

NINTENDO • PLAYSTATION • PS2 • DREAMCAST • HANDHELDS • ARCADE

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

NUMBER 135

31 GAMES REVIEWED

ONIMUSHI

TEKKEN 7

NBA 2K1

DINO CRIS

BANJO

SKIES OF ARC

GRAN TUR

OGRE BATTLE 64

NFL 2K1

JET GRIND RADIO

HELLS

HAWK 2

SLER'S RUN

FINAL FANTASY IX

QUAKE III

SEAMAN

TERS

ADDEN 001

FALL PREVIEW

ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK

AND 41 MORE REASONS TO STAY INSIDE

FINAL FANTASY IX GIANT HANDS-ON PREVIEW

GAME BOY ADVANCE DETAILS AND FIRST GAMES

PAPER MARIO

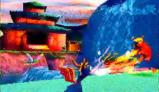
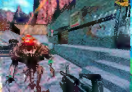
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READY 2 RUMBLE 2

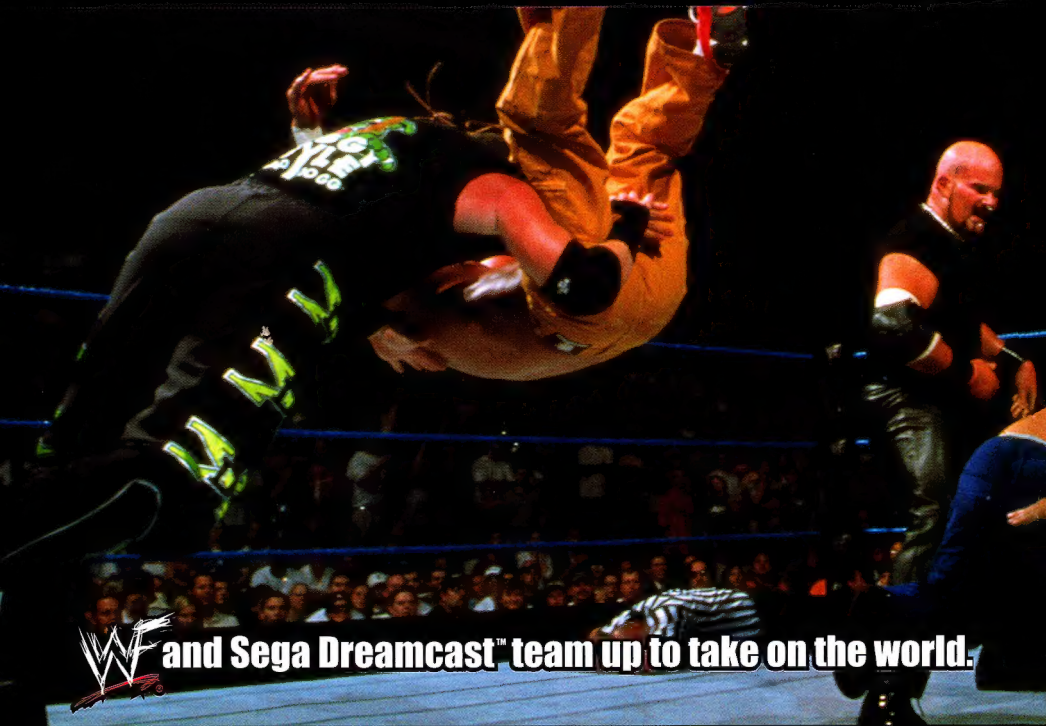
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- ☑ Your apartment is furnished with metal chairs and cheap buffet tables.
- ☑ You give your girlfriend the "stinky-face."
- ☑ You've rigged your apartment with elaborate pyrotechnics for dramatic effect.
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PlayStation 2

ELECTRONIC ARTS

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smoke. 13-17
to have it.



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Mild Animated Violence
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TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

OVERVIEW:



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and New Skaters



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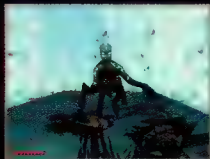
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Animated Blood and Gore
Animated Violence



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Animated Violence

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Aya Brea is back on the job. The Neo Mitochondrion Creature infestation has resurfaced and has taken a sinister twist. The outcome of this battle will determine earth's dominant species.



MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Animated Blood
and Gore
Animated Violence

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Hsu and Chan comment on Driver 2



EGM's Fall Preview-o-Rama 20 pages of information and speculation on this holiday season's must-play games for every system. From *Driver 2* to *Zelda: Majora's Mask*, we'll sift out all the good stuff for your reading pleasure—barring any interruptions from fictional comic characters. **pg 128**



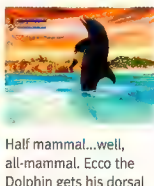
Metal Gear Solid 2 Would you like to see some new pics of Kojima's PS2 masterpiece? We thought so. **pg 74**



Final Fantasy IX We take an in-depth look at Square's final PlayStation FF installment. **pg 98**



Sega GT High-octane Dreamcast racing at its finest...or something like that. **pg 62**



Half mammal...well, all-mammal. Ecco the Dolphin gets his dorsal fin reviewed. **pg 174**

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SYSTEM KEY

	Dreamcast
	Nintendo 64
	PlayStation 2
	PlayStation
	Game Boy Color
	Neo-Geo Pocket Color
	Arcade



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AGE 17

What pro wrestler grapples with Sylvester Stallone in the movie "Rocky II?"

A: Dobb Lundgren B: Hulk Hogan

C: Andre the Giant D: The Iron Sheik

LIFELINES





**Good news, now you get to be the genius that
blew the easy question.**

Okay, smarty pants, strap on your thinking cap and let's get down to business. *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire: 2nd Edition*, is now on PlayStation. Six-hundred questions, plenty of topics, 3 Lifelines, even a 2-player Fastest Finger round. It's just like the TV game show, only without all the commercials. Real questions, real drama, real Regis. And, yes, that is our final answer. (Sorry, we couldn't resist.)

WHO WANTS TO BE A
MILLIONAIRE
2ND EDITION

TVS



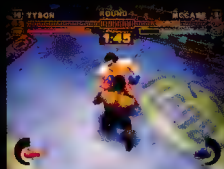
Fight Mike, or as Mike!

Take on the champ and a ton of bad-ass opponents on your way to the title shot. Or, be Tyson, and feel what it's like to knock the world senseless.



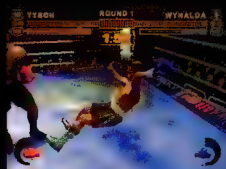
It's real! It's fierce!

The incredible realism includes sound effects, blood, facial damage, sweat—and individual recovery rates that can turn any bruising hero into a zero.



We've got a system!

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Animated
Violence



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ON



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You can power up a punch to increase damage—or nail your opponent's sweet spot, then watch him go 'nightie-night' as the lights go out on his lame career.



Take on the world!

Three modes of play include Showcase, Versus (winner keeps going), and World, where you train and manage your fighter up the ranks to undisputed champ.



42 KNOCKOUTS. YOU'RE NEXT.

* And counting...



Letters to the Editors

LETTER FACTS

- Number of requests for a poetry section: 2
- Number of readers enraged by Sega's WSB 2K1: 12
- Number of readers sickened by flabby butts in ads: 23
- Letters about politically incorrect Teletubbies: 1

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Parents To Raise Own Children

I've just finished reading your July issue and I felt compelled to write. I've been a loyal reader of many different magazines, but I've never written to any of them. What inspired me? Two things—violent video games under the gun again (EGM #132) and the ratings debate in the Final Word column. Illinois Attorney General Jim Ryan's comment defies common sense. He urges retailers to enforce the ratings system, yet does he have any idea as to how it could be enforced? Does he know what the retail store atmosphere is like?

I've worked at Electronics Boutique for almost two years. I've seen children under 17 purchase M-rated games. I've sold them to young people—Resident Evil, Mortal Kombat, Metal Gear Solid and more

back. She was upset that I had sold the game to her son. I apologized, refunded the money, and told her that it was too difficult for me to monitor all the transactions. I told her I was pleased she had noticed the rating, and had involved herself in her son's recreational pursuits. She apologized for her anger and the matter was settled.

On another occasion I sold Resident Evil 3 to a 10-year-old boy. This wasn't my idea. I refused at first, but then I was screamed at [by his father] for not selling the game to his son. When I indicated the Mature rating on the package, I was told it was none of my business what his son played.

What am I getting at here? The power to enforce the ESRB rating already exists—parents have the power. The ESRB provides the information the parents need to involve themselves in the decision to purchase a game. Yet far too often parents ignore the rating and games

"The power to enforce the ESRB rating already exists—parents have the power. The ESRB provides the information on the parents need to involve themselves in the decision."

recently Perfect Dark. Do I feel guilty? No.

Let me give two of my experiences to illustrate where the power to enforce ESRB ratings lies. Once, a young boy of about 14 purchased a Mature-rated PC game—I think it was Dungeon Keeper. Five minutes after he left, his mother stormed in and demanded I refund his money and take the game

end up in the hands of kids who should not be playing them. Parents are the ones who know their children best, and can decide whether or not a game is appropriate. I don't know your child well enough to judge if he would consider DOOM as target practice for real-life violence.

Name withheld by request

While we're tired of seeing anti-anti-video game letters (as we're sure you are), we wanted to share the unique perspective of this

reader. It seems like common sense but it bears repeating: Parents are the only people who can really enforce the ESRB ratings.

Congratulations. You win an InterAct controller. You will be receiving a Barracuda (PS), an Alloy Arcade Stick (DC) or a SharkPad Pro 64⁺ (N64).

See page 205 for official rules.



Bare Butts Sicken Reader

You guys need to get rid of those sick Sega [Virtua Tennis] ads! Who wants to see some locker room full of naked, over-the-hill male court-jockeys?! All this to try to get the more "adult audience" to buy an E-rated game? Good freaking grief.

Matthew Newton

We contacted the ad agency responsible and passed along your complaints about the "over-the-hill male court-jockeys." You'll be happy to hear they have agreed to reshoot the ad, this time using "really hot guys." Seriously, you will notice a change in the ad this month.

Gamer's Mommy Won't Let Him Play

I am 19 years old and my mother has been getting on me about being too old for video games. I told her that many people of all ages play them, and that includes adults too. Now that I have been discouraged from playing video games, I haven't touched my N64 or GBC in a long time. My question is, can you guys convince her that video games aren't just for the youth? Thanks.

Randy Moore

We could convince her, but what's in it for us? Can you hook us up with say, some household appliances? Dean needs a new toaster oven, and Sewart's curling iron has definitely seen better days. So how about it? You scratch our back, we convince your old lady, dig?

In Memorium: Neo•Geo Pocket Color

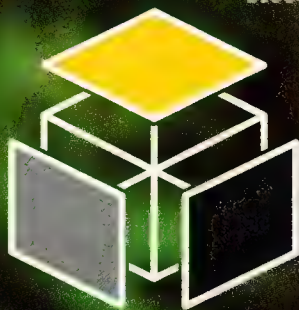
As one who knew the Neo•Geo Pocket Color closely, I would like to give a eulogy.

The Neo•Geo Pocket Color led a

cont. on pg. 26

PHYSICAL SCIENCE

blood > drive > toxic >



apparel
E.T.A. spring..01



LETTERS

Send us your thoughts, your wishes, your innermost weirdness... or your pictures, crazy screenshots or photos of bizarre game-related moments.

cont. from pg. 24

beautiful, if short, life. Almost all of its games were excellent, both in gameplay and in graphical splendor. Its 16-Bit graphics and slightly larger screen put the Game Boy to shame. Its "click stick" joystick pleased my thumb for hours while Puyo Pop, SNK vs. Capcom: Match of the Millennium and Metal Slug occupied my mind. The NGPC had a good home in my pocket, forever accompanying me.

I will make no attempt to convince you of its excellent games; they speak for themselves. Samurai Shodown 2 has occupied me for 40 hours so far, and I'm not even bored yet. I figured that because of its stellar library it would lead a long, full life. I was wrong. I hadn't figured that NGPC's parent, SNK Japan, would brutally murder it and recall all its games.

Not only did SNK Japan kill the NGPC, but it killed the sense of hope in all of us NGPC owners. As the games are silently pulled off the shelves, my heart sinks. In stores, on Web sites, it's as if this excellent handheld never existed. And guess who facilitates this? The ignorant gamer. No one even misses the damn thing. SHAME ON YOU! I miss it. I feel sorry for myself because I know what I'm missing. But I feel worse for all of you "gamers" because you don't.

In conclusion, the Neo•Geo Pocket Color led a short but spectacular life, providing joy and entertainment to the few of us who were willing to open our hearts to it.

Rest in peace, sweet prince.

Steve Gilhoof
general_tso10@hotmail.com

We are all deeply saddened as well my friend, the little fella was like a son to us.

Evil Teletubbie Makes Leap To Video Games

I found out something rather interesting when I popped a demo CD into my PlayStation. My wife tried the "Play With the Teletubbies" demo. Imagine our surprise when we heard

"Po," the red one, talking. It isn't the fact that he/she/it was talking, but what it was saying. Remember the Teletubbie Po dolls that were recalled because of their voice sample? Well, surprise! It's back! The phrase that sounds remarkably like (and feel free to edit) "f****t, f****t, bite my butt" has made it into the game. In fact, this phrase was repeated several times. I just wonder how many "Teletubbie horrors" we will soon be hearing about.

Jeff Dabbs
Lake Elsinore, CA

We did some research on this topic, and apparently it *is* within Po's contract that it can hurl politically incorrect epithets in whatever form of media it appears in. And then it puts the lotion on itself.

Video Games Appear In Video

I was just wondering if you've seen the new Janet Jackson video "Doesn't Really Matter." The reason I'm asking is because in the scene where she is dancing with some people there is a big screen in the background that is playing something that looks like Jet Grind Radio, and when I looked closer, I also saw a character from Samba De Amigo. Is the video really showing these games?

Yes, yes, we know. We keep hearing this damn legend, however, none of us has the intestinal fortitude to sit through an entire Janet Jackson video to validate these outlandish claims.

Man Speaks With No Jaw, Tongue

OK. I loved your story on Soul Reaver 2, but you forgot one major stoopid question. How does Raziel speak? I mean really, he has no jaw, tongue or lips. The most he could do would be a bunch of pathetic grunts yet he speaks better than an English

"It is amazing that SNK cannot even last as long as the batteries in my Neo•Geo Pocket."

SHORTS

The very best of the EGM letters laurel.

I have an idea for a new section you could add to EGM.

A section for poems. Poems that are related to video games. It would be interesting, and might bring more readers to EGM.

SNF5epn
@aol.com

It would not be interesting, it would be horrible. It would signal the coming of the end times.

Might I request a poetry section be added?

InnocentAerith
@aol.com

See response listed above.

Is E-Sak back from vacation in Turkey yet? He didn't really retire from the Turkish Wrestling League, did he?

andrewjohnson
@gamespotmail.com

The Sak is Back! Say it, SAY IT! The elusive Mr. Saccorettili is indeed still in action, and he cannot wait to "sit on your spit." Watch for his bilarity to ensue in an upcoming issue.

Question of the Moment

How do you feel about the death of SNK in the USA?

SNK?

catkuma@juno.com

I am pissed off about the death of SNK!!! I really started to like the Neo•Geo Pocket. They were coming out with some decent games like Metal Slug and SNK vs. Capcom. It's a shame to see the company leave the U.S. market, but it looks like in the end Game Boy reigns supreme.

DaLOx28@aol.com

What's the big deal with the death of SNK? It was a weak platform that had crappy games and no support. Good riddance to it if you ask me.

xtrabondage@hotmail.com

Uh...who? (Go back to playing Mario Golf.)

MRTCS2@aol.com

I bought a NGPC months ago. I played it by myself with no linked games for the entire time I owned it. Now, suddenly, all of my friends want one too. Pathetic.

TheGrandN@aol.com

I purchased my Neo•Geo Pocket six months ago and have enjoyed the hell out of it. The batteries that came with it still work! It is amazing that SNK cannot even last as long as the batteries in my Neo•Geo Pocket.

joeredifer@film-tech.com

I'm sure gonna miss that little machine... oh wait! I've never even used an SNK.

hackysack8@hotmail.com

I personally think it's a shame, they had some great games.

mdoverkill@hotmail.com

This sucks. Now I'll never get to play Bio Motor Unitron 2 or Cool Cool Train. F* you, Aruze.

fan-addict@excite.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

What PS2 launch title are you going to buy first?

Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading: **Launch Title**



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LETTERS

cont. from pg. 26

professor. I can see in the spirit realm his voice would be a projection of his thoughts, but he still speaks with his vampire brothers in the material world. matt8@SoftHome.net

You're right—that's one stoopid question we forgot to ask. So we sent it on over to SR2 director Amy Hennig, who had this to say: "It's all about the uvula."

There ya go. Ask a smart-ass question, get a smart-ass answer. What, did you expect a metaphysical discourse on how Raziel actually speaks?

Reader Buys "Worst Game Ever"

I'm so mad I don't even know where to start. I have been a Sega fan forever. I have never been mad or held a grudge about any of the mistakes they have made before. The 32X? I saw it as a company trying to better its hardware. The Saturn? A system that could've been a classic, but the third-party companies were afraid of it and "ran" to Sony. But this latest injustice CANNOT be justified by any excuse. After seeing NFL 2K, NBA 2K and NHL 2K I knew Sega was bad to making great sports games. And knowing that traditionally their best sports game has always been WSB, and hearing all the hype, I couldn't wait for the release of WSB 2K1. I even went out and paid for it in full weeks before its release. THIS IS NOT ONLY THE WORST BASEBALL GAME EVER, IT'S THE WORST GAME EVER! First off, how do you possibly make a sports game where you CAN'T control your own defenders? The whole point to playing a game is that YOU are playing! Second, they lied about all the options. There are no batting hot-cold zones, no VMU pitch selection, and overall the game doesn't even warrant a rental, let alone a purchase! Now I know Sega felt pressure to release this game after all the hype, but I would have been less disappointed if Sega would have just issued a press release stating that while they tried, they couldn't make WSB 2K1 up to the company's standards, that they were sorry and they promise to bring it out next year when it was truly ready (and maybe

You can write EGM at:

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Please note: We reserve the right to edit any correspondence for space purposes. If you don't want your name, city/state or e-mail address printed, tell us so (but please include your phone number and mailing address for Letter of the Month consideration).

"Has this experience soured me to the PlayStation forever? No. But it has made me wonder why Sony can't make a good RPG for their own system, with such examples as FFVII to guide them."

even incorporate online play!). EGM, my fellow Sega fans, I am LIVID!
REDRZA@aol.com

We received a lot of similar letters this month, and we feel your pain—check out our review of WSB 2K1 on pg.76. We asked Sega about the promised features not found in the game, and they told us the "hot and cold zones (that) illustrate batters' streaks and slumps" (from the back of the WSB 2K1 box) are actually in the game, and are "embedded in the statistics." We have no idea what that means, but there you go. As for the other missing features, Sega told us they scrapped them to get the game out on time, something that happens often in the development of any title.

Fans Of High-Budget Cesspools Rejoice!

Man, have I got some major complaining to do! I just recently purchased Sony's Legend of Crap-oon. Talk about disappointment in the fullest. I was expecting an epic tale worthy of Homer, and instead I was

triated to a high-budget cesspool of idiotic dialogue and repetitive gameplay. Now, I know what you're thinking. We told you so, right? Well, I just had to see for myself how bad it was. Another thing was the lack of originality. The world is in peril and a group of plucky youngsters use powers to fend off the evil, while the hero and heroine discover new feelings about one another. Now am I crazy or do I see a correlation here. Dart/Shana, Cloud/Aeris? I mean come on! It was so obvious that Sony ripped off Squaresoft! Has this experience soured me to the PlayStation forever? No. But it has made me wonder why Sony can't make a good RPG for their own system, with such examples as FFVII to guide them. Anyway, I hope you print this letter, in an attempt to show Sony the error of their ways.

See, fool, we don't just drop knowledge on you little g's for fun. We been down in it since back in the day, you know what I'm sayin'? We take the wack hits so you don't have to, know what I'm sayin'? So next time you gettin' ready to sling some of your ducts, remember how tight our sciences. You know what I'm sayin'?

LETTER ART

WINNER

Christopher Pedayo
Mississauga, Ontario, CA

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Close, but no controller

Bad luck to these guys... better luck next time. Free to e-mail us artwork as well. More of our messages are e-mails these days so don't miss out!



Mandy Shafer
Fairview, TN



Kieth Ereskin #237650
Brooklyn, CT

(All entries become the property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be returned)

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Bobby Labonte

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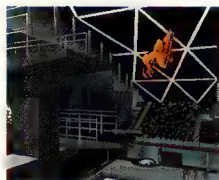
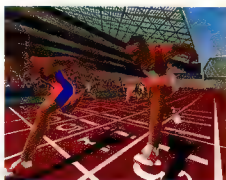
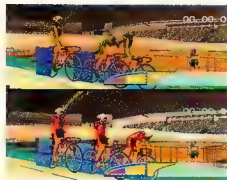




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Press Start

The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

Space World Shocker

Nintendo to keep Dolphin (Starcube?) behind closed doors in favor of giving the spotlight to Game Boy Advance

Nintendo's annual Space World exhibition at Makuhari Messe in Chiba, Japan is only a few weeks away (Aug. 25-27) as this issue of EGM goes to press (excited?). But Nintendo has released a few nuggets of information on what we can expect to see, including a tentative list of games expected at the show and the first few screenshots.

For Your Eyes Only

Why are there no games listed for Dolphin? Early word out of Japan indicates that Dolphin will be shown only to the press and industry insiders behind closed doors at a pre-show event the day before. Miyamoto's new Mario game will likely be one of the first games shown on the machine. Space World may also be the venue where Nintendo unveils a new name for the machine. Long known as Dolphin,

the name Starcube has persistently followed the console since it was first uttered at E3. A Nintendo spokesperson said they couldn't confirm the name change. At press time, it's still officially Dolphin, but be prepared to start calling it something else next month.

Mini-DVD

Matsushita's (aka Panasonic's) president recently commented to Bloomberg News Japan that development of the console was complete and that its release was now up to Nintendo. Matsushita is handling the DVD drive in the machine. Rumors (which will hopefully be proven false soon) suggest that Nintendo might go with a "mini-DVD" format for the system. Historically, Nintendo has been big on non-standard formats for their games in order to prevent piracy, but that's also been one of



Here it is, the first screenshot of Mario Kart Advance. Makes your mouth water, don't it?

the reasons major publishers have been wary of supporting their machines. Would the use of a "mini"-DVD cut away the storage benefits afforded by the format? Nintendo has said from the beginning that their version of the Dolphin hardware will not be able to play DVD movies, while one manufactured by Matsushita would be able to.

Advance to the Masses

Game Boy Advance, on the other hand, will be shown to the public for the first time at the show, along with seven games—three of which will be from Konami—who partnered with Nintendo last year to form the Mobile 21 development studio to create GBA and cellular-networkable games. While Nintendo's rumored to have been showing a GBA version of Yoshi's Story, that game is suspiciously absent from the list. Perhaps, as when Nintendo first

Capcom takes Mega Man in a new direction on GBA with Mega Man EXE.



Nintendo's Space World 2000 Lineup

LISTEN TO THE MUSIC BY JEFF LABRECQUE

Nintendo 64

- Sin and Punishment: A Successor of the Earth
- Mario Party 3
- Animal Forest
- A Stranger Shiren 2: Invasion of the Ogre! Shiren's Castle!
- Mickey Speedway USA
- Custom Robo V2
- Leader of Animals
- Echo Delta

Game Boy Color

- Donkey Kong Country
- The Legend of Staffi
- Pokémon Puzzle League GB
- Zonar, Mystery Man
- Zelda: Triforce series/Chapter of Gala
- Hamster "Ham-taro": Operation "Be friend"
- Tennis (Mario Tennis?)

Game Boy Advance

- Konami's Wacky Racing
- Silent Hill (Konami)
- Golf Master (Konami)
- Mario Kart Advance
- Kuru Kuru Kuru Rin
- Golden Sun
- Napoleon





LIEBERMAN AS VP?

Al Gore's running mate on the democratic presidential ticket is none other than Connecticut Senator Joseph Lieberman. Some may remember him as one of the most outspoken senators on violence in video games when the real uproar began in the early '90s and a supporter of the current ESRB ratings system. A little *Mortal Kombat*, Senator?

showed off the original GBC using a version of Super Mario Bros. (which later became Super Mario Bros. Deluxe), they're still developing it.



Check back next issue for more pics from the show of what the Game Boy Advance looks like in action. And if we're lucky, we'll be able to show you what we saw of Dolphin—err, Starcube—too.



Konami's *Wacky Racing* (left) and Momotarō Matsuri show off what the GBA can do.

Classic Gaming Expo 2000 Report

As the outside temperature was pushing 115 degrees, the only cool spot in Las Vegas during the last weekend of July was inside the downtown Plaza hotel. It was there that nearly 800 people made the pilgrimage to the second Classic Gaming Expo (CGE).

The grassroots effort that assembled last year's show had been so successful that it was believed there wouldn't be any way for this year's show to top it. One fear was that the programmers wouldn't return. For everyone involved it meant taking time off and traveling to Las Vegas at their own expense just so a bunch of classic game collectors could gawk at them and listen to their stories. The 1999 show was like a reunion for them and most reunions are only held every five or 10 years.

All those fears were unfounded and the guests showed up again in full force: Ralph Baer, Joe Decuir, Howard Scott Warshaw, Rob Fulop, David Crane, John Harris, and the trifecta of Bill Kunkel, Arnie Katz and Joyce Worley (editors of the early '80s video game magazine *Electronic Games*). Keynote speeches featuring these guests and dozens more ran throughout the two-day event and while some of the stories from these speeches were heard before, no one seemed to mind.



Ralph Baer demonstrates a classic game (left) and a plethora of arcade games on free play (above).

One tradition that guests look forward to at CGE is the sale of new homebrew games for the classic systems. This year's show featured formerly known prototypes that were released for sale in limited editions. The highlight was the release of an *Odyssey2* pinball game written by Ralph Baer to show off the system's abilities. Steamroller, an unreleased Colecovision game from Activision; and Sea Battle, a shelved 2600 version of the Intellivision classic, were also available for sale from Retrotopia, the new name of Intellivision Productions. In honor of the 20th anniversary of the Intellivision, the Blue Sky Rangers held a birthday party complete with cake and balloons and held a contest called Video Game Karaoke where contestants had to supply sounds effects for classic Intellivision games.

Van Burnham, whose book *Supercade: A Visual History of the Videogame Age 1971-1984*, will be published by MIT Press next spring, showed off her new 2600 game; *Escape From Supercade*, to be released in conjunction with the book. Only 100 copies of the game are planned and the first 26 will be sent to the lucky winners of a drawing held at CGE.

The remainder of the booths had classic games for sale as well as homebrew games from the last few years.

CGE 2001 will be held on August 11, 2001. See you there!
- Leonard Herman

DEVELOPER PROFILE

Free Radical Design



Location: Nottingham, England

Web site: www.freeradicaldesign.com

of people: 16 (currently)

Current project(s): *TimeSplitters* (PS2)

Titles team members have worked on previously: *GoldenEye* and *Perfect Dark* (N64, Rare/Nintendo) and *Omar Sharif's Bridge* (I)

Story behind the name *TimeSplitters*:

The arch-baddies are called *TimeSplitters* and the game has lots of levels split up through different time periods.

Most important element of making a good console first-person shooter (and one that's easy to get wrong): Cutting-edge technology and visuals are not as important as gameplay, ever. People often forget this, and the result is a nice-looking game that isn't much fun to play.

Most exciting aspect of the next-generation consoles: Ability to return to the high framerates of the 2D days, while drawing more characters on the screen.

Fans of *GoldenEye* and *Perfect Dark* are going to like *TimeSplitters* because: It was created with the same principle in mind—gameplay is the #1 priority.

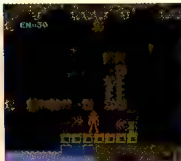
During late-night programming sessions, we: Program. Other people might do more interesting things, but we are trying to release a game on time.

Story behind our name: We thought of a lot of names, chose one and then didn't use it because someone else already had. So we chose Free Radical Design.

Favorite office catchphrase or slogan: "Why would that be good?" It's a question everyone ought to ask themselves from time to time. It's usually the response to someone's "great new idea," that turns out not to be so great after all.



PRESS
START



UP TO THE CHALLENGE?

Ever wonder what would happen if some of yesterday's best games were made...more difficult? Enter a lil' group called Challenge Games (<http://smb3c.darkmazda.com/>), that's taken games like Super Mario 1, 2, 3 and Metroid and edited their maps and graphics. Note the SMB2-style Mario and altered Samus graphics.

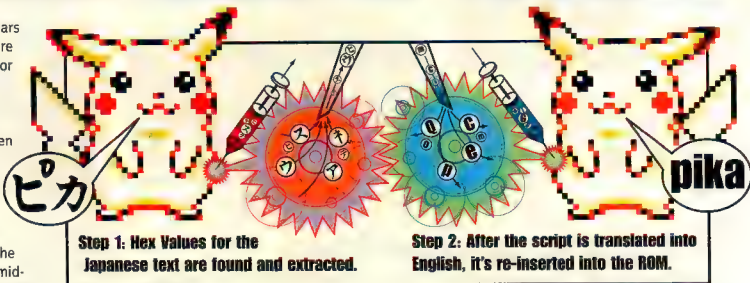
The Science Behind Fan Translation

Hard to believe, but a few years ago, many Japanese games were considered "too complicated" or "weird" for stateside gamers. It's still true to some extent (*ahem*, Konami, Policenauts) but things have definitely gotten better.

Previously, die-hard RPG fans played through these games in Japanese—controller in one hand, Kanji dictionary in the other. When the emulation scene broke in the mid-'90s, it renewed attention in Japanese titles that never made it to the U.S. Now fans have found a way to hack into game ROMs and translate them into English for everyone else to enjoy.

No Experience Necessary

You might think that you'd need to have vast programming knowledge and be fluent in Japanese to take on one of these translation projects. But that's often not the case. There are dozens of translation groups across the Net with varying degrees of programming expertise and Japanese fluency. Musashi, of Gajjin Translations, who worked on the Sweet Home translation, told us, "I actually can't program. In fact, it's not necessary to translate a game." It's helpful to know a little Japanese, but most ROM



translators have the help of someone more fluent in the language.

"Plain and simple, you find the Japanese font, create an English font, find the script in the ROM, dump the script, get the script translated, and then reinsert it back into the ROM. Then you create a patch," he told us. Programs to aid in the process can easily be found using Internet search engines. SNESTool and Thingy are two of the most popular tools used in ROM hacking. Sometimes it's necessary to alter the program so that a readable English font will fit within the game's given text boxes—another challenge for many translation projects.

You'll only find English "patches" on most fan-translation sites. You have to have the Japanese game ROM somewhere else first (also

easy to find via search engines). When you have the ROM and the patch, you use an IPS Patcher program or SNES Tool to make the modification to the original game ROM, and voilà—it's in English. Some translators even create a new title screen where the game name is presented in English (patches for Sweet Home and Seiken Densetsu 3 do this).

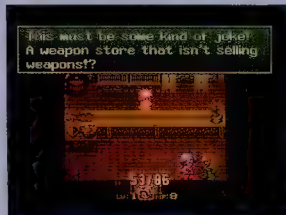
Don't think that translation projects are limited to older consoles like the Super NES and NES. Already, several projects have begun on the PlayStation and are progressing nicely.

Legal Issues

Fan translation isn't limited to just video games. For years, some animation out of Japan has been available only in fan-subtitled (or

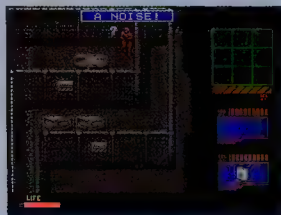
Seiken Densetsu 3

Secret of Mana's Super NES sequel never saw a U.S. release, disappointing many diehard Square fans. It was picked up and translated by Lina-Chan, Nuku-Nuku and Filla's Translations—resulting in one of the best English translations available on the Net. If you liked Mana, it's a must-play.



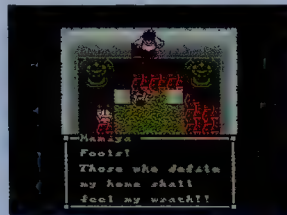
Metal Gear 2

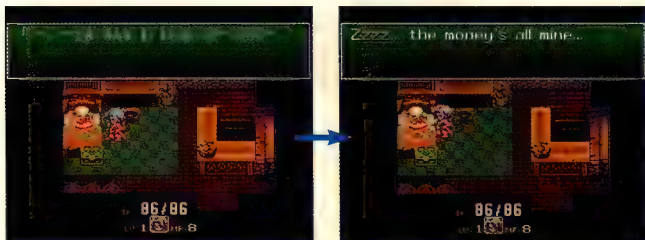
In 1990, Konami produced Metal Gear 2 for their MSX line of computers (never released in the U.S.—we only got Snake's Revenge). You can find the story of this game in the "previous missions" sections of MGS, but the way to really experience it is to give it a shot yourself.



Sweet Home

This Capcom Famicom title is credited as the inspiration for the first Resident Evil. Best described as a survival horror RPG, it follows the exploits of five investigators as they get trapped inside Mamiya Ichirou's estate. Gajjin Translation's work on Sweet Home is second to none. Excellent job.





The same line in Square's *Seiken Densetsu 3*, first in Japanese, then in English using the patch made possible by Lina-chan, Nuku-Nuku and Filia's Translations.

"fansub") form before shows like *Dragon Ball Z* and *Pokémon* created more demand for it. Since the network of fans doing fansubs is small and not for profit, the companies who produced the original work mostly ignore it. Is it legal? 'Fraid not. Under the Berne Convention (a law that the U.S. adopted in 1995), these translations infringe upon a company's copyrighted work and their right to distribute an English-language version—whether or not the movie (or game) has ever been released outside of Japan. So far, only one company, Ascii, has threatened legal action against a translation group. The game was RPG Tsukuru 2 (RPG Maker) Super Dante for the Super Famicom. KanjiHack, the group that did the English-language patch, was asked to pull the patch from its Web page or face legal action. It's since been pulled.

"We're flattered that we have fans who love our games so much that they would try to translate the games themselves," John Laurence, spokesman for Enix America, told us. "The problem is that these translation projects, although they may seem fun and interesting to the people doing them, threaten our Intellectual Property. If this asset is threatened or undermined, it limits our ability to continue to make great games and ultimately will hurt the gamers who want us to continue to make awesome games."

Lina-chan, of Lina-chan, Nuku-Nuku and Filia's Translations (responsible for the translation of the *Secret of Mana* sequel *Seiken Densetsu 3*, [<http://translations.animangargp.org/>]) told us, "We know that by doing this we are basically hacking into copyrighted material. But we do it for the love of gaming and the art of translation/programming, and also to bring excellent games that wouldn't otherwise make it to the U.S. to the English-speaking community. We do not profit from this."

Pokémon On the Loose

While most reputable fan translation groups work on games that have never and will never be released commercially here (or if they are, often remove their own translation), others aren't so honorable. Translated *Pokémon Gold* and *Silver* ROMs are easy to find on the Net, often right out in the open on *Pokémon* fan sites. The translated ROMs are also, in some cases, being burned to cartridges and sold as legitimate products when they are not.

Nintendo is not happy about this. Official English versions of *Gold* and *Silver* will be released on Oct. 16 and the company is actively pursuing counterfeiters.

As long as there's a demand for these games in English that goes unanswered by publishers, fans will take matters into their own hands. ♣

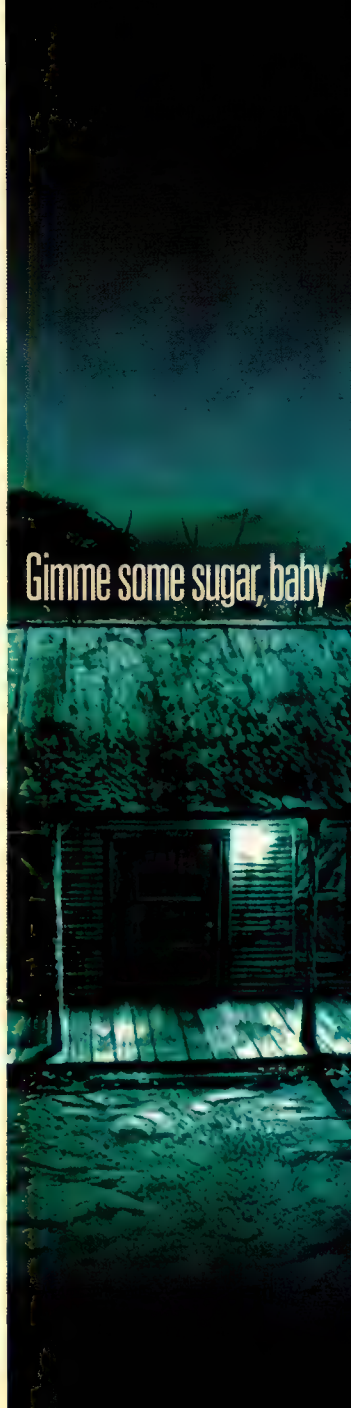
Earthbound Zero

Nintendo shelved plans to bring the *Famicom Mother* (the prequel to the SNES *Earthbound*) to the States due to lackluster sales of other RPGs. Somehow, a prototype English EPROM was found, the title screen logo was changed to *Earthbound Zero*, and the ROM found its way onto the Internet.



Pokémon Gold/Silver

Unfortunately, those behind the *Pokémon Gold/Silver* translations are more in it for the money than the fun of it. As the mistakes below show, it's best to wait until October for Nintendo's official release.





PRESS
START

IMPORT CALENDAR

SNK vs. Capcom Millennium Fight 2000



Import Pick of the Month: Coming in September, the game fighting game fans had dreamed of for years—Capcom and SNK's fighters in one game.

PlayStation

- 8/26 Dragon Quest VII, Enix (RPG)
- 9/7 Beatmania APPEND GOTTAMIX2 Going Global, Konami (Music)
- 9/13 Dino Crisis 2, Capcom (Action)
- 9/28 Blade Arts, Enix (Action)

PlayStation2

- 9/7 Pro Baseball At The End of the Century 1999, Square (Sports)
- 9/21 Keyboard Mania, Konami (Music)
- 9/21 Ring of Red, Konami (Strategy RPG)
- Sept. Silpheed The Lost Planet, Game Arts/Capcom (Shooter)
- Oct. Motopp, Namco (Racing)

Dreamcast

- 9/6 SNK vs. Capcom Millennium Fight 2000, Capcom/SNK (Fighting)
- 9/6 Dino Crisis, Capcom (Action)
- 9/21 Despiria, Atlas (RPG)
- 9/21 Sakura Taisen 2, Sega (RPG)
- 9/21 Sakura Taisen 2 Limited Box, Sega (RPG)
- 9/28 Dead or Alive, Tecmo (Fighting)
- 9/28 Napple Tale, Sega (Action RPG)
- 10/5 Eternal Arcadia, Sega (RPG)
- 10/5 Eternal Arcadia Limited Box, Sega (RPG)

Game Boy

- 9/7 Pop'n Music Animation Melody, Konami (Music)
- 9/28 Beatmania Gottamix 2, Konami (Music)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import game store for the latest release information.



SOLID SNAKE DOES X-MEN

Betcha didn't catch this one. David Hayter, who voiced Solid Snake in Metal Gear Solid, wrote the screenplay for the movie *X-Men*. He also appears in the movie as a policeman in the museum toward the end of the film.

Where's the Bleem!?

It's been a few issues since we heard much about the new DC bleem! Since it's been delayed a bit, we figured we'd update you on the situation and, if you don't know what bleem is, fill you in on a few details along the way.

What is bleem! for Dreamcast?

Bleem! is software for Dreamcast that allows you to play PlayStation games on the Dreamcast in a higher resolution and with various other graphical enhancements.

How much will it cost?

Each bleempak (which will let you play 100 PS games) will cost \$19.99.

What games will be on the first bleempak?

That hasn't been decided yet. Bleem!'s planning on announcing the list a few weeks before its release.

The PS controller is different than the Dreamcast one. How will I play the games?

With the Dreamcast controller, some PS buttons will be accessible by pressing a button combination. But if you've got PS controllers already and want to use them, you can pick up bleempods (pictured at right) for \$19.99 apiece. There will also be bleempads, Dual Shock-style pads, for Dreamcast available at the same time.

When will the first bleempak for Dreamcast be available?

Right now there's no firm release date or timetable. That should be determined within the next few weeks. Bleem!'s testers are spending hundreds of hours to make sure all 100 games work perfectly. "We're not going to release the product until everything's smoothed out," bleem! spokesman Sean Kaupainen told us. Their testers have even run into bugs in production games that show up in bleem! but on the PlayStation.

Will I be able to play import games on it?

