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See pg. 70

**METROID PRIME AND FUSION PREVIEWED INSIDE!**

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November 2002 \$4.99/\$6.50 Canada



**REVIEWED:**

- Sly Cooper (PS2)
- Star Fox Adventures (GC)
- Terminator (Xbox)
- Need For Speed (all)



**PREVIEWED:**

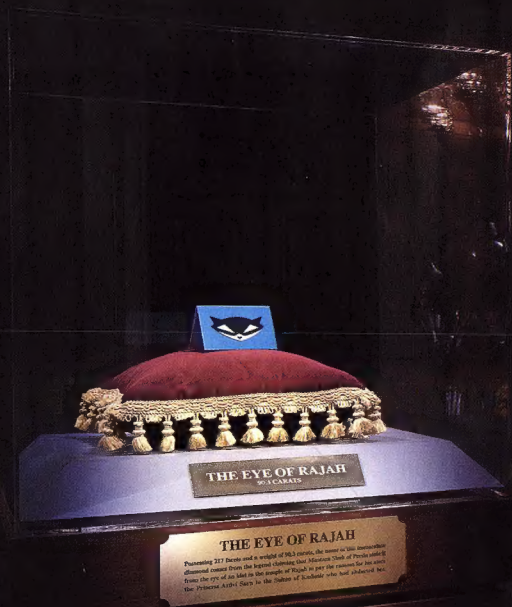
- 007: NightFire (all)
- WWE SmackDown! (PS2)
- Contra (PS2)
- Mario Party 4 (GC)

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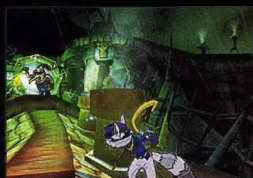
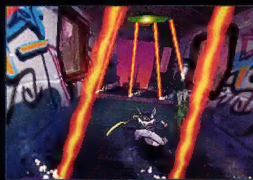
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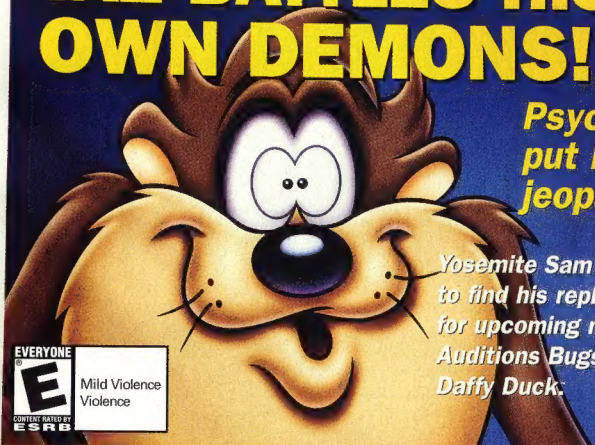
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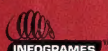
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Violence  
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**Bugs™ seeks anger management!**

**MOVIE SET IN SHAMBLES AFTER BUGS HAS MELTDOWN.**



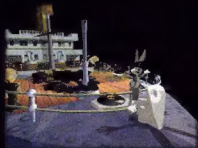
**Blunt trauma injuries reach all time high! Are you at risk?**

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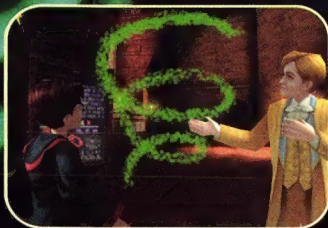
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Legendary director, *Yosemite Sam*, is casting the lead for his new feature film. Whoever lands the role is sure to become an instant Hollywood icon. But there can be only one. Who will it be? *Daffy Duck*? *Bugs Bunny*? *Taz*? *Sylvester*? Praised for "great graphics, a wacky sense of humor and some frantic multiplayer fun," by XBM, *Loons* is a no-holds-barred, no-rules, anything-goes, free-for-all struggle for stardom. Welcome to the dark side of Hollywood.



Wand from Ollivanders.



PlayStation 2



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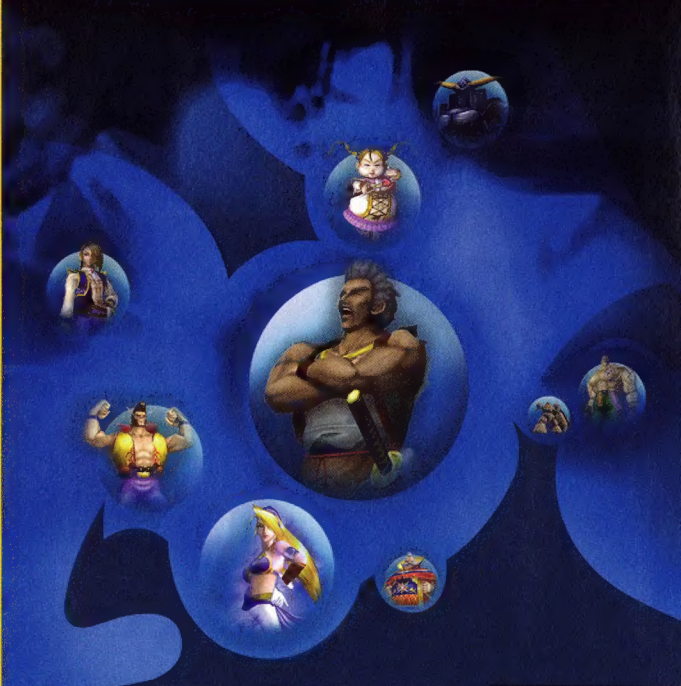
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mild violence



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NOW  
IN STORES

# Legiaia 2

Duel Saga  
レガリアデュエルサーガ





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## Halo 2

The next *Halo*? Yep, if anyone can hope to follow in Master Chief's groundbreaking footsteps, it's the o' Chief himself. Discover what the wizards at Bungie are preparing for next year's amazing sequel to the best Xbox game. Exclusive info and images await on **page 214**.



**Grand Theft Auto: Vice City**  
More vehicles, more guns, more fun...revivit the pastel-colored excess of the 1950s on **page 264**.



Can any game be worth \$200?  
Find out why **Steel Battalion**  
costs a mint on **page 172**.



Wax nostalgic as **EGM** chooses  
the **20 Greatest Moments in  
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This month, down a double dose of Samus with *Metroid Fusion* (GBA) and *Metroid Prime* (GC). Then, get all shaken and stirred by the lovely girls of **James Bond 007: NightFire** and the curly brawlers of **WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth**. Stick around, because **Devil May Cry 2**'s Dante fills your soul with light on the PS2.

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Judgment Day has arrived, as holiday heavy hitters like **Star Fox Adventures**, *Sly Cooper* and the *Thievius Raccoonus* and *Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2* compete to win gamers' hearts.

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Go on...use our **Turok: Evolution** cheats. You know you want to. Follow up that cheating with some relaxing *Animal Crossing* straits.

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## SYSTEM COLOR KEY



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PlayStation 2



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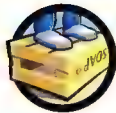
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EDITORIAL

## Size Matters

**H**old the jokes and set aside your insecurities for one moment. Now, feel and caress this magazine. Can you respect our girth? You're holding in your hands what is quite possibly the best *Electronic Gaming Monthly* ever. It's the biggest issue in years, with double the amount of editorial pages than normal. Did you lift with your feet?

You'll notice a huge chunk of the real estate is dedicated to our cover story, *Halo 2*. Hey, it's only the game every Xbox owner is looking forward to, and the only Xbox-exclusive title that PlayStation 2 and GameCube gamers are jealous of.

Not that the PS2 doesn't have something the

other systems want: *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*. It's next month's cover story, but we've got the goods now. Check out our "25 Reasons Why You'll Love Vice City" feature on p. 264.

But maybe it's the GameCube crowd that has the most to boast? I mean, c'mon...how can you beat a console that is home to Samus, the heroine of the fan-favorite *Metroid* series? We've already done a cover story on her (see issue #157), but now that she's preparing to be released into the wild, we're paying her another visit with a *Metroid Prime* preview. Check out her little sister, too, with the *Metroid Fusion* story in the Game Boy Advance section.

*Shoe*

By Dan "Shoe" Hsu



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### David Kushner

We sent David, a writer for *Spin* and *Entertainment Weekly*, undercover to experience the rough life of a game tester for our Press Start section.



### Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

This month, *EGM's* sister mag came to the rescue by sacrificing four editors—Joe Rybicki, Chris Baker, Todd Zuniga and of John D.—to the *EGM* God of Workload Toil and Torture.



### Peter Susic

This NY-based freelance writer has covered trends in home theater and video games for the past several years. He currently writes for *FHM* and *Newsweek*.



### Scott Steinberg

Scott's our very own Jules Asner, running around the world, interviewing every celebrity in sight and asking them dirty questions. Only Scott doesn't look so hot in a bikini.



### Darren Gladstone

Originally hailing from New York, Darren has contributed to the likes of *CNET*, *Wired*, *Playboy*, and some graffiti near his apartment. Now, it's *EGM's* turn.



### Miguel Lopez

This former *GameSpot* editor continues to strongarm *EGM* for work every month. It's a good thing we're hooking him up, otherwise he'd have to peddle medicine door-to-door.



### Christian Nutt

Christian's back with some hands-on previews for us. You can also see his work in *Wizard's Anime Invasion* and *Animejump.com*. He gets around!



### Dean Hager

Our former managing editor was a trooper and stuck around for another month to help wrap things up—and to make sure people didn't jack all of *EGM's* stuff back in Illinois.



### Jeanne Kim

Ah, hal! Despite her tearful good-byes in last month's issue, Jeanne "Token Girl Game" Kim has weaseled her way back in. Look for citations of her work in the Reviews section.



### Jonathan Dudlak

After leaving *EGM* to stay rooted in the Chicago soils, not much has changed: Jon's still got his dam fingers in Reviews, Press Start and...



### Dan Leahy

No longer at *GameNow*, Dan's concentrating on the "moving and shaking" required to get freelance gigs. And by that we mean spending 14 hours a day playing *Madden* online.



### David Hodgson (Prima Games)

Back for this month's Tricks section, Dave went back and "old-school'd" *Mario 64*, grabbing all 120 stars. During this time, we learned many new (and British) swear words.



## Eat My Shorts!

Look out this issue for quotes from *The Simpsons* or a famous movie. Find one, e-mail it (and where you found it and your non-P.O. Box mailing address) to us at [EGM@ziffdavis.com](mailto:EGM@ziffdavis.com) (subject: *Eat My Shorts—EGM #160*), 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 #159:

- "Will someone please think of the children?" (*The Simpsons*, p. 22)
- "That armor's too strong for blasters. Use your hammers and low cables!" (*Empire Strikes Back*, p. 138)
- "Wipe them out—all of them." (*The Phantom Menace*, p. 186)

Issue #158's winners of *Madden NFL 2003* (PS2):

- Alain Patenaude—Las Vegas, NV
- Steven Noonan—Whitman, MA
- Daniel Klingens—Austin, TX
- David Hlynski—Riverside, CA
- Christopher Bhatti—Brooklyn, NY



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what you can't see.



OVERWORKS™

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# Shinobi

[sega.com/shinobi](http://sega.com/shinobi)

臨兵



PlayStation 2



Blood and Gore  
Violence

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# REPRESENT

"Rayman Arena is impossible to put down, especially multi-player." -PLAY magazine

"Ubi Soft's limless hero will soon strong-arm the competition..." -Nintendo Power



Mild Violence



PlayStation 2



# OR GET SMOKED!

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



YOU ARE FLINT

YOU ARE TEX

YOU ARE BRUTUS

YOU ARE HAWK

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



Violence  
Blood



The year is 2348 and more than fifty star systems are populated with colonies. But when an alien invasion threatens to put every living organism on the endangered species list, the Confederation of worlds must dispatch its elite special forces unit, code-named Brute Force. That's you. As Brute Force, you command four separate intergalactic mercenaries: the trigger-happy assault trooper, cyborg sniper, stealthy assassin and feral alien are all played by you. As you guide these shooters through 20+ missions and 4 exotic worlds,



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XBOX

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# Letters to the Editors

## WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

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## LETTER OF THE MONTH

### Tekken It Too Far

Congratulations, Kevin Wada! You win an InterAct GameShark for PlayStation 2, Dreamcast, Game Boy Advance or Game Boy Color. Hopefully, you'll put your GameShark to good use. Try entering the "fun" code!



I am deeply disturbed by the *Tekken 4* reviews in the October issue of *EGM*.

When I read the individual reviews scoring *Tekken 4*, I was agitated by the disorderly research done by the reviewers. Now I realize that the reviewers probably had very little time to work with the game, and fitting their reviews into the limited space affected the in-depth quality of their reviews—but, regardless, the October reviews were inconsistent and crudely done.

I understand that these reviews are opinions and personal feelings, but to add facts that aren't even correct (only two new characters?) makes me question the validity of ANY of the points in these reviews.

The reviews are in no way completely wrong, but they leave a bad taste in my mouth. I'm not attacking the integrity of the magazine or the reviewers. I only wish to bring my point across. *Virtua Fighter 4* is a great game; *Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore* is a great game. But *T4* is also a great game.

Kevin Wada  
Wadaboiz2@aol.com

Thanks for your brutal honesty, Kevin. We got bags of mail from tearful *Tekken* fans crying foul, but we've had our hands on this game since the debut of its identical import version earlier this year. And please remember: **With a 7, 6.5 and 7.5, T4 still earned decent scores. (On EGM's scale, 5 is average.)**

That said, we know what we were getting into when we laid down the numerics. We calls 'em like we sees 'em, and as polished as *Tekken 4* is, there just isn't enough meat on the bones to keep us coming back. As to your "two character" comment, we only consider Steve and Craig the true newbies. Christie is basically a reshaped Eddy, and Combot is *T4*'s Mokujin. Big whoop! In stark comparison to *Virtua Fighter*'s stunning reinvention this year, *T4* is little more than a mild tweaking of a stale and aging franchise. Imagine if the leap between *T3* and *T4* were as substantial as that from *Soul Blade* to *Soul Calibur*. The mind boggles at what could have been.

### Got Damn?

I'll get straight to the point: Your *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs* review in the October issue was a direct affront to anyone (including myself) who truly trusts Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Since you used the term nine times during the course of your review, please let me remind you that "God" and "damn" when put together are highly offensive to a lot of people—believe it or not—including some gamers!

Aaron Marshall  
Erwin, TN

**Aaron, of course we care, and of course we meant absolutely no disrespect to anyone who has belonged to any kind of organized religion anywhere, at any time in the course of human history. We're sorry you took offense, but let's face**

**facts—if we never printed anything that we thought might piss off some nutjob somewhere (not that you're a nutjob), you'd be holding a bunch of empty pages right now. And then we'd get letters from people complaining that they just spent five bucks on a bunch of empty pages.**

As for the *SOCOM* review in particular, we had a tough call to make: Do we piss off a few extra-sensitive types with a mild expletive, or do we piss off a bunch of big, brawny army drill sergeants with an unrealistic portrayal of their manner of speech? Put yourself in our shoes, and hopefully you can understand why we chose to piss you off instead.

### Mascot Infidelity

Over the past few months, I have seen a few of my favorite series—like *Crash*

### SHORTS

I'm refusing to eat until I get word that *Biggs Corps 2* is being made for GameCube.

realwinemog@hotmail.com

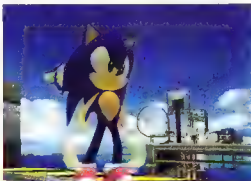
Well, it looks like someone's gonna be a little hungry come supper time! With all the talk of Rare-buyouts (first Activision, now Microsoft), no one has stopped to give the long-lost 1997 hit much consideration. The developer probably has bigger things to worry about.

*Bandicoot* and *Sonic*—ported to other systems. *Crash* [appeared on] all three of the next-gen consoles and *Sonic* [went] to the GC. After I finished *Crash Bandicoot* on the Xbox, I realized it was just plain boring to play. I noticed that bringing the same game series to three different consoles could do a lot of damage to the game itself—even kill the entire series.

There aren't that many series left out there that haven't been going down in popularity since coming to the next-gen systems. That's why I think we need more franchises, and developers need to keep series exclusive to one system. [Old faves] like *Mario* and new rising stars like *Halo* should stick to one system only.

Christopher Rivers  
quaken2002@yahoo.com

First of all, we're shocked that you had to finish *Crash* for Xbox before realizing that it was boring. Secondly, with regard to *Sonic*, he had to go to another platform, since the Dreamcast is no longer a viable



*Sonic* contemplates jumping to another system, then thinks better of it.

console. We don't necessarily agree that a franchise should stay platform-specific, but we are aware that flooding every system with a port of every game rarely allows titles to take advantage of any single console's strengths. For the time being, though, you needn't worry about *Mario* and the Master Chief switching sides.

### Squares Cubed

Ever since the announcement that Square would be making games for Nintendo, I've been hopeful that a *Final Fantasy* title would come to





## TIDBITS

**Lint from the pocket of the pants of the mind of the crew at EGM...**

Are you absolutely sure that *Mystic Heroes* is only a one-player game? All other sources say otherwise.

Alan Tse  
kaltoualan@hotmail.com

Whoops! That's our bad. That little info box in our *Mystic Heroes* review should have said "4+ players." Because of that little error, we left Jeanne back in Chicago to clean the toilets while we went to play in San Francisco.

With all the online-gaming hype, are there going to be any online fighting games? And has Capcom given up on fighting games (such as the *Street Fighter* series)?

gundamwin10@hotmail.com

Good question, and the answer is no, Capcom has not given up on making fighting games. While we can't really go into too much detail, it is safe to say that Capcom is hard at work on a new 3D fighting game, filled with many of your favorite Capcom characters. Expect all fighting games to be online in the near future. Yeah, we said it.

GameCube. Finally *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicle* is announced on your website, and I hear it can only be played with the GBA game? Come on! I want a classic *Final Fantasy* for GameCube. My suggestion is a U.S. release of *FFX International* for GameCube. Any plans for that?

Bluejackets7@hotmail.com

**Details on the GameCube and GBA FF games remain scarce (check page 42 to see what we know). For the record, though, we're betting you won't need the GBA game to enjoy *Crystal Chronicle* on your GC. The handheld title is likely a pint-sized version of its big brother, and they'll probably link up in some substantial way, but Square and Nintendo wouldn't make you buy them both just to play. Here's the bad news though—*FF:CC* doesn't look like a "classic *Final Fantasy*." It might be more of a multiplayer action-RPG—not the standard, turn-based role-playing you know and love. You'll have to make do with it, though, since there are no plans for *FFX* on the 'Cube.**

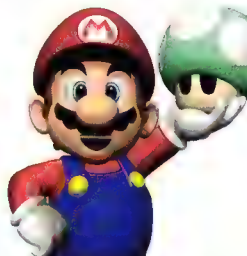
## Mr. Sandman

I have been playing *Super Mario Sunshine* for the last 15 hours. The time right now is 6 a.m., but I can't stop playing. I am 18 years old. I have no shame admitting that I'm devoting my life to the superior quality of *SMS*. But...I hate it. Why does Nintendo make me love them, when I really want to hate them? They give us nothing for

months and then unleash this monster on us. Why?! Do they want to give me a heart attack with the sudden shift from gaming mist to gaming bliss? I can only imagine what will happen to me when *Metroid* and *Zelda* hit. Oh well, here's to our love-hate relationship, Nintendo.

Simon Arestov  
Paris, TX

**Yep, you've figured out Nintendo's diabolical plan to toy with the fragile emotions of millions of gamers. If they really wanted to, they could just release tons of incredibly mediocre games all year long. Instead, they've cruelly decided to spend lots of time crafting thrilling blockbusters that everyone loves! What nerve! Maybe your life would be more stable if you investigated the gaming offerings by 3DO.**



**"Mu ha ha ha! If you think sleep is the only thing I will take from you, fear also for your HEAD! The world will be mine, I tell you. Mine, all mine!!!!"**

## Post Office

So you've just finished reading the magazine from cover to cover, but you want more EGM? May we suggest the EGM message boards, viewed daily by literally thousands of other gamers just like you? Hit [egm.gamers.com](http://egm.gamers.com) and strike up a conversation today!

**This month we asked our readers "Does Super Mario Sunshine live up to its predecessor, Super Mario 64?"**

"Hell yeah, Mario's the dopest, stupidest, most ninjalst plumber this side of the Mushroom Kingdom."

— MrGlubGlub

"I think it's a good sequel, but it would have been impossible for Nintendo to recapture that magical feeling of playing the first 3D Mario game."

— Johnnyuber

"You actually get to ride Yoshi in this one! But we have not seen Luigi! How come Luigi didn't want to go on vacation?"

— Ajmk5

## Question of the Moment

### Which fighting game is better: *Virtua Fighter 4* or *Tekken 4*? Why?

*Virtua Fighter* was first. It's better—always has been. *Tekken* started life as a "me-too" game and a mediocre one at that.

dmcdream@hotmail.com

I think *Tekken 4* is better. In my opinion, the controls for *Virtua Fighter 4* are a little hard. *Tekken 4* is a lot easier to control and a little more fun.

xsaiyax2002@yahoo.com

I like *VF4* more. One word: Kumite.

jc5891529@mail.liijay.com

*Virtual Fighter 4*? *Tekken 4*? Who cares?! Give me *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*!

hurt\_like\_me@yahoo.com

*Tekken 4*. Deeper, more satisfying gameplay. Plus—a fighting beard!

Arty Ward, e-mail address withheld

*Virtua Fighter 4* is best. *Tekken 4* is slow and sluggish. It's dung.

slosberg@stonerock.net

Neither. I'll wait for *Dead or Alive 4*. Why? Large, jiggly breasts.

sacrosanct@mail.com

I've always felt that *Virtua Fighter* was the better series overall, except when *VF* kinda dropped the ball with part 3. But *VF* came back tenfold, while *Tekken* hasn't changed a lick in five years.

StealthMantis4@aol.com

In a close fight, I'd say that *VF4* gets the K.O. over *Tekken* because of the Kumite mode and the countless ways to customize your fighter.

supernamek\_17@hotmail.com

*Virtua Fighter 4*? Why? Simpler user interface, faster fights, more realistic fighting styles, and a drunken geezer.

Sinamanstic@aol.com

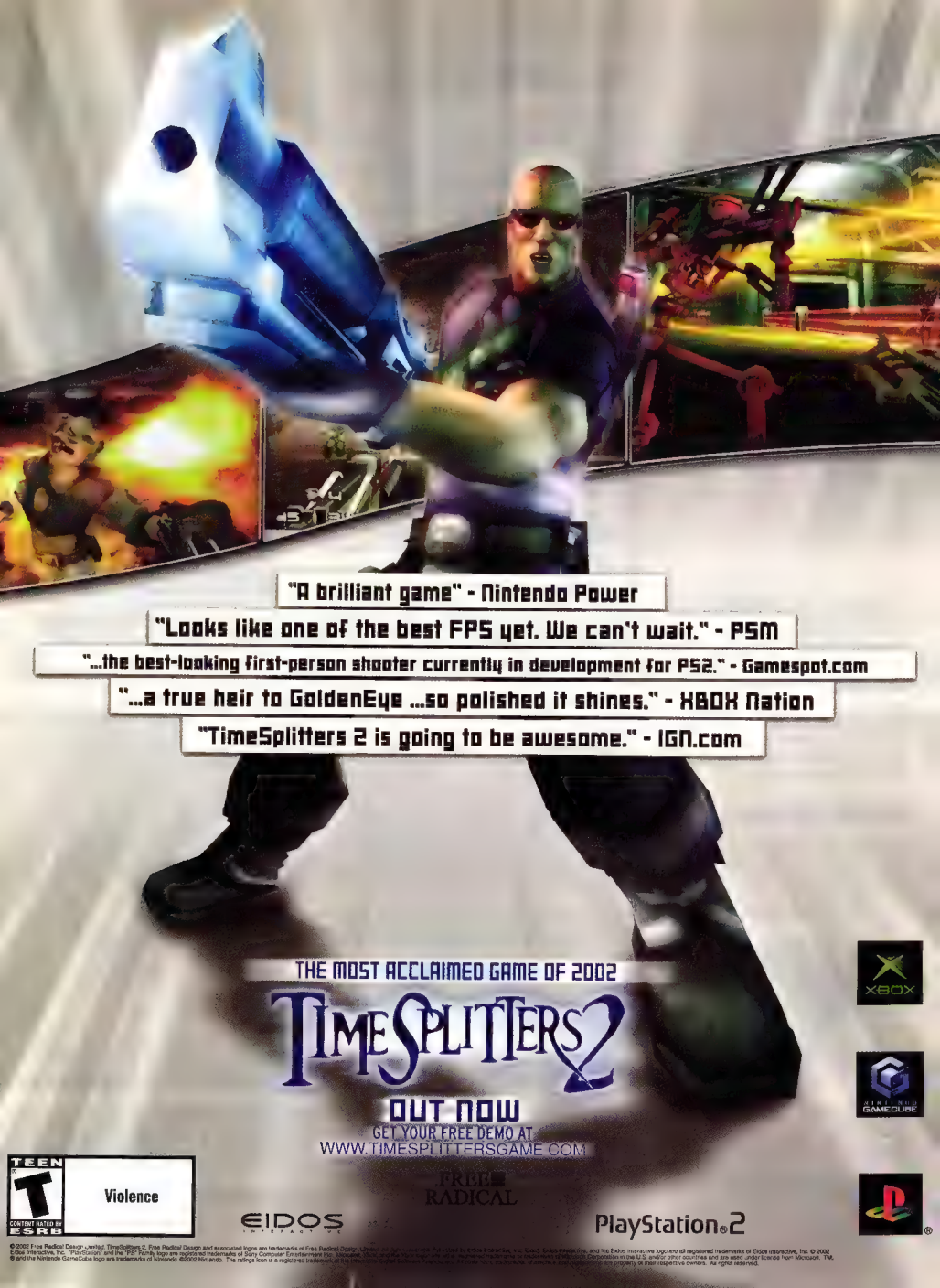
### Next Month's Question of the Moment:

**We've told you our favorite gaming moments. Now tell us yours.**

Send your brief, coherent responses to: [EGM@ziffdavis.com](mailto:EGM@ziffdavis.com) with the subject heading:

**My favorite gaming moment!**





"A brilliant game" - Nintendo Power

"Looks like one of the best FPS yet. We can't wait." - PSM

"...the best-looking first-person shooter currently in development for PS2." - Gamespot.com

"...a true heir to GoldenEye ...so polished it shines." - XBOX Nation

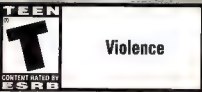
"TimeSplitters 2 is going to be awesome." - IGN.com

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LETTERS

## You can write EGM at:

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San Francisco, CA 94105  
E-mail: EGM@ziffdavis.com

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

Also note: We just can't write back to everyone, but make your comments constructive—or at least humorous—and you might get sumpin' back!

## Don't Hate the Animals Because They're Ugly

I was reading my *EGM*, and suddenly I hit the review section. I headed over to the *Animal Crossing* review since I had mocked the game for its inferior graphics. Shame on me for being jaded by next-gen visuals. I overlooked a game simply because of its looks. I have to say, though, that after reading such a well-thought-out review of *AC*, I will definitely be buying it. I'm just saying, keep up the eloquent writing. Because of your reviews and games like *AC*, you really made me see the error of my ways.

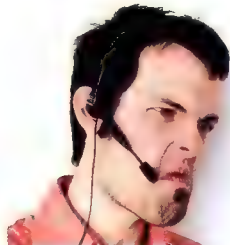
ZekeKravn@aol.com

**Congrats on seeing past *Animal Crossing's* ugly duckling looks. We're sure that anyone who really gives this oddball title a chance will find it to be more innovative, fun and addictive than *Pop Rocks!* It's so open-ended and easy to play that even your mom will be hooked. We're still jabbering on about captured bugs, attractive end tables and Feng Shui furniture placement.**

## SOCOM Problems

Do any of you find the headset that comes with *SOCOM* a little small? I have a big head, but it's not huge like [Previews Editor] Greg Sewart's.

PsYcHoMaNt1s7625@aol.com



Our tester scowls at the pinching power of the *SOCOM* headset. "It hurts!"

## SHORTY FILLAZ

I am writing in for some kind of spiritual advice. Tfnaciously87@aol.com

Our advice to you is to chant this simple mantra: "I live Rasta an' have no regret! Rasta is forever! Rasta is I guide. Rasta is all t'ings."



Since the *SOCOM* headset is a one-size-fits-all dealio, we're surprised you can't get it to fit your big, fat head. And despite your assumptions regarding Greg's cranium, he's gone on record to say: "It fits quite nicely, thank you very much." So there.

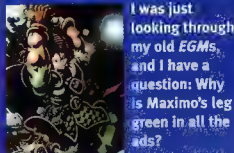
## MO'COM Problems

I was wondering if it's possible to play *SOCOM* even if your PS2 doesn't have an Internet connection.

alexg1@cox.net

Good news, Alex. *SOCOM* does have an offline mode, where you go through 12 dangerous missions with computer-controlled buddies, so you're in luck. Have at it, our Internet-challenged friend.

## SILLY QUESTIONS! ANSWERS!



I was just looking through my old *EGMs*, and I have a question: Why is Maximo's leg green in all the ads?

David Fluke  
INSTITCHES34@gmail.com

Uh...Maximo was borrowing Peter Pan's satin fanny-pants for the day!

Got a stupid game-related question? Send it to EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading "No one is more stupider than me!" Your letter might appear in this very blue box!

## LETTER ART: THE FUTURE OF TOMORROW IN TODAY'S MAIL

### Letter Art of the Month WINNER

Leo Hussey • Baltimore, MD



A variation on a theme...



The original painting

It's too bad you can't really see the sick amount of detail in this Rapidograph'ed video-game homage to Diego Velasquez's *The Surrender at Breda* (circa 1635). Congratulations, Leo. It seems staying awake during your art history class has finally paid off since you're now the proud owner of a shiny new GameShark (with which you can rewrite the history of gaming, much in the same way you defiled Velasquez's original vision). Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery of your InterAct GameShark for PlayStation 2, PlayStation, Dreamcast, Game Boy Advance or GB Color. Some assembly required.



### Almost Sharkworthy...

Old-school Spidey-versus-the-Green-Goblin action...



Rod Beltran • Hayward, CA

The sick thing about Letter of the Month and Letter Art of the Month contests is that no purchase is necessary. Did you know you can get EGM without actually buying to pay for it by killing your own copy with really fine sand? Or by spraying an atomizer from within your dog? How about creating a copy with a sandstick, a file can and your nipper? That's the beauty baby. What we're really looking is that you can find official contest rules on our official web site: [www.egm.gamers.com](http://www.egm.gamers.com).

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# REIGN OF FIRE

GAME BOY ADVANCE



PlayStation 2



MATURE



Blood  
Violence

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**THEIR EVERY BREATH  
COULD BE YOUR LAST.**

RAVAGE EARTH AS A DRAGON,  
SWOOPING FROM ABOVE TO  
HURL FIREBALLS AND NATURAL  
NAPALM WITH EVERY BREATH.

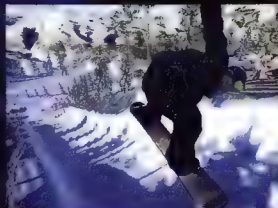
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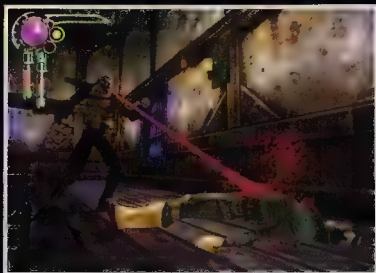




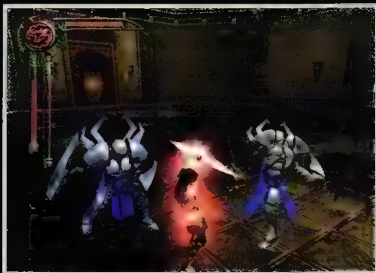
PlayStation 2



March 2002, Kain returns to video gaming's high-throne of bloodthirsty bad-asses.



When battle-ax and sword edges dull, Kain turns to Dark Cults such as rupture and possession.



Whether in pursuit of power or just for the thrill of the kill, Kain's lust for blood is inspiring.

To Behead  
Or Not To Behead  
That Is The Question  
- Kain

**!** This game is intended for mature audiences ONLY.

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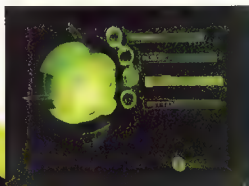


# Press Start

## The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

# Let There Be Live

### Microsoft bets on broadband with the launch of their online gaming service, Xbox Live



Install Live and voila! You'll have a new option in your system's main menu to configure your account.

**X**box Live officially launches on Nov. 15, delivering the promise of fast, dependable online gaming to the broadband-enabled masses. Or, at least it'll let thousands of gamers call each other dorks (and—ahem—probably worse) 'til they're blue in the face. Here's a quick rundown of what you'll need to know to dip your toe into Xbox Live.

### What You Get

This is what your \$49.99 Xbox Live Starter Kit gets you:

- **STARTUP DISC**—Installs the Live software on your Xbox's hard drive.
- **XBOX COMMUNICATIONS HEADSET**. Lets you talk to and hear other players.
- **FREE GAME**—Beta testers got Acclaim's RC racer *Re-Volt*. The Starter Kit's game is TBD.
- **ONE XBOX LIVE GAMERTAG NAME**

Your name in the online world. (Make sure it's catchy—like AnubisMaximus.)

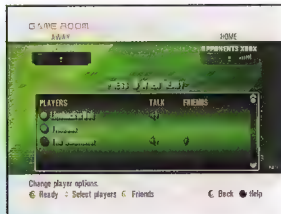
- **A ONE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO XBOX LIVE**. By the time your subscription's up, you'll have a week or so of *Halo 2* under your belt.

### What You Need

What you'll need on your end to play on Xbox Live:

- **AN XBOX**: They ain't free, ya know.
- **BROADBAND INTERNET CONNECTION**

We're talkin' DSL, cable modem, T1 or other fat-pipe connection to the 'Net. Note: Your ISP service is a separate cost from your Live subscription.



Each game has its own look and feel, like this setup screen in *NFL Fever 2003*.



## FIRST STRIKE

To prepare members of the press for Sony's PS2 online launch, Microsoft sent out a "PS2 Online Starter Kit" with items including an online voice communicator (phone card), a short-range voice communication system (two cups connected by a string) and a 56k Download Assistant (ball and paddle). The sarcasm was overwhelming.

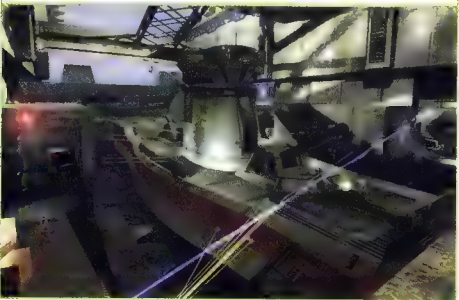
# The Launch Games

Here's a quick rundown of the first seven online-enabled titles you'll be able to play on or around the Nov. 15 launch of Xbox Live:

**NHL Fever 2003**  
**PUBLISHER:** Electronic Arts  
**RELEASE DATE:** November 2002  
**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2-16  
**DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT:** Yes, to be determined.  
**CLANS AND RANKINGS:** No

**Unreal Championship**  
**PUBLISHER:** Atari  
**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 15  
**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2-16  
**DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT:** Yes, to be determined.  
**CLANS AND RANKINGS:** Yes

This is it—the killer app for Xbox Live. An online first-person shooter crammed full of gorgeous graphics, creative weapons, addictive gameplay and some tasty Nali Fruit. Up to 16 players can frag it out in Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch, Survival, Double Domination and Bombing Run matches.



**Microsoft**  
**RELEASE DATE:** Nov. 15, simultaneous with Xbox Live.  
**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2-8  
**DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT:** Yes, available on day one.  
**CLANS AND RANKINGS:** No

What's better than fast-paced urban destruction in the cockpit of an 800-ton war machine against waves of computer-controlled enemies? Why, getting up to eight giant mechs to go at it in *Assault's* various online modes, of course.

**Whacked!**  
**PUBLISHER:** Microsoft  
**RELEASE DATE:** October 2002  
**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2-4  
**DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT:** No  
**CLANS AND RANKINGS:** No

Need a break from all those serious, strategic online escapades? Turn off your brain and mash away with *Whacked!*, a bizarre party title in which four contestants bludgeon one another in six frenzied mini-games, like Dodgeball, King of the Hill and Fragfest.

**Team Cherry's Ghost Recon**  
**PUBLISHER:** Ubi Soft  
**RELEASE DATE:** November 2002  
**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2-16 (Deathmatch)  
**DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT:** Yes  
**CLANS AND RANKINGS:** Yes

The Xbox "counter-strikes" against Sony's *SOCOM* offensive with *Ghost Recon*, a realistic squad-based FPS. Play through a campaign in six-player co-op (with 10 spectators, no less), or engage in 16-player skirmishes with your favorite real-world weapons.

**NBA 2K3**  
**PUBLISHER:** Sega  
**RELEASE DATE:** October 2002  
**NUMBER OF PLAYERS:** 2-8  
**DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT:** Yes  
**CLANS AND RANKINGS:** Clans, no. Rankings, yes.

Back on the Dreamcast, the *NBA 2K* series was the first online b-ball game for consoles, and we dug it. For its Xbox Live debut, *NBA 2K3* features quick match and opti-match (enter in search criteria and it'll find a game that fits those parameters), plus you can download stats and see how you rank against players across the country.



**JETPACK 3941**

**FOR YOUR  
SAFETY**

# TRIBES AERIAL ASSAULT



RIGHT TURN



LEFT TURN

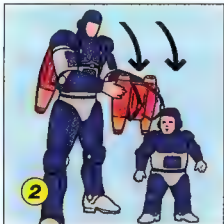
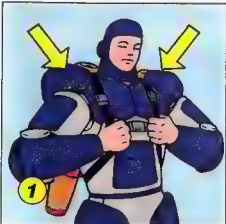


STOP

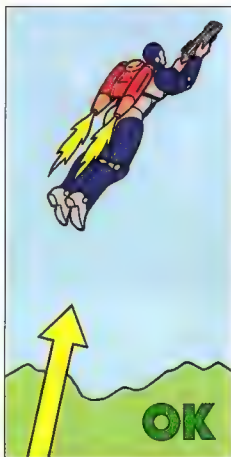


RESTART

## AFFIX OWN JETPACK BEFORE ASSISTING OTHERS



## JETPACK CONTROL



## JETPACK CARRY-ONS



## MINEFIELD AVOIDANCE



**IN CASE OF MISSILE LOCK  
THROW:**



FLARE GRENADE



**DO NOT THROW:**



SHOE



SPITBALL



TANTRUM

**OUT OF AMMO**



1 READY



2 LEAN



3 BEND

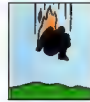


4 KISS ASS  
GOODBYE

**FALLING TO YOUR DEATH**



FUTILE FLAPPING

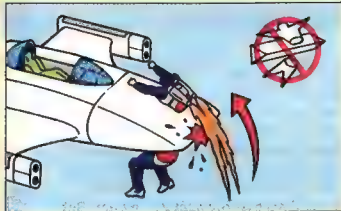
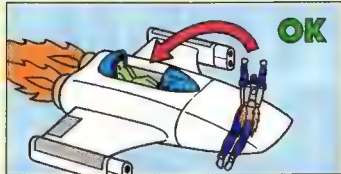


CANNONBALL



PRAYER

**ENTERING TRANSPORT**



**ATTENTION: IF YOU CANNOT PERFORM THESE FUNCTIONS, PROCEED DIRECTLY TO TRIBES.SIERRA.COM FOR A TRIBES VIDEO FEATURING "DOWNFALL."**

- DON'T FLY ALONE. PLAY WITH UP TO 16 PEOPLE OVER MODEM OR BROADBAND USING SONY'S NETWORK ADAPTER. SHARE THE PAIN.
- JETPACKS LET YOU TAKE THE CARNAGE AIRBORNE. THE FORECAST CALLS FOR RAIN—OF BLOOD.
- CATCH BIG AIR—AND CATCH THEM UNAWARE—WITH EXTREME SKIING, JETPACK-STYLE.
- CAN'T GET IT UP WITH YOUR JETPACK? JUMP IN A FIGHTER, BOMBER, ARMED TRANSPORT OR GRAVBIKE.



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PRESS  
START



NO FOOLIN'

For their most recent April Fools' trick, our baby-brother mag *GameNOW* doctored up some really convincing shots of an Xbox game they called *Metal Gear Solid X, X*, they claimed, would finally let fans play throughout *MGS2* from Solid Snake's point of view (like the pic here looking down on the infamous harrier battle from a helicopter above). The funny part is, since *Substance* does let you play through the game as Snake, in a way, the joke came true. Maybe next time, *GameNOW* should show something totally ridiculous like a *Metal Gear* skateboarding game. Oh wait, *Substance* has that, too....

# Fresh Gear

## It's Substance over style for the Xbox version of Metal Gear Solid 2



"This looked a lot easier from up in the 'copter."

Even one year later, there are moments in *MGS2* you never forget: Raiden battling three giant REX robots at once; Solid Snake jumping into the sea to chase after his nemesis, Revolver Ocelot; you tapping a button over and over trying to skip through endless, confusing dialogue.... OK, they aren't all necessarily *happy* memories. But the new version of the game, *MGS2: Substance*, heading to the Xbox this fall and the PS2 early next year, adds more action and pure gameplay to balance out the story-heavy main game (which is also included in *Substance*—check out the next page). Here's the new stuff you can play as either Raiden or Snake, with slight differences depending on whom you pick:

### VR MISSIONS

You get almost 200 of these training-style mini-games, in four flavors: **Sneaking** (use stealth to get to the goal), **Weapon** (shoot targets with various guns), **First-person** (complete missions entirely from a first-person perspective) and **Variety** (a smorgasbord combining elements from all of the above). Because all of these missions are set on a sort of virtual-reality "holodeck," backgrounds are very simple, but the game does change the look of the levels to morning, evening, or night after checking your Xbox's internal clock. You're also scored on all your missions; do well, and you may unlock some secrets.



### ALTERNATE MISSIONS

Like the VR missions—but set in environments from the actual game (the Big Shell oil rig and tanker boat)—the Alternate Missions explore some of the more quirky bits of *MGS2*'s gameplay: **Bomb Disposal** (locate and disarm hidden explosives), **Eliminate** (kill everything that moves), **Hold Up** (sneak up and draw your weapon on all guards without being seen or firing a shot—see pic above), and **Photo** (match a picture of an object hidden somewhere in the level with your own snapshot).

### SNAKE TALES

These five levels might be the **best part about Substance** for those of us who



have already played *MGS2*. Each is its own self-contained story, starring Solid Snake and using the same environments and characters from *MGS2*. Think of Snake Tales as slices from the game in some alternate *Twilight Zone* dimension. For example, in

one mission, Solid Snake—not Raiden—is called in to defeat the terrorists and rescue the president from Big Shell. He meets Secret Service agent Ames—but in a different location this time. And in the hostage room, he must listen for a woman dialing a cell phone, not a man's heartbeat. Snake Tales use the same framework, levels, and people as *MGS2*, mix them all up, and pad 'em out with new story sequences (all told through text).

Cont. on page 40

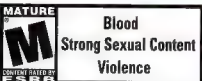
Death is my business  
and business is good.



# HITMAN 2

SILENT ASSASSIN

OUT NOW



PC  
CD

PlayStation®2



hitman2.com

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PRESS  
START

Cont. from page 38

## NEVER PLAYED METAL GEAR SOLID 2?

You're in luck. The full standard version of *Sons of Liberty* is included in *Substance* as well, with an added perk: now you can play through the whole thing as Solid Snake or Raiden. (In the original, you start as Snake and switch to Raiden a couple hours in.) All the dialogue, item locations and story elements are still exactly the same as in the original PS2 version—but hey, you've

never played it before, right? You also get another difficulty level—even harder than the super-uber-tough Extreme—for a little added replay value. And remember, when you start to hear Rose drone on and on about when she and Raiden first met (you'll know what we're talking about soon enough), you've got all those extra VR missions to play instead.



## PS2 OWNERS DON'T DESPAIR—MORE METAL GEAR SOLID 2 IS ON SALE NOW!

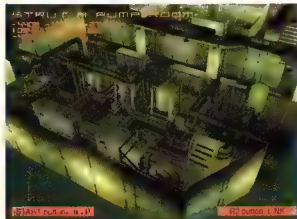
What did *MGS2* look like when Konami first started development? On what date did *MGS* mastermind Hideo Kojima make his controversial decision to scrap series mainstay Solid Snake for the PS2 sequel, in favor of newcomer Raiden? (Hint: It was much earlier than you probably think.) How does the enemy A.I. figure out which staircase to go down once they spot you? All of these questions and many more you would have never, ever had the slightest inkling of thinking to even consider about possibly asking will be answered with *The Document of Metal Gear Solid 2*, a \$20 making-of DVD—on sale Sept. 24.

### WHAT YOU GET:

More than one dozen categories of extras are stuffed into the *Document Disc*. Here's just a sampling:

### Backgrounds:

Check out 3D models of all the game's environments, including a few that didn't make it into the final game.



### Characters:

Play Barbie with every single character model in the entire game (even all the New York business people who only appear at the end). Dress them up in different outfits (or buck naked, in Raiden's case), try on new hairdos, weapons—you know, that sort of thing.

### Mechanics:

Again, play dress-up, but with vehicles and machines this time—and no wigs.

### Program:

Read about the tricks and techniques that Kojima's team used to push the PS2 and to achieve the level of quality found in *MGS2*.

### Music:

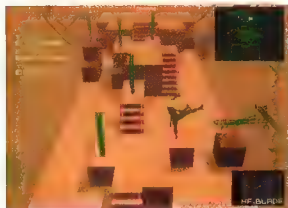
Switch between different versions of *MGS2*'s music tracks on the fly to see how the game's dynamic sound system works.

### Polygon Demos:

Watch any cutscene from the game, pause it, adjust the camera, or check out the original storyboards.



An unobscured view of Raiden's crotch. Hmm...explains a lot.

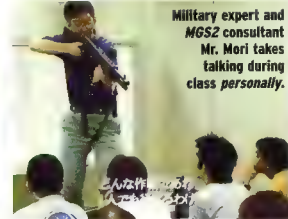


### VR Training:

Five playable VR-training mini-games from *MGS2: Substance*, ranging from super simple to frustratingly tough.

### BUT IS IT WORTH BUYING?

Die-hard *Gear* heads will marvel at the wealth of sketches, 3D models, and trivia sprinkled throughout *Document*, while everyone—including more casual fans—will appreciate the sampling of VR missions. The interface is clunky, and unfortunately, some of the best bits remain in Japanese (including storyboards and the original design documents). But if you loved *MGS2*, or you're interested in detailed info on how a modern blockbuster console game is put together, the \$20 price tag is worth it. **A-**  
—Mark MacDonald



Military expert and *MGS2* consultant Mr. Mori takes talking during class personally.



A dense, moss-covered jungle scene. The foreground is dominated by large, dark green ferns and thick, mossy ground. In the middle ground, a stream flows through the forest, with fallen branches and more mossy rocks. In the background, a soldier in a dark uniform is visible, standing near a large tree trunk. The lighting is dramatic, with bright highlights on the moss and ferns, and deep shadows in the forest. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and elite.

YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE MOST ELITE  
COMMANDO UNIT ON THE PLANET.

**SOEOM**  
DE NANSSEAL



PRESS  
START



## LAST TIME, ON SHENMUE

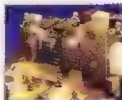
You're looking forward to the release of Yu Suzuki and Sega's modern-day adventure game *Shenmue II*, but you never played the first one (because it was on Dreamcast, and you didn't buy that, now did you? No. Curse you!). Fear not, because Microsoft just announced that *Shenmue: The Movie*, a DVD of all the cinemas and story bits from the first game, will be included with the sequel for free.

# Square's First Cube and GBA Games Revealed

Now that the six-year-long Cold War between Square and Nintendo is finally over, both companies can get back to doing what they do best: making gobs of money off each other. Square recently announced their first trio of games for Nintendo's Game Boy Advance, as well as the first details on the mysterious GameCube/Game Boy Advance link-up title, *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicle*. Here's a brief rundown of what we know so far about these soon-to-be hotly anticipated titles, none of which has been confirmed for a U.S. release (yet):

### Final Fantasy Tactics Advance

**Publisher:** Square  
**Developer:** Square  
**Release:** Winter 2002  
**Buzz Meter:** 4/5  
Originally planned as an "enhanced port" of the PS1 *Final Fantasy Tactics*, *FFT Advance* has taken on a life of its own as an entirely new game under the direction of the original game's creator, Yasumi Matsuno (who's also heading up *FFXII* for PS2). According to Square, the game will feature an all-new scenario and "improved gameplay," as well as link-cable support for multiplayer battles.



*Final Fantasy Tactics* (PS1)

### Final Fantasy Adventure

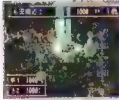
**Publisher:** Square  
**Developer:** Brownie Brown  
**Release:** Summer 2003  
**Buzz Meter:** 3/5  
*Densetsu* is neither a port nor a remake of the 1991 Game Boy game of the same name (known as *Final Fantasy Adventure* in the U.S.), though it will be "largely based" on the old-school classic. Interestingly, Square has commissioned Brownie Brown, the Nintendo second-party made up of ex-Square staff who worked on the original *Seiken* trilogy, to develop the game.



*Final Fantasy Adventure* (GB)

### Dice De Chocobo

**Publisher:** Square  
**Developer:** Square  
**Release:** Late 2002  
**Buzz Meter:** 4/5  
The first Square GBA game scheduled to go on sale is none other than *Dice De Chocobo*, a multiplayer board game featuring everyone's favorite lil' birdy and other characters from the *Chocobo* series of games (*Chocobo's Dungeon*, *Chocobo Racing*, etc.). This underwhelming title was originally released as part of the *Chocobo Collection* anthology on PS1 in Japan.



*Dice De Chocobo* (PS1)

## Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicle

GameCube/Game Boy Advance

**Publisher:** Square  
**Developer:** Square/Brownie Brown  
**Release:** Spring 2003  
**Buzz Meter:** 5/5  
*Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicle* is one of the longest-awaited *Final Fantasy* game for GameCube and Game Boy Advance. It was hinted at back when Square Enix announced plans to support Nintendo platforms again (for the full story, see *EGM #196*). Developed by game designer Shuhei Ogino, a subsidiary of Square, *Crystal Chronicle* is an all-new *Final Fantasy* that has nothing to do with the "main" series. Though specific gameplay details are sparse, we know that the game will make use of the GBA as a controller, and multiplayer play will be a key part of the experience (we start lining up Internet play with now). Judging from the brief snippet of gameplay footage unveiled in Japan (shown at right), *Crystal Chronicle* looks more action-oriented than the average *Final Fantasy*.



These *Crystal Chronicle* scenes of an advanced, tactical, money-gathering battle were from a commercial recently running in Japan to promote the GameCube. Its character designs look similar to those in *FFXII*.





## EQOA BETA-TEST ALERT

Free-game alert! Sony Online Entertainment is seeking some helpful gamers to beta test its upcoming massively multiplayer online RPG, *EverQuest Online Adventures*. If you have a PS2, a Network Adaptor and a memory card, surf over to <http://everquestonlineadventures.station.sony.com/beta/> and apply for the open public beta.

## Attention: Your Xbox Is Doomed

When *Doom III* for the PC was first revealed at this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo, people were amazed by its stunning, starkly lit *Resident Evil*-meets-first-person-shooter visuals. It was thought, however, that the graphical quality (as ever, enabled by coding wiz-meister, John Carmack) could only be

produced on the most powerful PCs. Not so! During his keynote speech at the Quakecon event held last month, Carmack commented that he is "completely committed" to releasing *Doom III* on the Xbox. He also noted that the Xbox version of the game would have the "full graphics fidelity" of the PC version.



All the pants-wetting visuals of *Doom III* on PC (shown here) should be intact when the game's baddies hop to Xbox.

## No Online Play For PS2 TimeSplitters 2

We've got some bad news for those of you expecting to blast it up online in Eidos' *TimeSplitters 2* when it's released. Online play has been excised from the PS2 version of this first-person shooter. "We had always hoped to include an Internet component in the PlayStation 2 version of *TimeSplitters 2*," Eidos tells us. "However, the infrastructure is not yet in place that will enable us to incorporate an online element and still make the game's proposed release date. We don't want to delay the release and disappoint the many fans who are awaiting the game." How many people out there who are waiting for *TS2* wouldn't be able to wait a little longer for a release with online play? Raise your hands! Thought so.

If it's any consolation, you can still hook-up 16-player matches using Link (up to six PS2s) or over Ethernet LAN (up to eight PS2s with the Network Adapter). So if you're in Boston and were planning on fragging your friend from Albuquerque, it's time to invest in a plane ticket.



You can't see them, of course. After all, they're SEALs, a commando unit legendary for its ability to penetrate enemy territory undetected. And then strike with surgical precision. Enter the world of SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs, where stealth, intelligence and teamwork are the ultimate weapons.



Developed in association with the U.S. Navy SEALs, SOCOM is unconventional warfare the way it's really fought. That means hostage rescues, reconnaissance, ambushes and demolitions. Hoo-yah.



Whether you're in single-player mode or playing online with and against up to 16 total players, your SOCOM headset is critical. It'll help you communicate and strategize with your unit, so everyone returns in one piece. Remember: "No SEAL left behind."



Combat terror in extreme environments like Turkmenistan, Alaska, Thailand and the goat-infested Congo. Should he a walk in the park. Next to Hell Week, that is.

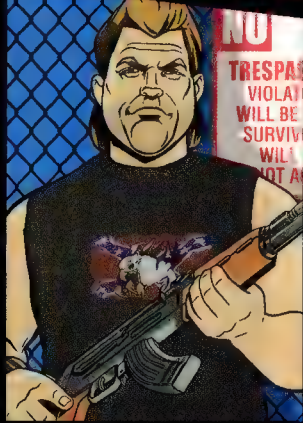
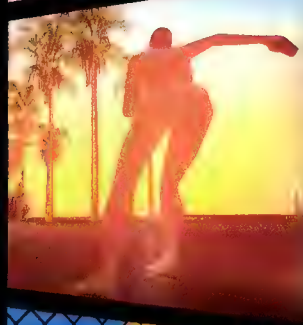
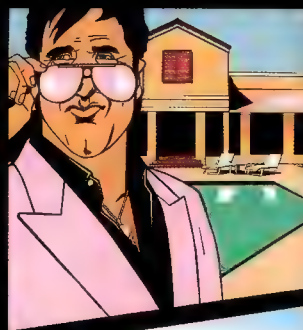
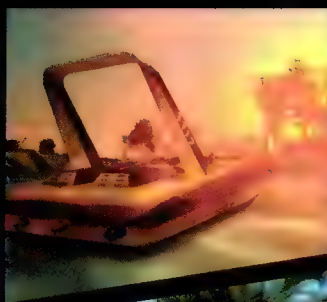


LIVE IN YOUR WORLD  
PLAY IN OURS.

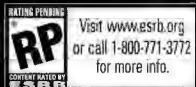
PlayStation 2



Blood and  
Violence



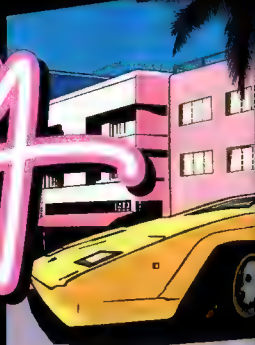
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PlayStation 2

# grand theft auto

# vice city



[WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/VICECITY](http://WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/VICECITY)

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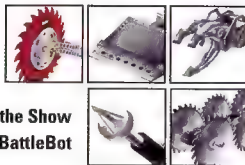
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PRESS  
START

**“When I was pushing the (R) button, the stiffness reminded me of a water pistol I used to play with. I thought, ‘What if Mario sprayed water around with it?’”**

—Nintendo Director Yoshiaki Koizumi on the origin of Super Mario Sunshine’s water tank

# Afterthoughts: Mario Sunshine

Soon after the release of *Super Mario Sunshine*, Nintendo held a press conference in Japan with key members of the development team—and didn't invite us. Hmpf. No, that's cool, Nintendo; we didn't want to go to your stupid press conference, anyway. Besides, we'd rather just get our hands on the transcript, cut it up and rearrange it, then pretend we were there for the interview. On hand were *Mario* creator Shigeru Miyamoto and *Sunshine*'s Director Yoshiaki Koizumi. (For more of this interview, minus our pithy comments, head to the developer section of the *Mario Sunshine* page on nintendo.com).

**Shigeru Miyamoto:** Thank you for coming.

**EGM:** Well, when you invited us personally, Mr. Miyamoto, we had to accept.

**SM:** Mr. Koizumi worked on *Super Mario 64*, too, and he played a major role. I also worked with him on *The Legend of Zelda*—

**EGM:** OK, OK, enough with the introductions—let's get to it. What were you hoping to accomplish with *Sunshine*?

**SM:** Whenever we create a new *Mario* game, even though it's a sequel in a series, we always try to offer some new challenge. We want to incorporate everything that the existing technology makes possible. We want to be able to say, “We have used the full functionality of the hardware so we cannot do better on the current console.” When a new game was to be developed for GameCube, we approached the project with very high aspirations.

**EGM:** What did you think of the early reports that said *Sunshine* looked just like *Mario 64*?

**SM:** About a year ago—when we showed the first video of *Sunshine*—even though we offered a glimpse of something really unique, we did not show Mario using the water pack. We didn't want that idea to be stolen at such an early stage. As a result, I'm afraid that you might not have found the video footage very exciting when you saw it. Around that time, the basic game system was complete, and new characters were moving around in it. Over the past year, we've changed the direction of



the game so that *Sunshine* is more like *Super Mario 64*—a kind of conservative move.

**EGM:** Conservative in what sense?

**SM:** We're working on many projects. We have shown the idea for *Mario 128* before [Ed. note: We're guessing he's referring to the game

previously known as 100 Mario], which is headed in a different direction. But *Sunshine* took this direction—it is an authentic sequel to *Mario 64*. I regret this somewhat—not because of the quality of *Sunshine*, but because this *Mario* may not attract players returning to gaming after some time.

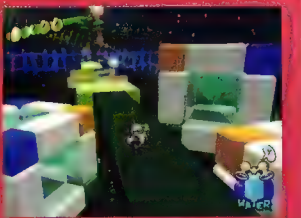
Cont on page 50

## BALANCING ACT

What's up with *Sunshine*'s plain-looking (but tough-as-nails) obstacle course stages? Miyamoto explains...

**SM:** [Those are] the basis of the *Mario* series. Though the freedom of action seems to be the essence of *Mario* games nowadays, simple missions are very important. One thing we may need to reflect upon is that players have to clear all of the stages in order to get to the final one. We should have designed the game differently, but we couldn't.

**Yoshiaki Koizumi:** The water tank makes *Super Mario Sunshine* relatively easier. We



had to limit the area where Mario could visit by hovering, for example, to make the gameplay more tense. Making these stages that you've mentioned more compulsory helped balance the difficulty level in the game.





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# THEIR BAT



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TO HOLD YOU BACK



Cont. from page 48

## “Get accustomed to the GameCube controller because, 10 years from now, it will be the standard.”

**EGM:** You want *Sunshine* to bring a lot of people back to gaming?

**SM:** I want people who have not played any video games for the past 30 years to try *Sunshine*. The video-game industry has changed a lot, and people who try a video game for the first time in 30 years won't have a clue about what's happened in the interim.

People who have been away from gaming may have trouble understanding *Sunshine* the first day they play it; however, on the second day, they will start to understand its charm. Even though you might feel like stopping on day one, please don't. If you play *Sunshine* for three days, you'll make the reentry into video-game culture. [Laughs] I am not saying that it's an easy game, but that most people will understand its charm instantaneously.

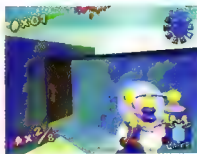
**EGM:** Back to *Mario 64*, we noticed the player needs to adjust the camera more often in *Sunshine*, while in *64* it was usually automatic. Why the change?

**SM:** That question isn't very easy to answer. Some say that *Mario* games should be very easy to play, so the camera angle should be fully automatic. We have tried many different camera systems, including semi-automatic ones, but they did not appeal to everyone. Some liked it and some didn't. As far as the camera system is concerned, now we tend to leave greater autonomy to players—but not to the extent that it prevents smooth gameplay.

**Yoshiaki Koizumi:** You don't have to change the camera angle all the time in *Sunshine*, but, at some points, you can see cool graphics by changing the angle yourself. I



Many of *Sunshine*'s character models will be reused in future games like *Mario Party 4*.



### MARIO SECRETS!

Where can you find this mysterious door? What does it lead to? What happens when you get all 120 Shines? Find the answers to all your *Mario* questions in our *Sunshine* extravaganza in the tricks section at the back of this issue.

hope people will get accustomed to it.

**SM:** In many games, we are now incorporating the notion that, if you press [L], the camera will show a 180-degree view. As long as that kind of system is in place, it may be better to leave the camera angle

to the discretion of players. If we like, we can incorporate both the automatic and manual modes so that players can choose whichever one they like.

