

page 109: HOW TO JOIN OUR
REVIEW CREW!

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THE RPG

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AN XBOX?

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games to get on a budget



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SEQUELS!

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■ Viewtiful Joe 2 ■ Van Helsing ■ Final Fantasy GBA ■ & more!

PRINCE OF PERSIA 2



HALO 2



NEED FOR SPEED
UNDERGROUND 2



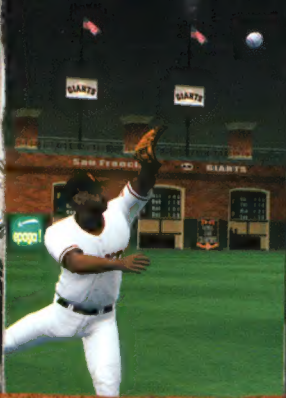
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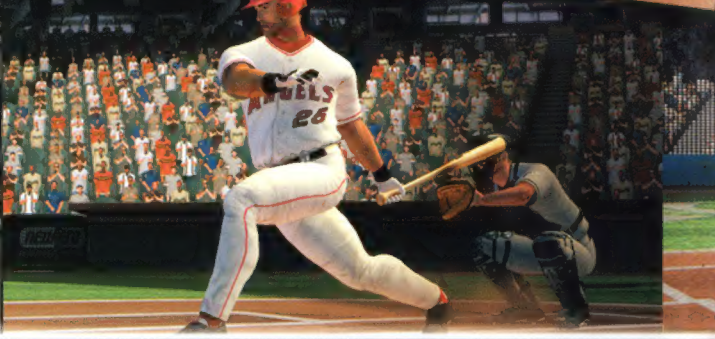
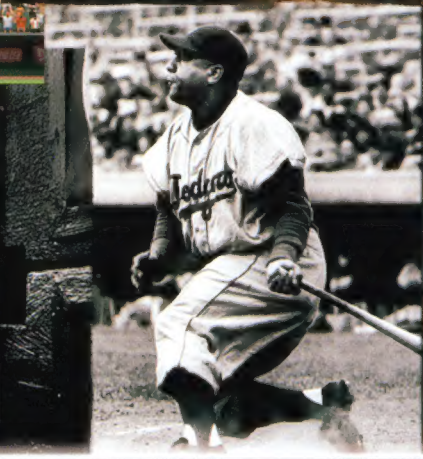
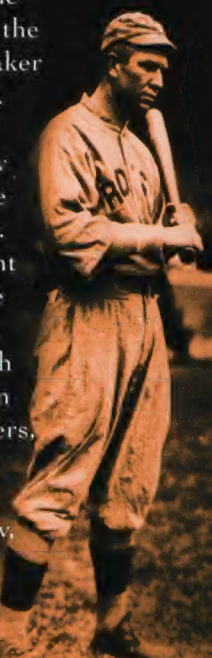
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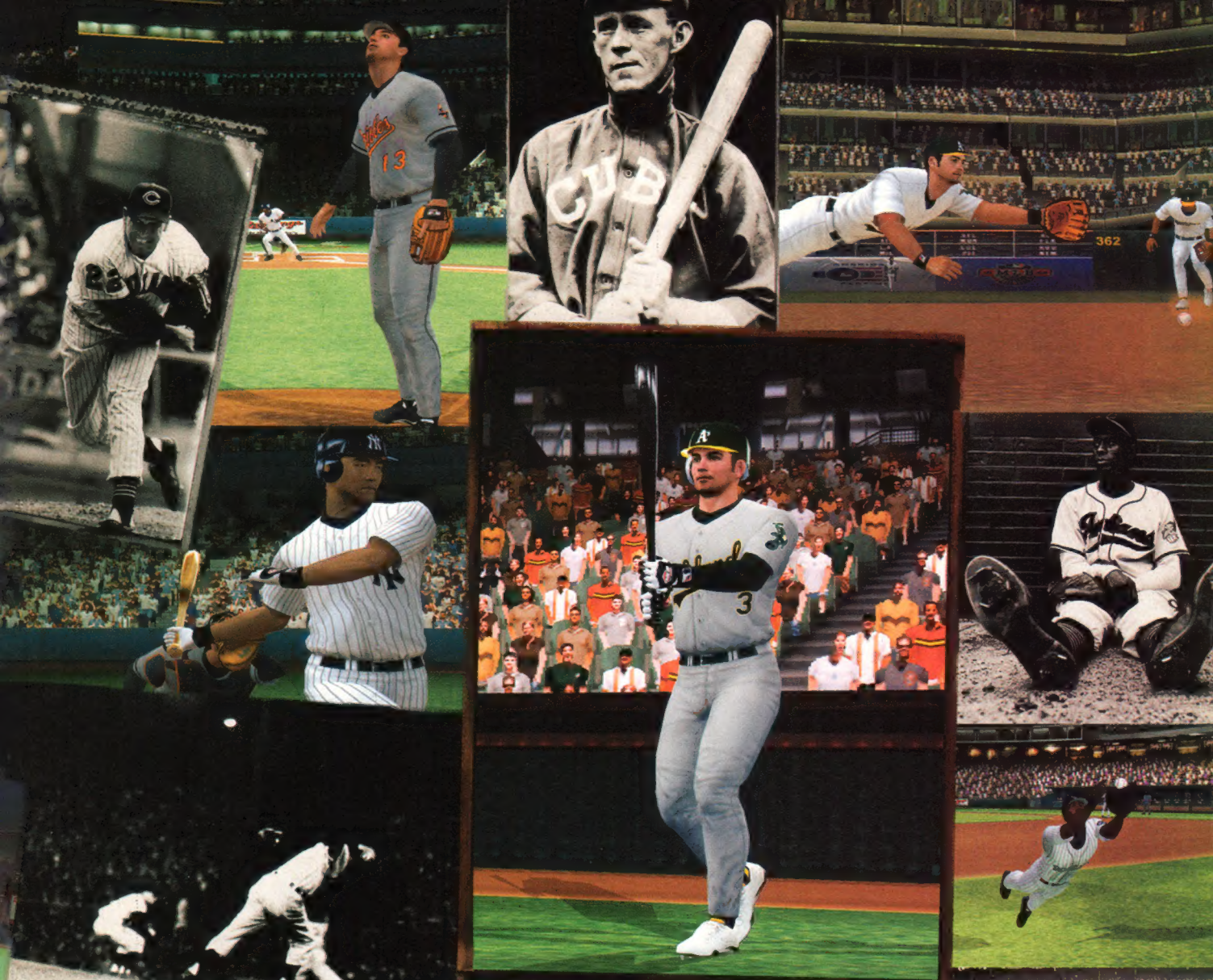
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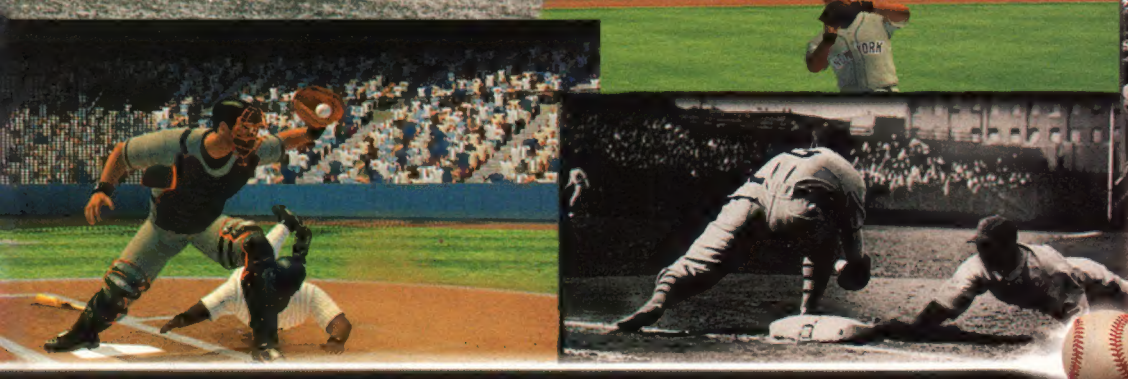
SPEAKER 3624-5

It has been decades since Major League Baseball has seen the likes of a Tris Speaker or a Connie Mack. Men blessed with the smarts and raw talent to fill the role of player/manager. But with the advent of Franchise Mode in MLB 2005, the lost art is back with a twist: Players can be managers, owners, or all three, in the ultimate test of baseball know-how, as fans control every detail—from player deals to the price of pretzels.





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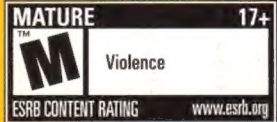


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THE DRIVER



PlayStation 2



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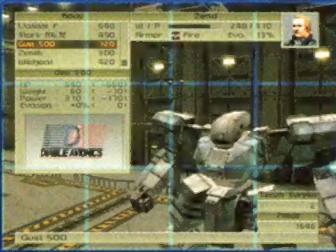
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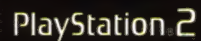
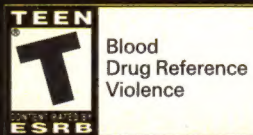



BREAKTHROUGH MULTIPLAYER GAMEPLAY: 1ST-PERSON MERCENARIES VS. 3RD-PERSON SPIES



A BREAKTHROUGH IN ACTION

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A promotional poster for the video game Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow. The central figure is Sam Fisher, a man with a beard and short hair, wearing a black tactical suit with yellow accents and a black mask with three glowing yellow lenses. He is holding a black assault rifle. The background is a fiery, orange and red sky over a tropical landscape with palm trees and buildings. The text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

Tom Clancy's
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UBISOFT



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Sick of hearing about *Halo 2*? Vote for something else

75 COMING SOON

You'll find few fireworks this July



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BUILD YOUR OWN XBUNDLE

How to grab an Xbox and a handful of games for little green

COVER STORY:

84 DRIV3R

The first PlayStation 2 and Xbox installment in the hard-driving series is nearly road ready, and developer Reflections has handed us the keys. We check under the hood and give the game a six-point inspection.

REVIEW CREW

Three reviews per game—just the way you like it

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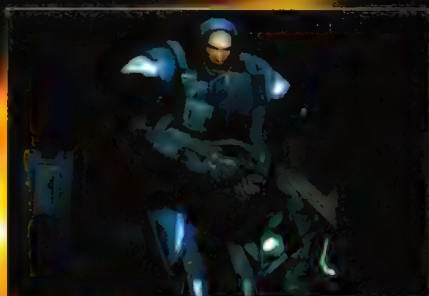
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THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK: ESCAPE FROM BUTCHER BAY



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FIRST NEXT-GEN GAME UNVEILED

We shed light on the mysterious *Dark Sector*.

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We stake out six games that are about to carjack *Grand Theft Auto*'s bandwagon... and get away with it.

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Here are your four continues

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editorial



Multiplayer gaming may one day destroy the videogames-business. That's my theory, anyway. In all my spare time, I've been playing *Spiriter Golf Pandora Tomorrow* online over Xbox Live. I don't want to play anything else, and I know I'm not the only one. Some people already have over 180 hours logged on... and the game has only been out for a month and a half as of this writing! (Let's see... 180 hours divided by 45 days = we need an intervention.) That's 180 hours they're not playing some other videogame. I don't mean want to think about it

I've combined online playing hours *SOCOM* I am. If players have logged on to their PlayStation 2. The days of their lives are spent in *SOCOM*'s world—and probably nowhere else. Do you see where I'm going with this? I love multiplayer gaming, and I love online gaming. But what's going to happen to this industry if we're not buying new games because our current ones are occupying all of our time? Those less-typed games will sell even less; publishers will take even lower risks and stick with their *Ninja Gaiden* and

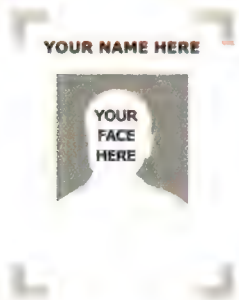
Grand Theft Auto: Small Town DSAs, and perhaps game makers will want to charge us (as in Microsoft's case with Xbox Live, charge us more) to play with our friends online. This holiday season, we're gonna get slammed with online-enabled games, from *Star Wars Battlefront* to *Battlefield: Modern Combat* to *Gran Turismo 4*. When you're on your 100th hour of *Halo 2* deathmatch, just make sure to take a breather and check out some of the other great games this industry has to offer. OK?

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The all-new 1UP is here, and it's exploding with new features! We've still got all of that great daily content you've come to know and love, but we're now the first-ever destination for gamers to meet, play, get informed, and show off.

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If you have a GameFace, we have a place for you to put it.



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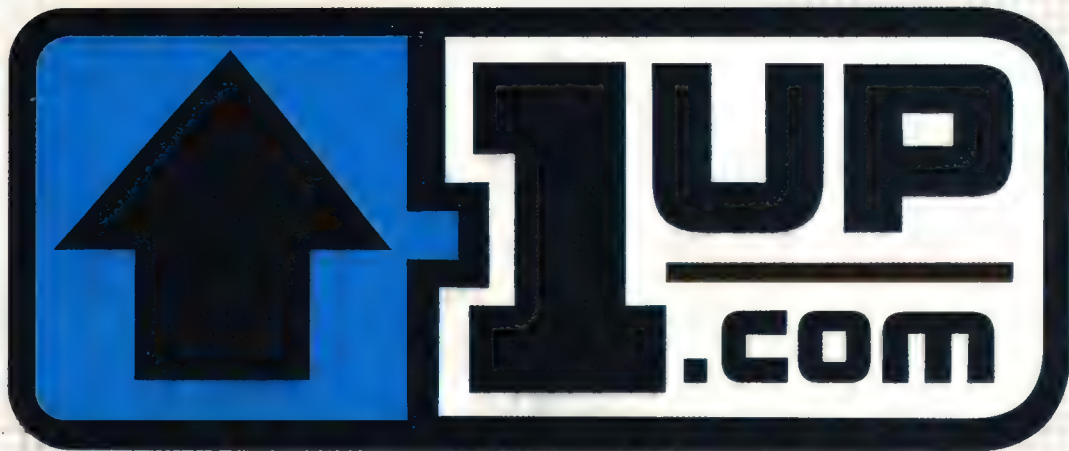


YOUR GAMES



Get YOUR GameFace on.





TM

Get clubbing! Join clubs or create your own and invite all of your friends.

MY CLUBS (7)

- EGM Fans**
Members: 364
JOIN THIS CLUB
- Shoe's World**
Members: 496
JOIN THIS CLUB
- SOCOM II Club**
Members: 283
JOIN THIS CLUB

YOUR CLUBS

Make friends with other gamers - including us editors.

You Share 3 Friends

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- Dan Hsu**
Honolulu HI
Points: 68,250
- Sam Kennedy**
San Jose CA
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YOUR FRIENDS

You've got a voice, let it be heard! Tell everyone what you're playing or doing.

DAN'S 1UP JOURNAL

My day at the office

Some of us readers are advised to never touch any gun (nobody wants to get shot) but I understand why they'd all be so... The hands of time are getting the second highest score possible. The best way to do this is to... (text continues)

Tuesday, January 20, 2004 5:17 AM America's...

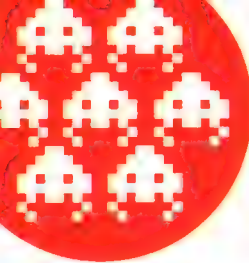
Next generation Consoles

The game is... (text continues)

YOUR JOURNAL



We're all here. Join us at 1UP.com.



staff

don't hate us because we're beautiful

the review crew



DAN "SNOD" HSU, Editor-in-Chief
Snod is so excited about the idea of Review Crew Survivor (see pg. 106) that he was considering a similar elimination-style contest with the existing Crew...until he realized he'd probably be the first one voted off by the readers because they still hate him for his *Illegals* (Nintendo 64) review (5.5 out of 10).
Now Playing: *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow*, *Front Mission 4*
Fave Genres: Just about everything

MARK MACDONALD, Executive Editor
The idea that he might actually enjoy Vin Diesel's work (see his *Riddick* review, pg. 100) has Mark questioning all his beliefs. Could *Halo* be crap? What if Bush is a great president? Friends: brilliant comedy? Maybe Limp Bizkit does rock? He must journey into himself to find the answers.
Now Playing: *Zelda: Four Swords Adventures*, *Riddick*
Fave Genres: Action, Adventure, Shooters, LAN Party Music



JENNIFER TSAO, Managing Editor
Since two of her current faves feature characters designed by the great Shigeru Miyamoto, Jennifer figured it was time to pull an old fan pic out of the vault. She'll never forget that night—the mood...the music...the magic, magic mushrooms....
Now Playing: *Zelda: Four Swords Adventures*, *Mario Golf: Advance Tour*, *Final Fantasy XI*
Fave Genres: Adventure, RPG, Action Sports, Puzzle, Music



CRISPIN BOYER, Senior Editor
You think working at a videogame magazine is nothing but fun and games and free instant oatmeal? Read the fine print in the employee handbook: "Employees must wear at least 15 pieces of hair at all times." It's worth it for the oatmeal.
Now Playing: *Front Mission 4*, *Beyond Good & Evil*, *Mario Golf: Advance Tour*, *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow*
Fave Genres: Action, Adventure, RPG



SHANE BETTENHAUSEN, Previews Editor
Buying games is a dangerous habit. Sure, you intend to play through every game that you purchase, but somehow, five years later, you've still got a shrink-wrapped copy of *Front Mission 3* gathering dust on your shelf. This is Shane's painful reality.
Now Playing: *Shining Force* (GBA), *Katamari Damacy* (imperfect PS2), *Hygar* (for the Sega Master System), *Halo*
Fave Genres: Fighting, RPG, Action, Adventure, Karaoke



DEMIAN LINN, Reviews Editor
Seeing as how *Splinter Cell* and *Splinter Cell*-related issues are so EGM #179, there really are no bios-page-appropriate monologue subjects left for this issue. How 'bout those NHL playoffs, eh? Can you believe the weather we're having?
Now Playing: *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow*, *Riddick*, *Challenge 2*, some game with ninjas, eucitre
Fave Genres: Action, Hockey, Racing, Fighting



BRYAN INTIHAR, News Editor
It's been one helluva crazy month for Big B. He's killed countless demons on the beautiful streets of Paris, teamed up with *Shrek's* Gingerbread Man, and wrestled a guy named Dik Dik Van Dik. But nothing compares to the craziness of planning the magazine's Press Start section.
Now Playing: *Uimimusha 3: Demon Siege*, *NCAA Football 2005*
Fave Genres: Action, Adventure, Sports



SHAWN ELLIOTT, Associate Editor
UFC, *Van Helsing*, *Riddick*, *Ultimate Muscle*—if it's branded on a licensed property, Shawn has to play it. Now he's got his own plans for a quick cash-in: *Hulk Hogan's Thunder Mixer*, the licensed game based on the licensed blender that "prepares baby formula with the power of a cyclone."
Now Playing: *Splinter Cell PT*, *Chronicles of Riddick*
Fave Genres: Fighting, Shooters, Adventure, Racing



Guest Reviewers

GREG FORD
The long summer days are here—oh for the days when that meant three months of Nintendo and kickball for Greg.



JON DUDLAK
"One more samurai game... Just give me one more space-samurai game to review. Then you'll all be sorry."



PATRICK MAURO
This syndicated sports talker has to wonder if the use of performance-enhancing drugs would elevate his reviews.



KEVIN GIFFORD
Kevin can't get enough of those cutesy platformers. We're a little scared to tell him the big news about *Blinx 2*.



JOHN MCCARDIN
Though he once famously called the movie *Friday* like 730 a "murder mystery," John knows his videogames.



■ When, in the midst of mind-crushing deadlines, we wander deliriously around the office in a videogame-induced somnolence, sometimes we bump into kind editors from **XBOX NATION**, **OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE**, **GMR**, and **1UP.COM** who offer to help.

The Contributors

■ **Maxim** contributor **ALEX PORTER** went from airbrushed hotties to celluloid zombies for our *Resident Evil: Apocalypse* movie story....
■ Freelancer **GLENN McDONALD** visited the country's best psychics for a premonitory glimpse into future gaming technologies for our "The Future Is...What?" news piece....
■ Stalker-to-the-stars **SCOTT STEINBERG** hounded Derek Jeter until the baseball great sat down to have words with him for our Celebrity interview....
■ Alien-in-disguise-as-a-writer **JUSTIN SPEER** used his extraterrestrial mind-control techniques to pather sizzling intel on all the latest games for our Hot Ten and "Unusual Suspects" feature.

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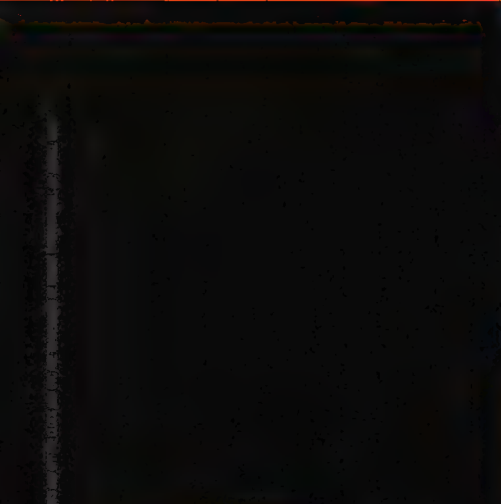
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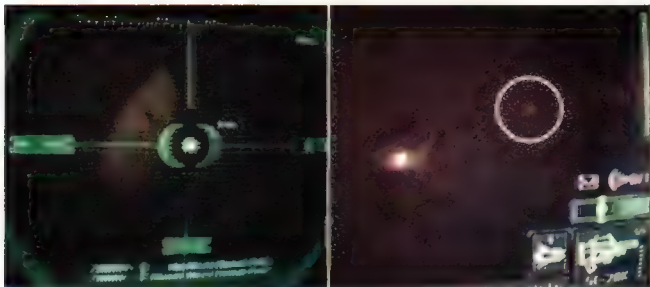
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Letters

Ranting, raving, and something stinky



■ Bigfoot, Nessie, a turd—why are all the photos that matter always blurry?

Hidden and dangerous

I was sneaking my way through *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow's* final mission when I came across a cleaning lady. She started screaming, so I did the logical thing and put her in a sleeper hold. Suddenly I noticed something interesting. Seems she was about to take the Browns to the Super Bowl but took a dump right on the floor instead when I put the squeeze on her. I'm serious. Look at the photos I took for proof.

—Brentendo

But did you try checking out the heat signature with your thermal scope?

Dr. Mario

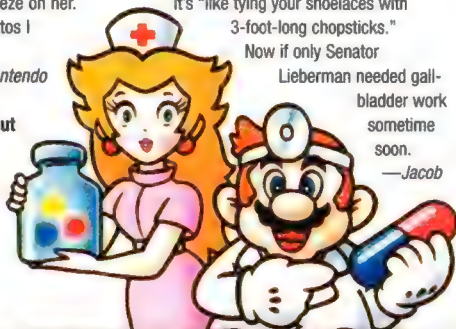
Hey, did you know that a recent study found that "doctors who spend at

least three hours a week playing videogames make about 37 percent fewer mistakes in laparoscopic surgery and perform the task 27 percent faster than their counterparts who don't play videogames?" Laparoscopic surgeons, for those not in the know, use tiny cameras and other joystick-controlled instruments when operating. According to Dr. James Rosser, it's "like tying your shoelaces with 3-foot-long chopsticks."

Now if only Senator

Lieberman needed gallbladder work sometime soon.

—Jacob



POST OFFICE

Geek speak from our message boards, www.boards.1UP.com (look for *Electronic Gaming Monthly's* forums)



Stealth ass-assins

What's the most sinister thing you've said, seen, or done online in *Splinter Cell*? Our posters spill the beans: MetalGearHalo: "When I grab mercs, I yell 'Zed, bring out the Gimp!'" SeniorFunkernickel: "The next guy who

says a word about Rick James while choking me is getting punched in the face. Seriously."

SalFPS: "What if I walk you over to a fire extinguisher after my teammate puts a hole in it, and hold your face in the spray while screaming, 'bukkake'?"

NotoriousPig: "I have no tactics. I just quit when I'm losing."
Chixdiggit: "If you quit in the middle of a match with me, it had better be because the pepperoni Hot Pocket in your microwave needs flipping."

Mario third party

Board member Barricade unleashed hell by suggesting that Nintendo follow in Sega's footsteps and drop out of the console biz: "GameCube's a format for playing Nintendo games and little else." But "it's Xbox that's the Halo TV adapter," argued ELCHINGON214. Cronqvist thinks the idea's "a dream come true. It saves me from buying an

Letter of the month

Call first and finally consoles

In the midst of all the hype surrounding Sony's PS3, it's time to remind gamers to be cautious about investing in the upcoming hardware. Sony's looking best synergistically with quality, with the exception of its graphics. It doesn't make sense that the company's consumer products are just improved by quality games and performance while, at the same time, gamers across the globe have to turn their systems sideways or upside down to get them to work properly. We have to demand if you're serious about a PS3, you need the console designed for the...
Historic decision, you'll end up ending your last day in 2006 and the Sony console you...
—Steve D

We're here served by Sony's problem-games hardware before Sony, but if everyone heeded your advice, that second shipment of PS3s might never arrive. Let's just hope Sony sees the reality announced delay of their...
the hardware's reliability.



Sidney Eng, a winner is you! As our Letter of the Month writer, you've won a copy of whatever game we happen to have in hand when we get around to sending out your prize.

Hollywood hoey

Why cast celebrities in videogames that aren't based on existing franchises? Games with solid writing and character development sell themselves. Publishers should save the money they squander on pretty faces and buy better programming and development teams—you know, people with actual ideas. Perhaps some actors are genuine gamers, but I'd bet that most are like Rachel Dratch, star of the canceled CG-rendered sitcom *Game Over*,

who admitted that *Pitfall* was the last game she played (*EGM* #178).

—A.J. Keiner

Chalk it up to games going mainstream, A.J. Developers are bound to use stars as games continue to compete with movies. Plus, celebs stand to reach a wider audience by appearing in games.

You lookin' at me?

After hosting several four-player *Halo* >

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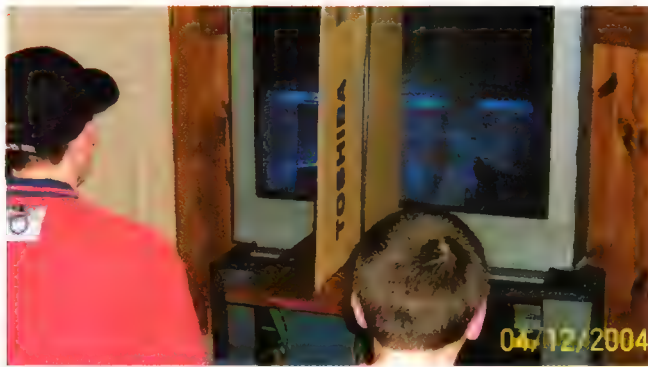


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■ **Cardboard:** Not just for breakdancing and curbside condominiums anymore.

▶ matches, I devised a way to deal with cheaters who constantly look at your quarter of the screen. All you do is duct-tape two pieces of cardboard together and attach them to your TV as shown in the picture. It works great for team-based matches, and I encourage anyone in a similar situation to make a divider of their own.

—Deron

Nuts and bolts

What with the prevalence of bolts, wrenches, and other tools in *Ratchet & Clank*, I'm surprised Sears didn't get on board with a few Craftsman ads: "Built for life...and harsh extraterrestrial combat."

—Mark Buckingham

Colors of the rainbow

According to an ad in a recent issue, *EGM* called *Rainbow Six 3* "a must-have title" and a "gorgeous masterpiece that's

peerless in its class." And yet in issue #178, you gave the game utterly average scores (5.0, 6.0, 6.0). I'm not planning on burning my back issues or canceling my subscription, but I've got to know: What's the deal? Did the *Rainbow Six* reps threaten your lives or offer you golden tickets to Willy Wonka's for telling them what they wanted to hear?

—E.J.P.

We did in fact say those things—about *Rainbow Six 3* for Xbox back in *EGM* #174. Unfortunately, some unsavory marketing types took our quotes for the superior version and applied 'em to the other two (PlayStation 2 and GameCube). Apparently, "not worth the pedigree that the series has forged on Xbox" or "buy an Xbox and play that version instead" didn't seem too compelling as far as quotes go.

Game name

Great mag, guys, but isn't it about time you gave us your Xbox Live gamertags? I'd love to take you on. And for that matter, why not print tags for your celebrity gamers so the faceless masses can slay them, too?

—Tim Teets (Gamertag: misfitsports)

Like the time we signed up for that smoked-meat catalog after sampling Ma Kettle's blood sausage at the country fair, we suspect we're gonna regret this. Actually, we know we're going to regret this, but here are a few anyway: EGM Mark, EGM Crispin, EGM Demian, EGM Bryan, and EGM Shawn (note the spaces in the first three). As for our celebrity interviewees, well, they know better.

Familiar faces

Is the assassin Hanzo Hattori in your *Samurai Warriors* review based on the same guy as Hattori Hanzo from *Kill Bill Volume 1*?

—Loolala

Director Quentin Tarantino's inspiration is obvious. For more knockoffs of the legendary Yagyu ninja look up any of publisher SNK's *Samurai Shodown* games or the *Hunter X Hunter* anime series.

Oil and water?

I'm a PC and console gamer, but the idea of porting games from the former to the latter bothers me. It's disappointing to see great games downgraded so that they can run on consoles. Game makers should focus on original titles that take full advantage of the systems they're designed for.

—Daved Artemik

Not everyone is fortunate enough to own the mini mainframes it'll take to play *Half-Life 2* and *Doom 3*, and we're not gonna complain much about getting the opportunity to enjoy pared-down versions at a reasonable price.

Poster boy

Ubisoft's *XIII* is so stylish I had to base ▶



GAME DESIGN-O-RAMA

Got proof that game design is best left to the pros? Send your concept (with art) to EGM@ziffdavis.com, subject: design-o-rama



CHAMPIONS OF NO WRATH: REALMS OF NEVERQUEST

Negotiate a feeding/payment contract that benefits both vampires and humans! Stage a sit-in at the local pub until they allow orcs and ogres to swig grog alongside uppity elves! Boycott castles until every last prisoner is released from the dungeon! *Champions of No Wrath* challenges players to master nonviolent resistance to pacify the Realms of NeverQuest.

—Zizak



HUNTER HUNTER

The bolt-action rifle is on the other hoof in this game of wildlife revenge. Play as a white-tailed deer that covers his scent with Old Spice and stalks hunters. Or pick the endangered manatee and blast speeding watercraft out of the water. You can even choose lab animals and perform cruel experiments on scientists. And the final boss? Ted Nugent, of course. *Hunter Hunter*: where every day is open season...on idiots.

—KayDee Kersten



GRAND THEFT AUDIO

Compile the biggest library of illegally downloaded songs on the Net and become the Tony Montana of music. Expand your collection and stick it to the man by establishing contacts in key peer-to-peer cartels including Kazaa, Sharebear, and LimeWire. But watch out, if you aren't careful, the RIAA will slam you with subpoenas and fines you couldn't pay even after a lifetime of hard labor.

—Aaron Harper



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SEEING DOUBLE

Get your own ideas for how Nintendo's upcoming dual-screen portable might work? Send your double visions to EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject "Nintendo DS idea"



■ This sharp-looking Nintendo DS mock-up comes courtesy of Robert Jackson.

The Nintendo DS will feature "connectivity connectivity." The top screen connects to the GameCube, while the bottom one links up with the Game Boy SP. Of course, you'll have to buy three versions of the same title in order to fully enjoy the feature, but the writing's on the wall: You gotta get yourself connected.

—Michael Lew

Each player's secondary screen displays vital stats including health, ammo, and what have you. The twist is that the first player's character appears on the second player's screen, and vice versa. Both cooperate to guide one another through the game.

—Kupi

Give me a racing game with a separate screen for the rearview mirror.

—Calvin Wain

Granted this is the same company that asked us to buy a GBA in order to engage in a virtual two-way with Tingle (*Zelda: The Wind Waker*), but I wouldn't mind a multiplayer game in which each player sees a shared and personal screen.

—Immanuel Comer

Imagine controlling two parties at once in a *Chrono Trigger* sequel, one in the past and the other in the present or future. When the first group acts in the past, effects are felt in the future. Imagine the possibilities.

—Mace Casas

► my last art class project on the shooter. It took three weeks to complete, but it was worth the effort. I hope you like it.

—Patrick Adams

Wait, you send us art and expect praise? In *EGM's* letters column, the place where tattoos and people dressed like fruitcakes come to get laughed at? Nice try, Patrick, but we're not falling for it. Whoever made this pic—which you're clearly hoping we'll ridicule—has talent.



■ Who knew they make tracing paper this big? (Only kidding, Patrick—nice work.)

When EA strikes, you're out

"It has been discovered that, while using the EA.com service to play on EA Sports Online servers, you have been using foul, abusive, vulgar, or otherwise offensive language," or so the e-mail said. It then went on to warn, "Your account has been flagged for this violation, which means we will be monitoring your activity while you are online."

Granted I love to talk s***, but I'm still not sure when trash talking constitutes the kind of violation that warrants being monitored under the threat of removal from EA's servers. What can and can't I

say, and in which games? Also, if they're gonna monitor my online gaming activities, does that mean they'll be listening in on my conversations, too?

—Mike Oh

We got Jay Blincoe, who oversees customer service for EA Sports Online, on the, uh, line, and here's what he had to say: "I can assure you that while we do try to keep our environment free from harassment and foul language, we recognize that smack talk is part of the game. But if language gets out of hand, users oftentimes complain via our report abuse system, and we follow up. By no means do we monitor individual user conversations or blacklist anyone's account without good reason." In short, talk smack but don't talk s***.

Too sexy for your camouflage

I was reading your *Metal Gear Solid 3* cover story (*EGM* #178), thinking of ways to make the buck-naked camouflage that you guys came up with usable. Then it hit me. Imagine this: An enemy commander warns his troops that Snake's about to infiltrate their enclave. When watchmen spot what appears to be a naked man gathering mushrooms in the jungle, they'll pay him no mind. After all, what kind of secret operative works in the buff?

—Timmy Ramone

This is *Metal Gear Solid* you're talking about. Stranger things have happened in this series.

Decisions, decisions

Like most gaming Luddites, I was against the idea of going online with my consoles (PS2 and Xbox) and figured the fad would eventually fade out. Now I see that the trend is here to stay, and well, if you can't beat 'em.... Problem is, I'm not sure which system to join 'em with. It appears that

"What kind of secret operative works in the buff?"

—Timmy Ramone

Microsoft is doing great things with its service, but while several of my friends play online with PS2, I don't know anyone with Xbox Live. *Halo 2* looks enticing, but so do *Resident Evil: Outbreak* and *Final Fantasy XI*. Help me decide which connection is right for me, won't you?

—Nick Rittenhouse

If your friends happen to live nearby, you might as well just invite 'em over for some face-to-face fragging. On the other hand, if they're spread out in colleges across the country, sticking with PS2 might make it easier to stay in touch. But if we had to choose one online setup, we'd go with Microsoft's. Even though you won't be able to play with the friends you already have, making new ones is so much easier

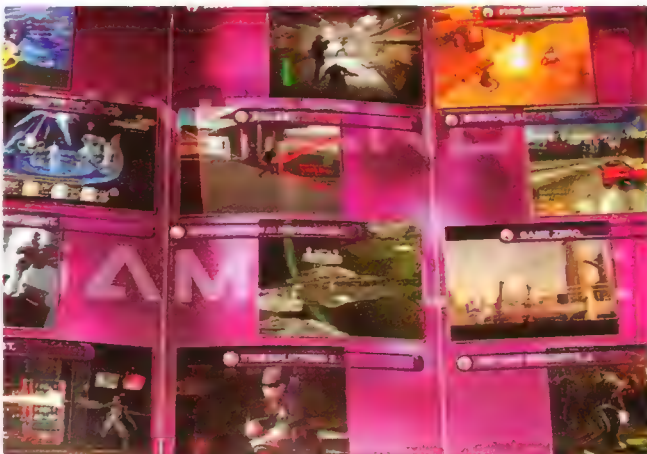
with Xbox Live's streamlined interface and superior community support.

Jedi mind trick

I'm assuming you've seen Nintendo's brochure for this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo (I've attached a pic in case you haven't). The entire lineup looks crucial, but it's *Rogue Squadron IV* that has me grooming my Chewbacca doll's Real-Feel™ hair in anticipation. Can you score me any info before the convention?

—CountDookie

You've been duped; LucasArts and Nintendo say the brochure is bogus. But if another *Rogue Squadron* sequel does come out, you can bet your Wookiee comb that the real deal will have the all-important "Star Wars" in its title. 🙌



■ Yep, this Nintendo catalog featuring *Rogue Squadron IV: New Rebellion* is phony.

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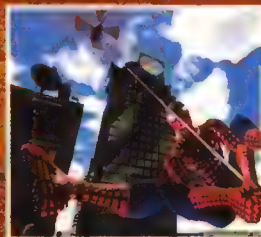
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PlayStation 2



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RETURN OF THE RING

Frodo lives! Or maybe that's just his stunt double in EA's *The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age*, which lets you do more than hunt some orc

Watch the DVDs, reread the books, and crank the hobbit-themed Led Zeppelin tunes all you want—none of it makes up for the lack of another *Lord of the Rings* flick this winter. The king has returned. The ring is scrap. No way is Gollum coming back from that reverse jackknife into molten Mount Doom.

But not so fast. While frumpy kiwi Director Peter Jackson moves on to remake *King Kong*, EA Games is recalling *Rings'* stars—including Ian "Gandalf" McKellen—to Middle-earth to record fresh dialogue for a new game: *The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age*, which hits all consoles this fall. Formerly teased as *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy* in the closing

credits of last year's multiplatform *Return of the King* beat-em-up, *Third Age* takes EA's series in a new direction—one that makes more sense than the straight-up action approach of the two prequels. It's a proper role-playing game.

"This game will definitely appeal to traditional RPG fans as well as to fans of the films," says Executive Producer Steve Gray. "We will give you a specific set of characters [for] your party, but you will be able to significantly customize them." These heroes are minor characters from the movies—elf maidens, human rangers, dwarf warriors, and other folks on the fringe of all those wide-angle shots and raging battle scenes. Still, "you will play

as Gandalf sometimes," Gray says, "and he has a lot of really cool magic he can do." Your gang will roam all of Middle-earth's principle locations and encounter its forces of evil (or good, if you choose to be bad guys—see sidebar). "You travel on a sort of S curve that weaves in and out of the path of the [movies'] Fellowship through the story of the trilogy," says Gray. "At times, you'll be behind or 'next to' them; at others, you'll be in the same time and place as the Fellowship."

That means you'll have a showdown with the Balinog flame demon in the dungeons of Moria, charge through the films' cast of thousands, battle an orcsback, if you like (see the sidebar)—plus

explore a few new locations. "Very open environments and optional side quests will give gamers a lot of freedom and prevent any two players' experiences from being alike," says Senior Producer Todd Arnold.

The development team—mostly the same crew that crafted the last game—has full access to all of New Line Cinema's film footage, art assets, and musical score to piece together Middle-earth. Although Peter Jackson didn't shoot any new scenes just for the game, *Third Age* will still pack lots of sequences from the movies, plus new computer-generated cinematics filmed using the movies' stunt guys. We doubt if any Zeppelin will make it into the soundtrack, though. —Crispin Boyer

■ Shining knights of the light side or hongo-beating trolls of Sauron's shadow forces—you play as either.



■ Nobody takes a dwarf: All Middle-earth races get the props in RPG *The Third Age*.

