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THE GBA SEQUEL TO
SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT

MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

MK'S RETURN TO ITS ROOTS



REVIEWED:

- Blood Omen 2 (PS2, Xbox)
- Resident Evil (GameCube)
- Dragon Ball Z (GBA)
- Wipeout Fusion (PS2)



PREVIEWED:

- EverQuest (PS2)
- Crazy Taxi 3 (Xbox)
- Minority Report (PS2)
- Mario Tennis (GC)

DISPLAY UNTIL JUNE 4

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA Issue 155

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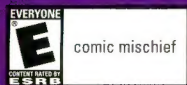
"Raggy, Raphne, Red, Relma? Where are you?"



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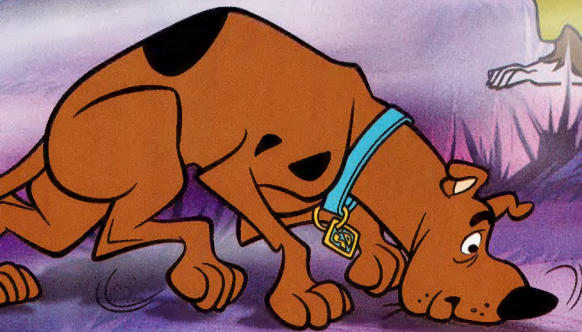
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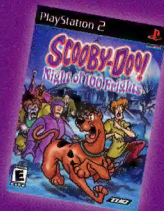
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voice actors and special guests.



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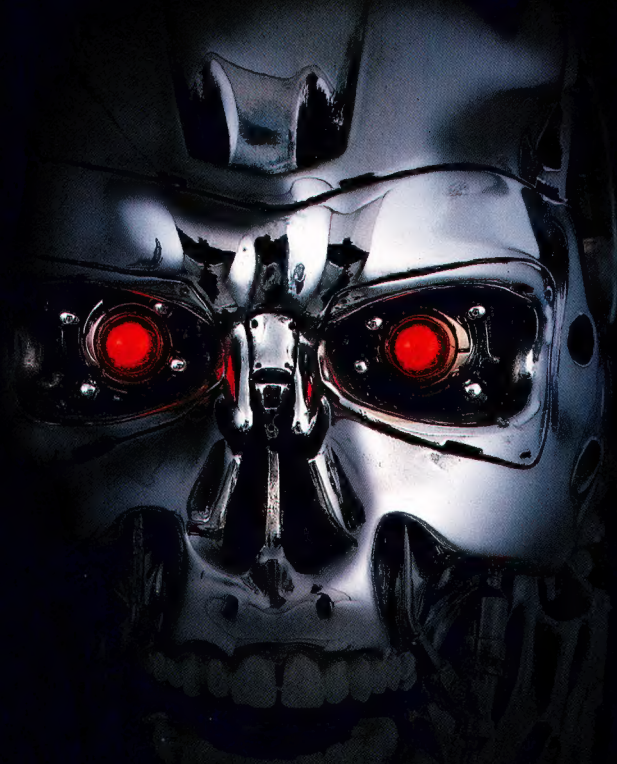
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PlayStation 2



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New Yankee Skipper Manager, GM

By FELIX COATES

Yanks Slow Out of the Gate
Fans question off-season moves

ASSOCIATED TIMES

A Yankee losing five of their first seven games

SPORTS WEEKLY

Pitching woes plague struggling Yankees

Posada sidelined for 2 weeks with foot injury

Associated Times

Top prospects called up to fill holes

With the advice of scouts and coaches, the Yankees' GM has called up two promising prospects from the minors to help plug the holes created by recent injuries. Management hopes these youngsters will not only

Yanks snag Big Unit in blockbuster trade

By M. Yeung

In a move geared to brace them for a second-half surge, the Yankees landed perennial All-Star Randy Johnson in a trade yesterday. The 6'10" lefty will step in as the number one starter and shore up a rotation that has been, by most accounts, New York's

Big Unit fires one-hitter as Yankees' streak continues

By Marisa Ramsdell
SPORTS WEEKLY

Yanks staff up with veteran coaches

By Matt Johnson

NEWS TODAY

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2001

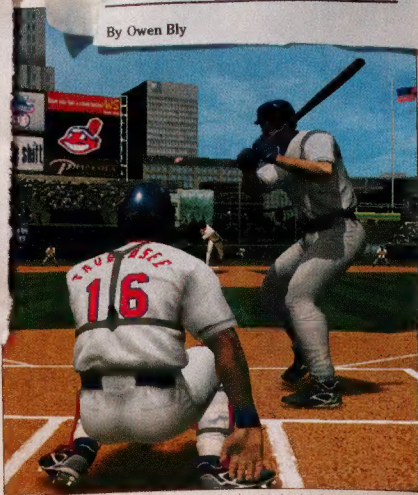
NY signs Giambi to be 'cornerstone' of franchise



Money Player. Jason Giambi, infielder in Oakland.

Retooled lineup excites fans, management

By Owen Bly



Look out world, Giambi's blast won the game and sent a signal to the rest of the league.

Giambi and Co. Starting to Roll

By H. Willoughby
Staff Writer

Johnson proved once again why he's one of the great...



Have a Seat.





Once upon a time,
there was a happy little place,
with happy little creatures.



Comic Mischief
Mild Language



PlayStation 2

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Until, one day a bunch of freestylers found it and it wasn't so happy anymore.
The End.



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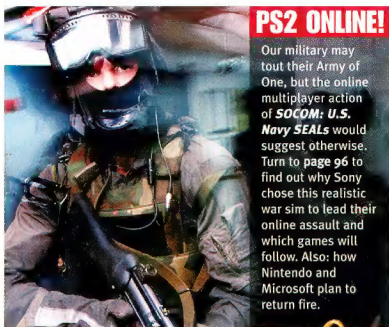


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PS2 ONLINE!

Our military may tout their Army of One, but the online multiplayer action of **SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs** would suggest otherwise. Turn to page 96 to find out why Sony chose this realistic war sim to lead their online assault and which games will follow. Also: how Nintendo and Microsoft plan to return fire.

Jango Fett might have found that Pokémon are great for target practice, but as you'll see on page 26, **Pokémon Advance** makes you stick to just catching them.



Jango Fett? More like Jango Fett.



LucasArts' new **Episode II** games are streaming out faster than a gaggle of Stormtroopers, er, Clones, and on page 44, we'll give you an exclusive glimpse at this next generation of **Star Wars** games.



See why the new **Castlevania** proves that killing zombies is perfect for killin' time on page 90.



It's been years since Midway made "fatality" a household word. Turn to page 56 to see if **Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance** can recapture the series' lost (blood) luster.

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Square and Nintendo finally kiss and make up, Yu Suzuki spills his guts on **Virtua Fighter 4** and beyond, plus the full scoop on **Pokémon Advance** and the exciting new Sega-made **F-Zero** sequel.

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We have more sneak peeks than the hole in the women's locker room. Our looks at **Onimusha 2**, **Tenchu 3** and **Medal of Honor: Frontline** on PS2, **MechAssault** on Xbox, and **TimeSplitters 2** on GameCube will surely make you break out the Wet Wipes.

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We turned out the night-light to see if the GameCube's **Resident Evil** kept that shorts-slinging magic, whether Kain still thrills in **Blood Omen** (Xbox and PS2), and if **Triple Play 2002**'s bat still has pop on PS2.

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Unlock classic characters in **Virtua Fighter 4**, be stronger than the Force in **Jedi Starfighter**, and open up a bunch of hidden pros in **Tiger Woods 2002**. Also: Become the king of **NBA Street** on GameCube.

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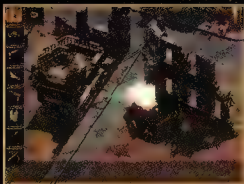


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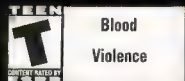
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2
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IT'S WWII ALL OVER AGAIN.



PlayStation.2

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EDITORIAL

Online: Ready or Not

Online gaming is right around the corner. When the PlayStation 2 Network Adapter is released this fall, it'll let people connect their PS2s to the Internet via narrowband 56K or broadband. That should change the face of video gaming forever, eh?

Wait a sec. Didn't Sega's Dreamcast let you do all that too? In fact, wasn't a modem packed in with the system, so you didn't have to buy extra hardware like this PS2 Network thingamajig? And haven't sales figures been telling us for years that consumers just aren't willing to buy peripheral add-ons for their gaming machines? So aren't Sony's plans to take the PS2 online doomed from the get-go?

No doubt early adopters and hardcore gamers will buy the Network Adapter right away. After all, we can't wait to tear it up online with our cover-story game, *SOCOM*, like our PC *Counter-Strike* friends have been doing for years. But early adopters and hardcore gamers didn't make SegaNet a commercial success, and they're not going to make "PS2 online" one either.

It's the general, more mainstream crowd who will make the difference. If they give online console gaming a shot and say, "We like. Oh boy, do

we like," only then will we see a true shift in the industry. And if anything can turn the masses on to Internet gaming, it's the oh-so-popular PlayStation label. You know, the brand that turned video gaming from a geeky Comic Book Guy hobby into something that "cool people" do? When the PlayStation met the mass market, the two changed gaming forever (it's now big, big business, and everyone wants a piece of the pie). They can do it for online as well.

And about that whole "having to buy a separate add-on" obstacle that I talked about earlier...keep in mind that the PlayStation 2 North American installed base is "only" 9.1 million right now. Compare that to the 32.2 million PS1s over here. That means, assuming the PS2 has as much growth potential as the PS1, Sony still has plenty of room and time to figure out how to make the Network Adapter an integral part of the PlayStation 2 experience. Fifty bucks says the Adapter, not long after its release, will be bundled in with the PS2 hardware, even though that's not on the itinerary right now. After all, Sony *needs* to get them into consumers' hands if they're gonna reach that critical mass market for game makers to want to support online play.

Shoo

By Dan "Shoo" Hsu



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Founder Steve Harris



Greg Orland

A modern-day Diogenes in a latter-day Gomorrah, ne'er-do-well Greg Orland is known by his peers at *Xbox Nation* as the "editor-at-lunch."



Ray LeWan

Ray's one of our behind-the-scenes guys. This month he's helping out with layout on our Previews/Reviews sections. He's also contributed to our sister mag *GameNOW*.



Peter Feloni

Although Pete's only been contributing for a few months, his tricks will be remembered long after he starts his new job as a secret IT agent. *EGM* wishes him luck!



Shane Bettenhausen

Shane lends his sagacious skills to *EGM*'s previews, reviews and features. He's also wormed his way into *GameNOW*, *OPM*, *Pocket Games* and *Gamers.com*.



Christian Nutt

Once again, we welcome Christian onboard to lend his expertise to our previews. Interested in more of his work? Check out our Gamers.com site or *Pocket Games*.



Jeremy "Norm" Scott

Creator of *EGM*'s popular *Hus and Chan* comic series, Norm somehow succeeds every month in making us laugh, cry and feel like superheroes all at once.



Eat My Shorts!

Look around this issue for quotes from *The Simpsons* or a famous movie. Find one, e-mail it (and your mailing address) to us at EGM@ziffdavis.com (Subject: *Eat My Shorts—EGM #155*), and you may be one of five lucky winners (chosen at random) who will win a copy of this month's *Game of the Month*.

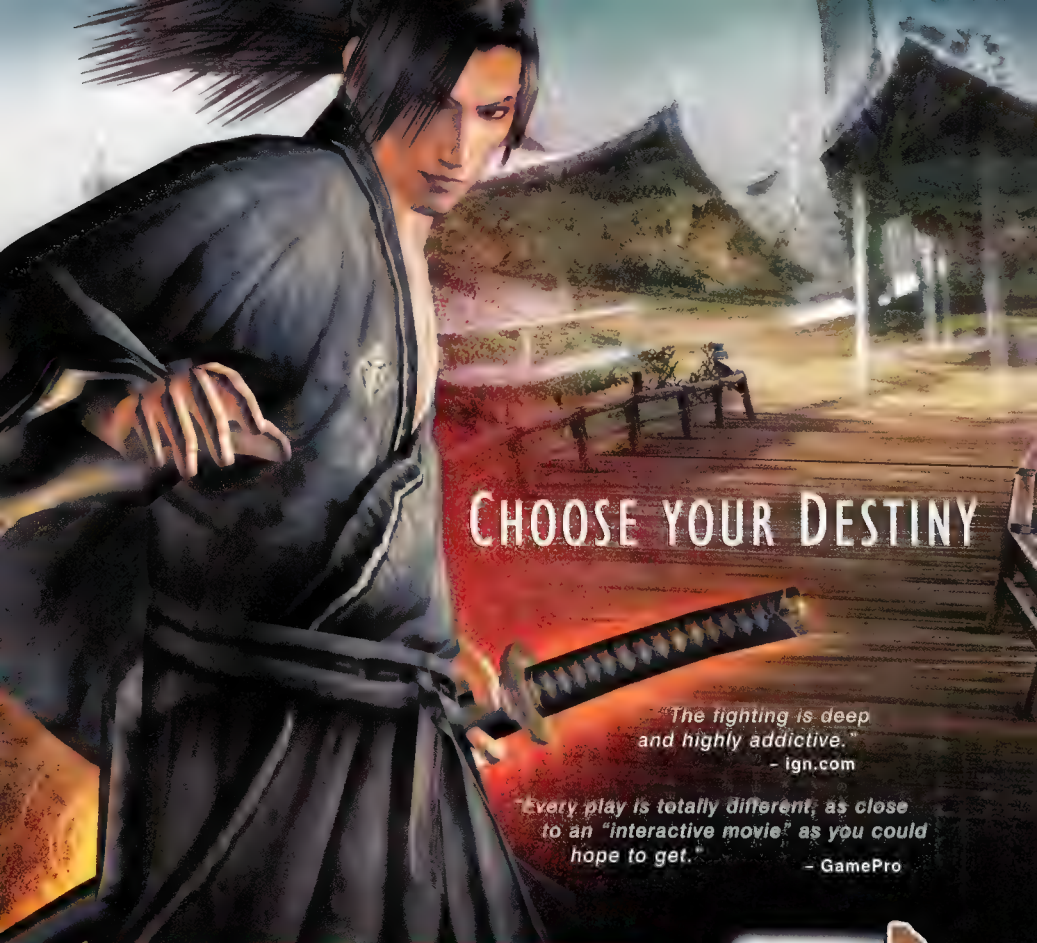
Just a few of the quotes from issue #154:
• "These aren't the droids we're looking for." (*Star Wars*, pg. 28)
• "On the seventh day, man will rest...in peace!" (*Mortal Kombat: Annihilation*, pg. 41)
• "C'mon...we practically spoon feed this one to you!"
• "Worst...reader poll...ever."
(*The Simpsons*, pg. 18)

Issue #154's winners of *Hot Shots Golf 3* (PS2):
• Chris Ritko—Johnstown, PA
• Jay Stob II—Hudsonville, MI
• Chris Reditto—Chicago, IL
• John Briseno—Canton, MI
• Alexandria Thomas—Jefferson City, MO

Big Contest Winners

Many have entered, few have won in our Ultimate Console Giveaway contest from *EGM #148-#150*. The lucky bastards are:

- | PS2 Pocket Games | Wii Pocket Games |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1.) Douglas VanDerVeek | 1.) Andrew Flor |
| 2.) Benjamin Lewis | 2.) Miles Goossens |
| 3.) Patricia Reinert-Savidge | 3.) Kyle Boberg |
| 4.) Ryan Grubb | 4.) Ryan M. Nguyen |
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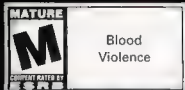


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PlayStation 2



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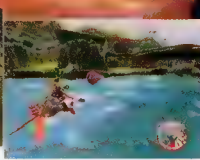
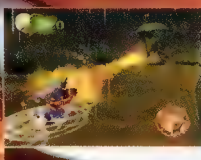
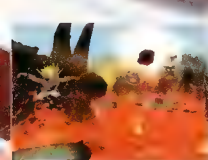
A NEW LEGACY IS BORN. IN THE HERO COMMUNITY YOU HAVE TWO CHOICES. TRUST YOUR FEELINGS AND BELIEVE THAT SOME OF US ARE BORN TO FIGHT OTHERS ARE DOING THE FIGHTING. INTRODUCING JAX (THE FIGHTER) AND DAXTER (THE LEGAL GUY). JOIN THEM AS THEY STRIVE TO SET THE RECORD OF FIGHT ON AN AMBITIOUS MANY DREAM. BUT FEW DARE ATTEMPT. TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THEM LEARN MORE ABOUT THEM VISIT WWW.SONYCOMPUTERENTERTAINMENT.COM

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Violence

NAUGHTY DOG

PlayStation 2





If you're planning on sending in a letter asking how to unlock Sonic and Tails in *Super Smash Bros. Melee*, save your stamps. Like we told ya last month, **IT WAS AN APRIL FOOLS' JOKE**. Over half our mail this month was about that little prank of ours; we're starting to regret doing it!

Letters to the Editors

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Non-line Gamer Gets Cut Off

I have been starting to wonder if online gaming is really such a good idea. Sure, it allows gamers to play with other people all around the world, but what about all the negatives? First, there's the price. You have to buy hardware to get online, then there's always a connection service to subscribe to. A 16-year-old (such as myself) with parents who aren't willing to pay for yet another Internet service is out of luck.

Second, games like *Final Fantasy XI* are going to be playable online only. If I can't get online in the first place, am I going to miss out on a lot of cool games because they don't have a single-player mode? Couldn't this lead to the death of the single-player-gaming genre entirely? Can you imagine not having games like *Devil May Cry* and *Pikmin* or having them cheaply modified for multiple players?

I think developers like Squaresoft should reconsider the online gaming direction they're taking. I already know I won't have a way of playing my PS2 or

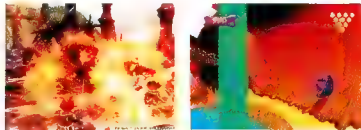
GameCube online unless their services are free, and that has already broken my gaming heart (no *FFXI* for me).

Steven Sewell
Indianapolis, IN

We can all deal with the prospect of online gaming in one of two ways. We can take Grandma's approach: Shut it out and retire to our bomb shelters until the Internet collapses on itself and covers the nation in black goo. Or we can embrace the potential of an online gaming world and hope that we don't lose touch with the roots that gave it life.

Don't get us wrong—we see your point. Your fears about the cost of network gaming are particularly spot-on. Younger and less wealthy gamers aren't going to be able to afford the simple upkeep of an online gaming lifestyle. But we think costs are bound to subside once it's established, and someday we'll all look back and laugh at our distress over connectivity. Then we'll get into our hover cars and fly down the vertical roadways to the local Spaceburger for a milkshake pellet.

We're OK with *Final Fantasy XI* (far left) going online, but if they take our *Bedrock Bowling*, so help us, some fools are gonna get messed up but good.



Congratulations Steven Sewell. You win an InterAct GameShark for PlayStation 2, PlayStation, Dreamcast, Nintendo 64 or Game Boy Color.



PSTunes

I recently found that my PS2 can play some music off of my old PS1 games without even entering the game (it plays the songs from the browser menu when you hit the Triangle button). But so far, the only games that I found to work are *Bowling and Tetris* 1. I tried *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*, *Gran Turismo 3* and *ATV Offroad Fury*, but none of them worked. Why not?

Karl Althaus
Des Moines, IA

Your PS2 (and PS1, for that matter) is basically a glorified CD player, and it has the capability to play audio CDs if they're encoded correctly. Some game CDs have Red Book audio, which is a recording standard that allows their audio tracks to be understood by standard CD players. Not all games are done this way, and usually the ones that have licensed music you'd actually want to listen to (*Tony Hawk* is a perfect example) don't give you access to just the tunes. But hey, if you can rock the sweet *Bowling* soundtrack, what do you care, right?



Sorry, Death Angel. We've found a new way to rock your voracious souls.

Ex-Box Owner

You guys seriously mislead me. You talked for months about how ultimate the Xbox was going to be and how it was going to thrash the competition, so naturally, I bought it. The games that suck the most on the Xbox are the ones *EGM* talks about the most, like *Halo*! Thank God I also bought a GameCube. Like always, Nintendo has filled my life with countless happy hours of joy and excitement.

Jason Mason
Hesperia, CA

Huh? We don't remember saying the 'Box was going to be ultimate or thrash anything. Yeah, we're big Halo fans, but we honestly believe it's an incredible game. Maybe you oughta have a look back through some of our lower Xbox game review scores and the Xbox vs. GameCube feature, which we think did a pretty fair job of comparing the two consoles bit by bit. Yeah, Xbox got the nod in the end, but it was way too close to call that a definitive decision for all gamers.

SHORT

I would like a picture of Jeanne Kim. Can you send me one?

Ben
Jefferson County
Correctional
Facility

Yeah, sure, Ben. You want we should, um... laminate it for you to keep it, ah...clean?

Keep It To Yourself

I am an avid reader who looks forward to your reviews a great deal. But when I see a review that gets a 9 from one reviewer and a 5 from another, I get confused. This doesn't really help me decide which games I should buy. If you think about it, your reviews kind



DAVID
BECKHAM

Player Card

7



Position: *Midfield*

Height: *5'11"*

Weight: *147 lbs.*

Score: *27/75*

- Kicks a soccer ball 88-Mph.
- Runs nearly 8 miles a game.
- Has multiple MVP and Player of the Year awards.
- Captain - Team England.
- Helped create a game worthy of his name.

**Helped create a game
worthy of his name.**

DAVID
BECKHAM
SOCCER



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Developed in England under superstar David Beckham's watchful eye, prepare yourself for the most complete soccer game ever created. Over 200 international and club teams compete for glory through multiple tournament and training modes, while spot-on commentary and advanced A.I. assure authenticity. Are you ready to step into his world?



GAME BOY ADVANCE



PlayStation 2

RAGE



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GO FOR THE ULTIMATE SPIN AT

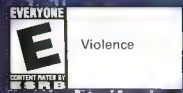
MARVEL **SPIDER-MAN** **COLUMBIA PICTURES**



GAME BOY ADVANCE



PlayStation 2



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NO
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ALL
ACTION.



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Battle the world's toughest villains, including Shocker, Vulture and The Green Goblin.



Master web-slinging as you bank around corners, cut web-lines for sudden drops, and zip-line to adjacent buildings.

SPIDER-MAN™

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ACTIVISION

activision.com



LETTERS

The Answer Is...

Just ask bitter old uncle EGM; he'll give you the ugly truth.

Will the old Turbo Grafx-16 *Ninja Spirit* come out for the Xbox?

Larry Tarver
Youngstown, OH

No.

Can you please review, then review, *Warcraft 3* on the PC? real_azn_masta@hotmail.com

No.

I was wondering how hard it is to get a letter published in your magazine.

gar2000
pacbell.net

Hard. Very hard.

I know PS2 is backward-compatible with PS1 games, but what about Japanese PS1 games?

tonykaye21
aol.com

Nope.

In any way to make my letter more noticeable to the people who might read it?

Princidedmonds
aol.com

Of course. And by that, we mean no.

Is it possible to play Game Boy Advance games on my Game Boy Pocket?

andegoot34
[hotmail.com](mailto@hotmail.com)

No. Hell, no.

of just reflect the different opinions that all of us have. I think you should review games on the whole with one score rather than give several potentially misleading opinions.

Danny Maka
Salt Lake City, UT

We have different reviewers for most games precisely for the reason you stated: Everyone's game tastes are different. Most of our readers can identify with a few members of the Review Crew, though, and make decisions based on how these individuals score a game. Sure, we all can recognize a killer game or a total crap pile when we see one, but our individual preferences are what account for the rest of the variation in scores.

It's rare to see a title span four whole points between reviewers (especially if one score is a 9—that almost never happens). But when it does happen, it should actually tell you *more* about what kind of gamer would like or dislike the game. We're just lookin' out for your best interests.

Review Crew Rearranged

I've always loved anagrams. One day I got to working on finding anagrams for the Review Crew. Here's what I got:

Crispin Boyer: Is born pricey
Che Chou: Echi! Ouchi!

Jonathon Dudlak: Junk data on hold
Dean Hager: Eager hand
Dan Hsu: Uh...nads
Chris Johnston: John's rich snot
Jeanne Kim: Keen in jam
Kraig Kujawa: I jaw rug kaka
Dan Leahy: A lady hen
Mark MacDonald: Rock lad, madman
James Mielke: Seek lime jam
Greg Sewart: Wag regrets
Shane Bettenhausen: He's the bus antennae or He's beaten 'n' the anus
Electronic Gaming Monthly: Intently cool, charming gem
black_and_gold@hotmail.com

Black and gold, you are truly a god among men, even though you spelled Jonathon Dudlak's name with an "o" at the end. Jakal nano thudd forgives you.

The Best Game in the History of Mankind

Recently one of my friends lent me an Xbox-specific magazine to prove that *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic* is actually better than *Final Fantasy X*. Upon reading the preview, I stumbled upon a sentence that read, "The experience and skills of developer BioWare and the unstoppable *Star Wars* universe combine to create an RPG so deep and so accessible that inferior games such as *FFX* can only watch in awe."

The piece continued to say that this game will be more revolutionary than

Question of the Moment

What do you think is the best EGM April Fools' joke of all time?

The best April Fools' joke had to be the Sheng Long code for *Street Fighter II* in the April 1992 issue. You guys fooled the hell outta me.

soopermanlover33@hotmail.com

Sonic and Tails for *SSBM* was pure genius. The picture was pretty convincing, too. The best part was reading the letters from confused readers asking what they were doing wrong.

smforg@hotmail.com

Personally, I liked your most recent trick. It was so hard not to laugh when my friends called me with frustrated complaints like the ones you guys got.

Aeosept@aol.com

I think the greatest one was Sheng Long in the arcade version of *Street Fighter II*. I remember going to the arcade and seeing lots of people get angry and cuss at the machine 'cause it wouldn't unlock him. I was laughing a month later when I found out it wasn't real.

Baibineux14@aol.com

I gotta admit that the best was the first. Your "Simon Belmont in *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2*" trick nearly cost me my controller. Nasty of you to make it exactly two button presses too long to be interesting.

DarkMage369@cs.com

That damn *GoldenEye* trick from April '98, with which you supposedly could play as the former Bonds like Roger Moore and Sean Connery and unlock weird levels. You even had a screenshot that looked totally realistic.

jasowisc@hotmail.com

Considering that your Sonic/Tails joke spawned over 150 topics on the gamefaqs board alone, I'd say that one.

ZombieBite@aol.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

What movie would you like to see get made into a video game?

Send your brief, coherent responses to: EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading:

Flick Pick

Post Office

If you're wondering what this is all about, go visit the EGM message boards directly! Type egm.gamers.com into your Web browser, find the link that says, "Talk to the EGM editors online now!" and give us your thoughts. You could be our next Postmaster General!

Q: NintendoKO: Video-game Word Chain!

OK, it's pretty mindless, but Nintendo's word-chain game went on for nine pages by the time we went to press, and some of the games people pulled out to keep it going were pretty original. How does it work? Someone gives a name of a console game, then the next poster uses the last letter of that name to spell out a new game and so on. We were waiting for a chance to be mean and jump in with *Wild g*, but the opportunity just never came up. Crud.



GAUNTLET[™] DARK LEGACY[™]

MIDWAY

nice rack, dude!

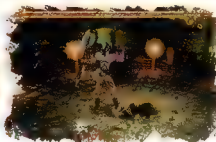
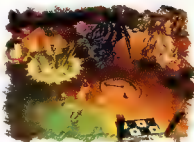


**THE GAME WHERE YOU AND 3 BUDDIES ALL GET TO BE HEROES.
ONLY THING IS, ONE OF YOU HAS TO BE THE CHICK.**



screenshots from PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system

Get your friends together for the original, all-4-one, one-4-all, hack-and-slash, free-4-all. Gauntlet Dark Legacy brings all the excitement, fun and camaraderie of this classic to Nintendo GameCube™, PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system – and now Xbox™ video game system!



AVAILABLE NOW



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PlayStation®2



Blood
Violence

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LETTERS

You can write EGM at:

EGM Letters
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL
60522-3338
E-mail: EGM@ziffdavis.com

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: We can't realistically get back to everyone who writes in, but we do read every last letter that we get. So keep mailing 'em in—we hear you!

Final Fantasy VII. Can a journalist actually say that? They haven't even played the game yet, but has already made *FFX* inferior?! It upset me because I think *Final Fantasy X* is a very good game, and I haven't even seen anything on this new *Star Wars* game yet. What's your take on this?
spunkymonkey87@msn.com

Well, we went down to visit LucasArts and see the game in action. At this early point in the game's development, there isn't any combat, lighting, dialog, story or character interaction even implemented, so about the only thing one can realistically compare between the two titles might be the concept art. We can't account for other publications, but you can check out our feature on all three upcoming *Star Wars* games on page 40 for a few *Knights* screens and a look at what we know about the RPG so far.

Old's Cool

What's with all these mainstream gamers who have been popping up lately? They think *Tony Hawk* is the best thing to happen to video games and ask, "Who is that woman?" when they see the picture of Shigeru Miyamoto that I carry in my wallet.

I'm not the Jesus of video games, or even the Bill Cosby, for that matter. But I've been gaming for a long time, and I'm not out there buying every rehashed extreme-sports game that comes out. How many times can you go jumping off a ramp with a different number of wheels somehow strapped to your feet? What happened to hardcore gaming, the heated arguments over which *Final Fantasy* music is the best and the contests to see who can beat the original *Mega Man* fastest?

Ben Haferman

Oh, the arguments are still there, Ben. They've just gotten a little bit obscured by the huge influx of new gamers that titles like the one you mentioned are bringing in.

We try to welcome any new blood who shows interest in gaming, so we

can't agree with your views 100 percent. But we do know the feeling—it's like when your favorite band gets big and all these lame-asses are at the show singing along to their one single. Ya just gotta be patient with 'em. Who knows? Maybe someday you'll meet a nice girl who's into *Tony Hawk*.

Curses!

Has anyone else noticed that you can't use curse words in the name-entry portion of *Metal Gear Solid 2*? I've tried a bunch of different ones, and it won't accept any of them. Is it because of the feature that lets you put your name up on Konami's Web site? Do you know of any other games that feature this sort of censorship?

Anonymous

We certainly do, nameless champion of the obscene. *Spider-Man* (PS1, DC) has a particularly hilarious vehicle for cutting out the curses. When you try to input a code in the cheats window, Spidey will pop in and

RUMORS

I heard you guys are making your own game. What's it called, and when is it coming out?
american1223@cs.com

We're actually working on a game based on the TV show, *Small Wonder*. It's a 3D platformer about a robotic girl and her heart-warming quest to become a real human. We'll send you a copy.



punch out any bad terms, turning them into random words like "love" and "cloud."

Spidey's an E-rated title, but we're not sure what M-rated *MGS2's* excuse is. Apart from the obvious story distraction playing a character named "Balls" would cause, the only other reason might be what you mentioned—putting your character name up on Konami's Web site. Hey, you can always use that crazy hacker speak to trick the game into letting you make a\$\$\$n.

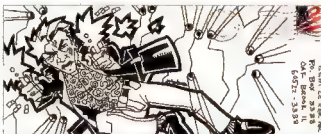


With a little help from Spidey, obscenities are wiped out of your cheats and replaced with even less appropriate words.

LETTER ART: POST-RELEASE CONCEPT ART

Letter Art of the Month WINNER

Jay Stoner • Lexington, KY



Congratulations, Jay Stoner! Max Payne's Bullet-Time never looked better. Your prize is on the way—an InterAct GameShark for PlayStation 2, PlayStation, Dreamcast, Nintendo 64 or Game Boy Color.



If you want a chance to cheat on your favorite games, draw us up some purty pictures on a #10 envelope (the long, business type) and send it off via your express to:

EGM Letter Art, P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338
(or E-mail EGM@ziffdavis.com)

Be sure to include a mailing address and system preference for your prize. All entries will be returned to the earth from whence they came once we see 'em, so if you wanna keep it, don't send it.

Not quite Sharkworthy...

The first and second losers. Better luck next time.



Nell Foster
Decatur, AL



Daniel Jimenez
Wyoming, MI

For Letter of the Month and Letter Art of the Month contests, no purchase is necessary. Sending a name will not get you letterboxed with any more post-free love. Seriously, if you're still unclear on the complete rules of this convoluted contest, you can always read the complete rule rules at egm.com or write us at: EGM Contests Legal Rules Request, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. Warning: If you write us asking for contest rules, we'll laugh and thank you very late.

SSG. Roderick Robinson. SF Weapons Sergeant. **AN ARMY OF ONE.** In the United States Army.

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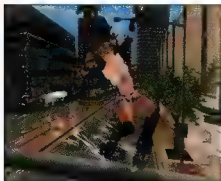
AGGRESSIVE INLINE™



Skate as one of the 10 top pros:
Jaren Grob, Taig Khnis, Shane Yost,
Matt Salerno and Chris Edwards



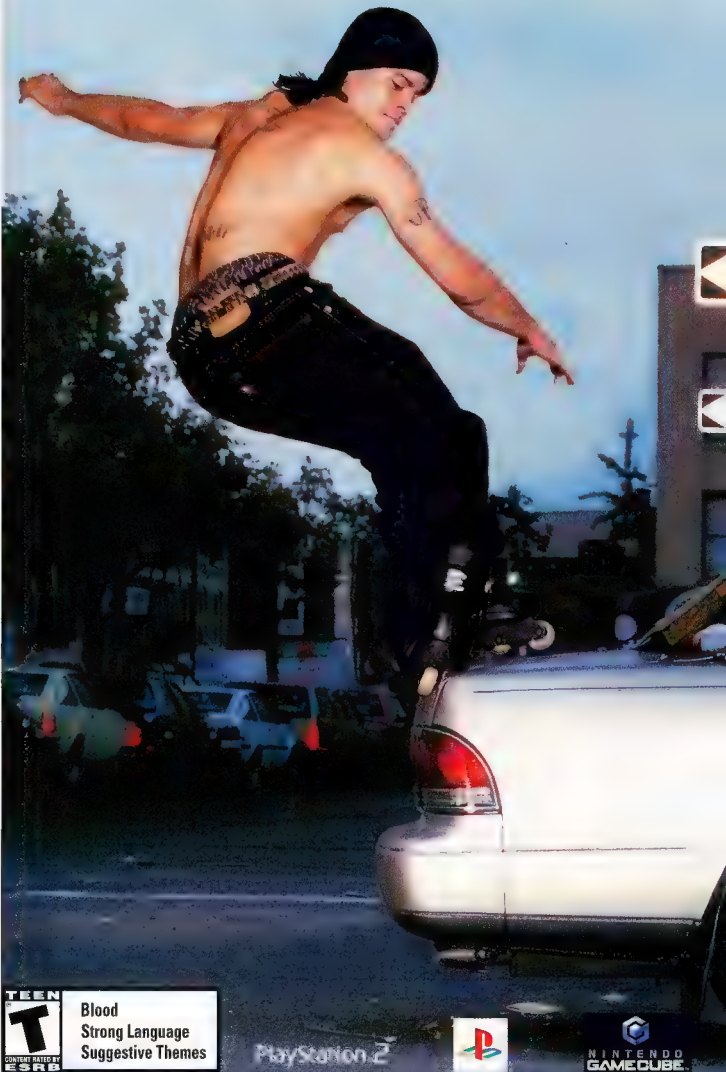
Unleash an arsenal of tricks: big air
maneuvers, grinds, vaults, wall rides,
fast plants, cess slides and skitches



Punish your friends with split-screen
multiplayer; build the ultimate skate-
park with the in-game park editor



Attack 9 mammoth levels with environ-
ment-altering cinematics at every corner



Blood
Strong Language
Suggestive Themes

PlayStation 2





Skate the edge of sanity.

