

BE A GAME
RESISTANCE!
SEE PG. 52

LORD OF THE RINGS: WHAT'S NEXT FOR MIDDLE-EARTH

The #1 Videogame Mag for PS2 • Xbox • GameCube • PS One • GBA...

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTH

Special
SUPER-SIZED
Issue!

55 BEST GAMES

FOR EVERYONE ON YOUR
GOOD (AND BAD) LIST

THE EGM HOLIDAY BUYER'S GUIDE STARTS ON PAGE 148

GTA: VICE CITY

SECRETS REVEALED!
FREE STRATEGY POSTER

9 NAUGHTIEST GAMES OF ALL TIME

(Keep Your Children Away!)

REVIEWED:

- Metroid Prime
- Street Fighter X Tekken
- Mortal Kombat: DA

PREVIEWED:

- Castle Wolfenstein
- War of the Monsters
- True Crime
- The Getaway

DISPLAY UNTIL JANUARY 7

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA Issue 162

January 2003 \$4.99/\$6.50 Canada

01 >



14024 06960 8

EGM.GAMERS.COM

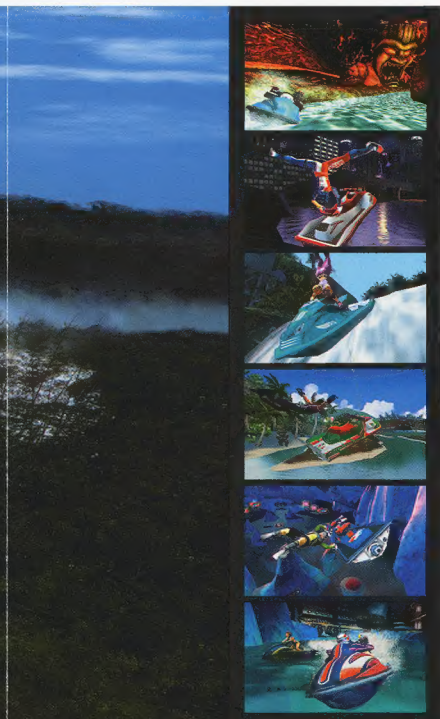




JET X_{2.0}



JET X₂O



With more than 30 arcade-style tricks in Amazon waterfalls and 7 other insane environments, you'll have to add a few more feats to your list of things to do before you die. Jet X₂O has arrived.



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

PlayStation 2



Comic Mischief
Suggestive Themes



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS™



R.Y.N.O.

IT STANDS FOR RIP YOU A NEW ONE.
GET IT?



DEVASTATOR

COME ON, IT'S CALLED THE DEVASTATOR.
WHAT DO YOU THINK IT DOES?

ONE GIANT STEP BACK



TRESPASSER

YOU NO LONGER HAVE TO PAY
ATTENTION TO THOSE
"NO TRESPASSING" SIGNS.



BLASTER

IT'S RAINING BULLETS AND SOMEONE
FORGOT HIS UMBRELLA.



TESLA CLAW

LET'S JUST SAY THE RESULTS
ARE NOT PRETTY.



MORPH-O-RAY

DID SOMEBODY
ORDER CHICKEN?



TAUNTER

"YOUR MOMMA IS SOOOO FAT,
NO, REALLY, SHE IS."
SEE? TAUNTING IS FUN.

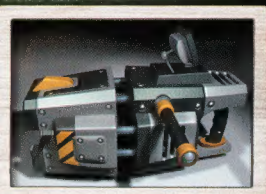


WALLOPER

KNOCK YOUR ENEMIES
INTO NEXT WEEK.

INSOMNIAC
GAMES

www.playstation.com Ratchet & Clank is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Created and developed by Insomniac Games. © 2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live In Your World, Play In Ours." is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.



VISIBOMB

REMOTE CONTROLLED MISSILE WITH A MOUNTED CAMERA THAT GUIDES IT STRAIGHT INTO YOUR ENEMY—SAY CHEESE.



PYROCITOR

WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR ENEMIES MEDIUM OR WELL-DONE?



HYDRO DISPLACER

FISH OUT OF WATER!
FISH OUT OF WATER!

WARDS FOR MANKIND

RIP THE GALAXY A NEW ONE.
YOU DECIDE HOW.



PlayStation 2



Mild Violence



Middle-earth stands on the brink of destruction.
You will unite. Or you will fall.



Blood
Violence

© 2002 New Line Productions, Inc. The Lord of the Rings and the characters, names, and places therein, TM The Saul Zaentz Company d/b/a Tolkien Enterprises under license to New Line Productions, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Electronic Arts, EA GAMES, the EA GAMES logo and "Challenge Everything" are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries, and are used under license from Microsoft. TM, © Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. EA GAMES™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand.



NEW LINE CINEMA

America Online Keyword
Lord of the Rings

www.lordoftherings.net

NOW AVAILABLE ON



Fight as Aragorn, Legolas or Gimli, each with their own unique combat styles and upgradable abilities.



Battle Sauron's evil minions, including the Cave Troll, Ringwraiths, and Uruk-Hai, from the Mines of Moria to the Walls of Helm's Deep.



Throughout your epic journey, enjoy exclusive actor interviews, scenes from the movie *The Two Towers*, and the original score from *The Fellowship of the Ring*.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS

THE TWO TOWERS

GAME BOY ADVANCE



PlayStation 2

JOIN THE ADVENTURE AT lordoftherings.ca.com



Challenge Everything™



Meet the world's most notorious drivers on the streets of LA, Paris, and Tokyo.



Choose from the latest performance enhanced vehicles and compete to make a name for yourself.



There are no rules - drive anywhere in the city. Find the fastest route to win.



Violence

"PlayStation" and the "PS" family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Angel Studios and the Angel Studios logo are trademarks of Angel Studios. Rockstar Games and the Rockstar Games logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Copyright 2002. All rights reserved.

PlayStation 2



湾岸 MIDNIGHT CLUB II

The Future Of Illegal Street Racing

LOS ANGELES / PARIS / TOKYO



The Midnight Club is now open to motorbikes. Take advantage of the speed and control - but watch out, a wrong move will send you flying.



The cops know you are out there - don't get caught.



Use tricks to gain an edge or just to show off. Style is almost as important as winning.



JANUARY 2003

WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/MIDNIGHTCLUB2





*From the Shadows of history,
a Legend reawakens.*



TRAVIS RICE
WWW.DCSHOECOUSA.COM



ZAPALAC PHOTO

WATER-RESISTANT
H2ZERO™ SHOES
Skate-shoe aesthetics meet
snowboot technology
to make the water-resistant
H2ZERO™ line.



**SNOWBOARD
OUTERWEAR**

DC outerwear is defined
by clean lines and
technical features.

**SNOWBOARD
BOOTS**

DC makes the most comfortable,
snowboard boots, featuring: gel pads,
heated insoles and inflatable linings.

ARE YOU READY FOR SNOW SEASON?



LOOK FOR THE DC WINTER COLLECTION
AT YOUR LOCAL SKATEBOARD
AND SNOWBOARD SHOP.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE DC WINTER COLLECTION
AND SHOP WITH US: WWW.DCSHOECOUSA.COM/DCWINTER



EDITORIAL

No Point At All

Boy, do I hate writing the editorial. No one really reads this drivel, right? Hello? Anyway, I gotta do it just because it's expected of a magazine (and of me). Great.

So I'm sitting here, wondering what the heck should be writing about.

How about the gaming violence controversy, in light of recent events surrounding the D.C.-area sniper? Nah. The subject of videogame violence is sooo last decade. Who who really believes *Mortal Kombat* or *Doom* is the cause of society's ills isn't reading our magazine anyway, so I'd be preaching to the choir. (Oh, and if some of you are reading the magazine, I just got this to say to you: Gimme a break.) Besides, one of our readers (a parent, no less) puts some good perspective on this subject in our letters section this month.

How about something clichéd like how this is such a great time to be a gamer? Barf. If you need me to tell you that, then you're probably dead on the inside, and therefore, drooling on, rather than

By Dan "Shoe" Hsu



reading, this magazine.

But you know, this talk about violence and happy days as a gamer...it's got me thinking. Videogames make me damn happy (no, this isn't the thesis of the editorial—I'm still rambling). In their virtual world, I like shooting things. I like stealing cars. I like skateboarding where I'm not supposed to be skateboarding. I like playing the hero, mobster, robot, or monster. Hey, I'm a grown-up, but I still like playing make-believe—so what? Slowly, because of sickos like the D.C. sniper or the Columbine kids, an atmosphere that makes us feel guilty for enjoying our *Grand Theft Autos*, *Unreals*, and *BMX XXX's* is creeping across America. Well, screw that. I'm gonna go have fun with my videogames no matter what people tell me. I'm not going to go out and harm anyone, so I'll keep on playing my *Mature-rated* games (note: I'm over 18); watching my *American Pies*; and eating greasy, half-pound burgers.

—Shoe

Editor-in-Chief
 Dan "Shoe" Hsu • shoe@ziffdavis.com
 Executive Editor
 Mark MacDonald • mark_macdonald@ziffdavis.com
 Managing Editor
 Jennifer Tsao • jennifer_tsao@ziffdavis.com
 Features Editor
 Crispin Boyer • crispin_boyer@ziffdavis.com
 News Editor
 Chris Johnston • chris_johnston@ziffdavis.com
 Previews Editor
 Greg Sewart • greg_sewart@ziffdavis.com
 Reviews Editor
 Shane Bettenhausen • shane_bettenhausen@ziffdavis.com
 Web Content Editor
 James Mielke • james_mielke@ziffdavis.com
 Tricks Editor
 David Hodgson • tricks@ziffdavis.com

Art Director
 Monique Martinez • monique_martinez@ziffdavis.com
 Associate Art Director
 Stefan Belavy • stefan_belavy@ziffdavis.com

Copy Chief
 Kristen Salvatore • kristen_salvatore@ziffdavis.com
 Copy Editors
 Greg Ford • greg_ford@ziffdavis.com
 Tom "Bone" Edwards • tom_edwards@ziffdavis.com

Contributors
 Chris Baker, Rob Bernstein, Damon Brown, John Brandon, Che Chou, Jonathan Dudak, Ethan Einhorn, Darren Gladstone, Sam Kennedy, Jeanne Kim, David Kushner, Dan Leahy, Demian Lim, Miguel Looez, Greg Rybacki, Mike Rees, Gerry Serrano, Rey Serrano, Scott Steinberg, Gary Steinman, Phil Theobald, Todd Zuniga

International Editor
 John Riccardo
 Japanese Correspondent
 Yutaka Onbuchi

Manufacturing Director
 Carlos Lopez
 Senior Production Manager
 Anne Marie Miguel

Art Production Manager
 Michele Kellogg-Manousos
 Assistant Production Manager
 Teresa Newson

Vice President/Game Group
 Dale Strang
 Editorial Director
 John Davison
 Creative Director
 Simon Cox
 Business Director
 Cathy Bendoff
 Senior Newstand Sales Manager
 Don Galen

Advertising Inquiries Contact:
 Game Group
 101 2nd Street, 8th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105
 Telephone: 415-547-8783

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE NUMBER:
 800-779-4374 (US & Canada)
 WEBSITE: <http://service.egmgame.com>
 PLEASE SEND ALL SUBSCRIPTION QUESTIONS TO:
 P.O. Box 65724, Boulder, CO 80522-5724
DO NOT CONTACT THE EDITORS RE: SUB. PROBLEMS

Group Publisher
 Lee Umacke
 Lee Umacke • lee_umacke@ziffdavis.com
 Group Associate Publisher
 Stan Taigen
 Stan Taigen • stan_taigen@ziffdavis.com

NORTHWEST
 Regional Sales Manager
 Marc Yamaguchi
 Marc Yamaguchi • marc_yamaguchi@ziffdavis.com

ACCENT EXECUTIVE
 Meighan O'Rourke
 Meighan O'Rourke • meighan_ourourke@ziffdavis.com

BAY AREA District Sales Representative
 Mary Gray
 Mary Gray • mary_gray@ziffdavis.com

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
 Mary Letson
 Mary Letson • mary_letson@ziffdavis.com

MIDWEST/EAST Regional Sales Manager
 Marc Callison
 Marc Callison • marc_callison@ziffdavis.com

REGIONAL SALES
 Ian Sinclair
 Ian Sinclair • ian_sinclair@ziffdavis.com

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
 Emily Olman
 Emily Olman • emily_olman@ziffdavis.com

SOUTHWEST Regional Sales Manager
 Karen Landon
 Karen Landon • karen_landon@ziffdavis.com

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
 Linda Philippi
 Linda Philippi • linda_philippi@ziffdavis.com

EAST COAST ONLINE SALES
 Jonathan Nagy • 212-503-4685
 West Coast Online Sales
 Ian Rotcop • 415-547-8564

SENIOR MARKETING MANAGER & CREATIVE DIRECTOR
 Rey Ledda
 Rey Ledda • rey_ledda@ziffdavis.com
 Marketing Coordinator
 Wayne Shu
 Wayne Shu • wayne_shu@ziffdavis.com

SENIOR ADVERTISING COORDINATOR
 Tipper Ubbelohde
 Tipper Ubbelohde • tipper_ubbelohde@ziffdavis.com
 Sales Assistants
 Kristeen Laut
 Kristeen Laut • kristeen_laut@ziffdavis.com
 CJ Amit
 CJ Amit • cj_amit@ziffdavis.com

Founder: Steve Harris

Contributors



Jonathan Dudak

Honestly, sometimes we get so busy we just don't have time to be funny. That's when we call Jon here. Comedy is his only escape from his day job at a paper-tube factory.



Darren Gladstone

When he's not busy shooting clouds in the latest version of *Die Hard: Vendetta*, Darren keeps busy with more entertaining activities, like stapling his tongue to his lower lip.



Jeanne Kim

Jeanne handles our interaction with the outside world, like the Man on the Street section in news, so we don't have to leave the confines of our warm bunker.



David Kushner

A writer for *Rolling Stone* and *Entertainment Weekly*, David dove into the world of game development this month to learn how to get the world's coolest job: game designer.



Dan Leahy

Although he still does a few sports reviews for us, Dan left a cushy job at *GameDuo* to train for the World Strongman Competition. He's up to 200 lbs on the keg toss.



Demian Lim

The schoolyard kids kept teasing us, "If you love Demian so much, why don't you marry him?" Because legally, we can't. But we can hire him, starting next issue. So hah!



Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

Joe Rybacki, Chris Baker, Gary Steinman, Todd Zuniga, Sam Kennedy, Saddam Hussein, and John Davison—which of these names isn't from our awesome sister mag? Hint: It's not Gary.



GameNow

When protesters appeared outside our offices chanting, "What do we want? TO PLAY GAMES! How do we want it? NOW!" our sister-in-law mag was created to shut them up.



Xbox Nation

Our stepister magazine has that great Greg Orlando taste, and Evan Shamoon works on even the toughest stains. Now, new and improved with 89 percent more Che Chou!



Scott Steinberg

Like Jeanne, Scott's pleasing appearance and bowel control make him indispensable when we need to talk to people, like for our Tony Hawk and War Games interviews this issue.



Damon Brown

Getting paid to make games is tricky, but anyone can craft home-brewed titles for the fun of it. All you have to do is read Damon's article in our Press Start section.



David Hodgson (Prima Games)

Dave does such a great job on the tricks section every month, if it weren't for the fact that he and the band Oasis come from the same country, we might even call him "friend."

Looking for love, in all the write places

Want to work for us. America's Number 1, most-read, most bad-ass videogame magazine? We're looking for experienced writers in the following areas: Reviews, Backlist, Weblog, Previews, Freeway, Online News, and Videogame controllers. All e-mail only. You'll be responsible for all the work. Interested? Send a resume and a preview/review writing samples to egm@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading: **Freelancer: Your Name**. And watch how quickly we delete your email if you actually use "Freelancer: Your Name" as the subject line.



PlayStation 2

Legiaia 2

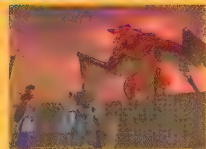
Duel Saga
レガリアデュエルサーガ



Call on elemental forces to battle enemies, heal injured friends, and destroy barriers.



Utilize special attack combos and combine items to create new and more powerful weapons.



Add hours of gameplay with multiple side-missions and mini-games.



TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Mild Violence

EIDOS

Legiaia 2 Duel Saga © 2000 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Published under license by Eidos Interactive Inc. ©2000 Eidos Inc. Eidos is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Fresh Games, Eidos, Eidos Interactive and the Eidos logo are trademarks of the Eidos group of companies. All Rights Reserved. "PlayStation" and "PS2" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

VISIT
WWW.PLAYFRESH.COM

SCREAMING BRAKES. GROANING ENGINES. GRINDING GEARS. AH, THE SOUNDS OF THE GREAT OUTDOORS

"MORE MODES THAN YOU CAN THROW A STICKSHIFT AT!"

— PSM, OCTOBER '02

Xbox™ video game system screen(s) shown



Tear up the terrain in a multitude of modes, including Follow the Leader, Elimination, Relay and Rallycross.



Jockey for position—and even collide—with ruthless competitors in chaotic packs of cars.



Tackle hazardous weather and real-time damage that accurately affect performance.

ACTIVISION

activision.com



Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for Rating Information



PlayStation 2



RACE OF CHAMPIONS and RACE OF CHAMPIONS EVENT TM © 2000 International Media Productions S.A.M. © International Motorsport Promotions S.A. Licensed by International Media Productions S.A.M. and Licensing Management International Ltd. RALLY FUSION, RACE OF CHAMPIONS GAME © 2002 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. under license. Activision is a registered trademark and Rally Fusion is a trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. License for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the NTSC U/C restriction only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.



GRAN CANARIA

GRAN CANARIA

ROD

Vive Canarias

CRIFONE

MICHELIN

W.E. engineering

RALLY FUSION





RED FACTION II

COMMONWEALTH COUP

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

FROM THE AIR

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



Aear Fighter #4

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.



MATURE



Blood and Gore
Violence

For more up-to-the-minute coverage of the conflict, go to www.redfaction2.com

© 2002 Eidos Inc. Red Faction™, Aear™, Technology, Weapon, Fly™ and their respective logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Eidos Inc., "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

D'ETAT

overthrow the Dictator Sopot.



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



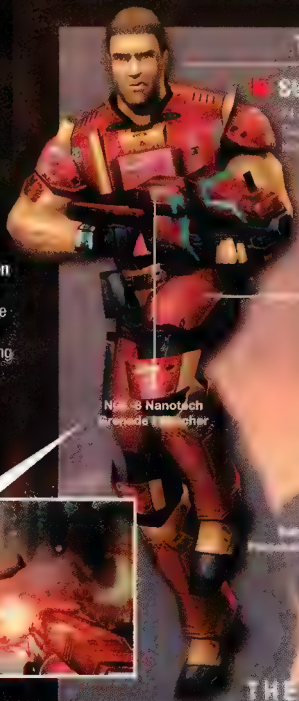
Nick - Nanotech Grenade Launcher

Nick - Nanotech Grenade Launcher

THE REBELS

■ SUPER SOLDIERS

FEARS, the best of the Faction Guard soldiers.



THE WEAPONRY

These are the most powerful weapons of the Faction.



■ GMRD-32 MAGNETIC RAIL DRIVER

The most powerful of the Faction's weapons.



■ N.I.C.H. - NANOTECH INDIVIDUAL COMBAT WEAPON

The most powerful of the Faction's weapons.



■ CAR-72 MILITARY ASSAULT RIFLE

The most powerful of the Faction's weapons.



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

EB GAMES™

electronics boutique

XBOX ONLY ON XBOX
BRUTE FORCE
#222846-4 • XBOX
MICROSOFT XBOX
\$49.99
RESERVE YOUR COPY TODAY!
BRUTE FORCE
"BANDEROS' ALONE... DEADLY TOGETHER."
RP
MICROSOFT
#222846-4



XBOX GAMING BUNDLE
#229538-4 • XBOX
MICROSOFT XBOX
\$199.99

XBOX ONLY ON XBOX
SEGA GT2002
#214866-6
E
SEGA

XBOX ONLY ON XBOX
JSRF
JET SET RADIO FUTURE
#214860-9
T
SONY

GET SEGA GT 2002 AND JET SET RADIO FUTURE FREE WHEN YOU PURCHASE XBOX CONSOLE!

Microsoft™ Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries.

***INCLUDED IN HARDWARE BOX**

TO PLACE YOUR ORDER NOW CALL 1.800.800.0032 OR VISIT WWW.EBGAMES.COM!

EB GAMES™

XBOX

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

PlayStation 2

• XBOX 360
• XBOX 360
• HIP GEAR™

\$99.99

• HIP SCREEN™
• NINTENDO GAMECUBE™
• HIP GEAR™

\$99.99

• HIP SCREEN™
• PLAYSTATION 2 ACCESSORY™
• HIP GEAR™

\$99.99

• PLAYER BATTERY PACK
• #2247528 • PLAYSTATION 2 ACCESSORY™
• HIP GEAR™

\$29.99

HIP gear

• POWER & LIGHT SCREEN™
• #2307221 • PLAYSTATION 2 ACCESSORY™
• HIP GEAR™

\$99.99

Prices valid in U.S. only. Typographical errors are not the responsibility of Electronics Boutique. Not all items may appear at our outlet locations. Prices may vary by location. At time of printing, all products are expected to be available. Some packaging, pricing, and special offers may differ in Canada. Prices and availability are subject to change. Manufacturers' delays are not the responsibility of Electronics Boutique. ©2002 Electronics Boutique.

CALL 1.800.800.5166 TO FIND A STORE NEAR YOU!

electronics boutique



Letters to the Editors

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Sniper Sniping

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



I raised my son (24 now) on my own as a single parent, and we basically grew up together playing and enjoying videogames. Often, games were motivational tools or rewards for school and work well done.

With the recent D.C.-area sniper terror, we all had to endure so-called "profilers" giving their interpretations of what and who they thought the sniper was. One particular profiler claimed the sniper was a "20-year-old, white, freaked-out videogame player" who used videogames as a training simulator. Right, and because I can play *Flight Simulator*, I can fly a Concorde, too. Anyway, as we all now know, his profiling skills left something to be desired.

Too often when some loony goes on a rampage, videogames get blamed. And as the politicians and media jump on the bandwagon, they conveniently forget to mention that games have a rating system designed to keep violent content out of young and impressionable hands.

We don't need more censoring. We need folks to be aware and be responsible for themselves. We would really like to see EGM severely chastise these nimrods and their narrow-

minded views. As I mentioned, my son and I have played videogames for all these years, and we don't have any of these "freaked-out" tendencies—never have, and would venture to guess, never will. Our view is that videogames are entertainment—and distractions from blockheads like "profilers" on the daily talk shows. So please, in video game terms... "Blast 'em!!!"

James Arnott
via e-mail

Well, you did a pretty good job of blasting 'em yourself, James. We could go on at length about this topic, but we'd be preaching to the choir. Stopping psychos from going psycho is pretty tough. But it sure seems like stricter gun-control laws would do the job better than banning Grand Theft Auto.

Isn't it funny, though, whenever the reporter-types want to beat this "story" further into the ground, they always pull out these ancient clips of Doom and Mortal Kombat? When was the last time you played Doom, anyway? If the pundits would just extract their heads from their respective...wait. We're going to sit down now. Anyway for a nice game of Mario Party?

Gran Turismo Gripping

OK! I'm fed up with it! *Gran Turismo* must end! Is it me or do you compare every type of racing/car game to *Gran Turismo 3*? If I made a monster truck game where I shoot out dishwashers at cows, you would say, "If you want a watered-down *Gran Turismo* with cows, then this is your game." Not every car game should be compared to *Gran Turismo 3*! The only reason it's on the top 10 sellers list every month is because of your hype!

Matt Beaumont

A watered-down Gran Turismo with cows? That sounds awesome!

Seriously, though, GT3 is the most realistic driving game there is, and it's a game almost everyone is familiar with. That's why it gets all the name-checks. Look at it this way—if we're reviewing a football game, don't you want to know how it stacks up against Madden?

A Sequel Too Far

It should be apparent by now to most *Kingdom Hearts* players that there's a super-special secret trailer at the end of the game when you seal all the worlds, get the 99 puppies, and beat the crap out of the Hades Cup. So is Squaresoft giving us something to

TID BITZ

Lint from the pocket of the pants of the mink of the crew at EGM....

Is it possible to make a *Metrod Prime* for the Game Boy Advance, but with lower resolution?

Bmxdrlr999

Maybe. But we sure couldn't do it. Next!

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA INC.

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer
Robert F. Callahan

Chief Operating Officer & Chief Financial Officer
Bart W. Catalane

Senior Executive Vice President
Tom McGrade
(Publishing Operations)

Executive Vice President
Stephen D. Moylan

Executive Vice President and Editorial Director
Michael J. Miller

Senior Vice President
Jasmine Alexander
(Technology and Sales Operations)

Senior Vice President (Circulation)
Charles Mast

Senior Vice President
Sloan Seymour
(Publishing Director, Baseline)

Senior Vice President (Game Group)
Dale Strang

Senior Vice President (Internet)
Jason Young

Vice President (Corporate Sales)
Ken Besch

Vice President (Publisher, PC Magazine)
Tim Casatelli

Vice President (Integrated Media)
Charles Lee

Vice President (Corporate Communications)
Almee D. Levine

Vice President (Editor-in-Chief, Internet)
Jim Luderbach

Vice President (Editor-in-Chief, eWEEK)
Eric Lundquist

Vice President (Editorial Development)
Bill Machrone

Vice President (Controller)
David Mullen

Vice President (Human Resources)
Beth Repeta

Vice President (General Counsel)
Carolyn Schurr Levin

Vice President (Editor-in-Chief, Baseline)
Tom Steiner-Threlkeld

Vice President (Internet Audience Development)
Stephen Sutton

Vice President
Stephen Velth
(Publisher, CIO Insight)

Senior Director, Manufacturing
Carlos Luo

Director, International
Christin Lawson

JUSTICE LEAGUE

INJUSTICE FOR ALL

MIDWAY

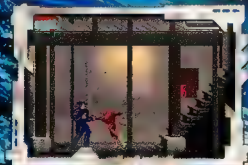
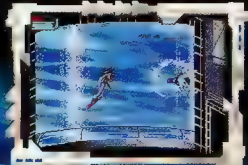
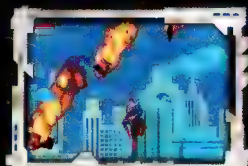


JUSTICE LEAGUE COMES TO THE GAME BOY ADVANCE

When global catastrophe strikes and the world is in peril, the call goes out for the Justice League, the greatest super heroes of all time. Fighting for truth, justice and freedom, Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, The Flash, Green Lantern, Hawkgirl and Martian Manhunter have banded together to fight for the common good against the *Injustice League* in an all-new action adventure title for the Game Boy Advance. Featuring 12 levels of non-stop action, gamers will overcome dangerous obstacles, an onslaught of villains and discover power-ups on the path to victory!

GAME PREVIEW AT:

WWW.JUSTICELEAGUE.MIDWAY.COM



EVERYONE

E
ESRB

Violence

Justice League: Injustice For All video game © 2002 DC Comics and Midway Home Entertainment Inc. MIDWAY and the MIDWAY LOGO are registered trademarks of Midway Amusement Games, LLC. All rights reserved. Distributed under license by Midway Home Entertainment, Inc. TM, ® and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo.

DC Bullet Logo, JUSTICE LEAGUE and all related characters and elements are trademarks of and © DC Comics.
WBIE LOGO, TM & © Warner Bros. (2002)

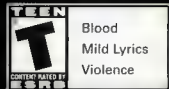
GAME BOY ADVANCE



GO STRAIGHT FROM THE SLOPES TO A SLAB IN THE MORGUE.

In *Evolution Snowboarding*, where every run is a fight to the finish. To stay alive, you've got to shred the course as well as the competition with a sick selection of glubs, chains, and swords that prove just how cold winter can be. Of course, it should be pretty warm in the Grematorium.

EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING™



PlayStation 2





LETTERS

that we shocked people with pointless sex and gore? I think a line needs to be drawn somewhere. XXX was a big eye-opener: Stop pushing the envelope, because it's clear off the table by now.

Ryan Latimer

Oh, Canada!

I bought *Madden 2003* and love it, even more now that I have the Network Adaptor. But why hasn't there been a CFL football game? I know that a lot of Americans hate the CFL, but we invented the sport, and most of our players are American anyway! I really don't understand it—EA Sports puts in the damn NFL Europe teams (who suck) but not the CFL!

Brad Vermette (one angry Canadian)
Chevy_el_camino@hotmail.com

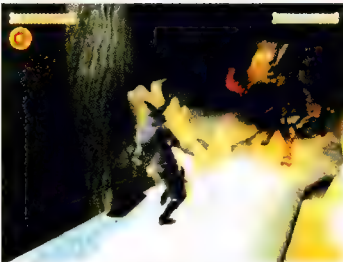
We were totally going to ridicule you, but then we got a second letter calling for a CFL mode in Madden. Whoa. Hey EA, maybe this is crazy enough to work?

Middle-Earth Maligned

What kind of idiotic a***** do you have editing your magazine? On page 287 of the December issue, there is a horrible error. You write, "When the Balrog is stunned, use Clamdring...." Clamdring?! In *The Hobbit*, the sword's name is Glamdring. We are talking about a sword, not a shellfish.

Luke Jandreski

Good eye, Luke, but you're wrong. During the course of our exhaustive fact-checking process, we consulted Tolkien's heirs and they said "Glamdring" was actually a typo in *The Hobbit*. The correct spelling is, indeed, "Clamdring." Apparently, Tolkien was going for some sort of maritime feel.



Whether battling the Balrog or just puttering around the house, Gandalf is never far from his trusty blade, Clamdring. According to appendix XII of *The Silmarillion*, you can hold the hilt up to your ear and hear the ocean.

QUESTION of the Moment

Where do you think games will be 30 years from now?

Three words: virtual reality *Halo*.
DontSteponPeter@aol.com

PlayStation 9, XXXBox, GameTriangular-Prism, a *Final Fantasy VII* sequel (c'mon, a sequel to *FFX* and not *VII*), huge TVs with subwoofers as big as houses, and lickable TV screens.

Salamander Strike

I don't really think it matters because the Mayans said the world would end in December of 2012, and they have predicted every astronomical event and have only been off by a few seconds.

Mitch Hedberg

All games will be virtual reality—no controllers. You'll stand in a huge transporter in your room and you will actually be inside of the game. Now I realize that's kinda way out into the future, but in 30 years I really think games will be truly unbelievable. If it's not done by someone out there now then I will do it myself, so be prepared world—I am coming.
ZALE515@aol.com

Computers will have taken over the Earth, and they will be storing humans underground. They'll use us for entertainment purposes. Revenge!

RABIDMONKEYNO6@aol.com

On the moon. How's that for brief?
T777jubilee@aol.com

I think games will be too realistic in 30 years. So when we want to play a fighting game, we might as well just walk outside and beat the crap out of each other.
KINGTATER@aol.com

Just ask Billionaire Bill. By that time he would have bought out Nintendo and run Sony out of the videogame business! Once again, M\$ monopolizes another industry! Mwahahahaha!!!

Eddie Rivera

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

**Has *XXX* gone too far, or will
games get even more explicit?**

Send your brief, coherent responses to:
EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading:
Someone think of the children!

FULL SAIL

Real World Education

School of:
Game Design
Computer Animation
Digital Media
Film
Audio
Show Production

800.226.7625
www.fullsail.com

3300 University Boulevard
Winter Park, FL 32792

- Financial aid available to those who qualify.
- Job placement assistance.
- Accredited by ACCSCT.

6 WORLD TITLES, NEVER THE SAME WAVE TWICE.

"HANG TEN" IN HAWAII

PlayStation 2



WIN A TRIP TO SURF CAMP IN HAWAII!

Hit www.activision02.com/slater.html today to enter the "Hang Ten in Hawaii" sweepstakes for your chance to win the ultimate surf camp experience in Hawaii and other cool stuff. Register today.

Win a trip to surf camp in Hawaii. Open to legal residents of the 50 United States residing in Florida at least 13 years old. Void in Puerto Rico and where prohibited. Go to www.activision02.com/slater.html for official rules. Sony Computer Entertainment America takes no responsibility for this offer.

EVERYONE



Mild Lyrics
Mild Violence



PlayStation 2



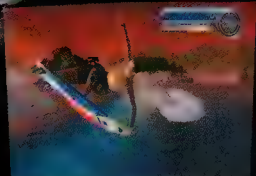
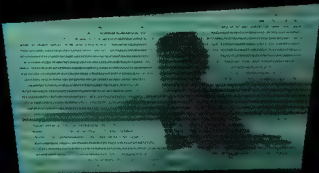
GAME BOY ADVANCE

WII

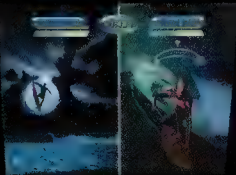


SURFING WILL NEVER BE THE SAME

Drop in with 6-time World Champion Kelly Slater or one of 8 other top pros in the ultimate surf experience, Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer®. Play a total of 30 levels at the most challenging surf breaks from around the globe. Pull off big air and fantasy tricks like **Greeno Flip**, **Knack Knack** and **Hangman** that let you take surfing to a whole new level. Surf in a constantly changing wave environment—you'll never see the same wave twice.



Visit 15 of the most popular surf spots from around the globe.



9 modes of play including 2-player PUSH™ mode.

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER



Surf on waves populated with other surfers.

© 2002 Activision, Inc. All rights reserved.

© 2002 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision and Pro Surfer are registered trademarks and Activision 02 and Sports Revolution are trademarks of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Kelly Slater is a trademark of Kelly Slater. PlayStation 2, Xbox and Game Boy Advance versions developed by Treyarch, Game Boy Advance version developed by HoGen Studios. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft, TM, ©, Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo Game Boy logo are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners.



ACTIVISION02.COM

A lush, dense jungle scene with a stream in the foreground. The trees are heavily covered in moss and vines, and the ground is covered in ferns and other vegetation. The lighting is dappled, suggesting sunlight filtering through the canopy.

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

SCODOM

UNIVERSAL



LETTERS

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

MISSING AN ISSUE? SUBSCRIPTION DELAYED?

Then don't bug us! We're all huddled together in an igloo on the North Pole making this mag every month. Talk to the subscription folks who get paid to deal with people like you!

Phone toll-free: (800) 779-1174

Website: <http://service.egm.com>

Snail mail: P.O. Box 55722; Boulder, CO 80322-5722

Game Boy Science

Did you know you can toggle color on and off while playing a Game Boy game on a Game Boy Color/Advance? At the opening screen where Game Boy pops up, just tap left or right on the D-pad.

Hayes Owens

Actually, you can hold any direction on the GBA's or GBC's D-pad as the logo pops up to choose between different color palettes. And if you press L or R for any original GB or GBC game, it will stretch the picture to fill the GBA's bigger screen. It's magic!

SPOILER ALERT

I love your magazine and all, but I have a slight problem. You should really be careful with what screenshots you show in your magazine. I was looking through issue #160 and came upon a screenshot of Fox fighting Andross. I was really disappointed in seeing it clear as day; I wanted to find out for myself who the final boss in *Star Fox Adventures* is. If you are going to show anything that would spoil something for us, please consider putting in bold letters "SPOILER ALERT" or taping the pages together or something. Thank you for your time.

Chevelle Abad
khyuffie@hotmail.com

Dude, it's the cheats section! The whole thing is spoilers.

Man With A Plan

I recently picked up a copy of *EGM* and noticed an article about *Final Fantasy I & II* being rereleased...in Japan only. That's just not right. So I've started a petition, located at: <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/finalfan/petition.html>. Sign it!

Jeff Daniel

Your petition must've worked. The games are arriving here in early 2003.

Primed for Metroid

I'm confused. *Metroid Fusion* takes place after *Super Metroid*? And *Metroid Prime* after the original *Metroid* and before *Metroid II* on Game Boy?

If this is true, it would be a mistake to buy both on the same day. I might as well get *Prime* first, then, when I'm done, get *Fusion* so I can go by the story line....

Ray

After a long discussion between our resident *Metroid* scholars (well, the two dorks who've been humming the music from *Prime* the most anyway), it seems you are correct. *Metroid* happens first



Mr. Chozo statue sez: "Those who don't know their *Metroid* history are doomed to repeat it. Be cool, stay in school! Here, have some missiles."

on Planet Zebes, then *Prime* on Tallon IV, then *Metroid II* on SR 388, then back to Zebes for *Super Metroid*, and, finally, the remote space station where *Fusion* takes place. As far as what order to play *Fusion* and *Prime* (since they were both released on the same day), we'd suggest doing it the other way around—you can get through *Fusion* fairly quickly on the GBA's tiny, dark screen, then dive into *Prime*'s deep, rich, chocolatey world. ☘

MORE BITZ

What happened to your letter art section?

Fred Askare

We had to cut it this month.

Will it be back next month?

Zz Badnusty

Hard to say.

Why'd you cut letter art? It was my favorite part of the mag!

Lance Vance

Hey man, me too! Some people around here don't care for it, though. Powerful people....

What about my *Dragon Ball Z* art?

Tatori Jr.

Try the fridge.

OOPS!

#1 Er...small problem with last month's Letter Art winner. Guy already won for that letter in issue 159. We swear, it's the last thing we're going to blame on that tumultuous move we just went through. Except for the thing below.

#2 That screen shot of *NBA Live* and *NBA 2K3* on pages 212 and 209 last issue? Same one. Did we mention that we had to move offices TWICE? No lie!

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. Moo-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 gnat-infested Congo. Should be a walk in the park. Next to Hell Week, that is.



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD
PLAY IN OURS™

PlayStation 2



Blood and
Violence

CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB



Unlimited adventures.

Thousands of players.

One phenomenon.

EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
FOR AGES 13-17

Blood
Suggestive Themes
Violence

Game experience may change during online play.



PlayStation 2

SOE
SONY ONLINE
ENTERTAINMENT



Now Available on
NINTENDO
GAMECUBE



MATURE
M
BLOOD AND GORE
VIOLENCE



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

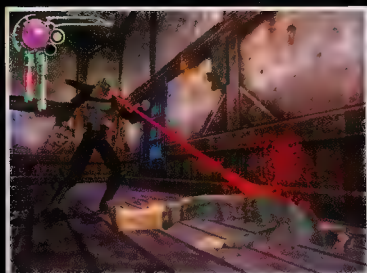




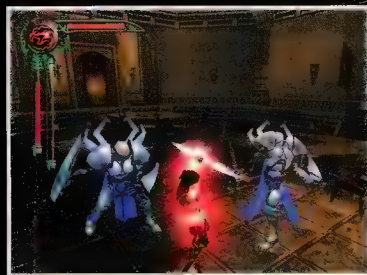
PlayStation.2



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 Gifts 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

WILLIAM BRYAN STEVENS

BLOOD OMEN 2

HE'S BACK

! This game is intended for mature audiences ONLY.

www.LegacyofKain.com

Developed by Crystal Dynamics. ©2004 Crystal Dynamics. Blood Omen 2, Crystal Dynamics and the Crystal Dynamics logo are registered trademarks of Crystal Dynamics. Crystal Dynamics is a wholly owned subsidiary of Eidos Interactive, Inc. Eidos, Eidos Interactive, Inc., Eidos Interactive logo and the Eidos Interactive logo are all registered trademarks of Eidos Interactive, Inc. ©2004 Eidos Interactive, Inc. The PlayStation 2 and the PS2 Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The Xbox logo and the Xbox logo are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. The Xbox logo is a registered trademark of the International Digital Software Association. All rights reserved.



Press Start

The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet



It used to be that wannabe Middle-earthlings on a quest for Middle-earth things had only three options: a) Read J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy for the hundred-and-eleventy-first time; b) Watch 1978's mythically bad animated adaptation; or c) Crank up Led Zeppelin and inhale the Hobbitine references.

But now that Director Peter Jackson's trilogy of *Lord of the Rings* flicks—the second of which, *The Two Towers*, is just assaulting theaters—has hoarded box-office treasure that'd make a Dwarf drool, Hobbit-heads have a bazillion new *Rings* things to keep them busy. And amidst the blitz of toys and T-shirts, they have—of course—videogames. "It's an amazing time to be a *Lord of the Rings* fan," says Michael Regina, head of TheOneRing.net (www.theonering.net), the Web's slickest site devoted to Tolkien's fantasyland. "While some people despise all the merchandise, games,

and so on, I think it has only helped bring the books more into the spotlight."

It's also enough stuff to frazzle the hair on Frodo's feet. So, we've rounded up and compared all the *Rings* games out now (see the chart on the next page), and made like that hottie Elf Galadriel by peering into the future of halfling-heavy titles.

The next game based on the movies
The Lord of the Rings: Return of the King
EA Games • December 2003 • PS2, GC, Xbox
 If you've already hacked and slashed your way through EA's recently released *Two Towers* game, you'll know what to expect from this follow-up, which is based on next year's final installment in New Line Cinema's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. The same internal team at EA is developing the game, and they're sticking with their fast-paced formula: Players take Middle-

earth's mightiest through the film's most spectacular action sequences, including a massive battle at Minas Tirith and the big finale showdown at Mount Doom's footsteps. The devel-



Hobbit-forming: Sam and Frodo will be playable in EA's *Return of the King*, along with the three warriors you control in EA's current *Towers* title.



XBOX, GAMECUBE GRAB EA'S RING

The fast-paced, movie-based Orc slashing of EA's recent *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* is no longer reserved exclusively for PlayStation 2 owners. In December, EA is releasing exact ports of the game for GameCube and Xbox.

opers say they're tweaking the gameplay by giving characters the ability to jump and climb, thus adding more multilevel areas to the environments. EA is also shooting for a simultaneous release of *King* on all three systems (right when the third movie opens in December 2003), so PS2 owners won't get a head start this time around.

What's it got that the other games don't? Once again, EA and New Line Cinema have clasped gauntlets to forge a game that's 100-percent faithful to the flick. The movie's actors will record dialog, giving this *Rings* title higher production values than the competition.

The next game based on the books

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers Universal • Fall 2003 • PS2, Xbox

To put it delicately, Universal's *Fellowship of the Rings* game, out now for PS2 and Xbox, is not exactly a magical experience. It's more like something Gandalf could "conjure up" on the crapper. So, why would gamers want to gird their loins for this follow-up quest from Surreal Software, the same guys behind the blah PS2 version of *Fellowship*? Universal is stressing that this time around, Surreal isn't sticking porting an Xbox version, like they were with *Fellowship*. Instead, they're making this new

PS2 and Xbox action-adventure from scratch, focusing much of their moxie on the combat system. "In *Fellowship*, the enemies basically come up and maul you," says Surreal Designer Todd Clineschmidt. "Now, we're trying to make it so if you have four bad guys around you, you can attack them all at once. *Mark of Kri* is one game we're looking at for the combat system, although that's a bit more tactical than we want to go. We still want fast action."

Surreal also wants to bring that fast action to life on a super-duper scale. About a third of *Towers* is set at Helm's Deep, the colossal fortress where Saruman's swarming Orc army

War of the Rings

Scamper from your Hobbit hole and you'll find two major Middle-earth titles in stores today, but which is the *Rings* leader? We pit EA's game

against Universal's, and toss an oldie-but-god-awful Super NES *Ringer* into the fray just to make Tolkien turn in his grave.

	EA Games' <i>The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers</i> • PS2, GC, Xbox	Universal's <i>The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring</i> • PS2, Xbox	Interplay's <i>The Lord of the Rings: Volume One</i> • Super NES
Release season (out of 10)	8, 9, 10, 11	PS2: 7, 8, 9, 11 Xbox: 4, 5, 7, 8	11-1994: 5, 6, 8, 9 Adjusted for today: 1, 2, 3, 6, 7
Looks like:	The first and second <i>Lord of the Rings</i> flicks	The sweetest art ever air-brushed on the side of a van	16-bit graphics at their most spectacularly mediocre
The gameplay:	Word-swingin', arrow-tingles, button-poundin', hand-breakin' hack 'n' slash based on the first two movies	Sleazy stealth missions mixed with plodding book-based mini-quests and battles with brain-dead baddies	Written-RPG questing for genre or something. Hell, we dunno—it's been years since we played this game
Playable characters:	Aragorn, Gimli, and Legolas, each with his own moves	Gandalf, Frodo, and Aragorn, each with his own levels	All Fellowship dudes, moving in sync like l'il <i>Solid Gold</i> dancers
Typical activity:	Slashing an Orc in the face	Collecting a bunch of items	Wandering your party member off
Sample boss:	The towering Troll in Balin's Tomb	A narcoleptic Balrog (hint: attack him when he falls asleep)	A Balrog sprite Frodo could crush with one fuzzy little toe

And the game that rules 'em all:

EA's *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*





PRESS
START



STICK AN ORC IN IT

Artists created a Tolkien Enterprises-approved style tome for Universal's games. These sketches of an Uruk-Hai super Orc (far left) and hill Troll (left) will come alive in Universal's *Two Towers* game.

Elf quest: Universal's *Towers* game will feature many more playable characters—"Everyone and their mothers," says the developer—than *Fellowship*. The newly designed Legolas here is just one of them.



besieges Aragorn's holed-up forces. That battle has already been done—and done beautifully—in EA's *Two Towers* game, out now for PS2. But Clineschmidt figures that Surreal can go one better. "If you look at the Helm's Deep levels in EA's game," he says, "they basically have a movie in the background of guys running by and fighting each other. We want to do something a lot more interactive and realistic than that. We want to let players run anywhere they want in Helm's Deep and attack whomever they want." The trick, Clineschmidt says, is figuring out how to make the PS2 hardware pump an army of enemies onto the screen. "We're looking at games that do that well," he says, "like [PS2 riot title] *State of Emergency*."

Of course, Surreal's game will pack more than just hacking, clashing, and slashing. After all, half of Tolkien's *Two Towers* novel follows Sam and Frodo's sneaky flight to Mordor.

"What we've decided to do is interweave the book's two paths," Clineschmidt says, "so you might play a little bit of Helm's Deep, and then it will switch to Frodo and Sam's side of the story. You'll be doing sword combat one level, then sneaky puzzle stuff the next."

What's it got that the other games don't?

Since Universal has the Tolkien book license, its *Towers* will have all the little details—including a finale battle with Shelob, a sinister she-spider the size of a Ford Taurus—that'll likely be missing from the flick (Director Jackson has said he's saving that confrontation for the third film). "Our goal is to contain all the major events that happened in the second [book]," Clineschmidt says, "so it would be safe to assume that we have the whole thing with Sam battling Shelob."

The game based on *The Hobbit*

The Hobbit • Sierra • Fall 2003 • GC

If developer Inevitable Entertainment's take on *The Hobbit*—Tolkien's 1937 *Rings*-prequel that put Middle-earth on the fantasy map—looks candy-coated compared to the other games here, there's a reason for that. "We thought *The Hobbit* was a younger book," says Ken Embery, the game's executive producer, "so we thought our game should have a younger, stylized look."

But Embery says you don't have to be a halfling-size tyke to have fun in Hobbiton. "We're trying to make a game that has the exploration, puzzle-solving, and quests of *Zelda*," he explains, "but also has the action and combat you'd expect from a platformer." Players guide Bilbo, Tolkien's original Hobbit hero, on his adventure with Gandalf and a band of Dwarves as they trek across Middle-earth to confront the dragon Smaug. Along the way, Bilbo will nab the invisibility-granting One Ring from groveling Gollum; pick the pockets of a Troll trio; spelunk an Orc dungeon; sneak past forest Elves and other "big folk"; and just try to keep his furry feet dry. "It clearly says in *The Hobbit* that Bilbo doesn't swim," Embery says, "so there's a lot of platforming and puzzle solving for him to get past water."

It all adds up to an adventure with as much potential stuff to worry about as the three *Lord of the Rings* games combined. "Of the four primary books, *The Hobbit* [is] [most] packed end-to-end with adventure and inter-



Bilbo will be *The Hobbit*'s only playable character.

esting confrontations for Bilbo," Embery says. "I think it has everything you'd want as a guideline for the creation of a game."

What's it got that the other games don't?

The cursed magic ring that causes so much trouble in *The Lord of the Rings* books and movies is a lot less prickly in the *The Hobbit*, which is set 60 years before the evil Sauron awakens from his millennium-long dirt nap and starts hunting for his all-powerful knick-knack. "In *The Hobbit* book," Embery says, "the ring didn't have any negative effects on Bilbo. It didn't suck energy from him or cause any health damage. But the book did say the ring would hop off his finger at inopportune times." So, imagine this scenario: Bilbo has just slipped on his ring and is sneaking invisibly through an Orc dungeon when the damn thing pops off his finger. "You'll suddenly be naked to the world," Embery says, "and then you have to move quickly—and think fast." 🐉

—Crispin Boyer



Miracle blade: Early in *The Hobbit*, Bilbo will find Sting, the glowing, Orc-slaying short sword he later gives Frodo in *The Fellowship of the Ring*.



PRESS
START

Evil Returns to PlayStation 2

PlayStation 2 owners, start boarding up those windows and stockpiling ammo—the zombies are headed back to your system. The main *Resident Evil* sequels may be GameCube-exclusive, but that's not stopping Capcom from bringing two new *Evil* spinoffs to PS2 next year, one of which takes survival horror to a place it's never been before: online. So get those broadband adapters fired up—the T-Virus just found a new way to spread.



Non-player characters will react to you differently, depending on which persona you choose.



Resident Evil Survivor 4

Hot on the heels of *Dino Stalker*, Capcom's *Dino Crisis*-themed shooter, comes yet another RE-based installment in the *Survivor* light-gun game series (which doesn't actually support light guns in the U.S....go figure). *Survivor 4* is due out in Japan early next year, but Capcom hasn't made a decision on a U.S. release yet.

Three days after the T-Virus is stolen from Umbrella's Paris laboratory, a luxury liner filled

with VIPs from all over the world is suddenly sea-jacked (yeah, it's a word—trust us). Enter Bruce McGovern, cheesily named Umbrella operative and all-around curious guy. Learning that the boat actually belongs to Umbrella, Bruce decides to investigate who's behind the incident and what they've got against his company. That's where the intro story ends, but here's going to guess that soon after, he runs into a buttload of zombies.



These zombies want to feast on brains, but they're gonna get lead instead.



Resident Evil Online

Ever wondered what it would be like to roam the zombie-infested streets of Raccoon City in the midst of the total chaos we glimpsed in *RE2* and *RE3*? With *RE Online*, due sometime in 2003, you'll get your chance.

REO is a four-player network game (think *Phantasy Star Online*) with a simple goal: Get out of Raccoon City alive. You start by choosing your alter ego from a cast of eight people (characters include a police officer, a surgeon, a plumber, and a waitress), each with their own background story, individual traits, and abilities. The weapons and items you can use and the areas you can visit will vary depending on which character you choose to play, as will your starting point (all four players start alone). However, unlike most online games of this sort, you can't always chat freely with the other three players in your game. Much of the communication will take place via preset menu choices, where you choose from a list of different things to say. And since computer-controlled side characters communicate in the same manner, you won't always know if the person you're talking to is real or not. Trippy, eh?

REO will have about 18 scenarios, set in a motel, a subway, a hospital, and a lab, among others.



Gameplay appears similar to that of the offline *RE* games of the past. Among the more unique features: When any player triggers a cinema, all four participants see it regardless of where they are in the game.

So, what about the all-important price factor? According to Capcom, the monthly fee to play online in Japan will range between 500 and 1,000 yen (roughly \$4 to \$8, although there's been no word on U.S. pricing). The good news is that *REO* will support both broadband and narrowband play. 🎮



PRESS
START



IT'S A SUNNY WORLD AFTER ALL

And the mud continues to fly! If you were quick on the draw and kept your finger on the pulse of the Internet's gaming community, then you saw the *Flash* animation Microsoft posted on xbox.com (it's since been taken down) called *Double Super Sunny World*, which shows characters that bear a striking resemblance to Mario and friends getting scared by an Xbox robot. Hey, we'd be scared, too—the Xbox is heavy!

War Games

Gulf War hero takes a shot at today's hottest military sims

Lost. Afraid. Desperate for a tall glass of lager. All are thoughts that crossed former British Special Air Services (SAS) Sniper Team Commander Chris Ryan's mind while he was stranded behind enemy lines during the Gulf War. As the sole remaining member of mission Bravo Two Zero, which saw three comrades killed in action and four captured, Ryan undertook an eight-day sojourn across the desert in search of freedom. The resourceful recruit managed to escape Saddam's clutches...but he couldn't evade ours. Now that Ryan's a best-selling author and game consultant (on Codemasters' *Igiz* for PC), EGM couldn't resist putting the screws to him on the latest wartime wares. Here's what this real-life soldier has to say about the latest in military gaming.

Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon

(GC/PS2/Xbox, Ubi Soft)

"Now, this is good—nice graphics, quite realistic. The weapons are suitable and fit the scenario. The team-play component requires some getting used to; there's a lot to think



about before you start, but that's how it is in real life. Getting shot in specific [body] parts really slows you down, too. I like that—the realism, I mean, not the getting-shot bit."

Conflict: Desert Storm

(GC/PS2/Xbox, Gotham Games)

"You get to play as the SAS, so I'm biased. The game's got good level design. It's a nice mix of environments; it's pretty realistic, too. Reminds me of what it's like to kill a man. But



British SAS Sniper Team Commander Chris Ryan and his controller of choice for real-life combat.

the A.I. is stupid, and the controls are terrible—bad enough to cause flashbacks."

Prisoner of War

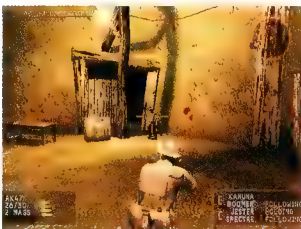
(Xbox, Codemasters)

"I got to Syria after traveling over 200 miles with no food or water. But if I had been captured, boy do I wish it would have been like this. It's a cool concept...reminds me of [the movie] *The Great Escape*. Talking to groups of characters is fun, and the stealthy gameplay is great. The being-fired-upon part I could do without. Been through enough of that."

SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs

(PS2, Sony CEA)

"Looks nice, but I wouldn't call it outstanding. Team controls are good, but the A.I. is dodgy. Enemies try to club you, not shoot you. Friends never pack the right weaponry [in the default



loadout] for the mission, either. But then, that always seems to be how it goes in real life, too. It's all right, but I wouldn't keep at it."

Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2

(PS2, 3DO)

"Er...kids might like it, but the game's ugly as sin. It stutters like hell and doesn't excite me at all. You can tell it's rubbish. Frankly, if I'd had the choice of playing with this or myself as a kid, I'd have ended up choosing the latter. It'd have been more enjoyable."

—Scott Steinberg

MAN ON THE STREET

Say Anything...

We love going to our local game store and freaking people out by asking them random questions about gaming. This month, we asked folks, "If you could say anything you wanted to Nintendo, Sony, or Microsoft, what would it be?" Here's what a few of them told us:



"Nintendo's doing a great job revitalizing their classic games, and I'm glad they're starting to go into mature games. Sony is losing ground to the Xbox. And Microsoft needs to get some more solid titles."

—Devon Johnson, Skokie, IL

"I think Nintendo needs to focus more on adult games. I'm looking forward to *Resident Evil Zero*, but other than that, all I have is *Mario Sunshine*, and I'm about to get rid of it." [laughs]



—Eric Porter, Chicago, IL

"Drop the prices, please! I'd love to get a PS2 or GameCube, but I can't afford it. By the time they drop the price to where I can afford it, it's too late and something else will already be out."

—Christopher Koch, Des Plaines, IL



"Nintendo—don't sell out. They sold Rare, and they shouldn't have done that. I just hope Nintendo doesn't end up merging with Microsoft, too. I'd rather see them make it on their own. They also need to focus on better titles. I'm looking forward to *Metroid Prime*. I hope they didn't screw that up."

—Akhtar Samani, Chicago, IL

"Microsoft should get out of the videogame industry. [laughs] They don't put out good games and the fact is, they don't really know what they're doing. [laughs] They're in over their heads."



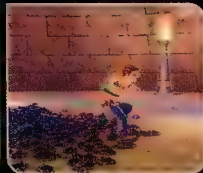
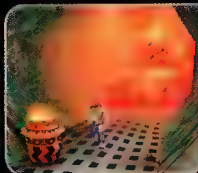
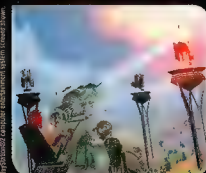
—Joe Friedenson, Des Plaines, IL



IT BEGINS AS A DREAM.
THEN IT GETS REAL.

HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING DELIVERS AN EPIC EXPERIENCE OF MULTIPLE GAMEPLAY STYLES SEAMLESSLY BLENDED TOGETHER IN A MASSIVE UNIVERSE.

YOU MUST FIGHT TO SAVE YOUR PEOPLE FROM AN ANCIENT EVIL. DRAW UPON EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER LEARNED TO FIND THE HERO WITHIN AND ANSWER THE CALL OF THE KING TO FREE YOUR PEOPLE FROM THE TYRANNY OF ENSLAVEMENT.



HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING'S FREEFORMER™ GAMEPLAY MOVES SEAMLESSLY BETWEEN RACING, SHOOTING, #LYING, GLIDING, SOARING AND DOG-FIGHTING GAMEPLAY IN A SEEMINGLY SOUNDLESS UNIVERSE!

Fall 2002

Coming 2003



Mild Violence



PlayStation 2



GAMEFRONT

HAVEN
CALL OF THE KING™

HAVEN.MIDWAY.COM



PRESS
START



HIDDEN TREASURE

Producer Scott Pease's favorite *THPS 4* secret: "There's this one place in the back of the Carnival where there's this roadie and this goat hanging out, and if you just watch the roadie's animations...."



Afterthoughts: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4

Whether you're an action-sports fan or not, you've probably wondered how *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* developer Neversoft continues to up the ante year after year. We did, too, so we sat down with Producer Scott Pease to get the inside story on the fourth game (and how they got Jenna Jameson on a skateboard).

EGM: It must be challenging to expand on such a winning formula year after year—how do you do it?

Scott Pease: We simply try to reinvent the game every year. We know that if we give players the same game year in and year out, they're gonna quit buying it, so we try to find a new angle, a new way to make the game fresh. We don't want to be the next *Tomb Raider*. [laughs] Plus, there's all the stuff from *Tony Hawk 3* that got cut near the end—we throw all of that in there, too.

EGM: Or, in this case, you lose something that's always been standard—the time limit. How did that come about?

SP: It was something we always wanted to do, but never had the time. Last year, we were so caught up in making the transition to PS2 that just getting the basics—physics, control, animation, rendering, networking, scripting—took so much time that we didn't really have the manpower to rework some of the core mechanics. On this version, with a lot of that stuff already worked out, we were in a better position to experiment and mix things up.