Yes, you will be able to play import versions of the games available on each bleempak. You won't be able to play imports not in the supported games list. Because the bleempaks will support European, Japanese and U.S. versions of each game, that's made testing take a lot longer. There is a possibility that an import game-only bleempak will be released, but probably not in the near future.



Bleempaks will come in DVD-style cases (above) for a low \$19.99 price. Also at that price are bleempods (below), which allow you to use your PS controllers on the DC.



Has Sony filed any new lawsuits against bleem! as a result of the Dreamcast version?

No, they haven't. The original complaints Sony had against bleem! are still being decided in court. Until then, the company is free to distribute the product on the PC and DC.

As part of its anti-piracy campaign, Sega's said that newer versions of the Dreamcast hardware won't play software on CD-ROM. How does this affect bleem!?

Kaupainen: "It won't affect us because that's in Sega's operating system. We're running our own operating environment, which will run PlayStation games. Sega's steps are to prevent bootleg GD-ROMs from being played. We're against piracy in all its forms."

GS Cube Brings Real-time CG Movies to Net

Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. unveiled GS Cube, a development system designed to bring CG-movie content to broadband Internet connections, at the recent Siggraph 2000 convention in New Orleans. A price has yet to be made public, but it has the power of 16 PlayStation 2 systems. That's nearly \$5,000 of PS2 power! So you won't be playing a GS Cube-based machine at home anytime soon, but it may play a role in Sony's overall broadband plans for the next few years.

Sony got the backing of major movie and effects houses to show off its new toy. Attendees were treated to demonstrations done in real time of scenes from *Antz*, *The Matrix* and a flight sim.



A scene rendered in real time from the movie *Antz* (shown above from the film) was used to demonstrate the GS Cube's power.

Sony GSCube Specs

CPU: 128-Bit "Emotion Engine" x 16
System clock frequency: 294.912MHz
Main memory: Direct RDRAM
Memory size: 2GB (128MB x 16)
Memory bus bandwidth: 50.3GB/s (3.1GB/s x 16)
Floating point performance: 97.5GFLOPS (6.1GFLOPS x 16)
3D CG geometric transformation: 1.04Gpolygons/s (65Mpolygons/s x 16)
Graphics: Graphics Synthesizer 1-32 x 16
Clock frequency: 147.456MHz
VRAM size: 512MB (embedded 32MB x 16)
VRAM bandwidth: 755GB/s (47.2GB/s x 16)
Pixel fill rate: 37.7GB/s (2.36GB/s x 16)
Maximum polygon drawing rate: 1.2 Gpolygons/s (73.7Mpolygons/s x 16)
Display color depth: 32-bit (RGBA: 8 bits each)
Z depth: 32-bit
Maximum resolutions: 1080/60p (1920x1080, 60FPS, progressive)
Merging functions: Scissoring, alpha test, Z sorting, alpha blending
Sound: Emotion Engine native audio
Maximum output channel: 16
Sampling frequency: 48kHz
Output data length: 16-bit
Output data format: AES/EBU digital audio format

Indianapolis Toughens up on Violent Games

On July 17, the Indianapolis, IN, City-County Council passed an ordinance restricting minors from playing violent or sexually explicit video games in arcades. Games like *House of the Dead 2* and *Mortal Kombat* fall into the "violent" category and now must be kept 10 feet away from areas where gamers under 18 would be, inside an enclosed area out of their sight line. If a parent or guardian is present, gamers under 18 years old can play the games—as long as they remain within five feet of the adult.

"While video games are not the sole cause of juvenile crime, there is a strong correlation between violent entertainment and crime," Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson said in a statement. "We simply cannot put community safety at risk by allowing kids to simulate

murders, knowing that it is excellent practice for the real thing. We do not want our children to be desensitized to violence."

The ordinance takes effect Sept. 1.



Kids enjoying their daily dose of violence.

Who's laughing now?



PRESS
START

SEGA'S R&D HIERARCHY

Sega recently reorganized their research and development teams so that each has its own specific name. You'll be seeing these names on future Dreamcast titles, so get to know 'em.

Old Name	New Name
R&D 1	Wow Entertainment
R&D 2	AM2
R&D 3	Hitmaker
R&D 4	Amusement Vision
R&D 5	Sega Rosso
R&D 6	Smilebit
R&D 7	Over Works
R&D 8	Sonic Team
R&D 9	United Game Artists

Digital Media
Production

SOUNDTRACKS

All three of these discs are available for \$16.99 from www.marscolonymusic.com.

Powerstone Original Soundtrack

Powerstone's soundtrack is a mix of epic orchestral tunes with more light-hearted pop fare. Included on the disc are tracks filled with voice samples of each character, perfect to add to the soundtrack of that home-made kung-fun action film.

Review Score: 3/5



Street Fighter III: Third Strike Original Soundtrack

A collection of 32 fast-paced synth pop/hip-hop tunes from the arcade game, with occasional "wocka-chicka" guitar sounds thrown in for good measure. Good stuff to have on in the background while getting some work done.

Review Score: 3/5



Resident Evil Orchestra

An 11-track collection of music from Resident Evil. Unfortunately, it's not always the most recognizable stuff from the games. Still, the games have some of the creepiest and intense music in video games today. Turn out the lights and turn it up.

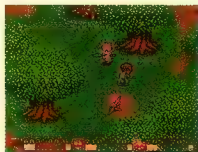
Review Score: 2/5



Old School

This month, we take a look at two games that came out in the U.S. with sequels that didn't make it. However, sequels to both of these, *Seiken Denetsu 3* for *Secret of Mana* and *Do-Re-Mi Fantasy* for *Milon's Secret Castle*, are available in English via fan translators (see story on page 36).

Secret of Mana (SNES)
Released: 1993
Why it was cool:



Secret of

Mana was the pinnacle of action RPGs. It had beautiful graphics, a great story and an amazing soundtrack, but what really put it above the others of the time (and still, even now) was its multiplayer aspect. You could play through the whole game with up to three people, a feature that very few games have even attempted, let alone pulled off since.

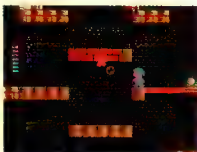
How EGM rated it: 9.0, 9.0, 9.0, 8.0

Comments: Playing through *Secret of Mana* three-player was surely one of the greatest gaming experiences of my life. The game would have been amazing playing it alone but when you combine all the cooperative aspects of multiplayer, it was just incredible. The game's soundtrack is composed by Yasunori

Mitsuda and it's still one of my favorites, even though it was "only" on the SNES. It was really a shame that the sequel was never officially released in the states and was only two-player to boot.

- Kenneth Miller

Milon's Secret Castle (NES)
Released: 1987
Why it was cool:



This combination action/platformer/puzzle game was truly unique. You wandered around different rooms in a giant castle, shooting bubbles at enemies and blocks to find money and secrets. Later you could buy special items and bigger bubbles with the cash. Despite being a huge seller in Japan (over 1 million sold! the box proudly proclaimed), Milon is not so well known in America for some reason.

How EGM rated it: N/A

Comments: I dust this game off once a year or so because it's just that good—there's really nothing else out there like it. It's *incredibly* hard and very frustrating, but also ingenious in its design. Do what you must to find and play this game.

- Mark MacDonald

Tidbits

In Japan, Sega will offer limited demos of upcoming games under its @barai system. For 1,000 yen (about \$9.25), you'll be able to get the first few hours of games like *Eternal Arcadia* (the first game that'll be available in an @barai format). If you like it, you can log onto Sega's Web site and buy a code to unlock the full version. **BBI, a division of Blue Box Toys will introduce a series of action figures of Kain and Raziel from Soul Reaver and Dart, Lloyd and Shana of Legend of Dragoon (pictured at right). Previously, BBI has created action figures for Omega Boost and Fighting Force 2.** Word is Electronic Arts is



eyeing the ultra-popular *Harry Potter* series for future games in time for the release of the movie in 2001. **At the San Diego Comicon, Simpsons creator Matt Groening announced that there will be a video game based on Futurama for PlayStation 2.** The European launch of PlayStation 2 has been delayed by a month, to Nov. 24. **Interact's got a new Game Boy Color GameShark coming in September with 2,000 Pokémon codes (we really need that many?) and...get this, an Internet hook-up.**

Microsoft recently opened up its official X-Box site in Japan. To check it out, go to www.xbox.co.jp (your browser must be able to display Japanese). The English X-Box site is located at www.xbox.com.



Q - M a n n

Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

Back to school time, my little Quartermaniacs. You know what that means, right? Time to strap in, lean back and get ready for the fourth quarter (ooohh baby). That's when the games really start rolling in. Just look at the fall preview feature in this issue. This year is especially laden with diamonds in the rough—it's going to be harder to distinguish the hits from the pits. But the RC will give you guys the heads-up on that. It's up to the Q to give you the gossip...and here goes:

...Some **Metroid** bits have leaked out of NCL. Two years ago, Nintendo, realizing that every E3 all us lil' rumor hounds ask about is **Metroid**, went to **Rare** and asked if they'd do the honors and give us the new **Samus** adventure we so desperately need. The boys in Twycross turned it down due to the feast of N64 projects already on their plates. Dagnabbit! We will get another **Metroid** game in the future, though...Speaking of Nintendo news, remember that "**Ura Zelda**" game that **Miyamoto** was working on for the **64DD**? While walking around NCL's offices, one of the Q's spies got a glimpse of the title, confirming its existence. Of course when he asked about it, he was quickly ushered off the premises. Whether or not the rest of us will ever see it is still up in the air. I've heard it's still in the release plans for Japan. **Sorry America, none for you.**

...After the rather dismal box office return for **Titan AE**, Fox has pulled a cut-'n'-run on the video game version. So those screenshots of it you saw a few issues back in this very magazine are all you'll ever see...Say, that reminds me...What is up with these **dismal \$9.99 PlayStation games**? For all you guys out there who are being tempted by the cheap price, let me let you in on a little secret—ALL of them are steaming PILES! AVOID! AVOID! **Danger Will Robinson, Danger!** OK, I'll admit that **Sheep** is worth the scratch, but it pains me to see the gaming public being ripped off. Sony, why are you letting this happen? Say, that reminds me...Hollow Man was a junker, wasn't it?

...Samba! Yes, yes...I know what you're thinking, how could a hardcore gamer like yours truly even possibly think of picking up the maracas and shakin' 'em like a bat out of hell. But alas, I have caught the **Samba de Amigo** bug, and Sega's about to have more Latin beats ready in the arcade. Deep within Sonic Team, they're already putting the finishing touches on a **new version of the arcade game** which will feature all-new music. Expect it in the arcades

soon...No, no...I can't, I won't get into Dance Dance Revolution...**NOOOOOOOOO!**

...Speakin' of our good friends Naka and Co. over at Sonic Team—or at least, **former members of Sonic Team**. Oshima-san, the original designer of Sonic the Hedgehog, and a bunch of other ex-Sega employees have formed a new company called **Artoon**. Their first project is a game for (dum dum da) the PlayStation 2.

...Like **Ogre Battle**? Sure, we all do! But what happens when stores can't get enough copies to go around? You get a lot of angry N64 RPG fans. Seems that **Atlus' Ogre Battle 64**, scheduled for a September release, has been the victim of a "chip shortage" (hrmmm, where have I heard that one before...). Because of this, retailers will be getting 15-20% fewer copies than originally anticipated. And a **second shipment** won't be out to stores until **early to mid-December**. So if you're going to grab **Ogre Battle 64**, do it quickly...Say, that reminds me...when I woke up this morning, there was a note from the Milkman inside! Said that Atlus was gonna be bringing **one of Hudson's GBC titles called Robo Pon** to the U.S. as early as October. Sounds like a party, baby...bleem! bleem!...what's that, you say? Single-game versions of **bleem!** so DC users can play more recent PlayStation hits?

...Remember that time when everyone thought **Shiny's Messiah** was like, THE game? Well, if you've just gotten into gaming in the last two years, you probably don't remember that *chertle*. As early as right after the Dreamcast's first announcement, **Shiny Prez Dave Perry** was boasting just how sweet the DC version of Messiah would be. And now, well...word has it it's been canned...

...**Treasure doing Silpheed**? Yes, that's right, kiddies. Treasure, **every fanboy's wet dream**, is doing the honors on the PS2 sequel to the classic Sega CD shooter for Game Arts. And who's bringing it out in the U.S.?

Round-up
the usual suspects...Until next month, rumor mongers...

- The Q



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H A L F

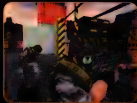


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Sega Dreamcast



PRESS
START

The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of June, 2000

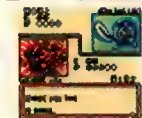
1 - Perfect Dark



Joanna had only shown up in the last few days of May but managed to climb to the number-two spot last issue. This time, **Nintendo's** first-person blastfest claims the number-one position, pushing the Pokémon games ever downward.

	LAST MONTH	2	
10	Crispin	10	Mark
9.5	Kraig		

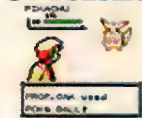
2 - Pokémon Trading Card



If you listen to some reports in the media, Pokémon's popularity is shrinking. At least until **Nintendo** releases Gold and Silver. But the Pokémon games remain strong on the charts, with only Pokémon Pinball falling off.

	LAST MONTH	1	
8.5	Cy	4.5	Chris
9.0	Jim		

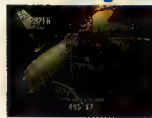
3 - Pokémon Yellow



Nintendo managed to squeeze more money out of the first Pokémon game by giving you Pikachu from the beginning and making other minor cosmetic changes. How long before this one drops off the charts?

	LAST MONTH	3	
8.0	Chris	6.0	Crispin
8.0	Che	6.0	Shoe

4 - Tony Hawk's Pro Skater



It's a Tony Hawk double feature. While the PlayStation version wasn't able to fend off Pokémon to get on the charts before, it's finally broken through. Not only did the PS version get on the list, but **Activision's** N64 version...

	LAST MONTH	7	
9.0	Che	9.0	Crispin
8.0	Dean	7.5	Chris

5 - Tony Hawk's Pro Skater



...was right behind it. It's not often that a third-party N64 game is able to get into the top 20—unless it's a wrestling game. The real question is, will Activision be able to fend off the hordes of Tony Hawk clones?

	LAST MONTH	11	
9.0	Shawn	9.0	Che
7.0	Chris	8.5	Dean

6	Wario Land 3 Nintendo		LAST MONTH	NEW
7	Spec Ops Take 2 Interactive		LAST MONTH	13
8	Pokémon Blue Nintendo		LAST MONTH	10
9	WWF SmackDown! THQ		LAST MONTH	5
10	Pokémon Red Nintendo		LAST MONTH	12

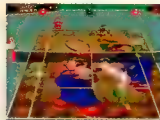
11	Pokémon Stadium Nintendo		LAST MONTH	4
12	Legend of Dragoon SCEA		LAST MONTH	NEW
13	Syphon Filter 2 989 Studios		LAST MONTH	8
14	Super Mario Bros. Deluxe Nintendo		LAST MONTH	18
15	Excitebike 64 Nintendo		LAST MONTH	6
16	Syphon Filter 989 Studios		LAST MONTH	15
17	Vagrant Story Square EA		LAST MONTH	14
18	Triple Play 2001 Electronic Arts		LAST MONTH	16
19	Gran Turismo 2 SCEA		LAST MONTH	17
20	Legend of Mana Square EA		LAST MONTH	NEW

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service. Call Mary Ann Porreca at (516) 625-2345 for questions regarding this list. Top 5 game descriptions written by the EGM staff.

JAPAN TOP 10

1	Mario Tennis Nintendo	
2	Final Fantasy IX Square	
3	Jikkyo Powerful Pro Baseball 2000 Konami	
4	Medarot 3 Kabuta/Kawagada Version Imagineer	
5	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters III Konami	
6	Tomarunner Vs. C'Arc-en-Ciel SCEI	
7	Jikkyo Powerful Pro Baseball Konami	
8	Pachi Slot Anzu Afaze	
9	Tomb Raider IV The Last Revelation Nintendo	
10	From TV Animation One Piece Bandai	WS

Weekly Famitsu, week ending 7/23/2000.



Mario Tennis gives Final Fantasy IX a racket-beating in the Japan Top 10—of course in total sales it's quite a different story.



The fourth installment in the Tomb Raider series came out on July 19 in Japan and is making quite the showing for a non-Japanese developed game.



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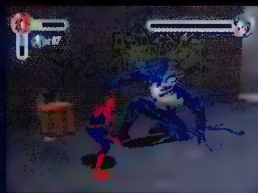
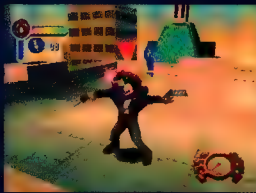
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August 2000



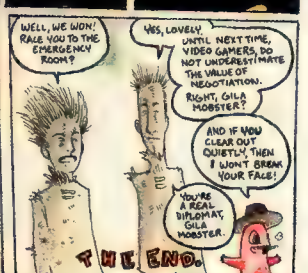
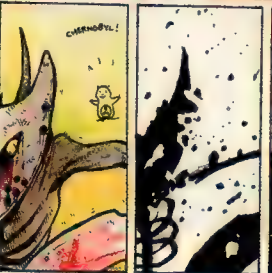
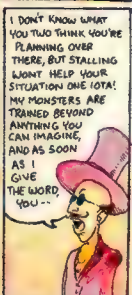
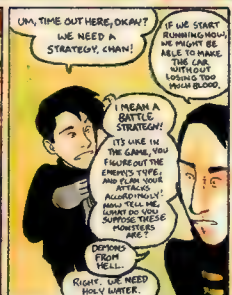
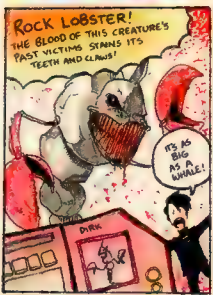
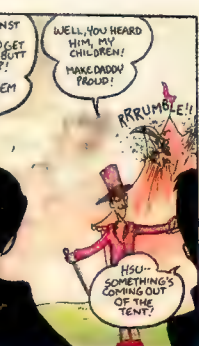
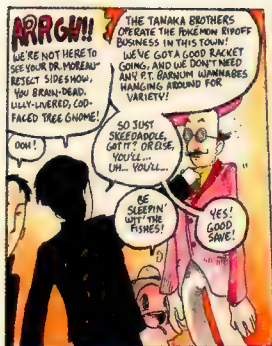
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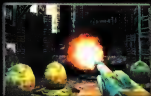
DON'T BE AFRAID OF
THE DARK.

BE AFRAID OF
WHAT'S IN IT.

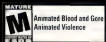
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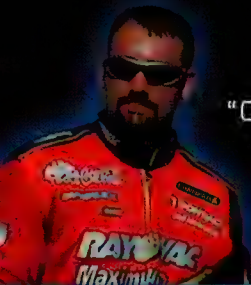
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WARNING: Previews marked with international symbols may or may not be released in the U.S. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

It's here! Millions of Japanese gamers and importers across the globe are currently enjoying Square's latest masterpiece Final Fantasy IX! And of course, that includes the *EGM* crew. The joy begins on page 98. Why are you still here? Go! Read! Gawk! Be happy!

The Dreamcast lineup this month was feeling a little dry, so we busted out some primo imports for you Sega freaks out there. Saturn buffs will find something very familiar about Virtua Athlete 2K, while RPG lovers will no doubt drool over page 66 drooling over the beautiful Hundred Swords shots we've got.

Nintendo's offering is distressingly small this issue as well. Nonetheless, we've got some hands-on experience with TWINE, the next Bond game on the 64-Bit platform. Page 68 reveals if it truly is a worthy successor to GoldenEye.

Speaking of GoldenEye, ex-Rare employees Free Radical gave us a look at their premier PlayStation 2 offering this month. TimeSplitters is looking great, check it out on page 78. Other notables in the PS2 section include



The final fantasy on the PlayStation is here. See why this one is likely to be the greatest hour for this venerable series starting on page 98.

Dynasty Warriors 2, SSX and a whole slew of EA Sports titles, plus that Metal Gear game everyone seems to be making such a fuss over.

But is the PlayStation faltering? Not just yet. Shining even under the blinding light that is FFIX are Medal of Honor: Underground and Crash Band. Also witness the triumphant return of the Arcade section! King of Fighters 2000 and the latest BeMani game grace those pages.

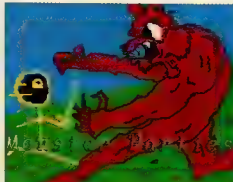
Next month? How about the DC's answer to Final Fantasy IX from Game Arts? Grandia II cometh...

TOP 5 Preview Picks

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Final Fantasy IX | PlayStation, November |
| 2. Metal Gear Solid 2 | PlayStation 2, Fall 2001 |
| 3. Virtua Athlete 2K | Dreamcast, September |
| 4. Medal of Honor Underground | PlayStation, October |
| 5. The World Is Not Enough | Nintendo 64, November |

Agetec & EGM Present the RPG Maker Contest

Think your RPG idea is better than *EGM's* own Monster Parties? Well here's the chance all you little Sakaguchi-wannabes have been waiting for. Snag a copy of Agetec's RPG Maker and start designing your masterpiece. When you've got it just right, use your Dex Drive to e-mail your creation to egmcontests@ziffdavis.com with the subject "RPG contest" by Dec. 31, 2000 (Please don't mail us any memory cards). We'll play and judge each game, and the best submission (as judged by the venerable *EGM* Review Crew) will get the full preview and review treatment right here in these pages, while the worst ones will likely be openly mocked. The winner will also receive a brand-spankin'-new PlayStation 2 console and three games—Armored Core 2, Evergrace and Eternal Ring—all courtesy of Agetec. So what are you waiting for? Get crackin'!





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TEEN
T
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Mild Language



Dreamcast

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PREVIEW



FEEL THE HEAT

There was a second game in the pseudo series of track & field titles on the Saturn. Winter Heat was even more obscure than Decathlete, though our Canadian editor says it was the best one.

Virtua Athlete 2K

- Publisher:** Agetec
- Developer:** Climax Entertainment
- Platform:** 1-4
- Genre:** Sports
- % Sims:** 100% (Japan)
- Release:** September
- Also In:** Decathlete (Saturn)
- Web Address:** www.agetec.com
www.climax.co.jp

- The Good:** It's basically Decathlete on the Dreamcast.
- The Bad:** Only seven events.
- And The Ugly:** Muscle aches after tapping buttons for a few hours.



The stamina bar above is a good idea gone awry. This "feature" costs most would-be gold medalists even the easiest of wins.

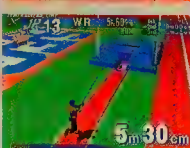
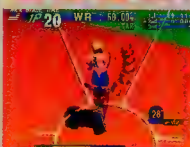
Tap the run button frantically as you vault over each hurdle. The 110M Hurdles is the easiest event to win.



MISSING EVENTS

DE(cath)LETE

Despite all the similarities, Virtua Athlete 2K lacks three of the events found in Decathlete. The 400M Race, Pole Vault and Discus Throw. Ah well...no one's perfect. Still, the extra three events would add to the replay value of this track & field game immensely. Climax missed this boat.



Remember the Saturn? How about the little-known game called Decathlete? It seems Climax Entertainment does, since Virtua Athlete 2K is almost a carbon-copy of Decathlete, right down to the order in which the seven events take place.

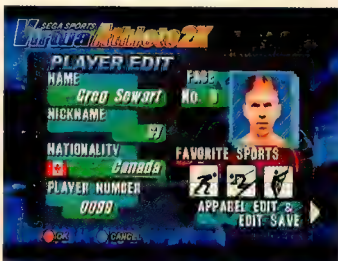
And what better time to release a track & field title? Agetec's throwing their proverbial hat into the Olympic arena by localizing Virtua Athlete, taking on Konami and Eidos.

Like other games in this genre, most of the time in VA 2K you only need to worry about tapping a couple of power buttons really fast, and once in a while hit an action button to do things like jump or lean into the finish line of a race. Occasionally the D-

pad comes into play, either to control direction in a foot race or to curl around the bar in the High Jump. The only other variable in most events is the endurance meter, meaning mashing the buttons as quickly as possible isn't always the best strategy.

Completing a seven-event tournament (100M Dash, Long Jump, Shot Put, High Jump, 110 M Hurdles, Javelin Throw and 1500M Race) unlocks a collection of 61 "sports" (everything from Synchronized Swimming to Jazz Music) which, if chosen as "Favorite Sports" in the character editor, affect certain athletic aspects. In fact, this is one of the only differences between Decathlete and Virtua Athlete 2K.

Hopefully Agetec will make a few changes to this game during the localization procedure. The major problem with VA 2K is the difficulty. It's far too hard to win any of the events, even on the easiest settings. Playing against three friends makes this a decent party game, but even then the extreme difficulty hurts the fun factor. Still, thus far the game plays a tad better than International Track & Field, so Agetec may just cash in on this venture.



The Player Edit feature adds a much-needed bit of personality to a genre that's altogether too lifeless. Name them, number them, deck them out in all the freshest gear. Gotta look good for the honeys out on the field. This guy has way too much hair to be the real Greg Sewart, though.



On a typical day the US Customs service seizes:

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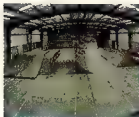


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This title is not yet approved by Sony Computer Entertainment America.



PREVIEW GALLERY



DAVE MIRRA'S EASTWOOD RAMP PARK

Not only does Dave Mirra have his own game, he's got a ramp park as well. If you're ever in North Carolina, check it out at: 301-F N. Greenmeadows Dr., Wilmington, North Carolina. e-mail: rampark@eastwoodrampark.com

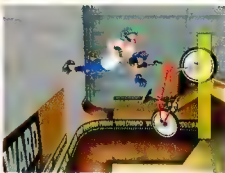
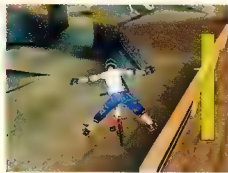
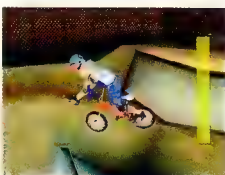
Sega GT

The closest thing to Gran Turismo 2 for the Dreamcast will be upon us **Aug. 29**. So what's **Sega** changing in the U.S. version? First of all you can say goodbye to the Homologation Special subtitle, thank God. Also expect the welcome addition of some European and American cars like the Audi A6, Dodge Viper GTS-R and Ford Mustang Cobra. Various sponsors have been replaced with new ones along the side of each track as well. Otherwise, the game remains the same.



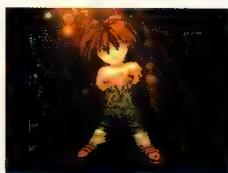
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX

It's just like the PS version only better-looking and faster—60 frames per second to be exact. In case you missed our preview in the September issue, here's the scoop on this **fall** release from **Acclaim**. Ten riders including Dave Mirra and Ryan Nyquist are available for Street, Vert and Dirt action. A special trick modifier allows up to 1300 possible moves, and new crash technology makes each wreck look different than the last.



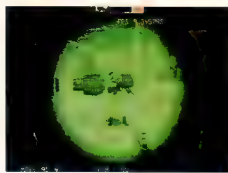
Evil Twin: Cyprien's Chronicles

Originally planned as a feature CG film, Evil Twin: Cyprien's Chronicles has instead turned into a video game. The star, the Chucky look-alike Cyprien, is pulled into a parallel world that's filled with creatures he's conjured up in his nightmares. He comes equipped with a slingshot, can obtain more weapons, and can turn into Super-Cyprien. This Tim Burton-esque game from **Ubi Soft** is scheduled to ship in the **spring of 2001**.



Spec Ops: Omega Squad

This is the ninth(!) game in **Ripcord Games'** Spec Ops series (most of which have been on PC). Choose between first- or third-person views and run through five levels of six missions apiece in exotic locales like Antarctica (never knew it was so mountainous there), Korea, Pakistan, Thailand and Germany. No online play—sorry kiddies, you'll have to wait 'til the next DC Spec Ops in 2001. This one heads out in **September**.



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Sega Dreamcast



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PREVIEW
GALLERY



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BIG BUZZ NEWS

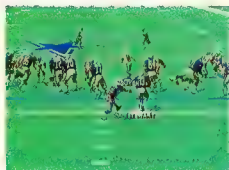
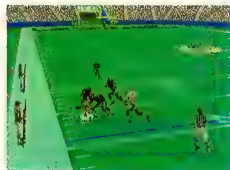
Tim Allen reportedly raked in around \$50,000 for doing the voice of Buzz Lightyear in the original *Toy Story*.

Toy Story 2?

A cool \$5,000,000. Not too shabby for a guy who usually makes a living by grunting. Source: www.imdb.com

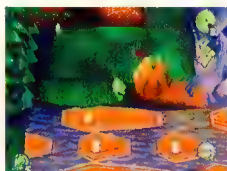
NFL Quarterback Club 2001

Acclaim's QB Club has an uphill battle against Sega's online NFL 2K1, but it comes armed with a ton of off-line features. QBC allows you to replay the key moments of every Super Bowl, create players and playbooks, in addition to creating and drafting your own football team. The graphics are good, but the animations are a little choppy. If that gets fixed up, it could be a good football season for DC owners.



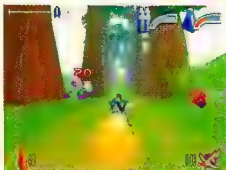
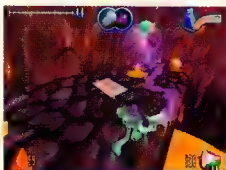
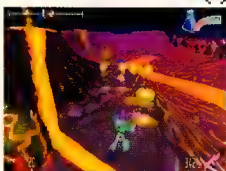
Frogger 2: Swampy's Revenge

The hoppinest piece of road-kill ever gets a second (or is it a third?) shot at virtual life, courtesy of **Hasbro Interactive** and **Millennium Interactive** (Glover). Now you can play as the little frog who could through a 3D platformer adventure mode, or take to the streets in a traditional overhead homage to the original game. Multiplayer has also been added. Frogger 2 is due this **summer**.



Buzz Lightyear of Star Command

Based on the cartoon of the same name, this mildly kiddie 3D action game from **Activision** and **Traveler's Tales** features Buzz in his own "real" galaxy, fighting a variety of baddies. The Buzz character model has a cartoony cel-shaded graphic style, but the rest of the game doesn't. Too bad. Levels are set up like chases: The boss character says a couple of things in the beginning of the stage, then you chase him/her through the level, avoiding enemies, collecting money, tons of items and different space-age weapons, eventually making it to the boss battle. Then you can spend your cash on items, shields and weapons. It has a **September** release date.



MTV Sports: Skateboarding

Coming from **THQ** and **Darkblack**, this skateboarding title features Andy MacDonald and a 30-person crew of pro and fantasy skaters duking it out in a number of ramp and rail-ridden arenas. The game is more detailed compared to THPS, but the graphics don't look as natural. And the same goes for the animation in this early build. Let's hope this stuff is tweaked in the final version. Look for it **late this year**.



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PREVIEW GALLERY

ESPN International Track & Field

Track & Field has come a long way, baby. Ignore the ESPN moniker **Konami** bestowed on the game and that's basically what you have: button-mashing action at its best. There's some finesse and timing (angles, release position) in events such as the Long Jump, Pole Vault, Hammer Throw, Trap Shooting, Triple Jump and Weightlifting, but the rest of the 12 events will put blisters on your thumbs this **September**.



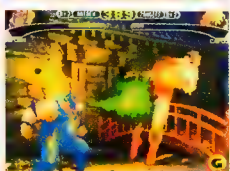
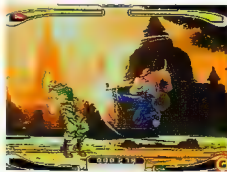
Hundred Swords

Currently only in a select few special **Sega** networked arcade cabinets in Tokyo, this **Smile Bit** (Jet Grind Radio) game will be coming home to the DC soon. Choose between the multiplayer version (up to four can play via the DC network) or single-player adventure mode. It looks like a real-time strategy in the vein of *StarCraft*, but with a mix of *Dragon Force*'s huge battles (you control up to 400 soldiers) and a fantasy setting.



SNK vs. Capcom

SNK is the chocolate and **Capcom** the peanut butter as they join forces for this Naomi arcade and DC über-super-mega-fighter (we hope, anyway) due **Sept. 6**. Build teams of 2-4 characters from a cast of 28 (with favorites from both companies like Ryu, Terry Bogard, Guile, Mai, etc.) in this four-button, all 2D fighting game. Also choose your playstyle or "Groove": Capcom (like *Street Fighter Alpha*) or SNK (KoF).

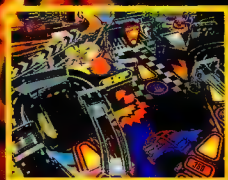


WORMS

pinball



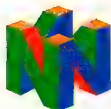
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PREVIEW

256

BITS AND BITS

The size of The World is Not Enough in Megabits—just as big as Rare's Perfect Dark.

The World Is Not Enough

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: Eurocom

Players: 1-4

Genre: Action

% Done: 75%

Release: November

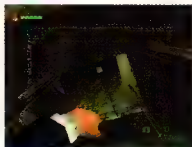
Also On: PS2, PS, PC, GBC

Web Address: www.ea.com
www.007.ea.com

The Good: Plays like GoldenEye, and has nearly as much cool stuff as Perfect Dark.

The Bad: N64 blurry textures.

And The Ugly: Moneypenny's strangely thick polygonal ankles.

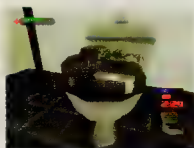


Q comes up with some crazy stuff. Bond can use his watch as a grapple, and hoist himself to places otherwise unreachable.



GADGETS GALORE

The Name's Mo...Gizmo



GoldenEye had a few featured gadgets. Then Perfect Dark came along and raised the bar with its huge number of hi-tech devices. Now this non-Rare Bond FPS is here, and has just as many gadgets to fool around with as PD. And the best part is, they're not just there for show or a one-time use—you use the gizmos quite a bit in each of the levels. In this sense, the game has a bit of an adventure angle to it. In true Bond fashion, you have to crack safes, defuse bombs, decode pass codes for locked doors and security cameras, wire-tap phones, climb up stuff and knock people out with your watch, among many other things with your items.

Don't automatically assume The World Is Not Enough isn't something special simply because Rare isn't behind it. In fact, from what we've seen so far this game might have the stuff to compete with GoldenEye and Perfect Dark, and that ain't easy.

Prolific U.K.-based developer Eurocom has taken on the daunting task of creating what's essentially the sequel to GoldenEye, with a mission structure that loosely follows the TWINE film plot. But simply calling it a sequel doesn't do the game justice. Even though TWINE looks, plays, moves and controls a lot like GoldenEye in parts, it really is its own game.

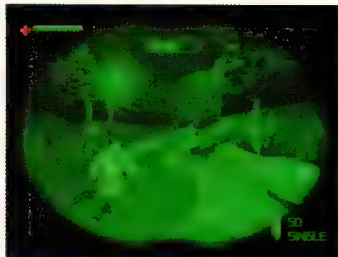
Eurocom is using a game engine specifically designed for the N64, which delivers a nice balance

between detail and framerate. The graphics utilize the Expansion Pak, and are certainly impressive, though not revolutionary. Thankfully, this allows the framerate to be fluid in most play modes. TWINE also has tons of impressive voice-acting, a kick-ass musical score and excellent sound effects.

TWINE features more than 40 weapons (some straight from the movie) and gadgets (that you actually use time and time again). Whether it's the scope on your sniper rifle—which now has a night-vision mode—or the variety of insane watch gadgets (poison dart, laser and more), you shouldn't get bored anytime soon.

Overall, there are more than 10 levels, filled with intense, multi-tiered objectives. And even though the game (mostly) follows the plot of the big screen version, it elaborates upon certain scenes and adds objectives (or we should say plot points) the film never had. The skilful level is of particular interest. In it, you're on a track of sorts, but are able to control left and right to a degree. It's a unique gameplay twist, without sacrificing the overall feel.

And that's just the one-player game. The robust multiplayer mode—complete with crafty AI bots—has over 10 arenas and a ton of options: more than 20 characters and a number of gameplay and weapon types can be found. You can play Capture the Flag, Team Battle or variations of either. And of course, there's always the good ol' deathmatch. Up to four people can play at any one time, which includes the number of bots.



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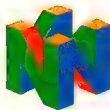
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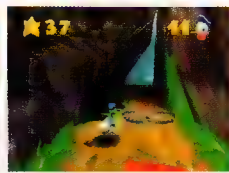
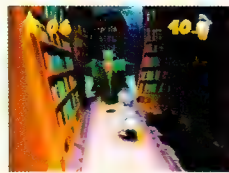
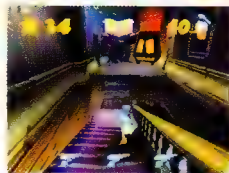
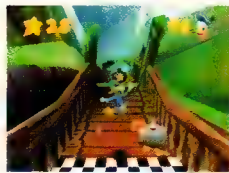
Pokémon Stadium Gold & Silver

Judging from the reader art we get, you all like to see Pokémon fight—especially when it ends in violent, bloody death. **Nintendo's** version, **due in Japan in December**, is a lot less graphic but still a whole lotta fun—just load your Game Boy Pokémon via the N64 Transfer Pak and duke it out in 3D. All we know so far about this sequel is it's compatible with older Pokémon, plus the new Gold and Silver critters. More soon.



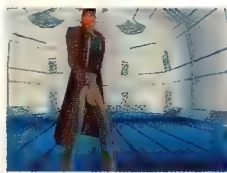
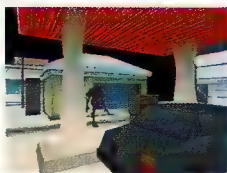
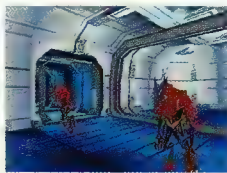
Donald Duck: Quack Attack

The temper tantrum-throwing fowl makes his N64 debut, courtesy of **Ubi Soft**. Aimed at children but boasting a visual quality worthy of Rayman (who lends his engine), DDQA should satisfy platform fans old and young. The key is mastering Donald and his various moods, which range from merely cranky, to downright agitated. Ubi Soft expects to have this one ready in time for a **November** release.



Roswell Conspiracies

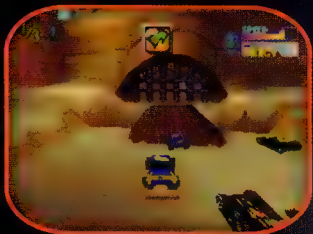
Redstorm (makers of all things Rainbow Six) has picked up the license to the BKN Network's Roswell Conspiracies, a show about a group of intelligence agents on the hunt for nasty aliens (disguised as vampires and werewolves) who are stalking the Earth's population for food and sport. The Global Alliance is the multi-national group formed to eradicate the problem. You play Nick Logan, main headhunter and all-around good guy, in the third-person, while exploring fully 3D environments. You use an alien detector to discern real humans from the aliens, and can equip yourself with a variety of weapons. Roswell Conspiracies will ship on multiple platforms this **winter**.





WOW!

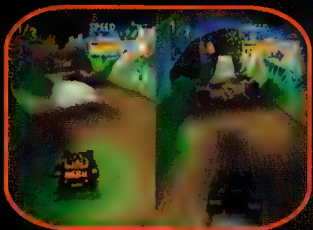
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environments



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in Battle Mode.
One of five hair-raising
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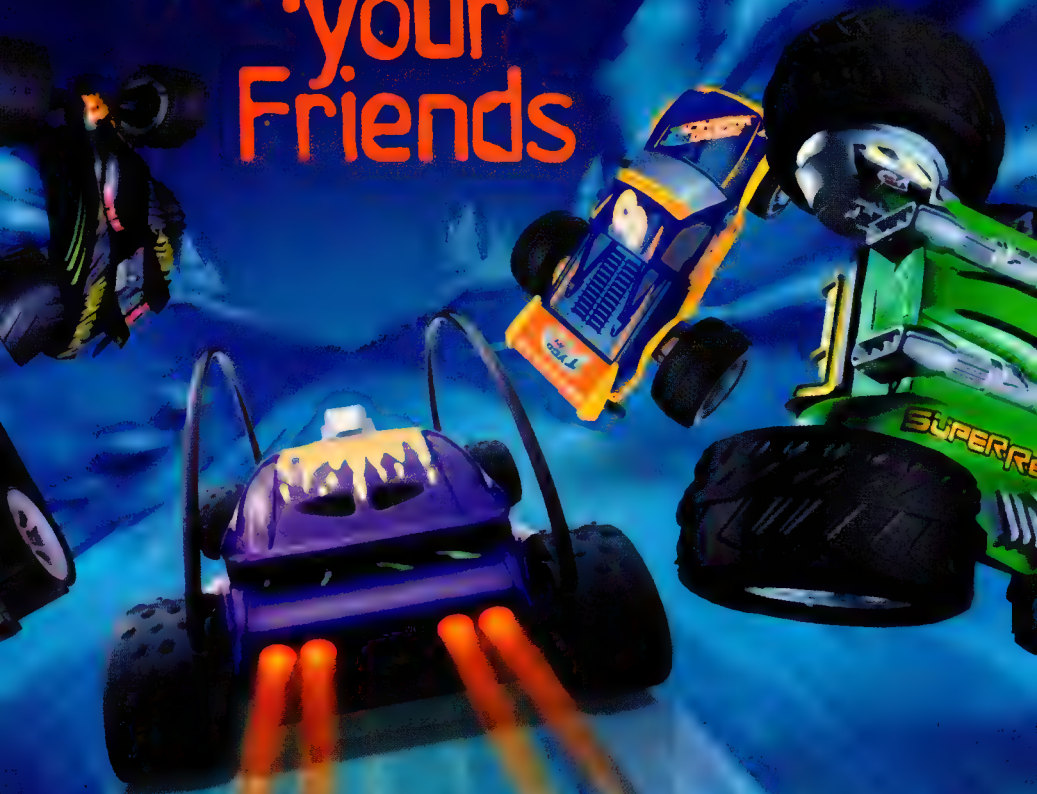


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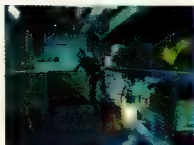
For the PlayStation game console



PREVIEW

Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty

Publisher:	Konami
Developer:	KCEJ West
Players:	1
Genre:	Action/Adventure
% HOME:	40%
Release:	Fall 2001
Web Address:	http://www.konami.co.jp/kcej/products/west/mgs2/japanese/01.html
The Good:	Reassures us of the power of the PS2 hardware.
The Bad:	Still over a year off!
And The Ugly:	The guard holding the shield that Snake kneecaps.



