

WORLD'S FASTEST PCs

COMPUTER

# GAMING

COUNTDOWN  
TO ISSUE 200

ZIFF DAVIS

THE #1 PC GAME MAGAZINE

WORLD

The best games of the year

DIABLO II



BALDUR'S  
GATE II



CRIMSON  
SKIES



MADDEN 2001



NO ONE  
LIVES FOREVER



# ULTIMATE BUYERS GUIDE

1/2001 • ISSUE 198 • [www.gamespot.com](http://www.gamespot.com)

75 TOP GAMES,  
SYSTEMS,  
AND MORE!

23 Hot  
Reviews

50 Tips &  
Codes



# DUNKUS COLLOSUS

BENCH CATAPULTIN' RAINMAKERS.  
NIGHTY-NIGHT MOVES AND HOWD-  
HE-DO-THAT AIR SHOWS. THINK  
YOU GOT THAT KINDA GAME?



BRING IT IF YOU GOT IT TO NBA LIVE  
2001: THE BASKETBALL DYNASTY FOR  
THIS CENTURY, NEXT CENTURY,  
AND THE CENTURY AFTER THAT.

IF IT'S IN THE GAME, IT'S IN THE GAME™

EASPORTS.COM AOL KEYWORD: EA SPORTS

# Are you ready for the



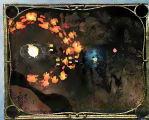
**"The World's Fastest GPU"**

- 'Nuff Said

"If you loved Baldur's Gate, then... Baldur's Gate 2 is bigger, more ambitious, and just a flat-out better game. Bioware and Black Isle have said they want this to be the only RPG you'll need this year—and, frighteningly, they may be right." - Computer Gaming World

"This sequel features fantastic locales, more spectacular monsters, and more character classes. It promises to be the most ambitious second edition D&D® game ever." - Gamespot

"... Baldur's Gate II: Shadows of Amn will be one of most important RPGs ever released. It is a beautiful epic, bringing to the field a new level of polish, detail and design. And, it's going to change everything." - IGN



Developed by  
**BIOWARE**  
CORP



Dungeons & Dragons





# Ultimate Adventure?



FORGOTTEN REALMS

# Baldur's Gate II Shadows of Amn™

**NOW AVAILABLE!**

[www.interplay.com/bgates2](http://www.interplay.com/bgates2)

BALDUR'S GATE II: SHADOWS OF AMN: Developed and © 2000 BioWare Corp. All Rights Reserved. Baldur's Gate, Shadows of Amn, Forgotten Realms, the Forgotten Realms logo, Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, the AD&D logo, D&D and the Wizards of the Coast logo are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and are used by Interplay under license. All Rights Reserved. BioWare, the BioWare Infinity Engine and the BioWare logo are trademarks of BioWare Corp. All Rights Reserved. Black Isle Studios and the Black Isle Studios logo are trademarks of Interplay Entertainment Corp. All Rights Reserved. Exclusively licensed and distributed by Interplay Entertainment Corp. All other trademarks and copyrights are property of their respective owners.

In the ancient land of Yamato,  
an aging and power-hungry warlord turned to  
darkness in his mad quest for eternal life.

His soul ravaged by the demon Raien,  
the warlord released hordes of undead  
warriors and hellspawn to crush all life from  
his kingdom and the four houses of power  
who swore fealty to his throne. As bodies  
fester from the warlord's assault,  
seven samurai stand ready for their  
final mission —  
revenge.

◆ Lead your samurai through ten  
huge environments of fast-paced  
action role-playing based on  
Japanese monsters and myths.

◆ Get ready for intense multiplayer  
mayhem! Up to 35  
people can play online and vie for  
the mantle of Dark Warlord.

◆ Innovative character AI  
gives you more than 30  
commands for you to lead  
your party through the  
always-changing landscape  
of the single-player game.



SIERRA  
STUDIOS

CLICK  
ENTERTAINMENT

[www.throneofdarkness.com](http://www.throneofdarkness.com)

# THRONE OF DARKNESS™



# ONLINE METAVERSE™ MATCHING SYSTEM

Vie for control of the galaxy  
through territorial expansion and economic domination

Work alone or together with other captains of your Star Empire  
to disrupt enemy shipping, suppress Orion Pirates,  
capture planets and - ultimately - to conquer hostile homeworlds



KLINGON™  
EMPIRE



ROMULAN™  
STAR EMPIRE

BOVA™  
CONQUEST EMPIRE



LYRAN™  
EMPIRE



HYDRAN™  
KINGDOM



MIRAK™  
STAR LEAGUE

Single player - 75 missions to explore

Real time damage textures

Dynamic colored lighting from weapons, explosions and stars  
Ships and planets come to life with luminosity mapping

With 8 Star Empires you command 1000+ variations of ships  
and other spacecraft represented by over 90 unique 3D-models

Multiplayer options include Metaverse™ campaigns at  
flipside.com or battles using MPlayer, TCP/IP

New classes include FIGHTERS, ESCORTS,  
FAST PATROL SHIPS, TENDERS and CARRIERS

The Mirak Star League, ancient enemies of the Lyran Star Empire,  
joins the galactic war with fighters, carriers and twice the missiles.

Meanwhile the Organians have returned, orchestrating the rise of the  
single-minded "peacemakers" of the Interstellar Concordium. The ISC's  
Plasmatic Pulsar Device is a key element of their brand of peace.



*The Best Starship  
Naval Combat Game  
Just Got Better!*

S T A R T R E K  
STARFLEET COMMAND<sup>®</sup>

VOLUME II

EMPIRES  
AT WAR<sup>™</sup>



[www.interplay.com/sfc2](http://www.interplay.com/sfc2)  
[www.startrek.com](http://www.startrek.com)

STAR TREK: Starfleet Command © Rodden & Synapse, all other trademarks © 2000 Interplay Entertainment Corp. All Rights Reserved. TM, © & © 1999 Paramount Pictures. STW 1000 and related elements are trademarks of Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved. Game mechanics and game play based on the board game created by Dennis Scott, Bureau © 1977-1980, bearing the trademark, "No Droids, No Droids." TM and the "T" logo are trademarks of Interplay Entertainment Corp. Interplay and the Interplay logo are trademarks of Interplay, Inc. Exclusively licensed and distributed by Interplay Entertainment Corp. All other trademarks and copyrights are the property of their respective owners.

TEEN  
T  
COMMENTS  
PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED

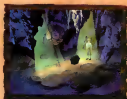
Comic Mischief  
Suggestive Themes  
Use of Tobacco  
and Alcohol

© 2006 Lucasfilm Entertainment Company Ltd. The Lucasfilm logo is a registered trademark of Lucasfilm Ltd. © 2006 Monkey Island and its characters are registered trademarks or trademarks of Lucasfilm Entertainment Company Ltd. All rights reserved.





FINALLY,  
A SOFTWARE  
PIRATE  
YOU CAN  
TRUST



ESCAPE FROM  
**MONKEY  
ISLAND™**



LUCASARTS ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY PRESENTS

AN OFF-BEAT ADVENTURE OF PIRATEY PROPORTIONS

STARRING GUYBRUSH THREEWOOD ELAINE MARLEY-THREEWOOD CHARLES L. CHARLES  
OZZIE MANDRILL THE ULTIMATE INSULT AND LOTS O' MONKEYS

FOR WINDOWS 95/98 - 3D HARDWARE REQUIRED

[monkey4.lucasarts.com](http://monkey4.lucasarts.com)



# KNUCKLE WHITENER

**WingMan**  
RUMBLEPAD™

**BEST BUY**

**COMP USA**  
THE COMPUTER EXPERTS

**Fry's**

**MICRO CENTER**  
THE FUTURE OF COMPUTERS

electronics **EB** boutique

**VIBRATION  
FEEDBACK**



WingMan Force 3D



WingMan RumblePad



WingMan Formula™ Force GP

Your hands are hungry for something more. Not a regular gamepad that just sits there while they do all the work. No, your hands want a vibration feedback-infused machine that reacts to every jerk, crash and explosion of the game. The WingMan RumblePad. Your hands deserve it.



**Logitech**

[www.logitech.com](http://www.logitech.com)

©2000 Logitech. All rights reserved. Logitech, the Logitech logo, WingMan and the Logitech logo are trademarks of Logitech. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.



## Holiday Hit List 2000

66

Naughty? Nice? Does it matter, when you've got our Holiday Last List in one hand and a credit card in the other? Check out our picks of games and hardware that you can buy now, and pay for all year long!



94

### Is the World Ready for a "Cyber" Olympics?

Or has Korea just gone mad? Ken Brown uncovers the ungainly spectacle of the world's first international games challenge.

### In Search of the Ultimate Gaming Machine

When you're feeling the need for speed, and money is no object, our annual Ultimate Game Machine drag race is what you need to read. Seven systems put it all on the line.

102

#### PREVIEW

### High Heat 2001 .....62

It's the best baseball game ever, and it's only getting better.



#### INSIDE GAMING

180

#### Player Banning in Online RPGs

Massively Multiplayer Games  
by Thomas L. McDonald .....180

#### The Adventure Game Is Back (Did It Ever Leave?)

Adventure Games by Audrey Wells .....182

#### 3rd Edition D&D Is the Charm

Role-playing by Deslock .....184

#### Space Strategy Gaming in Your Palm

Homebrew Games by T. Byrd Baker .....186

#### Get Boardgame Designers Into the Computer Biz

Wargames by Bruce Geryk .....187

# REBUILD. REUNITE. REJOICE.



There is a place where starships, space stations, and planets once thrived. A place where alien races were at war. A place called Startopia. Come. It's time to rebuild the old empire, maintain peace and order, and prosper. Yes, we can all get along.

**STAR TOPIA**  
BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE.

**EIDOS**  
GAMES  
eidos.com

**WADY FOOT PRODUCTIONS**

**RP**  
RATING PENDING  
ESRB

Copyright © Wady Foot Productions Ltd 1999. All rights reserved. Starships, space stations, and planets are trademarks of Eidos Games Ltd. All other trademarks and the Eidos logo are trademarks of their respective owners. The Eidos logo is a trademark of the Eidos Group. All rights reserved.

Gazing at developers' crystal balls, peeking at **EMPEROR's** sandworms, stepping into **ARCANUM's** steamworks, and looking back at a rather bizarre year.

## 119 REVIEWS

Baldur's Gate .....	120
Command & Conquer: Red Alert 2 .....	126
No One Lives Forever .....	128
Combat Flight Simulator 2 .....	132
NHL 2001 .....	134
Superbike 2001 .....	136
The Longest Journey .....	138
Metal Gear Solid .....	140
Midtown Madness 2 .....	144
Rune .....	146
SWAT 3: Elite Force .....	148
Blair Witch Volume 1: Rustin Parr .....	150
Close Combat: Invasion Normandy .....	152



## 174 GAMER'S EDGE

Baldur's Gate II .....	174
Unreal Tournament .....	176
CG Tips .....	178
Icewind Dale, Metal Gear Solid, Elite Force, Heronwerk: Cataclysm, Crimson Skies, and more.	



## 160 HARDWARE

## 160 Dell 800

Put the Power in your Lap. Dell's latest laptop for the gamer on the go.



## 164 Under the Hood

Make your computer boot faster.

## 168 Tech Medics

Tips for trouncing tech troubles.

## 170 Killer Rigs

Build a gaming beast!

## 172 Hardware Reviews

KDS Avtron AV-195-TF

Sidewinder Force Feedback 2

Klipsch

ProMedia 2.1 Speakers



## THE USUALS

## 23 George Jones

The future of gaming foretold.

## 29 Letters

Gamers go postal.

## 190 Index of Advertisers

In case you can't find the ads.

## 192 Greenspeak

The 3rd Annual Greenspeak Awards

# Ancient Enemies, Frozen

## You're in Our World Now!™



- The newly discovered frozen continent of Velious adds 16 new advanced adventure zones
- 12 new player character armor graphics for each race
- Hundreds of new magical items to discover, trade and sell from the mundane to the magnificent
- Dozens of quests for characters level 35+ which will take you to the planes and a city of dragons
- A new cast of creatures to confront Frost Giants, Ice Dragons, Cave Bears, Snowfang Gnolls, Storm Giants and more
- Full version of either EverQuest or Ruins of Kunark required.





# AN INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN A WORLD of MAGIC

**Danger awaits, hardy traveler,** in the turbulent lands of Arcanum! Prepare potion or pistol, for armament is a must! Encounter more than 500 friends and fiends of the oddest sort on dozens of quests and campaigns. Travel alone through this massive realm,

or invite companions to join you online. And for those with discriminating taste, we sport the most advanced role-playing system ever created in this or any other reality.



Brigades toward. Eighty spells in 16 Colleges are at your disposal, while the mechanically inclined may construct wonders of the age with 56 technological degrees from eight disciplines.



An epic story with multiple paths ensures you'll never play a single or multiplayer game the same way twice. Or create your very own online campaigns with the Arcanum World Editor.



Dozens of quests and a limitless character design let you decide the destiny of your character, be it elf, half-orc or other sundry races.



© 2002 Sierra Online, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Sierra, Sierra Online, and Arcanum are trademarks of Sierra Online, Inc. The beta logo is a registered trademark of Sierra Online, LLC.



Visit [www.aosb.org](http://www.aosb.org)  
or call 1-800-776-3732  
for more info.



[www.Arcanum1.com](http://www.Arcanum1.com)



NO MAGES  
ALLOWED

## BULLETS & BRIMSTONE

Witness the metallurgical  
might of the repeating  
rifle or unleash the dark  
arts of a Hellgate, as  
a mechanical future  
challenges a  
magical past.

# ARGANUM

© OF STEAMWORKS & MAGICK OBSCURA ©

EXPERIENCE THE ULTIMATE

*All-New Rime Age*

Journey into an entirely new realm to uncover secrets and information no one has known before.

Over  
6 Million  
Units  
Sold

As of 10/2000, including PC Games, CD-ROM, and DVD

*Think you know everything about Myst?*

Then you're in for a real surprise. realMYST™ uses a state-of-the-art, realtime 3D graphics engine to present Myst as it was originally intended: a fully immersive, dynamic world that you can wander through and interact with. For fans, it's like nothing you've experienced before. If you've never played, realMYST is the ultimate adventure you've been waiting for.

*Wide-Open, Walk-Through Gameplay*

For the first time, you can explore whatever you want, with 360 degrees of freedom.





DIRECTORS' CUT IN REALTIME 3D

# Forget Everything You Know About MYST

## Special 3D Effects and Animations

Day Night, Dynamic Lighting, Weather Effects, and Special Interactive Effects bring the world of Myst to full, vibrant life.

*The Ultimate,  
Directors' Cut*  
realMYST is the version of Myst that Cyan and the world-famous Miller brothers always wanted to make, but the technology wasn't ready—until now.

WINDOWS®  
95/98/2000/ME  
PC CD-ROM



## Is Your System Ready?

realMYST is optimized to run best on NVIDIA-based PC's and graphic cards. For the best realMYST visual experience make sure your PC has an NVIDIA Graphic Processing Unit driving your gaming experience.



Does your PC  
have graphics to  
the n<sup>th</sup> degree?

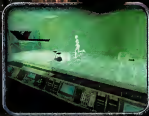
[www.realmyst.com](http://www.realmyst.com)

©2002 Bethesda Softworks, a Division of Bethesda, Inc. and © 2002 Cyan, Inc.



# TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES

In light of Lara's recent disappearance, those closest to her gather together at the Croft Estate on a gray, rainy day for a memorial service in her honor. Afterwards, the friends sit quietly together in the study of the Croft Mansion and provide new insights about Lara's past exploits that have until now remained a secret...





HER LEGACY  
LIVES ON.



**NVIDIA.**  
graphics

Does your PC  
have graphics to  
the *n*<sup>th</sup> degree?



Animated Blood  
Animated Violence



**PC  
CD  
ROM**



Dreamcast.

[tomraider.com](http://tomraider.com)

Ace pilots don't settle for cheap thrills.

Real flying is all about wrestling the raw powers of Mother Nature. Hanging on as you throttle your engines. And relishing the feeling as your wheels kiss the tarmac. You've never felt anything like the new SideWinder<sup>®</sup> Force Feedback 2 joystick. Using a next-generation processor, it takes technology to the limit by delivering over 100 distinct forces with more speed and strength than ever before. Turning more than 200 force feedback-enabled games into the most intense gaming experience imaginable. So the next time you're ready to push the envelope, you'd better buckle in first.



MICROSOFT  
**SIDEWINDER**  
FORCE FEEDBACK 2

# George Jones, Game Psychic

**PUBLISHER** **LEE URSANO**  
lee.ursano@cw.com

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** **GEORGE JONES**  
george.jones@cw.com

**EDITOR** **KEN BROWN**  
ken.brown@cw.com

**MANAGING EDITOR** **OWEN LOWBARACK**  
owen.lowbarack@cw.com

**TECHNICAL DIRECTOR** **DAVID SALLON**  
david.sallon@cw.com

**SENIOR EDITOR** **JEFF ARVIN**  
jeff.arvin@cw.com

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR** **ROBERT COFFEY**  
robert.coffey@cw.com

**ASSISTANT EDITORS** **ALEX HANBY**  
alex.hanby@cw.com

**THOMAS "BOOTS" HUGHES**  
thomas.hughes@cw.com

**TEM PRICE**  
tem.price@cw.com

**HELY FLEMING**  
hely.fleming@cw.com

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS** **CHARLES ARVAL**  
charles.arval@cw.com

**MANK AYER**  
mank.ayer@cw.com

**ART DIRECTOR** **STEVE WARCZYK**  
steve.warczyk@cw.com

**GRAPHIC ARTIST** **JASON HARTLE**  
jason.hartle@cw.com

**PRODUCTION DIRECTOR** **CARLOS LOPEZ**  
carlos.lopez@cw.com

**PRODUCTION MANAGER** **ANGIE MARIE MICHAEL**  
angie.marie@cw.com

**AD PRODUCTION COORDINATOR** **TURESHA NEWSON**  
turesha.newson@cw.com

**ASSISTANT MANAGER** **STEVE DESPES**  
steve.despes@cw.com

**TECHNICIAN** **ROBERT OSANE**  
robert.osane@cw.com

**HOW TO CONTACT THE EDITORS**  
ADDRESS FOR SUBSCRIPTION RELATED QUESTIONS AND FEEDBACK TO:  
CW EDITORIAL, 92 BEALE STREET, 10TH FLOOR, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105 OR  
HOW MAY CONTACT US VIA: CONTRIBUTORS@CW.COM  
WEB SITE: WWW.CW.COM/STAFF

**SALES AND AD SALES DEPARTMENT**  
**GROUP ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER** **WALTER GIBBY**  
walter.gibby@cw.com

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER / EAST COAST TERRITORY** **BRUCE COLLISON**  
bruce.collison@cw.com

**DISTRICT SALES REPRESENTATIVE** **TALLIE RICE**  
tallie.rice@cw.com

**ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE / EAST COAST TERRITORY** **EMILY GURMAN**  
emily.gurman@cw.com

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER / PACIFIC NORTHWEST AND S.W. AREA PENINSULA** **IAN SIEGLER**  
ian.siegler@cw.com

**ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE / PACIFIC NORTHWEST AND S.W. AREA PENINSULA** **MIKEY GRAY**  
mikey.gray@cw.com

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER / SOUTHWEST TERRITORY** **KAREN LINDON**  
karen.lindon@cw.com

**ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE / SOUTHWEST TERRITORY** **LINDA PELINE**  
linda.peline@cw.com

**REGIONAL SALES MANAGER / TEXAS, WASHINGTON, SAN FRANCISCO TERRITORY** **MARC KAMASUOG**  
marc.kamasuog@cw.com

**ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE / TEXAS, WASHINGTON, SAN FRANCISCO TERRITORY** **MICHAEL SPRUNZ**  
michael.sprunz@cw.com

**SENIOR MARKETING MANAGER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR** **REY URSANO**  
reynolds.ursano@cw.com

**MARKETING COORDINATOR** **ANNE URSANO**  
anne.ursano@cw.com

**ADVERTISING COORDINATOR** **TYLER URSANO**  
tyler.ursano@cw.com

**SALES ASSISTANT** **KIRSTEN LAUT**  
kirsten.laut@cw.com

**SALES ASSISTANT** **CHERYL CARANDINO**  
cheryl.carandino@cw.com

**HOW TO CONTACT ADVERTISING & SALES**  
92 BEALE STREET, 10TH FLOOR, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105. OR CALL (415) 361-8776. FAX (415) 361-8891

**FOUNDER** **BUSHELL BRY**



What happened to my year? Wasn't the Fourth of July just last month? The cause of the print magazine is that because we're consistently two months ahead of ourselves, we lead this strange, quasi-futuristic existence that keeps us ahead of the rest of the world (in our own minds, at least). So for us, it's December in October. Or something like that.

And so, seeing as I'm currently two months ahead of the rest of you, I've decided to enlighten, astound, amaze, and inform you with my predictions for 2001:

- **BLACK AND WHITE** will be released to rave reviews in the springtime. It will get coverage in Time, Newsweek, and CNN.
- Someone, somewhere, will release a **SURVIVOR** game to very un-rave reviews, but blockbuster sales.
- Nintendo will surprise everyone this year. With the Fall 2001 launch of the Game Cube, and the spring launch of the Game Boy Advance (which plugs into the Game Cube), Nintendo is going to astound us with a degree of innovation—and hopefully more mature titles—that console gamers aren't used to.
- Ditto Microsoft and the Xbox.
- On the second anniversary of the Columbine shooting, the violence in gaming issue will rear its ugly head, this time in the form of anti-violence legislation.

**“Nintendo is going to astound us with a degree of innovation—and hopefully more mature titles—that console gamers aren't used to.”**

- **DUKE NUKEM FOREVER** won't ship until very late in the year.
- **HALF LIFE 2** will be announced at E3.
- You are going to see many more stories like our Korean gaming story in Computer Gaming World. The author—*CGW* Editor Ken Brown—is now officially my hero. He finally nailed the story we attempted to accomplish two times prior—and it's a landmark story. For a magazine that prides itself on computer game coverage, we haven't done a great job of presenting the lives and souls behind our hobby. Until now.
- You're going to see our competitors begin to copy our newfound approach to feature stories. *CGW*

**GEORGE'S MIX**

1. **NO ONE LIVES FOREVER**
2. **Easy Riders, Ringing Bulls: How the Sex, Drugs, and Rock and Roll Generation Saved Hollywood**, by Peter Rinkoff
3. **Bridging the Gap**, by the Black Eye Puss (hip/hop CD)

**SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES:**  
FOR SERVICE QUESTIONS ADDRESS CHANGES OR TO ORDER, PLEASE CONTACT US AT:  
WEB: SERVICE.COMPUTERGAMINGWORLD.COM (FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE) OR SUBSCRIBE.COM/USMAIL/COMPUTERGAMINGWORLD.COM TO ORDER.  
PHONE: US OR CANADA: (800) 371-4640 OR (415) 361-8800; INTERNATIONAL: (415) 361-3400  
MAIL: COMPUTER GAMING WORLD PO BOX 10748 BOSTON, MA 02210 PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR MAILING LABEL WITH ANY CORRESPONDENCE.  
PACIFIC: US AND CANADA: (800) 465-4600; INTERNATIONAL: (415) 361-3400  
EMAIL: US.COMPUTERGAMINGWORLD.COM PLEASE FILL MAIL ADDRESS ADDRESS FROM WHICH YOU SUBSCRIBE, OR YOUR SHIPMENT/RETURNS.  
SUSCRIPTIONS: THE ONE YEAR (12 ISSUES) SUBSCRIPTION RATE IS \$19.99 IN THE US AND \$29.99 IN THE US AND \$39.99 IN THE US AND \$49.99 IN THE US AND \$59.99 IN THE US AND \$69.99 IN THE US AND \$79.99 IN THE US AND \$89.99 IN THE US AND \$99.99 IN THE US AND \$109.99 IN THE US AND \$119.99 IN THE US AND \$129.99 IN THE US AND \$139.99 IN THE US AND \$149.99 IN THE US AND \$159.99 IN THE US AND \$169.99 IN THE US AND \$179.99 IN THE US AND \$189.99 IN THE US AND \$199.99 IN THE US AND \$209.99 IN THE US AND \$219.99 IN THE US AND \$229.99 IN THE US AND \$239.99 IN THE US AND \$249.99 IN THE US AND \$259.99 IN THE US AND \$269.99 IN THE US AND \$279.99 IN THE US AND \$289.99 IN THE US AND \$299.99 IN THE US AND \$309.99 IN THE US AND \$319.99 IN THE US AND \$329.99 IN THE US AND \$339.99 IN THE US AND \$349.99 IN THE US AND \$359.99 IN THE US AND \$369.99 IN THE US AND \$379.99 IN THE US AND \$389.99 IN THE US AND \$399.99 IN THE US AND \$409.99 IN THE US AND \$419.99 IN THE US AND \$429.99 IN THE US AND \$439.99 IN THE US AND \$449.99 IN THE US AND \$459.99 IN THE US AND \$469.99 IN THE US AND \$479.99 IN THE US AND \$489.99 IN THE US AND \$499.99 IN THE US AND \$509.99 IN THE US AND \$519.99 IN THE US AND \$529.99 IN THE US AND \$539.99 IN THE US AND \$549.99 IN THE US AND \$559.99 IN THE US AND \$569.99 IN THE US AND \$579.99 IN THE US AND \$589.99 IN THE US AND \$599.99 IN THE US AND \$609.99 IN THE US AND \$619.99 IN THE US AND \$629.99 IN THE US AND \$639.99 IN THE US AND \$649.99 IN THE US AND \$659.99 IN THE US AND \$669.99 IN THE US AND \$679.99 IN THE US AND \$689.99 IN THE US AND \$699.99 IN THE US AND \$709.99 IN THE US AND \$719.99 IN THE US AND \$729.99 IN THE US AND \$739.99 IN THE US AND \$749.99 IN THE US AND \$759.99 IN THE US AND \$769.99 IN THE US AND \$779.99 IN THE US AND \$789.99 IN THE US AND \$799.99 IN THE US AND \$809.99 IN THE US AND \$819.99 IN THE US AND \$829.99 IN THE US AND \$839.99 IN THE US AND \$849.99 IN THE US AND \$859.99 IN THE US AND \$869.99 IN THE US AND \$879.99 IN THE US AND \$889.99 IN THE US AND \$899.99 IN THE US AND \$909.99 IN THE US AND \$919.99 IN THE US AND \$929.99 IN THE US AND \$939.99 IN THE US AND \$949.99 IN THE US AND \$959.99 IN THE US AND \$969.99 IN THE US AND \$979.99 IN THE US AND \$989.99 IN THE US AND \$999.99 IN THE US AND \$1009.99 IN THE US AND \$1019.99 IN THE US AND \$1029.99 IN THE US AND \$1039.99 IN THE US AND \$1049.99 IN THE US AND \$1059.99 IN THE US AND \$1069.99 IN THE US AND \$1079.99 IN THE US AND \$1089.99 IN THE US AND \$1099.99 IN THE US AND \$1109.99 IN THE US AND \$1119.99 IN THE US AND \$1129.99 IN THE US AND \$1139.99 IN THE US AND \$1149.99 IN THE US AND \$1159.99 IN THE US AND \$1169.99 IN THE US AND \$1179.99 IN THE US AND \$1189.99 IN THE US AND \$1199.99 IN THE US AND \$1209.99 IN THE US AND \$1219.99 IN THE US AND \$1229.99 IN THE US AND \$1239.99 IN THE US AND \$1249.99 IN THE US AND \$1259.99 IN THE US AND \$1269.99 IN THE US AND \$1279.99 IN THE US AND \$1289.99 IN THE US AND \$1299.99 IN THE US AND \$1309.99 IN THE US AND \$1319.99 IN THE US AND \$1329.99 IN THE US AND \$1339.99 IN THE US AND \$1349.99 IN THE US AND \$1359.99 IN THE US AND \$1369.99 IN THE US AND \$1379.99 IN THE US AND \$1389.99 IN THE US AND \$1399.99 IN THE US AND \$1409.99 IN THE US AND \$1419.99 IN THE US AND \$1429.99 IN THE US AND \$1439.99 IN THE US AND \$1449.99 IN THE US AND \$1459.99 IN THE US AND \$1469.99 IN THE US AND \$1479.99 IN THE US AND \$1489.99 IN THE US AND \$1499.99 IN THE US AND \$1509.99 IN THE US AND \$1519.99 IN THE US AND \$1529.99 IN THE US AND \$1539.99 IN THE US AND \$1549.99 IN THE US AND \$1559.99 IN THE US AND \$1569.99 IN THE US AND \$1579.99 IN THE US AND \$1589.99 IN THE US AND \$1599.99 IN THE US AND \$1609.99 IN THE US AND \$1619.99 IN THE US AND \$1629.99 IN THE US AND \$1639.99 IN THE US AND \$1649.99 IN THE US AND \$1659.99 IN THE US AND \$1669.99 IN THE US AND \$1679.99 IN THE US AND \$1689.99 IN THE US AND \$1699.99 IN THE US AND \$1709.99 IN THE US AND \$1719.99 IN THE US AND \$1729.99 IN THE US AND \$1739.99 IN THE US AND \$1749.99 IN THE US AND \$1759.99 IN THE US AND \$1769.99 IN THE US AND \$1779.99 IN THE US AND \$1789.99 IN THE US AND \$1799.99 IN THE US AND \$1809.99 IN THE US AND \$1819.99 IN THE US AND \$1829.99 IN THE US AND \$1839.99 IN THE US AND \$1849.99 IN THE US AND \$1859.99 IN THE US AND \$1869.99 IN THE US AND \$1879.99 IN THE US AND \$1889.99 IN THE US AND \$1899.99 IN THE US AND \$1909.99 IN THE US AND \$1919.99 IN THE US AND \$1929.99 IN THE US AND \$1939.99 IN THE US AND \$1949.99 IN THE US AND \$1959.99 IN THE US AND \$1969.99 IN THE US AND \$1979.99 IN THE US AND \$1989.99 IN THE US AND \$1999.99 IN THE US AND \$2009.99 IN THE US AND \$2019.99 IN THE US AND \$2029.99 IN THE US AND \$2039.99 IN THE US AND \$2049.99 IN THE US AND \$2059.99 IN THE US AND \$2069.99 IN THE US AND \$2079.99 IN THE US AND \$2089.99 IN THE US AND \$2099.99 IN THE US AND \$2109.99 IN THE US AND \$2119.99 IN THE US AND \$2129.99 IN THE US AND \$2139.99 IN THE US AND \$2149.99 IN THE US AND \$2159.99 IN THE US AND \$2169.99 IN THE US AND \$2179.99 IN THE US AND \$2189.99 IN THE US AND \$2199.99 IN THE US AND \$2209.99 IN THE US AND \$2219.99 IN THE US AND \$2229.99 IN THE US AND \$2239.99 IN THE US AND \$2249.99 IN THE US AND \$2259.99 IN THE US AND \$2269.99 IN THE US AND \$2279.99 IN THE US AND \$2289.99 IN THE US AND \$2299.99 IN THE US AND \$2309.99 IN THE US AND \$2319.99 IN THE US AND \$2329.99 IN THE US AND \$2339.99 IN THE US AND \$2349.99 IN THE US AND \$2359.99 IN THE US AND \$2369.99 IN THE US AND \$2379.99 IN THE US AND \$2389.99 IN THE US AND \$2399.99 IN THE US AND \$2409.99 IN THE US AND \$2419.99 IN THE US AND \$2429.99 IN THE US AND \$2439.99 IN THE US AND \$2449.99 IN THE US AND \$2459.99 IN THE US AND \$2469.99 IN THE US AND \$2479.99 IN THE US AND \$2489.99 IN THE US AND \$2499.99 IN THE US AND \$2509.99 IN THE US AND \$2519.99 IN THE US AND \$2529.99 IN THE US AND \$2539.99 IN THE US AND \$2549.99 IN THE US AND \$2559.99 IN THE US AND \$2569.99 IN THE US AND \$2579.99 IN THE US AND \$2589.99 IN THE US AND \$2599.99 IN THE US AND \$2609.99 IN THE US AND \$2619.99 IN THE US AND \$2629.99 IN THE US AND \$2639.99 IN THE US AND \$2649.99 IN THE US AND \$2659.99 IN THE US AND \$2669.99 IN THE US AND \$2679.99 IN THE US AND \$2689.99 IN THE US AND \$2699.99 IN THE US AND \$2709.99 IN THE US AND \$2719.99 IN THE US AND \$2729.99 IN THE US AND \$2739.99 IN THE US AND \$2749.99 IN THE US AND \$2759.99 IN THE US AND \$2769.99 IN THE US AND \$2779.99 IN THE US AND \$2789.99 IN THE US AND \$2799.99 IN THE US AND \$2809.99 IN THE US AND \$2819.99 IN THE US AND \$2829.99 IN THE US AND \$2839.99 IN THE US AND \$2849.99 IN THE US AND \$2859.99 IN THE US AND \$2869.99 IN THE US AND \$2879.99 IN THE US AND \$2889.99 IN THE US AND \$2899.99 IN THE US AND \$2909.99 IN THE US AND \$2919.99 IN THE US AND \$2929.99 IN THE US AND \$2939.99 IN THE US AND \$2949.99 IN THE US AND \$2959.99 IN THE US AND \$2969.99 IN THE US AND \$2979.99 IN THE US AND \$2989.99 IN THE US AND \$2999.99 IN THE US AND \$3009.99 IN THE US AND \$3019.99 IN THE US AND \$3029.99 IN THE US AND \$3039.99 IN THE US AND \$3049.99 IN THE US AND \$3059.99 IN THE US AND \$3069.99 IN THE US AND \$3079.99 IN THE US AND \$3089.99 IN THE US AND \$3099.99 IN THE US AND \$3109.99 IN THE US AND \$3119.99 IN THE US AND \$3129.99 IN THE US AND \$3139.99 IN THE US AND \$3149.99 IN THE US AND \$3159.99 IN THE US AND \$3169.99 IN THE US AND \$3179.99 IN THE US AND \$3189.99 IN THE US AND \$3199.99 IN THE US AND \$3209.99 IN THE US AND \$3219.99 IN THE US AND \$3229.99 IN THE US AND \$3239.99 IN THE US AND \$3249.99 IN THE US AND \$3259.99 IN THE US AND \$3269.99 IN THE US AND \$3279.99 IN THE US AND \$3289.99 IN THE US AND \$3299.99 IN THE US AND \$3309.99 IN THE US AND \$3319.99 IN THE US AND \$3329.99 IN THE US AND \$3339.99 IN THE US AND \$3349.99 IN THE US AND \$3359.99 IN THE US AND \$3369.99 IN THE US AND \$3379.99 IN THE US AND \$3389.99 IN THE US AND \$3399.99 IN THE US AND \$3409.99 IN THE US AND \$3419.99 IN THE US AND \$3429.99 IN THE US AND \$3439.99 IN THE US AND \$3449.99 IN THE US AND \$3459.99 IN THE US AND \$3469.99 IN THE US AND \$3479.99 IN THE US AND \$3489.99 IN THE US AND \$3499.99 IN THE US AND \$3509.99 IN THE US AND \$3519.99 IN THE US AND \$3529.99 IN THE US AND \$3539.99 IN THE US AND \$3549.99 IN THE US AND \$3559.99 IN THE US AND \$3569.99 IN THE US AND \$3579.99 IN THE US AND \$3589.99 IN THE US AND \$3599.99 IN THE US AND \$3609.99 IN THE US AND \$3619.99 IN THE US AND \$3629.99 IN THE US AND \$3639.99 IN THE US AND \$3649.99 IN THE US AND \$3659.99 IN THE US AND \$3669.99 IN THE US AND \$3679.99 IN THE US AND \$3689.99 IN THE US AND \$3699.99 IN THE US AND \$3709.99 IN THE US AND \$3719.99 IN THE US AND \$3729.99 IN THE US AND \$3739.99 IN THE US AND \$3749.99 IN THE US AND \$3759.99 IN THE US AND \$3769.99 IN THE US AND \$3779.99 IN THE US AND \$3789.99 IN THE US AND \$3799.99 IN THE US AND \$3809.99 IN THE US AND \$3819.99 IN THE US AND \$3829.99 IN THE US AND \$3839.99 IN THE US AND \$3849.99 IN THE US AND \$3859.99 IN THE US AND \$3869.99 IN THE US AND \$3879.99 IN THE US AND \$3889.99 IN THE US AND \$3899.99 IN THE US AND \$3909.99 IN THE US AND \$3919.99 IN THE US AND \$3929.99 IN THE US AND \$3939.99 IN THE US AND \$3949.99 IN THE US AND \$3959.99 IN THE US AND \$3969.99 IN THE US AND \$3979.99 IN THE US AND \$3989.99 IN THE US AND \$3999.99 IN THE US AND \$4009.99 IN THE US AND \$4019.99 IN THE US AND \$4029.99 IN THE US AND \$4039.99 IN THE US AND \$4049.99 IN THE US AND \$4059.99 IN THE US AND \$4069.99 IN THE US AND \$4079.99 IN THE US AND \$4089.99 IN THE US AND \$4099.99 IN THE US AND \$4109.99 IN THE US AND \$4119.99 IN THE US AND \$4129.99 IN THE US AND \$4139.99 IN THE US AND \$4149.99 IN THE US AND \$4159.99 IN THE US AND \$4169.99 IN THE US AND \$4179.99 IN THE US AND \$4189.99 IN THE US AND \$4199.99 IN THE US AND \$4209.99 IN THE US AND \$4219.99 IN THE US AND \$4229.99 IN THE US AND \$4239.99 IN THE US AND \$4249.99 IN THE US AND \$4259.99 IN THE US AND \$4269.99 IN THE US AND \$4279.99 IN THE US AND \$4289.99 IN THE US AND \$4299.99 IN THE US AND \$4309.99 IN THE US AND \$4319.99 IN THE US AND \$4329.99 IN THE US AND \$4339.99 IN THE US AND \$4349.99 IN THE US AND \$4359.99 IN THE US AND \$4369.99 IN THE US AND \$4379.99 IN THE US AND \$4389.99 IN THE US AND \$4399.99 IN THE US AND \$4409.99 IN THE US AND \$4419.99 IN THE US AND \$4429.99 IN THE US AND \$4439.99 IN THE US AND \$4449.99 IN THE US AND \$4459.99 IN THE US AND \$4469.99 IN THE US AND \$4479.99 IN THE US AND \$4489.99 IN THE US AND \$4499.99 IN THE US AND \$4509.99 IN THE US AND \$4519.99 IN THE US AND \$4529.99 IN THE US AND \$4539.99 IN THE US AND \$4549.99 IN THE US AND \$4559.99 IN THE US AND \$4569.99 IN THE US AND \$4579.99 IN THE US AND \$4589.99 IN THE US AND \$4599.99 IN THE US AND \$4609.99 IN THE US AND \$4619.99 IN THE US AND \$4629.99 IN THE US AND \$4639.99 IN THE US AND \$4649.99 IN THE US AND \$4659.99 IN THE US AND \$4669.99 IN THE US AND \$4679.99 IN THE US AND \$4689.99 IN THE US AND \$4699.99 IN THE US AND \$4709.99 IN THE US AND \$4719.99 IN THE US AND \$4729.99 IN THE US AND \$4739.99 IN THE US AND \$4749.99 IN THE US AND \$4759.99 IN THE US AND \$4769.99 IN THE US AND \$4779.99 IN THE US AND \$4789.99 IN THE US AND \$4799.99 IN THE US AND \$4809.99 IN THE US AND \$4819.99 IN THE US AND \$4829.99 IN THE US AND \$4839.99 IN THE US AND \$4849.99 IN THE US AND \$4859.99 IN THE US AND \$4869.99 IN THE US AND \$4879.99 IN THE US AND \$4889.99 IN THE US AND \$4899.99 IN THE US AND \$4909.99 IN THE US AND \$4919.99 IN THE US AND \$4929.99 IN THE US AND \$4939.99 IN THE US AND \$4949.99 IN THE US AND \$4959.99 IN THE US AND \$4969.99 IN THE US AND \$4979.99 IN THE US AND \$4989.99 IN THE US AND \$4999.99 IN THE US AND \$5009.99 IN THE US AND \$5019.99 IN THE US AND \$5029.99 IN THE US AND \$5039.99 IN THE US AND \$5049.99 IN THE US AND \$5059.99 IN THE US AND \$5069.99 IN THE US AND \$5079.99 IN THE US AND \$5089.99 IN THE US AND \$5099.99 IN THE US AND \$5109.99 IN THE US AND \$5119.99 IN THE US AND \$5129.99 IN THE US AND \$5139.99 IN THE US AND \$5149.99 IN THE US AND \$5159.99 IN THE US AND \$5169.99 IN THE US AND \$5179.99 IN THE US AND \$5189.99 IN THE US AND \$5199.99 IN THE US AND \$5209.99 IN THE US AND \$5219.99 IN THE US AND \$5229.99 IN THE US AND \$5239.99 IN THE US AND \$5249.99 IN THE US AND \$5259.99 IN THE US AND \$5269.99 IN THE US AND \$5279.99 IN THE US AND \$5289.99 IN THE US AND \$5299.99 IN THE US AND \$5309.99 IN THE US AND \$5319.99 IN THE US AND \$5329.99 IN THE US AND \$5339.99 IN THE US AND \$5349.99 IN THE US AND \$5359.99 IN THE US AND \$5369.99 IN THE US AND \$5379.99 IN THE US AND \$5389.99 IN THE US AND \$5399.99 IN THE US AND \$5409.99 IN THE US AND \$5419.99 IN THE US AND \$5429.99 IN THE US AND \$5439.99 IN THE US AND \$5449.99 IN THE US AND \$5459.99 IN THE US AND \$5469.99 IN THE US AND \$5479.99 IN THE US AND \$5489.99 IN THE US AND \$5499.99 IN THE US AND \$5509.99 IN THE US AND \$5519.99 IN THE US AND \$5529.99 IN THE US AND \$5539.99 IN THE US AND \$5549.99 IN THE US AND \$5559.99 IN THE US AND \$5569.99 IN THE US AND \$5579.99 IN THE US AND \$5589.99 IN THE US AND \$5599.99 IN THE US AND \$5609.99 IN THE US AND \$5619.99 IN THE US AND \$5629.99 IN THE US AND \$5639.99 IN THE US AND \$5649.99 IN THE US AND \$5659.99 IN THE US AND \$5669.99 IN THE US AND \$5679.99 IN THE US AND \$5689.99 IN THE US AND \$5699.99 IN THE US AND \$5709.99 IN THE US AND \$5719.99 IN THE US AND \$5729.99 IN THE US AND \$5739.99 IN THE US AND \$5749.99 IN THE US AND \$5759.99 IN THE US AND \$5769.99 IN THE US AND \$5779.99 IN THE US AND \$5789.99 IN THE US AND \$5799.99 IN THE US AND \$5809.99 IN THE US AND \$5819.99 IN THE US AND \$5829.99 IN THE US AND \$5839.99 IN THE US AND \$5849.99 IN THE US AND \$5859.99 IN THE US AND \$5869.99 IN THE US AND \$5879.99 IN THE US AND \$5889.99 IN THE US AND \$5899.99 IN THE US AND \$5909.99 IN THE US AND \$5919.99 IN THE US AND \$5929.99 IN THE US AND \$5939.99 IN THE US AND \$5949.99 IN THE US AND \$5959.99 IN THE US AND \$5969.99 IN THE US AND \$5979.99 IN THE US AND \$5989.99 IN THE US AND \$5999.99 IN THE US AND \$6009.99 IN THE US AND \$6019.99 IN THE US AND \$6029.99 IN THE US AND \$6039.99 IN THE US AND \$6049.99 IN THE US AND \$6059.99 IN THE US AND \$6069.99 IN THE US AND \$6079.99 IN THE US AND \$6089.99 IN THE US AND \$6099.99 IN THE US AND \$6109.99 IN THE US AND \$6119.99 IN THE US AND \$6129.99 IN THE US AND \$6139.99 IN THE US AND \$6149.99 IN THE US AND \$6159.99 IN THE US AND \$6169.99 IN THE US AND \$6179.99 IN THE US AND \$6189.99 IN THE US AND \$6199.99 IN THE US AND \$6209.99 IN THE US AND \$6219.99 IN THE US AND \$6229.99 IN THE US AND \$6239.99 IN THE US AND \$6249.99 IN THE US AND \$6259.99 IN THE US AND \$6269.99 IN THE US AND \$6279.99 IN THE US AND \$6289.99 IN THE US AND \$6299.99 IN THE US AND \$6309.99 IN THE US AND \$6319.99 IN THE US AND \$6329.99 IN THE US AND \$6339.99 IN THE US AND \$6349.99 IN THE US AND \$6359.99 IN THE US AND \$6369.99 IN THE US AND \$6379.99 IN THE US AND \$6389.99 IN THE US AND \$6399.99 IN THE US AND \$6409.99 IN THE US AND \$6419.99 IN THE US AND \$6429.99 IN THE US AND \$6439.99 IN THE US AND \$6449.99 IN THE US AND \$6459.99 IN THE US AND \$6469.99 IN THE US AND \$6479.99 IN THE US AND \$6489.99 IN THE US AND \$6499.99 IN THE US AND \$6509.99 IN THE US AND \$6519.99 IN THE US AND \$6529.99 IN THE US AND \$6539.99 IN THE US AND \$6549.99 IN THE US AND \$6559.99 IN THE US AND \$6569.99 IN THE US AND \$6579.99 IN THE US AND \$6589.99 IN THE US AND \$6599.99 IN THE US AND \$6609.99 IN THE US AND \$6619.99 IN THE US AND \$6629.99 IN THE US AND \$6639.99 IN THE US AND \$6649.99 IN THE US AND \$6659.99 IN THE US AND \$6669.99 IN THE US AND \$6679.99 IN THE US AND \$6689.99 IN THE US AND \$6699.99 IN THE US AND \$6709.99 IN THE US AND \$6719.99 IN THE US AND \$6729.99 IN THE US AND \$6739.99 IN THE US AND \$6749.99 IN THE US AND \$6759.99 IN THE US AND \$6769.99 IN THE US AND \$6779.99 IN THE US AND \$6789.99 IN THE US AND \$6799.99 IN THE US AND \$6809.99 IN THE US AND \$6819.99 IN THE US AND \$6829.99 IN THE US AND \$6839.99 IN THE US AND \$6849.99 IN THE US AND \$6859.99 IN THE US AND \$6869.99 IN THE US AND \$6879.99 IN THE US AND \$6889.99 IN THE US AND \$6899.99 IN THE US AND \$6909.99 IN THE US AND \$6919.99 IN THE US AND \$6929.99 IN THE US AND \$6939.99 IN THE US AND \$6949.99 IN THE US AND \$6959.99 IN THE US AND \$6969.99 IN THE US AND \$6979.99 IN THE US AND \$6989.99 IN THE US AND \$6999.99 IN THE US AND \$7009.99 IN THE US AND \$7019.99 IN THE US AND \$7029.99 IN THE US AND \$7039.99 IN THE US AND \$7049.99 IN THE US AND \$7059.99 IN THE US AND \$7069.

EPIC IS TOO SMALL A WORD.



Visit [www.earth.org](http://www.earth.org)  
or call 1-800-771-3772  
for more info.

SIERRA  
STUDIOS

STAINLESS STEEL STUDIOS

©2000 Sierra On-Line, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Sierra, Ghost Station, the "S" logo and Empire Earth are trademarks of Sierra On-Line, Inc. Age of Empires is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. The red logo is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.



FROM RICK GOODMAN  
LEAD DESIGNER, AGE OF EMPIRES®

# EMPIRE EARTH™

GO BEYOND THE AGES. SUMMER 2001

[WWW.EMPIREEARTH.COM](http://WWW.EMPIREEARTH.COM)

Sega Rally now  
available on PC.

You know, like the  
one in your office.



SEGA RALLY 2

# SEGA RALLY

CHAMPIONSHIP



Customize your car's setup  
for maximum velocity and  
perfect handling.

Leave the competition in  
the dust. Unless it's  
raining or snowing -  
then let 'em eat mud!

Tackle 21 white-knuckled  
courses - day or night,  
through all kinds of weather





Sega's hottest racing game ever is now available on PC. Get ready for that road-chewing, dirt-spitting action you've come to expect. With a fully customizable car, you might even survive to see the checkered flag. Race the computer or challenge your friends over the Internet. And remember, if too much Sega Rally gets you fired from your job...it works great on home computers too.