Men in Back

Just because you control a party of bit-player heroes doesn't mean Frodo, Aragorn, and the rest of the film's Fellowship are MIA in *Third Age*. "In major story points and battles," says Executive Producer Steve Gray, "the characters from the films will appear in cinematic sequences and will even join your party."

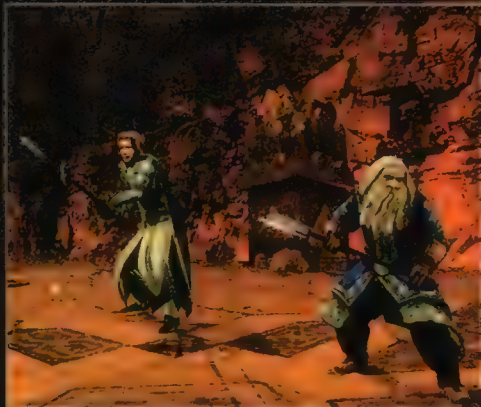




Beyond Good and Evil

If we learned anything from master-piece Xbox RPG *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*—which lets players explore their dark sides—it's that being bad can be awfully good. *Third Age* will deliver similar evildoing duties. Although you start the game on the side of light and build a party of fine, upstanding Middle-earthlings, you'll unlock shadow missions—sordid sorties in the name of dastardly Saruman and Visine poster-eye Sauron. You know you'll play them.

■ The Batrog: not stopping, not dropping, and definitely not rolling.



■ Heroes of might and magic: You'll level up characters via skill trees, tweaking defense and magic abilities and melee and ranged attacks.

Battlefield Middle-earth

Keeping with the traditional-RPG feel of the game, *Third Age*'s combat is turn based. "If you play *Final Fantasy*, it will feel familiar to you," says EA's Steve Gray. "Obviously, we have our own game mechanic, but we want fans of the genre to be able to quickly pick up and easily start playing the game." You do get one nifty twist: Some characters can ride horses or the wolflike warg beasts into battle—a skill that's especially important when the party reaches the rolling plains of Rohan. EA won't reveal much about beast wrangling, other than "during combat, you have special play mechanics and skills associated with riding," says Gray.



LIGHTS, CAMERA, METROID!



Samus heads to the silver screen

Watch out, Ms. Croft—Samus Aran is coming to Hollywood. Director John Woo (*Mission: Impossible II*, *Face/Off*) recently optioned Nintendo's *Metroid* franchise for a big-budget motion picture with the hopes of bringing it to theaters before 2006. Woo's involvement will start on the production side of things, and later he'll decide whether or not he'll direct. Initial reports have the movie chronicling the early days of the space-traveling bounty hunter. Co-producer Brad Foxhoven

told *The Hollywood Reporter* that the sci-fi film "will stay true to the game and have Samus battling the Metroids and Mother Brain in a fight for control of the galaxy." You might recall that this isn't the first stab at a *Metroid* movie. Zide/Perry Entertainment acquired the film rights back in January 2003, but that's about as far as the production group ever got on the project. Let's hope Woo and crew can make the movie happen...and that it's better than the last *Tomb Raider* flick.

CASTING CALL

Here's who we think deserve starring roles in the upcoming *Metroid* film:



Samus Aran: **Kristanna Loken**
Any woman who can go toe to toe with Terminator-turned-Governor Schwarzenegger has our vote to play the intergalactic heroine.

Baby Metroid: (voice of) **Emmanuel Lewis**
The former *Webster* star is both cute and troubled—it's the perfect combination for the life-sucking role.

Mother Brain: (voice of) **Christopher Walken**
Only someone as versatile and peculiar as Christopher Walken could play Samus' main adversary.

Ridley: **Dragonheart's Draco**
Remove the laughable Sean Connery voiceover and this out-of-work dragon could easily fit the bill as Ridley.

Kraid: **Weird Science's Chet**
If Chet puts on a few pounds, the gassy, boil-infested creature from the 1985 teen flick is a shoe-in for Kraid.

GRUDGE MATCH (Un)Dead Again



VAN HELSING **COUNT CHOCULA**
Van Helsing's mere name drives fear into the hearts of vampires everywhere, but the semisweet baron of breakfast is another story. Is Helsing in for death by chocolate, or should cocoa beware? We find out in *Grudge Match!*

POSSE

 Crafty monk Carl, played by Faramir from <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> Advantage: Van Helsing	 Frankenberry, Booberry, and before a nasty falling out, Fruit Brute	
---	--	---

SOCIETAL CONTRIBUTIONS

 Kills all the nasty monsters that might eat you otherwise	 Will send you a Wacky Wall Walker Advantage: Count Chocula
--	---

HOLLYWOOD HISTORY

 Fought a less-intimidating Bela Lugosi Dracula before the world was in color	 Countless commercials, record deal (free in specially marked packages) Advantage: Count Chocula
--	---

ROLE MODEL

 Dracula-whacking Richter Belmont of <i>Castlevania</i> Advantage: Van Helsing	 <i>Sesame Street's</i> Count Von Count
--	---

FAMILY TREE

 A long line of other vampire hunters that couldn't close the Dracula deal	 Quaker Oats begat Cheerios; Cheerios begat Cap'n Crunch; Crunch begat Chocula Advantage: Count Chocula
--	---

WINNER: COUNT CHOCULA
Some say Van Helsing isn't a cereal killer. No kidding! He tried to... in that silver bullet for a silver spoon.

TIDBITS: BAD NEWS FOR BALLERS, GOOD NEWS FOR ONLINE WEDDINGS



XFL Sports Rides the First
Microsoft will not release new editions of its Xbox sports titles *NFL Fever*, *PGA Tour Golf*, and *WWE Smackdown!*. A company rep says the decision to skip a year off was made to "maintain the quality" of each game. This will also affect the rest of the XFL Sports portfolio—*Amateur Athlete*, *Top Gun*, and *1080i*.



Sega Debuts Next Phantasy Star
Sega's *Phantasy Star Online* recently revealed *Phantasy Star Online 2* as a massive multiplayer sequel to its *Phantasy Star Online* franchise. No online title to target platforms were divulged, but signs point to PlayStation 2, but expect a return to the Xbox live system. Find the console PC game and new possible items.

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Illustration by Dave Johnson.

BATTLE ON TWO FRONTS

Advance recon from Halo 2's online multiplayer game and single-player campaign

Facts of Live
 We figure Halo-heads who lamented the lack of online multiplayer in the first game have a lot of pent-up aggression, so they'll be hitting the sequel's 16-player online battle royales post haste when Halo 2 hits Xbox this November. Lucky you: The game uses Live's new lag-reducing tricks, such as finding opponents closest to your hometown and who share the same broadband provider.

My Other Gun's a Plasma Pistol
 Developer Bungie promises that the control scheme for Master C's new dual-weapon gunnery is cinchy to learn, plus you won't lose the ability to whiz grenades. You're only able to wield two weapons that make sense, however (you won't charge into battle with two sniper rifles, for instance).

Gaze in the Military
 Master Chief character models (and enemy Elite aliens, available in some levels) crane their heads in the direction their players are looking. It's a nifty effect with a strategic twist: You know when you're being watched.

Halo for Two (to 16) ▲

Jackal 2.0
 Remember the shield-wielding Jackal dino-bird things from the first Halo (right)? Now they're leaner, meaner, and a 23 percent uglier. Check the punk rock 'dos.



Halo for One ▼

Move Over, Master Chief
 Since saving Earth is a big job for just one genetically enhanced cyborg, Chief at times will lead a band of Orbital Drop Shock Troopers, elite "helljumpers" who essentially parachute into battle from orbit. We figure he can take out these Jackal jokers on his own, though.



Shadow Ops
 And you thought the first game's enemies were brainy. Halo 2's Covenant aliens will seek cover in shadows, making Master Chief's flashlight crucial this time. But don't get too close: Larger aliens like the Elites and new Brutes are more aggressive and extra keen on alien-a-mano melee attacks. —Crispin Boyer

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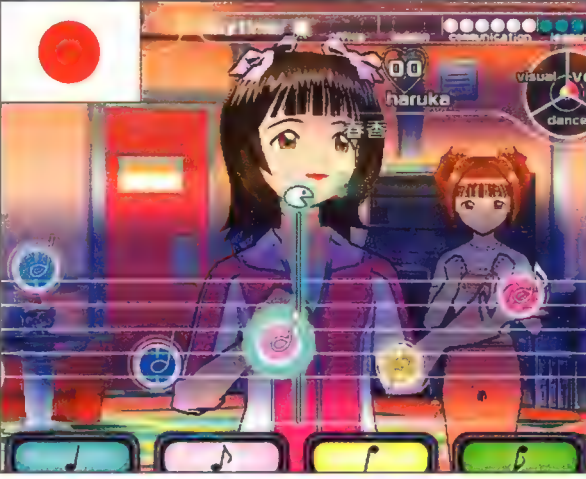
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SYNTHESIZE YOUR LIFE
Atelier Iris takes a constructive approach to bashing stuff
Atelier Iris (PlayStation 2) is the sixth game in what's probably the longest-running role-playing series you've never heard of. Why hasn't the franchise reached our shores? Probably 'cuz of its wacky game system, which is a weird mixture of *Final Fantasy* and *Animal Crossing*. Instead of a hulking mass of manflesh (or a whiny blitzball player), you control an alchemist—someone who takes random items and uses oogly-boogly "Mana" power to synthesize them into weapons and healing potions. Acquiring the raw materials for this process involves breaking stuff around town, including barrels, crates, and random bits of furniture you find in strangers' houses. And here you thought stealing herbs from people's closets was bad.

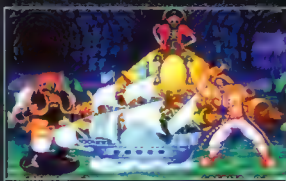


DANCE, YOU! DANCE!
 Create a pop-band phenomenon in **The Idolmaster**
 Have you ever wanted to play big-time music agent to a bunch of hot Japanese chicks? Sure...who hasn't? Namco makes it possible in *The Idolmaster*, hitting arcades later this year in Japan. Choosing from a stable of nine ladies, you create a unit (a group of singers, sort of like Menudo except with big anime eyes) with the hopes of propelling the gorgeous gals to worldwide stardom. *The Idolmaster* features five minigames for raising each member's singing and dancing stats. In online multiplayer, competitors vote for their favorite performances, and the unit that survives to the end wins the game...and the adulation of pudgy, sweaty guys across eastern Asia.

OLD SCHOOL

10 years ago in EGM

On the Cover:
Mortal Kombat II
 In the summer of '94, readers were treated to an exclusive first look at the gory fighting sequel's console and handheld incarnations (SNES, Genesis, Game Gear, and Game Boy).



Game of the Month: World Heroes 2 Jet — SNK's slightly tweaked new version of *World Heroes 2* (Neo-Geo) earned the Review Crew's top honor, despite the game's ridiculous characters. Who could forget Mud Man and ol' Muscle Power? We could.



Hello, My Name Is PlayStation
 Not only did *EGM's* spies come away from a Japanese-only media event with the final name of Sony's 32-bit console (it was originally dubbed PS-X), they also delivered the first pics of the system, controller, and logo.

L'I'L PREVIEWS: FROM JAPAN WITH LOVE

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST AND THE BROKEN ANGEL
 PS2 • Square Enix • Fall 2004 — Square Enix breaks the world of anime with this action-RPG based on a popular comic. You control Edward Elric, who uses the power of alchemy to create his own red alkahestry. Dive into the story, but the real reward is a hilarious bit of comic-panel slapstick. Witness your Elric create such a mess playing, always in dizzy situations.

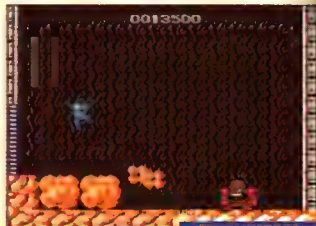
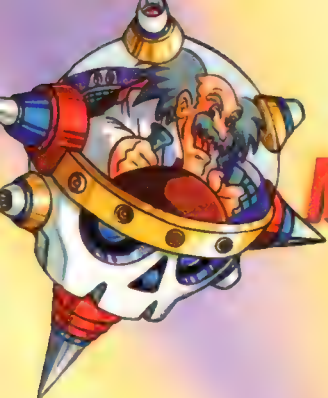


UNDER THE SKIN
 PS2 • Diigoon • Fall 2004 — What do you mean you're already different? — Skin casts you as a murderous alien named Cassy who's tasked with eradicating major rockin' act Limp Bizkit. They go to the city, screaming at the point of a screaming crybaby. The song and dancing huge looking balls. The comedy can be much reached making "Sexual Demos a great medium to make Fall Out."



Saturn Eye Candy
 Sony didn't garner all the headlines, as Sega released the first-ever screenshots of *Virtua Fighter* running on its 32-bit Saturn system. The game's 3D visuals were unattractive, to say the least, but thankfully, Sega would later upgrade the graphics in *Virtua Fighter Remixed*.

THE ULTIMATE COLLECTION OF MEGA MAN'S FINEST ADVENTURES!



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AVAILABLE SUMMER '04



Go back to Mega Man's beginning with these special game compilations. Save the planet from 15 years worth of evil villains! Mega fun awaits with 10 action-packed games for the Nintendo GameCube™ and PlayStation®2 computer entertainment systems and 5 infectious games on Game Boy® Advance.



COMING FALL '04
5 GAMES IN 1

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PlayStation 2



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WEB SIGHTS

Manhattan's a swinging place in Spider-Man 2

Spider-Man games have progressively improved at putting you in Peter Parker's snug bodysuit. With an open-ended objective structure, a revised web-swinging system, and a cadre of comic-book supervillains, *Spider-Man 2* promises to be the definitive *Spider-Man* summer. A stylish re-creation of Manhattan provides a stellar backdrop for the action—check out some highlights from a day's work around town.

—Thierry "Scooter" Nguyen



Daily Bugle Building
Spidey looks overly happy to visit his workplace, if you ask us. Since the story line is closely tied to flick's, expect a few plot missions (which are optional) to center around secret-identity-endangering high jinks at the *Daily Bugle*.



St. Patrick's Cathedral
Spidey plays the Good Samaritan by dropping someone off at church after a rescue. One thing you learn in this game: People ask Spidey to do a lot of things, whether it's thwarting robbers, delivering pizzas, or chauffeuring fools *Crazy Taxi*-style.



Sailing the Rails
Swinging is a whole lot easier this time around, and it's actually faster to zip some webs onto the elevated tracks than to ride these trains. Crazy midair acrobatics seen in both the movies execute effortlessly here. So what if Spidey doesn't fly?

Illustration by Sean Tiffney



Bad Guys Love Abandoned Warehouses

Doc Ock might be the only villain in the movie, but don't be surprised to see some more faces from Spidey's gallery of rogues. Here, C-grade baddie Shocker is up to no good, but you won't have to foil him alone—Black Cat will help you short him out.



A Walk in Central Park

Sometimes, you'll just see a bunch of thugs hop into a car after robbing a bank. Chase them down, jump onto their car, and pound the bolts out of it. When said goons run out, give 'em the ol' one-two combo before they escape into Central Park.



Skyscraping

Imagine the whole of Manhattan. Now, cut it length- and width-wise. While the layout of the city isn't exactly to scale, the heights of the buildings are. Most of the city is unlocked from the get-go, so you can spend hours just swinging around.



Helicopter Havoc

On one hand, you now have to be near something to latch your web onto (no more shooting webs into thin air and swinging). On the other hand, you can attach your web to anything—even a passing helicopter.

104



Unnerving realism. A graphically harrowing depiction of the terror of war.



Powered by Guerrilla's groundbreaking 'Killzone' engine.



Missions range from large-scale NVA battles to stealth-based assignments.



"We've never seen a more realistic war game." - PSM

Forget Medals. Forget Honor. Just Survive.

It's 1967. You've been drafted to fight in the most controversial conflict of modern times. Prepare to experience the fear, chaos and atrocities of the Vietnam War. From napalm bombardments of civilian villages to deadly VC booby traps, can you survive your first tour of duty?

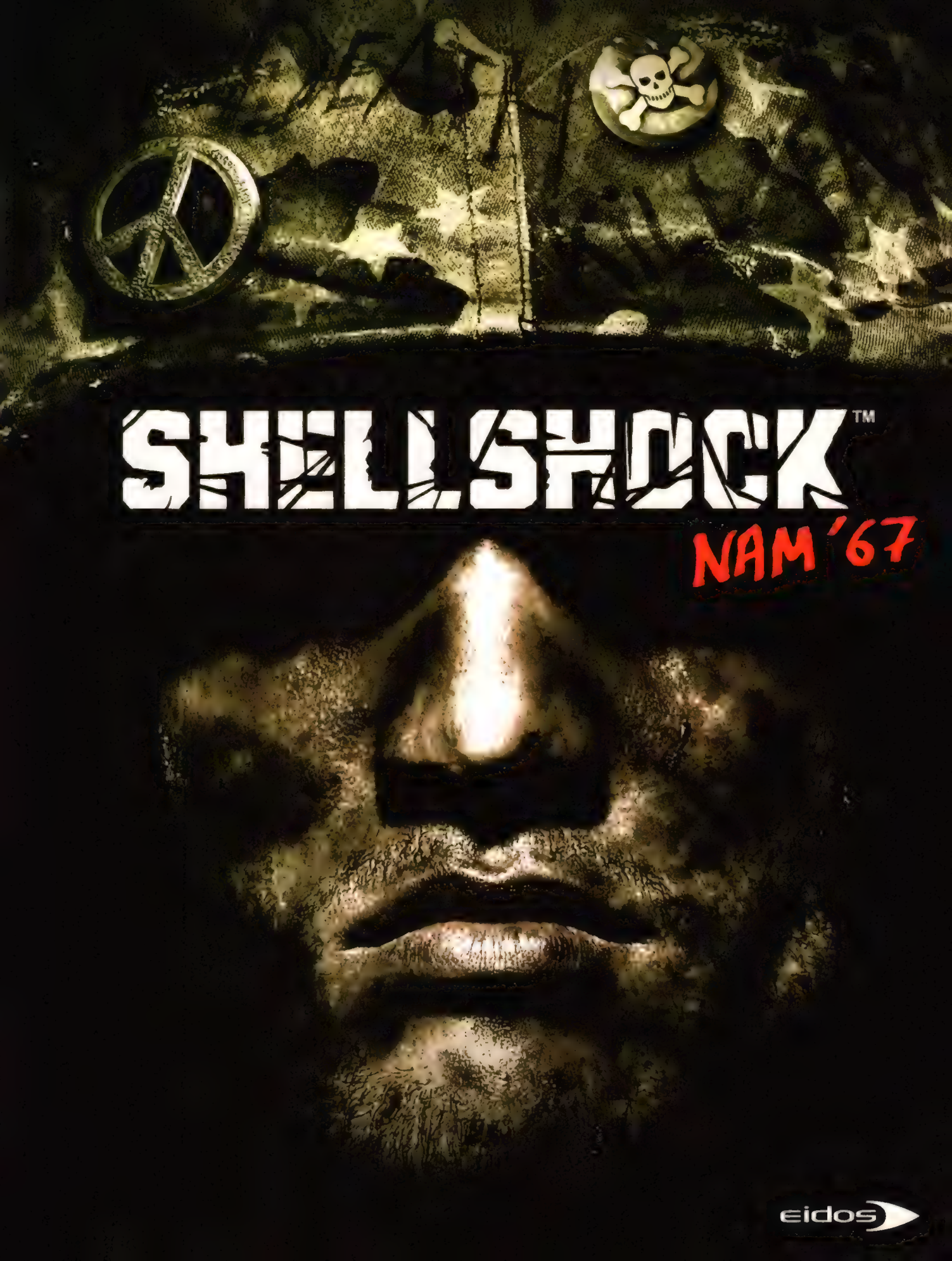
COMING JUNE 2004



PlayStation 2



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SHELLSHOCK™

NAM '67

■ If real war were this cute, nobody would protest it.

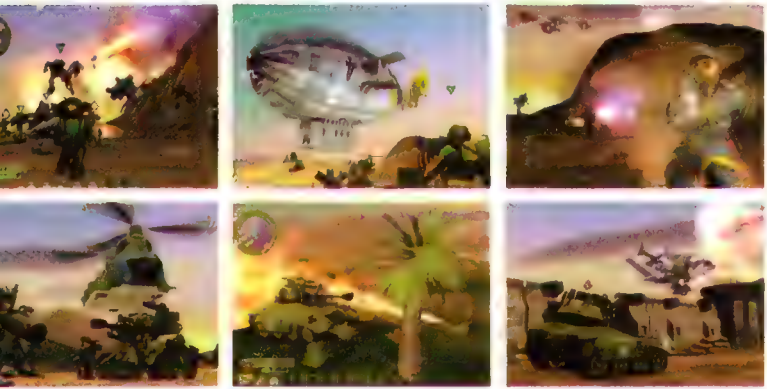
WAR IS HECK

Advance Wars: Under Fire tackles tactics

It's been begged for by countless fans and rumored for years, but now, finally, Nintendo's cult-hit *Advance Wars* franchise is storming the shores of GameCube this fall. The invasion won't go quite as you'd envisioned it: A new

developer, Kuju, is steering the series in an unexpected direction. *Under Fire* replaces the turn-based battles of previous *Wars* titles with frantic real-time combat, so you can no longer take your sweet time deciding who lives and who dies. From this first

batch of screens, a lot of *Under Fire* looks like the *Wars* we know and love (futuristic units with a cartoon flair), and a lot of it...doesn't (drab backgrounds, no cool anime-style characters). We sense conflict brewing for the hearts of *Wars* fans....



Whoju?
Kuju is a London-based developer previously known for work on such games as *Fire Warrior* (PS2), *Lotus Challenge* (XB), and, uh, *Microsoft Train Simulator* (PC). Along with *Advance Wars*, it is concurrently developing a cell phone game based on, of all things, *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*. Dude.

BY THE NUMBERS

Legendary figure:

- 7.6** Million Units sold worldwide of *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* (Nintendo 64)—the best-selling game in the *Zelda* franchise
- 16** *Zelda* titles released in the U.S. to date
- 3** *Zelda* titles released for Phillips CD-i system
- 0** Number of *Zelda* CD-i games worth playing



CHARTS

TOP 10 BEST-SELLING GAMES FOR MARCH 2004

- 1** *Ninja Gaiden* XB • Team Ninja
- 2** *Pokémon Colosseum* GC • Nintendo
- 3** *MVP Baseball 2004* PS2 • EA Sports
- 4** *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow* XB • Ubisoft
- 5** *MVP Baseball 2004* XB • EA Sports
- 6** *James Bond 007: Everything or Nothing* PS2 • EA Games
- 7** *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes* GC • Konami
- 8** *Final Fantasy XI Online* PS2 • Sony CEA
- 9** *Resident Evil Outbreak* PS2 • Capcom
- 10** *MX Unleashed* PS2 • THQ

TOP 10 GAME RENTALS FOR THE WEEK ENDING 03/21/04

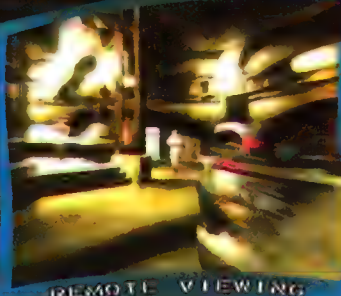
- 1** *Resident Evil Outbreak* PS2 • Capcom
- 2** *NBA Ballers* PS2 • Midway
- 3** *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow* XB • Ubisoft
- 4** *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3* PS2 • Ubisoft
- 5** *EA Sports Fight Night 2004* PS2 • EA Sports
- 6** *Rise to Honor* PS2 • Sony CEA
- 7** *Destruction Derby Arenas* PS2 • Gathering
- 8** *James Bond 007: Everything or Nothing* PS2 • EA Games
- 9** *Mania* PS2 • Gathering
- 10** *NFL Street* PS2 • EA Sports Big

Source: NPD TRSRS Video Games Service. Call (516) 625-6190 for questions regarding this list. *Wmm, that's a good meabai.

Source: Blockbuster Video

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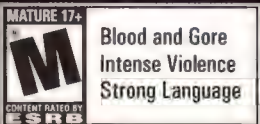
"...ONE OF OUR MOST-WANTED GAMES OF 2004" -IGN

"...ONE OF THE YEAR'S MUST-PLAY EXPERIENCES..." -PSE2

"...THIS ONE LEVITATES ABOVE THE PACK." -PSM

"...ONE OF THE MOST INNOVATIVE ACTION GAMES OF THE CURRENT GENERATION." -XBN

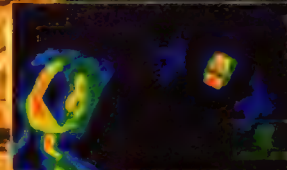
Featuring **COLD**
"With My Mind" Music Video



PlayStation 2



Secret agent Sam Fisher really can't stand these missions.



Hunting the Hunters

Here's your chance to play out your favorite movie starring beefy state politicians. Xbox Live players invented a new mode for *Pandora* called "Predator." The idea: Forget the normal objectives and just kill. Try these rules:

- ▶ 3 mercs (1 life) vs. 1 spy (5 lives); 12-minute time limit
- ▶ No frags, spy traps, or mines
- ▶ Best map: the open courtyard in Deftech Below

The spy has to hunt down and eliminate all mercs within the time limit. Recommended neck-grabbing trash talk: "I'll bleed ya real quiet." Just don't use the "ugly motherf*****" line. OK?

AFTERTHOUGHTS: SPLINTER CELL PANDORA TOMORROW

An **on- and offline chat** with the developers of one of the greatest multiplayer games of our time

As we enter the dimly lit room, we survey our surroundings: long water pipes running along the ceiling, tall ledges, and a dark area in the back corner. It's all perfectly set up for us—though that security camera on the wall has us a little on edge. Nothing a well-thrown salt shaker won't take care of.

Newest stealth-action hit? Nope. Just the silly daydreams of *EGM* editors entering a local restaurant, with a bit too much *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow* on the brain. The recent Xbox release blew us away—the single-player game is great, but it's the addicting online multiplayer that has taken a firm hold of our minds and free waking hours. We sat down with *Pandora* Creative Director Gunther Galipot and Brand Manager Xavier Fouilleux to discuss the ins and outs of this masterpiece. And check out how the PS2 and Cube versions are shaping up on pg. 42.

—Dan "Shoe" Hsu

EGM: Two-on-two gameplay is great and all, but naturally, we gamers want more. Why no 3-on-3 or more?

Galipot: We specifically limited the number of players to ensure that *Pandora Tomorrow* remained a stealth-action game rather than morphing into a free-for-all shooter. Playing with more than three or four members on a team would change the game mechanisms radically and deliver a whole different experience to gamers than the one we originally proposed. That's not a bad thing—but it's a different game.

EGM: Online, a lot of jerks are dropping out the minute they start losing, to avoid a loss in ranking points. It sucks for the players playing fairly.

Fouilleux: There's one thing that a lot of people don't know: If you quit midgame, you'll get the ranking penalty on your next match. That's why sometimes you'll win a game but still see a loss in points—because you quit an earlier round.

EGM: How can you tell the difference between an intentional quit and a legitimate game crash?

XF: We have ways to tell. [Smiles] With our next update, though, we'll be releasing a new ranking system.

EGM: The multiplayer learning curve is steep, and it's scaring off all the newbies that we'd like to beat up on. How do you recommend they get started?

GC: I recommend that they play both the spy and merc tutorials, and that they

to wake up, then knocks him out again right away by jumping on him or gassing him with a sticky camera. Repeat as necessary.

GC: This is obviously cheap! For the sticky cam stuff, you can avoid that by escaping immediately when you wake up, because you are granted temporary immunity for few moments.

EGM: How about a mercenary committing suicide in order to replenish his supply of spy traps and mines?

"From L.A., with love."

—LA player to NY player, during a live online match shown to the public, before snapping his neck.

familiarize themselves with a level through the "visit a map" option before they actually jump into a live battle.

EGM: Cheap play or fair game? A spy knocks out a mercenary, waits for him

GC: Honestly, I think this is a very bad tactic because it lays your defense open for the whole necessary [10-second] respawning time—plus you have lost a respawn. Let's just say that it's a good trade-off for the spy!

UBISOFT WOULD NOT OFFICIALLY COMMENT ON THIS, BUT WE LEARNED THAT TWO NEW *PANDORA TOMORROW* (XBOX) MAPS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD SOMETIME IN JUNE.

"During testing, everyone killed the dog."

—Splinter Cell Brand Manager Xavier Fouilleux

EGM: What's the best trash talk you've heard a spy say to a mercenary he's got in a choke hold?

GF: One of the best I've heard was at our [publicity] event during which gamers in a Los Angeles theater played against contestants in a New York theater. One of the L.A. players had a New Yorker by the neck, and he cracked, "From L.A., with love," just before breaking his neck.

By the way, I should tell you that you have the same opportunity to talk trash when you play as a merc. When a spy is lying unconscious but is still alive, press the White button to speak to him and tell him what you really think!

EGM: Are people playing online how you'd expect them to play?

XF: One thing that people aren't using very much is the mercenary taser. It's a really powerful weapon and very useful in close combat. If you use it often, you'll see that the spies won't come at you as often.

EGM: Are there any cool gadgets that didn't make it into the final game?

GF: There is one I really regret, but in order to be true to the realism of the Clancy brand, we had to abandon it. It was an optical camo suit for spies that allowed them to almost disappear for a certain period of time. The effect onscreen was stunning; it was sort of similar to the *Predator* effect in the film but more fluid, as in the *Abyss* movie.

I also wanted to have automated sentry guns that spies could hack and take over. Maybe in the sequel....

EGM: What's your favorite level?

GF: My favorite multiplayer level is the warehouse. It can be played 1-on-1, and the objectives are opened in a linear way—in order to open area 2 you need to complete area 1 first, and so on.

Also, players are always in the same area, so the action is always "at hand." It plays like a chess game, in that you're trying to avoid falling into the enemy's trap while trying to trick him into yours. It creates an extreme level of tension.

XF: Single player, I really like the train level, because it offers different paths, even though the train itself is very linear. It also gives you a very Hollywood style of tension, because you arrive on the roof of a speeding train, and you can hang off the side with another train passing by. It's different from anything in the first game.

EGM: [Watching Fouilleux, who is playing the train level, approach a caged barking dog and kill it] Now, did you have to kill him? We know it's not necessary for this level....

XF: [Laughs but doesn't answer]

EGM: Do you at least feel bad about it?

XF: It's funny—during testing, everyone killed this dog. The dog isn't really a danger to you, but when he starts barking, players usually panic and shoot him.

People also want to see if you can actually kill him. In game design, if players see something that looks like it should logically work, they want it to work. Even if it doesn't make sense to try it, they'll try it anyway, just to see if it works within the game environment.

EGM: I didn't like the Jerusalem level. It was so long and difficult.

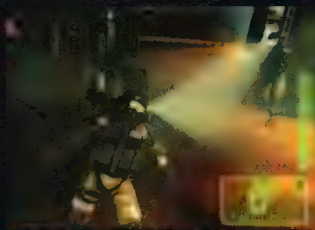
XF: The checkpoints there are spaced a bit far apart from each other. The problem is, if you're caught and you have to start over again—especially if you're not a very patient gamer—you'll want to go through that section even faster the next time, which means you'll make more mistakes and be likely to lose again.

EGM: You know, except for the two main guys (played by actors Michael Ironside and Dennis Haysbert), the voice acting is really bad. Did you blow your budget on the real stars?

XF: We've heard those complaints. It's not a question of budgets, but we didn't pay enough attention to the secondary roles. It's definitely something we'll be more careful with next time.

EGM: We once asked the *Halo* guys who'd win in a fight: their Master Chief, *Metal Gear Solid*'s Solid Snake, or Sam Fisher. They said Master Chief because of his technological advantage....

XF: Well, Master Chief isn't a realistic character, with guns that shoot lasers that track you and all—I don't think Snake and Fisher would have a chance against him. But put them in the right environment, with shadows and places to climb and hide, then Fisher would have a good chance to sneak around and kill some people. [laughs] >



▀ Above: A spy goes for broke. **Below:** Snipe the spies in the head for a one-shot kill.



PS1's *Metal Gear Solid* influenced the creation of *Pandora Tomorrow*'s innovative multiplayer mode. Read about it in the extended Afterthoughts interview on egmextras.1UP.com.

Press This

Pandora's instruction manual sucks. The multiplayer game has a bunch of cool stuff you wouldn't even know about unless you experimented or someone told you. Try these on for extra badassery.*

Mercenary

- > **Wake up teammate:** A
- > **Slide down ladder:** A + Down
- > **Listen in on spy communications:** White button (after spy trap hit)
- > **Quick 180° turn:** Double-tap left or right
- > **Oh, and your reticule?** The arrows on the outside show what direction sound is coming from, and the inside cones indicate whether it's above or below you

Spy

- > **Roll:** Hold B while moving at full speed. Tap X in midroll to autodraw your gun
- > **Slide down ladders or poles:** A + Down
- > **Listen in on merc communications:** White button (after spy bullet hit)
- > **Laser sight on/off:** D-pad Up
- > **Pull out gun without laser sight:** Hold X

*Special thanks to SalFPS, x DashRipRock x, SPeSiMen, and Alkente

PANDORA TOMORROW'S INFAMOUS "CHAT CHEAT" (WHICH ALLOWS DEAD PLAYERS TO CHAT WITH TEAMMATES) SHOULD BE FIXED IN AN UPCOMING UPDATE THROUGH XBOX LIVE

PANDORA'S OTHER BOXES

How does the hit Xbox game fare on PlayStation 2 and GameCube?

PLAYSTATION 2

Locked, loaded, and fully online.

The good news: The PS2 version of *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow*, due out June 18, will feature the same 2-on-2 online play that's made the Xbox game our best buddy for the last couple months. That's really all you need to know, so don't even worry about any bad news.

With headsets, the Network Adaptor, and a broadband connection, PS2 players can join the fight against terrorism. Two sneaky spies, in the traditional *Splinter Cell* third-person view, take on heavily armed mercenaries, who play in first person. Funky gadgets—like spy bullets that allow you to listen in on enemy headset communications—and specialized equipment and vision modes for each team make this a multiplayer experience unlike anything you've played before. Trust us—it's *sooo* good.

On the lonesome-player side, the PS2 game will get one new map that wasn't on Xbox, as well as a special ranking system that lets you see how well you've tackled each level. Everything else stays pretty much the same, from the great graphics to the Tom Clancy-flavored story line.



■ *Splinter Cell's* temporary holy-crap graphics will stay mostly intact for the PS2 version.



■ This is what stealth gaming looked like in your grandparents' day.

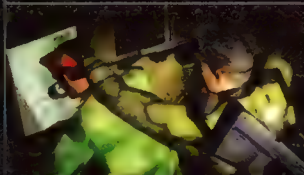


GAMECUBE

No multiplayer, but—oh boy!—GBA connectivity...

That's sarcasm right there. We're sad to report that the GameCube *Pandora Tomorrow* will not feature the innovative multiplayer game that's on Xbox and PS2. "It's really hard to make an online game for GameCube because Nintendo doesn't really help you [as a developer]," says *Splinter Cell* Brand Manager Xavier Fouilleux. That's OK, because exclusive to the GameCube version is Game Boy Advance connectivity. (Actually, that's not OK, but what can we do?) You don't need the GBA version of *Pandora*—a GC-GBA link cable and a GBA will give you a little, detailed radar to help you spot enemies, just like in the original Cube *Splinter Cell*.

The single-player game is still damn good, though. You'll travel to exotic, strange locales like Indonesia, Jerusalem, France, and LAX airport to unravel a terrorist plot. The GameCube version also has the same new map that the PS2 game gets, as well as a ranking system in which after you finish a stage, you get a code that you can enter on a website to see how you fared. Use fewer bullets, get spotted less, and be an all-around good American soldier, and you'll get the fine rankings to show off to your friends. ☺



■ New moves make it even easier for Sam to sneak out past curfew.



■ SISSTIXS in the command center



NO SPEED LIMIT

Tweak out with *Need for Speed Underground 2*

After an early test drive with the original *Need for Speed Underground*, we knew it was special—but we didn't figure it would end up as last year's second-best seller, an

object even closer than it appeared in *Madden's* rearview mirror. Though it can be hard to follow up that sort of surprising success, publisher Electronic Arts is rarin' to try—and soon: *Underground 2* is on the

assembly line and set to debut in time for the holiday season on PS2, Xbox, and GameCube. Will this second foray delve deeper into the racing underworld or simply cover the same rain-slick ground?



Bright Lights, Big City

You'll still be racing on curiously moist city streets at night—that hasn't changed. But the city itself has. "The first *Underground* was really a collection of tracks that were in the same world, but you could only drive on one at a time," says Chuck Osieja, executive producer. "This year you can drive from a circuit event to a drift event to a drag event without ever leaving the world. There will be five distinct sections of the city, and the whole thing will be tied together with a pretty intense system of freeways." Overall, expect a much more open-ended experience.



Body Shop

Too much is never enough if you're a tweaker. But you better like shopping, because tuner stores will be located in different neighborhoods and have different parts available. "We're not changing the kits and packages that we had last year," says Osieja, "but instead, we're adding the ability for the player to buy and tune individual performance parts. Gear [ratios], shocks, torque curves, and much more will all be there for the player with enough car know-how to squeeze that little extra out."

More good news: Once you've got the neon and vinyl decals just so on your Civic, you won't have to trade it in for something else—in *Underground 2*, your garage will be big enough to hold a whole cavalcade of lowered, spoiled, whistle-tipped little numbers. Woo woowoo!

PC GAMING UPDATE

Orcs and dorks



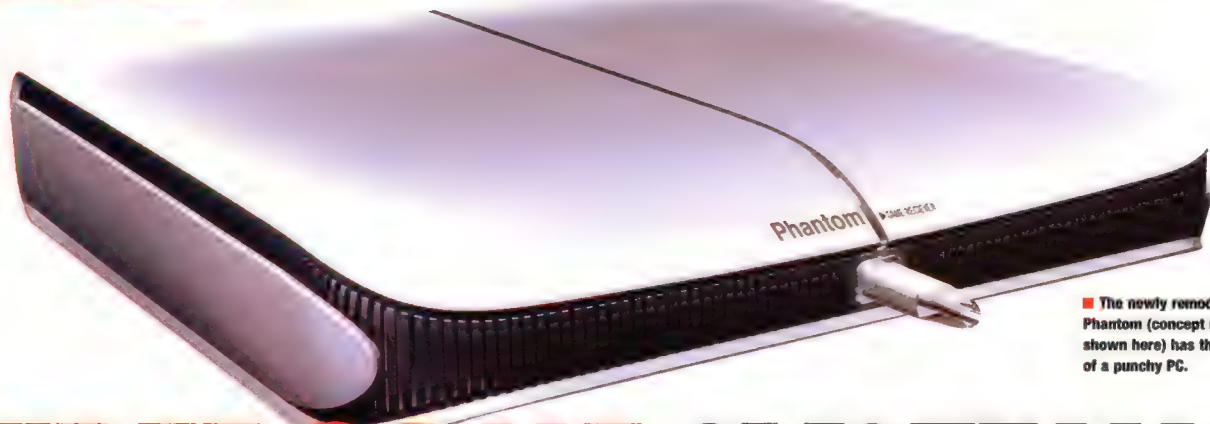
While console gamers continue to acclimate to the brave new world of online gaming, we on the PC side of things are so used to it that we've taken to measuring our masculinity with a yardstick made entirely of jaded ennui. And nothing triggers that reflexive ho-hum response quite like the sterile landscape of massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPG). They've been so done to death that every game box should ship with a toe tag inside.