Switch to the first-person view on the fly for more precise aiming.



Hit the bottles and wine spills out.

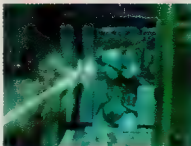


Snake is cornered by a couple guards in a supply room—bad move.

COOL EFFECTS

...whoa...


Check out some of the graphical flourishes in MGS2. (top) It's hard to see in screens, but falling rainwater "beads" on the camera when it hits. (middle) This thrown knife cuts through the air like a Matrix bullet. Finally (bottom) huge plumes of fire and smoke erupt from incredibly realistic explosions.



Yes, we've already dedicated more than five pages to Metal Gear Solid 2 over the last few issues since the game was first revealed at the E3, but then you're not complaining are you? In fact, we would have shown you even more if we could have, but we were limited to shots given to us from Konami. But now that the MGS2 trailer is available on DVD in Japan, the dam has burst—let the let MGS2 coverage flow forth!

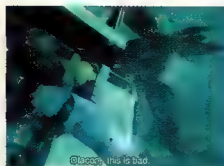
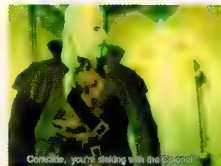
Why all the hype on this game that's still over a year away? If you played the first Metal Gear Solid, chances are you don't need to ask. But even if you *hated* that game, seeing the roughly 10 minutes of footage of the sequel trailer will at least get you

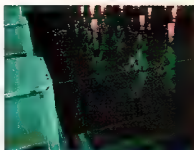
excited about the capabilities of the PlayStation 2. Sure some other PS2 titles look good, but this game—the environments, the characters, effects, everything—is head and shoulders above anything else we've seen for the system.

Unfortunately, as far as gameplay details go, we've pretty much already said everything that's known so far (and Konami is being stingy with new info) so let's recap: Solid Snake, Otacon Revolver Ocelot, and even Liquid Snake are all back. The game takes place largely on a giant tanker transporting the new Metal Gear device, and also in New York City. There's a new first-person shooting mode you can activate at any time to look around, aim and fire your weapons. Check out all the screens and captions in this spread for a few more tidbits and gameplay details, and of course stay tuned over the next few months—we'll be watching this one like a hawk. 



Some old and new friends: (left) the mysterious new knife-tossing lady; enemy boss or Snake's latest love interest? You decide. (bottom left) Revolver Ocelot returns from MGS, complete with both hands. (bottom middle) The latest Metal Gear, Metal Gear Ray, created to combat all the Metal Gear Rexes created after the last game ended. And finally (bottom right), Snake fills Otacon (yep, he's back too) in on the situation in his typical understated style.





!!!

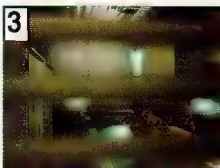
MGS had its share of humorous moments, and the MGS2 trailer has some too: One scene has Snake sneezing and simultaneously alerting a room packed full of guards. Another shows one guard noticing another sleeping and kicking him awake along to soothing sax music.



1ST-PERSON MODE

Solid Quake

MGS2's first-person mode is entirely optional—just press a shoulder button and the view changes. You can aim and fire your weapons but not move around. Check out the scenes of it included in the trailer:



(1) Snake tosses an ammo clip to distract a guard, allowing him to roll past undetected. (2) The first-person sniper view returns, similar to the first game. Here Snake lines up his sites before taking the guard out with a sleeping dart. (3) Hiding inside a locker, Snake clicks the door shut and alerts the bad guys.



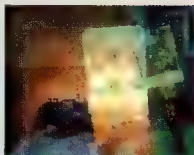
Shoot the pipes to cause steam to shoot out and hurt the guards.



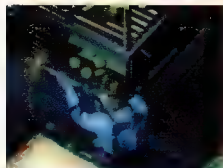
Blood splatters on the walls and stays there.



Lots of the gameplay looks similar to the original MGS: You can still (4) strangle and drag guards from behind, plus (5) lay down, crawl and shoot from the ground. One new move (6) lets you jump over railings and hang from the edge, then drop down (7) or pull yourself back up.



Some guards have those pesky bullet-proof shields—aim for the soft spots, like the legs. Ouch!



Another cool new move: You can quickly turn around corners to fire, and then flip right back, even when you're kneeling.





From the new Shoot Out and Practice Modes, to the expansion teams and up to the minute replays, we've captured it all.



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the speed and intensity of hockey. It'll get in your head and stay there.

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PREVIEW

TimeSplitters

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Free Radical Design
Players: 1
Genre: Shooting
% Done: 60%
Release: October
Also Try: GoldenEye
Web Address: www.eidos.com

The Good: Created by former GoldenEye 007 and PD development-team members.

The Bad: Relatively few single-player levels.

And The Ugly: Dual-joystick controls take some getting used to.



Nope, that's not one of the Beastie Boys—it's one of the game's campy playable characters.

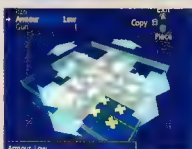
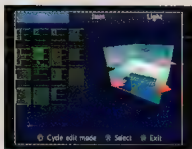


Enemies attack in groups and often seek shelter behind objects.

A CONSOLE FIRST

Level Editor

Tired of the TimeSplitters' 24 standard levels? Create your own with the game's innovative level editor. Simply rotate and drop the predesigned building blocks, texture map and populate them, and you're in business.



One of the most heavily hyped PS2 launch titles has got to be Eidos' TimeSplitters, and for good reason: It's being developed by Free Radical Design, which was founded by several prominent defectors from Rare's GoldenEye 007 and Perfect Dark design team.


The game, which is being billed as the "fastest first-person shooter ever made for a gaming console," spans 100 years (from 1935 to 2035) and includes a cast of 24 playable characters, with laughably bad names like "Peekaboo Jones" and "Chastity Detroit." (Finally, a game with serious technology behind it that doesn't take itself too seriously.) Apparently, this disparate bunch of heroes and villains has attracted the attention of

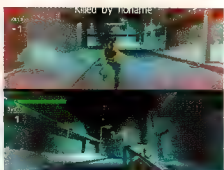
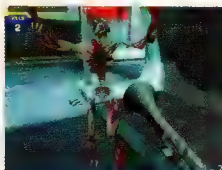
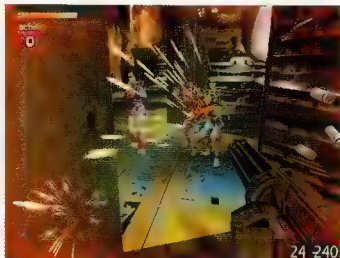
the TimeSplitters, an alien race who have been meddling in human affairs for eons. Will the good guys wise up in time to send those time-traveling bastards packing?

While a story mode is well and fine, everybody knows the game's multiplayer matches are the real attraction. Up to four players can square-off via the MultiTap in eight different scenarios, including Death Match, Bag the Flag, Escort Assassin and Last Stand.

In addition to names like "Hick Mutant" and "Siamese Cyborg," enemies possess an uncommon level of intelligence, stalking and retreating with deadly efficiency. They also know how to seek cover, attack in groups, lob bombs from high overhead, and generally make your life miserable. Fortunately, you'll be armed with 20 obscenely big guns, each with dual operating modes (a la Perfect Dark).

Cooler than all, however, is the game's innovative level editor, which allows you to construct sophisticated battlefields from predesigned building blocks. You can also texture map them with the theme of your choice, populate them with regenerating baddies, and scatter an arsenal of weapons to be collected.

Given the number of high-profile sequels that'll be available by PS2's launch, it's going to take a lot to break away from the pack; however, TimeSplitters seems to have what it takes to do just that. 



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Dreamcast



PlayStation



ACTIVISION

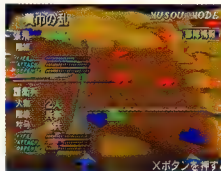


BIGGER IS BETTER

The battle areas in *Dynasty Warriors 2* are 400 times the size of those in another Koei/Omega Force 3D fighter, *Destrega*.

Dynasty Warriors 2

Publisher:	Koei
Developer:	Koei/Omega Force
Players:	1
Genre:	Action/Strategy
% Done:	85%
Release:	Oct. 26
Also Try:	Romance of the Three Kingdoms VI, <i>Dynasty Warriors</i>
Web Address:	www.koeigames.com
The Good:	Combo of hack-'n'-slash action and strategy gameplay.
The Bad:	Not quite enough moves to call it a fighting game.
And The Ugly:	Getting over 1,000 kills in one battle. Wowza!



You don't see this kind of map in most fighting games. It shows your objectives and the locations of enemy armies.

Occasionally, your skills with a sword will be matched by an enemy fighter. When this happens, start prayin'.



SANGOKU WHAT?

Three Little Kingdoms



The characters in *Shin Sangoku Musou* (that's *Dynasty Warriors 2* to you and me) should look familiar. They're the same ones from *Dynasty Warriors* (also developed by Koei's Omega Force team), a straight-up 3D fighting game that starred characters based on another Koei series—*Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Hard to believe there's been six *Rot3K* games, eh?

Koei has combined what they do best—military strategy—with the action and intensity of a fighting game for this sequel to *Dynasty Warriors* (*Sangoku Musou*).

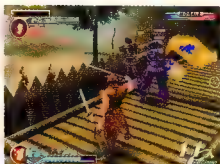
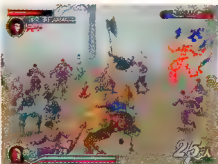
When you begin, you choose to play as one of nine warriors, split between three kingdoms (Shu, Wei and Wu). More characters are unlockable, up to 28. You have three main attacks—Normal, Charge, Special and the Bow and Arrow—and two modes of play: Story (five levels) and Free (up to eight unlockable levels). Each has his or her own special weapon, but can pick up arrows to shoot at far-away or elevated enemies.

The levels are huge: 150 scale acres square (that's one square kilometer), with more than 2,000

warriors running around, all battling simultaneously. 30 to 40 enemies can be on-screen at the same time. You can't hit those on your side, and usually there's at least a color difference between you and your enemies. Levels have different geographical (and weather) characteristics, too, and occasionally you'll have to exploit them in order to win. As you play in one area of the map, your forces wage battles elsewhere. As victories are won around the map, you're alerted by the sound of cheering troops and a glowing icon on the overworld map. If the victory was big enough to do something like open a blocked passageway or discourage the enemy leader, you see a short cinema (all using the in-game engine with no loading).

Battles can take an hour or more to complete, and along the way you'll collect experience points and power-ups to aid your quest. Morale plays a large role in how battles turn out. Raising your troops' morale makes them fight better. That's where strategy comes into play. You decide which division to back up, and they each have their own morale meter. So you might find yourself running to the aid of a division with low morale.

One of the cooler options is using a horse to travel around the map. It's not always the best way to fight, since you're limited to swinging at enemies on either side of you, but it's a great way to get from one side of the map to the other in a hurry. 🐎



Knockout Kings 2001

Part of boxing's lure is the personalities behind the gloves, and the PS2 is the perfect system to portray them in EA's boxing game. Almost every well-known fighter past and present is represented from Ali to Frazier (along with their fighting styles). What you can't see in these shots are some of the cool motion-blur effects and roving cameras that contribute to the feeling of speed and impact. Coming this **winter**.



NHL 2001

Aside from the fundamentals of hockey, 30 NHL teams (expansion teams from Columbus and Minnesota included), 20 international teams, licenses galore, NHL 2001 features a lot of original features to get excited about. Thanks to the power of the PS2 all your favorite NHL players will display emotion on their faces (mostly anger, what other emotions do you ever see in hockey?) and through body language (that's right, hitting and fighting is what we're talkin' about). The most anticipated new features are better player models, motion-capture and updated physics. Fresh ways to score include "cannon shots" and one-footed wristers. Icons will let you know who's in a slump and who's hot. A Fantasy Mode with dispersal draft and multiplayer season play are possible as well. EA has this slated for a **fall** release.



PlayStation 2

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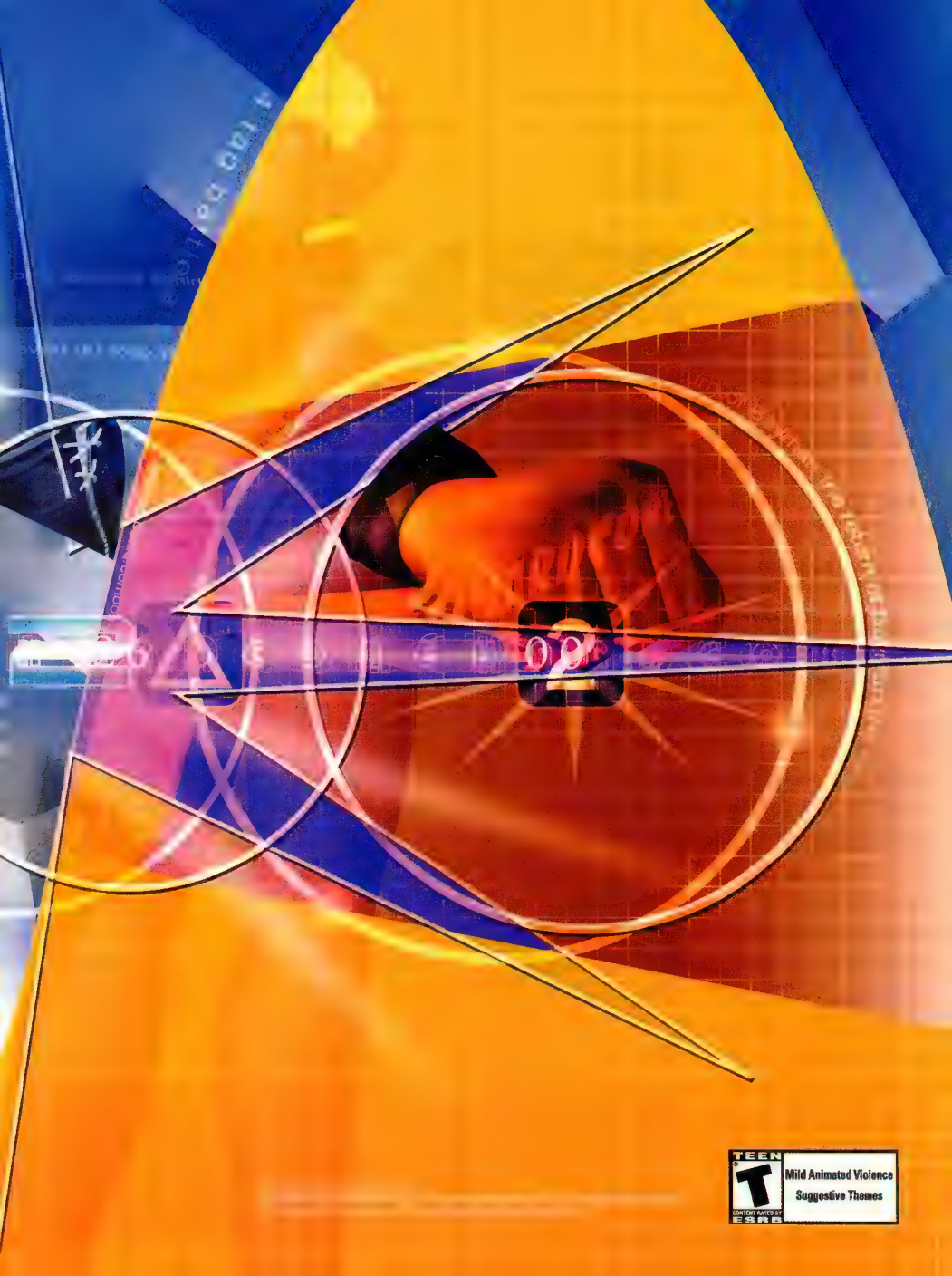
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PlayStation®2



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Mild Animated Violence
Suggestive Themes

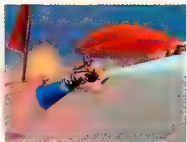
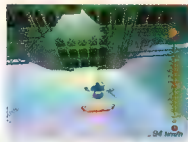
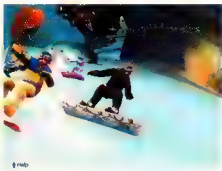
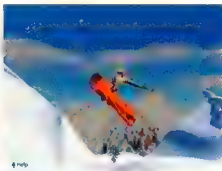
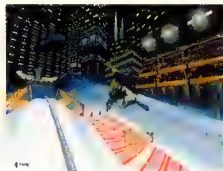
SSX

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Canada
Players: 1-2
Genre: Sports
% Done: 95%
Release: Oct. 26
Web Address: www.ssx.ea.com

The Good: Smooth, very good-looking and innovative.

The Bad: Comparisons to Trickstyle are inevitable no matter how unjustified they are.

And The Ugly: All the cool lighting effects and intense backgrounds slow the framerate just a touch.



Just the facts, ma'am, SSX has three game modes: Freeride, Single Event and World Circuit. Players have their choice of eight courses initially, and two bonus courses once the appropriate challenges have been met. Eight international riders each with his or her special abilities are up for grabs. The two-player split-screen features Contact Racing in which bumping and shoving are encouraged.

MUSIC EXPANDED

Game Music Innovation (finally)



Most extreme games simply crank up a techno beat and let it drone on endlessly no matter what's happening on screen. Sure, it was fine for the original Wipeout, but over the last four years it's gotten as stale as the Japanese hairmetal that permeated every game in the mid-'90s. SSX has broken the mold by creatively integrating original beats by the Beastie's Mix Master Mike and Rahzel of Roots. Essentially the music plays off the action on screen. Big beats kick in when the rider is really jamming while quieter, more sedate stuff flows during appropriate, low-action scenes.

Don't let the throngs of mind-numbingly average snowboarding titles released before SSX taint your thoughts. EA Canada has created a wholly unique experience that can only be described as a beautiful, psychedelic carnival on snow.

It's hard to describe the sense of vast space and depth in this game. Huge panoramic camera sweeps reveal majestic mountains and picturesque snow-covered forests and hills in the background. Rolling terrain peppered with slopes and monster cliffs abound. In stark contrast, as the camera approaches the staging areas and perimeters of each boardercross event. Vibrant lighting effects, robust colors and the excitement of the crowd get the extreme sport mojo flowing.

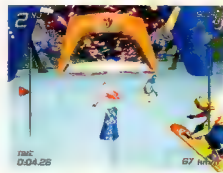
Needless to say, SSX has enough eye-candy to satisfy any graphic snob. More importantly it has

excellent gameplay. We love it when those two elements come together.

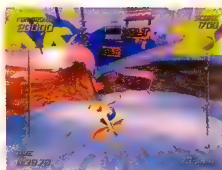
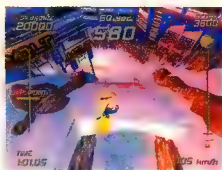
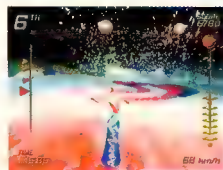
Character animation is topnotch (very fluid and realistic) and controlling any of the eight post-gen-x, prototypical riders is smooth and intuitive. Tricks are pulled off in a variety of ways but mostly by simple combos using just about every button on the controller. Catching massive air is more the norm than the exception. Successfully completing tricks boosts your adrenaline meter, thus making it easier to perform the hardest crowd-pleasing maneuvers. Heightening the experience, the Dual Shock 2 reacts to even the subtlest bumps and jostles.

Each of the 10 courses features much more than simple jumps and grinding material. Moving ramps, rotating doors and tons of non-traditional elements litter the trails. At certain points fireworks will explode around you. Wipeout-inspired arrows line the base of the banked corners increasing the sensation of speed. Exploring new routes on these massively long tracks is encouraged: within them you'll find secret goodies as well as special trick areas and time-saving shortcuts.

If you haven't figured from our gross display of enthusiasm, SSX is already looking good. It's definitely not just another snowboarding game, and could even make it into the ranks of must-buy PS2 launch games. But we'll wait 'til the review next month to say for certain.

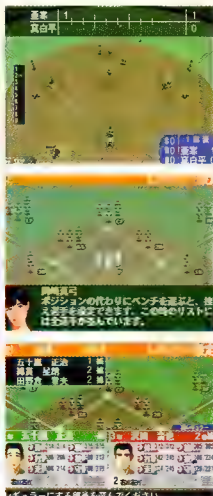


Nuance effects in SSX are awesome. The faint trails left in the snow, vapor from the tips of the boards, ultra fluid riders and more.



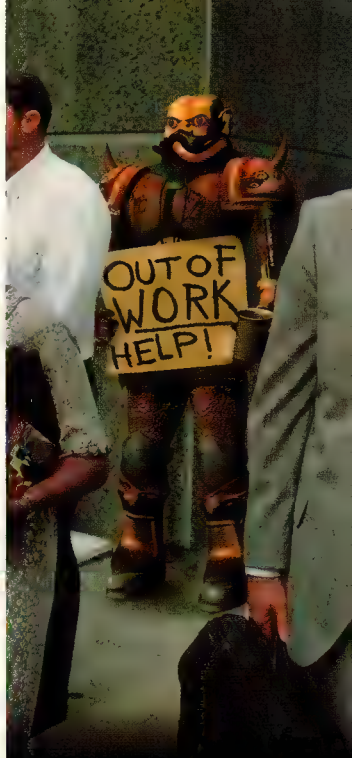
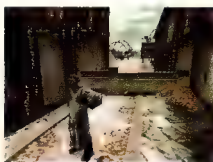
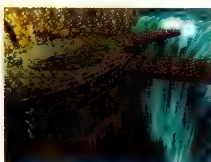
Koushien Baseball

Better known for mainstream hits (just kidding) like Tail of the Sun, and A-Train, not to mention Mr. Domino, **ArtDink** is back with a baseball game that is by turns as perplexing as it is deep. Your role as a baseball manager sends you through pages and pages of training and maneuvering as you fine-tune your team for greatness. The chances of seeing this game localized for the U.S. are zero.



Summoner

Finally we've had some hands-on playtime with the launch RPG that **THQ** hopes will lead the pack this **October**, and there's no question it's quite a departure from the console role-playing norm. Summoner features immense, detailed 3D environments featuring diverse locales, from city slums and sewers to burial catacombs and monasteries. While the action-oriented battles are still being tweaked, the ability to switch instantly between characters (either the humans in the party or summoned creatures) at the touch of a button is a welcome addition—especially considering the bonus multipliers you get from doing rear and higher-ground attacks. Once THQ adds a more acceptable frame-rate and a more fleshed-out conversation system, this could turn out to be a deep, engrossing RPG. It looks like the stable of PlayStation 2 launch RPGs is gonna be sweet!



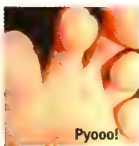
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PREVIEW GALLERY

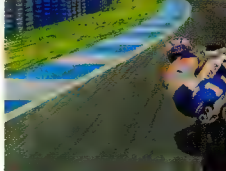
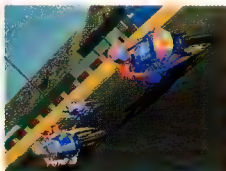


PRIMETIME FANTASY

When you think of the NFL, you probably think of big guys, hard hits and shoulder pads. What you probably don't think of is athlete's foot. www.athletesfoot.com has everything you need to know about your fungal fantasies, so check it out, sucka!

Moto GP

Anyone expecting **Namco's** next big PS2 racer to simply be Ridge Racer V on two wheels is in for a rude awakening. We got a chance to try out this bad boy recently and trust us, Moto GP will chew you up and spit you out if you're not careful. Featuring licensed bikes, drivers and real tracks from all over the world, this is a hardcore sim from start to finish. Hitting a turn too hard, or not apexing a curve properly is a surefire way to drop from first to last and end up agricultural racing through the gravel traps. The most impressive aspect of the game so far has to be the authenticity with which the tracks have been modeled. Comparing shots of the game engine and actual photos of each track reveals very few differences. Namco knows this is a genre rarely done justice on home consoles, and are trying hard to get it right.



ESPN X-Games Snowboarding

We recently had a chance to play **Konami's** ESPN X-Games Snowboarding. It looks a lot like Nintendo's 1080 Snowboarding—well, OK, it's a helluva lot nicer-looking than the N64 is capable of, but you get the idea. There's a large variety of events (tricks, slalom, big-air, boardercross, half-pipe, etc.) as well as 15 snowboarders available. It's like Tony Hawk planted in powder, ESPN XGS arrives this **October**.



ESPN Primetime

This year Madden, and to some extent, NFL 2K1 will get some tough competition from ESPN Primetime, Konami's long-awaited re-emergence into the gridiron arena. Featuring commentary from Chris Berman and Tom Jackson, expect the glossy treatment featuring all manner of ESPN logos in your face. The jury is out on how the game actually plays, but the visuals seem to be in place, even at this pre-alpha state. **Konami** is putting serious effort into more than just the graphics though, with a full-fledged general manager mode, full season mode, practice camps and various tournament options. Konami definitely has a fighting chance since both Primetime and Madden are technically first-generation efforts, but who's gonna score the big touchdown remains to be seen. ESPN Primetime is due this **winter**.



Yeah Baby!! Gameboy
has gone groovy!!

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- Link up with a friend/enemy for LINK PLAY!
- Multiply your grooviness with the Shagulator

If my game is too groovy,
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this game for squares:

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GAME BOY
COLOR



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F1 Champ. Season 2000

EA Sports is taking their F1 franchise to the next level this **November** on the PS2. F1 2000 will feature all the drivers, cars and tracks of the real series (with the possible exception of Villeneuve) as well as new AI routines, making your opponents react realistically to various racing situations. EA's taking no chances—they're calling on the help of real F1 talent to oversee everything from physics to camera angles in this simulation.



Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001

With a projected release of **winter 2001**, Tiger Woods Golf is a long Par 5 from landing on your PS2. But that hasn't stopped **EA** from releasing a few early shots, and even though they're from embryonic stages of the game's development, they give a good clue of what the finished product might be like. We're told the features and gameplay will be similar to the PS game, but with 3D-rendered players and with more use of analog control.



Madden NFL 2001

Sure, sure, the game looks amazing. There's no doubting that, but the way it plays makes this title one of the most highly anticipated PS2 **launch** games. Running the ball, for example, is an act of ballet. You'll see huge-armed linemen stunt the progress of defensive players so clearly you'll know whether to cut left, right or wind into a wicked spin move. And since the Dual Shock 2 buttons are analog, passing the ball on a line or throwing a sweet receiver-leading lob is up to how hard you jam your thumb into the controller. As far as tackling, you'll actually feel like you're putting the screws into an offensive player when tackling him. The Madden Cards, done by Upper Deck specifically for the game, are a perfect touch to keep you coming back for more.



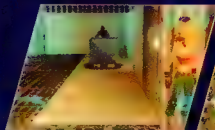


Danger Never Looked So Good!

3rd person action-adventure has never been sexier with **DANGER GIRL**, the only videogame based on the best-selling comic book series by **J. Scott Campbell** and **Andy Hartnell**.

Dare to take control of 3 beautiful yet lethal Danger Girls in an espionage-themed thrill-ride deemed too dangerous for any man to handle!

COLLECTORS ITEM!
Manual features exclusive character sketches, bios and artwork from the Creators!



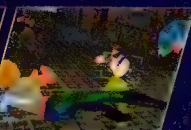
Varied modes of play: stealth, sniper and more



Dozens of weapons (whips—need we say more?)



Original art by the creators



Classic Danger Girl signature moves



Animated Violence
Animated Blood
Suggestive Themes

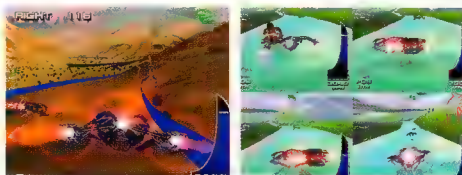
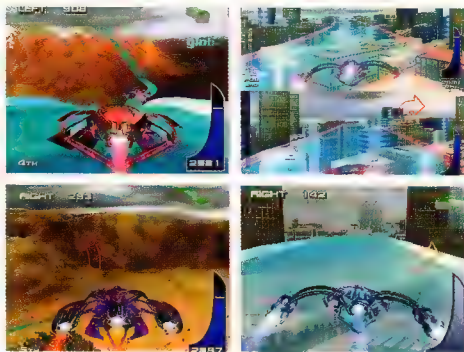
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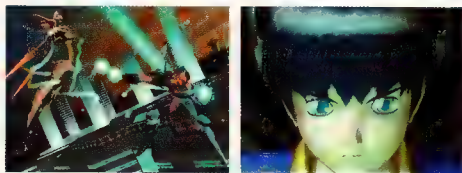
G-Surfers

G-Surfers is a futuristic racer developed by the U.K. outfit **Blade Interactive**. Similar to WipeOut and MagForce Racing, G-Surfers adds a twist with a world creation technology that generates a lot of the Earth's environments on the fly. The game also features almost 50 tracks and a four-player split-screen. The game does not yet have a publisher, but that should change in time for G-Surfers' **winter** release.



Zone of The Enders

Otherwise known as Z.O.E, Hideo Kojima's (of MGS fame) mech adventure game remains shrouded in mystery, but that hasn't stopped us from hunting down some new shots and skinning them like possums. String 'em up! Now we're seeing human character models in the lineup as well. With Z.O.E and MGS2 in the pipeline, **Konami** should emerge as one of the PS2 publishers to watch when the games ship sometime in **2001**.



IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS

Oddly enough, the Rhythmic Gymnastics event in International Track & Field has the same interface as Konami's hit Dance Dance Revolution. We found out that you can indeed use the DDR pad with this game, though we're not sure why you'd want to. Outside of the gymnastics, using the pad for any event usually results in a staggering loss.



PS2

PREVIEW GALLERY

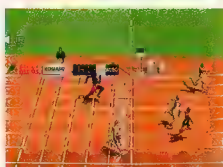
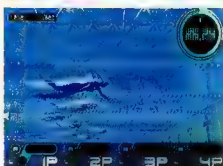
Swing Away Golf

Swing Away Golf takes a page from Mario Golf (GBC) by integrating regular golf action with RPG elements. Choosing the right caddy is as important as a good tee-off shot. These unique "bag-toters" help you unlock courses, offer advice and act as guides throughout your journey from amateur to professional golfer. Originally released in Japan as Paradise Golf, this lighthearted, T&E-developed title features seven cartoony characters, six caddies and six courses (initially). To answer the question on everyone's mind—yes it plays much like Mario and Hot Shots Golf (that's great news). Don't let the silly look fool you however, there's a good amount of sim in this fall release golf/RPG hybrid. Story mode offers the most heft with emphasis on challenges, equipment upgrades and character interaction. General play features a whole lot of adjustability be it stance, spin, cut and a number of other modifiers. An in-depth create-a-course option lets you select course type, pars, hole shape, elevation and more. It looks like EA has a winner on its hands.



ESPN International Track & Field

Konami hadn't yet slapped the ESPN license on the PS2 version of this game when we took a look at it, but when they do, it'll be the same as the DC game. If you're interested (as we are) in the differences between the two games, you might be a bit disappointed. For the most part, they are identical. On some events the PS2 graphics seem brighter and the athletes are more detailed (particularly in the face), but nothing too substantial. It's ironic that so much work went into the graphics, because when you're playing the game, you don't get to really enjoy them since you have to stare at sliding bars and gizmos to pull off the technical aspects of each event. Check it out this fall.



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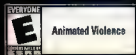
RELEASE DATE: PlayStation 2 Launch

This title is not yet approved by Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

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THE HOTTEST



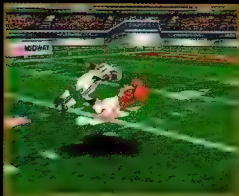
Sega Dreamcast

*Screenshots shown from Sega Dreamcast™ version

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MIDWAY
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GAME IN FOOTBALL IS BACK.

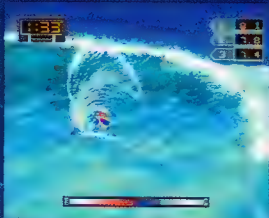
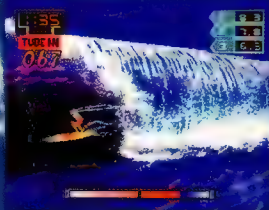


NFL Blitz 2001, the only extreme football game, is back. Delivering all the fast and furious action Blitz fans have come to know and love, and then some. And, with blistering features like "On Fire" mode, new mini games, in-depth customization options and an "En Fuego" Replay Mode, NFL Blitz 2001 lets you play with an intensity the pros can only dream about. NFL Blitz 2001's earth-shattering hits, insane passes and over-the-top gridiron action is hot enough to make Green Bay in December feel like Miami in July.



NO NFL. NO RULES. NO MERCY.™

Surf Riders



The First 30 ft
Public Humiliation
Simulator

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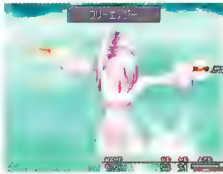
PREVIEW

Final Fantasy IX

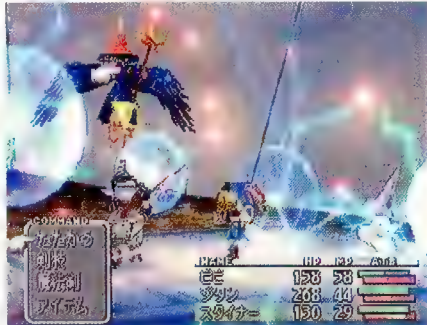


Publisher: Square EA
Developer: Squaresoft
Players: 1
Genre: RPG
% Done: 100% (Japan)
Release: Holidays
Also Try: FF Anthology, VII, VIII
Web Address: www.sqa.com
 www.squaresoft.com

The Good: The graphics, the gameplay and the music.
The Bad: It's the last "traditional" Final Fantasy game.
And The Ugly: Quina Quen's long tongue.



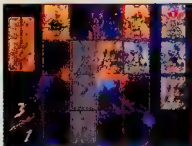
Tired of getting beat down? After a certain amount of hits, characters enter their Trance state, giving them access to more powerful attacks.



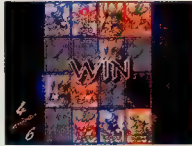
Steiner, Zidane and Vivi (left to right) take on one of the Black Mages sent after the party near the start of the game.

MINI-GAME

In The Cards



Very different than the card game found in FF VIII, the one you'll play in FF IX (Quad Mist) is more like a side attraction than anything else. You can't trade in cards for items, and nothing's really that rare. Oh, and it's way more confusing to play. Get ready for lots of arrows on the cards, some strange numbers that randomly pop up, and incredibly vague directions given by the local townsfolk.



Final Fantasy. It doesn't matter how old you are, how long you've been playing games, or even if you're into RPGs. If you enjoy video games in any way, shape or form, this is a name you're familiar with, and for good reason. No other series has delivered the same combination of high-quality gameplay, graphics, music and story line so consistently, sequel after sequel after sequel. Final Fantasy games are often the standard on which other RPGs are judged, and now, less than two years after the epic FF VIII, yet another release is right around the corner. We got our hands on the import version for a peek at what U.S. gamers can expect later this year.

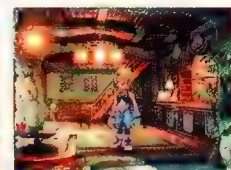
Those with a keen eye have probably already noticed that Final Fantasy IX doesn't look anything like the last few games in the series. Those with even keener eyes have probably noticed that, in fact, part IX looks a lot more like the older Final

Final Fantasy games—and they would be totally right. Final Fantasy IX was created for the old-school gamers, those who remember losing entire nights of sleep while trying to get to the bottom floor in the town of Summoned Monsters in part II or those who chased the faster fish in order to keep Cid alive in FFIII. Everything from the overall motif to the battle system to even the music is geared toward those who first cut their teeth on RPGs back in the 8- and 16-bit days. Of course none of this means that fans of the more recent PS FF games won't be able to enjoy part IX, but they definitely shouldn't expect more of the same. Aside from the obvious visual updates—the plastic future vision has been replaced with a more traditional Victorian-influenced medieval design—many classic gameplay elements have returned. Health and Magic Points are back, you once again buy and equip new weapons and armor, only certain characters can cast certain spells, and, thankfully, once again you can have four party members in battles. Oh, and fun has returned to the Final Fantasy universe.

Yes, Final Fantasy VIII was incredibly enjoyable to play, but it lacked something that used to be a staple in the FF universe: a sense of lighthearted adventure. To smile while playing the last game was a rare event, but Final Fantasy IX is designed to actually make you laugh out loud while tromping



Both the polygon characters and fully rendered backgrounds are packed with detail—this is easily one of the greatest-looking RPGs ever.



FORCED FEEDBACK

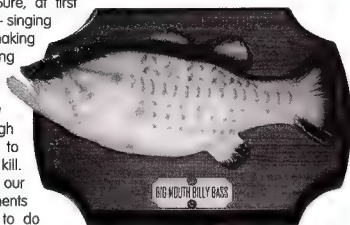
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BIG MOUTH BILLY BASS KICKS MUCH ASS

You saw him in our Pokémon feature last month. Now it's time to experience him first-hand in cyberspace...for free. After viewing, you'll soon realize why we're all such crazy bastards. Sure, at first Billy seems fun — singing his songs and shaking his tail. But hearing the same two songs over and over again, day after day is enough to drive a man to drink...and then kill. But then, maybe our Quake III tournaments have something to do

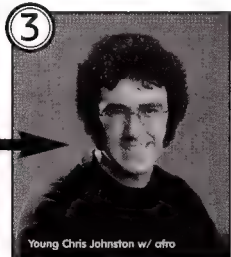
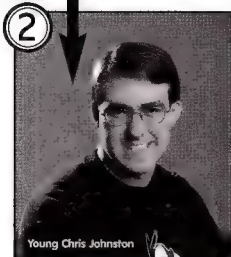
with our aggression. Simply go to gemmy.com/Assets/BillyBass/BillyTable/BigMouthBillyHAPPY.htm for a little hot Billy Bass action. 🍄



HOW TO GIVE YOUR- SELF A SWEET FRO

The afro has long been a desirable look for any man. As far back as the sixties, people have sported the giant, puffy hairstyles. Now, you too can have an afro — at least in a digital form. First, you'll need a computer with some photo-editing software installed on it and a scanner. After that, you'll need a pic of someone with an afro (preferably some-

one who has a head shaped like yours). You'll also need a picture of yourself. Scan the pics in, and get used to using the clone tool in whatever program you're using. Slowly and carefully, start cloning the afro onto your own picture. Remember to size it properly, and add shading where necessary. Leave room for ears, or use the breadth of the afro to simulate giant sideburns (similar to those in the example below). Before you know it, you'll have a fine-looking fro on your head. Next Month: How to give yourself a sweet mullet. 🍄

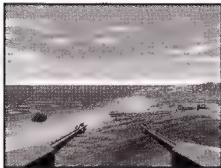
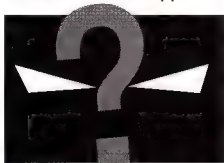


S O . . . WHERE'S SUSHI-X?

