

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

World Exclusive:

FINAL FANTASY X

We undress the mother of all RPGs
New screens and info inside

TEKKEN 4

First in-game screens

REVIEWED:

Gran Turismo 3 (PS2)

Sonic Adventure 2 (DC)

Resident Evil Code: Veronica X (PS2)

PREVIEWED:

Onimusha 2 (PS2)

Spy Hunter (PS2)

Spider-Man 2 (PS)

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092



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ART BY KEIJI AWAKO



PlayStation 2



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By Dan "Shoe" Hsu • shoe@ziffdavis.com



EDITORIAL

A Tale of Two Covers

Look on the cover of the magazine you are holding in your hands. Unless something went horribly awry at the printer, you will see one of two images (both shown below).

If you see a bright and colorful Yuna (She's Final Fantasy's new heroine) using her wide-sweeping arms to cast a spell over the ocean waves, then you have our stunning "normal" cover, which was put together by our art director, Mike Reisel. He took a new image from Square's illustrious artists and crafted the magnificent piece you see here.

"Why two visually captivating covers for just another Final Fantasy?"

If you see a wispy hand-painted picture with flairs of amber and gold...if you see Tidus, our Final Fantasy X hero, protectively standing in front of Yuna...if you see a little Mog and Chocobo off to either side, then congratulations. You managed to land one of our exclusive, limited-edition covers. This chef-d'oeuvre was made special just for us by Final Fantasy's—actually, video gaming's—most famous artist, Yoshitaka Amano.

You've seen his goods in past FF games (in manuals, box art, posters, etc.) or with DC Comics (his most recognized work being *The Sandman: The Dream Hunters*, a collaboration with Neil Gaiman). This special cover was only printed on less than 15 percent of our maga-



Cover #1 (starring Yuna), the one you probably got.



Cover #2. Limited-edition, by Yoshitaka Amano.

zines, so if you don't have it already, you better run out and grab one fast.

Why for the big fuss? Why two visually captivating covers for just another Final Fantasy? As you can see, starting on page 112, this isn't just another chapter of the long-running role-playing game series. This is Final Fantasy being revamped and re-created for a new generation of gamers and a new generation of hardware. This is a big deal, folks, and we're here with an exclusive sneak peek of the whole game, well before it even hit store shelves in Japan. New info and

never-before-seen screenshots await you inside. But the whole issue isn't just about Square's new deal. We have loads of new coverage on the stuff you're probably playing lots of right now, like Gran Turismo 3 and the always-hard-to-see-clearly Game Boy Advance. We also talk a bit about something you probably haven't played a lot of lately (unless you're old school, geeky, hardcore or all of the above). This month is the 10th anniversary of the launch of the Super Nintendo Entertainment System, father to my two favorite fantasies (among those that can be printed here), Final Fantasy V and VI, and one of EGM's favorite consoles of all time. Take a trip back down memory lane with us on page 126.

Shoe

Contributing Writers

Chris Baker

Chris is a know-it-all writer who's spearheading "Ever Wondered...?", our new answer session to gaming's burning questions.



Shane Bettenhausen

A huge game deserves a huge feature. This ex-Gamers.com-er parachuted in to help scribe our massive Final Fantasy X piece.



David Kushner

Think games aren't all they should be? David shows you how to put your money where your mouth is by making your own.



Ethan Einhorn

Now a seasoned EGM contributor, Ethan knocked out several game previews this month. His next order of business—NBA Street.

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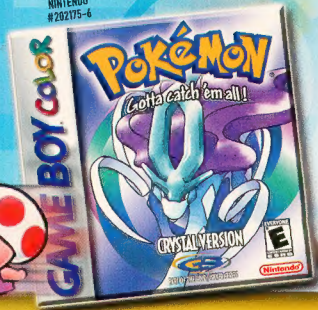
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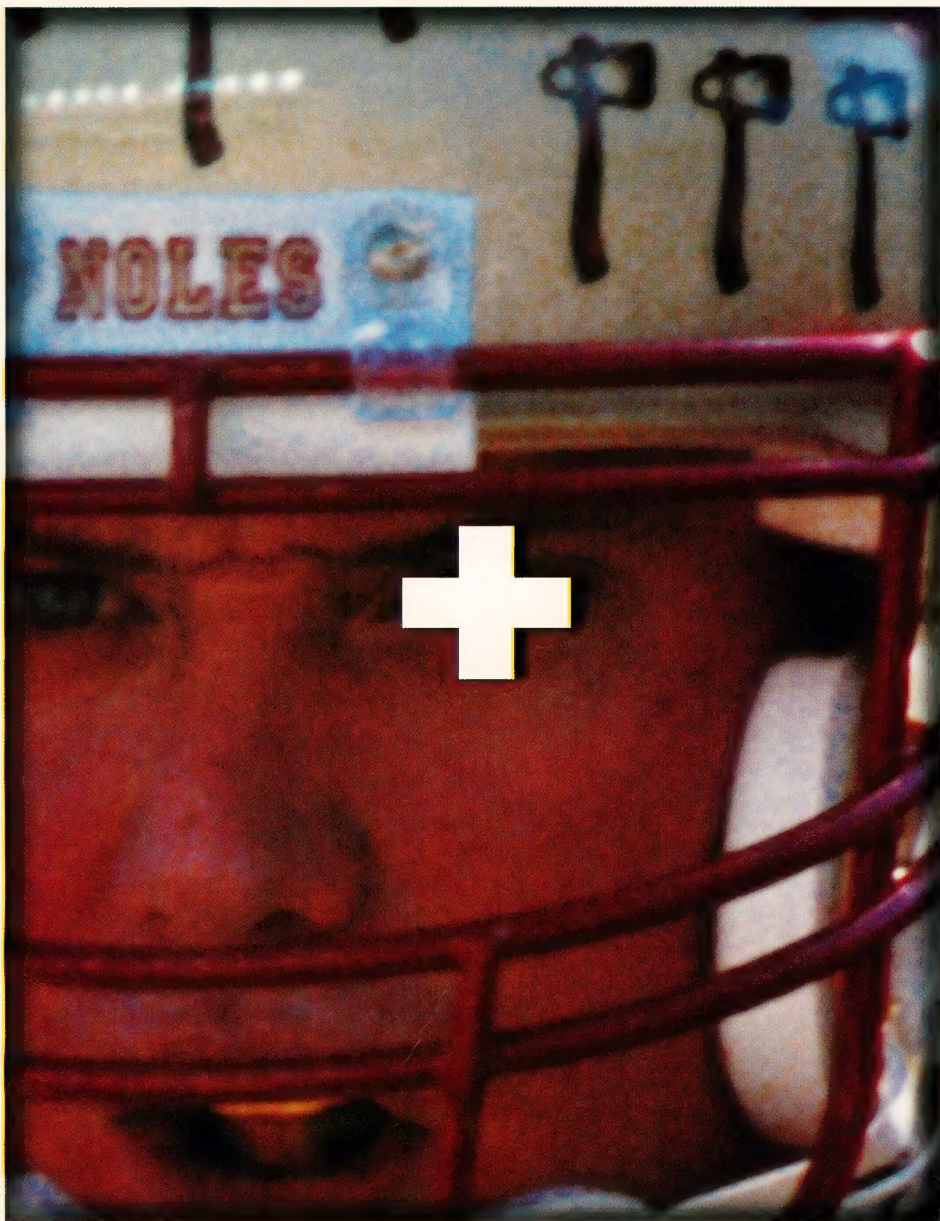
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Final Fantasy X Square is taking its premiere RPG franchise in new directions on the PlayStation 2, and we have the full story—not to mention loads of exclusive screens—straight from the series' creators. X marks the spot on **page 112**.



Sonic Adventure 2 Is one of the Dreamcast's last hurrahs a great game worthy to ride into the sunset on? Find out on **page 146** if the last Sonic game on Sega hardware runs rings around the competition, or just jumps through hoops.

The Super NES Turns 10 Nintendo's classic 16-bit system debuted a decade ago this month, and we're celebrating the occasion with a five-page ode to this old friend. The memories begin on **page 112**.



Gran Turismo 3 A-spec The long, difficult wait is over. Our review of GT3 begins on **page 142**. But wait, there's more! We also kick off a new section called **The Inside Track** this month. You'll find the first edition spread across both our GT3 review and the back of our poster this month.



Garage, Inc. Wanna get into game development? Why not go indie? Independent developers are the garage bands of this industry. We follow one intrepid start-up through the highs and lows of do-it-yourself game design. Do they make it? Find out on **page 132**.

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Find out why everyone's been prying open their Game Boy Advances and why they probably shouldn't. Also, get the scoop behind the making of Twisted Metal: Black and what really happened to Half-Life for DC.

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Contrary to popular belief, yes, we do have a Previews section. Just not when we have an E3 feature loaded with over 100 games. That was last month, but now we're talkin' about Metroid's arrival on GameCube and GBA, Spy Hunter and Madden 2002 on PS2, and even Spyder's return to PS1.

Review Crew 140

Vin Diesel ain't the only one gettin' fast and furious. Check out our reviews of GT3, NASCAR Heat and oh yes, horsey simulator Gallop Racer. But don't forget about games that use human horsepower: NCAA Football 2001, NBA Street and N64 Tony Hawk 2.

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The Final Fantasy movie made us reminisce about the series that's shaped role-playing games since the original arrived on the 8-bit Nintendo. Has the series changed for the best, or has it become just another game with a nice name?



WHO WANTS TO BE A

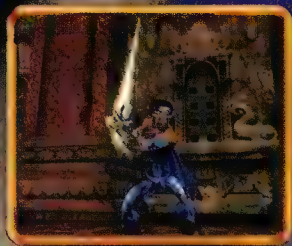
sit-at-home contestant who faces mind bending questions, orders in Chinese food and then, while taking a bathroom break to ponder the advantages of certain lifelines over others, realizes that you could always just push pause and look up the answer on the Internet, but knows that because you're at home, there's no need to worry about making a fool of yourself on national TV and besides, just like on the actual show, you really don't stand a chance of ever becoming a

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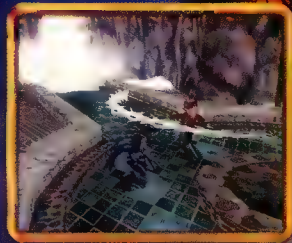
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- Fake letters from Contributing Editor David Hodgson jokingly pretending to be a reader who's "a big fan of David's 'Where Are They Now?' series": 1
- Love letters to Associate Editor/Art Director Jeanne Kim: 78

Letters to the Editors

LETTER OF THE MONTH

System Wars

Buying a game console has become like buying a new car! With each year, as hardware costs rise, it seems that the allegiances of gamers to specific console manufacturers settle into more firmly solidified, blind partisanship.

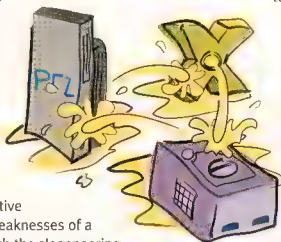
Internet forums and magazine letters columns are looking more like the bumper stickers on Ford and Chevy trucks every day. So what? Aside from replacing more objective looks at the relative strengths and weaknesses of a given system with the sloganeering of console manufacturers' ad campaigns, such single-mindedness would seem to actually hurt us, the consumers.

While we were all scrambling to get our hands on a PS2, we not only let a

It surprises me to see people write that Sony has ended the console wars before they've even begun. And while it appears that Sony's system finally has some truly exceptional games on the horizon, two other contenders arrive with tempting offerings.

What is the non-partisan gamer to do?

Shawn Elliott
selliot23@aol.com



Yeah, it's a bit silly how normal, everyday gamers turn into vicious street thugs when talking about their favorite systems. One

reader even wrote in, angry about our last issue's less-than-enthusiastic write-up on the Xbox. He proclaimed that Microsoft's machine is going to be the best thing ever. We shut him up real quick with

"It surprises me to see people write that Sony has ended the console wars before they've even begun!"

system with, in my opinion, one of gaming history's finest libraries (the Dreamcast) go under, but we also encouraged Sony to continue boasting about its market dominance with nothing more to show for itself than a handful of rushed-to-market, disposable titles.

Shortly after Sega announced it would cease manufacturing the Dreamcast, I too jumped ship and traded my DC for a PlayStation 2. Sorry mistake that, so far. Phantasy Star Online, Quake III Arena, Shenmue, Soul Calibur, Jet Grind Radio, NFL 2K1...all gone so that I could play what? Two semi-enjoyable hours of Zone of the Enders and a three-hour run through the murky, overrated Red Faction? Sigh.

a, "How on earth would you know that, not having played the thing yet?" See this month's Question of the Moment to read some of the more intelligent comments on the upcoming system wars.

But that's human nature. You become protective of the things that are endearing to you (although how the unreleased Xbox became endearing to that reader, God only knows). This fall will probably bring out the worst in everyone, with three consoles from which to choose....

So what is the non-partisan gamer to do? Buckle up and get ready to start spending some of your hard-earned dough! Buy everything! Buy! Buy! Buy!

Nutso Over Amano

I just got the latest issue (August, EGM #145) in the mail and after reading your editorial, I truly hope you guys are going to reward your faithful subscription holders with the Amano cover of the next issue. Please!

I will be VERY disappointed if I don't get one, and I'm unwilling to pay for an extra copy of something I already have. Please, please use your almighty influence to make this happen.

Duncan Crawford
skulboy@earthlink.net

Unfortunately, we don't really have much of anything "almighty" (at least that's what our significant others tell us). We don't have influence over jack, much less control of a randomly distributed issue. Sorry! If you don't see the Amano cover edition of this issue in your mailbox, then your only alternative is to trek to the nearest shop to look for it.

Crispin the Saint

Dear Honorable Crispin,

Before I was confirmed on June 10, I was given the daunting task of finding a confirmation name. As I was going through the List-o-Saints, I stumbled across the name...(dun dun da!)..."Crispin." Instead of the expected, "Hey that's neat...what does the name mean?", I said, "Sweet!! Just like Crispin Boyer!!!" Needless to say, my parents got kind of perturbed, but nonetheless, my full name is now Josef Anthony Crispin Locastro. Just for trivia's sake, Crispin is a curly haired saint. He was a religious advocate by day and a shoemaker by night...back in the 16th century.

Josef Anthony Crispin Locastro
burger_dog17@yahoo.com

Features Editor Crispin Boyer responds: I'm flattered you picked my name for your confirmation, but are you sure you want to go through with this? I mean, do you have any idea how many different ways those cruel kids down the street can make fun of a name like Crispin? Crispin,

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LETTERS



Crispy Creme, Crispy Wheats and Raisins—I've heard them all.

Allow me to suggest a few tougher, more street-sounding names such as "T-Bone," "Heywood Jablownee" or "Dandy Andy."



St. Crispin Boyer, circa 1989

Classic Zelda

I heard that The Legend of Zelda for the [8-bit] Nintendo was coming out on the Game Boy Color with extra stuff. Is this true? I don't have a NES any more (I regretfully gave it away for my N64), and I always wanted

to play that game again. If it is coming out, would Zelda II be coming out as well? How about Link's Awakening for the Game Boy Advance?

Allen Fangor
afangor@dellepro.com

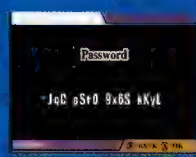
Indeed, Capcom, developers of **Zelda: Oracle of Ages and Oracle of Seasons**, was working on a GBC remake of the original 8-bit **Zelda**. Executive Producer **Yoshiki Okamoto** told us at E3 that it was completed, but not released because of problems brought on by the GBC's oddball screen size. (Players couldn't see entire rooms at once

pAssWords sUck

I'm afraid I'm detecting a little bit of hypocrisy. On the page leading to our regular reviews section (EGM #144), you guys pointed out that unlike your competition, you would not be reviewing Outrigger for DC or Gran Turismo 3 for PS2 because the American releases weren't ready for review yet. I applaud you for making this distinction, and I respect your values. One of the reasons I enjoy your magazine so much is because you're willing to risk being the last one to publish a review in order to make sure it is fair and accurate.

However, it seems suspicious to me that in none of the reviews for GT Advance Championship (GBA) did you mention the fact that the battery-save system has been removed for the domestic release in exchange for an infuriatingly cumbersome password system. I honestly do think that this will be a key obstacle to enjoying the game and one which I can only imagine was left out of the reviews because you reviewed the Japanese release instead of the U.S. one. If I am wrong, please correct me, but if that is the case, why would you not warn gamers of this fly in the ointment? Especially when the game is constantly awarding new parts and cars and therefore, new password combinations.

Dave Zerk
kx@ziffdavis.com



You're right. We did fail to report on the password system properly, and we take full responsibility. Please accept our apologies. What happened? With GT Advance, we reviewed a battery-save version that THQ informed us was complete and final code. They told us that nothing would change for the retail release. As you've noticed, THQ put in a password system at the last moment, replacing the battery save. Why? To save money.

Nothing is more important to us than honest, trustworthy reviews, so we went and played the password-laden version to see if we would have to change our original scores. Greg Sewart and Dean Hager both agreed that the password system is really cumbersome, but it doesn't affect gameplay all that much. The lack of a battery save, however, affected Che Chou much more. He says, "For a portable game, who's going to carry a piece of paper around to write down a password each time you have to turn the thing off?"

In the end, the new password system bugged the reviewers enough to force them to change their scores (see left). Again, our apologies to everyone involved. We'll do our best to make sure this doesn't happen again.

Re-Reviewed

Here are the Review Crew's new scores for THQ's GT Advance Championship for the Game Boy Advance. Remember...the scale goes from 0 to 10, with a 5.0 being middle-of-the-road average.

- Greg Sewart: **8.0** (originally 9.4)
- Dean Hager: **8.5** (originally 9.4)
- Che Chou: **7.0** (originally 8.5)

Note: these new scores force us to take back the EGM Silver award we gave GT Advance the first time around.



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5. Show them your respect. They are a very intelligent species.
6. Don't touch them. They are very sensitive.
7. Don't touch them. They are very sensitive.
8. Don't touch them. They are very sensitive.
9. Don't touch them. They are very sensitive.
10. Don't touch them. They are very sensitive.



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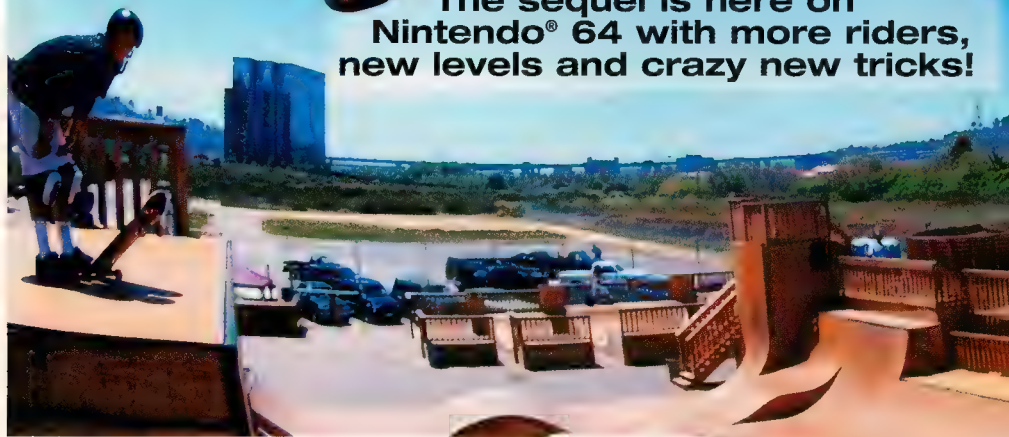


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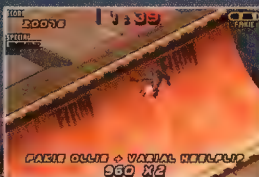
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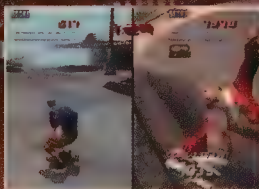
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LETTERS

like they could in the NES original, so they would miss staircases, bombable walls, etc.) He also said the decision to release it or not is now up to Nintendo, but he doubts it will ever see the light of day. Damn. Maybe they'll rework it (or Super NES' Link to the Past) for the GBA though....



The Legend of Zelda (NES): A real classic and a thetruth.com friend.

An interesting side note: As you may or may not know, the Oracle series was originally slated to be a three-game series, so what happened to the third cart?

Okamoto told us the hassles of making three GBC games linkable to each other proved to be too much for Capcom to handle. ("The debugging would take forever," he told us.) So they took Miyamoto's suggestion and scrapped the third Oracle game. It was never completed.

Pool Boy or VP?

I'm a Brazilian guy and would like to thank you because since I started reading your magazine (#19), I loved it so much that I learned english just to read it. Now ten years later I work in a five star Hotel in Rio de Janeiro because I speak the language that your magazine introduced me. [SIC] siso@mailbr.com.br

We would say we're flattered and impressed, but we have no idea what kind of job you hold at this hotel.

Not-So-Gay Letter

Hi guys...love your work but issue number 145 bothered me a little bit.

MORE LETTER FACTS

- Letters that got resent to us with an apology because the original wasn't spell-checked or proofread: 4
- Letters we automatically dismissed because they really needed spell-checking or proofreading: 13
- Average number of entries for "Eat My Shorts" contest: 800+ a month

On page 58, the Best GameCube Game award went to Rogue Leader: Rogue Squadron II. I don't have a problem with that; I think *Star Wars* is great. But what I do have a problem with is the nice little slur you managed to sneak into the text.

The line is as follows: "...the GC game that impressed us most packed spaceships and John Williams tunes, not coins and gay Mario music." Could you explain yourselves? What did you mean by that? Does Mario music frequently engage in homosexual behavior?

I demand an apology for your furthering of the "acceptable" prejudice. I'm not gay and I don't know any gay people. But as a decent human being, I'm not going to sit and read your magazine when you have your little slurs hidden in every issue or so.

"Jessica" address withheld

P.S. The editor who wrote that bit should read *Homophobia: Analysis of a "Permissible" Prejudice...* www.cyberpsych.org/homophobia/

The Oxford Dictionary has its first (and therefore, most common) definition of the word "gay" as:

gay /gay/ • adj.
1. lighthearted and carefree; mirthful.

So we're not really sure that you're raising a stink about. "Gay" is a perfectly cromulent word.

Molar Activity

How does the Game Boy Advance stand up to bite attacks (from humans, dogs and other living creatures)? I remember renting a game with a cheating AI system for my Game Boy Color. I got so mad, I bit the screen. Luckily, I bit above the actual screen, but I still bit the screen's plastic.

SHORTS

Direct, to the point, here they are. This month's shorts:

Did you tell Capcom to release my Mega Man compilation? I'm gonna pee my pants if I have to wait any longer!!
sayanikowsk1@webtv.net

Send us a picture so we can show everyone how serious you weral

Do you know when the Wonder Swan Color is coming out in the U.S., and do you know when a Dragon Ball Z game is coming out?
Bun978@aol.com

WSC: It's not. DBZ: The Legacy of Goku, an action-adventure game with some role-playing elements, is in the works for the Game Boy Advance. Infomags will be releasing it this winter. These guys will be releasing more titles based on the DBZ license in the future.



Question of the Moment

What Are Your Thoughts on the Upcoming System Wars?

Let's just say that PlayStation 2 is America and GameCube is Hiroshima and Xbox is the big atomic bomb that will end the whole war.

richieballz@yahoo.com

Let's see. GameCube vs. Xbox vs. PlayStation 2 vs. Dreamcast. DC beats PS2, Xbox beats DC, GC beats Xbox.

Ottercool@igmail.com

GameCube: \$199.99. Xbox: \$299.99. The realization that the PS2 will kick their booties in the console wars: priceless. There are some things money can't buy. For everything else, there's the PS2.

slimshadyfan99@hotmail.com

When will Nintendo grow up?! Those games are still kiddly. Look at Pikmin, Smash Bros., Kameo.... Forget it. Nintendo just won't change....

friendlyguy28@mail.com

Let's put this in Perfect Dark terms: Nintendo has an RCP-120 and everybody else is unarmed, Nintendo wins.

Excalibur2043@aol.com

I think the Xbox is going to follow its American-based ancestors' footsteps (like 3DO and Jaguar) and die a quick death within two years. I predict the PS2 will come out on top with the GameCube giving it some healthy competition.

force555@hotmail.com

Dreamcast still rules all!

CubsRules8@aol.com

I'd rather have an Xbox or a GameCube than a PlayStation 2. But Sony has Square. Hence, they have me. It's out of my hands.

iwishwasafi@hotmail.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

What is your favorite Final Fantasy, and are you excited about Final Fantasy X?

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

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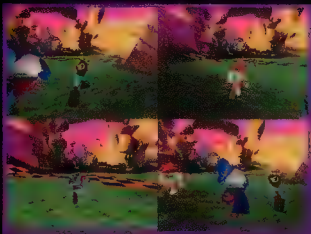


*Moby
*Fallacy Slim
*Propellerheads
and more

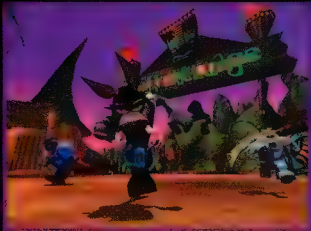
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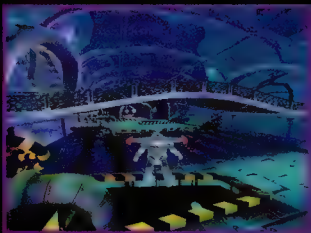
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You can write EGM at:

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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, mailing address and system preference for Letter of the Month prize consideration).

Also note: Although we can't respond to every letter, as far as you know, we do read them all. Also, everything you send us is ours to keep!

Also, one time, a wire scratched the screen...right across the middle, leaving a visible gouge. I tried polishing it for a few, frantic minutes. Apparently I polished it so hard that the plastic melted back into its straight-outta-the-box condition. Everything looked brand new, except for my aforementioned bite, which still remains to this day.

Xuncu Mordon
ucnux@yahoo.com

To be honest we aren't sure how the Game Boy Advance will stand up to bite attacks. We're having trouble getting people to play with "Jesus"—our name for the white Japanese GBA that started working again three days after we flushed it in a toilet—much less wrap their lips around it. And to those who were wondering:



Yes, we really did flush it in a toilet.

How to Score a PS2

A few months after his parents were divorced, little Jay passed by his mom's bedroom where he saw her rubbing her body and moaning, "I need a man, I need a man!"

Over the next couple of months, he saw her doing this several times. One day, he came home from school and heard her moaning again. When he

MORE SHORTS

What did that Canadian Stewart do with his money? Did he buy some Canadian bacon on the way home to his eskimo? MrSparkle442@aol.com

Yep. He bought some Canadian bacon on the way home to his eskimo (the one who's waiting for him each night in his igloo).

In case you missed the last issue, Previews Editor and Canadian Greg Stewart won SGK for winning a NASCAR 2003 contest at this summer's video-game trade show, E3 (the Electronic Entertainment Expo).

peeked into her bedroom, he saw a man on top of her.

Little Jay ran into his room, took off his clothes, threw himself on his bed, and started rubbing himself, moaning, "Ohhhh, I need a PS2! I need a PS2!"
JayTheFF@excite.com

Hmm...was this appropriate to put in our magazine? Probably not. Oh well. Too late.

Tactics Revisited

Square has or is ready to rerelease Final Fantasy Tactics, Xenogears and some other "old-school" PlayStation games for the PlayStation 2 in Japan. (It's called the Square Millennium Collection.) Is there any news of Square Electronic Arts doing a similar rerelease for the U.S.?

Avid Final Fantasy Tactics fans will surely love to have this game available again. Trying to find a copy of this classic game is impossible, and when you do find it, people are asking \$60-80 for it. While I probably would pay that much 'cause the game is that

good, I wouldn't pay that much for a used copy. And my copy is scratched beyond playability.

Phil Williams
ill_wi_willy@yahoo.com

Square EA is not planning on bringing out the Square Millennium Collection to the U.S. But fear not. Sony should soon be rereleasing Final Fantasy Tactics under their Greatest Hits line. In fact, it may be out by the time you read this.

The good news: You'll be able to buy the game for \$19.99, brand new! The bad news: It's gonna have that huge, gay "Greatest Hits" logo on the packaging. And we do mean "gay" in the most mythical way.

Oops.

Last issue, we accidentally credited Paramount Pictures with Spider-Man (the movie, not the game, which is called Spider-Man the Movie). The folks with access to imaginary movie critics are the ones making the flicks. Columbia Pictures.

LETTER ART

Letter Art of the Month WINNER

Alex Chen • San Jose, CA

CONGRATULATIONS! Your prize is on the way—an InterAct GameShark for PlayStation 2, PlayStation, Dreamcast, Nintendo 64 or Game Boy Color.

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(or e-mail EGM@ziffdavis.com)

Be sure to include a mailing address, and tell us what system you'd like your prize for, in case you win. All entries become the property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be returned.

Close, but no controller

Bad luck to these guys.... Better luck next time.

Matt Koenitzer
Medford, NJ

Dominick Carriero
Stuart, FL

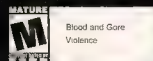
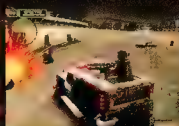
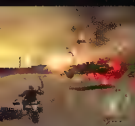
For Letter of the Month and Letter Art of the Month contests, no purchase is necessary. If you're really bored and want to read the complete colored legal rules, please visit www.egmag.com or write us at: EGM Contests Legal Rules Request, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. After reading the rules, please get a ruler. Don't forget to tell us what system you'd like your prize for, and don't forget to give us your physical mailing address as well...or else, no prize for you!

PlayStation 2



twisted metal

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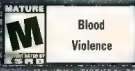
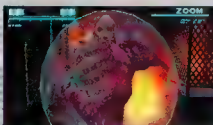
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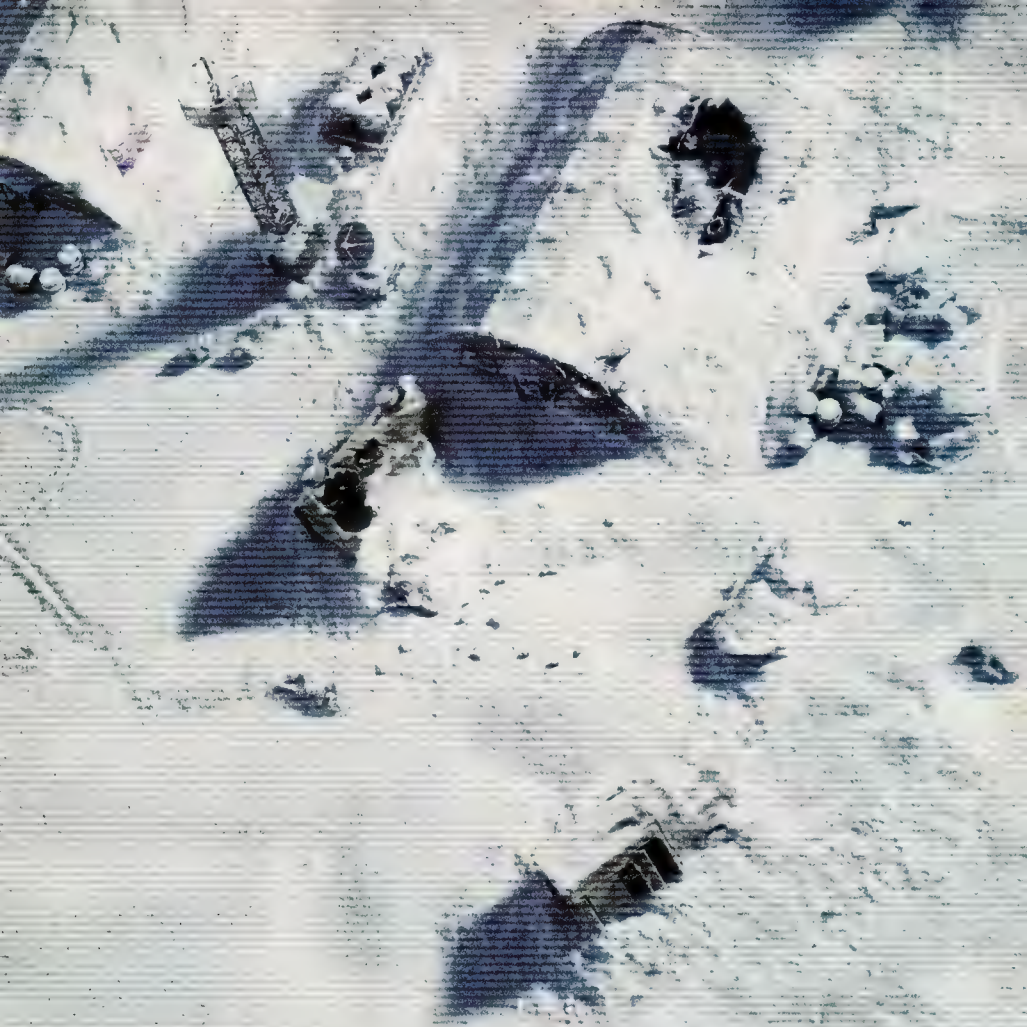


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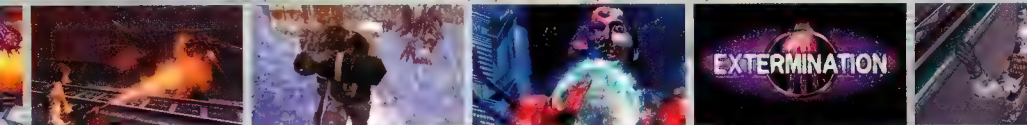
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PlayStation 2



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Comic: Mischief and Violence

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By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@ziffdavis.com
& Jonathan Dudlak jonathan_dudlak@ziffdavis.com

Press Start

The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

Tekken It Up A Notch

Tekken 4 gives Namco a chance to reinvent their six-year-old formula for fighting-game success

Some things just get better with age—fine wines, blue jeans...those little mechanical banks from the '40s you see on the *Antiques Road Show*. When it comes to video games, time is not always so kind. While most games go straight to the compost heap by the time they hit a fourth or fifth edition, a look back through Namco's flagship fighter legacy proves that Tekken has aged better than Richard Gere. Alongside *Virtua Fighter*, Tekken defined the 3D-fighter genre that solidified in the late '90s, and if it ends up looking like the arcade screens you see on these pages, Tekken 4 for the PS2 seems poised to do everything right.

With *Virtua Fighter 4* nipping at its heels, Tekken's fifth installment has a

British Boxer Steve Fox weighs in as one of Tekken 4's three new characters.



Japanese gamers with mobile phones are getting their own new version of Tekken. For a little under \$3 per month, properly equipped cell-phone users can play Tekken Command Battle, a Java version of the game, against an equally wired friend. Players input a skill (block, throw, defend), and based on their experience relative to an opponent, they will perform differently in battle. Where do they get these wonderful toys?



tough road ahead if it wants to be competitive with Sega's arcade juggernaut. Both titles have a similar history, competing on rival consoles in the mid-'90s and enjoying updates every couple of years. But while Virtua Fighter 4 is returning to a simpler control scheme and more classic gameplay, Tekken 4 tests the water with several new features.

Most notably, the formerly infinite arenas now have walls and natural boundaries that players can interact with. Don't expect to be busting through fences or anything, but you'll see some breakable objects here and there, and even more animated onlookers than in Tekken Tag. Using the walls and arena boundaries strategically for reversals and trapping your opponent will be key, especially when combined with the revised sidestep. Namco is removing the straight vertical and backward jumps (a forward jump will still be possible) to allow continuous movement into and out of the screen by holding the joystick up or down. Getting strategic positioning will be a huge part of the game, and players will be able

to drop a fighter into two or three different ring locations at the start of each bout to suit their preferences. Also new to Tekken 4 are Soul Calibur-esque parries, which allow you to pull an opponent toward you and quickly switch phases (but you won't have to worry about those annoying SC ring-outs!).

For those of you who follow the Tekken story line, the premise of T4 is pretty basic. In trying to track down the Devil Gene possessed by Jin Kazama for his biological experiments, Heihachi is led instead to the presumed-deceased Kazuya. What he doesn't know is that Kazuya has been resurrected in a biological research lab, and after disposing of the goons Heihachi has sent to find him, Kazuya embarks on a quest to destroy the man himself. Conveniently, in order to lure Kazuya within striking distance, Heihachi sponsors a tournament, knowing Kazuya will enter for the chance to defeat him. Of course, all the familiar Tekken favorites appear for a piece of the action as well, and thus Tekken 4 is born.

Filling out the ranks of the 20 total playables

Cont. on page 36



TIDBITS

GC Japan Launch Details

If you thought GameCube games would be cheaper because they come on smaller discs, think again. Nintendo recently announced the slate of GC titles it plans to release in Japan this year, and all will run gamers 6800 yen (about \$54 apiece). Two titles will accompany the system's Japanese launch on Sept. 14—Luigi's Mansion and Wave Race: Blue Storm. Pikmin will follow in October (making it a likely U.S. launch title in November), with Smash Bros. Melee in November and Eternal Darkness and Animal Forest in December. Nintendo of America has yet to announce game pricing for the U.S. market, but they insist it will be competitive.

Perfect Dark TV Series

Rare's N64 first-person shooter Perfect Dark will get a sequel in fall 2002 on GameCube. Fans of the game will get even more Joanna than they've bargained for, though. Fireworks Entertainment and Goodman Rosen Productions have optioned TV and movie rights, meaning a TV series based on PD could be on the air as early as fall 2002.

Namco, Square and Enix Team Up for Online Games

Namco, Square and Enix recently announced that they would team up to make games for use on Square's PlayOnline service, scheduled to launch next March. Square's Final Fantasy XI will be the first game to use it, but could Tekken be far behind?

Quake III Arena Dreamcast Map Pack Released

The Dreamcast Map Pack for Quake III is now available for download at sega.com. With it, PC, Mac or Linux players with a 1.16b or lower version of Quake III Arena can square off against people playing on Dreamcast. To get to DC players using the computer versions, use GameSpy 3D or PingTool to browse Sega's DC servers.

MGS2: U.S. First, Japan Second

Historically, games that are developed in Japan are released there first. In a stunning reversal, Konami revealed that their Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty will hit U.S. PS2s in November, but Japanese gamers will have to wait until December. We know what we'll be thankful for come Turkey Day.



RENT

A blue sports car, possibly a Toyota Supra, is shown in a garage setting. The car is the central focus of the upper half of the advertisement.

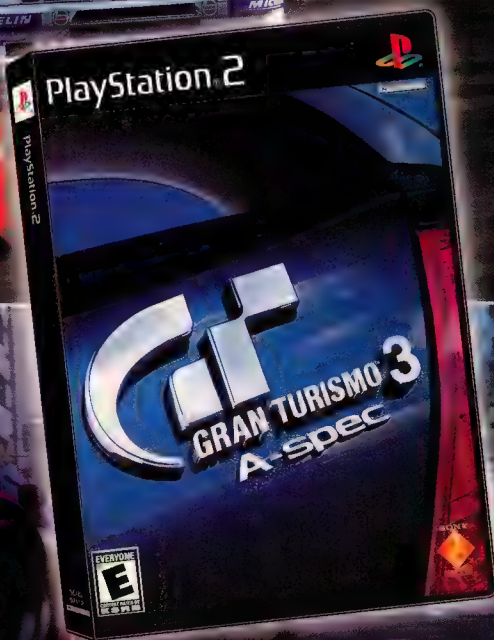
THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE

A red sports car, possibly a Nissan Skyline GT-R, is shown in motion, blurred background. The car features 'BRIDGESTONE' branding and the number '8' on its rear.