**YK:** Right, but I tried both and found the free-camera-angle style easier to play.

### LITTLE SQUIRT

Mario's backpack-mounted FLUDD water tank is the biggest innovation in *Sunshine*, affecting just about every area of gameplay. Here, our hosts explain how the idea evolved—from its initial squirt-gun inspiration to the final form you see here.



**YK:** What I really wanted to reproduce with this new game were the feelings we had in our childhoods when we were playing. I wanted players to engage in mischief, such as watering other characters or playing with mud. I wanted to simulate child's play. That was the first priority. The water-pistol idea came from this effort. When I was pushing the [R] button, the stiffness reminded me of the trigger of the water pistol that I used to play with. I thought, "What would Mario look like if he sprayed water around with it?"

**EGM:** So washing away graffiti and mud grew out of that?

**YK:** When I submitted the basic proposal for the game to Mr. Miyamoto, I had already come up with the water-pistol idea. [But] letting Mario have a water pistol alone wouldn't make the game fun. I liked the basic play-control style of *Mario 64* and thought that it should be applied to the new game. Then, I imagined why Mario might have a water pistol, what should [he] aim [it] at? Opponents? A wall? Around that time, we decided to include the wall jump move, so we wanted to create a number of tall buildings that Mario could jump around. So why would Mario have to move around a

town with many walls? Maybe he had to clean up the town with the water pistol. I thought up the idea of painting mud all over the town. The idea of Mario leaving dirty footprints followed.

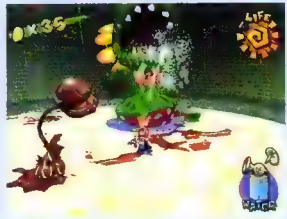
In the end, I thought we could reproduce the feeling of childhood play.

**SM:** We experimented with watering and graffiti drawing and erasing, among other things. In video games, it is not a simple task to draw graffiti and have it remain there. It's not as easy as it seems. Painting and maintaining a screen full of graffiti is very difficult in a video game. It can be accomplished only with the GameCube.

**EGM:** So why did it go from a water pistol to the water tank?

**YK:** Well, I thought it was like a child's dream come true—flying in the air by using the equipment on your back.

**SM:** Although we called it a water pistol, we tried to design it so that no associations could ever be made between it and actual weapons. So we were trying to design the weirdest and funniest gadget, which turned out to be a tank you wear on your back.



# "I feel it's necessary to make the interval between sequels as short as possible...[Nintendo has] to improve the situation for our fans."

**EGM:** So are we going to have to wait another six years for the next *Mario*?

**SM:** Whenever we are working on so-called "series" games, I really feel it's necessary to make the interval between a game and its sequel as short as possible, and we have to do something to improve the situation for our fans. Accordingly, people who used to work together on the *Mario* series have been split into several teams in order to introduce *Mario* games with less lag time between them. We are taking a similar approach to the *Zelda* series. However, all the games shall be developed so that they retain the high quality that people expect from Nintendo.

**EGM:** So then we can start expecting more sequels to the big-name series (*Mario*, *Metroid*, *Zelda*) in the future than what we've seen over the last few years?

**SM:** There are many characters in *Sunshine*: Mario, Peach and many others. We will make use of the same character models in future games such as *Mario Party*. Before, we had to create each character for each game. Standard character models are being created by one team at Nintendo, which will be shared by other game-creation groups. Of course, that system won't work 100 percent of the time. However, when we make a completely new *Mario* game, the development time will be significantly reduced. This is one way to

shorten the development time: by improving the R&D circumstances.

**EGM:** Right, right...wait, you didn't really answer our que—

**YK:** The idea of letting Mario use some tool initially faced opposition. Now that he is using a water tank, he may also use other tools. In that sense, *Sunshine* may have paved a new way for Mario's future adventures.

**SM:** We have had rather serious discussions over the question, "Can Mario use tools?" It may be okay for Luigi. [Laughs] The water pistol was created by the same designer who armed Luigi. If that's the case, Mario can use one, too. [Laughs]

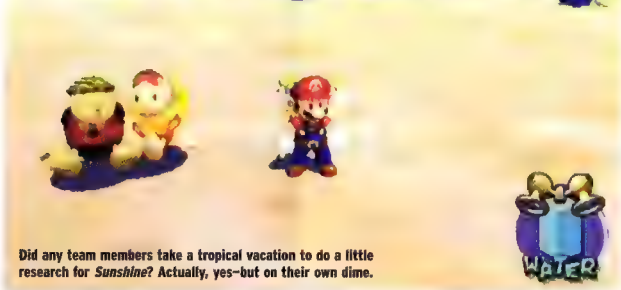
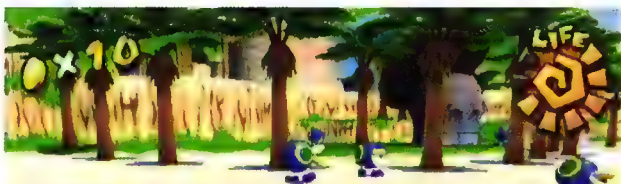
**EGM:** Huh? What are you laughing ab—

**SM:** I'd like to add one more thing. Not

everyone has used the GameCube controller. So, those who play GC for the first time may feel a bit uneasy initially. Of course, we, the developers, have been playing exclusively with the GC controller so we can't play [games] with any other controller. I had some confidence with the N64 controller, too. However, when I compare the two, I can tell that the GC controller is better designed for gameplay. What I really want to say is: Get accustomed to the GC controller because, 10 years from now, this controller will be the standard.

**EGM:** Oh SNAP! You go girl! But wait a sec; a few years back weren't you saying the N64 add-on 64DD disk drive was the future of gaming? And before that, the Virtual B—  
**YK:** Security! ☹

—Mark MacDonald



Did any team members take a tropical vacation to do a little research for *Sunshine*? Actually, yes—but on their own dime.

## PRINCESS CORTANA

What does *Mario* have in common with *Halo*, besides both being great games and ending in "o"? Actress Jen Taylor—she voices both Princess Peach and Cortana





PRESS  
START



**“Sora is actually a combination of all of the male lead characters I have designed, from Cloud (FFVII) to Tidus (FFX).”**

—Kingdom Hearts creator Tetsuya Nomura on his inspiration behind Sora, when asked if his latest hero was designed to resemble Nomura himself.



# Afterthoughts: Kingdom Hearts

With no *Final Fantasy*-related action on the schedule for the remainder of the year, RPG-starved eyes instead turn to Square's other magnum opus, *Kingdom Hearts*. Now that the game is finally here, we sat down with director and character designer Tetsuya Nomura to see what he had to say about his first project as lead designer.

**EGM:** What help did you get replicating the movements of the Disney characters?

**Tetsuya Nomura:** Disney provided us with tons of assets—mostly stills [and some] video material. We modeled each and every character based on the assets we received. Some traditional Disney characters were given new outfits for *Kingdom Hearts*. The models for those were then given to Disney for review and eventually, after a round of edits, were approved. As for the animation, we handled all of that at Square, too, and had Disney review and approve it. During the first six months, our animators' "research" involved watching Disney movies.

**EGM:** What do you think of Haley Joel Osment's performance?

**TN:** His performance...well, compared to us he's still a little kid—a little boy. So during breaks in recording, Haley's like a little kid. But when he gets to the job, he gets it done right. If they have to do retakes, Haley gets it in [only] a couple of takes. He's done the job very maturely.

**EGM:** We hear that Haley's voice was changing during voice recording [Editor's note: Ahh, puberty?]. Would you keep Haley, with his deeper voice, for the sequel?



**TN:** If there is a sequel, and if the story is set two years later, there wouldn't be a huge difference in the character, so we would keep Haley. But if the sequel's story takes place so years after, we would have to make adjustments.

**EGM:** In Japan, *KH* sold more than anyone expected. Why do you think this is?

**TN:** *KH* had conservative projections in Japan where Square was hoping to sell 500k, but ended up selling close to a million—so, clearly, *KH* is very successful. *Final Fantasy* sells 2 million copies, but that's in the first three days. Why is it such a sustained success? Is it because of the Disney thing? *Final Fantasy* fans want to buy it the instant it comes out, but is this for a broader audience—for people who might want to try it out later? I think it is.

**EGM:** So U.S. gamers get the improved version of *KH*. What changes, obvious and not-so-obvious, did you make for the U.S. version?

**TN:** [We didn't do any] big camera work, like

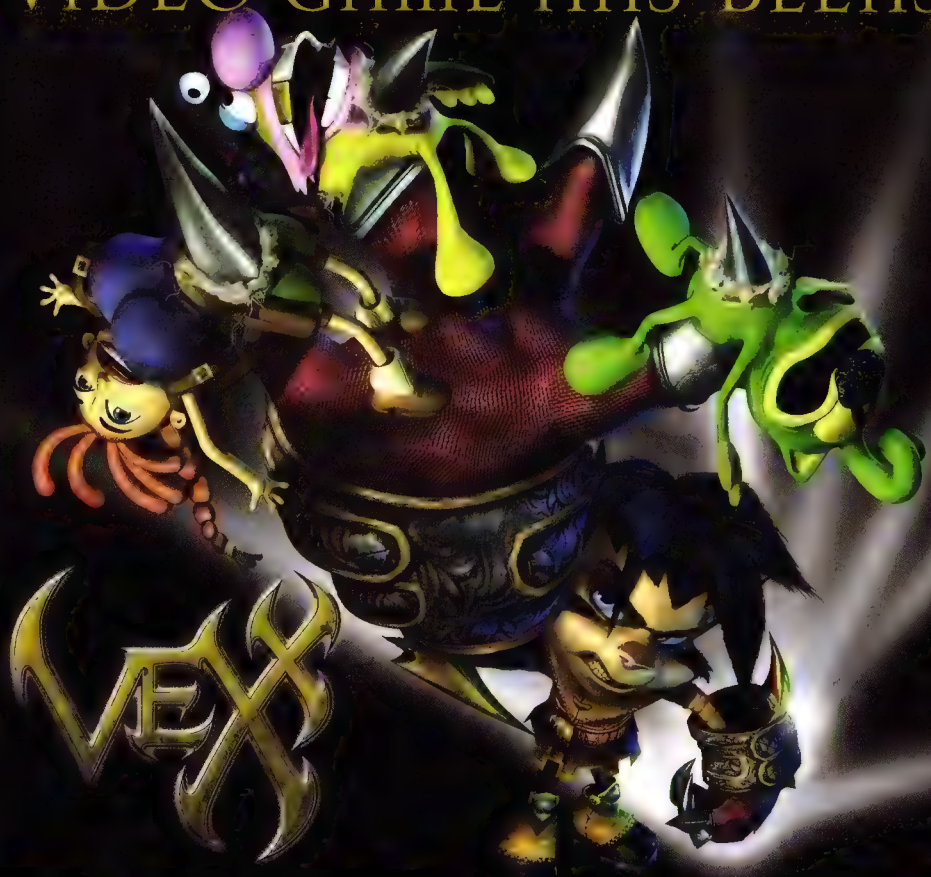
change the camera angles [Editor sobs at this point]. In [Japanese gaming magazine] *Famitsu's* review scores, one of the reviewers mentioned that. But if we changed any of that stuff, it would've created some bugs. So that's why we didn't change any of it. But for one of the events in the game (a conversation between Sora and Squal), we didn't have enough time to do voice recording for it during the Japanese version, so we included it for the U.S. version. 🎮

## Hearts Part Deux

Despite the fact that the special ending of *Kingdom Hearts* (for those hardcore gamers who get everything) shows a clip that sets up a sequel, Nomura will not confirm that he's involved with a *Kingdom Hearts 2*. He mentioned to us that he's working on "more realistic" character designs for a secret project. "I'm working on another title now," explains Nomura. "It hasn't been announced in Japan yet, so I cannot go into details."



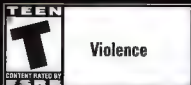
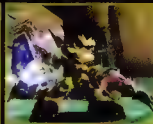
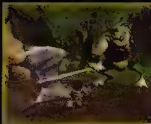
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## CELEBRITY GAMER: BRUCE CAMPBELL

# Kicking Ash And Taking Names With Bruce Campbell

Celebrities are normal people, too—just incredibly rich ones. You like games; they like games. Each issue we'll talk to a different celebrity who plays 'em, is involved in their creation, or is lucky enough to be *in* one. This month we caught up with B-movie mainstay Bruce Campbell, who stars in THQ's *Evil Dead: A Fistful of Boomstick* (pictured below), coming in early 2003 for PS2 and Xbox.

**EGM:** Fans have been clamoring for an *Evil Dead* movie sequel. Why another game instead?

**BC:** Because it doesn't take as much of (*ED* director) Sam Raimi's time. There's a harsh reality of availability. However, games are also a way to keep the franchise going. Fans like the character—and if they can't have a movie, give 'em a game. The quality's getting better and better. It'll just become like a movie eventually anyway.

**EGM:** Why does *ED* stand out even today?

**BC:** The films are irreverent. They don't play by the rules. The average viewer can sympathize. College kids love flipping off the world, saying, "I'm out of high school

now; don't tell me what to do." That's what Ash personifies.

**EGM:** The Deadites: Can they ever be defeated, or will marketing prevail?

**BC:** To some degree. In the game, it'll depend how good you are. You can win. They just won't make it easy. The Deadites, that is—not the marketers.

**EGM:** You tend to appear in B-level games and movies. Is that due to a talent deficiency, or...?

**BC:** I dunno. I've done a whole range of stuff, so I don't really have one particular notion of myself. I think you just wind up where you're perceived. That's nine-tenths of the law.

**EGM:** Working on horror titles, you've gotta have some pretty freaky stuff sent your way. Anything that stands out?

**BC:** I've seen a lot of *Evil Dead* tattoos. I've seen Ash on shoulders and butts and breasts. I met a kid named Ash, who was 16, named after the [character]. Lots of piercings, too. The *Evil Dead* crowd is a pierced crowd.

**EGM:** Think the Ash-man will ever get smart



Campbell with a statue of Ash—the character he made infamous in the *Evil Dead* movies. Can you guess which is which?

enough to stop going back to the cabin?

**BC:** No. He's just too stupid. He's the salmon that has to return to spawn.

**EGM:** Very perceptive. You seem quite sensible. Want to sacrifice a virgin with us this Tuesday?

**BC:** No. I don't believe in the occult. That's the beauty of movies. Schwarzenegger may own a Humvee, but I don't think he rolls around with M50 machine guns blasting through the backyard. Although, in his case, maybe.

—Scott Steinberg



## Ecks Vs. Sever: Game to Movie to Game

This fall, if you wander into your local mega-cineplex, you might see what you think is another game-gone-movie. And you're half-right—*Ecks vs. Sever* was released as a Game Boy Advance game a year ago. But the movie, starring Lucy Liu and Antonio Banderas, isn't based on it. It's the other way around. Here's the scoop: Bam Entertainment developed *Sever* (the game) for release when the movie was originally supposed to hit theaters...last year. But when it was done, the film was a year away from opening day. Instead of holding the game 'til the film was ready, Bam released it (minus mention of the flick) last November. And now that the movie's out, *Sever* has returned to GBA once again (and PS2 this time, too). The new game is still called *Ecks vs. Sever*, but it isn't a re-packaging of last year's release—it's a sequel. Now you know the rest of the story.



Ecks: "Let's settle this once and for all. Got yer GBA, Ms. Sever?"



## ONE EXPENSIVE GAME

The recent Japanese Dreamcast launch of *Ikaruga*, the spiritual follow-up to Treasure's *Radiant Silvergun* for the Sega Saturn, re-ignited interest in the classic and rare import among the hardest of the hardcore. Mint-condition copies of *RS* have been selling on eBay for over \$220. See what all the fuss is about when *Ikaruga* hits the U.S. on GameCube next year.



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Run Like Hell	Interplay	10/10/02
Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	Electronic Arts	10/11/02
The Lost	Crave Entertainment	10/18/02
Silent Scope 3	Konami	10/18/02
Vexx	Acclaim	10/21/02
NBA 2K3	Sega	10/25/02

### Xbox

Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Eidos	10/3/02
Conflict: Desert Storm	Take 2 Interactive	10/3/02
Blink: The Time Sweeper	Microsoft	10/10/02
Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter	Crave Entertainment	10/11/02
Toejam & Earl III: Mission to Earth	Sega	10/23/02
X-Men: Next Dimension	Activision	10/25/02
Medal of Honor Frontline	Electronic Arts	10/31/02
Unreal Championship	Infogrames	11/1/02

### GameCube

NHL 2003	Electronic Arts	10/3/02
Robotch: Battlery	TDK Mediactive	10/9/02
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Vexx	Acclaim	10/20/02
Mario Party 4	Nintendo	10/23/02
NBA 2K3	Sega	10/25/02
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Activision	11/1/02
NHL 2K3	Sega	11/2/02
Batman: Dark Tomorrow	Kemco	11/8/02

### Game Boy Advance

Antz: Extreme Racing	Empire Interactive	10/12/02
Downforce	Titus	10/17/02
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## EGM's Handy Guide to Halo-ween Costumes

**Still not sure what to do on Halloween this year? Here are a few quick-and-dirty game-related costume suggestions from us here at EGM:**

### Mario, circa Super Mario Sunshine

**Why it's easy:** You can either grow a moustache or paste on a fake one (that includes you, too, girls). A pair of overalls and a garden hose later, and you're all set.

**Potential snags:** Wealthier households might think you're there to do some landscaping.

**Sidekick possibilities:** Some construction paper and a helium balloon can make a half-assed Shine in a pinch.

**Presentation:** Aim water cannon innocently at face/crotch of homeowner, pets or antiques visible from doorway, and bargain for a larger candy take.

### Halo/Halo 2's Master Chief

**Why it's easy:** Just a few simple mods to your *Doom* Space Marine costume from '94, and you're ready to rock.

**Potential snags:** Some out-of-touch yokel's bound to think you're Robocop.

**Sidekick possibilities:** Hot girlfriend? Contessa. Ugly best friend? Covenant Elite.

**Presentation:** Recruit your younger siblings to dress up as The Flood and cling to your limbs. Parents may not get the reference, but it'll be the most interactive costume they see, guaranteed.



Illustration by Jeremy "Norm" Scott

### Guy from Grand Theft Auto III

**Why it's easy:** There's a good chance you look like him already, so just throw on a black jacket and some cargo pants. Later, you can dig out your '80s threads and revisit the same houses as the guy from *GTA: Vice City*.

**Potential snags:** (1) You'll get about three houses in before the cops confiscate your Molotov Cocktail. (2) People may think you've just come to rob 'em.

**Sidekick possibilities:** (1) Friends in fed suits and black Town Car constantly following you around. (2) Baseball bat.

**Presentation:** You're on your own here, folks. Keep it clean.

## Nintendo's Last Game Boy Color Game Ever?

Just when you thought GBA had replaced all memories of Nintendo's last-generation portable, out pops a final Game Boy Color game from the Big N themselves. Play your cards right, and *Hamtaro* (out Oct. 28) will enchant your lil' sister or that special lady in your life with his virtual pet hamster antics—keeping them busy while you concentrate on the deluge of more (ahem) mature titles this fall. And, unlike a real hamster, he can't get lost in your air ducts.



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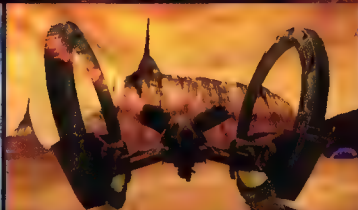
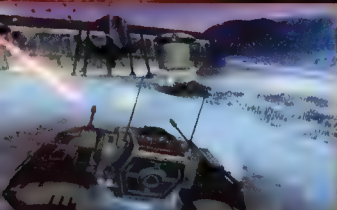
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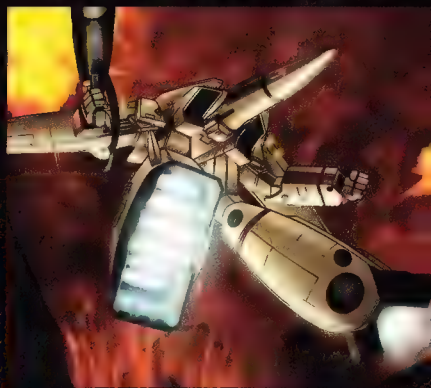


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PlayStation 2





PRESS  
START

## Cut your console free from that rinky-dink TV with our guide to the ultimate gaming televisions

Sure, its faux-wood finish faded years ago, and the UHF knob busted off in the "Tekken incident of '96," but otherwise your trusty 19-inch TV is still fine for gaming, right? Sorry, jack. If you're playing on a dinky, outdated set, you're just not getting the big picture. Many PlayStation 2, GameCube and Xbox games pack visuals souped-up for today's super-duper boob tubes. And the great news: A surge in demand for the home-theater experience has pushed down the prices of cutting-edge sets that would have required a second mortgage two years ago.

But if you've been livin' in the A/V stone age for a while, a trip to the TV aisle of your local mondo electronics store might give you the techno-jeebies. So tag along for our crash course on modern couch-potato technology.

### Digital TV: crystal-clear gaming

High-definition television, or HDTV, has been a big-buzz display technology for years, promising high-resolution imagery so crisp you'd swear you were peering out a window. Reality, however, hasn't caught up with the hype—at least when it comes to watching TV shows. HDTV is supposed to be the broadcast standard by 2006, but that's taking longer than anticipated. Right now, HD programming is only available in a few dozen cities.

But who cares about watching *Hee Haw* in high definition anyway? You just want better-looking games. And the great thing about HDTV is that it makes games look spectacular. High-definition sets come in two flavors. The



**You must turn on progressive scan in PS2 games like SOCOM. Most GameCube and Xbox games do it automatically.**

cheaper kind—in the \$800-to-\$2,000 range—fits in the "HD-ready" category, also often called "digital TVs." They pump the same high-res visuals as true HDTVs but lack a receiver (sold separately for around \$500) to pick up HDTV broadcasts. True HDTVs have a built-in receiver and a wider, 16:9-ratio screen, as opposed to the 4:3 screen of analog TVs and many digital sets. But true HDTVs start at around \$4,000. It's an unwise investment, since HDTV programming is so limited and games will look just as good on the less expensive HD-ready sets.

### 16:9? 4:3? Whazzat?

Simply put, 16:9 and 4:3 refer to a television screen's dimensions. The current screen ratio of a standard analog TV is 4:3, meaning four units wide for every three units high. That was the actual dimension of movies until the 1950s. When TV began to catch on, film studios countered by offering a "bigger" experience and produced movies presented in widescreen. As a result, most flicks today are closer to 16 units wide by nine units high, or what we call 16:9. Obviously, you can't fit a 16:9 image in a 4:3 space unless you crop the sides or use black bars above and below the image, a trick called "letterboxing."

More and more 4:3 TVs are offering a 16:9



Illustrations by  
Pixel Pushers Design





screen mode, which ups the horizontal resolution to make widescreen movies and games look extra sharp in letterbox format. The screens of some pricier digital sets and all true HDTVs come in the extra-wide 16:9 shape, so you don't see those black bars above and below the image at all.

The big question, then, is which screen type should you buy? It all depends on how much time you spend watching DVD movies in addition to playing games. Most flicks play in a 16:9 mode, making your widescreen TV the perfect home theater. Widescreen games, on the other hand, are still a rarity—most games are only available in 4:3. Play them on a 16:9 TV and you'll either have to stretch the image to fill the screen or deal with vertical black bars on each side of the image. Think of it as the opposite of letterboxing (it's actually sometimes called "window"-boxing).

### The power of progressive scan

We haven't really explained why digital TVs look way better than analog TVs, so here's the poop: Digital sets use a screen technology more along the lines of PC monitors. But the real key to their clarity is a screen enhancement called progressive scan.

To understand what progressive scan is, you gotta learn what it ain't. Standard analog TVs feature interlaced displays, meaning the picture you see is divided into two parts: an even and an odd set of scan lines, which are the horizontal image lines your TV tube displays on the screen. These two sets are actually not displayed at the same time but instead alternate at a rate of 60 frames per second. Progressive scan, on the other hand takes the whole image—all the scan lines—and displays it at 30 frames per second. You get a much sharper picture without any of the flickering common to interlaced displays.

Digital TVs also offer higher-resolution modes labeled 480p, 720p and 1080i. The 480p mode is similar to the resolution of most standard TV broadcasts, except that it's progressive scan and not interlaced (which is called 480i), so it's much sharper. It is not considered a true HDTV format. 720p mode may or may not be true HDTV, depending on whom you talk to, but it's still vastly better than 480p. Even though it's interlaced, 1080i is considered true HDTV.

OK, we can sense your eyes glazing over from all the tech-speak, so let's get to the point: What can all this do for my games? If you own an Xbox, plenty. Nearly every Xbox game supports 480p progressive-scan mode,

although developers have been slow to support 720p and 1080i. About half of GameCUBE games—all first-party stuff and a few third-party titles—support 480p. PS2 developers, meanwhile, are just now catching on to progressive scan; so far, *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs* and *Tekken 4* are the only games to support the mode, although many future titles will be 480p compatible. Note that you will need to use component cables (and your respective system's component-video adapter, sold separately) to take advantage of progressive scan.

### Can you live without digital TV?

Regular analog TVs are still a safe bet for gamers on a budget. Features like flat screens, digital-comb filters and high horizontal resolution add a lot of visual pizzazz to analog sets. And you can find these features on 27-inch analog TVs for under \$500 and on whopping 36-inch tubes for less than a grand. Flip the page for our recommendations.

## Shape Changers

If you enable the 16:9 mode in a widescreen-ready game like *Eternal Darkness* (GameCUBE) and play it on a 4:3 TV, you can only view it in letterbox format (note the black bars above and below the image). On the other hand, if you play non-widescreen games on a 16:9 television, your set will either center the image or stretch it to fit the screen.

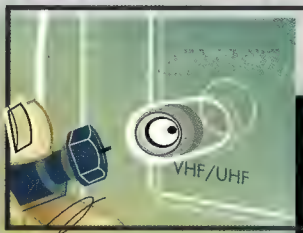
## Nerd's Eye View

Smash your face against a conventional analog TV screen, and you'll see the horizontal scan lines that make up the image. These lines are nearly invisible on an HD display with progressive scan activated, making your games look unbelievably crisp.

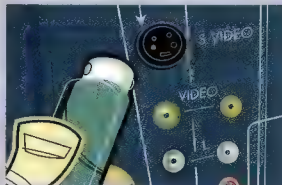


## Plug 'n' Play

Pick the right cable to punch up your console's graphics



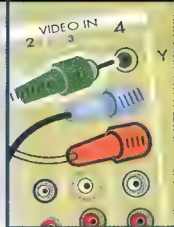
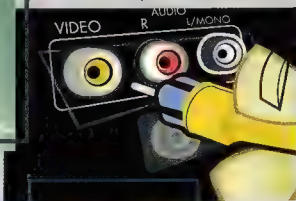
RF antenna/cable



S-video

Even the best TV ain't worth crud if you jack in with a crap connection, so avoid stone-age RF hook-ups and, at the very least, use the composite cables that came with your console. Better still, go with S-video, which makes for more vibrant colors and less blurring. Component signals look slightly better on conventional TVs, but they are the required connection for HD sets with progressive scan.

### Composite video



Component video



PRESS  
START

## Boob-Tube Buyer's Guide

Now that you're ready to upgrade your gaming experience, here's a selection of super-sharp sets of every size and budget

### \$ TVs on the cheap

If you're paying for college or just buying too many games, you probably don't want to drop a small fortune on a TV. Good news: These conventional (and one HD-ready) sets will make your games look awesome and you won't even have to sell much blood to get them.

#### JVC AV32320 32-inch TV • \$450

Just a couple of years ago, the idea of a 32-inch TV for under \$500 was unheard of, yet JVC has delivered with a set that offers 700 lines of resolution and even high-end component video inputs. Designed as an ideal TV for DVD playback, this set will also make games look great—and at 32 inches they'll be larger than life.

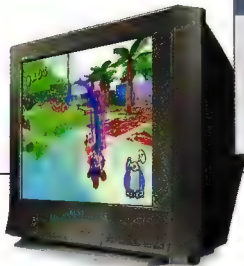
### \$\$ The junior-executive systems

Why not spend a little more dough and step up to these HD-ready sets, which a few years ago would have cost more than \$5,000. You'll need to buy a harder TV stand for the bigger sets, which can weigh up to 300 pounds.



#### Samsung TXM-3296HF DynaFlat 32-inch HDTV Monitor • \$1,300

This beauty is essentially the same TV as the 27-inch HD Samsung in the cheapie section except, well, it's a little bigger. One of our editors liked this model so much, he bought one for himself.



#### Sony KV-27FS33 FD 27-inch Trinitron WEGA TV • \$550

This model is a wee smaller in screen and a wee larger in price than the JVC, but you'll appreciate the difference a Trinitron tube makes. The ultra-sharp flat screen increases the viewing angle so more people can crowd around for multiplayer *Halo*. And not only does this set feature a 16:9 enhanced mode to improve DVD movies and widescreen games, but it also has S-video and component video inputs.



#### Toshiba 36HF72 36-inch Digital TV • \$1,800

We're getting bigger. This righteous 4:3-ratio HD-ready TV (sometimes called the 36HF72) comes with all the features of the smaller Samsung, including 1080i maximum resolution and a 16:9 mode. Plus, you get two component inputs—handy when you want to hook up more than one game system at a time.

#### Hitachi 43UWX10B 43-inch Rear-projection HDTV • \$2,100

If you crave a mega-big HD-ready screen (like, so big you can park your car in the box it comes in) for under three grand, you'll have to settle for a rear-projection set. Unlike the direct-view models we've shown you so far, rear-projection TVs beam the image onto the screen with little ray guns hidden behind it. The picture isn't quite as crisp as a direct-view set—especially when viewed from any angle but head-on—but this Hitachi model is stunning nevertheless. Widescreen games on Xbox are particularly rich and vivid. It will be hard to go back to anything else after playing *Madden* on the 43UWX10B. Beware, though: Rear-projection screens are more susceptible to burn-in from static images, such as TV-channel logos or health bars in your games, than direct-view sets.

## ASK THE INTERNET

You got home-theater questions? Mega-site [www.avforum.com](http://www.avforum.com) has answers. Head here for in-depth FAQs, classified ads for used gear and forums frequented by like-minded home-theater buffs. Friendly advice is just a click away.



#### Samsung Tantom TXM2796HF 27-inch HDTV Monitor • \$800

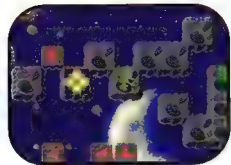
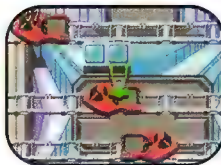
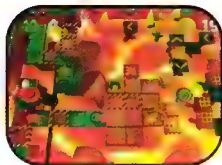
Here's your ground-floor opportunity to dive into digital TV. Samsung's HD-ready monitor packs all the features of the big boys—progressive scan, 1080i resolution, a 16:9 mode—at a budget price. And at 27 inches, it's the perfect size for a dorm room or small apartment.





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## Room with a View

### Quick tips for happy viewing

The prime seating location in a home-theater room is called "the sweet spot," and when it comes to setting up a TV, all adjustments (color, brightness, etc.) should be done from this location. But the best technique for finding this elusive spot is hotly debated, and numerous online viewing-distance calculators complicate matters. We'll keep it simple: You want to sit where you can see and appreciate the finer details, read subtitles and basically view the picture without seeing actual pixels on the screen. If you start to see too many artifacts, either you have really bad source material or you're just too close. The basic rule has it that you should sit at least 4 to 6 feet away from sets bigger than 19 inches. And be sure to play in a darkened room to avoid glare.

Most flat-screen direct-view TVs offer the largest off-axis viewing angle, meaning you don't have to be directly in front of the set to appreciate the picture.



Serious about seeing the perfect picture? Get the **AVIA Guide to Home Theater** (www.ovations.com). This \$50 cinch-to-use DVD walks you through your TV's calibration, letting you tweak color, brightness, etc., with scientific precision.

With rear-projection, LCD and plasma, on the other hand, it is much more important for your view to be centered on the screen, so don't place your comfiest gaming chair too far off to the side. When you're picking out your set at the store, keep in mind that bigger doesn't always mean better. A 63-inch widescreen TV is not going to be ideal in a 10-by-10-foot room no matter what you may think. And don't necessarily take the sales-person's advice, especially as bigger sets cost more! For a medium- to small-size room, a 27-inch set will do the trick.

## \$\$\$ Sets for the filthy rich

So you sold your Internet stock when it was high, eh? Then why not splurge on these fantasy displays which—believe it or not—are actually much cheaper than they used to be.



### Samsung HLM507W DLP 50-inch Monitor \$4,500

Buckle the heck up: You're entering the future of display technology when you game on one of these. The heart of this set's digital light-processing technology is a micro-mirror optical semiconductor chip with an array of more than a million microscopic mirrors that are used to create especially high-resolution images. In English: Your games will be crystal-clear (although eagle-eyed viewers may notice occasional rainbow effects). The Samsung isn't as slim as plasma or LCD displays, but the 50-inch screen still has a front-to-back footprint of only 18 inches, which isn't too bad considering its versatility. The unit can be used as a computer monitor as well as your primary TV.

### Sony Cineza VPL-HS1 Home-entertainment Projector • \$3,000

Hitachi's 43-inch still not big enough for you? If you demand a truly titanic gaming experience, Sony's Cineza is among the new and highly affordable projectors. It'll turn any room into a home theater, and since it accepts both 16:9 and 4:3 signals, you don't even have to worry about aspect ratios. Just sit back and watch movies or play games that will truly immerse you into the experience. You can even buy a screen that retracts, but we doubt you'd ever want to turn this thing off. Just be warned that the projector has a bulb that will eventually dim, burn out and require replacement. Typical bulbs last about 2,000 hours and cost between \$205 and \$250.



## Sound Advice

Great visuals are only part of the equation when you assemble the ultimate gaming rig. So meet us back here next month for round two of our A/V assault: how to soup up your sound system. We'll run down everything from the different types of surround sound to how loud isn't always better for your ears. I'll thank you 30 days.

—Peter Suci

# Who is Voden05?

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Blood  
Violence

PC  
CD  
ROM



PlayStation

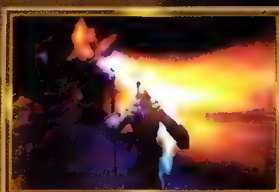
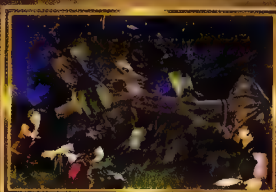
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Dark ill-will has descended upon the land of Middle-earth, and the great quest of The Ring has begun. From the halls of the serene Elven and from the Shire to the Hall of Ardaun, the power of Gandalf's staff, Frodo's steed, and Aragorn's steel to deliver the Ring from evil. The journey has begun. It will be a flicker from a shadow to disaster. [www.lordoftherings.com](http://www.lordoftherings.com)

Screenshots are from the Xbox™ video game system and PlayStation™2 computer entertainment system.

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# All Work And All Play

**Game testing** is the one video-game job nearly anybody can land (and it'll get your foot in the game-biz door). But with all the mind-numbing hours spent chained to the same title for months on end, is it a dream job or just a nightmare?

**W**hen you play video games for a living, your dreams get weird. Just ask any of the professional game testers at Rockstar, the New York City-based publisher of the mega-hit *Grand Theft Auto* franchise. These 10 guys (and one woman) spend all day, sometimes seven days a week, playing the same game over and over and over again to make sure it doesn't suck, crash or bug out when you slip it into your console at home. It's not easy. And, after all that time, it doesn't take long for their neurochemistry to freak.

Rich Huie, a 23-year-old tester for the *GTA* series, dreamed he was working a storefront in the game with *Goodfellas'* Ray Liotta and Joe Pesci. Joe Green, a 35-year-old veteran, once dreamed he was inside *Ms. Pac-Man*, so to speak, running around and gobbling down dots. "I woke up thinking, 'Um, this isn't supposed to be happening,'" he recalls. Sometimes the dreams don't wait for sleep. Lance Williams, a Rockstar tester who worked on the riot game *State of Emergency*, found himself passing a cop on the streets of Manhattan and thinking, "Oh yeah, I can take that guy."

Bad dreams are a small price to pay for what many would consider the coolest job in



the world. Game testers—or, as they tell their parents, “quality-assurance analysts”—are in the enviable position of getting paid to play. They sit on their cans in front of television sets all day doing exactly what you do every night for nada, nachos included. But, as they eventually learn, a gig like this is hardly all fun and games.

As the gatekeepers of the \$8-billion video-game industry, these elite players are the front line of any successful company. The stakes couldn't be higher. With a typical game requiring up to \$5 million and two years to produce, the last thing a publisher wants is to release a game with bugs that will infuriate if not alienate persnickety buyers. The only way to make sure a title is clean is to hire gamers who can play it for thousands of hours without breaking their thumbs or losing their minds.

### The professionals

Video games weren't always run through the ringer. Back in the golden age of 1980s gaming, many developers chose to do their own testing. But as the industry began to rival the movie business, demand for quality—not to mention the rise of competition—required more hardcore testing. Nintendo of America

was one of the first heavy hitters in the U.S. to devote an entire department to quality assurance back in 1988 when, as part of its Treehouse (named for Donkey Kong's abode) development office, it hired full-time testers.

The very first of these lucky players was Michael Kelbaugh, who has since worked his way up to being the director of product testing for the company. “Back when I started, the company only needed two of us,” Kelbaugh says, “but now as games have gotten incredibly complex, we have 350.”

Nintendo isn't alone. Microsoft, Sony and Electronic Arts each employs similar numbers of full-time testers. These larger publishers test about 30 to 70 different titles per year, with at least a few solid months of scrutiny applied to each and every game. Many titles land on the testers' machines a full year before their official release. Each game will go through about 30,000 hours of tests.

“We're trying to open up the games to testers earlier and earlier,” says Jamie King, Rockstar's director of development, “because no one wants to have to spend a bunch of 12-hour days playing the product at the very end—it can be quite the miserable experience.” As the tumultuous holiday season approaches, game companies even need to supplement their tester troops with civilian volunteers and freelancers.

Most testers do it more for love than money. Professionals make between \$20,000 and

\$50,000. Civilians get around \$10 per hour and/or—what else?—free games! Often, testers do it simply to get a foot into an increasingly competitive industry. “It's definitely one of the better ways to get into this business,” says Kelbaugh. He's far from the only one who's worked his way up the ranks after starting as a tester. But one thing's for sure: If you want to play games for a living, you need to know how to hack it. And if you want to know how to hack it, the first thing you've got to learn is not how to play a game, but how to break it.

### Game busters

The offices of Rockstar Games are three floors above a busy strip of Broadway in New York City. Three floors is roughly 30 feet. Thirty feet is about how far the PlayStation 2 console fell when the Rockstar testers chucked it out the window.

OK, that's an extreme and rare example of just how far some testers go—to the point of seeing if blatant console abuse will affect a game—to make sure your playing experience doesn't blow. Sometimes they'll plug a hair dryer into the wall and leave it blasting overnight on a console that's running their title, just to see what happens. Other times, they'll give the machine a subzero dose of arctic suffering by cramming it into a freezer for the weekend.

Believe it or not, such lengths are necessary given the increased demands—and creativity—of players who will chuck, freeze, and bash a game, deliberately or not. “The gamers today are highly intelligent and are absolutely going to take your game apart.”

*Cont. on page 74*



**Just another day at the office:** The decor of most game-tester work zones is about as plush and sexy as a telemarketer call center. But then telemarketers don't get paid to play games all day, they don't have game posters all over their office walls, and they don't have break rooms filled with classic arcade machines.









Cont. from page 71

Rockstar's King says wearily, "and they will savage you. That makes our job harder."

So today's testers are expected to bust a game by any means necessary. That means playing a game precisely how it's not supposed to be played: running where you're not supposed to run, jumping where you're not supposed to jump, blowing up stuff that you're not supposed to blow up. Since a gamer is capable of doing anything at any moment, the game has to be prepared to do something sensible in response—something besides crashing.

### Unplaying the game

Lance Williams is an accomplished tester at Rockstar. He knows how to break stuff. And like the rest of the dozen testers, he works in an airy loft with the typical accoutrements of a gaming company. A foosball machine and a vintage *Asteroids Deluxe* arcade game await play. Packages of Throat Coat and other cold and flu remedies—just what the doctor ordered for all the long hours—line the shelves. Bikini centerfolds leer seductively from the walls.

For Williams, however, there are no distractions away from the game unfolding on the monitor before him: *State of Emergency*.



At the time of this writing, the PS2 urban-riot simulator is just weeks away from completion. That means it's been going through the testers' brutal calisthenics for months. As we watch, Williams guides a character named Hector Saldado, a.k.a. Spanky, through the roadside melee. Williams is playing the game's Revolution mode, which tests a player's ability to complete various missions during the riot. The one he's testing now centers on Spanky's ability to protect a character named Marcus Washington from becoming road kill.

"You want to *unplay* the game," Williams says as he maneuvers Spanky toward a city bench. Spanky lifts up the bench and hurls it at Washington, the person he's supposed to protect. Washington survives the punishment. "That's good," Williams says with a nod. "He's still alive. He's not supposed to die."

The ability to break a game, to push it beyond what it was meant to do, is high on a publisher's list of tester skills. But it's a tough task—one that goes against all your gaming instincts. "To do this job right, someone really needs to break out of their linear train of thought and play a game backwards," says Nintendo's Kelbaugh. "Being first or best or getting a high score is irrelevant. If you're directed to go somewhere, go out of order."



### Bug hunt

Testers generally receive a detailed list of tasks to play out over the course of the day. In *State of Emergency*, for example, Williams had to spend a couple of days simply running around with a baseball bat and trying to break every storefront. If a bug is found, it's logged in a company database, then passed along to the developers for a fix. A typical game can suffer nearly 15,000 bugs over the course of its development.

And sometimes it even takes a good accident to uncover a bug. That happened rather crucially while Nintendo was testing the Nintendo 64 destruction game *Blast Corps*. The company videotapes every hour of play testing, and this example shows why. Just three days before the game was to be approved, a game tester got up from his desk and went out for lunch. The car he was driving in the game was left plowing up against a wall. When the tester came back, he found that the car had somehow passed through the wall and was drifting out into the strange ether beyond the game's environment. The presses were stopped. The game was recorded just in the nick of time.

Other companies use more scientific tools to get to the heart of the problem: psychologists. Bill Fulton, the user-tester lead for Microsoft Games Studios, employs full-time psychologists who prepare detailed questionnaires for people who play-test the games. The doctors observe professional and



# Testers Wanted

## A guide to landing your first game gig

While you'll find thousands of tester positions available in the game biz, they're as competitive as you'd expect—especially since the job is a surefire way to get a foot in the door. What can you do to describe the bug you found and how you found it. "It's vital for our testers to be able to communicate in a concise and clear manner, both in writing and verbally," says Craig Hunter at VIS.

You should also change the way you look at games. "I usually ask the people to think of their favorite game and talk about it," says Peter Wong, a product manager for Microsoft Games. "What I'm wanting to hear is a deeper, more thorough analysis.

Think about the small details." On top of all that, of course, you'll need a passion for games and a quick grasp of technology. (Besides just testing, you may be required to take screenshot captures, work with databases and specialized programs, and perform other techie tasks.) And you may need to relocate to stand a chance. Although you'll find game-development studios everywhere from New York to North Carolina to Chicago to Texas, most of them cluster on the West Coast.

volunteer testers for up to two hours at a time while the players run through the games. In 2003, they tested 6,500 participants in 270 tests on 70 different titles. One such test used in *Halo*, for instance, showed that gamers had varying assumptions about which way their character would look when they pushed the joypad stick up. "There's nothing worse than trying to shoot someone on the second floor," Fulton says, "and shooting your feet." The game was then changed to accommodate a gamer's viewing preference.

But while the testers themselves feel accomplished at finding such crucial snafus in a game, the developers don't necessarily share in their revelry. "It's probably more frustrating for the developers who have to fix it!" says Craig Hunter, a producer at game studio VIS.

This creates a notoriously tense relationship between the two groups. "There's always going to be a conflict in delivering those messages," says Rich Rogers, a producer for Sony Computer Entertainment America. Gary Rondez, lead tester for the PS2 motocross racer *FreeStyle*, admits that being the frequent bearer of bad news affects how testers are perceived. "Everyone thinks we're the lower end of the spectrum," he says, "...the grunts in the army. But we're just going out and doing the job. That's what they hired us to do."

Back at Rockstar, Williams finishes his mission. The game passes muster. Soon he will be on to the next one. And when it comes, he'll be ready to play it...and break it to bits.

—David Kushner

Now that you're ready for the job, peruse these tools for finding game-testing opportunities in the industry....

### • Cooljobs.com

([www.cooljobs.com](http://www.cooljobs.com)) In addition to offering job listings for cool gigs like counter-terrorism and clowning, this site has a section devoted to "electronic-game design." Recent listings include a position testing games for EA.

### • Qajobs.net

([www.qajobs.net](http://www.qajobs.net)) An exhaustive resource for "quality assurance" personnel, this site lists positions according to job, salary and location. You can also register as a candidate for prospective employers who come to troll the site for recruits.

### • Microsoft Playtest

(<http://www.microsoft.com/playtest>) Microsoft enlists play-test volunteers here. To qualify, gamers need to be at least 16 and willing to spend some time in the Seattle area, where the campus is located.

### • Entertainmentcareers.net

(<http://entertainmentcareers.net/sbjobs/>) Check under the Multimedia/Video game category for listings of companies seeking game testers.

### • Gamespot Beta Test Center

(<http://gamespot.com/gamespot/stories/flat/0,11963,2636409,00.html>)

This address is a bitch to type in, but it leads to a great repository for companies seeking people to beta test new PC games from home.



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PlayStation 2



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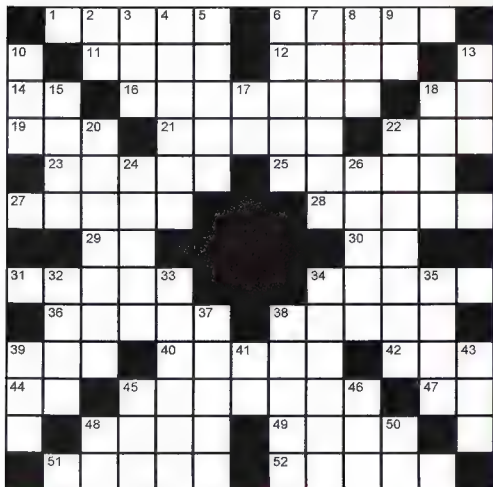


DVD FOR FREE

Now through Nov. 2, 2002, when you buy an Xbox and the DVD Player Kit, you'll be eligible for a \$30 mail-in rebate, making the DVD kit (basically) free!

## Why, Halo

(Solution on page 329)



### ACROSS

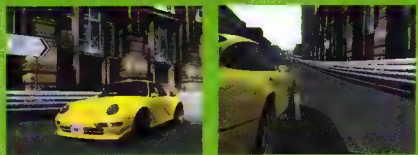
1. *Contra*: Hard (Genesis)
6. UFC Publisher
11. Halo novel, *The \_ of Reach*
12. Xbox driver *Wreck\_*
14. Ms. Pac-Man, to Jr. Pac-Man
16. Halo's Needler, Pistol...
18. *Shaq\_* (Genesis)
19. Used to digitize full-motion video
21. Sends your console's signal to a TV
22. Capcom's *Devil* may do this
23. *Zelda*: *Ocarina of Time*'s Epona
25. Lent voice to Activision's *Spider-Man*
27. Grants gamers' cheating wishes
28. \_ of *Thunder* (TurboDuo)
29. Makes *Quakes*
30. Type of strategy game (abbrv.)
31. Mario's new, not-so-secret weapon
34. Dreamcast, to the hip-hop community?
36. *Zelda*: OOT's mountain city
38. Halo's Derelict is one, for multiplayer
39. *Hunt \_ Red October* (SNES)
40. *Kingdom Hearts* vents-summon
42. *Army Men*: \_ *Attack* (PS1)
44. Leon S. Kennedy's employer, RC \_
45. Rayman's benefactor
47. *Madden NFL 2003* position (abbrv.)
48. PS1 shooter \_*osoma*
49. *NBA Street*'s B-Ball surface?
51. Uses weights in *Olympic Summer Games* (PS1)
52. *Final Fantasy* movie didn't win one

### DOWN

2. Sony's *The Mark \_ Kri*
3. Xbox WWF title
4. "Magic word" when asking for a game
5. Dreamcast's \_ *Zero*
6. *Final Fantasy VII* (PS1) hero
7. You usually get five days to finish one
8. *Shrek*'s kart-racing donkey
9. Against, in fighting games
10. Low-level *Doom* (PS1) baddie
13. *Final Fighter*-turned-*Street Fighter*
15. Thumbs do it after many games
17. Shooter on 3DO system \_*ed*
18. Goes *Bedrock Bowling* (PS1)
20. Halo tour guide, for a while
22. Palm-sized pal in *Halo*
24. *Gallop Racer* (PS2) jockey
26. Powers *Jedi Starfighter* (Xbox)
28. Overhead from the undefeated Mark MacDonald during *Halo*, "I am \_!"
33. *Jumping Flash*'s (PS1) flashy jumper
34. Lets the car side in *Gran Turismo 3*
35. *Final Fantasy* (NES) boat type
37. Ammo for *Quake*'s (NG4) nailgun
38. *Double Dragon*'s big guy
39. Halo's genre, for short
41. Owns Halo-maker Bungie (abbrv.)
43. *World Series Baseball* (Xbox) stat
45. Wireless-cable-gaming frequency
46. Super Nintendo un-killer app *TNN Boss*: \_ (abbrv.)
48. Part of Pac-Man's waist size?
50. Pac-Man, to Jr. Pac-Man

## Gotham Sequel to Hit in 2004

As Microsoft's Xbox event in NYC had people, we saw the reveal of the new Gotham: *Timeline of Events* and *Play*. Although the final game is due in 2004, there's a lot to see here. The first one is *Timeline of Events*, which is a... (text is blurry and partially obscured by a green overlay)



## Lunar Legend Lands In America

*Lunar Legend*, the portable version of the first title in Game Arts' acclaimed *Lunar* RPG series (which has been seen previously on PlayStation and Sega CD in the U.S.), has finally been confirmed for a stateside release. But it's not by the company many role-playing fanatics would expect. Ubi Soft will do the honors this time around, and the good news is you won't have to wait long before getting a chance to play it—*Legend* will be out in November.









PRESS  
START



## WOMB RAIDER

We'd bet there aren't many kids out there named Turok, but there might be a few more after Acclaim's "Turok: Evolution Baby-Naming Contest." In perhaps the most shameless video-game promotion ever, Acclaim ran a contest to give away \$50,000 in U.S. savings bonds to the first child born on Sept. 1, 2002 and given the name Turok. (The catch? The kid has to keep the name for one full year.) We're not sure whether to laugh or cry.

# Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

'Sup homies? It's your streetwise rumor collector, The Q, here to rock your world with gnarly tidbits of gossipy goodness scrounged from the darkest depths of the game industry. This month yours truly has a huge amount of Square-related news to dump upon ya (in addition to a bunch of other schtuff). So lemme back up the truck and spill it:

## Skip XI and Go Right to XII

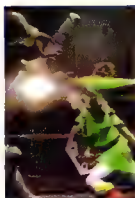
...Kicking off the Square rumorpalooza this month is word that *Final Fantasy XI*, the online installment of the series that gamers are currently enjoying in Japan, **may not get a stateside release** at all. Why? With the servers to maintain and police, technical support to give, and games to monitor, the RPG maker's U.S. operation can't do it alone. Only someone the size of EA or Sony could lay the proper groundwork. Without that, the game may have to skip a U.S. release entirely. What does that mean to you, the scrawny lil' American gamer already in the midst of posting this tasty rumor on message boards across the Internet? Three possibilities. One, Square secures a partner to do the dirty work and the game's released here next year no problem. Or, the next *Final Fantasy* to be released on PS2 in the U.S. could be *XIII*, skipping over *XI* entirely. The final option is that one or all of the three *Final Fantasy* *Golds* based on *FFX* scheduled for release in the near future in Japan may be brought to America as *XI*....



...While we're all waiting for *Halo 2*, we have one more game from the guys at Bungie to look forward to. Previously known as Project Phoenix, Bungie's next title has been re-named (it'd be a breach of national security to tell you what that name is, though), and it's a bit of a departure from the likes of *Halo*: Details are scant, but a recent dumpster-diving mission near the developer's HQ revealed that the game has a medieval theme. Either that or I dug up discarded pictures from someone's trip to a Renaissance Faire....

## More Zelda On The Way

...We don't even have our hands on the GameCube *Legend of Zelda*, and already The Q's sources have reported in on another Hyrulean adventure: Nintendo's U.S. development house, Nintendo Software Technologies, is working on **something Zelda-related**. The transmissions are a bit fuzzy at this point, but it may be the long-rumored GameCube remakes of *Ocarina of Time* and *Majora's Mask* (the two N64 *Zeldas*) with a shiny new coat of paint....



## Bungie Gets Medieval On Your Asses

...While we're all waiting for *Halo 2*, we have one more game from the guys at Bungie to look forward to. Previously known as Project Phoenix, Bungie's next title has been re-named (it'd be a breach of national security to tell you what that name is, though), and it's a bit of a departure from the likes of *Halo*: Details are scant, but a recent dumpster-diving mission near the developer's HQ revealed that the game has a medieval theme. Either that or I dug up discarded pictures from someone's trip to a Renaissance Faire....

## Square GBA/GC Releases in the U.S.?

...Square's still mum on the topic of how their GBA and GC releases will come out in America. But The Q's sources hear that one other than Nintendo will publish their 'Cube title, *Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicle*, in the U.S. in 2003 (just as they are in Japan). As for the GBA games, it's expected that Square will self-publish those in both territories (U.S. and Japan).

## Final Fantasy I and II To See U.S. Release?

...Another tidbit of note The Q picked up on recently is the chance that the PS1 remakes of *Final Fantasy I* and *II* will see stateside releases. The story goes like this: When word of the upcoming Japanese releases of these classic quests hit the streets, gaming retailers began to knock on Square's door wondering when they might come to the U.S. Up until retailers started asking, there was no plan to bring them here. But I hear the forecast calls for winds of change, and if the rumors are to be believed, you might just be playing the earliest of FFS before too long at a value-conscious price....



## The Hot Q: Mother 3 On GBA

...You may remember a few issues back The Q told you about rumblings from the bowels of Nintendo of a *Mother* game for Game Boy Advance. (The only game in the *Mother* series released in the U.S. was the 16-bit Super NES cult fave *Earthbound*.) And indeed The Q was correct, but the upcoming title is not a port or remake of a previous game. Instead, The Q has heard recently that the original scenario from the cancelled *Mother 3* (for N64) is being adapted to GBA by a second party, most likely Brownie Brown. Expect official news on this shortly—maybe even by the time you read these very words....

**Time to call it a day, folks. Well this month's section kicked ass Ecks vs. Sever-style if I do say so myself. If you want to write this of skipper on the good ship Gaming Gossip, get on yer computer and drop an e-mail to quartermann@ziffdavis.com with any comments or questions you might have. Until next time, "may the luck of the Seven Pillars of Beelzebub be with you at all times!" (And if you can tell me what movie that's from, give yourself a cookie.)**

—The Q

## Bits of Q

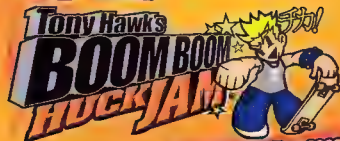
■ A *Mega Man Battle Network* title (starring Capcom's blue bomber, at work) is in the rights for GameCube.



■ *Half-Life 2* is coming to Xbox.  
■ Capcom's *Onimusha 3* will be the final (at least, there ain't gonna-be any more) installment of the series.  
■ In the next chapter of *Legacy of Kain*, the two splinter series, *Blood Omen* and *Soul Reaver*, will become one.

■ A massively multiplayer online RPG set in the Marvel Universe is in development for PC and console.  
■ A PS2 version of the *America's Army* game recently released on PC is in development and might (like the PC version) also be distributed free at Army recruiting centers.

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a triple threat.



PlayStation 2

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IS IN YOUR HANDS.  
BOTH OF THEM.**

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# YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BREAK THE DEFENSE ANY WAY YOU SEE FIT.

Put together fiendish combinations of 100 new moves and exploit the D. If you cannot afford room for a jumper, room will be provided for you with a little stutter-step fade-away action. Crowded lanes beg to be taken apart with your patented brand of hole-picking-360°-spinning-crossover artistry. String 'em out, spin 'em 'round, leave 'em crying and finish big.



# YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO DEFEND AGAINST ANY OFFENSIVE FREEDOMS.

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UNDERSTAND THE RIGHTS OF  
**EA SPORTS FREESTYLE CONTROL**

IT'S HARDWOOD MAGIC IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND.  
SET YOURSELF FREE.



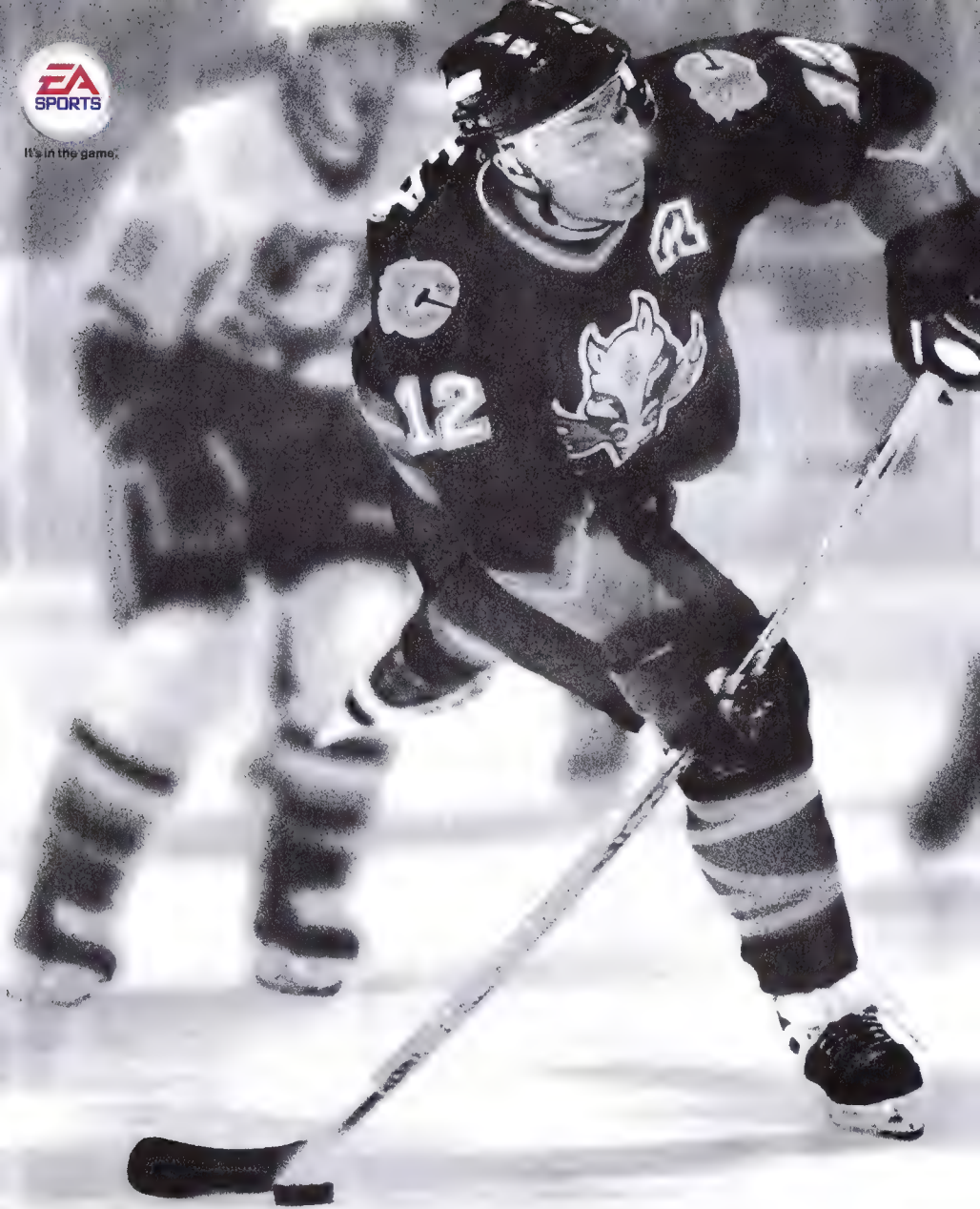








It's in the game.



