

INSIDE: ZELDA, METAL GEAR SOLID 4, SOCOM 3, AND MORE

ELECTRONIC GAMING®

The #1 Videogame Magazine **MONTHLY**



EXCLUSIVE!

SOUL CALIBUR III

THE BEST FIGHTING GAME JUST GOT BETTER...

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA

Sept. 2005
\$4.99 U.S.
\$6.99 CAN.



WWW.1UP.COM



Turn your living room into a playground.



Mild violence

Screens simulated. EyeToy, Play 2™, Gran® ©2005 Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by London Studio. EyeToy and EyeToy: Play 2 are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours." is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America.



Say hello to EyeToy: Play 2, with 12 all-new games like GoalAttack, HomeRun, AirGuitar and 75 bonus games. The included EyeToy USB camera tracks your every move, putting you in the middle of the action. It's the most fun you can have in your living room!



EyeToy USB Camera (for PlayStation 2) included

EyeToy: Play 2
Game Disc



www.us.playstation.com

PlayStation 2



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD
PLAY IN OURS.

BE THE LAW OR BREAK THE LAW



MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood and Gore
Drug Reference
Intense Violence
Sexual Themes
Strong Language

PC
CD-ROM
SOFTWARE

XBOX

XBOX LIVE
ONLINE ENABLED

ONLINE
BROADBAND ONLY



PlayStation 2

CHOOSE YOUR SIDE!



www.25tolife.com

"PROTECT SOCIETY AS THE BOYS IN BLUE OR JOIN A GANG AND WAGE WAR ON IT" - PSM



Start a gang and take it online with up to 16 Players!



Represent online with your fully customized character!



Over 50 weapons to choose from.

25 TO LIFE

25 to Life © 2005 Eidos. Developed by Avalanche Software, LLC and Ritual Entertainment, Inc. Published by Eidos, Inc. Creative direction by Hvy1 Productions. Avalanche and the Avalanche logo are trademarks of Avalanche, LLC. 25 to Life, Eidos and the Eidos logos are registered trademarks of the Eidos Group of Companies. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. PlayStation and the PS Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor (for PlayStation 2) and Memory Card (8MB) (for PlayStation 2) (each sold separately). The Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Xbox logo, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. All rights reserved. Game Experience May Change During Online Play.

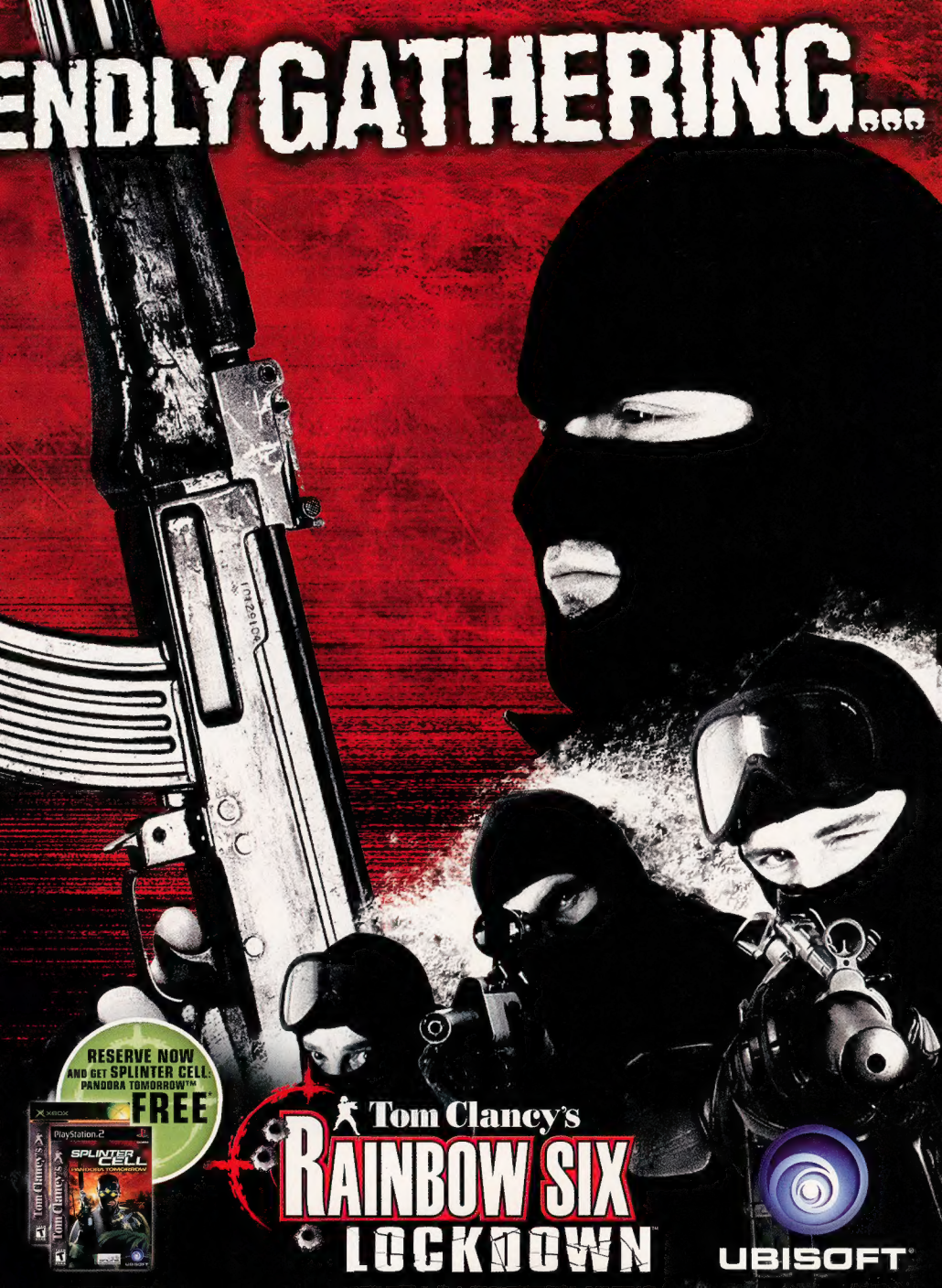
ritual
ENTERTAINMENT

avalanche
SOFTWARE

HWY
1
PRODUCTIONS

eidos

ENDLY GATHERING...



RESERVE NOW
AND GET SPLINTER CELL:
PANDORA TOMORROW™

FREE



Tom Clancy's
RAINBOW SIX
LOCKDOWN

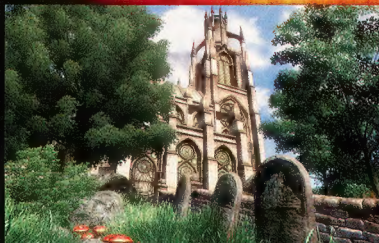


UBISOFT



Winner, Best RPG of E3

— Game Critics Award, GameSpot, IGN, GameSpy,
Xbox Evolved, Console Gold, Daily Game, Games Domain



“Oblivion is, at this time, the best-looking
game I have ever seen in my life.”

— Xbox.com



“The biggest title for the Xbox 360™,
and the one I'm most looking forward to.”

— GamePro Magazine



“One look at Oblivion will shatter your
conceptions about what is possible in a
video game.”

— GameInformer

The RPG for the Next Generation





The Elder Scrolls IV

OBLIVION



contents

issue 195 September 2008

LETTERS

12 Tell us how much you hate us

PRESS START

The latest news, previews, features, and gaming gossip

18 SEQUEL FACTORY

Why *Mega Man Battle Network 7* ain't that big of a stretch

22 GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES

Takes place three years before *GTA 3*...when we still had a social life

34 KING KONG

This ain't going to be *Donkey Kong* for your Xbox 360

38 ZELDA WATCH

Our new monthly section monitors Link's unusual hormonal change

40 ONLINE

A *SOCOM 3* online community just for steamy chats about land vehicles

46 GIZMONDO

Find out what the hell this thing is...and whether it's worth \$400

48 METAL GEAR SOLID 4

Alert the guards—Snake's sneaking back into our living rooms

50 NINTENDOGS

Lay out that newspaper for your DS—these mutts are coming

58 NEXT-GEN CONSOLE REPORT

We enter the lab and create our very own Nintendo Revolution controller

60 CELEB GAMER

The Beastie Boys chat about how handhelds make their asses numb

64 RUMOR MILL

Tom Cruise, Lindsay Lohan, Master Chief—only quality gaming gossip

GAME OVER

Funny reviews and funny pages

126 SEANBABY'S REST OF THE CRAP

128 CROSSWORD/GRUDGE MATCH

130 EGM RETRO/OLD SCHOOL

132 FINAL WORD

133 NEXT MONTH

134 HSU & CHAN

90

COVER STORY: SOUL CALIBUR III

The ultimate fighting game is back! *Soul Calibur III* promises more bouncy boobs (two new girl characters), a build-your-own-badass feature, strange new weapons (like...umbrellas?), and did we mention more bouncy boobs?

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

EDITORIAL
Editor-in-Chief Dan "Sho" Hsu
Executive Editor Mark McDonald
Managing Editor Jennifer Tebo
Senior Editor Craig Beyer
Reviews Editor Dennis Lim
News Editor Bryan Schutten
International Editor John Riccardi
Intern James Lee

DESIGN
Art Director Monique Conoverto
Associate Art Director Stefan Isenay

CONTRIBUTORS
Freddie Arcene, Robert Ashley, Tom Ryan, Robert Coffey, Patrick Kopeck, Matt Lewis, Rich Mangano, James "Millman" Mielke, Thierry "Scorcher" Noivion, Christian Neri, Kyle Orland, Jeremy Parish, Andrew Pillock, Matt Rodden, Joe Schick, Ryan Scott, Seanbaby, Gerry Smetani, Andrew Soosa, Melissa Westrich, Marie Van Dyke

Founder Steve Harris



ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA GAME GROUP

HEAD HONCHOS
President Scott C. McCarthy
Vice President of Development and Business Development Bill Dautler
Editorial Director John Davison
Group Creative Director Simon Cox

COPY DESK
Copy Chief Tom Edwards
Copy Editors Greg Ford, Susie Ochs

PRODUCTION
Senior Production Manager Anne Marie Miguel
Production Manager Monica Brent

Assistant Production Manager Teresa Newson
CIRCULATION
Consumer Marketing Director of Retail Sales William Michalopoulos

SALES
Vice President of Sales Scott McDaniel
Senior Director of Advertising Sales Marco Yamaguchi
Territory Managers & Acct. Execs.
Gaming Accounts

Northwest
Regional Sales Director Amy Melina
Account Executive Brent Marlyn
Southwest
Southern California and Arizona Regional Sales Director Leslie C. Geland
Account Executive Rita Kline
East
AL, AR, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, WV, WY, Canada

Regional Sales Director Ian Sinclair
Account Executive Rita Kline
Consumer Accounts
Senior Director of Consumer Advertising Sales Marc Collins
Account Executive Jessica Robert

1UP.com
Editor-in-Chief Sam Kennedy
Senior Advertising Coordinator Tigler Ubbelohde
Advertising Coordinator Jessica Peacock
Administrative Assistant Lynn Fortunado
Sales Assistant Tiffany Ott

Multiplatform

- 106 Madden NFL 06
108 Fantastic 4
108 The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction
109 Batman Begins

PlayStation 2

- 110 EyeToy: Play 2
110 Makai Kingdom: Chronicles of the Sacred Tome
112 Fullmetal Alchemist 2: Curse of the Crimson Elixir

Xbox

- 112 Sid Meier's Pirates!

GameCube

- 114 Geist
116 Sonic Gems Collection

PSP

- 116 Death Jr.
118 Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition

Nintendo DS

- 118 Advance Wars: Dual Strike
120 Pac'N Roll
120 Nanostray
120 Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory

Extra Stuff

- 122 Reviews Wrap-up
124 Reviews Archive



108



114



26

MR. NINTENDO

We chat with the legendary Shigeru Miyamoto, the man behind *Mario*, *Zelda*, strange garden creatures, and more.

76

UNDER THE RADAR

Previews of what could be the next sleeper hits

- 76 Dragon Quest VIII: Digital Devil Saga 2
82 Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney
82 Fatal Frame 3: The Tormented

- 82 Stubbs the Zombie in Rebel Without a Pulse
82 Shadow of the Colossus
82 Radiata Stories
82 Total Overdose

- 86 World Reborn: Unification
86 Popolocrois
86 Lost in Blue



76



82



82

MARKETING
Senior Director
Ray Ladda
Research Director
May Ford
Marketing Coordinator
Jason Friedenthal
To contact:
Sales & Advertising
please call 415-541-8000
Contact names on the
advertising kit are listed here.
Asusline: uslive@infocent.com

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
Chairman & CEO
Robert F. Calahan
President & COO
Barry W. Calahan
Chief Financial Officer
Derrick Ivins
Executive Vice President
& Editorial Director
Michael J. Miller
Executive Vice President,
General Counsel &
Secretary
Gregory Barton

PROVIDENTS
Scott C. McCarthy (Game Group)
Sean Seymour (Entertainment Group)
Jason Young (Consumer Tech Group)
Chris J. Davis (Internet)

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENTS
Joseph Alexander (Technology & Sales Operations)
Kenneth Beach (Corporate Sales)
Martha Schwartz (Customer Solutions Group)
Lisa Vink (Advertising/Market Intelligence and Corp. Marketing)

VICE PRESIDENTS
Ira Becker (Finance)
Bill Dunbar (Ops. and Business Development), Game Group
John Dawson (Editorial Director), Game Group
Scott Davis (Consumer Marketing & Database Management)
Aimee Goldwyn (Market Expansion)
Barry Horgan (Internet)
Frankie Johnson (International Licensing)
Michael Keenan (Market Expansion)
Lisa Kish (Advertising/Market Intelligence and Corp. Marketing)
Jim Loudenback (Editor in Chief)

INTERNET
Calvin Lago (Production)
Eric Lindbeck (Editor in Chief), iWFOO
Chris Magno (Internet)
Alagna Mendicino (Internet)
Jim McCabe (PC Magazine)
Scott McDaniel (Sales), Game Group
Paul O'Reilly (E-Book Marketing Group)
Ellen Poynton (Editor in Chief), CD iWrights
Bobb Raparia (Online Research)
Tom Sabers (Publisher), Editor in Chief, Business
Stephen Schar (Online Audience Development)
Stephen Webb (Enterprise Group Publishing Director)

MONICA WILSON (Event Marketing Group)
Director of Corporate Communications Randy Zane

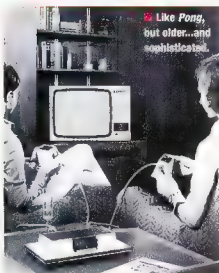
IT WEST COAST
Senior Technical Analyst
Bill Schmeizer
Technical Specialist
Nick Kallister

Subscription Service 800-778-1174
Mail Call 248-360-594-1449
E-mail: subscribe@infocent.com

All content copyright © 2005 Ziff Davis Media Inc. Reproduction, modification, or transmission, in whole or in part, by any means, without written permission from Ziff Davis Media Inc. is strictly prohibited.
All rights reserved.

Letters

ranting, raving, sex, drugs, and videogaming



Baer screwed again

In your "Most Influential People" piece (Issue #193), you listed Nolan Bushnell as the father of console gaming. You should have mentioned Ralph Baer, creator of the Magnavox Odyssey. The Odyssey came out before Pong, and Atari had to pay royalties to Baer and Magnavox for patent infringement. Ralph never gets any credit for his work.

—Tim Posey

Good point, but FYI, we didn't call Bushnell the "father of console gaming." We credited him for creating Atari and bringing Pong to the masses. Ralph Baer does deserve a spot on our list, though.

EGM is a heel

I'm sick of you people insulting wrestling in your game reviews. It may not be real, but you don't have to attack it.

—Damien Clipp

Your attacks aren't completely real. We always let the oily manhandlers know beforehand so they can brace for emotional impact.

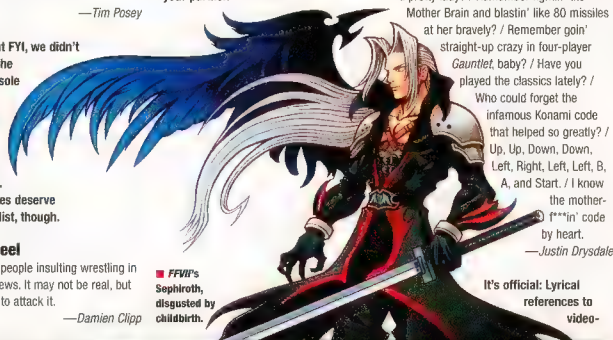
Sephiroth is born

When my wife was pregnant, I put headphones on her belly and played videogame songs, usually pieces from Sonic Adventure, Chrono Cross, or even the theme song from Killer Instinct. But the song I think the baby loved the most was an orchestral version of the Final Fantasy VII theme. When it was time for the baby to come into our gaming world, labor stopped completely. It was like the baby wasn't ready or something was missing. So I took the headphones, put on the song, and when it was finished, the baby was ready to go. Guess the baby was excited to know more about Final Fantasy VII.

—Jean-Marie Aineux

Please visit

www.plannedparenthood.org to find a contraceptive that's right for you and your partner.



■ FFVII's Sephiroth, disguised by childbirth.

It's official: Lyrical references to video-

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Subtitles are not optional

The "Out of Sight" article in Issue #193 got me thinking about a subject close to my heart. I have a cousin (she's like a sister to me) who started my love for games. She got an Atari 2600 for Christmas one year and taught me how to play all her games. We continued our love of gaming through the years. However, something changed with the PS2 and Xbox: Most new games have voice acting, but many don't have optional subtitles. You see, my cousin Noreen is deaf. She would love to play these new games, but she can't make heads or tails of what's going on. So we'll play games like Halo and Halo 2 together, so I can explain what's happening using sign language.

DVDs always have a subtitle option. Why can't game developers do the same with games?

—Pamela Robbins



Congrats, Pamela. Your thoughtful Letter of the Month has earned you and your cousin a random game (hopefully subtitled) from the EGM pile.

Whack MC

I just finished my masterpiece, a flow that represents the classic NES era. Here's an excerpt: "Remember Justin Bailey? / Remember when ya found out Samus was a pretty lady? / Remember fightin' the Mother Brain and blastin' like 80 missiles at her bravely? / Remember goin' straight-up crazy in four-player Gauntlet, baby? / Have you played the classics lately? / Who could forget the infamous Konami code that helped so greatly? / Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Left, B, A, and Start. / I know the motherf****in code by heart.

—Justin Drysdale

games are over. Oh, and that code you know so well? Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, LEFT, B, A, Start.

Money = Root of all fanboys

The next-generation consoles have been unveiled, and the fanboys are out in full force. I'm sick of them already. No one has seen the consoles in real life, just pictures and screenshots. But they already have their favorites and aren't afraid to talk them up. The comments they're making are beyond pointless.

I own all three current consoles, and I can't wait for all of the next-gen machines.

—Drew Quandt

Shut up and pick a side, Richie Rich

Gaming-rig inflation

How does the industry expect the average game to keep up with technology costs? Judging by the "Console Wars" story in Issue #194, it seems the only way to play will be online and on a huge HDTV. I've got >

POST OFFICE

Rambling and ranting from our message boards, boards.1UP.com (look for Electronic Gaming Monthly's forums)

What left field, weirdo, or little known games are you looking forward to this year? See Under the Radar (pg.76).

Yannicus162: Shining Force Neo (PS2)—in the hopes that it's not nearly as bad as Shining Tears.

NYCmagics: Odama (GC),

because we need different/quirky/odd games achieving success here in the United States.

Bowflex_Body: If a game is so lousy that it can't get media attention, I tend to think that it probably isn't worth my time.

Roboman2: Sadly, my most anticipated title this year—*Dragon Quest VIII* (PS2)—

probably qualifies as "under the radar."

C_Strife97: Gunstar Super Heroes (GBA)—is anyone else thinking of going all handheld, or am I just crazy?

Yanman1568: Lost in Blue (DS) for sure. Just the concept of surviving on a deserted island sounds like fun. And the DS will bring some new gameplay ideas.

Kahinix: Trauma Center: Under the Knife (DS): I think being an amateur surgeon—without the liability of a malpractice suit or the bloody clothes—would be fun.



CONTACT EGM

E-mail us at: EGM@ziffdavis.com

Or write to: EGM Letters, 101 2nd Street, 8th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105

For subscription help, contact: E-mail: subhelp@egmnet.com Website: <http://service.egmnet.com> Phone toll-free: (800) 779-1174 Old-fashioned way: P.O. Box 57722, Boulder, CO 80322-5722

BACK ISSUES?

E-mail back_issues@ziffdavis.com to order old issues.

**If your backpack
says something about you,
tell it to shut up
and carry your stuff.**



Super Break™

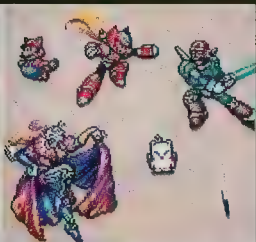
BONUS GALLERY

Going the extra mile for love of the game

Project Pixelation

Last summer I stumbled on a how-to for making old-school videogame sprites from Perler Beads (those colorful, cylindrical beads you melt together with an iron; you know, the ones you stop playing with when you're 11). Here are some of the larger sprites I made over Christmas: break (note the pan for scale).

—Christopher M. Wilhelm



> a 27-inch TV from 1996 and a 10-year-old stereo (that's two speakers, no fancy surround sound system). Now, I make decent money, but not enough to keep up with what will be the standard soon. Us working folks might be inclined to spend the money for new-generation technology as long as that technology doesn't cost the equivalent of a down payment on a house or car.

—Ryan Haack

Obviously an expert

Why must there be sex and drugs in videogames? That's what the Internet, soul mates, and street corners are for.

—Huey

Thanks for the info; we've been looking for real sex and drugs all night!

Bully

My stepbrother says that I'm a geek because I like videogames. He says that anyone who plays games is a loser.

Basically, I hate him because he doesn't

know anything, and he's a wannabe skate punk/sports jock/rock star.

—J-Man

We were totally going to defend you, but your stepbrother jumped us in

the bathroom (we're still finding bits of our undies where they shouldn't be).

Getting the feel for "real"

How many of your reviewers regularly drive an assortment

of different sports cars? You all seem to be experts on realistic physics in racing games, but I would imagine most of you probably drive import passenger cars, SUVs or, God forbid, a Hyundai or Kia. I would never drive anything but a sports car, and I don't think *Gran Turismo 4* feels at all like a real driving simulation. It feels more like how gamers would want cars to handle while playing with a DualShock [The cars in *Forza Motorsport* and *Sega GT* feel like real cars.

And just for a last low blow to *Gran Turismo 4*: I own a 1978 Datsun 280Z, and the manual transmission is a four speed, not a five speed as in *GT4*. There is a Fairlady model equipped with a five speed, but it's not the same model [as the one] featured in the game. So much for "The Real Driving Simulator."

—Ryan LeCocq

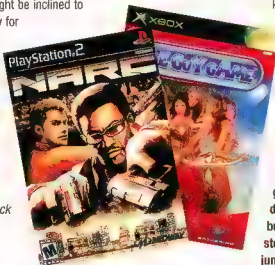
Reviews Editor Demian Linn responds: "We'll surprise you, Ryan LeCocq—if that

is your real name. Regular Review Crew contributor Greg Sewart used to race go-karts competitively and just about lapped me the last time we went karting. And before this whole videogame thing, I was a roadtester at a car magazine. But then *Gran Turismo* came out, and I realized I was in the wrong industry entirely."

Origins of Private Pilot

I bought *Full Spectrum Warrior* a while ago and loved it. I also found out it was a training tool used for the Army. I was out of high school and looking for a job, so after beating *FSW*, I visited a recruiter for the United States Marine Corps. I enrolled, training to become an infantryman. I'm now in camp, getting ready to pass the Crucible. Most people I talk to think I'm an idiot for joining the USMC—and I am—but I'm more of an idiot for joining because of playing *FSW*!

—Alexandre Perra



■ EGM reader Huey knows better ways to spend twenty bucks than on these games...



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



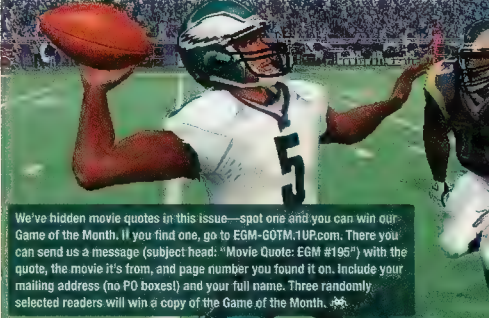
Shadow Ops: Fred Mercury

Your challenge: Singing 12-part castrato harmonies in a band called Queen while somehow staying in the closet.
Your weapons: An iconic handlebar mustache, a sweaty mesh T-shirt, a sparkling white grand piano, and an arsenal of killer guitar riffs.
Your mission: Save rock 'n' roll from the clutches of tame metal bands, whiny suburban punk rockers, and a chorus of orybaby pretzels

Your reward: Everlasting life in the pantheon of rock

—Absalom Jones

WIN THE GAME OF THE MONTH CONTEST



We've hidden movie quotes in this issue—spot one and you can win our Game of the Month. If you find one, go to EGM-GOTM.1UP.com. There you can send us a message (subject head: "Movie Quote: EGM #195") with the quote, the movie it's from, and page number you found it on. Include your mailing address (no PO boxes) and your full name. Three randomly selected readers will win a copy of the Game of the Month.



FRED WIPTON HAS DEFEATED AN ARMY OF EVIL SQUID.

What have you done lately? For example, are you spending more time gaming with high-speed SBC Internet? Not for just \$14.99 per month for a full year, but for online or with qualifying services. With speeds up to 8 Mbps, you'll be able to keep up with the competition, whether it's down the street or halfway around the world. For details visit sbc.com/gamer.



For new customers who order online or who order with qualifying services. Other monthly charges and taxes apply. For details of available charges, restrictions and requirements, call toll-free 1-866-416-6471 or visit sbc.com/offerdetails. DSL Internet by SBC Internet Services, a Yahoo! service, is a registered trademark of Yahoo! Inc. SBC, the SBC logo and other product names are trademarks of SBC Knowledge Ventures and its affiliates. ©2005 SBC Knowledge Ventures, L.P. All rights reserved.

IT'S IN THE DARKEST DAYS
WHEN A LEADER MUST STEP INTO THE LIGHT.



A lone party is only as strong as its leader. In the unforgiving world of *Dungeon Siege II*, you will gather warriors, build their skills and adopt exotic creatures. Only then can you battle the ancient sword of Zaramoth and the tyranny that sweeps Aranna. Whether you go it alone or choose a multiplayer campaign in this sequel to the million-selling *Dungeon Siege*, the fate of the world lies in your hands.

www.dungeonsiege.com

DUNGEON SIEGE II



press start

gaming news, previews, canine cuteness, and other stuff



SEQUEL FACTORY

Videgame companies are producing franchise follow-ups at insane rates, with no work stoppage in sight

Twenty-one. No, this isn't a friendly reminder of how old you must be to legally drink a Budweiser. Rather, it's the number of *Mega Man* titles that Capcom has released since 2000. Think about it: That's roughly four games a year starring the Blue Bomber. Now some may be of the opinion that such sequel overload is a surefire way to kill a franchise, but Capcom Director of Marketing Todd Thorson believes the publisher is simply giving gamers what they want. "The *Mega Man* franchise has consistently done well at retail due to a loyal and widespread fan base," he says. "One of our latest games, *Mega Man Anniversary Collection*, is one of our best-selling yet at more than 500,000 copies [in the United States]."

While the case of *Mega Man* is extreme, it's evident that most companies in the videogame biz are getting some serious mileage out of their popular franchises. Just flip ahead to the Sales Charts and Hot Ten sections of this mag and you'll find sequels dominating those pages. And after speaking with several analysts, publishers, and developers, it doesn't look like this trend will stop anytime soon.

Show me the money

As videogames have transformed into a viable (and highly profitable) medium since the days of *Pong*, the industry's corporate structure has evolved right along with them. "Publishers are now big public companies with a responsibility to their investors," says one financial analyst who

wishes to remain anonymous. "Part of that responsibility entails having a plan, and to have a plan you need visibility." That's where sequels come in, as investors feel more confident in a publisher whose annual portfolio includes at least a few titles with an established audience. Also,

with development costs on the rise, turning a profit is becoming harder and harder, which causes companies to lean more heavily on their franchises. "A game on all three consoles would have to sell around 600,000 in its first year, plus another 600,000 over the next couple of years just

New System = New Ideas

Looking to enrich your videogame experience with more non-franchised, non-licensed titles? The release of three new consoles by the end of next year should help, as publishers tend to use a hard-ware launch to try out new brands. "Early in the life cycle of a platform there are few products for customers to choose from," says Neil Young, vice

president and general manager of Electronic Arts Los Angeles. "It's a great opportunity to have a top-five title that captures mindshare and will either get purchased by everyone who's buying a new console or give you an opportunity to capitalize on that mindshare with a sequel when the installed base [of the platform] is larger."

>>> WARREN SPECTOR, WHO CREATED THE CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED YET POOR-SELLING *DEUS EX* SERIES (XB), HAS OPENED JUNCTION



to break even," says analyst Michael Pachter of Wedbush Morgan. "A million-unit seller isn't what it used to be."

Even members of the development community understand that creating sequels makes financial sense. "This is a business and our livelihoods depend on being able to make and sell lots of games," admits Ted Price, president of developer Insomniac. "If we're fortunate enough to develop a concept that becomes a franchise, we have a better chance to sell more games consistently—that is, as long as the sequels continue to surprise and excite players." This November, Insomniac will release its fourth *Ratchet & Clank* game in four years, the weapon-heavy platformer *Ratchet: Deadlocked* (PS2).



■ *Beyond Good & Evil*: made possible by Ubisoft capitalizing on its popular brands.

Without Splinter Cells, there would be no *Beyond Good & Evil*

Videogame purists may bellyache that today's software selection lacks original properties like the '03 critical hit (and commercial flop) *Beyond Good & Evil*, but consider this: If it weren't for sequels, companies couldn't create new brands. Gary Keith, Ubisoft's director of brand management, explains: "[Sequels] give people more of what they love, and they help publishers build a war chest so they can afford to take risks on new game ideas." The success of the *Mortal Kombat* franchise, for example, helped Midway fund four all-new titles last year, including the horrorfest *The Suffering* (which will receive a follow-up this September); plus, the publisher plans to launch another four original properties in '06.

This strategy works for independent developers, too. BioWare, best known in the console market for creating the Xbox role-playing blockbuster *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*, used that hit and multiple PC games to make its first non-franchised, non-licensed title, *Jade Empire* (XB). "Creating new intellectual properties has been the goal of the com-

pany since we started BioWare 10 years ago," says co-CEO Greg Zeschuk. "We also have two other new intellectual properties in development right now."

Will the sequel factory ever slow down production?

Well, not until gamers start asking for it. "If you want to blame someone for

the number of sequels, blame the consumers," ex-Naughty Dog (*Jak* series) President Jason Rubin told *The Hollywood Reporter*. "If *Tony Hawk 5B* is what gamers want, so be it." Pachter agrees: "Publishers give [consumers] what they want, which is, apparently, World War II-based first-person shooters." And don't forget *Mega Man* games.

—Bryan Iltis

BY THE NUMBERS

Where's the originality?

0	Number of original properties (console or handheld) that finished in the top 10 of games sold during '04 in the United States.
1	Number of original properties that finished in the top 50 (<i>Fable</i>).
4	Number of original properties that finished in the top 100 (<i>Fable</i> , <i>Rise to Honor</i> , <i>True Crime: Streets of L.A.</i> , <i>Red Dead Revolver</i>).

No fairy tale here: *Fable* (Xbox) is the only non-sequel, non-licensed game to crack the top 50 sales chart in 2004.

Source: NPD; NISYS Video Game Service

EGMINTERNATIONAL

You call yourself hardcore? Ha!

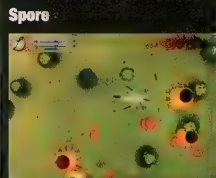


■ PS2
NAMCO X CAPCOM
Oh, great, did these companies merge, too?
 No, no—they just came together to create a game that will make hardcore video dorks salivate so much that they'll need a boat to float out of their parents' basement. This strategy-RPG (produced by the folks at Monolith Soft, the outfit behind *Xenosaga*) works along similar lines as the robot-combat-RPGs that litter Japan's game shops...except the characters are all from Namco and Capcom titles of years past. **So you can do Pac-Man versus, say, Dante?** It could be possible, given the convoluted plot Monolith's come up with to explain the massive crossover here. Licensing issues could make a U.S. release tough, but if Klonoa and, uh, *Resident Evil*'s Leon Kennedy have taught us anything, it's to never give up!



■ PS2
SHIKIGAMI NO SHIRO: NANAYUZUKI GENSOUKYOKU
Namco X Capcom just isn't fringe enough for me. Then how about a game that combines the two least popular genres on the planet—text adventures and overhead shoot-em-ups—into a single 7,140 yen (or around \$65) package? The *Shikigami* series has so much backstory behind its bullet-ridden hide that the creators actually made an adventure game based on it. And your choices in this adventure affect the difficulty and enemy setups of the shooting sections. **When did shooter plots get so complicated?** Beats us—it's to the point where the developers even sell a separate DVD with artwork, interviews, and original radio-drama bits. All this for a game in which you press a single button...a lot.

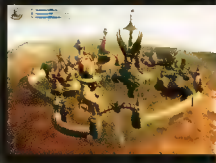
WHAT'S PLAYING IN THE COMPUTER **GAMING** WORLD



Spore
 When I was a kid, I was totally freaked out by King Vitamin. Not because of the dreams in which he ate my feet—I could deal with those. Actually, it was the cereal box that did the damage. It showed the King, and he'd be holding a box of the cereal, and on that box was the King holding another box and on it was him and so on. That infinitely telescoping cereal box blew my mind every morning before third grade. *Spore*, the next undertaking of *The Sims* genius Will Wright, should be just as mind-blowing, just about as infinite, and the only thing bothering my brain is that I have to wait until late next year to play it.

Spore's premise is simply brilliant: You start as a single cell creature, and if you survive long enough, you evolve. Nothing drastic, maybe you can fight other cells better, or maybe you get a flagellum and move faster. Simple editing tools that persist in all aspects of the game let you make highly personalized design decisions: Survive long enough and you'll evolve into a more complex creature, eventually move to the land, become the dominant species on your planet, create a society to rule that planet, and move to space to conquer your solar system, the galaxy, and maybe even the universe. From the most drastically humble beginnings you can grow to omnipotence. Also, the competing species will be drawn from an online database tracking the species created by all the other players in their respective games.

—Robert Coffey,
 Computer Gaming World



NEWS TIDBIT

Halo for Hollywood!
 Movieland has just gobbled up yet another videogame franchise, and it's a big one: *Halo*. According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, Universal Pictures and 20th Century Fox will join forces to make a film based on Microsoft's blockbuster sci-fi franchise that between its two Xbox installments has sold more than 13 million copies worldwide. While details remain scarce, we do know Alex Garland (*28 Days*

Later) penned the script and that the movie is scheduled to hit theaters sometime during 2007. Also, reports about that Microsoft and *Halo* developer Bungie are being very protective of the project, which hopefully means they'll keep Uwe Boll, director of videogame-to-movie duds such as *House of the Dead* and *Alone in the Dark*, far away from Master Chief.



➤ 90 MILLION AND COUNTING—SONY ANNOUNCED THAT IT HAS NOW SOLD 90 MILLION PS2S WORLDWIDE SINCE ITS DEBUT IN 2000....

EB GAMES™

electronics boutique®

Be Legendary. Be Predatory.

Be BOTH.

COMING THIS FALL



**FREE
MAKING OF
ULTIMATE
SPIDER-MAN™
CD**

WITH YOUR \$5 DEPOSIT*

* While supplies last. See sales associate for complete details. Availability date subject to change. MARVEL, Spider-Man and all related characters: TM & © 2005 Marvel Characters Inc. All rights reserved. www.marvel.com

**CALL 1.800.800.5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU
OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM**

EB GAMES
electronics boutique®
www.ebgames.com

We take games seriously™

ACTIVISION

PSP

GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES

Publisher: Rockstar
Developer: Rockstar Leeds
Release Date: October 2005

Same town, different story

Once upon a time, a man with no name came to Liberty City. He was a very, very bad man, and he did many very, very bad things. So bad, in fact, his adventures (as chronicled in *Grand Theft Auto III* on the PS2 and Xbox) caused people in the real world to do bad things as

well, which made all the grown-ups become mad at videogames for a while.

This story isn't about the man with no name, however, but rather one of his bosses in *GTA3*, Toni Cipriani (who is also a very bad man). Three years before the man with no name arrived in Liberty City, Mr. Cipriani himself

was just returning to town after being away for a long time, hiding from other bad men that he'd hurt. Now Mr. Cipriani is back, ready to show everyone why Liberty City stories weren't meant to be told to children.