BE PREPARED  
DAWN 2001



[WWW.INTERPLAY.COM/FALLOUTBOS](http://WWW.INTERPLAY.COM/FALLOUTBOS)

MICRO FORTÉ



Fallout Tactics: Brotherhood of Steel © 2000 Interplay Entertainment Corp. Fallout Tactics: Brotherhood of Steel is a trademark of Interplay Entertainment Corp. All rights reserved. Micro Forté and the Micro Forté logo are trademarks of Interplay Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

# LETTERS

## Mouse-Look: Who Came First?

I really enjoyed Robert Coffey's RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN preview in the December 2000 issue. The screen shots and artwork have me especially intrigued. I'm really looking forward to experiencing WOLFENSTEIN after so many years.

While I was perusing the sidebar "You've Come a Long Way, Wolfie," I noticed that you gave QUAKE credit for being the first game with mouse-look. I do remember reading an article a while back that stated that id software took this idea from Bethesda Softworks' THE TERMINATOR: FUTURE SHOCK. Being an old FUTURE SHOCK fan, I had to bring this to your attention.

Tony Jung

I just opened up my fresh-out-of-the-mailbox December issue of CGW, and rushed to read the cover story on RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN. The game will be amazing, but I have to correct a statement that you guys made. DUKE NUKEM 3D was the first game to include mouse aiming up and down - all you have to do is press the U key.

Miroslav Djuric

Contrary to your comment that DUKE was the first game to incorporate the mouse-look (actually, we said it was QUAKE - Ed.), Bungie Software's MARATHON had this feature when first released back in November of 1994 (that's right, a full two years before DUKE). I can remember the glory days of the Macintosh (circa 1995 or so, when there were actual games to play) where we would watch DOOM players and ask "why can't you look around?" Nobody understood that we had been looking up and down for over a year.

Ryan Bolduan

Actually, you're all correct. All of these games had some form of "mouse-looking" available before QUAKE. So any way you slice it, we were wrong. As to who did it first amongst the three games listed here, our crack team of fact-checking monkeys has determined the following: MARATHON wins, with a release in 1994 on the Mac. THE TERMINATOR: FUTURE SHOCK, released in 1995, wins as the first PC game with mouse-look, followed by DUKE 3D in 1996.

Penny Arcade by Mike Krahulik and Jerry Holkins ([www.penny-arcade.com](http://www.penny-arcade.com))



© Mike Krahulik and Jerry Holkins

## George Jones: Potty Mouth-in-Chief

I was appalled that George Jones chose to use an obscene word and ask his readers to "excuse our French" in his article on MAJESTIC (December 2000). For some time, I have noted with sadness how the editorial staff continues to lower their standards to that of giggling teenage boys trying to demonstrate their machismo and sound cool by sprinkling their articles with blustering profanity to describe a game. For years I have ignored the excessive use of the phrase "kiss ass" which often appears in ads and occasionally in editorial. I've ignored the constant use of "sucks," because the phrase "sucks" has a different connotation than it did when I was a teen during the 1970s. I can ignore the sometimes incoherent usage of "hell" and "damn." However, I take offense at Mr. Jones' use of the word - which used to earn an "R" rating for any film. If Mr. Jones cannot communicate any better than this, it is time for a new editor. One who holds the standards of print media just a touch above the locker room banter of 7th grade boys.

Jay

Redondo Beach, California

My 8-year-old has recently discovered all the neat stuff in CGW, and is now usually the first one to grab it from the mail and check out the new game titles and reviews. Given that fact, I am disappointed to find the use of the "F-word" in the MAJESTIC preview. I hope this is a goof on the part of the editors. If this is a view of the future, CGW will need to be an example of "parents must have standards," and you will have lost a long-time subscriber. I know the kids will understand, because they have even commented on the frequent use of rough language and gross-out images the ads tend to use. Too bad. For all of us

Larry R. Schultz  
Berlue, WA

George Jones responds: Usage of the "F-word" is never gratuitous or taken for granted in CGW. In fact, this is only the second time we've used it. (The first was in our KINGPIN review earlier this year.) My point in using it in the context of my preview of EA's MAJESTIC was twofold: First, it was literally my reaction when I saw the bold nature of the game ("Oh f---"). Second, it was an attempt to signify that this game is most definitely not business as usual. Still, though, I apologize to anyone who took offense - just because I have a dirty mouth shouldn't mean that you have to hear it.

## Look, Some Guy Likes Garfield

I just read your December 2000 issue and was SHOCKED to see that your game rating scale had Garfield the Cat at the bottom! Some of us just happen to like him (I think). And how could you put Ren as 4 stars? He's an idiot! Who comes up with this stuff?? I demand to see the manager!

Matt Moody

## Another Egregious Mistake

I received the most recent issue of CGW a few days ago, and started to peruse your most excellent reviews. When I came to CRIMSON SKIES, I had to chuckle at the author's use of "egregious." I have seen this word appear in quite a few gaming magazines recently, and it must be the new "paradigm" or "obfuscation." At any rate, I believe that egregious is an adjective, not a noun, therefore, it cannot be the object of the verb as the author is using it. Perhaps he meant to use "egregiousness" instead? Keep up the good work.

John Ponsolle



19" MONITOR

1.6GHZ MICRON PC

© Best Buy 2000

BestBuy.com

A warm, dimly lit living room decorated for the holidays. In the foreground, a young girl with blonde hair and a red headband runs joyfully towards the camera, her mouth open in a wide smile. She is wearing a light blue dress with a white top and red floral accents. Behind her, a young boy in a dark suit and tie runs, holding a video game box. In the background, an elderly woman with white hair, wearing a red vest over a white blouse, sits at a table covered with a blue cloth, surrounded by holiday decorations and a small Christmas tree. To the left, an elderly man in a red sweater and glasses stands near a doorway, holding a drink. The room is filled with festive items, including a large red poinsettia plant in the lower left and a patterned rug. The overall atmosphere is cozy and celebratory.

AND ALL THE GAMES TO KEEP  
THE HOLIDAYS FROM SUCKING.

**BEST  
BUY**

Turn On the Fun™



**LETTERS****DECEMBER 2001 CONTRIBUTORS**

JAMES D. DUNNING JR.

**ONLINE GAMES EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION**

TOM MCCRAE

**DEAR GAMESWORLD EDITOR**

BOB MADORE

**FEATURED GAMESWORLD ARTIST**

AL PERLMAN

**EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS**

MICHAEL J. HALLER (EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, PC MAGAZINE)

**EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS**

J. SCOTT SPYRIS (CONSUMER MEDIA GROUP)

**EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS**

BILL FLAHERTY

**EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS**

PETER LONZO (BUSINESS MEDIA)

**CONTRIBUTORS**

CHARLES HAST (CIRCULATION)

REBECCA MCPHERTERS (STRATEGIC SERVICES)

**ADVERTISING**

KEN BEAUCHAMPEL (GAMES)

JOHN DOUGLE (EDITOR, ENRIG)

G. BARRY DOLSON (EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, MANGO INTERNET LIFE)

ROBERT HERMANN (PRODUCTION)

CORTYON LEE JONES (PUBLISHER, ZIFF DAVIS BRAND BUSINESS FOR THE NEW ECONOMY™)

HOWARD KARLAN (MARKETING, CONSUMER MEDIA GROUP)

ERIC LAUBGUTH (EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, EWEEK)

GILL NACHRING (TECHNOLOGY)

MICHAEL PERKOWSKI (PUBLISHER, SMART PRINTER)

ROBIN PINDER (EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, FAMILYPC)

CHRISTOPHER SCHWARZ (GENERAL COUNSEL)

SILVIA SCHWARTZ (GROUP PUBLISHER, ENRIG AND SMART PRINTER)

PAUL SOMMERSON (EDITORIAL DIRECTOR, ZIFF DAVIS DEVELOPMENT)

DALE STRANG (GAME GROUP)

VINCENT STUBBLE (HUMAN RESOURCES)

STEPHAN WIRTH (GROUP PUBLISHER, INTERACTIVE WEEK AND THE NET ECONOMY™)

**STAFF**

MARK VON NISSE (VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER)

BILL DAVIS (CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER)

**CONTRIBUTORS**

JAMES D. DUNNING JR.

TOM MCCRAE

BOB MADORE

AL PERLMAN

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

J. SCOTT SPYRIS

BILL FLAHERTY

PETER LONZO

MICHAEL J. HALLER

**LETTERS**

John, while we appreciate the correction, we had to chuckle at your use of the word "mayhap." Actually, "mayhap" does not have an "s" at the end. It is a singular word, derived from the phrase "it may happen." We don't mean to obfuscate the point of your letter, but such an egregious mistake could not go unmentioned, seeing as though it sets a new paradigm in irony. Thanks for writing.

**Look, a Rock Star Says We're Cool**

When I saw page 192 of the November CGW, I was half asleep and reading in bed. I jumped up and danced around the house shouting out to my wife that we (the Old 97's) were finally in a cool magazine. At least, one that I like. Thanks to Robert Coffey for putting us in his Mix.

I'm a game freak and have read CGW since the early 90's. It's a great magazine. Funny thing is that it's more exciting to me to see our name in a mag that I care about than stupid Spin or Rolling Stone, which totally suck.

**Ken Bethea**  
guitar player  
Old 97's

**Nice Tip, Eh?**

I finished perusing your December issue, and took special interest in the online purchasing article [Read me, page 50]. It attracted me because I am Canadian, and purchasing games up here costs a lot more than down south [grm...]. Anyway, during my Internet travels, I came across a little site called shop-on.ca. They specialize in Canadian orders (their site is based in Canadian \$), but also ship to the U.S. Just figured I'd point this out for the rest of us above the 40th meridian.

**Kyle Zwarich**



Thanks. All the moose who read our magazine will be invited.

## 200th Edition!

### Your Favorite Gaming Moment

What was your favorite gaming moment? As part of our countdown to Issue 200, we're inviting everyone to submit their wildest gaming experience in 200 words or less. We'll collect the most interesting stories and print them in a special section of the March issue. Here's your chance to be a part of gaming history. Write to us at [cgwletters@ziffdavis.com](mailto:cgwletters@ziffdavis.com).

Write to us at:

[Cgwletters@ziffdavis.com](mailto:Cgwletters@ziffdavis.com)

For help with subscriptions:

[Cgw@zeddats.com](mailto:Cgw@zeddats.com)

**WOLFENSTEIN Story: The Patch**

In our December story on RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN (pps 106-107), we incorrectly identified Scott Miller as the funding source for WOLFENSTEIN 3D add-on SPEAR OF DESTINY. Actually, Id Software funded SPEAR OF DESTINY. We also reported that Todd Porter talked John Romero into forming Ion Storm. Romero strongly denies this, saying he had discussions about forming a company with Tom Hall months earlier.

The group of developers who formed Third Law Entertainment left Ion Storm in 1995, not 1998. We also wrote that Third Law's game, KISS, "shipped in one-fourth the time of DAIKATANA - and outsold it!" Actually, it shipped in less than half the time (14 months vs. 36 months for DAIKATANA), and did not outsell it. DAIKATANA sold 40,351 units as of the end of September, vs. 22,725 units of KISS for the same period, according to PC Data. We sincerely apologize for the errors.

**ZIFF DAVIS**

Adult Supervision  
of  
Contributors  
Required



COMPUTER GAMES WORLD IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH IDC  
TODAY'S 800:

I face my darkest chapter,  
The Queen has taught you well.  
Though you think you are my captor,  
You'll soon hear Death's dark knell.



American McGee's  
**ALICE**

**W**

onderland has been cruelly corrupted by the deranged Queen of Hearts.

The Mad Hatter, Jabberwock and other familiar characters have become her menacing minions. Out-run, outwit, or outfight these twisted characters and confront the sadistic Queen. Only one of you can survive. Travel through wickedly surreal landscapes wielding an arsenal of sinister toys, including rapid-fire playing cards and jack-in-the-box bombs. Designed by American McGee of Quake™ and Quake II™ fame, and using an enhanced Quake III: Arena™ engine, American McGee's Alice pulls you into a fast-paced, third-person world where horrific characters and fiendish puzzles conspire to deprive you of your sanity before they take your life. Are you ready for the next chapter of Alice? Visit [alice-ea.com](http://alice-ea.com)





## To PC — or — Not PC

Whether 'tis nobler to work on PC, and suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or sell out and do console games

■■■ With the release of the PlayStation 2, the dogs of war have been loosed. The PS2, Dreamcast, Xbox, and Game Cube aren't only battling for our hearts, minds, and wallets, but also for those of PC developers, as they consider the potential rewards of offering games on those platforms. We contacted many of the leading developers and publishers to get a peek at their plans.

Some were careful in their comments, such as Tom Byron, LucasArts' director of product marketing, who would say only that "LucasArts could be a very big player in the console market." Others, like Trip Hawkins of 3DO,

are ready to thoroughly embrace the PS2: "For play, the PS2 is the future of gaming," Hawkins says. Then there were some who see the advent of the new console systems as ushering in a sea-change in the marketplace. Sierra Studios producer Jeff Fobst sees the new consoles changing the marketplace. "These new opportunities provide a sort of shake-up of the status quo. If you were the leader in the past, you need to step up and reassess yourself by making a great new game. If you were behind the leaders a bit, the new playing fields give you an opportunity to demonstrate your ability." We've already seen this with Bungie, who agreed to be acquired by Microsoft in large part so that they could be one of the leading Xbox developers.

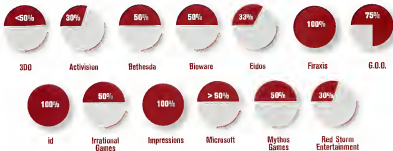
And what about the games that are designed for consoles—will we see those games ported to the PC? Todd Vaughn, director of new business at Bethesda, thinks so. "We do foresee a few 'ports' of console projects to PC, but only where it's appropriate. The PC is a different market with different expectations." Steve Ackrich, head of development for the San Jose branch of Infogrames says that the console market is bigger, but it's also tougher. "Our PC titles have more potential for financial success. Given the licensing and manufacturing costs on a console title, we need to sell nearly 50 percent more than a PC title."

How much will the lure of the larger console market affect PC game companies? Only time will tell, but it's reassuring to see so many of our favorite developers stay committed to our favorite platform. —Mark Asher

**Quotes from the Industry** **Page 37**

### Placing Their Bets

Here's the percentage of resources publishers say they're allocating to the PC (as opposed to consoles) over the next 18 months.



SAYANARA,  
STARBUCKS

Our lives are suddenly worth living again with the recent advent of an engineering marvel that dispenses piping hot java or espresso, free, at the push of a button. The half-coffee, half-chocolate "Makochino" is our new life's blood, without which you surely wouldn't be holding this magazine. Blessed caffeine, blessed coffee bean, we praise thy glory.



## The BAD...

## BLAIR WITCH

If you're looking for fuel to build a pyre that will consume the Blair Witch demons from our midst, look no further than the three Blair Witch games from the Gathering of Developers.



**Sodded** with the same engine that made *NOCTURNE* such a nightmare, these games couldn't rise above awkward cinematic CGI that interferes with the action. Call us crazy, but shouldn't shooters let you see where you're shooting?

## and the UGLY

## MATTEL MESS

Losing \$4 billion dollars in 15 months for purchasing The Learning Company is only enough. But the fallout from having lost so much by acquiring a software company

(including game developer) may have losting implications. SSI will likely lose



centennial uncertainty as they chart their future with new system (see pg 64), but we hope that the worst is behind this venerable publisher.

## Dawn of a 3D Dune

Sandworms spring eternal in Westwood's rechristened classic

Westwood Studio 1, pulling it head out of the sand while diving deep into the gritty stuff at the same time. How? By returning to it, cherished *Dune* license while acknowledging that real-time strategy (RTS) games have evolved beyond the staid structure of their recent DGC titles. *EMPEROR: BATTLE FOR DUNE* is a fully-3D RTS and even now, a full year away from release, it's drop-dead gorgeous. The dev team is moving away from linear mission-based gameplay to let players conduct a more free-form campaign, fighting for planetary sections on a map that looks almost like a Risk board.

Players can choose from three different races: the noble House Atreides, the evil Harkonnen, or the insidious Ordo; and make alliances with any two of five sub-houses, each with unique weapons and advantages. Each combination of house with sub-house gives players different kinds of armies, so they can tailor their tactics for specific strategies.



Westwood is also adding a huge single-player game with 33 maps and more than 100 missions. Several multiplayer options are also planned, including a co-op mode for players to battle through the single-player game. Scores of brand new units promise challenging, unpredictable play. This could well be the title that reclaims Westwood's status as an innovator. —Robert Coffey

## Quotes From the Industry

continued from page 36

## In Their Words

"I don't think there will be a drop-off in quality or quantity of PC games. A few big name PC developers are focusing somewhat more on consoles, but most of the PC shops are staying with the PC."

—Phil Steinmeyer, PopTop Software

"Our belief is that the days of porting console titles to the PC are over. The vast majority of games currently in development are being built for either format, not both."

—Nick Earl, V.P. of Development at Eidus

"I think the PC platform is in a bit of a recession (no kidding), but I do think it is only a temporary situation."

—Mark Dochtermann, Ritual Entertainment

"The only prediction I'd dare to make is that the gaming score probably isn't going to change as much or as quickly as many people would believe."

—Chris Beatrice, Director of Design and Development at Impressions

"I am a former PC gamer who has tired of the constant revisions on the PC platform and the constant feeling of dread that the game won't work for some reason."

—Trip Hawkins, CEO 3DO

"I suspect that new consoles arriving imminently will cause some PC developers to unwisely leave the PC platform, only to find out the competition isn't any easier on console."

—Greg Zeschuk, Joint CEO at Bloware

# Y2K in Review

Although fears of global catastrophe were unfounded, the year 2000 proved to be a tumultuous one for PC gamers. Industry buy-outs, rumored firings of legendary game designers, and even the threat of PC gaming's number-one ally selling us out were just some of the highlights.

Despite all this, a number of quality games hit store shelves and managed to take the edge off of things...a little bit. One thing is for sure: With the upcoming console battle royale, 2001 should be another up-and-down year for PC gamers. Herewith, we revisit the Top 10 stories of the past year.

## 10. Richard Garriot Splits With Origin

Hot on the heels of the ULTIMA ASCENSION debacle, the legendary game designer responsible for the ULTIMA series parts ways with the company he helped found. Was Lord British fired, or did he quit? And when—and with whom—will he dive back into gaming?

## 9. The Unwashed Masses

Replacing the Deer Hunters of the world is none other than Regis Philbin. Who wants to be a Millionaire? Disney Interactive, obviously—their PC quiz show sat at the top of the best-seller charts all year long. This begs the question—who's going to publish the Survivor game?

## 8. Sequels Rule the Day

One of the bright spots: The year's

## The top 10 stories of the year

two biggest sequels—BALDUR'S GATE 2 and DIABLO 2—did not disappoint. Huzzah!

## 7. Sleeper

Just when we thought the small-time developer was dead, Big Time Software surprised us all with COMBAT MISSION, an absolutely amazing 3D war game. Meanwhile, a small, unfunded group of Croatian designers released a technology demo of SERIOUS SAM that blew gamers and game designers away.

## 6. Bungie Sells Out

We can only pray that the Redmond Giant's swallowing of one of the last truly great game design shops is a good thing. MicroBungie's belated announcement that HALO would ship on both Mac and PC, in addition to Xbox, helped calm many fears.

## 5. Chapter 11

G.O.D. sells out to Take 2 Interactive. Mattel gets sold for a song and a prayer. Looking Glass bites the dust. We must be a leading indicator for New Economy companies—the gaming industry started to shake out long before the dot-com world did.

## 4. Dai-, Dai-, Dai-, Dai-, DAIKATANA

John Romero's long-chron-



icled magnum opus is released and immediately eviscerated by the critics with a level of cruelty rarely seen. The primary culprits: excessive hype, an outdated engine, and some serious AI problems with the game's sidekicks.

## 3. The Two-Ton Gorilla

When GNN covered Sony's new console release, PC gamers suddenly understood why game companies have been scrambling to the video game side of the world.

## 2. Sim Life

Will Wright creates a national phenomenon with THE SIMS, an instant game-of-the-year candidate that got men talking about such previously taboo issues as wallpaper and carpeting.

## 1. Xbox

Microsoft decides to battle Sony on their own turf. Confused PC gamers don't know whether to take this move as validation or betrayal. Time will tell.

—by George Jones

## TCHOTCHKE OF THE MONTH

Do not be deceived: These are no simple puppets. They are the tangible manifestation of the soul-wracking conflict constantly thundering in the black, tarry hearts of each and every Dark Prince of Gaming that is the CGW edit staff. Thanks to TalonSoft's kind gesture, we could finally use these crude stand-ins to settle the metaphysical war waged in the core of our very beings. Would godliness prevail, at long last silencing the hot evil whispers forever ringing in our tortured minds? Would saintliness redeem our wretched souls and pull us from the bottomless pit of venomous loathing in which we have dwelled for to these many years? Would we finally be good?

Oh, come on—the nun never knew what hit her.



# Blinded by Science

■■■ After hacking through PLANESCAPE, ICEWIND DALE, and BALDUR'S GATE II, will role-players be ready for more in ARCANUM? They will if I'm any judge. Losing most of my waking hours to these masterpieces over the past year didn't stop me from becoming utterly obsessed with Chapter One of Sierra's upcoming RPG epic.

The attention to detail in this game is incredible. Troika Games—founded by FALLOUT veterans Tim Cain, Leonard Boyarsky, and Jason Anderson—has crafted a world every bit as compelling as everyone's favorite post-apocalyptic planet.

Pollution has gotten out of control and rusty grime covers nearly every surface. You won't find elves frolicking in the forests and halflings smoking in the shire. Ever since technology reared its ugly head, people have been abandoning magic for science. Many have set aside sorcerers' tomes for machinists' textbooks, and—just as engineering students razz art students today—a "talking rivalry" has set in between the two groups.

Players have to choose where they stand on this issue by specializing in Technological Disciplines or Magical Spells. Of course, you



ARCANUM's steamworks make us hot and bothered



«We do this moaning with your head around here, fell-ers.»

▲ This mage could use a few spells: even the magical water cottage right about now.

◀ Like its predecessor FALLOUT, ARCANUM is a character- and story-driven game.

might forgo both and spend all your character creation points on different physical skills. Replayability is key here. You could go through the game as a stereotypical mage, picking incantations from the 16 spell

colleges. Then, you could try your luck as a scientist trained in chemistry and explosives. Or as a riverboat gambler/gunfighter trained in gambling, haggling, and firearms.

Having what amounts to the entire spectrum of a skewed Victorian society available to role-play makes ARCANUM a unique experience that most RPG veterans will appreciate. Anyone who can tear themselves away from traditional dragons 'n' damsel fare should enjoy this twisted look at a yesterday that never was. —Brett Todd

## EVERQUEST Reaches 300,000 Active Players

■■■ Verant Interactive has signed up 300,000 EVERQUEST players, according to Sony Online Entertainment. Since the game's launch in February 1999, EVERQUEST has broken all records previously set by an online multiplayer game.

With monthly fees of just under \$10, that's \$3,000,000 a month in revenue from EVERQUEST alone. The second EVERQUEST expansion pack, THE SCARS OF VELOUS, is scheduled to come out in December of 2000.

# 15

January 1995

Ah, ain't he sweet. This portrait of winsome young Sid Meier appeared on a 1995 advertisement for the celebratory sin SILENT SURVIVE. That began the relentless marketing of the Sid Meier name that continues to this day. Also in this issue: the first review of Hell of Fame gaming classic, ULTIMA IV, designed by the other enduring game design personality, Richard "Lord British" Garriott.



# 10

January 1981

This was the year that the Grinch stole gaming's Christmas. Due to a number of factors, the most important being that game development had to re-tool to support VDA graphics and sound cards, about 90 percent of the games expected for Christmas didn't make it. And there was much wailing and gnashing of teeth. Since then, fortunately, the game industry has improved its holiday getting (even a little), and gamers have learned to expect release dates with as much skepticism as election year political promises.



# 5

January 1996

The knockout king of our 1996 Ultimate Game Machine feature was the Gateway PS-133X. This baby offered a screaming 133MHz Pentium chip, 16 MBs of RAM, and a whopping 1.6GB hard drive. All this could be yours for the low, low price of \$330. Take a look at our Ultimate Game Machine feature in this issue to see what we'll be sniffling at in five years.



# START SPREADING THE



**AVAILABLE NOW**

**Westwood**  
STUDIOS  
www.westwood.com

© 2001 Electronic Arts Inc. Command & Conquer, Red Alert and Westwood Studios are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. All rights reserved. Westwood Studios™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand.

TEEN

ANIMATED VIOLENCE

For information on this product's rating, please call 1-800-735-8722



# NEWS...

**"9.3 out of 10"**

**"Go buy the game."**

**- IGN**

**"The most visceral, thrilling and heart-pounding intense RTS experience ever seen on the PC."**

**- AVault.com**

**"One of the most enthralling and addictive RTS games we've played."**

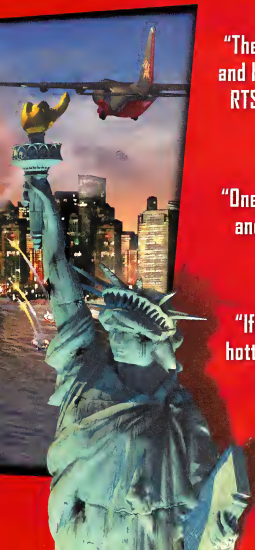
**- Gamecenter**

**"If you're looking for the hottest RTS this year, your ship has come in."**

**- Gamers Depot**

**"Westwoods finest game to date."**

**- PC Zone (UK)**



# UO Goes 3D

**\$5 upgrade** for existing  
**ULTIMA ONLINE** players

■■■ The granddaddy of massively-multiplayer, online role-playing games continues to evolve with Origin's second major upgrade: **THIRD DAWN**. Unlike **THE SECOND AGE**, which was designed to fix many of the game's early problems, **THIRD DAWN** is a graphics enhancement in order to bring the 2D game into the 3D generation. Although the new graphics still don't compare well with UO's popular cousin, **EVERQUEST**, they do help to give

UO a desperately needed facelift and a bit more eye-candy for its 206,000 active users.

All the creatures and characters are going 3D, and there'll be cool new animations and special effects. There will also be a huge new area to explore: **Isbenschur** will be 50 percent bigger than the **Lost Lands** of **THE SECOND AGE**. It uses

the **Trammel** rule set, and will be adventure-only (no housing). Evil will make a difference here (for example, evil characters will be more likely to be attacked by monsters), and it will have "good" monsters (for evil characters in battle against).

If you're willing to pay a small fee to beta-test the new version, then be sure to get in on the **THIRD DAWN** beta program. During the

beta period, existing UO customers can upgrade for only \$5. After that, the upgrade price goes up, but it should still be less than the \$40 boxed version.

Current players will not be required to upgrade, but none of the graphic enhancements will be visible to them, and they won't have access to the new land.

**THIRD DAWN** is scheduled to come up in late January. —Ken Brown

**BAD BREATH** **THIRD DAWN** introduces 3D characters, improved animations, and better special effects.



## Reality Check

	CGW	PC Gamer	IGN	GameZone.com	GameSpot	GameSpy	Average
Age of Empires II	B+	A	A+	A+	A-	B-	A-
Grand Prix 3	B+	B+	A	B	A-	B+	B+
Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K. 2	B-	A	B+	C	C+	A	B
Homeworld: Cataclysm	A+	A	*	A-	A-	A	A
Madden NFL 2001	A	B+	B-	A-	B-	B-	B
Sanity: Alien's Artifact	C-	B+	C	C	C+	C	C
Sims: Livin' Large	A	A-	*	C	B+	B+	B
Soulbringer	C-	B-	B-	C-	C+	B-	C
Star Trek: ConQuest	B-	B-	B-	C	B	B-	C-
Star Trek: New Worlds	F	C	*	D-	B	B	D-

\* indicates game has not been rated

And the Winner Is...

**HOMEWORLD: CATAclysm**, proof that expansions can, sometimes, outdo the very games they expand. Other noteworthy titles include another expansion (**AGE2: THE CONQUERORS**), and MicroProse's foray into the racing arena with **GRAND PRIX 3**. The **Star Trek** curse is still alive, with two **Trek** games by two different publishers festering at the bottom of the barrel.





- Real Time Space Station Construction

- First Person Combat

# DARK ORE

coming spring 2001

enter the "Dark Ore" CONTEST at:

[www.raylogic.com](http://www.raylogic.com)



Windows  
98/2K  
Required

The RayLogic system and the RayLogic name are registered trademarks of RayLogic, Inc. All graphics, text and games depicted are © 2000 Microsoft, Windows, and the Windows logo are registered trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

# News & Notes

## Microsoft Cans CONQUEST

Microsoft recently announced that it would not publish CONQUEST: FRONTIER WARS, the highly unanticipated game from Chris Roberts' Digital Anvil Studios. In an official statement, Microsoft said it "had high aspirations for the game, and it simply did not progress as [we] had hoped it would."

In an interview with GameSpot, Digital Anvil's Eric Peterson said the game is basically complete, and the team is currently making minor



Conquest

tweaks to some of the single-player missions. They plan to finish the game before looking for another publisher, pursuing a co-branding deal, or deciding to publish the game in-house, according to Peterson.

CGW never got excited enough about CONQUEST to preview it. Our view is, if you want to play a game that features three races in a science fiction future, dust off your copy of STARCRAFT.

## Sega's Dreams Dying

It appears that Sega is the first console manufacturer to abandon the high-stakes game of video game hardware. After the company's recent quarterly loss of \$205 million—its fourth consecutive loss—the company has announced a strategic shift away from Dreamcast and toward developing software for multiple platforms. Sega said it would license its Dreamcast technology for use by other hard-

ware vendors.

This leaves Sony, Nintendo, and Microsoft to duke it out for video game supremacy next Christmas.

## Mattel Dumps Games Division

After paying \$3.5 billion for The Learning Company in 1999, Mattel recently unloaded the entire software unit for basically nothing. In late September, Mattel sold The Learning Company unit to Gores Technology. Details were not disclosed, but the Wall Street Journal reported that Mattel essentially gave the division away for a share of future earnings that The Learning Company might generate.

This brings to a close Mattel's disastrous foray into the software game and educational market. The company lost so much money on the software division that it lowered earnings and drove down Mattel's stock price. Earlier this year, Mattel went through some highly publicized corporate bloodletting that included the resignation of CEO Jill Barad and other senior Mattel executives.

Besides educational software, The Learning Company also consists of Mindscape and SSI.

Terry Fahn, spokesperson for the Gores Technology Group, told CGW that Gores is reviewing their options and looking at ways of restructuring. "They've sent people to look at the assets and are planning on operating it successfully. They plan on having it profitable within six months." Fahn said that Gores specializes in acquiring non-core businesses from large corporations and turning them around. They sell some, but they "hold onto more than 50 percent of the companies they acquire," said Fahn. Vance Diggins, President of Gores Technology, has been named the interim CEO of The Learning Company. —Mark Asber



ALIENX features impressive graphics and good AI.

## Groove Games

### Free 3d games you can play from your browser

Browser-based games are getting downright sophisticated—and surprisingly realistic. If you're looking for a quick diversion, check out some of the games you can play for free from 3D Groove. They'll work on Windows or Mac-based systems, require no 3D hardware, and can be played over dial-up or broadband connection. Five million people have already downloaded the front-end software needed to play them.

REAL POOL 3D is easy to play and features realistic physics and multiplayer options. TANK WARS is an action game set in an apocalyptic world, where players battle each other in a post-modern cityscape. Players can choose from four



Stick Fists as your internet browser in WWI ARCADE DOGFIGHTING.

different tanks and a variety of weapons. Other Groove games are also up and running.

Several new Groove games will be coming online in 2001, including WWI ARCADE DOGFIGHTING and ALIENX. The arcade fier and 3D shooter both feature detailed graphics and low-latency gameplay, but the AI and network code is still being worked on.

Check them out at [3Dgroove.com](http://3Dgroove.com) or [shockwave.com](http://shockwave.com).

The Third Deployment of Delta Force is Here...

# DELTA FORCE

## Land Warrior



"...Land Warrior will be the best game in the Delta Force lineup yet."

- GameSpot



IN STORES  
November 2000

New Characters with Special Abilities

Next Generation JD  
Josephine Eagles with  
Expansive Indoor  
and Vast Outdoor  
Environments

New High-Tech  
Weapons & Systems

Large Scale (up to 50 players) Internet Multiplayer  
Perpetual Online NovaField Character Statistics



Get the DEMO at  
[www.novalogic.com](http://www.novalogic.com)

NovoWorld



NOVALOGIC - THE ART OF WAR.

© 2000 Novologic, Inc. All rights reserved. Novologic, Delta Force, and Land Warrior are trademarks of Novologic, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries. Novologic, Delta Force, and Land Warrior are registered trademarks of Novologic, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries. Novologic, Delta Force, and Land Warrior are registered trademarks of Novologic, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries. Novologic, Delta Force, and Land Warrior are registered trademarks of Novologic, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries.

*Big guns.  
Fast planes.  
Gorgeous dames.*



Dogfight opponents online in cutthroat multiplayer.



Fly 11 locked-out planes in 24 thrilling missions.



...and when you're not in the air, you can relax with sports, strategy games and more.

The 1930s ain't what they used to be.

America lies in pieces and air power is king. It's a shoot-or-get-shot-down world.

You'll dogfight ruthless air pirates.

Rescue saucy pinups. Dodge fiak from dicey femmes fatales. And mix it up with

other aces online. But remember, one thing still holds true—don't get mad, get even.

[www.microsoft.com/games/crimsonskies](http://www.microsoft.com/games/crimsonskies)

Microsoft

Zone.com

ZIPPER  
INTERACTIVE

ESRB  
TEEN  
Mild Fantasy Violence



**Last night, she shot you down.  
TODAY, IT'S YOUR TURN.**

# CRIMSON SKIES



## THIS MONTH'S TOP 10 PREORDERS



**Myth II: Soulshifter** (Action/Adventure)  
Follow the story of the constantly popular graphical adventure series, but from the standpoint of an embittered villain who seeks revenge against Atrus.



**Black & White** (Action/Adventure)  
Complex in detail, graphically gorgeous, with free flowing, individualized play. Already voted one of the games that will change gaming forever.



**Tribes 2** (Action/Adventure)  
No armor, no shields, no need to apply, since the action in Tribes 2 promises to be so fast, you'll need your wits about you before you charge into the fray.



**Pool of Radiance: Siege of Myth Drennar** (RPG)  
Not your run-of-the-mill, linear role-playing game. Has a cooperative multiplayer mode and a good deal of character environment interaction.



**Clive Barker's Undying** (Action/Adventure)  
Clive Barker acted as story consultant on this atmospheric game that is best described as a mix between Resident Evil, Hell Like, and Thief.



**Monopoly Tycoon** (Strategy)  
The family-favorite board game has been turned into a 3-D city-building em. Practice outflow schemes against your opponents on the Internet or LAN.



**Half-Life: Counterstrike** (Action/Adventure)  
This mod is now the newest game for Half-Life! Join a terrorist or anti-terrorist assault squad and play hostage rescue, assassination, or just blast the enemy!



**Arcanum: Of Mages & Magic** (Action/Adventure)  
Arcanum: Of Mages & Magic is a fantasy world where magic and technology hold equal sway, and an adventure might just as easily wield a firelock pistol as a flaming sword.



**Throne of Darkness** (Action/Adventure)  
Combines the hack-and-slash gameplay of Diablo with the rich historical texture of feudal Japan. A good-looking game with interesting action-RPG twists.



**MechWarrior 2** (Action/Adventure)  
Fast-paced Mech strategy game featuring 24 different skill sets and a full Mech bay to give you total control of your forces.

## THIS MONTH'S TOP 10 RELEASES



**Escape from Monkey Island** (Adventure)  
The best Monkey Island 3D graphic adventure game, with all the humorous antics and addictive gameplay of the first three installments.



**EverQuest: The Scorn of Velious** (Action/Adventure)  
This 2nd expansion is designed for mid- to high-level players, and features new zones, new enemies, new treasures, and an improved interface.



**Baldur's Gate 2: Shadow of Amn** (Action/Adventure)  
An ambitious role-playing game based on the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons game. Stand out as one of the best RPGs available.



**Command & Conquer: Red Alert 2** (Action/Adventure)  
Set just a few years after the original C&C, this fast-paced, real-time strategy game focuses on quick, intense battles on American soil.



**The Legend of Dragoon** (Action/Adventure)  
Gorgeous graphics, excellent animation, and the cinematic sequences add up to a mesmerizing plot and a wonderful gaming experience.



**Combat Flight Sim 2: Pacific Theater** (Action/Adventure)  
A deep, involving game with excellent graphics, great sound effects, and adjustable realism settings. A dream come true for historic flight sim fans.



**MechWarrior 4: Vegeance** (Action/Adventure)  
The creators of BattleTech and the original MechWarrior game return to give MechWarrior 4 an all-new storyline and six new BattleMechs.



**realMyst** (Action/Adventure)  
Solve puzzles and roam magical realms filled with arcane technology in order to solve an ancient mystery, all in a beautiful, interactive virtual world.



**NHL 2001** (Action/Adventure)  
Paste a picture of your face onto a character model and go head-to-head against 50 NHL and international teams in your living room or on the Internet.



**No One Lives Forever** (Action/Adventure)  
Control with deadly agents, evade traps, unravel mysteries, and become entangled in a cleverly constructed conspiracy that threatens the entire free world.

All available now at the  
Computer & Video Games store at  
**amazon.com.**

Get thousands of game titles for up to **50% off** at [amazon.com/videogames](http://amazon.com/videogames)

# Top 40

CGW's Monthly Readers' Poll

## WHAT WE'RE PLAYING

### No One Lives Forever

From Betty! Shogun's Date Archer has had as much in our readers' polls as any other surprise hit (not to mention weekly funny) 80's spy-thriller-turned-first-person shooter. Top question for Action Game of the Year.



### Baldur's Gate 2



Yep, we're still playing it. And we'll still be playing it this time next century. Looking back on chapter one from chapter three is like looking back on one's childhood. How young, how naive we were then. It only we could return to chapter one and know all that we know now...

### Real Alert 2

After Tiberian Sun closed new hot nights around the office last year (Mutual Commodes anyone?), we were relieved to find that **RED ALERT 2's** multiplayer is somewhat more balanced. And it has the best single-player gameplay (not to mention hottest cut-scene babe) of any CAC game.



### Heroes Chronicles



Nothing remotely new here, but for **HEROES III** concludants Mr. Jeff Gross and Robert Coffey, the new self-contained single-player campaigns are a nice, cheap fix. Good, solid, turn-based combat gaming.

It's the rare game that nails a top five slot in our poll in its first month, but that's what **BALDUR'S GATE II** did. This future Hall of Famer is already a huge hit with gamers, and why shouldn't it be? It's deeper and more detailed than the best RPGs of all time. The only question now is, will it unseat **DIABLO II** for #1?

Several other new titles made a strong debut, but we were surprised to see **ULTIMA ASCENSION** snark in at #40. Who left open the gates of hell? After all this time, it must finally be playable.

Rising Poller		Old Top	
1	1	Diablo II Xbox	5
2	2	Half-Life Xbox	5
3	4	Age of Empires II: Age of Kings Microsoft	5
4	1	Baldur's Gate II Interplay	5
5	5	Unreal Tournament Epic/GT	5
6	8	The Sims Electronic Arts	5
7	10	Strike III Arena Activision	3.5
8	13	Age of Empires II: The Conquerors Microsoft	4
9	11	Deus Ex Eidos	3.5
10	6	Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear Red Storm	4.5
11	17	Icewind Dale Interplay	4.5
12	-	Command & Conquer: Red Alert 2 Westwood/EA	4
13	12	Final Fantasy VII Eidos	4.5
14	14	Half-Life: Opposing Force Valve	3.5
15	15	Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri Firaxis	5
16	-	Asheron's Call Microsoft	3
17	9	Homeworld Borealis	4.5
18	20	Final Fantasy VIII Eidos	2
19	21	System Shock 2 Electronic Arts	4.5
20	24	Baldur's Gate: Tales of the Sword Coast Interplay	4
21	32	Homeworld: Cataclysm Borealis	5
22	15	Planescape: Torment Interplay	5
23	29	Roller Coaster Tycoon Hasbro	4
24	37	Heroes III: Armageddon's Blade 300	4.5
25	-	Metal Gear Solid Microsoft	4.5
26	27	Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed Electronic Arts	4.5
27	33	Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun Electronic Arts	4
28	-	The Sims: Livin' Large EA	4.5
29	22	Thief: The Dark Project Eidos	4.5
30	23	Caesar III Borealis	4.5
31	34	Soldier of Fortune Activision	2.5
32	31	Warms Armageddon Hasbro	4
33	-	Civilization: Call to Power Activision	4.5
34	40	Shogun: Total War Electronic Arts	4.5
35	25	SixCity 3000 Electronic Arts	4
36	23	Thief 2 Eidos	4.5
37	38	MechWarrior 3 Hasbro	3
38	-	Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force Activision	4
39	35	FreeSpace 2 Interplay	4.5
40	-	Ultima Ascension Origin/EA	2.5

## WE WANT YOU!

Vote in the Top 40 Games poll at [www.computergaming.com](http://www.computergaming.com). The more people who vote, the better the results, but please vote only once per month.





The Future of Adventure  
is a Journey Into the Past

# TIMELINE



Based on his latest best-selling novel, Michael Crichton, the creator of *Jurassic Park*, sends you on a story-driven journey back in time for one of the greatest adventures of your life.

**Rethink What Is Possible. Fall 2000**



For more information visit [www.timelineworlds.com](http://www.timelineworlds.com)



© 2000 Timeline Computer Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Timeline is a copyright of Timeline Computer Entertainment. Published by Eidos Interactive. Eidos, Eidos Interactive and the Eidos Interactive logo are registered trademarks of Eidos Interactive, Inc. The ratings logo is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

*Outnumbered.*



# But Not Outsmarted.

*Project IGI: I'm Going In* is the first military stealth shooter to stress cunning and covertness over firepower.

Sent in behind enemy lines for a routine track and capture, you take on the role of Dave Llewelyn Jones, a British and US operative. Suddenly caught between greed and treason, this assignment evolves into a solo mission of stealth and retaliation.

Battle your way through Eastern Europe in pursuit of a homicidal ex-Russian Colonel bent on turning Europe into a radioactive wasteland. An adrenaline pumping plot keeps you riveted as you go behind enemy lines to save the world from nuclear terror!

## FEATURES:

- Use your skills in sneaking, crawling, tracking, sabotage, and reconnaissance to finish your mission objectives.
- Match wits against enemy AI that intelligently reacts to your every action with actual military tactics.
- Call in for Napalm strikes via your revolutionary intercommunication PDA.
- Equip yourself with the latest NATO spy gear: a "sneak" weapon to defeat enemy surveillance, bunkers, tanks, and gunships.

# PROJECT IGI I'M GOING IN.



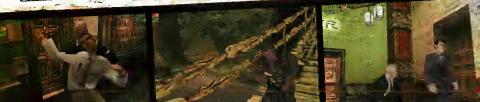
**EIDOS**  
INTERACTIVE  
eidos.com



Visit [www.eaib.org](http://www.eaib.org)  
or call 1-800-771-3712  
for more info.

EIDOS.COM

©2000 ID Interactive. Hitman's Codename 47 is a trademark of Eidos Interactive. Eidos, Eidos Interactive, and the Eidos Interactive logo are registered trademarks of Eidos Interactive, Inc. The Hitman logo is a trademark of the International Digital Software Association. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.



# Death can strike anyone. For the right price.

You never know when death will come—unless you make a few special arrangements. Because once the Hitman takes your assignment, someone takes a bullet. It's not a righteous way of life, but we all have to make a living. Even if it means making a killing.

- Plan your assignment to account for multiple completion paths to each mission.
- Access black market weapons, decoys, traps, and personnel from an innovative currency reward system.
- Artificial intelligence that redefines the genre of the "Thinking Shooter".
- Learn how to become a more proficient hitman through a comprehensive weapons and agility training session.
- Gripping and mature plot driven by stunning cinematic visuals.



# HITMAN

CODENAME 47



EIDOS





EIDOS  
ENTERTAINMENT



The godfather of gangster sims is back. Rule the streets of Prohibition-era America with your own brand of violence and greed as you build the perfect organized crime machine. It's terribly wrong. Of course, that's what makes it fun.



Real-time game play keeps up appearances by day while working bank vaults and brothels by night.



Command a host of new specialist characters to build your team's criminal power and experience.



In large campaign mode, you'll wreak long-term havoc across fifteen counties of the State of Temperance.

FAMILY-STYLE DINING.

**Gangsters**  
VENDETTA 2

It's Disturbingly Authentic  
[www.gangsters2.com](http://www.gangsters2.com)



The ESRB is a not-for-profit organization. For more information, contact the ESRB at 1-800-771-ESRB or visit our website at [www.esrb.org](http://www.esrb.org).

# Check the Rating!

The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rating system can help you decide whether a computer or video game is right for your family. The ESRB system offers both **RATINGS** that tell you what age the game is appropriate for, and **CONTENT DESCRIPTORS** that indicate whether there are particular content elements which may be of interest or concern.

## **RATING SYMBOLS** (found on the front of the game box):



Content may be suitable for persons ages 3 and older.



Content may be suitable for persons ages 6 and older.



Content may be suitable for persons ages 13 and older.



Content may be suitable for persons ages 17 and older.



Content suitable only for adults.



Product is awaiting final rating.

## **CONTENT DESCRIPTORS** (found on the back of the game box):

The content descriptors tell you whether the game includes elements such as:

### **MILD ANIMATED VIOLENCE**

Contains scenes depicting cartoon/animated/pixelated characters in unsafe or hazardous acts or violent situations.

### **MILD REALISTIC VIOLENCE**

Contains scenes depicting characters in unsafe or hazardous acts or violent situations in photographic detail.

### **COMIC MISCHIEF**

Contains scenes depicting activities characterized as slapstick or gross vulgar humor.

### **ANIMATED VIOLENCE**

Contains depictions of aggressive conflict involving cartoon/animated/pixelated characters.

### **REALISTIC VIOLENCE**

Contains realistic or photographic-like depictions of aggressive conflict.

### **ANIMATED BLOOD AND GORE**

Animated/pixelated or cartoon-like depictions of mutilation or dismemberment of body parts.

### **REALISTIC BLOOD AND GORE**

Depictions of mutilation or dismemberment of body parts in realistic or photographic-like detail.

### **ANIMATED BLOOD**

Animated/pixelated or cartoon-like depictions of blood.

### **REALISTIC BLOOD**

Representations of blood in realistic or photographic-like detail.

### **SUGGESTIVE THEMES**

Includes themes that may be suggestive of mature content.

### **MATURE SEXUAL THEMES**

Contains provocative material including depiction of the human body in either animated or photographic-like formats.

### **STRONG SEXUAL CONTEXT**

Graphic depiction of sexual behavior and/or the human form (i.e., frontal nudity) in either animated or photographic-like detail.

### **MILD LANGUAGE**

Product contains the use of words like "damn".

### **STRONG LANGUAGE**

Commonly referenced four-letter words.

### **GAMING**

The depiction of betting-like behavior.

### **USE OF TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL**

Product contains images of the use of tobacco and/or alcohol in a manner which condones or glorifies their use.

### **USE OF DRUGS**

Product contains images of the use of drugs in a manner which condones or glorifies their use.

### **INFORMATIONAL**

Overall content of product contains data, facts, resource information, reference materials or instructional text.

### **EDUTAINMENT**

Content of product provides user with specific skills development or reinforcement learning within an entertainment setting. Skill development is an integral part of product.

### **SOME ADULT ASSISTANCE MAY BE NEEDED**

Early Childhood/Developer only.

**ESRB**  
ENTERTAINMENT  
SOFTWARE  
RATING BOARD

1-800-771-ESRB

[www.esrb.org](http://www.esrb.org)



# COMMANDOS 2



EIDOS

# HOT SHOTS



## Red Faction

■■■■ RED FACTION is a great-looking first-person shooter from a developer with a pedigree. Volition is the group behind the FREESPACE and DESCENT series, and they always deliver impressive graphics and physics engines. In this case, they're building in the ability to drive six different vehicles. Their "Geo-Mod" technology lets players destroy walls, floors, and just about any other solid thing in the gaming environment. Blowing stuff up works for us.

Detonatable environments could crack open new possibilities. Don't have a key to open a door? Blast it. Want to surprise a room full of enemies? Blow a hole in the ceiling and drop in. Getting hammered by small arms fire? Dig yourself a loophole with explosives.

Watch for Red Faction coming from THQ this spring. [www.refraction.com](http://www.refraction.com)



## Star Trek: Bridge Commander

■■■■ This promises to be Mr. Holland's Quest. Larry Holland, the legendary designer behind LucasArts' classic sims SECRET WEAPONS ON THE LUFTWAFFE, XWING, and THE LUFTWAFFE, always finds ways to involve players deeply in the action. And that's exactly what he's planning for this enormously ambitious Star Trek sim.