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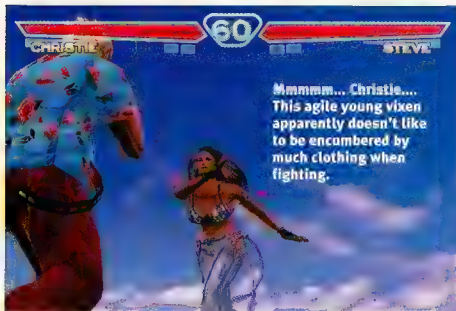


PRESS
START



THE NEW KID

Tekken 4 headliners Craig Marduk (the ear-notched Goldberg look-alike on the left) and Christie Monteiro (right). One's got power and one's got finesse. Which would you rather take home to mom and dad?



Mmmm... Christie.... This agile young vixen apparently doesn't like to be encumbered by much clothing when fighting.

Cont. from page 33



in the game are three new fighters, which may seem like a drop in the bucket when you look at the entire cast in Tekken's history. Hopefully, though, the days of slapping some armor on King or a prefix on Jack and calling them new characters are gone, and we'll have a score of solid fighters to choose from this time around.

The new recruits are pretty cool, the first of which is British middleweight boxer Steve Fox. While the designers originally planned to have two boxers with different fighting styles, they ended up combining them both into one well-rounded pugilist. Like most boxers, Steve's moves are all punch-based, so his kick buttons

will instead perform dodging and blocking tactics. To balance out his slightly limited attacks, Fox is going to be one fast sucka.

Four out of five Tekkenists agree that Eddy Gordo was one of the coolest additions to Tekken 3, so they will be happy to see a new Capoeira fighter introduced in T4. Please welcome Christie Monteiro, student of Eddy Gordo and granddaughter of his master. She was originally planned for Tekken 3, but the designers didn't feel comfortable with her character model until now. Add another one to the list of hot girls who can kick our rears.

Speaking of rears, athlete Craig Marduk brings

up this one to complete the all-star Tekken cast. An unknown benefactor recently sprung Marduk from prison and issued him a plane ticket to the tournament. Craig's a Vale Tudo fighter, a style heavy on ground attacks that you may recognize from the UFC games, which should nicely round out the large variety of disciplines represented in Tekken 4. See the page topper above for pictures of these two newbies.

With the arcade version hitting this summer, it'll be a while before we see Tekken 4 on U.S. PS2s. So take on that 10-year-old whiz kid at the arcade soon so you don't fall behind for the PS2 version. 🎮

If You're Going to Roughhouse, Go Outside. Or to the Garage. Or the Jungle...

For those of you who were miffed to hear that the arenas in Tekken 4 will be finite, this should ease the blow. From the insane detail on the water and lighting to the lifelike, animated backgrounds, there's plenty to distract you from the fight.



Rooftop platforms, stone lion heads and a bright city night make for one hell of a fight. How cool would it be if that clock moved in real-time? We're not going to hold our breath.



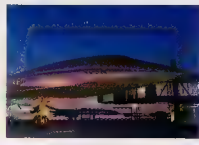
We can only hope you'll get to take out some soccer-mom aggression, Street Fighter-style, on the SUV parked back there.



We've seen Tekken bowling; might this be the beginnings of Tekken beach volleyball?



We don't know who designed this building, but typically you want to put the escalator next to the fountain, not in it. It's wet-sock time, baby!



Before the Backstreet Boys tore down their music-video set, Namco snagged a picture to use in designing this Tekken 4 arena.

PERFECT
FOR
WASHING
DOWN
MYSTERY
MEAT





PRESS
START

TOP 5 GBA LAUNCH GAMES

- 1 Super Mario Advance (Nintendo)
- 2 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 (Activision)
- 3 F-Zero Maximum Velocity (Nintendo)
- 4 Castlevania: Circle of the Moon (Konami)
- 5 Rayman Advance (Ubi Soft)

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Game Service

Flicker & Fade

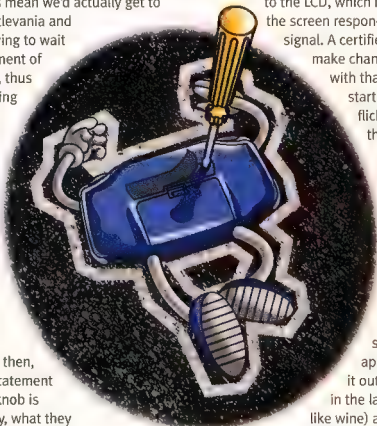
How that little knob on the GBA's backside can land you a broken unit

For a while there, the Internet rumors seemed too good to be true. A contrast adjustment for the GBA? Would this mean we'd actually get to play games like Castlevania and Rayman without having to wait for the proper alignment of the sun and planets, thus achieving ideal lighting conditions? So gamers eager to try something, anything to help make the GBA's sub-par display more visible, peeled back their serial-number stickers to gain access to the small adjustment knob buried behind the GBA's screen. About then, Nintendo issued a statement to clarify what that knob is actually for. Basically, what they said boils down to, "It's a flicker adjustment; don't mess with it."

While turning the little gold adjustment component will lighten and darken the GBA

screen, that's just a side effect of what's really going on. The knob controls the voltage supplied to the LCD, which in turn affects how the screen responds to the incoming signal. A certified technician can

make changes to the display with that knob if your GBA starts freaking out and/or flickering a lot. Tuning this bad boy takes a skilled hand, though, so the bottom line is this: You run the risk of frying your GBA's screen if you screw with the adjustment knob, so don't even mess. Sure, the idea of a brighter screen may be appealing, but we tried it out on a test unit (here in the land where GBAs flow like wine) and it makes things zero percent better. It's like thinking that cranking up the brightness on your 13" Sanyo TV from 1986 is gonna get you the clarity of an S-Video signal. No such luck, friends.



OUT AND ABOUT

Real-World Views from John Q. Public

We've seen what the GBA can do in the friendly confines of the EGM offices, but we wanted more, so we took to the streets to find out what the "outside world" thinks of the little sucker.



"I don't think the lighting is a problem. The Game Boy Color was too bulky; this is easier to grip. It's cool."

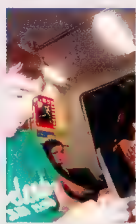
-Derek Wong, Age 13, Sunnyvale, CA



"The GBA launch could be compared to the launch of a high-profile PC title. The mayhem was short-lived. That might be because Nintendo didn't have enough systems."

-Jeff Gardner
Manager, Babbage's
Bolingbrook, IL

A rather curious commuter looks on as Brent Jordheim finds the ideal spot for his GBA good times. That's no special laboratory, kids, it's simply the overhead light on San Francisco's BART train. Take notes, Nintendo.



"It's a cool little system. Even though I work for Sony, I think Nintendo stole the show at E3 (Electronic Entertainment Expo)."

-Anonymous employee of the Sony-owned Metreon store in San Francisco

Top Ten Signs You're a GBA Addict:

10. You swipe much-needed AA batteries from TV remote and little sister's Barbie Car Wash
9. You endure severe beating at school after wearing self-engineered GBA chest-mount bracket
8. You buy power amp and surround speakers for your stock GBA sound system
7. After dying in Mario Bros., you swear profanely at GBA with outstretched hands about how you were "totally ducking just this"
6. You have head surgically removed to eliminate pesky light obstructions
5. You show up at prom date's house with GBA and link cable instead of corsage
4. You modify cart slot to accept WonderSwan color games and Turbo Express TV Tuner
3. You look up from GBA and find yourself at end of train line next to sleeping hobo for third consecutive day
2. You trade in entire collection of Army Men console games to purchase Army Men Advance
1. You change name to "George Bernard Apesnikh" to share initials with favorite system



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A villainous force has transformed the dream world of Lunatea into a nightmare. A young hero, Klonoa, has been given the task of rescuing this once enchanted land. A daunting mission, to be sure. But with ears to ride the wind, and a magic ring to control his foes, this hero's victory cry will surely be heard.

KLONOA 2
Lunatea's Veil

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PRESS
START



Tomb Raider
@ The Box Office

Opening Weekend **\$47.7 Million**

Week One **\$36.1 Million**

Week Two **\$17.4 Million**

EGM GOES TO THE MOVIES

It's not often that a movie comes out based on or inspired by a game. That's why it's really amazing that this summer we had two of them. As the diligent gaming journalists that we are, we stood in line to see these blockbusters. And here's what we thought of them. Warning...spoilers ahead:

Lara Croft: Tomb Raider



"The only thing faithful about *Tomb Raider* the movie to its video game franchise is the disproportionate size of Jolie's stuffed bra. It's not a complete disservice to gaming cinema, but with so much licensing resource to draw on, West and his writers did very little to elevate the genre. I was disappointed with the action sequences that focused more on pyrotechnics than style." —*Che Chou*

"You need to go into this movie with the right set of expectations: It's going to suck. *Hard*. (Play the last couple TR games if you need help getting into this mindset.) That way, when you see it, you're pleasantly surprised that it's average, mindless summer fare. Sure the plot makes *The Goonies* look like a documentary, but what did you expect? Enjoy the Incredible Crumbly Monkey Statues and watching Angelina Jolie run, and think about other stuff the rest of the time." —*Mark MacDonald*



Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within



"I thought this movie was pretty damn good. Technically speaking, it's stunning. But the characters are very one-dimensional (like 'the bomb everything in sight' General) since you don't have 70 hours to develop them (like you would in an RPG). The slower-paced scenes aren't as convincing as the motion-captured action sequences. Two big humps that bring the experience down are clichéd characters and that the movie never really explains half the things that are going on." —*James Miletich*

"In addition, there were some weird 're-dialing' kinda lost me ('Gala this, Gala that, spirits in the earth, blah, blah, blah') but I was definitely entertained throughout. If it weren't so predictable (come on, you knew everyone else was going to get jacked before the end), and if it didn't have so many stereotypical elements and characters, it would have been a lot better." —*Sam Kennedy, Official U.S. PlayStation Mag*



The Truth About Dreamcast Half-Life

After weeks of rampant speculation among retailers and consumers, Sierra has finally confirmed every Dreamcast owner's worst fear. *Half-Life*, one of the last great games for Sega's fading system, is officially dead. On June 15, the publisher sent out a press release that read: "Sierra regrets the cancellation of *Half-Life* for the Dreamcast due to changing market conditions." That was it; no explanations, no damage control, and certainly no apologies.

So why the last-minute cancellation? Wasn't the game already done and ready to ship? Not surprisingly, when we contacted Sierra for some answers, their response was "no comment." In fact, their entire PR strategy was to sandbag the truth in hopes that the cancellation fiasco blows over without too much damage to their credibility. But with a DC-specific strategy guide already in stores, and at least one published review (of an early beta) in a certain other "professional" magazine, many fans got a taste of what was to come, only to have it abruptly snatched away.



The game's been canned, but you can still get the hint book.

Not satisfied to digest Sierra's company line, we poked around for some answers. Our sources gave us an eye-opening account of what really happened to *Half-Life*. We discovered that the truth wasn't all that far from Sierra's claim of "changing market conditions."

With the waning state of the Dreamcast, and the summer launch of Game Boy Advance, *Half-Life* would've had little chance of fighting the noise in retail space. So instead of dropping more money into a game that's already millions in the hole (after all, it had been heavily marketed as early as last fall), Sierra killed the project. But wouldn't it have been better to release it anyway to try to recoup costs? Not really. By canceling the game, our inside sources told us, Sierra could write off the entire development cycle as a tax break, since they technically made no money from the venture. There's no conspiracy at work here; it simply had to do with bad timing and the bottom line for a very public company.

But the fact remains, *Half-Life* DC is finished—heck, we've even played it. So will Blue Shift, the extra scenario created specifically for the DC version, make its way to the PS2? And what's to become of the finished DC version that's languishing to see the light of day? Nobody knows for sure—not even Sierra.

—*Che Chou*

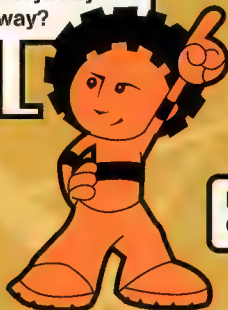


Here's a last glimpse at *Half-Life* DC. Breathe it in, folks.

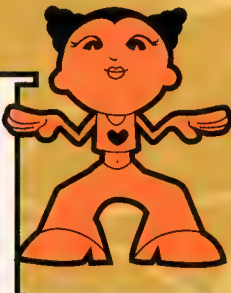
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Coming In AUGUST

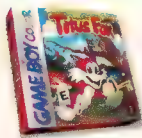


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FREE Article #2



FREE Article #3



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GAME BOY
COLOR





SONIC ON GAMECUBE?
 Sonic's coming to GameCube sooner than we thought—well, maybe. Sega's Virtua Striker 3, an arcade soccer title developed by Hitmaker that is scheduled to be one of the company's first GameCube titles, features Sonic and a few of his pals as secret characters.

NCAA 2K2: Sega Aims For College Football Touchdown



Due out this fall, Sega's first collegiate pig-skinner since the Genesis days will hit Dreamcast in the form of NCAA College Football 2K2. Developer Visual Concepts' (designers of Sega's other 2K2 sports titles) goal is to give gamers the same kind of thrill usually reserved for Division I "backs and ballers, minus the blood, sweat and marching bands. NCAA CF 2K2 includes a Dynasty mode that lets you operate your team's program as its athletic director. Recruiting, redshirting and creating off-season training programs are all at your command. The best part, as with any Sega Sports game, is being able to go online with up to seven other players (four per Dreamcast) to see who can take the cake. Team-specific playbooks and that awesome college atmosphere are all part of Sega's drive to give you the most bang for your football buck.

We caught up with Greg Thomas (Visual Concepts' head honcho) to find out what makes NCAA College Football 2K2 tick:

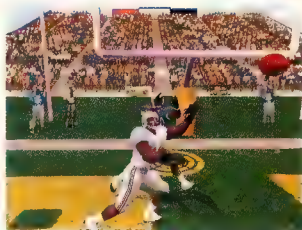
EGM: So is this just NFL 2K2 in college-boy clothes or is it way more than that?

Greg Thomas: We realize what our consumers are demanding and they wouldn't put up with "NFL 2K2 in college-boy clothes." We started with the Sega Sports NFL 2K1 engine, but ended up with a completely different game. Also, the entire front-end interface is different. All of the in-game artwork has been redone, the commentary was rewritten from scratch and dubbed over with new voice-over talent, and, of course, the AI was modified for an overall college style of play. The college style is vastly different from the NFL, so from the standpoint of the game data, this meant starting from scratch. This included creating complete rosters for each

Division-IA team, as well as including over 700 new plays and individualized playbooks that accurately represent the play-call tendency for each team. We also went out and licensed as many properties as we could. Users can take their teams to one of over 20 Bowl games, including the National Championship Rose Bowl and even attempt to win the Heisman Trophy. Starting with the Sega Sports NFL 2K1 engine was helpful, but there was still a tremendous amount of work required to turn it into a true college football title.

EGM: We hear every Division I stadium will be in the game. Is that true and is it hard to fit over 100 stadiums onto a GD-ROM?

"We realize what our consumers are demanding and they wouldn't put up with 'NFL 2K2 in college-boy clothes.'"



NEWS IS NEWS

Microsoft has reached an agreement with XBOX Technologies, a firm who filed a lawsuit against the software giant over the use of the name Xbox. Under the agreement, XBOX Technologies, a technology holding company, has agreed to change their name and drop their challenge against Microsoft for an undisclosed reward (ahem, money).



PRESS
START

GT: Fitting all of the art onto the GD-ROM was a major concern from the beginning of this project. In addition to the individual stadiums for each Division-IA school, we had to create new stadiums, multiple sets of team jerseys, team helmets, team logos, individual team sidelines and crowds. That doesn't include the new player models, player indicators, cursors and other in-game art that were needed. We were able to create all of this new artwork and fit it onto the GD-ROM by using new methods of data storage.

EGM: How do you plan to go about giving NCAA 2K2 that college feel?

GT: One of the enhancements we have made in order to capture the college atmosphere is to make the crowd an integral part of the game. The college game is all about atmosphere and the crowd will be used to illustrate the game's momentum. In addition, we have negotiated the rights to use a large number of the major

university fight songs and will incorporate those into the game as well.

EGM: Tell us more about the Dynasty mode.

GT: The main goal is to guide your team to as many National Championships as you can. This is accomplished by continually replenishing your team every year by recruiting the appropriate players. Visiting that high school player multiple times doesn't always guarantee an automatic signing. The recruit takes all factors such as geography, school prestige and the coach's track record into account before he signs a letter of intent. Junior college transfers can also be recruited—so that walk-on you just signed onto the team might one day be a starter. Other features of the Dynasty mode include the ability to red-shirt players and an off-season training camp that lets the user decide where to focus the team training. 🎮

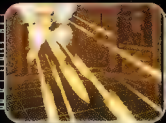
—James Mielke



Sega recruited former Purdue pilot Drew Brees, now a San Diego Charger, to act as an advisor to the team and handle motion-capture duties (above). Thomas told us that Brees contributed some plays from his college days as well as some of his offensive strategies and philosophies.

This ain't your little brother's card game.

Features exciting 3D Polygon Battle Sequences!



DIGITAL CARD BATTLE

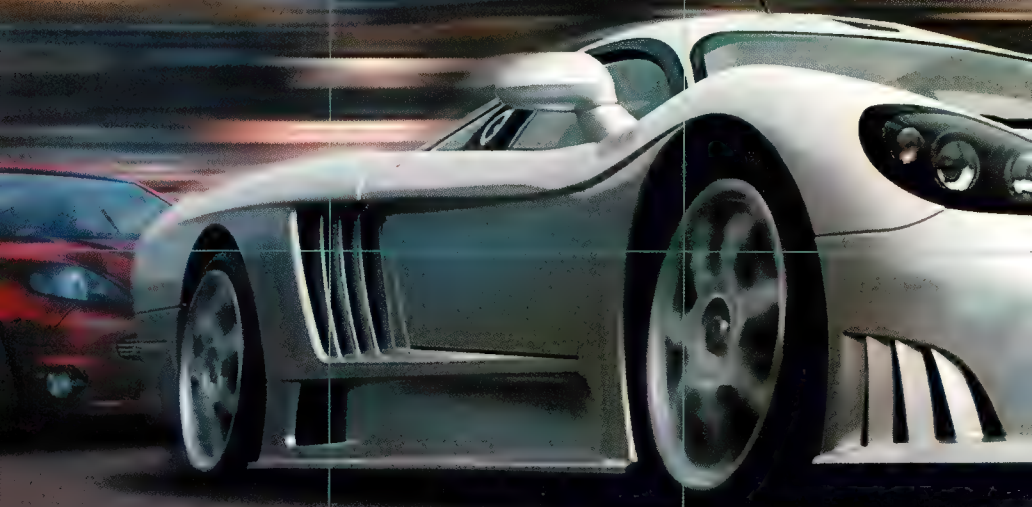


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PlayStation 2

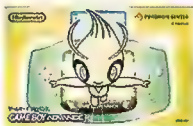
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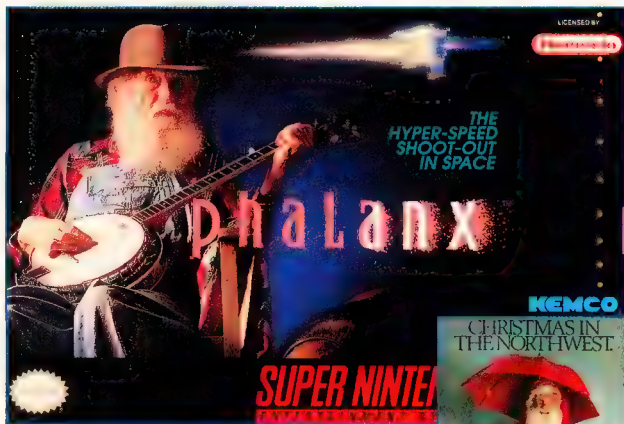


NEW GBA COLOR

The colors just keep on coming! A new Celebi green GBA will be sold in Japan exclusively at the Osaka and Tokyo Pokémon Center stores beginning July 21. It'll cost you the same as a regular color GBA, but it's got the Pokémon Center logo and two silhouettes of Celebi on the bottom of the screen.

Ever Wondered...?

They keep you up at night and scratchin' your noggin all day. No, not ear mites—we're talking about the great mysteries of gaming, which we'll start solving every month in this new section. And in honor of the Super Nintendo's 10th anniversary (see page 126), let's kick off our first round of Q's with this infamously bizarre 16-bit mystery...



The Phalanx Factor

Q: What was the deal with that old dude on the cover of the SNES shooter Phalanx?

A: Phalanx was just another Super NES side-scrolling shooter that we all probably would have forgotten about by now—if not for the inexplicable shot of the bearded geezer strummin' a banjo on the game's box cover. Why the old guy? "The problem is that all the game art looked alike at the time—monsters or spaceships or something," explains Matt Guss, head of the advertising company behind the Phalanx campaign. "We wanted to create some shock value so someone would have to pick the game up. We called it the 'Heavy Huh?!' factor." Art director Keith Campbell says they did the photo shoot themselves, hiring a model for the role of the 80-something hayseed. "I'd used him before as Santa Claus on an album-cover shoot," Guss adds. "I remember him coming into the studio, and I thought the poor guy was gonna die right there on the stage. I think he'd had a stroke earlier—not earlier that day, but in the past.... We stuck a banjo in his hands, and I think we stuck a spaceship behind his head that he was supposed to be staring at in wonder,

Mystery man:
a sampling of
his work.



sort of a *Star Wars*-comes-to-the-Ozarks kind of thing." You gotta admit Guss' cover concept was mighty effective. After all, we're still talking about the game 10 years after its release. Heavy, huh? If you're too young to remember this game, don't worry. Kemco's rereleasing it for the Game Boy Advance.

The Kart Konundrum

Q: Why are there so many kart-racing games?

A: We asked Naughty Dog President Jason Rubin, whose *Crash Team Racing* is one of our favorite kart titles, to give his insights into why every marketable character—from Buzz Lightyear to Chocobo—seems to be revving up in a go-kart title. He confirms what we knew all along: Based on the phenomenal success of *Mario Kart* and *CTR*, companies began to assume that any franchise can automatically rake in cash by going kart. "Naughty Dog even got pitched to do a kart game starring wrestling characters, not once but twice," Rubin says, "by two different publishers with two different



"Unfortunately, if you don't do it first or better, you probably shouldn't do it."

—Naughty Dog President Jason Rubin

wrestling franchises. Unfortunately, if you don't do it first or better, you probably shouldn't do it. This is a lesson that never seems to be learned by our industry."

Low-Fi But Hi-Tech

Q: How come every time you see someone playing a video game in movies or on TV, it sounds like Atari 2600 Pac-Man, Yar's Revenge or some other old-school title?

A: Chalk it up to the low gaming IQ of most mainstream moviegoers. Nowadays, games have orchestral scores and teams of audio designers who create lush soundscapes as good as anything you'll hear in a flick, so modern games just don't sound like video games at all to the casual listener. But things were different back in the good ol' days, when "there were no sound engineers, and we only had a couple of 4- or 8-bit registers to play with," says Howard Scott Warshaw, who created the Atari games *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Yar's Revenge* and *E.T.* "Instead of background music, we would add event-specific sounds to support the gameplay." Thus, the lo-fi bleeps and boinks of classic games are instantly recognizable as what they are—video-game sounds—and that's why filmmakers use them. "I noticed the sounds of Yar's *Revenge* in *Airplane II*," Warshaw adds, "and I remember thinking 'Wow, they ripped me off. That is so cool.'"

—Chris Baker

Got a gaming mystery? E-mail it to EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject header "Ever wondered," and we'll solve it for you.



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DEVELOPER PROFILE

Inevitable Entertainment

Year Founded: 2000
Location: Austin, TX
Web Site: www.inevitable.com
of people: 35



What are your current projects? Tribes 2 for the PlayStation 2. We are also working on another project that will be unveiled in the future (wink, wink).

What are some of the challenges doing an online PS2 game like Tribes 2? The fact that this is a relatively new step for consoles as a whole. What problems are going to pop up? How many users will upgrade to online capability? It's very much a wait-and-see situation.

What are some of your previous games? Well, we'd have to go back to some of the games we worked on at Iguana/Acclaim Entertainment Austin. The Turok titles, the All-Star Baseball series, Quarterback Club...pretty much everything that came out of there for the past six years. About 90 percent of the staff was associated with [Acclaim Studios Austin] at one time.

What's the best thing about getting out of the Acclaim organization? The worst? The amount of creative freedom afforded would be the best thing. The worst would be not having the chance to work with some of the people who are still there.

The story behind our name: One day, Craig Galley, one of the co-founders and technical director, was watching *The Matrix*. Neo's on the subway tracks, the train's coming, and the agent holds him down saying, "That is the sound of inevitability...." We also like to joke that we had to buy the .com away from an online coffin company....

What's the best console to program for? Really, they all have their strengths and weaknesses. It comes down to what type of game you're trying to create.

The worst? Wow, if this question was any more loaded, it would pass out. Ummm, the Indrema?

CRAZY TAXI: THE MOVIE

This is not a joke (but it should be). Richard Donner (*Superman*, *Lethal Weapon*) will direct and executive produce a movie based on Sega's Crazy Taxi. Why Crazy Taxi? "I loved playing Crazy Taxi, and I realized immediately that it had the potential to be a big summer event movie," Donner said. "Sega's game franchise has the perfect mix of action, humor and great characters to translate to the big screen." We hope that the movie is able to keep the story intact. You're probably thinking, "What story?"...Exactly.

Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

Hold onto your butts, Q-followers, it's your friendly neighborhood rumor-slinger here to spin you a web of fine rumors and truths. So let's get to it!

Rumor: I saw a screenshot of the title screen for Tekken 4 Vs. Virtua Fighter 4. It's happened! It's really real! I can't believe!

Truth: Sorry pal. You saw the right image, but assume too much, young grasshopper. Sega and Namco teamed up to promote both games,

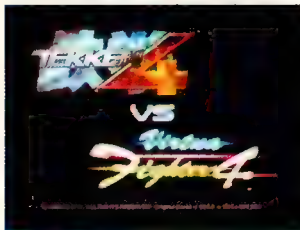
which'll show up in Japanese arcades around the same time. They took out a newspaper ad together, and even showed up to promote both titles at a recent Japanese PlayStation 2 expo. But as much as we'd all like it to be true, there's no Tekken Vs. Virtua Fighter game.

Rumor: Infogrames is changing its name to Atari! **Truth:** Not quite. Apparently Infogrames will be using the Atari label to release several big-name titles, such as *Spintop* or *Unreal* on consoles, but will NOT be changing their name permanently...yet. And let's face it, Atari is a whole lot easier to pronounce than Infogrames.

Rumor: Tomb Raider the movie sucked, so they're not making another one or any other video-game movies ever again.

Truth: False! A sequel to the Angelina "I like horses" Jolie flick is in the works, as are films based on *Pitfall!* and *Crazy Taxi* (groan).

Got a rumor? Drop me an e-mail at quartermann@ziffdavis.com. -The Q



METAL GEAR SOLID 2 WATCH

Got a question, theory, or screen you'd like to add to our rampant coverage and analysis of MGS2? Send it to us at egm@ziffdavis.com, subject "MGS2WATCH"

? I heard (Metal Gear creator) Hideo Kojima said MGS2 would be the last Metal Gear game; is that true?

! Nope, that's Internet BS. In our interview at E3, Kojima told us MGS2 is likely the last Metal Gear with him as director, but he hopes to stay on as a producer and see the series continue with someone else at the helm.

? There can't possibly be any secrets left in the playable MGS2 demo...can there?

! Unbelievably, there are. *PSM* learned about two tricks from Kojima himself: First is a new way to stun enemies—if you can hit the blue "!" that appears when any guard thinks he's seen or heard you, it will temporarily stun him, complete with bubbles fizzing out of his head like a drunken comic character. The

? other trick is doing 100 pull-ups (while dangling from any ledge, hold R1 and push R2 and L2 simultaneously) to increase your grip strength. Otacon will even call to congratulate you!



? What was that weird flying thing at the end of the playable demo, and what was Snake talking about when he said "CYPHER!"?

! That "weird flying thing" is a Cypher—an unmanned flying machine currently under development here in the real world. It has a range of uses, but it looks like whoever is controlling it in the demo is using it for surveillance. More info is just a quick google.com search away—check out www.sikorsky.com/programs/cypher/.

—Mark MacDonald



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THE TOOTH IS OUT THERE

Did you catch this sweet baby face tooth? It was "hidden" between the lines...

Afterthoughts: Twisted Metal: Black

In each installment of *Afterthoughts*, *EGM* takes a game that's already on store shelves and asks the developers for their thoughts, post-release. This month, we chose Sony's *Twisted Metal: Black*. We fired off some questions to David Jaffe, director and lead designer of *TM: Black* from Sony CEA Santa Monica and Scott Campbell, president of Incog Inc. Entertainment (the developers). Here's what they had to say.



EGM: Why is the game so difficult? Even *Twisted Metal* veterans had trouble getting through some of the long levels.

David Jaffe: The thing you need to understand is that the weapons in the game are very deep. Right off the bat, most people use them at face value and don't realize that things like the Reticule Attack, for example, can almost kill an enemy car with one shot if you use it right. Because our focus was always multiplayer, we wanted to make sure the single-player game trained people to use and understand the deeper attacks. If we had made the game "easy" or even "medium" for players who were not using these deeper skills, we would not have prepared people for the multiplayer aspect of the game. You need to think of it as a fighting game. If you get to level two or three in *Street Fighter II* or even *Mortal Kombat* and don't use any of the moves other than kick, punch and jump, you're not gonna win.

Scott Campbell: The game is really difficult if you just go in and start blasting everything in sight without paying attention to what you are firing and how you are firing it. The weapon system was designed and balanced to award more damage for using the skill-based weapons such as the Gas Can, Satellite, Reticule, Zoomy and many of the special weapons. We also made sure that the majority of the weapons could still be used as "fire-n-forget," but the damage will be less. Once a player starts to master these weapons and combines them with combo moves, the gameplay is more focused and less random chaos.

EGM: Why take the series in such a dark, twisted and violent direction?

SC: We felt that *Twisted Metal* had become too over-the-top-wacky, which contributed to the series going stale. The original theme was always supposed to be this dark and hostile universe; however, this was difficult to completely pull off on the PS1 hardware. When you throw in all the cars and weapons flying around these big 3D environments, the dark grunge look translated into busy, distracting noise. In an effort to improve on visuals and make them brighter (so you could easily see your enemies), the game kind of organically

morphed into the Saturday-morning cartoon theme, and it ended up working for *Twisted Metal 2*. On PS2, we knew we had the horsepower to finally deliver the dark and hostile theme—this was the game and universe in which we wanted to battle.

EGM: How intact has the violent content remained from when you were developing the game to the final product?

SC: For the most part, the content has remained fairly intact. Some of the movies were toned down; we took out some of the blood on the pedestrians. The violent content issue in games is a tough balancing act because everyone draws the line differently. In the end, Sony was very respectful of preserving the original vision of the game.

EGM: Is it weird having a kiddie version of *TM* on PS one (*Small Brawl*) when you've just finished the darkest edition of the series?

SC: It is an interesting contrast when you put them both side by side. When we brainstormed concepts for this game, we approached it from the standpoint of "what universe do we want to play this game in next?" rather than "let's make a kiddie game." The miniature theme had come up many times in previous concept discussions and we felt that it could open the door to some new play experiences. Now, after nine months in development, it shows great promise of delivering that experience without departing from the basic *Twisted Metal* style of car combat.

EGM: We noticed that the control scheme for the Freeze maneuver was brought over from *TM3/4*. Was anything else brought over?

SC: If the freeze maneuver is the same as *TM3/4*, then it happened by coincidence. As we were



Scott Campbell (left), president of Incog Inc. Entertainment and David Jaffe, SCEA's director and lead designer of *TM: Black*.

ALMOST TWISTED

It's not called Twisted Metal, and there isn't the Sweet Tooth in it. But GT Interactive's Rogue Trip (released for PlayStation in 1998) was designed by the same team—and the gameplay is so similar that it might as well be. The Review Crew gave it two nines, an 8.5 and an eight, scoring it a silver award.



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"We felt that Twisted Metal had become too over-the-top wacky, which contributed to the series going stale."

tuning the combo moves (freeze, shield, mine, etc.), we wanted to make sure the combo button sequences did not interfere with the driving. As we wanted to minimize the false positives, we tried a number of button combos before finally settling on the ones in the game. Nothing was brought over from TM3/4 for Black; TM2 mainly served as the reference prototype.

EGM: Have you guys had any contact with the team from the previous 989 Studios versions? Did any of them work with you on TM: Black?
SC: I just received an e-mail from Jim Buck (lead engineer on TM4) congratulating us on the game. It was a cool gesture. The Sony sound and audio group worked with us on TM: Black. They are a very talented group and were great to work with!

EGM: What was it like seeing the series end up in the hands of someone else?
SC: It was frustrating to lose the series in the first place. It was like losing a child.

EGM: Does it make it easier or harder for you to follow in the footsteps of the two games developed by a different team?
SC: I think it was harder because the franchise reputation had gone downhill, and the press kept referring to car combat as a dead genre. We put a lot of pressure on ourselves to redeem the franchise. We knew that the game needed to

blow even us away (that is, after making three car-combat games), plus be good enough to convince the gamers who were disappointed with the last installments that this one is worth the cash.

EGM: Why the lack of variety in Story mode? Each stage is basically the same, gameplay-wise.

SC: During the design process, we did evaluate adding checkpoint-style mission elements and even mini-games to the Story mode, but it seemed to distract from the free-form car combat. Instead, we opted to add a more immersive story element and change it up with unique level designs, and offer the player-level-select options along the way.

EGM: Where does the series go from here, besides online?

SC: We are very sensitive about not burning out the series, so we will be giving the next episode an extended incubation period.

EGM: Besides online play, what will Twisted Metal Online offer that's new?

SC: The TM: Black Online product definition and price is currently under evaluation. For this evaluation, we put ourselves in the consumer role—everyone at Sony and IncoG Inc. Entertainment is extra-sensitive to making sure the consumer gets his or her money's worth. 🐾

REVIEW FLASHBACK

All of the old TM games have become Greatest Hits titles for Sony. Here's how the series fared against the Review Crew:

Twisted Metal

Andy Baran said: "The graphics are outstanding and each level gets progressively better. The climax on the rooftops is a real blast."

9.5 Andy 9.0 Matt E. 9.0 Mike 9.5 Susan K.

Twisted Metal 2

Crispin said: "I wasn't all that crazy about the first Twisted Metal, but this sequel is worlds better, even though it looks like the same old thing at first glance."

8.0 Susan 8.5 Steve 8.5 Crispin 8.0 Susan K.

Twisted Metal 3

John Davison said: "The level design is uninspired at best, while the new 'realistic physics' engine seems utterly redundant. Even the multiplayer mode fails to impress."

6.0 Crispin 5.0 Steve 5.0 John D. 5.5 Susan K.

Twisted Metal 4

Che said: "This series, which goes on its fourth anniversary this year, is becoming seriously stale. Deathmatch has always been the main staple of Twisted Metal, but not even that could salvage an otherwise hackneyed formula in TM4. Please, introduce something new!"

7.0 Steve 6.5 Dean 5.0 Chris 5.0 Che

Twisted Metal: Black

Kraig said: "TM had lost its luster years ago, but now it's truly back (in black, yeah, yeah). It floors me that the original developers were able to step back into the saddle years later and dig this franchise up from the grave."

8.0 9.0 8.5



PRESS
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The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of May 2001

This month yet another **Nintendo** franchise dominates the top of the charts, but we'd still rather see Link and Co. at the top of the list than those damn, dirty **Pokémon**. Oh, and did you notice the top-selling PS1 game is **Spec Ops**? We predicted that months ago, even without Miss Chloe's tarot cards. For the record, we scored that game 4.0, 2.0 and 5.5. Why oh why won't you listen to us? One big surprise this month is the appearance of **Acclaim's** awful PS1 ATV racer in the top 20. We can only assume the success of **Offroad Fury** is turning people ATV crazy...that or people have way too much extra money.

1	The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Seasons Nintendo	NEW!	10 Chris	9.0 Mark	9.5 John R	GAME BOY COLOR	EGM HONOR	
2	The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Ages Nintendo	NEW!	10 Chris	9.0 Mark	9.5 John R	GAME BOY COLOR	EGM HONOR	
3	Mario Party 3 Nintendo	NEW!	8.5 Chris	7.0 Jeanne	6.5 Shoe	GAME BOY COLOR	EGM HONOR	
4	Red Faction THQ	NEW!	8.5 Che	8.5 Kraig	9.0 Mark	PS2	EGM HONOR	
5	Pokémon Silver Nintendo	◆	9.0 Chris	8.5 Crispin	8.5 Mark	GAME BOY COLOR	EGM HONOR	
6	Pokémon Stadium 2 Nintendo	◆	5.0 Chris	6.0 Jeanne	6.5 Ethan	GAME BOY COLOR	EGM HONOR	
7	Pokémon Gold Nintendo	◆	9.0 Chris	8.5 Crispin	8.5 Mark	GAME BOY COLOR	EGM HONOR	
8	Crazy Taxi Acclaim	NEW!	8.0 Greg			PS2	EGM HONOR	
9	Dark Cloud Sony CEA	NEW!	8.0 Crispin	8.0 Ethan	9.0 Gary	PS2	EGM HONOR	
10	ATV Off-Road Fury Sony CEA	◆	8.5 Dan	9.0 Dean	8.5 Greg	PS2	EGM HONOR	

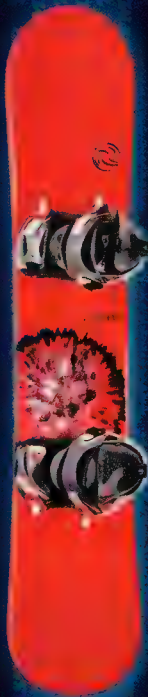
11	Spec Ops: Ranger Elite Take 2	PS1	NEW!		
12	Madden NFL 2001 Electronic Arts	EGM HONOR	PS2	◆	
13	Gauntlet: Dark Legacy Midway	PS2	NEW!		
14	Onimusha: Warlords Capcom	EGM HONOR	PS2	◆	
15	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX Activision	PS1	NEW!		
16	Gran Turismo 2 Sony CEA	EGM HONOR	PS1	◆	
17	Super Mario Bros. DX Nintendo	EGM HONOR	GAME BOY COLOR	◆	
18	Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble Nintendo	GAME BOY COLOR	◆		
19	Tekken Tag Tournament Namco	PS2	◆		
20	ATV Quad Power Racing Acclaim	PS1	◆		

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service. Call Kristin Barnett-von Korff at (516) 625-2481 for questions regarding this list. Chart description written by EGM staff. Sarcasm supplied by Canada's favorite son.