EGM: The new two-button tricks definitely do that, but now it seems like any bozo can get decent scores with some proper button mashing while grinding.

SP: That depends on what you call a decent



score. Every time you mash like that, you affect your grind balance, so if you really want to work a combo that spans across the whole level—and scores a million or more—button mashing isn't going to get it done. But for less-experienced players, it's a nice way to build small combos.

EGM: Which brings us to the question of difficulty. How do you decide whether something is too hard, too easy, or just right?

SP: It's a team thing. We also do a lot of focus testing...we have local kids in to test almost every week without fail. We watch them play and adjust the game accordingly. At first, we might see kids getting stuck or blowing through the game too easily, but week after week, we start to see the bumps smooth out and the game ramp up nicely.

EGM: The voice acting adds a lot of flavor to this version. Do you have real-life models upon which those characters are based?

SP: The pro voices you hear in the game are the pros in real life. They all got really into it and were constantly rewriting the script on the fly to make what they said true to skateboarding and their own personalities.

EGM: Jenna Jameson modeled a secret character. How'd you hook that up?

SP: It wasn't hard. Until after she came in. That's all I'm saying. [laughs]

EGM: You obviously get tips from the greatest skaters in the biz. What are the best stats to upgrade first?

SP: It totally depends on the kind of player you are. I like to skate fast and not worry about being switch, so I go for speed and switch first. We have one guy here who likes



Is It Real, or THPS?

Every virtual skater knows that realistic moves like the ollie and the tailgrab aren't the most fun—or the most lucrative in terms of points. But have the "special" moves in *Tony Hawk* lost all basis in reality?

"All the moves are worked out in conjunction with the pros themselves," Pease explains, "and they're really all over the map—from realistic to ridiculous. For example, one of Tony's tricks is the 360 Varial McFlwist. Near the end of the game, Tony told us he was working on the trick and he sent video of a few attempts. We put it in the game and about a week later, he landed it for the first time."

"On the flip side, Eric Koston's got a move [in the game] where he pulls out a pizza box and takes a bite from a slice. He actually did something similar in the skate video *Chomp on This*—he ollied an old couch lying in the street with a pizza box in his hand. So, it plays off of that."

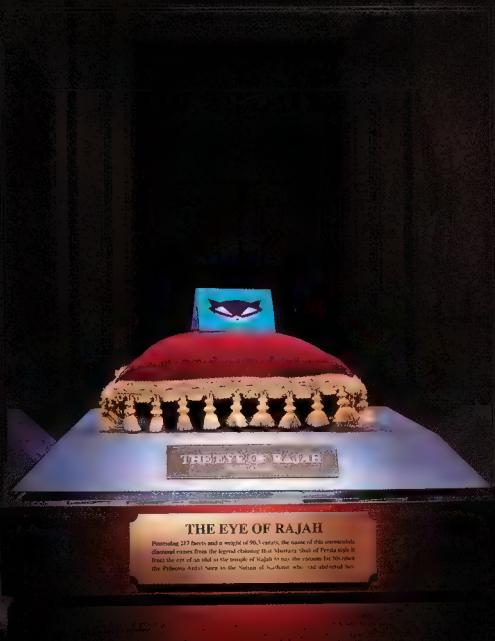
to score almost exclusively through lip tricks, so he ups that first.

EGM: One last question: You've done four *Tony Hawk* games in about five years. Is there really more room for improvement?

SP: Always. We get asked that same question every year. Every year, people doubt us. We feed off of that. So, just keep on doubting us. When the next one comes out, hopefully, you'll be surprised once again. 🍌

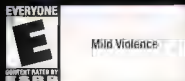
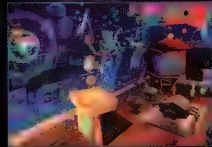
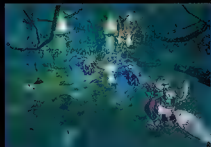


BE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.



One cunning devious thievius raccoonus.

Stealing is never condoned, unless you're Sly Cooper. A notorious raccoon thief on a mission to steal back his family's most prized possession. Using a repertoire of sneaky moves, you'll go from one impossible job to the next using cunning skills and mavericks to infiltrate the most secure places in the world. Spotlights, alarms, infrared lasers and tripwires are no match for this raccoon. Because when you're as good as he is, grabbing priceless jewels and emptying casinos is like taking candy from a baby.



PlayStation 2

www.playstation.com "PlayStation" and the PS Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Use of the word "PlayStation" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Sly Cooper and the Thievius Raccoonus is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Developed by Sucker Punch Productions LLC. ©2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.



PRESS
START

TARANTINO GOT GAME

These days, it's hard to find a blockbuster film that isn't immediately turned into a game. (Thank God *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood* wasn't a blockbuster.) So it's not exactly a surprise to hear that Quentin Tarantino's Uma Thurman/Liu Liu actioner *Kill Bill*, the tale of a scorned female assassin going after her boss and his cronies, is going digital. Universal's Black Label Games division will handle development of the game, which is set for release on undetermined platforms in early 2004, simultaneously with the DVD release of the film. The movie hits theaters in fall 2003.

CELEBRITY GAMER: TONY HAWK

Talking Pro Ukulele With Pro Skater Tony Hawk

Celebrities are people, too—just incredibly rich ones. You like games; they like games. Each issue, we'll talk to a different celebrity who plays games, is involved in their creation, or is lucky enough to be in one. This month's gaming celeb needs no introduction; the *Pro Skater* titles that bear his name have been some of the biggest hits of the modern-console generation. But can Tony Hawk really beat his own game?

EGM: Call it a hunch of ours—you suck at *Pro Skater*, right?

Tony Hawk: Nah, I rate somewhere between good and excellent. I can finish every goal without using cheats. The only problem is that by the time a game's finished and I can explore ways to get big points, we're already testing the next version.

EGM: Are you surprised by all the hype the series has received?

TH: Not at all. I knew it would be a great game from the start.

EGM: Ever think there'd be not one, not two, but four (and more later) *THPS*'s?



TH: I never considered it, even though it is a blast to play. I thought it would only reach a skating audience.

EGM: What games do you like to play in your free time? Be honest—how many hours have you logged into *Bob the Builder*?

TH: I'm a closet *Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer* fanatic. It's awesome.

EGM: The whole *Pro Surfer*, *Pro Snowboarder*, *Pro Ukulele Player* thing's a little played out, isn't it?

TH: Definitely not, considering the different terrain elements like water or snow, and the possibilities of each sport. The game genre for our sports has finally come of age.

EGM: Are you a PlayStation 2, Xbox, or GameCube man?

TH: PS2—I've grown used to the controller over the years, and I like that it doubles as a DVD player.

EGM: Surely when checking out skateboard sims, you don't...er...play with yourself? Wait—we meant *as yourself*...

TH: That depends. I usually finish the game



Believe it or not, Tony Hawk actually does play as himself when he's getting to know a new version of *Pro Skater*.

with my character so I'm prepared for the inevitable questioning [from the media] that I'll get once the game is released. I then move on to the other pros or secret characters.

EGM: Britney's got her *Dance Beat*, Mary-Kate and Ashley have the *Magical Mystery Mall*. In your mind, what would the worst possible Tony Hawk spin-off game be?

TH: A *Survivor*-style version of *THPS*. Britney would make a sweet character, though. 🍌

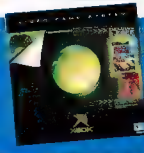
Return of the Pack-Ins

Mintendo and Microsoft have decided to make getting a system this holiday season easier by sweetening their deals.

In the Xbox corner, you have a special edition package that includes the Xbox system, the slimmer Type S controller (why isn't that a standard yet?), and two single games—*Sega GT 2002* and *Jet Set*

Radio. Fans can get it for \$199.99.

If the GameCube more your style, Nintendo's offering a package that includes the indigo-colored GameCube controller, the best-selling *Super Mario Sunshine* and a Memory Card for



\$49.95. OK, that's a little more than the basic system, but if you're buying a GC for the first time, you're going to want *Mario* and a memory card anyway (just trust us on the one), so that'll save you some green coming buying them separately.

ENTER THE EVERYBODY RUNS SWEEPSTAKES

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

Minority Report™ the movie took you on a futuristic thrill ride. Now *Minority Report™* the video game will do it again. As Precrime Officer John Anderson, you've been framed for a pre-murder, but there's an even graver conspiracy lurking in the shadows. Now you're on the run, fighting for your life through 40 levels of non-stop action. Take on enemies with hand-to-hand combat and futuristic weapons and devices straight from the movie as you try to prove your innocence, and stop the conspiracy before it's too late.

VISIT
MARGAMESWEEPS.COM
TO ENTER!

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO WIN THE ULTIMATE
MINORITY REPORT PRIZE PACKAGE:

GRAND PRIZE: (one (1) randomly drawn winner will receive)

- Official *Minority Report* movie prop—Spyderbot.
- Xbox™ video game system
- *Minority Report* video game for the Xbox™ video game system
- *Minority Report* movie DVD
- The Apex Theory's CD "Topsy-Turvy"

FIRST PRIZE: (twenty-five (25) randomly drawn winners will each receive)

- *Minority Report* video game for the Xbox™ video game system
- *Minority Report* movie DVD
- The Apex Theory's CD "Topsy-Turvy"

MINORITY REPORT



SWEEPSTAKES BEGINS NOVEMBER 2002

We purchase necessary to enter or win. Sweepstakes period 11/2/02 to 12/3/02. Open to legal United States residents, at least 13 years old at time of entry. Void where prohibited. Go to www.mrgamesweeps.com for full official rules. To enter go to www.mrgamesweeps.com and follow the directions online. Limit one entry per person per email address, during the duration of the promotion. Odds of winning depend on the total number of eligible entries received. Winners will be selected by random drawing on or about January 3, 2003. One (1) Grand Prize winner will receive one (1) Spyderbot — an Official Prop from the *Minority Report™* movie including certificate of authenticity, one (1) Xbox™ video game system, one (1) *Minority Report™* movie DVD, one (1) Topsy Turvy CD by The Apex Theory and one (1) *Minority Report™* Xbox™ video game. Approximate Retail Value (ARV) of Grand Prize is \$541. Twenty-five (25) First Place winners will each receive one (1) *Minority Report™* movie DVD, one (1) Topsy Turvy CD by The Apex Theory and one (1) *Minority Report™* Xbox™ video game. ARV is \$91 each. Total ARV of all prizes: \$2,816.

PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE™



VIOLENCE



DREAMWORKS



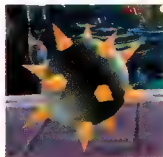
ACTIVISION

Minority Report™ & © 2002 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation and DreamWorks LLC. All rights reserved. For interactive and their associated logos are trademarks of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. under license. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the NTS-C UC designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. Powered by Nintendo. Nintendo Game Boy, Game Boy Advance, Nintendo GameCube and the Official Seal are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2002 Nintendo. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

activision.com



PRESS
START



INSOMNIAC RIPS THEMSELVES OFF

Before creating *Spyro the Dragon*, Insomniac made *Disruptor*, a sleeper-hit first-person shooter for the PS1. If you've played it, you might recognize a few things in *Ratchet*. "If you go into Quark's Headquarters, you'll see these patrolling spheres, and when they get close, spikes will come out," Insomniac's Ted Price explains. "Well, that was the first enemy that we ever created for *Disruptor*. And we ripped ourselves off and put it right back in. The little spiky-ball mines are actually the same thing as well. We love those."

Afterthoughts: Ratchet & Clank

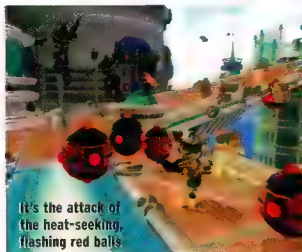
Gaming's had a lot of dynamic duos—Banjo and Kazooie, Mario and Yoshi, ToeJam and Earl, Jak and Daxter.... Add to that growing list the team of Ratchet and Clank, who star in Sony and Insomniac's latest PS2 platformer, *Ratchet & Clank* (what did you think it was going to be called?). We sat down with Insomniac President Ted Price, who tells us about weapons left in Gadgetron R&D, why there isn't more Clank and how the Morph-O-Ray got its name. Read on.

EGM: This game's mostly all about Ratchet, which leaves Clank seeming a bit neglected. Why isn't Clank used more?

Ted Price: We spent a lot of time debating Clank's gameplay sections, and we were pretty excited when we came up with the concept of Giant Clank—it makes people here very happy to just go in and bash stuff with him. But we wanted to keep him fairly different from Ratchet as far as his gameplay. We couldn't give Little Clank weapons; otherwise, it would just be the same thing all over again. So we had to create a more mentally challenging set of tasks for Little Clank. I suppose we had fewer ideas for those than we did straight-on action ideas for Ratchet. Therefore, Clank is—and I think rightly so—a secondary character when it comes to gameplay. But I think we made up for it because Clank is a pivotal and well-developed figure in the story.

EGM: What was the most difficult part of the game to get right?

TP: I'd have to say it was the weapons. We started out thinking that the game was going to be much more strategic than it ended up being. In other words, some weapons just wouldn't



It's the attack of the heat-seeking, flashing red balls.

work against certain enemies, and that became fairly frustrating [in early testing]. We took a step back and said, "Well, why don't we make it so that every weapon will be effective against enemies, but some weapons will be more so."

EGM: Which weapon is your favorite?

TP: It's a toss-up between the Morph-O-Ray and the Gold Devastator.

EGM: Speaking of the Morph-O-Ray, why is the gun that turns enemies into chickens not called the Cluck-Cluck Gun or something?

TP: Well, most of the weapons have fairly high-tech-sounding names, and we wanted to stay within that general area. We stuck with it because it's morphing enemies into something else. We also wanted to surprise players. Even though everyone will probably have heard about the Morph-O-Ray, for those two players who haven't, it should be a real surprise when they see that first enemy turning into a chicken.

EGM: Thanks to this article, even fewer people will be surprised. Sorry about that. Now, were there any weapons you designed but scrapped during development?

TP: We came up with maybe 60 different weapon ideas when we started and distilled those down to 16. A couple examples were the Shrink-O-Ray (shrinks enemies down into little enemies, so you can take care of them easily) and the Gigant-O-Ray (blows up enemies into a big balloon, so you could pop 'em). Another one we prototyped but dropped early on was called the Revolverator—a drill that you'd use kind of like the Walloper. You'd stick it into an enemy, and he would spin around on the tip and then fly off. It had such a narrow attack range and wasn't that much fun—so we cut it. 🍌

PICKING THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR THE JOB



Not sure which of the 16 weapons and five gadgets you should attach to Ratchet's eight-slot QuickSelect? Please allow Insomniac's Ted Price to suggest the perfect menu to satisfy your appetite for destruction:

Keep It Simple (And Cheap): the Bomb Glove, Pyrocitor and Blaster

"The Bomb Glove is a great weapon against any single enemy. You can do a lot of damage from a safe distance with it. The Pyrocitor is really good for swarming enemies. And the Blaster is good for picking off difficult enemies from a distance." If money's no object, Price suggests the pricier Tesla Claw, Visibomb and the Glove of Doom.

Setting the Perfect Trap: Mine Glove and Taunter

"Many players don't realize this, but you can create some fun setups by tossing a few mines in front of some enemies and then using the Taunter to either wake up the mines or taunt the enemies so they walk into them."

Most-Wanted Gadgets

"I usually reserve the other slots for some hand gadgets like the Swingshot, the Trespasser and the Hydro Displacer. Those are things that you use fairly frequently throughout the game, so it's nice to have them accessible."



LANs Fueled By

BAWLS. GUARANA

12/01/02

World Chess Network Online
worldchessnetwork.com

12/05/02

First Gamers LAN (MS)
firstgamers.net

12/06/02

Web2Zone (NY)
web2zone.com

12/07/02

Überfrag 1 - SLLAN (TX)
uberfrag.com

MemphisLAN (TN)
memphislan.com

Indiana University Gaming (IN)
indiana.edu/~gaming

WPALAN (PA)
wपालan.com

12/18/02

The CPL (TX)
thecpl.com

12/27/02

Seattle Nights (WA)
shill.org

SlayFest (WA)
slayfest.org

Evoked Gaming (PA)
santafrag.com

w0rdtothat (ME)
w0rdtothat.com

12/31/02

TFRAGGED (PA)
TFRAG.com

*Dates are subject to change

For more info on LANs and to find out how you can get a free 12-pack, go to bawls gaming.com

Now available at

COMPUSA



RATINGS SCANDAL

Wonder where the idea for the IPI ESRB rating on the front of your game boxes originated from? Well, the Sega CD is partly responsible. In 1993, Senator Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) led the Senate in an attempt to ban violent games. Along with *Mortal Kombat*, one of the most talked-about titles in that hearing was *Night Trap* on the Sega CD. The bad publicity led Sega to create a rating system for its own games, eventually leading to ratings on all videogames.

Sega CD Turns 10

EGM pays homage to the li'l add-on that couldn't

Ten years ago (in November 1992), Sega introduced the Sega CD in North America. The system was an add-on to Sega's popular Genesis console, putting games on CDs and adding a few neat-o scaling and rotation tricks that were already built into Nintendo's competing Super Nintendo. The Sega CD was supposed to give Sega the advantage in the 16-bit console war. But instead, success eluded the overpriced add-on, which catered only to hardcore Sega fans and received very little third-party publisher support. The Sega CD had a few excellent titles, but they were so rare that justifying the machine's \$299 price tag was tough for most gamers. With such lackluster sales and little support, the Sega CD didn't last too long in the U.S.—Sega stopped manufacturing the system in 1995. (Even so, with its three-year shelf life, the Sega CD lasted longer than the Dreamcast...) 🐱



Not even a second, cheaper model of Sega CD (above) could save it from obscurity.

The Sega CD's Four Must-Play Games



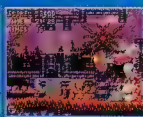
Snatcher (Konami)

A slick cyberpunk adventure in the vein of *Blade Runner*, developed by Hideo Kojima (the man behind *Metal Gear Solid*). Its main character even looks like Harrison Ford.



Lunar (Working Designs)

This incredible RPG (later remade for PS2 and GBA) chronicles the story of a young boy named Alex as his dreams of becoming a hero come true.



Sonic CD (Sega)

Sonic CD is considered by some to be the best *Sonic* ever. It played almost exactly like the original *Sonic* on the Genesis, but with new levels, kickin' 3D bonus stages, and time travel.

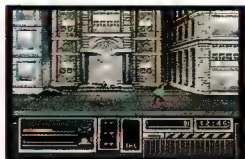


Night Trap (Sega)

Night Trap was a full-motion-video game, starring Dana Plato (*Diff'rent Strokes*), in which you protected a group of scantily-clad, slumber-partying girls from vampires called Augers.

A New Citizen...

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Sega CD, Good Deal Games (www.gooddealgames.com) and Older Games (www.oldergames.com) are releasing another disc for the long-dead system—*Citizen X* (available via their website for \$25). It's an old, unreleased title by defunct developer Digital Pictures (*Night Trap* and several other bad games). But *Citizen* isn't just some point-n-click full-motion-video game. It's actually a side-scrolling action title in which you chase down a terrorist bent on unleashing nerve gas.





GAVE PEACE A CHANCE.

All else has failed. The lines between good and evil have been drawn: There's you and there's everybody else. Your weapon is a 40-foot-tall walking death machine. Your mission is destruction. Tanks, helicopters, buildings, the planet itself. Welcome to war in the 31st century, where peace is one of those things you read about.

 **MECHASSAULT™**

For added destruction play online with Xbox Live. Engage others on a massive scale. Download new Mechs, new missions, even enemies. This is epic devastation taken to a whole new level and it's only available on Xbox Live.

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
THE ESRB

Violence
Blood

www.xbox.com

www.mechassault.com

 fasa studio

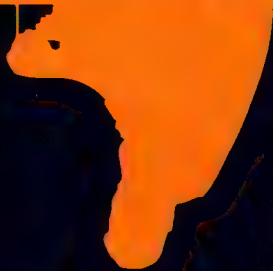
ONLY ON
XBOX

 XBOX™

XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED



***IT'S ABOUT AS CLOSE TO
"GOING PRO" AS A GAMER CAN GET.***



Xbox Live™ is the world's only no-holds-barred, high-speed, ultimate gaming arena. Jump from game to game and play thousands of other players using one Gamertag. You can't do that anywhere else.



YOU AIN'T GONNA RULE THE ULTIMATE ARENA WITH A NAME LIKE BUNNY23

Use your unique Gamertag to build your rep across all games. After all, you'll need it to grow your legend in this arena.

THOSE VOICES IN YOUR HEAD ARE VOICES IN YOUR HEADSET

With the hands-free Xbox Communicator, you can talk trash, call plays, disguise your voice, and even mute the sucker that won't shut up.

DOES RUINING SOMEONE'S DAY MAKE YOU DO THE DANCE OF JOY?

Well, for \$49.99*, you can dance the dance all you want with Xbox Live. This is the arena where dreams are crushed.

USE OPTIMATCH™ AND QUICKMATCH TO SEE HOW YOU STACK UP

Quickly find opponents on your skill level, so you won't waste your time with rookies or get schooled by grizzled veterans.

DOWNLOAD NEW CONTENT, SO THE GAME NEVER ENDS

Get different weapons, new characters, additional levels, and more with downloadable content that will extend your game like never before.



GET YOUR STARTER KIT FOR JUST \$49.99* AND ARM YOURSELF FOR ENTRY.

\$49.99*

\$49.99* INCLUDES:

- 1 YEAR OF XBOX LIVE SERVICE
- XBOX COMMUNICATOR HEADSET
- WHACKED! AND MOTOGP ONLINE GAMES†



www.xbox.com/live

xbox
LIVE

*Manufacturer's suggested retail price.



PlayStation 2

WILD ARMS 3

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

Wild Arms is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ©2002 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. World, Play In Ours, is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. www.playstation.com

Please NO

WILD ARMS 3

Clive has an "explosive" personality

Healbers can only be found on ground

Gallops at all we!

Don't forget to reload your weapon

See everything with Rhoda

Virginia plays her cards right

Booming hard to reach switches.

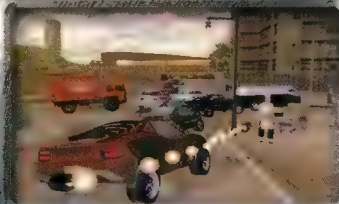
Upgrade your arms.

BATTING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org
or call 1-800-771-3772
for more info.



Take on the cut-throat Yakuza mafia as a top-level cop or spy in **40 INSANE MISSIONS**—double the number of the original hit.



Blast away enemies with new **CAR-MOUNTED ROCKET LAUNCHERS** and blast away friends in **MULTIPLAYER** showdowns.



For even more high-impact action, **DON'T BRAKE FOR PEDESTRIANS**. Now if they get in your way, they're gonna pay.



Drive down the mob in high-speed pursuits, then explore the city at your pace in **EXCLUSIVE FREE ROAM MODE**.

**ALL-NEW FOR THE PLAYSTATION®2
COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT
SYSTEM AND
NINTENDO GAMECUBE™**

Enter to win cool prizes at
GOWRECKLESS.COM

Screenshots taken from PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system gameplay.

ORIGINAL HIT AVAILABLE ON XBOX™ VIDEO GAME SYSTEM

ACTIVISION

**BUNKASHA
GAMES**



PlayStation 2



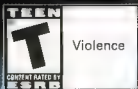
activision.com

© 2004-2002 Banbaku Publishing Co., Ltd. Portions © 2003 Activision Publishing, Inc. PlayStation 2 game engine © 2002 Traveller's Tales. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark, and the Activision logo, the Yakuza Mission are trademarks of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system with the NTSC U/C designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2004 Microsoft, Microsoft Game, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The settings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners.

**MORE MISSIONS
MORE MAYHEM
MORE WRECKLESS.**

WRECKLESS

The Yakuza Missions™



...smash into pretty much anything you see... get that euphoric feeling that comes rarely in life."

—PSM, October '02



PRESS
START

VIDEO GAME U.

When you compare the average salary of a game designer (\$76,000) with that of a pre-business-school graduate (\$50,000), it's no wonder that students are beginning to declare themselves as "pre-vid." To keep up with the times, such vaunted schools as Georgetown University have begun offering courses in videogame production. Still, for our tuition money, we'd enroll in one of these schools, which offer the top five game-degree programs in the world. We rank 'em from fifth to first.

5. **Academy of Interactive Entertainment** • www.aie.act.edu.au
AIE is known for its degree programs in computer modeling and game animation. The only catch: Its campus is located in Canberra, Australia.

Playing God

'Game Designer' is the one job title most EGM readers would love to have on their business cards. We tell you everything you need to make it happen

It's midday at the offices of Insomniac, developer of the PlayStation 2 platformer *Ratchet & Clank*, when the chickens break loose. Up until this moment, the place has been quiet. Game developers hunch over their desks. The blinds are drawn to keep the California sun from glaring on TV monitors. A few Nerf guns rest on shelves, waiting for a spontaneous battle that never erupts. There's good reason for the quietude: *Ratchet & Clank* is due for delivery to publisher Sony Computer Entertainment America within a matter of days. And if the game is going to make it, the chickens better get their act together.

The birds in question have just flooded the screen of Peter Hastings, one of three Hastings brothers who work as programmers at Insomniac.

Hastings and Design Director Brian Allgeier are testing the effects of the Morph-O-Ray, a weapon that mutates enemy robots into frantic poultry. "At first, I wanted a gun that turned them into toasters," Hastings says, "but chickens are funnier." Yep, this guy has a cool job—one that you, too, can land if you heed the advice in this article. But hear us now and believe us later: The first step to landing a job as a game designer is to be a team player. "Everyone here contributes to the game," Allgeier says. "I'm just a funnel for the ideas."

Evolution of a dream job

In the world of videogame development, it seems like everyone wants to be the designer. But many people don't seem to know what

being a game designer really means. If you ask most gamers, they'll tell you that the designer is the person in charge of a game's "vision," the one who kicks back in a hammock and dreams up just what sort of fantasy-adventure or first-person shooter or whatever to unleash upon the joystick nation. Truth is, being a game designer is a lot of work. He or she oversees the entire game-design process, including its art, programming, level and mission designing, etc. Often, the lead designer is the person who came up with the game concept to begin with.

When thinking about designers, certain individuals inevitably come to mind: Shigeru Miyamoto, designer of *Mario*; Hideo Kojima, designer of *Metal Gear Solid*; Will Wright, designer of *The Sims*. These are the Spielbergs of the game industry, the people whose names alone can hypnotize legions of gamers into forking over their lawn-mowing money for their latest software. But these guys are the exception to the rule. The days of a singular "game god" are pretty much over. Back in the 1980s, when the industry was just getting in gear, a gamer could simply plop down in front



4. **The Art Institutes • www.ail.edu**

Master the arts of storytelling, level design, and animation at AI, which offers a Bachelor's degree in Game Art & Design. The school has online courses and campuses across the U.S.

3. **Full Sail • www.fullsail.com**

Located in Winter Park, Fla. (just 20 minutes from Disney World), Full Sail offers an Associate's degree in Game Design, which will drill you in C++, 3D modeling, and physics.

2. **University of Advancing Technologies • www.uat.edu**

Enroll at UAT's Tempe, Ariz., campus and you'll get an outstanding education in the multimedia arts and at least 200 days of sunshine per year.

1. **DigiPen • www.digipen.edu**

Considered the Ivy of gaming schools, the Redmond, Wash.-based campus prides itself on its rigorous, four-year Bachelor of Science degree program.

—Rob Bernstein

of a Commodore 64 or Apple II computer and make an entire game from start to finish: graphics, sound, programming...the works. But as games grew more complex, so did their requirements. Today, a major videogame can cost \$5 million to produce, and the size of the team it takes to produce it can easily spill into the dozens. As Chad Findley, lead designer for *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* developer, Neversoft, says, "It's unrealistic to have one person in charge, since the games are becoming so huge." The future, then, is all about teamwork—teams of gamers working together to design compelling virtual worlds. And, with teams growing in size, that means more room for people like you.

Tools of the trade

That's why a company like Insomniac, which has perfected the art of collaborative game design, is a model for anyone who wants to design games for a living. Its approach dates back to the company's roots, when 34-year-old President and CEO Ted Price first set out to break into the gaming business. "I was doing all the art, sound, and music," Price says. "Al [Allgeier] was doing the graphics engine, and Brian [Hastings] was handling the enemies. From the very start, the design was a collaboration." Hastings is a programmer by trade, making him the team's go-to guy when it comes to figuring out what can be technically accomplished. When a game designer is not a programmer—or does not have a working knowledge of the craft—he can find himself in tricky situations. Once *Ratchet & Clank* was underway, for example, Allgeier had the design idea to feature a battle on a moving train. "I wanted to have this section that was like something out of an action film," he says. "I thought it would be pretty straightforward." But because of the unique physics of the situation, it turned out to be, as Allgeier puts it, "a programming nightmare."

This is why Allgeier and Price both recommend that aspiring designers verse themselves in the holy trinity of game skills: programming, art, and production. Because design is so collaborative, the person leading the process has to interact frequently with all of the members on a team, making sure that things like the story arc and character development remain coherent. Allgeier says that when he first started out, he—like many young game developers—suffered from some basic misconceptions about how games are designed. "I thought that a game designer created a plan and gave it to the art and programming machine," he says, "and a game was just created. I was surprised to see that a game designer had to ensure that the design functions, and, if not, to problem-solve on the fly. There are always thousands of details that need to be taken care of. Even though you plan, lots of things break." It's up to the lead game designer to run around the office and make sure everything is fixed.

At this moment in the Insomniac office, what needs to be fixed is the Morph-O-Ray. At Peter Hastings' desk, Allgeier is putting the weapon to the ultimate test: turning a robot into a chicken and then trying to lay that chicken to waste. But the more rapidly he fires into the bird's wings, the more his own health oddly decreases. Allgeier raises a brow as he watches. "So I take damage when I destroy a chicken?" he asks. Hastings, inventor of the chicken ray, replies, "Don't worry, we can change that." The Morph-O-Ray is his design, after all. And he won't let anything ruffle his feathers.

(Continued on page 54)

▼ Master of his domain: Insomniac's Peter Hastings is one of the new breed of game designers. He's a programmer by title and trade, but he's also part of the collaborative design effort that produced such stellar games as *Spyro the Dragon* (PS1) and *Ratchet & Clank* (PS2).





(Playing God continued)

Game Design 101

Baby steps for the wannabe designer

Becoming a game designer requires the personality blend of a rock star and a rocket scientist. You've got to have the gumption to imagine a wild, robust virtual world, and the technical chops to know what it takes to make it happen. "Good designers have a good blend of right brain and left brain," says Insomniac's Ted Price. "We are our own unique beast." Looking to be a little beastly yourself? Here's how to pump up your odds of making it in the competitive world of game design.

Play games (smartly)

It follows reason that the best way to learn how to design videogames is to play them. A lot. But we're not just talking about jacking a billion cars in *Grand Theft Auto*. "Think about what games you dislike and why," advises Neversoft's Chad Findley. "For instance: 'This game was not fun because the controls didn't work or the enemies weren't realistic.'" Brian Allgeier of Insomniac agrees that it's all in how you approach the interactive experience. "You need to have an analytical eye," he says. "Take apart the game and try to figure out how it was constructed, what the design philosophy was. You have to be able to dissect something in order to put it together."

Hit the books

The days of game designers who skipped higher education seem to be on the wane now that more and more schools—

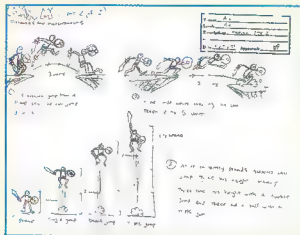
DigiPen in Redmond, Wash., to Full Sail near Orlando, Fla.—are offering game-development programs. Allgeier recommends that students not skip the basics: Game designers should have at least a basic knowledge of the various aspects of the craft. That means a computer programming course, an art course, and some kind of literature class that studies the elements of a narrative. "It's good to be well-rounded," he says.

Make a mod or demo

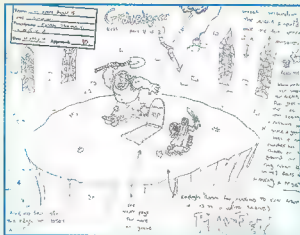
The catch-22 of console game design is that you can't make a game unless you have a special (and expensive) game-development system, and you can't have a game-development system unless you're already designing games professionally. What to do? Make a mod, which is a modified version of an existing computer game. Classic hits like *Doom*, *Quake*, and *Half-Life* have spawned vibrant communities of would-be designers who use the games' free software tools to create their own titles. Some of the most successful game creators got their start in just this way—by making mods and sending them in with their resumes. You can also strike out as a hobbyist game developer and make a demo game (flip the page for tips).

Write a design document

A design document is basically an outline of your game, detailing everything from characters to weapons, enemies to levels. Though



Comic genius: These illustration-heavy plans for Capcom's PS2 game *Maximo* show that design docs don't have to be 100-page-thick novels full of dull text. In fact, being a visual thinker is a must for all would-be game designers.

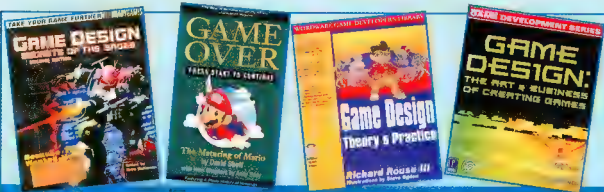


some designers end up throwing their design doc in the trash once development gets underway, professionals know that it's crucial (particularly when dealing with big-name publishers) to put your ideas down on paper. For the skinny on the art of writing a design document, surf over to Game Design Documents (www.ihfsoft.com/index.htm), a site dedicated to this craft.

Knock on doors

Since it's way easier to get work at an existing game studio than to start your own company, hit the streets once you have a mod or demo and start hunting for jobs. Your best bets for finding out who's hiring are these two sites: www.gamejobs.com and www.gamedev.net. Both contain more how-to articles for would-be game designers than you can shake a joystick at, and—more important—both feature comprehensive job lists. Gamejobs even has direct links to the appropriate human-resources page for each company, so you know precisely where to send your resume.

—David Kushner
(Continued on page 56)



If knowledge is power, skim these books to build your game-biz health meter: *Game Design: Secrets of the Sages* by Marc Saltzman (a good overview of design basics); *Game Over* by David Sheff (a thorough look at how Nintendo became what it is today); *Game Design Theory & Practice* by Richard Rouse III (a step-by-step look at the game development process, highlighted by excellent interviews and in-depth game analysis); and *Game Design: The Art & Business of Creating Games* by Bob Bates (it looks at the whole games business, including licensing, marketing, and team management).

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.

Shenmue II

Vengeance is just the beginning.



INCLUDES
"SHENMUE: THE MOVIE"
on DVD



Use of Alcohol
Gambling
Violence

SEGA

www.xbox.com/shenmue2

ONLY ON
XBOX

XBOX

©2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logo are registered trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. SEGA and Shenmue II are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. The names of actual products and companies mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners.



PRESS
START

(Playing God continued)

SITES TO SEE

Don't know your sprite from your text parser? Click here for the answers, young grasshopper....

www.game-developer.com
A powerful search engine to find game-development articles

www.filppcode.com
A website full of comprehensive tutorials and info for advanced game coders

www.programmersheaven.com
Resources for all major programming languages
dir.yahoo.com/recreation/games/computer_games/programming
A superlong list of game-programming sites

Do-it-Yourself Game Design

Three ways to play game god just for the fun of it

Not a team player? Don't give a squat about building a career in game design? No problem. Amateur game-construction is a booming hobby, with lots of cinch-to-use software packages that make game building a breeze. And the best part is that you only get as involved as you want. Depending on your available brain power (and cash), choose one of these holy-moley power levels....

Minor deity

The quickest way to get started is to get a game-development kit. These rely on pull-down menus and icons, so you can concentrate on designing actual gameplay instead of programming. Agatec has the *RPG Maker* series for PS1 and (available in 2003) PlayStation 2, letting you

make your own private *Final Fantasy*. Both programs are surprisingly complex and flexible. And don't discount nifty extras like the park editor in *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4*. You can glean a surprising amount of game-design know-how by simply trying to craft the slickest park on the block.

If you have a PC and want to get a little more in-depth, you'll find plenty of freeware (read: no cost) and shareware game-making software, such as *Adventure Maker 3.0* (www.adventuremaker.com), *DC Games Toolkit* (www.dcgames.com), and *DigiPen's*

own Project Fun software (www.projectfun.digipen.edu). All of these packages let you create graphics-rich computer games without having to learn complex programming languages.

And just because it doesn't require programming skills doesn't mean your game has to suck. Take ChiselBrain Software's *Pencil Whipped*, a finalist at the 2002 Independent Games Festival. It was created using Pie in the Sky's Game Creation System (S70). Though the software can create only first-person shooters, this package is still a great training tool for anyone getting started in game design. "If you were doing [this type of] raw coding from scratch," says *Pencil Whipped* creator Lonnie Flickinger, "you'd most likely have to have a huge team of developers, and it would take many, many hours, or even years, to see results."

Zeus Jr.

If you've got some time and extra dinero, Sony's got the package for you. This past May, it released a limited-edition kit that allows PS2 owners to use the Linux operating system to make games.

At \$200, it's not too hard on your pockets, but you'll also need a VGA

monitor (another couple hundred).

Check out the official website—playstation2.linux.com—for a comprehensive FAQ and loads of other details.

On the PC side, you'll find options that require programming but still give relative newbies a good starting point. We especially like PTG Software's *Game Programming Starter Kit 6.0* (\$50), which comes with Microsoft Visual C++ 6.0 for programming, *3D GameStudio Standard 5.12* for level design, and the book *Game Design: Secrets of the Sages* as food for thought. Bear in mind that this isn't kid stuff: Both the Sony Linux package and the PC gaming kits require patience, focus, and time. However, these packages come with

low-level libraries that will help you do the dirty work. For instance, Sony's Linux suite comes with premade routines that make 3D effects easier to use.

O holy omnipotent dude

Now we're talking the hard stuff—raw PC coding not recommended for anyone without previous programming experience or unprepared to do some research. The upshot of your hard work is control: You'll be able to eke out a little more speed or further manipulate the visuals in your games.

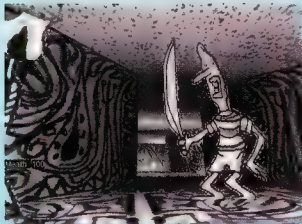
You also have plenty of options. You can take the freeware route with packages such as DJGPP C/C++

(www.delorie.com/djgpp), which works well with the freeware game-software library Allegro (www.talula.demon.co.uk/allegro). Or you can get the popular Microsoft Visual C++ (about \$100) or Borland C++ (\$70 and up), both of which are well supported by many game-programming books. C and C++ are the most popular game languages, but you can use whatever language you want—Microsoft's Visual Basic, Pascal, JAVA, etc.—as long as it gets the job done.

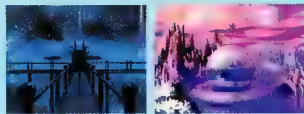
Above all, have fun!

Visit the recommended websites at the top of the page to learn more about programming options. And when you're up at three in the morning trying to get the last bug out of your funky-fresh game, realize that there are hundreds of thousands of other coders doing the exact same thing at the exact same time. Welcome to the club. 🐱

—Damon Brown



Wanna make a wacky first-person shooter like *Pencil Whipped* here? Go to www.pieskysoft.com to buy the \$70 software that makes it possible.



Home-brewed games *Timba* (left) and *T'ALVI* (right) were created using *Adventure Maker*, which is perfect for making *Myst*-like adventures.

It's what's inside that counts.



MAGIC

The Gathering®

ONLINE



With 350 new cards, the *Onslaught™* expansion is the perfect entry into the **Magic: The Gathering** Online game. And the new Morph mechanic allows you to keep a poker face as your opponents lose their heads. That's because you play Morph cards face down. So they won't know what's lurking underneath, except that it's going to be one nasty surprise.



free game download:
www.magicthegathering.com

All trademarks are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2002 Wizards



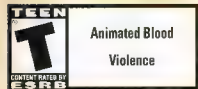


konami.com



“THE GREATEST ACTION SERIES OF ALL TIME MAKES ITS TRIUMPHANT RETURN” *PLAY*

“TOP 5 PS2 GAMES” *EGM*



GAME BOY ADVANCE

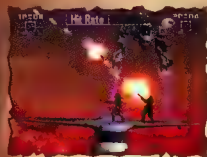
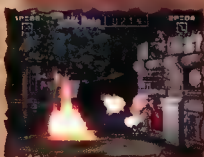
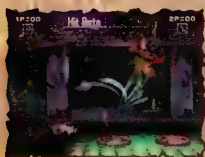
PlayStation 2



CONTRA SHATTERED SOLDIER™ and CONTRA ADVANCE THE ALIEN WARS EXT™ are trademarks of KONAMI CORPORATION. KONAMI® is a registered trademark of KONAMI CORPORATION. © 1987-2002 KONAMI & KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT TOKYO A.. RIG-ITS RESERVED "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. TM ®, and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.



THE ULTIMATE RUN AND GUN SHOOTER RETURNS



CONTRA

SHATTERED SOLDIER™



THE BEST STORYLINES EVER.
PERIOD.
END OF STORY.



Mature Sexual Themes
Strong Lyrics
Violence

PlayStation 2



The names of all World Wrestling Entertainment™ televised and live programming, talent names, images, likenesses, slogans and wrestling moves and all World Wrestling Entertainment™ logos are trademarks which are the property of Yuke's Co., Ltd. Yuke's Co. and its logo are trademarks of Yuke's Co., Ltd. JAKKS Pacific and the JAKKS Pacific logo are trademarks of JAKKS Pacific, Inc. THQ and the THQ logo are registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All rights reserved.

SHUT YOUR MOUTH.



SMACKDOWN
SHUT YOUR MOUTH





NCAA 2K3
COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Religion 2K3



Live the dream with one of over 300 D-1 schools.



Backstroke in February or you can dance in March.



Send Cinderella home early.



Take it to the net, then cut it down.

—IN STORES AS WELL AS THESE PLATFORMS



PlayStation 2



SEGA
SPORTS

segasports.com



PRESS
START

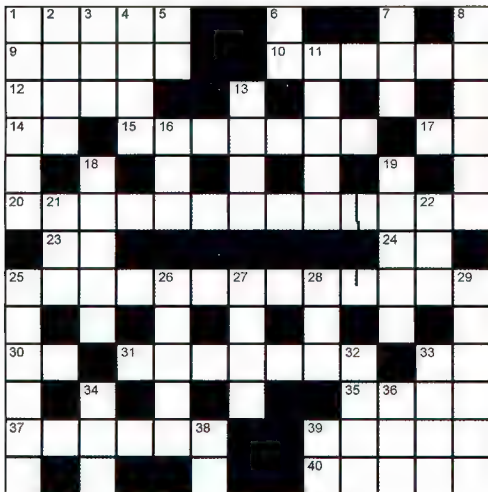
GREAT WHITE WHALE



Microsoft and Sega figured out a way to sell 999 more Xboxes in Japan... release a limited-edition *Panzer Dragoon Orta* system! This stylish model features a white plastic shell bearing *Panzer*-style markings, and comes with a white controller, the game, and a special neck strap, all for about \$325. Oh, you want one? Sorry—all 999 of 'em were sold on the first day of November to gamers in Japan through Sega's website.

Legends of Zelda

(Solution on page 232)



ACROSS

1. Sega's Gun (PS2)
9. *Contra's* (NES) "R" power-up
10. SNES game on the GBA, for one
12. Use a door in *Silent Hill 2*
14. Two-player mode
15. Xbox action title
17. Time for a *Simon's Quest* (NES) curse
20. Super Nintendo *Zelda*
23. Up-Right direction (abbrv.)
24. 5-Down's state setting, for short
25. N64's first *Zelda*
30. Game Boy's color *Zelda*
31. Like *Halo's* Halo?
33. DC's game format _ ROM
35. Small sword in *Final Fantasy III*
37. Used to kill Gohma in *The Legend of Zelda* (NES)
39. *Dynasty Warriors 2* polearm
40. *Rogue Leader* (GC) backdrop

DOWN

1. Otacon does it when Solid Snake finds him
2. PaRappa does this well
3. Donkey or Diddy Kong
4. *Super Mario* "ladder"
5. Nintendo GameCube thriller, for short
6. *Virtual On's* (Saturn) _ Temjin
7. Holds captured fairies in an N64 *Zelda*
8. *Morrowind* headgear
11. Fox-like Pokémon
13. Story

6. Found in the middle of a *Mario Tennis* court
8. One of Link's new moves in the GC *Zelda*
9. *Endgame* (PS2) locale
21. PS2 platformer *Monsters* _
22. Game genres: flight _ or dating
25. Asks you to gamble in NES *Zelda*
26. Timothy almost becomes one (to Dan) in *Xenogears*
27. Ys hero
28. Enemy
29. *Zone of the _* (PS2)
32. The "D," for short, in *GT3's* LCDP
33. *Metal* or *GUILTY*
34. What Baby Mario does when he falls off Yoshi in *Yoshi's Island* (GBA/SNES)
36. NES *Zelda* baddie _ hat
38. Opposite of 23-Across
39. *Silent Scope* or *Solid Snake*



Fantasy Remakes Get U.S. Release

The PS4 remakes of *Final Fantasy VII* and *II* are headed stateside this spring in an as-yet-untitled one-disc package (woo-hoo!). This will be the first time U.S. gamers get to play an official translation of the second *Fantasy* (the Super Nintendo game we know as *FFVI* in the U.S. was actually the Japanese *FFIV*). And, although pricing has yet to be announced, new PS4 games are rarely more than \$50 these days (so we expect it'll be nice and affordable).



Batman Reaps Even More Vengeance

While we may have to wait awhile for the next live-action *Batman* movie, the caped crusader's videogame adventures continue. In fall 2003, Ubi Soft will release a sequel to their multiplayer bat-game, *Batman Vengeance*, for all three next-gen consoles. Currently called *Batman 2* (a title that will very likely change), the game is based on the *New Adventures* animated series and will include the ability to play as multiple characters.



Overheard

"Yes, we are working on [Metal Gear Solid 3]. The concept and direction are still being set, [but] if I told you about it, you'd be surprised. At one point, there was talk that [MGS creator Hideo] Kojima wouldn't do another game as director, but it looks like he will. [MGS3] is so ambitious it could collapse if Kojima doesn't take charge of it."
—Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance Assistant Director Yoshikazu Matsuhashi on MGS3

"I thought everyone wants a mouse for Xbox!"
—Microsoft's Ed Fries jokes in response to our pleas to not release the horrible recent life simulator *Sneakers*

"The self-destruct sequence is now active. There are five minutes until detonation." "Well, that blows," Steve said."
—Excerpt from the new version of *Resident Evil 4* Code Veronica by S.D. Perry

SO BRUTAL. SO EVIL. SO DEADLY.



Featuring **ADAM'S**
Immortal™ main series.
WWW.MORTALKOMBAT.MIDWAY.COM

A NEW LEVEL OF INTENSE COMPETITION HAS ARISEN AS TWO POWERFUL SORCERERS HAVE FORGED A DEADLY ALLIANCE THAT NOW REPRESENTS EARTH'S GREATEST THREAT. AN ALL-NEW, LETHAL FIGHTING SYSTEM. THREE UNIQUE FIGHTING STYLES PER WARRIOR, INCLUDING HAND-TO-HAND AND DEADLY WEAPON COMBAT. OVER 20 NEW AND CLASSIC WARRIORS. EXTREMELY REALISTIC EFFECTS AND BRUTAL NEW FATALITIES.

IT'S IN YOUR BLOOD.
Now Available!



Blood and Gore
Violence



GAME BOY ADVANCE
PlayStation 2



Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance © 2002 Midway Amusement Games, LLC. All rights reserved. MORTAL KOMBAT, DEADLY ALLIANCE, the dragon logo, MIDWAY, the Midway logo and all character names are trademarks of Midway Amusement Games, LLC. Used by permission. Distributed under license by Midway Home Entertainment Inc. ®, Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. "PlayStation" and the "PS Family" logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. Screen shots displayed are from the Xbox™ video game system.



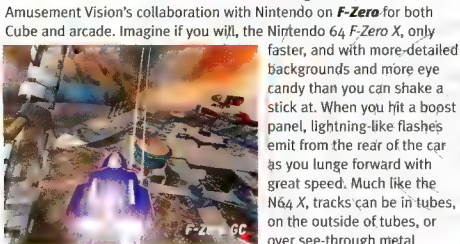
PRESS
START

Quartermann — Game Gossip & Speculation

Happy ho-hos and holidays to y'all out there in Q-Land. The foot-steps you hear on yonder rooftop belong to none other than yours truly, The Quartermann, purveyor of all that is rumorific on the globe. The Q's sack is overstuffed with carefully wrapped tidbits this month, so may I suggest you break out the size-18 stockings, friends...The Q's about to bust a hole in this one. (Translation: Prepare yourself for rumors in—3...2...1...)

F-Zero Inches Toward Starting Gate

The Q's geeked-out about a lot of the fresh games set to debut in 2003, but if there's one that I'm most curious about right now, it's Amusement Vision's collaboration with Nintendo on **F-Zero X** for both Cube and arcade. Imagine if you will, the Nintendo 64 **F-Zero X**, only



faster, and with more-detailed backgrounds and more eye candy than you can shake a stick at. When you hit a boost panel, lightning-like flashes emit from the rear of the car as you lunge forward with great speed. Much like the N64 **X**, tracks can be in tubes, on the outside of tubes, or over see-through metal grates, and all include jumps and hazards aplenty. One of the big differences between this and the old **F-Zero** is the emphasis on the characters and their rivalry. And there's one detail I want all you Q-disciples to check out: Take a look at the screenshot above. Focus on it. Be the screenshot. Now, see that lil' robot there? Ten points to the man (or lady) who can give me the name of that famous 'bot. Yes, it's **R.O.B.**, the cool-but-not-practical 8-Bit Nintendo accessory that The Q is currently using to hold his can of Vanilla Coke (yum!). That lil' detail is something that perhaps only die-hard-4-life N-fans will appreciate—and let's hope the final game has more of that kind of thing. Now, kindly wipe the drool off of this page and continue reading....

Xbox 2 Before PlayStation 3

Not terribly surprising comes word that the **Next Box** (that's a play on words, ya see) will supposedly show up before Sony's **PlayStation 3** debut (still a few years away—2005 or 6 at current estimates). This news came direct from main man Ed Fries over at Microsoft. Just remember, folks, the earliest bird doesn't always get the worm (otherwise we'd still be Dreamcastin').

2003: Year of the MMORPG

MMORPG! No, it's not some word I pulled outta Webster's Zebulonese Dictionary. It's an acronym for **Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games**, and if The Q's Magic 8-Ball is correct, "it is decidedly so" that you'll see loads of them for Xbox by Microsoft and others in the new year. You already know about **True Fantasy Online** and **Star Wars Galaxies**, but there's a total of four or five of these babies in development for 2003 (some may slip to 2004). Even **Rare** is producing their own (I can already see it—create your character by sticking googly-eyes on everyday household items. Fun!)... Also on the MMORPG front (but not Xbox) is **Final Fantasy XI**. Good news: It's "outlook good" on a U.S. release. Bad news: It may still be a long wait before we see it....



Hawk to Hibernate Till 2004

In hopes of keeping the series fresh, The Q has heard that the **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater** series may take a year off. That could mean you won't be grindin' new railings in **Tony 5** for a lil' while, so fill up on the fourth game for now. And in a somewhat-related-so-I'll-put-it-here item, **EA Sports Big** is working on **SSX3** after a similar break (also in hopes of keepin' it fresh). Mum's the word, yo....

The Hot Q: New GBA or Not?

Would Nintendo divide the handheld market and alienate gamers who bought a GBA just one year ago by introducing a new, more powerful version of the hardware, just to incorporate cell-phone technology? That's the question now, with buzz circulating that the Big N has such a device in development (which I mentioned during last month's visit), and some even reporting it will happen next month in Japan! Lemme just say this: Nintendo's not one to push the technology envelope so soon after a launch. Years separated previous versions of their handheld hardware....

And that's it, baby? ZING! Now back to my **Animal Crossing** game. Oh, and for those of you playing **AC**, too, lemme tell you in on a Q-secret: hidden NES games, baby, that haven't been reported in any "guidebook." They exist. Want one? OK, here's the pa—oh! I'm all outta room. Until next time, gaming buds—latah!

—The Q

Bits of Q



■ In **TimeSplitters 2**, **Xtreme Beach Volleyball** (Xbox), basketball player-turned-actor **Dennis Rodman** will voice Zach, owner and proprietor of the game's tropical island setting.

■ Rumor has it that **Eidos** may release a **TimeSplitters 2**

with the online play missing from the current one) in 2003.

■ Current gossip indicates the next **Dragon Ball Z** game will be an RPG.

■ New **Sega** sequels to watch out for: **Out Run 2** (Japan), going on test soon in Japan, and **Virtua Cop 3**, running on

the Xbox arcade hardware code-named "Chihiro."

■ They were dead and now they're "back"—the new owners of SNK have opened a U.S. division. No word yet on what (outside of arcade games) they'll be doing.





PRESS
START

Charts - September 2002

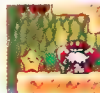
TOP 20 BEST-SELLING GAMES				
1	Madden NFL 2003 EA Sports	9.5 Dan L	9.5 Dean	9.0 Jonathan
2	Kingdom Hearts Square Electronic Arts	8.5 Greg S	8.5 Milkman	8.5 Shane
3	Super Mario Sunshine Nintendo	9.5 Greg S	9.5 John R	9.5 Mark
4	SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALS Sony CEA			
5	Tekken 4 Namco			
6	Star Fox Adventures Nintendo			
7	Yu-Gi-Oh! Dark Duel Stories Konami			
8	Animal Crossing Nintendo			
9	Grand Theft Auto III Rockstar			
10	Yu-Gi-Oh! Forbidden Memories Konami			
11	Onimusha 2: Samurai's Destiny Capcom			
12	NCAA Football 2003 EA Sports			
13	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 Activision 02			
14	Super Mario Adventure 3 Nintendo			
15	Gran Turismo 3 A-spec Sony CEA			
16	... Namco			
17	... Nintendo			
18	NBA Street EA Sports Big			
19	Medal of Honor: Frontline EA Games			
20	Street Hoops Activision 02			

TOP 10 RENTALS		BLOCKBUSTER
1	Madden NFL 2003 EA Sports	
2	SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALS Sony CEA	
3	Super Mario Sunshine Nintendo	
4	... Namco	
5	Street Hoops Activision 02	
6	NCAA Football 2003 EA Sports	
7	Medal of Honor: Frontline EA Games	
8	Stuntman Atari	
9	NFL Blitz 20-03 Midway	
10	NFL 2K3 Sega Sports	

Source: Blockbuster Video, September 2002

TOP 10 BEST-SELLING GAMES IN JAPAN	
1	Star Fox Adventures Nintendo
2	Yoshi's Island: SMI 3 Nintendo
3	Legend of Starfi Nintendo
4	Dynasty Warriors 3: Mousho-den Koei
5	Energy Airforce Taito
6	Dragon Drive: Tactics Break Bandai
7	Yamasa Digi World SP Yamasa Entertainment
8	Marvel vs. Capcom 2 Capcom
9	Culdcept II Expansion Sega
10	...hack Volume 2 Bandai

When the PlayStation's the cock of the walk, it's nothing less than a miracle to see *three* Nintendo games at the top of the Japanese chart. What's *Legend of Starfi* you ask? It's a new platformer (reminiscent of the *Kirby* series) starring (what else?) a star prince who has fallen to Earth and must make it back up to the sky. Here's hoping it's U.S.-bound.



Legend of Starfi

Source: Weekly Famitsu, week ending 10/6/02

Source: NPD, BEST'S Video Games Service, Call Mission Barnett von Korf at (510) 455-2488 for questions regarding the list.

"Fast...stunning...impressive, most impressive"

IGN

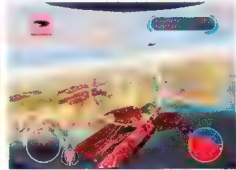
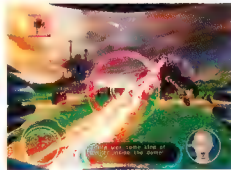
"Frenetic land assaults, overwhelming numbers, smooth, bright graphics, a ton of multiplayer options...quite simply, the greatest amount of "stuff" you've ever seen in a shooter... you may need a reminder to close your gaping jaw"

OXM

"Large and detailed, graphically impressive..."