Developed by
Z-AXIS

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GAME BOY ADVANCE



Press Start

The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

Back in the Saddle

Square and Nintendo kiss, make up

All it took was a small article in Japanese business newspaper *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* to get millions of gamers around the world excited: Square, purveyors of all things *Final Fantasy*, is developing for Nintendo platforms again. The uproar set gaming chat rooms and message boards on the Net afire. It was as if a major cataclysm had occurred: Riots in the streets, dogs and cats living together, mass hysteria!

Before you get too excited, let us explain. This doesn't mean Square is pulling support from PlayStation 2. Sony's machine will remain the home of *Final Fantasy*. It means that GameCube and Game Boy Advance will see Chocobo tracks of their own in the near future.

A Quick History Lesson

Let's recap the situation. As serious role-playing-game fans know, the relationship between Square and Nintendo hasn't been rosy for years. Before the era of PlayStation, Square was a staunch Nintendo third-party publisher and supporter. But the Nintendo 64's cartridge format proved too limiting, and the company packed its bags and headed for the cheap rent of PlayStationville. For years, rumors spread that Nintendo Co. Ltd. Prez Hiroshi Yamauchi took their departure as a personal affront, backed by quotes like this, to *Bloomberg Japan* in 2000 on whether Square would ever return to the Nintendo fold: "There is no contract with Square, and that matter is not open to further discussion. [Square] can say whatever they want, but we have no intention of signing a contract, and there's little chance of one being signed in the future."

Harsh words, but as the saying goes—time heals all wounds.

The First Strike

This is what was originally reported out of Japan in early March: Fund Q, Yamauchi's personally funded program to aid development of game projects that use the GameCube-Game Boy Advance link, will bankroll a Square-affiliated development house to produce a game in the *Final Fantasy* series that uses the link. The first title will be released by the end of the year in Japan, and by the time you read this, Akitoshi Kawazu, director of Square's *SaGa* series, will have established the new development company, called Game Designers Studio (original, eh?). In addition, the group is working on two to

three other titles for release before March 2003, one of which is confirmed to be a GBA version of the PS1 title *Final Fantasy Tactics*.

Quiet All of a Sudden

Neither Square nor Nintendo has said much since the initial report about the "deal," but Square representative Hideki Tsuchiya told *EGM* that Fund Q's role in the new company and the development of a game that uses GBA-GC connectivity is still up in the air. "The



Illustrations by Pixel Pushers Design



Final Fantasy Tactics (PS1 version shown above) will be one of Square's first GBA titles.

THE PS2'S ONLINE ASSAULT BEGINS...

If you've been waiting and waiting to play some online PlayStation 2 games, you only have to wait a few more months. Sony recently announced that August is go time for PS2 online. That's when they'll launch the \$40 PS2 network adapter, which will hit with a handful of online-ready games—including cover game *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs*. Follow our SEAL team to the right for all the details, including a look at every announced online PS2 title.

Alpha team, head to page 96.



Affirmative!



Yes sirl!



Wiss my...

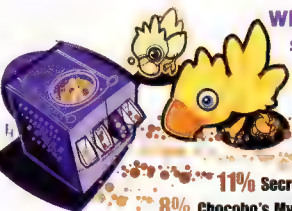


deal between Fund Q and GDS has not been finalized," he told us. "It still hasn't been decided that GDS will make a game which will work with both GameCube and Game Boy Advance. The company is focusing on GBA, so exploring development possibilities could lead to using the connectivity."

According to Tsuchiya, work on the games hasn't started yet. This despite consistent rumors that they've been in development for several months and the fact that if they plan to get three to four games out before March 2003, they'd be in development already. "GDS will be working on new titles and a few other ports of popular Square games. Some reports already mentioned a specific title like *Final Fantasy*. Indeed that's one of the candidates,

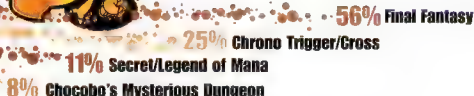


It's still a possibility (how much do we have to beg?) Square could port its Wonderswan remakes of *FFI-IV* that were released in Japan.



Which Square series do you want to see lured to a Nintendo platform?

Source: Gamers.com poll, 3/02



but nothing is concrete." How about ports of the Japan-only Wonderswan Color remakes of the early *FF* games? "Wonderswan Color and GBA are two different systems," Tsuchiya explained, pointing out the obvious. "It's not easy to port games from one to another." As if that's ever stopped companies from doing it before. Yes, the technical aspects of it may be difficult. But if Square pulls it off, they would finally make money on those titles outside of Japan in a worldwide Game Boy Advance market. We're pretty certain fans would line up for the privilege of forking over the cash.

Actual development will be handled externally, under GDS' direction. Tsuchiya points out, "There's only one person who works for GDS: Akitoshi Kawazu." This may be due to stipulations in a deal Square and Sony

struck last fall, which put 19-percent ownership of Square in Sony's hands. That insured that *Final Fantasy* and Square's most popular games would appear on PlayStation platforms first. At that time, Square said that the deal wouldn't affect future multiplatform development, but this shell company was clearly formed to appease someone, whether that's Sony or Nintendo.

Square EA: "No Comment"

In the U.S., Square Electronic Arts had this to say at press time: "[We do] not have any comments at this time regarding [this] news. We hope to be able to provide more information as it becomes available." Let's hope that information includes the phrases "lots of games" and "soon." 🐉

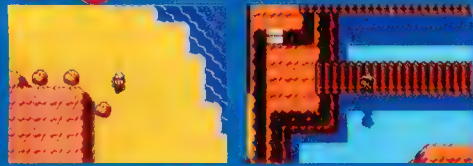
First Look At Pokémon Advance



Pokémonians, here it is—A first look at Pokémon Advance for GBA. Here's what we know so far:

- The game will feature 100 new creatures.
- A total to 351, including new evolutions.
- You'll play as a silver-haired, headband-wearing character.
- His outfit includes a Pokémon Mimi on his belt.
- As you look at the screenshots below, notice (left to right) footprints as he walks on the beach, your shadow you walk above the water, and your character's reflection in the puddle as he walks across it. *Pokémon* GBA hits Japan later this year, the U.S. in 2003.

Add two more Pokémon to the roster: The ghostly lookin' guy on the right is Yowamaru (aww, ain't he cute?), and Barubifito is the insect on the far right. Both appear in the fifth *Pokémon*.





PRESS
START



Illustration by Jeremy "Norm" Scott

DEATH BY PLAYSTATION

The next time you're gaming on a fishing trawler off the coast of northern Queensland, make sure your PlayStation isn't resting on a metal table and plugged into the on-board power supply. The unfortunate Richard Wells, 49, of Innisfail, Australia, decided to get his game on instead of helping his fellow fishermen, and got the Dual Shock of his life when a wave crashed through his cabin window and zapped him dead. According to *The Daily Star*, three other crew members suffered electrocution and burns as they tried to rescue him. The game he was playing? Hopefully not *Aquanaut's Holiday!*

—David S.J. Hodgson

GAMECUBE TIDBITS

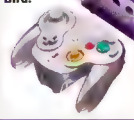
GC Game Delays, New Peripherals

GameCube owners have hit a bit of a dry spell, but to counteract that, Nintendo made a few announcements that will help hold players off 'til the fall:

- Mark **June 24** down on your calendars.

That day will see three Nintendo releases: the **Memory Card 251** (a bigger memory card for \$19.99), **Wave Bird** wireless pad (\$39.99) and the survival-horror game *Eternal Darkness*.

Nintendo's
Wave
Bird.



- Looking forward to *Star Fox Adventures*? Hope you like waiting. It's been delayed 'til the fall. (Oh c'mon, you knew it would happen. It's a Rare game!)
- The sequel to 1980's *Snowboarding*, once announced, then cancelled, is now back on for release this winter in Japan.
- *Mario Party 4* will debut in Japan around the same time. (No U.S. dates have been set for either yet, but they shouldn't take long to hit America after their Japanese counterparts.)

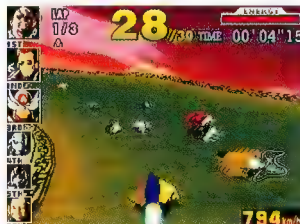
Sega and Nintendo Team Up For New F-Zero

First Square and Nintendo make nice-nice (see page 26) then Nintendo lets Sega develop a new *F-Zero*? What's next, Sonic Team doing the next *Kid Icarus*? (We're joking, of course.)

Under the agreement, Sega will publish a new arcade version of the hovercraft battle/racing game in Japan, called *F-Zero AC*, on the GameCube-powered Triforce arcade hardware, while Nintendo will release a home version of the same game, *F-Zero GC*, for GameCube. Data can be swapped between the two with

the standard GC memory card. Both are scheduled for release before year's end, and the arcade version will be shown at May's E3 expo in L.A.

Sega development team Amusement Vision, whose previous credits include *Super Monkey Ball* (GameCube) and *Daytona USA* (DC), will develop the project. The prospect of working on a Nintendo franchise has the studio salivating. AV President Toshihiro Nagoshi commented, "I never imagined I would do a project like this. I feel I have been waiting for this opportunity since I created *Daytona USA*." Perhaps the most interesting detail of this announcement is Nintendo's Director of Corporate Planning Satoru Iwata's comment that they want to pursue more collaborations like this in the future. Hmm....



F-Zero X for N64 (above) was the last time the series was seen on a home console.



Not-So-Amazing Spider-Man Gaming Moments

My spider sense is tingling! That must mean the sleuths at *EGM* have dug up my more "notable" appearances in video games from the past. Hey, every superhero has his off days. Do I need to bring up that *Superman* N64 game?



Spider-Man (Atari 2600)
Parker Brothers, 1982
The first Spidey video game was so simplistic by today's standards, but in 1982 it captivated Spider-fans across the country. Just scale the building and get past the Green Goblin and his bombs.



Spider-Man/Venom: Maximum Carnage (SNES and Genesis)
Acclaim, 1994
Speaking of bombs, this *Maximum Carnage* set 'em-up was released as a "limited edition" red cartridge but sold so poorly that a second batch of non-red carts was never produced.



The Amazing Spider-Man: Web of Fire (Sega 32X)
Sega, 1995
As the last game for Sega's ill-fated 32X add-on, it's no wonder few have even heard of this (rather crappy) action game. Despite the (low) quality, it fetches over \$100 on eBay.



Think you got what it takes to control her?

ENDGAME



Fans of different modes of play will keep you coming back for more.



Only interactive and destructible environments. You can shoot it, you can hit it.



Best game ever. Winning is over. It's just the beginning.



PlayStation 2



Guncon

GUNCON2





PRESS
START



Afterthoughts: Hailed by many fighting-game cognoscenti as the deepest 3D brawlers around, the *Virtua Fighter* series is now in its fourth installment, but it blazes a trail on a non-*Sega* console for the first time. To find out what makes this brawler tick, we sat down with the man who taught you how to punch in 3D. Read what he has to say about his latest masterpiece, as well as *Shenmue II* and a possible *Fighting Vipers* sequel. **Yu Suzuki**, would you please step into the ring?



YU SUZUKI: TEMPTATION OF A MONK

"I always wanted to put a character who used Shaolin kung-fu into *Virtua Fighter*," said Suzuki, creator of *Virtua Fighter*. "I met a monk about 30 years ago who I became friends with. He was the inspiration for Lei-Fei, and I made him into a character who is both beautiful to watch and easy to use. With very little effort, you can perform more complicated-looking moves than if you used someone like, say, *Shun Di*."

Afterthoughts: Virtua Fighter 4



EGM: Now that you're finished with the *Virtua Fighter 4* port for the PlayStation 2, are you satisfied with the results?

Suzuki: Before we started the conversion, we gave ourselves a set amount of time to reach our goals. I can say that we achieved everything we set out to do.

EGM: Why did you take out Taka-Arashi? Surely there are *Virtua Fighter 3 Team Battle* players who miss their sumo-wrestler.

Suzuki: Of all the characters, he would have had the hardest time being integrated to *VF4*. There's much more to implementing Taka than just putting collision detection on his skin. The reason for that is because when you hit his skin, you're not necessarily hitting "him," and to be honest, we didn't have enough time to make him work in *VF4*. That does not mean he won't be back. He could show up in the future.

EGM: Why did you remove the undulating environments?

Suzuki: We wanted to get back to making the game fun. We did a lot of research and surprisingly, most people said *VF2* was their favorite in the series. So we decided to go back to flat arenas and a three-button layout. We think that this contributes to the most intense fighting, which is also why we added walls. I don't want people running away in this game. I want people to fight.

EGM: Are you planning on working on a sequel to *VF4*?

Suzuki: We have some other things to finish before we start work on a sequel, but yes, I would like to work on a weapons fighter.

EGM: Like *Soul Calibur*? You've



mentioned before how that was the 3D fighter to beat.

Suzuki: I can't give out too many details, but I can tell you that it might be in the *Fighting Vipers* universe.

EGM: *VF4* for PS2 looks pretty, but it ain't arcade-perfect. So how's that Xbox version coming along? [wink, wink]

Suzuki: [looks over at Sega of Japan PR manager, mumbles something in his ear, laughs, turns to us] We can't say anything about that.

EGM: Why did you remove the fourth dodge-button from *Virtua Fighter 3 Team Battle*?

Suzuki: We are considering bringing it back in the future. We wanted newcomers to the *Virtua Fighter* games to feel comfortable when they try it, and having fewer buttons was integral to that. That's not to say that having fewer buttons makes a game easier. If you think about it, having fewer buttons to control all the moves in *Virtua Fighter* is actually very complex. You have to know how to do more moves with fewer buttons, so in a way, it's very difficult.

EGM: The increased low-punch priority has shifted the balance of the game. Can you explain why it's such a cheap and powerful move now?

Suzuki: In the past, *Virtua Fighter* was more of a sim. In a sim, the low-punch, used from a squatting position, is a relatively weak move. To help the defensive options in *VF4*, we gave the move more power, moving the game away from a strictly simulation feel. The game was designed like a complex game of "rock, paper, scissors." If someone is low-punching, there are moves to negate the low-punch.

EGM: Yeah, try telling that to Che "Cock Punch" Chou. How many items are unlockable in Kumite mode? We want Pai looking pretty.

Suzuki: *VF4* for PS2 has 400 items to unlock. But some of the items are different than the ones found in the Japanese version of the game.

EGM: Is Sarah still your favorite character? We saw you kicking someone's ass using Lei-Fei at last night's *VF4* launch party.

Suzuki: Yes, Sarah is still my favorite character to use if I'm playing against a skilled fighter. If I'm playing against someone who isn't so good at *VF*, I'll use Lei-Fei.

EGM: How's *Shenmue II* for Xbox going?

Suzuki: It's going very well! It's basically finished at this point. The storyline will remain largely the same, but the gameplay and events will receive some tuning. It even looks better than the Dreamcast version! [Editor's note: DC *Shenmue II* was only released in Japan and Europe.]

REPRESENT...





INFINITE



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A promotional poster for the video game Rayman Arena. The background is a dark, fiery arena with a large, glowing yellow and orange flame at the top. In the foreground, a large, stylized character with a large orange nose and a purple body is looking towards the viewer. In the background, a character in a red and black outfit is flying through the air, and a bright yellow and green energy burst is visible. The text "OR GET SMOKED" is at the top, "RAYMAN ARENA" is in the center, and "RACE TO THE FINISH. BATTLE TO THE END." is at the bottom. The website "www.raymanarena.com" is at the very bottom.

OR GET SMOKED

RAYMAN ARENA

RACE TO THE FINISH. BATTLE TO THE END.

This is multiplayer mayhem Rayman style. Race and battle across 15 obstacle filled racecourses and 15 blistering battle zones. You wanna represent in this arena? Here's a tip: keep one eye on the finish line and the other on your back and you just might smoke'em all.

www.raymanarena.com



PRESS
START

EGM AT THE MOVIES



"Oh Milla...
love me tender."

Resident Evil

You may have missed *Resident Evil* when it was in theaters, but we didn't. Here's what a few EGM editors thought about the game-gone-movie.

A movie where you watch Milla Jovovich fight the undead? Sign me up! Unfortunately, the director tries so hard at the beginning to fake you out that by the time you're supposed to be surprised or scared by anything on screen, you've been desensitized. I didn't jump once during the last half. I did, however, get annoyed at the incredibly generic characters and the "insta-bad guy" near the end. *RE* isn't the worst video-game movie ever made, but it ain't good, either. —Greg Seward

Finally a video-game movie that doesn't suck...too much. Yeah, the acting generally stinks (although Milla does a fine job), but the story unravels in fine fashion with enough twists to keep you guessing toward the end. Less scary and more action than I would have liked but generally a decent, if not actually "good" horror-action flick. Besides, nine bucks is a small price to pay to see Milla crawling around in the buff. —Milkman

Maybe the dozen or so average-at-best video-game flicks that came before it lowered my expectations, but I was surprised to find myself enjoying *RE*. It's got cool monsters and an enjoyable plot that almost meshes with the games. If you really think about it, you'll notice all kinds of stupid story errors and editing weirdness, but if you are really thinking about it, you missed the point. It's bubblegum: Enjoy it for an hour, then forget it. —Mark MacDonald



BURN THE FLOOR IN STYLE

Having trouble finding a good dance-pad controller to use with your new copy of *Dance Dance Revolution Kanamix* (see our review, pg. 122)? You'll find a wide selection of pad options at Red Octane (www.redoctane.com). Their newest (and highest-profile) offering is the Red Octane Ignition Pad (left, \$129.99), a sturdy pad with extra foam padding inside and cardboard reinforcement on each of the four step directions. But if that's a little too rich for your blood, they have plenty of other lower-priced alternatives.

TIDBITS

New Quest for VF

Virtua Fighter creator Yu Suzuki announced a spin-off game for GameCube at Sega's recent Game Jam 2 event in Tokyo, called *Virtua Fighter Quest*. Suzuki describes *Quest* as a *Zelda*-style adventure with the younger gamer in mind. Sega will release the title next year as part of the 10th anniversary of the *VF* series.

Kirby Gets Own Show

Nintendo's popular pink puff ball, Kirby, is headed to a TV screen near you this fall. The lil' guy's animated series, which recently debuted in Japan, will air on Fox Kids as part of the upcoming fall season.



Virtua Cop Comes Out of Retirement

Virtua Cop, Sega's popular light-gun blaster that lit up arcades in the early '90s, is returning. *Virtua Cop Elite Edition* for PS2 is a package that includes the first two VCs, compatible with guns like Namco's Guncon 2. The collection will debut at May's Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Los Angeles, along with titles like the highly anticipated Xbox *Panzer Dragoon* and a PS2 version of Yu Suzuki's racer, *Ferrari F355*.

Forest = Crossing

Nintendo's GameCube communication role-playing game *Animal Forest* is a confirmed fall release in the U.S. But it's undergoing a name change. It shall henceforth be referred to as *Animal Crossing*.

PaRappa Creator Cuts New Jib

Masaya Matsuura, creator of Sony's *PaRappa* series, is bringing rap to the common man with *Mojibribban*. Coming this fall in Japan, it takes any message you write and turns it into a rap (complete with voice). Then you or anyone you send the message to can "play" it using the two analog sticks. In addition to typing your own messages or playing premade raps, the game is Net-enabled so you can receive new "levels" from friends. We hope someone brings this to the U.S., just so we can turn all the curse words we know into lyrics.



E.T. Rerelease!

Resident Evil ain't the only older game getting a facelift. To coincide with the 20th-anniversary rerelease of the film, Atari will be updating the original Atari 2600 version of its *E.T.* game for the Xbox.* Here's what's new:

- Matrix-style slo-mo 360° pan every time E.T. grabs a Reese's Pieces
- Two words: cel shading
- High school sniper minigame now set in Afghanistan
- "From the makers of *Grand Theft Auto III*" inexplicably added to packaging
- Black gun pixel on government agents changed to blue walkie-talkie pixel
- Scenes of E.T. falling into pits removed in light of 9/11
- Sucks 20 percent less crap than old version
- Members of 'N Sync make cameo appearance



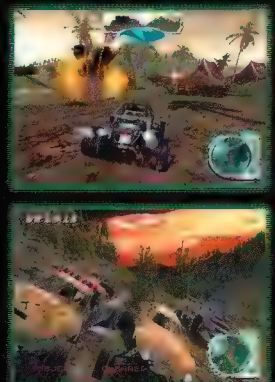
*This is not true. It is a lie. A job. Do not write us letters asking about this game, unless you want us to track you down and punt you for sport, like that more Savoring the Game!



APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION

Most old-school PlayStation owners will remember *Destruction Derby*, one of the system's first games that wowed us with blissful vehicular destruction. Studio 33, developer of *Formula One* and *Destruction Derby Raw* (left), has been tapped for a PlayStation 2 sequel by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. The project is tentatively known as *Destruction Derby 4*. No release date has been specified.

PlayStation 2 SMUGGLER'S RUN 2 HOSTILE TERRITORY



The ultimate off-road driving adventure returns to the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system. Work for an elite band of smugglers delivering contraband, escaping the authorities and attacking rivals. Make the drop, hit the nitro boost and get across the border before all hell breaks loose!

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Soundtrack provided by
James Ruskin, 430 West Records
and Kevin Saunderson



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KMS

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the ONION

VOLUME 36 ISSUE 27

AMERICA'S FINEST NEWS SOURCE

Video-Game Characters Denounce Randomly Placed Swinging Blades

WASHINGTON, DC—A coalition of video-game characters representing the nation's leading systems appeared before Congress Monday to denounce the pointless, deadly presence of spinning blades in video-game landscapes.

"We are here to demand an end to the shockingly casual placement of dangerous blades in our places of work," said Tomb Raider star Lara Croft, who estimates that she has lost more than 600,000 lives to spinning, falling, swinging, and suddenly appearing blades this year alone. "This kind of thing has been going on since the days of Pitfall Harry, and it has got to stop."

Croft, flanked by Metal Gear's Solid Snake, Super Mario 64's Mario, and both soldiers from Contra, called upon Congress to revise OSHA laws to extend protection to the digitally rendered.

"From Pitfall to Bad Dudes Versus Dragon Ninja to Gauntlet, the deadly spinning blade has been with us so long, we no longer even question it," Croft said. "It's high time it was done away with once and for all."

Exacerbating the situation, Mario said, is the seemingly arbitrary placement of the hazards. "I could see why, if you're in a factory, you might



Above: A concerned Mario discusses the relating fireball chains found throughout World 14 of Super Mario Bros.

find yourself jumping around on dangerous conveyor belts moving in different directions," he said. "But why would you have conveyor belts in a castle? Or in the middle of a forest? Nintendo and these other companies are always talking about how realistic their graphics are. Well, what's so realistic about killer turtles shooting out of clouds and such?"

Added Mario: "It's a me, Mario!"

In addition to the standard spinning blades, the coalition is seeking restrictions on random whirling fireball chains, falling blocks, spike-pit traps, and

invisible cross-corridor laser arrays.

Legislators listened attentively as the digitized characters told of their near-death encounters.

"Just the other day, I was running through the British Museum's Egyptology exhibit when a bunch of six-foot steel scythes suddenly burst out of a sarcophagus," Croft said. "Fortunately, I managed to leap out of the way at the last possible second. But a situation like that could have easily turned tragic."

"We're not so different from you," the blue-jacketed guy from Double Dragon said. "We

just want to be left alone to do our jobs—saving princesses, finding lost treasures, destroying out-of-control nuclear-equipped robots. But it's nearly impossible to go about your daily life when you're living in constant fear of some giant, evil mushroom suddenly lunging at you from out of nowhere."

"I mean, would you put up with a row of whirling knives in the cereal aisle at Safeway?" the Double Dragon guy continued. "Of course not. Why, then, should Duke Nukem have to run through a corridor of them to get the health pack he needs to survive?"

The characters said they intend to boycott their respective video games until Nintendo, Sega, Sony, and other manufacturers take "significant measures" to improve safety.

"In addition to mandatory warning lights and buzzers at least eight seconds before the appearance of a blade, spike, or other health hazard, we are calling for mapping features in all 3D-rendered environments, large flashing arrows to high-light such hidden objects as health and life bonuses, and, in the case of Sonic Team games, safety guardrails on all loops."

Added Sonic: "And would it kill you to compose better music? I almost didn't finish the jungle part on that last one." ❧

TIDBITS

S is for Smaller

If you think the standard Xbox pad is too large, then run (don't walk) to your local game retailer and pick up Microsoft's Xbox Controller Type S (on sale now for \$40).

It's the same size as the Japanese pad, only with a black Xbox logo in the center and sturdier, man-sized American buttons. Now why didn't they just release this at launch?



Sega's GBA Future

Sega announced their next few Game Boy Advance titles (to be released via THQ). In late 2002, we'll get a portable version of *Virtua Tennis*, followed by *Crazy Taxi*, *Super Monkey Ball* and *Phantasy Star Collection* in early 2003. PSC will include the first three games in the series.

PSIV, released for Genesis in 1994, is not included.





PRESS
START



DOA kickstart
Lei Fang.

CLEAVAGE: THE MOVIE

The way Hollywood is snatching up video-game licenses (*Crazy Taxi*, *House of the Dead*, etc.) we wouldn't be surprised to see a big-screen version of *Travis* with James Woods as the L-shaped piece. The latest announcement is for a movie based on Tecmo's *Dead or Alive* fighting series, coming to theaters in 2003. Mindfire Entertainment (*Free Enterprise*) will handle production. Actresses with breast enlargements, get your résumés in now.

Video-Game Action Figure Round-Up

If you're an avid gamer, chances are you have more than a few action figures in your possession. And if you haven't already flipped the page, we're betting a few of them are of video-game characters (possibly posed in compromising positions). Each year, a new bundle of game-related toys hits the market, and 2002's no different. We attended this year's International Toy Fair in NYC and checked out all the fresh gear gamers will be decorating their rooms/desks/cars with later this year. Here's a quick preview of what you can expect to find at toy or game stores (Electronics Boutique or GameStop stores will be your best bet for most of these) near you before the fall:

Final Fantasy X

With each new *Final Fantasy* game comes a new line of toys, and *FFX* is no different. Several companies have *FFX* offerings, including an impressive line of vinyl statues, action figures, plush toys and—for those who like to dress up as game characters—Tidus and Yuna jewelry from ArtFX/Koto Inc. More information on these *Final Fantasy* goodies (most of which are available now) can be found at their Web site, <http://www.artfx-kotobukiya.com>.



Yu-Gi-Oh!

If *Yu-Gi-Oh!* is your thing, then, Maat, you got the cure. Coming this summer are action figures, games and other collectibles starring Yugi and the rest of his card-battlin' monster-summoning pals.

Kingdom Hearts

And as we told you last issue, N2Toys is jumping into the video-game arena with an impressive line of toys based on Square's *Kingdom Hearts*. They come in a variety of bundles, including heroes, villains and two-figure packs with one of each.

Dragon's Lair 3D

From Anjon Inc. comes this line of figures based on Encore Software's *Dragon's Lair 3D* (that debuts this summer for PS2 and GC). The first wave hits in early summer and includes Dirk the Daring, Mordroc the Evil Wizard, Princess Daphne and Singe the Dragon. These high-quality figures capture the original Don Bluth designs perfectly. A second series is already in the planning stages, and we're happy to report that the Giddy Goons may make an appearance in the future as well (sweet).



Onimusha 2

McFarlane Toys tackles yet another video-game license in fine style. Scheduled for a May release, the series includes the main *Oni 2* characters but unfortunately not much in the way of standard enemies.



Perfect Dark

Yes, *Perfect Dark*. It makes sense that a game as delayed as this Nintendo 64 classic would just be getting figures now, eh? This 12-inch version of Joanna Dark from Nintendo/Rare's first-person shooter will finally be out in the fall from Blue Box Toys in the two flavors you see here.

Okage: Shadow King

Maybe it wasn't the most popular PlayStation 2 game last year, but it sure makes for interesting action-figure fodder. These *Okage* figures from Toycom come two to a \$25 pack (yeouch, expensive!), three packs in all, and include a third ghost character: Stan or a different form of enemy spirit.



Cheaper thrills.



Mature Rating

Announcing the PS2 Greatest Hits at Best Buy.

\$5 OFF

any video game
title or accessory
\$19.99 and up

Good only at Best Buy stores. Not good in combination with other coupons or offers. Limit one per coupon per title or accessory per customer. Not valid on prior purchases. Valid on in-stock items only; no rainchecks. No dashes. Coupon must be presented at time of purchase. No copies. Coupon value is 1/100 of one cent. Good through 8/3/02.

Cashier Instructions: Verify product qualifies. Scan coupon bar code. Scan product bar code. Highlight qualified item. Press "Item Modify," Press "Item Discount," Press "Tab," Enter "500" and press "Enter," Write "VOID" on coupon and place in register media file.



Turn On the Fun™

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PRESS
START

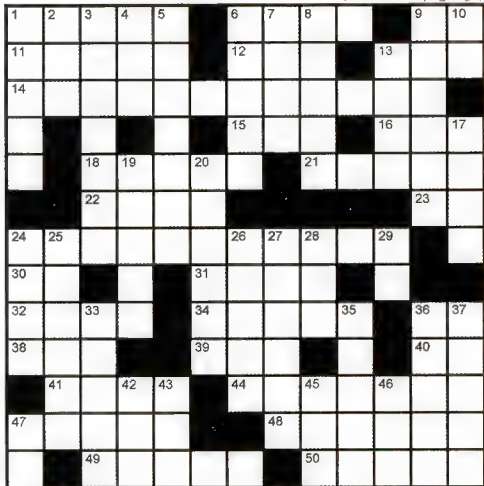


SEGA DIGGS UP CLASSICS

Don't get excited just yet **Mr. Bones** fans (all five of you), but Sega's planning to revive select Genesis, Saturn and Dreamcast classics and bring them to the Xbox. A company called Cool Net Entertainment will do the honors on porting the titles, which will be updated and enhanced to take full advantage of the system (*Streets of Rage, anyone? Anyone?*). The first releases may land in Japan as early as this summer.

At the Movies

(Solution on page 132)



ACROSS

1. FMV, in layman's terms
2. Usually a double-tap on the D-pad
3. -Mu of *Jumping Flash 2*
4. *State of Emergency* pastime?
5. Queen boss of *Brave Fencer Musashi*
6. Mary-Kate, to Ashley Olsen
7. 2002 Paul Anderson game movie
8. It's where *Hot Shots Golf 3* begins
9. Online gamer's greatest nemesis
10. Precedes the chorus in music games
11. Like 45 down
12. Beginner's difficulty setting
13. *Dead _ Alive 3*
14. E.T.'s last name?
15. Powered up
16. Color of Ecco's watery home
17. *Battletech* vehicle
18. 1991 Genesis RPG
19. Forces in *Ace Combat 04*
20. Mario, to Luigi
21. Xbox footracer *Dash Racing*
22. PS2 first-person shooter, for short
23. Jean _ of the X-Men
24. Supporting party gal of *FFVIII*
25. Popular nine-headed boss monster
26. Ammo for *Halo's* Needler
27. _yard Dog (Atari 7800)
28. _ of the Griffon (TurboGrafx-16)

DOWN

1. Played by Bob Hoskins in a 1993

game flick

2. Mined in *Harvest Moon*
3. GBA game/upcoming movie *Ecks _*
4. Binary code for "on, off, on"
5. What *Munch's Oddysee* does for SoBe?
6. Fights Griffon in *Devil May Cry*
7. Minimum bet in *Vegas Stakes*
8. Like NES *Blades*
9. *Double Dragon* movie hottie
10. Place to play Region 1 DVD games
11. Holds *Command & Conquer* Tiberium
12. NES robot game _mite
13. Super Nintendo RPG _bound
14. Console
15. Gets raided by Jolie in a 2001 game film
16. Keeps you alive in most games
17. Site of movie/Atari game *Chainsaw Massacre*
18. Arcade-style vertical shooter
19. Dreamcast thriller _bleed
20. Pliiskin's rank in *MG52*
21. Can be "power" or "AJV"
22. Shiva in *Final Fantasy III*
23. Van Damme in *Street Fighter movie*
24. Push left or right in *Crazy Taxi*
25. Working Designs' PS1 *Lad*
26. Had revenge on the Atari 2600
27. *Portal Runner* feline sidekick
28. Makes an Xbox memory card obsolete
29. Cop-themed racer *Chase*

Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

Mr. CJ "Ceej" Johnston keeps telling me how I'll get more space soon, but noooo.... Derrnitalll! Yikes, I better get to it:

...As a follow-up to last month's rumor that **Doom 3** would lead on Xbox and follow on PC, well...by the time that hot one reached your eyes, talks had fallen through and the remains had been buried.... Expect **Insomniac's** post-*Spyro the Dragon* PS2 entry, **Ratchet and Clank**, to make a big splash in Sony's booth at this May's Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in L.A.... Lots of action's afoot on the sequels front this month, too. Look for **Capcom** to unveil **Devil May Cry 2** soon—The Q hears Dante'll be walking up the walls in this one, kiddies. **Konami** will be unwrapping **Silent Hill 3** and a new **Contra** probably by the time you read this.... Though **Sega's** days in home hardware are over, the company continues to work on new arcade architecture, including a soon-to-be-revealed **Naomi 3**. I'm sure the two games that Sega eventually releases for it will be splendid!



Bye for now, folks. If you have a mind to write The Q, drop me an E-mail at quartermann@ziffdavis.com. Buh-bye! —The Q

CAUGHT IN THE NET

Memories For Sale

Sometimes we come across something on the Net so ghastly, so intriguing, that we just have to share it with you. This month, Michael Moody's eBay auction (item # 1341836302 if you wanna look it up) caught our attention. "I didn't count, but it's probably between 3,000-4,000 [items]," he told us. "The estimated value, if sold separately, is about \$17,000."

The massive spread (some of which is pictured here) includes dozens of systems, from early *Pong* consoles to Sega's Saturn, and *thousands* of games. We had just one question: What drives a man to sell off almost his entire collection? "[My wife and I] fell on some bad financial times and after trying everything else, [we] felt this was a way to get out of the bind we're in."

The bidding started at just a penny and ended up at \$12,200 (not including shipping, which could get expensive). Would you part with your collection for that? Neither would we.



A few shots of the collection. That'll be \$12,000 please.

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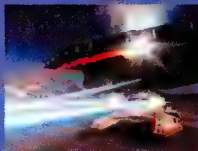
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GAME BOY ADVANCE

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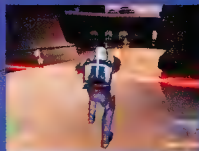




Clone Wars pg. 41



Knights of the Old Republic pg. 42



Bounty Hunter pg. 44

Send In The Clones

On the heels of Episode II, three new Star Wars games gear up for attack

By Jonathan Dudlak and Shane Bettenhausen

If you're like us, you're all set to head out and get fleeced by another new *Star Wars* movie. Yeah, we're gonna sit through all the bad dialogue, fart jokes and desecration of classic characters because Lucas has us all p-whipped and we're suckers. But we're gonna strap our thumbs in an optimistic thumbs-up position, slap on our robotomized smiles, and hope for the best. Besides, even if *Episode II* ends up being another *Episode I*, there is, well, a new hope.

This fall, LucasArts is churning out a trio of new games spanning all three next-gen consoles. While we suggested the developers roll all three titles into one ultra-game for all platforms, here's what we'll be getting: a flashy mission-based shooter, an expansive RPG and a stylish action-adventure.

So when you're watching the movie and a middle-aged Obi-Wan, frustrated by Anakin's antics, quips, "I'm getting too old for this!" resist the urge to stick your head in the concession-stand oven. Head back into the theater and see if you can't at least

memorize some of the characters' names—they'll be popping up in two of these new titles. Besides, you'll be glad you kept yourself alive to see if all these games turn out Harrison Ford-hot or Jake Lloyd-not.



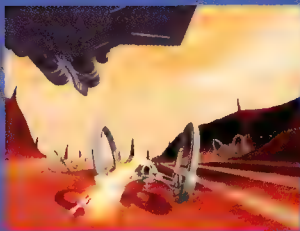
Mr. Fisto

SOMEBODY STOP HIM!

We respect George Lucas' vision, but why does he keep coming up with downright silly names for new characters? *Episode II* features Kit Fisto, Dexter Jettster and Ean Sleazebaggano. We're not kidding.