But that might be changing. *City of Heroes* (available now from developer Cryptic Studios) breaks from the traditional MMORPG mold by casting players as comic book superheroes. The character creation alone is insanely addictive, plus the gameplay is so streamlined and user-friendly that it's easy to overlook the depth behind it.

Further off is Blizzard's *World of Warcraft*. While this is the first MMORPG for the developer, Blizzard has more than a little knowledge about online gaming, having practically monopolized the world's bandwidth since the launch of its free online Battle.net service with *StarCraft*. Unfortunately, Blizzard's game at the moment seems very traditional—past the fantastic art design and appeal of the *WarCraft* game world is a straightforward MMORPG. The open beta test has just begun and already players are spawn-camping (waiting in areas where enemies are sure to reappear). Blizzard is famous for long, taxing beta periods, so odds are it will hammer on *WOW* until it feels the game is perfect.

—Robert Coffey,
Computer Gaming World





■ The newly remodeled Phantom (concept render shown here) has the guts of a punchy PC.

FREE GAME SYSTEM!*

*But read the fine print—you only get the peppy Phantom game box if you sign on the dotted line

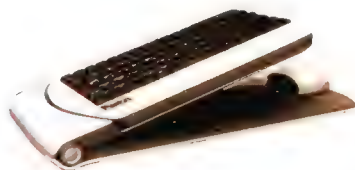
Oh, how easy it was to sneer at Infinium Labs, the Florida-based start-up that—since announcing its Phantom game console last year—has been accused of everything from hoaxery to hucksterism. But laugh at this: Infinium announced a price for its PC-games-playing system, which launches Nov. 18. It's free.

There's a catch, of course. "We're not selling a console," says Kevin Bachus, a key player in the launch of Xbox and now head guy at Infinium. "We're selling a subscription service, the idea that gamers are ready for games to come to them." Here's the deal: You get a free Phantom if you commit to two years of Infinium's games-on-demand service for \$30 a month (you'll need your own broadband-Net connection). It's not a new idea—Sega rebated the price of its fizzling Dreamcast to anyone who signed up for its online-gaming plan. But the Infinium service itself is a first. The basic subscription gives access to a shifting library of older, low-profile PC games (we're talking *Deer Hunter*-caliber titles). "Think of it as basic cable," says Bachus. You can

then pay extra fees for premium content, such as the top three first-person shooters or strategy games. "That's more like premium cable, like HBO," he says.

But the biggest perk—included in the basic subscription—is the ability to try demos, rent games (for an estimated \$5 for three days, provided publishers allow it), or outright buy them. Titles are available the same day they hit stores, downloaded to your Phantom, and installed automatically. That's great for subscribers, but will stores want to sell a system that lets gamers shop from home? "It seems unlikely that [retailers] would embrace a platform that sees as its endgame a way to undermine their business," says Hal Halpin, president of the Interactive Entertainment Merchants Association, "but I understand [Infinium's] looking for ways to belay that." In particular, the company will cut participating retailers in on subscription profits.

Bachus says Infinium's own studies show that gamers are clamoring for the system's convenience, even if biz watchers aren't so optimistic. "It'll be hard to grab the attention



■ Lap hog: The Phantom's funky folding controller combines a keyboard and mouse—the control scheme de rigueur for PC games.

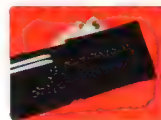
of the 30 million gamers already out there," says Richard Ow, senior analyst at industry-tracker NPD Funworld. "Half of them are under 18, so you not only have to get them to buy in, but their parents as well."

Not an issue, says Bachus, who claims the Phantom isn't for kids (you must pass a credit check to get the thing). "We're aiming for PC gamers who've become disenchanted with gaming since they joined the work force and started families," he says. "They still love games but don't have time to be a gamer. The Phantom will give them that opportunity again." —Crispin Boyer

FIGURING OUT PHANTOM

Subscribe

Sign up for a two-year commitment to Phantom's \$30-a-month service. (That's \$720 total.) Enlist at participating stores and cable providers or at infiniumlabs.com.



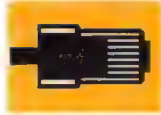
Get the Free Unit

Once you've done the deal, you get the console. Afraid of commitment (or fail the credit check)? You can outright buy the Phantom for \$199 and just subscribe on a month-to-month basis.



Connect the Box

That \$30-per-month contract does not include Internet service or a cable or DSL modem, so you'll need to jack your Phantom into your own broadband Net connection. The console doesn't support slow-ass dial-up, either.



Go Play

The basic subscription entitles you to a limited number of PC budget games and older software, plus the option to download free demos, rent new PC games, or buy them. You can also sign up for pricier premium content.



TWO OF A KIND?

We tell apart near-identical-twin upstart systems Phantom and ApeXtreme...

	LAUNCH DETAILS	THE PITCHES	UNDER THE HOOD	GAMES THEY PLAY	BELLS AND WHISTLES
	Price: Free (with subscription) Launch: Nov. 18	Play PC games on your TV with a minimum of installation fuss	PC architecture, including a 2.5GHz processor and 40MB hard drive	PC games bought and downloaded from Infinium's games-on-demand service	Subscription service lets you rent or buy games
	Price: \$499 Launch: Late August	Play PC games on your TV with a minimum of installation fuss	PC architecture, including a 2GHz processor and 40MB hard drive	Off-the-shelf PC titles. The system downloads scripts that install the games automatically.	Unit plays DVD movies and records TV shows

Pray for a full frontal assault.



You're going to love her killer moves. When her world is threatened by the awakening of ancient evil, Alish and three other great heroes must unite to defeat it. Now this enchanting princess, a brave warrior, a high-flying gunslinger, and a dark huntress will battle through the Realm of Shadows on a quest to reclaim their world. Rotate between each character and use all their powers to prevail in one of the most intense action RPGs. Sudeki will leave you breathless.

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MATURE 17+



Violence
Blood and Gore



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PlayStation 2



Suggestive Themes
Violence

FIRST NEXT-GEN GAME UNVEILED

Can't wait to see PS3 or Xbox 2 software? Then feast your eyes on **Dark Sector**



■ "Man, I can hardly breathe in this thing."



When it comes to making games for the next batch of consoles, developer Digital Extremes isn't waiting around—not even for Sony, Microsoft, and Nintendo to announce the darn things. The Toronto-based studio (makers of the online-enabled fragfest *Unreal Championship* for Xbox) revealed the first software for the next-gen systems—*Dark Sector*, a sci-fi first-person shooter with multiplayer capa-

bilities. Digital Extremes is currently designing the game based on technical specs it's projecting for consoles like PlayStation 3 and Xbox 2.

Our first look at *Dark Sector* comes via a short trailer (peep it on our website, 1UP.com). It features a secret-agent-looking fella sneaking around a space station and hiding in the shadows from heavily armed guards on patrol. Other highlights include

the main character's skintight suit morphing into protective gear. Unfortunately, mums the word on which of the big three will receive the futuristic shoot-em-up. Digital Extremes spokesperson Meridith Braun will only confirm that *Dark Sector* is indeed for "a next-generation console"; she also promises that the teaser trailer isn't some fancy CG movie—it's all in-game footage. —Bryan Intihar



■ *Dark Sector* wasn't always a first-person shooter. The original design doc had it as a massively multiplayer action game for PC.



■ This isn't run-of-the-mill character art—it's an in-game model. Looks hot, doesn't it?

What Ever Happened to...

Simply being one of the first games shown for an upcoming system doesn't necessarily guarantee a successful launch. Remember...

Title	<i>Malice</i> (XB)	<i>JetSprint</i> (XB)	<i>The Druid King</i> (XB)
Type of Game	3D action-platformer	Speedboat racer	Zelda-esque action-adventure
Original Release	Nov. 2001	2001/2002	Early 2002
Current Status	Summer 2004 release	Cancelled	Cancelled

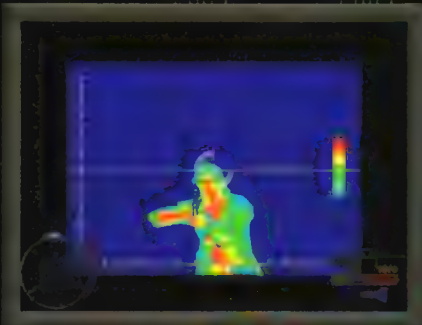
Digital Extremes, however, is confident *Dark Sector* won't have such problems. "Every game [we've] ever made has shipped," says founder and Creative Director James Schmalz. "We don't expect *Dark Sector* to be any different."



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GABE LOGAN, I.P.C.A. COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

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ELIMINATE ALL ENEMY AGENTS AND PREVENT
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ANY INFORMATION RECEIVED WILL BE HIGHLY
CLASSIFIED AS YOU WILL BE ENGAGING
LETHAL INTERNATIONAL ASSASSINS. SUCCESS
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OPERATION IS CRUCIAL.

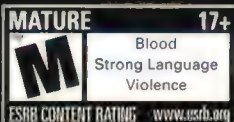
PRIORITY:

URGENT

THE BEST WEAPON WE HAVE IS YOU.



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.



PlayStation 2



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FIRST LOOK: PRINCE OF PERSIA 2

Grittier than Sands

P *Prince of Persia* is a gamers' game, says Product Manager Danny Ruiz. "As soon as *Sands of Time* hit store shelves, we read the reviews, grilled focus groups, and waded through message boards, all to find out how people thought we could improve the franchise. The consensus was unanimous—the combat was too repetitive." Ruiz's readiness to listen to the masses is refreshing, but we can't help but wonder: How will *Prince of Persia 2* (arriving on PS2, Xbox, and GameCube this November) one-up his highness's already outstanding swordplay? "Improvisational combat that offers players plenty more options," answers Ruiz. "Think *Tony Hawk* with a sword instead of a skateboard."

The Prince bounds between enemies, evading blows by a hair's breadth. He back-flips behind one and holds him by the throat as another steps up and takes a stab at the human shield. Once the hostage has served his purpose, the Prince slices him in half, and turns to face the other attacker. Producer Yannis Mallat is at the controls, and he's out to prove a point. "I could've kept leaping," he says, "stunned one enemy with a projectile, and cut off the other's head with his own sword."

But the problem with *Sands of Time*'s combat wasn't lack of depth: it was the way you had to fight a dozen fiends in one room before a gate would open to the next. "In the last game, you'd go from an acrobatics area to a fighting area and back," explains Mallat. "This time, we're interweaving the two types of gameplay." In some cases, you'll actually do both at the same time, as Mallat demonstrates by scaling the back of an enormous beast and burying his scimitar in its head. "That's not a boss," he says with a smile. "We'll show you those later."

— Shawn Elliott



■ We've been sworn to secrecy about *POP2*'s story for the time being, but we can say that it's set on an island stronghold.

THIS FALL, MIDWAY PLANS TO RELEASE *SHADOW HEARTS: COVENANT*, THE PLAYSTATION 2 SEQUEL TO THE TRAGICALLY UNSUCCESSFUL (YET REALLY QUITE DECENT) RPG FROM 2001.

THE SEASON OF EVIL

Join the flesh feast when the next wave of **Resident Evil** invades theaters and consoles

Bad things don't come in threes—evil things do. This fall marks the release of the *Resident Evil* movie sequel, a PS2 follow-up to *Resident Evil Outbreak*, as well as the GameCube-exclusive *Resident Evil 4*. You're gonna need a whole lot of ammo and healing herbs if you intend to survive until the holidays.

Welcome to the Apocalypse

"We got bitch-slapped by game fans after

the first movie," admits Producer Jeremy Bolt. But he insists that sequel *Resident Evil: Apocalypse*—due this October—won't rip out the hearts of fans hoping to watch characters from the games battling hordes of flesh-hungry undead (the first movie featured no game heroes). Though Mila Jovovich reprises her role as the movie-only character Alice, the *Apocalypse* team liberally pillaged key elements from the *RE 3: Nemesis* game. Brit actress Sienna Guillory fills the butt-kicking boots (and

skimpy wardrobe) of spunky S.T.A.R.S. operative Jill Valentine. Expect game characters Carlos Olivera, Nikolai, and the Nemesis itself—armed with rocket launcher and rail gun—to make appearances, along with more blazing guns, zombies, and decomposing Dobermans than you can shake a large intestine at.

—Alex Porter

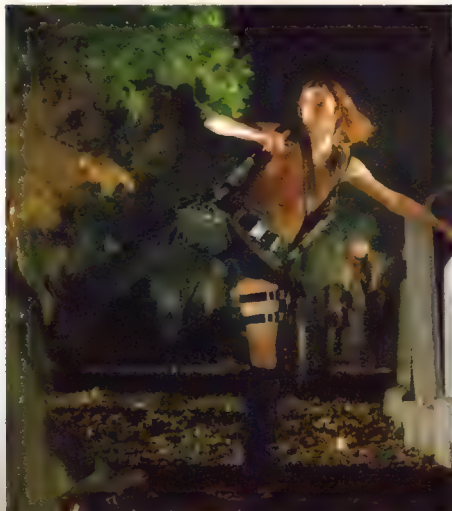


Little-known fact: Undead simply cannot resist the allure of a bare midriff.

TECMO ANNOUNCED TWO UPCOMING XBOX TITLES THAT ARE ALMOST ENTIRELY DEVOID OF HEAVING BOSOMS—THIS FALL, LOOK FOR AN ENHANCED VERSION OF FREAKOUT SUR-



■ This time, the flick actually includes game characters. Exhibit A: Jill Valentine (above), who smartly brought a sweater along.



■ She's either about to leap out of the way of this flaming cop car...or ignite it with a fart. Your call.

RESIDENT EVIL: OUTBREAK FILE #2

Shockingly, Capcom plans to ship a PS2 follow-up to its recent hit *Resident Evil: Outbreak* by the end of 2004. Dubbed *Outbreak File #2*, this sequel promises to deliver a slew of spooky new missions, including the zoo-based one pictured below. But with that short a lead time, it'll likely be an *Air Bud* to *Air Bud 2: Golden Receiver*-style sequel—if you expect more than just a different ball stuffed in this hound's mouth then you're ripe for a let-down. *File #2* hosts the same cast, same three-character (offline) or four-character (online) parties, same premise, and same pre-fabbed, controller-issued chat commands. Despite gripes from fans, the developer believes voice communication could "ruin the experience" of an online *RE* (we also hear that it "takes more work" and "costs more money"). At least they're fixing a few nagging problems—everything from puzzles to enemy behavior to those quasi-useful makeshift weapons is getting tweaked to trim down the kinks in this second stab at online survival-horror.

—Jon Dudlak



■ Guess no one informed the citizens of Raccoon City that playing the *Jumanji* board game is a very bad idea.



■ "Something tells me I'm getting killed in the 'Up...'"



RESIDENT EVIL 4

Series creator Shinji Mikami promised that *Resident Evil 4* would "be scarier than ever before." Is he right? Maybe, but the GameCuba title sure is a departure from previous *Evils*. Aside from fully 3D graphics, the camera has changed dramatically—you now have the option of either an over-the-shoulder or first-person perspective. Also, a European village replaces the well-traveled Raccoon City as the game's backdrop. About the most familiar thing in *RE4* is the hero—Leon S. Kennedy of *RE2* fame returns as a U.S. secret agent who has orders to find the president's kidnapped daughter. Fortunately, we've gotten our hands on three new screenshots, and like Mikami said one year ago, "Don't pee your pants!"



■ Leon pants in a Middle-earth videogame adventure. Or not.



THE FUTURE IS...WHEN?

We track the ETA of next-next-next-generation gaming

In 30 years, today's game controllers and consoles will seem as high-tech as a

SCUD missile. But who wants to wait that long for the gizmos we see in sci-fi? We peek into U.S. and

European R&D labs to see how close we are to these mega-immersive technologies.... —Glenn McDonald

Virtual-reality Headsets

Are We There Yet? Noggin-mounted virtual-reality (VR) goggles, combined with control gloves and body-tracking devices, are the most common approach to total-immersion gaming, but so far the experience doesn't exist outside of cheeseball amusement parks. Consumer headset monitors like Sony's Glasstron and the Olympus Eye-Trek are the first mass-market forays into headset displays, but these are barely immersive and not at all responsive to your movement. They are essentially stereoscopic mini-monitors with surround sound.

ETA: It'll be at least five years until game-specific hardware and software become market-ready and affordable.



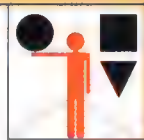
■ Crude VR goggles like these from IO Display Systems will run you \$1,200.



Holodeck-style Game Chambers

Are We There Yet? A straight-out-of-*Star Trek* holodeck is strictly sci-fi, according to physics. "Holograms can't produce texture or force," says Jason Jerald of the University of North Carolina's Effective Virtual Environments Lab. Automatic virtual environments (called CAVEs) offer the next best thing. Created by Dr. Carolina Cruz-Niera at Iowa State University, a CAVE is a room in which you interact with 3D graphics projected on the walls, ceiling, and floor. The University of Southern California's FlatWorld project—a slick CAVE used for Army training—is touted as the world's first "holodeck."

ETA: Disney World's DisneyQuest high-end arcade—filled with linked VR setups—is a step in the right direction for commercial game-chambers. True holodecks, though? Ain't happenin' for a loooooong time.



■ CAVE: up needs

Holographic Displays

Are We There Yet? The kind of holograms we crave for gaming—3D images that hover in space *Star Wars*-style—are still conceptual. "The amount of computational power required to do a useful interactive holographic display is horrendous," says UNC's Jason Jerald. Holographic technology already exists in "white light," such as the security imprint on your credit card. Great—at least game boxes can look way cool.

ETA: "A long ways off," Jerald says. "Creating true 'ghost' holograms is possible but prohibitively expensive."



Body-tracking Devices

Are We There Yet? Cameras or touch sensors that track motion are already built into some industrial VR headsets and CAVE systems (see the holodeck blurb). Meanwhile, peripherals such as Sony's EyeToy and the various dance pads are technically body-tracking devices, in that actual physical movement is replicated in the game world.

ETA: Researchers say it'll take 10 years for more complex body-tracking systems to hit home gaming. And if we ever do don full-body rubber suits to play *Tomb Raider*, you can't borrow ours.



Jack-into-yer-skull Gaming

Are We There Yet? Here we're talking real sci-fi stuff—the idea of actually jacking your brain into a videogame as in *The Matrix*. It's theoretically possible; neurologists tell us the brain and central nervous system operate on electrical impulses, while experts point to proto-concepts like cochlear implants, which have the effect of communicating sound to the brains of deaf people.

ETA: Talk to the neurologists. Observing electrical brain impulses is one thing. Manipulating them via a \$300 Sony BrainStation is another. You go first.



Dream On: Three Experts Predict Gaming's Neo-future

"In 50 years, we may have virtual reality that...you'll have trouble telling from real life. It's being seeded now by recent advances in [medical] technology, making it thinkable to use electromagnetic fields to stimulate certain areas of the brain."

—Sci-fi author and screenwriter John Shirley (*Demons*, *Crawlers*, *The Crow*)

"Location-based games, playable with portable devices that 'overlay' a fantasy world on the real world, will be a major new style of game. Massively multiplayer online role-playing games will branch out from their roots and encompass a wide range of game styles, including social-climbing games, military strategy, and so on."

—Greg Costikyan, head of the NYC chapter of the International Game Developers Association

"With big screens becoming more generally available, games will probably contain more worlds simultaneously onscreen for multiplayer games. But ultimately, the desire to play games—to escape reality and get your mind off everyday problems—is as old as humanity, and games will remain just that."

—Video Ping-Pong inventor and "Godfather of Videogames" Ralph Baer

Illustrations by Terry Woy

A full-page photograph of Tracy McGrady in a blue Orlando Magic jersey with the number 1. He is in a dynamic pose, holding a basketball in his right hand and shouting with his mouth wide open. He is wearing a white armband on his left arm and white sneakers with blue accents. The background is a dark, solid color.

Great for dunking.

My friends told me, "T-Mac, you're gonna be big some day." Must've been the milk. About 15% of your height is added as a teen and the calcium and vitamin D can help. Will drinking a cool glass of milk make you the hottest scorer in town? Hey, it couldn't hurt.

got milk?



And people wonder why nobody ever rides Amtrak these days.

FIRST LOOK: TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT

Time isn't a constant anymore

If Producer Steve Ellis could turn back the clock, *TimeSplitters* would've been online ages ago: "Unfortunately we, well, ran out of time with *TimeSplitters 2*." Better late than never, though, and *Future Perfect*, the forthcoming third installment in developer Free Radical's history-hopping first-person-shooter series, hopes to make good on any and all past promises. (They never promised you a quick release, though: You'll have to warp ahead to spring 2005 to play it, and publisher EA Games claims that only the PS2 version will go online—Xbox and Cube players will make do with merely spitscreen thrills.)

Perfect delivers classic first-person gun-

play (it's by the same guys behind beloved N64 oldies *GoldenEye* and *Perfect Dark*), but with some keen modern trappings. Expect drivable tanks, cars, and trucks, along with a vast arsenal of period-specific arms ranging from turn-of-the-century antiques to ultrahigh-tech weapons of tomorrow (including a gravity gun that can levitate and toss anything that isn't tied down).

But it's *Future Perfect's* mapmaking feature that'll have do-it-yourself types counting the days till the game's far-off release. From spacious arenas ideal for sniper duels to cramped obstacle courses where rockets reign supreme, you can create the multi-player killing fields of your dreams.



Back to the Future

Future Perfect's story mode promises a more memorable trip for time travelers than in previous installments in the series. You play alongside past and future versions of yourself (à la Van Damme's *Timecop*) while trying to prevent paradoxes. Aspirin not included.



Barrels. Not just for exploding anymore.



DESERT ISLAND GAMES: MACHO MAN RANDY SAVAGE



Each month, we force a celebrity or game designer to tell us what three console games they'd want on a deserted island. This month we strand Macho Man Randy Savage: pro wrestler, movie star, meat-product endorser, and one of the stars in Acclaim's *Showdown: Legends of Wrestling*. —Marc Saltzman



Pac-Man (Multiplatform)

"Gotta love it. It's so old school but oh so cool. That game just ate the competition."



Gran Turismo 3

(PS2)
"You can't beat this game for its killer graphics, insane speed, and awesome control."



All-Star Baseball 2005

(PS2/XB)
"I dig this game and I've been playing it a lot. And hey, I have a baseball background. Not many people know about that." [Savage played in the minors for the Cardinals, Reds, and White Sox.—Ed.]

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CELEBRITY GAMER: DEREK JETER

The Bronx Bombers' heavy hitter takes us out to the ball game

As both pro athlete and enthusiast gamer, New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter isn't one to let foul balls lie. Ever the perfectionist, even the 1996 American League Rookie of the Year honor wasn't enough for the perennial fan favorite, who has since nabbed a World Series MVP trophy and four championship rings. Jeter's onfield accolades have also earned him a six-year stint headlining Acclaim's *All-Star Baseball* series. With another big-league season in full swing, the Yankee captain takes a rare time-out from his hectic schedule for a brief powwow:

EGM: Just how long have you been a videogame junkie?

DJ: Since age 7. *Pac-Man* is my all-time favorite title. That guy could sure eat dots, but he also consumed more of my childhood than I'll ever admit. My parents should've never gotten me an Atari.

EGM: What's currently at the top of your playlist?

DJ: Pick any game that stars a character I grew up with. If it's got Donkey Kong or Frogger in it, it's golden.

EGM: Why kick it old school?

DJ: Today's stars just don't have the classics' staying power. Kids love *Grand Theft Auto* now, but will they look back fondly on its hero 20 years down the road? I think not...and if so, it'd just be creepy.

EGM: So what's the electronic diversion getting the most play back at your homestead these days?

DJ: [Laughs] My two-way pager. But my PS2 is definitely a close second.

EGM: How accurate are your digital counterparts in most of the baseball simulators?

DJ: Oh, they're way off. I should be batting .400 and making no errors. Would you believe some games actually insinuate that my team doesn't win the World Series every year?

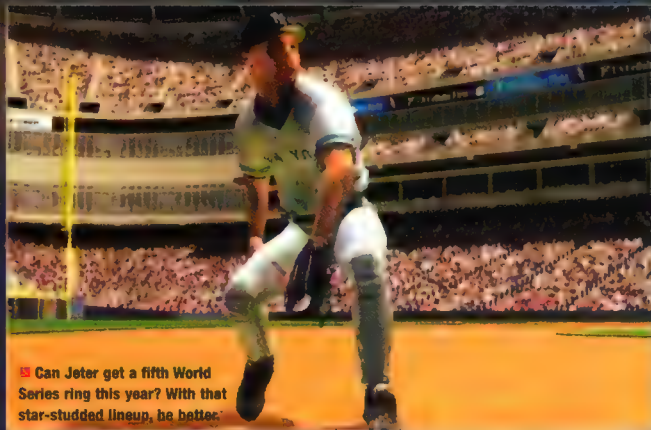
EGM: The humanity! Still, ever wish you possessed any of your virtual double's powers?

DJ: Almost every time I step out onto the field. Each game, there's at least one play I wish could hit the reset button.

EGM: As long as we're being honest, come clean...just how much more *Madden* than *All-Star Baseball* do you really play?

DJ: None. In fact, I think I'm the one [pro] who couldn't care less about football or basketball games. My friends and teammates swear by that stuff. Me? Baseball is the only sport in my blood—and my home console, for that matter.

—Scott Steinberg



Can Jeter get a fifth World Series ring this year? With that star-studded lineup, he better.



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YO, JOE!

Viewtiful Joe 2 henshin-a-go-goes to the Cube and PS2

After garnering critical praise—including *USA Today's* Game of the Year award and a (far more prestigious) Silver award from *EGM*—solid sales numbers, and thousands of diehard fans, did you think Capcom would bring back its awesome action-fighting hybrid *Viewtiful Joe* for another go?

As the cocky hero himself would say, "Well, duh!"

More surprising is what system the sequel is coming to—or, should we say, systems. No longer a Nintendo exclusive series, *Viewtiful Joe 2* is coming to both the GameCube and PS2 this winter. (In fact, the first game is on its way to Sony's system as well—see sidebar.)

At this point, it looks like *VJ2* will follow the original *Joe's* formula in many respects: same 2D-3D hybrid graphics and crazed comic-book art style, plus familiar enemies and power-ups. But Capcom points out a few key differences: First of all, *Joe's* girlfriend, Sylvia, will star as a second playable character from the start of the game (she cameoed as an unlockable extra character in *VJ*). She packs a pistol for long range attacks, which should mix

up the usual close-quarters fistcuffs we're used to. Second, all of *Joe's* old *Matrix*-style time-warping VFX powers—slow, mach speed, and zoom—will be joined by new abilities like replay. Before you start thinking *Blink* or *Prince of Persia*, here's how it'll work: After punching an enemy, you can replay the scene over and over for triple damage, or use replay after eating a healing ham burger to triple its replenishing power. Finally, *Joe's* trusty vehicle, Six Machine, returns (he flew it in a side-scrolling shooting stage in *VJ*), now with six different transformations for him to pilot, including a race car, drill, cannon, and submarine.

Development will be handled by the newly formed Clover Studio, an independent start-up funded by Capcom. But don't worry about an inexperienced team taking over *Joe's* fate: Clover is headed up by Atsushi Inaba and Hideki Kamiya, the same guys responsible for the original *Viewtiful Joe*, as well as *Devil May Cry*, *Steel Battalion*, and *Resident Evil 2*.

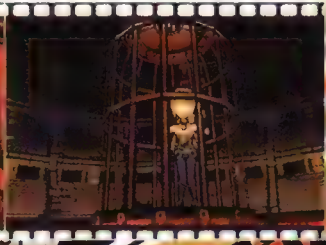
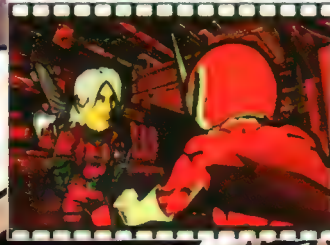
—Mark MacDonald

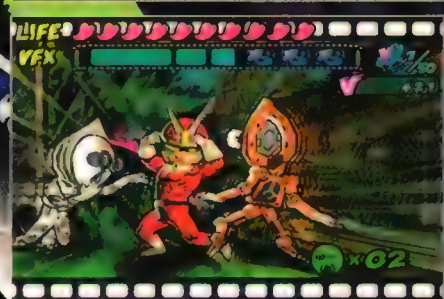
Joe's first adventure is on its way to the PS2, too!

That's right. While they're waiting for *VJ2's* winter release, PS2 owners can get familiar with the series by playing a version of the original game for their system this summer. And this ain't your average *Joe*. Small tweaks and additions are promised, including an appearance by *Devil May Cry's* half-man, half-demon hero Dante.

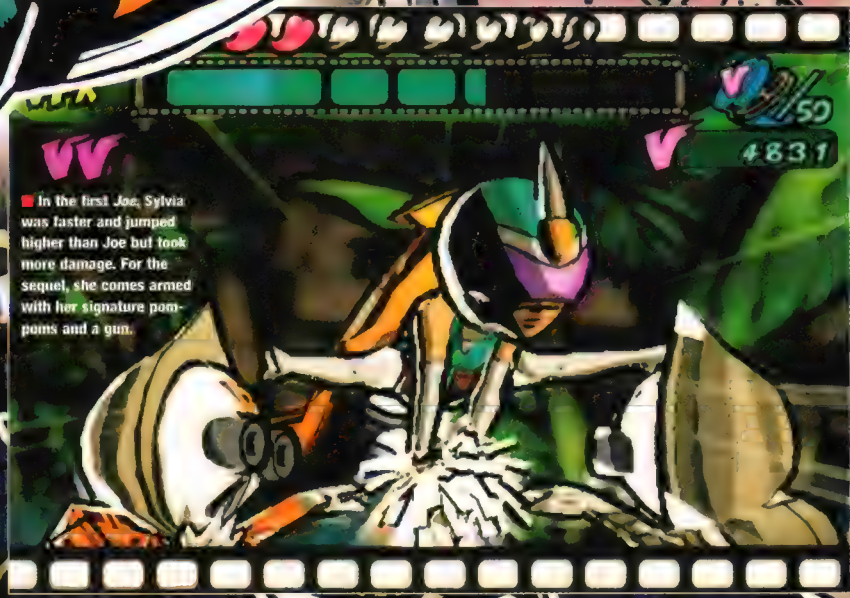
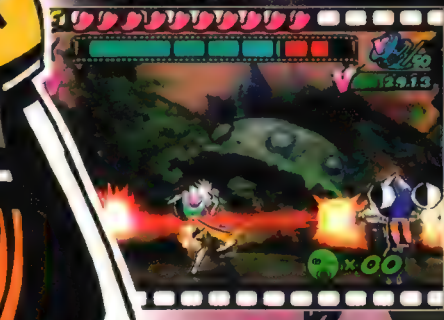


Joe's mach speed ability returns, along with all his old VFX powers.





In addition to this jungle stage, VJ2 will include levels set in underground ruins, ancient Japan, snowcapped mountains, and outer space.



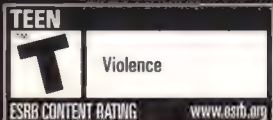
In the first Joe, Sylvia was faster and jumped higher than Joe but took more damage. For the sequel, she comes armed with her signature pom-poms and a gun.

T H E T H R E A




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pennies aplenty and still line their software library with some great games. Combining greed with the thriftiness of heartless miser, we've constructed a series of Xbox bundles for different types of

gamers—and each one will cost you less than 300 bucks, not including tax. Also, be sure to check out egmextras.1UP.com for more supercheap bundles.


—Greg Orlando

<p>The Gone Shooting Bundle</p>  <p>Xbox console with Halo, \$169.99</p> <p>Armed and Dangerous (LucasArts), \$29.99 — Laugh and blow stuff up.</p> <p>Max Payne 2: The Fall of Max Payne (Rockstar), \$29.99 — You have the right to shoot lots of thugs in the face.</p> <p>Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War (Activision), \$19.99 — Have fun storming this Nazi-ridden castle!</p> <p>Panzer Dragoon Orta (Sega), \$19.99 Delicious pun alert: You "Orta" play this beautiful sci-fi shooter.</p> <p>Metal Arms: Glitch in the System (VU Games), \$19.99 — Who wins when sassy robots go to war? We all do.</p> <p>Total = \$289.94</p>	<p>The I Can't Drive 55 Bundle</p>  <p>Xbox console, \$149.99</p> <p>Project Gotham Racing 2 (Microsoft), \$29.99 — Online-enabled <i>Project Gotham Racing 2</i> is like video chocolate.</p> <p>Burnout 2: Point of Impact (Acclaim), \$29.99 — The best crashes of any car game today. This one is a must-have.</p> <p>Sega GT Online (Sega), \$19.99 One of the deepest racers ever created.</p> <p>RalliSport Challenge (Microsoft), \$19.99 — Rally racing is fun. Really.</p> <p>TOCA Race Driver 2: The Ultimate Racing Simulator (Codemasters), \$29.99 — Wow, that's a mouthful, but a very good racing sim nonetheless.</p> <p>Total = \$279.94</p>	<p>The See You Online Bundle</p>  <p>Xbox console, \$149.99</p> <p>Xbox Live Starter Kit with MechAssault, \$69.99 — Includes a year subscription to Xbox Live, a communicator headset, as well as a copy of the fine shooter <i>MechAssault</i>.</p> <p>Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge (Microsoft), \$29.99 Plane combat is plainly great when played against 15 other online pilots.</p> <p>Capcom vs. SNK 2: EO (Capcom), \$29.99 — Intercampany brawling makes for a great time on Xbox Live.</p> <p>Unreal Championship (Atari), \$19.99 — A very thrifty way to perfect your fragging and trash-talking skills.</p> <p>Total = \$299.95</p>	<p>The Sporto Bundle</p>  <p>Xbox console, \$149.99</p> <p>Top Spin (Microsoft), \$29.99 — Hands down the best tennis game ever. And it has hottie Anna Kournikova on the box.</p> <p>ESPN NFL Football (ESPN Videogames), \$39.99 — Unlike <i>Madden</i>, ESPN's gridiron offering is playable online. Also, it's \$10 cheaper than EA's game.</p> <p>Amped 2 (Microsoft), \$29.99 It's like <i>Tony Hawk</i>, but on a snowboard. <i>Amped 2</i> also includes online slopes.</p> <p>Mad Catz control pad (Mad Catz), \$19.99 — A fine third-party controller for when a friend comes over to get his ass handed to him.</p> <p>Total = \$269.95</p>
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WHOSE GAME IS IT ANYWAY?

Match the title to its story line. C'mon, try it....

<p>A Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes (GC)</p>	<p>1 A lone agent takes on terrorists planning to release smallpox on the unsuspecting public.</p>
<p>B Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow (PS2/XB/GC)</p>	<p>2 A lone agent takes on terrorists planning to release a mysterious mutated virus on the unsuspecting public.</p>
<p>C Syphon Filter: The Omega Strain (PS2)</p>	<p>3 A lone agent takes on terrorists planning to release a nuclear weapon on the unsuspecting public.</p>
<p>D Fugitive Hunter: War on Terror (PS2)</p>	<p>4 A lone agent takes on terrorists, and we can't believe anybody would release such a crappy game on the unsuspecting public.</p>

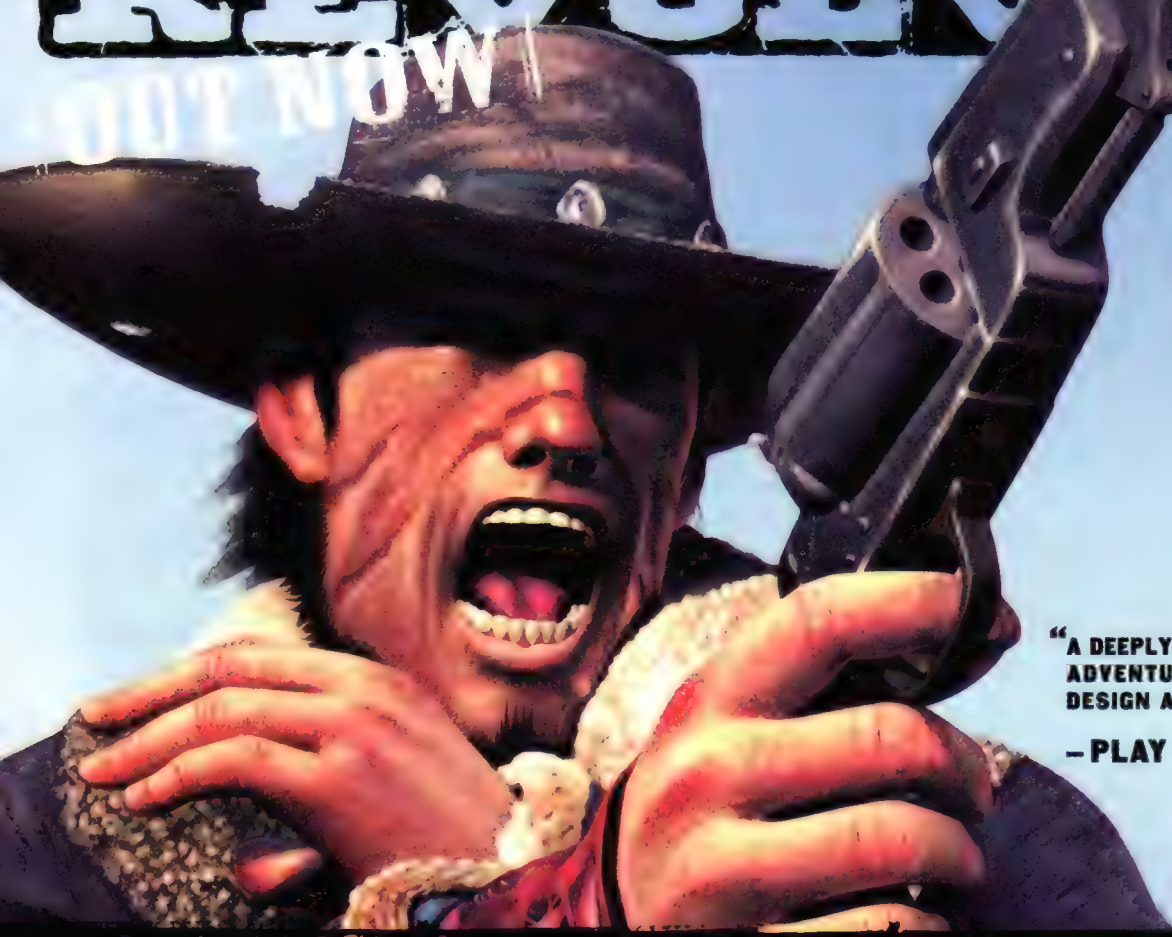


Answers: A-3, B-1, C-2, D-4
Illustration by Enocore

➤ MIDWAY ARCADE TREASURES 2 (COMING TO PS2, XB, AND GC THIS FALL) FEATURES MORE THAN 20 CLASSIC GAMES, INCLUDING MORTAL KOMBAT, NARC, AND PRIMAL RAGE... ➤

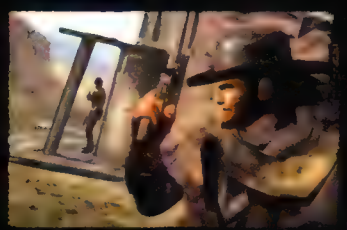
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PlayStation 2



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Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Black Arrow will incorporate upcoming Xbox Live features like clan support and user-created tournaments.