PSM

TO CHECK OUT THIS BADASS GAME GO TO
WWW.BATTLEENGINE.COM



Available 1/28/03



**Battle
Engine**
aquila

ATARI



PRESS
START

Coming Soon

December

ATV: Quad Power Racing 2 (Racing)	Xbox
BattleBots (Action)	PS2, GC
BMX XXX (Sports)	GC, Xbox
Capcom vs. SNK 2: EO (Fighting)	Xbox
Colin McRae 3 (Racing)	PS2, Xbox
Crimson Sea (Action)	Xbox
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai (Fighting)	PS2
E.T.: Return to the Green Planet (Adventure)	PS2
Fila World Tour Tennis (Sports)	Xbox
Frogger Beyond (Action)	PS2, Xbox
Kirby: Nightmare in Dream Land (Action)	GC
Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past (Adv.)	GBA
Little League Baseball 2002 (Sports)	GBA
Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (Action)	GC, Xbox
Lunar Legend (RPG)	GBA
MLB Slugfest 20-03 (Sports)	PS2, GC, Xbox
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance (Fighting)	GBA
Motor Trend Lotus Challenge (Racing)	Xbox
Mystic Heroes (Action)	PS2
NCAA College Basketball 2K3 (Sports)	PS2, GC, Xbox
NHL 2K3 (Sports)	PS2, GC, Xbox
Nightcaster II (Action)	Xbox
Star Wars: The Clone Wars (Action)	PS2
Steel Battalion (Action)	Xbox
Street Fighter Alpha 3 (Fighting)	GBA
Super Bubble Pop (Puzzle)	GC, GBA
Super Bust-A-Move 3000 (Puzzle)	GC
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon (Action)	PS2, GC
Whiteout (Sports)	PS2



Gully Gear X2 (Fighting)	PS2
Haven: Call of the King (Action)	Xbox, GC
Hypersonic Xtreme (Racing)	PS2
Kung-Fu Chaos (Action)	Xbox
Jeopardy! 2003 (Misc.)	PS2
Malice (Action)	PS2, Xbox
My Street (Misc.)	PS2
Panzer Dragoon Orta (Action)	Xbox
RoboCop (Action)	PS2
The Sims (Misc.)	PS2
Skies of Arcadia Legend (RPG)	GC
Summoner: The Prophecy (RPG)	GC
Super Puzzle Fighter 2 (Puzzle)	GBA
War of the Monsters (Fighting)	PS2
Wheel of Fortune 2003 (Misc.)	PS2
Worms Blast (Strategy)	GBA

February

1080 White Storm (Sports)	GC
Conflict: Desert Storm (Action)	GC
Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge (Flight)	Xbox
Freaky Flyers (Action)	PS2, Xbox
Gladius (RPG)	PS2, GC
.hack (RPG)	PS2
The Legend of Zelda (Adventure)	GC
The Lost (Action)	PS2, Xbox
Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter (Action)	GC, Xbox
Marvel vs. Capcom 2 (Fighting)	Xbox
Pride Fighting Championship (Sports)	PS2
Pro Race Driver (Racing)	Xbox
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic (RPG)	Xbox
State of Emergency (Action)	Xbox
Vexx (Action)	PS2, Xbox
Warrio World (Action)	GC
Whiteout (Sports)	PS2
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duelists Of The Roses (RPG)	GC
Yu-Gi-Oh! Dungeon Dice Monsters (RPG)	GBA

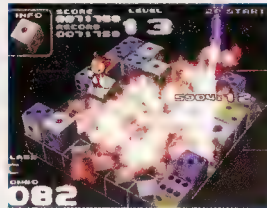
January

Aquaman: Battle for Atlantis (Action)	Xbox
Army Men: Air Combat (Action)	GC
ATV: Quad Power Racing 2 (Racing)	PS2, GC, GBA
Battle Engine Aquila (Shooter)	PS2, Xbox
Black & Bruised (Sports)	PS2, GC
Dark Cloud 2 (RPG)	PS2
DOA Xtreme Beach Volleyball (Sports)	Xbox
Devil May Cry 2 (Action)	Xbox
Digimon Battle Spirit (RPG)	GBA
Disney Sports: Basketball (Sports)	GC
Dr. Muto (Action)	GC
Dynasty Warriors 3: Xtreme Legends (Action)	PS2
Fuel (Racing)	Xbox
Galerians: Ash (Action)	PS2
The Getaway (Action)	PS2
GT Advance 3: Pro Concept Racing (Racing)	GBA



IMPORT CALENDAR

XI (Sai) Go



Import Pick of the Month: A few years back, a little-known PS1 puzzle game called *Devil Dice* (aka *XI* in Japan) passed through the EGM offices. And some (our current editor-in-chief included) became hopelessly addicted. The United States never saw the sequel, *XI Jumbo*, so we're pretty sure it won't see this il'l gem, called *XI Go* (pronounced "sai-go," which means "final" or "last" in Japanese). The basic premise: You play a lil' devil standing atop giant dice, flipping their sides to match an adjoining die, then chaining all of them together to create huge combos.

PlayStation 2

- 11/28 *Dark Chronicle*, Sony CEI (RPG)
- 12/12 *Point Blank Collection Plus Time Crisis*, Namco (Shooting)
- 12/19 *Bombberman Jettors*, Hudson (Action)
- 12/19 *Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance*, Konami (Action)
- 12/19 *Unlimited Saga*, Square (RPG)
- 12/19 *XI (Sai) Go*, Sony CEI (Puzzle)
- 12/26 *Kingdom Hearts: Final Mix*, Square (RPG)

Game Boy Advance

- 11/21 *Pokémon Ruby*, Nintendo (RPG)
- 11/21 *Pokémon Sapphire*, Nintendo (RPG)
- 12/6 *Kururin Paradise*, Nintendo (Puzzle)
- 12/13 *Klonoa Heroes: Legend of the Star Medal*, Namco (RPG)
- 12/19 *Sonic Advance 2*, Sega (Action)

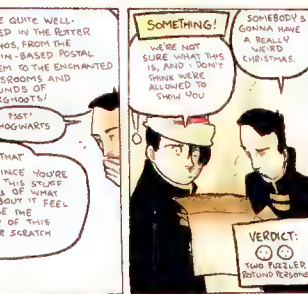
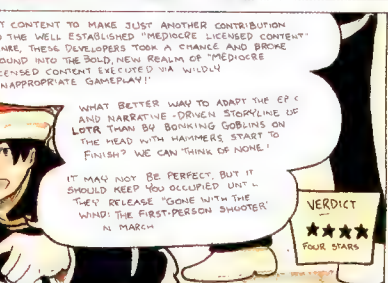
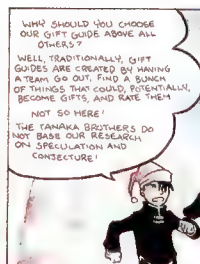
GameCube

- 12/13 *The Legend of Zelda*, Nintendo (Adventure)
- 12/19 *Bombberman Jettors*, Hudson (Action)
- 12/20 *Mr. Driller Drill Land*, Namco (Puzzle)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import-game store for the latest release info. And consult your doctor for more info about Rogaine.



PRESS START



A person in a dark tactical suit and helmet is rappelling down a wall of fire. The person is positioned in the center of the frame, with their body angled slightly to the right. They are holding onto a rope that is attached to a point above them. The background is a dense, textured wall of orange and yellow flames, with some darker, charred areas. The overall atmosphere is one of intense action and danger.

ACCESS GRANTED.

ALL THE DEADLY REALISM

Tom Clancy's



SQUAD-BASED BATTLEFIELD COMBAT



SQUAD-BASED COUNTER TERROR

YOU'VE COME TO EXPECT.



ELITE TACTICAL ACTION



STEALTH ACTION REDEFINED



I ALONE HAVE THE FIFTH FREEDOM.

THE RIGHT TO SPY, STEAL, DESTROY AND ASSASSINATE,

TO ENSURE THAT AMERICAN FREEDOMS ARE PROTECTED.

IF CAPTURED, MY GOVERNMENT WILL DISAVOW

ANY KNOWLEDGE OF MY EXISTENCE.

I AM SAM FISHER.

I AM A SPLINTER CELL.



You make the rules in the high stakes game of covert espionage. Work alone, outside the boundaries of the law, to thwart cyberterrorist attacks against the United States. With thermal goggles, fiber optic cameras, prototype guns and other dirty tricks, you redefine justice and punishment. Rappel, split jump, glide along ziplines, force information from your enemies, even use them as human shields. And remember - a dead witness is not really a witness.



Blood and Gore
Violence





STEALTH ACTION REDEFINED



Tom Clancy's
**SPLINTER
CELL**

www.splintercell.com





IF YOU THREATEN OUR NATION,
I WILL HUNT YOU DOWN. YOU CANNOT HIDE.
THERE IS NOTHING I CANNOT SEE OR HEAR.
THERE IS NO PLACE MY BULLET CANNOT GO.
I WILL NOT STOP UNTIL MY JOB IS DONE.
THIS I SWEAR.



Your mission: execute Jack Ryan's orders as you rescue hostages, plant surveillance, defuse bombs, and uncover the deadliest threat to peace the world has ever known. Based on Paramount's hit movie and Tom Clancy's best-selling novel, this is your chance to create your own ending to the Sum of All Fears saga.



Blood
Violence



GAME BOY ADVANCE





ELITE TACTICAL ACTION



Play It On
ubi.com



Tom Clancy's

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS™

www.sumofallfears.ubi.com



WE ARE
THE NATION'S CHOSEN FEW.
WE ARE SWIFT, SILENT, AND INVISIBLE.
WE WILL NOT FAIL OUR COUNTRY.
WE WILL NOT FAIL EACH OTHER.
WE WILL NEVER SURRENDER.
WE FIGHT, SO THAT PEACE MAY REIGN.
WE ARE THE GHOSTS.

Xbox game play only shown



Command the Ghosts, an elite handful of specially-trained Green Berets, in a deadly, realistic campaign waged on the war-torn battlefields of tomorrow's headlines. Use cutting-edge gear and guns to lay waste to the enemy, or your multiplayer opponents. A total battlefield experience that only Tom Clancy and the makers of Rainbow Six can deliver.

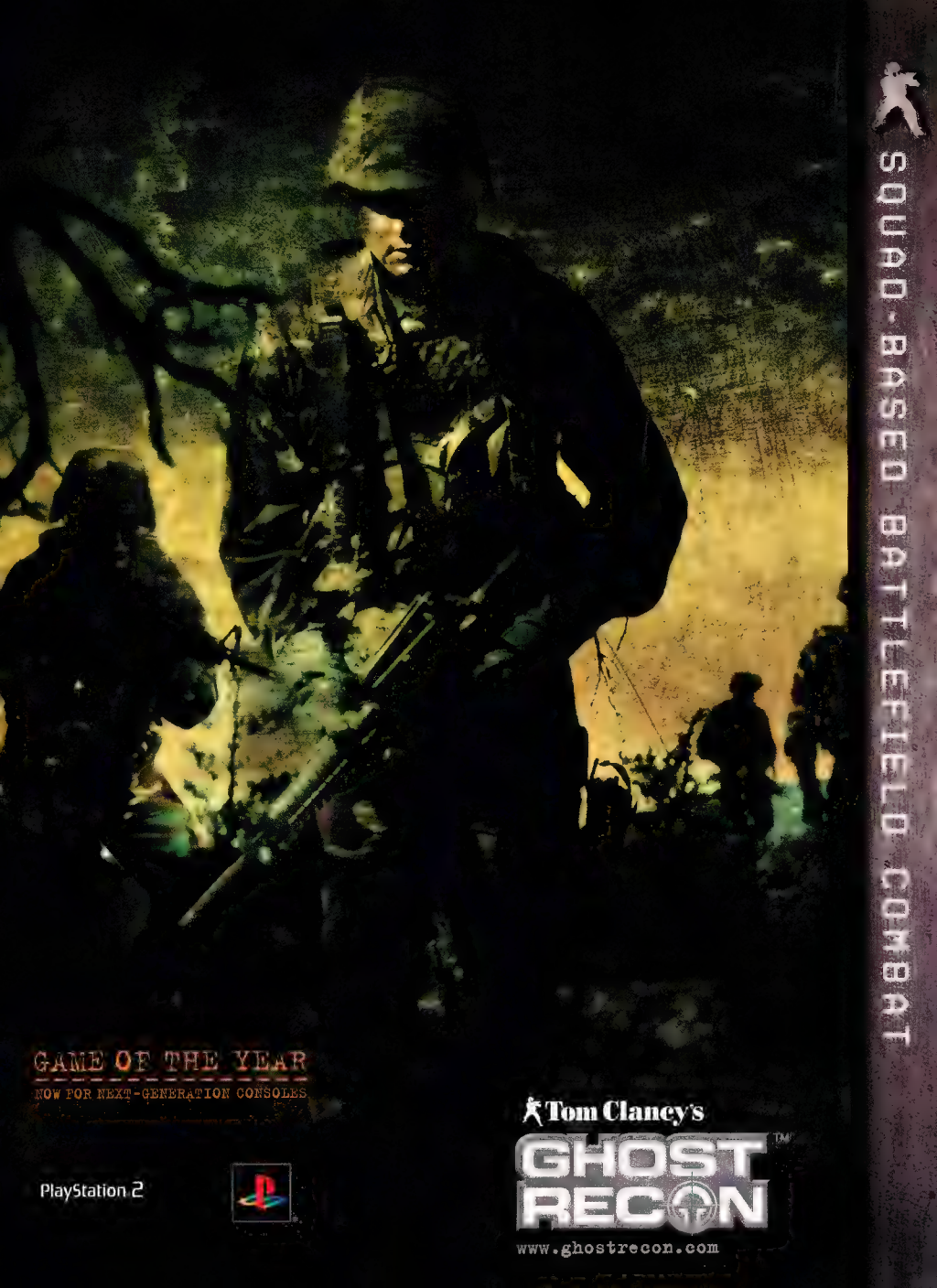


Blood and Gore
Violence





SQUAD-BASED BATTLEFIELD COMBAT



GAME OF THE YEAR

NOW FOR NEXT-GENERATION CONSOLES

PlayStation 2



Tom Clancy's

**GHOST
RECON**

www.ghostrecon.com



WE ARE
FREEDOM'S ANSWER TO FEAR.
OUR DUTY BEGINS WHEN NEGOTIATIONS END.
FOR WE DO NOT BARGAIN WITH TERROR.
WE STALK IT, CORNER IT, TAKE AIM,
AND KILL IT.
WE ARE TEAM RAINBOW.



The father of all tactical shooters returns, in an all-new game locked and loaded to change the face of action gaming. **AGAIN.** Advance to a new level of gaming realism with new high-tech gear to hunt the Targos and 57 weapons to take them down. Experience unmatched graphical realism and high velocity multiplayer action powered by next generation Unreal™ technology. We wrote the book on tactical squad-based combat. Now we're rewriting it. Study up.



Blood
Violence





SQUAD-BASED COUNTER TERROR

Tom Clancy's
RAINBOW SIX 3
RAVEN SHIELD

www.raven-shield.com



Ubi Soft
ENTERTAINMENT



Previews

This Month in Previews

PlayStation 2

- 86-88 EverQuest Online Adventures
- 90-91 War of the Monsters
- 92, 94 The Getaway



The Getaway

- 96, 98 Dragon Ball Z: Budokai
- 100 Final Fantasy X-2
- 102 Guilty Gear X2
- Galerians: Ash
- NBA Street Vol. 2

GameCube

- 110-111 True Crime: Streets of L.A.



True Crime: Streets of L.A.

- 112 Black & Bruised
- X-Men: Wolverine's Revenge
- 114 Skies of Arcadia Legend
- Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter

- 118-120 Panzer Dragoon Orta



Panzer Dragoon Orta

- 122, 124 Return to Castle Wolfenstein
- 126 Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis
- Midtown Madness 3
- Dark Angel

Game Boy Advance

- 128 Pokémon Ruby & Sapphire



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.

As I sit here watching my co-workers playing *Metroid Prime* on GameCube (see our review on page 184), I have to wonder: Does Xbox stand a chance in 2003?

I mean, I'm a big supporter of the system. I think Xbox is capable of the most incredible games on the market. It's got the hard drive, the built-in broadband adapter, and gobs of power to boot.

Xbox definitely enjoys great titles here and there, too—*Splinter Cell* and *Unreal Championship* are the latest examples. And one of the games I've most anticipated, *Panzer Dragoon Orta*, is hitting next month. (Check out the *PDO* preview on page 118, by the way; the game is gorgeous.) Or take *MechAssault*—a relatively low-hyped game that turned out to be a very solid, worthwhile purchase.

The problem is, there just aren't many blockbuster titles on the horizon that are guaranteed to get everyone—the mass market—into Xbox. PS2's got just about every big third-party title there is: *Final Fantasy X-2*, *Devil May Cry 2*, and of course *Grand Theft Auto IV*. Nintendo's got *The Legend of Zelda* and *F-Zero*



War of the Monsters is the best game you've never heard of. Check out our preview starting on page 90.

queued up, plus they can always mine their treasure trove of franchises. What's Xbox got that'll sell systems? *Halo 2*. And it's a late 2003 release.

Who cares about the mass market? Anyone who loves their Xbox should—bigger sales drive bigger games, and more of them, to any console. Appeal to only hardcore gamers and you'll eventually find yourself in the bargain bin.

Maybe Microsoft's purchase of Rare will give them the punch they need in 2003. But I have a feeling it'll take a lot more to stay in the race. 🐾

—Previews Editor Greg Sewart

TOP 5 Preview Picks

1. **War of the Monsters** PS2, January 2003
2. **The Getaway** PS2, January 2003
3. **Panzer Dragoon Orta** Xbox, January 2003
4. **Pokémon Ruby & Sapphire** GBA, 2003
5. **Dragon Ball Z: Budokai** PS2, December 2002

All the Review Crew wants for Christmas is:



EverQuest Online Adventures

Publisher:	Sony Online Ent.
Developer:	Sony Online Ent.
Players:	Lots
Genre:	Massively Multiplayer Online RPG
% Done:	85%
Releases:	March 2003
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.station.sony.com
The Good:	It'll be the first RPG of its type for consoles.
The Bad:	No one enjoys paying a \$10-a-month fee.
And The Ugly:	Just try to make a hot-looking female Troll character...we dare you.

EQ:OA'S FUTURE

Expanding



EverQuest hasn't become the PC phenom it is today by remaining stagnant. In order to rope in new followers and to appease early adopters, Sony Online Entertainment has crafted four successive expansion packs to inject fresh content (like new areas, classes, and races) into the evolving world. The PS2 *EQ* will feature similar updates, and the first one's already in the planning. "Design and art is already underway for our first expansion," explains producer Rod Humble. "But I had best not say more before I get into trouble."



In late September of 2002, a handful of lucky PS2 owners received a highly addictive substance in the mail: the insidious, life-eroding drug known on the streets as *EverCrack*. That's right—your social life could be in jeopardy. *EverQuest* is coming to the PlayStation 2. Sony Online Entertainment's massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG) pioneered the genre on PCs a few years back, and now this all-new console version is getting its kinks ironed out by a crew of brave beta testers. While those lucky souls take on hordes of Orcs, read ahead to see what all the fuss is about.

There has never been a home console game like this before. Sega's *Phantasy Star Online* (Dreamcast, GameCube) offers Net role-playing, but not in a persistent world with hundreds of

simultaneous players. Unlike traditional RPGs, *EverQuest* has no "on-rails" plot forcing you to progress your quest in a certain direction. Here, you determine the adventures, and when you're not around, the world and hundreds of other human players continue on without you. Want to go on quests for fame and riches? You can. Want to spend hours just chatting with and annoying other *EverQuesters*? It's your call. Want to spend your time setting up a profitable business trading bat fur for rat whiskers? Go for it.

Entering the realm is easy. You create your alter ego for adventuring in the world of Norrath by picking your race from among the various types of Humans, Elves, Trolls, and Dwarves, then choosing your character class (warriors, magic-users, rangers—there are 13



The land of Norrath offers some serious geographical diversity, from vast arid deserts to slimy, stagnant swamplands.



THE FATE OF FFXI?

The U.S. release of Square's MMORPG, *Final Fantasy XI*, has been in limbo for a while, but current info points that it should hopefully land here sometime in 2003. Keep your fingers crossed.

NORRATH: THE EGM EDITORS' TRAVELOGUE

Two of our intrepid editors ventured into the world of *EverQuest*. Here are their experiences after exploring the vast realm of Norrath.



SHANE BETTENHAUSEN,

REVIEWS EDITOR:

CHARACTER: Thrax

RACE: Elf

CLASS: Druid

My experience with *Online Adventures* reminded me of my dangerous affair with the PC version years ago, but on a more manageable scale. I love that death has become a nonissue here. If you die, you can just turn off the game without worrying about your rotting corpse and unscrupulous thieves. The first-person-shooter control setup (you have to use both analog sticks to move around and look) took some getting used to, but overall, it's faithful to the PC hit. Now, if only I could convince these antisocial beta testers that grouping is more fun than taking everything on solo.



JENNIFER TSAO, MANAGING EDITOR AND RESIDENT EQ FANGIRL:

CHARACTER: Jett

RACE: Erudite

CLASS: Wizard

Norrath has a strange, seductive quality. Just as you're about to log off, you suddenly feel compelled to wander just beyond that next ridge, lake, or mountain to see if maybe, just maybe, there's a cool quest item or battle awaiting you. And then, there's the experience curve. As you get better weapons and spells, you naturally have to deal with better, more challenging enemies on which to use them. They say junkies have to ditch their old friends before they can truly kick the habit. In Norrath, you'll always find a group of buddies looking to share the action. Addictive personalities, beware.

It's much easier to enjoy EQ:OA in small, manageable chunks

in all—and customizing your look with various faces and hairstyles. Your options run the gamut from a mullet-sporting Elven enchanter to a beastly, pink-haired Troll shadow knight.

Once you've designed your avatar, jump onto a server via your Network Adapter (56k dial-up or broadband) and begin interacting with a colossal, living world that's populated by thousands of other players. The core gameplay experience allows you to team up with other real people to fight monsters, explore dungeons, and find cool, new equipment. It's open-ended, rewarding, and lasts as long as you're willing to stick with it. If interacting with Earthlings in the real world is something your antisocial (or weird) personality just doesn't allow for, you can go it alone, but you'll have greater success if you make the friendly leap and actually talk to the other players. Most of the time, you'll find that it's rather easy to form some cyber friendships. In fact, if the PS2 version of *EverQuest* follows in its PC forerunner's footsteps, you'll likely be hearing

EQ wedding bells between some lovestruck Halflings sometime in the near future.

Your chosen race and class determine your starting city, but the designers made sure that gamers wouldn't be overwhelmed by being dropped into an unfamiliar environment. "The early pace of the game is much faster than the PC version, with quests guiding you through the first levels," Executive Producer Rod Humble explains. "We also went out of our way to insure that each class is self sufficient to a large extent." This is great news for newbies who have never ventured into an online RPG before, and indicative of the serious thought that went into adapting *EQ* for the console audience.

Character death created the most frustrating aspects of the PC *EverQuest*. You would often have to trek across the land to retrieve your fallen corpse and belongings (all the while hoping that someone else didn't find it first), and if you logged off after dying or got disconnected during a fight, your corpse and belongings would eventually rot away. Thankfully, the developers completely eliminated those problems in the console version.

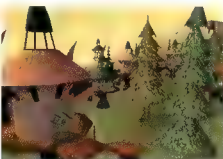
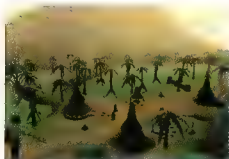
"We redid the death system to insure there was never a real penalty to logging off in a hurry, like when you hear 'Dinner's on the table!'" says Humble. "We removed corpses and introduced an

TAKING CONTROL

Net Play



Now this is the most stylish way to enjoy *EQ: Online Adventures*. Logitech's NetPlay controller combines the functionality of a USB keyboard with the sleek stylings of a Dual Shock 2 controller for maximum chat-while-you-play versatility. You can also break it down into a separate keyboard and controller. The official release date remains shrouded in mystery at this time, but expect to see it looming on store shelves by the time you journey to Norrath. Logitech hasn't decided on the final price either, but hopefully it will ring up at far under the \$80 mark (its Japanese retail price).



NO! PS2 MMORPGS

Are there even more online RPGs on the PS2 horizon? Yep, Koei's *Nobunaga's Ambition Online* (pictured) is currently beta testing in Japan, and Square's rumored to be working on a follow-up to *FFXI*.



You'll find an insane variety of weapons and armor in Norrath. Scope the crazy claws on Calanio.



experience penalty system instead, although you never lose levels." This feature makes it much easier to enjoy *Online Adventures* in small, manageable chunks.

The traditional battle system from the PC game has also been scrapped in favor of a more action-oriented setup in which you attack with the X button and select spells on the fly with a real-time menu, à la *Kingdom Hearts*. Gamers who don't care for the slow battles of most role-playing games might be pleasantly surprised. "It's not really turn-based," Humble explains. "We wanted a fairly fast-paced game with the ability to coordinate strategies with your friends during combat."

The PS2 hardware actually allowed the development team to make some surprising technical improvements over the PC original. That version's world was broken up into small segments called zones, and incredibly long loading times awaited you

when you walked from one to the next. *Online Adventures* for PS2 has no zones, and the physical world itself is incredibly huge. "The world is 500 square miles—a larger landmass than all of [PC] *EQ* plus its expansions combined," says Humble. "If *Online Adventures* was on the PC, it would have shipped on at least seven CDs! For the PS2, we fit it snugly onto a single DVD."

So far, the beta-testing phase has been smooth. "Stability is our number-one concern," explains Humble. "Happily, the servers proved more robust than we thought, and now, most of the testing is aimed at content and play balance." We acted as trailblazing Norrath pioneers for a few weeks, and witnessed a few improvements over the course of our adventures. It's a constantly evolving experience that will hopefully be ready for prime time in the spring. 🍄

—Shane Bettenhausen

CONTROVERSY

EverDeath

EQ has often snagged media attention for the wrong reasons. Recent scandals include:

- A Wisconsin mother sued Sony Online claiming that *EverQuest* contributed to her son's suicide. (Her claim was eventually thrown out.)
- An *EQ*-playing Florida man was sentenced to 15 years in prison after killing his infant son (he locked him in a closet as not to disturb his online roleplaying).
- In 2000, some *EQ* players were banned for life after posting racy fan fiction stories about the game's characters. Apparently, Sony Online doesn't take kindly to tales of sultry Elf princesses getting it on with Troll shadow knights.



When going up against big enemies (like the Griffon in the right shot), bring some allies, or it won't be pretty.

War of the Monsters

Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Incoq Inc.
Players: 1-2
Genre: Fighting
% Bomb: 80%
Release: January 2003
Also On: None
Web Address: www.scea.com
The Good: Giant robots and monsters—what more could you want?

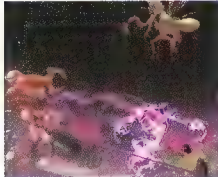
The Bad: A few classic movie monsters would be nice.

And The Ugly: No Gamera-inspired character? How can there not be a flying turtle?



Cars, building spires, passing helicopters... they can all be used as lethal weapons in *War of the Monsters*.

Congar loses control when Preytor just won't pick a @%\$*! station!



Seeing *War of the Monsters* in action is like watching the best parts of the greatest schlock sci-fi movies, all condensed into one epic battle. Except it's better because nobody has to wear the stinky rubber Godzilla suit, and you can't see any of the wires.

It's not hard to pick out the influences behind *War of the Monsters*. Take a little *Ultraman*, some *Shogun Warriors*, a huge helping of kaiju movies (featuring the men in rubber monster suits previously mentioned), mix in some old comics, and there you have it. But thanks to the wonders of technology, those lumbering monsters that crushed so many cardboard buildings and Matchbox cars just got a lot more coordinated—and destructive. "I recently watched one of the classic [kaiju] movies," says Sony CEA Creative Director Mike Giam, "and I kept wanting the monster to pick the other one up and throw him into a building or smash him on the head with a piece of rubble. I'd like to think that maybe the way we have our monsters fight is a little like the way the

directors of those classics would have done it if they were in our place today."

And the way the monsters fight is quick, brutal, and very entertaining. The resulting mayhem mixes the speed and twitch gameplay of something like *Super Smash Bros. Melee* (GameCube) with huge, totally destructible environments. You've got a target-lock option (vital in keeping track of your opponent, considering how big the levels can be), strafe moves, and a fairly basic hand-to-hand combo and grapple system. Counter moves add some variety to melee combat, and all characters have a ranged attack, along with two unique special moves you can execute if you're packin' a full energy bar. Sounds pretty standard so far, but you can also use the environment to your advantage in battle, and that's where *War of the Monsters* begins to show some unexpected depth.

Basically, if it's standing, you can knock it down. Then you can pick it up and start swinging. Steel girders can be wielded like clubs, chunks of concrete

MEN IN TIGHTS

We're not usually much for performance art, but we'll make an exception for the kaiju-based wrestling league you probably haven't heard of, *Kaiju Big Battle*. Let's face it: Men dressing in rubber suits and whaling on each other is a dying art form, but *Big Battle* characters like Club Sandwich, Silver Potato, Uchu Chu the Space Bug, and the nefarious Dr. Cube are keeping the dream alive—and settling their differences in the squared circle. Check kaiju.com for upcoming *Battle* dates and broken-English-based hilarity. *Danger can happen!*



SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

ULTRA-V



This robot's detachable fist grabs foes from across the level and drags them back for easy pummeling....

MAZINGER Z



This Shogun Warrior's detachable fist introduced the term "choking hazard" to children's toys.

CONGAR



This giant primate enjoys climbing Las Vegas' Stratosphere Tower to swat at Apache helicopters....

KING KONG



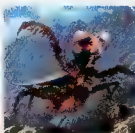
The original giant primate enjoys climbing the Empire State Building to swat at flimsy biplanes.

PREYTOR



This quick and nimble mantis was mutated by radioactive goo and a mad scientist bent on world domination....

KAMAKIRAS



This not-so-quick and nimble Kama-kiras was mutated by a radioactive storm in *Son of Godzilla*.

can be thrown or used as a shield. Cars, trucks, tanks, and helicopters can all be scooped up and chucked at your enemy. But your foes can also catch whatever you're throwing and send it right back atcha. Nothing sucks more than being done in by your own projectile. Or, if they're wielding a girder, they can swing it Barry Bonds-style and hit away incoming projectiles. You can even impale your opponent with a radio antenna, and then wade in with melee attacks while they button mash, frantically trying to pull out the offending object. Producer Dylan Jobe sums it up like this: "If you aren't holding a piece of debris or an I-beam or a tanker truck, you should go get one." You can even knock whole buildings onto rivals for a quick kill, although it's very difficult to do.

We got hands-on time with six monsters, and it looks like there should be at least 10 when the game is done. As expected, there's the usual big and burly one, the super-fast but fragile one, the one with the great special moves, and many variations in between. Some can kinda-sorta jump, while others can get way up there and glide halfway across a stage.

The main single-player mode is Adventure, which takes you through a series of monster-based alter-

cations and some boss battles. Then there's also a Free-For-All slugfest vs. up to three CPU-controlled monsters and an Endurance mode. Unfortunately, there's no two-player co-op option—at least not yet, although you can beat up on each other or a pair of CPU monsters. *War of the Monsters* also includes a few cool minigames, but we won't spoil 'em for you. Two-player games use a splitscreen most of the time, but when both monsters are nearby, a "unified camera" kicks in and you get a single viewpoint. This doesn't always work smoothly, but there's still time for IncoG to fix it before the game's final release.

War of the Monsters' retro sci-fi feel extends to the music and to details like the Start screen—the menu options appear on a drive-in movie screen, with '50s-era cars parked in front. Even the loading screens—which feature mock-ups of movie posters that might have been—are cool. Graphically and gameplay-wise, *War of the Monsters* already feels very polished, and if IncoG can make the single-player Adventure mode compelling and add a few tweaks here and there, we've got high hopes. After all, the only thing better than giant robots vs. giant monsters. 🦾

—Demian Linn



Violence is the only way Kineticlops knows to express his envy of monsters with actual bodies.



The Getaway

Publisher:	Sony CEA
Developer:	Sony Team Soho
Players:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	85%
Release:	January 2003
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.scea.com

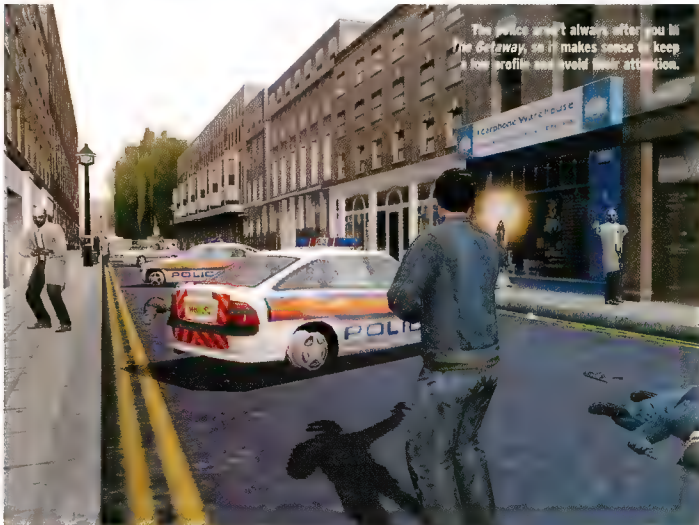
The Good: You play an ex-mobster who's pulled back into the world of crime in this very cool, Guy Ritchie-style story.

The Bad: It'll take some time to get used to the lack of onscreen indicators.

And The Ugly: The main character's dry-cleaning bill after getting shot up.



Anything can be used for cover, even the guys who are shooting at you (below).



Anyone who loves a good Guy Ritchie film (*Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, *Snatch*, and especially *Swept Away*...not) is going to really enjoy *The Getaway*. This *GTA3*-style action title set on the mean streets of London truly feels more like an interactive movie than just another videogame.

Before you start moaning about how you've heard that a dozen times before, pay attention. Developer Team Soho has been very careful to make sure that, from the instant the game boots up, nothing on the screen screams "videogame." You won't find life bars, timers, targeting reticules, direction indicators, or inventory screens in *The Getaway*.

So, how do you find your way around London? Easy. Your car blinkers go off while you drive, indicat-

ing which way you should turn. What about knowing how much damage Mark (the main character) has taken? Let's put it this way: If his jacket is blood-stained and he's staggering around like he's about to fall over, it ain't good.

And even though using professional actors to voice videogame characters is nothing new, Team Soho went one step further in that department as well. Instead of designing characters and assigning voice actors to them, Soho signed the actors first and created the characters around them. Every character you see in *The Getaway* is modeled after the person doing the voice acting, including their build, mannerisms, and movement.

Of course, gameplay is king, and *The Getaway's* is

MEET THE CAST

MARK

Mark is a retired mobster, or so he thought. He finds out how hard it is to get out of the life and go straight when his wife is murdered and son kidnapped by...



YASMINE

...Yasmine and her washed-up group of gangsters. This cold-as-ice hit-woman is the one that grabs Mark's kid on the orders of...



WWW.ZOOYORK.COM

BACKGROUNDS OF FINE ARTS. TODD JORDAN. PUTS HIS CAMERA DOWN TO RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL ART FORM. NO LIE. NOSE BOUND & MOLLIE BACKSIDE. 180
REDA BLACK AND WHITE PRINTS. BEAUTIFUL. EST. 3.0 IN STORES NOW. BEAUTIFUL. NEW WINTER 2002 DEBTS OUT NOW. BEAUTIFUL.

ZOO YORK TODD JORDAN



Todd Jordan

PRINTED BY REDA 2002



shaping up very nicely. Much like *True Crime* from Activision (see our preview on page 110), this game is similar to *Grand Theft Auto III*, but it's not exactly the same. While you can steal cars and generally cause havoc in *The Getaway*, that's not really the point. Usually, you're set on very specific missions and start off each one in your own vehicle, stealing cars only if yours gets wrecked somehow.

But most of your time in *The Getaway* will be spent infiltrating buildings around London. And we don't mean just running into a room, guns blazing—that's a good way to come down with a bad case of death. No, in this town, the only way to work your way into hostile territory is to use stealth. When entering a structure, the first thing you should do is find some cover, 'cause chances are, you're already being shot at. Remember, Mark's not Superman. He can't take too many hits, and there are no medipacks or health power-ups lying around in this game.

Once Mark's behind some cover, peek around the corner and evaluate the situation. Figure out where you have to go next and how many thugs you'll have to take out to get there. Then work out the safest way to do it. That's the only way to play *The Getaway*. The pace of this game is really slow—it's a lot like *Metal Gear Solid 2*.

The one problem people could have with this title is that it's very linear. While you're playing in a living, breathing city, you're set on one task after another, and really have no room to deviate from the set course of the story. At least in other games of this ilk (*Vice City* and the aforementioned *True Crime*), there's a bit of variety to be found in side missions and minigames. But that's not a knock on this game—just a warning to those expecting more *GTA*-ness. Otherwise, *The Getaway* is going to be another great addition to this fledgling genre come January. 🐾

—Greg Sewart



Instead of attempting to shoot the guy perched on this fire escape, just shoot the oil drums below him. Boom!

MEET THE CAST (CONT.)



CHARLIE

...Charlie, an old-school mob boss who figures the only way to bring Mark out of retirement is to threaten his son's life. Charlie's every move is being closely watched by...



FRANK

...Frank, a disgraced detective trying to clear his own name. Now he's hot on the tail of Charlie's unwilling new stooge, Mark.

THEIR EVERY BREATH
COULD BE YOUR LAST.

REIGN OF FIRE

EVIL DRAGONS
AND DRAGONS
ARE FIERCE EN
ENOUGH TO HURL
FIREBALLS AND
NAPALM
WITH EVERY BREATH.

DRAGON FAST-KNOCK TANKS AWAY
AS A DRAGONFIGHTER
16 MISSIONS LOADED WITH
CHAOTIC ACTION, DESTRUCTION
AND EXPLOSIONS.

DRAGONS
ON THE GROUND WITH
HIGH-TECH WEAPONS AND
MILITARY-STYLE VEHICLES.



GAME BOY ADVANCE



PlayStation 2



boni!fun.com/reign



Blood
Violence

Reign of Fire © 2002 Sega Corporation. © 2002 B&M Entertainment, Inc. B&M and the B&M logo are registered trademarks of B&M Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Sega and the Sega logo are registered trademarks of Sega Enterprises, Ltd. All rights reserved. Used with permission. TM, ®, Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo Game Boy logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system with the NTSC-U/C designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Microsoft logo and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The Game Boy logo is a registered trademark of the Nintendo Game Boy family of products. All other trademarks and trade names herein are the property of their respective owners.

Dragon Ball Z: Budokai

Publisher:	Infogrames
Developer:	Dimps
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Fighting
% Done:	90%
Release:	December 2003

Also On: None
Web Address: www.dragonballz.com
The Good: Fans of the show will appreciate the attention to detail in character design and story.

The Bad: Long-winded exposition before battles? Oh yeah, that's *Dragon Ball*.

And The Ugly: Android #19. He embodies all that is just plain weird about *DBZ* character designs.

HARDCORE FAN

Otaku no DBZ



Since *Dragon Ball Z* is a very popular anime series, and many fans of Japanese animation like to hear it in the original tongue, we had to ask: Will *Budokai* feature dual languages? The answer is no. "We decided to include the U.S. voice actors to create something special and familiar to the majority of *Dragon Ball Z* fans," Associate Producer Chris Lundeen tells us. "It was something that hadn't been done on this scale before, and never in a *Dragon Ball* game. In the end, we had a full disc of dialogue and didn't have the room for both English and Japanese." Elite fans...you'll have to buy the import.



One of the more popular *Dragon Ball* matchups: Frieza versus Goku. A boot to the marauding alien's noggin is just what the doctor ordered.

Dragon Ball fans have waited a long time—almost six years since *Dragon Ball GT* hit the PS1—for the day their favorite series would once again be made into a console game that didn't require modifying a system and learning to read Japanese. That wait is over, now that *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai* is entering Earth's atmosphere at an incredible rate of speed, and with a formidable Power Level readout (read: Surprise! It doesn't suck like previous *DBZ* console games).

As one might expect, *Budokai* is a 3D fighting game, but it's not just any ol' *Virtua Fighter*. You'll begin your training in Story mode, which strolls through the main events of the Salyan, Namekian, and Android chapters of the *Dragon Ball Z* saga. The convoluted story's been abridged, but there are loads of cut-scenes, all using the in-game graphics and character models.

You begin playing as Goku, trying to rescue your son Gohan from intergalactic kidnapper Raditz. That's where you'll get your first taste of *Budokai*'s combat. The buttons are very simply set up: Punch, Kick, Guard, and Energy. For the most part, you'll use Energy to throw a fireball at your opponent, but stick it on the end of a punch combination and you'll throw a Kamehameha Energy Blast (or another more powerful attack, depending on your character) at your stunned opponent. Pull off a couple of

those and Raditz'll be beaten to a bloody pulp. But wait—if you've seen the show, you know the battle isn't over yet. You've gotta hold Raditz in front of Namekian warrior Piccolo so he can help you finish him off. To do that, you'll have to turn one of the analog sticks clockwise or counterclockwise to keep yourself in the blast area while Piccolo charges up. Once he lets loose, Raditz is toast—and uh...well, you are too, though you come back to life soon enough.

That beginning scenario gives you a good idea of what to expect in the rest of Story mode. The action is divided into chapters, but the story doesn't always progress via one-on-one fights. Sometimes, you'll have to meet special conditions (deflect a certain number of projectiles, for example). Highlights



**No one
will mind
if you play
naked.**



Look for this icon on ATV Offroad Fury™ 2 and other PlayStation 2 games with online capability.



**LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.**



FULLY RENDERED

When loading up a *Dragon Ball Z* game, you'd expect to be treated to a video of the show's opening right off the bat. After all, what developer wants to spend time redoing the whole intro with in-game graphics? Well... *Budokai* developer Dimps, for one. You'll see the fully 3D intro several times when playing through Story mode (or you can skip it if you've already memorized all the words to the opening theme).



When you fight Raditz as Goku, you'll have to hold the squirming bastard into the line of Piccolo's Ki Blast (top left). But go back into Story mode after finishing it the first time and you'll face the same challenge from Piccolo's perspective and charge the Blast instead (bottom left). This is just one example of how the Story mode is extended after you've completed it once.

FIGHTERS GUILD

Meet Your Match



Loyal *Dragon Ball Z* fans will no doubt be pleased with the number of characters in *Budokai*—23 in all. You'll start with five characters, and have to play through Story mode to unlock the rest of them.

STARTING LINEUP:

- Goku
- Kid Gohan
- Krillin
- Piccolo
- Tien

UNLOCKABLE CHARACTERS:

- Android 16
- Android 17
- Android 18
- Android 19
- Captain Ginyu
- Cell
- Dadoria
- Frieza
- Great Saiyaman
- Hercule
- Teen Gohan
- Nappa
- Raditz
- Recomee
- Trunks
- Vegeta
- Yamcha
- Zarbon

to look forward to include fighting the mini versions of Cell (you've gotta defeat six Cell Jrs. in a row with one life bar) and the battle with the series' first major enemy, Frieza. You switch characters throughout the game, too; you start with Goku, but change to fight as Vegeta, Gohan, or Piccolo as you progress. Each character controls similarly, but each has his own signature moves (Piccolo has a Ki Blast instead of the Kamehameha, even though it's almost the same thing).

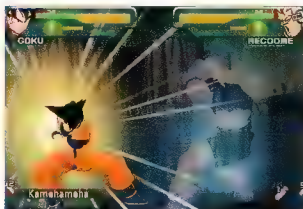
Even after you've finished Story mode for the first time, *Budokai*'s not over. You can revisit different chapters and play scenarios not available during the regular game, seeing events from other characters' perspectives. For example, remember that fight with Raditz at the very beginning of the game? Well, you can do it again, but this time as Piccolo rather than Goku, charging up your Energy Blast by twirling the analog sticks as fast as you can.

In addition to the one-player story, there's a one- or two-player Duel mode for quick battles, a solo World Match tournament mode against the computer, a practice arena, and an option to edit your fighters' skills—or buy them new ones. Editing your favorite fighters has its advantages, especially when playing against a friend.

"Visiting Mr. Popo's Skill Shop with enough Zeni to buy capsules allows you to create a character that matches your fighting style," explains Associate Producer Chris Lundeen. "Are you a better defender? Buy a Senzu Bean to gain full health automatically after being beaten to a pulp. Do you want to inflict maximum damage in one shot? Grab Goku's Spirit Bomb. If your friend uses a Viral Heart Disease attack (which constantly drains your energy), you'd better make sure you have the antidote!"

Excited? Then what are you waiting for? Hop on the next cloud and get ready to begin your Super Saiyan training.

—Chris Johnston



Goku charges up his patented Kamehameha attack.



Tapping the Energy button without hooking it onto a punch or kick combo will send out a regular fireball.

Download. Upload. Reload.



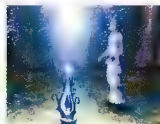
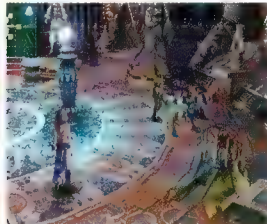
Look for this icon on Twisted Metal:Black. ONLINE and other PlayStation 2 games with online capability.



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

Final Fantasy X-2

Publisher:	Square Electronics Arts
Developer:	Squaresoft
Players:	1
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	50%
Release:	Fall 2003
Also In:	None
Web Address:	www.squaresoft.com
The Good:	It's an actual, honest-to-goodness sequel to a <i>Final Fantasy</i> game.
The Bad:	Square's keeping a tight lid on most of the game's characters.
And The Ugly:	Yuna's new hoochie-mama look might be too much for her old fans.



Yuna takes center stage in this sequel, but she's not a summoner anymore. Now, she uses guns.



Yuna will explore all-new areas of Spira, like this ethereal tower.

Any RPG fan will tell you—Squaresoft simply does not make direct sequels to its epic *Final Fantasy* games. Sure, you'll find a different guy named Cid, a feathery Chocobo, and the occasional Moogle in each new chapter, but the story lines of these role-playing games have never linked to the previous game in the series...until now. The deepest wishes of any gamer who reached *Final Fantasy X's* bittersweet ending will soon be fulfilled: Square will release a direct sequel in 2003.

Final Fantasy X-2 focuses on the further adventures of Yuna, the sweet, endearing heroine who helped Tidus overcome the ancient evil known as Sin. The first thing you'll notice about the game is, well, Yuna's

ass. It appears that the traumatic events she's undergone have inspired a total fashion makeover. This liberated Yuna has tossed aside her classy priestess garb in favor of sultry hot pants, handguns, and one extremely long braid of hair. The details of her quest remain foggy, but it appears to be set about two years after the end of *FFX*. Her main goal is to discover a way to reunite with love interest Tidus, who vanished from the world of Spira after defeating Sin. We'd love to go into greater details about what to expect from *FFX-2*, but frankly, it's just too early to reveal more. See below for a sneak peek at what Yuna will experience in this landmark sequel. 🐉

—Shane Bettenhausen

A GLIMPSE OF WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

BATTLES



This sequel's combat system appears to be much like *FFX's*, with reassuring standbys like hit points and magic points displayed onscreen. It's nice to know that even though she's now packin' two pistols, Yuna can still toss a spell or two when she needs to.

REBUILDING



FFX-2 takes place in Spira, the same world from the first game. You'll find that the denizens have flourished since the defeat of Sin and rebuilt their homes. Here you see Kilika, the seaside village that was obliterated in *FFX*, restored to its tropical splendor.

YUNA RAIDER



This is a biggie—Yuna will be able to jump over pits and pull herself onto ledges on the field maps. Incorporating action elements into standard RPG gameplay seems like a good idea to us, but will diehard *Final Fantasy* fans be aghast? We'll see.

OLD FRIENDS



Hottie-come-lately Yuna's the main attraction, but *Final Fantasy X's* Lulu and Rikku will also show up. It's unclear if they'll be playable party members, but expect nearly every character from *FFX* to make at least a cameo appearance sooner or later.

ROBOTS



After Yuna and co. debunk the technology-fearing religion of Yevon at the end of *FFX*, the general populace embraces the previously forbidden concept of machinery. You'll now find robots chilling in the temples, and hovercrafts, not Chocobos, will be carrying people around.

**If you suck,
at least no one
will know who
you are.**



Look for this icon on SOCOM U.S. Navy SEALs and other PlayStation 2 games with online capability.

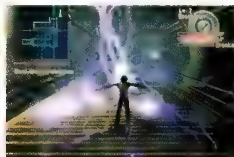


**LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.**

Galerians: Ash

Sammy • January 2003 • Also On: None—Picking up directly after the events of the PlayStation cult-hit *Galerians*, this sequel reunites Rion, the pill-popping psychic hero, with Lilia, his waifish girlfriend. Together, this heroin-chic duo must once again battle the evil supercomputer Dorothy and her legion of psychic assassins, aka Galerians.

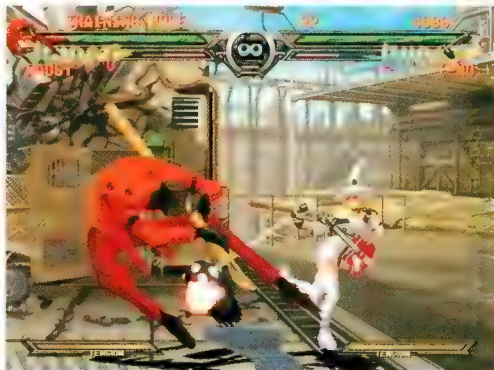
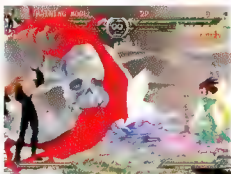
The gameplay mixes elements of action, role-playing, and survival-horror into one trippy, creepy adventure that borrows heavily from the classic anime flick *Akira*. It's twisted, gory, and deep, and the ambiance feels kind of like *Ico* meets *Silent Hill* in *Blade Runner*. If that sounds like your cup of drugged-up tea, check it out.



Guilty Gear X2

Sammy • January 2003 • Also On: None

—Just in time for this winter's Guns 'N Roses tour, this heavy metal-themed 2D fighting game strikes the PS2 again. As sequels go, this one falls squarely into the *Super Street Fighter II* camp, meaning that it's more of a "substantial upgrade" than a true "next chapter." Even so, GGX2 sports six cool, new characters, additional stages, and a cinema-heavy story mode, and subtle gameplay tweaks like the new Burst Gauge. Expect the same smooth animation and quirky character designs the series is famous for, and of course, tons of wink-wink references to '80s hair bands like Testament and Enuff Z'nuff. Seriously.



NBA Street Vol. 2

EA Sports Big • Spring 2003 • Also On: GC, Xbox
We've been waiting too long for a sequel to EA Big's awesome NBA hoops game. *Vol. 2* adds co-op multiplayer to the mix, along with even more tricks (like the ability to dribble off your opponent's head), and a fresh crop of old-school ballers whose nicknames are still legendary: Magic, Dr. J, Pistol Pete, and Wilt the Stilt.



gpb MIDWAY

**SAVE OUR SPECIES.
EXTERMINATE THEIRS.**

DEFENDER

SAVING THE HUMAN RACE

Only Defender gives you the power to save the human race from the onslaught of an alien invasion. Now the timeless action videogame returns, all-new and in full 3D, with non-stop space combat, strategic gameplay, special weapons, and a ship designed to be an alien's worst nightmare. **YOU ARE THE LAST LINE OF DEFENSE. YOU ARE THE DEFENDER.**



PlayStation®2
video game system

screenshot from Xbox™
video game system

BECOME A DEFENDER AT WWW.DEFENDER.MIDWAY.COM



PlayStation 2

GAME BOY ADVANCE



Violence

TEEN
T
ESRB

Defender © 2002 Midway Amusement Games, LLC. All Rights Reserved. DEFENDER, MIDWAY and the Midway logo are registered trademarks of Midway Amusement Games, LLC. Used by permission. Developed by Dharma Seven Studios, Inc. Distributed under license by Midway Home Entertainment Inc. ®. Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo Game Boy logo are trademarks of Nintendo. "PlayStation" and the "PS" family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

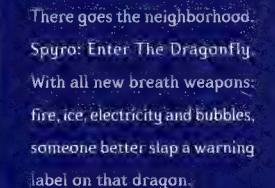
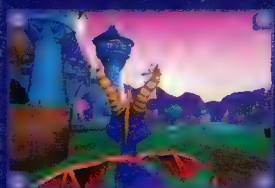
He's not just a fire hazard anymore.

METRO ANIMAL CONTROL



PlayStation 2





There goes the neighborhood.
Spyro: Enter The Dragonfly.
With all new breath weapons:
fire, ice, electricity and bubbles,
someone better slap a warning
label on that dragon.



www.spyrothedragon.com

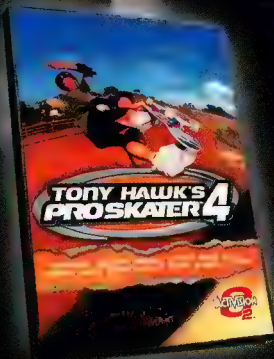


DROP IN TO THE **ULTIMATE** SKATEBOARDING CHALLENGE!

YOUR CAREER IS WHAT YOU MAKE OF IT...



14 of the world's top pros challenge you to prove your skills.



Featuring songs by *N.W.A.*, *Offspring*, and *System of a Down*. Official Strategy Guide available from *Brady Games*.

** Online play exclusive to PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system.*

TEEN

T CENTURY RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Comic Mischief
Mild Lyrics
Suggestive Themes

© 1999-2002 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Activision 02, Pro Skater and Sports Revolution are trademarks of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Tony Hawk is a trademark of Tony Hawk. PlayStation 2, Xbox, and GameCube versions developed by Neversoft Entertainment, Inc. PlayStation and Game Boy Advance versions developed by Neversoft. Nintendo Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S.A. and/or other countries and are licensed under Microsoft.™, ®, Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. The orange logo is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners.

PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system screenshots shown.

"Groundbreaking and brilliant..."

"Neversoft has another masterpiece on its hands."

-Official PlayStation Magazine (#60)

TONY HAWK'S PROSKATER™4



Tons of new goals in the deepest career mode to date.



All new tricks - skitch behind cars, skate on moving objects, and transfer over spines.



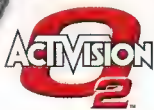
New multiplayer and online modes including Score Challenge and Capture the Flag!

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater™4 is the ultimate challenge. Pros challenge you to make your mark in huge free-roaming levels, taking on 190 progressively harder goals with no time limits to hold you back. Decide when you're ready to take on your Pro Challenge and move into the pro ranks, where it's a whole new game. Build your skills, earn respect, and show that you've got what it takes to Go Pro...




GAME BOY ADVANCE

Compatible with PlayStation® game console and compatible with PlayStation®2 computer entertainment systems



SPORTS REVOLUTION

activision02.com

A person wearing a bright yellow jacket is shown from the chest up on the right side of the frame, giving a thumbs-up gesture. The background is a vast, cloudy sky with soft, diffused light, suggesting a bright but overcast day. The overall mood is positive and energetic.

SAVE YOUR THUMBS FOR SOMETHING WORTHWHILE.

Keep your thumbs happy. Play video games. *Get them at EBgames.com.*



EB GAMES.com
AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY OUR GAMES



PREVIEW

True Crime: Streets of L.A.

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Luxoflux
Players:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	60%
Release:	Spring 2003
Also On:	PS2, Xbox
Web Address:	www.activision.com
The Goal:	It's like a John Woo flick in videogame form.
The Bad:	People might think it's simply a <i>Grand Theft Auto III</i> clone.
And The Ugly:	Being the quest of honor at a Russian Mafia bullet festival



STREETS OF L.A.

City of Angels



Executive Producer
Chris Archer

Unlike the *Grand Theft Auto* series, *True Crime* takes place on the actual, honest-to-goodness streets of L.A., not some fictional city. "What we have accomplished is effectively a real-time map of Los Angeles," beams Executive Producer Chris Archer, "complete with hundreds of landmark buildings like the L.A. Convention Center, Staples Center, Capitol Records, Hollywood and Highland, Rodeo Drive, and Santa Monica Pier, just to mention a few."

Upon first viewing *True Crime*, the phrase "*Grand Theft Auto III* clone" immediately comes to mind. But those working on the game don't seem to be worried. "I think it's great to be compared to the biggest game of last year," laughs Executive Producer Chris Archer. "And while we don't mind the nod, *True Crime* offers a much different experience for the gamer. In this game, you're the star of a Hong Kong-style action movie that takes place in L.A." In other words, *True Crime* is still a drive-anywhere, shoot-anyone game, but with much more emphasis on hand-to-hand combat and gunplay than *GTA3*.

And that's not the only difference. Instead of being a young mob-hopeful slowly working your way through the ranks of the underworld, you play as Nick Kang, a rather destructive cop (sorta like Riggs from the *Lethal Weapon* flicks) with a martial-arts

background, a Hong Kong upbringing, and a father who died in the line of duty. Who better to assign to the special antimob task force of the L.A.P.D.?

Your time is spent shaking down informants, tailing mob bosses, and infiltrating gang hideouts. (The prominent gangs in *True Crime* are the Russian and Chinese Mafias.) But remember—first and foremost, you're a cop, so no matter what you're doing, if you get a call on a break-in or stolen car, you should really help out in any way you can. If you're close to the scene, assist the boys in blue and chase down that perp. It's the only way to earn "cop points," which in turn is the only way to unlock the various dojos around L.A.

Yes—dojos. See, *True Crime* isn't all about car chases and drive-by shootings. Once you get where you're going, you'll have to get out of the car and take thugs on in face-to-face fights. And while it's

THE SEARCH FOR INSPIRATION

RESERVOIR DOGS (1992)

Director: Quentin Tarantino

Five strangers team up for a diamond heist, but everything falls apart when they discover they have a rat in their midst. One of the grittiest, goriest, swearingest crime movies ever to hit the big screen.

Quote: "You shoot me in a dream, you better wake up and apologize."



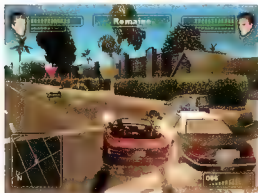
HARD BOILED (1992)

Director: John Woo

Cops, bombs, babies peeing...all the spectacular things you'd expect in a John Woo film. Chow Yun-Fat reprises the role he always plays: soft-spoken badass who kills lots of people.

Quote: "Give a guy a gun, he thinks he's Superman. Give him two and he thinks he's God."





usually much easier to pull a piece on a bad guy, that's not always an option. Therefore, you've gotta have fists of fury. Luckily, L.A. is a mecca of martial-arts instruction. "Nick can learn moves from senseis in numerous dojos spread throughout the city," explains Archer. "We have numerous fighting styles in the game, including Wu Shu kung fu, Kenpo, traditional karate, and wrestling."

Wait...wrestling? "Yeah. The wrestling has to be my favorite fighting style in the game," Archer says

"Pretty much anything directed by John Woo, Michael Mann, or Quentin Tarantino...well, maybe not From Dusk Till Dawn."

—Executive Producer Chris Archer on what movies inspired True Crime

with a smile. "While this wouldn't normally be the case—I'm a huge Hong Kong cinema fan—when we did the motion-capture session with professional wrestlers, it was, simply put, awesome and powerful. It's not pretty, but incredibly brutal to watch. All the moves are motion captured and look amazing." We'll back that part up. Fighting in *True Crime* looks just as good, if not better, than many of the fighting games out there. Plus, you can throw opponents into and through just about anything around you. Some scumbag giving you static? Throw him through a table and watch him shut the hell up.

Or, if you happen to be a pacifist, simply take him to the ground and cuff him. But where's the fun in that?

Just know that every action has a consequence. Unlike the recent *Grand Theft Autos*, in which failing to protect someone or killing the wrong guy leads to a Mission Failed message and a chance to start over, the world of *True Crime* never stops, even if the player makes a mistake. Let a suspect escape, and the story will simply branch off to a different plotline—

probably one that ends with said criminal returning and making Nick's life quite miserable. The streets of L.A. offer no second chances, but the game does have multiple endings, so wasting someone or failing a mission isn't the end of the world.

The best part? Well, by the time *True Crime* comes out this spring, you're likely to be all *Vice City*-ed out, which means this new take on the genre should be exactly what the doctor ordered. At the very least, it'll be a solid action game with a sweet fighting system. 🐾

—Greg Sewart

SHOOT TO KILL

Bussin' Caps



Since gunplay is such an important part of *True Crime*, you'd better believe the developers at Luxoflux are taking their targeting system seriously. *Streets of L.A.* features a cool, *Max Payne*-ish slow-mo effect, making aiming easier than in *Vice City*. And when Nick learns the precision-targeting technique (above) ...look out. "The game goes into a slow-motion close-up of the enemy, with a targeting reticle that can be moved to the specific location on the enemy you want to hit," says Executive Producer Archer. "It's the player's choice and skill that determines whether or not he can nail the guy with a single shot."