Good question. If we knew the whereabouts of our elusive gaming ninja, we'd like to get him a couple of paychecks and ask where in the hell he has been hiding. But truth be told, we can't find the guy. Now that we have a West Coast office, we have the staff out there searching far and wide (we had an unconfirmed sighting in San Francisco some time back), and the boys at the Midwestern home office always have their eyes peeled. Obviously, we'll keep you abreast of the situation. 🍄

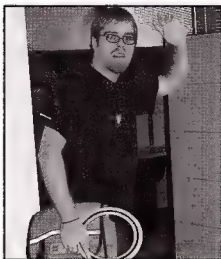
MONTHLY GUILTY PLEASURE

We know it's wrong to enjoy certain things, but sometimes we just can't help it. This month, Beach Head 2000 for the PC takes our Guilty Pleasure award. Sure, the graphics aren't very impressive and the gameplay is terribly simple, but it's well-made and you can't deny how fun it is to waste hundreds of soldiers and aircraft at a time, while they try desperately to storm a beach you're defending. We usually pretend the guys we're laying to waste are Nazis. That helps. 🍄



SHAWN DECIDES TO GO BACK TO COLLEGE

Before you think you're losing another EGM editor, fear not. Shawn will still be freelancing for EGM while he goes to school, doing a few things here and there. So why is he leaving? Well, it's just that time in his life — he has been meaning to go back to school for a while now. Shawn will be studying a variety of things at college, including Professional Chimp Wrestling, Big Rig Repair and Mini Bike Racing. He's also going to study Studio Arts, with hopes to become a slacker. Wish him luck. 🍄



A NEW LOOK NEXT MONTH

Keep an eye out for a slightly different look in our Forced Feedback section next month, with the addition of some new columns, stories and more. We know most of you have been enjoying these pages thusfar, but we want to give you even more bang for the buck. Of course, we're open to suggestion as well. So if there's something you'd like to see in Forced Feedback, send your ideas to forcedfeedback@hotmail.com

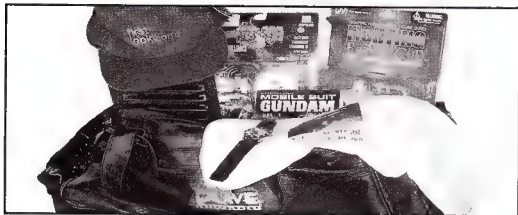
EGM's Random Quote of the Month

"I'm not called jerk ball.
I'm Monkey Boy."

- Monkey Boy, from the unofficial live-action version of Dragonball on DVD (Chris Johnston actually paid \$20 for this hilarious piece of garbage).

YOU COULD WIN!

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As you may or may not know, we get a lot of cool items from the companies we deal with on a regular basis. And yes, we do appreciate them, but all too often after looking at them for a while they end up sitting in somebody's cubicle or getting stored in a cabinet. Stuff like hats, shirts, pens, pieces of plastic, toys, games and other such things. So we thought, "Let's pass some of this fodder on to our readers, instead of just having it lay around." After all, better you enjoy this stuff than us. Like last month, read the instructions below, send in a postcard and you might just be picked as the winner! This doesn't cost you anything—it's as simple as sending in a three-inch by five-inch postcard with your name, address and phone number on it to the address below. We'll then pick one winner in a few weeks, and send out the goods.

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Congrats to EGM #133 Winner.

Brandon Townsend of Greenwood, MS

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WEB SITES PHATTER THAN FAT

Thank you to all who continue to send us sites. We love checking them out more than we love G.I. Joe and Cobra T-shirts. As usual, here are all kinds of sites: Weird, gaming-related, zany, funny, cool, stupid and so on and so forth. Send Web site submissions to shawn_smith@ziffdavis.com

- www.execpc.com/~ayanmo/scult.html
- www.tzd.com
- www.slickdeals.net
- www.eminemworld.com
- www.diablo.org
- www.ptcsucks.com
- www.mirc.com
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- www.theweeklygiggle.com
- meded.med.uci.edu/~dalvarez/cgi/camel/camel2.html
- frogurt.duffless.com/Bar/

* We cannot be held responsible for any of the material presented on the sites listed above. Parents or guardians may want to verify the content of the sites) before allowing their children to venture forth. Remember to surf safely.

HOT & NOT

EGM

The EGM Hot & Not list—a place where you can get an inside look at what the staff of EGM likes and dislikes. The list contains general and specific items, concepts, games, people and more. Note: Particular entries may or may not coincide with the opinions of particular staffers. Send yours to shawn_smith@ziffdavis.com

- Ultimate Collector Legos
- Digital cameras (specifically, Nikon Coolpix digital cameras)
- Baby Taylors
- High School Dean Hager with fro
- Cool weather in July
- Cnet buying ZDNet
- Billy Basses
- Fanciful journeys
- New dual processor G4's running windows 2000! at double the speed of GHz pc's
- Secret forest preserves time has forgot, and where a myriad of mystical creatures roam
- Quake III on Dreamcast online
- Ficks about leather-clad superheroes
- Harry Potter
- Those Discovery.com commercials
- Machiavellian scheming and backstabbin' on TV's Survivor
- Online deal offer online deal
- Mullets...as usual
- Luke-warm (to put it nicely) Jet Grind Radio reception in Japan
- \$150 wad to fix a \$250 camera
- How quickly digital cameras drain batteries...even high-power cells
- Being consumed by material things
- Being consumed by a whale
- High cost of various types of RAM
- Billy Basses only singing 2 songs
- The volume at which Billy Bass sings those two songs
- Being held down by the man
- Clichéd flicks about Revolutionary War heroes
- Louie Anderson and Tom Arnold in The Patriot
- Erectile dysfunction
- Starbuck's
- Online companies that go out of business because of the coupons and various deals they offer
- The fact that mullets are, in fact, coming back in style
- Shawn going back to College



You'll once again explore a fully 3D world map (by foot, trusty Chocobo, or the ol' airship standby), but this time the landscape is littered with huge castles and other, more medieval locations.

around. From the way the armor-clad Steiner throws jumping tantrums when he gets upset or how the clumsy black wizard Vivi pulls his hat down over his face when embarrassed, the characters in Final Fantasy IX are packed with...well, character. And even though this game deals with serious issues and has a story line packed with adventure and intrigue, it never takes itself too seriously; Final Fantasy IX is all about having a good time.

With this in mind, it's easy to see that the development team behind Final Fantasy IX is very different than the one that worked on VIII (that team is said to be currently hell under way with the first PlayStation 2 FF game). The changes they made didn't stop with just bringing back the old feeling of the series and returning some of the staple features, they also reinvigorated a once-incredibly important part of Final Fantasy: the battles.

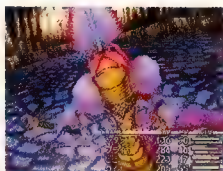
Aside from the fact you can now use four characters at once, and that magic requires points for casting, the fights once again are packed with

something called strategy. No longer will you be able to cast Guardian Force after Guardian Force with no penalty (they now require Magic Points too), you'll have to use your head and keep track of all the stats. Boss fights can often mean death unless you use your Potions and Phoenix Downs correctly, and even the most routine battles can end with you loading up an old game if you get careless and run out of Magic Points.

Don't worry though, there's a whole new range of features to help you out in this cold, classic, gameplay-inspired world. The most exciting is something called Trance; there's a second bar underneath the real-time status indicator (the Active Time Battle bar, which lets you know how long until you can attack again), and each time you get hit it fills up a bit. When it reaches the brink, your character is bathed in light and sparks, signifying the Trance has begun. Now you can cast much more powerful spells and instigate other cool attacks against your foes for a few turns. While it only lasts a short while, your Trance attacks can turn a hard boss battle into a short bloodbath.

It's true, Final Fantasy IX is much different than VIII, but even if you're a huge fan of the last game's futuristic setting (and being able to summon Guardian Forces time and time again), you shouldn't count this one out yet—it's packed with the kind of classic gameplay and feelings that made this series so popular to begin with. Of course, on the other hand, if you've been playing these games for years, and you get excited just hearing that there's a dragoon that leaps off screen for a whole turn (just like Kain!), well, then you're in for one hell of a treat. 🍄

Aside from being filled to the brim with strategy, the battles are overflowing with amazing spell effects.



ONLINE STRATEGY


Mis-Guided

PlayOnline.com

Something strange is going on in Japan. The land of a thousand strategy guides for every game has absolutely none for Final Fantasy IX, and not one magazine has shown a walk-through past the first hour of the game. So what gives? SquareSoft Japan is trying to promote their new Play Online Internet strategy Web site (www.playonline.com), and don't want any competition. Any publisher or game magazine that crosses them will be on Square's bad side, which could mean less coverage of future Square games (and nobody wants that, do they?).

Could something similar happen when the game launches in the U.S. this winter? It's possible—both Versus and Brady Books are being asked to wait until further notice before creating guides. Square EA's official stance right now is "no comment."





**ODE TO INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD
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PlayStation.2

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Sega Dreamcast

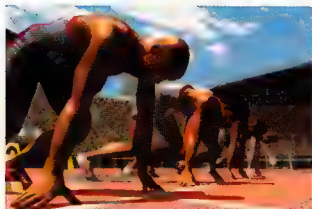


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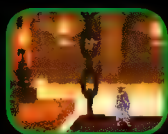
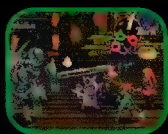




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PREVIEW

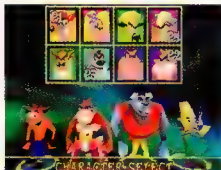
16,000,000

CRASH BASH

Number of Crash Bandicoot games sold to date worldwide.

Crash Bash

- Publisher:** SCEA
- Developer:** Eurocom
- Players:** 1-4
- Genre:** Action
- % Done:** 75%
- Release:** November
- Also Try:** Mario Party 2
- Web Address:** www.playstation.com
- The Good:** Mario Party-style, multiplayer fun.
- The Bad:** MultiTap required if more than two want to play.
- And The Why:** Crash still ain't no Mario.



Crash Bash contains eight different characters from previous Crash titles.

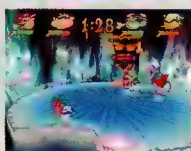
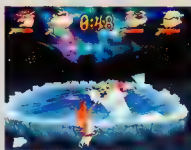


This contest plays like a cross between Tank Battle and Bomber Man.

NUMBER OF EVENTS

Déjà Vu

Although Crash Bash contains more than 28 different events, many of them, such as the three below, offer only slight variations on the same theme. Fortunately, you can mix things up a bit by switching between team and every-man-for-himself.



While the N64 has amassed quite a library of awesome party games—Mary Party 1 & 2, Super Smash Bros., and GoldenEye 007 spring immediately to mind—PlayStation fans haven't been quite as lucky. Sony, with a little help from Eurocom and Cerny Games, hopes to remedy this situation with Crash Bash.

Sony calls Crash Bash a "3D arena-based battle" game, but it's basically Mario Party without the board game elements.

Playing as one of eight characters from previous Crash titles—including Crash, Coco, Dingodile, Tiny, Dr. N. Cortex, N. Brio and Koala Kong—gamers face off in more than 28 high-impact events. Among other tasks, you'll drive tanks, bounce on pogo

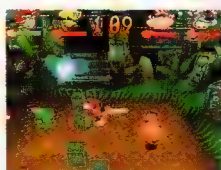
sticks and even ride polar bears—whatever it takes to annihilate the opposition.

Whereas Super Smash Bros. was filled with plenty of Mario-esque butt-bouncing and block-busting, Crash Bash contains plenty of Crash's signature moves, including spinning, jumping, nitro box tossing and animal riding. There are also plenty of familiar pick-ups, which offer speed and health boosts, weapons, etc.

Play modes include Adventure, Battle and Tournament Battle. In Adventure Mode, one or two players compete against computer-controlled opponents and four Bosses. The story line, such as it is, revolves around the rivalry between Aku Aku and Uka Uka, who call a contest to determine whether the forces of light or dark are more powerful.

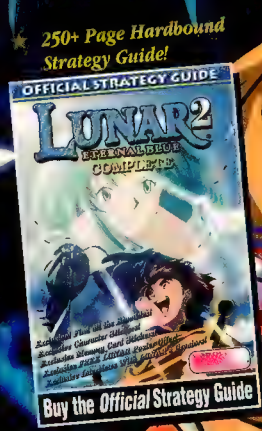
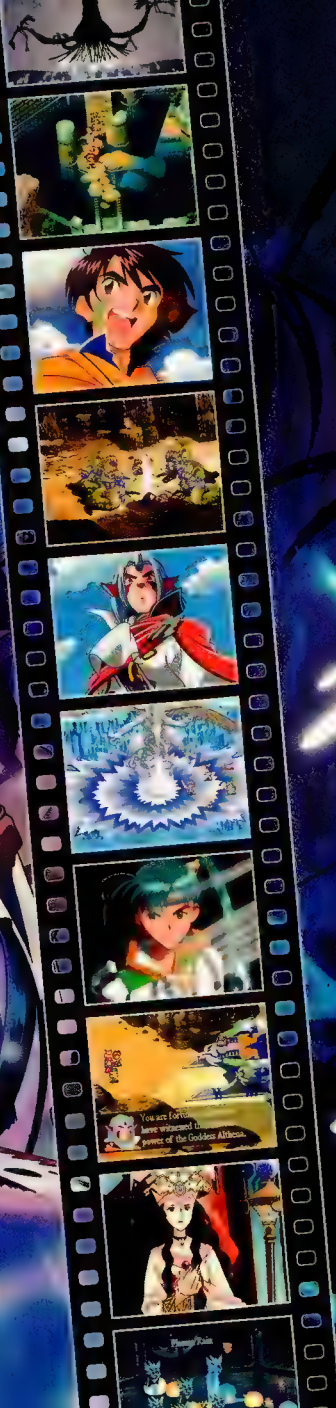
Battle Mode is playable with up to four players going head-to-head (via the MultiTap) in an arena setting. In the short version of this mode, the game is played until one player wins three times in a single arena. The tournament version of Battle Mode is a succession of short battles in which players accumulate points based on their performance.

Like Mario Party, the game's contests are simple yet addictive. On the down side, you do need a MultiTap if more than a couple of people want to play; however, this is a small price to pay to enjoy what is shaping up to be one of the PlayStation's all-time best party games.



A pair of glowing red eyes, possibly belonging to a creature or a person in a dark environment, looking directly at the viewer. The eyes are bright red and surrounded by a faint, dark glow.

*In The Darkest Hour,
Hope Springs Eternal.*



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PREVIEW



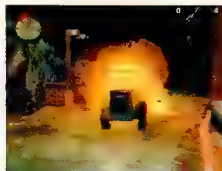
VIVE LA RESISTANCE

MoH Underground is inspired by the true story of Helene Adams-Deschamps, French Resistance survivor and author of *Spyglass: An Autobiography*, and by all of the women who made heroic contributions to the war effort.

Medal of Honor Underground

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Dreamworks Int.
Players: 1-2
Genre: Action
% Done: 65%
Release: Fall
Also Try: MoH, Ouake II
Web Address: www.ea.com
 moh.ea.com/mohu/

The Good: More Nazi-killing.
The Bad: The graphics are really chunky and rough in spots.
And The Ugly: The nasty feeling you get when you actually feel like you're in Europe during WWII.



Military machines of all sorts play a major role in Medal of Honor Underground. Whether the Germans are running a munitions convoy across the Italian border, securing an area with Panzer Tanks or gunning down Allied forces with a deadly placement, it's your job to take them down—usually with a well-placed Panzerfaust bazooka shell or molotov cocktail.

GIRL INCOGNITO

Disguises



Like the first Medal of Honor, Underground allows you to assume the identity of various people in order to obtain sensitive information and sabotage the Nazi regime. In one instance, Manon takes the role of a photojournalist for a French Nazi Propaganda newspaper. As this photographer, you must wander around the level, snapping pictures of Nazi soldiers and displaying your papers. Funny thing is, if a guard doesn't want you to pass, you simply have to keep snapping pictures of him. Before you know it, he'll be posing for the camera, and you're free to go through. Once you weasel your way into restricted areas, it's time to blow the heck outta some supply trucks and get a hold of secret documents.

Dreamworks Interactive is quick to point out MoH Underground isn't simply a mission disc—it has a new main character, plot, levels, weapons, enemies and more. But at its core, it's still Medal of Honor. It looks, plays and sounds a lot like the original. But when the original is one of the best first person shooters on the PlayStation, we aren't complaining.

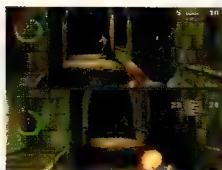
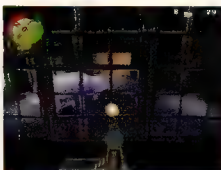
You're Manon, the French woman (that's right, a woman) who helped James Patterson while he was in Europe in the first game. Underground actually takes place before the first Medal of Honor—when Manon was in a small group of freedom fighters in the French Resistance. The Nazis have just occupied France, and many French are forced to make a

difficult decision: Surrender or resist. Obviously, Manon couldn't go over to the "dark side," so she went on board with her brother in the Resistance to fight for freedom. This is where Underground starts.

So what's different this time around? There are seven main levels, made up of 22 separate missions that take place throughout Europe and North Africa. Underground features 12 authentic German and French WWII weapons, and of course plenty of Nazi soldiers and vehicles to use them on. Enemies are smarter as well, and use suppressive fire and squad tactics to take you down. Luckily, Manon's not alone in her fight. On a couple of occasions, she's assisted by computer-controlled companions who fight by her side (ala Syphon Filter). In one instance, Manon's brother helps mow down some Germans, and picks the lock of a building so Manon can gain entry. If he dies, the mission is over.

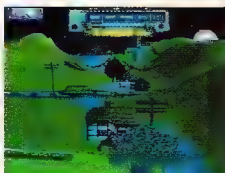
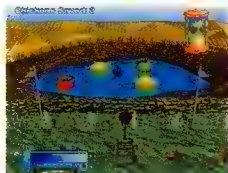
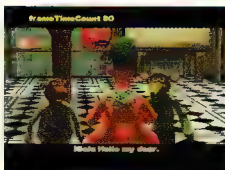
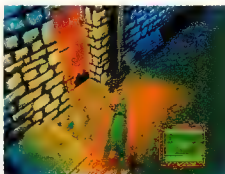
Of course the most memorable aspect of the first MoH had to be the audio (it won EGM's award for Best Sound Effects). Luckily effects man Erik Kraber and composer Michael Giacchino are both back doing the sound for Underground.

The two-player split-screen multiplayer mode also returns, essentially the same as before, except with new levels, weapons and characters. Oddly enough, it's the gripping story line and atmosphere of the single-player game that has us excited about Underground.



Chicken Run

Solid Snake has flown the coop. As amazing as it sounds, the gameplay in **Eidos'** *Chicken Run* is kinda like *Metal Gear: As Ginger*, you have to sneak around the farm (see the little radar scope in the upper-right screenshot?) under the cover of darkness to collect the necessary tools to escape, while avoiding the Tweedys and their dogs. At the end of each mission, you'll play a mini-game to try to escape the farm. You also get to play as the rats, Nick and Fletcher. Coming in **November**.



Blade

Since our last look at this game **Hammerhead** has decided to tear it down and rebuild from scratch. We got a chance to check out the new version and it's looking good. *Blade* is a prequel to the movie of the same name (but don't expect to hear Mr. Snipes reprising his role). One of the cooler weapons in the game (besides that kick-ass sword) are UV grenades. What better way to kill a vampire than with a little ball of sunshine? Despite the overhaul, **Activision's** still aiming for a **fall** release.



GRAPPLING HOOK



PREVIEW
GALLERY

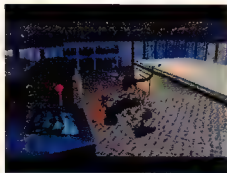
117,138

LOTS OF SWEAT

The number of Web sites returned from internet search engine Lycos when querying for ECW.

Tomb Raider Chronicles

Lara Croft is dead. At least that's what **Eidos** is hinting at for this next Tomb Raider installment. "In Chronicles we're not actually going to say that Lara Croft is dead," Core Designs' Adrian Smith told *EGM*, "and we're also not going to say that Lara Croft is alive." TR Chronicles is designed to be a consolidation of the series thus far before Core takes it onto the PS2 next year. The game will offer four separate adventures (Rome, U-boat, Spooky Island and Tower Block) that take place in Lara's past. "What we're actually focusing on is all the old characters from Tomb Raider," says Smith. So Tomb fans can expect to see some familiar faces returning (besides Lara's of course). We'll be back with more details as the **November** release date approaches.



ECW Anarchy Ruiz

Strange how little this game engine, used in so many **Acclaim** wrestling games, has changed over the years. Maybe that's because it's solid. This new ECW installment features all of the ECW wrestlers, tons of signature moves and a slew of play modes. Although, we all know how it plays and looks. The game's PPV Event and Wrestler creator is what makes this offering special. It's scheduled for an **August** release.



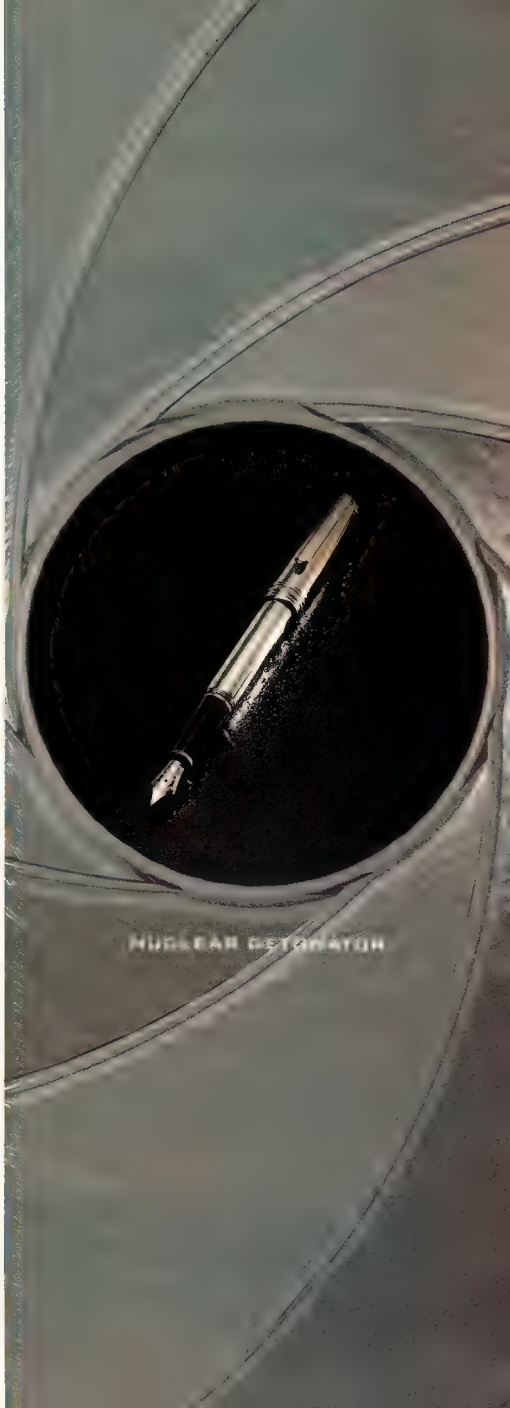
Jarrett & Labonte Stock Car Racing

Previously known as WTC, **Codemasters** recently signed on Jason Jarrett and Justin Labonte as spokespersons for the game. Not that the game has much to do with the NASCAR series they both race in. Otherwise, the only major change since we last looked at this title is an all-new physics engine, making the handling much more forgiving. Codemasters knows a lot of people found TOCA 2's ultra-realistic control daunting, so they've gone above and beyond to make J&LSCR more accessible for rookies. You can still bank on that great racing action found in every Codemasters game, it'll just be easier to get into this time. Featuring 23 tracks and 42 cars, look for it in **October**.



Ultimate Fighting Championship

Crave recently stopped by to show us an extremely early revision of UFC for the PS. Although it doesn't look nearly as impressive as the DC version (not surprising since the DC and PS versions are being developed by two different programming groups), it's pretty good for a PS game, and features all the UFC fighters, a ridiculous number of moves and fighting techniques to learn, and plenty of modes (although many weren't active in this build). Career mode will unlock even more fighters, many that aren't in the Dreamcast version. It's set for release in **December**.



NUCLEAR DETONATOR



PREVIEW
GALLERY



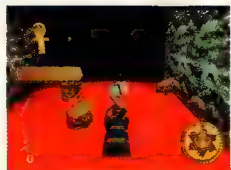
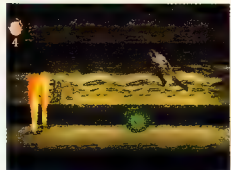
Santo

DAD-BOY MEXICAN WRESTLERS

Mexico has a great history of flamboyant, masked wrestlers—much more so than America. While our dads were watching guys like Dusty Rhodes and Jerry Lawler bounce around in their jumbo-size speedos, wrestlers like the great “Santo” were messing it up in style down in Mexico.

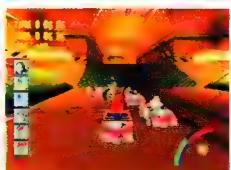
The Mummy

Born of Konami's relationship with Universal is this game version of the Brendan Fraser movie, under development by Rebellion, of *Aliens vs. Predator* (PC) fame. Gameplay is Tomb Raider-esque, broken up by arcade-style challenges like a side-scrolling Donkey Kong level where you have to jump over barrels and avoid flames that shoot up from the ground. All of the game's 12 levels take place during the last 20 minutes of the movie. Each level is made up of six to eight “zones,” and will take you through familiar locations in the movie. They all take place inside, but there are hidden levels to find, one of which is outdoors. As an added bonus, the trailer for the second movie, which hits theaters in 2001, is included on the disc. The Mummy hits PlayStation and Dreamcast in **November**.



Woody Woodpecker Racing

Konami brings Walter Lantz's famous cast of characters to the race track this **November**. It includes nine (three of which are hidden) of your favorite characters—Chilly Willy, Wally Walrus and Woody Woodpecker himself among them. You race in specialized cars corresponding to the level you choose—i.e., a Jalopy in the Junkyard level. Modes include World Championship, Quest, Single and Multiplayer (for two players).



WWF SmackDown! 2: Know Your Role

SmackDown fans get ready for more of the same mojo that made the original such a fan favorite. Developer **Yuke's CO.** of Japan has pumped up Know Your Role with all-new story lines, additional play modes and updated rosters. Along with the modes you're familiar with, there are now Ladder Matches and Tornado Tag Team events. Expect to see bodies flying (very) high and low. The emphasis is on circus-like aerobatics plus crushing leaps and pins. Players will continue to fight backstage, in the VIP room, the parking lot and now in the World Wrestling Federation Entertainment complex. An up-to-date roster includes 50 WWF Superstars including The Rock, Triple H and Chyna. Create-a-Superstar seems every bit as entertaining as last year. **THQ** will release SDIz this **fall**. Look for a hands-on preview in the November issue of *EGM*. In the meantime, check out these exclusive shots.



ATV: Quad Power Racing

Acclaim is pumping out the high-quality niche racers these days. First it's RC Revenge, then Ferrari F355, and now it's ATV: Quad Power Racing. Developed by Climax Studios, the physics in this dirt-tracker are excellent, with riders bending at all the right moments, and recoiling from the impact like they would in real life. You can take on Championship, single race, time attack, or a two-player mode, all while racing against five other riders on a dozen outdoor tracks. Mountain, snow and desert terrain are featured, and offer pro routes for players who have beaten the regular circuits. Twelve different quads are selectable and a hidden Super Quad can be unlocked once all the Pro Championships have been won. ATV Quad Power Racing will land in stores this **August**.



RC Revenge

The unofficial sequel to Re-Volt, RC Revenge is being developed by former Psygnosis coders and the quality shows. Part Wave Race 64, part Wipeout, RC Revenge lets you select from over a dozen vehicles on over a dozen land and water-based theme tracks. Horror World, Planet Adventure, Jungle World, Monster World and AKLM Studios are all part of the action in this Micro Machines-style racer. Choro-Q/Penny Racers fans should check out this little gem, coming from **Acclaim** late this **summer**.





ITALIAN SUPERBIKE

The Ducati 996 is an awesome motorcycle. Check out these stats: 4-stroke, 90-degree V twin-cylinder, DOHC, 4 valves per cylinder, 996 CC motor. Produces 112 HP @ 8,500 RPM. It's all yours for a cool \$16,495.

NBA Live 2001

If you've got game, you're going to get rewarded handsomely in EA's NBA Live 2001. Live now has a reward system similar to the "Madden Challenge" that lets you earn new abilities and codes for accomplishing on-court feats. Also interesting is the player creation feature that allows you to assign personalities and facial expressions. So, if you want an Iverson-esque jerk, so be it in when the new Live hits in **October**.



Buzz Lightyear of Star Command

Other than the graphics, there isn't much different between this PS Buzz and its DC cousin both from **Activision**. You control Buzz in his home galaxy, defending it against a variety of evil alien henchmen. The game is based on the cartoon by the same name, and has more of a kid's game feel. It features tons of space-age weapons and several vehicles to ride. It's due in the **fall**.



Ducati (working title)

This motorcycle sim slipped in unannounced but early play tests reveal it's squarely on track. Developer **ATD** (Attention To Detail) has captured the physics as well as the flavor of the fine Italian bikes of the same name. They sway and roll across the road in a very realistic manner. **Acclaim** is aiming for release sometime this **winter**. Quick Race Mode lets you progress through several stages (eight tracks initially) earning points toward faster bikes and more challenging courses. Ducati Life is similar to EA's Porsche Challenge Career Mode: Starting with a vintage bike, players race for cash and experience. As money is stock-piled new bikes as well as upgrades become available.





007
World is Not Enough

ALL THE GADGETS
TO LIVE LIKE BOND

SEE THE WORLD
THROUGH BOND'S EYES

1999 EA GAMES

007
Racing

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BEHIND THE WHEEL

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TO ODDLY GO...

Like the Star Trek movies, EA Sports' NHL series seems to be cursed in its "odd-numbered" years. NHL 97 sucked, while NHL 98 was impeccable. NHL 99 regressed, while NHL 2000 redeemed itself. Let's hope NHL 2001 doesn't pull a Star Trek V on us.

NHL FaceOff 2001

989 Sports' FaceOff 2001 hits the ice this **September** and it comes loaded with both new NHL expansion teams (Minnesota Wild, Columbus Blue) and eight international teams. There are four play modes: Tournament, Practice, Draft and a nifty Shootout mode that distills hockey into its most basic, fun elements. New improvements consist of more control over your shots, improved AI and a new "Line Manager."



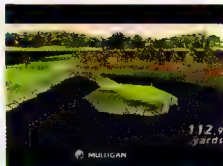
NHL 2001

Hockey is a game of ebbs and flows, and EA captures that with NHL's all-new "momentum" meter this **fall**. Make a few good plays, and your players will get juiced. Make a blunder and morale drops, along with players' performance. There are new tools to swing the game in your favor too, particularly with your star players who now wield cannon and "one-footed wrister" shots.



Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001

Think you can rip the PGA Tour to shreds as well as Tiger Woods? Well, EA is giving you that chance this **fall**. Although the game is titled after Tiger, you can also play with the popular PGA Tour chaps and help one of those old codgers qualify then win the tournament itself. The graphics have gotten a minor tune-up, with other improvements consisting of a cleaner interface and more detailed courses.





You've been hypnotized into thinking you're pretty good.
On the count of three, you will wake up.

You are no stranger to single-player mode racing. You are King of the Road.
You are way out of your element. Introducing 4x4 Evolution, the first game with internet connectivity for heavy-duty off-road competitions between Sega Dreamcast, PC and Mac users simultaneously. Because racing alone is like having sex by yourself.



ALL THE TOP SUVs AND TRUCKS FROM LEADING MANUFACTURERS TO CUSTOMIZE • 16 MERCILESS OFF-ROAD COURSES, EACH WITH THEIR OWN ACTIVE ENVIRONMENT, MUSIC SCORE AND DIFFICULTY • GO ANYWHERE GAMEPLAY — NO PREDETERMINED TRACK • ACCURATE PHYSICS, PHOTO-REALISTIC GRAPHICS, AND UNFORGIVING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.



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■■■■ ACTION BASS



After a hard day of fishing under the sun or competing in a tournament, you look with awe at the trophies your angling skills have awarded you. In this action-packed arcade style fishing game, the player can either spend time leisurely casting across lake waters waiting for a bite on the line or they can enter an intense fishing competition where the only fish that matters is the biggest catch of the day. Along the way players will face all sorts of challenges including shifting water conditions, unstable weather and even more skilled opponents as he continually attempts to outwit the wily bass during each season of the year. Amazingly realistic fish behavior ensures that no fish is caught without a fight and that reeling in a winner delivers optimum angling action excitement.

- Tournament-style Challenge Mode, free-wheeling Free Mode, and an Extra Bonus Mode.
- Lure Action Gauge allows the player to monitor lure movement easily.
- Enjoy watching fish (up to five heaviest) you brought back in the Aquarium Mode.
- Five diverse lures are available at the beginning, covering a wide range of water conditions and lure movements. More lures will be available as the player gains experience.
- Wide variety of "lure action" possible to attract bass, some requiring retrieving or rod movements only, others requiring skillful combination of the two.

\$9.99* GOT GAME? \$9.99*

WWW.TAKE2GAMES.COM

SPEC OPS: STEALTH PATROL



Welcome to the US Army Rangers, one of the toughest and most elite of the world's military task forces. Your main objective is to control your team of Rangers and eliminate opponent targets while completing mission sub-tasks in the time allotted. Choose between stealth or all out frontal assault- it's up to you. 3D action, time pressure and realistic combat will keep you begging for more. Immersed in huge, outdoor 3D environments you and your team members must successfully execute your tasks which revolve around several different mission objectives including reprisal attacks, seize and destroy missions, counter-terrorist attacks and raid and destroy missions. Each environment is unique, not only in look and feel, but in game play as well. With the emphasis on action and realism, navigate your team with guns blazing or silently under the cover of darkness across landscapes of thick jungle, barren desert, arctic tundra and dense forest.

Do you have what it takes? Will you be able to complete your mission, though you may be the lone survivor?



- :: 5 intense mission campaigns each with numerous sub-missions based on real activities carried out by the US Army Rangers
- :: An arsenal to choose from including shotguns, grenades, machine guns, sniper rifles and more
- :: 3 difficulty levels - Private (Easy), Corporal (Medium), Sergeant (Difficult) offers massive replay value
- :: In the 2 Ranger option the player has simultaneous control of 2 Rangers
- :: Create an inventory filled with hi-tech equipment to aid the Rangers in their tasks - GPS navigation for moving through dense landscape, tripwire mines to booby trap enemies, nightvision goggles for stealth accuracy, med kits for injury repair and more

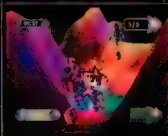
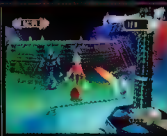
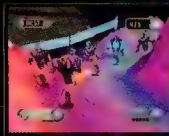
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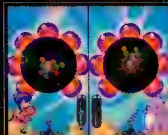
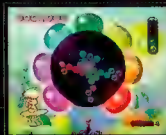
BALL BREAKERS

Roll with the punched ball over the competition!



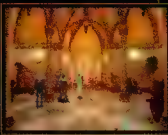
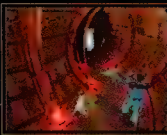
SPIN JAM

Ultra-addictive arcade action puzzler!!!!!!!



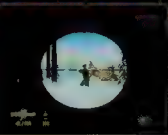
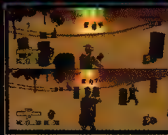
MARTIAN GOTHIC

Horror on an intergalactic scale!



SPEC OPS: STEALTH PATROL

The enemy is expecting you tomorrow. You're already there!



PRO-PINBALL BIG RACE USA

Pro Pinball: Big Race USA delivers more adrenaline-pumping action than your brain can handle!



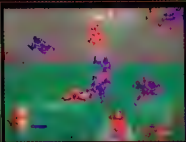
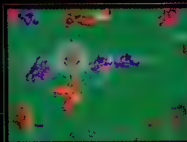
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SPEEDBALL 2100

Extreme sports have been taken to the next level!



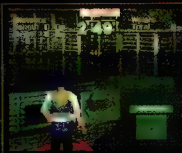
GRUDGE WARRIORS

There is no such thing as friendly fire.



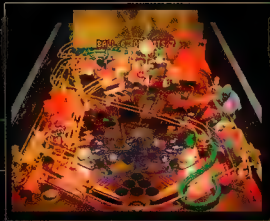
ACTION BASS

Pulse pounding white knuckle action of bass fishing is here!



PRO-PINBALL FANTASTIC JOURNEY

Steam powered time travel will whisk you away into the world of pinball.



* Suggested Retail Price-\$9.99.

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PREVIEW GALLERY

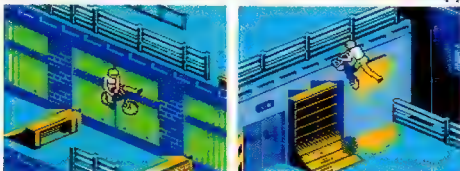
Road Rash

It sure took long enough, but this fall Road Rash finally makes its way to the GBC courtesy of EA. It'll sport five different tracks, a full complement of bikes and a career mode—almost a carbon-copy of the Genesis original right down to the graphics. You'll even be able to race against friends via the Link Cable.



Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX

As far as X-Game winners go, Mirra is topped by none, but we're not sure how his expertise could benefit this simplistic take on Acclaim's PlayStation biking game. The gameplay is straightforward: Do as many fancy BMX tricks as you can to rack up the points, and a little flat-out racing as well. If doing supernatural things with two wheels appeals to you, Mirra BMX should be in stores now.



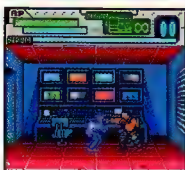
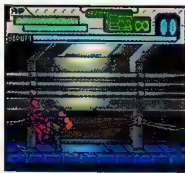
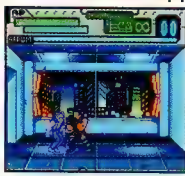
MTV Sports: Skateboarding

Developed by Darkblack (the team behind the PS and DC versions), hopefully this one can escape the horrible legacy of GBC skateboarding games. It features a worldwide skate tour competition and enough modes to choke a horse along with plenty of real-life skate tricks. It's due sometime this summer.



Blade

Since Activision is in the process of bringing this Marvel favorite to the PlayStation, it's only fair that Game Boy Color owners get a crack at him too. Everybody wants a little vampire huntin' action on the go. Blade is your basic horizontal-scrolling action adventure game where you kick ass using your gun, that infamous acid-edged sword or badass kung-fu. It should arrive in time for the holidays.



Spider-Man

After years away, your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man is slinging his way to the Game Boy Color. Swing from web-lines, crawl walls, and battle classic Spidey enemies like Dr. Octopus, Electro, Venom and the Sandman. **Activision and Vicarious Visions** have just finished putting the final touches on this pocket adventure, check out our review this issue to see how it fares.



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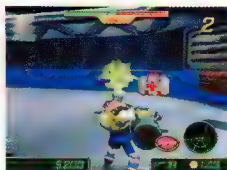
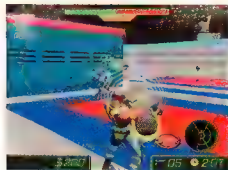
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PREVIEW

The Grid

The premise of this fall release **Midway** title is simple. Contestants battle in a virtual-reality, holographic computer playing field called The Grid. Up to six players can compete via linked machines in a behind-the-back first-person shooter deathmatch (similar to Sega's upcoming OutTrigger). Combining heavy weaponry (25 different items) with hardcore fighting is the cornerstone of the game.



King of Fighters 2000

The latest annual installment of **SNK's** fighting series is **out now**, but if what we hear about their developer leaving is true it could be a while before they put out another. In 2000 you can do the "Striker" tag-team special attacks at any time: while jumping, during attacks or special moves, or even when you're knocked down. Also the "Emergency Evasive Action" from Kof98 is back. We expect a DC version soon.



Dance Maniax

Konami's previous arcade dancing games required you to press floor-mounted buttons. This time around, you only need to put your hands, feet or any other part of your body between the upper or lower sensors to "dance" to the music. You've got to do it as the icons fall to the top of the screen. DM features over 25 music selections from original titles, Toshiba EMI licensed albums, and Konami's Beatmania series games. Now, how are they going to make a controller for the home version? **Now playing in Japan.**



You "press" the buttons in this game by breaking the invisible beam in between the sensors, divided into upper and lower areas. Dance to the music!



BORN OF
FATE

RAISED BY
PROPHECY

CHOSEN AS A
SAVIOR

DESTINED TO
DESTROY...

PREPARE FOR AN
ORIGINAL EPIC
FANTASY RPG.
COMING IN 2000

Summoner

www.summoner.com



PlayStation®2



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Sega GT

BENNY MOTO PRO RACER TIP:

CUSTOMIZE

GO KICKY FAST OKAY!

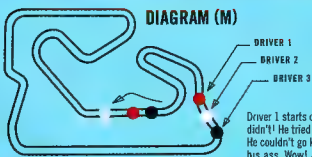
1

Famous pro speed racer Benny Moto says, in life and in racing we must know how to **SLOW DOWN**. Benny uses carbon fiber rotors and 4 piston calipers because he says the curb tastes like defeat.