JAPAN TOP 10			
1	Tactics Ogre Gaiden Nintendo	GAME BOY ADVANCE	Who'd you've thought a game that puts you in the role of a bloodthirsty mosquito would make it onto the charts?
2	Sonic Adventure 2 Sega	◆	Sony's Ka muscled its way to number five. The hubbub surrounding Sonic's 10th anniversary propelled the blue hedgehog's latest to the number-two position, and GT3 is holding steady a month after release.
3	Gran Turismo 3 A-spec Sony CEI	PS2	
4	Atelier Lillie 3 Gust	PS2	
5	Ka (Mosquito) Sony CEI	PS2	
6	Legendary Gambler Tetsuya Athena	PS2	
7	Evergrace 2 From Software	PS2	
8	Pia Carrot 2.5 REC Interchannel	◆	
9	One Piece: Rufin's Quest Banpresto	GAME BOY COLOR	
10	League Jikkō Winning Eleven 2001 Bandai	PS1	Sonic Adventure 2

Source: Weekly Famitsu, week ending 6/24/2001

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Coming Soon

August

Game Boy Advance		
Atlantis—THQ	Action	
Lady Sia—TDK	Action	
Mario Kart Super Circuit—Nintendo	Racing	
Game Boy Color		
WWF Betrayal—THQ	Action	
Xena: Warrior Princess—Titus	Fighting	
PlayStation		
Hoshigami—Attus	Strategy-RPG	
Madden NFL 2002—EA	Sports	
PlayStation 2		
18 Wheeler—Acclaim	Racing	
Alon D'ar—Ubi Soft	Adventure	
Commandos 2—Eidos	Strategy	
Conflict Zone—Ubi Soft	Action	
Extreme-G 3—Acclaim	Racing	
Giants: Citizen Kabuto—Interplay	Adventure	
Half-Life—Sierra	Action	
Herdy Gerdy—Eidos	Misc.	
Ico—Sony CEA	Adventure	
Jekyll Hyde—Dreamcatcher	Adventure	
Le Mans 24 Hour—Infogrames	Racing	
Madden NFL 2002—EA	Sports	
NFL GameDay 2002—Sony CEA	Sports	
NFL QB Club 2002—Acclaim	Sports	
Okage: Shadow King—Sony CEA	RPG	
Portal Runner—3DO	Adventure	
Project Eden—Eidos	Action/Strategy	
Resident Evil Code: Ver X—Capcom	Adventure	
Test Drive Off-road—Infogrames	Racing	
Dreamcast		
Alien Front Online—Sega	Action	
Conflict Zone—Ubi Soft	Action	
Evil Twin—Ubi Soft	Adventure	
Floigan Brothers—Sega	Adventure	
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX—Activision	Sports	
NCAA College Football 2K2—Sega	Sports	
Ooga Booga—Sega	Misc.	
Propeller Arena—Sega	Action	
World Series Baseball 2K2—Sega	Sports	

September

Game Boy Advance		
Breath of Fire—Capcom	RPG	
Columns—Sega	Puzzle	
Cube—Ubi Soft	Puzzle	
Dark Arena—Majesco	Action	
ESPN Skateboarding—Konami	Sports	
Harry Potter—Electronic Arts	Adventure	
Jedi Power Battles—THQ	Action	
Jurassic Park Builder—Konami	Misc.	
Mega Man Battle Network—Capcom	Action	

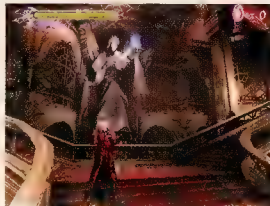
Rugrats—THQ	Action	
Spider-Man—Activision	Action	
X-Men—Activision	Action	
Nintendo 64		
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2—Activision	Sports	
PlayStation		
Digimon Grand Prix—Bandai	Racing	
NASCAR Racers—Hasbro	Racing	
Sheep Raider—Infogrames	Action	
Spider-Man 2—Activision	Adventure	
X-Men: Mutant Acad. 2—Activision	Fighting	
PlayStation 2		
Arctic Thunder—Midway	Racing	
Baldur's Gate—Interplay	Action/RPG	
Batman Vengeance—Ubi Soft	Action	
Capcom vs. SNK 2—Capcom	Fighting	
Duke Nukem—Rockstar	Action	
ESPN Skateboarding—Konami	Sports	
Evil Twin—Ubi Soft	Adventure	
Hot Shots Golf 3—Sony CEA	Sports	
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2—Eidos	Adv.	
Run Like Hell—Interplay	Action	
Silent Hill 2—Konami	Adventure	
Spy Hunter—Midway	Action	
Time Crisis 2—Namco	Light Gun	
Dreamcast		
Alone in the Dark—Infogrames	Adventure	
NFL 2K2—Sega	Sports	

October

Game Boy Advance		
Batman Vengeance—Ubi Soft	Action	
Doom—Activision	Action	
E.T.—New Kid Co	Action	
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX—Activision	Sports	
Shaun Palmer Snowboard—Activision	Sports	
Tarzan—Ubi Soft	Action	
PlayStation		
DDR Disney Mix—Konami	Music	
Doom—Activision	Action	
Monsters, Inc.—Sony CEA	Misc.	
Syphon Filter 3—Sony CEA	Action	
Tales of Destiny 2—Namco	RPG	
PlayStation 2		
ESPN NFL PrimeTime—Konami	Sports	
Grand Theft Auto 3—Rockstar	Action	
NFL 2K2—Sega	Sports	
Shaun Palmer Snowboard—Activision	Sports	
SOCOM: US Navy SEALs—Sony CEA	Action	
Smuggler's Run 2—Rockstar	Racing	
Top Gun—Titus	Action	
Tribes 2—Sierra	Action	
WWF SmackDown! 3—THQ	Action	

Compiled By Jonathan Dudlak jonathan_dudlak@ziffdavis.com

Devil May Cry



Import Pick of the Month: Devil May Cry, Capcom (Action). The last few months have been dry as far as the import scene goes. It's about to heat up with the impending launch of GameCube and several big-name PS2 titles on the way, beginning with Capcom's Devil May Cry. It won't be long before it joins the ranks of Resident Evil and Dino Crisis as a high-profile Capcom series.

PlayStation 2

- 7/26 Everyone's Golf 3, Sony CEI (Sports)
- 8/23 Devil May Cry, Capcom (Action)
- 8/30 PaRappa the Rapper 2, Sony CEI (Music)
- 9/20 Guitar Freaks 4th Mix & DrumMania 3rd Mix, Konami (Music)
- 9/27 Silent Hill 2, Konami (Adventure)

Dreamcast

- 8/23 Aero Dancing i, CRI (Flying)
- 8/30 Get Bass 2, Sega (Sports)
- 8/30 Neon Genesis Evangelion Typing Tutor, Gainax (Misc.)
- 9/6 Shemmue II, Sega (Adventure)

Game Boy Advance

- 8/1 Golden Sun, Nintendo (RPG)
- 8/21 Wario Land Advance, Nintendo (Action)
- 9/27 Z.O.E. 2173 Testament, Konami (RPG)
- Sept. Game Boy Music, Nintendo (Music)
- Sept. Phalanx, Kemco (Shooter)

GameCube

- 9/14 Luigi's Mansion, Nintendo (Action)
- 9/14 Wave Race: Blue Storm, Nintendo (Racing)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Even though game release dates are taken more seriously in Japan than in the U.S., they can change! Consult your local import game store for the latest release information. If you are still reading this, stop...now.

Kick Some Rusty Metal Butt!



PlayStation 2

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**BAN
DAI**



G MOBILE SUIT
GUNDAM
JOURNEY TO JABURO

HSU AND CHAN

GAME DESIGNERS IN.

"LAST HURRAH!"

TO THE GOOD LIFE!

ARR!

HELLO, VIDEO GAMERS! CHAN TANAKA HERE, ENJOYING THE TWILIGHT DANCE OF SUMMER WITH A GLASS OF LEMONADE, A GOOD BOOK, AND AN ESTIMATED FOUR GALLONS OF INDUSTRIAL-STRENGTH SUN BLOCK.

BROTHER HSU, YOU IS MAKING THE MOST OF THE DAYS BEFORE THE BIG AUTUMN RUSH! CURRENTLY, HE IS DOING SO BY RUNNING BACK-HEKID THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S LAWN SPRINKLERS!

BOO-HOO!

EEK! POLICE!

IT'S GOOD TO TAKE TIME OFF FROM WORK, HSU, AND THEN IT'S A CHANCE TO STEP BACK AND REALIZE THAT OUR JOBS ARE NOT THE BE-ALL-END-ALL OF OUR EXISTENCES!

ALSO, IT TEMPORARILY STAYS OFF THE URGE TO STRANGLE ONE'S CLEVER AND/OR WORKERS A DEFINITE PLUS IN TODAY'S BUSINESS WORLD!

AAHGH! SHE'S GOT A RAKE!

SIP

BWAMP!

BUDDADADAD

BAM BAM

CHAN - WHAT IS HEREN'S NAME IS MAKING THAT RACKET? IT'S COMING FROM NEXT DOOR...

CURSES! MY LAF. AWWW IN PINK LEMONADE! UNPLEASANTLY CHILLY!

LOOK, CHAN! THE NEIGHBOR'S YARD IS ABSOLUTELY PESTERING WITH YOUNG TEENAGERS!

IT'S A RIOT!

QUICK! GET THE MACE!

I'LL GET THE MACE, ANNNNN!

ACTUALLY HSU, I THINK THERE'S JUST HAVING A COOKOUT

ARRGH!! LOUD, TEENAGED HALFWITS! THE BANE OF MY EXISTENCE!

WERE THEY NOT BUCK EARLY MARKS FOR SLACKING AND NO PLACE IN THIS WORLD AT ALL!

HEY! ISN'T THAT THE NEIGHBOR'S KID WITH HIS PART ABOUT SOME GIRL?

WHY IS IT SO!

JUST LOOK AT 'EM.

CATCHED IN THE "TRUDS OF YOUNG LOVE."

BOTH OF 'EM TOO NERVOUS TO MAKE A MOVE.

GO ON, YOU GUTLESS COWARDS! LET'S SEE SOME ACTION!

DO YOU WANT TO DIE ALONE?

BOO!!

IT'S DIFFICULT BEING THE GUIDING HAND OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION, PARTICULARLY WHEN THERE'S SUCH "RESISTIBLE NIN-COMPPOPS."

YIKES! OUR COACHING HAS WORDED TOO WELLY!

KEEP THE GARDEN HOSE HANDY!

I'M DEPRESSED CHAN. ARE THOSE DOOR DOGS REALLY OUR FUTURE?

HAVE WE SO CROSSED THE LINE INTO ADULTHOOD THAT WE CAN ALLOW CREATURES SUCH AS THEM TO BE REGARDED AS THE STANDARD FOR HIPNESS?

THE WORLD CHANGES, HSU - WE MUST CHANGE WITH IT. NOW, LET'S GO INSIDE AND BE OLD.

I'M NOT SURE IF I'M OW!

BONK! BONK!

HEY!

HEY, MISTER! CAN WE HAVE OUR BALL BACK?

... ..

CHAN NOW IT'S A MATTER OF HONOR.

YOU GUYS CAN JUST TOSS IT OVER.

YOU DONT NEED TO BRING IT ALL -

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

YAAAAARRGH!! DOWN WITH ADOLESCENTS!!

VROOM!!

AAAAA!

CRASH!

YOUR MUSIC IS UNINSPIRED AND FULL OF POLITICAL Cliches!

BEGONE!

YOUR HAIR IS EXCESSIVELY GREASY! PEOPLE STARE! THEN DO!

WE SAW YOU WALKING AROUND YESTERDAY WITH YOUR PARENTS... IN PUBLIC!

WE HAVE PHOTOS!

HAND ON, YOU HAVE SOMETHING ON YOUR FACE! COULD BE A PIMPLE!

HOW DOES THAT SET WITH YOUR FRAGILE SELF-ESTEEM?

HOOOOOO!

FINISH HIM!

SHE SAID YOU LOOKED KIND OF FUNNY.

MUST GO. WRITE. POEM.

THAT'S RIGHT! RUN! RUN AS FAST AS YOUR AWKWARDLY-PROPORTIONED ARMS AND LEGS WILL CARRY YOU!

SEEK SOLACE IN YOUR BIG PANTS AND CELL PHONES - BUT REMEMBER, NOW AND FOREVER, WHO OWNS THE FRONT YARD!

HA!

QUICKLY NOW, HEAD BACK IN SHITS BEFORE THE COP ARRIVE!

THE NEXT TIME VIDEO GAMERS... YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD TO BE IMPURE!

ADIOS!

THE END!

SEARCH! CREATE! DESTROY!



Now, the year's biggest movie comes to the year's smallest console.
Introducing **THREE** exciting new Jurassic Park 3 games for
the Game Boy Advance.



Search for missing dinosaur DNA and create new dinosaurs

- 2 fun gameplay modes combining intense action and puzzle shooting
- Use dinosaur abilities to find new levels and uncover paths
- Over 12 levels and 10 species of dinosaurs

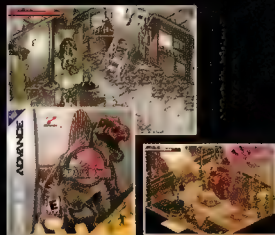
JULY 2001



Create and manage your own personalized Jurassic Park

- Breed 140 species of dinosaurs to exhibit in your customized Jurassic Park
- Trade DNA with your friends to complete your dinosaur collection
- Manage everything from the admission price to the stores

SEPTEMBER 2001



Destroy traps and barricades and run from dinosaurs to escape from Jurassic Park Island

- Outmaneuver 8 species of dinosaurs with unique AI and abilities
- Find, use and combine over 25 weapons and items to help you survive
- Fast-paced motorcycle action with a pack of hungry raptors on your tail

NOVEMBER 2001

GAME BOY ADVANCE

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A Note to Parents: The Jurassic Park films are rated PG-13. Consult www.filmratings.com for further information.





PlayStation 2



www.scea.com

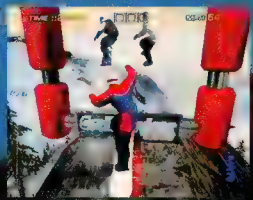
Winter. It's just better.



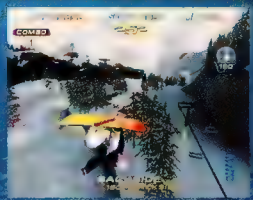
Jeremy Jones casually tweaks a switch 1440 stailfish over a 70-foot+ cliff band.



Amateur rider Trent covers huge distance with this late 180 tail grab in Canada.



Blinding speeds and endless combinations are Tara Dakides' key to boardercross.



Todd Richards gets big style points with this inverted backside 180. The Highland Flad Eggs.



Kevin Jones grabbing stailfish over powder transitions.



MLB 2002

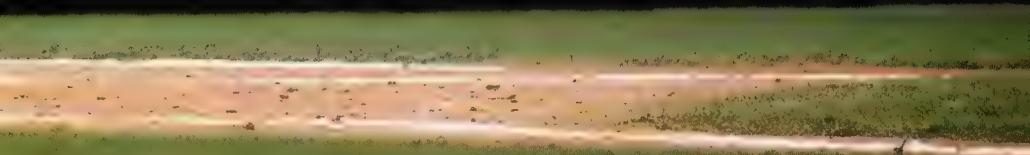
Total Control



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You have .72 seconds to make a decision.





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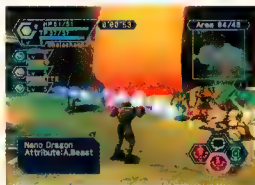
WARNING: Previews marked with international symbols may or may not be released in the U.S. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

Things look kinda bleak lately. With only two systems seeing any type of major action (and one of those being a handheld), some are wondering if our industry is headed for another crash reminiscent of the fallout of '84.

The advent of the \$10 game line (which is rumored to be ending soon) on the PS feels uncomfortably similar to the flood of games for the Atari 2600 that ultimately led to the demise of the system—and nearly the entire industry.

We've been teetering on the brink, to be sure. The more jaded members of the industry have been predicting doom and gloom for a while now. With this exceptionally slow transition year (or is that years?) hitting everyone so hard, could it be that said industry folk are right after all?

Probably not. Sure, this has been a slow year with the painful demise of the Dreamcast and the rocky start of the PlayStation 2, but the times they are a-changin'. Come this fall we'll see the launch of two major consoles and—hopefully—the bloodiest system war since the SNES and Genesis went toe-to-toe back in the early '90s.



Take a gander at the game that's sure to destroy the social lives of more than a few editors (like they had one to begin with). **PSO Ver. 2** starts on page 98.

It won't be easy for Microsoft and Nintendo, what with the PS2's huge head start and all. But as Sega learned the hard way with the Saturn and Dreamcast—a head start doesn't mean a whole lot in this business.

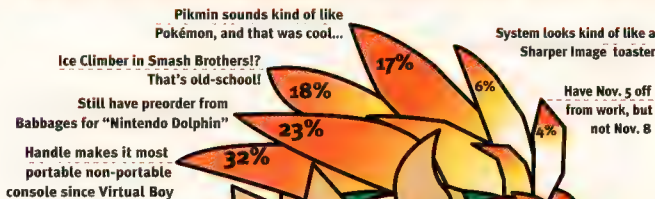
Keeping that in mind, check out a few more pretty screenshots of GameCube games in our Previews section this month. Some of Nintendo's big guns in the war against Sony and Microsoft start on page 90.

It's gonna be just awesome to be a gamer come this fall...assuming you have lots of money to spend.

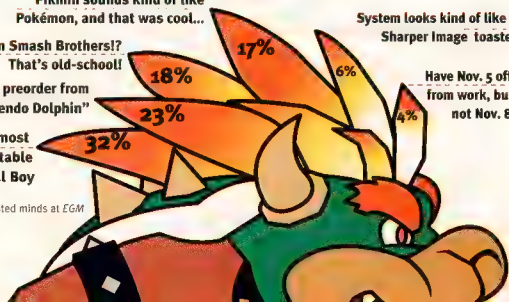
TOP 5 Preview Picks

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Ico | PlayStation 2, August |
| 2. Phantasy Star Online Version 2 | Dreamcast, To Be Determined |
| 3. Castlevania Chronicle | PlayStation, Now (Japan) |
| 4. Metroid Prime | GameCube, Fall |
| 5. Legends of Wrestling | PlayStation 2, November |

Why are you buying a GameCube this fall?



*poll courtesy of the twisted minds at EGM



**NOT FOR THE FAINT
OF THIRST**



2/3 more than 6.75 fl. oz. juice boxes or pouches.

WANT MORE? GULP 2/3 MORE.



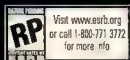
VIDEO REVIEWS



VIDEO REVIEWS



PlayStation.2



XBOX



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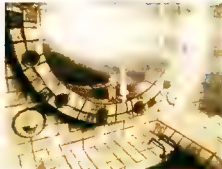
Want speed? Get in the car and pick up Test Drive. Need more info? Go to www.testdriveinfo3.com

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Ico

Publisher:	Sony CEA
Developer:	Sony CEI
Players:	1
Genre:	Adventure/Puzzle
% Done:	80%
Release:	August 2001
Also Try:	Picking your jaw up off the floor.
Web Address:	www.scea.com
The Good:	Awe-inspiring visuals.
The Bad:	No cooperative two-player option.

And The Ugly: The game's young human hero has a pair of grotesque horns growing out of his head.



The game's ambient effects have to be seen to be believed. You might want to put on some sunblock before playing.

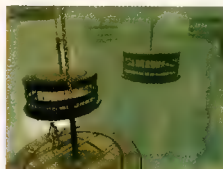
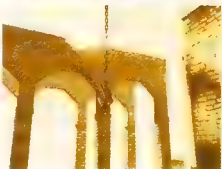
Those who suffer from vertigo, beware; areas like this would make Indiana Jones lose his lunch.



Princess Yorda won't go anywhere or do anything without Ico's constant prodding; he actually has to escort her by hand from one dungeon seal to the next. You'll be tempted at times to leave her behind as dead weight, but not only would that be a decision unbecoming of a hero, it would ultimately halt your progress—she alone possesses the ability to open the castle's magic barriers. So for all intents and purposes, the two of you are linked together throughout the entire game.



In line with the game's "realistic" feel, Ico is incapable of carrying multiple items and weapons. All he gets is a stick.



Make no mistake: This one's a tough puzzler and not a straightforward adventure title.

It's easy to get a handle on the game's Lara Croft-styled control scheme but difficult to work past the castle's perplexing puzzles. If you want to make it to the end credits, you'll need to possess refined reasoning skills and adroit reflexes. Reasoning is key when attempting to determine how to get Princess Yorda from the start of a location to its end: Unlike Ico, she can't scale walls or take out enemies, so you must often "create" paths that are safe and accessible for her to traverse (this is done by correctly arranging metal boxes, activating elevators, etc.).

Reflexes come into play when you're constructing these routes. Putting the walkways together forces Ico to lunge, climb and shimmy his way around the castle's expansive rooms and courtyards. This balance of strategy and action is nothing short of perfect; think Prince of Persia meets Pipe Dreams, and you'll get the general idea.

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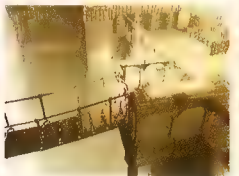
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As you maneuver through the clever tricks and traps, you'll be treated to some truly astonishing visuals. In terms of creating a convincing environment, nothing on the market quite matches this (no, not even "that demo" that came with Zone of the Enders). Backdrops appear as if they've been constructed from stone and soil, not polygons and texture maps.



GETTING INTO CHARACTER


If you **REALLY** get into Ico, check out <http://www.phobe.com/horns/>. The site will show you how to create your very own horns in a matter of hours.



The lighting effects in this game are truly a sight to behold; instead of merely throwing in an occasional lensflare, Ico bombards your screen with stark rays of white sunlight. Exteriors and windows are harshly blown out; interiors are dark and saturated with grime. When you dart across a stone floor, dirt particles are scattered into the air. Jumping into a pool of water will start a brilliant ripple effect. These details lend an incredible "you are there" credence to the gameplay.

This high-contrast, stylized look will certainly not appeal to all tastes. Same thing goes for the

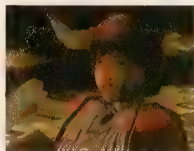
narrative, which may be too dark and abstract for casual gamers. But remember: Any time a work of art attempts to transcend the boundaries of its medium, it'll likely alienate those looking for the same old, same old. This game is for patient players who enjoy the finer things in life.

With all of the exciting titles hitting the PS2 this year, Ico is gonna be an easy one to overlook—don't let that happen. This August, after you've souped up all of your GT3 cars, pick this up. It's the perfect way to bide your time 'til Solid Snake rolls into town. 

—Ethan Einhorn

REAL EMOTION

Windows to the Soul



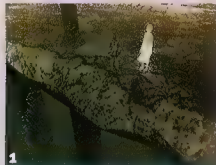
When you finally get your hands on a copy of Ico, take a moment to examine the protagonist's face. Look at his eyes—note how they shift when he's distracted or wideen when he's frightened. These movements are uncanny, even frightening; Ico almost looks *real*.

Throughout the game, the two central characters walk together in silence, but their highly reactive eyes, nostrils and lips allow them to be quite expressive nonetheless. These emotive features represent a new high-water mark for video game animation.



LARA CROFT, EAT YOUR HEART OUT

Want to see just how in-depth Ico's gameplay can get? Check out all these things you'll have to do just to cross a little ol' chasm. This ain't your typical action-adventure game...



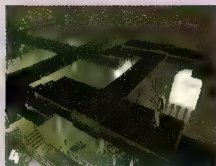
1 Can't get past this gap?



2 Run upstairs...



3 Climb the window sills...



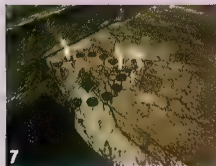
4 Hop onto the ceiling girders...



5 Unhook the chandelier and let it drop to the bottom floor



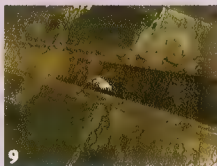
6 Go downstairs, grab a bomb...



7 Use the chandelier to light the bomb



8 Blow up the center pillar...



9 And use your new bridge!



PREVIEW

Onimusha 2

RISE FROM YOUR GRAVE

Deceased actor Yusaku Matsuda plays Jyubei in *Onimusha 2*. He died shortly after making the film *Black Rain*.

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Players: 1
Genre: Action/Adventure
% Done: 30%
Release: March 2002 (Japan)
Web Address: www.capcom.co.jp
The Good: Play as the sexy MF with the afro and reave souls.
The Bad: Prerendered backgrounds mean more camera headaches for those boss fights.



In *Onimusha*, you played as two characters throughout the story (although never both at once). Here in the sequel, you'll be accompanied by AI-controlled friendlies who help you kill things. The shot to the left shows Jyubei and a lady friend taking down Centaur Smurf. Notice her health bar on the upper right-hand corner. It begs the question: What happens if she dies?

CANDIDATES

Do You Yagyu?

Yusaku Matsuda who? Here are three Japanese superstars American audiences are much more familiar with. Capcom, are you listening?



Actor gone sensei, Pat Morita? Wax off, old man.



Gedde Watanabe (aka The Donger)? Umm, no.



The obvious choice for the role: bad-ass Sonny Chiba

Wait, *Onimusha 2*? Wasn't it just a month ago when we sent demon spawn back down to hell and wished we could skip those gorgeous cutscenes? Yes, but right on the dot with their internal development schedule, Capcom recently unveiled *Onimusha 2* at a press event in Japan. But with all the attention Devil May Cry is getting, can *Onimusha 2* still impress?

The sequel takes place 30 years after the damsel-in-distress story line of *Onimusha*. This time, you play as legendary swordsman Jubei Yagyu, a venerable one-eyed killing machine from Japan's Tokugawa period. For Jubei, creator Keiji Inafune chose a deceased actor, Yusaku Matsuda (*Black Rain*), to embody his mercenary spirit. "We surprised everyone when we announced Takeshi Kaneshiro in *Onimusha*," says Inafune. "We wanted to shock people even more this time." While his decision to go with Matsuda may have little impact on most American audiences, it does have pop-cultural significance in Japan. "It was risky," he adds. "I wanted to be the first to have done this in the video game industry."

While the backgrounds are still just prerendered wallpapers (like non-Code: Veronica Resident Evils), it's now much easier to appreciate how all that freed-

up processing power is being used in *Onimusha 2*. On-screen improvements like better character detail, weather effects and more (lots more) enemies coming at you simultaneously have the potential to make *Onimusha 2* more than just another cash-in sequel.

And while the backgrounds are prerendered, there'll be some interaction with the environment. Look forward to lots of falling bamboo shoots and busted rice-paper doors. Those of you who are castle-phobics should sleep better now knowing that *Onimusha 2* will also be set among different areas, indoors and out, day and night.

From where we were standing, *Onimusha 2* looks like it'll play a lot like its predecessor. To the uninitiated, it might look like Resident Evil with sushi, but this game emphasizes brawn over brains. You'll still need to dash, strafe, slash and collect the souls of ungrateful dead. Intermittently accompanying Jubei in his fight is a band of misfits including a swordswoman, a gunsmith and a military commander. It looks like these peripheral characters will be AI-controlled, but will fight alongside your main guy.

Whether you'll be able to play as any of the other people is still anybody's guess. But there's one thing we are certain about: *Onimusha 2* may not "out-cool" Devil May Cry, but even at 30 percent, the game already looks a lot more fun than the first. Let's just hope we can skip those cutscenes this time.

—Chou



Resident Shenmue: In towns, the living will walk among the dead as the locals go about their daily lives.

The PS2 version of Madden 2002 offers "Madden Classic," which is Madden '93 with new rosters. The folks at this "Classic" Madden cult should be happy; they refuse to play new Maddens and also get rid of headaches by drilling a hole in the skull. <http://www.geocities.com/homeiswhere/maddenhome.htm>



PREVIEW

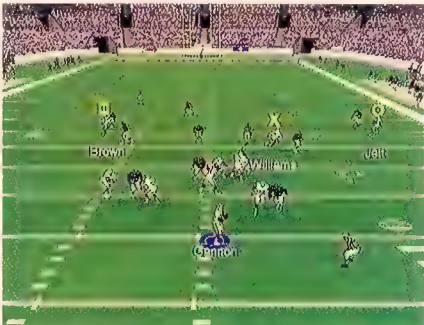
Madden NFL 2002

Publisher:	Electronic Arts
Developer:	EA Tiburon
Players:	1-8
Genre:	Sports
% Done:	70%
Release:	August 2001
Also On:	Xbox, GameCube, PS1
The Good:	The Franchise mode incorporates next year's realignment when you get to year two.
The Bad:	Losing your job and gaining 20 pounds.
And The Ugly:	Listening to Madden and Summerall commentate on all of it.



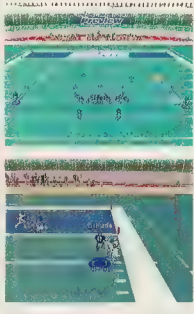
Randy Moss. He's a jerk. But he sure can catch purty, can't he?

If you don't like this view, define your own camera views. Or better yet, drop a couple grand on a widescreen television and use the Widescreen mode to see the whole field from sideline to sideline.



MADDEN 101 Football For Dummies

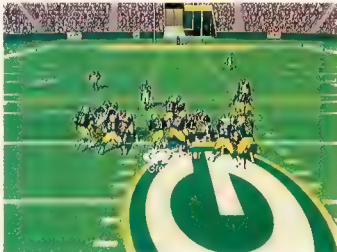
If you don't know the difference between a Post Corner route and a flag post, then it's time to enroll in Madden's new Training mode. At least the tuition is free (with purchase of the game). After picking a play, the computer walks you through it while Madden explains some of the finer nuances. Then it's your turn to take the reins. If you do well, you'll get a pat on the back and maybe even a token good for a Madden Challenge card or two.



Second and one. The defense is expecting a deep ball on this "free down." I line up in an obvious passing formation—the Shotgun—to complete the ruse and hike the ball.

Instead of passing, Brett Favre hands it off to the Packers' halfback, Ahman Green, who has finally shaken the knock against his hands to become a starter. After getting the rock, he jets around the right side, only to smack the backside of his own guard. The collision knocks Green off balance (you can see him wave a hand trying to keep his balance) just long enough for a Rams linebacker to spear the helpless dead-in-the-water running back. What should have been a perfect play turns into chaos as the ball squirts free seven yards in the opposite direction of the hit. All is not lost, however. I take control of my fullback and cut a defensive lineman running for the ball, sending him into the turf. Then I quickly shift control to my wide receiver, who scoops up the ball in stride, picks up a block, and turns upfield for 15 yards. Now that's football.

The true test of a pigskin game isn't how it handles the three-yard off-tackle plays, but how it handles the broken ones you see on *Sportscenter*. Let's face it: The football is the funkiest shaped ball in sports, and when it changes hands, weird s*** is



gonna happen. Here's a game that embraces that.

Yeah, sure—stupid and funny plays happen in every video game, but not because of great game design. What's special about this one is the physics engine that takes into account size, momentum and speed, and the silky-smooth animations that make it feel real. The halfback waving his arm for balance. A cut block taking the knees out from under a lineman, making him crumble into a heap. Some of these animations were in last year's game, but they're now so smooth that they make PS2 Madden 2001 look stuck in quicksand with a ball-and-chain.

The timing of this huge leap in quality might have had as much to do with new competition from Sega's 2K series and Microsoft's Xbox NFL Fever as it did Tiburon's getting a better grip on the stubborn (but powerful) PS2 hardware. Jeremy Strauser, producer of Madden 2002, assures that "we always make the best game possible," but, like any sports fan, acknowledges that "competition is always a good thing. Every few years we have someone new gunning to beat Madden, and we just work harder and continue to make the best game out there."

'98 Sports learned that hard lesson. Years ago, witty commercials showed players calling their offices to get the newest GameDay, but those lines have since gone dead. It's not hard to figure out why they're calling now. "I'm not going to mention names," says Strauser, "but let's just say more than one starting NFL QB has called me personally to ask for better ratings in Madden." —Craig Kujawa



EA scared a lot of people with the ghostly "lifeless stare" their players had last year, but that won't be a problem this time.

Spy Hunter

Publisher:	Midway
Developer:	Paradigm
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Action
% Done:	75%
Release:	October 2001
Also Try:	San Francisco Rush
Web Address:	www.midway.com

The Good: It feels a lot like the old Spy Hunter, but with fancy 3D graphics and mission objectives.

The Bad: The two-player mode is just a straightforward deathmatch.

And The Ugly: The Interceptor, after suffering real-time damage from some missile hits. No way that'll buff out.



You see, son, when a spy car and a weapons van love each other very, very much, the car enters the van's rear-end. Then, a little while later, the car re-emerges, bursting with ammo and fully restored armor.



I think [Spy Hunter on PS2] gets your heart pounding every bit as much as the original."

That's a gutsy statement from producer Michael Gottlieb, considering it's to a room full of EGM editors who grew up humming the catchy theme from the 1983 classic coin-op on their way between grade school and the local arcade. But before we had a chance to hoggie and crucify Gottlieb for blasphemy, his game finished loading, and suddenly what he said didn't seem so outrageous.

Spy Hunter PS2 walks that fine line that every remade classic must—the line between preserving what made the original great and updating what's needed for today's infinitely more powerful systems. The first thing to go was the overall point of the game. It's no longer just about seeing how long you can last or how many points you can rack up. Now you go on missions, each with necessary and optional objectives such as destroying a prototype enemy helicopter, escorting a cargo truck, taking out a series

of control towers, etc. Completed missions earn you special points you can use to open up more difficult missions. And you don't cruise along one long, twisting road anymore either—branching paths, shortcuts and jumps, in levels ranging from the Amazon jungle to European city squares, add way more variety than the old game ever offered. You even get to do a little offroading, sending park benches, cafe tables and chickens (yep, chickens) flying in your wake. Oh, and as you can see, the graphics look *slightly* better as well (note the italics for the sarcasm-impaired). The sense of speed does get a little chunky in some of the bigger areas, though—we'll just have to wait, as always, for the final version to see if that little bump is smoothed out.

So what'd they keep from the dusty old arcade game? Lots, actually. It's still all about your tricked-out super spy car, loaded for bear with turbo boosts, oil slicks, smokescreens, missiles and machine guns (plus new laser and mine weapons). When you need to reload your weapons and replenish armor (another new feature) you still pull into a big red truck. And although you face plenty of new bad guys, many of your old buddies are back and just dying to say hello, including the bomb-tossing helicopter, the bulletproof bully you have to ram off the road, and the drill-happy switchblade car, to name a few. Oh, and that infectious theme ("Peter Gunn" for all our Napster-friendly readers) is back, remixed and ready to bounce around your brain for days on end once more.

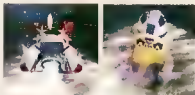
—Shawn Smith & Mark MacDonald

My Other Spy Car's a Jet Ski

The Interceptor can turn into four vehicles, depending on the driving conditions and your damage level:



You play most the game as the standard sports car, but as you take damage it sheds armor until it turns into the sleek cycle above. It's a bit faster and easier to maneuver, but a couple solid hits and you're dead.



When you enter water, the Interceptor changes into a jet-powered boat or Jet Ski (the sea-worthy version of the motorcycle).





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Giants: Citizen Kabuto

Publisher:	Interplay
Developer:	Digital Mayhem
Players:	1
Genre:	Action/Adventure
% Done:	60%
Release:	Fall 2001
Also On:	PC

Web Address: www.interplay.com

The Good: The comic segments are actually funny.

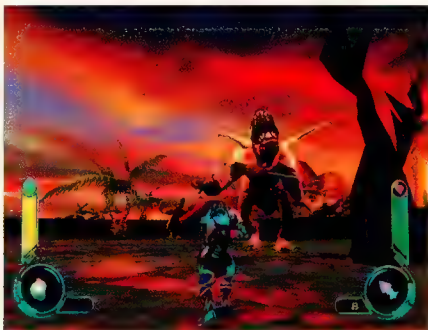
The Bad: The graphics aren't exactly awe-inspiring.

And The Ugly: Kabuto's appetite for helpless civilians.



The game's cutscenes are surprisingly well-written—these Meccas have a great sense of comic timing.

Pretty, eh? If only the game looked as good in full motion as it does in these stills...



GIANTS: BOX ART

Don't Judge a Game by its Cover



Giants is a light, fanciful action/adventure laced with gut-busting humor... but you certainly wouldn't think it, judging by the product's cheeseball box art. Kind of reminds you of the tacky paintings on the covers of those old, hardbound Dungeons & Dragons books, doesn't it? Clearly the artist didn't actually play the game, or he would have known to place the hilarious Mecc soldiers front and center. It's a really unfortunate marketing misstep; players may accidentally pass this one by, thinking it's nothing more than another Orphen or Warriors of Might and Magic. Let's hope that positive reviews will get people past that ugly cover.

Earthworm Jim 1 and 2 weren't just games; they were comedies. Funny from stem to stern, no console title has ever matched the comic invention of these classic carts. Come August, this may no longer be true: Giants: Citizen Kabuto will finally be available on the PlayStation 2. The side-splitting PC original was developed by ex-Shiny (creators of Earthworm Jim) team members, and this port handled by Digital Mayhem—retains the computer game's broad comic appeal.

The sarcastic cows in the Jim carts have been replaced here by Smarties (aliens who share more than a passing resemblance to Perfect Dark's Elvis character). These poor guys are being pushed off their planet by an extremely aggressive co-habitant species. The villains—silver-skinned demigods known as Sea Reapers—will stop at nothing to lay exclusive claim to the land. They've summoned a hideous giant from the spirit realm to devour the entire Smartie population. Delphi, a good-natured, Pocahontas-style Reaper, is dedicated to stopping the genocide. She gets some unexpected help from a troop of Meccs—space rangers with Scottish accents—that have crash-landed on the planet. These disparate narrative elements are detailed in gut-busting cutscenes...some of the wittiest ever produced for a console game.

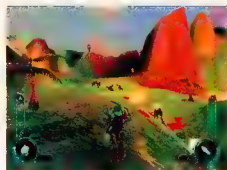
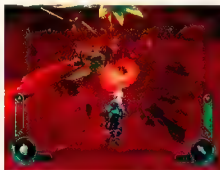
Throughout the course of the adventure, you'll get to step into the skins of two distinctly different characters. You start out as Baz, one of the marooned Meccs. He

carries an arsenal that'd do Duke Nukem proud: miniguns, rocket launchers and lasers are all at his disposal. Comparisons to the blond master of mischief don't end there; Baz's play mechanics are almost identical to the ones employed in the latest third-person Duke adventures. Learning to strafe, run for cover, and use your jet pack is critical if you intend to survive the swarms of insect-like predators that pop up everywhere.