PS2
START



Clone Wars

Systems: PS2 and GameCube

Release: Fall 2002

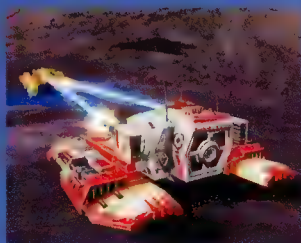
Developer: Pandemic

When we heard that *Clone Wars* starts up right where the *Episode II* movie leaves off, we naturally asked LucasArts' Producer Jim Iso if he could fill us in on the details of the movie's ending. No dice. But he did give us a scoop on this 3D vehicular-combat title in an interview with Pandemic Studios, makers of *Dark Reign 1* and 2 (PC) and *Army Men RTS* (PS2). "We're really trying to show the real war," Iso explains, "which hasn't been done before, in movies or in games. It's something like *Rogue Leader* meets *Apocalypse Now*." For those who slept through film class, that

means loads of action-heavy, mission-based combat with a gritty military theme (only on other planets). "The 16 missions include objectives like escorting convoys, defending friendly craft, and destroying targets," says Iso. "There will also be power-ups and unlockable bonus items."

Clone Wars takes place on six different planets, including Geonosis, a stark, rocky world introduced in *Episode II*. Because all the ships in the game are built for planetside travel and a few missions are conducted on foot, the whole game plays out close to land. But count on *Clone Wars* taking some cues from LucasArts' other popular space shooter. For one, fans of *Starfighter* and *Rogue Leader* will recognize the wingman controls, which can be used to issue orders to squadmates.

We took CW's multiplayer for a ride, and its *Twisted Metal*-style combat seemed solid. Up



to those players who prefer a more tactical approach, PS2 can play in a standard deathmatch, but you can also play in a standard deathmatch, or of the hill, capture the flag and more. What really caught our attention, though, is the strategy multiplayer mode, which has a feel like *Herzog Zwei* (Genesis) but not quite as involved." See below for more.



SW Gets Strategic



Clone Wars'll have you using your brains as well as your proton torpedoes. Producer Jim Iso elaborates on the genre-bending Conquest multiplayer mode: "Each player starts out on the map with an HQ that he needs to protect, but there are several neutral factories on the map that can be captured to produce additional units." You still have to drive around shooting things in this mode, but victory demands that you take over the opposing HQ.



EA GAMES

THE AWFUL TRUTH

The Product: Jar Jar Monster Mouth Candy

The Taste: Sweet strawberry

The Cost: The respect of all of your friends...forever.



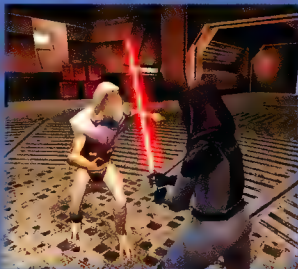
Knights of the Old Republic

System: Xbox
Release: November 2002
Developer: BioWare

Most of this *Star Wars*-themed RPG is still too early to show, but BioWare Producer Casey Hudson and Mike Gallo, producer on the LucasArts side, have its framework firmly in place. You control a party of three characters, each with his own stats, items and powers (in standard RPG fashion) in a vast 3D world. "Combat is real-time," Gallo explains, "and every character is hand-animated for each item, weapon and attack." Hudson adds, "There's a lot of character customization.

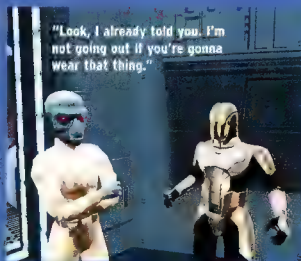
You'll get to develop force skills with each character. In *Knights*, the force works kind of like magic, doing things conventional RPGs and the mastery of a mages with time.

Knights won't have any online multiplayer components. Gallo and Hudson are looking to do a spin-off of the game as a single-player adventure. BioWare already has almost a dozen games, an environment of networks and a complex character-driven story to bring the primary quest interesting. "We set the game some years before the *Episode II* movie," says Gallo, "which gives us a degree of freedom in creating the world we would like to see.



...and you can do it on Xbox or PS2. They can do it on both of them. They hear of a walking talking animal character? Well, the walking talking animal character is another part of the game's plot, which involves planets like Tatooine and Coruscant, as you can see in the galaxy map below.

...and you can do it on both of them. They hear of a walking talking animal character? Well, the walking talking animal character is another part of the game's plot, which involves planets like Tatooine and Coruscant, as you can see in the galaxy map below.



"Look, I already told you. I'm not going out if you're gonna wear that thing."



Race Relations



Although your hero in *Knights of the Old Republic* can only be a human, you control a multitude of other races using the game's three-person party system. "You'll be able to take control of any of the characters in your party at any time," says Producer Casey Hudson, "and you'll have full control over the stats and inventories of each character." You'll encounter beloved *Star Wars* aliens, droids and creatures across your journey, and many of them will join your party. When we asked Casey if we'd be seeing any of Jar Jar Binks' relatives in the game, however, he sternly said, "This game is 100-percent Gungan-free."





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PRESS START

The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of February 2002

With warm, fuzzy games like *Grand Theft Auto III*, *State of Emergency* and *Max Payne* selling like mad, who says today's youth is desensitized to violence? Obviously just a bunch of crazies trying to stir up trouble. To be honest, though, the market for cute and cuddly has gotta be hot, with both Mario and Sonic making appearances on the charts in February. Ah, it feels like the good ol' days again. Back when the blue hedgehog and pudgy plumber duked it out regularly. Back when Vanilla Ice still rocked the house. Back when Crispin still wore parachute pants.... Oh wait, that was just last week.

1	Grand Theft Auto III Rockstar	9.0 Crispin	9.0 Greg	10 Milkman	PS2		
2	State of Emergency Rockstar	NEW! 6.5 Crispin	6.5 Jonathan	6.0 Shane	PS2		
3	Super Mario Advance 2 Nintendo	NEW! 9.0 Chris	9.0 John R	9.0 Mark	GAME BOY ADVANCE		
4	Sonic Advance Sega	NEW! 8.0 Chris	8.0 Greg	7.0 Milkman	GAME BOY ADVANCE		
5	Sonic Adventure 2: Battle Sega	NEW! 6.5 Chris	7.0 Greg	6.5 Milkman	PS2		
6	WWF Raw The	NEW! 7.0 Chris	5.5 Greg	5.5 Shoe	XBOX		
7	Wreckless: The Motorbikes The	NEW! 7.0 Dean	7.5 Jonathan	8.0 Milkman	XBOX		
8	Final Fantasy X Square Electronic Arts	9.0 Greg	9.5 Milkman	9.5 Shane	PS2		
9	Max Payne Rockstar	7.0 Shoe			PS2		
10	NBA 2K2 Sega Sports	8.5 Dan L	9.0 Dean	9.0 Kraig	PS2		

11	Madden NFL 2002 EA Sports						
12	Halo Microsoft						
13	Maximo: Ghosts to Glory Capcom			NEW!			
14	Grand Theft Auto 2 Rockstar						
15	Driver 2 Infogrames						
16	Super Smash Bros. Melee Nintendo						
17	Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty Konami						
18	Gran Turismo 3 A-spec Sony CEA						
19	Motocross Mania Take 2						
20	Gran Turismo 2 Sony CEA						

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service. Call Krátin Barnett-von Koff at (516) 675-7281 for questions regarding this list. Chart description written by EGM staff. Vanilla Ice's career is on the upswing! he recently went toe-to-toe with *Different Strokes* bad boy Todd Bridges on the debut broadcast of *Celebrity Boxing* on Fox. Ice list.

JAPAN TOP 10			
1	Wild Arms Advance Third Sony CEI	PS2	Wow—an Xbox game on the Japanese chart. Wait, wait. <i>The Castle of Shikigami</i> is a vertically scrolling arcade space shooter. (Now it all makes sense.) Sony's latest <i>Wild Arms</i> release lands at the number-one spot in its debut week. And GameCube has fared pretty well this month, with god game <i>Doshin the Giant</i> and communications RPG <i>Animal Forest</i> + both in charting positions.
2	Onimusha 2 Capcom	PS2	
3	Let's Make a Pro Soccer Club Sega	PS2	
4	Doshin the Giant Nintendo		
5	World Rally Championship Spike	PS2	
6	XenoSaga Episode I Namco	PS2	
7	The Castle of Shikigami Media Oest		
8	Power Pro Baseball 2002 Summer Konami	PS2	
9	Itadaki Street 3 Enix		
10	Animal Forest + Nintendo		

Source: Weekly Famitsu, week ending 3/17/2002

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PRESS
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Coming Soon

May

PlayStation 2

Barbarian—Titus	Fighting
Britney's Dance Beat—THQ	Music
Chris Edwards Aggressive Inline—Acclaim	Sports
Conflict Zone—Ubi Soft	Strategy
Downforce—Titus	Racing
Evil Twin—Ubi Soft	Adventure
Freestyle—EA Sports Big	Sports
Hitman 2: Silent Assassins—Eidos	Action
Jimmy Neutron Boy Genius—THQ	Action
Legion: The Legend of Excalibur—Midway	Strategy
Looney Tunes Space Race—Infogrames	Racing
Monster Truck Madness—Ubi Soft	Racing
Rayman Arena—Ubi Soft	Action
RLH: Run Like Hell—Interplay	Action
Scooby Doo 2: Night of Frights—THQ	Adventure
Spider-Man—Activision	Action
Test Drive—Infogrames	Racing
UFC Throwdown—Crave	Fighting

GameCube

Legends Of Wrestling—Acclaim	Wrestling
Lost Kingdoms—Activision	RPG
Rayman Arena—Ubi Soft	Action
Red Card Soccer 2003—Midway	Sports
Virtua Striker 3—Sega Sports	Sports
Zoo Cube—Acclaim	Puzzle

Xbox

Ballistic—Infogrames	Puzzle
Crash—Majesco	Racing
Hitman 2: Silent Assassins—Eidos	Action
Legends Of Wrestling—Acclaim	Wrestling
MotoGP: Ultimate Racing Tech.—THQ	Racing
Outlaw Golf—Vivendi	Sports
Rayman Arena—Ubi Soft	Action
Red Card Soccer 2003—Midway	Sports
Sega GT 2002—Sega	Racing
Smashing Drive—Namco	Action
Spider-Man—Activision	Action
Test Drive—Infogrames	Racing
World Series Baseball 2K3—Sega	Sports
Worms Blast—Ubi Soft	Puzzle

Game Boy Advance

Breath of Fire II—Capcom	RPG
Defender of the Crown—Metro3D	Action
Disney's Jungle Book—Ubi Soft	Action
Dragon Ball Z: Legacy of Goku—Infogrames	Action
Lego Soccer Mania—Electronic Arts	Sports
Pinball of the Dead—THQ	Pinball
Pocky & Rocky—Crave	Action
Sheep—Capcom	Strategy
Smash Pack—THQ	Action
Spider-Man—Activision	Action
Star Wars: Attack of the Clones—THQ	Action

Ultimate Brain Games—Telegames	Puzzle
Wings—Metro3D	Action
Zoo Cube—Acclaim	Puzzle

June

PlayStation 2

Antz Racing—Empire	Racing
Commandos 2: Men of Courage—Eidos	Strategy
Endgame—Empire	Action
Gravity Games BMX—Midway	Sports
H2Overdrive—Crave	Racing
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2—Activision O2	Sports
Medal of Honor: Frontline—Electronic Arts	Action
MLB Slugfest 20-03—Midway	Sports
MLX Superfly—THQ	Racing
Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2—Elec. Arts	Racing
Return to Castle Wolfenstein—Activision	Action
Skies of Arcadia—Sega	RPG
Simpsons Skateboarding—Electronic Arts	Sports
Stuntman—Infogrames	Action
Terminator: Dawn of Fate—Infogrames	Action
Virtua Tennis 2K2—Sega	Sports
Way of the Samurai—bam!	Adventure

GameCube

BMX Racing—THQ	Racing
Eternal Darkness—Nintendo	Adventure
Gravity Games BMX—Midway	Sports
MLB Slugfest 20-03—Midway	Sports
Top Gun—Titus	Action
WWF Wrestlemania X8—THQ	Wrestling

Xbox

Buffy the Vampire Slayer—Electronic Arts	Action
Crazy Taxi 3: High Roller—Sega	Racing
Gravity Games BMX—Midway	Sports
House of the Dead 3—Sega	Action
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2—Activision O2	Sports
MLB Slugfest 20-03—Midway	Sports
Pro Race Driver—Codemasters	Racing
Terminator: Dawn of Fate—Infogrames	Action
Toxic Grind—THQ	Action

Game Boy Advance

Aero the AcroBat—Metro3D	Action
Desert Strike—Electronic Arts	Action
Disney's Lilo and Stitch—Disney Interactive	Action
Dragon Ball Z: Card Game—Infogrames	Misc.
Dual Blades—Metro3D	Action
Duke Nukem—Take 2	Action
Fire Pro Wrestling 2—bam!	Action
Mega Man Battle Network 2—Capcom	Adventure
Minority Report—Activision	Action
Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed—EA	Racing
Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron—THQ	Adventure
Spy Hunter—Midway	Racing
Yu-gi-oh!—Konami	Misc.

IMPORT CALENDAR

DDR MAX: Dance Dance Revolution 6th Mix



DDR MAX: Dance Dance Revolution 6th Mix

Import Pick of the Month: *Dance Dance Revolution* makes the jump from PS1 to PS2 with the May release of the sixth installment, *DDR MAX*. It's a complete overhaul of the music/dance game series with a handful of new features. The most noticeable is a "freeze" step where you must keep your foot on one of the arrows (that is, if you have a dance pad controller) for a certain amount of time. Over 40 songs make up the soundtrack in *MAX*, and Konami's sure to include a few more from the new arcade sequel. Track down a PS2 mod chip and get dancin'!

PlayStation 2	
5/16	<i>DDR MAX: Dance Dance Revolution 6th Mix</i> , Konami (Music)
5/16	<i>Final Fantasy XI</i> , Squaresoft (Online RPG)
May	<i>U: Underwater Unit</i> , Irem (Action)
6/20	<i>Popolocrois: New Beginnings</i> , Sony CEI (RPG)

PlayStation	
4/25	<i>Klonoa Beach Volleyball</i> , Namco (Action-Sports)
4/25	<i>Dragon Quest Monsters 1&2</i> , Enix (RPG)

Game Boy Advance	
4/26	<i>Rockman Zero</i> , Capcom (Action)
6/6	<i>Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance</i> , Konami (Action)

GameCube	
April	<i>Rune</i> , From Software (RPG)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import-game store for the latest release info. Get your skis shined up, grab a stick of Juicy Fruit...

Original Iced Tea.

So cool, your tongue'll stick to it.





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UM... EITHER THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT HAS A VERSION OF 'STRATEGO' INSTALLED, OR JUST LAUNCHED A NUCLEAR STRIKE AGAINST FRANCE.

HEY, EASY MISTAKE COFFEE?

SUCK IN THAT GUT, YOU TOMB-RAIDIN', LODGE-RIDDIN', SET-GRINDIN' VIDEO-GAMIN' MAGGOTS!

PESS IS OVER, SO PUT AWAY YOUR TONGS, QUIT YER BELL-ACHIN' STAND UP, AND GET READY FOR THE TOUGHEST, MOST REWARDING FIVE MINUTES OF YOUR LIFE!

LONGER, IF YOU'RE READING THIS ON THE CAN.

FALL IN!

HERE AT TANAKA BROS. GAME DEVELOPMENT, ACCURACY IS A HIGH PRIORITY IN OUR VIDEO GAMES! (SNEEZ) OF COURSE, WHEN WE'RE ON DEADLINE, BUT WE WON'T GET INTO THAT HERE!

THE POINT IS, WHEN WE MAKE A GAME ON A PARTICULAR SUBJECT, WE RESEARCH THE CRAP OUT OF IT! DAY AND NIGHT, SO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH, AND SOMETIMES STAY THERE FOR WEEKS ON END, SINCE IT'S A TAX WRITE-OFF! WE ARE COMMITTED TO QUALITY!

FOR A PRESENT EXAMPLE, WITH THE RECENT INCREASE IN THE POPULARITY OF MILITARY-THEMED GAMES, WE THOUGHT IT A GOOD IDEA TO MAKE ONE OF OUR OWN!

BUT ARE WE ABOUT TO MAKE A SUPERHOT, TWO-BIT KNOCKOFF JUST TO CASH IN ON THIS CURRENT TREND?

WE CAN'T! THOSE WERE ALL RUMORED FOR AN EARLY RELEASE!

NO TIME!

INDEED! TODAY, FOR THE SAKE OF A GAME, MY YOUR COMPANIONS AND I BECOME A WELL-DISCIPLINED COMMANDO UNIT, AND TAKE PART IN AN EXERCISE THAT SHALL TEACH US, TRULY, WHAT IT IS TO BE A SOLDIER!

OR TO BLOW AN AFTERNOON, WHICHEVER.

ALL PRESENT AND ACCOUNTED FOR?

SIR!

AS YOU KNOW, MEN, THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS EXERCISE IS TO CROSS TOWN AND STAGE A MOCK TAKEOVER OF THE OFFICE OF RIVAL DEVELOPERS, 'YAMAMOTO GAMES.'

HSU! YOU CALLED AND LET THEM KNOW WE'RE DOING THIS TODAY, YEST?

UM... HAM... AH, THEY'LL PROBABLY ROLL WITH IT, THEY'RE PRETTY LEVEL-HEADED GUY'S.

AND IF NOT EVERYONE HAS THEIR GADGETS?

SIR!

ALRIGHT, LET'S MOVE! GO! GO! KISS THE HARRY GADGETED HAND OF ADVENTURE!

YOU! URRANGE BOY!

LET'S SEE SOME HOSTS!

CHERNOBYL!

GO! GO! FASTER!

--WAIT, NO, NOT THAT WAY, THE CAR'S IN THE SHOP!

OVER HERE!

HEY, HOW YA DOIN'?

I SEE DEAD PEOPLE!

YAMAMOTO GAMES

'WE BRING YOU MORE FUN THAN YOU DESERVE'

YARRRRG!!

YOU! DOWN! UNDER THE DESK!

THE WATER COOLER IS SECURE!

UM... YOU CAN LEAVE YOUR FEET POUNDING OUT IF THAT'S MORE COMFORTABLE!

WE TAKE NO PRISONERS! SO GET OUTTA HERE, GO ON LUNCH OR SOMETHING.

LOOK! GO-OP SWALL!

EEK!

HAZZAH!

YAMAMOTO GAMES!

IT HAS TAKEN YOU THIRTY YEARS TO BUILD SEVEN EMPLES, AND FOUR MINUTES TO LOSE IT!

WEEP WEEP YOU SORRY GUY'S, AND KNOW THAT THE TANAKA BROTHERS REIGN SUPREME!

SHORTLY!

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, THIS IS PRETTY GOOD RESEARCH, TOO.

WE'LL SEE YOU IN THIRTY DAYS, VIDEO GAMERS.

HALP!

END

HOT-HEADED. COLD BLOODED.

From a quiet moment in a dark room

to a hot pursuit through a city street

There and first person cold blooded gameplay

Cutting-edge stealth action

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HEADHUNTER.

"Headhunter is already looking like it has what it takes to stand in the same place as Splinter Cell or Metal Gear Solid." - OPM, January 2002



Blood
Violence



PlayStation 2

Acclaim
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- ▶ *Experience an amazing variety of lush environments, including Swiss Alps, Arizona Desert, Amazon Jungle, and Arctic Circle.*
- ▶ *Evade enemies with thermal vision and by running silent in stealth mode, or use turbo and VFF upgrades to transform your helicopter and move at blinding jet speed.*



Blood and Gore
Violence



PlayStation®2

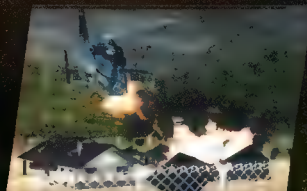
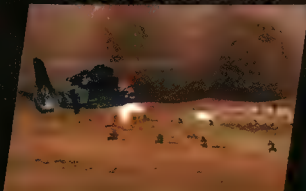
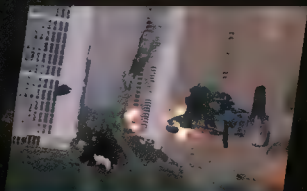
Witness the explosive action of Fire Blade firsthand at:
fireblade.midway.com



**THE ONLY THING LEFT
STANDING IS FREEDOM.**

FIRE BLADE

Feel the Roar of War



In the cockpit of Fireblade there is one goal: use whatever means available to annihilate the terrorist cells flaring up around the globe. Battle through 18 Missions in 4 campaigns at the helm of the carrier chopper or the Vendetta attack copter and unleash a barrage of hi-tech deadly weapons. Go turbo, or remain undetected from enemies in stealth mode. To win the war, you've got to end the war. Attack and destroy!

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This Month in Previews

Just when we think we have the extra time to tackle all those great games we didn't get a chance to play last year, Shoe reminds us that E3 is approaching. Damn...looks like I'll have to put those all-night *Fuzion Frenzy* sessions on hold again.

For the confused, E3 (Electronic Entertainment Expo) is the annual trade show where game publishers gather to display their wares to business types, retailers, journalists and a bevy of pimply faced fanboys who manage to sneak in somehow.

Here comes the part where I tell you why you should care about any of this. For months now, you've been hearing and reading rumors regarding the next wave of awesome games. Well, starting at the end of May, you'll actually get to see said awesome games right here in these pages. No more pussyfooting around and hiding things from the gamers. (You hear that Nintendo? The jig is almost up!)

In fact, if you peruse the list to the left, it's easy to see the beginnings of



Bust out the eye-drops. The Belmonts are back for another round. See what you'll be playing on the crapper for months to come starting on page 90.

what I'm talking about. Look at all the big names over there! And that's just a taste. Over the next few months, we'll be introduced to some games that are sure to leave palms sweaty and trousers soiled.

As for the *EGM* editors, E3 means lots of liquor. But hey, if drinking ourselves stupid and throwing up in the back of a cab is wrong, we don't wanna be right! 🍷

—Greg Sewart, Previews Editor

TOP 5 Preview Picks

1. **Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance** Game Boy Advance, June 2002
2. **Medal of Honor: Frontline** PlayStation 2, June 2002
3. **MechAssault** Xbox, Fall 2002
4. **Onimusha 2: Samurai's Destiny** PlayStation 2, Fall 2002
5. **TimeSplitters 2** GameCube, September 2002

Star Wars! Nuthin' But Star Wars!

When we asked what *the* Star Wars game of 2002 would be, lonely basement-dwellers the world over strongly preferred *Knights of the Old Republic*. Surprisingly, our fake Jar Jar game fared better than *Clone Wars*. The Gungan nation thanks you.



Source: Gamers.com poll, 03/21/02

Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance

Publisher:	Midway
Developer:	Midway
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Fighting
% Done:	50%
Release:	September 2002
Also in:	Xbox
Web Address:	www.mortalkombat.com
The Good:	Promises a return to the old-school of <i>Mortal</i> combat.
The Bad:	It's too early to tell if <i>Deadly Alliance</i> will deliver.
And The Ugly:	Those Cavaciri pants you wore to the arcade in '92 to play the original <i>MK</i> .

FIGHTING STYLES

Do the Do



Tae Kwon Do, Tang Soo Do, Hapkido...wondering what all these names are doing plastered at the bottom of the *MK:DA* screens? Each character's moves are based strongly on one particular fighting style. A fighter specializing in Jeet Kune Do (think Bruce Lee) will have a different move set than one whose strength is Hapkido (kicks, throws and locks).

Though each combatant is proficient in only one discipline, the cast of *Deadly Alliance* can switch between several different forms during a match, even mid-combo. Start off your move string with Hung Gar and finish up with a Snake form to surprise your opponent with a Hung Snake. Yes, thank you—we came up with that all by ourselves.



After a pig-the-tail-on-the-donkey game gone horribly wrong, Kenshi was forced to wander Earth in total darkness.

We know what you're thinking, and we're right there with you. "A new *Mortal Kombat*? OK, if you say so...." But we're hopeful that *Mortal Kombat*, after a five-year hiatus, can resurrect itself in the console market with *Deadly Alliance*. As excited as the old-school game boys in us want to get over a new *MK*, our hearts have been broken before (or should we say, "be-4"). So we turned a deaf ear to the hype, put on our Joe Friday hats, and took down just the facts on Midway's fighting chances with the new *Mortal Kombat*.

Notice any projectiles in these screens? Neither did we, but relax—the game is still very early. From what we know, though, *Deadly Alliance* is getting back to basics, so outlandish special moves and heat-seeking missiles may be a thing of the past. According to series co-creator Ed Boon, *MK:DA* is returning to the darker gameplay feel of the first two

Mortal Kombat titles. No more Animalities or Friendships—the game has a much more serious tone. But fighters will have weapons and random objects in each arena to use on one another (a feature introduced in *MK4*), and some stages will have multi-tiered combat fields a la *MK3*. The developers also ditched the run button to keep the game's mechanics more consistent. Full 3D movement and a mix of custom and scripted combos will also make this *MK* play like no other.

Despite the return to classic gameplay, *MK's* fighter roster continues to grow—*Deadly Alliance* has around two dozen combatants between the returning favorites and newbies like Blind Kenshi (shown above) and a female version of SubZero. Each character uses a unique fighting form (shown in yellow text at the bottom of each screen) and has the ability to switch styles mid-game (see the sidebar for details). Boon promises the switch





between styles will be quick and easy, allowing for some cool combo potential.

Since the story is about as important as the plot of a porno film, we'll spare you the drivel and just say that Shang Tsung is back in the game, and the "Deadly Alliance" is a pact between him and Quan Chi to overthrow Rayden (or Raiden, depending on whom you ask) and his mortals. What's more exciting is seeing hard-ass fighters like Kung Lao back in the game. It's enough to give nostalgic MK2 fans a reason to keep their eyes on *Deadly Alliance*, anyway. 🍄 —Jonathan Dudlak



Check Your Might

Just how big an MK nut are you? Follow this simple test to find out.

If You...

- Have played any MK game more than once... 5 points
- Have seen both *Mortal Kombat* movies... 10 points
- Bought *MK: Special Forces*... 15 points
- Dressed up as Scorpion for Halloween... 20 points
- Purchased the *MK: Annihilation* movie... 25 points
- Did that trick that makes it look like Kano's ripping out the dude's kidney in *MK1*... 30 points
- Have an MK toothbrush or lunchbox... 40 points
- Total... _____ points

Give Yourself...

- 5 points
- 10 points
- 15 points
- 20 points
- 25 points
- 30 points
- 40 points
- _____ points

60 or higher: A certified, tough-skinned, shameless MK coconut.
 40-60: Walnut. Tough and wrinkled from years of MK experience.
 20-40: Peanut. Your soft, novice core is easily exposed.
 20 and below: Corn Nut. No Liu Kang mullet and dragon tattoo for you. Now go unpause your Tekken game.



Medal of Honor: Frontline

Publisher:	Electronic Arts
Developer:	DreamWorks Interactive
Players:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	80%
Release:	June 2002
Also On:	Xbox, eventually
Web Address:	moh.ea.com
The Good:	Shooting a Nazi perched on a rooftop, making him fall over the side.
The Bad:	When he grabs onto the ledge at the last second and pulls himself to safety.
And The Ugly:	Capping him in the groin after he's gone through all of that effort.



War movies aren't the only flicks *Medal of Honor* borrows scenes from. This mine-cart chase feels ripped right out of an *Indiana Jones* film. Poor *Indy* never got a bazooka, though.

With the war on terrorism raging on, World War II movies have taken a backseat. But don't worry, *Band of Brothers* fans.

This *Medal of Honor* sequel is so broad in scope that it gives you everything you could possibly want from a dozen Nazi war films put together: mass destruction, espionage, prison breaks and scores of troops eager to "take one for the team" by jumping on live grenades.

MoH's opening D-Day assault sets the tone of the game perfectly. You'll know what we mean when your screen shakes and you hear the "thump, thump" (over 400 audio files per level) of artillery exploding in every direction. *Oh s****. Then there's the crackle of machine-gun fire and the sight of your fellows getting thrown into the air like rag dolls. *Oh s***, Oh s***!* This game manages to pack more wallop in two missions than some games stuff

in 20. Scott Langteau, producer at DreamWorks, sums it up perfectly: "We're trying to scare the hell out of you."

And they're really good at it. They tapped military advisors (Capt. Dale Dye from *Platoon*, *Band of Brothers*) and the Smithsonian to make sure their Nazis acted and looked authentic, right down to the way their uniforms were buttoned. "We even sent the art director and associate producer to the Netherlands to visit the locations we feature in *Frontline*," said David Prout, lead artist at Dreamworks. They went to the Netherlands for free...to scout locations? Yeah, sure guys.

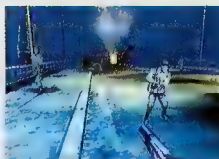
Whether or not DreamWorks' management is gullible doesn't matter. The developer's thirst for detail definitely paid off, particularly evidenced when you trade fire on the battlefield. The baddies won't sit and eat your lead. Instead, they'll scramble

BLASTING ON A BUDGET:

A Bridge Too Far (1977)



This classic re-creates Operation Market Garden, the most risky and brutal Allied defeat. Watch Robert Redford, man-eater Anthony Hopkins and the cock of the walk, Sean Connery, get their asses handed to them.



"Your mission is to disarm the detonators the Germans placed on the bridge," says Langteau. "We suggest that Nijmegen Bridge didn't blow, because you got to it first and saved it. Our homage to *A Bridge Too Far*."

Das Boot (1981)



Regarded as one of the most realistic (and claustrophobic) WWII movies ever made, this flick tells the tale of a German U-Boat crew. If you want to feel what it's like to be a well-armed sardine, then check this out.

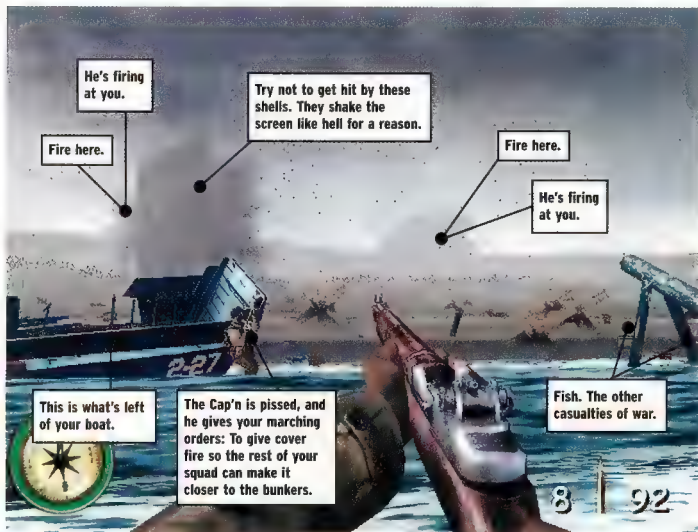


You may not get to helm a U-Boat, but you get to raise hell in one. After smuggling aboard via a packing crate, you have to destroy the sub from within. That is, if the knife-throwing cook doesn't stop you first.



HO-RIFFIC!


America wasn't the first to think of stealth aviation. Those crafty Germans nearly beat us to it with the HO-IX, a plane made almost entirely of wood, until the Allies halted its construction. One of the relics is being restored at the Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian, but isn't currently on display. Luckily, you can get your HO fix by checking out the abnoxiously long URL below: http://www.hotel.wineasy.se/ipms/stuff_eng_detail_hoix.htm



for cover or turn over a table to make some. A few of the bastards are so dodgy that you'd swear it's easier to get a clear shot at a groundhog on a foggy golf course. (That's your signal to use a bazooka.)

Not every moment will grind your teeth. A handful of covert-ops offer a breather by turning you into a working-man's James Bond. (Sorry, no Martinis here.) Your numerous chores include disabling trucks and clearing road blocks, in addition to finding secret files.

Hell, we wouldn't have been surprised to see "scrub a swastika off a toilet" after gawking at the to-do lists.

Our favorite assignment of the bunch was using a fake ID to sneak around a German compound *Castle Wolfenstein*-style. (Oh, the Apple II memories!) Come to think of it, forget all the cool stuff we just talked about. Any game that rekindles our fond memories of that breakthrough Nazi-buster is enough to get us excited.  —Kraig Kujawa

ACHTUNG, BABY

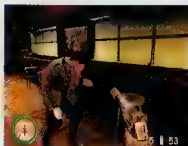
You Think You Know Pain?



This castrated soldier is re-thinking his decision to enlist.



He's going to have to explain the wooden leg to his wife.



This drunk Nazi does his best EGM staff impersonation.

PLAY MON: FRONTLINE INSTEAD OF RENTING THESE WWII FLICKS

Saving Private Ryan (1998)



It's safe to assume that most of us saw this movie five times to gawk at its gritty opening D-Day beach sequence over and over, not to stare at Matt Damon's shiny hair. Unless you're a Judy Garland fan.



Moh's opening Omaha Beach scene rips off *Ryan's* D-Day sequence and takes it one step further. Instead of being unloaded from your aquatic meat mover, you get blown out of it by a well-aimed shell.

Captain Corelli's Mandolin (2001)



"Why am I in such a suck-ass movie?" cries Nicolas Cage. Funny, we were asking ourselves the same thing after watching this saffest about an Italian WWII occupation of a gorgeous island and its women.



OK, so there's no island and no women in *Medal of Honor* to speak of. The closest thing we could find was this hot resistance radio operator whose stare easily topped Penelope Cruz's (Cage's love interest).

Onimusha 2: Samurai's Destiny

Publisher:	Capcom
Developer:	Capcom
Players:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	75%
Release:	Aug. 27, 2002
Samurais:	Don't get no respect.
Web Address:	www.capcom.com
The Good:	More weapons, more characters, a much longer game. It's very nice. Very nice indeed.
The Bad:	The main character is based on a dead actor. Shudder!
And The Why:	A four-legged spiderman.

DOPPELGÄNGER

Born Again



Like the first *Onimusha*, *Oz*'s main character and hero is based on a real-life actor. Unlike *Oz*, whose Samanosuke is based on the living, breathing Takeshi Kaneshiro, *Oz*'s Yagyū Jubei is modeled after the late Yusaku Matsuda (a popular Japanese actor and singer). Matsuda is best known in America as Sato, the bad man from the movie *Black Rain*, but his most famous role is that of Syunsaku Kudo. Kudo was his character on the 1970s Japanese TV show, *Detective Story*. One Easter egg in *Oz* is the Black Suit Man mode, which opens up after you beat the game once. Beat BSM mode and you'll unlock a movie-viewer that lets you view 20 game cinemas with Matsuda in his black suit.



Dressed for success: Jubei (in secret costume) must defeat the minions of Nobunaga, stylishly, time and time again.

In typical Capcom fashion, the final boss is a humongous sonofab**! Thankfully, you're no small fry yourself.**



Set 10 years after the conclusion of the first game, *Onimusha 2* introduces a new sword-wielding hero to the world of feudal Japan to vanquish the undead forces of a revived and rejuvenated Nobunaga.

Yagyū Jubei, the main character, is surrounded by an all-new supporting cast of fighters. O-yū (the obligatory babe) wields a sword, Magochi is a lanky gunman, Kotaro is a boy ninja, and Eki is a fat, drunken spearsman. Depending on what decisions you make in the game and how friendly you are to certain characters, some will accompany you on your travels and assist you in battle. From time to time, you assume control of them (à la Kaede from *Oz*) for certain quests. Thankfully,

everyone can utilize the Ogre gauntlet now, allowing even these role-players the chance to regain health during battle.

The game is again controlled *Resident Evil*-style (move forward, pivot right/left, etc.), but the controls feel much more responsive since the characters are swifter and more nimble. Unlike the first *Onimusha*, which was originally designed for the PS1, *Onimusha 2* was developed with the PS2's power in mind—and it shows. The graphics are improved, with more realistic-looking high-res characters and sharper, animated backgrounds. Rain falls, grass bends in the wind, reflections appear in the water...these details create a convincing atmosphere that enrich the static 2D, prerendered backgrounds.