ONLINE THIS MONTH

Xbox is getting a whole lot livelier

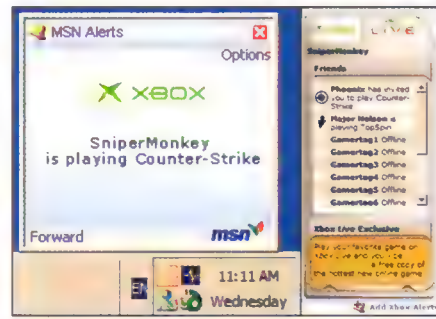
Shame on you. That's right, shame on you if you have an Xbox and a broadband Internet connection in your home, but *don't* have an Xbox Live subscription. Lucky for you, though, now is looking like the best time to finally sign up for Microsoft's online service—one new feature is available today and several more are on the way.

Voice messages have recently been added to the list of available Xbox Live options (if you haven't already, simply log on to Xbox Live and you'll automatically download this all-new feature). You can now record 15-second audio clips and send them at any time to your gaming buddies—useful when verifying friend requests or simply reminding your online counterparts how they got served in last night's *Crimson Skies* match.

In the coming months (an exact date is still to be determined), you'll be able to send game invites to friends who are

signed on to MSN Messenger. Also, Microsoft's PC chat program will soon have a specially marked Xbox tab, so you can check the online status of your Xbox Live pals.

As for the games, the next wave of Live-enabled titles can include clan support, user-created tournaments, and online content swapping (emblems, customized maps, rosters, etc.). Ubisoft has already announced that its upcoming squad-based shooter *Rainbow Six 3 Black Arrow* will incorporate several of these features—specifically, clan support and custom tournaments. So even if none of your buds game on Live, finding new ones'll be a snap.



Keep tabs on your Xbox Live buddies via MSN Messenger.

On egmextras.1UP.com

Don't forget to head over to our new and improved website, where you'll find our complete *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow* Afterthoughts interview, a chat with the writer of *The Shield* videogame, and the full transcript of our talk with the creators of *TimeSplitters: Future Perfect*.

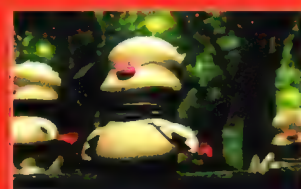
must-hit websites



1up.com — Steve Kravitz won't do it. He's already had to do it again. But 25-year-old amateur filmmaker Steve Kravitz is now the star of *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow*. This is the story of the old and the new. The story of the old and the new. The story of the old and the new.



1up.com — It's a new day for Mario. The first Mario game for the Game Boy Advance. The first Mario game for the Game Boy Advance. The first Mario game for the Game Boy Advance.



Final Fantasy XI Online — It's a new day for Final Fantasy. The first Final Fantasy game for the PlayStation 2. The first Final Fantasy game for the PlayStation 2. The first Final Fantasy game for the PlayStation 2.

ONLINE NOW

How to pass the time while waiting for Halo 2



Xbox Amped 2
Your local ski park may be closed during the dog days of summer, but Microsoft's breathtaking virtual mountains stay open and covered with fresh powder 365 days a year. So do yourself a favor and dig out that online lift ticket and download three brand-new *Amped 2* courses: Sky, Pioneer, and Slopestyle 2003.

Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3

Sure, you're probably plenty busy with *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow* (who isn't?), but don't forget about Ubisoft's other top-of-the-line Tom Clancy game. Those with an itchy Xbox Live trigger finger can now download two additional *Rainbow Six 3* multiplayer maps. One is set in an abandoned train yard in Heidelberg, Germany, while the other's backdrop is a Los Angeles parking garage. Like all other RS3 downloads, these two are free.



PlayStation 2

Final Fantasy XI Online

The dedicated players of Square Enix's massively multiplayer role-playing game can now enjoy *FFXI*'s first conflict event, ballista. It's kind of like soccer—teams (made up of players from the same nation) move a stone (called a petra) up and down the field with large castelike structures (the rooks) serving as the goals. Whichever team has the most points after a set time wins the match. Hey, it can't be any worse than *Phantasy Star Online*'s silly soccer minigame. Also, a character's experience won't be affected by the outcome of a ballista contest.



Buckle up. Danger just called 'shotgun.'

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it's good to play together

xbox.com/rallysport2

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SQUARELY RETRO

Square Enix revisits the past with a duo of surprise releases

You rarely hear "unexpected sequel" or "surprising remake" when discussing videogames, since rehashes and endless follow-ups increasingly seem to be the lifeblood of the gaming industry. Yet, somehow, Square Enix still managed to blindside gamers with these two titles—a revamped double pack of *Final Fantasy I & II* for GBA and an out-of-nowhere sequel to the moderately successful 1998 PS1 action-RPG *Brave Fencer Musashi*.

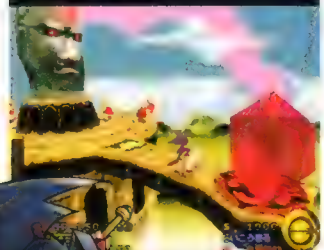
Expect further revelations from our chocobo-herding pals in the coming months, including information on a rumored *Final Fantasy*-based action game for PS2, a potential sequel to *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles* for GameCube, and more *FF* titles for GBA (both remakes and originals).

Final Fantasy I & II Advance

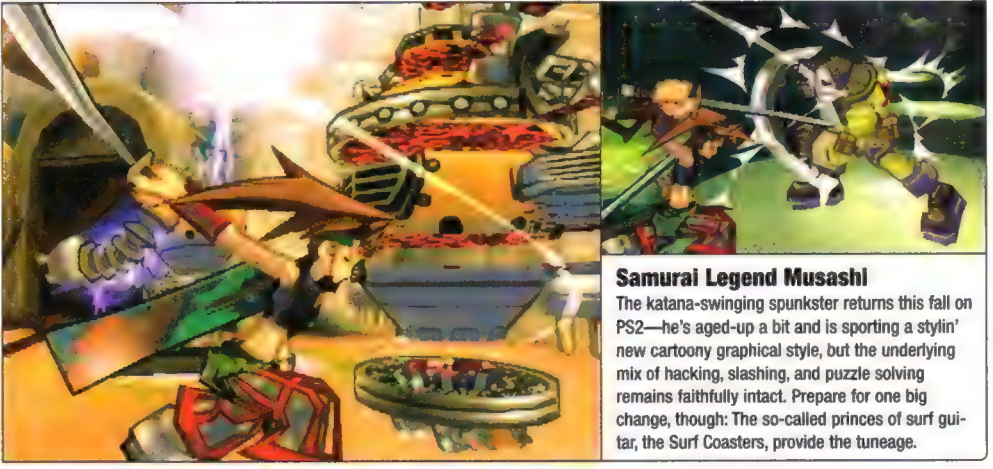
Toss out that copy of *Final Fantasy Origins* (the combo pack of *Final Fantasy I & II* for PS1), 'cause this new *FF* combo pack for Game Boy Advance bests it with improved visuals, modernized magic-point and experience systems, and an all-new dungeon and boss for each game. Look for it this fall.



Musashi Who?



Catch up with Square's spiky-haired boy samurai in *Brave Fencer Musashi*, a light-hearted role-playing romp for PS1 that earned a Silver Award here in EGM.

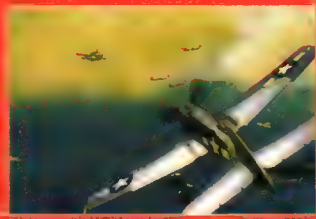


Samurai Legend Musashi
The katana-swinging punkster returns this fall on PS2—he's aged-up a bit and is sporting a stylin' new cartoony graphical style, but the underlying mix of hacking, slashing, and puzzle solving remains faithfully intact. Prepare for one big change, though: The so-called princes of surf guitar, the Surf Coasters, provide the tuneage.

L'I'L PREVIEWS: KNOWING WHO YOUR ONLINE FRIENDS (AND ENEMIES) ARE

HEROES OF THE PACIFIC

PS2/WX • EA • December 2004 — Explosive war of warts gets added to the ambitious re-creation of World War II's biggest Pacific theater campaign. The game supports an astounding 300 players online at once.



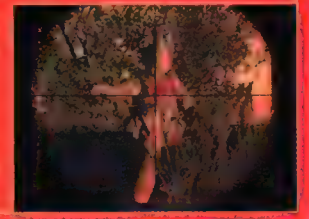
RISE OF THE KAMEK

PS2 • Sony • EA • June 2005 — Out-there. The Marx of *Goosebumps* calls a spook with *Kamek*—word is *Kamek* has several tiers of new, unique, references to the cool 1980s horror classic, a new



OPERATION FLASHPOINT

XB • Codemasters • Fall 2004 — Big war! Authority? The 31st Airborne Division's Flashpoint is to train and defend its troops in action, and by developer Codemasters to provide training conditions for the U.S.





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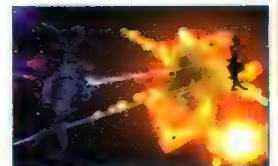
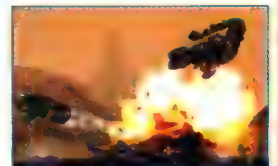


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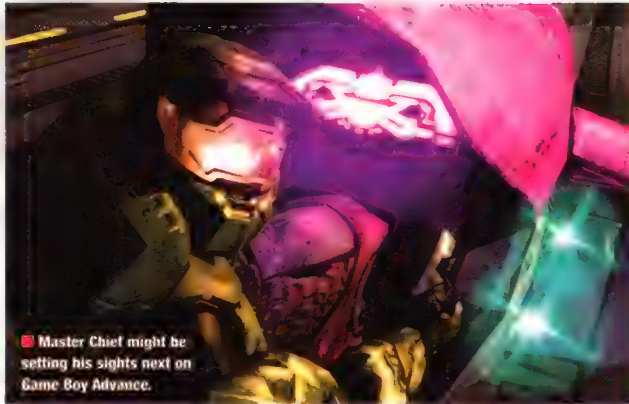
THE RUMOR MILL

Gossip that pumps up the volume

Hey all you listeners out there, it's that time again—when the most controversial voice in radio today, The Q, scorches the airwaves with another batch of red-hot gossip hits you won't wanna miss. So sit back, relax, and let the rhythm of my rumors soothe your gaming soul. These heavy hitters are sure to place me atop the FCC's most-wanted list (Howard Stern who?), so e-mail your truly at quartermann@ziffdavis.com while you still can. —The Q

Lady Lara's comeback story

Few things make Quartermann cry, but watching the rise and fall of Eidos' *Tomb Raider* franchise brought a tear to my eye. (Who says The Q ain't sensitive?) Luckily, Ms. Croft is now in the good hands of developer Crystal Dynamics (*Legacy of Kain* series), and she could be back in action much sooner than expected. The next *Tomb Raider* game will reportedly arrive in '05 on PlayStation 2 (not the next-gen consoles, as some had thought), with completely new visuals and, more importantly, overhauled game-play mechanics.



Master Chief might be setting his sights next on Game Boy Advance.

Halo advancements

Word around Quartermann headquarters is that the long-awaited Xbox sequel to *Halo* isn't the only time you'll be donning Master Chief's armor. The intel I've come across indicates that Microsoft has in the works a brand-new *Halo* title for—brace yourself—Nintendo's Game Boy Advance. This news comes as quite a shock to me too, folks, but like my momma always says—the more *Halo*, the better.

More Need for Speed

I sure hope Electronic Arts' video grease monkeys are getting paid overtime these days. Not only are they working on an *Underground* sequel (check out our preview on page 44), but my spies tell me that development on another *Need for Speed* game is already underway. Details are scarce, but The Q hears this one (supposedly subtitled *Most Wanted*) will feature a cor-

nucopia of car types. I'm talking tuners, muscle cars, exotics...the works!

Suffer some more

Apparently, Midway isn't finished scaring the living bejeezus outta us. A little birdie whispered into my ear that a sequel to its horror-filled action game *The Suffering* is coming next year. But that's not the only sequel the publisher has cooking; Midway has every intention of making its upcoming stealth-action game *Psi-Ops: The Mindgate Conspiracy* into a series.

Pint-sized GTA

Last month I knocked your socks off with info on a *Metal Gear* game for Sony's PlayStation Portable (better known around these parts as PSP). Well, hold on to your knickers, boys and girls, 'cause I just got wind of another blockbuster franchise coming to PSP—*Grand Theft Auto*. Yep, my sources tell me that those rock stars at...uh, Rockstar are cranking away on a *GTA* project designed specifically for Sony's upcoming handheld. Where will the game be set? If I had a vote, I'd cast it for Vegas, baby, Vegas!



The *Grand Theft Auto* series is coming to Sony's PSP? So says Q-Mam.

OVERHEARD



"[Acclaim] has taken the franchise of the Mary-Kate and Ashley brand in videogames and has now run it into the ground."

—From a lawsuit filed by Mary-Kate and Ashley against Acclaim Entertainment, suing the company for about \$500,000

"For some reason the day before Valentine's day [the number of people playing *SOCOM II* online] went down a lot. But it [went back to normal] on Valentine's Day, which is scary."

—Sony Senior Producer Seth Luisi in a presentation about online gaming at the Game Developers Conference



"I need the same kind of skill [that you use to play *Super Monkey Ball*] to go into a body and sew two pieces of intestine together."

—Surgeon Dr. James "Butch" Rossier on how videogames can help develop hand-eye coordination

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MUSIC CHOICE ALTERNATIVE

MUSIC CHOICE 

ARTIST FACT
Thursdays is singer Geoff Rickley, guitarists Steve Pedula and Tom Keely, bassist Tim Payne, and drummer Tucker Rule.

Song: War All The Time
Album: War All The Time
Artist: Thursdays



MUSIC CHOICE METAL

MUSIC CHOICE 

ARTIST FACT
Boyzetfire producer Dave Fortman previously worked with bands such as 12 Rods and Evanescence.

Song: Full Color Guilt
Album: Tomorrow Come Today
Artist: Boyzsetfire



MUSIC CHOICE RAP

MUSIC CHOICE 


ARTIST FACT
In 1999, Columbia never released 50 Cent's debut album Power of the Dollar due to heavy bootlegging.

Song: Rain On Me
Album: Get Rich Or Die Tryin
Artist: 50 Cent




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MUSIC CHOICE 

ARTIST FACT
Alice In Chains recorded their Jar of Flies EP in seven days.

Song: Nutshell
Album: Jar Of Flies
Artist: Alice In Chains



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FIRST LOOK: THE SHIELD

Bad cop...and worse cop

Tommy Vercetti's lovable lack of remorse, insatiable greed, and general lawlessness helped make *Vice City* a hit, so gamers looking for more moral relativism, take note: Heroes don't get much more antiheroic than *The Shield's* Vic Mackey. He's a loyal family man and a hard-nosed detective...but his unique code of ethics allows him to not only use whatever force necessary to achieve justice, but to also keep a cut of whatever cash and contraband he recovers.

Problem is, the source material here—

FX's gritty TV cop drama—doesn't translate into a game very naturally. Shakily filmed scenes of cops discussing shady deals wouldn't make for fun playin', so the developers at Point of View instead opt to focus on the show's most action-packed element—when Vic and his boys bust into some perp's pad and inflict serious hurt. Don't worry if you haven't been keeping up with the show, though. Writer Scott Rosenbaum explains, "We're going to keep exposition to a minimum—it's going to feel like a lost episode, with the emphasis squarely on gameplay."

As Vic, you infiltrate L.A.'s crumbling churches, grimy crack houses, and shady hideouts to weed out wrongdoers. (Squadmates provide backup on some missions, but you won't be issuing *Rainbow Six*-style squad commands.) Since authenticity is paramount, you'll only have access to real-world weapons that the LAPD would use, but combat shouldn't get stale, thanks to complex hand-to-hand brawling and a multitude of ways to slam guys against walls (and other objects). Look for Vic's ends to justify his means on PS2 and Xbox in early 2005.

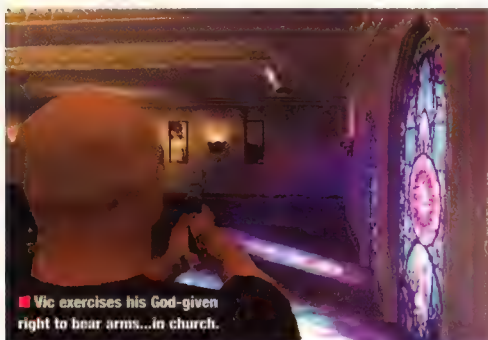


• Vic makes good on that "Kill your television" bumper sticker.



Crossing the Line

If you watch *The Shield* on FX, you're aware of just how far it pushes the limits of basic cable with intense gore, rampant profanity, and raw sexuality (including some seriously unwelcome sodomy in a recent episode). Can we expect Sammy Studios' interactive take to be even more shocking? "While the game will be Mature, we're also making sure we keep it realistic," explains Scott Rosenbaum, writer for both the game and the show. "Like in the show, we don't do things because we can do them—we do them only when they add value to the story we're trying to tell.... 'Gratuitous' is a bad word on *The Shield*."



• Vic exercises his God-given right to bear arms...in church.



REALITY CHECK

Experts explain what happens when videogames get real

Q: Could someone survive a fall into a pit of molten lava if he or she jumped out really quick, à la Mario from any of his adventures?

A: Sure, if you're quick—as in impossibly, inhumanly quick. "If you spent all of one microsecond in the lava, you could theoretically jump back out," says geologist Dr. Rhonda Adkins.



"You'd have to be amazingly fast because [lava is] 750 to 1,200 degrees Celsius, well over the boiling point of water. Since water makes up most of the human body, you would vaporize almost instantaneously." Adkins says it is possible to take a quick step or two on a thin flow of lava after it has cooled somewhat. "You probably couldn't ever wear those shoes again," she says.

Submit game scenarios you'd like to see tested in real life to EGM@ziffdavis.com. Write "Reality Check" in the e-mail's subject line.



• "I'm-a having a Mario party...in-a my pants."

Illustration by Ericone

LOOK FOR THQ'S TOTALLY CREEPY CAVEMAN TO RETURN THIS FALL ON PS2, XBOX, GAMECUBE, AND GBA IN *TAK 2: THE STAFF OF DREAMS*, ANOTHER JUJU-FILLED PLATFORMER.

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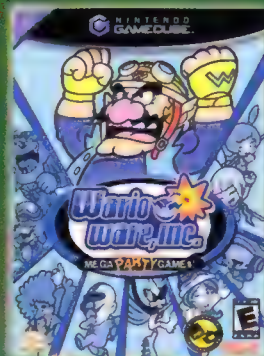
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THE HOT TEN

These games simply can't get here soon enough

Disagree with the list? You're the ones who created it. Rock your vote at www.egmmag.com.



■ *FFXII* guest stars the feisty Viera gals from *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance*.

- 1** Halo 2 (see pg. 30)
XB • Fall 2004
- 2** Final Fantasy XII
PS2 • Spring 2005
- 3** Metal Gear Solid 3
PS2 • Fall 2004
- 4** Resident Evil 4
GC • Fall 2004
- 5** Doom 3
XB • October 2004
- 6** Geist
GC • Fall 2004
- 7** Kingdom Hearts II
PS2 • Early 2005
- 8** Knights of the Old Republic 2
XB • February 2005
- 9** Star Fox 2
GC • Fall 2004
- 10** Fable
XB • September 2004



■ Is it just us, or does this look sorta like *The Phantom Menace*?

FINAL FANTASY XII

PS2 • Spring 2005 — With great power comes great perks. Yoichi Wada, the man at the reins of the mighty two-headed juggernaut that is Square Enix, recently let a few words slip on the company's biggest upcoming titles. Wada stated that *Dragon Warrior VIII* was

proudly carrying on the series' staunch traditions of old-school role-playing. As for *FFXII*, he described it as moving further away from RPG convention and leading the series in a new, far more interactive direction. How we long for that sweet embrace....



■ Prepare to battle beasts with a bud over Xbox Live.

DOOM 3

XB • October 2004 — In space, they say, no one can hear you scream. We're not really sure whether *Doom 3* takes place in outer space or hell, or if an inverted demon-baby head with spider legs even has ears, but we do know that at least one other person will hear you howl in terror thanks to an Xbox-exclusive co-op mode. Eek!



Unlock hidden characters, upgrade your weapons and find new worlds with these sweet cheats, tips and tricks. Cut out the cards, and stash them in the game case so you can really get into the game. Check out www.getintothegame.com to download a coupon for \$5 off any game shown here and check out more codes for the latest hot titles.

Check out www.getintothegame.com to download a coupon for \$5 off any game shown here and check out more codes for the latest hot titles.

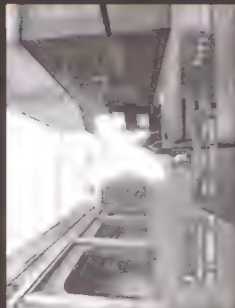
TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3



PS2

SECRET TIPS!

- Weapons equipped with reflex sights (M4 & G36C) are great for moving while zoomed in. Unlike the scoped weapons, the reflex sight doesn't obscure your peripheral vision. Plus the 2x zoom is less disorienting while moving making these weapons ideal for clearing rooms.
- When stealth is essential, always drop to a crouch before moving out. Crouched movement reduces the amount of noise produced in addition to lowering your visible profile.
- Thermal vision can be used to see through smoke as well as closed doors. Scan for enemy heat signatures to gather intel on a room before staging an assault.



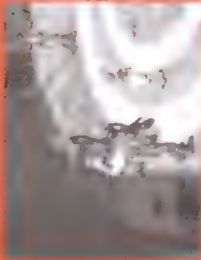
POKÉMON COLOSSEUM



GC

CATCH THEM ALL!

- When you attempt to leave Pyrite City, three trainers block the exit—each with a different Pokémon. Scouting the trainers before you battle will help you identify who has which Pokémon you really want before picking your fight.
- Hidden Pokémon that appear only through battle can be easy to accept every challenge you can find. The town square in Pyrite Town is full of trainers looking for a good scrap.
- Higher level trainers in Pyrite Village, the forest paradise. Check hidden chests and secret rooms to reveal secret passages that reveal Item Boxes full of helpful goodies.



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HITMAN: CONTRACTS



PS2, XBOX

ASSASSIN SKILLS

- **Mission 2: The Meat King's Party**
The large meeting area on the first floor of the slaughterhouse features a motorized rail. You can use this rail to hide dead bodies.
Drag a corpse onto the steel platform on the far west side of the room. Use the nearby control panel to stop the motorized rail as a fire meat hook approaches. An option appears in the Action List, allowing you to hang the corpse on the hook.
- **Mission 3: The Bjartskov Band**
Enter the mess hall's kitchen under the guise of a waiter. Pick up the laxative from the counter-top and dump it into the nearby pot of borscht. Fechs eventually eats the tainted soup, and the laxative soon causes him to stumble into the mess hall's restroom.
Walk over to the mess hall's fireplace and snag the fire poker from the nearby rack. Enter the restroom and wait for Fechs to take the fire stool. Bludgeon him with the fire poker, then steal his clothing to assume his identity.





Unlock hidden characters, upgrade your weapons and find new worlds with these sweet cheats, tips and tricks. Cut out the cards, and stash them in the game case so you can really get into the game. Check out www.Geintothegame.com to download a coupon for \$5 off any game shown here and check out more codes for the latest hot titles.

Check out www.geintothegame.com to download a coupon for \$5 off any game on this card. While you're there, get the scoop on all the hottest games and accessories.

NINJA GRIDEN



NINJA TIPS

The Final Solution
Technique for lower level enemies of any stripe. The Final Solution equates to instant death. Combine the Guillotine Throw (press Y while near an enemy) with a follow-up Flying Sparrow (press Y while jumping forward on enemy) while they're flat on their backs. This will decapitate just about every low-level enemy and should be a mainstay in your arsenal even at higher levels.

Secret Weapon: Doblithero
This massive sword, with its 100-pound heft, makes the War Hammer seem like a child's toy. In addition to shattering walls and barriers, just as well as the Hammer, it's also a much more powerful weapon. Collect 20 Golden Scarabs to earn this weapon.



XBOX



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TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW



SURVIVAL SKILLS

Multipayer
Mercenary Tactics
When playing the mercenaries, you must defend the ND133 consist of all costs. Luckily, each building can only be assaulted by a couple of access areas, so it's possible for mercenaries to camp the choke points—the points that the Shadownet players must pass through—and blast them to pieces.

Multipayer Spy Strategies
Your most important tactic will be subterfuge. You can send one spy to trigger an alarm at a main entrance, especially one close to ND133 tubes, and force the mercenaries to counter with some armed security. While they're busy in that section, a second spy can mount a quick in-and-out assault on another building's ND133. Operate in a timely manner and you can have the mercenaries pulling their collective hair out. Drop your smoke grenades at the first sign of enemy fire.



XBOX



VAN HELSING



MONSTER MASH

PUZZLE BREAKTHROUGHS

In Van Helsing
your weapons slay monsters and they hold the key to some puzzles. Maybe you searched an entire room with a stilette puzzle and found nothing. You may have even searched the statue itself, but did you search it with the correct weapon? By aiming and shooting a weapon like the Crossbow into a slot too small for your fingers, you can release a reward you might not have found otherwise. The same holds true for any of the energy based puzzles throughout the game that can be charged up with your Electric Gun.

FIRE THE BOSS
Bosses are the toughest monsters on each mission, the monsters that can usually eat you for lunch if you don't serve them up a lead sandwich. Certain bosses, like the werewolf Volkam, will grapple with you and may catch you in a devastating move like his famous chokehold. It doesn't have to end there, however. Rather than suck up the damage, you can break some of these fast as your trigger finger will go. If you're good, all your shots will inflict damage and you'll avoid going splat at the end of the boss' maneuver.



PS2, XBOX



COMING SOON

Summer's slim pickin's



Street Fighter's Ken (Ken's not in school).

JULY 2004



Athens 2004
PS2 • 989 Sports — It's a bit early to tell just how special Sony's Olympic Games will be.

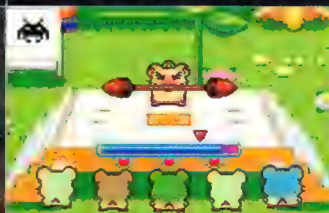


Catwoman
PS2/XB/GC • EA Games — Things get frisky when an enchanted cat imbues Patience Phillips (played by Halle Berry in the forthcoming flick) with feline powers.

As Catwoman, she prowls about rooftops, sees in the dark, and toys with crooks before pouncing on 'em, but can she clean up after herself when she's done?



Crimson Tears
PS2 • Capcom — Spill blood in labyrinths with a pair of test-tube babies bio-engineered to spill blood in labyrinths.



Hamtaro: Rainbow Rescue
GBA • Nintendo — Where do hamsters go for spring break? Hamsterdam. If you found that funny, this pacifier's for you.



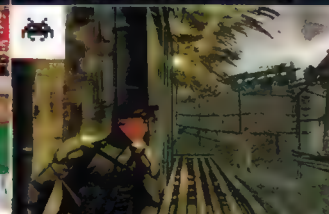
Nebula: Echo Night
PS2 • Agetec — Space is scarier when seen through a helmet and set to the sound of your own erratic breathing.



Pro Fishing Challenge
XB • Atlus — Land the big one and mount 'im on your memory card. Six-pack and sunscreen not included.



NCAA Football 2005
PS2/XB/GC • EA Sports — An all-new crowd-noise-control feature gives Madden's W'l bro the home-field advantage. And now, calling timeouts actually makes a difference: You can coach specific positions (like a rattled QB), or ice the opponent's nervous kicker.



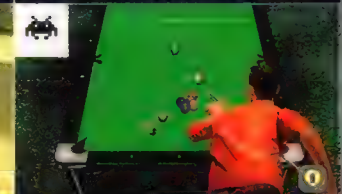
Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow
PS2/GC • Ubisoft — Sam Fisher sneaks onto PS2 and GC with the spy game that garnered our gold award on Xbox.



Street Fighter Anniversary Collection
PS2 • Capcom — Celebrate the series' 15th year on consoles with *Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike* and *Hyper Street Fighter II*.



Tales of Symphonia
GC • Namco — Were guessing fans of this RPG franchise won't mind the cuddly characters and cartoon-like graphics.



World Championship Pool
GC • Jaleco — Boasts more minigames than butts in a tavern's ashtray. Sadly, Merle Haggard's not on the soundtrack.

UNUSUAL SUSPECTS

Six new games that build upon the roots of Grand Theft Auto



When a product attains a certain level of success, it's just a matter of time before someone rushes a crappy imitation to market in hopes of a free ride on the gravy train. *The Smurfs* had to contend with *The Snorks*. Debbie Gibson had to fend off mall-concert competition from Tiffany, and *The Addams Family* fought valiantly against the lameness of *The*

Munsters. Likewise, in the wake of *Grand Theft Auto's* industry-quaking prosperity, fans eager for a comparable experience had to make do with disappointing games like *True Crime: Streets of L.A.* and *RoadKill*. Now that the quickie cash-ins have landed, though, it appears that *GTA's* massive popularity might have a lasting, positive effect on videogames. Its unique mix of

GTA's massive popularity might have a lasting, positive effect on videogames.

free-form gameplay, branching missions, street-smart humor, and sexy harlots continues to inspire other developers. For the

Six games in this feature, thievery is the sincerest form of flattery. —Justin Speer, Shawn Elliott, and Shane Bettenhausen

■ The choppers in *Mercenaries* aren't just for sightseeing.



MERCENARIES

PS2/XB • LucasArts • Fall 2004

What's the world to do when a coup in North Korea tosses a live grenade in its lap? Throw some mercs on top of it. It's a dire situation: Tanks roll through cities, innocent civilians perish, and intrepid journalists become POWs. You find yourself knee-deep in this dog pile as a gun hired on behalf of the United States, Sweden (are Swedes secretly badasses?), or Britain to replace the pin before the situation explodes. Each agent is fluent in a different foreign language, which allows him or her to forge unique alliances with factions—but whoever you play as, stuff's gonna blow up real good.

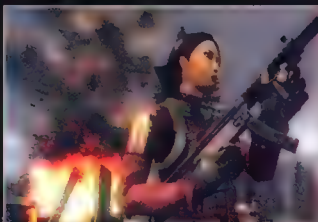
Like *Grand Theft Auto*, *Mercenaries* takes a do-what-you-wanna-do, kill-who-you-wanna-kill approach to missions in a seamless sprawl. Instead of shooting up

nodes in a criminal network, you tackle (or team up with) Chinese- and Russian-sponsored cutthroats with the help of drivable tanks, choppers, and some serious air support. Drop a bunker-busting bomb on an enemy outpost and, after the shock wave sends everything in the vicinity flying, a tsunami of smoke and debris washes out from the epicenter.

The guys at developer Pandemic don't mind the *GTA* comparison. "We love *Grand Theft Auto* and take comparison between the two games as a compliment," admits Director Cameron Brown. "But unlike *GTA*, we allow you to destroy anything, including entire city blocks. Plus, our faction system is much more integrated into the structure of the game than was the case with *GTA's* gangs." ▶



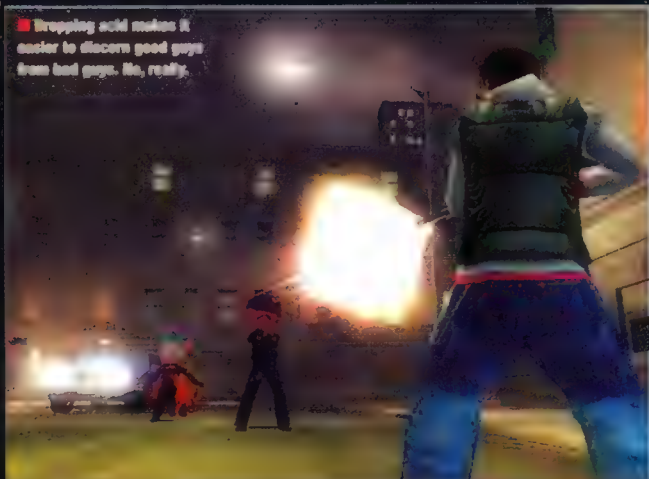
THE PITCH



■ When negotiations fail, switch to brute force.



■ Dropping acid makes it easier to discern good guys from bad guys. No, really.



NARC

PS2/XB • Midway • Spring 2005

Like the *Grand Theft Auto* series, this game puts you in a sprawling, crime-infested city where you can take on missions or operate under your free will. But wake up and smell the coca, because Vice City this ain't. "Narc is not about kicking grandmas for cash and stealing cars," explains Creative Director Tom Hall. "It's about being an undercover narcotics officer and facing temptations that those officers face while trying to do their job." Taking bribes and using excessive force, buying, selling, and even doing drugs—Tommy Vercetti's will was never this free.

As a ragtag duo of undercover cops named (actually, one would hope, nickname) Hitman and Max Force, it's up to you to uncover the truth about a dangerous new superdrug spreading through the

city. Will you stick to the straight edge or try to walk the line? Taking a hit might let you take bullets without flinching, but you might have to pony up the last of your cash to feed your addiction instead of buying a bulletproof vest. If you get hooked on a drug like crack, you have to get your fix regularly or deal with erratic controller rumbling and losing chunks of health. But hey, it's your body.

Still, if you aren't careful about who and what you smoke and shoot up (be careful what you drop, too), you'll screw your reputation with the force and get busted down to a lowly beat cop. Continue the downward spiral, and you'll end up a wanted criminal on the other side of the law. Didn't you know? "Winners don't use drugs."

THE PITCH



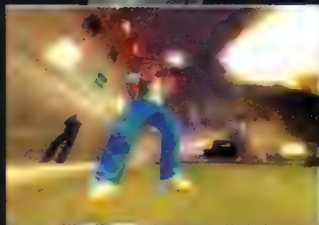
GTA



Up in Smoke



Narc



■ This is for pulling those walkie-talkies on E.T.



DESTROY ALL HUMANS

PS2/XB • THQ • Fall 2004

Being the foolish humans that they are, gamers relish the illusion of digital freedom provided by "sandbox" games like *Grand Theft Auto*. But would our intellectually superior alien overlords be satisfied with software in which interaction with humans was about as subtle as a blow to the head with a baseball bat?

In *Destroy All Humans*, extraterrestrial clone extraordinaire Cryptosproidium 137 is looking to harvest DNA from puny earthlings, and he has plenty of nonviolent interactions that don't involve parking in remote areas with a prostitute. They sound like they could actually be more fun, too. "There are some very cool weapons, but even better are the abilities you have as an alien and what you can do with them," says Andrew Goldman, CEO of developer

Pandemic.

"This is where the freedom comes from—messing with the people in the game for fun or to accomplish an objective."

For instance, you can prove Earth girls are easy by hypnotizing Peggy Sue or using psychokinesis to literally pick her up in front of her boyfriend. A more practical use of your mental powers would be to lure a guard from his post and will him to dance a jig to distract his buddy. When bizarre alien mind tricks and old-fashioned interrogation don't work, you can break out with the only language these filthy humans understand—your death-ray-equipped flying saucer. ▶



THE PITCH



GTA

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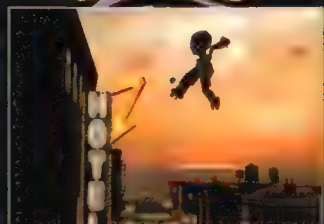


Mars Attacks!

=



Destroy All Humans





■ The fools you waste here aren't just random thugs—they're real players.

25 TO LIFE

PS2/XB • Eidos • February 2005

Eidos made life in the ghetto sound pretty damned depressing, but Eidos' upcoming *GTA*-inspired shooter promises to make gangbanging a blast. *25 to Life* thrusts you onto the mean streets, where you'll wake up to barking dogs, car alarms, and plenty of gunfire over the sounds of old-school and new-school hip-hop. Remember the most dangerous areas in Liberty City? You're there, and rolling up your windows isn't going to save you.

Unlike the other contenders here, *Life* bravely tackles a frontier that even *GTA* has dared to attempt yet—online play. Offline, the gameplay takes a page from the established mission-based dossier: You live the life of a rising young thug destined for bigger, badder things. The minute you step online, though, you'll find

yourself taking part in an urban war raging between rival gangs and police task forces. Whichever way, when the s*** goes down, you better be ready. "Imagine the online action of *SOCOM* reimagined on the gritty streets of *Grand Theft Auto*," explains Eidos' Denny Chiu. "It's a brutal world that will always be changing, as our players will define the direction of the turf war."

The game aims to include heavy character customization, whether you want to hit the streets looking like bulletproof-vested rapper 50 Cent (you are going to be taking a lot of lead) or deck out Officer O'Malley in the latest SWAT gear. Just know that you can't get access to the latest and greatest stuff without working your way up the ranks. *25 to Life* requires you to pay your dues. ▶

THE PITCH



■ Detect your antifeero with gangland couture like ski masks and bulletproof vests.



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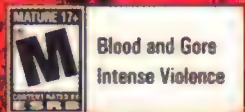
ONE GRAND PRIZE WINNER will receive airfare and a 3-night stay for two at a popular Las Vegas Strip hotel.* In addition, the Grand Prize winner will receive an **ONIMUSHA 3 DEMON SIEGE PRIZE PACK** that includes the following: a copy of the game, a signed poster from the Onimusha 3 team, an Onimusha 3 t-shirt, an Onimusha 3 standee, an Onimusha 3 "Behind the Scenes" DVD, an Onimusha 3 Brady Strategy Guide, a copy of Onimusha Warlords, and a copy of Onimusha 2. A Prize Package valued at \$2000!

5 FIRST PRIZE WINNERS will receive the Onimusha 3 Demon Siege Prize Pack (see contents above).

10 SECOND PRIZE WINNERS will receive a copy of Onimusha 3 Demon Siege plus ONE Onimusha 3 t-shirt.

50 THIRD PRIZE WINNERS will receive an Onimusha 3 t-shirt.

*Dates for trip should exclude holidays and are subject to approval by Capcom. Capcom has the final right to choose the hotel. You must be 21 or older to win the Grand Prize. See <http://onimusha3.egmmag.com> for complete contest rules.



PlayStation 2



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THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY

PlayStation 2 • Sony CEA • Fall 2004

Warning: In order to prepare you for just how...British *The Getaway: Black Monday* will be, this preview is presented in the local London lingo.

So, first you take your *GTA*. Just slap it right down and give it a few rolls over, yeah? Now we're going to trim off the edges, get rid of the screen litter, Health bars, minimaps—all gone, easy-peasy. Then we give it a bit of a dress up and carve out a nice little functional underground rail system in there. Put a little photo-realism in the faces and buildings, right? Now we do sort of a Guy Ritchie on it, mixing up the timeline and telling it from the perspectives of three different blokes like so. There we go! Lovely!