Delphi—the second controllable character—is a master swordswoman; slicing through enemies with her razor-sharp rapier is a total rush. She can control the environment, too. When playing as her, you'll be able to unleash magnificent tornados and devastating bolts of lightning. Near the end of the game, she'll use her magic to transform into Kabuto—an enormous monster capable of trashing cities bare-handed. She is fully controllable in this form; as you slam her fists into the homes of evil Smarties and gobble up antagonistic alien mercenaries, fond memories of Rampage will instantly come to mind.

These varied play elements make for a title you'll not soon tire of. The sprawling, organic worlds presented here have the potential to keep you immersed for weeks; by the time you've saved the "good" Smarties, you'll be inextricably attached to these charming, iconic characters. There's nothing quite like this on the market. 🍄

—Ethan Einhorn



PlayStation 2

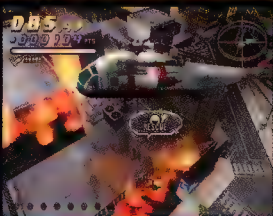
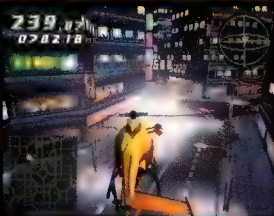
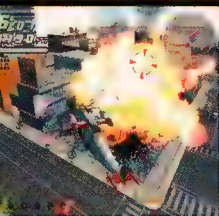
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- FLY AT HIGH SPEED THROUGH A MAZE OF BUILDINGS, HIGH-TENSION ELECTRICAL WIRES AND OTHER DEADLY OBSTACLES AS YOU ASSIST THE POLICE IN THE CAPTURE OF HIGH SPEED FELONS ON THE RUN.



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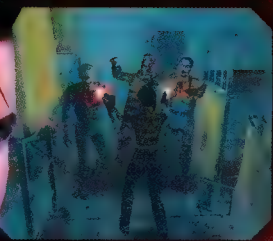


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T A L

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RESIDENT EVIL CODE: Veronica

CAPCOM

PlayStation®2



BE THE MARSHAL!
One alternate outfit we hope to see in *Legends of Wrestling* would be Captain Lou Albano's classic Super Mario Bros. costume. Anyone old enough to remember the *Super Mario Bros. Super Show* should know what we're talking about. Anyone who doesn't remember it...we envy you.

Legends of Wrestling

Do names like Bobby "The Brain" Heenan, Bret "The Hitman" Hart and George "The Animal" Steele stir up fond memories of watchin' wrasslin' in your youth? **Acclaim** hopes they will, as those three and at least 30 other classic brawlers will star in their **November** release, *Legends of Wrestling*. Since they lost the WWF license, Acclaim's taking the all-star approach to sports entertainment by pitting these past heroes against one another in up to 12 types of matches.

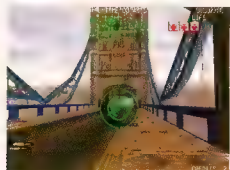
THQ's *SmackDown!* series has raised the wrestling bar. Acclaim's aware of this and points out that *LoW* does not resemble any of their older, rather dismal wrestling games. Expect loads of new customization options and the ability to build your own stable of wrestlers.

Bobby Heenan and Captain Lou Albano will provide the color commentary as you beat the living crap out of guys like Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka and the Iron Sheik. And no, the steroid injection simulator is not a planned feature.



Silent Scope 2

Konami's sequel to *Silent Scope* will appear this **fall** and behave very much like its relatively young father. The *Time Attack* mode has been replaced with a *duel* option, which lets you go one on one against the computer or a friend to test your marksmanship. To hook up against another person, though, you'll need another TV, PS2 and copy of the game, as it works via the PS2's i.Link port. Pretty cool. Expensive, but cool.



NHL 2002

Sega entering the open market must have been the proverbial kick in the pants **EA Sports** needed to start rebuilding old franchises; NHL is looking more polished than it has in years.

From the *Madden* games comes an in-depth Career mode and "NHL Cards," which change different play aspects: big heads, stronger defense, infecting the opposing team with the flu...regular stuff.

EA's adding some very cool gameplay elements as well. The new *deke* button actually gives you full control over your player's stick, making it much easier to fool the goalie and ripple twine. Even cooler is the new *Breakaway Cam*. As you break toward the net, the screen goes letterbox and the noise of the crowd dies down. All you hear is your heartbeat and your skates on the ice. We like. Look for NHL this **fall**.



HALF MAN.
HALF DEMON.
PURE VENGEANCE.

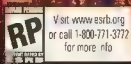
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PlayStation 2



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770

The total number of breeds listed on the Internet's most comprehensive dragon newsgroup, alt.fan.dragons.

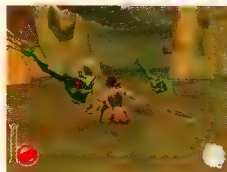


PS2

PREVIEW
GALLERY

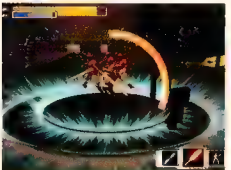
Drakan II

Two years in the making, **Surreal Software's** Drakan II is an epic-sized sequel to the popular PC original. You take on the role of Rynn, a female warrior who fights for peace atop the back of Arohk, a mighty fire-breathing dragon. New features include a greater level of character customization, non-linear gameplay and a supporting cast of allies. Look for it on store shelves by the end of **summer**.



Eve of Extinction

In the near future, a high-tech military facility is bent on designing super-powered weapons comprised of flesh and metal. The organization's goal? Why, to create a race of super-human soldiers, of course! True blue Josh Calloway teams up with his girlfriend to take the devious organization down, soldier by soldier. **Yuke's** is at the helm of this one; we should see a U.S. release from **Eidos** this **fall**.



NASCAR 2002

NASCAR 2002 looks like it's firing on all cylinders. **EA** knows it did fans of the sport a great disservice last year, so they've got **EA Tiburon** (those Madden guys) working on the new circle-track racer. Finally we'll get features that have been considered essential in most any other sports simulator. Create your driver and start a career; paint your own car; earn new sponsors by performing well on the track; and watch other racers come and go through the years.

When you don't have enough cars in a NASCAR game, it's ruined. A lack of opponents makes it way too easy to lose the draft on superspeedways, thus ruining the race. Tiburon knows this and has put more cars than ever before into each race (the number's nearing 40 now). Plus every team sports its 2001 paint scheme, and all 23 NASCAR tracks are featured in the game. What we've played so far is a definite step in the right direction. EA's promising a solid framerate at all times on this **fall** release, even in multiplayer. Let's hope that's the case.





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A Journey fraught with danger

A Journey to save the world...

A Journey West

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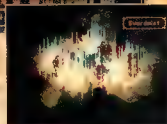
Saiyuki is a strategy RPG based on one of the most popular legends of China, the journey of the monk Saizō from China to India and back.

Man or Beast... The Ultimate Attack Force... "WereForm"
Romp across the battlefield as a huge monster with powerful attacks!

An unexpected source of aid... "Guardians"
The heavens will support you and provide protection and power!

Character Customizing
Add special abilities and improve character attributes!

Magic
Magic turns the tide of battle! Effects range from beneficial healing, to comets that kill all in their wake!





TOP GUN SUBTEXT

Want to know what *Top Gun* is REALLY all about? Take a look at *Sleep With Me*, the 1994 romance flick starring Eric Stoltz. In it, *Pulp Fiction* auteur Quentin Tarantino pops on screen for a few minutes to deliver a monologue deconstructing the Tom Cruise vehicle. His take? That Maverick and Ice Man only have eyes for each other. This comic bit is a playful jab at *Top Gun* director Tony Scott, who also helmed Tarantino's *True Romance*.

Gekisha Boy 2

Picture Pokémon Snap (no pun intended) in 2D, only with flying ninjas and peeing children replacing Pikachu and pals and...well, you'd *still* need to see this hilarious new import from **Irem** to believe it. As an American photojournalist (complete with stereotypical blond hair, giant schnoz, cap and pervert-sized grin) on assignment in Japan, your job is to grab enough interesting pictures to satisfy your grumpy bastard of a boss. Luckily, every place you go is teeming with freaky characters (all paper-thin a la PaRappa) acting up: Statues move, volcanoes erupt, transvestites blush—Godzilla even makes a cameo. Good pictures earn you points, plus a chance for more film, flash bulbs or other goodies. The truly dedicated can insert their own pics into the game via a USB digital camera, or print out screens on the PS2's printer.



Primal

It's Tomb Raider meets *The Exorcist* in this new adventure game from **Sony**. We expect big things from *Primal*, at least on the aesthetic front: The graphics look damn nice so far.



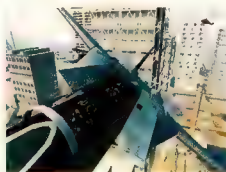
Robocop

Titus seems to have a thing for resurrecting '80s movie licenses. You'll hear no arguments from us, *Robocop* ruled. This one will take advantage of Sony's upcoming light gun—take down greasy urban thugs Peter Weller-style.



Top Gun

This year's newly licensed drivers were still in diapers when *Top Gun* first hit movie theaters. That said, one has to wonder how many gamers have really been clamoring for the continued adventures of Maverick, Goose and Ice Man. Ancient license aside, though, this **Titus**-developed game is shaping up to be a fairly promising aerial-combat title. Will it give the *Ace Combat* series a run for its money? We'll find out this **winter**.



EVIL TWIN

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Embrace the Dark Divine

October 2001

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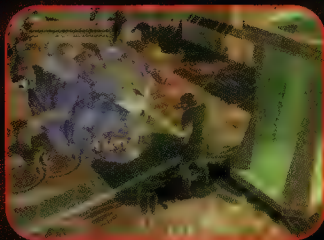
FORGOTTEN REALMS

Baldur's Gate™

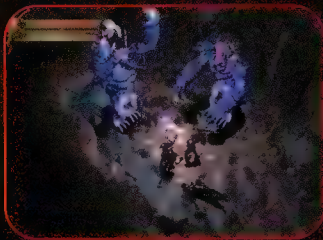
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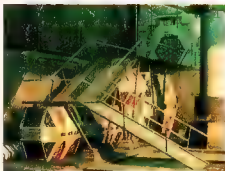
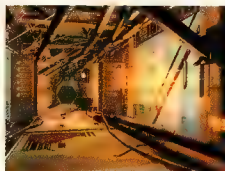
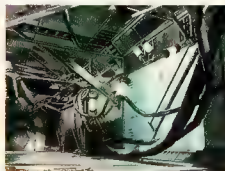


DANGEROUS AIR

In Acclaim's video games, Dave Mirra has to jump from tall buildings, crash through glass windows, and play chicken with trains. Ever wonder how sturdy the guy is in real life? Consider this: Even after discovering a blood clot in his brain (the result of a 1993 car accident) and getting his spleen removed (a surgical necessity when a 1995 bike stunt went bad), the BMX pro has gone on to win multiple Gold Medals in the annual X-Games competitions.

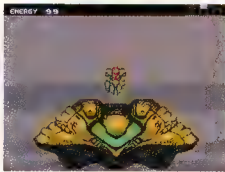
Metroid Prime

Prime—adj. First or early in time, order or sequence; original. From that, one would guess that this Metroid will take place before the original Nintendo Entertainment System game. Neither **Nintendo** nor developers **Retro Studios** have made it clear where this game will fall in the series' timeline. Last month we showed you shots of Samus in action (though there are still no gameplay shots available). This month we've got a look at some of the environments you'll play through. At first glance, there are one question—where are the colored bubble doors?!



Holy Ship!

Samus' ship (far right) has undergone a facelift since the last time we saw it above the surface of Zebes in Super Metroid (right).



Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2

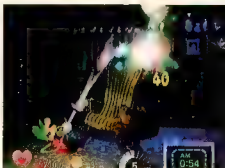
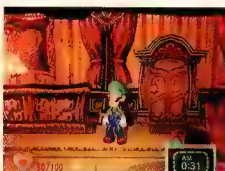
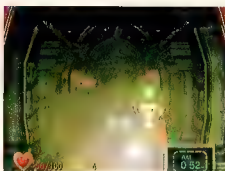
Looks like ol' Dave is gonna make it to Nintendo's new deck before Mat Hoffman will. **Acclaim** plans on having this one ready for GameCube's **November** launch. With a 12-player roster, over 1,500 tricks and 11 different levels, the game will give you plenty to jam on through the holidays. Developer **Z-Axis** is taking advantage of the new system's power by offering highly interactive environments (you'll get to drive through heavy traffic), in-depth create-a-player and create-a-park modes, and an ultra-realistic crash system.

While these screenshots aren't exactly mind-blowing, we do expect the game to look pretty good when it's finished. Z-Axis was able to make Dave look great on the PS1; imagine how buff he'll be on this platform!



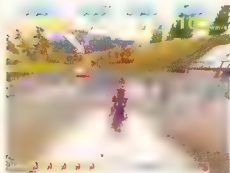
Luigi's Mansion

And now, the latest from the land of Luigi. **Nintendo** just released the screenshots below, and although they are all of in-game events, they do not tell us anything we didn't already know. We can, however, say with confidence that despite the suggestive shadow, peeling back the curtain in the steamy shower scene below reveals nothing but an empty tub. Them ghosts are slippery ones if you're not quick on the draw.



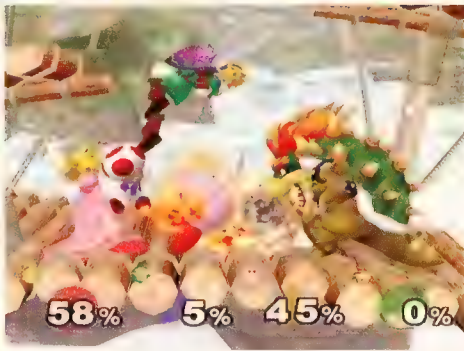
Wave Race: Blue Storm

The next **Nintendo** franchise scheduled for a facelift is Wave Race. This **November** all your hydro-racing needs will be fulfilled, with added features like a bunch of different weather effects and a new turbo boost option. Perhaps the most exciting part, though, is the new four-player mode (the original was only a two-player experience). We'll be sure to bring you more on WR:BS as we near the GC's launch.



Super Smash Bros. Melee

Well, we don't have any new information on Smash Bros. for the GameCube, but we do have a nice new set of screens for your hungry eyes. Check out the chaos in the four-player game! Yep, that's Toad making a cameo appearance in front of Princess Peach. **Nintendo** is sure to dribble a few more screens out as we approach the game's **Nov. 5** launch date. Fear not, we'll keep you in the loop.



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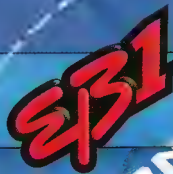


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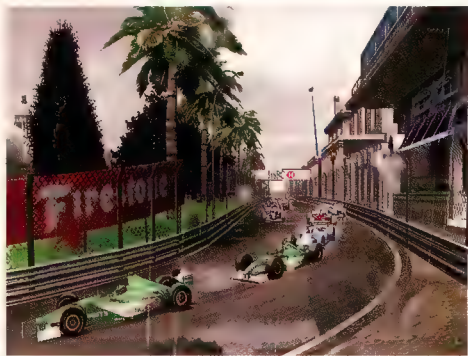
Genma **Onimusha**

At **Capcom's** recent Onimusha 2 press conference (see PS2 previews), creator Keiji Inafune mentioned this Xbox version of the original adventure game would include new elements to appease hardcore "maniac" gamers. Hopefully that means more than a slight Code: Veronica X-esque story revision (although Onimusha's plot holes could certainly use some plugging up as well). It's due **before March 2002**.



F1 2001

The last PS2 version of **EA's** F1 series left a lot to be desired. But lately the publisher's been big on redefining their major franchises, and plans to do just that when they debut F1 on the Xbox this **winter**. Drivers will now react like they would in real life, the rosters will be totally updated, and a highlight reel will be automatically edited and played after each race. Here's hoping the gameplay receives a similar overhaul.



The Simpsons: **Road Rage**

Mr. Burns is at it again. He's just purchased the Springfield Transit Corporation for \$1 million and has jacked up fares in an attempt to gouge the citizens of Springfield. As a result, people are forced to drive everywhere, and the streets have filled with angry commuters.

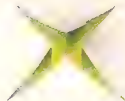
In an effort to buy back the Transit Corporation, members of Springfield have opted to drive through the crazy city streets and pick up residents in need of transportation. Obviously borrowing Crazy Taxi's gameplay, Road Rage requires delivery of these passengers to specific locations within set time limits in order to receive fares. The game even includes Crazy Taxi's large arrow at the center of the screen that directs you to destinations.

But regardless of how close it is to Crazy Taxi, Road Rage does have the very unique Simpsons feel to it, thanks to the use of cel shading (making it look more like the cartoon). Also, the game allows you to choose one of 22 characters (ranging from Simpson family members to other townies such as Flanders, Apu and Barney). **EA** unleashes its Rage in **November**.



VIDEO GAME FASHION

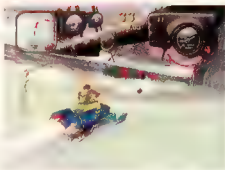
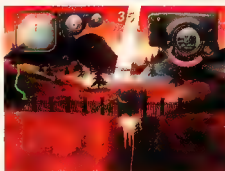
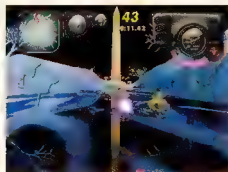
Considering their attire, one would think that the female snowboarders in *Dark Summit* were at the Academy Awards, not on top of ice-cold snow bluffs. I mean, c'mon...even Lara dons "keep warm" gear when frolicking in the snow.



PREVIEW
GALLERY

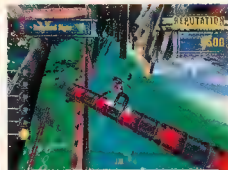
Arctic Thunder

It would set you back a few thousand dollars to put an Arctic Thunder machine in your living room. Lucky for you, **Midway** is bringing it to Xbox (and PS2) this **fall**. The home version has 12 courses: six from the arcade (Blizzard in DC, Lost Himalayan City, Chernobyl Meltdown, Swiss Alps, Haunted Forest and Alaskan Pipeline) and six new ones (Sports Arena, Logging Camp, UFO, China, Atlantis and Theme Park). Up to four players can play split-screen through the regular tracks or in a new battle mode in an enclosed snow arena. Pick one of the six characters, each with his or her own strengths and tricked-out snow crafts. You collect boost power, missiles and more to blast past your opponents. If that doesn't work, you can attack them with your fist (works in real life, too).



Dark Summit

SSX is probably the first thing that comes to your mind when looking at these gorgeous stills. Fair enough: Like that killer PS2 title, *Dark Summit* centers on snowboarding through exaggerated, candy-colored terrains. What makes this **THQ** release unique is its intricate narrative, which unfolds by completing a varied set of mission objectives. We expect it to hit store shelves this **winter**.





GOOD HEDGEHOG.



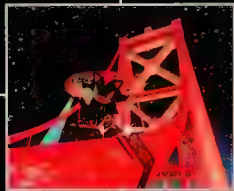
SEGA.COM/SONICADV2

Play as Sonic and board, swing and grind to save the world.





EVIL, SINISTER, MALCONTENT HEDGEHOG.



Play as Shadow, Sonic's evil double, and conquer the world.

 Dreamcast.



PREVIEW



SONIC BOOM

To celebrate his 10th birthday, Sonic and pals chilled out on the PSO servers June 16-30. Pretty cool, except for the grating Sonic Adventure theme song that kept playing.

Phantasy Star Online Ver. 2

- Publisher:** Sega
- Developed by:** Sonic Team
- Platform:** 1-4
- Genre:** Online RPG
- % Complete:** 100%
- Release Date:** Soon...we hope
- Also Available On:** GameCube
- Web Address:** www.sega.com
- The Good:** New MAGs, new weapons, new modes, new monsters.
- The Bad:** Many annoying little problems remain.
- And The Note:** When you tell the average PSO player he or she will have to pay to play in ver. 2.

CHALLENGE MODE: RACE AGAINST THE CLOCK

After gathering your party (1) and waiting for the level to load (they look slightly different than the usual environments), your mission is to clear a set number of areas within a certain time limit. Notice the gravestone left by dead players (2), complete with epitaph. If you are successful (3) you go up in rank and can try the next Challenge level.



HELPFUL HINTS

Icon-O-Class

Certain switches and panels in PSO ver. 2's Challenge Mode use chat icons to tell you how to proceed. A few examples:



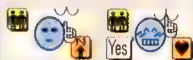
Shoot the switch.



Run through the wall to the right (a secret door will open and let you in).



Activate the switch by dropping four weapons on it.



Activate the switch by sticking...um...never mind.

If you never tried the original PSO, Sega's life-consuming online RPG, try this: Call in sick to work or school, don't sleep or shower for three days straight, and really piss off your significant other. There, now you know what it feels like to be a PSO addict. Or you could always just jump on board once PSO Ver. 2 comes out.

Notice I didn't say PSO2—it's PSO *Version 2*...not a sequel, but more of a director's cut. In most ways it's the same old game: Clear out monster-infested dungeons room by room alone or with up to three friends online, build up your character and MAG (a kind of robot sidekick) by gaining experience points and stat-boosting items, and try hard to remember that thing you once had called a social life. Of course there are some changes too, and since our last preview, we've received an avalanche of questions about them. After some quality time with the import version, I'll do my best to answer the biggies:

So what's new for Version 2? An "Ultimate" difficulty level with some new monsters (for players level 80 and over only), a shortcut to change weapons and use items and spells (just hold R and hit Y), a soccer game, Battle and Challenge modes (see sidebars) plus new MAGs, armor and weapons. **Can I use my character from PSO in PSO Ver. 2?** Yes, and you can even go up to level 200 now. **Level 200 eh? Muhaha! I can't wait to cheat in Ver. 2 and**

cheapen the experience for everyone online! Oh you're one of those bastards, are ya? Well, listen up: You and your level 100, Sonic Knuckle-toting, ultra rare MAG-owning ilk might just be out of luck. Version 2 can detect illegitimate items and characters created using the GameShark, and won't allow them online. Hopefully that will stop (or at least limit) cheating. **Should I wait for the U.S. version?** I'd recommend it. The Japanese version does have an English mode, and you can get it to work online (check out www.mamak-int.com for help), but you won't be able to transfer over your U.S. PSO character, and there are few English-speaking Ver. 2 players out there now. **When is the U.S. release?** Originally it was scheduled for July 30, but (possibly due to squabbling between Sega of Japan and Sega of America over the price for the pay-to-play plan) it's now listed as To Be Determined. I would guess late summer or early fall. **Did you say pay to play?! That sucks!** Yeah, I know. But hopefully the cost will be low (in Japan it's about \$8 for three months), and Sega tells us the price for the game itself is also under discussion. **How is the soccer game?** Pretty \$#@%ing lame. **That reminds me, is that annoying language filter still there?** Yup. Makes it pretty hard to speak in simple Japanese, too, since you can't use the verb "shitteru" (to do). —Mark MacDonald

BATTLE MODE: FINALLY YOU CAN KILL YOUR FRIENDS

In either of two new arenas (pictured here), two to four players can fight at their own experience level, or even the odds by making everyone equal. The winner can be whoever gets the most kills or collects the most Meseta—your choice.





World Series Baseball 2K2


- Platform(s)** Sega
- Visual Concepts**
- Players** 1-8
- Genre(s)** Sports
- % Done** 80%
- Release Date** August 2001
- System** DC only
- Website** www.sega.com
- The Good** Online baseball.
- The Bad** Lag sucks.
- Any Other Info** David Wells.



Visual Concepts has faithfully re-created all the major-league ballparks. Check out the fine details present in the background of Milwaukee's Miller Park (top left). City backdrops and plenty of signage also help flesh out the visual palette. The player models look solid, and the game has plenty of signature styles. Check out Big Mac layin' wood (top right).

ONLINE PLAY

Just Win



WSB 2K2 is sure to offer a thrill for the online mavens, as it will be the first Sega-Net game to track wins, losses and disconnects.

Now no more bragging "1,000-0, who wants some?" in the lobbies, as potential opponents can see your record. This is a huge step forward in terms of finding quality opponents, as we've all been through the mysterious disconnect. Now, when you're leading 8-0 in the third inning, that opponent might care a little bit more about his "street cred" and finish the game.

Still, don't expect cowards to completely run and hide, as disconnects are often unintentional. You'll have tons of players saying, "Play me...dude, those disconnects are because I can't turn off call waiting."

In any case, your best bet for finding good hardcore competition is to surf DC sites for league play. Or just look around for me in the lobbies. Check for Hossman after 10 p.m. CST.

Sega console owners have historically been treated to nothing but the finest baseball video games. The World Series lineage began on the Genesis and truly blossomed on the Saturn, establishing high hopes for the first DC incarnation. But those high hopes turned into bitter disappointment with last summer's release of WSB 2K1. A Sega of Japan arcade conversion, World Series 2K1 was little more than a hitting simulator with tons of bugs to boot. There was a complete lack of options, no manual fielding, limited game modes, etc. Despite this, Sega marketed the game as sim baseball and tagged it with the prestigious 2K brand name. Bad move.

Give Sega credit for realizing their blunders and dropping the fate of 2K2 directly into the hands of Visual Concepts. VC now looks to do for baseball what it already has done for football and basketball—make it great and take it online, in that order.

Not one line of code is being used from last year's disaster, thankfully, and this is being pitched and designed as a sim-heavy game of baseball. Twenty-five-man rosters will be featured for each team, as well as a 10-man farm roster. This should give players the flexibility to use key role players and manage injuries. For example, if you're taking Atlanta through a season and aren't happy with Rico Brogna at first base, send him down and call up fan favorite Wes Helms. We likey. Another key aspect of the rosters—

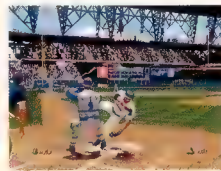
and this is good news/bad news—is that they will be extremely up-to-date. That's the good news. The bad news is that the game's obviously running late.

As a SegaNet title, WSB 2K2 will be playable online, a fact which has this Dreamcast owner (and probably many others) swimming in drool. Lag presents a serious potential problem (especially in hitting), but so far testing has gone well. For the online challenged, the requisite single-player franchise mode allows you to guide a team through multiple seasons.

As for the actual gameplay, WSB 2K2 was first unveiled at the E3 convention in May. From what we saw, the game was extremely impressive. It features a cursor-based pitching and hitting interface, hot and cold hitting zones, manual fielding control, and tons of signature swings and deliveries. Hitting is a nice blend of twitch skills and strategy, as each batter's hot and cold zones are represented on screen.

The usual array of managing options is also there for the taking, with defensive alignment shifts, double switches, hit and runs, and other tactical fine points. Expect the CPU to take advantage of these maneuvers as well, which is a good thing for any gamer wanting a challenge. While the late release pretty much sucks, we look at it this way—it's a great excuse to be playing baseball past October. 🍁

—Dan Leahy



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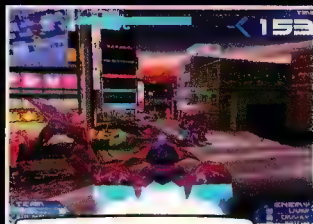


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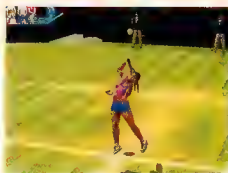


PRODUCTS RANGES FROM
LATING FEMING TO T E E N
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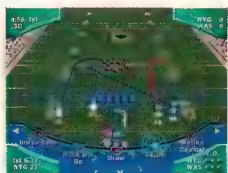
Tennis 2K2

Sex sells, and **Sega** is delivering plenty of it this **fall**. Women (namely the Williams sisters) and the lack of online play are the big news in this sequel (sadly, there is no nude code to speak of). Mixed matches allow for some interesting competition, and the revamped World Circuit Mode now lets you create your own pro to play mini-games with and to take to the top of the world rankings.



NFL 2K2

The Dreamcast may be on its last legs, but **Sega** and **Visual Concepts** are showing no signs of letting up this **fall**. This year's edition of NFL will further flesh out online play with broadband support, player profiles (that keep track of wins, losses and rankings), and more intuitive lobbies. An entirely new playcall system is also being installed in addition to improved computer intelligence and graphics.



NBA 2K2

So far, the NBA 2K series is progressing nicely. With 2K2, the action is faster, an effect enhanced by smoother player animations. Drives to the hoop and forward-leaning three-pointers look particularly impressive—you'll see plenty of them too, thanks to a computer-intelligence overhaul that makes fast-breaks more realistic. Like NFL 2K2, NBA 2K2 saves online profiles, so try not to rack up the losses this **fall**.



CORN GONE WRONG

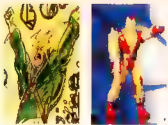


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Spider-Man 2 villains Electro and Shocker both have names that imply the same kinds of things—electricity, surging power, that sort of thing—but they're very different fellahs. In fact, they're archenemies in the Marvel world. Must be an AC/DC thing.

Spider-Man 2 Enter: Electro

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Vicarious Visions
Players: 1
Genre: Action
% Done: 80%
Release: Fall 2001
Also try: Spider-Man
Web Address: www.activision.com
The Good: It's Spider-Man with a few new ideas.
The Bad: It's Spider-Man with few new ideas.
And The Ugly: Spidey's jaggy look on the PS1, just begging for the PS2 treatment.



Spider-Man always wanted a sidekick. Parker stretches the limits of his new yellow silk pajamas with a flashy finish to his quick-and-dirty three-hit combo.



Don't let the black Spandex fool you; that's Spidey's sticky wad all right. You'll unlock over a dozen outfits and abilities this time around.

Fashion Bug



If you were a resident of Spider-Man's New York City, seeing newshound Peter Parker swinging around on a web might raise some flags in your head. Fortunately, no one seems to mind that or any of the other hidden costumes in the PS1 version of Spider-Man 2.

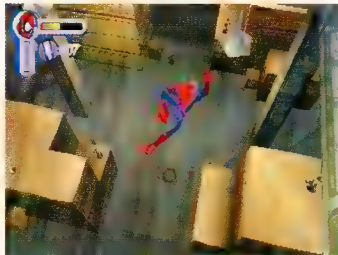
In the first game, getting to these ability-enhancing getups was right tough, and the same goes for the sequel. Rewards include strength and stealth outfits, suits from the original comic, and costumes from the upcoming movie.

Completing the prescribed challenges that give you access to all 19 costumes is exclusively a task for the hardcore, or those lazier folk with a healthy supply of cheat codes.

I don't want to give away the surprise, but it's not Doc Ock you'll be out to get in Spider-Man 2.

Nope, the current nemesis in Spidey's life is a take-charge kind of guy with an electric personality, one with the potential to spark a surge of crime across New York City.

Well, as if that wasn't blunt enough, yes, Electro is the bad guy du jour. From the looks of it, he's going to be just as behind-the-scenes as the good doctor from the original, but he's a tough one nonetheless. There's no Venom tour guide leading you to your destiny this time, though. Spider-Man will instead spend his time solving puzzles that involve a good deal of interaction with the game's environment. Getting from one area to the next often involves

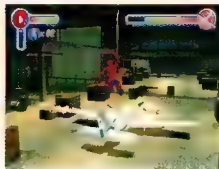
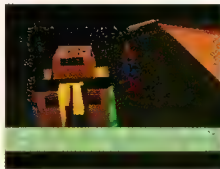


more than just quick web-swinging and landing punch combos on dim-witted enemies. Your webbing, for example, is instrumental as both a tool and a weapon. In addition to its usual duties, it'll be used to put out fires, or tangle up and reel in animate objects. The added puzzles and interaction with the Spider-Man world give this game a lot more depth and complexity. With that in mind, those of you who breezed through the first game should set aside extra hours for the sequel.

All you purists: Fear not, the game still has more than its share of basic brawling. Unfortunately, it's shaping up to be just as vanilla as before, with three-hit pummel-fests proving the most effective weapon against the faceless baddies. But at least you have the option of crushing the opposition with mailboxes, crates and barrels of toxic waste if you get bored. And isn't that what being a superhero is all about? Of course it is. 🕷

—Jonathan Dudlak

Controlling the webmaster is still a bit tough when you change perspectives, like in the ceiling-crawling scene at left. *The Daily Bugle* also reports a slew of new puzzles to get your Spider Sense tingling. *S-Man 2* has significantly more tricky tasks than the action-driven original. Diffusing a bomb, stopping a runaway plane, and plotting your way out of various tight spots are just a few of the ways you'll have to use your noodle as much as your netting this time 'round.



As reluctant as we are to recognize it, we know not everyone grew up playing 2D Castlevania games. If you're not too familiar with the Dracula saga, run over to www.classicgaming.com/castlevania for the lowdown on the entire collection of games.



PREVIEW
GALLERY

Castlevania Chronicle

Living in the United States has its drawbacks. Americans are at the mercy of sales and marketing execs when it comes to getting Japanese-developed games. As a result, the U.S. has missed out on some incredible titles, and despite its popularity, Castlevania is no exception to this frustrating formula.

Don't despair just yet. Konami hasn't confirmed or denied a stateside version of their newest PS1 release, but it's definitely worth importing if you don't want to risk history repeating itself (anyone who's tried to find a copy of Dracula X for the PC Engine knows what we mean). Castlevania Chronicle ("Akumajou Dracula" in Japan) is a beefed-up version of an older game made for the Japanese Sharp X68000 computer system. Talk about



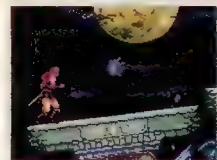
obscure, eh? But the combination of Super Nintendo-grade graphics and classic Castlevania gameplay make it one of the Belmonts' best.

If Symphony of the Night was your first Castlevania experience, think of this game as a simpler, shorter, more linear version of that PS1 classic. Sure, it's not as pretty as SOTN, but the game is just good, clean fun.

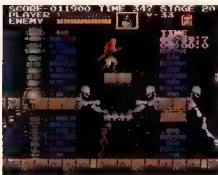
If you've had the frustrating pleasure of the 8-bit Nintendo Castlevanias, Chronicle borrows heavily from the first and third NES titles, with reworked versions of their levels, bosses and music. It still comes across as a completely unique adventure, in either of its two play modes,

Original or Arranged. Choose Original and you'll have your choice of three different sound sets for your listening pleasure. Arranged features a more sophisticated interpretation of the music, a more colorful and detailed Simon Belmont, and a visual re-vamping for the Count himself. In Arranged mode, the game is also better balanced—enemies do a lot less damage, which helps prevent the standard pounding-skull-against-wall antics Castlevania provokes.

While it might prove too much of a niche title to appear in the U.S., Chronicle is a must for big fans of the series, so bag it while it's still available.

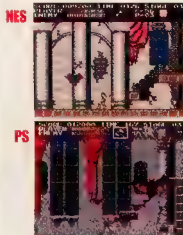


Every chuck-the-controller-across-the-room enemy that defines CV games is represented in Chronicle. From the hopping hunchbacks to the regenerating red skeletons to the infamous Medusa heads, there's plenty to set you back the minute you think you're getting ahead. Find the healing herb (unique to this game), though, and you're golden!



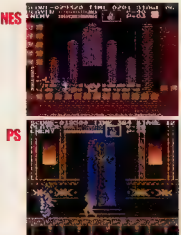
BACK FROM THE DEAD

Recognize these bosses? If you've played Castlevania for the NES, chances are a couple of them look familiar. Chronicle is strongly based on the original, from nearly identical levels to remixed versions of the music. Though a few of these bosses are reprised from the NES game, they look and behave rather differently and are by and large more difficult to defeat. Here's a quick look at how these old haunts have changed.



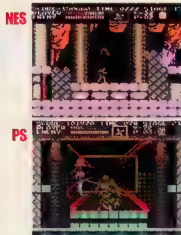
Vampire Bat

For some old gamers, he was the first level boss they'd ever faced. Gone is the silly smirk of the NES's flying mouse. In Chronicle, he's all business.



Medusa

In addition to tossing snakes your way, this Medusa will actually turn you to stone with a blast from her eyes. She's a little trickier than the bodiless original.



Grim Reaper

Blue Oyster Cult obviously never got this far in Castlevania, because the Reaper is one to fear. He acts similarly, but he's not nearly as hard in Chronicle as he was on the NES.



CLASH OF THE TITANS

Back in 1993, Virgin Interactive released *Robocop vs. The Terminator*—a hard-as-nails action platformer—on the Genesis and the SNES. The game rode into stores on a crest of fan hype (it was based on a popular Dark Horse comic series), and was backed by some damn slick marketing: The Nintendo version even shipped in an ultra-cool black-rubber case.

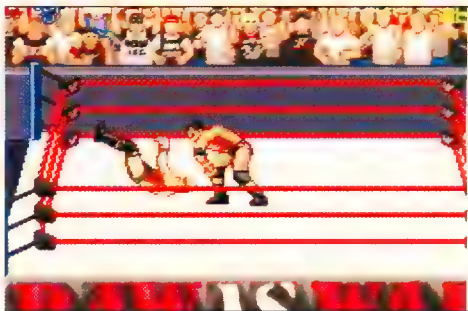
Advance Wars

Many moons ago, before some of our favorite readers were even born, a lonely and misunderstood computer named Joshua asked Matthew Broderick: "Would you like to play a game?" That game, my friends, was a war game. This **September**, **Nintendo** and **Intelligent Systems** invite you and three other enemies to a handheld wargame on your GBA. Like other classic strategy titles, *Advance Wars* is a turn-based affair where you deploy an army of fatties to eliminate the opposition and capture factories. Other factors for success include terrain, reinforcements and funding. Each army also has a unique set of "heroes" to lend plenty of personality to *Advance Wars*. So, shall we play a game?



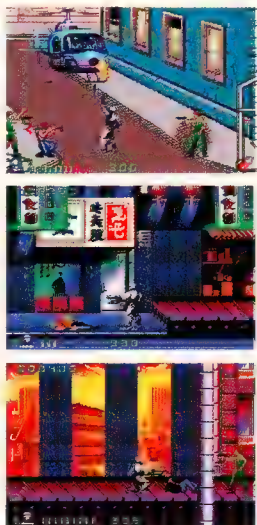
WWF: Road to Wrestlemania

Few would argue with the assertion that there has never been a good WWF Game Boy Color game; the system's limited button configuration and poky processing speed made a mess of titles like *Attitude* and *SmackDown!*. Enter the Game Boy Advance—a unit that has the power to capture the action of the WWF in all its mat-pounding! glory. **THQ** is intent on making the system's first licensed wrestling game totally smoke: It'll feature 24 superstars, four-player link-up capability (very cool), five different game modes and six varied match types. It's coming this **fall**.



Robocop

Few '80s coin-op machines could match the fun or graphical pizzazz of Data East's *Robocop*. It's a classic, and is still routinely sought out by arcade-emulation enthusiasts everywhere. **Titus'** new pocket adventure looks strikingly similar to that groundbreaking release. You control Murphy, a cyborg programmed to serve and protect the citizens of Detroit. His home town is under siege—armed thugs have taken over the street. Their leader, a criminal mastermind (what else would he be?), owns the police department in its entirety. What's an iron-clad law enforcer to do? Kick some criminal ass, of course! Find out this **winter** if you have what it takes to reclaim the city.