But *Onimusha* veterans probably want to know if the weapons still rock, and it's safe to say indeed they do. The Thunder, Wind and Lightning Orbs all return, but this time an Ice Spear and an Earth Hammer have been added. The results, predictably, are awesome, with the spear shattering frozen enemies and the hammer capable of sending a quake toward every enemy on screen. A secret Fire Sword completes the collection.

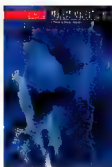
Featuring a sizeable quest, more playable characters, plus a wealth of secrets and skill-based challenges, *Onimusha 2* will likely appeal to those craving an intense and replayable action game. 🕸

—James Mielke



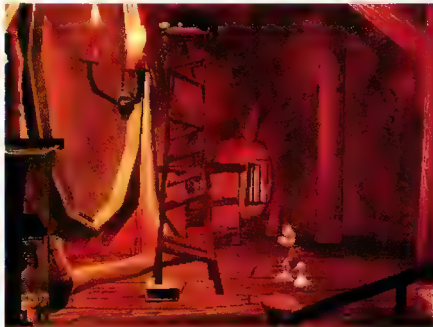
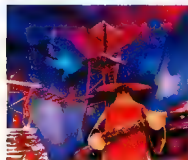
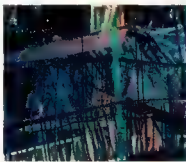
A VERY SPECIAL MAJESTIC MIX

A group of musicians has combined their talents to create a tribute CD of music from *Final Fantasy* composer Nobuo Uematsu. Called *Project Majestic Mix*, the disc has new interpretations of classic *FF* themes. Project Composer Stephen T. Kennedy says that he and the other artists contributing to the project "have set out to express ourselves by rearranging and recording this music in a way that is more pleasing than its video-game counterpart." For more info, point your Web browser to www.majesticmix.com.



Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc

Ubi Soft • Fall 2002 — Here we go again! This time, it looks like Rayman's gotten himself into some sticky situations on the seedy side of town. Lucky for him, he's armed with a new set of powers and combat tactics to keep hordes of smarter and more savage enemies, including Dark Lums, from pounding him to mush. We hope the disjointed one's third game will be as great as the last.



Robot A.D.

Enix • October 2002 — In the future, giant robots will be a lot more common than they are today. For example, it would be commonplace to stroll out of 7-Eleven, Slurpee in hand, and have to quickly dodge the stomping feet of a 20-story-tall mech. In *Robot A.D.*, you'll be dishing out, as well as avoiding, the wanton destruction. This action game follows an urban sci-fi tale of good robot versus evil robot, where you control giant mecha from ground level. That's right, you're on the *ground* and not safely *inside* the 'bot itself. For example, if something knocks over a building, you'll have to escape from falling debris. You control your mech with one analog stick while you're running away using the other. (See the guy standing there in the pic on the top left? That's you.) Now fight, my robots!



OUTLAW GOLF GREAT GOLF



Appropriate
golf attire
required



HYPN TIX



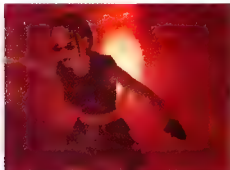


BABY GOIN' BACK?

Angelina Jolie, she who played Lara Croft in the *Tomb Raider* flick last summer, adopted a Cambodian child with husband Billy-Bob. Turns out that it's illegal to adopt Cambodian children due to the extremely corrupt adoption trade in that country. Whoops!

Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness

Eidos • November 2002 — Since we last spoke of Lara and her new PS2 adventure, the game has found itself an official title, which seems to reflect its more mature style. New background details have been unearthed, such as developer Core Design's rather bold choice to separate the game into three distinct gameplay styles. The first will feature Lara without weapons, relying on stealth and character interaction to progress through an almost RPG-like scenario. The second will be more akin to the past *Tomb Raider* titles (though Lara will sport several new moves, such as a chokehold straight out of *Metal Gear Solid*). And the third, featuring the new playable character Curtis Trent, will be much more action-oriented and heavy on shooting. Honestly, we're just happy to finally see some screenshots that make this game look like something other than a high-res *Tomb Raider*. Our concern is that people might start referring to Lara as "Snake." But hey, what better game to imitate?



Blade II

Activision • Summer 2002 — Sir Wesley of Snipes' new movie may bear the same name as Activision's coming sequel, but the two don't share much else. *Blade II* the game will feature an original story not even loosely based on the flick, though the Reapers (the evil so powerful they force Blade to team up with his vampire enemies) do play a major part in both stories.



GET LOST

Never heard of *The Land of the Lost*? Wanna put a tune behind the lyrics for our *Dino Stalker* preview below? Or maybe you are looking for an autographed picture of the actor who played Chaka, the feral boy? (And no, he's not a member of Sugar Ray.) For this and oh-so-much more about everyone's favorite mid-'70s, freaked-out, sci-fi dinosaur puppet show, visit www.landofthelost.com.



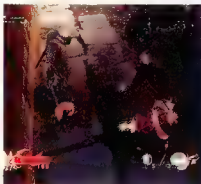
Dino Stalker

Capcom • Fall 2002 — As sung to the theme of the old TV show *The Land of the Lost* (see top of the page); cue banjo: "World War II pilot Mike Wired/On a routine attack mission/Had the airplane shot down that he'd flown/High up in the sky/A white light engulfed him/As he parachuted down a thousand feet below/To the Laaaa-and of the Lost!" OK, the setup for this time-travelling first-person shooter is pretty damn goofy. But *Stalker* does have a few big things going for it: interactive backgrounds (everywhere from the jungle to a futuristic city), a script from the *Resident Evil* scribes at Flagship, and full Guncon 2 light-gun compatibility.



Tenchu 3: Wrath of Heaven

Activision • Fall 2002 — The beloved ninja-assassination simulation returns with a much-deserved PS2 facelift. Although the original team behind the first two *Tenchu* titles jumped ship to make *Samurai*, Activision proudly carries on the stealthy saga of Rikimaru and Ayame. Those nifty ninjas join several other new playable characters for some sneaky neck-slashing and grappling-hook acrobatics.



BAD ATTITUDE



Replace
your
divots



HYPN•TIX

TEEN
MATURE: SEXUAL THEMES
MILD VIOLENCE
STRONG LANGUAGE



PREVIEW GALLERY



THE POWER OF CHEESE

The last original *Shinobi* title was released for Saturn under the name *Shinobi Legends* in the U.S. Unfortunately, the game was filled with cheesy live-action cinemas. So cheesy, in fact, that the opening was actually cut out of the U.S. version. We're talking worse than made-for-Sci-Fi-Channel quality, here.

Reign of Fire

bam! • Fall 2002 — bam! scored the license to this by-the-numbers sci-fi movie and, by God, they're going to use it. *RoF*, starring bad boys Matthew McConaughey and Christian Bale, is set in a near-future wasteland where dragons have taken to the skies. Nobody knows how it happened, but now everybody's looking to gun 'em down. Expect to do the same in this over-the-shoulder action game.



Endgame

Empire • May 2002 — Namco's pumping out Guncon-compatible titles as fast as they can, but trigger-happy PS2 fans still cry out for more NRA-approved action. Luckily, Empire Interactive responds with this high-concept blast-a-thon. You are Jade, a sexy marksman who must fight for her life when her favorite Holodeck-style virtual-reality games become a little too real.



Way of the Samurai

bam! • June 2002 — Part adventure, part fighting game, *Way* puts you, a ronin, smack-dab in the middle of a samurai clan war. Developed by Acquire (the makers of *Tenchu* and *Tenchu 2*), *WotS* leaves it up to you to decide how to interact with characters and explore, while providing plenty of chances to kick enemy butt (or vice versa). Keep on the lookout for samurai ponytails (or better yet, afros—see right) this June.



Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer

Activision • Summer 2002 — You, Kelly Slater and seven other pros battle the big curls in this surfing safari. The emphasis is on pretty water graphics, real-world physics, and big, big waves.



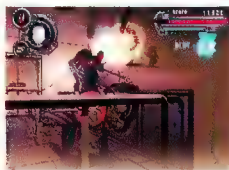
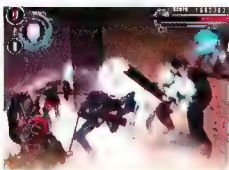
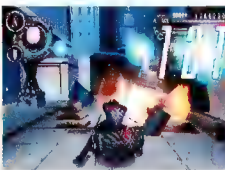
Shaun Murray's Pro Wakeboarder

Activision • Summer 2002 — Wakeboarding: part waterskiing, part snowboarding, part high-pressure enema. Actually, it's all about catching air off the boat wake and trickin' like a madman.



Gungrave

Sega • July 2002 (Japan) — Imagine a free-roaming 3D action-shooter (in the vein of *Devil May Cry*) infused with a future-Western apocalyptic motif, and you'll end up with a nugget like *Gungrave*. The game's plot progression is told through "old fashioned" hand-drawn animation. Currently there are no plans to release this cool looking game in the U.S., but Sega is considering it.



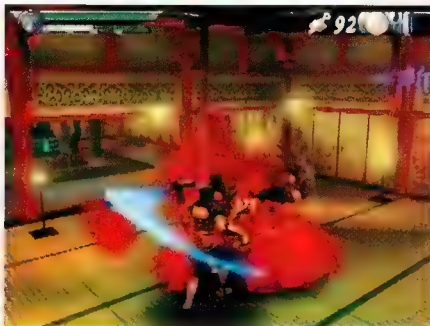
CRUISE IN CONTROL

Activision isn't allowed to use Tom Cruise's likeness in the *Minority Report* game because of licensing issues. Maybe the hunk will ease up for a (fingers crossed) *Cocktail* video game...?



Shinobi

Sega • Fall 2002 — After a six-year hiatus, Shinobi will soon stalk the shadows once again, hunting evildoers against the background of a futuristic Tokyo that's been decimated by a tremendous earthquake and the general crumbling of social values. Shedding its 2D roots, the new *Shinobi* will be a cross between Capcom's *Strider* and Activision's *Tenchu*, featuring fully 3D worlds to creep around in and a main character who can scale walls, use ninja magic, and take on many guys at once...no, not like that.



Minority Report

Activision • November 2002 — If you take the upcoming Tom Cruise flick, remove Tom Cruise, and turn the whole event into a beat-'em-up action game, you'd have *Minority Report* (uh, the game, that is).

Developer Treyarch is touting a realistic physics system that allows you to punch a guy in the gut, grab him, toss him into a glass wall, see it shatter—with very lifelike movement from all bodies involved (no generic, canned animations here). And while you dodge 5-0 and try to figure out why you've been accused of a "future murder," you'll get to reenact bits of the film, like jetpacking and our fave, knocking people upside the head with the "puke stick," which causes victims to blow chunks. Good, clean, family fun!



SPANKING NEW FOR XBOX



Cheating
penalty—
one stroke



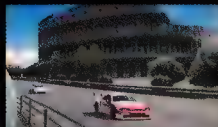
HYPNOTIX

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PlayStation 2

THREE SIGHTS NOT TO BE MISSED IN ROME. TURNS 2, 5 AND 7.



Mild Lyrics



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It's difficult to appreciate some of the greatest tourist destinations in the world when you're racing through them at 225 mph. But with over 30 different racecourses and cars from the world's top manufacturers which are created according to the exact specifications of their real-life counterparts, you'll feel like you could. Besides, when the competition starts battling with you for every inch of space on the track, you won't have time to see the sights. However, you can test your skills in the intense arcade mode or the simulation mode, where true car fanatics can supe-up their cars to no end. So don't worry about packing all your things, because if you're good, it'll be a short trip.



THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE





PREVIEW

TimeSplitters 2

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Free Radical
Players: 1-4
Genre: First-person shooter
% Done: 50%
Release: September 2002
Also On: Xbox, PS2
Web Address: www.eidos.com
 www.frd.co.uk

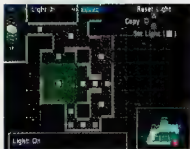
The Good: Single-player game promises plenty of depth and detail.

The Bad: Cartoonish design may be mistaken for a kid's game.

And The Ugly: The tie on the dude who owns www.timesplitters.com.

LEVEL EDITOR 2.0

Do It Your Damn Self

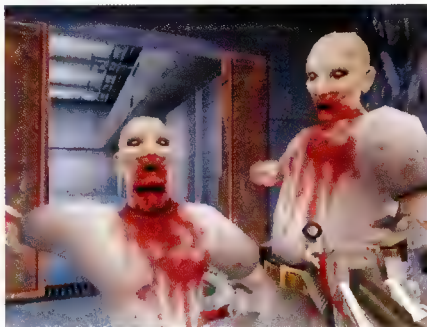


Feel like something is lacking in most modern first-person shooters? Then how about you get off your big fat butt and do somethin' about it! The level editor from *TS* (pictured above) returns in *TS2*, and this time it will allow you to make multi- and single-player levels, as Doak told us. "You can put doors in, and you can put keys in, and you can link the keys to doors. Then you can add a start point and an end point, and put in non-player characters and [have them say stuff]. Effectively, you could make something about the complexity of a *Doom* level." (And we didn't really mean that comment about your fat butt—we're sure your butt is wonderful.)



Destructible items are all over the levels: windows, monitors, lights, even some melons (a nod to *Metal Gear Solid 2*, perhaps?).

All due to a horrible misunderstanding, many innocent zombies were killed on their way home from the pie-eating contest.



Even if you didn't know that Free Radical Director David Doak worked on the blockbuster Nintendo 64 first-person shooter *GoldenEye*, you can tell he knows a few things about the genre just by watching him get behind a controller. The way he glides through hallways, stealthily disabling security cameras. Or how he drops enemies with a single head-shot before they can even raise a gun to their hostages. Or when he toys with his victims, lighting them with a flamethrower then dousing them with an extinguisher, only to set timed explosives on their back and watch them panic before the inevitable "BOOM!". But maybe the best evidence of all is the fact that he, and the team at Free Radical, are the guys making the game that includes all the cool stuff outlined above (and that's just the first couple levels): *TimeSplitters 2*.

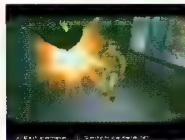
You may remember the original *TS* on the PS2 for its smooth graphics, innovative level editor or frenzied multiplayer matches, but chances are the single-player game doesn't leap to mind. "The big

thing for the first [*TS*]," Doak explains, "was to make a solid multiplayer game, give it a fast, arcadey feel, and have it done in time for the PS2 launch." But for the sequel, as Doak told us, Free Radical's crosshair is aimed squarely on the single-player experience. "We thought, 'Let's include the kind of interactivity that *GoldenEye* had', just to remind people it wasn't that we'd forgotten how," he jokes.

To jog your memory, Free Radical is building each level in *TS2* as a little story in itself, set in its own unique time and place, with characters, weapons and objectives specific to it. Encompassing it is the larger overall plot of two space marines (that's you and a friend if you want to play co-op) in pursuit of the naughty title aliens and their time-travel device. "It's kind of like a TV action series," says Doak. "There's a back story, but each each level is like a little episode." From gangster-filled 1930s Chicago, to a modern-day Siberian dam overrun with mutants, to a robot factory of the future, you warp into a different identity to accomplish each mission—kinda like the old sci-fi TV show *Quantum Leap*. The idea is to add this deep solo experience to an updated version of the multiplayer action the original *TS* was known for. An ambitious plan, but as we watch David score his umpteenth head-shot in a row, it's hard not to believe Free Radical could pull it off.  —Mark MacDonald



(From top left): Boss! Unlike the original *TS*, some levels in part 2 end with big bad guys like this fleshy...thing. Next, lobster-boy gets slow-roasted...mmm, lobster-boy. Finally, a picture-in-picture window pops up to show the effects of your actions (when you pull a lever to open a door, etc.), and you can take control of remote security guns, much to the dismay of this guard.

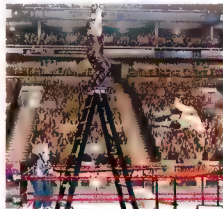




PREVIEW

WWF Wrestlemania X8

Publisher:	THQ
Developer:	Yuke's
Players:	1-4
Genre:	Wrestling
% Done:	85%
Release:	June 2002
Web Address:	www.thq.com
The Good:	You can re-create Hogan vs. The Rock and change the outcome so that Hogan wins.
The Bad:	Alas, no backstage matches.
And The Ugly:	Ric Flair's man tits flopping around during his WX8 match against The Undertaker.



We're pretty sure Undertaker's going to be landing on his face shortly.



Another great gimmick match is Hell in the Cell. Here, Triple H slams Rikishi onto the top of the cell. Ouch.

NO WAY OUT

NWO Returns

It's official: The NWO will be included in the roster of *WX8* superstars, bringing the total number to 42.

Wrestling fans have come to expect a lot from the video-game versions of their favorite sport. THQ hopes *Wrestlemania X8*'s boatload of features will make those fans' mouths water: 42 superstars (including WCW and ECW folks), seven arenas (like the Toronto SkyDome, the location of the real *WX8*), 35 kinds of matches (including gimmicks like Cage Matches, Hell in the Cell, Tag and TLCs), a deep Create-a-Wrestler setup, and a Challenge mode where you pick a wrestler and go for a belt.

Japanese developer Yuke's has created an entirely new engine that combines the best elements of their previous work (which includes *SmackDown!* on PS2 and *No Mercy* on N64) with more of a focus on grap-

pling. Takumi Kon, the game's producer, told us, "We wanted to make *WX8* more of a simulation game. The grappling system now lets you counter and reverse your opponent with the touch of a button: R to counter strike, L for grapple counters, and when you press both, you can counter a special attack."

Standard strikes are all performed with the B button, but the flashiest moves are performed by pressing one or two buttons together with a directional. (Exact attacks are also determined by ring position and what direction your opponent is facing.) Build up your Attitude Meter and you can perform a wrestler's signature move like The People's Elbow or Undertaker's Rope Walk.

Just in case hand-to-hand combat isn't enough and you need that extra "oomph," you can grab props out of the audience to beat your friends with. And you can realize your dream of throwing Stephanie McMahon through the announcer's table...repeatedly. (C'mon, you know you wanna.)

Of course, no wrestling game would be complete without getting four friends in the ring for an impromptu battle royale. Now, instead of cycling through targets when things get crazy, you can lock onto opponents with the GC controller's C-stick. Just point it to the guy you want to focus on in relation to your screen positioning (very handy).

With all this stuff, the only thing *WX8* lacks is the smack talk—you provide that. 🍌

—Chris Johnston





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PREVIEW
GALLERY

MAG DADDY

As usual, Japanese gamers have access to something special we don't. At Sega's Game Jam 2 event in Tokyo where they showed off their latest games to the public, a rare "Deluxe Air Mag" was awarded to groups of gamers who challenged the special *Phantasy Star Online* boss battle Sega set up. What is it? We'll have to quiz some lucky Japanese gamers.

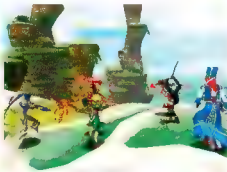
Mario Tennis

Nintendo • TBD — String up your racquet and wash those whites—Mario and his pals return to the court for this 'Cube sequel to *Mario Tennis* on N64. From these early screens, you can see what the smooth new character models will look like. Look at the shine on Mario—you could blind someone with that. And just check out the fuzz on that tennis ball. Makes you wish you were playing it now, eh?



Phantasy Star Online: Ep. I & II

Sega • Fall 2002 — Better start saving that Meseta (ahem, money in the *PSO* world) now, boys and girls. Online play in *PSO GC*, now with an *Episode I & II* subtitle, has been confirmed in Japan (Internet play in the U.S. is still a mystery). Enhancements to this version include new character classes (a female Ranger, a female Robotic Hunter and a male Force), costumes, enemies, bosses and levels like this beach stage.



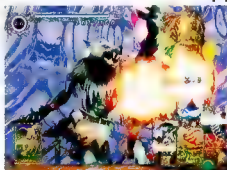
Mario Golf

Nintendo • TBD — When Mario's not saving Princess Toadstool, he likes to kick back, grab a soft drink, and hit the links with his buddies. And you can join him in this update to the N64 arcade-style sports game, also called *Mario Golf*. Mario's been workin' on his power swing, as evidenced by this front and back shot of him giving a ball a thwack. Take that, Tiger Woods.



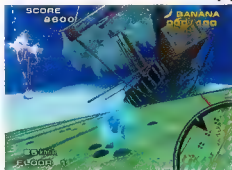
Lost Kingdoms

Activision • May 2002 — Real-time card-battling carves itself a new niche in From Software's new action-RPG. A prim princess deals out death with a deck and wrecks monster necks in this odd game.



Super Monkey Ball 2

Sega • Fall 2002 — Sega keeps the gameplay but builds on its popular party/puzzle original with a dozen minigames (including revamped versions of the old faves) and 150 new solo stages.





PREVIEW
GALLERY

Eternal Darkness

Nintendo • June 24, 2002 — It may be a mature-rated GameCube adventure with zombies, shotguns and item-fetching puzzles, but according to the president of developer Silicon Knights, Denis Dyack, "Eternal Darkness is absolutely *not* Resident Evil." And after finally getting some quality time with the game, we see what he means. The emphasis here is more on a huge storyline and a theme of insanity than the slasher-flick thrills of the Capcom series. Less survival horror and more psychological thriller, as Dyack calls the game.

In *ED* you travel through history, playing as 12 characters in different times and places, all improbably but eventually connected. Dyack says more than five hours of cinemas weave the various stories together, including branching paths and more than three endings. And Denis promises one other thing: *Eternal Darkness* will not be delayed again. As to why it's taken this long, he offers an honest excuse: "We (at Silicon Knights) were happy with the gameplay, but in talking with Nintendo, we realized it could be a lot better."



ETCH-A-SKEETCH

Eternal Darkness isn't just the name of a game for Nintendo—it's a way of life. The company has been keeping the press in a virtual blackout on *ED* (as on most every other game), and even though we finally got a chance to play this one, we couldn't get any screenshots showing the coolest features. So we decided to take the law into our own hands. Here are our pics, completely unofficial, straight from our napkin to your eyes, starring you as the Roman dude (pictured above):



SPELL CASTING: You'll find various magical objects throughout *ED*, each with its own special powers. You can combine them later to uncover healing, defensive and attack spells—even summon monsters to explore levels and fight enemies like so:



INSANITY: Every time a monster spots you, your Sanity meter drops; kill them to regain your marbles. If you don't, eventually you experience bizarre hallucinations (see monsters who aren't really there, you appear to shrink, etc.). Sound cool? It is. "We found (in focus testing) players actually enjoy going insane," Dyack says.



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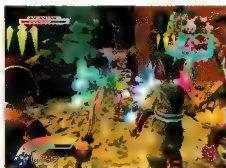
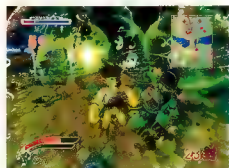
Mario Sunshine

Nintendo • Aug. 26, 2002 — Mario and the Princess may have thought they were just going on vacation, but there's something sinister going on in the peaceful beachside town that serves as *Sunshine*'s backdrop. Someone disguised as Mario has vandalized the local scenery with dark scribble marks. Accused of the crime, Mario arms himself with a waterpump backpack and sets out to find the real culprit.



Mystic Heroes

Koei • Fall 2002 — In the old days, Koei's name was synonymous with involved and painfully dull historical sims. But the mayhem of the *Dynasty Warriors* series proved that ancient China doesn't have to be boring. *Mystic Heroes* mixes the hack-and-slash fun of *DW* with fantasy role-playing. Select three heroes to battle evil hordes with slashing blades and blazing spells, and rack up a huge body count.



Beach Spikers

Sega • August 2002 — Developer AM2 brings 16 tanned, toned and totally female beach-volleyball players from the far reaches of the globe to the 'Cube in this fast-action arcade port. Given its coin-op roots, expect simple and speedy gameplay like that of *Virtua Tennis*—only sexier and scantily clad. Break out the tanning oil and call over three friends for a jiggle-filled four-player match in the sand.





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Attack 20 types of creatures in swarms of up to 30 at once using 20 melee, ranged and spell weapons from swords to axes and flamethrowers.

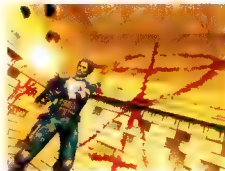


Slay in brutal single- and multi-player action through 23 huge environments, including a prison, gothic church, cemetery and torture chamber.



The Terminator: The Dawn of Fate

Publisher:	Infogrames
Developer:	Paradigm
Platform:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	75%
Release:	Summer 2002
Price:	PS2
Web Address:	www.infogrames.com
The Good:	New Terminators abound.
The Bad:	The camera thus far sucks in the manner of a Hoover vacuum.
And The Ugly:	Where's Arnold?



What's that symbol on the wall? Could it be that the Blair Witch is behind all this "death to the human race" craziness? The mind wobbles.

Big man Justin Perry hammers away at the never-before-seen T-400. Note the neat lighting effects.



FROM THE GLOOM

Doomsday



Not that *EGM* would ever pretend to engage in idle speculation, but we suspect that James Cameron may have taken inspiration for the Terminator robots from Marvel Comics' favorite fiend, Dr. Doom. The doctor, a rather stupid and megalomaniacal genius who put a metal mask on his face while it was still white-hot, has plagued the heroes in the Marvel Universe for some 40 years now.

Doom's full-body armor and tendency to speak about himself in the third person ("Doom would like one ticket to see Britney Spears' delightful on-the-road epic *Crossroads*, you impudent dolt!") does tend to give him a rather robotic look and manner—and his inclination toward trying to kill everyone who is not Doom seems to make him the world's first true Terminator. Hmm....

Prepare to swallow the bitterest pill ever concocted: Arnold only *thought* he'd be back. When Infogrames snagged the rights to make a game based on James Cameron's violent movie *The Terminator*, they were unable to secure likenesses for the film's stars. As a result, the third-person shooter *Terminator: The Dawn of Fate* will most definitely lack a Schwarzeneggeresque quality.

No matter. Developer Paradigm, which once toiled mightily on the very excellent Nintendo 64 launch title *Pilotwings 64*, seems poised to make game fans forget old whatshisname. *Dawn of Fate*, a true prequel, ends where *Terminator* starts and begins in that most-troubled year of 2027. Amid the backdrop of a terrible human-robot war, a ragtag human resistance, lead by hero John Connor, uncovers a fiendish plan hatched by the no-goodnik automaton Skynet. Skynet, a shadowy villain in the finest mold of Arthur Conan Doyle's Moriarity (only with electronic guts), hopes to send a fearsome new terminator back to the past to whack Connor's mom before she can give birth.

Fortune favors the brave, and also those who can puke hate in excess. Players take the role of humans Kyle Reese, Justin Perry and Katherine Luna as they



attempt to thwart the vile Skynet's schemes with extreme prejudice. Mission-based play initially sees the humans on the defensive, slugging it out with Skynet's forces in a shattered Los Angeles, but shifts gears as the game progresses and, ultimately, the fight ends up on Skynet's doorstep.

Though still early in its development stage, *Dawn of Fate* may hold magic in the mold. New and never-before-seen Terminators such as the hulking, rusted-out T-400s and the more modern T-800s haunt the game's levels. These formidable foes quickly learn to raise their arms to deflect bullets, teleport in a gorgeous flash of pink and blue, and explode brilliantly when stabbed by the humans' plasma baton. A rather intriguing storyline should keep players hooked like trout—the developers have created a new faction of cybernetic men called the Dighumans and thrown in a subplot involving a human traitor.

"This is a relentless action game," says Lead Designer Ken Tabor. Battles can be fought in close quarters *mano a mano* or with any one of the game's 15 or so long-range weapons. To ensure a cinematic feel, Paradigm opted for a third-person perspective and a dynamic camera that currently, to put it mildly, makes us want to chuck our cookies. ("We're going to be working on the camera until they tell us to stop and the game ships," Tabor says.) Here's hoping.

—Greg Orlando



Man made the machines, and then he made the machines mad. Far left: It's face-kicking time! Left: That sign is there for a reason, pal.

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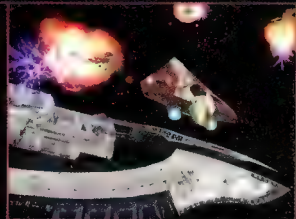
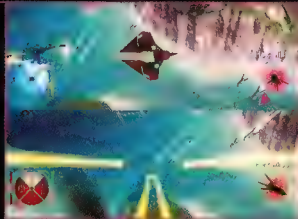


Violence



Official *Star Wars* Web Site www.starwars.com

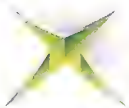
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Screenshots from PlayStation 2 version












PlayStation 2





PREVIEW

MechAssault

-  Microsoft
-  Day 1
-  1-8 (online)
-  Action
-  40%
-  November 2002
-  Mechwarrior on PC
-  www.xbox.com
-  Fast-paced, first-person shooter-style gameplay.
-  Gamers weaned on PC mech sims will not like how this game has been "dummied down."
-  That city block you destroyed in the name of justice.

STRATEGY ADVICE

Mech RTS?

Expect some very cool online options in *MechAssault* to complement the single-player campaign.

Along with standard deathmatch and capture-the-flag games, Day 1 revealed plans for a particularly cool online mode where you would be allotted a certain amount of cash and use it to buy buildings, defenses and mechs. With your fortifications in place and your invasion team built, it's time to head out and attempt to destroy your opponent's base. So it's a little like a real-time strategy game but from the perspective of a mech pilot.




(Left) One second the folks at 110 Crossfire Lane were marveling at the cheap rent. The next they were wondering if they could get their deposit back.

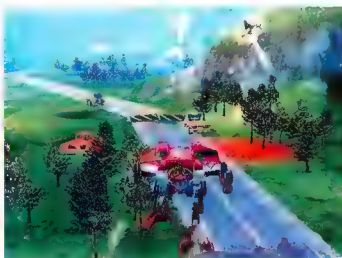
The problem with mech games—specifically ones based on *BattleTech*—is that they're generally too slow and complex to make for a good console experience. That's why the only exciting giant robot games you see tend to come out of Japan, where mechs are usually fast and nimble, not huge and lumbering. Until now.

In a move that's sure to have pen-and-paper purists across the country crying foul, Day 1 is creating a *BattleTech* game with giant robots that behave more like they belong in *Robotech* or *Zone of the Enders*. These babies are fast and furious. In *MechAssault*, you're a one-man wrecking crew, capable of literally destroying entire cities. But all this destruction isn't senseless (OK...most of it is)—

you can actually knock buildings onto groups of attacking enemies, thus saving time and ammo. Plus, it's one of the ways to find weapon, shield and jump-jet upgrades in the game.

Day 1 wants to keep this game console-friendly, so you'll play the role of a single, badass mercenary sent in to clean out a planet of unsuspecting pirates. That means no squad to deal with and no wingmen to protect. But *MechAssault* will still feature objective-based gameplay, like rescue and escort missions. In other words, it's not just another mindless shooter.

The big question is whether or not *BattleTech* can succeed as a console game. Microsoft's determined to prove it can.  —Greg Sewart



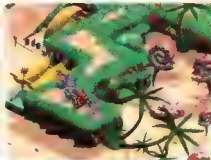
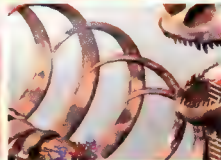
Hackers have cracked into Digimon Online!

Digimon Online!

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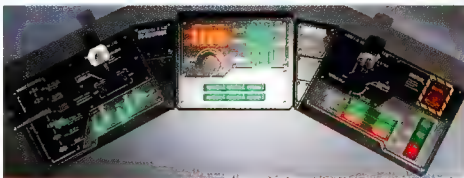


PREVIEW GALLERY

Steel Battalion

Capcom • October 2002 — If giant bipedal robots were ever to stomp from anime fantasy into the real world (God willing, they will someday!), *Steel Battalion* is what piloting one of the lumbering beasts would truly be like. Not twitchy, arcade action like *Armored Core*, but a slower, more deliberate affair you control literally step by step, thanks in part to the most ridiculously ornate (and no doubt expensive) custom controller we have ever lusted after. Just look at that thing! (below, right)

In keeping with the immersive, realistic vibe, everything takes place from your perspective inside the cockpit, from the hatch closing around you when you start up your mech to the static that distorts your viewscreen when you get hit. Plus, *Battalion's* art direction is being handled by two ex-*Devil May Cry* staffers. We are seriously geeked for this one.



Two sticks, three foot pedals, and 40 buttons for everything from ignition, to firing weapons, to cleaning your windshield (seriously!): The custom *Battalion* controller (left) is every mech fan's wet dream.

Crazy Taxi 3: High Roller

Sega • Summer 2002 — The Crazy Taxi Cab Company has opened a branch office in Sin City for this third installment of Sega's awesome driving series. Streak through the streets of Las Vegas in search of crazy money with four all-new drivers and cars. All you old-school cabbies will be excited to know that the original West Coast and Small Apple courses will also be present when *Crazy Taxi* debuts on Xbox.



what are you thinking?



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PREVIEW
GALLERY



HOMOLOGATION SPECIAL

The original *Sega GT* (for Dreamcast) had the subtitle *Homologation Special* in Japan. Quit your giggling, though; homologation means "confirmation or ratification (as of something otherwise null and void) by a court or a grantor." What that has to do with racing, we have no clue. Must be why they dropped the subtitle.

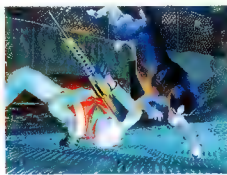
ToeJam & Earl III

Sega • Fall 2002 — Back in the early 1990s, quirky afro-space aliens ToeJam and Earl rode the wave of new-school hip-hop to the top of the Sega Genesis buzz. Now they're back, and if they're not fakin' the funk, then they've still got a place in our hearts. Part scavenger hunt, part 3D platformer and part rhythm minigames, *TJ&EIII* will remind us once again that there's no parking on the dance floor, baby.



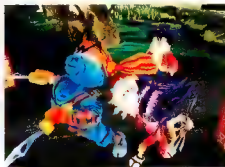
Dead to Rights

Namco • July 2002 — Namco's U.S. studio (*Pac-Man World*) is helming this sweet-looking bullet-fest, mixing *Syphon Filter*-ish run-and-gun shooting with the over-the-top martial-arts style of a Hong Kong action flick. Plenty of minigames promise to spice things up as well (like weightlifting and arm wrestling when you get thrown in jail). It's safe to say that this game is gonna rock if Namco can pull it off.



EDGE OF WAR

In some levels you can take control of your dog Shadow (above) to attack enemies, retrieve weapons and items, sniff out bombs, etc. Just like that movie *K-111* but without Jim Belushi. And not so lame.



Sega GT 2002

Sega • Fall 2002 — Pilot classic muscle cars from the '70s and '80s along with modern Japanese sports cars—over 100 total—in Sega's upcoming attempt to dethrone *Gran Turismo*.

Kung-Fu Chaos

Microsoft • Fall 2002 — *Power Stone* meets *Universal Studios* in this four-player fighter. If the simple brawler combat doesn't draw you in, maybe the movie-set-gone-awry arenas will.

Quantum Redshift

Microsoft • December 2002 — Futuristic vehicles, assorted weapons, insane speeds. It's all very *Wipeout*, isn't it? It should be, since former *Wipeout* guys are developing the game.

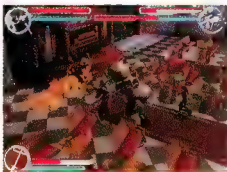
Crimson Skies

Microsoft • September 2002 — You're a daredevil pilot in this high-flyin' 1930s-based action game that has you flying distinctly non-1930s airships into battle in order to save your girl.



