

OVER 60 MUST-READ GAME REVIEWS INSIDE

# GAMEINFORMER

COMPLETE  
MGS2  
STRATEGY  
GUIDE  
INCLUDED

Video Games

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M'FARLANE  
10/03

ISSUE  
104

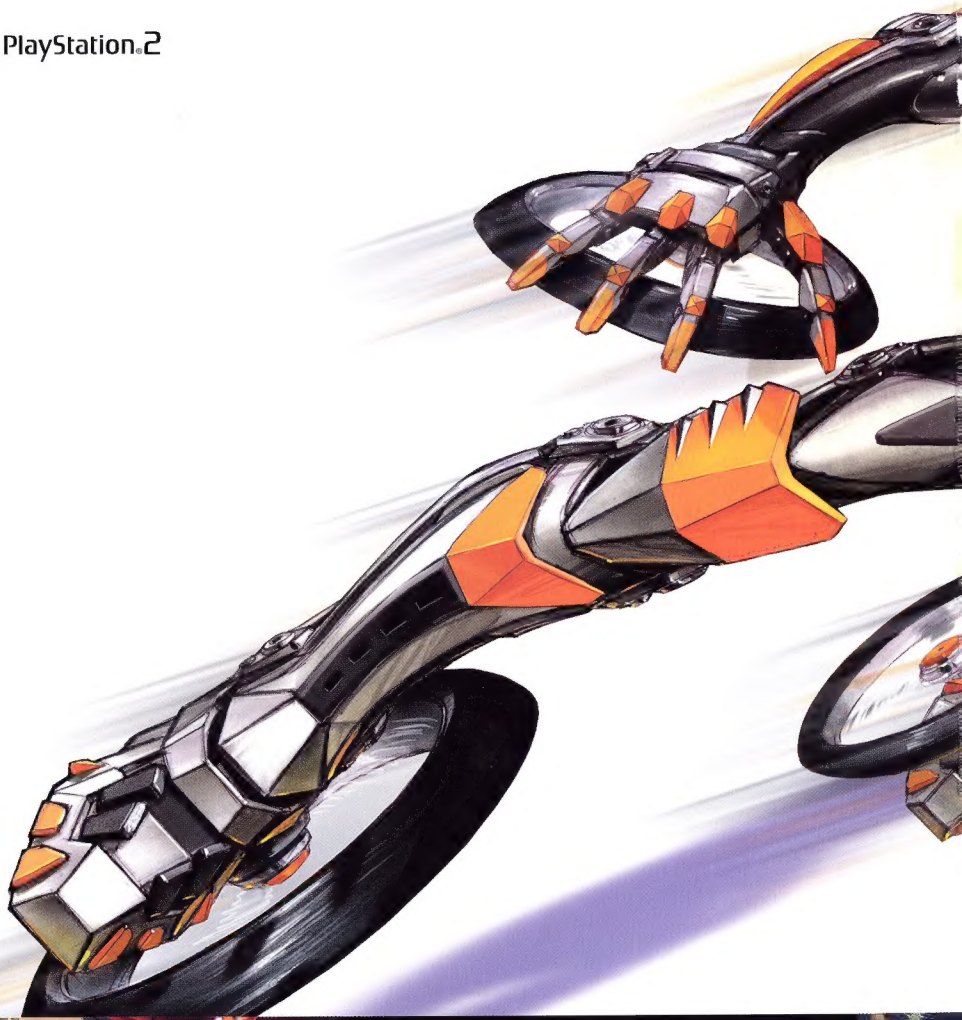
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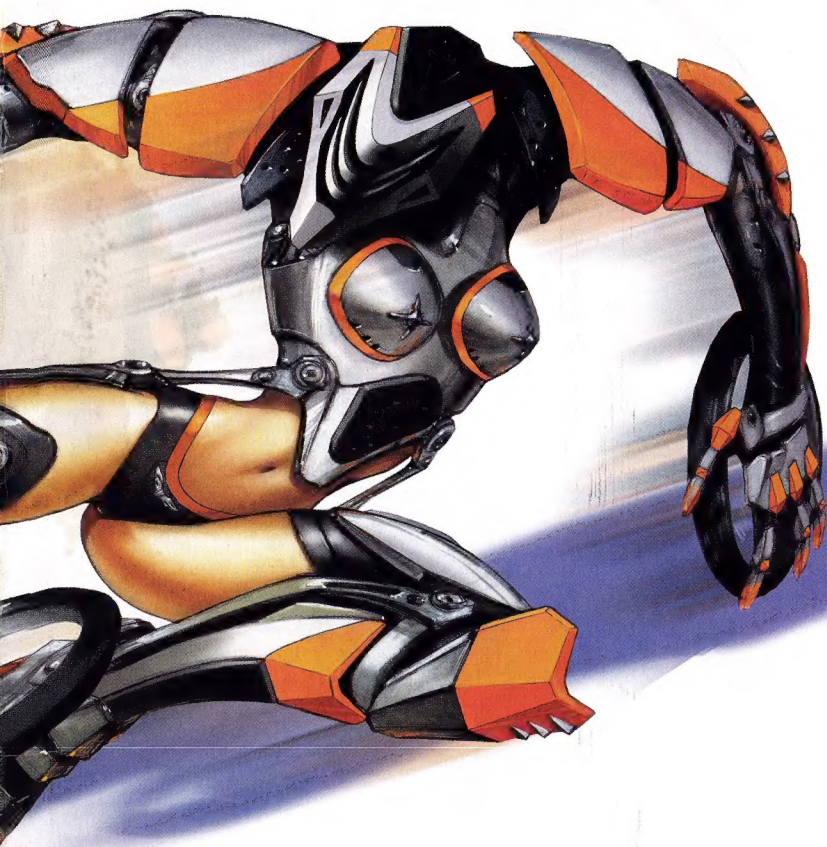
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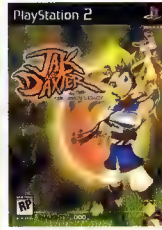
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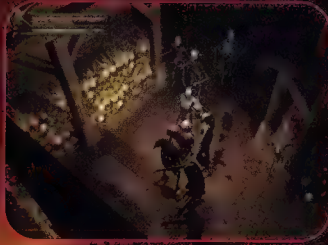
PlayStation 2