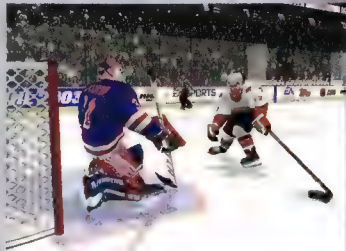
EVERYONE  
**E**  
CONTENT RATED BY  
ESRB  
Comic Mischief  
Violence

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2003



PlayStation 2

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**Every great magician uses a magic wand.  
This one makes frozen rubber disappear.**



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START

# Charts - July 2002

TOP 20 BEST-SELLING GAMES								
1	<b>NCAA Football 2003</b> EA Sports	9.5 Dan L	9.0 Dean	8.5 Jonathan	PS2			
2	<b>Grand Theft Auto III</b> Rockstar	9.0 Crispin	9.0 Greg	10 Milkman	PS2			
3	<b>Medal of Honor: Frontline</b> EA Games	8.0 Crispin	9.0 Kraig	8.0 Mark	PS2			
4	<b>Stuntman</b> Atari				PS2			
5	<b>Gran Turismo 3 A-spec</b> Sony CEA				PS2			
6	<b>MLB Slugfest 20-03</b> Midway				PS2			
7	<b>Dragon Ball Z: The Legacy of Goku</b> Infogrames				GAME BOY ADVANCE			
8	<b>Super Mario Advance 2</b> Nintendo				GAME BOY ADVANCE			
9	<b>Yu-Gi-Oh! Dark Duel Stories</b> Konami				GAME BOY COLOR			
10	<b>Halo</b> Microsoft				XBOX			
11	<b>NCAA Football 2003</b> EA Sports				PS2			
12	<b>Yu-Gi-Oh! Forbidden Memories</b> Konami				PS2			
13	<b>Midnight Club</b> Rockstar				PS2			
14	<b>Spider-Man</b> Activision				PS2			
15	<b>Digimon World 3</b> Bandai				PS2			
16	<b>ATV Offroad Fury</b> Sony CEA				PS2			
17	<b>Resident Evil Code: Veronica X</b> Capcom				PS2			
18	<b>Super Smash Bros. Melee</b> Nintendo				GAME BOY ADVANCE			
19	<b>Sonic Advance</b> THQ				GAME BOY ADVANCE			
20	<b>Spider-Man</b> Activision				PS2			

TOP 10 RENTALS		BLOCKBUSTER
1	<b>Stuntman</b> PS2 Atari	
2	<b>Medal of Honor: Frontline</b> PS2 EA Games	
3	<b>Test Drive</b> PS2 Atari	
4	<b>Spider-Man</b> PS2 Activision	
5	<b>Men In Black II: Alien Escape</b> PS2 Infogrames	
6	<b>Freestyle</b> PS2 EA Big	
7	<b>Grand Theft Auto III</b> PS2 Rockstar	
8	<b>Bruce Lee: Quest of the Dragon</b> X Universal Interactive	
9	<b>All-Star Baseball 2003</b> PS2 Acclaim	
10	<b>Way of the Samurai</b> PS2 Bam!	

Source: Blockbuster Video, July 2002

TOP 10 BEST-SELLING GAMES IN JAPAN		
1	<b>Gundam: Lost War Chronicles</b> PS2 Bandai	For being almost a month old by this chart, <i>Mario Sunshine</i> 's still doing pretty well in Japan with over 500,000 units sold so far — not bad for a plumber coming off a six-year vacation. But the real surprise is the new <i>Dragon Ball Z</i> game for GBC slotting in at number five on the chart. For an anime series that ended over 10 years ago, that's pretty good.
2	<b>Super Robot Wars R</b> PS2 Banpresto	
3	<b>Super Mario Sunshine</b> NINTENDO Nintendo	
4	<b>Pachislot Aruze Kingdom 7</b> Japan Amusement Broadcasting PS2	
5	<b>Dragon Ball Z: Cho-Senshitachi</b> Banpresto Color	
6	<b>RPG School 5</b> Enterbrain	
7	<b>Powerful Pro Baseball 9</b> Konami	
8	<b>My Summer Vacation 2</b> Sony CEI	
9	<b>Ape Escape 2</b> Sony CEI	
10	<b>Air</b> NEC Interchannel	

Source: Weekly Famitsu, week ending 8/12/02

Source: NPD TRS-5 Video Games Service; Call Kristin Bannett-von Korff at (310) 635-7261 for questions regarding this list.

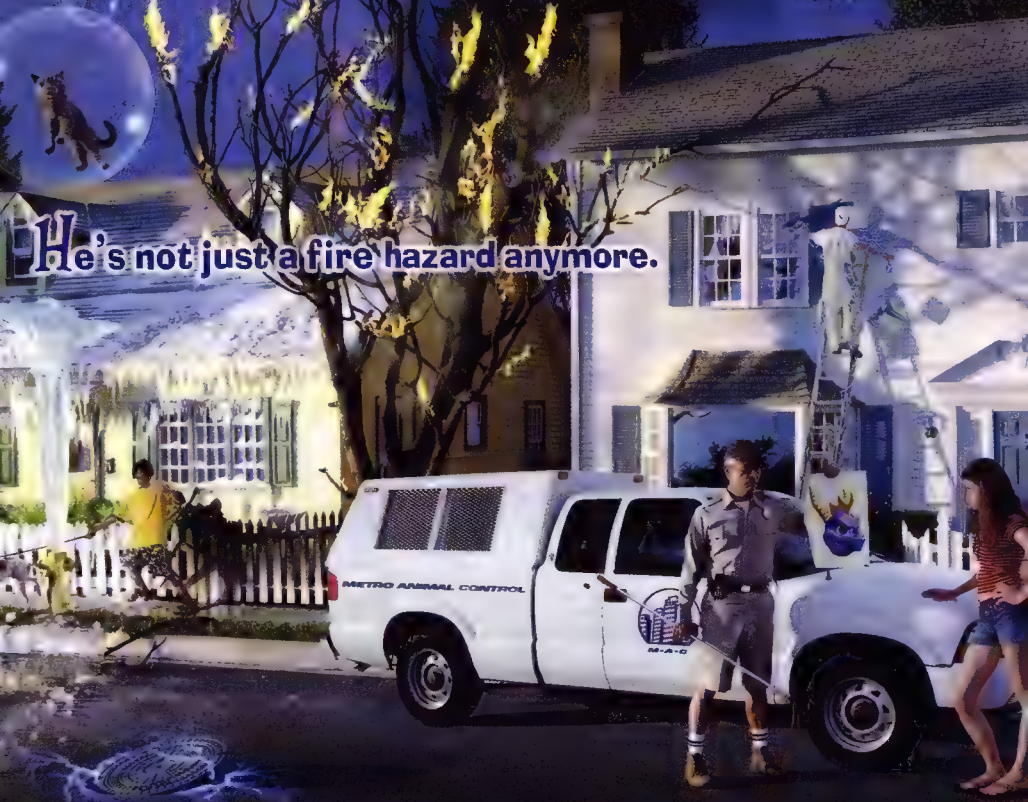


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www.spyrogame.com/enterthedragonfly

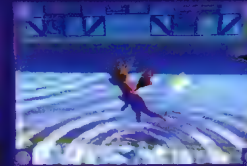
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## Coming Soon

### October

PlayStation 2	
Ballistic: Ecks Vs. Sever—Bam	Action
BloodRayne—Majesco	Action
Burnout 2: Point of Impact—Acclaim	Racing
Dragon's Lair 3D—Encore Software	Action
Evolution Skateboarding—Konami	Sports
Fighter Maker 2—Agetec	Fighting
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City—Rockstar	Action
.hack—Bandai	RPG
Hot Wheels Velocity X—THQ	Racing
Jet X20—Sony CEA	Racing
Legia 2: Duel Saga—Fresh Games	RPG
Legends of Wrestling 2—Acclaim	Action
Lost, The—Crave	Action
NBA 2K3—Sega Sports	Sports
NBA Live 2003—EA Sports	Sports
NHL 2003—EA Sports	Sports
NHL 2K3—Sega Sports	Sports
Simpsons Skateboarding—EA Games	Sports
Sub Rebellion—Metroid3	Shooter
Terminator: Dawn of Fate—Atari	Action
Tribes: Aerial Assault—Sierra	Action
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger—EA Games	Action
X-Men: The Next Dimension—Activision	Fighting
GameCube	
BloodRayne—Majesco	Action
Broadband Adapter—Nintendo	Hardware
Dragon's Lair 3D—Encore Software	Action
Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters—Infogrames	Fighting
Legends of Wrestling 2—Acclaim	Action
Mario Party 4—Nintendo	Party
Modem Adapter—Nintendo	Hardware
NASCAR Thunder 2003—EA Sports	Racing
NBA 2K3—Sega Sports	Sports
NCAA College Basketball 2K3—Sega Sports	Sports
NHL 2003—EA Sports	Sports
NHL 2K3—Sega Sports	Sports
Phantasy Star Online: Episodes I&II—Sega	RPG
Resident Evil 6—Capcom	Adventure
Swingerz Golf—Fresh Games	Sports
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger—EA Games	Action
Xbox	
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance—Interplay	Action
Blinx: The Time Sweeper—Microsoft	Action
BloodRayne—Majesco	Action
Crimson Skies—Microsoft	Shooting
Fatal Frame—Tecmo	Action
Hitman 2: Silent Assassins—Eidos	Action
House of the Dead III, The—Sega	Shooting
Legends of Wrestling 2—Acclaim	Action
NBA Inside Drive—Microsoft	Sports
NBA Live 2003—EA Sports	Sports
NHL 2K3—Sega Sports	Sports
Phantom Crash—Phantagram	RPG
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Rep.—LucasArts	Action
Terminator: Dawn of Fate—Atari	Action
Toejam & Earl III: All Funked Up—Sega	Adventure
Toxic Grind—THQ	Action
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger—EA Games	Action
Whacked!—Microsoft	Misc.
Game Boy Advance	
Defender of the Crown—Cinemaware	Action

Driver 2 Advance—Atari	Action
Game & Watch Gallery 4—Nintendo	Misc.
Godzilla: Domination—Atari	Action
Hamtaro (GBC)—Nintendo	Misc.
Robotech: The Macross Saga—TDK	Action
Star Wars Episode II: The New Droid Army—THQ	Action
WWE Road to Wrestlemania X8—THQ	Action
Yu-Gi-Oh! Eternal Duelist Soul—Konami	RPG

### November

PlayStation 2	
Grand Theft Auto Compilation—Rockstar	Action
PlayStation 2	
ATV Offroad Fury 2—Sony CEA	Racing
Batman: Dark Tomorrow—Kemco	Action
Battlebots—THQ	Action
BMX XXX—Acclaim	Sports
Contra: Shattered Soldier—Konami	Shooter
Dance Dance Revolution MAX—Konami	Misc.
Defender—Midway	Action
Disney's PK: Out of the Shadows—Ubi Soft	Action
Dr. Muto—Midway	Action
FIFA Soccer 2003—EA Sports	Sports
Harry Potter: Chamber of Secrets—EA Games	Action
Haven: Call of the King—Midway	Action
James Bond 007: NightFire—EA Games	Action
Legends of Wrestling 2—Acclaim	Action
Lord of the Rings: Fellowship—Universal	Action
Lord of the Rings: Two Towers—EA Games	Action
Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter—Crave	Action
Malice—Universal	Action
Minority Report—Activision	Action
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance—Midway	Fighting
NASCAR Heat 2—Infogrames	Racing
RAD: Robot Alchemic Drive—Enix	Action
Ratchet & Clank—Sony CEA	Action
Red Faction II—THQ	Action
Rocky—Ubi Soft	Sports
Rygar: The Legendary Adventure—Tecmo	Action
Shinobi—Sega	Action
Sims, The—EA Games	Misc.
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly—Universal	Action
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter—LucasArts	Action
Star Wars: The Clone Wars—LucasArts	Action
Suikoden III—Konami	RPG
Super Bust-A-Move 2—Ubi Soft	Puzzle
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003—EA Sports	Sports
Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness—Eidos	Adventure
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4—Activision 02	Sports
Treasure Planet—Sony CEA	Action
Vexx—Acclaim	Action
Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions—Activision	Action
WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth—THQ	Action
GameCube	
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance—Interplay	Action
Batman: Dark Tomorrow—Kemco	Action
Battlebots—THQ	Action
BMX XXX—Acclaim	Sports
Cubivore—Attus	Misc.
Defender—Midway	Action
Disney Sports Basketball—Konami	Sports
Disney Sports Football—Konami	Sports
Disney Sports Skateboarding—Konami	Sports

Disney Sports Soccer—Konami	Sports
Disney's PK: Out of the Shadows—Ubi Soft	Action
Evolution Worlds—Ubi Soft	RPG
FIFA Soccer 2003—EA Sports	Sports
Harry Potter: Chamber of Secrets—EA Games	Action
James Bond 007: NightFire—EA Games	Action
Legends of Wrestling 2—Acclaim	Action
Medal of Honor: Frontline—EA Games	Action
Metroid Prime—Nintendo	Action
Minority Report—Activision	Action
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance—Midway	Fighting
NBA Live 2003—EA Sports	Sports
Rocky—Ubi Soft	Sports
Sonic the Hedgehog Mega Collection—Sega	Action
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly—Universal	Action
Star Wars: The Clone Wars—LucasArts	Action
Street Hoops—Activision	Sports
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003—EA Sports	Sports
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4—Activision 02	Sports
Vexx—Acclaim	Action
Warrio World—Nintendo	Action

Xbox	
Batman: Dark Tomorrow—Kemco	Action
BMX XXX—Acclaim	Sports
Brute Force—Microsoft	Action
Crimson Sea—Koei	Action
Defender—Midway	Action
DOA Xtreme Beach Volleyball—Tecmo	Sports
Dr. Muto—Midway	Action
Dragon's Lair 3D—Ubi Soft	Action
Fire Blade—Midway	Action
James Bond 007: NightFire—EA Games	Action
Kakuto Chojin—Microsoft	Fighting
Legends of Wrestling 2—Acclaim	Action
Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter—Crave	Action
Malice—Universal	Action
MechAssault—Microsoft	Action
Medal of Honor: Frontline—EA Games	Action
Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance—Konami	Action
Minority Report—Activision	Action
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance—Midway	Fighting
MX Superfly—THQ	Sports
Panzer Dragon Orta—Sega	Action
Rocky—Ubi Soft	Sports
Steel Battalion—Capcom	Action
Superman: The Man of Steel—Infogrames	Action
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon—Ubi Soft	Action
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell—Ubi Soft	Action
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4—Activision 02	Sports
Unreal Championship—Infogrames	Action
Vexx—Acclaim	Action
Xbox Live Starter Kit—Microsoft	Hardware
Game Boy Advance	
Altered Beast: Guardian of the Realms—THQ	Action
Contra Advance—Konami	Shooter
Dragon Ball Z (GBC)—Infogrames	Action
Harry Potter: Chamber of Secrets—EA Games	Action
Justice League: Injustice for All—Midway	Action
Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers—EA Games	Action
Lunar Legend—Ubi Soft	RPG
Metroid Fusion—Nintendo	Action
Monster Rancher Advance 2—Tecmo	Misc.
Phantasy Star Collection—THQ	RPG
Revenge of Shinobi—THQ	Action



## Want to know how realistic NFL Fever '03 is? Take a number.

- 1 - Dramatic camera angles take you all over the field
- 2 - Go from clipboard holder to MVP in Career Mode
- 3 - Someone should've used the bump-n-run
- 4 - Use Hot Routes to exploit the defense
- 5 - Player physiques from L to XXXXXL
- 6 - Tougher AI anticipates your moves
- 7 - Where you sweat — they sweat
- 8 - Helmets that reflect the playing environment
- 9 - Unique player faces
- 10 - NFL newbies, the Houston Texans
- 11 - Shirtless guy with a painted face being loud
- 12 - Take your game into the ultimate broadband arena by playing online with *Xbox Live*
- 13 - Create killer plays and use them to shock the nation on *Xbox Live*
- 14 - *Xbox Live* Opti-Match links up players of equal rank
- 15 - Trash-talk faceless foes with an *Xbox Live* communicator
- 16 - Download updated player rosters on *Xbox Live*

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**Hsu and Chan**  
GAME DESIGNERS IN...

**First Person!**

HE SAID YOU WALKED FORWARD.

WHOA, HEY.

HELLO, VIDEO GAMERS! I'M HSU TANAKA, THAT'S MY BROTHER CHAN, AND I'M HOLDING A BOX OF DYNAMINE AND AN INDUSTRIAL-SIZE VOMIT BAG, BECAUSE TODAY'S TOPIC IS FIRST-PERSON SHOOTERS!

ALREADY MY STOMACH LURIES IN ANTICIPATION!

WHOA, BOY! CHAN?

Hsu HAS EXPRESSED SOME APPREHENSION ABOUT DOING THIS ONE, AS HE HAS PROVEN EXCEPTIONALLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE EFFECTS OF MOTION SICKNESS, A PROBLEM THIS GENRE.

AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE LAST FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER Hsu HAS MANAGED TO LAST MORE THAN THREE MINUTES ON WITHOUT KEELING OVER WAS "DUCK HUNT" FOR THE NINE AND SEVEN THAT WAS A CLOSE CALL...

OH, MAN, THE DOGS LEFT ME AT THE HORN! HORN!

BUT PERHAPS THE MORE IMPORTANT ISSUE HERE IS THE QUESTION OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THESE GAMES -- TO WIT, WOULD THE PHRASE "FIRST-PERSON" BE USED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO PRECEDE "SHOOTER"?

WHY? IS THE MAIN HALLMARK OF THE ONLY GENRE TO DROP YOU LITERALLY IN THE SHOES OF A CHARACTER AN UNRELENTING STREAM OF VIOLENCE AND BLOODSHED?

BESIDES SALES FIGURES, OF COURSE.

THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS, AND IN THESE TIMES OF WIDE AND ETHICAL AMBIGUITY, NO LACK OF FINGER-POINTING, EITHER.

INDEED, PARENTS GROUPS HAVE BEEN QUICK TO VOICE THEIR CONCERNS THAT EXTENDED EXPOSURE TO THESE TITLES MAY WELL BE TAINTING THE YOUTH OF TODAY...

...UNWITTINGLY BREEDING A RACE OF CONSCIENCELESS KILLERS, WHO HOP AROUND IN A HIGHLY UNREALISTIC FASHION AT HIGH SPEEDS, NEVER TURNING THEIR HEADS TO EITHER SIDE, AND BECOMING NIGHT-INVINCIBLE BY RUNNING OVER SPECIAL, GLOWING POWER-UPS!

OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. I DIDN'T ACTUALLY MAKE IT ALL THE WAY THROUGH.

THE POINT IS, THERE'S TROUBLE AFOOT!

ENTER THE CHANCAM, FIRST IN A CUSTOM LINE OF RESEARCH EQUIP- MENT, CRAFTED FROM THE FINEST MATERIALS EVER TO BE FOUND IN THE LOCAL HARDWARE STORE, AND ASSEMBLED IN AN AFTERNOON, ONE OR TAKE!

EXPLAIN THIS SUCKER, Hsu!

THE PURPOSE OF CHANCAM-1 IS TO AID IN CREATING NEW AND LESS-VIOLENT SUB-GENRES IN THE FIRST-PERSON GENRE, ALTHOUGH OF COURSE WE DRAW THE LINE AT BEING OUTRIGHT SOCIALLY PRODUCTIVE. WE WANT THESE GAMES TO SELL, AFTER ALL.

OUR FIRST PLAN WAS TO ATTACH THE CHANCAM TO ONE OF OUR OWN HEADS, AND THEN MONITOR OUR ACTIVITIES OVER THE COURSE OF A DAY TO SEE IF ANYTHING WE DID WOULD BE SUITABLE FOR BUILDING A GAME AROUND...

ALAS, IT WAS NOT TO BE. ALL THAT WAS DEFINITELY GATHERED FROM THIS RESEARCH WAS THAT WE LEAVE THE HOUSE WORKFULLY FEW TIMES ON ANY GIVEN DAY, AND EVEN THEN, ALMOST NEVER FOR ANYTHING INTERESTING.

WE THOUGHT WE WERE ONTO SOMETHING WHEN A RUBBER-BAND FIGHT BROKE OUT, BUT THAT WAS CUT SHORT WHEN ONE PARTY HIT ANOTHER IN THE EYE, AND WHAT FOLLOWED ON THE TAPE WAS A STREAM OF CURSING SO LOUD AND VILE AS TO RENDER THE PLAYBACK FUNCTION INOPERABLE, TO SAY NOTHING OF THE DAMAGE TO THE PLANTS AND WALL PAPER.

SORRY, PELLAS.

OTHER THAN THAT, THE FOOTAGE WE GATHERED TOTALLED APPROXIMATELY TWENTY-ONE HOURS OF FINGER-TAPPING, TOENAIL- CLIPPING, WALKING BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN ROOMS, AND HOLDING DULL, MEANDERING CONVERSATIONS WITH BORING PEOPLE...

SO, BASICALLY, "SHEM'NUS" WITHOUT THE ACTION SEQUENCES. WE NEEDED BETTER!

THIS BRINGS US TO OUR CURRENT COURSE OF ACTION -- REALIZING THAT AN OFFERING OF FORCE IS BASICALLY A NECESSITY TO KEEP INTEREST IN A GAME, WE HAVE HIRED TWENTY THUGS...

... WHO HAVE BEEN GIVEN ORDERS TO ATTACK THE PERSON WEARING THE CHANCAM! AND WHO BETTER TO COME UP WITH NON-VIOLENT SOLUTIONS TO A SITUATION LIKE THIS THAN A PEACE- LOVING HIPPIE?

PUT THIS ON, GUY.

HEY, MAN!

HI, MOM!

THANKFULLY, SO LONG AS "PHI" RECORDS ARE STILL SELLING, OUR SWEETLY HIPPIE SUPPLY 'S PRETTY HIGH- BOTTOMLESS!

DON'T WORRY, CONCERNED GAMERS -- IT TOOK SOME REALLY TENSEY WRITING, BUT WE ACTUALLY SIGNED A RELEASE TO DO THIS, SO WE'RE IN THE CLEAR!

SIC 'EM, GUYS!

YARRG!!

WHOA.

MAN, WE SUCKS.

I MUST ADMIT, I WAS EXPECTING SOMETHING MORE MAGOVER-ESQUE.

OH, Y.

WHOA! MELLOW OUT, MAN!

WELL, SO MUCH FOR THAT.

HERE, SEND THIS OFF TO FURBYST HOME VIDEOS, AND FETCH THE NEXT CANDIDATE.

THANKFULLY, SO LONG AS "PHI" RECORDS ARE STILL SELLING, OUR SWEETLY HIPPIE SUPPLY 'S PRETTY HIGH- BOTTOMLESS!





## 112% NBA

Anyone can give 110%. NBA Inside Drive 2003 is now loaded with a 25-season dynasty mode that includes player management, timely trades, intense drafts, play design and stars that improve with age. Will purple reign? Will the windy city rise again? It's your team, kid.



More basketball than basketball

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

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PRESS  
START

Cont. from page 92

HSU AND CHAN'S OFFICIAL WEB SITE - [www.ape-law.com/evilmonkey](http://www.ape-law.com/evilmonkey)

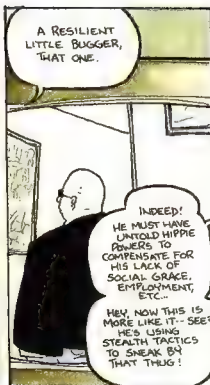
BUY HSU AND CHAN JUNK! - [www.cafeshops.com/hsuandchan](http://www.cafeshops.com/hsuandchan)



HSU - HANG ON A SECOND! LOOK! THE CHANCAM'S STILL BROADCASTING!

HE'S MOVING!

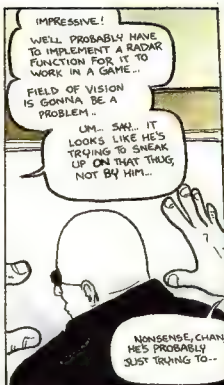
QUICK, GET SOME POPCORN!



A RESILIENT LITTLE BUGGER, THAT ONE.

INDEED! WE MUST HAVE UNTOLOD HIPPIE POWERS TO COMPENSATE FOR HIS LACK OF SOCIAL GRACE, EMPLOYMENT, ETC...

HEY, NOW THIS IS MORE LIKE IT - SEE? HE'S USING STEALTH TACTICS TO SNEAK BY THAT THING!



IMPRESSIVE!

WE'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO IMPLEMENT A RADAR FUNCTION FOR IT TO WORK IN A GAME...

FIELD OF VISION IS GONNA BE A PROBLEM...

OH... SH... IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S TRYING TO SNEAK UP ON THAT THING, NOT BY HIM!

NONSENSE, CHAN, HE'S PROBABLY JUST TRYING TO--



SNAP!



THAT WASN'T PEACE-LOVING AT ALL!

MAN!

YOU GIVE 'EM ONE STUPID PRINCIPLE TO LIVE BY AND THEY HAVE IT DOWN THEIR LEGS!

NO WONDER NOBODY LIKES 'EM!



WOUNDS OF RESEARCH DOWN THE DRAIN!

AND IT'S GONNA TAKE WEEKS TO GET THE STINK OUTTA HERE.

HSU - OUR PROBLEMS HAVE JUST INTENSIFIED.

HE'S FOUND THE SECRET MUNITIONS CACHE ON THE SECOND FLOOR!

HOLY CRAP!



SINCE WHEN DO WE HAVE A SECRET MUNITIONS CACHE IN THE OFFICE?

SINCE '95. DOOR-TO-DOOR MUNITIONS DEALER DROPPED BY AND YOU KNOW HOW I AM WITH SALESPEOPLE.

SO, UM, GOT ANY IDEAS? HE'S IN THE NEXT ROOM



I MAY... THINK CHAN - WHAT SINGLE, UNWRITING CONCEPT BEST SYMBOLIZED THE DECADE OF THE SEVENTIES AND ITS PEOPLE?

OF COURSE! WHOLESOME AND DELICIOUS HOSTESS' FRUIT PIES!



I ONLY PRAY THEY WORK IN TIME!



ONE PUEBIL RUSE LATER...

NOBODY CAN RESIST THE DELICIOUS FLAXY CRUST AND SELLY FILLING!

LAR OFF MAN, I'M CAUGHT ALREADY...

I'LL JUST TAKE THIS YOU UNHOLY AMALGAM OF FLOWER AND CHILD!



WELL, I THINK WE LEARNED A VALUABLE LESSON ABOUT FIRST-PERSON SHOOTERS, YOOHAI!

NO, WE DIDN'T WE LEARNED ABOUT SMELLY HIPPIES.

OH, YEAH, WELL, THEY'RE BAD NEWS, TOO. LET'S DO A PUZZLE GAME.



UNTIL NEXT TIME, VIDEO GAMERS, THIS IS HSU TAKAHARA, REMINDING YOU THAT... UM... YOU SHOULDN'T TRUST HIPPIES, I GUESS.

I DUNNO, TOOH WHO WERE.

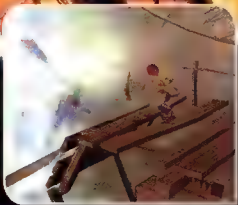
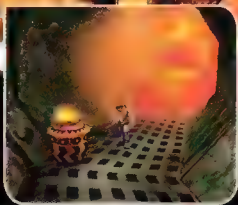
YOU GUYS DON'T EVEN HAVE ANY HOSTESS FRUIT PIES, DO YOU?

GET A HAIRCUT, HIPPIE! -IN SAIL!

END.

IT BEGINS AS A DREAM...





FREEFORMER™ ENGINE MOVES SEAMLESSLY BETWEEN RACING, SHOOTING, FLYING, GLIDING, BOATING AND DOG-FIGHTING GAMEPLAY IN A SEEMINGLY ENDLESS UNIVERSE!

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Mild Violence

Coming 2003

Fall 2002



GAME BOY ADVANCE

PlayStation 2



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The Midway logo, featuring a stylized 'M' and 'W' in red and white, followed by the word 'MIDWAY' in white capital letters.

...THEN IT GETS REAL.

# HAVEN

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# SMASH SIMULATED SURVIVAL

*The last thing to go through your mind will be your ass.*

## BURNOUT™ III POINT OF IMPACT



HEART RACING. POLICE SIRENS FLASHING BEHIND YOU. HANDS CLENCHING THE WHEEL AS YOU MANEUVER THROUGH THE MOST REALISTIC TRAFFIC SCENARIOS EVER DEVELOPED. EYES WATERING AS YOU WITNESS THE MOST REALISTIC AND HORRIFIC CRASHES EVER SEEN IN A GAME. MUSCLES TENSING AS YOU TRY TO MAINTAIN CONTROL THROUGH 30 ONE-ROAD STAGES. YOU'VE PICKED YOUR CAR FROM AN AUTOMOTIVE ARSENAL OF 14 ALL-NEW VEHICLES. HOPEFULLY, CAR AND DRIVER WILL SURVIVE THE POINT OF IMPACT. OR THE LAST THING TO GO THROUGH YOUR MIND WILL BE YOUR ASS.



Mild Violence

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# THE KING OF FIGHTS



PlayStation 2

**Acclaim**  
www.acclaim.com

# Previews

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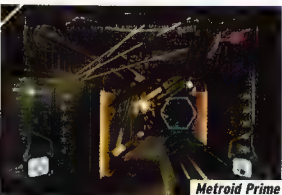


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Metroid Prime

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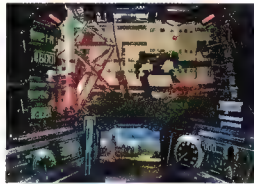


**WARNING:** Previews marked with international symbols may or may not be released in the U.S. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

I'm all for pushing the envelope. Sure, you can argue that some of the things in *Grand Theft Auto III*—like the senseless violence and the late-night rendezvous with hookers—are somewhat juvenile, and even set back the industry in the eyes of senators, parents groups and the like. But there was actually a good reason for the stuff in that game. It lent an air of authenticity—not to mention atmosphere—to what was a very good, very adult game. It's akin to the type of content you'd find in a gangster flick like *Goodfellas* or *The Sopranos*.

Then we come to *BMX XXX*, an action-sports game where you trick your way down an inner-city street, knocking over pimps, creating toplevel female bikers and listening to such witty comments as "Get your hot, salty nut sacks here!" or "I think I'll cut my husband's d\*\*\* off." Gimme a break. How does any of that stuff add to the experience of what is basically the latest version of *Dave Mirra BMX*?

Or I could be wrong. Maybe *BMX XXX* will be the shot in the arm the genre needs. After all, if it plays just like last



It's the mech simulator with the sweetest controller we've ever laid eyes, hands or feet on, and you can see what *Steel Battalion* is about starting on page 172.

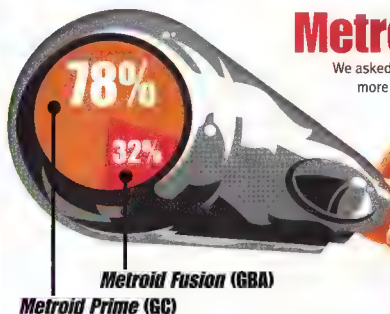
year's *Dave Mirra* (or even better), it should still be a good game, right? But I'm willing to bet that *BMX XXX* will just end up as ammo at the next congressional hearing to show how our nation's youth went awry.

Either way, one thing I'm almost positive about is that *XXX* will sell like crazy for the first few weeks after its release. So in the end, I guess Acclaim will accomplish its goal. No foul there—everyone's out to make a buck in this business. 🎮

—Previews Editor Greg Sewart

## TOP 5 Preview Picks

- |                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <b>Metroid Prime</b>   | GC, Nov. 18, 2002   |
| 2. <b>Steel Battalion</b> | Xbox, November 2002 |
| 3. <b>Devil May Cry 2</b> | PS2, January 2003   |
| 4. <b>Metroid Fusion</b>  | GBA, Nov. 18, 2002  |
| 5. <b>Red Faction II</b>  | PS2, Oct. 29, 2002  |



## Metroid Madness

We asked you, our readers, which *Metroid* you were more excited about: the 3D *GameCube Prime* or the 2D *Game Boy Advance Fusion*.

Source: Gamers.com poll, 8/02



# MINORITY REPORT

STEVEN SPIELBERG'S FUTURISTIC THRILLER EXPLODES  
ONTO ALL NEXT GEN GAMING SYSTEMS.

FALL 2002

## EVERYBODY RUNS

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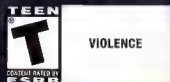
PlayStation 2



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GAME BOY ADVANCE



DREAMWORKS



ACTIVISION

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# Devil May Cry 2

<b>Publisher:</b>	Capcom
<b>Developer:</b>	Capcom
<b>Players:</b>	1
<b>Genre:</b>	Action-adventure
<b>% Done:</b>	30%
<b>Release:</b>	January 2003
<b>Age In:</b>	None
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.capcom.com
<b>The Good:</b>	With a bunch of new moves, Dante is cooler than ever.
<b>The Bad:</b>	You won't see this game under the Christmas tree.
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	Have you ever seen a devil cry? It ain't pretty.

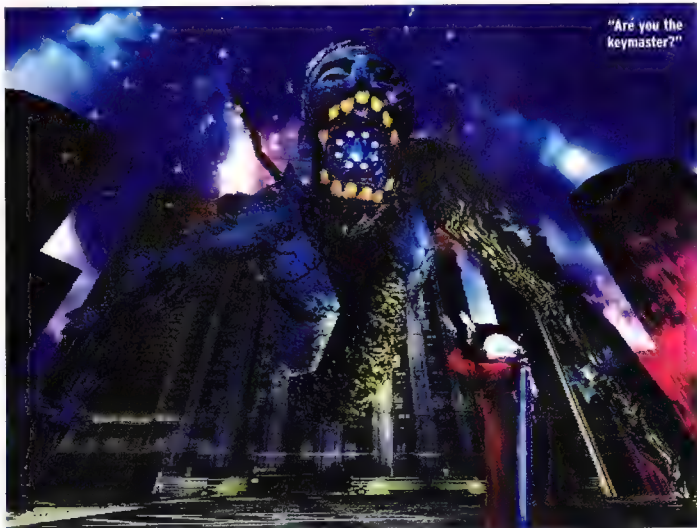
## NEW CHARACTER

### She-Devil



"A lot of people who played *DMC* were disappointed that Trish wasn't a playable character," says Tsuyoshi Tanaka, producer of *DMC2*. "So that's why it's important we're introducing Lucia as a playable character in *DMC2*." Two playable characters mean you'll be able to double your pleasure and go through the game twice—once as Dante and once as Lucia (above).

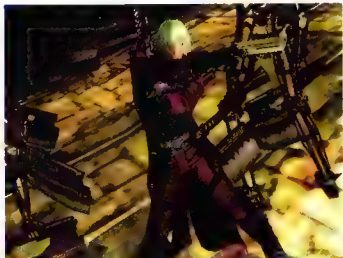
Aside from their branching, yet intertwining storylines, the characters will also control differently. Lucia, who wields a double scythe, is the quicker of the two and extremely deadly at close range. "We toyed with the idea of making Dante kind of like James Bond, where in each game, he has different female support characters," says Tanaka.



Tsuyoshi Tanaka used to write about video games for a living. These days, he's on the other side of the biz making one of Capcom's biggest sequels in recent years: *Devil May Cry 2*. "The hardest part about going from writing to actually making a game is the number of people involved," he tells us while entrenched in a busy workweek at Capcom's development studios in Osaka, Japan. "When you're writing, you just worry about your text and maybe the layout of the page. But when it comes to making games, you've got to coordinate maybe 50 people to finish one task...now that's difficult." Add the fact that this is Tanaka's debut title, and it's practically a miracle *DMC2* manages to meet our expectations at all.

Yet, just minutes into the gameplay demo, we can already tell that *Devil 2* is in good hands. "We took a global survey and asked our fans what they liked about *DMC*," says Tanaka. "Overwhelmingly, gamers responded with how cool they thought Dante's character was, and how much they liked *DMC*'s action gameplay. So this time, we're focusing on those two aspects of the game." As he guided Dante, *DMC2*'s lead badass, through an early area of the game, we were struck with the very same hook that first pulled us into the original.

At a glance, *Devil May Cry 2* looks and feels a lot like the first game. As the dual pistol-wielding Dante, you take on hordes of supernatural bad guys comin' at ya from all sides. And when you can see the whites of their eyes, whip out Dante's massive blade for combos and other bone-crushing possibilities. But *DMC* wasn't just another 3D brawler. Its appeal was embodied in Dante, a super-cool half-man, half-demon hybrid packing enough



Much of *DMC2*'s action takes place in huge outdoor levels. Here, Dante prepares to dive, head first, down this skyscraper.

Can't get enough of Dante and his big, fat sword? Head on over to the *DMC2* section on [www.capcom.com](http://www.capcom.com) and check out *DMC2 Magazine*, a weekly online 'zine loaded with news and soundbites from *DMC2*.



## "I use the words 'Devil Never Cry' in an important part of *DMC2*."

—*DMC2* producer Tsuyoshi Tanaka

heat and one-liners to make Vin Diesel look like a girly-man. Aside from giving him even more zing with a gun (see sidebar), *DMC2* sees Dante performing *Matrix*-like feats such as running onto a wall, doing a reverse flip and blasting enemies on the downstroke. These acrobatics serve as more than just new signature moves, they're also important for the sequel's huge city levels.

Tanaka shows us the first level of the game, which features a full-blown Euro-style town. "This level is about nine times the width of any area in *Devil May Cry*," Tanaka explains. "Players are encouraged to jump onto rooftops and leap from one to the next because there's more than one way to get to the end." Tanaka then pulls the camera way back for a flyby of other places we'll likely visit on our journey

through hell: a massive helipad in the middle of the sea, of all places; an ancient temple reminiscent of Mayan architecture; and last but certainly not least, an impressive dark urban wasteland with skyscrapers galore.

Other aspects of the game that Tanaka and his team have focused on are difficulty level and camera views, which players complained about in the first game. "We felt that the biggest problem of *DMC* was that it was too difficult," says Tanaka. "*Devil 2* will adjust the level of difficulty to adapt to how good the player is so that if you die a lot, the game will throw out less enemies and make them easier. This game will be a lot more accessible for mainstream players." As for the camera, only time will tell; Tanaka assures us that it's not going to be a problem for the sequel.

So is Tanaka nervous about taking on the highly anticipated *DMC2* as his first-ever project? "Not really. The only pressure I have is the deadline to get the game done," he tells us. "They moved the release date up four months, so it's been stressful. Just remember, Capcom loves you." 🎮

—*Che Chou*

## NEW ATTACKS

### Gun Smoke



*DMC2* expands Dante's list of attacks with awesome new techniques. He can now target and shoot two enemies at once as he walks around the screen. And because it's Dante we're talking about here, every move—from crossing his dual pistols to blast fools on opposite ends of the screen, to the nonchalant flip of a gat to shoot someone coming up from behind—exudes the same amount of mad confidence and style we fell in love with from the first game. Let's rock.



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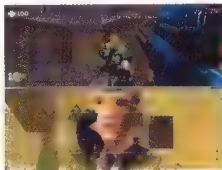
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plays  
her  
cards  
right



# Red Faction II

<b>Publisher:</b>	THQ
<b>Developer:</b>	Volition
<b>Players:</b>	1-2 (1-4 w/ Multitap)
<b>Genre:</b>	First-person shooter
<b>% Done:</b>	80%
<b>Release:</b>	Oct. 29, 2002
<b>Play On:</b>	None
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.redfaction2.com
<b>The Goal:</b>	Wanton destruction of buildings, vehicles and bad guys
<b>The Bad:</b>	Bothersome spider mines and sentry droids
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	Blowing up an enemy and reeling at the bloody leg stumps he leaves behind



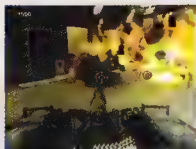
That there's the prettiest man we've ever laid eyes on. How in the world could we possibly shoot at him?



Double-fisting takes on a whole new meaning in *Red Faction II*.

## HODGEPODGE

### Red Faction II: Stealing the Best Bits from Your Fave Video Games



Those naughty boys at Volition have turned the past year's shooter releases into a gigantic crib sheet to nab ideas from: Your character's health/shield regenerates just like Master Chief's from *Halo*. Some of your ordnance can be carried in both hands, and each weapon has secondary fire; thanks, *Half-Life*! Oh, and there's the "flying on rails through the sky, planting rockets and gunfire into buildings" levels; hats off to *Virtua Cop 2* for that one. What's next? Sitting on a tank turret with a machine gun, like James Bond in *Agent Under Fire*? Hey, wait a minute....

According to developer Volition, it's better to be red than dead. For the follow-up to last year's Mars-based first-person shooter, mining uniforms and *Total Recall*-inspired underground cave break-outs have been shelved in favor of over-developed cyborg warriors packing more destruction in their pockets than what you might find in Ted Nugent's shed.

What Volition has attempted to pull off in *Red Faction II* is a dystopian look into the future, complete with Sopot, a totalitarian leader who plasters his visage on every massive red curtain he can find. Although the plot's reasonably fleshed-out (Sopot's condemned you and five other super soldiers to death, and you're not too happy about it), it isn't required reading. Mainly because the high number of goons you'll be cutting down in various Earth locales instantly makes you forget the nuances of overthrowing regimes.

Instead, twitch with excitement as you think about the next armor-plated schmuck you'll be tearing to pieces, using a weapon (see pg. 110 for some of the 14 available) that would make *Halo*'s Master Chief soil his rusty britches in envy.

The much-acclaimed Geo-Mod game engine from

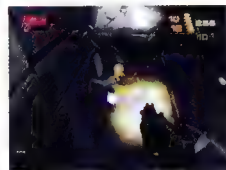


the last *Faction* makes a return in the sequel. In tandem with some of the heavier weapons, you can lay waste to plenty of scenery and even open up new areas by being recklessly adventurous. Of course, not everything in the environment is destructible. You'll see inconsistencies like planks of wood that take countless grenades without a splinter, or concrete walls that fly apart after a quick prodding, but those are minor quibbles. It's the combat enhancements in *Red Faction II* that'll really make you take notice.

First up, you've got your teammates to help you. These cookie-cutter sidekick stereotypes include the slinky Tangier, the walking man-mountain Repta, the curiously stoic sniper Quill and the annoyingly loud, half-retarded Shrike.

These guys can act as drivers and pilots in the numerous vehicle segments of the game, leaving both your hands free to return fire on pursuing enemies or to rain death from above. Teammates also tag along for some of the more footy missions. Don't worry, action fanatics, the pace of the game won't be dragged down by ordering your troops around or by tedious squad-based strategies—instead, these A.I. drones will automatically watch your back and pepper hapless enemies while you take point.

In terms of controls, *Red Faction II* is more versatile than most games in the genre. If you're one of those gamers who just can't stand the PlayStation



Fire when you see the whites of their eyes, even if they're already on the ground, begging for mercy. Always remember: mercy is for the weak.



# JUSTICE LEAGUE

## INJUSTICE FOR ALL

MIDWAY

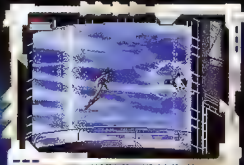
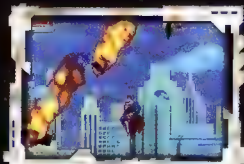


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GAME PREVIEW BY:

[WWW.JUSTICELEAGUE.MIDWAY.COM](http://WWW.JUSTICELEAGUE.MIDWAY.COM)



EVERYONE



Violence



GAME BOY ADVANCE

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(302)


Cont. from page 108

2 controller and require precision cap-popping courtesy of a mouse and keyboard, then *Red Faction II* is your game. You buy the USB keyboard and mouse, the flat surface to rest them on and the medical bills for your carpal tunnel syndrome.

Finally, fans of multiplayer fragdowns will be more than a little excited to learn this game has a variety of environments, deathmatch bots, match types and well-toned future

warriors from which to choose in the multiplayer modes. The stages are exceptional and look larger than those seen in recent first-person shooters like *007: Agent Under Fire* and *Half-Life*. Plus, *Red Faction II* offers environmental variations, such as trampolines. Maybe we'll get to set up our own crazy Slamball tournaments!

We came away slightly dazed by the game's ultra-violence interspersed with mini-game

stages. Don't expect a revolution with the reds this time. The gameplay in *Red Faction II* isn't anything you haven't already seen, but its addictive, seat-of-your-pants, adrenaline-pumping action is still pretty enthralling. You may have to leave your brain at the door, but for those of you aching to tag bad guys in near-future body armor, prepare to be welcomed into the faction. 

—David Hodgson

## GETTING THE JOB DONE

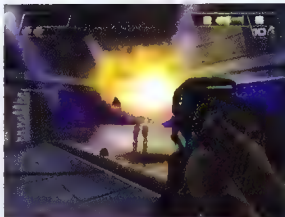
# So, How Do You Mangle Your Foe into Unrecognizable Fleshy Chunks?



### CSP-9 Semi-Automatic Pistol

**Chunk Kibble Rate:** 1/5 Giblets  
**Amusement Factor:** Medium

This pathetic "phut-phut" pistol can be changed into the ultimate enemy embarrassment if you're wielding two at a time. Waltz around your victim while plugging him with lead, and laugh at his automatic-weapon-based ineptitude.



### NGL-8 Nanotech Grenade Launcher

**Chunk Kibble Rate:** 6/5 Giblets (Overload)  
**Amusement Factor:** Off the Charts!

Yes, that's a security guard's legs you're seeing, along with a cranial portion and a red mist of offal floating from the explosion cloud. And that's just one of the entertaining maiming effects Volition's working on for this over-the-top launcher.



### CAR-72 Military Assault Rifle

**Chunk Kibble Rate:** 2/5 Giblets  
**Amusement Factor:** Low

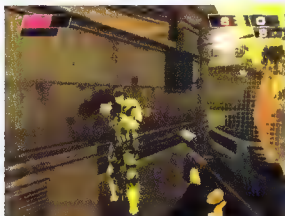
The AK-47, sorry, we mean CAR-72 is your regulation assault rifle, with a pitiful three-shot regular fire, and a "tearing through enemies" automatic fire. You need your foe to check the ceiling in a lurching death twitch? This is your weapon.



### CAS-14 Automatic Combat Shotgun

**Chunk Kibble Rate:** 4/5 Giblets  
**Amusement Factor:** High

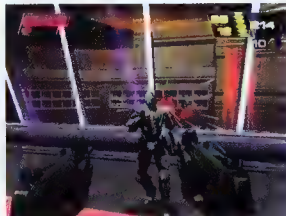
Amusingly violent weapons get you moist? Then prepare for humorous and morally objectionable blasting, throwing your enemy back in a crumpled heap. Or try setting them on fire with incendiary rounds. They run! They smolder! It's fun!



### Nanotech Individual Combat Weapon

**Chunk Kibble Rate:** 1/5 Giblets  
**Amusement Factor:** Low

It's a big, bad piece of heavy, glistening metal, so why does the N.I.C.W. pack the firepower of a Daisy air rifle? Only Volition knows. But it can paint the walls behind your victims in splatters of their own blood, so it's not all bad. Don't shoot your eye out.



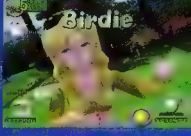
### CMG-32 Submachine Gun

**Chunk Kibble Rate:** 2/5 Giblets  
**Amusement Factor:** Medium

A pair of Uzis in a video game? Certainly not! These are CMG-32 submachine guns, and are nothing like Uzis. Oh, except for the firing capacity, ammo loading and look of the weapon. Use both at once, in the John Woo-regulation firing style.

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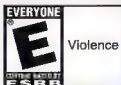
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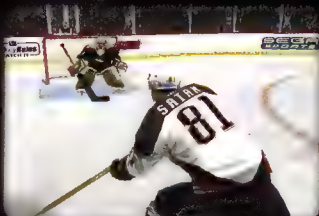


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It sends you into the boards with the force of a wrecking ball.



So get tough or you'll be eating ice.

WREAK HAVOC ON THE ICE



PlayStation.2



## SEGA SPORTS

segasports.com

# WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth

- Publisher:** THQ
- Developer:** Yuke's
- Players:** 1-2 (1-6 w/ Multitap)
- Genre:** Wrestling
- % Done:** 65%
- Release:** November 2002
- Also On:** None
- Web Address:** www.thq.com
- The Good:** You can finally wrestle as Hogan in his classic red and yellow. Wool!
- The Bad:** Still no bra and panty matches. Damn!
- And The Ugly:** Kurt Angle's new haircut. Can that dude get any uglier? Apparently so...



Mix things up by taking the match backstage.



New match types this year include Elimination Tag, Captain Fall Tornado Six-Man Tag and Slobber Knocker Anywhere. If you don't know what those are, you can't call yourself a fan.

## POKER FACIAL

### Up Close 'n Personal



It's more important in a wrestling game than any other in the sports genre to get each character's looks and mannerisms absolutely perfect. Yuke's tells us that for SYM, not only are wrestlers' faces more detailed but "every part of their behavior has been tuned so they use the moves you'd expect, and show the same personality traits. For example, Hogan pointing his finger, blocking the opponent's punch and then returning a hard punch to send the opponent to the mat, or Brock Lesnar shrugging his shoulders after a punishing attack."

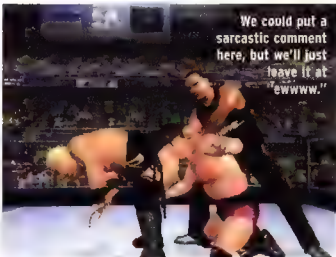
Sports gamers have been used to yearly updates for a long time—*Madden*, *NFL 2K* whatever, *Tony Hawk 5000*... Well wrestling fans, you better warm up to the idea. This year's update of *SmackDown!* is almost here.

Before you get the idea that *Shut Your Mouth* is just another yearly rehash, let the team at developer Yuke's put your fears to rest. "Every area of the game has been tremendously improved," they tell us. And that doesn't just mean they added more wrestlers (though they did that, too—over 55 WWE Superstars make appearances in SYM).

Most important to fans everywhere is the story mode, which has undergone the most tweaks and changes. "Season mode was an area that was

heavily criticized in [last year's] *Just Bring It*, and we listened to consumers and changed this whole mode," the team at Yuke's explains. This year, Season begins with the draft between *Raw* and *SmackDown!* from last spring, and includes the re-emergence of the nWo. As you might expect, the goal is to become WWE Heavyweight Champion, but the path won't be the same for every wrestler. "You select the Superstar you want to take through a season, and it will be up to you to play out your own story, as you will be faced with many choices," the team explains. "Depending on who you select, you may start right at the bottom having to fight your way through all wrestlers and belts in order to reach the Holy Grail. This depth provides a lot of

Cont. on page 115





*M*iddle-earth stands  
on the brink of destruction.

A dark, atmospheric night scene. On the left, a wooden structure, possibly a ladder or scaffolding, is partially visible. The background is mostly black, with several small, warm-toned lights scattered across it, suggesting a distant city or a festival. The overall mood is mysterious and somber.

*You will arise. Or you will fall.*







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# THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE TWO TOWERS



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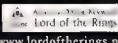
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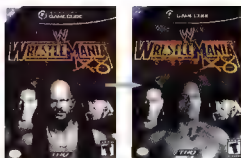
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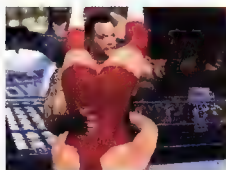
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**SWITCHEROO**

After Stone Cold's recent problems with WWE management (he's not on the active roster anymore) and certain run-ins with the law, the belligerent Superstar was removed from the original cover for *Wrestlemania X8* (GameCube) and replaced with The Rock. Which cover will net you the most cash when you bring it to the *Antiques Roadshow* in 2075? Only time will tell.

Cont. from page 114



replay value as the storylines always change based on your selected wrestler and the choices you make." Along the way you'll unlock new costume parts you can use to create your own wrestlers.

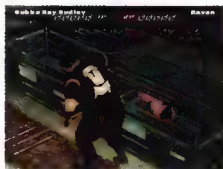
The gameplay's been refined, too. "We re-worked the system to ensure that there are counters for grapples and strikes," says Yuke's, "and have added a selection of cool counters so that the moves don't get repetitive. It is important that you get the timing right or you leave yourself exposed even more." One wrong move and next thing you'll see are the lights of the arena as The Undertaker chokeslams your sorry ass (and you deserved it).

As you hit the mat with a resounding thud, you'll hear the voices of WWE sideline commentators Jerry "The King" Lawler, Jim Ross, Tazz and Michael Cole. "We have completely changed the way the play-by-play system works to remove the flow problems and at times odd commentary we had in *Just Bring It*," says Yuke's. "The comments hit at all the right points in a match to ensure it supports all the action going on." All the action won't only be in the ring, either. Fight in backstage arenas modeled after Madison Square Garden and Pay-Per-View events

like *Backlash* and *Unforgiven*. These environments, according to Yuke's, "provide you with the opportunity to take the action out of the ring where everything you see and touch results in a corresponding effect."

Even with these fixes, tweaks and new features for *SYM*, the team at Yuke's already has ideas for next year. "We didn't have a chance to get [some features] in that will be included in upcoming years," they say. "Expect some big changes." 🍀

—Chris Johnston



**NOT GUILTY**

## Stone Cold Buggin'

The big question for some fans: Will Stone Cold Steve Austin be in this year's *SmackDown!*? Wonder no more—the Texas native may not be on the WWE's active roster, but he's included in *Shut Your Mouth*. And he's not even a secret character that you'll have to unlock—THQ told us that he's available from the get-go just like all the other wrestlers in the game. Just remember to keep it clean in the ring.

We've learned a valuable lesson today, kids. If you hit a girl, you're going to come back and put you in a submission hold.



PREVIEW

# Contra: Shattered Soldier

<b>Publisher:</b>	Konami
<b>Developer:</b>	Konami
<b>Players:</b>	1-2
<b>Genre:</b>	Shooter
<b>% Done:</b>	90%
<b>Release:</b>	November 2002
<b>Also On:</b>	None
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.konami.com
<b>The Good:</b>	Finally, a return to classic <i>Contra</i> action.
<b>The Bad:</b>	This game will hand you your ass if you're not fast.
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	Just thinking about the crappy PS1 <i>Contra</i> games we've had to endure the past few years.

## FIREPOWER

Dish out some major hurt in one of three ways in *Contra*:



Your standard rapid-fire machine gun.



Roast your enemies with the flame thrower.



Nothing beats the grenade launcher for sheer power.



**T**he series that once defined shooters (and survived two horrendous PS1 outings) is returning to form on the PS2. *Shattered Soldier* will remind old-timers of the glory days on 8- and 16-bit consoles, while newbies will finally understand why the *Contra* franchise is held in such reverence amongst geriatric gamers.

This is just mindless fun, which is what makes it so great. Forget mission objectives, solving puzzles or any of that crap. Just shoot...a lot. Your thumb will be glued to the fire button for the duration of *Contra*, taking a break only when you switch between the three weapons (see sidebar).

The coolest part of *Shattered Soldier* is the huge bosses you'll face. It seems the developers have a special place in their hearts for the *Transformers*, because almost every giant robot here has two or more forms. Take the submarine boss early in the game, for example. You start off dodging incoming fire as it takes shots at you from the background,

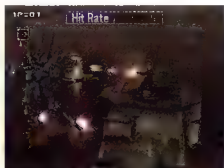
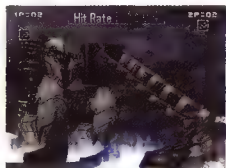
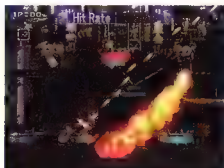
only to have it submerge and come up directly under the bridge you're on. Deal enough damage while it's in front of you and it'll transform into a helicopter. Now you have to run in below it and systematically take out turrets, engines and rotors, dismantling it to the point of destruction. And with a high boss count, the game delivers a lot of similar encounters.

For all you old-school gamers who're wondering, *Shattered Soldier* is no cakewalk. You'll find your controller slick with sweat after each level, and you'll wonder just how you made it through that crazy crossfire or survived that screen-filling alien. And of course you'll be able to bring along a buddy for simultaneously play throughout the game. In fact, that's the best way to go. Having someone covering your ass increases your chances of survival tenfold.

So put those bad PS1 memories behind you.

*Contra* is back in a big way. 🍀

—Greg Sewart





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GAME BOY ADVANCE

PlayStation 2

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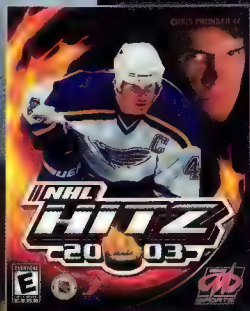


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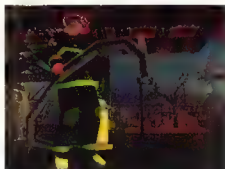
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# BMX XXX

<b>Publisher:</b>	AKA Acclaim
<b>Developer:</b>	Z-Axis
<b>Players:</b>	1-2
<b>Genre:</b>	Action sports
<b>% Done:</b>	50%
<b>Release:</b>	Fall 2002
<b>Also On:</b>	GC, Xbox
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.acclaim.com
<b>The Good:</b>	<i>Dave Mirra</i> gameplay with lots of T&A.
<b>The Bad:</b>	More unnecessary controversy for the gaming biz.
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	Eating Chinese food at Lon Hung Coc's.



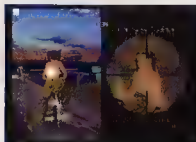
Sometimes, a long, flaccid firehose is just a long, flaccid firehose.



This screenshot pretty much sums up *BMX XXX*: a *Dave Mirra*-style game in a raunchy, inner-city environment.

## MULTIPLAYER

### Bike Snipe



In case you think *BMX XXX* is all dog feces and cleavage, know that the game also features a two-player splitscreen mode. Acclaim hasn't whipped out the skinny on all the different multiplayer aspects yet, but they have mentioned two: Strip and Sniper BMX. The stripping game will work like that old game of HORSE you've played in *Tony Hawk*, except the loser gets to drop his/her trousers. Sniper BMX brings an interesting twist to action sports, namely that of rifles, machine guns and rocket launchers. Player one, who sits on one side of the level with his/her weapon of choice, tries to take out player two, who's trying not to get shot to pieces. XXXtreme indeed.



If you think of the action-sports genre as a big, fat teat that's getting sucked dry by games like *Tony Hawk* and *Dave Mirra*, then it isn't hard to see why developer Z-Axis' latest bike-fest is stacked with boobage. After all, where do you take a genre that's completely saturated with clones and sequels? Why, straight to the trailer park, of course.

Some of you may remember first seeing this game under the title *Dave Mirra BMX XXX*. Naw, you're not partying too hard—that was the original title, but publisher Acclaim decided to ditch the *Mirra* license in order to make the naughtiest, most juvenile gaming experience possible. "With a non-licensed product we can really push the envelope," says Alan Lewis, director of public relations at Acclaim.

According to him, this descent into the gutter is a natural, evolutionary step. "Folks are looking for an entirely new experience. *BMX XXX* is raw, rowdy and real," boasts Lewis. "We're introducing strippers, pimps, hookers, bums, drunks, monkeys, dogs—all part of a cast of 50 whacked-out personalities."

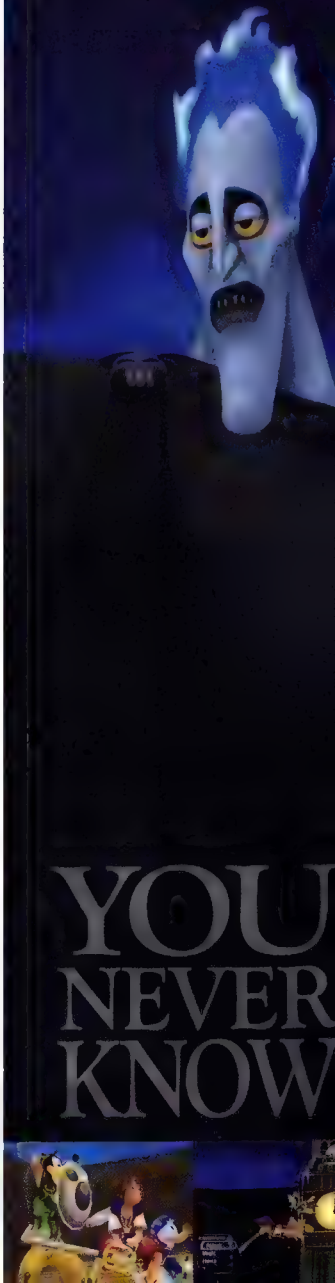
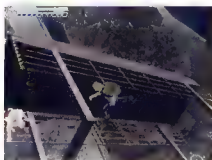
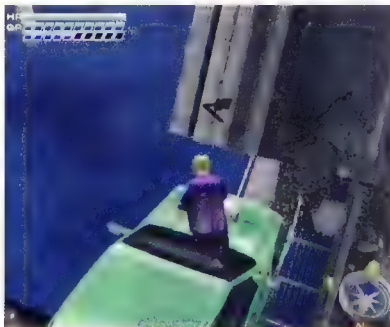
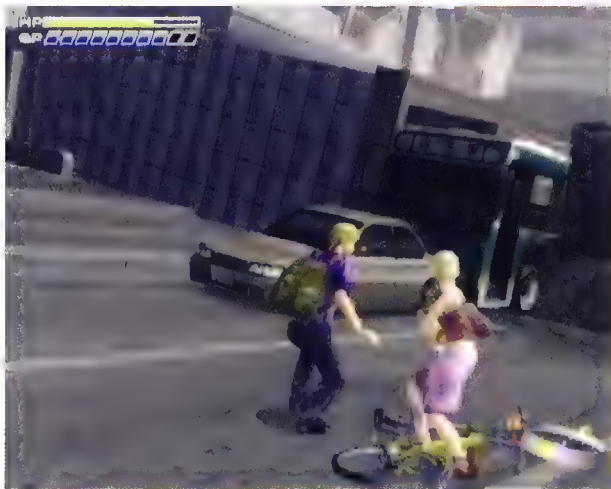
To tell you the truth, we're not sure if it's whacked-out or just plain whack. Similar to *Aggressive Inline* and the soon-to-be released *Tony Hawk 4*, *BMX XXX* lets you explore its huge environments without the pressure of time limits. You progress through the game by talking to lowlifes who give you lowbrow objectives. Take the Probe Payback episode for instance, where you poke aliens in the ass with your bike to avenge an indignant Russian cosmonaut; in Rent-a-Bitch, you sacrifice a pimp's poodle to satisfy a dirty, crapping dog on the loose. Those of you tired of free porn on the Internet can finally put your kicks with *BMX XXX*'s peepshows that feature live-action videos of real-life strippers. And yes, this game is rated Mature.