Diddy Kong Pilot

Rare's *Diddy Kong Racing* was in a class by itself on the N64; the graphics were beautiful, the level designs were brilliant, and the multiplayer modes were addicting.

Diddy Kong Pilot takes the awesome airplane sequences from that seminal N64 cart and streamlines them to fit the technical confines of the GBA. Given the talent at hand, it's safe to assume that the end product will be capable of giving Nintendo's own *Mario Kart* a run for its money.

Diddy, Donkey, Cranky, Dixie and the *Kremlings* are all on board and ready to race. Sadly, *Banjo* and *Conker*—from the N64 game—didn't make it here. Expect the game to be out before the end of **winter**.



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Mario Kart

If you're over 12, you probably remember **Nintendo's** Mario Kart on the SNES—the game that single-handedly kicked off the mascot kart-racing genre. Now we can finally take all that high-speed shell-tossin' action on the road.

The term "overkill" doesn't even begin to describe the 40 tracks and four-player link modes (both single and multi-cart) planned for Mario Kart Super Circuit.

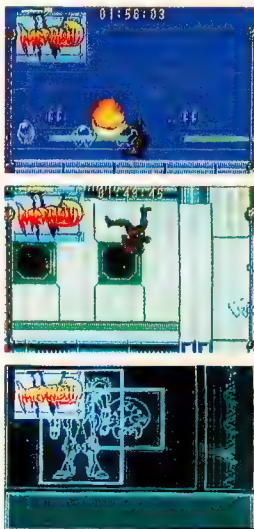
Speaking of the Link Cable, the real meat of the game for most people will be the awesome battle arenas. Racing around a wide-open area trying to burst the balloons of three opponents is incredibly fun.

Despite a Mario Kart purchase being a no-brainer, we'll have a review next month.



Metroid IV

You'd have an easier time wrestling a fresh honey-baked ham from Sally Struthers than getting any info out of **Nintendo** about Samus' upcoming portable adventure: It's still early in development, which means no new details or real screens. But here are a few more grainy pics from the E3 video display and a quick recap: At least part of the game takes place on a large spaceship, and at some point Samus merges with one of the Metroid aliens. Don't worry: Unlike that freaky scene in *Alien Resurrection*, the "merging" is very tastefully portrayed (see bottom screen). This fusion may be the cause of the new powers Samus was sportin', like the ability to stick to and run along walls and ceilings.



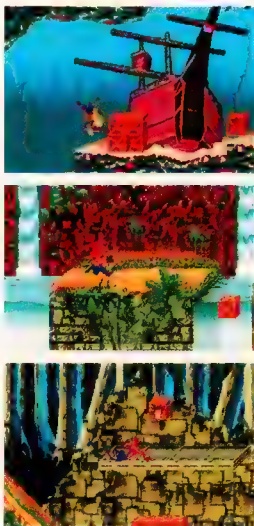
Spyro the Dragon: Season of Ice

It's not Puff the Magic Dragon, nor is it Pete's Dragon. No, this is Spyro the Dragon, and you won't uncover any drug or phallic references here. Developed by **Digital Eclipse** (Rayman GBA), Spyro on the GBA hopes to capture the fast-paced platform gameplay that made it famous on the PS1. Frolck among 12 unique environments and 30 some stages while you rescue frozen, helpless fairies. To complete the GBA experience, **Universal Interactive Studios** has thrown in a handful of mini-games as well as a 3D flying mode. Catch Spyro on the GBA this **September**.

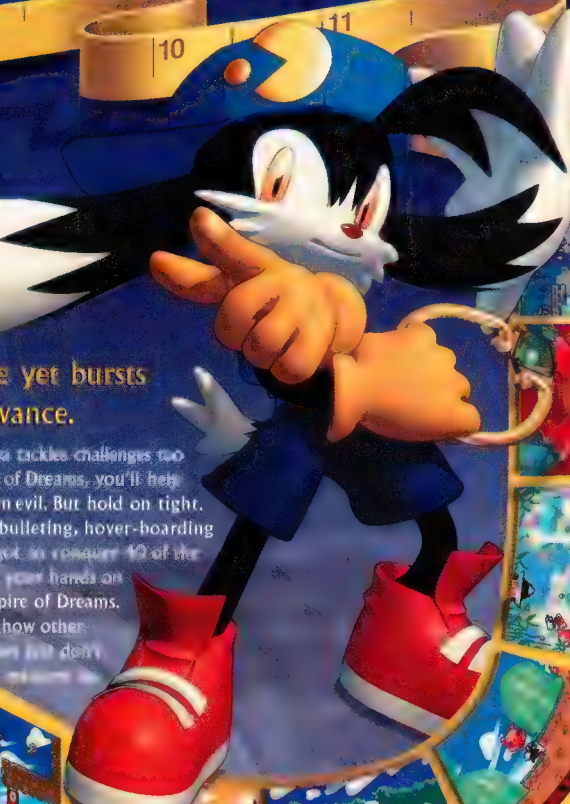




Crash GBA

Crash Bandicoot's magnetism still confounds a few of us here at *EGM*, but the fact remains, this critter is undeniably popular. To ensure a top-notch handheld debut, **Universal Interactive Studios** hooked up with **Vicarious Visions** (THPS2 GBA) to create a Crash game that's not only technically cutting-edge, but also faithful to the series. Here, Crash takes on Dr. Cortex once again to stymie his sinister schemes. Like its beefier PS1 cousins, Crash GBA (working title) will feature side-scrolling action, 3D chases, aquatic exploration, as well as vehicular shenanigans to distract you on your next long roadtrip. It's Crash, it's in 2D, and if this wets your whistle, then you better start blowing **Q1 2002**.



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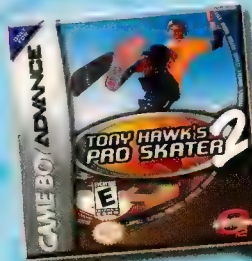


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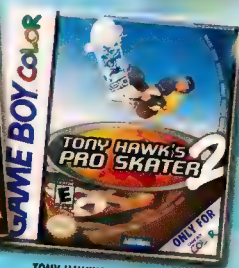
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FINAL

Ready for a new take on
your favorite RPG series?
X marks the spot.

by James Mielke and
Shane Bettenhausen



FANTASY X

It's the video-game equivalent of McDonald's tinkering with its secret sauce or Quentin Tarantino making a movie without the F word: Square is changing the formula of its flagship role-playing franchise. Final Fantasy X—due here in early February 2002 for the PlayStation 2 (it just hit Japan July 19)—comes with a 3D facelift, an overhauled battle system, voice acting for the dialogue, and a long list of other subtle and not-so-subtle changes.

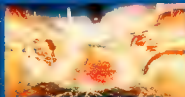
If you think about it, now's really the perfect time for all the tweaking: This game marks the series' debut on the PS2—something we've been jazzed about ever since Square wowed us with FFVIII-themed tech demos back when the system was first announced. And FFX is, after all, the franchise's 10th installment—a double-digit milestone rarely reached in the biz. FFX, the final FF game on the original PlayStation, paid homage to the staples and traditions that had, up until then, defined the series, but it was mostly designed as a farewell note to the Final Fantasies of old. New hardware beckoned, and Square, an industry leader and innovator known for pushing both gameplay and technological boundaries, set their sights on raising the bar once again. Critics would argue that Final Fantasy had been in cruise control for the last few years and that a shakedown was in order. Thankfully, in the case of FFX, a shakedown is what we got.

With this in mind, it was with great anticipation that we invaded Square's Los Angeles offices to be the first gamers in the world to play the completed Japanese version of FFX.



Pssst: The FF movie soundtrack packs a hidden FFX trailer. Here's a scene-by-scene breakdown...

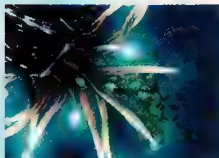
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IN THE BEGINNING

As we've come to expect from every FF installment, all the characters in FFX are brand-new—aside from series regulars the Chocobos, Mooglees and Cid (see Role-Players sidebar). Bearing a subtle Asian stylistic influence, FFX's story pivots around Tidus (pronounced "Tee-duss"), a professional Blitzball player from the land of Zanarkand. His father, Jecht, also a famous Blitzballer, disappeared more than 10 years ago when Tidus was only a boy. Now 17, Tidus is content with being one of the sport's brightest, most visible stars—at least until a creature known as "Sin" appears. The massive squid-like creature wreaks havoc and rains destruction on all in its path.

When Sin suddenly crashes Tidus' Blitzball tournament, we find ourselves in the midst of melee number one. Appearing practically on cue is Auron, a disheveled character who knew Tidus' dad very well. Auron presents Tidus with Jecht's old sword and the duo begins slicing some Sin-spawned monsters. Unlike the old-school random combat of past games, this



Sin-ematic: Tidus and Auron face big bad Sin for the first time.

battle segues neatly from the real-time cinematic conversation between the two characters to the perspective of Tidus, who sees each enemy drone launched by Sin land directly at his feet, amidst rubble and tongues of flame.

Upon dispatching Sin's horde of hideous drones, we see a blinding vortex crack open the sky, white shafts of light slicing through the clouds. As the ground that surrounds them crumbles and is drawn up into the glowing portal, Auron lifts Tidus off his feet by his tunic and utters, "Get ready. It's all about you. This is your story."



DESTINY FORETOLD

Tidus comes to in a world that's cloudy and gray. Clearly this is no longer Zanarkand—this is the world of Spira, a mysterious, archaic land shaped by the religion of Yevon, a theology that forbids technology and machinery. Among the characters you will meet are Yuna, Kimahri, Wakka, Rikku and Lulu—a cadre of Summoners, Warriors and Mages who all have a similar goal: to defeat Sin. Only

summoners can actually stop the creature, though. In fact, Yuna's father, Braska, quelled Sin's last attack 10 years prior. Surprisingly, Yuna knows of Tidus' distant homeland, Zanarkand. Even more intriguing, she knows this because the man who was her father's guardian was named Jecht. Is Jecht still alive? Why was Tidus brought to this Spira? What is Sin?

Without giving too much away, we'll say the group soon witnesses the inevitable reappearance of Sin, whom the locals believe punishes the use of technology. The hapless





Fantasy Force: The Faces of FFX

Tidus

Age: 17
A pro Blitzball player for the Zanarkand Abes, Tidus (pronounced "Tee-duss") has legions of adoring fans, from young children who ask him for Blitzball tips to the giggly teenage girls who pine for his autograph. A cheerful, sun-bleached lad, Tidus is the son of Jecht, a famous Blitzball player who disappeared many years ago.



Yuna

Age: 17
She is the daughter of Braska (the last summoner to defeat Sin 10 years ago), and she realizes her destiny is intertwined with the creature's sudden reappearance. A confident yet impulsive girl, Yuna is willing to sacrifice herself for the greater good. Unsurprisingly, Yuna also has a crush on Tidus.



Auron

Age: 35
A father figure to Tidus since Jecht disappeared, Auron can be found in FFX carrying a wine jug and looking generally untidy. Symbolically, Auron hands Tidus his father's sword during their first mutual encounter with Sin's forces. Auron has deeper ties to Tidus' past (and his eventual future) than he first lets on.



Wakka

Age: 24
He's the captain of the Besaid Village Blitzball team, the Besaid Aurochs, as well as the outspoken member of the group. Wakka's heart is in the right place, but he can be stubborn, to the detriment of the party. One of Yuna's handful of guardians, Wakka also befriends Tidus in a big-brother kind of way.



Lulu

Age: 23
White Lulu may seem too serious at the beginning of the game, this black mage (not all of them wear funny hats) is actually the most down-to-earth, mature member of the group. Ever the voice of reason (and sarcastic to boot), Lulu eventually lightens up later in the adventure. She is also a bodyguard of Luna, even though fellow guardian Wakka gets on her nerves throughout the game. Lulu casts her spells with the help of an assortment of dolls she carries with her.



Rikku

Age: 16
A vibrant girl from Al Bhed, Rikku is devoted to saving Spira from Sin. Unlike the residents of Besaid Village, she ignores the anti-tech traditions of Yevon belief and uses any machinery that can help her defeat the creature. She is traveling the world at the behest of her father, Cid.



Kimahri Ronso

Age: 25
Kimahri is a member of the Ronsons, a race of lion-like beastmen. Short for a Ronso—his kin call him "Little Ronso"—Kimahri leaves his clan to become Yuna's guardian. He is very protective and initially offers a gruff attitude toward Tidus.



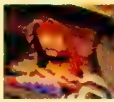
Seymour Guado

Age: 28
A child born of Guado (a race of demi-humans) and human parents, Seymour inherited the position of Maestro of Yevon and chief of the Guado tribe upon his father's death. He is revered and worshipped for treating the citizens of the realm equally, perhaps because of his own mixed heritage.



Jecht

Age: 35
Jecht is a loud but more skeptical version his son, Tidus—to whom he remains a mystery. Tidus eventually learns that Jecht, once a legendary champion in Blitzball, also found his way into the world of Spira.



O'AKA the 23rd

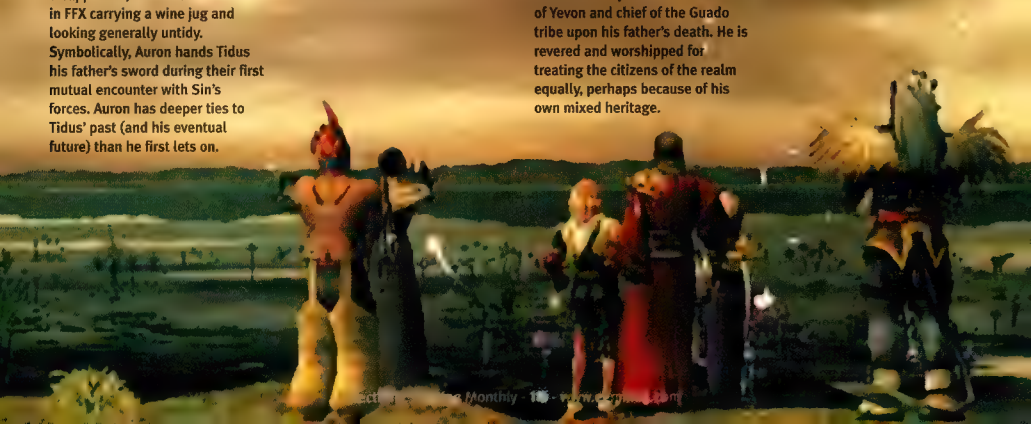
Age: 30
This greedy, 23rd-generation traveling merchant serves as the party's "shop." He always appears to hawk goods but is not wealthy and often asks for donations to rebuild his shop.

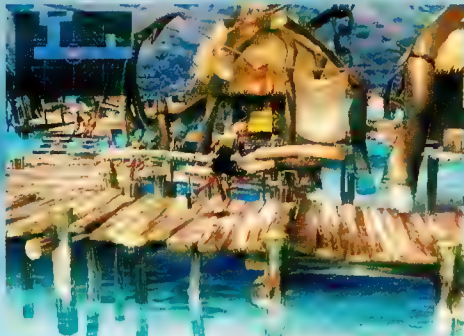
Braska

Age: 35
Braska is Yuna's father, the summoner responsible for bringing peace to the realm 10 years ago. He often appears with Jecht and Auron in flashback sequences.

Cid

Age: 39
The leader of the Al Bhed, Cid is Rikku's father and Yuna's uncle.





denizens of Besaid Village are powerless against Sin's brutal assault, and many lives are lost. After the chaos settles into quiet disaster and Sin is nowhere to be found, we see yet another function of the summoner — to put the souls of the recently perished to rest. It's important to do this lest the dead become disenchanting spirits, resentful of the living, and so Yuna performs the ritual, walking on the crest of a wave.

One interesting facet of the game is that an older, wiser Tidus often intersects with flashback narration, reviewing things that have actually already happened from his perspective in the future. In a small sense, the narration works much like in the flick *The Usual Suspects*, which scenario

writer Kazushige Nojima admits was an influence. Essentially, the game is told as a flashback, as the opening cinema shows Tidus recounting past events. It's a unique and intriguing storytelling device that has been used to great effect in movies but largely ignored in video games until now (although FFXIII made some use of this technique). It's not just the story that's undergoing a metamorphosis though.

FINAL FANTASY X: THE NEW SCHOOL

Over the last 15 years Square has consistently pleased fans with the Final Fantasy series, honing the gameplay with each new release. While the past three PlayStation titles have showcased evolutionary

tweaks, the fundamentals of battle, character growth and exploration have remained fairly static. The time has come, however, for Final Fantasy to graduate to the PlayStation 2, and FFX reveals Square's desire to fundamentally alter the core of the established gameplay by changing the battle system, experience system and the presentation of the game's world.

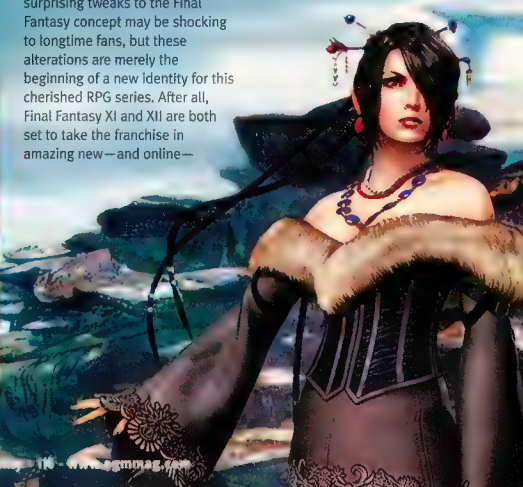
After FFX rediscovered the roots of the series with its old-school charm, traditional fans might require a Phoenix Down when they hear of FFX's unexpected new style. Fortunately, there's nothing to fear, as the changes here are brilliantly implemented. Square's surprising tweaks to the Final Fantasy concept may be shocking to longtime fans, but these alterations are merely the beginning of a new identity for this cherished RPG series. After all, Final Fantasy XI and XII are both set to take the franchise in amazing new — and online —

“I believe it would be fun to create another story with (FFVII's) Aeris and Cloud in a 'gaiden' [side-story] game. But for now, it's more interesting for me to create new stories featuring new characters.”

— Director Yoshinori Kitase



We Are Family: Tidus discovers firsthand why Kimahri's kin call him “Little Ronso.” That can't be good for a man-beast's ego.





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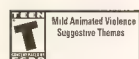
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Lulu's Overdrive attack uses whatever doll she has equipped.

directions in the next few years, so fans need to open their minds to the limitless possibilities of change and embrace the future.

Leading the series' charge onto the PS2 is a creative super-group culled from Square's finest talent—no small surprise considering the magnitude of the project. Fans weaned on the 3D legacies of FFVII and VIII will be glad to know that character designer Tetsuya Nomura (after spending time on the Bouncer and his current project, Kingdom Hearts) is back on board. Nomura, realizing that the super-deformed, memory-saving characters of the past were no



longer necessary on the PS2, designed FFX's cast in the more realistic style of FFVIII. Joining him are Final Fantasy veterans Yoshinori Kitase (director for the FF series since VII), Kazushige Nojima (scenario writer), art director Yusuke Naora, composer Nobuo Uematsu and, perhaps most significantly, Toshiro Tsuchida, the director of Square's Front Mission strategy-RPG series, who was brought in to overhaul the Active Time Battle (ATB) system.

UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE

Modern FF battles took shape when FFIV (FFII in the U.S.) infused standard turn-based fighting with real-time Active Time Battle insanity. ATB added timer bars beside each character in battle, forcing players to keep an eye on them for their next chance to attack. It meant that players couldn't just take a nap or grab a snack while fighting an FF battle anymore, or they'd quickly find monsters feasting on their characters' indecisive entrails. ATB offered unpredictable encounters: Would a character

have time to heal before the boss unleashed a devastating flare attack? (Most of the time, the answer was a resounding "No.") Strategy was often a roll of the dice, and this uncertainty became the norm for FFIV through IX.

Since FFX represented a fresh start for the series, director Yoshinori Kitase wanted new ideas for the somewhat musty battle system. So Square called on Toshiro Tsuchida and gave him one standing order: to rework FF combat from the ground up. "It was the general director, [Hironobu] Sakaguchi, who thought of appointing him," Kitase recalls. "I had Tsuchida design the battle system as he wished, and it was his idea to discontinue the legendary ATB system that had been tradition since halfway through the series." At first,



"If there's ever an opportunity, I'd like to work on a fantasy strategy game. And being that we're able to develop games on a...machine like the PS2, I've come up with many new ideas in my head for Front Mission. If there are any fans hoping for a sequel, I'd love to create one."

—Battle-system director
Toshiro Tsuchida





Role-Players: Final Fantasy's Recurring Crew

Even though each summer's Final Fantasy game is a self-contained story, it's common to find returning characters to lend supporting faces here and again. The enemies like Behemoths, Bombs and Cactuars offer repeat performances, but much more memorable are the friends who stick around: namely, Chocobos, Moogles and Cid. These lovable bit players have been a staple of Square's franchise for over a decade, so here's a quick overview of their contributions to the Final Fantasy canon.

Chocobos

This feisty fowl has evolved into the main Final Fantasy mascot over the past decade, transcending its original role as a packhorse to become the star of its own series of popular titles. Chocobos may look like overgrown chickens, but these feathered friends are powerful allies that have aided the heroes of nearly every Final Fantasy adventure.

First Appearance: Final Fantasy II (Japan)

U.S. gamers never got their hands on this 8-bit sequel to the original blockbuster, but Japanese gamers were party to the introduction of the Chocobos. Players would find them "chillin' in the

Chocobo Forest, eager to carry heroes to their destinations. Chocobos returned in every successive Final Fantasy title (including Final Fantasy Tactics) as birds of different sizes, colors and abilities, lending a wing to the cause.

We've also seen Chocobos pop up in non-FF games, such as the import-only brawler *Tobal 2*. Square even created a design doc for a Chocobo-centric fighting game called *Battle de Chocobo* (the project was scrapped). No matter, Square ultimately placed the Chocobo in the limelight by producing an entire line of games—including *Chocobo's Dungeon 1* and *2* and *Chocobo Racing*—starring the beloved beast.

Moogles

These cuddly critters are the branchid of longtime Final Fantasy artist Yoshitaka Amano (who, just to remind you again, created our limited-edition cover this month). Unlike the lovable Chocobos, Moogles are quite intelligent and maintain a complex society. No one really knows exactly what a Moogle is, but they do appear to be mammalian, winged and highly huggable.



First Appearance:

Final Fantasy III (Japan)
Just as U.S. gamers missed the first appearance of the Chocobo, Western players were also denied the Moogles' debut in this 8-bit classic, in which a group of industrious Moogles operates a magic shop.

Moogies make brief appearances in FFV, FFVI, FFVII and FFIX, but these foppish creatures truly steal the show in FFVI (FFIII in the U.S.). During one special encounter, the player has the opportunity to control a massive team of Moogles in a strategic multi-party battle. One of these brave souls, Mog, joins the team for the remainder of the quest.

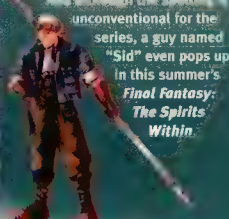
Moogies were also seen in *Final Fantasy Adventure* (Game Boy) and *Secret of Mana* (Super NES)—both of which are odd roles, since the Final Fantasy universe rarely crosses over into other titles. (Final Fantasy Adventure isn't really an FF game at all, but rather the predecessor to *Secret of Mana*.)

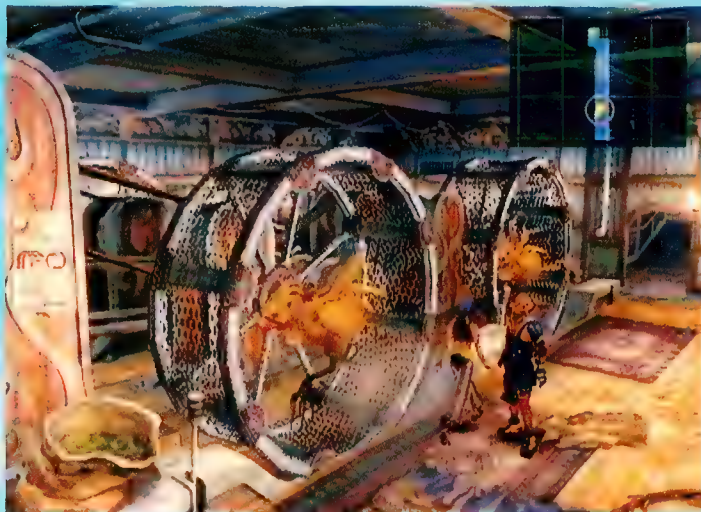
Cid

Perhaps the strangest of these supporting roles is that of Cid. Nearly every Final Fantasy game features either a party member or a helpful non-player character named Cid. Each Cid is totally unrelated to his previous namesakes, yet every successive FF title includes a character by this name. Most avid FF gamers have a favorite Cid, and it's often a toss-up between the sailor-mouthed Cid Highwind from FFVII or the tragic inventor from FFVI who strangely resembles a piece of candy corn.



And through the spellbook of unconventional for the series, a guy named "Sid" even pops up in this summer's *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*.





Tsuchida was a tad apprehensive about tinkering with the well-tooled battle engine, but soon afterward he irrevocably changed the game, discarding the ATB system altogether. "The reason why I used a system that didn't reflect Active Time Battle was to show how thinking through and tackling tasks can be an enjoyable experience," Tsuchida says, "and I wanted to convey this in an uncomplicated manner. I think the Final Fantasy RPGs exhibit highly strategic battles using various

abilities and magic. I simply restructured those elements to create the battle system for FFX. So although strategic elements have been incorporated, I believe fans of the series will be able to easily adapt to the system."

In FFX's battles, all action ceases between turns. During these breaks, a chart in the upper-right corner of the screen displays the precise sequence of character and enemy turns. This allows for perfectly planned strategy in every encounter, and these between-turn breaks also allow the player to use the "Interchange System." For the first time ever in any Final Fantasy, party members can be easily

switched into and out of the meleé instantly. For example, if the magician-heavy party entering a battle is ill-equipped to face a group of foes, you can quickly call in a new squad of brute-force brawlers to replace their comrades. In other words, if the current team isn't up to snuff, get 'em out of there. Think of Interchange as a quick-change basketball substitution, minus the time-outs.

Characters not switched in the fray still receive experience for a

battle, but it's actually beneficial to use as many different characters as possible as each added character yields more total experience for the party. "To make the most of the Interchange system during battle," Tsuchida tells us, "the characters have been designed to be more unique and have more specific abilities. Characters can be interchanged numerous times during a single battle, so it is no longer necessary to prepare and adjust the characters in advance."

While the strategy of the battle engine has been drastically retooled, the actual actions of the characters remain true to previous games. Commands like Attack, Magic and Item should be instantly familiar. Character classes are also drawn from previous Final Fantasy games, as FFX features modern



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equivalents of Knight, Black Wizard, Thief, Summoner, Dragon, Blue Wizard, and Magical Swordsman (whom longtime fans will remember from FFX) among the party members. Just don't expect Lulu to don a Vivi-style pointy hat or Yuna to sport a freakish horn on her forehead. Tetsuya Nomura's realistic characters are the epitome of funky tropical style, not old-school super-deformed designs.

Two new battle functions do appear: Overkill and Overdrive. Overkill damage occurs when the finishing blow to a beastie delivers far more damage than its remaining Hit Points. Such attacks result in greater rewards when you collect the spoils after a fight, so it's a good idea to smash each foe into oblivion with your strongest attacks. Overdrive, on the other

hand, is basically the same Limit Break/Trance State razmatazz featured in the last few Final Fantasy titles, in which your characters could unleash super attacks when they took enough damage. Each character has a unique set of Overdrive abilities to choose from, and everyone's skills are unique. Tidus busts out insanely powerful sword attacks, Lulu spews multiple simultaneous spells, Kimahri uses acquired enemy skills, and Auron unleashes some Zell-style physical blitz combos. Each character's Overdrive attack is even performed differently control-wise. For example, Tidus has an NBA Live-like free-throw meter where you need an accurately timed button press to pull off your attack, while Lulu's Overdrive demands speedy twirling of the left analog stick.

Summoned monsters have undergone a major transformation in FFX: Once called forth, they now join the battle as controllable characters. When Yuna brings one of these beasts into the fray, it can both attack foes and be attacked. Of course, these deities are still able to unleash blazing special attacks as in previous games, but now those F/X firestorms are the Overdrive attacks of the

summoned creatures. Because of the increased complexity of the summoning system, the overall number of possible summoned creatures is lower. To master new summon magic, Yuna must visit various temples located throughout the world.

SPHERE EFFECT

The traditional experience-point system also gets a kick in the pants in FFX, as Tsuchida has fused experience and abilities together to form the "Sphere Table," a special visual aid used when building up your characters. After each battle, the party finds a number of different Spheres among the Gil and Items. Four types of Spheres exist: Power, Magic, Ability and Speed Spheres. These globes can be spent on the Sphere Table to

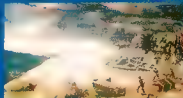


"It's hard to pick only one, but I really like Tidus, and Red XIII from FFXVII."

—Character designer Tetsuya Nomura, when asked which character he created for Square was his favorite

No more prerendered backdrops: FFX's 3D world is rendered on the fly, which makes for slick segues between cinematics and battles.





BLITZBALL BASICS

In both Tidus' homeland of Zanarkand and the land of Spira (where the majority of FFX takes place), Blitzball is the sport of kings. It doubles as both entertainment and a spiritual gathering; hence, the sport's greatest athletes are also society's heroes. A combination of rugby and water polo, Blitzball takes place entirely underwater (the athletes can hold their breath for more than 40 minutes). It's a furiously fast, strategic game, but RPG gamers unaccustomed to breakneck sports action should fear not—although you move in real time, actions such as shooting, passing and blocking are turn-based. Players should try to master this novel sport quickly, as you can jump into a Blitzball competition at every save point. So take a sec to study these rules.



The OFFENSE:

Each team has five players. As you move around the "field," your teammates will shift positions accordingly. You can switch to automatic movement, so you only have to worry about shooting, passing, etc. Each player has a preset amount of HP (basically, movement points) to use. Any movement ("dribbling") costs HP, as does passing (3 HP) and shooting (10 HP). Players not in control of the ball regain HP over time. Each player has a preset amount of PS (pass strength) to use. By keeping an eye on your PS you can gauge whether a pass will be successful. For example, if your PS is lower than the PS needed to reach your teammate, the pass will fail and can be

intercepted by the opposing team. The ST (shoot) meter also has a numeric value (see a pattern forming?). It gets lower as you approach the goal. You need at least 10 ST to shoot the ball. When you attempt to shoot, the goalie's defensive stats appear. Your ST needs to be higher than the goalie's CA (catch power). You can shoot the ball even if you don't have enough HP, but your chances of success decrease proportionately. For example, if a shot costs 10 HP and you only have 5 HP, you only have a 50 percent chance of scoring the goal. Master players like Wakka have special shots that cost extra points to deliver, but the payoff is often worth the effort when a blazing ball hits the goal.



The DEFENSE:

A defensive player's CU (cut power) negates the offense's PS. If a player on defense has a CU score equal to or greater than the passing player's Pass Strength, the defender will intercept the ball. Defenders must watch out for the Breakthrough—a move used by players on offense when they're surrounded by two or more defenders. Using a Breakthrough move will allow the offense to avoid one of the defenders (usually the defensive player with the highest CU). This increases the offense's chances of a successful pass, but it costs HP, so you can't abuse this move.

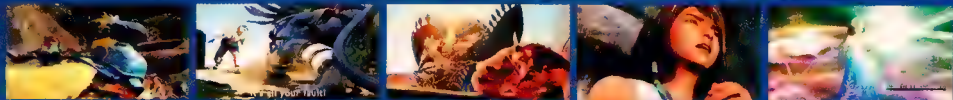
The final defensive tactic is the Capture. At select times you can "capture" an opponent's special move, similar to stealing items or a spell, and use it against them later.



The Breakthrough move was made for situations like this one, where the offensive player is surrounded.



Troubled waters: Wakka's special move irks the defense.



increase statistics like HP and MP, learn new spells and master new abilities. The actual Sphere Table is a giant physical representation of every spell, ability and bonus available in the game, and each party member begins in a distinct place on the game-board-like table. Each stop on the Sphere Table is linked to other spots, creating a complex network of interconnected abilities to master. Since everything is connected, certain points must be passed in order to reach others. Therefore, you cannot learn Firega without first mastering Fire and Filera.



The Sphere Table in action.

When looking at the Sphere Table, it's possible to zoom the camera out and view the relative positions of all party members on the complete board for a quick look at how the party is progressing.

Although this ability/experience system lets you customize characters to your liking, each party member is intrinsically unique and excels at specific skills. For example, Wakka is a very physical character, so his starting position on the Sphere Table is near attack bonuses, HP increases and special attacks. However,



Wakka can eventually learn Black Magic if you're adamant about moving his position on the table toward the magic side. Such an endeavor would take a lot of effort, and the magic-savvy Wakka wouldn't be quite as physically strong as an average Wakka, but it can be done if you're persistent.

MAP QUEST

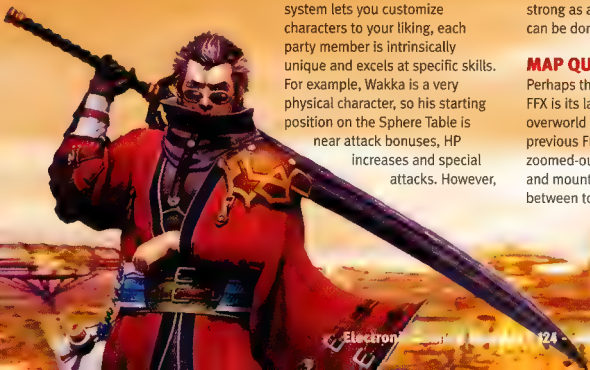
Perhaps the biggest new quirk in FFX is its lack of a traditional overworld field map. While every previous FF game jumped to a zoomed-out world of lush plains and mountains when you moved between towns and dungeons,



"One day, one of our staff let me listen to *Miss you Amami*, Rikki's album released on an indie label. The album is a masterpiece, and her voice is amazing. It would be nice if more of this type of remarkable Japanese music were released overseas."

—Music composer Nobuo Uematsu, when asked why he picked Japanese indie singer Rikki to perform FFX's love theme

everything in FFX is viewed from the same close-up perspective—the scale of the terrain doesn't change to reveal more of the world when you leave town. Instead, to reach a new area, the party must traverse a large forest or desert on foot. Fortunately, the world is comprised of many small islands, so the hiking won't cripple the party—or your fingers on the joystick. And when you move between islands, a parchment map shows the party's movement via a dotted line. The lack of a traditional overworld may seem unsettling at first, but the actual effect of having a continuous world is quite realistic. After all, isn't a forest more imposing when the hero's





head isn't peeking out of it on a giant map?

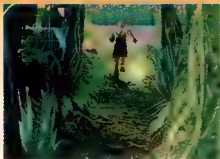
Other enhancements on the technical side of things include the game filling an entire DVD (goodbye four-disc sets). FFX is also compatible with Sony's upcoming hard drive, which will be used as a fast cache to reduce loading times.

Overall, FFX is a game that amazes on multiple levels. The graphics immediately catch your eye, with facial geometry and animation surpassing even the character models in Sega's Shenmue for the Dreamcast. Polygon counts go through the roof—environments are expansive, elaborately decorated scads of characters and bystanders populate the screen, and textures are rich in detail and color. Higher resolutions, higher framerates and seamless transitions between the game engine and CG cutscenes are all part of the package. The cinemas, it should be noted, now run at a full 30 frames per second, which is television-standard. So now more than ever, an FF game is like watching a movie, in full DVD



The new overworld map replaces the 3D field maps of past FFs.

quality, on your TV screen. Complementing this is 5.1 surround sound that, on the right home audio system, will help your ears keep pace with your eyes. Even though the soundtrack features fewer than the typical 100 tunes found in earlier Final Fantasies, FFX will still include around 70 new tracks. Nobuo Uematsu's compositions have expanded stylistically to include some hard-rock tracks and even a house-music rendition of the "Prelude" theme. "It's basically like changing clothes," Uematsu says when we ask about his constant reinvention of familiar themes. "I try to arrange the composition differently each time



while preserving the basic melody line." Head to our Web site, www.egmmag.com, to hear a few audio clips from FFX's soundtrack.

Music isn't the only aural effect to have an impact on FFX. For the first time in a Final Fantasy, Square employed voice actors to augment the storytelling package. Spoken dialog truly ramps up the Final Fantasy cinematic experience, as conversations between characters convey emotion and narrative in ways that written text never could. Work has already begun on the English localization of FFX's dialogue, which is no small task considering that the game's script is 10 times as large as the average Hollywood flick.

Overall, the drastic changes to the battle engine, experience

and presentation combine to make FFX's gameplay a fresh experience for RPG fans. Is it impressive? You bet. Is it the leap Square needs to keep the Final Fantasy brand vital, as well as secure in its role as the franchise against which all RPGs are measured? Most definitely.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE...

Log on to www.egmmag.com for extended coverage of FFX. In addition to offering audio samplings from the game's soundtrack, we're teaming up with TokyoPop for a contest in which you can win a package of the Chrono Trigger, Final Fantasy IV and Final Fantasy IX soundtracks—all signed by Uematsu himself. You'll also find more exclusive shots of the game, as well as full transcripts of our interviews with everyone on the FFX team—including character designer Tetsuya Nomura, director Yoshinori Kitase and artist Yoshitaka Amano. You can even watch the FFX trailer that we've run across the top of the feature. See you online. 🎮



Yoshitaka Amano

Cover Story

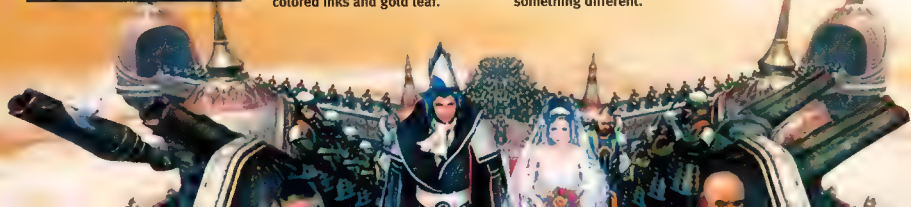


As some lucky readers have already noticed, a limited number of *EGMs* feature a special cover painted exclusively for us by longtime Final Fantasy collaborator Yoshitaka Amano. Working out of his Soho studio in New York City, the prolific artist—who has designed characters for everything from Final Fantasy to the anime classic *Vampire Hunter D*—started our piece in pencil, then finished it with acrylic paint, colored inks and gold leaf.

As for the creative process behind this once-in-a-lifetime piece of art, Amano tells us, "I did many sketches, but most importantly, I tried to portray how Tidus is fighting for Yuna, protecting her.... I also wanted to show how he was hurt and weary. I ripped his clothes a bit. With computer graphics, you can see the clothes that he wears, but it's difficult to convey a tired feeling. With painting, I can show something different."