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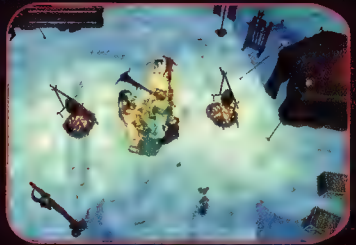
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# GAMEINFORMER

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## COVER STORY

### 42 METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

We have been waiting for its arrival since E3 2000, where Metal Gear Solid 2 first debuted on a video screen surrounded by thousands of gamers looking up in awe. The wait is over. The time is now. Metal Gear Solid 2 is upon us and Game Informer has got you covered.

## FEATURE

### 50 TOKYO GAME SHOW 2001 AUTUMN

If it's Japanese, and was at the Tokyo Game Show, it's in this jam-packed feature. Wondering what's up with Final Fantasy XI? It's in here. Thinking about Nezmix? You're not gonna believe this, but it's in here too. Now stop staring at the girls to the left and go get the goods.

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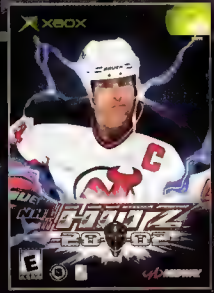


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PlayStation 2



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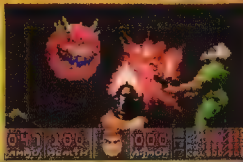


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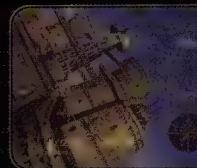
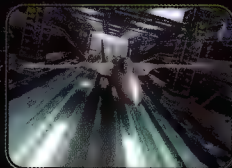
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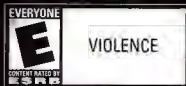


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# EDITORS' FORUM

## THE GETTING IS GOOD



It never fails to amaze me how many games we get in the office right before the holidays. This year, it's even more overwhelming than usual due to the incredible amount of fantastic titles coming out.