Here's what you can expect from his adventures....
—Dan "Sho" Hsu

Welcome to the Jungle... Again

It's Liberty City all right. All three major areas (Portland, Staunton Island, Shoreline Vale) are intact, which means this little PSP disc is packing in an insane amount of urban real estate. It's impressive from a technology standpoint but may be a bit disappointing for fans who've seen it all before. Because *Liberty City Stories* takes place only three years before *Grand Theft Auto 3*, not much has changed since we last visited the town. You will see some new (or rather, old) businesses. For example, on the PSP you'll see Paulie's Revue Bar, which will later become Luigi's Sex Club in *GTA3*.

Throughout the city, you'll also find stunt opportunities for your cars, hidden packages, and rampages (during which you go hog-wild and shoot as many civvies as you can within the time limit), just like in previous *GTA3*.



This town is big enough for two gun-happy, carjacking gangsters.



>> *GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES* WILL FEATURE CELEBRITY VOICE ACTING AND SEVERAL RADIO STATIONS WITH LICENSED TUNES... >>

ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN™

BE LEGENDARY

UltimateSpiderManGame.com



PlayStation 2



Spider-Man and all related characters thereof are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc., and are used with permission. Copyright © 2005 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. Game © 2005 Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. "PlayStation 2" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft, Inc. © Game Boy Advance, Nintendo DS and the Nintendo Game Boy logo are trademarks of Nintendo © 2004 Nintendo. All rights reserved. PC CD-ROM logo TM and © 2003 EMI. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

GTA (CONT.)

Now Featuring

Liberty City Stories jacked several post-GTA3 improvements, such as new cars, motorcycles, and *GTA: San Andreas*' trip skips (to save you time when replaying failed missions) and improved targeting system (with the ability to cycle through enemies), though you still can't shoot as effectively as you can in, say, every other videogame on the market.

Unfortunately, you won't be building up your character's stats as in *San Andreas*, and you still can't swim, as *Liberty City* wasn't designed for that. You will, however, get to dress up in different outfits. Rockstar won't say quite yet what effect this has on gameplay.



■ Two-wheelin' in Chinatown. Watch out for split and snort rockets from old men.



Story Time

Although the city is a familiar concrete jungle to most of us, the adventure is all new. As you'd suspect, Toni's return to *Liberty City* isn't a quiet one, with the Sindacco family, the police, and even the mayor's office "welcoming" him home like a parade gone horribly wrong.

We've seen two missions so far. In one, the don sends you to pick up some money at a warehouse, which blows up just as you get there. You must scramble around picking up all the loose change while picking off Triad gangsters. In another mission, you have to stop four waves of Sindacco thugs from blowing up a casino. It starts with two cars full of hit men, then an armored truck, and finally, a dynamite-packed van, which you have take over and drive out of harm's way. In all, Rockstar promises "a lot" of missions that can add up to between 80 and 120 hours of gameplay. **46**



■ These park joggers are going down.



>>> RUMORS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING THAT *GTA: LCS* WILL HAVE MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT. BUT ROCKSTAR WON'T CONFIRM OR DENY THIS.... >>>

ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN™

BE PREDATORY

BE BOTH

SEPTEMBER 2005

UltimateSpiderManGame.com



PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE

NINTENDO DS

ACTIVISION

activision.com

WIRELESS GAME

MARVEL

Spider-Man and all related characters thereof are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. and are used with permission. Copyright © 2005 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. Game © 2005 Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision and registered trademarks of Activision Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The "X" Game Boy Advance, Nintendo DS and the Nintendo GameCube logos are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2005 Nintendo. All rights reserved. PC CD-ROM logo TM and © 2003 ESRB. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.



Photographs by Mattias Westfall and Alejandro Chavetz

>> THIS SEPTEMBER, MICROSOFT WILL RELEASE *FABLE: THE LOST CHAPTERS*, A "DIRECTOR'S CUT" OF THE XBOX ACTION-RPG THAT

WHY IS SHIGERU MIYAMOTO SO DAMN HAPPY?

Is it because he's got one of the coolest jobs in the world as the head of Nintendo's design lab? Or because his games have made billions of dollars? Or because he's seen the top-secret Revolution console? Or maybe because his wife is finally playing games? Let's find out...

Of all the different ways to introduce Shigeru Miyamoto, none seem adequate. He's the creator of *Mario*, sure, but what about *Donkey Kong*, *Yoshi*, *Zelda*, *Star Fox*, and *Pikmin*, not to mention the dozens of games, such as *Kirby*, *Pokémon*, and *Metroid*, he's consulted on over the years? He's the senior managing director and general manager of Nintendo's Entertainment Analysis and Development Division: That's technically correct, but what the hell does it mean? He's the "Spielberg of videogames": That has a nice ring to it, but did Spielberg establish any genres in the movie industry the way *Super Mario Bros.* defined the platformer? He's a god of game design: Most would agree, but somehow it doesn't quite fit the humble family man who rides a bike to work every day.

Maybe the best introduction is Shigeru Miyamoto needs no introduction, at least to gamers who've enjoyed any of his work over the last 25 years. We know he's important, his time is precious, and what he has to say about online gaming, the next *Mario*, and Nintendo's upcoming Revolution console is worth reading.

—Mark MacDonald

EGM: We've heard that you're working on a new project for Revolution. What can you tell us about it?

Shigeru Miyamoto: [Only that] we want new projects that utilize the inherent functionality of the system. I want to concentrate on something really unique—but because it's unique, it'd be premature to

"We wanted [an online gaming network] that was safe, reliable, and didn't cost the player anything."

—Nintendo game design guru Shigeru Miyamoto

say anything about it right now. I get a lot of questions about *Mario 128* [and other Revolution titles], but until the interface is announced, I can't really talk about them.

EGM: You mention *Mario 128*—two years ago when we talked, you said if you didn't show *Mario 128* in that next year, you would consider yourself a failure. And now here we are....

SM: I'm sorry. [Laughs] Yeah, I got sidetracked with things like *Donkey Kong: Jungle Beat* and some other titles, and they took some of my energy away from the project. We have been continually working on different projects, different experiments with the *Mario 128* engine. The name *Mario 128* came from *Mario 64* [for the Nintendo 64 and now DS]—with that name, we wanted to say, 'Hey, we're creating something brand new.' So what we do on the Revolution, whether or not that's going to be [called *Mario 128*]...it's going to be a new *Mario*.

EGM: Since *Mario 128* started as a GameCube project and has now been moved to the Revolution, has the game design changed as well?

SM: Well, [when we] create a *Mario* game, there are [initially several] experiments. A

lot of fundamental things have to be in place. And really, *Mario 128* never really got past that stage. So rather than having an actual game design for it, it was more of a concept, like the types of things we want *Mario* to do. So we're obviously still using a lot of that material, but as far as the game design [is concerned], we're swapping ideas and different concepts with the *Mario Sunshine* team and trying to see what we can come up with, trying to find the most interesting direction to take.

EGM: We know the Revolution will be Wi-Fi [wireless internet] capable out of the box, and later this year we will see the first online Nintendo DS games. After holding out for so long, why has Nintendo finally decided to embrace online gaming?

SM: At Nintendo, we've always had to step back a little from network or online gaming. We didn't like the business model [where] you've got a server, you pay a monthly fee, etc. There's all this setup involved—it didn't seem all that customer-friendly. But with [the online plan we have], there's no fee, it's easy to use. There's no setup for [the player]. This type of system really generated a lot of interest within Nintendo. We wanted something that was safe, reliable, and didn't cost the player anything.

EGM: It's funny you say that, because when the other systems went online, Nintendo introduced "connectivity" [hooking a GBA to the GameCube], which seemed pretty complicated. Do you now think that was a mistake?

SM: Connectivity was a very interesting idea. I still believe it [is] a very interesting idea. Unfortunately, the idea wasn't communicated very well to the consumer, and that's too bad—I wish we had done that better. Part of [the problem] was the obstacles consumers perceived before they actually tried it. I think people felt, "How am I going to connect these?" "It sounds really difficult," "I'm not going to be able to look at both screens at the same time," and so on. With the DS, we made up for some of those problems—when you buy the DS, it's got the dual screens, it's got the mic, it's got the wireless. It's all built in, so the player doesn't have to worry about it.

EGM: Was there any thought of revisiting the connectivity idea with the DS and the Revolution via Wi-Fi?

SM: Of course we've thought about it. But our main goal is to create an environment that provides easy access for the player. ▶

MIYAMOTO (CONT.)



"I'll stay at work until at least 10—sometimes until 1 in the morning."

➤ So whether or not the DS will be used as a controller or what people will do with the Revolution—we're really not interested in everything the Revolution can do. We don't want developers to build games around what the Revolution can do, we want them to build games around what is interesting—to use that functionality to their best advantage. So again, it will end up being whatever the developers think is best for their game. The main point of the Revolution is to create a console that allows game designers to create unique, interesting, fun game experiences, rather than being focused on just super graphics or something like that.

EGM: Let's switch gears and talk about you for a bit. Take us through your typical work day.

SM: Well, it varies a little, of course, but some mornings I'm up at 7, some mornings I sleep in until 9...I'm usually up by 9 at the latest. Then I'll stay at work until at

least 10—sometimes until 1 in the morning. Most of the time is taken up walking around and checking in on all the different teams working on different projects. The biggest job per week would be meeting with the producers of these titles, checking on their progress, and deciding [if they are] on the right track or [if] things need to be adjusted. Then I'll have meetings with [Nintendo President Satoru] Iwata to talk about things like Revolution or meet with [the public relations department] to talk about advertising and marketing and how to marry those things with products—that takes a lot of my time.

EGM: What's your favorite part of the job?

SM: Well, since Mr. Iwata became company president, I've been able to duck out of some of the more tedious management issues I've had to deal with in the past. So I'm really happy I can do more on the development side, meeting with teams and checking on their progress.

EGM: What do your wife and children think about your work?

SM: I have two children: One is in college, and one is a senior in high school. And unfortunately, they both now know where to look on the Internet if I get up at [the industry trade show] E3 and do something

embarrassing. [Laughs] [At an E3 press conference two years ago, Miyamoto appeared in a puff of smoke with a *Zelda*-style sword and shield to thunderous applause—Ed.] I try to keep my private life and work separate as much as possible. At home, we have a really cheerful life.

EGM: Does your family play games?

SM: My wife has never really been into games—not even *Tetris* or anything. But *Wintendogs* has her hooked. We have three DSes sitting on the living room table right now, all being actively used to do things with the dogs. You may ask yourself why I only have three DSes when there are four people in my house. After all, I'm a big shot at Nintendo, on the board and everything, right? Well, the truth is my dad stole one. [Laughs] He took one and he's playing [the import-only problem-solving game] *DS Brain Training for Adults* on his own. Compared to the past, games are really popular right now in my household. I'm hoping we can have the same sort of response with the Revolution—I really feel we're getting close to that.

EGM: Any chance either of your children will follow in your footsteps?

SM: My daughter really likes videogames, but she has no intention of [doing what I do]. My son is looking more at advertising or design, but not related to games.

EGM: We've seen how your home life can influence your work, like your gardening hobby led to *Pikmin*. Recently, your family got a dog, and now we have *Nintendogs* on the way.

SM: [Once we got a dog], we met a lot of

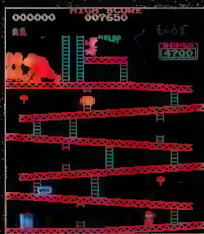
SHIGER-WHO?

A Miyamoto Profile

Like a 1-minute-long episode of *Inside the Actors Studio*, without all the ass kissing:

• Born November 16, 1962.

• Grew up outside Kyoto, Japan. His family had no car or television.



• Hired at Nintendo in 1977; started work on his first videogame (*Donkey Kong*, above) in 1980.

• His biggest rival: Professor Erno Rubik, inventor of the Rubik's Cube.



• Two games he wishes he had thought of:

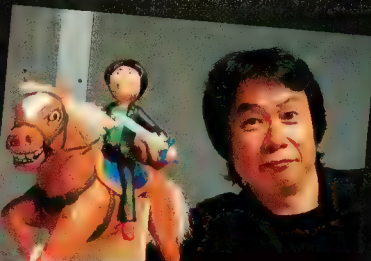
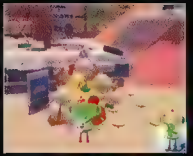
Seaman (Dreamcast)

"I really like well-developed concepts. I think [Seaman creator] Yoot Saito is good at that." [Saito is currently working on the medieval-Japan-themed pinball game *Odama* for the GameCube.]



Katamari Damacy (PlayStation 2)

"Really unique and well executed."



BATMAN
IN THEATERS NOW



For the hero in all of us.

Milk's 9 essential nutrients give me the strength and energy I need to fight
the forces of evil. Not drinking milk? Now that would be a crime.

got milk?

MIYAMOTO (CONT.)

ENDO DS



"The interface we're creating for the Revolution is well suited for *Pikmin*—I think it would make a good match."

other dog owners. From young people to older people, having the dog enlarged our circle of acquaintances and friends. If you see people passing on the street who aren't walking their dogs, you don't have to stop and talk to them. But if [people] walking their dogs catch each other's eyes, they will generally stop [and talk about their dogs]. And I really thought it was an interesting communication phenomenon—pet owners chatting with each other. So one thing I thought was, wouldn't it be interesting if dogs had some sort of a

device on their collars that allowed them to exchange information with other dogs as they were walking by, like a business card? "Hi, I'm Fido." "Hi, I'm Spot." Anyway, we actually used the GameCube to make [a prototype dog game]. Of course, on the GameCube we had some great graphics—really realistic, really nice-looking dogs—but that's where it stopped.

EGM: Until the DS?

SM: Looking at the Nintendo DS' functionality, with the touch screen, the mic and the voice recognition, the wireless communication feature—I'm like, "Wait a minute! This is the perfect hardware for this particular software title." While this discussion was going on, a younger director was talking about making some kind of parrot game. His idea was you talk to the parrot, and the parrot talks back to you. But then we started thinking of localization issues—English for America, and then Europe, where you've got five languages, and it just sounded like way too much. But if we make a game work where you would record your own voice and it was played back, there's no localization needed. So I said to the director, "Parrots are nice. Let's do dogs." [Laughs] But obviously, the director was really happy because his idea was still alive, and married with my idea, it was even better.



EGM: Moving on to other games—we know *Smash Bros.* is coming to the Revolution, but what about the DS?

SM: We're thinking about it.

EGM: What about *Luigi's Mansion*? Is that series over, or will we ever see another?

SM: The [director] often says, "Make another one! Make another one!" And I want to see Luigi again.

EGM: Any chance we'll see anything more of *Pikmin*?

SM: Nothing's set in stone yet, but the interface we're creating for the Revolution is well suited for *Pikmin*—I think it would be a good match. Not much I can say other than that.

EGM: Will we ever see anything more of *Stage Debüt* [a technology demo that allowed players to map their face on in-game characters]?

SM: Yeah, I want to do something with it.

EGM: How does it feel to see all the nostalgia and >

Miyamoto Profile (cont.)

• Biggest disappointment of all the games he's made:

The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords Adventure (GameCube)

"It's such a great game and just not enough people played it, you know? I just wanted it to sell better!"



• What game he's been playing a lot lately:

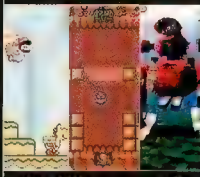
DS Brain Training for Adults (Nintendo DS, Japan only)

"There's a Japanese university professor who's written a series of books of brain teasers and puzzles. His idea is that the brain is a muscle that needs to be exercised just like anything else. He's really popular right now. So they've made a videogame version of this—there's some really fun stuff in there."



• If he could choose only three of his classic games to download to his Revolution's virtual console, he would pick:

1. *Super Mario World* (Super Nintendo)
2. *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past* (Super Nintendo)
3. *Star Fox 64* (Nintendo 64)



► Left to right: Mario, Zelda, and the surprise choice, *Star Fox 64*.

You Make The Comics!



Easy to use Self-Publishing Software

Turn your Video Gameplay into a Comic Book!



Take screenshots from inside your favorite video games.

Drag & Drop into easy-to-use comic book templates.

Easily add text, effects and balloons to your characters story.

Save your comic as a .PDF and share it online with your friends.

Print and bring your Adventures to life.

www.PlanetwideComics.com

© 2005 Planetwide Games. www.PlanetwideGames.com. All Rights Reserved.

PC
CD-ROM
ONLINE
SOFTWARE



MIYAMOTO (CONT.)



goods based on your earlier games?

SM: It's nice to see, as long as they're [of] good quality and [are] good products. It's flattering. In Japan, there's this group called Tongari Kids that have a rap song [called "B-Dash"] that uses some *Mario* sounds. It's really popular right now, and there's a lot of talk about it.

EGM: What about this: If you could only save one of your babies from a burning building—Mario, Link, or Donkey Kong—who would you save?

SM: [Thinks for a moment] Well, if I saved Link, I'm sure the other two could get out on their own. [Laughs]

EGM: And Link couldn't?

SM: He's too cute. [I'd need to help him.]

EGM: Your games often incorporate violence, but it's always silly or cartoonish. Would you ever consider making a truly violent or Mature-rated game?

SM: Well, if violence was a key component within the game idea, I would have no problem making a game like that. But I don't want to make a violent game for the sake of violence, where violence is the fun part of the game. 笑

Iwata: Not too proud to come down and kick your ass at *Mario Kart DS*.

MIYAMOTO'S BOSS: SATORU IWATA

Contrary to what his games have led us to believe, Nintendo's final boss doesn't have giant spikes on his shoulders that shoot off like missiles, a tougher second form, or any flashing weak points (that we could see anyway). In fact, Nintendo President Satoru Iwata seems like a nice, regular guy. He didn't even go into that whole, "I'm impressed you made it this far, but now...blah, blah, blah" speech when we sat down to talk about Nintendo's upcoming Revolution console.

EGM: With the DS going online, you're stressing it will be simple and free. Will that same philosophy carry over to the Revolution?

Satoru Iwata: The Revolution's Wi-Fi connection must be as simple as the DS. And we are not intending to charge people a fee [to play regular Revolution games online]. But [we also] talked about the "virtual console" concept, that the 20 years of Nintendo [games will be available] for the Revolution via download. We're not saying that every single [one of those games] should be free.

EGM: Speaking of the virtual console, might older offline multiplayer games, like *Mario Party*, be altered so you could play them online with the Revolution?

SM: [We only] know that we [will] offer the past games [for sure]. But we are discussing the possibility of having [older] games like *Mario Party* [playable] online. So if our discussion goes well, and if the technical aspects of Revolution also [work], that's possible.

EGM: You've said the Revolution controller will be unique—do you

"Most households already own a DVD player... most people won't be playing [Revolution] on an HDTV."

—Nintendo President Satoru Iwata

worry about it alienating developers? Say *Splinter Cell* comes out for all the next-gen systems; might the Revolution controller be so different that it'd be tough to map the controls onto?

SM: Well, of course, the idea is that the Revolution will sell and sell and sell so it becomes the standard in the industry. [Smiles] However, at least for the launch period, we designed the controller so it can play any of the different conventional styles. After all, we are talking about [playing games from our past machines via the virtual console]. So don't worry about that.

EGM: Why make the DVD player optional with Revolution? And how will it work—is it an attachment or a remote or what?

SM: The majority of households already own a DVD player or two. We don't want them to spend extra money just to have a console which happens to have DVD capability. And the DVD player isn't going to be an attachment; it's going to go inside the machine so you won't even be able to tell the difference.

EGM: You've promised Wi-Fi for the Revolution, but will it also have a standard Ethernet port?

SM: [No, I] don't even have an Ethernet port. However, through the USB port, it's possible to have Ethernet [with an adapter].

Considering where the machine will be placed in the household, we think it would be difficult for people to route the typical [Ethernet] line to it. Also, we're [considering] connecting the DS with the Revolution via Wi-Fi.

EGM: Some people are saying Nintendo has given up trying to lead technologically and is focused on innovation.

SM: I don't think the Revolution's [graphics] will be inferior in any fashion to Xbox 360 or PS3. Even if you look at *Zelda on GameCube*—I don't think that looks inferior to what [the competition] is touting as "next generation" visuals; but we think there are more important things for now than making the system [work with] a high-definition television. The majority of people won't be playing our system with an HDTV [though] with the Revolution, 480p [resolution] will be standard. We are not making light of graphics and technology—we are trying to make the best-possible machine that will appeal to the most people. 笑



Will you be able to play old multiplayer games like *Contra* online with the Revolution? Perhaps.

>>> BANDAI IS SHOOTING TO HAVE A GAME READY FOR THE PS3 LAUNCH. OUR MONEY IS ON IT INCLUDING "GUNDAM" IN THE TITLE... >>>

Hylan Blvd.

WARNING

THE MAKERS OF NEW TAG BODY SPRAY CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR FLOODS OF OVER-EAGER LADIES. BE ADVISED TO MOVE TO HIGHER GROUND FOR CLEAREST SIGNAL, AND CARRY THIS CARD.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE HOTLINE

1-888-TAG-ASST

In the event of a dicey and/or sketchy situation involving TAG-affected females, call immediately. No joke.

TAG CONSIDER YOURSELF
WARNED



XB360/PS2/XB/GC

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

Jurassic park just got a lot hairier

There's only one thing that worries us about *King Kong*: The last time we were this excited for a movie-based game, it was *Enter the Matrix*, and we all know how that one turned out. But after a few hours of hands-on play and a sit-down talk with *Kong* director Michel Ancel (creator of *Rayman* and the critical darling *Beyond Good & Evil*), a disappointment of *Matrix* proportions seems increasingly unlikely.

Lord of the Rings and *Kong* movie director Peter Jackson handpicked Ancel to create the game version of his ape opus, and *LOTR/Kong* screenwriter Philippa Boyens worked with Ancel's team, penning a narrative for the game that touches on key movie plot points while adding its own story arcs through Skull Island and New York City.

You'll control both puny human Jack Driscoll (Adrien Brody's character in the film) and Kong; the Jack sequences are

in first-person view, while Kong swings through the jungle in third person (see sidebar). As Jack, raptors and other less familiar monsters are constantly stalking you—the feeling of fear and vulnerability is intense and oppressive, even when you're fighting side by side with the movie's other human characters.

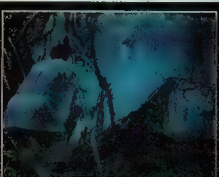
King Kong—and yes, it really does look as amazing as these screenshots—is perhaps the most cinematic (in a good way) game we've seen yet. There are no cut-scenes, no inventory screens, no health bars, nothing to make you think about the "game" aspect of what's happening; you'll still get all the important info, but it comes from visual and audio cues, like your heavy, ragged breathing if you're injured. There's even an "old movie" option that'll let you play through the game in grainy black and white, recapturing the feel of the 1933 original film.

—Demian Linn

Publisher: Ubisoft
Developer: Ubisoft Montpellier
Release Date: November 2005



For a game about a giant ape, there sure are a lot of dinosaurs in *King Kong*...



GOOD TO BE KING

Kong's kind of like a big, hairy Prince of Persia—he'll bust out a wall-run, then swing from branch to branch with grace. "When you play Kong, you can't fall by your moves," says the game's director, Michel Ancel. "You will not fall like in [a] platformer. That's not King-like."

But you will beat down all kinds of dinosaurs, and look appropriately dramatic doing it. Ancel says his team has "integrated movie rules to avoid bad

camera cuts," and though we don't actually know what that means, the quickly shifting camera angles almost never got in our way. Combat's fairly simple, but fun—aside from general punnelling, Kong can scamper up nearby walls and then power-bomb dinos and execute finishing moves (a body slam, a jawbreaker maneuver, etc.) once they're stunned. After rummaging for your life as Jack, it's nice to be all-powerful for a change.



MICHEL ANCEL ON...

The man in charge of *King Kong* talks about working with Peter Jackson but *doesn't* talk about his game's big secret feature.

...Jack vs. Kong

"When you play as Jack, you are surviving around you. [Skewering] some food on your spear could be a way to attract a predator in a trap or something like that. When you play as Kong, you don't care about all those things. It's not intellectual anymore; it's more about full power, destroying everything."

...collaborating with Peter Jackson and crew

"What's interesting is that they just send things for our inspiration. Sometimes when working with artists, instead of making a precise comment, it's better to inspire—they give better work when they're inspired. Peter Jackson works like that with us; he inspired us with the story and [production art]."

...why you'll want to be Kong playing King Kong

"In some ways the game is quite linear. But what is very interesting is that we tried to have a kind of sandbox system—you can move from A to B in different ways. You can be [aggressive] or be in a kind of stealth mode. [Eventually you'll] unlock a big gameplay feature; this feature will be very interesting for the player and will give another perception of the game. The way to unlock it is not just finding every treasure or every I don't-know-what. It's not about collecting things—it's about replaying with a different style and a different experience."



King Kong makes the subject of dozens of videogame every yearbooks



WAS ORIGINALLY DUE OUT IN THE SPRING, HAS BEEN DELAYED INDEFINITELY. HMM, WE SMELL A POSSIBLE CANCELLATION....>>



STALK YOUR PREY BY LAND, SEA, OR AIR USING ALL SORTS OF VEHICLES AND A STAGGERING ARRAY OF REALISTIC WEAPONS.



UNLEASH YOUR PRIMAL INSTINCTS AND BECOME STRONGER, FASTER, DEADLIER.



FIVE MULTIPLAYER MODES, INCLUDING THE UNIQUE PREDATOR MODE. LET YOU EXPERIENCE THE BEST XBOX LIVE™ HAS TO OFFER.



CREATE YOUR OWN TROPICAL HELL AND SHARE YOUR MAPS ON XBOX LIVE.



RATING PENDING
RP
Visit www.esrb.org for updated rating information.
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

ONLY ON XBOX

XBOX LIVE
GOLD PROGRAM

PRE-ORDER NOW AND GET **RAINBOW SIX** FOR FREE!
VISIT FARCRYGAME.COM FOR MORE INFO.



ZELDA WATCH



Link takes a walk on the wild side in **Twilight Princess**

Best Console Game. Best Action/Adventure. Best GameCube Game. It's still months before *The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess*' fall debut, but Link's next adventure is already earning kudos from its showing at the E3 game industry trade show last May.

Great news for *Zelda* fans, but even better news for Eiji Aonuma, producer of *Twilight Princess* and the main man behind the franchise ever since *Majora's Mask* on the Nintendo 64. Maybe that's why we found him in such good spirits at E3, even after three days of nonstop press interviews. We figured one more wouldn't hurt.

—Matt McDonald and
Shane Solomon/Janson



EGM: We've seen Link as a human interacting with various animals—petting cows, sending a hawk to pick up items, carrying cats, etc. But what about when he transforms into a wolf? Will he interact with animals differently?

Eiji Aonuma: The relationship that human-Link has with animals is the relationship that any human has—it's very much a master-and-pet type situation. But when Link transforms into the wolf, because he's an animal, he'll be able to communicate with other animals. Who knows, maybe he'll even be able to talk with [this horse]....

EGM: The creature that rides on Link's back when he's a wolf—Midna—defines how he attacks. Will any other characters ride Link at any point?

EA: No, Midna is the only character [that does that]. But there will be ways to power-up and change her attacks.

EGM: In the artwork we've seen for *Princess*

Zelda in the new game, she looks ready for battle, with armor and a sword. Will she ever fight alongside Link, maybe like the final boss battle in *The Wind Waker*?

EA: [Long pause...then smiles and laughs] Well, when Link goes into the Twilight realm he gets transformed into this wolf, [right]? Obviously, at some point he will encounter Zelda...perhaps when she sees what Link's been doing she will think that, by co-operating



■ Princess Zelda: Armed and ready for battle?



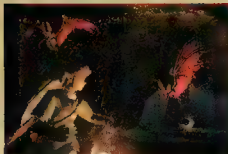
Quick Zelda Recap

You are up to date in 30 seconds or less, or your next pizza is free.

- ▲ Link is out to save Hyrule from the creeping darkness—the twilight of the title—that threatens to engulf the Kingdom.
- ▲ He transforms into a wolf, which he enters this Twilight realm; there he forms a partnership with a white named Midna, who rides on his back and helps attack enemies.
- ▲ Both Princess Zelda and the villain Ganondorf are confirmed for the game.
- ▲ Sadly, the festive and heavy of Triforce is like as consolation, we need again offer this pie.



Midna helps Link by riding on his back and attacking monsters, but Twilight Producer Aonuma hinted she may have her own agenda.



with him, there's a chance she could save Hyrule. So the natural progression would be to think that perhaps they'll [work together] in some way.

EGM: Where does Twilight Princess fall in the overall Zelda timeline?

EA: It takes place [a few decades] after *Ocarina of Time* (NG4), but this game is not specifically a sequel. That being said, we're thinking that, because it's several decades after *Ocarina*, it's possible some of the characters from that game might still be alive in this world. We've already shown the goron [a race of stocky, brown earth-dwellers shown boxing with Link] in an earlier trailer; I think people can look forward to seeing if we include zorans [gray mermen and mermaids] as well....

EGM: We noticed a sign in the village listed times a shop was open. Will the game have a real-time day/night cycle, as in *Majora's Mask*?

EA: Trying to re-create a [full real-time] system like that would require too much

effort to maintain and control. If we were to try something like that again, we wouldn't be able to have [Link transforming into a] wolf, or the Twilight realm—we'd have to focus just on time.

That being said, there will be a day/night system, both in the Twilight world and in the [normal world]. When time passes from day to night, certain things in the world will change, and that will affect gameplay.

EGM: How do you switch from day to night if it's not real time? Is there a particular item you always use?

EA: There are areas of the game where we need to have it stay day-time or night for gameplay purposes. But we also don't want to have a system where the player can't do anything until a

particular time of day arrives and the player has to wait around—that's not very good game [design]. So in that sense, you have to have some mechanism for control. And we have been looking at different ways to do that, and we have a plan for how we're going to do that in the game.

EGM: What sort of differences will we see at night?

EA: You might have seen scenes of Link holding a lantern at night, walking through areas of a village. In *Ocarina of Time* and *Majora's Mask* the night was fairly well-lit, enough for you to see, but in *Twilight Princess* we want to have the night be very, very dark, to the point that, without a lantern, you can't see as you're walking around. Really give it the idea that it's not safe to go out alone at night, especially if you don't have a lantern to guide yourself.



Both the goron and (probably) zora races are back.

DS Zelda Update!

As the main man in charge of all things *Zelda*, Aonuma also has a role in Link's next portable adventure, already well-under way for Nintendo's DS handheld. (expect an official announcement soon). "What I can tell you," he says, "is that it's going to use the touch screen for a very unique control system that people have never experienced in a *Zelda* game before." How so? "I think one of the important elements of the *Zelda* series has always been that you feel like you're in the world doing the things that Link is doing and touching the things that Link is touching," he says. "This time you'll be able to use the touch screen and actually touch those items and objects yourself." And while Aonuma confirms DS *Zelda* will not be a *Four Swords* title or a multiplayer game, he won't say a word about the graphics. 3D? 2D? Both? Cartoonish? Realistic? He laughs: "You'll have to look forward to hearing about that!"

For more regular updates on *Zelda*, check out

ONLINE

THIS MONTH

SOCOM 3: Reporting for an improved call of duty



As any cynical PC or Xbox gamer will tell you, a big reason why the *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs* series has been so successful on PS2 is its lack of competition. While tactical shooters are being run into the ground on other platforms, the few that make their way to Sony's console are generally along the lines of watered-down *Kool-Aid*—kinda muddy looking and a poor imitation of the real thing (see exhibit *Ghost Recon*). *SOCOM* has always been the exception. But with *SOCOM 3* (coming this

October to PS2), developer Zipper Interactive is looking to create an online military shooter that can compete with the big boys as well. Land and water vehicles? Check. 32 players? Check. New modes and community features? Sir, yes, sir.

Taking on Xbox Live
It may seem overly ambitious just for one game, but No. 3's community interface promises more than what we've seen in any PS2 title, and it even looks to challenge Microsoft's acclaimed Xbox Live service in

some ways. Yet according to Zipper Interactive Multiplayer Designer CJ Heine, the motivation for the new interface didn't come from Microsoft. Rather, it's the result of online fan support of the previous games. "We looked around on the Internet and saw players forming smaller *SOCOM* communities on various message boards and websites," he says. "We really wanted to pull all of that together and offer a place within *SOCOM 3* where they could form a central community." This community site will give players access to leaderboards, mail, message boards, FAQs, and so on.

Also, many of these features will be available via both the PS2 and any computer you come across.

The ability to look up game stats on a PC may remind some players of the much-praised Bungie.net website set up for *Halo 2*, but Sony CEA Senior Producer Seth Luisi claims *SOCOM*'s support in this area will outmatch even that of the Xbox hit. "The community features that we've added to *SOCOM 3* are far beyond those found in any other online action games," says Luisi. "The *SOCOM* series has a history of innovating community features that

▶ A WINTER STORM TO INVADE SOCIAL—BLIZZARD, PUBLISHER OF THE UPCOMING *STARCRRAFT: GHOST* (PS2/XB/GC), WILL HOST A

CLAN WARS

Among *SOCOM 3*'s many new community features is a "clan challenge" system that, among other things, cuts down a lot of the hassle involved in getting players together. "We wanted to streamline the process for clans to compete against each other, and the clan challenge system does this by automating many of the steps that clans would normally have to do on their own," says Multiplayer Designer CJ Heine. "Things that have been automated include finding suitable opponents to challenge, coordinating a time to play, and choosing any special game conditions."

Clans will also have their own ranking ladders this time around, where the squad's position will be based on overall team performance instead of individual statistics. And due to the increase in players allowed in a game at once, clans will now support up to 32 players.



■ Apparently, *SOCOM 3* will also feature one nasty game of Chicken.

other companies are just now starting to copy, such as integrated clans, ladder ranking [*SOCOM 1*], and skill levels [*SOCOM II*]."

Mode 6 and Mode 7

Supporting the game's focus on community is control point, a new online mode built around the idea of team communication. Here, each team has to mark five specific locations on a map (control point is best suited for *SOCOM 3*'s larger battlefields), but the twist is that it's not a tug of war. Instead, both

teams can have marks on the same location, so the mode turns into a race to see which team can get to all the locations first. "Rather than obligating players to defend claimed locations, players are always on the move to try and help in the fight for the next unclaimed control point location," says Heine. "Players are going to find that the teams that emphasize communication and practice multiple strategies for reaching each control point location will be very successful with this game type."

Convoy, another all-new online mode, puts its emphasis on the vehicles. One team has to protect and guide a group of vehicles through a map, stopping to pick up cargo along the way, while the other team tries to prevent just that. "These cargo trucks are an easy target for the opposing team to destroy, and protecting the trucks will come down to how well the players on foot can clear out the enemy positions and let the players driving the cargo trucks safely complete their route," says Heine.

—Matt Leone

WHAT'S UP AT



EGM.1UP.COM

Look for the section labeled "EGM Extras" if you want more info on that. Gizmodo—or something actually cool, like videos of the *King Kong* dev team talking about the funky monkey. Also, read what other folks in the videogame biz have to say about the industry's continued support of the "Sequel Factory."

ZELDAWATCH.1UP.COM

Need the latest on Link's journey to becoming a man? Then visit our newly formed *Zelda* hub, which will be continually updated with new screenshots and info, as well as exclusive stories you won't find anywhere else.

CHEATS.1UP.COM

"Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right—what again?" 1UP.com needs your help and is politely asking for people to submit their own cheats. Don't just keep 'em to yourself; share with your fellow gamers.

Featured Club:

1UP's Crossfire

Foisty debaters should check out 1upcrossfire-club.1UP.com, as every week members of this club bitch about a new controversial videogame topic.

Featured Blogs:

Marc Ecko

The fashion designer goes back to his NYC graffiti roots with his new game, *Marc Ecko's Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure*. See what he's up to at getting-up.1UP.com.

Robin Wilson

Remember the Gln Blossoms back in the '90s with "Hey Jealousy"? Ever wonder what they've been up to? Read their videogame-crazed lead singer's blog at theoutsider.1UP.com.

GAMER-SLI

- NVIDIA® nForce™4-SLI Chip Dual PCI-Express Motherboard
- Raidmax® Samurai Gaming Case
- Corsair® 2048MB DDR400 Memory
- Serial-ATA 250GB 7200RPM Hard Drive
- 16x Double Layer DVD±R/RW + CD-R/RW Drive
- 16X DVD-ROM Drive
- 2X NVIDIA® GeForce™ 6800GT PCI Express 256MB Video Cards
- 7.1 Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
- 10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN
- Optical Mouse & Multimedia Keyboard
- Microsoft Windows® XP Home Edition
- Free Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter
- Free 1-Year 24/7 I-Care Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service
- Upgrade to Sincro RW-670XL 5.1 Crazy Lighting Speaker System Add \$189

AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-57 Processor	\$ 2829
AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor	\$ 2169
AMD Athlon™ 64 4000+ Processor	\$ 2049
AMD Athlon™ 64 3700+ Processor	\$ 1939
AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor	\$ 1889
AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor	\$ 1859
AMD Athlon™ 64 3000+ Processor	\$ 1809



- Provides leading-edge 32-bit performance for music, video, and games and is ready for future 64-bit software.
- Improves security against certain types of viruses, with Enhanced Virus Protection for Microsoft® Windows® XP SP2.
- Conserves power and operates quietly with AMD Cool'n'Quiet™ technology.
- Features Hypertransport™ technology for improved multitasking performance.