Throw in random profanities (the "s" word, the "f" word, etc.) and you've got a game so over-the-top, you'll laugh at it purely out of embarrassment for its creators. Do you really care that *BMX XXX* plays and controls just like the other *Mirra* games? Or that it's got new flatland and recovery techniques? No, of course not. Who's got time for gameplay when there are tits to be had? 🍑

—Che Chou

## Disaster Report

**Agatec • October 2002 • Also On: None** — The word "survival" takes on new meaning in *Disaster Report's* ultra-realistic setting. As a reporter who survives the collapse of a city that's sinking into the ocean, you must pick your way through the rubble to find your way to safety. Along the way you'll encounter other survivors, some of whom you must rescue using hastily gathered objects. And if avoiding crumbling skyscrapers wasn't enough, you'll also wrestle with dehydration and Black-Ops forces who want to silence you before you uncover the mastermind behind the city's destruction.

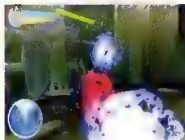
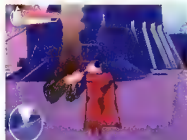
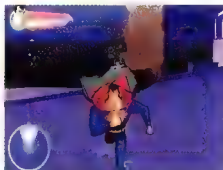
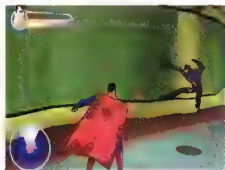


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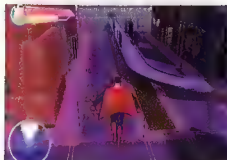
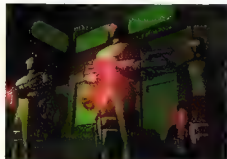


# Superman: Shadow of Apokolips

<b>Publisher:</b>	Infogrames
<b>Developer:</b>	Infogrames
<b>Players:</b>	1
<b>Genre:</b>	Action
<b>% Done:</b>	90%
<b>Release:</b>	Sept. 24, 2002
<b>Also On:</b>	None
<b>Web Address:</b>	us.infogrames.com
<b>The Good:</b>	You can use just about any of Superman's powers.
<b>The Bad:</b>	Finicky controls.
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	The memories of <i>Superman</i> on the Nintendo 64.



Even though Lex Luthor and Darkseid are the chief antagonists in *Shadow of Apokolips*, you never actually face them. Expect confrontations with superfoes Metallo, Parasite, Kanto and Livewire (left), however. Of course, it takes a little more than straight-up fisticuffs to take each one down.



**S**uperman fans have waited long enough. Finally, after years of uninspired—even downright offensive—video-game interpretations, the Man of Steel is ready to leap tall buildings in a single bound in a game that, while not without its faults, should do an admirable job of shaking the indelibly horrible memory of Titus' N64 Super-embarrassment.

Just playing the opening level of *Shadow of Apokolips* makes this apparent as you realize that developer Infogrames-Sheffield House has done all it can to make this the Supes you know and love straight from the Kids' WB! cartoon series of the late '90s. Although the inclusion of virtually all his powers helps accomplish this, the team has gone

beyond simply including the likes of heat vision, cooling breath, X-ray vision and superhearing (visualized as radar)—the game also allows you to put your powers to use in very cool ways. For instance, Superman doesn't just lift heavy things with his superstrength, he also uses this power to deliver particularly punishing blows from above, or to rip pipes from walls and use them as devastating weapons. And he doesn't just fly, he whisks through the air at varying speeds with maneuvers like barrel rolls and loop-de-loops that prove themselves as useful in dodging attacks as they are stylish.

Of course, pure heroism plays a large role as well. In addition to the Last Son of Krypton's overall goal of stopping the combined forces of Lex Luthor and Darkseid, his more immediate concerns center on saving individuals in peril, whether by lifting them to safety or merely by beating the crap out of the intergang robots terrorizing them.

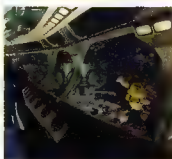
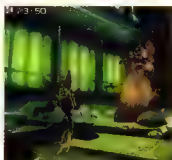
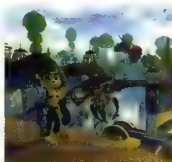
At this point, the key gripes gamers might have with *Apokolips* involve its camera and difficult-to-master controls. But to most *Superman* fans longing for a decent game, these issues certainly won't offer a lethal dose of Kryptonite. **A** —Chris Baker



Nearly 60 cutscenes help bring the story to life, along with voice acting from the show's core cast, including Tim Daly and Dana Delany.

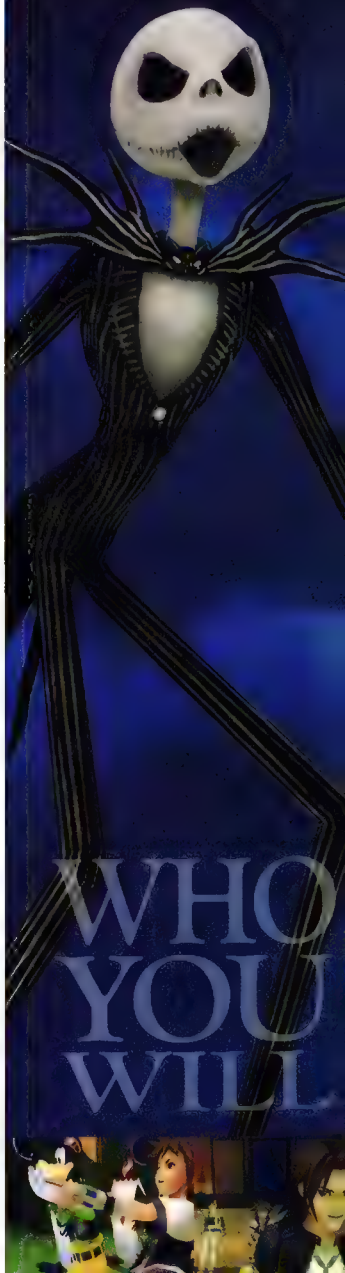
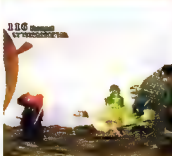
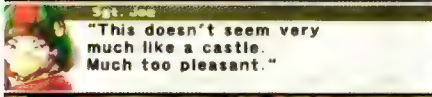
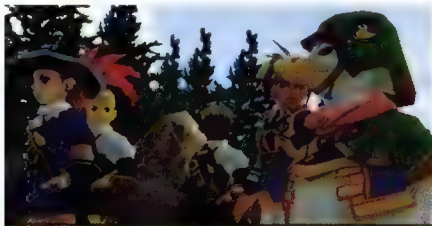
## Ratchet & Clank

**Sony CEA • November 2002 • Also On: None** — There's a ton of PS2 hoppers and boppers arriving this fall, but Sony's *Ratchet & Clank* stands apart from the rest. Its hook comes from its intense firearm combat and bountiful selection of equipment (over 30 guns and gadgets total). You'll need all that high-tech heat to smoke the baddies infesting the game's 18 planets.



## Suikoden III

**Konami • November 2002 • Also On: None** — This RPG series has always been known for its depth of story and character development, and *Suikoden III* is no exception. The game centers on an intricate tale of politics and war headed by three lead characters whose stories intertwine throughout the course of the game. Enemy encounters are handled via a simple turn-based system. While most skirmishes are just your party versus a group of monsters, large-scale battles fought between armies mix things up a little.



The whole Lucas family is pooling its resources for *Bounty Hunter*. Industrial Light & Magic is responsible for all the game's CG cutscenes, and Skywalker Ranch is taking care of the audio—both signs that *Bounty Hunter* will look and sound all sorts of legit.

# Star Wars: Bounty Hunter

<b>Publisher:</b>	LucasArts
<b>Developer:</b>	LucasArts
<b>Players:</b>	1
<b>Genre:</b>	Action
<b>% Done:</b>	65%
<b>Release:</b>	November 2002
<b>Also On:</b>	GC
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.lucasarts.com
<b>The Good:</b>	Most of Boba and Jango's crazy gadgets will be included.
<b>The Bad:</b>	The searing lack of a flyable Slave 1.
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	Rozzata, Jango's Tiderian ladyfriend.



Being a jet-packin' player ain't easy. Wait, actually it is. Jango's pack has enough juice for some decent-sized bursts, and it recharges quickly.

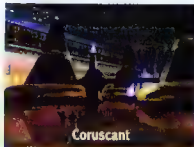
One advantage to being a crazy gunslinger is the ability to blast two targets at once, as shown on the right.



## WELCOME HOME

### In The Hood

Sixteen levels scattered throughout five unique worlds. That's the deal. Some of these will be familiar, though most won't. Here are the ones you've probably heard of.



Coruscant

The home of the Galactic Senate, Coruscant is literally a planet-sized metropolis. In *Bounty Hunter*, expect to explore its seedier areas.



Tatooine

Tatooine is a dry, desert world, home to all manner of scum, viltainy and moisture farmers. You'll run into Jawas, Hutts and other, less-pronounceable species.

The name "Fett" carries a mad amount of weight, and LucasArts knows this. That's why it's so baffling that it's taken this long to get a game devoted entirely to the illest armor suit in the known universe. *Star Wars: Bounty Hunter* is the title in question, and while it doesn't star Boba Fett himself, you get to play as the next best thing: his old pa Jango. Ultimately, it's all about the armor, so don't sweat it too much if you've got a hardcore Boba fetish. If you've seen *Episode II* then you know that old man Jango is capable of some pretty Fett-like things.

What you'll be doing, exactly, is guiding Jango through a series of *Star Wars* locales (of both newly-wrought and classic varieties) on missions revolving around blaster-heavy gameplay. Apart from his characteristic twin blaster pistols, Jango packs an assortment of space-age hardware including, but not limited to, a sniper rifle, a wrist-mounted flame thrower, a rocket launcher and, of course, his trusty Jedi-snaring whipcord. You'll use this last one to great effect when snagging live bounties—enemies scattered throughout the levels who have prices on their heads. Collect enough of them and you'll unlock all sorts of goodies, including alternate



characters, bonus movies and bits of concept art. You can bring them in dead, too, of course. They just won't be worth as much.

"The baddest bad guys don't talk much," says LucasArts associate producer Rachel Hardwick. And Jango's a great example of that. Most of the plot-forwarding will be done via Fett's retainer Rozzata, a member of the same squat, winged species as *Episode I*'s Watto. She may not be pretty, but she's definitely loyal, and she more than compensates for any verbal challenges Jango may suffer.

Those looking to hotrod around space in Slave 1—the famous Fett-family craft—will be a little disappointed, however. "We really wanted to focus on creating environments that compel you to use your jetpack without making it a full-on flight game," says Hardwick, regarding the lack of Slave 1 action. To its credit, the game's jetpack mechanics do a lot to hasten the pace up several notches. And, as lead tester Andy Alamano states, "You'll be able to enjoy [Slave 1] in its parked form." Fair enough.

In any case, *Bounty Hunter*'s brand of run-and-blaster gameplay seems like just the thing to do the Fett clan some justice. And who knows? There might be some Boba hidden in there, somewhere....

—Miguel Lopez

## Fighter Maker 2

**AgeTec • October 2002 • Also On: None** — You've violated *Virtua Fighter*, taught *Tekken* a lesson and bitch-slapped *Bloody Roar*. So what does a fighting gamer do next? Why, he makes his own brawler, of course! The sequel to the cult-fave PS1 title, *Fighter Maker 2* provides gamers with the tools to create their own 3D fighting game. Customize your fighter's every last detail, choosing from over 260 body parts and 600 pre-designed moves (you can create your own, too). And if you're one of the hardcore who owns the original *FM*, dust off that copy and download an additional 800 moves into *FM2*.



# Dr. Muto

**Publisher:** Midway  
**Developer:** Midway  
**Players:** 1  
**Genre:** Platformer  
**% Done:** 90%  
**Release:** November 2002  
**Also On:** GC, Xbox

**Web Address:** www.midway.com

**The Good:** Yet another creative character game this year.

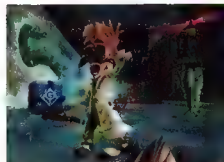
**The Bad:** The good doctor may get overlooked with stuff like *Mario, Sly* and *Blinx* out there.

**And The Ugly:** Muto's flying-squirrel form is a little disturbing.



That's one small step for Muto, one giant leap for mad doctors everywhere.

With Muto's inventions, you can create your own earth-shattering kabooms.




It seems a whole army of new characters is lined up to take a bite out of Mario's pie in 2002. Along with the likes of Ratchet & Clank, Sly and Blinx comes a mad scientist bent on rebuilding his destroyed homeworld. A noble cause despite the fact that he plans to destroy four other worlds in order to do it.

Dr. Muto's deal is that he has to collect DNA from various creatures and then mutate into one of six forms in order to collect all the terra (chunks of earth) he needs to complete his project. So if you see something you can't jump to, mutate into a flying squirrel to get over there. If you see a tiny hole you need to fit through, transmogrify into a mouse and pray there are no cats around. You get the idea.

Of course, just running through four worlds would make for a pretty short game. So besides the standard enemy killin' and puzzle solvin' you'd expect, you'll actually have to travel back and forth between planets many times in order to collect all

the mutations you need for success.

Helping the demented doctor in his endeavors is ALF (Artificial Life Form), a wise-cracking construct that seems more interested in berating Muto than actually assisting him. Still, the little floating head will offer advice should you get stuck in any one spot. It's Midway's method of helping the player along without simply walking them through the whole game.

The real question is whether or not *Dr. Muto* is going to stand out in the deluge of similar character-based games this year. Obviously, Midway is confident that it will. The cool shapeshifting gameplay along with the Looney Tunes-style humor (think along the lines of Marvin the Martian) should set *Dr. Muto* apart. The whole game has a very unique look, too—no cutesy junk you'd expect in this genre. You'll find no bouncy music or brightly colored turtles here. Muto's lab is filled with stuff like stereo equipment, girly posters and even an old Atari 2600. Sweet!  —Greg Swartz

## MUTO'S MUTATIONS



Dr. Muto can take on six forms in total (other than human). Most of them are pretty self-explanatory. The gorilla is very powerful, the fish is the only way the doctor can survive underwater, etc. The sixth form? We're not allowed to show you yet, but the game intro will give you a hint.



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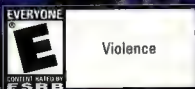
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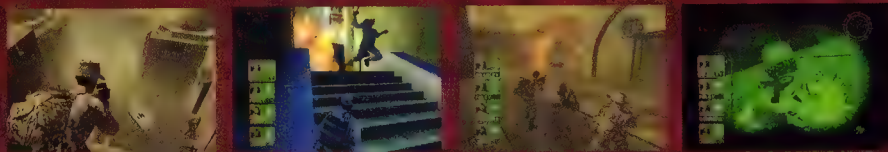


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Can you see the 300,000 Nazis, 600 Panzer tanks and 29 batteries of artillery in this picture?

Neither could they.

## 1944: The Long Road to Berlin

### *Jun. 6: D-Day*

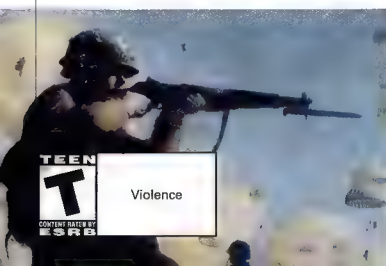
Since dropping behind enemy lines 3,000 ft. above Normandy, France, your efforts have pushed the Nazis deep into the Ardennes forest.

### *Dec. 16: The Battle of the Bulge*

During the worst blizzard in war history, Hitler's greatest gamble begins on a 90 mile loosely held Allied front.

### *Dec. 24: The Ardennes Forest*

Hold the Allied line until a break in the weather allows American and British forces to begin bombing again.



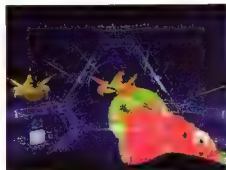




PREVIEW

# Metroid Prime

<b>Publisher:</b>	Nintendo
<b>Developer:</b>	Retro Studios
<b>Players:</b>	1
<b>Genre:</b>	Shooter
<b>% Done:</b>	60%
<b>Release:</b>	Nov. 18, 2002
<b>Age Rating:</b>	None
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.nintendo.com
<b>The Good:</b>	Samus will own your life this November. Oh sweet mercy!
<b>The Bad:</b>	November seems oh so far away! Sob!
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	A mad-as-hell Sheegoth protecting its young.



Your thermal visor is indispensable in determining an enemy's location and/or weak point. This is one of your most important tools.



The giant stone boss Thardus takes a LOT of work to bring down. Scanning for weak spots is necessary to your survival.

## CONNECT Y'SELF

Nintendo finally confirmed that *Metroid Prime* will indeed enjoy GameCube-to-Game Boy Advance-connectivity features with *Metroid Fusion* (both games come out Nov. 18th). When prompted to reveal what, exactly, these features will consist of, a Nintendo representative would only say that the bonus enjoyed would be "simply unbelievable." Perhaps uploading Samus' suit from *Fusion* to *Prime*? Alas, only time will tell.

The last time we checked in on *Metroid Prime*, our concerns with the fan-favorite series going 3D were put to rest by the impressive level that we saw. That was then, this is now, and we've explored an additional four levels that have left us crying for more. In case you're unfamiliar with this legendary series, here's a short highlight reel of landmark *Metroid* moments:

### *Metroid* (Nintendo Entertainment System), 1986

The groundbreaking original game found our heroine, Samus, navigating the labyrinthine tunnels of the planet Zebes while fighting Kraid, Ridley and Mother Brain, who was trying to use the power of the metroids for her own nefarious purposes.

### *Metroid II* (Game Boy), 1991

Samus heads to planet SR388 with the sole intention of destroying the Queen Metroid. A single metroid, however, escapes.

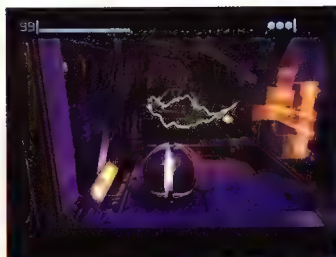
### *Super Metroid* (Super NES), 1994

Back to Zebes Samus goes to confront not only the reanimated Kraid, Ridley and Mother Brain, but a whole host of new enemies and Space Pirates, too. All this while attempting to retrieve the stolen metroid hatching from *Metroid II*.

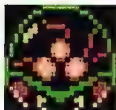
### *Super Smash Bros.* (Nintendo 64), 1999 & *Super Smash Bros. Melee* (GameCube), 2001

Samus comes out of a long hibernation to kick Nintendo-character ass in the now-classic (and highly successful) fighting-game series.

**Fast-forward to the present:** *Metroid Prime* (and to no small extent, *Metroid Fusion*) is poised to not only rejuvenate, but also reinvent the series that has, for so long, gone missing. Reborn as a first-person adventure, *Prime* bucks both the preconceptions of what a *Metroid* game and first-

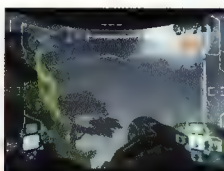
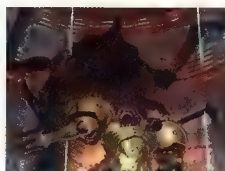
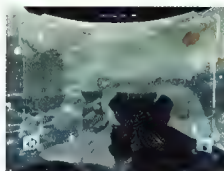


The morph-ball (above) plays as crucial a role in Samus' 3D world as it ever did in her 2D adventures. Amazingly, the transition animation is smooth and the switch to 3rd-person control is as flawless as can be.



## WHAT EXACTLY IS A METROID?

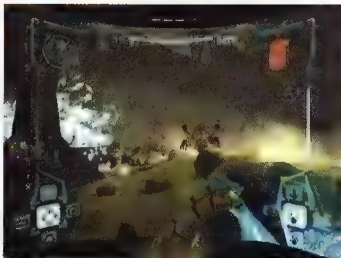
For our readers who are asking themselves "What the hell is a Metroid?" here's the answer: It's the alien life-form that Samus (the heroine of the games) discovers on the planet Brinstar. Naturally, Samus' idea of paying respect to the critters is to trash every last one of them over the course of the series. Savage!




person shooter should be. Focusing less on twitch-blasting (although there's plenty of that) and more on exploration, *Metroid Prime* puts you in the suit and brings you face-to-face with Samus' world in ways that 2D never could.

Although one might be inclined to view Samus' arsenal as her most important equipment, it's her visor that plays the biggest role. Through careful use of her combat, scanning, x-ray and thermal visors, Samus can gather all the info she needs to navigate any set of circumstances, whether it be in combat (by spotting an enemy's weak point) or in piecing together the clues to an environmental puzzle.

Visually, the game is rendered with a staggering attention to detail. Once you land on the Chozo area (which has been commandeered by the Space Pirates), a plethora of visual fireworks bombard you all at once. Cool details like condensation, reflections, splatter, static and short-circuit effects flood her HUD at one point or another. And when Samus fires a charged-shot, the air around the projectile warps. Enemies, it must be noted, are not only deceptively fast, but are also extremely well-animated, with rag-doll physics coming to life when



fallen Space Pirates tumble from their perch.

While Nintendo is to thank for many of the innovative touches that have gone into the game, developer Retro gets the credit for pulling it all together so beautifully. As one Nintendo rep told us: "The folks at Retro are fans of the original games. The intent is not to make a first-person shooter, but to bring Samus into a 3D world. To call it [just] a first-person shooter undermines the game." 

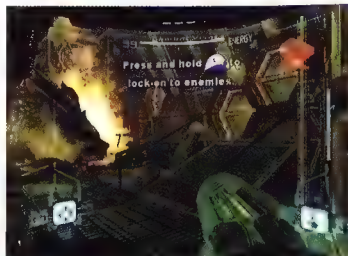
—James "Milkman" Mielke

## LOW AND BEHOLD

### Spiderball



One of *Prime*'s innovations is the introduction of the spiderball. A power-up earned by beating the big boss Thardus (see facing page), the spiderball enables Samus to climb various zipper-like tracks located all over the game world. From these spider tracks, Samus can bomb her way into other morph-ball-sized nooks and crannies. Many environment-based puzzles are solved this way, so it pays to use your scan visor everywhere you can. If you see a spider track, you can bet your bottom dollar that it leads to something important.



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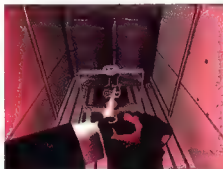
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PREVIEW

# James Bond 007: NightFire

**Publisher:** EA Games  
**Developer:** Eurocom/EAC  
**Players:** 1-4  
**Genre:** First-person shooter  
**% Done:** 80%  
**Release:** Nov. 18, 2002  
**Also On:** PS2, Xbox  
**Web Address:** www.ea.com  
**The Good:** Great level variety, cool gadgets and the sexiest girls ever seen (and felt) in a *Bond* game.  
**The Bad:** Driving levels (which are excellent) are too infrequent.  
**And The Ugly:** Getting capped by Nick Nack in multiplayer.



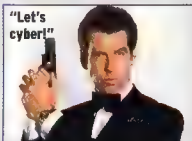
A massive stash of Q-Gadgets greatly aids Bond's quest. He's so smooth that passing airport security with watch lasers, pen darts and minigun suitcases is a cinch.



*NightFire's* brand-spanking-new graphical engine blows away *Agent Under Fire's*.

## CYBERSCANNING

### Piercing Eyes



*NightFire* marks the debut of Pierce Brosnan's likeness in digital form. Previous *Bond* titles had the debonair actor's face for the box, but not in the game itself. "Getting Pierce in the game is a great example of MGM going out of their way to help us out," says producer Joel Wade. "We were able to step in at Pinewood Studios where Pierce was shooting the final scenes for *Die Another Day* and actually cyber-scanned his head. We used a laser scanner to generate a mesh of close to a million polygons—a nearly perfect geometric replica of Pierce's head—and the result is pretty amazing." Once Pierce gives up the *Bond* role, EA can always use that scan for its *Remington Steele* game.

Scope the scantily clad temptresses, dry martinis, car chases and ingenious spy gadgetry—James Bond is back. EA follows up the success of last year's *Agent Under Fire* with an all-new adventure to coincide with the launch of the latest 007 flick, *Die Another Day*. The simultaneous releases aren't directly related, though, as *NightFire* is a completely new production, not a movie tie-in. "With an original game, you're able to craft your

intact. For example, the game opens with a breakneck shooting level in which you're sniping cars from a helicopter. Just like in the films, that over-the-top action scene segues into a traditional credits sequence, complete with sultry, undulating vixens and that unforgettable *Bond* music. After that, the pace never lets up as Bond explores over 10 exotic locales to uncover the diabolical plans of master-mind Rafael Drake.

**"The players who think like Bond—using wits instead of their guns—will score the highest."**

—producer Joel Wade

story around interesting game experiences instead of a script that was written with only the silver screen in mind," explains producer Joel Wade. "This allows us to create fantastic game experiences without being restricted to the exact fiction of the movie, and to let the story and game design play off each other."

Even though *NightFire's* not based on a movie, the stylin' production values of the blockbuster remain

You'll soon discover that international intrigue involves more than just first-person shooting. Missions run the gamut between shooting, stealth, driving, flying and underwater combat. Unlike in some games ("cough" *Dead to Rights*), these additional gameplay modes aren't mere afterthoughts—they're packed with depth. In fact, the driving bits (in Bond's oh-so-sexy Aston Martin V-12 Vanquish) use the amazing *Need For Speed:*

## ZANY HENCHMEN DEATHMATCH SUPERSTARS

Deathmatch just wouldn't be the same without a smattering of classic *Bond* adversaries, so EA has included many beloved baddies. Say hello to insidious sidekicks who tear it up in split-screen.



**JAWS**  
 Played by: Richard Kiel  
 Films: *The Spy Who Loved Me*, *Moonraker*  
 Benefits: Huge size instills fear, but also an easy target.



**"Da plane!"**

**HICK HACK**  
 Played by: Herve Villechaizes  
 Film: *Man With the Golden Gun*  
 Benefits: He's super-short, so he's incredibly hard to hit.



**MAY DAY**  
 Played by: Grace Jones  
 Film: *A View to a Kill*  
 Benefits: Mean appearance and mean-eating gaze terrify your foes.

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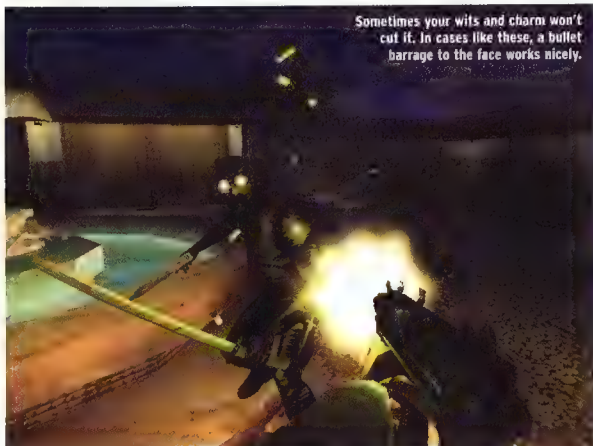
PREVIEW

Cont. from page 138



### GRATUITOUS PICTURE OF HALLE BERRY

*NightFire's* gorgeous babes push the envelope for digital hotness, but Jinx, the main Bond Girl in the new film, *Die Another Day*, simply cannot be matched. Yep, that's Halle Berry over there.




Sometimes your wits and charm won't cut it. In cases like these, a bullet barrage to the face works nicely.



Most sports cars can impress normal, land-dwelling chicks, but Bond's drool-worthy Aston Martin V12 Vanquish doubles as an undersea submersible. That way, you can go cruisin' the ocean for horny mermaids...or at least a lonely manatee or two.

*Hot Pursuit 2* engine to offer serious thrills.

The *GoldenEye*-inspired shooter levels remain the central gameplay draw, but how you tackle these stages is largely up to you. "Action fans can attack the majority of the levels with guns blazing, and we've provided a huge arsenal for them," says Wade. "However, the players who think like Bond—using their wits instead of their guns—will score the highest." Solving missions and giving goons the slip requires complete mastery of Q's spy gadgets.


Of course, a *Bond* game just wouldn't be the same without a stellar multiplayer experience. *NightFire's* unfriendly firefights offer a ton of options, memorable characters and locations ripped from classic *Bond* films. It's a fast, solid good time that should keep you and your buds glued to the couch for days. While there wasn't time to include online play, Wade hints that Bond's next outing (probably in 2003) might make that jump. 

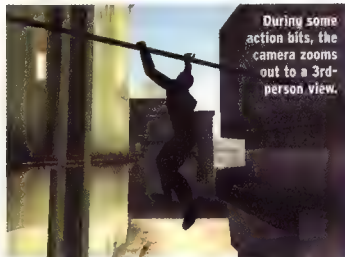
—Shane Bettenhausen

### SUPPORTING CAST

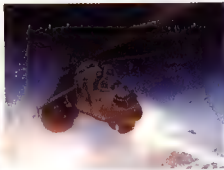
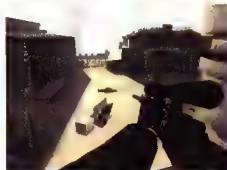
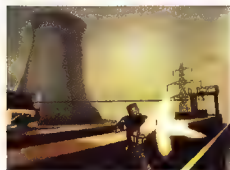
## Bond's Girls



*James Bond* movies are famous for featuring Bond Girls, beautiful allies who assist our secret agent in both the battlefield and the bedroom. Who could forget the likes Pussy Galore, Holly Goodhead and Dr. Christmas Jones? Well, *NightFire* features a total of three different female counterparts for James. Zoe Nightshade, the plucky CIA agent from *Agent Under Fire*, makes a return appearance helping Bond with a sticky situation in the Austrian Alps. Dominique Paradis (above) is a scandalous French intelligence agent who Bond encounters in Paris. Finally, Alura McCall is the stunning blonde Australian on loan to M16 who helps Bond for the final assault on the villain's orbiting forces. 

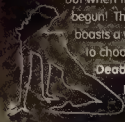


During some action bits, the camera zooms out to a 3rd-person view.



# Chicks really dig the trees...

and you'll love the scenery too because the babes from the million-selling fighting game, **Dead or Alive**™3 are back! This time, they're setting aside their fighting gear for some **fun-in-the-sun** swimwear and turning up the heat in **Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball**™. This is no ordinary volleyball game - this is volleyball to the extreme with **great gameplay** and **mind-blowing realism**. You'll be able to feel the sand between your toes and the gentle ocean breeze as you compete in the **most outrageous beach volleyball game** yet! Points earned on the court allow you to customize your babe off of it, with **over 100 different swimsuits and accessories** to choose from. But when the day is done, the fun has just begun! This first ever **"Sports Fantasy Simulation"** boasts a variety of different **nightlife activities** to choose from. Whatever your pleasure, **Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball** promises **extreme action** and a **whole lotta satisfaction!**



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WORLD NEWS

# WATCH

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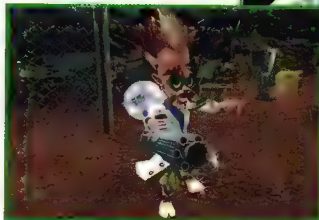
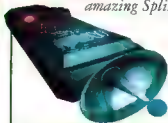


# MAD SCIENCE WATCH

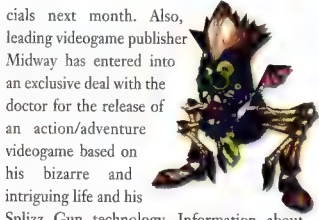
## The Doctor Is In



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Morph into six strange creatures from a gorilla to a spider using Dr. Muto's amazing Spizz Gun



Use a wide variety of gadgets only a mad scientist could invent such as Rocket Boots and the Super Baller



cial's next month. Also, leading videogame publisher Midway has entered into an exclusive deal with the doctor for the release of an action/adventure videogame based on his bizarre and intriguing life and his Spizz Gun technology. Information about Muto's videogame, simply titled, "Dr. Muto," is revealed on [www.drmutomidway.com](http://www.drmutomidway.com), which is a website devoted to Muto's universe of baffling

*Defend yourself against burly Rent-a-Cops, vicious "Charks," and other blemishes of your rival, Professor Burnitall*

puzzles, mind-bending devices, freakish monstrosities and twisted humor.

Is Dr. Muto the 21st Century's Einstein, or just another madman? Judge for yourself this fall when "Dr. Muto" the videogame releases for next generation videogame platforms.



### PROFILE ON... Professor Burnitall

As energy magistrate of the Centralis solar system, Professor Gumber Burnitall has outperformed all expectations for energy production by strip-mining and pilaging the natural resources of every planet in the system; he's a master at making energy while demolishing a society. But the genius Dr. Muto has become a wrinkle in his expansion plans. We caught up with the



professor recently, who told us, "He's a manic bent on ruining my beautiful energy empire. That ridiculous Dr. Muto believes he can build a planet from scraps of DNA and terra, then steal my energy reserves as the catalyst! PAH!" Burnitall went on to say that Muto is a renegade terrorist and, "My forces will stop at nothing to destroy the horrible little man, no matter WHAT creature he shapes himself into!"

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Fall 2002

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PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE





PREVIEW

# Mario Party 4

<b>Publisher:</b>	Nintendo
<b>Developer:</b>	Hudson
<b>Players:</b>	1-4
<b>Genre:</b>	Puzzle
<b>% Done:</b>	90%
<b>Release:</b>	Oct. 21, 2002
<b>Also On:</b>	None
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.nintendo.com
<b>The Good:</b>	Party gaming is as vibrant as ever in Nintendo and Hudson's latest collaboration.
<b>The Bad:</b>	Running out of chips and dip halfway through a game.
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	Getting shot out of a cannon at 80 miles per hour. Argh!



Find out who the true basketball player is in this straightforward mini-game. Could Princess Peach be the one with the mad reach?



Luigi, back from his stint as leading man in *Luigi's Mansion*, hits the party decks to give the dice a roll.

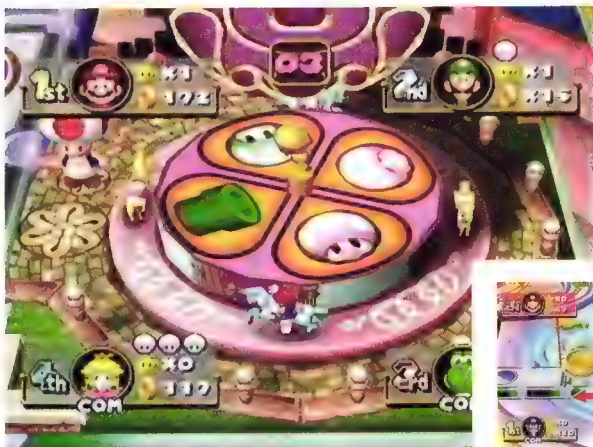


For a series that is about to go four-deep, *Mario Party* is still—surprisingly—full of cool, new ideas. With nearly every new mini-game as fun and inventive as the last, we wonder how Hudson's developers do it. Think about it: Arcade games in the '80s could've survived on the premise of one of *MP's* mini-games alone. And how many mini-games does *Mario Party 4* pack in? Fifty. And not the enhanced, repurposed and recycled mini-games of *Mario Party's* past, either; all 50 games are brand new. Although some of these find you mashing buttons *Track and Field*-style, others take finesse and precision timing to master. Thankfully, each game leads off with a detailed description of the

controls, as well as the option of taking it for a practice run—giving newbies a fair shot at keeping up with *Mario Party* mastas!

Starting a game is as easy as selecting from the party-hearty crew of Donkey Kong, Daisy, Princess Peach, Mario, Yoshi, Waluigi and Wario (among others). Once the who's who has been settled, you're ready to hit the boards. In case you're new to the *MP* experience, the game essentially takes one to four players around a *Chutes 'N Ladders*-style board—rolling the dice and unlocking mini-games along the way. It's a simple yet effective formula that's lasted the whole series.

While this is all well and good, nothing tells





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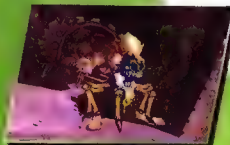
"Before I got my Splizz Gun, my studio apartment was way too cramped. Not anymore! Now I just morph with the first spider I see, spin a web in the corner, kick back with a bowl of bugs and watch the tube. Thanks, Dr. Muto. Your fiendish gadgets rock!"

Doug Morris, Modesto, CA

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through the  
tightest spots,  
don't be a man -  
be a mouse.

It **DICES**  
chromosomes!  
It **SPLICES** DNA!

When the situation  
calls for brute strength,  
just go ape.



Morph into six strange creatures from a gorilla to a spider using Dr. Muto's amazing Splizz Gun



Use a wide variety of gadgets only a mad scientist could invent such as Rocket Boots and the Super Baller



Defend yourself against burly Rent-a-Cops, vicious "Cherks," and other henchmen of your rival, Professor Burnitell

**DR. MUTO**  
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Coming Soon

Coming Soon



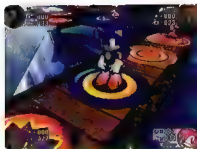
PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE



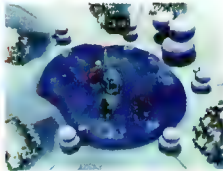
PREVIEW



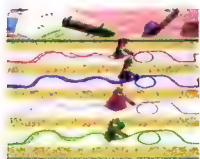
## SHORT END OF THE SONIC STICK

Although most of the world didn't try *Sonic Shuffle* (Dreamcast), the few who did were left wondering what went wrong. It was, after all, developed by the same folks who made the highly-acclaimed *Mario Party* series, so expectations were high. But instead of an easy-to-play multiplayer extravaganza featuring the fastest mascot in the West, gamers got an attractive, but sluggish, gem-fetching bore.

Cont. from page 144



*Mario Party 4*'s tale better than putting it to the test, and that's exactly what we did. All it took was a few rolls of the six-sided, and soon we were subjected to the cruel twists of fate fans of the series know and love. There were twists that robbed us of as many coins as we had won, twists that found us slipping on banana peels to determine our path (Medic!), and twists that got us stomped-on by a suddenly enlarged opponent. But when the dice rolled in our favor, it brought us into a wonderful world of mini-games. It is in honor (not really) of our experience that we offer but a small handful of the minigames we've unlocked.



**Trace Race**—It's Crayola time, baby! This exercise measures your artistic grace as you attempt to trace a pre-drawn line, using the analog stick as your pen.

Although speed is a factor, you can finish first and still not win if your line is sloppy. The person with the best combination of accuracy and speed will emerge victorious.

**Bliame It On The Crane**—This Milli Vanilli-inspired (in name, at least) mini-game gives you a time limit in which to catch a certain number of Nintendo characters. Complicating matters are the hordes of Shy Guys littering the joint. This one calls for superb eye-hand coordination.

**Take A Breather**—This simple contest pits four characters against each other to see who can hold his breath the longest. The person who mashes the button the fastest for the duration of the competition will surface as the blue-faced victor.

**Bomb-omb Breakers**—This Tetris-y block-dropper challenges gamers to see who can connect three like shapes the fastest. The twist here is that you can enter your opponent's territory and clutter his stack with junk or use some of his pre-combo

stackage to finish your own combos. They should rename this game "Getting Jacked By Your Homies."

**Right Oar Left**—By far one of the most difficult games in *MP4*, Right Oar Left forces two teams of two players each to work in tandem—to see who

can steer a small kayak through a roaring-rapids race. The difficulty lies in knowing which direction to spin your paddle and how that will affect the direction of your boat. Word to the wise: The computer never seems to screw this one up, so you'd better practice your stroke.

**Revers-A-Bomb**—Revers-A-Bomb will remind older gamers of the classic arcade hit, *Tapper*. Only this time you're not sending back beer glasses; you're sending back bombs! The goal is to reverse the direction of any bombs walking your way and make them detonate on your opponents' side. This frantic slap-a-thon requires quick reflexes and a fast finger. Ka-boom? Ka-boom! **Long Claw of the Law**—In this touchy-feely finger-fest, you're trying to grab little Goombas out of the windows in which they appear. Just like a shooting-gallery game, Long Claw of the Law offers up false alarms to distract you from the true targets. To temper over-eager trigger fingers, there's a slight delay between the button press and your control of the Goomba-grabbing claw.

**Hide & Go Boom**—The odds are in your favor in this amusing bit of fireworks. Your opponents scramble for "shelter" in cannons, and you're given three chances to light and launch your opponents out of hiding. You must find all three cloistered characters in order to win the match, but since

they often double-up in a cannon, it's like killing two birds with one stone.

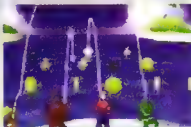
So, will *Mario Party 4* keep our attention when Nintendo's blockbuster titles like *Metroid Prime* and *The Legend of Zelda* roll around? Probably not, but we'll have fun with this while we're waiting.

—James "Milkman" Mielke

## IN HINDSIGHT

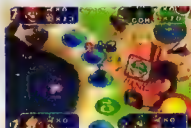
We take a brief look at the evolution of the series that redefined party gaming.

### Mario Party



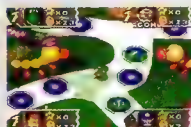
The original *Mario Party* made the Nintendo 64 the party place to be. Four-player support, a 100-star quest and loads of mini-games made this a noteworthy trendsetter. It was flawed perhaps, but not as much as *Sonic Shuffle*.

### Mario Party 2



More of the same, really, but the series' weakness of being more a game of chance than a game of skill is exposed. Random rolls of the dice score more come-from-behind wins than we care to remember.

### Mario Party 3

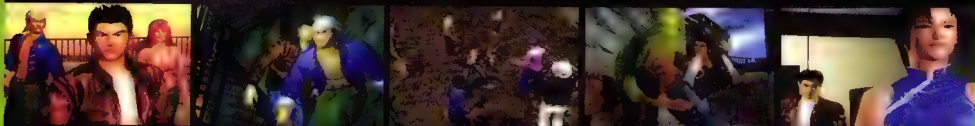


Daisy and Waluigi join the fun—which now includes 70 staggering mini-games and a new Duel mode. This is the best of the bunch so far.

Somewhere in a city of 7 million,  
is the man who killed your father,  
the man who knows why and the  
woman who may be your only  
chance at finding them.

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Gambling  
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SEGA

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# GET READY TO

# ROAD™

ROBOT ALCHEMIC DRIVE



Blood  
Violence



PlayStation 2



# RUBBLE



## IT'S TIME FOR A LITTLE URBAN RENEWAL

There's a new fight in town and this time it's huge. Take command of 120ft. tall, fully armored, fully loaded Meganites and stop the apocalyptic Volgara invasion from rampaging through our cities. If that means you have to knock down a few buildings and crush some pedestrians, well, such is the price of victory. We didn't say it would be easy to save the world, but hey, nothing ever is.



PREVIEW

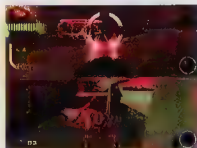
# Star Wars: The Clone Wars

<b>Publisher:</b>	LucasArts
<b>Developer:</b>	Pandemic
<b>Players:</b>	1-4
<b>Genre:</b>	Action
<b>% Done:</b>	75%
<b>Release:</b>	October 2002
<b>Also On:</b>	PS2
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.lucasarts.com
<b>The Good:</b>	Rogue Leader-style polish coupled with roughneck ground warfare.
<b>The Bad:</b>	This game is way more entertaining than the flick.
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	The guy they got to voice Yoda. Hyuk!



## FOR YOUR CREW

### Conquest!



Easily the most compelling multiplayer mode in *Clone Wars* is Conquest. The point is to hold down your fort while putting as much pressure as possible on the bases of your opponents.

It gets more complex, though. You're able to build up defenses within your base by basically staying put. See, there are special buildings throughout your zone, and if you just sit inside one of them, your forces will erect laser cannons all around it.

After they've erected four cannons at any building, they'll start producing tanks instead. You can then deploy these tanks to crush your enemies' pathetic defenses. It's a nice mix of action and strategy, and it actually works!

In spite of all their mythological posturing, the *Star Wars* movies are ultimately about one thing: nasty, bust-your-head-open battles populated by fresh ships and their suicidally daring pilots, and peppered with enough blaster fire to lighten the dreariest, most jaded soul. It's a good thing that they translate well to the realm of video games, considering how many titles LucasArts releases every time there's a new movie. *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* is the latest manifestation of this, and if you're at all familiar with *Rogue Leader*, then you'll know just what tree this game's trying to measure up to. Sprinkle in some *Twisted Metal*, and you're that much warmer...

As the title would imply, *The Clone Wars* takes place during that nigh-legendary spot in the *Star Wars* continuum, which is currently located just after *Episode II*. It was a time of great unrest for the Galactic Republic (no thanks, in large part, to Jar-Jar Binks), which equates to a whole mess of tanks, walkers and heavily-armed Jedi, among other units,

being deployed to bring down the house. Much like in *Rogue Squadron*, you'll get to use different vehicles in different scenarios, with some sections calling for a bit of hands-dirtying third-person Jedi lightsaber action.

For a majority of the time, though, you'll be behind the wheel of a zippy fighter tank. It's a quick little number, with the ability to tear speedily through enemy ranks, as well as pummel them with fire from its heavy blaster and concussion missiles. The battles you'll engage in when piloting said tank are unrelentingly thick in terms of headcount, so its high mobility and respectable offensive power will definitely keep it out of the scrap heap, provided you're careful, of course.

You'll spend a good bit of time off of the ground, and in the air. In these situations, you'll get to ride a Republic Gunship, which is both nicely hooked-up in terms of armaments and is as swift as a hungry bat. Apart from the standard allotment of blasters and missiles, it's strapped with a crazy-cool concen-

## LAID BACK LIKE YOUR GRAMPS

References to old-school *Star Wars* designs are rampant in *The Clone Wars*. It's neat to see how Imperial design has evolved.



This squat walker (left) eventually evolved into the massive (not to mention collectible) AT-AT (right).



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GAME BOY ADVANCE



Violence



PlayStation 2



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PREVIEW



## TANK BOYS

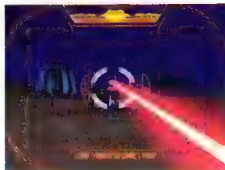
Pandemic, developer of *The Clone Wars*, certainly knows what's up when it comes to tanks. The studio was responsible for the modern PC remake of the arcade classic, *Battlezone*, as well as a sequel to that remake. Both of these were really impressive from a graphical standpoint at the time of their releases, so it shouldn't come as a surprise that *Clone Wars* is quite easy on the eyes.

Cont. from page 150



Sure, concussion missiles will get the job done if you're in a pinch...

...but the four-way concentrated laser will work even better, and it looks much cooler. Can you dig it?




trated laser beam that can rip right through enemy hulls like no one's business. Just like the tank missions, insanely populated battlefields are the order of the day here, so you'll need all the firepower you can get.

In truth, though, there doesn't seem to be a battlefield in *Clone Wars* that isn't filled to the brim with the richness of carnage. Take your tank to a mountaintop, and you'll be able to peep aircraft dogfighting above you. Look down, and you'll see infantry and lighter hardware doing their thing. Spend too much time gazing at your figurative navel, though, and you'll catch some flak to the rear—there's fighting on your stratum, too, so you'll have to stay with it.

Throughout most battles, you'll maintain a certain level of control over the units on your side. By means of the directional pad, you'll be able to issue rudimentary commands like "defend," "attack" and "regroup." Your men are decently responsive and can actually carry their own weight in battle. In

some scenarios, though, you'll simply be supporting groups of autonomous wingmen—such as the case in a level we played, which had us playing backup for a group of friendly assault walkers. Regardless of whether you're giving or receiving the orders, all sorts of banter will color the battles, much of which will be uttered by some real Jedis.

On your side of the battlefield will be most of the Force-wielding all-stars from the recent *Episode* movies including Obi-Wan Kenobi, Mace Windu and the whiny Anakin Skywalker. You'll get lots of play time with them in the third-person segments, but in most cases, you'll just take on their roles from inside the cockpits.

A whole mess of multiplayer modes will further beef up the action (see the accompanying sidebars), some of which are genuinely loads of fun. On the whole, it's clear that developer Pandemic is shooting for a *Rogue Squadron*-level of polish with *Clone Wars*. Here's to it working out. 

—Miguel Lopez

## WELCOME TO...

### Deathmatch Academy

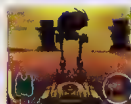


The **Academy mode** is basically all about a lighter sort of competition. You don't fight the other player at all, but rather try to complete some sort of objective before him or her. If you try to shoot each other, nothing will happen. It's all about brotherly love, you bloodthirsty savages. That's the way they do it in Jedi school.



The **Duel mode** on the other hand, is anything but friendly. It's your basic deathmatch mode that has you racking up as many kills as you can. You can be as dirty as you want, as long as you win. If you've played any of the *Twisted Metal* games on the PS1 or PS2, you'll have a good idea what the gameplay concept is like here in split-screen mode. It's just too bad we won't be playing this online this fall.

## LAID BACK LIKE YOUR GRAMPS (CONT'D)



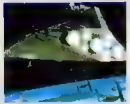
These funny-headed chickenwalkers call to mind something...



Ah, yes. So the AT-ST inherited the family charms. Just be wary of deadly Ewok-tech.



OK, maybe we're pushing it, but doesn't this carrier scream Star Destroyer?







Bound by  
family blood,  
He must return  
to the castle.

Tortured by  
his dark fate,  
He must recover  
Dracula's lost relics.

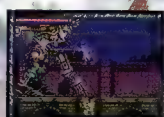
Cursed with  
perilous dangers,  
He must rid  
terror from the land.

And amid the  
depths of evil,  
Solve the mystery  
of a lost friend.

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Mild Violence

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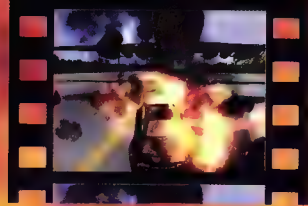
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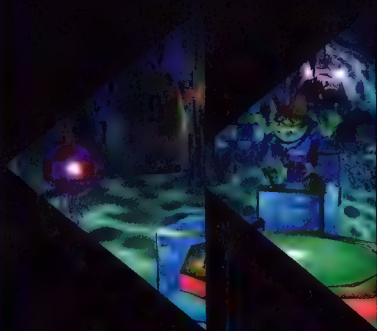
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# CHASE

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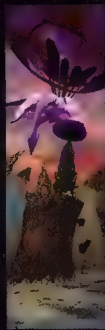
## Who needs nine lives



Rewind time to throw the world in reverse and uncover secret areas.



Hit fast-forward to tackle challenges that require you to be quick on your paws.



Slam on pause shots at frozen crystals without



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to take free  
enemies or grab  
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like they're stuck in mud as you and  
"The Time Sweeper™" do damage.



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PREVIEW

# Batman: Dark Tomorrow

**Publisher:** Kemco  
**Developer:** Kemco  
**Players:** 1  
**Genre:** Action  
**% Done:** 90%  
**Release:** November 2002  
**Also On:** PS2, Xbox

**Web Address:** kemcogames.com

**The Good:** One of the few *Batman* games based on the comic, not the movies or show.

**The Bad:** Do gamers still have faith in the Bat?

**And The Ugly:** Two-Face with a sunburn.



"You! My room. 10:30 tonight. You! 10:45...bring a friend!"

Despite all his cool gear, Batman will still mix it up with the common thugs of Gotham City.



For all his cool gadgets, Batman's cuffs look decidedly low-rent. Must be a bungee-cord sale.

The name *Batman* doesn't exactly fill gamers with a lot of confidence. After all, the Caped Crusader has had a pretty rocky video-game history. Oh, and the movies have sucked for quite a while now, too.

But wipe that from your memory. *Dark Tomorrow* has nothing to do with those crappy flicks. "*Batman: DT* is the first next-gen *Batman* game to be based on the DC comic book," says producer Takufumi Yuki. "We wanted *DT* to reflect the comic-book world, not the clean-cut superhero we see in animation and movies." In other words, expect to skulk around a very dark, gritty and violent Gotham City. But it ain't all action in Batman's world.

The less-informed may not know that the Dark Knight's physical abilities are matched only by his skills as a detective—a trait the developers at Kemco want to play up in the game. So expect to be searching for clues and using the ol' grey matter just as much as kicking in doors and beating villains senseless.

While you won't have the Boy Wonder at your

side, Batsy's handy utility belt weighs him down with loads of awesome gadgets (see below). And you'll need 'em against the rogue's gallery of super-criminals you'll face. "Some of *Batman*'s biggest challenges in the game include Black Mask, Scarface, Ratscatcher, Killer Croc and Poison Ivy," says Yuki. "But there are even more villains waiting in line to ambush the Dark Knight as you delve deeper and deeper into the game." By the way, we think it's pretty cool that this list of enemies feels a little more diverse than what we're used to in most *Batman* games.

When it comes down to it, *Dark Tomorrow* feels like a great blend of the best action games in the series, plus the puzzle solving of *Resident Evil* and even a little bit of stealth gameplay a la *Metal Gear Solid 2*. I mean, hey, the Dark Knight hasn't stayed alive all these years by running around in plain view, right? Be one with the shadows, grasshopper.

The only thing we find distressing is the total lack of a Batmobile. Maybe in the sequel? 🦇

—Greg Sewart

## THOSE WONDERFUL TOYS



### Heavy Batarang

Anyone who doesn't know what a batarang is needs a serious dose of *Batman* comic books or movies or something. You throw it. It hurts bad guys.



### Universal Tool

What superhero would be complete without his trusty Universal Tool? How else would they tighten the loose license plate on the Batmobile?



### Medical Kit

The perfect remedy for all those bat boo-boos the Caped Crusader is bound to suffer. And it comes in this stylish, bat-shaped case—perfect for storage!



### Batgrapple

Batman is just that: a mere man. So, of course he needs help moving from rooftop to rooftop. The batgrapple is the tool you'll likely use most in your quest.



### Batcuffs

Criminals are people, too, and Batman's deal is that he doesn't like to kill. So bring 'em in alive with the batcuffs. Commissioner Gordon thanks you.





PREVIEW

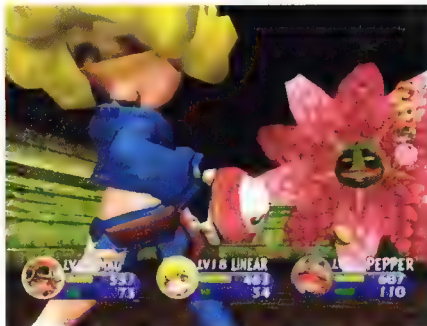
# Evolution Worlds

<b>Publisher:</b>	Ubi Soft
<b>Developer:</b>	Sting
<b>Players:</b>	1
<b>Genre:</b>	RPG
<b>% Done:</b>	90%
<b>Release:</b>	November 2002
<b>Also On:</b>	Dreamcast (sorta)
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.ubi.com
<b>The Good:</b>	Two games in one is definitely a good value.
<b>The Bad:</b>	The games weren't that great on Dreamcast.

**And The Ugly:** These graphics were OK in 1999, but it's a new millenium, baby!



Mag and party get from one place to the other by plane. Do you care? We thought not.



Pepper is the sultry temptress while Linear is the quiet, innocent one. Mag's the luckiest dude alive.


I HAD A DREAM

## RE-REVOLUTION?



If *Evolution Worlds* looks familiar, that's because this is a compilation disc. *Worlds* seamlessly combines the *Evolution: World of Sacred Device* (1999) and *Evolution 2: Far Off Promise* (2000) Dreamcast RPGs into one long experience.

So if you're a vet of those two games, don't expect anything new here. Well, except for a bit of voice acting and updated enemies.



As one of the first RPGs to come to the GameCube, *Evolution* is getting a lot of attention—perhaps more than it deserves. But that's only natural when you're one of the new kids on the block.

The game focuses on the adventures of Mag Launcher of the famous Launcher clan of adventurers. He's a spunky and determined lad who whiles away his time searching for hidden treasure in the plentiful dungeons near his home town.

Unlike many RPGs that focus on creating a rich landscape brimming with colorful characters and baroque locales, the world in *Evolution* is almost entirely confined to huge mazes full of enemies and traps. Each of the two lengthy chapters in the game is anchored by a single, small town, meaning there isn't much real estate in the *Evolution* world.

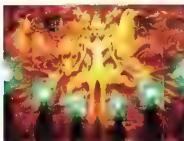
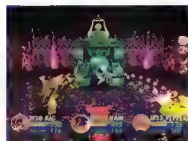
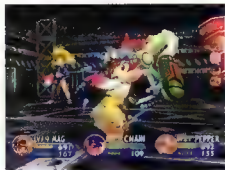
Where it does resemble a more traditional RPG is in the turn-based battles. You'll fight foes using the power of your CyFrame, a special kind of weapon with upgradeable parts that Mag (and some of his

comrades) can use. As you earn experience from fighting enemies, you can enhance your CyFrame with a number of special attacks or learn spells of your choosing. Mag can buy new parts for his 'frame that let him heal his allies or flatten his enemies with a giant hand. His devoted butler, Gre Nade, has powerful martial-arts attacks and a whole set of spells that can only be used to benefit Mag.

The majority of the game's dungeons are randomly generated, which means you'll have a slightly different adventure each time you enter one. But this also precludes many of the clever design elements (puzzles, secret rooms and the like) you might expect from most RPGs. In short, don't expect this to be the next *Final Fantasy*.

But that doesn't mean you can't find something to like about this game. It seems as though the developers made up for the brevity of each quest with an enormous amount of spells and skills. The idea behind *Evolution Worlds* is to get there first and hope for the best. ♣

—Christian Nutt



*Evolution* uses a battle system similar to what you'd find in *Grandia*. There's a bar on the right side of the screen that lets you know the next few moves in advance, rather than just guessing at which character is faster. Not spectacular, but not too shabby, either.



# GAUNTLET DARK LEGACY™

nice rack. dude!



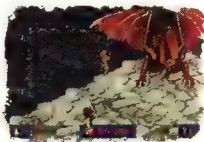
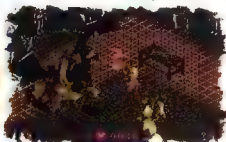
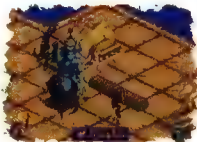
**THE GAME WHERE YOU AND 3 BUDDIES ALL GET TO BE HEROES.  
ONLY THING IS, ONE OF YOU HAS TO BE THE CHICK.**



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screenshots from Game Boy® Advance



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PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE

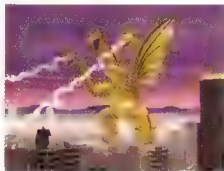




PREVIEW

# Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee

<b>Publisher:</b>	Infogrames
<b>Developer:</b>	Pipeworks Software
<b>Players:</b>	1-4
<b>Genre:</b>	Fighting
<b>% Done:</b>	75%
<b>Release:</b>	Winter 2002
<b>Also On:</b>	None
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.atari.com
<b>The Good:</b>	Godzilla is the man whether in he's in Seattle or Japan.
<b>The Bad:</b>	Camera isn't a Toho license. <i>Godzilla vs. Gamera</i> would be super-dope wouldn't it?
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	<i>Godzilla 2000</i> , that mockery, made it into the game.



King Ghidora wreaks havoc on the city of Tokyo with his electric breath. We wish we had electric breath. We'd wreak havoc too.

Cause enough damage to whatever town you're in, and you'll incur the wrath of the city's military defenses. Ice ray bad!



## IT'S A KING THING

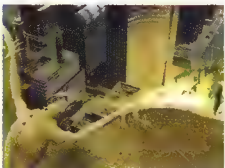
### Kong, phooey



One classic battle you won't find in *Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee* is the legendary showdown between the leathery lizard and the acrylic-carpet likeness of his one-time nemesis, King Kong. Now, if you asked us who would emerge victorious in a battle between a big baboon and a nuclear-powered Tyrannosaurus Rex who can breathe freaking fire out of his mouth, we'd have to go with Godzilla. But for some god-forsaken reason, King Kong one-ups the G-thang (although neither monster is the clear victor) in 1963's *King Kong vs. Godzilla*. A popular myth is that two versions of the film exist with different endings. While the edited U.S. movie is indeed different than the Japanese version, the endings are the same.

Imagine a game that models itself after the dynamics of popular wrestling games, but replaces the overfed, Speedo-wearing machomen of the WWE with the overfed, rubber-suited monsters of Toho (Godzilla's licensor). Now swap out the rings, ropes and bloodthirsty crowds with laser-fences, sprawling city blocks and a crowd-control-minded militia and you'll end up with *Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee*. With the similarly-themed *War of the Monsters* (PS2) in the works, it seems as if the giant-monster genre is experiencing something of a renaissance, with the last game of this breed being SNK's 1991 classic, *King of the Monsters* (Neo-Geo).