This month we manage to review most of the big games on all the platforms, but there are a ton of major titles still coming our way including Jak and Daxter, Tennis 2K2, Super Smash Bros. Melee, Harry Potter, Max Payne, and Warrio Land 4.

Perhaps the biggest problem with all these "Triple A" games coming out all at once is that some truly great games will likely slip through the cracks. Games like

Giants: Citizen Kabuto, Splashdown, Grand Theft Auto 3, Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance, Syphon Filter 3, and Soul Reaver 2 – all magnificent games in their own right – will be overshadowed by the Metal Gear Solids, Tony Hawks, and Rogue Leaders of the world.

I know it's hard to play them all, but there really are some unforgettable gaming experiences being unleashed on the world right now. I can't think of another time when the getting was this good. So my advice to you is simple – get them all, lock the doors, order pizza, and prepare to be blown away.

*Andy*  
Andy McNamara  
Editor  
andy@gameinformer.com

### REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

reiner@gameinformer.com  
This month's cover art was created by Clayton Crain and a little comic book artist that goes by the name of (drum roll please)...TODD MCFARLANE!! You're probably asking yourself, "Why in the world did Todd McFarlane do a cover for Game Informer?" Because we kick total ass, that's why!!! Sure, I could lie to you and say that Konami set us the entire deal, but the truth of the matter is, Todd couldn't pass up a golden opportunity like this. After he found out we were interested, he probably said something along the lines of, "Oh my God! I can't believe I'm going to be on the cover of Game Informer, which is, like, my favorite magazine in the world!"

### MATT, THE ORIGINAL GAMER

matt@gameinformer.com  
This month took a hit out of me. I've done further damage to my already-ravaged brain by inhaling varnish fumes for a month straight, suffered a nasty cut on my noggin while helping to move the lumber that will make our new desks, and came down with a bout of food poisoning from a defective hamburger purchased at the McDonald's in the lovely hood of North Minneapolis. Still, I soldiered on, bravely tackling the wilds of Grand Theft Auto 3 and a preview build of TimeSplitters 2. Xbox and GameCube are both cool, but with so many awesome PlayStation 2 games being released now and in the near future, I just don't think you can afford to live without one. But maybe that's just the past 'n' future talking.

### JAY, THE GONZO GAMER

jay@gameinformer.com  
On my recent trip to Tokyo, I discovered a few stores that sold American video game magazines. Not only was I shocked by the publications' high overseas price (\$11.00, which translates to about nine bucks), but I was overwhelmingly impressed that I never found a Game Informer at any of those newsstands. So, in response, I'd just like to send out a big thank you to the legions of Japanese Game Informer readers. Without all of you, we wouldn't be the only outcast US vid mag on that side of the sea. Watch out Famitsu, here comes GI!

### KRISTIAN, THE GAME DAWG

kristian@gameinformer.com  
I would like to take this precious bit of creative editorial space to send out a heartfelt apology to all of those people in the 724 building who were so deeply affected by our office's construction period. I would especially like to apologize to those on other floors who went home "sick" during the day because of the fumes our paint created. I was not aware that fumes could seep through floors and ceilings which are engineered to harbor the smoke and flames of a major fire. I would also like to apologize to those who were so cruelly forced to engage in involuntary exercise by using the stairs for two hours while we moved over 3,000 pounds of lumber from the street level to our 4th floor office space. Luckily, a friendly and understanding building manager stopped by to set us straight. Thanks Jim-Bo!

### JUSTIN, THE DIGITAL DEVIANT

justin@gameinformer.com  
People say this every issue, and though I hate agreeing with them, I must remark that it's been quite a month. Between my "new" car dying, looking for an apartment during deadlines, and duct-taping Reiner's mouth every time he threatened to reveal the spoilers in Metal Gear Solid 2, I'm one tired out. But enough about me – let's talk about you. So, how's it going? What's new? Screw that, you're boring. At least you're lucky, though, because this is the greatest time ever to be a gamer. We reviewed more amazing games this issue than we normally do in a year's time. I personally gave five titles a score of 9 or higher. Will you agree? If you know what's good for you. Ho, ho, ho.