BATTALION (AMD) 5-TURBO

- 15.4" Wide Screen 16:10 WXGA TFT LCD 1280x800 Display
- AMD® Mobile Athlon™ 64 Processor with HyperTransport Technology
- Mobile ATI® Radeon™ 9700 PRO 128MB DDR Video
- 1024MB DDR-400 Memory
- Removable 8x DVD±R/RW / CD-RW Drive
- 60GB 5400RPM Ultra-ATA100 Hard Drive
- 10/100Mb Ethernet LAN & 56K Modem
- Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Mini-PCI Network
- 3x USB 2.0 & 1x Firewire IEEE-1394 Ports
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Card Reader
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
- Free 1-Year I-Care Deluxe 24/7 Phone Support
- Choice of 8 Exclusive Reflective Colors
- High Performance Li-Ion Battery
- Free Deluxe Carrying Case

Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 3700+ Processor	\$ 1479
Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 3400+ Processor	\$ 1359
Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor	\$ 1329
Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 3000+ Processor	\$ 1279
Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 2800+ Processor	\$ 1249

BATTALION (AMD) 5-TURBO

- 15.4" Wide Screen 16:10 WXGA TFT LCD 1280x800 Display
- AMD® Mobile Athlon™ 64 Processor with HyperTransport Technology
- Mobile ATI® Radeon™ 9700 PRO 128MB DDR Video
- 512MB DDR-400 Memory
- Removable 8x DVD & 24x16x24 CD-RW Combo Drive
- 40GB 5400RPM Ultra-ATA100 Hard Drive
- 10/100Mb Ethernet LAN & 56K Modem
- Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Mini-PCI Network
- 3x USB 2.0 & 1x Firewire IEEE-1394 Ports
- 3-in-1 Built-in Media Card Reader
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
- Free 1-Year I-Care Deluxe 24/7 Phone Support
- Choice of 8 Exclusive Reflective Colors
- High Performance Li-Ion Battery
- Free Deluxe Carrying Case

Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 3700+ Processor	\$ 1389
Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 3400+ Processor	\$ 1269
Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor	\$ 1219
Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 3000+ Processor	\$ 1169
Mobile AMD Athlon™ 64 2800+ Processor	\$ 1149



Order Toll Free 888.462.3899





• The AMD Athlon™ X2 dual-core processor enables everyone to do more in less time by delivering exceptional multi-tasking capabilities and increased performance on digital media.

• Dual-core technology is like having one processor responsible for running programs in the background while a second runs the applications you want to work on. The AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 dual-core processor brings true parallel processing to the desktop and can increase computing performance by up to 80%.

ULTRA
BUYPOWER Recommends ULTRA Power Supply

BARGAIN 64



- AMD Athlon™ 64 3000+ Processor \$ 529
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor \$ 579
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor \$ 619
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3700+ Processor \$ 669
- AMD Athlon™ 64 4000+ Processor \$ 779

NIZKT™ Trinity Mid-Tower Case
• See Through Window + Neon Light
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 4 Chip Motherboard w/ 16X PCI Express
Corsair 512MB DDR400 Memory
800GB 7200RPM Hard Drive
16x DVD-ROM
52x32x52 CD-RW
ATI Radeon™ X-300 128MB
16X PCI Express Video Card
8-Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
10/100 Mbps Ethernet LAN
800Watt Surround Sound Speakers
Multimedia Keyboard & Optical Mouse
Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
FREE Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter
Add VideoSonic V9324 19" LCD - Xtrame 4ms video for ultimate gaming @ \$ 449

GAMER PRO (SLI Ready)



- AMD Athlon™ 64 3000+ Processor \$ 779
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor \$ 849
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor \$ 889
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3700+ Processor \$ 949
- AMD Athlon™ 64 4000+ Processor \$ 1059

Raidmax™ X-1 Gaming Case + See Through Window + Neon Light
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 4x-SLI Chip Motherboard w/ 16X PCI Express
Corsair 512MB DDR400 Memory
160GB 7200RPM Hard Drive
16x DVD-ROM + 52x32x52 CD-RW Combo Drive
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 6800 128MB 16X PCI Express Video Card (SLI Ready)
8-Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN
800Watt Surround Sound Speakers
Multimedia Keyboard & Optical Mouse
Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
FREE 1 Year 24/7 I-Care Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service
Upgrade to Secure RW5600L 2.1 Lighting Speakers add \$78

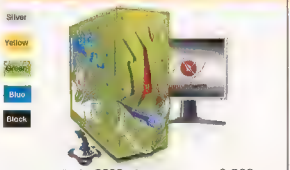
GAMER FX



- AMD Athlon™ 64 3000+ Processor \$ 769
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor \$ 819
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor \$ 849
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3700+ Processor \$ 899
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor \$ 979

NIZKT™ Trinity Mid-Tower Case
• See Through Window + Neon Light
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 4 Chip Motherboard w/ 16X PCI Express
Corsair 512MB DDR400 Memory
160GB 7200RPM Hard Drive
16x DVD-ROM
52x32x52 CD-RW
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 6800 256MB 16X PCI Express Video Card
8-Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
10/100 Mbps Ethernet LAN
800Watt Surround Sound Speakers
Multimedia Keyboard & Optical Mouse
Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
FREE Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter
FREE 1 Year 24/7 I-Care Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service

BACK TO SCHOOL 64



- AMD Athlon™ 64 3000+ Processor \$ 809
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3200+ Processor \$ 859
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor \$ 889
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3700+ Processor \$ 949
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 3800+ Processor \$ 1029

Raidmax™ Guardian Mid-Tower Case + See Through Window + Neon Light
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 4 Chip Motherboard w/ 16X PCI Express
Corsair 1024MB DDR400 Memory
160GB 7200RPM Hard Drive
16x Double Layer DVD±RW + CD-RW Drive
ATI Radeon™ X700 256MB 16X PCI Express Video Card
8-Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
10/100 Mbps Ethernet LAN
Creative RB-8510 5.1 Surround Speakers
Multimedia Keyboard & Optical Mouse
Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
FREE Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter
FREE 1 Year 24/7 I-Care Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service

NIGHT DREAMER FX



- AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor \$ 1359
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3700+ Processor \$ 1409
- AMD Athlon™ 64 4000+ Processor \$ 1519
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor \$ 1629
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4400+ Processor \$ 1689

Raidmax™ Aluminum 8-Bay Super Light Weight Tower Case with 420 Watt Power + See-Through Window + Sound-Activated Neon Light
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 4x-SLI Chip Motherboard w/ 16X PCI Express
Corsair 1024MB DDR400 Memory
Serial ATA 200GB 7200RPM Hard Drive w/ 6MB Cache
16x DVD-ROM Drive
16x Double Layer DVD±RW + CD-RW Drive
2X NVIDIA® GeForce™ 6600GT 128MB DDR3 ADP 16X PCI Express Video Card
8-Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN
Logitech X-530 5.1 Surround Sound Speakers
Multimedia Keyboard & Optical Mouse
Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
FREE Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter
FREE 1 Year 24/7 I-Care Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service

ZILLION FX



- AMD Athlon™ 64 3500+ Processor \$ 1439
- AMD Athlon™ 64 3700+ Processor \$ 1489
- AMD Athlon™ 64 4000+ Processor \$ 1599
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4200+ Processor \$ 1719
- AMD Athlon™ 64 X2 4400+ Processor \$ 1769
- AMD Athlon™ 64 FX-57 Processor \$ 2359

Raidmax™ Samurai Gaming Case
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 4 Chip Motherboard w/ 16X PCI Express
Corsair 1024MB DDR400 Memory
Serial ATA 200GB 7200RPM Hard Drive
16x DVD-ROM Drive
16x Double Layer DVD±RW Drive
NVIDIA® GeForce™ 7800GT 256MB DDR3 16X PCI Express Video Card
8-Channel Surround 3D Premium Sound
10/100/1000 Mbps Ethernet LAN
Creative Cambridge Desk Top Theater 5.1 S560 Surround Sound Speakers
Multimedia Keyboard & Optical Mouse
Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Edition
FREE Wireless 802.11g 54Mbps Network Adapter
FREE 1 Year 24/7 I-Care Deluxe Technical Support + On-Site Service
Upgrade to Ultra X-Connect 500W ATX Power Supply + 8mm Fans + 8mm Fans + 8mm Fans + add \$98



THE SALES CHARTS FOR MAY 2005

TOP 10 BEST-SELLING GAMES



- 1 **Pokémon Emerald** • GBA • Nintendo
- 2 **Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith** • PS2 • LucasArts
- 3 **Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith** • XB • LucasArts
- 4 **Forza Motorsport** • XB • Microsoft
- 5 **Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition** • PS2 • Rockstar
- 6 **Lego Star Wars** • PS2 • Eidos
- 7 **Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith** • GBA • Ubisoft
- 8 **God of War** • PS2 • Sony
- 9 **MVP Baseball 2005** • PS2 • EA Sports
- 10 **Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition** • XB • Rockstar

TOP 10 PS2



- 1 **Star Wars: Episode III ROTs**
- 2 **Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition**
- 3 **Lego Star Wars**
- 4 **God of War**
- 5 **MVP Baseball 2005**
- 6 **Major League Baseball 2K5**
- 7 **Area 51**
- 8 **Gran Turismo 4**
- 9 **EA Sports Fight Night Rd. 2**
- 10 **Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005**

TOP 10 XBOX



- 1 **Star Wars: Episode III ROTs**
- 2 **Forza Motorsport**
- 3 **Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition**
- 4 **Lego Star Wars**
- 5 **Area 51**
- 6 **Doom 3**
- 7 **Jade Empire**
- 8 **Splinter Cell Chaos Theory**
- 9 **MVP Baseball 2005**
- 10 **Major League Baseball 2K5**

TOP 10 GAMECUBE



- 1 **Pokémon Colosseum**
- 2 **Super Mario Sunshine**
- 3 **Donkey Kong Jungle Beat**
- 4 **Super Smash Bros. Melee**
- 5 **The Legend of Zelda: Wind Waker**
- 6 **MVP Baseball 2005**
- 7 **Animal Crossing**
- 8 **Kirby Air Ride**
- 9 **Mario Party 6**
- 10 **Star Fox: Assault**

TOP 10 PORTABLES



- 1 **Pokémon Emerald** • GBA
- 2 **Star Wars: Episode III ROTs** • GBA
- 3 **Lego Star Wars** • GBA
- 4 **Fire Emblem: Sacred Stones** • GBA
- 5 **Hot Shots Golf: Open Tee** • PSP
- 6 **Need for Speed Und. Rivals** • PSP
- 7 **Untold Legends: BOTB** • PSP
- 8 **Star Wars: Episode III ROTs** • DS
- 9 **Twisted Metal: Head-On** • PSP
- 10 **Mario Party Advance** • GBA

TOP 10 RENTALS

FOR THE WEEK ENDING 6/19/05



- 1 **Medal of Honor: Eur. Assault** • PS2
- 2 **Midnight Club 3: DUB Ed.** • PS2
- 3 **Medal of Honor: Eur. Assault** • XB
- 4 **Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas** • XB
- 5 **Batman Begins** • PS2
- 6 **Star Wars: Episode III ROTs** • XB
- 7 **Batman Begins** • XB
- 8 **Midnight Club 3: DUB Ed.** • XB
- 9 **Madagascar** • PS2
- 10 **Star Wars: Episode III ROTs** • XB

ON THE AUCTION



Medical doctors say that purchasing these items at these prices is the first symptom of stupidity.



Item: Apparently, *Resident Evil's* T-Virus turned this limited-edition Dreamcast completely red...and expensive as hell.
Winning Bid: \$577.89



Item: Head online with this rare Atari Jaguar Voice Modem. Good luck finding someone else to play with, though.
Asking Price: \$400

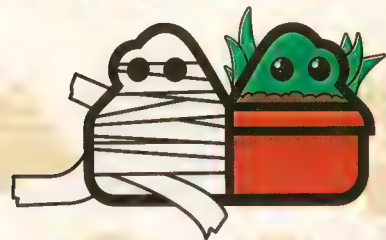
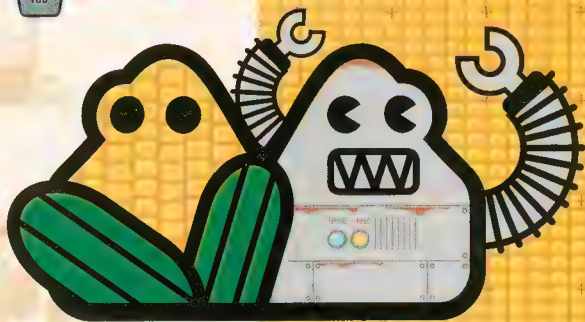
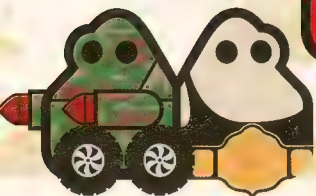


Item: A little girl riding a gigantic bunny fighting a big ball named Fernandez? Only found in the NeoGeo import *Waku Waku 7*.
Asking Price: \$395



Item: You got a grand to spare? Then go pick up *Toon Panic*, an unreleased Nintendo 64 game. Never mind that there's probably a reason it never hit stores.
Asking Price: \$1,000

>>> UBISOFT HAS REPLACED THE "3" FROM THE NEXT GHOST RECON (XB360/PS2/XB/GC) WITH THE SUBTITLE ADVANCED WARRIOR... >>>





WHAT THE HELL IS THIS THING?

The Gizmondo does way more than play games. (It knows where you live!) But is the most versatile portable you never heard of worth buying?

It's a sales pitch straight out of an infomercial. The Gizmondo handheld—which hits stores August 11—plays games, movies, and music. But wait, there's more! Act now and it works as a digital camera. And it'll check your e-mail. And it lets you instant message pals. And it's a global-positioning gizmo. "We've taken every single hip device on the market and integrated it into one," says Carl Freer, managing director of Gizmondo Europe.

But all these features come at not just one price, but two. Gamers can buy the Gizmondo for either \$229 or \$399—the difference depends on if they allow so-called Smart Adds to download to their system. Think of them as commercials, for everything from new games to fast food to tennis shoes. Buy the cheaper Gizmondo, fill out

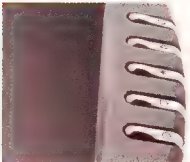
your demographic details, and each day you'll receive three 30-second Smart Adds supposedly tailored to your tastes and even your location. Freer says the advertisements won't interrupt your games or movies, and they'll often end with a bar code that local merchants can scan for discounts on the advertised item. "With bargains and coupons directly targeting a user's preference," Freer says, "the Gizmondo will ultimately pay for itself if you...purchase the less-expensive Add-enabled model." You can also choose to enable Smart Adds later if you buy the full-priced device.

It's easy to look at the Gizmondo—an oddly named system from unknown company Tiger Telematics (no relation to the Tiger that released Game.com back in 1997)—

and wonder how it will ever compete with the \$150 Nintendo DS and the \$250 Sony PSP. "Shelf space is at a premium, and there are more platforms that require dedicated space now than there ever have been," says Hal Halpin, president of the Interactive Entertainment Merchants Association.

But Freer is itching for a fight. "Sony and Nintendo are the major players," he says, "but we intend to be the ones that shake things up and offer a new standard in handheld gaming that they can't even dream of delivering to gamers with their current hardware." And like the infomercials say: Wait, there's more. We rate each of this mystery system's functions and, more importantly, its games to help you decide if you should act now.

—Crispin Boyer



■ The Gizmondo's button layout is a bit awkward for first-person games, and the function buttons along the top are tough to press.



■ Downloadable ads make for a cheaper Gizmondo package, but do you really want to watch commercials on a game system?



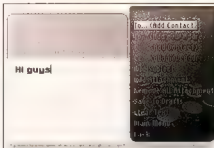
DOING ITS THINGS: RATING GIZMONDO'S FUNCTIONS



The Camera

Gizmondo is the first gaming system with a built-in digital camera, which snaps 640x480-resolution pics you can send to friends or transfer to your PC. **A good thing?** Picture quality is fine, but we're geeked about the camera's gyroscopic abilities, which sense the angle you're holding it at (as in GBA tilt-sensing games like *Yoshi's Topsy-Turvy*).

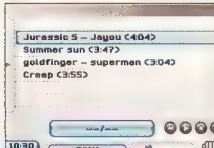
Adventure game *Agaju*, still early in development, is the first title to use the feature. Aim the camera in the direction you want to look in the game's world, then snap pics of symbols to summon fairies. Gizmondo reps call it "augmented reality." We call it a gimmick that could be fun in the right games.



E-mailing and Messaging

Like those BlackBerry on-the-go e-mail gizmos so popular with junior executives everywhere, the Gizmondo can send and receive e-mails and instant messages that contain pictures, music, and video files. These features won't be free: The company is in negotiations with service providers.

A good thing? The only way to stay in better touch with your friends would be if Gizmondo worked as a cell phone, too (it doesn't, but the company isn't ruling out that feature for a future model). Built-in text-prediction software makes typing out long messages less of a chore, but we still prefer the DS' easier-to-use PictoChat messaging function.



Music and Movies

Gizmondo uses Windows CE as its operating system (which comes with Windows Media Player), meaning it can play just about any music or movies that you normally enjoy on your home computer. Simply connect your Gizmondo to your PC via the included USB cable, then drag any movies or music you want to the handheld (you can also download tunes from www.gizmondo.com). The Gizmondo stores the content on removable SD media cards.

A good thing? The music and movies played fine, although we'd rather watch flicks on the PSP's nearly twice-as-large, 16x9-ratio screen.



Global Positioning System

Gizmondo is the only gaming system that reads beams from outer space to show exactly where you are, your proximity to other Gizmondo owners, directions to the nearest 7-Eleven, and more. You can even transmit your location in an emergency (say, when gambling debts land you in a mobster's trunk). Mapping software sold separately.

A good thing? The Gizmondo's GPS is its standout feature—one we hope will make for unique gameplay experiences. The first candidate is launch title *Colors*, a gang-warfare game that has you defending your turf from other real-world players. Of course, the game will only work if enough people buy it.

THE LAUNCH GAMES

Electronic Arts, Ubisoft, Microsoft, and more publishers are all aboard to make Gizmondo games, but that doesn't mean you'll find many recognizable names in the system's launch lineup of 15 to 20 titles (with another

80 or so due by the end of the year). In fact, many Gizmondo names sound downright weird (*It's Mr. Pants*, *Mamma Can I Mow the Lawn?*) or even dirty (*Ball Busters*). The games themselves—the graphics of which

look about as good as PSP titles—come on SD cards that sell for between \$20 and \$40. (The system ships with a card packed with demos.) Here's a look at what's worth buying—and what's not—come launch day.

The Good

Trailblazer—A simple futuristic racer that has you using special turbo and jump tiles to achieve the best time. Perfect for quick-fix play in bursts.



Sticky Balls—Laugh at the title all you want (and we have), but *Sticky Balls* is a fun puzzler that's part pool, part Tetris, part geometry lesson.



Hockey Rage 2005—Like most Gizmondo games, *Hockey Rage* is simple fun, if not exactly challenging. And it's not too hard on the eyes, either.



The Blah

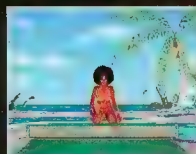


Fatherham Classics—Three games in one (a racer, a shooter, and a puzzler), but only the addicting block-dropper (above) held our interest.

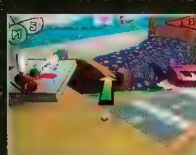


Gizmondo Motocross 2005—A run-of-the-mill dirt-track racer hampered by a limited top-down view.

The Just Plain Bad



Pocket Ping Pong 2005—All the teeny-bikini skin of Tecmo's *Dead or Alive* series wrapped around a lame Ping-Pong game. We're turned off.



Toy Golf—Tabletops and floors make for the hardest minigolf game we never want to play again.

The Not Ready for Review



Colors—Wage gang wars on your own real turf using Gizmondo's GPS feature. **SSX 3**—EA Big's supreme snowboarding game hits Gizmondo. EA also has one other "major" franchise game in the works for launch. **Ball Busters**—It's like squash but in 3D. And in the future.

Interstellar Flames 2—When aliens attack, you attack back. **Richard Burns Rally**—Ultraprealistic off-road racing. **FIFA 2005**—In Gizmondo's homeland, they call soccer "football." Silly. **Chicane**—A street-racing sim starring British speed nut Jensen Button.

PS3

METAL GEAR SOLID 4

Series creator Hideo Kojima drops hints about his PS3 debut

Konami recently fired its first shot in the looming next-gen console war by announcing

Metal Gear Solid 4 as a PlayStation 3 exclusive. Although the game is likely two years away, series mastermind Hideo Kojima has crafted a slick teaser trailer (head to UP.com and search for "Metal Gear Solid 4" to scope it) that reveals a few bits of prime intel: The game takes place after the events of *MGS2*, you play as Solid Snake, and the theme of the game is "no place to hide." In a series traditionally all about hiding, that could cause some difficulties. *EGM* sat down with Mr. Kojima for a brief chat about his next opus....

—Shane Bettenhausen

EGM: Good job on the MGS4 trailer—it's really quite funny....

Hideo Kojima: That makes me happy to hear, because the Japanese guys didn't get it at all, including the members of my own staff. We had a preview event for Konami in Hoppongi where we work,

and no one said anything to me after it was shown.

EGM: The whole "no place to hide" concept: Does that mean that the stealth aspect of the previous games won't be in the next game?

HK: It does not mean that you don't need to hide. It will be a stealth game, like the ones we've produced in the past. You do need to hide. That is the purpose of the game. The concept behind "no place to hide" is as you saw in the trailer: There was a building and then it was bombed, and suddenly there was no cover. That's the concept...there is no safety zone. According to the environment, things will always be changing, and there might be conditions where there literally is nowhere to hide.

EGM: You had mentioned that there are several hidden hints in the trailer. We noticed a

butterfly and a bird....

HK: Yes, there are other side meanings there.... I'm just satisfied that I could give everyone a laugh. One of the goals in creating this trailer was to go against the buzz about new hardware and how great next-gen graphics would be. I predicted that there would be a lot of new shooters with very realistic graphics, so I decided to lighten the mood and make everyone laugh with a trailer for a combat game.

EGM: For MGS2 you went to NYC, and for

MGS3 you went to the jungle. Was there a physical location where you traveled to research MGS4?

HK: Not yet, actually. That's a tricky question, because if I answer it, it'd give too much away. It's very difficult to go there; that's the only hint I can give you. And also, I'd like to say that for *MGS4*, it's a combat game: weapon against weapon, or hand to hand with punching and kicking, but I think that a more important part of combat is the psychol-

The World of MGS4

Kojima also offered vague hints about just how revolutionary the world of *MGS4* could be. He compared previous game environments to movie sets, stating that he now wants to simulate a real world. If he were to craft a forest environment for *MGS4*, he would want everything to work together in a realistically re-created ecosystem: Every tree grows from a seed, sheds its leaves, and dies. Ambitious....



FAMILIAR FACES

Although the story is closely guarded, Kojima has revealed the central cast of characters for *MGS4*. Spoilers abound for those too lazy to have played past games, so tread with caution.



Vamp

MGS2's bizarre bisexual vampire apparently didn't die from that bullet to the head. So he's back from the dead, but whose side is he on? Since his beef is with the Patriots (the ill-motivated controlling the government), he and Snake share the same agenda....



Meryl

Snake's sassy love interest from the first *MGS* returns at last (the canonical ending of that game has her surviving the sniper wound, in case you cruelly let her die when you played). Hopefully, she'll be kicking ass at Snake's side during *MGS4*.



Raiden

MGS2's much-reviled postmodern prissy-boy plays a role in *MGS4*, but thankfully, it's not a starring one. We're not sure if the baby in the pie is his with the traitorous (yet still lovable) Rosemary, or Olga's infant rescued from the clutches of the Patriots.



Revolver Ocelot

It's tough to figure out just whose agenda this dynamic triple-agent is truly pursuing, but he'll definitely lead our heroes to the location of the Patriots. Also, don't forget that he has Liquid Snake's hand grafted onto his arm. And that it tells him to do things.

Publisher: Konami
Developer: Kojima Productions
Release Date: 2007

logical aspect. Meaning, there is an intense mental fear when you point a gun at someone. I want to represent that in *MGS4*... a more psychological battle. That's what real combat is all about. So, myself and my staff, we need to talk to a psychologist to better understand this concept. I want to absorb all the lessons from the shrink and control my staff with fear. [Laughs]

EGM: Can you reveal the subtitle for MGS4?

HK: Actually, we have many titles to choose between and haven't quite decided on one.

EGM: Will you be as hands-on as always with MGS4? You've been talking about passing control of the series along ever since MGS2....

HK: Yes and no. Well, no, actually, because there will be another producer and director on set. In the past it was

just me passing info on to the staff, but now we'll gather together and try to create something new that is a product of all three of us. It's a totally new way of producing *MGS*.

EGM: What secret info can you tell us about Metal Gear Solid 4 that nobody knows...that your team won't kill you for telling us?

HK: This is a *Metal Gear Solid*, yet the trilogy is now over, so we have to come up with a new story. There will be a strong story in the background, but what I can say is that we won't create it in the same way: cinema, action sequence, cinema. I want the action to be less localized, for events to occur across large areas. I want to utilize the environment itself to tell the story line. Another new aspect is that Snake always had to sneak into an enemy fortress or field. We will change that in some way for *MGS4*, so you'll get a new experience for sneaking in.



Solid Snake

The gravely voiced badass returns in action with a redesigned sneaking suit, a full beard, and a killer agenda. We assume that the basic mission of *MGS4* will be for Snake's rogue operative group, code-named Philanthropy, to take down the Patriots.



Otacon

Snake's pal will once again offer invaluable technical support on the mission. Once he finds out that Vamp, the murderer of his beloved stepsister, Emma (and Ivy beloved, we mean creepy incestuous "beloved"), is still alive, we might see some geek rage....



Big Boss (says us)

We're not 100 percent sure that this creepy old naked dude is in fact Big Boss, but he certainly looks the part. And if it is him, what role will he play in the story line? We all certainly came to respect him after his starring role in *MGS3*....



Naomi (we think)

We're guessing that this is Naomi Hunter from *MGS2* (it could also be Fortune from *MGS2*—the jury's still out). Naomi's a bit player in the over-all series story line, but it's possible that the FoxDie virus she engineered in *MGS* is relevant again. ...

DS

NINTEN DOGS

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Release Date: August 2005

Puppy love...or puppy hate?

Whether you consider this DS canine-rearing sim an innovative paradigm-shift in non-gaming or a cheesy Tamagotchi rip-off, you can't deny its popularity. It already has an enormous following in the Japanese market: During the week of their release, the pups helped the DS outsell the PSP and PS2 combined.

Nintendo, hoping to repeat its success with dog-loving Americans, is prepping three versions of *Nintendogs* for the U.S. (each named for its cover model): *Labrador Retriever*, *Chihuahua*, and *Miniature Dachshund*. Each cart features five different breeds, and you'll have to wirelessly hook up with friends to collect 'em all. Nintendo deserves some props for actually improving the U.S. versions by adding three breeds absent in the Japanese originals: golden retriever, Siberian husky, and boxer.

What follows is a quick look at the life of a happy, well-loved Nintendog (and a tragic glimpse of one raised by a less-caring owner). — *Kimi Matsuzaki*



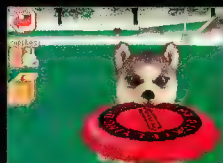
Walking the Nintendog

Dogs love a nice hike. Before taking your puppy on a walk, you are given a map to chart out the prospective trip, within the constraints of the dog's energy meter. Question marks along the route will trigger random actions—from picking up a filthy stick to getting jumped by bigger, meaner dogs. Don't miss the unexpected goodies along the way; give a quick tug on the leash and your pup will retrieve a present for you. If your puppy starts to bore you, fear not—there are smarter dogs at the park to play with!



Accessorize

Customize your pooch with a cornucopia of cheesy items. You can obtain goods through a few different means: buy 'em at the store, pick them up while walking in the neighborhood, or receive them as gifts from visiting dogs via Wi-Fi play. Common items include collars, hair bows, bow ties, and flowers. Special rare items include Afro wigs, Mario & Luigi hats, thigh-high dominatrix-style stiletto boots, and more. Your Nintendog can sport only one item at a time, and you can sell any unwanted items at the Recycle store.



Competitions

When you decide that your puppy is ready to "bring it" (or when you're beginning to run out of money), you can enter various competitions. Unless you have the quick wrist-flick down pat, the Frisbee competition is by far the most difficult. Not only does your dog need to catch the Frisbee, but you need to know how to throw it far enough to net decent points. Newbies should try the far easier agility competition (a fun obstacle course), as well as a dog contest in which your puppy performs a trick chosen at the judge's whim.



Home Improvement

After winning competitions, you will have a wad of cash burning a hole in your pocket, so you might as well upgrade the bachelor pad. After dropping the dough to upgrade your house, the little green men inside of your DS need 24 hours to complete the renovations. You can choose from such different house styles as early American and space age.



➤ MAX PAYNE TO SHOOT UP THE SILVER SCREEN—ACCORDING TO *THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER*, 20TH CENTURY FOX HAS ACQUIRED THE

mojo master



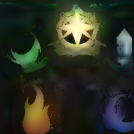
Meet me at
mojomastergame.com
XOXO
~Light Girl!

1STED



www.mojomastergame.com

An Editorial Supplement to Electronic Gaming Monthly™



DEAD OR ALIVE 4

ALIVE WITH PLEASURE

Tozmo's renowned fighting series bounces onto the Xbox 360 this fall with its newest installment, *Dead or Alive 4*. As you'd expect, the intense hand-to-hand action, massive destructible environments, and gorgeous ladies of the previous games return, along with deeper gameplay, snazzy next-gen looks, and three all-new characters. Our favorite? Kokoro, the lovely specimen pictured here. Her hakkyokuken martial-arts style and demure fashion sense should make her a classy alternative to the normal stable of brazen DOA jerebebs.

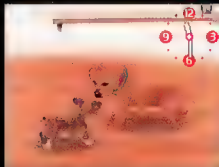


ELECTRONIC GAMING
The #1 Videogame Magazine MONTHLY
An official magazine to Electronic Arts™



Playtime for the Pups

Sometimes it's refreshing to forget about the quest for cash and fame and just frolic with your dog. Bringing a Frisbee to the park is great—the training there helps your pup in the competitions, after all. Aside from the Frisbee, you can bounce a tennis ball off the wall of your abode, let your dog bat around a soccer ball, or blow soap bubbles for your puppy to jump up and catch. Your hound will also play with his furry pals: While at the park, whip out your toys and become the life of the party.



Friends and Foes

All dogs are unique—your pooch will enjoy interacting with some canines, yet simply won't get along with others. You'll notice distinct personalities emerging, too: There will be that dog at the park that upstages everyone by catching the Frisbee and not allowing any other dog in on the fun or glory. You might come across a dog who decides to bully your puppy and continues pawing her while she's down on the ground. Your puppy may also find true love, staying in until the wee hours of the morning gazing at the stars with her sweetheart.



Visiting Friends

If you're feeling lonely and want some visitors, simply place your DS in Sleep mode. Once another *Nintendogs*-equipped DS comes within range, your puppies can visit each other. If you get a good visitor, the puppy may even come bearing a gift of a rare item. Once the visit is over, the type of puppy who visited you becomes an unlocked breed in your game.



HOW TO UTTERLY RUIN YOUR NINTENDOG:



Dirty Dogs

Too cheap to spend seven bucks on shampoo? If you fail to give your puppy a bath, fleas will begin jumping off of his hideously stinky body. Then his friends will desert him and the competition judges will laugh in his face and tell him to go home.



Abandonment

Want to make your dog sad? Turn your DS on and ignore him for a while...come back and, if you're lucky, he'll have disappeared. He'll probably come back eventually, bearing a gift in an attempt to bribe you into loving him.



Stealing From a Puppy

Stuck with a dog you hate? Sell all the items he finds on his walks, along with the presents given to him by his doggie friends. He'll be crestfallen, but who cares? All that cash goes to a good cause—buying a better puppy.



FILM RIGHTS TO ROCKSTAR'S BULLET-TIMING ACTION HERO, A DATE FOR THE *MAX PAYNE* MOVIE HAS YET TO BE ANNOUNCED. ... >>

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BIRTY IMAGES

OVERHEARD

New, larger format means 80 percent more ha-ha

Following its E3 unveiling, Nintendo leaks more important information regarding "Revolution."



"PlayStation 3 will play your PlayStation games. It's not enough for us to go in there and say, 'It's backward compatible, sort of.' That doesn't work for us."

—Sony Computer Entertainment America President and CEO Kaz Hirai knocks the Xbox 360's ability to play only certain older Xbox games

"[The voice actors] have no leverage. In 99 percent of all games, the voice actors are irrelevant. You replace one voice actor with another nonunion actor, and no one will know the difference."

—Hideo Kojima analyst Mike Goodman's take on voice actors' demands for a royalty-based pay structure for videogame work

"It's good that other Japanese developers are finally supporting Microsoft's system, but I want to let them to make something decent for a change."

—Tomonobu Itagaki, leader of Tecmo's Tekken Ninja (Dead or Alive, Ninja Gaiden), and apparently not a fan of Sseekers or Kakuto Chojin

"It's really hard to think of new ideas. Look at Hollywood. Do you think they really wanted to make a *Flinstones* movie?"

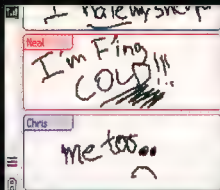
—EA Senior Vice President of Marketing Frank Gibson responds to the idea that his company favors sequels and franchises over original games

"25 to Life makes *Grand Theft Auto* look like *Romper Room*."

—Sen. Charles Schumer, D-NY, who asked retailers in his state not to stock Eidos' Mature-rated inner-city shooter

"What gets me out of bed and into the office every day is the thought of Sony Computer Entertainment President Ken Kutaragi's resignation letter, framed, hanging next to my desk."

—Xbox Corporate Vice President for Xbox J Allard wrote as part of an exercise in which top Microsoft execs were asked what motivates them



"Because of the wind and the cold we had a Dell computer that got fried, a Polytechnic screen that went out, we had three of the four MP3 players go bad... but the Nintendo DS units [kept] hanging in there."

—Climber Neal Moeller, who made it to the top of Mount Everest along with partner Chris Corbush and 12 Nintendo DS handhelds

"I am in love with the PSP like Tom is in love with Katie. No, wait, that's not true... that would mean I'm just FAKING my love for the PSP!"

—Game designer David Jafta (God of War), who just so happens to be working on a new game for Sassy's handheld system

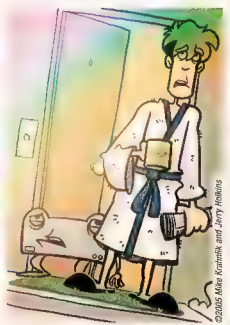
"How ironic—that's the first time Paris was put into something instead of the other way around."

—Internet gaming forum member Erik Phalras responds to news that Paris Hilton's movie *The Hitlz* will come out for PSP

What the Eff?

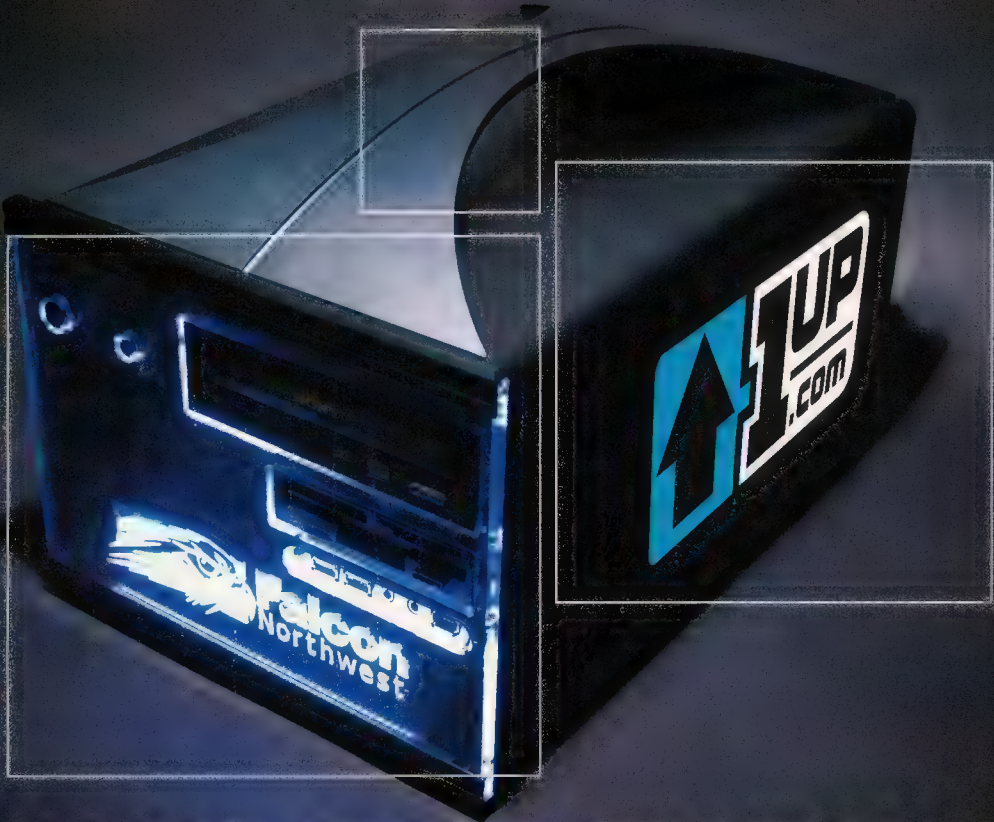


PENNY ARCADE
WWW.PENNY-ARCADE.COM



QUOTATIONS SOURCES FROM TOP TO BOTTOM, STARTING WITH LEFT COLUMN: THE SEATTLE TIMES, ASSOCIATED PRESS, EGM INTERVIEW, NEXT-GEN.BIZ, ASSOCIATED PRESS, WIRE, DAVIDJAFFE.MOBILO.COM, GAMING AGE FORUMS, KOTAKU.COM

>> RARE BACK IN NINTENDO'S CAMP? SORT OF: AS THE NOW MICROSOFT-OWNED STUDIO IS CURRENTLY STAFFING UP FOR DS PROJECTS...>>



MAKE YOUR FRIENDS DROOL WITH ENVY!