THE PITCH



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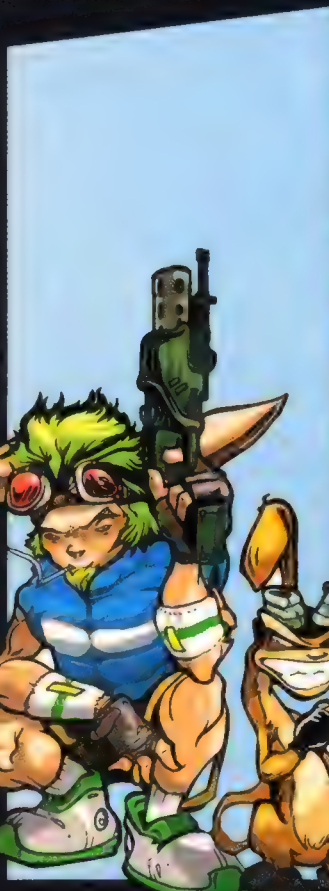
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GTA

Snatch

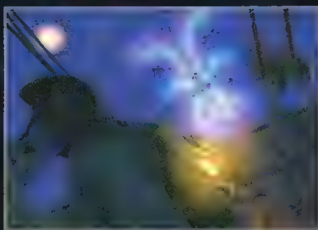
The Getaway: Black Monday



JAK 3

PlayStation 2 • Sony CEA • October 2004

The *GTA*-fication of *Jak & Daxter* isn't exactly news—*Jak II* already embraced the go-anywhere carjacking spirit of Rockstar's hit...with spotty success. "Some gamers felt lost in the city," explains Design Director Amy Henning. "In *Jak 3*, we're going to make missions more focused so that people who want to explore still can, but everyone else won't feel frustrated by the total freedom." *Jak 3*'s new desert-wasteland city, tricked-out auto duels, and sandblasted rescue missions promise to offer a more balanced gameplay blend.



THE PITCH



+



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GTA

Road Warrior

Jak 3

GHOST IN THE SHELL

[STAND ALONE COMPLEX]

Imagine

No borders. No boundaries. No body.

Major Motoko Kusanagi and the officers of Section 9 are highly skilled and trained to deal with criminal activity in both the real and online worlds, but when the lines between two realities collide, a series of events will set in motion their most chilling and dangerous case of all. The fight for the future of humanity begins now.

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DRIVER'S ED

Fast and furious, or just infuriating? We road test **DRIVER**, the first PlayStation 2 and Xbox incarnation in the series that put Grand Theft Auto-style gameplay on the road map

by Kevin Gifford

We'll give this much to *DRIVER*: It sure knows how to blow stuff up. Tag a car, boat, or bike with a grenade launcher and watch the parts fly with the kind of physics-is-fun realism you'd expect from a game from the guys who made *Stuntman* for PlayStation 2 and *Destruction Derby* on PlayStation 1. And if we're taking a little too much

pleasure in terrorizing the game's Sunday-driver traffic, bear with us. We've waited a long time—a loooong time—to get behind the wheel of *DRIVER*, the high-revving sequel that blew past several targeted release dates and was last seen on the cover of *EGM* two years ago. Now, development on the game is nearly at the finish line. *DRIVER* (call it *Driver 3*, although we

like to pronounce it "Drive-Threeer") is set to hit both your PlayStation 2 and Xbox (sorry, GameCube owners) in late June.

That means not only can producer Martin Edmondson and his team at Newcastle, England-based Reflections take a break (may we suggest a shower?), but also that *DRIVER*, after years of speculation and a few *Grand Theft Auto* clones,

is finally ready for a test drive. Publisher Atari just handed us the keys.

The rush-hour verdict: In many ways, it feels more like a low-octane version of *GTA*. Find our six-point inspection on page 90. If you greasemonkey readers want a more detailed diagnosis of what's under the game's hood—and, of course, how to blow it all up—flip the page. ➤

Action!

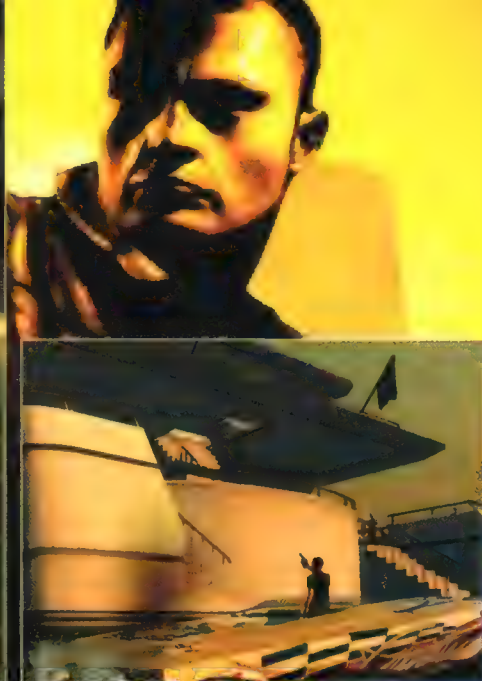
DRIVER, as in the prequels, comes with a film director mode that lets you take an instant replay of your last few minutes of driving and turn it into a miniature movie production, with multiple cameras and optional slow-mo or motion blur. Outdoing Michael Bay is easy enough—just steal a car in front of the cops, have a spectacular crash, then blow everything to hell.









Remember: You're a cop, you idiot! So go easy on the collateral damage.



Trains, bikes, and automobiles? Yes. But planes? Only in *Vice City*.



Head-on Collision: DRIV3R vs. the Grand Theft Auto games

	Grand Theft Auto series	DRIV3R
OCEANFRONT PROPERTY:	In <i>Vice City</i> , you motor, boat, or fly around a fictional, cartoony re-creation of Miami that shares the endless coastline of the real thing, some similar neighborhoods, but not much else.	You begin the game in the <i>real</i> Miami. If you feel like visiting South Beach or cruising down the Miracle Mile, then go ahead. It's a free country...if you steal a car to get there.
THE MICHAEL MADSEN FACTOR:	In <i>GTA3</i> , actor Michael Madsen provides the voice for Toni Cipriani, a part-time racketeer who gives you a half dozen or so missions in Liberty City.	Madsen does the voice for Tanner, an undercover FBI agent assigned to the Miami police department in order to investigate a suspected car-smuggling ring.
PHYSICS LESSON:	Zoom into a street lamp, and you'll knock it to the moon, while your auto keeps on truckin' with little loss in speed. Definitely don't try that at home.	Zoom into a street lamp, and—smash!—you'll be glad Tanner wears his seat belt.
GETTING WET:	Fall into a body of water, and that's that—you drown. Stick to the shallow end of the pools.	Tanner can swim to his heart's content. Must have learned it at the FBI academy.
ESRB RATING:	 Thanks to dirty words and gushing gunshot wounds. You damn kids stay away from this game.	 Although you can gun down pedestrians and go on horrific hit-and-run sprees, you never see a drop of blood.

> Old-car smell

On the surface, *DRIV3R* is remarkably close to the two PlayStation titles that preceded it. You play as Tanner, an FBI agent working with Miami police as they infiltrate a car-smuggling ring, and your days are filled with gun shoot-outs, undercover surveillance, and most of all, car chases. *Really dangerous* car chases. As Reflections' Edmondson states, *DRIV3R* "is meant to be the most realistic simulation of Hollywood and TV car chases"—something reflected in the missions you run, a good 80 percent of which are purely car oriented (the rest are on-foot shoot-outs).

Turn the game on, and you get three modes that should be familiar to fans of the series: Undercover, Take a Ride, and Driving Games. Undercover is the main

story, a collection of 26 missions that take Tanner from his hip Miami pad to the French city of Nice and finally to exotic Istanbul as he hunts down the smuggling ring and the crime boss at its apex. You move the game along by finishing missions, which, as in any *GTA*-style title, have you watching cut-scenes, following the map, and completing given objectives.

Take a Ride, on the other hand, is the game's free mode: You choose a city, time of day, weather, and vehicle, and then you're set loose, free to explore the world at your leisure. You can steal any car you want, climb into backyards and go for dips in swimming pools, use impromptu ramps to barrel onto rooftops, etc. Miami and Nice are available right away, while Istanbul must be unlocked in undercover

mode first.

Driving Games mode offers quick bonus missions—chases, getaways, and so forth—if you don't have a lot of time but want to have a bit of action before bed-time (no, not *that* kind of action).

Detour ahead

So how is *DRIV3R* different from the garage of *GTA*-style games that have sprung up since *Driver 2*? Part of it is in the freedom—the "freedom to do something you think we didn't expect," Edmondson explains. One Miami mission involves picking up C4 explosives from a house on stilts in the ocean, then planting them on the yacht of a rival gang lord. The typical way to do this is to fire up the cigarette boat in your backyard (standard

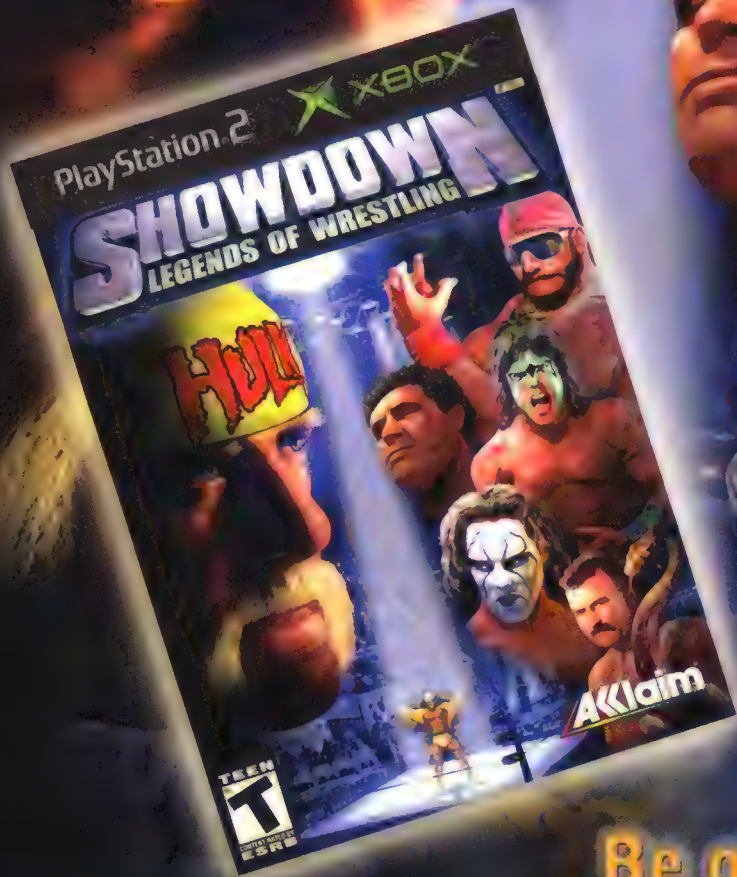
issue for all Miami cops, of course), pick up the C4, then dock at the yacht and drop off the goods. This method, however, attracts hostile gunfire at both points. What's the alternative? Well, you could try leaving your boat a prudent distance away from the yacht, swimming over to your target, and grabbing an auxiliary boat instead, so you won't be pegged immediately as a rival gang member. It takes more time and some inventiveness, but it's a bit safer than the obvious route.

Several of Tanner's missions have multiple solutions, all with varying degrees of difficulty. Another Miami job, for instance, has our hero giving the business to a local punk on a private island. Trouble is, once you're done, the punk's cronies raise the drawbridge linking the island to the city >

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Akkaim



■ The big rig is slow to get moving—especially with the trailer attached—but don't she pack a wallop?



■ Got insurance? *DRIV3R*'s autos take a realistic licking—you can shatter their windows, shoot out their tires, and eventually reduce them to auto parts.



proper, shutting off your escape route. What to do? Well, you could climb up the bridge control tower, go all Steven Seagal on the staff inside, and bring the bridge back down. If you're too low on health for this strategy, you could try hunting down a boat to hijack and ride back home. If you can't even find one of those...well, swimming is always an option. A bit slow, perhaps, but it works.

Unfortunately, this freedom of choice isn't so important in every mission, and many levels boil down to the following steps: 1) chasing the bad guy to his hideout, then 2) shooting the bad guy in his hideout. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't experiment. It's just that most alternate solutions take too long, are impractical, or are suicidal.

On the roads again

The three cities in the game are immaculately rendered and true to real life, although some of the less interesting freeways have been truncated. No two streets look alike here (a problem that plagued Los Angeles in Activision's multiplatform *True Crime: Streets of L.A.*), and each city has its own defined architecture and cute little details—the castle in Nice, the hanging laundry in Istanbul, the sudsy red tide in Miami. "I don't think the game would work half as well," Edmondson says, "if we had gone for a cartoon-style interpretation of the cities." You even get an equivalent of *GTA*'s hidden packages. Hunt long enough, and you'll find scattered "Tommy" thugs you must gun down and kill. These guys sport Hawaiian shirts and

Welcome to...



Location: Southeastern United States
Landmarks: The Orange Bowl, Little Havana, neon-covered oceanfront streets, minimalls
Watch out for: The go-cart track behind the Billmore and not on the map; the swimming pool (and cigarette boat) behind your apartment



Location: The French Riviera
Landmarks: Promenade des Anglais, Place Garibaldi, a lot of sidewalk cafés with tables just begging to be knocked over
Watch out for: A seaside cave with a hidden surprise



Location: The meeting point between Europe and Asia
Landmarks: Topkapi Palace, the Church of St. Irene, the least hygienic streets in all of Europe
Watch out for: Discouraged orphans in the city's endless narrow, twisty alleyways

water wings, so we'll let you draw your own conclusions about Reflections taking jabs at *GTA: Vice City*'s nonswimming hero, Tommy Vercetti.

The true-to-MapQuest cities are complemented by an equally realistic set of vehicles and driving controls. You won't find any licensed cars in *DRIV3R*, but you will find more than 70 machines to drive, running the gamut from sensible Volkswagen Passat clones to Ferrari-ish sports cars. Vehicles become unlocked (and selectable in Take a Ride mode) as you encounter them in the story mode, and some of the bonus cars—including go-carts and garbage trucks—unlock only after you carefully search every backyard and alley.

The most powerful set of wheels in the game is the 18-wheeler—not for its speed

or good looks, but for its incredible appetite for destruction. One mission in Nice requires you to find this truck and drive a stolen car into its storage compartment so it escapes police attention. Once you get the truck, give it a test drive in Take a Ride—you'll become a practically invincible force on the road, sending cars flying into the air. An even more amusing trick: You can detach the storage bed from the rig at any time. Imagine sending 70-mph metal missiles on wheels toward your chosen target—that's what high-speed detachment does for you. It's great fun, and the external, slow-motion Thrill Cam (available at the press of a button) lets you admire your destruction right away. Still not exciting enough? You can always break out that grenade launcher. ▶

WELCOME TO DRIV3R'S ED

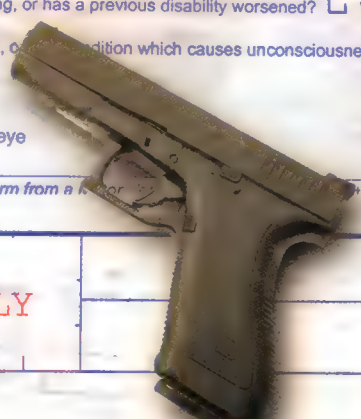
WWW.IGUIDES.NET

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS BRIEF ROAD TEST BEFORE USING THE *DRIV3R* iGUIDE:

- DO YOU OFTEN EXCEED CITY SPEED LIMITS? Yes No
- ARE YOU LICENSED TO CARRY A PISTOL, SUBMACHINE GUN, SHOTGUN, ASSAULT RIFLE, OR GRENADE LAUNCHER? Yes No
- HAVE YOU EVER HIJACKED A MOTOR VEHICLE BEFORE? Yes No
- DO YOU EVEN HAVE A DRIVER'S LICENSE? Yes No



1. Have you had, or are you being treated for, any of the following, or has a previous disability worsened? Yes No (If "Yes", check one of the following)
- 1. Convulsive disorder, epilepsy, fainting or dizzy spells, or any condition which causes unconsciousness
 - 2. Heart ailment
 - 3. Hearing impairment
 - 4. Temporary impairment of leg, arm, foot, hand, or eye
 - 5. Other (explain) _____
- If you checked box 1 or 2, obtain the appropriate medical form from a doctor. This form must be completed by you and your doctor.*



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- STOP/RESPONSE
- Failed to answer summons
 - Insurance lapse
 - License/Permit Surrendered for Non-Driver ID Card

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PLEASE COMPLETE AND SIGN



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▶ BEHIND THE WHEEL: THE DRIV3R SIX-POINT INSPECTION

TRAFFIC CONTROL: MY OTHER CAR IS A...

Forklift? Go-cart? Horribly unsteady truck with a tacky corporate sponsor logo emblazoned on it? Comedic Vespa scooter with a hair-dryer engine? With more than 70 cars, *DRIV3R* has something for even the most rabid auto-ophile...well, except for car nuts expecting real, licensed vehicles. *DRIV3R* doesn't have those. Let's just pretend we're driving a Mustang and hope Ford doesn't notice, mmm-kay? Don't forget the boats either; if you like tooling around in a sleek speedboat or prefer the bizarrely tedious captaining of a rusting German fishing trawler, the game's got you covered. Just like *that other game*, you can bail from any vehicle while it's moving (not a sound plan when you're out at sea) and shoot pretty much everything—including individual tires, windshields, and even headlights.



HANDLING: PHYSICS YOU CAN FEEL

When you're climbing into a game from a developer that spent almost a decade on a physics engine (going back to PlayStation 1 crumple-fest *Destruction Derby*), you know you're in for a thrill ride. *DRIV3R* doesn't disappoint. In fact, zooming along in a rapidly disintegrating muscle car at Evel Knievel-approved speeds through gargantuan levels is as addictive as heroin-laced Krispy Kremes. Each vehicle skids, e-brakes, donuts, and falls apart differently, and you'll have almost limitless fun taking a big rig or a Fiat Punto look-alike and plowing each off the side of a cliff to see how they bounce. Whet your appetite and rent *Stuntman* for PlayStation 2 to see how realistic the game physics are. Then imagine these physics bolted on to a game that's actually fun to play.



TIRE PRESSURE: WILL IT GIVE PLAYERS ROAD RAGE?

Reflections learned its lesson after *Stuntman*, which was outrageously difficult. But as we breezed through *DRIV3R*'s first quintet of Miami missions in 45 minutes, we started to worry that the developers may have balanced the gameplay a little on the easy side. Although cops love to swerve into you, attempting a fishtail and other *World's Most Conspicuous-Inducing Police Chases*-style techniques, we escaped again and again simply by stopping behind an indestructible lamppost and waiting for the boys in blue to ram it. The more "wanted" you become, the more cops arrive, eventually setting up roadblocks in your path. But you'll never see any SWAT teams, tanks, or madness from *the other game* here. Gunfights with bombastic henchmen are a little more fraught, as they plug at you from hidey-holes while you're still wrestling with the slightly spotty aiming scheme. Fortunately, Tanner can self-administer dark green medical boxes to replenish his health. No standing next to a wall and wheezing here, *Getaway* fans.



MILEAGE

IS *DRIV3R* BUILT TO LAST?

Topping cop-star Tanner's to-do list are the undercover missions, which we've counted up and found to number less than 30 levels across all three cities. That's a tad short compared to *the other game's* 50 stages. Then you have Take a Ride mode, in which you're free to tool around each city, locating dozens of alternate routes, alleys, and impromptu ramps and generally causing havoc (but without any type of gameplay structure). Has Reflections spent all of its time crafting beautifully rendered French alleys, entire Islamic temples, and secret go-kart tracks, and no time adding anything to do except drive around just gawking at it all? Well, perhaps as compensation you get the Driving Games. Those familiar with the franchise know what to expect: Six types are available (with between one and three additional versions of each per city), and these minigames have you zooming through cones as quickly as possible, zooming *into* cones as quickly as possible, outrunning the cops, or simply surviving for the longest possible time.



KICKING THE TIRES: TAKING TANNER OUT FOR A SPIN

This muscle-shirted wheelman with anger management issues doesn't spend all his time behind the wheel; pedestrian wandering plays a big part in *DRIV3R*, too. While out of his auto, Tanner can run, sidestep, roll, bring out a weapon, fail to clamber over any wall higher than his knee, jump from his left foot only, glitch into scenery (we're assured this will be fixed), but more importantly, swim! Unlike a certain other action hero, Tanner doesn't gurgle to death in neck-deep water. Although you rarely have any reason to swim, the ability is there if you want to reach hidden caves or small islands...and you absolutely hate boats.



THE BOTTOM LINE: BUY OR LEASE?

Let's be honest—we're a tad perturbed by our *DRIV3R* experience. We're not lambasting the incredible driving physics, the wealth of vehicles, or the gigantic facsimiles of Miami, Nice, and Istanbul. We're not even that POed about the rampant pimping of Sobe energy drinks and Nokia advertising on every large billboard and almost every cut-scene. Rather, we're worried about this game's longevity. We've driven at breakneck speed through Istanbul and gawked at the faded and ornate beauty of the ancient mosques and crumbling apartment blocks. Then we counted the number of missions there: seven. Why spend years designing a cityscape and then use five percent of it in the main game? What gives? Not Reflections, as the number of missions are stingy, and gameplay design is all too familiar: Chase a car, enter a building and shoot everyone, drive to a waypoint, chase a car while shooting, then chase another car. Here's hoping for a more fully loaded vehicle by the time our Review Crew takes the final game off the lot next issue. **4.5**

Time for us to motor, but check back

Next month: Our full review of *DRIV3R*.





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PS2/XB

VAN HELSING

Kills movie monsters dead

Too Many Van Helsings Introduced in Bram Stoker's immortal *Dracula* (as the man who sticks it to the count), Van Helsing has since appeared in over 40 films and 60 TV shows. Even Anthony "Sir" Hopkins played the part in Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 *Dracula* remake.

SHAWM: In a world where evil rises with the setting sun, one man with a wicked arsenal and moves to match arrives to destroy the damned—it's been done before, but if you're gonna sink your fangs into someone else's ideas, you might as well tap a vein as rich as *Devil May Cry's* (PS2).

Like other famous monster slayers, Van Helsing has a knack for knocking fiends into the air and perforating 'em before they fall. You're not forced to spill blood with style, but if you've got the hankerin', you can drive the point home with some high-stakes combos. Combat is almost as deep as it is dazzling: depending on the creature you're facing, you'll want to use different ammo, since shapeshifters don't like silver, ice dwellers can't stand heat, and flying ghouls fear your

grappling hook. (Only God knows what works best on the wicked Domba Loompa look-alikes, but if they're in the flick, I'm so there.)

Even with its occasionally crappy camera and rampaging lollipop guild of evil midgets, the game is good—if derivative—fun while it lasts (unless you loved the movie, *Devil May Cry's* monster mash will do you better). Problem is, *Van Helsing* doesn't last long. Five or six hours is all the time it takes to fight Frankenstein, whoop the Wolf Man, put the hurt on the hunchback, and destroy *Dracula*.

G. FORD: *Van Helsing* is a pleasant surprise. While VU Games could have simply shoveled out a quick cash-in title, it has instead delivered a



game that does enough right to make for a good time. The controls are fast, smooth, and responsive, and the titular Van Helsing has some nice weapons and death-dealing maneuvers—running and jumping around while mashing monsters with some basic combos is fun. But all ain't so dandy. A troublesome fixed camera hampers these thrills by occasionally giving you poor views of the action or flipping the screen at inopportune times. Also, a handful of lesser enemies seem overly difficult and annoying—imagine *Castlevania's* bats or Medusa heads if they could withstand six times the hits. Not that these irritants spoil the whole experience. *Van Helsing* may be short and sometimes repetitive, but it's still a fun ride.



■ **Red of Red Dead Revolver** (see page 95) Infamy says, "Rotgut. It does a body powerful good."

THE RATING SYSTEM



At *EGM*, we evaluate only games that have been deemed final and reviewable by their publishers. Three editors rate each game independently, and we use the whole scale. **5.0 IS AVERAGE.**

AWARDS



Platinum — straight 10s. For games that are life-changing.



Gold — for games with an average score of 9.0 or higher.



Silver — for games with a mean score of 8.0 or higher.



The highest-scoring game each month gets a star.



The lowest-rated game with unambiguously bad scores.

ESRB KEY (Also check out www.esrb.com)

E-Everyone:

Saccharine fun for the whole family: dancing cats, rampant sharing, and possibly Smurfs.

T-Teen:

Like PG-13 movies, Teen games often feature fistfights, mild violence, and madcap antics.

M-Mature:

For the 18-and-over crowd. Intense violence, gore, pixelated sex, drugs; parents no likey.

GAMECUBE

104 The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords Adventures

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Monster Mishmash

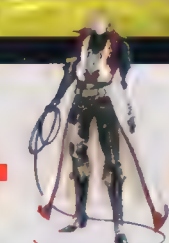
Twin pistols? Check. Whiplike grappling line? Yup. Glaives? You betcha. If it's been used to hunt vampires, chances are Van Helsing has his own.



Devil May Cry's Danto



Blade...from *Blade*



Castlevania's Leon Belmont



Van Helsing

XBN—GREG: Think of *Van Helsing* as a 21st-century retelling of the popular song "Monster Mash," just with less musical whimsy and more cross-collecting and wholesale creature slaughter. As the titular holy warrior, players use weaponry (both exotic and mundane) rather than trying to outthink the hellspawn hordes, but hey, whatever gets the job done in time for the credits to roll.

Popular fiends Frankenstein's Monster (he's just misunderstood), Mr. Hyde, and the Wolf Man

serve as bosses, and for the most part, this third-person adventure breezes along. But the graphics appear washed-out and dismal even for Transylvania, and in an attempt at being cinematic, the game sometimes pulls back dramatically, shrinking the hero and the action unnecessarily. Worse still, boss monsters sometimes run offscreen, leaving players to guess when the brutes have used their damaging long-range strikes. Eh, popcorn movie, popcorn game.



Good: Stylized combat...

Bad: ...ripped right out of *Devil May Cry*

Other Notable Vans: Halen, Morrison, Gogh



THE VERDICTS (out of 10)

7.0 **6.5** **6.0**
SHAWN G. FORD GREG

Publisher: VU Games
Developer: Saffire
Players: 1
ESRB: Teen

www.vanhelsinggame.com

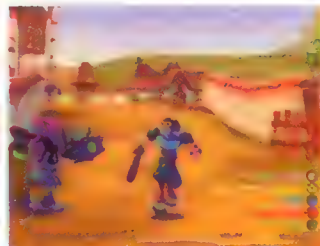


The worst part? If any of these no-hoper characters die, you have to restart the whole mission.

PS2/XB/GC

FUTURE TACTICS: THE UPRISING

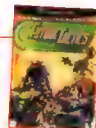
You get what you pay for



Good: Destructible environments affect strategy

Bad: Laughable graphics, annoying missions

Affordably Priced MSRP: \$19.99



SHANE: Forget everything you know about strategy games—all those utterly uncool grids, languid turn-based attacks, and differential equations are totally outdated. Crave's *Future Tactics* brazenly screams, "School's out, nerds!" to its tactical brethren, eschewing many of the antiquated rules in favor of hipper, more action-oriented gameplay. It's a noble quest, indeed, but not an entirely successful one.

Tactics handles movement and combat in a wildly different manner than most other strat games: Here, you move your characters freely within a certain radius and attack using line-of-sight gunfire. Consequently, battles turn into annoying guessing games. Will I be able to see that enemy? Can he see me? How far can they move? Whatever the answer, it's not fun.

Subpar visuals don't help, either. Sadly simplistic landscapes, tacky colors, dorky characters, and an utter lack of polish reinforce the bargain-bin pricing. The poor graphics even leech the thrill of deformable terrain—the sparse animation of knocking over a small hut or blasting craters looks sadly unrealistic.

KEVIN: The kindest thing you can say about *Future Tactics* is that publisher Crave's not asking full price for this obscure Euro import. Ostensibly a real-time strategy title, *Future Tactics* is really a glorified game of hide-and-seek: You either fall into your enemy's sights or manage to luck out for another turn. Skill plays a secondary role, and you can beat almost every mission via brute force. Blowing holes in the ground is cool, yeah, but even that effect's wasted on an art style that reminds me of *Captain Planet and the Planetears*.

XBN—GREG: Of course, you know, this means war—turn-based, third-person perspective war, but with added landscaping elements. Knock down a boulder to crush a hapless enemy or blast a huge crater and use it as cover. Ignore the aliens shooting each other—despite conquering Earth, they're exceedingly stupid. Wince as the camera doesn't pivot when asked to; this war is certainly hell sometimes. Strategize, embrace the RPG elements, and the senseless yet inexplicably fun comic violence ain't half bad for budget-minded generals.

THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)	4.0	4.5	6.0
	SHANE	KEVIN	GREG

Publisher: Crave
Developer: Zed Two
Players: 1-2
ESRB: Teen

www.cravegames.com



Shrek's love of inverted keg stands (left) is the stuff of fairy tales.

PS2/XB/GC

SHREK 2

A little something from the kids' menu



After facing the cuddly kitten ninjas, you'll have to sleep with the lights on. Y'know, nightmares.

Good: Family-friendly gaming that doesn't completely suck

Bad: Sophisticated gamers will want to take a pass

Still, We Can All Agree: Gingerbread Man rocks



JENNIFER: Sometimes, it just seems right to grade on a curve. The average *EGM* gamer weaned on titles such as *Grand Theft Auto* and *Splinter Cell* is not going to appreciate *Shrek 2*. It's way too easy, short, and simplistic for that crowd. But come on, are those people really playing this game? No—they're playing *GTA* and *Splinter Cell*. The people who play *Shrek* of their own free will are gonna like it just fine.

The rich environments and cut-scenes (voiced by members of the cast) faithfully recreate the cartoon's lighthearted ambience, and the simplistic platformer gameplay is accessible and fun. The variety of characters you play along the way keeps things from getting too repetitive, and the party system (most of the time, you've got four Shrekmates in your group) is perfect for co-op multiplayer. Things break down a bit near the end, with oversimplified levels that feel rushed and an uncreative final boss battle that strings together stuff you've already seen plenty of in the rest of the game. But if every game were *Splinter Cell*, what would your kid sister and her friends rent for the weekend?

BRYAN: Previous games starring the big green ogre were more nightmare than fairy tale, but surprisingly, *Shrek 2* comes close to having a happy ending. Aside from the good-looking visuals, it's a hoot playing as characters such as the Gingerbread Man and Puss in Boots, and as in the animated films, their amusing one-liners keep the action lighthearted. Problem is, this one is really designed with the kiddies in mind. Those who have long since retired their *Shrek*-themed bedspreads will find the game easy and repetitive.

XBN—GREG: Once upon a time, developer Luxoflux took animated ogre Shrek and his many associates and jammed them into a game that was part beat-em-up, part platformer, part puzzle adventure, and mostly schizophrenic. And it was passable, except for the single-player mode in which the three AI-controlled characters behaved stupidly. With four players, the game was a bit better, but what a shame about the unresponsive controls. In the end, though, everyone lived happily ever after, especially when the game was turned off.

THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)	7.5	6.0	5.0
	JENNIFER	BRYAN	GREG

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Luxoflux
Players: 1-4
Rating: Everyone

www.activision.com

00:54



Red (below): "What do you want on your tombstone?" Cowboy: "Ham, pineapple.... Wait, pizza's not invented yet." Rim shot!



Cowboy lyrics: Expert professionalism grants you slow-mo "dead-eye" attacks, which guarantee straight shooting.

PS2/XB

RED DEAD REVOLVER

Shootout at the "eh, it's OK" corral

Good: Wildly stylistic take on the Wild West
Bad: Lousy boss battles, some janky missions
Only on Xbox: One bonus multiplayer level



CRISPIN: Legend has it that squinty-eyed quick-drawing gunslinger Red, the Clint Eastwoody hero of *Red Dead Revolver*, once shot a man for shooting a dog. It's true—I saw it happen in the game, along with shootouts with rogue colonels, stagecoach robberies, raging saloon brawls, and slow-mo gunfights at high noon, all conveyed via stylized grainy visuals and a killer old-western soundtrack. *Revolver* just bull's-eyes the spaghetti western genre.

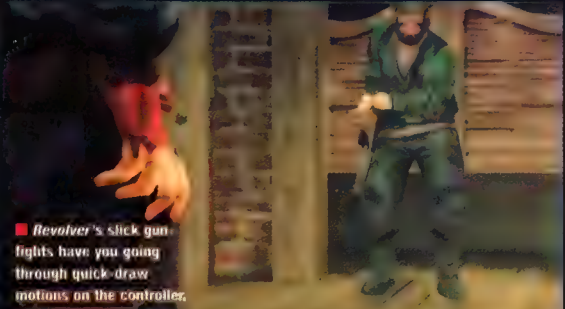
But although it starts with the good intentions and bad attitude of a Sergio Leone flick, *Revolver* devolves into a jumble of play styles—horseback riding, bar fighting, mindless blasting, minor role-playing—that all feel rough around the edges. Control is stiff and floaty, while boss battles often require stubborn persistence

instead of strategy. Fortunately, the short, punchy missions leave you little time to grouse at the game's flaws before you're whisked to the next action-packed level (of which you'll find many). And amidst the messier missions, you get a few that really stand out—like an assault on a train from horseback. More levels like that and this Wild West game would have won me over.

SHAWN: Bar brawls, sundown duels, bounty hunts—*Revolver*'s loaded with a half-dozen potential reasons to feel at home on the shooting range, but most all of 'em are blanks. My reviewing posse-mates will put a slug in that pony, so I'll just mosey over to the multiplayer ghost town. Texas-hold-em and stud modes are supposed to play like poker with bullets and

power-up cards, but after wasting 20 minutes running in circles and shooting each other in the face till someone falls, you'll know it's time to fold 'em and walk away.

XBN—GREG: Historians may question the factual accuracy of Old West gunfights involving English gentlemen and killer midget clowns, but that seems to be the least of *Red Dead Revolver*'s problems. A spaghetti western shooter shouldn't be this meatball laden. The game looks like five miles of prime Death Valley real estate and plays like a Milli Vanilli rock opera. It hits a crescendo of absurdity when you face off against a superquick fat man who attacks by exploding the dynamite strapped to his blubbery waist. Add many uninspired, strategy-eschewing battles, and voilà, the West was dumb. **A-**



Revolver's slick gun fights have you going through quick-draw motions on the controller.

THE VERDICTS OUT OF 10

6.0 **4.5** **4.0**

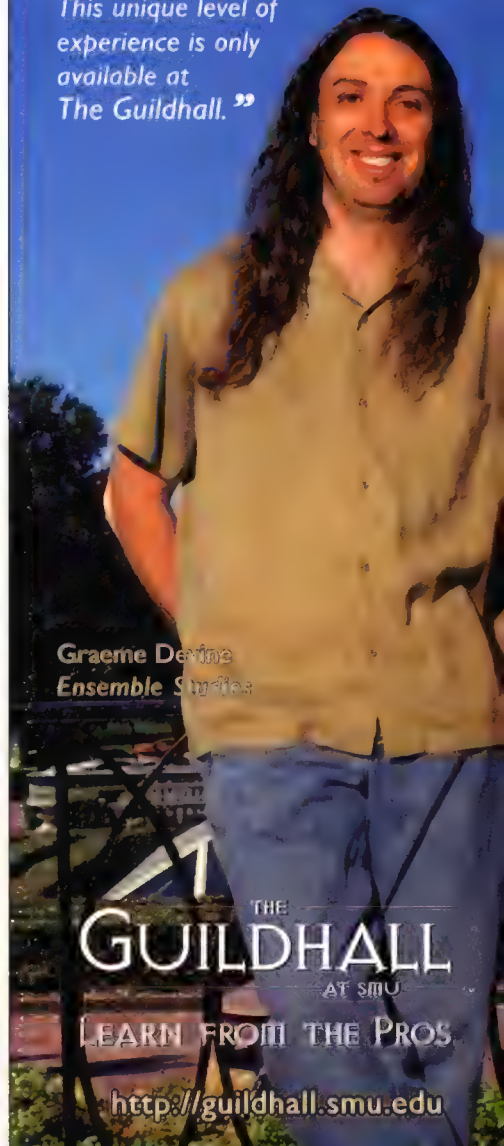
CRISPIN SHAWN GREG

Publisher: Rockstar
Developer: Rockstar San Diego
Players: 1-4
ESRB: Mature
www.rockstargames.com

Why does gaming professional Graeme Devine recommend The Guildhall at SMU?

Simple. He helped design the curriculum.

"There are many education programs out there, and while some seem successful, the heavy involvement of professional game developers makes a huge difference in *The Guildhall at SMU*. After completing *The Guildhall* program, students have definite experience in making games — they actually graduate with four complete games in their portfolios. This unique level of experience is only available at *The Guildhall*."



Graeme Devine
Ensemble Studios

THE GUILDHALL AT SMU

LEARN FROM THE PROS

<http://guildhall.smu.edu>



Frenchman Jacques: not a big zombie samurai fan.



Jacques (below) has unconventional tastes in weaponry...



PlayStation 2

ONIMUSHA 3: DEMON SIEGE

Don't mess with the French time traveler

BRYAN: I laughed when I first heard *Onimusha 3: Demon Siege's* wacky narrative. A strange time warp sends a 16th-century samurai to modern-day Paris? Some French dude modeled after actor Jean Reno (*Mission: Impossible*, *The Professional*, *Rollerball*) is transported to feudal Japan to face the series' resident bad boy, Nobunaga Oda? How could I not chuckle? But after playing the soul-sucking series finale, I'm no longer laughing—the compelling off-the-wall story is just one of the reasons why *Onimusha 3* is, for my money at least, the best action title on PlayStation 2 so far this year.

Several issues that plagued the last two games have been addressed, *Onimusha* vets will be glad to know. For starters, the fixed camera is much less of a problem than before; during combat, your enemies are rarely situated where you can't see them. The new *Devil May Cry*-like control scheme makes it easy to quickly change targets and evade swarms of Genma demons. And lastly,

the backdrops have gone fully 3D; beautiful, finely detailed French landmarks are perfectly re-created, and much like the game's crazy premise, duking it out around the Eiffel Tower and Arc de Triomphe helps make *Onimusha 3* anything but a tired sequel.

Another plus is the game's dual-hero system. Switching between the Japanese samurai stud Samanosuke (remember him from *Onimusha 1?*) and French military officer Jacques Blanc keeps the gameplay feeling fresh—and you'll even control Jacques' fiancée for a brief bout of demon slaying. It also helps that each of the protagonists comes equipped with a unique set of special moves and weapons (my personal fave is lassooing foes and tossing them across the screen with any one of Jacques' many whiplike toys).

I do, however, have one gripe: the puzzles. The few that involve time travel—which you'd think would be innovative, at the very least—are more like drawn-out fetch quests than a series of chal-

lenging and stimulating brainteasers. But otherwise, *Onimusha 3* is, how do you say, *magnifique*.

MARK: Just when you thought Capcom would never top *Dino Crisis 3's* "Jurassic Park in space" theme for hokiest adventure game plot ever, along comes *Onimusha 3*. It's not that the idea of ancient Japanese demons time-traveling to modern-day Paris is a bad one...wait, yes it is. That's exactly what it is: a just-plain-bad idea made worse with hammy dialogue, clichés, and some pretty ridiculous leaps of logic. It's painfully obvious that the game's awkward story was cobbled together to accommodate French actor Jean Reno, whom few Americans will recognize anyway and even fewer will care about.

Luckily, *Onimusha 3* doesn't need a gripping story or star power. Not only is it one of the best-looking PS2 games yet, with both the pulsating demonic underworld and Parisian landmarks brought convincingly to life in detailed, real-time



Onimusha 3 is a wacky, wacky, wacky game. It's not that the idea of ancient Japanese demons time-traveling to modern-day Paris is a bad one...wait, yes it is. That's exactly what it is: a just-plain-bad idea made worse with hammy dialogue, clichés, and some pretty ridiculous leaps of logic. It's painfully obvious that the game's awkward story was cobbled together to accommodate French actor Jean Reno, whom few Americans will recognize anyway and even fewer will care about.