LETHAL WEAPON (1987)

Director: Richard Donner

Suicidal cop Riggs teams up with officer Murtaugh (who's too old for this s***) to take down a group of former Vietnam War mercenaries turned heroin dealers. Much property damage ensues.

Quote: "Have you ever met anybody you didn't kill?" "Well, I haven't killed you yet."



HEAT (1995)

Director: Michael Mann

De Niro meets Pacino in this stylish action-drama about a crew of high-stakes thieves and an obsessed cop trying to take them down. Best known for its thrilling bank-robbery scene with the million-bullet shoot-out.

Quote: "Cause she's got a great ass, and you got your head all the way up it!"



Nick goes all *Max Payne* as he redecorates a Russian bathhouse in dark, crimson hues.



Black & Bruised

Majesco • January 2003 • Also On: PS2

Arcade boxing games are as old as dirt, but Majesco plans to bring something new to the ring with *Black & Bruised*. The cartoony design style stands out, and the power-up system is deeper than *Ready 2 Rumble's*, but the biggest innovation has to be the Boxer's Life mode, in which between-bout movie clips advance each fighter's unique story. And these fighters aren't all coming up from the mean streets; the 14 characters (with at least four that are unlockable) include an opera singer, a socialite, a cowgirl, and a wannabe actor. The usual Versus, Survival, Training, and Tournament modes round out the pugilistic action.



X-Men: Wolverine's Revenge

Activision • Spring 2003 • Also On: PS2, Xbox

Wolverine's Revenge changes the pace of *X-Men* games by placing the ol' Canuckhead in a solo adventure. Wolvie's healing factor and adamantium claws both play major roles, but so do his more forgotten powers—for example, you can sniff out what's ahead using his heightened sense of smell. The comics-faithful story comes courtesy of veteran *Wolverine* writer Larry Hama, and Mark Hamill voices the feral one.



Things in the light are not the same in the dark



Travel two parallel worlds to fight evil and restore peace in the land of Hyrule. Or, try the depths of the Four Swords dungeons in a new challenge where you take on the ultimate Wind Mage with up to four players.



Link with up to
4 Players

EVERYONE
E
ESRB RATING
FOR ALL AGES

Mild Violence

POWERED BY

COMPUSA's
Gamefixx.com
we're your connecton!



PREVIEW
GALLERY

GAME PUBLISHER RELEASE DATE

PlayStation 2

Ghost Recon	Ubi Soft	12/5/02
NCAA College Basketball 2K3	Sega	12/12/02
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai	Infogrames	12/19/02
Butt Ugly Martians: Zoom or Doom	Vivendi Universal	12/31/02
Malice	Sierra	1/1/03
The Sims	Electronic Arts	1/15/03

X b o x

NCAA College Basketball 2K3	Sega	12/12/02
Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	Electronic Arts	12/12/02
Capcom vs SNK 2 EO	Capcom	12/12/02
Brute Force	Microsoft	12/24/02
Malice	Vivendi Universal	1/1/03
Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball	Tecmo	1/15/03

GameCube

Dead to Rights	Namco	12/3/02
Jimmy Neutron Boy Genius	THQ	12/5/02
NHL 2K3	Sega	12/5/02
NCAA College Basketball 2K3	Sega	12/12/02
Ghost Recon	Ubi Soft	12/19/02
Dr. Muto	Midway Games	1/5/03
Resident Evil 2	Capcom	1/9/03

Game Boy Advance

Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	12/3/02
MLB Slugfest 2003	Midway Games	12/5/02
Road Rash - Jailbreak	Destination Software	12/5/02
Battlebots: Beyond the BattleBox	Majesco Sales	12/8/02
Mortal Kombat Deadly Alliance	Midway Games	12/8/02
The Recruit	Ibom entertainment	12/12/02
Disney Sports Football	Konami	12/20/02
Downforce	Titus	2/19/03

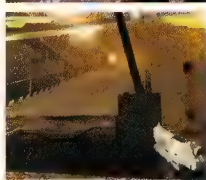
Skies of Arcadia Legend

Sega • January 2003 • Also On: Dreamcast—Sega's air-pirate fantasy didn't exactly fly high on the struggling Dreamcast, but hopefully, more fans will discover its riches when it lands on GameCube. Here, it's the biggest fish in an RPG-starved lake. You assume the role of Vyse, a swashbuckling teen with a thirst for adventure and the keys to his very own airship (which is great for attracting some perky female comrades). The gameplay borrows a few pages from *Final Fantasy*'s library, with turn-based battles, cavernous dungeons, and majestic airships. Hey, if you're gonna pilfer some great ideas, take from the best.



Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter

Black Label Games • March 2003 • Also On: Xbox
Crave's recent move to exclusively producing budget titles has left the long-delayed *Mace Griffin* in the hands of Black Label (aka Universal Interactive). So what makes this stand out in the crowded first-person-shooter genre? Seamless transitions from space dogfights to interior combat—you can pilot a spacecraft one minute, then dock it and enter a corridor shooter the next, all with no loading screens. Fly six different ships, infiltrate alien cattle-farms (you read that right), and salvage parts from wrecked outposts.



RESERVE THESE GAMES NOW AT
PREORDERPIPELINE.COM

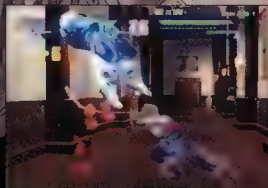
Release dates subject to change. Visit us online for current information.
Not all titles available in all CompUSA stores.

GAMERS.COM

FIGHT LIKE A SUPER HERO.™



EACH X-MEN HAS EXPLOSIVE AND UNIQUE SUPER HERO™ POWERS TO TAKE ON OTHER X-MEN—IT'S THE MOST INTENSE FIGHTING YOU'VE EVER EXPERIENCED.



USE INCREDIBLE COMBINATIONS AND UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS TO BRING 24 DIFFERENT X-MEN MUTANTS TO LIFE!

X-MEN™

NEXT DIMENSION



Violence,
Suggestive Themes



PlayStation 2

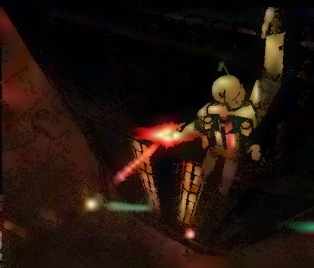
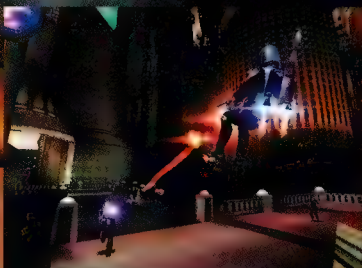
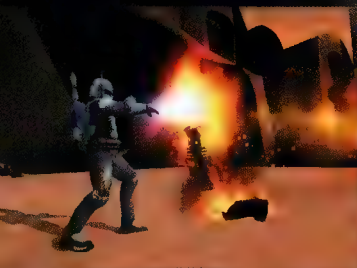


MARVEL

ACTIVISION

activision.com

MARVEL, X-Men, and all Marvel characters: TM and © 2002 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. www.marvel.com. Game code © 2001-2002 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the ESRB MC classification only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. Licensed by Nintendo, Nintendo and Nintendo GameCube are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.



TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Violence



NINTENDO
GAMECUBE™



PlayStation 2



WHAT DO THE GALAXY'S MOST DANGEROUS FUGITIVES SEE WHEN THEY HAVE NIGHTMARES?



You're Jango Fett, the most ruthless bounty hunter the galaxy has ever seen. They made you the genetic template of the clone army for a reason: you're fast, you're lethal and nothing comes between you and your prey. Fly, fight and tear your way through 18 levels on six unique worlds that make up the seedy underbelly of the *Star Wars* universe. And teach the galaxy's most wanted that in the end, there's no place to hide.

STAR WARS BOUNTY HUNTER

WWW.STARWARSBOUNTYHUNTER.COM



PREVIEW

Panzer Dragoon Orta

- Sega
- Smilebit
- 1
- Shooter
- 90%
- January 2003
- None
- www.sega.com
- Panzer Dragoon returns from the void!

So few people understand how awesome that fact is.

It's been almost five years since the last Panzer game.



New to the Panzer Dragoon series is the Glide command. Basically, it accomplishes one of two things. You can use it as a speed burst to position yourself properly against large enemies (or you can just use it as a ramming attack). Or, you can have it act as a brake, to keep from running into obstacles or to get enemies off your back.



Full 360-degree awareness will keep you from getting dead in Panzer Dragoon Orta.

This wasn't supposed to happen. Although the Panzer Dragoon series was one of the most beloved on Sega Saturn, developer Team Andromeda split up after the third game in the franchise was completed, making a fourth game highly unlikely. Hardcore Sega fans were bummed, since they'd never again revisit the gorgeous, mythical lands of Panzer Dragoon; take on one of the screen-filling bosses; find out what happened to Lagi (their faithful mount); or hum along to the absolutely beautiful music that was the series' trademark. But even though the Panzer titles were supposed to be a thing

of the past, here we are, just a month away from playing the fourth chapter.

Aside from having stunning graphics (it's one of the prettiest games you'll see on Xbox), Panzer Dragoon Orta is one of the most frantic shooters you'll ever play. You have to be constantly aware of everything happening around your dragon steed, and know how to deal with it. But while "dealing with it" would normally mean shooting anything that moves, Orta introduces new play mechanics that make it much more than a run-of-the-mill shooter. (Not that any past Panzers have been run-of-the-mill; just

What's all the Fuss About?

We're sure you're not very familiar with the Panzer Dragoon saga. The games were all released on the Saturn, after all. So here's a quick 'n' dirty rundown of the first three games in the series. Pay particular attention to the first two games, since they're both shooters like Orta.



This Saturn launch title might not look like much now, but back in the mid-'90s, this was the game that convinced a lot of people Sega's new console was the bomb. A fully 3D, on-rails shooter with incredible music, Panzer Dragoon was very innovative.



FAVORITE DRAGON

Playing through *Orta* multiple times will unlock various goodies such as extra levels, movies, and concept art. The best secret, though, is the full version of the original *Panzer Dragoon*.

HOW THE WINGS ARE EVOLVED (OR NOT)

THREE WINGS

FOUR WINGS

SIX WINGS



Base Wing



Heavy Wing



Glide Wing

WING TYPE	THREE WINGS	FOUR WINGS	SIX WINGS
MOVEMENT	B	C	A
WEAPON RANGE	B	A	C
WEAPON BURST	BURST OF 3	BURST OF 3	HOMING SHOTS
WEAPON SPEED	8	3	NONE
WEAPON TYPE	HITS EVERYTHING ONSCREEN	CONCENTRATED LASER THAT NEEDS TO BE AIMED	CONCENTRATES ON INCOMING FIRE
WEAPON EFFECT	GLIDE ATTACK DOES DECENT DAMAGE	CAN'T GLIDE	VERY POWERFUL SHOT: REGAINS HEALTH
WEAPON USE	WAVES OF REGULAR ENEMIES AND EARLY LEVEL BOSSES	BOSSES WITH MAJOR DEFENSE AND LOW MOBILITY	LARGE SWARMS OF ENEMIES OR BOSSES WITH MANY TURRETS

check out the *Dragoon* Classics sidebar.) You now have a bit of control over your speed (with the new Glide move), and can choose the form of your dragon (a throwback to the dragon evolution feature introduced in *Panzer Dragoon II Zwei*...kind of). No longer do you simply turn and shoot at whatever you see; you're now forced to think through each situation. Do you switch to a different form to take on that wave of tough enemies coming from the front? Or do you slow down to let that rear-approaching wave overtake you? You also have to gather experience points for each form of your dragon—yet another thing to keep in mind during those nail-biting firefights.

But don't get the impression that *Panzer Orta* is all about micromanaging special abilities and upgrading your dragon. Each facet of the game is so smoothly implemented into the classic shooter-action formula that after a couple levels, they'll



The Glide Wing's Berserk attack will make short work of those missiles.



This follow-up improved on the cult-hit launch game in almost every way. It played the same, but added the Berserk attack (wiping out everything onscreen) and an evolution system where your dragon grew based on your performance in every level.



Saga took the evolution system from *Zwei* and ran with it in this most unique of role-playing games. That's right. This was no shooter, but a full-fledged RPG with a turn-by-turn battle system and a story that brought the whole trilogy to a close.

TAKE CONTROL

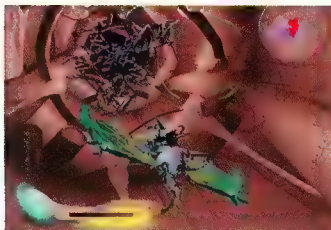
This is the fire button. Tap it to unleash bursts of fire from rider Orta's handgun, or hold it down to lock on to multiple enemies, resulting in your dragon unleashing homing lasers from its mouth (depending on its form).

Use these to look at all four quadrants of the radar. Simultaneously hitting both buttons looks directly behind your current view.

Use this button to transform your mount into one of three forms.

Glide with these colorful little buttons.

The Berserk attack buttons. Just make sure your Berserk meter is full before you try it.



become second nature. You won't be thinking about which dragon form to take—you'll simply be doing it.

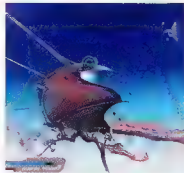
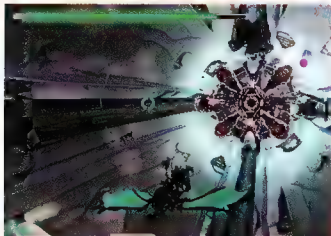
Imagine flying along and noticing three radar blips coming from behind. You jam on the shoulder buttons for a quick turn and see that the approaching trio of baddies is shielded from the front. Fair enough. Just hit the Glide button to slow down and watch them streak past you. Now, lock on all three rear ends to take 'em out. But don't get too comfortable; there are 20 new enemies charging at you from 12 o'clock. Time to transform to the Glide Wing and use its homing shot to destroy that flock of bogies in record time. Even if they manage to fire off a bunch of missiles, just use your Berserk power to take care of all the incoming projectiles. Hey, you'll even get a little health bonus to boot. Such is a regular battle situation in *Panzer Dragoon Orta*.

As in most shooters, though, the bosses are the most impressive part of *Orta*. These screen-filling monstrosities will

have you saying "holy crap" as you dismantle them piece-by-piece with your lasers and Berserk attacks. And learning to use the Glide ability is the only way to beat them. (You starting to notice a pattern here?) See, getting alongside or in front of different bosses is the sole way of exposing their weak points. To get alongside them, you need to aim to the left or right of the creature and speed up or slow down depending on their flight pattern. Having to think through each boss encounter helps *Orta* further transcend the average shooter.

And to think, five years ago, most *Panzer Dragoon* fans thought they'd never again see their beloved series. It's nice to see that as old-school games are revived (like *Contra* and *Metroid*), some of the more niche titles aren't getting overlooked. Hopefully, the Xbox will mean that a bigger crowd of gamers will get to experience *Panzer*. After playing *Orta*, they'll understand why a lot of us old-timers have such fond memories of the *Panzer* series. 🐉

—Greg Sewart





PREVIEW

Return to Castle Wolfenstein

- Activision**
- Nerve Software, Raster Productions, and Id Software**
- 1-4 (1-12 online)**
- First-person shooter**
- 65%**
- Spring 2003**
- PS2**
- www.activision.com**
- Put simply, the innovative multiplayer mode rules.**
- The fantastical elements (zombies, magic) might turn off hardcore WWII nuts.**
- Getting fragged by the leather-clad Nazi chicks... it hurts so good.**



Not all of your enemies are drooling zombies, wicked magicians, and evil Nazis. Some are HOT evil Nazis.



Return's single-player game revives the same timeless thrills of the old Wolf games—filling Nazi brains with lead.

Wein Liebert! It's been 10 years since Id Software's *Wolfenstein 3D* pioneered the first-person shooter (FPS) genre. Without its bare, gray corridors; floating keys; and rabid Nazi dogs, we'd never have seen the likes of *Doom*, *Quake*, or *Noah's Ark 3D*. The great-grandpappy of the FPS has finally strafed back for another round in *Return to Castle Wolfenstein*, a modern-day update that offers a complex single-player adventure and a groundbreaking online multiplayer mode.

The wafer-thin story line of the old Wolf game was something like "shoot lots of Nazis," but *Return* actually sports a deep plot that might shock purists. This game centers on a fantastical *Indiana Jones-meets-X-Files* scenario. SS commander Heinrich Himmler is

trying to use dark magic to resurrect Henry the Fowler, the 10th-century warrior whom Hitler believed to be the genesis of the Aryan race. It's some pretty far-out stuff, and it leads to all sorts of weird encounters with magic-wielding foes; genetic monstrosities; and creepy, undead freaks.

You may be thinking, "Wait a second! This game isn't new, I saw it for PC last year!" But rest assured, this isn't a quick-and-dirty port. Serious improvements take it a step above its PC cousin. "The Xbox is an extremely powerful console," explains Director Brandon James. "There have been optimizations across the board." Console players get new cinematics, reworked character models, and Killer Dolby Digital 5.1 surround sound. "Playing the game with a

STOCK UP ON THESE HANDY NEW BATTLEFIELD ITEMS

B.J.'s Arsenal

The Xbox version of *Return* boasts four useful items you can carry with you and use when the situation demands. They're all new to the console version except for the wine bottle, cause B.J.'s always enjoyed fine vino.



B.J. hits the sauce when the goin' gets rough to regain some health. Look for them in Nazi wine cellars.



Use this to emit an electromagnetic pulse that will stun certain nasty types of creatures.



Pull out this shimmering shield when you're surrounded by those aforementioned EMP-fearing baddies.



B.J. borrows a page from the *Castlevania* canon with this relic—it obliterates evil with a blast of holy light.

Enter Champs Sports All-Star Game Sweepstakes.
Visit your local Champs Sports store or log on to champsports.com

SURE THERE'S A POINT WHERE
THE GAME SLOWS DOWN.

WHEN IT'S OVER.



NBA
STARTING
FIVE

Looking for a leisurely game of hoops? Look elsewhere. This is NBA Starting Five—the game that moves so fast you'll be hitting the showers after you play. Pull off the league's sweetest moves as effortlessly as the pros. Execute real NBA team tactics that'll keep your offense putting up numbers and your D putting on the pressure. Draft new stars from an up-to-date roster then bench the slow ones. And get familiar with the pause button. You're gonna need it.



CHAMPS
SPORTS



©2005 Konami. All rights reserved. NBA, Starting Five, and NBA Starting Five are trademarks of Konami Corporation. The Konami logo is a trademark of Konami Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Microsoft, Xbox, and Xbox Live are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. The Chicago Bulls is a trademark of the Chicago Bulls. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. NBA Starting Five is a registered trademark of Konami Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.



PREVIEW



WOLFENSTEIN

Back before *Wolfenstein 3D* brought Nazi-blasting to the masses, a series of computer games carried the *Castle Wolfenstein* name. Id later bought the rights and carried on the legacy.



Above: Himmler and Co. have been dabbling in some shady genetic experiments in their hidden laboratory. When you encounter these grotesque monstrosities, knock them out with the EMP generator to avoid being swarmed.

surround-sound system takes the audio to an entirely new level," James divulges. "Bullets impact all around you, zombies moan and growl from behind you, and the positions of enemies are even more apparent as sound cues are picked up from all directions."

Technical upgrades are nice, but adding new levels, monsters, and weapons is even cooler. You'll find plenty of all three here. In fact, the game now sports a new playable prologue explaining how our consonant-heavy hero, B.J. Blazkowicz, ends up back at the castle. You'll also find two new guns scattered throughout the game's later levels, and you'll need 'em to handle the nasty new foes lurking in the shadows.

You might expect the single-player experience to hearken back to the simple find-the-key setup of the old *Wolf* games, but it's actually much more varied. "Players can take a tactical approach to every combat situation, choosing to use stealth, sniping, a frontal attack, or (most often) a combination of all of these styles," says Id Software co-owner Kevin Cloud. "Some combat situations have an element of style similar to something like *Metal Gear Solid*." Hardly the mindless blasting one might expect from a *Wolfenstein* title. Oh, and the Xbox version features another new way to play: Cooperative mode. "Hooting it up next to a buddy while storming your way through the single-player campaign is just immensely satisfying," says James. Remember the fun you and your friend had with *Halo* at 3 a.m.? Yep, it's time for that again,

but with Nazis and zombies instead of Covenant and Flood.

As solid as the main adventure is, *Return to Castle Wolfenstein's* Xbox Live combat just might overshadow it. It's not the kind of online fragfest you might expect. "Going into the design of multiplayer, we all really wanted to stay away from the classic deathmatch concept," explains James. "Developing an Axis vs. Allies team-based experience just made better sense." Each player chooses from one of four unique classes (see below). In each match, two teams race to complete a series of objectives while trying to impede the opposition. For example, in one level, an engineer must bomb a safe, extract the documents, and pass them off to a teammate who then runs them through a secret passage-way to safety. Team-based strategy demands a steady flow of voice contact, and the Xbox Live communicator performs admirably.

The multiplayer stages offer a wide variety of locales and objectives, and the developers have tweaked them for the Xbox. "Most of the levels from the PC version have been redesigned or turned into multiple maps to maximize the fun for tighter 4-6 player squads," explains James. "We've also added exclusive maps just for the Xbox version."

It's obvious that tremendous effort went into moving *Return* over to the Xbox. Once the wizards at Id are finally pleased with their creation, expect legions of gamers to inundate the servers with WWII mayhem.

—Shane Bettenhausen

MULTIPLAYER CHARACTER CLASSIC INITIAL VERSIONS BROWSE

SOLDIER	ENGINEER	ENGINEER	MEDIC
He's the only member who can wield the really heavy weapons, but he lacks other specialty skills. Adds some much-needed brawn to a team.	He can toss out a limited number of ammo refills to his comrades, call in fiery air strikes by tossing out flare grenades, and use most of the same guns as the soldier.	You'll need an engineer to complete many of the level-specific goals in each map. He can't use many types of guns, but he can operate some turrets and reactivate machinery.	These guys can toss out medkits and revive fallen players before the timed respawn (usually, you must wait about 20 seconds to get revived). Not much of a fighter, though.

WIN COOL PRIZES!

ENTER THE

PANZER DRAGON ORTA™

SWEEPSTAKES



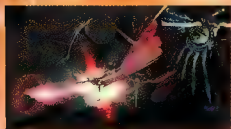
10 stages of frantic action featuring multiple paths with unique encounters



Enemies attack from all sides in a 360 degree theater of combat.



High-quality cut-scenes weave a compelling story of war, hope, and resurrection



Master multiple dragon powers and attacks

Here's what you could win:

GRAND PRIZE (1)



- 1 Opened copy of Panzer Dragoon Saga signed by Smilebit
- 1 Sega Saturn
- 1 Sega Saturn 3D Control Pad
- 1 Signed Panzer Dragoon ORTA "movie-style" poster
- 1 Panzer Dragoon ORTA t-shirt

SECOND PRIZE (4)

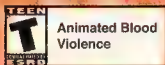
- Unopened copy of Panzer Dragoon Saga for Sega Saturn
- 1 Signed Panzer Dragoon ORTA "movie-style" poster
- 1 Panzer Dragoon ORTA t-shirt

THIRD PRIZE (10)

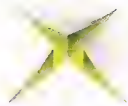
- 1 Panzer Dragoon ORTA t-shirt

ENTER ONLINE AT:

WWW.GAMERS.COM/PANZER



Sega is a registered U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Sega, the Sega logo, Panzer Dragoon, and Panzer Dragoon ORTA are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. Original game (S), SEGA CORPORATION, 1994, 2002. Panzer Dragoon ORTA (C) SEGA/SMILEBIT CORPORATION, 2002. Microsoft, XBOX, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the US and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. Dolby and the double-D symbol are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories. All Rights Reserved. www.sega.com/panzer



PREVIEW GALLERY

Dark Angel

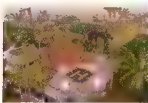
Sierra • December 2002 • Also On: GC—The TV series may have been cancelled, but genetically altered super-soldier Max lives on in this beat-'em-up, which features voiceovers from sci-fi pinup girl Jessica Alba herself. Max has a few special combo moves at her disposal, but nothing especially spectacular, since this is mostly your typical brainless brawler. Mash buttons, grab keycard, open fence, then mash more buttons.



Jurassic Park:

Operation Genesis

Universal Interactive • March 2003 • Also On: PS2—Finally, instead of trying to survive in the post-movie *Jurassic Park*, you actually get to run a park on your own. Fund digs around the world for dino DNA, collect what you find, grow dinos, and place them in the park. But be careful—placing natural enemies near each other will result in expensive dino-casualties. And be prepared to bring out the choppers and tranquilizer guns, should a stray raptor or T-Rex decide to hunt some tasty tourists. Can you do accomplish what John Hammond couldn't? Can you control Jurassic Park?



Midtown Madness 3

Microsoft • Spring 2003 • Also On: None Street racing may be the theme du jour in driving games, but *Midtown Madness* has been doing it on the PC for years, and now it's coming to Xbox. Race licensed cars, from the BMW Mini Cooper to the new Hummer, through the streets of Washington, DC or Paris. Play by yourself or against friends (or enemies) online through Xbox Live. And to keep the *Madness* from getting old, you'll be able to download new content and missions.



Break AWAY

Get
ACTIVE
Stay



FritoLay

Tropicana



the PepsiCo family of companies

What's holding you back?
Get out. And get to your
local Y. Much more there
than you might think.



YMCA

gymna
baske

er rock | d | scuba | football | aerobics
ga skateboard | vert | arts www.ymca.net



LEGENDARY BOXES

This time around, the cover creatures are the legendary Pokémon that Team Magma and Aqua seek to capture. The "red" version, *Ruby*, features Graodon, and the "blue" version, *Sapphire*, features Kai'ooga. Don't get attached to these names; they may end up changing for the U.S. version.

Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire

Nintendo • 2003 • Also On: None
Your friendly neighborhood Pikachu is headed back to gamedom in 2K3 when the next addiction for Pokémaniacs hits the United States in the form of *Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire*. The two games were released in Japan in November, so we've got a good peek at this next generation of *Pokémon*. And if you don't mind tripping over a few minor spoilers, take a gander at these new features:



New Villains

Depending on which version you play, you'll encounter different villains, each with their own plans for world domination. In *Ruby*, Team Magma is out to expand the amount of land on Earth and claim it for themselves by capturing Graodon, a legendary Pokémon who saved the world from a catastrophic, continuous rain (think Noah's Ark). And in *Sapphire*, Team Aqua wants to flood the Earth and turn it into their own private *Waterworld* by catching legendary water Pokémon, Kai'ooga.



A New Beginning

When you begin the game (in Mishiro Town with the Japanese version), before you can go get your very first monster, you'll witness the Professor being attacked by wild Pokémon. And you can't very well collect your first Pokémon without his help. To save him, you grab one of the three beasts the Professor was carrying in his now-abandoned backpack. Once you've saved him, the "Mon" you chose will be your starting Pokémon.

A New World

You've been to Johto and traveled the beaten paths of Kanto in the previous games. In *Ruby and Sapphire*, you've got an entirely new world to explore. And to help you on that quest is a new map function called PokéNav (shown above). You can zoom in and out on the map, and if you select a town, you'll even be able to see if there's a Pokémon center, store, or gym nearby.



A New Place to Call Home

In earlier *Pokémon* games, you could return to your room in your hometown and deck it out with all sorts of crap. Well, now you can even claim an area for your own "secret base." If you find holes in a desert hill, for example, you can make your Pokémon dig an entrance and create your own lil' hideout. You can trade these between cartridges so your hideout will appear in your friends' games and vice versa.



A New Rival

Your rival this time around is the Professor's kid. Is it a dude or a chick? The gender of your number-one opponent is the opposite of what you choose for yourself. So, if you choose "boy," your rival's a girl (and vice versa).

A NEW START!

Unfortunately, that team of level 99 Pichu and Pichus you totally kicked ass with in *Red/Blue/Yellow/Gold/Silver/Crystal* will have to stay in its cartridge prison. You can't trade Pokémon between the new GBA versions and the old GB/GBC games, so you've no choice but to rebuild your team from scratch.





METROID® PRIME • JAMES BOND 007™ NIGHTFIRE™
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA® • SEGA SPORTS™ NFL 2K3
NBA LIVE 2003 • NEED FOR SPEED™: HOT PURSUIT 2
STAR FOX® ADVENTURES • SONIC MEGA COLLECTION™
SWINGERZ GOLF™ • SEGA SPORTS™ NBA 2K3 • NHL® HITZ
LORD OF THE RINGS™: TWO TOWERS™ • NHL® 2003
SEGA PHANTASY STAR™ ONLINE EPISODE I & II



MADDEN NFL 2003 • MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE™
TIME SPLITTERS™ 2 • TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER™ 4
GODZILLA® DESTROY ALL MONSTERS - MELEE
STAR WARS® JEDI OUTCAST™ JEDI KNIGHT® II
SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS™ • SUPER MONKEY BALL™ 2
NASCAR THUNDER™ 2003 • SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE™
ANIMAL CROSSING™ • KNOCKOUT KINGS™ 2003 • ETC.

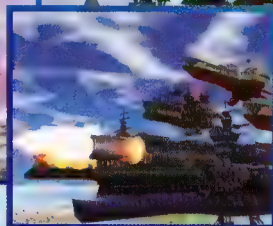
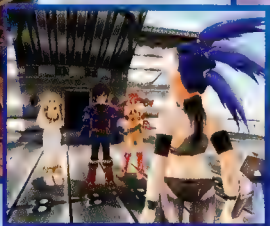
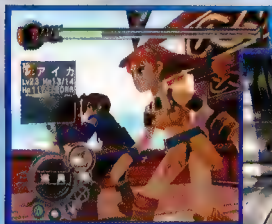


MORE THAN 180 GAMES. WHAT A RUSH.

High-Spirited Aerial Adventures Await You!



SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS™





As the massive
 Valuan airship
 draws near, your crew checks
 their weapons yet again. Ready
 your cutlass and grappling hooks
 and steel yourself for battle.



To Be Continued...



RATING PENDING
RP
 VISIT www.esrb.org OR
 CALL 1-800-771-3772
 FOR RATING INFORMATION.
 CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Sega, the Sega logo, and Skies of Arcadia are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. ©Overworks / SEGA, 2000, 2002.™ and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. www.sega.com

ACTION ON NINTENDO

VENDETTA

AMERICA'S UNLUCKIEST COP IS HAVING ANOTHER VERY BAD DAY.

John McClane is back ... this time in an all out battle to save his daughter. Rely on the killer instincts that made McClane a legend. Use your wits - and everything else at your disposal - to blast your way through L.A.'s seedy underbelly. Take out a multitude of bad guys and save the day as the Die Hard saga continues.

GAME FEATURES:

- New and original film characters.
- Hero Mode for heightened intensity and quickened reflexes.
- Dual weapons and an awesome arsenal including a sniper rifle, flame thrower and more.
- Take enemy hostages to save civilians and neutralize threats.

<http://diehardvendetta.sierra.com>



Blood
Strong Language
Violence



bits
studios



GAMECUBE™



TM

HAS JUST MATURED.



©2002 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. Fox Interactive, Die Hard and their associated logos are registered trademarks or trademarks of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All rights reserved. Sierra and the Sierra logo are trademarks of Sierra Entertainment, Inc. Vivendi Universal Game, and the Vivendi Universal Games logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. Game Engine © 2002 Blue Studios, TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. The red logo icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Any other trademarks, company and/or product names are the property of their respective owners.



The 9 Naughtiest Games Ever Made

(Plus one that's so naughty, we're not even allowed to tell you about it)

by Seanbaby

DIRTY PICTURES

Watch for these icons to measure the depths of each game's depravity.

IS THAT WHAT I THINK IT IS?



ONLY IN JAPAN



PIXELATED KNOCKERS



FULL FRONTAL NUDITY



MAKES YOU LESS INTERESTED IN SEX



FOR SICKOS ONLY



GENUINELY AROUSING



A CLASSIC GAME MADE DIRTY



Want gaming gifts for pals who've been nice? Skip ahead to the cover story, St. Nick, Jr. Right now, it's time to—awww, yeah!—get naughty. And if you think recent games like *BMX XXX* or the *Grand Theft Auto* series are the first adults-only titles to ramp up the raunch, buckle the heck up, choirboy. Sand paintings show that as far back as ancient Egypt, primitive man was mixing pornography with *Zaxxon*. This article, formed by months of painstaking and throbbing research, ranks the nine (plus one) naughtiest titles. It doesn't matter how old or obscure the game is, or whether it was unlicensed or imported; if it belongs deep behind the counter at a game store for the criminally insane, you'll find it here.

Heed this one warning: Some of the things discussed in this article may confuse and frighten younger readers or people with sheltered lives. If you are one of these, please stop reading and skip ahead to any of the reviews of games in which you splatter alien heads with a rocket launcher. Reading

this article will require some semblance of maturity and open-mindedness, so don't go calling the police about the filth that Satan sneaked into your videogame magazine.

On the other hand, please note that just 'cause this article requires maturity to read doesn't mean it took maturity to write. We're not pretending that what you're holding in your hands is anything more than an immature, hokey, funny, frightening look at gaming at its sleaziest. (And for God's sake, we hope all you're holding is this magazine.)

Each game will receive an Eroticism rating computed by expert pelvises, which describes how likely it is that playing it will take you from cold and clammy to hyperventilating with desire. And, though most of the actual gameplay in these naughty titles involves sexual content, the majority of the pornographic material has to be earned. That's why each game also gets a Nudity-challenge score, which describes how much work it takes before you and your joystick see some hoo-ha.

9. Bubble Bath Babes



Nintendo Entertainment System



Bubbling Bunny, you might have an easier time getting *Tetris* enthusiasts into your bathtub if you shaved off some of that blue armpit hair.

topless cheerleaders, but when the words "Pop my bubble now! I bet I can make yours burst!" come out of her mouth, you'll probably be too busy backing away cautiously to worry about anyone's bursting bubbles.

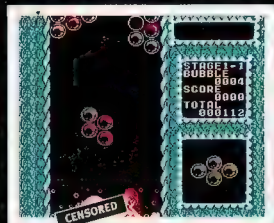
Nudity Challenge: 7 (out of 10)

Every two levels, the game displays a progressively more-naked picture of a woman making progressively more-insane comments about her genitals and soap. Trouble is, before you start seeing serious skin, the levels become almost impossible to beat. In fact, getting to the point at which you see any actual nudity requires such a high level of hand-eye coordination and rapid reflexes, you'd get more out of deciphering the scrambled images on late-night *Skinemax*.


One day, a game designer was playing *Tetris* and said, "What if I were playing this type of game, but at the same time was sporting a chubby?" Thus, *Bubble Bath Babes* was born. It's a lot like *Tetris* with a naked woman on the screen. If you do well, the game shows screenshots of sluts surrounded by flowers and screaming about bubble baths. For example, one chick in a bikini shrieks, "Way to go, hotshot! Care to lather me up?" If that doesn't put you in the mood for sex and *Tetris* at the same time, you're either a robot or a gay robot.

Eroticism: 2 (out of 10)

When a badly rendered woman who clearly can't speak English is trying to seduce someone with puns about soap bubbles, she's clearly fighting an uphill battle, no matter how attractive she is. She could be playfully washing your car with a group of



8. Strip Fighter 2

 TurboGrafx-16



As you can see, winning battles gives your fighter the honor of victory. And also boobs.

If all the fighters in *Street Fighter II* were women, and the game sucked, you'd have *Strip Fighter 2*. In it, several karate women face off in some kind of pit-fighting tournament, where the prize is to see naked pictures of women. The warriors come from varied backgrounds and cultures but are all bound together by an ancient martial-arts technique that mostly involves showing their panties to each other.

Eroticism: 3

We're all used to seeing half-naked females in fighting games, so nothing in *Strip Fighter 2* will turn you on until you win a picture of a naked girl. But that's when things get creepy. Before the camera pans down the girl's strategically blurred body, you see a panted-on eyelid slide over one of her eyes then disappear. We dunno if you've ever seen a girl wink without moving her face, but it looks less like flirting and more like a baby doll that's about to come to life and kill you.

Nudity Challenge: 7

You only earn nude pictures if you beat the game on Hard. But *Strip Fighter 2*'s control is so bad, it's tough to tell which gal you're actually moving. You often don't even know you've lost until you notice no picture of a naked woman is revealed.



7. Burning Desire

 Atari 2600

In *Burning Desire*, you play the role of a rescuer swooping in to save a woman from cannibals who've tied her to a burning pedestal. You dangle from a helicopter and drip liquid onto the fire with one of two rod-shaped things coming out of your pelvis. We'd like to think the rod squirting the flames is a fire hose, but because this is supposed to be an "adult" game, we should probably just be pretty grossed out right now.



What pants-free rescue expedition into a fiery cannibal camp would be complete without a crudely rendered sexual position that we can't show you here?

Eroticism: 1

Once you slowly, drip by drip, put out the fires that are cooking the woman alive, you lower yourself down to her. She will grab your previously unused non-dousing rod with her mouth and hold on with her teeth as you fly away. Solve the mystery that these bad graphics have given us and you'll realize that something painful and non-erotic is happening on the screen. Plus, your character seems to have double the normal amount of reproductive organs; one is a handle and the other is a fire extinguisher. Whatever fantasies this game is trying to create, good luck getting turned on by any of them.

Nudity Challenge: 2

The actual rescue is simple, but your only reward is a blink-and-you'll-miss-it animation of a half-monster woman showing you and your "safety rope" some X-rated gratitude. Then just to show you how bright she is, this bimbo takes about three seconds to find her way back to the cooking pot and start the whole ordeal over.

6. The Yakyuen Special • Sega Saturn



Thank you, Japan.



Another angle, better illustrating the daring cinematography.

In *The Yakyuen Special*, you select from a stable of Japanese girls ranging from cute to beastly. After you make your selection, the girl comes on the screen (next to a chart of her name, measurements, and age) and politely greets you. Then you play rock, paper, scissors against her, and she takes off a piece of clothing each time you win. Simple enough, right? But here's the weird part: Each time she removes something, the girl stars in a dancing video—but this is no sexy, stripper kind of dance. Instead, she prances around like an

adorable bouncing princess. That's fine, if she's dressed in a little tennis outfit, but when a woman is stripped down to her panties, something is horribly wrong about her dancing like a 30-year-old in a cookie commercial. Of course, this is a game from Japan. We should just be happy that an octopus demon doesn't slither into the room and take a dump on the girl's forehead.

Eroticism: 1

The innocence never leaves these dancing girls' faces. It's like they don't actually know that they're in an adult game and think they're putting on a talent show for their grandmothers—which means that no matter how naked they get, the player is the one who ends up feeling dirty.

Nudity Challenge: 9

Each showdown lasts until someone loses five rounds. By that time, it's either game over or you're watching a nude girl hop up and down. Unfortunately, we suspect this game cheats, because winning five rounds is amazingly hard. For every short video of a prancing naked girl, the game cheats you into watching several hours of partially clothed dancing. *The Yakyuen Special* is like buying a stack of adult magazines and letting yourself enjoy them only if you've flipped a coin to "heads" 50 times in a row.

DUDE, TURN OFF YOUR FLOOD LIGHT



**INTRODUCING THE
BEST LIGHT EVER MADE**

FLOOD LIGHT™

**STOP CRAWLING AROUND IN THE
DARK, DAMP EARTH WITH THE
WORMS. COME OUT WHERE YOU
CAN SEE. COME TO THE LIGHT.
THE FLOOD LIGHT.**

**FOR GAME BOY ADVANCE™. LIKE YOU
DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW THAT...**

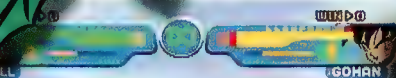
FLOOD LIGHT...THE UNFAIR ADVANTAGE.



WWW.GAMESTERUSA.COM

EB GAMES™

electronics boutique



PlayStation 2



IN STORES
12/18!



FUNimation
Productions, Ltd.

INFOGRADES™

DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI 2
#231147-9 • PLAYSTATION 2
INFOGRADES™

\$49.99



Prices valid in U.S. only. Typographical errors are not the responsibility of Electronics Boutique. Not all items may appear at our outlet locations. Prices may vary by location. At time of printing, all products are expected to be available. Some packaging, pricing, and special offers may differ in Canada. Prices and availability are subject to change. Manufacturers' delays are not the responsibility of Electronics Boutique. ©2002 Electronics Boutique.

TO PLACE YOUR ORDER NOW CALL 1.800.800.0032 OR VISIT WWW.EBGAMES.COM!

EB GAMES™

**LARA CRIFT
TOMB
RAIDER**
the angel of darkness

**PRE-ORDER NOW TO
GUARANTEE YOUR COPY**

**COMING IN
FEBRUARY!**

PlayStation 2



**LARA CRIFT
TOMB
RAIDER**
the angel of darkness

**PURCHASE GAME AND RECEIVE
20% OFF
GUIDE!**

**TOMB RAIDER:
THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS™**
#PDS47-2 • PLAYSTATION 2
EIDOS

\$49.99



**TOMB RAIDER:
THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS™**
#S265-8 • OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE
PRIMA: BETH SIEG

\$14.99

CALL 1.800.800.5166 TO FIND A STORE NEAR YOU!

electronics boutique®

5. Gigolo • Atari 2600



You, the naked veteran street-walker, carefully decide which random door to burst through.

Note: For censorship reasons, we've replaced all the names of private parts in this write-up with the name of a vehicle. For example, what was once the word "penis" might now be described as "riding lawn mower." If this choice of code leads to any grain-related disasters, be sure to send us a postcard from the road after you join the retard circus.

With your *Gigolo* game cartridge and a little imagination, you and your Atari 2600 can go on an exciting journey into the world of street prostitution. The object of the game is to go from door to door and "do business" with any men you find inside. When you encounter a customer, the game switches to an action sequence of you riding his dune buggy in his unfurnished apartment. Press the joystick up to shift your hovercraft to the tip of his fire truck, then press the joystick down to slide your roller skate to the base of his speedboat. For each successful maneuver, you receive one dollar, which you'll need to return to your pimp's walk-up window.

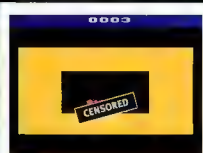
The only challenge of the game comes from the many random homes of people unwilling to solicit a prostitute—they'll throw you into the street and call the cops. Then it's a mad scramble to escape by ducking into houses and hoping someone in there will let you lie low while they pay you to bounce up and down on their John Deere tractor.

Ecsticism: 1

Even if this wasn't the Atari 2600, and the graphics didn't look like two oatmeal robots humping, there's still nothing that desirable about running from house to house and jumping on strange naked men.

Nudity Challenge: 5

You only get three lives, and you lose one every time the police arrest you. That means that if you're unlucky enough to stumble upon only uninterested customers, a lot of *Gigolo* sessions end without even one opportunity to sell your sweet paddleboat.



As you can see, this customer has spent so much of his money on your Big Wheel that he couldn't afford a bed.

4. Choaniki



PlayStation



Your naked-men helpers will fall in love with the stage boss and abandon you. No words describe the betrayal you'll feel when you're left for an insane pile of homoerotic space flesh.

It was inevitable that a Japanese game designer would follow his Japanese/English dictionary down a trail of mistranslation from "happy" to "whimsical" to "gay" and finally to "It's raining men—hallelujah!" That's apparently what happened with this oddball installment in an even more oddball Japanese series.

Choaniki is a cross between the classic shooter *Gradius* and oily men having fun with each other. You start the game as a nine-story flying man in a Speedo, fir-

ing lasers out of your Viking hat. Soon you're transported to a dimension of pure homoeroticism. As you swim through the air with your two nude male assistants, you blast hordes of chariots filled with naked men; rocket-powered, shaft-shaped objects crawling with naked men; and giant naked men using other giant naked men as pogo sticks. And if you think that sounds awesome, maybe you oughta take the money you were about to blow on Cher tickets and import *Choaniki* instead.

Ecsticism: 0

Let us try to paint this oil massage of a mental picture: The first boss is a monstrously huge man wearing a metal sphere for a codpiece. As you blast it, a second phallic-shaped man comes out of his crotch and tries to jab you with his stretching arms and head. While this is all going on, humpy jazz music is mixed with the sounds of a woman panting. That other sound you're hearing is you screaming.

Nudity Challenge: 0

Even if you're terrible at *Choaniki*, the game's intro features all the grinning, posing naked men you could ever want.

3. Custer's Revenge



Atari 2600

Custer's Revenge is a dramatic historical recreation of the battle of Little Big Horn, slightly rewritten to appeal to our adult fantasies.

Instead of being killed by the savage, godless Sioux and Cheyenne Indians, Custer wades through a hall of arrows to get it on with a woman tied to a cactus. We know what you're saying: Finally, I can use our country's bloodiest military disaster as foreplay!



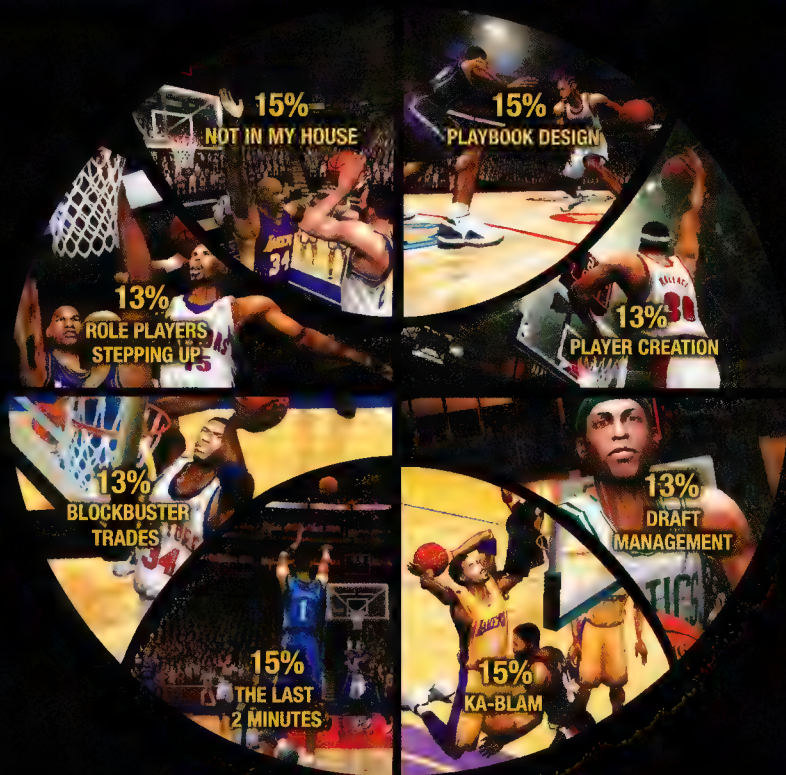
Get ready for liberty, lady, because God's Great America has just dropped its pants! Yee-HAW!

Ecsticism: 2

If you're wondering how to explain this game's level of intense sexuality to your children, the *Custer's Revenge* instruction manual advises, "If the kids catch you and should ask, tell them Custer and the maiden are just dancing." This advice is pointless, though: If you're the kind of parent who gets off on a pink-scarf-wearing cowboy romancing what looks like a hot dog stuck on a toothpick, you're probably playing the game far away from the safe location where the local authorities have moved your children.

Nudity Challenge: 7

Getting across the screen to score points with your pelvis is mostly a matter of luck, since, if you see an arrow coming at you, you usually can't move fast enough to dodge it. Also, cacti appear randomly and skewer your manhood without warning. These are both formidable obstacles on your noble quest, but the real challenge must have come when Custer had to convince the Seventh Cavalry to go through with this ridiculous military operation, just so he could get some action.



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.

**NBA 2003
INSIDE
DRIVE**

More basketball than basketball!

www.nbamaindrive2003.com



www.xbox.com

www.nba.com

ONLY ON
XBOX



©2002 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Other products and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners. The NBA and Individual NBA member team identifications used on or in this product are trademarks, copyrighted designs and other forms of intellectual property of NBA Properties, Inc. and the respective NBA member teams and may not be used, in whole or in part, without the expressed written consent of NBA Properties, Inc. ©2002 NBA Properties, Inc. All rights reserved.

2. Boong-Ga Boong-Ga



Everyday life in Japan: A distinguished businessman prepares to violate an arcade game's rear end.

Developed by Koreans for Japanese arcade-goers, *Boong-Ga Boong-Ga* is absolute madness. You select from eight characters, like "Gangster" and "Child Molester" and then—better sit down for this—you ram a plastic finger into a plastic butt that protrudes from the arcade unit next to the words "HAVE A FUN!! ENJOY."

This game does more

than threaten the future of the world with an army of highly trained madmen proctologists; it shames America's industrial complex. Japan and Korea have completely beaten us in the virtual-rectal-stimulation-simulation race.

Eroticism: ???

Since the entire idea behind this mess confuses us, we couldn't give it a fair Eroticism rating. So come up with your own personal score by rating the likelihood you'll ever say this sentence: "I've been at the arcade pretending to jam my finger up a gangster's buttocks all day. Boy, am I horny."

Nudity Challenge: 0

There's really no nudity to earn in this game, but a card pops out of the machine after every match and explains your sexual behavior. And after imagining the kind of people who would assault a toy ass in public, it's a safe bet that each and every card reads, "Your sex life is a big disaster of freakish criminal behavior."



Boon-Ga Boon-Ga's corporate mascot: a turd in pajamas.

1. Miss World '96 Nude



The object of *Miss World '96 Nude* is to draw on areas of the screen and uncover a picture of a naked woman. The challenge comes from the creatures who try to ram you while you're drawing. It all works kinda like the classic game *Qix*, only here you get to "meet hot beautiful girl," quoth the game. Depending on which girl you select, the pictures come in varying degrees of nudity. One woman may be covered in lingerie, while another looks like she was photographed by a man trying to climb up her birth canal.



Before turning (left): Note how everything in the world is starting to seem better. After turning (right): Aiiieeeee!

Eroticism: -16

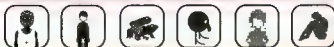
Almost all the women in this game look good; that's not the problem. The problem is that, at random points during gameplay, a little girl's head appears, shouts "Turning!" and transforms into Dracula. Then the nude photo you're uncovering switches into a scene of absolute horror. What was once a seductive, stretching woman is now a pile of blood-soaked screaming corpses. Growling demon heads grow smaller demon heads out of their faces. The fact that this hellish picture eventually turns back into a hot topless girl is moot—you're still done thinking about sex for a while.

Nudity Challenge: 3

While it will probably take a few quarters and a strong stomach for demonic terror to make it far enough in this game to reveal an entirely nude picture, you at least see each woman's body in silhouette before you uncover it. So, if you have a thing for a certain body part—say, the armpit—it's pretty easy to figure out where her armpits are and draw out the area around them. But keep your quarters. If an armpit that transforms into Pinhead and then back into an armpit can arouse you, chances are, you'll be aroused by anything.

And the game that's just too naughty for EGM...

Beat 'em & Eat 'em • Atari 2600



If you study this screenshot very closely, you might just guess the object of *Beat 'em & Eat 'em*, but you'll probably live a longer, healthier life if you just avert your eyes.

Note: We wanted to let you read all about Beat 'em & Eat 'em, the bona fide nastiest game of all time. But the truth is, if you had been directly exposed to the following text, demons would have dragged us straight to hell. So we've censored the more offensive bits. Read between the lines at the risk of your mortal soul.

The object of *Beat 'em & Eat 'em* is simple: You control two naked women who run back and forth trying to catch _____ You might ask why someone would do something like that. Well, the manual says that each _____ "could have been a famous doctor or lawyer." The problem with that—and this is a medical fact—is that it doesn't matter whether you _____ or let it splatter all over the sidewalk. It's still going to give you the same number of famous baby lawyers: none.

Eroticism: 1

There's something nonerotic about skipping past the foreplay, past the _____ and getting straight to the _____ They might as well have skipped right to the _____ spot.

Nudity Challenge: 8

As the game goes on, the _____ falls like rain. Catching it all _____ requires a miracle of perversion and reflexes. For each falling wave of future doctors you manage to _____, however, you're rewarded with an animation of the women licking their lips. And thanks to the primitive graphics of the 2600, these lip-licking women look like they have full beards. Even more horrifying: Now you must deal with the realization that these women are actually men who will carry your lawyer spewn to term.

Gekko will defend Harmonia at all costs.

UNRAVEL THE MYSTERY OF THE BATTLE BETWEEN GEMANIA AND THE SOFT SWARM
UNCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE 27 TRUE RYUNES AND SAVE THE WORLD FROM DESTRUCTION



Suikoden

幻想水滸伝

- 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 Ryunes, and save the world from destruction.*



PlayStation 2





koei

www.koegames.com



Tension,
fear,
excitement...



Samurai Sea and Dynasty Warriors 3 are trademarks of Koei Corporation and Koei Co., Ltd. ©2002 Koei Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox Logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The character is a trademark of the interactive Digital Software Association. Dolby and the double D symbol are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories.

ONLY ON
XBOX



Crimson Sea

Heart-pounding, cinematic-quality, real-time graphics.
Feel the rush as you decimate swarming enemy masses!
The visual and sound effects of these tremendous battles push Xbox™ to the limit!



Fight for your life as you are surrounded by the hordes!

A new and improved "Group Control Engine" puts more than 1,000 enemies in your sights at once!

"Liquid" aliens change shape as they attack!

Watch as these enemies of unknown origin morph before your very eyes!

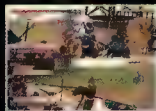
Complete immersion in battle!

3D effects, a new enemy detection system and Over 700 new sound effects make this
game the most immersive you've ever played.



A Warrior Worth A Thousand!

The mega-hit Tactical Action game is coming to Xbox!



AVAILABLE NOW!





TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Mild Language
Mild Violence



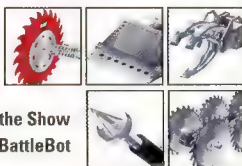
PlayStation 2

Game and Software © 2002 THQ Inc. © 2002 BattleBots® Inc. All rights reserved. BattleBots and related logos, characters, names, and distinctive likenesses thereof are the exclusive Licensed Property of BattleBots Inc. and used under exclusive license. All Rights Reserved. Developed by Warthog, Warthog and its logo are trademarks of Warthog, THQ and its logo are registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.™, © and the Nintendo GameCUBE logo are trademarks of Nintendo.

POWER STEERING. PRECISION HANDLING. GRIPPING, CIRCULAR DISC OF DEATH.



DRIVE ONE TODAY.



20 BattleBox™ Arenas of Destruction
3 Modes of Gameplay – Tournament Mode,
Arcade Mode and Multiplayer (1-4 players)

Choose From a Variety of BattleBots® Seen on the Show
Build Your Own BattleBot



Kick Bot!



www.battlebots.com



www.thq.com



EGM'S HOLIDAY BUYER'S GUIDE

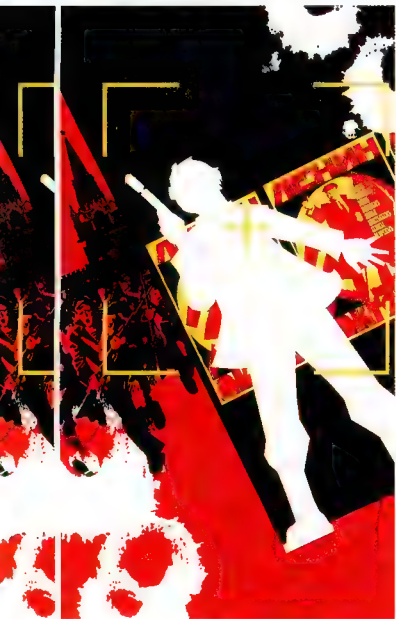
This invaluable guide could save your sanity this holiday season. If you're charged with the task of shopping for a game-loving friend, family member, or loved one, you'll need some pointers, because the game shelves are riddled with crap-filled pitfalls. Buy your pal a copy of *Portal Runner*, and you'll see his holiday cheer crumble into spiteful disdain. Trust us—all the stuff recommended here will foster good will and joy. If you're too cheap to actually buy games for others, you can also use this guide to help form your own massive wish list, you greedy bastard.





For the Gamer on a Secret Mission:

It's best to stay on the good side of gamer friends who own their own stealth suits and can kill you six ways using only their thumbs. Play it safe by giving these **super spy-game** gifts.



Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell

Xbox • Ubi Soft

Review scores (out of 10): **9.0, 8.5, 9.5**

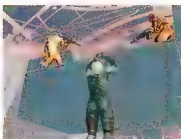
Secret-agent wannabes will swoon the second they slip this spy simulator into their Xbox. Oh, the gadgets—everything from a micro-camera to a PDA. Ah, the graphics—the hyper-realistic environments pack plenty of shadows to lurk in. Ooooh, the gameplay—you can chimney-climb up walls and use enemies as human shields. Everything great about *MGS2*—minus the hokey plot. And its star, Max Fischer, is the kind of guy Snake would go bowling with after a mission.



Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance

Xbox • Konami

Scores: **9.5, 9.5, 9.5**



Speaking of Señor Snake, he's rappelling onto Xbox in a deluxe redux of last November's PS2 hit *MGS2*. Now, you can play as Solid Snake in the main game, and Konami has added new minigames, special missions, and skateboarding (no, really).

Medal of Honor: Frontline

PS2, GC, Xbox • EA Games

Scores: **8.0, 8.0, 9.0**



With all holy hell breaking loose on *Frontline's* WWII battlefields, it's easy to forget that you do your fair share of covertly sticking it to der Führer in this game, too. You'll don Nazi uniforms, pass off phony ID papers, and creep through German bases.

James Bond 007: NightFire

PS2, GC, Xbox • EA Games

Scores: **8.0, 8.5, 9.0**



Jimmy Bond's staying busy in *Die Another Day*, but the mac daddy of all spies still has time to chug martinis and chase tail (oh, and save the world) in *NightFire*. It's a mission so secret, you won't see it in any theater, but it's still 100 percent 007 fun.

For the Gamer Who Kicks Ass:

Grab one of these fighting games for a friend who's full of pent-up rage. You know, the one who's doing *Karate Kid* crane kicks when nobody's looking.

Virtua Fighter 4

PS2 • Sega

Scores: **10, 10, 9.5**



The deepest, most fun-to-play non-weapons-based fighting game around, *VF4* beats down its competition with its incredible Kumite mode, which awards special items and ranks to players for beating the toughest computer opponents. This is one of the few fighting games that can provide hours of one- and two-player entertainment, making it the best bang you can buy for the fisticuffs buck.