2

Are you hard core? Have this beefy spring please. It's good for you. Without a trick suspension the hairball track will shake your head up and down like one of those stupid dogs in the back window.



Driver 1 starts off in the lead. But did he listen to Benny? He didn't! He tried to save money on brakes. He's cheap. He's stupid. He couldn't go kicky fast through the turn. Now Driver 2 passed his ass. Wow! And look at Driver 3! He's making power. How to be the leader? Customize and drive like a freak with fiery pants.

3

A big, 19 inch, 3 piece magnesium wheel is your fun friend in the quest for a sweeter contact patch. It's hot too.



**YOU FOLLOW MY ADVICE.
YOU CUSTOMIZE. YOU BEAT
EVERYBODY. POW!**



Tear it up in this total competition speed trip where you can build original machines from scratch or tweak over 130 GT sports cars that reproduce exact handling and performance specs. Then use your VMU to trade machines, parts and lap times on the net. Assuming you got anything worth trading, Grandma.

6

The shock absorber is often overlooked. Not here in Benny's shop everyone concentrates on the shock. A good shock where it really counts will bring forth nimbler handling and quicker transitions.



5

Oh my God! Look at that engine! Yes, that's a kicky big damn motor. Benny likes the superhuge V12 for stump-pulling power. But only for the big bad bomber cars. Otherwise enjoy a V-8.



4

Oh! What a loud muffler! Loud cacoph muffers intimidate chump-ass rivals. Get a big pipe for greater flow at high rpm levels.



 Dreamcast

IT'S THINKING

~~EGM'S~~ HSU AND CHAN'S FALL PREVIEW -O-RAMA!



MEET YOUR HOSTS:
HSU AND CHAN TANAKA
GAME DESIGNERS

GRAY CHEEK 172

AS THE FOUNDERS OF "TANAKA BROTHERS GAME DEVELOPMENT," HSU AND CHAN HAVE BEEN DELIGHTING AUDIENCES WORLDWIDE FOR YEARS WITH SUCH NOTABLE TITLES AS "ROLLER DEATH DEATH," "FIGHTING FIGHTERS," AND "LORD OF THE TROUSERS," A JAPANESE DATING SIM. THEY ARE ALSO RECOGNIZED BY FOUR OF THE PEOPLE WITHIN AS BEING PROUD CARTOON CHARACTERS, AND ARE WANTED IN THE STATES FOR UNPAID PARKING TICKETS.

THEY CAN PROVE NOTHING!

EVIL PINKIE CHARACTERS

FRAGILE BY THE WAY, WHO CARES?

HELLO, VIDEO GAMERS!

I'M HSU TANAKA, THAT'S MY BROTHER CHAN, AND WELCOME YOU TO HSU AND CHAN'S FALL PREVIEW-O-RAMA. BUT WE'RE RUNNING LOW ON TIME AS IS, SO TOUGH TIDELY!

AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, WE'RE ENTERING THAT TIME OF YEAR, ONCE AGAIN, WHEN THE GAME PUBLISHERS BEGIN TALKING OUT THEIR BIG-TICKET SOFTWARE -- IN WHATEVER STAGE OF COMPLETION THEY HAPPEN TO BE -- SLAPPING ON PRILE THE CURE FOR CANCER, IN THE HOPE THAT THEY CAN SELL ENOUGH OF THEM BEFORE CHRISTMAS TO JUSTIFY THE PRODUCTION. ENOUGH SQUARES TO KEEP THEM ALIVE UNTIL THEY CAN RELEASE THEIR BIG-TICKET SOFTWARE FOR NEXT CHRISTMAS!

IT'S TRADITION!

RIGHT YOU ARE, BROTHER, AND A WISE TRADITION IT IS!

INDEED, I REMEMBER WELL THE YEAR WE DECIDED TO SUCK THE TREND AND SCHEDULE ALL OUR BIG RELEASES TO HIT THE STREETS ON BOXING DAY!

WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT THAT WAS!
HOO-BAY!

CHERNOBYL!

GAME OVER

TOP SECRET

SHIP TO www.ape-aw.com/evilmonkey

DANGER BROTHERS

YES, BUT BAD MEMORIES ASIDE, I'M CONFIDENT THE FALL WILL PROVE TO BE ONE OF THE MOST INCREDIBLE IN THE HISTORY OF VIDEO GAMING!

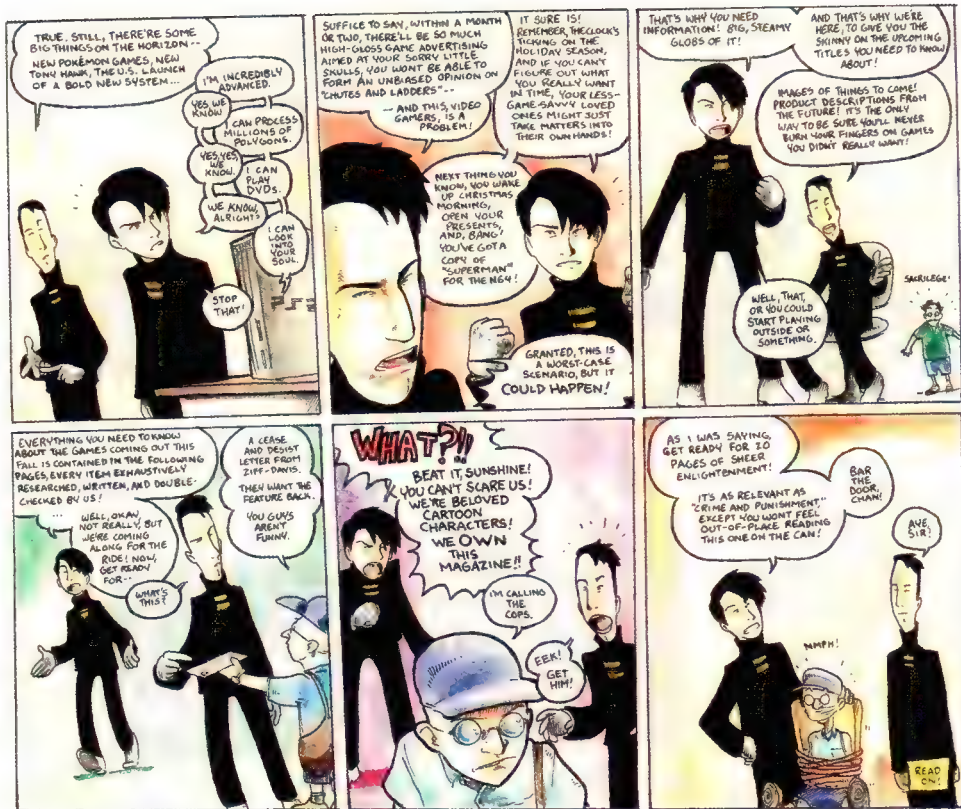
GOOH, REALLY?!

WELL, HEEN, I DUNNO, THAT'S WHAT IT SAYS IN THE SCRIPT.

BUT, THEN, NOBODY IN THE MEDIA EVER COMES RIGHT OUT AND SAYS ANYTHING LIKE "THIS WILL PROBABLY BE THE MOST MEDIOCRE FALL IN RECORDED HISTORY!"

OR "WELL, THERE'S ALWAYS NEXT YEAR!"

A HUMBLE ASSIST BY CHRISTOPH BOYER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



Editor's note: Oh, insults of insults, indignities of indignities—EGM's fall mega-preview feature has been hijacked by that famous (more like infamous) duo of game designers, Hsu and Chan. Worse yet, they're not even good game designers. (Well, OK, the Tanaka Brothers' *Bad Mileage 2000* did earn decent review scores last year, but that's only 'cause no other game let us jump the Grand Canyon in a Dodge Dart.) But worst of all, these guys aren't even real. For nearly a year, we've showcased the antics of these make-believe, overly caustic, highly caffeinated game designers, and this is how they repay us—by escaping from their two-page comic and breaking into our cover feature?

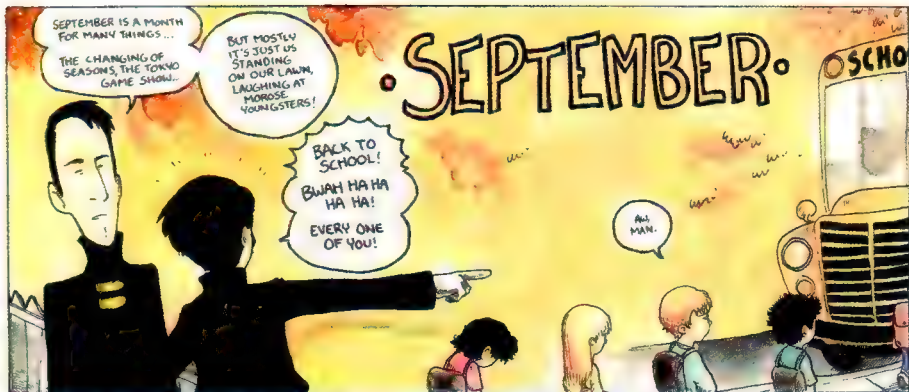
We knew we shoulda put a deadbolt on page 50.

All, however, is not lost. Hsu and Chan only managed to hogtie their mailman and some folks in our ad-sales department most of

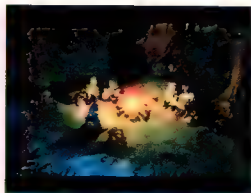
the EGM editors scampered unseen into the ventilation ducts. Now if we can chimney climb down a few elevator shafts and scramble across a rooftop or two, we can call the cops and put an end to this hostile takeover. And they say nothing exciting ever happens in the Chicago suburbs.

speaking of excitement (yes, we know that was a lame segue, but we're under duress here), we still managed to put our laptops and cell phones to use and pull together this comprehensive 20-page feature on the holiday season's most exciting must-play games. From *Banjo-Toie* to *Zelda: Majora's Mask*, you'll find every title—more than 40, in fact—worth getting through the end of this amazing year for gaming.

Let's just hope the Tanaka Brothers—as well as a few other creations of that cartoonist Jeremy "Norm" Scott scattered hither and yon throughout the article—don't sully your reading experience.



OGRE BATTLE 64

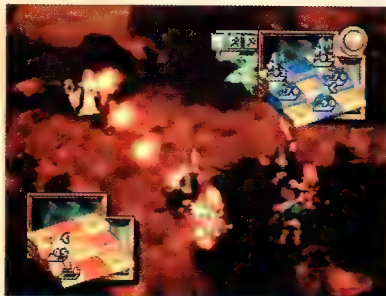


What's the deal? Atlus is banking on the fact that *Ogre Battle* is gonna be the best RPG experience you can find on the N64, both in 2000 and every other year the system has been in existence. "I think *Ogre Battle 64* has the strongest RPG elements of any game out there," said assistant producer Colin Totman. "While it's not truly the first RPG, I think it's safe to say that it's the first Strategy RPG, and the most in-depth game that you will ever see on the Nintendo 64."

The *Ogre Battle* series has enjoyed a rampant cult following ever since its first Super NES incarnation. Atlus thinks it's mostly those folks who'll snap this game up, though they don't feel their prospective audience is limited at all. Gail Salamanca, product specialist at Atlus, said, "Sure the veterans of the game will surely enjoy this new one, but to reach those who haven't experienced *Ogre Battle* will be the true test. Watch out, Square..." Strong words, to be sure, but the average *Ogre Battle* fan is just as devout as any Final Fantasy fanatic out there.

Obviously N64 owners craving action should look elsewhere, but for anyone who's stuck it out this long praying for a good RPG on the last cart-based console finally has something to get excited about.

So why is it a must-get game? Isn't it obvious? When was the last time you played an RPG on your N64? Or the last time you played a new *Ogre Battle* game? But the fact it's all but alone in its genre is only one reason *Ogre Battle 64* will be a hit this year. Mature, deep and just plain fun, this is the better-late-than-never strategy RPG N64 gamers will treasure.



HALF LIFE

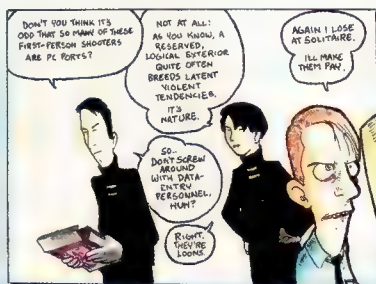


What's the deal? The PC version of Half-Life received Game of the Year from so many PC gaming mags that we just don't have room to list all of them here. And it deserves every bit of critical acclaim. The game in a nutshell: You're a scientist geek who has to rid a secret government laboratory of vicious creatures from another dimension. Luckily, you get ahold of a bad-ass HazMat suit and an array of automatic weapons. Problem solved. The sci-fi story packs action, mystery, suspense—you name it.

Now this amazing first-person shooter is coming to the Dreamcast, specifically designed to take advantage of what the system has to offer. Plus, it has a DC-exclusive mission designed by Gearbox (the same team who developed the Opposing Force add-on for PC). And let's not forget: It's supposed to use SegaNet for online play. Need we say more?

So why is it a must-get game? The PC version of Half-Life was as much an adventure game as it was a first-person shooter. It's this sort of hybrid gameplay that keeps the FPS genre fresh. Besides, Half-Life has an amazing story, and

apparently looks better than the PC version in some respects. And if it does, in fact, have a smooth Internet multiplayer mode when it's released...well, that's reason enough to get it.



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2



What's the deal? It's only the sequel to the biggest-selling, most critically acclaimed skateboarding game of all time. With improved graphics, bigger levels, a much larger palette of moves to draw from and a more complex yet intuitive trick system, you can pretty much go anywhere and do anything—even link insane combos with manuals. But how is this sequel going to stand up to the recent avalanche of competing Tony Hawk clones? "We don't pay much attention to the competition," Scott Pease, THPS2's producer at Neversoft, told us. "We just try to imagine what the most kick-ass skateboarding game would be like and then go out and make it." They're doing a great job so far.

So why is it a must-get game? Believe it or not, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 is better than the original, with even more tricks to pull off and more stuff to collect. And the nice thing is, you don't have to be into skateboarding to enjoy it.



FERRARI F355 CHALLENGE



What's the deal? Drive a car you'll likely never get to put your ass inside, at insanely high speeds, on tracks you'll likely never drive upon, and that alone is usually reason enough to investigate. Published by Acclaim (license-holders of all games-related Ferrari stuff), but developed by the legendary AM2 division at Sega, Ferrari F355 Challenge brings the arcade experience home in slightly different but amazingly awesome form. Despite not having the three monitor wraparound screen action of the arcade unit, the conversion rocks at 60fps, in hi-resolution, and looks good enough to make Gran Turismo 2000 fans crap their pants.

So why is it a must-get game? It's the first AM2 racing game to come home since Daytona for the Saturn, and that's a big deal—especially when you think of all the racers AM2's put out in the interim (Scud Racer, Daytona 2, etc.) but hasn't converted for the living room experience. You'd better believe this game will be a hot-potato, especially with Yu Suzuki's name on it.

THE COURT'S GOING TO BE A LITTLE
WIDER THIS SEASON.



SEGA
SPORTS

NBA 2K1



Time to reach out and posterize someone. Our new online gameplay lets you and up to three of your boys use one console to take on wannabes nationwide — from gloating Laker groupies in L.A. to nostalgic Knicks worshippers in Queens. There's e-mail so you can, uh, "chat." Plus franchise mode, SWAT blocks, and all crossovers and spin moves. An with graphics tighter than a joint guard's shorts circa 1974. Now we'll see who's got internet game.



nba.com



Dreamcast

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SEGA
SPORTS

NFL 2K1

Online gameplays here, too, so you can challenge your opponents nationwide—from players in Schenectady. You can enjoy radically improved running and passing, new playbooks, and you've got yourself

...and you can challenge your opponents nationwide—from players in Schenectady. You can enjoy radically improved running and passing, new playbooks, and you've got yourself



PLAYERS



Dreamcast

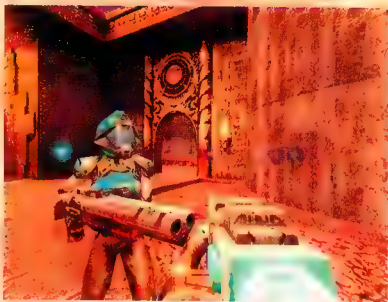


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SUDDENLY, THE WHOLE COUNTRY IS INBOUNDS.



QUAKE III ARENA



What's the deal? Oh, you can play Quake III Arena with three buddies on one TV in split-screen mode. We promise we won't point and laugh at you (although we can't make the same guarantee for Hsu and Chan). But damnit, man—this is one of the first full-blown network games optimized for SegaNet (which also launches in September). QIII Arena is meant to be played over the Internet, against 15 human opponents. And despite some initial concern from developer Raster Productions that it couldn't be done, QIII Arena will support deathmatching between owners of the DC and PC version. PC users will just need to download a patch and play on special servers that are running with the Dreamcast version's maps. "This is especially interesting because it's the first time PC and console users will be able to play head-to-head online in real-time action," QIII Arena senior producer Scott Hawkins told us. "It'll allow users to answer the question: Which type of gamer is the ultimate online fragmaster—PC or Dreamcast players?" DC gamers need not fear losing their competitive edge because they're stuck with awkward joystick-only control; Sega is shipping the DC mouse in time for the game's release.

So why is it a must-get game? It's about gosh-darn time we got to use the Dreamcast's modem for more than just clunky Web browsing and the occasional Chu Chu match. QIII Arena—like NFL 2K1 and a few upcoming third-party titles—will prove once and for all whether the DC and its 56K modem can pump out a lag-free online-gaming experience. We really dig the game's new features, too—especially the way you unlock new characters by hunting and fragging them on the game's servers. Now that's the manly way to play QIII. Forget about that split-screen stuff.



NFL 2K1

What's the deal? "People who will play NFL 2K1 will walk away with a grin on their face," says Visual Concepts' Rustin Lee. Last year, Sega was all smiles after the warm reception gamers gave NFL 2K, but now there are expectations to meet. Explains Lee, "Every football game out there has a label: 'It plays great, but looks horrible,' 'It looks amazing, but has no gameplay,' or even worse—'It's about the same as last year.'"

Chances are, that last label won't be attached to NFL 2K1, since it's the first console football game to have online play. "They can expect to be blown away by the fact that there is virtually no difference between playing at home offline vs. being online," says Lee, who then concedes,



SEPTEMBER



"There is a tiny bit of latency you'll feel, but that's about it." The improvements don't stop there. "You'll be treated to new defensive line moves, bump-and-run coverage, true zone defense, zipper passes, an improved running game, new animations, true pump fakes and greater speed overall," Lee told us.

So why is it a must-get game? Lee isn't blowing smoke in your helmet—NFL 2K1 really is very nimble online. Once in a while latency may slow the game down by a fraction, but we came away very impressed and satisfied knowing that we can log on and stuff our running back down someone's unwilling throat a few thousand miles away.



ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP

What's the deal? Who better than a real-life ultimate fighter to tell us just how realistic *Crave's Ultimate Fighting Championship* on the Dreamcast can be? "See, they have blood on the mat over there, and the art in the center of the ring is dead-on," bona-fide UFC competitor Matt Hughes told us during a recent demo session of the game at our office. "They have the strikes, submissions on the ground, take-downs—this is the closest thing I can think of. There's no way to make it more realistic."

So why is it a must-get game? With its roster of real fighters—including, of course, Hughes—and thousands of moves, UFC does have that whole "realism" thing going for it. That means it's not as mindless as a wrestling title and not as hardcore as a Capcom fighter. This hybrid is a different kind of fighting game. Better still, it's fun.



READY 2 RUMBLE ROUND 2



What's the deal? We figure the gang at Midway has been watching too many *Love Boat* reruns lately, 'cause they've turned to a tried-and-true trick to spruce up this sequel—celebrity guest stars. In addition to the fighters who return from the previous game, Round 2 offers Shaquille O'Neal and Michael Jackson as your very special extra opponents.

Whazzat? You're not drawn by the game's star power? Then keep in mind that the visuals here have been jazzed up a bit (in fact, the Dreamcast version looks nearly as good as the upcoming PS2 one). And Midway's cranking up each fighter's already overblown personality with new animation and speech. The gameplay, meanwhile, will offer more depth than last year's model.

So why is it a must-get game? You get new boxers, better graphics and a deeper fighting engine. But ultimately, you get to wale on Michael Jackson. Do we really need to say anything else?



METROPOLIS STREET RACER



What's the deal? Bizarre Creations and Sega want a kick-ass looking answer to *Gran Turismo 2000* that isn't just another clone. "We wanted to get away from the 'choose your car, choose your circuit' type of game, and also make sure we weren't just copying the 'car collecting' philosophy of other games," said Sarah Dixon of Bizarre Creations. We reckon you can expect a totally unique spin on the licensed-car racing genre.

You've gotta respect the amount of work that went into this game, too. The cities and cars have been modeled using the utmost detail, including research to the tune of 35,000 photos, 250,000 air miles and over 100 train tickets accumulated by the MSR team.

So why is it a must-get game? This game is gorgeous, one of the most impressive seen on the Dreamcast. And the team making it? They're responsible for some of the early *Formula 1* titles from *Psygnosis* on the PlayStation, so you know this baby's gonna handle like a dream.



LEGEND. ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK

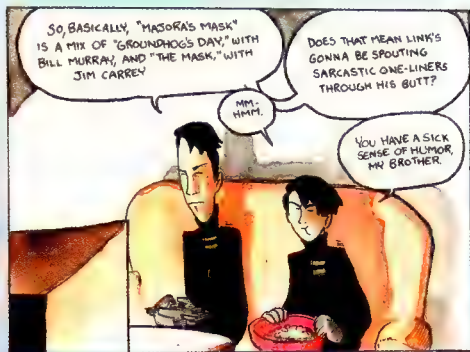


What's the deal? At first gander, Link's second N64 adventure may look like a sidestory to Ocarina of Time, but trust us—Majora's Mask is anything but the same ol', same ol'. First, there's the oddball plot, which has Link zipping backward in time again and again (thanks to his trusty Ocarina) to save the world from a falling moon. Then there's the three masks that transform Link into creatures with all-new powers, which you must use to make it through the puzzle-packed dungeons. And let's not forget the 20 regular masks that augment your regular abilities.

You'll also face all-new bosses, fight new monsters, and abuse new flocks of chickens. And Link's not in Hyrule anymore, either; the game's set in an alternate dimension, so get ready for that same sense of discovery you felt whenever you reached a new area in Ocarina of Time. Better still, all the good stuff from the last game returns in this sequel. You'll find Link's

horse, Epona; the same intuitive control scheme; the stunning visuals (the game uses the RAM Pak now, too). You'll even hear classic Legend of Zelda tunes that didn't make it into Ocarina of Time.

So why is it a must-get game? Look, you know you're gonna buy this game, and we know you're gonna buy this game. But bear in mind it hits stores Oct. 26—the same day as the PlayStation2. All we can say is make sure you get plenty of rest the week before.



MADDEN NFL 2001

PS2



What's the deal? When we think console football, we think of fat guys like John Madden. And while he isn't a pleasant sight, it sure looks like his PlayStation 2 game is. Electronic Arts, despite all of its resources, has been vexed when transitioning to a new platform—a fate they refuse to repeat ever again. “Everybody talks about platform transitions and first-generation titles,” says Steven Chiang, executive producer on Madden 2001. “But Madden NFL 2001 doesn't look or play like a first-generation football title.”

EA has had the benefit of having access to PlayStation development hardware for longer than most, and they've clearly taken advantage of it. In May, they debuted a fully playable version of the game that had graphics that quite simply blew everyone away. Chiang guards against Madden 2001's only improvements being chalked up to simple eye-candy. “It is more than just a beautiful-looking game—it's fun to play and it has amazing depth. The engine is optimized to run in a high-resolution (640 x 480) and at 60 frames-per-second (read: smooth.) There are a ton of animations, a new collision system, and improved A.I.” Furthermore, some of that eye-candy brings about big gameplay changes. “We now have detailed throwing animations for the Quarterback, and while he's in this motion, he moves differently. Assuming the QB is right-handed, he can't roll left as fast, and the QB back pedals at a different rate than if he steps up,” says Chiang, who then explains why we should care. “This changes the passing game because if the user throws the ball while back pedaling, the QB will throw off his back foot, resulting in a less-than-perfect pass.” While casual football fans might not care, it's the sort of thing that die-hard gridiron junkies will treasure.

So why is it a must-get game? Madden 2001 on the PlayStation is an absolutely amazing football game, and its brains and gameplay have basically been transplanted and improved on the PlayStation 2. This is definitely one of the most impressive PS2 games we've seen to date and it seems like nothing short of EA sliding off into the ocean could stop it from living up to expectations. Oh, wait—they are based in California.

NFL GAMEDAY 2001

PS2

What's the deal? GameDay was there in the beginning for the birth of the PlayStation and it'll be there again for the PlayStation 2. Or will it? Even though we've heard reports of GameDay 2001 PS2 sightings and it still sits on Electronics Boutique's release list, we're starting to think that its kickoff might be delayed. Apparently, the reabsorption of 989 Studios into Sony Computer Entertainment has thrown a kink into things and the game's no-show at E3 in Atlanta hasn't squelched those fears.

So why is it a must-get game? We think GameDay 2001 will happen, just not as quickly as we'd hoped. Given its pedigree, however, we figure this game'll be a thing of beauty, regardless of its release date.

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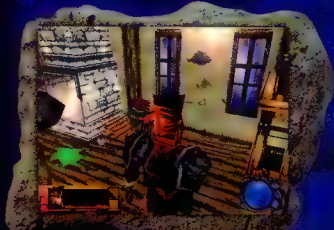
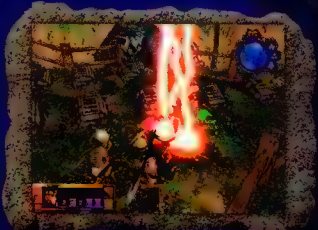
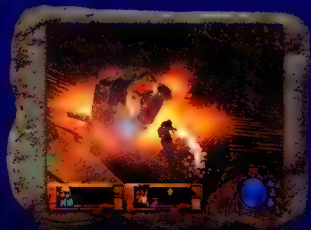
(Also pillage, plunder, hack, slash)



The Rock Monster,
Yalta Desert.
From stone to sand, by
the force of my blade.

LEGEND OF THE

BLADE MASTERS



Die by the Sword.

and conquer by the sword.)

Trial of the Worms,
Wizard's Cave

*"Green is for the precious
life that I take from thee."*

Date with Queen Arachnid,
Evans Forest

*"I only her exoskeleton
was as tough as her will."*

Otanka (Mighty Koth),
Koth's Cave

*"Fire in the belly has
my strike refined."*

- Quest-Based Action RPG For All Gamers
- Beautiful Anime-Style Landscapes and Graphics
- Immersive 3D Environment and Free-Roaming Camera
- Breakthrough Interface for Inventory and Magic Spells

Sega Dreamcast



RATING PENDING



RIDGE RACER V

PS2

What's the deal? The Ridge Racer name has been a staple of the PlayStation's library since the very first system was sold. In fact, the original game takes a lot of the credit for the phenomenal initial sales enjoyed by Sony. It's fitting that this Namco masterpiece should launch Sony's second generation of hardware in style. Ridge Racer V will bring all the fast, smooth racing action we've come to expect from Namco, not to mention the plethora of bonuses and extra features they've become so famous for. The kicker, of course, is the incredible graphics. Don't listen to anyone complaining about "jaggies"; RRV is one of the best-looking games to come to market in quite a while.

So why is it a must-get game? Ridge Racer V is the latest in a long line of games that embody everything a racing fan looks for when they boot up a system. Now Namco is working with hardware comparable to the best arcade technology, and the results are stunning.

•OCTOBER•

SSX

PS2

What's the deal?

Sure, SSX—or Snowboarder Supercross—is a snowboarding game, but don't hold that against it. Developer Electronic Arts Canada has pulled in a BMX course designer to help craft the game's slopes, then given the whole thing an injection of pure vertical insanity. Put simply, you ain't played a snowboarding title like this before. The courses mesh futuristic cityscapes with quarter-mile drops and oddball obstacles like, well, entire buildings (you can bust through their windows). And you'll find shortcuts everywhere. It's like Cool Boarders meets WipeOut meets Beetle Adventure Racing. With tunes by Mix Master Mike and Rahzel, SSX packs the requisite attitude. And—good golly—does this launch game ever look purty.

So why is it a must-get game? We'll admit it—Tony Hawk's Pro Skater has rekindled our love for extreme experiences. And even though the late-'90s avalanche of snowboarding titles has left us with a bad taste for the genre, we're eager to get our hands on SSX. It's new. It's big. It's novel. And it's ours in October.



MEDAL OF HONOR UNDERGROUND



What's the deal? In this Dreamworks' prequel to the game that really made you feel like you were behind enemy lines in WWII, you play Manon, the french woman who helped James Patterson while he was in Europe. The game starts with her humble beginnings in the French Resistance and follows her through a period with the American OSS (the plot was even inspired by a true story).

Sounds cool, but you might worry that Underground is nothing more than a glorified mission pack. Careful—they're nearly fightin' words to Scott Langteau, the game's producer. "More often than not, mission packs introduce a couple of new enemies, maybe two new weapons, some rehashed levels, and—if you're lucky—a couple of new pieces of music," he told us. "What we've done is introduce a score of new weapons, tons of new enemies, completely new environments—24 levels set throughout Europe and North Africa—made from scratch and in most cases much bigger in size than the original game's. This is not to mention that we've also got twice the number of voice actors—both German and French—and twice the amount of dialog in the game, plus brand-new sound effects from the award-winning sound designer who worked on MOH. And we have a completely new soundtrack orchestrated exclusively for



MOH Underground by a 65-piece orchestra along with a 25-member boys choir. Does this sound like a mission pack?" OK, OK, we surrender.

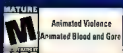
So why is it a must-get game? You get to kill more Nazis. Do you need more reason than that?



THE GLADIATOR BLOODSPORT OF THE FUTURE



Unreal™ Tournament coming this
Fall for the PlayStation®2 and
the Sega Dreamcast™



PlayStation 2



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TIME SPLITTERS

PS2

What's the deal? Sony devotees who've never gotten in on the whole GoldenEye craze should finally get their chance with TimeSplitters. Developed by Free Radical, a team of Rare expatriots, TimeSplitters sets out to deliver the same four-player multiplayer action that was previously only found on the N64. "Because of the kind of game we're doing, we focused on the multiplayer first and then on the single player," Free Radical's David Doak told us. But he admits he's worried that not enough people will purchase the MultiTap to fully enjoy the game. "I thought the N64 really established that you need four controller ports—that it was the middle entry requirement."

TimeSplitters will allow gamers to customize much of the game once areas are unlocked. For example, players will be able to select which weapons—and even enemies—will be available in a certain stage. "This is because we don't take ourselves too seriously," Doak adds.

As for how TimeSplitters will stack up against networked multiplayer games being offered on the Dreamcast and PC, Doak commented that an over-the-Net network experience is just not the same as sitting in the same room with four of your mates all screaming in your ear. "If people can get the social aspects working then maybe, but you currently don't have the bandwidth for that. Until you can see your opponent's reaction and shout at them—I mean, that's the funny part."

But since so much of an emphasis has been placed on TimeSplitters' multiplayer modes, how will the single-player mode stack up? Doak informed us that while it won't feature the complexity of Perfect Dark or GoldenEye, the team is looking to include many of its trademark FPS elements. "We know what we can do," he said. "I mean, we're done it before."

So why is it a must-get game? It's a new multiplayer FPS from the people who brought you GoldenEye and Perfect Dark. 'Nuff said.



NBA 2K1

What's the deal? We may sound like a broken record when we say, "It's the first [insert sport here] to have online play for a console!" when we talk about Sega's sports games, but that's exactly what NBA 2K1 delivers. "Almost everyone who has tried the game online can barely detect a difference [with offline play]," says Visual Concepts' Rustin Lee. "Our game will not 'chug' unless your connection is horrible."

You might want to make sure you have some choice bandwidth because if NBA 2K1's newfound depth pans out, you'll be burning up the phone lines while you learn the intricacies of the game. A new low-post game will let you bump, grind and drop step to the basket, while the refined passing system should help fast-breaks and half-court offenses operate more realistically. "We take pride in capturing the subtle nuances of the NBA that fans have grown to love about it," says Lee. We reckon fans'll grow to love NBA 2K1, too.

So why is it a must-get game? The original NBA 2K had its flaws but showed immense potential as a next-generation basketball game. Just a modest amount of hoops time with the sequel online convinced us that this would not only be a novel online game to have, but a great hoops simulation as well.

•OCTOBER•

SAMBA DE AMIGO

What's the deal? OK—get this. There's this posse led by a sombrero-wearin' monkey who like to go around shaking their maracas to the music—anytime, anywhere. Could be the middle of the street, on a stage indoors or out. Armed with this game and its special maraca controllers (no firm details yet on what these will cost in the U.S.), you can join their army. Shake your maracas in high, middle or low positions according to the on-screen instructions.

Sega is leaping headfirst here into a genre that's mega-popular in Japan but has yet to take over America. The Japanese version featured a wide variety of music, including the Reel Big Fish version of A-ha's "Take On Me," and Bellini's samba music hit "Samba de Janeiro." A music lineup for the U.S. version hasn't been finalized yet. This'll definitely be one of those games to get your non-game-playing friends hooked on.

So why is it a must-get game? Got friends who aren't into video games but love music? Get them together and in front of this game and you've got yourself an instant party.

HI THERE! I'M AMIGO FROM SAMBA DE AMIGO, AND I'M HERE TO TELL YOU THAT YOU HAVEN'T LIVED UNTIL YOU'VE WOKEN UP TO MARIACHI MUSIC AND THIRTY-EIGHT INDIVIDUAL CLIPS OF FRENCH ROAST!

ZOWIE!



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JET GRIND RADIO



What's the deal? Sega's long been known for producing titles that are sometimes quirky, sometimes downright weird, but almost always completely unique. Such is the case with Jet Grind Radio. It's like some kind of hybrid Tony Hawk platformer where destruction of private property is the goal. If you're one of those hoodlums who sprays his name on the walls of all the local freeway overpasses (you know who you are), JGR is made for you.

Don't let the lackluster sales of JGR in Japan discourage you; Sega of America isn't feeling the blues. "While we generally like to make all our games appealing to a worldwide market, we realize that Jet Grind Radio is definitely more appropriate for the U.S. market," Producer Jason Kuo said. "A perfect example of a similar situation is Crazy Taxi, which sold like hotcakes here, but didn't do quite as well in Japan." No matter the sales numbers in the land of the rising sun, Jet Grind Radio has instant classic written all over it.

We hear that Sega's adding another area to Jet Grind before it reaches U.S. shores. Something that distressed

us is that we also heard they'd be changing the music. Luckily the only modifications to the sound will be a few new tracks; the original songs will not

WE'RE WHAT HAPPENS TO MIDDLE-CLASS SUBURBAN KIDS WHEN THE MALLS CLOSE FOR TOO LONG!

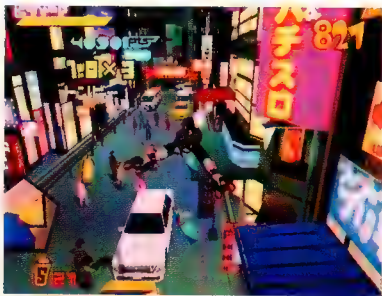
LET'S GO DEFEY SOME AUTHORITY!



be removed at all. That's another point for Sega.

The bottom line is Sega's hoping that Jet Grind Radio will be just different enough that it'll warrant a second look from consumers the country over. They know it's got great graphics, killer level design and a unique premise. It'll either be a mass-market hit or one of the first DC games with a cult following. Sega would prefer the former.

So why is it a must-get game? Jet Grind Radio just oozes style. At first glance the game looks complicated, but leave it to Sega's talented internal development studio, Smilebit, to make the control so simple that anyone can pick up JGR and see its appeal immediately. That said, Jet Grind is simply a solid, enjoyable game the likes of which you've never experienced before.



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OCTOBER

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SMUGGLER'S RUN

PS2

What's the deal? Well, it's kinda like a racing game, it's sorta like vehicular combat, and it plays a lot like *Motocross Madness* on the PC. Whatever the heck genre this thing fits into, *Smuggler's Run* sure is fun—and it's just the sort of every-man's game that'll zoom off the shelves come launch day. "The PlayStation 2 is going to attract a broader, more mainstream audience much earlier than the original PlayStation did," Jeronimo Barrera, the game's producer at Rockstar, told us. "So *Smuggler's Run* is the perfect launch title for the system because it's so easy to pick up and have fun with right away. At the same time, hardcore gamers will appreciate the fact that we just didn't create prettier versions of existing PlayStation games." With *Smuggler's Run*, developer Angel Studios is expanding upon existing genres, tapping into the power of the PlayStation 2 (you won't see worlds this immense on the Dreamcast) and giving us gamers one helluva joyride.

So why is it a must-get game? Ask half the *EGM* staff what they think the objective is in *Smuggler's Run* and they'll probably mumble an "I dunno" while they zip across the game's incredibly expansive world, launch over canyons and run down hikers and livestock. Control here is so tight that even plain ol' Sunday driving through the spectacular terrain is a blast. But in case you were wondering, there is an actual game here, too. Your goal is to grab contraband and haul it safely to its destination—without getting nabbed by the fuzz. Trust us—it's simple, chaotic fun.

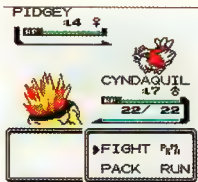


POKÉMON GOLD/SILVER

GAME BOY
COLOR

What's the deal? Nintendo threw in 100 new monsters and color just to sell a few million more Pokémon carts, right? No, not exactly. Pokémon Gold and Silver completely redefine the Poké-verse laid down by the first games. You still capture and train up to 250 monsters, but now you'll find male/female versions of each Pokémon, too. So your Pikachu might not be exactly the same as a friend's. And, if we can peer into the future for a sec, this concept of your own unique monster will only expand in games beyond Gold and Silver. "In future games, your Pikachu may be brighter yellow, mine may be darker. Yours may be slightly larger than mine," Gail Tilden, Nintendo's vice president of product acquisition and development, told us. "All of that can't yet be implemented, but they have gone to the step of identifying each monster's sex. That's the goal of Pokémon, that you live in a real environment."

Nintendo's banking on the new games to "catch" the real-life attention of gamers 24/7. Gold and Silver's new features include an internal clock, so certain monsters will only be capture-able during specific hours of the day, and a cellular phone with which players can send and receive messages and



challenges from other trainers. While some analysts claim Pokémon's 15 minutes of fame are nearly over, Nintendo hopes that Gold and Silver's release will renew interest in the series (just as the original game begins to drop off of the sales charts). Will it work?

So why is it a must-get game? Disregard the hype behind the Pokémon franchise and all of the licensed products it has spawned. Gold and Silver are really good RPGs, and a lot more polished than the original Pokémon games were. Even if you've never touched Pokémon, Gold and Silver is a must-play.

EVIL DEAD

HAIL TO THE KING



What's the deal? Hey, it ain't just the Tanaka boys who are psyched that developer Heavy Iron is giving Sam Raimi's *Evil Dead* flicks the survival-horror-game treatment. Even the boomstick-wielding main man himself thinks the whole experience is gonna be groovy. "It's fun to play the same character without having to be covered in blood and go through all that nightmare," said Bruce Campbell, who's reprising his role as average-Joe-turned-bloodsoaked-hero Ash for this PlayStation and Dreamcast game. "I can sit in a nice, clean, air-conditioned booth and go, 'Ooh! Ah! Ow! Oh!' instead of actually having to be there."

Heavy Iron and publisher THQ have enlisted the aid of both Campbell and Raimi to tweak the game's script for the hardcore fans. After all, nobody knows *Evil Dead* better than these guys. *Dead-heads* should expect an authentic Ash experience. "Rather than doing a character that's sort of like Ash, I'm actually going to be Ash," said Campbell—who has done the voice of Pitfall Harry and other game characters. "A lot of times when I do the other games, people are like, 'Well, you should have sort of an attitude like Ash, but not Ash.' So I try not to cough up all the old lines. I save them for this."

So why is it a must-get game? With weapons, deadites, locations—even the wild camera style—yanked from all three movies, who wouldn't want to come get some when *Evil Dead* hits this Halloween?



TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT



What's the deal? Everyone who likes a fighting game almost always likes Tekken. Like *Soul Calibur* for the Dreamcast, *Tekken Tag Tournament* for the PS2 is a conversion of a System-12 arcade game. Also like *Soul Calibur*, the graphics have taken a light-year leap over the original arcade version. Running at 60fps, in razor-sharp hi-resolutions, *Tekken Tag Tournament* also features 2-on-2 gameplay so powerful it'll make you pee your pants!