Our cover art at an early stage. If the front of this mag features the finished image, congrats—you have a limited-edition issue!



OLD SCHOOL



STILL SUPER AFTER

SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM



SELECT

START

The Super Nintendo Turns 10

Gone but not forgotten, the Super NES celebrates its first decade of service this month. So let's slap on the system's big purple power button and relive those 16-bit memories...

Believe it or don't, in the days before Nintendo 64, the cartridge format wasn't considered evil, Square and Nintendo were best buddies, and now-blasé effects such as scaling and rotation were considered state-of-the-art. Once upon that time—10 years ago this month, to be exact—Nintendo was prepping its Super NES (Nintendo Entertainment System) for U.S. release. Many *EGM* editors consider that system to be the best console of all time, so, with the Nov. 5 launch of Nintendo's GameCube looming, we figured it's high time for a fond look back at the Super NES, its games, its contributions to our hobby, and how its neck-and-neck race with Sega's Genesis turned into the bloodiest console brawl this industry's ever seen.

The Super NES launched in late August 1991, 10 months after it arrived in Japan as the Super Famicom. Packed with two controllers and the amazing Super Mario World, the \$200 Super NES seemed poised for success. Third-party support was strong, with classics like *Act Raiser*, *Final Fight*, *Super Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* and *Final Fantasy II* all released within a month or two of launch. And Nintendo's own properties—namely *F-Zero* and *PilotWings*—certainly didn't hurt.

The system packed a punch, too. "It could generate many more colors than the NES," says Satoru Iwata, Nintendo Corporate Limited's director and general manager of corporate planning, "and for the first time, the hardware did some of the work that had previously been

ALL THESE YEARS

By John Ricciardi



DIDJA KNOW?

The Super NES was originally going to be made into an add-on for the old NES in the U.S. to preserve Nintendo's massive 8-bit userbase and allow for backward compatibility. The code name for the add-on was NES-SFX. Obviously, this plan was eventually scrapped.

THE TOP 10 BEST-SELLING SUPER NES GAMES* WORLDWIDE

1. Super Mario World (20.6 million)
2. Super Mario All-Stars (10.5 million)
3. Donkey Kong Country (9.3 million)
4. Super Mario Kart (8.7 million)
5. Donkey Kong Country 2: Diddy's Kong Quest (5.1 million)
6. The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past (4.6 million)
7. Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island (4.1 million)
8. Donkey Kong Country 3: Dixie Kong's Double Trouble (3.5 million)
9. Killer Instinct (3.2 million)
10. Star Fox (2.9 million)

* First-party games only

done by the software." The console's mega-hyped "Mode 7" feature, for instance, allowed scaling and rotation of a game's background image, which in the hands of capable developers made for gee-whiz effects. "I was astonished by the overwhelming leap of the Super NES' capabilities over existing consoles," says Masato Maegawa, president of Treasure, the Konami expatriates behind Super Castlevania IV. Just as impressive was the sound chip, designed by Sony. "Super NES was the first console that had more than one ADPCM [Adaptive Differential Pulse Code Modulation] channel," says Ancient Corp.'s Yuzo Koshiro, who's famous for composing the music in Act Raiser, Revenge of Shinobi, Streets of Rage and Shenmue, among other games. "Its sound

chip could achieve even natural orchestral sound, like the score I made for Act Raiser." The Super NES did suffer growing pains—namely, slowdown in the first batch of games because of its sluggish CPU—but developers quickly worked out the console's kinks.

While Nintendo was already in cruise control in Japan, where the Super Famicom completely dominated right out of the gate, things were not going to be so easy in the States. Sega was already off to a successful yearlong head start with the Genesis, and their aggressive marketing coupled with some huge exclusives (like the original Madden and NHL games) meant Sega's momentum would be tough to break. The battle that took place in the months and years to come was

brutal, and though the Super NES eventually won out in the end, it was us—the gamers—who turned out to be the real victors.

The Super NES and Genesis were dead even for quite a while, each with a diverse library of solid titles and a smattering of exclusives that kept each system worthwhile in spite of its competitor. If you liked sports titles or shooters, you probably leaned toward Genesis. If you went into RPGs or platformers, the Super NES was the way to go. Madden? Sega. Final Fantasy? Nintendo. It was simple. But in the early '90s, one genre was booming in the arcades—fighting games—and at the time, nobody realized just how much of an impact they'd have on the home market until summer 1992. That's when the most popular fighting game of them all, Capcom's Street Fighter II, landed exclusively on the Super NES (it didn't hit Genesis until fall 1993).

Street Fighter II kicked off the fighting-game craze on the consoles just as it did in the arcades, and in 1993, Mortal Kombat hit home (albeit with toned-down gore in the Super NES version), along with Street Fighter II Turbo, both of which were big sellers. A year later, an uncensored Mortal Kombat II hit the Super NES, which helped propel Nintendo ahead in the battle against Genesis. At the 1994 Summer Consumer Electronics Show, Nintendo unveiled Donkey Kong Country, whose "Advanced Computer Modeling" graphics wowed the crowds. The game went on to sell more than 9 million copies worldwide, cementing Nintendo's lead and paving the way for two hit sequels.

The Super NES continued to dominate in its final years, while Sega went on a consumer-unfriendly peripheral-releasing tirade that gave birth to the Sega CD and 32X before the surprise release of Saturn in May 1995. Meanwhile, Super NES gamers enjoyed some of the system's best games yet, including Yoshi's Island, Super Mario RPG, Chrono Trigger, Tetris Attack and Kirby's Dream Land 3. The flow of software finally dwindled to nothing at the end of 1997, well after the system began to show its age. "Because of the software growing bigger and developers having to program Super NES games in



COMPLETE CONTROL...

Nintendo's controllers have always been innovative—this is the company that invented the D-pad. With the Super NES came two extra face buttons and a key feature: the top-mounted L and R shoulder buttons, which added functionality without crowding the layout. They've been copied many times since. "It was the first pad I thought was better than a joystick for some kinds of games," says Takayuki Hirono, main programmer of the Super NES shooter Space MegaForce.

Assembly language," Iwata says, "it became harder and harder to induce the real charms of the powerful hardware at the end of its life cycle." Nevertheless, Super NES games hit Japan right up until last year, mostly in the form of rereleases and special editions, thanks to Nintendo's unique Japanese game-download service called Nintendo Power (not to be confused with the U.S. magazine of the same name).

In the end we saw more than 700 Super NES games (1,400 in Japan), and over 23 million pieces of hardware sold in the U.S. alone (with 49 million sold worldwide). While it may not have enjoyed the success of the original NES, it still left its mark in the industry as a system that took 2D gaming to new levels. And let's not forget the best thing to happen to Super NES fans: Game Boy Advance, widely considered the handheld spiritual successor to the 16-bit wonder. With lots of souped-up Super NES ports on the way, as well as plenty of new games, there's really no good excuse for you not to own one of these little gems. The Super NES may be gone, but as the saying goes, its soul still burns...

EGM ON THE SUPER NINTENDO...

Nintendo's classic 16-bit system may be celebrating its 10th anniversary this month, but EGM has been around even longer, and we were there to introduce the system to the world back in 1989, in our second issue. To wit, here's what we had to say about the Super NES way back when...

"The Super NES has by far the most impressive specs of any piece of consumer video game hardware."

"While I personally hold a lot of hope for the Super NES, it will have to overcome its major slowdown problems. The graphics are nice, but where are all the great games?"

"The Super NES is a great system. It's the best system on the market. It's the best system on the market. It's the best system on the market."

"It has, by far, the best library of grade AAA titles on the market. Nothing on the 32- or 64-bit systems compares to the richness and quality of games on the Super NES."

"The Super NES is a great system. It's the best system on the market. It's the best system on the market. It's the best system on the market."

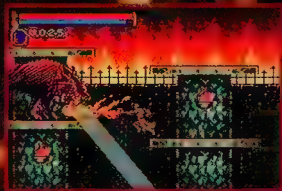


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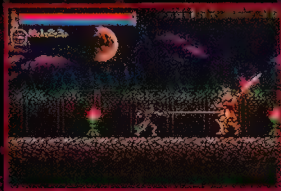
Castlevania

Circle of the Moon

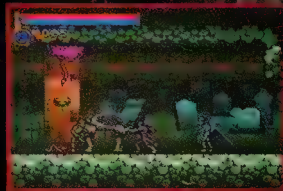
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THE 10 GREATEST SUPER NES GAMES

After a lot of shouting, crying and—almost—a little gunplay, the *EGM* editors assembled this list of their favorite Super NES classics. Trust us—all these titles are as enjoyable and playable today as when they were first released.



10. **Contra III: The Alien Wars** (Konami, 1992)
One of the finest side-scrolling action games ever to grace any console, with intense two-player action, awesome Mode 7 effects, killer music and insane bosses. We're still waiting for a worthy sequel.



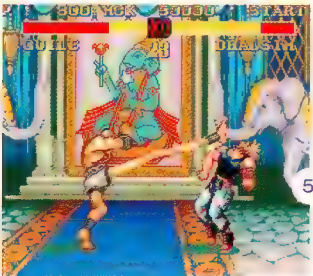
9. **Chrono Trigger** (Square, 1995)
This "Dream Project" between the creators of Final Fantasy and Dragon Warrior was just re-released for the PlayStation as one half of Final Fantasy Chronicles. Why not go find out for yourself why it's so great?



8. **Tetris Attack** (Nintendo, 1996)
Hands-down the best two-player puzzle game ever made. TA was recently Poké-fied for both the N64 (Pokémon Puzzle League) and the GBC (Pokémon Puzzle Challenge). Some of us still prefer the Super NES original.



7. **Super Castlevania IV** (Konami, 1992)
Developed by the team at Konami that went on to become Treasure, this classic featured huge character sprites, rotating corridors, loads of parallax and even an eight-way whip for ol' Simon Belmont.



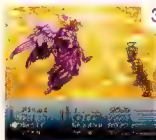
6. **Super Mario World 2: Yoshi's Island** (Nintendo, 1995)
Another Super NES classic that's on the way for the Game Boy Advance, Yoshi's Island combined beautiful Super FX2-chip-enhanced visuals with truly genre-defining gameplay. It's easily one of the best platformers of all time.



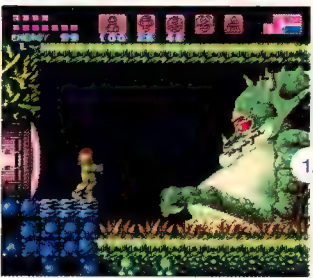
5. **Street Fighter II Turbo: Hyper Fighting** (Capcom, 1993)
Street Fighter II was the game that turned the tides in the Super NES vs. Genesis war. Turbo helped boost Nintendo even more so, with a faster engine, more moves and characters, and rock-solid gameplay.



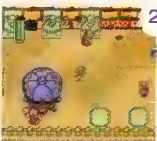
4. **Super Mario World** (Nintendo, 1991)
With 96 levels of classic Mario action, SMW was (and is) a Mario fan's dream come true. If you missed it the first time, watch for the recently announced GBA remake due sometime next year.



3. **Final Fantasy III** (Square, 1994)
The best RPG on a system known for great RPGs, FFIII—the last "old-school" FF—was a testament to the Super NES' graphics and audio capabilities. Also available in FF Anthology for the PS1 (as FFVI).



1. **Super Metroid** (Nintendo, 1994)
"The last Metroid is in captivity. The galaxy is at peace." So begins the most incredible side-scrolling action/adventure ever to grace a console. Strong words? Nah. Amazing graphics, amazing gameplay, amazing bosses, heck, even amazing music—it's all here. Nintendo hit the bull's eye with Metroid 3, and we're praying that they can do it again with both Metroid 4 (GBA) and Metroid Prime (GameCube).



2. **The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past** (Nintendo, 1992)
Link's finest hour? We think so. The Super NES brought the land of Hyrule (and its dark counterpart) to life, with a massive quest spanning two huge worlds and some of the most incredible dungeons ever designed.

HONORABLE MENTION: Super Mario All-Stars (Nintendo, 1993)

Before you sick the Hammer Brothers on us for not including this incredible cart, bear in mind that we decided to exclude remakes and compilation titles (such as Tetris & Dr. Mario, Ninja Gaiden Trilogy, etc.). But if we did allow compilations, you better believe All-Stars—with its enhanced remakes of Super Mario Bros. 1 through 3 and Japan's Mario 2: The Lost Levels—would nab the numero-uno spot.

THE MANY FACES OF SUPER NES

Nintendo's 16-bitter has evolved quite a bit over the years, especially in Japan. Take a look at some of the more popular pieces of hardware that came to be (or in the case of the SNES CD, not to be):



Prototype Super Famicom

This early SFC prototype featured smaller controller ports, a headphone jack and volume knob, a mysterious "Famicom" button on the console, and A and D buttons, which were later renamed X and Y.



Super Famicom

The Japanese Super Famicom boasts a much sexier design than its ugly-ducking U.S. counterpart. Plus, the buttons on the controller are color-coded. Our lucky gamer compadres in Europe got this design as well.



Super NES

Following in the footsteps of the NES, Nintendo decided to redesign the Super Famicom before releasing it in the States, stripping it of all its visual appeal in the process. But hey, she's got a great personality...



Redesigned Super NES

This smaller, value-priced SNES came at the end of the system's life cycle. In exchange for this "value," gamers had to give up S-Video and RGB support, which to some (like us), was a bit tough to swallow.



Satellaview

Satellaview was a Japan-only add-on for the SFC which allowed gamers to download exclusive games and content (like a remake of NES Zelda and a sequel to F-Zero, among others) over a broadcast satellite network. Despite being unique and interesting, the service never really took off.



Super NES CD-ROM

After "breaking up" with Sony, Nintendo settled on this design for their 32-bit "ND Drive" CD-ROM add-on for the Super NES, which was put together in conjunction with Philips (the CD-i people). Sadly, the project was eventually scrapped, and Nintendo has remained CD-free even to this day.



Sharp SF1

Hoping to capitalize on the success of their Twin Famicom—a combo Famicom (NES) and Famicom Disk Drive—Sharp released the SF1, an S-Video-ready television with a built-in Super Famicom. An impractical device, it quickly fell into obscurity.



PERIPHERAL VISION

Like any successful system, the Super NES was host to its fair share of first- and third-party peripherals, some good, some bad, some downright ridiculous (Batter Up!, the motion-sensor baseball bat controller, takes the cake). Behold, a hit list of popular gizmos...

Super Scope

Nintendo's gigantic, awkward scope gun worked surprisingly well but suffered from two fatal flaws: First, you couldn't use two at once (meaning no two-player action), and second, there were hardly any games released for it.



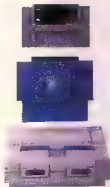
Super Game Boy

One of the coolest peripherals ever, the Super Game Boy adapter allowed you to play your Game Boy games on the Super NES, and with a limited color palette to boot. It's a crime there was no first-party N64 version.



Game Genie

Long before there was GameShark there was Galoob's Game Genie. It worked much like the 'Shark, except that you could only input five codes on any one game. This thing was outrageously popular back in the day.



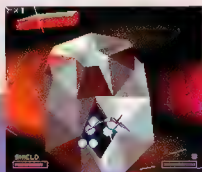
XBAND Modem

This awesome peripheral (available for Genesis first) was way ahead of its time. XBAND allowed gamers to direct-dial each other and play online for a monthly fee. Sadly, despite support for big games like Super Street Fighter II, Mortal Kombat II and NBA Jam T.E., the service never took off.



Super NES Mouse

This thing came bundled with Mario Paint, a strangely addictive PC Paint ripoff with limited options and hardly any space to save drawings or music (you could create basic music tracks in addition to your pictures). More than 15 games supported the Mouse, but Mario Paint was really the only one worth owning.



GARAGE,

With their big dreams and tenacious spirit, independent developers are the garage bands of the game industry. We follow one such group through the highs and lows of do-it-yourself game design, culminating with their all-or-nothing bid to win last March's Independent Games Festival competition. Want to get into game design? You must read this article.

by David Kushner

This is when the battle begins," Martin Snyder says as he demos his game at the Game Developers Conference, the annual shindig for game makers in Silicon Valley. A portly guy in a shirt that reads "Caution, 1 Byte" is eyeing Snyder's dream project, *Strifeshadow*, a real-time strategy game that, at the moment, is featuring a little melee action between the skeletal slashers and the gremlin grenadiers.

As Snyder works the controls, he's pretty indistinguishable from the rest of the game developers here this weekend. He's got the bloodshot eyes, the five-o'clock shadow and the easy-going laugh that punctuates the action on screen. But while he fits in with the crowd, Snyder and his team, called *Ethermoon*, aren't totally "in" quite yet.

They're independent game developers, six young, passionate gamers from around the world who've been creating their own elaborate title, completely from scratch, with the hopes of making it big—all without the financial support of a deep-pocketed publisher. *Ethermoon* epitomizes the high-tech dreams and hardcore work ethic that imbue the indie-gamer scene. If this were the music biz, they'd be the garage band recording their own album on their own dime. And in the gaming biz, those who want to rock must do whatever it takes to get there.

For *Ethermoon*, this means coming out here



The Ethermoon Men

Fred Wilson
writer

Joel Stuedter
artist

Joe Poppa
lead 3D artist

Rob Chilcott
musician/sound editor

Tom Cadwell
lead designer

Martin Snyder
president

INK.

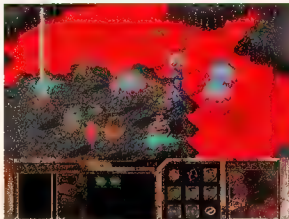


to San Jose to compete in the third annual Independent Games Festival, a contest held in conjunction with the main GDC each year. This time around, to developers are bucking for a top prize of \$10,000 cash and, more importantly, the cachet of being the hot upstart talent in an increasingly competitive industry. If Ethermoon score, they might just fulfill their dream of being like their heroes, id Software: the iconoclastic developers of Doom and Quake who rose from the swamps of Louisiana to create some of the best-selling games of all time.

"What it all comes down to is we want to make games," says Snyder, after the portly guy wanders off for some free chow. "To be honest, we're not even thinking about the future now. We don't have time. We're putting every ounce of our energy into just getting our game done." For indie game developers, the most important thing isn't just dreams, he says. It's stamina.

Independent's Day

These are tough times for anyone to break into the business, let alone self-funded newbies. During the game developers convention, news hit that Electronic Arts had laid off a large chunk of employees,



Ethermoon's Strifeshadow is "the kind of game we wanted to play," says Snyder.

including those behind the seemingly infallible Ultima Online 2 sequel. Not long before, Sega announced that it was closing shop on the Dreamcast. The cover of *Develop*, a trade magazine for game makers, put the state of affairs most succinctly: "Why the Game Developer Lottery Rarely Pays" read the cover; over the words was a picture of a hand with its middle finger extended.

This certainly wasn't a time when developers were expecting to get the finger. Au contraire, this is still supposed to be the "it" year for gamers—players and developers alike. PlayStation 2, after a rocky start, is building a head of steam. Xbox and

GameCube are on the way. Every time you turn around you hear how Americans are spending more cash on video and computer games than they spend on going to the movies. So what's the problem?

In part, it's just a matter of plain old maturation. "Company consolidation will continue," says industry analyst Jeremy Schwartz of Forrester Research. "This means it's getting tougher for small development groups to maintain independence." The more competitive the market, the more competitive the games. As a result, game makers are pumping more and more cash into production. The cost of a typical game now is as much as a small Hollywood film. According to publishers and developers, the average budget for console games ranges between \$1 million and \$5 million.

And those costs won't be falling anytime soon, says Doug Lowenstein, president of the Interactive Digital Software Association, the trade organization that represents the major publishers in the industry. "It's getting much harder to be independent these days," Lowenstein says. "The cost of producing a product is so high, the time required is so long, you either have to be very wealthy or have a development deal with a publisher. That's the only source of funding. Getting a



Living the dream: You can't talk about independent developers without mentioning indie king John Carmack, programmer of Doom and Quake—the series that put upstart id Software on the map. He claims his biggest competition isn't the mega companies; it's the guys working out of their basements.



deal with a publisher is not impossible, certainly, but it's not going to be easy."

To make things even more challenging, aspiring console game makers are pretty much locked out of the creative world. To make a game for Sony, Nintendo or Microsoft, gamers need development kits: pricey machines that let them code and create for the designated consoles. These setups can cost tens of thousands of dollars, first off, and, second, they have to be doled out by the parent companies based on elaborate licensing deals. In other words, aspiring developers have to start in the one truly open arena: making their products on personal computers, then pawing them off to console developers down the road.

For these reasons, plenty of aspiring game makers simply go the traditional route: submitting game demos, résumés and obsequious cover letters to land a job on an established development team. But others, out of sheer passion and love, go the indie route—cobbling together enough cash and enough teammates to make games from start to finish on their PCs. It's like the garage bands who churn out their own record and score a major deal (think Nirvana) or filmmakers who max out their credit cards to make their own flick (think *Blair Witch Project*). Even then, the odds are tough. "You can't easily *Blair Witch* this business," says Jeff Brown, spokesperson for Electronic Arts. "It's almost impossible to make a breakaway hit without heavy corporate resources."

Though the gaming market might be tough, as long as there's a gamer, there's a hope. That's what keeps Ethermoon afloat. And that's exactly what they're relying on to keep them there. In their tenacity and their focus, they exemplify the spirit of independent gaming. The question is whether passion alone is enough.

Dream Team

"So this is what you block look like," says Ethermoon music composer Rob Chilcott. "I suppose you're not really that different from what I expected." Chilcott has just sauntered into the Independent Games Festival exhibit



Go time: Strifeshadow went up against nine other independent titles at March's GDC.

"You can't easily *Blair Witch* this business. It's almost impossible to make a breakaway hit without heavy corporate resources."

—Jeff Brown, Electronic Arts

area after a dozen-plus hours on the plane from England. This is not only his first trip to the United States, it's his first face-to-face meeting with his cohorts at Ethermoon.

Each of the six team members works as part of what president and lead developer Martin Snyder, 27, considers a virtual company: a tightly run ship of developers from around the world. For Ethermoon, it was a necessary solution considering that they were all young guys in their 20s who couldn't afford to uproot and move together to the same town. "We don't have to be in the same room to make a great game," Snyder says. And making a great game was the only necessity at the heart of his plan.

Like many aspiring game developers, Snyder got the bug early. As a kid growing up outside Philadelphia, Snyder played his fair share of Atari 2600 games and dumped a large sum of tokens into arcade titles. After graduating from Cornell with a computer-science degree, though, he deferred his dream and set off to work as a software engineer for a Silicon Valley startup. "I always had it in the back of my mind to make games," he says, "but I never thought the industry was accessible."

Eventually the dream roared back. Snyder left the beleaguered startup he had joined and decided to give game making a shot. Problem was, he didn't know how to crack in. So he blindly sent out résumés only to find himself feeling even further from his goal. Left without any bites, Snyder finally took his cause to the people. He started cruising fan sites, looking for people who could help him build the kinds of games he liked, such as the PC real-time-strategy hit *Starcraft*.

It was online at a site called *Battle Reports* that Snyder found Tom Cadwell, a computer-science major (and fellow *Starcraft* fan) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Cadwell had earned an impressive reputation online for writing a *Starcraft* strategy guide and, more importantly, winning the Brood War Beta Tournament run by *Starcraft's* producers at Blizzard Entertainment.

Cadwell and Snyder shared not only a dream to make games but a vision for what kind of game they wanted to make. "We wanted to do a strategy game that was heavy on multiplayer action," Snyder says. All they needed were people to help—people who, like them, loved games, had some specialized aptitude, and were willing to work insanely long hours for free. With speed and energy, the two newly formed partners put the word out online, hitting Web sites, newsgroups and ICQ chat.

The pitch was simple, says Snyder: "We have a vision for a game, and if you join us you can help shape it." It didn't take long to get bites. Rob Chilcott, a 22-year-old musician from Bath, England, joined after being plucked from MP3.com, where he had been pawing his songs on the identifier of "fantasy musician." "That was enough of a clue for us that he might be interested in what we were doing," says Snyder.

Soon enough the rest were in place: Fred Wilson, a 21-year-old student at University of California at San Diego who was posting his own fan fiction on *Battle Reports*; Joe Poppa, a 27-year-old artist from Pittsburgh; and Joel Stuedler, 26, an artist known for his work on *Starcraft* mods. After finding a pleasing scramble of words—Ether and Moon—for their company name, the team and their game, *Strifeshadow*, were ready to rock.

In the game, players choose from one of three races: the resilient undead *Accursed*, the powerful *Dark Elves* bandits, or the intelligent and mobile *Sylvans*. Each team competes to build resources and overthrow the opposing forces. Unlike a lot of real-time strategy games, which save a big blowout battle for the finale, *Strifeshadow* was made precisely to feature many big skirmishes throughout the game. "This was the kind of game we wanted to play," Snyder says, "and, from doing our research, we figured out that a lot of others feel the same way too."

With the goal set, the Ethermoon boys split up the work and got down and dirty. Only Snyder, who had saved up cash from his day jobs, quit to work full-time. The rest put in their hours in addition to school and jobs of their own. In total, the team members put in dozens of hours per week; Snyder alone is working 12 hours a day, seven days a week. To keep it all together, the team members rely heavily on ICQ chat, keeping windows open on their desktops throughout the days and nights. "It's a lot cheaper than talking on the phone," says Chilcott, "and we're almost always online."

Still they faced problems. Halfway through the game's progress, they encountered compatibility issues: A game build would

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AUGUST 2001



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The Indie-game Hall of Fame

So you wanna be a video-game star? Here's how you start: Brush up on these classic examples of do-it-yourself game development. Yep, as you might suspect, the vast majority of these titles were made for computers—heck, some were even made for mainframes! But that's the usual path for newbie game designers: Make a game on PC, then pawn it off to the console publishers. Here's a rundown of notable indie releases over the years.

Spacewar

The grandpappy of all electronic games, *Spacewar* sprung forth in 1962 from a young MIT student named Steve Russell. Russell spent six months working on the game in the school computer lab, doing all the coding on the only machine at his disposal: a giant mainframe



called the PDP-1. Gamers duked it out against each other via circling rocket ships.

Adventure

In 1977, Will Crowther and Don Woods, two more MIT students, created one of the first role-playing sensations, called *Adventure*. Molded from *Dungeons & Dragons*, the game—also run on a mainframe—was text-based, letting the player explore mazes, find booty and slay beasts, pretty much the same RPG formula that exists today.

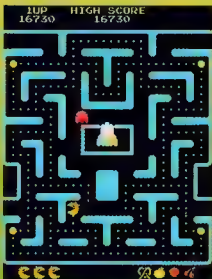
Ms. Pac-Man

In the early '80s, MIT students Doug MacRae and Kevin Curran were accomplished arcade hackers, capable of decoding and reassembling popular games of the day. In 1981, the duo reverse engineered *Pac-Man* and came up with *Ms. Pac-Man*, a subsequently humongous hit for Midway, who had purchased the game.



Commander Keen

Before *Quake*, before *Doom*, before even *Wolfenstein 3D*, id Software uploaded their first independently produced game, *Commander Keen*, in 1990. It followed the surreal adventures of a boy who builds a spaceship in his backyard and goes off to—what else?—save the galaxy. This one started it all and has hit just about every platform, including the Game Boy Color.



play fine on one person's computer but crappy on the next. It was a roadblock, one that gave Snyder, the project lead, more than a few sleepless nights. "We ended up having to rewrite everything so that it would work for all of us," he says. "It was no easy task."

Ten months after starting work on the project, Ethermoon had *Strifeshadow* ready in beta form just three days before the Independent Games Festival. Already, the game has garnered attention online, from the forums of real-time strategy fans to game Web 'zines like *GameSpy* and *Gamasutra*. But the real test, Snyder knows, isn't going to come from the critics. It's going to come from the gamers at large, like the ones milling around the conference this weekend. Judgment day is now.

The Verdict

Darkness has fallen on the mirrored buildings of Silicon Valley. Outside the club Polly Esther's, spotlights pan the patch of sky above a flashing pink neon sign. A row of game royalty files in—Will Wright, creator of *The Sims* (PC); Sid Meier, designer of *Civilization* (PC); and Hironobu Sakaguchi, the genius behind *Final Fantasy*. The stars are here tonight to honor the god of indie gaming: John Carmack, programming legend

"Anyone with a few specialized skills can do this. I think we've proven that."

—Ethermoon's Martin Snyder

behind *Doom* and *Quake*.

Ironically, Carmack's induction into the Interactive Achievement Association's Hall of Fame comes at precisely the same moment as the Independent Gaming Awards down the block. And, really, this synchronicity is the ultimate statement of the do-it-yourself (DIY) gaming dream.

At the time Carmack co-founded his company in the early '90s, electronic

gaming was suffering a plight similar to the one faced by popular music. Glossy pop hits like *Super Mario World* were the hair bands of their field. The only true alternative to the increasingly corporate video-game machine was in the relatively subterranean world of computer-game programming. Games, particularly for the Apple II computer, were where believers of the so-called Hacker Ethic—a lust for getting inside the guts of a machine—could lose themselves in the ether of new code. You didn't need a fancy-ass system or some kind of corporate backing. All you needed was a way with programming and a love of gaming.

Since then, id games from *Wolfenstein 3D* to *Quake III Arena* have become classics. Id and Carmack are now synonymous with the great American computer-game dream. It's a dream about four guys who love to make games and end up driving Ferraris through the fantasy life. "Id is like the Rolling Stones," says Michael Poole, vice president of worldwide studios for id's publisher, Activision. "A group like that comes around very, very rarely."

As Carmack took the stage to accept his award, he said he was happy to see how the industry has grown and, more importantly, how the next generation of gamers has taken the DIY ethic to heart. Appropriately



Super Noah's Ark 3D

Created by a group called Wisdom Tree, this unlicensed Super Nintendo game turned players into Noah, who had to run around throwing fruit and veggies at his unruly livestock. Even more bizarre: The game used the engine for id's Nazi shoot-'em-up, Wolfenstein 3D.

Counter-Strike

Want some quick-and-easy game-



dev experience? Build a mod, like the guys behind Counter-Strike, a staggeringly successful add-on for the brainy action game Half-Life. Counter-Strike is currently being played by more people online than those playing the original game. How's that for full circle?

Tread Marks

A true inspiration, Tread Marks was a tank shooter made by a programmer named Seamus McNally, who also was suffering from a fatal case of Hodgkin's disease. McNally finished the game and won last year's Independent Games Festival before dying shortly thereafter. The IGF grand prize is now named in his honor.

Serious Sam

Released this year, Serious Sam is the product of Croteam, a group of young guys in Croatia (yes, Croatia). After making a soccer game that was a minor success in Europe, Croteam set out to make this very old-school, very Doom-like first-person shooter, which already enjoys a large following online.



enough, right down the street, Martin Snyder and the Ethermoon crew are waiting to see how they fare. Snyder just made it in on time after searching for his mom, who was wandering around lost outside. She had flown in from the other side of the country—a surprise visit for her son's big occasion.

Big-name developers have dropped by the awards ceremony, as well, perhaps to eyeball their future competition in the game-making biz. Snyder and company are sharing a table with former members of Looking Glass, the team behind the popular PC game Thief. Behind them, hotshot PC-game developer American McGee (Alice) is taking in the scene. "We all just looked around and said, 'Wow, we're really just happy to be here with all these people,'" Snyder says.

His sentiment makes it easier to stomach the announcement of the winners—it turns out Ethermoon won't nab any awards this time around. The big sweep went to Nexon, creators of another real-time strategy game called Shattered Galaxy. Nexon, it turns out, was more indie in the Hollywood sense, able to conjure up a \$1 million budget thanks to some help from Korean investors.

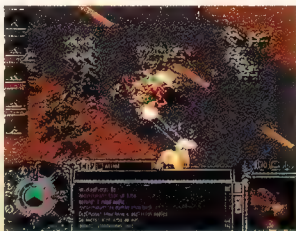
Is Ethermoon bitter? Maybe just a bit. After the show, Tom Cadwell lamented the

fact that Nexon had been working on their game for a couple of years while Strifeshadow was fresh out of beta. But Snyder doesn't fault the judges. "This never was a level playing field," he says. "Some entries were much further along than others. Besides, I don't think everyone comes here to win. It's the recognition that's the real prize." Snyder adds that, with some more hard work and determination, Ethermoon's time may yet come. The next day, with pamphlets on disc-duplication services in hand, he was ready to get back to the grindstone. "When we walk out of here," Snyder says, "we go right back to work on Monday."

And so it goes in the rough-and-tumble world of DIY development. As soon as the fun ends, the games begin.

Editor's note: In the six months that have passed since the GDC, Ethermoon has continued working on Strifeshadow, which Snyder says the team is in the process of wrapping up right now. (Expect it to be finished by mid-summer.) For more info on the game—as well as instructions on where to buy it from online retailers—head to www.ethermoon.com. And if you feel inspired to become an indie game developer yourself, head to www.igf.com

to find out how you can enter the Independent Games Festival, held every March in San Jose, Calif., where you'll take on the likes of Ethermoon. ❁



Ethermoon's Strifeshadow built a lot of buzz at the Independent Games Festival, but in the end it was a team called Nexon that won the competition. Their winner, a massively multiplayer real-time strategy game called Shattered Galaxy (seen above), can support more than 50 players and upward of 500 units in a simultaneous skirmish within a single battle. The Ethermoon team noted, however, that Nexon had a lot more time and money to work on Shattered Galaxy.



Power Tools

Peripheral Reviews

The extra battery pack charges back here.

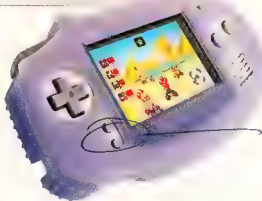


Bumper GBX

Company	System	Price
InterAct	GBA	\$9.99

Granted, there's always the possibility of dropping your GBA. And, sure, it wouldn't hurt to have a little protection if that should happen. But *comon...* is this thing really necessary? Maybe if you're a fumbling idiot or a small child who doesn't have fully developed motor skills. It fits well overall, but we saw put your hard-earned dough elsewhere.

www.interact-acc.com



The speakers plus the wow thing make for a nice little system.

The start and select buttons are too tough to get to.

Shock 'N Rock

Company	System	Price
Nyko	GBA	\$24.99

The Shock 'N Rock was a nice add-on for the Game Boy Color, and it's still decent for the Game Boy Advance. Problem is, the quality just doesn't seem as high as it used to be—some of the molding around the seams looks and feels cheap. Still, the thing gives you better sound, a rechargeable battery, and adds a little life to the system. The vibration feature is pointless, though.

www.nyko.com



Pump up your GBA's sound with this handy plug.

Power Station

Company	System	Price
Mad Catz	GBA	\$49.99

This is one of the coolest devices to come out for the GBA. Why? It just adds a certain amount of legitimacy to this "kid's toy." Your friends, thinking this is the newest gadget from Palm, will mistake you for some high-powered CEO when you grab your Advance from its "docking cradle." Wrong—you just need your daily Tony Hawk 2 fix. The unit gives you two rechargeable Ni-MH battery packs (which last about 15-20 hours each) and the docking bay (which has a charging spot for your system and for the extra pack).

www.madcatz.com

Tremor Speakers

Company	System	Price
TDK	Any	\$149.99

The Tremor system is the perfect choice for anyone who wants big sound in a small space. The stylish, shielded unit features two tall satellites and a compact sub with 150 watts of power. We're talking loud, clear sound here. It's too bad the volume knob is tricky to fiddle with. If you're looking for even bigger sound, consider the WOW Thing by SRS Labs. This enhancement device will only set you back \$30.

www.tdk.com/speakers/
www.wowthing.com



Power Link Plus

Company	System	Price
Nyko	GBA	\$9.99

This one is straightforward enough. It's a link cable for the GBA, and it works. Upon closer inspection however, you'll see the Power Link allows four people to play a game at once—no need to purchase multiple link cables and string them all over the place. Who wants a four-player GBA session to look like the back room of a Radio Shack anyway?

www.nyko.com

This hub allows for four players with just one cable... sweet.

GBA Carry Case

Company	System	Price
A.I.S. Ind.	GBA	\$11.99

There are plenty of bags on the market for GBA, but this one stands out from the rest. It has a simple design, and it works. The case has ample room for your system, a handful of games, and even a cable or extra batteries. Nicer still, the case is padded, and features a wrist and shoulder strap for easy carrying (that is, if you don't mind looking like a complete tool).

www.alsindustries.com

AdapterPak

Company	System	Price
InterAct	GBA	\$9.99

Once again, this product is pretty straightforward. It provides power to your Game Boy Advance. The fact you get both an AC adapter and a car power adapter is what sets this one apart from others on the market—and for a reasonable price, too.

www.interact-acc.com

Let there be light...

If you're a GBA owner, chances are you've wrestled with properly lighting your little screen. Don't feel bad—you're not alone. So the question arises: How do you properly light your GBA screen? Read on.

Like the Game Boy Color, the Advance has a slew of lights available for it. Problem is, with the variety of lights on the market it's difficult to figure out which one is worthwhile. With the GBC, Nyko's Worm Light was the winner, hands down. Not so with the Game Boy Advance.

This time around, InterAct's GlowGuard (around \$10) is the light to get your hands on. Not only does the thing provide ample lighting in any dark environment, it also nicely clips onto the back of the system (with handy buttons to get the thing off) and flips down to protect the GBA's screen. Of course, the pass-thru port on the back helps, too.

So what about the Worm Light? While it's not the worst light on the market (that award goes to Nuby's Cobra Light), it's difficult to adjust, and it's not nearly as helpful as the 'Guard.

Light Alternatives

So, there's only one GBA light that's worth getting? Yes. It's sad but true. Luckily, there are a number of inventive alternatives we've come up with since we got our systems. Hopefully, they'll help you as much as they've helped us. One quick note: Get yourself a hefty roll of duct tape so you can strap this stuff to your GBA.

The Sun

Pros: This is the most powerful light source known to man. What more could you ask for? Besides, it gives your body a healthy dose of good old Vitamin D.

Cons: It's only out during the day (lame), and it burns the Dickens out of your hands when you try to tape it to the Game Boy Advance. Also causes skin cancer in high doses.

Tap Light

Pros: The staff's personal favorite, the Tap Light not only brightens up the GBA's screen in dimly lit conditions, it also makes it easier for us to pee at night. No more messy stalls at the EGM offices.

Cons: Takes four AA batteries, and it seems the local Wal-Mart is always out of the damn things. As seen on TV my ass. Maybe next time, Tap Light.

Flashlight

Pros: It's the easiest one to duct tape to your GBA, and if you get one of those kick-ass Mag Lights, you can act like a cop and shine it in people's eyes while you chest-poke them.

Cons: While it works like a champ, it gets no points for style. Plus, the Krypton bulb makes us think of *Superman III* starring Richard Pryor. That movie was a steaming turd.