1UP.COM IS GIVING AWAY A FALCON NORTHWEST FRAGBOX!

WITH AN 80 GB HD AND 1024 MB RAM, THIS IS ONE BLACK BOX THAT'S NOT ONLY PACKED WITH POWER—AMD 64 3000+ SOCKET 939 PROCESSOR AND NVIDIA GEFORCE 6600GT 128 MB VIDEO CARD—BUT ALSO SEXY ENOUGH TO MATCH YOUR FINEST DECOR.

SO QUIT DROOLING ON THE MAGAZINE, AND GO ENTER AT <http://pcgiveaway.1up.com>. ENTER NOW—THE CONTEST ENDS SEPT. 6, 2005!



Where gamers call home.



Most Wanted's bad girl Mia (played by actress Josie Maran) reaches for the stick shift.

XB360/PS2/XB/GC

NEED FOR SPEED: MOST WANTED

Publisher: EA Games
Developer: EA Canada
Release Date: November 2005

Five facts (and one rumor) to get you up to speed with EA's newest racer

1 **These cops mean business**
You're a hotshot street racer trying to build up cred by winning duels on the open road. Chicks want you, dudes want to *be* you, and cops...well, they want to arrest you. *Most Wanted's* law enforcement officials react quite realistically to your joyriding. "The cops will initially be very aware of public safety, possibly calling off a pursuit if speeds get too excessive," explains *Most Wanted* Senior Producer Larry LaPierre. "Later in the game, as your heat and notoriety increase, it's personal: They'll come at you head-on at 100 mph, try to ram you into oncoming traffic, and drop spike belts to take out your tires."

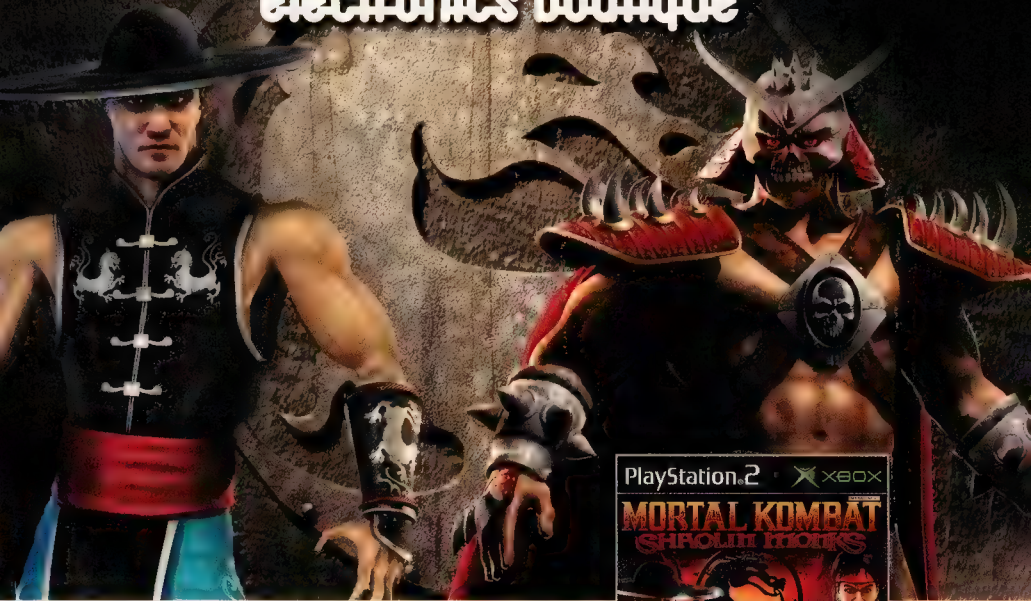


2 **You're not underground anymore**
Nitro-boosting through the rain-slicked, neon-filled nighttime cityscapes of the *Underground* games was certainly stylish, but day-tripping is cool, too. *Most Wanted* serves up a massive, open-ended world with races taking place between sunrise and sunset. Expect a gritty, sun-baked city with plenty of looming industrial complexes, obscure shortcuts, and way fewer Burger Kings than in *NFS:U2*. "*Most Wanted* takes things to an edgier, more ill-lit side of the action," says LaPierre. "It only made sense for the environment to reflect this change." >

>> NEGATIVE GHOSTRIDER, THE PATTERN IS FULL: MASTIFF WILL RELEASE A NEW TOP GUN FLIGHT SIM FOR THE NINTENDO DS THIS FALL..... >>

EB GAMES™

electronics boutique®



**PRE-ORDER NOW TO
RECEIVE AN EXCLUSIVE
MORTAL KOMBAT
FIGURINE!**

PRE-ORDER REQUIRES A \$5 DEPOSIT



While supplies last. See Sales Associate for complete details.

**CALL 1.800.800.5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU
OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM**

EB GAMES™
electronics boutique®
www.ebgames.com

We take games seriously™

MIDWAY

IT'S NOT WHO'S THE STRONGEST
BUT WHO'S THE SMARTEST

go to navy.com



STRIKE & RETRIEVE

NTE
NAVY TRAINING EXERCISE

IT'S MORE THAN JUST A GAME.

NAVY

NEED FOR SPEED (CONT.)



3

It's all about the speedbreaker

When you're speeding down a narrow road trying to beat a rival to a tollbooth checkpoint, you don't have time to react to, say...a police cruiser barreling toward your windshield. It's the perfect time for the speedbreaker, a special ability that slows time to a bullet-time crawl. It's quite similar to *Midnight Club 3*'s "zone mode," only more forgiving...and available to all vehicles. "The speedbreaker really allows you to get in the zone," LaPierre explains. "For example, you could use the extra time to thread the weak spot in the roadblock, blast through it, then transition back to full speed mayhem." You have only a limited amount of this crucial juice, so use it sparingly...oh, and don't try it in real life. "Driving home last week the cars slammed on the brakes in front of me and my first instinct was to press my speedbreaker to avoid the accident," laughs LaPierre.

4

This time, you'll actually want to race online

The online action in the *Underground* games suffered from an awfully clunky interface. The developers at EA Canada aim to fix that snafu for *Most Wanted*. "We want to make it much easier to set up races," says LaPierre. "In *Underground 2*, it was frustrating getting bumped back to the lobby and having to find the guy you just raced." Currently, only 1-on-1 duels are planned for the online games....



6

It's rumored that you can play as the fuzz...

Back in *NFS: Hot Pursuit* (PS1), you could step across the thin blue line and commandeer cop cars. Can you rock the other siren here? "We still have a lot of things we are trying to get into the game," says LaPierre. "The one thing I will say is that if it is not exceptional, we will not put it in the game until we have it right, so...in short, maybe." ❄️ ❄️ —Shane Bettenhausen

5

Some of these racers are mighty fine

Wild On... hottie Brooke Burke spiced up *Underground 2*'s raceways, but she's nowhere to be found in *Most Wanted*. Luckily, her replacement appears to be up to the task. Meet lovely Josie Maran—she'll be playing Mia, a down 'n' dirty racer who propels you deeper into the world of illegal street racing. You might remember her from *Van Helsing*, in which she played that naked, red-headed harpy chick that you couldn't stop looking at because she lacked nipples. Man, that movie sucked.

**EQUIPPED WITH ADVANCED WEAPONRY,
SOPHISTICATED RADAR AND COLLEGE PROFESSORS.**



When you join the U.S. Navy, you don't just ~~finish~~ your college education - you accelerate it. Because the U.S. Navy is outfitted with everything you need to earn your college degree while you serve. Take real college courses with real college professors, right on board your ship. To learn more, go to navy.com or call 1-800-USA-NAVY.

NAVY
ACCELERATE YOUR EDUCATION

© 2009. Paid for by the U.S. Navy. All rights reserved.

NEXT-GEN CONSOLE REPORT

Constructing our own revolution

Stonehenge, Bigfoot, the Jennifer flick *Gigli*—the world is full of mysteries. You can now add one more to that list: the Nintendo Revolution controller. "I really want to change the game again with the controller for the Revolution," Nintendo President Satoru Iwata told us this past spring. "I think you'll be surprised when you see it."

Well, we're tired of playing the waiting game, so we've gotten all Dr. Frankenstein and created our very own "revolutionary" Joypad. Plus, we've enlisted the help of various developers to predict the likelihood of these rumored features actually making it into Nintendo's next-gen controller, and how they might go about using each to spice up gameplay.

—Bryan Little

CAMERA
"It's tough not to be seen as copying [Sony's] EyeToy, but there's no doubt it's a cool input device for games. Maybe they could make one with stereovision, so it can calculate points in 3D space. So you could have games with gesture recognition, and others that get you up and sweating." **Odds: 1:1**
—Dave Perry, Shiny (*The Matrix: Path of Neo*)

DS-ESQUE TOUCH SCREEN
"Touch screens are the ultimate real-time strategy interface. Imagine if 'Revolution Wars' happened in real time?" **Odds: 1:1**
—Randy Pitchford, Gearbox (*Brothers in Arms: Road to Hill 30*)

TRACKBALL
"It's a little too retro for even Nintendo to go back to trackballs, but it could improve first-person shooters and real-time strategy games. And *Missile Command* would rock with it!" **Odds: 20:1**
—Dave Perry, Shiny

HEADSET
"Barking out audibles on the line [of scrimmage] in real time via your own customized calls would be great. Or maybe just telling your receivers to change their routes. I could see play-calling [for football games] in general going this way." **Odds: 2:1**
—Kraig Kujawa, Midway (*Blitz: The League*)

PRESSURE-SENSITIVE GRIPS
"Wow! All of my ideas on how to use such a feature are extremely dirty. I can't imagine Nintendo thinking the same way that I am..." **Odds: 500:1**
—Randy Pitchford, Gearbox

>> NEXT-GEN TURF WARS—NEWBIE DEVELOPER REAL TIME WORLDS IS MAKING A GRAND THEFT AUTO—FLAVORED MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER

E-READER

"Nintendo will open up a huge market with its downloadable content, but it could expand it even further by adding an E-Reader [card] slot as well. Imagine getting a videogame in a box of cereal!" **Odds: 20:1**
—Jeremy Mustard, *GlyphX (Advent Rising)*

MICROPHONE

"Nintendo has already tried the standalone microphone before. It's a great input device if it's really good at keeping out background noise. That said, I'm not so excited about lifting my controller to my face, so a headset seems like a better place for the microphone. Expect us to be ordering characters around in the game, and expect them to understand you better. Hopefully, some will have attitude and tell you to shut up!" **Odds: 5:1**
—Dave Perry, *Skinny*

GYROSCOPIC CONTROLS

"This is almost like analog controls to the next level. Obviously, games where you need to tip the controller (think *Super Monkey Ball*) are a no-brainer. But think about a stealth game and how 'still' you hold the controller coming into play. Another interesting idea is if you are a magic user and you have to actually move the controller in the air to cast a spell." **Odds: 5:1**
—Chris Charla, *Backbone (Death, Jr.)*

INTERCHANGEABLE FACE BUTTONS

"This is just crazy talk. The only thing I see here are legions of lawsuits from parents of kids who accidentally swallowed their Z button. Also, I'd expect a ton of replacement part requests." **Odds: 126:1**
—Kraig Kujawa, *Midway*



CELEBRITY GAMERS: BEASTIE BOYS

Gettin' ill with those boys from Brooklyn



Nothing can bring down the three man-children that the world has come to adore as the Beastie Boys. Not even some broken equipment, which on a recent afternoon in New York City has caused a two-hour delay for the group. The performers stood on a darkened sound-stage hammering away on their Blackberrys while awaiting the taping of their first MTV2 *Video Mod*, the network's latest attempt to cross over into the gaming world that remixes today's hottest music videos with videogame animations. So what kept Mike D, MCA, and Ad-Rock occupied when their batteries died and the technical difficulties continued? A spirited conversation about *Unreal Tournament* dependency and their \$10 million dream arcade game.

—Matt Rodbard

EGM: What do you guys think about music in videogames? Is it usually well chosen?

MCA: I add my own music. I like to make a playlist or put a bunch of CDs on random, and then turn off the game's sound. I like to put on the sexiest music possible for gaming.

EGM: Who'd win in this basketball matchup: the Beastie Boys from *NBA Jam Tournament Edition* vs. the Beastie Boys from *NBA Street V3*?

Ad-Rock: I'm not really a fan of any of those games. I do like the way they have us bulked up in *NBA Street*, though—we all look pretty jacked! And I think they may have airbrushed in a few tattoos here and there. But what I really wanted was an

iced-out medalion for my chest. It would be an eight-legged octopus with diamonds as suction cups. Jacob the Jeweler and I have been talking about this.

EGM: Any of you three ever get into handheld games?

MCA: The problem with playing portable videogames is that you end up sitting on the toilet for like an hour and a half, even if you have "finished" in a couple minutes. **Ad-Rock:** I had some problems when the Game Boy came out—I spent too much time playing *Tetris*. I had two storage lockers and I used to just go and spend time there, staring at my boxes. I'd move them all over the place; a box down in the corner, a box in the center—just like in the game.

EGM: So what's your latest gaming obsession?



■ A new *Video Mod* (like this one starring the Beastie Boys) runs every month on MTV2.



The problem with playing portable videogames is that you end up sitting on the toilet for like an hour and a half, even if you have 'finished' in a couple minutes.

—Beastie Boys' MCA

MCA: For a while I turned into a little *Unreal Tournament* [PC] addict. I had just been hooked up with this full-blown computer, with three new video graphic cards and the whole nine. That game was nasty, with the different teams and s***, running through the tunnels with aliens trying to cut you up with razor guns. I would play it till like the sun came up and then I'd be like, "On s***, I really gotta stop."

Mike D: I'd like to say that I found myself being very concerned for [MCA] during this period. Seriously, it was like talking to someone going through a drug phase.

Aubrock: I'm more into flashlight tag, TV tag, and Tumble Town.

EGM: Aren't we all? Anyway, how did you guys get involved with *Video Mods*?

MCA: Originally we went to a gaming company and talked about doing a videogame version of our latest album. It seemed like an interesting idea since the gaming company had created these environments and made these characters. The company said it was too busy, but were

like, "Yo, MTV makes those joints—hook up with them?"

EGM: What's the videogame you've been waiting for someone to make?

MCA: I'm gonna tell people, but consider this patented now. If anyone bites this s***, then I'm gonna come after you. But basically I'm going to take a car chassis and put video screens in for like the windshield, the windows, the rearview mirror—everything. So you're basically

Didja Know?

In 1992 the Kaneko Company created a *Beastie Boys* arcade game that had goals such as retrieving the group's microphones, avoiding flying eggs for 30 seconds, and keeping your balance on an enormous turntable while battling a boss named "The Turntable King." The game, however, never made it into arcades, as the Beasties wouldn't approve the project. (Good call, guys!)

surrounded with screens inside this car chassis. Then you can drive around really fast, but you also have a gun, and while you're driving around you can shoot at other cars or people. Michael Jackson might want to order one, maybe [directors Steven] Spielberg and [George] Lucas will want to order two. You know, it's probably going to cost like 10 million dollars. **MC**

COUNTDOWN TO ISSUE 200

THE TOP 10 MOST

What's in a name? Well, that's what this edition of the *EGM* 200 wants to find out. We perused our massive database of game tapes in search of the titles that stood out the most. Be sure to log on to egm.IUP.com with your own ridiculous username and discuss.

7

Sensible Soccer Jaguar • 1995

It's just like regular soccer, only nobody draws any yellow cards and your mom's there telling you how to get grass stains out of your socks. Play nice.

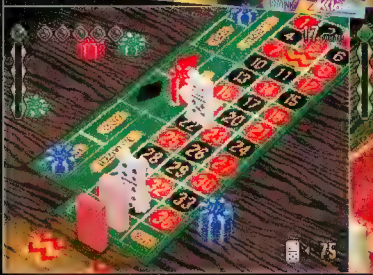


3

**It's Mr. Pants
GBA/Giz
• 2005**
...and he's
here to stop
Mr. Domino!

No One Can Stop Mr. Domino! PS1 • 1998

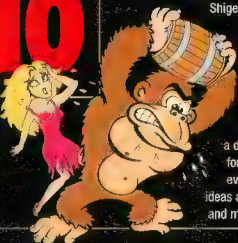
You gotta love a game that just straight-up taunts you. Mr. Domino is a cute, fun-loving guy who loves to run around his magical levels filled with happiness and sunshine...and there's no f***ing way you'll ever stop him!



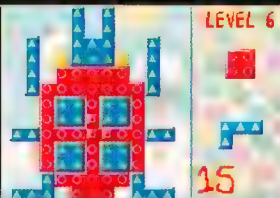
10

Donkey Kong • Arcade • 1981

As the story goes, legendary game designer Shigeru Miyamoto dubbed his landmark arcade game "Donkey Kong" because the titular character was one stubborn monkey. A monkey...like a donkey. This proved for the first time that even Miyamoto's bad ideas are worth millions and millions of dollars.



6



Irritating Stick PS1 • 1999

Is it a game, or a sign that maybe it's time to see a doctor? OK, this one is just way too easy to make fun of.

2

RIDICULOUS GAME NAMES

9

Elemental Gimmick Gear • DC • 1999

It's not very wise to put a word like "gimmick" in your title, especially when the other two words do absolutely nothing to tell you what type of game you're looking at—though it did provide gaming journalists with many delicious *EGG* puns.

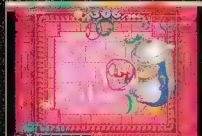


How is it? Did you find anything? Looks like this is the deesest we can do...

8

Three Dirty Dwarves Saturn • 1997

Our first thought: Is this the one about the perverted adventures of Bashful's three uncles whom the rest of the family doesn't really like to talk about? No, but it should've been.



Japanese-only Dishonorable Mentions

Sexy Paradise (above)
 Arcade/PS1/Saturn • 1996

Babobabo Babobabo
 GBA/PS2 • 2002/2003

Arknoid
 PS2 • 2000

5

Tang Tang GBA • 2001

Not only is this game name ridiculous, but it's also horribly misleading—from start to finish, *Tang Tang* is completely "tang" free.



4

BRAMMA Force: The Assault on Belfogger 9 PS1 • 1997

Things about this game we are able to reasonably deduce from its absurd title: 1) There's an assault of some sort; 2) It likely occurred somewhere in outer space; and 3) nobody has ever played it.

PERFECT 00



The Typing of the Dead DC • 2001

When the great zombie outbreak inevitably arrives, it won't be the trigger-happy commandos we turn to for help. Oh no, the President will pick up that phone and call Anderson Temporary Staffing Solutions, and a mighty legion of keyboard-wielding secretaries will save the world for \$5.15/hr.



THE RUMOR MILL

Makes Tom and Kate look like back-page news

If you're a student, I apologize in advance for what I'm about to say: The Q is absolutely tickled pink that summer is coming to a close. I can now start venturing outside without producing sweat stains that someone believes resemble a famous dead person, and so many anticipated titles—plus the first of the next-gen consoles, Xbox 360—will soon invade my game room. But hey, if you feel my apology wasn't sincere enough, feel free to send me a nasty e-mail at quatermann@ziffdavis.com. Enjoy school, kids! —The Q

Surf's up

Those in The Q's inner circle are well aware of my inefficiencies in the water. Long story short: My three-legged golden retriever Prickly Pete has a better breast-stroke. That's why I'm so giddy that EA's *SSX* series will soon give me the opportunity to become a surfing Zen master. No misprint here, folks: Along with snowboarding and skiing, the version of *SSX* being designed for next-generation consoles will feature surfing. And don't be surprised if another extreme sport is added....

Blocky, these Star Wars are

So George Lucas has finally closed the book on his faraway galaxy. Does this mean the end of *Star Wars* games? In the words of Vader in *Episode III*: NOOOO! Actually, I'm hearing that the surprisingly popular *Lego Star Wars* is receiving a follow-up, and will take you through the major events of *Episodes IV, V*, and *VI*. Hopefully, this one throws a bone to older Patdawans (like myself and ups the difficulty.

Handing over the reins

Recently, Sega signed on developer Secret Level (*Star Wars: Jedi Starfighter*) to remake one of its legendary franchises (sorry, Sonic's bunch isn't quite ready to reveal its identity) for both PS3 and Xbox 360. Well, this is just the beginning, as word around the campfire is that Sega is looking to several gamemakers on this side of the Pacific to update some classics, like *Space Harrier*, *Daytona*, and *Golden Axe*. Hmm, I wonder which one developer Silicon Knights (*Eternal Darkness*) is working on?



■ The Q eyes the *Da Vinci Code* videogame.

A different kind of page-turner

These days, no book is hotter than author Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*. It's a fixture on the best-seller charts and heads to the big screen next summer (starring Tom "Oscar" Hanks), and now, it seems you'll be solving this murder mystery on your console. Expect the

Da Vinci Code game to land on store shelves around the time of the flick.

Shadowrun breathes new life

A few years ago, I wept tears of joy when I heard that Microsoft was bringing back the classic role-playing game *Shadowrun*. Those tears quickly became sour as Gates' crew nixed the Xbox project. Now, apparently, developer FASA (*MechAssault*) is in the process of retrofitting *Shadowrun* for Xbox 360, and if my minions are correct, it'll be drastically different from the Super Nintendo and Genesis hits. What's so drastic, you say? Well, I'll save that for another day....



■ Yes, *Jade Empire* maker BioWare will cheat on Microsoft.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Q: Are longtime Xbox supporters BioWare (*Jade Empire*), Valve (*Half-Life 2*), and Id Software (*Doom 3*) jumping ship to PlayStation 3?

A: Well, not entirely. Those in the know tell us that these super-talented development studios do indeed have games in the works that will be exclusive to Sony's next-gen console. But fear not, Xbots; we also hear that the three will support Microsoft's upcoming machine. Whether those particular titles are exclusive, however, remains a mystery. ☛

■ Look at the size of that thing!



FOR CENTURIES THE DARKWATCH HAS
PROTECTED THE WORLD FROM EVIL.
NOW, AS JERICHO CROSS, YOU MUST JOIN
THIS SECRET SOCIETY TO SAVE HUMANITY...
AND YOURSELF.

Experience a Single Player, Story-Driven
Adventure or Intense Multiplayer Combat

Your Decisions Set You on a Path
of Good or Evil

A Vast Arsenal of Powerful Weapons - Each
With an Intense Secondary Melee Attack

AUGUST 2005

DARKWATCH™

DEATH FEARS THOSE WHO WEAR THE BADGE.



PlayStation 2



MATURE 17+

M
Blood and Gore
Intense Violence
Language
Sexual Themes
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

16 PLAYERS VIA XBOX LIVE®

JOIN US AT DARKWATCH.COM

©2005 High Moon Studios, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Published and distributed by Capcom Entertainment, Inc. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM LOGO are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. DARKWATCH and all related trademarks are trademarks or registered trademarks of High Moon Studios, Inc. or its affiliates. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live logo, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks are owned by their respective owners.

THE HOT 10

Anticipating these most-wanted games won't make 'em come any faster

Who picked all this crap? Should have been you. Head over to egn.1UP.com and cast your vote.



Nothing says anti-establishment like frosted bangs.



1 **The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess**
GC • November 2005



2 **Half-Life 2**
XB • October 2005



3 **Perfect Dark Zero**
XB360 • November 2005



4 **Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories**
PSP • September 2005



5 **Ninja Gaiden Black**
XB • September 2005



6 **New Super Mario Bros.**
DS • Fall 2005



7 **Final Fantasy XII**
PS2 • Spring 2006



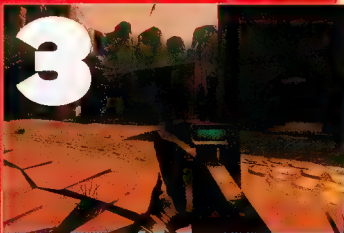
8 **Gears of War**
XB360 • Fall 2006



9 **Soul Calibur III**
PS2 • October 2005

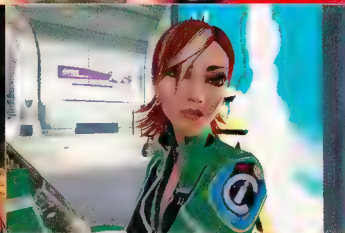


10 **Resident Evil 4**
PS2 • November 2005



PERFECT DARK ZERO

XB360 • November 2005 — We've tried *PDZ*'s multiplayer shootin' action, but its solo play remains a mystery. Aside from some basic backstory—sassy young Joanna (she's a Pisces) joins her bounty hunter pappy, Jack Dark, in a mission against



Now that is one next-gen muzzle flash.

corrupt "hypercorporations"—there's little substantive data on this prequel. You can actually glean more knowledge from Eric Trautmann's promotional tie-in comic book *PDZ: Welcome to the War*. His design philosophy? "Please, please, please don't suck."



FINAL FANTASY XII

PS2 • Spring 2006 — Around the time you're reading this, Square will be showing off *FFXII* at its summer gaming event in Chiba, Japan. Along with appearances by the game's voice actors and composers, Square is planning to make a big announcement concerning the long-delayed title. But don't get too jealous, it's probably just the Japanese release date (expected to be late 2005). We won't see it till 2006....



RESIDENT EVIL 4

PS2 • November 2005 — Finally, we glimpse the first info on the PS2 version of Capcom's brilliant reinvention of its flagship survival horror series. Here we see a newly added weapon in action: the high-tech Plagas Removal Laser 412. Expect a full report on more awesome new content soon—and we don't just mean the new costumes and true widescreen mode that Capcom's already promised.

COMING SOON

...to a console near you



• Liu Kang from *Mortal Kombat: Shaolin Monks* asks for spare change to cut his damn mullet.

SEPTEMBER 2005



Battalion Wars
Nintendo • GC — This console cousin of the GBA hit *Advance Wars* brings cutesy real-time strategy to the living room.



Burnout Revenge
EA Games • PS2/XB — Disgrace your driver's ed teacher again—pick this up for some seriously undefensive driving.



Commandos Strike Force
Eidos • PS2 — *Commandos* returns as a first-person shooter, but still no appearance from original commando Ahnuud.



Evil Dead Regeneration
THQ • PS2/XB — Previous efforts to capture the chain-saw-as-hand zeitgeist of *Evil Dead* have unilaterally sukked, despite the best voiceover efforts of Bruce Campbell. Maybe the addition of an undead midget sidekick will put this one over the edge.



Hitman: Blood Money
Eidos • PS2 — This time your bald assassin can blow his hard-earned cash on info, weapons, and hopefully some Rogaine.



Indigo Prophecy
Atari • PS2/XB — Folk-rock lesbian crooners the Indigo Girls solve mysteries in this paranormal adventure game. Or not.



Kingdom Under Fire: Heroes
Microsoft • XB — Say hello to bilsters, as this sequel utilizes every button on your controller to control massive armies.



MediEvil Resurrection
Sony CEA • PSP — *MediEvil* returns with more undead humor as you play as jawless, one-eyed skeleton Sir Dan.



Mortal Kombat: Shaolin Monks
Midway • PS2/XB — *Mortal Kombat* gets all bi-curious with this co-op brawler. Nothing wrong with a little experimentation.



NHL 06
EA Sports • PS2/XB/GC — Don't bother waiting for hockey season to finally start—take matters into your own hands.



Tiger Woods PGA Tour 06
EA Sports • PS2/XB/GC — Play as PGA players Ian Poulter, Mike Weir, and a bunch of other guys you've never heard of.



Ultimate Spider-Man
Activision • PS2/XB/GC — He's 16 and busy with homework, the now-underage Mary Jane, and, of course, crime fighting.

Also in September

187: Ride or Die
Ubisoft • PS2/XB

Call of Cthulhu
2K Games • PS2/XB

Far Cry Instincts
Ubisoft • XB

Marc Ecko's Getting Up
Atari • PS2

24: The Game
2K Games • PS2

Crash Tag Team Racing
VU Games • PS2/XB/GC

L.A. Rush
Midway • PS2/XB

Ninja Gaiden: Black
Tecmo • XB

Burnout Legends
EA Games • PSP

Dance Dance Revolution Extreme 2
Konami • PS2

Midway Arcade Treasures 3
Midway • PS2/XB/GC

Rainbow Six: Lockdown
Ubisoft • PS2/XB/GC



• Crash Tag Team Racing

>>> VU GAMES ACQUIRED UK-BASED SWORDFISH STUDIOS, WHICH MADE THE SO-SO SHOOTER *COLD WINTER* (PS2) FOR THE PUBLISHER. >>>

WARNING
Don't try this at home. Seriously, if you want
a blast of tropical lime taste, go to Taco Bell.
www.DoNotDoThisAtHome.com

© 2006 MOUNTAIN DEW BOTTLE AND BOTTLED BY PEPPER, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFFREY COOPER



Mountain Dew Baja Blast[®], only at Taco Bell.

Made exclusively for Taco Bell. To go with the
spicy, crunchy, melty, grilled and marinated food you crave.

THINK[™]
OUTSIDE
THE BUN TACO
BELL



FROM COMBAT TO CONSOLE

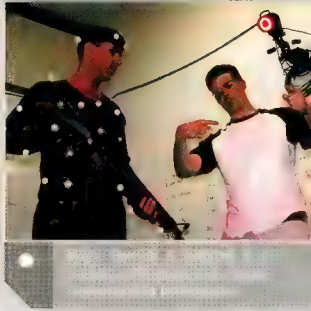
In 2001, Captain Jason Amerine was among the first troops to drop into Afghanistan. Now, in 2005, he and his fellow Soldiers are helping Ubisoft create the most authentic military console game ever.

In mid-November 2001, Captain Jason Amerine was in the heart of Taliban territory, in the town of Tarin Kowt, Afghanistan. The Taliban, having been driven out of the town by the local people, had regrouped and were advancing toward the town in a large convoy of approximately 400 men. Captain Amerine was leading an A-team of 11 men from the Army's 5th Special Forces Group. Hamid Karzai, a Pashtun leader with whom Captain Amerine was working, had assembled a group of 30 to 40 indigenous fighters. Captain Amerine hoped that air strikes, coupled with extensive planning, would be enough to defend the town and keep Karzai alive.

Three years later, Major Jason Amerine (he has since risen in rank) and a team of Soldiers were given a slightly different mission: to work with Ubisoft's game developers to create *America's Army: Rise of a Soldier*. Designed, developed and originated by the U.S. Army, the game was to be the most authentic military console game available.

"America's Army is the most realistic military game, because it was created by the actual source. Developed by real Army Soldiers and based on real Army missions, this game gives you the true Army Soldier experience."

—Major (r) Chris Chambers, Deputy Project Director



Major Amerine, an avid gamer, began his work with *America's Army* as a Mission Development Officer on the highly successful original PC game. He saw this mission not only as an opportunity to create games he would want to play, but also as a way to communicate the true Army experience.

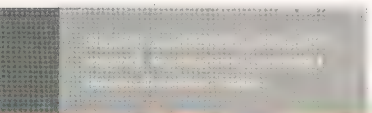
In 2004 the Secretary of the Army entered into an exclusive licensing agreement with Ubisoft to develop the first authentic Army console game. This was something of a historical agreement, as the Army had never before granted this license (and, more pointedly, the

unparalleled access to the Army's vast assets and resources that came with it) to any console game publisher. However, in order to ensure *Rise of a Soldier* maintained the Army's rigorous standards of authenticity and realism, the Army maintained creative oversight.

During the creation of *Rise of a Soldier* with Ubisoft developers, Major Amerine and a team of Special Forces Soldiers helped to construct missions faithful to their real-life experience in Special Forces. "[Ubisoft] wanted to make something unique," Major Amerine said of the developers. "So I went to them with my list of the things I wanted. And what was really cool was they had very similar ideas. They did an incredible job—in a way it felt like being Special Forces again."

Major Amerine was also eager to prevent the usual flaws in military games from creeping into *Rise of a Soldier*. "One of the biggest things you learn about moving on the battlefield is to get down," he explained. "If somebody's shooting at you, you want to get down. In a lot of the games they actually reward you for not getting down, but jumping around and doing all this silly stuff that you'd get shot doing."

Creating strategies and evaluating objectives within the *Rise of a Soldier* gameplay actually mimicked the decision-making process of a Sergeant during a mission: maps and 3D images were





Elements within the game are digital replicas of environments, equipment and weapons found in Afghanistan.

“In real-world tactics there’s no right or wrong... But those are choices you have to make on the battlefield. And in the game, it works exactly the same way.”

—Captain Erich Fellenz, Mission Development Officer

evaluated for cover and concealment, overwatch, and ability to support other fire teams—precisely the type of planning all Army leaders perform in their real-world missions. Knowing where to put your men and when to put them there “is something that comes from, quite honestly, years of experience in doing it on the ground,” says Army Special Forces Captain Erich Fellenz, Mission Development Officer for the game.

Being able to form a game based on these real-life experiences is what gives *Rise of a Soldier* its edge. To further their knowledge and under-

standing of an Army Soldier’s life, the developers were sent to Fort Lewis in Washington state and Fort McClellan, Alabama, where they received training and experienced mock combat missions. Weighed down with combat gear, they were also treated to a lesson in room clearing and advanced urban combat, complete with live (and loud) ammunition. All of this was done to ensure the console game was not only optimized for console game play, but

also unique and authentic enough to be an Army game.

One of the most distinctive aspects of *Rise of a Soldier* is Career mode, which allows players to experience just what it takes to become a high-ranking enlisted leader in the United States Army. This feature is just as detailed as every other in the game, having been informed by the experiences of the Soldiers working on the game. The Soldier begins as a basic rifleman and progresses by accumulating experience and developing value-based skills until



CAREER MODE

Do you have what it takes to be a Special Forces Team Leader?

"In *Rise of a Soldier* players can actually create a persistent character online and build him from match to match."

—Major (r) Chris Chambers, Deputy Project Director

Career mode takes you through a career in the U.S. Army, from rifleman through Special Forces. At the outset of the single-player and multiplayer game, players create a Soldier from unique faces, home states and corresponding regional accents as diverse as the Army itself. The Soldier then, like a real Army Soldier, has a distinct way of interacting with others.

Players rise through the ranks by completing Missions and acquiring Experience Points. Experience Points are then used to raise your in-game Soldier Skills.

For example, raise your leadership points and you'll increase the skills of the Soldiers under your command; raise your marksmanship points and improve your accuracy. These skills are an authentic, although



partial, reflection of what it takes to succeed in the Army and advance in rank.

Missions are not evaluated by number of bad guys killed. They are completed when a player accomplishes a mission and has acquired skills up to Army standards. That means making smart decisions, staying calm under fire and working with the team in order to achieve the objective.

As a Soldier moves through combat, the Combat Effectiveness Meter (CEM) provides a real-time assessment of your skill levels. For example, players' shooting effectiveness suffers as a result of poor movement and positioning and when they are under heavy fire. If a player is less physically fit or unable to provide necessary medical attention, this is also reflected in player performance. Players can improve their effectiveness by quickly rectifying their mistakes (e.g., get into the prone position if shooting) or by further developing their Soldier Skills.

ARMY PV2 ALPHA ONE Not signed in

PROFILE

RANK Private First Class

EXPERIENCE 120 TO NEXT RANK 1800

UNIT

HOME STATE California

HEIGHT 6' 7"

WEIGHT 195 lbs

PATCHTYPE Medic

ARMY PV2 ALPHA ONE Not signed in

SKILLS

SKILL POINTS 32

NEXT LEVEL 30 REGISTRATION LIMIT 18

SKILL	POINTS	LEVEL
Leadership	100	3
Observation	100	6
Marksmanship	100	6
Stoath	100	7
Honor	100	5
Conditioning	100	5
Lifesaving	100	8

ARMY PV2 ALPHA ONE Not signed in

WEAPON MOD

M4A1 SOPMOD MODIFICATIONS

The perfect combination of firepower and compactness, the M4A1 is ideal for close-quarters combat.