You'll take command of a Federation starship (assuming orders like a captain) on the bridge of The Next Generation. While exchanging threats with adversaries on-screen, you'll jockey for position like heavyweight in a title bout. When things get ugly, spectacular special effects will show huge holes blasted through hulls with phasers and photon torpedoes, and dynamic damage models depicting actual components and systems blown to smithereens. It promises pulse-pounding, pants-filling action.

...Beam aboard for the shakedown cruise this summer.

[www.bridgecommander.com](http://www.bridgecommander.com)





## Flash Point: Status Quo 1985



■■■ As war games become more action-oriented, and action games become more war-like, expect to see more games like **FLASH POINT**, a tactical war game similar to **HIDDEN & DANGEROUS**. Players control a squad of up to 12 soldiers on a Cold War battlefield, each of which operate independently when not under your guidance. Your troops will fight with anti-tank missiles, grenade launchers, and hand-held anti-aircraft missiles, while others offer support as medics, snipers, snipers, mine layers, and mortar carriers. Solo players can rise in rank from private to colonel in the U.S. Army, but the game will also support LAN and Internet play.

The most interesting feature is that you can control many of the vehicles, including Russian tanks, Hind Gunships, and armored troop carriers. Keep this one on your radar. It's scheduled for release in summer, 2001. [www.bohemianinteractive.com](http://www.bohemianinteractive.com)



## Age of Sail II

■■■ Stop playin' with yer betayn' pin and hoist the ensasel, ye mangy mongrel, it's time to put to sea. Lord Nelson commands us to engage the filthy French once more in battles from Copenhagen to Trafalgar. Keep yer wits about you, for we expect to see mighty armadas of up to 60 3D ships, in all kinds of accursed weather, with up to 32 other sea dogs via LAN or Internet. Perform admirably, and you might even make admiral.

Should you defect to the rebels, they'll likely feed you to the savages. But there's a chance you can work your way to admiral in the American fleet as well. It's a great big world out there, with 2000 ship types and 100 scenarios to fight through. But if you betray Lord Nelson, it won't matter what pretty port or 3D cove you run to hide in, we'll find you and fire a cannonball up your ass.

Now get crackin', we set sail in January. [www.talonsoft.com](http://www.talonsoft.com)



## SimCoaster

■■■ Grab your map and wipe up the vomit! Stated for an early 2001 release.

**SIMCOASTER** is the sequel to last year's **SENTHEME PARK**. While the focus is still on building and managing amusement parks, **SIMCOASTER** moves away from the "software toy" sandbox play of the previous title to a challenging, objective-based style of game-

play as you work to gain a controlling interest in a huge corporation. The interface has been reworked, with a bigger screen, more detailed reports, and an offline coaster designer. **CCW**





Wait till next year by Tom Price

# Sammy Sosa's High Heat Baseball 2002

**A BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR A BALL GAME** So far, the developers have finished only Pac Bell park (it is relatively near 2001's studios, so "research" tips are easy to make), but all current major league parks and plenty of classic fields will ship with the final version.

**I had some serious baseball fever this year.** Partly because my beloved San Francisco Giants kicked off their inaugural season at beautiful new Pac Bell park with an NL West division crown (which was squandered in their embarrassing first-round playoff loss to the Mets, but I don't want to talk about that). But also because of HIGH HEAT 2001, which I've played relentlessly throughout the season, both with custom leagues and teams, as well as with the real-life season.

It's been fun to follow my digital players' real-world exploits, and marvel at how well they've been scouted and recreated by the HIGH HEAT team at 3DO. Jeff Kent had a breakout year for the Giants in real life, just as he did on my custom team. Darryl Kile proved to be a diamond in the rough in both worlds as well. No doubt about it, the HIGH HEAT guys know baseball (yes, how many times do we have to say it?), so of course I'm gnashing sunflower seeds with anticipation for next year's edition, even if I should be sick of baseball (and those damn Mets) by now.

The last two HIGH HEAT games were two of the best PC baseball games ever, thanks to their superb gameplay and attention to detail. HIGH HEAT 2002—which should be rolling out sometime during spring training for the 2001 season—changes nothing fundamental to the series, and only adds to and enhances the game. So while we can't predict how good HIGH HEAT 2002 will be when it's released, the building blocks for excellence are there—and they're looking pretty sweet.

So what's new, you ask? Right off the bat (no pun intended) gamers will notice the improved graphics, with higher polygon counts for both the players and stadiums. In fact, improving the graphics is the number-one priority for the HIGH HEAT team this year. The added resolution results in player models that look much more realistic than last year's, and stadiums that are much more spectacular and full of minute details. Even the user interface screens got a facelift.

#### Generating Runs

Player animations have increased as well, with more

### GAME SPECS

GENRE: Sports • RELEASE DATE: Spring 2001  
 PUBLISHER/DEVELOPER: 3DO • CONTACT: www.3DO.com

signature moves included. One new animation comes in the form of a hitherto ignored—yet highly important—member of a baseball team who regularly takes the field: I'm talking about base coaches. They're in this year, and not only will they be animated, but their animations will be smart as well. Base coaches will give you tips on whether to run or not by waving players around, telling them to braid, or motioning for them to slide. Now, when you've got a guy rounding third on a base hit, you can get some help from your base coach just as you would in real life. On the other side of the ball, you'll be able to activate your cutoff man on plays at home from the outfield throws (the cutoff man works the infield, as opposed to the relay man who's an infielder, who runs partway into the outfield to relay a long throw).

Base coaches aren't the only members of your coaching staff who will make an appearance in HH2002. Like in the classic EARL WRAVER BASEBALL, you can now call mound conferences and your pitching coach will come out and talk to the pitcher. The main function of this will be to stall for time while your bullpen gets warmed up. To what extent your pitcher will be affected by these visits (Will it settle him down? Will he feel more pressured?) is still up in the air.

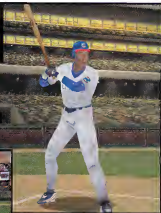
Another new animation could also have a serious effect on gameplay. This year, you'll have the ability to make your catcher snap throw to a base after the pitch, in an effort to catch a slow-to-get-back baserunner. It looks like baserunning (which was one of the few weakpoints of HH2000, but was corrected in HH2001) will become even more key to winning games, just as in real life. Catchers will also occasionally drop third strikes, so that throw so first becomes even more important.

### The Numbers Game

Of course, the heart of any good baseball game lies in its stats modeling, and the HIGH HEAT series has always been top in offering a great gameplay experience for those who

### A MAN IN UNIFORM

This player model shows off the higher polygon count as well as enhanced textures that look far more realistic than last year's uniforms.



**WHIPPI!** The pitcher/batter interface is largely unchanged, save for the pitcher's new ability to throw from different parts of the rubber.



**BARRY ON A WIRE** Here's a new shot of the Barry Bonds model, with and without skin.

prefer manage-only mode. As if they didn't have enough stats tracked already, HH2002 will now track streaks, and assess team and player match-ups based on history. And for everyone running online leagues, HH2002 will allow you to export stats in HTML format to make posting them on the Web easier.

Custom-league players will also be happy to hear that expanded rosters will now be in effect once your team gets into the final stretch of a season. So you'll have to do plenty of scouting in your minor leagues to bring up the best prospects—something made easier by the ability to use minor leagues in batting practice, and the all-new pitching practice mode.

Sure, HIGH HEAT 2002 is months away from even being near completion, but if I could buy stock in it, I would. I'm that sure it's going to be a winner. With all the new features being layered on top of what is already (in my not-so-humble opinion) the greatest sports game ever, how can you lose? Well, if you're the Giants, let me tell you. First, Dusty never should have... **CGW**

### IT'S U I LOVE

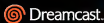
The user interface (UI) screens have been polished a bit, and a few new features—like an Orbis command for when you change your mind about the pitcher you've brought in—really improve the overall look of the game.





HE CAN SPEW SWARMS OF  
FROM YOUR BONES. YOU, HOWEVER

Think you're having a bad day? Try waking up from a 3000 year nap to find meddling humans pillaging your crypt. Resurrecting the hit movie, *The Mummy* brings the horror of death back to life. And as the hero, it's your duty to fight any scarabs, spirits and undead you meet while exploring the uncharted tombs of the pyramid. Sure, you'll be loaded with weapons and special moves. But beware. After sleeping that long, it just might be his morning breath that kills you.



# THE MUMMY™

LOCUSTS AND DEVOUR THE FLESH  
CAN HIT RESTART.



"The Mummy" interactive game © 2000 Universal Studios, Inc.™ Universal Studios. Licensed by Universal Studios Licensing, Inc. Developed by Reliance Interactive Limited. Published and distributed by Konami Corporation. All Rights Reserved. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Sega, Dreamcast and the Dreamcast logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Enterprises, LTD. Game Boy and Game Boy Color are trademarks of Nintendo of America Inc. © 1995, 1999 Nintendo of America Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Konami is a registered trademark of Konami Co., Ltd. © 2000 Konami.

# season

**A**ll we want for Christmas is 50 great games. And a blazing fast graphics card. Oh, what the hell, how about a new 1GHz system to boot? In a boom-time economy, is that too much to ask?

Hell no! Have a look at the great gaming to be found in our annual holiday wish list, and you'll see why our consumer covetousness index is at an all-time high. This year more than ever, the problem won't be in finding good games, it's finding the time to play them all.

# gre



# S

**ACTION BY ROBERT COFFEY 68**

Crimson Skies	Metal Gear Solid
Giants: Citizen Kabuto	No One Lives Forever
MDK2	Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force

**RPG & ADVENTURE BY JEFF GREEN 70**

Baldur's Gate II	Escape From Monkey Island
Diablo II	Icwind Dale
Deus Ex	The Longest Journey

**STRATEGY BY ROBERT COFFEY 74**

Combat Mission	Red Alert 2
Homeworld: Cataclysm	Shogun: Total War
Majesty	The Sims

**SPORTS BY TOM PRICE 76**

Backyard Sports Series	NHL 2001
Madden 2001	Sammy Sosa's High Heat 2001

**DRIVING BY TOM PRICE 77**

Grand Prix 3	NASCAR Heat
Motocross Madness 2	Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed

**SIMULATIONS BY DAVE SALVATOR 80**

Allegiance	Jane's F/A-18
Combat Flight Simulator 2	Klingon Academy
Enemy Engaged:	Rogue Spear:
Comanche vs. Hokum	Covert Ops Essentials

**CONSOLE GAMES BY TOM PRICE 86**

Jet Grind Radio	Spider-Man
PlayStation 2	Shenmue

**KIDS GAMES BY TINA HALMERSEN 90**

Barbie Magic Genie Bottle	Hot Wheels Stunt Track Driver
Holye Kids Games	Search & Solve Adventures

**HARDWARE BY OAVE SALVATOR 91**

Hercules 3D Prophet II Ultra	Sound Blaster Live X-Gamer 5.1
KDS Avitron AV-17TF monitor	Logitech WheelMan USB

# edings!

# action

The action games of 2000 were all over the map, and for that we should be grateful. While past years have featured scores of virtually identical games, the class of 2000 brings real originality to the party in the shape of wicked humor, creative premises, and fresh spins on standard gameplay. Their unique personalities make each of these games must-haves for the action fan.

## 1. No One Lives Forever

Microsoft, [www.foxinteractive.com](http://www.foxinteractive.com)

■■■ It's setting may be a retro swinging '60s London, complete with a go-go bustled, big-haired heroine, but there's nothing backwards-looking about NO ONE LIVES FOREVER—this spy thriller has its eyes firmly fixed on moving the shooter genre forward, and it succeeds in spades. It's the most enjoyable single player shooter of the year.

NOLF indulges in its campy *Avengers*-style action with relish, giving gamers loads of useful gadgets (poisoned hair barrettes and acid-spraying perfume atomizers), inspired villains including a demented opera diva and a belligerent, kilted Scotsman, and some of the funni-



est incidental dialogue ever burned onto a CD.

But ultimately it's the outstanding variety of missions that make NOLF a winner. Many of the missions are stealth-based,

forcing you to elude security cameras, searchlights, guard dogs, and some of the smartest bad guys to be found in any game. Don't worry—there's still plenty of action, it's just that NOLF delivers may of its thrills in unexpected ways: on a sinking ship buckling from water pressure; on a space station bombarded by meteors; or freefalling from a doomed aircraft as you fend off enemies while desperately trying to procure a parachute.

NO ONE LIVES FOREVER is a definite contender for Action Game of the Year and a game that any action fan absolutely has to play.

## 2. Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force

AtariGames, [www.atargames.com](http://www.atargames.com)

■■■ The first outstanding game based on the delectable QUAKE III engine, ELITE FORCE boldly takes you where other *Star Trek* action games have never gone—deep into the spirit of the source material. Frankly, we can't think of any licensed product that has so faithfully recreated the essence of its inspiration. ELITE FORCE plays and feels just like an episode of the TV show, from the surprise twist of the game's opening sequence, to



the desperate battles that jeopardize your mission towards the end of the game.

ELITE FORCE serves up a steady stream of action, punctuated by scripted scenes that capture that *Trek* feel while propelling the game's story. The levels are amazing, particularly the sterile claustrophobia of the Borg cube. While the brevity of the game is kind of a letdown, it's a great ride while it lasts, sure to please both hardcore and casual gamers.



## 3. Crimson Skies

Microsoft, [www.microsoft.com/games/crimsonskies](http://www.microsoft.com/games/crimsonskies)

■ ■ ■ Clockful of the swaggering derring-do of a classic pulp serial, CRIMSON SKIES is one of the most entertaining action titles of the year. The tongue-in-cheek fiction of the gameworld casts you as Nathan Zachary, a cocky "air pirate" in an alternate 1930s America, where the union has fractured into a number of campy new countries (think the Nation of Hollywood and Republic of Texas). While the mission-based gameplay has you flying a number of fancifully designed planes, CRIMSON SKIES shouldn't be confused with a flight sim—this is an air-based shooter, pure and simple, loaded with desperate dogfights, harrowing stunt-flying, and white-knuckle bombing runs. How forgiving is the flight model? Well, the ground will actually push you back up into the air, unless you flat-out dive into it.

With an outstanding blend of action and personality, CRIMSON SKIES has one of the broadest appeals of any action game.

## 4. Giants: Citizen Kabuto

Interplay, [www.interplay.com](http://www.interplay.com)

■ ■ ■ This is easily the most wildly imaginative action game of the year. Set in a beautifully rendered island paradise, GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO chronicles the struggles between the gun-toting Meccaryns, the spell-casting Sea Reapers, and the eponymous behemoth of the game, Kabuto. Blending some light real-time-strategy elements, GIANTS deftly combines three different styles of action play with a smart-sleazy sense of humor (the Meccaryns camouflage themselves as tiny shrubberies that dart about in a classic cartoon manner). Multiplayer options let you fight as any of the three races: Will you opt for the combined forces of the Meccs, the powerful landscape-altering magic of the Sea Reapers, or the raw brute force of Kabuto?



## 5. MDK2

Interplay, [www.interplay.com](http://www.interplay.com)

■ ■ ■ What other game lets you fight as a crazed scientist, defusing bombs and blasting flautent fig-shaped aliens with radioactive toast? What other game features a cigar-chomping, jet-pack-flying dog packing an Uzi in each of his four arms as he hovers over a pool of toxic waste fighting hordes of nasty ET's? What other game lets you don a special sniping helmet so you can shoot an enemy in the eye from about a mile away, before a frantic interlude of frenzied precision-shooting against a skyscraper-sized hecat alien bastard?

MDK2 is beautiful and hysterically funny. It's three games in one, and every action gamer should be playing it.



## 6. Metal Gear Solid

Microsoft, [www.mgspe.com](http://www.mgspe.com)

■ ■ ■ Okay. Wow. Console gamers have been craving about the supposed brilliance of METAL GEAR SOLID for the last couple years, but we never knew what they were talking about. Until now. Microsoft's port of Konami's critically acclaimed PlayStation game is easily one of the best action games released for the PC this year. METAL GEAR SOLID is the HALF-LIFE of the console world—a compelling, atmospheric, beautifully-paced blend of storytelling and action that presents a new challenge around every corner and keeps you riveted to the screen throughout. Part shooter, part platform game, part THIEF-like stealth game—and all totally addictive. It's an instant classic; don't miss it.



■ ■ ■ If you somehow missed out on last year's Game of the Year, there's good news: UNREAL TOURNAMENT is being re-released in a bonus-packed "Game of the Year" edition. The holidays will also see a new HALF-LIFE pack-

age as well as QUAKE III: TEAM ARENA, a team-based multiplayer add-on for QUAKE III ARENA. Notion spin-off releases need to have the ROUSE SPECIAL: OCEAN OPERATIONS expansion as well as SWAT 3: Elite Edition, which adds

new missions and multiplayer functionality. Owners of SWAT 3 can simply download the new material for free at [www.siem.com](http://www.siem.com). Just because they're over a year old doesn't mean these games don't have plenty to offer.

# role-playing and adventure

**W**e are never happier. In previous holiday issues, we complained about the dearth of RPGs. Now, there are too many. There's absolutely no way you can play every cool RPG out right now and still maintain an actual life. Our suggestion? Abandon reality. Fill your classes. Call in sick. Do whatever it takes, but don't miss out on the best crop of RPGs in years. And check out our adventure game recommendations too. No, really, we have some!

## 1. Baldur's Gate II

istepley  
www.baldur.com

■■■■ There's a new God-Emperor of RPGs, and its name is BALDUR'S GATE II. Take everything you knew about the original BALDUR'S GATE—or the AD&D rules in general—and thrust that knowledge into the hands of wildly-imaginative Canadian madmen, and you'll start to get a good grasp of what BALDUR'S GATE II is like.

"Epic" doesn't quite do this game justice. It brilliantly mixes elements like dragons, soul-seeking mages, the war between the drow and the "good" elves, guild politics, and children of angry gods into a cohesive and intriguing story. It allows your characters to progress from adventuring champions to the level of demi-gods. It consistently throws surprises at you, ranging from simple pleasures such as seeing two NPCs in your party become drinking buddies, to witnessing the awe-inspiring power of a level-17 mage. All this portrayed by an updated engine with beautiful high-res art and first-class voice-acting and sound.

Biosware has really outdone themselves with BALDUR'S GATE II. If you have any hankering for AD&D, if you've ever read and enjoyed *The Lord Of The Rings*, or if you just want to play one of the best PC games of the year, you owe it to yourself to check out this epic.



## 2. Escape From Monkey Island

LucasArts, [www.lucasarts.com](http://www.lucasarts.com)

■■■■ How can we say this without sounding like over-eager kids? Answers: We can't. The fact is, ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND is not just an adventure game, it is a bona fide event—the next chapter in one of the best, most beloved computer game series of all time. If you've played the previous games, you already know you want this. But if you've never experienced the comic misadventures of Guybrush Threepwood, Elaine, and Chuck LeChuck, now is the time to jump aboard. ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND marks the series' big transition to 3D graphics (featuring a modified version of the GRIM FANDANGO engine), and the game was written and designed by Mike Stemmle and Sean Clark, the comedic geniuses who made the classic SAM AND MAX HIT THE ROAD years ago. It's been a while since we've had a good, funny story to sink our teeth into, and boy, does this industry need it. Hail Guybrush, and hail LucasArts for bringing him back one more time.



© 2005 Electronic Arts Inc. EA GAMES, EA GAMES and EA GAMES are trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. EA GAMES is a trademark of Electronic Arts Inc.



"A visual dynamo that could best be described as Monkey Island on some weird alien crack..." [IGN.com](http://IGN.com)



Having mastered the forces of inertia, mass, and gravity,  
they *still* have absolutely no idea how to get off the planet.

Spiraling through the Cosmos, five aliens have crashed on our fair planet Earth. Their intent? World domination? Enslave our women? Steal our bodily fluids? No, they'd just like to leave. For they are trapped between the clutches of the evil Dr. Sakarin and his deadly hitman. You must help them fashion solutions from strange and savage surroundings. Arm them with bathroom products, used undergarments, and cow dung to get them home. It's the greatest adventure you and five space idiots could possibly imagine.



# STUPID INVADERS

crash landing  
01. 2001



# strategy

**A**s mere meat cogs in the cold steel machine of human civilization, we live our lives as powerless automatons, forever dancing to please the godless whims of The Man so we can keep roofs over our heads. Thank God for strategy games, which give us a sense of control and authority lacking in our everyday lives. Behold the games we think will best slough the existential funk afflicting our withering brains.

## 1. The Sims

Electronic Arts  
www.thesims.ca.com



■■■ Who would have thought that telling someone when to pee could be so much fun? The breakout title of the year, **THE SIMS** is an absolutely addictive game that allows you to exercise complete control over a population of virtual people that you create. Every aspect of their lives is jerked and twisted by you, their digital puppetmaster, telling them when to cook, when to sleep, who to flirt with, what friends to have, what career to pursue, and, yes, when to shake the dew off their pixelated lily.

Okay, odds are you go to the bathroom and buy lamps in your own life, but the true appeal of **THE SIMS** lies not in what the game throws on your monitor, but in what it stirs in your subconscious. From the moments you spend designing your first Sim's home, until that home is haunted by the ghosts of dead roommates, the game triggers your story-telling gene and your mind starts weaving involved and



## 2. Homeworld: Cataclysm

3D Realms • homeworld-sims.com

■■■ Don't confuse **HOMEWORLD: CATAclysm** for a **HOMEWORLD** sequel—it doesn't push the franchise forward so much as it fulfill its promise, becoming an even better game in the process. **CATAclysm** features the same true 3D, deep-space gameplay as in the first game; but it succeeds with better vision balance, a number of interface and engine tweaks, and even deeper, subtler strategy. A large part of the game's success is due to an entirely new set of units, most with alternate attacks and abilities that you can research.

A new unit limit prevents the "Usurp and Destroy" tactic of the first game—so more taking over enemy ships to build a gargantuan fleet; on the contrary, you'll be battling a new adversary, the Beast, a techno-organic race that will take over your vessels if you're not careful. **CATAclysm's** challenging gameplay tells a great story and engages not only your tactical mind, but your imagination as well.

involving narratives. That self-made soap opera is what keeps you glued to your computer—just check out the epics created by the game's scrapbook feature and posted on the Web site if you need further proof. Make sure you pick up the expansion pack **LIVIN' LARGE** to enjoy even more ways to torment/toward your little computer people.





# 3. Combat Mission

Big Time Software  
[www.bttfintire.com](http://www.bttfintire.com)

■■■ Do you fear the wargame? The cold, lifeless abstractions? The flooding pace? The hard number crunchiness?

Time to set your assumptions aside and check out COMBAT MISSION, a game that has set the sleepy wargame genre on fire. What's the big deal? That would be the 3D graphics. Gone is the flat hex-grid and lifeless units common to wargames. This simulation of WWII tactical combat drops you right down into the little villages and dense woodlands of Western Europe that hosted the Allied offensive following D-Day. The action plays out in realtime with pauses every minute for orders, creating a tense balance between the player's control and the chaos of the battlefield. Underneath the 3D graphics is a sophisticated artificial intelligence, and a physics engine that will pose reasonably challenging tactical problems, and provide all the historically accurate detail a war buff could hope for. It includes dozens of scenarios, and a dozen more can be found online—thanks to the included scenario editor and a dedicated fan-base. Only available online at [battlefront.com](http://battlefront.com).



# 4. Shogun: Total War

Electronic Arts  
[www.ea.com](http://www.ea.com)

■■■ With beauty and grandeur worthy of a Kurosawa epic, and the demanding large-scale tactical combat of the deepest war game, SHOGUN brings the ancient art of warfare vividly to life. A sweeping campaign game charges players to raise and maintain an army as they seek to seize total control of ancient Japan. While the overall campaign is engaging, it's the real-time tactical battles that are the highlight here, as literally thousands of warriors battle on foggy hills and rainswept battlefields, all brought to life through the game's muscular 3D engine. SHOGUN is an obvious choice, not just for wargamers but for strategy fans tired of the same old RTS.



# 5. Majesty

Microprose  
[www.majestyquest.com](http://www.majestyquest.com)

■■■ Much of MAJESTY's magic is created by what the game doesn't give you—direct control over the units responsible for protecting your kingdom. MAJESTY is a fantasy kingdom sim that briefly defies the "churn out armies" mold of most real-time strategy titles, instead asking you to create an environment to support the heroes your various guilds produce. You can't command your forces where and how to attack, but you can offer financial incentives to get them to do your bidding. Easy to learn, full of depth, and remarkably quick-paced in spite of the lack of hands-on unit control, MAJESTY is one of the freshest, most enjoyable games of the past year.



# 6. Red Alert 2

Westwood Studios  
[www.ea.com](http://www.ea.com)

■■■ If ever a game were assured of being a hit, this is the one. The latest installment in the C&C universe, RED ALERT 2 focuses its real-time gameplay on fast-paced action



and constant conflict. Loads of imaginative new units—like mind-controlled giant squids and demolitionists that can strap bombs to anything, including cows—should liven up this RTS stalwart's traditional play. With an enormous, rabidly solid fan base, RED ALERT 2 is the obvious choice for gamers looking to test their mettle online—you'll never go wanting for an opponent.

# sports

It may seem like dark days for PC sports gaming—what with former powerhouses Microsoft and Sierra essentially killing off their sports lines, and stalwart EA Sports dedicating more time and resources to their PlayStation2 products over the PC versions. What's a desk chair quarterback to do? Fear not. There are still some essential sports titles out there that should tide us over until next season.

## 1. Sammy Sosa's High Heat 2001

300 • [www.3do.com](http://www.3do.com)

■ ■ ■ Sure, baseball season is over, and both Bay Area teams lie in a smoldering pile of wreckage, but that can't stymie our love of the game of baseball, and its best representation ever on the PC, SAMMY SOSA'S HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2001. HIGH HEAT has been an unbreakable addiction around the CGW offices for the last year and a half, and there's no sign of it letting up anytime soon. Blame it on the sophisticated stat engine, or the sublime pitcher/batter interface, or the realistically modeled attributes of the players. HIGH HEAT is nothing less than the closest thing to actual baseball, outside of stepping up to the plate for real. If you love baseball, you must have HIGH HEAT 2001.



## 2. Madden 2001

EA Sports • [www.easports.com](http://www.easports.com)

■ ■ ■ It may be the only football game for the PC in town (unless the text-based FRONT OFFICE FOOTBALL makes an appearance this year), but it's still a doozy. One of the finest graphics engines in sports gaming brings out every last detail from the laces on the ball, to the reflection of the stadium lights on helmets—MADDEN 2001 is a beautiful game. But backing that up is an improved play-calling system that draws on unique playbooks for each NFL coach, loads of new animations, and a cool challenge mode that'll have you playing the final quarters of famous games. Don't bother flipping a coin—go get it.



## 3. NHL 2001

EA Sports • [www.easports.com](http://www.easports.com)

■ ■ ■ EA Sports' NHL franchise is one of the strongest and most popular perennial sports titles, thanks in part to professional hockey's established-yet-growing popularity in the U.S., but also to the fact that the NHL line has been consistently solid. Year after year, EA's NHL products have ranked at the top of CGW reader polls (well, we do have a lot of Canadian readers). This year's edition continues to improve upon the series, with an enhanced graphics engine and a system of sliders for finely tuning opponent AI. Now, if they could just tweak the particle system to show flying teeth...



## 4. Backyard Sports Series

Humongous Entertainment • [www.humongous.com](http://www.humongous.com)

■ ■ ■ What's Christmas all about, but the kids? The best publisher of titles for the pre-teen set, Humongous Entertainment, continues their output of quality games that appeal to both young and old with its Humongous Sports' BACKYARD line. The latest release, BACKYARD SOCCER MLS EDITION, features the MLS license and some of its more popular players like Carlos Valderrama and Cobi Jones; some members of the U.S. Women's team—like Brandi Chastain—are also included. Other titles like BACKYARD BASEBALL and FOOTBALL feature major league licenses as well. The BACKYARD games are so much fun, you'll be playing them long after the kids have gone to bed.



# driving

**D**riving and racing games have nearly universal appeal. Even if you're not a NASCAR fan or a Formula One devotee, anyone who has ever been behind the wheel of a car has dreamed about taking that sucker out on the open road and pushing it to its limits. The beauty of being on the PC is that you can drive any car as crazy as you want to—without the repercussions. Here are a few games that should appeal to any racing fan, be they grease monkeys or little old ladies from Pasadena.

## 1. Need For Speed: Porsche Unleashed

Electronic Arts  
[www.nsfdrivespeed.com](http://www.nsfdrivespeed.com)

■■■■ Before its release, some (including this game journalist) thought this latest NFS title might be hampered by its focus on a solitary automaker. How wrong could we have been? **NEED FOR SPEED: PORSCHE UNLEASHED** continues to improve upon the venerable NFS line with a sharply realistic graphics engine and a variety of excellent single- and multiplayer modes that will have you appreciating the historic Porsche line like never before. You'll learn everything you ever wanted to know about Porsches, from the uber-stylish Boxster to the classic 356 roadster, via the background archival footage included in the car showcases. The slick Factory Driver mode—putting you into the role of test driver at the German manufacturer's hallowed test site—is alone worth the price of admission.



## 4. NASCAR Heat

■■■■ Sporting a crystal-clean graphics engine and sturdy physics, backed up by a design team riddled with ex-Papyrus staffers, **NASCAR HEAT**

is the only NASCAR game really worth buying this Christmas. Of course, if you're shopping for a serious hardcore NASCAR enthusiast (the kind who takes their



## 2. Motocross Madness 2

Microsoft

[www.microsoft.com/games/motocross2/](http://www.microsoft.com/games/motocross2/)

■■■■ If your kid is begging for a dirtbike this Christmas, save on medical bills and instead buy them the best off-road motorcycling game out there. **MOTOCROSS MADNESS 2** is guaranteed to be a hit with everyone in your house, courtesy of its Dreamamine-inducing jumps and spectacular line-of-oncoming-traffic stunts. It doesn't matter if you prefer the extreme big-air stunts of supercross or a nice cross-country run through lushly reseeded landscapes, MCM2 has it all for the motorcycle enthusiast in all of us. Buy this game. Your kid's neurologist will thank you.



## 3. Grand Prix 3

Maxpro

[www.grandprixgames.com](http://www.grandprixgames.com)

■■■■ With its dedication to hardcore simulation-level car physics, **GP3** stands head and shoulders above the rest of the Formula One PC game field. Designed by Geoff Creammond—the programming guru behind Microprose's genre-leading **GRAND PRIX** series—**GRAND PRIX 3** takes the genre to the next level, with even more realistic car physics, and more highly-detailed graphics to give you the sensation of being behind the wheel of a lightning-fast, open-wheel race car. The meticulously recreated tracks are something to see as well. This may be the closest you'll ever get to Monaco, unless your name is Princess Stephanie.



force-feedback wheel to hed with them), you might want to wait until after the beginning of the year for **NASCAR RACING 4**.

Still, **NASCAR HEAT** offers quite a hit in the way of an innovative single-player experience with its mission-based "Beat The Heat" mode. Beer belly and oil-stained t-shirt not included.

Maxpro

[www.Astro-Intanthe.com](http://www.Astro-Intanthe.com)

YOUR FATHER HAS BEEN KILLED. YOUR HOMELAND OCCUPIED.

TAKE COMMAND AND  
**RECLAIM**  
YOUR BLOODRIGHT.



On Xbox 360, play MechWarrior 4: Vengeance with up to 12 friends in a 12-player LAN or online. On the edge 30-megabit, single-player campaign. On join a friend in the 12-player for up to 12 MechWarrior Vengeance will be yours.

# MECHWARRIOR 4

## VENGEANCE

THE ASSAULT BEGINS NOV. 2000 • [WWW.MICROSOFT.COM/GAMES/MW4](http://WWW.MICROSOFT.COM/GAMES/MW4)



ACTUAL GAME FOOTAGE



F959  
COMPUTER  
ENTERTAINMENT

Zone.com

Microsoft

# simulations/space sims

One of the ironies of the "hard times" to befall the simulation genre is that the fewer sim games that do get made have all been at least competent, and most have been very solid. One fortunate trend in simulations this year has been a better balance between the hardcore sim and the purely fun factor. These are games after all. The following are titles that virtual pilots would definitely appreciate seeing under their holiday appetites of choice.

## 1. Enemy Engaged: Comanche vs. Hokum



Empire Interactive  
www.empire-us.com

■■■ Without a doubt, EECH is one of the breakthrough titles this year in any genre, revisiting the neglected arena of helicopter simulations. Not since Jane's Longbow 2 has a game set a new standard in chopper sims. But in addition to its good flight models, beautiful graphics, and impressive dynamic-campaign engine, EECH does an excellent job of striking that precarious balance between realism and fun—not that the two are mutually exclusive. But in the simulations world, this balance is crucial to make these games both accessible to newbies and fun for the grizzled vets.

EECH's excellent dynamic-campaign engine is not at all player-centric. In other words, there's a conflict going on all around you, and while you can pick and choose what sorties to fly, don't expect to just enjoy the scenery if you wander off course—you may stumble into enemy AAA or an unexpected division of tanks. The flight models are somewhat simplified, again in pursuit of the fun/realism balance, but this isn't just yank and bank. You'll need to learn chopper strategies, whose main demand is the effective use of stealth in order to stay off enemy radar. So strap yourself in, and get into the action. Just remember to take a few breaks for food, drink, and general hygiene.

## 2. Allegiance

Microsoft  
www.microsoft.com

■■■ While the wild blue yonder holds allure for some pilots, others pine for bigger spaces, as in outer space. Microsoft's ALLEGIANCE puts you into the driver's seat of a space fighter, but you'll have to do more than just turn and burn. At its core, ALLEGIANCE's gameplay is akin to that of a space-based, real-time-strategy skirmish map: A "commander" looks at the over-all system map, and starts clicking around on the units on his team. He decides where to send miners to harvest resources, where to build stations in order to create more ships, and which interceptors should be dispatching of the incoming enemy-bomber horde. All this in order to wipe out the other teams and control all the sectors in the map.

The twist is, with the exception of miners, every unit is being controlled by an honest-to-blood gamer. Gamers not only pilot fighter-craft, they can control the turrets of bombers and gunships, or take the helm of a mighty capital ship. In short, we're talking a fully-functional gaming universe, where gamers' command decisions ultimately turn the tide or seal the fate of a team.



## 3. Klingon Academy

Interplay  
[www.interplay.com](http://www.interplay.com)

Some of this year's pleasant surprises were several *Star Trek* games that didn't take that license for yet another trapeze through the sand. Among them was InterPlay's **KLINGON ACADEMY**, a capital ship strategy game set in the *Star Trek* universe. Naturally, you play as the Klingons in the scripted mission, but there are also plenty of Federation, Romulan, Tholian, Goon, and Sha'kuriel vessels, objects, and stations. In the narrative game, you start with a small ship and move up, but in the quick-game menu, any ship or combination of ships can be configured for a custom encounter.

Essentially a prequel to *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*, **KLINGON ACADEMY** uses Christopher Plummer to great effect as the Shakespeare-speaking General Chang, one of the few interesting Klingon characters. If you're shopping for a Trekkie (they prefer to be called Trekkers, but whatever), then **KLINGON ACADEMY** should make the list.



## 4. Combat Flight Simulator 2

Microsoft  
[www.microsoft.com/games](http://www.microsoft.com/games)

This year has seen a dearth of WWII prop-sims, compared to last year's bumper crop. In fact, Microsoft's new **COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2 (CFS2)**, is just about the only stand-alone simulation that will ship this year. Fortunately, the CFS2 crew has cranked out a winner, both for visual panache and engaging gameplay. CFS2 focuses on the Pacific Theatre of operations, and the planes involved are mostly carrier-based, such as the F4F-4 Wildcat, the F6F-3 Hellcat, and the imposing F4U-1A Corsair. Japanese planes include two Zero models, and the Shiden-kaï.



## 5. Jane's F/A-18

Electronic Arts  
[www.ea.com](http://www.ea.com)

Though this game may be the swan song from this august development house, **JANE'S F/A-18** is an outstanding jet sim that will thrill all pilots who want to feel the rush of getting catapulted off a carrier deck. **JANE'S** painstaking flight models hold up very well, and do a very good job of modeling the F/A-18's flight characteristics, including its tendency to bleed speed, but to recover it with afterburners.



## 6. Rogue Spear: Covert Ops Essentials

Red Storm  
[www.redstorm.com](http://www.redstorm.com)

A sim of a different stripe, tactical sims take you inside the world of counter-terrorist squads and SWAT teams. The latest installment in the **ROGUE SPEAR** series, **COVERT OPS ESSENTIALS**, provides nine new missions in a variety of settings. But also included is a second CD with extensive training exercises and background information, and interviews with actual counter-terrorist specialists. This is a stand-alone game, and doesn't require that you own any previous version of **ROGUE SPEAR**.







IT'S TIME TO  
BUILD THE NEXT  
GREAT EMPIRE.

MAY THE GODS  
BE WITH YOU.



GET \$10 BACK by mail when  
you buy the *FREQUENCY* DVD  
(AVAILABLE 10/31/00)  
AND *ZEUS*.

See Zeus Box or [www.sierrastudios.com](http://www.sierrastudios.com)  
For Details. Offer Expires 5/31/01



[ZEUS.IMPRESSIONSGAMES.COM](http://ZEUS.IMPRESSIONSGAMES.COM)



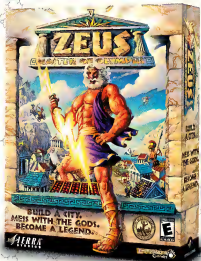
[WWW.SIERRASTUDIOS.COM](http://WWW.SIERRASTUDIOS.COM)



Control the fate of ancient  
Greece as you rule cities, defend  
territories and rub elbows with  
Gods, Heroes and Monsters.

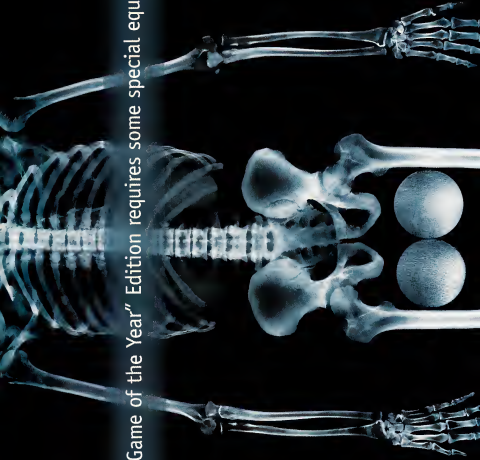
From the makers of the award winning *Pharaoh*™ and *Cesar III*, comes a city-building game of mythological proportions. Featuring more adventures and gameplay than ever, *Zeus* lets you interact with the Olympians. Build a temple to Athena, or summon the hero Perseus to battle the mythic beast Medusa. And as your city grows, you can even establish colonies while engaging in diplomacy, or extortion, with other city states. With action on land, sea — and the heavens — *Zeus* proves that city-building isn't just for naive mortals anymore.

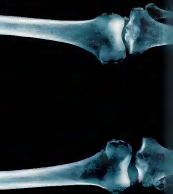
AVAILABLE NOW



© 2000 Sierra On-Line, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Sierra, Sierra Studios, The Impressions Games logo, Zeus, Master of Olympus, Pharaoh and the Impressions City Building Series logo are trademarks of Sierra On-Line, Inc. © 2000 New Line Home Video, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Frequency is a trademark of New Line Home Video.

Our new "Game of the Year" Edition requires some special equipment.

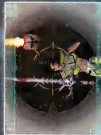




*Unreal Tournament's* ballsy new "Game of the Year"™ Edition delivers its legendary first-person combat with all-new games (Tactical Ops, Chaos, Rocket Arena), skins, weapons and maps—all at an irresistible low price. Insane combat. Eye-popping graphics. Multiplayer heaven. Do you have what it takes to survive the gladiator bloodsport of the future?



It's just you and your opponent in hand-to-hand gladiator combat with Rocket Arena.



Check out insane new weapons including a sword, crossbow and Proximity Mines in Chaos.



Rampage through deadly cityscapes with real-world weapons in Tactical Ops.



Unreal™, Tournament™, Game of the Year Edition™, Chaos™, Tactical Ops™, Rocket Arena™, skins, weapons and maps are trademarks of Epic Games, Inc. Microsoft and the Windows logo are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Epic Games, Inc. is a registered trademark of Epic Games, Inc. The orange logo is a registered trademark of the THX. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.

# consoles

One videogaming console or another will be at the top of many a kid's (and possibly even more adults') list for Santa this year. We're in the midst of yet another evolution of living-room-centric game machines (if one more person asks me if PC gaming is dead, I'll be naughty—not nice!), so there's some pretty exciting stuff coming out of Japan these days. And no, we're not talking about Hello Kitty sex toys.



## 1. PlayStation 2

Sony Computer Entertainment  
www.playstation.com

■■■ If you've never heard of the PlayStation 2, we hope you're feeling better after your coma. The followup to one of the most unexpectedly successful videogame consoles ever, the PlayStation 2 aims to be an all-in-one home entertainment center, thanks to its high-end graphics and DVD-movie playback capabilities. Add backward compatibility (i.e., you can play your original PlayStation games on it) to the mix, and you've got one fine piece of consumer electronics, despite the \$300 price tag. The launch titles, including MADDEN 2001, ARMORED CORE 2, and KESSEN look mighty impressive. The only problem is getting your hands on one.

## 2. Jet Grind Radio

Sega Entertainment  
www.sega.com

■■■ Okay, so maybe a game that involves street kids doing helmet-less, in-line skating tricks while spray-painting graffiti and battling cops (did we mention they were in gangs?) may not sound like the best influence on the youth of America, but that doesn't have to stop you from having a good time with JET GRIND RADIO, new for the Sega Dreamcast. What's most noticeable isn't its potent fun factor, but the cool "cel shading" technique applied to the graphics that gives you the illusion of playing a cartoon.



## 3. Spider-Man

Activision  
www.activision.com  
PSX, NG4, GDC

■■■ Let's face it. Most superhero games haven't been much more than crass attempts to cash-in on popular merchandising licenses. But the new SPIDER-MAN game from Activision and developer Neversoft succeeds in giving fans about as much web-spinning, wall-crawler fun that can be had without wearing Spider-Man underoos. The expansive cityscapes are just the right setting for Spidey, and you'll have a blast swinging from rooftop to rooftop, battling your favorite supervillains. Our Spidey-sense is tingling.



# 4. Shenmue

Sega Entertainment  
www.sega.com

■■■■ SHENMUE is the long-awaited masterpiece from Sega design-god Yu Suzuki that blends role-playing, adventure, and action. You'll guide your hero Ryo through a living world full of interactivity; almost everything in the world is open to your exploration, but you'll especially want to check out the video arcade. There, you'll be able to play emulated versions of classic Sega games. This one of those games you don't play so much as live.



## Reviews Index 2000

### ★ 5 STARS EDITOR'S CHOICE ★

Game	Reviewed in Issue...
Castrol Mission	184
Every Ragepack: Demons vs. Robots	185
High Heat Baseball 2001	181
Homebrew: Calliope	187
PGA Uts 2000	187
Operational Art of War: CDW Edition	184
PGA Championship Golf	184
Passenger: Terminal	188
Spychike 2000	184
The Sims	188
Speed Tournament	187

### ★ 4.5 STARS EDITOR'S CHOICE ★

Alephina	183
Waltz II	184
3rd Tech Racing	189
EverQuest: Karamazov expansion	184
FIFA 2000	187
Fight Unlimited 3	187
Freemans 2	188
Final Office Football 2	188
Heroes of Might & Magic III	186
Foreverfall	188
Inevitable Date	183
Jane's USAF	187
Jane's EU-18	188
Machin 2001	187
WAK 2	184
Mig Alley	187
Motocross Madness 2	183
Need For Speed: Porsche Unleashed	183
Op Art: Wings of Year edition	183
Pro Football: Football Journey	183
San Diego Park	187
Sid Barker's Antikamal	187
Rising Sun	186
Super Space-Station 4 parallax	181
Diapers: Total War	184
The Sims: Urban Lingo	184
Thief 2	181
Thief B&W	188

### ★ 4 STARS ★

Age of Empires 2: The Conquerors	183
Age of Wonders	187
Alpha Omega: Alice Classic	185
Arle & Atilia: Les Fils	187
Rocky Road Baseball 200	183
Calliope 2	188
Close Combat III: Battle of the Bulge	188
Chinese Skies	187
Dark Reign 2	185

Onix	189
Earth 2000	184
Evolution	184
F1 2000	182
Grand Prix 3	188
Grand Doctor	184
Ryze the Timequest	186
Impresso Collection 2	183
King's Academy	184
Learnings Revolution	184
Majesty	181
Microsoft Flight Simulator X64	187
NASCAR Heat	187
NASCAR Racing 3	188
Power Campaigns: Normandy 'M	188
Pharaoh	187
Rainbow Six: Raven Ops	187
Risk II	181
Steddy 2000 Delicieux	184
Star Trek: Voyager: Elite Force	187
Steel Dawn's	187
SWAT 2	188
Think Bolder: The Last Revolution	188
Veridian: Dictionary	185
X-Plane	182

### ★ 3.5 STARS ★

Assault High	183
Breakband 2000	185
Don Ex	185
Flying Saucers	184
Fighter Ace 2	181
Flower 3D	187
Road Trip! Ace 2	187
Uhlen LS 2000	187
NASCAR 2000	187
NASCAR Legend III	187
NFL Blitz 2K	187
NFL 2000	184
Reo	188
Power Elite	187
Power Renard 3d	188

Quake 3: Arena	188
Seven Kingdoms 2	186
Shelton Company	188
Silver	187
South Park Indly	184
StarLancer	183
Start-Up 2000	189
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2000	185
Tour	182
Urban Chase	188
Wind 61 Time	187
X: Beyond The Frontier	181

### ★ 3 STARS ★

12 G-Stock High	189
Adhem's Cell	182
Command & Conquer: The Lord of the Rings	181
Demons	188
FIFA-ICE Super Street	183
Half-Cit: Operating Force	187
Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade	184
KA-K2 Alligator	181
KRS: Psycho Circus	184
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	183
MadMaxer 3 Expansion	183
Myth Fellowship	188
Mind Fluxor	183
NHL Championship 2000	183
Paradise's Box	187
Slave Zero	187
Rayman 2	188
Reck for the Stars	188
Renegade	187
Seymour Dine	185
Shogun: Openly	185
Dr. Kluge's Iron Plague	188
Tekken	182

### ★ 2.5 STARS

1022 G6	183
WMA: Superbike	188
Army Man: World War	184
Beep! Baseball Elite	188
Castle Juggler	183
F1 World Grand Prix	183
King of Kings Pass	188
MS International Soccer 2000	182
Op. Art of War II: Empirical Xenos	187
Sunny Side Deluxed Stars	181
Swily	188
Shadow World	181
Soldier of Fortune	181
Snuffrager	188
Space Ace 2	187

Tandem	181
Ultima Ascension	187
Who Wants to be a Millionaire?	183

### ★ 2 STARS ★

Abomination	188
Aztecage	181
Assault Flat 3	188
Army Man: Air Tactics	184
Choc 2	181
Crusaders of Might & Magic	188
Calliope	188
Galle Force 2	187
Secret 2: Menagerie	184
Final Fantasy VIII	188
Force Commander	181
Gunsling	189
Heroes & Generators: Devil's Bridge	183
Interstate '98	187
Microsoft Baseball 2000	181
Might & Magic VII	182
Napoleon III	187
Odium	185
Outlines	187
Panzer General III: Semtex Earth	187
Test Drive 8	188
Open Eye II: Open Sky Arena	187
Solar Task: America	181
Shogun: Shogun 2000	188
Wild West West	188

### ★ 1.5 STARS ★

Wish	183
Crusades Eagle	183
Delusion	183
Die Hard: Village 2	182
Vigilance	187
Global Night 3	188
Orbiton	181
Martyr	188
Massiah	187
Neptune	187
Star Trek: Conquest Online	185
Submarine Titans	188
Test 5: Le Mass	184
Triple Play 2001	182
Vampire: The Masquerade	184

### ★ 1 STAR ★

Age of War	188
Baker of Hazard	187
Ballon: Fighter Command	188
Professional Ball Editor	188
Star Trek: New World	187



# Something New Chills the Heart of Icewind Dale...

A Hero reborn, a people betrayed. The Barbarian tribes are on the move, threatening to wipe out the Ten Towns of Icewind Dale. Yet all is not as it seems. An epic journey awaits the heroes of Black Isle's hit RPG, with new monsters to battle, new places to visit, new treasures to find and new wonders to behold!