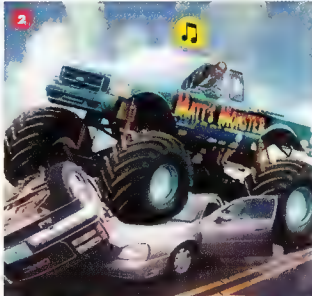
### KATO, THE GAME KATANA

kato@gameinformer.com  
Some last minute changes and plenty of butt sweat has created what I think is an impressive lineup of games this issue. I count myself pretty fortunate to have stayed up until the wee hours of the morning playing Metal Gear Solid 2 in awe with Reiner, only to come in the next day to sit down with Rogue Leader. In-between, I got screwed on turn three of NASCAR Thunder's Talladega by Kristian, a.k.a. The Eliminator. I may have gone too far in my revenge when I bumped his Pathfinder into a row of parking meters outside, but that's for the courts to decide. My lawyer plans to blame it on the varnish fumes in our office, and that sounds fine to me.

### HOW ARE WE HANDLING OUR DAILY COMMUTE?

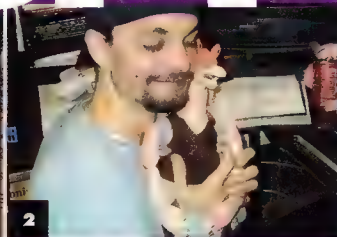
The GI staff has to get used to a longer commute to new offices in downtown.

1. Kristian's sprint to make the bus. 2. Matt's monster truck gets only three miles to the gallon, but easily clears a two-car pile up. 3. Always in a hurry, Andy finds a shortcut in his armored command car. 4. Justin and Reiner use their transit pass to ogle the babes on the bus. 5. From his Geo Metro, Jay explains why the guy who cut him off is still number one with him. 6. Weaving in and out of traffic, Kato blazes his way to work in record time on his '98 Ital Velocifero scooter.



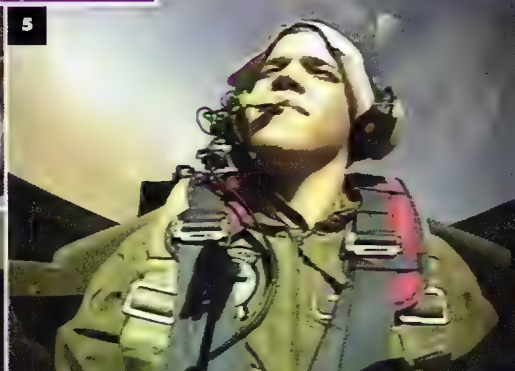
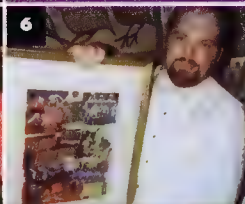
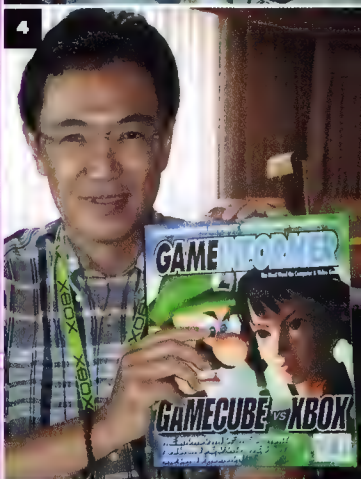
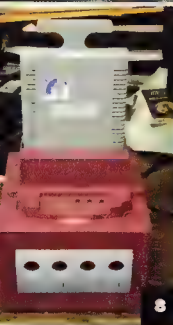