MODIFICATION	DESCRIPTION
PAINT PAIR	ADG 4x
BOTTOM PAIR	Harris Bipod
GRAPEL	M408 Suppressor
ATTACH	Foregrip

4 power scope which assists in target acquisition

he has what it takes to be a Special Forces Operations Sergeant.

Missions are replayable, allowing players to develop their Soldier Skills in their current role. But with every rise in rank, more missions are unlocked, and the complexity of the duties grows accordingly. Captain Fellenz described this progression and expansion in his own career as a Soldier. After his time in the Infantry, he trained to become a Ranger ("because that was the hardest training I could find"), then, once eligible, advanced to Special Forces.

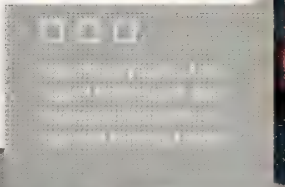
As for Major Amerine, he succeeded in accomplishing his Mission Objectives by training, using maps to plan tactics, working closely with indigenous forces and, above all, providing leadership

and performing honorably. Tarin Kowt remained free from Taliban control and Hamid Karzai became the president of Afghanistan.

Having risen through the ranks of the U.S. Army and established themselves as Soldiers worthy of the Army's Special Forces, these Soldiers, you can be sure, gave everything they had in their work with *Rise of a Soldier*. Besides, for the Soldiers working on this project, *Rise of a Soldier* is more than just the development of a game, but a reflection of their lives and experiences as true Army Soldiers.

Pre-order *America's Army: Rise of a Soldier* at www.riseofasoldier.com. □

Coming October 2005



Then-Captain Jason Amerine, pictured with Special Forces and indigenous fighters in Afghanistan (blurred to protect their identity), worked with game developers to accurately recreate the Army Soldier experience.

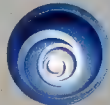


PlayStation 2



Blood
Violence

© 2005 Ubisoft Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. America's Army, America's Army Operations, America's Army: Special Forces, Empower Yourself, United Freedom, the Official U.S. Army Game and U.S. Army are trademarks or registered trademarks of the United States Army in the United States and/or other countries and used under license from the United States Army. Rise of a Soldier, Ubisoft, and the Ubisoft logo are trademarks of Ubisoft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Developed by Secret Level. Published by Ubisoft Entertainment. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires internet connection. Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 and Memory Card (MCM) for PlayStation 2 (each sold separately). The Gamma icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment/America Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live logo and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.



UBISOFT

THESE GAMES ARE

OUT THERE



Light attack

DRAGON QUEST VIII

PS2 • November 2005

Gathered intel: How can the eighth game in a franchise be considered "under the radar"? Well, for a variety of reasons, this role-playing series never really took off here in America.

Although it's huge in Japan (with over 40 million units sold to date), the previous incarnations to come

Stateside

(as *Dragon Warrior* games) reached only the hardest of the hardcore RPG market. *DQ8* can change all that. Prepare for a massive, complex quest that pushes the limits of the PS2.

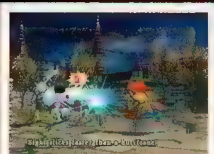
"We're putting as much energy as we can into making this version perfect for the American market," explains *Dragon Quest* creator Yuji Horii. The changes from the Japanese version



Jessica Coste/Raffaelli

(that country's best-selling PS2 game ever) include the addition of voiceovers, reworked menus, re-orchestrated music, and tweaks to the battle system.

U.S. roleplayers weaned on angsty fare like *Final Fantasy VII* might be a tad surprised, though: Beneath the modern trappings of 3D visuals and professional voice work, *DQ8* still exudes a specific brand of innocence and purity that's not accidental. "If you play a really dark RPG with moody visuals, then the player himself will have a dark heart," explains Horii. "To have a bright and lighthearted



Unlike in the old *Dragon Warrior* games, you can now actually see your characters in battles...time to party like it's 1989.



Some of the year's coolest games lurk under most gamers' radar

If you're into gaming, you can't help but hear about the high-profile, big-budget blockbusters destined for massive popularity—a new *Zelda*, *Grand Theft Auto*, or *Halo* won't exactly sneak onto shelves. Yet a lot of games do just that, coming to market

with little fanfare...and little chance of catching on. It doesn't always end in tragedy, however: Sometimes, one of these seemingly niche titles makes the daring leap into acceptance—Namco's 2004 hit *Katamari Damacy* went from geek to chic almost overnight. Here's a look at this year's offbeat contenders....



Even more out there

Can't get enough bleeding-edge gaming? Head to egm.1up.com for info on more titles including *Guitar Hero* and *Magna Carta*.



world and still be able to tell a satisfying story is really much easier on the user."

Nearest known relative: If you can stomach the chunky graphics and endure the challenging 100-hour-plus adventure, *Dragon Warrior VII* (PS1) will show you just how phenomenally deep role-playing games can get.

Chances of survival: Excellent. With no, new *Final Fantasy* until next year, RPG-starved PS2 owners should take a chance on this epic. —Shane Bettenhausen

DQB's complex skill system allows you to customize your characters' growth based on what battle actions you choose.



Yangus attacks!





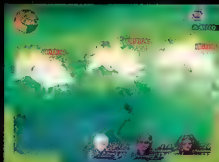
DIGITAL DEVIL SAGA 2

PS2 • September 2005

Gathered intel: This is the sequel to last year's cult role-playing hit *Digital Devil Saga*, a fact cunningly concealed by the "2" in its title. Players who want to see what happens after the first game's cliffhanger ending can carry over their memory-card data to go into part two with all their hard-earned abilities and stats. New to the second game are additional playable characters and a new world—with new and more devious dungeons—to explore.

Nearest known relative: *Final Fantasy X*. If it were crazy hard, *Digital Devil Saga* has that series' involving story and fully voice-acted cut-scenes to make the intense dungeon crawling and party building go down a little easier. Those familiar with *FFX*'s sphere grid will also find common ground here, as *DDS*' ability-building interface is quite similar.

Chances of survival: It's not going to become the next monster hit, but the growing popularity of anime-styled games should make this a fairly successful niche game—most likely with the *Evangelion* crowd, since it's got all the religious portent and moral angst they crave. —*Nich Maragos*



GUN

XB360/PS2/XB/GC
• October 2005



Gathered intel: We'd probably get our asses kicked for calling Neversoft's (the guys behind *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*) new shooter *Grand Theft Auto: Dodge City*, but we swear it's flattery. Set in the brutal frontier states of post-Civil War America, this game casts you as a young gunslinger on a mission of vengeance. Like *GTA*, *Gun* offers a vast, open-ended world to explore, diverse missions to undertake, and plenty of high-octane rides (well...horses, anyway) to commandeer. As the title implies, you deal in lead, and the gunplay combines slo-mo bullet time with precise timing-based combos to create a new breed of six-gun shoot-out.

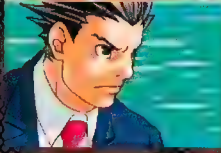
Nearest known relative: In terms of subject matter, comparisons to *Dead Man's Hand* and *Red Dead Revolver* seem unavoidable, but *Gun* is far more ambitious and free-form than its Western brethren.

Chances of survival: Not everyone's into the cowboys and Indians scene, but the huge, go-anywhere world might lure skeptics in. Plus, the gritty, serious setting (more HBO's *Deadwood*) should really connect with older gamers. We saw plenty of messy head shots, shot-gunned horses, and brazen strumpets (thanks to the "Whore Wagon") in our short demo. One caveat, though: The Xbox 360 version we saw looked barely better than its XB cousin. —*S.B.*



PHOENIX WRIGHT: ACE ATTORNEY

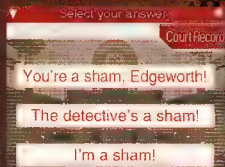
DS • November 2005



Gathered intel: The DS is a regular breeding ground for off-the-wall gameplay concepts, so Capcom's *Phoenix Wright* should fit right in—here, you play the role of a young hotshot lawyer tasked with winning five controversial cases. How does one play a game about the law? Lots of (often quite funny) dialogue choices. It's up to you to cross-examine witnesses, present evidence to the judge, and object when your rival crosses the line. Hilarious writing and slick anime-style animation bring the bizarre package together.

Nearest known relative: Straight-up adventure games like this are quite rare these days, but interactivity-wise it's a bit like Ubisoft's *Spring*, only funnier, and with less hooking up in net tubs.

Chances of survival: Hot litigious gameplay isn't exactly an easy sell. But then again, NBC does have like 20 different versions of *Law & Order*. Maybe this will reach some odd new demographic. —S.B.



FATAL FRAME 3: THE TORMENTED

PS2 • November 2005

Gathered intel: Tecmo's third installment in its fan-favorite horror franchise retains the series' trademark combat—battling ghosts with a special spirit camera—but adds some much-needed variety. "This game offers three different playable characters," explains Producer Keisuke Kikuchi. "Each has different levels of skill with the Camera Obscura, so you'll have to vary your tactics depending on the situation." One new character, a young man named Kei, is such a poor shutterbug that he resorts to *Metal Gear Solid*-stealth to avoid detection by the game's grisly ghuls.

Nearest known relative: Obviously, it doesn't stray too far from its predecessors' shadowy path, but even series vets

might get spooked here: *Tormented* is even more depressing and surreal than the last two games. "Each character has experienced profound loss and sorrow," says Kikuchi. "Coping with this pain is so intense that their reality and nightmares begin to overlap." Sounds like the series might be heading further into the psychological horror realm of Konami's *Silent Hill* series.

Chances of survival: The series maintains a loyal fan base, and this latest version finally expands the scope of the game, so maybe it has a shot at broader appeal. Then again, launching up against the PS2 version of survival-horror juggernaut *Resident Evil 4* certainly won't help its chances. —S.B.

STUBBS THE ZOMBIE IN REBEL WITHOUT A PULSE

XB • November 2005

Gathered intel: A survival-horror game with zombies...not too original. But how about a game in which you play as the zombie, slurping brains to create an undead horde? That's different.

Set in 1959, *Stubbs* skewers that era's cheesy kitsch and dime-store novelty with a blend of slapstick goofs and pitch-black comedy. Stubbs tosses his own organs as hand grenades, rolls his head like a bowling ball, and graphically gorges on brains.

Nearest known relative: *Stubbs* is the brainchild of *Halo* cocreator Alex Seropian and runs on the *Halo* engine. While differ-

ences between the blockbuster shooter and this oddball eat-em-up are obvious, the game shares *Halo*'s aiming controls. Stubbs can't shoot guns. That would be too straightforward. He can, however, possess a gun-toting human and fire away.

Chances of survival: *Stubbs* is weird, but zombies are familiar fare for gamers. And don't underestimate the power of the *Halo* association. If *Stubbs* turns out both fun and funny, it could be a surprise hit. Plus, a dire lack of Xbox-exclusive games this fall puts this squarely in the spotlight.

—Robert Ashley



SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

PS2 • October 2005

Gathered intel: Seasoned action gamers have kicked thousands upon thousands of virtual asses, but how many victories truly meant something? *Shadow of the Colossus* strips away the sword-fodder that clogs other titles, allowing a young boy to hunt massive living statues with sword, bow, and steed. Bold in concept, but its true scope is unknown.

Nearest known relative: Similar David and Goliath-style battles graced the swashbuckling adventure *Galleon* (XB), but *Shadow's* true legacy stems from the cult-classic *Ico* (by the same developer).

Chances of survival: *Ico* fans will want to see if *Shadow* can move them in the same way, others may not be willing to emotionally invest. —Justin Speer

EBGAMES™

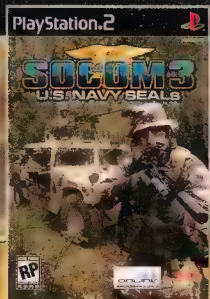
electronics boutique®



SOCOM 3

U.S. NAVY SEALS

AVAILABLE 9.14



**PRE-ORDER TODAY &
RECEIVE A PLAYABLE
DEMO DISC!**

**CALL 1.800.800.5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU
OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM**

EBGAMES™
electronics boutique®
www.ebgames.com

We take games seriously™





RADIATA STORIES

PS2 • September 2005

Gathered intel: The developer behind last fall's sleeper RPG hit *Star Ocean: Till the End of Time* returns with another monstrous quest guaranteed to consume at least 40 hours of your free time.

Radiata Stories presents an imaginative, pastel-colored world where humanity struggles in a massive war against other beastly races. Like *Star Ocean*, this is a deep, complex role-playing game, but the combat has been specifically designed to lure in newbies—fast, action-oriented battles allow you to rack up huge combo attacks and combine party members' spells for screen-filling special effects.

But the game's real draw will be its unique system for recruiting party members. "You can find up to 150 different people willing to join your party,"

explains *Radiata* Producer Yoshinori Yamagishi. "Each person has a real-time schedule that they follow that links up to the PS2's internal clock, so you have to stalk them and see what they do in order to figure out how to recruit them." For example, you might see a random dude drop his contact lens into a drain (we're not making that up, by the way), and you'll have to retrieve it for him in order to gain his support. Getting them all will

drive completists nuts...or at least sell a lot of strategy guides.

Nearest known relative: The structure and gameplay systems echo those in *Star Ocean*, but the giant, living world reminds us of what was cool about *Shermie* (Dreamcast).

Chances of survival: It's coming out with very little fanfare, and the name isn't a known quantity, so it's going to have a tough time getting noticed. Hopefully, RPG fans will do their homework on this one. —S.B.



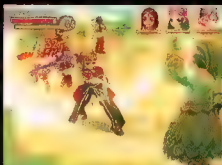
TOTAL OVERDOSE

PS2/XB • November 2005

Gathered intel: It's certainly different: a south-of-the-border take on *Grand Theft Auto* in which you can kill an enemy with a drive-by door slam, slow-mo bullet dive out of your car à la *Max Payne*, shoot an hembre in the face and catch his hat on your head before producing *El Mariachi*-inspired twin machine-gun guitar cases to create a 12-kill combo with a *Tony Hawk*-esque scoring system—all to the sound of Mexican hip-hop. And if you screw it up, rewind it. *Prince of Persia* style!

Nearest known relative: Everybody's cousin. This game borrows liberally from a whole slew of hit games to craft a wild, weird shooter yet manages to retain its own quirky charm.

Chances of survival: It may just be loco enough to work. The over-the-top action and sick humor stand out in a sea of overly serious shooters. —J.S.



FALLING OFF THE RADAR

Are these potential sleepers headed for the big sleep?



BC

This prehistoric Xbox adventure is "on hold" but may still return one day.



Chulip

Good news: Natsume's oddball PS2 kissing RPG should come out this fall.



Phantasy Star Trilogy

Expect a delay—the final game hasn't even come out for PS2 in Japan yet.



The Shield

Despite the TV show's popularity, this game appears to have been canned.

Bring it.

#1 rated NHL game.

—gamerrankings.com



ProControl™—cycle the puck, give-and-go, attack like the pros, even from behind the net!



Get physical with the **Enforcer System™**—wear down your opponent's scoring line.



Hundreds of new **PureMotion™** animations bring authentic in-your-face NHL action to life!



Maximum Goaltending & On-The-Fly Coaching let you rule the rink from any position on the ice.

NHL 2K6



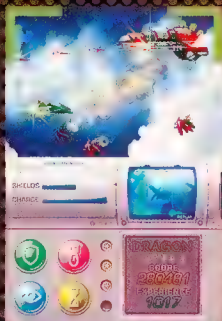
Hit the ice like never before with NHL 2K6! With fast action and new cutting-edge features galore, no other hockey game comes close to matching 2K6. Skate, pass, shoot, defend—and enforce—with all the intensity and total authenticity of the real NHL! www.2KSPORTS.com



PlayStation 2



© 2005 Take-Two Interactive Software and its subsidiaries. All rights reserved. 2K Sports, the 2K Sports logo, and Take-Two Interactive Software are all trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. NHL and the NHL Shield are registered trademarks of the National Hockey League. All NHL logos and marks and team logos and marks depicted herein are the property of the NHL and are reproduced without the prior written consent of NHL Enterprises, L.P. © 2005. All rights reserved. © NHL, NHL, 2K6 is an Official Licensed Product of the NHL, NHLPA, NHLPA National Hockey League Players' Association and the NHLPA logo are trademarks of the NHLPA and are used under license by 2K Sports. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires internet connection. Network Adaptor (for PlayStation 2) and Memory Card (for PlayStation 2) (each sold separately). The Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, Xbox Live logos and Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.



WORLD REBORN: UNIFICATION

DS • September 2005

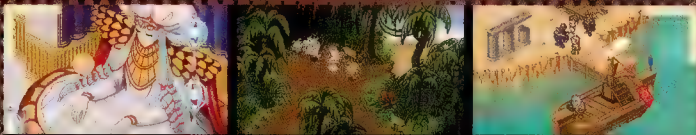
Gathered intel: Unknown developer NeoPong has wildly ambitious plans: *World Reborn* isn't even out for GBA yet, and the Nintendo DS sequel is already in the works. Yet-to-be-introduced returning heroes Thiel and Mei again fight to save their world alongside a team of four other pilots and ships. Outfit your fighter with bristling special abilities, weapons, and secondary fire for a highly customizable shooter that even has cooperative online play.

Nearest known relative: Given the way the developers play up the connection to classic console games of old, we're tempted to say something like *The Guardian Legend* (NES) for its mix of adventure and shooting sections. But for those whose memories don't reach that far back, maybe you should think *Gradius V* (PS2).

Chances of survival: Never mind survival, right now it's not 100 percent certain this game will be born in the first place—NeoPong doesn't currently have a publisher lined up, and it's the sequel to a game that isn't out yet on a different platform. Also, when it comes out, it will have to contend with competing DS shooters like *Nanostray*.

—N.M.

■ For exclusive screens and audio from *Unification*, head to www.NintendNow.com.



POPOLOCROIS

PSP • September 2005

Gathered intel: The PSP finally gets a proper role-playing game (c'mon, people, *Untold Legends* is just a dungeon hack) with *Popolocrois*, the first American entry in a long-running popular Japanese series. However, those who bought Sony's portable for its high-tech specs might be confounded to discover that this is a compilation of two 2D games originally appearing on the PlayStation...1. Hey, but they're new to

you, and the hand-drawn art style recalls simpler times.

Nearest known relative: It's best to compare *Popolocrois* to another RPG for the kids' set—*Paper Mario* (GC). Shockingly, this game is actually simpler than the plumber's quest: It encourages the use of autobattle by making it the default setting. Players over the age of 10 should turn that off.

Chances of survival: Ordinarily, we'd expect a game like this (cutesy, old school, kind of for babies) to reach only the hardest of the hardcore RPG crowd. On the other hand, new software for the PSP is at a premium, and thousands of game-starved early adopters could make this one an inexplorable hit. We'll see what Americans make of the odd little series once it's released next month. —N.M.



LOST IN BLUE

DS • September 2005

Gathered intel: Washed ashore on a desert island, a teenage boy goes about the business of staying alive, procuring food, shelter, and a castaway girlfriend. *Lost in Blue* turns the everyday tasks of survival into minigames, the perfect excuse to use all of the DS' bells and whistles. You'll start a fire by rubbing sticks together (using the L and R buttons) and blowing on the sparks (with the microphone). You'll milk a goat by pulling its udders with the stylus. You'll cook your dinner by closing the lid of the DS (like a pot) for just the right amount of time.

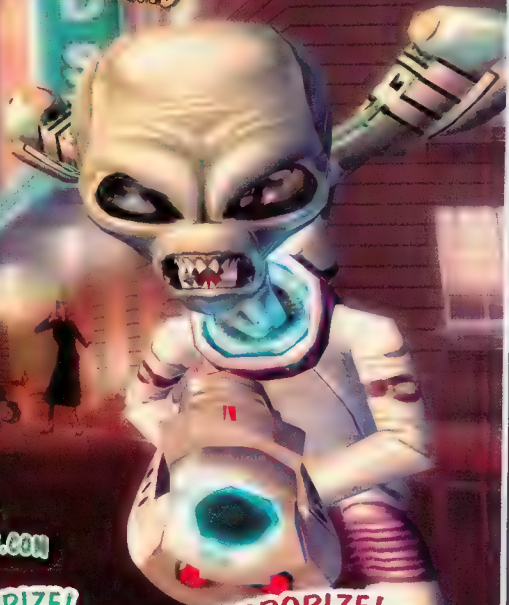
Nearest known relative: This game is actually a sequel of sorts to *Survival Kids*, a little-known GBA adventure. But you never played that, so compare it to the mundane-yet-lovable *Harvest Moon* farming-sim series. *Lost in Blue* adds urgency to the idea with its desert-island premise. Think of it as a role-playing game with a lot of minigames (that just happen to be about goat milking).

Chances of survival: *Lost in Blue* is packed with more novelties than an ice-cream truck, but it might grab the attention of DS quirk-seekers looking for their next out-there gaming fix. —N.M.



DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

ONE GIANT STEP ON MANKIND™



IN STORES NOW
DESTROYALLHUMANS.GAME.COM

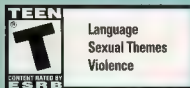
HYPNOTIZE!



VAPORIZE!



TERRORIZE!



© 2005 THQ Inc. All Rights Reserved. Developed by Pandemic Studios, LLC. Pandemic® and the Pandemic logo® are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Pandemic Studios, LLC and are reproduced under license only. THQ, Destroy All Humans and their respective logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. All other trademarks, logos and copyrights are the property of their respective owners.

Put on Your Game Face

Competition's cutthroat out there —

serious gamers can't afford to sleep on the latest technology trends.

Interact with **35,000 gamers** and get an edge at New York's only consumer gaming and technology event, DigitalLife, the final word in electronic entertainment.



We're dishing up the world's hottest games and gadgets.

Gold, hard cash is yours for the taking too — come get some as we host the largest PC & Console tournament on the East Coast.

Welcome to the next dimension. Welcome to your

digital**life**



Get Tickets Now!

www.digitallife.com

october 14-16 • new york city • jacob javits center • 1-866-761-7282

Official Tournament Sponsor:



CREATIVE

intel

Microsoft

NOKIA
Connecting People

TOSHIBA



GGL



NEW YORK POST



MAKE YOUR FRIENDS DROOL WITH ENVY!

1UP.COM IS GIVING AWAY A FALCON NORTHWEST FRAGBOX!

WITH AN 80 GB HD AND 1024 MB RAM, THIS IS ONE BLACK BOX THAT'S NOT ONLY PACKED WITH POWER—AN AMD 64 3000+ SOCKET 939 PROCESSOR AND NVIDIA GEFORCE 6600GT 128 MB VIDEO CARD—BUT ALSO SEXY ENOUGH TO MATCH YOUR FINEST DECOR.

SO QUIT DROOLING ON THE MAGAZINE, AND GO ENTER AT <http://pcgiveaway.1up.com>.
ENTER NOW—THE CONTEST ENDS SEPT. 6, 2005!



Where gamers call home.

SOUL SEARCHING

Sword fighter **Soul Calibur III** wants to give weekend shogun warriors the weapons (and incentive) to become champions

by Shawn Elliott

We've got tons of *Soul Calibur III* stuff for you in this issue, but that's only the beginning. Look for "Soul Calibur III" under "EGM Extras" on egm.1UP.com for exclusive screens, videos, documentaries, retrospectives, and lots more. Plus, see how the EGM editors did against the champs at 1UP.com, Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine, and even *Computer Gaming World* in our interoffice *Soul Calibur II* tournament. It ain't pretty.



It's all perspective. In the samurai cinema classic *Rashomon*—a tragic tale told four ways by as many witnesses—who's doing the watching makes all the difference. Take one storyteller's word for it, and the sword fight at the center of the yarn is the stuff of legend, choreographed combat like in the movies. Listen to another, and it's a bumbling embarrassment—thwack, thwack, whiff, and the participants are as ready to run away as they are to risk their necks. Same story with blade-based fighting franchise *Soul Calibur*. No, seriously.

To casual viewers, *Soul Calibur*'s combatants stab and slice, sock and block the same as those in any other game in the genre. Whomp on buttons, and with a little luck you'll win—no moves to memorize, no science to sweat, and somehow still a giddy good time with a good-looking game. Not so, say the vets. Accident is actually miscalculation; it's more chess at a hundred moves a minute, an elaborate series of psych-outs and counter-psych-outs made possible only when you know your warrior as well as the person you're playing against. To the pro, solo play is for practice. Nothing tops going toe-to-toe in head-to-head. No brawler series is better.

Who's right? Both! If PS2-exclusive sequel *Soul Calibur III*'s creators have anything to say about it.

Playing it safe

"Once you've established a series like *Soul Calibur*," says Director Jin Okubo, "you can't change the core components. The challenge is to build on what works, to bring something new and innovative to the table while staying true to the formula and to the characters that fans have come to identify with." To wit, this is a safe sequel. "It's not a revolution!" says Producer Hiroaki Yotoryiyama. "Instead, we're tweaking and refining for an easier-to-play and even more intuitive product."

In versus mode that means tighter venues, walls, waist-high barriers, a surrounding abyss—you're never more

(continued on page 54)

HIGH-CALIBER EDUCATION

Four reasons newbies should play this series.

Guard Impact

Any fighter can deflect an incoming attack, opening up his opponent to retaliation. Timing is crucial, and there's a heavy price to pay for predictable parrying, but the strategy doesn't stop there. Although your foe is stunned once you interrupt his strike, he can still stop your counterattack with a Guard Impact of his own. Get good, and you'll exchange well-timed parries for a cinematic stalemate of clashing swords.



Eight-Way Run

Soul Calibur characters can both sidestep and move freely in any direction while still facing down their opponents. This feature made *SC* the first fighter to feel truly 3D and means matches don't seem like they're happening within the confines of an invisible corridor.



Air Control

Here, when someone pops you into the air, you aren't a helpless pin-cushion; watching passively as your opponent practices combos on your soon-to-be corpse. Air Control allows you to shift your weight in midair to either avoid your enemy's cleaver or remain in the ring.



Ring Out

Landing outside the arena is an instant loss. While some less-experienced fighters will call this cheap, it's very strategic. Characters have different moves to send foes sailing over the side. Conversely, Eight-Way Run, Air Control, and Guard Impact give you options to avoid going out.

NEW CHALLENGERS

SC3 Producer Hiroaki Yotoryiyama sounds off on the game's newcomers...

Setsuka

"Setsuka specializes in counterattacks. Her reach is rather short, but she's speedy. It's safe to say that she's aimed toward advanced players."

Tira

"We call Tira's weapon the ring blade. She's a well-rounded and able-bodied assassin, ideal for the intermediate-level player, and appears as though she's dancing when doing various moves."

Zasalamel

"With that deadly scythe he has in his hands, Zasalamel can pull opponents in or push them away. He's a well-balanced character who most anybody can handle."



YOU HAVE TO HAVE A QUICK MIND SO YOU CAN SURF



HARDER. I GET MOTIVATED JUST BY THINKING OF SURFING.



I WOULD NEVER THINK OF SMOKING POT.



(Continued from page 92)

than a few feet from a lickety-split loss. As before, back-to-the-wall beatdowns sap big stamina, whereas being forced from the ring means forfeiting the round. The barriers—rock and wood railings—are all new and add to the strategy: Some attacks send opponents sailing (ii) and over 'em, others put 'em clean through in a cloud of splinters and sheared stone.

The trick is to guess where the other guy is going, to drive him in specific directions while he tries to do the same. "Soul Calibur's system (see sidebar: High-caliber education) has always rewarded reading your opponent," says Yotoryiyama. "If you're holding a small sword and someone comes at you with a huge sword, you instinctively want to sway to the side or step away. It's a natural response, and it's where Eight-Way Run [which frees you to move in any direction while still facing your foe] comes from. Also, duels have a definitive timing, a pattern of thrust, parry, and feint, which is where we get Guard Impact and move faking."

Mo' modes

Don't fret if the nuances seem daunting: Yotoryiyama and company have newcomers covered. In fact, Soul Arena mode—a variety of bouts with special victory conditions—is designed not only to draw the casual crowd, but to convert them into hardcore fighting fans in the bargain. "When a duel requires you to do this or that to do damage," Yotoryiyama says, "It's also teaching you new tricks."

Other parts are plain fun. Coin Collector matches (also part of Soul Arena mode) involve beating the charge out of baddies like a schoolyard bully, then scooping up the loot as it scatters. Soul Squash is about bouncing an adversary between walls racquetball-style. Whisp Shoot fills the arena with wandering sprits, which you can absorb and fire at your foe. Finally, Dancing Statue pits players against a granite colossus in a David and Goliath-style duel. While Yotoryiyama won't say whether we'll walk tall as the giant himself, it's possible he's among the game's

(continued on page 94)

SOUL EXCEPTIONS

The ones that didn't make it

■ That gossip pegged *Devil May Cry* star Dante as a bonus brawler. After all, *Soul Calibur II* had guest characters from other companies, so why wouldn't its sequel? Putting the rumor to rest, Producer Hiroaki Yotoryiyama assures us that "Dante will not be in *Soul Calibur III*." Where did the scuttlebutt originate? "The Internet," answers the producer, laughing so hard and long that we suspect something's been lost in translation.

■ Appearing in all three versions of *Soul Calibur*, Hecrod (created by comic book and toy mogul Todd McFarlane) was neither a true guest character nor the greatest idea—the mock tie-in villain mimicked a variety of the cast's best moves, breaking the game's balance in the process. Where's the big bag now? "Hecrod? Producer Yotoryiyama muses, "Hecrod has gone on vacation."

WHAT'S THE STORY?

"Why did all these people decide to beat on each other? Producer Yotoryiyama sums it up superquickly: "*Soul Blade* (PS1) was about the existence of an evil, soul-stealing sword called the Soul Edge. *Soul Calibur* (Dreamcast) introduced its foil, a good sword. *Soul Calibur II* told the story of the evil sword's return and how it took over the *Soul Calibur*. *Soul*

Calibur III is essentially about what happens next. More significant than the two weapons, however, are the warriors who encounter them. "The most important part of a fighting game is the characters who are fighting, and it's crucial to give them motivation—why are they fighting, what are the stakes, what are their places in the big picture? SC3 provides that."





5

ENFORCERS

FRAMED FOR MURDER

HAVE ONLY ONE WAY OUT.

BEAT DOWN

FISTS OF VENGEANCE™

100 WAYS TO INFLICT PAIN.

AUGUST 2005

www.capcom.com/beatdown



MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Strong Language
Violence



PlayStation



CAPCOM

©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2005. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. ©cavia 2005. CAPCOM, the name CAPCOM, the CAPCOM logo and the CAPCOM logo marks, BEATDOWN, FISTS OF VENGEANCE is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. and cavia inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings logo is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks are owned by their respective owners.

(continued from page 34)

whopping cast of 30 playable characters—a lineup that includes every warrior to lift a sword in the series, along with a trio of new bruisers: hula gal Tira, scythe dude Zaslamei, and parasol-blade prima donna Setsuka. (“We always start with a weapon,” says Motion Design Chief Kento Kojima, “then determine what sort of movement fits that weapon, and what kind of character fits the movement.”)

Soul Calibur II's console-specific characters Link (GameCube), Heihachi (PlayStation 2), and Spawn (Xbox), however, aren't reprising their roles, and no new Sony-appropriate stars are standing in. “But we think we're offering something better,” says Yotoryama. “Instead of a single guest character, we're giving you tools to create your own.”

Soul mates

If you're prone to coordinate colors and flatter facial features with hip hairstyles, outfitting a hero in character-creation mode can take hours. Even if you aren't the choosy sort, you still might find yourself asking, “Does that kimono complement these clogs?” It all starts with a specialization. The profession you pick determines strength (the damage your attacks do), vitality (the extent to which the enemies hurt you), hit points (total health), and agility (how fast your fighter runs around the ring). Next, you'll need to settle on facial structure and skin tone, tweaking eyebrows, lips, and the like until the suave swordsman or grizzled samurai geezer of your fantasies springs to life. Then comes clothing, a head-to-toe assortment of shoulder pads, helmets, shoes, belts, hats, sashes, armor, and accessories—all of which can be layered and colored as you like. Adjustments aren't all superficial either. Stick to a bright palette and your disposition will be outgoing; go for an ominous look and it'll get darker, as reflected in dialogue and victory dances between rounds. Your character will continue to evolve in *Soul Calibur III*'s Chronicles of the Sword story/strategy mode (see sidebar). “You can make most any character imaginable.”

(continued on page 36)

STRATEGIZING BY THE SWORD

Consider *Soul Calibur III*'s Chronicles of the Sword mode a test of sorts. If players take to its combination of real-time strategy and *Soul Calibur* combat, series creators say they'll consider spinning a role-playing game off the series. Here's how this potentially fun genre-bender works:

■ Missions unfold on finely detailed, top-down maps. Starting with a handful of fighters, your created character included, you'll move each around fortresses and over open terrain on a network of trails. Mission objectives range from annihilating a rival army to rescuing a stranded unit; here, you'll capture a series of strongholds.



ABELIA

Lv.24
Health
Weapon

[Infantry]
[240/240]
[Resting Verge]

■ Come into contact with free-roaming opposing forces and you're forced to fight. Winning the standard *Soul Calibur* duel that follows earns you experience points, which—depending on your profession—power-up either speed, toughness, strength, or stamina. Success in Chronicles of the Sword also earns you additional weapons and clothing options for character creation.



RESULTS

LEVEL UP!

LV.	24 ↑	WINS	73 ↑
EXP	10550 ↑	LOSE	2
NEXT EXP	11290 ↑	DRAW	5



IF YOU'RE GOING TO SIT IN YOUR BASEMENT
PRETENDING TO BE AN ELF,

YOU SHOULD AT LEAST HAVE SOME FRIENDS OVER TO HELP.



GET TOGETHER. ROLL SOME DICE. HAVE FUN.


PLAYDND.COM



(continued from page 96)

Yotriyama says, "And, of course, we think it's a great way to introduce new players to the game, people who aren't normally into the genre."

Everybody wins

Yotriyama's strategy seems sound: Let the fanatics fight one another at the expense of studies, social lives, work schedules, and friendships, while offering everyone else an outlet to enjoy the experience at their own level of understanding. It's that same reluctance to leave anyone out to which he attributes the series' continuing lack of online play: "We're very interested in [it], but at the same time, what the worldwide research we conducted showed was that the infrastructure is uneven, that not everyone has [high-speed Internet access]. So rather than implement online play which isn't something everyone would be able to enjoy, we felt expanding the single-player content and delivering an extremely compelling product would be the wiser direction to go with *SC3*." At some point, however, we have to wonder: to what extent the producer is picking and choosing answers. What about the PS2-exclusivity part, for instance? Won't that alienate the hundreds of thousands who supported *SC2* on Nintendo's and Microsoft's hardware? "It's a timing issue as well," he says. "When we looked at the extent of the content we were determined to deliver and the time frame in which we wanted to deliver it, we knew we'd have to concentrate on a single platform."

The team's tight schedule carries other consequences, too. This *SC* looks a lot like the last—certifiably stunning, with flashes that follow blades as they arc through the air and almost artistic animation, but somehow less so than you'd expect from a sequel in a series that has just gotten more gorgeous with each installment. Ditto for design: You can't complain about the way one of the genre's finest games works, except to say that it's too little you haven't seen before. Whether or not it's all enough, of course, is another matter of perspective.

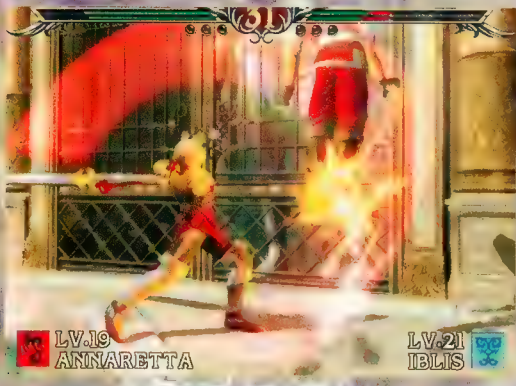
STRATEGIZING BY THE SWORD (CONT.)



XIAOXIN
Lv.18 [Bandit]
Health [240/240]
Weapon [Dark]

■ To seize a stronghold, you'll need to stand on it for a set amount of time. Assign two or three soldiers to the spot and the enemy will have to take them all on, one at a time. Note that while losing once won't knock you out of the mission, it will reduce your total hit points for the remainder of it.

■ With two soldiers overtaking one stronghold, it might be wise to move your custom warrior to another. Before assaulting the fort, you can scan the garrison guarding it—seeing, for instance, that the assassin with a short sword there is a less-than-ideal match for your lance—and strategize accordingly.



LV.19 ANNARETTA **LV.21 IBLIS**



GERALD
Lv.40 [Knight]
Health [240/240]
Weapon [Hell Design]

■ Each character in *Chronicles of the Sword* is also coded as cavalry, infantry, knight, or bandit (i.e., in addition to his assigned profession). This designation determines a warrior's strengths and weaknesses on the mission map—how fast he can cross certain types of terrain (cavalry and infantry), how efficiently he can turn strongholds (knights), and whether he can pass through occupied bases (Bandit). "To figure out the best battle strategy," says Producer Hiroaki Yotriyama, "you must be able to base decisions on conditions that change from moment to moment."