[www.interplay.com/icewind](http://www.interplay.com/icewind)



**BIOWARE**  
INFINITY ENGINE  
Advanced  
**Dungeons & Dragons**



Visit [www.esrb.org](http://www.esrb.org)  
or call 1-800-771-3772  
for more info

Icewind Dale: Heart of Winter © 2004 Interplay Entertainment Corp. All Rights Reserved. The Infinity Engine © 1998-2003 BioWare Corp. All Rights Reserved. Dungeons & Dragons, the FORGOTTEN REALMS logo, ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS, the AD&D logo, Wizards of the Coast and the Wizards of the Coast logo are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and are used by Interplay under license. Black Isle Studio and the Black Isle Studio logo are trademarks of Interplay Entertainment Corp. The Infinity Engine and the Bioware logo are trademarks of BioWare Corp. Exclusively licensed and distributed by Interplay Entertainment Corp. All other trademarks and copyrights are property of their respective owners.

FORGOTTEN REALMS

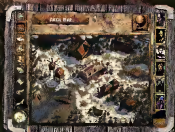
# ICEWIND D.A.L.E.



## HEART OF WINTER



Supports 800x600 resolution!



6 new regions to explore, including the town of Lonelywood.

# family & kids

Picking out four kids' games to recommend for holiday gifts isn't an easy task, especially when there are so many available. Out of the dozens we looked through, we found the following four to be games that we would purchase ourselves. Hopefully, this category will help guide parents in their quest for quality games. Enjoy!

## FOR ALL AGES

### 1. Hoyle Kids Games

Sierra Attractions, [www.foylegames.com](http://www.foylegames.com)

■■■■ HOYLE KIDS GAMES has something for everyone; it's a collection of 12 classic games for all ages. Keep a snowman from melting as you play Hangman, watch the tropical fish swim by during a game of Go Fish, or laugh at the flapping frogs in a game of Checkers. There's also Memory Match, Chinese Checkers, Snakes & Ladders, Old Maid, War, Crazy 8s, and our personal favorite, Battling Ships. There're also a couple of racing games and a face-maker that you can use to personalize your character's portrait. Graphics are pretty good, and computer opponents are entertaining with their snappy banter. Most of the games have adjustable skill levels, and game rules and help are readily available on every screen. Several of the games have multiplayer modes as well. **Age recommendation:** 6-12



## FOR OLDER KIDS

### 2. Search & Solve Adventures

By: Learning Company, [www.learnco.com](http://www.learnco.com)

■■■■ SEARCH & SOLVE ADVENTURES is an adventure game for slightly older kids, filled with puzzles that require a bit of brainpower to solve. The goal is to help the four ClueFinders find out who is sending SOS signals from a haunted amusement park and figure out what's going on there. Puzzles of deductive reasoning, and pattern recognition abound, but there's enough adventure included so that kids won't mind actually learning something along the way. The puzzles are challenging but not so difficult as to be frustrating. Also comes with a "Real World Adventure Kit" with six additional activities.

**Age recommendation:** 9-12+



### 3. Barbie Magic Genie Bottle

Mattel Interactive, [www.mattelinteractive.com](http://www.mattelinteractive.com)

■■■■ BARBIE MAGIC GENIE BOTTLE is an adventure game; it comes with a clever "magic genie bottle" that plugs into the joystick port and acts as a controller for some of the game functions. Pull out the stopper, and the Barbie genie comes out to assist you with hints and instructions. Rub the bottle with your hand to lift items into the air so you can get what's behind them, or to use your magic carpet to fly to another town. Collect clues and solve puzzles in order to find the five missing power gems, and save the kingdom from the Evil Sultan! **Age recommendation:** 5 and up



### 4. Hot Wheels Stunt Track Driver

Mattel Interactive, [www.mattelmedia.com/hotwheels/stunt\\_track/](http://www.mattelmedia.com/hotwheels/stunt_track/)

■■■■ HOT WHEELS STUNT TRACK DRIVER is the best Hot Wheels game we've seen, particularly for the younger crowd. In addition to the tracks that are provided, you can create and save up to four of your own. You can also unlock new tracks by winning the trophy races, and you'll unlock a new car the first time you successfully complete each track. Cars are rated according to speed, traction, and handling, and the tracks have a variety of flips, turns, and loops. Players can perform various acrobatics while flying through the air during jumps. Easy enough for a 5 year old to enjoy for hours.

**Age recommendation:** 5 and up





# hardware

**T**he gamer who is reading this: Stop now and hand the magazine over to your significant other. If you keep reading, it will ruin the surprise. You do like surprises, don't you? If you don't want yet another tie, belt, pair of mittens, or John Tesh CD, hand it over to your spouse now and no one gets hurt...

To the spouse of aforementioned gamer: Are they gone? Good. Finally, we can talk freely. No matter what your significant other says he/she wants for the holidays, here's the stuff they really want. Of course, the only downside is that this gear will pretty much pair gasoline onto the fire that is their gaming jones, but hey, it'll keep them at home.

## 1. Hercules 3D Prophet II Ultra

\$600, [www.hercules.com](http://www.hercules.com)

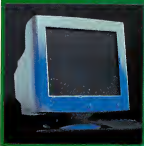
■■■ If there's one thing gamers continually quest and just after, it's more 3D performance. This year's king of the hill is nVidia's GeForce 2 Ultra chipset, which adorns Hercules' 3D Prophet II Ultra. This card packs 64MB of very fast DDR SDRAM, and shreds every benchmark test we can throw at it. The card offers second-generation accelerated T&L, has one of the most complete sets of Direct3D rendering features, and lets games run beautifully at high resolutions. At \$600, it's a pricey bugger, and if that's just a little more than you were looking to spend, consider the 3D Prophet II MX, which for around \$120, is a solid price/performance offering.



## 2. KDS Avitron AV-17TF

\$230, [www.kdsusa.com](http://www.kdsusa.com)

■■■ And, of course, the fastest 3D card in the world leaves an awful lot to the imagination without a good monitor with which to see the pretty pictures. KDS' latest Avitron offerings will make any gamer's face light up. Using Sony's Trinitron picture tube, the Avitron series of monitors delivers beautiful color saturation and sharp images that will make your TV nervous, as in very nice one. And all this Technicolor goodness comes to you for around \$230. Considering what you get for this price, the KDS biz guys should have their heads examined.



## 3. Sound Blaster Live X-Gamer 5.1

\$95, [www.soundblaster.com](http://www.soundblaster.com)

■■■ Great images need great sound to round out the mix, and Creative's latest Sound Blaster, the Live X-Gamer 5.1, is this year's hot ticket. In some ways, there's not much that's new about the card, but what makes it interesting is that the X-Gamer 5.1 can translate any incoming audio—music CDs, MP3s, or two- or four-channel game audio—into a 5.1 output, and send that to your Dolby Digital decoder, bathing your beloved gamer in a sea of sound. And given the game bundle—UNREAL TOURNAMENT, MDK 2, DEUS EX, and THIEF II: THE METAL AGE—you could buy them this product, throw out the sound card, and still save yourself money. All told, it's a great deal.



## 4. Logitech WheelMan USB

\$60, [www.logitech.com](http://www.logitech.com)

■■■ Despite the myriad options out there for game controllers, the fact of the matter is that you still drive most PC games with your keyboard and mouse. Logitech's WheelMan series of mice were the first to employ a contoured design that made them more comfortable for extended use, and the latest WheelMan is the heir apparent in this line. This alluring rodent is of the USB species, and uses optical technology to replace the old ball/sensor mechanism that mice have used for 20 years. The result is a comfortable ride and smooth gameplay, and that comfort extends over to mousing through the Web and biz apps too.



IN STORES NOW

"The ultimate game that combines the fantasies of  
RTS and RPG fans alike." —3dActionPlanet.com

"Extremely fluid animations and a rock-solid storyline"  
—AdrenalineVault.com

"The game looks spectacular  
and could be one of the best  
looking 2D games ever."  
—PCIGN.com



PC  
CD  
ROM



Voluntary Blood  
Assessment Waiver



CHALLENGE YOUR STRATEGIC SKILLS IN RTS MODE.  
DISCOVER YOUR COURAGE IN RPG MODE.



# KINGDOM UNDER FIRE

War of Heroes



[WWW.KINGDOMUNDERFIRE.COM](http://WWW.KINGDOMUNDERFIRE.COM)



WORLD CYBER



# Is the World Ready for a **CYBER OLYMP**

story and photos by Ken Brown



AMES

It's the closing ceremony and the world's top athletes are about to receive their awards. With "The Stars & Stripes" blaring, a rapt audience watches two Americans and two Swedes mount the platforms. The winner, clutching a stuffed tiger, hends for an officiant to drape a gold medal around his neck. His blond hair looks nearly ablaze in the stage lights, the TV cameras, and the flashes from a dozen international photographers. Shifting the tiger and beaming broadly, the winner lofts an oversized check for \$25,000.

# CS?

Sydney? Uh-uh. These athletes don't look much like Olympians. Instead of tight bodies and athletic grace, we're talking gangly teenagers who could use some sun. Most probably couldn't clear a hurdle.



American Brian Flaxler won \$10,000 for taking first in ONLINE TOURNAMENT. Beyond his gaming, he goes to college and has a job and a girlfriend.

But what they *can* do is limit you down and frag your ass faster and more relentlessly than anyone in the world at QUAKE III ARMINA. Their reflexes and visual acuity have grown robotic through months of practice, eight hours a day, seven days a week. Some even hired gaming coaches.

They're all here, 166 "cyber athletes" from 17 countries, at an amusement park at hour's drive from Seoul, Korea, competing for \$200,000 in prizes. Outside the awards ceremony, costumed space characters wander through a crowd munching on roasted squid and grooving to a band braying "L'Asia" Le Vida Laca. "I check the sky to see if the clouds are alpha-blended, half-expected that I'm dreaming about HEAVY METAL FAKK 2.

But it's real. A Korean organization, in partnership with several companies and guided by a large committee of government ministers, university members, and media leaders, has spent five million dollars hosting an event that is essentially a warm-up act. In 2001, they will host the first World Cyber Games in Korea, which they have every intention of turning into a bona fide, Olympic-style event. They plan to invite 400 players from 25 countries to compete in 6-8 events, including both PC and console games.

The man responsible for all this, Yoo Sup Oh, appears neither visionary nor mad. Gregarious and energetic, Mr. Oh appears to be a combination of savvy promoter and games enthusiast. One of the first things he tells the

press is how strongly he believes "games are a universal language and a way to exchange culture. I think if we are successful in creating a Cyber-Olympics, then that is a contribution we can make to the worldwide games industry."

All of which raises some fairly startling questions: Why Korea? Can they pull this off? And, does anyone really want to watch gaming tournaments on TV?

### Why Korea?

For Americans went on *M.A.S.H.*, it may come as some surprise that there aren't any tent camps in Seoul with boys named Ho-john who come to do your laundry. It's a metropolis of 15 million, with high-rise apartment buildings that stretch for miles in every direction. Traffic clogs the city 24 hours a day, the normal work week is six days, 12 hours a day, for fun, families go shopping at midnight. "It's like *Blade Runner*," was one journalist's description of a bustling shopping district at 3a.m.

Competitive, hard-working people need ways to blow off steam. But the government's ban on Japanese-language software made it difficult to get video games, until recently, PlayStation were also unavailable. (Japan occupied Korea from 1910-1945, leaving a legacy of cold trade relations.)

All of these factors contributed to the emergence of computer gaming as a popular pastime. In the last two years, that pastime has grown into a national obsession with *STARCRIFT* (see sidebar). Koreans have snapped up 1.8 million copies of *STARCRIFT* and its add-on, *BLOOD WAR*—more than a third of worldwide sales. Many of those copies are for Korea's "PC Bang," Internet cafes where gamers can play multiplayer games, eat, drink,



## Game Tournament (게임대회장) World Cyber Game Challenge



Caucasia, hawkier babes, and babies holden on state helped draw spectators to the playoffs.

## World Cyber Game Challenge



The main competition took place on a stage before a live audience, with huge monitors and a commentator covering the action.

and compare their standings. The PC Bang (literally, "PC room") now number nearly 20,000, generating \$4 billion last year alone in rental revenue. Many Koreans point to STARCRAFT and PC Bang as the main factors behind the country's rapid adoption of the Internet. A recent book, *Starstruck*, goes even further, explaining how STARCRAFT has had a fundamental effect on Korea's economy.

There are now weekly STARCRAFT tournaments that give away thousands of dollars, and some companies are giving top players \$30,000 or more per year in sponsorships. Player leagues and ranking services have become extremely popular. Given what's going on there, Mr. Oh's dream of a "Cyber-Olympics" starts to make sense.

"Korea has very few natural resources," Mr. Oh points out. "So our government has put an emphasis on bringing out the gaming industry as a core business. But most Korean game companies are very small, and they aren't organized. I think our World Cyber Games can help organize [the Korean games industry] and make it internationally well-known."

## Welcome to Korea, Enjoy Your Stay on the Floor

After preliminary competitions in 17 countries, the organizing committee for the World Cyber Games Challenge invited the top players to come to Korea for two weeks, all expenses paid. Nineteen players came from the U.S. to compete in four official events: QUAKE III, STARCRAFT, FIFA 2000, and AGE OF EMPIRES II, plus an exhibition event for UNREAL TOURNAMENT.

The players didn't expect rooms at the Ritz, but neither were they prepared for what they found: rooms with bare floors, an end table, and a desk. Brian Power, a 21-year-old UY player from Toronto, Canada, had a bad first impression. "No one told us about the mattresses and pillows in the closets, so we curled up with our heads on our suitcases and slept on the bare floor," he says. "And we didn't know how to turn the floor on either, so we were furious after our first night. And then they told us we had mattresses and pillows and a heated floor. And we thought, 'that's not so bad.'"

"The first night I thought I was going to be a cripple," says Gordon Evans of Succasunna, N.J., who accompanied his 15-year-old son Jeremy to the event. "But you get used to it. I'm walking around."

There were other problems, including low turnout for many of the events. But most of the players seemed pleased with the way the events were organized and judged, and they were happy to compete for such lucrative prizes.

Power observed, "It's their first attempt at this competition, and there were some minor bugs. But as a whole, they threw a lot of money into it, gave the players a great time, and made it a competition that people could watch and enjoy even if they weren't playing."

With North America's preference for first-person shooters, the Americans and Canadians generally did well in QIII and UT. However, no one from the western hemisphere even made it into the semi-finals in STARCRAFT, FIFA, or AGE OF KINGS. The Koreans did so well in FIFA it embarrassed the hosts: The top four finishers were all Korean, and no Korean lost to a non-Korean. Then again, soccer is the country's most popular "non-cyber" sport.

# "Mom, I'm Going Pro"

■ ■ ■ In five years' time, die-hard game junkies have gone from the stereotype of nerdy slugs to international stars. What a difference money can make. Johnathan Wendel, a.k.a. Fatal1ty, has become something of a celebrity in gaming circles for his QUAKE III prowess—and his winnings.

"I'm very popular in a lot of countries: Bulgaria, Denmark, everywhere in Europe, Asia, Korea, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Mexico, Canada. I'm popular among cyber athletes in general, and especially among those who play QUAKE. It's really an honor to be known worldwide and have that many fans."

Wendel, 19, is among an elite few who will make more than \$100,000 this year in winnings alone. He also has sponsorships from mouse maker Razor Boomslang and gaming Web site STOMPED.

Wendel says he practices two to six hours a day. If a tournament is coming up, he practices at least eight hours a day. "It's just like any other professional sport," he says. "You've got to

play, play, practice, practice."

Parents rarely endorse the idea, until they see the money. Wendel had to move out of his mother's house before he could dedicate himself to his sport. His father wasn't very supportive either, until Wendel took 3rd place in his first tournament and won \$4,000. "After that, they were really happy," he says.

Other players have gone even farther. Several top players have



This top four finishes in QUAKE III walked away with \$20,000. Don't expect to see them on a lot of Wheaties anytime soon.



moved to Korea to compete in more tournaments and earn lucrative sponsorships that enable them to practice full-time.

If you're interested in registering for a tournament, visit the following sites:

[www.battletop.com](http://www.battletop.com), [www.thegpl.com](http://www.thegpl.com), [www.worldcybergames.org](http://www.worldcybergames.org)



Close media attention followed the games, including TV cameras and press from Europe and Asia.

## Has Anyone at ESPN Stopped Laughing Yet?

It's one thing to host a gaming competition, it's quite another to think gaming will become a big sport, and it's a huge leap to think it could become Olympic material someday. There are plenty of skeptics, but you won't find many among the players and organizers.

"I think the sport will grow," says player dad Evans. "I just hope that all the projections I'm hearing aren't overly optimistic. All these kids are great kids here. If they can make money at it, either full-time or part-time, I think it's great for everybody."

Canadian player Power thinks games will grow more popular as the graphics improve. "Games still look sort of cartoony, they still look like a computer game. In two years, they're going to look as real as watching a

hockey game on TV."

Brian Haider (a.k.a. Destruct), 18-year-old winner of UNREAL TOURNAMENT from Becker, Minnesota, thinks "People are going to have to open up their minds and not be so stubborn about it" for the sport to grow. "It could get huge, like it is in Korea," he says. "I mean, Korea can't shape the world when it comes to gaming, but it's just going to have to take off from here."

Actually, the World Cyber Games isn't the only game in town. In the U.S., the Cyberathlete Professional League has been holding tournaments since 1997, and has recently expanded into other countries. Founder Angel Munoz has his sights on the future, but he doesn't agree that the

Korean organizers have the right way to get there.

"We look at Korea as a phenomenon that cannot be replicated elsewhere very easily," says Munoz. "Korea has its own agenda, but we think it's sort of laughable. They think the sport is at level 50, but we think it's at level 10."

But don't spectacle sports usually require some visible action on the part of the players?

"Every sport had humble beginnings," he replies. "Does [gaming] offer the same spectacle as football? No. But it is more interesting than bass fishing? Gaming is an incredible multi-billion dollar industry. Is it that crazy to think that 10-15 years from now, gaming tournaments could be as big as some other sports?"

Not if you're Korean. **CGW**

# STARCRAFT Goes Supernova in Korea

Like most Asian cultures, Koreans are quick to hop on trends, but not even the mass weddings of Rev. Sun Myung Moon could forestall the national fixation over STARCRAFT. The country of 45 million people has bought more copies of STARCRAFT than any other country in the world. 40,000 copies are still sold each month, according to Blizzard. That's more copies than HALFLIFE sold each month in 1999 in the U.S.—a population five times larger than Korea.

Blizzard estimates that at least 70 percent of the population has played STARCRAFT. The fever has led to STARCRAFT-packaged snack foods, STARCRAFT TV shows, music CDs based on the game, and, of course, the profusion of game rooms throughout the country.

The game's popularity in Korea amazes its creators. Blizzard's Susan Woolley and Bill Roper readily admit that Korea has become an extremely important market, but say they struggle with the need to serve Koreans without exploiting them. Blizzard's partners clamor for more STARCRAFT specialty items than they will allow. The latest request: STARCRAFT clothing. Roper says, "They wanted to know if we thought military style, hip hop, or casual clothes would be more appropriate. How do you decide what style STARCRAFT clothes should be? And do we even want to do that?"

Another company has requested Blizzard's blessing for a STARCRAFT-themed restaurant, a la Planet Hollywood.

While some of the requests leave them shaking their heads, Roper says he is always humbled when he travels there. "We almost feel guilty that we're not serving them more sometimes," he says. "It's now almost half our market."



The Zergling is a common sight in gaming events in Korea. It's a small, insect-like creature that is a common sight in the StarCraft game.



# FEEL LIKE

*a kid again.*



A **KID**, PILOTING A *Hellcat*  
**OVER THE PACIFIC**, TRYING TO WIN  
A **WORLD WAR.**

**GET**

BEHIND THE CONTROLS OF ONE OF SEVEN WWII AIRCRAFT, THEN FLY A CAMPAIGN IN THE PACIFIC, WHERE YOUR MISSIONS ARE BASED ON YOUR PERFORMANCE. YOU'LL FEEL LIKE YOU'RE RIGHT IN THE ACTION WITH EXPLOSIVE DETAILLED AIRCRAFT RIGHT DOWN TO THE COCKPIT, SPECTACULAR DAMAGE EFFECTS AND REALISTIC WEATHER OPTIONS ADD TO THE REALISM. AND CARRIER LAUNCHES AND LANDINGS ADD TO THE CHALLENGE. WITH IMPROVED 3-D SCENERY AND AI, IT'S AN AERIAL COMBAT EXPERIENCE LIKE YOU'VE NEVER HAD BEFORE. SO GET UP THERE AND HOLD ON.



WWW.MICROSOFT.COM/GAME/COMBATFS2









## ULTIMATE GAMING MACHINE PART 2

7 top-of-the-line systems shatter the Gigahertz barrier and shred the road

Story by  
Dave Salvator

Photos by  
Hayden Hauser

Photo illustration by  
Jason Babler

**T**echnolust is an expensive jones. If you want the best of everything in your gaming rig, you might as well put a revolving door on the side of your PC case.

This year's contestants in our Burn, Baby, Burn roundup have CPUs and 3D cards whose clock rates are twice as fast as last year's best, a testament to the relentless rate of increase in processing horsepower. As we saw last month, an awful lot of power can be stuffed into a sub-\$1,700 box. But if you don't want to add that tag line "it's a great performer...for the money," and you want the fastest thing on the planet, then strap in and hold onto something bolted down. Because things are going to move fast. As in, insanely fast.

### The Winners

Two systems made it to the winner's circle this year for one simple reason: They're the fastest Gamed systems we've ever tested. Each scored important performance wins, but neither dominated overall. They roared to life out of the box, and shredded every test we could throw at them.

This year marks the first time that both winners were AMD-powered. What's even more interesting is that they prove that a 1.2GHz AMD system tuned for gaming can beat a 1.6GHz Pentium 4 system, given comparable 3D cards. Both of these rigs come from companies that specialize in high-end PCs for gamers, Alienware and Falcon Northwest. You pay more for the performance that a boutique shop can give you, but you do get something for your money.

Once unpacked, Alienware's Aurora system casts an imposing shadow. The Aurora's full tower case has eight, yes, eight cooling fans in it. Strap a pair of wings and some landing gear on this sucker and it's airborne. Fortunately, the fans are all quiet, so it won't be like having an air conditioning unit on your desk.

This system lead the pack in 3D GameGauge performance. It also tied for the top spot in 3D WinBench testing, and had wins in the 2D graphics and CD-ROM tests.

Alienware achieved this by running its system hot: The CPU was clocked at 1.248GHz, 4 percent faster than the standard 1.2GHz chip. They also warmed up the 3D card, by overclocking the engine and memory by 6 percent and 4.3 percent faster than spec, respectively.

Despite the overclock, the Aurora never crashed on a benchmark run. And even left running for days on end, the Aurora always snapped back to attention with the click of a mouse. It's a stable system.

#### Nice Package

Alienware's choice of an Antec case is a good one, as this full-tower beast packs a 400-watt power supply to keep the juice flowing smoothly. The side panel removes easily, exposing a neatly packaged system where you have plenty of room to move around and get components in and out. As for added extras, the included Sound Blaster LiveDrive allows both analog and digital audio devices to send and receive audio information from the Sound Blaster Live.

and there are MIDI in and out connections for budding musical geniuses. The LiveDrive also includes a pretty slick remote that lets you drive both the SB Live itself, as well as drive transport controls in the Live's hunkled media player. And all this audio love finds voice through Klipsch's mighty ProMedia V.2-400 4.1 speaker setup.

Alienware includes a recovery CD to bring the system back to its factory drive image, which can be a real lifesaver when things go terribly, terribly wrong. All the documentation for the installed components are included, along with individual driver disks. Buyers also receive a Windows ME CD.

This may seem trivial, but some system makers no longer send the actual CD, only a recovery CD. You paid for the damn OS, you should get the CD; make sure any system you buy comes with it.

When push comes to shove, both Alienware and Falcon are the high-performance champs, though Alienware had a slight edge in 3D GameGauge testing. Alienware's inclusion of some audio extras struck a chord with me, owing to my own sonic jones. If you don't dabble much in things audible, it may not be anything you need or use. But make no mistake, Alienware's Aurora is more than ready for any game you can throw at it.

## Alienware Area 51 Aurora

The fastest 3D GameGauge performer includes many bells and whistles, including Creative's LiveDrive for making fast audio connections a snap. Also

included is a third and seemingly unneeded CD-ROM drive.

COMPUTER  
GAMING  
WORLD  
★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
EDITORS'  
CHOICE





**F**alcon Northwest is no

stranger to the winner's circle. Their Mach V system is usually as good as it gets for gamers, routinely trouncing the competition in pure gaming performance. Although Falcon shares top honors this year with Alienware, both of these systems were able to outgun a Pentium 4 in nearly all 3D game testing, a considerable feat given Pentium 4's ostensible clock-and system-memory bandwidth advantage. Chalk it up to years of tuning rigs specifically for gaming.

Although some PCs are finally discovering that the visible color spectrum extends beyond beige, Falcon stuck with their usual beige case. Despite a lack of visual panache, the case is nonetheless excellent and easy to open sans tools, thanks to twin thumb-screws. Once inside, the Mach V is smartly appointed with top-shelf components and plenty of knuckle room for getting hands in and out of the box scrape-free.

**Nitrous Injector**

Falcon runs its system very close to spec clock rates, though the 3D card is slightly juiced, with the engine and memory clocks running at 260MHz and 490MHz, respectively. Also in the mix are Falcon's now standard-issue Klipsch ProMedia V.2-400 speakers, as well as Logitech's very solid optical-sensor mouse. And though the rest of the Mach V's components aren't really eye-grabbers, they're still very solid gaming iron that

**Falcon NW Mach V**

★★★★☆

The Mach V is one of two Athlon systems to out-class Pentium 4 on 3D GameGauge testing. Its sleek exterior belies the performance beast that dwells within.

COMPUTER GAMING WORKAL

EDITORS' CHOICE



first running 3D WinBench at the very high resolution of 1600x1200x32. In fact, Falcon was just a fraction behind the 1.5GHz Pentium 4-toting Dell.

will keep you cruising smoothly.

If the look is somewhat banal, the performance is anything but. On 3D GameGauge, Falcon outpaced all systems except one (Alienware's Aurora). Although Falcon didn't score the highest 3D GameGauge score, it did the Alienware on 3D WinBench, had faster CPU performance than Alienware, and came in

**Sweating the Details**

Falcon was one of the originators of "the world's most detailed documentation," creating a "paper registry" with the amount of system detail supplied in their docs. In addition, Falcon includes docs for all the installed components, an actual Windows ME CD, and a system recovery CD. Another little extra is Logitech's latest WheelMan mouse, a USB rodent sans ball that uses an optical sensor similar to those found on the newest Microsoft mice. To my hand, this is actually a more comfortable mouse than Microsoft's, though mouse preference is highly subjective. But all-told, Falcon once again shows its stripes as a top-drawer gaming PC maker, and this Mach V will bring high-performance joy to any gamer.



**D**ell got a makeover this year, finally offering consumers a color other than beige.

The Dimension 8100 is a Pentium 4-packin' performer that combines high performance with rock-solid stability. The machine's performance comes at a fairly low price as nutha systems go, e more three large. But included in this system is a 4.1 set of Altec-Lansing speakers that can "ghost" a center channel for 5.1 Dolby Digital playback, as well as handle two- and four-channel audio coming from the sound card—which is Turtle Beach's solid Sante Cruz board.

Dell's new case leans more towards form than function, though it does a pretty good job in both departments. Getting in is easy enough: pushing a button on the front panel pops the side panel, making for a tool-less entry. But once in, space is pretty scarce, owing to a large wind tunnel over the Pentium 4 CPU. Like something out of the Austin Powers gadget shop, the power supply unlatches and flips up to allow access to the motherboard power cable connector and RDRAM slots. It's a pretty cool thing to look at, though the release latch doesn't work that smoothly, and there are some sharp edges to be avoided so as not to make an inadvertent blood donation. The hard-drive cage detaches with a single screw, and adding a device in the one free 5-1/4" device bay is pretty easy, thanks to the slide-in

## Dell Dimension 8100

★★★★

A Pentium 4-powered beast with a beautiful Trinitron monitor. The new case is a welcome change, but isn't as easy to open and close as it should be. Jammin' audio, thanks to the bundled 4.1 Altec-Lansing 890s.



trays that release sans tools.

### Intel's New Gladiator

Despite the recent rash of Intel gaffs, Dell has remained an Intel-only shop, and is in some sense the Pentium 4 flag-bearer. Pentium 4 tests well versus Athlon, but fails to score a knockout punch, especially given the fact that the P-4 is currently tethered to RAMBUS. But having said that, Dell placed a very respectable third in 3D GameGauge testing, trailing only Falcon and Alienware. The Pentium 4 performed well in 3D WinBench's Processor test, which tests the CPU's ability to handle transform and lighting (T&L) data from Direct3D, though it only edged out Falcon's 1.2GHz Athlon CPU. These numbers suggest that once Athlon hits

1.5GHz clock rates—and that should be sometime in the first half of 2001—Athlon may beat Pentium 4 clock for clock. And that, my friends, would mean a crushing defeat for the Intel crowd.





get you, the physics will.



**NASCAR**  
*Racing 4*

**PAPYRUS**  
RACING

**SIERRA**  
STUDIOS

[www.nascar.com](http://www.nascar.com) [www.nascarracing4.com](http://www.nascarracing4.com)



Gateway Select 1200

★★★★★

A competent mid-pack performer whose most noteworthy feature is an 'easy-open, tool-less entry' case that's anything but. The speakers sound great, but are a bit underpowered.

**G**ateway has become a two-CPU system maker, offering both Intel- and AMD-based boxes.

Their 1.2GHz Athlon box turned in good—though not great—performance, but despite this somewhat unremarkable performance, it was stable throughout testing. This mediocre performance comes despite having what looks on paper to be a very hot system: a KT-133-based motherboard, 1.2GHz Athlon CPU, and a 64MB GeForce Ultra-based 3D card.

Gateway deserves credit for putting two USB ports and a 1394/FireWire port on the front of their system, but that's where the good news ends. In a hotbed attempt to create a tool-less entry, Gateway instead created a box that requires an extra set of hands to actually open it. Two spring-loaded release handles have to be held while

the side panel is removed. A daunting, and unnecessarily complicated task.

As for performance, Gateway's 3D GameGauge performance was a little below the average of all systems tested, which seemed odd considering this rig's components. Gateway was running Detonator 3 drivers, and the 3D card was running in AGP 4X mode as reported by PowerStrip, and yet, they failed to excel. Which is not to say that this Gateway was crashing left and right. Hardly. The box was stable, and always came back to life after being asleep, even after being left on for a week.

The Boston Acoustic BA-7500s included with this rig sound terrific, though they come up a little quiet in the volume department. All in all, a competent offering with good USB-port location, and lousy case-access design. For your large gaming dollars, you can do better.



Hypersonic Sonic Boom AV

★★★★★

Good performance and generally competent choices are to be found here. Looks like Hypersonic and Alienware have both discovered Antec cases, judging from the former's case, which features a slide-down front panel that exposes the drive bays.

the GTS' memory. At this higher speed, though, the system was well-behaved, didn't crash, and came back to life from sleep mode even after running for a week.

Opting not to follow the Klipsch herd, Hypersonic instead sent VideoLogic's new CrossFire 4.1 speakers, which sound good, if a bit under-powered. But these speakers have a separate amp that accommodates three inputs, and a headset jack. Like Alienware, Hypersonic loads this box out with Creative's LiveDrive, which allows analog and digital audio, as well as MIDI connections, to be made without having to futz behind your system. For music audio/enthusiasts, this is useful, though most gamers probably won't make much use of it.

By the time you read this, Hypersonic will probably upgrade the CPU from 1GHz to 1.2GHz. With a GeForce 2 Ultra-based card, Hypersonic's performance outlook would improve somewhat, though it remains to be seen if they can catch Falcon and Alienware.

**H**ypersonic's entry this year represents a kind of snapshot in time, and Hypersonic will likely be shipping a 1.2GHz Athlon by the time you're reading this. But the faster processor won't shore up their 3D GameGauge performance that much, when Hypersonic finished just north of this year's slowpoke, Compaq. This box was well-behaved and crash-free, but its performance across the board, despite this stability, was unremarkable.

Notable features include a Card Cooler dual-fan cooling unit to keep the 3D card happy and humming. Hypersonic curiously decided not to send a GeForce 2 Ultra-based 3D card, but rather a 64MB GeForce 2 GTS card with the memory clock gunned up to 400MHz, which is an aggressive 20% overclock over the spec'd 333MHz clock rate for



## How We Tested/What the Numbers Mean

Though Alienware is out in front, Falcon and Dell are hot on its heels. Next are Gateway and VoodooPC running mid-pack, and Hyperionic not far behind. Compaq ran dead last, despite having a 1.5GHz Pentium 4 CPU and a 64MB DDR GeForce 2 board. The average score was 84.6.

	Alienware Lead and Mean Rig	Alienware	Compaq	Dell Dimension	Falcon NW	Gateway	Hyperionic	VoodooPC
<b>Graphics Chipset</b>	Intel E7E	ATI X1600	ATI X1600	ATI X1600	ATI X1600	ATI X1600	ATI X1600	ATI X1600
<b>3D Test Engine (Clock/ Memory Band to Graphics Chipset Overclock (if any))</b>	710/300 6.7D	505/400 6.4D	700/300 6.4D	700/400 6.4D	505/400 6.5D	700/400 none	700/400 8.7D	700/300 10.5/8
<b>CPU</b>	Pentium-4 960MHz	Atom 1.2GHz	Pentium 4 1.5GHz	Pentium 4 1.5GHz	Atom 1.2GHz	Atom 1.2GHz	Atom 1.8GHz	Atom 1.7GHz
<b>3D GameScore Score</b>	76.7	69.1	70.3	69.9	66.4	64.1	63.3	63.1
<b>3D WinBench 2000 (1024x1024x32)</b>	84.7	80	88.6*	86	81	87	83.7	86.3
<b>3D WinBench 2000 (1800x1200x32)</b>	69.6*	78.6	88.6*	72.6	80.7	78	69.4	69.6
<b>3D WinBench 2000 Processor Test Quake 2 (1600x1200x32)</b>	39.4*	1.94	1.91	2.40	7.45	2.80	1.82	1.96
<b>3D WinBench 2000 Processor Test Quake 3 (1600x1200x32)</b>	39.4*	51.6	68.6*	50.5	67.4	58.6	58.4	66.1
<b>3D GameScore 3 Processor Test (1600x1200x32) Quake 2</b>	30.1	42.6	68.6*	63.6	42.6	49.1	29.9	49.3
<b>MAX 2</b>	64.16	40.9	68.6*	78.16	62.92	59.35	70.6	61.82
<b>INFRA TOURNAMENT</b>	38.6	71.8	68.6*	54.16	50.41	38.89	62.16	CHASSIS
<b>WinBench Tests</b>								
<b>High-End Graphics WinMark</b>	658	1438	805	591	568	7480	1380	1458
<b>High-End Desk WinMark</b>	20000	32800	18500	12000	31000	20700	34000	26000
<b>Q3 WinMark</b>	1700	1700	1570	591	1730	1370	510	1720

\*2900 did not run. Tests couldn't run because the monitor could not display test resolution.

In order these systems were, we benchmarked them with our own custom cocktail of tests that include a healthy dose of 3D WinBench, WinMark, and Ansis and Q3 WinBench. Then we introduced our own 3D GameScore, a collection of six DirectX9 games (RE-VOLT, EXPANZOR, INFRA TOURNAMENT, JANE'S UNCLE PAULZER ELITE, and NFL FEVER), and one OpenGL game, BLAKE 3 ARENA. These tests are run at 1024x768 with a mix of both 16-bit and 32-bit color settings. We also used three tests from our upcoming version of 3D GameScore (3.0), which you'll soon be seeing as our primary testing tool. In those tests, we crank the test resolution up to 1200x1024x32 for every game tested. As a final bit of fun, we take the option for a spin through Quake 3 ARENA at 1500x1200x32, with all the graphics being based up. We also ran the simple "fun" test of loading the systems as far over a week, letting them "go to sleep" and making sure they'd wake up uneventfully.

Get to the **finish line**  
any **freakin'** way you can.



8 new Screening machines are hitting the streets of San Francisco and London. Not to mention the buildings, bookstores and shopping malls. The only rule in this race is: There aren't any rules.



Arctic  
Screener  
PRESENTS

**MADTOWN  
MADNESS 2**  
www.microsoft.com/games/madness2



Microsoft

VoodooPC Monsoon XS

★★★★★

The polished metal case looks cool, but this AMD-powered system looks better than it performs, thanks to dated 3D drivers.

**L**ike its name suggests, VoodooPC's Monsoon XS didn't leave anything out of this rig. Three hard drives, a 1.1GHz Athlon CPU, and a CPU cooling fan that would make Igor Sikorsky envious. VoodooPC (no affiliation with 3Dfx) is a Canadian gaming PC maker who's looking to take on the big boys to the south. Their XS offering does a good job, but would have been faster with newer Detonator 3 drivers for the GeForce 2 GTS-based 3D card. The result is a great-looking box that performs stably, but squarely midpack.

VoodooPC scores points for one of the coolest cases in this roundup. A brushed aluminum finish adorns this box, along with a ventilation fan on the top of the machine. Inside is a trickier huge CPU cooling fan which can be removed by unscrewing three thumb screws. The side pan is only two thumb screws away from being off. The icing on the cake is two front-mounted USB ports, although they're very low on the front panel.

We've seen several systems in this roundup running Promise EIDE RAID (redundant array of inexpensive disks) to increase disk performance, and the proof is in the XS' disk performance numbers. Promise RAID arrays were sometimes unstable in the past, but the bugs appear to have been killed dead.

What a difference drivers can make. If the XS had the 8.32 version of nVidia's Detonator 3 drivers, it would probably finish closer to the front of the pack, and since that would be a "free upgrade," the VoodooPC deserves your consideration.



Compaq Presario 7000T

★★★☆☆

It's got the right ingredients, but they fail to combine into a winning recipe. Still uses an analog flat panel, whose maximum resolution is 1024x768.

**C**ompaq has been trending positively in our roundups over the last several years. However, Compaq tends to over-engineer where it's not needed, resulting in systems like this one that underperform despite their high-end components. This system features the same top-of-the-line components as Dell, a 1.5GHz Pentium 4, and a 64MB GeForce 2 GTS 3D card, and yet it significantly trails the latter in performance, which managed a respectable third-place finish behind Falcon and Alienware.

Although Compaq has transitioned toward using more third-party components, it still seems hell-bent on laying out its own motherboards. Given that the similarly-equipped Dell ran circles around this rig, we suspect Compaq's proprietary motherboard is partly to blame. The system was stable, but stability alone at this price point doesn't cut it.

Compaq was the only company to send a flat-panel dis-

play device, but it was a dated 16" analog panel whose maximum resolution is 1024x768. Given the arrival of the DVI standard, and the subsequent arrival of digital flat panels, this is now older technology that has no place in a gamer's dream system. We also believe that gamers should have the option of going to 1600x1200. (Compaq does offer CRTs in a variety of sizes that can be substituted for this aging flat-panel.) This monitor hurt the Compaq's score, due to its inability to complete some of our 3D tests that are run at higher resolutions.

This system would make a fine multimedia/Web browsing/productivity box, but its game performance still has a ways to go before we'd recommend it for your next gaming system.





# FEATURE ROUNDUP

Model	Alienware	Compaq	Dell	Falcon MW	Gateway	Hyperionic	VoodooPC
Monitor	Area 51 Access	Proware 1000T	Generation E100	Watch V	Soloist 1300	Game Baron III	Maxwell X5
Radio	4.5 slots	2.5 slots	4 slots	4.5 slots	3 slots	3 slots	3E slots
Price as configured	\$4,599	\$3,149	\$3,029	\$3,515	\$3,299	\$3,099	\$4,500
3D GameEngine Score	62.1	76.3	86.5	88.4	84.1	80.3	88.1
CPU	AMD Athlon 1.4GHz	Pentium 4 1.6GHz	Pentium 4 1.6GHz	AMD Athlon 1.2GHz	AMD Athlon 1.2GHz	AMD Athlon 1.6GHz	AMD Athlon 1.1GHz
Memory	128MB PC133 SDRAM	128MB DDRAM	128MB SDRAM	128MB PC133 SDRAM	512MB PC133 SDRAM	1536MB PC333 SDRAM	256MB PC333 SDRAM
Motherboard	Maxtorcard	Compaq	Intel	ASUS ATX	ASUS ATX	ASUS ATX	ASUS ATX
System Chipset	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra
3D Card	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra
Monitor	NewScale P815 (27")	Compaq Astary Flat Panel (15")	Dell Ultracolor P811 (27")	Dell Ultracolor P811 (27")	Microsoft DiamondView X1 (20") (27")	Microsoft DiamondView X1 (20") (27")	Samsung SyncMaster 950DF (27")
Hard Drive Controller	Adaptec 2916U Ultra160	Delcoid EIDE	Delcoid EIDE	Delcoid EIDE	Delcoid Ultra160	Delcoid Ultra160	Delcoid Ultra160
Hard Drive	Seagate Cheetah 7530	IBM DeskStar 7168 Ultra100	New IBM 7533P 7528 Ultra100	IBM DeskStar 4158 Ultra100	IBM DeskStar 4158 Ultra100	IBM DeskStar 4158 Ultra100	Maxtor DiamondMax 950DF (27")
Optical Drive	Pioneer RW DVD drive, Proxter (18" CD-ROM drive)	Compaq CD-RW	12X DVD-ROM	Toshiba 48X CD-ROM	Pioneer ProXtreme 12X/10X CD-R/W	Maxtor DiamondMax 950DF (27")	Pioneer ProXtreme 12X/10X CD-R/W
Reasonable Storage	Maxtor ProMedia 21V-109	Maxtor ProMedia 21V-109	Maxtor ProMedia 21V-109	Maxtor ProMedia 21V-109	Maxtor ProMedia 21V-109	Maxtor ProMedia 21V-109	Maxtor ProMedia 21V-109
Speakers	Compaq Sound Bar/Lite Lbc 3.1	Compaq Sound Bar/Lite Lbc 3.1	Compaq Sound Bar/Lite Lbc 3.1	Compaq Sound Bar/Lite Lbc 3.1	Compaq Sound Bar/Lite Lbc 3.1	Compaq Sound Bar/Lite Lbc 3.1	Compaq Sound Bar/Lite Lbc 3.1
Screen Card	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra	ATI Radeon 7.1 Ultra
Game Controller(s)	Microsoft Sidewinder FFB steering wheel and FFB joystick	Microsoft Sidewinder FFB steering wheel and FFB joystick	Microsoft Sidewinder FFB steering wheel and FFB joystick	Microsoft Sidewinder FFB steering wheel and FFB joystick	Microsoft Sidewinder FFB steering wheel and FFB joystick	Microsoft Sidewinder FFB steering wheel and FFB joystick	Microsoft Sidewinder FFB steering wheel and FFB joystick
Other Accessories	Additional cooling fans, GeForce Max Monitor	Additional cooling fans, GeForce Max Monitor	Additional cooling fans, GeForce Max Monitor	Additional cooling fans, GeForce Max Monitor	Additional cooling fans, GeForce Max Monitor	Additional cooling fans, GeForce Max Monitor	Additional cooling fans, GeForce Max Monitor



# sacrifice

The image features a central figure, a person in a dark, patterned jacket, being held aloft by several large, reddish-brown tentacles. The scene is set in a dark, blue, ethereal environment with a glowing light source behind the person. Above the person, a large, glowing, blue, skeletal or mask-like face is visible. The overall atmosphere is dark and mysterious.

TO WHICH GOD WILL YOU  
MAKE YOURS?

A sacrifice to

# Persephone

GODDESS OF LIFE

would be good for your soul...

We are Persephone, we are the essence of life, the great healer who mends the ills of the flesh and cleanses the impurity of the soul. Our vision is one of peace, our path of mercy. We shall guide you down the true path and you shall possess power overwhelming, and our covenant with you shall be as simple and strong as it is pure.

— Persephone, Goddess of Life

## sacrifice



Declare war against other disciples in intense multiplayer action.



The souls of the fallen await redemption! Reincarnate them into your service!





Please the Gods...  
Make your Sacrifice.



The false temples of other Gods await destruction!  
Your God will be pleased, very pleased...

A sacrifice to

# Charnel GOD OF DEATH

offers the power of destruction  
and carnage.

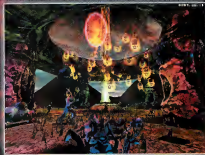
I am Charnel, the God of Strife, Lord of Slaughter, Master of Death. Where there is pain, I am. Where there is suffering, I flourish. Without conflict, without struggle, without me to hate, who would have cause to call themselves just? Only a fool would seek contentment in peace and tranquility.

-- Charnel, God of Death

## sacrifice



Your creatures need you! Cast deadly spells to aid them.



Make a Sacrifice, secure your victory, your God feeds well.



Choose a God...  
Make your Sacrifice.



The dark beauty of Charmel's world awaits...

# NO GREATER sacrifice

## SACRIFICE

GENRE: REAL-TIME STRATEGY  
DEVELOPER: SHINY ENTERTAINMENT  
PUBLISHER: INTERPLAY ENTERTAINMENT CORP.  
FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.INTERPLAY.COM

- Choose one of five gods and challenge up to four players over the Internet or LAN on a dynamic, ever-changing battlefield.
- Multiple paths and decisions throughout Sacrifice's single player campaign makes each time through a unique storytelling experience.
- Crush your foes using fearsome monsters and powerful magic.
- Over 50 spells and 50 creatures await your every command.
- Beauty on an unprecedented scale, over 100,000 frames of handcrafted animation.
- Colossal worlds are yours to explore.



COMING THIS FALL

"Best PC Game of the Show."  
- ECTS 2000

"Sacrifice is a fantastic, visually stunning union of art and technology that sets the standard for others to follow."  
- NVIDIA Corp.

"The game is drop dead gorgeous."  
- Daily Radar.com

"It appears to us that Shiny's entry into the RPG/RTS area is going to be very, very impressive."  
- FightingSquad.com

"Sacrifice will rip your imagination wide open and change your impression of real-time strategy games."  
- Tucows.com

"With its striking visuals, addictive game play, and offbeat humor, Sacrifice is definitely going to turn a few gamers' heads."  
- Gameproworld.com

"Sacrifice seems to have it all: Gorgeous graphics, unique yet cohesive visual design, and the company's distinctive sense of humor."  
- Next Generation

"Sacrifice is shining a light on pushing the creative boundaries for the RTS genre."  
- Gamepy.com

"Let's lay the best PC game, Sacrifice will be!"  
- GameFan.com

"Sacrifice is shaping up to be one of the best looking games of the year."  
- Vciv.com/extreme.com

**Interplay**  
BY GAMES FOR GAMES™



www.sacrifice.net

# JANUARY REVIEWS



NO ONE LIVES FOREVER

As unique forms of entertainment, computer games have come a long way. While games don't have quite the mass-market appeal of movies yet, their designers have done more to immerse them with plot and narrative. One way they've done this is by including more cut-scenes. Done right, cut-scenes can progress the plot, add to the drama, and develop characters. Done wrong, they can stop a game's momentum faster than a brick wall at the Bay 5050.

Take, for example, **NO ONE LIVES FOREVER**, reviewed this month. Awesome game, with quite really cool level design, beautiful application of the Unreal 2 engine, and a great sense of humor that make its cinematic cut-scenes go on for 'freakin' eons. And the people just stand there and talk and talk and talk... the facial animations are pretty nice, but really, the cut-scenes drag the otherwise kicky pace down to a snail's pace.

For a game that did cut-scenes right, look to **GRIP: THE ENIGMA**. **ELITE FORCE**. Some name is a little long, but the cinematic camera does it right. Involves the look of the show, it was like watching an actual episode. Oh, what about good old **HALF-LIFE**? The opening sequence was carefully scripted and somewhat cinematic; at least you could move around that tram car. It was limited, but it gave you the chance to get a feel for the control, and to look around at whatever you wanted to. As the game went on, the plot advanced through conversations you initiated with NPCs - not long, extended scenes of talking heads blathering.

Game designers take heed. Don't ruin your game's pace with long exposition. Don't let us get bored. And maybe take a film class down at your local community college and learn a few things about camera angles and direction. Who knows...one of these days, you might be compared to guys like Scorcese or Kurasawa. Some of you already deserve to be. -Tom Price

## JANUARY REVIEWS

GAME	RATING
<b>Dalton's Gate 2</b>	★★★★★
<b>Blair Witch Volume 1: Rustin Parr</b>	★★★★★
<b>Close Combat: Invasion Normandy</b>	★★★★★
<b>Combat Flight Simulator 2</b>	★★★★★
<b>Command &amp; Conquer: Red Alert 2</b>	★★★★★
<b>The Longest Journey</b>	★★★★★
<b>Metal Gear Solid</b>	★★★★★
<b>Midtown Madness 2</b>	★★★★★
<b>NHL 2001</b>	★★★★★
<b>No One Lives Forever</b>	★★★★★
<b>Rune</b>	★★★★★
<b>Superbike 2001</b>	★★★★★
<b>SWAT 3: Elite Force</b>	★★★★★

**HOW DO WE RATE?** We review only finished games—no betas, no patches.



## SPOTLIGHT REVIEW: BALDUR'S GATE II

**SMALL CHECK** It's nice to be able to drop the interface panels and game all against this massive beast in 3D, wide-screen play.