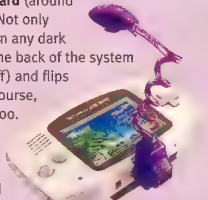
Ball Lightning

Pros: An amazing amount of intense light in a very small space. It also sounds cool when you tell your friends you can summon the power of Ball Lightning to see your GBA screen with. Very Dragonball Z.

Cons: In addition to killing innocent cows all over the Midwest, it will kill you. That's one less EGM reader, and that's never good.



InterAct's GlowGuard



Nyko's GBA Worm Light Plus



Review Crew

Our Philosophy

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 or

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

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. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AVERAGE. Simple, ain't it?

Our Awards



Platinum Awards go to games that get all 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 (but lower than 9.0) receive **Silver Awards**.

The Crew



Crispin Boyer

Features Editor

Crispy's mighty excited about Final Fantasy X—especially its story.

Still, he misses the gripping plots of old-school games. Ninjas and punk rockers just don't kidnap presidents' daughters like they used to.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure
Current Faves: Klonoa 2, Sonic Adventure 2



Che Chou

West Coast Editor

Che spent a week in Seoul, Korea, eating delicious kalbi, drinking thick rice wine, and scouring PC cafes for C-Strike (to no avail), and he loved it. He had this to say upon his return: "Ape shall never kill ape."

Favorite Genres: Fighting, Driving, RPG
Current Faves: Counter-Strike, GT3, NeoRageX



Jonathan Dudlak

Associate Editor

After losing his copy of Radiant Silvergun, Jon's putting out a call to all readers to send in any unused copies they might have. And if you stole his, totally send that back. Maybe a cake or something, too.

Favorite Genres: Fighting, Adventure
Current Favorites: Castlevania Chronicle, GT3



Dean Hager

Managing Editor

Dean can't wait for deadlines to end so he can lock himself in his house and play NCAA Football 2002 until his fingers bleed, or until he gets the Huskers to the Orange Bowl whichever comes first.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Racing
Current Favorites: NCAA Football 2002



Kraig Kujawa

Senior Associate Editor

Kraig went to his 10-year high-school reunion and was rewarded with "Most Unique Job," among other things. Last year's winner was a porn star, so suffice to say, he's in good company.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Action, Adventure
Current Favorites: NCAA 2002, Madden 2002



Dan Leahy

Editor in Chief, Expert Games

Dan is almost as crazy about NCAA Football as Dean ever there. He divides his time between NBA 2K3 (yes he's still playing that one) and bringing his Ohio State Buckeyes back to prominence.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Action
Current Favorites: NBA 2K3, NCAA Football 2002

Game of the Month



Gran Turismo 3

pg.142

Surprise! OK, maybe not. It's a little hype for Polyphony Digital's newest racer as been deafening, but they delivered—big time. In fact, many of us were still knee-deep into the import when the U.S. version finally arrived, just in time for the long-awaited review.



Dan "Shoe" Hsu

Editor in Chief

At the staff WhirlyBall party, Shoe boasted a whooping 4-for-79 from the field. He did make up for that suckiness later in the day by beating a bunch of 30-year-olds in Laser Tag. What a stud!

Favorite Genres: Anything that doesn't stink
Current Faves: PSO Ver. 2, Metal Marines (NES)



Chris Johnston

News Editor

Chris rediscovered the joys of PSO recently and hasn't gotten much sleep since. It'll fill up the time until he's able to dive into Dance Dance Revolution 5th Mix and PaRappa 2. It's all about the music!

Favorite Genres: Adventure, Puzzle, Music
Current Favorites: DDR Extra Mix, PSO Ver. 2



Jeanne Kim

Associate Editor/Art Director

Absorbing dangerous UV rays at the beach, BBQ'n Chicago-style polish sausages, and scarfing down every kind of coffee ice cream imaginable keep Jeanne primed for her daily Soldier of Fortune blood blasting.

Favorite Genres: RPG, Adventure, Action
Current Favorites: Mario Advance, DDR EM



Greg Sewart

Reviews Editor

Jeanne finally got tired of Sewart "makin' the moves" on her and beat him about the head and neck. His excuse for letting a girl kick his ass? "I'm a lover, not a fighter." We think "loser" is more appropriate.

Favorite Genres: Racing, RPG, Action
Current Faves: GT3, Sonic Adventure 2

Team EGM

These are the sports nuts on the Crew, but that doesn't mean they're not into all types of games. It just means you can be sure that sports reviews are being done by the sports enthusiasts and not by some schmucks.

ESPN X-Games Skateboarding



Publisher: Konami **ES**
Developer: Konami Osaka
Also Try: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 (PS1, DC, N64)
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Best Feature: Looks great
Worst Feature: Limited camera angles
Web Site: www.konami.com

ESPN X-Games Skateboarding is surprisingly good, but overly arcade-like physics and confining camera angles keep it out of Tony's neighborhood. It's something you may not consider, but a smooth, wide-panning camera is essential to the vert-ramp experience. ESPN's top-down perspective cheats you out of admiring your incredible hang times...too bad. A few other things bother me as well. The lack of split-screen play (it uses a turn-based system) and the inability to link ground tricks put the game at a disadvantage. At the same time, you **haven't experienced "big air" until you've tried this pup.** No joke, on the vert ramps you literally float for 2-3 seconds a pop. Excessive? Yes. But it lets you trick it up like the Hawkman on steroids. Speaking of tricks, the interface is similar to THPS if not easier. In fact, you can button smash and still wrack up big scores. Special moves are trickier but look fantastic (especially the Christ-air and the more involved super move, the Mtwist). Another strong point is the Arcade License mode. It's great fun exploring the vast urban and suburban environments, collecting icons, knocking down fire hydrants and, in general, causing mayhem. Despite its flaws, this title has spunk. A decent selection of pipes, pro skaters, plus real and fantasy courses assure you'll be hooked for the long haul. Keep an open mind about this one. You may be surprised how much you like it.

Dean

Let's just pretend, for the sake of this review, that Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 wasn't at E3, and that I wasn't a kiosk hog in the Activision booth. Because out from under the shadows of THPS, ESPN is surprisingly fun. It doesn't push any previously set boundaries, but if imitation is the best form of flattery, then the folks at Konami worship Neversoft. If you've played THPS, then you'll feel right at home here; ESPN feels nearly identical, right down to the combo system and stage goals. Still, the game feels rushed. The graphics are sharp, but there's slowdown in certain areas. Even so, ESPN is a step in the right direction for the ailing franchise.

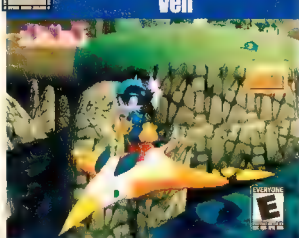
Che

It seems one publisher after another is scrambling to be the next action sports king. It reminds me of all those sports divisions that popped up—and quickly died—a few years back. While I will give Konami props for including a Canadian skater, I can't forgive the shoddy control. Every time I try to pull off a grab trick in the vert competitions, I only seem to be successful about half the time. Plus, skaters seem to hang a little too long in the air. It's very disorienting. Even if you do get used to the control, the draw distance in the Arcade mode is atrocious. Although X-Games does a lot right, the poor camera and nigging control issues make it a rental.

Greg

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**
7 **7** **5** **6**

Klonoa 2: Lunavea's Veil



Publisher: Namco **ES**
Developer: Klonoa Works
Featured In: EGM #140
Players: 1
Also Try: Rayman 2 Revolution
Best Feature: Improved gameplay
Worst Feature: Too easy
Web Site: www.namco.com

The first Klonoa was, in my opinion, the best platformer for the original PlayStation. Symphony be damned, the 2D critter set against lush 3D backdrops, featuring multiple paths and a darkly whimsical story line, delivered innovative gameplay from start to finish. While childlike in its presentation, Klonoa was anything but childish in its execution. Klonoa 2 mines the same rich vein, but breathes full 3D life into the hero. The result is stunningly fluid animation, and dead-on accurate control that inspires confidence with each and every jump. The graphics have also taken a PS2-sized leap. Klonoa now vaults his way through an astonishing series of Tim Burton-esque environments so huge, they could not possibly have appeared on the original PS1. K2 soars to such intense skyscraper-sized heights that it had my hands sweating from the vertigo. Despite the wealth of eye-candy, the true brilliance behind the game is the sharp level design. While it features less backtracking and twistiness than the original game, K2 presents a formidable series of reflex and timing-based challenges that will keep you coming back to find every secret the disc contains. The downside to Klonoa 2 is that it's a bit on the easy side, and lacks the dark, melancholy mood that engulfed the first game. Hopefully Klonoa 2 does well at the box office (unlike the first game), because, despite his low profile, this kitty is a prince among men.

Milkman

Despite everyone telling me how great it was, I never played the original Klonoa—now I see what all the fuss was about. The cuties, brightly colored graphics and quaint story aren't the draw. It's the pure platforming gameplay (with a slightly different spin) that gets everyone hooked. The graphics may be all polygonal, but the third dimension is so limited it puts the focus on the good of run, jump, and grab the coins (in this case, gems) formula. I understand the purpose of most enemies here is to facilitate the switch-type puzzles, which I love, but I still would have liked more challenging and varied foes. Too easy (especially the bosses) but fun.

Mark

Inevitably, a group of people is going to come out and pan this game for being too much like the first. Well, sucks to them. With killer franchises of the past getting contorted beyond recognition in development these days, seeing Klonoa's addictive gameplay preserved in a gorgeous graphical formaldehyde is a welcome sign that all is not lost. Everything that needed updating got it—it's a longer adventure in which the story plays a much larger role, snagged enemies give you new special abilities, and you'll find yourself hung up on at least a few of the many puzzles. It's still a little too linear, but Klonoa still rocks my dream world.

Jonathan

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**
8 **8** **7** **8**

NBA Street



Publisher: Electronic Arts **ES**
Developer: NuFX
Featured In: EGM #141
Players: 1-2
Also Try: NBA Hoopz
Best Feature: Great control
Worst Feature: No multi-!-up support
Web Site: www.nbastreet.com

I had to put my skepticism aside when I heard about another zany, over-the-top basketball game hitting the market. We'd already been down this road, right? Jam, Showtime, Hoopz...we've seen this movie before. Street is different. It's different in a way that *Reservoir Dogs* is from a Steven Segal flick. Street possesses electrifying gameplay with kick-you-in-the-teeth animations and visuals. Stealing elements from SSX and Tony Hawk is nothing new. Plenty of games have tried to do as much. But successfully incorporating a tricks and combo-based point system into a basketball game is genius. You will want to pull off every special move, over and over. You'll want to block every shot, throw down every dunk, and dive for every loose ball. And like SSX, Street comes packed with extras w/o unlock. Expand your roster, unlock new courts and players, and upgrade your team. It's all about establishing some street cred. The game also shines with its environments, a mere afterthought for most sports games. Set in killer urban locales, Street pulls off the hip thing without being corny. I can't say enough about this game. The only niggling negative is that it doesn't support the multi-!-up. I know it's not a big deal, but people who do own a multi-!-up own it for games like this. Now, get in a room full of friends, bust out Street, and plan on calling the pizza guy at 3 a.m.—it's that good.

Dan L.

There's life left in the action-sports genre, and EA Big is supplying the rescusators. This has something none of the other games in this genre have: character. And I'm not talking about the lame "hip" dialogue. Once you see the freak show squad comprised of an eight-foot center, a man made of magma, and M.J., you'll understand. What I don't get is why the gameplay was designed so well, but the features so poorly. Jordan is immediately accessible when he should have been the crown jewel at the end. And worse, it's a sin that there's no multi-!-up support. I love this game, but some bad decisions kept a good game from being truly great.

Craig

Unlike other games in its genre, NBA Street is much more than a simple three-on-three Jam fest. Insane special moves, Harlem Globetrotter-like sequences and circuits galore place it on a higher plane. It doesn't hurt that M.J. is available from the start either. I really like the ability to attack an opponent with so many different weapons. If you're having trouble with one—the alley-oops play for example—simply switch it up with something else (pick-and-rolls, three-pointers, etc.). The game is check-out of opportunities once you know what you're doing. NBA Street is super-solid on almost every level. I only wish Create-A-Player were deeper.

Dean

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**
8 **8** **8** **9**



Gran Turismo 3 A-spec



Publisher: Sony CEAA
Developer: Polyphony Digital
Featured In: EGM #545
Players: 1-6
Supports: iLink, GT Force
Best Feature: A car nut's dream come true
Web Site: www.scea.com



About friggin' time, eh? We finally got our hands on the U.S. release of Gran Turismo 3, and now we're passing the savings on to you. If you're any kind of racing enthusiast, you've already bought the game and are likely deep into the Simulation mode. More power to you. For those of you who're

still on the fence about whether or not to try GT3, it's time to make that commitment. And trust us, commitment is what it takes to get the most out of this game. Completing this title means you have to compete in—and win—approximately 370 races (10 of which are one- to two-hour-long endurance affairs).

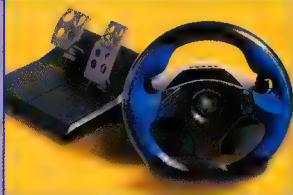
Casual fans may look at that figure and wet themselves. No doubt about it, this game is daunting (but at least you'll get your money's worth). Suffering through the relatively slow average speed of the early races is almost unbearable when compared to jumping into

the Arcade mode and firing up some of the fast, S-Class cars. Even so, the sense of accomplishment as you move from something like a lowly Mazda Miata to the Castrol Toyota Supra is unmatched. Visiting your garage and seeing something in the neighborhood of 200 tricked-out speed machines staring back at you ain't too shabby either. In the interest of not bogging the game down in the early stages, Sony even added 3,000 credits to the starting amount in Simulation mode (meaning you can buy better cars right out of the gate).

The changes from GT2 to GT3 aren't too

GRAN TURISMO 3 The Inside Track

Welcome to The Inside Track. Every month check this section for Gran Turismo 3 tips, oddities and everything in between. Send contributions to EGM@ziffdavis.com, subject: GT3 Inside Track.



GT Force

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If you don't own multiple copies of GT3 (or have extra PS2s and televisions lying around), you can still play a two-player split-screen race. Just make sure your opponent has a little more skill than our young Jonathan Dudlak (crashing below).



It's hard to write a review for this game without sounding like a gushing groupie. I love so much about GT3. The collection of cars, while omitting some of the ones I'd like to see (the BMW Z3 or McLaren F1 being at the top of the list), is diverse and impressive. I find myself playing just to get every one of them into my garage and try them out. Let's face it:

This game has taken over my entire life. I think my race count is up to well over 400 in Simulation mode right now, and I still come back for more. Even though it'd be nice to see a few more cars on the track, or a tougher AI (check out Professional difficulty in Arcade mode for the best challenge), I can't go a day without firing up this game for a few quick races. I even like the rally racing in GT3—something I absolutely despised in the last game. The amount of races required to complete this game borders on ridiculous, but that's part of the beauty. GT3 wasn't meant to be finished in one sitting, and even if you want to tear through it as fast as possible you'll have to stop and learn the nuances of at least a dozen different cars to see any success. I still wish the game had a few more upgrades: Internet play, smarter opponent AI and more cars on the track during the races. Still, I can't in good conscience lower the score when the game is this spectacular. Sure, Gran Turismo 3 ain't completely perfect, but neither is an EGM score of 10, right? **Greg**

plentiful, really. It's too bad that a more aggressive, intelligent AI for opposing cars wasn't one of them. As is, the CPU vehicles still drive in a high-speed parade, all but ignoring the player (unless you choose Professional difficulty in Arcade mode, where your opponents will fight tooth and nail for every single position).

The setup options between the two games remain similar as well: Win races to earn credits, use credits to buy cars, upgrade cars to win more races, and so on. Where the differences really lie is in the presentation and easy

navigation of the Simulation mode. Gone is the stupid world map from Gran Turismo 2, and with it the frustration of remembering which part of the world you bought your car in, not to mention the amount of time it took to get to that area. You also don't need to worry about extra race series hidden within seemingly random car manufacturers' areas.

This game is a required part of every racing fan's library. In fact, even if you're not a car nut, GT3 is worth a try. You might just find a new appreciation for the genre. Besides, you won't find a better showpiece for your PS2.

Anatomy of a GT3 Review

ORIGINAL SCORE (WHAT WE WOULD'VE GIVEN THE IMPORT):

9.5



Super-cool, super-fast Diabolo GT deleted

-.5

Super-average Acura RSX Type-S added

+.1

3,000 extra credits added to the start of Simulation Mode

+.8

Extended soundtrack featuring artists like Raekwon and Snoop Dogg. Doggy style never gets boring!

+.1

A little loading cursor thingy to keep ADD sufferers interested

± 0

Sweet intro music replaced by moderately cool Lenny Kravitz track

-.2

English text added for the 99.9 percent of us who don't read Japanese

+.2

FINAL SCORE (FOR U.S. VERSION):

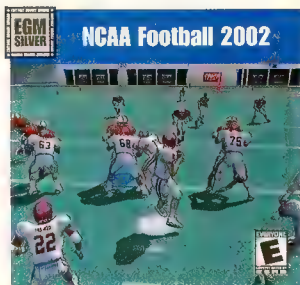
10



For me, GT3 isn't just about the beautiful graphics, or the huge roster of cars, or a sense that the GT mode somehow nurtures your driving skill and invigorates your racing spirit—these are elements any great driving game should have. What I truly love about GT3 is the fact that each car has a feel all its own. Since GT mode now classifies races by car models and types, you end up learning the subtle nuances of every ride. Still, **giving GT3 a 10 doesn't mean that it's perfect.** The game's weakest point is its AI, as it still forces me off the road in pursuit of its prescribed race line. What the 10 means is this: GT3 is, at this point, the best racing game ever made. **Che**

Watching director Kazunori Yamauchi dart around the Detroit auto show, feverishly searching for new ways to make his game better in the few hours he had left in the States, it's no wonder this game is so freaking incredible. Whether you're a gearhead or a speed freak when it comes to racing games, **GT3 will exceed most any expectations you could have.** It's the most realistic racing experience around, and that includes all the frustrations of having a weak car or getting nudged by aggressive competitors—it's part of GT3's style. I can't help but give it the best of endorsements and humbly prepare to surrender my nights to one sweet piece of software. **Jonathan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	9	6	10



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Tiburon
Also Try: Madden NFL 2002
Players: 1-8
Supports: Multi-tap
Best Feature: Inspired gameplay
Worst Feature: Weak D on punt returns
Web Site: www.easports.com

It's tough to contain my excitement so I'll just say it: This game is awesome. How's that for a review—fanboy-ish right? Seriously, if you think Madden 2002 is good, you haven't seen anything yet. **NCAA offers better speed, superior AI and superb college aesthetics.** And while they may share some traits (like control and similar graphics), the diverse college playbooks and the unpredictability of amateur athletes make NCAA a much different experience than Madden. Technically, it's solid as a rock. The game speed is comfortable—not too fast, but not slow either. Players are fluid and natural, and the hits are at times bone-jarring. Tiburon did a great job with the special moves as well. Out-backs, jukes, diving...most everything looks convincing. The collision detection is accurate too (that's important). So it's perfect, right? Not quite. Punt returns are screwy. Unless you manually place a blocker, most of the time your return man is greeted with a helmet to the gut the second he catches the ball. That's about it though, unless you count the generous running game as a flaw (I don't)—given the choice between a ground game that keeps things interesting and a stonewall defense, I'll take the former. It's not automatic either; you still have to find the holes. No doubt about it, NCAA 2002 is a must-have game. Oh yeah, the witty commentary (Corso, Herbstreit and Nessler) is a great touch.

Dean

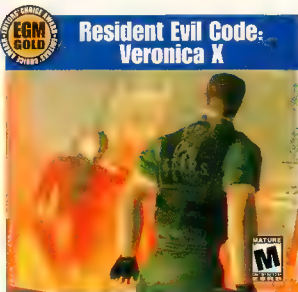
I'm pleased to say that EA didn't take the easy way out with NCAA 2002. **Instead of being Madden with college teams, NCAA plays with a vibe all its own.** Team-specific playbooks are deep and varied, and offer myriad dream match-ups. Faster than last year's Madden, the game just feels right. Running the option hasn't been this fun since Bill Walsh College Football '95. Throw in a tremendous Dynasty mode (with up to 12 of your friends), spot-on stadium detail and a Campus Challenge mode (think Madden Cards), and I'm hooked. My only problem with the game is that Dean "Huskerrific" Hager seems to have Ohio State's number.

Dan L.

Few games give me the sense of accomplishment that NCAA does: I took the Texas A&M Aggies to the National Championship and made their starting running back win the Heisman Trophy despite his bad case of fumbleitis. I topped it all off by bludgeoning Dan's Buckeyes and scrapping by Dean's Cornhuskers. All in all, a nice week in the office. I'm telling you this not to brag (all right, I am a bit), but rather to show you how **this video game is eating up my summer free time.** The fast gameplay, ample strategy and gorgeous graphics make it hopelessly addictive, and I think only a great NFL game could wield the power to make me put this game down.

Kraig

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
 8 6 5 9



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: EGM #143
Players: 1
Also Try: Onimusha
Best Feature: Another excuse to play a rad game
Worst Feature: It's a pretty straight remake
Web Site: www.capcom.com

The nice side effect of Resident Evil games is that they're so easily linked to the exact time and place in your life when you first played them. For me, Code: Veronica was the reason I took a three-day mid-week vacation in my last year of college—it's that good. The most original, engaging game in the series, it's still one of the best reasons to own a Dreamcast, but it's good to see it finally reaching a more mainstream console. Like most DC ports to PS2, the graphics are comparable, but certainly not significantly improved. Having played the game before, I was drooling for the new bonus footage, but having to wait until the game is over to see the bulk of it really bated my Alaska. That's the only place this game lost major points with me—they could have changed a lot more to make this feel less like a straight port. How about speeding up those load times, or some new enemies and areas to explore? The fanboy-targeted DVD pack-in (a story supplement for die-hard followers of the series) makes you feel like you're getting more, and as long as the Dreamcast game is still selling for \$40, it's worth it. **CV is a necessary part of any adventure gamer's balanced breakfast; just make sure you play either of its console incarnations, even if it means waiting for the DC version to drop 20 bones.** Get this souped-up remake if you've got the hardware and are new to the game—it's one of the best uses for the PS2 right now.

Jonathan

As much as I'm apathetic toward repackaging games from one system to the next, RECV deserves a much bigger audience than it had on the DC. If you missed out on this game last year, don't let the cryptic title fool you: This is the real sequel to REA. Thanks to its **masterful storytelling and superb graphics**, it's also the first game of the series to really pull me into the RE mythos. As for those of you who have already played this game to death on the DC, there's not a whole lot here you haven't seen before. The bonus scenes with Wesker are nice; comparable to the director's cut of *The Abyss*, they help you understand the story much, much better.

Che

If you missed Code: Veronica on the Dreamcast, play this game, now. Sure it drags now and then with excessive backtracking and a weak love subplot, but the overall package is still absolutely worth it: Crisp locales, crisp graphics (with real-time backgrounds instead of static paintings—take that Onimusha!) and a good-sized adventure. Already played it? Precious few added morsels (new FMV deals dealing with Wesker, the Wesker's Report DVD and Devil May Cry demo) are enough to insure RE fans will want to rent or borrow it, but the additions don't make the PS2's "X" version worth another purchase to anyone but the truly obsessed.

Mark

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
 8 6 2 5



Publisher: Conspiracy
Developer: Treasure
Featured In: EGM #144
Players: 1
Aka: Freak Out (In England)
Best Feature: Innovative techniques and design
Worst Feature: Boring non-boss levels
Web Site: www.conspiracy-games.com

Love it or hate it—and unlike me, most people will fall squarely into one camp or the other—you can't ignore Stretch Panic. That's due in part to the charming yet bizarre hallucinations that serve as characters, but mostly it's 'cause of the unprecedented ability to grab and stretch just about anything (you can actually deform walls, trees, enemies, etc., all in real time). Granted, the EX levels, where you earn points to access the boss fights, are EXcruciating. The vanilla-plain environments look like they belong on a PS1, especially contrasted against the wild designs the rest of the game enjoys, and are all populated by the same drone enemies so incredibly stupid they make the average Resident Evil zombie look like a card-carrying Mensa member. Luckily boss fights comprise the bulk of the game, and (eventually) make it worthwhile. The Mrs. Potato-head look-alike missing her eyes screaming "I'm blind!"; the hidden monster you track using sound (break out the headphones); or your evil twin in the screenshot above, who pukes all over the place when you hit her weak spot (that's me in the pic holding her hair back, as any good sister should)...like the artwork, certain bosses are so crazy and unique they leave a lasting impression. SP is most definitely not for everybody. The controls and camera are too damn; it's too short; it's too easy...but it's also **too damn interesting not to check out** if you're up for something different.

Mark

It's not often that a game totally shocks me, but this one made me speechless. Here's a title where you're rewarded for grabbing obnoxiously huge breasts. **At first, I thought I had been blessed to be on this review (a genuine breast-grabbin' simulator!),** but once I got past the novelty (it took awhile, granted), I was considerably less amused. This game is just plain whacked. It's very odd, both visually and gameplay-wise. And it's not too hard to play, either. The blinding camera makes it hard to control your character and aim your weapon (a scarf), and some of the bosses are frustrating (though a bit innovative). At best, rent this for a good laugh.

Kraig

Affectionately referred to as Stretch Pants by those who wear such garments on the Review Crew, **Treasure's first PS2 effort is a letdown.** Don't get me wrong, I love weird games as much as the next guy, but SP never moves beyond what feels like an elastic 3D engine tech demo. The controls for your demonic scarf arm are sloppy, the bosses are a cake-walk, and...I dunno...it feels like the folks at Treasure had this funny joke about snapping bikini straps and popping huge breasts, then somehow it turned into a game. I would have liked SP more if it were just a book full of the unique character designs. It's worth renting just to check out the weirdness.

Che

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
 7 6 8 3

City Crisis



Publisher: PSE
Take 2
Developer: Syscom
Players: 1
Also try: Burning Rangers (Saturn), Choplifter (NES)
Web Site: take2games.com

Best Feature: Easy to pick up and play
Worst Feature: Could've used more missions

City Crisis is one of those games that won't get much attention and that most people wouldn't give a second look to in a store, but those who take the chance and buy (or rent) it will like it. It's a **short-lived but fun helicopter rescue game** where most of the time you airlift people from burning buildings and put out fires in a bustling city. In addition to that, two Chase missions have you barreling down the city's streets shining a spotlight on a runaway bus or a sports car to aid police in capturing them. After I completed the game's final stage, where you rescue people caught in an earthquake, I wished there was more; there are areas of the city (like a huge amusement park) that you hardly interact with. Other issues hold it back, too: The low-res graphics look alright but the framerate picks up the occasional chug. Rescuing stranded citizens switches you to a side view, sometimes putting a building directly in your line of sight. Lastly, it's easily beaten in an afternoon. Sure you can try for better grades, but there could have been more. Still worth a try.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	7	8	5

Gallop Racer 2001



Publisher: PSE
Tecmo
Developer: Tecmo
Also Try: Gallop Racer (PS2)
Players: 1-2
Horses like to eat: Oats
Web Site: www.tecmoinc.com

Best Feature: Realistic horse-racing sim
Worst Feature: This game is not for novices

Thoroughbreds in the comfort of your living room? Hoo ha! Despite the arcade-y look of this game, this is anything but a pick-up-and-play game. This is a horse-racing *simulation*. Unlike Tecmo's Monster Rancher series, the Gallop Racer games target a very specific audience. The problem is that people who would most likely enjoy a game like this are probably at the racetrack itself, saying "hi" to their bookies, and not at home playing video games. For the armchair jockey who's still interested, there are over 1,500 horses to ride or race against in the game. But will even the most die-hard pony-preoccupied PS2 owner be willing to sit through GR2's deep breeding and training system? They'll have to be if they expect to get the most out of this game. Gallop Racer 2001 is like a Gran Turismo for horse-racing games: Even without the complex training process, the actual gameplay is no piece of cake; you've got to know when to whip ass or hang back, and when to make that final lunge for the finish line. **Only the dedicated need apply.**

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	8	8

NASCAR Heat 2002



Publisher: PSE
Infogrames
Developer: Monster Games
Featured In: EGM #243
Players: 1-2
Also try: Rumble Racing
Web Site: infogrames.com

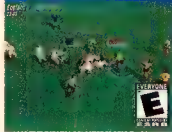
Best Feature: Very good control and AI
Worst Feature: We need 43 cars per race, dammit!

This is what NASCAR 2001 should have been... almost. It still only features 24 cars on the track (10 in two-player mode) as opposed to the 43 you find in a real NASCAR event. It's still missing some tracks and drivers, and the rosters are a tad outdated (not as bad as NASCAR 2001, though). What you do get is a pretty neat arcade racing experience with some excellent control and a wide array of play options. Setting Heat on high difficulty and turning the realism up gives you access to loads of setup options like tire pressures and weight placement. In fact, this is about as good as NASCAR fans have ever had to be on a console. But the piece de resistance has to be the Beat the Heat mode, which challenges you to a series of tests actually designed by drivers like Rusty Wallace, Ward Burton and Richard Petty. Fans of the sport will really appreciate this. Plus, entering the Race the Pro area pits you against the hottest laps said drivers actually made in the game itself. **This is, hands down, the best game for oval-track racing fans.** Now when do we get online play?

Greg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	9

Rugby



Publisher: PSE
Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports
Also Try: FIFA 2001
Players: 1-2
Australian for beer: Foster's
Web Site: www.easports.com

Best Feature: Easy controls
Worst Feature: Rucked-up rules

Unless you live near a high concentration of Australian immigrants, you probably haven't been introduced to the finer points of rugby. Any good Aussie would tell you that rugby involves pitching, kicking and tossing the oval (pronounced "aivil" down under) while simultaneously kicking, punching and forearming your opponents. Despite the violent nature of the sport, rugby actually demands a lot of strategic maneuvering. Rucks, scrums and Mauls (gotta love those terms) are key gameplay moments which demand more coaching than twitches skills. **Once you've mastered the somewhat quirky camera zooms and the rules of the sport, EA's Rugby becomes an enjoyable experience.** There are plenty of modes to select from and the interface is very user-friendly. There's even a training mode for those too intimidated to head right to the action, and trust me, most of you will want to take advantage of it. Otherwise plain on getting smacked in the chops by the computer. Kudos to EA Sports for bringing this one stateside.

Dan L.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	7	8

Floigan Bros: Episode 1



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Visual Concepts
Featured In: EGM #139
Players: 1
Supports: SegaNet
Best Feature: Voice acting
Worst Feature: Insanely repetitive
Web Site: www.sega.com



At first glance, Floigan Bros. looks like a run-of-the-mill 3D platform buddy adventure. And maybe Visual Concepts should've used that formula. Instead, Floigan Bros. is a **substandard virtual pet game with slightly better graphics than a Tamagotchi**. Its potentially cool 1950s cartoon style is held back by repetitive mini-games and gameplay that makes everything a chore. A few brief flashes of an action game still exist, so don't think it's all about playing with and feeding your dim brother Moigle. The problem is that the control and camera for the action bits are just as slow, awkward and frustrating as they are during the exploration parts. Worst of all, just when you think you're going to get to the meat of the game—it's over. Apparently there are going to be MORE of these (this is just Episode 1). It took me less than five hours to get to the end, and three of those hours were spent playing the same four mini-games over and over to get enough points to teach Moigle rudimentary things that you rarely use more than once (yeah, the fun oozes from this game). You can get online and download more little things to do, but that doesn't add much to the game. The one good thing I can say about Floigan Bros. is that they used professional cartoon voices. But even though the game is supposed to be an interactive cartoon, it only has a few cinemas, and the ending is perhaps the lamest I've seen in a long time.

Chris

Need an ego boost? Check out how painfully weak FB is, and you'll feel like the smartest schmuck on the planet; unless, of course, you enjoy **babysitting a whiny aif who constantly screws with you**. Silly me to expect challenging puzzles and a story from this "adventure" title. Nah, collecting points by winning "exciting" mini-games like Catch and Tag do away with all that rubbish. And who really gives a flying Floigan about the "state-of-the-art" AI if all that entails is being at the beck and call of Moigle's constant nagging? The well-composed jazzy score is the only thing FB's got going for it, but sorry to say, that isn't saving this sucker from the junkpile. **Jeanne**

Floigan's got "I've been in development for so long, I've got to be released NOW, finished or not" written all over it. It's riddled with problems. We're talking events that don't trigger properly, leaving you wondering what the hell you're supposed to be doing next. We're talking gameplay that swings wildly from being overly simplistic (with brain teasers that couldn't tease a 1-year-old) to being frustratingly directionless and unintuitive. We're talking bad mini-games that can bore you to sleep in no time. We're talking can't-see-s*** camera angles. We're talking one really bad game here, folks. Great idea. Poor, poor execution.

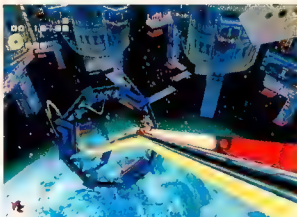
Shoe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	5	3	2

Sonic Adventure 2



The final levels (below) take place on a space station orbiting Earth. Shadow and Sonic grind down these metal ribbons before their final confrontation. You know what they say: Try not to look down.



The last Sonic game on Sega hardware...it's enough to bring tears to my eyes. But what a hell of a way to go. Losing the more boring aspects of the last game (like the fishing levels and the "overworld") was definitely the right thing to do: SA2 feels like a classic Sonic game again, where you speed through one level to the next. Though any stage that doesn't feature Sonic or Shadow really breaks the high-speed flow of the game. Still, the developers make up for it somewhat by offering some incredibly cool, diverse bosses to fight (like King Boom Boo! in the big screen up there). Besides, the cast of playable characters is a lot more likable now that E-102 and Big the Cat are gone (they still do comeos, however). And unlike the first Adventure, you have to play as all the different characters to advance in the game. Not to worry; as with most Sonic games, the difficulty curve in SA2 is just about perfect. If you do happen to get stuck in an area or on a particularly tough boss, the cute little robo-Chaos appear and offer hints to get you through your problem. Outside of a little collision detection glitch here and there, **Sonic's only real problem is the god-awful camera control.** You can rotate your camera most of the time, but you can't actually place it anywhere. Sometimes it'll pan dramatically in the middle of a difficult fight or jump, causing an untimely death. If Sonic Team had fixed that, this game would get a higher score. **Greg**

Being a longtime Sonic fan, I was happy to see Sonic Team return to more fast-paced, action-oriented gameplay. On the other hand, it's amazing that some of the first game's most nagging issues weren't fixed. **The camera is one of the worst I've ever seen in a 3D action game.** You'll get the camera right where you want it, just to have it swing back around when you move. The bad camera is what kills you 90 percent of the time, destroying much of the enjoyment. Sonic and Shadow's levels are excellently crafted, but playing as the rest of the characters (especially Knuckles and Rouge) drags it down. It's good, but the first Sonic Adventure is still better. **Chris**

I wanted to love this game to death, but the resulting homage to Sonic's 10th anniversary is less the pinnacle of his existence and more a **democratically assigned collection of exercises starring his less-interesting colleagues.** Had it been a CD-ROM full of just the Sonic (and his doppeleganger Shadow) high-speed loop-de-loop challenges, SA2 would have been amazing. Instead, the game gives a little too much time to Tails' leaden E-102-styled platform duties and Knuckles' nonstop fetch quests, castrating Sonic 2's main strength: Sonic. And despite some of the loveliest graphics ever seen, horrendous camera work spoils it.

Millkman			
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	5	5

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sonic Team
Featured In: EGM #143
Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pack, SegaNet, VMU
Best Feature: More balanced than Sonic Adventure
Worst Feature: Absolute crap camera angles
Web Site: www.sega.com

Sonic Adventure reinvented Sega's flagship series when it took the blue hedgehog into a fully 3D world and forced the player to spend more time exploring each level. Three new characters (with totally new play styles) brought some much-needed variety to the game, too. But the transition to the Dreamcast wasn't entirely smooth. Camera issues and a boring between-level hub world slowed the game down way too much.

Enter Sonic Adventure 2. That annoying hub world is now gone, and only three of the original five play styles have returned: Sonic's running, Knuckles' treasure hunting and E-102's shooter levels (which are now played using either Tails or Eggman). Hey, at least that stupid fishing game is finally gone.

The two new characters in SA2, Shadow the Hedgehog and Rouge the Bat, are carbon copies of Sonic and Knuckles, though Shadow



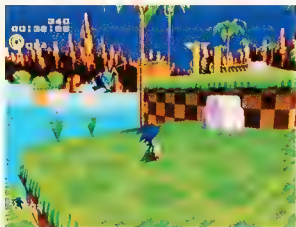
Completing Tails and Rouge's kart levels unlocks the kart mini-game. You'll be able to download different track themes.

is incredibly cool.

Having to use all six characters keeps the game fresh, but some of the treasure-hunting levels can go on way too long. It's mostly due to the horrible camera panning, which is bound to confuse or kill you during a few of the more difficult levels and boss fights. Sonic Team has yet to get a handle on a good camera placement scheme, relying way too much on dramatic pans and angles.

The added value of mini-games is not lost on Sonic Team, so SA2 features a lot more of them. There are four different two-player modes to be found, including an unlockable kart racing game that's actually pretty cool. Even the Chao VMU raising is more of a game and less like a bad Tamagotchi ripoff.

When it all comes down to it, Sonic Adventure 2 is a quality game with a few snags here and there. Hopefully they'll be ironed out by the time the blue blur shows up on a new system.