Tekken 4

PS2 • Namco

Scores: **7.0, 6.5, 7.5**



Virtua Fighter 4 is the better game, but some people just gotta have their *Tekken*. And really, what's the harm in it? With a huge, hardcore following, *Tekken 4* boasts mad combos, cool characters, impressive fighting arenas, and the usual smattering of Bonus modes and sexy cinemas. Plus, its gameplay is more accessible than *VF4's*, making it a safer gift for most gamers looking for quick, easy thrills.

Super Smash Bros. Melee

GC • Nintendo

Scores: **9.5, 9.5, 9.5**



If the GameCube gamer in your life has lots of friends, you can't go wrong with a gift of *Smash Bros.* It's the most exciting, most frantic four-player fighting game around, featuring an orgy of Nintendo characters, old and new. Where else can you see Samus Aran delivering a massive plasma blast to Pikachu? Even solo-gaming types will find lots to like here, with a ton of modes and characters to unlock.

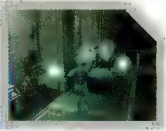
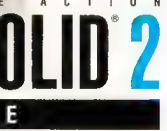
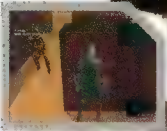
B-B-B-BONUS GIFTS!

Let the stocking icon be your guide to these gift supplements for extraworthy pals....

If you give 'em *Splinter Cell*, throw in *Shadow Warriors* **EXTRA!** Tom Clancy, the maestro of gung-ho military thrillers, takes you inside the Special Forces in this hardcover book.

If you give 'em *Tekken 4*, throw in *Bumfights DVD* (\$20, www.bumfights.com)! Videogame brawling is cool and all, but nothing compares to the stark horror of watching two homeless dudes beating each other to a pulp over a bottle of Mad Dog 20/20. A holiday treasure.

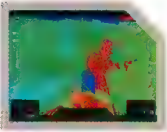




TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION

METAL GEAR SOLID 2

SUBSTANCE



350+ VR MISSIONS
EUROPEAN EXTREME MODE
HIDDEN PLAYABLE CHARACTERS

150+ ALTERNATIVE MISSIONS
CASTING THEATER
ENTIRE SONS OF LIBERTY™ GAME!

5 SNAKE TALES
BOSS SURVIVAL MODE
MERYL RETURNS!

EXPERIENCE THE MOST ADVANCED AND IMMERSIVE VR MISSIONS IN THE HISTORY OF VIDEO GAMES

OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE

MATURE

 Blood and Gore
 Partial Nudity
 Violence

NOW AVAILABLE FOR XBOX™





For the Gamer Who's Getting Some:

So you've got a significant other and are getting lucky? Lucky you. But we figure couples who stay together should play together, and these are the **relationship-bolstering games** that'll curl your special friend's fingers—and toes.



Animal Crossing GC • Nintendo

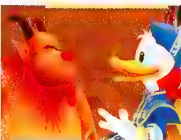
Scores: 9.0, 9.0, 9.5

Nintendo's quirky town simulator offers three things that make females go gaga: It's cute, it's ridiculously cute, and it's horrendously, stupidly cute. Oh, and your gal's nesting instincts will hit overdrive as she gathers stuff for her abode. Guys will love the hidden NES games (*Donkey Kong*, *Punch-Out!!*, and more), as well as the ability to tour their gal's town. Just don't deforest her neighborhood and declare yourself Dictator for Life—unless you like sleeping on the couch.



Kingdom Hearts PS2 • Square EA

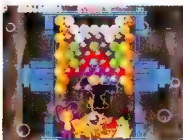
Scores: 8.5, 8.5, 8.5



Chicks dig Disney. And *Kingdom Hearts* is so full of Uncle Walt's characters—from Tinkerbell to Monstro—that if this game doesn't make a Dumbo-bellyflop splash with your girlfriend, she must be goofy. Plus, guys can be a Herc-style hero every time they beat a boss for their gal.

Super Bust-A-Move 2 PS2, GC • Ubi Soft

Scores: Not yet reviewed



Easing your girl into gaming? A *SOCOM* bloodbath will only scare her away. You need a gentler experience, and the PS2 puzzler *Bust-A-Move 2* (called *Bust-A-Move 3000* on the 'Cube) is just the thing. This game will lure her in and never let go, as long as you're not a jerk in multiplayer.

Super Monkey Ball 2 GC • Sega

Scores: 7.5, 8.5, 9.0



See monkey run. See monkey fall. See monkey fall around in his little ball. It's a fun formula for his-and-hers gaming, and this sequel perfects the monkey madness with nuttier stages and minigames. It also encourages leaning in your seat, so couples will likely get nice and close.

For the Gamer Low on HP:

These **role-playing games** will enrich the life of anyone craving epic adventures packed with saucy sorceresses, roving ragamuffins, and long Summon spells.

Wild Arms 3 PS2 • Sony CEA

Score: 8.0



This uniquely stylish Wild West quest breathes some much-needed variety into the swords 'n' sorcery obsessed genre. Solid gameplay; attractive, cartoony visuals; and a nontraditional plot help to set this one apart from the norm. Imagine if *Final Fantasy* crossed over into *The Wild Bunch* and you'll get the idea. Don't worry if they've never played the first two *WA* games—this one stands squarely on its own.

Morrowind Xbox • Bethesda

Scores: 7.0, 7.5, 8.5



Sick of that guy who's always hanging around with nothing to do? Give him this game and you'll be rid of him for at least 100 hours. *The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind* is so open-ended and nonlinear that gamers can literally play it for months. It plays like a full *Dungeons & Dragons* campaign brought to life in gorgeous 3D, minus the bagful of dice and the face full of acne.

Lost Kingdoms GC • Activision

Scores: 7.5, 8.0, 8.5



It's a little bit *Magic: The Gathering*, a heaping spoonful of *Final Fantasy*, and a dash of *Pokémon*, all mixed up and poured into GameCubes's first (and, to date, very best) RPG. As a sprightly young lass, you must travel the world in search of magical cards adorned with summonable critters. The speedy, action-packed battles should appeal to gamers who find most role-playing warfare a bit too slow.

B-B-B-BONUS GIFTS!

If you give 'em *Animal Crossing*, throw in *Nintendo's e-Reader* and *Animal Crossing e-Cards* (5¢ for the e-Reader; cards are \$2 per pack). Hook this wacky gizmo to your Game Boy Advance, then link it up to your GameCube and swipe these cards that unlock new stuff in *Animal Crossing*. Convoluted fun for the *Animal* nut.

If you give 'em *Morrowind*, throw in *George R.R. Martin's A Song of Ice and Fire series* (\$8 per paperback book)—Nothing works up an RPG fan like a good fantasy novel, and Martin's dark, brutal *Ice and Fire* series is the hottest thing in the genre. It all begins with *A Game of Thrones* and continues through two follow-ups. The fourth book hits in April 2005.



FORGOTTEN REALMS

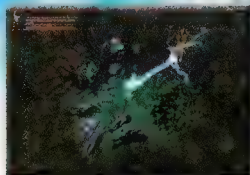
Baldur's Gate

DARK ALLIANCE

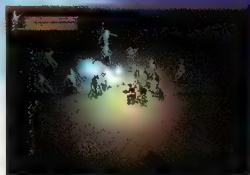
Live the Fantasy...

"Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance looks like an absolute must-have game..."

- GameSpy.com



Explosive spell effects



Hordes of D&D® creatures

bgdaxbox.blackisle.com



Blood
Violence
Use of Alcohol



Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance ©2002 Interplay Entertainment Corp. All rights reserved. Baldur's Gate, Dark Alliance, Forgotten Realms, the Forgotten Realms logo, D&D, the Dungeons & Dragons logo, and the Wizards of the Coast logo are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc., and are used by Interplay under license from Interplay Entertainment, Inc. Black Isle Studios, the Black Isle Studios logo and the Interplay logo are trademarks of Interplay Entertainment Corp. Snowblind Studios and the Snowblind Studios logo are trademarks of Snowblind Studios. High Voltage Software and the High Voltage Software logo are trademarks of High Voltage Software, Inc. The Bang! logo is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. TM, © and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners. Screen shots are from the Xbox™ video game system.



For the NC-17-Rated Gamer:

When cutesy characters and bouncy music just ain't cuttin' it anymore, get the grown-up gamer on your list something a bit more adult, like these **mature games**.



Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

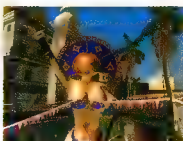
PS2 • Rockstar • Scores: 10, 10, 10

If you have a grown-up pal who hasn't gotten Vice City yet, give 'em a good slap, then give 'em this living, breathing metropolis overflowing with bad drivers, coke addicts, violent cops, and '80s glitz. The open-ended gameplay means just about anything goes, and we mean *anything*—from offing an unwanted spouse for some rich businessman to blowing up buildings to fix the real-estate market. The fantastic '80s tunes and deep, Scarface-inspired story line make Vice City this holiday's hottest adults-only gift.



BMX XXX

PS2, GC, Xbox • Acclaim
Scores: Tune in next month



Acclaim spices up the action-sports genre by adding dick jokes and boobs. Think of this as Dave Mirra BMX with naughty bits that make Vice City seem like Disney World. The hard part will actually be finding the game this holiday season. Hint: Don't look in Wal-Mart or Toys R Us.

Eternal Darkness

GC • Nintendo
Scores: 9.0, 8.0, 7.5



Eternal Darkness proves that survival-horror doesn't need cheap scares to supply a solid freak-out. And if you're looking for a gift that can drive its recipient insane, you've come to the right place. A creepy story line, tons of playable characters, and weird visual tricks abound.

Resident Evil 4

GC • Capcom
Scores: 8.0, 8.0, 9.0



What holiday would be complete without flesh-eating guests? (Well, besides the in-laws.) In this Evil prequel, players find out just what went down before Chris and Jill discovered the mansion in Raccoon City. Plus, an innovative dual-character system fleshes out the gameplay.

For the G-Rated Gamer:

The heroes of these **kid-friendly games** prove there's more to gaming than blasting off zombie heads or running over bystanders in a stolen Ferrari.

Super Mario Sunshine

GC • Nintendo
Scores: 9.5, 9.5, 9.5



Those bright, colorful graphics; those simple but wonderful controls; that funny accent—only evil, bad men like Saddam Hussein or Hitler could not love Mario. In *Sunshine*, a mysterious person posing as the famous plumber turns a tropical paradise into a cesspool, and it's up to Nintendo's main man to clear his name (and to clean up the island). The perfect gift for any youngster—just make sure he/she doesn't already own it.

Sly Cooper

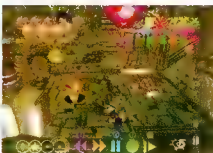
PS2 • Sony CEA
Scores: 9.0, 8.5, 7.5



Sly Cooper may technically be a criminal, but hey—cut him some slack, Jack. He's stealing back something that's rightfully his: his family's book of thieving secrets (aka the *Theivus Raccoonus*). In this old school-style platformer, Sly hops 'n' bops past booby traps set by the world's most nefarious villains. Cartoon-like graphics illustrate the action nicely; it's one of the neatest looking games around.

Blinx the Time Sweeper

Xbox • Microsoft
Scores: 8.0, 7.5, 5.5





What happens when you arm cats with vacuum cleaners? You get Blinx, a feline janitor who can control the flow of time by collecting time crystals. Use VCR-style controls like pause, rewind, fast-forward, slow-mo, or record to wipe out enemies across 30-plus levels in this simple-but-addictive action-puzzler. It's a cool little game with a great concept; just don't expect an epic, Mario-style adventure.

B-B-B-BONUS GIFTS!

If you give 'em *GTA: Vice City*, throw in *Vice City soundtrack albums* (\$22 each, \$96 for the box set)—Each of the game's seven music radio stations has its own soundtrack CD, courtesy of Epic Records. Buy 'em separately based on the music your giftee likes, or buy 'em all in a box set.

If you give 'em *Super Mario Sunshine*, throw in *Voice-activated Talking Mario Phone* (\$85 from allfunnystuff.com) Polyconcept USA produces this animatronic desk phone in the shape of Nintendo's lovable plumber. He talks! He moves! He'll frighten small children!

SPOOKY TALES OF TERROR THAT WILL MAKE YOU SHIVER!



THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD



WWW.SEGA.COM/HOTD3



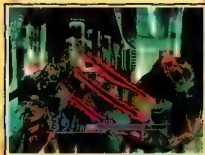
THE RULES REMAIN THE SAME:



GET 'EM IN YOUR SIGHTS.



AIM FOR THEIR HEADS.



RELOAD!



Blood and Gore Violence

WMI 57 DATE 2002

THE HORROR RETURNS!





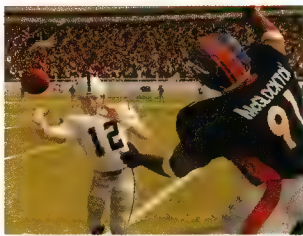
For the Cyber-Ballers:

For players who're feeling tough but can't get busy and dirtied up in the rough, we've got the **sports games** they need to get physical without the physical.



Madden NFL 2003 PS2, GC, Xbox • EA Sports Scores: 9.0, 9.5, 9.5

The king of pigskin takes *NFL 2K3's* threat seriously and one-ups the competition with a combination of great graphics, superb control, and some of the deepest play mechanics ever seen in a sports game. If you're a PS2 owner, the best part about giving *Madden* to another PS2 fan is you'll have a guaranteed partner to pummel online. Or owners of any version can gather up three pals and make playing together on one system a new *pre-Monday Night Football* tradition.



NBA 2K3 PS2, GC, Xbox • Sega Sports Scores: 8.5, 9.0, 9.5



Basketball lovers never had it this good, what with *2K3's* blend of up-tempo gameplay and Miller Time dunks. The fluid player animations don't hurt, either. Online play (available only in the PS2 and Xbox versions) makes the question "Who da man?" a nationwide debate.

Hot Shots Golf 3 PS2 • Sony CEA Scores: 8.5, 9.5, 9.0



Hot Shots Golf 3's wacky characters may lure players in, but it's the gameplay that makes them stay. Ultrarealistic ball-flight physics, lavishly crafted courses, and supertight controls make it the game to play for that special someone looking to swing a nine-iron on fooling-together days.

World Series Baseball Xbox • Sega Sports Scores: 8.5, 9.0, 9.0



Baseball may be tedious to watch, but baseball games are a different matter, a theory proven by *WSB*. What's *WSB's* secret? It's fast (and intelligent) fielder response, its excellent pitcher/batter interface, and its dead-on ambience of a day at the ol' ballpark.

For the Gamer Who Smokes the Half Pipe:

Extreme sports sure look cool, but grievous bodily harm is always only one fall away, and the recovery time's a bitch. Keep it on the safe side—give these games instead.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4 PS2, GC, Xbox, GBA • Activision Scores: 9.0, 9.0, 10



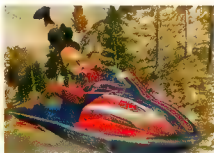
Many assume that skateboarding fans are sooo over *Tony Hawk*. Guess what: They're not, and this year's model—the best ever—will exceed the expectations of jaded skeptics. Huge levels, fiendishly tough goals, and unlockable pro challenges go hand in hand with a couple of vital new moves to make the game both challenging for experts and accessible to newbies. A killer sound track—AC/DC, System of a Down, etc.—rounds out the package.

Aggressive Inline PS2, GC, Xbox, GBA • Acclaim Scores: 8.5, 8.0, 8.5



Inline skaters will love shredding through seven well-crafted levels (plus bonus areas) that offer ramps, rails, and half-pipes up the wazoo, while creative challenges keep it interesting. This ain't no *Tony Hawk* rip-off, either! Inline-specific tricks and a cool experience system give this game a feel all its own. Some of *THPS4's* innovative features (like a Bail button) actually showed up in *Aggressive Inline* first!

Jet X20 PS2 • Sony CEA Score: 8.5



Grinding rails and tricking down snow-covered mountains is soooo 1997. Change things up a bit with *Jet X20* (or, as we like to call it, *SSX: Tricky on Water*). The graphics are pretty, the game is plenty fast, and the tricks are sick. Plus, you can unlock slew of sassy characters and souped-up jet skis. Blast ahead to our reviews section if you want the full scoop on Sony's wet-'n'-wild new kid on the block.


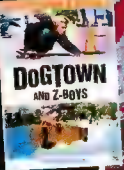
B-B-B-BONUS GIFTS!

If you give 'em *Hot Shots Golf 3*, throw in *Darf on Golf DVD (\$35 at www.amazon.com)*

Tim Conway's timeless comedic take on golfing is the perfect companion for *Hot Shots'* freaky fairway action. A guy pretending to be really short playing golf...genius!

If you give 'em *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4*, throw in *Dogtown and Z-Boys DVD (\$29)*

This rad documentary chronicles the evolution of skateboarding, from its early days in the SoCal underground right up until *Tony Hawk* made it all mainstream. Hear it all from the guys who made history.

PREY ON THE DEAD...

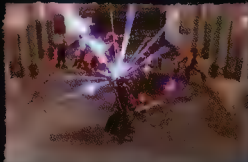
OR THE DEAD
WILL PREY ON YOU.



Fight zombies, vampires and ghouls on your own as one of 4 unique Hunters, or battle cooperatively with up to 4 players on a single screen.



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



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

HUNTER THE RECKONING

LET THE HUNT BEGIN ON NINTENDO GAMECUBE™

DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

WWW.INTERPLAY.COM/HUNTER



Blood and Gore
Violence



Hunter: The Reckoning © 2002 Interplay Entertainment Corp. All rights reserved. AtlasTech Game Engine trademark 2000 High Voltage Software, Inc. All rights reserved. Developed for Interplay Entertainment Corp. by High Voltage Software, Inc. under license from White Wolf Publishing, Inc. Hunter: The Reckoning is a registered trademark of White Wolf Publishing, Inc. Interplay, the Interplay logo, Digital Mayhem, and the Digital Mayhem logo are trademarks of Interplay Entertainment Corp. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft, TM, © and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other copyrights and trademarks are property of their respective owners.



For the Blockbusting Gamer:

Gamers looking to live out silver-screen fantasies after the lights go up (and they unstick their feet from the theater floor) will love these games that bring the **movie magic** home.



Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

PS2, GC, Xbox • EA Games

Scores: 8.0, 8.0, 8.5

Peter Jackson's phenomenal film series gets the royal treatment in this challenging slash-'em-up that stars Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli. The game's frenzied action should appeal to both mainstream gamers looking to kick some ass and Renaissance Faire revelers buzzin' on mead. As a cool added bonus, EA stuffed a ton of special features onto the game disc, including interviews with the movie's actors, production art, and behind-the-scenes info on the game's creation.



Spider-Man

PS2, GC, Xbox • Activision

Scores: 6.5, 6.5, 6.0



Activision's take on last summer's biggest hit offers can't-miss web-slinging thrills, even if navigating the indoor levels will have you reaching for the Dramamine. Web-heads will dig the slick graphics, voices by the movie's stars, and appearances by villains from the comic book.

Harry Potter: CoS

PS2, GC, Xbox • EA Games

Scores: 8.5, 7.0, 6.5



The überwizard's next-gen debut has arrived, and it's a great mix of *Zelda*-style gameplay and author J.K. Rowling's magic world. As a second-year student, you explore the depths of Hogwarts, play Quidditch, and ditch class to investigate sounds coming from the girls' bathroom.

Rocky

PS2, Xbox • Ubi Soft

Scores: 7.5, 7.0, 6.5



Much like Rocky himself, this game came from behind to win the hearts of our Review Crew. It's a stunning example of the power of deep gameplay and the mere presence of Mr. T. It's also one of the best boxing games in years, and it's packed with references to the classic flicks.

For the Gamer Who's a Robot in Disguise:

They're normal by day. But at night, they shed their birthday suits and boogie down to the sounds of Cybertron. These **mech games** will flip their switch.

MechAssault

Xbox • Microsoft

Scores: 8.5, 8.0, 9.0

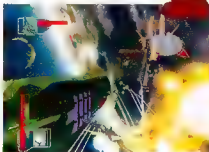


Some gamers want a detailed mech game with tons of customization and upgrade options. Some gamers just want to blow crap up. For the latter crowd, there's *MechAssault*. Now people can experience the thrill of piloting 40-foot-tall walking tanks without having to worry about all the little details (just pick a pre-packaged mech and move out) or waiting till the 31st century. Also perfect for the Xbox Live player who craves online destruction.

Robotech: Battletory

PS2, GC, Xbox • TDK Mediactive

Scores: 8.5, 8.0, 7.5



Transform seamlessly from jet fighter to land warrior and let those missiles fly in this slick videogame rendition of one of TV's most beloved cartoon series. A side story to the original plot, *Battletory* combines harrowing twitch-action combat with the narrative fluff of a space opera. Hardcore fans might even deserve the special Limited Edition package that includes a soundtrack, t-shirt, and other goodies.

Steel Battalion

Xbox • Capcom

Scores: 8.0, 9.5, 8.0



Quite possibly the most complex mech simulator ever made, *Battalion* is a no-holds-barred excursion into the world of robot fetishism. Featuring a 40-button controller and audio-visuals modeled after real-life war footage, this game is slow, detailed, and awesome. But make sure you really love (not like—love) whomever you'd be giving this to, 'cause all this realism comes at a steep price: \$200.

B-B-B-BONUS GIFTS!

If you give 'em *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, throw in

The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring Platinum Series Extended Edition (\$40)

Even if they were duped into buying the non-extended DVD released over the summer, your pals will still want this four-disc behemoth. It's bursting with deleted scenes, making-of clips, and other Hobbit goodies.

If you give 'em *Robotech: Battletory*, throw in *Robotech Battletory action figures* (\$60) — All five of the game's Veritech fighters are featured in this set of Toyami's superposeable figures.





For the Gamer Who Reaches Out and Touches People:

If the gamer on your list is one of those tech-savvy types who's merged their console with the information superhighway, grab 'em one of these **Internet-enabled games** to further their quest for world domination.



SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs

PS2 • Sony CEA

Scores: 9.5, 9.0, 9.5

The soothing aroma of pine will be overpowered by the stank of napalm come Christmas morning. Sony's killer app for the PS2 Network Adapter plunges players into the fray with a team of real-life comrades, either as the heroic Navy SEALs or the dastardly terrorists. The online play gets a serious boost from the voice headset that's packed with the game. You stay in contact with your teammates with real-time chat—as long as you watch their backs and keep 'em alive.



Phantasy Star Online

Ep I & II • GC • Sega

Scores: 10, 9.0, 9.0

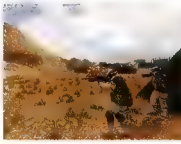


This package includes the original Dreamcast versions plus an all-new episode that features an entirely new game to explore. And three new character classes inject some funky-fresh style into the proceedings. Remember that it costs nine bucks a month to play online, though.

Ghost Recon

Xbox • Ubi Soft

Scores: 8.0, 8.0, 7.5



This game takes the *Rainbow Six* concept of elite tactical ops into the great outdoors, as online allies face off against opposing teams across deserts, plains, forests, and bombed-out cities. It's tense and addictive—the perfect way to blow off steam after a long day of boring reality.

Unreal Championship

Xbox • Infogrames

Scores: 8.0, 8.5, 9.0



With its mix of complex levels, cool weapons, and bizarre characters, this white-knuckle shooter offers the freakin'-best fraggin' on Xbox Live. The really rad part: Opponents' victory taunts and whimpers of defeat come through loud and clear on the Xbox Communicator headset.

For the Gamer Who Waxes Nostalgic:

"Back in my day, we had parallax scrolling and we liked it!" Sound like a gamer you're trying to shop for? Then pick up these **old-school hits** for veteran players.

Contra: Shattered Soldier

PS2 • Konami

Scores: 9.0, 9.0, 8.0



Remember those last two PlayStation *Contra* games that came out a few years ago? They sucked. Well, put those out of your mind because with this new *Contra*, Konami returns to what made the series so good—blasting aliens from a side-scrolling perspective with a wide array of artillery. Like any good old-school blaster, this one is thumb-blisteringly difficult—just the way old-timers like it.

Metroid Prime

GC • Nintendo

Scores: 10, 10, 10

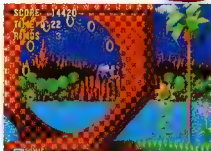


Ask any old Nintendo fan about *Metroid*, and they'll tell you the sci-fi action series hasn't had a bad game yet, then probably launch into a half-hour-long story about their favorite *Super Metroid* memories. Shut them up by giving them *Prime*, the GameCube update that retains all the great classic gameplay they were so crazy about years ago, with the look and feel possible only on a modern system.

Sonic Mega Collection

GC • Sega

Scores: 7.5, 8.0, 6.0



Now, when you feel the need for *Sonic* speed, you can leave your ancient Genesis system up in the attic. *Sonic Mega Collection's* got 12 games, enough to satisfy any classic gamer's hunger for blast processing. Almost all of them show Sega's blazing blue hero in tip-top form; just ignore the few stinkeroo titles. Plus, the disc is loaded with extras like comic book art and movies of Sonic's past.



B-B-B-BONUS GIFTS!

If you give 'em *SOCOM*, throw in **Richard Marcinko Navy SEAL Figure (S&A)**—Manufacturer Blue Box Toys offers a full line of hyper-authentic SEAL figures (never call them dolls!), but you can't go wrong with the figures based on Dick Marcinko, a legendary real-life SEAL and *Ince* man's man who was keeping democracy safe while you were busy saving the princess in your damn Nintendo tapes.



If you give 'em *Sonic Mega Collection*, throw in **Activision Anthology (PS2, \$30)**—Relive the glory days of blips, bleeps, and two blocky images onscreen at once in this compilation of 40 classic Atari 2600 games, complete with hit '80s tunes for background noise.

PlayStation 2

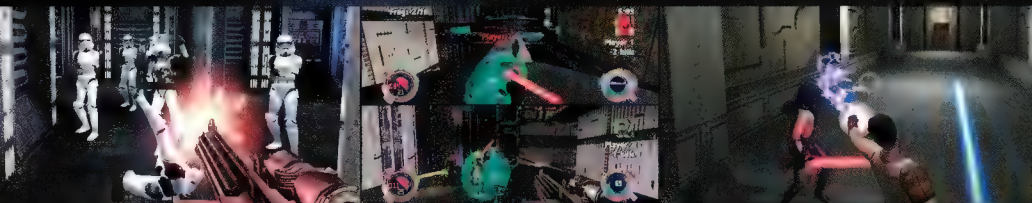




STAR WARS™ JEDI KNIGHT® II: JEDI OUTCAST™



Jedi. Outcast. Rebel. Mercenary. You have one lightsaber and eight Jedi Force powers, including Jedi Mind Tricks, Force Lightening and Force Push. With a devastating arsenal of weapons like disruptor rifles, thermal detonators, trip mines and a Wookiee bowcaster you must battle a hoard of new enemies. Fight in single mode or go lightsaber against lightsaber in split-screen multiplayer Jedi arena — or die trying. Learn more at jedipoutcast.com



Official Star Wars Web Site www.starwars.com



Violence



ACTIVISION



© 2002 LucasArts Entertainment Company LLC. © 2002 Activision Inc. & TM or © as indicated. All rights reserved. Used under authorization. LucasArts and the LucasArts logo are registered trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. TM, © and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. This product contains software technology licensed from AI Software, Inc. AI Technology © 1999-2002 AI Software Inc. All rights reserved.



For the Gamer Who Goes Kicky Fast:

Speed limits holdin' them down? That AMC Gremlin in the garage crampin' their style? Sounds like you're shopping for a gamer who can't drive 55. Get 'em one of these **racing games** to feed their every speed need.

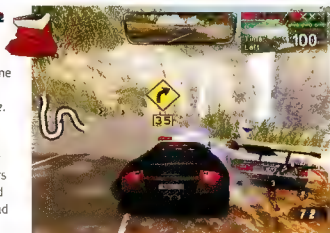


Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2

PS2, GC, Xbox • EA Games

Scores: 9.5, 9.0, 9.0 (PS2 version)

Know someone who's dreamed of tearin' up the streets in a car that's worth more than their house? Give the next best thing: *Hot Pursuit 2*. It truly lives up to its name by delivering an absurd feeling of speed, while its Hot Pursuit mode lets players rev high as either speeding crooks in a getaway car or the diligent coppers trying to catch 'em. Jumping into a high-speed cop car and ramming your buddies off the road or laying spike strips is oh-so-satisfying.



Burnout 2

PS2 • Acclaim

Scores: 8.5, 8.5, 8.0



If running from the law isn't their thing, how about streaking down the highway into oncoming traffic? *Burnout 2* is the perfect game for those precision drivers who like to thread the needle at high speeds. Plus, the crashes look simply fantastic. It's a total adrenaline rush.

Sega GT 2002

Xbox • Sega

Scores: 8.0, 8.5, 8.5



Gamers who pine for *Gran Turismo 4* will find plenty to love in *Sega GT 2002*. Buy and sell cars, upgrade 'em, or just take photos to hang in a virtual garage (seriously). All the game needs is virtual beer for gamers to knock back while working on their dream hot rods.

NASCAR Thunder '03

PS2, GC, Xbox • EA Sports

Scores: 9.0, 9.0, 9.0



NASCAR ain't just a redneck thing anymore, so fans don't need to hide their love for the sport or for this incredible simulator. Race door-handle to door-handle with the likes of Jeff Gordon and Mark Martin on every track on the circuit (plus a few fantasy courses).

For the Gamer Not Worth Full Price:

Why buy a pricey gift for your third cousin twice removed when you could get him these **budget titles** instead? Happy holidays, cheapskate.

The Italian Job

PS1 • Rockstar

Score: 8.5



A \$10 game based on an obscure 1969 Michael Caine movie sounds like just the thing to prop under that wobbly end-table in your living room, but *The Italian Job* is a surprisingly fun and polished Driver clone that would still be worth buying at full price. The extremely varied levels offer plenty of cool scenarios, including the famous rooftop-hopping car chase in a Mini Cooper from the flick.

Project Gotham Racing

Xbox • Microsoft

Scores: 8.0, 9.0, 8.5

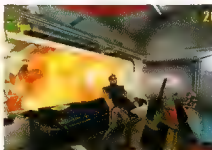


Fast and cheap is a winning combination in our book, and this Xbox launch title—recently relegated to Microsoft's new budget line—goes from zero to 60 in under 30 smackers. It's also a good-looking racer that rewards stylish drivers with special Kudos points they can use to unlock cars and tracks. The environments tend to be kind of barren, but the focus here is more on the cars than on the scenery.

Red Faction

PlayStation 2 • THQ

Scores: 8.5, 9.0, 8.5



Now that the original *Red Faction* is a greatest hits game—and thus sells for a mere \$20—blowing stuff up has never been so affordable. Gamer pals who missed this futuristic first-person shooter when it first hit will dig its sci-fi story and explosive gameplay: Nearly every bit of the environment can be blasted to tiny bits. Plus, it's a cheap way to get up to speed for the recently released sequel.

B-B-B-BONUS GIFTS!

If you give 'em *Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2*, throw in **Cobra ESD666 Radar Detector (\$66)**—We reckon hard-revvin' gamers have a tough time staying under 55 in the real world, so help encourage them to drive "safely" with this gizmo. It detects several bands of the fuzz's speed-freak-busting radars and lasers. After all, just having this thing in the car will remind leadfoot drivers to obey speed laws, right? Just nod your head and agree.



If you give 'em *The Italian Job*, throw in **The Italian Job on VHS (\$50 at www.amazon.com)**

This heist flick is the perfect movie to get gamers into the offensive-driving mood. Or, if you're really cheap, just toss a pine-tree air freshener into the stocking.



A GAMER'S PARADISE >>>



**BUY IT NEW.
BUY IT USED.
TRADE IT IN.**

GAME CRAZY IS THE BEST PLACE TO BUY NEW OR USED GAMES, OR TRADE IN YOUR OLD GAME GEAR FOR THOUSANDS OF NEW AND USED GAMES, SYSTEMS AND ACCESSORIES.

GAME CRAZY IS LOCATED NEXT TO SELECTED HOLLYWOOD VIDEO STORES. LOG ON TO THE STORE LOCATOR AT GAMECRAZY.COM TO FIND THE STORES NEAR YOU!



**RENT IT.
TRY IT.**

HOLLYWOOD VIDEO HAS THE HOTTEST TITLES FOR XBOX, GAMECUBE, PS2 AND MORE FOR RENT! KEEP THEM FOR 5 DAYS - PLENTY OF TIME TO TRY THEM BEFORE YOU BUY AT GAME CRAZY.

**RENT 1 GAME,
GET 1 FREE**

Free game of equal or lesser value. Game deposit may be required. Not valid at Game Crazy. Limit one coupon per customer. May not be combined with any other offer. Valid at all locations. Free membership req. req. Add. send day fees occur at regular rate. Cash value 1/1000. Copying or advertising this coupon, or offer without the express permission of Hollywood Video is strictly forbidden. Coupon expires 03/31/03.

PlayStation PlayStation 2

GAMECUBE Gamecube

XBOX Xbox





For the Gamer on the Go:

Gamers facing a long ride to work or school every morning need thrills that fit within the snug confines of their pockets. Give 'em these **portable games** to help keep their commutes from being a drag.

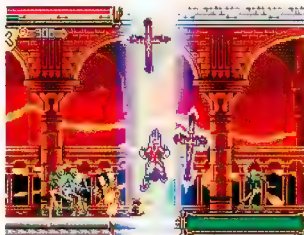


Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance

GBA • Konami

Scores: 10, 9.5, 9.5

Gamers can spend countless hours exploring every chamber and tower of Drac's castle (twice!) and be totally enthralled the whole time. And when you see them trying to uncover that last 0.1 percent of the castle map, you'll know that *Castlevania* has gotten into their bloodstream. The graphics, gameplay, and supercool (yet easy) bosses come together to create one of the best experiences on the GBA.



Super Mario World

GBA • Nintendo

Scores: 9.0, 9.0, 9.0



When a title is listed 10th on *EGM's* Top 100 Games of All Time (issue #150), you know it's something every gamer has gotta play. It's *Mario*, it's got 96 levels, and—best of all—it's now portable. The cart even packs the four-player *Mario Bros.* as a bonus game.

Zelda: Link to the Past

GBA • Nintendo

Scores: 9.5, 9.5, 9.5

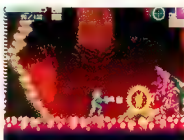


In this portable version of the Super NES *Zelda: A Link to the Past*, players journey back to Hyrule and experience the pure old-school glory of exploring labyrinths and skipping through the Lost Woods. It delivers an all-new four-player battle/co-op game, as well.

Metroid Fusion

GBA • Nintendo

Scores: 9.0, 9.0, 9.5



This sequel to the hallowed Super Nintendo classic *Super Metroid* packs so much morphballing, space-jumping, and wave-beaming into a handheld, it's flabbergasting. It's also the prime side-gift for *Metroid Prime* on the GC—link both games up for cool bonuses.

For the Gamer Who Deserves a Lump of Coal:

You want to kick his ass, but he's got a restraining order against you. Do the next best thing: Send him a **piece of crap**. Nothing says, "I hate you" more than a gift like this:



Mortal Kombat Advance

GBA • Midway

Scores: 0.5, 0, 1.5

Imagine the fun you'll have watching a deserving recipient trying to play this turd of a fighting game: "Hey, I think this cartridge that you gave me is defective. Nothing seems to work properly. Sometimes, the special moves will pass right through the enemies. The amount of damage you do is erratic and inconsistent. The graphics are glitchy and missing animations.... Do you still have the receipt?" Then after rubbing your hands together in sadistic glee, enjoy watching as your "friend" waits in a long, postholiday line to exchange this sucker for a new copy, only to realize that it wasn't a defective cart—that's just how bad this game is.



B-B-B-BONUS GIFTS!

If you give 'em any GBA game, throw in **GameGizmo GBA TV Tuner (\$67 at www.gamegizmo.com)**. This gadget brings network TV right to your GBA's LCD screen. It's a great way to keep up with the televised commentary at a ball game while playing *Baseball Advance* during commercial breaks.



If you give 'em *Mortal Kombat Advance*, throw in ***Mortal Kombat: Annihilation*, the novelization (\$6 at www.amazon.com)**.—Now that you've stabbed a buddy in the back by putting the immensely crappy *MK Advance* under his tree, twist that dagger by slipping this book adaptation of the second *MK* film into his stocking. A likely excerpt: "Sonya kicked Scorpion in the head. Yada, yada, yada. Scorpion punched Sonya in the neck. Blah, blah, blah. Oh yeah—**MORTAL KOMBAT!!!**"

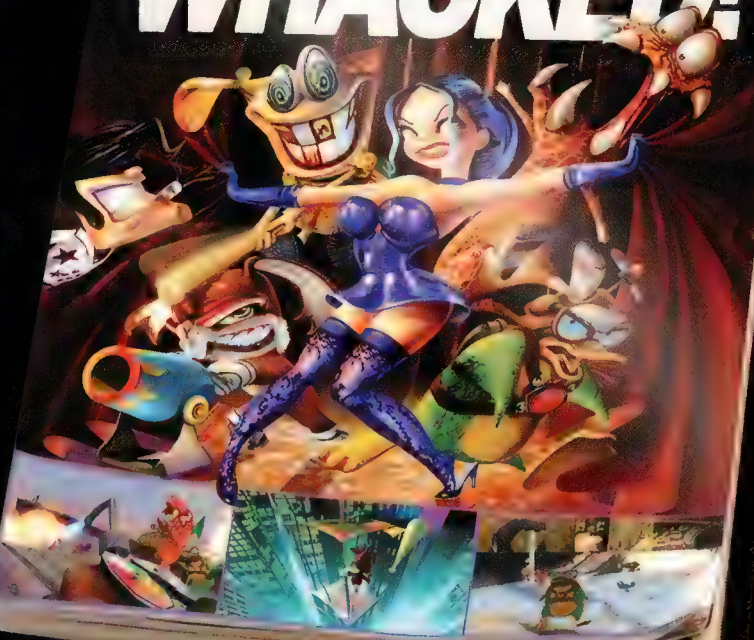


©2002 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, Whacked!, and the Xbox logos are registered trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Xbox Live subscription sold separately. The names of actual products and companies mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners.

TU
WEAKLY

FINALLY, A GAME SHOW
THAT SEPARATES
THE BAD-ASSES FROM
THE BED-WETTERS.

WHACKED!



CHNL	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	1:00	2:00
XBOX	Whacked! —Game Show VIOLENCE		(2002) A wild, multi-player, free-for-all combat game. Players must sabotage one another with 7 unique characters plus one sick and twisted host in 13 diverse environments with 30+ weapons and power-ups.				
XBOX LIVE	Whacked! —Game Show VIOLENCE (Now online)		For added mayhem, play online with Xbox Live and trample, torch, and trash-talk other gamers in a 4-player melee.				

www.whackedtv.com

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Mature Sexual Themes
Violence
Strong Language

WHACKED!
GAME SHOW GONE WRONG

ONLY ON
XBOX

www.xbox.com



XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED



For the Gadget Gamer

There's more to life than games. No, really! Here's a roundup of alternate gifts you should consider for the gamer who has damn near everything we recommended in the last dozen pages. Some of this stuff is pricey. Some of it's wacky. And some of it you may want on your wish list, so we included tips on how to let your loved ones know what you want to see under the tree this year.

—Darren Gladstone

Samsung SPH-A500 cell phone \$300 with Sprint PCS service plan

Compact and stylish, this is one of the first U.S. phones to play games that aren't crap. Sprint has partnered with Sega (for a baby version of *Super Monkey Ball*), THQ (*MotoGP*), and others, so you'll have no shortage of games to download. Plus, you can grab crazy ringtones, odd pictures, and screen-savers, or just go nuts and actually call somebody.

Convince loved ones to get this for you by asking: "Don't you want to be able to get a hold of me whenever you want?"



Archos Multimedia Jukebox • \$400

Got a mountain of MP3s on your computer and—ahem—a couple of videos as well? That's where this 20-gigabyte monster comes in. It can play all the music you can throw at it, while the tiny LCD screen plays your videos. You can also plug this into your home theater for a big-league effect.

Convince loved ones to get this for you by saying: "Think of all the money I'll be saving on CDs." (Disclaimer: Distributing digital audio files over the Internet is illegal...wink, wink.)



Sony CLIE PEG-T665C PDA \$400

Here's a pair of new personal-data assistants that are colorful, sexy, and a bunch of other adjectives you wouldn't normally associate with PDAs. Sure, you can stash digits and important dates, but both these suckers are also built for playing games. Sony sells an optional game controller (\$40) that turns the Palm OS-powered CLIE into a Game Boy from the year 2009. Toshiba's handheld is a turbo-charged multimedia machine that uses the mightier Pocket PC operating system, letting it play fancier games and emulate yе olde hits.

Convince loved ones to get this for you by saying: "This will make sure I don't forget any anniversaries or birthdays."



Toshiba e330 PDA \$450

ULTRACADE • Around \$3,500

This full-size home arcade unit may cost as much as a '94 Honda Civic, but it's absolutely the best gift you could ever give a gamer (or receive yourself, natch). San Jose, CA-based HyperWare's ULTRACADE comes loaded with 86 classic arcade games—everything from *Mr. Do!* to *Berzerk* and just about any Capcom coin-op that was in arcades before '92 (including *Street Fighter II* and its many variations). You can buy either an ULTRACADE kit (\$2,500) to install in your own arcade cabinet or order the whole thing pre-assembled (about \$1,000 more). You can also order separate game packs filled with beloved hits from the good ol' days. Call 408-895-0323 to find a local ULTRACADE dealer or check out www.ultracade.com.

Convince loved ones to get this for you by saying: "I won't waste my life and all my quarters at the teen center anymore."

Sharp Aquos Liquid Crystal Television • \$3,800

HDTV is the wave of the future. (Need proof? See our super-TV buyer's guide in *EGM* #160.) But the big sets can really cramp the style of gamers stuck in dorm rooms or tiny bedrooms. Fortunately, this slim and sweet-looking 22-inch widescreen HD monitor doesn't need much room at all. The only real trick here is finding a rich relative to front the money for it. **Convince loved ones to get this for you by saying:** "All my other friends at the country club have one."



SongPro • \$100

If the Archos Jukebox is too rich for your blood, check out this alternative gift for the Game Boy-owning music kook on your list. Plug it into a Game Boy Color or GBA to turn the portables into full-fledged MP3 players. (It also supports WMA tunes and the proprietary SongPro Audio format, which displays album art, lyrics, and other scrolling visuals on the Game Boy screen.) In addition to headphones, the SongPro comes with a USB cable and software that lets you jack the thing into your PC and download music from the Net (did you read our disclaimer for the Archos Jukebox?). You also get a 32MB SD card that you can upgrade to 512 megs if you really want to weigh this thing down with tunage. Can't find the SongPro in your local game store? Order it from www.songpro.com.

Convince loved ones to get this for you by saying: "Hey, it's cheaper than most regular MP3 players."



SCOTTeVEST Version 2.5 • \$130

OK, so it may look like a Members Only special from 1983 (does that mean it's back in style now?), but this jacket is made for the heavily armed geek. With more pockets and wire compartments (21 in all) than Jackie Chan's tuxedo, this thing can stash everything from your PDA, Game Boy Advance, cell phone, and MP3 player to the latest issue of *EGM* (yes, it has a spot in which to store your magazines).

Convince loved ones to get this for you by saying: "I can walk around in public carrying my GBA in my GBA purse, or I can keep it hidden away in the SCOTTeVEST. You decide."

Sony MDR-DS8000 Surround Headphones • \$700

For those with the burning desire to strap a six-speaker surround set to their heads, the DS8000 is the perfect gift. It supports every major surround technology—Dolby Digital to Pro Logic II to DTS—and pipes it directly into your melon. And it's wireless, so you can deafen yourself up to 33 feet from the infrared transmitter. Comfy, too.

Convince loved ones to get this for you by saying: "You're always complaining about how noisy my games are..."

Sony SVR-3000 (TiVo) \$450 plus TiVo service (about \$12 a month)

Never again let a 12-hour gaming marathon keep you from watching *The Sopranos*. The TiVo Series 2 recorder records your favorite TV shows for later playback. The best part: blowing through commercials when you take a break from *GTA: Vice City* to catch up on your soaps.

Convince loved ones to get this for you by saying: "Less time wasted watching TV commercials equals more time studying/cleaning the house/being with you."



EB GAMES™

electronics boutique

PlayStation.2



**COMING IN
JANUARY!**

**PRE-ORDER NOW
TO GUARANTEE
YOUR COPY**

湾岸
MIDNIGHT CLUB II

TAKE YOUR GAME FURTHER WITH BRADYGAMES™

湾岸
MIDNIGHT CLUB II
OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE

**MIDNIGHT CLUB II:
STREET RACING**
#225085-0 • PLAYSTATION 2
ROCKSTAR GAMES

\$49.99

**PURCHASE GAME
AND RECEIVE**

**20% OFF
GUIDE!**

MIDNIGHT CLUB II: STREET RACING

#226312-7
OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE
BRADY GAMES

\$49.99

Prices valid in U.S. only. Typographical errors are not the responsibility of Electronics Boutique. Not all items may appear at our outlet locations. Prices may vary by location. At time of printing, all products are expected to be available. Some packaging, pricing, and special offers may differ in Canada. Prices and availability are subject to change. Manufacturers' delays are not the responsibility of Electronics Boutique. ©2002 Electronics Boutique

TO PLACE YOUR ORDER NOW CALL 1.800.800.0032 OR VISIT WWW.EBGAMES.COM!



GAME BOY ADVANCE SYSTEM

GAME BOY ADVANCE • NINTENDO
 ARCTIC #201796-0 FUSCHIA #204856-3
 GLACIER #201798-6 INDIGO #201794-5
 PLATINUM #219385-2 POKEMON #203230-0

\$69.99
EACH

PRE-PURCHASE TODAY!



NINTENDO GAMECUBE CONSOLE
 NINTENDO GAMECUBE • NINTENDO
 PLATINUM #227069-7
 JET #212451-8
 INDIGO #212447-7

\$149.99
EACH



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA:
 A LINK TO THE PAST
 #224379-3 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
 NINTENDO

\$29.99



METROID FUSION
 #274-9 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
 NINTENDO

\$29.99



METROID PRIME
 #274-7 • NINTENDO GAMECUBE
 NINTENDO

\$49.99



BACKYARD FOOTBALL
 #27-2 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
 INFOGAMES

\$29.99



DRAGONBALL Z:
 THE LEGACY OF GOKU
 #214363-4 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
 INFOGAMES

\$29.99



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS:
 EYE OF THE BEHOLDER
 #227845-4 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
 INFOGAMES

\$29.99



PlayStation 2



Best Fighting Game
Best Simulation



Blood
Strong Lyrics
Violence



MORE THAN 20 TOP FIGHTERS



MULTIPLE FIGHTING STYLES

**FOR ALL THE PAIN HE'S IN,
QUITTING WOULD FEEL
MUCH WORSE.**

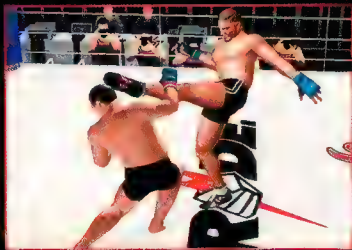
PRIDE FC

FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

VARIOUS FIGHTING POSITIONS



ONE HIT KNOCKOUTS



DREAM STAGE
entertainment



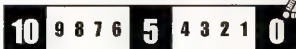
www.thq.com



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 10s, the best and rarest review a game can get.



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



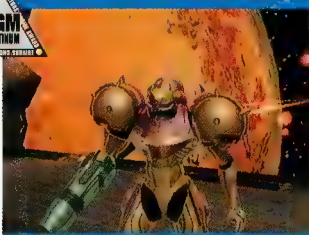
Games that average at least an 8.0 (but lower than 9.0) receive **Silver Awards**.

This Month in Reviews

This time last year, our cover screamed "Too many games!" in blazing 3-inch letters. Now, it might as well screech "Too many golds!" Our review section's jammed with so much metal—Platinum for *Metrod Prime* (GC), Gold for *Splinter Cell* (Xbox), Silver for *The Two Towers* (PS2), and more—that our lawyers

advise you to lift this issue with your legs, not your back. But we also give garbage games their due with a special new section devoted to the stuff no one here really wanted to play. Humor-writer Seanbaw, now a regular EGM contributor, handles this delicate duty—and makes Mary Kate & Ashley cry—on page 216.

Game of the Month



Metrod Prime pp. 18-4

Like its battle-battered star—Citrus-colored she-warrior Samus Aran—*Metrod Prime* for GameCube faced astronomical odds when it touched down in our offices this month.

Here was a new installment in our favorite made-in-Japan side-scrolling series, but molded into a 3D, first-person platformer (blah) by a bunch of untested guys in Texas (Austin-based Retro Studios). We didn't know what to expect. A few hours later, we knew the Retro crew managed to lock down the series' gameplay, sound, and feel. And, just like the star of their masterpiece game, they'd just saved the universe.

The Crew



Shane Bettenhausen Reviews Editor

Shane played so much of the two spectacular *Metrod* games this month that he claims to have actually written the book on it. Or at least to have doodled sexy Samus fan art in the margins.

Favorite Genres: Action, Fighting, RPG
Current Faves: *Metrod Prime* and *Fusion*, *PSO*



Crispin Boyer Features Editor

Crispin's mom was so impressed when he reached the rank of captain in *Steel Battalion*, she made him his own flight suit. He wears it to work half the time. Er, we mean he wears half of it to work all the time.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure
Current Faves: *Steel Battalion*, *Metrod Prime*



Che Chou Executive Editor, Xbox Nation

Che will be scarce now that he's gone to sister mag *XBN*. So we got a pic of him before he was a rock star, before he had hair down to his ass, back when he was just a wide-eyed kid we called "Fresh Meat."

Favorite Genres: Action, Fighting, Giant Robots
Current Faves: *Steel Battalion*, *Resident Evil 4*



Dan "Shoe" Hsu Editor-in-Chief

When Shoe dreams, it's not about being a *GTA* mobster or a *Lord of the Rings* hero. It's about filling his home with traffic cones and fruit-shaped furniture. Madman? Yup. *Animal Crossing* addict? That, too.

Favorite Genres: All of 'em
Current Faves: *GTA: Vice City*, *Animal Crossing*



Chris Johnston News Editor

Young CJ has been servin' hard time after stealing items out of the lost and found (and trash) in *Animal Crossing*. Of course, he could leave his cell any time he wants, cuz in AC, grand larceny ain't a crime.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure, Music
Current Faves: *PSO Ep. I&II*, *Metrod Prime*



Mark MacDonald Executive Editor

It may have been over a year since Mark maliciously and intentionally led their people to various deaths solely for his own amusement, but as the Pikmin well know, revenge is a dish best served cold.

Current Faves: *Metrod Prime*, *Steel Battalion*
More Current Faves: *Metrod Fusion*, *MGS2:Z*



James "Milkman" Mielke Whirling Dervish

Milky was so preoccupied with *Splinter Cell* this month that he's sworn off clothing with any semblance of color in it. Now that the Milkman is back in black, it's even harder to find him at work.

Favorite Genres: Action, Fighting, Role-playing
Current Faves: *Splinter Cell*, *Metrod Fusion*



Greg Sewart Previews Editor

Sewart got so into *Zelda* for the GBA this month, he decided to show us how well he could play his ocarina. He was so terrible that we didn't have the heart to tell him he was actually playing a flute.

Favorite Genres: Racing, RPG, Action
Current Faves: *Zelda GBA*, *MGS2: Substance*

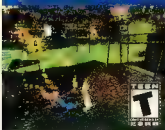


Jennifer Tsao Managing Editor

Subject: Jennifer Tsao. Group #14A. Experiment results: Tsao seems impervious to cuteness levels that drive other subjects mad. Will increase dosage next round, perhaps adding Kirby and Moogle vectors.

Favorite Genres: Action sports, Adventure
Current Faves: *Tony Hawk 4*, *Animal Crossing*

Dr. Muto



Publisher: PS2
Midway
Developer: Midway
Players: 1
Also On: GC, Xbox
Features: Ugly character designs
Website: www.drmutoo.com

Best Feature: Quirky main character
Worst Feature: Annoying main character

Pity poor Dr. Muto. Not only did he blow up his planet in some mangled ecological experiment. Not only does he have to muddle through dingy, poorly designed locales in search of parts to rebuild his world. Not only must he morph into those spectacularly uninteresting creatures, like a mouse, a spider, and a squirrel. But—worst of all—he's also forced to star in this disastrously dull dud of a game. In a season when quality platformers are proliferating like a barn of hares in heat, *Dr. Muto Falls to Impress*. Granted, *Muto* offers plenty of platform elements spread through enormous levels, but games like *Ratchet & Clank* and *Mario Sunshine* do it so much better. The control, the camera, and the graphics are a muddy mess that conspire to wring out almost all the fun. Worse yet, the mutating aspect—arguably *Muto's* only fresh point—is just a meaningless gimmick that brings nothing new to the gameplay. What difference does it make if, say, you turn into a mouse to enter small places, and end up experiencing the same dreary gameplay on a smaller scale? **Gary**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	4	5

Haven: Call of the King



Publisher: PS2
Midway
Developer: Traveller's Tales
Players: 1
Also On: GC, Xbox
Features: Lamest Mascot Hairstyle;
 Bright-red crows
Website: www.midway.com

Best Feature: Amount of different gameplay styles
Worst Feature: Annoying aiming issues

At a time when so many top-tier platformers are available on the PS2, *Haven* stands out by offering a **metric ton of gameplay modes:** On-rails shooting levels, off-road races, stationary first-person blasters, jetpack missions, aerial dogfights, boats, biplanes, huge weapons, obstacle courses, twitchy action, and thoughtful puzzles add to the standard *Mario* formula. The problem is, in the attempt to be all things for all kinds of gamers, each little mode lacks polish. From the atrocious aiming in the platform bits to the convoluted controls in some of the vehicle segments, the frustration factor is immense—this is one of the most difficult platformers you'll play. Stick with it and you'll be rewarded with the occasional edge-of-your-seat, blister-inducing, adrenaline-fueled thrill-ride of a level—although you'll suffer further just as many torturous bits that'll have you crying foul. Still, hardcore types will love its challenge, and just about anyone else should appreciate *Haven's* diversity. It's a solid game, but with more balance, it could've been great. **Gary**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	6



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami CET
Players: 1-2
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #160
Best Feature: Contra done right!
Worst Feature: No spread gun...are you kidding?
Website: www.konami.com

OK, I'll be a nice guy and tell you what you want to hear: This game rocks. All you hardcore *Contra* vets can rest assured that Konami did this bad boy right. Just like the grand *Contras* of yore (*Alien Wars*, *Hard Corps*, and the original), *Shattered Soldier* is a straight-out, side-scrolling, one-hit-and-you're-dead, insanely old-school shooter. With each new level, you'll be humbled as you try to live longer than a few seconds. But that's OK. Practice. You'll soon learn that every enemy, miniboss, and magnificently inspired end-level boss has a pattern. And after doing a bunch more times, you will learn those patterns, master them, and burn them into your brain. And you know what? It won't matter. **You will still die. A lot.** Some of the battles require such a high degree of precision, if you so much as breathe the wrong way, it's over. But it's this unrelenting intensity that will keep you coming back. You just can't let beat you—not until you've destroyed every last alien monstrosity. One minor complaint: For such a twitch game, there are too many controls. With three chargeable weapons to switch between (adding a strategic element) and buttons to lock your gun and feet, it can be a bit overwhelming at times. As for the *Contra*-staple two-player co-op mode, it's fun as hell while remaining ultra-tough. Besides the mysterious lack of the spread gun!), *Contra* is back and in fine form. **S. Ford**

It may look fancy, but *Shattered Soldier* is old school in every possible way. It's got old-school level design, old-school challenges, and most importantly, kick-ass old-school gameplay. *Contra* fans will be beside themselves when they see just how cool it looks and plays on the PS2. There's far more depth here than ever before, with the on-the-fly selectable weapons (thanks to secondary super shots) and the new Hit Rate percentage. Muster up your patience, though—these pattern-based boss encounters demand extremely precise play. In fact, this ends up being my only regret with the game. I wish it had more simple, run-and-gun *Contra* gameplay. **Sam**

Hey you, Mr./Ms. Hardcore Gamer. You better be buying this game. Not renting. Not borrowing. Buying. You've been complaining about how you miss the good ol' days and how "games aren't like they used to be" and "2D is better than 3D" and "Contra sucked when it went to the PS1." Well, Konami listened to all your complaints and delivered exactly what you've been looking for. Of course it's linear. Yes, it's full of easy-to-remember patterns. But that's old-school for you, baby. You asked for it—you got it. I will say, though, *Soldier* is disappointingly short, and I wish it had the traditional *Contra* trait of getting new weapons as you progress. **Shoe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	6	7

Disney's Treasure Planet



Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Bizarre Creations
Players: 1
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #156
Best Feature: It's Jak and Daxter Lite
Worst Feature: It's...Jak and Daxter Lite
Website: www.scea.com

For a game that's almost certain to get lost in the holiday shuffle, *Treasure Planet* has a lot to offer. Sure, you're better off sticking with Sony's Big Three (this fall's *Sly Cooper* and *Ratchet & Clank*, and last year's *Jak and Daxter*), but once you're done blasting through the best of the bunch, this movie-to-game adventure offers more solid platforming action. From the sharp graphics to the tight control to the intricate level designs, everything here is remarkably well done. The problem is, there's almost nothing new, different, or especially exciting in *Treasure Planet*. Is that necessarily a bad thing? It all depends on how you approach the game. If you require every videogame experience to be massively different from the last, then don't even think about this game. It can get so derivative that at times it feels almost like a direct, shameless rip-off of *Jak and Daxter*. But if you simply want a fun diversion that ties nicely into the Disney film (with just a few CG cut-scenes and solid voiceover from the film's cast), this comes recommended. It's easy to play, easy to enjoy—and equally easy to forget about once you're done. Basically, it's the perfect weekend rental. *Treasure Planet* is also a solid choice for younger kids, since the play mechanics are fairly straightforward—but it's also got enough tough moments to challenge even the most hardcore gamer. **Gary**

With any title based on a film, the first question you should ask yourself before playing is, "Did I like the movie?" Cuz chances are, your opinion of the game hinges on that answer. *Planet* feels as if a gallon of solid-but-derivative, action-platforming gameplay has been dumped into a *Treasure Planet*-shaped glass. This game is basically a series of collect-a-thons: Get 100 Good Drubbalons and 10 Green Energies, ride your sailboard through rings around a level, and maybe finish one or two other level-specific objectives. But unless you thought *Planet* was the "best movie ever," it won't be long for you to wonder why you're still playing this. **GJ**

Over an hour after quitting *Treasure Planet*, I still have Disney-movie music swelling in my head. Maybe that's because this game really hits you over the head with Uncle Walt's aesthetic: whimsical cartoon graphics and cut-scenes, a cast of extremely traditional characters (including the hero and wacky sidekick), and an extraordinarily predictable plot. But as anyone who's played such games can tell you, the Disney vibe doesn't necessarily translate into magnificent gameplay. That's not to say *TP* is bad. You can run, jump, and hoverboard to your little heart's content, and each level contains new challenges. It's just not going to rock your planet. **Jennifer**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	2	4

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers



Sometimes, it seems like all that inspirational talk about teamwork and fellowship is a crock. Two of your allies often seem to be mysteriously absent when the Orcs attack. Luckily, on some levels (like this one, below), you'll have the help of some conveniently unbeatable, nameless human warriors.