# Lord of the RPGs

Bioware gives us an epic filled with mad—yet beautiful—ideas and gameplay

In the spirit of our upcoming 200th issue, allow me to add a new "great gaming moment": destroying a floating skull in **BALDUR'S GATE II**.

In a game full of massive threats, both traditional (dragons) and bizarre (mind-layers), a floating skull sounds, well, drinky. That is, until you realize it's a *deshchik*—something usually slain by

"Astral Mages" only or other uber-powerful individuals that you read about, but never get to play as, in your *Dungeons and Dragons* sessions. A *deshchik* is so powerful, it doesn't even need a body, it kills by merely looking at you.

In my several battles against this damn skull, I alternated between a fanatical "must-kill" mentality, and hate-filled resignation. I played, I died, I reloaded, I strafe good, and I died some more. I watched my party get hit by Imprisonment and Wail Of The Banshee repeatedly. But one night, I finally made good use of my spells. After firing around Lower Resistances and Spoilstrikes, and using "let-it-with-my-swords" tactics, I finally put that skull down. I got a nifty ring, a bunch of experience points, and the satisfaction of destroying some under-fragment of D&D creator Gary Gygax's imagination.

**BALDUR'S GATE II: SHADOWS OF AMN (BG2)** is filled with moments like that. It pushes the limits of high-end AD&D gaming; it constantly throws surprises at you; it forces you to think and strategize. When it's all over, when you realize that you just overcame what is essentially a force of nature, you feel great. And it delivers these great gaming moments with style and polish.

## Idiotique

Immediately after starting up the game, you'll notice the first real improvement Bioware made: the story. While I can't even remember the last three-quarters of the previous game, BG2 grabs you right from the beginning. Although you were revealed as a Child Of Bhaal (the God Of Murder) at the end of BG1, that didn't stop a powerful mage from kidnapping and experimenting on you. Circumstances fit together to allow you to escape from his laboratory into the humongous city of Athkatla, and you're off.

If anything, the plot style is reminiscent of *The Lord Of The Rings*; it's a story with a simple center, but with political intrigues, warfare, moral ambiguity, and lots of dark overtones surrounding that center. Each chapter in BG2 has a pointed, focused, and interesting goal, which immediately takes care of the "where am I going, and why?" aspect of the previous game. While it doesn't have the emotional or philosophical resonance of *PLANESCAPE: TORMENT*, it isn't the light-adventure fare of *ICEWIND DALE* either. It's a dark fantasy epic.

**Requirements:** Pentium-II 233, 2MB RAM, 4x CD-ROM, 15MB hard drive space, DirectX-compatible video card and mouse.

**Recommended Requirements:** Pentium-III 450, 6MB RAM, 120MB hard drive space, 6x CD-ROM, 32 color.

**2D Support:** Quack! **Multiplayer Support:** 14 players (12/14)

**Publisher:** Interplay • **Developer:** Bioware • \$44 • [www.interplay.com](http://www.interplay.com)  
**ESRB Rating:** Teen (13+); admitted blood and violence, use of alcohol.

## CGW RATED

### PROS

It's the massive, widescreen, AD&D epic everyone's been waiting for...

### CONS

...with some goofy design/technical quirks.





**NOVEMBER RAIN** Combat suddenly becomes more competitive, with enemies knocking you down into the fray and dragons ripping their way into our defenses.

To progress through the story, you'll go forth on quests. This is where most RPGs degenerate into annoying tasks along the line of "deliver mine loaf Of Buggery to Shagadick Elf, and ye will receive three-pence and twenty points of experience" I cringed early on when some stuffy noble told me to go kill some ogres that were loitering on his property. Thinking I was going to play a glorified woodwhacker/PodEx man, I went to his property and, well, things were not what they seemed at all. A simple, run-of-the-mill, "go kill this now!" quest, through a series of tweets and turns, became a neat little mini-adventure, one that probably would have been used as a major quest in another game. BG2 is full of quests like this that take our expectations about the genre and turn them sideways.

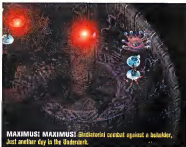
Of the game's seven chapters, the bulk of these quests lie within Chapter Two. Be warned: Once you progress along the main plot to Chapter Three, you're pretty much locked on course until Chapter Six. So while this doesn't have the massive, outright freedom of say, DANGERfall or even

TORMENT, I think it ultimately makes for a nice compromise. You can do as you will in Chapter Two, then follow the focused story for a couple chapters, finish off any loose ends, and plow your way to the end.

#### Fitter Happier

Such an epic plot and quests require larger-than-life heroes. Bioware pumped up the experience-point cap to nearly three million, resulting in characters that average between levels 15 to 19 (for comparison's sake, the overly-famous Dnzt Do'Urden is a level 15 ranger). You'll have literally ground-shaking fighters who crush ogres with their bare hands, mages who can banish their enemies to other dimensions, and priests who can channel the wrath of their god with but a whisper. Combine this raw power with some of the equipment you'll be running into (Holy Avenger, Dragonscale Armor, Staff Of The Magi, Crown Faery), and your group suddenly evolves from mere adventuring party to pantheon.

With such powerful characters, Bioware speeded up the overly-formalistic AD&D character creation system. The traditional classes now have "kits," which are subclasses with various advantages and disadvantages. When I imported my ranger from BG1, I could either keep him as he was, or choose to turn him into an archer (deals death-from-aft), a stalker (snoaky and backstabbing), or a beast-master (he, uh, gets an "animal companion").



**MAXIMUS! MAXIMUS!** Gladiatorial combat against a beholder. Just another day in the Underdark.



**FIT FOR A KING** Each class gets a "signature" item. The new three-slot magic system for reaction keeps, furnished with remnants of a class.

Bioware also worked in three classes from the new Third Edition AD&D rules: the bulky barbarian, the versatile sorceress, and the "my-hands-are-registered-lethal-weapons" monk. The net result is that there's a lot more flexibility and choice when it comes to character creation. Gamers have already started discovering insane power combinations, like kossam/mages or smash/buckle/fighters.

As in BG1, you only roll up your main character, the other five slots in your party will be filled by various NPCs you'll encounter. The stats and class choices that Bioware made for these NPCs aren't for power gamers, they're for gamers who care about character. While BG1 had only a few scant lines of dialogue, the NPCs now have their own stunts, rivalries, and personal ambitions. They will argue with each other, flirt, run off on their own quests, ask for help, give you advice, or simply hit each other. You can even choose to get romantically involved with an NPC; I was amused to see Jahlam and Aerie have a massive jealous argument over my stalker, Soontara.

#### How To Disappear Completely

Since you now have a party of demi-gods, the bulk of your combat is no longer pure enemies such as goblins or orcs; you'll mostly face off against enemies you've only heard about. Vampires suddenly become normal enemies. Gigantic iron golems are everywhere, beholders start popping up frequently, and don't be surprised when you stumble onto packs of mind flayers (who can



#### MAPQUEST, AD&D-STYLE

Thank the gaming gods that maps of large cities now come filled and annotated.





Your thirst for conquest  
goes unquenched no longer.



© 2005 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, the Microsoft logo, and Age of Empires are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.



# AGE OF EMPIRES<sup>®</sup> THE CONQUERORS EXPANSION



Five new civilizations to lead or conquer: Aztec, Mayan, Hun, Spanish, and Korean. Four new campaigns to emerge victorious: Attila the Hun, El Cid, Montezuma, and the Battles of the Conquerors. Your challenge: Expand your empire and rule the world.  
[www.microsoft.com/games/conquerors](http://www.microsoft.com/games/conquerors)



Zone.com

Microsoft

# IT'S HIGH



Visit [www.sierra.com](http://www.sierra.com)  
or call 1-800-775-3000  
for more info.

**SIERRA**  
STUDIOS

**BEWOLF**

© 2000 Sierra On-Line, Inc. and Wile, L.L.C. All Rights Reserved. Hellfire is a registered trademark and Sierra, Sierra Studio, and the "S" logo are trademarks of Sierra On-Line Inc. Gunfire Chronicle is a trademark of Wile, L.L.C. Bewolf and the Bewolf logo are trademarks of Wile, L.L.C. The raven icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

# NOON IN DEEP SPACE



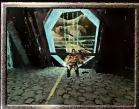
## FIERCE PREDATORS

Encounter genetically engineered aliens and outlaw biondes. Created using Half-Life's award-winning AI, your opponents are as treacherous as they are varied.



## FOUR UNIQUE WORLDS

Stalk your quarry on the Western rim of the galaxy. Explore jungle ruins, technowastelands and more in both single-player and multiplayer games.



## CUSTOMIZE YOUR ARSENAL

ArmHaze alien scouts using an amazing arsenal of weaponry that you can customize and upgrade throughout the game.

Gunman Chronicles uses the Half-Life engine to stunning effect, and promises to bring gamers a taste of extreme, in-your-face action.

- CNET Gamecenter



# GUNMAN CHRONICLES

[www.gunmanchronicles.com](http://www.gunmanchronicles.com)



RED ALERT 2 offers retro Soviet-bashing action for diehard RTS fans

# The Russians Are Coming!

Once upon a time, a little company called Westwood released a game called **COMMAND & CONQUER** that, along with Blizzard's **WARCRAFT**, were or less kick-started the real-time strategy genre. The sequel, **RED ALERT**, refined the formula. And then things started to slide. Seemingly oblivious to the advances being made in the RTS field by games like **WARCRAFT 2** and **TOTAL ANNIHILATION**, Westwood began to release a series of crummy add-ons, mini-sequels, spin-offs, and "gold editions," culminating in the online fiasco **SOLE SURVIVOR**. The long-awaited C&C sequel, **TIBERIAN SUN**, was a small step in the right direction but way too little, way too late.

And now, as a wave of fully 3D titles like **GROUND CONTROL** and **DARK REIGN 2** have all but supplanted "old school" real-time strategy, comes the belated sequel to the sequel, **RED ALERT 2**, sporting — that's right — a simplified, toned-down version of the 2D **TIBERIAN SUN** engine. It's a strange decision...since when have gamers asked for less

fancy graphics as time goes on? Is there a method to this madness?

## Retroactive Russkies

Despite the odd engine choice, the multimedia package

surrounding **RA2** is as polished and overblown as C&C fans have come to expect. Whopping techno-rock assaults you from the instant the install program comes up. Full-motion video may be officially dead, but nobody's told Westwood — **RA2** is chock-full of slumming Hollywood actors in bad costumes spouting laughable dialogue.

The retro feel doesn't end there. What's the last time



**BLOWN UP GOOD** **RA2** may have a dated 2D engine, but the game makes up for it with a whole lotta explosions.

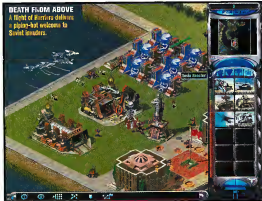
someone cast Soviets as the bad guys? **RA2** continues with the original's alternate history, in which time-travel meddling prevented Hitler's rise to power — but allowed Stalin's Red Army to march across Europe instead. Now, Stalin's successor Romanov — armed with weird-science gizmos and psychic commandos — has launched a full-scale invasion of the United States, in a tip of the hat to that 80's Patrick Swayze classic, *Red Dawn*.

## Unleash the Squids!

**RA2**'s convoluted backstory certainly wins points for recombinant silliness and sheer cheesy audacity. Among the forces arrayed against the U.S. are assault blimps, mentally-controlled giant squids, and bald psychics named Yui. The Americans have developed some unconventional gadgets themselves, ranging from time-traveling

troopets to weather-control attacks to dolphins with sonic cannons. As for the actors who grace the frequent cut-scenes, most notable are Ken Wulfert, supplying the requisite T&A as tank-topped agent Tanya, and B-movie regular Udo Kier, sporting his usual unrecognizable accent and penetrating stare as the Rasputin-like Russian psychic.

The two campaigns — one Soviet, one Allied — play out about how you'd expect, in scenarios of mounting difficulty, with the more exotic units and



**Requirements:** Pentium III 250, 50MB RAM, 30MB free hard space, 50K audio for Internet play. **Recommended Requirements:** Pentium III 500, 128MB RAM, 30 Support: Use Multiplayer Support: Internet LAN or Wireless Dual CD-ROM drives.

**Publisher:** Electronic Arts • **Developer:** Westwood Studios • 315 • www.westwood.com  
ES: G rating: Teen, simulated violence.

## COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT 2

Reviewed by Jason Kapalka

## CGW RATED

### PROS

Nicely polished; lots of bizarrely imaginative units; still has that C&C multiplayer magic.

### CONS

2D engine is getting pretty tired; offers nothing you haven't seen a zillion times before.





**FMV LIVES!** Slightly embarrassed Hollywood actors advance RA2's convoluted storyline.

structures introduced gradually. They're well-designed if you like this sort of thing, featuring lots of recognizable cities and landmarks (the initial Soviet scenario requires you to level the Pentagon).

However, they're often handicapped by the "puzzle game" nature of most single-player RTS scenarios, particularly in the stages that require you to guide a small group of commandos through a maze-like map, seeking the one specific path or tactic that will allow you to beat vastly superior forces.

#### Ah, but the Play's the Thing

As for the gameplay, it can't come as much of a shock to hear that it's fundamentally the same as *TIBERIAN SUN* or *RED ALERT*. Tiberium, et "minerals" are still gathered by harvesters; barracks still produce fragile but cheap infantry; tanks still rush. The "simplified" engine concept mostly means that the multi-level terrain of *TIBERIAN SUN* has been toned down to make room for more special effects and explosions. This works pretty well; for sheer carnage, RA2 is hard to beat, often filling the screen with more units, shrapnel, lightning bolts, lasers, and assorted debns than you can shake a yelping attack dog at.

The interface is essentially the same as in previous games, with a number of welcome reforms. Chief among them is the use of tabs to quickly switch between buildings, defenses, troops, and vehicles—eliminating the frantic scroll-fest of earlier C&C titles. Also gone, mercifully, is *TIBERIAN SUN*'s stillborn waypoint system, replaced here

**RADIATION HAZARD** A nuclear attack renders this section of real estate unbuildable.



**GET ME THE JOINT CHIEFS** A massive Soviet assault on the Pentagon. The White House can also be targeted for laser points.



with a much more intuitive hotkey system similar to *TOTAL ANNIHILATION*'s. The unit-experience system introduced in *TIBERIAN SUN* has also been tweaked, to the point where it's now occasionally useful. Production queuing and rally points are cleanly implemented, but anyone expecting fancier features like *AGE OF KINGS*-style formations will be disappointed—RA2 is still very much a "no 'em" experience rather than an exercise in small unit tactics.

#### And Now the Good News

So far, so blah. The big surprise in RA2 is the unit mix. Where *TIBERIAN SUN* stuck to a conservative mix of tanks and troops with one or two side-specific specialist units, RA2 chucks in everything but the kitchen sink. Yes, your engineers are still here, along with some returning units like super-commando Tanks, but practically everything else is new

Not only do the two sides feature almost completely different unit mixes, but in multiplayer and skirmish mode you can select from one of eight countries, each with a different specialty unit—such as the British Sniper or the Iraqi Desolator. These can make quite a difference, as you'll learn the first time an alarm-bomb-picking suicide van from Libya cruises into your base.

The sheer variety and imagination of the new units (see sidebar) go a long way towards making up for the dated engine. Even versus the computer skirmish opponent, it's a blast playing around with new and exotic tactics. Perhaps a Chrono Legionnaire rush will succeed in erasing your opponent's base from history? Or maybe a wave of mind-controlling commandos can turn your opponent's own troops against him? Only time will tell how finely balanced the units are in multiplayer, but I can honestly say I haven't had this much good old-fashioned fun with an RTS in a long time.

#### We Will Bury You

In the final analysis, RA2 certainly doesn't do much to advance the state of the art, and if you've tired of the real-time strategy genre, it probably won't renew your interest. But the newly-tuned interface and flamboyant units make it an engaging blast from the past for gamers who can overlook the engine. For C&C fans, this is unquestionably the best title in the series; if it's the game *TIBERIAN SUN* should have been. **CGW**

## Red Alert 2's New Units

### SOVIET FORCES

#### Crazy Ivan

This demoliition expert can attach a ticking time-bomb to pretty much anything: passing harvesters, enemy buildings, even wandering civilians or cows.

#### Yuri

These psychic troopers can take control of any one enemy unit, directing its actions until killed.

#### Desolator

The special unit for Iraq is equipped with a massive nuclear cannon. His special ability allows him to bathe a vast swath of land in deadly radiation.

#### Terror Drone

This spider-like robot can snare enemy infantry, but its main task is to disable vehicles by looping inside and tearing them apart from within.

### ALLIED FORCES

#### Chrono Legionnaire

These elite troops can teleport anywhere on the map instantly. Their attack simply erases a unit or building out of time.

#### Spy

These masters of disguise can give you a variety of bonuses, depending on the building they infiltrate. For instance, sneaking into a Tech Base will allow you to build a new super-unit, while hitting a radar station will erase your opponent's map.

#### Mirage Tank

Capable of disguising itself as a tree, this stealth unit can make for some strange Mechtech-like scenarios as a high-caliber forest advance on you.

#### Prism Tower

The Allied response to the Soviet Tesla Coil, Prism Towers multiply their firepower by the number of towers in the "network," that is, within range of each other.

I'LL TUMBLE FOR YA: A variety of great cinematic moments — like this dead bad guy crashing through the ceiling — really add to the game's mood.



9/143



**GETTING\* MEDIUM-EVEL KNIEVEL ON YOU** A few steerable vehicles in the game means you'll have the chance to save bullets by leaning over bad guys on your motorcycle.

NO ONE LIVES FOREVER goes undercover and over the top

## Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!

**T**he glamorous and deadly world of jet-set spies is the ultimate old-boys network, with every rakish covert operative armed with a sly wit, a silenced pistol, and a great big sloppy Y chromosome.

Breaking through the bulletproof glass ceiling would appear an impossible task, a challenge requiring ingenuity, energy, and a daring approach to a seemingly invulnerable obstacle. Breaking through the humdrum design of the average first-person shooter is no less daunting a task, yet

NO ONE LIVES FOREVER shatters the barriers of convention with eventful humor, inventive missions, and tense, gripping action.

### Kitten With a Whip

You play as Cate Archer, a paragon of bravado and confidence sheathed in a skin-tight, psychobolic, leatherette catsuit. A reformed thief and neophyte secret agent for UNITY — a clandestine law and order organization operating for Her Royal Highness — Cate must not only save the world from the evil machinations of HARM, but prove to her superiors and colleagues that an agent can succeed with a metaphorical rather than literal set of big brass thunderballs.

By setting itself in swinging 60's London, NO ONE LIVES FOREVER (NOLF) immediately sets itself apart from other shooters not only in terms of timeframe, but in its attitude as well. With liberal doses of the campy spy fare of the era, NOLF is as much an homage to *Get Smart*, *In Like Flint*, and *The Avengers* as it is classic 007. The cheeky, playful sense of humor that

infuses almost every aspect of the game is one of the principal reasons NOLF is such a pleasure to play. While your arsenal is primarily realistic, most of your special-use gadgets are as tongue-in-cheek *play* as they are useful: cat's eye sunglasses that can scan for mines or lasers, exploding lipstick, a wind-up mechanical poodle for distracting guard dogs, and an enormous mod belt buckle that does double duty as a zipline.

But your inventory pales in comparison to the brilliantly funny dialogue. Much of the humor plays out as straight-faced, classic two-

## NO ONE LIVES FOREVER

Reviewed by Herbert Coffey

**STUCK ON YOU!** Plunk an enemy near a wall with a crossbow bolt, and he'll never get over his hang-ups.



### CGW RATED

#### PROS

Fresh, funny, and challenging—what more do you need?

#### CONS

Cut-scenes are in need of some serious trimming.

**Requirements:** Pentium III 300 CMM 16MB, 32MB free hard drive space, 3D card. **Recommended Requirements:** Pentium III, 128 MB RAM, 300MB free drive space. **3D Support:** DirectX 6.0 Multiplayer Support: LAN Internet via Ethernet (2-10 players)

**Publisher:** Fox Interactive • **Developer:** Monolith • **E-til:** • [www.foxinteractive.com](http://www.foxinteractive.com)  
**ESRB Rating:** Teen; simulated violence, comic mischief, mild language.

person comedy routines, with one NPC acting as the other's straight man. Many of these exchanges take place as overheard dialogue while you sneak through various H.A.R.M. installations, whether it's two scientists offering each other reassuring messages, a cruel guard taunting another about how his eyeballs will be

accepted out, or a foot soldier discovering a slain comrade and flay stating, "This does not look good here - dead person," the one constant is that it's funny. Even the exchanges you have with various deep-cover contacts are funny: A series of sexually suggestive code-phrases leads to your colleagues lamenting the demeaning nature of their remarks, speculating as to how big a loser the cryptographer is, and observing, "Those code-phrases have a rather confessional nature, don't you think?" Appropriately cartoonish voice-acting and clever dialogue make it all work.

Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the frequently memorable cut-scenes. While the game successfully plays as an interactive spy movie, the in-engine cut-scenes often as not bring the action to a grinding halt. Yes, they do a good job of pushing the engaging twists and turns of the story forward, but they go on for so many lengthy and unrelated tangents that you are likely to find yourself skipping them, and thus following plot elements that set up the following mission.

So, what are you likely to find yourself skipping the space bar to skip them, and thus following plot elements that set up the following mission.

### Spy Hard

NOLF is broken up into 15 episodes, each mission-based, each with several levels, each with a variety of objectives that are likely to change mid-mission. And many of those missions, especially in the latter half of the game, are hard.

But the inventiveness and variety make even the toughest of the missions compelling. The tip-off that these won't be your ordinary shooter levels comes with your very first assignment: Charged with protecting a thick-headed diplomat, you set up a hotel room and snipe at a slew of would-be assassins. This

shooting gallery mission is a far cry from the typical run-and-gun. And the missions just keep getting better. You'll have to escape a



**SPACE JUNK** A nuclear reactor during a space station mission forces you to look for an escape pod, or die trying.



**FEELING GROOVY** In the swinging '60s, even laser-cut assassinations have groovy aesthetics.

sinking ship, battle attack copters from an Alpine train, and sneak past scores of surveillance cameras to stow away on a spaceship. You'll even free-fall from a crashing plane - whizzing past flocks of geese, shooting at pursuing skydivers - all while you plummet towards a bad guy in order to commendee ho parachute. It's thrilling, it's challenging, and it's incredible fun.

Even the more straightforward missions reflect the same care and attention to detail that make them stand above the average shooter. The walls of that sinking ship groan and buckle as it collapses under water pressure, harpoons from your spear-gun will pin enemy scuba divers to walls, and your adventures aboard a space station are interrupted by a catastrophic meteor storm. And when you face off against a boss, most of the time it defies the usual "fire rocket launcher at museum" prototype: In one boss encounter, you have one frozen minute to herd innocent civilians off the streets; in another, you are charged with the best mission objective ever - "Kick Armstrong's Ass."

### Kiss Me Deadly

As fanciful as much of NOLF is, a lot of the game's rewards come as a result of its real-world elements. The nerve-wracking stealth missions ramp up tension, thanks to surveillance cameras that set off alarms when they pass over dead bodies, guards that not only hear you but pursue you, and the very logical fact that shooting out security cameras will alert security personnel that something is not as it should be. As in ROGUE SPEAR (and real life), you're much more accurate firing your weapon when



**ENTRAPMENT** A cleverly innocuous vent is revealed to be an Italian trap thanks to your stylish laser-defeating neighbor.



**PUPPET GOVERNMENT** Meet the brains behind the global force for evil that is H.A.R.M. - a bad puppet.

standing still - but you're an easier target if you do.

And don't let the general bulletoney of your enemies fool you - these are some tough adversaries. The AI will run and alert other guards, fan out and take cover when attacking you in packs, exploit higher ground when possible, and trigger alarms if threatened. But they don't cheat. They have the same weapons as you and the same vulnerability, there's just more of them.

Real-world weapons such as a .38 revolver or a firm submachine gun form the bulk of your arsenal, though there is a rocket-launcher disguised as a briefcase. What really makes a difference in damage are your bullets: Dumdum bullets pound enemy flesh, phosphorus rounds keep burning after they hit, and cyanide-tipped bullets slowly poison (and will make you hallucinate a floating flock of bleating goats). There are no traditional power-ups in the game, so while you'll be able to pick up new body armor during a mission, you generally won't be able to repair health damage. And forget about an invisibility or quad damage boost.

NOLF pretty much hits every nail square on the head. Except for the painfully long cut-scenes and an inability to review the intelligence you pick up during a mission, the designers have created a slyly funny game that deftly combines bullet-spraying action, Thelma-style sneaking, and imaginative storytelling. NO ONE LIVES FOREVER is the best single-player shooter of the year. **CGW**

# HALF COUNTER

The #1 Online



Real weapons mean real damage in this tactical action thriller



Win more rounds – your team earns more “mooney” to buy bigger and better weapons.



Complete strategic objectives with your team – your every action impacts your teammates.

## Plus The Ultimate Collection of Half-Life Multiplayer Games:

- Half-Life Multiplayer
- Opposing Force™ Multiplayer
- Team Fortress Classic™
- Wanted
- Redemption
- Firearms





# HALF-LIFE™

## STRIKE

### Multiplayer Game

Arm yourself with real-world weapons from Sig Sauer's to C4. Complete diverse and challenging strategic missions in several real-world locations. Demolish enemy sites, rescue hostages, or just wipe up the floor with the opposition in this wildly popular team-based game based on the award-winning Half-Life engine.

## THE COMPLETE HALF-LIFE MULTIPLAYER EXPERIENCE

SIERRA  
STUDIOS

gearbox  
GAMES

DEVELOPED BY

VALVE

[www.sierrastudios.com](http://www.sierrastudios.com)



ESRB RATING  
RP  
RATED EVERYONE  
CONTENT RATED FOR ALL AGES

Visit [www.esrb.org](http://www.esrb.org)  
or call 1-800-771-3772  
for more info.

CFS2 revisits the South Pacific, and keeps it fun

# Beyond Midway

**W**hen I was a kid, I used to hang out at the army base when my dad worked, and read the U.S. Army Field Manuals. Back then, a lot of content in those manuals was in comic book format, and was surprisingly well done. The 300-plus page COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2 (CFS2) manual reminds me of those old army manuals, with a slightly updated, edgier style. The in-game cut-scenes and interface screens use the same comic style as well.

This style provides some real atmosphere – the kind that's missing in many sims. It's also a testament to the attention to detail in CFS2. The flight combat adheres to the same level of detail, though some other areas are lacking a bit.

## Naval Gazing

CFS2 focuses on naval aviation, for the most part. While there are nods to the American and Japanese army fliers, the two campaigns focus on these nations' navies. In either case, you'll play a fighter pilot flying carrier-based aircraft, though you will sometimes fly from ground-based steps. While the campaigns are scripted, they differ considerably from

the first game in this series; there are more missions, and the campaign structure allows for branching. The missions are consistent, so your default aircraft makes sense in their contexts. You can start a pilot's career at any number of key times during the war, usually at the point of a major battle.

There are some oddities. Despite being an ensign, you are always in command of a flight. And if you start later in the war, everyone in your squadron is still a rookie. There are clearly gameplay-balancing enhancements, and don't detract from the

overall historical feel (for me, anyway). More odd, however, was the ability to change the default aircraft to planes that simply didn't make sense – allowing a P-38 to be chosen for a carrier mission, or letting a Japanese pilot pick an F6F Hellcat.

During a career, there are a series of fairly generic missions, punctuated by major real battles. For example, when flying as a Japanese pilot, there were a number of bomber intercept missions while based in New Guinea, followed by the Battle of the Coral Sea. In fact, the generic missions are often fairly easy, whereas the historical missions can be pretty tough.

## Take to the Sky

CFS2's manual gives some performance specs for all the planes in the game – flyable and non-flyable – but missing are some crucial speeds and feeds like *V<sub>max</sub>* (velocity never exceed, the plane's safest maximum speed), *V<sub>max</sub>* (speed at which the plane can turn the tightest), and *V<sub>max</sub>* (speed at which you land). The CFS2 team researched deeper performance specs of the game's planes, but found conflicting data, and for this reason decided to omit these specs. Still, giving some idea as to what these speeds are for each plane would have been awfully helpful.

The flight models seem a bit forgiving, but they do behave properly. It's fairly easy to get yourself into a spin if you're not paying attention, but spin recovery is pretty straightforward, even in a twitchy plane like the F4U-1A Corsair. Torque seems to be properly modeled, and at the

highest settings, you have to manage your energy properly in order to be successful. In fact, energy management is the name of the game, because the AI has been programmed to manage energy much like human pilots. The overall AI is considerably improved over the previous CFS; I didn't see any undamaged AI planes asper in, though I did witness two dumbwits collide with each other on takeoff. At the highest settings, the AI pilots seem to take advantage of the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of their individual aircraft. Hellcat pilots will try "boom and zoom" tactics, whereas Zero pilots will try to engage you in a "knife fight" or turning battle. Note that whatever your flight model settings, the AI will always use the most realistic flight model.

Where CFS2 excels is in the ability to make you feel like you're flying World War II

## COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2: WAR IN THE PACIFIC

reviewed by Lloyd Cole

**FOREIGN RELATIONS** A Hellcat sends its warm regards to a Japanese base.



Requirements: Pentium III 266MHz, 32MB RAM, AMD graphics card, 256MB hard drive space, 4x CD-ROM.

3D Support: DirectX MultiPlayer Support: None, TDFM: the Sims

Publisher: Microsoft • \$49 • www.microsoft.com/games  
ESRB Rating: Everyone



## CGW RATED

### PROS

Great visuals; excellent combat feel and atmosphere; accessible; highly expandable.

### CONS

The world outside the aircraft seems sparse; limited multiplayer options.



**LOADED FOR BEAR** An P-51 Mustang packing rockets and looking for trouble.



**TERROR FROM ABOVE** A Zero prepares to strike these U.S. carriers.



**FLYING SHOTGUN** A P-51 escorts for a B-24 on a bombing run.



**THE PATTERN IS FULL** The P-51 buzzes the carrier before taking to the air.



**OH-PIE!** The P-51 cockpit has a lot of controls.

birds over the Pacific. The scale of some of the missions is enormous, and fuel management becomes critical. The aircraft models themselves are highly detailed, with moving control surfaces (even cow! flaps), fully-functional cockpit controls, and even retractable canopies. CFS2's career (campaign) mode avoids the "re-fly to get it right" syndrome; you can actually fail to achieve mission goals for several consecutive missions before getting the boot. But if your pilot actually dies, you either have to re-fly the mission or be willing to start a new career.

In addition to career mode, there are training missions and a number of stand-alone missions based on actual historical flights by Pacific War aces on both sides. Some of the stand-alone missions have a lot of aircraft in the sky, and even a fast system can bog down a bit. There's also a quick random-mission creator for instant action buffs.

Multipayer is limited to flying against other humans (no AI aircraft or co-op mode), but you can fly on teams.

### Flight and Fight

Combat in the air is a pure joy, even when you're outnumbered and outgunned. Control response is crisp, and CFS2 supports multiple controllers, much like its civil aviation cousin; force-feedback is also supported, if flew with rudder, throttle, and stick — all of which behaved just like you'd expect. The padlock system works well if you're in virtual cockpit mode, and the view system is uniformly excellent. Near the ground, the level of detail starts to fall a bit. You have ample opportunity for close air support — during one mission, I flew right along the front lines between U.S. Marines and the Imperial Japanese Army. But you never see any activity on the ground; vehicles don't seem to

move, nor are there human figures dashing across the landscape. Naval missions seem a little more robust — if two enemy vessels encounter each other, they'll fight, but carrier operations seem sterile. When attacking enemy carriers, I never caught them with planes on the deck, which happened on a number of occasions during the war in the Pacific.

Clearly, Microsoft put the lion's share of its efforts into the fighter pilot experience. Even the choice of flyable aircraft is limited to fighters; you can't fly torpedo- or dive-bombers. However, like CFS1 and FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2000, CFS2 boasts an open architecture. Already, flyable versions of American carrier attack aircraft have appeared on fan sites (see [thehangar.dog-fighter.com](http://thehangar.dog-fighter.com) for some examples). The sim feels and looks best when you're in the air-to-air battles.

### Room to Grow

As noted above, CFS2 has an open architecture, so the cottage industry of add-on makers for CFS1 is busy working on add-ons for CFS2.

However, owners of the game have some terrific options as well. Microsoft shipped a mission creator in the box. The mission builder is a sophisticated tool that allows you to build missions with multiple triggers, scripted events, and semi-random encounters. You can even create your own campaign, though that means learning the file format for the campaign files, which are simply text files.

If you want to experience CFS2 in all its simulation goodness, there's a price to pay. The system requirements are pretty steep if you want to burn on all the features. But Microsoft's newest combat sim is such a tremendous improvement over the original, sim buffs owe it to themselves to check it out. **CGW**

NHL 2001 shoots and scores

# Shot on Goal

**E**A Sports' NHL series has consistently sold a bazillion copies and thrilled arcade hockey gamers with hyper-kinetic action and enough zyc and ear candy to make Dreamworks jealous. But the game frustrated those who were looking for a truly realistic NHL simulation. When Fox dropped production of the only other PC hockey simulation (NHL CHAMPIONSHIP 2000), the oh-so-wise pundits predicted that — with no competition to drive significant realism improvements — NHL 2001 would just be more of the same. We were wrong. Good gosh almighty, we were wrong. If you don't like NHL 2001, then you don't like PC hockey games. Or PC sports games. You probably don't even like to have fun. You may be dead.



## NHL 2001

rated by Jeff Leckey

Sports has always nailed in this series, with nearly photo-realistic recreations of every rink in the NHL, players that actually look like their real-life counterparts, cut-scenes between plays that display players chatting with teammates and coaches giving advice on the bench, and much more. The background music, the crowd chanting, the reverberation of matted slap shots banging into the boards — everything here pulls you into the game in a way that is unsurpassed by any sports game on any platform. If you have a speedy machine and a good 3D video card, turn your

### Have It Your Way

All of the jaw-dropping graphics and special effects are back in spades. This is one area that EA Sports has always nailed in this series, with nearly photo-realistic recreations of every rink in the NHL, players that actually look like their real-life counterparts, cut-scenes between plays that display players chatting with teammates and coaches giving advice on the bench, and much more. The background music, the crowd chanting, the reverberation of matted slap shots banging into the boards — everything here pulls you into the game in a way that is unsurpassed by any sports game on any platform. If you have a speedy machine and a good 3D video card, turn your

**3 ON 2** A nice pass to the open player results in a goal.



speakers up to 11, crank this baby up, and show it to your buddy when he brags about his super console games. But you already knew that NHL 2001 would be a superstar in the sound and graphics departments. So what makes NHL 2001 such a revolutionary step in this franchise?

It's the sliders. The glorious, miraculous sliders. In a burst of inspired genius, the designers of NHL 2001 must have scratched



**I WAS HERE FIRST** Cut-scenes show players jockeying for position before the face-off.

their heads and said "Instead of trying to determine the perfect game-play settings, why not just let the gamers configure that for themselves?" And thus was born the first hockey sim that can please everyone from the wild-eyed action gamer who wants a rock'em-sock'em arcade-feel, to the hardcore NHL realism aficionado. You can adjust 17 facets of gameplay, such as game speed, aggressiveness, hitting power, frequency of injuries, frequency of penalties, goalie skills, shot accuracy, and much more. EA, in effect, lets you program the game to play it the way you like it. Think that the passing is too accurate? Bump the passing-accuracy slider down a notch or two, and say goodbye to end-to-end pinpoint passes. You say you're still learning the game and you like everything, but you just can't score yet? Keep your goalie's skill level up and drop the opposing keeper's slider down, until you have competitive games. You complain that you've measured the elasticity of the pucks used in the

**NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK** The new expansion teams in Minnesota and Columbus are included.



**Requirements:** Pentium 200 MHz or AMD K6-III, 32MB RAM, 100MB hard drive space, supported 4MS or higher CD and DVD or 48MB drives, 4X CDROM

**Recommended Requirements:** Pentium 4 500 MHz, 64MB RAM, 200MB hard drive space, 1X CDROM, 3D Support: OpenGL 1.1c

**Multiplayer Support:** 2-4 players over LAN network or Internet via EA server or ICQ/VE

**Publisher:** Electronic Arts • **Developer:** EA Canada • **ESRB Rating:** Everyone

## CGW RATED

### PROS

All the eye and ear candy you'd expect from an EA Sports game; the ability to tailor almost every aspect of gameplay.

### CONS

The computer scores for too frequently from the blue line and beyond; defensive AI is still a peg short of ideal; online play is spotty.



NHL, at rink temperatures and they bounce too much in NHL 2001? Get a life. Then, lower the puck-elasticity slider until the game meets your scholarly ideals.

The result is a hockey game that is a lot of fun and a real challenge for every taste. In addition, some of the other bugbears of previous games in the franchise have either been eliminated or severely reduced. No longer are there super-goals that stop every shot, save a few from specific sweet spots. Goals in NHL 2001 are generally satisfying. While some of the AI goals will be quick "where did THAT come from?" slap shots (and these occur in the real NHL), many are the result of pretty plays on the computer's part and/or mistakes on your part. Goals from your team are usually the result of nice one-timers, deflections, rebounds, and even the occasional blast from the point. Unfortunately, all is not perfection: Your AI foes will often fire a shot from halfway across the ice that slides right past your goalie, far more frequently than occurs in real life. (Note: EA has released a patch that is supposed to help alleviate this problem.)

#### In the Net

While the configuration sliders are the key to the paradigm shift in NHL 2001, there are other improvements of note. A momentum meter displays the shift in that intangible factor, with big plays, big hits, and goals contributing to a team's gain in momentum and the resulting boost in play. The franchise mode, while still limited to 10 years, features AI general managers who are quite a bit smarter than last year. As for fighting: It's lame. Turn it off. Get a Dreamcast and ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHALLENGE if you want a fighting game.

There are a couple of other areas that still need improvement.

Defenders often stand and watch a forward blow by them before they decide to turn and give chase. The computer doesn't readily strike terror in your heart when they get a power play. And online play appears to be very spotty right now. But even with those minor flaws

— as well as the more significant frequent long-range AI scoring problem — NHL 2001 is a gem. By setting the new standard in user configurability, the designers of NHL 2001 have completely disproved the old saying that "the surest way to failure is to try to please everybody." NHL 2001 is the game that hockey fans have been waiting for. **CGW**

**IT WAS A BANANA PEEL, REF**  
A 50% hockey action behind the play.



**LISTEN UP!** Coaches give their players a little advice reorganizational.



## Who's keeping score?

Chalk up another victory and hang your fallen enemy on the wall. Introducing Global Rankings™ — your tool for tracking all your game scores, statistics, and world rankings. With FREE real-time automatic reporting you can easily check the results when you're done playing your favorite games. Find out who has the most kills with the rocket launcher or who's always cumping out. User-managed leagues let you compete against your friends or take on a rival clan. Isn't it time you take your game to the next level?

You kick ass, we'll take the names.

[www.globalrankings.com](http://www.globalrankings.com)

Look for Global Rankings in these killer games:



**GLOBAL RANKINGS™**

Global Rankings is a trademark of HerMc. Designated trademarks and brands are the property of their respective owners.

2quick4u  
Chris C. @ 2qu  
www.2qu4u.com



## SUPERBIKE 2001

Reviewed by Greg Furlan

**TRACTION TIME** The game engine comes standard with a 3D, 64-bit model, which comes in handy during those "accidental flips."

Superbike 2001 earns the right to wear boots and a cape

# It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's...



**S**ome activities are reserved for Supermen, no matter how badly we mere mortals wish this were not the case. Piloting jet fighters. Performing black ops missions. Driving Indy cars, dragsters, or production race bikes. These are professions so overloaded on intensity and adrenaline that some of us can't help but wish we could take part in them just once. The goal of a simulation should be to give the player a small taste of what an experience like that might be like, without the nasty "give up everything else in your life" side effects that usually go along with it. To that end, SUPERBIKE 2001 is an outstanding gem.

### Time to Get Schooled!

The courses are incredibly detailed and a joy to ride. Every twist and turn of each track is faithfully reproduced, all the way down to the

little dips, bumps, and rough patches that add character to a course. Three new courses have been added since last year's offering — bringing the total number of tracks up to 15 — and they make great additions to the game. In order to race competitively on any of these tracks, you have to know the track you're riding in detail. You've got to know where to pass, where to stay cool, which corners are longer than you think and what gear to take the second chicane in. While other games may leave this all for you to figure out, SUPERBIKE 2001 provides you with a corner-by-corner tutorial of each track. Let me tell you, this is a great feature! In fact, after running through the tutorials for a couple of the tracks, I eagerly switched to manual transmission mode so I could be sure to use the proper gearing for each turn. I really appreciated the fact that the help system gave me information that allowed me to be more in control of the bike on a higher-difficulty setting, rather than just restating the obvious. Also new this year is a practice mode, so you can now get the hang of the tracks riding solo before having to worry about traffic.

These two new features alone make this a worthy successor to SUPERBIKE 2001.

## CGW RATED

### PROS

The best road racing game out there, for arcade- and sim-racers alike; a complete lack of game crashes, bugs, and other annoyances.

### CONS

There's only so much time in the day...

**HOW'S THAT AGAIN?** The nicely-detailed tutorial walks you through the course visually and verbally, with lots of tips about optimal gearing and changing road surfaces. Would you like tips with that?



**Requirements:** Pentium or 486 200 MHz, 32 MB RAM, 400 MB hard-disk space **Recommended Requirements:** Pentium II or 473 MHz, 64 MB RAM, 3D Support: Direct 3D Multiplayer Support: 2-6 players over Internet or LAN, 2 play: split-screen mode.

Publisher: EA Sports • Developer: EA Sports • CD • www.easports.com  
E3/13 Rating: Everyone

### The Way I See It

The external racing views and the replay system remain relatively unchanged since last year, which is fine, given just how good these already were. Helmet cams, however, have been greatly improved. Now, rather than having your helmet remain directly over the handlebars, your point-of-view actually shifts off axis from the bike, just as your head would if you were actually leaning into a turn. At first, this shift in POV is quite disorienting, but after a couple of laps I forgot all about racing from the third-person viewpoint.

**JUST HANGIN' OUT** Here's a helmet-cam view heading into a chicane. Notice how your point of view is not directly over the bars, adding to the impression of the leaning bike.



**TWO CLOSE TO THE ROAD** The front-view view ranks for some great replays, but is one of two views that are almost completely useless while actually playing.



**THE LONG WALK HOME** With tail crashes turned on, you'll have to walk all the way back to your bike, pick it up, and do a running start. Great for burning off those extra calories!



**LOOK, MA, NO BIKE!** The online-cybernetic riders advance by through the air with flailing arms and kicking legs. While entertaining, these maneuvers aren't recommended for turning in their local time.



The new helmet-cam view is not only completely usable, but from my experience, preferable. It's definitely one of those little things that make a huge difference. I went back and played SUPERBIKE 2000 a while to see if I was over-reacting, and I don't think I am. The head motion actually helps you get into that zone where disbelief is suspended and you forget that you're playing a video game, not riding a bike. When accelerating out of a turn at full throttle, you can almost sense the asphalt sliding away mere inches from your knees.

Bike setup is a breeze, and the effects of each setup decision are nicely explained right there in the interface. Oddly, you must actually get onto the track and enter the pits before you can tweak your bike; but you can do that in any mode, including training mode. Once you have the bike dialed in the way you like it, you can save your configuration for use later. In fact, you can create a different bike setup for each track in training mode, then load and unload the settings when you decide to race. On a level track with long straights, you'll want stiffer springs and a higher top end. On a course with lots of tight corners and short straight sections, that setup would be disastrous! The ability to get your bike completely dialed in for each course and to save your configurations for a run at the championship is an extremely nice feature that will be appreciated by anyone looking

to compete on the higher difficulty levels.

Multiplayer options in SUPERBIKE 2001 are pretty standard, with the game supporting LAN and Internet games over IP. The manual claims that the game can support up to eight players, but strongly recommends that you restrict yourself to six or fewer players for performance reasons. If you are going to max out the engine, you'd better be sure you're running it on some pretty fast iron. There's also a split-screen option that is surprisingly playable, though you'll have to be content with the third-person viewpoint in this mode. Since there's no persistent online community for SUPERBIKE 2001, you'll need to know the IP address of the machine hosting the game in order to connect across the network. For those looking for a modem-to-modem connection, you unfortunately won't find it here.

### Here They Come Down the Back Straight...

After spending many hours playing SUPERBIKE 2001, I can honestly say it is the best motorcycle road racing game I have ever played. It's smooth, fast, stable, and a whole lot of fun. With lots of difficulty options, you should have no trouble finding a setup that works with your skill level. If you are a racing sim enthusiast, this is one game that is well worth the price of admission. **CGW**

**SPLIT PERSONALITY** The split-screen mode allows you to race pretty effectively against another rider on one machine. You will, however, lose the 300-horsepower win.





**MIDTOWN MADNESS** The world of Stark is all for technological glory.

THE LONGEST JOURNEY is one of the year's best adventures

# Fantastic Voyage

## THE LONGEST JOURNEY

reviewed by Audrey Wells

**T**HE LONGEST JOURNEY, Funcom's stunning adventure game, finally made available to U.S. audiences after months of delays, deals with the age-old notions of the conflicts between science and magic, rationality and irrationality, reality and fantasy. In THE LONGEST JOURNEY, the world has been divided in two. There is Stark, a bleak technological wasteland, and Arcadia, a whimsical but stagnant world of magic.

They were separated from each other long ago to prevent humankind from mindlessly destroying their world and themselves.

A force called the Balance – watched over by a Guardian – sustains the separation. The two worlds have been divided for so long, that it would be catastrophic for them to be reunited if the moment wasn't right. Unfortunately, the moment is not right and the Guardian is nowhere to be found. The Balance is collapsing and the magical world of Arcadia is leaking into Stark, causing all kinds of disorder. There's only one person who can thwart the impending destruction.

There's only one person who can thwart the impending destruction.



**DO YOU PLAY D&D?** What would the magical realm of Arcadia be without a few dragons?

across the hall and meeting her art competition deadline. She has a small but supportive circle of friends, a job at the local cafe, and a room to herself. What more could a girl want?

It all begins with April's strange dreams of fantastic creatures and ethereal places during the night, a growing source of anxiety for the budding artist. All is not well when the delicate Balance begins to collapse – the dreams are no longer confined to sleep. Soon, other-worldly creatures and scenes begin appearing from out of thin air, to the astonishment of April and other Stark citizens. With the help of an enigmatic and shadowy man, April learns of Stark's sister-world, the Balance, the missing Guardian, and her unique talent for "shifting" or traveling between the worlds. As a Shifter, April has a duty to help restore the Balance before it's too late.

**COLOR ME OVERWHELMED** April Ryan, burgeoning artist and the sister of our era, but lives large worlds.



### So, Who's the Lucky Heroine?

The fate of both of the worlds rests on the young shoulders of April Ryan, who happens to have an intricate destiny laid out for her and a knack for traveling between these two parallel worlds – though she doesn't know it just yet. At first, the 18-year-old appears to be leading an unremarkable life in Stark. She recently left home to escape a suppressive family and to pursue an art degree. Her only major troubles in life were dealing with the jerk

Requirements: Pentium 486MHz MMX, 32 MB RAM, VGA video card with 7 MB RAM, CD-ROM load drive speed. Recommended Requirements: Pentium

55MHz, 64 MB RAM, 1 GB hard drive space, 3D Support: Best 3D Multiplayer Support: None

Publisher: 3D Sportsy • Developer: Funcom • \$49 • www.longestjourney.com • ESRB Rating: Mature



### CGW RATED

#### PROS

Superb graphics, unparalleled depth of storyline, characters, and dialogue.

#### CONS

Dialogue may be too lengthy for some.



### And We Do Mean "Longest"

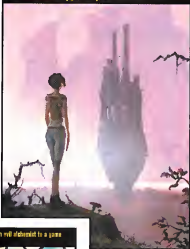
THE LONGEST JOURNEY does not skimp on gameplay, unfolding over 13 lengthy, gorgeously rendered chapters. Over the course of the game's intricate plot, you will encounter a delightful assortment of characters, puzzles, and locales. There's a lot to accomplish before it's all over, making for a thoroughly satisfying gaming experience.

The game often revolves around lengthy conversations between April and other characters, fundamental to understanding the story. The length of the conversations is usually a treat rather than a nuisance because the voice-acting is superb, the script is well written, and the characters are all unique and interesting. Subtitles are available, and it's a simple matter to ESCAPE your way through dialogue after reading it if you find it tedious to listen (but I don't recommend this).