So why is it a must-get game? Well, the fact that just about every character that's ever been in a Tekken game (minus that useless dinosaur Gon) is being compiled into one lump sum may have something to do with it. The fact that Namco adds that tasty four-character action a la *Marvel vs. Capcom* is also a yummy temptation. While Tekken plays second fiddle to *Virtua Fighter* in Japan, it's always been mega-popular here, and will most likely sell by the truckload when it lands on our fair shores. It's not much more, gameplay-wise, than *Tekken 3*, but boy does it look swell!

•OCTOBER•

DINO CRISIS 2



What's the deal? It's pretty easy to sum up the original *Dino Crisis: Resident Evil* with Dinosaurs. Sure the backgrounds were fully polygonal, but everything else was pretty similar to the survival horror standard set by Capcom's big zombie games. So is the sequel just more characters, more big lizards and better graphics? Hell no! Well wait, yes actually, but it's also so much more. Capcom gutted the gameplay, and totally rebuilt it into a run-and-gun action fest for this sequel. You amass points by blasting down enemies, with bonuses awarded for speed and combos; later you can turn those points in for new weapons and ammo. It's more like *Final Fight* with guns than *Resident Evil*.

So why is it a must-get game? The first game was great, but we have been dying for something new to break out of the RE mold—especially now that every company from Asmik Ace to Jaleco has their own survival horror rip-off. Just from the short demo we've played, *DC2* looks like it will deliver the teeth-grashing, shotgun-pumping shot in the arm the genre needs.

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Sega Dreamcast

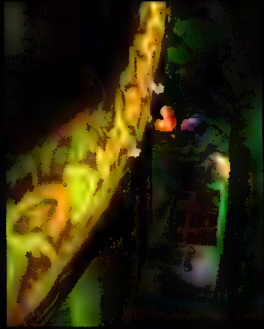
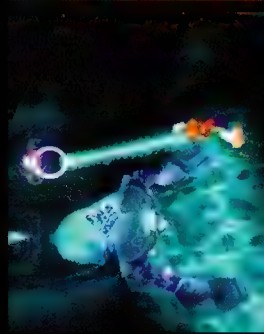
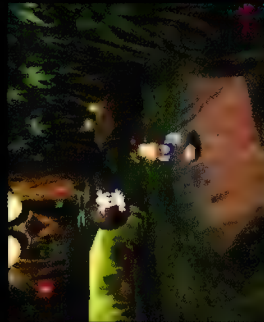
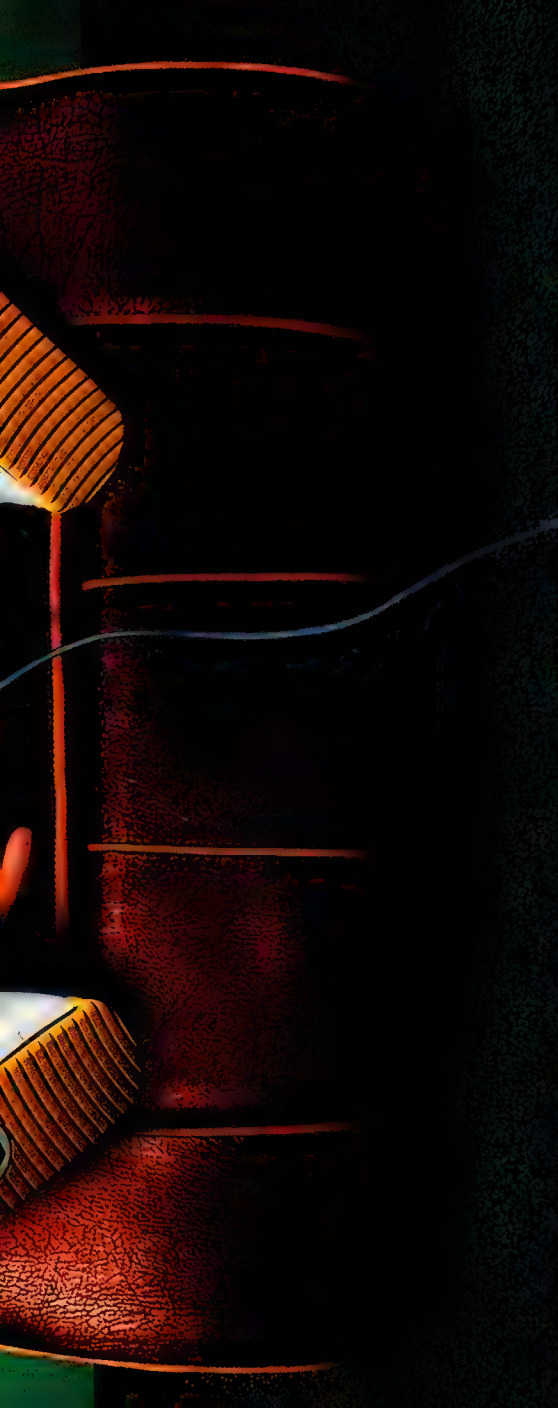


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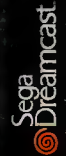


RAYMAN 2





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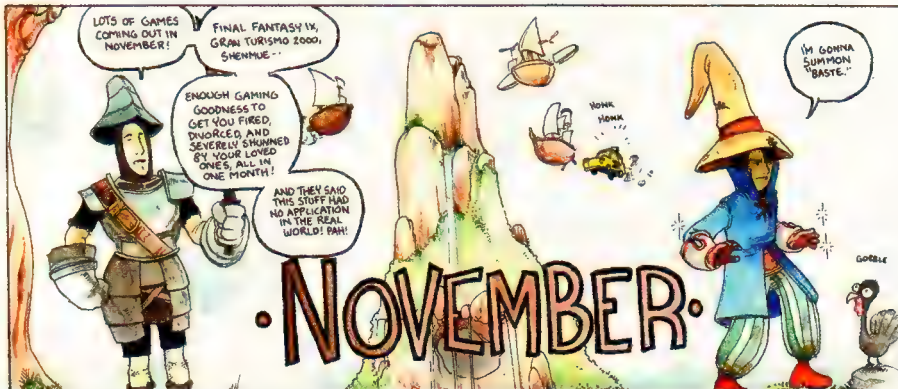


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GRAN TURISMO 2000

PS2



What's the deal? Back in 1998, Sony all but snatched the driving crown right out from under Namco's nose when they released Gran Turismo upon an unsuspecting American public. It was so revolutionary with its testing system and ridiculous amount of licensed cars (many just everyday vehicles racing side by side with exotic dream machines) that it redefined the genre and has yet to be topped by any other racing game. Sony knows GT is one of the most bankable properties in the industry, so they're readying GT2000 (or GT on steroids, if you will) for release on the PlayStation 2.

While this title was originally announced as basically an upgrade to Gran Turismo 2, rumors abound that GT2000 will contain more cars and tracks than its PlayStation predecessor, not to mention the obvious graphical enhancements made possible through the PS2 hardware.

You'll spy a shimmering heat wave as the cars scream over the hot pavement, and some of the most impressive lens-flare effects yet will add an unprecedented level of realism to what Sony hopes will be



the definitive racing simulator on any console.

So why is it a must-get game? The simple fact is the Gran Turismo games are the most realistic racing simulators available on home consoles today. Plus there's just no substitute for the myriad of licensed vehicles at your disposal. Whether you're racing a Honda Civic or a McLaren F1, the feeling of authenticity when you're screaming around a hairpin turn is more than enough reason to shell out the cash for this bad boy.



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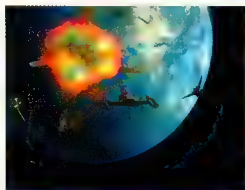
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STAR WARS

EPISODE ONE

STARFIGHTER

PS2



What's the deal? Forget about those dusty Kenner X-Wings and TIE fighters you toss around in the basement—the gang at LucasArts claims Starfighter is the closest you can get to movie-quality dogfighting. And that's not just 'cause of the extreme detail you'll find on the three ships you pilot against the Trade Federation. In Starfighter, size is everything. "One of our largest environments is more than 2,500 square kilometers," said Daron Stinnett, Starfighter's project leader. "The player flies about 250 kilometers per hour, so in that particular environment it would take about 10 minutes to fly from one side of the gameplay area to the other." You'll also face ships that were sketched by *Episode I* concept artist Doug Chiang but didn't make it into the movie. LucasArts built polygonal models of these leftover craft for the game.

Not all the planet-based missions (which are separate from the space-based stages) are set over wide-open terrain. One much tighter environment, for instance, takes place in a deep waterfall basin. The PlayStation 2's power is focused on this smaller area to create a lush, denser-feeling level. "Our engine does very well with virtually any-size environment, from vast open areas to others that are as detailed as a first-person action game," Stinnett told us. **So why is it a must-get game?** Starfighter's gee-whiz visuals are stellar, sure, but it's the mission variety—which looks to rival *Rogue Squadron's* killer assortment of sorties—that's got us excited. One planet-based level has

you and your wingman whizzing down a narrow canyon in a dead-of-night stealth mission to deliver ammunition and supplies to the Naboo resistance. You'll also go on a series of space-base missions in which you'll take on an enemy convoy. You eventually hijack a Trade Federation lander and use it to sneak past a blockade. "In the final mission in that series," Stinnett explained, "the player mans the lander's turret for a little B-17-style gunnery action." Sounds fun, and we hear *Super Bombad Racing* is gonna be a blast, too. That's two good PS2 Star Wars games to look forward to.

THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH



What's the deal? Different developer, same cocky hero. Electronic Arts has handed Bond's tuxedo to Eurocom, a developer who isn't oblivious to the astronomical expectations set by Nintendo's *GoldenEye*. Michael Condey, associate producer of *TWINE*, is confident that they know what gamers want. "The player gets to be Bond again—the sexy girls, the state-of-the-art Q-lab gadgets, the exotic locations," he told us. *TWINE* N64 follows the movie, but embellishes it to squeeze different types of gameplay and missions into it. "We have added control features, expanded multiplayer modes, and new gameplay mechanics such as skiing and underwater navigation," Condey said.

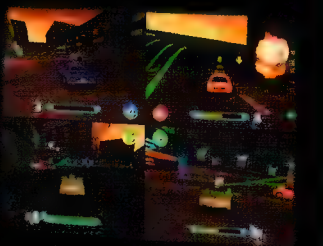
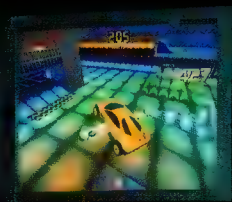
All of those additions are nice, but we were hoping some heavy petting of the Bond women. No luck there, but *TWINE's* multiplayer modes should provide plenty of foreplay. "The multiplayer arenas are each unique from the single-player missions, and although some share similar themes, each is completely different in architecture," said Condey. "My favorite occurs between two jets in flight. The level allows for the player to fight inside, out, on top of, and between these two jets as the player maneuvers around." That sounds tricky, even for 007.

So why is it a must-get game? When Eurocom sounded so confident about their project, we wondered if they've been drinking one too many shaken (not stirred) martinis. But after dusting off our *GoldenEye* skills and getting some trigger time in on an early version of the game, we found that their *Brosnan*-like cockiness might be rightly justified. This worthy game could be the perfect sequel to *GoldenEye*, even if the movie wasn't.



• NOVEMBER

M



2049 RUSH ST

San Francisco Rush™ 2049, the only high-octane title that brings together three games in one, including Race Mode, where you scream through 6 futuristic San Francisco tracks; Stunt Mode, with insane air and gravity-defying tricks, and finally, Battle Mode, with four-player capacity that lets you lock and load your way through 8 killer arenas. The pedal-to-the-metal arcade favorite is back with all new features and something for just about every octane junkie, including online ghost races for Sega Dreamcast®. Gentlemen, start your adrenal glands.



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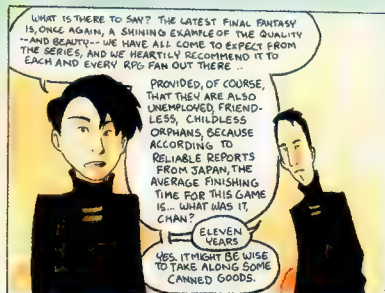


FINAL FANTASY IX

What's the deal? If you want all the nitty-gritty details on Square's final PlayStation installment of its flagship RPG series, flip to page 98 for our in-depth two-page preview. In the meantime, we just want to assure you of one thing: Final Fantasy IX is all good. Japan's *Famitsu* magazine—which reviews games in the same four-person format we do—gave the game a 10, 10, 9 and 9. Nearly everyone who's played the import claims FFXIX recaptures the sense of lighthearted high adventure that so defined the old-school FF games. Instead of overly complex Junctioning or Materia systems, this game returns to the simple, Magic-Points-based combat system of the good ol' days. It's got Dragons. It's got Black Mages. It's got a fantasy setting. It's got a motley crew of quirky, superdeformed characters. It's got airships. It's got everything fans of the NES and Super NES FF games could want.

So why is it a must-get game? Essentially, this thing takes everything that was good about FF I through VI and spruces it all up with the fantastic environments and FMV of FFXVII and

FFVIII. And keep in mind that this could be the last old-school FF game. Series director Hironobu Sakaguchi said all future installments on PlayStation 2 will take the franchise in new—and mostly online—directions. So, whether you're a die-hard fan of the old Final Fantasies or you've been weened on the flashy new PlayStation stuff, you'll wanna pick FFX up. This sure-to-be blockbuster has something for everybody.



•NOVEMBER•

SKIES OF ARCADIA

What's the deal? To hear veteran Sega game designer Reiko Kodama (she worked on Phantasy Star) describe *Skies of Arcadia*, this is the traditional RPG that Dreamcast owners have been craving. The game's enormous world and fully customizable airships (you even pick the crew) have us gearing up for 20,000 *Leagues Under the Sea*-style high adventure. "It's set in an age of exploration," Kodama told us. "You can spend time in each area and explore it to the nth degree."

So why is it a must-get game? This looks like it's gonna be something extra-special from the Phantasy Star team. And *Skies*'ll definitely keep you in RPG heaven until *Grandia II*.

DRIVER 2

What's the deal? Wreckless driving and evading arrest ain't the only crimes you can commit anymore in *Reflections*' sequel to last year's runaway hit. Now you can add grand theft auto to your list of felonies, too, because *Driver 2* lets you hop out of your car and swipe any car you like. Oh, and the game will look much nicer, too, with curving streets and more pedestrians to try to bowl over...er, kindly avoid.

So why is it a must-get game? Let's face it—the first game's high-speed formula worked, and this sequel adds some cool new gameplay twists to the mix.

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

What's the deal? *TimeSplitters* may be nabbing plenty of attention for its designers' *GoldenEye* roots, but *Unreal Tournament* is holding its own in the buzz department, too—and not just 'cause it was such a hit with PC gamers. UT will be the first PS2 title that'll support a true networked mode. Invest in a FireWire hub and cables and you can link four PS2s together for your own UT frag party. Sure, it's an expansive and inconvenient option (a hub will run you about \$80 and each participant will need his or her own TV), but at least you'll get to enjoy this frenetic first-person shooter the way it was meant to be played. Unfortunately, developer Epic Megagames wasn't able to implement play over the Internet using USB modems, so the only other way you can play UT with four friends is via the game's split-screen mode—unless you wait for the just-announced Dreamcast version and play this thing over SegaNet.

So why is it a must-get game? Fed up with tired ol' deathmatch and capture-the-flag stuff? UT's mission-style multiplayer modes could be just what you're looking for.



SPEC OPS

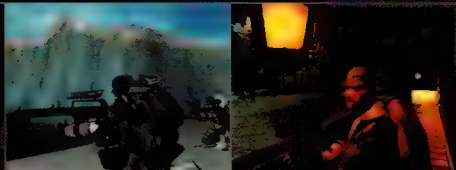
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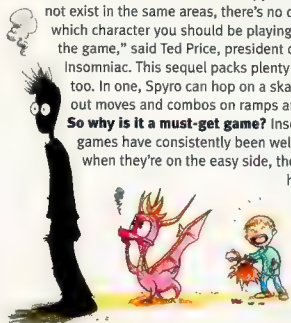


SPYRO: YEAR OF THE DRAGON



What's the deal? It's the newest in a line of impressive Spyro the Dragon games. Year of the Dragon still has the cartoony 3D action we've come to know and love, except with some additions to the gameplay. The game now has a variety of characters to use—each with its own homeland and unique abilities—who help Spyro achieve certain objectives. And you won't have to worry about backtracking with multiple characters like you did in a certain ape-riddled N64 adventure. "Since most of the time Spyro and the critters do not exist in the same areas, there's no confusion about which character you should be playing at any point in the game," said Ted Price, president of developer Insomniac. This sequel packs plenty of mini-games, too. In one, Spyro can hop on a skateboard and bust out moves and combos on ramps and half-pipes.

So why is it a must-get game? Insomniac's Spyro games have consistently been well-made. Even when they're on the easy side, there's no denying how fun and impressive-looking they are.



ONIMUSHA: PS2 WARLORDS

What's the deal? Capcom's first effort on PS2 isn't a Street Fighter or Resident Evil title. Go back in time to 16th-century Japan, where a samurai warrior named Samanosuke must rescue a princess kidnapped by the forces of darkness. "Our ultimate goal on this product is to achieve the highest-quality look on PlayStation 2 this year," Keiji Inafune, Onimusha's director told us. The game's engine is somewhat reminiscent of Resident Evil's, but allows more freedom of movement for combat. Sword-to-sword battlin' is the name of the game here, after all. It also uses the PS2's analog button function so you control the speed of your attacks.

This is a fictional story based within real events during Japan's feudal era. The team motion-captured Japanese actor Takeshi Kaneshiro (who has appeared in numerous Samurai/action films himself) to make the main character look as realistic as possible.

So why is it a must-get game? Most of the big games on PlayStation 2 this year are sequels, and this is one of the first big-name original titles from a big Japanese publisher that'll appear on the system.

•NOVEMBER•

NASCAR 2001

PS2



What's the deal? Like every other franchise they've got, EA Sports has become somewhat lazy with the NASCAR license in recent years, rehashing the same old engine with a new driver thrown in once in a while to reflect the coming of hot new rookies and retirement of venerable heroes.

Whether it's the excitement of a new system or the fact that Hasbro is trying to invade EA's territory with their own NASCAR title, this year's NASCAR installment is receiving a complete overhaul. This isn't just last year's game in new clothes; EA has actually gone back, torn down the old engine and rebuilt it from the ground up.

The historical Daytona International Speedway, a license locked out of the video game world for years, is the site of NASCAR's biggest race of the year. Well, the license is now available, and EA has snatched it up for NASCAR 2001. For the first time ever, players will be able to test their mettle in the Daytona 500 on a home console.

So why is it a must-get game? Aside from Hasbro's new NASCAR title, EA's NASCAR 2001 is the only place to go for

fans to get their fix. Upon the launch of PlayStation 2, it'll be the only racing game out that's endorsed by a U.S. sanctioning body. NASCAR is the second most watched sport in the country for a reason. Forty-three cars screaming around triovals and half-mile short tracks at upward of 200 mph is about as exciting as it gets, and EA Sports has always known how to capture that feeling.



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BANJO-TOOIE



What's the deal? If every company had the record for hit games that Rare does, it would truly be a gamer's paradise. At least N64 owners will benefit from it at a time when third-party support is slim. Rare's big offering for the holidays this year—barring any unforeseen delays—is the much-anticipated sequel to Banjo-Kazooie. This bear (Banjo) and bird (Kazooie) team have nine new worlds to explore (150 total areas), new moves, multiplayer games for up to four players, and a lot of other surprises. Instead of being attached to each other at the hip like in the first game, they can split up and take on areas alone. Ever since Rare said that Tooie would somehow interact with and unlock levels within the original, we speculated on how that'd be done—it's not expected to be through a "lock-on" cartridge. Even today, Rare still won't say how they're going to do it—and probably won't until the game is released.

So why is it a must-get game? It's a 3D platform game from Rare—what more do you need?

SONIC SHUFFLE



What's the deal? Sega and the same Hudson guys who brought you Mario Party are the brains behind this mini-game-packed title starring Sonic and company. As in Mario Party, SS is set on themed game boards covered with icons that kick off mini-games or trivia challenges when you land on them. Oh, and Sega's giving the characters that nifty Jet Grind Radio-style celshaded look, too.

So why is it a must-get game? We got no reason to think SS won't be every bit as fun as Mario Party, and—better still—you can play this thing over the Internet, too.

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX



What's the deal? Super-duper big-air time, fellas. If you dig Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, then chances are you'll dig this BMX game featuring the Condor himself, Mat Hoffman. Choose from up to nine riders, each with different abilities, and take to the half-pipe, along with over half a dozen real-world environments designed to hone your skills.

So why is it a must-get game? Tony Hawk Pro Skater is one of the best-playing, best-looking sports games out there, extreme or not. That Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX uses the TH engine is no small matter. BMX moves silky-smooth, and should add to the growing roster of enjoyable games (Spider Man, THPS2) to use the technology. Sure, BMX riding isn't as big or accessible as skateboarding, but this is sure a great way to take a peek at this up-and-coming sport.

SHENMUE



What's the deal? Actually, Hsu and Chan have summed up Yu Suzuki's epic pretty darn nicely here (but that doesn't mean we're letting them off the hook for making a mockery of our feature). This cast-of-hundreds epic—the first chapter in a nobody-knows-how-long series—is crammed with fine-brush details such as a working weather system, yokels who follow day and night cycles and mini-games, mini-games, mini-games. The numerous play styles hold together a plot that centers on Ryo Hazuki, a young Japanese man seeking answers behind his father's death, and maybe a pet kitty along the way.

Sega hired more than 200 American and Canadian voice actors to portray every citizen in Shenmue's world. The English redubbing process has already been completed in Japan, and Sega says U.S. gamers need not worry about God-awful voice acting spoiling the Shenmue experience. "The dialogue's all there, and it's sounding pretty good," localization producer June Honma told us. "It sounds like what would happen if

everybody in Japan suddenly spoke good English. They don't necessarily sound like Americans, but the voices fit the characters and the environment they're in."

So why is it a must-get game? We've known this thing was something special ever since Sega announced it back before the Dreamcast's Japanese launch. And even if you're not sucked in by Shenmue's twisting story, stylish visuals or trillions of tiny details, you can still blow a few hours playing arcade-perfect renditions of Space Harrier and Hang On, both of which you'll find within the game.



• NOVEMBER •

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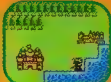
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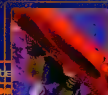
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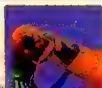
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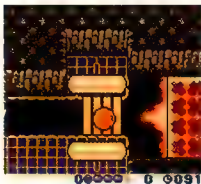


PlayStation²





KIRBY TILT 'N' TUMBLE



GAME BOY
COLOR

What's the deal? First, Nintendo created Game Boy carts that gave the system force feedback. Now, Nintendo brings us cartridges that can sense what direction you're moving the system. You know people who jerk their Game Boys in all directions while playing? (Does anyone really play like that?) Now that herky-jerky movement is part of the game. Tilt 'n' Tumble is similar to a game of Labyrinth—a wooden game board where you had to tilt the playfield to guide a marble around a maze filled with holes. Only instead of a marble, it's Nintendo's lil' pink power puff, and the levels are a lot more exciting than navigating a hole-filled maze. Guide Kirby through loads of areas, packed with secrets, mini-games and bosses to collect the stars stolen from Dream Land's night sky. To move him around, you tilt the Game Boy up, down, or side to side left or right. To make him jump, you quickly angle the Game Boy up, like you're flipping a pancake. Areas include a desert, cloud world, ghost-filled dungeons, forest and castle. Getting used to all that movement could be difficult—it'd be best to keep the Dramamine close by. And it'll require a sufficient amount of light since you'll have to tilt the screen away from direct view to move Kirby around. But whoever said new technologies wouldn't take some time to get used to?

So why is it a must-get game? In addition to using this super-cool tilt technology, it's another game starring one of Nintendo's lesser-used characters. And since it's a first-party GBC game, you know it's going to be good.



PAPER MARIO



What's the deal? The original Mario RPG was a no-brainer: Couple Mario, the hottest video game character at the time, with Squaresoft, the hottest RPG developer on the planet and—boom!—instant hit.

Well, Squaresoft may be out of the equation now, but Nintendo's N64 follow-up to the Super NES classic promises to be something special nonetheless. The Paper Mario team is making a concentrated effort at getting away from that tired "N64 look" (you know, blurry, low-res 3D models) and going for the same cardboard-cutout style seen in Yoshi's Story.

Nintendo knows that its fans, when they're not drooling over the latest Pokémon product, live to play new Mario adventures. Plus we all know Nintendo would never mess up anything with Mario's name on it, right?

So why is it a must-get game? Paper Mario is going to appeal to just about everyone, and for good reasons. It's got great, old-school RPG action, unique sprite-based graphics and, well...it's a new Mario game. How long have you been waiting for a new cartridge starring that pudgy little plumber, anyway?

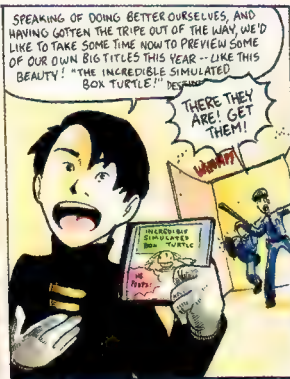
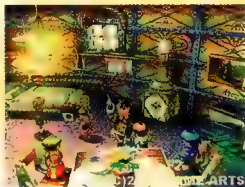
GRANDIA II



What's the deal? If you played the first Grandia on the PlayStation, chances are you're already hot for this Dreamcast sequel without us having to say a word. The idea of more awesome, intricately designed 3D dungeons, unique real-time/turn-based battles, memorable characters and another huge, twisting story line is enough to have any RPG—as Hsu and Chan say—lover stocking up on the canned goods. The only problem critics and gamers both found in the first game was with the localization—Sony's typically stiff RPG dialogue and some clunky voice acting. That's a mistake Ubi Soft isn't planning on repeating for part II: They've hired the director responsible for some of the best voice work ever in any video game—Metal Gear Solid—and are working hard to keep the text as close to the Japanese as possible, but also smooth and natural-sounding in English.

From what we've seen of the import, Grandia II's gameplay looks mostly like the first game (even though the world and characters are entirely unconnected with the last title). The one new feature developer Game Arts is touting this time around is the combination of real-time graphics and prerendered CG: As seen before briefly in games like Final Fantasy VIII, Grandia II makes use of the technology for awesome spell effects and other sequences that look way better than the DC hardware would normally be able to handle.

So why is it a must-get game? Let's face it, Evolution just ain't cuttin' the mustard—the Dreamcast needs a truly great RPG, bad. And who better to deliver it than the two men responsible for the mega-hit Lunar RPGs, the voice director for the ultra-super-hit Metal Gear Solid, and character designer (who made the too-cute Grandia squirrel-pika mascot) behind the super-kala-frickin'-foober-doober-uber-pika-pooper-hit Pokémon?

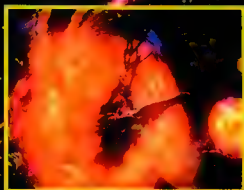
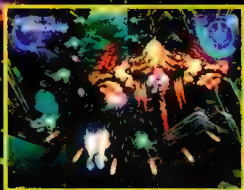


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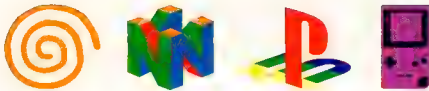
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Review Crew

This Month...

More changes to the crew this month—well, mostly they won't take place until next month, but we didn't want you all to panic so we're warning you early. New hire Ryan Lockhart (formerly a writer for the now-defunct *Incite* video games magazine, but we don't hold that against him) doesn't start full-time until next issue, but since he wrote an entire strategy guide on Ecco, we thought we'd have him chime in with a review. Also next issue we say hello to Jon Dudlak, a local champion who managed to survive the 13 days of challenges and training it takes to become an *EGM* editor. And of course, we bid a fond adieu to Shawn—but not really. He'll still be around. 🍄

Our Philosophy

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 0.0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap, as our scale (above) explains. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ain't it?

Our Awards



Platinum Awards go to games that get three 10's, the best and rarest review a game can get.



Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.



Games that average at least an 8.0 receive **Silver Awards**.

The Players...

Crispin Boyer

Cris has it rough. Not only did Hsu and Chan hijack his feature, now Shawn (who's also Cris' roommate) is leaving—and taking the George Foreman grill!

Favorite Games: Action, Adventure

Dean Hager

It's football time again and Dean can't wait for the awesome PS2 Madden. In the meantime he's settling for the regular ol' PlayStation version.

Favorite Games: Sports, Racing

Sam Kennedy

Sam just came back from London with some sweet Sega football jerseys. Now the *EGM* crew want some. Will he be able to go back with Dean's credit card?

Favorite Games: Action, Adventure, RPG

Dan Leahy

Dan can't stop talking about Mario Tennis. Now he thinks Camelot should do Mario—football, baseball, basketball, bowling and maybe fishing.

Favorite Games: Sports, Action, Fighting

James Mielke

The Milkman's girlfriend keeps using the word "marriage" in conversation. The Milkman keeps using the words "Diablo II" in conversation. Stalemate!

Favorite Games: RPG, Fighting, Gum Spittin'

Greg Sewart

Greg's still reeling from the barrage of hate mail over his Chrono Cross review last month. He's received at least 13 death threats, and even a pile of dog feces!

Favorite Games: Racing, RPG, Adventure

Joe Funk

With PlayStation 2 sports games right around the corner, Joe is chomping at the bit to let everyone know who the big boss man is.

Favorite Games: Sports, Action

Chris Johnston

CJ knew it was time to go to the dentist when his upper-right wisdom tooth began bleeding. Too bad he's got to wait 'til this issue's off to the printer to get it fixed.

Favorite Games: Adventure, Puzzle, Music

Kraig Kujawa

After going through bouts of depression invoked by Shawn's departure, Kraig was cheered up only after playing NFL 2K1 online and seeing more PS2 Madden.

Favorite Games: Sports, Strategy

Mark MacDonald

In the interest of total disclosure, Mark would like you to know he attended an Ubi Soft press event—in Hawaii, OH, and Evolution 2 is the best game. Ever.

Favorite Games: Action, Adventure, RPG

Andrew Pfister

It's back to school for the last time, and Andrew plans to finish off his final summer vacation with Chrono Cross, Virtua Tennis and FASEL!

Favorite Games: RPG, Action

Shawn Smith

This is the last issue for Shawn as a full-time. Weird. While in college, he'll be a regular old freelancer. He says it has been a truly magical journey.

Favorite Games: Action, Adventure

Game of the Month



Madden NFL 2001 Pg. 180

For the first time since...well who knows when, a sports title walks away with Game of the Month honors. Both the N64 and PS versions of football's flagship title scored Gold awards with the Review Crew this month, edging out another excellent tennis sports game by a nose—a big, fat, moustached, plumber's nose. On the other end of the spectrum, we had some of the worst games in recent memory this month—Samurai Showdown: Warrior's Rage, Mortal Kombat Special Forces and the not horrible but very disappointing Game Boy Color version of Perfect Dark. So what's in store for next month? Can you say PS2 launch games? Aww yeah. 🍄

EDITORS' CURRENT FAVES

- 1** Madden NFL 2001 EA
- 2** Chrono Cross Square EA
- 3** Mario Tennis Nintendo
- 4** Ecco the Dolphin Sega
- 5** Jet Grind Radio Sega
- 6** Parasite Eve II Enix
- 7** Perfect Dark Rare
- 8** Dragon Warrior I/II Enix
- 9** Virtua Tennis Sega
- 10** Seaman Sega

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Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Psikyō
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Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Old-school gameplay
Worst Feature: Levels too short
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Take a few Capcom characters, put them on wheels, throw them into a 3/4-perspective action-shooter with infinite Firepower and you get Cannon Spike. It's great to see Capcom teaming up with Psikyō, a company that definitely knows how to make old-school games, and it's nice to see the characters (Mega Man, Arthur from Ghosts 'N Ghosts, and more) in a new setting. Only problem is that it's not enough. It's a great idea but the execution barely scratches the surface of what the game could have been. The missions are ridiculously short—never bigger than a few screens across—and there's no cut sequences to advance the story. Everything seems very random. Just imagine what this could've been—bigger levels with more emphasis on side- or vertical scrolling bits, more cameos from Capcom characters. Don't get me wrong—**this isn't a bad game, it just leaves me wanting more.** Luckily it doesn't suffer from the same unlimited continue syndrome that most arcade ports these days do, so finishing it on anything but the easiest setting takes skill. Graphically it looks great, very fast and detailed. One big problem I had with the control: It gets really repetitive having to tap and hold the right trigger to lock-on to enemies. After a few hours of playing my right index finger cramped up somethin' fierce. Let's hope Capcom makes a kick-ass sequel that fleshes out some of the ideas Cannon Spike hints at.

Chris

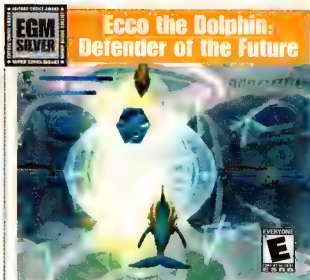
This game is something of a surprise. Imagine a combination of Expendable, Zombie Revenge and Dynamite Cop—that's pretty much what Cannon Spike is. Less "find-the-key" and more "just plain" old blast everything. **Cannon Spike is an extremely repetitive shooter,** which, luckily, features fan-favorites Megaman, Cammy, Charlie of Street Fighter fame and more. Each character plays differently enough to warrant sampling, but the game is very short. The art gallery is awesome, but it's unlocked after one play, so the incentive to revisit Cannon Spike passes quickly. It looks great and it's cheap, but maybe not worth buying.

Milkman

There's no denying CS is an intense, visual masterpiece. It has tons of incredible effects, and highly detailed character models (especially Mega Man). Chances are it'll sell well, and it probably deserves to. But despite how fun it is initially or how snazzy it looks at the end of the day CS is an arcade game, which means it gets old quick. If you want an arcade experience at home, then it'll be right up your alley. I want something more, however. That's why I'd go over to my local Blockbuster and rent the thing for a few nights. Sure, there's a bit of nostalgia involved since CS features a number of popular Capcom characters, but that's not worth 30 bones.

Shawn

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Appaloosa Interactive
Featured In: EGM #132
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Gorgeous graphics and sound
Worst Feature: Tough learning curve
Web Site: www.sega.com

After a couple of hours with this game I was convinced I'd have to score it low—the learning curve is so steep! But here's the catch: **No matter how frustrated I got in any level, I was always compelled to keep trying** until I succeeded in taking the lovable little mammal to the next challenge. That speaks volumes about the quality of Ecco. It's not often nowadays to get a game so well designed that a high difficulty doesn't totally destroy the experience. Ecco's also easily the most impressive-looking game I date on this system, from the beautiful underwater scenery all the way up to the surrounding landscape above the surface. The quality of design and production in this game is simply second-to-none. Complementing the look perfectly is the enchanting soundtrack, which rivals the superb job Spencer Nilsen did with Ecco on the Sega CD what seems like ages ago. The wonderful level design and graphics would still be nothing without a great story, but Ecco excels here as well. The plot feels like it belongs in a movie, yet another reason to keep playing even after reaching what feels like an insurmountable challenge. The conversion from 2D to 3D hasn't hurt that classic Eco feel either, as this game controls perfectly. Defending the future is a long (over 25 levels long, in fact) and arduous task, but it's enjoyable every step of the way. You hardcore types out there should love this.

Greg

Ecco raises the bar for graphic quality and detail on the Dreamcast. No other game, except maybe Resident Evil Code: Veronica, comes close. **The visuals are simply breathtaking.** The dolphin and sea creature animation is unmatched in its degree of realism. It's so real that I'd scream in pain and jump out of my seat every time I got hurt. The developers also did a great job translating the balance and feel of the old Eco games into 3D. Even the music has that Sega CD Ecco feel to it. Control becomes second nature after a few hours getting used to your new fins. This is a must-play. It's almost enough to make me forgive Appaloosa for those Contra games.

Chris

There's no question this is a pretty, pretty game. In fact, it's easily one of the best-looking home games ever. But, at the same time, it's also one of the most frustrating. To be honest, **I haven't gotten this pissed off at a game in years.** In some ways it's great that you're thrown into levels with no real direction; it forces you to think and fully explore before moving on. But at the same time, being stuck in a series of tunnels with no apparent way out or dying again and again while trying to perform some insane jump isn't exactly fun. If Ecco played half as good as it looked, it would have been a truly incredible experience, instead of just an aggravating one.

Ryan

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

10 9 8 5



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Psikyō
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Old-school shootin' fun
Worst Feature: Often can't avoid death
Web Site: www.capcom.com

Since the days of the original Raiden there haven't been many shooters that have made me lose sight of my ship against the backdrop of never-ending enemy fire. Or that have thrown so much at me that avoidance is not an option. But Gunbird 2 is such a game. **This is a balls-to-the-wall shooter.** Crafted by Japanese shooter wizards Psikyō and (after the first time a game of theirs has made it to the U.S.), it's the perfect example of an old-school twitch game. In fact it's almost too reflex-intensive and it's easy to get frustrated. Enemies throw so much crap at you that most of the time—depending on what difficulty you have it set at—it is impossible to avoid getting hit. After you pass a certain point in the game you are thrown back to the beginning of each stage (those continues are unlimited) and can't continue from where you died, which is actually good 'cause it keeps the difficulty high. The game has some wacky Japanese humor, and each character has two possible endings to choose from. In one of them you sprinkle a fattening potion on the citizens of a city. In another you become a "bright" girl, literally. Unfortunately, it's so old school that the cinemas are mostly still images. Sound-wise, character voices get repetitive very quickly, and the music is very plain synth-pop. If you remember the old days of shooters, this is worth picking up. At the lower price it's being sold at, it's a worthy purchase.

Chris

What's up with Capcom lately? They've got a stable of shooters the likes of which hasn't been seen since the glory days of the Genesis. No complaints here, though this game reminds me of just how easy games have gotten... or how slow I am in my old age. **The difficulty on the single-player game is definitely way up there,** and the fact that after the third level you need to restart any level you die in from the beginning means you won't beat it in one sitting. Well, unless you play the two-player mode, then you can rifle through the game's seven missions immediately. Barring that, Gunbird 2 feels like a great old-school shooter with sweet 2D graphics.

Greg

I appreciate it when a company the size of Capcom brings over a humble 16-Bit-style shooter these days. But when it barely has the strength to compete with shooters from the early '90s, I wonder why they even bothered. Gunbird 2 is a paint-by-numbers textbook scroller stencilled in from the blueprints of mediocre shooters past. **The game lacks the hook that made recent blasters like R-Type Delta and Radiant Silvergun so much fun to play.** Of the half-dozen characters available, the only one compelling enough to play as is Morrigan of Darkstalkers fame, although why Capcom shoehorned her into this mediocre shooter is beyond me.

Milkman

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

6 6 6 5

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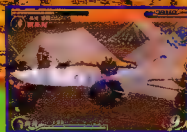
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Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Eden Studios
Featured In: EGM #333
Players: 1-4
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Track editor
Worst Feature: Some slowdown
Web Site: www.infogrames.com



If you're experiencing déjà vu it's OK, this game was released last year as V-Rally 2 on the PS. Fear not, it's been totally reworked for the DC, from the physics to the graphics. And considering the PS game was mighty good to begin with, DC owners are in for a treat. TD: V-Rally offers a lot of track variety and a large stable of licensed rally cars to choose from. If you find yourself mastering all the tracks in the game too early, the fully functional track editor is easy to use. In CB time you'll be creating your own "widow maker" to challenge yourself and make your friends cry like little girls. The gameplay itself is spot-on. Vehicles feel "heavy" (though not as much as Sega Rally 2) and react realistically to the bumps and curves of the road. Once in a while you'll get a strange hop, usually having to do with too much acceleration over a crest. **The learning curve is perfect**, however, so frustration never sets in. The only way to unlock the 30 hidden cars is to beat all three modes of the game on all three difficulty levels. Rookies will benefit from the game's progression, and advanced veterans may find the first half a tad boring. Either way, the entire experience is a blast. If you can stand a four-way split screen, V-Rally even includes a decent multiplayer mode. The only thing tarnishing this game is a little slowdown during certain curves. It's never enough to truly detract from the game, and certainly no worse than Sega Rally 2.

Greg

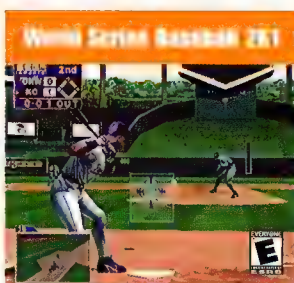
I really liked this on the PlayStation, and I really, really like it on the Dreamcast. As I soaked in the speed, handling and the inspired game play, I all but forgot about Sega Rally 2. Honestly it seems like V-Rally is twice as fast. The selection of licensed cars is great and the adjustability is even better. Especially like the steering options—they let you tailor your car to fit your driving style. Heavy over-steer for power-sliding, or under-steer for the riding-on-rails experience. The courses are also very well-done. They've kept momentum-killing obstacles to a minimum so it's possible to really haul around these twisty tracks. A must-buy for Rally fans.