TOP ORCHESTRAS AND CHOIRS COMBINED WITH VIDEO FOOTAGE, LASERS, LIGHTS AND LIVE ACTION TO CREATE AN EXPLOSIVE AND UNIQUE ENTERTAINMENT EXPERIENCE.

PERFORMING MUSIC FROM

HALO MARIO KINGDOM HEARTS
WARFRAME ZELDA METAL GEAR SOLID
MYST CASTLEVANIA plus
TRON SONIC CLASSIC ARCADE SEGMENTS
TOMB RAIDER ADVENTURE MUSIC AND MANY MORE



IN CONCERT!
VIDEO GAMES
NORTH AMERICAN TOUR
2005 LIVE™

For more information, or to purchase tickets, visit:
www.videogameslive.com or www.ticketmaster.com

8/11 ATLANTA, GA
8/13 HOLMEL, NJ
8/14 CAMDEN, NJ
8/17 TORONTO, ONTARIO
8/19 BRISTOW, VA
8/22 BOSTON, MA
8/24 CLEVELAND, OH
8/25 COLUMBUS, OH
8/26 CINCINNATI, OH
8/27 CHICAGO, IL
8/28 DETROIT, MI

9/1 DENVER, CO
9/3 DALLAS, TX
9/4 HOUSTON, TX
9/6 PHOENIX, AZ
9/7 SAN DIEGO, CA
9/9 MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA
9/11 IRVINE, CA

MORE DATES COMING SOON...
* DATES AND LOCATIONS
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Created and produced by Tommy Tallarico and Jack Wall
A Clear Channel Music Group and Mystical Stone Entertainment Production

CLEAR CHANNEL
MUSIC GROUP



DRESSED TO KILL

Build a better swordsman
in character creation mode



Gender

Men and women are created equal in *Soul Calibur*. Why not make separate characters of each sex?



Job

The profession you pick (if possible in all) determines what weapons your character can wield (ninjas, for example, use kunai or the katana-and-shuriken combo) and his stats (slow-moving barbarians rely on brute strength).



Hair

From the traditional topknot to Prince Valiant's bangs to Princess Leila's bun, hairstyles come but never go.



Underwear

Armor chafes. Cover your character's sensitive spots in anything from functional chain mail to frilly peek-a-boo panties.



Face

First, select a facial structure from a staggering assortment encompassing most every ethnicity and age. Then independently change the color of eyebrows, eyes, and lips.





Upper and mid torso

Apply clothing and accessories to layers, dressing parts of the torso differently as desired. Masks, necklaces, collars, scarves, and sashes are available as well.



Shoulders and arms

Producer Hiroaki Yoshitama made sure his dynasty warrior's duds matched. If you'd rather your pirate rocked ninja-arm-guards, go right ahead.



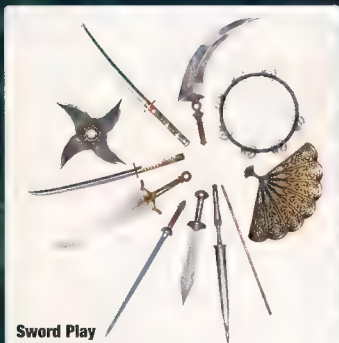
Legs and hips

Socks and shoes go on separately, same goes for the gear on your shins, waist, and legs. Also, changing the color of each piece of apparel alters your personality.



Finishing touches

Now that you've created and fully clothed your fighter, he needs a sword of some sort (see below).



Sword Play

Which one of the character creation mode's 10 stock weapons you decide on (completing *Chronicles of the Sword's* many missions unlocks others) will determine the attacks at your disposal. So far, each style (be it staff, sword and buckler, etc.) seems derived from *Soul Calibur's* existing cast, but the developer explains that it's still working on each weapon's arsenal.





A Monster in the Making



Just how big a phenomenon is the Dragon Quest™ series? On previous launch dates, thousands of Japanese schoolchildren were mysteriously absent from school, and count less salarymen inexplicably called in sick. And somehow, all of them wound up visiting their local game store so they could be first to play the latest Dragon Quest title...

In order to curb this disturbing game-related wave of truancy and counter-productivity, Square Enix™ (formerly Enix) elected to release future Dragon Quest games only on weekends—and the Japanese government and ministry of education let out a collective sigh of relief.

The epic role-playing game series known as Dragon Quest has captured the hearts and minds of game fans of all ages for almost 20 years. Beloved since its 1986 debut on the Japanese Famicom (NES), the Dragon Quest series has sold more than 40 million copies worldwide and spawned a number of sequels, music CDs, comic books, T-shirts, toys, and two animated TV shows.

It even led to a game where players roll pencils with Dragon Quest characters' attacks and stats printed on each side. "Dragon Quest Battle Pencils" became popular mid-class diversions, evolving into a phenomenon that resulted in angry principals banning them in schools across the island nation.



THE LATEST title in the franchise, *Dragon Quest VIII*, sold over 3 million copies in Japan within the first three days of release. Now, the thrilling PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system adventure is crossing the Pacific to take over America, courtesy of Square Enix, maker of the genre-defining FINAL FANTASY® series and the world's number one creator of role-playing games.

Set to launch in November, the U.S. version of *Dragon Quest VIII: Journey of the Cursed King™* features a slew of improvements and additions, including spectacular voice acting, brand-new animations, greatly enhanced music and sound effects, and a highly refined graphical interface that makes playing a snap.

In short, the Quest just got a whole lot more epic...



A WORLD WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

You are the hero, and your quest awaits! Gather allies and venture into battle to thwart the malicious jester known as Dhoulmagus. Be brave, but know that your journey will not be an easy one; the foul Dhoulmagus possesses a magic scepter powerful enough to curse an entire kingdom, transforming its people into plants and its rulers into beasts.

Live the glorious adventure, with beautiful cel-shaded graphics and characters created by famed Japanese comic artist Akira Toriyama, creator of the *Dragon Ball* series. Battle a myriad of enemies both amusing and dangerous in turn-based combat, and customize your allies' tactics, attacks, and spells. Explore a lush, streaming 3D world fraught with wondrous items to find, challenges to complete, dungeons to explore, and monsters to slay. With hundreds of hours of gameplay lying in wait, you'll quickly realize why the world of *Dragon Quest* has already captivated one nation...



Alcohol Reference
Fantasy Violence
Mild Language
Simulated Gambling
Suggestive Themes



PlayStation 2

SQUARE ENIX™

www.square-enix.com



THE KING OF RPG'S

There's no denying that Square Enix knows role-playing games; 60 million people worldwide have enjoyed the company's definitive FINAL

FANTASY games.

For *Dragon Quest VIII: Journey of the Cursed King*, Square Enix partnered with some of the game industry's finest talents, including the esteemed series' creator Yuji Horii, composer Koichi Sugiyama, and developer Level-5. An all-star team ensures that this PlayStation 2 adventure is one magnificent RPG—and a King worth paying homage to. ■





review crew

a quiet month in which we find ourselves ready for some football

GAME DIRECTORY

MULTIPLATFORM

- 106 Madden NFL 06
- 108 Fantastic 4
- 108 The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction
- 109 Batman Begins

PLAYSTATION 2

- 110 EyeToy: Play 2
- 110 Makai Kingdom: Chronicles of the Sacred Tome
- 112 Fullmetal Alchemist 2: Curse of the Crimson Elixir

XBOX

- 112 Sid Meier's Pirates!

GC

- 114 Geist
- 115 Sonic Gems Collection

PSP

- 116 Death, Jr.
- 116 Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition

DS

- 118 Advance Wars: Dual Strike
- 119 Pac'N Roll
- 120 Nanostray
- 120 Splinter Cell Chaos Theory

EXTRA STUFF

- 122 Reviews Wrap-up
- 124 Reviews Archive



★
GAME OF THE MONTH

THIS MONTH IN REVIEWS...

Not everybody likes *Madden*. Not everybody likes *Madden* as Game of the Month, either. It's a refresh—a roster update!; we'll get rate e-mails that manage to say exactly that, except in 2,000 words. Some of those e-mails might even come from nonporto EGM staffers. Sure it's a refresh. So is *Advance Wars: Dual Strike* and *EyeToy: Play 2*, two titles that also earned awards this month. They're all refreshes of fundamentally great games—made better, in most cases.

But with sports sims, there's a very simple reason the good ones score

well year after year: We have an objective measuring stick. Everybody's seen football games on television, and almost everyone has played football, if only in the backyard. How can a videogame that does a pretty good job of re-creating that experience—and makes it fun to play—not be scored accordingly?

In other news, one of the three superhero games we reviewed this issue bowled us over with its incredible...Hulk-ness. Tossing around cars and smashing buildings as a green, irradiated Lou Ferrigno is actually as fun as it sounds.





THE REVIEW CREW



DAN "SHOE" HSU, Editor-in-Chief
Likes (again): *Advance Wars: Dual Strike*, *Meteos*
Dislikes: Too much portable gaming = Bad eyes
Blog: egmshoe.1UP.com



MARK MACDONALD, Executive Editor
Likes: Shooters, adventure, new *Halo 2* maps
Dislikes: Recent drought of good PSP games
Blog: egmmark.1UP.com



JENNIFER TSAD, Managing Editor
Likes: Real-life football (seriously!)
Dislikes: Videogame football (sorry, sports!)
Blog: egmjennifer.1UP.com



CRISPIN BOYER, Senior Editor
Likes: Neon, videogames about pirates
Dislikes: Fluorescence, piracy of videogames
Blog: egmcrispin.1UP.com



SHANE BETTENHAUSEN, Previews Editor
Likes: RPGs, karaoke, fighting games, *Burnout*
Dislikes: Mondays, pickles, terrorism, pennies
Blog: egmshane.1UP.com



DEMIAN LINN, Reviews Editor
Likes: Playing Marty Turco in *NHL 2K9* (lost in OT)
Dislikes: French toys (see the blog)
Blog: egmdemian.1UP.com



BRYAN INTIHAR, News Editor
Likes: Action, adventure, sports
Dislikes: The nickname "Saorto"
Blog: egmbryan.1UP.com



ROBERT ASHLEY, Staff Reviewer
Likes: Games in bed, aka the new reading
Dislikes: Games on toilet, aka the new thinking
Blog: brantreesbob.1UP.com



SHAWN ELLIOTT, Staff Reviewer
Likes: *Soul Calibur III*, Tokyo, sharing
Dislikes: Jet lag, people editing his text
Blog: egmshawn.1UP.com



GREG FORD, Staff Reviewer
Likes: *Madden*, buried pirate treasure
Dislikes: Collections of bad games
Blog: egm_ford.1UP.com



JAMES LEE, Staff Reviewer
Likes: Hockey, making Greg's head bleed
Dislikes: RPGs and chocolate Twizzlers
Blog: egmlee.1UP.com

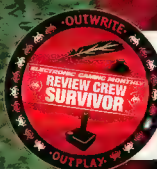


PATRICK MAURO, Staff Reviewer
Likes: Playing the new *Madison* (in the nude)
Dislikes: Chihuahua as an accessory
Blog: What, me blog?



CHRISTIAN NUTT, Staff Reviewer
Likes: Multiple new .hack announcements
Dislikes: PSP—what happened? Back to *Ridge*
Blog: fericide.1UP.com

JUSTIN SPEER, Staff Reviewer
Likes: The profundity of strategic card battles
Dislikes: Joanna Dark's new look
Blog: zepulys.1UP.com



AARON KOEHN

The winner of our Review Crew Survivor contest was put on a strict superhero-game-only diet this month. The subject did not react well, proclaiming "meh!" to that new *Batman* game and "bluargh!" to *Fantastic 4*. Read all about it on pages 108 and 109.



THE RATING SYSTEM & AWARDS

7.0-10 GOOD

5.0-6.5 FAIR

3.0-4.5 POOR



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 unimpossibly bad scores.

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

Everyone: Suitable for all ages. Includes cartoon violence, mild language, and possibly Smurfs.

Everyone 10+: Suitable for all ages over 10 that may include mild violence between cartoon squirts.

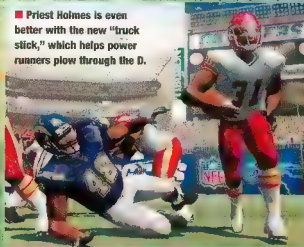
Teen: The PG-13 of game ratings. Fisticuffs, hilarious sexual misunderstandings, and mascot antics.

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

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.**

You may also see reviews written in the talks over at **OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE** and **1UP.COM**. Do not be alarmed; these people are all right.

■ Priest Holmes is even better with the new "truck stick," which helps power runners plow through the D.



PS2/XB/GC

MADDEN NFL 06

16 years and still splitting the uprights

ONLINE
PS2/GBA

★
GAME OF THE MONTH

RYAN: When *Madden* became the only NFL game in town (EA acquired the exclusive rights to the license late last year), I'm sure some sports worried that it would give the company an excuse to kick back the Lay-Z-Boy, open a cold one, and put the *Madden* series on autopilot. Well fear no more—the megapopular gridiron franchise definitely did not take this season off.

The tweaks start with *06*'s new QB vision control passing system. A cone represents your quarterback's view of the field, and you'll receive a major accuracy bonus if you throw the pigskin to a receiver in that highlighted area. While the feature fosters a sense of realism, it also unnecessarily complicates your aerial attack (see sidebar).

But the rest of *06* is right on target. For starters, the ground game is vastly improved, thanks to wider running lanes and the added ability to run over defenders with a quick flick of the right analog stick (C-stick on the Cube). You can now call smart routes, which make a designated receiver

go for the first-down marker. Even defense—which really stepped it up last year—is slinger here. (I found myself in position for a lot more interceptions.) And if you aren't a fan of setting concession prices in franchise mode, the ego-filled NFL superstar mode will happily occupy your time (check G. Ford's review for all those details). Now, if only the developers can fix those new passing mechanics for the Xbox 360 version....

G. FORD: *Madden 06* is still excellent despite the fact that, as Bryan said, its biggest innovation really amounts to an unnecessary step in the passing game. I'm more impressed by the little tweaks—precision passing (see below), smart routes, the "truck stick" for those Jerome Bettis moments—that improve the overall experience.

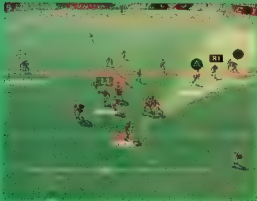
The second biggest innovation, NFL superstar mode, contrasts nicely with the deep but long-in-the-tooth franchise mode. Following a created or imported (from *NFL Street 2* or *NCAA 06*) player as

he takes an IQ test, gets drafted, hires agents, and even plays football on occasion may not excite every gamer, but it's a creative alternative to the usual stuff. Regardless, when you get between the lines, the action doesn't get any better.

PATRICK M: Another year, another *Madden*, and another step toward the perfect football game. Seemingly minor tweaks—35 new offensive formations, offensive line audibles, and a fake snap button to draw the defense offside—dramatically enhance the NFL experience. Running the ball feels more realistic with the new truck stick, a high-impact change (literally) that allows the ball carrier to flatten defenses, while the new back juke will leave overaggressive defenders scattered about the field. I just wish I could use the precision passing feature yet not worry about that passing cone. Only the steep learning curve of the new passing system keeps this *Madden* from perfection. **A-**

The PSP Factor:

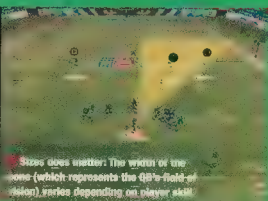
PS2 owners catch a lucky break—their version of *Madden* comes packed with PSP system link features you can transfer franchise data from the console game and continue playing your season on the PSP edition (which lacks the handheld this September) vice versa.



Just a Passing Fancy?

We give the developers a coachlike pat on the butt for trying something different with the revamped passing system, but it's still far from perfect. In previous *Maddens* it was hard enough to find an open man while avoiding QB-hungry pass rushers—now, you also have to worry about the quarterback's field of vision (controlled via the right stick/C-stick, or you can also lock on to receivers with a button press on PS2/XB), an extra step that makes you even more vulnerable to sacks. With fewer shoulder buttons on Xbox and GameCube, it's still a bigger headache.

You can turn it off and pass the old way, but then you can't precisely place balls high, low, in front of, or behind the receiver—lame.



Stars show weather: The width of the cone (which represents the QB's field of vision) varies depending on player skill.

Good: NFL superstar mode, improved running lanes.
Bad: Overcomplicated passing system.
Still to Come This Year: *Madden* for PSP and Xbox 360.



THE VERDICT
OUT OF 10

8.5 9.0 9.5

BRYAN G. FORD PATRICK M.

Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Tiburon
Players: PS2 1-2 (3-8)
w/ Multiplay, 3 online, XB 1-4 (2
online), GC 1-4
ESRB: Everyone
www.easports.com

MAXIMUM GAMING ON A MINIMUM WAGE

PLAY NEW GAMES FOR LESS LIKE MADDEN 06. RENT FOR JUST \$6.99



BLOCKBUSTER

Membership fees apply. This advertisement is not for rent. Prices subject to change. This selection available for rent only. Any applicable restrictions apply. © 2005 Blockbuster Entertainment. All rights reserved.



Hulk, seconds before he's crushed by the giant cheeseburger boss (see below). Roll credits, no sequel.

PS2/XB/GC

THE INCREDIBLE HULK: ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION

Quite smashing

Good: Hulk get mad, smash everything, and take a beating. **Bad:** Player get mad in one or two frustrating missions. **Favorite Hulk Pastimes:** Kicking car field goals, soldier baseball



JUSTIN: If you're going to put the Incredible Hulk in a videogame, give the guy some room. *Ultimate Destruction* puts the mean, green comic-book hero in open, Grand Theft Auto-style areas and lets players know the joy of smashing. The Hulk barrels through traffic like a linebacker, stomps up and over buildings with crashing momentum, and leaves huge dents in everything he touches. The Hulk has dozens of ways to do damage, each gaining more destructive power if you brutally smash the move's button in for a few seconds. The resulting carnage is insanely gratifying to one's raging id.

Instead of asking us to sneak around science labs as the guy who turns into the Hulk (like the last Hulk game), *Ultimate Destruction* leaves Dr. Bruce Banner's internal struggles right where they belong—in cut-scenes. Instead, you focus on battles with soldiers, helicopters, tanks, combat mechs, and fellow out-of-control mutants. In summary: Hulk mad! Hulk smash everything! Good call.

CRISPIN: Turns out the Hulk ain't so dumb. He's stolen ideas from fellow



Marvel comic icon Spider-Man, whose *Spider-Man 2* game gave players full control over the webslinger's goo-shooters and set him loose in a sprawling New York City. *Ultimate Destruction* follows suit, diligently reproducing Mr. Green's unlimited strength and unleashing it in smashingly fun urban and desert playgrounds. And while these environments aren't as pretty or dynamic as *Spider-Man*'s metropolis, the missions themselves are usually more exciting (especially the bonus games that have Hulk battling soldiers for distance records or trying to leap across the city without touching the ground). Story missions do get repetitive and control gets slippery when you push Hulk to full bore, but unlocking new powers kept me in the destructive mood.

OFFICIAL PS MAG—TOM: *Ultimate Destruction* is quite possibly the best superhero game to date. A slow start soon gives way to *God of War* intensity that takes off and never looks back. It works because the Hulk looks and acts exactly as you'd expect him to: full of gamma-generated rage. He leaps across the huge, open-ended environments, wall-runs up the sides of buildings, and executes fighting combos and feats of strength that only the Hulk could pull off. Tossing a tank to bring down a Titan Hulkbuster is simply an awesome moment. Hulk fans will appreciate the story line that includes such stalwarts as General "Thunderbolt" Ross, Doc Samson, the Abomination, and even the Devil Hulk. Quite smashing, indeed.

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

www.hulkgames.com

THE VERDICT'S
SCALE OF 10

9.0	7.5	9.0
JUSTIN	CRISPIN	TOM

PS2/XB/GC

FANTASTIC 4

Could use more Hulk



Street Fighter's Ken called—he wants his flaming Dragon Punch back.

Good: Get to play as Jessica Alba, tons of boss fights **Bad:** Can't make Alba's clothes invisible, lots of button mashing **Lamest Use of Super Power:** Turning into a tire



JAMES: Before radiation started cranking out superheroes like an assembly line, there was the Fantastic Four. And now that every comic-based movie is being partnered with a teenage videogame sidekick, we have a not-so-fantastic game.

Playing as the stretchy dude, invisible girl, human barbecue, or badass Rice Krispie treat still equals loads of button mashing for you. Thankfully, when you're fighting against the plethora of villains, such as Mole Man, Puppet Master, or a guy named Dragon Man (bitten by a radioactive dragon, presumably), the boss fights will have you strategizing and switching between characters. For example, you'll use ranged fireball attacks against Diablo and stretchy punches to the ass against gigantic mollusks (don't ask).

But it's mostly mediocre. *Fantastic 4* desperately tries to break up the button mashing with lame minigames, like hacking a door by doing preschool puzzles, which just made the game feel like a fantastic chore. Plus, the two-player co-op had me battling for the camera—both players can move it, so don't play with an idiot. Still, I'm a lover compared to Aaron

RC SURVIVOR—AARON: If you're going to call yourself "fantastic," you sure better be. But I've got to describe this particular "F" words to get some of this particular foursome. This game is big ridden and shoddy looking and has very loose controls, which are made worse by an incompetent camera that occasionally spins around you like it's attached to a crashing helicopter. Laughable voice act-

ing during between-level cut-scenes does nothing to alleviate the frustrating gameplay you've just endured, nor does it further the incoherent story. If playing as a superhero is your thing, I'd recommend buying some fights before buying this mess.

OFFICIAL PS MAG—TOM: Dang, Aaron. I think *Fantastic 4* is loads better than the average movie-based game—and like the movie, it's light, entertaining fare that doesn't take itself too seriously. Rather than lazily follow the movie's plot, it draws villains from the early years of the FF comic books: sure, the nonmovie levels may have little to do with the overall plot, but to longtime FF fans it's a blast to see Mole Man, Puppet Master, Annihilus, and even Blaastar. While it's short—most will finish in under eight hours—the levels are competently designed and the four characters are well balanced and convincing (the Human Torch is, um, coolest). I didn't have trouble with the shared camera control in two-player, either. *FF* isn't the slapsdash maled-in-effort it easily could have been.



THE VERDICT'S
SCALE OF 10

6.0	7.0
JAMES	AARON

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Seven Studios
Players: 1-2
ESRB: Teen

www.activision.com

PS2/XB/GC

BATMAN BEGINS

Splinter Cell for dummies



Batman: hovering above mediocre performance.

THE VERDICTS OUT OF 100	6.0	5.0	5.0
	MARK	BRYAN	AARON

Publisher: EA Games
Developer: Eurocom
Players: 1
ESRB: Teen

www.ea.com

Good: Sharp graphics; fun driving missions
Bad: Simple, repetitive gameplay
Nice Bonus: Unlockable making-of documentaries



MARK: Fantastic graphics, solid controls, stealth gameplay, lock-picking minigames, an optic cable to peek under closed doors, and a tight, black outfit—*Batman Begins* sounds a lot like *Splinter Cell*. It's not a terrible comparison, and I might even give *Begins* the edge in terms of story; the game follows the film closely and benefits greatly from the original cast's excellent voice acting.

But then the comparison falls apart, and *Batman* drops the batarang: It's too simplistic. While the game gives the illusion of *Splinter Cell*-style freedom in how you want to take out your enemies, Batman only really ever has one course of action: knock something over, scare the bad guys into dropping their guns, then come in punching and kicking. EA was obviously trying hard not to alienate anyone from the gigantic movie audience—maybe too hard. Once you recognize the formula, the game quickly starts to feel repetitive. Other minor complaints (fidgety camera, stupid guard A.I.) balance out with highlights (*Burnout*-like driving missions, cool moves in combat). The result is enough to appease casual players looking to relive the movie but not more discriminating gamers.

BRYAN: They should've called it *Batman for Beginners*. Seriously, this *Splinter Cell*

wannabe (complete with Hollywood good looks and top-notch voiceovers) doesn't just hold your hand, it practically picks you up, straps you into a bat-shaped baby carriage, and pushes you along. Searching for a point of entry? Don't worry, the game will always indicate where it is. Can't remember how to deliver that final blow to some dimwitted, no-name foe? Relax, simply wait for the "finish" icon to appear onscreen (no, really). It's almost like *Begins* was specifically designed for people who are new to this whole videogame thing. Still, I bet even newbies will label the Dark Knight's interactive return too much of a cakewalk.

RC SURVIVOR—AARON: This *Batman* installment reeks of *Metal Gear Solid* plagiarism (more so than *Splinter Cell*, to me) like the batsuit reeks after a bat-chili bender. The familiar *Metal Gear* radar (with the enemy's line of sight) is here, but mated with an inept combat system. Batman's got sweet gadgets as usual, but where to use them is so predetermined it gives the game a painfully linear feel. *Begins'* big pro is how great it looks, especially the lighting effects, which are contrasted nicely by the dark atmosphere, but I still found myself wishing the game would go the way of the old batsuit nipples and disappear.



SCHOOL OF ANIMATION & VISUAL EFFECTS
Student ... Jeremy Vorstad



play games or design them?

80% of our graduates are working in the art and design industry

SCHOOL OF ANIMATION & VISUAL EFFECTS

Games, 3D Animation,
2D Animation, 3D Modeling,
Character Animation,
Background Painting,
Storyboard & VFX/Compositing

ACADEMY of ART UNIVERSITY

FOUNDED IN SAN FRANCISCO 1929
BY ARTISTS FOR ARTISTS



REGISTER NOW

1.800.544.ARTS | www.academyart.edu FOR FALL-CLASSES START SEPTEMBER 1

79 New Montgomery St., San Francisco, CA 94105 • Nationally Accredited by ACICS, NASAD, FIDER (BFA-IAD), NAAAB - Candidate Status (M-ARCH)

PlayStation 2

MAKAI KINGDOM: CHRONICLES OF THE SACRED TOME

Devils, details, and delightful comedy



THE VERDICTS
(OUT OF 10)

7.5	8.0	7.5
JUSTIN	SHANE	CHRISTIAN

Publisher: NIS America
Developer: Nippon Ichi
Players: 1
ESRB: Teen
www.nisamerica.com

Good: Do things your way; plenty of extra goals.
Bad: Few interesting challenges; lots of clutter.
Strangely Western: It's called *Phantom Kingdom* in Japan

JUSTIN: Casting the player as an arrogant, power-hungry overlord, *Makai Kingdom* is a turn-based strategy game that indulges the stat-obsessed megalomaniac in everyone—or at least in fans of developer Nippon Ichi's other work (*Disgaea*, *La Pucelle*, etc.).

To conquer *Makai*'s challenges, you'll build an entire army from scratch using an eclectic mix of netherworldly soldiers, including healers, samurai, gun-toting infantry, and fearsome walking produce. Forget the actual battles; this is where the strategy is. Rather than choosing units for their capabilities, you'll find yourself planning ahead to unlock powerful new types of warriors, exploiting replayable stages and serial reincarnation to create your army.

But don't feel bad about it. Battle tactics can be boiled down to hit first and hit hardest. The depth comes in unraveling the huge, messy clunk of game systems and statistics and bending them to your will. Once you've done that, raise your fists and laugh maniacally till you hit level 9,999 or you're no longer amused—whichever comes first.

SHANE: Sure, developer Nippon Ichi does a fine job serving the hardcore tactical RPG crowd with a never-ending series of devilishly complex titles...but seriously,

guy, how long will we have to put up with these graphics? *Makai Kingdom*, like *Phantom Brave* and *Disgaea* before it, looks like it crawled outta 1997. Luckily, the rewarding gameplay (sporting a welcome refinement of *Brave*'s "confine" system and a new town-building aspect) still shines. Once again, it's all about character customization and experimentation, and a wonderfully lengthy quest (with the usual sampling of optional hidden dungeons) will keep diehards occupied for weeks. Plus, it's hard to hate on an ugly game with a great personality—*Makai*'s demon lords are veritable kings of comedy.

CHRISTIAN: Even in a genre known for being highly abstracted, *Makai Kingdom* seems practically without context. It all feels so, well, irrelevant—pushing around a bunch of tiny characters and dealing with their assorted toys provides loads of intellectual satisfaction, but I found it hard to make a real connection. The story, which actually has a great tongue-in-cheek sense of humor, bears on the gameplay only in the most offhand way. I can see why the developer has racked up die-hard fans, but I feel like I've been playing a game designed to appeal to tax accountants. *Makai Kingdom* is clever and exceptionally full, but I just didn't feel it, personally.

PlayStation 2

EYETOY: PLAY 2

Moving in the right direction



THE VERDICTS
(OUT OF 10)

8.0	7.5	8.0
JENNIFER	ROBERT	PATRICK K.

Publisher: Sony CEI
Developer: Sony CEI
Players: 1-4
ESRB: Everyone 10+

Good: These silly games keep getting better.
Bad: Camera sensitivity's still not 100 percent accurate.
Faked by Sony: These suspiciously gorgeous screenshots

JENNIFER: My arms hurt—*EyeToy: Play 2* got me using them in unnatural ways. The latest collection for Sony's motion-sensing camera peripheral asks players to saw, strum, whack, and smack through a dozen quirky minigames, and even taken with a healthy dose of skepticism, *Play 2* is fantastic. *EyeToy* titles always have a gimicky vibe, but in this case that preconception is wrong. Almost all of the games here are interesting, challenging, and enjoyable.

Everyone will have a different favorite—mine was Secret Agent—but what's undeniable is the variety and genuine innovation within each game. Playing *DIY*, you saw wood, build brick walls, put branches in a chipper, and more. The stupid-sounding-but-actually-amusing *Mr. Chef* has you assembling burgers, shaking milkshakes, grating cheese, and smashing tomatoes. Each of these activities requires a unique motion or tactic, and the many stages keep things more entertaining than the static minigames from the first *Play*.

Of course, the game is best played in groups, whether in the multiplayer mode or simply messing around in the noncompetitive *Play Room*. Score arms? For an unusual gaming experience like this, it's worth it.

ROBERT: Every time a new *EyeToy* game comes out it feels like we're checking in with the lab to see how the progress is

coming. As the camera gets more sensitive and responsive, the mission of controlling characters with body movements (already done fairly well in *AntiGrav*) looks better and better. For now, we get another set of carcomored minigames.

Actually, many of these games are far from "mini." With a better song selection and more frets to work with, *Air Guitar* could be a great stand-alone game. Same goes for *Mr. Chef*, a strangely compelling cooking game. So it's frustrating when these fun games just end at a sudden.

I appreciate that *Play 2* targets casual players, but I wish it had more challenging options—I played through most of the games on my first try.

TUP.COM—PATRICK K: *EyeToy* may be but a simple web camera, but simplicity has its charms. The first *Play* consisted of basic minigames without much substance. The sequel could have easily used the same strategy and been successful, but it's more ambitious. Motion is the hook in *Play 2*: players must constantly move and control their bodies, drag items across the screen, and so on. *Kung Fu* and other favorites return alongside video messaging, a slew of visualization gimmicks, and new, more complex games. It still lacks depth, but *Play 2* strongly rivals *Karaoke Revolution* for best party game.

EB GAMES™

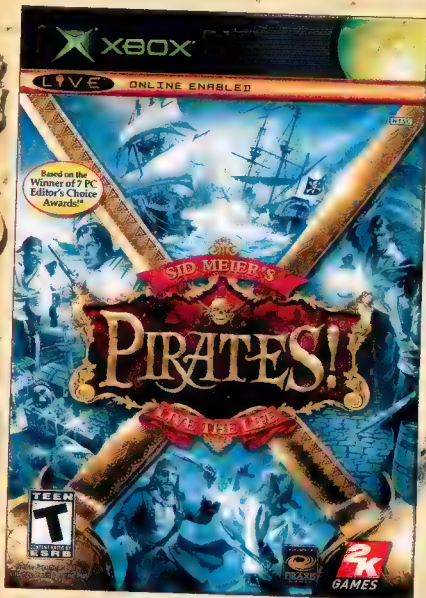
electronics boutique®



Only \$29.99

after \$10 EB Games mail-in gift voucher

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



Purchase Sid Meier's Pirates for Xbox® for only \$29.99 after \$10 EB Games mail-in gift voucher.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

Enter your email address to receive voucher status updates, news and special offers.

Mail this completed form along with your original sales receipt to EB Games Rebate Center / 770 Pilot Road, Suite F / Las Vegas, NV 89119. Savings will be sent in the form of an EB Games gift voucher. No cash will be issued. Gift voucher cannot be redeemed for cash, except where prohibited by law. Gift vouchers are good toward future purchases at any EB Games, Electronics Boutique or EDX in the U.S. or Puerto Rico. All incomplete forms will be discarded. EB Games is not responsible for lost and/or stolen mail-in and/or gift vouchers. Limit one per customer. Cannot be combined with any other offer or promotion. Not valid on previous purchases. Not valid on Pre-Played games. While supplies last. Selection may vary by store. No substitutions can be made. No rain checks will be issued. Some exclusions may apply. See Sales Associate for complete details. Typographical errors are not the responsibility of EB Games. Sid Meier's Pirates XB (sku: 246054-1) Voucher ID: 3751

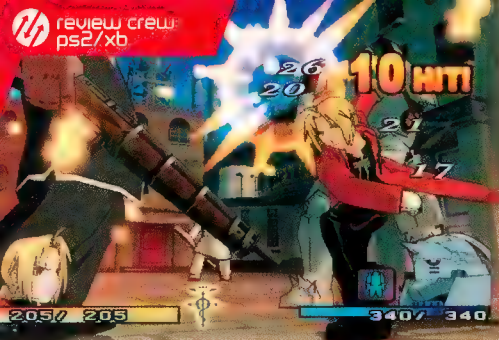
EB GAMES
electronics boutique
THE ORIGINAL

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT www.EBgames.com

EB GAMES
electronics boutique
www.ebgames.com

We take games seriously™

2K
GAMES



Xbox

SID MEIER'S PIRATES!

Pieces of great



Ships ho! Up to four players can exchange broadsides in the decent (but not online) multiplayer mode.

PlayStation 2

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST 2: CURSE OF THE CRIMSON ELIXIR

Catch this one in reruns

Good: Enriches the characters of the popular anime
Bad: Short, easy, simplistic
In Anime Terms: Filler episode



CHRISTIAN: Game publisher and all-around media juggernaut Square Enix once again turns its popular anime series into an action-roller, and it still feels like *Kingdom Hearts* light. At about seven and a half hours in, I realized I was approaching the game's climax. Before I reached nine hours, the credits had rolled.

It may say Square Enix on the box, but *Alchemist 2* is designed to suck in casual fans of the TV series—not hardcore role-playing types. So criticizing it feels about as fair as picking on the dyslexic kid during reading class. It isn't just that it's short—everything in the game is blindly obvious. Treasure chests are “hidden” in plain sight. Not once are you given a choice of where to go or what to do. If you can make it through a *Final Fantasy*, you'll decimate here.

The game isn't without charm, though. I've only caught a few episodes of the show, but I like the characters—and they're in fine form. The graphics do a good job of re-creating the series' look, and the combat goes beyond button-mashing. *Fullmetal Alchemist?* Maybe. *Full-price Alchemist?* No way. If you want

a meaty alchemic role-playing game, conjure up *Atelier Iris* instead.

SHANE: Appearing a scant six months after the first *Alchemist* PS2 adventure, this new chapter improves its forerunner's formula in many ways: An effective new visual style mimics the anime's distinctive look, deeper combat gives you control over a large arsenal of moves and combos, and a mostly original story line gives fans something to chew on. But the game still feels way too straightforward, short, and limiting—it's more of a beefed-up brawler than an RPG. And with a gameplay concept as cool as alchemy, it's a shame that the developers include so few uses of it. Maybe the third chapter (already in the works) will finally do this license justice.

OFFICIAL PS MAG—SCOOTER: While *Alchemist 2* is a better game than its predecessor, it's only a minor upgrade. It looks and sounds like an episode of the anime (largely due to the smart use of cartoonish graphics and voice talent), except it plays much like the previous game. Sure, the newer transmutations and combat options (like main guy Ed creating swords out of thin air) are spifty, but sidekick A.I. is still hard to control, the fighting is mindless, and the rest of the game is still linear action-RPG fare. It's a fun little distraction for fans of the anime, but not much else. If the previous game was a case of turning lead into copper, this one is akin to transmuting lead into shinier copper.



Not seen on TV: The animation is all new.

THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)	5.5	6.0	6.0
	CHRISTIAN	SHANE	SCOOTER

Publisher: Square Enix
Developer: Racjin
Players: 1
ESRB: Teen

www.square-enix.com

Good: Simple and addictive gameplay
Bad: Some minigames get repetitive
Crew a Real Big! All War At: www.ladywashington.org



CRISPIN: Ship blasting, town sacking, cutlass slashing, lass romancing, treasure hunting—if it's part of pirate pop culture, it's plundered by *Pirates!*, a slightly tweaked port of the acclaimed PC action-role-playing game. But depending on *Pirates'* life really is for these depends on how much you adore its grog-soaked subject matter (and I do), as well as your level of patience for playing the same few minigames over and over.