The characters in THE LONGEST JOURNEY are truly a motley group, ranging from profanity-spouting neighbors and openly homo-sexual landladies in Stark, to blue-skinned women and strange creatures who "flow with time" (rather than living in the present) in Arcadia. Profanity is used maturely and is never gratuitous, but makes the game unsuitable for younger children. The game also has an underlying sense of humor, providing welcome moments of comic reprieve. April and a few other characters impart some truly witty comments and perform some actions—like challenging an evil alchemist to a game of hopscotch—that will make you laugh despite the game's serious subject matter.

Puzzles in THE LONGEST JOURNEY are very well orchestrated.

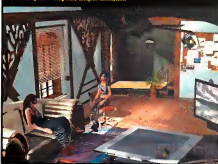
**ART SCHOOL THE LONGEST JOURNEY features some of the best rendered art and cut-scenes in any game this year.**



**WE INTERRUPT THIS EPIC...** One of the funny moments: April challenges an evil alchemist to a game of hopscotch.



**SO, ABOUT THAT RENT CHECK...** April deals with her free-spirited landlady, one of the game's most rich, complex characters.



Many of them are straightforward and relatively simple, which help keep the focus on the story, but there are a few really clever stumblers that present a hearty challenge for even the most seasoned of adventure gamers. All of the puzzles can be solved with a good dose of logical thinking and perseverance. None are so ridiculous or unfair to the point that you'll need hints to get past them.

### A Real Gem

The game's interface is blissfully uncomplicated, sticking to the standard adventure game point-and-click formula. Pressing the 'X' key helps beginners by indicating the available exits on screen. A conversation log keeps track of all the game's dialogue for future reference, and April's diary gives an ongoing, absorbing account of the story from April's point of view (and provides a few clues as well). You can also replay any of the dazzling video cut-scenes. Features such as these make THE LONGEST JOURNEY easily approachable whether you're an adventure gaming novice or aficionado, and add much to the overall quality.

The excellent storyline, medley of interesting characters, well-written dialogue, challenging puzzles, and wonderfully cinematic musical score will leave an impression on you for quite some time. And perhaps best of all, the game's graphics are absolutely stunning, without a doubt, this is some of the best artwork I have ever seen in a game. As is true in all the best games, it's quite clear that the designers, artists, musicians, and programmers of THE LONGEST JOURNEY poured their hearts and souls into this game, and what emerges is not just a great game but a work of art. **CGW**

METAL GEAR SOLID is the best console port ever

# High Gear



**A**dventure games aren't dead, they've moved to the consoles and discovered guns.

Our brothers-in-arms at *Electronic Gaming Monthly* give **METAL GEAR SOLID** (MGS) a full set of 10's, making it one of only a handful of perfect games and – therefore – one of the best console games ever made. It's not the greatest PC game ever, but MGS is still a top-notch game that offers the best espionage/action/adventure blend out there.

While the gameplay and graphics are top notch, the plot and dialogue in MGS have lost a little something in the transition from Japanese to English. As a result, the game feels like a cross between a James Bond movie and a soap opera, punctuating the phenomenal action sequences with stilted speeches stuffed with failed sexual innuendo. And, unfortunately, there's more dialogue here than there is in most movies. At times, you may feel like you're listening to a book on tape.

## METAL GEAR SOLID

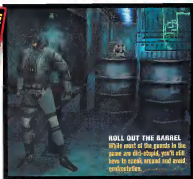
reviewed by  
Alia Handy

### Psychic Enemy Network

**METAL GEAR SOLID** brings some of the most viscerally fun gameplay there is to the PC. While there are several frenzied action sequences, it's MGS's nerve-rackingly tense stealth missions that set it apart. Quietly snapping a guard's neck while trying not to be seen by surveillance cameras just doesn't get old. And even when it does start to get repetitive, MGS will surprise you with something new and unexpected at every turn. For example, after half an hour of sneaking around the main building, you exit and are faced with a tank, a minefield, and no place to hide. This game also features the only sniper vs. sniper combat I've seen in a game, and it's gripping. Some scenes may feel contrived, but you'll still be hooked from start to finish.

The main reason MGS was considered perfect on the PlayStation side is that it was designed with that console in mind. For instance, during Snake's confrontation with Psycho Mantis – an elite psychic bad guy – there are three separate occasions when the game uses PlayStation hardware to drive points home: reading your memory cards, numbing your controller, and even, at one point, forcing you to move your controller from the player-one slot into the player-two slot to avoid your enemy's psychic probes. This is pretty much lost on the PC, and with it goes some of the game's creepy charm.

The PC port makes up for some of **METAL GEAR SOLID**'s shortcomings by including the



**ROLL OUT THE BARREL** While most of the barrels in the game are disarmed, you'll still have to sneak around and avoid detection.



**WORK IT, GIRLS** In the VR Missions, you can do photo shoots with virtual girls from the game.

**HIND QUARTERS** One of many cut-scenes reveals this bad guy that will come after you later in the game. Better find those sniper rifles.



online VR Missions disc that was sold as a separate game for the PlayStation. Thus, MGS can't be considered to be too short or too one-sided, since VR Missions add hours of extra gameplay. The extra missions are a welcome bonus, since the variety of gameplay in MGS will keep you glued for long stretches. If you've got the time, you may even beat the game in one or two sittings.

### Say What?

The constantly changing and morphing storyline will keep you interested and in stitches (unintentionally). The dialogue is rife with sexual suggestion, so Snake is constantly hitting on any female who appears on his comlink. While in Japan, the game's sexual tension and symbolism were well received and made perfect sense; in the U.S., it's a bit like watching a *Godzilla* movie: The action's great, but the characters can get annoying and laughable.

That doesn't necessarily make MGS any less of a game. In some cases, it makes it more enjoyable, much the same way the original **RESIDENT EVIL** was loved for its B-movie-style cut-scenes. If you can get past some of the preacher moments, there really is a decent message behind the MGS script: It remains to be seen, however, if gamers will accept videogames with a moral to their stories. Fortunately, with a great game like **METAL GEAR SOLID** leading the way, we may soon see more social awareness and poetic storytelling in our games. **CGW**

Requirements: Pentium III 350, 32MB RAM, 300MB free disk space, 3D Support: OpenGL, level 2.8. Multiplayer Support: low

Publisher: Microsoft • Developer: Konami • CD • www.mgsoc.com  
EPRS Rating: Mature; sexual blood and violence, mature comic themes.

## CGW RATED

### PROS

Fast, funny, innovative gameplay with added bonus of VR Missions.

### CONS

Some of the Godzilla-caliber, PlayStation-specific dialogue hasn't changed.



# EVIL DEAD

## HAIL TO THE KING

GROOVY

CHAINSAWS, BOOMSTICKS,  
AND DEADITES, OH MY!

SLICE AND DICE THE UNDEAD  
WITH A WEAPON IN EACH HAND.

FIGHT EVIL ACROSS THE SPANS OF TIME: FROM  
THE INFAMOUS CABIN TO ANCIENT DAMASCUS.

BEST OF ALL . . .  
BRUCE CAMPBELL AS ASH!



Screenshots from Sega Dreamcast



Dreamcast

WINDOWS  
95/98



HEAVY  
IRON  
STUDIOS

THQ

[WWW.EVILDEADGAME.COM](http://WWW.EVILDEADGAME.COM)



Great commanders don't do grunt work.

No matter what anyone says, the trowel is not mightier than the sword. With SideWinder Strategic Commander, you can finally focus on commanding your army. That's because a quick push of a button will order the construction of vast infrastructures. Assemble legions of troops. Delegate entire fields. Or jump to any spot on the battlefield. Set it up with your keyboard and mouse. Customize it for 72 different chores. And let it do the dirty work so you're free to strategize at the speed of thought. It won't, however, choreograph your victory jig. But we're working on that.



MICROSOFT

**SIDEWINDER**  
STRATEGIC COMMANDER

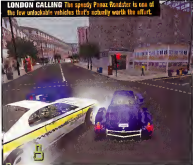
[www.microsoft.com/sidewinder](http://www.microsoft.com/sidewinder)

**IS THERE A PROBLEM, OFFICER?**

One of my mid-90s fantasies: driving a fire truck the wrong way up Lombard Street in San Francisco, is thwarted by middlemen caps.

**LONDON CALLING**

The speedy Proton Roadster is one of the few unlockable vehicles that's actually worth the effort.



MIDTOWN MADNESS 2 is great fun, but needs a tune-up

# Get Thee to a Jiffy Lube!

If for nothing else, **MIDTOWN MADNESS 2** may be remembered as the only racing game ever to feature a bad Michael Caine impersonator loudly paraphrasing Shakespeare as you drive. Sometimes it's hilarious, sometimes it's insufferable — and that just about perfectly

describes the game itself. Microsoft's arcade-style urban racer offers lots of cheap thrills and easy-on-the-brain racing action. But keep your expectations low, make sure you have a robust system, and don't expect any semblance of realism — or you're liable to do what I did: break a brand-new joystick in a fit of rage.

**MIDTOWN MADNESS 2** gets immediate points because its concept is cool, and one that lezzled urban dwellers cannot help but appreciate. As in the first game (set in Chicago), Microsoft and developer Angel Studios have made vehicular playgrounds out of two cities — San Francisco and London — that are nightmares for drivers in real life, and thus a total blast on the computer where anything goes. It's a great idea, but the execution is flawed

back (Checkpoint, Circuit, Blitz, and Cruise), along with the entertaining new Crash Course "career" mode, which tests you in a series of increasingly difficult races in each city. In San Francisco, you're training to be a movie stunt driver, and as the other side of the pond, you're learning your way around London by driving a cab. Each Crash Course lesson is short, with a specific goal — like making you pop a 180 and hit a checkpoint in just a few seconds. I like the idea a lot, but the problem is just that it could have been way better. And that's the problem with **MIDTOWN MADNESS 2** in general: It's an underachiever.

First of all, the selection of vehicles is dull, and the way in which new cars are "unlocked" as you win races — in the Crash Course and elsewhere — is unrewarding. Half the vehicles are simply rebrands from the first game. And while some of the new ones (like the Audi TT and Beetle RS1) are fast and responsive, others, like the fire truck, are just ridiculous. Yes, it's fun to drive the fire truck once as a novelty, but then you'll just go back to the same three or four cars you can actually use to win races. It's a problem repeated throughout the game: lousy rewards (like new paint jobs) for winning tough races.

The game's physics engine and damage model are also weak. Cars can take repeated head-on collisions with no apparent damage, only to fall apart completely on the very next hit. The opponent AI seems to have two settings: brain dead and unstoppable. I won many races by laughably large margins, but others I could never best (thus the broken joystick). Worst of all were the numerous frame-rate slowdowns and lockups. Even with the graphics on my PIII 266 dumbed down to 640x480 and most details turned off, I often found myself lurching along at an unplayable rate. And the graphics don't look that great to begin with — not nearly as good as the last two **NEED FOR SPEED** games.

**Ragin', Full On**

Still, though, **MIDTOWN MADNESS 2** has an undeniable charm. Scattering pedestrians, ramming police cars, mowing down parking meters: This is quality gaming. For a pure racing game, you can do much better (again, see the **NEED FOR SPEED** series), but **M2** scores points for humor, city design, and good post-race catharsis. A little more time in the shop, and Microsoft would have had a great game here. **GDV**

## MIDTOWN MADNESS 2

reviewed by  
J.J. "Can't Drive 35" Gross

## CGW RATED

**PROS**

Cool, semi-realistic depictions of San Francisco and London; great new Crash Course mode.

**CONS**

Some performance problems; blocky graphics; weak physics engine; lousy rewards system.

**Double Nickels on the Dome**

Both cities are remarkably rendered. Though the game obviously omits many details, it does a great job of capturing each city's basic feel and getting in the crucial streets and landmarks. Numerous smaller details — like the weird sculpture at S.F.'s Justin Herman Plaza — show that the developers did their homework. That said, though, the game gets a major demerit for failing to include San Francisco's new Pac Bell ballpark — only the coolest, most important new landmark in the city in decades. The ballpark's been a known fact for years — there's no excuse for its omission.

All the race modes from the first game are

**Requirements:** Pentium II 233MHz, 32MB RAM, 20MB hard disk space. **Recommended Requirements:** PIII 350, 40MB hard disk space.

**3D Support:** DirectX Multiplayer Support: MGS, LAX, or Internet via MGS Game Dam.

**Publisher:** Microsoft • **Developer:** Angel Studios • 449 • [www.microsoft.com/games/midtown2/](http://www.microsoft.com/games/midtown2/)  
**ESRB Rating:** Everyone



Nothing else will matter.

**YOU DON'T KNOW JACK® 5th Dementia**

- All new content
- Now with online play

**YOU DON'T KNOW JACK® Mock 2**

- Up to 3 players at once
- 50 all-new themed episodes

**YOU DON'T KNOW JACK® The Irreverent Quiz Show Party Game.**

[ydkj.com](http://ydkj.com)



FREE YDKJ Sports when you buy YDKJ 5th Dementia and "Any Given Sunday" on DVD.

By mail. Other online settings. See online app. See package for details.



RUNE falls short of delivering the Viking goods

# Half-Axed

**A**greeing to review a game is a lot like agreeing to go on a blind date. There is excitement, anticipation, and a hesitant hope that this could be "the one." After spending many nights with RUNE, I can assure you that it is not "the one." Sure, it's easy on the eyes, and it will definitely get your blood racing at times, but it has some unpleasant personality traits that are impossible to ignore.

Like many dates, RUNE starts off with some small talk (delivered via cut-scene). You then proceed to "get acquainted" with your surroundings before having to, quite literally, sink or swim. This is where you get your first clue that your epic adventure might not be so epic. The first several levels are spent exploring, with very little combat. During this exploration, you start to realize that you can put your can of Viking whoop-ass back in the fridge for a while. In fact, if you play on the easy setting and die from combat before the 30th level, your

license to buy whoop-ass should be revoked. And therein lies the biggest problem with this game: Any sense of epic adventure is lost in the overuse of tired gaming devices, including—but not limited to—pressure plates, switch hunts, lava, falling rocks, hidden traps, and way, way, way too many

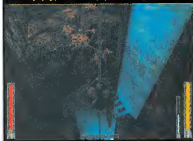
jumping scenarios. At least there is only minimal use of the omnipresent crates and barrels.

Some may argue that those are precisely the types of gaming devices that define an action game. Perhaps, but this is a Viking action game. Game styling that works for an archaeologist like Lara Croft seems a little flat for an epic warrior. RUNE is most enjoyable when you are busting down doors and dishing out carnage. Its many scripted events and cut-scenes add depth and enhance the overall gaming experience. But for those gamers who have had it up to here with cut-scenes, a skip-scene option would have been nice.

If you are patient enough to make it to the serious fighting, you will find a lot to like. Character animations are well done, and include different stances and fighting moves for each weapon class (sop, cleave, and bash). Enemies are varied, the most enjoyable being the Dark Vikings (although you will have to kill loads of less-inspired enemies, and wait



**BEST OF TIMES, WORST OF TIMES** The fun, semi-swinging mayhem portions of the game are unfortunately overshadowed by the tedious jumping-puzzle/club-a-rope-portion of the game.



nearly half the game for them). Enemy AI is pretty good, and will change tactics from offensive to defensive based on circumstance. They can lose a shield—or arm, for that matter—and continue to fight. Some enemies, in fact, will actually require you to liberate their head from their body before they'll die. The all-hackin', all-slashin' melee action carries over to the multiplayer game as well. Call me sick, but that's what I'm looking for in a Viking game.

What am I not looking for in a Viking game? Bugs. While RUNE never crashed, three different levels failed to run scripted events that were necessary for progression through the game. One bug actually required a hack to the level to continue. Um, that's not good. There were also a few minor issues involving sound and health status. Hopefully a patch will remedy these problems by the time you read this.

RUNE is more for those who enjoy the journey rather than the fighting along the way. In the end, an evening with RUNE is like a date with someone who is "just a friend"; it can be enjoyable at times, but it leaves you longing for something more. **CGW**

## RUNE

Reviewed by  
Jas "Bitar" Brilley

**SHGTY CIRCUIT** *Badass or not, this thing deserves more and has a super-powered questline. Not, there are lots of enemies and, oh, it's a lame puzzle.*



## CGW RATED

### PROS

It looks great, and who wouldn't want to play a Viking?

### CONS

More clicks than action; a few major bugs.

**Requirements:** Pentium III 300, 64MB RAM, 200MB hard drive space. **Recommended Requirements:** Pentium III 450, 128MB RAM, 30 GB HD, 64MBs hard drive space. **2D Support:** VGA, GDI, OpenGL. **3D Multiplayer Support:** LAN, Internet (2-16 players), min. 60 FPS per player.

**Publisher:** Gathering of Developers • **Developer:** Namco Bandai Studios • \$19 • [www.godgames.com](http://www.godgames.com)  
ESRB Rating: Mature; selected blood, gore, and violence.



Massive Fighting



Endless Adventure



Player Interaction



# Last Kingdom

We Dare you to challenge

- FREE 1st month membership
- Only support up to **ONE MILLION** players
- Online Multiplayer Game
- Associate with others in your virtual world

**Requirements**

- Internet Access Required
- Window 95/98/NT4
- CPU of Pentium 120 Mhz or greater
- 32 MB memory or greater
- 105 MB disk space or greater
- Modem 33.6 or greater



install **full** version  
- see CD-ROM title  
-\$24.99 value or free



Wild Discovery



Stunning Magic



Variety In Career

Last Kingdom is a large-scale fantasy role-playing game with hundreds of monsters, items and a wide variety of magical spells, you can become one of four characters and take their roles in a land of virtual reality. Last Kingdom is enormous and can be explored for hundreds of hours by visiting mystical lands through magical portals. Once you start playing, you will realize just how little you really know about the world of Last Kingdom—and how much there is for you to discover. You can embark even further into the game-playing experience by talking, trading, and exploring with other people over the Internet. Can you save the only kingdom left from the ravaging powers of darkness? We dare you to challenge! Visit [www.netamin.com](http://www.netamin.com) today.

Last Kingdom © 2000 Netamin Communications Corp. All Rights Reserved. Published by Netamin Communications Corp. Netamin is a trademark and the Netamin logo is a registered trademark of Netamin Communications Corp. MPlayer and MPlayer logo are trademarks of MPlayer. Computer Gaming World and Computer Gaming World logo are trademarks of Computer Gaming World. ZDNet and the ZDNet logo are registered trademarks of ZD Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.



SWAT 3 joins ROGUE SPEAR as an essential tactical sim

# There's a New Sheriff in Town

**A** least a year after its initial release, *SWAT 3* has fulfilled its promise as a must-have tactical simulation. *SWAT 3: ELITE EDITION* finally adds a multiplayer component, some gameplay tweaks, and robust editing tools to make the game a worthy rival of the top sim standard, *ROGUE SPEAR*. Better yet, all the new stuff is a free download for *SWAT 3* owners.

All of *ELITE EDITION*'s enhancements, tweaks, and modifications are welcome additions for the tense, fast-paced action of the multiplayer games. The AI and interlock see the biggest improvements, with TakeDown Studios adding over 50 AI personalities for hostages and suspects, as well as a number of SWAT team traits — like Raider, Assaulter, and Enforcer. Smarter suspects will hide if overwhelmed, or come after you if they have a high aggression rating. Controls and keyboard functions have been modified so that you can now easily map keyboard commands. There's five new quick-access stances for close-quarters battle (CQB) operations (crouch, lean, and stand), and a new feature for rapid deployment of CS, flashbangs, and lightsticks, so you can quickly toss them using a crouch command instead of holding down the mouse button while waiting for the desired loss strength.

There's also a host of new weapons for SWAT team members to choose from, including M4s, M1As, and HKG36Ks — all with regular or advanced optics, suppressors, and drum-magazine configurations. Weapons now have improved encumbrance, inertia, and ballistic values for better game balance. This means that running around taking shots with a decked-out M1 isn't as good a choice as the M1911 pistol or MP5 submachine gun; their light encumbrance are better suited for shoot and recovery. A new line of SWAT camouflage uniforms also plays a large factor in surviving each perilous mission — choose wisely.

The best additions, though, are the deathmatch or co-op multiplayer modes for up to five players. Five new kick-ass multiplayer missions include protecting dignitaries at Cheng's



#### DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Buy, just forget the guy on the floor is dead, and pay attention to how well his camouflage works as compared to that of the sliding burglar. Pick the right uniform to maximize your chances of mission success.



## SWAT 3: ELITE EDITION

Reviewed by Raphael Libertini

#### THIS IS NOT A KLINGON

And he's not bleeding purple blood — it's just as the brain end of a Postal3 cut-throat.



Chinese Theater, saving L.A. from deadly anthrax gas at the Whittan Airport, and stopping domestic terrorists from killing patients at a hospital. When you're freshed those, you can tackle all 16 original single-player maps in a variety of deathmatch modes or in co-op as well.

TakeDown has added visual and audio aids to help out with the multiplayer commands — Navigation Lines, Quick Compliance modes, Command tags, and chat commands, among others. Also useful is being able to see through the eyes of various element members via the opt-view and teammember screens. You can even add your own audio file to the chat menu. The only drawback is that multiplayer games can currently only manage a handful of players, but rumor has it that TakeDown is working to add more online players per game.

If you're into customizing levels, tweaking scenarios, or adding mods and meshes to a game, *ELITE EDITION*'s scenario editors are what you've been waiting for. You can easily add cool mods like the Tracers Mod or last-paced Hysteria Mod, available at the *SWAT 3* Web site. *ELITE EDITION* also includes templates for those of us who want to modify existing scenarios.

Other than the single player limit per multiplayer game, and the inability to finish a game without post-game chat, *SWAT 3: ELITE EDITION* is CQB gaming at its finest. With realistic ballistics, tactics, editing tools, and added multiplayer game features, *SWAT 3* challenges *ROGUE SPEAR* as the definitive tactical simulation game. So beg, borrow, or buy this game — just don't steal it, or you're liable to be on the wrong end of yet another *SWAT* sortie. **CGW**



**COP BY PROP** A team member in an airport is one of the five new missions.

### CGW RATED

#### PROS

Makes you feel like playing the good guy all over again.

#### CONS

Only five players max per multiplayer game.

### THIS OLD KILLHOUSE

The easy-to-use editor and mod tools let you totally build and customize your own missions. Expect to find loads of custom missions online for months to come.



Requirements: Pentium 233MHz, 21MB RAM, CDROM, last this spec. Recommended Requirements: Pentium 4 266MHz, 32MB RAM, 18 GB available.

3D Support: DirectX Multiplayer Support: LAN Internet (2-5 players)

Publisher: Sierra Studios • Developer: TakeDown Studios • 310 • www.sierra.com  
ESRB rating: Mature; minimal blood and violence.

A TRANQUIL  
ALASKAN NIGHT.  
SO QUIET,  
YOU CAN BARELY HEAR  
**A NECK SNAP.**



TACTIONAL ESPIONAGE ACTION  
**METAL GEAR**  
SOLID

**NOW ON PC.**



YOU'RE A RETIRED SPECIAL FORCES AGENT SINGLE-HANDEDLY TAKING ON AN ARMY OF TERRORISTS. THE AWARD-WINNING CONSOLE GAME COMES TO LIFE ON THE PC WITH IMPROVED GRAPHICS AND OPTIONAL FIRST-PERSON PLAY MODE. PLUS, IT NOW INCLUDES OVER 300 VIRTUAL REALITY TRAINING MISSIONS TO HONE YOUR SKILLS AS SNAKE, OR EVEN PLAY AS THE NINJA.

**INCLUDES VR MISSIONS**



[www.mgpcc.com](http://www.mgpcc.com)  
Metal Gear Solid® and Konami® are registered trademarks of Konami Co., Ltd. Metal Gear Solid VR Missions is a trademark of Konami Co., Ltd.  
© 2000 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation.



The first Blair Witch title is frightfully bad

# Don't Go Into the Woods

**S**ome people don't get *The Blair Witch Project*. They see nothing more than self-absorbed college students and shaky camera work. As a huge fan who still shudders when recalling Heather's screams of "What the f--k is that?!" I've never been able to empathize.

I can now. Thanks to Terminal Reality's *BLAIR WITCH VOLUME I: RUSTIN PARR*, I now grasp how some movie-goers associate tedium and nausea with that funky stick-figure logo.

## "I Don't Need To Go There"

This isn't surprising considering the game's lineage. *RUSTIN PARR* is a sequel of sorts to last year's *NOCTURNE*, which ham-



**CAN WE TALK?** Most of the game consists of lengthy conversations with two *Blair Witch* hewies. Expect a lot of repetition, especially if you already know something about the movie and backstory.

**I DON'T WANNA GO DOWN TO THE BASEMENT** In a display of avoidance through the essentially maze-like forest, when you'll finally discover a path to Rustin Parr's house in its pre-tran dip.

communicating an eerie atmosphere through both audio and video. Unseen children can be heard laughing and crying, a creepy musical score will build at

opportune moments, and exploring Parr's lonely house of horror is nearly as chilling as the final scenes in the movie.

But there isn't really a game here. Much of the threatening air is dispelled by the knowledge that you can gun down the unearthly enemies. Poor camera angles during combat turn fear into frustration. And while the plot would make a fascinating novella, it doesn't lend itself to gaming. The story progresses on rails, moving inexorably along an A-B-C line to the conclusion. There is no room for deviation, and the game actually prevents you from wandering off. Elspeth will simply wheel away from forbidden territory and announce something like "I don't need to go there." Better than the invisible walls that restrained the characters in *NOCTURNE*, but hardly satisfying.

This lead path is made even more imitating by obvious peddling. Most of the game takes place in a maze-like section of forest that must be navigated from one end to the other at least half-a-dozen times. The good 80 minutes or so of run-shoot-explore gameplay has been stuffed with hours of insipid dialogues. This bulks up the game's completion time to a respectable 10 to 15 hours, but does nothing to improve the quality of that time.

## Well, It Doesn't Look Like a Coffin

*RUSTIN PARR* is also marked by a lack of polish. Buttons are often unresponsive, and you simply can't move in the ways that the game demands. Dialogue text is filled with grammatical errors and misspellings. I was often forced to wait at least three minutes for a saved game to load. Hard crashes led to a number of system reboots. I got stuck on objects in the game a number of times as well. In all, this supposedly finished product seems more like a beta.

*BLAIR WITCH VOLUME I: RUSTIN PARR* is an inauspicious way to begin the *Blair Witch* trilogy of games. Serious gamers will be put off by the lack of interaction and poor controls, while movie fans who are casual gamers will have a tough time with high system requirements. There doesn't seem to be much of a built-in audience for this one. That may be a good thing, given its dubious quality. **CGW**

## BLAIR WITCH VOLUME I: RUSTIN PARR

reviewed by Brett Todd

pered supernatural settings with horrific control- and camera-systems. Many characters from the previous game sea back, and this time the "Spookhouse" agency is investigating the Blair Witch. The legendary figure was apparently involved in a series of child murders committed by a hermit named Rustin Parr near Burkittsville, Maryland. You take the role of Elspeth "Doc" Holliday, a medical specialist seen in a supporting role in *NOCTURNE*. You must determine if anything supernatural was involved.

Of course, spooky stuff 'a plenty is going on in the Black Hills that surround Burkittsville. To the designers' credit, they do a great job of

**DON'T TALK TO STRANGERS** You'll run into some old friends from *NOCTURNE* every now and again. Be nice, and you'll get the Stranger right the way a lead with the Blair Witch.



## CGW RATED

### PROS

Great atmosphere and an intriguing storyline complement the Blair Witch mythos.

### CONS

Poor design and controls will make you wish you'd been with Heather, Mike, and Josh.

**Requirements:** Pentium-II 233MHz or AMD K6-2, 8MB RAM (32MBD required for video hardware acceleration), 85MB hard disk space

**Recommended Requirements:** Pentium-III 300MHz, 16MB RAM, 165 MB free disk space. 3D Support: Direct3D. Multiplayer Support: None.

**Publisher:** Gathering of Developers • **Developer:** Terminal Reality • 323 • www.gdgames.com • ESRB Rating: Mature



The Legacy Continues with the **New**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> EDITION**  
**D&D RULES!**

▶ **New Character Classes and Races: Monk, Sorcerer, Barbarian and Half-Orc**

▶ **Random Quests and Dungeon Areas**

▶ **No Race or Class Restrictions**

FORGOTTEN REALMS

# POOL OF RADIANCE™

RUINS OF MYTH DRANNOR

[www.poolofradiance.com](http://www.poolofradiance.com)



WINDOWS  
95/98  
CD-ROM



©2000 Mages, Inc. and its licensors. All rights reserved. The BSI logo is a registered trademark of Mages, Inc. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, FORGOTTEN REALMS and the Wizards of the Coast logo are registered trademarks and POOL OF RADIANCE is a trademark of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and are used by Mages under license. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

RP  
Visit [www.ssi.com](http://www.ssi.com)  
or 1-800-777-8777  
for more info.

The CLOSE COMBAT series returns to its roots

# Once More, Into the Beach

**W**hen CLOSE COMBAT was released in 1995, it got a lot of attention because of its accurate portrayal of the most crucial element of combat: the men who fight. Unlike traditional real-time strategy games in which units mindlessly fought until destroyed, CLOSE COMBAT applied a wargame sensibility to a first-person genre and came up aces. The realistic responses of infantry units to the stresses of combat – combined with the vivid sound effects – created a wargame experience unlike anything before it.

CLOSE COMBAT: INVASION NORMANDY is the fifth game in this long-running series, and has come full-circle to the setting of the original game. Not only do the two games share a historical topic, they also share a focus on infantry as the major player on the battlefield, and this becomes a significant factor in differentiating INVASION NORMANDY from the preceding three games.

## CLOSE COMBAT: INVASION NORMANDY

reviewed by Bruce Burgk

The CLOSE COMBAT system has always been best at modeling infantry combat, but previous forays into the eastern front and the Battle of the Bulge necessitated large numbers of armored vehicles and the de-emphasis of infantry. The result was somewhat uneven; the vehicles got in the way. The vehicle AI here is pretty awful and is constantly getting stuck, or reporting "no clear path" when all that's ahead is an open road.

The reason this bad AI doesn't ruin INVASION NORMANDY the way it nearly ruined BATTLE OF THE BULGE is that this game is all about the grunts. Armored vehicles are

**HEDGEROW HELL** Constricted terrain can make for a painful slow rate of advance.



there for support, but if you're going to survive Normandy's hedgerows, beaches, and bunker complexes, you're going to have to do it with good infantry tactics. The force-mix reflects this, and you'll often wish you had one more BAR squad rather than one more bazooka team. This is as it should be. The AI in general, though, leaves a lot to be desired, and experienced players will quickly find ways to exploit it.

CLOSE COMBAT IV introduced a welcome strategic layer to the series, but it had flaws, not all of which have been fixed in INVASION NORMANDY. Battle groups can now be drawn

**BEACH BLANKET BLOODSHED** You can't do Normandy without a beach assault.



from a force pool to allow more flexibility in achieving objectives, but the restriction on one battle group per-map-space, per-side, remains. It robs the game of more wide-open tactical engagements, where skillful maneuvering would allow an attacker to enter from two map edges at once. This restriction is probably for play balance, but makes the strategic game feel artificial; there isn't much continuity between the strategic and tactical elements. The tactical game is gripping, the strategic one is not.

### Move Out!

INVASION NORMANDY is a good game with nothing new. Its solid system is basically unchanged since the first release, and those hoping for more than new maps and objectives will be disappointed. With the battles that remain unexplored by the series (the Pacific, Korea, Vietnam, etc.), it's puzzling that Atomic is revisiting past glories. Let's hope they aim a bit higher next time. **CGW**

**MEIN-OVERLORD** Father time covering the entire invasion, the strategic map restricts itself to Utah Beach and its environs.



### CGW RATED

#### PROS

As tense and fast-paced as ever.

#### CONS

Adds nothing really new to the series.

**Requirements:** Pentium 200, 32MB RAM, 250MB hard drive space, 100% SVGA video card. **Recommended Requirements:** Any assembly on minimum system.

**3D Support:** None. **Multiplayer Support:** Internet, LAN (2-8 players), serial, modem, MSN Game Zone, and MyPlay, and CD per player.

**Publisher:** Maffio/ESI • **Developer:** Atomic Games • \$45 • [www.atomic.com](http://www.atomic.com) • ESRB Rating: Teen, unrated violence.

A dark, jagged island with multiple peaks, resembling a volcanic or rocky formation, is centered in the frame. The island is surrounded by dark, choppy water. The sky is a deep, moody blue with some lighter clouds. The entire scene is viewed through a circular frame, likely representing a porthole or a camera lens, with a metallic, textured border visible at the top and bottom edges.

**NO TRIBAL COUNCILS.  
NO IMMUNITY CHALLENGES.  
JUST THREE SPECIES AND ONE LUCKY SURVIVOR!**

HI TECH



IANTE  
CITIZEN KABUTO



# MASTERS OF DESTRUCTION



## MECCS:

Ship damaged beyond repair, the Meccaryn squad is stranded on the island with enough firepower to destroy a small planet. Armed to the teeth with rocket launchers, grenades, millennium mortar, and sniper rifles; Baz, Tel, Reg, Gordon and Bennett are hi-tech damage dealing masters of destruction. With guns blazing the Meccs are fast on their feet and quicker in the air with jet packs as they scout the island traveling in packs and moving in formation.

The poor bastards don't stand a chance.



Armor up with sniper rifles, machine guns, and pop-up bombs.



Soar the sky with the Mecc-ropter and hi-tech jet packs.



Battle alien creatures in teams with up to 10 players in multiplayer.

*"I was blown away by this game... One of the must have games of the fall... An instant classic of huge proportions." -- Gamer's Pulse.com*



EXOTIC

A woman with glowing, ethereal skin and red eyes stands in a dramatic pose. She wears a dark, pointed headpiece and a white, flowing garment. Her right arm is raised, with a bright, glowing light emanating from her hand. In her left hand, she holds a large, curved sword with a dark hilt. The background is a dark, atmospheric landscape with a large, glowing orb on the left and a misty, mountainous terrain on the right.

GIANTS  
CITIZEN KABUTO

# RULERS OF THE SEA

## DELPHI THE SEA REAPER:

Driven from their island home to the deepest reaches of the ocean, the Sea Reapers live in exile beyond the reach of the island's brutal number one resident. Commanding the elements of earth, air, sea and fire, the ethereal females wage war with magic spells, lightning bows, and an indestructible scimitar of steel. Calling upon years of rage, Delphi summons all the powers of the sea in the form of a wall of fire, suffocating vortex and dangerous sea creatures in her mission to return home.

As Beautiful and Dangerous as the Sea Itself.

*The game's excellent character designs, impressive visual style, and real-time strategy and action elements blend together incredibly well, making Giants: Citizen Kabuto a breath of fresh air in a market glutted with clones.* ... Gamespot.com



Driven into the sea by Kabuto, the ethereal Delphi summons devastating powers.



Lightning, bows, spells and the Scimitar are Delphi's best defense.



Mechanotechnology vs Reaper magic... Delphi summons deadly sea monsters and tornadoes.






# LUMBERING MOUNTAIN

## **KABUTO:**

Summoned by the Sea Reapers to defend the island, this giant ferocious beast is simply too brutal to exist with any other creature. Ten times the height of anything on the island, Kabuto is a uniquely nasty creature. Pray he swallows you whole rather than making a fashion statement by wearing a struggling you on his razor sharp spikes, keeping his hands free to crush the rest of your team with an elbow smash. You'll need every ounce of firepower to take down this fang-filled eating machine.

"He can't wait to eat...er...meet you!"



*"With a complex story and beautifully crafted 3D graphics, the single-player game offers the kind of depth that's been sorely lacking in action games lately." -- Rolling Stone*

# OF PAIN



Eat, crush, and destroy anything in your path as Kabuto.



Through the fangs of Kabuto is the only way off the island.



Defeat this massive monster or end up an appetizer.



REQUIRES  
A COMPUTER



[www.interplay.com](http://www.interplay.com)

© 2009 Interplay Entertainment Corporation. All Rights Reserved. "Interplay" and "REQUIRES A COMPUTER" are trademarks of Interplay Entertainment Corporation. "NVIDIA" and "graphics" are trademarks of NVIDIA Corporation. "PlayStation 3" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "PC" is a trademark of Intel Corporation. "M" is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB). All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

DELL'S LATEST DELIVERS GOOD 3D GAMING AT 800X600

# Take it on the Run

**M**obile graphics chipsets have always been the bastard stepchildren to their desktop siblings. Given how bloody fast desktop chipsets have become, the good news is that even trailing a generation, ATI's latest Mobility-P chipset delivers good performance—provided you keep your resolution at 800x600. Dell's latest Inspiron, the 800, mates this ATI chip with an 850MHz mobile version of the Pentium-III. This CPU employs Intel's SpeedStep technology, which runs the chip at 800MHz when connected to shore power—but throttles it back to 700MHz running on its battery, a clock-down of 18%. But because

by Dave Salvator

the 3D chipset isn't being throttled, SpeedStep's impact on 3D gaming is pretty small. Other notables include a DVD-ROM drive, a larger 15" TFT display, and, Dell seems to have brought in the Style Police and mandated that bland boxes be gone.

This latest Inspiron weighs in at a trim 7.2 pounds, and is adorned with two USB ports, as well as a side-mounted 1394/FireWire port—great for connecting video camcorders and hard drives.

#### Numbers at a Glance

Here's a case where the numbers tell a somewhat misleading story. Compared head-to-head to last month's *Lean Machine* roundup winner, Alienware's Grey rig, the Inspiron trails badly. Its TFT display can display 1280x1024, our current test resolution, but this chipset wasn't really intended to run 3D games at that resolution. Even at 1024x768x32, UT still stuttered a lot. 800x600 seems to be its sweet-spot resolution where 3D games become smooth, though again, it doesn't show up in the performance tests as much as it does in actual gam-



ing. At 800x600, the Inspiron scored a woeful 46.5 versus the Alienware's 74.2, running at 1024x768 on the 3D WinBench 2000 WinMark test. Admittedly, the deck is stacked against Inspiron in this comparison, but given how laptops are always being billed

as "desktop replacements," the comparison does make some sense. However, as mobile performance goes, this Inspiron is about as good as gets for the mobile set, and at 800x600, it gets it done.

As for battery performance, it was able to get me through a screening of *The Fifth Element*, but by the end of the film, the battery was pretty much done. Running through a typical pair of WalkMan headphones, the Inspiron did an admirable job of conveying the sonic richness of this movie. One troubling thing here was that after watching the movie, I removed the DVD and it was very hot to the touch, not exactly the way DVD discs like to be. This Inspiron has a thermostat-controlled fan that kicks in when a certain inside temperature is exceeded, and it's surprisingly noisy.

#### PROS

Good mobile-gaming performance; supports 1280x1024 resolution, FireWire too.

#### CONS

DVD-ROM drive runs hot; still considerably trails desktop performance; noisy cooling fan.

Price: \$332 as configured

Manufacturer: Dell

Contact: [www.dell.com](http://www.dell.com)



Gaming on a laptop still doesn't stack up very well against traditional desktop gaming, but being able to break out a laptop and two gamepads and to challenge the goober who sits two cubicles down to a "friendly" game of MADDEN 2001 does have its appeal. So if you spend a lot of time airborne traversing the continent, this inspiration will let you get your gaming fix far from home. **CGW**

## Laptop Performance

CPU Speed	Dell Laptop-Share Power	Dell Laptop-Battery	Alienware Grey
	Pentium-III 850MHz	Pentium-III 700MHz	Pentium-III 600MHz
3D GameGauge Score	34.2	32.5	74.2
3D WinBench 2000 WinMark (1280x1024x32, Triple-buffered, 24-bit Z)	16.4	16.2	64.7
3D WinBench 2000 Processor Test	1.8	1.4	1.73
WinBench High-End Graphics WinMark	893	768	1010
WinBench High-End Disk WinMark	18100	9470	20880

## SYSTEM CHIPSET SLAP-DOWN

# Got Pipes?

RAMBUS NOT NECESSARILY THE WAY TO GO

**W**hen Intel debuted RAMBUS last year, it seemed like the heir apparent for high-performance system memory, and something that gamers would be lusting after.

In retrospect, it was more a case of right-place-right-time. Yes, RAMBUS' 1.6GB/sec peak data-rate is the fastest on paper, but RAMBUS-equipped systems exsisted for other reasons, specifically the 820 chipset's early support for AGP 4X, and the fact that alternative chipsets weren't quite ready for prime-time. The AMD chipsets have since matured, now offering AGP 4X, support for PC133 SDRAM, and ULTRATA hard drives. And AMD's Thunderbird CPU—still marketed as Athlon—teamed up with Via's latest KT-133 chipset delivers very fast gaming performance compared not only to Pentium-III, but to the new Pentium-4 Intel, meanwhile, has been dogged by a string of miscues that have compelled all but one major system maker (Dell) to now offer at least some AMD-based systems. To take a reading as to who's got the best chipset going, we pitted Via's KT-133 against Intel's two Pentium-III chipsets, the 815e and the 820e, and also against Intel's latest 850 chipset for the Pentium-4.

Intel's 815e and 820e are more alike than different, with the principal difference being which type of memory they support. 815e uses PC133 SDRAM, whereas 820e uses RAMBUS. Via's KT-133 chipset has a similar feature set to the 815e.

### My What Big Pipes You Have

To figure out who the top dog is here, I built three 1GHz systems with 64MB DDR GeForce 2 Ultra cards running on Windows ME with 128MB of system memory. The idea was to put very fast processors at either end of the system chipset, and look at the differences in performance attributable to the chipset. Why, you ask, does the system chipset matter so much? The system chipset is the central plumbing of your PC, and this

chipset acts as the primary "traffic cop," directing data, memory access, and file I/O. The best of CPUs is only as good as its system chipset, since a fast CPU will be "data-starved" if the chipset can't keep it fed and happy. Same holds true at the other end of the 3D pipeline—your 3D card.

What I found is that Intel's Pentium-III chipsets, 815e and 820e, run about even on 3D GameGauge testing, trading wins from test to test. But hot on their heels is the AMD/KT-133 combination, trailing by a mere 4fps (take a look at the charts). And the 815e and 820e boxes were only about 7fps off of the new 850/Pentium-4 setup Dell sent us for this month's Ultimate Gaming Machine roundup. What becomes apparent is that while the 820e/RAMBUS system is no slower than the PC133-equipped 815e, it also isn't any faster. And despite some recent price drops on RAMBUS memory, it still remains pricey versus PC133 SDRAM. Also, the difference between the slowest and fastest system on many of these tests is under 10%, a pretty negligible difference.

On more CPU-focused tests—including 3D WinBench 2000's Processor Test, as well as the 3D WinMark and several game tests run at 640x480x16 to get the 3D card "out of the way"—again, the differences were there, but small. So the good news is that it's hard to make a bad choice; but this data doesn't make a compelling case for RAMBUS.

### The Take-Away

If you're working with a tight budget, an AMD-based system using the KT-133 chipset will net the most performance for the least dollars, which is why we recommend the T-Bird Athlon/KT-133 combination in our Lean Machine Killer Rig. As for the Intel platforms, the 815e chipset proves itself to be a very solid performer, standing toe-to-toe with the RAMBUS-encumbered 820e. So if you're going to build an Intel-based box, look for a system using the 815e chipset, which is a solid PC133-based gaming platform. —Dave Salazar

## Test Results

	Pentium-III on 815e	Pentium-III on 820e	T-Bird on KT-133	Pentium-IV 1.2GHz T-Bird	Dell P-IV review box
3D GameGauge Score	31.7	31.2	76.3	66.4	66.0
3D WinBench 2000 (1280x1024x32, Triple-buffered, 24-bit Z)	88.9	106	160	111	103
3D WinBench WinMark (1600x1200, CPU test)	259	261	241	229	236
3D WinBench 2000 Processor Test	1.56	1.55	1.79	6.74	2.40
CGW ULTIMATE GAMING Test (1280x1024x32)	61.5	63.0	66	79.81	58.68
WinBench High-End Graphics WinMark (1024x768x32)	1170	1160	1190	1539	951





Real squads don't pass notes.

Scream. Howl. Heckle. The voice, man's primal form of communication, will once again revolutionize the way battles are won. With SideWinder® Game Voice you'll talk to and hear your squad without losing a step in an online firefight. Set up six different channels so you can plot with your teammates. Or broadcast abuse across the entire warzone. Taunt 'em. Scare 'em out of hiding. Because with the power of speech, your team's more like a real squad—focusing on the hunt and kill. Instead of the hunt and peck.



MICROSOFT

**SIDEWINDER**  
GAME VOICE

For a free demo, check out [www.gamevoice.com](http://www.gamevoice.com)

# Under the Hood

BY DAVE SALVATOR



## Look Before You Leap

Things to know before you make the move to broadband

**D**SL changed my life. Well, my online life anyway. Suddenly that third "w" in "www" no longer stood for "wait." Now, it's more like "whoosh." Then, a few TCP/IP tweaks later, it got even better. Downloads routinely screamed in at 1 megabit per second, nearly 30 times faster than the typical 56K modem. How sweet it is!

While I've heard horror stories o-plenty about installation misuses and delays, mine was wonderfully uneventful. I went with MindSpring as my ISP—since I've logged four years of good dial-up service with them—and got one of those free install/free gear/non-oppressive contract deals.

So it was all going so well, until I started looking at my ping times: 60 milliseconds on the first hop? What? OK, that's nearly twice as fast as a 56K modem, but still pretty slow compared to other people's DSL connections. I thought DSL was supposed to be super-fast and have really low latency. The lesson learned is: Not all DSL is created equal. So make sure you've found an ISP that really understands the importance of low latency in a gamer's life.

### Devil in the Details

A number of factors come into play here. But the first thing to know is that the first network hop your DSL line makes from your PC to your ISP is key in determining your overall latency performance. Some DSL services piggyback onto a Baby Bell network before hitting the Internet, and there can be multiple—and somewhat excessive—hops inside that network before you're on the Internet.

Another problem comes from "line interleaving," a process which makes your connection less vulnerable to noise that can slow down performance and cause dropped connections. This line stability comes at the cost of increased latency. The good news here is that often you can call your ISP and have them make a request to the Competitive Local Exchange Carrier (CLEC) to turn interleaving off and reprimon your line—where they basically turn off interleaving, and then reset your connection. Some users have reported dramatic ping-time decreases after their connection was reprimoned, with ping times to gateway dropping into the low teens.

### Just a Flesh Wound

Now don't go cancelling your DSL service contract and eating some early termination fee because you don't have a super low ping time. The thing to do is to tune your connection for its best possible performance, and if your line has interleaving turned on, see if your ISP can

have it turned off, as that may improve your latency. There's a terrific Web site I mentioned last month called [www.dslreports.com](http://www.dslreports.com), and they've got two utilities you're going to want. One's called DoctorPing, which will give you a good idea of how your latency performance stacks up versus

many other users' DSL connections. The other utility is a freeware app they call DoctorTCP, which lets you tweak your IP settings without having to plow through your Registry using RegEdit. This site also offers an easy step-by-step guide to getting your line tweaked for optimal line-speed performance.

So now I have to include a bit of a CYA (cover your arse) disclaimer here. My experience with MindSpring and the relatively high latency is ONE user's experience. Your mileage will vary. And to MindSpring's credit, my



**Not all DSL is created equal. Make sure you've found an ISP that really understands the importance of low latency in a gamer's life.**

connection is generally very stable, I've never had a service blackout, and connection drops are very rare. And post-TCP/IP stack tweaks, both my downstream (to my PC) and upstream (from my PC) line speed is plenty fast. And, if I play on West Coast game servers I still have good ping times, but it does kind of limit which servers I can get to with acceptable ping times. The next chapter in Dave's DSL Saga will be to see if I can get MindSpring to get line interleaving turned off on my connection and see what that does for my ping times.

### Epilogue

So do as I say, and not as I do. Before signing the dotted line with any ISP for xDSL service, have a good idea of what kind of latency you can look forward to. And be clear in telling any would-be ISP that your ping time to gateway has to be under 30 milliseconds. Also, find out if this ISP piggy-backs onto a Baby Bell's network as its means of connecting you to the Internet. And, see if you can get a line without interleaving (yes, it is worth sacrificing 100Kbits/sec of download speed if your ping times will drop to sub-20ms to gateway—because it will make your online gaming much more enjoyable). If you've already got a DSL line, have a way to go on a service contract, and then discover—as I did—that your latency is "sub-optimal," tune the connection as best you can, and ride the contract out unless you've got other compelling reasons to dump that ISP.