Dean

I'm a sucker for a cool track editor, and I have to say that I spent a lot of time playing around with V-Rally's. It may not be the most intuitive system ever, but you can knock together a very respectable course in less than 30 minutes. This alone gives TDVR a potentially longer lifespan than Sega Rally 2. As far as the driving goes though, I have to say that it takes some getting used to. It's far too easy to roll the car and, more shockingly, to flip the thing end over end. You can master it though, and once you learn to feather the throttle, you settle into the slide-happy gameplay quite easily. **It's not a better game than Sega Rally, but it's close.**

John

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega of Japan
Featured In: EGM #333
Players: 1-2
Supports: VGA Box
Best Feature: Graphics
Worst Feature: No fielding
Web Site: www.sega.com



Dreamcast owners probably figured baseball, of all sports, was safe in the hands of Sega. After all, the World Series line of baseball games had a long-standing tradition of excellence dating back to the Genesis days. Unfortunately, tradition goes out the window in WSB 2k1, right along with a good portion of the gameplay and fun we were expecting. The box promises that if you can "do it on the diamond, you can do it in the game." I guess that doesn't include fielding, because the CPU takes care of that for you. Is this the future? Do gamers want less control? Gee, I hope the next racing game steers the car for me! So I can just worry about the gas. Ridiculous. **WSB 2k1 has a host of other problems as well, including rampant slowdown, silly animations, unresponsive runners and fielders, terrible sound and more.** This game just doesn't feel like baseball, even for an arcade-based baseball game (which it is trying to be). The only portion of the game which feels remotely polished is the pitcher/batter interface, which is a deep system of subtle controls and cool timing elements. Once the ball gets put in play, however, hilarity often ensues. I love watching my pitcher run a circle around the mound before leaping, ballerina-style, to catch a pop fly. Ever seen a shortstop running in place? You will. I also suspect you'll be doing something a lot of other WSB 2k1 owners might do. Return the game.

Dan

Two things I really like about WSB—the batting and pitching interfaces. Using the trigger button in a reverse action (release for the swing) is a cool idea. It feels like you can hit anywhere on the field, and often times you can. Pitching is nearly as effective. Once you release the ball you direct it like a guided missile—fun stuff. Sadly though, the rest of the game is a flop. It switches between sim and arcade but doesn't commit to either. Come on...you can't take control of your fielders! That's just crazy. It looks good, although close-ups of players reveal robot-like features. Fly balls are hard to judge as well. Too bad, I was really hoping for more.

Dean

Sega Sports has been one of the brightest spots on the DC, which makes it incredibly surprising that they released this utterly stupid baseball game. On the surface the game looks great—the best a baseball game has ever looked, but at a horrible expense. I could hardly believe it when I couldn't control my fielders to retrieve a ball in play. **Even the worst baseball game on the Atari 2600 at least let you control your fielders.** Did they not think this aspect of the game was important? I tried to live in a fantasy world and pretend it didn't bother me, but it has too many other problems, such as the sluggish batting interface. What a mess. Pathetic.

Kraig

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Yuke's Co.
Featured In: EGM #333
Players: 1-4
Supports: None
Best Feature: Nine wrasslers on screen at once!
Worst Feature: Not enough modes and options
Web Site: www.thq.com



If you walk up to this game expecting a WWF SmackDown-quality experience, pack up your lights and head home now—**WWF Royal Rumble is downright skeletal compared to Yuke's much beefier PlayStation wrestling.** You don't get a season mode here. You don't get any create-a-wrestler options. You don't even get a true tag-team mode. All you'll find are wrestlers, lots of them, all in the ring at once in the game's best play mode, the Royal Rumble. As you've no doubt read in every preview of this thing, Royal Rumble crams up to nine wrestlers into the ring at the same time, with no hits to the framerate, and you and three pals can control four of them. It's chaotic fun for a while, but the thrill wears thin quickly because all you really end up doing is wailing on opponents who wander too near the ropes. The other main mode—Exhibition—is much more straightforward and blasé. It's just standard arcade-style action with simplified controls similar to SmackDown's. During later matches the AI cheats more than...well, more than a real pro wrestler, making for a frustrating one-player game. In fact, there's really no reason you would want to play this game alone. It's more of a party game. Royal Rumble certainly looks good—some specials are downright as-seen-on-UPN fantastic. But I'd just as soon play the coin-op version in the arcades, where I can see the flashy visuals for cheap.

Crispin

After the surprisingly high-quality WWF SmackDown, I had extremely high hopes for THQ's DC wrassler, Royal Rumble. Having a potential 9-man smorg of grapplers practically had me wetting myself. But unlike SmackDown, with its oodles of options, awesome create-a-player mode and stunning graphics, RR stands out because it contains absolutely none of these things. An arcade mode, a versus mode and a chintzy options list is all you get. That's it! The characters are ugly, the replay value is nil, control is weak, and the voice samples are non-existent. **This is one big disappointing cash-in on the Dreamcast's popularity.** Avoid it. **Milkman**

I'm not a big wrestling fan any more, so maybe I can't appreciate all the nuance to this game. But from a pure entertainment perspective, RR has limited appeal. Like wrestling itself, there's lots of flash but not much substance. **This is basically a strategy-free button-mashing arcade-style party game.** In the ring I often had trouble turning to face my opponent, instead my guy would lunge to his flank, unwittingly opening up to power moves. I guess when a bunch of wrestlers storm the ring it's supposed to be riotous mayhem, but I found it to be annoying more than anything. The graphics aren't anything special, and the moves weren't all that fun to execute. **Joe**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

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Railroad Tycoon II

Developer: G.O.D.
Developer: TopPop/Tremor
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: Strategic depth-online play
Web Site: www.tremor.net

Old hobbies like model trains are starting to go the way of the dinosaur, but at least Railroad Tycoon gives you a good reason to lay track: making money. Playing this game is complex at first and can be somewhat intimidating, especially because of all the micromanagement involved. With each layer of depth comes another control panel screen, usually laden with buttons and other bits of information. The in-game control scheme is probably as intuitively laid out as it could possibly be, but even after hours of play and help from a handy tutorial, I still found that managing a large choo-choo empire with a joystick was cumbersome. The graphics are decent but still leave something to be desired. It seems like **strategy games are always treated like second-class citizens when it comes to graphics**, and this game could have really benefited from a little more pizzazz. At least this does have one gem—online play. Although it wasn't up and running at press time, we have a good idea of how it will run, and like what we saw. Give it a try.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
1	1	1	1

Midway Battle Mode

Developer: Midway
Featured In: EGM #132
Players: 1-4
Supports: Battle Mode
Web Site: www.midway.com

After Hydro Thunder and Offroad Thunder—games with such big air you literally had to watch out for low-flying airplanes—the former king of the gonzo arcade racers seems almost tame in comparison. **Despite its sharp graphics and challenging track design, Rush 2011 is a rather ho-hum affair.** The new retractable wings, the only real concessions to the game's futuristic theme, are gimmicky and more of a hindrance than anything else, due to severe oversteering. Credit Midway with gamely tossing in a couple of bonus modes, Trick and Battle; however, neither justifies buying the game. Of the two, Battle mode, which allows up to four players to duke it out in team or free-for-all contests, is the more enjoyable, but it could have been even better if the developers had retooled the controls to facilitate turning and spent a little more time on level design. Hardcore Rush fans may enjoy collecting each level's 16 hidden medals—some of them are virtually impossible—but most everyone else will tire of the game before finding more than a handful.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
1	1	1	1

Eidos

Developer: Prolific
Featured In: EGM #132
Players: 1-4
Supports: Music and graphics
Web Site: www.eidos.com

Other than better-looking graphics and a decent four-player versus mode, there isn't anything noticeably different about this Dreamcast Magical Racing Tour compared to the PlayStation version. With these upgraded graphics come a desperately needed smoother framerate as well, even in the multiplayer mode. Still, for a Dreamcast game I was expecting **more impressive visuals overall.** Aesthetics aside, one rather annoying problem has come over from the PlayStation MRT: the game's identity crisis. Even though the intro is filled with the kid-friendly Disney story with nicely rendered characters and happy music, the game itself can be really challenging. So who is this game for? Experienced kart-racing fanatics who happen to like cute little characters and whimsical stories best-suited for 10-year-old children? Other than this, the game isn't terribly original. Even though there aren't many games like it on the DC, you can tell the game borrows a lot from Mario Kart and Crash Team Racing. All in all, it's better than the PS version but still nothing special.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
1	1	1	1

Madden NFL 07

Developer: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports
Featured In: EGM #134
Players: 1-4
Supports: Expansion, Rumble
Web Site: www.easports.com

If you love football, **there is no other pigskin game that comes close to touching the Madden franchise on the N64.** It's sad that there isn't any good competition on the platform. Once upon a time, Acclaim's Quarterback Club was a decent alternative, but no longer—EA has them beat hands down. This year's edition of Madden is good—damned good. It's the first one I like as much as its PS counterpart. The crisp, hi-res graphics are superb when the Expansion Pak is in use, far surpassing its PS version, and they look pretty good without it as well. In fact, a few of the EGMers stopped by my cube because it caught their eye—an action that speaks volumes. There isn't as much audio, however. A few extraneous things have been cut out: You can't choose from a jukebox of menu tracks, and there isn't as much commentary (though that's actually a plus.) Interestingly enough, the in-game crunches and hits sound more impactful than the PS game. The two games are so close, it's a toss-up—it almost comes down to which console controller you like better (for me, it's PS).

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	7	8	10

Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2

Developer: 3DO
Developer: 3DO
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Variety of weapons, and the music
Worst Feature: Touchy control
Web Site: www.3do.com

In a word: Sloppy. **Sarge's Heroes 2 looks and plays like something that should've stayed in the development studio for a few more months.** The frame rate is ridiculously choppy in spots (which is strange, since the graphics are sparse and simple 90-percent of the time), the camera usually follows way too close or whips around in a disorienting way and the control is too touchy—especially for how many cat-walk-type levels you have to plod your way through. You end up dying by falling or by chance rather than by fighting a boss or taking on any number of the brain dead tan soldiers. On top of all of this though, I doubt anyone will really die very often in this game since full-health-restoring med-pack after full-health-restoring med-pack litter each of the levels. The game does get a little better as you play through it, thanks to some interesting later missions. And really, I generally find it at least somewhat entertaining to play through a military style game with a covert operations feel (even if it's not the best one around). The music is consistently solid from start to finish as well (the sound effects and voices aren't near as enjoyable however). But these few good points certainly don't outweigh the bad. Overall, this one is a rental at best. The sad thing is, even with this review many of you will go out and buy this below-average time waster. Perhaps I'm just a jaded, out-of-touch gaming journalist.

Shawn

I can think of plenty of reasons to bag on this newest ho-hum installment in the mysteriously successful ho-hum series, but I'll focus my ire on one glaring flaw: jumping sucks. Your character always seems to leap too late, and that makes for a really bad time in some of the platform-heavy areas. Otherwise, **this sucker delivers the same low-brow thrills of its predecessor.** The fun gun is once again the flamethrower. Launching mortars is a hoot. You get to blow a lot of stuff up. Yawn. And while I'm all for a little mindless action once in a while, this game just needs more polish and better control. Even the multiplayer deathmatches are dull.

Crispin

Games just don't get much blander than this one. I felt myself slipping into a coma as I trudged my way through each mind-numbing level of Army Men. I realize that little plastic army men come in only two colors, but **why does the rest of the game have to be so damn ugly?** I've seen more polish on a dusty deck; it just seems 3DO's goal was to slap it together and ship it out. The animation is very choppy, the controls are stiff and the enemy intelligence gives these toys a bad name. The basic idea behind this game isn't bad, but I wouldn't be caught in a foxhole—plastic, or otherwise—with the development team.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	6	4	3

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Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Camelot
Featured In: EGM #132
Players: 2-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Doubles action
Best Feature: Losing at multiplayer
Web Site: www.nintendo.com



Note to self: Buy Mario Tennis as soon as possible. That's all that really needs to be said about this game. If you want to read on while I extol the virtues of this game, then please be my guest. If you'd rather not read my blather, then head the first sentence and just start playing it. Trust me, there's plenty to enjoy, as developer Camelot has outdone themselves and their previous N64 benchmark title (Mario Golf). First of all, I'm glad that 14 of the 16 characters in Mario Tennis are available right away. Unlike golf, where it's fun to unlock new players in a 1p challenge, tennis is all about the different styles of play. A nice portion of the Nintendo game line is present, including a few surprises (like Waluigi). **Gameplay is two-button heaven—it's by no means shallow or limiting.** Different surfaces and an analog controller are all you need to create an unlimited number of great shots. And you'll see those shots in clear detail, as characters are nicely animated and move without a hint of slowdown. There is also no shortage of game modes, with tournament play, singles, doubles, ring shot, ring shot time attack, and other mini-games like Bowser Ball and Piranha mode. Finally, if you get three friends, or enemies, over for some four-player doubles, I guarantee you'll have a good time—It's a fantastic party game. MT is a great package with a long shelf life. The only real shame here is that Nintendo can't throw this sucker online. **Dan**

Mario Tennis has the simple charm of Mario Golf and a similar quality level as well (they're from the same developer—Camelot). Cute players (Mario, Boo, Donkey Kong Jr., Luigi, the whole gang), lots of stuff to open up and most importantly awesome gameplay. Each character brings a unique dimension to the contest be it the ability to float, move super fast, smash the ball, curve it, etc. It's actually deeper than Virtua Tennis if you can believe that. The MT multiplayer games are especially fun (in Virtua Tennis they're just so-so). The wacky characters and wild abilities make it entertaining on many levels. Don't hesitate on this one; Mario Tennis is a must-buy. **Dean**

With a lineage of games unmatched in quality, I held the highest expectations for MT. Maybe that's why I was ever so slightly disappointed with this latest Mario sports offering. MT is excellent, but doesn't define state of the art in its genre like Mario Golf did. While the graphics are as good and fluid as you can get on the N64, and the gameplay solid, the game suffers from what is perhaps an inescapable part of tennis games: playing on the top or bottom of the screen. While MT has different settings, all the Mario-style power-ups you'd imagine and some cool mini-games, the traditional tennis game is still the best part. **Joe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	9	9



Publisher: 989 Sports
Developer: RedZone Interactive
Featured In: EGM #134
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Keith Jackson
Best Feature: Suspect AI
Web Site: www.989sports.com



Normally GameBreaker isn't as tight as GameDay, but I think the tables have turned. While not incredibly different from 2000, GB 2001 is an improvement. They've plugged many of the AI holes that soured the fun last year. For the most part computer coverage is adequate—not spectacular but not crazy either. Defenders aren't running away from the ball or making as many brainless decisions. That's the good news, but for several small reasons I still can't warm up to the game as a whole. For starters, the players move inconsistently. They "skitter" or jolt around in an unrealistic way (probably due to frame skipping). In contrast, the special moves (like diving and cutting) happen at a slower speed, almost in slow-motion. If everything were smooth and uniform it'd be easier to find holes in the line or track individual players. As is, when the camera pans out the line becomes a jumble of indistinct humanity. **Running a player through is more a crap shoot and less a calculated maneuver like it should be.** I sure hope things will be different on the PS2 version. One other problem: "rain-caking" receivers downfield without drawing a flag is cheap. Why the computer lets this happen I don't know. On a positive note, Keith Jackson is great. He's got a lot to say and it's in sync with the action. Overall, GB fans should be happy with this edition but in my opinion it's still not in the same league as NCAA Football. **Dean**

While developers turn their attention to the next generation of consoles, that doesn't mean quality should be forsaken on 32-bit titles. **GameBreaker does an admirable job of satisfying PlayStation-owning, hardcore college football fans.** Thankfully, interfaces have become fairly homogeneous on football games and GB does not attempt to reinvent the wheel—learning the game is pretty intuitive. All the college teams are represented including classic teams, and the gameplay is smooth. The Keith Jackson commentary is great, and GB also delivers with a good running game, an efficient passing system, and some cool tackling effects. **Joe**

As the years pass, it becomes more apparent that GameBreaker is never going to shake loose from being a sloppy football game, at least on the PS. There's a lot to like in the game, such as Keith Jackson's quips, the hard-hitting sounds and the arcade gameplay, but there's almost as many annoyances. The computer intelligence isn't very good, the interface is ugly, the players have no momentum (and can turn on a dime no matter what), and good lord, if they don't change how the pitching works, I'm going to have to fumble a game. **EA's NCAA Football 2001 has better gameplay and more features.** I suggest sticking with that one. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	7



Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: Tiburon
Featured In: EGM #134
Players: 1-8
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Madden Cards
Best Feature: Madden opening his mouth
Web Site: www.easports.com



I recently read on the news wire that Pat Summerall announced his plans to retire after this season. It couldn't come at a better time, and hopefully Madden will follow. Ironically, the only thing holding back EA's impressive franchise seems to be the blubbery broadcaster (and his pal) that dissipates the game's excitement. To EA Sports' credit, Madden NFL 2001 is such a good football game that this audible blemish doesn't pull the game down (and thankfully there's an option that allows you to turn the announcers off). **Madden 2001 has everything a football fan could want, and more.** EA's fast 3D engine has seemingly milked every bit of processing power the PS has in it to make the detailed players fly around the field. While that is easy to appreciate, the spotlight should also be shared by the impressive computer intelligence whose only weakness is apparent when it stumbles and bumbles trying to run the ball effectively (it does, however, pass quite efficiently). If the game gets too complex, simply tune down the difficulty level and make it more manageable. The thing that really surprised me are the "Madden Cards," which is the best new feature I've seen in a football game in a while. Here you can earn, trade and bet cards that can be used to open codes or improve players. There's something for everyone in this game—the only reason not to buy it is to wait for the PS2 version. **Kraig**

If this were any other football game I'd say skip it 'cause it's not much different than its previous edition. **But this Madden...need I say more? Buy it for the roster upgrades alone.** On a tangble level 2001 feels smoother and more responsive overall. The running game is still friendly. Follow your blockers for 3-5 yards a pop, no problem. Passing is as good as it's ever been. They've included a few more plays as well. If I could change anything I'd add even more tackle animations and slow down the kick meter. Otherwise, it's just right. As a side-note, enjoy this one while you can because once you play Madden for the PS2, you may not pick it up again. **Dean**

What more can you say about a game that defines state of the art in football sims for this generation of consoles? While all the obligatory ingredients are there for a standard football sim (teams, players, playbooks, even coaches this year), these elements performing together in concert is what makes this game so great. **From the opening series of plays the rock-solid control and movement of players was palpable.** Part of the appeal of playing a sports game is that if it's faithful enough to the sport it emulates, then it transcends the typical game experience and becomes an extension of the sport for the fan. Madden attains this ultimate status. **Joe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	8	8

光
速度
危険
死

Tokyo Xtreme Racer 2



悪魔達はover 100 miles of highway上で
他者の安全も省みずにレースをする。



"hundreds of opponent" から逃れる事は
不可能だ。何故なら彼らもまた
competitionを持っているからだ。



危険死

この脅迫者達は自分達を
ultra-super cool だと信じて
疑わない。彼らはその持てる
力の限りを尽くし闘う。
Emperor of the Streetsの巻を
手に入れる為に。

速度

路上にたむろする
流浪の一群は名書ある
シンボルをcreate and
edit logosする。彼らの
忠誠心はこのシンボル
しかshareしない。



www.cravegames.com

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Sega Dreamcast



CRAVE
SEGA DREAMCAST

Parasite Eve II



Publisher: Square EA
Developer: SquareSoft
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Resident Evil-style gameplay
Worst Feature: Tedious puzzles
Web Site: www.sqa.com



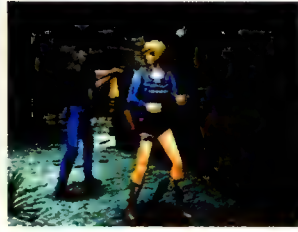
Square's first neo-survival-horror game spawned from an unlikely source. Based on a mediocre made-for-video Japanese movie. The original Parasite Eve was a problematic, but well-intentioned effort that took the prerendered background style of Final Fantasy VII, and packed it full of polygonal characters and monsters in a modern-day urban setting. When we first met Aya Brea, she was a rookie detective (shyeh right!) in the 17th Precinct of the N.Y.P.D. who found herself on the hunt for one Melissa Pearce, who would later become the twisted frestarter known as Eve. Fast forward two years later and Aya is no longer on the force. Instead she's part of an elite group (M.I.S.T.—Mitochondria Investigation and Suppression Team) of hunters whose primary goal is to track down the creatures (NMCs) this mitochondria spawned and



As pioneered by Enemy Zero and the Tekken series, the steamy CG shower scene makes a comeback in Parasite Eve II. Yay!

destroy them. This time around, Aya and company have ditched the RPG pretensions of the original game and gone straight for Capcom's bread-and-butter. While the name "Resident Evil" will most likely pop up in most gamers' minds, PEII is more than just a rip-off. Through the use of Aya's parasite-powers, the game adds a certain level of strategy by giving the gamer a number of choices in battle: Attack with your equipped firearm, launch a devastating fireball, or conserve that parasite energy for an emergency healing session? Also, the "proximity web" has been refined since the first PE—now it's used simply to aim magic attacks. Otherwise Aya auto-aims at the push of a button. An excellent addition to the growing roster of survival-horror games out there, Parasite Eve II should bring fans of the first flocking back for more, while the more action-intense gameplay will entice those who didn't cotton to Square's "cinematic RPG."

Forget what you know about the first Parasite Eve. While certain aspects of the game (like the story line) remain consistent, the execution this time is strictly Resident Evil (with a psychic twist).



I really liked the first Parasite Eve (except for the impossibly difficult/cheesy final boss, and the crappy "bonus" tower thrown as a replay incentive), and despite the significant stylistic changes made, I really like the sequel. **Square has taken the Resident Evil route and gone for full-on survival-horror with a psychic twist.** While the first was a halfway house between FFVII and RE, it wasn't enough of either to make a significant impact upon its release. At least PEII has made its mind up, I dig the game. It controls about as well as any of the RE games—a little wooden at times, and there are often so many enemies onscreen at once the auto-aim function has a hard time keeping up, but overall it works all right. What I don't dig is that the weapon customization aspect has been under-emphasized to the point of being almost non-existent. It's not altogether gone, mind you, but the innate thrill of finding parts and upgrading the hell out of your piece has been dumbed down considerably. The puzzles also tend to be a bit tedious and vague in their cluelessness. In its favor, the graphics have taken a turn for the better as character models and backgrounds have been beefed-up. However, pressing X to walk up and down stairs is lame, and the dearth of voice-acting makes for an often solitary experience. Still, PEII is the second best survival-horror game you're likely to play, and is certainly worth a shot. **Milkman**

Technically I guess this is a survival horror game, but **Parasite Eve II rolls far more on trippy mind games** than the pure shock value of hellspawn creatures jumping out around every corner. Since this is SquareSoft, it almost goes without saying that the plot and presentation is well above-average. The control, on the other hand, is pretty much the same as the Resident Evil series. I should be used to this by now I guess, but it usually reduces each battle to two combatants taking shots at one another, each hoping they last the longest. Nonetheless, PEII is an enjoyable experience (for the roughly 12 hours it lasts). PE Fans won't want to miss it. **Greg**

I was pleasantly surprised by the Resident Evil-style gameplay of PEII. Sure, it still has an RPG feel some of the time (thanks to HP, MP and the way the battles are set up, among other things) but it's also a solid addition to a short list of worthwhile survival horror games. **In a sense, it fits into a new genre: Adventure RPG.** Nice thing is, Square hasn't tried too hard to integrate the adventure stuff into this sequel. It all feels right—like a Parasite Eve game. The whole thing is still very cinematic, and features some really disturbing rendered sequences. If you liked the first game, this one—even though it has evolved—won't steer you wrong. **Shawn**

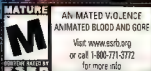
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	7	6	7

Survival Horror Has Entered A New Realm...



the Ring

TERROR'S REALM



Sega Dreamcast



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Publisher: 989 Sports
Developer: RedZone Interactive
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 1-8
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Tackle animations
Worst Feature: AI could still be better
Web Site: www.989sports.com



There's not a whole lot to highlight in this new edition of GameDay. It looks decent, has some sweet new tackle animations plus all the old familiar sound effects (they really need to update these). But there aren't any big advancements in gameplay. **The players don't skate around as much—that's nice.** And they've incorporated a cool new play-as-any-skill player option, but oddly enough it still has some nasty AI flaws. When you can flatten receivers downfield (way beyond five yards) without drawing a penalty you might think you're playing NFL Blitz. Another oddity (there's more than a few) that has me reeling—when a receiver or defender deflects a ball, it seems to bounce off an invisible barrier five feet above their outstretched hands. Then if you're lucky you get to witness the "flying nut" maneuver. This is a result of awkward jumping animation; the players appear to hover across the field—wacky stuff. It's not all weird however; they've simplified the super-moves to a double tap, plus the play-by-play is more accurate. Total Control Passing is more user-friendly as well. In the end, like most of the other football sims this year, there's not much difference over the last edition. If you're a GameDay fan, you'll probably be satisfied with the few changes made to the title. But overall, for the rest of us, there's not much to get excited about. Let's hope the PS2 version can breathe new life into this football mainstay. **Dean**

Like many sports titles released for PS this year, RedZone delivers a passable game with the latest GD installment. All the prerequisites for a solid football experience are included, in addition to a few interesting features like the replay telestrator and a pretty flexible play creator. The "money" part of the game though—running, throwing, catching, receiving and tackling is a little lackluster. **Frame rates slip at the most inopportune times, like when your receiver is jumping for a ball in the endzone.** Finally, it's a bit too easy to complete bombs in this latest GameDay—leading to five-minute-quarter games that last an hour. **Joe**

GameDay hasn't really changed that much since last year, and because of that, my complaints with the series remain the same. I can't stand that the players have no momentum, allowing them to change directions on a dime. I don't like how they still slide around like they're on ice, and the over-the-top stiff-arms and running game shatters what little bit of realism there is on the field. No other football game re-creates the exciting sights and sounds of the game like this one, but when it comes to realism and gameplay, Madden has widened the gap considerably. No longer is GameDay the innovator—the shoe is now snugly on the other foot. **Kraig**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

7 1 5 7



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Neversoft
Featured In: EGM #130
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Swinging around as Spidey
Worst Feature: Camera in enclosed areas
Web Site: www.activision.com



It's hard not to like Spider-Man. **It brings back a lot of warm, fuzzy memories from my teenage years.** Stan Lee even does some narration. But it does have a couple of annoying problems I can't overlook. First, like many 3D action games out there, Spider-Man suffers from a camera that gets funky in enclosed areas (and in Spidey's case, when they're stuck to a wall or ceiling). This camera issue makes otherwise cut-and-dry battles extremely tedious—especially if you get fouled-up and fall to your death. Boss battles are particularly tricky since they often take place in a room of some sort. Outside of the camera stuff, battles with regular enemies get tiresome since it's often the same thing again and again. True, you have a few different web tricks, but most of the time it's like the combat in Fighting Force. But before I get too negative, let me tell you about all of the game's good points. The levels are fresh and incredibly innovative, often playing out like a comic book. In other words, the game's consistently fast-paced. And any fan of comics will agree, it's great to see so many Marvel heroes and villains in one game—represented accurately to boot (worlds apart from those lame Acclaim superhero titles). It comes down to this: it's not quite as polished as some Neversoft games but it still has excellent gameplay, graphics, music and sound. No doubt, you'll have a lot of fun playing through Spider-Man, unlocking all of its secrets. **Shawn**

Without a doubt, this game lets you do everything a spider can. You can cut loose with super-duper strength and nifty webbing tricks and, better still, you can adhere to nearly every surface. Such ambitious game design makes for a few nasty problems, however. Both the camera and control go a little haywire. Spidey crawls into some nooks or leaps suddenly to a horizontal surface. Nevertheless, **I had a lot of fun just swinging around town.** And the game packs a surprising amount of gameplay variety beyond regular web-slinging. The story is a jumble, the game's a bit short, later bosses get really frustrating, but hey—this thing's still fun. **Crispin**

Once you get the hang of the controls, all of Spidey's web-slinging moves look and feel just right—it's cool just to watch him go. Production values are top-notch as well: great voiceover (and lots of it) and crisp graphics courtesy of the Tony Hawk engine. But **the damn camera!** It's too slow to catch up and it's constantly moving where you don't need or want it to be. Also, the fighting system may seem deep with all the different web moves you have (wing guys up, pulling them toward you and smackin' shooting web-balls), but the most effective method ends up being a pretty boring punch-punch-punch, repeat. Maybe not a classic, but still worth a try. **Mark**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

7 6 8 6



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Sony Music Entertainment
Featured In: EGM #130
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Day and night missions
Worst Feature: Camera, sluggish control
Web Site: www.activision.com



Interestingly, SME developed Tenchu 2 with the U.S. in mind. I'm glad for that because I played the original (in import, domestic and import-based-on-domestic form) to death. Yeah, the game had issues concerning camera placement, sluggish controls, and arriving at roughly the same time as Metal Gear Solid, but it was much more than Ninja, Shinobi or Strider had ever been. It was gaming's first real "ninja simulator." Well, for what it's worth, Tenchu 2 has almost all of the same problems, but still remains a compelling game. Improvements over the first game include more moves, more characters and a level-editor to fool around with. **Stealth is still the key to winning and scoring high,** but this time around there are day missions to test your mettle. The controls have increased in complexity (to Tomb Raider levels), but what T2 really needs is a switchable lock-on system to keep bad guys in line. It's harder to sneak up on guards and score those one-hit kills, as the AI has been bumped up to recognize your ass from a mile away. Yet, despite this, once you learn to adjust, there is a lot of gaming to be had (along with a mandatory tutorial), and a great sense of atmosphere, making the whole greater than the sum of its parts. The graphics are slightly improved, including a better framerate, but there's still some slowdown. Tenchu fans will want to pick this up immediately, others may want to rent. **Milkman**

I have strongly mixed emotions about this game. Parts of Tenchu 2 are so incredibly cool—huge sprawling levels, an awesome level editor, and the intricate interweaving stories and differing missions of the three playable characters. You've also got great control over your ninja and the stealth elements add an exciting tension to the gameplay. But other parts of T2 had me screaming expletives. The graphics should be better—the draw-in is especially noticeable and the slowdown can get annoying. But what really hurts this game are the boss battles—Tenchu 2 needs a lock-on targeting system bad. A mixed bag but intriguing nonetheless. **Mark**

This sequel has a lot of excellent cinematic qualities, and it's always fun to sneak up behind people as a ninja and disembowel them. But like any 3D action game that has loads of promise, a sometimes choppy framerate, touchy camera and awkward control (especially when fighting in enclosed spaces) can zap the fun right out of the game. Unfortunately, this is the case in Tenchu 2. **It has the same cool, stealthy style as the first one, along with some new features** (some of it obviously borrowed from Metal Gear Solid), but overall it's sloppy. Honestly, it seems like the development team needed a couple more months to tweak this one. **Shawn**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

7 7 7 6



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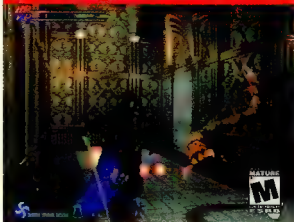
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Vampire Hunter D



Publisher: Jaleco
Developer: Jaleco
Featured In: EGM #125
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Slick anime styling
Worst Feature: Frustrating controls
Web Site: www.jaleco.com



D adds a number of original touches to a Resident Evil-style gameplay foundation—some cool traps, magic (of sorts) and an excellent and very original story line. Graphics are so-so: muddled backgrounds, bland characters and reserved special effects. Puzzles are fairly unremarkable as well: mostly find the key, flip the power on, whatever to open that next locked door, rarely requiring any real thought. But my **biggest problem with D lies with the controls.** Fighting enemies with the lock-on system is so unnatural and frustrating it's just silly, and even with that option turned off combat is a real chore. D stops entirely whenever he bumps into anything, which is really annoying when you're running from enemies. A big part of the game is also supposed to be the Soul Reaver-style soul sack, where you can replenish your magic by draining hurt enemies, but there is no way to tell when they are ready to be sucked. If you do too early they will nail you for more damage, too late and they are dead before you can feed. Very annoying. The interface is amateurish as well—getting to your maps is a pain and the setup often causes accidental use of precious healing potions or spells. Other features don't end up meaning much—you only play as the alternate character briefly and the multiple paths and endings are cool, but only if you're into the game in the first place. Only big anime buffs will find this one worthwhile.

Mark

More proof that developing a survival horror game is no easy business. Sure, it's based on a great game license, but **even fans of the anime won't be able to ignore this game's flaws.** In any one room the camera can switch nearly a half-dozen times, making it impossible to really see everything in a room unless you run around the perimeter (which gets you turned around way too easily). If you're fighting an enemy or boss, it'll usually switch angles at the most inopportune times, putting your enemy just out of sight so you can't see him but he still can hit you. Jaleco did a decent enough job with the translation, but that can't save D from mediocrity.

Chris

I really wanted to like this game. I loved the original anime, the novel written by Hideyuki Kikuchi, and Yoshitaka Amano's artwork. The game offers an excellent (if futuristic) view of VHO's world. The pre-rendered backgrounds are lavish, and the atmosphere is superb. What goes wrong is a laundry-list of "do not's" in a survival-horror game. **Stiff, overly touchy control.** Unnecessarily spastic camera angles, distant and so frequently changing that it's often impossible to tell where you're come from and where you're going. 180° reversals and dodge-moves don't help much since the combat is so helter-skelter. A very nice try, but sadly, no cigar.

Milkman

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

5 6 4 4

Action Bass



Publisher: Take 2
Developer: Syscom
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.take2games.com



Best Feature: It only costs 30 bucks

Worst Feature: It's not worth more than that

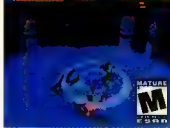
In theory, pricing titles with the gamer on a budget in mind is a great idea. When this concept is put into practice, however, everyone is suddenly reminded that low price equals low production values. Such is the case with this month's \$30 game from Take 2, Action Bass. **As an arcade fishing game, Action Bass isn't that bad.** The graphics are competent, if a bit plain, the fish models looking particularly authentic. The gameplay is full formulaic and simple, which isn't necessarily bad. That's not to say Action Bass is without its problems—the biggest of which is that it's darn near impossible to lose a fish once you've set the hook. When you stop reeling to relieve line tension, the fish won't try to swim away with the line, thus hovering around the 75% mark on the tension meter almost guarantees a successful catch. Action Bass may not be the greatest fishing game in the world, but unlike its budget-brethren (Spec Ops and Grudge Warriors), it's not completely worthless. If you need something to get Dad or Grandpa, you could definitely do a lot worse.

Andrew

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

6 3 4 4

Mortal Kombat: Special Forces



Publisher: Midway
Developer: Midway
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.midway.com



Best Feature: Beat guys up!
Worst Feature: The whole game is half-assed

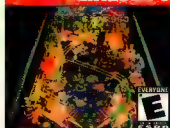
What the hell happened here? I swear this game looked better over a year ago at E3. What happened to being able to play as Sonya and not just Jax? The graphics—blocky models and warping, pixelated textures—remind me of 4-year-old first-generation titles like Loaded. Actually, scratch that, Loaded looked better. Luckily all the levels are so dark and horribly shaded you don't ever really see much of anything. The game flirts with some adventure-y elements like find-the-key puzzles and gaining levels through experience points, but the **real focus is on combat, which is absolute krap.** You have a block, two punches, two kicks, four special moves, weapons and special combo moves, but in the end it all comes down to one technique: Punch. That's it. Punch, and punch, and punch some more—just keep mindlessly tapping it. There were a couple moments in Special Forces, while pounding on some poor grunt's head or taking head shots with the sniper rifle, where my pain and annoyance subsided briefly, but those moments were far too rare.

Mark

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

1 2 1 1

Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey



Publisher: Empire Interactive
Developer: Cunniff Development
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.empire-interactive.com



Best Feature: The price
Worst Feature: There's only one table

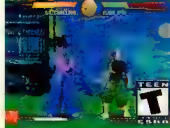
There are only a few things I *wouldn't* buy for 30 bucks. They are: a sack of Chalupas from Taco Bell, any album from the '80s and *Rambo III* on DVD. I'm pretty much open to anything else—including this game. Granted, playing pinball on a TV will never compare to the real thing, but **Pro Pinball does an amazing job conveying the pinball experience.** Even though the game only has one table, it makes up for it with incredible ball and table physics, and tons of bonuses, ramps and other stuff to open. Still, the game does have a couple of annoying quirks. First, even though you're able to choose from three table views, it's never quite right. You either see too much of the table from a zoomed-out view or not enough. The semi-transparent LCD that floats above the table may be part of the problem, too. You can choose three different positions for the LCD, and none of them work very well. The thing blocks part of the view of the table—which is never a good thing in pinball. The sound is pretty lame as well. But for 30 bucks, it's definitely worth looking into.

Shawn

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

6 4 6 9

Samurai Shodown: Warrior's Rage



Publisher: SNK
Developer: SNK
Featured In: EGM #128
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.snkusa.com



Best Feature: You can turn it off
Worst Feature: For SNK's last U.S. effort, it blows

Samurai Shodown: Warrior's Rage is yet another 3D SNK title that just should never have been. It's a **huge disgrace to the Samurai Shodown name, and I can't think of any reason why someone ought to pick it up.** The graphics are weak and lack detail (all the characters look dull and blocky), the sounds are average, and the story is simply tolerable. When it comes to gameplay, things don't get any better. There's an overall lack of polish that really hinders the fights—animations are often jerky and the control feels loose. The control itself is a departure from the previous Sam Sho games: three attack buttons and a dodge (which is completely useless). Also, to make things more dramatic the game pauses each time a combatant loses one of the three sections on their life bar. This just breaks up any flow a match might have had. Seriously, who would want that in a fighting game? Unfortunately, the additional modes (including training) and unlockable items do nothing to salvage Warrior's Rage. Sam Sho fan or not, stay the hell away from this one.

Sam

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

6 5 2 3

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The Flintstones: Bedrock Bowling



Publisher: Southpeak
Developer: Adrenalin Ent.
Featured In: EGM #125
Players: 1-4

Best Feature: The official voice actors do the lines
Worst Feature: It's not bowling. Why, God, why?

Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.southpeak.com

Adrenalin did a fantastic job with Ten Pin Alley and other bowling games, so why is this such garbage? Calling this "bowling" is incredibly misleading. There's no traditional bowling, something that's not clear from the packaging. The only thing tying it to bowling is that you have to knock over single pins placed around each "lane." Lanes are like tracks, turning the game into a sad knock-off of those levels in Mario 64 where you slid on your butt collecting coins. Levels have no time limit (although Gazoo refers to one), so there's never a need to use the turbo boost. The music is repetitive and isn't in the style of any of the show's music. The only redeeming aspect is that they used Hanna-Barbera's voice actors for the characters. Graphics are very plain, there's a lot of pop-up, and there aren't any cameos from the show. If we hadn't previewed this game 10 issues ago I would've guessed it'd been crapped out in a month. It baffles me that a company would let a game this bad out the door. Don't pay more than five bucks for this game or you'll regret it.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
2	1	0	8

Frogger 2



Publisher: Majesco
Developer: Majesco
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1

Best Feature: Classic Frogger gameplay
Worst Feature: Questionable maze design

Supports: None
Web Site: www.majesco.com

Let's face it, Frogger rocks. It's as close as one could get to defining a "classic." Frogger 2 keeps the traditional formula intact, while making improvements in key areas to keep things interesting. A couple of problems, though: A lot of the level puzzles and mazes, particularly the Ice stage, rely on trial-and-error a bit too much, and it's difficult to plan your next move with such a limited vantage point. This wouldn't be a problem if the mazes could be passed in more than one way, but unfortunately they are rather linear. The other issue is the questionable hit detection when jumping to different platforms. Sometimes you'll land half-way between two area squares, and if you're too quick you can easily end up in the drink. Graphically, Frogger 2 is quite an impressive cartridge by GBC standards. Colors are used liberally in each of the various stages, and for the most part contrast nicely—there's very little blurring. Lots of levels and classic Frogger gameplay; a worthy addition to your Game Boy library whether or not you grew up with the original.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	7	1

Galaga



Publisher: Majesco
Developer: Majesco
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2

Best Feature: It's portable
Worst Feature: Can't see incoming attacks

Supports: None
Web Site: www.majesco.com

Another classic arcade conversion, Galaga on the Game Boy Color should be considered only by fans of the original. Whether or not the gameplay stands the test of time is debatable, but the few new additions have made this game especially questionable. The color conversion and addition of detailed colored backgrounds is well-intentioned but creates a huge gameplay flaw: **You can't see any incoming enemy projectiles.** Those bright idea was it to make enemy shots green on a green background? The overall color contrast is so poor it hinders your game strategy. Galaga has some audio problems as well. The speakers on the Game Boy aren't that great to begin with, but the preset volume maximum is incredibly low, so you practically have to hold the speaker to your ear to hear anything. Even if you can adapt to these annoyances, the overall package isn't very exciting—enemy attack formations are repetitive, the backgrounds cycle quickly, and there are no extras. They probably should have left well enough alone; Galaga GBC is less-than-stellar.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
1	6	7	7

Q*Bert



Publisher: Majesco
Developer: Majesco
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1

Best Feature: Just like arcade
Worst Feature: Controls are a bit tough

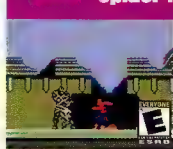
Supports: None
Web Site: www.majesco.com

I couldn't imagine Majesco finding a way to screw up Q*Bert, and I guess I should give them credit for not dropping the ball—after all, there's plenty of companies that have. Everything is pretty straightforward: You can play the arcade mode of the game, which is very similar to the original, except you can choose to play as Q*Dina, an obnoxiously ugly female Q*Bert. The adventure mode gives you more level shape variety, and is probably where you'll spend most of your time. The biggest problem with this mode is that sometimes the screen doesn't scroll quick enough to show you what's below, making some jumps an unreasonable leap of faith. Also, navigating can be a little tough with the small Game Boy pad and the odd perspective. To tackle that, Q*Bert offers two sets of control schemes, and one of them should make you feel right at home. Q*Bert couldn't keep my attention for long, however. I used to like this game a lot, but for me, the magic is gone. Unless you adore the arcade, I would recommend a different classic such as Ms. Pac-Man.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	3	5

Spider-Man



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Vicarious Visions
Featured In: EGM #135
Players: 1

Best Feature: Looks really good for a GBC game
Worst Feature: Far too difficult for the youngins

Supports: None
Web Site: www.activision.com

When the graphic capabilities of the Game Boy Color are pushed to their absolute limit, as Spider-Man pushes them, it's pretty impressive to see what can be accomplished. Spider-Man feels like a throwback to the time when action/platformers like these ruled the industry. Activision didn't even use the license as an excuse to peddle half-assed crap, something that happens far too much on this system. **Spider-Man offers up a solid platforming experience** with all the characters, locations and moves you'd expect. Spidey wall-crawls, slings webs and catches thieves just like fliest! Level design and animation are above-average for a GBC cart, yet another plus. Unfortunately, the difficulty level in Spider-Man is most frustrating. I don't suck at video games, but I found myself having to fight Venom (the first boss) far too many times before beating him. Call that a good challenge if you like, but it mostly just pissed me off. If you're the type who likes a tough game, try this one, but if you want to buy this game for your kids, consider yourself warned.

Greg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	7	6	5

Test Drive: Le Mans



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Infogrames
Featured In: EGM #133
Players: 2

Best Feature: Loads of cars, tracks and features
Worst Feature: Frustrating control

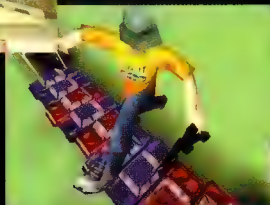
Supports: None
Web Site: www.infogrames.com

TD: Le Mans sports 10 licensed cars and more than 20 tracks. It lets you race in multiple weather conditions at both day and night. Championship and 24-hour modes include full pit strategy for the sim lovers out there. What's more, the game even uses the Wacky Races engine. All of this should add up to a winner, right? Wrong. **Test Drive: Le Mans is so much less than the sum of its parts.** Too bad, I was looking forward to sinking my teeth into a hardcore racing sim on the GBC. One of the biggest problems with the game lies in the graphics. Infogrames touts that 20 cars compete simultaneously while you play. However, the result is dramatic flickering on roadside objects the moment more than one vehicle is onscreen. Since those same objects are the best way to navigate each course, driving becomes a very frustrating chore indeed. Once you realize that, there's very little reason to carry on. Infogrames gets some points for effort here, because all the components are in place to make a great GBC racer, but the power of the system failed them in the end.

Greg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	4	6	2

Andy Macdonald
 1999 X-Games Gold Medal, Best Skateboarder
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 World Record for Longest Skateboard Jump - 15' 11 1/2"



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 Brian Howard
 Stevie Williams
 Jen O'Brien
 Colin McRay
 Rob Dyrdek
 Alan Petersen

You Can't Defy Gravity. But You Can, However, Taunt It A Little.



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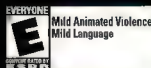
Deftones
 Cypress Hill
 Pennywise
 System of a Down
 OPM
 Snapcase
 Goldfinger
 Piffers
 No Use for a Name
 Flashpoint



Sega Dreamcast

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Publisher: Enix
Developer: Enix
Featured In: EGM #134
Players: 1
Supports: None
Best Feature: Two RPGs for the price of one
Worst Feature: Games feel slightly dated
Web Site: www.enix.com

I'm 13 years old again, playing the game that would lead to my undying love of RPGs for decades to come. Re-entering the U.S. market by releasing the two games that literally launched this genre is a stroke of pure genius by Enix. Even though *Dragon Warrior I&II* aren't nearly as advanced as current RPGs (D&I doesn't even have a party system), it's nice to take a trip down memory lane and revisit our roots. It's also interesting to see the progression made between the first and second game. Like all GBC conversions, *Dragon Warrior I&II* have been reworked slightly to compensate for the tiny screen. The results are spectacular. DWI has all-new fight backgrounds and both games have shed the insanely convoluted menu system employed by their NES ancestors (you used to have to bring up a menu and choose a command just to take the stairs to another floor). It's too bad Enix didn't decide to add fight backgrounds to DWII, though. Monsters floating over a white background don't look overly impressive. While old-timers will revel in this pure RPG experience, games like *Final Fantasy VII* will immediately notice the hours of exorbitant level building needed to complete each game, along with the fact that they're pretty damn short overall. Nonetheless, **you won't find a finer collection of classic RPGs this side of FF Anthology**, and on the Game Boy Color no less. Play this now. **Greg**

DWII&I is like an old favorite couch—nothing fancy, kinda ratty and ancient-looking, but solidly built with a comfortable, familiar feeling that I love. The story, combat system and pretty much everything else is right out of the RPG cliché handbook—but so what? It works fine, it's fun to play, and I don't expect stunning originality or a *Final Fantasy*-caliber experience from the Game Boy. Be warned: The old-school character building methods are in full effect here, so **if you don't like repetitive combat to strengthen your party you'll definitely want to pass**. So are these games dated? Yes, but more importantly, are they still worth playing? Definitely. **Mark**

I missed the DW craze back when the games first came out on the NES. (*Final Fantasy III* is the game that first turned me onto RPGs), so the only DW game I've played before was *DW Monsters*. Both games have **too much dungeon crawling** and not enough substance for me. Too much time's spent on building up levels and you don't always feel like you're advancing through the story. It's nice to see how far the genre's come, but I found DWI&II a tad on the slow side; if you like your RPGs old school, by all means—you're going to want this game (plus the selection of other RPGs for the GBC is pretty sparse), but I've been spoiled by *Final Fantasy*. **Chris**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	6



Publisher: Rare
Developer: Rare
Featured In: EGM #129
Players: 1-2
Supports: Rumble, Printer, IR Port, Link Cable
Best Feature: Gameplay variety
Worst Feature: Idiotic guards
Web Site: www.perfectdark.com

I reckon if Rare had made *Perfect Dark* in the 8-Bit '80s, it'd play a lot like this cheesy GBC version, which doesn't come close to the quality of the N64 original. Forget that you battle enemies named Mink Hunter and Octopus Prime. Forget that you wield tired weapons like Uzis and ninja stars (no Laptop or Farsight here). The real culprit is the dull sneak-around gameplay. The levels—which have you skulking through the jungle, a DataDyne base and the Carrington institute—look sharp but offer no interaction other than the rare switch or annoying Simon-style door-lock puzzles. Headshots, so crucial in the N64 game, are handled in an odd way here, too. You score one-hit kills by walking up to guards and point-blank blasting 'em. Lucky for you, the guards don't notice you unless you blunder directly in front of them. I've shot and missed guards from a millimeter away, but they didn't bat an eye and let me aim for a second shot. **PD does take advantage of every conceivable GBC feature**. Use the IR port to transfer multiplayer maps. Print unlocked pics with the GB Printer. Snap PD into the Transfer Pak to open a few cheats in the N64 game. And link two GBCs together to play a few dual-player modes. It's really the between-level mini-games that are PD's standout feature. You'll play twitch stuff inspired by *Spy Hunter*, *Tron Deadly Discs* and *Operation Wolf*, classic games from—that's right—the '80s. **Crispin**

Perfect Dark is easily one of the best-looking GBC games ever—huge characters, sharp backgrounds and outstanding animation—it's just too bad the gameplay didn't receive the same attention. The view is so "zoomed in" that it's impossible to get a sense of where you are in the maze-like levels (with no maps of course) or see what's around you, including enemies and hostages. There's some great mini-games (car chase, sniper mode, speedboats) but they aren't used nearly enough. **The lack of checkpoints makes some levels really frustrating**, and the story is embarrassingly bad (a guy named Max Danger? Please.). Disappointing. **Mark**

It's ridiculous how little this game has in common with its superb N64 counterpart. The only thing that makes them remotely similar is that the hero has breasts, and though that's kinda cool, it's not nearly enough. Since it has little to do with *Perfect Dark*, maybe they should have called this game *Idiot Executioner*. Most of the gameplay consists of trying to sneak up on guards from behind so that you can blow their heads off. Novel, yes. Fun, no. Exploding dumb enemies is amusing, but after the ninth headless wonder crumpled to the floor, I had enough. Some of the mini-games and multiplayer modes were cool, but I expected a lot more. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	5	4



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Bits Studios
Featured In: EGM #129
Players: 1-2
Supports: IR Port, Link Cable
Best Feature: Those wizards
Worst Feature: Troops get lost too easily
Web Site: www.nintendo.com

If *Warlockd* had come out on any console other than the GBC, we'd brand it the most blatant *WarCraft* copycat ever. But as a portable take on the classic real-time-strategy formula, this game is a fresh and addictive experience. Sure, it ain't perfect. You must baby-step your men across terrain, since they have a habit of wandering off and getting lost. The IR-Port-supporting battle mode is dull. The one-player game is a bit easy, too. Good thing it gives you plenty to do. You play as either humans or monsters, and each race gives you 13 levels. One mission has you destroying a giant spider. Another has you guiding two captured humans out of a dank dungeon. Level variety is one of *Warlockd*'s strongest features. The game is also surprisingly easy to control. You can order soldiers to guard structures, or select more than a dozen troops at a time and assign them to a team. And while you don't get a wide variety of troop or building types, you do get the wizards, which add even more strategy to the mix. The *Bombwiz* makes enemies explode and hurt other badies. *Sweatwiz* forces your grunts to gather resources faster, and so on. And you can only bring two wizards onto the battlefield at a time, so you better plan things out. Link up with a pal who's played his version for a while—and thus amassed a decent collection of wizards—and you're in for one of the most enjoyable two-player experiences on the Game Boy. **Crispin**

Warlockd packs more missions, modes and multiplayer options than 90 percent of the crud you'll find on the Game Boy. The horrid terrain-tracking skills of your men (they split up and get lost too easily) gets annoying sometimes. Fortunately, you can find ways around it by breaking your soldiers into smaller groups. The two-player army-battle mode you play with the infrared port is a clever idea, but I prefer the two-player link-cable game. You get several different modes (one, for example, has you racing to build farms), just make sure you play against opponents with a good stack of wizards, or you'll wipe them out too easily. **Greg**

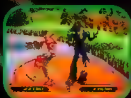
Who knew they could make a game like this on the Game Boy Color. But I'm torn. On the one hand, *Warlockd* is a real-time strategy title that's as polished (relatively speaking) and addictive as games in the same genre on the PC. On the other hand, **it's simple overall, and the characters often get stuck on objects in the playing field**. But I imagine this is about the best you can do with a game of this sort on Nintendo's little handheld. So, in that respect, it's quite amazing. It certainly has some neat features, like the infra-red fighting mode, link cable versus play and the ability to trade character-specific wizards with friends. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	8	8

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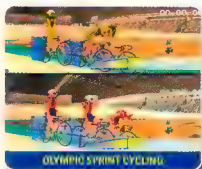
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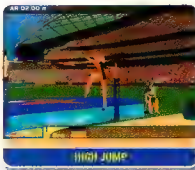
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Tricks of the Trade

By Trickman Terry
tricks@ziffdavis.com

TRICK OF THE MONTH

Draconus: Cult of the Wyrn

(For Dreamcast)
Awesome Cheats

On the Title Screen where it says, "Press Start Button," press X, Y, Y, X, Y, Y. This is the first part of the codes shown below. You will hear a sound to confirm that the code was entered correctly. Now begin a new game or load a saved one. In the middle of the game, press Start to pause and enter the following buttons codes:

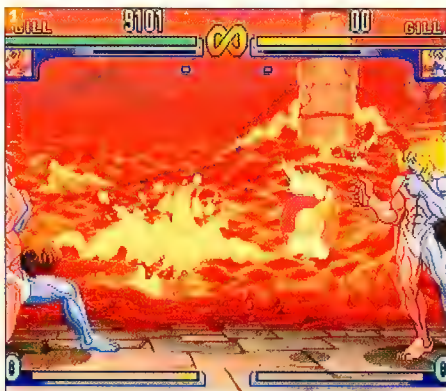
Level Skip

Press and hold the L-Trigger+R-Trigger buttons simultaneously. While holding these buttons, press Down on the D-pad. **Invincibility and One-Hit Kills**

Press and hold the L-Trigger+R-Trigger buttons simultaneously. While holding these buttons, press Right, Up on the D-pad, then press Start. You won't take any more damage and your instant kills will be worth 50,000 points!

Regain Life Points

Press and hold the L-Trigger+R-Trigger buttons simultaneously. While holding these buttons, press Left, Up on the D-pad, then press Start. You will regain all of your life points.



Street Fighter III: Double Impact

Hidden Extra Options

From the Title Select Screen, you may choose either Street Fighter III or Street Fighter III: Second Impact. At the Mode Select Screen, highlight "Option" and hold the L-Trigger+R-Trigger buttons. Keep holding them throughout the rest of the trick. Next, choose "Option." On the Option Mode Screen, highlight Game Option and press Left, Left, X, X, Right, Right, move Down to Button Config. and press Left, Left, Y, Y, Right, Right, move Down to Screen Adjust and press Left, Left, X, Y, Right, Right, move Down to Sound and press Left, Left, Y, X, Right, Right. You will



see that "Extra Option" will appear underneath the "Sound" option.

1 Play As Gill

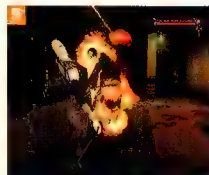
From the Title Select Screen, you may choose either Street Fighter III or Street Fighter III: Second Impact. At the Mode Select Screen, access "Option." Then access "Game Option." Put the difficulty to one star, damage level to eight stars, and rounds to one. This will make it easier to beat the game. Once you play and finish the game, go to the Player Select Screen, highlight Sean and press Up. Gill will now appear as a playable fighter.

2 Play As Akuma

From the Title Select Screen, choose Street Fighter III: Second Impact. On the Player Select Screen, highlight Sean and press Up. Akuma's Triangle will appear and you will now be able to fight as this character.

Play As Yang

From the Title Select Screen, choose Street Fighter III. On the Player Select Screen, highlight Yun and press any kick button to choose Yang instead.



Grand Theft Auto 2

Incredible Codes

On the Main Menu Screen, press and hold these buttons in order. Hold L, then hold C-Right, then hold C-Down. While holding these buttons, press A. The "Enter A Cheat Code" Menu will appear. Now you may input any of these passwords.

3 Unlock Every Stunt

Enter TRICKSTER.

Mirror Trucks

Enter YADAYADA.

Night Mode

Enter MIDNIGHT.

Nightmare Creatures II

Cheats Menu and Full Health

4 Cheats Menu

In the middle of the game, press Start to pause. Now press and hold the L-Trigger+R-Trigger buttons simultaneously. While holding these buttons, press Left, B, X, Left, B, X, Left, B, X, A, X. The "Cheats" menu will appear, which will give you the options for invincibility and one-hit kills.

Replenish Health

When your energy is low in the game, just press and hold the X+Y+B buttons simultaneously. Hold them until your health builds back up again and you will get a full bar!

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We want your tricks! We want to include your best codes and tricks in every issue. To get along with all our great tricks we pack in every issue. You can even win prizes if we pick yours as Trick of the Month! *Prize upon 100th combined issue.

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The PERFECT DARK insider

Your monthly source for anything and everything Perfect Dark

FIRING-RANGE ANTICS

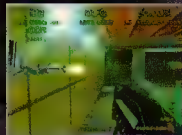
Start your day at the Carrington Institute by heading into the basement. In the room with the Hanger Information computer, you will find a floating crate. Grab hold and carry it on up to the firing range. Take the crate with you as you enter the actual shooting range. Now, before the glass door closes, use the crate as a doortop. Watch the hilarity ensue. Feel free to shoot out the lights or pop some caps in the people who inhabit the gun range outer room. Don't worry, though, no one can die. So, for some good laughs, turn people into human pincushions by using the throwing knives.



FARSIGHT FUN
Another fun firing-range activity involves the Farsight. Using this futuristic weapon, you are able to look right through the Carrington Institute walls. This

gives you the opportunity to blow up computers, shoot the 007 guns off the walls in the firing-range outer room, and cause all sorts of fun mayhem. Select the bronze medal level for the most time.

SENTRY TURRET HELPER



Thanks to Eric Nesmith and Chris Ngo. Having trouble getting all golds on the firing range? Here's a hint that will help. Go to the range and select Laptop gun on

any difficulty. Hold B to change to sentry turret, then tap Z to throw it. While it unfolds to become the turret, very quickly press Start, then Abort. Now tap Start very quickly again. The turret should still not be deployed yet. Choose the Gun you want to pass, and the difficulty. While it's counting down to start, the turret will be deployed. Voilà!

GAME BOY SECRETS?

Rare's been promising secrets will be opened up on the N64 version of Perfect Dark when you play with the new Game Boy Color PD cart installed in the transfer pak. Sounds great,



right? Well, we tried it and discovered it's true, but it only opens up the same bonus tricks you can get otherwise by beating the levels quick, getting headshots, etc. Lame!

Got your own PD tidbit for us? Send us a letter or e-mail us at EGM@ziffdavis.com, subject: Perfect Dark. If we choose your letter you'll get your name in EGM and maybe even a little somethin' extra!

RANDOM TRICKS

We got a whole slew of fun little tricks this month from Dr. Chris Ngo of Hayward, Calif. Amuse yourself and your friends:

SCORCHED CASSANDRA



Give Ms. De Vries a custom make-up job with your pistol. In mission 1-3 choose Agent mode (it's the easiest) and complete all the objectives. Rush up to Cassandra before she exits the building and shoot her until her shields disappear, then blast her in the face. Then check out her mug when you finish the level and the cinema begins.



MAGIC BOXES



When the box reappears it will be floating!

Try this magic trick in any multiplayer match. Shoot an ammo box up into the air and pick it up before it falls back down.

ELVIS HAS LEFT THE CARTRIDGE!

If you have problems beating a challenge with Elvis as your opponent, remove the expansion pack. With the pack removed most of the extra characters are disabled, including Elvis. Now when you try the challenge, Elvis will be a Shocktrooper. (note: It won't work when attempting challenges with 3-4 players.)

PERFECT DARK ON THE WEB

We don't know everything there is to know about Perfect Dark—even if we did we wouldn't have the space to print it all! But there are plenty of excellent Perfect Dark Web sites out there that go deeper into Rare's masterpiece. Check 'em out, and tell 'em EGM sent ya:

www.pdcentral.com

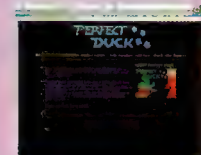
No more updates, but an active forum board and an interview with Perfect Dark development team.

www.perfectlydark.com



Good strategies, forum, lots of fan art, stories, links, etc.

www.perfectduck.com



A sometimes amusing parody.

<http://members.aol.com/catalr>

Um...interesting.

www.geocities.com/willmistretta/pdmyst.html



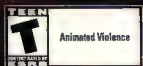
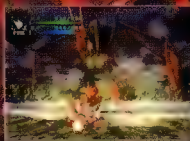
Great site talking on "The Mysteries of Perfect Dark."

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Super forum, lots of great content. Check this one out.

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TRICKS

TOP 5 TRICKS

The top 5 games of the last month given the full-on *Trickman* treatment:

1. Pokémon Trading Card (GB)

Find Codes

Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

2. Perfect Dark (N64)

Beat Challenges Easily

From the Perfect Menu Screen, use Player 1 and choose Combat Simulator. On this menu, choose Advanced Setup. Move down to Load Settings and press A, but don't choose any of the presets yet. Now, using the Player 2 controller, Press Start and then press Left with the analog stick. Move to any unopened challenge (without stars) and press Start. Choose to accept and start the challenge. Player 2 will now be ready and waiting for Player 1. Go back to the Player 1 controller and choose one of the presets. Back on the Game Setup Menu, press Start and you will go into the game. You will be on the Challenge that you chose earlier, but it will only have Player 1 and 2 in it. No Simultants will be in the game. Play until the scenario ends (time limit is reached, etc.) and after you go back to the Challenge Screen, you will see a star in the second position, showing that it has been beaten. This is a great way to unlock all the challenges with ease!

3. Pokémon (Yellow) (GB)

Easy Level Gain

To easily gain experience, switch the Pokémon you want to train with the top Pokémon on your list. When you go into

cont. on pg. 204

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NINTENDO 64

Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards

Unlimited 1-Ups

- Blue Stars replace Crystal Shards when you re-enter a cleared level, and you can return to a level you've already conquered and pilfer its Blue Stars 'til you get all the 1-Ups you'll ever need. To do this quickly, go to a level where the Crystal was found near the beginning (Level 1-1, for example). Once you grab the Blue Star, pause the game and choose "Try Again." Next, exit the level, then go right back into it so you can collect another Blue Star. You can repeat this process as often as you like.

Army Men: Air Combat

All Levels Open, Every Helicopter Available

On the Main Menu Screen, access the Password option. Now put in R Button, C-Left, Right, Up as your password, and then press the A button to accept. This will unlock all the levels and every helicopter as well.

Excitebike 64

Even More Codes

On the Main Menu Screen, press and hold these buttons in order. Hold L button, then hold

HEY, YOU; WANNA WIN FREE STUFF?

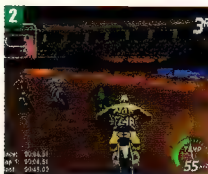
If your trick is selected as Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by InterAct, and a Pro Shock, or a Hyper64, or a VIPER controller from Fire International. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free game. See page 205 for rules.

Note: If you send your trick by e-mail, you must include your real name and address.

Send your best tricks, codes, Web sites, anything that can help make games more fun or interesting to:

Tricks of the Trade
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook IL
60522-3338
or send e-mail to:

tricks@ziffdavis.com



Excitebike 64, Cont.

C-Right, then hold C-Down. While holding these buttons, press A. The "Enter A Cheat Code" Menu will appear. Now you may input any of these passwords for the results shown.

2. Tiny Head

Enter PINHEAD.

Beat This!

Enter PATWELLS.

PLAYSTATION

Jackie Chan: Stuntmaster

Level Select and Bonus Movie Level Select

On the Title Screen where it says, "Press Start Button," press L2, Square, Triangle, Circle, X, R2, R2. You'll hear a sound if the trick was entered correctly.

3. Behind the Scenes Movie

On the Title Screen where it says, "Press Start Button," press Left, Right, R1, Circle, Square, Triangle, Triangle. The "Press Start Button" text will be replaced with "Bonus Movie." Press X to see the movie.

NHL: Rock the Rink

Cool Codes

From the Main Menu Screen, choose the NHL Challenge option. Highlight "New User" and enter one of the names below to get these results.

NHL Teams Available

Put in BAILEY as your name.

Now when you go to choose your teams, you can choose some of the national teams such as New York Islanders and Tampa Bay Lightning.

Boards Reward

Put in POWER SLAM as your name. Go back to the Main Menu and access the Rewards option. Move to Boards and the Rubber option will be open.

Bonus Moves

Put in IAWWEAK as your name. Now you can use the bonus moves in any mode of the game.

Sound Effects Reward

Put in NO CHANCE as your name. Go back to the Main Menu and access the Rewards option. Move to Sound Effects. Now the Action Movie and Cartoon option will be open.



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Nightmare Creatures II

Invincibility, Level Select and More

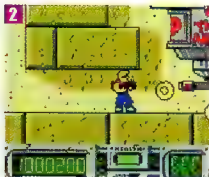
1. Invulnerability

During the game, press Start to pause. Then hold L1+R2+Square+Circle. With these held, press Select. The hidden Cheats Menu appears. Now give yourself unlimited life. **Level Select**

At Main Menu, highlight New Game and hold: L1+R2+Square+Circle. With these held, press Select. You will see the level text in the upper-left corner. Press Right to advance levels, press X to choose. You will now start on the level of your choice!

Debug Text

During the game, and *without pressing Start to pause*, hold L1+R2+Square+Circle. With these held, press Select. You'll get a bit of debug text in the upper-left corner of the screen.



GAME BOY

Duke Nukem

Invincibility and Level Select

Invincibility

At Title Screen (when "Press Start" flashes), press Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Up, Up.

2. Level Select

At Title Screen (when "Press Start" flashes), press Left, Right, Up, Up, Down, Up, Right, Left.

Rayman

Incredible Codes

World Map

Pause during game and press A, Left, A, Left, A, B, Right, B, Up, B, A, Left, A, Down, A.

3. All Powers Available

Pause during game and press Right, Left, Up, Down, A, Up, Up, Down, Down, B, Right, Right, Left, Left, A.

Gain Back Energy

Pause during game and press B, Right, A, Up, B, Left, A, Down, B, Right.



Turok: Rage Wars

4. Level Passwords for All Difficulties

On the Main Menu, choose Options. From the "Options" Screen, choose Password. Now enter the password for the following levels, on any difficulty as shown.

Stage 2 Easy Level: K14QF4

Stage 2 Medium: 3MQTL1

Stage 2 Hard: DT5JV1

Stage 3 Easy: 3175L31

Stage 3 Medium: Z1KMQ1

Stage 3 Hard: 2F5QZM

Stage 4 Easy: SMJ54M

Stage 4 Medium: 2TQCMR

Stage 4 Hard: MQ5LRS

TOP 5 TRICKS

battle, this Pokémon will appear. Switch to another Pokémon. Once you win the battle, the beginning Pokémon and the fighting Pokémon both gain experience points. This is especially useful if the Pokémon you want to build up has no initial attack in its first form.

4. Pokémon Stadium (N64)

Pikachu Talks

Note: You must have the yellow version of the Game Boy Pokémon game for this to work. Upload Pikachu from the game to Pokémon Stadium. Don't register Pikachu. Now start a battle and use Pikachu. When battling, Pikachu will say its name and have new animations for some of its moves.

5. WWF SmackDown! (PS)

Hidden Staff

While playing through a season, you will either unlock secret characters or get extra attribute points for your created wrestler. Here is a list.

1st Year: Ivory

2nd Year: Princes Albert

3rd Year: Janice Albert

4th Year: Viscera

5th Year: 80 points for created wrestlers

6th Year: Mideon

7th Year: Gerald Brisco

8th Year: Pat Patterson

9th Year: 90 points for created wrestlers

GameShark Codes

DREAMCAST

Midway's Greatest Arcade Hits Vol. 1 Robotron

Inf. Lives P1 3BE11BD300000102

Inf. Lives P2 25675CD100000102

Defender

Inf. Lives P1 9A68356C00000200

Inf. Lives P2 DB508C4400000102

Inf. Smart Bombs P1 C5D3D86300000301

Inf. Smart Bombs P2 D868BC4400000A03

Defender 2

Inf. Lives P1 52FF483C00000102

Inf. Lives P2 670B54D500000200

Inf. Smart Bombs P1 520748C300000E03

Inf. Smart Bombs P2 9B30356300000301

Joust

Inf. Lives P1 5C082356C00000400

Inf. Lives P2 545E478CC00000400

Mr. Driller

Inf. Lives 607B6B130000000A

Infinite Air BC463AD0E000FFFF

High Scoring 6D1B6B120000FFFF

NINTENDO 64

Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards

Enable Code DE0040000000

Infinite Lives 800D6F4F0003

Infinite Health 800D6F5040C0

Hiz Z for Max Stars

D109BAB42000, 810D6E600000

D109BAB420000, 810D6E62000E

Perfect Dark

Note: This requires the Zelda Keycode.

Please see manual for keycode activation.

Infinite Ammo Right P1 Lo Res Lvl 24

D1032e2f000e, 8013d2ca0032

Infinite Ammo Left P1 Lo Res Lvl 24

d013c66f000e, 8013bdf00032

Infinite Ammo Right P1 Lo Res Lvl 24

d013c66f000e, 8013b65a0032

Have All Weapons P1 Lo Res Lvl 24

d013c66f000e, 8013c5700007

Infinite Ammo Left P2 Lo Res Lvl 24

d0132e2f000e, 8013d46e0032

Have All Weapons P2 Lo Res Lvl 24

d0132e2f000e, 8013e20e0007

Infinite Ammo Left P1 Lo Res Lvl 1-23,

25? d013ee0f000e, 8013e5f00032

Infinite Ammo Right P1 Lo Res Lvl 1-23,

25? d013ee0f000e, 8013d5a00032

PLAYSTATION

Circuit Pro Bowling 2

Max Accuracy 800132A54 0006

Max Power 80132A68 0006

Max Spin 80132A7C 0006

Digimon World

Infinite Lives

8015582a0003

Have Only the Best Items With You

8013D4741051, 8013D4762062

8013D4783023, 8013D4744034

8013D47B5035

Legend Of Dragon

Dart:

Infinite HP 800BAEFC1770

800BAEFC09E7

Infinite SP 800BAF0009E7

Max Level 300BAF06003C

Max Drgn Level 300BAF070032

Quick Lvl Gain 800BAEFAFFFF

GAME BOY

X-Men Mutant Academy

P1: Infinite Health 012B33C8,

012B35C8

P1: Low Health 010A33C8, 010A35C8

P1: Max Gauge 012B30CA,

012B32C8

P1: No Rage Gauge 010030C8,

010032C8

P1: Ultra Quick Win! 010035CA,

010035CA

P2: Infinite Health 012B33CA,

012B35CA

P2: Low Health 010A33CA, 010A35CA

P2: Max Gauge 012B30CA,

012B32CA

P2: No Rage Gauge 010030CA,

010032CA

X-Treme Sports

Max Twirls Shakes 0169F6C8

Max Medals 01CF8DC8, 0101FEC8

Max Points 0109F7C8, 0109F8C8

0109F9C8, 0109FAC8, 0109FBC8

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Z

"...may just give the taxi boys a run for their money."

-Gamers Republic, April 2000

"Take the playability and polish of Crazy Taxi, throw in the seamy underbelly of GTA 2, then add a healthy dose of the interactive factor found in... Destruction Derby..."

-Official Sega Dreamcast Magazine, July/August 2000

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Sega Dreamcast



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FINAL WORD

Shawn Says Goodbye to His Life of Pimpin'



Usually, a bunch of us sit around and talk about a hot issue in the world of gaming in this section. For instance, we were originally going to talk about the silly laws being passed in certain states about violence in video games. Not this time.



Instead, I'm going to go on and on about what fun it has been to work at *EGM* for the past six years, and what an honor it has been to let all of you know what games deserve to be played, and what games are better shat upon. Hopefully this is at least somewhat interesting.



I've made the decision to leave *EGM* to go back to college soon after I'm done with this issue. It has been a long process, but I'm confident it's the right



"I imagine I'll get beat up a lot if anyone in my classes finds out who I am, and what I've done. Maybe I deserve it. I'll wear a cup."



decision. I've already enrolled in my classes for the semester, went through the tedious financial-aid process like many of you have, and just recently got myself a modest apartment. You know, college stuff. I know what you're thinking: "Here I am, busting my ass in college, taking classes I hate with all of my soul, wishing I could get a job at a gaming mag and here's this A-hole quitting a *secure* job at *EGM* to go back to school? What a fu_ing idiot!" I imagine I'll get beat up a lot if anyone in my classes finds out who I am, and what I've done. Who knows, maybe I deserve it. I'll wear a cup.



But you have to realize, I've been doing this for nearly six years now. When I originally started as a part-timer in 1994, Ed Semrad and Steve Harris were in charge. Crispin Bowler and Dan Hsu weren't even a twinkle in Joe Funk's eye. Mark MacDonald was still working on his family's farm in Missouri. Greg Sewart was...I don't know...building an igloo or something (what do they do in Canada, anyway?). Chris Johnston was still wearing diapers—scratch that, he still is. The point is, that was a long time ago and it's time for a change. Besides, I'm 24 years old. If I waited to go back to school in a couple of years or something, I'd just be

some old dude going back, drooling over all of the hot, taut freshman chicks. Although, more than likely I'll still be checking out all of the ladies. You know how it is.

I've done everything here from the old version of Get Some—called Lifestyles—all the way to the coveted position on Review Crew. Hell, I've even put together some office furniture and entertained *Ed's* giant son once or twice over the years (now that was a blast). But you know, even with the occasional three-day-long work day, stress-induced loss of hair and 15 extra pounds around my waist, it has been a damn fun ride. I certainly can't complain. I mean, who else in America gets to wake up in the morning and wonder what new PlayStation 2 games

they're going to get to play at work today? Answer: Gaming mag editors, importers, Donald Trump and crazy people.

I hope at least a few of you have enjoyed the humor I've tried to bring to the magazine, my down-to-earth approach to reviewing games, and my infrequent cartoon contributions. Speaking of cartoons, I'm going to study art in college—you know, painting, drawing and all of that other crap. It's certainly different from what I've been doing here—not that it's better or worse.

I'd like to thank all of the readers who've e-mailed and sent letters to me over the years (especially to those who sent me some hilarious and disturbing Web sites for the Forced Feedback section...even the lame ones rocked).

I should also mention: Even though I'm officially leaving *EGM*, I'm still going to be doing some freelance work every now and again. You'll probably see my name in Power Tools and Forced Feedback, among other sections on a regular basis, but not as often as usual. I couldn't really quit all together, could I? Now that would be crazy. It's just that I've been meaning to do this for the past couple of years, and now is simply the right time. Thanks for reading, and don't smoke crack.

Shawn Smith from past to present

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Crash Bandits 96	08/00	\$39.95	Medal of Honor 2					



NEXT MONTH

November 2000

On sale Oct. 3

PlayStation 2

Brace yourself. Sony's PlayStation 2 is nearly here and next month we're gonna tell you everything you need to know about this jet-black monster machine in our massive 30-page feature. We'll show you which five launch games you'll want from day one. We'll pick the 15 must-own DVD movies. We'll highlight all the gear you need to get the most from your system. And we'll find out from Sony just how they plan to make the PS2 the most important thing in your living room.



Will Smuggler's Run be one of our five must-buy launch games?



ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

- Preview of Spider-Man for Nintendo 64
- Preview of Grandia II for Dreamcast
- Preview of Dino Crisis 2 for PlayStation
- Review of Resident Evil Survivor for PlayStation
- Review of Ogre Battle 64 for Nintendo 64

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

Oct. 2000
On sale Sept. 12

Demo Disc Playables

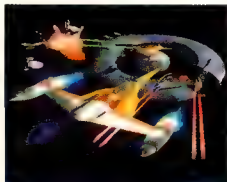
- Bust A Groove 2
- Sno-Cross Championship Racing
- Muppet Monster Adventure
- Team Buddies
- RC Revenge
- Sydney 2000

Non-Playables

- Spyro: Year of the Dragon
- Crash Bash
- The Legend of Dragoon
- Rayman 2

Star Wars

OPM delves deep into the Star Wars universe and covers the latest games based on the legendary movie series. With the PlayStation 2 about to hit stores in what may be the biggest console launch in history, OPM will showcase the games players will be talking about. They've got a whole slew of reviews, with comprehensive looks at Star Trek, Parasite Eve 2, Madden and GameDay.



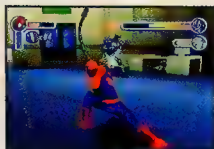
EXPERT GAMER

Oct. 2000
On sale Sept. 19

Spider-Man

Spider-Man will make a pre-Halloween appearance in XG's October issue, so look out for their guide—you'll be web-slinging your way through Spidey's PlayStation game in no time. Fall means football is in the air, so XG will be tackling Madden NFL 2001 and NFL 2K1. Looking for adventure? They've got you covered with a strategy guide on Chrono Cross, Square's long-awaited follow-up to the hit SNES game. Finally, look for tips on WWF Royal Rumble and Ultimate Fighting Championship.

- Spider-Man's webslinging tips and strategy
- All you need to know about importing foreign games
- Hard-hitting tactics to survive the U.E.C. Octagon
- Chrono Cross elements, characters and more
- Ogre Battle's classes and hidden treasures revealed



*All editorial content is subject to change.

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Official Contest and Sweepstakes Rules

Trick of the Month

1. No Purchase Necessary. To enter, send a letter or standard size postcard with your best trick codes for any video game in "Tricks of the Trade," P.O. Box 3334, Oak Brook, IL 60521-3334, or e-mail us at tricks@funco.com. Include your name, address, and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. Entries will be received by Sept. 30, 2000.

All entries become exclusive property of Sponsors and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due, or undelivered entries. Sponsors reserve the right to cancel this contest at any time with appropriate notice. Only one prize per family, organization, or household per game. Winning entries may be printed in *EGM* and/or *EGM* Express; however, only one prize shall be awarded.

2. Prizes that this sweepstake will have the same and look displayed in the magazine and will receive a video game cartridge valued at \$40.00. First Prize has an approximate retail value of \$40.00. Second Prize has an approximate retail value of \$20.00. Grand Prize winner will receive the addition to the first. Prizes awarded on 10 Game Shark Grand Prix has an approximate retail value of \$99.99. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. Entries shall be judged on the following criteria: (I) uniqueness (25%), (II) creativity (25%), (III) judging to be held on or about Aug. 26, 2000. All trick winners will receive a \$100.00 prize. Prizes are non-transferable. No substitutions of prizes are allowed. Winning the contest or Sponsors should the featured entries become available.

3. Odds of Winning: The number of entries and the odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received.

4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada, U.S. or Quebec. Non-compliance with this prize agreement constitutes voiding of any eligibility notification as well as voiding of any prize. Disqualification. Winners or the legal guardian shall sign an affidavit of eligibility and a release of liability agreement within the time of receipt or forfeit prize by acceptance of prize. Winner's agrees to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade, or promotion without their compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of Ziff Davis Media Inc., Interact Accessories and their respective affiliates are not eligible. Neither Ziff Davis Media Inc., Interact Accessories, nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions, or related companies are responsible for any stamps, taxes, or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. Winners accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that Ziff Davis Media Inc., Interact Accessories and their respective representatives, and winners have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses, or damages of any kind arising from acceptance, possession, or use of prizes.

5. Winner List: For a list of winners, send a request to the contest or receipt of prize. Winners accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that Ziff Davis Media Inc., Interact Accessories and their respective representatives, and winners have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses, or damages of any kind arising from acceptance, possession, or use of prizes.

6. Resolutions: Not when prohibited or restricted by any federal, state and local regulations apply.

7. Sponsors: This contest is sponsored by Ziff Davis Media Inc. and Interact Accessories Inc., Division Ziff Davis Media Inc. All Rights Reserved. Printed in USA.

Letter of the Month

1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send your letter to EGM Letters, P.O. Box 2336, Oak Brook, Illinois 60521-3336, or e-mail us at EGMletters@funco.com. Make sure to include your name, address and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. Entries will be received by the 30th day of the month for the next available issue of *EGM*. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due, or undelivered entries. Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of \$99.99. Winners will be selected by the Letters Editor whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. Entries shall be judged on the following criteria: (I) Creativity (25%), and (II) Trick (25%), judging to be held on or about the 15th day of each month. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prizes are non-transferable. No substitutions of prizes are allowed, except at the option of Sponsors should the featured entries become available. The odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply. 100% NON-FUNERAL COUNTRY. THE RULES, 5010-B DEL-ACK-5000 STAMPED RESOLUTION TO LETTERS OF THE MONTH CONTEST RULES, P.O. Box 3334, Oak Brook, IL 60521-3334.

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Ultima Black Gate

Rayman 2
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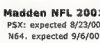
Turko 3: Oblivion
Next expected 9/22/00
GBC: expected 9/4/00



NFL Blitz 2001
DC: expected 9/15/00
N64: expected 9/22/00



Tony Hawk 2
PSX: expected 9/20/00
DC: expected 11/10/00



Madden NFL 2001
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N64: expected 9/6/00



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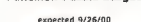
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