Hunter: The Reckoning

Interplay • June 2002 — Load one shotgun barrel with the four-player co-op and character building aspects of *Gauntlet*, the other with the frantic pace and surrounded-on-all-sides intensity of *Smash TV*, shove it all in the rotting mouth of an undead ghoulie, and pull the trigger. What ends up splattered on the wall (figuratively speaking) might look something like *Hunter* here, an arcade-style action/shooter set in a modern city overrun with hellspawn. Each of the four selectable characters possesses different traits (strength, speed, spells, etc.) you can boost by mowing down wave after wave of bad guys. Grab any guns (shotgun, flamethrower) or hand-to-hand weapons (sword, axe and our favorite: the chainsaw) you find lying around to help. Groovy.



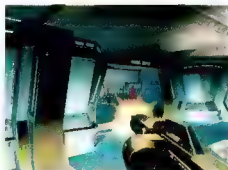
Battle Engine Aquila

Infogrames • November 2002 — Developed by Lost Toys (former members of Bullfrog), *Battle Engine* puts gamers in command of various high-powered mechs and vehicles with which to do battle over land, sea and air. You'll need your wits about you as you defend your nation against invaders looking to expand into your territory. Considering their familiarity with strategy games on the PC, expect Lost Toys to add a few strategic elements to this pretty shooter.



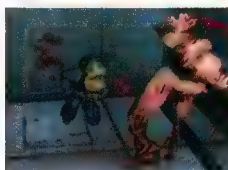
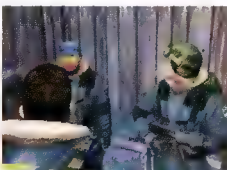
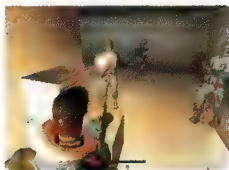
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter

Crave • August 2002 — Imagine playing a futuristic Clint Eastwood bent on revenge against a corporation 10 times as corrupt as Enron, and you've got *Mace* in a nutshell. Although the game doesn't have any multiplayer, Crave's confident its first-person ground-combat and arcade space dogfights will make up for the absence. Now is too early to tell, but if the gameplay's as good as the graphics, they may be right.



The Thing

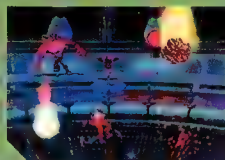
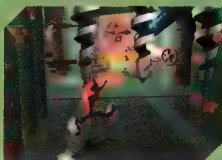
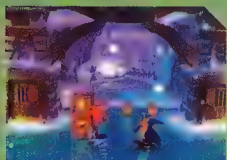
Universal Interactive • November 2002 — Our first look at *The Thing* in action left us very impressed. As the leader of a rescue team investigating an alien-infested Antarctic research base, you certainly do your share of capping parasitic enemies and solving puzzles. But the coolest aspect of the game is winning and maintaining your teammates' trust, manipulating them and protecting them in order to get out alive.



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DROWNING SUPERMAN

Xbox Japan's official *Kakuto Chojin* Web site has opened at <http://xbox.jp/software/kakuto/>. There's nothing much more there than a few screenshots, but typically, Japanese developers like to load their sites with goodies like wallpaper and icons, so check back periodically to see if anything new has appeared.

XIII

Ubi Soft • Winter 2003 — An offshoot of the *XIII* comic license, this first-person shooter uses the popular *Unreal* engine. The developers at Ubi promise story-driven action/stealth gameplay, and we're eager to find out just how seriously a cartoony cel-shaded FPS can be taken. It's coming to GameCube and PS2 next year, but only the Xbox version will have four-player splitscreen *and* online play modes.



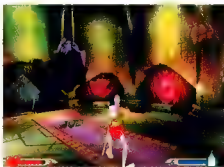
Spider-Man

Activision • April 2002 — If you're a web-head, chances are you've already made up your mind to grab *Spider-Man* this month. The question is, which system do you grab it for? Well, we'll review the game next issue. But until then, we thought you'd like to know that your favorite wall-crawler will enjoy two exclusive levels on the Xbox. The villain on these bonus stages? None other than the mighty hunter, Kraven.



Dragon's Lair 3D

Ubi Soft • Fall 2002 — The original arcade game was only slightly more interactive than a garage-door opener, but it was all about the style with *Dragon's Lair*. So developer Dragonstone Software went nuts with the cel-shaded goodness in bringing *DL* to 3D and added High-Definition TV compatibility to boot. It's essentially the same quest visually revamped, with a handful of new enemies and animations for hero Dirk the Daring.



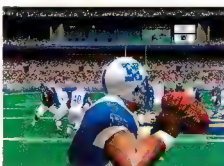
The House of the Dead 3

Sega • Fall 2002 — The last time we saw this zombie shooter it sported a more cartoony style. Judging by the newest shots of the game, developer Wow Entertainment has opted for a more realistic look instead. Result of the success of the *Resident Evil* movie? Preparation for their own *House of the Dead* flick? Or maybe they just have that much respect for the artistic integrity of the undead. You decide.



NFL Fever 2003

Microsoft • September 2002 — What better way for Microsoft to kick off their online gaming plans than with the latest edition of their football series? We're particularly excited about the way the game will access real-life weather reports over the Internet. For example, say you pick the Packers and it's 20 degrees out and snowing, that's the sludge you'll be playing in during your online game—talk about homefield advantage!



World Series Baseball

Sega Sports • July 2002 — This year's field of baseball titles struck out worse than a blind pitcher, so here's hoping that Sega can jumpstart things. The rebuilt Franchise mode is a great start, but purists can get fired up over the game's tip of the hat to history: You can play with 25 of the all-time great players in addition to dressing up in the old-school team uniforms. Finally, a chance to don those Astros' oh-so-mirthful jerseys.





LIQUID REFRESHMENT

It's probably best that Wolverine doesn't completely resemble his namesake. Wolverinefoundation.org says, "Contact with humans will usually elicit a vocal as well as chemical response." That means that Wolverines will try to pee on you if you approach them. That could add a whole new dimension to the *X-Men* films.

Kakuto Chojin

Microsoft • 2002 — *Chojin's* developer, Dream Publishing, is the same group that made *Tobal No. 1, 2* and *Ehrgeiz* for the PS1 (let's just pretend *The Bouncer* never happened, shall we?). So we're fairly optimistic about this new Xbox brawler despite its awkward name (*Chojin?* Gesundheit!) and still-mysterious gameplay. All we know is the focus is on brutal realism, and not to expect fireball-style special moves or any background interaction.



X-Men: Wolverine's Revenge

Activision • October 2002 — Marvel's most popular character finally gets his own solo adventure (none of that ensemble-cast stuff here!), and it's arriving on both Xbox and PS2. Playing a little bit like *Tekken 4's* Assault Force mode, Wolverine must slash his way through level after level of cyber-suited bad guys, while punishing famous Marvel villains along the way. It sounds tough.



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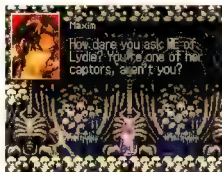
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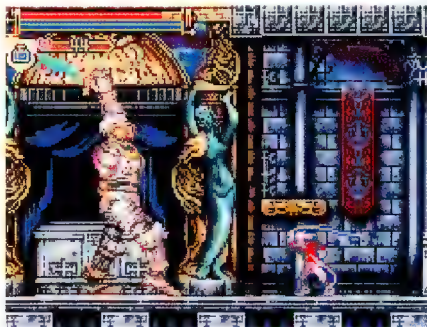
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Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance

- Platform:** Konami
- Developer:** Konami
- Publisher:** I
- Genre:** Action/Adventure
- Rating:** 80%
- Release Date:** June 2002
- Web Address:** www.konami.com
- The Hook:** This is the rightful successor to *Symphony of the Night* (PS1) that we've all been waiting for.
- The Music:** The background music sounds primitive, 8-bit Nintendo (NES)-style.
- Not The Same:** Imagine what they could've done with this thing on a real next-gen console....




According to this game's producer, the character Maxim was not named after the popular men's magazine. "It just sounds French," he said.



After beating the game, one of the treats you can unlock is a Boss Battle mode that lets you spank 'em all over again.

AYAMI KOJIMA

Juste Right



Ayami Kojima, a popular manga (or comics) artist in Japan, gave one of gaming's most revered franchises a facelift with her work on *SotN* (PS1). Since that time, her androgynous (see above) character designs have come to represent *Castlevania*'s new aesthetic. Koji Igarashi, creator of *SotN* and *Harmony*, plans for Kojima to remain as the series' illustrator for all future *Castlevania* titles.

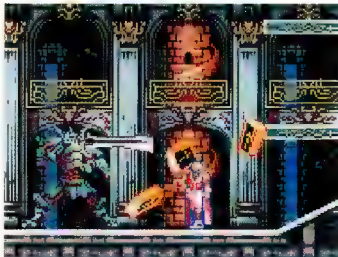
Our prayers for a new *Castlevania* in the 2D tradition were answered in the form of last year's excellent GBA launch title, *Circle of the Moon*. All was well for a time as we basked in the glory of its excellence, but when it was over, we hungered for more. More is exactly what we're about to get with *Harmony of Dissonance*, the latest chapter in *Castlevania*'s long-running saga.

For the GBA encore, Konami has given the series back to the able hands of Koji Igarashi, the visionary behind *Symphony of the Night* (PS1), a game that all but reinvented *Castlevania* with its *Super Metroid* (Super Nintendo)-inspired gameplay. "*Super Metroid*" is a great game that had a lot of direct influence over *Symphony*," Igarashi tells us during a recent visit to Konami's American headquarters. "I can't wait for *Metroid IV* on the GBA." After acknowledging his roots, he went on to say that his latest game, *Harmony*, recaptures *SotN*'s delicate balance of fast-paced action, epic exploration and deep RPG-isms like growth and expansive inventory. "Don't get me wrong," Igarashi explains while we get hands-on with a prerelease version of *Harmony*, "I thought *CotM* was a well-made game, but there were certain aspects of it that I thought could be improved." Well, from the few hours we spent with his latest creation, it looks like things have more than just improved from *CotM*—*Harmony* is better in nearly every respect. This is the successor to

Symphony that we've all been pining for.

Taking place 50 years after *Simon's Quest* on the NES (see sidebar below), *Harmony* is set in the countryside of Transylvania, where a sinister castle appears once every 100 years. You control Juste, a descendant of the legendary Belmont clan of vampire killers, who teams up with his buddy Maxim for a damsel-in-distress search-and-rescue.

Upon stepping foot into the castle, we couldn't help but notice the graphical upgrade. Not only is *HoD* bright and easy to see in average lighting, the game also animates extremely well. One aspect we found disappointing in *CotM* was its primitive-looking protagonist who harkened back to the stiff,



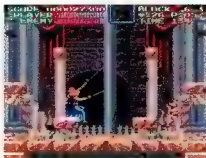
CASTLEVANIA'S DISCONTINUED AND REBORN

1450 — Sonia, earliest known Belmont, fights the Prince of Darkness in *Castlevania: Legends* (GB).

1476 — Trevor Belmont, Grant DaNasty, Sypha Belnades and Alucard defeat Drac in *Castlevania III* (NES). Trevor and Sypha marry.

1576 — Christopher Belmont takes on rolling eyeballs, Dracula and blurry graphics in the first GB *Castlevania*.

1591 — Chris gets called back for the second fuggy GB adventure, *Castlevania II: Belmont's Revenge*.



WHAT THE HELL?

Here's further proof that video games got no respect back in the early '90s. Right alongside Vernon CaTaffy (the villain from *Metal Gear* on the NES) as one of the lamest, most irresponsible localizations ever, are Fred Askare and Paula Abghout, the dancing boss duo from *Castlevania IV* (Super NES). Think names like Juste and Alucard sound a little fruity? You don't know how good you've got it now, kid!

EPIC SYSTEM

Fusion Frenzy



For a *Circle of the Moon*-style *Castlevania*, leveling up is a huge part of the agenda. Your character begins *Harmony of Dissonance* in a state of feeble endress with just a dangling bullwhip and the clothes on his back. The game rewards you experience for each monster you slay, and as you level up, Juste will dish out more damage and acquire super-human abilities.

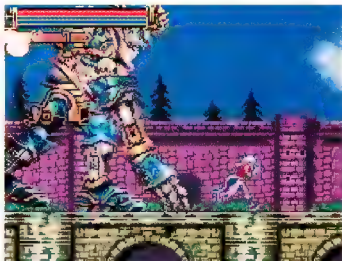
Although handy with a whip, Juste can also go to town with magic. To demonstrate, *Harmony of Dissonance's* producer, Koji Igarashi, equips a book of ice in the game and "fuses" it with a sub-weapon for a sweet new attack. There is a total of five different books—ice, wind, fire, water and earth—and these can be combined with six different sub-weapons for a total of 30 unique attacks. Since Juste is a mere mortal, he won't be able to morph into bats and wolves like Alucard.

Now that we think about it, Alucard was the coolest, wasn't he?



blocky look of the series' NES roots.

"We've definitely worked hard to push the limits of the GBA hardware," says Igarashi. "You can see this in the game's huge enemy bosses and how smoothly they move." *Harmony of Dissonance* captures the essence of its hero, the effeminate Juste Belmont, as



bosses," Igarashi tells us while we're fleeing from a tall, multi-segmented monstrosity on the screen. These massive bosses are composed of "pieces," such as arms, legs and torsos that move in tandem to give each creature a wholly organic feel.

The settings—everything from chapels adorned

"...CoTM was a well-made game, but there were certain aspects I thought could be improved."

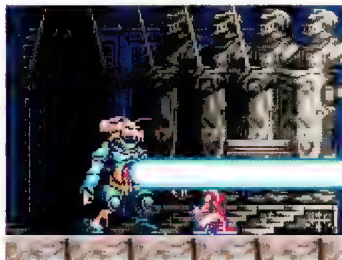
—Koji Igarashi, Producer

designed by Japanese comic artist Ayami Kojima, by bringing to life the fluidity of his anime-style movements and the artist's penchant for dramatic, billowy petticoats. Like Alucard from *SoTn*, Juste also leaves behind a trail of mesmerizing shadows.

"We brought back a lot of the techniques used in *Symphony* to animate the bigger enemies and

with ornate tapestries and stained glass windows, to the dank underbelly of Dracula's evil castle—are rich, diverse and lush with detail. It actually looks as if every brick and banister had been carefully hand-painted by illustrators.

Harmony's similarity to *Symphony*, however, extends far beyond just pretty hand-drawn graphics; underneath both titles lies a gameplay system (see Fusion Frenzy sidebar) that combines the best virtues of an action platformer with those of an RPG. "Action games have short lifespans," Igarashi explains. "With pure action games, many casual



One of the first bosses you meet in *HoD* is a bloody bat that separates when you attack it. Piece of cake, but it looks cool.

CASTLEVANIA'S MILESTONES AND TIMELINE (CONT.)

1691



Simon Belmont defeats Dracula in the original *CV* (NES). Later that year, he also kicks the crap out of Count Drac in *Simon's Quest* (NES).

1788



Richter Belmont whips it up in *Dracula X: Rondo of Blood* for the Japanese PC Engine (or TG-16). Maria Renard lends a hand in this battle by tossing kittens and eating cupcakes.

1792



Alucard wakes from his slumber to deal with family problems in *Symphony of the Night* (PS1). Richter and Maria guest-star.



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Before

After

IMMORTAL WISEGUY

Alucard, son of Dracula and the hero of *Symphony*, wasn't always the handsome, yet effeminate, badass with the long eyelashes. We remember him fondly back in 1990, when Alucard, who made his debut in *Castlevania III: Dracula's Curse* (NES), also moonlighted as a hitman for the mob.

DID YOU KNOW?

Black Sheep

Think you're hardcore? You don't really know the Belmonts unless you've played these CV games:



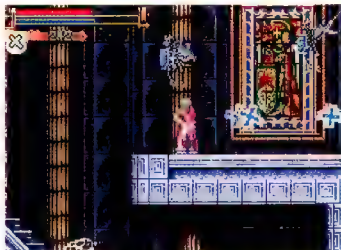
Vampire Killer (MSX, '86)
Simon Belmont makes his debut in this puzzle-esque hunt for Dracula's keys.



Haunted Castle (Arcade, '88)
Begins with Drac interrupting Simon's wedding. He ditches the tux and grabs a whip to save his beloved.

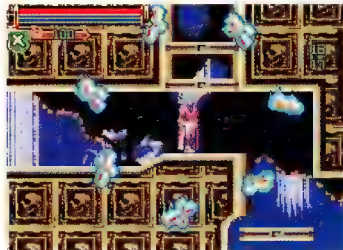


Kid Dracula (Famicom, '93)
Alucard's forgotten adventure came to Game Boy in the U.S., but in Japan it showed up on the NES.



players never even see the end. By turning *Castlevania* into an RPG, we made the game accessible for a wider audience, so those who may not be as good with action games can also reach the end if they take the time to level up."

As humble as he was during our playtest, we could still feel Igarashi's excitement for his latest



Circle's audio splendor: "It was difficult to balance out the CPU resource needs," he says. "This time, we allocated much more processing power to graphics, as opposed to *CoM*, which concentrated most of its resources on music."

So what's next for this venerable action franchise? Igarashi has just started a new *Castlevania* project on

"By turning *Castlevania* into an RPG, we made the game accessible for a wider audience..."

-Koji Igarashi, Producer

game. According to him, not only is *Harmony's* quest at least twice the size of *Symphony's*, "it also has lots more replay value." What kind of replay value? Will we be able to play as Maxim? "I can tell you now that the game has multiple endings," Igarashi adds. "This feature will be familiar to those who have played through *Symphony*."

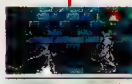
If we had to pick one aspect of the game that didn't quite make the cut, it'd ironically be *Harmony's* low-quality soundtrack. Igarashi explains why the music in this game took a step back from

target for a 2003 release, but he's mum about further details. "We're looking into which system to develop for and deciding whether the next game will be 2D or 3D." Uh, 3D? 3D as in *Castlevania* on the Nintendo 64? Igarashi shakes his head violently. "No! Please forget about the N64 version! *Devil May Cry* (PS2) had more in common with *SoTN* than that game." No matter where the series goes, he's certain about one thing: "I want to continue to think of the action element as *Castlevania's* foundation. That area will always be my number-one focus." -Che Chou



CASTLEVANIA'S BLOODLINES AND TIMELINES (CONT.)

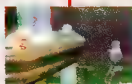
1830



Lacking a back-light, Nathan Graves braves *Castlevania: Circle of the Moon* (GBA).

1844

Henry Oldrey, who's just some guy, has a mini-adventure in *Legacy of Darkness* (N64). Simon Belmont rolls in his grave.



Reinhart Schneider, Carrie Fernandez and some teen-wolf named Cornell embark on the N64 game, *Castlevania*.

1910



John Morris, a swarthy Texan, and Eric Lecarde, some French guy, take on Drac in *Bloodlines* (Gen).



Frogger's Back!*

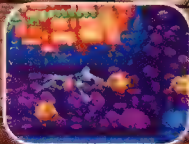
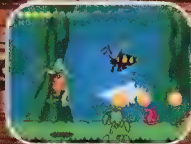


* Also available in convenient travel size.

Frogger



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PlayStation 2





SOCOM: U.S. NAVY SEALS
LEADS THE PLAYSTATION 2'S

ONLINE

Pop-pop-pop. Pop-pop-pop. Bursts of heavy-caliber bullets smack into watermelons and lightbulbs, sheet metal and mailboxes, panes of glass and slabs of ham strewn across a firing range in the California desert just south of San Diego. It sounds nothing like the kapow-kapow! gunfire you hear in movies. But then, these aren't movie guns. Pulling the very real triggers are real Navy SEALs, the most badass of the military's special forces. This messy target practice isn't low-tech training for future deployment to some Afghanistan warzone. Instead, these guys are lending their hardware to help launch a different kind of onslaught: Sony's online PlayStation 2 campaign, which finally gets rolling with the release of the system's Sao Network Adapter in August (no date has been set).

More specifically, the SEALs are squeezing out sounds for developer Zipper Interactive, whose audio engineers are recording—from a safe distance, of course—gunplay sound effects for their upcoming PS2 spec-ops sim, *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs*. It's the most true-to-life shooter we've ever locked and loaded into a console. (We'll let you guess what the melon and ham impact sounds will simulate.) But the bigger deal here is that *SOCOM* packs hefty online features, including 16-person multiplayer modes and voice chat via an included headset microphone. *SOCOM* is so feature-rich, in fact, that it can only be played over a broadband connection. But despite the lack of dial-up support, *SOCOM* is the primary weapon in Sony's initial online barrage: The game hits the same day in August as the Network Adapter.

Needless to say, this adapter—which was originally scheduled to ship last fall—is arriving a little late. Some figure it might have shipped even later if not for a certain competing black-and-green game box and its ambitious broadband-only network. "Had Microsoft not been going down the online-gaming road the way they are with Xbox, [Sony] may have felt they could delay even longer," says Ross Rubin, vice president and senior analyst at research group Jupiter Media Matrix. Sony, on the other hand, says competition had nothing to do with their timing. "We've taken a lot of time to study the overall North American market in order to get this end result," says Kaz Hirai, president and chief operating officer of Sony Computer Entertainment America (SCEA). "We

commissioned market studies and talked to a lot of PlayStation 2 gamers about what they wanted from their online experience." Hirai added that it also took longer than expected for the first-party online games to get up to speed.

But now that a handful of games—roughly half a dozen announced so far—will be ready for duty this year, Sony is geared up for online PS2 deployment. Its solution is simple: All that gamers need to buy is the Network Adapter, along with a game such as *SOCOM* that offers online features. The adapter combines a conventional 56K v.90 dial-up modem and an ethernet port for broadband connectivity, so it's good to go with any type of Internet-service provider (ISP) you already have. Flip the page for our guide to getting your PS2 online. Right now, though, the important thing to know is that you won't pay any additional fees to play.

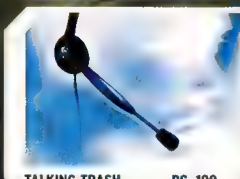
Of course, the adapter represents only the first stage of what Sony hopes will become a rich entertainment experience that goes beyond online gaming. When broadband worms its way into more gamers' homes, Sony plans to create a sort of online glitter gulch of downloadable games, music, movies and other content for your PS2. "This is something we'd like to offer consumers sooner rather than later," Hirai says. "We're talking this year or early next." That's also when we expect you'll be able to use your PS2 for browsing, instant messaging and other tasks spawned from SCEA's partnerships with America Online, Netscape and Real Networks. The PS2 hard drive add-on, which you'll need to do any heavy-duty downloading, will ship "once content becomes available that takes advantage of its storage capabilities," Hirai says. We know that next year's online RPG *Final Fantasy XI* will be one of the first games to require the hard drive, as well as one of the first to cost additional fees to play. But for now, Sony is easing both gamers and the industry into its grand online scheme for the PS2, going so far as to co-fund developers who experiment with novel network play. "We won't force a strategy on the market that it is not ready to embrace," Hirai says. "But we will approach the online arena with as much power and vigor as we always have in the offline arena."

In other words, as the SEALs say, "Hooyah!" Sony is finally firing their first volley in the online-console war. We're taking you on a recon mission to uncover the adapter's flagship title, *SOCOM*, as well as the rest of the games we'll be challenging you to online. See you on the battlefield.

THE BATTLE PLAN



HOOKING UP.....PG. 98



TALKING TRASH.....PG. 100



ONLINE LINEUP.....PG. 102



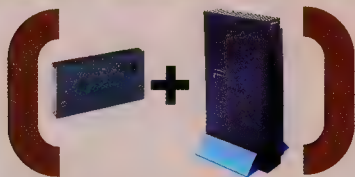
THE OTHER GUYS.....PG. 106

ASSAULT

BY CRISPIN BOYER

THE ONLINE EQUATION

Everything you'll need to get PS2 wired and ready



NETWORK ADAPTER AND PS2

The \$40 adapter, which ships in August, snags over the rear hatch on your PS2. It combines a 56K v.90 dial-up modem and ethernet port for broadband connections such as cable modems and DSL.



STARTUP DISC OR GAME DISC

The startup disc included with the adapter will baby-step you through the process of hooking your PS2 online via your existing ISP. Your configuration will be saved to a memory card, so online-enabled games can load the settings and connect lickety-split. *SOCOM* will even attempt to find its way online on its own (a process that's not too tricky, since the game supports broadband only). The startup disc also contains an online version of the tune game *Frequency*.



THIS IS WAR!

"Bravo, go to Juliet," 3D artist Russ Phillips says into his headset microphone as he demos *SOCOM*'s single-player campaign for us. In the kind of clipped dialog understood by the game's voice-recognition software, Phillips has just ordered his computer-controlled SEAL teammates to head to Juliet, a waypoint position that makes an ideal sniper perch for the team to cover his approach to a nearby terrorist base. Phillips taps the Triangle Button to crouch his character onto his belly. He begins a sneaking crawl toward the enemy stronghold.

Once his mission's accomplished, it's our turn to slip on the headset—and now we're talking real-life players in an online *SOCOM* mode called Extraction, which pits our team of eight SEALs against eight terrorists guarding hostages. "You escort the fat lady," a teammate's voice blurts in our headset when we reach the three female hostages. "I'll lead the two skinny ones." We're lucky this round: The players on the terrorists' team didn't move the hostages to separate locations or use them as

human shields. The game's two other online modes demand just as much teamwork and strategy. The Demolition mode has players trying to plant a bomb in the enemy's base, where they must guard it for 30 seconds until it detonates. The third mode, Elimination, is a deathmatch of SEALs versus terrorists. We see players sniping from foliage and shooting out lights to help exposed teammates. Each of the 12 multiplayer maps offers plenty of ways for crafty players to spoof enemies. One of the Zipper team's favorite tactics: They walk backward in the Alaskan level, so opponents can't track their footsteps in the snow.

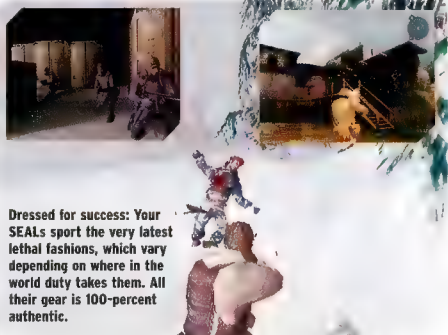
Nope, *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs* is not your typical console run-and-gun shooter—and not just because it comes packed with the microphone gizmo (see page 100 for more details) or that it's the PS2's first online game. Like the *Rainbow Six* titles and the PC *Half-Life* add-on *Counter-Strike*, *SOCOM* is set in the real world, where your life depends on your teammates, you can't carry 10 weapons at a time, and one well-aimed shot will kill you. "You have to be careful in this game," says Jim Bosler, Zipper's president. "You're going into dangerous situations with really tough enemies, usually outnumbered and outgunned, just like real SEALs face."

To achieve such lethal realism, Zipper—whose previous work includes the PC hits *Crimson Skies* and *MechWarrior 3*—recruited real-life SEALs, making *SOCOM* the first game with official involvement from a special-forces group. "We

have been working with [everyone from] the admiral of Naval Special Warfare right on down," Bosler says. "He even brought his son by to play the game." Besides lending their big guns for the heavy-metal-thunder recording process we visited at the outset of this story, the SEALs posed, sprang and pummeled their way through motion-capture sessions, gripping realistic toy air guns that Zipper staff smuggled from Japan, to record the game's true-to-life hand signals, sneak tactics and enemy-takedown animations. The artists laser-scanned the SEALs' faces to record authentic camouflage, while every gun and chunk of gear in their arsenal was photographed for the in-game 3D models and textures. When you inspect your SEAL teammates' weapons, backpacks, straps, buckles, belt loops and holsters in the game, you're looking at the real deal.

The SEALs even helped pick the

four regions for *SOCOM*'s single-player campaign, in which you and a team of three computer-controlled soldiers go up against terrorists in Alaska, Thailand, the Congo jungle and Turkmenistan, a neighboring country of Afghanistan. "We wanted to stay away from clichéd areas of operation, yet make sure they were also authentic," Bosler says. "That's kinda the fun: learning new places. It's like the term *SOCOM*. Gamers will learn what it means." (For the record, it stands for "Special Operations Command.") The campaign has you going on three missions in each region, making for 12 single-player missions in all. You'll face Russian ex-Spetsnaz terrorists waging biological warfare, Eurothug mercenaries out to kidnap hostages, and straight-up Middle-Eastern terrorists. Once you pick your primary and secondary weapon at each mission's start



Dressed for success: Your SEALs sport the very latest lethal fashions, which vary depending on where in the world duty takes them. All their gear is 100-percent authentic.



WAIT! WHAT ABOUT THIS THING?



THE PS2 HARD DRIVE

This peripheral—which fits into the hatch on the rear of your PS2, right underneath the Network Adaptor—will eventually play a major part in Sony's online strategy. You'll use it to download games, movies and music, as well as play more complex online titles. But right now, this thing doesn't do jack. None of the first batch of online PS2 games takes advantage of the hard drive, and SCEA says they won't release it here until there's a need for it. (We don't expect the drive to hit until 2003, with the release of *Final Fantasy XI*.) No word yet on a price.



YOUR INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER
Sony says the PS2 adapter will support any ISP in the country, so if you already have a Net connection at home—say, for your PC or Dreamcast—then you're all set (although you'll want to buy an ethernet hub if you want to split your broadband connection between your PC and PS2). Not wired? No problem: The startup disc also packs subscription offers for several popular dial-up and broadband ISPs, including EarthLink, AT&T WorldNet and Prodigy.



ONLINE PS2 GAMING

Pick a name and a password for your warrior (you can make as many characters as you like), connect to the *SOCOM* server, join a game and—whammo!—you're playing with other gamers just like you (they probably play in their underwear like you, too). The first batch of online titles won't cost extra fees to play, so all you spend here is the \$40 price of the adapter, the cost of the online-enabled game, and whatever you fork over per month for your ISP. Nothing's keeping third parties from charging fees, however, and we know that ambitious titles like *Final Fantasy XI* and *EverQuest* will cost extra to play.

(aside from that, you don't have to worry much about pre-mission planning), you and your SEALs will sneak into installations, plant explosives, rescue hostages, laser-designate targets for aerial bombardment, retrieve documents and much more. Secondary objectives pop up throughout each mission. Tackle them and you'll unlock secret extras. Fail, and at least you have access to the one thing real SEALs can't count on: the reset button.

STAY DOWN!

SOCOM isn't a fast-paced fantasy shooter like *Quake* or *Halo*, so failure is an easy option if you're not careful. You can only take three or four shots to your body armor before you eat it, and headshots are always lethal. You won't find health or armor lying around, either. Whether you're playing online or in the single-player campaign mode, stealth and teamwork are your two best friends. "If you're lying in the grass in your ammo, enemies will walk

right past you," Bosler says.

"You'll see it in multiplayer, too. An enemy will come by while you're hiding in the grass. You'll pop up and he'll be like, 'Whoa!'"

The game's environments give you and your team a hundred places to hide. You can creep through bushes, shadows and streams. "The deeper you are in foliage, the less likely enemies are to see you," says Software Engineer Michael Gutmann. You can shoot out lights, then switch on night-vision goggles to take out terrorists under cover of darkness. You can slip through the fog. Or you can even make your own cover if you have the right gear. "Say you want to run from one building to another," says Brian Soderberg, Zipper's vice president of technology. "You can throw a smoke grenade between the buildings and run through the smoke. The enemies will know something is up but not where you are. Or you can throw the smoke as a diversion."

Your three A.I. teammates in the single-player mode rely on the same stealthy tactics. "They understand the environment," Soderberg says. "They don't follow a script. They'll actually go hide behind trees. They'll find the shadows and move through them. They'll pay attention to what you're doing and follow your cues." In short, these guys take care of themselves—and they'll take care

of you if you don't order them to their deaths. Your fellow SEALs are so important, in fact, that you'll fail a mission if more than two of them die. "The SEALs are about being a team, not an individual," Bosler says, "so we made it so you can't succeed without acting as a team."

THEY GOT ME!

Your compadres aren't the only clever A.I. guys in the single-player game. *SOCOM*'s enemies, like your SEALs, don't follow scripted paths or patterns. Each comes with a varying level of courage, training and alertness, which govern how he'll react when you start raising hell. "They attain courage by having buddies around," Gutmann says. "Some may even try to rush you and take you out with their rifle butt. It's scary—they kind of scream when they run at you. But if you start taking their buddies out and they're suddenly left alone, they might surrender." Chicken-hearted terrorists throw their hands in the air, giving you the option of blasting them away or cuffing their hands.

A clever terrorist will scoop up your tossed grenades and chuck 'em right back. Enemies will come to investigate if they see foliage sway while you crawl through the bush. They'll call for help if you attack and track your footprints in the snow or your trail of blood if



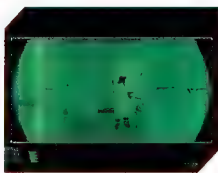
***SOCOM* can be played in either first- or third-person. It won't support USB mouse-and-keyboard control, since that would give some players an unfair advantage, although you can use a keyboard for lobby chat.**



you retreat. "It's a good idea to sneak around the enemy perimeter and leave your footprints in a shadowed area," Soderberg says.

Your team needs to stay stealthy to stay out of trouble, but that requires more than just creeping through shadows. Use silenced weapons and enemies won't know which direction you're firing from. And when you do kill a bad guy, clean up your mess. "If you leave a body in the middle of the base, the A.I. will eventually see it and tell other A.I., who will tell other A.I.," says Creative Director David Sears. "You want to drag and drop your victims behind walls or in foliage. It's just good housekeeping."

Fortunately, the bad guys have to play by the same rules you do. Their weapons are modeled after real ones, so they'll burn through ammo quickly if you stay one step ahead of them. "A lot of times," Gutmann says, "they'll run out of ammo and can't get to more



without having to come out of hiding, so they'll surrender."

And when they do give up the fight, you'll want to grab their guns. *SOCOM* features nearly 40 weapons in all, from the standard-issue M4 (basically an M16 with a grenade launcher) to a .50 caliber sniper rifle. "That gun would kill an elephant, pass through, and kill a tank on the other side," Sears says. Thing is, you can only carry two weapons at a time—a primary big gun and a secondary pistol—in addition to your pack of ammo, grenades and other gear. Grabbing enemy weapons will keep you in the fight when your guns run dry.

Tapping in the left analog stick changes your rate of fire, from single-shot to three-shot burst to



full auto. Going auto with most guns will empty your clip in four seconds. Fortunately, a little ammo goes a long way—literally: You can shoot through doors and walls and actually get guys hiding on the other side. "Each material in the environment, such as wood, concrete, glass and corrugated metal, has different characteristics for penetration," says Producer

Seth Luisi. "And each bullet type has a different velocity characteristic that determines what materials it can pass through." Shots will even ricochet, so watch that stray fire when you're near hostages. And bullets will cut through the softest targets of all: terrorist dirtbags. "If you line them up," Gutmann says, "you can get two guys with one shot."

TALK THE TALK

Command and conquer with *SOCOM*'s nifty headset microphone



It's made of chinsey plastic, and you look kinda like a McDonald's drive-through employee when you slip it on, but Logitech's headset microphone peripheral adds so much to the *SOCOM* experience that you really shouldn't play this game—either online or off—without it. Lucky you: *SOCOM* comes with this chatty gadget packed into the box, and the entire game-and-mic combo costs a reasonable \$60.

The gizmo's tremendous value during online play is obvious: Instead of pawing at a keyboard to type "Help, old chaps, I seem to be getting shot in the face!" to your compadres, you can just holler it right into the mic. All you gotta do is hold in the Circle button and begin speaking, then let go when you're done. Your team members will hear your message in their headsets or from their TV speakers if their mics aren't jacked into the PS2's USB port. You can even switch to separate audio channels for offense and defense. It's a great setup for talking strategy in *SOCOM*, a game that rewards well-planned team play.