Got a DSL horror story to tell? Rant to [cgw\\_hardware@iffdavis.com](mailto:cgw_hardware@iffdavis.com). **CGW**

# GOT Radeon™

**GOT 64MB  
OF HEART POUNDING  
3D GAMING POWER**

**"The RADEON™ is a total package,  
combining blazing-fast, spectacular-looking 3D  
with excellent DVD playback"**

MAXIMUM PC, OCTOBER 2000.

You said gimme the ultimate 3D gamer board and ATI did with the award-winning RADEON™ 64MB DDR. RADEON™ 64MB DDR delivers hurricane-force, realistic 32-bit true color 3D graphics, has the most comprehensive support for DirectX® 8.0 so you can play all the top 3D games now and in the future and features industry-leading DVD playback. RADEON™, now you got it. Now you get it — all.



Copyright 2000, ATI Technologies Inc. All rights reserved. ATI, RADEON and RADEON DDR are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of ATI Technologies Inc. All other company and/or product names are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of their respective manufacturers.



Visit [ati.com](http://ati.com)

# EVOLVE

**FREE SHIPPING**  
Thru December 31, 2000



**AWARD-WINNING SYSTEMS**



Looks are nice...  
but performance is everything.



### GREY

AMD Duron 760MHz Processor  
High Performance Heatsink/Cooling System  
VIA KT133 Chipset Motherboard  
128MB SDRAM (PC-133)  
Floppy Drive 1.44MB  
15GB 7200RPM Hard Drive Ultra ATA100  
NVIDIA GeForce256™ 32MB DDR Video Card  
SoundBlaster LIVE! 3D Sound Card  
Cambridge FIS1000 4:1  
Subwoofer/Speaker System  
58X EIDE CD-ROM Player  
White Hydraulic ATX Mid-tower Case w/300 Watt  
Microsoft Internet Keyboard PS/2  
Microsoft IntelliMouse PS/2  
U.S. Robotics V10 56K Voice/Fax/Modem  
Microsoft Windows Millennium OS  
1-Year Toll-Free 24/7 Technical Support  
with Alienware On-Site Home Service  
Personalized Technical Support Manual  
Optimized & Configured for High-Performance  
FREE FUNC Technical Surface Pad

**\$1,199.00**

Financing as low as: \$26.00/mo./\$0/mo.

### 24/7 Toll-Free Onsite Technical Support

Be a proud owner of an Alienware machine with it's legendary performance. You can rest assure that it will be backed up with 24/7 toll-free, onsite technical support. You can customize it online or have an experienced member of our staff guide you in customizing a machine for your specific needs. Alienware, the fastest system you'll ever use. Our slogan holds true: build it as if it were your own

### HIVE-MIND

AMD Thunderbird 1GHz Processor  
High Performance Heatsink/Cooling System  
VIA KT133 Chipset Motherboard  
128MB SDRAM (PC-133)  
Floppy Drive 1.44MB  
20GB 7200RPM Hard Drive Ultra ATA100  
NVIDIA GeForce2 GTS™ 32MB Video Card  
AkaiP L2500 LVN1 3D Sound Card  
AkaiP L2500 ACS 54 Onwag  
5-Piece Subwoofer/Speaker System  
Power 18X/40X DVD Player  
White Hydraulic ATX Mid-Tower Case w/300 Watt  
Microsoft Internet Keyboard PS/2  
Microsoft IntelliMouse PS/2  
U.S. Robotics V10 56K Voice/Fax/Modem  
Microsoft Windows Millennium OS  
1-Year Toll Free 24/7 Technical Support  
with Alienware On-Site Home Service  
Personalized Technical Support Manual  
Optimized & Configured for High Performance  
FREE FUNC Technical Surface Pad

**\$1,699.00**

Financing as low as: \$36.00/mo./\$0/mo.

### AREA51: AURORA

AMD Thunderbird 1.1GHz Processor  
High Performance Heatsink/Cooling System  
VIA KT133 Chipset Motherboard  
Virtual Channel 256MB SDRAM (PC-133)  
Black Floppy Drive 1.44MB  
40GB 7200RPM Hard Drive Ultra ATA100  
NVIDIA GeForce2 Ultra™ 64MB DDR Video TV-Out  
Kosmos Video Cooling System  
SoundBlaster LIVE! 3D Sound Card  
Klipsch 4.1 ProMedia v2 4.0 THX  
400 Watt Subwoofer/Speaker System  
Power 18X/40X DVD Player  
PowerLite 12X/10X/32X CD/RW IDE  
Black Hydraulic ATX Mid Tower Case w/300 Watt  
Black 107 Enhanced Keyboard PS/2  
Microsoft IntelliMouse Explorer  
U.S. Robotics V10 56K Voice/Fax/Modem  
Microsoft Windows Millennium OS  
1-Year Toll Free 24/7 Technical Support  
with Alienware On-Site Home Service  
Personalized Technical Support Manual  
Optimized & Configured for High-Performance  
FREE FUNC Technical Surface Pad

**\$2,999.00**

Financing as low as: \$69.00/mo./\$0/mo.

### MONITORS

17" Viewsonic G71 27hp	\$230.00
17" Viewsonic G773 26hp	\$205.00
19" Viewsonic E790B 26hp	\$399.00
21" Viewsonic G815 26hp	\$169.00
22" Viewsonic P9815 25hp	\$845.00

custom build your dream machine at: [www.alienware.com](http://www.alienware.com)

**TOLL FREE: 800-494-3382**

13458 Southwest 131 Street Miami, Florida 33186



ALIENWARE.COM

# + Tech Medics



You've Got Questions, We've Got Answers

by Dave Salvator

Wounded on the technological front? Our medics may be able to patch you up and get you back into the action. Send your gaming-related technical questions to [cgw\\_hardware@ziffdavis.com](mailto:cgw_hardware@ziffdavis.com).

## Me and Mouses Jones

**I have two mice, a Logitech Trackman Marble Wheel Mouse, and a Logitech Cordless Mouse. The Trackman is USB and the Cordless is Serial/PS/2. Is there a way I can plug both of them in and make them work? Since one is PS/2 and the other USB, you can run them both, and both mice will be active gaming devices. Sounds like a great test for the antihackers.**

## Leveling Up

**I have a relatively old system: a Pentium-III 266MHz, 64MB of RAM, an ATI Xpert 128 3D card, and an old 440 LX motherboard. I'd like to upgrade, but what should I upgrade first? Would more RAM be a quick fix? A better video card? If I do the motherboard/CPU route, I'm considering a Duron CPU. Would I need new RAM as well?**

Well, the problem is that when you upgrade any one of these components, the new iron will be held back somewhat by your existing system. This unfortunately holds true for any one of these components — CPU/mobo/RAM or the 3D card. And yes, you'll need new memory when you make the move to a new CPU/mobo, since

your current memory is running at 66MHz. But, given where you are, even a Duron 600MHz would be a substantial step up. Here's a shopping list. The ASUS A7V mobo, \$140; Duron 600MHz CPU, \$50; 128MB PC133 SDRAM, \$100; Hercules Prophet II MX, \$120. Being able to play your games smoothly. Priceloss. That comes to a little over \$400 bucks for a serious system face-lift. Another upside here is that when you're ready to upgrade your CPU, that mobo will run a 1.2GHz T-Bird. But if you have to pick and choose, look at replacing your 3D card first, followed by the CPU/mobo/RAM.

## Memory Tricks

**I've been reading about people tweaking their memory timings to squeeze more performance out of their machines before biting the upgrade bullet. How do you do this, and does it really help that much?**

While your machine is powering up, hit Escape, then F2. This takes you into the BIOS. If your BIOS allows it, and not all do, you can tweak three key memory-timing settings. They are Column Address Strobe (CAS), Row Address Strobe to Column Address Strobe (RAS to CAS), and Row Address Strobe (RAS). The setting you can tweak is the number of clock cycles to wait while these various memory functions operate, before the system tries to access memory. Set them too low, or beyond what your memory can handle, and your system will become very unstable. But properly tweaked, playing with

these settings will buy you a bit of real-world performance — though not a huge amount, since generally speaking, video memory is your bottleneck. But every little bit helps. Usually these three settings are set to 3:2:3. Try dialing them down to 3:2:2. But make sure, if you're set to 3:3:3, that you did the last few settings down one at a time, and bring your system back up and play some games. Or, if you've got QUAKE 3 (retail or demo), use it as a quick system test after each change you make and see if you've gained any speed. But if your system destabilizes, undo the last latency tweak, and the system should resume normal operation.

## Ultra-Confused

**I'm starting to get very confused from all the changes happening with graphics cards these days. I'm looking to upgrade to a GeForce 2. Is there any difference between the Ultra, and one without the "Ultra"? I like being able to game at 1600x1200.**

Yes, there are several important differences, starting with about \$200. The GeForce 2 Ultra chipset runs at a higher clock rate, both for the chip and its memory. The Ultra runs with a core clock of 250MHz, while the memory is run at an effective clock of 460MHz (230MHz DDR memory). The "standard" GeForce 2 is clocked at 200MHz for the core, and 332MHz (166MHz DDR memory) for the memory. The extra horsepower found in the Ultra will make gaming at 1600x1200 a smoother affair.



## TECH TIP Home Theatre Overdrive

If you're thinking about hooking up the digital output from your Sound Blaster Live to your Dolby Digital home-theater rig, think again. The digital output of the SB Live puts out 2.0V, whereas the S/PDIF standard weighs in at 500mv. On top of that, the SB Live output isn't impedance

matched to the 75 ohms of the standard. Feeding that signal to your home-theater receiver could wreak havoc with the circuitry in your theater rig. Hooitech ([www.hooitech.com](http://www.hooitech.com)) makes an adapter board that converts the signal properly. —Lloyd Case



[FourPointSurround™ FPS2000 Digital]

## Gaming With These Speakers Is Almost Like Cheating

With the FourPointSurround™ FPS2000 Digital speakers, winning is within your power. You will hear your enemy sneaking towards you from any direction. The FourPointSurround™ FPS2000 Digital speakers surround you with razor-sharp sound clarity, power for the most intense gaming, and bass that will kick you in the chest. If that's too much to handle, the FourPointSurround™ FPS1800 or the FourPointSurround™ FPS1500 speakers deliver true-to-life surround sound that no real gamer should be without.

You can still choose to "play by the book" - just don't come whining to us when you lose.



Visit [www.creative.com](http://www.creative.com) for more information.

©2000 Creative Technology Ltd. All brand or product names listed are trademarks or registered trademarks and are property of their respective holders. If you're not on the list, give us a call at 800.890.1000 for more information.

# CREATIVE

PERSONAL DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT

Starts Here.

YOUR TWO BEST RECIPES FOR BUILDING THE ULTIMATE GAMING MACHINE

# Killer Rigs

**Monitor**

KDS A9-21TF 21"  
Outquest 095



**CD-ROM/DVD**

Pioneer Ex SC21 DVD-3845  
Pioneer DVD-7355

**Hard Drive**

Quantum FireStorm  
Maxtor DiamondMax 9200+

**Flight Joystick**

CF I/E Combatstick USB  
Logitech WingMan Extreme Digital

**Action Gamepad**

Advanced Battlestick FA  
Dowo Gamepad USB

## Power Rig

Component	Manufacturer	Price	the Verdict
CPU	Amds 56 630	\$112	330 nodes, 8 bays, plenty of cooling
Motherboard	ASUS 81V	\$110	No KT-133, MP2 1X, Solid state
GPU	AMD Radeon 1 254r	\$530	Hot to the rig, baby
Memory	2GB of PC133 SDRAM	\$380	Directly has a quality all its own
Primary Graphics	Nvidia GeForce II Ultra 9100	\$380	Can you say "slapshot"?
Disk Controller	Adaptec 2940 Ultra 166 SCSI	\$160	Slightly faster, but also PCI 91 support
3.5" Floppy Drive	None	\$70	You still have to have one
Hard Drive	Quantum Atlas 10K - II (80GB 5250)	\$260	Hot at 3300
Backup	Creative DVD-RAM drive	\$70	5.2 gigs at backup
CD-ROM/DVD	Pioneer Ex SC21 DVD-3845	\$170	New Pioneer Slot-Drive DVD
Monitor	KDS A9-21TF 21"	\$700	Excellent tube, perfectly flat, beautiful color
Primary Audio	Sound Blaster Live 4-Channel 5.1	\$99	Your sonic world in 5.1, tape- or two-channel
Speakers	Logitech ProSound 5.1-100	\$750	Low, clear, uncolored, and loud!
Networking	3COM Ethernet 10/100 PCI	\$40	Works real fast (and secure)
Networking Hub	Netcom 16300	\$85	Multi-layer & 10/100, modern support
Keyboard	Microsoft Natural Keyboard Pro	\$53	Excellent in, keyboard-only
Mouse/Pointing Device	Logitech MouseMan Optical	\$43	It just feels better
USB Hub	Logitech WingMan 7-port USB HUB	\$70	Get those USB ports optimized

Total with Game Controller: **\$4,545**

Flight Joystick	CF I/E Combatstick USB	\$65	Outrageous throttle, it just feels right
Router/Printer	CF Pro Printer 1500	\$100	Ready perfect font placement

**Total \$5,710**

The Fine Print: All recommendations based on actual performance and testing. Prices listed are average best prices, save with price search engines like [www.computerstopper.com](http://www.computerstopper.com) or [www.pricegrabber.com](http://www.pricegrabber.com). Links compiled by Dave Schacter.

## Lean Machine

Component	Manufacturer
CPU	Amds GeodeLine Case
Motherboard	ASUS A7V
GPU	ATI Radeon 9000 refocusing fan
Memory	1GB of PC133 SDRAM
Disk Controller	Built-in V800/20
Primary Graphics	Gallop GeForce II 32MB 9100
Floppy Drive	None
Hard Drive	Maxtor DiamondMax 9200 Pro 20GB 48
CD-ROM/DVD	Pioneer DVD-7355
Monitor	Outquest 095
Primary Audio	Sound Blaster 16bit
Speakers	Bose Acoustics 9A-025
Modem	Acrobat PCI Call-Waiting Modem
Keyboard	Microsoft Natural Keyboard
Mouse/Pointing Device	Logitech 3-Button Mouse
Joystick	Logitech WingMan Extreme Digital



## WHICH 3D CARD SHOULD I BUY?

Choosing the right 3D card depends on your CPU and your motherboard, so we have two recommendations for you:

For a Pentium 233MHz or slower, or a PCI motherboard (no AGP), or a motherboard-down AGP graphics chip with no AGP slot, get 3dfx's Voodoo 5 5500 PCI board (\$200). The V5 5500 delivers solid performance and has very good full-screen anti-aliasing (FSAA) compatibility. And, when you swap in a new motherboard/CPU, you can migrate the Voodoo 5 board to the new setup and use it there until you decide to get an AGP-based 3D card.

For motherboards with AGP, we recommend Hercules' 3D Prophet II Ultra, based on nVidia's GeForce 2 GTS Ultra chipset. With 64MB of DDR SDRAM, this board will blast games at 1000x1200 - if your monitor can handle it. If \$500 is too steep, look at Hercules' 3D Prophet II, using the GeForce 2 GTS chipset; the 32MB version comes in at just under \$300.

## GIVING RAMBUS THE BOOT...

I haven't been a bumper year for Intel. First, they shipped a faulty Celeron chipset (dubbed Celeron-gate), which was part of the Q2 chipset. Then, there was a defect in Intel's 1.13GHz Pentium-III CPU. Most recently, an 850 chipset problem forced Intel to hold up shipments of Pentium-4. Intel has announced that it's phasing RAMBUS out next year. And there has been mounting evidence that RAMBUS doesn't outperform PCI33 SDRAM in consumer application performance, including 3D games.

Following my tests (see story on page 100), I've decided to replace RAMBUS in the Power Rig with the same motherboard I've recommended for the Lean Machine: ASUS' A7V. The Power Rig now has 364MB of PCI33 SDRAM for about the price of 256MB of ROMAM.

Intel-based systems using that company's 800a and 815a chipsets are still very solid performers, and of the two, the 815a is your better option, since you don't incur the extra cost of RAMBUS. But AMD has now jumped out 200MHz ahead of Intel in the clock-speed war, and use the latest high-speed parts. Athlons are quite readily available.

Price	The Skinny
\$180	in stock, of course
\$140	Solid, stable, Socket-A Athlon replacement
\$265	Superior, 3D-rendered
\$200	128MB, agerated in
\$0	It's in there
\$200	Superior GeForce 2 GTS card
\$58	Full game look it
\$130	Fast and cheap
\$120	Six-drive DVD
\$330	Solid 16" monitor at a budget price
\$45	R.I.P. Aerial
\$80	Fixed highs for better dollar
\$70	Solid performance, good price
\$30	Cheap, nice red-on buttons
\$25	Better than the "gaming" mouse
\$20	Very solid 3D processor with USB
<b>Total \$1,729</b>	

# THE NEW GOLD STANDARD

Saitek Cyborg 3D USB Gold

\$39.95  
MSRP

ADJUSTABLE FOR LEFT- AND RIGHT HANDERS

SMOOTH LEVER THROTTLE,  
9 BUTTONS, TRIGGER,  
3-WAY HAT SWITCH & 3D Twist!

INTUITIVE SET-UP USING SAITEK'S  
POWERFUL SGE SOFTWARE

TOTALLY ADJUSTABLE TO  
CUSTOM FIT ANY HAND SIZE

THE NEW STANDARD IN  
PRECISION HANDLING.

AVAILABLE NOW AT: BARRAGES, BEST BUY, COMP USA, ELECTRONICS BOUTIQUE, FRED MEYER, FRY'S ELECTRONICS, MUSCULAND, WIZARDS OF THE COAST, AND OTHER MAJOR RETAILERS.



COMPATIBLE WITH:  
MAC OS 9  
WINDOWS 98  
AND HIGHER



www.saitekusa.com

## Reviews



KDS Avitron AV-195-TF

## KDS AVITRON AV-195-TF

Price: 17-inch, \$260; 19-inch, \$190; 21-inch, \$190 (street prices).

Manufacturer: KDS

Contact: [www.kds.com](http://www.kds.com)

**KDS** has been known as a maker of competent, fairly unremarkable monitors. That story has changed with the arrival of their Avitron line of monitors, which come in 17", 19", and 21". All three are powered by a Sony Trinitron tube, and deliver stellar image quality with beautiful color saturation and hue; and KDS' onscreen display (OSD) controls are easy to navigate. The locker. They're priced to move. At press time, the 17" version had a street price of \$260, which

— for its image quality — is a hell of a deal. We ran the Avitron through standard video test patterns that test contrast ratio, convergence, focus, and color. It tested well, the only warts being the two very thin horizontal lines that are typically seen on Trinitron tubes. But they weren't noticeable on a tear through *UNREAL TOURNAMENT*, and the color definition was gorgeous on all of our 1024x768 test photos. Another cool feature on the 19" and 21" models is the auto-calibration, which automatically adjusts your image's position and size after a resolution change. This feature is found on other monitors, but hasn't worked well. On the Avitron, it did.

Given their image quality (and price), you'd be doing your eyes a favor to get one of these Avitrons. Get one before the KDS accountants come to their senses. —Dave Salvatore

— for its image quality — is a hell of a deal. We ran the Avitron through standard video test patterns that test contrast ratio, convergence, focus, and color. It tested well, the only warts being the two very thin horizontal lines that are typically seen on Trinitron tubes. But they weren't noticeable on a tear through *UNREAL TOURNAMENT*, and the color definition was gorgeous on all of our 1024x768 test photos. Another cool feature on the 19" and 21" models is the auto-calibration, which automatically adjusts your image's position and size after a resolution change. This feature is found on other monitors, but hasn't worked well. On the Avitron, it did.

Given their image quality (and price), you'd be doing your eyes a favor to get one of these Avitrons. Get one before the KDS accountants come to their senses. —Dave Salvatore



Sidewinder Force Feedback 2

Product photos by  
Rayden Hooper/DIGITAL CLARITY

SIDEWINDER  
FORCE FEEDBACK 2

Manufacturer: Sidewinder Co., Windows 2000, DirectX 9.0

Price: \$100

Manufacturer: Microsoft

Contact: [www.microsoft.com/sidewinder](http://www.microsoft.com/sidewinder)

**F**orce feedback controllers never achieved widespread adoption. The problems? They were big, expensive, and required a massive power brick. On top of that, not many games supported them.

Microsoft aims to change all that with their new Sidewinder Force Feedback 2. Coming in at \$100, it's still a high-end stick, but considerably cheaper than the original. It doesn't need a power brick, either — the power cord plugs directly into the base of the unit. Finally, it's more compact and better balanced. It was able to hold the whole affair comfortably in my lap while

playing *CRIMSON SKIES* and *MECHWARRIOR 3*, just like a normal joystick. The throttle is now a more traditional lever, much to my preference. The buttons themselves have embossed numbers — you no longer have to stab randomly to determine which button is 3 or 4.

The Sidewinder's new software is much improved, particularly the interface for remapping the buttons. Assigning keystroke combinations to individual buttons is pretty easy now, and the entire interface is integrated into the joystick control panel, so you don't have to run a separate program.

In the end, this refined evolution of the force feedback stick is more affordable and simply works better. —Lloyd Case



Klipsch ProMedia 2.1 Speakers

KLIPSCH PROMEDIA  
2.1 SPEAKERS

Price: \$200

Manufacturer: Klipsch

Contact: [www.klipsch.com](http://www.klipsch.com)

**Klipsch ProMedia 2.1-200 speakers** brought a new level of amplification to PC audio, as in 400 watts RMS of THX certified power. What did Klipsch do for an encore? Took their great 4.1 speaker system and brought out a 2.1 version with 200 watts of THX-certified power. The ProMedia 2.1s resemble the 4.1s in many ways, including huge tracts of clean sound and throat-cutting low-end response. But at \$200, with half the amp, these ProMedias aren't the insaney great deal that the ProMedia 4.1s are at \$260.

The 2.1s arrive with a 200-watt B.A.S.H. amplifier, which is split 50 watts per satellite, and 100 watts for the subwoofer. Audio runs serious bass through these things, and the subwoofer pushes so much air it almost seems like a fan. As an added feature, the ProMedia 2.1s now have a line-level input on the right satellite, where you can connect a DoolMan or MPG player. But there's only a tone control for the subwoofer, and given these speakers' bass-rich tendencies, a control to dial up treble frequencies would be useful.

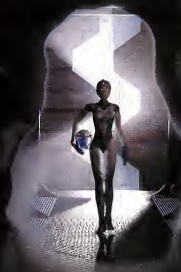
As for the overall sound, the 2.1s are great; both audio CDs and games are loud and clear, though they can be boomy unless you dial the subwoofer back. But if you close your eyes, you could almost swear you were listening to high-end stereo speakers for your living room.

If you're considering Klipsch, you'd do well to spend the extra \$60 bucks and get the 4.1 ng. —Dave Salvatore



# DEEP RAIDER

Experiencing 3-D  
Deep Sea Adventure...



## Deluxe Pack



Full Version of *Deep Raider* +  
USB JoyMouse

Available at >>>

electronics boutique®

[www.deepraider.com](http://www.deepraider.com)

COMPUSA

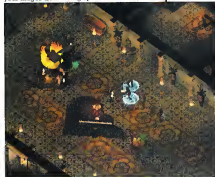


www.cybgraphics.com All right reserved. ©2000, Cyberscape Graphics, Inc. ©2000, InfoBank Technology Corp. The Cyberscape logo are trademarks of Cyberscape Graphics, Inc. In the U.S. And/or other countries. The InfoBank logo are trademarks of InfoBank Technology Corp. In the U.S. And/or other countries.

## Baldur's Gate II: Shadows Of Amn

Outmagic Merlin with this handy spell guide by Thierry Nguyen

**NASTY NISHRUU** When the enemy summons nishruu, hit the nishruu fast to protect your mages from losing spells and items



**BALLISTIC MAGIC MISSILE**  
A Minor Sequencer firing two Magic Missiles translates into ten projectiles, flinging themselves toward your target all at once.

**SATANIC SMOGG** If you need some extra firepower, use elemental. If the situation looks dire, and you have the protection, it's time to use Gate.

The mages in **BALDUR'S GATE II** may be mad, but they're not stupid.

BG2 mages play by a whole new set of rules. They know all the loopholes, and they're schooled in devious tricks to shatter your body and ego. Luckily, through many deaths of my own, I've figured out a few of their wily tactics and impart them here, if only to save you the grief of seeing some wimp-in-a-robe disintegrate you for the umpteenth time.

First things first: Go to your gameplay options, then to "auto-pause," and then check the option for "End of turn." While you could easily get away without doing this in both the original **BALDUR'S GATE** and even **ICEWIND DALE**, this is absolutely essential in BG2. This option allows for maximum efficiency, because if you interrupt a character during a

round, you're resetting his or her internal clock, which results in losing precious time. Since every spell can be cast within a round, you can be absolutely sure you're not interrupting or messing with the timing of your own spellcasting, just by waiting for the round to be over. Sure, the battles become even more turn-based, but the ability to efficiently cast your spells—rather than to haphazardly click around and accidentally interrupt your own casting—is worth it.

### Face More Into the Breach

Mages are no longer content to sit back and cast Fireball at you. They see you, and moments later, elaborate sets of spheres and shields are created before they even think about doing anything to you. You just have to learn how to peel away those defenses to show those mages who's boss.

Before you attempt to dispel the defenses, you'll want to make sure you can see them in the first place. Cast your highest level "visibility disruptor" (True Sight, Oracle, etc.), just to make sure you can actually target the mages when it comes time to shatter their defenses.

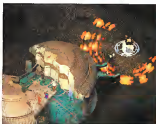
Follow that with a generalized spell-protection-disabler. These are spells ranging from Secret Word to Pierce Magic, or Kheben's Warding Whip. These will insure that any anti-spell globes or spheres are broken, and in some cases, will lower the target's magic resistance. When casting Level-Seven spells, I prefer to use Kheben's Warding Whip, since it will continue to peel away at other spell protections after impact (instead



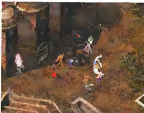
**SHIELDS UP!** This is how most battles start. Hit your target with *Breach*, then let your fighters thrack away.



**FIRE-AND-FORGET** Here's a cheap trick: Scout out an area, then move back and cast a *Fireball* or two into the "fog of war." Be even cheaper by casting *Cloudkill* instead.



**MAGIC IN THE STREETS** If you're in *Atlantia*, you may want to bribe a Council Of Six official into giving you a magic license. Visit the main government building, and prepare to pay 5000 gold.



of only taking out one), making your target even more vulnerable.

Finally, cast *Breach* itself. Just about any mage you recruit will invariably be able to cast level-five spells, so have him or her scribe *Breach* into their spellbooks ASAP. *Breach* literally tears through any spell with the word "Protection" in the title. Additionally, it even punches through and breaks effects like *Absolute Immunity* or *Stoneskin*. Whatever measure of protection the mage had will be shattered by the time you've breached them. Follow all that with some *Lower Resistances*, and you'll soon have a mage vulnerable to both physical weaponry and magical spells.

Have at least one mage dedicated to memorizing all of these protection-disabling spells, and for backup purposes, have the other mages memorize a *Breach* or two. With proper coordination and timing, one mage could concentrate on shattering defenses, and the other mage could immediately follow up with offensive spells to prevent the enemy from reaching their protections.

### A Shower of Sequences

Done properly, you can be just like those other mages who somehow set up elaborate defenses, or seem to cast a few spells way too fast. Take the time to fiddle with spells like *Minor Sequencer*, *Spell Sequencer*, and *Spell Trigger*.

For each of these spells, one basic rule is in effect: Any two or three spells within a certain level range are cast simultaneously. That means that in the time it takes to cast one *Magic Missile*, you can have three spells going on at the same time. *Minor Sequencer* can be used for a basic two-for-one *Magic Missile* combo, or to make your mage

hard to hit via *Minor Image* and *Blur* together.

*Spell Sequencer* gets even better, since you can string three spells together, as long as they're level-four or lower. You can do an instant-protection sequence with *Stoneskin* and both *Firehedge* at once, or rain down death with three castings of *Meat's Minute Meteors*.

*Spell Trigger* lets you cast three spells that are level-six or lower. Use this to create an instant spell defense-shattering kit, with *True Seeing*, *Peace Magic*, and *Breach* strung together. Or flood the room with three castings of *Chain Lightning*. An unshielded – but highly magic-resistant – enemy can be weakened by clammring it with three *Lower Resistances* in a row, making it ripe for a thrashing via *Magic Missile*.

These are just a few examples of the device things you can pull off with the proper sequences. Experiment with other combinations, and you'll see for yourself just how powerful mages are.

### Group Hug

When you know you're about to have a major encounter (such as, oh, seeing a dragon at the other side of the cave, or notic-

ing the giant sarcopteryx), you should be prepared to protect the group. Make sure to cast the following spells before a major encounter, and you should have a significantly easier time winning the battle.

**Waste:** Everyone gets hopped up and ready to inflict pain.

**Defensive Harmony:** Everyone gets a free AC boost, which always helps.

**Bless and Chant:** These raise your various attack and saving throws, while lowering the enemy's own attack and saving throws. Let them stack on top of each other, even though they're very similar.

**Protection From Evil 10' Radius:** Gives a nice, immediate knockdown to any enemy creatures. It's also useful for those times when you feel like conjuring any sort of Demon.

### Court Summons

When it comes to summoning, leave it mostly up to the priest or druid in the group – their elementals don't require the "barring period" that mages have. For mages, opt to summon either *nishrus* or *kakashars*, mainly because those are anti-mage creatures. Conversely, target *nishrus* first, so that they don't cripple your mages.

Priests can summon animals and undead to serve as pure cannon fodder and to save their elementals for serious, actual hitting power. Druids, in particular, get *Call Woodland Being*, which is extremely useful because you essentially get another free healer. Also, at high levels, the cleric can pull off a casting of *Gate* (be sure to cast *Protection From Evil 10' Radius* first); then let the resultant pit fiend tear its way through your opposition.

Next month, I'll focus on strategies against certain kinds of enemies (think mind-layers or liches). LGW

**BREACHIN' IN THE RAIN** Whether you're fighting mages in chapter two or seven, they will all falter beneath a mage who specializes in breaching their defenses.



# Unreal Tournament: Game Of The Year Edition

Get on top of the new maps by Thomas L. McDonald

Whether you're just joining the ranks at UT gamers via this new addition, or you've snagged these maps online and are trying them out, look here first. I spent some

time putting these maps through their paces to find out what makes the best ones work, and how you can use their features to your advantage.

## Cyrosis II

■ ■ ■ The intricate layout alone of *Cyrosis II* would make it a strong DM map, but a few unusual features make it one of the best. Almost every place someone might be tempted to camp has a blind spot. The most tempting trap is the "danger" switch, which triggers a matrix of beams that cover instant death; the kill is the Quad damage in the killing zone. One odd thing you might notice is that the real trap is the switch itself, which most seasoned players seem to trigger at longer than they should. Approached from the glass tunnel, this area makes a prime hunting ground for players lured by either the quad damage or the switch itself. Do yourself a favor and forget about the death beams.

■ The real threat is to those who would linger at the switch, hoping to vaporize an enemy, rather than watch their own backs.



## Facing Worlds II

■ ■ ■ I have designed this map to be his landmark UT level as a sniper's paradise. Each tower is loaded with sniper rifles and sniper nests. On the main level there are two sniper rifles, a pulse gun, and rocket launcher, as well as two medkits, armor, and a shield box. On the upper level, there is another sniper rifle and a pair of jump boots. The design of this upper tower is perfectly matched to the items. One of the high walls is shorter than the others, and reachable with the jump boots. The highest point on the map is then a short jump away. In this perch, a sniper has total dominance of the no-man's-land and the other sniper nests. Snipers in this spot are unopposed, and not so well defended for a long time, making up those slightly "honest-but-not"

■ See those red lights on the top of the opposing tower? That's where the sniper needs to go.



## Noxion 16

■ ■ ■ An oddly-named map on the servers, *Noxion 16* only really comes to life with large numbers of players. It also rewards good team tactics in DM more than most maps. This is due to a three-tiered no-man's-land, spanned by wireframe planks and flanked by sniper nests. A four-person defense in this no-man's-land can effectively slow (and a six-person defense can virtually stop) an opposing team from accessing the flag. A player on the top-most planks with a rocket launcher can sweep the center area clean, while snipers in the nests can provide additional stopping power. Effective teamwork at this area is essential to the map.

■ Spray the area with rockets from above, and snipe other teammates in the sniper nests to dominate *Noxion 16*.



## Healpod

■ ■ ■ Attempts to combine the healpod itself are bound to fail. A glowing green capsule at the center of the map, the pod heals you as long as you stand in it, but if someone walks over one of the numerous switches, it ceases instant death to whatever is in the pod. The temptation is to wait for someone to enter the pod and then to jump on the switch, but the odd timing and short duration of the killing mode mean too much time is spent waiting and too little time spent hunting. Forget about this trap; it's only there to prevent camping and in control for sniping up hills. Use the healpod sparingly, quickly, and only after a reason of the switches. Of course, people will flock to it like flies to light, so the upper levels are prime stalking grounds and good locations to rack up kills.

■ Sure, it's fun to slam down the healpod trap on an unsuspecting camper, but it's a pointless kill, and wastes time better spent on the move.



# Game Commander<sup>™</sup>

## Voice Control for Games & Simulations

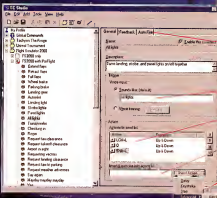
### Experience The Next Generation of Award-Winning Voice Control

No more fumbling with hard to remember keystrokes. The original Game Commander, released in 1998, won numerous awards for bringing the power of voice control to games including "Editor's Choice" from PC Gamer, Computer Gaming World and CHET Gamecenter. Now, Game Commander 2 breaks new ground with lightning fast command response and even more control over your games. You can even run Game Commander 2 along with popular voice chat programs such as TeamSpeak<sup>™</sup>, Roger Wilco<sup>™</sup>, and BattleCom<sup>™</sup>. And it works as hard as it plays. Take command of Windows, XP, 98, Me and 2000 applications too.



#### Powerful command editing

The Game Commander Studio gives you full access to all your commands and supports cut, copy and paste operations to make editing a snap.



#### Voice commands with no training

Put the power of speaker independent voice control to work immediately without tedious voice training.



#### Customizable audible feedback

Assign your own sounds and recorded speech to hear your commands being acknowledged and enhance the gaming experience.



#### Global commands

Common commands are available across all Windows applications.



#### Automatic command file loading

The right commands are always ready as soon as you heed them. No need to fuss with files while you work and play. Or lock one in place and use it everywhere.



#### Adjustable actions

Fine tune any keystroke or action for maximum control!

#### Multi-channel auto fire

Say a command and have it repeated continuously until you tell it to stop. Issue more commands while auto fire runs, including more auto fire commands!

#### No voice training required

Just type in what you want to say and you're ready.

#### Massive macro capabilities

Unleash up to 256 keystrokes per voice command.

#### Easy keystroke entry

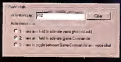
Just press the key as you would in the game. Many special Windows keys and combinations are also supported.

#### Extended actions

Configurable delay, key up, and key down actions, and step sequencing add more control capabilities than ever before.

#### Works with many voice chat programs

Use push-to-talk to switch between Game Commander and popular voice chat programs (Windows 9x & Me only). Or use push-to-talk alone to enable command recognition.



#### Available voice training

For special cases, strong accents or non-English commands, voice training takes only three utterances.



**Free Trial Download**  
[www.gamecommander.com](http://www.gamecommander.com)

Sontage Interactive  
 a division of Mindstar, Inc.  
 224 Airport Parkway, Suite 550  
 San Jose, CA 95130 USA  
 Tel: 408-467-0457  
 Fax: 408-467-9302  
[games@gamecommander.com](mailto:games@gamecommander.com)



# CG Tips

REARVIEW MIRROR

## Homeworld: Cataclysm

■■■ A good tactic with leeches is to use them as a distraction against Beast-heavy cruisers. The Beast can research heavy cruisers and put them into action long before the Somtaaw can answer with dreadnoughts, and a good Beast player will use this to his/her advantage, pressing the Somtaaw's mothership with heavy cruisers early in the game. Fortunately, a Somtaaw mothership is faster than a heavy cruiser; once its engines are upgraded, it can flee. Guard your mothership with a destroyer or two, as well as a sentinal shield, and as you run away from the heavy cruisers, produce a stream of leeches in order to harass them. The heavy cruisers will have to stop attacking in order to remove the leeches; at this point, you can attack with your destroyers, and pull them back into the mothership's defense screens when they begin to take damage. This will give you enough time to finish researching and building dreadnoughts. Once you have two or three dreadnoughts, a Beast fleet won't stand a chance. —Mark Laramore



For writing a couple of good tips on *HOMEWORLD: CATAclysm*, we're giving Mark a copy of *EDGE BY WIRE*, a *STARTLEST COMMANDER* 2 pin, and a *SANTO: BASTIN'S ASSKICK* shirt. Enjoy!

## Metal Gear Solid

■■■ Here're a few hints for the tougher areas of the game. First, when you're being tortured by Revolver Ocelot, the easiest way to resist is to use the keyboard. We recommend configuring your keys so that your space bar regains your strength. It's the easiest key to smack repeatedly, and using it will help insure that you save Meyl. The keyboard will also come in handy when you're fighting Psycho Mantis. If you've been using a gamepad to play up to this point, you'll need to ditch it in favor of the keyboard. Mantis can predict your movements if you're using a gamepad, but if you use the keyboard, he's vulnerable. Finally, keep an eye out for cardboard boxes. You can use them to warp around the Alaskan warhead-disposal complex. Simply hop into a truck and hide in your box. A guard will come by and drive you and the truck to wherever the box is addressed.



### Multi-Squad Tactics

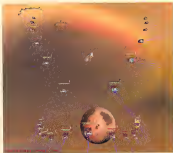
Sure, a gigantic mass of ships in Ciew formation is a mighty punch, but consider breaking your strike fleets into two or even three smaller groups. In any large battle, you will have major targets that require concentrated fire, as well as the smaller, faster defenders of those targets. By allowing one squad to focus fire on the large targets, you can let a second or even third squad maneuver and defend them.

### Get the Sacktime! Dealing With Infection

Beast infection raises the stakes considerably in *CATAclysm*. You must learn to deal with it effectively and to incorporate these considerations into all attacks against the Beast. There is some advance notice when your ships are being infected. If you can select the individual units (not the whole squadron), you can often scuttle these ships before you lose control of them. This prevents the Beast from gaining their tech and from adding another ship to their roster.

One important fact to remember is that the infection beam needs time to recharge. A good way to use this to your advantage is to stay just out of range. Send a cheap, easily-infected ship (such as a Recon) towards the Beast cap ship. The beam will fire at the decoy, and if you time it right, you can scuttle the decoy before the full infection takes hold. This gives you a window of opportunity to strike hard against the ship carrying the infection beam.

Finally, don't ever use a ship that will touch a Beast ship, such as the ram, the worker, or the leech.





## Crimson Skies

Highlight the microphone on the left side of the main menu in the campaign. Press the right mouse button, then type "idaho." A new drop-down menu that allows any level to be selected will appear at the top-right of the screen.



## Age Of Empires II: The Conquerors

While playing a game, press [Enter], then type one of the following codes to activate the corresponding cheat function:

RESULT	CHEAT CODE
1000 food	<i>cheese steak jimmy's</i>
1000 gold	<i>robin hood</i>
1000 stone	<i>rock on</i>
1000 wood	<i>lumberjack</i>
Cobra car	<i>how do you turn this on</i>
Control nature	<i>natural wonders</i>
Destroy all opponents	<i>black death</i>
Fast building	<i>agile</i>
Flying dogs	<i>woof woof</i>
Full map	<i>marco</i>
Instant victory	<i>J r winner</i>
Little monkey	<i>furious the monkey boy</i>
No fog of war	<i>potato</i>

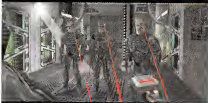
## Icewind Dale

You'll need to have patched your copy to version 1.05. You'll also need to edit a text file; create a backup copy just to be safe. Use a text editor to edit the "icewind.ini" file in the game directory. Add the line "Cheats=1" anywhere under the "[Game Options]" section.

## Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force

Press ~ to display the console, then enter one of the following codes to activate the corresponding cheat function. Cheats cannot be enabled in multiplayer mode.

RESULT	CHEAT CODE
Toggle God mode	<i>god</i>
All weapons	<i>give weapons</i>
998 health and armor	<i>undying</i>
No clipping	<i>noclip</i>
Invisibility	<i>notarget</i>
Third-person view enabled	<i>cg_thirdperson 1</i>
Third-person view disabled	<i>cg_thirdperson 0</i>
Hidden level	<i>map brig</i>



Start the game and press [Ctrl]+[Tab] to display the console window. Type "CHEATERSDOPROSPER:EnableCheatKeys()" to enable cheat mode. Then, enter one of the following codes while playing a game to activate the corresponding cheat function.

RESULT	CHEAT CODE
Move selected characters to pointer position	<i>Ctrl + J</i>
Heal or resurrect the selected character or portrait	<i>Ctrl + R</i>
Kill selected monster or NPC with no EXP	<i>Ctrl + Y</i>
Display trigger polygons (shows traps)	<i>Ctrl + 4</i>

### ADDITIONAL CHEATS

You can also bring up the console again ([Ctrl]+[Tab]) and type in one of these additional codes:

RESULT	CHEAT CODE
Full map	<i>CHEATERSDOPROSPER:ExploreArea()</i>
Teleport party to pointer	<i>CHEATERSDOPROSPER:Hans()</i>
Give selected characters indicated EXP	<i>CHEATERSDOPROSPER:SetCurrentXP(number)</i>
Add indicated gold to party total	<i>CHEATERSDOPROSPER:AddGold(number)</i>
Add 5 healing potions, 5 antidotes, and 1 scroll of Stone To Flesh	<i>CHEATERSDOPROSPER:FirstAid()</i>



BY THOMAS L. McDONALD [gamewriters@fflowers.com](mailto:gamewriters@fflowers.com)

# Banned!

**EVERQUEST PLAYER-BANNING RAISES SERIOUS ROLE-PLAYING QUESTIONS**

Player-banning is an extremely controversial issue in massively multiplayer online games, primarily because it's a clear case of a company defining limits on a realm they actively hype as "unlimited." Online role-playing games only succeed thanks to the creativity of the gamers, with the game itself being merely a tool to stimulate interaction. Sometimes, players cross the line in the name of "creativity" and run the experience for others with various forms of harassment. Considering the size and scope of games like *ULTIMA ONLINE*, *EVERQUEST*, and *ASHERON'S CALL*, these instances are surprisingly rare, but always controversial.

Two cases of player-banning stand in sharp contrast to each other. The first is an older story concerning the MDK (Murder Death Kill) guild, banned from *ULTIMA ONLINE* earlier this year. This guild was dedicated to being disruptive, and they preyed on a player named Angel Storm who wasn't going to put up with it. They had a little macro that displayed "Am Rage" on the screen as they stood over corpses, and would take pictures of these screens and post them to their Web site. So not only were they hunting other players, they were being crass dill-weeds about it. Origin got fed up, and banned the entire guild, proving that if you're a jerk long enough, someone will simply pull the plug.

### The Mystere Controversy

On the other side of this issue is a more recent case of player-banning, this one from *EVERQUEST*. A gamer named Mystere, whose character is a dark elf, posted a story to an unofficial message board. Though it was a very graphic tale of torture, the story was completely in character and in the tone of the game. Remember: This is a gameworld sprinkled with dismembered corpses and heads on pikes. The story was clearly fictional and not a threat—implied or direct—to another gamer. It was not on a Sony or Verant board; Verant was alerted to the story by a hysterical parent, who saw it and began to madly contact parental boardwatch sites and services to get *EVERQUEST* sites flagged for pornographic content. Verant may indeed have found the content offensive, but moreover, they saw looming bad PR and decided to make a point.



I was unable to reach Mystere (all emails bounced), but I was able to read the story in question before it vanished from the boards. It was a Sadcan account of torture written in-character, and seemed perfectly at keeping with the *EVERQUEST* gameworld. Yes, it was explicit, not to mention rather overwrought and pretty poorly written. But it was merely the textual equivalent of all those corpses seen in the game. Why is it fine when sprites are shown cutting each other to pieces, but when someone writes a story that describes the same thing, it suddenly becomes verboten?

Of course, any company has the right to ban whomever they want, whenever they want to. It's right there in the EULA you don't bother to read in your rush to click the "I Accept These Terms" button and get to playing the game. In the case of Sony/Verant, they clearly had visions of a rightly news story about some teen stalking and killing another with the accident used as proof of intent.

In a bizarre twist of anti-logic, however, General Counsel for Sony Online Entertainment Andrew S. Zaffron claimed that the player-banning was actually in response to the author's use of "our intellectual property—without license—to create what the law calls a 'derivative work.'" This must mean that all writers of EO fan-fiction (which Verant encourages, by the way) can expect a cease-and-desist letter.

### Smedley Speaks

"The simple fact," observed Verant CEO John Smedley in a statement to the press, "is that it's easy for folks to point at that story, point at *EVERQUEST* and link the two. It becomes our business, because it threatens our business by making us a huge target for all the folks out there that think we all are all a bunch of violent video-game players. This just gives them fuel for the fire."

While acknowledging that they handled the situation badly and apologizing for that, Smedley makes it abundantly clear that it was handled in that manner for PR reasons. He seems



EVERQUEST: There is our world, now

like a reasonable guy and was quick to try to mend fences with the community, but he's also unapologetic and remains vague about setting clear standards for behavior outside the actual game.

He understands what he calls the "big question": "Where's the line? And what right do we have to draw it outside the game? The answer is complicated and extremely subjective, so I'll just have to be honest and say we'll know it when it's over the line. We're going to discuss it in the upcoming few weeks and see if we can make it more clear, but I can't honestly say if we'll get anywhere, because none of us wants to stop people from writing awesome fanfiction about EQ. But we aren't going to be looking at every fan site and becoming the Thought Police. We have neither the time nor the inclination to do that. However, we need to protect EVERQUEST's good image as best we can."

Protect it from whom? The people who enjoy it and make it work, such as Mystere? It seems to me that Smedley should be protecting it from the people who want to bring it down. Verant is fighting the wrong enemy, but then RPGers only number in the thousands, while lazy parents are found on every block.



EQ: New life as Segafet?

THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD...

## SegaNet Going Strong

■■■ The barbarians are at the gates. Or, in this case, it's the console gamers.

Now don't get me wrong. I am a console gamer. I love my Dreamcast and will gladly marry it once Vermont gets around to legalizing every conceivable form of marriage. However, console gamers and PC gamers are oil and water, and Sega is about to try to get them to mix.

SegaNet launched this past September to bring select Dreamcast games to the Internet, with their awe-inspiring NFL2K1 as the flagship product. Considering that the DC unit only packs a measly 56.6K modem, they've actually done quite a nice job with resolving latency issues. Sure, the launch got off to a rocky start with disconnects and the usual sluggish responses, but the kinks are getting hammered out pretty quickly, paving the way for *QUAKE 3 ARENA* and *UNREAL TOURNAMENT* multiplayer support via Dreamcast.

That thought must send shivers down the spines of the hardcore PC gamers who populate the game servers, as they imagine rampaging hordes of 13-year-old console dweebs joining sessions from their living room. Real easy, trappers: There is no chance that PC-to-console gaming will happen any time soon. As of now, there is really no way to work out the complex latency and connectivity issues that would enable someone on a Dreamcast unit to challenge someone on a PC.

However, cross-platform gaming is being worked on in some very dark and dank cubbyholes, and Sega has placed itself at the crossroads with SegaNet. This online service is not only the sole portal for Dreamcast gamers to hook up, but they also launched as a full ISP and have now rolled out PC servers for titles like *QUAKE 3 ARENA*, *UT*, *AGE OF EMPIRES*, *KINGPIN*, and *MOTOCROSS MADNESS*. As for speed and stability, the PC servers are about comparable to the Heat.net service (which is pretty much exactly like MPlayer) because, well, it is Heat.net. Sega

folded Heat into SegaNet and is bringing Heat's original RTS/conquest game 18XX to the service for a free trial period with all new accounts. This might give the deeply flawed but still-promising 18XX some of the attention it's been sorely lacking.

Sega is angling hard to be all things to all gamers, and aren't doing too shabby a job. Their console support is working out better than expected. Their PC support is flake, but without the hooks needed to lure people away from the other services. Reports on the ISP show that it performs well. With an exclusive title or two and a better version of 18XX to anchor the service, it might become another Zone or MPlayer. That's certainly their hope.