# GI SPY



## CANDID PHOTOS FROM THE SEAMY UNDERBELLY OF THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY

1 Ultimate Fighting Championship up-and-comer Yves Edwards enjoys a game of UFC: Tapout at a recent Crave press event in Las Vegas. 2 "Put meesa down, okleday? Meesa no juv Reiner, meesa juv Kristian! Hesa hotsa, oy moolie moolie!!" 3 "You're gonna eat lightning, and your gonna crap thunder, kid!" Microsoft's Seamus Blackley coaches the Rockylike Justin Leeper on the finer points of DOA 3. 4 At the Tokyo Game Show, Microsoft's Japanese Product Line Manager Toshiyuki Miyata holds up a copy of Game Informer while "accidentally" covering up Luigi's face. All's fair in love and console war. 5 GI Spy checks the boogers as the Digital Deviant pilots an Extra 300L stunt plane at an event promoting Namco's Ace Combat 04. 6 (top) Former editor Jon Storm displays this cool GI collage at his wedding in Buffalo, NY (bottom). Former and present GI staffers Paul Bergren, Paul Anderson, and Andy McNamara help Jon celebrate his nuptials 7 D'oh! Here we see Kristian fall victim to the old rabbit ears trick at the hands of Ubi Soft's Melanie Hodgson. Later, Melanie's partner-in-crime, Dana Whitney, drew mustaches on all the pictures of Kristian we had hanging up in the office. 8 Here's a sneak peek at Nintendo's GameCube debug unit. We took a picture of it because Nintendo will probably never send us one. 9 "Grrrrr! Bow before Moss Man or I will smite thee with the power of photosynthesis!!!"



## DAY 37:

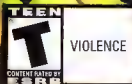
Killed Catalysts this morning by combining water, air and fire elements. Haven't saved the world yet. Really hungry.

## DAY 37:

Fighting never ends.  
Aaron working overtime.  
Killed gnomes.

## DAY 42:

Spent day in "fire" realm.  
Got lost. Sure wish I had  
"Backpacker's Guide to Perathia".



It's a journey to save a world, and all you have is your trusty axion. Combine the elements of fire, water, earth, and air (wind) and explore your way through the vast realms of Perathia. Prevent the apocalypse and, well, survive.

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XBOX

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# DEAR GI

## GOING POSTAL

First off, let me say what a great magazine you put together. I am not the most hardcore gamer in the world, but your in-depth reviews and humor help me sort through the garbage to find the truly great games that are worth my time.

Secondly, I have noticed that you allow, and even promote, your readers to send in "envelope art." As a US Postal Service worker who has to sort through this crap, PLEASE set down some guidelines. It's not enough that we have to put up with bad handwriting, improper spelling, addresses not showing through envelope windows, and just plain stupidity...NOOOOO! We now have to put up with big breasts, nipples, long legs, demonic looking beasts, and cutesy little puffy things. Enough I say!

As a guideline, the front of an envelope should contain a forwarding address, a return address, and postage – and NOTHING else. If your readers have a sudden urge to draw naked girls with cutesy little puffy things on an envelope, they should put their artwork on the back.

Jeremy Tramer  
Via yahoo.com



P.S. I can't even begin to describe to you the stuff I've seen going to the prisons.

**Jeremy, the last thing we want to do is get a disgruntled postal employee on our tail, but we have to defend the grand tradition of envelope art. Is it crap? Hardly. Have you ever tried to draw a demonic looking beast with big breasts? It's not easy – trust us. But, in the interest of efficiency and public safety, let's propose this compromise. Perhaps our readers can just draw their art on a sheet of paper and mail it INSIDE the envelope. Hopefully this will help all of our envelope art submissions reach the GI offices safely. As the motto of the US Postal Service clearly states, "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night nor nipples nor cutesy little puffy things stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."**

**P.S. Could you tell us more about the stuff you've seen going into prisons? We just want to make sure Justin's dad is getting our packages!**

## GIRL POWER

Let me begin by saying that I am fortunate enough to have an occupation (working at a GameStop store) that allows me to read and compare several of the industry's top gaming publications. I have been reading GI for over a year now that your publication is very close to becoming one of the most circulated gaming magazines in the country. Congratulations! However, I have no idea how you can continue to thrive when you are not attending to the needs of all your readers.