We tried the voice-chat feature and found that it worked extremely well, with minimal delay. Team member voices—which pop through your earphone with an artificial hiss as if

they were talking via a real military radio—even sound authentic. *SOCOM* lets only one person speak at a time, to prevent overlapping conversation and surges in lag-inducing voice data being sent over the Internet. The game will limit the length of each voice transmission to make sure punk players won't just hold down the Circle button and hog the channel. "Ten seconds seems a pretty reasonable duration," says Producer Seth Luisi.

But voice chat during online play is only half of the headset hoopla. *SOCOM* also supports voice recognition, meaning you can issue orders to your three A.I. squadmates during the single-player game. It works the

same way: Jab the Circle button, bark out a command like "Team, deploy at crosshairs," then watch your fellow SEALs sneak out of the bush and chuck grenades in the direction you're aiming. At any time, you can hold the Circle button and eye the available orders (see screen at left), which change depending on the situation. You might, for instance, order the guys to sneak to a certain waypoint (by saying, "Team, stealth to Charlie") or escort a hostage to the extraction zone ("Team, escort to Zulu"). "The team-command menu is subject-verb-object based," says Creative Director David Sears, "and once you become accustomed to the commands, it's





Tapping Triangle switches your stance from standing to crouching to lying prone. Your accuracy is best when you lie still on your belly—a great position for sniping.

COVER ME!

Such gruesome laws of physics apply to the multiplayer games, too. You will be able to shoot through stuff. Stumble carelessly through foliage and enemies will spot you. But even more important than sure shots or stealth is the teamwork aspect of *SOCOM* online. Playing as a team is so crucial, in fact, that your ranking on the game's ladder—which rates every participating player and is viewable by all—is determined by more than just who's got the most kills. You score higher for escorting hostages to safety, blowing up enemy bases, and finishing a match with all your teammates still kickin'. "It's a team-based game," Luisi says, "so you're given more points for doing team-based things."

Climb the rankings and you can expect to be contacted by *SOCOM* "clans," or groups of gamers who play together on a regular basis, who will invite you to join their

team. *SOCOM* makes it easy to form your own clan. Just name it, type in a one-line credo, select a badge, and you're ready to invite up to nine players to join. Then you can challenge other clans to see who's got the top team (the game ranks clans as well as individual players). Since *SOCOM* doesn't support split-screen or local-area-network play, clan warfare is the best option for gamers who only want to play with people they know. Instead of everyone lugging their TVs and systems to a room for LAN play, they just need to pick a day and time for the clan to meet online.

Clan support alone is going to nab *SOCOM* a massive following—especially if the latency stays as tolerable as in the version we played (we noticed no lag at all). "To provide the best performance, a consistent experience and no unfair advantages, all of the *SOCOM* servers will be hosted by SCEA in our San Diego facility," Luisi says. "We are also prepared to co-locate servers in Chicago and



Washington, D.C., if the East Coast-West Coast latency is greater than we expect." Sony says connection tests from as far as Europe and Asia have produced minimal lag.

It's just too bad that the only gamers who can play *SOCOM* are those with broadband ISPs. Right now, barely 40 percent of console gamers have broadband connections such as cable modems, DSL and T3 lines, according to numbers from Jupiter Media Metrix. Do the math and it's clear that a lot of PS2 owners will be left out of the *SOCOM* party. Sony says the game is broadband-

only for many reasons: Its realistic bullet physics, voice-chat functions and 16-player support just require too much bandwidth for narrowband to handle. "It would give gamers with broadband connections an unfair advantage over those stuck with dial-up," Luisi says.

In other words, even if gamers could jack into *SOCOM*'s brutal combat via narrowband, they'd wind up as target practice for players with fat-pipe connections. And...well, you remember the mess those SEALs made at that California desert target range.

really easy to just hold the button and talk."

Your fellow SEALs talk back to you, too. Give them an order and you'll hear their crisp "affirmative" in your headphone. They'll also feed you info throughout the mission, telling you when they've taken out enemies or if they see a terrorist near your position. Mission briefings feed through your headphone, as well. It all adds up to a completely immersive experience—which becomes even more intense when you see enemies react to your vocal commands. "If you walk into a room of terrorists and shout, 'Drop your weapons! Drop your weapons!' they'll actually listen to that and are more likely to surrender," says Software Engineer Michael Gutmann.

The voice-recognition system worked perfectly for us, once we got used to speaking the curt commands. Zipper claims the software will work with more than 90 percent of gamers. People with thick southern draws, high voices or other unusual vocal characteristics may have to speak slowly or just use the joystick to select commands as a back-up. Still, most gamers should have no problems commanding the troops. "One of the guys in our company is Russian, and it works just fine for him," says Multiplayer Designer Erin Korus.

The headset mic worked so well with *SOCOM*, in fact, that we wondered if we'll see it used with future PS2 titles. SCEA is taking a "whatever



Logitech designed *SOCOM*'s packed-in headset mic, which comes with a 10-foot cord and snaps into your PS2's USB port.

happens, happens" stance. They're not planning to sell the headset separately, although they did post the gadget's drivers to the PS2 development Web site, so any developers can add voice functionality to their games if they wish. "Sony's not really trying to push the headset," Luisi says. "It's just sort of something that came out of making this game, where we thought it would work really well. It's not similar to the Nintendo 64 and *Star Fox 64* where they were trying to sell the Rumble Pak in there."

INCOMING!

Your field guide to the other PS2 games you'll be playing online

REPORTING FOR DUTY THIS YEAR...

FREQUENCY • Sony CEA

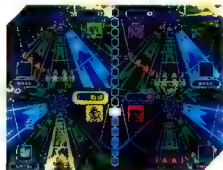
Connections supported: Dial-up/broadband

Maximum number of players: 4

Release: Comes with the Network Adapter (August)

Even if you buy nothing else with the Network Adapter when it hits in August, you'll at least have one game to try online with it. A Net-enabled version of *Frequency*, SCEA's trippy tune-mixing title, comes on the startup

disc packed with the adapter. And the networked play makes sense: *Frequency* was originally planned to be an online game, and now you'll be able to experience it the way it was meant to be played. This version adds more than a dozen new tunes and lets you compete in the original game's multiplayer modes online: You can either race against or collaborate with up to three other players along the Technicolor music tracks.



TRIBES: AERIAL ASSAULT • Sierra

Connections supported:

Broadband (and maybe dial-up)

Maximum number of players: 16

Release: August

If the ultra-realism of *SOCOM* turns you off, this futuristic sci-fi shooter just might be your cup of destruction. Like *SOCOM*, *Tribes* is a team-based effort: You and your buddies form teams of up to eight, for a maximum of 16 total participants, then coordinate your assault in games of capture-the-flag, team deathmatch and fortress assaults. What makes *Tribes* a unique shooter is its class system. Recon units are faster but lack the punch of a slower juggernaut trooper. Oh, and did we mention that you can fly? Not only do you get to fire up your jetpack, you'll also pilot an armada of transport and assault ships.

Getting an online game going is easy. Players simply jank into the *Tribes* lobby, then either join a game or create their server for others to join. Right now, Sierra



has every intention of supporting narrowband dial-up connections, but that's not a guarantee. "We're just starting testing of the dial-up connection and determining if it will be fun," says Adam Kahn, Sierra PR manager. "We won't release a game that allows some portion of the audience to dominate another portion based on anything but skill."

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 & 4

Activision

Connections supported:

Dial-up/broadband

Maximum number of players: 4

Release: *THPS3*: Out now

THPS4: November

Talk about thinking ahead. When developer Neversoft crafted *Tony Hawk 3* for release last November, they built in online support—even as Sony quietly delayed the launch of the Network Adapter. So if you already own *THPS3*, you've had the first adapter-ready title under your nose this whole time.

A handful of rabid fans have been playing the multiplayer modes online since *Tony 3*'s release, thanks to its support for third-party USB modems and ethernet adapters. "People don't even know that they can play *THPS3* online today," says Producer Scott Pease. "We think that once they try it online, they'll be hooked."

As expected, the next sequel in the high-flying series will also pack online features. Neversoft says they're taking *Tony Hawk 4* in new directions and making Net play a bigger part of the package. "There is a lot more we can do with the online component of the game," says Neversoft Prez Joel Jewett. "By the time demand hits critical mass, we will be out [in] front of the competition.... Wait 'til you see the next version."



Continued on pg. 104



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Violence

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PlayStation®2

TWISTED METAL: BLACK ONLINE

Sony CEA

Connections supported: Dial-up/broadband

Maximum number of players: 8

Release: TBA

This game's name sure sums it up: *Twisted Metal: Black Online* is *TM:B* with network play tacked on. From what we've seen, it packs the same levels and characters, along with new power-ups and other extras. The game will offer at least four modes that support up to eight players online. We expect gamers stuck with dial-up will have to play smaller games. Sony hasn't set a release date, but rumor has it that *TM:BO* may ship later than August because developer IncoG Inc. would like to beef up its features.



ONLINE THIS YEAR...MAYBE

Sony may have finally locked down the details of its network plans, but many developers are still not ready to crow about online support. Lots of upcoming company announcements will straighten things out. In the meantime, here are some notable fence straddlers...

• **Eidos' *TimeSplitters 2***—The online features of this souped-up sequel are in flux right now. Developer Free Radical says they'll add online support if they can firm up technical details and server issues with Sony in time for the game's September release. See page 68 for a preview.

• **Sega's *2K3 sports lineup***—Sega has confirmed that the Xbox versions of games in this series, which include *NFL 2K3* and *NBA 2K3*, will offer online play when they ship this fall. But as for the PS2 incarnations, all Sega will say is they'll add online play to their sports games as long as the target console supports it. So that means the 2K3 sports games for the PS2 will offer network play, right, since the system will be geared for online come August? Well, Sega isn't getting that specific just yet.

• **Capcom's *Auto Modellista***—Capcom in Japan announced that this slick-looking 'toon-shaded racer would support online play. The game is due to hit here this fall, but there's no word yet on if the American version will offer network play.



REPORTING FOR DUTY NEXT YEAR...

EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES

Sony Online Entertainment

Connections supported:

Dial-up/broadband

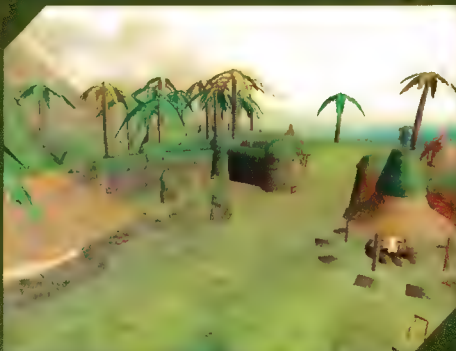
Maximum number of players: Thousands

Release: Spring 2003

If your idea of "massively multiplayer" involves more than standing in line at the local Arby's, perhaps Sony Online Entertainment has what you're looking for.

With *EverQuest Adventures Online* for the PS2, Sony hopes to capture console gamers who have managed to avoid the tractor beam of the incredibly addictive PC game, in which thousands of players roam a persistent world, questing and plundering together.

EOA, which is an original product (not a port of the PC cash cow), will have its own dedicated servers supporting both broadband and dial-up connections. While Sony hasn't solidified its pricing plans, gamers can expect to enjoy a free 30-day trial membership, with a nominal monthly subscription fee applied thereafter. What do you get for your greenback? Sony says *EOA* will support thousands of players per hub simultaneously, while offering nine races, 13 classes, highly customizable characters and 360 square miles of real estate to explore. Another bonus: The game won't require the hard drive. (Characters will likely be saved to *EOA* servers to prevent GameShark hacking.) If you're concerned about repetitive, Sony plans to periodically release low-priced expansion packs.



FINAL FANTASY XI - Square EA

Connections supported:

Dial-up/broadband

Maximum number of players:

Thousands

Release: 2003 U.S. / May 16 Japan

When you break it down, *FFXI* won't come cheap. After the \$40 network adapter, you still need the PS2 Hard Drive (about 80 bucks, assuming the U.S. cost stays close to what it goes for now in Japan), a subscription to Square's PlayOnline service (roughly \$30 a month in Japan), and of course the *FFXI* game itself (\$50). But being able to play Square's first foray into the online massively multiplayer arena? Priceless.

So why are we so jazzed for a game that isn't due here 'til next year? First of all, the graphics look fantastic. And let's admit it: Looks matter (sorry *EverQuest*). The different races and character classes (Knight,

Hunter, Beast Tamer, Minstrel) you choose from also sound great. And we like the fact that, although you travel in smaller parties, hundreds of people can be roam the world at the same time, unlike Sega's *Phantasy Star Online*.



BRINGING UP THE REAR...

And then we have all the big games announced for the PS2's broadband network in Japan—everything from *Arc the Lad Online* to a Namco flight-combat title to a massively multiplayer action-adventure from Tecmo (see last issue for details). Few games have been announced for stateside release, but we figure several are sure to hit here next year. At the top of our wish list is Capcom's *Resident Evil Online*, which has players banding together to battle zombies (unless they get bit—then they become the zombies) and *Gran Turismo Online*. We dunno if this new installment in the high-octane series will allow online competitive play or just car trading and other downloads. Either way, consider our engines started.

"The best crashes ever in a video game" - IGN



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PlayStation 2



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APOCALYPSE WHEN? The other guys' online plans

XBOX ONLINE

Here's a shocker: Microsoft and Sony don't see eye to eye when it comes to online. Rather than leaving it up to third-party publishers to run servers and hash out their own interfaces, Microsoft is making a closed broadband-only network with standardized features every online Xbox title will adopt. "All games will be routed into their network of servers," says Digital Extremes' James Schmalz. (His company is crafting network launch title *Unreal Championship*.) The bad news: You'll pay a monthly fee. But you should only have to worry about one name and password for all games, plus you'll have access to rankings and other perks Microsoft will reveal soon. And "[joining a game] will be as simple as a few button presses," Schmalz says. We figure the network goes live in November, when the first online titles (right) start hitting.

THE FIRST WAVE

Unreal Championship

The kick-off title.



Ghost Recon
Squad-based killin', kinda like *SOCOM*.

Rayman Arena
Mini-game madness.

Raven Shield
Takes the *Rainbow Six* series online.

Sega's 2K3 Series
Every sports title will support online.

XIII

Deathmatchin', comic-book style.

Phantasy Star Online

Announced for everything but PS2.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Virtual skateparks, here we come!

MechAssault
Steamy eight-player mech-on-mech action.



Wonderful toy: If you think *SOCOM*'s headset mic is special, wait'll you slip on Microsoft's Xbox Communicator and plug it into your joypad's memory-unit slot. It does the same voice-recognition and chat tricks, but also lets you alter your voice. (We're hoping our "Robo-Isaac Hayes" setting will impress the ladies.) The plan is for all Xbox online games to support the headset. Microsoft is toying with the idea of packing the Communicator in with subscriptions to their online service.



LESSONS LEARNED

Sega shares its online intel

With all this hubbub over Sony's network plans, it's easy to forget that Sega was into online console gaming in America before anybody: Dreamcast had nearly 30 Net-ready games before it went bust. Sega of America VP Charles Bellfield briefs us on what's right and wrong with online today....

EGM: Who's got the better online scheme—Sony or Microsoft?

Charles Bellfield: They are two very different strategies. Microsoft is saying, "Here's the tool kit, here's the environment, this is the interface, this is the billing system...." Sony is saying, "Here's a piece of hardware you can buy to upgrade your system. You third parties take advantage of it as you see fit." With Sony's plan, Sega can make the online environment we want consumers to live and breathe in, and we can [make it] unique to our

gaming experience. That's an advantage we have over other publishers who [lack online experience]. Whereas with Microsoft, we'll just work within their model.

EGM: Microsoft's strategy depends on gamers having broadband. Bad move?

CB: This is where Sega disagrees with Microsoft. We do believe that dial-up has a future. We proved it can deliver a compelling experience with Dreamcast. If you played *Phantasy Star Online* or our sports games or *Alien Front Online* and its voice chat, you saw what we can do with narrowband. If you look back to comments made by competitors in our previous life, Sony was...saying that the PS2 would expedite growth of broadband in North America. I hate to say it, but that never happened: Two years later we're still sitting in a predominantly narrowband environment....

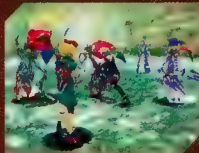
GAMECUBE ONLINE

We know Nintendo has some kinda online plan for GameCube. Cripes, you can see a picture of the modern peripheral right on the 'Cube's packaging. But so far the company hasn't announced—or seemingly even settled on—a network strategy. Ever since the system's debut last November, Nintendo top dogs have said they won't take GameCube online before its time.

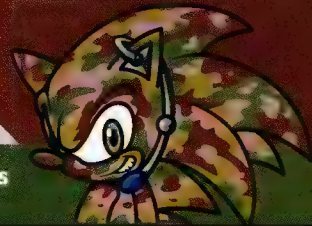
In other words, they're waiting until they have a few big games to kick off the network.

The only announced online title so far is Sega's *Phantasy Star Online: Episode 1 & 2* (flip to page 72 for info).

Sega in Japan is offering preorders for a trial edition of the game packed with a GameCube modem, but no similar plan has been announced or even hinted at here. We figure more GameCube online games and info will pop up at this May's E3 game-biz trade show.



PSO: Ep. 1 & 2 is a go for online whenever Nintendo's ready.



EGM: So Sony made the right move with its dual-band adapter, but what about the fact that this gizmo doesn't come with the PS2?

CB: We think it's a pity that Sony decided on this strategy, and we will wait and see how they'll be able to deliver the Network Adapter into gamers' households. We'll use that to determine whether we support the online side of [PS2] or not. The decision about Xbox is different. There...we just have to see how successful they are in getting Xbox owners to connect to broadband. Both strategies are not flawless. No one has a perfect solution. Sega didn't. We tried something with Dreamcast, but our online games failed because Dreamcast [didn't take off] as quickly as we hoped or expected. Maybe you could say that had consumers bought into the Dreamcast product a bit more, we'd be much further with online games today. 🍀

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Violence



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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 for

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

Between *SOCOM* online battles and return trips to *Resident Evil*'s house of horrors, Crispin needed the infusion of cuteness that only a Pikachu sandwich can provide. Mmm...tastes like Squirtle.

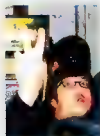
Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure
Current Faves: *Resident Evil*, *Blood Omen 2*



Dan "Shoe" Hsu
Editor in Chief

When Shoe saw that the *Res. Evil T-Virus* juice would turn one's right arm into a Popeye-sized monstrosity, he tried pouring some down his...well...let's just say God never intended *Res. Evil* to be whatever...

Favorite Genres: Shoe loves 'em all
Current Faves: *Maximo*, *Grand Theft Auto III*



Che Chou
West Coast Editor

Vfz madness continued this month with Che sneaking out of work to compete in underground warehouse tournaments. Here, Che flashes a "V" for victory...or maybe he's really just trying to say, "Peace out, bro!"

Favorite Genres: Fighting, Racing, RPG
Current Faves: *Vf4*, *Deus Ex*, *C-Strike* (PC)



Chris Johnston
News Editor

A few months ago, Chris couldn't be bothered to think about wrestling. Now the boy can't get enough after going to Raw and *Wrestlemania X8*. Now if we could only get him to stop saying "What??" constantly...

Favorite Genres: Adventure, Puzzle, Music
Current Faves: *Gitaroo Man*, *Tetris Attack*



Jonathan Dudlak
Reviews Editor

Ever since *Resident Evil* arrived at the office for GameCube and GBC, Jon hasn't been the same. Between his new Umbrella tattoo and these liquid lunches, we're loading the Colt Python just in case.

Favorite Genres: Fighters, Shooters, Platformers
Current Faves: *Resident Evil*, *Capcom vs. SNK 2*



Jeanne Kim
Associate Editor/Art Director

Whoo! This is the life! Blowing bubbles and letting the pre-E3 deadline stress just melt away. Yep, Jeanne's finally lost it. Only the debauchery-gaming parties of E3 can save her now. Doh, the humanity!

Favorite Genres: RPG, Shooters, Music
Current Faves: *Rallis. Challenge*, *Warcraft 3* (PC)



Dean Hager
Managing Editor

To protest reviewing the same game on three systems, Dean locked himself in an office and wrote songs about animals. He's got enough for a double-album set should any record execs be reading this.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Racing
Current Favorites: *Downforce*, *Spy Hunter*



Kraig Kujawa
Senior Associate Editor

Black Hawk Down, *We Were Soldiers* and *now Medal of Honor*. All of this war stuff has Kraig so spooked that he checks the sky for incoming artillery before stepping outside for his daily poetry reading.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Strategy
Current Faves: *Medal of Honor*, *NBA 2K2*

Game of the Month



Resident Evil pg. 114

Welcome to the world of survival horror. You can check your coat with one of our Crimson Head zombies, then this Hunter will show you the grounds. Oh, you've been here before? Well, we've remodeled, so make sure you check out our additions while you visit your old haunts. Just don't disturb our new guest out back. She isn't too kind to unwelcome guests....



Dan Leahy
Editor in Chief, *GameNOW*

Rumor has it that Leahy will be nabbing some camera time for an upcoming *Outside the Lines* segment on ESPN. He's enlisted an agent and demands that networks "show him the money."

Favorite Genres: Sports, Fighting, Action
Current Faves: *High Heat 2003*, *NFL 2K3*



Mark MacDonald
Executive Editor

Obviously to discover if *Resident Evil* can truly make you pee your pants, Mark came to work sporting custom diapers the day we got the game. But he finished it two weeks ago, and he's still wearing them....

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure, RPG
Current Faves: *Resident Evil*, *Deus Ex*



James Mielke
West Coast Editor/Webmaster

Sixteen years have passed since the original release of the *Watchmen* graphic novel. Milkman has read it front to back and deemed it the best thing he's read all week. Now he's moving on to *Black Hawk Down*.

Favorite Genres: Fighting, RPG, Action
Current Faves: *Resident Evil*, *Kingdom Hearts*



Greg Sewart
Previews Editor

Check out Sewart, trying to look all street. Maybe it's to offset the nerd vibe he's been putting out ever since he decided to play through all the *Final Fantasy* games again. For the record, he's on *IV* right now.

Favorite Genres: Racing, RPG, Adventure
Current Faves: *Blood Omen 2*, *Wipeout Fusion*

Blood Omen 2

"No, I said left, dammit. LEFT! Look, if you guys don't start taking this more seriously, I'm just gonna call the dance number off altogether!"

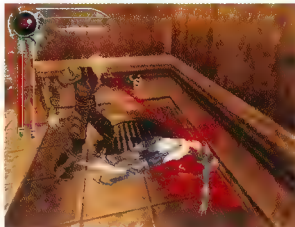


Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Crystal Dynamics
Featured In: EGM #147
Players: 1
AKA: What *Soul Reaver 2* should've been
Best Feature: Rich, detailed environments
Worst Feature: Very linear gameplay
Web Site: www.eidos.com



A big hug and a round of beers for the folks at Crystal Dynamics who decided to bring some fun back into the *Legacy of Kain* series. Controlling a character who's a badass from day one is a rare treat for adventure gamers, and it's what makes *BO2* so gratifying to play. While it borrows heavily from *Soul Reaver 2*, from its elegant voice acting to its story-driven gameplay, it's done away with all the downers that dogged Raziel's second adventure. No more running cross-country just to revisit an old location, jumping over clueless enemies along the way. Each of *Blood Omen 2*'s 11 chapters reveals an entirely new section of Nosgoth, usually containing crafty, region-specific enemies and unique non-playable characters.

Speaking of enemies, combat is where *Blood Omen 2* really outshines previous games in the series. Between having access



"Blaargh! Oh, man.... Shouldn't have had all that red wine and marinara for dinner..."

to any weapon an opponent drops and a nice blend of "Dark Gift" enhancements, Kain has an extensive arsenal of attacks and abilities. Sneak up behind a guard in the mist for a one-hit Stealth Kill, surprise a demon from 100 yards away with a leaping attack, or cast a soldier off a ledge after a firm choking. Kain is all about the killing, and having dozens of ways to get the job done keeps the game fresh.

You won't get hung up on any tricky puzzles in *BO2*—if you can handle *Soul Reaver 2*'s mindbenders, you can handle these. Getting through tough spots usually just involves flipping the right combination of switches, but the game often makes you master a couple of Kain's Dark Gifts to get the job done. The "Charm" spell is particularly cool—it allows you to mentally inhabit nearby peasants and make them do your bidding. They're very helpful and often situated to reach areas Kain cannot. So show your gratitude by not killing all their cousins and friends in town. Ah, what the heck, go ahead. Kain was never much for gratitude, anyway.

"Does it hurt when I do this?" Kain's stealth kill is the most productive use of his "Mist" Dark Gift. Victims die differently depending on the type of weapon used, so if you want a souvenir head to take home to the little vampires, we recommend a sturdy blade.



Crystal has finally perfected their trademark adventure-game model. Sexy gothic environments? Check. Polished voice acting conveying a cool story? Check. Solid combat model? Check...uh? Really? That's right. *Soul Reaver* victims, the fighting is actually decent in *Blood Omen 2*. It still likes you to default to a three-hit slashfest to get through most of the game, but a boatload of weapons and special attacks open up some pleasing possibilities for dispatching Kain's opponents. It's a good time overall, but as the writers of *Air Bud 2: Golden Receiver* know, perfecting a model that's flawed to begin with only magnifies its intrinsic problems. **I wish this game would get off its damn rails and let stuff happen that isn't necessarily in the script.** Only buildings you have to enter are unlocked, there's always just a single path from one area to the next, etc. You've got no choices at all in this game, and that seriously diminishes the fun. Even the puzzles all have a single solution that you figure out immediately, but you've still got to go through five minutes of trivial motions just to move on. The sweet Dark Gifts Kain obtains are just begging for some latitude at the hands of the player but are given none. If you're going to let me possess a peasant, I need to be able to walk him off a 30-foot-high ledge to his demise, end of story. It's too bad, a little innovation could've made this good game great.

Jonathan

Some kids aspire to be an astronaut or a cop when they grow up. Me? I've always wanted to be a vampire. So when it comes to the *Lok* series, where being an undead badass is basically half the fun, I'm a cheap and easy date. With all your super-human abilities, ***BO2* takes unholy vampiric pleasures to near-giddy levels.** Unfortunately, gutting Sarafan soldiers and drinking the blood of innocent civilians aren't the only tasks awaiting you in Nosgoth. Many of *BO2*'s levels consist of repetitious switch-flipping and crate-pushing. Returning fans will dig the quality narrative, but newcomers may find *BO2*'s arbitrary puzzles and cardboard cutout levels tedious. **Che**

The sour taste left by Raziel's last jaunt has been replaced by the warm, sweet taste of blood. Issues that dragged *Soul Reaver 2* down are not present—**Kain's artery-sucking escapade keeps the cutscenes to a minimum and actually rewards you for fighting.** Puzzles constitute much of the gameplay, and while early levels are heavy on switch-flipping and crate-pushing, later levels (like the stylish Eternal Prison) feature inventive obstacles requiring Kain's use of Dark Gift spells. The gorgeous, Gothic graphics will make your head spin, until the game slows to a crawl; while new data is loaded on the fly. If you can, get the speedier Xbox version. **Shane**

VISUALS 7 SOUND 9 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 2



Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Ion Storm Austin
Featured In: EGM #151
Players: 1
Pronounced: Day-Es-Ex
Best Feature: Deep gameplay system
Most Famous: Dated graphics
Web Site: www.deusex.com

PS2

Say *Deus Ex* three times really fast and you may find yourself muttering the words "day of sex," which, incidentally, is not completely unlike spending 24 straight hours with this unique first-person shooter. *DX* is a long, roller-coaster ride of an action game that will leave you happily exhausted in its final hours. What makes the game so satisfying is its combination of many well-handled elements. Its near-future scenario, in which a group of New York-based terrorists rises up against the governing body, has the hook of an *X-Files* episode with just enough real-world relevance to send chills down your spine. But *Ex* is more than just a good story; its excellent game design gives you the freedom to call all the shots. For the hell of it, I ran through the game as a merciful agent of the law, dishing out only non-lethal justice with my pepper spray and riot baton. It paid off. Those around me talked in hushed tones about how I was such a big wimp, but I actually received bonus items for my pacifist ways. Don't get me wrong, with all the heavy artillery you get, there's plenty of carnage to be had in *Ex*. But there's beauty in restraint, and the game shows plenty of discipline. My only complaint is that *Ex* wasn't prettier to look at. Some choppy gameplay makes it straight-up embarrassing for a PS2 title at times. But when all the other pieces come together, *Deus Ex* is the perfect example of why we never judge purely on appearances. **Ch**

This is not a first-person shooter. Sure, gunpowder junkies can get their fill of shotguns and sniper rifles. But if that's all you're looking for, the graphics here are so choppy and blocky you'd be better off with...well, just about any other PS2 FPS. *Deus Ex* is more like a first-person adventure. You infiltrate compounds, hack computers, pick locks, disable cameras—the game offers a refreshing number of different methods outside the usual "kill, kill, find key, kill" mold to accomplish goals. This unique degree of freedom, enhanced by a load of customizable skills and weapons, makes up for the graphical inferiority and long load times. **Mark**

Deus Ex is more first-person strategy than shooter. Yeah, you have loads of weapons, but you can get through most of the game without even touching 'em if you play it smart. *Ex* affords you a kind of gameplay latitude I haven't seen from any other action-shooter, and your character's stats and storyline are extremely responsive to the way you play each mission. I really love being rewarded for voluntary exploration, stealth and minimal hostile engagement—a lot of games force these tactics on you in an almost scripted fashion. The control pad's a bitch for navigating menus and aiming, but FPS purists can always use a USB mouse and keyboard.... **Jonathan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	6	8	7



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Amuze
Featured In: EGM #152
Players: 1
Also Try: MGS2 or Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Best Feature: Great gunplay
Worst Feature: Poor graphics during cutscenes
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

PS2

When Sega's *Headhunter* was cancelled for the dying Dreamcast console last year, I felt a pang of disappointment. Now that it's out for the PS2, I can honestly say Dreamcast owners (i.e., we) didn't miss out on all that much. *HH* borrows the heart-pounding stealth action of *Metal Gear Solid* and combines it with the key-hunting, herb-consuming good times of the slower-paced *Resident Evil* games. But whereas both *MGS* and *RE* are also renowned for their in-depth storylines, *Headhunter's* plot is riddled with a long list of made-for-TV-movie clichés. You are Jack Wade, hardboiled bounty hunter with a bad case of amnesia who has to clear his name, find out who gave him the shaft and...yadda yadda, you get the idea. While *HH's* storyline is strictly bad pulp with a near-future twist, the game's controls actually feel pretty good, thanks mainly to the fact that it plays a lot like *MGS*. You'll tiptoe through enemy territory, peek around corners, and break hundreds of necks. The combat system, which uses a behind-the-shoulder look-on-top, allows you to easily strafe or roll out of harm's way while tearing your enemies a new one. But the gun battles, which are the best parts of the game, are constantly interrupted by key-fetching errands and the occasional (pointless) motorcycle ride through the city. *HH* isn't a bad game to be sure, but as a hybrid of two very popular genres, it just never transcends its towering influences. **Ch**

The sneaky Swedes who concocted *Headhunter* somehow managed to genetically splice together two popular series to create something akin to *Resident Evil Gear Solid*. I'm not talking about vague inspiration—this game blatantly lifts so many aspects of those games that it is actually funny. VR missions? Yep. Enemy radar that gets scrambled when they see you? Bingo. Engraving a medalion to use as a key in a puzzle? Sadly, yes. Thankfully, it succeeds at being both derivative and enjoyable. The plot's not bad, the 3D engine is surprisingly solid, and the quest is plenty long. It's almost like the real thing, kind of like an off-brand box of Corn Flakes. **Shane**

Imagine a game that apes *Resident Evil*, *Metal Gear Solid* and, oddly enough, *MotoGP*, and you'll end up with an adventure game like *Headhunter*. It's a solid effort and for the most part successful. But because the controls are overly ambitious (read: complex), instead of being a crack shot with mad skillz, **Jack Slade is about as easy to control as a 6-year-old kid** when you're not wrestling with the controller or the lazy camera, you're driving a motorcycle that doesn't really drive like a motorcycle. It's too bad, because the presentation and overall level of finish hint at what this game could have been with some proper controls. Worth a rental. **Milkman**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	3	3



Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Ubi Soft
Players: 1-2 (5-4 with Multi-tap)
Also Try: *CTR: Crash Team Racing* (PS2)
Mario Party (N64)
Best Feature: Lots of levels with nice designs
Worst Feature: Controls in the combat stages
Web Site: www.raymanarena.com

PS2

It's inevitable: have mascot, will branch it out to other genres (just take a look at Mario, Sonic and, well, just about every other popular character in our industry). But unlike most of the kart or party games on the market, *Arena* has a spark of originality to it. The minigames here aren't all direct rip-offs of what you've seen elsewhere (like say, *Crash Team Racing* to *Mario Kart*). But the combat levels, for example, have a bit of first-person-shooter-deathmatch personality to them—totally unexpected for a game of this type. Even the racing modes...gameplay-wise, they're very derivative, but the large, creatively designed stages allow for multiple routes that take skill to navigate. And with 30 total levels to open up, *Arena* gives a decent bang for the buck, especially if you're looking for a multiplayer party game that will provide a few distractions here and there. Just don't expect this disc to do much more than that. It's not a finely tuned, polished title like the others mentioned above. The combat games, while fun, are hampered by a pretty half-assed targeting system that takes some getting used to (and once you do get the hang of it, it's still not ideal). The racing games don't have that control problem, but every character is armed with an automatically recharging freeze ray. What's wrong with that? Imagine how downright stupid multiplayer races get when players are freezing each other every other step of the way. **Shoe**

I generally like the *Rayman* style. In fact, I'm a big fan of his first two games. But *Rayman Arena* doesn't feel like it should be a stand-alone product to me. Maybe as a collection of minigames in a bigger title, this package would make more sense. But honestly, outside of the straight racing, I didn't have a whole lot of fun with any of the play modes in *Arena*. I really don't like the fact that, in multiplayer, you're limited only to arenas you've unlocked in the single-player mode. The problem is that the solo game just isn't any fun after about an hour (and trust me, it'll take a lot longer than that to unlock every level in this game). A rental at best. **Greg**

Someone Ubi Soft managed to make a "party game" that's addictive and fun whether you're entertaining a group of friends or a party of one. Of *RA's* two game types, the footracing pulled ahead as my favorite. Beautifully designed, lush tracks have just the right amount of shortcuts, traps and other hazards to keep things close without ruining the racing feel. Finishing the multiple race types means exploring every inch of track, so there's lots to do. On the flipside, arena battles are bogged down by awkward camera and strafing controls, but the levels are also well-balanced. This is a solid choice for weekend warriors looking for a good rental. **Chris**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	8

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PlayStation 2



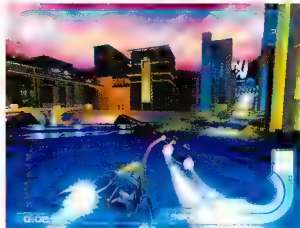
www.bam4fun.com



Wipeout Fusion



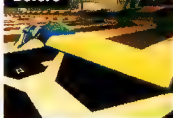
Left: Johnny Gordon's big sponsor deal and new-found job stability suddenly didn't mean so much anymore when Crash Trickle rammed a missile up his tailpipe. **Below:** Just like *Ridge Racer*, most tracks in *Fusion* get altered a little as the game progresses. Look out for those energy barricades!



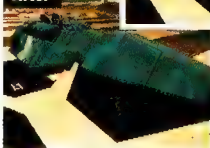
Publisher: bam! **PS2**
Developer: Sony Studio Liverpool
Featured In: EGM #153
Players: 1-2
Don't Forget: The Dramamine
Best Feature: It's a prettier, faster *Wipeout*
Worst Feature: Game stutters in multiplayer
Web Site: www.wipeoutgame.com

Port 'n' Polish

Before



After



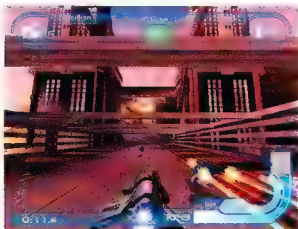
Use credits to upgrade your sled into a super-fast, tough, racing machine.