But that's all about to change thanks to Pipeworks



Software. Although Sony's *War of the Monsters* has been turning heads lately, it's Godzilla's posse that holds the killer license. Essentially a greatest hits of classic *Godzilla* characters, *Destroy All Monsters Melee* boasts fan favorites like Gigan, King Ghidora, Anguirus, Megalon, Mecha-Godzilla, Mothra and variations of Godzilla himself. All the monsters have the standard assortment of punches and kicks, each of differing speeds and power, as well as a long-distance attack (usually lasers or fire breath) and a throw move. Each monster also has its own signature move, naturally. While all of this may seem rather basic, a good deal of strategy comes into play during the battles.

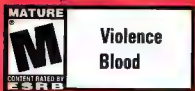
You see, each city's military defenses will come rushing to the scene of every monster battle, ready to dole out punishment to whichever monster is currently doing the most damage to the surrounding environment. So savvy gamers will knock or throw their opponents into as many buildings as possible, thus causing the victim to come under heavy fire from tanks, planes and helicopters. Alternatively, players can duck behind tall structures when opponents launch long-distance attacks. The army folks will retaliate, firing on the monster that just took out that skyscraper by accident.

Of the game's various modes, perhaps the most interesting is the *Rampage*-like Destruction mode, in which up to four players must level as much real estate as possible. —James "Milkman" Mielke



# SILENT SCOPE 3

SILENT SCOPE'S INTENSE SHOOTING ACTION RETURNS FOR A 3RD BOUND WITH AN ALL-NEW GAME FOR THE PLAYSTATION®2 COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM. AS THE WORLD'S BEST SHOOT-SCOPE, PREVENT A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION FROM USING CLONING TECHNOLOGY FOR GLOBAL DOMINATION. FEATURING EXPANSIVE LEVELS, DIABOLICAL BOSSES, AND NEW 3D SOUND TECHNOLOGY TO FIND AND ELIMINATE OPPONENTS, IT'S TIME TO SILENCE THE ENEMY THREAT. AS A BONUS, SILENT SCOPE 3 ALSO INCLUDES, SINCE THE GAME PLAY BY INCLUDING THE HIT ARCADE GAME, SILENT SCOPE EXT.



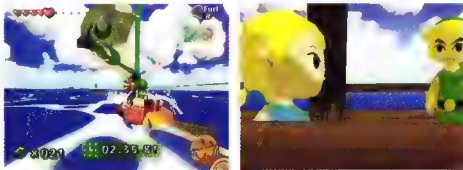
PlayStation®2



PREVIEW  
GALLERY

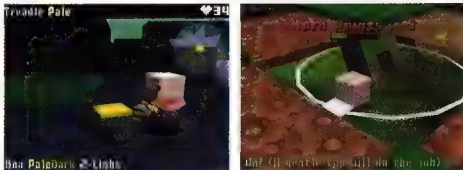
## The Legend of Zelda

**Nintendo • February 2003 • Also On: None** — We're back with another peek at Link's newest adventure, which is getting closer to completion, but still oh so far away. Fresh off his stint in *Super Smash Bros. Melee*, Link struggles with a serious case of arrested development as he regresses back to the days of his (our?) youth for this cartoony adventure that has us reaching for the Nilla Wafers and Jolt Cola.



## Cubivore

**Atlas • November 2002 • Also On: None** — Part nature sim and part beat 'em up, *Cubivore* casts you as a geometric animal that has to kill and eat other animals in order to leech their powers and abilities. Do that enough times, and you'll get to mate with female versions of those creatures to produce offspring worthy of your vicious legacy. Dumbfounded yet? Peep the screens—you ain't seen nothing.



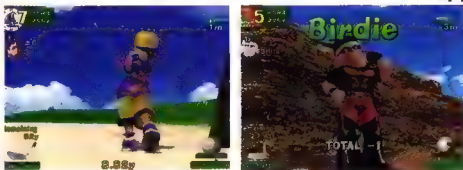
## NBA 2K3

**Sega Sports • October 2002 • Also On: PS2, Xbox** — For those ballers who dumped the piss-poor *NBA Live* in lieu of the masterful *NBA 2K2*, there's more promising basketball on the way from developer Visual Concepts. The best new feature? The ability to change your shot in mid-air. Instead of getting stuffed by Shaq, you can now scoop it, and push it off the glass. Nothin' but net.



## Swingerz Golf

**Fresh Games • October 2002 • Also On: None** — PS2 has *Hot Shots 3*, Xbox has *Outlaw Golf*, and now GC owners can get their zany links antics with *Swingerz Golf*. Go for the birdie using the analog swing meter on exotic courses in strange weather (like snowstorms or tropical rainstorms). Basically, this is the golf game you'll want around when you and your buddies are guzzling beer and lying about women.



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RED FACTION II

# THE PLIGHT OF



EXCLUSIVE PHOTOS

# THE RED FACTION



**CITY IN FLAMES:** A distant shot of Sopot City, capital of the Commonwealth, where a conflict between the Red Faction rebels and the Dictatorship Government has resulted in mass destruction.



# RED FRACTION II







**GEO-MOD TECHNOLOGY:** Red Faction troops circumvent a heavily guarded front gate by creating an entrance of their own in Sopot's military compound.



RED FACTION II

# COMMONWEALTH COUP

The Red Faction is using their entire arsenal in the latest attempt to



Asair Fighter 2.0

## FROM THE AIR

The Red Faction customized Asair is a maneuverable air assault vehicle equipped with optical zoom which allows for precise hits on enemy targets.



Drop Point 5:37am

Troops assemble at the Sopot Harbor.

## SOPOT CITY

## CIVILIAN UPRISING

After Sopot's forces withdrew from the main city, several Red Faction rebels raided Harbor Island and desecrated the symbolic statue of the dictator.



Blood and Gore  
Violence

For more up-to-the-minute coverage of the conflict, go to [www.redfaction2.com](http://www.redfaction2.com)

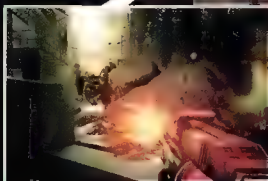
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# D'ETAT

overthrow the Dictator Sopot.



**Public Information Building 6:05am**  
Commonwealth Elite Guards attempt to fend off the attacking Faction soldiers.



**NC-8B Nanotech Grenade Launcher**

**Philly's Armored Personal Combat System**

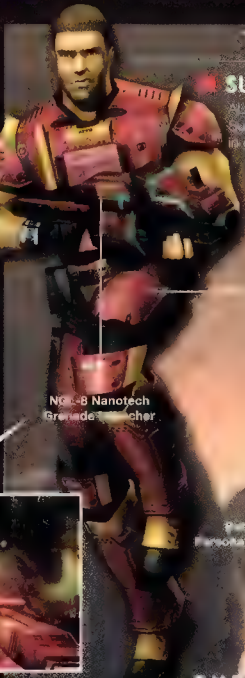


**The Slums 6:22am**  
Rebel soldiers continue to fight despite rumors of growing animosity between Faction leaders.

## THE REBELS

### SUPER SOLDIERS

ALIAS: the best of the Faction Super Soldiers is chosen time to revolutionize.



## THE WEAPONRY

These are only a few of the many weapons at the disposal of the Red Faction army.



### CMRD-32 MAGNETIC RAIL DRIVER

Fires metal shrapnel that go through just about any barrier without loss of accuracy. The targeting scope makes this weapon extremely accurate.



### N.I.C.W. - NANOTECH INDIVIDUAL COMBAT WEAPON

Capable of delivering automatic armor-piercing rounds as well as launching grenades.



### CAR-72 MILITARY ASSAULT RIFLE

A fully-automatic, high-powered rifle in a lightweight compact frame.

PlayStation 2





PREVIEW

# Steel Battalion

**Platform:** Capcom  
**Developer:** Capcom  
**Publisher:** 1  
**Genre:** Simulation  
**% Done:** 95%  
**Release:** December 2002  
**Also on:** None  
**Web:** www.capcom.com

**The Good:** It's the most ambitious mech sim ever made.

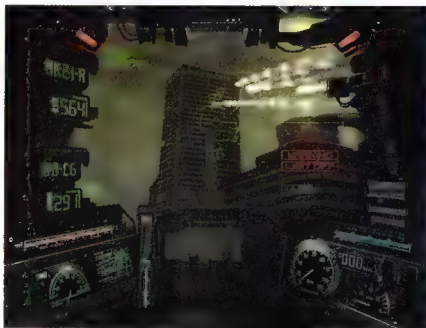
**The Bad:** The whole package will cost you around 200 bucks.

**And The Ugly:** Just try to carry this sucker home on foot.



Nope, the "vertical tanks" in *SB* aren't too pretty, but they sure can rip you a new one.

Since nearly everything in the environment is destructible, you can kiss that skyscraper goodbye.



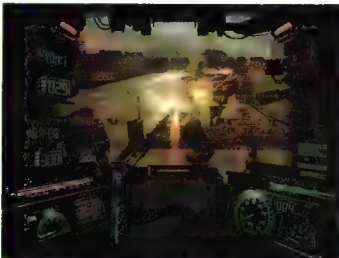
When Shinji Mikami, the visionary behind games like *Resident Evil* and *Devil May Cry*, came up with the idea to develop the mother-of-all Xbox exclusives, his staff took out all the stops. The result is *Steel Battalion*, a mech simulator so over-the-top in its pursuit of (virtual) reality, that it actually comes packaged with its own cockpit dashboard, featuring no less than two joysticks, three foot pedals and a whopping 40 buttons (see pg. 176). No, we didn't stutter—yes—FORTY buttons, every single one of which you'll press at least once each time you play a game of *SB*.

"We basically figured that the Xbox was a very powerful machine that could do a lot of amazing stuff," says Atsushi Inaba, producer of the game.

"So why not go all the way?" For Inaba, that meant he got to do things his way on this ultra-ambitious project. His team mocked up and burned through more than 40 prototypes of the mammoth controller before settling on the real thing. "Since I'm the one that ultimately decided what the final cost of the game was going to be," says Inaba, "there's really nothing that I had to leave out of the final version of the controller."

What, not even a seat-warmer button of some sort? "Well, originally, I wanted the controller to be made entirely out of metal," he explains. "It didn't happen because then it'd weigh too much and would present problems in the retail channel." Still, not too shabby for a peripheral most companies would shun as pure commercial suicide. "I was a bit worried about the prohibitive cost of the controller, but my goal was to create a good mech simulator," says Inaba. "I think that if people just play it, they'll realize it's a good game, regardless of the cost and complex learning curve." Which is basically what all this hoopla about *SB*'s high-priced controller really boils down to: How is the actual game itself?

When it comes to first impressions, *Steel Battalion* is drop-dead gorgeous. Visually, the game's war-torn environments give off a dark authenticity not commonly seen in your typical giant-robot action title. This is war. You're on the frontlines, and nothing has been spared the brutality of combat. As



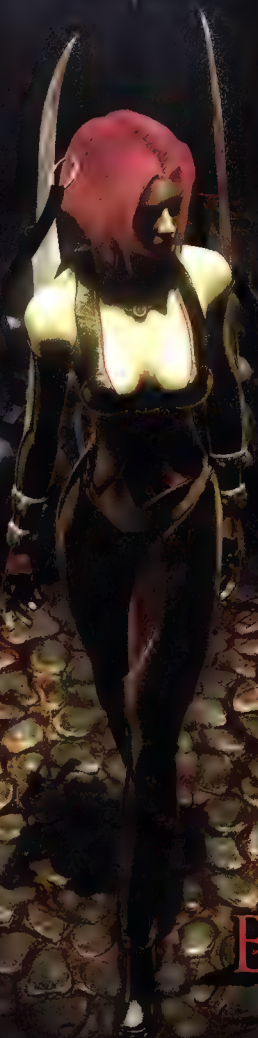
**CUSTOMIZE**

## Trick Out Your Ride



Although you can jump into *SB* for quick, random battles, its real depth lies in the Campaign mode, where you'll be able to customize your mech's armor and its various munitions. In total, there are 18 robots—each with different cockpits and physics—that you can pilot throughout the game. "In the first third of the game, the canopy view in the mechs will be smaller," says producer Atsushi Inaba. "As technology improves, you'll have better mechs with more streamlined cockpits." In fact, one of the later mechs we saw picked up enemy tanks with its arm and sped around like a hovercraft. Rad stuff.

DRIVEN BY FURY LUST  
TRIGHTENINGLY BEAUTIFUL  
MEN DROP AT HER FEET



PC  
CD



PlayStation 2



**Blood and Gore**  
**Strong Language**  
**Violence**

OCTOBER 31, 2002

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## THE BIG PICTURE

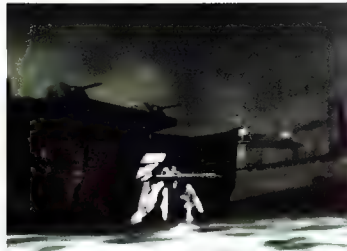
- 1 Your main weapon readout tells you what's equipped and how much ammo's left
- 2 Your sub-weapon readout and ammo count. Important for close-combat situations
- 3 Although it varies with each of the 48 different cockpits, this is your health bar
- 4 Multi-monitors give you other perspectives on the battle. It zooms, too!
- 5 The speedometer of the future is here. Kinda overwhelming, isn't it?
- 6 Side-step dashes and jumps register heat on this gauge. Keep an eye on this sucker
- 7 The comm. center, i.e., where you command wingmen, fire support and other allies
- 8 The heads-up display, locked onto an enemy target. Let 'er rip!



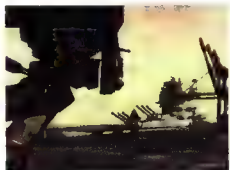
Cont. from page 172

you look out onto the battlefield through the eyes of your mech (a.k.a. "vertical tank" or "VT"), everything takes on a slightly washed-out, saturated video-screen appearance. That sunburned look, coupled with extensive shading and dynamic shadows, makes *SB* look at once gritty, solid and frighteningly realistic.

Likewise, the game's hefty use of bass and Dolby Digital 5.1 perfectly captures the bombast of warfare. These VTs feel heavy simply because they *sound* so weighty.



Admittedly, the intense audio/visuals, combined with all 40 buttons on your VT controller can be a total headtrip for any rookie. For our first sortie, we charged headlong through a heavily fortified beachhead with two other VTs in our battalion. After closing our hatch, flipping the switches and slamming down the ignition button, the ramp to our amphibious carrier dropped open and gave way to a scene not unlike what you saw in *Saving Private Ryan*. A haze of thick, black smoke masked a row of sandbags and artillery. Running alongside our teammates, we shelled distant gun emplacements with our 270mm rifle, and



**During one mission, you'll be asked to take down a huge naval destroyer at point blank range. Awesome.**

strafed nearby sniper nests with our mini-gun sub-weapon. We felt completely badass.

Past the beach, enemy VTs lined the nearby hills, lying in wait for an ambush. With lack of elevation to our disadvantage, our 270mm rounds hit nothing but dirt. All of a sudden, the cockpit goes red and we get a missile-lock warning. Where? Where's that bogey? All sorts of buttons light up on the controller, and out of panic, we jettison our extra fuel tank and activate the windshield wipers. We throw our foot onto the side-step pedal in a last-ditch effort to save our ass, but it's too late. The warhead detonates on impact, and our visuals scramble. We hear—no, we feel—our VT's slow descent as it collapses on its side. That's when we bail out, living to fight another day.

Afterwards, Inaba tells us he thinks that mechs will make it into real-life warfare in the near future. "If the Army tried to make one, it'd probably be just like the VTs in this game. They wouldn't move like Gundams, that's for sure."

Cont. on page 176

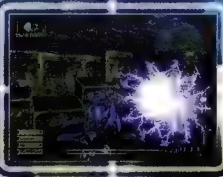
# SOME GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO STOP EVIL. ONE GOES TO GREAT DEPTHS TO SINK IT.

High-velocity nuclear attack submarine at minus 1,000 feet. Your mission is simple: Blow the Melugus Empire to kingdom come. Underwater, your adversary will never see you coming. They better not hear you either. Non-stop, adrenaline-pumping action and adventure await you and your crew. Move full-speed ahead around a massive post-apocalyptic underwater world in the most intense sub shooter ever.

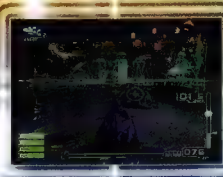
## SUB REBELLION



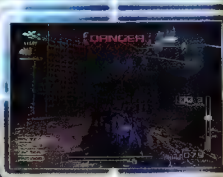
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Violence



PlayStation 2





PREVIEW

# Steel Battalion (cont'd)

Cont. from page 174

**SB's controller is so hardcore, we originally had plans to make this a centerfold pulout you can hang in the boy's locker room. But alas...**

## Left Joystick

Along with the foot pedals, you use the left stick to steer movement for your mech. A four-way "hat" on the stick controls torso rotation. Put all three of these elements together, and you've got the basics of how you truck your 800-ton VT around town.

Also notice how there are three foot pedals.



No, that third pedal isn't a clutch; you use it for a side-step boost when you're in a jam.



## Communication Tuner

Use that tuner dial to open a channel with a particular wingman, and give him up to five commands with the red comm. buttons. You can also use the tuner to call up support units such as supply and repair choppers, as well as air strikes. Bombs away!



## Gear Shift and Transmission

There's a reason that mechs are called vertical tanks (VTs) in *Steel Battalion*. Like tanks, VTs have a five-speed transmission that takes into account factors like torque and gear ratios. Torque determines how quickly you climb slopes. If you're cruising along in fifth gear and suddenly hit an incline, you'll definitely want to downshift to make the grade. Similarly, just as you wouldn't go from 0 to 60 in third gear in a car, you wouldn't want to start your run in anything other than first gear in a VT.

## Toggle Switches

We imagine it may get tiresome after a while, but we still get a kick out of flipping these switches on before we hit the ignition button. These switches, with labels like "oxygen supply system" and "fuel flow rate," don't do much—aside from making you feel even more badass in your vertical tank.



## Center Block

These six are some of the most oft-used functions in the game. The top row of buttons deals with dispensing chaffs (to stymie incoming missiles), extinguishing cockpit fires and, believe it or not, cleaning your windshield in case it gets dirty. G'head and laugh, but mechanized combat is filthy stuff—you won't want to be blindsided by dirt and debris. The buttons on the second row manage your six main and sub-weapons systems, plus all the payload for those big fat guns.

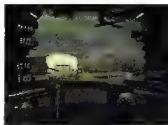


### Nine More Buttons

These nine buttons deal with assigning mech-specific power-ups and equipment to the function switches, ejecting your extra fuel tanks for better mobility, activating your night scope and putting your VT into a temporary butt-kickin' overdrive mode.

### Right Joystick

You use the right stick exclusively to control targeting and firing your main and sub-weapons. The small button you see here eases your targets whatever you put your reticle on, while the rectangular button lets fly your main guns. What you don't see is a trigger that fires your sub-weapon—handy for taking out entire squads of defenseless infantry.



### Multi-Monitor Management

What the heck's a multi-monitor, you ask? It's a small screen that sits right below your main heads-up display to show you peripheral views of the battle. With the multi-monitor, for instance, you can get a closer look at your currently locked target without losing sight of the big picture. Another useful feature is the main screen zoom, which lets you check out all the nitty-gritty of tiny foot soldiers before you blow them to pieces. This is handy for stealthy, non-combat recon missions.

### Cockpit Hatch and Ignition

You're not much use to your battalion if you take a random slug in the head. The first rule of thumb when piloting a VT is to close your cockpit hatch. As you watch the canopy lock down, you'll see your mech's onboard computer go through a series of system checks. Now it's time to fire'er up!



### Eject

When your tank is down on its knees, beaten, battered and begging for mercy, it's time to consider ejecting. Why go through the formality of bailing out, you ask? Easy. If you don't bounce out of your mech before it's a ball of flames, you actually LOSE YOUR ENTIRE CAMPAIGN SAVE GAME. The rationale is that since ejecting is such an important element of survival for fighter pilots in real life, the stakes should be just as high in *SB*. What an innovative pain in the ass. 🎮

—Che Chou



I ALONE HAVE THE FIFTH FREEDOM.

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PREVIEW

# Blinx: The Time Sweeper

- Publisher:** Microsoft
- Genre:** Cartoon
- Players:** 1
- Genre:** Action
- % Done:** 90%
- Available:** October 2002
- Age Req.:** None
- Web Address:** www.xbox.com
- The Hook:** The ability to freeze time and undo your mistakes (and they will happen).
- The Deal:** There aren't enough games that let you undo screw-ups.
- And This Sells:** Some of the time monsters look like animated M&Ms.



**HIT RECORD**

Want to be in two places at the same time? Now you can with the handy dandy record function that comes standard on the new TS1000 (not sold in stores). Just hit the record button...



...and start doing whatever you feel like. See that bad guy? Open fire while he's still frozen.



Once time restarts, work with your clone to double your firepower and fun.

If only life came with a remote control. Wouldn't you love to rewind time and undo that bone-headed pick-up line you just struck out with? (Trust us, "Is there a mirror in your pocket? 'Cause I can see myself in your pants" doesn't work.) Well, that's the premise (sorta) behind *Blinx*, one of the most innovative platformers to come along since Mario jumped on his first goomba.

Well, Nintendo's got their blue-collar brothers and now Microsoft has its own working-class stiff: a cute, cuddly janitor—err—cat named Blinx. He's one of an army of feline custodial engineers armed with high-powered Hoovers (the TS1000) whose job is to ensure that time keeps flowing (read: defeat time monsters). Hey, it's a dirty job, but somebody's got to do it.

As you start playing, you may find the game feels oddly familiar. No surprise there; developer Artoon is composed mostly of ex-Sonic Team members. But unlike Sega's speed demon, Blinx adds a whole new

dimension to the genre: time control. Producer Earnest Yuen explains that *Blinx* "opens the door to new solutions for taking out monsters, new ways to access areas of the level, and a bunch of awesome hidden goodies." In short, you not only need mad platforming skills, but must also manage the very flow of time in the game.

The only reason this is even possible is due to the Xbox's built-in hard drive—it is constantly recording what you do as you play. Thanks to it, you can instantly rewind and re-do actions or record new ones and play them back. In this case, the Xbox is working exactly like a TiVo recorder. Both temporarily save video information on a hard drive. (If you're still not getting the picture, hit pause and read the sidebars to learn all about it.)

We know what you're thinking: "If I can just pause, rewind and mess with time whenever I get into trouble, how tough can this game be?" Well, you're going to need to incorporate some strategy,



"IT'S STOOPID,  
LOWBROW, CHILDISH,  
AND... FABULOUS!"

—Official Xbox Magazine



# OUTLAW GOLF

*GREAT GOLF, BAD ATTITUDE*

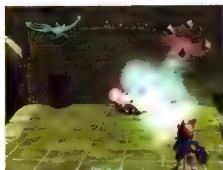
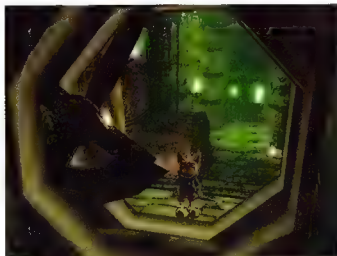


MATURE SEXUAL THEMES  
MILD VIOLENCE  
STRONG LANGUAGE



# PREVIEW

Cont. from page 182



because you don't have unlimited VCR access.

Confused yet? Don't be. Earning your different time powers couldn't be easier. Each world is filled with various time effects or health power-ups. But here's the catch: you can only collect four gems at a time, and it takes a set of three same-colored baubles to earn any sort of reward. Collect four gems without completing a set of three or more, and you have to start all over again. Therein lies the strategy in *Blinx*.

So you have to decide: Do you go for the extra life or the ability to slow time to a crawl? Or do you hang on and try to double your reward by grabbing four of the same gem? It's an interesting—and surprisingly cool—form of micro-management in a game where you totally wouldn't expect it. It allows Blinx to tackle every challenge in the game in multiple ways, making for some nice replay value.

When you aren't trying to pull an H.G. Wells on the

monsters, you'll be concentrating on earning a little extra cash. So just suck up anything you see with your TS1000 (Blinx is a janitor, after all). It's all worth money that can be used to upgrade your vacuum cleaner at the between-level store. Blinx can buy everything from liqui-vac nozzles to a trippy, glow-in-the-dark model. (Don't ask us what that one's for.) No word from Microsoft on the possibility of a home-haircut accessory.

Oh, and did we mention that the only way to defeat the baddies is by launching said junk at them? So get suckin'! Trust us; a full TS1000 combined with the magic of the Pause button is the *only* way to fight a boss.

In the sea of me-too platform games we're being subjected to this year, Blinx's time-twisting adventure is just bursting with originality. Now that we've played it, we're pretty pumped. We just wish there were a fast-forward button to make the release date come quicker. —Darren Gladstone

**CHARACTER KNOW**

There's nary a beastie that can challenge a greased Scotsman. Does this chronocat stand a chance against *The Simpsons'* janitor?

**Battery:** "Grease me up, woman."

**Battery:** "Meow."

**Arsenal:** Steroids and access to a collection of janitorial supplies.

**Arsenal:** Armed with state-of-the-art vacuum that can control time.

**Finishing move:** Lifting his kilt over his head.

**Finishing move:** Rewinds to undo kilt-lifting thing.

## BETTER THAN FIVE



**A bridge collapsed before you could get across? Rewind and try it again.**



**A little run down? Hit Fast-Forward and get a speed boost for a couple seconds.**



**Think *The Matrix*. You move at the same speed while everyone else Slows.**



**Stop everything with Pause, and take some cheap shots at the bad guys.**



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**LISA ROGAN**  
and  
**"G"**

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played in  
**GORESCOPE**



PREVIEW

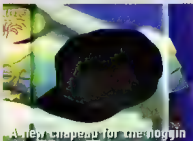
# Dead or Alive: Xtreme Beach Volleyball

**Platform:** Tecmo  
**Developer:** Team Ninja  
**Players:** 1-4  
**Genre:** Sports  
**% Done:** 80%  
**Release:** December 2002  
**Web site:** None

**Web Address:** www.tecmoinc.com  
**The Good:** The *DOA* gals are back in a gravity-defying action-sports game that boys will cherish.  
**The Bad:** Oh! If only our fantasies could be sweet reality!  
**Am! The Way:** Getting sand where the sun don't shine.

## XTREME SHOPPING

A small but luscious sample of the hundreds of feminine items for sale on Zack Island. Charge it!



A new shape for the noggin



Some hi-gloss hair polish



A wide brim to shield the eyes



Good kitty...illice kitty



As if these chicks aren't hot enough, now they can be made cocoa-brown brown by using some suntan lotion from the island's shop.

Expect some high-speed ball slappin' on the sandy courts. Here we see nature's finest assets at work and play.



Let's not beat around the bush: *Dead or Alive: Xtreme Beach Volleyball* is nothing more than the perfect excuse to lasso the series' well-endowed female combatants together in a game that requires them to 1) wear very little and 2) defy gravity. Now that we've established that, let us pose the question—so what? Is it illegal for women with 36DD chests to play a friendly game of volleyball? Of course it isn't, and that's what *DOA* mainstay Zack (he of the suggestive silver spacesuit) had in mind when he lured Kasumi, Hitomi, Christie, Tina, Ayane, Lei Fang, Helena and newcomer Lisa to Zack Island for the fourth *Dead or Alive* tournament.

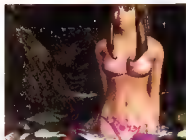
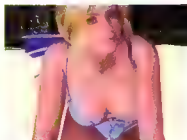
Unbeknownst to the girls, the premise of the tournament was nothing more than a ruse to get them on the island—a notion reinforced by the fact that none of the *DOA* men had been invited. But since they were already stuck on this tropical resort, the ladies decided to kill time by sunning themselves and playing some ball.

Since 2-on-2 volleyball is the axis upon which the

game spins, Team Ninja has added extra incentive to the matches. By defeating your opponents and tallying victories, you'll unlock additional courts all over the island, as well as earn cash to be spent at the island's one-stop shops. Items like bikinis, accessories and make-up are available for purchase, but players must be careful to match the correct goods with the appropriate characters. Each girl has her own preferences and may reject your selections if they don't fit with her style.

Gamers must also be aware of compatibility issues between characters, since the friction caused by pairing archrivals like Kasumi and Ayane may result in a lower level of performance. Thankfully, should the rigors of the beach prove too stressful, you can elect to retire to the island's casinos for a night of gambling, creating even more cash-flow opportunities. This winter, for gamers looking for love in all the wrong places, it looks like the beach is the perfect place to be. 🍷

—James "Milkman" Mielke



This is the game that *Dead or Alive* fans have been waiting for. With none of those pesky men in sight, gamers can finally sink their teeth into an all-girl, all-the-time, ball-blasting whack attack in the form of a female beach-volleyball competition. Compete for Xtreme prizes like suntan lotion, thongs and other girlish treats. You know you want it!

# Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon

<b>Developer:</b>	Ubi Soft
<b>Manufacturer:</b>	Red Storm
<b>Players:</b>	1-2 (1-16 online)
<b>Genre:</b>	Shooter
<b>% Done:</b>	90%
<b>Release:</b>	November 2002
<b>Age Req.:</b>	None
<b>Web Address:</b>	www.ubi.com
<b>The Good:</b>	Earning high-powered bonus weapons to use against the computer or others players online.
<b>The Bad:</b>	Being on the receiving end of said weapons.
<b>And The Ugly:</b>	While on Xbox Live, getting capped then taunted by some 12-year-old with an M60.



"Hey man, check out my Chewbacca costume! Whaaaroooo!" Who says that the guys in sniper school have no sense of humor?



The second, less popular part of the tank-escort missions: Find a parking spot and sneak back every hour to feed the meter.

## MISSION POSSIBLE

### Under Siege



Okay, people, LISTEN UP! Here's some of what you're in for while on recon:

**Anti-Armor:** Set up an ambush with your demolitions expert and carve a hole in a tank. There are also security missions in which you need to defend a convoy of tanks from harm.

**Defend:** Think *Hamburger Hill*. In this multiplayer mode, you need to hold your position against all comers.

**Search-and-Rescue:** It's up to you and your crack squadron to find the hostages on the map and escort them to safety.

**Firefight:** About as straightforward as it gets—the last team standing wins.

The flood of squad-based combat games is officially upon us. After spending a few hours in the s\*\*\* with the latest title in the long-running *Tom Clancy* series, we've got a bit of declassified info for all you civvies out there.

*Ghost Recon*, one of the Xbox Live launch titles, allows up to 16 dogfaces to go out on the field all at once in four squads of four. (For those keeping score at home, that's the same amount of online players as *SOCOM* on PS2.) This is big news for console gamers with broadband connections, but the online-enabled won't be the only people seeing some action. With LAN support and two-player split-screen, *Recon* is ready for anything.


If you've ever played any of the *Tom Clancy* titles, you know that this is more than just some blow-everything-to-hell shooter. We should know; we tried that approach in one mission, and the tank we were sent in to destroy wound up plastering us with a 125mm shell between the eyes. That's right, soldier; you'd better start using your head for more than holding your helmet in place!

Each time playing, you've got to pick the right squad members and weapons, and use stealth to your advantage whether you're playing against

human opponents or taking on the computer.

And when you do take up arms against the artificial intelligence, you'll find it just as tough as real-world opponents. "There are a lot of enemies on each of the maps, and they're working together against you," says Gary Stelmack, *Ghost Recon*'s lead designer. "Just when you think you've got 'em pinned down, you'll get flanked." The A.I. also runs on random patrol patterns. One time, you might see five terrorists staking out a position after you've cleared a ridge, while the next time, there won't be a bogey in sight.

That same intelligent A.I. controlling the enemies is also put to good use for your own troops. Your computer-controlled teammates are smart enough to cover your six. When we stranded our squad in a clearing, they knew enough to drop to a crouch and await their next order.

Another key element is the ranking system that encourages you to complete the single-player campaign. Finish all the tasks, and you unlock 50 bonuses ranging from extra characters and weapons to new maps, game modes and cheats. You can then use them against other people online. "Your opponents will be able to see your unlocked weapons," says Stelmack, "but they won't have access to them. That's when they know who to watch out for on the battlefield." 

—Darren Gladstone



Armed to the teeth and ready for combat, you can unlock a bunch of extras including the M60, AN94 and the Exploding Chicken mode.



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Blood  
Violence

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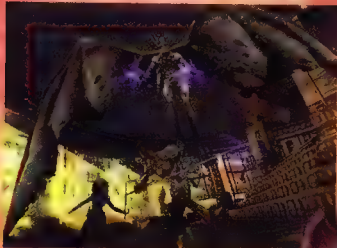
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Learn to craft deadly poisons, cast a meteor storm or devour your enemy's soul



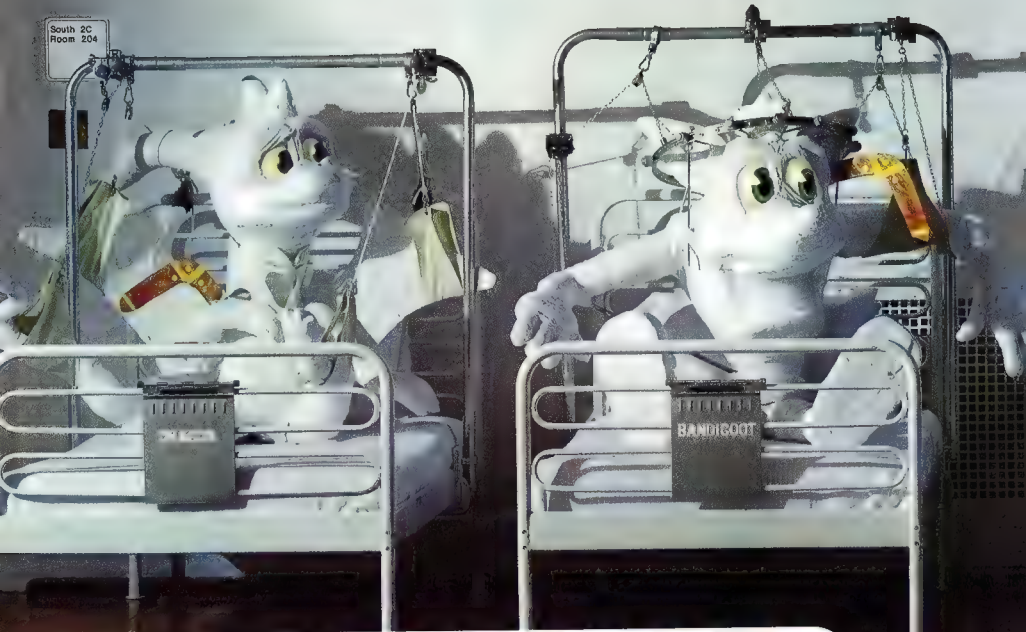
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PlayStation 2



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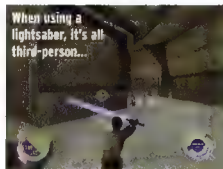
# Star Wars Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast

- Publisher:** LucasArts
- Developer:** Vicarious Visions
- Players:** 1-4
- Genre:** Action
- % Done:** 80%
- Release Date:** Winter 2002
- Mode:** GC
- Web Address:** www.lucasarts.com
- The Good:** Jedi mind tricks, force lightning, and other tomfoolery will be at your disposal.
- The Bad:** The PC game's online aspect has been absolutely plundered.
- And The Ugly:** No lightsaber dismemberments. What gives?

## FORCE-BLOGY

### What Would Yoda Do?

He'd use the Force, of course. And so can you. You'll be able to bust on fools in all sorts of Force-tastic ways and do other neat things, too, like jumping super-high, healing yourself and even throwing your lightsaber around like a boomerang. And if you're feeling really sinister, you can do like Emperor Palpatine and shoot evil purple static from your fingertips, as pictured below.



If there's any reason that we should be grateful to the *Star Wars* prequels, it's for showing us exactly how crazy Jedi can be when they're backed by bazillion-dollar special-effects budgets. As *Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast* makes evident, devotees of the Force have it even better in video games. And trust us, this is a good thing.

*JKII* puts you in the shoes of Kyle Katarn, a scruffy-looking smuggler-type who also happens to be a fairly formidable Force-wielder. In practical terms, this equates to a bunch of interesting twists on the *Star Wars* first-person-shooter gameplay you'd expect from a game like this. Though he's in a state of utter Force-withdrawal at *JKII*'s outset, Kyle quickly gains access to an arsenal large and varied enough to put those weird-headed *Episode I* aliens to shame. Basically, everything you've seen Jedi do in the movies will be available to you in the game. Did you just get shot up real good? No problem—your Force healing can stitch you right up. How about that gang of Stormtroopers? They cramping your style? All good—just Force shove them over the ledge and be on your way.

The minute you bust out your lightsaber, though, is when you'll realize what this Jedi game is all about. The view immediately switches to a third-

person perspective, allowing you to better peep the action at hand. As you've probably noticed from watching the *Star Wars* flicks, lightsabers are so powerful it's stupid, and this is a fact that *JKII* communicates very well. Simply put, you'll be slicing through Stormtrooper armor like it was Velveta. You can seamlessly cycle through three combat stances (quick, medium and strong) depending on how you want to swing it, and you can even reflect blaster bolts right back to their points of origin, be it a stationary turret, Imperial Walker or Stormtrooper. Don't expect any lightsaber dismemberments, though; LucasArts has decided to sanitize that twisted little graphical flourish from the PC game into non-existence for *Jedi Outcast*'s console incarnations.

One thing that's a little baffling (not to mention disappointing) is *Jedi Knight*'s lack of online support, given the proximity of its release to the Xbox Live launch. But don't worry, you still have a four-player split-screen option open to you, complete with computer-controlled bots. Besides, the original PC version of *Jedi Knight II* received critical acclaim for its single-player scenario, so it's all good. ☘

—Miguel Lopez





Hugo must fulfill his mission.

With the aid of his friends, Hugo can find out if he truly is a hero that his friends must find.



# Suikoden

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**- Unleash the power of three on a quest for peace -**

*The fates of three opposing heroes are forever altered in a battle that will determine the destiny of the entire land.*

*Uncover the 108 Stars of Destiny, create a homeland castle town,*

*discover the secrets of the 27 True Runes, and save the world from destruction.*



Mild Violence  
Suggestive Themes

PlayStation.2





PREVIEW

# Brute Force

**Publisher:** Microsoft  
**Distributor:** Digital Anvil  
**Players:** 1-4  
**Genre:** Action  
**% Done:** 95%  
**Release:** October 2002  
**Age:** None

**Web Address:** www.xbox.com  
**The Good:** Cooperative action with friends or the CPU equals squad-based gaming for anyone.

**The Bad:** You can't take it to the streets online.

**And The Ugly:** Brutus looks like a cross between a dog and a blue ass.



**Our girl Flint is especially good at scouting out hot spots and can disseminate that information among her partners.**

**Here we find Tex, the nature-loving pacifist.... Oh, who are we kidding? He's looking for someone to shoot. Twice.**



## SHOOTER BPA?

Unlike most games of this nature, *Brute Force* offers the additional benefit of raising your characters' skill levels. While not exactly a *Final Fantasy* in squad-based clothing, various attributes like sniper accuracy, shot power or physical endurance improve with time and experience. Since you can replay old missions at any time, taking your bulked-up characters back to earlier levels will result in a significantly easier experience.

This cooperative squad-based shooter thing is nothing new. Many have come before (*X-Squad*, *Rainbow Six*, etc.) and many have failed. Sony's *SOCOM* is about as close to console-perfection as anyone's gotten lately, but then it's not on Xbox, is it? So, answering the call for squad-based action, Microsoft enters the fray with some chicken soup for the special-ops soul: *Brute Force*. *BF* is a third-person shooter that relies on the diverse qualities of its four well-armed protagonists—Hawk, the sniper; Tex, the gung-ho hard case; Flint, the Halle Berry-lookin' scout and Brutus, the alien—to invigorate the gameplay.

Although *Brute Force* cannot be played online, gamers can still tackle missions with the assistance

of three computer-controlled allies. You can even cycle between any of these characters as the situation demands—meaning that if Tex is pinned behind a rock by some gunners, you can switch to Hawk and, from a better vantage point, dispatch enemies with her sniper rifle. Or if you prefer, you can have up to three real-life friends join the action—at any time—simply by pressing Start on the corresponding controllers.

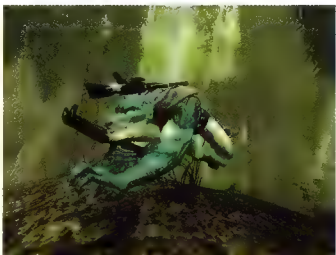
Employing each character's unique skills is key to minimizing casualties and completing mission objectives. Using your scout to pinpoint enemy locations, your sniper to take out enemy sentries, and your demolitions expert and close-combat veteran to clean up is merely common sense. You'll learn that stealth and smarts matter just as much as brute force in this game.

Fortunately the CPU is pretty savvy at managing the other three characters, leaving the gamer free to enjoy the game however he or she wants. 🍌

—James "Milkman" Mielke



Braap! "Woo! Pardon me!" Hawk reveals the true power of baked beans.



*Brute Force* rewards many styles of play. If you're the type who enjoys a *High Noon* shoot-out, then you're in luck. If you'd rather handle your business in a stealthy manner, you'll enjoy a completely different experience.

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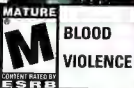
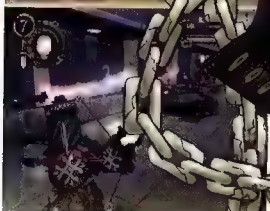
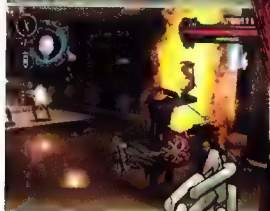
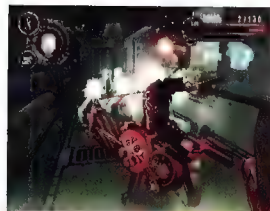
**Dramatic movie-quality cut-scenes.**

**Super-powered special weapons.**

**Destructible environments.**

**Nightmarish boss battles.**

**Disposable enemies.**



PlayStation 2


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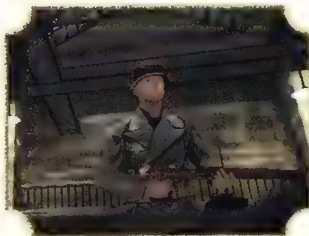
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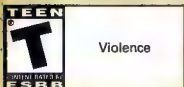
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PlayStation.2

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YOU DON'T PLAY,  
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\*Multi-player gameplay is only available on Microsoft Xbox™ video game systems and Nintendo GameCube™

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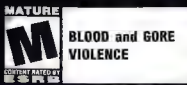
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PlayStation 2







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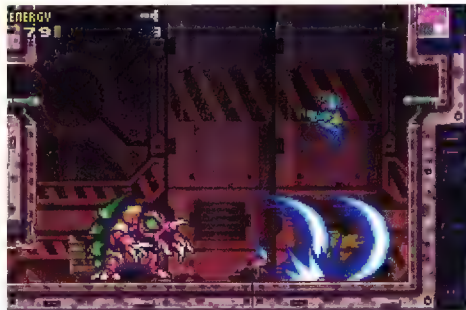
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THE  
THING



# Metroid Fusion

Platform:	Nintendo
Distributor:	Intelligent Systems
Genre:	1
Style:	Adventure
% Done:	75%
Available:	November 2002
Also on:	None
Web Address:	www.nintendo.com
The Good:	Classic gameplay and design is brought to the GBA in an all new adventure.
The Bad:	Bad? There's something bad?
And The Ugly:	Buying this and <i>Prime</i> on the same day. Wallet apocalypse!



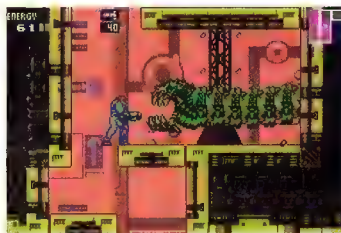
Left: Samus fights a boss that's actually a parasite. You probably know someone like that. Below: Samus faces off against her powerful clone. You probably *don't* know someone like that.



This is it, the true sequel to EGM's number one game of all time (see "100 Best Games Ever," issue 150), *Super Metroid*. *Metroid Fusion's* story picks up directly after the end of that Super Nintendo classic. The gameplay is just as compelling, and the developers have made many subtle improvements.

During a mission to planet SR388—the scene of *Metroid II* on Game Boy—our heroine is infected by a mysterious X parasite, which nearly kills her. She's saved, however, by a vaccine made from the DNA of metroids, the now-extinct, natural predator of said parasite. So when a space station researching the X sends out a distress signal, the newly immune Samus is sent to investigate.

*Fusion* may be based on an 8-year-old game, but it feels anything but stale. The control is smooth and varied—Samus has plenty of moves, including old favorites like dashing, ducking and rolling into a ball, plus new capabilities like grabbing ledges and climbing ladders. Her arsenal is impressive, with many different energy beams, missiles and bombs to choose from—once you find them in the game's maze-like levels, that is.



Much like the GBA *Castlevanias*, the world of *Fusion* is an interlocking labyrinth of rooms to explore (see sidebar). The game doesn't so much push you in the right direction as suggests the way to go. As you explore, Samus uncovers bits of the game's plot, adding a new dimension to the series.

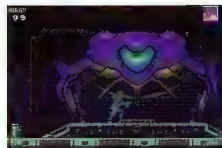
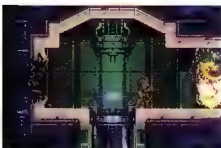
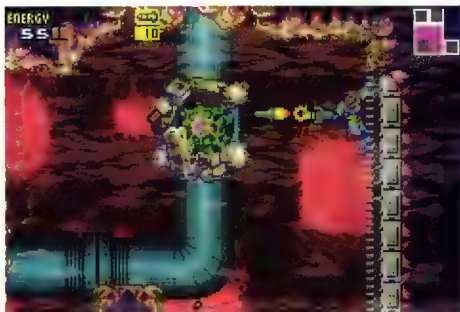
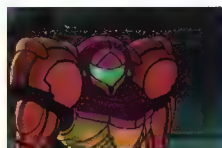
You can also link your GBA cartridge to the GameCube *Metroid Prime*, although Nintendo hasn't divulged just what this connectivity adds, merely saying it's "awesome." We shall see. ♣

—Christian Nutt

**WAY TO GO**  
**Mapquest**

The delatious X Parasites provide a deadly reproduction.

This screenshot may look familiar to *Castlevania* junkies or those who remember *Super Metroid* on the Super Nintendo. *Metroid Fusion* progresses almost exactly the same way as those games, where pretty much everything is nonlinear and requires a lot of exploration.



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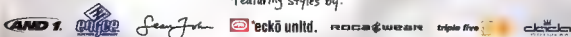
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PlayStation 2



ACTIVISION

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PREVIEW  
GALLERY

Kirby

Nintendo • October

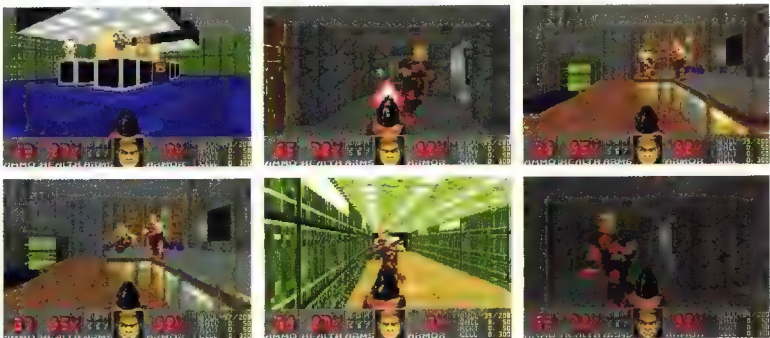
**2002** — Kirby's M.O. has always been hyper-cute action. The creative thing about Kirby games is his ability to eat his foes and steal their powers. The new GBA version has that, but otherwise it's very basic. Kirby doesn't include improvements made to the series over the years. But you will find a bunch of mini-games to make up for it.



Doom II

Activision • October

**2002** — While we wait impatiently for our Xbox version of *Doom III* (yay!), why not take a trip down memory lane with *Doom II*? This portable murder-simulator runs well on the little Game Boy Advance and promises lots of violence and green blood to take on the road with you. Honestly, what could be more American than that?



Tomb  
Raider

Ubi Soft • November

**2002** — Instead of the side-scrolling fare GB gamers are used to, this new handheld *Tomb Raider* uses a pseudo-3D overhead view. The result is a game that feels more like the original PS1 game and less like a generic platformer with the *Tomb Raider* name slapped on.



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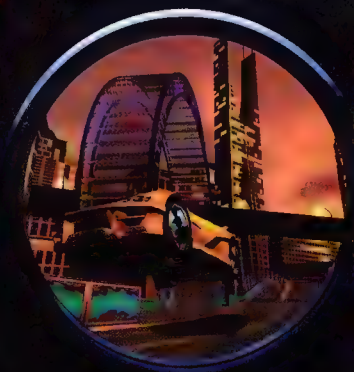
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CONTENT RATED BY  
ESRB

Violence



PlayStation 2

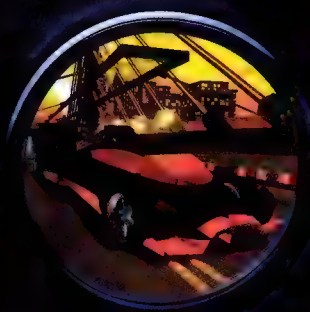
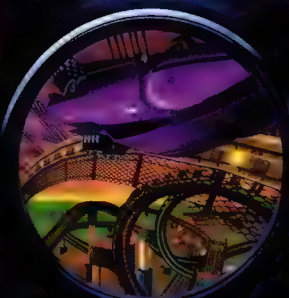


# Hot Wheels

## VELOCITY

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MATURE  
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FOR TEEN

Blood and Gore  
Violence

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DOESN'T DARE TO GO.

Will you?

MATURE

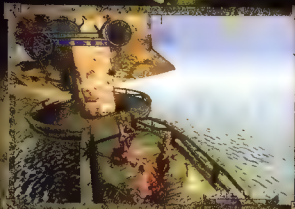


BLOOD  
STRONG LANGUAGE  
VIOLENCE



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**BY MARK MACDONALD  
AND CRISPIN BOYER**

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SEQUEL EVERY XBOX OWNER IS DYING FOR**



**I**n bad-news/good-news situations, it's customary to cut loose with the dreary news first. So, whammo: *Halo 2*—sequel to the white-hot hit that beat out even the mighty *Grand Theft Auto III* as our 2001 Game of the Year—doesn't land on Xbox until winter 2003. That's not for another 13 months. What the hell can we do to make such a cruel wait tolerable?

"You could stage mock *Halo 2* battles with G.I. Joes and fireworks," suggests Joseph Staten, cinematic lead at Halo developer Bungie.

"Tour the beautiful New Zealand countryside," offers Chris Butcher, Bungie technical lead and native New Zealander.

"I dunno. Read a book or something," says Bungie Studio Head Jason Jones. "My thoughts are all sucked into *Halo 2*'s design and engineering and art and figuring out what we're going to be doing for the online community. I don't do much besides this, so I'd be a bad person to ask for advice."





Jones' response brings us right to the bright news: The Bungie team is spending those 13 months dotting so feverishly on every piece of the *Halo 2* puzzle—from the intricacies of its galaxy-spanning story right down to the textured knitting on each space marine's T-shirt—that this sequel will surely wallop its predecessor in every way. This ain't *Halo 1.5*, the rumored *Halo 1* rehash tweaked with online play. (Bungie says that the pseudo-sequel was pure make-believe and "wishful thinking" on the part of eager-beaver journalists.) *Halo 2* will pack twice as many vehicles, including troop carriers and more flying machines. It will feature destructible environments and missions set in low gravity. It will deliver full-blown online battles between an army of armor-suited Master Chiefs and alien Elites.

It's sequel with so much more of...well, everything that tidying it all up with a tag line is tricky. Jones ceases concentration on the design process for a sec and tries: "I think the game is gonna be....," he stares at the conference room table in Bungie's Redmond, Wash., headquarters, searching for the words, "it's gonna be even more than *Halo 1* was." He looks up and smiles. "It's like *Halo 1* but on fire. And wrapped in bacon."

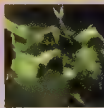
#### "Cool places to go that aren't Earth..."

The Bungie guys call it a "shield ship." It's a troop transport the size of a city block, and it's descending on a patch of hilly turf opposite an alien bunker. Squads of space marines march from the main hatch and prep for an alien assault the instant the ship touches down. A few troopers hop on the back of all-terrain four-wheelers—one of *Halo 2*'s many

## THEY'RE BACK?

Will these people, places and races from *Halo 1* return in part deux?

- **Another Halo:** Much of the first game was set on this Hula Hoop-shaped mystery world, an ancient planet-shattering weapon the Covenant was keen to commandeer—until you vaporized the whole enchilada. But "if you pay attention to the first game, you learn there are other Halos," says Bungie's Jason Jones, who at one point called the first game's derelict ring habitat the "Alpha Halo."  
**Probability of return...100 percent**
- **343 Guilty Spark:** Halo's hovering, humming, bowling-ball-size robo-caretaker had the kind of smarty-pants tude that wins friends and influences people. Could he have charmed his way into the sequel? "Guilty Spark was my favorite character," is all Design Lead Jaime Griesemer will say on the issue. "He has lots of personality."  
**Probability of return...80 percent**
- **The Flood:** Gamers had a collective freak-out the first time they went toe-to-tentacle with this galaxy-corrupting race of goey mutants (we sure did—see page 254), but surely *Halo 2* would be wiped out when their Halo habitat went kabloooie, right? "Do you think we'd really wipe out the Flood?" Jones asks. "The Covenant have a long history with them. Some really cool stuff will happen there."  
**Probability of return...100 percent**
- **Captain Keyes:** When we last saw the space marine's big cheese, he was vegging out in a Covenant ship, had put on about about a ton of mutated Flood flesh and was sprouting extra legs. Then his ship blew up. "Uh, no, Keyes does not come back," Griesemer says.  
**Probability of return...0.001 percent (Hey, never say never in sci-fi)**





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PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system and Xbox™ video game system screenshots shown.

## HAIL TO THE (NEW) CHIEF



### HAS BEEN

Like Christie Brinkley, the old Chief is a model whose time has come and gone. The only work he can get anymore is when someone wants to show how much better the new Chief looks next to him, or in the summer 2003 PC version of *Halo* (the gaming equivalent of doing a porno film). Poor guy. We still love you.

Unless you read the prequel novel *The Fall of Reach* (and are willing to admit it), you may not know that *Halo*'s hero, the Master Chief, is just a normal guy. At least, he was a normal guy, until he was plucked away by the military in early adolescence; trained morning, noon, and night for years in a special program (under conditions so harsh many of his peers died); and finally fused with an experimental power armor that boosted his muscle strength, reflexes, and general badass-ness to unheard-of levels. But other than that, he's just your average Joe. So far *Halo 2*, Bungie wanted to make him look less like a robot and more like a real guy in a suit.

"Things were a little exaggerated with *Halo 1*," says Bungie Artist Eric Arroyo. "Now his shoulders are more natural. His proportions are more natural. [He's] a little more realistic."

### ■ GIVE HIM THE FINGER

"He actually has individual fingers now," says Arroyo. "And he has a toe. His feet can really bend, where before he had more of a tank foot. Around his arms there are wrinkles in the fabric and they all stretch and move as he moves. It really adds a lot to the realism."

### ■ CAMERA SHY

Might we finally get a glimpse of the mug on the other side of that famous visor? "You'll definitely see more of Master Chief's personality," says Lead Designer Jaime Griesemer, "but not his face. It's not like it's a big secret. We just want to keep the player empathizing with him, and giving him a face would inevitably alienate somebody."

### ■ BATTLE SCARRED

This isn't just a new look for the Chief's old armor—it's an all-new suit he changes into at some point in the game, probably (judging from all the scuffs and scrapes) just before all holy heck breaks loose.

level is fully designed. But anyone who's played the original game's Silent Cartographer beach battle (think *Saving Private Ryan* with rayguns and super-sonic troop characters) knows that the battleground we just described is Master Chief's ultimate playground. And it's the kind of big-scale, teamwork-oriented commotion that Bungie plans to evolve for *Halo 2*'s single-player experience. "We had a ton of things in *Halo 1* that we tried," says Design Lead Jaime Griesemer, "and one of the things that really worked was when you fought alongside your marines. And now...we're going to focus on it a lot more. I'm not talking about ordering your squad around or anything like that, but you're going to be fighting alongside marines and against organized aliens a lot more than in *Halo 1*."

The shield-ship skirmish we just watched is actually a Bungie test level that'll wind up highly modified in the final *Halo 2* product. We dunno where the battle fits into *Halo 2*'s overall plot. And even if we did, we wouldn't tell you. Why spoil the story of a game that's still more than a year away? But if you've seen *Halo 2*'s wowie-zowie teaser trailer (and if you haven't, go to [www.xbox.com](http://www.xbox.com) and watch it now, soldier!), you already know the Covenant bring their war against humanity straight to our neck of the galactic 'hood: Earth. That's where *Halo 2* kicks off, although the trailer isn't the game's opening cinema.

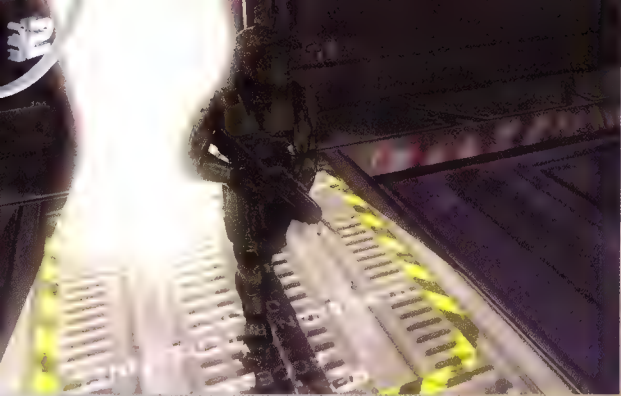
A brief period has passed since *Halo 1*'s finale, in which we saw Master Chief obliterate the enigmatic Halo ring-world. He had just crushed a Covenant force and an army of mushball space mutants known as The Flood. Now he's returned to Earth with Cortana—the chatty female A.I. construct built into the noggin of his newly upgraded armor—to find the planet on the brink of a "goddamned apocalypse," quoth the trailer.

new vehicles—and zip up a hillside. These guys are snipers, and when they reach the hilltop they dismount and take up positions.

Then everything happens at once. Enemy Grunts, Jackals and Elites—the various races of the trouble-making alien alliance known as the Covenant—pour from their bunker and begin blasting at the marines. Some marines dash headlong into the fight. Others cover their comrades from behind trees and rocks. Explosions erupt. Gvolving volleys from rapid-fire enemy weapons criss-cross the terrain. The snipers on the hillsides take beads on targets. Everyone works together. It's like a bona-fide military attack force.

The only thing MIA here is Master Chief, *Halo*'s walking-tank main character who really is an army of one. Don't worry—he'll show up eventually, once the





# PROPHET OF DOOM

"They're like giant space popes," is how Lead Artist Marcus Lehto describes the Prophets, a key race in the Covenant alien coalition and a new enemy in *Halo 2*. Bungie head honcho Jason Jones goes a little more in-depth: "The first two races of the Covenant were the Elites [the tall alien commanders in the original *Halo*] and the Prophets. The Elites are the military right hand, and the Prophets are the political, religious and spiritual leadership. Together they formed the Covenant and recruited other races around them."

The Covenant have wiped out every last human-colony world. Earth is all that's left. Master Chief and Cortana's mission is clear: Hightail it planetside to back up Earth's forces and repel the alien blitz.

Sounds like more than enough mission for one game, right? Well, that ain't the half of it. "There's going to be lots of cool places to go that aren't Earth," Bungie boss Jones says. So far, we've seen concepts for a level set in a hydroponic plant; on an orbiting space outpost; and on a mining station floating in the upper wisps of a gas giant, where hurricane-force gales make it tough just to walk, let alone massacre Covenant bad guys. One mission's set on a moon (we're not sure if it's Earth's or another world's), complete with weak gravity that drops the game's hyper-realistic physics into slow-mo. We watched Master Chief leap three times his height to reach a secret door to the Covenant's moon base. The kick from his rifle even slowed his descent when he fired downward while falling. Bungie is working on moon-buggy-style vehicles, which'll take stratospheric jumps in the low lunar gravity. And just think of all the low-G tricks you'll be able to try in multiplayer.... But we'll get to network play later.

## "Take the war to the Covenant..."

At some point in *Halo 2*, the Covenant's assault on our home planet comes to a close. Just don't expect the end-game credits to roll when it happens. Instead, Master Chief and Cortana will zip deep into the heart of Covenant territory, attacking the source of the enemy's power. "We're definitely going to take the war to the Covenant in this one," Jones says. The climactic battle that follows will bring a measure of closure to the *Halo* saga, something that was missing from the first game. "In *Halo 1*, you faced disaster after disaster," Jones says, "and by the end of the game you hadn't really gotten anywhere except saving the galaxy three different ways. Ultimately, humanity was in the same place as when the game started."