Huzzah! Now **this is how a movie-to-game adaptation should be done.** EA has boiled down the complex fantasy films to their wildest, ass-kickingest scenes: colossal battles against hordes of Orcs, Goblins, and Trolls. It might seem like just a button-mashing brawler at first, but the addition of multiple characters and experience-based upgrades infuses much-needed depth into what could have been *Final Fight* with Hobbits. Mastering the timing for combos and parry maneuvers takes practice and, more importantly, skill. You won't be able to succeed on the Normal difficulty level by simply jamming on the strong attack buttons, which I find commendable. The gameplay might be the real hook, but I can't deny the graphics: *The Two Towers* looks positively fantastic. Honestly, few PS2 games can match the sheer eye-candy overload offered here. Transitions between film footage and in-game graphics meld with shocking seamlessness. Amazingly, the audio matches the imagery: The film's incredible music heightens the drama here, and the real-actor voice clips only add to the real-movie feel. Although there's much to praise, not everything is entirely peachy in Middle-earth. First off, the game really should support two simultaneous players. It's an obvious choice that was grossly overlooked. Also, the game's short, so resilient players will be able to blast through it in a day or two. Finally, some of the levels suffer from a frustrating lack of restart points when you die. Minor grievances aside, it's a winner that fans of the flicks will dig.

Shane

The idea of taking the *Lord of the Rings* movie license and twisting it into an arcade beat-em-up might seem like the ultimate Middle-earth money-making scheme. But this thumb-blistering brawler—which is as beautiful as it is intense—is no rush job. In fact, it's actually surprisingly deep; **random button mashing won't get you far.** Sure, some levels are tedious, and the more crowded battles have you playing *Where's Waldo?* with your warrior, but the game is so chaotic and stunning that you're tricked into ignoring its flaws and thinking, "This is awesome!" even as you're screaming, "My thumbs are freakin' killing me!"

Crispin

The graphics and presentation in *The Two Towers* are exceptional. Certain parts look like they're right out of the movie. In fact, it's enough to keep you from noticing that you're basically doing the same thing over and over again. Sure, you can buy new combos for your three characters, and the levels are varied—from exploring Fanghorn Forest to fighting off waves after waves of enemies. But when it comes down to it, this is a **basic hack-'n'-slash game, albeit a really good one.** Any big *Lord of the Rings* movie fan will find this game worth buying for the solid gameplay combined with all the extras you can unlock as you play.

Greg S.

Publisher: EA Games
Developer: EA/Stormfront Studios
Players: 1
Also On: GC, Xbox
Best Feature: Looks and sounds as amazing as the movie
Worst Feature: Cries out for a multiplayer mode
Website: lordoftherings.ea.com



EA's officially licensed, action-game stab at Tolkien's masterpiece is the only one based on Peter Jackson's blockbuster film adaptations. It combines elements from last fall's *The Fellowship of the Ring* movie and this year's *The Two Towers* into one sprawling slash-a-thon. From the shocking opening stage (in which you learn the combat basics as guest-star Isildur by fighting Sauron's armies at Mordor) to the climactic brawl at the gates of Helm's Deep, the riveting, engrossing gameplay never lets up.

The production values of this game match the cool look of the movies perfectly. Film clips frame each level, the soundtrack hails directly from the movie's original score, and all of the principle actors have recorded new dialogue exclusively for this game. EA made extensive use of the movie's sets to create the game's environments, and the resulting stages look remarkably lifelike. And, as you'd expect, the characters look and behave like their silver-screen counterparts: Aragorn is a good, all-around fighter; Gimli is a dwarfen powerhouse for up-close brawling; and Legolas excels at archery and speedy, skillful swordplay (you get to choose which character you play before each level).

Some fans might lament the fact that EA chose not to make its *LOTR* game into an RPG, but realistically, this beat-'em-up action title holds much wider appeal to fans. It's fast, fun, and approachable, yet ultimately deep and rewarding.



Each character can learn special moves that will instantly defeat various evil races, such as Goblins, Orcs, and the nefarious Uruk 'Hai.

BEHIND THE SCENES



The Two Towers includes a bevy of special goodies for players to unlock, like production art and behind-the-scenes clips about the game's creation, including interviews with the film's actors about their voiceover work. These DVD-like special features offer great incentives to replay the adventure.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	4	6

THE MANIA IS BACK

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON
there will be
only one new wrestling
game exploding onto

Xbox &
Nintendo
GameCube..

• Over 65 ring warriors • New match types : 6 & 8 Man Tag, Ladder, Cage and Battle Royal

• Body Slam Challenge • All-new storyline career mode • DVD bonus footage and wrestler interviews

LegendsOfWrestling2.com

GAME BOY ADVANCE

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Blood
Violence

XBOX



PlayStation 2

NINTENDO
GAMECUBE

Acclaim
acclaim.com

Legends of Wrestling™ 2 and Acclaim © & © 2002 Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Developed by Acclaim Studio Salt Lake City. All Rights Reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. TM, © and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. Game Boy and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. Screens shown were taken from the Xbox version of the video game.

EGM SILVER

Jet X2O



Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Killer Game
Players: 1-2
Also On: None
Also Try: SSX Tricky
Website: www.scea.com

Best Feature: It's *SSX Tricky* on water
Worst Feature: Too many blind jumps

ESRB Rating: E

Over the past year, we've cruised through a handful of Jet-Ski racing games, and although some were really good, *Jet X2O* is by far the coolest. Basically, it's *SSX Tricky* on water, from the flyby of every track before each event to the shoulder-butt track system. And trust me—there'll be plenty of trick opportunities as you work your way down these super-long, shortcut-filled courses. My only complaint? Too many blind ramps break up the fun. It's annoying to be in a groove, flying down the track, only to land on an island and have to reset my craft or wait for it to slide back into the water. It really disrupts the flow of the race. Still, that's the only problem with *Jet X2O*. Everything else is exceptional, and letting the tricks for each character (as well as upgrading and unlocking the various vehicles) kept me coming back for more. A serviceable multiplayer game sweetens the replay factor. Spitscreens' nothing special, but it's enough for you and a friend to have some fun. **Bottom line:** Pick this up.

Greg S.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	3	9

NCAA March Madness 2003



Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Canada
Players: 1-2 (2-8 w/Multi-apt)
Also On: None
Perfect for: Keggars
Website: www.easports.com

Best Feature: Awesome Dynasty mode
Worst Feature: Blocky graphics can't hang with *Live's*

ESRB Rating: E

Seeing the vast improvement in *NBA Live* this year, I was moderately hopeful that *March Madness* would follow suit. Well, those hopes weren't entirely dashed, but they weren't quite fulfilled, either. **Judged against last year's *Madness*, this is a serious slice of roundball.** The inclusion of the Maui Invitational, custom tournaments, and the ever-popular Dynasty mode make for plenty of dream matchups. Those dreams, however, take on more of a Freudian quality once you take the court. It's like you tried to really get into it, but the subconscious pull of "NBA Live looks and plays better" keeps gnawing at the recesses of your mind. If you can quiet the voices in your head, *March Madness* succeeds on quite a few fronts. The recruiting interface is excellent (like *NCAA 2003's*), the strategic Coach's Council enhances the play-calling, and defense is actually better than *Live's* (you can block ducks, for instance). It's just an overall final layer of polish that keeps *March Madness* from the National Championship. Give it a shot.

Dan L.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	6	7

EGM GOLD

NHL 2K3



Publisher: Sega Sports
Developer: Treyarch
Players: 1-2 (2-8 w/Multi-apt)
Also On: GC, Xbox
Featured In: EGM #61
Best Feature: Awesome Franchise mode
Worst Feature: No online play (except on Xbox)
Website: www.segasports.com

ESRB Rating: E

For years, I've been a big fan of EA's *NHL* series, but Sega's *NHL 2K3* skates circles around *NHL 2003*, gameplay-wise. When you first fire up *2K3*, it doesn't immediately impress; the presentation, graphics, and commentary can't match EA's level of studied slickness. But then, you check out the various control options and realize **you've never had this much freedom in a hockey game.** On defense, the poke-check is very effective, plus you can slide across the path of a shot and have a fair chance of making the block. Of course, this means that having your star player hog the puck is a good way to screw up a scoring chance—def't passing is the key to putting the puck in the net. The whole game is just so versatile. If you find any aspect of *2K3* that's not quite to your liking, gameplay sliders let you adjust everything from collisions with the referee to the friction of the ice (unfortunately, there's no slider for the length of Mike Ricci's hair—it defaults to long and greasy). Treyarch and Visual Concepts have nailed the feel of hockey; all they need to do is work on the look and sound, cuz better graphics and more entertaining commentary will put *2K4* over the top next year. Oh, and online play for every platform...that'd be nice. By the way, these Americans need to hire Canada's Don Cherry for some color commentary. That man is a god north of the border.

Greg S.

Along with the World Cup and presidential elections, a defining hockey game storms the public every four years. *NHL 2K3* is the latest entry into that hallowed class. It's a hockey lover's dream and, at the same time, has the mass appeal of the legendary *NHL '94* for the Sega Genesis. It blends the blazing speed and pick-up-and-play fun of a videogame (big hits, lots of action) with the serious simulation aspects of real hockey (lots of mucking it up on the boards). Maybe the character models look a little weak, and who cares? You'll never be close enough to the ice to notice their blocky mullets. **This is the only hockey game to buy this year.**

Todd

Finally! A hockey game that will have fans everywhere sportin' big—and in some cases toothless—grins. *NHL 2K3*, one of last year's most under-appreciated Dreamcast titles, gave new meaning to the word "sim." Sega Sports overhauled all the little flaws in *2K2*, cooking up a board-checkin', glove-flashin', biscuit-in-the-basket of a hockey game. The rock-solid gameplay has been tuned to perfection and no other game sweats the details like this. (Try pinning guys up against the boards while fighting for a loose puck and you'll see what I mean.) Plus, the crazy-deep customization lets you tailor every facet to your specifications. **An absolute must-buy for puck enthusiasts.**

Dan L.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	9

The Simpsons Skateboarding



Publisher: EA/Fox Interactive
Developer: Code Monkeys
Players: 1-2
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #156
Best Feature: Solid skating engine
Worst Feature: Craptacular music
Website: www.eagames.com

ESRB Rating: T

The Simpsons do skateboarding! OK, I'll admit that phrase scared me at first, too. I mean, *The Simpsons Road Rage* and *Simpsons Wrestling* put the license in deep 'o'h. But this *Tony Hawk*-clone turned out surprisingly well. Besides the obvious draw of grinding all over Springfield and hearing the quips of the actual voice actors from the show, we get a solid foundation of objective-based boarding. The Skillz School challenges are reminiscent of *SSX's* Trick Book, which sure beats a tutorial, and the game has an open-ended level design. You're free to cruise the stages until you hit a timed challenge, and then it's back to exploration. And the levels are a pleasure for *Simpson*-philes; I was psyched to find one based on one of my favorite episodes, *Itchy* and *Scratchy* Land. The most important aspect of any action-sports game—controls—work well here. Unfortunately, you don't get nearly enough points for vertical tricks, turning all score-based objectives into grind-a-thons (luckily, there's an abundance of edges 'round town). Also, the combo-counting manual mode needs to be more forgiving. *Simpsons Skateboarding* definitely doesn't compete with his *Hawk*-ness as a true boarding game (no innovations here), but **it delivers enough to please fans of the TV series.** Now, give me *Family Guy Stealth Adventure* (starring Stewie, naturally) and I'll even happen.

G. Ford

This game made me want to release the hounds. Didn't anyone care enough to make this more than merely an average skateboarding game with the **Simpsons license plopped on top?** My biggest complaint is that the characters don't actually move by default. Instead, they stand still until you push them, and jumping has the buoyancy of Homer after a big box of glazed doughnuts. Plus, Kent Brockman's voice narrating every move is creepy and annoying. Still, if you learn the mechanics and accept the fact that repetitive grinding—rather than the few fun tricks—is the key to success, it's not a terrible game, just a disappointing one.

Jennifer

This game might be a lot of fun if you took all the skateboarding parts out. As it is, the skating is really just an excuse to toss in locations, characters, and quotes from the TV series. This approach was fine enough in *The Simpsons Road Rage*, but here, it's not enough to counteract the awful play mechanics of the skateboarding itself. **The controls are stiff and spotty** (why do I get big air on one side of a half-pipe and then barely clear the lip on the other?). In order to clear each level, you must do so on those collect-the-letters-to-spell-out-a-word things...only you have to do it in order and with a ridiculously short time limit. No fun—no thanks.

Joe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	3	5

JETPACK 3941 FOR YOUR SAFETY

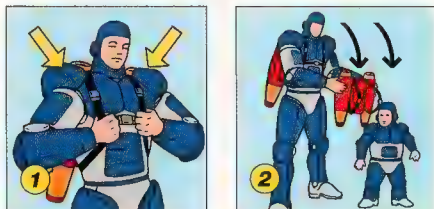
TRIBES AERIAL ASSAULT



OUT OF AMMO



AFFIX OWN JETPACK BEFORE ASSISTING OTHERS



MINEFIELD AVOIDANCE



JETPACK CARRY-ONS



ATTENTION: IF YOU CANNOT PERFORM THESE FUNCTIONS, PROCEED DIRECTLY TO TRIBES.SIERRA.COM FOR A TRIBES VIDEO FEATURING TRUSTcompany's "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.
- CAN'T GET IT UP WITH YOUR JETPACK? JUMP IN A FIGHTER, BOMBER, ARMED TRANSPORT OR GRAVBIKE.



PlayStation 2

SIERRA™



Exclusively for the PlayStation² computer entertainment system.

Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance



Although *Deadly Alliance's* mood seems gravely serious (Liu Kang does get brutally murdered in the opening, after all), you'll still find pockets of the tongue-in-cheek silliness that led to stuff like Babalities, Animalities, and Friendships. Here we see Sonya Blade blowing a silly-yet-deadly kiss.



Since the *Mortal Kombat* franchise seemed dead and buried, I approached this game with a mixture of apprehension and perverse interest. For me, the series peaked with *MK2*, but I respected that game's attempt at pushing the genre (at the time) with a deep skill-based system. Of course, that was years ago, and it doesn't take some sort of video black belt to see that the fighting genre has evolved way beyond those days of yore, leaving *MK* pitifully behind to play catch-up. That's basically what *Alliance* feels like: a declaration that Sub-Zero and his posse are back, ready to kick ass again in the 21st century. Well, old sport, I need more than that. Strip away the surprisingly excellent graphics and gimmicky bonus material and you've got a 3D fighter that's derivative at best, and at worst, the same game we got tired of years ago. The ability to switch between three different fighting styles on the fly is cool, but there are a ton of moves that can be easily abused, flushing both honor and skill down the toilet. Then there are the dreaded Tekken-esque multistring combos that are less about reflexes and more about hard memorization. I know that for a lot of nostalgic gamers, the selling point here isn't the depth of gameplay, but rather the outrageous fatalities, nonchalant gore, and truckloads of hidden secrets. Those fans of the series will be appeased, but I'm barely impressed.

Che

It's a shame, really. *Alliance* is an ambitious attempt at turning this franchise around, but underneath its slick new veneer, you'll find the same problematic gameplay that has plagued the series' recent incarnations. The multiple fighting styles and weapons seem cool at first. Too bad these styles are horribly unbalanced and all rely on a handful of special moves and *unintuitive, dated-in-combos*. In its defense, the game does offer tons of unlockable secrets and surprisingly attractive backgrounds (no praise for the laughably ranky animation, though—Johnny Cage's bicycle kick ooks 100 percent stupid). It'll be acceptable to current *MK* fans, but won't win many new ones.

Shane

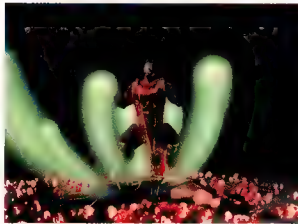
I never expected *Deadly Alliance* to be the best fighting game ever made—I just wanted it to be a good *MK* game. And it is. I'd go so far as to say it's damn good. Why? Because it's just a hell of a lot of fun. Sure, *MK:DA* is Steven Segal to *VF4's* Bruce Lee: less talented, less fittest, less handsome, but still able to kick butts. All of the classic *MK* characters have been gorgeously reinvented for maximum cool factor, and the number of unlockable bonuses (over 600!) will have fans playing for eons. The best part (and the thing that makes *DA* the best *MK* game since *MK2*) is that it isn't an over-the-top shockfest like the last few installments. Toasty.

Milkman

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	5	7

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Midway
Players: 1-2
Also On: GC, Xbox
Featured In: EGM #155
Best Feature: Lots of secrets to unlock
Worst Feature: Unbalanced gameplay
Website: www.mkdeadlyalliance.com

PS2



Finish Him! Fans will be happy to see that *Deadly Alliance* features a gaggle of new gross-out fatalities that spray oozing piles of gore all over.

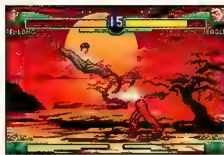
Back in the early '90s, *Mortal Kombat*, despite all its cardboard gameplay mechanics and cheesy digitized graphics, gave *Street Fighter II* a real run for its money in arcades everywhere. Now, more than a decade after the release of the original and following a few years of retirement, the series is back.

Gamers who missed the last few installments (and who can blame them? *MK3* and *4* were disappointing) will be especially surprised at the leaps *Mortal Kombat* has made to compete with modern fighting games. Take, for instance, the free-roaming eight-way movement system and heavy use of weapons highly reminiscent of one of our favorite fighters, *Soul Calibur*. Or the enclosed arenas you might be familiar with from recent *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter* titles. And the incredibly lengthy Konquest mode, in which players take on hundreds of challenges, learning the intricacies of the gameplay system and simultaneously

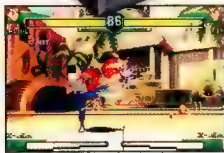
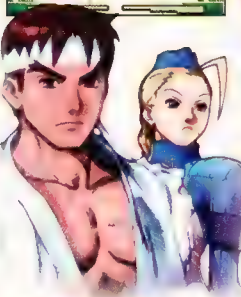
earning "currency" to unlock up to 676 secret items (*Soul Calibur* again).

All of these features bring *Deadly Alliance* up to speed in terms of modernizing the ancient franchise. Unfortunately, the one thing that hasn't gotten with the times is the series' stilted, unbalanced gameplay that has a tendency to induce severe button mashing. But we're getting ahead of ourselves; as you can see, Review Crew opinions clash over *Alliance*. Milky, who happens to be the master of unlocking (secrets), loves the game with an intensity that downright baffled our other two players. Read their reviews to find out why.





STREET FIGHTER PERFECTION



Street Fighter® Alpha 3 scores a triple K.O.! It's the most accurate translation of an arcade game to grace the circuits of the Game Boy® Advance video game system... featuring all new enhanced modes of play – including 3 fighting styles for every character. Maybe nobody's perfect. But as of today, at least one fighting game is.

CAPCOM
capcom.com



© CAPCOM CO., LTD. 1998. 2002 © CAPCOM U.S.A. INC. 1998. 2002 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM LOGO are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. STREET FIGHTER is a registered trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. Nintendo, Game Boy, and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

Rygar: The Legendary Adventure



During the game, you'll find three powerful Diskarmors: Hades, Heavenly, and Sea. Each has its own powerful moves, especially when equipped with ability-enhancing mystic stones. One secret Diskarmor you unlock after beating the game once is the mighty Pizzarmor. We kid you not.



I'm a big fan of the original *Rygar*, but even so, I didn't expect *The Legendary Adventure* to end up so unbelievably fun. Unless you actually play the game, you won't be able to grasp just how cool it is to hurl *Rygar's* Diskarmor at an enemy, and then whip your impaled victim around on a chain. Slamming the monster to the ground and causing it to shatter into little bits is merely icing on the cake. Does this make me a sick bastard? I don't think so. But I do think this makes *Rygar* an excellent game. When you're not sweating down the vast selection of bugs, floating sack-things, mythological deities, and uh, plants wearing boxing gloves, you're tearing the visually stunning landscape to bits, possessed by the urge to dig up every last secret bonus. Thankfully, this isn't a chore, since the controls are spot-on and the game's physics have a satisfying sense of gravity—not typical in a lot of today's floaty action games. Few games can compete with *Rygar's* awesome visuals—creative levels, flashy effects, and smooth movement put it at the top of the PS2 class. One graphical blunder does burden the action, though: *Werd*'s distracting. Still, the game's forgiving checkpoints and unlimited lives help keep frustration levels low. Simply put, *Rygar* is one of the finest action games around.

Milkman

What's up with a *Rygar* remake coming out of nowhere and being all fresh? Not only does it look unquestionably superb, *Rygar* also plays better than most of the action games out there. Smashing the amazingly rendered environments to bits is unbelievably satisfying, and combat with actual monsters is even more dreamy. The fact that the game is exploration-based makes it that much better. If you've ever wished for a *Symphonia* of the *Werd*-style *Castlevania* game in 3D, this is about as close as you're gonna get (for now). You'll have a hell of a time plowing through the game multiple times in order to unlock all the cool hidden items. Simply put: *Rygar* is hot!

Miguel

Like *Devil May Cry* before it, *Rygar* proves that you can pull off a true action game in 3D. This game plays like an absolute dream; the Diskarmor is a superfun weapon to use, and its many moves and combinations give *Rygar* plenty of depth. What surprised me most, though, were the incredible, lush visuals. Environments drip with an almost hand-painted quality, and the game is light years ahead of most in terms of its cinematic approach. It's even more impressive when you factor in the fact that good chunks of the scenery can be laid to waste: *Red Faction's* Geo-mod engine has nothing on *Rygar*. My only real qualm with this one is its slightly confusing camera.

Sam

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	8	9	8

Publisher: Tecmo
Developer: Tecmo
Players: 1
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #161
Best Feature: Awesome Diskarmor mechanics
Worst Feature: Spazzy camera
Website: www.tecmoinc.com



On a platform already occupied by Solid Snake, Dante of *Devil May Cry*, and Hotsuma from *Shinobi*, is there really room for yet another action hero? It doesn't look like the other guys have much of a choice—*Rygar* is exploding back onto the gaming scene for the first time in over 10 years.

Arguably the hardest-working man in the action-game business, *Rygar* comes ready to party with his trusty Diskarmor, the shield/weapon he keeps strapped to his right arm. The Diskarmor is *Rygar's* money-maker, and he shakes it whenever he can. Useful for dismembering his enemies, accessing hard-to-reach areas, blocking incoming attacks, and rappelling from fantastical heights, the only thing this yo-yo-like device doesn't do is cook *Rygar* breakfast. Not that he has time to worry about that, since obliterating everything in sight is his



Who's this guy and what's his damage? Here's a hint: He's named after a famous Greek philosopher, and he's always giving *Rygar* a hard time.

first priority. The game features a buttload of galleries, music tracks, movies, and other well-hidden secrets you can find buried in the extremely destructible environments.

Breathtaking landscapes, gigantic boss fights, a fantastic sense of exploration, and a cool lead character make *Rygar* a must-play.



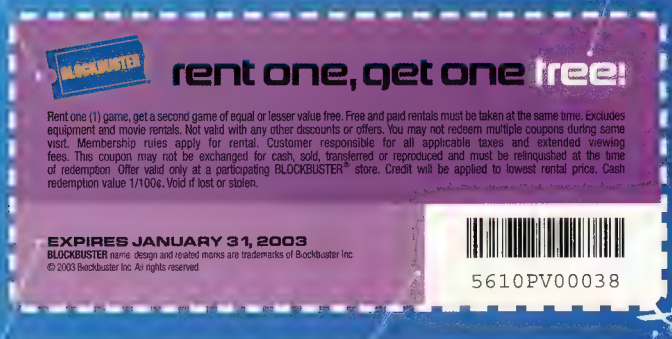
HOW TO BE A BETTER G A M E R

GAME YOUR WAY AT BLOCKBUSTER®

Rent and buy games and systems. BLOCKBUSTER is all about gamers now. Big new game section. Tons of copies. Guaranteed to be there. And you can buy previously rented games for less. So rent, buy, steal and buy again!

USE COMMON SENSE

Anything claiming to be free has to be a sure thing. Unlike your last job, this one is for real!



EXPIRES JANUARY 31, 2003

BLOCKBUSTER name, design and related marks are trademarks of Blockbuster Inc.
© 2003 Blockbuster Inc. All rights reserved.



5610PV00038

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!



RENT. BUY. GAME YOUR WAY.™

WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth



Commentary from ringside announcers Jim Ross and Jerry "The King" Lawler are still limited to announcing specific moves or throwing out comments on the various Superstars. It's common to hear the same one-liners over and over during a match—"Whoa, did you see that?"



Like football games, a new wrestling title comes out on each system every year and rabid fans gobble it up. The difference is that competition between multiple pigskin games forces those developers to innovate or be left in the dust. Wrestling is unchallenged when it comes to the all-important WWE license (and without it, you may as well not show up). So we get a game that plays, looks, and is "just fine," but deep down we long for something better. And this year's *SmackDown* is an example of that. Changes to the in-ring gameplay itself are barely noticeable. It's good, but if you're not a hardcore fan, you'll tire of it quickly. The Story mode's much longer than in previous games, but the RPG elements added to flesh it out just feel like padding. For example, the shoddily pasted-in dialogue text between wrestlers totally fails to capture the energy of the real WWE. Exploring the venues in first-person perspective is interesting at first, but you're never sure if anything is going to happen, so it's mostly aimless wandering. Thankfully, *SmackDown's* Create-A-Superstar is all a fan could ask for and more. It's got so many parts and options, putting yourself in the game is easier than ever. And it goes without saying that this is a fun multiplayer title. Even with its faults, *Shut Your Mouth* is good. But the stale wrestling genre needs to really think outside the gameplay cage to evolve.

CG

I can sum it up pretty easily: If you'd love to go to a live WWE match, odds are that you'll like this game. It assaults you with a cavalcade of match types and multiplayer options, clips from the TV shows, and a billion ways to create your own razzler—basically, all the stuff fans want. As in many wrestling games, the collision detection is spotty and the matches drag on for waayyy too long, but overall, the controls and play are solid. I do agree with CJ about the RPG-like elements, though. And your dialogue choices are laughably bad—nothing like what the real WWE superstars would ever say. Next time, THQ, hire the real WWE scriptwriters.

Shane

As wrestling games go, *Shut Your Mouth* is one of the best. Any oiled-up Superstar you could want is here, and the Create-A-Superstar mode is unbelievably deep. The controls are simple, too, although having to cycle through opponents with the Focus button gets annoying. And just like in real wrestling, the presentation here is spectacular. That said, the action in the ring plays almost exactly like last year's...which played awful lot like the old *PSX SmackDowns*. *Shut Your Mouth* is just an all-around solid game that somehow manages to survive a lack of evolution year after year. It's fun, but it's the same old thing.

Greg S.

Publisher: THQ
Developer: Yuke's
Players: 1-2 (2-6 with multitaes)
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #160
Best Feature: Deep Create-A-Superstar
Worst Feature: Attempt to make story more RPG-ish falls flat
Web Site: www.thq.com

PS2

Wish you could've been in the driver's seat during the draft between *Raw* and *SmackDown* from last April? Well now you can in THQ's latest WWE game, *SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth*. It all begins with that fateful day in April when the two shows split their lineup of Superstars, and it continues with you playing through the last season of programming (including pay-per-view) on your way to the championship belt. Most fans will come seeking the chance to live out the life of their favorite WWE Superstar, and luckily, Career mode receives the lion's share of improvements this year. It's much longer, and matches are broken down week-by-week. Between bouts in the ring, you can



Between matches, you can take a break from all the violence and go for a leisurely stroll around the arena. It's presented in a first-person mode, kind of like a dungeon-crawling RPG. Who knows what you'll find; maybe a wrestler will ambush you? Or visit the ShopZone and use your pay-per-view experience to unlock more goodies.

explore the arena in a first-person view, talk to your manager, and maybe even run into unexpected "trouble" with other wrestlers. Are you *Tough Enough*?

MIGHTY MEN-AND-MONSTER MAKER



The amount of parts you can use to create your own wrestler in *Shut Your Mouth* boggles the mind. Just look at some of the fighters we were able to create—Harry Potter, Darth Vader, Spider-Man, and everyone's favorite, The Tick. (Hey, he's a little pissed his TV show was cancelled and decided to get some vengeance in the ring.) Of course, when we weren't messing around with making crazy fictional characters, we created unrealistically buff likenesses of ourselves, too.

VISUALS 8 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY 7



Metroid Prime



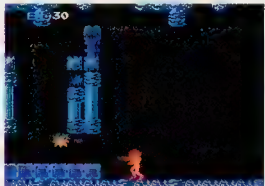
You explore an impressive range of different areas on the planet, from snowy mountains, to lush forests, to fiery caves.



**EXTRAS! EXTRAS!
READ ALL ABOUT THEM!**



Finish *Metroid Prime* to open a harder difficulty level, or link up with *Metroid Fusion* for the Game Boy Advance to unlock a new suit of armor for hero Samus. Not a big deal, but neat.



Finish *Fusion* and link up to play the full original *Metroid* on your GC. A very cool bonus, especially for those who've never seen it before. Hey, it was once state-of-the-art!



You can open galleries of concept art and renders by scanning a certain number of monsters and locations in the game, so analyze everything!

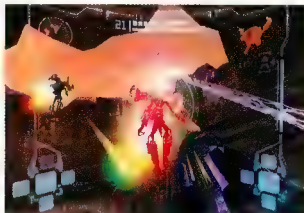
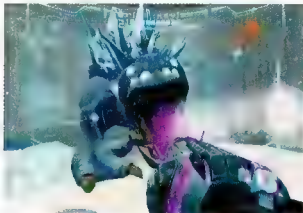
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Retro Studios
Players: 1
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #160
Best Feature: Incredible new aesthetics, same great gameplay
Worst Feature: Control scheme can be bothersome
Website: www.metroid.com

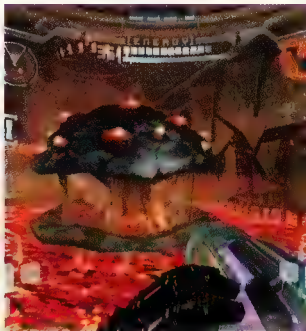


A few words of warning before you think about playing *Metroid Prime*: You're going to lose sleep for a couple weeks. Your garbage will not get taken out. The kitty litter won't get changed. You may even lose your appetite when it's time to put the controller down for meals, but that's OK, because the dishes wouldn't get done anyway. A game this incredible doesn't wait for when you have some free time—it hooks right into your brain and won't let go, sucking your life away just like the infamous *Metroid* alien parasites themselves. You just will not want to stop playing. So after a couple weeks, you're going to be one tired, hungry, sorry-lookin' (and possibly a bit smelly) mof, but you'll be smilin' ear to ear like you just won the lottery *and* the Super Bowl on the same day. *Metroid Prime* is that good.

As it did with *Zelda* and *Mario* before it, Nintendo (with its partners at Retro Studios) has taken one of the most beloved franchises of all time (*Super Metroid* was Number 1 on EGM's own top 100 games list last year) and brought it into full 3D in a way that is faithful to the games before it and a stunningly original experience.

Prime is definitely not your typical first-person shooter; it's about platform-jumping your way through a vast world; exploring; solving puzzles; and locating new weapons, power-ups, and secrets along the way. But when it does come time to exchange fire with the bad guys, *Prime* is among the very best. You need to constantly think in order to avoid the strengths and take advantage of the weaknesses of the different enemies, from the truly frightening boss monsters down to the tiny alien flies. Combat is a deeply satisfying mix of reflexes, and the kind of strategic thinking that requires you to ask: Which gun will inflict the most damage, or any damage at all? Should I wear a different visor to better see what I'm shooting at? Is that enemy vulnerable only from the back? Do I need to wait until my foe opens its mouth or charges right at me or retracts its





Boss fights in *Prime*, like good ol' Ridley here (left) require figuring out a pattern, then deciding how to take advantage of it (what weapons will work best), and having the reflexes to pull off your plan.

spikes? Am I better off rolling into a ball and getting the hell out of town?

It's so damn friendly, too—the game eases you into the action like a doting mother, teaching you about all your controls within the game, then slowly adding abilities, tougher enemies, and new areas to sustain an impossibly high level of excitement from the opening scene until the final credits roll. Before you have a chance to get stuck, a helpful report always comes in detailing where you need to go next. It never tells you how to get there or what to do once you arrive—it just gives you the location of the next major event. (Hardcore purists can turn this hint system off in the Options menu.) And along with an ingenious and indispensable 3D map, you can make your way

through the complex interwoven levels with minimal hassle.

And not only does it play great but, oh my, does it ever look good doing it. No game has ever approached the level of graphical detail found in *Prime*. On any system. Ever. Period. Every chamber, every hallway, every single room is unique and fully fleshed out. No repeat or cookie-cutter tools were used here. A breathtakingly exotic yet eerily believable alien world has been created as your giant playground to explore. In terms of style and technical ability, *Prime* is an absolute thrill just to look at.

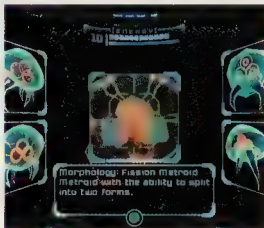
Oh, and you'll want to crank your stereo. Whether it's screeching monsters, the whir of your gun charging, or the fizz of sparks on a busted computer, the effects are excellent



SAMUS' VISORS: EVEN BETTER THAN THAT STAR TREK DUDE'S

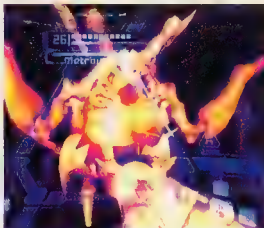
Each direction on the D-pad selects a different visor on Samus' helmet, each with its own unique (and very cool) graphical effect filtering everything you see. Here's why you'll need them all:

SCAN:



Used for gathering information; great for finding hints about enemy weaknesses and discovering how to get past tricky puzzles.

THERMAL:



Essential for fighting bad guys in dark places, but also helpful for locating power switches by the heat they emit.

X-RAY:



Necessary for seeing certain enemies and locating secret passages blocked by destructible walls.



Recognize the nasty little guys below? A few new varieties of Metroids, the energy-sucking jellyfish aliens of death, pop up from time to time in *Prime*, from little babies to the big bad momma. A hint: Don't bother switching guns near the end. Try using a super bomb instead.



across the board. Along with great remixes of old *Metroid* tracks and new haunting favorites you'll find yourself humming, *Prime's* audio is more than just good—it demands, and keeps, your attention.

Our only real complaint is with one aspect of the controls. The creators were trying to simplify things when they decided to use one button for looking up and down and another for strafing side to side, but actually, this setup often becomes more complicated and time consuming than the standard practice of using the second analog stick for both tasks. The excellent lock-on tracking system and otherwise great button layout minimizes most problems, but now and then, a particu-

larly stressful fight or steep platform path will make you wish Nintendo had implemented the dual-stick setup—or at least included the option. To be fair, the scheme here does work better for simple jumping maneuvers, but a button to lock auto-centering on and off would have given all the benefits, and much less of the finger fatigue, of constantly holding in the shoulder buttons.

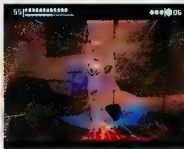
Ordinarily, we would penalize a game for that sort of thing, but the rest of *Prime* is so above-and-beyond the quality we all expect from even triple-A titles that its strengths more than make up for its one debatable weakness. Get this game—even if you have to buy a GameCube to play it.

The intense yet strategic combat of *Halo*. The ingenious level design and devious puzzles of *Zelda's* dark dungeons. The intriguing story, moody atmosphere, and spooky thrills of *Resident Evil*. The new *Metroid* stands with the very best of modern games in almost every important respect. Well, except sound and graphics, where *Prime* surpasses them all. The amount of time, skill, and dedication that obviously went into crafting and polishing this game just completely blows my mind. Videogames, regardless of what system they are for, just aren't supposed to sound this good, look this detailed, be this large in scope and this fun to play all at the same time; it's like the best title from six years in the future fell through a time warp. Besides one aspect of the controls (which not include the option for a dual-analog stick setup like most other first-person games?), it's hard to imagine any complaints even the most cynical gamer could have with *Prime*, right down to its impeccable pacing and difficulty level. It's a joy to play and nearly impossible to put down until it's all over, and even then, a stash of secrets and cool unlockables await. Whether you're new to the series or (especially) if you're an old fan with lofty expectations, *Prime* is better than you can imagine. An absolute masterpiece, a modern classic, and probably the most fun I've ever had playing a videogame.

Mark

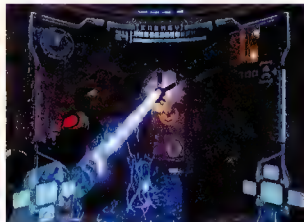
MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER...SAMUS

Folding in lay to a sphere with the Morph Ball allows you to get through tight spaces and tubes, or lay bombs to open new passages. Add the Spider Ball to magnetically climb on certain walls and the Boost Ball for an added burst of turbo speed—especially fun on the half-pipes you'll find on Tallon IV.



I never thought it would turn out like this. My wildest hopes for a U.S.-made *Metroid* first-person shooter peaked at "passable." Well, Retro Studios, I owe you an apology—*Prime* is the best GameCube game yet. First, know that it's not an FPS. Mark might wish it controlled like one, but I don't—the *Zelda*-style lock-on combat is spectacular, and jumping feels surprisingly natural. Amazingly, it plays like *Super Metroid*, only in full 3D. I could ramble on about the spectacular boss fights, ingenious power-ups, and amazing music, but instead I've gotta go buy my friend Chris a copy of *Prime*. It's been two years back that this new *Metroid* wouldn't even earn a Silver Award. I'm glad I was wrong.

Shane



In case you're still wondering if the new *Metroid* stays faithful to the series' platforming roots, check out this room (left)—they ain't afraid to go all vertical on you. The grapple beam (right) returns as well.

Man, I really don't know what to say. I was totally ready to hate on *Metroid Prime* prior to experiencing it first-hand, but the minute I set foot on Tallon IV's lush overworld, I was a believer. If you're a fan of the *Metroid* series, you'll be happy to know that *Prime* embodies everything you love about it: the amazing atmosphere, the sprawling world, and, most importantly, the seamless flow. But even if you've never played a *Metroid* game before, *Prime* will still impress you; the visuals are untouchable, the gameplay is tight, and the mood is hauntingly captivating. It is simply mind-blowing on so many different levels—you must experience it.

Niguel

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	10	9	8

Mario Party 4



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Hudson
Players: 1-4
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #160
Best Feature: Heated multiplayer action
Worst Feature: Dull single-player, as usual
Web Site: www.marioparty4.com

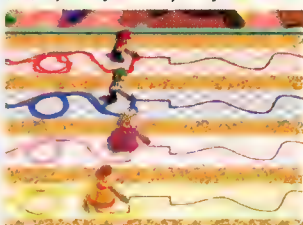


ing minigames, purchase items (used mainly to screw your opponents), and collect enough coins and stars to win the game.

That's how it's been since the beginning of this series, and that's how it remains today. *Mario Party 4* may not be the most original game out there anymore, but it's still oodles of fun. The game boards feature so many twists and turns, and the items are so varied, that the current leader can change nearly every turn. And since come-from-behind victories are fairly common, there'll be tons of trash talkin'.

That's the best part of *Party 4*, really: sitting around and screaming at your buddies while you jam on the buttons. (Speaking of which, if you're still looking for an excuse to pick up a few Wavebird wireless controllers, this is it.) If only you could play online when your friends weren't around....

Who wants some minigames? There's not only a plethora of multiplayer pastimes—like trying to trace a line more accurately than your opponents (below)—but there's some single-player fun, too. Check out Waluigi and his Goomba-stomping mech (left). A perfect game when you're goin' at it alone.



The original *Mario Party* was a fantastic party game, and each subsequent sequel has been better, thanks to a few badly needed tweaks. The only problem was, by the time *Party 3* rolled around, the formula had become so refined that very little needed to be fixed. That's where *Mario Party 4* comes in. Sure, the graphics look a lot nicer now than the series has hit GameCube, but it's pretty much more of the same. Still, it's hard to complain about a lack of innovation when you're having this much crazy multiplayer fun. Most of the enjoyment comes from the ample new minigames. Granted, the contests are all rather simple, but there's just enough variety to make you think you're experiencing something new when you're really just mashing buttons or playing simple memory games. Of course, you'll want to try these minigames (and the big game that surrounds them) with some friends—*Party 4* is rightfully dull as a single-player experience. The Story mode spices things up a bit by allowing you to win prizes and decorate tiny doll houses, but it's not enough to drive you to go at it alone. Multiplayer, however, is a hoot and a holler, and makes the game well worth picking up. A word of warning to Nintendo, though: Now that we have our GameCube edition, the whole *Mario Party* thing is dangerously close to becoming stale; next time, it'll need something new.

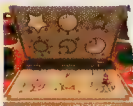
Phil

If you've played any of the previous three *Mario Party* games on Nintendo 64, you know exactly what to expect from 4: a simple, quality party game. (*Mario Party* is what all the *Sonic Shuffles*, *Crash Bashes*, and *Pac-Man Fevers* of the world strive to be.)

Gather three of your closest friends (or three computer-controlled players if you're the antisocial type), roll the virtual bones, and move around one of multiple game boards. Along the way, you'll play a variety of carpal tunnel-induc-

A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE GAMES

BOOKSQUIRM



You're standing on the pages of a giant book. Falling pages threaten to flatten you, but luckily there are plenty of holes in the paper to escape through. The last person standing wins. As the game progresses, the pages fall faster and there are fewer holes.

DUNGEON DUOS



This game requires teamwork aplenty. It seems like a simple button-masher at first, but that button mashing has to be perfectly timed with your teammate's platforming skills. If you don't work together, you'll never make it through this crazy obstacle course.

STAMP OUT!



This one's all about the land grab. Players stand on giant rubber stamps and hop around the screen, stamping their color on the board. Whoever colors the most space wins, so the key to victory is to move fast—and, of course, to color over your opponents' spots.

BOB-OMB BREAKERS



At first glance, you'll think this game is a *Tetris* clone, but those in the know will discover that it's much more like *Puyo Puyo*. Match the falling shapes to make them disappear while missing up your opponents' stacks. Once you reach 50 points, you win.

Mario Party 4 will definitely be out at my holiday get-togethers this year. I'll admit to being a bit of a party-game junkie. *Pictionary*, *Cranium*, *Charades*—you name it, I'm that person who starts dividing up the teams while the turkey is still on the table. So, *Party 4* is right up my alley, and it delivers. The minigames vary just enough to stay interesting without ever becoming too complicated. And the different types of gameplay, from the straightforward (puzzle and racing games) to the utterly random (blowing up bubbles or scaling a windswept cliff), let everyone be good at something. It may be formulaic, but if the formula works, why change it?

Jennifer

The *Mario Parties* are some of my favorite multiplayer games (right up there with the *Bomber* series), and this fourth installment is as good as ever. But after three previous titles, it's kind of a letdown that the only major difference in *MP4* is the sharp GameCube visuals. The new minigames are wicked fun, yet most are just variations of those you played in the earlier titles. And Nintendo still hasn't found a way to make *Party* an enjoyable single-player game. But when you've got three friends to play with, it can be the most fun you've had around a TV. Just make sure you don't choose that 50-round game, or you'll be there for all eternity.

CJ

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

7

6

2

9



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Players: 1
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #161
Best Feature: Spoooooo-kay!
Worst Feature: Feels a lot like the last RE
Website: www.capcom.com



Ah, it seems like just a few months ago that we were playing the first Resident Evil for GameCube...hold up, it was just a few months ago! No wonder the excitement that usually surrounds a new edition of Capcom's popular survival-horror series just isn't in the air this time. If you're not charging out to immediately jump on RE0, we can't blame you, but it would definitely be a mistake to let 0 completely pass you by.

In many respects, 0 follows the same path that the previous zombie thrillers have trod: explore room to room, gather items and keys, solve a puzzle now and then, and save up ammo for big boss fights. This newest RE does

WITHER WESKER?



0 does involve supervillain Albert "Future's So Bright I Gotta Wear Shades" Wesker and evil scientist William "T-Virus" Birkin, but only in a very limited fashion. Those hoping for an in-depth lead from this prequel into the rest of the series will have to look elsewhere—perhaps to one of the many fan fictions available from those lonely, obsessive souls on the Internet.

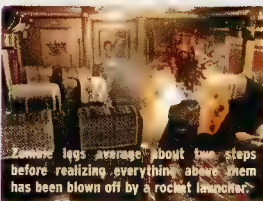


Remember that time in RE2 when, like, you were on like this big elevator and this, like, big mutated freak thing attacked you, and the elevator was moving, and you were like "WHOA, LOOK OUT!"? Well, you see that elevator again in 0 (left). Also, an improved map lets you know exactly where you drop items.



BONUS?

Besides the standard stuff you always get for finishing an RE game within a certain amount of time (new outfits and a rocket launcher), 0 includes the unlockable minigame *Leech Hunter*. Sadly, it's about as lame as it sounds: You run through rooms from the standard game that have been remixed with different monsters and items, and collect colored leech pendants. Once you finish the game...oh, sorry, you dozed off there for a second. Once you finish the game, you're ranked based on the number of leeches you found and on your completion time. Get good enough and you can unlock special weapons and features, like unlimited ammo, for the main game.





THE CLONE WARS ARE FAR FROM OVER



Official Star Wars Web Site www.starwars.com

STAR WARS. THE CLONE WARS

Where Episode II ends, your battle begins.

Defend the Republic on the ground and in the air across the battlefields of six different worlds. Battle through four multiplayer modes, including team-based strategy, deathmatch, king-of-the-hill and co-op endurance. Or lead your clone troopers to victory in an epic single-player campaign as Mace Windu, Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi. Your directive: crush the Separatist armies!

Engage in close combat to all-out warfare.

Battle through 10 missions on six vast worlds.



PlayStation 2



www.swclonewars.com



Violence



Star Wars: The Clone Wars is a trademark of Lucasfilm Ltd. © 2002 Lucasfilm Ltd. All rights reserved. SW, Clone Wars and The Clone Wars are trademarks owned by Lucasfilm Ltd. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Star Wars, The Clone Wars, and the Star Wars logo are trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. © 2002 Lucasfilm Ltd. All rights reserved. The Clone Wars logo is a trademark of Lucasfilm Ltd. © 2002 Lucasfilm Ltd. All rights reserved. The Clone Wars logo is a trademark of Lucasfilm Ltd. © 2002 Lucasfilm Ltd. All rights reserved.

Resident Evil 0 (cont.)



Here is Monsieur leech-obsessed scientist himself (below—he dresses like a wizard now for some reason). It's too bad the story for *0* focuses more on his history than more directly dealing with the events that lead into the first *Resident Evil*, but his leechy henchmen and their eggs are creepy.

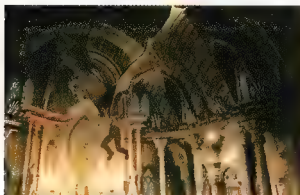


manage a few fairly significant alterations, though. Controlling two characters at once creates a few interesting puzzles (and, it must be said, a few tedious ones) and some fun combat moments, as you and your ally take on groups of enemies back-to-back, like a cop-buddy-film duo.

The ability to drop items (and subsequent lack of storage boxes) is another big change, although our three reviewers disagreed about whether or not that feature is a good or bad thing. Some found it refreshing to no longer be limited to certain rooms for placing and retrieving items, while others missed the ability to access stored objects from any storage box location.

A final, more subtle improvement can be found in *0*'s room layout: Everything is mercifully more convenient this time, and shortcuts usually appear the few times you need to do serious backtracking. In the end, these changes aren't so radical that they'll change anyone's mind about the series—if you already love or hate *RE*, you'll still love or hate this one—but they are improvements anyone can appreciate.

As for difficulty, a scarcity of ammo and healing items for the two characters you take care of makes *0* a good challenge on Normal (about as tough as the *RE1* remake). Also, Easy mode is available from the start this time, for those who get tired of seeing "YOU DIED" on screen all the time.



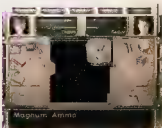
NO LONGER ALONE IN THE DARK

The biggest addition to *0* is the Partner Zapping system, which lets you switch back and forth between the two main characters, Billy and Rebecca, at any time. Just press a button and the screen blurs out; when you come to, you're in control of your new body. In each of the situations described below, this gives *0* a bit of the fresh gameplay *RE* so badly needs.

SOLVE PUZZLES

You'll need to split up and use both characters from time to time—like when Billy cranks open a cage so Rebecca can grab the item under it.

SWAP ITEMS



inventories, so who's carrying what rarely becomes a problem.

As long as your teammate is close by, you can trade items or ammo directly

FIGHT TOGETHER



to attack or hold fire anytime they spot a bad guy. Two guns are definitely better than one, especially since the other player can knock off that zombie chewing on your neck with a well-timed shot.

For a series that benefits so much from the unexpected, *RE0* is sadly predictable—the mutated animals (killer frogs? sigh), the crate-pushing puzzles, the self-destruct countdown during the final boss fight. And yes, it was just recently we were blasting zombies in the Cube's *RE1* remake, so a good deal of the "wow" factor is gone. But even if the game is largely formulaic, **Capcom still pulls it off better than anyone else out there.** The razor-sharp visuals and lifelike backgrounds (including a few truly amazing scenes atop a moving train) add to the chilling atmosphere that makes *RE* games worth playing. It's all about the glorious decay of dusty floorboards and darkened secret labs that create that wonderfully spooky feeling. One especially cool enemy—a goopy man-blob made of leeches—along with eerie music and a decent number of interesting puzzles pop up amongst all the shooting action. Personally, I love the lack of storage boxes; you can drop items anywhere to make room for what you really need, eliminating much of the backtracking that slowed this series down. And it's nice not always going it alone, although managing your second character takes getting used to. I was hoping for more backstory rather than the lame new plot, but fans will appreciate a few key historical moments. *0* doesn't defy any expectations, but it doesn't disappoint, either.

Mark

The *Resident Evil* games have always been about spooky atmosphere, and *0* is arguably the creepiest yet. **The music, monsters, and environments leave you feeling tense and uneasy throughout;** every time you open a new door, your right forefinger will be twitching, ready to spray some lead. But while this title has the mood aspect down pat, its new play mechanics leave a lot to be desired. You now have to control two characters (often simultaneously—think *Go for PS2*), which can get messy; it's often too hard to keep your secondary character out of harm's way. And the elimination of the storage boxes makes inventory-handling a hassle. All said, *0* is a flawed but engaging frightfest.

Ethan

Capcom's latest *RE* feels more like a sidestory than the all-revealing prelude that I was hoping for. Yet, I found *0* to be the most fun—gameplay wise—of the series. In addition to the strategies introduced by "zapping" back and forth between characters, the new weapons (especially the Molotov cocktail) give this *RE* refreshing ways to dispatch zombies and leeches. Taken on its own, *0* is an excellent adventure loaded with atmosphere and inventive boss fights. But I couldn't help but feel a tinge of disappointment with how little the game contributes to the overall *RE* mythos. Guess I'll have to wait until *RE4* to get the next real dose of the story line.

Che

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

9

8

6

4

GAME FIXX
TOURNAMENT
SAT.

GAME FIXX RULES!

Mr. January Party Animal



If you've got a game fixx™ membership*, then party hard, gaming guru. Join other hardcore gamers in our tournaments where you can win big prizes – for FREE. And if that's not enough to make you stream with pure joy, you also get up to 10% off accessories, games, and much more at CompUSA®.

With a game fixx membership, you can prove your supremacy over lesser gamers – because you get priority order status on pre-order games.

Go to www.gamefixx.com and join the club – now is the time to rule the gaming world.

COMPUSA'S
game fixx™
we're your connection!

SUN M T W TH F SAT

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	ENTER TO WIN \$500!!				18
19	20	Go to gamefixx.compusa.com/egg/default.asp				25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

All the Gaming Stuff,
All the Time. **COMPUSA**

STEPPING OUT OF THESE PAGES AND INTO YOUR HOMES!

Join Shoe and the rest of the Game Group editors as they invade your screen with the latest game news and releases that will jumpstart your weekend!

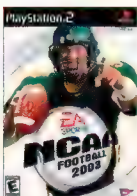
Tune in every Thursday 7:45 pm ET/ 4:45 pm PT to **HOTWIRED's** Big Video Game Hunting hosted by Renay San Miguel on CNN Headline News.

Big Video Game HUNTING

CNN
HeadlineNews



If you bought all these games, it would cost about **\$370.**



WHY NOT TRY THEM ALL FIRST IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE FOR LESS THAN \$10?