Finally, the granddaddy of combat-racing games comes to the PS2. Fans of the series may be distressed, however, to find that it initially seems like nothing more than a high-res *Wipeout*.

But it's much more. Gamers who give *Fusion* a chance will find a very deep upgrade system and plenty of tracks, weapons and vehicles to unlock, giving this installment some major bang for the buck.

What's really important, though, is how this baby handles at speed. While it's easy to get disoriented at first, the game is very forgiving to rookies (even Dean got good at it). You'll be destroying track records in no time.

And when you're careening through those later stages at breakneck speeds—some-where between exhilaration and motion sickness—you'll realize just how much this well-balanced game has improved your video-racing skills. Just go get it.



MODE MADNESS

Confused about all these different play modes? We'll break them down for you:

AG League: The real meat of *Wipeout Fusion*, AG League lets you earn cash to use on sled upgrades. You also earn the right to challenge different teams for use of their machines.

Challenge: Here you have a group of five challenges per team. Think *Gran Turismo 3*-style license tests, and you've got a good idea of what we're talking about. Finish the first five tests with any team to unlock its super weapons.

Arcade/Time Trial: Does this really need any explanation? Race against 15 other competitors or go for a solo run in an attempt to break the track record.

Zone: Pit road is closed in this mode. Your goal is to make it through as many laps as possible on a single shield.

The hype coming out of Europe for this game has been deafening. You'd almost think *Fusion* is the second coming. I don't know about all that, but it is an absolute blast to play. The high-speed, anti-grav combat racing formula hasn't worked so well since *Wipeout XL* on the PS1 (my favorite title in the series up until now). The smooth learning curve eases you into the game with slower sleds and wide, simple courses. But when you finally ramp up to the faster vehicles and later tracks...yikes. This game gets so fast and dangerous (what with all the weapons flying around) that no matter how big a lead you get, victory is never guaranteed. That's the way it should be. **Wipeout stays competitive without ever getting cheap.** You'll find no sudden bursts of speed from your opponents or super-marksman on your tail in this game. But don't go thinking that *Fusion* is just a tweaked or prettied-up *Wipeout 3*. It comes complete with a bunch of new features that racing gamers are going to love: progression reports, setup options and the ability to purchase upgrades for their racing machines. *Fusion* introduces all of that to the series along with a plethora of new weapons and challenge modes (kinda like *GTA's* license tests) to unlock along the way. **if only the game didn't bog down in two-player mode.** **D** rate it a little higher. Still, you won't find a better, or prettier, combat-racing game on the market today.

Greg

I'd like to thank Studio Liverpool for not mucking this game up with a lot of silly crap it didn't need. **It still feels like classic Wipeout**, but subtle changes have made it easier to tackle the intense, serpentine courses. It's partly because they're wider, but also because the game moves at manageable speeds. I'm not saying it's slow and easy, but you'll spend much more time cruising down the middle than you will scraping the walls. Between the improved gameplay, the hefty number of tracks (and ships) and the sheer amount of time you'll be playing, *Fusion* is worth your hard-earned dough. I only wish two-player ran a bit more smoothly.

Dean

When I grow up I want to be an anti-grav racer. If *Fusion* is any indicator, driving in the future is fast and that's just how I like it. There's nothing quite like the thrill of being armed to the teeth, shields at the ready, blasting over a thrust pad, shoulder-to-shoulder with 15 other racers of the same mind. *Fusion's* control, graphics and tracks are so spot-on that once mastered, weaving through the curves at supersonic speeds becomes second-nature. **In the later levels I felt like the freakin' Force was with me, man.** If I have any gripe, it's that the computer can be intensely difficult at times, but this is still the most fun you'll have on no wheels.

Milkman

VISUALS 9 SOUND 8 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 8

Downforce



Publisher: PS2
Titus
Developer:
Smart Dog
Sly Stallone:
Nope
Players:
 1-2
Sim or Arcade?
 100% arcade
Web Site:
 down-force.com

Best Feature: Smooth and very fast
Worst Feature: Limited replay value

"What the heck is this?" I heard that a lot from my coworkers as I played *Downforce*, usually after one of them watched my fair-out car's airfoils rotate like wing flaps to adjust for wind flow. It looks weird, but *Downforce* succeeds in two areas where Midway's *CART Fury* failed: the sensation of speed and the ability to provide competitive racing (however short-lived). It's obvious the game's tracks were designed with high velocity in mind. They're wide, the turns are long and sweeping, and for the most part, it's easy to see where you're supposed to go. Thanks to the smart layout, **you can really haul butt around every course**. Couple that with the competitive, wing-to-wing racing, and you're in hog heaven. But sadly, the fun is over too soon. The first two classes are fairly easy to win—you'll conquer those in a day. The expert class, while harder, shouldn't take you a whole lot longer. A fun cat-and-mouse two-player game contributes some residual replay value, but just the same, racing buffs should rent before thinking about buying this one.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	3

Shadow Man: Second Coming



Publisher: PS2
Acclaim
Developer:
Acclaim Studios
Teesside
Players:
 1
Kinda like: *Zelda* merged with the movie *Candyman II*
Web Site:
 www.acclaim.com

Best Feature: Switching between Mike and the Man
Worst Feature: Boring, clichéd enemies

Usually when a game hits retail before the gaming press it spells trouble, but *Shadow Man 2* ain't bad. The basic gameplay is solid. Fighting enemies and jumping through puzzle-filled dungeons in the *Zelda*-adventure mold (you even break open pots to replenish health and ammo, just like Link). The game falls back a little too often on kill-everything-in-the-room and pull-the-lever mechanics, but the choice between acting as Shadow Man or his human form Mike, each with his own powers, is a cool dynamic. A nice array of weapons (everything from voodoo-enchanted spears to machine guns) and the ability to hold one in each hand also makes combat enjoyable. But a few problems *drag Shadow Man* back out of the light. The interface definitely needs improvement; equipping weapons in and out of your inventory is such a chore you often just make due with what you have. And despite some surprisingly good voice work, the storyline is never involving enough to drive you on. Cooler character and enemy designs alone would have helped immensely.

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	6	5

Savage Skies



Publisher: bam!
Developer:
iRock
Players:
 1
Try instead: *Drakon: The Ancients' Gate*
Saving grace: *Ozzy Osbourne* got out when he did
Best Feature: Array of different flying creatures
Worst Feature: Cheesy metal soundtrack
Web Site:
 www.bam4fun.com

I bet you're wondering where the motivation for a Gothic, dragon-riding sky shooter came from. Think tattoo parlors with middle-aged rocker/gamer dudes perusing the walls for the perfect ink. Think heavy-metal concerts with pyrotechnics flying from the stage (this game was supposed to feature Ozzy Osbourne 'til he backed out). Think long, flowing mullets and Camaros with sidepipes. These, my friends, are the seeds that fertilized *Savage Skies*. While the setting is certainly unorthodox, the gameplay is nothing special. When an army of gun turrets and flying foes arelobbering you from all sides, enemies and the game only allows you to target one enemy at a time. It's natural to wonder which dark lord you've insulted to deserve this. Even the get-item-and-deliver missions are made to annoy—the map shows your location just fine, but you can't, for the love of Ozzy, find what you need due to poorly explained objectives and ambiguously defined targets. And who can forget those levels that send waves of enemies at you until you're just fried or bored to death (or both)? The lack of in-game saves makes these stages especially trying. The two-player mode might be cool if there was more to it than chasing your opponent around in circles. Look, novelty is one thing, but desperation is another. This game may sound unique, but no matter how cool it seems, you're probably not that desperate.

Jeanne

I can sum up *Skies*' heavy-metalized mix of high-flying battles and creatures ripped from the cover of my junior-high Trapper Keeper with one word: bland. Do anything more than primary mission goals and you're forced to flap around sprawling environments hunting for crystals or other secondary objectives for way too long. Meanwhile, annoying enemies with unerring accuracy blast you from all sides. Enemy dragons are tenacious; dogfights would almost be fun if most of your weapons weren't so tricky to aim. At least you get three campaigns to try if you get stuck, but that's about all that keeps *Skies* from seeming like a budget title.

Crispin

You've gotta admit—riding into battle atop a winged beast armed with supernatural weapons while heavy-metal music blares in the background sounds like a rockin' good time. But *Savage Skies* just doesn't have the good gameplay behind it to be anything other than a bland flight-combat shooter. The lackluster missions are a constant game of "who's shooting me, and where the hell is he?!" Simply keeping your target in sight is difficult in close combat, and long-range fighting is virtually impossible (you have one lock-on weapon, and it's too weak to damage the biggest threats). *SS* is a game with an interesting concept but not-so-good execution.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	4	2

Triple Play 2002



Publisher: PS2
EA Sports
Developer:
Pandemic
Beware of: Bob Costas' Commentary
Players:
 1-2
Try Instead: *High Heat 2003*
Web Site:
 www.easports.com

Best Feature: Plays more realistically than before
Worst Feature: Looks more ridiculous than before

Previous *Triple Play* games were a lot like some of my ex-girlfriends: Their good looks made me tolerate them longer than I should have. I won't have that problem this year, however, since **It looks like EA Sports beat this game down with the ugly stick** (or bat, whatever). Compared to smoother, more realistic titles such as *High Heat* (and to a lesser extent, *All-Star Baseball*), this is an embarrassment. You'd have to see the plastic, Bobblehead-like replicas of Jeff Bagwell and friends to understand. At least the action on the field fares a bit better. EA tweaked the base hits and home runs to realistic levels (last year was a home-run fest), allowing for more strategy to come into play. But does it really matter if you don't want to play this to begin with? Probably not. The only time I was genuinely entertained was when I plowed my weird-looking dudes into the catcher at home plate (the poor bastard). Once in awhile, you'll find similarly cool moment in between all the choppy animations and graphical glitches. Problem is those moments are as rare as, well, a triple play.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	7	4	4

Driven



Publisher: bam!
Developer:
bam! Studios Europe
Also Available: *The Cliffhanger, Rocky and Rambo* games
Players:
 1-2
Web Site:
 www.bam4fun.com

Best Feature: Celebrity voice acting
Worst Feature: Frustrating beyond belief

PlayStation 2 drivers have been swerving to avoid this wreck of a game since last November, and GC owners should follow suit. Sure, this version boasts a lot of improvements like faster loading, smoother graphics and new music tracks; but the underlying game still reeks. The biggest hurdle facing *Driven* is that it's just too frustrating to be fun. You'd think that a game that has simple controls, only automatic-transmission cars and extra lives would be a delightful romp, right? Nah. Unforgiving physics make every collision catastrophic—if you hit a wall or another car, you've likely lost the race. Any fun you'd have in Arcade mode will expire after a few plays, and don't even touch the ill-conceived Story mode. Absurdly difficult objectives such as "race a perfect lap on a windy road without hitting a wall or ever braking" made me want to end it all. Realistically, the jamming soundtrack and celebrity cover work by Sly Stallone are the main draws here, but no reason for recommendation. Much like the film that inspired it, this game isn't even worth a rental.

Shane

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	8	2	3

Grand Theft Auto III



"GRAND THEFT AUTO 3 EXPANDS THE VERY IDEA OF WHAT A GAME HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN" - IGN.COM

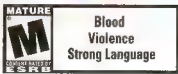
"AN AMAZING GAME." - NEW YORK TIMES

"A MAFIOSO MASTERPIECE" - MAXIM



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PlayStation 2



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This time around you need to either behead (left) or burn (above) zombies to truly kill them. Otherwise they will eventually come back to life as faster, nastier Crimson Heads (below).



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: EGM #154
Players: 1
Current Best: 2:05:37 on Hard with Jill
Best Feature: Detailed, spooky atmosphere
Worst Feature: Controls still take some adjustment
Web Site: www.capcom.com



attacking enemies (depending on how much precious ammo and healing herbs you have). But there are important advancements *RE* virgins will appreciate: Defensive weapons and an easy difficulty mode will help ease you into the somewhat awkward controls, while the graphics are sweet enough to keep anyone—even you sheltered freaks who somehow passed on all the previous *RE* games—interested. Seriously, it looks better in-game than the cutscenes of most other titles.

Next, for those of you who have played an *RE* game before but just not the original:

You're going to love this. The first *Evil* was always unique as a slower but more frightening experience as opposed to the faster action bent of the rest of the series. But now, with the improved graphics, the nail-biting intensity permeates every crack and corner of the mansion. A simple but interesting story is the bow that ties the package together.

And finally, for those of you who played the original PlayStation *RE* back in the day:

The beauty of this updated version is not only all the completely new rooms, puzzles, modes and more (which, as you can see on the next page, is quite impressive in itself) but also how the game uses your own memories against you. You might feel safe before a familiar door, only to walk through it and into a completely different zombie-filled room. Or find an object you remember from the original game used as part of an entirely new puzzle. Or run down that infamous hallway expecting dogs to come crashing through the windows only to...well, after all, the point is it's exciting as hell to *not* know what's gonna happen next all over again, so we better just stop there.

In order to save some time so you can go out and play this fantastic game that much sooner (because the whole point here is you should do just that), we're gonna divide this section of the review up into three parts. Find which of the following categories you belong to, read that paragraph, and walk, run or drive to your local game store to try this game. You won't be sorry, and here's why:

For those of you who have never played any *Resident Evil* game before: The GC version is the perfect place to start. In some ways it's like all other games in the series—you travel room to room, looking for items to unlock doors or complete puzzles, avoiding or

NEW DEFENSIVE ITEMS: DEFEND YO' SELF BEFORE YA WRECK YO' SELF

STUN GUN (JILL)



Zombie or no zombie, a stun gun to the 'nads is gonna take you down, period.

DAGGER (JILL & CHRIS)



The dagger may not be fancy, but you can't jack fanciness into a zombie's face to knock him back.

GRENADE (CHRIS)



1) Shove grenade in zombie's mouth. 2) Pull pin and run. 3) Count to three. 4) BOOM! 5) Smile.

NEW FOR 2002

In addition to the Crimson Head zombies and defensive items we already talked about, here's what's new or different for the GameCube version of *RE*:



NEW OUTFITS TO WEAR

Cue "Dad to the Bone."



NEW BOSSES TO FIGHT

Well, actually, just one new boss, but you will encounter her (yes, technically it's a her) several times. Another cool addition: Against several bosses a friendly character may, depending on your actions, fight alongside you.



NEW ROOMS TO EXPLORE

Some areas are completely new, some are similar but have new surprises worked in (as the poor sap above just found out), and a few are exactly the same but look about 1,000 times better.



NEW MODES TO UNLOCK

Try *Real Survivor*, where the item boxes are not linked to one another; *Invisible Enemy*, with (duh) invisible enemies; or *One Tough Zombie*, where your old pal Zombie Forrester (above) stalks you, strapped with enough grenades to blow you both sky-high if you shoot him.



NEW CUTSCENES TO WATCH

Most of the story in *RE* hasn't changed a bit, but there are at least a couple surprises. The old laughable dialogue and intro movie have been completely redone.



NEW PUZZLES TO SOLVE

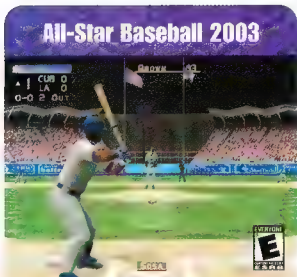
In fact, the majority of puzzles are different or all new. As fun as pushing crates over poison gas vents was in the old PlayStation game (yes, that is heavy sarcasm), the new puzzles are quite a bit more interesting.

Let's get one thing straight: This is not a rerelease for a new system like *Super Mario World*, and it's not a director's cut with a few extras, a la *Genma Onimusha*. The *RE* mansion has been completely gutted and rehabbed with only the foundation left intact. The most noticeable change—the incredibly realistic graphics—may seem only cosmetic, but they serve a higher purpose here. Without trying to sound corny, the house the game is set in becomes like a character in itself. OK, maybe that's corny after all, but it's true—dank corridors, flashing lightning and flickering fireplaces bring the mansion to life, making it fun just to watch someone explore its eerie environments. Other additions below the surface improve the game in lots of little ways, my favorite being the defensive items. They give you a second chance when you screw up, plus add a personal, in-your-face element that shooting zombies from afar lacks (nothing says "I love you" like a grenade in someone's mouth). As for replay, differences in the difficulty levels and extra modes like *One Tough Zombie* were **reason enough to keep me playing for a solid week**. The overall story is the one part of the original that remains. Despite a few interesting new notes and tweaks, there's no denying it's less exciting for experienced players to know how the game will eventually end. But the spooky ride that gets you there is still most definitely worth taking. **Mark**

Cripes, this remake makes the new *E.T.* look like a steaming bowl of ass gumbo. A handful of familiar nooks keeps the game grounded in the original *RE* mold, but it's an otherwise brand-new experience. Walking up to an area expecting one thing to happen and getting totally broadsided by something new just rocks. Not only do the backgrounds look amazing, but their realism combined with the confining effects of fixed camera angles make this the **scariest RE of all**. I got so spoiled by all the added goodies, the nearly unaltered boss fight killed my buzz at the end. But there's so much juicy gameplay here that weeks later, I'm still going back for more. **Jonathan**

When a game is so scary it makes you want to pause every five minutes for a breather, you know the developers have done something right. That's the kind of feeling you'll get from playing *Resident Evil*. The GC version is **more than just a graphical overhaul**—most of the puzzles have changed, a ton of areas have been added, and many existing areas have been modified. It's a lot harder now, too. The defense items are a welcome addition, and you'll need 'em—especially when you come across your first Crimson Head (what a nightmare). If you didn't like it then, you probably won't like it now, but for everyone else (over 18), it's a must-own. **John R.**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	9	6	7



Publisher: Acclaim Sports
Developer: Acclaim Studios Austin
Featured In: EGM #153
Players: 1-2
Best Extra: Rowdy crowds
Best Feature: Great graphics
Worst Feature: Fast pitch, slow cursor
Web Site: www.acclaimsports.com



It's nice to see lots of gameplay variety offered within the sports genre. You've got your sim-style (*High Heat*), your pseudo-arcade experience (*Triple Play*) and *All-Star Baseball*, a heavy hitter which seeks to blend the best of everything. That blend starts with one of the most appealing visual packages on the digital diamond. *ASB 2003* sports **amazingly life-like player models and snappy animation work**. Good sports games should offer lots of the following: Watch play, watch replay, smile. *ASB* fits that bill nicely. On the gameplay front, *2003* is still very true to the series' '64 roots. The cursor-based batting and pitching interface is here and delivers arguably the most realistic representation of trying to hit 95 mph heat. You won't be slamming six home runs per game anytime soon, and I like that. On the negative side, it seems the pitches come in a little fast. Be prepared to strike out 10 times in a game. Also annoying, from a pitching standpoint, is that even study pitchers (Randy Johnson) tire after six innings. Aside from that and a few problematic fielding gripes, *ASB* is solid. A bevy of single-player options and a wonderfully executed franchise mode should satisfy any baseball geek. Creating and customizing any of this year's surprising rookies are a cinch as well. Whether you're a major-league sports gamer or just up from the minors, *ASB's* options and eye candy make it a must-have for the baseball season.

Dan L.

These are the musings of a typical new *ASB 2003* buyer: Oh yeah, I'll start this up now. [30 seconds later] Wow, it looks good. The graphics are super-sharp, the player models are right-on, and the animation is beautiful—awesome! My buddy said the pitches are ballistic. I gotta check that first. OK, here comes the first throw. Swing! Ah, I must be rusty. Here comes another, swoosh—missed again. Third one, strike three 'Im out. CRAPI! **These pitches are like freakin' laser beams!** [fast forward two days] Well, I'm better, but even when I do make contact it feels more like luck than skill. Hmm...maybe my reflexes are shot. I am 21 years old after all. **Dean**

I'm not sure which is harder: keeping Robert Downey Jr. away from a crack pipe or establishing a consistent offense in *All-Star Baseball*. **You have to be a patient homie to get a good head on hitting the ball.** These pitchers throw wicked heat, and your batting cursor moves so sluggishly, it's difficult to get it into position on time. Half my hits seemed like lucky guesses. Once you finally do get the ball into the field, the gameplay is solid. The fielding and base-running play realistically and look great. I'd like to see Acclaim brighten the dark (but detailed) graphics a bit. If they did that and made hitting easier, this would seriously challenge *High Heat*.

Kraig



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Wow
Featured In: EGM #153
Players: 1-2
Try Instead: *All-Star Baseball 2003*
Best Feature: Excellent graphics
Worst Feature: Sluggish speed
Web Site: www.sega.com



If it just came down to looks, this would be the best baseball game of the year. The decision wouldn't even be close. Not only can you gaze upon your players' 3D-rendered mandibles as they grimace and grunt, you can even see them blow translucent bubbles with their gum while killing time between hits. It's a good thing the players have something to chew on—they'll need a way to help pass the time in this sluggish action-sports game. The biggest headache stems from the excruciatingly slow ballers and fly balls. The only way you could be prepared for them is if you held Spring Training on the Moon. Fielding markers try to ease your pain, but their clattering glow only adds to the confusion. That is, unless you like playing ball under disco lights. The end result is you can't care what happens on the field, just so long as you can hurry back to the home-plate duel. That part of the game is a blast. The ball is easy to spot, and the pitch selection keeps you guessing, but as the name implies, it's inevitable that you'll rail off home runs by the bunches. Sling one out at Bank One Ballpark, and you'll see the poolside fountains spray; nail a homer out of Enron—oops—Astros Field, and a train will choo-choo across the outfield wall. Those are great rewards for a dinger, to be sure. But it's still not enough to make it worth buying this glorified home-run derby—especially one that's paced as slowly as this.

Kraig

Let's get one thing straight: Folks looking for a deep, feature-rich baseball sim had best look elsewhere. Sure, *Home Run King* boasts sharp graphics, user-friendly controls and all the major-league trimmings necessary to simulate a World Series run. This game, however, is designed for quick, arcade thrills, and lacks goodies like fantasy leagues and comprehensive stat-tracking. Likely to elicit the most groans is the batter/pitching interface (aka the meat of the game) which only lets you control the ball's placement after it's released. It felt really awkward to me. Flash-over-function camera angles round out this underachiever.

Milkman

This game could have been more aptly titled *Breaks-in-Gameplay King*. Seriously, I hate tapping the button 10,000 times per nine innings just to try to keep an action moving along. **Even if you can get over that, and I can't (obviously), what's offered here is mediocre at best.** *Home Run King* is a very nice-looking batting and pitching simulator, with fielding controls thrown in as an afterthought. Delayed player control and an assortment of dizzying camera perspectives almost make you wish you didn't have to field, but then we'd be back to *World Series Baseball 2K1* on the Dreamcast. Wait a second, this game looks a lot like that...aw, crap!

Dan L.

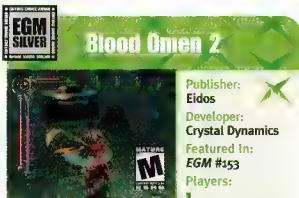


Best Feature: Realistic-looking players
Worst Feature: Batting is, well, swing-and-a-miss...

Publisher: Acclaim Sports
Developer: Acclaim Studios Austin
Featured In: EGM #153
Players: 1-2
Crowds: Very realistic
Web Site: www.acclaimsports.com

I'm beginning to think a flawless *All-Star Baseball* game is just not in the cards this year. This Xbox version has fewer bugs than *ASB 2002*, but still leaves some things to be desired. Case in point: **The lightning-speed pitches are impressive to witness but so ridiculously fast that, by the time you get your cursor lined up, the ball is resting in the catcher's glove.** I'm all for authenticity, but holy smokes, that ball's hard to hit. The only alternative is using the game's (cursor-less) Easy Batting option. But it's so simple: All you do is swing as the ball crosses the plate, and you're guaranteed some kind of hit—brainless. If the pitches were a tad slower, the difficulty curve would be perfect. As long as I'm making wishes, where's the animation of the ball launching off the bat after a hit? All the other baseball sims have it—why can't this one? Don't get me wrong, *ASB 2003* is still decent. But unless you have super-quick reflexes, simply surviving nine innings is a nightmare. Rent this one for a round of batting practice before committing to a purchase.

Dean



Best Feature: Excellent story keeps you playing
Worst Feature: Not enough checkpoints near the end

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Crystal Dynamics
Featured In: EGM #153
Players: 1
Nosgood Needs: A Belmont or two
Web Site: www.eidos.com

Comparing *Blood Omen 2* to its PS1 predecessor is like comparing Count Dracula to Count Chocula—they're similar in name only. Rather than another RPG, this is a straight action title with a little bit of puzzle solving. And since the game simply herds you from one event to the next, you're never at a loss for where to go. That's not to knock it, though. While the action gets a tad monotonous here and there, the excellent story and gorgeous level designs kept me coming back for more. My addition was further encouraged by a superb learning curve. *Blood Omen* gradually introduces you to new powers and enemies only as you're ready for them, making for an enjoyable game that's **always challenging but never frustrating**. My only complaint is that, near the end of the game, checkpoints are so few and far between that you'll find yourself repeating the same puzzles and cinemas over and over again should you make a small mistake. It breaks up the game's momentum. Otherwise, *BO2* is tastier than the blood of a pale young virgin on a full moon.

Greg



REAL FIGHTERS. REAL FIGHTING.



UFC: Tapout scores a 9 and gets OXM Editor's Choice Award!

"UFC is the most realistic fighting game ever."

- OXM

GamePro Review Score: 4 out of 5

"The game is so far the only fighter that comes close to making you feel like you're in a real mixed martial arts competition."

- GamePro

IGN Review Score: 8.3

"Wrestling is for sissies."

At least when compared to the real blood and bruises found in Crave's Ultimate Fighting Championship: Tapout."

- IGN

Gamespot Review Score 8.8

"As good as it looks, UFC: Tapout is even more impressive as a gameplay experience."

- Gamespot

Electric Playground Review Score: 8.5

"...for those who like their street fighting with style, UFC: Tapout hits harder than a bare-knuckle jab to the kidney."

- Electric Playground

UFC

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THE COMPETITION IS TOUGH AND THE FIGHTS ARE REAL.

IF YOU ENTER THESE AUTHENTIC UFC BOUTS

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO LEARN TO FIGHT YOUR WAY OUT.

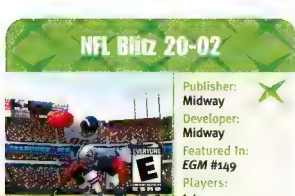


Blood
Violence



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NFL Blitz 20-02

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Midway
Featured In: EGM #149
Players: 1-4
Green Hints: Frequent
Web Site: www.midway.com

Best Feature: One extra player per side
Worst Feature: Rosters are a bit out of date

I've always been a *Blitz* fan, but the series had grown old in recent years. It just wasn't mixing anything up, trotting out the same graphics and gameplay year after year. Well, *Blitz 20-02* is different, or at least different enough to warrant your attention. The graphics have definitely been ratcheted up and look like they belong on a next-gen system. Players are large, detailed and intimidating, while the stadiums and fields provide great atmosphere. As for the gameplay, *20-02* got it right with the addition of an extra player on each side of the ball. On the playing-calling screen, you can direct this extra guy to do his own thing, which basically modifies any existing play in the book. It's a great tool that adds a dash of strategy to the old *Blitz* setup. Everything else basically follows the *Blitz* of old—go through the game, beat the teams, unload everything, throw in some codes and so on. If you're looking for serious *Blitz* fun, get four friends together for multiplayer, as this is where the game really shines. Big hits, trash talking and lightning-quick reflexes rule the day.

Dan L.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	8	5	8



Publisher: Midway
Developer: Point of View
This Music Is Fueled by Satan
Players: 1-2
Also On: GameCube
Web Site: www.namco.com

Best Feature: Crazy multiplayer madness
Worst Feature: Very short single-player experience

Smashing Drive is like some weird excuse student who seems hopelessly out of touch with popular culture. Maybe back in its native Spain, this candy-colored *San Francisco Rush* knockoff is cutting-edge, but it's a real oddball compared to the sexy Xbox racers available stateside. Visually, it's really quite ugly—simplistic buildings, cars and people fill the screen, and it's obvious that the developers have an unhealthy love for the color orange. At least the tacky colors match the bizarre soundtrack. This collection of upbeat rock anthems (with lyrics) qualifies for the coveted "So bad it's good" distinction. With only 30 brief stages, the single-player experience shows its short-attention-span coin-op roots. You can drop a few quarters at the local arcade or half a Benjamin for the home version and still beat the game in one sitting. Thankfully, the competitive two-player mode invites serious replay, as almost every contest ends up in a dead heat. The multiplayer picks up the slack from the solo mode enough to make *Smashing Drive* a fun, disposable rental.

Shane

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	8



Publisher: Midway
Developer: Point of View
Featured In: EGM #146
Players: 1-2
Remember...?: The weapons van? It's back!
Best Feature: Action-packed levels
Worst Feature: Dark, washed-out graphics
Web Site: www.midway.com

When it comes to remakes, good ones are rarer than a three-dollar bill. Lucky for us *Spy Hunter* turned out even better than I had hoped. This neo *Hunter* is just a good action game tailor-made for adrenaline junkies like me. It swipes the trademark black cars, catchy *Peter Gunn* theme and retro machine gun from the original 1980s coin-op, but the rest is all new. Let's dissect it into its top four attributes. 1) Speed: Your tricked-out spy car is a movin' mother. Even while kicking up café tables, chairs and other destructible objects, the game usually stays fast and fluid. No big surprise considering Paradigm's racing background. 2) Levels: They're fantastic. You're only driving from point A to point B on each course, but clever shortcuts, speed-friendly road designs and diligent enemies keep each one exciting. 3) Story: While only a tad better than an episode of *The Dukes of Hazzard*, the plot is captivating enough. It also jibes nicely with the hunt-and-destroy nature of the game. 4) Action: **Yup, this game is packed with it.** Your guns and missiles are capable of wrecking havoc on nearly any commonplace object (windowns, civilian traffic, etc.) that has nothing to do with your mission objectives, which is just mindless fun. You can create as much chaos as you want, and everyone likes to blow stuff up, right? This version is considerably darker (graphically) than its PS2 cousin, but don't let that deter you—it's just as much fun.

Dean

Since I'm the least-patient rush-hour driver in the world, this wholesale traffic annihilator really spoke to me. The remixed *Peter Gunn* theme sets the mood perfectly for the action, whose fast pace is only tempered by a handful of tedious missions. Some objectives read more like grocery lists than an order of espionage. Place five trackers, kill four trucks, get three partridges in a pear tree. Bah! I just wanna blow crap up and transform along the way, OK? It's worth fighting through it all—especially since the Xbox version includes the classic game and bonus tunes. Which raises the question: Why the hell wasn't this stuff in the PS2 edition?

Kraig

It's not easy to take an arcade classic (read: old game), bring it up to modern-day three-dimensional standards, and make it work. And yet, *Spy Hunter* succeeds. Driving around like a jacked-up James Bond and blowing stuff up with my all-in-one wonder vehicle is my idea of a good time. The game controls well, looks good (but not great), and features some cool secrets. On the downside, once the single-player game is beaten, it's beaten. *Spy Hunter* features a healthy bushel of missions, but only the 2-player and retro original are worth going back for. Still, as a nostalgia-infused quick thrill, *Spy Hunter* works fine for me.

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	8



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami CE Tokyo
Where the hell is: Smile.dk's "Butterfly"
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dance-pad controller
Web Site: www.konami.com

Best Feature: Huge song list
Worst Feature: Still missing DDR's best artists

I've said it before: *Dance Dance Revolution (DDR)* is the best music-game series around. In the past, Konami's U.S. DDR offerings have been lackluster, unable to compete with the better-in-every-way Japanese releases. But *Konami is worthy, and if you enjoy music games, you owe it to yourself to get this one* (and invest in a dance pad or two). Nothing beats getting on that dance-pad peripheral with a group of friends and "dancing" (rather, putting your foot on the correct direction when prompted) the best you can to infectious club mixes. New modes like Edit and Solo, a bigger and better song list (containing a few new melodies and Solo mode steps not yet released in Japan) with unlockable tunes give this a similar feel to Konami's better Japanese releases. Unfortunately, songs by my favorite DDR artists—E-Rotic, Captain Jack, Smile.dk and Papaya—are no-shows once again. But even without them, there are plenty of fun, danceable tunes in the list. It's not for everyone, but if you've never tried DDR, it's time to jump on the train, yo.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	8	5	8



Publisher: Rockstar
Developer: Pixelogic
Italian what now?: Based on '69 cult-classic Brit flick with Michael Caine
Players: 1 (5-7 alternating)
Web Site: rockstargames.com

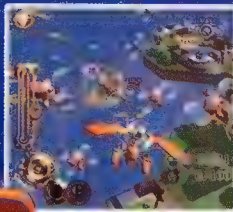
Best Feature: Looks and plays just like *Driver*
Worst Feature: Some very difficult missions

Ah, the dreaded \$10 game. How I've come to loathe thee. Most publishers use the low price tag as nothing but an excuse to release bad product. But wait! This kinda looks like *Driver*. Hey, it plays like *Driver* too! And look at all these cool minigames and driving challenges. Wow, I can even speed freely around London and Turin (the two cities in the game). As weird as it is to fashion a game after an obscure European flick from 1969, Rockstar could easily sell this game for full price, and it would still be worth buying. What you get is a very solid driving game that is loosely based on the movie (it re-creates the famous Mini Cooper car-chase scene almost perfectly) and plays wonderfully. Much like *Driver*, *The Italian Job* can get frustrating here and there (on two missions in particular) but not to the point of making you never want to play the game again. In fact, you'll like it and find yourself getting indignant about the whole thing and hankering any problem spots over and over again until you've got it right. That makes this game well worth the cost of a lunch or two.

Greg

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	8

AN AERIAL ADVENTURE UNLIKE ANY OTHER



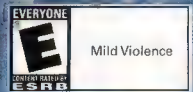
- Powerful game engine allows for expansive environments and an insane amount of onscreen action!
- Choose from three SkyGunners: Ciel, Copain and Femme. Take on a multitude of spectacular missions!
- Take advantage of the intricate scoring system to unlock hidden secrets and modes!



SkyGunner offers high-flying action, aerial dogfights, massive boss battles, and some truly amazing airship designs." *ESG*

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The setting is in the town of Rive, where an exposition is set to take place in two months time.
What adventures await these Gunners?



PlayStation.2



Dragon Ball Z: The Legacy of Goku



Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Webfoot Tech.
Featured In: EGM #154
Players: 1
Better than: Every other *Dragon Ball Z* game on the market
Also Try: *Breath of Fire II* (GBA)
Best Feature: Excellent graphics
Worst Feature: Poor collision detection
Web Site: www.us.infogames.com

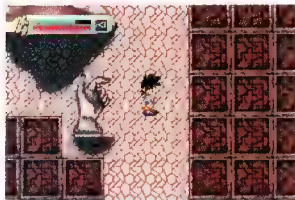
GAME BOY ADVANCE

ESRB
E
 EVERYONE

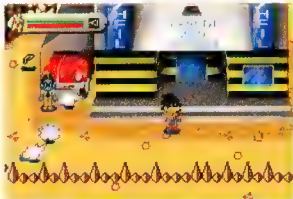
No, you haven't died and gone to meet King Yemma, *DBZ* fans. The first of Infogrames' games based on Akira Toriyama's mega-popular animated and comics series has arrived.

Legacy of Goku is an action-RPG based on the first three *DBZ* sagas: Saiyan, Namek and Frieza. As Goku, you battle evil and save the universe with fists of fury and fiery projectiles.

Don't know anything about *DBZ*? Allow us to give you the gist: In each episode of the show, a bunch of people (called Saiyans) with wily hair, rippling muscles and moon boots fight and talk about power levels for a half hour. These battles are commonly over control of the Dragon Balls (seven are scattered around the planet that, if collected, grant the gatherer any wish he/she desires) and sometimes span several episodes. We can assure you, *LoG* is shorter than the 185 half-hour shows.