Bungie won't tell us much about Master Chief's encounters on the Covenant's home turf—other than that it'll be nothing like the alien homeworld in the PC/PS2 shooter *Half-Life*. We do know *Halo 2* will reveal a lot more about the aliens and the motives behind their intergalactic assault and battery on humanity. "I think they were so mysterious in the first game that people saw the Covenant as very flat,"

## ■ DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

The idea is that every Prophet in the game will be different, each with its own unique head-dress and robes. Why the fancy get-up?

"You can see the relationship to priesthood and royalty that we're trying to pull off here," says Lehto. "We've got a character who's physically not imposing but uses things such as the chair and headdress to become an imposing presence within a room."

## ■ SPACE-POPE MOBILE

The Prophets sit on a handy anti-gravity doodad to get around, but don't pity them the way you would some old lady putt-putting along on her Rascal scooter.

"[It's] not that they can't walk", says Lead Designer Jaime Griesemer, "They just choose not to. They're too good for that."



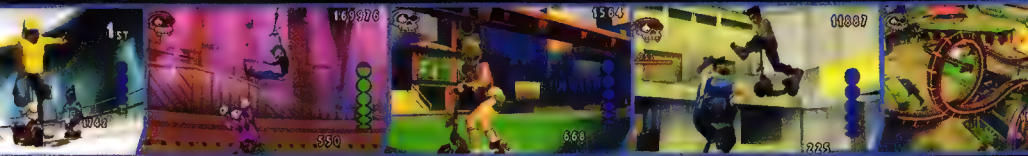
**A LOST PARTY OF SIX... A SEARCH PARTY OF ONE.**



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PlayStation 2



**CRAVE**  
ENTERTAINMENT



**Halo 2's use of cinemas will be a little different this time. Although you'll still get cutscenes like the teaser trailer here, about 70 percent of the story will unfold while you're controlling Chief, so there'll be fewer breaks in the action.**

Jones says, "or they just came across as the stupid cliché of an alien race that ruthlessly attacks mankind. Nobody knew about their social structure or anything, but I had hoped people would give us credit and realize there's more to the Covenant than what we showed. We're really expanding on them in *Halo 2*. There's a whole bunch of the story we still have left to tell, and that's going to be a lot of fun."

Revelations come in the form of new alien races, chief among them the Prophets (see page 220) and the Brutes (see right), with more alien enemies to be revealed later. Some revelations will even come from the original *Halo*—at least once the sequel shows you what to look for. "All through *Halo 1*, we were putting in the hooks for *Halo 2*," Griesemer admits. He's referring to the first game's mysterious little details, such as the scattered symbols on Halo and the funky history lessons from 343 Guilty Spark. "Almost nothing in *Halo* was random," he says. "I think a lot of people are going to play *Halo 2* and then go back and play *Halo 1* and see a lot of things they didn't see before."

### "Much more complicated engagements..."

Chat with Jason Jones about sequels—any kind of sequels, even the movie variety—and he'll tell you exactly how *not* to do them. "When you talk about the bad transition from the second *Alien* movie to *Alien 3*, I think we all know what happened there," Jones says. "*Alien 3* was just a different movie, right? And that's what you don't want to do. Likewise, we don't want to make a different game. Why eliminate the reasons people played our first game?"

That's why Bungie isn't fiddling with Halo's fundamentals. Master Chief can still carry only two weapons at a time. He still possesses superhuman strength. He still has a rechargeable force-field shield and flashlight. His armor has been upgraded this time around, but he's still pretty much the same green guy from the first game. "We're not going to give him any more superpowers," Griesemer says. "He won't walk on walls or fly. But we'll definitely give him augmentations. He'll have some tools."

Bungie didn't clue us in on what those "tools" might be yet, but we did glimpse a few of Chief's enhanced skills (see page 224 for a complete run-down). He's can now peer around corners and lean forward over ledges to check out a scene before he dives into it. (He won't be able to shoot or lob grenades, but the enemy A.I. can't see him, either.) The Chief's melee attack is beefed-up, too. Time your button presses right and he'll string together a combo

## BRUTE FORCE

They call the Brutes "the dogs of war" and fear that master and recruiter your whole career in *Halo*—you're finally going to get a personal, spend more time with the family, that sorta thing. Those dogs don't know mercy, aside, and they're still tougher than their Elite comrades. "For the Brutes, we're going for something more monstrous," explains Art Lead Marcos Llorca. "The way of the game this—connecting the dots between a myth and a presence."



### ■ RIFLE-BROODSTICK

We're guessing these things hanging from the Brute's belt are some new kind of grenade. Either that, or they stick to your face when you're in a position that's not quite as good as you think it is. Probably grenades.

### ■ GUN-BOTTOM

Check out that little thing along the bottom of the guy's gun—should be some of those mines, comin' at? Guess the way *Halo* works, it's a sure thing that even your Brute should use 'em. Big Brutes, you'll be able to take and use the extra new weapon.

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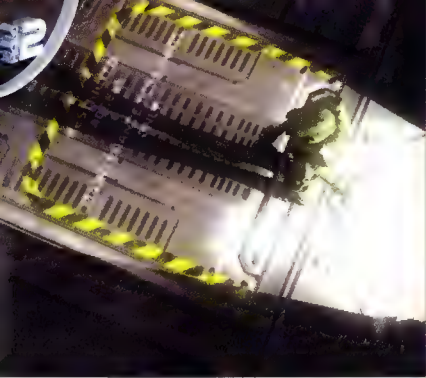
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# WHAT'S NEW IN HALO 2

A few highlights of what Bungie is planning for the sequel

Illustrations by eboy

of up to three skull-crunching smacks with his gun.

But the Bungie guys are saving most of their tweaks for the Master Chief's alien enemies and marine allies. We're not just talking about their look, although Covenant and marine character models come in a much greater variety this time. (Different types of marines, for example, will haul around their own special backpacks and wear unique body armor.) The bigger deal here is the A.I., which will potentially make the already darn-smart enemies and marines from the first game seem like high-school ROTC dropouts. "We gave a demo on *Halo's* A.I. at a game developers conference," Griesemer says. "We gave away every secret, and then we realized, 'Hey, we gotta make a sequel. We need a bunch of new secrets!' That's what we've been working on lately."

What they've settled on is a scheme that makes all computer-controlled characters more flexible in any situation. They'll have a larger variety of behaviors and interact more realistically with each other. "In *Halo 1*, the marines knew they had friends around, but they only used that information passively," says Chris Butcher, one of Bungie's technical leads. "In *Halo 2*, one of the marines will finish reloading his weapon, look at his four buddies and say, 'Charge!' The one with the [assault rifle] will immediately start suppressive fire while the two with shotguns charge across the beach and the guy with the rocket launcher watches the sky for Banshees. They'll really watch each other's back and coordinate their actions for maximum effect."

Other flashes of *Halo 2* A.I. brilliance: Marines will knock over tables and use them for cover. (Such defensive moves won't be part of a pre-planned script—the troopers will actually think to do this.) Marines pinned down by enemy fire might call for a Warthog to save their bacon. Marines will point out a sniper for an ally to grenade. Any of these scenarios can and will happen in *Halo 2*. "Instead of just communicating what they are doing at that moment," Butcher says, "marines'll be communicating intentions and making requests."

Your A.I. comrades complete the illusion of being living, breathing, thinking killing machines by getting a lot blabbier. Bungie is building on the first game's marine-conversation system, making it so your fellow soldiers will have more to say to you and each other. Let's rewind to the big shield ship battle at this article's outset for an example. Say that, instead of following the main attack force away from the ship, you

## RUN!

Always felt like you were wading through mashed potatoes when you needed to get somewhere fast in *Halo 1*? Move full speed ahead for a few seconds in *Halo 2*, and the Chief will lower his gun and break into a sprint, accelerating to almost twice normal speed (in current tests, at least). Jump, side-step or fire your weapon and you'll drop down to a normal pace, but for, say, backtracking to that rocket launcher in single-player or getting across the field with the flag in multiplayer, this new ability could be indispensable.



## ENEMY MOVES

To go along with their more animal-like animations, the enemies in *Halo 2* will have a wider range of moves at their disposal. You'll see Covenant scurry under ledges, leap over barriers and even climb up columns. "Guys are going to be a lot more mobile," says Griesemer. "They're going to understand how to move through the environment in not only effective ways—so they can find you and get to you—but also ways that are cool-looking and make them more difficult to fight."



## COMBO ATTACKS

Time your melee attacks correctly and you'll be able to string them together into devastating combos. In the final game they'll be different for each weapon, but in the example we saw, the Chief flipped over his rifle butt for two slaps from the side, then brought it down overhead for the crushing final blow. "It's based on *Final Fight*," says Griesemer, only half-joking, "as all good combo systems are."



## LEAN INTO IT

"A lot of times in *Halo* you entered combat before you wanted to," says Lead Designer Griesemer, "because as soon as you could see enemies they could see you. Leaning will allow you to look around the corner and check on guys before you commit." Currently set to the D-pad, this new function automatically leans the Chief forward a bit and cranes his neck around to the left or right, more like you would peek around a corner in real life than the slight shift to the side you'll find in most first-person shooters. You won't be able to attack while peeking, though—the idea is just to let you scout ahead a bit without being seen. "[It's] for checking out a situation before you enter it," Griesemer tells us. "To make sure nobody is looking, to see if a grenade would be appropriate, to watch out for surprise vehicles—that kind of thing."



## BLOW STUFF UP

You'd expect *Halo 2*'s levels to look better than the original game—the more exciting news is that you'll be able to blow those beautiful new levels all to hell. Doorframes, windows, columns—certain objects will splinter and shatter into pieces when they take enough damage. It won't be every surface, but enough that, as Lead Artist Lehto says, "You can walk into a scene where you just had major combat and it'll look like the lobby in the scene from *The Matrix*." Cool, you say, but what does it mean for gameplay? Two things: One, enemies will know what's destructible and what isn't. "So if you're hiding behind a piece of plywood," says Griesemer, "they're going to blow up the piece of plywood and come after you." Second, you can shoot out light sources, which leads us to our next point....



## SEEK COVER!

When you think back, levels in the original *Halo* were pretty bare—mostly empty rooms and hallways. Not so for the sequel. "We're going to be populating [*Halo 2*'s] world with a lot of objects that can be manipulated (by both the A.I. and the player)," says Griesemer after showing us one example—an A.I.-controlled marine flipping over a table to use as a shield. "Lots of games have had guys knock over a table," he says. "All of those games have had scripts that told that guy to knock over a table. Our A.I. goes, 'I need cover. I'm gonna knock over a table.' That means it can happen at any point during the combat. It can happen with any table, with any guy."



## HIDE 'N' SNEAK

Light, or lack thereof, will be important to parts of *Halo 2*. Details are still murky at this point, but it sounds like staying in the shadows will be one more way to evade your enemies. One section of a test level we saw even had Covenant soldiers patrolling the darkness with flashlights.



**Battlefield Earth:** Bungie didn't want to say much about what Master Chief finds when he touches down on terra firma, other than that: "the picture of Earth we want to give is that it's the most important thing in the galaxy for the humans to defend," says Bungie's Jason Jones.



mosey up on a hill and stumble upon one of the snipers. "If you hang out with him, he'll have these really cool things to say as he's popping off targets," says Cinematic Lead Joseph Staten, who, incidentally, provides the voice for the chickenhearted pipsqueak alien grunts. "That's something totally off the path and it's not crucial to go there, but we're building in that content knowing that the player might go there. We really want to have that level of detail that you may or may never see." Depending on which way you walk in a level, you might find marines who point you in the direction of a pitched battle, or who warn you about snipers while they hunker down, or who are just afraid to go any farther until you come and lend your firepower. "We just want to set up situations where the story isn't mission-critical, but it's definitely adding something special to your experience because the characters in the world are communicating to you," Staten says.

Of course, lifelike brainy marines deserve lifelike brainy opponents, so Bungie has souped up the Covenant's I.Q., too. "In *Halo 3*, our A.I. was about shooting people and not getting shot, and that was all it really focused on," says Butcher. "Now our A.I. will understand and move through their environment in ways that they never could before. You've got guys climbing. You've got guys ducking under objects or

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## DRIVERS WANTED

The speedy new ATV doesn't have any guns yet (and may never get 'em), but it sure looks cool. In the test level Bungie demo'd for us, Marine snipers used these four-wheelers to zip into position atop a hill to provide cover fire for the rest of their platoon.



The Warthog jeep will be slightly modified for different kinds of terrain (like jungle and snow shown above) or different purposes (like the troop transport on the end). The final Covenant Shadow (below) will seat just one driver, but two others can dangle off the sides.

jumping over them." It makes for enemies who animate like animals. The Elite soldiers will be more lithe and leopard-like. Jackals will behave more like birds. Life will be anything but a day at the zoo for Master Chief and his marine allies. Enemies know to switch on their flashlights and hunt for you in darkness. They'll understand how to fight in low-gravity environments. They'll talk to each other more (and most of them will speak English this time) and coordinate attacks. As tenacious as the first game's bad guys were, *Halo 2*'s enemies will make you fight even harder for every inch of ground. "You're going to have much more complicated engagements that are going to take longer," Butcher says.

### "Even the simple things look interesting..."

"I think we're probably the first sequel in history that's not bragging about having higher polygon counts," says Design Lead Griesemer. "In fact, the Master Chief is actually made from a little bit fewer polys than the *Halo 1* Chief, but he looks 10 times better because we're using bump maps in such an intelligent way."

Bump mapping—the rendering hocus pocus



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Halo 2 Warthog before bump mapping

**Bump up the volume:** Look at the treads on the Warthog's tires to see what bump mapping brings to the table. It would have taken thousands more polygons to achieve the same level of detail on a non-bump-mapped model. So many extra polys would have made for sluggish graphics.



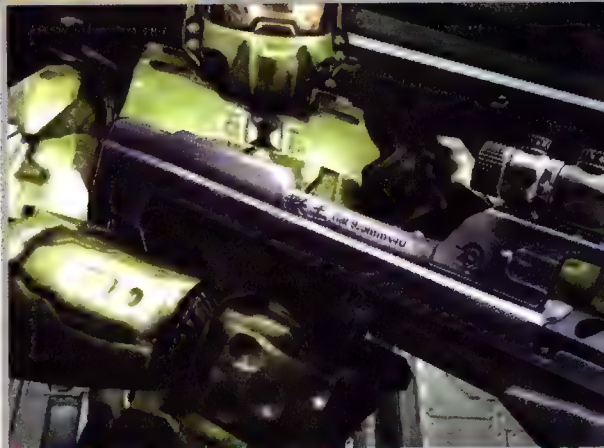
Halo 2 Warthog after bump mapping

powering much of *Halo 2*'s advanced new visual vibe—is a magic word with Bungie, because it's letting the team achieve an astonishing level of detail in the sequel's environments and on its characters and objects. Bump mapping's tech-nerd definition is that it's an Xbox-friendly rendering process that overlays a map of three-dimensional details—treads on a tire, buckles on gear, gouges on body armor—onto a polygonal model's flat skin. If you think of a 3D model such as a vehicle or character as a simple shape hacked out of wood, then bump mapping is the process of sculpting out all the fine details.

Bungie's artists are sculpting everything with bump maps in *Halo 2*, and it works beautifully. Just look at the screens and watch the trailer. "That's in-game content," Butcher says. "It's the visual bar we are confident we can achieve with the same frame-rate [smoothness] as in *Halo 1*." Unlike the first game, in which bump mapping was added late in development and used only on environments and structures, *Halo 2* has been bump-enhanced from the get-go. Everything in the game, including marines, weapons and retouched *Halo 1* models, will be sculpted for maximum visual impact.

"Master Chief doesn't look like a little featherweight polygonal mesh," says Art Lead Marcus Lehto. "He looks like a 400-pound cybernetic character who is gonna kick your ass. It's much more believable." And the whole point here is that such believability doesn't come at the expense of the game's performance. "We wanted to be able to have the large-scale battles we had in *Halo 1*," Griesemer says, "and we couldn't therefore just triple the poly counts on everybody. The bump mapping helps us make the game look so much better while not demanding anything more of the Xbox." Griesemer adds that the sequel will have even more characters on the battlefield this time.

Many Bungie guys we talked to guesstimate that *Halo 2*'s visuals are an order of magnitude better than the first game. That boost isn't just from the bump mapping's pumped-up detail: Half the pizzazz comes from the sequel's advanced new real-time engine for creating light and shadow, which reacts more realistically to bump maps than to ordinary textures. Watch Master Chief descend in a wire-mesh elevator and you'll see shadows dance around everything in the scene as he passes each floor. When the hangar airlock doors rumble open in the trailer, you see harsh sunlight, reflected from the Earth outside, bathe the scene and wash out weaker light sources. (Bungie calls such splashes of overpowering light the "bloom effect.") "Even the really simple things



The shadow shows: See the way Master Chief's battle rifle casts shadows on his shoulder (above), or how his helmet creates shadows on his chest (below)? That's called "self-shadowing." It's the new buzzword in graphics rendering, and it's one of the effects the Bungie guys are most proud of. "It's really hard to understand what that's doing to your monkey brain," says Design Lead Jaime Griesemer, "but you so notice the difference when it's not there."





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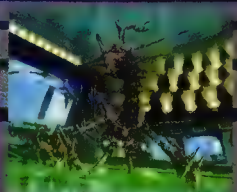
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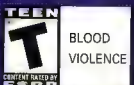
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# GUNS! GUNS! GUNS!

How come all the weapons in *Halo*, even the weird alien guns, look so believable? "We have some real gun...well, I wouldn't call them gun nuts," says Lead Designer Jaime Griesemer, "but gun...afficionados." He breaks down two of the new human weapons:

look interesting," says Straten. Bungie's artists are creating textures with this new lighting model in mind, whereas in *Halo 1* the lighting engine came in fits and starts, and the artists never really got the hang of it. Now it's letting them achieve the subtlety of details, such as the way every model in the game casts shadows on itself as well as its surroundings. "There's a lot of lighting things that our engine is doing," says Lehto, "but self-shadowing is probably the most important thing that you might not even notice. It's so subtle, but it's so cool."

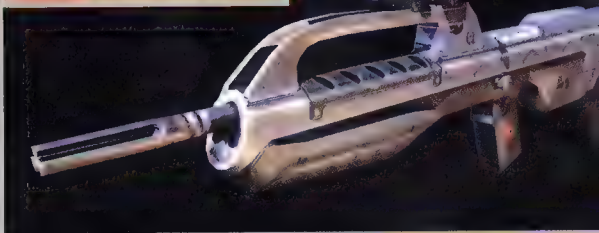
You don't really appreciate the sequel's lighting effects until the lights go out completely. It's a situation you could find yourself in frequently, since that Master Chief has the ability to shoot out lights and skulk in the shadows this time. Imagine hearing a bump in the dark, cutting loose with your battle rifle and seeing a dozen Covenant enemies strobe-lit by your muzzle flash, their shadows writhing on the walls as they scurry for cover. "It's really cool just running guys over in the dark," says Graphics Programmer Adrian Perez, "and watching the headlight from your vehicle cast this long shadow behind the bad guy right before you hit them."

Just don't get the idea that *Halo 2*'s enhanced use of light and shadow is going to drastically change the feel of the game. By no means will most of Master Chief's new haunts be dim and creepy. "We're definitely not doing this to set just a horrific tone," Griesemer says, "and we're not changing it into a stealth game. *Halo 2* is still all about fighting and shooting and killing. But, yeah, players have this great resource of being able to hide in the shadows now, and we're going to use it in some interesting ways."

## "Re-creating *Halo*'s single-player experience among players on the Internet..."

*Halo 1* was the first Bungie game in five years that didn't have Internet play. You can tell the team hates that—they hate it with all their might—especially because the game was originally designed for online. Microsoft's gaming network just wasn't ready when *Halo* launched in late 2001, so players had to settle for split-screen or linked-system multiplayer play. It was still ludicrously fun, just not the kind of experience Bungie wanted. "We've just been drooling to come back to team Internet multiplayer," says Jones.

Fast forward to *Halo 2*'s launch a year from now. Xbox Live, Microsoft's broadband-gaming network, will be a year old with its kinks ironed out. Bungie



## THE SMG

"The submachine gun has a high rate of fire, but it's pretty inaccurate. We may include a clip on the side where you can see the bullets, which disappear as you fire so you can tell when you're low on ammo. And it has a collapsible stock. When [the Chief] reads it, he'll pull it out and it will butt up against his shoulder."

will be able to stop drooling and we can start: *Halo 2* will feature online battles between Master Chief characters on one side and Covenant Elite soldiers on the other. The plan is for online to support at least 12 to 16 players. It'll be nothing less than the total online war Bungie originally envisioned. "The thing we're excited about bringing to Xbox Live is re-creating *Halo*'s single-player experience—with all the weapons, vehicles and explosions—among a bunch of players on the Internet." All of *Halo 1*'s multiplayer modes, including Capture the Flag, Oddball, etc., will return, except now with the added oomph of flying vehicles, way more weaponry, and real-time strategizing and trash talking via the Xbox Communicator headset microphone.

Bungie has other big plans for *Halo 2* multiplayer that they're just not ready to chat about. They know they want to enhance the cooperative mode of the main campaign game, but they probably won't make it playable over the Net ("That's really hard to do," Jones says). And they've heard all your gripes about the first game's lack of computer-controlled 'bot opponents for multiplayer. "We're thinking a lot about the 'bot question," Griesemer says. "We understand there are people who play *Halo* who want to play multiplayer, but they only

Cont. on page 238



# CRASH. CUBED.



Game Boy Advance.

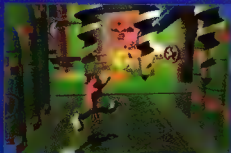


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# THIS IS WAR

As you can probably tell by now, despite Bungie's very cool plans for *Halo 2*, very little of the actual game is in a showable state. So we took matters into our own hands and put together this multiplayer diorama with what we know from the developers and a few guesses of our own. (The final game will probably look a little less pixelated). Bungie says 12 to 16 players is the minimum number they are shooting for, so here's our eight-on-eight matchup.

**1** We know multiplayer will include flying vehicles this time—we just don't know which ones. We'd be happy with the ol' Banshee here.

**2** Always dreamt of driving the tank one way while firing the turret in another? Bungie has implemented this feature in a test using the old *Halo 1* engine, where one analog stick moves the turret in one direction while the tank can move in another. It's an optional layer of depth for master tank pilots.

**3** The mic headset included with Xbox Live opens up all kinds of new possibilities for teamwork. Take this guy, perched way up here with a sniper rifle, relaying enemy positions (like that Shadow comin' down the street) to....

**4** ...set up an ambush with this guy, who has a Rocket Launcher all ready and waiting.

**5** One feature we're hoping is included is the ability to damage or destroy vehicles. If nothing else, a least show a scuff mark or two after a direct rocket hit.

**6** New for 2003, the Covenant Shadow. With room for four (driver, gunner, and two hanging off the side) and optional turret airbag, it's the perfect blend of power and sophistication, whether you're driving to dinner on the homeworld or running down filthy humans on the frontlines.

**7** The team is toying with is the idea of manual detonation for grenades: Push and hold in the shoulder button to toss an explosive, and it won't go off until you release the trigger. Imagine the cruel possibilities if this idea makes it into multiplayer—attach one of those Covenant grenades on someone's back as they grab your flag, then let them get oh-so-close to their own base.... "I'm gonna make it.... I'M GONNA MAKE IT! I'M THE KING OF THE W—" BOOM!

**8** "Yeeoooooooooooooooooooooooo!" We can't wait to zip around on the new ATVs.





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Cont. from page 232

have two controllers and they're not online. We want to do something for them, but I don't know what it's going to be."

We can't wait to find out. We can't wait to try online dogfighting in soaring new vehicles. We can't wait to try multiplayer battles in low gravity. We can't wait to play as a Covenant Elite wielding a human shotgun. We just can't wait for *Halo 2*. And the funny thing is, neither can Bungie. "We do what we do because we want to play our final product, too," Griesemer says. "Nobody has higher expectations than we do."

Ultimately, that's the numero-uno reason this sequel should turn out great. As fun and polished as the first *Halo* was, most of the game came together in the final month of development. Bungie has been working on *Halo 2* since six weeks after they finished the first one, planning every little detail, making sure this sequel lives up to their original vision. "When *Halo 2* is finished, it will define the next generation of games on the Xbox," says Ed Fries, Microsoft's VP of games publishing, "and it will define what network play can be on Xbox Live."

If that ain't good news, what is? Now what the hell are we going to do about that 13-month wait again? "I suggest cryosleep," Griesemer says. ☠

## 10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE FIRST HALO

*Halo's* been out almost a year now and people are still discovering new secrets and other interesting oddities. Here are a few of our favorites you can go back and try. This is by no means a comprehensive list—for that (and for more on all of the tricks below) check out [halo.bungie.org](http://halo.bungie.org), the best *Halo* web site on the 'Net.

### ■ FIRST-DEGREE MURDER

It's a well-known fact that *Halo* is a game of stealth and strategy. One of the most interesting secrets is that you can actually kill a Covenant Elite without being detected. This is done by using a specific combination of weapons and tactics. The first step is to get close to the Elite without being seen. Once you're in range, use a shotgun to kill the Elite. This will not trigger an alarm, and you can then escape without being detected.

### ■ TAKE A FREE RIDE

One of the most fun secrets in *Halo* is the ability to take a free ride on a Covenant vehicle. This is done by using a specific combination of weapons and tactics. The first step is to get close to the vehicle without being seen. Once you're in range, use a shotgun to kill the driver. This will allow you to take control of the vehicle without being detected.

### ■ HIDDEN MESSAGE

There are several hidden messages scattered throughout the game. One of the most interesting is a message hidden in the code of the game. This message is a secret message from Bungie, and it contains information about the game's development. To find this message, you need to use a specific combination of weapons and tactics.

### ■ THIRSTY GRUNT

Grunts are the most common enemy in *Halo*, and they're also the most interesting. One of the most interesting secrets about Grunts is that they can be killed with a single shot from a shotgun. This is done by using a specific combination of weapons and tactics. The first step is to get close to the Grunt without being seen. Once you're in range, use a shotgun to kill the Grunt.

### ■ SPENT SHOTGUN SHELL AND YOU'LL SPOT

One of the most interesting secrets in *Halo* is the ability to spot enemies using a spent shotgun shell. This is done by using a specific combination of weapons and tactics. The first step is to get close to the enemy without being seen. Once you're in range, use a shotgun to kill the enemy. This will allow you to spot the enemy without being detected.

### ■ SPENT SHOTGUN SHELL AND YOU'LL SPOT

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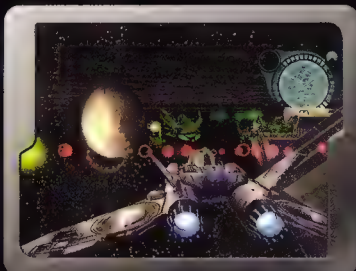
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*WHAT ALIENS HAVE  
NIGHTMARES ABOUT...*

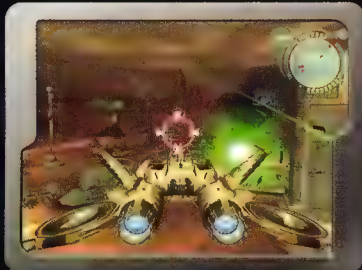




screenshots from Playstation®2 computer entertainment system



screenshots from Xbox™ video game system



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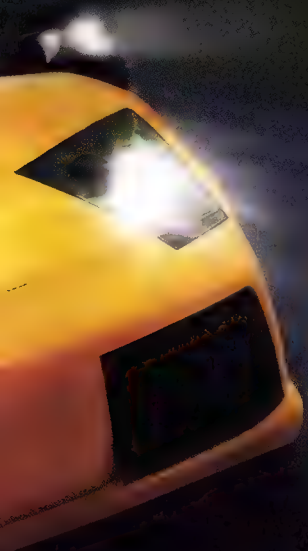
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What does it feel like to make a million leisure seekers stand up and cheer? Slide your skinny ass into Rocky's shorts and find out as you join his relentless quest for the title. Or take your shot as Apollo Creed, Clubber Lang or 20 others. Start with Training Mode or dissolve to Movie Mode in venues that range from scumbag gyms to the world's most famous arenas. But don't plan on coming out unscathed - the damage is way too brutal. As red-blooded Rocky fans know, sometimes all that's left is: "Cut me, Man."



Violence



PlayStation 2



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**Ubi Soft**

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FORGOTTEN REALMS

Baldur's Gate™

# DARK ALLIANCE™

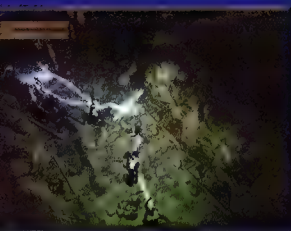
Live the Fantasy...

"Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance looks like an absolute must-have game..."

- GameSpy.com

"Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance looks like it's going to blow us away."

- XboxSolution



Intense battles



Explosive spell effects



Amazing graphics and gameplay



Interplay



# The 20 Greatest Moments in Console Gaming

Welcome to EGM's museum of amazing video-game memories. Feel free to play with the exhibits

Remember the time in that one game when you blew up the giant robot, judo-chopped those ninjas and/or rescued the president's daughter? That was awesome. Or how about that time you saved the realm with just one hit point to spare? Or the time you...well, you get the idea. Truth is, we all have too many favorite gaming moments, those slices of game time that blew our minds, made us weep, cooked us dinner or just made us go, "Whoa."

So this month we girded our loins for the nearly impossible task of choosing our 20 favorite, which we've dusted off and enshrined here in no particular order. Our only criteria: We wanted a good mix of brilliant bits from old and new games alike.

So head and enter the museum. Take these complimentary tissues. It's OK if you get teary-eyed. We've been there, man.

Spoilers ahoy: We couldn't wax nostalgic about our favorite gaming moments without revealing the plot twists and surprises that got us jazzed in the first place. So be sure to mosey past exhibits for games you don't want spoiled.





## Mind Games ▲

**Metal Gear Solid** (PlayStation)

When sub-boss Psycho Mantis "read our minds" in *Metal Gear Solid* and told us about some of the games that we played in real life, we just about dropped our controllers in shock. (We nearly dropped a little something in our drawers, too.) It was a memorable and innovative instant in gaming that transcended our TV screens.



## Saving Sergeant Patterson ▲

**Medal of Honor: Frontline** (PlayStation 2)

We've all seen the hyper-intense beach battle from Stevie Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*. This game let us live it. We knew from the explosive instant we landed into that maelstrom of whizzing bullets and earth-shaking explosions that, yep, war really is hell.

## It's a Girl!

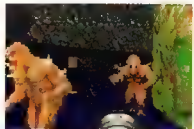
**Metroid** (Nintendo Entertainment System)

Back in the 8-bit Nintendo days, we didn't play games for the promise of some deliberately planted secret, but because they brought joy to our otherwise bleak junior-high existence. So imagine our surprise after beating the original *Metroid*, when Samus peeled her clothes off to reveal that he was, in fact, a she. Sadly, repeatedly beating *Metroid* only succeeded in making Samus put her suit back on. Crap!

## My Favorite Moment

**Jason Rubin**, co-founder of *Jak and Daxter* developer **Naughty Dog**

"1993, Winter, Boston: I download *Doom* to an MIT computer and start to play. Eighteen hours later, an enemy jumps around the corner and literally knocks me off my chair. That was the first time, but not the last."



## Croft Shows Off ▲

**Tomb Raider** (PlayStation)

G'head, admit it. You've shared a special moment with *Tomb Raider's* Lara Croft via this simple glitch: Backing Lady Lara into a corner whirls the game camera to reveal a front-and-center gander at her ta-tas. The view may not seem so spectacular today, but back then we felt positively naughty.

## Opera-house Rock ▼

**Final Fantasy III** (Super NES)

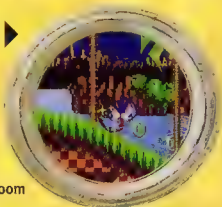
When we began our quest in *Final Fantasy III* (FFVI) on the *FF Anthology* PS1 disc, we didn't expect to have to sing our way out of trouble. Yet that's exactly what happened when our party arrived at an opera house. Sure, the operetta that followed wasn't exactly hi-fi, but it was still the most moving mix of sound (the actors actually warbled the lyrics) and story we had seen yet.



## Sonic Goes Boom ▶

### Sonic the Hedgehog (Genesis)

In 1991, Sega reversed its fortunes by introducing a new mascot. But unlike real hedgehogs (which are slow, timid and covered in mucus), this marsupial had style. He had 'tude. And, most importantly, he had speed that blasted us off our living-room sofas the first time we saw him go supersonic. Sega was so impressed with Sonic's speed that they coined the vaguely meaningless term "Blast Processing" to market the power of the Genesis system.



## Have a Nice Trip

### Star Wars:

**Shadows of the Empire** (Nintendo 64)  
Sure, we've done it since in *Rogue Leader* for GameCube, and we know we'll do it again in a future *Star Wars* game. But when we fired our tow cables and brought down an AT-AT walker in *Shadows of the Empire*, it was the first time we ever felt like we were actually in one of our favorite movies. Go figure: The best scene from the best *Star Wars* flick made the best level in a *Star Wars* video game.

## My Favorite Moment

### Jason Jones, Bungie's studio head

"That crazy part at the beginning of *Half-Life* (PC, PS2) when everything starts to go wrong at the lab. The scene winks out, and you get a quick glimpse of the other dimension and its creatures."



## Clean Up, Aisle Six ▶

### Eternal Darkness (GameCube)

You're hours into *Eternal Darkness*, and all that stands between you and salvation is the titanic Greater Guardian boss. You enter its chamber as unassuming monk Paul Luther, expecting a showdown. But those sweaty palms quickly cool off when the Guardian reduces the poor guy to a bloody stain on the floor with one swipe. So much for that battle. Someone hand us a mop.



## Layin' Eggs

### Seaman (Dreamcast)

If you think the premise of talking amphibious fish-men is kooky, wait'll you see the little guys being born. After lots of fussing with our aquarium—adjusting its temperature, light and oxygen levels—we finally became papas when tiny Seamen burst from the stomach of the nautilus that had consumed their eggs. Next came a thunderous roar of approval and the passing around of many cigars.

THINK FAST. ACT FAST.

OR DIE... FAST.

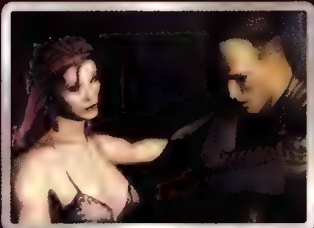
Your pulse pounds in your temples. Your crewmembers lie dead or dying around you. All you know for sure about the alien invaders is that you're next on their hit list. Time is running out. So is your life.



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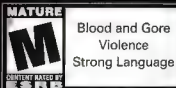
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## Tanks For the Memories ▲

**Grand Theft Auto III** (PlayStation 2)

If playing *Grand Theft Auto III* is like kicking a hornets' nest, then the queen hornet is the 100-ton tank Liberty City unleashes if you've been a bad enough boy. Even after taking out entire precincts and knocking out police choppers *Blackhawk Down*-style, we just weren't prepared for the tank's onslaught against our one-man army. That is, until we tank-jacked those wheels of steel ourselves.



## Castlevania Flips Out ▲

**Castlevania: Symphony of the Night** (PlayStation)

*Symphony* sucked us dry with its brilliance, only to flip us over and have its way with us again once we reached its "conclusion." Many satisfied players undoubtedly reached the summit, defeated Richter and enjoyed the bittersweet ending. If you bring the right items to the last room, however, you'll unlock a secret upside-down version of the castle with all new bosses. That's two castles for the price of one.

## My Favorite Moment

**Koji Igarashi, producer of *Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance***  
"When I played *EverQuest* under the name 'Alucard,' and players started asking me if I was a fan of the *Castlevania* series. If they only knew who they were talking to at the time!"



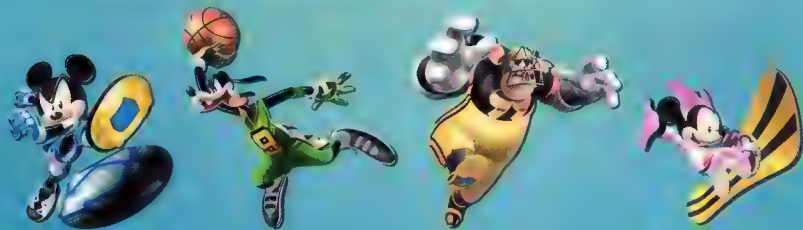
## Always On My Mind

**Tetris** (Multiple systems)

It wasn't long after we wrapped our heads around the classic puzzle game *Tetris* that it started to happen: Everyday objects like brick walls or crapper-stall doors turned into *Tetris* playing fields, and we couldn't stop playing the game in our heads. We realized then that this was no ordinary game; it was a curse, and we were stricken for life.



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SOME QUACK.



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**"It's-a-me, Mario!"**

**Super Mario 64 (N64)**

With those words (belted out in a finely tuned Italian accent), our favorite plumber's disembodied noggin popped from the screen and officially bridged the gap between old-school 2D sprites and new-school 3D visuals.

Simplistic, sure, but we can't think of a better way to kick off *Mario 64*. Our view of Mario's world had just changed forever.

## My Favorite Moment

**Nobuya Nakazato,**

**producer of *Contra: Shattered Soldier***

"I'll never forget the first time I played an RPG. It was *Wizardry*. Every time I'd input a command, the game would access the floppy-disk drives. While waiting for the game to load, I felt as if I was also preparing for battle in my own room."



## The Flood Pours In ▲

**Halo (Xbox)**

You learned how to overpower Grunts, outthink Elites, and out-manuever Jackals. About halfway through *Halo* you're feeling pretty good about yourself, then the game throws you a curve ball—actually, more like 10,000 balls, curving and jumping and grasping for your throat with tendrils a'flailin'. With the help of the chilling cinema that builds up to their debut, the parasitic alien race known as The Flood set up shop in our nightmares the first time we locked them in our sights.



## How Much for that Dog in the Window? ▲

**Resident Evil (PlayStation)**

There you are, strolling down a hallway early on in the original *Resident Evil*, minding your own busi—ZOMBIE-DOG ATTACK! And just as abruptly as that undead pup smashed through the window, we learned two lessons we will never forget: 1) Video games can be genuinely scary and 2) Stay away from windows in *Resident Evil* games.

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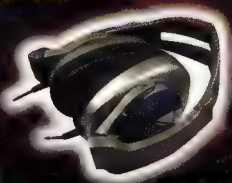
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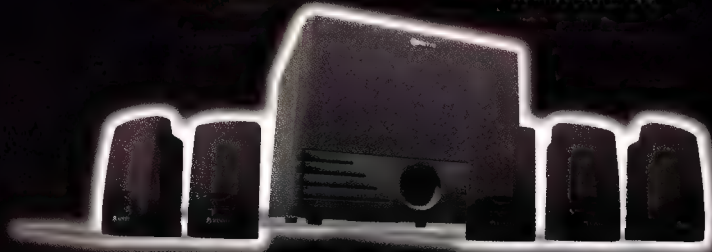
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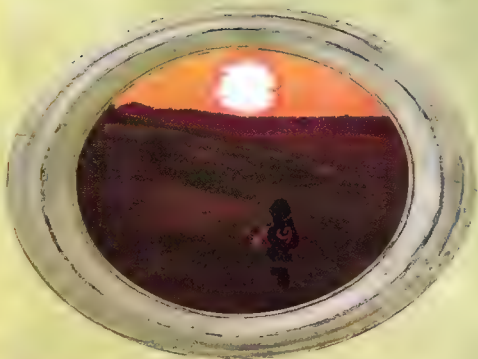
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**"Wait, I think they see me. Help! I'm over by the..."**

**SOCOM: U.S. Navy Seals** (PlayStation 2) ▼

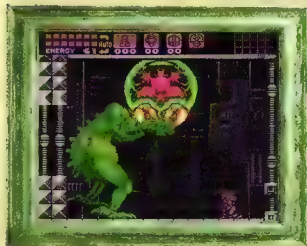
...then nothing. Dead air. You never forget the first time you hear your buddy's last words (in his own voice, thanks to the headset mic) cut off in mid-blab just as he's mowed down online in *SOCOM*.



**Land of the Rising Sun** ▲

**Zelda: The Ocarina of Time** (Nintendo 64)

The wait was interminable and the hype mammoth, but despite the slow build-up, the first Nintendo 64 *Zelda* adventure rocked. We knew that the moment we gazed into the sky from the massive Hyrule Field and saw the sun rise over the mountains. Suddenly, Link's realm became a fantasy world we could believe in.



**Baby Metroid is all Grown Up**

**Super Metroid** (Super NES) ▲

Our heroine Samus' ass is grass. She's been beaten. All is lost. But just as Mother Brain prepares to finish her off in the final battle of *Super Metroid*, Samus gets help from the unlikelyst source: the baby metroid she brought back from planet SR388. The now grown-up ball of goo soars in to suck some brain and save Samus, its adopted mommy.



**Enter the Dragon Punch** ▲

**Street Fighter II** (Arcade)

Forward. Down. Down-forward. Punch. *Street Fighter II*'s Dragon Punch is a simple enough slight of hand, but we'll never forget the first time we mustered our hand muscles to master the move. We suddenly realized *SFII* was more than just a mindless button-masher; we knew this new fighting game sure packed a wallop.



**Wrong End of the Stick** ▲

**Final Fantasy VII** (PlayStation)

Millions of gamers around the world uttered an audible croak during *FFVII* when Sephiroth descended from on high and sent a long shaft of steel through Aerith's back. His bad; we're sad. But all was not lost: Developer Square used a Phoenix Down and brought her back for a cameo—under her made-in-Japan name, Aerith—in *Kingdom Hearts*.

## Your Turn

**Readers get into the greatest-moments act**

When I unlocked all the characters in *Super Smash Bros. Melee* (GameCube), I can't imagine what the game would've been like without Mr. Game and Watch!

—Sikandar Shukla of New Delhi, India

When the Licker jumped through the two-way mirror in *Resident Evil 2*'s interrogation room, I screamed like a girl and jumped about a foot out of my chair. My brother, who was in the bathroom next door, says all he heard was "Ahhhh! M#@S#S f&S@!" (BOOM!) "Stupid



F@#%@\$ monster!" (BOOM!) To this day I have lured three of my friends to this same location only to watch them poop their pants.

—Billy Hendrix of Houston, Texas

I almost fell out of my seat when the Princess at the end of *Super Mario Bros. 3* said, "Thank you Mario, but our Princess is in another castle." For a brief second I was in shock, but then she said, "Just kidding."

—Anthony Acosta of Olathe, Kan.

When I wall-jumped to the top of the castle in *Super Mario 64*.

—Derek Moffett of Essex, Va.

When the President grabs Raiden's crotch in *Metal Gear Solid 2* and discovers that Raiden is actually a man.

—Yagiz Yilmaz of Tallahassee, Fla.

The day my grandpa called Mario "Brickbreaker."

—Randy Skaggs of Bonne Terre, Miss.



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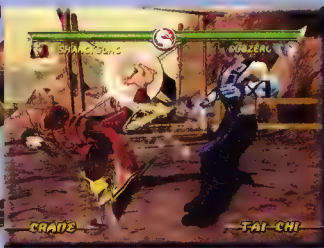
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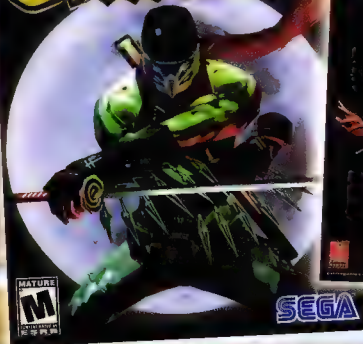
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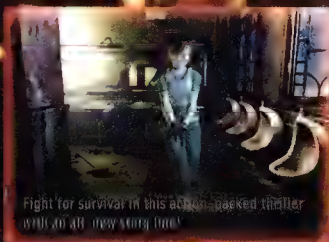
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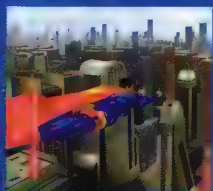


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Pixel Pushers Design





**Roll up your car windows  
(and for God's sake lock  
your doors) as we show  
every sight worth seeing in  
*Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*,  
this fall's hottest gamer  
destination**

If you thought life was cheap in Liberty City, *Grand Theft Auto III's* grimy urban jungle, wait'll you cruise the mean streets of its follow-up. In the sweltering dayglow metropolis of *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, which breaks ground on your PlayStation 2 Oct. 22., life ain't the only thing that's low down and dirty: Drugs are plentiful; chicks are easy; polyester is everywhere; cars, bikes, boats and a few flying machines are absolutely free; and the whole package is wrapped in '80s acid-washed denim with a pink-neon bow. Developer Rockstar North didn't cranked out *GTA 3.5* or some half-baked, just-more-of-the-same sequel. *GTA: Vice City* is bigger and better and cleaner and more beautiful with more wild missions than you ever could've imagined.

In other words, you're gonna love this place. Flip the page to start finding out exactly why...

**By Todd Zuniga**



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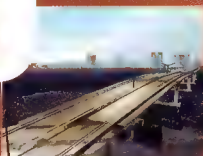
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8



↑ **Liberty City** is meant to reflect the look of that big, old, beautiful Miami City. Well, you don't have enough Vice City in **GTAV**. **THE SIZE** of Liberty City. You should pay attention, so we don't have to shout.

9



Remember when you were sick and tired of dealing with Salvatore in Portland but you had to wait to unlock the hijinks in Staunton Island and Shoreside Vale? No worries this time. Early rumors suggest that the whole world is at your coke-peddling fingertips from the second the game loads.



10

↑ **There's neon. Everywhere.** The entire city glows with the stuff. Think of it this way: Liberty City was dark and gritty; Vice City is not and grimy. One's a New York/Chicago hybrid; the other is a Miami/L.A. mix, but the real difference is that **Vice City's** graphics are so bright, clean and pretty, you won't get bored going back to walled Liberty City.



11

↑ **A new targeting system** means no more zooming in one direction while your character and Liberty City fluctuate. The camera now follows you, forcing you to consider the view. Our guess: allowing you to better see the benefit of trying to not get hurt, it may avoid future mistakes. Though it's true, you'll still be the victim of the targeted and pedestrians.



12

↑ **Yes, we said freaked-out pedestrians.** Instead of wandering aimlessly while you shoot up the locals, crowds now react to the madness that descends upon the streets of their fair city. Makes you feel kind of like you're in the living, breathing world you really wanted Liberty City to be.



13

↑ **GTA: Vice City** has, get this, motorcycles. In fact, at least four types of jackable motorcycles, said here: Even better, the last one is a real-life motorcycle that might allow you to ride in a heavy, customized gear. Don't tell us that last one is the real one, it's a real one, too.

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PlayStation 2

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# Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

Cont. from page 270



↑ **14** You'll be driving a classic car, like the Dodo, the Stinger, the fire truck, the fire truck, the Dodo, the Stinger. *Vice City* takes the pedal to the proverbial metal with more than twice as many classic cars as *GTA3*.



↑ **15** You can crouch behind cars and jump up to pop a cap. Or you can go close-quarters chop-socky if you show up at a gunfight with only your fists.



↑ **16** You don't have time to dropkick some passing Innocent off his tires. If you target the Goodyears of a getaway car, you can bust up those whitewalls.



↑ **17** Count to 40. A stupid exercise, but that's exactly how many weapons you can rifle through in the new neon city. *GTA3* had only 25.



↑ **18** Tired of putting out fires and driving a taxi? How about delivering pizzas? That's right, the side missions will feature some reckless driving to get that pizza to its rightful customer in 30 minutes or less. Domino's will be proud.



↑ **19** Instead of figuring out who's who in Rockstar's newest city of sin, you'll meet the antiheroes of the story in one of your first missions at a massively decadent party. While we weren't cool enough to get an invite to this soiree, we're guessing it'll be rife with girls in sequins, mounds of blow and every crook on the peninsula.



↑ **20** Plot twists. We won't say what they are because these twists are so bitchin' that we wouldn't dare ruin them for you. Let's put it this way: The plot has more wrinkles than the cast of *Golden Girls*.





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## EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING



PlayStation 2





# Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

Cont. from page 272

→ Bikin'd women rollerskate (not rollerblade) around oceanside areas of the city. Yummy. If you put on your best Hawaiian shirt, they might even use that front brake to chat you up. Seriously. The bystanders have three times the amount of voice as the last game, which means you may get charmed by a lady or two.



↑ Speaking of Hawaiian shirts, they aren't the only fancy-schmancy duds you'll tool around the city in. At parties, you'll wear suits and those God-awful slip-on woven shoes that Don Johnson sported during his glory days.

→ The law-dogs recognize you're a low-life, but there's plenty of other crime in *Vice City*. This means the fuzz aren't lying in wait for you and only you. They'll actually bust up gang parties with the same mucho-macho gusto that Eric Estrada unleashed in *C.H.I.P.s*.



↑ *GTA3* was wild, but *Vice City* is both wet and wild. High-speed chases on the high seas play a much larger role in the sequel, and you can hijack some pretty quick boats. But beware: The cops have their own boats to put down pirateering. Aargh!

**25** Since *GTA: Vice City* is happening in the '80s, a decade and a half prior to *GTA3*, you're going to see younger versions of the double-crossing Mafiosa you know so well from *GTA3*. Who? You'll see soon enough. Hold your fire until Oct. 22, will ya?

## ... AND FIVE REASONS YOU WON'T

- 1 Senator Joseph Lieberman will personally come down your chimney, Santa-style, to confiscate your copy of *GTA: Vice City*.
- 2 Because you were so addicted to *GTA3*, you lost your girlfriend and your appetite, and you let your subscription to *EGM* run out. Nice work! Now there's even more at stake with *Vice City* because of its scope (it's twice the size in gameplay objectives, not just physical acreage) and its '80s fashion sense. That means you better get ready to A) lose your ability to color coordinate, B) suddenly crave a pair of checkered slip-on Vans and C) request a fade at your local hair salon.
- 3 *Vice City* is only on PS2. Which, if you own a PS2, is great news. But for those who can't afford every system at EB, you better make friends with some PS2 owners quick. Maybe bring them a nice fruit basket.
- 4 Radio stations can't survive without a revenue stream, and that means crackpot commercials will split up tune time between Flock of Seagulls and Blondie.
- 5 The hidden packages, in some form or another, are back. You'll never leave the house, Mr. 100 percent.

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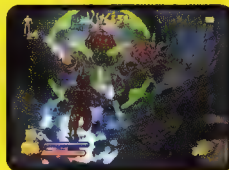
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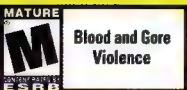
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# Review Crew

## 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



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**.

## Introduction

David Bowie once told us to face the ch-changes, and this month we discovered what he was talking about. First, a huge welcome to Jennifer Tsao, our new managing editor and the latest addition to our unholy clubhouse. As you'll see with our reviews section this month, even

though we lost Jeanne Kim, Dean Hager and Jon Dudlak with EGM's big move from Chicago to San Francisco, they still grace our pages with their freelance spirit. Look for more new names and faces popping up here next month, along with the first batch of big holiday games.

## The Crew



### Shane Bettenhausen

Associate Editor

The influx of confused midwesterners to San Francisco has been tough on the Cali guys. Shane was forced to act as tour guide, chauffeur and erstwhile landlord between grueling RPG sessions.

**Favorite Genres:** Fighting, Action, RPG  
**Current Faves:** *Mario Sunshine*, *Contra: 35*



### Crispin Boyer

Features Editor

Cris considered cryosleep to help make the year-long wait for *Halo 2* tolerable, but the process was too pricey. So he's going to have his head pickled and store the rest of his body in Grandpa's crawspace.

**Favorite Genres:** Action, Adventure  
**Current Faves:** *SOCOM*, *Robotech: Battlécry*

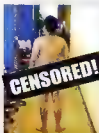


### Che Chou

Reviews Editor

If Che had a quarter for every time he was mistaken as a native Japanese guy in Osaka this month, he just may have enough money to afford *Steel Battalion* and its decadent controller. Maybe.

**Favorite Genres:** Fighting, Action, Racing  
**Current Faves:** *SOCOM*, *P. Crash*, *Mogwai*



### Dan "Shoe" Hsu

Editor in Chief

It's that crazy time of year—there's more gaming to do than there are hours in a day! Three consoles + two online launches = one delirious Shoe wandering the halls naked and incoherent. Hot damn!

**Favorite Genres:** Just about everything  
**Current Faves:** *SOCOM*, *Mario Sunshine*



### Chris Johnston

News Editor

A week of sleeping on an air mattress in an empty apartment (with only a laptop and cat for comfort) has left young CJ bitter and sarcastic. Surprisingly, that's not much different from his usual demeanor.

**Favorite Genres:** Action, Adventure, Puzzle  
**Current Faves:** *Animal Crossing*, *Sly Cooper*



### Mark MacDonald

Executive Editor

Has moving to San Francisco changed Mark at all? Hmm...well, he does miss his girlfriend...and he did grow a moustache...other than that? Nope. Haven't noticed any changes at all, really.

**Favorite Genres:** Action, Adventure, RPG  
**Current Faves:** *Sub Rebellion*, *SOCOM*



### James "Milkmank" Mielke

Web Content Editor

Playing *Metroid Prime* and *Fusion* this month made Milky curl up into a cute little ball. That was fine, but when he started rolling around the office, blowing cute little holes in the walls, we had to set a bear-trap.

**Favorite Genres:** Action, Fighting, RPG  
**Current Faves:** *Metroid Prime*, *Metroid Fusion*



### Greg Sewart

Previews Editor

Since moving into his apartment across the street from a girls' college dormitory, Sewart's barely been in the office. What could those college girls offer that a bunch of unwashed game editors can't?

**Favorite Genres:** Racing, RPG, Adventure  
**Current Faves:** *NFS*, *Robotech*, *NASCAR 2003*



### Jennifer Tsao

Managing Editor

It was tough giving up the unemployed life—sleeping late, *Buffly* reruns and free money from the government—but when EGM offered to pay her to play video games, Jennifer decided it was a fair trade.

**Favorite Genres:** Action sports, Adventure  
**Current Faves:** *Sly Cooper*, *Zelda: Ocarina of Time*

## Game of the Month

**Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2** pg. 284

Who'da think it? When the smoke cleared and all the *Sly Coopers*, *Star Foxes* and *Turoks* had fallen by the wayside, the PS2 incarnation of *Hot Pursuit 2* emerged victorious. You want blistering speed? You got it. Cool multiplayer modes? Check. A collection of cars that would turn Jay Leno green with envy? Yup. Once you start playing *Pursuit 2* you won't wanna stop... unless you're playing the different, less impressive Xbox or GC versions, that is.



## Grandia Xtreme

**Publisher:** Enix  
**Developer:** Game Arts  
**Players:** 1  
**Also On:** None  
**Featured In:** EGM #158  
**Best Feature:** Deep battle system  
**Worst Feature:** Tedious dungeon crawling  
**Web Site:** www.enix.com

Like previous *Grandias*, *Xtreme* definitely deserves props for its innovative battle system. Two things make *Xtreme* stand out from the rest: 1) Unlike most traditional turn-based combat games, it simulates real-time fighting by allowing actions by both characters and enemies to occur simultaneously, and 2) it incorporates an unusually high level of strategic planning in battles. By closely monitoring the circular meter that keeps track of movement for both your characters and the enemies, you can anticipate and plan out where, when and whom to attack. The effectiveness of counter-attacks, combos (where multiple characters join forces to strike a single enemy) and the extra powerful techniques you learn later on in the game all depends on how well you manipulate *Xtreme's* combat meter. Still, no amount of strategizing can compensate for the chore of wading through the game's many uninspired dungeons. Since the overworld offers only two towns, you'll spend nearly all your time clearing out pointless dungeons with little plot to propel you forward. It's like they took *Grandia's* brilliant fighting system and made an RPG where all you do is clear one dungeon after the next. Basically, *Xtreme* is the perfect definition of a dungeon crawl. On top of all that, the dialogue is so terribly written, you end up caring even less about an already weak storyline. *Xtreme* nails combat, but fails on the rest.

**Jeanne**

Approach it clinically, and you'll dig *Xtreme's* versatile, well-designed skill and magic systems, both of which allow you to mold your characters in really cool ways. It's also inherited the *Grandia* series' hectic battle system, which is a big plus: you're forced to remain active and aware, as your party and enemy warriors constantly shift positions around the battlefield. Gameplay aside, though, *Xtreme's* presentation is pretty weak overall. The voice acting will make you want to cut your ears off, and the cookie-cutter story and ill-developed characters don't help its cause. Still, its RPG aspects are solid, and that's what matters when you're 20 hours in.

**Miguel**

My favorite part of the *Grandia* series has always been the unique battle setup; personally I think it's the best turn-based system around. *Xtreme* takes the fighting style and runs with it, which is either a good or bad thing depending on how you look at it. On the one hand, if you're the type that likes to customize the crap out of your RPG characters and live for leveling up and fighting battle after battle, this is one of the best dungeon crawls you'll find. But if you're looking for something more traditional and story-driven, like the old *Grandias*, you'd better just wait for *Grandia III*. Just know what you're getting into right from the start, and you'll enjoy *Xtreme*.

**Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	5	3

## Mobile Suit Gundam: Federation vs. Zeon

**Publisher:** Bandai  
**Developer:** Bandai  
**Players:** 1-2  
**Also On:** None  
**Also Watch:** *The Cartoon Network*  
**Web Site:** www.bandai.com

**Best Feature:** Extensive campaign mode  
**Worst Feature:** Lack of multi-player variety

As far as giant-robot titles go, *Zeon* definitely falls into the no-fuss arcade-game category with its frantic run-and-gun action and easy-to-master controls. This accessibility, along with the detailed robot models, makes *Zeon* appealing for mech fans who dig *Armored Core's* visual polish but lack the patience for all the customizing *AC* forces down your throat. The best part of *Zeon* is its massive 100-plus mission tree that puts you on the frontlines as a grunt on either side of the war. And since the Story mode is chronologically faithful to the anime series, *Gundam* fans will recognize all the mobile suits and pick up a lot of references. Still, I've seen plenty of coworkers (most of whom couldn't tell the difference between a Gundam and a Goddamm) pick up the controller and start busting heads with ease. As a two-player split-screen mode allows you to play versus or co-op against bots in the scenario of your choice, it's a nice distraction but ultimately short-lived due to its lack of variety. I've got my fingers crossed that any *Zeon* sequels will catch the online bug.

**Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	6	7

## NASCAR Thunder 2003

**Publisher:** EA Sports  
**Developer:** EA Tiburon  
**Players:** 1-2 (1-4 Multi-Play)  
**Also On:** GC, Xbox  
**Featured In:** EGM #159  
**Web Site:** www.easports.com

**Best Feature:** The deepest NASCAR Career mode yet  
**Worst Feature:** RaceDay schedule still not right

As much as last year's *Thunder* felt more like a sports game and less like a cheap, licensed racing affair, *Thunder 2003* blows the doors off anything that came before it and gives *NASCAR* fans the full-fledged sports simulator that, until now, they could only get on a PC. The Career mode alone is enough to justify the score this game is getting. Not only do you have to court sponsors and perform well on the track, but you also have to keep up on tasks like maintaining your car, researching better engines and building new rides as the season progresses. It's the deepest setup I've ever seen in a racing game outside of *Grau Turismo 3*. But don't let that scare you rookies away. *Thunder 2003* also features a great arcade section, along with the new Lightning Challenge (where you take on challenges issued by actual drivers) and a Thunder license mode that teaches you how to drive every one of the tracks in the game. With all its hardcore sim elements and optional driving assists, *Thunder* will appeal to both the *NASCAR* fan and the casual gamer.

**Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	9

## Robotech: Battlecry

**Publisher:** TDK Mediatrice  
**Developer:** VICIOUS CYCLE  
**Players:** 1-2  
**Also On:** GC, Xbox  
**Featured In:** EGM #154  
**Web Site:** robotechgame.com

**Best Feature:** Your super-stick, quick-changing mech  
**Worst Feature:** Maddening escort missions

*Battlecry* for the PS2 is identical to the excellent Xbox version, which we review in more detail on page 302 (head yonder for a full-blown dissection). Here's the gist: The game takes the best bits of the *Robotech* cult-hit cartoon series—the forming jets, the stomping mechs, the streaming volleys of screaming missiles—and jettisons the sappy soap-opera plot, so you don't need to be a *Robotech* master to appreciate it all, especially the killer mech designs. Most missions pack a white-knuckle mix of objectives, and you can even skip tough levels and come back later if you're stuck. You do face a few frustrating escort and protection missions. Half the hassle there is the targeting system, which only lets you lock on to enemies in front of you. That makes it hard to single out bogies gunning for the ship or structure you're protecting. It's a minor pain; you should put up with for the game's real thrill: piloting your triple-changing fighter, which you'll transform constantly to handle different situations. It's a nifty game. Crispin that adds a lot of depth to this shooter.