Fairy Grudge Match		
	ONIMUSHA'S AKO	DISNEY'S TINKERBELL
Different outfits, which give Ako healing and other abilities	GET-UP	Stinky green number, slippers, magic wand
Ferry potions and puzzle items through time to Sam and Jacques	MISSION	Save Peter Pan's neck and look way too hot for such a little gal
No...is that by Albuquerque?	KNOWS WAY TO NEVERLAND	Yes...if you've got a happy thought, she's got the pixie dust

Great! Another...
 Kahl: Some...
 Don't Miss The...
 ...



THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)

8.5	7.0	9.0
BRYAN	MARK	MILKMAN

Publisher: Capcom
 Developer: Capcom
 Players: 1
 ESRB: Mature

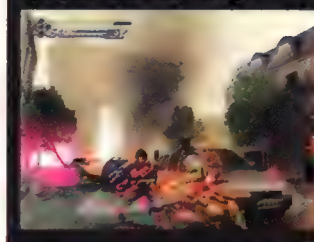
www.capcom.com



Tour de France



Why spend a bunch of Benjamins on a trip to Paris when for 50 bucks (all inclusive!), you can tour the city of love in *Onimusha 3*? During the game, you'll explore several well-known French landmarks, including the Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame Cathedral, Mont-Saint-Michel, and the Eiffel Tower. Better yet, Nobunaga's gang of Genma demons has scared away all the tourists, so you can fillet and flambé the hellspawn in relative peace while taking in the sights, to boot. Paris in springtime—you really must go.



3D—but more importantly, it's got the gameplay goods. It may not revolutionize any major aspects of the adventure game mold, but it does deliver on the two established basics—fighting and puzzles. Combat between the two main playable characters and with each of the very different weapons is instant hack-n-slash fun, but deep enough to stay enjoyable as you master the nuances. Defense, counterattacks, timing, combos, and more are all here and almost necessary against later enemies and bosses. Plus, dropped items and the ability to level up your weapons, armor, and fairy sidekick provide good reason to stop and fight.

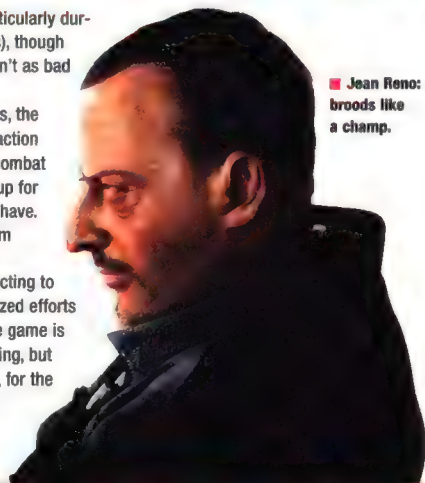
I must admit, the whole time-travel bit, as clumsy as it is plotwise, makes for some interesting puzzles—and I disagree with Bryan's claim that they're just extended fetch quests. The two main characters can trade items as they explore certain sections years apart, switching back and forth to

open up new areas for each other in a clever twist on the series' usual key finding and switch flipping.

GMR—MILKMAN: *Onimusha* mavens have plenty of reasons to be excited about the trilogy's closing chapter. Playing as *La Femme Nikita*'s "cleaner" (albeit in a different role), aka Jean Reno, is surprisingly cool. While the action is essentially the same as before, the expanded moves list and weapon selection are varied enough to accommodate two main characters, Samanosuke and Jacques (as well as a minor, third playable protagonist), who split screen time in equal parts. New analog control finally frees gamers from drives-like-a-tank, *Resident Evil*-style movement, while the introduction of 3D backgrounds makes for a more dynamic experience—but the perspective is still pinned on a predetermined axis, meaning that awkward camera angles still plague the

gameplay (particularly during boss fights), though the problem isn't as bad as before.

Nevertheless, the near-nonstop action and vigorous combat system make up for any quibbles I have. The switch from Japanese and French voice acting to uneven Anglicized efforts shortly into the game is somewhat jarring, but *Onimusha 3* is, for the most part, the apex of the series. 🐉



■ Jean Reno: broods like a champ.



■ You'll have to rediscover the block button for boss battles.



review crew:
playstation 2



■ For god's sake man, tap out already!

■ PlayStation 2

UFC: SUDDEN IMPACT

Same game, different name

Good: Solid, balanced brawls
Bad: Long load times, short bouts
Don't Call It: Spinning

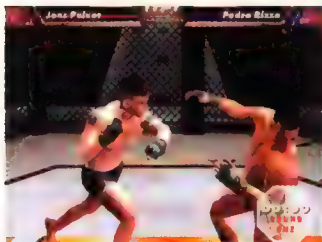


SHAWN: Say a word about man pretzels in this submission-heavy fighting sim, and UFC mavens get salty. Ain't nothing funny about taking a knee to the nuts, they'll say, unless you happen to call your character The Tenderloin Tussler. And that's about all the entertainment on tap in *Sudden Impact's* strawweight story mode, which, despite being one of the few additions to the series since its last bout on PS2, amounts to little more than a string of menus.

Brutal and over before you know it, *Impact's* combat offers the same bag of bruised knuckles and broken bones as previous *UFCs*. All fighters share the same simple controls for reversal and submission moves, but staying conscious takes timing and practice. Pounding buttons won't buy it, as I proved by bloodying the nose of Bryan's 240-pound punching bag with a woman half his weight. How's that for balance? Problem is, with the exception of grappling at the edge of the octagon, this event is no different than matches in '02's *Throwdown*. Diehard fans at least deserve improved graphics and passable presentation.

BRYAN: There comes a point in every fighter's career when it's time to hang it up—that day is now for the *UFC* series. Shawn's right; little has changed since you last entered the octagon on PS2 (same mediocre visuals, very few game-play enhancements). Also, the new story mode is merely a series of boring training exercises. Yawn. But I disagree with my fellow ultimate pugilist on one point: You can button mash your way to victory, trust me. Even the hardest of hardcore *UFC* fans should pass on *Sudden Impact*.

OFFICIAL PS MAG—GIANCARLO: The waning popularity of the *UFC* should give you a good idea of what to expect from *Sudden Impact*—it's basically a last-ditch effort to suck whatever money's left out of the franchise. Aside from a few new pointless moves (the most notable of which lets you pin an opponent against the fence), it's nearly identical to previous *UFC* games. And unfortunately, the story mode may also be new, but it's still boring, as it requires you to complete dozens upon dozens of tedious minimatches before any worthwhile bouts take place.



THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)	6.0	4.5	4.0
	SHAWN	BRYAN	GIANCARLO

Publisher: TDK
Developer: Opus
Players: 1-2
ESRB: Teen

www.ufcvideogames.com

■ PlayStation 2

GALACTIC WRESTLING FEATURING ULTIMATE MUSCLE

Rick Flair as the sixth Power Ranger



■ File *Galactic Wrestling* under Saturday mornings and sippy cups.

Good: Fast and funny fighting
Bad: Backyard production values
We'd Rather Play: The first *Ultimate Muscle* on GameCube



SHAWN: Don't expect a soap opera from this goofball grappler—you'll find better stories on steroid warning labels. But even if you're pumped on WWE's prime-time pageantry (are you here to fight or flex that oiled physique?), there's no reason *Galactic Wrestling* can't supplement your "real" wrestling diet, at least as a rental.

Multiplayer is the main event, hence my weekend-only warning, but what you get is mostly good. Effective evasion and countering make comebacks possible even when you're on the ropes, but it's the combos and power moves that give *Galactic's* matches an edge on McMahon's. Combat leans to the simple side and some characters are scrubby—no matter the size, you won't wanna brag about a winning streak—but you will laugh when you punt a human opponent through goal posts or break him in half with the help of a tag-team partner. It's only when your friends leave and you quit laughing at the colorful cast that the game's spastic commentary and limited replay value start to sink in.

BRYAN: Unlike last year's Cube-sponsored *Ultimate Muscle* event, *Galactic Wrestling* isn't worth the ticket price. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy the lightning-quick action and Saturday-morning-cartoon graphics, but my problem lies outside the ring. The lack of a career mode and create-a-wrestler (both considered genre norms, nowadays) makes Bandai's grappler one of the shallowest wrasslin' titles out there. It also suffers from exhausting load times and horribly repetitive commentary. So,

like my tag-team partner Shawn said, flex this *Muscle* only if you're visiting Blockbuster.

OFFICIAL PS MAG—GIANCARLO: *Galactic Wrestling* does a great job of capturing the utter insanity of the *Ultimate Muscle* cartoon with its mixture of over-the-top special moves and traditional grappling holds. But the novelty quickly wears thin when you realize just how incredibly shallow it is. *Galactic Wrestling* is a button-masher in every sense of the word, so don't expect to have any fights that go beyond who can push the Grapple or Strike button quickest.



■ Wally "The Walrus" Tusket rides Terri Bull, and in the background, a cruise ship hovers.

THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)	5.5	5.5	5.0
	SHAWN	BRYAN	GIANCARLO

Publisher: Bandai
Developer: Aki
Players: 1-2 (3-4 w/MultiTap)
ESRB: Teen

www.bandai-games.com

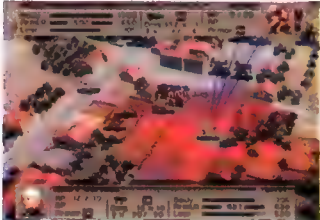


■ Giant mechs aren't so giant when you're controlling the action from a nearby zup, zup.

PlayStation 2

FRONT MISSION 4

Robots speak louder than words



■ The new link system in action (left)...and the new Barbie Dream Wanzler (right)...

Good: Deep, fast-paced robot fighting
Bad: A preponderance of stuff to remember
Best Accent: Co-pilot Beck and his pizza-chef voice



KEVIN: It's been four years since the last *Front Mission* (PS1), but little has changed with the robot-abusing strategy series. The world's still modern and realistic (less *Gundam* and more *Steel Battalion*), the customization options remain dizzying in their variety, and the game's still remarkably fun if you're into that sort of thing.

Front Mission 4 is basically *FM3* with a graphic makeover and not a whole lot else. Fans of *Final Fantasy Tactics* games will find familiar ground here: Your team moves around a grid-based map, fires at the enemy, then calmly waits for the opponent to play his turn. There are some new features—including a link system that lets other teammates join your attack—but the fundamentals are unchanged.

As with every *Front Mission*, there's almost too much to remember. At times, you'll have to keep track of weapon upgrades and ability stats for a headache-inducing 10 pilots at once. It's the type of game that chooses its fans rather than the other way around, but if you're up for the challenge, the battles are deep and worth the heady time investment.

CRISPIN: Brain-straining gameplay that takes moments to learn but days to master—that's what you pay for in a good strategy game. You get your buck's worth with *Front Mission*. Just when you think you've figured out all the mech types and tactics, the game unloads new tricks—such as crucial linked attacks that have allies blasting enemies who blast you in domino-effect battles that play out like *Reservoir Dogs*' finale shoot-out. You'll invest mondo time setting up for skirmishes that last hours. Losing is hell, but when your plan comes together...it's sweet.

SHOE: Like these guys say, *FM4* is taxing on the ol' noggin—most gamers will find an engineering textbook to be less intimidating. Kevin didn't even mention that you're tracking abilities for pilots and their heavy-metal rides. Do you care that mech #6's left arm weighs 10 pounds too much? It's decisions like this that can make the in-between, setting-up-your-crew rounds take longer than the battles themselves. But you just can't beat *FM4*'s deep (and plentiful) gameplay and high production values.

THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)

8.0	8.0	8.0
KEVIN	CRISPIN	SHOE

Publisher: Square Enix
 Developer: Square Enix
 Players: 1
 ESRB: Teen
www.square-enix-usa.com



PlayStation 2

BUJINGAI: THE FORSAKEN CITY

We built this city...on someone else's ideas



■ Even a lowly rat man can cut you deep if your guard meter is out of juice—*Bujingai* rewards good defense with a bonus on offense.

Good: Wall walking and floating-combat acrobatics
Bad: Faceless samurai game No. 4762
Gack! Main character Lau is inspired by J-goth rock star Gackt



JOHN D: As I reflect on my time with *Bujingai*, I feel compelled to ask, "Couldn't this city have just remained forsaken?" Indeed, did yet another effeminate samurai have to glide in from space to cock around in yet another troubled land on PS2?

Like most games of its breed, *Bujingai* relies on a plot no one reads and characters no one gives a rip about to make it interesting, while the action offers little more than hot-and-sexy graphics. Raise your hand if you care why you're fighting. Anyone? Now raise your hand if you just want to do something besides mash buttons. Sorry, you're asking for too much. Stage after stage mimics the worst of *Devil May Cry 2* (PS2), with meaningless orb collecting, gigantic no-skill combos, and didn't-I-already-kill-you-once-before boss battles. It's a step above competitor *Seven Samurai*, thanks to great visuals and some interesting aerial acrobatics, but *Bujingai* excels at little else, aside from sucking the last bit of life from an already tired genre.

SHANE: OK, granted, *Bujingai* does crib from *Devil May Cry 2*'s vanilla art direction

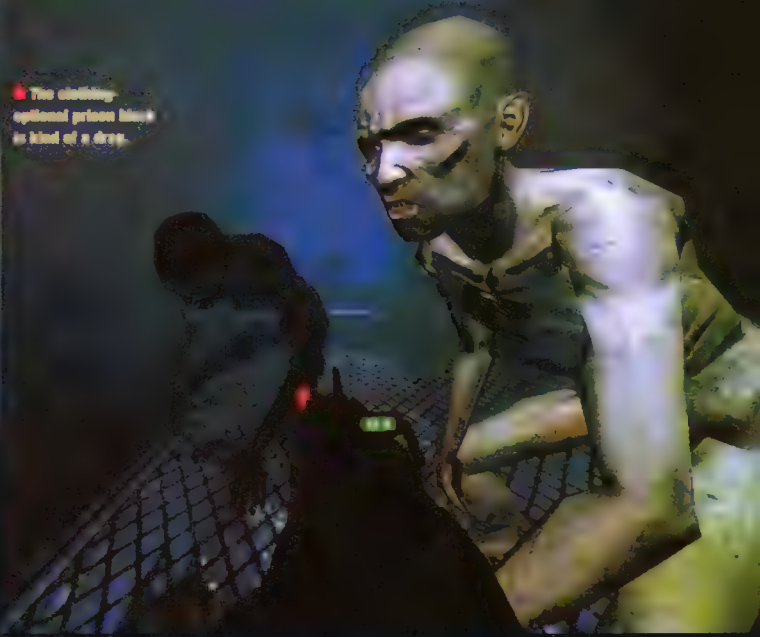
and combat playbooks, but it's not nearly as dire as Jon claims. Precise control, a deep magic system, and massive levels make this a fully above-average slashathon. Also, a major facet of the game's appeal is completely lost on us Americans—bizarre Japanese goth-rock Gackt lends his face and voice to hero Lau, but to you, he's just some femmy nobody. Think about it: *Michael Jackson's Moonwalker* for Sega Genesis wouldn't be nearly as creepy/appealing if you didn't know who MJ was...

OFFICIAL PS MAG—CHRIS B: *Bujingai* features some of the coolest, most intense sword fighting ever depicted in a videogame...it also features some of the most difficult, purely frustrating jumping puzzles I've ever experienced. It looks gorgeous and stylish when you swing your two blades...but crappy and dull when you stand still in bland environments. Some levels amuse with clever design...others just plain suck. It's a roller coaster of good and bad, but, for me at least, it still beats the hell outta *Devil May Cry 2*.

THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)

4.5	6.0	7.5
JON D.	SHANE	CHRIS B.

Publisher: Bam! Developer: Taito/Red Entertainment Players: 1 ESRB: Teen www.bam4fun.com



The clothing optional prices here is kind of a drag.



Lose a Lung, Unlock Stuff
Cigs may kill you, but they're a prisoner's pal in Butcher Bay. Find 'em beneath bunks, behind toilets, and in the back pockets of the men you beat to death. Riddick's too smart to smoke 'em, though—instead, each pack he finds unlocks bonus- es like produc- tion art and movie sets.

Xbox

THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK: ESCAPE FROM BUTCHER BAY

More fun than a box of rusty shivs

SHAWN: It's too easy. The guard's back is turned to you, and another convict is whispering "kill him." Two minutes in and you've wrung your first neck, watched your own fists reach out and twist a man's skull like a stubborn knob on the door to freedom—and then everything goes fuzzy.

When shackles and a circle of prison guards come into focus, you realize that Riddick's fast break was pure fantasy. No, escaping this penal colony will take more than 15 pounds of swiftly applied pressure, but you've already learned enough about yourself to know that nothing can keep you locked down for long.

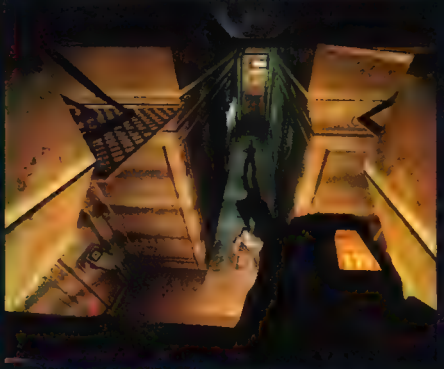
If *Riddick's* first few moments defy expectations, the rest stage an all-out riot. Butcher Bay's corridors, caverns, and cell blocks look too good to belong in licensed fare, but the game's pitch-black beauty goes beyond the surface of things.

It's the way a man's head jerks like a ball on a short string when you catch him with a brutal right hook; the telltale shadows that belie the positions of patrolling guards; and the bizarre movement of alien critters that make them all utterly, eerily believable.

Everything else is unbelievable. Riddick can see in night so black it'd drive normal men to tie ropes around their waists, and he does more than frag whom- or whatever is in his field of fire. He shoots craps, making money to buy a shiv. He picks fights in the exercise yard, working his way to the top of the inmate food chain with combos and counterattacks. He cuts deals with corrupt guards while butting heads with the hardasses, and when Riddick does finally get his hands on a gun, he's got good reason to use it. Whether you choose to strangle an enemy in the shadows or

send him to the hurt locker with a shotgun blast, *Riddick's* gameplay is as polished as its graphics. With light role-playing, stealth parts, and platforming bits that shift seamlessly from first- to third-person perspective, the game stages a prison break on the first-person shooter genre's status quo. Now if only the game's eight-or-so-hour sentence was longer—I could use more time in Butcher Bay's solitary confinement.

MARK: Three words I never thought I'd say: Vin Diesel rocks. Having never seen *Pitch Black* (this game is a prequel to *Pitch Black* and the upcoming *Chronicles of Riddick* movie) and not caring about any of his other flicks (*Private Ryan* doesn't count), I was surprised just how completely the cut-scenes and characters drew me in to *Riddick's* refreshingly adult story. As the voice of



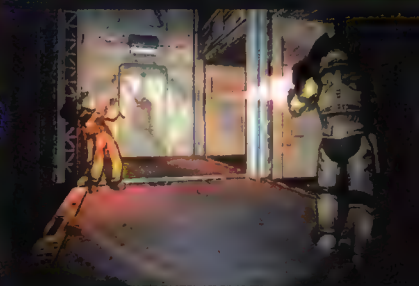
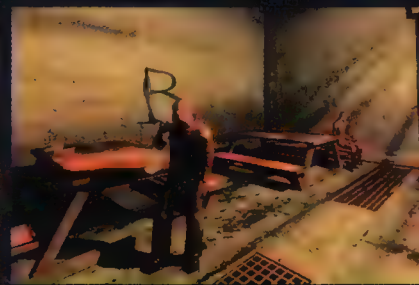
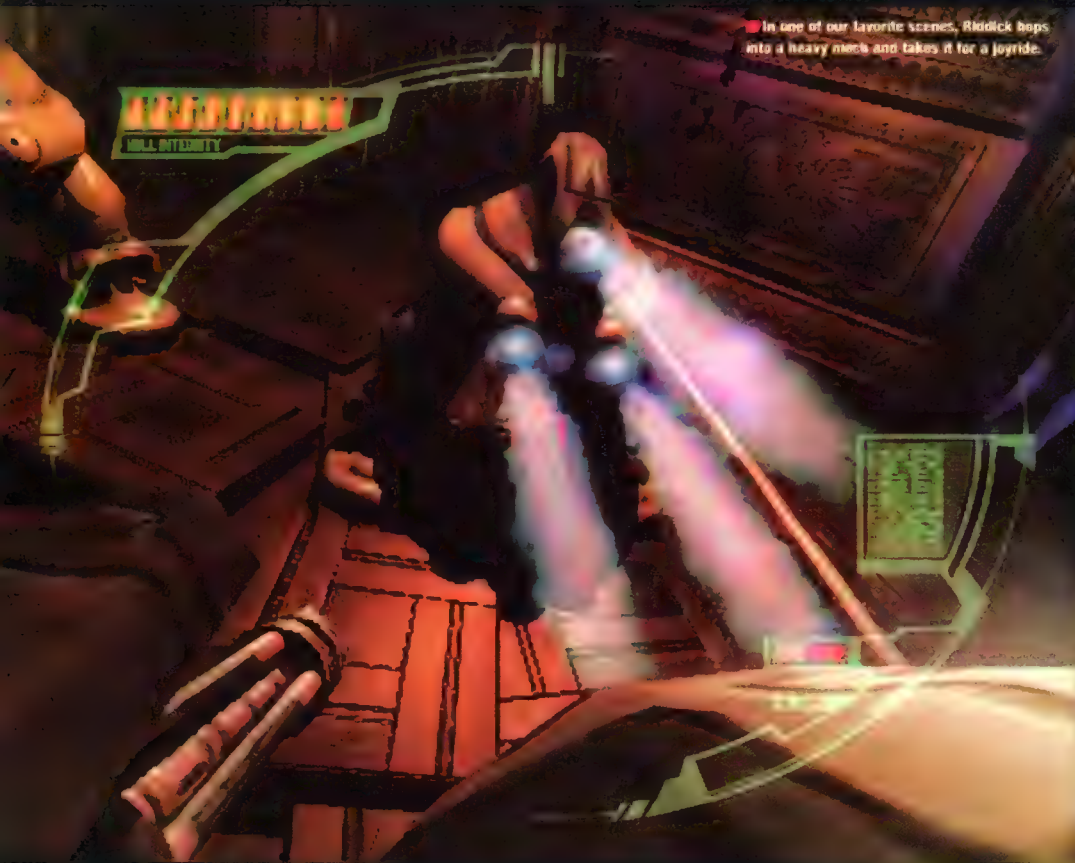
Good: Plenty of variety and visual polish
Bad: Over before you know it
Licensed Games: Laughingstocks no more



THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)	9.0	8.0	9.0
	SHAWN	MARK	CHE

Publisher: VU Games
Developer: Starbreeze
Players: 1
ESRB: Mature

www.vugames.com




the titular hero, Vinny D's gravelly baritone (so deep it makes Solid Snake sound like a 12-year-old eunuch) and perfect delivery add menacing cool to the general badass feeling you get playing this game. The use of the first-person view beyond the so-so shooting sections—for stealth, simple puzzles, even some light RPG and fighting elements—really makes you feel like you're living inside this dark prison world. Truly impressive graphics amplify the immersion. Liberal use of shadows and a host of cutting-edge, gee-whiz visual effects keep your eyes fully entertained, even if the level and enemy designs aren't especially impressive.

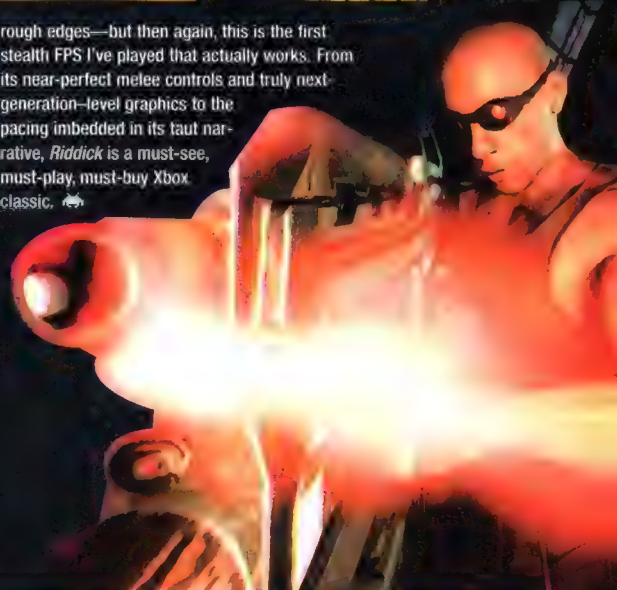
But I'd definitely have to disagree with Shawn when he says the game feels polished. Small control gripes, interface issues, and occasional A.I. hiccups are noticeable. And as much as *Riddick* pushes the envelope in terms of gameplay, it also falls back on a few clichés disappointingly often, with enough crate jumping, exploding-barrel blasting, and vent crawling for three first-person shooters.

Still, this is a game worth playing through, even

(or maybe especially) if you don't consider yourself an FPS fan. *Riddick* is exactly what it should be: the game equivalent of a fun summer popcorn movie. Don't expect an epic or focus on the rough edges, and you'll enjoy a short but sweet roller coaster ride.

XBM—CHE: Like Vin Diesel as Richard B. Riddick in this interactive prequel to the films, this game sneaked up on me from behind and snapped my preconceptions in half like a twig. What's more, it's also done the unthinkable: It's actually made me want to watch other movies starring Vin Diesel as the enigmatic Riddick (though nothing can make me sit through the execrable *XXX* again). Developer Starbreeze did a remarkable job of integrating the look and feel of the Riddick flicks into an indubitably playable first-person adventure. *Riddick* slips you into Vin Diesel's sweaty wife-beater tank top by establishing an ultra-immersive first-person perspective—much like Namco's flawed but innovative *Breakdown* (XB). Sure, as Mark points out, the game has its

rough edges—but then again, this is the first stealth FPS I've played that actually works. From its near-perfect melee controls and truly next-generation-level graphics to the pacing imbedded in its taut narrative, *Riddick* is a must-see, must-play, must-buy Xbox classic. 



Faces of Death in a Dark Place

There ain't enough ammo in the pen to pay everyone back, but Riddick's just as lethal even after his clip runs dry. Try settling scores by...



...planting your fist in a face; repeat as necessary.



...turning a guard's own gun on him with a counter.



...dropping down onto an unsuspecting enemy's head.



...slitting someone's throat with a homemade shiv.



...snapping the roll of quarters "The Man" calls a neck.

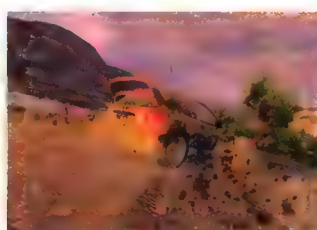


Rallisport: More arcadey than the Colin McRae series...and also way more fun.

Xbox

RALLISPORT CHALLENGE 2

Last chance power drive



Though the car damage looks really cool, it doesn't affect play much. Unless a wheel falls off.

Good: Near-perfect handling, huge number of courses
Bad: First half is way too easy
Who Knew? A 20+-year-old Volvo 240 turbo could haul total ass.



DEMIAN: Rally may be the redheaded stepchild of racing genres, but dammit, *Rallisport 2* deserves way more than some punk kid—not just cursory attention and pocket money, either. I'm talking many hours of your life and possibly a popsicle-stick shrine in your living room.

The solo rally sections, be they across the Australian desert, muddy U.K. back roads, or fog- and snow-choked Sweden, require unbelievably intense concentration. The payoff comes when you drift around a 95 mph bend you've never seen before, balancing the car with the throttle alone—a rush that matches the best moments of any driving game. And yet, the straight-up rally courses are actually the most boring parts; tight rallycross (against three other cars), crossover (two cars on parallel tracks, not in the last game), and ice racing circuits are the greatest bits, feeling more like roller coaster rides than race tracks.

It's annoying to hit a hay bale and stop dead, the car damage (while impressive looking) doesn't affect gameplay much, and the first half of *Rallisport* is ridiculously easy—there, it hurt bad, but I found some

faults. Now ignore that last sentence and get this wonderful game.

KEVIN: This is one of the finest racing games I've ever played. Like Demian said, it's easy at the start, but that changes: You'll eventually drive through narrow, slippery roads, at night, in the snow, for 15 minutes at a time. The incredible backdrops and weather effects only add to the experience, and the Xbox Live competition is similarly flawless. It's rare to find a racer that's so easy to pick up and play—and so immediately addicting. It's not a serious sim, but you'll be too busy enjoying yourself to care.

XBN—CHE: I may never have whipped an Audi Quattro around a serpentine track at over 120 mph, but I know that if I ever do, I want it to feel this good. As a spiritual successor to *Sega Rally*, *Rallisport 2* takes the accessible, arcadey approach. Sure, it may not feature the most realistic handling model for these real-life rockets, but considering the game's photorealistic visuals and environmental interaction, all running perfectly on Xbox Live—who cares?

THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)	9.0	9.0	9.0
	DEMIAN	KEVIN	CHE

Publisher: Microsoft
 Developer: Dice
 Players: 1-4 (2-4 online)
 ESRB: Everyone

www.xbox.com



The plot involves aliens, zombies, and giant crabs. Turns out they (spoiler!) all want to kill you.

Xbox

METAL SLUG 3

Zen and the art of side-scrolling shooters



Good: One of the best 2D shooters around
Bad: Hard, fairly bare-bones port
Best Vehicle: The machine gun—equipped ostrich



KEVIN: Another *Metal Slug*...should you care? Well, it's a port of arguably the best game in the classic series of 2D shooters. And it's the first *Metal Slug* arcade-to-console port that isn't deficient in some way—no slowdown, no flicker, no nothing. Most importantly, though, it's still among the best 2D action games ever created.

Not that *Metal Slug 3* is for everyone. It takes a certain sort of person to appreciate such a difficult game, especially one that requires so much replaying to complete. The fun doesn't come from reaching objectives or anything—it's from playing over and over in search of the perfect game or the highest score. Sort of like the modern-day-shooter classic *Ikaruga* on GameCube, actually, except a fair bit easier.

The Xbox version has a couple of bonus modes, but they aren't playable until you beat the game, and that's enough of a challenge in itself (especially considering *Metal Slug's* stinginess with continues). The \$40 price may be a bit steep for a four-year-old arcade game, but *Slug* is still just as fun as it was back in ol' two-triple-aught.

G. FORD: There are many breeds of gamers: casual, sports, spastic...and of course, the hardcore. *Metal Slug 3* is tailor-made for that last group—folks who can appreciate side-scrolling 2D graphics and don't mind restarting over and over again (you want midmission continues? Pansy!) or walking to school uphill both ways in the snow. Hard-as-heck bosses? Thank you, sir, may I have another?

Not you? Then there's no shame in skipping this—it's truly a frustrating game. All you fellow masochists, though, here's your fix until the next *Contra* shows up.

XBN—CHE: The *Metal Slug* series, known for its gorgeous 2D art of war, hits Xbox with a refreshing bang. I've always loved its skewed and deformed sense of humor and design, but hated that, as a quarter-munching arcade shooter, the games had no longevity. *Slug 3* makes amends with exclusive new levels and a simple continue system that forces you to master each level before unlocking the rest. Polished, well-balanced, and freaking difficult to boot, this *Slug* is a testament to gaming artistry.

THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)	7.5	6.5	8.0
	KEVIN	G. FORD	CHE

Publisher: SNK
 Developer: SNK Playmore
 Players: 1-2
 ESRB: Teen

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GameCube

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS ADVENTURES

Link cable to the past

JOHN R: It's been more than two years since Nintendo first started singing the praises of connectivity—the concept of hooking up a Game Boy Advance to a GameCube for new and exciting gameplay possibilities—and yet after all this time, you can still count the number of connectivity games that are truly worth their weight in link cables on a single hand. Fortunately (or unfortunately, if you have no friends), *Zelda: Four Swords Adventures* is one such game.

Four Swords was designed from the ground up to be a four-player game (though you can go it alone, too), and this is where it really shines. Hyrule Adventure, the main play mode, is an absolute blast with friends, thanks largely to its ingeniously designed stages, which encourage competition while simultaneously requiring play-

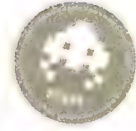
ers to cooperate with each other in order to advance. By your lonesome, the experience just isn't the same. Exploring a massive, multilayered *Zelda* dungeon with three other people definitely ranks up there among the most satisfying multi-player gaming experiences I've ever had—online or off.

Connectivity comes into play whenever you enter into a separate area from the main screen, like a house or a cave. Here, all the action occurs on your GBA, leaving you free to soldier on independently of your peers. One could argue that this feature isn't really necessary—until the first time you unleash an army of angry chickens upon your unsuspecting partners from the safety of an underground shelter. Then it all starts making beautiful sense.

As for Shadow Battle, the versus game, it's really just a standard four-player battle mode. Viewed as a separate minigame, it's mildly entertaining, but next to the far more enjoyable Hyrule Adventure, it's kind of hard to take seriously.

If you've got the equipment (and more importantly, the friends), it's highly unlikely *Four Swords* will disappoint. Hopefully, next time Nintendo will just take the whole thing online, but for now, a couple dozen feet of link cables will just have to do.

JENNIFER: What kind of frustration do you like? Personally, I can't stand insanely difficult bosses, odds-stacked-against-you hordes of enemies, or crack-shot snipers lurking in the murky lit multi-player shadows. But I truly adore a good brain-

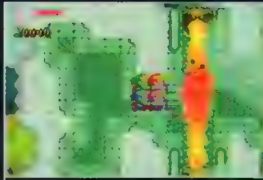


Tik's
Topography
 The Absolute
 Winner of Five
 Years
 Awarded the
 Best & Most
 Generally
 Enjoyed
 Multi-Pass
 Turned. This
 complex, but
 easy-to-learn
 game has
 been the
 ultimate
 success for us.
 Can't say we
 have a
 more
 successful
 game than
 this one.
 Unsurprisingly
 being a
 community
 based site we
 think it's
 important to
 have a
 "win a 000"

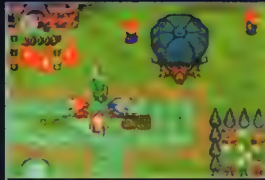
No Friends? No Problem!

Although we highly recommend you enjoy *Four Swords Adventures* with three of your pals, that doesn't mean the more hermit-like among you can't have a good time as well. In Hyrule Adventure's solo mode, one

player controls all four Links at once, switching between them on the fly to get through the game's numerous traps and puzzles. You can switch manually or choose from four different preset group formations.



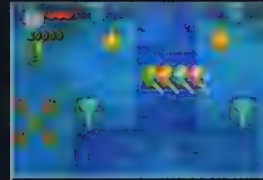
Box: Good for combat and squeezing through tight spots



Cross: Another strong battle formation, handy when surrounded



Long: Useful when facing a single foe, but open to ranged attacks



Wide: Same good and bad points as the Long formation...but horizontal

Check! Secret level link back design
 Best! From the GBA, it's a great way to play
 Nintendo's best! It's a great way to play

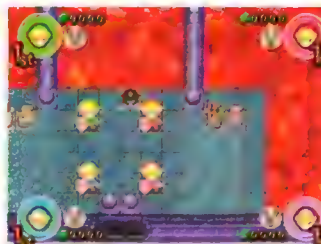
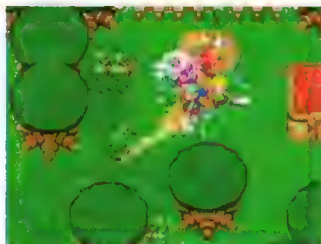


THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)

8.5	9.0	8.0
JOHN R.	JENNIFER	SHOE

Publisher: Nintendo
 Developer: Nintendo
 Players: 1-4
 ESRB: Everyone

www.nintendo.com



Link's Beverage Imbibing Challenge



Multiple Links sword swinging and boomerang chucking at once would drive anyone to drink, but if you prefer some rigid organization to go with your tipping, we guarantee adequate hydration if you take a shot of ginger ale when any of the below occurs:

- Another party member throws you off a cliff
- Someone else figures out which block to move in a puzzle before you
- You catch on fire
- There are four pressure plates, and you're the last one on
- Someone else lands the killing blow on a boss
- You get a sword power-up
- You're the last person into the Shadow World
- Someone discovers a secret passage
- A chicken kills anyone
- Tingle appears

teaser, and *Four Swords* is the game for me. The puzzles and battles in *Hyrule Adventure* are less about testing your reflexes, more about twisting your brain—they provide that satisfying “a-ha!” when you solve something that stumped you for 20 or 30 minutes. Too many puzzles would be overwhelming, but here, the balance is perfect: Just when you're brain-drained, a tasty treasure chest easily presents itself for your grabby hands. Same's true with combat—often, you'll need to study patterns to beat the baddies, but here and there you can just pound your way to victory.

Multiplayer adds another cool layer, though control freaks like me might shy away from its convoluted, anything-goes nature (especially when one player won't stop picking up and throwing another player...Shoel). About the graphics? Honestly, the 2D simplicity of it all captured my heart and earned major nostalgia points. It's fur-

ther proof that good gameplay is all it takes; next time, all I ask is to be able to save more often.

SHOE: If you thought *Wind Waker* was *Zelda for Babies*, then *Four Swords* is practically prenatal. I'm not making fun of its kiddy cartoon style. I'm referring to how each *Four Swords* stage is set up like a stripped-down standalone game—after you power up your sword, get that boomerang, or find a heart container to increase your health, say good-bye to them when you finish the level and start over on the next. You don't really develop your Link (Links, in this case) into a greater, more powerful hero. You don't even get to carry more than one subweapon at a time. It all feels like *Zelda Lite*.

So the gimmick here is playing four Links simultaneously. In single player, it's just that: a gimmick. Especially because in many situations,

particularly boss fights, you'll end up wanting to control one Link anyway and leave the others ghosted out and safe from harm. But in multiplayer...ho

boy, the great *Zelda* formula turns friends into enemies and enemies into friends, with every-one busting up and having a hell of a good time. Your fun will waver with some confusing levels that take way too long to finish, but cooperating and competing at the same time with your “teammates” is a great experience that any *Zelda* fan will enjoy. 🍷



■ Why do Links gotta be such buffies?

Tingle Time

Need a break from your quest? Try Tingle's eight hidden minigames. Highlights include:



Bucking Bronco: Hop on your trusty steed and rip around a massive indoor/outdoor track littered with sharp twists and turns. Chow down on carrots to increase speed.



Monster Hunting: Take on dozens of enemies in what is easily the most fun minigame. Two different variations are available, each with a ridiculous number of chumps to slay.



Volley, By Golly! Slap the colored ball back and forth between until some jerk screws up the volley. Whoever scores the most successful hits within the time limit wins.



Hammer Tag: Just like the game you played as a kid, assuming you played with giant hammers. Smack someone to confer “it” status. After 60 seconds of being “it,” you're out.

■ **Green day:** Seasoned pros will find *Advance Tour's* putting awfully cinchy. With nearly no lean to the green, 30 footers are cake.



■ GBA

MARIO GOLF: ADVANCE TOUR

Mini-golfing thrills minus the windmills

CRISPIN: Role-playing golf? Sounds as exciting as a pro-bowler fighting game. But in *Advance Tour*, all the extraneous questing, character building, and item collecting just works. Fans of the original Game Boy Color *Mario Golf*—also an RPG—will tell you that. And you *Golfing* aficionados should know that *Advance Tour* packs an overworld full of courses (five in all) as large as the original, with even more minigames and challenges.

It's all matched with the tweaked control of last year's *Mario Golf* GameCube game. For tour rookies, that means you can opt for baby-gamer one-button swings or tweak topspin and backspin with timed jabs of the A and B buttons. It's almost too simple: As you progress through the story mode, you'll find that later courses and unlocked opponents just aren't challenging your improved skills.