These hands point to invisible passageways—a small, yet important detail you could miss the first time you explore this Namekian Temple.



WHEN SAIYANS ATTACK

Goku begins his journey with the small but effect **Ki Blast (1)**. He then learns the time-stoppin' **Solar Flare (2)** from an old forest dweller. That'll tide you over until you meet up with King Kai and learn the powerful **Kamehameha Wave (3)**. And there's our favorite, the "hit King Kai over the head with a mallet" move **(4)**. Wait...you're not supposed to do that.

In *Legacy of Goku*, you gain experience points by defeating enemies, just as you would in any other RPG. But you can also gain points by talking to other characters and completing tasks, like rescuing a lost girl from the woods, planting new trees on the half-destroyed Namek, saving an old man, or stopping a band of bank robbers (below).



Legacy of Goku gets a lot of things right—the graphics are some of the best I've seen on GBA, the sound is good, and it follows the convoluted *DBZ* storyline pretty damn accurately (albeit abridged). For those reasons alone, **most hardcore *DBZ* fans will be able to overlook its problems. But I can't.** The enemies are unfairly difficult, and close combat isn't an option. Just hitting a creature who is all over you (which is all of them) is next to impossible to do with any accuracy, much less delivering the multiple hits it takes to put 'em down. You're left using long-range projectile attacks that are safer but still difficult to land because your opponents move so erratically, as if they're going to act out a tribal dance before killing you. Just as you're feeling this onslaught, part of that beautiful background you thought you were walking around inevitably blocks your movement, stopping you cold and giving your attacker a free shot. Wonderful. The gameplay (when you're not being chased by hordes of creatures) is pretty good, but simplistic. Bring an item here, find this person, plant these trees—nothing new, though if you've never played an action-RPG before, you may have some difficulty, especially in the Temple area of Namek. (The game has an unbelievably *nasty* habit of not fully explaining minor details, leaving a lot to trial-and-error.) This might be the best game ever spawned by *DBZ*, but it still falls just shy of "good." **Chris**

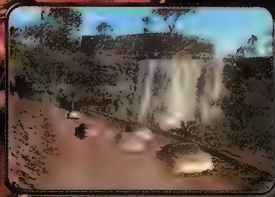
As someone who's never been a big fan of *Dragon Ball*, I came into *The Legacy of Goku* mainly just hoping for a solid action-RPG, regardless of the *DBZ* name. Now that I'm done, about the best thing I can say is that I don't necessarily regret the experience. *Goku* isn't bad—it's just that with a few adjustments, it **could've been a lot better.** The controls are too stiff (you can't even move diagonally), and battling enemies is both frustrating and boring thanks to touchy hit detection and extremely repetitive fights. It's too bad, 'cause the underlying game is pretty decent if a bit too short for an RPG. A good rental for casual RPGers. **John R.**

I have a dark secret: I'm a *Dragon Ball* fan. Hey, it's not my fault. I've been reading the books since the series started, and I happen to enjoy the exploits of Goku and co. If nothing else, *DBZ* does a good job of condensing the "Z" storyline into an eight-hour game that functions, on the basest level, as a guided tour through the world of *Dragon Ball*. But that's the only reason I dig this mediocre action-RPG. Holding the game back are some clumsy controls and a wimpy combat system. The rest of the "action" is made up of a never-ending series of fetch quests that are useful for little more than killing time. This one's for younger kids and hardcore fans only. **Milkman**



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Glorious Victoria Falls.
Herds of Peaceful Giraffes.

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for Rating Information



PlayStation 2

Rage

www.rage.com



www.midwaygames.com



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Digital Eclipse
Players: 1
Lamest Villain: The Culture: An old dude in a bird costume isn't scary—it's sad
Best Feature: Fluid animation brings the web-slinger to life
Worst Feature: Spidey's sticky touch makes navigating levels difficult
Web Site: www.universeofheroes.com

Attention, true believers! Rather than going for a quick buck by simply churning out a crappy movie tie-in, Activision has crafted a solid, impressive Spidey adventure. The first thing that will grab you is the slick graphical presentation. This GBA marvel instantly impresses with incredibly smooth character animation and cool transparency effects augmenting the backgrounds. The developers even squeezed some high-quality full-motion video clips onto the tiny cart. Gameplay fares nearly as well as the visuals. As the friendly, neighborhood Spider-Man, you swing between buildings, pummel wrongdoers and snap thrilling shots for *The Daily Bugle*. Moves are plentiful and fighting is fun, but maneuvering the wacky walkway can be frustrating. He sticks like glue to ceilings, walls and floors, and his intrinsic stickiness can get in the way of simple things like walking. Even so, this gloopy collision detection doesn't detract too much from the overall experience. Constantly changing level objectives keep the game fresh, and the plentiful boss fights against well-known villains will thrill fans of the comics. Perhaps the biggest problem facing the game is the misjudged bonus stage, a confusing 3-D web-swinging scene through New York. The poor little GBA wasn't built for this kind of thing, and the results aren't pretty. Stick to the proper game, and you'll have a gleeeful time with Spidey.

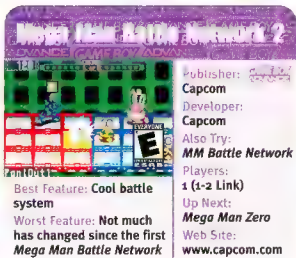
Shane

If you think *Spider-Man* on GBA is just gonna give some back rush-jog to cash in on the movie, I don't blame you. That sort of thing happens way too often on this system. But not this time. *Spidey* is a solid, if not spectacular, side-scroller. And the level design is great. You'll need to master every one of our hero's abilities in order to make it through each stage. Unfortunately, *Spidey's* radioactive powers aren't enough to ward off poor collision detection. Get anywhere near a vertical surface and watch webbing instantly attach himself to it, generally resulting in some damage. It's very disorienting and keeps this game from greatness.

Greg

Spider-Man duplicates the go-anywhere, stick-to-anything gameplay of the big-console versions. You can crawl on any surface, web-sling in every direction, wield super-duper strength, do whatever a spider can. Trouble is, some of the **thrill gets lost on the lil' screen**. Spidey doesn't stand out well against some backgrounds (get ready to squint them eyes). A few boss battles get frustrating 'cause it's hard to make out enemy animations. Too many levels have you hunting items within a time limit; more gameplay variety would be nice. But the further you play, the better things get. Later levels pack slick traps that make accurate webshots a must.

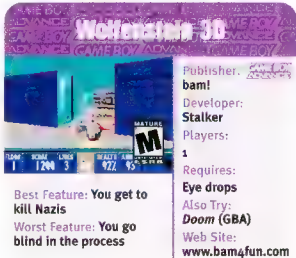
Crispin



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Also Try: MM Battle Network
Players: 1 (1-2 Link)
Up Next: Mega Man Zero
Web Site: www.capcom.com

Last year's *Mega Man Battle Network* offered an interesting twist on the standard *Mega Man* theme, mixing RPG-inspired gameplay with an innovative, action-based battle system. It comes as no surprise that a follow-up is already upon us (this is Capcom, after all), but this time around, it feels less like a sequel and more like a remix of the original game. *Battle Network 2's* graphics and sounds are only slightly improved over those of its predecessor, and the general game structure is mostly the same as well: Wander around, talk to people, get on the Net and bust viruses (i.e., explore dungeons and fight enemies), etc. Still, the core gameplay has been fine-tuned and improved upon quite a bit with many subtle but welcome enhancements. New "wild card" chips allow for a greater variety of combinations during battle, and the fact that you no longer refill HP automatically after each fight makes combat strategy that much more important. Revolutionary it ain't, but if you liked the first *Battle Network*, chances are good you'll dig the sequel as well.

John R.



Publisher: ban!
Developer: Stalker
Players: 1
Requires: Eye drops
Also Try: Doom (GBA)
Web Site: www.banfam.com

Just like the recently released *Doom*, *Wolfenstein 3D* is a near-perfect port of a groundbreaking first-person shooter from the glory days of shareware PC gaming. While not as technically impressive as Activision's *Doom* port, *Wolf 3D* is arguably just as much fun to play with its central theme of escaping an underground prison and kicking Hitler's ass during World War II. Despite all the joys that come with gunning down Nazis, all is not perfect in the land of GBA *Wolfenstein*. Like it or not, this is an OLD game, and the play mechanics are archaic by today's standards. I wish it had a multiplayer mode to link up in, and I also wish it had a simple map to keep me from getting lost all the time. What's more, you can only save at the end of each level (lame, considering you could save anywhere in the PC version). You'll spend huge periods of time squinting 'til you make it through a stage, which is murder on the eyes. If you can stomach its flaws and antiquity though, *Wolf 3D* is a fun time and worth at least a rental if you're a fan of the genre.

John R.



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: M4 Limited
Featured In: EGM #51
Players: 1
Also Try: Metal Gear Solid (GBC)
Best Feature: Interesting battle system
Worst Feature: Graphics are dark and outdated
Web Site: www.capcom.com

When I saw the first screens of this game last fall, I thought for sure it was going to be a total bomb. I mean, the idea of a 2D *Resident Evil* game created by an outside developer (Europe-based M4) on an outdated handheld system doesn't exactly inspire confidence. But alas, like all other *RE* games, I decided to give this one a chance (after all, it couldn't possibly be worse than *RE: Survivor*, right?). To be fair, *Gaiden* turned out to be better than I thought it would—I at least became enchanted enough to play all the way through to the end. But still, strip away the *Resident Evil* name and characters and what you're left with is an agonizingly generic, 8-bit Nintendo-era fetch-quest adventure game with very little variety or originality. All you do is run from point A to point B, avoiding zombies (no crows, no dogs, no licker-type things...just zombies), looking for keys and key items to open doors and further the story. The fear element is completely lost (would you be afraid of a pixelly little zombie that moves at 2 mph?), and the graphics and sounds are average at best, even by GBC standards. The one thing that does stand out is the battle system. Battling in first-person with up to three characters at once is kinda fun, and the targeting system works well. But alas, even this gets extremely repetitive due to the lack of variety among enemies. Unless you're a hardcore *RE* fan who just has to play 'em all, forget this one.

John R.

Resident Evil on a boat is as much of a conceptual nightmare as the searing *Speed 2*. Your eyes actually roll involuntarily when you hear about either one. While the game itself isn't terrible, **divine intervention could not have made this RE good on such a weak platform**. It just feels like one dude at M4 threw it together after losing a bet. Three-color blobs of pixels just aren't scary, and the combat model feels more like one of those arcade redemption games that spits out prize tickets than an action-shooter. Hardcore *RE* fans will want to play *Gaiden* for grins, but those looking to enjoy their GBCs will be nothing but pissed for buying this.

Jonathan

If the horrible PS1 *RE: Survivor* game was a slap in the face to fans of the series, *Gaiden* is a swift kick to the nuts. It is *Jugly* (yes, with an "J"), even by GBC standards—bland, lifeless backgrounds with animation and cinematics to match. Constant key-felching is made even more annoying by unlabeled locked doors. (Great, I got a kitchen key...so where the hell is the kitchen?) I did enjoy the twitchy combat, where you time button presses to a moving cursor for increased damage, but since you can't find nearly enough ammo to kill everything (required since random zombies often carry essential items), the game stifles even this limited appeal.

Mark



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Tricks of the Trade

By Peter Felonk

Seems like just yesterday that Pete joined the team, but now he's off to explore the wide, crazy world of online publishing. Wish him luck and keep on the lookout for who'll be joining EGM as its new-and-improved tricks connoisseur.



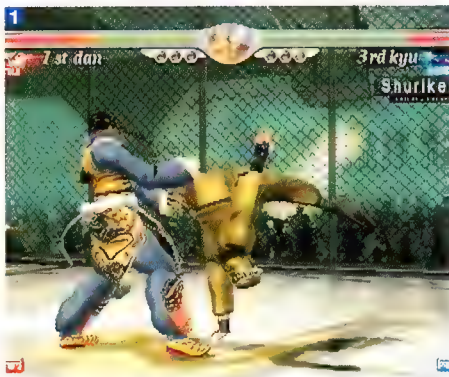
TRICK OF THE MONTH

Star Wars: Jedi Starfighter

USE THE CODES
Input PNYRCAD in the codes section of the bonus menu. It unlocks all the missions, ships and other goodies stored on the disc.

For added enjoyment, try inputting these codes as well:

- For no cockpit view: **NOHUD**
- To become invincible: **QUENTIN**
- For more camera views: **DIRECTOR**.

PS2 PLAYSTATION 2

Virtua Fighter 4 DRUNKEN NINJA MASTER

The following tricks can only be done with a created character. To create a character, choose Data Files from the main menu and pick New Player. From the New Player menu, create an A.I. file and then save.

Vf1 Models

In order to get character models styled after the first *Virtua Fighter* game, have a created fighter reach at least the first Dan ranking. Next, select that fighter, then hold Punch and Kick until the match begins.

Classic Victory Poses

Have a created fighter reach the second Dan ranking. Hold Punch, Kick and Guard during the replay after winning to see the classic pose from the first *Virtua Fighter*.

Classic Victory Poses, Part 2

Have a created fighter reach the third Dan ranking. Hold Punch + Kick during the replay after winning to see another classic victory pose.

Bonus Stages for VS. Mode

Unlock the following bonus stages by reaching the corresponding rank level with a created character.

- Training Stage 1**
First Dan ranking
 - Training Stage 2**
Fifth Dan ranking
 - Training Stage 3**
Monarch ranking
- Play as Dural in VS. Mode**
Defeat Dural in Kumite mode

with a created fighter and then play as him.

ESPN NBA 2NIGHT 2002

SLAMMIN' CODES

At the main menu press the Start button to access the pop-up menu, then select Options. Select Cheat and enter the following passwords. All codes are case-sensitive.

Players Have Huge Heads

BIGHEAD

Players Have Huge Hands

BIGHAND

Players Have Huge Feet

BIGFOOT

Flat Players

PANCAKE

Tiny Players

MINIMINI

No Overhead Lighting

DARKNESS

Easy Dunks

DUNKERS

Empty Bleachers

NO SPECTATOR:

2 Players' Bodies Are Invisible

INVISIBLE

Basketball Caps

BALLHEAD

Weird Effects on the Ball

BEFOREIMAGE

Increase Player Performance

ABILITYBONUS

Increase Player Shooting

EXCELLENT

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2002

UNLOCK THE PROS

Beat the following golfers in

Tiger Challenge to unlock each of the them.

- Justin Leonard
- Solita Lopez
- Colin Montgometry

3 Kellie Newman Jesper Parnevik Vijay Singh

Moa "Big Mo" Ta'a Vatu
Melvin "Yoshi" Tanigawa
Erika "Ice" von Severin
Super Tiger Woods
Cedric "Ace" Andrews

Stuart Appleby

Notah Begay III

Brad Foxon

Jim Furyk

Lee Janzen

TROPHIES AND CASH

Long-Distance Drive and \$1,000

350+ yard drive

Long Putt Plus \$1,000

Sink a 55+ foot putt

Fairway Challenge and \$2,500

Hit all fairways in a round

GIR Challenge and \$2,500

Hit all greens in regulation

Pin Seeker and \$5,000

Hit the pin

Aces Wild and \$25,000

A hole-in-one

One Time and \$2,500

Reach a par-5 green-in-one

Long Round and \$10,000

Shoot under 60 in a round

Birdie Streak and \$10,000

Six birdies in a row

Birdie Buster and \$25,000

12+ birdies in a row

Back-to-Back and \$50,000

Two eagles in a row

Top of the Tournaments and \$150,000

First place in all tournaments

Eagle Extravaganza and \$50,000

Four eagles in a round





Scenario Challenge and \$150,000
Complete all scenarios
Tiger Challenge Completion and \$250,000
Complete The Tiger Challenge
Eagle Hunt and \$1,000,000
Eagle every par 5 in the game

Driven

LET'S GO FOR A RIDE

At the main menu enter the following combinations. The sound of an engine will confirm proper entry.

- 4 Open All Racers Story Mode**
Down, Left, Up, Right, Right, Up, Down, Left
All Cars Opened
Up, Down, Right, Right, Left, Up, Down, Up
5 All Tracks Opened
Up, Up, Left, Down, Left, Right, Right, Up

Pirates: The Legend of Black Kat

TREASURE THESE TRICKS

During gameplay, hold R1 + R2 and press the following button combinations. Note that L3 and R3 refer to pushing down on the analog sticks.



More Gold
Triangle, R3, L1, Square, X, R3, Select, L3, Circle, L2
Wind Dancer Upgrade
Triangle, R3, L3, X, Square, R3, Select, L1, Circle. Note: When you go to another map, the Galleon will be available.

Crazy Voices
R3, Circle, Select, X, R3, Triangle, L1, Square, L2, L3
Get SSX Music
L1, X, Triangle, L2, Square, Circle, L3, Select, R3, L3
Pick Sword
R3, Select, L2, L3, Square, X, L1, Circle, L3, Triangle
Show All Treasure Chests
R3, X, Triangle, L3, Circle, L1, SELECT, L3, Square, L2
Wind Dance Invincible
SELECT, Triangle, L1, X, R3, L2, Square, R3, Circle, L3
Get All Treasure Chest Keys
Circle, Select, X, Square, R3, L1, L3, L2, Triangle, L3
Unlimited Items on Pick Up
Triangle, L1, Select, L2, R3, L3, Select, X, R3, Circle.
Katarina Invincible
X, Circle, L3, Triangle, R3, Select, R3, L1, L2, Square
Unlimited Wind Boost
While you're playing the game, hold R1 + R2 and press Select, L1, R3, Square, L3, Circle, L2, Triangle,



NBA Street

GAME BREAKERS

Enter these codes at the VS. screen.

Less Gamebreakers

Shoe, Turntable, Turntable, Basketball

More Gamebreakers

Shoe, Backboard, Backboard, Basketball

No Gamebreakers

Shoe, Megaphone, Megaphone, Basketball

No Juice

Turntable, Backboard, Backboard, Basketball

Unlimited Turbo

Turntable, Shoe, Shoe, Basketball

1 Big Heads

Shoe, Shoe, Shoe, Backboard

Less Blocks

Basketball, Turntable, Shoe, Basketball

Easy Distance Shots

Basketball, Backboard, Backboard, Basketball

Harder Distance Shots

Basketball, Turntable, Turntable, Basketball

Mega Dunking

Basketball, Megaphone, Megaphone, Basketball

Ultimate Power

Turntable, Shoe, Backboard, Basketball

Mad Hands

Shoe, Backboard, Turntable, Basketball

Super Swats

Backboard, Turntable, Shoe, Basketball

Sticky Fingers

Backboard, Shoe, Turntable, Basketball

Captain Quicks

Shoe, Turntable, Backboard, Basketball

2 Tiny Players

Shoe, Shoe, Shoe, Turntable

ABA Socks

Shoe, Shoe, Shoe, Shoe

TOP 5 TRICKS

The top 5 games of the last month for your tricked-out pleasure:

1. UFC Tapout

Bruce Buffer
Win UFC mode with all characters.

John McCarthy
Win UFC mode with Bruce Buffer.

Mario Yamasaki
Win UFC mode with John McCarthy.

The Cat
Win four consecutive matches in Arcade mode.

Femme Fatale
Win eight consecutive matches in Arcade mode.

Ice-T
Win eight consecutive matches in Arcade mode.

Mask
Win 32 consecutive matches in Arcade mode.

2. State of Emergency

True chaos theory
At anytime during the game, quickly input one or more of these codes. A text message will appear to confirm proper entry.

Invincibility

L1, L2, R1, R2, X

Unlimited Time

L1, L2, R1, R2, Circle

Unlimited Ammunition

L1, L2, R1, R2, Triangle

Punches Decapitate

L1, L2, R1, R2, Square

Little Character

R1, R2, L1, L2, X

Big Player

R1, R2, L1, L2, Triangle

Normal Player

Press R1, R2, L1, L2, Circle

Additional Looting

Press R1, L1, R2, L2, Triangle

3. The Simpsons Road Rage

Free ride for a doh!-nut
While in the Options menu, hold the L and R shoulder buttons. Then, press the following button combinations to unlock a bunch of Simpsons surprises that you may not have known about.

Red Soapbox Car
B, B, Y, X



TRICKS

TOP 5 TRICKS

(CONTINUED)

Smithers in Mr. Burns's

car
B, B, Y, Y
Nuclear Bus
B, B, Y, A
Extra Money
Y, Y, Y, Y
Stop Time

X, B, Y, A (You can press R-Shoulder to start, stop and reset the timer.)

Nighttime Mode

A, A, A, A
Flat Characters
X, X, X, X.

4. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Sk8'n with style
Choose the Cheats selection from the Options menu and enter the following case-sensitive passwords. If entered correctly, you will hear the sound of money being collected.

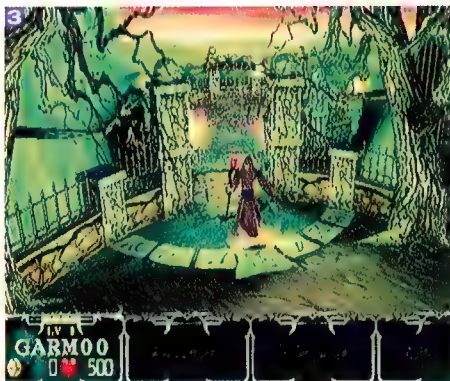
Cheat Menu When

Paused
MARKEDCARDS
Super Stats
MAXMEOUT
Unlock All Characters
FREAKSHOW

5. NBA Inside Drive

Let's go all the way
At the Options menu, pick Codes and enter one of the following listed below. Codes that change the basketball cannot be used together. The last one entered will be the code that takes effect.

USA Basketball
OLDSCHOOL
WNBA Basketball
GOTGAME
Chicago Sky Court
WINDYCITY
Little Players
SMALLSHOES



Tiny Heads

Shoe, Shoe, Shoe, Megaphone

Less Steals

Basketball, Shoe, Backboard, Basketball

No Alley-Oops

Basketball, Backboard, Turntable, Basketball

Summertime Joe "The Show"

Turntable, Turntable, Megaphone, Turntable

Springtime Joe "The Show"

Turntable, Turntable, Turntable, Basketball

Athletic Joe "The Show"

Turntable, Turntable, Turntable, Shoe

No Cheats

Basketball, Shoe, Basketball, Shoe

Casual Uniforms

Basketball, Shoe, Megaphone, Megaphone

Authentic Uniforms

Basketball, Shoe, Turntable, Turntable

Player Names

Turntable, Turntable, Basketball, Turntable

No Auto Replays

Turntable, Turntable, Turntable, Turntable

No HUD Display

Turntable, Turntable, Shoe, Turntable

No Player Indicators

Turntable, Turntable, Backboard, Turntable

No Shot Indicator

Turntable, Turntable, Turntable, Backboard

Explosive Rims

Turntable, Turntable, Turntable, Megaphone

ABA Ball

Basketball, Basketball, Turntable, Shoe

No Shot Clock

Shoe, Shoe, Shoe, Basketball, WNBA Ball

Basketball, Basketball, Shoe, Backboard

NuFX Ball

Basketball, Basketball, Backboard, Megaphone

EA BIG Ball

Basketball, Basketball, Megaphone, Turntable

Beach Ball

Basketball, Basketball, Turntable, Turntable

Medicine Ball

Basketball, Basketball, Shoe, Shoe.

Volleyball

Basketball, Basketball, Backboard, Backboard

Soccer Ball

Basketball, Basketball, Megaphone, Megaphone

Gauntlet: Dark Legacy

PETE NEEDS FOOD BADLY

Enter any of the following passwords as your player name.

3 Garm

GARM99

Invincibility

INVULN

Permanent Super Shot

SSHOTS

Permanent Triple Shot

MENAGE

Permanent Reflect Shot

REFLEX

Permanent Pojo

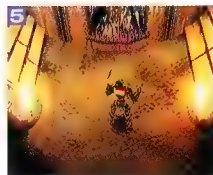
EGG911

Permanent Anti-Death

1ANGEL

Permanent Invisibility

000000



Permanent X-ray Vision

PEEKIN

Infinite Turbo

PURPLE

Growth and Shrink Enemy

DELTA1

Nine potions and Keys on Each Level

ALLFUL

Extra Speed

XSPEED

10,000 Gold Per Level

10000K

4 Smiley Face

STX222

Stig

STG333

Waitress

KAO292

Mike

DIB626

Quarterback

RIZ721

Karate Guy

SJB964

Black Outfit and Cape

DARTHC

Town General

TWN300

Japanese Schoolgirl

AY4555

5 Ninja

TAK118

Bloody Roar: Primal Fury

LEADER OF THE PACK

Clear Arcade mode a total of 16 times to unlock the following cheat options: Kids mode, Big Heads, Big Arms, No Walls, Final Round, Low Speed, High Speed, No Blocking, Max Difficulty, Knock Down Battle, Human Only, Beast Only, Hyper Only.



FINAL WORD

Online Gaming, Take Two: Sony's Turn

Crispin: Well, it took 'em long enough, but Sony is finally getting their online show on the road this August with the release of the PS2 network adapter. But I'm wondering if they're still launching this thing too early. I'm not sure if we're gonna see enough games out there to take advantage of it right away. *SOCOM* is awesome, but it's for broadband connections only. It'll be fun to finally play *Tony Hawk 3* online without fussing with a USB modem. But I just don't see much else besides *Tribes* and *Twisted Metal Online* that'll lure people to get wired this year. I don't see PS2 online exploding until the massively multiplayer stuff like *Final Fantasy XI* and *EverQuest* hit in 2003. And even that may not be enough.

"I'm wondering if they're still launching this thing too early."

Kraig: I don't think we have to wait until *FFXI* and *EverQuest* for multiplayer to explode. Just wait until *Madden* and the other deluge of sports games come out. That'll give all of the guys who don't have anyone to play football against since moving out of college a chance to play against someone whenever they want. That's huge.

Greg: Yeah, the sports fans will lead the charge in the online world. I mean, they were the ones with whom Sega had the most success on the Dreamcast.

Milky: The smartest thing anyone ever did in regards to online gaming on consoles was Sega packing the same modem into every Dreamcast. Their big mistake was not having the network or the games to support it from Day 1. Sony had none of these at the PS2's launch. That said, I hope they get some killer, innovative software together that makes me WANT to spend all my time online. It's taken them long enough.

Che: I think *SOCOM* is a great launch title for Sony. For mainstream gamers, console first-person shooters are still riding *Halo*'s huge wave of success. *Counter-Strike* and *Day of Defeat*'s popularity on the PC proves that there's a restless mass of online gamers who crave live competition. Gamers are ready for an addictive action game that's also non-committal. *SOCOM* drops you into the hot zone for a 30-minute firefight, and when things get too intense, you pull out and go read a book or something. This game has a real chance of blowing up into something huge. But Sony should never forget the cardinal rule for any online game: Make the interface as easy and seamless as possible. It has to be as easy as hitting play on

your DVD player. If I've learned one thing, it's that you can't overestimate the intelligence of console gamers.

Crispin: When I played *SOCOM*, it was really easy to just get online, join a game, and go to town. But I have another concern: With *Tribes* looking like it might be broadband-only like *SOCOM*, gamers stuck with dial-up connections are running out of stuff to play. At least *Twisted Metal Online* is supposed to support dial-up.

Cyril: Argh, am I the only one who refuses to pay \$50 a month for broadband? I understand that a good online gaming experience requires it, but when is this technology going hit the magic 20-bucks-a-month number? I'm not usually a late adopter, but the advantages aren't worth more than double my current dial-up costs. Requiring broadband and making people buy an adapter can almost guarantee a slow start to Sony's online rollout.

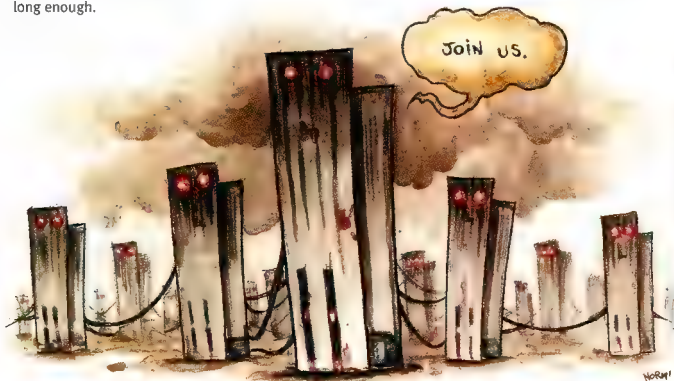


Illustration by Jeremy "Norm" Scott

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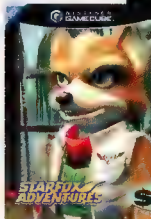
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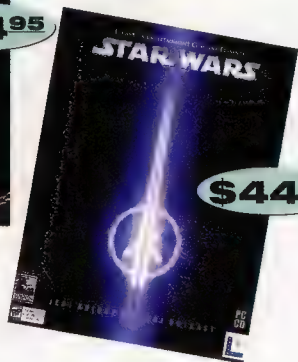
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NEXT MONTH

July 2002 (Issue #156)

On sale June 4

STUNTMAN

3,000 Pounds of Metal at Your Disposal

Lee Majors ain't got nothing on this game. If you've ever had the urge to perform intense driving stunts like the kind you saw in *The French Connection*, *Bullitt* and others, this game is right up your alley. We'll tell you everything you need to know, and why you should keep an eye on this upcoming title from Reflections—the same guys who created *Driver I and II*. But wait—there's more: Do you like after-market game accessories? *EGM's* backstage Betty demonstrates the latest bizarre peripherals in our *Let's Get Physical* feature. And finally, more game previews from the country's largest annual nerd, uh, video game convention—E3.



Reviewed Next Month:

- **Freekstyle** (PS2)
- **Medal of Honor: Frontline** (PS2)
- **Spider-Man** (PS2, Xbox, GC)
- **Test Drive** (PS2, Xbox)
- **Virtua Striker** (GC)
- **Burnout** (GC, Xbox)
- **Dropship** (PS2)

Previewed Next Month:

- **Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers** (PS2)
- **NASCAR Thunder 2003** (PS2, Xbox, GC)
- **Midtown Madness 3** (Xbox)
- **NCAA Football 2003** (PS2)

*All editorial content is subject to change.

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

June 2002
On sale May 14

Demo Disc

Playables

- **Herdy Herdy**
- **Medal of Honor: Frontline**
- **Fatal Frame**
- **Pirates: Legend of Black Kat**
- **Mad Maestro!**

Views

- **Scooby Doo! Night of 100 Frights**
- **Stuntman**
- **Delta Force**
- **Urban Warfare**

June 2002
On sale May 21

Next month *OPM* will not only feature the latest game in the *Star Wars* series, but they'll reveal all about the most terrifically badass bounty hunter ever born. Also featured: *Spider-Man* and *Medal of Honor*.



June 2002
On sale May 21

- **Rayman Arena**
- **Resident Evil**
- **Savage Skies**
- **Strategy updates**
- **Codes to go**



GAMENOW



SEGA IS BACK!

GameNOW is blowing the doors off of Sega next month. It doesn't matter what console you own or which genre you might prefer—they've got something for you. Sega is publishing killer titles in every genre next year, and *GameNOW* has exclusive access to two of them: *NFL 2K3* and *Crazy Taxi 3*. See the first shots, hear from the teams making the games, look for gameplay and much more!

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD GALAXIES

June 2002
On sale May 7

June 2002
On sale May 7



Reviews

- **Freedom Force**
- **Jedi Knight 2**
- **Ghost Recon: Desert Siege**
- **Star Trek: Bridge Commander**
- **Warlords: Battle Cry 2**

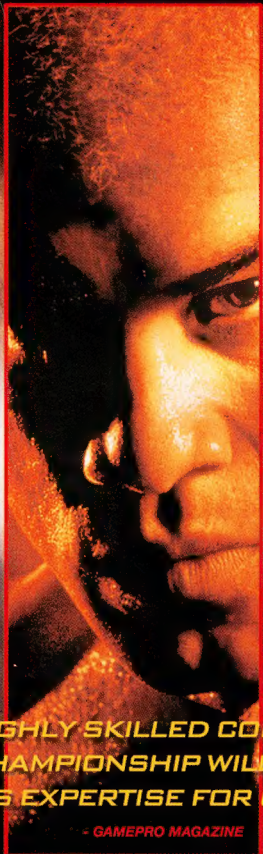
Previews

- **Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic**
- **C&G Generals**
- **City of Heroes**

Star Wars Galaxies—you know you want it. This could be the biggest massively multiplayer game ever, and *CGW* has the scoop, with never-before seen screens and tons of hands-on info. Included: a *Star Wars* poster and the chance to play the *Galaxies* beta test, free!



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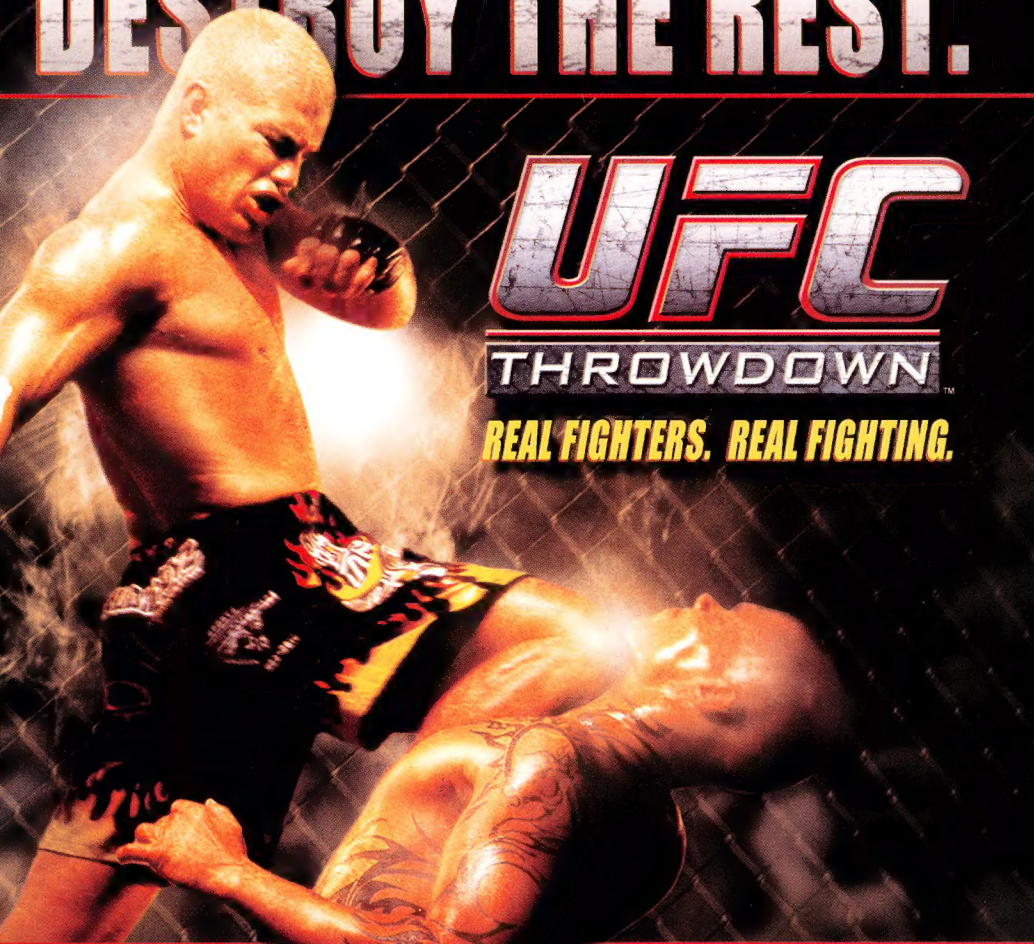


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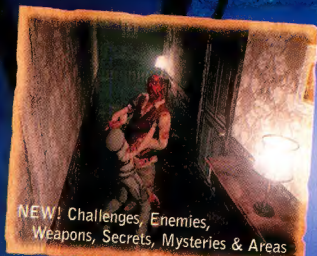
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