**Crispin**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	6

## Wild Arms 3

**Publisher:** Sony CEA  
**Developer:** Media Vision  
**Players:** 1  
**Also On:** None  
**Featured In:** EGM #159  
**Web Site:** www.scea.com

**Best Feature:** Refreshing Wild-West setting  
**Worst Feature:** Overly linear pacing can get tedious

Since there's no *Final Fantasy* this fall, RPG nuts will have to scour the shelves for a suitable replacement. *Wild Arms 3* fills this year's RPG void nicely, succeeding largely on account of its unique Wild-West style. A few key elements really make it special. Cartoony, cel-shaded characters and a weird graphical filter that paints a storybook texture on everything create a distinct look that separates it from the RPG pack. Cool characters and inventive locales also make a difference. You'll encounter brooding cowboys, seedy drifters and bawdy barmaids while exploring desolate plains and forgotten temples. Even your party members break away from the established norms—four vagabonds, each with an intriguing agenda, form a volatile, engaging team. The gameplay mechanics also impress. Blazingly fast (and mostly optional) battles add complex, puzzle-packed dungeons will keep you playing. *WA3* does suffer from one damning flaw that many RPGs share—it's too predictable. In the town-dungeon-town-dungeon monotony can get tiring.

**Shane**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	6	1



# Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2



Chasing down speeders in *Hot Pursuit* isn't always easy, but this situation to the left is a perfect example of how you can use the environment to your advantage. Just nudge the perp to the right and make him miss the upcoming jump. **Voilà! One traffic stop.**



**Hot Pursuit 2 could be the best driving game ever made.** I know that sounds like a bold statement, but I haven't enjoyed something this much in a long time. Whereas games like *Gran Turismo* simulate how real cars perform, *Hot Pursuit 2* is based on how you think these brutes would perform—in your wildest daydreams. From the nimble and lightweight Lotus Elise, all the way up to the 200 mph-craziness of the McLaren F1, every car handles the way you'd expect. Supercars with powerful V-12 engines make a noise like rattling rhinos playing trumpets through a fuzbox, while the more-attainable, super-tuned sedans make a racket that, for want of a better description, can only be described as "roarty." Every car handles differently, too. The BMW Z8, for instance, teaches you the true meaning of oversteering. Hurle into a corner, ease off the gas, turn in, then floor the pedal and feel the tug as your rear wheels bite into the dirt and pull you around onto the perfect line. This is automotive nirvana. And I've barely touched on the pursuit modes (a high-speed cops and robbers with tire spikes and roadblocks), the fabulous branching game-play structure, the enjoyable two-player modes (in which I beat Milky's ass) and the collection frenzy that provokes you to habitually play through every mode just to obtain the full garage. *Hot Pursuit 2* is an absolute must for racing fans everywhere.

**John D.**

This is one of the most wicked arcade-racing games I've ever played. While the *Need For Speed* concept (expensive cars, outrunning cops) isn't as novel as it once was, **never before has the series combined such furious speed, lavish visuals and responsive controls.** Ramming Ferraris off the road and calling in chopper support to slow reckless speedsters made playing as the boys in blue a freakin' rush. Then again, simply racing with loads of exotic cars (I'll take the Lotus Elise, please!) through dozens of cool challenges wasn't so shabby either. Of course, beating Swart in multiplayer made the whole experience that much sweeter.

**Milkmán**

You won't find a better arcade racer on the PS2. From the cool *Hot Pursuit 2* mode to the awesome tournament races, *Pursuit 2* is all about blistering speed and finding the best shortcuts on every track. The great control and supreme challenge of beating your aggressive opponents make every pulse-pounding moment of this game a pleasure! My hands would literally sweat after each hard-won race, knowing that a single miscue would have brought the entire pack down on me (unless I was racing against old-man Milky). The pumpin' soundtrack brings the whole package together into a **white-knuckle racing experience no gamer should be without.**

**Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	8	7	9

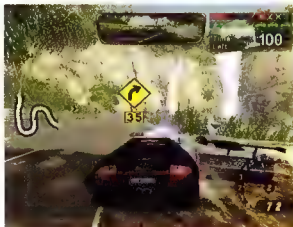
**Publisher:** EA Games  
**Developer:** Black Box  
**Players:** 1-2  
**Also On:** GC, Xbox  
**Featured In:** EGM #37  
**Best Feature:** Truly lives up to its name  
**Worst Feature:** Over-zealous cop A.I.  
**Web Site:** www.eagames.com



**T**his game was a pleasant surprise all around. Not only did it rekindle our fondness for the original *Need For Speed* on the PS1, but it convinced the better part of the Review Crew that there's more to racing games than just, well, racing.

For once, a game lives up to its name: *Hot Pursuit 2* is Fast, with a capital F. There's a healthy selection of cars at your disposal—22 of them are exclusive to the game, so if you've ever had a hankering to get behind the wheel of a Ferrari 550 or a Lamborghini Murcielago, here's your chance. And with *Pursuit's* harrowing sense of speed, the experience is suitably hair-raising, conveying the immense power these cars produce.

But *Pursuit* is more than just a gearhead's wet dream. What really sets this title apart from something like *Gran Turismo 3* is that, at its heart, the latest *Need For Speed* is still



**Play Hot Pursuit mode enough and you'll unlock cop cars the real police only dream of. Who could outrun this bad boy?**

more of a video game than a driving simulator. The game gives you plenty of reasons to revisit its 20 courses, since winning races isn't your only goal. An extensive tournament mode presents a variety of progressively difficult challenges. The underlying motivation throughout, of course, is to beat levels and collect your reward in the form of sexier and more powerful rides.

It also wouldn't be *Hot Pursuit* if you couldn't play as the cops and chase down bad guys, similar to *Grand Theft Auto III's* Vigilante mode. *Pursuit* gives you a variety of tricked-out police cars to use, such as the super-tuned Corvette Z06 that makes accelerating from a standstill feel like you're jumping into hyper-space. Plus, playing as one of the blue boys lets you call in deterrents like helicopters and spike strips. Nothing beats hearing those tires pop. Even the boring, old Crown Victoria is a blast as you slam racers into the wall. (And any game that can make a Crown Vic seem exciting is A-OK in our book.)



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## EVERYTHING EXPIRES

Open your fridge and take a big fat whiff of your milk. Nothing lasts forever. So get your butt movin'.

## KNOW YOUR CODES

Open all levels with this cheat? Maybe. If not, try dialin' it. You might just get yourself a date.

## TRIM HERE

Rip it, tear it, or pull it out. Whatever you do, DON'T run with scissors.

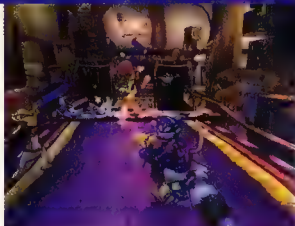


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# Sly Cooper and the Thievius Raccoonus

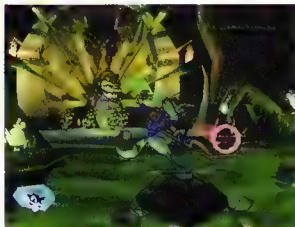


**Publisher:** Sony CEA  
**Developer:** Sucker Punch  
**Players:** 1  
**Also On:** None  
**Featured In:** EGM #158  
**Best Feature:** The cartoony presentation  
**Worst Feature:** Occasional choppy graphics  
**Web Site:** www.scea.com



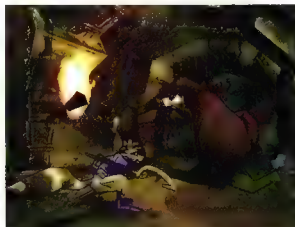
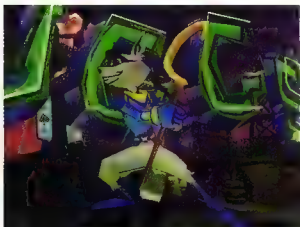
If all we told you about *Sly Cooper* was that it's an action-platform game, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Saving the princess/Earth/your friends from a power-hungry madman bent on world domination? Hey, we can't blame you. We've been lulled into thinking that's all the genre has to offer because so many character-based action games follow that same save-the-world concept. Well think again. *Sly* proves you don't need a damsel in distress, a planet in peril or six different colors of bananas to collect to make a modern action-platformer; it's still possible to innovate in this old genre.

The first thing that steals your attention in *Sly* is the game's cartoon-like presentation. Each of the five worlds begins with a Sly-narrated animated cinema chronicling the tragic (yet hilarious) life story of one of a group of villains called the Fiendish Five. The humor is



**Work your mojo and avoid Mz. Ruby's voodoo musical attacks to send her back to the bayou.**

straight outta the Saturday morning 'toons of old and doesn't end with the cinemas—it continues into the game. For example, as you wander into the first of the Fiendish Five's hideouts, you hear the boss over the P.A. system chewing out his employees for allowing someone to break in and screw with his operation. Taking a closer look at the backgrounds (and you have to—*Sly* doesn't hit you over the head with busy visuals) reveals other chuckle-worthy details, like the framed pictures of



## THIEVIUS MAXIMUS

### Game's Over But the Fun's Not Done



You've finished *Sly*, but the fun's not over. If you didn't pick up all the clues to every safe in the game, you won't clock in at 100 percent and unlock all the game's secrets. And you've still got the Time Trial mode, which challenges you to complete each level in an unbelievably short amount of time. Only a master of the *Thievius Raccoonus* stands a chance.



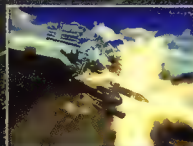
*It weighs 3 tons.*

*It occupies 100 square feet.*

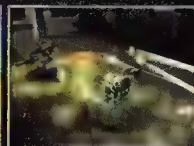
*And it's hiding right in front of your face.*



MISSILE ALERT



*Cloak yourself to hide from enemies or launch a stealth attack.*



*Engage in fast and furious mech battles at speeds over 100 mph.*



*Test your skills against other players in a non-stop rumble.*

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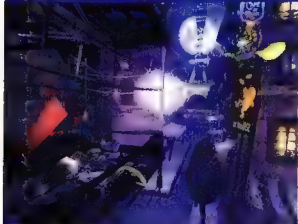


PHANTAGRAM  
INTERACTIVE

[www.phantomcrash.net](http://www.phantomcrash.net)

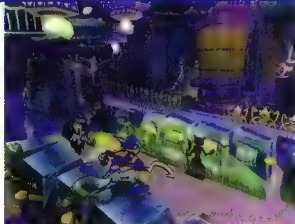
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## Sly Cooper and the Thievius Raccoonus (cont.)



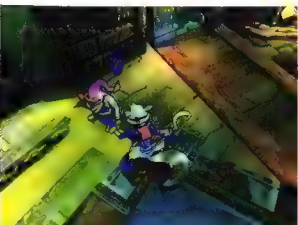
steaks and fire hydrants found in canine criminal Muggshot's casino. Even the story features more detail than you'd expect; while it focuses on your search for pages of your family's thieving guidebook (the *Thievius Raccoonus* from the title), there's also a very fun cat-and-mouse, love/hate relationship going on between our hero and his nemesis, Inspector Carmelita Fox.

But the plot and presentation aren't the only things that make this game wicked cool. The control and camera systems are both intuitive and very responsive. Gameplay is initially simple: just sneak around avoiding detection. But a few levels later you're at the controls of a cannon turret, defending your buddy Murray in first-person as he runs for a key. Or you're grinding down railings. Or jump-

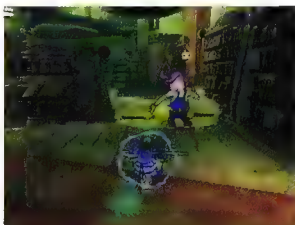


ing over icy cliffs in China while avoiding Ms. Fox and her shock pistol. Or dodging monkey snowballs. Or riding a hover scooter, blasting monkeys with nunchakus using *Robotron-style*, dual-analog control (one stick moves you, the other handles the direction you fire). We could go on, but you're just going to have to play the game yourself. Trust us, every level has something new, and we don't just mean the very last boss encounter you'll be doing things you haven't done in any previous area.

Sly deftly avoids the monotonous fetch-quest trappings of the genre, too. You can collect clues that unlock more moves, but it's optional—you can finish the game without nabbing any of them. Let's hope when there's a sequel it can stay as fresh.

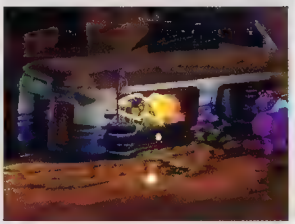
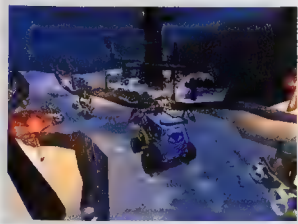


Once you've gained a few moves from the arsenal of the *Thievius Raccoonus*, you can whack enemies in creative ways. Let's see.... Death from above with a hat mine (left), or a deadly electric roll (right)?

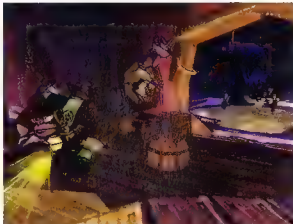


### NOT JUST RUNNING AND JUMPING

In between all the sneaking and thieving, you wouldn't think there'd be time for things like gathering chickens for a ghost fixin' a feast, or racing renegade monkeys in your van (below, left). But there's time for both, as well as hacking into computers, nabbing treasure chests from wily crabs and sniping enemies out of Murray's path (below, right).



If you don't have a horseshoe strapped to your back, getting hit once will send you to an early grave. Patience is the key. If you encounter an enemy you've never seen before, approach with caution and learn his pattern first. Then attack when the time is right.



It's hard to find a platformer these days that isn't high on how huge its levels are or how many items you can collect, so when a game like *Sly Cooper* comes along, keeps it simple and does its thing this well, you savor it. *Sly* impresses in nearly every category. First off, the character and level design are stunning. From the moment I saw Sly's tail twitch in anticipation of his next heist, I knew I was in for a treat. Every area and all the cinemas drip personality. The only flaw is that sometimes so much is happening on-screen (often during battles with Carmelita) that the game gets bogged down and a lil' choppy. It's not enough to affect gameplay, but it's still distracting. Speaking of gameplay, it couldn't be tighter. No extraneous level wandering here—there's always something nearby that needs whacking. The mini-games and variety of tasks you get to do keep the adventure perfectly paced. An especially jaw-dropping moment is the battle against voodoo swamp gator Mz. Ruby. I won't spoil it, but it's a unique boss encounter, combining my two favorite gaming genres—music and platform—beautifully. It's a shame *Sly's* so short (about 8-9 hours if you just do the basics), but when a game is this consistently good, length doesn't matter as much. It's developer Sucker Punch's second game (the first being the Nintendo 64's *Rocket: Robot on Wheels*), but this is easily the best platformer on the PS2.

**Chris**

When I first plugged in *Sly Cooper* my initial impression was, "Great, yet another cel-shaded Mario rip-off." After playing through it, though, I'm ready to eat my words—this is a solid blend of 3D-platforming action and stealth adventure. Besides top-notch animation and graphics, other highlights include the mini-games and unlockable power-up moves. Some will take issue with the frequent one-hit kills and, perhaps, *Sly's* under-15-hour length (of course, I finished it by only forgoing daytime sleep and my girlfriend—thanks, *Sly*). But the game is definitely worth a rental, and if you play, do explore every nook and cranny you won't be disappointed.

**Darren**

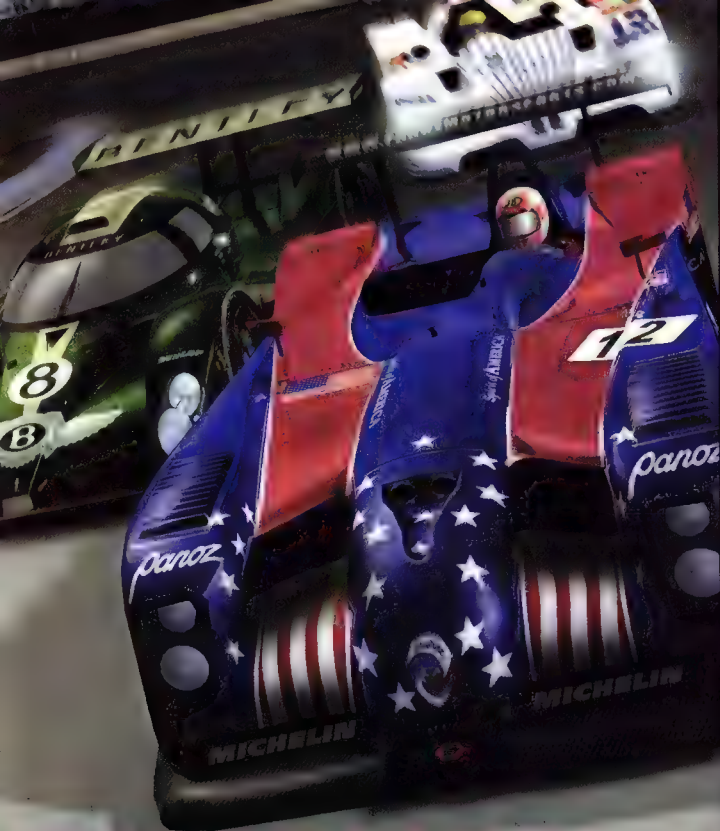
One glimpse of *Sly's* fat raccoon tail undulating against a non-cartoon Paris backdrop and I knew this game would be fun to watch. In just wasn't sure I'd enjoy playing what looked like your standard platformer. But the intricate run-and-jump challenges, shoot-'em-up mini-games, time trials, puzzles, and secret shortcuts kept me entertained, and each ability *Sly* learned—from stealth to the double-jump-grab to invisibility—opened up new and unexpected ways to overcome obstacles. The die-and-try method gets old, but *Sly* does strike a nice balance: it's neither too difficult nor too easy, and finishing a level always delivers a satisfying thrill.

**Jennifer**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

9 7 8 7





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REDLINE TO THE FINISH LINE



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PlayStation 2

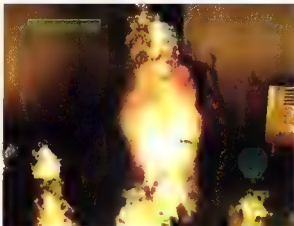


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# The Thing



These "things" don't go down so easy. In fact, after pumping them full of lead, you need to ignite the aliens with your flamethrower in order to finish 'em. The problem is that these flames are hard to control, so often you'll accidentally set your teammates or yourself ablaze.



I suffered two mild heart attacks while playing *The Thing*: The first occurred when I spun around just as a recently mutated ally was taking a cut at me, and the second occurred when I realized I had to quit the game every time I died just to continue. I can't say enough about *The Thing*'s theatrical presentation of a perfectly dark, desolate world. It completely enveloped me, and the **balance of action, puzzles and story is just right**. A few sticking points, however, broke my immersion and tested my patience. For a game that makes you die and restart a lot, it's mind-blowing how annoying the whole retry process is (the in-game menus alone require days of acclimation). The A.I. is often brilliant; the way enemies and allies react to your behavior and environmental cues is genius. Occasionally, though, your blockhead cohorts will wander in front of your blazing muzzle as you try to clear a path through the mutants. And man are they unforgiving if you accidentally tag 'em (and you will, trust me). I risked life and limb rescuing an old-man from a dangerous compound, but just one glancing blow from my machine gun and he marked me for death-by-blowtorch. The frustrating user-interface and under-realized potential of its trademark trust/fear dynamic make it hard to appreciate *The Thing*'s underlying strengths. At its heart, though, this game has a great concept and is wonderfully suspenseful. **Jon**

*The Thing* is another when-aliens-go-bad game that hides its mediocrity behind blood, violence and a recognizable name. Its big attempt at originality requires keeping your teammates in check when they freak out after seeing one too many blobs of muscle walking around. But this feature adds little enjoyment to the gameplay, becoming more of a nuisance than anything else. For straight-up action, shooting aliens and barbecuing their guts is cool, but it isn't easy. Ammo and med kits are in short supply, and laborious puzzle-solving puts a damper on shoot-outs. Simply put, *The Thing* lacks any stand-out features to keep you playing. **Jeanne**

I've got to give this game's developers their due: **The Thing** blazes new ground in the survival-horror genre. The inclusion of a four-character party system adds some real depth. Dealing with your teammates causes headaches, however, as path-finding issues and friendly-fire shootouts are serious bums. Other problems, such as annoying flamethrower control (it's too easy to self-immolate) and the absence of a way to load your saved game when you die (you have to exit to the main menu) should've been ironed out in testing. Despite these gripes, the moody visuals and frantic gameplay prevail, so horror fans should still seek out *The Thing*. **Shane**

**VISUALS** **8** **GENUIENITY** **6** **REPLAY** **8** **2**

**Publisher:** Universal Interactive  
**Developer:** Computer Artworks  
**Players:** 1  
**Also On:** Xbox  
**Featured In:** *EGM #158*  
**Best Feature:** Genuinely creepy atmosphere  
**Worst Feature:** Friendly fire  
**Web Site:** [www.thethinggames.com](http://www.thethinggames.com)

**A**h, '80s horror flicks—*Friday the 13th* taught us all to fear hockey masks, *Jaws* kept us beach-ridden well through the leg-warmer-and-Aqua-Net era, and *The Thing* made us damn scared of Antarctica in general. Thanks to sharp graphics, this new game of the same name extends the desolate ambience of the 1982 film to support an especially realistic action-adventure.

*The Thing*'s claim to fame is its trust/fear A.I. patterns that determine how your colorful-voiced allies react to you and to what's going on around them. Sometimes sharing your items and weapons or using your leadership skill to calm a nervous comrade can mean the difference between your friend staying sane or losing his mind altogether. And



**You'll need an engineer on your team to open sealed doors—pray he doesn't get eaten, go insane or get shot before then.**

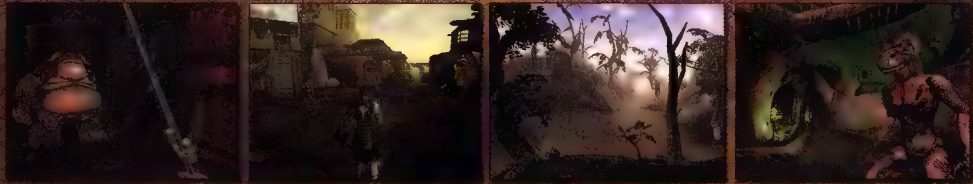
while an extra ally or two following you around can be a burden when fighting a swarm of mutants, they do help you out by providing health boosts, support fire and engineering skills (fixing broken door switches and the like).

Beyond its innovative A.I. routines, *The Thing* includes puzzle-solving objectives and blood-splattered action sequences, so it should pack a little something for everyone.



## FEAR AND LOATHING

**Subject:** *The Thing* reviewer.  
**Exposure:** Four days of *The Thing*, sausage pizza.  
**Symptoms:** Deep-seeded fear and general mistrust of all things—especially the color orange; superfluous use of lysol.  
**Subject Maintains:** "We trust only this Allen wrench, microphone cable and bottle of hydrogen peroxide now. Together we will sow the seeds of New Earth."  
**Treatment:** Discontinue exposure to *The Thing*, replace with prolonged exposure to *Good Times*.



# “MORROWIND IS THE BEST-LOOKING XBOX GAME SINCE HALO.”

GAMES DOMAIN



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- \* **NEXT GENERATION TECHNOLOGY.** Realistic textures and objects, incredible polygon counts, and advanced weather systems.

## OWN THE CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED RPG FOR XBOX™

**GAMEPRO**, 5.0 score  
**GAMEZONE**, Editors' Choice  
**GAMEOVER**, Gamer's Choice award  
**XBOX EVOLVED**, Gold Medal  
**THE ARMCHAIR EMPIRE**, 10/10  
**UGO**, A+ score  
**GAME VORTEX**, 9 of 40

**IGN**, Editors' Choice  
**ADRENALINE VAULT**, Seal of Excellence  
**GAME INDUSTRY NEWS**, 5 gems  
**GAMEPOT**, Game-of-the-month  
**GDXBOX**, GD Droid award  
**XBOX MANIACS**, Editors' Choice  
**GAME CHRONICLES**, Editors' Choice

**GAMES DOMAIN**, Top Game  
**TEAM XBOX**, Editors' Choice  
**INVISIBLE DREAM**, 99% rating  
**GAME RANKINGS**, 96% score  
**NEXT LEVEL GAMING**, 5 of 6  
**GAMINGWORLDX**, 9.0 score  
**GAMING TARGET**, 9.0 score

The Elder Scrolls III

# MORROWIND™



Blood Violence

# Tribes: Aerial Assault



**Publisher:** Sierra  
**Developer:** Inevitable  
**Players:** 1-2 (2-4 Online Dial-up, 2-16 Broadband)  
**Also On:** None  
**Featured In:** EGM #158  
**Best Feature:** Options—luscious, luscious options  
**Worst Feature:** Daunting complexity  
**Web Site:** tribes.sierra.com



**You can set the difficulty of the bots before each match. The dumb ones are painfully stupid, but the smart ones make you feel painfully stupid.**

Those of you who don't venture onto your computer to play games should know that *Tribes* is the third member of the PC's Holy Online Triumvirate of first-person shooters (FPS) whose other slots are filled by the *Quake* and *Unreal* franchises. *Tribes* has always been the most complex of the three, due in part to the jetpack factor (they come standard with the suit) and three distinct armament choices: light armor, which is fast as hell but can't hold much heavy weaponry; medium armor, which is slower but more powerful; and heavy armor, which turns you into a lumbering beast vaguely resembling the Thing, except this time armed to the teeth.

All the complexity of the PC version has been faithfully transferred to the PS2, and that's both a good and a bad thing. The good news is that online veterans will have access



to all those little tweaks and options that *SOCOM* lacks. The bad news is that novices are going to be left staring slack-jawed at the setup screen. Which character do you want? What armor do you prefer? Which weapon do you want to start with? What kind of game do you want to play: Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch, Capture the Flag, Capture and Hold, Hunters? Which map do you want to play on? How many players do you want in the game? You want bots? We got bots! How many do you want? How smart do you want 'em? Do you want firefly enabled? How much damage should it do?

It's exhausting just to list; imagine coming in as a first-time player and being faced with such an array. This complexity, both in gameplay controls and in setup options, is *Tribes*'s strongest suit—and its biggest weakness. But while it's initially daunting, there's a sense of accomplishment that comes with learning all the advanced techniques. And the best part: You get to show off all those skills online.

The higher they rise, the harder they fall. This axiom is put to the test hundreds of times in *Tribes*. These huge, towering environments offer plenty of opportunities to splatter oneself across an acre of real estate, and the game dutifully reports each and every self-destruction.



*Aerial Assault* may very well be the most PC-esque game to hit consoles since *Starflight* for the Genesis. Technically, the translation from the PC version is quite solid; controls are intelligently distilled for the Dual Shock, allowing for a great deal of flexibility, and the addition of generous auto-targeting and lock-on features help ease the lack of a mouse and keyboard. But damn, tweaking all those options makes my head hurt, and the jetpack adds a dimension to gameplay that takes a good deal of getting used to. The game does walk you through the options menu controls in the one-player campaign (read: training mode), but there's still a steep learning curve to tackle, especially when it comes to advanced maneuvers like "skiling" (using your jump and jetpack controls to travel more quickly) and precision jumping. Since *Tribes* will likely appeal mainly to FPS veterans, it begs the question why an FPS veteran would be playing the PS2 version over the PC game in the first place? Still, what the game aims to do, it does quite well: Graphics are solid and smooth, controls are reasonably tight, online play is easy to get rolling and relatively lag-free (although there's an annoying delay when firing), and the use of bots allows for a passable facsimile of online play in single-player mode. But many of the level designs get on my nerves, and I can't help thinking the complexity will scare a lot of folks away. **Joe Rybicki**

Online play for those who want it, reasonably intelligent A.I. bots for those who don't, vehicles, remote turrets, jetpacks, configurable characters—*Tribes* has a ton of cool extras you don't expect to find in a PS2 shooter. Unfortunately, the basic stuff you do expect is missing or rotten: The graphics are dull, the sounds repetitive and as a game built for strategic multiplayer (with its gigantic environments and high player counts), *Tribes*'s lack of any way to communicate with other players (or your A.I. comrades) cripples its potential. If you've got an online PS2 and broadband, play *SOCOM* instead. **Mark**

*Tribes* is the most oddball and least user-friendly first-person shooter you'll ever play. When you're not coming to grips with its intimidating crapload of weapons, gadgets and vehicles, you're struggling to master flight with your jetpack or just trying to find your way around your own damn base. Get a bead on the basics, though, and *Tribes* potentially becomes the deepest online shooter yet, with players assuming particular roles (medics, pilots, etc.). But I say potentially because a crucial piece of the puzzle is missing here: communication. Without any means of team chat, games boil down to everyone just doing their own thing and hoping for the best. **Crispin**

**VISUALS** **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**  
**5** **5** **7** **8**

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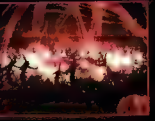
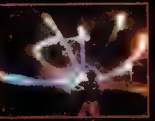
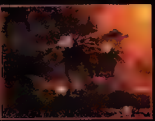
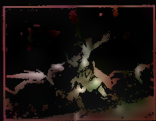
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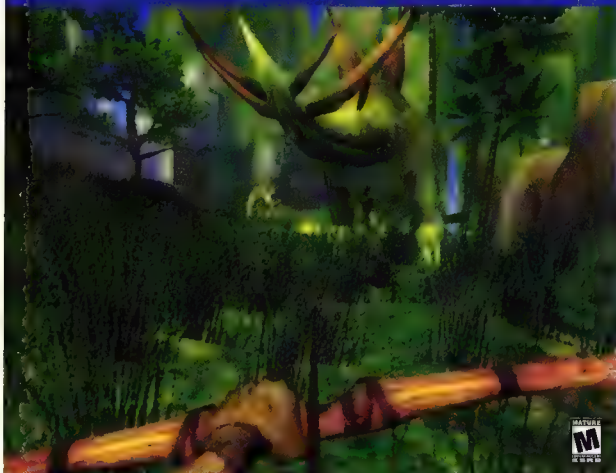


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# Turok: Evolution

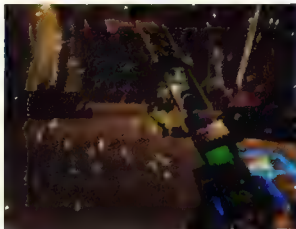


**Publisher:** Acclaim  
**Developer:** Acclaim Austin  
**Players:** 1-2  
**Also On:** GC, Xbox  
**Featured In:** EGM #353  
**Best Feature:** A few creative, well-designed levels  
**Worst Feature:** All the other levels  
**Web Site:** [www.turok.com](http://www.turok.com)

PS2

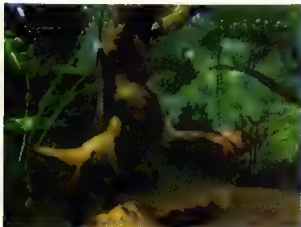
**B**ack in its heyday, the *Turok* series was a true pioneer—it brought first-person shooters (FPS) to the Nintendo 64, spearheading a renaissance for the genre on console systems. We weren't just hunting for keys in drab corridors anymore; suddenly we were hunting for keys in steamy, raptor-infested jungles. This dinosaur-blasting zeitgeist peaked with *Turok 2*, and the next two games met with diminishing excitement as the N64 faded into memory. Now, five years after he first hit the scene, Turok's back with a title that promises to evolve the series into something new and exciting. Sadly, the results are disappointing.

*Evolution* explores the roots of the series by casting you as the Native American warrior Tal'Set (also known around *EGM* as "Decorative Towel Set"), who later becomes the legendary Turok. The hijinks begin when



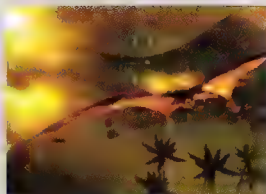
**Turok: Evolution's weapons are plentiful, clever and cool. The creative lineup of bows and blasters outclasses the arsenals of many other games.**

he and his nemesis, an Indian-hating hick named Tobias Bruckner, both get sucked into a warp zone to the Lost Land. Upon his arrival, Tal'Set joins forces with the human resistance to fight the Sleg, a lizard-like race of warmongers. So far, so good. But suddenly, with no further story setup, you're searching for captured wise men, rescuing senators and fulfilling vague prophecies. Plot events often unfold in clumsy cinemas that'll leave you



## TUROK TAKES FLIGHT

### Pansy Dragon

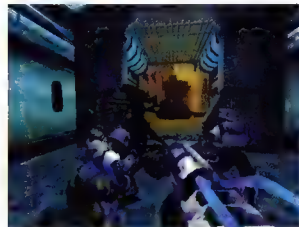


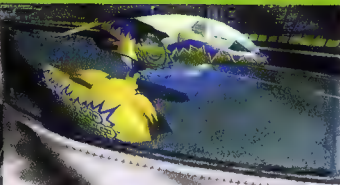
A handful of new flying levels represent the largest addition to the standard *Turok* gameplay formula. Our hero saddles up what looks like a prehistoric toucan (armed with .50-caliber cannons) and attempts his best impression of Sega's *Panzer Dragon* series. Rather than being about shooting stuff and having fun, these scenes largely consist of fighting with the floaty controls to keep your ride from exploding against a canyon wall. Expect to die. A LOT. Oddly enough, the control in these sections is a lot better on the Xbox version. Why? It's a mystery to us, too.

wondering "What the hell's going on?" and "Who thought a cybernetic redneck was a cool idea?"

Of course, gripping storylines are usually a bonus in any FPS, and certainly not a prerequisite for fun. Gameplay always takes center stage, and *Turok's* controls perform admirably, making strafing runs and long-distance headshots a breeze. Movement gets a little clunky when climbing ladders and making long jumps, but in general, *Turok* does exactly as you command.

Thanks to the responsive controls, you'll also be able to appreciate all of *Turok's* many cool weapons. The game boasts quite an arsenal, and many have multiple firing modes thanks to collectible attachments. Some weapons, like the Dark Matter Cube or the Gravity Disruptor, create really dazzling effects. As with previous *Turok* games, it's obvious a lot of thought and effort went into





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## Turok: Evolution (cont.)



**Turok: Evolution** promises highly-developed, realistic enemy A.I., but doesn't deliver. Some foes will surrender after being shot (below), but there's nothing you can do with them except finish them off or let them run away (probably into a wall or tree).



the game's weaponry.

Sadly, not as much love went into the game's presentation. In screenshots, *Turok* looks good with lush forests and massive dinosaurs. But what the screens don't show is the crippling slowdown that plagues many levels, or the way bushes, trees and grass fade into view only a few feet in front of your eyes. Also, the later levels set within cities and bases look dull and uninspired. The worst visual snafu has to be the awful character models, some that look like they wandered in from the old N64 *Turok* cartridges.

Sonically, *Evolution* is once more a mixed bag. The music is a dynamic blend of over-the-top orchestral crescendos and atmospheric tribal noise, but the elephantine brass blasts outnumber the ambient grooves, so it becomes grating. The audio effects aren't much better—the guns sound wimpy, and as Tal'Set waded through water, confused staffers mistook the noise as both a washing

machine and a vomiting cat.

We could forgive all these surface problems if the game were a blast to play, but what's truly holding *Evolution* back are its poor level designs. Too many stages are overly long, uninspired and annoying. You'll likely have to play through several missions multiple times to complete them due to tricky jumping puzzles or unclear objectives. While the game is quite long by FPS standards, most players will likely give in long before the 15th chapter out of sheer frustration.

*Evolution's* last chance at redemption was its multiplayer mode, but alas, it does not rock our world. The PS2 version only supports two players, so leave that Multi-tap in the closet. What's worse is that the game pauses to load during combat. It's almost like online lag...in an offline, split-screen game. Yikes.

It may seem like we're being hard on ol' *Turok*, but in the end the game is disappointing, a real letdown for a once-proud series.

Hey, welcome back *Turok*. While you were gone, a lot has happened. For example, console first-person shooters got way better. Check out games like *Medal of Honor*, *Red Faction* and *Halo* to get caught up on what's changed since the Nintendo 64 days. Hey, what's that? Your new game? Sure, I'll try it. (Three long, arduous days of playing pass.) *Turok*, buddy, I'll give it to you straight—you game isn't quite up to snuff. First off, the story is utter nonsense. The last boss is so unashamedly dippy that it actually made me laugh out loud. Oh, and what's with the graphics? Levels are plagued with slowdown and pop-up, while the character models look simplistic. And tell your sound guys that their wussy effects and bombastic tunes don't do you justice, either. At least you still control fairly tight. Well, except when it comes to climbing ladders. Really, though, it's the boring level designs that annoy me the most. Some missions rule, like the stealthy raid in chapter four, but lots of stages boil down to cheap deaths, jumping puzzles and memorization. No, wait, actually I hated the flying levels even more than the normal ones. The super-floaty control made me splatter my damn prehistoric toucan against the wall 3,204 times during the "Chaos in the Skies" level. Finally, what's with the lack of a four-player mode? What the hell? I know that I sound really critical, but I had such high hopes. You've really let me down.

**Shane**

Despite its promise of *Evolution*, in most ways *Turok* is a giant leap backward: blocky characters, objects that suddenly pop into view, choppy movement and a two-player limit for spitscreen multiplayer, complete with lag (that's right, offline lag). A few sections get creative—the *Panzer Dragoon*-style flying sequences and stealth levels may be rough around the edges, but they're a welcome break from an otherwise unpolished hodge-podge of FPS clichés, right down to the power-up-filled crates and explosive barrels. No wonder your review copies were sent out in time for *Turok's* release; this game was obviously and painfully rushed out the door. **Mark**

Were it not for the fact that this game has some horrific scenery pop-up, speech samples that appear to have been recorded in a latrine, extremely suspect control in the flying levels, ugly character models, imprecise jumping and load times as long as the Jurassic period, we'd have a real winner. (Oh, and the on-screen health bar is too small.) *Turok* is a grandiose attempt at an FPS that's, at best, mediocre. The main game's stable controls, lavish set designs and assortment of intimidating beasts are diluted by hackneyed boss battles, tiresome gore and other problems listed above. *Turok* has its moments, just not too many of them. **David M.**

### TUROK'S MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENTS



Not pictured: giant cyborg arm and feather-clad lion-mount.

Tal'Set's Southern-fried nemesis, Captain Tobias Bruckner, might just be the dumbest idea for a villain we've ever seen.



In the last few levels, you fight side-by-side with a brigade of troops who completely and utterly suck.

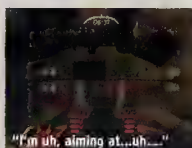


Danger: teleporting trees ahead

Huge pieces of the scenery often fade in right before your eyes. What you're not seeing here is a mountain that's about to appear.



Most of the character models look shockingly bad in both the cinemas and the multiplayer battles.



"I'm uh, aiming at...uh..."

Manning a powerful gun turret sounds like fun in multiplayer...until you realize the turret itself takes up your entire aiming view!

VISUALS 3 SOUND 3 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 6



# Is there mud in your Blood?



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**Publisher:** Midway Sports  
**Developer:** Point of View  
**Players:** 1-2 (1-4 Multi-tap)  
**Also On:** GC, Xbox  
**Better Than:** NFL or Arena Football  
**Best Feature:** Fast-paced arcade action  
**Worst Feature:** Gameplay is getting a bit stale  
**Web Site:** www.midwaysports.net

PS2

Jump in the time machine and transport back to 1997. Hey, there's EGM's Dan Leahy! He's about 165 pounds with a baseball cap on his mighty head of hair, and he's playing *NFL Blitz*, Midway's newest arcade sensation. Fast-forward to present day. Hey, there's Dan again, weighing in at 178 pounds with a receding hairline, no hat (because that's what caused the hair problem), and he's lounging on a couch playing Midway's yearly console rehash of *NFL Blitz*. If that hasn't painted the proper picture, I'll spell it out: **This is the same game as *Blitz 20-02***, which happened to be one of the few major upgrades to the franchise. If you missed *20-02*, then by all means pick up the latest and greatest. *20-03* has the same blazing arcade action, but this time with pumped-up visuals and deeper gameplay. Still, compared to last year's *Blitz*, which had a dramatic new look, a cool, new eighth-player dynamic and expanded playbooks, *20-03*'s changes are miniscule. And although I don't enjoy playing through a season's worth of CPU matches like I used to, it's hard to resist the competitive fun of a multiplayer game. The big hits and obnoxious announcer are guaranteed to turn any mild-mannered gamer into a raging trash-talker. Not a football game? Don't worry. *Blitz* is a snap to learn, and a lot of fun to boot. As a rental, *Blitz* will give you your money's worth. As a purchase, *20-03*'s not worth the upgrade from *20-02*. **Dan L.**

Having already given this franchise a major facelift last year, Midway has kept *20-03* largely the same, save a handful of fresh goodies. Here's a breakdown of what's new: 3) Icon passing. It's way better than the old point-and-toss system. You can pull-off amazing mid-throw sequences with it. 2) Smarter defense. Make a stupid pass into coverage and you pay the price with an interception. 3) Create-a-player. It's good for a laugh. 4) Replays. Well, it's about time. And the overall verdict? While *20-03* is only slightly different than last year's *Blitz*, it's still a blast. If you already bought *20-02*, rent this game to weigh the differences. Newcomers, pick this one up. **Dean**

Don't get me wrong, *Blitz* has always been a fun game with three pals, some drinks and a Multi-tap, but the franchise is stuck in neutral. **Improvements over last year's (extremely late) version of *Blitz* are minimal:** minor graphical tweaks and a new create-a-player option. The gameplay's the same basic blend of light strategy and no-rules brawling that's always been a trademark of the *Blitz* series. Don't expect a serious football game, as interceptions and sacks are commonplace. In fact, it's so brutal that playing defense is almost more fun than offense. If you want something quick, dumb and fun, give it a go. Otherwise, stick with *Madden*. **Shane**

VISUALS 7 SOUND 8 INGENUITY 3 REPLAY 8



**Publisher:** THQ  
**Developer:** Volition  
**Players:** 1  
**Also On:** None  
**Featured In:** EGM #358  
**Best Feature:** Deep, imaginative quest  
**Worst Feature:** Weak combat engine  
**Web Site:** www.summonerz.com

PS2

I hated the first *Summoner*. The main character was a wuss, the graphics were bad and the combat was lousy. Still, I had hope for the sequel and prayed that Volition listened to our criticisms while making *Summoner 2*. They did. **Instead of playing as an emaciated dweeb, you're now a rather snobby young queen with a bizarre band of allies.** These comrades and their diverse abilities come in handy since the game focuses primarily on combat. Ironically, *Summoner 2*'s strengths (faster action, computer-controlled allies) expose the game's many weaknesses (poor camera during combat, enemies that swarm you, sluggish controls). Another problem is that spell-casting leaves you vulnerable the whole time. Nothing is more frustrating than pausing to cast a heal spell and having your ass kicked while your character completes her animation. Usually you walk away even more burned than before. Despite these flaws, being able to switch between party members on the fly gives the game an added depth most action-RPGs (*Forever Kingdom* being the exception) lack. And while the storyline is extremely linear, the game's stylish interface (blinking eyes appear next to important items, animated mouths appear by characters you can talk to), visually imaginative world and deep selection of weapons and accessories are enough to satisfy even the most fussy RPG fan. **Milkman**

Admittedly, I was wary. I'm still recovering from the deep emotional scars caused by the first *Summoner*, the RPG equivalent of a bucketful of spew. This time, however, **my fears were unfounded—this sequel doesn't suck.** The story is mildly intriguing, the combat's actually fun and the graphics are only tacky, not mind-blowingly bad (see: *Summoner*). Some might get turned off by the Lil' Miss Priss protagonist and her periodically enforced duties as a queen (like doling out money to build statues or deciding the fate of traitors), but at least the developers tried something new. If you were burned by the first game, you'll be pleasantly surprised here. **Shane**

The first *Summoner* didn't go over too well with a lot of people, so Volition's decision to change things around for the follow-up is a good one. The biggest improvement—the more active, twitchy combat—works quite well, making *Summoner 2* more immediately engaging than its predecessor. Battles are genuinely fun, although occasionally undermined by spotty teammate A.I. And while *52*'s visual style is a bit questionable (some character designs are downright nasty), you really can't fault the quality of the script. The great voice acting makes the sometimes-flaky story that much easier to swallow. Overall, a solid, if somewhat unconventional RPG. **Miguel**

VISUALS 6 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 3



**Publisher:** Metro3D  
**Developer:** Irem/Racjin  
**Players:** 1  
**Also On:** None  
**Likely to Give:** The bends  
**Best Feature:** Realistic underwater action  
**Worst Feature:** Blat graphics  
**Web Site:** www.metro3d.com

PS2

*Sub Rebellion* is excellent in both premise and execution. Fueled by a *Star Wars*-esque rebellion-versus-the-empire plot, *Sub* takes you through 20-plus missions of heated aquatic action in a drowned, futuristic world (where you may come across a half-buried Statue of Liberty, for example). Though slower paced than most action titles, *Sub*'s intensity more than makes up for it. While most of the game takes place silently beneath the waves (fighting enemy ships, searching for rare artifacts, etc.), *Sub* shakes things up by sending you topside to duel with helicopters, bombers and land-based tanks. Thankfully, you pilot a highly customizable submarine with a staggering array of weaponry and an easy-to-read HUD. But the things that *Sub Rebellion* doesn't do are almost as important as the things it does. It doesn't concern you with ammo management, damage you when you bang into rock walls or make you worry about oxygen conservation—essentially, unnecessary frustration is kept to a minimum. Throw in an innovative sonar function that exposes enemy subs and hidden treasures through a wireframe effect, convincing aquatic effects and significant replay value (you do want to find every last treasure, don't you?), and you've got one of the most compelling single-player action games to come along in ages. Don't let this one pass you by just because you've never heard of it. **Milkman**

*Sub Rebellion* won't win any awards for its simple graphics or blippy keyboard music, but its combo of intense, old-school action-shooter gameplay (think an off-rails and underwater *Star Fox*) with entirely original elements (the sonar effect's genius) has me hooked. Controls are complicated—shooting your weapon, pinging sonar, moving forward, turning and lowering yourself all at the same time is not uncommon—but deeply satisfying as you work your way over the learning curve. Plus, new equipment for your sub and a surprisingly interesting plot spur you on. If you know what SNES stands for (and still play yours from time to time), get this game. **Mark**

Playing *Sub Rebellion* must resemble what it's like to hang out in a real-life submarine: novel at first, but ultimately a bit repetitive, hypnotic and a little claustrophobic. Being able to hook up your sub with weapons and components is rad; installing new parts that improve the way it performs (or destroys) gives you a nice, rewarding feeling as you complete your different missions. My only beef is with the actual levels—they could use a bit more visual distinction. As it is, they lulled me into a dull stupor after prolonged exposure. Luckily, relief comes in the form of excellent controls and well-paced battles. Saving graces indeed. **Miguel**

VISUALS 4 SOUND 5 INGENUITY 8 REPLAY 7

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PS2



## THE NASCAR THUNDER 2003



Publisher: EA Sports  
Developer: EA Tiburon  
Players: 1-4  
Also On: PS2, GC

Best feature: Very deep Career mode  
Worst feature: Raceday schedule still not right

Featured In: EGM #59  
Web Site: www.easports.com

NASCAR fans have been dying for their *Madden*—a game that truly simulates the sport, with loads of stats, team management options and the like. With *Thunder 2003*, the wait is finally over. The only real complaint I have about the game is that the Raceday schedule still doesn't reflect a true Winston Cup event. It'd be nice to have a multi-car practice session for each track at the very least, not to mention the traditional Happy Hour shakedown. Otherwise, this is an excellent NASCAR simulator with a super-deep Career mode that challenges you to run an entire team (from hiring your crew to performing on the track). But I think my favorite part is the Lightning Challenge where various drivers introduce you to specific racing situations they found themselves in over the past year. Then you have to go in and either repeat what they did or do better. It gives you a real sense of interaction with the stars of the sport, plus it's a nice break from the constant driving in circles that gets on some players' nerves. I can't recommend this game enough.

Greg



EA Games  
Developer: EA Canada  
Players: 1-2  
Also On: PS2, GC

Best selection: Awesome car selection  
Worst feature: Poor sense of speed

Featured In: EGM #57  
Web Site: www.eagames.com

If you want to know how this game should have turned out, go back to the PS2 section and read the *Hot Pursuit 2* review. Done? Good. Now forget everything we said back there. *Speed* on the Xbox is not the same game as its excellent PS2 counterpart. It doesn't look as good, it doesn't play as well, and it definitely doesn't feel as fast. I guess that sounds a little harsh. On its own, Xbox *Hot Pursuit 2* is actually a good game; it just doesn't hold a candle to titles like *Proctur Gotham Racing* or *Sega GT 2002* in terms of speed. Variety's a different story, though. If there's one thing *Need For Speed* does right, it's that it offers a sweet collection of hot rods that any video-driving junkie would die for. It's got some really cool race modes too, including *Hot Pursuit*, where you need to outrun the cops while trying to win a race. And the tracks are super-big. We're talking laps that are often over three minutes long, which equals a lot of shortcuts, obstacles and back-and-forth racing in every event. A good game that would've been great if it ran as fast as the PS2 version.

Greg



Publisher: Genki  
Developer: Genki  
Players: None  
Also On: None  
Dial It Up: None  
Best Feature: Quirky, edgy aesthetics and design  
Worst Feature: Too few battle arenas  
Web Site: www.phantogram.com

Phantogram  
Genki  
None  
None  
None  
None  
None  
None

Of all the mech shooters currently in vogue on consoles, *Phantom Crash* is one of the best-looking and most original of the bunch. Unsurprisingly, the game is set in the near future, where Japan has abandoned Tokyo to its labyrinthine streets for rumbling, a competitive bloodsport involving jacked-up, car-sized robots. With such a dystopian premise, you'd think the world of *Phantom* would be full of drooling Mad-Max-style psychotics—but it's not. The characters in *Phantom* have more in common with the pop-punk, anti-establishment attitude of *Jet Set Radio Future*. This infectious style is pervasive throughout the game, even on the battlefield, where you spend the majority of your time. If you've played *Halo* before, you'll basically have no trouble moving, strafing and blowing stuff up in *Phantom*. What makes the game so immediately gratifying is that it essentially plays like an first-person shooter, except the camera sits behind your mech. I love the way every robot is equipped with a rechargeable optic camouflage cloaking device; it's a lot like managing the protective shield in *Halo*—stay cloaked during firefights, then pull behind cover when you need to recharge. Outside of battle, the game occupies you with a TON of funny, poorly localized dialogue. I mean, how do you not love a game that puts you in the ring against a rival named "Makunt"? If you like quirky Japanese-style games, pick this up.

Chie

*Phantom Crash* will tickle Japanese-mech fans in all the right places with high-speed robots, heavy armaments (including my fave, the aptly named Big Shoo), plenty of customization and more presentation style than five *Jet Set Radios* put together. But with the good Japanese flavor, you also get the bad. The bizarre storyline is filled with so much nonsensical dialogue, you end up using more button taps skipping the junk than you use in actual combat. That's fine, though, 'cause the action's where it's at. Exciting arena clashes, realistic graphics, stealth-mode mechs...the only things missing are a streamlined interface and more variety.

Shoe

If *Phantom Crash* were an online game, I'd be tempted to marry it. As is, though, it's easily worthy of a spot alongside the best giant-robot games ever. Imagine a *Gun Turismo*-like setup, but with insanely customizable mechs in place of autos. *Phantom*'s delicious depth allows you to get your paws dirty with the most minuscule of tweaks—performance-related, destructive and even cosmetic. And once you're ready to boogie down in the arenas, expect an experience that's tense, explosive and painfully fast. The multiplayer mode, with its limited customization, ain't all it could have been, but the single-player game is plenty cool.

Miguel



Publisher: AKA  
Developer: AKA  
Players: 1  
Also On: None  
Best Feature: Exciting gameplay and best feature  
Web Site: www.codemasters.com

Codemasters  
Wide Games  
1  
None  
Prison Camp Solid  
Exciting gameplay  
Generally unpolished  
www.codemasters.com

Your brief window of opportunity comes right after the spotlight sweeps by and the guard turns his back. You sprint for the only part of the fence without barbed wire and quickly climb over. Before anyone notices, you crouch down in the tall grass, out of sight. You just hope no one heard you or sees your footprints in the snow, or else it's solitary confinement. That's the type of intense, gun-less, adrenaline-filled gameplay that fills this WWII prison-camp game. No sickly love stories or mind-boggling plotlines that'll make you want to jump off the George Washington Bridge here. This is pure sneak-around action, with a little character interaction (bribery, hints and even deception) to guide you along. You'll get a rush out of learning and exploiting the prison-camp routines and guard patrols, and knowing you just got away with one helluva covert-mission run, leaving those sour Krauts dumfounded and PO'ed. And even though you'll revisit the same camps in later levels, the objectives are varied enough that you won't mind the redundancy. I was almost prepared to say *POW* is more fun than *Metal Gear Solid 2* with its emphasis on gameplay over, well, all that other crap that dragged down *Solid Snake*'s adventure. But *POW* was let out early on some technicality: Another month of clean-up development work could've polished up the controls, graphics and unusually stupid A.I.

Shoe

Nothing screams fun like a Nazi prison camp. *POW* is the first non-violent WWII-themed game with a plot lifted straight from classic war flicks. With multiple ways to complete each mission, *POW*'s *Shenmue*-meets-*Metal-Gear-Solid* stealth vibe creates both freedom and tension. What hurts the game, however, are the pasty graphics and occasionally dopey A.I. (At one point, I was crouching right next to a guard and he didn't notice a thing!) It made me want to throw the game into solitary confinement. Despite its spotty production values and winny pacifist ways, *POW*'s varied gameplay kept me planning my next great escape. A worthy rental.

Darren

Imagine *Metal Gear Solid* with all of the stealth and none of the fighting. That pretty much sums up *POW*, a game plagued by an awkward inventory system, occasionally twitchy controls and half-witted guards. (I've seen goldfish with longer attention spans—the Germans give up chasing you after to seconds of running. Usually in circles. While you're hiding in a bush. Next to them.) But it's not all bad. *POW* won't win any graphical awards, but it sports superb voice acting, a novel premise and intelligent mission design. I was hoping for more Nazi killing and less clambering over fences, but this is still an interesting stealth-game diversion.

David H.



THE EYES OF A BOY. THE SWORD OF A MASTER. THE FIGHT OF HIS LIFE.



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**T**  
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Mild Language

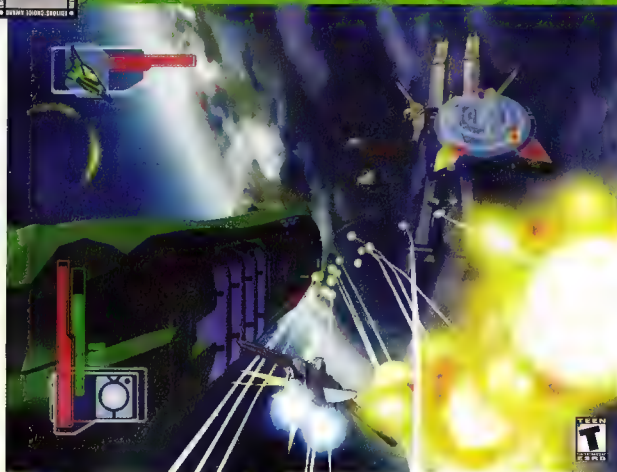
  
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GAME ARTS



PlayStation 2

# Robotech: Battlery

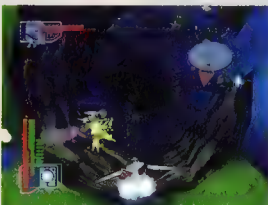


**Publisher:** TDK Mediactive  
**Developer:** Vicious Cycle  
**Players:** 1-2  
**Also On:** PS2, GC  
**Featured In:** EGM #154  
**Best Feature:** Your quick-changing mech  
**Worst Feature:** Annoying escort missions  
**Web Site:** www.robotechgame.com

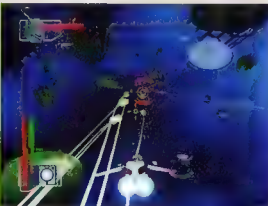


## CAT-SCAN FEVER

The first mission in *Robotech* that'll have you crying foul is "Cat Scan," where you have to protect a woefully weak Cat's Eye recon plane from enemy forces. But it isn't as hard as you think:



Ignore the Battlepods since they're not firing on the Cat's Eye (and if you destroy any, they'll just reappear in greater numbers). Instead, fly tight circles around the plane and drop flares every five seconds.



While you're doing that, concentrate on those Fighterpods (the ones shooting the missiles). Just cycle through the targets until you lock onto one, then unleash three volleys of missiles.

All three forms of your Veritech fighter are important in *Robotech*. Fighter mode (left) fires powerful missiles and flares. Guardian mode (below) fires weaker missiles and can pick up certain objects. Battloid mode (bottom, left) can snipe and shoot down incoming missile volleys.



The first time you start up *Robotech*, you're thrown right smack into a dogfight in the skies over Macross Island and the grounded SDF-1 battle fortress. For me, a hardcore fan of the TV series, it was like a dream come true. The missiles were flyin', the planes were transformin' and I was in heaven. The developers did a great job of forcing you to take advantage of your transforming Veritech by giving all three modes distinct strengths and weaknesses. It's not nearly as unwieldy as it sounds, either. By the third mission I was pretty much comfortable with every form of my mech, and knew when to change into what. In fact, the controls in general are great. The only catch is understanding how to use your various abilities the proper way during some missions—especially ones where you have to protect an ally. I don't have a problem with escort missions in general, but *Robotech* never makes it clear how you should go about accomplishing your goal, and the key to protecting a target in one sortie won't necessarily work in another. It can get frustrating. Plus, I wish the game included a way to target enemies that aren't in your direct line of sight. It would have cleared up just about every problem I have with *Battlery*. In the end, though, the lock-on issue only becomes a pain during a handful of the many missions you'll take on in *Robotech*, so it doesn't ruin the overall game. Definitely check it out. **Greg**

Even if you're a stranger to Macross Island and think a Veritech is a school for VCR repair, you'll find a lot to love in *Battlery*. Half the fun comes from your fighter's three transformations, which are more than mere cosmetic quick-changes. You'll need to flip between them constantly, picking the right mode for the current threat or target. It's what makes the game's chaotic moments so thrilling. Mission variety is solid and most are short and sweet, so you don't redo much stuff over and over if you fail. My only gripe: A few escort missions are maddening. They're especially frustrating in space, where targeting particular enemies is extra tricky. **Crispin**

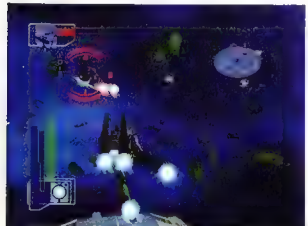
For those who witnessed the unfolding drama of the *Robotech* television series as a kid, *Battlery* is a momentous game that's both nostalgic and fun. It does an incredible job of re-creating the show's fast-paced mech combat by combining slick animation and spot-on controls. With voice work by the same actors from the original show, *Battlery* isn't just a good action game for Robo-geeks like me, it's a very happy reunion. However, those unfamiliar with *Robotech*'s legacy will be less forgiving about its frustrating difficulty and stilted air-combat levels. Not worth the \$80 collector's-edition price tag, but definitely purchase-worthy otherwise. **Che**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

**R**obo-what now? The average PlayStation-generation gamer may not remember this classic cartoon series, but trust us, it's awesome. Great characters, huge battles and super-cool transforming robots (called Veritechs) made it one of the defining animated shows of the '80s. Now, over 15 years later, we finally get a *Robotech* video game.

And it's a good game to boot. *Robotech* fans will finally be able to live the life of a *Robotech* Defense Force pilot, flying every model of Veritech from the show (including the Super and Armored versions) in ground, air and space missions. You'll also cross paths with main characters like Lynn Minmei, Roy Fokker, Rick Hunter and Lisa Hayes, although you won't get to play as any of them.

But you don't need to be a *Robotech* geek to get into *Battlery*. At the end of the day this is just a kick-ass action game everybody should check out and play.



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# The Terminator: Dawn of Fate



Apparently, those bad-ass Terminators that we know and love (Arnold's T-800 and Robert Patrick's goopy T-1000) are not indicative of the brand's overall quality. In this game you'll trash countless waves of mildly threatening junk heaps (below) that Arnie could trounce with his pinkie.



Something tells me this game isn't what director James Cameron had in mind for a full-fledged prequel to his classic *Terminator* films. Plotwise, it's a royal mess, featuring shallow, stereotypical heroes, a cheesy villain and cringe-worthy dialog. It doesn't help that the characters from the film, like Kyle Reese (what's with the fro?), Sarah Connor and Arnie's T-800, look nothing like the actors who portrayed them. Apart from the iffy character design, though, the game's graphics do look pretty swank. Bombed-out streets, abandoned asylums and massive fortresses channel the bleak feel of the movies nicely. Some scenes are just overly dark, but at least the game has an adjustable brightness slide. Just like in the movies, music and sound effects play a crucial role. The soundtrack sports both cool, ambient creepiness and crunchy heavy-metal riffs. Of course, **pretty levels and power chords can't hide *Dawn of Fate's* real weakness: crappy gameplay.** The control tries to mimic that of *Devil May Cry*, but ends up just being flaky and weird. You'll get stuck on walls, and the manic camera will make your head spin. Targeting enemies is a chore, so if you just use a sweep-kick/stab combo instead of firing guns, you'll do fine. *Terminator* is unbalanced, repetitive and not much fun. To top it off, the game is short enough to finish in just a few hours. Even if you're a huge fan of the movies, this is a rental at best.