Publisher: Crave
Developer: Runicraft
Also Try: Quake III Arena
Players: 1
Supports: Mouse, Keyboard
Best Feature: Plays just like the PC version...
Worst Feature: ...until the framerate gets choppier
Web Site: www.cravegames.com

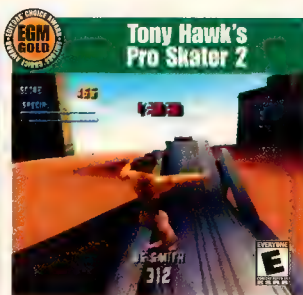


Although I respect SoF's unpretentious take on the first-person shooter genre, it is not a very solid game. Its laundry list of shortcomings includes horrendous (read: zero) AI, choppy framerate, lengthy load times and one of the lamest, most contrived story lines ever. **It's just another typical shooter with the same typical problems.** To top it off, Runicraft left the entire multiplayer mode on the cutting-room floor. For a next-generation first-person shooter, this is inexcusable. Even the now underpowered N64 had four-player splitscreen, folks! In the first couple levels, all appears to be well with this gritty fire-and-forget-style first-person shooter. Its straightforward (and rather linear) levels give you ample opportunity to aim and behold your poorly trained opposition. Yes, the game is shamelessly violent—so violent, in fact, it's almost tacky. I won't deny it: Turning somebody's face into cherry dentures with a 12-gauge satisfies some primal, visceral hunger the first 20 or 30 times, but after a couple hours you begin to see the gimmick for the one-trick pony that it is. The gore adds nothing to the gameplay. It isn't that I don't like my games bloody and medium rare, but amputating arms and legs with your pistol at long range (consistently) really tests your suspension of disbelief. What am I supposed to be fighting, an army of lepers? Rather than ease the pain of losing Half-Life on the DC, SoF pisses on an open wound. **Chae**

With its choppy gameplay, long load times and squads of enemies so dumb even Gomer Pyle could kill 'em with his bare hands, Soldier of Fortune would never pass muster with any drill instructor. But I'm tolerant of a game's flaws if it's still fun, and SoF blows explosive thrills. Your arsenal here is slick, with lots of full-auto firepower and even better sound effects. The lean-around-corners function adds a lot to the gameplay. But ultimately, **SoF is best played as a guilty pleasure:** I kinda like watching bad guys jerk in a death dance when I fill them with lead or fire 'em with my Rambo knife. If only you could share the "fun" with others in a multiplayer mode. **Crispin**

Since it's no surprise SoF's graphics, sound and controls have suffered from being squeezed through the PC-to-DC porting juicer (and woo boy, hey they), I won't bore you with obvious criticisms. Instead, this review is for all you aspiring mercenaries or jaded DC owners out there! Sniping slimy terrorists is hella killer, **setting nukes ablaze in dramatic present-day danger zones like Iraq makes you feel like a military star,** and the groin shot-friendly damage system which (I believe) was developed solely to empower gamers' egos, keep SoF hot long after the blood runs cold. Hankerin' for some good ol' fashioned shootin'? Feed the need with SoF. **Jeanne**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	8	2	10



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Edge of Reality
Featured In: EGM #143
Players: 1-2
Supports: Rumble Pak, Expansion Pak
Best Feature: Classic THPS gameplay
Worst Feature: Extra-blurry visuals
Web Site: www.activision.com



You gotta hand it to developer Edge of Reality—they sure know how to port Tony Hawk games to the Nintendo 64. Their version of the first game captured all the fun and gameplay finesse of Neversoft's original, and this sequel is no different. They even managed to cram in a bonus: a hidden level from Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX. Stellar port job or not, Tony Hawk 2 is still held back by the limitations of the N64 hardware. The visuals are extra blurry, and the backgrounds suffer from the same short draw distance as the PS1 original (although the framerate is a tad smoother here). Still, control has been improved (you're no longer stuck using only the C buttons), and **THPS2's overall gameplay is rock-solid.** You get the revolutionary new Manual mode, which lets you link an unlimited number of grind combos. And you'll find lots of tweaks, like the ability to recover from a bail more quickly by tapping A. The developers squeezed a surprising amount of music onto the cart. Just don't expect any songs with dirty words—or, for that matter, any blood in this sanitized port. Oh, and here's one more thing to keep in mind: THPS2 is one of the last games we have listed on our N64 release chart (Madden 2002 is the only other). Is THPS2 enough to tide you over until the gameCube's Nov. 5 launch? Certainly. If you've never played it on another platform. Otherwise, there's no real reason to get this version. **Crispin**

Maybe I've been playing too much THPS2 on the DC because the environments in this N64 version look blurry to me. The background draw-in is a bit pokey as well (it doesn't hurt gameplay though). Regardless, Neversoft and Edge of Reality have churned out another sweet THPS title. **It's amazing that the now two-year-old engine is still kicking butt.** Fluid animation, excellent camera work and superior two-player action remain the strong points of the title. The features conspicuously missing from the first are happily present now: A park editor and Create-A-Player. Honestly, I don't know how they can make this game play better...it's awesome. **Dean**

What hasn't already been said about Tony Hawk 2? The developers have done an admirable job of re-creating the experience on the N64, right down to the licensed music. All the options are present, as well as the different skaters and the ability to buy new tricks and gear as you earn money. I'm not a big fan of the N64 controller, so things feel a little mushy in this version. Of course, the fuzzy, muddy textures we've come to know and hate on this system take some of the "wow" out of the graphics in THPS2 as well. **Only if you don't own a DC or PS should you buy this.** Otherwise go for the better graphics (DC) or the better controller (PS). **Grea**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	8	2	10



Publisher: Infragames
Developer: Darkworks
Featured In: EGM #144
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Tense atmosphere
Worst Feature: Too much backtracking
Web Site: www.aloneinthedark.com



Alone in the Dark was doing "survival horror"—complete with polygonal characters on predraw backgrounds, shotguns, zombies, locked doors and strangely out-of-place puzzles—back before anyone even had a name for the genre. But the series isn't "alone" any longer, and this latest game barely manages the current status quo in many respects. There's less emphasis on combat, but even so, the enemies are lame and the measly two, count 'em, two boss battles (per character) are hardly any challenge or fun. This game also suffers from a serious lack of design. As usual, progress is all about finding and using the next item or key, but **illogical puzzles, vague directions and objects almost impossible to spot against the backgrounds** cause you to waste too much time wandering the same rooms again and again. Add doors that inexplicably lock and unlock themselves and unhelpful maps, and you better have a strategy guide or the patience of Buddha. But here's why you might still want to check this game out: it's spooky as hell. Having to use a flashlight to find your way and the moody music create an atmosphere as intense as it is creepy. Also, the way the two characters' games overlap and fill gaps in each other's stories works well (better than Resident Evil 2 even), but only already devoted fans of the genre will find these cool aspects enough to overlook the otherwise significant shortfalls. **Mark**

As a fan of the PC series, it's hard to believe that AitD has been reduced to a bastardized Resident Evil ripoff. **It's more like a gothic Easter Egg hunt than a mystery.** Don't come here to get your blood pumping. The zombie-bustin' action is pedestrian at best, and the dark graphics—well, they're just dark, not very scary. Solving puzzles between shotgun blasts is about as exciting as looking for loose change in a sofa. You look for shiny objects with a flashlight, and even after you find something, it wasn't worth the time. It seems like the only thing the designers got right was the game's subtitle—it was often a nightmare to play. **Kraig**

It's funny how Capcom took the best bits of AitD and improved upon them to create Resident Evil, considering Infragames is now doing the same in reverse. The control, if a tad sluggish, is up to par with what you'd expect in a game like this. The flashlight feature works nicely, throwing shapes all around on lush prerendered backgrounds, creating a suspense-filled atmosphere with enough surprises to make me jump on more than one occasion. The game is a bit unfinished in places, and the character models look a little worse, but the reinvention of Edward Carnby holds up. A good Stephen King-y alternative to the competition, and a fine return to form. **Millman**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	4	8

Disney's Atlantis



Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Disney Int./Eurocom
Also Try: Toy Story 2
Players: 1

Best Feature: Good variety
Worst Feature: Camera problems

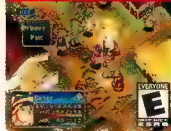
Supports: None
Web Site: www.scea.com

I haven't seen *Atlantis* yet, but after playing this game, I feel like I have. Unlike most movie-themed shovelware, *Atlantis* integrates the story and gameplay seamlessly. I found myself immediately drawn into its world, wanting to solve each level so that I could see what happened next. And hey, I could save nine bucks by seeing most of the movie this way, anyway (spoiling the plot doesn't take long). *Atlantis* is an easy game that will keep you interested even if you have a short attention span. The traditional 3D platform gameplay is varied with mini-games and side-scrolling shooting levels to keep you on guard. Sure, there's a huge jump or hidden object here and there, but if you get stuck, it won't be for long. And there's always an ample amount of power-ups to keep you alive. Unfortunately, the biggest challenge comes from getting the game's camera to behave. Often it makes timing jumps or aiming weapons a real pain unless you move it manually. It's something I can live with that doesn't sink this otherwise great game.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	2	3

Saiyuki: Journey West



Publisher: Koei
Developer: Koei
Featured In: EGM #124
Players: 1

Best Feature: Fantastic story line steeped in true Chinese legend
Worst Feature: Too linear

Also Try: Final Fantasy Tactics
Web Site: www.koegames.com

Perhaps the first faithful video game interpretation of Son Goku, the legendary Chinese monkey-king (Dragonball Z is loosely based on the mythology), *Saiyuki* is an excellent strategy/RPG in an otherwise vanishing genre. Keep in mind, this sort of story is probably not for everyone, but even skeptics will be drawn to the familiar Final Fantasy Tactics-styled presentation. Sprite-based characters, 3D backgrounds and flashy summon effects bind the aesthetic package, but the similarities end there. Closer in feel to Vandal Hearts than FFT (or Romance of the Three Kingdoms, for that matter), *Saiyuki* is more about character positioning and using your were-forms than it is constant team management. That's not to say there's no customizing, as smotheries can upgrade your armor and weapons. But what the game sacrifices in depth, it makes up for in playability that could appeal to a potentially broader audience. Also, the translation is extremely well done; a thoughtful and compassionate retelling of a fascinating legend. Excellent stuff.

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	8	8

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire 3rd Edition



Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Buena Vista Interactive
Also Try: Jeopardy!, Wheel of Fortune

Best Feature: More bad-game bashing for everyone
Worst Feature: Acute desire to assassinate Regis ASAP

Supports: 1-2
Web Site: www.scea.com

Ah, the smell of cash in the air! Who says sex sells? It's all about amateur quiz night at Club Regis, laser lights and all! But don't get saucy just yet, since originality makes no appearance on stage in this third reiteration of the Millionaire series (although only the second for the PlayStation). In fact, instead of improving, as one would and should expect from a frigid 3rd edition, quiz-ees will immediately notice the database of questions has been on Deal-a-Meat instead of the Beefcake liquid diet. Also Regis' few spunky chime-ins will severely disappoint his extremist fans, as well as nauseate everyone else with how much they sound like assembly-line verbal by-product. Even Millionaire TV show fans will have to admit the initial "Ha, ha, I'm on the show!" euphoria they may have experienced from earlier editions feels as old as Regis' make-up this time around. Folks, let's just face it. This disco trival/pursuit needs to finally cash in its chips, roll over like a good piece of you-fill-in-the-blank, and die. And this time, accept no reincarnations.

Jeanne

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
2	2	0	3

Dragon Warrior III



Publisher: Enix
Developer: Enix
Featured In: EGM #139
Players: 1

Best Feature: Excellent animation during battles
Worst Feature: Seemingly endless level-building

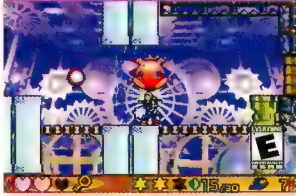
Also Try: Dragon Warrior I&II
Web Site: www.enix.com

It's great to see games like this being redone for the GBC. I really hope the trend continues on the GBA. Unfortunately, while these portable adaptations of classic RPGs are a great way to relive the early days of the genre, they're also a constant reminder of how far we've come. *Dragon Warrior III* boasts some great graphics (considering the system)—very colorful and incredibly well-animated during the battle sequences. The story line is a step up from the "rescue the princess" crap a lot of these early RPGs used, and the dialogue is definitely above-average. There are even some really cool options (throw in to make life easier, like the Full HP option that automatically uses spells and herbs to heal your party. Being able to save any time with the Field Log is a nice touch, too. If it weren't for the fact that you have to walk around aimlessly and build your levels to a ridiculous degree in order to complete the simplest tasks, I'd probably have scored this game a little higher. We've come a long way; endless level-building is an obsolete play mechanic.

Greg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	3	5

Klonoa: Empire of Dreams



Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Featured In: EGM #144
Players: 1
Supports: None
Web Site: www.namco.com
Also Try: Rayman, Mario Advance

Best Feature: Simple but fun gameplay
Worst Feature: Highly repetitive

Whatever it is that platform gamers love about little critters of amibard species tossing puffed-up enemies around, all the while blasting unintelligible gibberish, it was enough to sponsor Klonoa's sequel on the PS2 and this inspired GBA title. More of a puzzle game than its console counterparts, Empire trades in the franchise's familiar "run left to right" gameplay for a slew of large rooms crammed with logistical puzzles. Despite its strictly 2D perspective, the game just looks phenomenal. The independently scrolling backgrounds are still there, but you can't move or throw things into or out of the screen (a small price to pay for a fun-driven title like this to go portable). I was pleased to see the controls hold up so well on the GBA's awkward D-pad; pulling off the small stash of Klonoa's trademark moves was a breeze. While control feels like traditional Klonoa, EoD's structure breaks down a little differently. The object is to locate and reach three stars and one exit (in that order), which are strategically placed within each level. Not unlike watching those slides of your 1984 family reunion, this gets old after a while. Puzzles become more difficult as you progress, and will certainly prove challenging to even skilled gamers, but building the motivation to tackle that next room knowing it's going to be like the last dozen is a task in itself. Nonetheless, it's a solid choice for any platform or puzzle gamer.

Jonathan

Since most folks never get to experience Moonlight Museum, Klonoa's first handheld adventure, it's a real treat to get a brand-new Klonoa game for the GBA. Klonoa: EoD is awesome. It features the same beautiful, stylized artwork as the 3D games, but flatter, with layers of lovely parallax making up for any dimensional loss. The control is right on the money, and the music and sound effects are vintage Klonoa. Consistent with the series, the level design is the real star here, offering five worlds of uninhibited fun, with a variety of action and puzzle-based stages that will appeal to a broad audience. An instant classic in my opinion.

Milkman

I'm all for traditional 2D platformers, especially when they play and control as well as Klonoa: EoD does. The gameplay is nothing revolutionary, mind you, and this title is nothing next to Mario Advance. But the clever puzzle elements, clean graphics and simple premise all make this one of the better GBA carts on the market. Hardcore gamers may be disappointed, though. Empire of Dreams is a breeze to beat, especially since free lives are always available (like you mate readers wish Jeanne Kim could be). I had more than 30 lives before even leaving the first world! (Not that they were all needed...I hardly died at all during my 2D romp.)

Shoe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	6



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Tricks of the Trade

By Trickman Terry
tricks@zilfidavis.com

TRICK OF THE MONTH

Twisted Metal: Black

INVULNERABILITY

In the middle of the game, press and hold the L1+L2+R1+R2 buttons. While holding these, quickly press Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Left, Down, Up. Precise timing is needed to get the trick to work. Once you do this, the words, "Invulnerable On" will appear on the top of the screen. You will now be invulnerable to all attacks and explosions.

Will Brewster
Carrollton, TX



PS2 PLAYSTATION 2

CART Fury: Championship Racing

CARS, DRIVERS, ETC.

From the Select Driver screen, press the following buttons to access new characters and cars.

More Cars

Press L1 to access alternate cars. The new cars you open while playing the game will also be present on this screen.

More Drivers

Press R1 to access alternate characters.

In case you're not used to reading game manuals (check page 22 of your instructions), here are codes to enter on the Cheats screen.

Fog

R2, R1, X, Square, Square, Circle.

1 Big Head

Triangle, Square, Square, L2, L1, R2.

Twisted Metal: Black

HIDDEN VEHICLES

2 Yellowjacket

In the Junkyard, shoot down the airplane that circles the level and it will crash into the side of the gully. The wreckage of the plane will open up a secret passage-way that spans the level. Inside the middle of the tunnel is a strange control panel and a weird-looking concrete structure.



Shoot the panel until it blows up, then Yellowjacket will be lowered down. From here on out, this car will be playable.

Axel

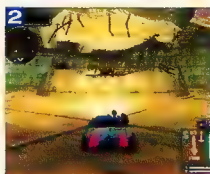
In the Freeway, grab yourself some Gas Cans and head over to the construction site. Find yourself an incline that allows you to aim your weapons up at the crane that is holding a small building. Shoot the Gas Cans into the control room of the crane to force it to drop the building. Drive to where the building is and blast the walls off of it. You will find your new vehicle inside of the little house structure.

Warthog

In the Suburbs, there is a hill that overlooks the factory district that you can climb from inside the carnival. Leap off of the hill (marked with a Gas Can) onto the building labeled "A & L Transportation." Shoot out the small raise in the ceiling to open up a hole into the building. Drop down inside and you will find a control switch to shoot. Blasting it will lower Warthog down on a giant piston.

ManSlaughter

When you exit the Prison Ship, take an immediate right turn and follow the path around the out-



side of the boat until you come across some crates with a Health Power-Up on top of them. Shoot the crates until they form a ramp, then ride up and shoot the hull of the ship to reveal a secret passage into the Detention Center. Inside is a switch that reveals ManSlaughter as a playable car.

DC DREAMCAST

Bangai-O

3 HIDDEN OPTIONS AND LEVEL SELECT

When you are asked to enter your initials, put in the pale gopher symbols for all three initials. Then choose "Start Game." When the Level menu appears, scroll Left or Right to choose your starting level. You can choose any level up to 44 with this trick. To get the new options, choose Exit from the Level menu. Go back to the main menu and pick Game Options. Scroll down and choose "Done." You will now access a new menu called Secret Garden. Now you can choose the size of Riki and Mami's shots, the size of the debris, choice of background and Invincibility!

Crazy Taxi 2

MANY COOL CODES

4 No Destination Mark

On the Driver Select screen, press and hold the Y button and then press A. The words, "No Destination Mark" will show up on the lower-right side of the





screen. You will have to rely on the arrows to guide you to the correct spot to stop your taxi.

No Arrows

On the Driver Select screen, press and hold the START button and then press A. The words, "No Arrows" will show up on the lower-right side of the screen. You will have to rely on your passengers' directions to get to your destinations.

Expert Mode

On the Driver Select screen, press and hold the Y+START button simultaneously and then press A. The word, "Expert" will show up on the lower-right side of the screen. This is a combination of No Arrows and No Destination Mark.

New Views

(Note: You must have another controller plugged into port 3 of your Dreamcast for this trick to work.) Take the controller in port 3 and hold START. While holding this button, press any of the following buttons for these results.

- 5** Y = Third-Person View
- X = Toggle between Counter Clockwise and Clockwise Rotation.
- A = Normal View
- B = Toggle between Left Side Panel View, Front View and Rear View. (While in this mode, press the following commands to get

even more views. Left = Left Side Panel View, Right = Right Side Panel View, Up = Unobstructed Front View).
L-Trieger = Change arrow color to blue.



Incredible Crisis

6 STRANGE EFFECTS

(Note: You must have another controller plugged into port 2 for these tricks to work.) In the middle of the game, take controller 2 and hold Up or Down to make your head huge, and hold Left or Right to flatten your character. Also, you can press Triangle for a horn, Square for a crowd boo, Circle for a Drum sound, or X for a whistle.

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

GRIND METER AND GRANDMA Grind Meter

First, begin a new career. In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Press and hold the L1 button. While holding it,



press Left, Circle, Square, Triangle, Square, Circle, X. A meter will appear and show your balance when you grind.

7 Unlock Grandma

In the game, press START to pause and then choose the Retry option. Repeat this nine more times and the game will tell you that you ride like a grandma. As soon as you begin riding again, your character will turn into an old lady!

Mike Hansen
Eagan, MN

Who Wants to Be A Millionaire: 3rd Ed.

8 COMMENTS AND ALTERNATE NAMES

On the "Enter Your Name" screen, put in your name as REGIS or REGIS PHILBIN and Regis will tell you that it is taken and replace it with another name, such as BIG FAKER or PRETENDER. If you enter the name, MILLIONAIRE, Regis will make a comment and give you another name, such as MY BIGGEST FAN. If you choose not to enter a name, Regis will get mad and give you a replacement name, such as WHOEVER.

World's Scariest Police Chases

MANY COOL CODES

On the main menu screen, enter the following button codes for the results shown here.

9 All Missions

Down, Up, Left, Right, X, Triangle, Circle, Square.

TOP 5 TRICKS

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

1. Pokémon Gold/Silver



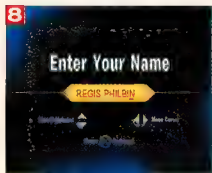
Duplicate Pokémon and Items

WARNING: THIS TRICK AFFECTS YOUR SAVED GAMES. USE WITH CAUTION! First, you must decide on the Pokémon and item you want to clone. At any time during the game, press START and access the Pokémon option. Choose the Pokémon you want to clone and make it hold an item that you also want to clone (such as a Master Ball). Next, go into a town and find a Pokémon Center. Move in front of the PC and press START. Move down the menu and access the Save option. After saving your game, press the A button to turn on the PC. Access Bill's PC and deposit the Pokémon you want to clone into one of the boxes. Then choose "Change Box" and move to an empty box. Press A and choose "Switch." When it asks if you want to save the game, choose "Yes." Now, this part is very important and requires precise timing. The game will tell you that there is already a save file, and it will ask you if it is OK to overwrite the file. Choose "Yes" and immediately turn off the Game Boy. Be sure to turn it off before any words other than "Saving" appear on the screen, or the trick will not work. Turn the Game Boy back on again. Check your party status and you should see the Pokémon you wanted to clone still in your party. Access Bill's PC and look at the box in which you deposited the Pokémon. The Pokémon and the item it was holding will be cloned inside the box, and still in your party! You can clone up to five Pokémon and items at one time by doing this trick.

2. Onimusha: Warlords

Bonus Secrets

Onimusha: Warlords 2 Trailer After you beat the game, a new option called "Special Feature" will appear on the game select screen. In the Special Feature menu, you will find a short sneak preview of Onimusha: Warlords 2.
Extra Costume Another bonus that you earn for beating the game is





TRICKS

TOP 5 TRICKS

(CONTINUED)

Samanosuke's extra costume. If you start a new game and choose the "Extra" option, the mighty samurai Samanosuke will be wearing a lovable panda costume. The soul-stealing Orb on his arm is even changed into a happy, smiling flower.

Bonus Game. If you've managed to find all 20 of the Fluorites in the game, you'll open the pot-smashing mini-game, Oni Spirits. This 12-level game is very tough but fairly addictive.

3. ATV Offroad PS2 Fury

Increase AI Difficulty From the main menu, choose Pro-Career. Choose an empty slot and then put in ALLOUTAI for the name. After pressing "Done," you will be taken back to the main menu. Now when you race, your opponents will be more difficult to pass.

4. Zone of the Enders PS2

Health and Ammo

In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Then press L1, L1, L2, L2, L1, R1, L1, R1, R2, R1. Your health and ammunition will be refilled. Note that your level will decrease each time you enter it.

Versus

On the title screen (where it says, "Press Start Button"), press Circle, X, Right, Left, Right, Left, Down, Down, Up, Up. You'll hear a sound confirming that the code was entered correctly. Press START and scroll through the main menu options until you see Versus. Choose it to fight a one-on-one battle with the computer or a second player.

5. Dr. Mario 64

S-Hard in Story

From the main menu screen, choose Story. After choosing a name, go to the Story menu and move down to Game Lv. Highlight the Hard setting and press the Z button to get the S-Hard difficulty.



All Starting Locations in Patrol Mode

Down, Up, L2, L1, X, Triangle, R2, R1.

Bonuses and Weapons

Left, Right, L1, R1, Circle, Square, R2, L2. This will open up the bonus items in the Options, such as the Flower Power theme, Tank, Pizza Truck, etc. This will also give you all weapons in Free Patrol.



Earthworm Jim

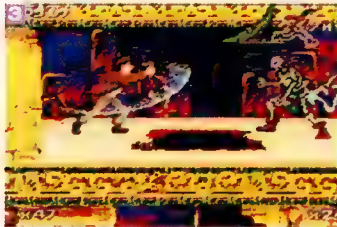
LEVEL SWIP AND LEVEL SELECT

Level Skip

Press START to pause during the game, then press Right, R-Shift, B, A, L-Shift, L-Shift, A, R-Shift. You will see the Earthworm Jim head say "Groovy" if the code was entered correctly.

1 Level Select

Press START to pause during the game, then enter the following commands to skip to the specific levels as shown. What the Heck?: SELECT, R-Shift, B, Down, L-Shift, B. Down the Tubes: Up, L-Shift, Down, A, R-Shift, A. Snot a Problem: R-Shift, Up, SELECT, L-Shift, R-Shift, Left. Level 5: R-Shift, L-Shift, A, B, B, A, L-Shift, R-Shift.



For Pete's Sake: Right, Left, R-Shift, L-Shift, A, R-Shift. Buttville: L-Shift, A, Up, R-Shift, A, R-Shift, A, SELECT.

Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure

2 LEVEL SELECT, DEBUG AND INFINITE CONTINUES

On the title screen, enter L-Shift, SELECT, A, SELECT, R-Shift, A, L-Shift, SELECT. The "Level Select" will appear in the middle of the screen. Hold SELECT and press L-Shift or R-Shift to switch levels and press START or B to begin on the level you chose. While playing, you can exit the current level by pressing START to pause and then pressing SELECT. This will bring you back to the title screen. To move your character anywhere on the current level screen, press and hold the SELECT button. While holding it, move the D-pad in any direction and your character will go there—being invulnerable all the while. You can pick up all needed items in the level this way, without getting hit.

3 Infinite Continues

Use up all three of your lives in the first level. When the "Continue" screen appears, press B, B, B. The counter will change to "99" and stop counting down. This will give you an unlimited amount of continues.



Iridion 3D

2 LEVEL AND BOSS SELECT

On the title screen, move down until you access the "Password" option. On the password screen, put in the following codes (make sure to include the * symbols at the beginning and end of the passwords). First, enter *S3L3CT0n* and when you are taken back to the title screen, enter the Password option again and put in *SH0WT1M3* for the second password. You will be automatically taken to the "Options" screen. The last two options will be "Start Level" and "Start at Boss." From here you can start at the beginning of any level, or you can choose a level number and start at the boss of that level. During the game, press SELECT to end the current level and return to the title screen.

Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2

UNLOCK NEW BOXERS

Rumble Man

On the main menu screen, highlight Championship and press Left, Left, Right, Left, Right, Right, Left, Left, L-Shift+R-Shift. You will hear a cheering sound when entered correctly.

Shaquille O'Neal

On the main menu screen, highlight Survival and press Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, Left,

Left, Right, L-Shift+R-Shift. You will hear a cheering sound when entered correctly.

Michael Jackson

On the main menu screen, highlight Arcade and press Left, Left, Right, Right, Left, Right, L-Shift+R-Shift. You will hear a cheering sound if done right.

GT Advance: Championship Racing

EXTRA MODES AND CREDITS

On the title screen where "Press Start Button" is flashing, press and hold the L-Shift+R-Shift buttons. While holding these, press the following commands for the results shown.

Extra 1

Hold Right and press the B

button. You will hear a sound. The Extra 1 option will open up on the main menu screen. It will allow you to play as the kart racers in this mode.

Extra 2

Hold Left and press the B button. You will hear a sound. The Extra 2 option will open up on the main menu screen. It will allow you to play as the Formula cars in this mode.

Ending Credits

Hold Up and press the B button. You will hear a sound. The ending will appear and the credits will roll after the code is entered.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

CHEATS AND MORE

You will hear a sound and the wheel will spin around when you

enter these codes correctly.

Cheats Opened

On the main menu, hold the R-Shift button and press B, A, Down, A, START, START, B, A, Right, B, Right, A, Up, Left. Now access the Options and the Cheats option will be available. This will give you access to Perfect Balance, Always Special, Disco Lights and more!

Smiley Face Blood

On the main menu, hold the R-Shift button and press START, A, Down, B, A, Left, Left, A, Down. When your skater falls, he/she will leave behind smiley faces instead of blood.

No Blood

On the main menu, hold the R-Shift button and press B, Left, Up, Down, Left, START, START.

Constant Zoom In and Out

On the main menu, hold the

R-Shift button and press Left, A, START, A, Right, START, Right, Up, START.

Unlock Spider-Man

On the main menu, hold the R-Shift button and press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A, START. Spider-Man will be available from the Select Skater screen in Free Skate and Single Session modes.

Level Select

On the main menu, hold the R-Shift button and press A, START, A, Right, Up, Up, Down, Down, Up, Up, Down.

Level Select and Lotsa Money

On the main menu, hold the R-Shift button and press B, A, Left, Down B, Left, Up, B, Up, Left, Left.

GameShark Codes



PLAYSTATION

Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX: Maximum Remix

Unlock Levels - DM

300832F80015

Unlock Costumes - DM

300832F90005

Unlock Bikes - DM

300832FA0005

Unlock Levels - RN

300835580015

Unlock Costumes - RN

300835590005

Unlock Levels - TM

300837B80015

Unlock Costumes - TM

300837B90005

Unlock Bikes - TM

300837BA0005

Unlock Levels - ML

30083A180015

Unlock Costumes - ML

30083A190005

Unlock Bikes - ML

30083A1A0005

Unlock Levels - CK

30083C780015

Unlock Costumes - CK

30083C790005

Unlock Bikes - CK

30083C7A0005

Unlock Levels - TM

30083ED80015

Unlock Costumes - TM

30083ED90005

Unlock Bikes - TM

30083EDA0005

Unlock Levels - KH

300841380015

Unlock Costumes - KH

300841390005

Unlock Bikes - KH

3008413A0005

Unlock Levels - SB

300843980015

Unlock Costumes - SB

300843990005

Unlock Bikes - SB

3008439A0005

Unlock Levels - LR

300845F80015

Unlock Costumes - LR

300845F90005

Unlock Bikes - LR

300845FA0005

DREAMCAST

18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker

Must Be On

24584C490000002

Inf. Time Arcade

F294B9A30000009

331EA9480000009

Inf. Time Parking

C8CAF77E0000009

80C9C7A48000009

A6ADE1DA0000009

Time 0:00:00 Parking

D6CA9BFA0000009

Inf. Time Score Attack

4B5ACED70000009

Max Cash

6AB8C763205FE0FF

Must Be Last Code

245EECA9

PLAYSTATION 2

Crazy Taxi

Must Be On

EC907FE0143C2534

Infinite Fare Time

4CBA872C1456E00C

Max Cash Earned

1CBA840817E9C70C

Square = More Time

0CD237301456E6A5

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FINAL WORD

Final Fantasy Fixation



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West Coast Editor



Chris Johnston
News Editor/
Philanthropist



Che Chou
West Coast Editor



Greg Sewart
Previous Editor



Mark Macdonald
Executive Editor

James: Am I looking forward to FFX? Hell yes, I am. Since I actually got to play the finished version for the feature, I can definitely say that the game has some big changes (most for the better), which address the concerns I had for the series. I felt like VIII and IX, as good as they may have been, simply took the line, and were evolutionary and not revolutionary. FFX is really kick-ass and I can hardly wait for my import to show up in the mail. I just hope the masses can recognize the improvements Square has made to FFX. It's really incredible. My favorite FF? I'd have to say, until now, that it was VII. I know a lot of people dog it, but I associate it with a great time in my life,

"I just hope the masses can recognize the improvements Square has made..."

and I played the import and domestic versions to death. So there.

Chris: As the FF series has gone from 2D to 3D it's lost a bit of that magical quality for me. My favorite Final Fantasy will always be FFIII (well, VI if you're going by the Japanese timeline), with IX a close second. Those had characters I actually cared about and some great moments of comic relief. I'm not really a fan of Tetsuya Nomura's character designs, and while I thought IX was a breath of fresh air for the series, X seems to be bringing it back to reality. Characters like Steiner or Vivi (two of the more developed cast of FFX) just wouldn't be in FFXVIII, FFX or FFXI. Since FFVII, I've mostly just played through about the first disc and then stopped. I just haven't been compelled to finish them. But hey, maybe FFX will change that trend, eh?

Che: I know many fans have a lot of precious memories connected to the 16-bit FFs, but not me. Being a little older, I remember playing FFs on the SNES in college and just getting completely bored with the primitive dialogue and all the cliché-ridden plot devices. Love, death, betrayal...these were all portrayed with zero subtlety. Sure, the gameplay was great, but more than any previous RPG I've played, FF was loaded with story and it forced you down a very linear path. It wasn't until FFXVIII that Sakaguchi's favorite themes actually worked for me in

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an emotional context. Why? Because the graphics were finally good enough to convey human expression. As far as I'm concerned, bringing back character designer Tetsuya Nomura for FFX was the right thing to do. I can't wait.

Greg: Che is nothing but a graphics whore, but I do agree with him on one point: The 16-bit FFs were so freakin' melodramatic. I especially remember FFIV in that respect. Every 10 minutes the sad music would begin, someone would die, or remember a loved one, or be unable to confess their feelings for whomever their love interest was in the game. Then all the characters would hang their heads for a moment of retrospective silence, as if we

needed the point driven home. That said, I didn't really enjoy FFVIII all, and that thought FFX was the return to the series' roots the franchise needed. While I'm excited to play FFX, I'm hesitant to get my expectations too high for fear it's just gonna be another disappointment like the first couple of FF games on the PS1.

Mark: The 16-bit Final Fantasies were melodramatic? Did you play VII or VIII? Hell, every game in the series goes overboard with the cheese now and then. While I've enjoyed the different stories to varying degrees, and definitely appreciated the graphics (if not the character designs) of the PlayStation games, what it comes down to in picking a favorite for me is gameplay, and that is why FFV is king. No other game in the series, or any other RPG I've played on console or PC actually, has come close to the genius that is the Job System. The ability to pick different classes (or "jobs") for your characters to advance in actually made you want to fight all those damn random encounters. It also made the game so deep that I began playing FFV again as soon as the credits stopped rolling to explore it all, and a couple times again after that. I can't say that about any other Final Fantasy. Well, actually, I guess I did play through VII six times, but that's different—I had to for the strategy guide I was writing. But that is another story... (cue Conan music).

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Virtual Fighter 4
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Alliance

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Sega Strikes Back
Phantasy Star Online
Quake III: Arena
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December '00

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Paper Mario
Fall Tokyo Game Show
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June '01

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Mat Hoffman's Pro
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July '00

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January '01

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Sies of Arcadia
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July '01

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Gran Turismo 3
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Metal Gear Solid 2
Space Channel 5
Seaman
Zelda: Majora's Mask
Black & White
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February '01

Xbox Revealed
Zone of the Enders
Phantasy Star Online
Fighting Vipers 2
Star Wars: Starfighter
Grandia II
Banjo-Tooie
Tomb Ra der Chronicles
Donkey Kong Country
Mickey's Speedway USA

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August '01

Nintendo GameCube
E3 Wrap-up
Tekken 4
Metal Gear Solid 2
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NEXT MONTH

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Metal Gear Solid 2

After tracking MGS2 creator Hideo Kojima to the secret underground bunker where his team is putting the finishing touches on this year's most anticipated PS2 game, we were granted an exclusive interview with the man, the myth, the legend himself. Check back next month for all the details, plus a rare peek into the Konami development offices, interviews with the U.S. voice cast, a full recap of the twisting story up until now, and more. If you miss this, you better be dead or in jail (and if you're in jail, subscribe!).



ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

Reviewed Next Month:

- **Mario Kart: Super Circuit** (GBA)
- **Advance Wars** (GBA)
- **Super Street Fighter II Revival** (GBA)
- **Spider-Man 2 Enter: Electro** (PS)
- **Le Mans 24 Hours** (PS2)
- **Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX** (DC)
- **Extermination** (PS2)

Previewed Next Month:

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Sept. 2001 ICO ICO

On sale Aug. 14

Demo Disc Video Previews

- **Legion: The Legend of Excalibur**
- **Escape from Monkey Island**
- **Disney's Atlantis: The Lost Empire**
- **Drakan II**
- **OKAGE: Shadow King**
- **Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX**

Sony's ICO wowed all comers at E3. Find out why. Also, be sure to check out OPM's ongoing coverage of Gran Turismo 3 and a Resident Evil Code: Veronica X review. We'll also present new info on Dragon Warrior VII, Spider-Man: The Movie and Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3.



EXPERT GAMER

Sept. 2001

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- **Escape from Monkey Island strategy**
- **Tony Hawk 2 cheats for N64**
- **More codes and tricks**



Oracle of Ages

Check back in the September issue of *Expert Gamer* for the second blowout on Zelda's newest adventure. Use our maps, walk-through information and charts for Oracle of Ages. In his last appearance for the Dreamcast, Sonic makes his return in Sonic Adventure 2. Don't miss it! On the PS2 front, a Resident Evil Code: Veronica X guide.



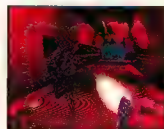
COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

Sept. 2001

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Killin' Time

Killin' Time is here! The next wave of first-person shooters is coming, and *Computer Gaming World* has the lowdown on all the heavy hitters. Check out our exclusive hands-on previews of Aliens Vs. Predator 2, Return to Castle Wolfenstein, Soldier of Fortune 2, Medal of Honor: Allied Assault, Red Faction and more!



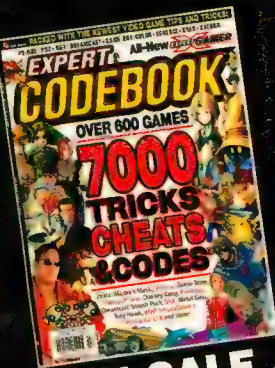
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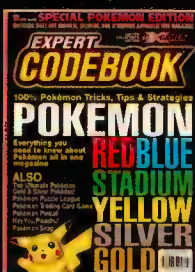
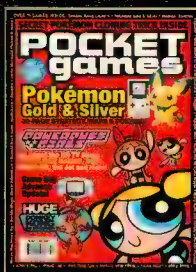
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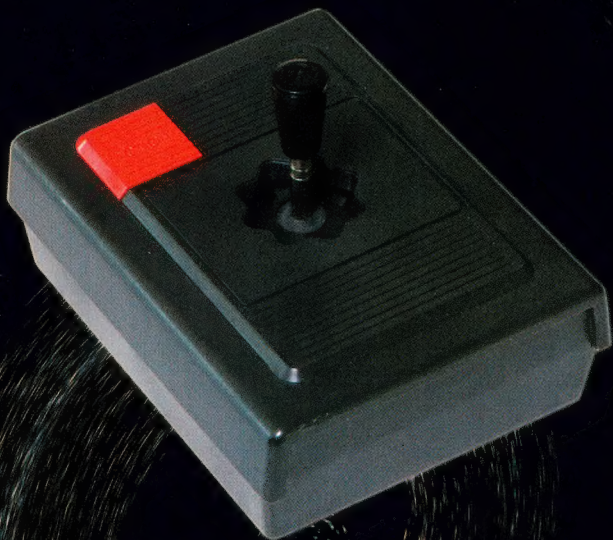
Eat My Shorts! Win a Free Copy of Gran Turismo 3 for the PS2.

While reading this issue, did you notice any clever (or not so clever) references or quotes from a famous movie or that TV show we all love so much, *The Simpsons*? you did, send the quote or reference to us (along with what page you found it on and your mailing address). *Gran Turismo 3* is yours in a random drawing.

Five lucky folks will win a free copy of this month's Review Crew's Game of the Month (in case you weren't paying attention, it's Gran Turismo 3 for the PlayStation 2.) Send your stuff to: EGMC@ziffdavis.com (subject: Eat My Shorts—September Issue) or simply mail us at: Eat My Shorts—September Issue, c/o Electronic Gaming Monthly, P.O. Box 1185, Oak Brook, IL 60452-1185.

Some of the references and quotes include: "...of the 99 ultra-violence..." (*A Clockwork Orange*, pg. 104), "A noble, quiet, embiggens smallest man..." (*Simpsons*, pg. 34), "...purple monkey dishwasher" (*Simpsons*, pg. 104), "...purple foil" (*Simpsons*, pg. 104).

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