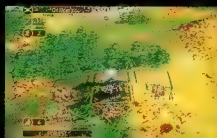
Like the classic computer game on which it's based, *Pirates!* is more an amalgamation of fun little challenges strung together by a booty of miniquests and an overall plot to avenge your family's nasty fate. Sword fights and ballroom dancing boil down to timed button presses. Sacking towns just takes a few minutes of strategic placement on a chess-piece battlefield. None of it's hard (pick a trickier difficulty level, time period, or nationality to dodge a total cakewalk), and most of it's fun...for a while. Eventually, my impatience with the same little games set in like seasickness, but the quests and fleet of ships and play-astardly-as-you-tare piracy kept me from hopping overboard.

C. FORD: An open-ended game like *Pirates!* is dangerous for a player like me, someone who has that strange need to collect every shiny bauble a game hides and complete all insignificant side missions. I went two go-rounds to finally finish its primary revenge missions. But I didn't mind, because its eclectic minigames and do-anything structure

hooked me big time. Once you learn the rules and choose the right difficulty, the sword fighting, city sacking, and ship blasting prove divine. Dancing and sneaking...not so much, and a waypoint system akin to that of *GTA: San Andreas* to keep your adventures in order would've been handy, but any pirate life has its compromises.

DEMIAN: At this point, I'd like to stress that a score of 6.5 is above average. Because *Pirates!* is definitely an above-average game—I was totally hooked on it for a while, even staying up late to pirate just one more town or sink one more hapless Spanish trade galleon.

Unfortunately, sometimes I was also up late playing the “dance with the governor's daughter” minigame, the mind numbingness of which infects *Pirates!* like an aggressive strain of scurvy. I love the game's open-ended format and even its basic premise, but most of the minigames (not just the dancing one—I'm also sending the rapier blades and stealth bits to the stockade) are repetitive and, well, a bit crap, honestly. It's worth playing, but save your doubloons until you can get it for a steal.



THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)	8.0	8.5	6.5
	CRISPIN	G. FORD	DEMIAN

Publisher: 2K Games
Developer: Firaxis
Players: 4-8
ESRB: Everyone

www.2kgames.com

Are you

SKILLED

enough,

GOOD

enough,

BAD

enough to...



WIN \$1,000,000!

It is **Time**. **Time** to take it to the next level. **Time** to put your money where your mouth is. **Time** to have fun. **Time** to compete. Do you have what it takes?

VISIT US AT EGAMINGLEAGUE.COM

• Player registers for a tournament by choosing a console, and a particular game.

• Players are organized into groups of 10.

• Each player plays every other player within this group.

• Players will participate in a minimum of 9 games each time they register. Each 9 game set is called a round.

• Player with the best record in each round advances to the next round.

• Prizes are awarded to the winners of each round.

• Prizes will be awarded accordingly. Round one prize will be \$10, round two \$100, round three \$1000, round four \$10,000.

• The number of rounds will be determined by the number of participants in a given tournament.

• Tournaments will grow in increments of 1000 players.

• Player standing in EGamingLeague will be based on a point accumulation system. (ie. Most rounds won, most games won, highest points score, etc.)

• A World Cup Championship tournament, made up of the best EGamingLeague gamers, will be run once a year.

• The grand prize for the World Cup Championship may be as high as \$1,000,000.

• The World Cup Championship winners will be featured in magazine, websites, and possibly television.

GameCube

GEIST

Ghostbusted

CRISPIN: Possession is nine-tenths of the game in *Geist*, an off-killer first-person adventure that has you playing a spirit on a possessing spree. You hit the ground gunning at the outset, guiding an operative sent to shut down a mysterious company that's harvesting ghosts and brainwashing them so they become terrorist spies. Fortunately, this early dose of first-person blasting is short; *Geist*'s primitive shooting sections are less fun than sitting through that mid-'90s live-action *Casper* flick. Most enemies are morons, little more than human turrets who can't wait to get blasted (comical death animations ensue).

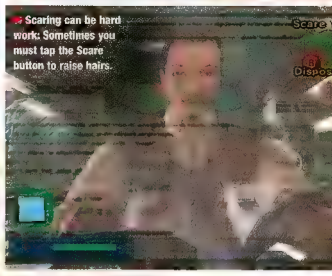
Life—or, rather, the afterlife—improves once you become a wandering spirit who can possess enough random objects to fill a Home Depot. Dish racks, soda cans, light bulbs, ceiling fans, exploding barrels—they're all up for spectral grabs. So why inhabit a bowl of dog food? Each object often has a "scare" function that frightens nearby animals or humans, which you can only possess once

you get their knees knocking. It's a killer idea that might have worked in a game from a more accomplished developer, or if n-Space (maker of *Duke Nukem* and *Mary-Kate & Ashley* games) had more time. *Geist*, however, is a sloppy mess of nonsensical plot points, dumb puzzles (which often boil down to trial-and-error guessing), and yet more bland blasting sections toward the end of the game, when this whole ghost train really derails.

MARK: Two games cobbled together on one disc, *Geist* is more Frankenstein than ghost. It's got the body of any late-'90s PC shooter (no-hum graphics, lame animation, generic weapons and enemies) and a head filled with the step-by-step item-hunt puzzles of adventure games best left forgotten. As for the brain, there isn't one: Enemy A.I. is laughable. Moments when the intriguing elements of this paranormal shooter synch up do exist—like when you hop from sentry turret to security guard to exploding crate, possessing each in turn and pitting

them against one another—but they are few and far between. Oddly enough, everything works better in the unique multiplayer modes, with you and your friends (and cannon-fodder bots, if you like) providing the steady mix of strategy and chaos that n-Space couldn't manage for the one-player game.

1UP.COM—ANDREW: It's one step forward, three steps back for *Geist*. I like the idea of jumping from body to body (to mop bucket) and wreaking spiritual havoc upon my enemies, and in the context of hopping into soldiers for different weapons and abilities, it's fairly well done here. But once you figure out the basic puzzle design (find objects to possess, use them in the right order to scare dude, then possess dude), the routine gets old fast. It's nice not to have to worry about animo, but enemy soldiers show little intelligence, so you don't need a lot of firepower to take them down. And the interesting, sometimes trippy story is hampered by substandard visuals and low production values. ☹



Scaring can be hard work. Sometimes you must tap the Scare button to raise hairs.

When did ghost busting become *God of War*? These towering stone golems are *Geist*'s only fun—and most out-of-place—bosses.

Repo Men
Geist's three-split-screen multiplayer modes are certainly different—and fun. They all mix in the ghosts—immortals, ghouls, mooks of players taking over each other's avatars (and weapons), such as turrets. Our favorite pits ghost hunters against spirits, who must possess the hunters and walk them into deadly traps.

My Afterlife as a Manhole Cover...and Three Other Random Possessions From Geist

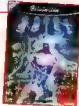
Manhole Cover
Highs: Protect pedestrians from falling into human waste; leap dozens of feet into the air to scare evil scientists.
Lows: You spend your life in close proximity to turds, which makes for a limited social scene.

Bowl of Dog Food
Highs: You can terrify a dog with its own food, thus opening up the canine for possession. Trust us: The dog's more fun to control.
Lows: You're frequently licked clean by a dog. And we all know where that tongue has been.

Motorcycle
Highs: Can give friends lifts around town, plus pull totally sweet wheelies.
Lows: This sequence does not live up to the comic potential of failed TV pilot *Heat Vision & Jack*. (Never seen it? Google it immediately!)

Hot Shower Girl
Highs: She's hot. And in the shower. Plus, possessing her gives access to a hospital wing, where you rescue your former partner.
Lows: If you can't spend the rest of the game checking yourself out in the mirror, what's the point?

Good: Novel possess-your-enemies gameplay
Bad: Primitive visuals, lame first-person shooter
Somewhere: Patrick Swayze is weeping



THE MESSY CRISPIN 6.0 MARK 5.5 ANDREW

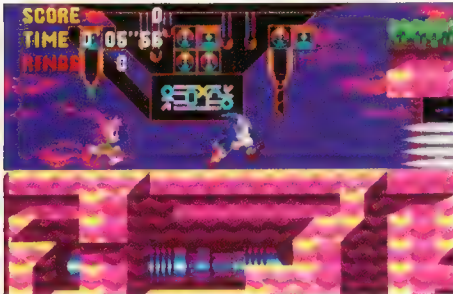
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: n-Space
Players: 1-4
ESRB: Mature

www.nintendo.com

GameCube

SONIC GEMS COLLECTION

A diamond, two opals, and lots of cubic zirconia



■ *Sonic CD*: Brilliant, creative, and packed with hot hedgehog-on-hedgehog action.



■ Props to Sega for reviving *Sonic the Fighters*, but where are lost gems *Chouto* and *SegaSonic*?

THE VERDICTS (out of 10)	SHANE	G. FORD	JEREMY
	6.5	5.5	6.5

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sonic Team
Players: 1-2
ESRB: Everyone

www.sega.com

Good: *Sonic CD*

Bath: Game Gear *Sonic* games

America Loses: Japanese version has extra games



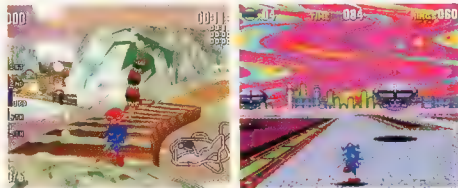
SHANE: With all the proper, mainstream *Sonic* games sitting pretty in the best-selling *Sonic Mega Collection*, Sega had to dig pretty deep into the annals of obscurity to compile this sister compilation. It's a woefully uneven mix, but one that true *Sonic* fans will probably still want to own just for *Sonic CD*, aka the best *Sonic* game ever. Don't listen to the haters: This game is utterly fantastic. By adding an actual reason to explore the colossal, creative levels—*Sonic* can journey to the past to create a "good future" in each stage—Sega morphed the series' trite run-n-jump gameplay into something phenomenal.

Regrettably, none of the other games here approach that level of greatness. *Sonic the Fighters* (making its first home appearance) feels like a dated, dumbed-down *Virtua Fighter*, while *Sonic R* offers the unlikely combination of clunky on-foot racing and a horrendous house-music soundtrack. A handful of mind-numbingly poor Game Gear games round out the package. Sega Genesis cult classic *Vectorman* (and its sequel) make for pretty sweet unlockables, but the Japanese *Gems Collection* also dishes up the three *Streets of Rage* games, which Sega removed to score an "E" ESRB rating. Weak.

G. FORD: When a game collection is anchored by a classic—say, *Pac-Man*—

you know that even if the filler is less than stellar, you've still got a rock to fall back on. The problem with *Sonic Gems Collection* is that its anchor, *Sonic CD*, while beloved by many (including Shane over there), is more of a wild card. I applaud the change-each-level-of-future concept, but I find the process of completing the steps to achieve these objectives often frustrating. The rest of the games range from mildly enjoyable (*Sonic Triple Threat*, *Tails Adventures*) to gimmicky bad (*Sonic the Fighters*, *Sonic R*) to just plain bad (Game Gear's *Sonic Spinball* and *Sonic Drift 2*). Among the stronger showings on this spotty *Sonic* collection are the unlockable *Vectorman* games.

1UP.COM—JEREMY: I'm all for retro compilations, but *Sonic Gems* is the third *Sonic* collection in as many years. At this point, we're mainly down to the dregs; sure, *Sonic CD* is cool (if not as great as the fan-boys—er, Shane—think) but most of the '90s-era games just aren't fun. And the *Tails* titles are garbage that I wouldn't even want to play on Game Gear, let alone on GameCube. Even the unlockables are lame; Japan gets *Streets of Rage* and we have to settle for *Vectorman*? Hey, Sega, you have dozens of titles that fans would kill to see. How about giving the blue guy a rest, and those other classics a little love? 🐉



■ *Sonic's* future view can be seen in *Sonic R* (left) and the special stages from *Sonic CD* (right).



Collins College >> Your profession. Our passion.

Main Campus - Tempe, AZ >> West Campus - Phoenix, AZ

Collins College offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in Game Design and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Visual Arts with a major in Game Art.

Add a new
dimension to
your life.

CALL NOW
FOR MORE
INFORMATION

1-888-356-7777
www.CollinsCollege.edu

Collins College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACCSC). Financial Aid is available for those who qualify. Career services assistance. Collins College West is a branch of Collins College. Not all programs available at all locations.



by Mick O'Connor

PSP

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION

Worth the wait?



THE VERDICTS
ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10

7.0	8.5	7.5
DEMIAN	G. FORD	JAMES

Publisher: Rockstar
Developer: Rockstar Leeds/
San Diego
Players: 1 (2-6 via local Wi-Fi)
ESRB: Everyone 10+
www.midnightclub.com

Good: The entire console game shoehorned into the PSP.
Bad: If you've played it on the big TV, there's no going back.
No Sense of Speed: When you're staring at a loading screen.



DEMIAN: *Midnight Club* for PSP is missing one thing: Muzak. Nothing would complete the "on hold" experience of the game's minute-plus load times like the song stylings of Kenny G—perfect to contemplate suicide to.

But in between all the painful waiting, *DUB* is a great street-racing game—the same great game you may have already played on a console. Like, *exactly* the same. You still race through Detroit, San Diego, and Atlanta, upgrading, tuning, and picking out your favorite spinner rims. It's long. It's fast. It's frustrating when you mess up a quarter mile from the finish line and have to restart for the third time. And it looks absolutely beautiful on the PSP, although you'll want to crank the game's brightness all the way up. *DUB* also supports six-player Wi-Fi races (everyone has to have their own copy of the game, unfortunately), along with other multiplayer modes like tag, but not full online racing.

The thing is, *DUB* just doesn't make that much sense as a handheld game when you could be playing it at home on a far bigger screen, without load times that make you want to cry.

G. FORD: I've long been a fan of *Midnight Club*'s driving style—with its emphasis on intense city driving, telephone poles be

damned—so I was happy to see the tradition successfully carry over to PSP. This game's not perfect: It has frequent, killer load times, and strangely, when you wipe out, you reappear facing the wall or whatever it was you hit. But still, it's a mighty impressive title that stands out on a system with an abundance of good racers. The game's open-ended setup works well in the shortcut-filled, uniquely delatied cities, and the special moves breathe life into the tweak-and-upgrade-till-you-bleed street-racing genre. Definitely a ride worth taking.

JAMES: This ambitious PSP game has got all the original console game's pimped-out cars with strange special powers, like slowing down time or shooting out sonic booms. But I would've just been happy with stronger headlights, as I had to up the brightness on my PSP, wishing it was *Midnight Club* but *Mid-Afternoon Club* as I started in the dark city of San Diego. There's less oncoming traffic to compensate for the smaller screen, and I didn't quite feel the classic *Midnight Club* sense of speed like *Demian* did. But thankfully, all the races from the console version are here, so whether you're new or old to the series, *DUB* for PSP has plenty to keep you busy for a long time.

PSP

DEATH, JR.

Warmed over



Repetitive? Well, *Shoe* may have a squeaky Circle button on his PSP due to *Death, Jr.*'s constant button-mashing...

THE VERDICTS
ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10

5.0	4.0	6.0
ROBERT	SHOE	CHRISTIAN

Publisher: Konami
Developer: Backbone
Players: 1
ESRB: Teen
www.deathjr.com

Good: Death and despair as humorous subject matters
Bad: Monotonous shoot-a-thon with a horrible camera
Source Material: *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Psychonauts*



ROBERT: In the wasteland of racing games and regurgitated franchises currently on offer for the PSP, *Death, Jr.* looks like an oasis. It's not an update, an offshoot, or a sequel—and the game's characters have a touch of Tim Burton's gothic-horror-meets-Saturday-morning-cartoon style. But unfortunately, this oasis is a mirage.

Death, Jr. is basically a third-person shooter. You watch the action from behind DJ as he plows through an assortment of monsters with his arsenal of guns and trusty scythe. Or that's how it would work—if the in-game camera weren't completely inept. It has a knack for sticking in place (resisting your L button calls to regroup behind DJ) and dumbly staring at a wall as your health drains away.

The game has you mindlessly shooting away as you crawl along from one firelight to another through boxy, dull levels. Many of the stages are actually similar to those in *Psychonauts* for Xbox and PS2 (Meat World = Meat Circus, Suburbia = Milkman Conspiracy, Asylum = Asylum), but with none of that game's subtle detail or charm. And don't even think about storytelling, which rears its head here just long enough for a fart joke. *Death, Jr.* is DOA.

SHOE: I've never gotten motion sickness from playing a game...until now. *Death, Jr.*'s stages are dingy and dark (even with

the PSP's and in-game brightness levels maxed out), the viewpoint's constantly whipping around like an indecisive spaz, and the motion's all blurry and choppy—couldn't stand playing *DJ* for more than 30 minutes at a time.

OK, so you're the masochistic type who's willing to sacrifice his eyesight at an early age. Well then, you can look forward to a better experience further into the game when you get all the big guns (and the options to upgrade them into even bigger guns). But still, with the bland levels, generic PS1-era platform game play, and cheap enemies, you shouldn't bother.

CHRISTIAN: Between the Tim Burton style and the Jonon Vasquez (*Johnny the Homicidal Maniac*, *Invader Zim*) screwed-up-kids-in-school motif, I was hooked the first time I saw *Death, Jr.*'s concept art. I just wish the developer's reach hadn't exceeded its grasp. It's a fun game, no doubt, but it's way too focused on combat. PSP may be big and beautiful compared to Game Boy, but airplane glare left me unable to dodge and weave as precisely as the game requires. *Death, Jr.*'s tons o' guns can make for frantic fun, but when the enemies have unerring aim, it's cheaper than Christmas cards on December 26—especially when the controls are floater than a Thanksgiving Day balloon.

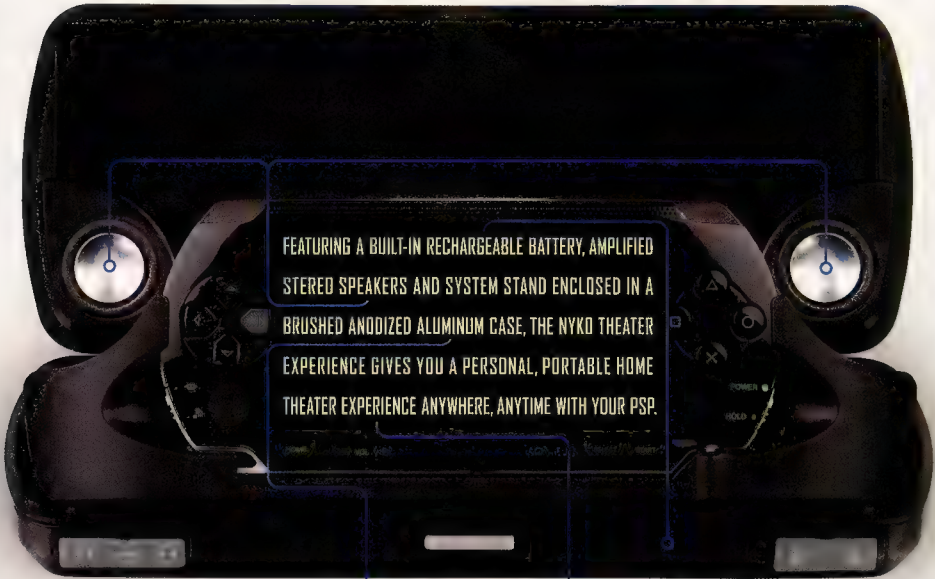
AND NOW... YOUR FEATURE PRESENTATION.

"CLEARLY... THE LEXUS OF PSP™ CASES"

— Pocket Games, Spring 2005

"TWO OF THE TOP FIVE MUST-HAVE
ACCESSORIES FOR THE PSP™"

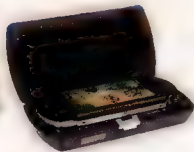
— Gamespy.com



FEATURING A BUILT-IN RECHARGEABLE BATTERY, AMPLIFIED
STEREO SPEAKERS AND SYSTEM STAND ENCLOSED IN A
BRUSHED ANODIZED ALUMINUM CASE, THE NYKO THEATER
EXPERIENCE GIVES YOU A PERSONAL, PORTABLE HOME
THEATER EXPERIENCE ANYWHERE, ANYTIME WITH YOUR PSP.

THEATER EXPERIENCE™ for PSP

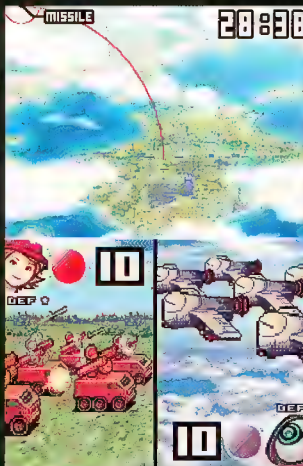
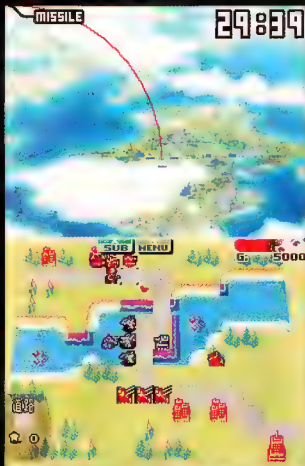
ALUMINUM CASE WITH BUILT-IN
SPEAKERS, RECHARGEABLE BATTERY
AND STAND FOR PSP. ADDS UP TO
7 HOURS OF EXTRA PLAY TIME.



CHARGER CASE™ for PSP

ALUMINUM CHARGER CASE
WITH BUILT-IN RECHARGEABLE
BATTERY FOR PSP. ADDS UP TO
7 HOURS OF EXTRA PLAY TIME.

NYKO
www.nyko.com



■ The top screen can show game data or a second front to advance war on.

■ In survival mode, you'll have limited funds, rookids, or time to complete a set number of stages.

DS

ADVANCE WARS: DUAL STRIKE

Is that a tiny battalion in your pocket?

SHOE: That sub just sank my battleship! Fine—I'll send that sub to the ocean floor with my cruiser's torpedoes. But then that cruiser has to watch out for long-range missiles from shore. But I can take care of those with my new megatank, if that stealth bomber doesn't drop its load first.... The ultimate in rock-paper-scissors turn-based strategy returns—this time on the DS—and unlike *Advance Wars 2*, this sequel has a whole lot new going on.

The six new units really make this feel like a significant upgrade over *AW2*, which showed off only one new AT-AT-like tank. Having one or two vehicles on every front (repair boats on the water, black bombs in the sky, etc.) forces *AW* vets to think up new offensive and defensive strategies.

And you can now fight battles on the two sepa-

rate screens, send units from one front to the other, swap between commanding officers to optimize their powers, upgrade those COs with new skills gained from experience, capture communication towers to increase your power.... It's all great for fans of the series looking for something new, but it may be a bit *too* advanced for greenhorns.

The difficulty ramps up in no time, and the new modes (combat and survival) can make a novice swear off tiny-tank strategy games forever. Regardless, something this deep and fun at the same time is a rare treat, especially on a portable system. I'll be replaying this one for months....

DEMIAN: Shoe's right about *Dual Strike*'s complexity—rookies will need to sleep with the manual.

under their pillows to get a grip on all the unit types, CO powers, and how terrain modifies combat. But dogged beginners will discover what the pros already know: All that complexity makes for fascinatingly deep, strategic battles. You'll feel like you deserve a silver star just for beating the CPU.

I absolutely hate the between-battle anime-style talking heads, though—new guy Jake is the worst, always going on about "owning" and serving "hot bowls of smackdown soup"—and while the stylus speeds up combat somewhat, it's too easy to slip up and end a unit accidentally or tell a factory to make the wrong unit.

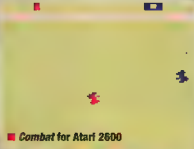
TUP.COM—MILKMAN: A winning combination of style and substance, *Dual Strike*'s true beauty lies beneath the surface. It's the expanded portfolio of vehicles and strategic subtleties and wealth of new commanding officer combos that really make this game sing. While the actual battlefields and unit graphics haven't evolved much and the Jake character sounds like an Eminem-wannabe, the new survival and combat modes (eight can play combat using one cart, by the way) more than compensate. Result? Super-addictive strategy gaming. ★

Going Wi-Fi

Dual Strike isn't the first wireless multiplayer support. We got dropped only once during our hours of playtesting, though we were sitting quite far apart from one another (about 30 to 35 feet away). You can send preprogrammed messages to each other, too, so break out the dirty-language dictionaries.

Combat Evolved

The new combat mode, coincidentally or not, plays a lot like the Atari 2600 game of the same name. With a limited budget, you buy units and then send them out one by one to destroy foes or capture buildings (move with the D-pad, shoot by tapping the stylus toward your foe). *Advance Wars* vets'll find it to be a fun little distraction, especially in multiplayer. If you're a rookie, however, it'll probably seem way too simple...and stupid.



■ Combat for Atari 2600

Good: New modes, units, and ways to play.
Bad: Accidentally selecting the wrong things with the stylus.
Not Aight: New character Jake is a bit too hip and in our faces.



THE MEGACRISIS

9.0 8.5 9.0

SHOE DEMIAN MILKMAN

Publisher: Nintendo
 Developer: Intelligent Systems
 Players: 1-4 (2-6 via local Wi-Fi)
 ESRB: Everyone

www.nintendo.com

DS

PAC'N ROLL

Rolling up in style



■ The heinous level 5-3. If you can Pac'N roll here, you can Pac'N roll anywhere.

THE VERDICTS OUT OF 10	7.5	6.5	6.5
	SHANE	JENNIFER	ROBERT

Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Players: 1
ESRB: Everyone

www.namco.com

Good: Creative, challenging gameplay.
Bad: Steep difficulty curve; juvenile story.
Bastard Child Of: *Marble Madness* and *Super Mario 64*



SHANE: Cleanse the memories of the weirdly endearing (yet ultimately insubstantial) *Pac-Pix* from your mind: *Pac'N Roll* is a more worthwhile DS game. While it initially seems straightforward—roll our rotund hero through mazes by dragging the stylus across him on the DS' bottom screen—it quickly matures into a serious and creative platforming adventure. As special moves, power-ups, boss encounters, and tricky jumps enter the equation, the gameplay ramps up to nearly *Super Mario 64* levels. In fact, the level designs eventually get a bit too ambitious for the control scheme: The moving platforms, tipping scales, and jump pads of level 5-3 will give an ulcer to all but the most skilled players. Luckily, a variety of entertaining modes (time attack, challenge, classic *Pac-Man*) will keep you busy until you can conquer the tougher stages.

Overall, *Pac'N Roll* is a nice-looking, solid action-adventure that—most important—feels like a real game, not some wacky tech demo. Don't be scared away by its baby-gamer look: The complexity and difficulty of the later levels strikes a stark contrast to the cornball story line that unfolds (very slowly) in a series of picture-book cut-scenes aimed at 4-year-olds. If you're old enough to read, you're old enough to skip all the cinemas.

JENNIFER: *Pac* doesn't quite roll with the big boys here—especially now that last month's *Kirby Canvas Curse* has set a new standard for touch-screen platforming. The level design is by no means terrible, and controlling Pac-Man feels intuitive and natural. Boss battles are decent, and Pac has a couple of interesting power-ups that keep the gameplay from being too rudimentary. But *Pac'N Roll* lacks that certain something that would have elevated it from just meh to truly memorable. I found myself playing the game simply because I had nothing better to do, not because I was particularly into it.

ROBERT: I like my *Pac-Man* games abstract, a skeleton to hang a simple game on. While *Pac'N Roll* goes through the motions of story and adds the annoying villain Golvis to its cast, the game itself never strays far from simple fun. The stylus-on-trackball interface feels like driving a car via remote-controlled robot, like one too many degrees of separation between you and Pac-Man. But it works and lends novelty to a familiar game. *Pac'N Roll* lacks the sweaty-forehead urgency an arcade-style game needs, at least until the more elaborate later levels. Time limits could have added that tension, but I'll settle for the unlockable time attack mode.

MUSIC VIDEO JOINS THE GAMING REVOLUTION!

Eagle Rock Entertainment providing music video content for the 1.2 million+ PSPs

ALL TITLES INCLUDE FULL DVD CONTENT!

Eagle Rock Entertainment is the first music company to fully embrace Sony's new UMD format for PlayStation Portable (PSP) with the release of their first wave of music and concert titles. Taking advantage of the high-capacity (1.0 gigabyte) space on the UMD and the high resolution LCD screen, music fans will now be able to bring their favorite concert along to sit back and watch on those long flights or road trips.

ALL TITLES AVAILABLE IN STORES 8/30/05



BUSTA RHYMES
EVERYTHING REMAINS RAW



SNOOP DOGG
PUFF PUFF PASS TOUR



PUDDLE OF MUDD
STRIKING THAT FAMILIAR CHORD



VARIOUS ARTISTS
THE UP IN SMOKE TOUR



MARILYN MANSON
RINGS, GOD AND GOVERNMENT WORLD TOUR

UMD for PSP

www.eaglerockent.com

www.eaglerockent.com

www.eaglerockent.com

www.eaglerockent.com

www.eaglerockent.com

DS

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY

No. Just, no



■ Up to four can play versus mode with just one cart, but two-player co-op requires two copies.

Good: Includes all the levels and multiplayer modes
Bad: Everything else. Seriously: everything
Explains a Lot: Based on the N-Gage version

MARK: As a fan of stealth-action in general and the Xbox *Chaos Theory* in particular, playing the DS version is like reuniting with an old friend...who's gained weight, lost his hair, had his limbs chopped off, his brain sucked out, and been through one of those ear-crusher things. And smells. Like eat pee.

I will grant *Chaos Theory* only two things before a "but" so huge it must be italicized: It's impressive how much of the full console game it includes (the moves, long levels, and multiplayer modes), and about 30 seconds of my co-op game with Shoe was accidentally fun (I shot him in the ass). But every other aspect of DS *Splinter Cell* is like a lesson in bad game design. The control scheme: awkward as hell. The touch screen camera is screwy enough, but it requires constant attention, taking your hand off the buttons that open doors, grab guns, pull out your weapons, and so on (which is annoying in single player and effectively kills multiplayer entirely). The graphics: blocky and sloppy. If they weren't so murky and dim, the way they chug along frame by frame may have induced vomiting. Enemy A.I.: nonexistent. I could go on, but I won't. Let's all just try to forget this game ever happened.

the touch screen, I'll never understand.

This porta-Cell captures the console games' intense hide-and-seek-or-die mood fairly well (way better than the Game Boy editions did), but it's way too ambitious for the technology. On paper, it has all the modes and gameplay I'd want from a portable spy thriller, but the sluggish and blocky graphics only make me want to find a desk job instead.

TUP.COM—MATT: If the keys on my keyboard were as accurate as the controls in *Chaos Theory*, this review would, at minimum, have the symbols *, @, and # in it. And I'm not trying to curse, despite the game's best attempts to make me. No, I'm just dealing with this brutal combination of touch screen camera control, poor collision detection (which totally could have been saved if there was a melee attack in the game), and lack of precise movements: *Chaos Theory* provides glimpses of an extremely cool stealth game, where you can mess with the enemies by using aural and visual distractions like in the console version, but the controls are always seconds away from bugging you.



SHOE: The camera controls are riot as bad as Mark is making them out to be. The touch screen is a great way to make up for the lack of two analog control sticks in a full 3D game where your view is more important than the gun in your holster. But why the developers didn't put the rest of the controls (crouch, open doors, etc.) on

THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)

5.0	5.0	5.0
MARK	SHOE	MATT



■ Lots of bullets and strangely phallic enemies (top right). It's a shooter, all right.

DS

NANOSTRAY

Straight shooter

Good: Outright two-player modes
Bad: You can beat the whole game in under an hour
It'd Be Nice: If you had three hands to play this game



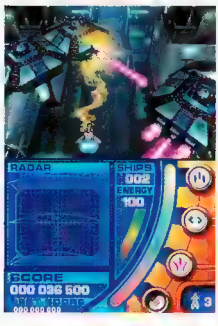
SHOE: On a certain level, any traditional 2D shooter can be fun. You shoot things, you dodge things—I like the sound of that. The difference maker is the gimmicks, like the weapon attachments in the *R-Type* series or the black/white dynamic in *Ikaruga* (GC). Without 'em, who cares? *Nanostray*'s "gimmick" is the use of the DS touch screen in the laziest way possible. You can select different weapons by touching the appropriate icon, hit a symbol to scan a boss for weak spots (which you can find by just shooting them), or activate anti-power-ups to screw up your opponent in two-player—all stuff that can be done without a touch screen. Plus, you won't want to lift your fingers from the regular buttons to touch the screen anyway (unless you like dying a lot), so I found myself sticking to one weapon type

for the entire game. Which, by the way, takes like 20 minutes to complete.

So *Nanostray* still plays like, well, most shooters, which makes it all right. Make sure to give the two-player mode a shot: It's a lot of fun working against each other instead of cooperating.

MARK: *Nanostray* should come in a plain white box labeled VERTICAL SPACE SHOOTER—it's as generic as games come. That's not to say it's terrible; it apes the thumb-twitch dodge-and-fire action of old-school Japanese arcade shooters well enough, but it lacks the clever play mechanic, personality, or style needed to encourage mastery or even replay. The weapon selection is weak, the power-up system simplistic (one might argue nonexistent), and the whole thing is over before you know it. The wait for a great DS shooter continues....

SHAWN: Flash-frozen shooter *Nanostray* is short enough to scroll through in the time it took to stop at a convenience store back when this sort of game was about the only sort of game. Perfect for a portable? Sure, if you're only playing once. You could say it's predictable ever after on purpose—made for memorizing the patterns of crossfire—but it takes a certain sort to play for points alone, and *Nano*'s past-blasting isn't neat enough if you're not nostalgic. Even its touch-screen weapon-select switches—the game's attempt to teach a dogged genre new tricks—would've worked better as actual buttons.



THE VERDICTS (OUT OF 10)

5.0	5.0	5.0
SHOE	MARK	SHAWN

Publisher: Majesco
 Developer: Shin on
 Players: 1 (2 via local Wi-Fi)
 ESRB: Everyone
 www.nanostray.com

8 RIDE 7 OR DIE

... looks incredibly detailed and dynamic with relentless and over-the-top car acrobatics."

1Up.com



STARRING
LARENZ TATE
NOEL G GUERRILLA BLACK
DRIVE. BLAST. RULE.

SOUNDTRACK BY
GUERRILLA BLACK

WWW.187GAME.COM



MATURE 17+
Blood
Strong Language
Violence

PlayStation 2

ONLINE
BROADBAND ONLY



XBOX
LIVE

XBOX
LIVE
ONLINE ENABLED



UBISOFT

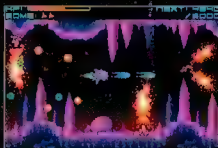
© 2005 Ubisoft Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. 187: Ride or Die, Ubisoft, Ubi.com, and the Ubisoft logo are trademarks of Ubisoft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires internet connection, Network Adaptor (for PlayStation 2) and Memory Card (PS2) (each sold separately). The Online logo is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Americas Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live logo, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

REVIEWS WRAP-UP

The games that were too little, too late...
...or on cell phones



Pink Gundam vs. chartreuse Gundam: Good taste loses.



Sigma Star Saga

GBA • Namco • ESRB: E — It's an adventure hybrid in which role-playing-game-style random encounters suck you into side-scrolling shooter sequences a bit too frequently. An enjoyable custom weapon system becomes overkill against enemies that rarely even return fire, making *Sigma* more about near-passive "leveling up" than reflex-fueled finesse.

Bottom line: Attractive, intriguing, and possibly worth playing, but *Sigma* fails to capture the essence of the space shooter.



Mobile Suit Gundam vs. Zeta Gundam

PS2 • Namco • ESRB: E — Like the previous *Gundam* action games (all developed by Capcom, as is this one), *MSG vs. Z6* is based heavily on its dark *Zeta* TV-show counterpart, which many fans consider to be one of the series' best seasons.

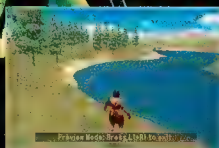
Bottom line: Aside from superficial fan service from the vintage TV series, the game is essentially the same clunky shooter you've played twice over—if you've played them at all. Even *Gundam*-diehards would probably be happier just watching Toonami.



Armored Core: Nine Breaker

PS2 • From Software • ESRB: T Call it *Gran Turismo* for giant robot aficionados; *Armored Core: Nine Breaker* (ninth in the *AC* series) is all about customizing your supersized metal man for battle. There's no longer any plot, just a string of opponents and unlockable robot parts.

Bottom line: A good time for the mech-curious and full-on robot-fetishists alike. *Nine Breaker*'s more than 400 replacement parts offer plenty of robot possibilities for serious hardware freaks.



RPG Maker 3

PS2 • Agetec • ESRB: E10+ — Well, since there won't be a new *Final Fantasy* this year, creative types can take matters into their own hands with this surprisingly powerful role-playing tool kit.

Bottom line: Getting even a rudimentary game up and running takes at least an hour, but the interface has actually come a long way since the previous *RPG Maker*. Likewise, the audiovisual presentation also looks a lot better...as in, actually like a PS2 game. Plus, this game makes good use of that pricey HDD unit you bought....

N-GAGE TRIPLE TEAM

What's goin' on on N-Gage? Wraslin', sneakin', drivin'...side talkin'...