But the game's addictive formula won't lose its

grip before you find everything worth seeing—and there's plenty hidden here, including a course with power-ups and obstacles from Mario's world (plus individual Mario-ized holes you can open on old greens). Even after the final tourney, *Advance Tour's* golf bag still offers enough diversions (co-op multiplayer = good times) to keep you busy until someone makes *Street Bowler III: Gutter Brawl*.

JENNIFER: Even if you weren't praying for the perfect portable golf game, this is the answer to your prayers. The mechanics are simple and easy to learn—once I got the hang of weather conditions and top- and backspin, I breezed through the early courses with nary a bogey. Later events are substantially more challenging, but by that time, my golfer had awesome stats and skills. My only complaint is that it's too hard to find all the separate modes and

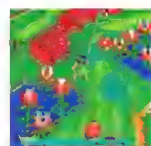
stuff the game has to offer...but hey, what else are you going to do on your morning bus ride?

SHAWN: Now that Bowser's all but given up abducting princesses, Mario's had plenty of time to tee up. The plumber already proved his PGA potential with *Toadstool Tour*, and he shoots to this tourney's greens with the same simple yet precise club control that helped him sink a near hole in one on the Cube. Applying spin and curving shots like a pro is satisfying (only the shallow putting disappoints), but it's the RPG-like story mode that really puts this *Tour* under par. With talkative townsfolk who'll offer stroke-saving tips, local hot-shots eager to show you up, and a course in the boonies with its own clever set of rules, what's not to love about this goofball world where everything revolves around the perfect game of golf? 🍄

■ **Links game:** After maxing out your *Advance Tour* golf goliaths, transfer them to *Toadstool Tour* on GameCube and get nuts.



■ **Wander the overworld** to find stat-boosting minigames, such as this Stargate challenge.



Super Mario-ize It
While *Advance Tour* doesn't team from tee to shining tee with Mario references, it does have its share of mushroomy moments. Aside from obligatory fan-service stuff (like finding blue overalls in a locker), you unlock a special course, as well as individual holes, crammed with classic power-up blocks and Mario-villain obstacles. It's the best part of the game.

Happy Coincidence? Proof that Adam Sandler is the missing Mario brother



MARIO

Plays a plumber who becomes a golf champ in *Advance Tour*

Wields an H2O-squirting backpack in *Mario Sunshine*

Known to pounce on turtles, fish, and other animals

Dated actress Alicia Silverstone

ADAM SANDLER

Plays a hockey player who becomes a golf champ in *Happy Gilmore*

Wields an H2O-squirting backpack in *The Waterboy*

Known to pounce on animal-rights activist Bob Barker

Also dated actress Alicia Silverstone



Good: Great control, days of play
Bad: Gets easy for grown-up players
Hey Cheaters: Save between holes and restart if you choke



THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)

9.0	8.5	8.5
CRISPIN	JENNIFER	SHAWN

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Camelot
Players: 1-4
ESRB: Everyone

www.nintendo.com



■ (Above and left) Visually distinctive and mercifully brief cut-scenes illustrate each attack.



■ GBA

SHINING FORCE: RESURRECTION OF THE DARK DRAGON

The lighter side of tactics

Good: Simple yet engaging tactical combat
Bad: Lack of versus mode
Much Less Taxing Than: *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance*

SHANE: Props to Sega for reviving this often overlooked (well, by folks less nerdy than me) tactical RPG series. Back on Sega Genesis, this streamlined blend of fantasy role-playing and war-game strategy blazed the yellow brick road for fare like *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* and *Tactics Ogre*. Of course, compared to those calculus-crunching behemoths, *Force* feels simplistic—you're basically just moving a group of cute troops around battlefields, taking turns approaching, flanking, and whacking enemies.

Surprisingly, though, with only a few alterations and additions, *Force* holds up remarkably well a decade later. The skirmishes draw you in with balanced difficulty and excellent pacing, and questing after secret characters makes the otherwise perfunctory towns worth exploring. While an all-new installment

would have been preferable, Sega does at least add some polish to *Resurrection*—but it's in the little things, like doubled item-carrying capacity and the ability to buy multiple items at once. The visuals and music also benefit from an overhaul, though only slightly: Clunky animation and tinny tunes don't really impress. Luckily, the addition of secondary battle goals, three new characters, and a handful of new (insanely hard) extra battles really fleshes out an already impressive title.

JOHN R.: Though I cried on Shane's shoulder when I heard *Force* was just a remake, the game it's based on still compares favorably to today's strategy-RPG hybrids. Similar to *Fire Emblem* or *Advance Wars*, *Force* offers simple yet addictive gameplay that pretty much anyone can get to grips with. The remake sports

improved visuals, some new battles, and a top-notch updated localization, but sadly, the battle animations are terrible. Otherwise, though, my complaints are few. Bring on the sequels!

KEVIN: For those with enough geek cred to remember the first *Shining Force* when it hit the Genesis in 1992, this refurbished version may be something of a letdown. Developer Sega AV (aka Amusement Vision) replaced the formerly dark graphics with Super Nintendo-style pastels, and the game has a few tiny enhancements (mostly to make it easier for modern players), but compared to *Advance Wars* and other GBA originals, *Resurrection* will seem old-fashioned and heavy on the fighting. It's still a classic, and addictive if given the attention it deserves, but it could've done with still more sprucing up.



■ GBA-exclusive stages offer new (yet lame) enemies.



Narsha, What do I do now...?
 Where is Mawlock...?

THE VERDICTS (out of 10)

8.0	8.0	7.5
SHANE	JOHN R.	KEVIN

Publisher: Atlus
 Developer: Sega AV
 Players: 1
 ESRB: Teen
www.atlus.com

“★★★★”

—The People Who Own This Shop

“A truly admirable anime collection.”

—Student from O-Chem Class

“A Japanese marvel.”

—Old Kid on the Block

“Two thumbs up.”

—Smith and Tanaka from Gym

“A delightful anime resource”

—Video Store Manager

“The must-visit site of the year.”

—Guy Who Surfs a Lot

“Anime toys, books, figures...you name it!”

—The Die Hard Collector



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Elements of *Donkey Kong Jr.* find their way into *Vs.*



If you need more time to strategize, you can stop the clock and look around by pressing in both shoulder buttons.

GBA

MARIO VS. DONKEY KONG

Precision pipe fitting

MARK: In many ways, *Vs.* apes the original Game Boy *Donkey Kong* (a great game that still deserves attention, by the way), combining traditional platforming with a puzzelike setup to each stage.

Unlike its predecessor, however, certain elements of this *Kong* come up a bit short. Controls are solid and dependable but don't quite reach the usual *Mario* level of spot-on responsiveness, and many of your more interesting moves (handstand, using hammers, spinning on gymnastics-style horizontal bars) are only rarely necessary. Visually, the game is colorful and sharp, but with a simple, pre-rendered look that can appear spartan and cold.

Thankfully, the core gameplay works well. Figuring out exactly how to approach a stage—which route to take, how to get the key, which switches to flip in what order—is as fun as dodging bullets and tossing enemies. The *Lemmings*-style (Super Nintendo) levels are especially fun, in which you protect a group or single "mini Mario" while guiding them to a goal (see below). But the more enjoyable stages don't really show up until

the second half of the game; earlier levels are too easy, too hard, or (most often) far too short. More and bigger levels that combined and explored the various moves and game mechanics you don't see enough of would've gone a long way. A good time killer, even if it doesn't quite live up to its potential or famous namesakes.

DEMIAN: Silly *Donkey Kong*, windup Mario toys are for kids. And that's all the backstory needed or given in this latest riff on Mario-style 2D run-and-jump gameplay. While the moving platforms, spiky and/or fiery deaths, and mean Shy Guys will be instantly familiar to Mario fans, the relatively tiny *Vs.* stages are self-contained puzzles rather than sprawling playgrounds, demanding mental acrobatics and split-second reaction times. But Mark's right about the controls lacking a certain something; I blame a full 30 percent of my deaths on the fact that, instead of jumping out from a ladder or vine as intended, I'd often plummet straight down.

Mario has a few new tricks (like a falling-block-

deflecting handstand to double-jump) along with his classic moves, and there's a whole lot of gameplay here—thanks in part to the princess-is-in-another-castle-esque twist and unlockable bonus levels. Too bad there isn't much variety. Most puzzles have only one solution; it would have been nice if players could use their creativity to reach objectives in multiple ways.

GMR—ANDREW: *Mario Vs. Donkey Kong* is a fine example of what good handheld gaming ought to be: nugget-sized entertainment that you can put down just as easily as you pick it up. The short, puzzle-based levels manage to incorporate many different elements (keys, switches, conveyor belts, enemies...) without making things needlessly complicated. A seasoned gamer might find *Vs.* easy at first, but mastering each stage in an attempt at beating the high score proves much more challenging—and, ultimately, rewarding. **A-**



Mini-Me

The six standard worlds in *Vs.* end with one stage in which you need to guide as many mini-Marios as you can to a toy box. The cute li'l tykes can't climb ladders, but they'll follow you anywhere, even right into enemies or spikes, so plan ahead. Once you "finish" the game and open up the Plus worlds, the gameplay changes again; you'll escort a single mini-Mario to find the necessary keys instead of doing it yourself.



THE VERDICTS
(out of 10)

7.0
MARK

7.5
DEMIAN

7.5
ANDREW

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Players: 1
ESRB: Everyone

www.nintendo.com

REVIEWS WRAP-UP

Too late or too little

We were hoping to review that new *Harry Potter* game what's out right about now (*Prisoner of Azkaban*), but EA Games thought it'd totally spoil the movie for us if we played the game first. Since we've already read the book we're not sure how that'd work, but whatever, hold on to your Bott's Every Flavor Beans until next issue.

And then there were a few other games this month that we just didn't have enough space to cram in....

MTV Music Generator 3



■ So many menus, so little time.

PS2/XB • Codemasters — *Generator 3* trumps its older siblings with its incredible ease of use: Remaking the 10 licensed tunes is simple enough for a total newcomer. The trade-off is that *MG3* lacks the power and flexibility of *MG2*, but it's a great primer in the basics of sample-based music creation.

River City Ransom II

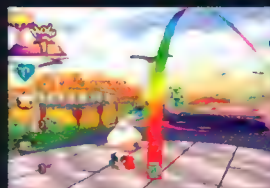


OLEX was very happy and the...
 ■ Speechless.

GBA • Atlus — Now why are you gonna go and kidnap that girl when you know her boyfriend's bound to bust up your whole clique with bicycle chains, baseball bats, and crowbars? The revered Nintendo Entertainment System beat-em-up returns with all the quirky power-ups and RPG elements that made *River City* the place to brawl with

biker gangs. Who'da thunk a punk rock album could boost your toughness by 10?

Wabbit King



■ Hit that freakin' frog like you mean it.

PS2/GC • Bandai — More fun and less lethal than frog baseball, it's frog golf! Or froft. *Rabbit King*'s kiddie graphics and humor will put off most non-kiddie gamers, but its quirky gameplay is mildly addictive. Not addictive enough to warrant a full three-person review, but hey.

Olde Tyme Games Shoppe

Frothing Nintendoophiles are circling and recircling June 7th on their calendars, on account of the eight classic NES titles—*Xenious*, *Bomberman*, *Pac-Man*, *Excitebike*, *Ice Climber*, *The Legend of Zelda*, *Super Mario Bros.*, and *Donkey Kong*—coming out on Game Boy Advance that day at 20 bucks a pop. Judging by the two we got our hands on ahead of time (*Donkey Kong* and *Mario Bros.*), they're pretty much perfect ports. Some haven't aged so well, though; our top picks would be *Excitebike*, *The Legend of Zelda*, and *Mario*.



REVIEW CREW SURVIVOR

Think you got the goods to join *Electronic Gaming Monthly's* Review Crew? Let us take you down a notch, hotshot. One lucky writer will join the Review Crew on a contributing basis...if he or she can make it through *Review Crew Survivor*. The rest of you get public humiliation.

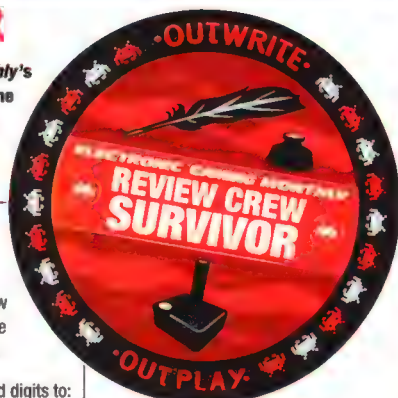
Send This:

■ A VHS tape—two minutes of you on camera telling us why you belong on the Review Crew, and five minutes of you playing a videogame of your choice, demonstrating how hardcore you are. We want to see you playing the game, the action on the screen, and that no cheat devices were used.

■ Writing samples—two 200-word reviews of two different videogames of your choice (don't forget to include scores using our review scale—see pg. 93).

■ Name, address, and digits to:

EGM Review Crew Survivor
 101 Second St, 8th Floor
 San Francisco, CA 94105



Entries due in our hands by
Wednesday, June 30, 2004

In an upcoming issue, we'll select 15 candidates to participate in a series of writing challenges. Your work will be put up for the world to see in *EGM* and on egmsurvivor.1UP.com, and that same world will vote to decide who gets kicked off each month. We'll ask the last survivor to be an official reviewer for one issue (or more). Now get writing!

*Subject to terms and conditions, of course. Each month, the surviving candidates will have to turn in a new writing sample for publication and judging. Failure to submit by the given deadlines will result in automatic disqualification. After reader voting, we will inform the survivors what they are to do next and by when. We will continue this until one person is left. The winner will be paid our normal freelance rate for one to three reviews for at least one issue (more if we like you, fewer if we don't—we reserve all rights to stop this program at any time). Winner may be contributing to the main Review Crew section or Review Crew Wrap-Up, depending on logistics, like your access to special console hardware used to play renewable discs. The full rules and legal mumbo jumbo are on <http://egmsurvivor.1UP.com>.

Archie Maclean Presents

POOL PARADISE



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REVIEWS ARCHIVE

Our archive is bigger than your archive

greatest hit or miss?



FREEDOM FIGHTERS

■ PlayStation 2/Xbox/GameCube
 ■ Released: March 2002
 ■ Original Scores: 7.5, 8.5, 8.0
 The Soviet Union won the cold war, and commies are invading the country. Fortunately for you, recruiting and commanding packs of resistance fighters in NYC's war-torn boroughs is as easy as humming a few bars of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

BUMPER TO BUMPER

Crashing into things and being crushed isn't as exciting as it sounds. How you take to a game's bumper action depends. *2002/03* picks all to be a bumper's best. *2002/03* picks all to be a bumper's best. *2002/03* picks all to be a bumper's best.



4.5 — Average score for the top 2002/03 games reviewed by EGM

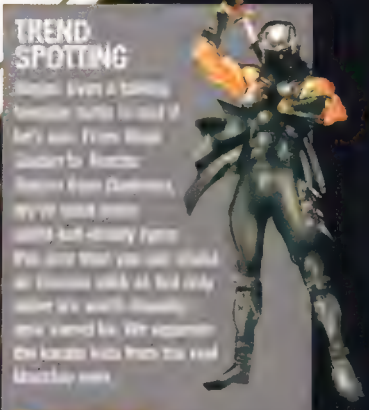


7.4 — Average score for the great 2002/03 games reviewed by EGM

GAME	SYSTEM	VERDICT	SCORES (out of 10)	AWARD
Airforce Delta Strike	PS2	■ Slow-moving flight sim stalls before it reaches the danger zone	3.5 3.5 6.0	
Alias	PS2/XB	■ Clever disguises can't conceal crappy gameplay	5.0 5.5 4.5	
All-Star Baseball 2005	PS2/XB	■ Take us out to the ballgame...just not this one	5.5 4.5 6.0	
American Idol	PS2	■ The only button you need to press is on the back of your console	1.5 2.0 1.0	
Amped 2	XB	■ An eye-pleasing boarder with very few patches of yellow snow	8.0 8.0 9.0	Silver
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance II	PS2/XB	■ Ho-hum hack-n-slash. Now that's a role you don't wanna play	7.0 4.5 5.0	
Battlestar Galactica	PS2/XB	■ Launched before all systems were go	6.0 6.0 5.5	
Beyond Good & Evil	PS2/XB/GC	■ Shutterbug Jade's picture-perfect adventure was underexposed. Snap it up	8.0 9.0 8.0	Silver
Breakdown	XB	■ You can practically feel the impacts in this first-person brawler	8.5 8.5 7.0	Silver
Champions of Norrath: Realms of EQ	PS2	■ A <i>Dark Alliance</i> -style take on <i>EverQuest</i> , complete with online co-op	8.5 8.0 8.5	Silver
Colin McRae Rally 04	XB	■ Rev your engines for 04's top-notch handling and wicked terrain	8.5 8.0 8.5	Silver
Counter-Strike	XB	■ A bare-bones first-person shooter that's expendable in the war of the war games	5.0 5.0 7.0	
Crash Nitro Kart	PS2/XB/GC	■ For roadside assistance call 1-800-BUY-MARIO-KART	5.5 6.0 5.5	
Crimson Sea 2	PS2	■ Space runs red with bug blood when <i>Dynasty Warriors</i> goes sci-fi	8.0 7.0 6.5	
Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge	XB	■ A stellar and stylish shooter, <i>Crimson Skies</i> kicks the genre's tires and lights its fires	9.0 9.0 8.5	Silver
Custom Robo	GC	■ Robo-battling is solid, but what's with the shallow, pseudo-RPG stuff?	6.5 6.0 8.0	
Cy Girls	PS2	■ Progress-impeding puzzles will make you feel like the butt of a bad blonde joke	7.0 5.0 5.0	
Dance Dance Revolution Ultramix	XB	■ Perfect your gimp step and build a pimp rep	8.5 8.0 7.0	
Dead Man's Hand	XB	■ Find out how the West was dumb in this oddball first-person shooting gallery	6.5 5.0 4.5	
Destruction Derby Arenas	PS2	■ Even crash-test dummies would yawn at this wreckage	4.5 3.5 6.0	
Deus Ex: Invisible War	XB	■ <i>Invisible War</i> 's captivating story compensates for its technical shortcomings	8.0 9.0 7.0	Silver
Drain	XB	■ One of our reviewers gave it an 0.5. What do you think?	2.0 0.5 2.5	
Drakengard	PS2	■ <i>Dynasty Warriors</i> meets <i>Panzer Dragoon</i> , only not as good as either one	7.5 7.0 3.5	
Dynasty Tactics 2	PS2	■ Medieval Chinese generals put on their wildest headgear before going to war	7.5 7.5 7.5	
EA Sports Fight Night 2004	PS2/XB	■ EA returns to the ring under a new name and registers a knockout	8.5 9.0 8.0	Silver
ESPN College Hoops	PS2/XB	■ Our own NCAA investigation reveals that <i>ESPN</i> plays too much like a pro game	8.5 7.5 6.5	
ESPN Major League Baseball	PS2/XB	■ If <i>MVP</i> is this season's Yankees, then sadly, <i>ESPN</i> is its BoSox	8.0 8.5 7.5	Silver
ESPN NBA Basketball	PS2/XB	■ Even Kobe Bryant's star-studded legal team struggled finding fault with this one	8.5 9.5 9.0	Gold
ESPN NHL Hockey	PS2/XB	■ If we were in Detroit, we'd be throwin' an octopus onto the ice. Goal!	8.5 9.0 9.0	Silver
EverQuest Online Adventures: Frontiers	PS2	■ Doesn't the front lawn constitute a new frontier to <i>Evercrack</i> -heads?	6.5 6.0 7.0	
EyeToy: Groove	PS2	■ Don't let looking like a displaying ape stop you	8.0 8.0 7.0	
Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel	PS2/XB	■ Repetitive critter hunting in a watered-down wasteland	4.0 4.5 4.0	
Fatal Frame II: Crimson Butterfly	PS2	■ Combating poltergeists with a Polaroid is scarier than it sounds	7.5 7.5 6.5	
FIFA Soccer 2004	PS2/XB/GC	■ Responsive on-field controls make it a breeze to bend it like Beckham	7.5 9.0 8.0	Silver
Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles	GC	■ Charming action-RPG so cute that it could give Hello Kitty a heart attack	8.0 8.0 8.0	Silver
Final Fantasy Tactics Advance	GBA	■ Deep strategy for the on-the-go tactician. Complete with androgynous heroes	9.0 9.0 9.0	Gold
Final Fantasy XI	PS2	■ A monstrous MMORPG that'll consume your life. ADD-types need not apply	8.5 8.5 8.5	Silver
Final Fantasy X-2	PS2	■ Yuna and her female friends rock Spira like never before, and we like it	8.5 9.5 9.5	Gold
Fire Emblem	GBA	■ Deep tactical strategy, but your trip through fantasyland ends too quickly	7.5 8.0 8.5	Silver
Firefighter F.D. 18	PS2	■ Fight fires, fireman-hating robots, and trial-and-error gameplay	6.5 6.0 4.0	
Goblin Commander: Unleash the Horde	PS2/XB/GC	■ Off-the-leash real-time strategy with a few warts	8.0 6.0 4.5	
Grabbed by the Ghoules	XB	■ Something seriously stupid this way comes	5.5 4.0 4.5	
Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup	PS2/XB/GC	■ Rugby, basketball, and nerds on broomsticks collide with thrilling results	7.5 7.5 6.5	
Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life	GC	■ Would you really have more fun watching the grass grow? Find out	8.5 6.5 7.0	
Hitman: Contracts	PS2/XB	■ Money grows on trees when you cut throats to rake leaves	8.0 7.5 8.5	Silver
The Hobbit	PS2/XB/GC	■ Bilbo Baggins' journey just isn't as appealing as his young nephew's	6.5 5.0 7.0	
James Bond 007: Everything or Nothing	PS2/XB/GC	■ With brains, brawn, bullets, and balls, Bond saves the world again. Splendid	8.0 8.5 8.5	Silver
Karaoke Revolution	PS2	■ Like real karaoke, except the audience actually boos you offstage for bad singing	6.5 8.5 7.5	Silver
La Pucelle: Tactics	PS2	■ Deep strategy-RPG gameplay you'll love, with childish characters you'll despise	7.5 8.5 8.0	Silver
Legacy of Kain: Defiance	PS2/XB	■ Quenches your undying thirst for blood and souls	7.5 8.0 7.0	
Lethal Skies II	PS2	■ Crashes and burns	3.0 5.5 4.0	
Links 2004	XB	■ The rest of the PGA can't compete with <i>Tiger</i>	6.5 7.5 6.5	
LifeLine	PS2	■ Wanna play <i>Resident Evil</i> again, using speech recognition that doesn't really work?	4.5 4.5 4.0	
Lowrider	PS2	■ Won't make you wanna bounce	5.0 5.5 2.0	
Lord of the Rings: Return of the King	PS2/XB/GC	■ Stick an orc in it, it's fun. Stick a thousand orcs in it, it's...er, funner	8.5 8.5 8.0	Silver
Lord of the Rings: Return of the King	GBA	■ Legolas gets shrunk to Keebler size and your girlfriend still thinks he's hot	7.0 6.0 7.5	
Lupin the 3rd	PS2	■ Fanatically true to the anime, but fiddly controls and lame puzzles steal the fun	5.5 4.5 7.0	
Mafia	PS2/XB	■ Jack jalopies and outdrive thugs in this glitchy 1930s gangster game	6.0 5.0 7.5	
Magic the Gathering: Battlegrounds	XB	■ The cards say you need a life	4.0 5.5 4.5	
Manhunt	PS2	■ Videogame-hating Senator Joe Lieberman's dream come true	7.0 6.5 7.0	
Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga	GBA	■ A polished, thoroughly enjoyable adventure in the same vein as <i>Paper Mario</i>	9.0 8.5 9.0	Silver
Mario Kart: Double Dash!!	GC	■ Cooperative driving spells pure, unfiltered fun	10 10 9.5	Gold
Mario Party 5	GC	■ Nintendo's pair of plumbers are no party crashers	8.0 8.0 8.0	Silver
Maximo vs. Army of Zin	PS2	■ Despite the clean underwear, it's not as zesty as the original	6.0 6.0 7.0	
Max Payne	GBA	■ Bullet time in your back pocket	7.0 7.0 8.0	
Max Payne 2: The Fall of Max Payne	PS2/XB	■ Slow-mo bloodshed at its hard-boiled best	8.0 8.0 8.5	Silver

Hitman: Contracts—
cold-blooded and cunning.

GAME	SYSTEM	VERDICT	SCORES (out of 10)	AWARD
Medal of Honor: Rising Sun	PS2/XB/GC	■ A few stunning set pieces can't save this rough-edged shooter from mediocrity	5.5 5.0 5.5	
Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes	GC	■ The stealth-action classic is still solid enough to make this remake a must-play	8.0 9.0 8.5	Silver
Metroid Zero Mission	GBA	■ Samus blasts back to her first adventure in this surprise-filled remake	9.5 9.0 9.0	Gold
Midway Arcade Treasures	PS2/XB/GC	■ With 20 timeless classics for a mere 20 bucks, there's no reason not to buy it	8.5 7.5 8.5	Silver
MLB 2005	PS2	■ A quick trip to the minors has made <i>MLB</i> a title contender again	7.0 7.0 7.0	
MTX: Mototrax	PS2/XB	■ Poor handling has our bike stuck in the mud. Wait, that doesn't smell like mud	6.0 6.5 5.5	
MX Unleashed	PS2/XB	■ Riding <i>Unleashed's</i> off-road crotch rockets is worth the sore coccyx	8.0 8.0 8.0	Silver
MVP Baseball 2004	PS2/XB/GC	■ Like the Bronx Bombers, <i>MVP's</i> new additions will excite all baseball fans	8.5 8.0 8.5	Silver
NBA Ballers	PS2/XB	■ Midway's 1-on-1 baller has the skillz to pay the billz (or something like that)	8.0 8.0 8.0	Silver
NBA Live 2004	PS2/XB/GC	■ Not even the Laker Girls can compete with <i>Live's</i> stylish on-court moves	8.0 8.5 9.0	Silver
NCAA March Madness 2004	PS2/XB	■ It's awesome, baby, with a capital A!	8.0 8.0 8.0	Silver
NFL Blitz Pro	PS2/XB/GC	■ A <i>Madden</i> -like face-lift puts <i>Blitz</i> firmly back in the playoff race	7.0 7.0 6.0	
NFL Fever 2004	XB	■ Scant franchise options keep <i>Fever</i> warming the bench	6.5 6.5 6.0	
NFL Street	PS2/XB/GC	■ The gridiron gods have <i>Street</i> -ified football, and boy, is it good	8.5 8.0 8.0	Silver
NHL 2004	PS2/XB/GC	■ Beefy dynasty mode, but plays and looks as ugly as a hockey player's smile	8.5 6.5 7.0	
NHL Hitz Pro	PS2/XB/GC	■ Like a porn star's assets, <i>Hitz</i> isn't exactly realistic, but it's sure fun to play with	7.5 8.5 8.0	Silver
NHL Rivals 2004	XB	■ Our referees slap <i>Rivals</i> with a five-minute major for sucking	3.5 4.0 6.5	
Nightshade	PS2	■ 3 <i>Ninjas Kick Back</i> on a scale of ninja-tude	6.0 5.5 8.0	
Ninja Gaiden	XB	■ Swordplay so sweet you'll break out the split-toe slip-ons	9.5 9.5 9.5	Gold
Onimusha Blade Warriors	PS2	■ Think <i>Super Smash Bros.</i> (GC) with Bushido instead of butt stomping	7.0 7.0 7.5	
Pac-Man Vs.	GC	■ Excellent multiplayer makes GBA connectivity worthwhile. Plus it's free	8.0 7.5 9.0	Silver
Phantasy Star Online: Episode III	GC	■ This infectiously fun card game got us hooked on <i>PSO's</i> world for a third time	9.0 8.0 9.0	Silver
Phifa! The Lost Expedition	PS2/XB/GC	■ Maybe—just maybe—it should have stayed lost	6.5 5.0 5.5	
Pokémon Channel	GC	■ Good God, change the channel!	3.5 2.0 6.0	
Pokémon Colosseum	GC	■ Story mode injects some life into this otherwise mediocre Poké-battler	7.0 5.0 7.0	
Project Gotham Racing 2	XB	■ Buckle up for the best racer since <i>Gran Turismo 3</i>	9.5 9.5 9.5	Gold
R: Racing Evolution	PS2/XB/GC	■ Looks fantastic, but it feels like you're driving on ice	6.5 6.0 4.5	
Ratchet & Clank: Going Commando	PS2	■ Everything you've ever wanted from an action game. And an absolute must-play	8.5 9.5 9.5	Gold
Resident Evil Outbreak	PS2	■ Raccoon City is more like Silent Hill when you can't communicate with other players	5.5 6.5 7.0	
Rise to Honor	PS2	■ Look, it's Jet Li...in a kinda repetitive brawler with cheap enemies in FUBU gear	6.5 6.5 6.0	
R-Type Final	PS2	■ Pure side-scrolling shooter bliss. Plus it's only 30 bucks	8.5 8.0 8.0	Silver
Samurai Jack: The Shadow of Aku	PS2/XB/GC	■ This samurai's game is better than expected...but still can't beat the cartoon	6.0 7.0 5.5	
Samurai Warriors	PS2	■ The series hasn't been there (Japan), but it's done that (skewer oodles of swordsmen)	7.0 6.5 7.5	
Sega GT Online	XB	■ Runs a good race, but can't keep pace with <i>RailsSport</i> and <i>Project Gotham Racing 2</i>	8.5 8.5 8.5	Silver
Serious Sam: Next Encounter	PS2/GC	■ Never take your finger off the trigger in this dumb-but-fun first-person shooter	6.5 7.0 5.0	
Seven Samurai 20XX	PS2	■ See har!-kar!	3.5 3.5 4.0	
Siren	PS2	■ Battle hayseed zombies in this <i>Silent Hill</i> clone that's more convoluted than creepy	5.0 7.0 4.0	
Silent Scope Complete	XB	■ There's no better way to freak out America's politicians than with this sniper game	6.5 5.0 6.0	
The Sims: Bustin' Out	PS2/XB/GC	■ Personal hygiene and bodily functions have never been so much fun	9.0 8.5 9.0	Silver
Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow	XB	■ Sam's solo missions take few chances, but the multiplayer mode is revolutionary	10 8.5 9.5	Gold
Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow	GBA	■ Packs the stealth gameplay of the big-console version but none of the fun	4.5 5.0 4.5	
SOCOM II: U.S. Navy SEALs	PS2	■ This is one online war we hope never sees a cease in hostilities	9.0 9.0 9.5	Gold
Sonic Battle	GBA	■ Sonic and pals come to fisticuffs in this love-it-or-hate-it pseudo-3D brawler	7.0 5.0 4.5	
Star Wars Jedi Knight: Jedi Academy	XB	■ Another bland <i>Star Wars</i> third-person action game? Time to drop out	6.0 6.5 3.0	
Steel Battalion: Line of Contact	XB	■ This ultra-deep robo sim's horrible interface and laggy play need an overhaul	5.0 5.5 4.5	
The Suffering	PS2/XB	■ Midway's inmate could've benefited from a few more months of rehabilitation	6.5 6.0 6.5	
Sword of Mana	GBA	■ Managing your weapons requires a master's degree in metallurgy	6.5 6.5 5.0	
Syphon Filter: The Omega Strain	PS2	■ Low-fever shoot-em-up contaminated by foul controls	6.5 6.5 5.0	
Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines	PS2/XB	■ No need to come back, Arnold	3.5 3.5 2.0	
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004	PS2/XB/GC	■ As hot as Tiger's bride-to-be. Well, almost	9.0 9.0 9.5	Gold
TOCA Race Driver 2	XB	■ Every form of racing devised by man...what? No mud-bogging? #S@! this noise	8.5 8.5 8.0	Silver
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Jungle Storm	PS2	■ Online play is OK, but good God, these graphics are uglier than a colon polyp	4.5 5.0 6.5	
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3	XB	■ O! Clancy's <i>Rainbow</i> is one of Xbox's sharpest shooters	9.0 7.5 9.0	Silver
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3	PS2	■ Too bad the dumbed-down PS2 version misses the mark	5.0 6.0 6.0	
Tony Hawk's Underground	PS2/XB/GC	■ Good Lord...he is? Someone get him out!	9.0 9.0 10	Gold
Top Spin	XB	■ Here's your only chance to ever score with tennis bombshell Anna Koumlikova	9.0 9.0 9.0	Gold
Transformers	PS2	■ Carriers that change into a mile-high robots? Doesn't get much cooler than that	8.0 7.5 7.5	
Unreal II: The Awakening	XB	■ Blast a motley assortment of aliens with a motley assortment of weaponry	7.0 6.5 6.5	
WarioWare, Inc.: Mega Party Game\$	GC	■ Single-player stinks of a quick cash-in—split the bill with four friends	8.0 6.5 7.0	
Winning Eleven 7	PS2	■ Soccer action more intense than a David Beckham-Poeh Spice embrace	9.5 8.5 8.5	Silver
World Tour Soccer 2005	PS2	■ Receives a yellow card for its unresponsive controls and shallow gameplay options	6.5 5.0 4.5	
Wrath Unleashed	PS2/XB	■ A half-assed strategy game plus a half-assed fighter make...well, you do the math	4.0 7.0 4.5	
WWE Raw 2: Ruthless Aggression	XB	■ We willingly tap out	3.0 6.5 4.5	
WWE SmackDown! Here Comes the Pain	PS2	■ 'Course it doesn't tell you that the pain won't subside for four to six weeks	7.5 8.0 7.0	
WWE Wrestlemania XIX	GC	■ Better than years past, but a steroid injection or two away from main-event status	7.5 7.5 6.5	
Worms 3D	PS2/XB/GC	■ That's an entire extra dimension of caricatured carnage! Great multiplayer fun	7.5 7.5 6.5	



**greatest hit
or miss?**



**PROJECT
GOTHAM
RACING 2**

■ Xbox
 ■ Released: December 2003
 ■ Original Scores: 9.5, 9.5, 9.5
 Sit down for photo-realism, shut up for flawless handling, and hold on for revolutionary online racing. Real-time scoreboards and ghost cars of the world's finest drivers add immense replayability.



tricks of the trade

'Cause playin' by the rules never got nobody no big head mode

trickster

You should find more than enough tip treasures to satisfy your appetites in this issue. One peek at all the hidden goodies we've uncovered in *Resident Evil Outbreak* and *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes* should have you squealing with glee. But if for some reason that's not quite enough, then our tips on how to rake in the dough in *Final Fantasy XI* and how to open the slew of unlockables in *Ninja Gaiden* should fill your cup—until next issue, at least.

—David S. J. Hodgson
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■ PlayStation 2

RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK

This grab bag of tricks shows you a few of the things you may not have realized about *Resident Evil Outbreak*—some funky hidden stuff, solutions to difficult puzzles, and things it would've taken you too long to figure out on your own.



■ Hot in Herre: The Bob Vila of undead combat is David King, using his plumbing arts to combine household crap into zombie-cullin' ordinance.

alcohol. What do you suppose could go in there? Right, a bottle of alcohol, which you can find on the third floor. It's worth the trip. You'll get a shotgun for your trouble.

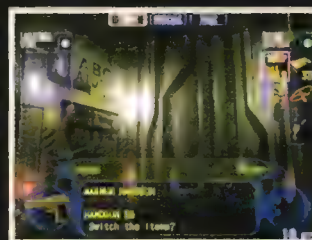
Be careful, though, because the second floor may be thick with zombies when you come back down to open the picture. Nail boards over the doorway by the stairs on the second floor before running up for the bottle. That should slow them down a bit.

A Dying Gift

Scenario: Below Freezing Point

Playing as Yoko has its benefits. Even though she can't take much punishment, she can carry twice as many items as the other players. Another plus is that during the Below Freezing Point scenario, you can get a good weapon if you're playing as the young student.

When you crawl into the Area B pass way (which is right near the computer room), you'll meet a gravely wounded



man. If you interact with him as Yoko, he'll hand over his Magnum!

Completion Confusion

Scenario: Below Freezing Point

Wondering why you can't get 100 percent of the events at the end of the scenario? It could be one (or both) of two things. First, when you use the turntable key to activate the turntable lift, there's a delay before it moves up. If you aren't on it when it goes up, you'll be left behind...to die. It

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Handy Man

Scenario: All

David King, the plumber turned zombie bait, is used to working with spare parts and odd ends. You can use the vinyl tape in his tool kit to combine items into more effective weapons.

The math is pretty simple: Wooden pole + knife = spear
Iron pipe + battery = cattle prod (zombie prod, really)
Iron pipe + concrete hunk = sledgehammer
Lighter + pesticide = flame spray!

Hard Drinkin'

Scenario: Outbreak

In the owner's room of J's Bar is a picture with a hole in it shaped like a bottle of

■ GameCube

METAL GEAR SOLID: THE TWIN SNAKES

Snake is cool, despite his real name being Dave. He's able to cut down foes with just a bandanna, tool around against Fox Hound, and uncover dozens of Easter eggs. We crack open the best ones below:

Alternate-ending theme

Complete the game three times.

Bandanna

Complete the game with Meryl.

Boss survival mode

Complete the game.

Crimson ninja

Complete the game twice.

Meryl demo

Complete the game with Meryl.

Otacon demo

Complete the game with Otacon.

Camera

Find the camera and complete the game.

Stealth suit

Complete the game with Otacon.



Tuxedo

Complete the game twice.

Sneaking suit Meryl

Complete the game twice.

Alternate Meryl demo

Complete the game with the tuxedo.

Alternate Otacon demo

Complete the game with the tuxedo.

Alex from Eternal Darkness

Look at the cover of a book on the ground.

GameCube and WaveBird in the lab

Look on the desk to see a GameCube and WaveBird.

Mario and Yoshi in the lab

A Mario and Yoshi statue rests on top of one of the monitors.

Replenish health battling the ninja

While fighting the ninja, go into first-person mode and shoot Mario in the head. You will hear a 1UP noise and get some life back.

Psycho Mantis knows what's on your memory card

If you have a *Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker*, *Super Mario Sunshine*, *Super Smash Bros. Melee*, or *Eternal Darkness* save on your memory card, Psycho Mantis will tell you about it while he's talking to you.

Eternal Darkness poster

You'll find an *Eternal Darkness* poster in the armory room inside a locker.

ZOE2 poster

You'll find a *ZOE2* poster on the wall in Otacon's lab.

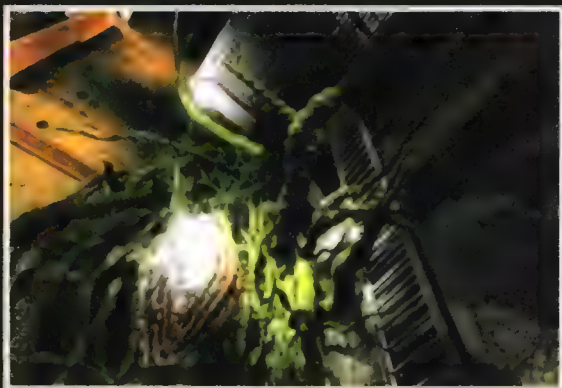
**TRICKS IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH PRIMA GAMES**

If you need more zombie-hunting tips, *Metal Gear* secrets, or keys on how to be a sure-fire ninja assassin, then be sure to pick up Prima's official strategy guides for *Resident Evil Outbreak*, *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes*, *Ninja Gaiden*, and *Tenchu: Return From Darkness*. They'll be sure to tell you everything you need to know.