**Shane**

I have seen the post-doomsday future, and it's kinda lame. *Dawn of Fate* is filled with a wee variety of klutzy cyborgs who die easy if you blast their chrome domes. Even worse, the willy-nilly camera makes it hard just to walk in a straight line, let alone blast Skynet's tin men. The *Terminator* license is wasted here, too. You only face one Arnie-style robot, human characters look awful (I've seen better body armor on *Dr. Who*) and the plot isn't even consistent with the flicks. You will find a few tense moments (the final boss is pretty cool), and lots of unclickable encouragement replay. But one trip through this blah future is enough for me. **I won't be back.**

**Crispin**

*Dawn of Fate* deals with the futuristic stuff we've all been dying to see more of ever since those oh-so-brief glimpses in the *Terminator* movies: the giant gleaming Hunter-Killer tanks and jets, the rag-tag group of rebellious humans (including the two most important characters, Kyle Reese and John Connor) and, of course, hundreds of T-800s minus their Ah-nid skins. Moody music and crisp graphics set a nice stage, but, unfortunately, your seat has an obstructed view. You spend so much time flipping between different angles and third- and first-person views that just getting from point A to point B can be a headache. Rent if you're a big fan. **Mark**

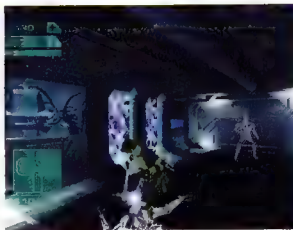


Publisher: Atari  
Developer: Paradigm  
Players: 1  
Also On: PS2  
Featured In: EGM #155  
Best Feature: Snazzy, post-apocalyptic levels  
Worst Feature: Crude combat and jumpy camera  
Web Site: www.terminator-game.com



At the beginning of both *Terminator* films, we're given a brief glimpse of the future: America in 2027 is a grim, war-torn wasteland packed with brave rebels fighting giant war machines. As a prequel to the first film, *Dawn of Fate* thrusts you into this post-apocalyptic setting as a band of fighters serving under General John Connor. The crux of the game centers on stopping the evil super-computer Skynet from sending a Terminator back in time to kill Sarah Connor (John's hottie mom). Of course, if you've seen the film, you know how well that plan turns out.

The gameplay mixes elements of gunplay, hand-to-hand brawling, puzzle solving and mini-games into a genre-bending cocktail reminiscent of recent titles like *Dead to Rights* and *Devil May Cry* (PS2). Multiple characters and customizable upgrades (like health and ammo boosts) add an RPG flourish to the action, and tapping into your adrenaline



**Terminators fall prey to the same weaknesses as vampires—one stake (in this case, a metallic, glowing one) through the heart and they're toast.**

reserve gives your hero a burst of superpower when you need it most.

On the surface, *Dawn of Fate* captures the gritty, dramatic feel of the classic sci-fi films remarkably well. But while the graphics and sound draw heavily from the movie's excellent production design, the basic gameplay can't quite measure up to similar games in the genre. If you're a huge fan of the flicks, give it a rental. In other words, terminate your desire to buy this game.

## FUTURE SCHLOCK



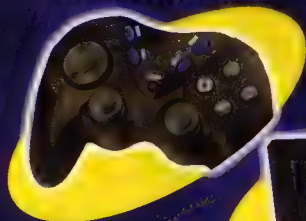
Fear Factory: maniac muses of the cybernetic battlefield.

During the closing credits of *Dawn of Fate*, you'll hear "Terminate," an original ode to the mechanical murderers by nu-metal rockers Fear Factory. This artistic explosion isn't mere marketing synergy—the guys are huge fans. In fact, they already wrote one *Terminator*-inspired ditty, "Hunter-Killer," without even being asked! If you're looking for the goofiest homage to the series, however, hunt down "Dead or Alive" by '80s hair band Phantom. Lines like "Infrared eyes search for human prey" are classic.



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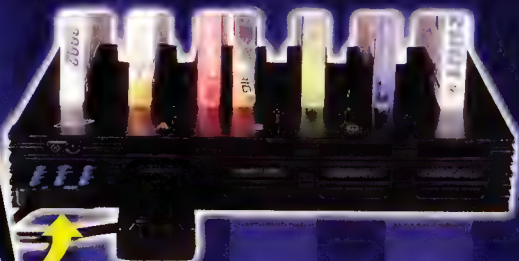
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**Turok Evolution**



**Publisher:** Acclaim  
**Developer:** Acclaim Austin  
**Players:** 1-4  
**Also On:** PS2, GC  
**Read first:** PS2 version's review  
**Web Site:** www.turok.com

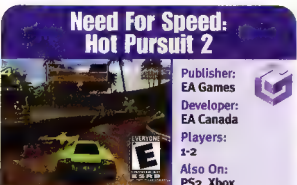
**Best Feature:** Creative weapons  
**Worst Feature:** Generally mediocre design

Turok's comeback bid shines brightest on the Xbox, but it's still nothing special. It suffers from the same design weaknesses as its PS2 counterpart, including a laughable pool, poor level design, wimpy sound effects and fluctuating difficulty. While the game offers cool weapons and environments, the **overall package is lackluster**. Visually, *Turok* can't compete with the likes of *Halo*, although it's smoother and sharper than its PS2 cousin. Even so, graphical issues still rear their ugly heads here. Problems like the bizarre level-of-detail system (where trees and shrubs magically fade into existence as you move around) and god-awful character models that would look more at home on the old Nintendo 64 often make this game painful to behold. The single-player game drags on through 15 hit-or-miss levels, including four flying stages (which control better on Xbox than on PS2). And unlike the PS2 version, the multi-player mode here is faster, plays better and supports four-player splitscreen. Sadly, *Turok: Evolution* is no better than average.

**Shane**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	4	3	4

**Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2**



**Publisher:** EA Games  
**Developer:** EA Canada  
**Players:** 1-2  
**Also On:** PS2, Xbox  
**Featured In:** EGM #157  
**Web Site:** www.eagames.com


**Best Feature:** Lots of sweet cars to choose from  
**Worst Feature:** Slow sense of speed

The last *Need For Speed* left a lot to be desired, with its single car manufacturer and sluggish gameplay. *Hot Pursuit 2* definitely addresses the former problem—you'll find everything from Mustang to McLaren in this bad boy. Once you're on the track, however, you may soon forget this happy fact, as you realize that the game stutters every time you run under a big shadow or go in and out of tunnels. And even though your speedometer reads in the vicinity of 100-130 mph, it feels more like a Sunday drive down a busy city street. It really sucks since almost everything else about *Hot Pursuit 2* is awesome. The tracks are nice and big (usually about three minutes per lap), the control is spot on and the various modes—especially *Hot Pursuit*, where cops try to chase you and your fellow racers, down—will keep you busy for hours. So while I hate to give the fanboys on the message boards fodder for their endless system wars, if you own all three systems, ignore the GC version of *Hot Pursuit 2* and go straight for the PlayStation 2 game. It's far and away the best of the three.

**Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	8	7	9

**4x4 EVO 2**



**Publisher:** Universal  
**Developer:** Terminal Reality  
**Players:** 1-2  
**Also On:** Xbox  
**Truck upgrades are:** Useless  
**Web Site:** universalgames.com

**Best Feature:** Soccer moms will be in SUV heaven  
**Worst Feature:** Brain-dead competition

The general idea behind the *4x4 EVO* games has always been a good one: basically, *Gran Turismo* with pickup trucks and SUVs. Honestly, though, driving trucks over uninspired courses at speeds of up to only 60 mph (at least that's what it feels like) does not make a great game. While playing, I felt like I was on my way to pick up the kids from school rather than racing. It's a waste of an otherwise good game because there are loads of trucks to buy, and the various parts and pieces you can install will impress even the hardest of the hardcore gearheads. But since the difficulty is set so that slower cars get a speed boost, none of these parts actually make a difference on the track. One thing you can count on, though, is watching the A.I. make a bunch of bone-head maneuvers. I swear, these are some of the stupidest drivers I've seen in a long time. At one point I even saw one guy get stuck on a bridge for four laps just because he couldn't figure out how to turn the wheel left or right to free himself up. Overall, *4x4 EVO 2* is disappointing and lame.

**Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	4	3	4

**Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex**



**Publisher:** Universal  
**Developer:** Traveller's Tales  
**Players:** 1  
**Also On:** PS2, Xbox  
**Featured In:** EGM #142  
**Web Site:** universalgames.com

**Best Feature:** Old-school platform gameplay  
**Worst Feature:** Cheap one-hit deaths

Nobody's more burnt on *Crash* than this chica. So imagine my (groan) delight when that bippity-boppity intro music fired up on my TV. As I nestled my rump comfortably into the sofa in preparation for the notoriously long load times (as seen in the PS2 version), I asked myself, "Why am I doing this?" But even before the first snore of the evening bore itself from my nostrils, level one was ready. Hal. Perhaps Traveller's Tales finally got load-times right? We'll see about that. This stubborn girl wasn't convinced yet, even as she discovered how much more forgiving *Crash* was on the GC. Not only did I not have the desire to smash the disc into a zillion pieces, I actually found the game somewhat enjoyable. Yes, **Wrath on the GC is much more polished here than on the PS2**, but some things never change. Despite some clever approaches to level design, it still lacks any real innovation to its simple platform roots, making it an ideal candidate for little kids. But with *Super Mario Sunshine* out now, it's tough to recommend this game to any age group.

**Jeanne**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	2	4

**NASCAR Thunder 2003**



**Publisher:** EA Sports  
**Developer:** EA Tiburon  
**Players:** 1-4  
**Featured In:** EGM #59  
**Best Feature:** Deep Career mode  
**Worst Feature:** Raceday setup still not right  
**Web Site:** www.easports.com

GameCube owners might have felt left out when *Thunder 2002* skipped their system last year, but hey, 2003 was worth the wait. This is, hands down, the best console *NASCAR* game yet. The incredibly deep Career mode has you taking care of your cars, sponsors and crew members through a 20-season dynasty. While the Lightning Challenges put you in the shoes of stars like Dale Earnhardt Jr., Bobby Labonte and Jeff Burton as you re-enact or change the outcome of various racing situations they've found themselves in over the past few years. It makes for a nice mix of hardcore and casual racing that should appeal to all types of fans. A myriad of graphical tweaks—including instant replays and pit-stop animations where your crew may actually stumble—give the game a truly authentic look. Of course, gameplay is king, and the developers didn't just repackage last year's game. Cars drive realistically here. Don't expect your car to stick to the road when you go barreling into a turn on a flat track like New Hampshire, whereas speedways like Daytona require a lead foot. Slide around too much and not only will your tires wear down, but they'll actually blow (a new feature this year). It all comes together to create the most immersive *NASCAR* title ever on any console. And for those of you who are new and curious, *Thunder 2003* features enough assists and tutorials to ease you into the action nicely.

**Greg**

Just because I'm not a hardcore *NASCAR* fan doesn't mean that I don't know a good racing game when I see one. Although the thought of driving around in circles for 500 laps doesn't really appeal to me (sorry Greg, but I like to powerlide), I can't argue with the immense value offered by *Thunder 2003*. Yeah, perks like the loads of cars and tracks, impressive graphics and four-player support are cool, but it's the Lightning Challenge that *NASCAR* fans will really love. This mode puts you in the driver's seat for two dozen of the most dramatic moments in *NASCAR* history, giving you the chance to rewrite the books. Simply awesome.

**Milkman**

You know *Thunder 2003*'s intense when it's all you can think about when you hit the sack at night. A new game engine and sharper graphics have worked wonders for both its authenticity and playability. Now you've got the ultimate mix of speed, beauty, gameplay and worthwhile extras to mess with, including race scenarios and tips from the real drivers. I'm most impressed, however, with the precise control. Gliding between two cars at 195 mph without touching a single quarter panel has never been more intuitive; it uses the analog stick's range of motion very well. *Thunder 2003* has widened its lead over the pack by a huge margin.

**Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	9

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# Star Fox Adventures

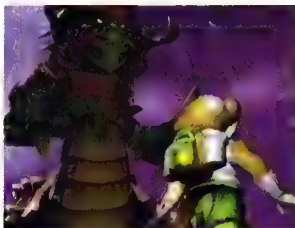


**Publisher:** Nintendo  
**Developer:** Rare  
**Also On:** None  
**Featured In:** EGM #159  
**Best Feature:** Cool, Zelda-style dungeons  
**Worst Feature:** Dumb fetch quests  
**Web Site:** [www.starfoxadventures.com](http://www.starfoxadventures.com)



Much like *Eternal Darkness*, *Star Fox Adventures* made a lengthy, complex and ultimately worthwhile journey to the GameCube. What was a cancelled Nintendo 64 title called *Dinosaur Planet* has transformed into the action-adventure debut for Nintendo's spacefaring fuzziest, Fox McCloud. The fantasy storyline, non-player characters and prehistoric-themed levels might not have been originally designed for Fox and his pals, but the combination of beautiful graphics and solid gameplay make it worth recommending to most gamers.

The adventure begins with a prologue starring Krystal, a mysterious female fox who speaks a freakish foreign language. After a brief aerial battle, she confronts the evil General Scales, who roughs her up and imprisons her in an ancient temple. A distress beacon goes out to Fox McCloud. He arrives



**SFA's bosses are infrequent but imposing. To beat this creepy dino, you'll have to slice your way out of his belly after being swallowed.**

on the war-torn world of Dinosaur Planet with little knowledge of his situation, but his pals Peppy, Slippy and General Pepper (we knew him back in the '60s when he was just a sergeant) help out Fox with tactical support.

It's painfully obvious that the natives of Dinosaur Planet need assistance, and lots of it. For the first few hours of the game, Fox transforms into the ultimate Good Samaritan. He's nursing herds of tired mammoths back to

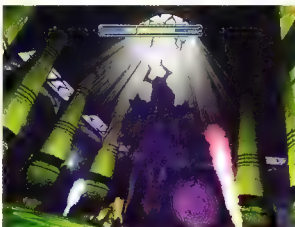


## SHOOTING LEVELS

### 63 Seconds of Fun



If you come to *Star Fox Adventures* expecting to pilot the Arwing spaceship through fun-filled flying levels, you're going to be sorely disappointed. Rare did include some brief shooting stages in between levels of *Zelda*-inspired action, but when we say brief, we mean brief. These levels are over in a flash—the first one clocks in at an amazingly terse 63 seconds. All that you have to do is fly through a set number of gold rings before the level ends. Sure, you can scramble to shoot enemies, collect bombs and power-ups if you really want, but it's not necessary. It's a real shame that more wasn't done with these stages, though, as the tiny taste sampled here could easily have become a larger part of the game. Of course, Nintendo hasn't completely forgotten Fox's roots. That's why they've enlisted Namco to produce a new *Star Fox* space shooter for the GameCube. It's due out next spring.



# Duel to the depth.



## SEGA Bass Fishing Duel™

Sega Bass Fishing Duel will knock you overboard with heated two-player competition. And when you finally run out of friends to beat, you can tackle the CPU opponents, each with their own personalities, strengths and weaknesses. This attitude may not make you popular around the watering hole, but it's lonely at the top, buddy. Who says fishing's not an extreme sport?



Ruthless CPU > anglers to battle.



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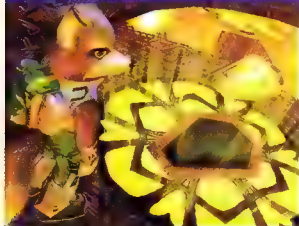
< The only PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system fishing game with split-screen two-player or vs. computer competition.



PlayStation®2

SEGA®

## Star Fox Adventures (cont.)



**Fox McCloud and Tricky meet the Warpstone, a colossal statue capable of teleporting you all over Dinosaur Planet. We're totally prepared to believe all of that stuff—it's the fact that he has a ridiculous Scottish accent that we simply cannot buy. Be warned, even more goofy accents await you!**



health with turnips, collecting tasty mushrooms for dinosaurs and lighting torches to aid hungry critters scared of the dark. These fetch quests might start to grate on your nerves after a while, but you will learn the ins-and-outs of the gameplay while acting like a fuzzy Boy Scout. If you can stick through these middling bits, the game opens up into a full-fledged epic with traditional dungeons and bosses.

The controls are a no-brainer for anyone who's played a recent *Zelda* title. Fox controls just like Link, from the automatic jumping to the lock-on combat. You can activate items and special moves via a handy C-stick menu, and even map these abilities onto the Y-button. An original gameplay element is Tricky, a sassy dino sidekick who helps Fox solve puzzles (see below).

Graphically, none of *SFA's* N64 roots show through. Impressive special effects like reflective water, lifelike shadows and amazingly realistic fur, show off the best the "Cube has to offer. Huge environments stretch far into the distance, and every area features a full day/night cycle, as well as changing weather. The action runs at a speedy clip, only stutter-

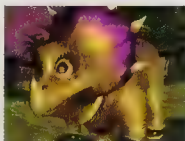
ing for one or two seconds when the game loads a new area. Rare had a long time to work on this game, and it definitely shows in the polished graphics.

The sound is also up to Nintendo's usual high standards. Music is catchy, vibrant and varied, building into a tense tune when danger's afoot. Unfortunately, not as much care went into the voices. Fox is great; he's a likable, self-assured hero. Whether you're able to stomach Slippy, Peppy and General Pepper depends on your past *Star Fox* experience. They're awfully annoying, and they talk a lot. Even worse, however, is the new language invented for the game. It sounds silly when the characters drop English words like "General Scales" and "Dinosaur Planet" into long strings of nonsense.

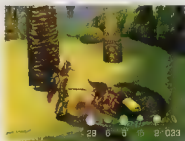
As you can tell by the scores, a strong rift of opinion divided our reviewers. The string of simple fetch quests that bogs down the first few hours could turn off players looking for an adventure that starts on a grander scale. Also, many of the game's puzzles require tons of experimentation to solve, so some patience is required. For most folks, however, Fox's quest will be a fun, challenging endeavor.

Playing *Star Fox Adventures* thoroughly messed with my brain. One minute, it's *Zelda* déjà vu, solving puzzles deep in a dungeon, then a level of classic *Star Fox* shooting mayhem, only to be followed-up by a Rare-style cutscene featuring a wise-cracking cartoon bird. **It's a bizarre mishmash of clashing styles, concepts and gameplay that, despite being all over the map, is still a must-play title.** When I first started playing, however, I had my doubts. The first few hours suffer from poor pacing and an overabundance of mental fetch quests. Thankfully, once you start exploring vast dungeons in search of Spellstones and Krazoa Spirits, the game hits its stride and it's all good from that point onward. (The later level designs and bosses totally make up for the dull opening sections.) The quest is long (20 hours+), sufficiently challenging and rewarding. Visually, you'd never know that this was once an N64 title—it's one of the sweetest-looking games I've ever seen. The graphics are simply phenomenal, utilizing every special effect at the "Cube's disposal. The gameplay harkens back to the N64 days, specifically, the two *Zelda* games. The control mimics that of Link's beloved quests perfectly, and that's a good thing. I suggest that all *Zelda* fans give *SFA* a chance and stick with it. Overall, it's a highly polished effort. (Special note: If you, unlike me, think talking foxes are sexy, add two points to my score.) **Shane**

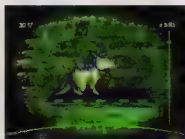
### TRICKY, FOX'S REPTILIAN SIDEKICK



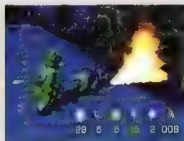
About an hour into the game, you'll find Tricky, the crown prince of his tribe. After you help rescue his mom, he'll join you as a permanent traveling companion. He's a spunky (read: annoying) tyke who's itching for adventure and, despite his seemingly dippy nature, can actually help you solve puzzles. If you see an exclamation point appear above his head, try one of these moves:



Dig up stuff like gold and turnips, but sadly, not dirt on Slippy's sordid past.



Sometimes, you just gotta tell Tricky to stay put in order to press switches.



A quick blast of flame can melt ice and burn brush, but it can also fry Fox.



Buy a ball in order to play fetch. If you play a lot, Tricky will evolve slightly.

*SFA* looks great, but its fresh visuals are quickly spoiled by the same-old collect-a-bunch-of-items-aud-nauseum gameplay Rare's recycled for years. Dino Planet's inhabitants can't seem to do a damn thing by themselves (no wonder they were so easily enslaved). *SFA's* boring, tension-less story doesn't help matters either, and the lack of help for puzzles makes them more frustrating than fun. Not even the flying bits save this from mediocrity—they're too short and feel tacked on. And why the hell do I have to hear the same Slippy/Peppy/Gen. Pepper babble in every submini, every time I access it? Skip this adventure and wait for *Zelda*.

**Chris**

As 3D-adventure games go, *SFA* is near the top of its class. While it doesn't exactly break new ground (Rare games, er, rarely do), the execution is simply impeccable. From its fluid, Kilk-y (*Out of Control*) fighting style, to the variety of weapon upgrades and all the clever uses for your dino sidekick, *SF* gives you plenty of cool things to do in this sprawling epic. Minimizing frustration, Fox auto-jumps (taken straight from *Zelda*) and ledge grabs with the best of 'em. Graphically, the game is a work of art. Only a few years ago visuals like these would pass for a Pixar movie. Clunky interface issues aside, *SFA* is a stunning addition to the series.

**Milkman**

VISUALS 9 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY 3

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# Tricks of the Trade

By David S J Hodgson

We've bathed in more *Sunshine* than George Hamilton, gone half-crazy fixing up money-making schemes in *Animal Crossing*, and even managed to squeeze in a *Buffy* code or two. Write us at [tricks@ziffdavis.com](mailto:tricks@ziffdavis.com).



In Partnership with Prima Games. Tricks, strategies and amusing game antics from *Commandos 2*, *Turok: Evolution*, *Super Monkey Ball 2*, *Armored Core 3*, *Run Like Hell* and *Spyro* are taken from their respective Official Prima Strategy Guides, all on sale now!

## Turning Tricks (Part 2)

We know we asked this before, but which is your favorite kind of Easter Egg?

Source: [Gamers.com poll, 8/02](http://Gamers.com poll, 8/02)

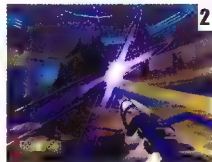


## Top 5 Tricks of the Month

### 1 Turok: Evolution - A small herd of dino-mighty codes!

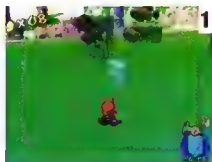
**Turok** mocks you. It shows a Cheat Code screen in the Options menu, and laughs when you attempt to input the letters. That's as **unnecessarily offensive** as the lizard warrior being vertically decapitated in the logo introduction. Add a degree of glee to your dino hunt and tap in these codes. For **all levels**, try **SELLOUT**. **Invisibility** is all the rage thanks to **SLEWGH** (that's "HGWELLS" backwards, time-traveling bookworms). Need **more ammo** than Ted Nugent? Go with **MADMAN**. **Invincibility**? Type **EMERPUS** (or "SUPREME"

backwards). Finally, **all weapons** is **TEXAS**. Note that **TEXAS** gets you all the weapons on that stage only, which is why we're pea-shooting the Triceratops (1). Invisibility keeps critters standing still, even when you fire (2). Oh, and you skip to level 10 (3) when you load a saved game. Rockin'!



### 2 Super Mario Sunshine - Complete game freakdown!

**Screen 1:** Mario. Bless his dungarees—he's pooped! But wait just a second.... How is he sleeping here? **He's underwater, with fishes above his head!** Now look at **screen 2**. Whaaa..?! The game's gone mad! **This is Yoshi, underwater!** How do you access this insane glitch that allows Yoshi to reach the desert island with the Orange Juice pipe without riding those damn boats?



Well, the clue's in screen 1. Figure out what Mario's doing (**a famous Italian mob saying**), and let your

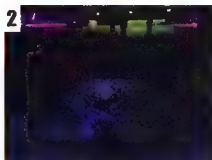


URL do the talking! The secret follows [egm.gamers.com](http://egm.gamers.com), or come back next issue for the answer.

### 3 Buffy the Vampire Slayer - Codes to be "fangful" for!



For a bloody good time and more excuses to look at Sarah Michelle Gellar's "Buffy buttocks," why not unlock the following four arenas (1 and 2),



infinite health, slaying power, and the ability to turn all blue and ghostly? All you need to do is tap in the following codes while you're in the **Extras** menu.

A shriek of delight occurs after correct button jabbing. For those of you who have trouble understanding initials, Y is the Yellow button, B is Black, and W is White. Unlock all four **arenas** with **YYW, BBY, YYY, YWB**. Infinite **Slayer Power** is **YYY, BBB, YWB, BWY**. Infinite **Health** (immune from kicks, punches, and regular attacks) is **YWB, BWY, BBB, YYY**. Play arenas as a **Dark Slayer** using **BWY, YBB, WBB, WBB, WBB, BWW**.

### 4 Animal Crossing Extreme item cost!



### Animal Crossing Extreme item cost!

We've found **the most expensive (and useless) item ever** in a video game! Want to know what it is? A model of a Post Office. Want to know how to get it? Pay off your loan to Tom Nook, and then begin to deposit Bells at the Post Office. You get a prize for 1,000,000 Bells (Tissues), 10,000,000 (a Piggy Bank), 100,000,000 (Mail Box), and (wait for it!) **the P.O. model for 999,999,999 Bells!**



### Grand Theft Auto III Tanks a lot!

It's still selling 100,000 copies a month. Know what that means? Yep; **GTAIII** code central yet again! This oh-so-amusing code lets you hop in the **massively armored Rhino tank**. Gun the engine, crumple cars, out-fox the police on a lunatic rampage like that guy did in L.A. Tap **Cir, Cir, Cir, Cir, Cir, Cir, Cir, L2, L2, L2, Tri, Cir, Tri** during play.



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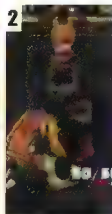
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# Street Hoops

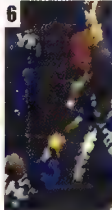
We're takin' it to da streets in Santa Claus costumes. Ya dig?

A veritable hoop frenzy of embarrassing costumes are a moment away. Some games like to dress up their characters in a Mariah Carey-sized wardrobe of fine outfits, with hats, boots and other accessories. Not so with *Street Hoops*: It's a nasty baggy tracksuit with different textures instead. Great.



L2, Cir, Squ (4). Are we done yet? Nope! "Hilarious" **Pimp costumes** (5) are worn after inputting R4, Squ, Cir, L2. What the game likes to think are **Cowboy uniforms** are yours (6) after tapping Cir, R2, R2, R1. Baggy pink **Kung-Fu outfits** occur (7) when you press Cir, Cir, Squ, L1. Finally, you can't get much more sweaty than a shot from a downtown **Santa** (8). Try R2, L2, R2, L2. Fun, eh?

As you'd expect, enter all these codes inside the fancy Cheat menu boxes. Enter R4, Cir, L2, R2 for a **Block Party** backdrop (4). Tap R2, Cir, L2, Cir for a **Power Game**. For a **Black Ball**, go with R2, R2, Cir, L2. For a **red, white and blue ball** (2), try Cir, R2, Squ, R2. For **clown outfits** (3), you'd better get pressing Squ, L1, Squ, Cir. **Cool Tuxedo threads** occur after putting in L2,

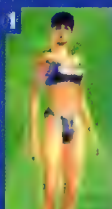


# Beach Spikers

A bevy of Sega-franchise bikinis for their buttock-viewing simulator

The lines are drawn in the sand: Sega and Tecmo are preparing to outdo themselves in the "not quite porno" volleyball department. We kept our end up, fiddling furiously with our joypads, and found the high fashions available to those rendered volleyball/skimpy bikini aficionados out there.

**Uniforms 72-86:** Unlock these delightful bikinis (4) by slogging through the sometimes tedious Tutorial Mode (including the non-interactive parts). Ready for some extreme hairstyle excitement? Enter your name as FVIPERS for *Fighting Vipers* Uniforms 109-110, **Hair 75**, and **Face 51** (2). **DAYTONA** for *Daytona USA* Uniforms 107-108 (3). **PHANTA2** gets you *Phantasy*.

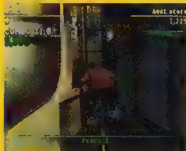


*Star Online* Uniforms 114-115, **Hair 77**, and **Face 53** (4). Ooh! Lala! Get into the *Space Channel 5* spirit with **ARAKATA**; it gets you Uniforms 111-113, **Hair 76**, and **Face 52** (5, 6). Tap in *JUSTICE* for *Virtua Cop* bikini's 105-106, and cop shades with **Sunglasses 94**. Yes, model number 7 has her hair in a mullet. **OHTORII** (Uniforms 116-117) gets you SEGA logos up the wazoo (8). Literally.

## CODEX

**Mat Hoffman's BMX 2**  
Something a tad "special!"

Try these Specials when your meter turns green:  
**Mat Hoffman**  
Back Flip Tail Whip: R, D, Cir  
Barhop: R, L, Cir  
Peacock (below): L, U, Cir



**Kevin Robinson**  
Pendulum: L, R, Squ  
Rocket 1-Foot C-bar: R, L, Cir  
No-hand Backflip: D, R, Squ  
**Mike Escamilla**  
Back Flip No-foot: L, R, Cir  
Body Varial: R, U, Squ  
Decade Air: R, L, Squ  
**Nate Wessel**  
Back Flip No-foot: R, L, Cir  
Pendulum: L, R, Squ  
S-man Doub Seat: D, L, Squ  
**Rick Thorne**  
No-hand Backflip: D, R, Squ  
1-Hand Swing Leg: R, L, Cir  
Rocket 1-foot C-bar: R, L, Cir



**Ruben Alcantara**  
Decade Air: L, R, Cir  
Double Tailwhip: D, L, Cir  
S-man 1-Hand: R, L, Squ  
**Joe Kowalski**  
Half Barspin Whip: U, L, Cir  
1-Hand C-bar: R, L, Squ  
S-man 1-H (above): L, R, Cir

## GREATEST HITS REVISITED

### Midnight Club

Get yourself *Smuggler's Run*, save your game, then start up *Midnight Club*. You can now *Drive & Kick Buggy*.





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# Mr. November

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3	4	5			8	9
10	11	12			15	16
17	18	19		21	22	23
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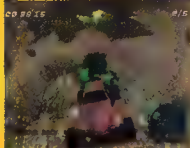


## TRICKS

### CODEX

#### Smuggler's Run

Countermeasure cavalcade!



Need a little more firepower? Then tap this code with the game paused:  
**Unlimited Countermeasures**  
 X, X, X, Y, Y, Z  
**Hover Sled**  
 "Great" rank (all missions)  
**North America Zone**  
 Locate eight Secret Tokens

### EGM's "Bossometer"

What's this boss all about?

- HC** Massive Constitution
- LR** Long-Range Coward
- HH** Hand-to-Hand Mad
- B** Berserker
- ME** Magically Empowered
- FT** Flying/Teleporting Ability
- LI** Ludicrously Imposing
- ES** Eye-Poppingly Speedy
- SE** Surprisingly Feeble
- TW** Throbbing "Weak Spot"
- JH** Joypad Hammering
- UW** You're Unfairly Weakened
- RD** Doesn't Really Die
- MB** Minion of Big Boss
- CA** Complete Anticlimax
- S** Bling-Bling After Battle

# You Ain't the Boss of Me!

Disgusting alien xenomorphs and cute turnip warthogs? All right here!

In the most bizarre boss box-out ever, here's an unholy union with all the information on destroying two disgusting fiends from *Run Like Hell*, plus how to interact with a duo of cute denizens of *Animal Crossing*.

## Run Like Hell

Boss: Purple Cutter

Boss Abilities: **HC** **LR** **HH** **B** **ME** **JH**

**Plan of Assault:** This alien turkey launches in with a fast charge, which should be dodged. Blast this purple monstrosity (1) until it hops onto a surrounding ledge. Once he's up there, Scout Eggs drop from the ceiling. Ignore the Cutter and destroy the Scouts. After this, move to avoid the Cutter's poison attack (2), and don't give into the gas. Unload at the freak as it belches poison—the best time to attack. Once poisonless, it charges, returns to the ledge, and the battle repeats until one of you keels over. Make sure to heal your

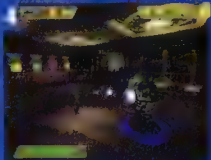


## Run Like Hell

Boss: Green Cutter

Boss Abilities: **HC** **LR** **HH** **B** **ME** **JH**

**Plan of Assault:** This green freak of nature starts off by viciously charging. Swiftly dodge out of the way in the large arena. You'll waste ammo slamming lead into the beast when it spins (1), so confuse it instead by running around the room's perimeter and down the center. When it stops spinning, unload with everything you've got. Dodge its swipe twice, backing up and blasting (2), and then position yourself between the poison pillars it releases. Now, the Scouts, and defeat it after it finally jumps, but beware its spins.



## Animal Crossing

Boss: Crazy Redd

Boss Abilities: **LI** **UW** **S** **S** **S** **S** **S**

**Plan of Assault:** Crazy like a fox? Yeah, and as expensive as a mink coat, Redd will send a flyer to your mailbox when he's in town, and his position can be verified with Copper the Police Dog. He's open between 6 PM and 6 PM the next day, and randomly shows up (1). This cunning fox houses unique items, which complete collections or can be donated to the town Museum. Problem is, this fox knows it (2), and charges outrageous prices! So save up the Bells, and get fleeced with as much dignity as you can muster.

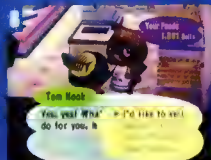
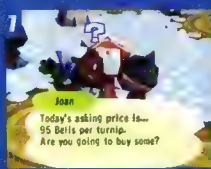


## Animal Crossing

Boss: Saw Jan

Boss Abilities: **LI** **S** **S** **S** **S** **S**

**Plan of Assault:** Jan's part of the Infamous Turnip Canel and she's in your village between 6 AM and midday, every Sunday. Get your white root veggies from her at around 70 to 100 Bells each (1). Don't buy more than 200 at a single day, and remember they go rotten and worthless within a week! How any day, except Sunday, go to Tom Nook's and sell those Turnips (2) for an incredible (usually 300) profit! Don't keep doing this though, or you'll flood the market and the price will drop. Now muscle into your pal's towns.







# Super Monkey Ball 2

## Mastering the master stages: Time for some delicate monkey touching!

You'll need 12,000 Play Points to unlock all the Party Games. But that's a breeze compared to accessing the Master Stages: Beat all 60 Expert Challenges without continuing to access them!



**Stage 1: Centrifugal (1)** Use the bowl's spin, and angle to the right, off the starting platform. As you fall, roll back, and stay on the wall with the bananas. You won't see the exit so use the map.

**Stage 2: Swing Bridges (2)** Each of the three bridges spin in half-circles. Wait for the close end to pass, and dart to the next platform. The last bridge spins faster so your timing must be precise.



**Stage 3: Cylinders (3)** Drop onto the cylinders near the middle, to the side opposite to its turn. Moving to adjacent cylinders is tricky; turn early, and don't slow down. Ignore the bananas.

**Stage 4: Passage (4)** Wait for the side bars to shoot through the maze, cross square one to another, repeat, after the bars switch. Roll into the pit from the first "I" or "r" square for a different goal.



**Stage 5: Notch (5)** Wait for the pipe to flip, roll onto it slowly to the left, and ride the pipe around, staying on top. Wait behind the second notch on the flip side, and when high up, drop off the end.

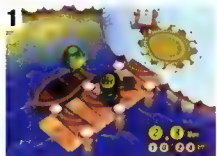
**Stage 6: Intermittent (6)** Jump from platform to platform, using the bump to get enough air. Control your speed as the platforms get smaller. Ignore the bananas, and stay in the center.



# Animal Crossing

## 120,000+ bells in 15 minutes? The fastest way to make money!

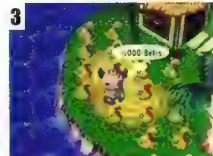
You know about catching tree Bees and selling them for 4,500 each. You've caught exotic fish in the rainy evenings. And Joan's turnips (see left) are bringing in the moolah. But where's the big money?



The "big money" is accessed via the crazy Kapp'n and his "turn a sane gamer to murder" sea shanties (1). To increase your windfall, have lucky items in your house, and make sure you've planted an orchard. Now shake fruit off trees until your inventory is stuffed. Head on down to the jetty (with your GBA plugged in), and set sail



for the Tropical Island! Once there, drop all of the fruit in the center of the island, adding to the massive pile by picking all the island's trees, too! Then set sail back to town, weeping softly at the sea shanty you can't get out of your head, and begin to pick more fruit again! Now your friend (or you) should pick up your GBA, and get the



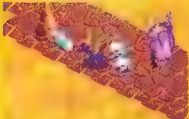
islander to eat all the fruit (2). At the third meal, he deposits a bag of cash. Nab that and place it away from the islander, so he doesn't pick it up. Once all the fruit is eaten, order the islander back into the hut, get Kapp'n to row you back, deposit more fruit, then collect all the cash bags (3). Repeat this until the fruit's out, and the cash is in!

## CODEX

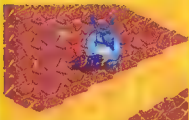
### Spyro

Crush this first boss!

Fracas before Celestial Fields Once you have enough fireflies, chat with Bianca. You must now face Crush. Move to the middle of the stage,



which'll cause Crush to belch ice balls at you (above). Leap to the outer ring, and dodge the balls. Chow down on the single sheep if you're hit.



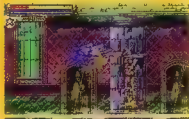
Pick up an ice ball, throw it back at him. As he's frozen, head-butt him (above), and repeat this twice. Cleo then grants you exit (below).



**Castlevania: H of D**  
Classic Konami-code action!

### Hard Mode

When naming yourself, enter the word "HARDGAME." Play as Maxim Beat the game and start over with the name "MAXIM."



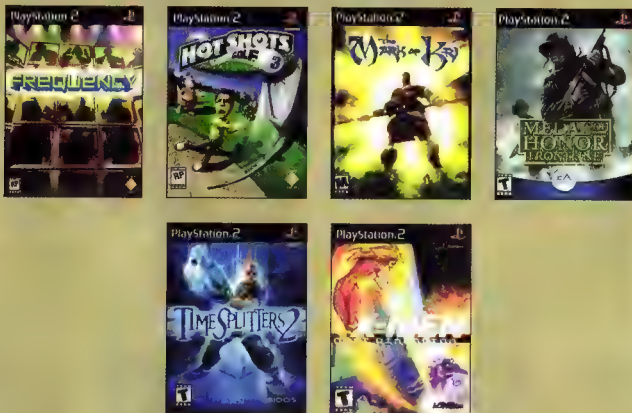
### Disable all Spellbooks

When naming yourself, enter the word "NO MAGIC."

### Boss Rush Mode

Finish the game to fight a plethora of bosses in a row. Simon Belmont (plus sprite!) Tap in the "Konami code" (U, U, D, D, L, R, L, R, B, A) at the Konami logo and start Boss Rush Mode to play as Simon!

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# Super Mario Sunshine

EXCLUSIVE  
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## Crazy Shines, loony jumps, and madcap kipping positions!

### Mario Madness!

#### Full Game Secrets Overview

The next 19 screenshots take you through the weird and wonderful journey detailing what happens when you've got a GameCube masterpiece and too much time on your hands. You all know about the "Aloha Mode," the sunglasses, porno shirt, and sunglasses salesman (see last issue). This time, we've got Easter Eggs, madcap Triple Jumps, and some crazy tricks!



**Screens 1 and 2:** Ready to weep? This is your prize for completing the game. Yep, you've got 24 Postcards to look at while the end credits roll, and then one of



these two pictures. Screen 1 occurs when you beat the game with less than 120 Shines. When all Shines are collected, screen 2 appears instead. Noooo!



**Screen 3:** Console yourself by creating a giant sunflower field in front of Stage 4. Episode 4 is the place for this. Get all the turtles to land in the same place!



**Screens 4-6:** Want to know where the highest vertical jump in all of video gaming is? Well we're telling you anyway! Enter Noki Bay, Episode 1, and collect



both the Springboards. One is near the cannon, the other is near the Red Nozzle Box. Now bounce up to the high cliff where the Gold Bird is, place one tram-



poline at the base of the palm tree, the other on top, then (with the Rocket Nozzle) bounce and Rocket off the top springboard, and freefall for 15 crazy seconds!



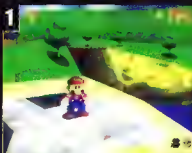
**Screen 7:** Have you ever just stopped and checked out the sky? Aside from being blue, there's a moving jet plane leaving a vapor trail. Far out!

FROM THE VAULT: MARIO SPECIAL!

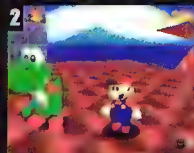
## Super Mario 64: Crazy glitches & secrets!

Dust off your Nintendo 64, or buy one and this game for less than the price of *Super Mario Sunshine*. Now start playing, and then start gibbering at how difficult it is! No time? Then here's some crazy stuff that rocked Mario's old world!

OLD-SCHOOL TRICKERY!



**Screens 1-2, Yoshi:** Nab all 120 Stars, and the cannon in the castle courtyard opens.



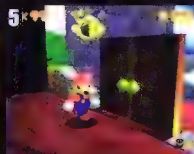
**Aim at the castle roof, and meet Yoshi:** He sparkles your jump and crams in 100 Lives!



**Screen 3, On the Piste:** Move Mario near a snow tree, and wait until he has a tinkle!



**Screens 4-6, Castle Glitch:** At the roof, take the Cap Wings, and shoot Mario at this ledge.



**Run up the ledge and castle spire, then dive in, and you'll fall through the spire, into a**

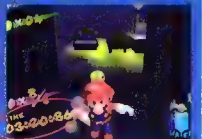


**massive game glitch!** You're stuck here, until you walk through an interior wall!

## TRICKY



There's gotta be some way to lengthen your Delfino Island fun, and we've got one way: Beat our challenge scores! Check both screens, and look for the completion



There's an odd secret level in this. Screen one is from Episode 6; scrub that beach and beat our time! Screen two is from Episode 8; Grab those coins before we die! The more time, the better!





**Screens 8-9:** Gold Coins, eh? Aren't they great? Well, there are two places where you can completely max out your coinage. The first is Pinna Park,



Episode 2 where you can keep collecting cash from the Gold Bullet Bills. The second area is the Airport at the end of the game. Keep coming back here



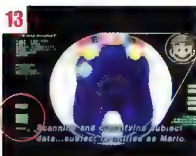
for max coinage!  
**Screen 10:** Hold on! Didn't we see this guy in Ricco Harbor? Yep, the submarine pilot chills out at the Gelato Beach bar



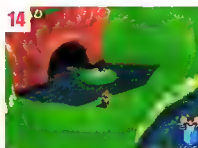
when you complete both stages!  
**Screens 11-12:** Triple Jumping. It's the maneuver of choice for the professional plumber. You



can triple jump from the Delfino Plaza cannon to the palm tree leading to the "grassy" mini-game. Even better, in Pinna Park Episode 5,



triple jump through the right ferris wheel supports, and avoid the tedious climb!  
**Screen 13:** It's a cool little touch, so when F.L.U.D.D. scans



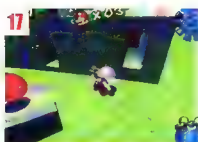
you at the beginning of the game, check the bottom left of your screen for past Mario exploits! Wahoo!  
**Screens 14-16:** Are you wondering where the last three Shines are located? Yes,



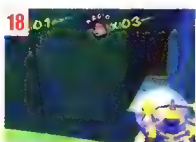
there's a rather annoying secret that's unlocked as soon as Shadow Mario raises the Delfino Plaza's water table. Here's what you have to do: First, enter the Corona Mountain stage for Shine 18



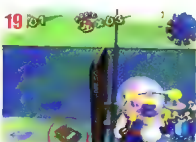
(from the Boss Battle), then pier and head toward the pier near the Blue Coin Raccoon Hut. To the left is a boat captain who's appeared. He can take you back to the Airport, where a Blue Coin, 100



Gold Coins, and eight Red Coins can be found!  
**Screens 17-19:** This last Easter Egg even has us confused! It looks like something was going to be added into the game, but was removed at the



last minute. Or is it an E-Card Reader prize? We don't know. All we suggest you do is enter Nokki Bay Episode 3, and drop down to the very bottom of the bottle. Use the screens to guide you to a fastened iron



door, down a narrow corridor. Use your camera to "glitch" around, and you'll spot an old book on the other side of the door! It can't be opened, and we've got the broken joypads to prove it!



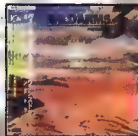
Kingdom Hearts OST (2CD)  
TOCT24768



Final Fantasy X OST (4CD)  
S5CX10054



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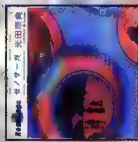
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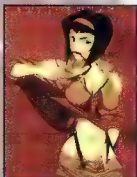
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# Commandos 2

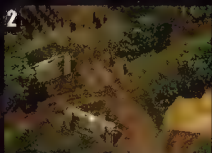
## Three tough secret missions, taken apart with military precision



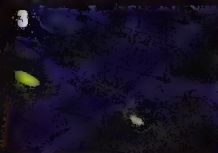
Isometric World War II warfare can be tough, so we've gathered three of the hardest bonus tasks (awarded after photo pieces have been collected) and offered cunning advice in the combat zone!



**Mission 6:** This uses the Tutorial landscape. To win, deactivate all five mines (1). Tie the soldiers near the Sapper, shoot the one at the guard hut and the one running from the car. Use the Thief to grab the items inside the metal crate (far bunker) and knock the grate in the bunker for grenades. Use Sapper to Grenade remaining guards, cut the fence to deactivate mines, then escape in a car.



**Mission 9:** Organize a small band of allied soldiers to tag a large group of Germans. Use the Sapper's ammunition to tag a large group of Germans. The Sapper (2); he should set all the mines. You need a defensible position with long fields of fire. Make sure defenders aren't grouped or they'll be hit by Kraut Grenadiers. Sneak the Sapper to the enemy wall and throw a Grenade in before running back.



**Mission 10:** Find the Grenades, and raise hell (3)! Knock the guard out, drag him behind bushes, throw cigarettes to the flashlight guard, attack and stash him. Swing your Thief to the far telephone wire, switch the lights off in the bunker, take the items from the grate, and with the Sapper, throw a Grenade into the bunker, and tag the guards that check it. Mop up the remaining guards.

# Armored Core 3

## Extra special options, all levels, and op-intensify throbbing power!



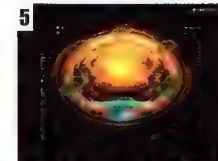
The Raven's touched down after game completion, and you're wanting to know just what goodies are unlocked? Well, there's a groovy amount of mech carnage still to get, even after the Campaign.



**New Options:** Completed the single-player campaign? Nice one, but remember to save your game after the credits roll, as it brings up loads of new options (1). **Free Mission:** One option allows you to play any mission in any order (2). This can improve your ranking (the only exception is the special task after Disable Radar Equipment).



**Free Consort Select:** The next option is the ability to choose any wingman you want for any mission (3). **Arena Restoration:** As you progress through the game, ACs you encounter challenge you in Arena mode (4). **Extra Arena:** Load a saved game in which you've received the top arena rank. This rockin' good time is a 2-on-2 fracas (5)!



**Hidden Viewpoint:** With a save file from either two previous AC games, press Start during any mission and tap L1, R2, X, Squ, Down. You get a new third-person view. Press Start to revert back. **Op-Intensify:** The optional part you win when you complete the game enhances your AC, as you defeat certain Arena enemies, and big foes (6).



## CODEX

### Prisoner of War

Humongous Huns? All here!



All levels unlocked  
geriangs (all case sensitive)  
All daily events unlocked  
all times

First-person viewpoint  
Boston (or "A" in Camp 5)  
Top-down viewpoint  
Foxy (or "A" rank in Camp 4)  
Unlimited "Goodies"  
Dino (or "A" rank in Camp 4)  
Giant Germans (above)  
Muffin (or "A" in Camp 2)  
Guard Awareness  
Quincy (or "A" in Camp 1)  
Impervious to Bullets  
Fatty (or "A" rank in Camp 3)

### Dead to Rights

15 levels. 1 wifebeater vest

At the "New Game" option, press U, D, U, D, L, R, R, Y, X, X, and again You'll be able to access all the levels. Including the homage to Bruce Willis (below).



### Enclave

Golem action and God mode

Pause, and tap X, Y, X, Y, X, Y, X, Y, X, X, Y, Y (easier than it looks) to choose God Mode and Complete Mission options. For a playable Earth Golem (below), complete the Light Campaign. For Fetica, complete the Dark Campaign.



# You Ain't the Boss of Me!

A bonus creature feature starring Fox's foes and Turok's tormentors!

A prehistoric frag-fest ranging from Dinosaur Planet of *Star Fox* to the moon future urban arenas of *Turok: Evolution*. One game requires a little legwork to defeat its bosses. The other is cookie-cutter blasting.

## Turok: Evolution

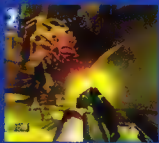
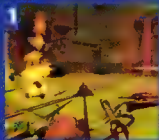
Boss: Steracosaurus



Boss

Abilities:

**Plan of Assault:** A triumph of unsuited combat techniques, once you enter the massive arena, tear apart the enemy infantry that arrives (4). They're also hiding behind blockades, and dropping in from above. Need more ammo? Then open the Raptor cages. When the enemies are down, the Steracosaurus stomps into view. Although he's got a few attacks, the "annoying as all hell" one is a charge. Back up, and if you're hit, skim the perimeter for health. Now fire at it (2) until it falls, then fire again. Repeat twice more.



## Turok: Evolution

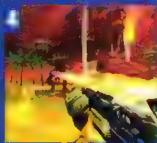
Boss: General Bruckner



Boss

Abilities:

**Plan of Assault:** Yep, this presents a strong sense of déjà vu to Steracosaurus hunters: Slam the enemy Spawners that drop out of the sky, and keep your distance from them. Bruckner appears riding a T-Rex (3). You need to watch his mini-gun spray attack, and that damn flamethrower. React by keeping your distance, and circling around Bruckner. Watch those T-Rex feet, too! Now stay at range, blasting the lizard (4), putting trees between you to slow him down, and you'll eventually topple the evil Bruckner. Combat variation? Nah.



## Star Fox Adventures

Boss: Galdon



Boss

Abilities:

**Plan of Assault:** Equip Tricky's Flame Command to thaw Galdon out, and check the crates and plants for items to help out during battle. Dodge the green fireballs, wait for him to roar, and run under him. Thwack that backside (1), not yours, (2) until he swallows you. In his stomach are damaging gems, the Spellstone, and an unpleasant polyp-like growth. Lash out at it, until the Spellstone dislodges and the fight is over (6). If you're slow, you're spat out, and must aim for his heart; Fire Blaster shots home in. Repeat the whacking until he's dead.



## Star Fox Adventures

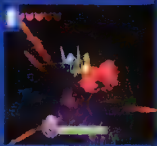
Boss: Andross



Boss

Abilities:

**Plan of Assault:** When you see that crazy ape head, fire at its eyes and forehead diamond, spinning to avoid the ray attack. When it forms hands, stay at the extreme left or right, aiming at the diamond, and moving to the other when it hides the diamond. He then belches silver rings and meteors. Fire at these and roll quickly away from his mouth sick (7). More eye action to follow; dodge the missiles this time. Andross turns; take out the hands. Falco appears! Smart bomb the swallowing head, and take out the brain (8)!



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## FINAL WORD

# The Future of First-Person Shooters

**Mark:** With all the consoles 'Net-bound and first-person shooters (FPS) becoming the console genre du jour, I think gamers are about to get a lot more choosy. If a modern FPS isn't going to include online multiplayer (*TimeSplitters 2*, I'm looking in your direction), it better sure as hell have something new and cool going on in single-player. Dinosaurs like *Turok: Evolution* (ha!) just won't cut it anymore against games that push the boundaries of the genre, like *SOCOM*, *Metroid Prime*, *Deus Ex*, *Halo* and, from what it sounds like, *Halo 2*.



**Deus Ex**

**Che:** I think Mark's touched on something here. A lot of console FPS games are focused on the multiplayer experience. That's excellent, but let's not forget that a great FPS always needs a compelling and intelligent single-player narrative. On the one hand, you've got *Deus Ex*, with its deep storyline but total lack of multiplayer; and on the other, you've got sweet fragfests like *Halo* and *SOCOM*, where the single-player campaign feels more like an extended tutorial, prepping your skills for the ultimate challenge: humans. I'm hoping that *Halo 2* will bridge this gap.

**Shoe:** I don't even care if multiplayer games include online play. I'm fine playing split-screen—nothing like chillin' with your friends and fragging them at the same time. I just want their multiplayer designs to be as innovative as the *Perfect Darks* or *Halos* of the world. Both of these games offered so much in terms of features, modes and customization, you could party with them for weeks.

**Mark:** Split-screen? Bah! I can't stand being limited to one tiny corner anymore, especially since you're

usually sharing a screen with the same people you're fighting against. That's no fun against people (like Shane "Heat Seeking" Bettenhausen over there) who will cheat any way they can to win (and, in Shane's case, still lose).

**Milk:** I hate split-screen, too. I'm sorry, but I'm a screen-hog, and nothing kills my buzz faster than squinting, trying to see where I'm going while navigating some dark corridor. I need the Full Monty—that's for sure. Actually, I'm looking forward to *Metroid Prime* more than anything. Six months ago I wouldn't have said that, but it's looking really good now. Plus, it's single-player only, so split-screens won't haunt my Chozo time.

**Greg:** I gotta go with Mark and Milk. Split-screen's acceptable only when there's no other option. I hate that other people are able to see what I'm doing...even if that usually amounts to committing suicide over and over and over again.

**Milk:** You were never very good with the rocket jump, were you?

**Greg:** Just ask Shoe. I have more confirmed suicides than the rest of the staff combined.

**Shoe:** I don't care what any of you suckers say—you don't get that same playing-next-to-your-buddies thrill online. The only way to get the best of both worlds is to play networked (i.Link or LAN) games, but that sure as heck ain't convenient for most folks.

**Che:** That's just the way Shoe likes to play deathmatch games—by peeking at the other players' screens to see where they are. He also likes to camp.

**Shoe:** [Censored], Che.



**Crispin:** Well don't think players are gonna be any less cheap online. In fact, I'm kinda worried about cheat devices like the GameShark royally screwing up the 'Net-play experience. If a guy across the country mows me down in *SOCOM*, I want to know he got me fair and square. So it sounds like what we all really want is an FPS with an ultra-deep single-player story and a cheat-proof multiplayer mode we can play in our living room. And if anyone even thinks of peeking at our screen in multiplayer, we will kill them.



**Perfect Dark**

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NEXT MONTH

December 2002 (Issue #161)

On sale Nov. 5

# Grand Theft Auto Vice City

## Exclusive First Review

Finally. You've seen the screens and done your time in Liberty City, waiting for a chance to skip town for some fun in the sun. The time is nigh. Next month, EGM hits the beach with the exclusive first review of *GTA: Vice City*. Will the sequel stack-up to the brilliance of its predecessor? We get nitty-gritty with *Vice City* in our huge insider feature and strategy guide. We'll also be dreaming of sexy elves and crusty wizards with our *Two Towers* and *Harry Potter* coverage!

### Reviewed Next Month:

- **Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring** (PS2, Xbox)
- **Resident Evil 8** (GC)
- **Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets** (All Systems)
- **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4** (PS, GC, Xbox)
- **ATV Offroad Fury 2** (PS2)

### Previewed Next Month:

- **Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers** (PS2)
- **True Crime: Streets of L.A.** (PS2, GC, Xbox)
- **Minority Report** (PS2, GC, Xbox)

All editorial content is subject to change.

## OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

Nov. 2002

On sale Oct. 8

### Demo Disc

#### Playables

- **Wild Arms 3**
- **Sly Cooper**
- **Silent Scope 3**
- **DDR MAX Dance Dance Revolution**
- **Dual Hearts**
- **MX Superfly**
- **Red Faction II**
- **Hitman 2**

#### Videos

- **Ratchet and Clank**
- **Contra: Shattered Soldier**
- **Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness**

### GTA: VICE CITY

All the stuff the other magazines didn't tell you about! The deepest, dirtiest secrets of *GTA: Vice City* revealed just in time for its anticipated release on Oct 22. Read *OPM* or miss out!



GTA: Vice City



Contra: SS

## GAMENOW

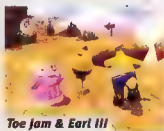
Nov. 2002

On sale Oct. 15

- **Sly Cooper**
- **Toe Jam and Earl III**
- **The Terminator**
- **Tekken 4**
- **Turok: Evolution**
- **Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers**



Sly Cooper



Toe Jam & Earl III

### STAR FOX ADVENTURES

*Star Fox* is finally flying into orbit, and the crew at *GameNOW* will be on hand to record this historic moment. Check out our review tips on how to get through *Dinosaur Planet*. Elsewhere in the mag, we check out *Turok*, *James Bond* and *Toe Jam & Earl*. Will their new adventures be worth your time? Get the scoop in *GameNOW* this November!



Turok: Evolution

## COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

Nov. 2002

On sale Oct. 1

### BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE

*James Bond* comes to the PC for the first time ever, and *CGW* brings you the exclusive in-depth story on the levels, the cars, the gadgets, the weapons, and, of course, the babes that will make this game a first-person-shooter classic. Plus, what it's like to be "Jaws" in multiplayer. We also check out one of the hottest RTS games ever: *C&C Generals*!



The Thing

#### Reviews

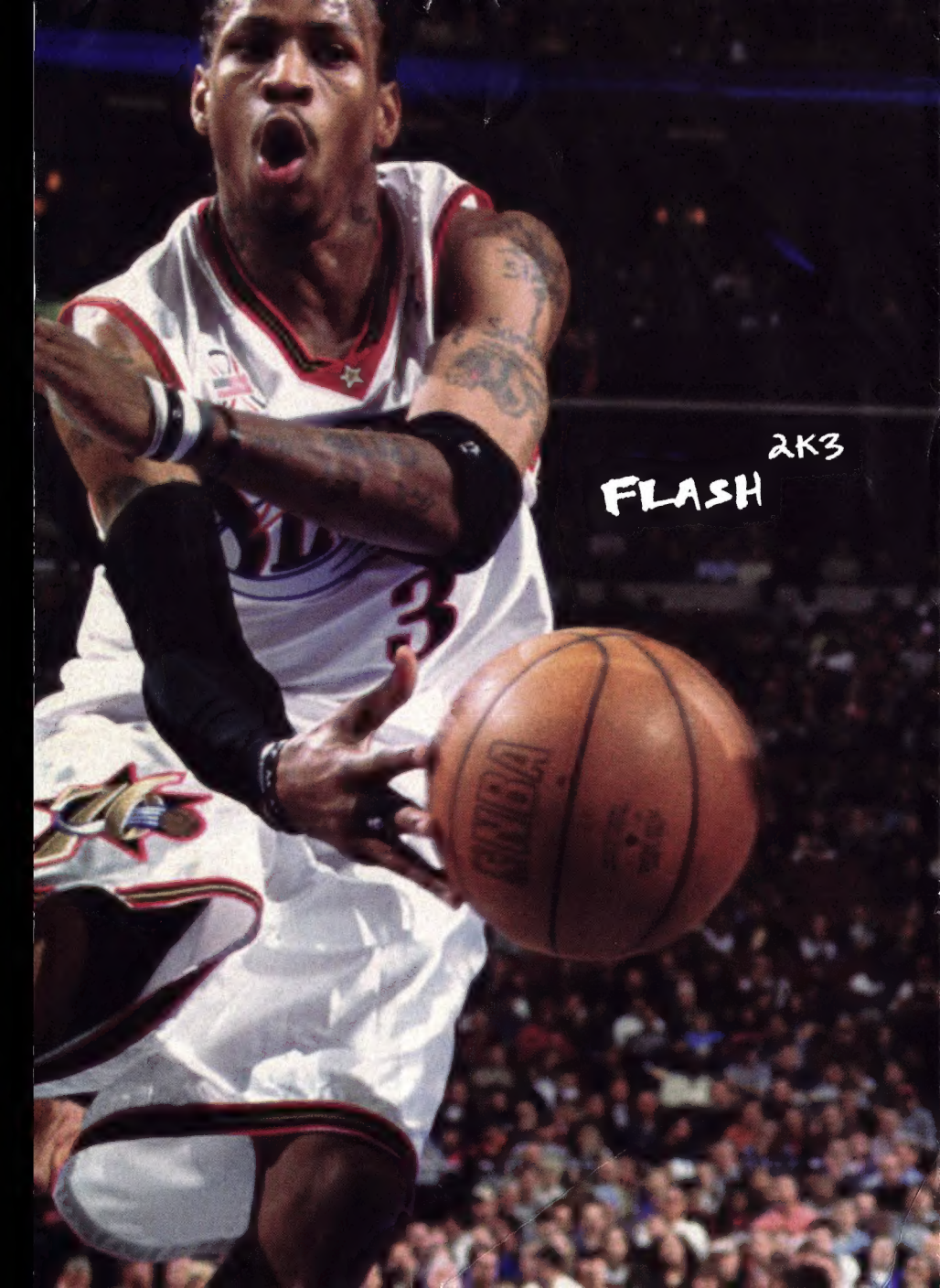
- **Madden 2003**
- **Moonbase Commander**
- **The Thing**
- **Airborne Assault**
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#### Previews

- **No One Lives Forever 2**
- **Rollercoaster Tycoon 2**
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Bond 007: Nightfire



FLASH 2K3

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PlayStation 2



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