PLUS:

- SPECIAL FEATURE: PRIMAL
- MOVIES
- BEHIND THE SCENES
- COOL MOVES
- DOWNLOADS

PlayStation MAGAZINE

DECEMBER ISSUE ON SALE NOW SHINOBI
FINAL FANTASY X-2
GTA: VICE CITY • 2002 HOLIDAY GAME GUIDE

REVIEWED: THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING • THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS
TIMESPLITTERS 2 RED FACTION II
NBA ROUND UP
SUJKODEN III • TONY HAWK'S PRO-SKATER 4 • RATCHET & CLANK • BLOODRAYNE

PREVIEWED: STARCRAFT GHOST • XIII • MINORITY REPORT • ATV OFFROAD FURY 2 • TENCHU 3: WRATH OF HEAVEN
RYGAR STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS .hack/INFECTION • NHL 2K3 • FIGHTER MAKER 2 • RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC • ROCKY

NEWS ABOUT: DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI • TOKYO GAME SHOW 2002 • LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: ANGEL OF DARKNESS • TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES
NBA LIVE 2003 • BMX XXX
SLY COOPER • KILL BILL
UPCOMING GAME MOVIES



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Paradox
Players: 1-2
Also On: GC, Xbox
Featured In: EGM #159
Best Feature: Vastly improved game mechanics
Worst Feature: Lightweight physics
Website: www.universeofheroes.com

Finally, an *X-Men* brawler that fighting-game purists (and not just fans of the comic book) can sink their teeth into. I have to give developer Paradox its props—*Next Dimension* is a vast improvement over its previous efforts (*X-Men: Mutant Academy 1* and 2). Unlike those PS2 games, just jamming on one button over and over won't get you through *Next Dimension*. Yes, the computer is wise to your tricks now. No matter which of the fan-friendly modes you take your favorite X-Man through (the innovative, branching Story mode being the game's high point), it's actually the impressive fighting mechanics (and not the license) that make this worth playing. *Dimension* cleverly mixes expansive, *Dead or Alive* 3-style levels, *Tekken*-esque combos, and *Marvel vs. Capcom*'s aerial juggles. Plus, with 24 characters to choose from, the fighting variety goes on and on—everyone should be able to find a fighter they feel comfortable with. The game stumbles a bit by putting the block move on a shoulder button when simply pulling back would have sufficed. Also, the floaty physics don't give the characters (especially larger guys like Juggernaut) the substantial, weighty feel that they should have. Still, for *X-Men* fans who dig on videogames, *Next Dimension* is the ultimate souvenir. For everyone else, it's still a very fun fighting game. **Milkman**

As with its PS2 predecessors, *Next Dimension* means well. It offers up a sizeable roster from the *X-Men* universe and a fairly solid fighting system that doesn't completely age the other brawlers out there. Unfortunately, despite a commendable combo setup, the engine itself has plenty of frustrating elements. The controls are stiff, and confining throws and counters to the shoulder buttons just doesn't seem right. Plus, collision detection is iffy at times, and the game suffers from an overall lack of balance between characters. Factor in obscene load times and overly difficult enemy A.I., and it's a game that only rabid X-fans will enjoy. **Sam**

You'd expect *Next Dimension* to be a step up from the PS2 *Academy* games. But it's actually more of a mutated shuffle sideways. It's not crap—X-fans will enjoy the easy moves and massive environments, plus familiar heroes, villains, and locations. Even Professor X himself, Patrick Stewart, lends his voice. If you look below the surface, though, you'll find a merely passable fighting game. Too many characters play almost identically, and orchestrating movement with both the D-pad (for horizontal) and analog (for 3D walking) creates crazy exploitable mistakes, like blocking while moving in for a throw. This one's for fans only; Milkman's just got a crush on his lock. **Shane**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	7



Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Dragonstone
Players: 1
Also On: PS2, GC
Featured In: EGM #156
Best Feature: Snazzy animated intro and ending
Worst Feature: Sloppy controls
Web Site: www.dragonslair3d.com

The idea of throwing Dirk the Daring and Princess Daphne into a fully interactive 3D world is a great one—these are wonderful characters, and old-school gamers have wanted to explore Singe's Castle in real-time since the original *Dragon's Lair* debuted in arcade 20 years ago. *Lair 3D* was even handled by the same guys responsible for that classic laserdisc game—which is both good and bad. It's good from a style standpoint; this release really captures the look and feel of Dirk's cartoon arcade exploits. But it's bad from a gameplay perspective—the developers obviously had no idea how to make a character control smoothly in a 3D environment. Running, jumping, and climbing are real headaches; poor *Dirk* moves with the grace and speed of a snail draped in chain-mail armor. It's too bad—the crummy play mechanics spoil what would otherwise be a solid game. Most of the puzzle-centric stages are cleverly designed, and the boss fights are handled well, but that's not enough to salvage a game with busted play controls. If you're a hardcore fan of the series, this release is worth at least a rental—you'll get a kick out of seeing classic scenes from the arcade game reworked to fit into the new 3D template (the Lizard King sequence is particularly cool). But if you've never heard of this series before, you're better off avoiding *Lair 3D* altogether. **Ethan**

In 1983, people would line up just to watch the original arcade version of *Dragon's Lair*. Control a cartoon? Impossible! Now, it's back in vogue with cel-shading technology. That's why I'm torn about the 3D version. It looks nice, plays reasonably well, and gives a King's ransom worth of true-to-the-original arcade levels to explore. The lack of polish, though, keeps *Lair 3D* from standing above the crowd. Take the vertigo-inducing camera control and targeting system, for example. It had me spinning around some rooms, running into walls, and missing enemies. What this new *Dragon's Lair* boils down to is a merely decent game that's banking on its kitsch factor to sell copies. **Darren**

If you took away TV, radio, sports, the Internet, playing cards, books, dice, pointy sticks, the arts (including finger painting), dirt, air, sock puppets, broken glass, all other videogames, every form of human and animal companionship, rust, cheese, hammers, rocks, and yodeling—why, then, *Dragon's Lair 3D* might be the most fun you could have and still be conscious. We heartily recommend slamming hero Dirk the Daring into walls to watch him recoil, as this is the best part of the game. A camera system that hates you dominates throughout, and the only real challenge here is trying not to openly weep while "savoring" this game's overly simplistic run-jump-slash play. **Greg S.**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	7



Publisher: Vivendi Univ.
Developer: Snowblind Studios
Players: 1-2
Also On: PS2, GC
Also Ty: *Gauntlet: DL*
Website: www.interplay.com

They just don't make games like this often enough. *Dark Alliance* is as deep as any RPG, but its focus on fast-paced gameplay makes it as visceral as the spazziest beat 'em up. Don't let its *Dungeons & Dragons* roots fool you, either; all the hardcore rules are kept well behind the scenes, so if you weren't reared on 20-sided dice, you should still be all good. *Dark Alliance* is a straight-up dungeon crawl, and for the most part, all you've gotta do is jam on the attack button. Enemies come at you en masse, which makes the proceedings hectic and exciting. Luckily, you have a nice variety of ways to dispatch them, helping offset one of the game's biggest faults: the feeling of monotony that sets in after you've killed your 10,000th Dark Elf. The fact that these enemies are as intelligent as cinder blocks doesn't help; you'll often be able to kill the strongest ones by simply running around them in circles and striking their flanks. In spite of this, this game is easily worth checking out (especially with a friend for co-op play), assuming you missed it on the PS2.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	7



Publisher: Codemasters
Developer: Codemasters
Players: 1-4
Also On: PS2
Best Feature: Great graphics and control
Worst Feature: The loneliness of rally racing

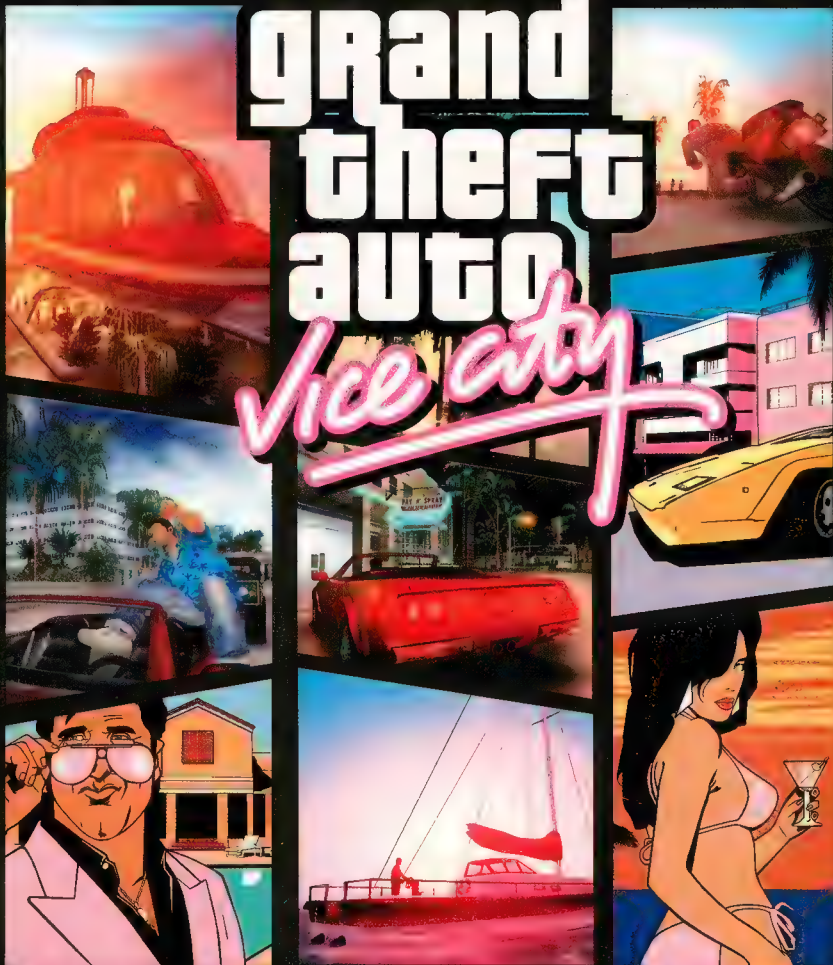
You can always count on Codemasters to push the envelope with the *Colin McRae* series, and *Rally 3* is no exception. As you fly down treacherous, winding roads, you'll be amazed at how realistic the world around you looks. It's easy to mistake *Rally 3* for a television broadcast. Gameplay-wise, *Colin* drives like a dream, making you feel like you're actually in control of your car as you approach that scary hairpin turn surrounded by those very unforgiving trees. And you can't just go balls to the wall the whole time, either. Your car can only take so much damage before it craps out, and you've only got two chances to fix it during each rally. I really like that, since it sets up a nice risk/reward system where you might have to take a hit on your completion time to keep your car in one piece. The only reason you might not get into *Colin McRae 3* is if racing against the clock—and never other cars—sounds boring to you. But then, you're not really a rally fan, so this game wasn't made for you anyway. You won't find a better offroad racing simulation anywhere. **Greg S.**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	7

PlayStation 2

Grand Theft Auto

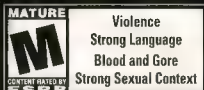
Vice City



WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/VICECITY

SOUNDTRACK ALBUMS AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY ON EPIC RECORDS

WWW.VICECITYRADIO.COM



PlayStation and the PS Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. © 2002 Rockstar Games, Inc. Rockstar Games, the Rockstar Games logo, Rockstar North and the Rockstar North logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Rockstar Games and Rockstar North are subsidiaries of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. "Epic" and "Epic" Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. Marca Registrada. © 2002 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. All other marks and trademarks are properties of their respective owners. All Rights Reserved. Note: Rockstar will be following ESRAs guidelines for R-rated games in the marketing of this game. This game contains violent language and behavior and may not be appropriate for persons under the age of 17. It is a comic interpretation of gangster activity and the story, names and incidents portrayed herein are fictitious. No identification or similarity to actual persons, living or dead, or to actual events is intended or should be inferred. Any resemblance is coincidental. The makers and publishers of this videogame do not in any way endorse, condone or encourage this kind of behavior.

James Bond 007: NightFire



NightFire's driving levels aren't just some tacked-on extra—the team behind *Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2* crafted them using that game's awesome engine. The *Spy Hunter*-esque weaponry, cop evasion, and thrilling jumps will make you forget all about the vomitous *007 Racing* for PS1.



After last year's ambitious but ultimately disappointing *Agent Under Fire*, I was ready to bury the whole Bond game concept under a tombstone that read "At least *GoldenEye* was good." But I judged too quickly—*NightFire* is a rousing success that should revitalize 007's gaming career. The super-slick presentation (featuring a CG title sequence complete with a vocal *NightFire* theme song and copious glamour shots of Pierce Brosnan's cyber-scanned face) really makes it feel like a real *Bond* movie. Each gameplay mode—like the shooting, driving, and flying parts—sports solid, speedy graphics that look a little snazzier in this Xbox version compared to the PS2 and GC ones. But it's not the nice visuals that make *NightFire* worth playing—the amazing gameplay is the main draw. You can tackle the FPS levels with either a take-no-prisoners, shoot 'em up philosophy, or a stealthy gadgets 'n' evasion style. Your experience will be vastly different depending upon which you choose, inviting lots of experimentation and replay. Very cool. The vehicle-based stages offer more straightforward action, but they're still fun (if a bit too easy). One caveat, though—it's all over way too quickly. You'll blast through the game in a weekend, no problem. Luckily, the enjoyable split-screen Deathmatch (don't expect online or network play) will draw you and your friends back for some classic Mayday vs. Oddjob action.

Shane

The best 007 title to come around since *GoldenEye*, *NightFire* takes all the gameplay elements that *Agent Under Fire* fouled up last year and polishes them till they shine. The first-person sequences now offer branching paths, and the intense driving stages—handled by EA's *Need For Speed* team—totally steal the show. Heck, even the on-rails shooting stages are a blast. Every part of this game is frantic, fast-paced, and fun, and that includes the fluid four-player, split-screen face-offs. Provided you're not expecting a game as deep as *Halo*, this is definitely one to check out. The characters, gadgets, humor, and pacing all come together to capture that indescribable *James Bond* feeling.

Ethan

Bond is a lot like *Batman*: a great license that only seems to get a good game once in a very great while. Well, it looks like 007's time is now. The FPS sections in *NightFire* are really open-ended for this style of game, letting you decide how to infiltrate each new area, when to get into a firefight, and when to avoid detection altogether. And since Bond's always globe-trotting, the levels vary greatly, with loads of gadgets at your disposal (most of which are actually useful this time) to keep the gameplay fresh. On top of all that, the driving levels interspersed throughout are really fast and fun, like a shootin' version of *Hot Pursuit 2*.

Greg S.

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY



Publisher: EA Games
Distributor: Eurocom / EA
Players: 1-4
Age: PS2, GC
EGM #160
Extremely varied gameplay
It's too short
007.ea.com



Your Aston Martin V12 Vanquish performs remarkably well off-road...way off the road, as in underwater. Sadly, it attracts no mermaid Bond girls.

flying, and underwater stages tossed in between FPS bits. In terms of pacing, visuals, and variety, it's a massive improvement over last year's *Agent Under Fire* 007 title.



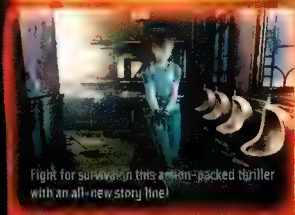
A robust Multiplayer mode helps keep the action shaking and stirring once you've finished the main game. It's classic split-screen mayhem for four buddies, but the lack of Xbox Live support (or even LAN network play) means the fun will be localized to your living room.

Timed to coincide with the launch of the new *Bond* flick, *Die Another Day*, EA launches an all-new adventure for the suave agent in Her Majesty's Secret Service. *NightFire* doesn't offer any digital encounters with Halle Berry, but breakin' free from a movie plot allows the game to really go over-the-top with explosive action sequences, missions featuring Q's souped-up vehicles, and a triple dose of Bond-girl sexiness. The shooting stages derive obvious inspiration from Rare's Nintendo 64 classic, *GoldenEye*, but take the concept of a Bond first-person shooter much further. Both guns-blazing and super-stealthy approaches can succeed; depending on your style, you'll often find two totally different paths through a level. Slipping through silently demands that you master the clever uses for the game's array of Q-gadgets. And tinkering with goodies like a tiny spy camera, watch laser, grappling hook/cell phone, and an exploding electric-razor bomb actually makes it feel like you're Bond, not just a *Doom* marine in a tux. Plus, the game keeps mixing it up with driving,



BEFORE THE MANSION.
BEFORE THE DISASTER.

EVIL IS BORN.



Resident Evil
Zero

The brand-new Zero chapter—only on Nintendo GameCube™!

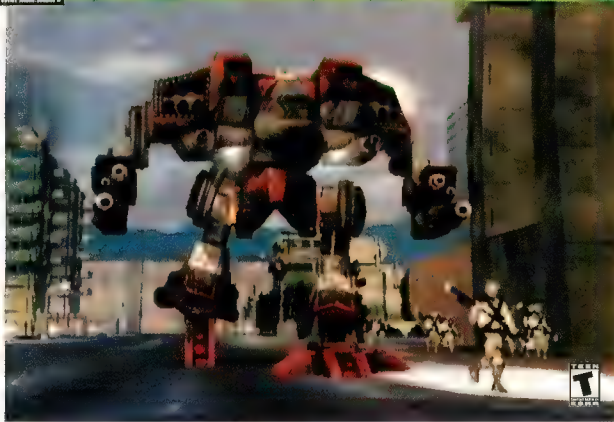


Blood and Gore
Violence

NINTENDO
GAMECUBE.

CAPCOM
capcom.com

MechAssault



- Microsoft
- Day 1 Studios
- 1-2 (2-8 Online or LAN)
- None
- EGM #160
- Almost fully destructible environments
- Sometimes overwhelming odds
- www.mechassault.com

It's time for some urban renewal, giant-robot style. Twenty-story-tall bipedal machines are getting together to bring the house down in *MechAssault*, a fast-paced shooting game that's at least a couple tons of fun.

An army of more than 20 mechs is at your disposal, and each has its own unique build, handling, and weapon payloads. For the sneaky bastards out there, check out the quick Puma, which cloaks itself while stalking prey. Or, if you'd prefer to wade into battle and just crush the enemy, nothing beats a bullet barrage delivered by the heavy Mad Cat or Thor mechs.

The single-player mode is varied and challenging (too challenging, sometimes). We had the most fun, however, gunning each other down in the various multiplayer modes. Most were exciting (Destruction—your basic free-for-all Deathmatch), though some were pointless (Not It!—essentially everyone teaming up on one guy), but all played near flawlessly either splitscreen or over a LAN. Even the Xbox Live online experience was smooth and lag-free. The voice-chat (with headset communicator) worked just fine and left us wishing we'd never again have to use a keyboard for online talk. You can vent your frustrations to the entire battlefield by yelling into the mic or send team-only info to your friendlies with one button-press—an invaluable feature. Expect the airwaves to erupt with some colorful language, though, because war is truly hell.



You're not just fighting other mechs. You're taking on helicopters, men in battle suits, battieships, and foot soldiers—whom you can just step on.



The stages in *MechAssault* have an amazing amount of detail. Fire a missile at a building and you'll smash through the wall and windows, exposing the structure's now-on-fire innards. Keep firing, and the building will come crashing down. And it's more than just blowing stuff up for the sake of blowing stuff up; you can use it all to your advantage. See a Cougar walking underneath a rocky overpass? Don't just shoot him; hit the staff above him to bring it crashing down for extra (and oh-so-satisfying) damage.

While we're saddened by the fact that we won't live long enough to see the 31st century (when we get to drive these beasts to work and utterly destroy anyone who cuts us off on the highway), we do like playing *MechAssault*, with its hulking mechs, destructible stages, and massive firepower.



Some will salute *MechAssault's* crisp graphics. Others will talk about the variety of mechs at your disposal. Me? I like blowing everything to hell. The detailed and destructible environments keep you on your toes in this game, as you really get a feel for the size and scope of your mech. You can squish soldiers underfoot, hide in large hangar bays, or run between buildings in densely packed cities. There are a few annoying things that keep *Assault* from earning true *MechWarrior* status, though. The tiny radar gives you a heads-up on nearby threats, but why no satellite map in single player? If they have the technology to build giant mechs, you'd think they'd be able to get a snapshot of the hot zone you're dropping into. The other issue is the difficulty. Tanks surround you, helicopters swarm, and enemy mechs blast away—new recruits will undoubtedly be overwhelmed. At times, I didn't know where the hell incoming fire was coming from. That's when I almost wished I were in a slow-moving sim like *Steel Battalion*. Still, the great multiplayer matches will shut up most complainers (which reminds me: "Editor's Death," wherever you are, you're officially my bitch). I do have to throw in one public-service message, though: The vibration feedback works almost too well. My favorite weapon, the PPC cannon, causes the controller to shake as it charges, but charging too long caused a 5.5 Richter-scale quake in my hands.

Darren

In direct contrast to *Steel Battalion*, *MechAssault* is flashy, fast, and instantly gratifying. There aren't any fancy gyroscopes, reticules, heads-up displays, or ammo counts to worry about—this is the land of fire-and-forget, and you're the king of short-term memory. Still, for such quick-paced arcade action, *MechAssault* does a great job of making you feel like a 40-foot-tall behemoth as you trample and blow the crap out of just about any building in town. And the game really shines on Xbox Live, where the various online modes become addictive. It isn't the depest action game around, to be sure, but that doesn't mean it's not a helluva lot of fun.

Chae

Don't lie. If you were to get into a 100-ton walking tank in real life, you're not going to want to fiddle with using complex controls or customizing your ride; you're gonna want to blow the living heck out of everything around you. For that, *MechAssault* delivers. It's a fast-paced action game that makes you really feel like you're firing huge weapons with seriously heavy ammunition. The pyrotechnics are impressive (just wait till you see the final mech's special weapon), and the resulting damage in the environment looks incredible. **Multiplayer is a lot of fun, especially online**, but only if you can get a large group game going (two player is boring).

Shoe

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

OUND SOUND

BEST BUY

in the Fun

MOVIES



NEUTECH



Get the Rocky Collection on DVD at Best Buy.



BEST BUY

From DVD movies to DVD players, even plasma TVs. You'll find something fun for everyone.

Turn On the Fun
BestBuy.com™

\$2 Off any MGM DVD

Look for the special MGM movie section in most Best Buy stores.



BEST BUY

© 2003 Best Buy

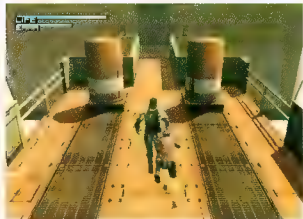


4 00048 89179 8

Good only at Best Buy retail stores in the United States. Not good in combination with other coupons or offers. Limit 1 coupon per like per customer, until 12/31/03. Not valid on prior purchases. Valid on in-stock items only. No restrictions. No cash. Coupon must be presented at time of purchase. No return. Coupon value is 1.77(03) of one cent. Good through 12/31/03. Cashier instructions: Scan coupon. *PC Scan qualifying product. *PC Scan all other products. Being sold. Price. Item. Subject. Item. To enjoy savings online. Where. *MGM on the coupon may print in the register coupon inside file. Valid on 1 MGM title per customer. One time use only.

© 2003 Best Buy

Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance



So let's say, hypothetically speaking, that you think the hero of *MGS2*, Raiden, is a bleached-blond, whiny, wussyboy stupidhead—hypothetically speaking, of course. Well, in *Substance*, you can play as Solid Snake in a huge collection of mini-games.



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami CET
Players: 1
Also On: PS2 (2003)
Featured In: EGM #160
Best Feature: Incredible gameplay
Worst Feature: Lame story
Website: www.konami.com

Most of us didn't really expect to be that blown away by *MGS2: Substance*. After all, we play every major game that comes out, so we were already familiar with the trials and tribulations of Snake and company from the PS2 version last year. But the moment we dove into the VR training missions added for *Substance*, or when we tried the main game again, for that matter, we were hooked on *MGS2* all over again.

Simply put, this was a great game before, and now it's changed for the better. Sure, the ridiculously complex and silly main story is still there, but the new VR missions that challenge you to learn every nuance of *Metal Gear Solid* (from bomb disposal to photography) are entirely new and incredibly entertaining.

And then there are the Snake Tales—a collection of minimissions starring series' superstar Solid Snake. (He takes a back seat to...

new character in the main game, in case you somehow missed that whole controversy.) Don't get your hopes up too high, though. While the challenges are neat (and hard!), they don't really add to (or fix) anything from the main game's story line. In fact, the pages of text that thread together the different Snake Tale missions might even have a fruitier plot than *MGS2* proper (parts of it seem like a *Star Trek* holodeck episode gone awry). It's like a parallel universe, where Snake is thrown into various situations that are pieced together with different playable sections from the rest of the game. You have goals like taking a photograph of a giant monster or playing through some modified VR missions.

All three of our reviewers agree: Whether or not you've played *MGS2* before, *Substance* has enough...well, substance, to warrant checking it out.



namco

WWW.NAMCO.COM

PlayStation 2

tick

tick

tick

tick

tick

boom!

Push any good guy too far, eventually he's gonna make some bad things happen. Ex-cop Jack Slate is no exception. But when he explodes, things are going to be worse than you can ever imagine. So be sure to watch your backs, thugs. Your time's running out.



MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB FOR AGE 17+

Blood
Mature Sexual Themes
Violence



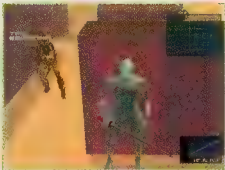
Dead to Rights

© 2002 Namco Bandai Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. "Namco" and "Dead to Rights" are registered trademarks of Namco Bandai Entertainment Inc. "PS2" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "TM" and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. "ESRB" (the ratings logo) is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. "Gamecube" are from the PlayStation2 computer entertainment system version.

Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance (cont.)

OUR FAVORITE VR MISSIONS

Just to give you an idea of the wide variety of actions and occasional humor included in *Substance's* hundreds of VR missions, we picked a few of our favorites:



NINJA MISSIONS

Once you play through 50 percent of Raiden's VR missions, you unlock his ninja outfit and some all-new missions. Not only does he look cool, but the ninja also gets plenty of quality slicing and dicing time with an artery-severing sword (that can also be used to block bullets—too cool).

THE BIG FALL

Did you know you can catch ledges as you're falling in *MGS2*? Grabbing on demands precise button-pressing accuracy. One mission takes this obscure skill and forces you to master it, starting you at the top of a 20-story structure and daring you to get all the way down. Watch that first step.

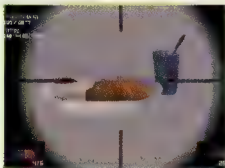


STREAKING MODE

Raiden's final challenge is to get through five levels in two minutes without being spotted—while buck naked. This bashful pretty-boy can't bother to attack while in the nude, so you'll have to evade everyone. The best part is when you get caught: You hear approaching police sirens as the Game Over screen appears.

SAVE LUNCH!

Snipe approaching guards before they can reach the front of the playfield. What are they after? Usually, it's your buddy-with-benefits from *MGS1*, Meryl, but when you play as Snake's alter ego, Pliskin, it's a plate of delicious curry. Sure, this plate of food won't be your constant companion, but it won't up and die on you, either.



SIZE MATTERS

A few missions feature gigantic, 80-foot-tall guards stomping around and screaming like Godzilla (they even have the trademark spines on their back). Bringing these colossal dudes to their knees requires a volley of well-placed Stinger missiles. You're better off just sneaking past them.



PHOTOGRAPH MODE

Once you get your assignment (either a description or a picture of a certain object), you need to locate it and take a picture. The shot above is of a crewman's ghost—you need to shoot the lights out for it to appear. While it's not quite as bone chilling as *Fatal Frame*, it's at least 500 percent more cool than *Pokémon Snap*.

The game boasts a bevy of hidden characters, but in reality, most of them are just different versions of Raiden and Snake. Here, we see good old Dave (Snake's real name, y'know) masquerading as the mysterious Pliskin by wearing a headset. **Lame.**



Let's not beat around the bush: The story in *Metal Gear Solid 2* is all sorts of messed up. But for every sappy exchange or ridiculous plot twist that has me rolling my eyes in disgust, there are a dozen things I love about this game. In my opinion it's still the one of the greatest action games out there. *Substance* is filled with tense moments as you break cover in order to move through each area, taking out enemies and trying to avoid detection. The controls are so spot-on that avoiding confrontation is a matter of skill rather than luck, and fighting off an attack is equally entertaining thanks to all the weapons at your disposal. The best part about *Substance* isn't that Xbox owners finally get one of the biggest titles on the PS2, though. It's that they're getting a deluxe version of it. The dozens and dozens of added VR missions guarantee that you'll be playing this one for quite a while. Plus, they're about the coolest tutorials you could ever have in a videogame, teaching you how to do every move, use every weapon, and master every advanced technique you might not otherwise think of. Then you can apply them all to the new Snake Tales. As anyone familiar with *MGS2* knows, Snake didn't play quite the role most of us expected, so including His Solidness in these non-sequitur minigames feels like Konami's way of saying "sorry" for something that wasn't so bad in the first place.

Greg S.

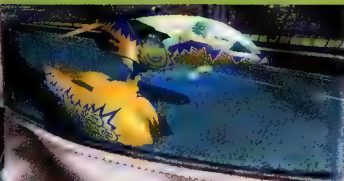
Xbox owners who missed out on all the *MGS2* action last year will be happy to know that the core game is perfectly intact in *Substance*. Is that a good thing? Yes, because all its fabulous stealth gameplay carries over perfectly. No, because the graphics haven't been upgraded, which is a shame. Thankfully, *Substance* makes up for it by adding a massive collection of VR missions, extra modes, and costumes to unlock and enjoy. Does this make the main character, Raiden, any less of a Backstreet Boy? No. Will players continue to have a love/hate thing with *Substance's* twisted, unerving story line? Most definitely. **Essential gaming**, regardless.

Markman

Almost everything great about *MGS2* on the PS2 holds up on this rerelease: The sharp graphics, fantastic sneaking/fighting/shooting mechanics, and attention to detail still amaze. Plus, all the added VR missions take advantage of the game's biggest strength (gameplay) and cut out its one real weakness (silly story line); challenging and addictive, many stages are so intricate they become almost like little puzzles. Controls don't work quite as well as on the PS2 controller the game was designed around, especially in the new first-person missions, but they soon become comfortable. A must-play for *MGS2* newbies, but at least worth renting even if you already beat it.

Mark





IT'S NOT ENOUGH
TO WIN.
EVERYONE ELSE MUST LOSE.
MISERABLY.



The future of racing isn't guts and glory. It's vendettas and vengeance. On the Quantum Redshift™ circuit, every racer has their own nemesis. So as you top speeds of 800 mph on 16 professional circuits, your goal is two-fold: Grab the checkered flag and dog your rivals. And to make things even more interesting, the 16 ships come with a total of 160 weapons.

Quantum Redshift

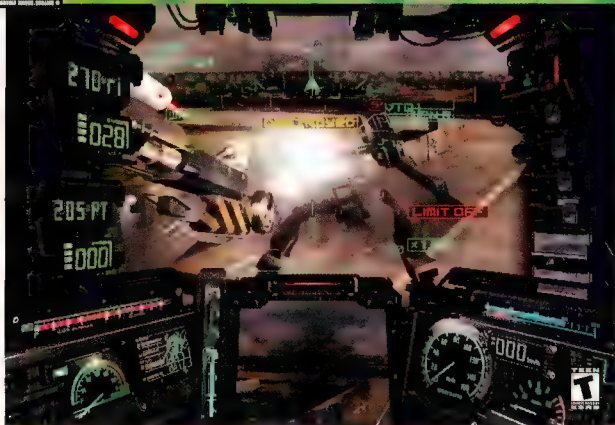
Race. With a Vengeance.

www.quantumredshift.com



www.xbox.com





VT Cruiser: Sleeker vertical tanks open up later in the game. The cockpit to the left is from a second-generation VT, which is less cramped and has a color monitor, compared to the black-and-white first-generation jalopy below. Third-generation mechs have cup holders and lumbar support.



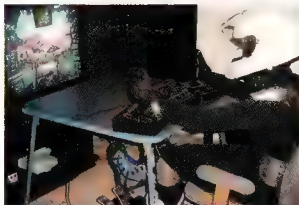
It's a million little things that make *Steel Battalion* the most immersive robo sim this side of the year 2005: the pre-mission mech start-up sequences, the claustrophobic cockpits, the lack of a pause button (hint: Unplug the controller if too much Code Red soda has pushed your bladder to code yellow). And then there's one mighty big thing: the included controller, studded with buttons that glow and react to what's happening onscreen. Expect to invest a full day of play to become a true mech warrior, because **manipulating two sticks and three pedals is tantamount to driving a manual transmission while juggling.** The experience is really a trial by fire: If, by the fourth mission, you haven't mastered your mech's systems and started tailoring your arsenal, you're scrap. Foul up a few times and you have to start the whole game over—a prospect that made me sweat in later missions. *Battalion* does have a few loose bolts that wobbled my suspension of disbelief. Terrain pops into the picture in some environments, which is a shame considering how amazing everything looks otherwise. Your computer-controlled squadmates are useless in battle and even get in the way (you can make 'em behave by issuing orders halfway through the game, when maps start to repeat). If only *Battalion* was online and those were real pilots! I was screaming at it. Let's hope Capcom brings a networked version (currently announced only for Japan) to the States. **Crispin**

Steel Battalion's obsession with giant mechanized warfare borders on fetishism, and for a mech junkie like me, it's heaven. Sure, it costs as much as an Xbox, but **you get what you pay for;** and in this case, your return value isn't just the deep gameplay or photorealistic visuals—it's also a very physical sense that you're piloting an 80-ton robot. In the midst of an intense firefight, you'll feel the sweat on your palms, stiffness in your shoulders (from working both arms on the control sticks), maybe even a leg cramp from working the three foot pedals. *Battalion* is a dirty little slice of hyper-reality that will forever change the way gamers view not just mech games, but simulations on the whole. **Che**

Anyone who sees *Battalion's* awesome, massive controller cannot resist giving it a test drive—but 10 minutes later only the stubborn, the hardcore, and the truly mech-obsessed will have the desire to continue. It's slow, it's difficult, it's unapologetically complicated...but it's also **incredibly realistic, unique, and engrossing.** When you play, you are in a gigantic robot, lumbering into real-world combat. I was a little disappointed the camera zoom doesn't reveal more long-range detail, and that my moonic teammates all seem to idle with the enemy when you aren't within sight. But for those who can appreciate it, *Battalion* offers an experience like no other. **Mark**

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

Publisher: **Capcom**
 Developer: **Capcom**
 Players: **1**
 Also On: **None**
 Features of: **EGM #160**
 Best Feature: **Lap-busting controller**
 Also a Feature: **Bank-busting \$200 price tag**
 Website: **www.capcom.com**



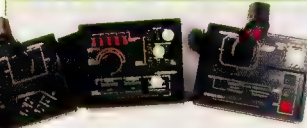
Battalion's controller is too big for your lap, so buy a cheapo card table and set up shop in front of the TV. Oh, and wear shoes or the stiff pedals will tucker out your toes. Homemade flight suit optional.

Steel Battalion is the game for anyone who ever wanted to pilot vehicles for the U.S. military but couldn't because of lousy eyesight or crummy grades or grotesque obesity or...well, we won't ask if you don't let. This game—which seals you inside monster "vertical tanks" (VTs) with enough firepower to level Toledo—is the ultimate simulator, making even high-end PC combat games seem like kiddie rides. The only trick: You gotta buy your way into *Steel Battalion's* army. The game costs \$200, thanks to a packed-in, 3-foot-long controller bristling with 34 candy-colored buttons, two joysticks, three pedals, and a six-speed gearshift. And, yes, some assembly is required.

The controller, price, two instruction manuals, and mondo learning curve all make for the most niche console game ever. But if none of this terrifies you, or if you think all other mech games are for girls, lock onto *Steel Battalion*—quickly (Capcom is releasing it in limited quantities). It's got the right stuff if you do.



Missions range from sneaking through a pitch-black base to an assault on a battleship, although we're happy just grabbing enemy livestock with our manipulator claw and taking 'em on rides.



CHAFF—Anytime this button flashes, hit it! It'll spoof any enemy missiles homing in.

- 2. FORECAST SHOOTING SYSTEM**—Ups the smarts in your targeting computer, making long-distance hits more likely.
- 3. OVERRIDE**—Jam it for a speed boost in second- and third-generation VTs.
- 4. EFFECT**—Bail out when all is lost. Save data's nuked if you go down with the ship.



MOTOROLA
intelligence everywhere™

the next box.



*Release The Power Of Broadband
Wired Or Wireless Networking
Connect Multiple PCs & Consoles
Create The Ultimate LAN Party*

We've integrated a SURFboard® Cable Modem and combined it with an 802.11b wireless access point and a 5-port 10/100 Base-T switch. We even threw in advanced firewall technology with DMZ.

Basically, it's a party waiting to happen.

check it out >

www.motorola.com/shop/wirelessgateway

SBG1000



Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell



Picking locks offers some of the coolest moments in the game. After the first few tries, you'll be a master locksmith, breakin' into enemy hideouts (and, if it's more your style, the ladies' room).



Publisher: Ubi Soft
 Ubi Soft Montreal Studios
 Platform: PS2, GC
 EGM #161
 You ARE a silent assassin
 Missions get can get pretty tough
 Website: www.splintercell.com

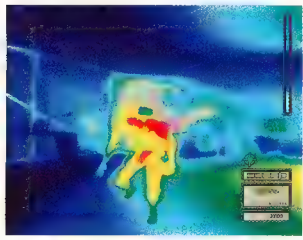
Light, of course, is bad, but the shadow is oh-so-very-good. It's the place where Fisher disappears at the blink of an eye and where he functions at his best. The trouble (for the bad guys) is, Sam can see you—you can't see him.

And since light is such a key element, it helps that *Splinter Cell's* lighting effects are truly the most realistic and dramatic ever seen in a videogame. While screens do a fair job of conveying it, you really need to step in front of a floodlight and have it cast a long, striking shadow to really understand how drop-dead gorgeous it looks in the game.

Because the lighting is so effective, you're able to use shadows to sneak right under the nose of an enemy guard facing your direction. Then again, if you choose to circumvent his position, climb a terrace, and scoot over him, well, that sort of organic, environmental

Ubi Soft has nailed it. In an arena created and defined by Konami's *Metal Gear Solid* series, *Splinter Cell* (and more precisely, Sam Fisher) has walked onto the playing field and damn near leveled it. High praise, you might think, for a publisher best known for the armless, legless wonder, *Rayman*—and yet, it's true. *Splinter Cell* is the second coming of the stealth-action genre. Whereas most Tom Clancy games have revolved around the strategic use of an entire squad of specially trained tactical agents, *Splinter Cell* is different. Specializing in delicate covert ops, you quickly grow fond of the gruff hero Mr. Fisher (expertly voiced by Michael Ironside), who threads his way in and out of danger, often without firing a shot.

Unlike the drab, dreary world of *Solid Snake*, the Eastern Bloc, where Überagent Fisher plies his trade, is a place bathed in shadow and light.



HANGING IN THE DARK

No, the screens to your right aren't of some grimy, underground European club. They're savvy hints to 1) help you through a tricky point in *Splinter Cell* and 2) show you how open-ended the game is. There are multiple ways to overcome most obstacles. Take, for instance, the sewer sequence in the Chinese Embassy mission: You have to tail three guards, and you're not allowed to kill any of them. This is quite tough, because if they catch a glimpse of you, you're worm food, guaranteed. So, how can you make your life easier? The moment you step into the sewers, pull out your smoke grenade and lob it at the guards. When they start coughing, run into the smoke and conk all three of 'em in the head with your elbow. That way, you can breeze through the underground area totally undetected.



SHE PREPARED AGAINST HIM
HE COULD NOT RESIST HER NEEDS
HE WOULD DIE FOR HER



PC
CD



PlayStation 2



Blood and Gore
Strong Language
Violence



IN STORES
NOW



www.majesco.com

"I COULDN'T PUT IT DOWN."
—ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

...ONE OF GAMING'S MOST SENSUAL BABES...
—PLAY

A FAST AND FURIOUS ACTION/
ADVENTURE THAT OOZES STYLE."
—GAMEPRO

BLOODRAYNE.COM
BLOODRAYNE™

Screenshots taken from Xbox version of the game. ©2002 Terminal Reality. Developed by Terminal Reality. Licensed to and published by Majesco Sales, Inc. ©2002 Majesco Sales, Inc. All Rights Reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. TM, © and the Nintendo Game Boy Advance logo are trademarks of Nintendo. ©2001 Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.



Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell (cont.)



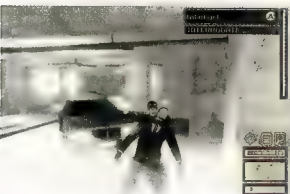
We really cannot stress enough just how amazing *Splinter Cell's* visuals truly are. It's raised the benchmark by which all future Xbox titles will be judged—*Metal Gear Solid 3* now has something to shoot for.



gameplay is possible, too. In fact, most problems in this near puzzle-like game can be solved in any number of ways (see *Dancing in the Dark* sidebar).

Aiding Fisher in his exploits is a stellar control set. After a mandatory training session (it's over with quickly, don't worry), the initially complex controls soon become second nature. Everything feels just right. The way Sam jumps, the way he crouches, the way he rappels down buildings—you'll find little fault with the controls. The camera is completely manual (and managed by the right thumbstick) but is user-friendly and is almost always able to give you the perfect angle.

But what would a supersecret agent be without a host of fancy techno-gizmos? Thankfully, Sam's array of weapons, fiber-optic cables, smoke grenades, thermal goggles, and more are all easily accessed by an organized and sensible interface. No struggling to equip the right item in the heat of battle. Likewise, when Fisher switches on the infrared or the night-vision, the



whole screen is filtered without switching to the prohibitive first-person view.

Not everything is perfect, though. When you trigger the close-up third-person targeting mode each time you pull out your weapon, Sam always hangs to the right, exposing himself whenever he needs to peek around the left corner of a wall. This often gives him away to security cameras and eagle-eyed guards. Another little gripe is the weak 5.7mm pistol Fisher packs during the first few missions. Since it's equipped with a silencer, the gun's stopping power is considerably weak, often rendering point blank head shots to approaching enemies ineffective. Man up to a 9mm, Fisher!

Still, over the course of nine tension-filled missions, there is never a dull moment. Cut-scenes cannot be skipped, but the story is so good, you'll want to savor the game's every politically driven nuance. Basically, *Splinter Cell* is a game that magically makes everything come together—graphics, gameplay, innovative new ideas, and dazzling execution. You feel like the world's supercoolest stealth machine every time you complete one of the game's objectives.

Especially for the virgin effort of a brand-new franchise, *Splinter Cell* comes up smelling like roses on all fronts. The fact that *Cell's* Xbox Live compatibility ensures additional downloadable missions, costumes, weapons, and enemies, makes this an even greater value for black-ops wannabes. Don't hesitate to buy this amazing game.

Some missions require apprehending a particular target and using his retinal pattern to get past checkpoints. The thrill is in the hunt; using feathery footsteps to successfully sneak up on preoccupied punks is totally cool.



Usually, the name Tom Clancy on a game box means you'll be orchestrating a small army of spec-ops soldiers using complex PC controls. Not this time. *Splinter Cell*, in no uncertain terms, is the new definition of stealth-action games. Its hero, Sam Fisher, uses the darkness so effectively, even Solid Snake better watch his back. Being able to sneak up on a guard who is staring right in your direction adds a tension so tangible, you'll breathe a sigh of relief upon clearing any level. You'll also pump your fist since the game imparts a feeling of real triumph every five minutes. And, of course, nearly every mission enables you to accomplish your tasks in multiple ways. It's not as open-ended as something like *Grand Theft Auto III*, but *Splinter Cell* offers enough leeway for differing tactics that it never feels forced or scripted. The generous checkpoints ensure that backtracking is kept to a minimum, which is especially helpful during the tougher missions. But for every lesson learned (read: every time you blow your assignment), the repeat visit is almost always a more efficient affair. This keeps the replay incentive high and gamer involvement that much richer. Clocking in at nine levels, even the best players will take a good while to finish the game. To be perfectly blunt, the world of Sam Fisher is so taut, so complete, it makes *Metal Gear Solid's* stealth elements, as good as that series is, seem more like a big ol' game of *Pac-Man*.

Milkman

Splinter Cell is a graphical powerhouse; the title's visuals set a new benchmark for console games. And its story is gritty and compelling—every event plays out realistically. A man like our hero, Sam Fisher, could actually exist in our world, and if he did, he'd use the same battle techniques and artillery that we see on display in the game. At times, the title almost feels like a simulation. But fear not, action fans: this adventure definitely delivers in the gameplay department, too. Once you master the hero's stealth tactics, you'll feel compelled to run through missions multiple times, trying to kill as few people as possible. My only gripe: Some levels are outrageously difficult.

Ethan

Splinter Cell is a perfect example of style meets substance. While the audiovisuals are cutting edge in their pursuit of realism, what sets the game apart is how both aspects are integrated into gameplay. In true stealth-action fashion, sticking to the shadows renders you invisible to enemy guards, allowing for some truly classic moments where you **actually feel like a predator stalking his prey**. Throw in a wide assortment of useful (and fascinating) gadgets with responsive, no-fuss controls and you've got an adventure that's both inventive and fun. But I have two complaints: You can't skip cut-scenes, and the story isn't really all that exciting. Nitpicks aside, it's a must-buy for Xbox owners.

Che



ALL NEW TRIALS

11 NEW GAMES



DOWNLOAD NEW BIKES & TRACKS

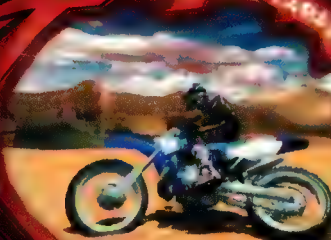
MX Superfly™

FEATURING
RICKY CARMICHAEL

RACE FAST. JUMP HIGH. HOLD ON.

12 NEW STUNTS

CASH PRIZES & CLOSER RACES



12 NEW RICKY CARMICHAEL

NEW FEATURES



PlayStation 2



© 2002 THQ Inc. Ricky Carmichael used under exclusive license by THQ Inc. THQ, the THQ logo and the MX Superfly logo are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All other trademarks and logos are property of their respective owners. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. TM, © and the Nintendo Gamecube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.



Publisher: Atari
Developer: Digital Extremes
Players: 1-4 (2-16 Online or LAN)
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #161
Best Feature: Dangerously addictive online play
Worst Feature: Weak single-player game
Website: www.unrealchampionship.com

Before we begin, please fill out this handy checklist: (Check the box if the statement applies to you.)
 I'm the proud owner of an Xbox and an Xbox Live online account—rarin' to frag fools in the online arena.
 I'm willing to spend the phat cash required to get my Xbox online. Broadband or bust!
 I don't have broadband, so I can't get on Xbox Live. But I still like Unreal!

All right, if you checked either of the first two boxes, go buy this game. (Third-box checkers, hold tight.) **Unreal Championship delivers a phenomenal online shootout**—lush graphics (with only a hint of Net lag), an atmospheric soundtrack, and stunning level designs show off the attention to detail that this series is legendary for. Tight, responsive controls make dodging, double-jumping, and even circle-strafing a snap. Variety is the key to any good online first-person shooter, and *UC* doesn't disappoint here. Team Deathmatch and Capture the Flag never get old, and the two creative new match types, Double Domination and Bombing Run, demand some intense teamwork. Truly awesome stuff. I also can't stress enough how much strategy and fun the Communicator microphone adds to the online game. OK, back to the third-box guys. The splitscreen game is fine, but the single-player matches against bots get old really quickly.

Shane

I'm twitching right now. My fingers ache, yet I still want to play more *Unreal Championship*. As first-person shooters go, *UC* gets nearly everything right. The choice of weapons, variety of mutators, and multitude of game play modes will have me logging online often. Without a doubt, **this title will inspire would-be fraggers to sign up for Xbox Live.** The online action, however, isn't completely smooth, due to occasional slowdowns, and the only reason it's even noticeable is that I've been mercilessly playing the latest PC installment, *Unreal Tournament 2003*, for months. Oh hell—so long as my Link Gun has ammo, I'll still be a happy camper.

Darren

Is it considered a bad thing when the Xbox inherits a PC franchise? When it's stuff like *UC*, I fail to see the problem. With **smooth graphics, fast action, and intuitive controls**, plus Xbox Live or network multiplayer matches, *UC's* easy to enjoy. The various Deathmatch and team modes are all highly entertaining—talking smack while leading your team to victory over Shane's gang in Double Domination never ceases to amuse. *UC* might as well be online only, though. Since it lacks a Story mode and "features" chop-tacular splitscreen play (four players is brutal). But if you're Live and kicking (and don't mind the occasional hiccup of lag), prepare for some intense fragging.

G. Ford

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**



Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: High Voltage
Players: 1-4
Also On: None
None
Also Try: NBA2K3
Website: www.xbox.com

Best Feature: Deep player customization
Worst Feature: Where's the online play?

Among this year's b-ball crop, *NBA Inside Drive 2003* sticks out like a sore thumb due to its lack of upgrades. While *Live* is completely redesigned and *NBA 2K3* pushes the online envelope for the Xbox, *Inside Drive* has, uh...downloadable shoes. That's just one example of the **frilly extras being pawned off as significant updates** of last year's *Drive*. Gameplay has remained largely the same, albeit with a couple fixes. The speed burst, completely out of sync last year, has been toned down to offer a more realistic feel. And blocking shots is now more challenging. This time around, you won't see a 6-foot-1-inch guard holding his ground and swatting Shaq down low. *Drive's* Dynamic Player Performance system offers some much-needed depth with its biophysical types and downs based on how well you play. It's a nice feature, but most of this year's games offer something similar, so it's hardly unique. Online play would really have helped, but it's mysteriously absent. Why couldn't it have been ready for the launch of Xbox Live? As it stands, *Inside Drive* just can't quite compete with the big boys.

Dan L.

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**



Publisher: EA Games
Developer: Griptonite
Players: 1 (2-4 Linked)
Based On: The hit movies
Does Not Support: Gmil
Website: www.lordoftherings.ea.com

Best Feature: Detailed character customization
Worst Feature: Too much mindless slashing

Forget about Universal's problematic *LOTR: Fellowship of the Ring* game; this one's better. *The Two Towers* smushes together strategic RPG elements with the simplest-minded hack-and-slash game play perfected by such gems as *Diablo* and *Gauntlet*. Players can choose one of five heroes (Frodo, Aragorn, Gandalf, Legolas, and Eowyn—a sixth is unlockable) and chop their way to glory, all the while collecting goodies such as foodstuffs, weapons, pieces of armor, and so on. **The strategic RPG elements greatly augment play** and have the added benefit of balancing out the game's more mindless moments. Killing equals experience, and heroes can be buffed up by selecting special skills, abilities, and spells; there's nothing quite so cool as selecting Aragorn's Wield Dual Weapons skill and then wading into a cluster of enemies with two Orc-slaughtering blades. To top it off, *Two Towers* is a decent-looking game: the characters and levels actually resemble their cinematic counterparts. Though it may not rule them all, it certainly has its moments.

Greg O.

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: HAL Laboratory
Players: 1 (2-4 Linked)
Also On: None
Featured In: EGM #160
Best Feature: Old-school Kirby fun
Worst Feature: Too short
Website: www.kirbykirbykirby.com

Don't let the new name fool you—*Nightmare in Dream Land* is a remake of the old 8-bit Nintendo classic, *Kirby's Adventure*. Revisiting that gem is a great idea—just don't expect much new content to go with a major graphical overhaul. The attention to detail in the backgrounds and character animation is stunning. The game no longer slows down at certain points, and the bosses are much larger and more impressive this time around. In case you're not a Kirby veteran, this is old-school platforming at its best. Every minute I spent with *Nightmare*, inhaling enemies and taking on their powers, was extremely satisfying. The level design is lighter than the sprawling, unfocused stages seen in the pink guy's recent adventures. And I'd forgotten about the level taken from the original *Game Boy Dream Land*, faithfully reproduced in glorious black and white. **Unfortunately, Nightmare doesn't last long.** Finishing the game takes just a few hours, and after you're done, there's little incentive to play again. It's a shame they didn't add more, maybe from other Kirby games, to extend the replay value. The four addictive minigames help (the Samurai Duel, taken from Super NES *Kirby's Super Star*, is the best), but it doesn't make up for the main game's short length. Even so, *Nightmare* is still great fun and better than most platformers out there. And hey—if you're a Kirby fan, you've used to short games by now.

CJ

"The sun shines on this parcel of mine. Where I walk, enemies black, and I float gently down." Not even the game's bad poetry can pthole the tirelessly precious puffball Kirby, star of the cute and rather intriguing *Nightmare*. Kirby at once sucks and blows, using his cavernous maw to inhale enemies and mimic their powers. Sometimes, it's a **cheery drug trip** (the Kirbster floats on clouds and must vanquish a killer alarm clock). More often, it's just a solid platformer with a dreadful soundtrack. *Nightmare* offers cool minigames with graphics that suggest there may be a better life for us all, provided we imbibe the proper substances in their proper doses. Hallelujah.

Greg O.

Kirby will automatically appeal to Hello Kitty fans, Pokémonians, and anyone else who can appreciate a lovable pink blob. It's a simple game, and therein lies the appeal—you float Kirby around colorful, straightforward levels, meeting and beating on other cute little blobular enemies. **It's so easy, you can just sit back and enjoy the high cuteness factor** without having to repeat sections over and over to get past them. The stages are short and manageable, so you can fly through them pouncing on every baddie or just choose your favorites to pick on. The game doesn't last long, but maybe that's good: Before His Puffy Pinkness has the chance to get annoying, you're done!

Jennifer

VISUALS **SOUND** **INGENUITY** **REPLAY**



MATURE
M
 Content Rated by
ESRB
 Blood and Gore
 Violence

You can't fight
 what you can't see.



 OVERWORKS™



Shinobi
 sega.com/shinobi

臨兵闘者皆陣列在前 臨兵  Play Station 2 

SEGA is a registered trademark of SEGA CORPORATION. SEGA and Shinobi are registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation and its affiliates. ©2002 SEGA CORPORATION. Original Game COVERWORKS/SEGA. 2002. All Rights Reserved. www.sega.com. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved.



The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past and Four Swords



Platform: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo, Capcom
Players: 1 (4-4 w/ Link Cable)
Genre: None
EGM #157
Overall Grade: One of the greatest games of all time in portable form, and *Four Swords* is an absolute blast
Special Features: Link's annoying yell with every sword attack
Website: www.nintendo.com

You may remember *A Link to the Past* from its Super Nintendo incarnation years ago, but what about the new multiplayer game Capcom added to Nintendo's classic, *Four Swords*? Here's a quick Q&A to get y'all up to speed.

What is *Four Swords*?

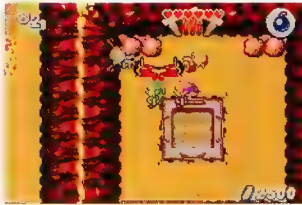
It's a two-to-four player quest to save the Princess Zelda. Oh, and it's completely separate from *A Link to the Past* (like the *Mario Bros.* mode you find in the *Mario Advance* games).

How does it work?

Simple. You explore six unique *Zelda* levels on your quest. The person who gets the most rupees (gems) in each level wins.

So, I have to compete with my buddies?

Well, yes and no. See, most of the obstacles in *Four Swords* require teamwork. Sure, you can go



Defeating most enemies in *Four Swords* requires teamwork. Here, two Links grab each side of a baddie and pull him apart.

around throwing each other off cliffs and hogging all the items, but you won't get very far that way.

What about the monsters?

They require teamwork, too. Especially the level bosses. They're color-coded in order to help you see which player needs to swing his sword at which spot.

What if one of the players dies?

All the rupees the team collects go into a pot. If anyone dies, a certain number of rupees are subtracted in order to revive him. As long as your team has enough rupees, you're safe.

If I don't have three other people to link up with, can I still play *Four Swords*?

No problem, as long as you have at least one other person (sorry, you can't play *Four Swords* alone). What's even better is that the levels change to accommodate teams of two or three. Of course, it's riotously fun with four players.

So, what's the verdict?

It's fantastic. We didn't really think a multiplayer *Zelda* game would succeed, but boy are we glad to be proven wrong. *Four Swords* perfectly mixes co-op and competitive gameplay.

Left: Each boss will give you a hint about how to beat him, and they're almost always color-related. Just before this ugly dude's arm blossomed, the left side of it was colored red, while the right was green. The blue and purple players just get to sit back and collect the rupees.



If there's one thing *Four Swords* has taught me, it's that CJ and I simply cannot work as a team. He's always trying to throw me off a cliff or into a burnin' ring of fire. Big jerk. Anyway, on with the review. First of all, *A Link to the Past* is an amazing game. Heck, it was third on our all-time top 100 list (*EGM* #150), so you know it rocks. And this GBA version is a carbon copy of the old classic (with the added bonus of being able to save anywhere). All the great action, gadgets, and mind-bending puzzles I remember from my youth can now be enjoyed by an entirely new generation of gamers. This overhead adventure pulls you in right from the opening and doesn't let go until you've defeated the mysterious evil that's causing so much unrest in the land of Hyrule. **It'll have you hunched over that little screen for weeks.** Plus, playing through *A Link to the Past* actually unlocks power-ups in the new multiplayer *Zelda* adventure, *Four Swords*. For instance, finding the Magic Sword in *Past* earns you the ability to throw swords in *FS*. Speaking of *Four Swords*, I've never played a game quite like this. It forces you to work as a team while simultaneously rewarding competition. It's raucous fun to screw with your fellow players. You'll probably be cussing out your linked-up pals, but having so much fun that you'll play till the batteries run out. You simply cannot miss this game.

Greg S.

If you've ever played the Super Nintendo version of *A Link to the Past*, then you've already played this portable version. Except, of course, that the original wasn't as cool. Sure, the classic 16-bit *Zelda* (still my favorite game in the series) is here in all its glory, and that alone would earn this title a high score, but the inclusion of a fabulous new multiplayer game, *Four Swords*, adds **major replay value.** It's a wicked-cool blend of *Zelda* and *Gauntlet*, and you'll have to use some old-fashioned cooperation to defeat enemies and solve puzzles (or you can just smack your buddies around). Required playing for absolutely every GBA owner, no excuses accepted.

Phil

Ten years ago, when I had to put down *A Link to the Past* for a family vacation, I remember thinking, "Wouldn't it be great if I didn't have to wait till I was home, in front of the TV, to play more?" And now, that childhood dream's been realized—I can play this classic *Zelda* anywhere, with its huge quest, mind-bending dungeons, and sharp graphics that stand the test of time. And to make it an even sweeter deal, I can link up with friends to play *Four Swords*, which is **the most fun I've ever had with a four-player GBA game.** I swear, throwing Stewart into the flaming pit of fire he deserves (or off a suitable cliff) is incredibly cathartic. If you own a GBA, this *Zelda* should be in your collection.

CJ



Games will never be the same

Don't just play your game be a PART of the ACTION. The KINYO GAME ZONE SURROUND SOUND SPEAKER SYSTEMS and PULSATING HEADPHONES make you feel like you are actually in the game. Now you can make the roar of the crowd, the rumble of formula racers and the thunder of combat a unique reality.

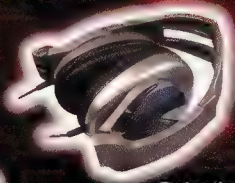
If you're looking for LIFE-LIKE Gaming Excitement, The KINYO GAME ZONE SURROUND SOUND SPEAKER SYSTEMS and PULSATING HEADPHONES will make your gaming experience come alive.

Enter the Game Zone

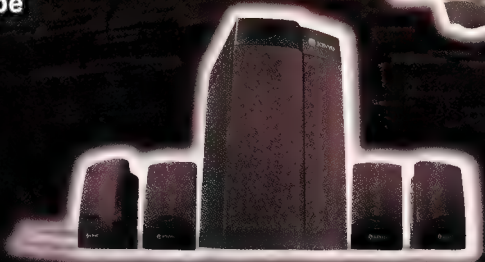
Surround Yourself with Pulse Pounding Sound

Designed for:

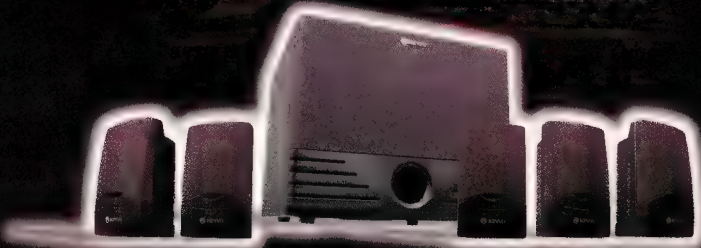
PS2
PSone
Xbox
GameCube
N64



Pulsating Headphones



Game Zone 4.1™



Game Zone 5.1™

Available at:

GameStop Babbage's software Best Buy GAMESTOP



KINYO

Where Sound Dreams Come True

www.kinyo.com

All other trademarks and/or registered trademarks are the property of their respective owners.



You'll get to know our heroine, Samus Aran, through cool cinema scenes like this. As you can see, she's sporting a fresh new look. It's not really a fashion choice, though—her body has been irrevocably altered after being infected with the X parasite (and then cured with Metroid DNA).



Playing through *Metroid Fusion* stirs up the same gushing emotions that I felt with *Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance*—they're both spectacular updates to classic franchises that leave you wanting more. It's a tough call to choose a victor between them, but I feel that *Fusion* has a slight edge over its batty peer. The excellent graphics (for a GBA game) perfectly paint a desolate space station marooned in orbit. Massive bosses fill the screen and Samus' smooth animations impress. It certainly looks just as good as, if not better than, *Super Metroid*. Musically, the game stumbles slightly. The eerie, droning tracks aren't awful, though I won't be humming them anytime soon. Luckily, the gameplay didn't disappoint at all. As expected, the control is fantastic. Samus' myriad moves activate with precision and ease—all games should feel this good. At first, I was concerned about the game's seemingly rigid map system. It appears that the game is going to be divided into six distinct levels, but further investigation proves that you'll travel freely between them, exploring every shadowy nook along the way. Thanks to the in-game map system, you will never get lost, but this also means that you can reach the end in about four hours. Finding all of the cleverly stashed items will easily take another four, so don't rag on the length that much. *Fusion* is a rare treat that begs to be played over and over.

Shane

Fusion is proof you can never have too much of a good thing. The artwork is fantastic, with all sorts of cool effects, and of course the classic *Metroid* gameplay remains as entertaining and rewarding as ever. It even boasts a top-notch story that includes some genuinely surprising moments—not very common in a handheld game. Thanks to a shimmering rainbow or a shooting star, it's all over way too soon. Yes, the ability to link up with *Metroid Prime* to unlock extra bonuses is cool, but after waiting so many years for a new 2D *Metroid* game, I wish the main quest could've lasted longer. Still, I wouldn't trade those hours for anything.

Milkman

This game almost got me killed. Rather than stop playing *Fusion* while standing on the bus to work, I risked keeping both hands on my GBA, almost flying out the front windshield at a sudden stop—that's how bad you'll want to continue this game once you start. Like *Super Metroid* it's packed with hidden passages, fun boss fights, and cool power-ups, plus everything looks and plays just fantastic on the GBA. I'm split on the navigation rooms—they minimize the frustrating time wandering, but at the same time, I would've loved for the *Fusion* experience to last longer, even artificially. Regardless, this is one of the best original GBA games yet.

Mark

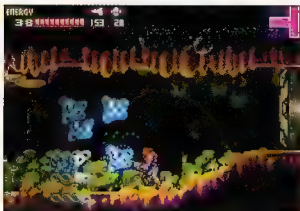
VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Platform: 1
Supports: GBA-to-GC link cable
Franchise: EGM #160
Best Feature: Flawless gameplay
Worst Feature: Navigation rooms limit exploration
Website: www.metroidfusion.com

rated by heroine Samus Aran. This rare glimpse into her character is unexpected and cool. Also, *Fusion* gives the player incredibly specific instructions on where to go next. Navigation rooms always reveal precisely where on the map Samus should be headed, so there is less time spent wandering around than in earlier versions of *Metroid*. Surprisingly short, but sweet all the same.