WWE Aftershock

NG • THQ • ESRB: T Undertaker, Triple H, and the gang are back, looking like they were drawn by your kid brother. Even for an N-Gage game, *Aftershock*'s incredibly ugly. You can counter, punch, or grab, but it doesn't take much to master the weak controls.

Bottom line: *Aftershock* is a button masher with horrible music and bland single player. It's like playing with those deformed Bashin' Brawlers dolls.



Shoot him in the head pixel!

Splinter Cell Chaos Theory

NG • Ubisoft • ESRB: T — If you're dying to play *Chaos Theory* on your cell phone, you're in luck. Too bad all of *Splinter Cell*'s complicated controls, like night vision (press 3) or crouch (press 9), are mapped to every frigging button—it's like playing a stealth game on an ATM.

Bottom line: It's ambitiously in 3D, but with a frustrating camera and controls, Sam Fisher can try sneaking onto our handhelds...but we'll totally spot him.



Glimmerati

NG • Nokia • ESRB: M — This is one of the best and most ambitious N-Gage games yet. With an engaging story line of high-society racing, it's like *GTA* meets *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*. But instead of taking out gang bosses, you'll drive the boss' girlfriend to the airport.

Bottom line: If you own an N-Gage, this is a must have. The racing controls are simple and addictive, plus the hot chick racers really class it up.

SHONEN JUMP'S ONE PIECE GRAND BATTLE™

Battle to be King of the Pirates!

Ahoy there mi hearties! In a world of pirates, one man wants to become the greatest of them all: Monkey D. Luffy.

So stretch out those rubber limbs, unsheathe your sword and gather your pirate chums. It's time to do battle! Will you become King of the Pirates?



Choose from 16 one-of-a-kind wacky pirates and 32 support characters – each with more than 20 regular moves!*



Land ahoy! 7 colorful stages full of crazy gimmicks. Pick up and use objects to fight your foes!*



6 game play modes, including 2-player Grand Battle versus model!

Coming September 2005

Also look for the collectible card game coming soon!



PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE



BANDAI

www.BANDAI GAMES.com

*Screenshots and other play footage apply to PlayStation 2 and Nintendo GameCube™ versions only.
© 2005 Eiichiro Oda/Shueisha/Toei Animation/© 2005-2006 Bandai. BANDAI logo is a registered trademark of Bandai. All Rights Reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Game Boy Advance" and Nintendo Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2005 Nintendo. The ratings logo is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. CARTOON NETWORK and logo are trademarks of and © 2005 Cartoon Network.

REVIEWS ARCHIVE

The overhead bin for our travel-size reviews

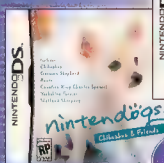
Nobody is safe from *Killer 7's* freaky visuals—not even old men in wheelchairs.

GAME	SYSTEM	VERDICT	SCORES (out of 10)	AWARD
Arc the Lad: End of Darkness	PS2	■ An "action" role-playing game with less action and more dialogue reading	6.0 5.5 4.0	
Advent Rising	XII	■ So-so sci-fi story, but you won't get past its numerous bugs and sucky controls	4.5 4.0 6.5	
Ares 51	PS2/XB	■ This fun, creepy shooter is satisfying even with Duchovny's monotonous voiceover	8.0 8.0 8.0	Silver
Atelier Iris: Eternal Mana	PS2	■ A difficult-to-pronounce name, but a worthy RPG with simple, enjoyable battles	8.0 7.0 7.5	
Bombberman DS	DS	■ Have a blast (get it?) with some classic multiplayer fun or the decent single-player	8.0 6.5 8.0	
Brothers in Arms: Road to Hill 30	PS2/XB	■ Sainte BW's brainy A.I. and squad tactics—it's the best WWII shooter yet	8.5 9.0 9.0	Silver
Close Combat: First to Fight	XII	■ Belongs in no man's land because of bland gameplay and shell-shocked A.I.	5.0 5.5 4.0	
Coded Arms	PSP	■ First-person shooting comes to PSP...then shoots itself in the foot with this crap	4.0 6.0 3.5	
Cold Fear	PS2/XB	■ It's a lukewarm zombie game, but the exploding head shots are rad	6.0 7.5 5.0	
Cold Winter	PS2	■ 007 meets MacGyver (sans mule) in this above-average violent shooter	7.0 6.5 7.0	
Colossus: Road to Freedom	PS2	■ Thought Russell Crowe was a pissed-off gladiator? Try playing this repetitive game	7.0 4.5 5.0	
Conker: Live & Reloaded	XB	■ The squirrel's single-player game should have stayed caged in the Nintendo 64	5.0 7.0 8.0	
Dead or Alive Ultimate	XB	■ The bouncing boobs of DOAs 1 and 2 look way nicer revamped for Xbox	7.0 7.5 7.5	
Dead to Rights II	PS2/XB	■ This bring sequel about a cop and his dog is great...for us to poop on	4.0 6.0 4.5	
Destroy All Humans!	PS2/XB	■ Missions get repetitive, but launches cows and anal probing never get old	7.0 7.5 6.5	
Dynasty Warriors 5	PS2	■ Another sequel to you as a Chinese Rambo, but it's an addictive hack-'n-slash	8.0 7.5 8.0	
Enthusia: Professional Racing	PS2	■ Even hardcore Gran Turismo fans should take this racing sim out for a spin	8.0 8.5 8.5	Silver
Fire Emblem: The Sacred Stones	GBA	■ A great strategy-RPG sequel, but just a bit more of the same stuff from the original	8.0 7.5 9.0	Silver
FiatOut	PS2/XB	■ You can learn a lot from a dummy: Avoid this car wreck of a driving game	6.0 4.0 4.0	
Forza Motorsport	XB	■ Skids across the finish line as one of the best racers for the Xbox	9.5 10 10	Gold
God of War	PS2	■ Great beard of Zeus! Missing this hot action-adventure would be a Greek tragedy	10 9.5 10	Gold
Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas	XB	■ This ambitious game expands its gangland territory to the Xbox	9.0 9.0 9.5	Gold
Haunting Ground	PS2	■ Even the bouncy boobs can't make us think this is a top-notch survival-horror game	7.0 6.5 5.0	
Hot Shots Golf: Open Tee	PSP	■ An addictive golf game, even though its cuteness nearly sets off our gaffer reflex	7.0 7.0 7.0	
In the Groove	PS2	■ Dast of old the headband and spandex: a decent dancing game with more crappy techno	7.0 7.0 5.5	
Jade Empire	XB	■ Put Jet Li to shame as you beat your own lung 'n' badass in this excellent action-RPG	10 9.5 8.5	Gold
Juiced	PS2/XB	■ Trails the pack, but with A.I. bunnies and betting on races, it earns our respect	7.0 6.5 7.0	
Killer 7	PS2/GC	■ A shooter that tries harder for style with arty-farty graphics rather than gameplay	5.5 5.0 6.0	
Kirby: Canvas Curse	DS	■ Our little pink blob has us dusting off that thylus in this ingenious DS game	8.5 9.0 9.0	Silver
Lego Star Wars	PS2/XB	■ Some fun disassembly is required when you use the Force to bite apart battle droids	7.0 7.0 7.5	
Medal of Honor: European Assault	PS2/XB/GC	■ No online multiplayer, new features are nothing to write home about	7.5 6.5 6.0	
Meteos	DS	■ Who knew a puzzle game where you rub space rocks would be an addictive?	9.0 9.0 8.0	Gold
Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition	PS2	■ This time around, cars have superpowers and move faster than a speeding bullet	8.0 8.0 9.0	Silver
MLB 2006	PS2/XB	■ The series tries to go for a hit, but it's still just a bunt compared to the competition	7.0 6.5 7.0	
Mortal Kombat: Deception	GC	■ This bloody sequel has so many extra game modes that there's even MK chess	6.0 6.5 7.5	
MVP Baseball 2005	PS2/XB/GC	■ Slick minigames make it the best baseball sim yet	8.5 8.5 9.0	Silver
NBA Street Showdown	PSP	■ Decent b-ball, but it just double-dribbles the console version of <i>Vx 2 onto PSP</i>	6.5 7.0 6.5	
NCAA Football 06	PS2/XB	■ Go from pizza box-filled dorm rooms to Heisman winner in this great football game	9.5 9.0 9.0	Gold
Pac-Pix	DS	■ Get ready for more DS drawing—all that doodling in school will finally come in handy	7.0 6.5 7.0	
Parish	XII	■ The shooter has cool weapons and a semi-interesting story, but it's no <i>Halo</i> killer	9.0 8.5 8.5	
Pokemon Emerald	GBA	■ Catch those little bastards all over again, if you're a fan of the genre	7.0 7.5 7.0	
Pokemon Dash	DS	■ In this mediocre Pokemon spin-off for tykes, rubbin' really is racing	5.5 6.0 6.0	
Predator: Concrete Jungle	PS2/XB	■ Predator vs. crappy camera: Whoever wins, we lose by playing this bland game	5.5 4.5 4.5	
Psychonauts	XB	■ Care more crazies than shock therapy does in this great platformer	8.0 9.0 8.0	Silver
Psychonauts	XB	■ Inevitably repetitive—it's more like BattleBots hell than purgatory	3.0 2.0 2.0	
Renegade: The Tower of Purgatory	PSP	■ Gameplay so heribite that it actually ruins a videogame that has hot ninjas in parties	4.5 4.0 4.0	
Red Ninja: End of Honor	PS2/XB	■ Koko the gorilla can communicate more easily than gamers can in <i>RED's</i> online play	5.0 5.0 4.5	
Resident Evil Outbreak: File #1	PS2	■ The stealth kills is easy when your numskull A.I. partner's not getting in your way	6.0 6.0 7.0	
Rise of the Kasai	PS2	■ Yawn as you hack and slash as a samurai who deflects bullets...with his sword	4.0 7.0 5.0	
Samurai Western	PS2	■ It's <i>Fantasy 5</i> plus <i>Hidoutam</i> plus <i>Mad Max</i> , but with a cliff-hanger ending!	8.0 8.5 8.0	Silver
Shin Megami Tensei: Digital Devil Saga	PS2	■ Need to get crappy shareware games and <i>Missinsewage</i> over your PSP? Look no further	3.0 3.0 2.5	
Spider-Man 2	DS	■ If your spider sense is on the fritz, let us warn you to avoid this ho-hum adventure	6.0 5.5 3.0	
Spider-Man 2	PSP	■ Kirsten Dunst looks nice, but the camera has a hard time focusing on anything else	6.0 7.0 6.0	
Star Wars Republic Commando	XB	■ Guide a squad of three smart stormtroopers who actually shoot the bad guy!	7.0 7.0 8.0	
Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith	PS2/XB	■ Play this repetitive game and you'll understand why the dude went to the Dark Side	4.5 5.5 6.0	
Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith	PS2/XB	■ Maybe in a galaxy far, far away this side-scrolling crap is still considered awesome	4.5 4.0 4.0	
Tekken 5	PS2	■ The Iron Fist tournament may be getting a little nasty, but it comes with great extras	8.0 8.0 8.5	Silver
Tony Hawk's Underground 2 Remix	PSP	■ The additional features make you want to keep grinding in the Destruction Tour	9.0 9.0 8.5	Silver
Twisted Metal: Head-On	PSP	■ This fighting game with cars is OK, but the series is due for some maintenance	7.5 6.5 6.0	
Unreal Championship 2: The Final Conflict	PS2	■ Fast-paced deathmatching that's ideal for gamers bored with <i>Halo 2</i>	8.5 8.0 8.0	Silver
Viewtiful Joe 2	PS2/GC	■ More of what you hopefully know and (should) love from Joe's first outing	8.0 8.0 8.5	Silver
WarOfWares: Twisted!	GBA	■ Spin your GBA like a nutcase in this collection of new free-three-second microgames	9.0 9.0 9.0	Gold
Wipeout Pure	PSP	■ Remind yourself to blink while playing this great, intense racing game	8.0 8.0 8.5	Silver
Worms: Forts: Under Siege	PS2/XB	■ Weird fort building and stupid A.I. make <i>Worms</i> gross again	6.5 4.0 6.5	
WWE Wrestlemania 21	XB	■ The A.I. is so bad that this game is even unworthy for a fake sport	3.5 5.0 6.5	
Yoshi Touch & Go	DS	■ Draw clouds with the thylus and control the environment for Mario's green steed	7.5 7.5 8.5	

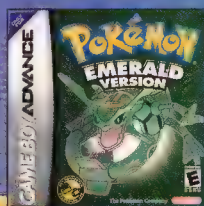
*Games in red are previous Game of the Month winners.

EB GAMES™

electronics boutique®



AVAILABLE
8.23



CALL 1.800.800.5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU
OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM



game over

advanced dweebs and eggberts, third edition

SEANBABY'S NERD MANUAL



Classifying Homo sapiens Dorkitus

Instead of talking about games this month, I'm cataloging types of gamers. It's called Nerd Manual. Nerd Manual will help readers avoid or defeat specific types of nerds. Please note that Nerd Manual

is not satirical. It does not use irony or sarcasm ever, for any reason. If you see yourself in Nerd Manual, everything it says about your people is true, nerd.

As research for this article, I spent months studying nerds...the way they

raise ferrets, the way they struggle to find their glasses after they fall down, the way they write Doctor Who-on-Go-Bot fan fiction. Speaking of, here's an excerpt from some of my own: "The clanging of his robot hips against my

time booth fascinated my Doctor Who brain. Mostly because, wow, that hot robot was a motorcycle like five minutes ago. Suddenly, Cap'n Crunch arrived with breakfast and an erotic surprise!" —Seanbaby

BUDSMOKA_247



■ "This one time? My boy had her little kind nugs, brat!"

Games played: These nerds play online games under the names of badly spelled marijuana references. Whether it's in *Halo* or *SOCOM*, they communicate entirely in insults, and the only thing they hate more than n00bs is everything.

Appearance: This nerd may sound like a bathroom wall that grew a shrieking mouth, but he looks like a suburban kid emulating the style of TV criminals. This creates the fashion statement, "I'm a tiny undercover cop who's bad at his job."

Diet: Budsmokas can feed off the same pizza for up to 246 days. Also, if their online trash talk is to be taken literally, their own crutch is a viable food source—at least for others.

Special abilities: Advanced grumpiness. Whether they win or lose a match, they'll find a reason to be furious with everyone else's participation in it. Doctors say that after several weeks, this level of rage will cause an artery to burst, so many theorize that these nerds perform an intense hour of kitten snuggling each day to avoid brain explosion.

Weaknesses: Due to the nature of their social rejection, this type of nerd cannot form conventions or website clubs around their hobby and will never be found in colonies larger than 1d4. Because of this, I feel very safe saying they are all pansies and that, in fact, I had sex with THEIR mothers last night.

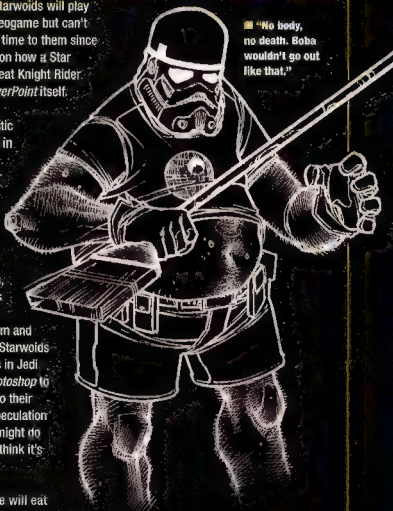
STARWOID

Games played: Starwoids will play any *Star Wars* videogame but can't devote all of their time to them since that presentation on how a Star Destroyer could beat Knight Rider: isn't going to *PowerPlay* itself.

Appearance: Plastic armor only comes in size human, so some of the larger imperial soldiers are forced to disguise themselves as "fat guy in Yoda shirt." Despite this, jungle teddy bears and Chewbaccas can still sense them and will attack. Some Starwoids occasionally dress in Jedi robes and use *Photoshop* to put lightsabers into their hands, but new speculation reveals that they might do so only because I think it's so funny.

Diet: These people will eat whatever trash George Lucas and his movie-generating computer puke into their mouths and like it.

Special abilities: They're capable of surviving on a movie-theater sidewalk for 348 weeks without nourishment, and when they are equipped with a



■ "No body, no death. Boba wouldn't go out like that."

broom handle and a video camera, a roll of a natural 20 will open a dimension door to the plane of Funniest Internet Video Ever.

Weaknesses: Sand. It, you know, gets everywhere. Not like you, baby.

Illustrations by Mike van Dyke



NIHONGOLOID

Games played: These costume-wearing freaks (Japanese game or anime only, thanks) are mostly into role-playing games but may dabble in other genres if a game comes packaged within a story boring or fruity enough. Nihongooids actually become invested in those cut-scenes none of us watch, and they can be moved to tears when their *Final Fantasy* group encounters an especially emotional plot twist. Away from videogames, they enjoy collectible-card games,

cartoons, and hiding from predators. Also note: It's acceptable for a grown male member of their culture to discuss and trade monster cards with 10-year-old strangers. Witnesses to this should not feel obligated to call the authorities, but maybe should anyway.

Appearance: Their clothes and territory are both marked with screaming, adorable creatures. Like space nerds, these nerds can often be found dressing up like their favorite fictional characters. However, Nihongooids are unique in that it's not unusual for men in their culture to dress not only as a cartoon character, but as a girl cartoon character. This carries no stigma among their people, as their sex organs have long since been removed and dried. Biochemically, they can still achieve stimulation through animated television, but it requires the indescribable—and tentacles.

Diet: Nihongooids live mainly on table scraps of Japanese culture. They can eat earth food, but only if it has Voltron on the box.

Special abilities: Beware the Hob-Nihongooids. They are smaller in size but have a *Dragon Ball Z* fanaticism of +4d20. They are especially dangerous since during an encounter with a character with no interest in their magic karate show, their mind will violently reject this fact. On every unsuccessful saving throw against spaz, a Hob-Nihongooid can generate 3d4 hate letters to any game magazine without a 30-page *DBZ* cover feature.

Weaknesses: They take double damage from any reality-based attacks, such as the realization that no one outside their club knows what the hell *Go Go Panda Detective* is.

■ "WHAT? You don't know what Pecky is?? Kekekekeke!"

4-UM TROLL

Games played: These vary from nerd to nerd but are always associated with an irrationally extreme emotion. The same game that devastates one message-board forum troll's entire life may very well be the one true love of another. What these nerds have in common is that their opinions one way or the other causes them to hate everyone else who has ever lived.

Appearance: Due to the forum troll's reclusive nature, no one has ever seen one. Based on traces found in message boards, however, experts speculate their fat asses sound like this when they try to move: "Bllggbtargoooo! SLOP SLOP!"

Diet: Forum trolls survive solely on brief acknowledgements that they exist from people who don't like them. For every forum poster who disagrees with their wildly disagreeable madness, the forum troll gains 1d6 hit points. If the disagreeing party seems angry at the idiology of the forum troll, it gains another 1d6 hit points and secretes a fungus from its armpits.

This fungus is treated as a level 9 gray pudding with an Intelligence of 4d6.

Special abilities: If the surrounding characters all make their Ignore Dumbass saving throw, a forum troll has the ability to switch identities and go back into the forum to disagree with themselves under a different name.

Weaknesses: Forum trolls must make a saving throw against suicide if no one on the message board seems to care that they hate *Mario Golf*. This saving throw is at a -4 penalty if someone points out that they spelled "Golf" with too many inches of exclamation points. ☘

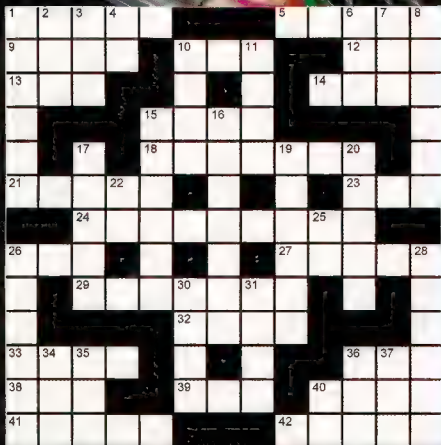


■ "hello every1. something ruz, yet other things are teh suck."



WE'VE GOT SOUL

Solution on page 133



ACROSS

- Who Batman begins as
- Destroy All Humans'* invading race
- Japanese developer... Factory
- Portal Runner* lion's name
- PS1 3D platform-shooter
- Alice's brother in *Xenogears*
- Medal of Honor* bad-guy alliance
- Grand Theft Auto 3* sequel city
- Printed on a *Metal Gear Solid 2* cardboard box
- Halo 2*'s odd ball
- Follow-up to Dreamcast's *Metropolis Street Racer*
- Soul Calibur* swordsman
- Spinter Cell* government org
- ToeJam's cousin in *ToeJam & Earl 3*
- Alternative to a KO win in *Soul Calibur*
- Short for "nonplayable" characters"
- Mario race car
- Soul Calibur*'s boy isn't a guy—she's a...
- Madden*'s Giant Manning
- Undetermined release date (abbrv)
- Big brute of *Street Fighter III*
- What "the price" is in an Atari game-show game
- Sign up for Xbox Live again?

DOWN

- Badass Defender* (Xbox) creatures
- Leon's fair-weather friend Wong
- Used to buy games in Japan
- United States and Canada in game releases, for short
- Commodore moon blaster... 64
- Early Rockstar PS2 title
- Half of lame duo in old *Nintendo Power* comic
- You fight in Goro's in *Mortal Kombat*
- Soul Reaver* predecessor: *Blood*
- MGS3 colonel
- Tenchu* ninja dropping
- Like *Moon Patrol*'s setting?
- Powerful *Phantasy Star* spell
- Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude*'s minigame icon
- Jet of *Rise to Honor* (PS2)
- Series that 2 DOWN appears in, for short
- Saucy squirrel (now on Xbox)
- Pikachu colored?
- Friend of Mr. Mosquito?
- NCAA 06 SoCal school
- Game Boy heavyweight boxer
- Drive a big one in *18 Wheeler*
- Time Crisis* peripheral
- The Lord of the Rings* RPG *The Third*...
- '80s cartoon turned game... *Man*

GRUDGE MATCH

Welcome to Earf!



VS.

DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

WAR OF THE WORLDS

We don't know much about alien life, but our singular view of the universe tells us that everyone up there is vying for a piece of our sexy planet. To destroy all humans would require a war of the worlds, however, so let's see which of these gets it right.

INSPIRATION



Mars Attacks!, '50s sci-fi gems
Advantage: Destroy All Humans!

Loosely based on the book's cover art.



ALIEN WEAPONRY



Extreme anal probes our brains
Advantage: Destroy All Humans!

Heat rays melt our primitive flammables



STORY LINE



Furons harvest DNA while teleporting our junk around
Advantage: Tie

How invasion impacts Earth's best-looking inhabitants
Advantage: Tie



CAST



Crypto talks (and looks) like Jack Nicholson
Advantage: Destroy All Humans!

Dakota Fanning dresses like an alien



FURTHER STUDY

Download Crypto desktop clutter for your PC

Spin the 1978 *WOTW* disco-rock opera. Boss!
Advantage: War of the Worlds

WINNER: DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

Disclaimer: Selecting a winner in this Grudge Match doesn't mean the EGM staff condones human annihilation by our extraterrestrial readers. But if the s*** goes down, we have a list of grade-school bullfights we'd like you to hit up first.

WHAT IF YOU COULD WIN EVERYTHING IN SYNC MAGAZINE?



IN AUGUST, YOU CAN!

PLUS, WHEN YOU PICK UP SYNC'S AUGUST/SEPTEMBER "WIN IT" ISSUE AT ANY BARNES & NOBLE STORE FROM AUG. 9 THROUGH 16, YOU'LL HAVE A CHANCE TO SCORE BONUS GADGETS.

EGM RETRO: THE LONG ROAD TO STREET FIGHTING

The prehistory of fighting games

Fighting games have been around for a while, and with the upcoming release of *Soul Calibur III* (PS2), it's clear that the genre's soul still burns. Any gamer worth his weight in Super NES carls knows all about *Street Fighter II* and the evolution of

fighting games since Capcom dragon-punched gamers into one-on-one bliss. But it's not like these games sprang suddenly into existence in 1981. Grab your archeology gear as we delve into gaming's fossil record to trace the prehistory of fighters. —Jeremy Parish



Boxing Atari 2600 • 1981

At the time, Activision couldn't stop gushing about how realistic *Boxing*'s graphics looked. Which they did...if you were from the planet of Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots. Even so, this top-down sim was a decent take on the sport. You know, considering *Pong* was state-of-the-art back then.



Karate Champ Arcade • 1984

The same year Ralph Macchio won our hearts in *The Karate Kid*, Data East made martial arts cool among the game-nerd set. *Karate Champ* was about tournament rules, which meant fighters were awarded points for clean hits in a nice orderly fashion. *Primal Rage* it wasn't.



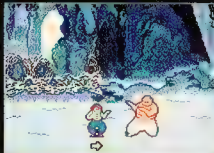
Kung-Fu Master Arcade • 1984

Mr. X has kidnapped the lovely Sylvia and set an army of warriors (and snakes...and midgets) along the hero in this brawler. Players punched, leapt, and sweep-kicked their way through endless waves of foes in order to rescue her. Apparently, Mr. X really, really liked Sylvia.



Karateka Apple II • 1984

Before he made *Prince of Persia* (the original PC version, that is), Jordan Mechner created *Karateka*, which played like *Kung-Fu Master* but introduced this little thing called a "story" to fighting games. Unlike in the *Street Fighter* or *Tekken* series, though, *Karateka*'s plot actually made sense.



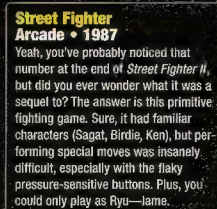
Yie Ar Kung-Fu Arcade • 1984

This fighting game went one up on *Karate Champ* by offering more varied enemies. Opponents attacked in waves, aggressively lashing out with increasingly deadly weapons. The player, of course, was unarmed. Just think of this as *Soul Calibur*'s incredibly unfair great-granddad.



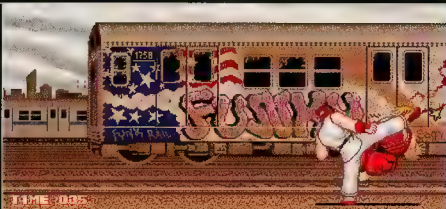
Double Dragon Arcade/NES • 1987/1988

This one took the walk-and-punch action of its predecessors and added catchy new features like special attacks. The NES version dropped the co-op play, but it did pack a new fighting mode that allowed two players to go at it with larger versions of both the heroes and villains.



Street Fighter Arcade • 1987

Yeah, you've probably noticed that number at the end of *Street Fighter II*, but did you ever wonder what it was a sequel to? The answer is this primitive fighting game. Sure, it had familiar characters (Sagat, Birdie, Ken), but performing special moves was insanely difficult, especially with the flaky pressure-sensitive buttons. Plus, you could only play as Ryu—Jame.



OLD SCHOOL

10 years ago in EGM

■ On the Cover: Mortal Kombat 3

Nothing says "We heart MK3" more than having the fighter on two consecutive covers—just to talk about Scorpion's new teleport punch.



Game of the Month: Rayman (PS1)

Known for its great music and graphics, the original *Rayman* ended the debate of whether the PS1 could do side-scrollers. The franchise started off strong, as the first two *Raymans* received mostly 9s (out of 10) from the EGM Review Crew.



Playing the Name Game

Peripheral manufacturer STD asked EGM readers to help name its new line of PS1 and Saturn controllers. Almost 3,000 entries were received. Hopefully, one or two people recommended that the company first think about changing its own name.



Tough Actin' Tinactin

We talked football with Mr. Pigskin himself, John Madden. And we found out that listening to him speak about the great sport for an hour is equivalent to watching a week's worth of ESPN Classic.

World's Largest
Computer & Video Game Festival

WCG 2005

WORLD CYBER GAMES

USA Championship National Final

Hammerstein Ballroom,
Manhattan Center Studios in NYC
September 8-10, 2005

Official Games

- FIFA Soccer 2005™
- Half-Life™: Counter-Strike
- Need for Speed™: Underground 2
- StarCraft™: Brood War™
- WarCraft™ III: Frozen Throne™
- Warhammer™ 40,000: Dawn of War™
- Dead or Alive™ Ultimate
- Halo 2™



<http://us.worldcybergames.com>

Premier sponsors



Official suppliers



GAMECLOUD

Official Media Partner



Official Partners



VS.

Matt Schaldach
xtcdukes.UUP.comSara Nicholson
dirtydiva.UUP.com

FINAL WORD

Guest-starring: you

We asked our community manager Kimi Matsuzaki to pick two UUP members to be special guests on Final Word this month. She just had to make sure that the two were established bloggers or forum posters—and that they smelled nice. Kimi found the only two who fit that description: Matt “xtcdukes” Schaldach and Sara “DirtyDiva” Nicholson. We throw them to the Final Word wolves to get their thoughts on this or that....

If you could permanently kill off one franchise, which one would you pick?

Sara: Eenie meenie miney mo, oh Nokia, you must go. I'm sorry; all three major players in the console race lend different strengths, but Nokia? I know they had good intentions, but it's time for them to count their losses and fold their hand. N-Gage = poop.

Matt: It could be my stuck-in-my-ways old age talking, but I thought the question was about an actual game and its subsequent sequels. If that were true then my choice would have to be the *Halo* series. (Please send all hate mail to *EGM's* round file.)

liked the first one, but...is it just me or is *Halo 2* pretty much just like the first? Two guns? No ending? Big deal. Kill the series before it turns into a shadow of its initial greatness. Oh wait, it already has. But to take your path on this, I would have to agree. Where's the fun in playing on a taco?

Sara: Ah...pass the dunce cap—my mistake. I would never say to kill the *Halo* series because I still have hope that it can make a great comeback on the Xbox 360. Then again, if they just released all of the previous maps in multiplayer mode, I'd be happy. If we're talking games, I'd say *TimeSplitters* has to go. Those games were just crap.

What's the best game of modern (current-gen) times and of all time?

Matt: Damn you, *EGM*, for making me quick. These best-of-all-time lists spark nothing but arguments and letter bombs. So for want of a new mailbox, I have two picks for current-gen systems: *Animal Crossing* (GC) and *Katamari Damacy* (PS2)—two games that came out of left field and have contributed to many a sleepless night in search of that perfect chair or the biggest ball of junk the King of Cosmos has ever seen.

As far as the game that reigns supreme over all others? Well, that has to be *Tetris*.



Everyone's abusing poor N-Gage...even our Final Word guy.

“The game that reigns supreme... *Tetris*.”

Never before has a game spawned so many clones. Without *Tetris* there would be no *Lumines*. It is the epitome of what gaming is all about. Pick it up. Play it. Smile. **Sara:** No, no, no! That was my pick! I'm sorry, you have to pick another. Hmm, there are so many great games out there. *Metal Gear Solid* was such a pioneer in story-driven action. *Ghost Recon* was so great as both a strategic shooter and a great online game. *The Grand Theft Auto* series has really pushed the boundaries of all that's acceptable. Of course, *Halo* was just a phenomenal all-around game.

So many greats for different reasons. I don't want to pick just one and you can't make me! Oh, OK, how about *Lemmings*?

Matt: *Lemmings*? As your all-time favorite game? C'mon! Try harder. Are you just throwing that out there? It's seems like such a from-the-hip choice.

Sara: Hg llw, no... Just can't pick a favorite, so the first thing that came into my head was *Lemmings*. I ride New York City Transit too much.

PSP or DS?

Sara: PSP! I keep telling myself that I would wait until all the bugs had been worked out, but it just didn't happen. After whining throughout lunch that I felt like I was missing out, a coworker insisted I go get one just to shut me up. The UMD

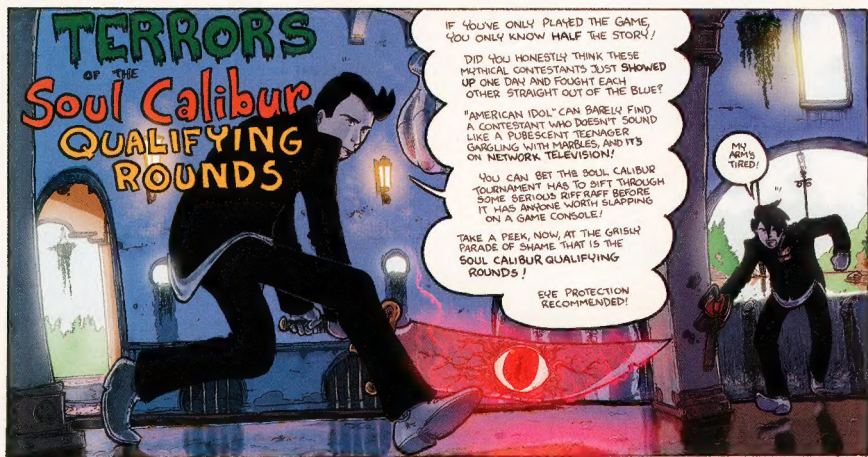
movies are incredibly clear even on such a small screen. I am so completely hooked on *Lumines* that I'm getting close to breaking the million-point barrier. Someday.... Also, I haven't been a big fan of Nintendo offerings since the Nintendo 64. Nothing about the DS wows me.

Matt: Poor, poor Nintendo. I for one love my DS. It seems to be gaining steam now. I agree at launch the PSP was the no-brainer choice, as long as you didn't mind Sony throwing up a big middle finger to anyone's concerns regarding button placement, dead pixels, and memory stick costs, but just because a system has great graphics doesn't make it better.

Sara: As for the memory stick, I don't care about that because I don't need the PSP to be an MP3 player or a photo display. Also, graphics don't completely make the game, but they do make it better. If they didn't, we'd all still be perfectly happy bouncing single pixels across the screen.

Matt: But I am happy pushing pixels. *Tetris*: best game ever, remember? But do you see what I'm saying? Sony comes out with this do-all machine and for

what? So they can say they did. I am sick of these catch-all systems. Most people don't even buy them for that purpose anyway. I mean who actually decided to purchase a PSP because of the MP3 or movie capabilities? Stick to games, guys! It's what we're here for. ☹



Edward Totte attempted to instill fear in his opponents Blackbeard style by weaving reeds into his beard and setting them on fire. Unfortunately, he had also used a generous amount of AquaNet hair spray to accent his fearsome appearance.

To his credit, those who witnessed his subsequent and total immolation reported being "quite horrified."



"Iron-Note" Fung was master of an obscure Shaolin sect that specialized in the use of low-grade musical instruments as deadly weapons. Alas, on the day of the tournament, Fung discovered that his students had already made off with the triangle, the cowbell, the tambourine, and even the bike horn, leaving him no choice but to do battle using the far less-coveted "block and stick."



Danny "Deborah" Shlezinger entered the Soul Calibur tournament under the impression that it was "a pageant of some sort." Danny, who was merely a transvestite with no remarkable fighting skills, was admitted to St. Mary's hospital in stable condition.

"We saw the costume and just assumed he could fight," said competitor Shinji, adding that he found Mr. Shlezinger's girlish shrieks during the match to be "oddly satisfying."



A spirited match between newcomer **Goldman** and a leading contender came to a violent end 15 minutes in, when a combination of sweat and the heat of the day caused the sticky glue that was holding the contender's costume to her body to finally give way.

Taking advantage of Goldman's subsequent distraction, the contender leapt forward and beat him good. Goldman was admitted to the infirmary with extensive bodily lacerations but was in good spirits otherwise.

TOP SPIN

"One of the best tennis games ever
created is finally coming to the PS2."
PSM



on the tour.



The rankings are in, and Top Spin is on top of the tennis video game world. Serve and volley with 16 of the tour's top players like Roger Federer and Maria Sharapova as you compete in tournaments around the world. Create a virtual version of "you" with Eye Toy™, refine your shots with a coach, and match skills with the pros on every kind of court surface as you make a run at the Championship!

www.topspingames.com



PlayStation 2



©2005 Take-Two Interactive Software and its subsidiaries. All rights reserved. Top Spin, 2K Sports, the 2K Sports logo, and Take-Two Interactive Software are all trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires internet connection, Network Adaptor (for PlayStation 2) and Memory card (UMD) (for PlayStation 2) (each sold separately). The Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

Pure fun is a hole in one!

JAMDAT® MINI GOLF

JAMDAT Mini Golf is a Hole-In-One! Putt your way through an exotic paradise full of hazardous obstacles and secret shortcuts. Enjoy beautiful graphics, fun music, and realistic physics. Use a simple interface to move the camera around and aim for that perfect shot.

**Mini Golf. Mini Screen.
Mega Fun!**



DOWNLOAD TODAY from the Games Menu on your phone or from
www.jamdat.com

verizonwireless

JAMDAT
mobile

www.jamdat.com

© 2005 JAMDAT Mobile Inc. All Rights Reserved. JAMDAT, JAMDAT Mobile and the bubbles logo are registered trademarks of JAMDAT Mobile Inc.

Made with love by

RETROMAGS

Our goal is to preserve classic video game magazines so that they are not lost permanently.

People interested in helping out in any capacity, please visit us at retromags.com.

No profit is made from these scans, nor do we offer anything available from the publishers themselves.

If you come across anyone selling releases from this site, please do not support them and do let us know.

Thank you!