FULL SAIL
Real World Education

Game Design & Development
Bachelor of Science
Degree Program



■ Remove all the extraneous numbers to find the one you need.

isn't pleasant, but you need to do it to get the full event checklist.

Second, you can kill the huge plant using the V-Jolt from one of two places depending on which character you start with—either at the trunk of the plant on B7F or at the vines that entangle the ladder on B6F. You must do both to get both events checked off.

Missing Numbers

Scenario: Decisions, Decisions

When trying to get the red gem from the trunk of the plant on B7F or at the vines that entangle the ladder on B6F, you need to do two

things. First, press the button under the picture to your right as you enter the office. Second, set the glowing hands of the clock to the appropriate time. To figure out what time to set it to, find the number memo on the desk. The last page says something like this: "Hour: 47 Minute: 98." Go back through the memo to see the blocks of numbers and remove the ones that aren't listed in the "Hour/Minute" text. So, in the example above, you would remove all the numbers that aren't 4 on the first page, and all the ones that aren't 7 on the

second page. What's left will be a group of 4s in the shape of the number you need. (For example, if the 4s are in a vertical line, the first number is 1.)

Daylight Savings

Scenario: Decisions, Decisions

The Daylight antitoxin is a very powerful tool in your fight against the T-Virus and its spawn. Take a few samples of it with you (in addition to the ones you use to clear the virus from you and your compatriots). When you get to the second battle with Thanatos outside in the front square, check the vehicle parked to one side in the garage. You should find an ampoule shooter. Load up the Daylight and take down that monster with the antitoxin.

You can defeat him without using the Daylight, especially if your companions are with you. This can affect which ending you see.

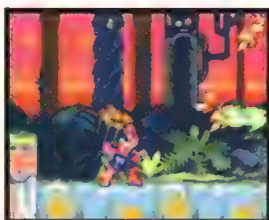
There are several different endings in the last scenario. They all depend on which character you are using and how much Daylight antitoxin you have with you when Thanatos is finally defeated. Let's just say that it's better to have more Daylight than less, but you'll want to see each of the endings. >



■ Game Boy Advance

MEGA MAN ZERO 2

Upgrade your superdeformed weapon with these top-notch leveling techniques to take your G-Force castoff from wide-eyed anime reject to pulverizing powerhouse.



Rise armor
Do 20 jumping slashes with the Z-Saber in one level.

Active form
Kill 20 enemies with the Z-Saber while dashing.

Defense form
Kill 20 enemies with the Shield Boomerang.

Energy form
Grab 25 life capsules.

Erase form
Ricochet 30 enemy shots with the Shield Boomerang.

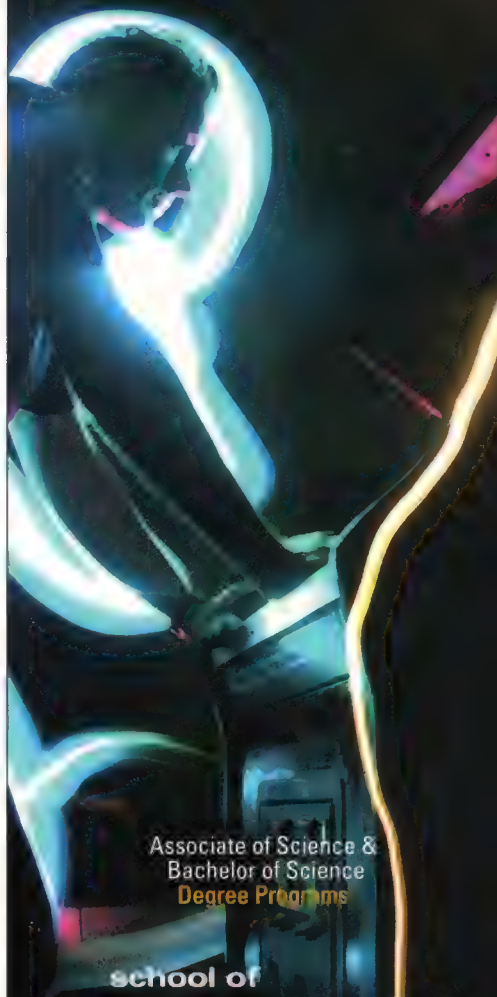
Power form
Pull anything 30 times with the Chain Rod.

Proto form
Complete the game.

Rise form
Kill 10 enemies with the Z-Saber.

Ultimate form
Use every Cyber Elf.

X form
Kill 50 enemies with the Buster Gun.



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■ Xbox

TENCHU: RETURN FROM DARKNESS

Come out of the darkness to tackle this third installment of *Tenchu*. With these codes, you'll be able to get new abilities, increase your item stash, and have access to an ultimate assassin.

Restore health

During a mission, pause and press Up, Down, Up, Down, X, X, X.

One Kanji

During a mission, pause and press Left, Left, Left, Right, X.

Fill the Kuji meter

During a mission, pause, hold the left and right triggers, and press Left, Left, Left, Right, X.

New ability

During a mission, pause, hold the right trigger and Black button, and press Up, Up, Down, Down. Release the trigger and Black button and press X, X, left trigger, right trigger.

See your score

During a mission, pause and press Right, Right, Right, Left.

Increase score by 100

During a mission, pause, hold the White and Black buttons, and press Right, Right, Right, Left.

All items

At the Item Selection screen, hold the left

and right triggers and press Up, Down, Up, Down, X, X, X, Left, Right, Left, Right, X, X, X.

Increase items

At the Item Selection screen, hold the left and right triggers and press Up, Left, Down, Right, X, X, X.

Unlimited item capacity

At the Item Selection screen, hold the right and left triggers and the White button and press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right. Let go of the White button and press X, X, X.

All characters

At the Start screen, hold the White and Black buttons and press Up, Right, Left, Down. Release the White and Black buttons and press left trigger, right trigger.

All missions

At the Mission Select screen, press White, White, left trigger, right trigger, Right, X, left click, right click.

All layouts

At the Mission Select screen, press right click, left click, left trigger, right trigger, White, Black.

Increase offensive power

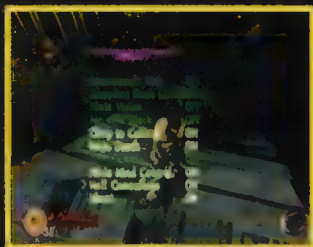
During a mission, pause, hold the right trigger and White button, and press Up, Down, Up, Down. Release the right trigger and White button and press X, X, X.

Bonus mission

At the Title screen, press White, Up, Black, Down, left trigger, Right, right trigger, Left.

B-side voices

At the Title screen, hold the left and right triggers and press Down, X, X, Up, X, X, Left, X, X, Right, X, X.



■ Hapless Guard #27 is about to feel the deadly art of the beatdown courtesy of *Tenchu*'s third hidden character, the sneeze-sounding Tesshu.

■ GameCube

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE: EPISODE III—CARD REVOLUTION

Psycho Mantis has a lot to answer for. Now any upstart videogame can force its more insane fans to play through a back catalog of questionable releases to unlock otherwise unobtainable goodies—a marketing department suit's wet dream. Check out the *Sonic* comestibles below:



Rare Cards

Nano Dragon card

Go to the card trading machine with a *PSO: Episode I & II* save on your memory card.

Clippen card

Go to the card trading machine with a *Billy Hatcher* save on your memory card.

Rage card

Go to the machine with a *Sonic Adventure 2: Battle* save on your memory card.

Sange card

Go to the card trading machine with a *Sonic Adventure DX* save on your memory card.

Beat, Hallo Rappy, Sonic Knuckles cards

Go to the card trading machine with a



Sonic Heroes save on your memory card.

Madam's Umbrella card

Go to the card trading machine with a *Sonic Mega Collection* save on your memory card.

Unlock a dressing room

Complete both offline stories.

Lobby chairs

Tired of standing in the lobby while you're waiting? Pull up a chair by pressing either X + A or X + B in any online lobby to create a Photon chair. The color of the chair depends on your ID. To sit, press A; to get up, press B.



■ PlayStation 2

CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH



The lands of Norrath are constantly at war. Train your warrior to fight these insurmountable hordes...or just tap a few buttons and start pillaging with a pumped-up specimen.

Start with a level 20 character

Start a new character, and as soon as you have control of him or her, press L1, R2, Triangle, and R3 at the same time.



VS.



Herr Replay takes the first shot with some sweet *Pokémon Colosseum* codes and finishes with a healthy dose of *X-Files: Resist or Serve...*

GC POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

[Must be on]

T5Q5-3Z14-1PN7X
1XQX-P4JW-BYNKZ
XW15-OED9-7TDK3
U37Y-NRU7-JNQNP
QKD7-BBUR-PE574
H92V-PT0G-QAFTZ
UZEN-7R25-VD1CJ
3R46-C157-GTX6K
M401-KYPD-GXNT5
H92V-PT0G-QAFTZ
D3R6-UCX9-FYA60

Exclusive!

Snag all enemies

4UH3-PJ43-9BE8D
D5T4-BCVW-WQKTH
QZZF-15QP-PGEQU
XTXK-CVYP-JFCKG
PHBR-5E46-3YZMZ

Infinite money

F34N-YFCE-B5VFF
J6BC-FZ51-RZPYN
BQ44-7UK5-9DJ16

Infinite Poké coupons

DVfV-6HUU-GT7A3
WYXE-W14D-AXGBA
CGVH-9ERC-671ZW

In-Battle Codes

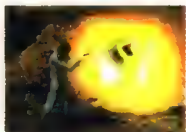
BEJW-N529-XFTFH

Superfast level up

VKMU-V7UD-TF8WJ
MRC7-6NTX-N2JGA
29EV-N45B-P8774

One hit kills opponents

FAJK-V3F4-QU2J9
KWXV-M7U2-MOYEJ
2B4C-GGNX-1M1V9



41M0-D8DM-7REMW
134B-58MB-5FPR5

XB X-FILES: RESIST OR SERVE

[Must be on]

Q8NG-WTVB-3XTVT
BAC9-Z52C-TTY4H

Infinite health

4EBB-35N1-OPDHR
ZVM6-7K5G-9T1QC

Max note pages

BN92-YOHN-BKQ9Y
Q3KK-1NGW-DD1A7

All notes

CYRQ-FNDC-N4KQG
Q501-4ZBD-0DB0N
WY9T-12FW-XKURZ

All levels—both

16J6-XAFR-FJTQC
KNTR-2TTV-FRKJP

Cheat Codes

NNKX-P8V9-GT4NK

Infinite ammo/items

D6WY-A3EX-T6PZH
4GDH-0140-6WUR7

Invisible dead

[L1 + L2]
EH2N-374F-9QT3A
5U3B-B2R4-4X3QA
YMEM-KWVU-0V1EC

Normal dead [R1 + R2]

QJZX-2WFQ-C8N3W
D11J-71Q6-YRJDQ
9N5U-UHGE-PBZNT

One-shot kill

6W3K-Z5MU-7TRWW
KXZ1-BA1F-0T90H

Incendiary rounds

YCH2-VVHA-P2UWC
TB64-YP60-KF9AG



...but *Monsieur Shark* strikes back with tons of exclusive *Onimusha: Blade Warriors* and *Boktai: The Sun Is in Your Hands* cheats.

PS2 ONIMUSHA: BLADE WARRIORS

[Must be on]

94C498A4 3B3E8132

Unlock all levels

1491F528 36F0179C
1411F528 36F017BC
1451D628 3670170C
1451D628 3670172C
1451D628 3670171C
1450D628 3670173C

Unlock all characters

240FEF96 EBCB1E17
240FEF96 EBCB1E37
240FEF96 EBCB1E87
240FEF96 EBCB1EA7
240FEF96 EBCB1E97
240FEF96 EBCB1EB7
2411F528 36F0170C
2411F528 36F0172C

One kill for 40

D412B028 7670577C
1490B02A 3E70577C

Player 1: Infinite health

04D0982A B6F055DC

Player 1: infinite special gauge

24D0932D 3EF0554E

Player 1: Max health

04D0982B B6F055DC

Player 1: Max special gauge

24D09329 36F0554C

Player 1: 50 percent health

D4D29028 76F055DC
04D0902C 3EF055DE

Player 1: 25 percent health

D4D29028 76F055DC
0450902A 36F055DE

Player 1:

One-hit death

D4D29028 76F055DC
04509028 36F055DC

Exclusive!

Player 1: Fast left [L1 + L2]

D4403E77 9CF8CC42
2492D308 6650554C

Exclusive!

Player 1: Fast right [R1 + R2]

D4403E67 9DF88C4A
2492D308 6670554C

Exclusive!

Player 1: Red orb 0410B028 3670575C

Exclusive!

Player 1: Green orb 0490B028 3670575E

Exclusive!

Player 1: Blue orb 0410B028 3670575E

GBA BOKTAI: THE SUN IS IN YOUR HANDS

Exclusive!

[Must be on]

926A428B6ADE
043147E81C44
46F6C94818E8

Exclusive!

Unlock sound mode

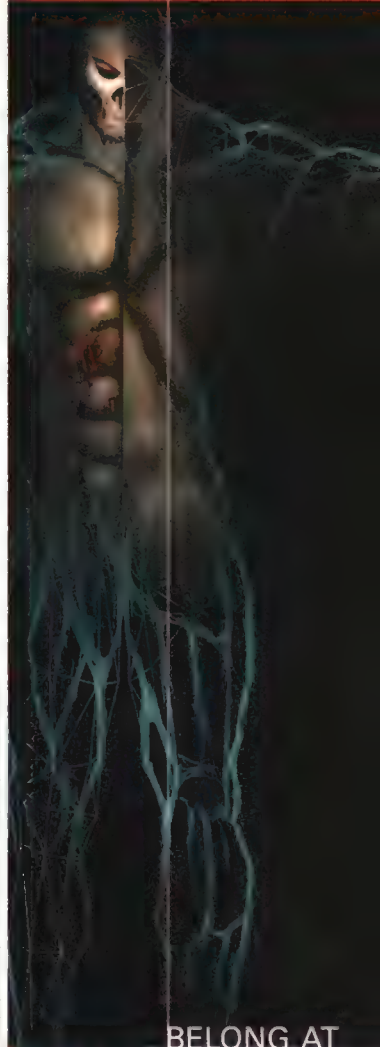
F651E27A3AE0
E9A4E21B3798

Exclusive!

Unlock Hard difficulty

C430437A54A0
DBC5431B59D8 >

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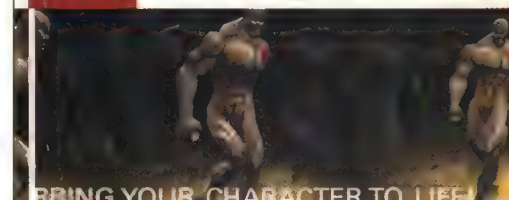
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PlayStation 2

FINAL FANTASY XI



■ Consider these guys flying bags of money. They drop wind crystals and beehive chips, which will net you a grip of cash.

Bling Bling: How to Get Paid in Vana'diel

So you wanna get paid? You wanna be the biggest baller in Vana'diel? Join the club and get in line. The life of a hustler ain't easy. You need to start small, and we'll show you how to do it. Just peep the name of your character's homeland below, and we'll tell you what you need to kill in order to rake in that cash.

Bastok

It may seem like the pickings are slim in Bastok in comparison to the other starting cities, but a closer inspection reveals a wealth of potential plunder. Start out by hunting huge hornets just outside of town. They'll drop wind crystals, which sell very well in the auction house, as well as beehive chips. Collect both of these in stacks of 12, hawk them, and watch the money roll in. Once you hit level 5 or so, start taking on the various quaddavs that roam the Gustaberg areas. They'll drop all kinds of valuable stuff—quaddav back plates, quaddav helms, and various spell scrolls. They also drop small amounts of

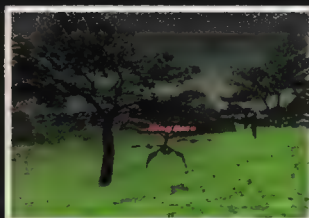


■ These cats drop their back plates and a bunch of spell scrolls you can hawk.

money, which can easily add up. Also, keep your eyes open for goblin thugs—they'll drop fire crystals, which are always in demand, as well as wild onions, which can fetch you a nice sum.

San d'Oria

There's a gang of quests that can make you heavy loot in San d'Oria, most of



■ These guys might as well bleed gold. Whenever you see one, kill it. Your wallet will thank you.

which involve collecting various monster parts. Your primary target for money-farming purposes should be ding bats. Not only do they drop wings you can trade to an NPC named Secodiand (Northern San d'Oria, position E-6) for 200 gil per pair, but they also drop highly salable fire wind crystals. When you hit level 5, hunt the orcs that roam the Ronfaure areas—they drop fire crystals and various armor bits that are decently valuable. Finally, just like in Bastok, go after goblin thugs for their fire crystals, wild onions, and goblin gear, all of which sell very nicely at the auction house.

Windurst

It's all about the crawlers in Windurst. Learn to see them as living piles of gold, because the spools of silk thread they

drop can fetch upward of 10,000 gil for stacks of 12. Also, keep the crawler calculi they drop—you can trade them to an NPC named Ilu Bohjaa (Windurst Woods, position H-6) in sets of three for 600 gil. In between crawler spawnings, go after the yagudo that roam the Sarutabaruta areas. They drop gil, wind crystals, yagudo necklaces, and yagudo leathers, all of which sell pretty decently. You can also trade the necklaces to an NPC named Nanaa Mihgo (Windurst Woods, position J-3) for 200 gil for every set of four. You'll get better rates at the auction house, no doubt, but trading them to Nanaa will net you an added bonus—an increased level of fame in Windurst, as well as brownie points with the underground trading operation she's a part of.

PS2/XB

MTX: MOTOTRAX

Comedic bike types? Massive acceleration? Blatantly offensive name for the law-enforcement character? It's all here.

Superfast acceleration
Enter J1H345 at the Cheat menu.



Officer Dick

Complete free ride in career mode.

Police bike

Complete all freestyle events.

Silkknit bike

Complete master supercross.

Speed demon

Complete career mode.

Trick bot

Complete freestyle in career mode.

Xbox

Speed demon

Complete career mode.

Trick bot

Complete career mode.



■ The only good birdman is a dead birdman. Hawk their feathers and their necklaces. No pun intended.

■ Xbox

NINJA GAIDEN



■ Here's looking at Ryo, kid: Hayabusa tackles the fear-inducing "well-lit lampshade" in a new get-up.

While Ryo is adventuring out to retrieve the Dragon Sword, keep his classic ninja outfit on and obtain enough scarabs to get the Dabilahro.

Ninja training outfit

At the Main menu, highlight New Game, hold both trigger buttons, and press A.

Armet of Benediction

Collect 15 scarabs.

Dabilahro

Collect 20 scarabs.

Armet of Fortune

Collect 30 scarabs.

Armet of Tranquility

Collect 40 scarabs.

Ninja Gaiden 1

Collect 50 scarabs.

Ninja Gaiden 2

Once you obtain the original *Ninja Gaiden*, shoot the clock tower near Muramasa's shop in Taimon.

Ninja Gaiden 3

In the ceremonial room in the aqueducts, jump up the wall where you found the golden scarab.

Dark Dragon Blade

Complete the game, then visit Muramasa's shop in Chapter 13.



Kitetsu

Defeat Doko at the end of Chapter 11. (Be careful, though, because it will drain your health if you are not wearing the Armet of Tranquility.)

Unlabored Flawlessness

Upgrade the wooden sword to its max level of 7.

Windmill throwing star

Located in a narrow alleyway down the street from Han's Bar.

Evil Ryo

Complete the game on Very Hard.

Movie gallery

Complete the game.

Future Ninja Suit and Plasma Sword

After you complete the game, highlight New Game, hold the left trigger, and press A.

All music and sound test

Complete the game.

Very Hard

Complete the game. 🏆



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- Indianapolis, IN
- Louisville, KY
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THE REST OF THE CRAP

Extra-special "We've Finally Pushed Him Over the Edge" edition

help me

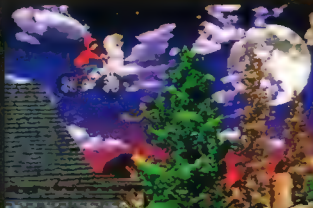
Despite my complaining, sometimes they hand me these games and we all have a good laugh, me and my EGM tormentors.

Whether it's the ridiculousness of someone making a game about that horny swine Miss Piggy, or the ridiculousness of Barbie dressing her horse, there's always something to point and laugh at. Well, it's not cute this month. I despised these games so much I spent two weeks sending hate mail from fake Yahoo accounts trying to get me fired. Unfortunately, since this is exactly what every single Game Boy Advance publisher has been doing for a year, no one noticed.

—Seanbaby



E.T. THE EXTRA TERRESTRIAL



■ Hey kids! Ride your bike off a roof.

GBA • NewKidCo — In this exciting game of wandering and toad-dodging, the audio engineers tried to create the ambient sounds of the forest. Like with every aspect of every E.T. game, they've failed completely. What may be intended as crickets and toads are loud splats and snapping sounds that make it seem like your Game Boy is farting itself to pieces. If you love the sound of flatulence enough to stick around, you'll find that E.T. controls like a runaway log, and this brown pile of slimy space crap gets killed by EVERYTHING. Butterflies, rocks, turtles...if it's moving and farting, you're dead. You'd have better luck steering

an ugly baby through a minefield by throwing firecrackers at it.

The evil alien-kidnapping scientists were right: Lock this nasty little thing up. And next time the cops see a boy flying his bicycle with a muppet in the basket, they should open fire.

AMERICAN IDOL



OOOH I WANNA DANCE WITH SOMEBODY

■ My condolences on your head deformity, pal, but I'm still beating you up.

GBA • Codomasters — While creating your character for the singing competition, you can select whether you're a boy or a girl. It doesn't matter which one you pick, though, because once you see what songs you get to sing, you're a girl. With such masculine choices as "Oooh, I Wanna Dance With Somebody!" and "I Will Survive," you might as well be singing "Time to Get My Uterus Scraped (Push It, Push It!)." After selecting which song is going to emasculate you, it's time to tap to the rhythm! Your digitized singing voice gets better or worse depending on how well you tap, but it's all relative: Even when you're tapping perfectly, you never sound like anything other than a robot being strangled at a drag show.

Warm fuzzies: A bad rendering of Paula Abdul told me that I really lit up the stage! Giggle! It was days ago, and I still haven't stopped floating!

CRAZY CHASE



■ I figured there'd be clowns in hell.

GBA • Kemco — My first mistake was

reading the back of the box before playing *Crazy Chase*, because I learned that it was my job to rescue Princess Honey to make Planet Clown laugh again. I can't tell you how much I didn't want to do this. After reading that, the game could have been about spanking Wonder Woman with Bon Jovi and I would have hated it.

Planet Clown can suck it. To rescue it, you race your clown down a path of comical hilarity where bushes snag your clothes and puddles make you wet! When you control this crazy clown's antics, the only thing that can stop the laughter is you! For added fun, even if you make it to the end of a level, you can't move on unless you found all four hidden whatever's along the way. This was a brilliant design strategy, since some of the levels don't get REALLY hilarious until the eighth or ninth time through.

Eat me: Seriously, guys. For making me play this game—eat me.

NO RULES GET PHAT



WHOA THAT AIN' SNOOP NASTY! WE'RE FROM PLANET PUNKAZZ! WE THINK WE'RE ALL THAT BETTER MOVE YOUR BUTT FASTER, CUZ WE'RE HERE TO BE PHAT!

■ "We're from Planet Punkazz; we think we're all that." Now that's quality exposition.

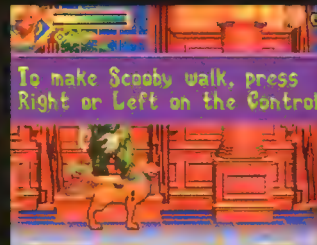
GBA • TDK — To give consumers an idea of what they can expect from *No Rules Get Phat*, let me walk you through some of the features listed on the box.

- "Skateboard, snowboard, shoot, and scratch to keep the Punkazz aliens from gettin' phat." Now this is totally true. You really will spend a lot of your time keeping aliens from gettin' phat. Although to be honest, I only shot a lot of them with a slingshot until they exploded. So if gettin' phat means not exploding from sling shots, then...you know what, I'll just trust whatever they said about phat.

- "Bust out with trix such as Double Ollies, 360s, and hand plants." Translation: We've got a jump button.
- "Five worlds including Colbutt Mountain and the Cocoa Soul Puffies cereal factory." Since Colbutt Mountain and that cereal mess are completely meaningless to the consumer, I assume the developers included them just so they'd get credit for how outrageously outrageous they are when they name things. Mission accomplished, wild men!

SCOOBY DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED

GBA • THQ — Sure the education system



■ OK, wait, wait, slow down. Left and what? Start again from "You are a moran."

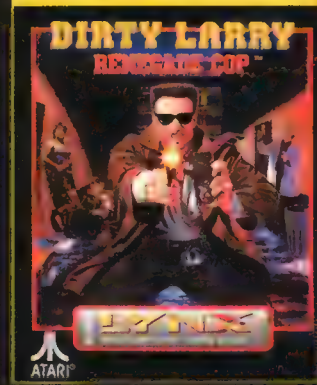
is collapsing, and breeding programs initiated by the stupid are producing idiot children in incredible numbers, but when a game involves walking sideways and jumping over ghosts, we do not need a damn 30-minute tutorial. Even if this was some poor kid's first videogame, I think he or she could figure it out. I don't remember being four years old at the arcade and demanding from God, "Two directions and a button!? Why does your *Donkey Kong* creation mock me with its indecipherable madness?" I'll tell you something right now: If you need any amount of training to get ready for the top-secret mission of hopping over a rat on Level 2, you probably have some mental condition named after you.

Recipe for developer suicide: Imagine if your first game was based on a movie that was a sequel to a movie based on a cartoon that sucked.

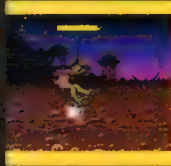
great moments in bad box art

DIRTY LARRY (ATARI LYNX)

Dirty Larry is a loose-cannon cop on the edge who breaks even his own lone-wolf rules, but holy Christ, I'd hate to think what he's arresting and killing at the same time if he's ignoring that circus going on behind him. We've got a transvestite hooker with a chain, and if I'm not mistaken, that's a mad scientist finishing up his evil chemistry experiment right there in the alley.



classic crap



CYBORG JUSTICE (SEGA GENESIS)

I think we can all agree that *Cyborg Justice* couldn't have named itself anything tougher, but that's the only nice thing anyone will ever say about it. If moon scientists glued toasters to roller skates and shoved them, they would make more effective karate robots than the clunky piles of garbage here.

FROM THE CREATORS OF *MACROSS*, THE INSPIRATION FOR *ROBOTECH*®, NOW COMES

ORIGINAL VIDEO ANIMATION

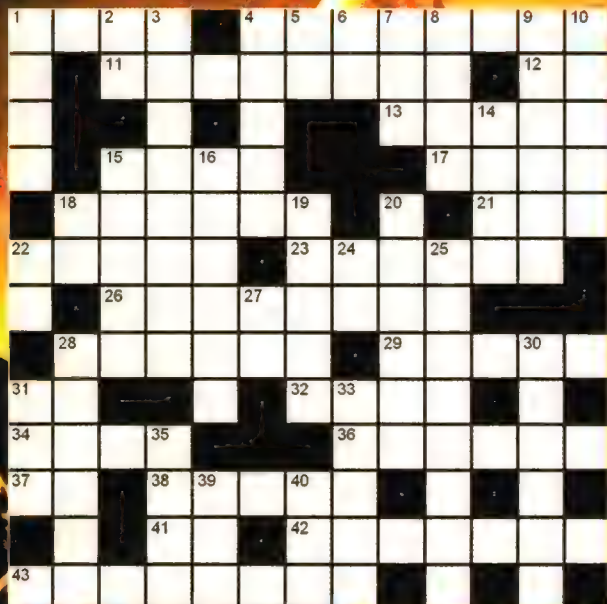
メガゾーン23

MEGAZONE 23

REALITY IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER.

Welcome to *Megazone 23*, where nothing is what it seems—this is a truth that street racer Shogo Yahagi has just confronted head-on. The world that he's lived in his entire life is a lie, the military is hot on his heels and his only chance for survival lies with a stolen robot motorcycle and an artificial intelligence that may or may not be telling him the truth. It's a deadly race against time as Shogo must find a way to break the iron curtain of secrecy that surrounds the Megazone, before its keepers silence him forever.

TEST DRIV3S



ACROSS

- Sega haunted-house shooter series (abbrev.)
- PS2 man-cycle racer
- Electric Pokémon attack
- Dead to Alive*, or *Skate to Die*
- Message board for griping gamers
- Resident Evil 2* unlockable character
- EA's minigaming dot-com
- Bluff blonde of *Gladus*
- It's one under a bogey in *Hot Shots Golf*
- Jennifer Garner's console debut
- Craftsman of older RPGs
- Konami role-playing series
- Makes Mario big, for short
- Job for a retired wheelman?
- The distance around *Halo's* Halo divided by the distance across it
- Madden* movements high- or side-
- Alero or Tornado from upcoming *GT4*, for short
- Mr. Mosquito, for one
- Project Justice's* Hayato teaches this (abbrev.)
- What *Oddworld's* Abe does to control his enemies
- Club for *Virtua Fighter's* Shun-Di? (abbrev.)
- Hitman* neck tattoo
- DRIV3R* developer's most recent effort

DOWN

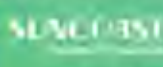
- Driver* "Get out of my way!" action
- NEC's short-lived 16-bitter, for short
- Subject of a Capcom *Crisis*
- Syphon Filter 3* setting, for one
- The last NES *Dragon Warrior* in the U.S.
- "Do you want to continue?" response
- LOTR's* Legolas, for one
- Like a 300ZX roof in *GT2*
- NCAA 2004's BYU mascot
- Like Maximo's suit
- Splinter Cell* rappelling tool
- Devil May Cry* hottie
- Mini *Metroid*
- Organization that typically approves a(n) 22 DOWN (abbrev.)
- Duck Dodgers* (N64) collectibles
- Like a 4-on-3 team deathmatch?
- Console adapter
- Yoko's *RE Outbreak* access card...
- ...and her unique item
- Fight Night* goal
- Like *Scope* or *Service*
- GT3's* super Suzuki
- Balloon Fight* objective?
- Military Madness* (TurboGrafx-16) tough tank
- Revealing *Final Fantasy* spell
- The bad guys might wear a black one in *Red Dead Revolver*
- Ballers* affiliate org.



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NEXT MONTH: AUGUST 2004 • ISSUE #181

THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH!

ON SALE JUNE 29

You call it the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3). We call it the Circus of the Geeks. Once every year, our entire industry lies down to attend the world's biggest videogame trade show to soak in the lights, sounds, beverages, booth babes, and games—not necessarily in that order. Next month, we'll be back with a massive update. Want to know what the future has in store for your favorite console? Want an early impression of every major game from the show? Want a sneak peek at what's coming out later this year and next? Want to see pictures of these so-called booth babes? Of course you do. See you in 30.



Metroid Prime 2: Echoes (GC)



Kingdom Hearts II (PS2)

REVIEWS

- DRIV3R (PS2/XB)
- Full Spectrum Warrior (XB)
- NCAA Football 2005 (PS2/XB/GC)

PREVIEWS

- Tony Hawk's Underground 2 (PS2/XB/GC)
- GoldenEye: Rogue Agent (PS2/XB/GC)
- Devil May Cry 3 (PS2)...and more!



Final Fantasy XII (PS2)



Doom 3 (XB)

PSP hands-on report!

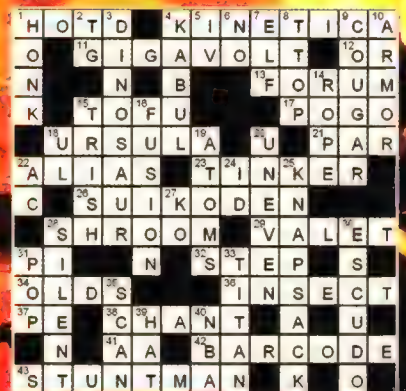
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ANSWERS TO TEST DRIV3S

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HSU AND CHAN
GAME DESIGNERS ARE
WHEELMEN!

WE'VE CAUSED THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS OF PROPERTY DAMAGE AND ENRAGED HUNDREDS OF PEDESTRIANS... FOR JUSTICE!

HOW ARE WE NOT REALLY BAD GUYS, AGAIN?

HELLO, VIDEO GAMERS! I'M HSU TANAKA, THAT'S MY BROTHER CHAN, AND WE ARE --

WELL, WE'RE LOST, FOR ONE THING BRAINIAC HERE THOUGHT HE KNEW A SHORTCUT.

I DO! SOME SHORTCUTS ARE LONGER THAN OTHERS! DON'T MII!

WANT I SHOULD MII WITH HER? I JUST SAY?

THE TANAKAMOBILE WAS, SADLY, NOT BEEN PERFORMING UP TO SNUFF, OF LATE.

IT SEEMS THAT A BARBAGE OF CURSES, SCRAPES, TREE DAMAGE, ROCK DAMAGE, AND THE OCCASIONAL LATE-NIGHT TRIP TO MEXICO HAVE FINALLY TAKEN THEIR TOLL.

NOW, EVERYBODY QUIET DOWN WHILE I ASK DIRECTIONS.

EXCUSE ME, MY GOOD NARCOTICS HOBBYIST! DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE GARAGE IS AROUND HERE? WE HAVE A CAR TO DROP OFF.

WHAT? THAT CAR? DO THEY KNOW YOU'RE COMING?

YEAH, WE MADE AN APPOINTMENT. WERE NOT TOTAL FARMERS, HERE.

JUST TELL US HOW TO GET TO THE GARAGE, AND WE'LL LET YOU GET BACK TO THE BUSTLING PANHANDLING INDUSTRY.

ALL RIGHT, IT'S A LEFT ON LEHIGH AVE, THEN TURN INTO THE ALLEN AFTER THE WALL WITH A GRAFFITI PAINTING OF A DUCK SELLING CRACK ON IT.

THEY'LL SORT YOU OUT FROM THERE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

NO PROBLEM, CARE TO DONATE A DOLLAR TOWARDS THE CAUSE OF NOT BEING SHOT BEFORE YOU GO?

THE MD HAS A GOOD PITCH, CHAN. GIVE HIM TWO.

SHORTLY...

WELL, IT'S NO WONDER WE COULDN'T FIND THIS PLACE-- THERE ARE NO SIGNS, NOTHING! THAT CAN'T BE GOOD FOR BUSINESS.

HEY-- YOU THE GUNS WHO CALLED? WHERE'S THE CAR?

WE ARE, AND ARE YOU BLIND? THIS IS THE CAR. BIG, METAL THING ON BLACK DONUTS. YOU'RE NOT INSPIRING MUCH CONFIDENCE IN YOUR MECHANICAL PROWESS.

IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE SOME KIND OF JOKE? TELL, GIVE ME MY PIECE!

WHOA! HEY! CRIPES! WE AGREED TO TAKE THE EXTENDED WARRANTY ON THE PHONE! CALM DOWN!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR GAME IS, BUT IF YOU AND YOUR GOONS AREN'T BACK WITH THE 400 SERIES CUSTOM JOB IN FRONT OF THE TULIP CLUB IN FIVE MINUTES, WE'RE GOING TO BLOW A HOLE IN YOUR LITTLE BLUE FRIEND, HERE!

MM...

AND THEN YOU.

ECK!

WE'RE ON IT!

IT'S BECOMING RAPIDLY APPARENT THAT THIS GARAGE MAN NOT BE ONE OF THE MORE CONVENTIONAL SORT, WHERE THEY DON'T KILL YOU WITHOUT GOOD REASON-- I'M GOING TO HAVE SOME VERY STRONGLY WORDED SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR COMMENT BOOK.

GILA HOBBSTER, YOU CARRY FIREARMS-- IS THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO GET US OUTTA THIS?

THEN SAID I HAD "PANACHE."

NOW GET TO WORK, OR I SHOOT.

THE CLOCK HAS STARTED, GENTLEMEN!

RIGHT!

WE'RE OFF.

MANE YOU'D GO FASTER IF YOU DROVE?

HEY! SHE'S GOOD!

3:35

THE TULIP CLUB

S-CREEETCH!

THERE IT IS! BUT LOOK! THOSE GUYS ARE ALREADY TRYING TO STEAL IT!

THIS CALLS FOR "CHAN!"

FOLLOW THE LEAD!

STOP THOSE MEN! THEY'RE STEALING THAT CAR!!

THANK YOU SO MUCH! THIS CAR IS VERY EXPENSIVE.

ANYTIME, CITIZEN! SAY, THERE'S A DUCK BEHIND YOU.

REALLY?

VROOM!!

YEAH!!!

THEY'RE RIGHT BEHIND US! SHAKE 'EM! SHAKE 'EM!

RIGHT!

MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T USE YOUR TURN SIGNAL SO MUCH WHEN YOU'RE TRYING TO SHAKE SOMEONE.

AH, I'LL REMEMBER THAT!

1:15

LICENSE-RETARDING IS UNAMERICAN!

THOSE 70-YEAR-OLDS REALLY KNOW THEIR STUFF!

IS THIS THE FREEWAY?

0:10

IT'S COME DOWN TO THIS-- A SLUNT SO DANGEROUS THAT WE DON'T EVEN HAVE THE SPACE TO SHOW IT!

STILL, IT WAS CONSIDERATE OF 'EM TO LEAVE THE RAMPS UP.

HEY...

AND THIS...

THANK YOU, BOYS! YOU'VE LED US STRAIGHT TO A STOLEN-CAR RING HERE IS AS MUCH OF THE 400 SERIES AS WE COULD SAVE. WAGE, DON'T SNEEZE.

NOT A PROBLEM, OFFICER! AND IN THE SPIRIT OF GOOD FAITH, HERE IS AS MUCH OF THE 400 SERIES AS WE COULD SAVE. WAGE, DON'T SNEEZE.

I TELL YOU DON'T HIT THOSE RAMPS JUST RIGHT.

WELL, THAT WRAPS THAT UP VIDEO GAMERS! COME BACK IN 30 DAYS FOR MORE NONSTOP ACTION!

RIGHT BEFORE THEY SHOWED UP I WAS THIS CLOSE TO SEDUCING MY WIFE TO FREEDOM.

NO LIE.

AM I IN BURBANK YET?

END!



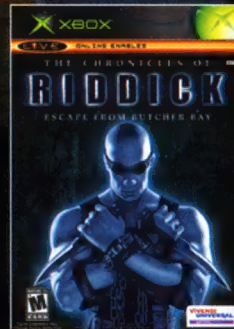
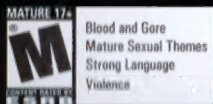
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Game Informer

The dark can't protect you.



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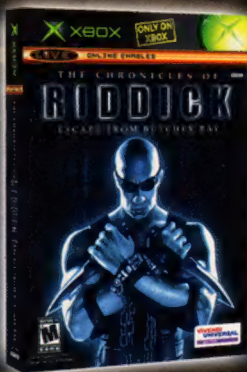
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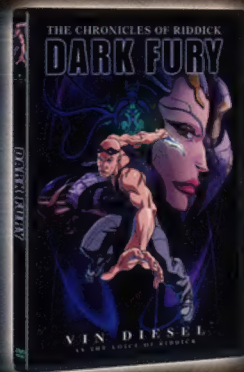
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