It's disheartening that so many of the best Game Boy Advance games are simply ports of preexisting Super Nintendo hits. Revisiting vintage gaming chestnuts on the go is cool, but where are all of the new classics? From the blackest recesses of space, Nintendo has finally delivered the answer to that plea with *Metroid Fusion*. This is the direct sequel to *Super Metroid*, the 16-bit Super Nintendo adventure that we named the number 1 greatest game of all time. Big boots to fill, that's for sure.

In many crucial ways, the gameplay remains true to the series' established norms. You slowly amass a cool arsenal of weapons and power-ups that allow you to tackle harder enemies and explore more remote areas. It's still necessary to investigate walls and ceilings for hidden passageways and secret goodies, and some big, scary bosses still stand in your way. A few new twists, however, do make the game feel new. For one thing, the plot takes center stage thanks to a series of cinematic cut-scenes nar-



Samus learns a few new maneuvers in Fusion to help wipe out the X parasites (although she doesn't glow green and can't suck the life from living things, despite her crazy Metroid DNA.)

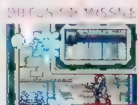


Charge up your beam and drop into a ball to release a wave of low-flowing energy.



Samus' Metroid-enhanced body can't cope with a traditional Ice Beam, so she uses some

frosty-tipped missiles instead.



This upgrade causes a wide spread of freezing missiles to bellow from her projectile. It's perfect for stopping large groups of monsters.

JOYRIDE STUDIOS



Where
video game
characters
come to life

Behind these walls exists the most technologically advanced studio ever created for the game industry. They call themselves JoyRide Studios. They've developed the resources to take the hottest game characters and vehicles from every platform and transform them into reality.

Using super computers calculating trillions of 3-D details per second, each collectible is articulated to the finest detail...a detail never seen before in the 2-D world of your television.

They didn't stop there. Through their advances in game play capture, JoyRide was able to unlock the most coveted tips, tricks, and secret codes for each game and will include this intelligence with every collectible figure and vehicle sold.

Come experience
the next level
in collecting...

JoyRide calls it
Reality!

www.joyridestudios.com

Available at these and many other fine
retailers for a limited time:



SAMUS ARAN



GONGON



HAVOC



LUIGI



Sega, Nintendo, EA and the game properties under each are registered trademarks used under license. EA SPORTS, EA SPORTS BIG and associated logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. EA SPORTS BIG™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand. © 2002 Racing Champions Ent.

Walgreens



ES GAMES

GameStop

MEDIA PLAY.COM

MACYS.COM



The Rest of the Crap

Reviewing the games no one else bothered to

Every assignment I've had here at *Electronic Gaming Monthly* has been a veiled excuse to torture me. First, there was the 20 Worst Games of All Time. Then they locked me in a room for 30 days with a Blockbuster Games Pass to see what it would take to make a man crack. After that, it was the 9 Naughtiest Games of All Time. My research for that took me into the dark, perverse world of adult videogames where eroticism never comes without a generous helping of the grotesque.

So naturally, when *EGM* asks me to do a monthly reviews column outside of the official Review Crew, I get the games about Mary-Kate and Ashley teaching each other about bird-house construction and friendship. I get the games that practically have bad reviews written into their titles (like *The Scorpion King's Unplayable Marketing-Side-Effect Adventure*). Trust me—this column is not going to help one single person make a game-purchasing decision, but if all goes according to *EGM's* sinister plan, it just might make me cry.

—Seanbaby



From left to right: Satan, Satan



▲ This is obviously a game designed for pre-teen girls, which means we're going to need an explanation on exactly for whom Britney is wearing those see-through pants and tiny, tiny panties.

A lot of games let you simulate playing football or annihilating the head of something from beyond the galaxy. However, the Game Boy Advance version of *Britney's Dance Beat* takes fantasy simulation to exciting, new levels: **It puts the experience of tapping your fingers along to music in the palm of your hand!** The gameplay begins and ends with you pressing a button to the rhythm of Britney songs. That may not sound like much (because it isn't), but at least the game's kindhearted. In an effort to make any musically inept players feel better about themselves, the animators decided that Britney herself should have no rhythm. No matter what song she's gyrating or pawing at herself to, not one of her pelvic thrusts hits a beat. Of course, this review might be totally unnecessary since, guessing what I can about age and gender demographics, you decided *Britney's Dance Beat* was an atrocity before you finished reading its title. But, like I said, this column is not here to help you complete your Christmas list. It's here to reassure you that you were right.



▲ If you're still confused by these instructions, don't worry. The damn cat slowly demonstrates every tip he gives you, including how to move left and right.

This is the story of a lonely witch who, while trying to magically create a man to boff in her kitchen, turns herself to stone. It's your job as Sabrina the Teenage Witch to find the four ingredients in the house to unfreeze her. This is impossible for two reasons: 1) You have the sense not to play this game and 2) A talking cat is so busy giving you instructions, you'll die of old age before you finish the first level. **The game uses two buttons: run fast and hop. The cat somehow stretches this into a six-hour seminar on how to play the game.** Let me tell you something—if you need a cat to tell you how to use a control pad to move left and right and decipher a two-button control scheme, you're going to be just as happy pounding your special-needs hands against an empty Game Boy Advance, or even a bowl of yogurt.



▲ A revealing look inside Barbie's head, shortly before it's melted by your big brother's magnifying glass.

Before *Barbie Groovy Games* even starts, it makes one thing clear to the player: The color "Barbie Pink" is owned and trademarked by the Mattel Corporation. If you or any affiliated parties prance through a meadow in this copyrighted color, you are subject to Barbie princess prosecution. Once that's out of the way, it's clear that all the time Barbie's people spent running around buying colors could have been better spent working on this videogame. **It's nothing but a collection of old games you used to play in the car as a kid, but hit over the head with a sack of fairies** (e.g. tic-tac-toe played with butterflies and flowers, *Connect Four* played with ice cream, etc.). And trust me—it does not suddenly become fun if you get to drive to that game of tic-tac-toe in a pink Ferrari while launching hearts and rainbows out of your face.



▲ A street thug's bullet takes on my heaving chest in the never-ending fight for justice.

Females take a much different approach to fighting crime than males do. Knight Rider and the Incredible Hulk never once had to go undercover as strippers or hookers, but that's the first thing TV heroines think to do. You might think it's a clever reason for the show's writers to get the women into bikinis, but that's nonsense. It's just easier to take down drug dealers if there's more of your breasts showing. This game follows that train of thought. **It's a lot like the classic game *Rolling Thunder*, if there were two Thanksgiving turkeys attached to the hero's chest.** And in case you're wondering, yes, in *VIP*, the animators made the brave decision to have your breasts smack against your face every time you jump. If, in this column, the *EGM* editors allowed me to give games official ratings, *VIP* would receive the Presidential Boobs Award for 100 Percent Awesome. 🍌

FEATURING
TOP TRACKS BY
DIARUDE, ALICIA,
J516, REEL 2 REAL

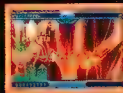
Now on the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system!

DORMAX

Dance Dance Revolution



ALSO AVAILABLE



www.konami.com



Mild Lyrics

BEMANI



DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION™, DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION KONAMI™, DORMAX DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION™ and BEMANI™ are trademarks of KONAMI CORPORATION. KONAMI® is a registered trademark of KONAMI CORPORATION. ©1998-2002 KONAMI & KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT TOKYO ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Product covered under one or more of the following U.S. Patents: Des. 433,717; Des. 431,267; Des. 436,804 (Patents pending in U.S.). *PlayStation® and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.



Tricks of the Trade

By David S J Hodgson

As *GTA: Vice City* shoots to Number 1 on all sales charts, we tear open the game and have a good rummage around. Then there's the intriguing matter of a Beast Handler's potato sculpture. Don't ask.

Tricks in Partnership with Prima Games



Tricks, strategies, and outrageous game antics from *Star Wars: Bounty Hunter*, *Bloodrayne*, *Shinobi*, *Red Faction II*, and *Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee* are taken from their respective Official Prima Strategy Guides, all on sale now!

Turning Tricks (Semi-)Finals

Vote now at Gamers.com! In our last round before the *incredibly* exciting finals, we pitted massive swollen marmarines against massive swollen craniums, and you picked a preference. The results may surprise you. If all your gaming friends are Amish.

91% The "female character huge breast augmentation or visible panties" code.

9% The "once was Nintendo but is now completely over-done" huge head code.

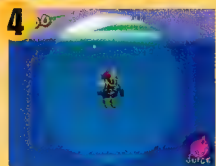
Source: Gamers.com poll 8/04

Top 5 Tricks of the Month

1 Need for Speed Hot Pursuit 2: Sam's hot car lot!

PURE For more hair-brained racing than a week inside an ambulance with Dom DeLuise, Burt "piece" Reynolds, and Jack Elam, tap these codes in at the Main menu: **Aston Martin V12:** R2, R1, R2, Ri, Tri, Le, Tri, Le. **BMW Z8:** Squ, Ri, Squ, Ri, R2, Tri, R2, Tri. **Corvette Z06:** Le, R2, Le, R2, L1, R1, L1, R1. **Ferrari 360:** R2, Squ, R2, Squ, Tri, L2, Tri, L2. **Ferrari F50:** L1, Tri, L1, Tri, Ri, L2, Ri, L2. **Ferrari F550:** L1, Squ, L1, Squ, Ri, Ri, Ri, R1. **Ford Pursuit Mustang Cobra R:** Le, Squ, Le, Squ, R2, R1, R2, Ri. **Ford T550:** Ri, Le, Ri, Le, R2, Squ, R2, Squ. **HSV Coupe GTS:**

L1, L2, L1, L2, R1, Tri, Ri, Tri. **Lamborghini Diablo 6.0 VT:** Ri, R2, Ri, R2, R1, L1, R1, L1. **Lotus Elise:** Tri, R2, Tri, R2, Le, Squ, Le, Squ. **McLaren F1:** Tri, L1, Tri, L1, R1, Le, R1, Le. **McLaren F1 LM:** Squ, L1, Squ, L1, Tri, Ri, Tri, Ri. **Mercedes CLK GTR:** R2, R1, R2, R1, Le, Tri, Le, Tri. **Porsche GT:** Le, Ri, Le, Ri, R1, R2, R1, R2.



Super Mario Sunshine Life's a Glitch!

PURE A full-on madcap glitch-fest video by Regus (part of neomega.net) is on the site. Mario glitches through fruit and walls; **sits on an invisible light-house;** aims water behind him; floats a pear; hides inside a cannon with a Planta above; **rides Yoshi underwater;** stands underwater at Serena and Gelato Beach; and, most bizarrely, gets blasted skyward by a Dune Bug! **Tedious positioning** is required!

2 Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers: Goodies!

PURE Don't fancy slapping down countless Orcs? Short attention span? Then beat the game and receive a special message...that we're printing so you can ruin this game quickly, return it to Blockbuster, and get on with your life. Start a mission, then pause and hold in L1, L2, R1, and R2. Now, tap the following: **All Upgrades (1):** Tri, Cir, Tri, Cir. **Invulnerable:** Tri, Squ, X, Cir.



Slow Motion: Tri, Cir, X, Squ. **Always Devastating:** Squ, Squ, Cir, Cir. **Twitchy Enemies:** Tri, Tri, X, X. **Infinite Missiles:**



Squ, Cir, X, Tri. **Refill Health (2):** Tri, Do, X, Up, Oh, and beat the game with all three characters to unlock Insidur.

3 House of the Dead 3: Complete HOTD2 Hidden Game!



PURE In what has to be the coolest and most sickening Easter Egg since Cadbury's Mini-eggs arrived stateside, fans of **undead-disemberment action** should fill



their pantaloons with delight at this rockin' hidden game! Complete *House of the Dead 3* in survival mode, and what happens? You only get a **complete version of House of the**

Dead 2 to play! Hats off (and zombie heads off) to Sega for allowing shooting-game owners to blast highly unpleasant and realistic rotting corpses without the need to own more than one **day-glo green gun** or a Dreamcast. As you'd expect, all the *HOTD2* tricks work (complete the game for red blood, the different costumes, etc). Finally, beat *HOTD3* with an "A" ranking to unlock the Free Play credits option.

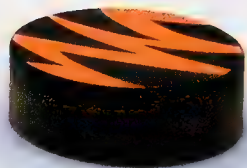


Wreckless Going for gold...

PURE **PURE** Need a gold medal for smashing dozens of illegally parked stalls in **seedy alleyways?** Thought so; **as soon as you boot up** your game, highlight the Unlimited Time option, and press L2+R1+Ri on the D-pad+Cir (PS2), or L+R+Ri on the D-pad+Z (GC). **Press the buttons all at once.** Then, faster than you can say "bizarre car physics," all the missions with Gold rating are yours!



Are You Supercharged?





Shinobi

Need a ninja? Then meet the playable Moritsune and Joe Musashi



Let's start this **double secret-character revelation** by letting you know how to play as **Moritsune (1)**, the demon-possessed madman. Now that he's better, he's yours to unlock once you collect 30 Oboro clan coins.

Snag this swag, and Moritsune joins your fight from the main Title screen. **Moritsune is stronger and faster** than Hotsune, but takes a hammering when wielding Akujiki, leading to a faster-paced game. But

what's truly rockin' is the inclusion of **Joe Musashi (2)** from the original game! What's more, he's got **unlimited shirikens and no cursed blade**—the only way to play! Nab 40 Orobo coins and choose him at the title screen.

Star Wars: Bounty Hunter

In-game Easter Eggs abound! Next stop, Devil's Tower!



Screen 1: There's **55 Dark Horse comic book pages** to unlock, and three pages appear for every mission you complete, with the rest activated after the game ends. **Screen 2:** Similarly, each of the **23 trading cards** appear once you locate a Mandalorian Feather (there's one in each level), with the final



cards showing up on game completion. **The outtakes?** One series per chapter completion. **Screen 3:** But what about those **110 pages of concept art**? Aha, there's one page opened for every 2,500 credits you collect on a secondary bounty. This means that you'll need 275,000 credits for the whole shebang!



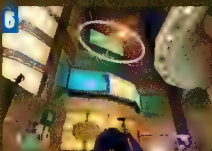
Now onto the loony series of mad-cap Easter Eggs hidden in the game. **Screen 4:** Locate a Power Droid (the type known as a "gōnk") and **bump into him a total of five times**. Why? Because if you don't, you won't hear him exclaim a series of beeps. Hey, that sounds like Morse code...and you're right!



The Morse code is actually a declaration of allegiance to a game designer, and the Power Droids in *Dark Forces 2* and *Obi-Wan* are also programmed this way. **Screen 5:** Ready for a **Beast Handler's close encounter**? When you follow the handler back into his seedy apartment dwelling (yes, that



means you don't shoot him), you'll uncover a picture of Devil's Tower on the wall, sculpted out of whatever passes for **mashed potatoes** in the Star Wars universe. Yes, it seems this handler's sad little existence is to pray at the altar of LucasArts Easter Eggs; astute gamers will have seen the



Devil's Tower in *Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine* (bonus level), and *Battle for Naboo* (Sanctuary mission). Finally **(Screen 6)**, let's not forget the phrase "**I'm selling these fine leather jackets**," which appeared in almost every LucasArts game, including this one. Except it's in Aurebesh.

CODEX

Quantum Redshift

Case Sensitive Cheating
Access the Cheat menu by typing the cunningly subtle "CHEAT" (watch those capital letters!) as your player profile name. Now, go to the Options menu and then to the Cheats tab underneath it. Phew! Ready to unlock all the speed types? Type in zoomZOOM. Need the full compliment of hackneyed future pilots? Try Nematode. Now shift it!

NBA Inside Drive 2003

Cheat codes from downtime
Get yourself into the Cheat Code menu, and exercise that code-typing thumb. Need easy alley-oops? Type DUNKYOU. Want unlimited turbos? Try SPEEDY. Crap at three-pointers? Not when you tap in THREE4ALL. Of course, you'll want the comedic "tiny players" cheat. ITSYBITSY is the phrase for you. Finally, for a "7oz throwback b-ball, type in STYLIN7o5 for an ABA ball.

NFL Fever 2003

Pigskin Peculiarities

Tap in these names to unlock a variety of amusing teams and venues. Yes, there's a greenhouse. And Samurai.

Outlaws	'83 Raiders (121)
Sausage	'85 Bears (104)
Empire	'89 49ers (107)
Milehigh	'98 Broncos (106)
Blazer	Firemen (317)
Robes	Monks (303)
Viola	Pansies (300)
Igloo	Polars (323)
Slasher	Samurai (309)
Target	Spies (313)
Flock	Sheep (318)
Dusty	Tumbleweed (304)
Flowers	Greenhouse
Warrior	Asian Castle (108)
Dustball	Dust Bowl (109)

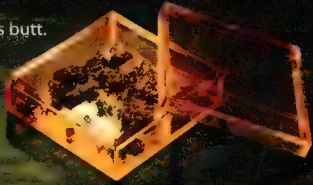
GREATEST HITS REVISITED

Crazy Taxi Rickshaw!

At Character Select, hold **L1**. Hold **R1**. Release **L1**. Release **R1**. Hold **R1**. Hold **L1**. Release **R1**. Release **L1**, then begin.



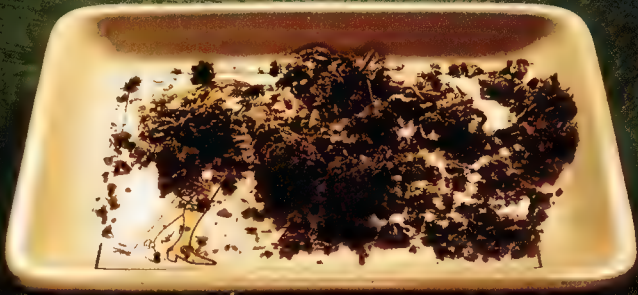
Sniffed cat's butt.



Made a 12" lint ball.



Didn't see merging truck.



MARIJUANA. HARMLESS?

facts

THE ANTI-DRUG.

freevibe.com



TRICKS

One Bad Muthaf

SMACKDOWN SHUT YOUR MOUTH

Forgotten Superstar #1 Tommy Dreamer!



What's this? Diamond Dallas Page is in *WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth* despite suffering a career-ending injury? Kevin Nash, Maven, and Rhyno are playable characters even though all three have been out of the ring for months? **Shawn freakin' Stasiak** makes it into the game when he's already been given his walking papers? These are the hazards of making wrestling games. Fortunately, *Shut Your Mouth* has that handy Create-A-Superstar mode, and *EGM's* here to help put even more of your fake wrestlers back in the ring. **Except maybe Road Dogg**

This month's created Superstar is Tommy Dreamer. Gone are his early WWE Barbasol-drinking "Tommy Knoxville" days. The Innovator of Violence has returned to his ECW roots, with **trusty Singapore Cane** in hand. Follow the instructions to add Tommy Dreamer to your WWE roster (if there are no directions for a particular Create mode option, leave it at default):



Appearance:

HEAD: Hair: #16 (dark brown)
FACE: Eyebrow: #9; (dark brown)
FACE: Eye Color (dark brown)
FACE: Mustache: #14 (d. brown)
BODY: T-Shirts: Blank: #1 (black; shorten sleeves)
LEGS: Pants: #8 (black)
WAIST: Belt: #42 (optional)
FEET: Shoes: Blank: #14
DESIGN: Patt: Body: WWE: #64
FIGURE: Height: 6' 4"
FORM: 260 lbs., so slightly



increase Width and Thickness of Neck, Chest, Shoulder, Abdomen, Arms, Thigh, and Legs;
FACE/HEEL: Face
CALL NAME: Tommy Dreamer
ABILITY (Attack/Defense): Powerful: 2/2
Speedy: 2/2
Technical: 4/4
Roughneck: 4/4
MOVE SET: Roughneck
LOGIC 1: Brawler
LOGIC 2: Striker
BASES: Taunt: Replace Taunt Train with Shouting 1
SMACKDOWNS: Raven Effect, Double Arm DDT
READY MOVES: Grapple: Replace DDT2 with Jeff Jawbreaker and Wrist Clutch & Elbow with Shoulder Thrusts
READY MOVES: Back Attack: Replace Bulldog with Pendulum Backbreaker 2 and Facecrusher 5 with Bulldog
TURNBUCKLE: Grapple: Replace Toss to Turnbuckle with Big Chop
TURNBUCKLE: Back Attack: Replace Beat Head 1 with Illegal Pin. Now Tommy's ready!

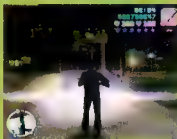


Vice City Vices Bikes, Cheats, & Jumpin'



On Yer Bike

Crave insane jumps, but hate the messy landings? Try hitting a ramp (like the one downtown) with a bike and control its pitch in the air. Or leap out while airborne in a car!



Gutter Snipe

Feel the need to decapitate your car-jacked victim before stealing his ride? Then aim through the windshield with the sniper rifle. The headless body falls out of the door.



Starving for a Code Fix?

Later we give you the Dodo cheat, so we might as well ruin the entire game right now with the **Weapons Code** (one type of each); R1, R2, L1, R2, Le, Do, Ri, Up, Le, Do, Ri,



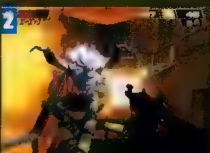
Up, 100 Armor is R1, R2, L1, X, Le, Do, Ri, Up, Le, Do, Ri, Up, 100 Health is R1, R2, L1, Cir, Le, Do, Ri, Up, Le, Do, Ri, Up, **Slow Motion** is Tri, Up, Ri, Do, Squ, R2, R1. All codes during gameplay.

Red Faction 2

All the Faction 2 Cheat Facts; including the wacky ones!



The first code unlocks the whole shebang! **Unlock All:** Tri, Tri, X, X, Squ, Cir, Squ, Cir. **Super Health:** X, X, Squ, Tri, Squ, Tri, Cir. **Infinite Grenades:** Cir, X, Cir, Squ, X, Cir, X, Cir. **Director's Cut:** Squ, X, Cir, Tri, Cir, X, Squ, Tri. **Walking Dead (z):** X, X, X, X, X,



X, X, X. **Gibby Ammo:** X, X, X, X, Squ, Cir, X, X. **Extra Chunky:** Cir, Cir, Cir, Tri, X, Cir, Cir. **Infinite Ammo:** Squ, Tri, X, Cir, Squ, Cir, X, Tri. **Wacky Deaths (z):** Tri, Tri, Tri, Tri, Tri, Tri. **Bouncing Bombs:** Cir, Cir, Cir, Cir, Cir, Cir, Cir. **Rain of Fire:** Squ, Squ,



Squ, Squ, Squ, Squ, Squ, Squ. **Rapid Rails:** Cir, Squ, Cir, Squ, X, X, Tri, Tri. **Gibby Explosions:** Tri, Cir, X, Squ, Tri, Cir, X, Squ. **Unlock Levels (z):** Cir, Squ, X, Tri, Squ, Cir, X, X. **Win Game:** Squ, X, Squ, X (can be entered multiple times).

**54 years of history.
161 racing titles.
38 models.
1 game.**



CLIMB IN, BUCKLE UP AND POP THE CLUTCH ON ONE OF 38 STYLISH CARS, SPANNING LOTUS' PRESTIGIOUS 54-YEAR RACING HISTORY. PUT YOURSELF TO THE TEST AS YOU TWIST THROUGH MOUNTAIN PASSES IN THE ALPS, FLY OVER THE RAINBOW BRIDGE IN TOKYO OR LEAP A TRAIN IN A HOLLYWOOD STUNT. SO. PICK A LOTUS, SLAM IT INTO HIGH GEAR AND TAKE THE LOTUS CHALLENGE.

Rip through 28 races or 22 stunts in 5 thrilling game modes: collection, championship, single play, multi-player and challenge.

38 licensed Lotus cars all featuring realistic vehicle damage.

Revolutionary controller system designed for a more realistic driving experience – tested & approved by the Lotus test drivers.

Brought to you by Motor Trend® - the #1 automotive authority



MOTOR TREND PRESENTS

LOTUS CHALLENGE



Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for Rating Information.

MOTOR TREND



PC
CD-ROM



XICAT
INTERACTIVE

Where games meet reality.

www.XICAT.com

© 2002 Kuju Entertainment Ltd. Published by Xicat Interactive, Inc. Lotus Challenge™ is a trademark of Group Lotus plc. Team Lotus monoposto racing cars are licensed by Cassio Team Lotus Limited. All Lotus trademarks used within Lotus Challenge are trademarks of Group Lotus plc used under license by Kuju Entertainment Ltd. Motor Trend ® & © 2002 PRIMEDIA Specialty Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the US and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.



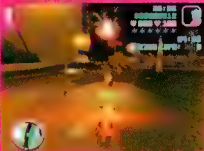
TRICKS

GTA:

Advice



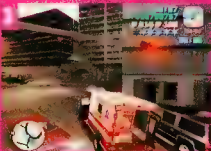
And I can... I can do the same... and I received good power-ups!



Trick 1: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 2: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 3: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 4: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 5: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 6: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 7: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 8: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 9: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 10: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



Trick 11: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.

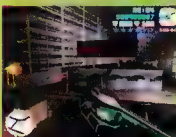


Trick 12: If you're stuck in a dead-end place, or if you've been stuck in a dead-end place for a long time, try driving a yellow taxi. You'll get a power-up, and you'll be able to drive away.



ALL-POINTS MULLET-IN

American Idols
Packing in the Packages



There's 100 Hidden "Idol" Packages scattered about in hideously out-of-the-way areas, like on top of planes and buildings, so use your chopper to find some (above). Initial prizes appear at the




Ocean View of Starfish Island (when it's yours). Packages 10-19 gets you a **Body Armor**. 20-29 gets you a **Chainsaw**. 30-39 gets you a **Python** Magnum-style revolver. A **Flamethrower** is yours for 40-49, and 50-59 (above) nets a **Sniper Rifle** with



laser shot. 60-69 awards you a **Mini-gun**—instant vehicle detonation (above)! A **Rocket Launcher** (great for chopper takedowns) is for 70-79. A **Sea Sparrow**



helicopter (floats and shoots) on the Starfish Island helipad is yours with 80-89. 90-99 gets you a **Rhino** (above), and 100 nets you a **Hunter**—an attack helicopter! The last two are at Fort Baxter.



YOU GOT A
PROBLEM.

You do now.



Blood
Suggestive Themes
Violence

ONLY ON
XBOX

www.kakuto.com

www.kakuto.com

It's a 3D world of characters, a 3D world of action. There are no rules in a match where two at a time, they take part in a brutal and intense power test. There are no rules, no weapons and no team fights or powers. And with the most realistic graphics ever seen, you may very well be the video game your mother was warned about.



©2002 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, the Xbox logo, and Kakuto Chojuin are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Other products and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners.

THE FOLLOW UP
TO THE ACTION-PACKED
ZONE OF THE ENDERS: IDOLO
ORIGINAL VIDEO ANIMATION MOVIE



ZONE OF THE ENDERS
Z.O.E.
DOLORES



Based on the Best Selling
Playstation 2 Game



ANIMATION FOR A NEW GENERATION

www.advfilms.com • info@advfilms.com

AVAILABLE AT THESE AND OTHER FINE RETAILERS:



Godzilla: Hot DAMM!

A Veritable Code Frenzy and Comedy Combo!



Hold L, B, R. Release B, R, L. A code entry box appears.
Use the D-pad to choose numbers, and use A to move on.

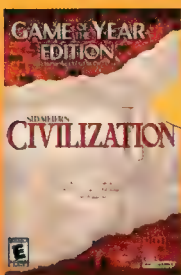
- 567980 Black & White mode (4)
- 661334 Technicolor mode (2)
- 760611 12 continues
- 986875 Player 1: micro monster
- 971934 Player 2: micro monster
- 895636 Player 3: micro monster
- 795735 Player 4: micro monster
- 174204 All are micro monsters
- 843901 Player 1: damage-proof
- 706149 Player 2: damage-proof
- 188522 Player 3: damage-proof
- 286552 Player 4: damage-proof
- 505634 All are damage-proof
- 511012 Player 1: quad damage
- 815480 Player 2: quad damage
- 212454 Player 3: quad damage
- 698206 Player 4: quad damage
- 817683 All deal quad damage
- 492877 Health regenerates
- 756287 Everything throwable
- 112122 Buildings indestructible
- 316022 Monsters are invisible
- 650867 One-time energy
- 649640 Player 1 always Rage (3)
- 122224 Player 2 always in Rage
- 548053 Player 3 always in Rage
- 451242 Player 4 always in Rage
- 256806 Turn Military On/Off
- 135984 Player Indicators On
- 677251 Super energy player 1
- 435976 Super energy player 2
- 603696 Super energy player 3
- 291680 Super energy player 4
- 562142 No health power-ups
- 134615 No Mothra power-ups
- 413403 No energy power-ups
- 119702 No rage power-ups
- 841720 No freeze tanks (4)
- 2251331 Unlock Godzilla 2K
- 612633 Unlock Gigan
- 877467 Unlock King Ghidorah
- 104332 Unlock Rodan
- 537084 Unlock Destoroyah
- 557456 Unlock M. King Ghidorah
- 131008 Unlock Mechagodzilla
- 696924 All beasts but Orga (5)
- 480148 Unlock all cities
- 443253 No status HUD



This game gets especially insane if both monsters are invisible (6), although it's almost impossible to play. Not even their beam attacks show up! While a mini-monster fight looks one-sided (7), the shrunken beast presents a smaller target, but those stubby little arms are no good for grappling! The best code combo is "mini monsters" and "throw all objects" (8). Classic "sweaty-man-in-suit" action!



www.chipsbits.com
 your #1 game store
 year-end specials!



**Civilization III
 Game of the Year
 Infogrames**

\$39⁹⁵



**Elder Scrolls III:
 Tribunal Expansion
 Bethesda**

\$29⁹⁵



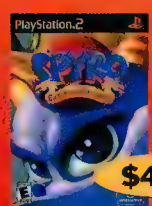
**Combat Flight
 Sim 3
 Microsoft**

\$49⁹⁵



**Lord of the Rings:
 Fellowship of the Ring
 Universal**

\$39⁹⁵



**Spyro: Enter the
 Dragonfly PS2
 Sierra**

\$49⁹⁵



**Metal Gear Solid 2:
 Substance XBOX
 Konami**

\$49⁹⁵



**Resident Evil Zero GCN
 Capcom**

\$49⁹⁵



**Medal of Honor
 Underground GBA
 Destination Software**

\$34⁹⁵

McVAN'S VIDEO GAMES

BULK UP YOUR GAMING THUMBS!!



WE HAVE IT ALL!!

1-(260)-498-3722

www.McVANS.com

THE ULTIMATE MAIL ORDER VIDEO GAME STORE!!

Star Wars: Bounty Hunter

Un-fet-tered access to the four toughest bosses, by Jango!



By now you'll have deduced that a lifetime of Sarlacc Pit digestion is more fun than hunting the game's 150 Secondary Bounties. Alas, limited space means we're only able to take out the game's more troublesome bosses....

Boss #1: Longo Two-Guns

Mission: Chapter 5: Longo Two-Guns

Boss Abilities:



Plan of Assault:

When Longo's finished twirling his pistols, try to mark him, then run over and mark (and tag) the final Jawa bounty. When combat begins, use the pod engines on the left side of the arena as cover, and take out all of Longo's thugs that enter this zone. You can snare Longo, but it's almost impossible, and the damage you take is horrendous. Instead, circle-strafe around Longo and whittle him down (1), preferably with Heavy Blaster fire. Or, stay at distance and tag him easily with the Sniper Rifle (2).



Boss #2: Kratt Dragon

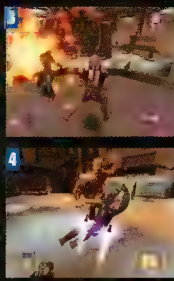
Mission: Chapter 5: Gardulla's Palace

Boss Abilities:



Plan of Assault:

As soon as Gardulla's been snacked on, you'll need to boost to one of the narrow ends of the arena, grab the jet-pack fuel, and blast the four guards on the turrets (3), each of which is carrying a rocket launcher. Let's try not to fall into the mouth of the Kratt Dragon or get hit by a rocket, eh? Then, start your assault on the scaly one: Jump when the Kratt pounds the ground, and launch a missile into its mouth, follow it up with any remaining weaponry (4), re-arming from more thugs on the turrets.



Boss #3: Montross

Mission: Chapter 6: Moon of the Dead

Boss Abilities:



Plan of Assault:

Although he looks slightly cooler than you do in his Mandalorian battle armor, there's little time to inspect him at close range as he's vicious with the blast and missiles, and can put the boot in when you fall over due to his blasts. Instead, stay at range, flying to the rock columns and collecting the fuel. Then, hit Montross with the twin or heavy (5) blasters and finish him with missiles while flying at range (6). Use altar columns as cover.



Boss #4: Komari Vosa

Mission: Chapter 6: Final Confrontation

Boss Abilities:



Plan of Assault:

Komari Vosa is one sick puppy, and her jedi mind tricks make her infuriating in the combat zone. Boost over her head into the left alcove, claim the Mandalorian Rage, and escape up the steps to the doorway and through to the arena, where she's easier to hit. Wait until she's coming down from a charge, or move (7), and snare her (8). Switch to your blasters and unload on her. Continue this plan until one of you falls over dead. Preferably her.



EGM's "Bossometer"

What's this boss all about?

- MC** Massive Constitution
- LR** Long-Range Coward
- HaH** Hand-to-hand Mad
- B** Berserker
- ME** Magically Empowered
- F/T** Flying/Teleporting Ability
- L** Ludicrously Imposing
- ES** Eye-Poppingly Speedy
- TW** Throbbing "Weak Spot"
- JH** Joypad Hammering
- S** Bling-Bling After Battle

LAME LOONS!

Third-rate Powerslave homages with a WB franchise aren't coming better than *Lame Loons*. Infographic is a time-traveling in the most played-out one of all time: big heads, Power, hold down and A, then... www.egm.com

CODEX QUICK TRICKS

Terminator Dawn of Fate

Head up for the aiming Zoom in with turrets using L3. Use L1 and R1 to zoom the options. Aim at heads for Skyнет points and easy kills.



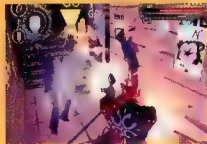
NASCAR Thunder 2003

Driving with Dale
Unlock the fantasy drivers by naming yourself Extra Drivers. Unlock the Dalester by naming your driver Dale Earnhardt.



Gungrave

Happy trails and sleepy play Remember to auto-face and target a foe, and once you beat the game on easy, try the slow-mo and character-select options.



Tekken 4

Iron Fisting new-stage action Craving some dojo action? Beat Tekken Force for the Dojo. Complete Story with Steve for the statue stage.



GET READY TO BEAT YOUR FRIENDS AND EVERYONE ON THE NET

GRIP ACTION *Grip to Rip!*

NEW!

- Play Harder, Faster, Longer!
- Ergonomics? How 'bout NO MORE SORE THUMBS!
- Heightened Controller Sensitivity!
- For PS2, XBOX & GameCube
- Thumb Pad Pops-on to Analog Joystick

NOW!

Special Offer!

1 set \$5.99

2 sets \$10.99

S&H \$1.50 in CA.

add sales tax \$.50 each

GRIP ACTION
P. O. Box 6468, Orange,
CA 92863-6468



PATENT PENDING

Order Now!
800-573-7576

www.gripaction.com

riping@gripaction.com

COMING SOON TO A STORE NEAR YOU!

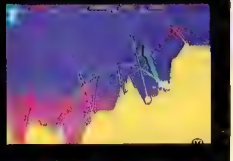
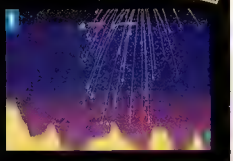
Deathtank!

Mad Props to Lobotomy Software
and their awesomely addictive minigame!



If you were one of the three people to visit Sega's disastrous 1997 ECTS booth, you'd be able to make out the sounds of whistling rockets (A) just audible over the sobbing. This cacophony came from one of the finest party games you've never played: Saturn *Deathtank!* Developed by the lamentably defunct Lobotomy Software, this featured the classic "tank on a hill" shooting other tanks on a hill" gameplay (A) and was more addictive than crack. To play the game, you need a copy of the seminal *Powerslave*. Locate all 23 "team dolls," and the game opens up. Or, remap the controls and change A to C, X to Z, and L to R. Got *Duke Nukem 3D*? Then go play the sequel (*Deathtank Zwei!*) with an *Exhumed* or *Quake* save game, or once you break every urinal in the game. Lobotomy, we miss you!

FROM THE VAULT
LOBOTOMY
SPECIAL!





FINAL WORD

GameCube vs. Xbox: Then and Now

Chris: Last year, we did an intensive comparison of the two new systems on the block—Xbox and GameCube. We put them through their paces, weighing their launch libraries, third-party support systems, future outlooks, and other factors (see *EGM* #149 to get the full story). To commemorate that matchup, we thought we'd take a look back at our decisions a year later and see if we'd stick with them today.

I picked GameCube, and I'd definitely stick with that choice into 2003—not because the GC has the best third-party support (cuz it doesn't), but because Nintendo makes the games I want to play, and the Cube is the only place to get

don't mind, I'm gonna go play some *Sewer Shark* on my Sega CD. Screw technology.

Mark: You still didn't answer the question.

Greg: Fine. Yes, my Xbox is hooked up. You happy now? I notice you haven't really chosen a side yet, *Halo*-boy!

Mark: Yeah, you just hooked it up yesterday for *Panzer*.... Anyway, I love *Halo* and am not happy with the Cube's small library and online plan (or lack thereof), but Nintendo just has more great exclusives now (*Mario*, *Metroid*, *Resident Evil*)

Crispin: I picked GameCube last year, and now I wanna switch my vote. Only a couple of games—*Mario Sunshine* and *Eternal Darkness*—have kept my Cube from gathering dust. While Xbox doesn't have any gee-whiz titles besides *Halo*, it does have a better variety—more sports, racing, and shooters. And what everyone 'cept Mark is ignoring is that Xbox beats the turd out of GameCube in the online department. Xbox Live is easily the most feature-packed online service of the three consoles.

Shane: I wasn't around last year to pick GameCube, so I'm picking it now. It's just been an awful year for Xbox. First-party games are nowhere to be seen, and exclusive third-party stuff has been disappointing. Aside from *Halo* and a few good Sega titles, there's still no reason for me to dust off my hulking black behemoth. Sure, they got ex-Nintendo developer Rare recently, but that doesn't change the here and now. Xbox just doesn't have much exclusive, engaging content. Meanwhile, I've had a spectacular time with *Mario*, *Animal Crossing*, *Smash Bros.*, and *Phantasy Star Online*, plus *Zelda*, *Mario Kart*, and more are on the horizon to make next year just as good.

Shoe: I took a chance and picked Xbox last year. Yeah, the machine's had a crappy 2002. Are we really that quick to give up on it, though?

Just like 12 months ago, I still think both machines are viable. It just depends on what you're looking for as a gamer. (How's that for a safe, non-committal response?) But as 2002 winds down, Xbox owners are gonna get the juice with *Ghost Recon*, *Steel Battalion*, *Splinter Cell*, *Panzer Dragoon Orta*, and more.

But I gotta admit—after I'm done playing those, I'll probably still be checking in on my little village in *Animal Crossing*.

Mark: You are such a wuss.

A year later, do we stand by our console?

them. *Mario*, *Zelda*, *Animal Crossing*, *Monkey Ball*, *Metroid*...sorry Microsoft, but your lineup just ain't that strong. I think I've bought one Xbox game in the last eight months (*Blink*), and I don't see many on the horizon that get me as worked up as Nintendo's lineup, even down the road.

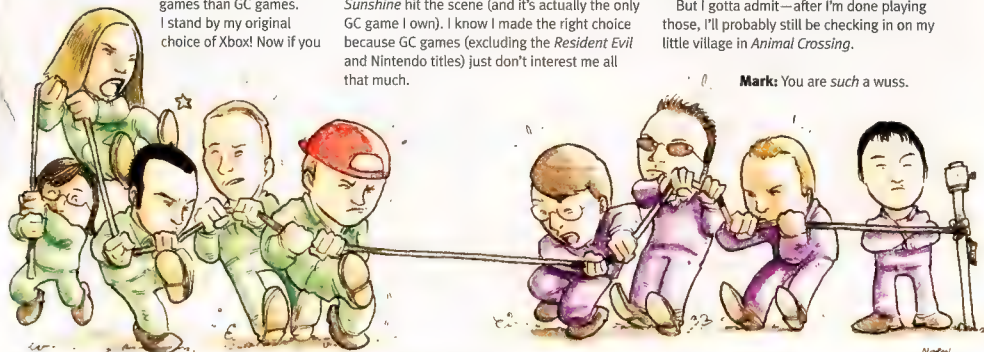
Mark: Ah, how I have waited for this day. Sewart, for example—I know you've been playing your GameCube way more than your Xbox this past year.... Is your Xbox even hooked up at your new apartment? Eh? Is it? IS IT?!? ANSWER THE QUESTION!!!

Greg: Just calm down. I *have* played my Cube more than my Xbox these past few months, but I still have way more Xbox games than GC games. I stand by my original choice of Xbox! Now if you

and coming soon (well, hopefully with *Zelda* and *F-Zero*). I'll have to stick with the GC.

Milk: Last year I picked GameCube, and while I still have yet to play anything on it as compelling as *Halo*, my time spent playing *Animal Crossing* alone is more than double the time I've played all my Xbox games combined. Of course, that may change once *Panzer Dragoon Orta* hits. I'm also looking forward to spending some hours with *Splinter Cell*.

Ché: Last year, I picked Xbox based on how much third-party support and horsepower it had. While I haven't played anything near *Halo*-quality for a whole year, I've still spent more time with the Xbox than with GameCube. In fact, I didn't feel compelled to buy a Cube until *Mario Sunshine* hit the scene (and it's actually the only GC game I own). I know I made the right choice because GC games (excluding the *Resident Evil* and Nintendo titles) just don't interest me all that much.



Turbo Shock 2 Controller

Features Turbo Function
For AutoFire Capability



Game Screen

Full Color Game Screen Allows You To
Play Games, Home Videos
& DVD's Anywhere!



Cyber Shock 2 Controller

Programmable Allows Up To 12 Difficult
Multiple Moves To Be Programmed Into
One Button!



Game Sound System

AV Selector and
Stereo Speakers
Add A Blast
To Your Gaming
and Favorite CD's!



DVD Remote, Multitap & Horizontal Stand

Wireless Control, 4 Player Multitap,
Organize PS 2 Games and DVD's with Style!



INCLUDES!
Remote Control

Game, Audio & Video Selector

Connect Up To 5 Components!
Easily Switch To Game Console, TV, VCR, DVD, Tuner and More!



Attitude For Your PlayStation® 2!

Available at **T Y S U S T Y S U S C M**

Advertiser Index

A.D. Vision Inc. www.advfilms.com	226	Kinyo www.kinyo.com	213
Acclaim Entertainment www.acclaim.com	175	Koel Corporation www.koelgames.com	144-145
Activision 14-15, 25, 44, 50-51, www.activision.com 106-107, 151		Konami America 23, 58-59, 123, 143, 154, www.konami.com 217, 233	
Advanced Cybertech www.xicat.com	223	LucasArts Entertainment 116-117, 161, www.lucasarts.com 189	
Bam Entertainment www.bam4fun.com	95	Majesco Sales, Inc. 207	
Best Buy www.bestbuy.com	199	McVans Video Games 228 www.mcvans.com	
Blockbuster Entertainment www.blockbuster.com	181	Microsoft 45, 46-47, 55, 141, 165, www.microsoft.com 203, 225	
Capcom U.S.A., Inc. www.capcom.com	179, 197	Midway Home Entertainment 21, 37, www.midway.com 65, 71, 103	
Chips & Bits www.chipsbits.com	227	Motorola - BCS www.motorolabroadband.com	205
Columbia House www.columbiahouse.com	348-b	Namco Hometek www.namco.com	201
CompUSA http://gamefix.compusa.com	114, 191	Nintendo of America www.nintendo.com	113, 129
DC Shoes, Inc. www.dcschoosusa.com	11	Office for National Drug Control Policy www.whatsyourantidrug.com	223
Ecko Unlimited www.ECKO.com	93	Pepsi-Cola Company www.pepsico.com	121
Eidos Interactive, Inc. 13, 30-31 www.eidos.com		Radica USA, LTD. 137 www.gameterusa.com	
Electronic Arts www.ea.com	4-5	Sega of America Dreamcast 8-9, 62-63, 125, 130-131, 155, 183, 186a-f, 211, sega.com 235-238	
Electronics Boutique 18-19, 138-139, www.ebgames.com 138a-b, 168-169		Sony Computer Entertainment 2-2c, 2d-3, 26, 37, 39, 48-49, www.scea.com 89, 97, 99, 104	
Electronics Boutique/Ebworld www.ebgames.com	108-109	Sony Online Entertainment 146-147 www.sonyonline.com	
Full Sail Real World www.fullsail.com	24	THQ 16-17, 60-64, 159, 170-171, www.thq.com 192-193, 209	
Game Music Online www.gamemusic.com	22	Take 2 Interactive Software 28-29, 195 www.take2games.com	
Grip Action www.gripaction.com	229	Target Stores 66a-b www.getintothegame.com	
H.J. Heinz - Foodservice Division www.heinz.com	121	Ubi Soft Entertainment 73-84 www.ubisoft.com	
Hobaram Corp. www.hawls.com	44	Vivendi Universal-Sierra Entertainment www.sierra.com 43, 477	
Hollywood Video www.hollywoodvideo.com	163	Vivendi Universal Games Inc. - Universal 104-105, 132-133 www.universalinteractive.com	
Infogrames, Inc. 6-7, 68-69 www.infogrames.net		Vivendi Universal Games Inc.-PPG www.interplay.com 157, 163	
Intec Inc. www.inteclink.com	231	Wizards of the Coast 57 www.wizards.com	
JoyKide Studios www.joykidestudios.com	215		
Kellogg Studio www.tonythetiger.com	219		

ANSWERS TO
 LEGENDS OF ZELDA
 CROSSWORD
 PUZZLE

G	R	A	V	E	V	J	A	H				
R	A	P	I	D	R	E	M	A	K	E		
O	P	E	N	P	E	R	A	L	K	E		
V	S	E	N	C	L	A	V	E	P	M		
E	S	I	O	E	P	E						
L	I	N	K	T	O	T	H	E	P	A	S	T
O	C	A	R	N	A	O	F	T	I	M	E	
L	K	N	D	O	F	T	S	N				
D	X	F	L	O	A	D	E	D	G			
M	C	A	O	L	E	D	E	P	E			
A	R	R	O	W	S	S	P	E	A	R		
N	Y	W	A	S	T	A	R	S				

on page 64

United States Postal Service Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title Electronic Gaming Monthly		2. Publication Number 0 0 8 1 9 5 7		3. Filing Date 10/3/02
4. Issue Frequency Monthly		5. Number of Issues Published Annually 12		6. Annual Subscription Price \$24.97
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4) 28 East 28th Street, New York, NY 10016				
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer) 28 East 28th Street, New York, NY 10016				
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank) Publisher (Name and complete mailing address) Lee Unisacke, 50 Beale Street, San Francisco, CA 94105 Editor (Name and complete mailing address) Dan Hau, 50 Beale Street, San Francisco, CA 94105 Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address) Jennifer Tano, 50 Beale Street, San Francisco, CA 94105				
10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give the name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.) Full Name Complete Mailing Address Ziff Davis Media Inc. 28 East 28th Street, New York, NY 10016 Ziff Davis Publishing Holdings Inc. 28 East 28th Street, New York, NY 10016				

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None	
Full Name Complete Mailing Address	
None	
12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes: <input type="checkbox"/> Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months <input type="checkbox"/> Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)	

PS Form 3526, October 1999 (See Instructions on Reverse)

13. Publication Title Electronic Gaming Monthly		14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below November 2002	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		734,058	722,498
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (1) Paid (Postmaster: Please Call Subscriptions Based on Form 3541, provide advertiser's proof and exchange order)		390,235	380,303
(2) Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541 (Include advertiser's proof and exchange order)			
(3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution		142,583	149,100
(4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS			
c. Free Distribution by Mail (Sum of 15c, 20c, and 40c)		532,618	529,403
(1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541		8,642	3,133
(2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541			
(3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS			
d. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)			
e. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15c and 16a)		8,642	3,133
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 16b)		541,460	532,536
g. Copies not Distributed		192,598	189,962
h. Total (Sum of 15g and 16c)		734,058	722,498
i. Payment Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c, divided by filing lines 10g)		98,400	99,412

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership
 Publication required. Will be printed in the January 2003 issue of this publication. Publication not required.

17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner
Charles Mast, Sr. Vice President, Consumer Media _____ Date **10/2/02**

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

Instructions to Publishers

- Complete and file one copy of this form with your postmaster annually on or before October 1. Keep a copy of the completed form for your records.
- In cases where the stockholder or security holder is a trustee, include in items 10 and 11 the name of the person or corporation for whose benefit the issue is being published. Also include the names and addresses of individuals who are stockholders who own or hold 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities of the publishing organization. In item 11, if none, check box "None." Use block initials if more space is required.
- Be sure to furnish all circulation information called for in item 15. Free circulation must be shown in items 15d, e, and f.
- Item 15b, Copies not Distributed, must include (1) newspapered copies originally stated on Form 3541, and returned to the publisher; (2) unsolicited returns from news agents; and (3), copies for office use, leftovers, spoiled, and all other copies not distributed.
- If the publication has Periodicals Publication as a general or requester publication, the Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published. It must be printed in any issue in October or if the publication is not published during October, the first issue printed after October.
- In item 10, indicate the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published.
- Item 17 must be signed.
Failure to file or publish a statement of ownership may lead to suspension of Periodicals authorization.

PS Form 3526, October 1999 (Reverse)

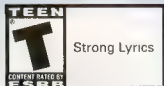
THE ONLY THING THAT
CAN STOP THE RACE IS
GOOD WEATHER



WHITEOUT



Experience the thrills, spills and sub-arctic chills of authentic snowmobile action. Careen along snow-packed trails in blinding blizzards. Bust big, frosty air with over 30 different tricks. And pray for endless winter storm fronts. It's Whiteout. And it's got racing down cold.





NEXT MONTH

February 2003 Issue #163, on sale Jan. 7

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

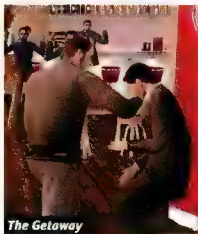
World Exclusive! Driver 3

Before *Grand Theft Auto* hit superstar status with *GTA3*, there was *Driver*. The megahit series pioneered the open-ended, drive-anywhere, be-a-bad-guy gameplay that we're all crazy about today. Now, as it prepares to enter the PS2 big house, will it have what it takes to compete with the likes of *Vice City*, *The Getaway*, and *True Crime*? Find out next month as we take the world's first look at *Driver 3*.

Then help us ring in the new year with reviews of the biggest games that didn't make the 2002 holiday season, including *The Getaway* and *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai* on the PS2 and *Panzer Dragoon Orta* on the Xbox.



The Sims



The Getaway



1080° Avalanche

Reviewed Next Month:

- *War of the Monsters* (PS2)
- *ATV Offroad Fury 2* (PS2)
- *Skies of Arcadia Legend* (GC)
- *Superman: Man of Steel* (Xbox)
- *The Sims* (PS2)

Previewed Next Month:

- *Tenchu 3* (PS2)
- *Universal's Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (PS2/Xbox)
- *Backyard Wrestling* (PS2)
- *Midnight Club II* (PS2)
- *XenoSaga* (PS2)
- *1080° Avalanche* (GC)

All editorial content is subject to change.

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

Jan. 2003
On sale Dec. 10

Demo Disc

Playables

- **SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs**
 - **War of the Monsters**
 - **Rygar: The Legendary Adventure**
 - **Burnout 2**
 - **Shinobi**
 - **Legia 2**
 - **Minority Report**
 - **Haven**
 - **Reign of Fire**
 - **Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003**
- Videos**
- **The Getaway**

WAR OF THE MONSTERS

It's the new game from the developer of *Twisted Metal: Black*—and it kicks ass! Play the demo, check out the feature, and read the review. Plus: *OPM's* annual peripheral supertest.



War of the Monsters



Shinobi

GAMENOW

Jan. 2003
On sale Dec. 17

Reviews:

- *Splinter Cell*
- *WWE SmackDown! Shut Your Mouth*
- *Metroid Fusion*
- *Age of Mythology*

Previews:

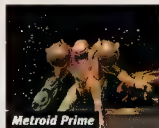
- *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai*
- *Star Wars Galaxies*
- *Devil May Cry 2*



The Two Towers

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

Find out how good a game based on a movie can be...then learn all the ins and outs of fighting enemies and get a free *Two Towers* poster, too! What more could you want? How about strategy blowouts for *RollerCoaster Tycoon 2*, *Resident Evil Zero*, *Metroid Prime*, and *GTA Vice City*? We've got those, too!



Metroid Prime

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

Jan. 2003
On sale Dec. 3



NOLF 2



Tron 2.0

TRON 2.0

How can a 20-year-old Disney movie translate into a slick-looking PC game? Next month, *CGW* gets some hands-on time with *Tron 2.0* and gives you the straight scoop on lightcycles, multiplayer, and meeting a digital Bruce Boxleitner.

Reviews

- *No One Lives Forever 2*
 - *Unreal Tournament 2003*
 - *Age of Mythology*
 - *Nitman 2*
 - *Battlefield 1942*
 - *America's Army*
- Previews**
- *Asheron's Call 2*
 - *PlanetSide*
 - *Hannibal*



Battlefield 1942

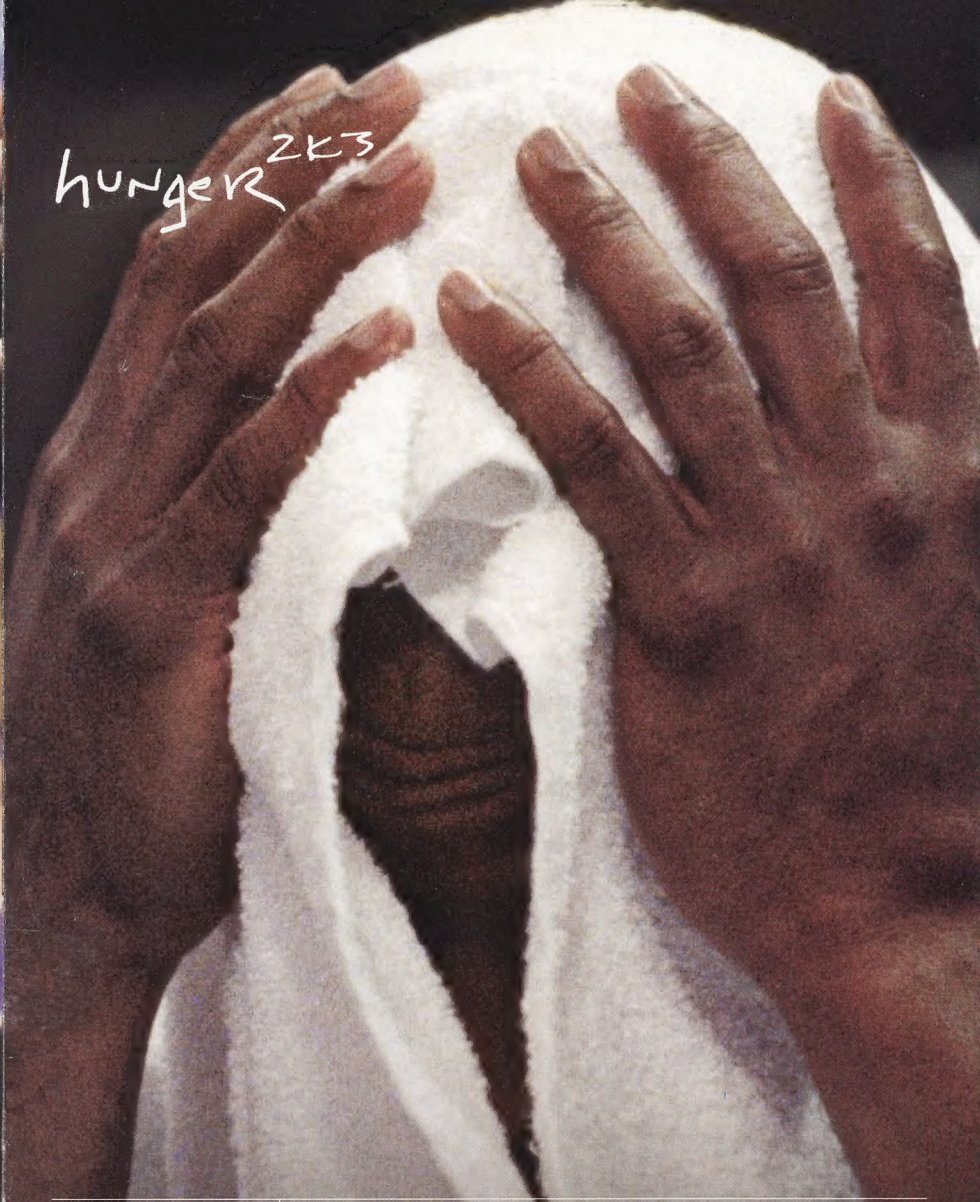


FLASH 2K3



Feel ^{2K3}

hunger ^{2K3}



Experience the joy of flight.



Control your body and your rival.



It's time to play with the big boys.



POWERED BY ESPN

DRIVE AND DISH ON THESE PLATFORMS



PlayStation.2



Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Sega, the Sega logo, and Sega Sports are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. © SEGA CORPORATION, 2002. All Rights Reserved. www.segagames.com. The NBA and individual NBA member team identifications used on or in this product are trademarks, copyrighted designs and other forms of intellectual property of NBA Properties, Inc. and the respective NBA member teams and may not be used, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of NBA Properties, Inc. © 2002 NBA Properties, Inc. All rights reserved. Made and printed in the USA. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "X" and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo, Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. ESPN is a trademark of ESPN, Inc. ESPN branded elements © Disney

Authority 2K3

NBA 2K3

SEGA
SPORTS

segasports.com

Made with love by

RETROMAGS

Our goal is to preserve classic video game magazines so that they are not lost permanently.

People interested in helping out in any capacity, please visit us at retromags.com.

No profit is made from these scans, nor do we offer anything available from the publishers themselves.

If you come across anyone selling releases from this site, please do not support them and do let us know.

Thank you!