BY AUDREY WELLS [gnedrow@gddragon.com](mailto:gnedrow@gddragon.com)

# They're...Alive! ALIVE!

THE TRUTH IS, ADVENTURE GAMES WERE NEVER DEAD TO BEGIN WITH

**W**ho says the adventure genre is dead? You can just obliterate that clichéd phrase from your mind. In spite of the mainstream gaming media consistently bemoaning the death of adventure games, the genre is actually bustling with life. With this fact in mind, I recently wrote to *IGN* to criticize their latest "adventures are dead" shtick—only to be offered a column in return. As a result, you are now the privileged reader at the brand-new Inside Adventure Gaming page. See where complaining gets you?

I thought the best way to start my first column was to debunk the myth, and then to profile on about all the new adventure games coming from developers around the world. This new group of games, along with a few older gems, makes for a nice, diverse range to suit the tastes of all breeds of adventure gamers—whether you're a diehard third-person gamer, first-person gamer, or somewhere in between. Whether you're buying for yourself or someone else this holiday season, these games are a surefire way to satisfy all adventure game cravings.



## A Fantastic Journey

THE LONGEST JOURNEY's designer Ragnar Tornquist and his team at Funcom have produced an absolute masterpiece of adventure gaming, about the caliber of a Jane Jensen or Tim Schafer game. Over a span of thirteen chapters, THE LONGEST JOURNEY tells an inspiring tale of an eight-year-old girl named April Ryan and her quest to unravel the questions surrounding her own destiny and two breathtaking parallel worlds of magic and science. The game features spectacular visuals, a beautiful musical score, and one of the best stories I have seen, played, or heard in a long time. It is certainly a must for any self-respecting adventure gamer—it's one of those treasured games that finds a privileged spot on your shelf to be remembered and replayed for all time. See the full review elsewhere in this issue.

For more information: [www.longestjourney.com](http://www.longestjourney.com)

## Wanna Be a Shadow Hunter?

Jane Jensen's award-winning GABRIEL KNIGHT series is one of the greatest adventure game series of all time, beginning with the 2D animated *Sons of the Fathers* in 1993 and the full-motion video *The Beast Within* two years later. In 1998, a third masterpiece was added to the collection, *Blood of the Sacred*, *Blood of the Damned*—this time in 3D. It is an exciting tale of intrigue, conspiracy, and ancient secrets that begins when good ol' Gabe travels to France on assignment as Schattenspieler, or Shadow Hunter. Over the course of the game, the dynamic duo of Gabriel and Grace (Gabe's assistant) begins to uncover and unravel the sinister plot and mind-boggling enigmas surrounding the French village of Rennes-le-Chateau. This is one adventure game that you shouldn't overlook, despite *COW's* rashly tarnish review (April 2000); it is a personal favorite of mine and tells a damn good story.

For more information: [www.sierrastudios.com/games/gk3/](http://www.sierrastudios.com/games/gk3/)



**Swashbuckling Pirates, Ahoy!**

LUCASARTS' upcoming **ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND** is the fourth in an *adventure* series that began over a decade ago with the classic **THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND**. In this episode, you'll again play as Guybrush Threepwood, wanna-be pirate extraordinaire, as he sets off on a whole new buccaneering adventure chock-full of sidesplitting wittiness, insult arm wrestling, punk pirate ships, and oodles of shreking monkeys. This time around, the game will be in 3D and controlled by keyboard (using an improved version of the **GRIM FANDANGO** engine). This game is sure to be full of laughs and a treat for new and old **MONKEY ISLAND** fans alike.

**For more information:** [www.lucasarts.com/products/monkey4/](http://www.lucasarts.com/products/monkey4/)

**It's the Day of the Dead**

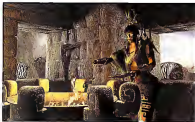
Though Tim Schafer's **GRIM FANDANGO** was released in 1998, it's one of the best adventures ever made and is still available in bargain bins. You play as Manny Calavera, "travel agent" in the Land of the Dead (a world inspired by Mexican folklore) and seller of travel packages to souls on their way to eternal rest. When Manny manages to steal the perfect client from his rival, a chain of events is unleashed, sending him on a wild film-noirish ride to unravel crime and corruption. The graphics and animated cut-scenes are phenomenal, the plot is wonderfully whimsical, and the characters and their respective voice actors are captivating. If you missed this one before, find it and buy it now.

**For more information:** [www.lucasarts.com/products/grim/](http://www.lucasarts.com/products/grim/)

**Enchanting Worlds**

**MYST**-lovers will enjoy this beautiful sequel to **ATLANTIS: THE LOST TALES**. You play as Ten, descendant of Seth (the star of the first game) and the Bearer of Light, as he embarks on a journey to defy the Dark. Jam-packed with mysteries and puzzles to solve, **BEYOND ATLANTIS** will enchant you with its brilliant graphics, imaginative soundtrack, and breathtaking worlds. Ten will travel to places ranging from Mayan temples to an Irish monastery, solve complex puzzles, and meet enigmatic characters. Steer clear if you're not a fan of developer Cryo's work, but if you like immersing yourself in a beautiful world and solving puzzles, **BEYOND ATLANTIS** is for you.

**For more information:** [www.dreamcatchergames.com/products/atlantis.htm](http://www.dreamcatchergames.com/products/atlantis.htm)

**Espionage Galore**

In DayDream Software's **TRAITOR'S GATE**, you play an American spy sent to infiltrate the Tower of London and replace the precious crown jewels with replicas in order to thwart an expected theft by a traitor. To top it off, you're not to let the British know what is going on! What could be more fun than sneaking around, slinking past guards and alarms, and using all kinds of sophisticated, high-tech spy gadgets? **TRAITOR'S GATE** features a beautifully recreated Tower of London and realistic puzzles. A difficult maze in one portion of the game makes it more suitable for experienced gamers, but it's certainly a refreshing change of pace for all gamers due to the unusual spy theme.

**For more information:** [www.traitorsgate.com](http://www.traitorsgate.com)

**Until Next Time...**

Enjoy adventure gaming at its finest. Prove CGW wrong. Buy every adventure game known to humankind. And send your comments and criticisms to me at [gamestame@gfdamaia.com](mailto:gamestame@gfdamaia.com).

BY STEPHEN "DESSLACK" JANICKI [desslack@dslack.com](mailto:desslack@dslack.com)

While computer RPGs like the MIGHT AND MAGIC series permitted, and required, characters to significantly enhance their core attributes during the course of their experiences, attributes in D&D have always been kept relatively static. Under the new D&D system, attributes continue to increase, which more effectively rewards players for accomplishments. Even more significantly, characters now acquire additional skills and feat abilities as they gain experience, and all of the discriminatory class and race limitations have been eliminated. If you really want to role-play a mage character that is capable of wearing armor while casting spells, or dual-class a halfling thief into a ranger, you can now develop your character in that fashion. Different classes and races are still better suited to certain roles and activities, but determined players are no longer absolutely prohibited from roleplaying their creations in the manner of their choosing.

The 3rd Edition designers extensively play-tested and capably tweaked the new system to both address all of D&D's perceived flaws, and to ensure that no elements that players strongly identified with D&D were removed or modified beyond recognition. For example, D&D has traditionally required mages to pre-select and memorize spells—an onerous requirement that significantly limits the utility of spell-casters. It's annoying to be struck with a granite statue as a party member, just because your spell-casters didn't anticipate that they'd need to memorize stone-to-flesh spells.

RPG systems created during the past ten years have almost universally adopted more flexible point-based sys-

tems that allow characters to choose their spells at the time of casting, instead of in advance. But completely abandoning D&D's spell-casting system—even if it was widely regarded as cumbersome and outdated—might have alienated veteran players. Instead, the 3rd Edition designers introduced a new character class, the sorcerer, who isn't required to memorize spells in advance; and they have permitted priests to gain access to unmemorized spells as well. A great design compromise.

### Die, Monster, Die!

There are also a ton of logistical changes introduced by the 3rd Edition, such as an increased emphasis on using a 20-sided die to determine the results of actions. Since computer D&D games already sorted through attack modifiers, saving throws, and other complexities in a manner largely transparent to players, those sorts of rationalizations may have a more noticeable impact on tabletop D&D than computer game adaptations. But D&D's old rules were often difficult to understand and unintuitive, as anyone who has tried to explain D&D's armor class system would appreciate. Collectively, the rule simplifications should make D&D easier to comprehend and enjoy.

Computer RPGs inherently have less role-playing flexibility than their tabletop counterparts, and D&D adaptations have been additionally hampered by an arcane, unbalanced system. But now, with the 3rd Edition rules, D&D computer gaming experiences should be much closer to real roleplaying.

Any system that gives players additional opportunities to personalize the experiences of their dented, gnome-barbarian alter-egos is a step in the right direction for the genre. **GGW**

ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES WOODS FOR ENR. PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES WOODS FOR ENR. PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES WOODS FOR ENR.

## DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS—BETTER THAN EVER?

# Enter the 3rd Edition

British half-orcs are back. So are those more-violent-than-meditative monks. Accompanying them are dwarven paladins, armor-wearing mages, and brutish barbarians. *Wizards of the Coast* has finally unveiled the third iteration of the most popular RPG of them all, *Dungeons & Dragons*, and this edition radically revises the core rules and leaves very little unchanged. In spite of all the changes, the new version has been widely praised by tabletop gamers and should be a significantly better D&D system for computer RPG adaptations as well.

While D&D computer games have consistently been popular, the actual gameplay system has been derided as outdated, unbalanced, and unintuitive. Many RPG systems created specifically for computer games are better balanced, more accessible, and allow players additional opportunities to personalize their experiences. As if in answer to that, the D&D 3rd Edition rationalizes the existing rules, removes arbitrary

and illogical gameplay restrictions, and allows players to create and develop characters that more accurately reflect the personalities they wish to roleplay.

### Core Distinctions

D&D characters are rated in six core attributes, but in previous editions, some of those attributes—charisma, wisdom, and intelligence—were completely useless for most classes. While some non-D&D computer RPGs (like *FALLOUT*) forced players to make difficult choices about which attributes to emphasize, D&D has historically made those choices almost meaningless.

Computer adaptations of D&D have also, generally (with the notable exception of *PLANESCAPE*), made no attempt to make higher attribute scores affect anything other than combat effectiveness. That should change with the 3rd Edition, as the under-utilized attributes are given increased importance to certain classes, and more opportunities to influence the outcome of events.



Technology is all around you.

[Shop](#) | [Business](#) | [Help](#) | [News](#) | [Investing](#) | [Reviews](#) | [Electronics](#) | [GameSpot](#) | [Tech Life](#) | [Downloads](#) | [Developer](#)

Your beeper beeps. Your PDA chimes. You can make a quick call wherever you are. Yup, technology is an integral part of everyday life. That's why ZDNet has all the product reviews to help you find the latest gadget. In fact, ZDNet was named "Best Overall Online Site" by the Computer Press Association. However technology touches your life, ZDNet's Reviews Channel has something for you. Because ZDNet is where technology takes you.™



[www.zdnet.com](http://www.zdnet.com)

# ELITE Lite

## SPACE TRADER FOR THE PALM OS

Short Range Chart **BSYW**



Each ship in **SPACE TRADER** has a **movement range**, meaning that you'll have to plan your trade routes carefully.

■■■ My Game Boy Color is laying idle in some dark corner of my basement, sitting right next to my NEO-GEO Pocket Color. They've both been temporarily replaced by my Visor, thanks to a little gem of a freeware game called **SPACE TRADER**. You begin by assigning skill points in several areas, depending on what you want to specialize in; and then warp around an enormous galaxy buying low, selling high, and upgrading your ship. **SPACE TRADER** is a game of consequences: Kill innocent cargo ships or smuggle contraband, and your police record will suffer. Hunt pirates as a bounty hunter and pass random cargo inspections, and your record will improve. The game mechanics are somewhat simplistic — fighting ships is reduced to tapping Attack, Fire, or Surrender buttons, for example — but these decisions serve to streamline gameplay, rather than hurt it.

There is actually an **ELITE** clone for the Palm OS called **VOID** ([www.pdbusiness.com](http://www.pdbusiness.com)), but the fight and combat sequences are annoying due to less-than-ideal controls, and you need a color Palm IIIc to get the most out of it. **SPACE TRADER** is more fun in many ways, because the text-based interface is better suited for the Palm OS, and the pacing is flawless. It had me tapping away into the wee hours of the morning for over a week, and even my wife is addicted (well, she was addicted until she accidentally picked up a box full of Tribbles from a shady dealer). Pick up the latest version of the **Space Trader** Center ([go.to/spacestrader](http://go.to/spacestrader)).

## INSIDE HOMEBREW

BY T. BYRL BAKER [tyrbaker@msn.com](mailto:tyrbaker@msn.com)

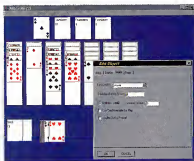
# Solo Mio

## THE JOY OF SOLITAIRE AND OTHER SMALL GAMES

After a month's hiatus you'd think I'd reappear with something amazing, but I'm here to talk about Solitaire. You remember, that card game you used to play before you bought a computer? I recently had the urge to play some of my favorite old Solitaire games on the computer, but couldn't find a single package that used the house rules I was accustomed to. After much searching, I stumbled upon Dan Reed's **SOLO** ([members.home.com/tenguru](http://members.home.com/tenguru)), a beautiful freeware program that makes everything from customizing rules to creating entirely new Solitaire games incredibly easy.

**SOLO** is nowhere near as flashy or feature-rich as the best freeware and shareware Solitaire games on the market. It won't automatically move cards around if you double click them, and there aren't any fancy graphics. Its real strength is the editing capabilities, which let users make any changes they want to a game without requiring any programming skills at all.

Say, for example, you play **Klondike**, and two cards are turned over from the stock pile at a time instead of three, and you also want to only be able to see the last card you turned over (not the other card that was peeled off along with it). Making those changes takes all of ten seconds, once you spend the fifteen minutes or so it takes to get familiar with the editor's basic options. Creating a new game takes some planning, but that same simple editor interface lets you create foundations, tableaux, and other piles; place them on the table by dragging them around, and establish rules, using a fill-in-the-blanks interface. **SOLO** comes with more than 67 games to get you started.



## MOD-MAKERS GETTIN' PAID

# Huzzah, Shrapnel Games!

■■■ Tip o' the hat to **Shrapnel Games** for instituting a program that rewards the top mod authors with publishing deals. I'm used to seeing companies draw on the best stuff from the mod communities to pad out expansion packs, but the mod authors are rarely rewarded with anything beyond a T-shirt and a free copy of the game.

**Shrapnel's** new program not only gives mod authors a cut of the proceeds from the sales of their mods, but

also highlights the author at their site, and goes the extra mile to credit these talented designers for their hard work.

The first person to take advantage of the deal is Ed Marshall, with his **Tour of Duty '44** mod for **WOK 2K**. This new addition models the D-Day landings and the first few days of fighting that took place during this historic battle. You can learn more about it and order the mod at [www.shrapnel-games.com](http://www.shrapnel-games.com). **GGW**



BY BRUCE GERYK [germyk@netll.com](mailto:germyk@netll.com)

(above) You can play old favorites by e-mail using ABE DE CAMP 2.

(left) Yes, PACIFIC WAR was a great game.

GET ESTABLISHED DESIGNERS OFF THE SIDELINES AND INTO THE GAME

# Wasted Talents

**W**argamers are a nostalgic bunch. How else to explain our joy at the recent re-release – for free download – of Gary Gygis's *PACIFIC WAR*, by Matrix Games? ([www.matrixgames.com](http://www.matrixgames.com)) Long a favorite among hardcore armchair generals, this eight-year-old classic is one of the only computer games ever released to model the Pacific Theatre of World War II in significant detail. In fact, the level of detail is such that gamers not familiar with serious military simulations could be forgiven for mistaking the game for some kind of military spreadsheet.

## Wargaming With Microsoft Excel

This spreadsheet feeling isn't restricted to *PACIFIC WAR*. While computer wargaming grew out of its boardgaming counterpart, computer wargame designers quickly found that they had a tool unavailable to their colleagues who worked with paper-and-cardboard: unparalleled computational power. While board wargame designers always had to worry about how much record-keeping they were imposing on players, the computer lifted this restriction completely for those who designed on a digital canvas. Gygis's *PACIFIC WAR* and *WAR IN RUSSIA* (1993) did the most comprehensive job of harnessing computer power in the name of pure simulation. Why settle for an 8-7 panzerkorps unit when you can know exactly how many tanks, guns, men, and aircraft each one has, and make every single one of them have an impact on the battle? This approach reached its logical conclusion with the 1998 release of Norm

Koger's *THE OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR*.

## An Insurmountable Barrier?

What strikes me about this situation is that computer game designers eventually did run into the same problem that faced their boardgame counterparts, but in a different form. Increasing size and sophistication makes it difficult to play these games as games, where you use the game mechanics to outsmart your opponent. The physical limit on the amount of information a player can effectively process is still there, but if this limit is exceeded, it no longer makes the game unplayable. It simply means that the game will proceed on its way with less and less player control. Once you lose control of the game mechanics, you're not really playing the game; the game is playing itself.

Not all boardgame designers tried to push the simulation barrier. Games like Courtney Allen's and Don Greenwood's impulse series (*STORM OVER ASSENHEM* through *BREAKOUT: NORMANDY*) combined historical accuracy with simple mechanics and tense face-to-face gameplay. Kevin Zucker's long line of Napoleonic designs struck a perfect balance between modeling Napoleonic warfare and putting players in a position to intelligently make all the crucial game decisions, without being snowed under by statistics.

Simply porting these games to the computer is not the answer, because the level of detail would seem simplistic in a computer game context. The single die rolls that resolved huge battles in *NAPOLEON AT*

*BAY* would seem out of place in a medium where *WARGAMES: NAPOLEON 1813-1814* recently simulated the same thing with a detailed real-time tactical engine. Computer games and boardgames try to achieve different things and require different approaches. At the same time, they surely have enough in common to allow accomplished boardgame designers to make their mark in the electronic medium.

## Get 'Em off the Sidelines!

I don't understand why some enterprising wargame company hasn't already tapped the wargame design talent pool in this manner. Specifically, I can't believe that no one has approached Kevin Zucker to lend his expertise to a massive Napoleonic wars project, since this seems to be the "great neglected topic" that so many wargamers want to see in a game.

I spoke with Kevin at Origins '98 and asked him when we'd see a version of one of his games done for the computer. He said that if his company could find investors for this sort of project, he'd love to hire a programmer to work on it. This is absolutely backwards. It's as though instead of drafting Peyton Manning, the NFL wanted to find someone who would fund an expansion team, and then made him the quarterback.

There are several accomplished boardgame designers who would certainly benefit any future computer wargaming project. Instead of constantly tweaking or re-using old games and concepts, let's get some real innovation into computer wargame design. Team these guys up with established computer wargame designers and programmers, and see what they can dream up. It wouldn't have to be expensive. Just revolutionary. **GMW**



CLIMB IT UP! TEAM TIGER  
**WRESTLE FIGHT**™  
 Dive In! Mission 3™  
 In the heat of the moment, it's  
 team play! Players can  
 be cut-throat but will  
 defend each other  
 when you knock both  
 out. The ultimate  
 Punk and Fatima's  
 team. You'll have  
 your favorite  
 wrestling stars  
 in every new game type  
 and a revolutionary  
 3-D world full of  
 non-stop  
 non-stop  
 non-stop



**\$28.95**

Activision (Action)  
 Release: NOW  
 PC CD

**STARBUCK TRIBES™**  
 Takes you behind the scenes of  
 the world's largest coffee  
 company to tribes 2, where you  
 acquire new recruits and  
 expand your territory. You'll  
 learn about the company's  
 history and the challenges  
 of running a business in  
 a competitive market.  
 Includes a full business  
 simulation with a focus on  
 marketing and sales.  
 Includes a full business  
 simulation with a focus on  
 marketing and sales.  
 Includes a full business  
 simulation with a focus on  
 marketing and sales.



**\$42.95**

Activision (Action)  
 Release: NOW  
 PC CD

# CHIPS & BIT INC.

P.O. BOX 234 OPT 11356  
 2520 VT. RTE. 100N ROCHESTER, VT 05767  
 INT'L 802-767-3033 FAX 802-767-3382

## COMPUTER GAMES: ACTION

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
Alien Resurrection	11/00	\$29.95	Star Trek: Enterprise	09/00	\$39.95
Alien vs. Predator	09/00	\$29.95	Star Trek: Voyager	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Super Smash Bros.	09/00	\$19.95
Bully	09/00	\$29.95	The Sims: The Sims	09/00	\$29.95
Competition Tennis 2000	09/00	\$29.95	Thor 2: The Metal Age	09/00	\$29.95
Conan Exiles	09/00	\$49.95			
Def Jam Fight for NY	10/00	\$29.95			
Def Jam Fight for NY	10/00	\$29.95			
Def Jam Fight for NY	10/00	\$29.95			
Def Jam Fight for NY	10/00	\$29.95			

## 'AMERICAN MCGEE'S ALICE' From the largest rat of the Mushroom World to the intricate chemistry of the Mad Father's Domain and beyond, Alice's World returns to its roots. Immerse yourself in a world of ambience, cinematic confusion, and mortal danger that no other rat for Alice must endure the chase.

EA (Adventure)  
 Release: NOW PC CD **\$45.95**

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
EA (Adventure)	11/00	\$29.95	EA (Adventure)	11/00	\$29.95
EA (Adventure)	11/00	\$29.95	EA (Adventure)	11/00	\$29.95
EA (Adventure)	11/00	\$29.95	EA (Adventure)	11/00	\$29.95
EA (Adventure)	11/00	\$29.95	EA (Adventure)	11/00	\$29.95

## COMPUTER GAMES: SIMULATION

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
1800 Euro War	11/00	\$19.95	1800 Euro War	11/00	\$19.95
300: The Inside Story	09/00	\$29.95	300: The Inside Story	09/00	\$29.95
300: The Inside Story	09/00	\$29.95	300: The Inside Story	09/00	\$29.95
300: The Inside Story	09/00	\$29.95	300: The Inside Story	09/00	\$29.95
300: The Inside Story	09/00	\$29.95	300: The Inside Story	09/00	\$29.95

## COMPUTER GAMES: HARDWARE

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95

## PC: SPORTS

Title	Release	Price
Beast Soccer 2001	10/00	\$19.95
Beast Soccer 2001	10/00	\$19.95
Beast Soccer 2001	10/00	\$19.95
Beast Soccer 2001	10/00	\$19.95
Beast Soccer 2001	10/00	\$19.95

## HINT BOOKS

Title	Release	Price
Call of Duty: Modern Warfare	11/00	\$19.95
Call of Duty: Modern Warfare	11/00	\$19.95
Call of Duty: Modern Warfare	11/00	\$19.95
Call of Duty: Modern Warfare	11/00	\$19.95
Call of Duty: Modern Warfare	11/00	\$19.95

## VIDEO GAMES: RAC

Blue, Red, and Green  
 (GOLF) This contains  
 over 250 PGA members  
 and the original PGA  
 members. Includes a  
 variety of new  
 features to help you  
 win and then get it  
 out with others.

'POINER SILVER'  
 Release: NOW  
**\$29.95**

Activision (Adventure)  
 Release: NOW  
 PC CD

## VIDEO GAMES: RAC

Blue, Red, and Green  
 (GOLF) This contains  
 over 250 PGA members  
 and the original PGA  
 members. Includes a  
 variety of new  
 features to help you  
 win and then get it  
 out with others.

'POINER SILVER'  
 Release: NOW  
**\$29.95**

Activision (Adventure)  
 Release: NOW  
 PC CD

## VIDEO GAMES: RAC

Blue, Red, and Green  
 (GOLF) This contains  
 over 250 PGA members  
 and the original PGA  
 members. Includes a  
 variety of new  
 features to help you  
 win and then get it  
 out with others.

'POINER SILVER'  
 Release: NOW  
**\$29.95**

Activision (Adventure)  
 Release: NOW  
 PC CD

## VIDEO GAMES: RAC

Blue, Red, and Green  
 (GOLF) This contains  
 over 250 PGA members  
 and the original PGA  
 members. Includes a  
 variety of new  
 features to help you  
 win and then get it  
 out with others.

'POINER SILVER'  
 Release: NOW  
**\$29.95**

Activision (Adventure)  
 Release: NOW  
 PC CD

## VIDEO GAMES: RAC

Blue, Red, and Green  
 (GOLF) This contains  
 over 250 PGA members  
 and the original PGA  
 members. Includes a  
 variety of new  
 features to help you  
 win and then get it  
 out with others.

'POINER SILVER'  
 Release: NOW  
**\$29.95**

Activision (Adventure)  
 Release: NOW  
 PC CD



## SONY PLAYSTATION

Title	Release	Price
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95

## NINTENDO 64

Title	Release	Price
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95
Act of Valor	10/00	\$29.95

# New Releases!

Loopy Landscapes PC **\$28.95**  
 Escape From Monkey Island PC **\$39.95**  
 Kingdom Under Fire PC **\$39.95**  
 Unreal Trants: Game Yr. PC **\$29.95**

## COMPUTER GAMES: ADVENTURE

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95

## COMPUTER GAMES: HARDWARE

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95

## COMPUTER GAMES: ADVENTURE

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95

## COMPUTER GAMES: HARDWARE

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95

## COMPUTER GAMES: ADVENTURE

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95

## COMPUTER GAMES: HARDWARE

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95

## COMPUTER GAMES: ADVENTURE

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95
Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95	Amplitude	09/00	\$29.95

## COMPUTER GAMES: HARDWARE

Title	Release	Price	Year	Release	Price
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95
ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95	ATI Radeon 9800	11/00	\$29.95



Anywhere, Anytime, Always  
the leading edge of learning.

AICS is now  
American College of Computer & Information Sciences

- Earn your B.S. or M.S. degree
- No classes to attend
- Self-paced study
- Prepare for a hi-tech job

For a free catalogue call  
1-800-767-2427  
or visit [www.aics.edu](http://www.aics.edu)



American College  
of Computer & Information Sciences

ACCREDITED MEMBER DISTANCE EDUCATION TRAINING COUNCIL

# Coming Next Month:

Previews of:  
**Undying**  
**Serious Sam**  
**Red Faction**  
**Morrowind**

Reviews of:  
**Alice**  
**Escape From Monkey Island**  
**Links 2001**  
**Tony Hawk 2**  
**4x4 Evolution**  
*and much, much more...*

COMPUTER  
**GAMING #199**  
WORLD

ON SALE THE  
FIRST WEEK  
IN JANUARY

PUBLISHER	TITLE	PRICE
AOL/US	Distance Education	199
Altimax	Altimax Gaming	166/107
Amazon.com	Amazon.com Line Listing of Top Games	48
ATI Technologies Inc.	RAGEON	199
Bentley	Holiday Presentation	35/24
Chop & Biss	<a href="http://www.cdmg.com/chps.html">www.cdmg.com/chps.html</a>	108/888
Creative Labs	Four Point Sound - FPS2000	160
Dell Computer Corporation	Dimension & Inspiron Systems	09/06
Edios Interactive	StarKopia	12
Edios Interactive	Tomb Raider V	35/21
Edios Interactive	TimeLine	51
Edios Interactive	Project IGI: I'm going in	33/3
Edios Interactive	Heaven	54/55
Edios Interactive	Diagrams 2	96/97
Edios Interactive	Project Eden	58/59
Electronic Arts	NBA Live	02/1
Electronic Arts	Alice	34/35
Gathering of Developers	Kingdom Under Fire	22/23
Heaven.com	Global Rankings	126
Inkulek Technology	Diary Reader	178
Inkulek	Ultim Tournament	84-85
Interplay Productions Inc.	Baldur's Gate 2	3/3
Interplay Productions Inc.	Star Frontiers Core 2	5/7
Interplay Productions Inc.	Fallout Tactics	38
Interplay Productions Inc.	Isometric Dale	88/89
Interplay Productions Inc.	SectraX	133/138
Interplay Productions Inc.	Genie	153/159
Kosmos of America	Mummy	64/65
Logitech	Wireless MousePad	10
LucasArts Entertainment Company	Escape from Monkey Island	9/9
Mattel Interactive	and MSSE	15/12
Mattel Interactive	Pool of Radiance	151
Mattel Toys Inc.	Saga Rally	26/27
Moran Electronics Inc.	Micro PC	111
Microsoft	Force Feedback 2	22
Microsoft	Crucial Skills	46/47
Microsoft	Meek Warner IV	76/76
Microsoft	Combat Flight Sim II	99
Microsoft	Meltdown Address	107
Microsoft	Age of Empires II	128
Microsoft	SideWinder: Snake's Commander	142/143
Microsoft	Steel Door Solid	149
Microsoft	SideWinder GameVoice	162/163
Nintendo	Last Kingdom	147
Nintendo	Delta Force	45
Nintendo	Competition	92
Ray Logo Software	Dark Dio	43
Sattek Industries	Qyong 3D	171
Serra On Line	Thease of Darkness	4/5
Serra On Line	Arctania	14/17
Serra On Line	Expans Earth	24/26
Serra On Line	Zest	82/83
Serra On Line	Necroz 4	104/107
Serra On Line	Ganax	124/125
Serra On Line	Hell Life Coaster Strike	130/131
Serra On Line	Yes, Don't Know Jack	145
Savage Interactive	Game Commander	197
Sony Online	Diagnose	14/16
THQ	Earl Dead	141
Ubi Soft	Strapped Insiders	79/79
Walwood Studios	Real Alert	90/41
Walwood Studios	Beeper	100/101

# MYSTERY. SPACE ALIENS. DISASTERS. WAR.

AND GUIDING YOU THROUGH IT ALL...



The #1 computer game magazine on the planet.

Month after month, you get in-depth reviews, sneak-peeks at new games, updates on new technologies, and winning secrets for the most popular games. Plus, every issue comes with a CD filled with interactive demos of the very latest games and more.

Wouldn't you sleep better knowing it was coming right to your mailbox every month?

Detach and mail back the order form below or  
**Call us at 1-800-827-4450**

SAVE UP TO  
**79%**

CLIP HERE



## COMPUTER **GAMING** WORLD **SAVINGS ORDER FORM**

**Yes!** Send me Computer Gaming World for the savings term I've selected below.

- One year (12 issues/12 CD-ROMs) \$24.97 – SAVE 74%  
 Two years (24 issues/24 CD-ROMs) \$39.97 – SAVE 79%

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ (please print)  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ #BXD7  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

- Payment enclosed  
 Please bill me

Mail this form back to:

Computer Gaming World P.O. Box 57167 Boulder, CO 80323-7167

Annual subscription price \$24.97. Plus U.S. airmail \$2.00 per year. Canadian GST included. Allow 3-6 weeks for delivery.



# Third Annual Greenspeak Awards

Let's laugh and cry together as we look back on Y2K

**■ Ay caramba! Have I been doing this for three years already?** Where does the time go, I ask you? How did I get here? Why, it seems like it was just yesterday that I was crawling around on the floor, in rubber pants, eating baby food and getting spanked. Wait a minute—that was yesterday. Apologies to the wife for sharing our "special time" in public.

In any event, welcome, fellow gaming brethren, to the Annual Greenspeak Awards—that magical moment each year when we look back and sing a song of ourselves, like the great poet Walt Whitman once did many years ago before croaking. While other gaming awards may have more so-called "prestige," the Greenspeak Award is still the one that gives most of us that special tingle deep inside. I know it does me.

But, hey, enough of my yacking already. Let's pass out some awards!

**Marketing Morons of the Year**  
Whomover designed and approved the box for MESSIAH, one of the most phenomenally awful boxes ever. Here we have a game hyped for years as some kind of cutting-edge graphics extravaganza. So what do they do? They put it in a butt-ugly solid grey box, with the game name unreadable from two feet away. Bravo! I'm thinking that maybe they just didn't want people to know they were buying MESSIAH, in which case, change this award to Marketing Genuses of the Year.

**Real Gaming God of the Year**  
Richard, "Machiabelly," the "fat guy guy" from CBS' *Survivor*. Our own Robert Coffey called it from week one. Richard was the only guy who took the show for what it was, a game, and then played it like a great gamer would, week after week. He was smart, cunning, conniving, and ruthless—all the qualities that we, as computer gamers, strive for and admire in our digital domain. Sure he was unlikable. When's the last time you liked the guy who beat you in *QUAKE*?

**Scariest Game of the Year**  
THE SIMS. When played seriously, this was just way too frightening and close-to-home for me. My first Sim, the cleverly-named Jeff Green, lost his first job almost immediately because he stayed home playing computer games. From here, it was a steady progression into full-fledged Lorderdon, as he ended up flat-broke, friendless, and so depressed that he just sat on the couch in the dark all day, crying. Ultimately, I just had to delete the poor guy. I'm sorry—I thought I played games to escape reality.

**Whiny Babies of the Year**  
All the pussy game company dweebs who closed their message boards, pulled their ads, and wrote cranky letters this year in response to negative publicity or bad press about their games. I'm not going to name names, because we (and they) know who they are. But, man—grow some huevos and learn how to take criticism with some shred of dignity and humility. Learn that it might help you to listen

to it. And, most importantly, learn that blaming the press—or the poor gamers who wasted their money on you—for the failure of your products will only make it worse. Just shut up, take your lumps, and prove us wrong the next time out.

**Imperialists of the Year**  
Microsoft. Gee, with the way this company is growing in the gaming industry, you'd think they were ambitious or something. A host of A-level releases (AGE OF EMPIRES 2, MOTOCROSS MADNESS 2, the great poet of METAL GEAR SOLID, the upcoming MECHWARRIOR 4, and more), the acquisition of major game developers like Bungie, and the announcement of the Xbox console were all major events this year, furthering Microsoft's rapid and scary transfor-

**While other gaming awards may have more so-called "prestige," the Greenspeak Award is still the one that gives most of us that special tingle deep inside. I know it does me.**

mation from gaming weakling to dominant powerhouse. That Bill Gates—he'll go far. Mark my words!

**Best Game Titles of the Year**  
The ABOMINATION and OBIUM. Game publishers, do yourselves a favor: Don't make it this easy for us. Make us work for it. In case you're unsure, here're a few sample titles you should probably stay away from in 2001: ABYSMAL, GODAWFUL, UNPLAYABLE, and SUCKFEST 2001.

**Summer of the Year**  
The closing of Looking Glass Studios. Game companies come and go—it's business. But this one hurt. This one mattered. This one made it feel like nothing is sacred. Looking Glass didn't make the best-selling games, but they made the smartest games, like SYSTEM SHOCK and THEET, that overflowed with creativity and originality, and reinvigorated entire genres. Here's one last salute to a great company, and my best wishes to all the alumni! Keep making games, guys. We need you.

**Reality Check of the Year**  
The CGW staff's real-world softball team—the ill-fated, odious abomination known as Los Chupacabras. How many did we win, guys? One game? Against the blind guys? All I know is that I personally learned my lesson: The real world is a scary, brutal place, where bad things happen. Next year, I'm staying on the computer, playing computer games, as much as I possibly can. That's my promise to you. **CGW**

What Jeff doesn't realize is that the one game we won is the one he set out. You figure it out, and email him at [jeff\\_green@ziffdavis.com](mailto:jeff_green@ziffdavis.com)

is it a notebook  
that doubles as  
an entertainment  
center OR an  
entertainment  
center that  
doubles as a  
notebook? yes.



#### DELL™ INSPIRON™ 8000

##### NEW—Multimedia Mobile Desktop

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 700MHz
- 15" Super XGA® TFT Display ■ 64MB 1066MHz SDRAM
- 10GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive ■ 8X Max DVD-Rom Drive
- 32MB AGP 4X ATI® Rage Mobility™ M4 3D® Video
- Internal V.90 56K Capable® Fax/Modem
- 69Whr Li-Ion Battery ■ harman/kardon Audio
- MS® Works Suite 2001 ■ MS® Windows™ Me
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty\* ■ 3-Yr On-site Service\*
- 1 Year of AOL® Membership Included\*\*

**\$2599**  E-VALUE CODE  
89485-801125a

- Midnight Gray Standard - Add Color Palm Rest Kit with Four Colors, add \$19.99
- Add Modem 8X Max CD-RW, add \$399

Introducing the all New Dell™ Inspiron™ 8000.  
The most complete multimedia capabilities  
ever featured in a notebook.

With the Dell™ Inspiron™ 8000, you can carry your home entertainment system and your computer with you. Innovations like 32MB video with 4X AGP graphics and harman/kardon audio, deliver sharper images and smoother transitions to bring games, movies, and streaming video to life. And with dual optical devices, you can watch a DVD movie and burn a CD at the same time. With a notebook this fast and this powerful, you can do more wherever you are. It's just one more way Dell helps you get the most out of your PC.



contact us today

877.964.3355

www.dell4me.com

DELL.COM

Includes Windows Millennium Edition — the home version of the world's favorite software.

\*Must register for AOL within 30 days of receiving computer. To avoid paying monthly fees, cancel during 1st year promotional period. Even during promo period, telephone access charges on your phone bill (call your phone co. for details) and surcharges for premium services and 800 access may apply (including in AK). For new U.S. residents with major credit card or checking accounts only. Limited time offer.

# bringing great values home for the holidays.

Find today's cutting-edge technology under your tree this year.

No one gives you more jingle bells and whistles than Dell™ this holiday season. Looking to burn your own CDs? Watch DVDs? Or maybe you're just looking for pure speed. Well, we've got it all and at unbelievable prices. Custom-build your own system or surprise a loved one with one of these great systems here. And 1 year of ADL\* membership included (\$263 value)<sup>1</sup> with the purchase of a new Dell home system. We'll even give Santa a break and drop it off for you.



NEW—Dell™ Inspiron™ 8000 Notebook

## DELL™ NOTEBOOKS:

### DELL™ INSPIRON™ 3800

#### Design and Affordability

- Intel® Celeron™ Processor at 600MHz
- 12.1" SVGA TFT Display
- 32MB 100MHz SDRAM
- 5GB\* Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Modular 24X Max CD-ROM Drive
- 2X AGP 8MB ATI Rage Mobility™ M13D\* Video
- Internal V.90 56K Capable\* Fax/Modem
- Li-Ion Battery with ExpressCharge™ Technology
- MS® Works Suite 2001 ■ MS® Windows® Me
- 1-Yr Limited Warranty\*
- 1-Yr Next-Business-Day On-site Service\*
- 1 Year of ADL\* Membership Included\*

**\$1349**  E-VALUE CODE  
89486-801113

AS LOW AS \$37/MO., FOR 48 MOS.<sup>1</sup>

### DELL™ INSPIRON™ 4000

#### NEW—Thin and Light

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 600MHz  
Featuring Intel® SpeedStep™ Technology
- 14.1" XGA TFT Display
- 64MB 100MHz SDRAM
- 10GB\* Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Modular 24X Max CD-ROM Drive
- 2X AGP 8MB ATI Rage Mobility™ 128 3D\* Video
- Internal V.90 56K Capable\* Fax/Modem
- 5Whr Li-Ion Battery with ExpressCharge™ Technology
- MS® Works Suite 2001 ■ MS® Windows® Me
- 1-Yr Limited Warranty\* ■ 1-Yr On-site Service\*
- 1 Year of ADL\* Membership Included\*

**\$1949**  E-VALUE CODE  
89486-801115b

AS LOW AS \$53/MO., FOR 48 MOS.<sup>1</sup>

### DELL™ INSPIRON™ 8000

#### NEW—Multimedia Mobile Desktop

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 700MHz
- 15" Super XGA+ TFT Display
- 64MB 100MHz SDRAM
- 10GB\* Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 8X Max DVD-ROM Drive
- 32MB AGP 4X ATI Rage Mobility™ M43D\* Video
- Internal V.90 56K Capable\* Fax/Modem
- 9Whr Li-Ion Battery
- Harman/ardon Audio
- MS® Works Suite 2001 ■ MS® Windows® Me
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty\*
- 3-Yr Next-Business-Day On-site Service\*
- 1 Year of ADL\* Membership Included\*

**\$2599**  E-VALUE CODE  
89486-801125a

AS LOW AS \$71/MO., FOR 48 MOS.<sup>1</sup>



## DELL™ DESKTOPS:

### DELL™ DIMENSION™ L Series

#### Affordable Desktop Solution

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 800MHz
- 64MB SDRAM ■ 7.5GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 15" (13.8" vis) E551 Monitor
- Intel® 3D™ AGP Graphics
- 48X Max CD-ROM Drive
- SoundBlaster 64V PC LC Sound Card
- PC Speakers
- V90 56K Capable PCI DataFax Modem for Windows™
- MS® Works Suite 2001 ■ MS® Windows® Me
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty\* ■ 1-Yr At-Home Service†
- 1 Year of AOL\* Membership Included\*\*

**\$899**  E-VALUE CODE  
89486-591108  
AS LOW AS \$29/MO., FOR 48 MOS.†

### DELL™ DIMENSION™ 4100 Series

#### Advanced Performance, Smart Value

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 866MHz
- 64MB SDRAM at 133MHz
- 20GB Ultra ATA-100 Hard Drive
- 17" (16.0" vis, 26dpi) M781s Monitor
- 18MB ATI Rage™ 128 Pro
- 48X Max CD-ROM Drive
- SoundBlaster 64V PC LC Sound Card
- harmankardon Speakers
- 3Com™ V90 56K Capable PCI Telephony Modem
- MS® Works Suite 2001 ■ MS® Windows® Me
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty\* ■ 1-Yr At-Home Service†
- 1 Year of AOL\* Membership Included\*\*

**\$1199**  E-VALUE CODE  
89486-591111  
AS LOW AS \$33/MO., FOR 48 MOS.†



Includes Windows Millennium Edition — the home version of the world's favorite software.

\*Must register for AOL within 30 days of receiving computer. To avoid paying monthly fees, cancel during 1st year promotional period. Even during promo period, telephone access charges on your phone bill (call your phone co. for details) and surcharges for premium services and BDF access may apply, including in AK. For new, 18+ U.S. members with major credit card or checking account only. Limited time offer. †Monthly payment based on 13.99% APR. APR FOR QUALIFIED CUSTOMERS, OFFER VARIES BY CREDITWORTHINESS OF CUSTOMER AS DETERMINED BY LENDER. Taxes and shipping charges extra. From American Investment Bank, N.A. to U.S. state residents (including D.C.) with approved credit. Availability may be limited in some states.

Prices, specifications and availability may change without notice. Taxes and shipping charges extra, and vary. Cannot be combined with other offers or discounts. U.S. only. Offer valid for Dell Home Systems Co. only. For a copy of our Guarantee or Limited Warranties, write Dell USA L.P., Attn: Warranties, One Dell Way, Round Rock, Texas 78682. We have an on-site service provided via third party contract with customer. Technician will be equipped if necessary, following phone based troubleshooting. To receive Next Business Day service, Dell must notify the service provider before 5am (customer's time). Availability varies. Other conditions apply. For hard drives: GB means 1 billion bytes, accessible capacity varies with operating environment. Download speeds limited to 33Kbps. Upload speeds are less (about 20Kbps) and may be slower in metropolitan and online conditions. Analog phone line and compatible nonoverlapping SatView packaging or concentration may differ from what is shown. For state deals and coupons, call 800 768 9865 for HP label the best deals logo and Pentium are registered trademarks and Intel SpeedStep and Celeron are trademarks of Intel Corporation. MS, Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. America Online AOL and the Tagline logo are registered trademarks of America Online Inc. 3Com is a registered trademark of 3Com Corporation. HP and DeskJet are registered trademarks of Hewlett-Packard Corporation. ©2000 Dell Computer Corporation. All rights reserved.

### DELL™ DIMENSION™ 4300 Series

#### Advanced Performance, Smart Value

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 933MHz
- 128MB SDRAM at 133MHz
- 20GB Ultra ATA-100 Hard Drive
- 17" (16.0" vis, 26dpi) M781s Monitor
- 32MB NVIDIA TNT2 M64 4X AGP Graphics
- 12X Max DVD-ROM Drive
- SB Live! Value Digital
- harmankardon Speakers with Subwoofer
- V90 56K Capable PCI Telephony Modem for Windows™
- MS® Works Suite 2001 ■ MS® Windows® Me
- Pro2T SurgeArrest
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty\* ■ 1-Yr At-Home Service†
- 1 Year of AOL\* Membership Included\*\*

**\$1499**  E-VALUE CODE  
89486-591114  
AS LOW AS \$41/MO., FOR 48 MOS.†

### DELL™ DIMENSION™ 8 Series

#### Cutting-Edge Technology

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 1GHz
- 128MB RDRAM
- 40GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 19" (18.0" vis, 26dpi) M991 Monitor
- NEW 33MB DDR ATI Radeon™ Graphics
- Realtek™ CD-RW Drive
- Turtle Beach® Santa Cruz DSP Sound Card
- Altec Lansing™ THX-Certified ADA 885™ Speakers with Subwoofer
- 3Com™ V90 56K Capable PCI Telephony Modem
- MS® Works Suite 2001 ■ MS® Windows® Me
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty\* ■ 1-Yr At-Home Service†
- 1 Year of AOL\* Membership Included\*\*

**\$2199**  E-VALUE CODE  
89486-591122  
AS LOW AS \$60/MO., FOR 48 MOS.†

## DELL™ SOLUTIONS:

### SOFTWARE & ACCESSORIES

#### Printers:

- HP® DeskJet® 952C, add \$199 after \$99
- HP® Mail-In Rebate (Reg. \$249)\*\*
- HP® DeskJet® 932C, add \$149 after \$99
- HP® Mail-In Rebate (Reg. \$199)\*\*

#### Scanners:

- HP® ScanJet® 5300Cse, add \$149 after \$99
- HP® Mail-In Rebate (Reg. \$199)\*\*
- HP® ScanJet® 4300Cse, add \$99 after \$99
- HP® Mail-In Rebate (Reg. \$149)\*\*

#### Power Protection:

- Pro2T SurgeArrest, add \$38

#### Software:

- Ultimate Sports Pack Plus (Dimension™ only), add \$99
- Home Reference 4-pack\*\*, add \$79

### FINANCING & SERVICES

#### Payment Solutions:

- Dell™ Purchase Plan - Enjoy easy-to-budget, low monthly payments. Systems as low as \$26 a month\* on the 48-Month Purchase Plan. Call now for fact, sample, and convenient processing.
- Dell™ E-Check - One convenient electronic payment from your checking account.

#### Service Upgrades:

- Dell™ Dimension™ Premier 3-Yr At-Home Service, add \$99
- Dell™ Inspiron™ 3800 and 4000 Notebook 3-Yr Next-Business-Day On-site Service, add \$149

contact us today

877.964.3355

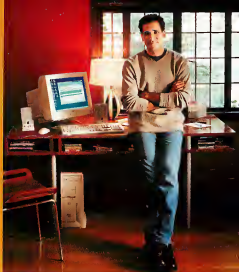
www.dell4me.com

DELL.COM

DELL4me.com

a 1GHz processor?  
talk to me.

a \$1699 price tag?  
now I'm listening.



#### DELL™ DIMENSION™ 4100 Series

##### One Powerful PC

- Intel® Pentium® III Processor at 1GHz
- 128MB SDRAM at 133MHz • 20GB Ultra ATA-100 Hard Drive
- 19" (16.0" vis.) 256dp M991 Monitor
- 32MB NVIDIA TNT2 M64 4X AGP Graphics
- 8x/4x/2x CD-RW Drive • SoundBlaster 6AV PCI LC Sound Card
- Altec Lansing® ACS-340™ Speakers with Subwoofer
- V90 56K Capable PCI Telephony Modem for Windows®
- MS® Works Suite 2003 • MS® Windows® Me
- 3-Yr Limited Warranty\* • 1-Yr At-Home Service\*
- 1 Year of AOL® Membership Included\*

**\$1699**  E-VALUE CODE  
89484-501116z

- Upgrade to Premier 1-Yr At-Home Service\*, add \$29
- Epson® Stylus Color 777 Printer, add \$86

Hear this: The Dell™ Dimension™ 4100 PC with  
a 1GHz processor now costs just \$1699.

If you're the kind of person who thinks fast, eats fast and works fast, have we got a computer for you. The Dell™ Dimension™ 4100 desktop with, yes, a fast Intel® Pentium® III processor at 1GHz. It makes computing a snap. From crunching numbers to playing your favorite graphics-intensive games, the power of the 4100 will blow you away. And now it costs just \$1699 including a CD-RW drive. Plus, it's backed by Dell's award-winning, around-the-clock service and support. Speed at a price you can afford—it's just another way Dell4me™ is helping you get what you're looking for. So contact Dell today by phone or on the Web. Ordering takes only a few minutes, which we know is a big deal for someone like you.



contact us today

**877.964.3355**

**DELL4me.com**

[www.dell4me.com](http://www.dell4me.com)

**DELL.COM**

Includes Windows Millennium Edition — the home version of the world's favorite software.

\*Must register for AOL within 30 days of receiving computer. To avoid paying monthly fees, cancel during first year promotional period. Even during promo period, telephone access charges as your plan or bill (local year plans do not apply) and charging for premium services and 800 access may apply. Subscribing to AOL. For new US customers with major credit card at checkout account only. Low cost rate offer.