I was reading this month's issue of GI (Issue 102, October 2001) and came across a letter from a girl

named Megan Laughman. Her concern was that in issue #100 you did not list the five hottest guys in gaming history. I too noticed this, but ultimately thought nothing of it, considering that most game magazines are read by males. So, when I went on to read that you had published a "Seven Hottest Men in Video Games" in this month's issue I immediately turned the page in excitement that her request had been attended to. I think you know what I am going to address now. I found it inappropriate and disrespectful to other female gamers and myself when I turned to page 78 to find the photos of your staff. What were you trying to say by this act of immaturity? Since this month's issue hit the shelf, I have received several emails and phone calls asking what GI is saying to a considerable portion of its purchasers. Let me say that before this incident, the only frequent complaints I received about GI was its lack of a female game reviewer. I can only hope that you will take this letter into consideration and I hope that it will persuade

you to apologize for your actions in one of the upcoming issues of GI. Thank you for your time.

Marie Rzeznic  
Via hotmail.com

You guys are wild and I love your mag; it's the best out there. I'm sure you've heard that a few thousand times. Anyway, I'm with Megan Laughman (Dear GI, Issue 102). Your response was cute and very funny, but – come on guys – could you tone down the half-naked girls? I mean us girls wanna have fun, too. I'm sure your office doesn't consist of only males, so go get some female input! Women of the world unite!

Jazz, the Female Gamer  
Via msn.com

**We received a lot of mail on this subject over the last month, and it does appear that we overstepped the bounds of responsible journalism in our response to Ms. Laughman's letter. As longtime readers of Game Informer know, Dear GI responses are often written in jest, and are not always intended as a serious reflection of our beliefs. While we do feel that the response was humorous, it did create the mistaken impression that we do not respect or value the opinions of our female readers. This is most certainly not the case. Although we have no female members of the review crew at the present time (a situation we hope to rectify in the future), there are several women on the Game Informer staff who play a vital role in the creation of our magazine. So, to all of our readers that were offended by our remarks, we offer our apologies.**

## HAIKU 4 U

Do you think haikus should be regarded as poems? They don't even rhyme.

Mike Tempesta  
Waltham, Massachusetts

**Poetry is for weiners, whether it rhymes or not, pooppy wierdo!**

**P.S. Your letter isn't really a haiku, Michael Angelou. The middle line has eight syllables, not seven. FYI – Poems is a two-syllable word.**

## READERS SOUND OFF ON GAME VIOLENCE

I wanted to let you know that I'm extremely pissed off about the attempt Congress is making to try to control the game industry. Those are two things that don't mix well – politics and video games. It's like ketchup on ice cream – they may think it's a good idea, but it just leaves a bad taste in your mouth. The link between violence in society and violence in video games is absurd and false. I believe Richard Rhodes is correct in saying that violent people have to have had violence directed at them or somebody they love. I think violent people are a product of their family environment. My son is four years old, and he plays all my games, but he knows it's just fantasy and that, in reality, we as human beings shouldn't hurt or kill other human beings because it's wrong. Why does he know this? Because I taught him the difference between fantasy and reality and the difference between right and wrong.

Steve Weber  
Houston, TX

I can understand both sides of the argument surrounding video game violence. I think that games started off being marketed toward a younger audience because it was a difficult trend for older folks to get into. The concept of playing games on your television was mostly foreign to older people at the time. Today, the people who grew up in the earlier days of gaming are adults. I have to admit, video games have helped me deal with my aggression and hostility toward other humans.

On the other hand, I understand the concerns people have about games. There are two factors that I think contribute to these fears. One, games are becoming more realistic. Two, games are interactive. Another problem is that video games have yet to become as sophisticated as R-rated movies. I own Conker's Bad Fur Day, and although it's a fine game to play, its content is rather forced gross-out humor and really isn't that funny in my opinion. It's gratuitous, and I'm willing to bet some middle-aged geek came up with the idea by saying, "What about the word poop? Kids like poop!"

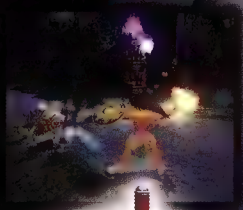
So, how do you keep mature-rated games out of the hands of younger children? And how young is too young? I don't know. What I do know is that back when my father was a child, a lot more children hunted with real guns than do now, and his generation turned out fine.

Scott Krasselt  
East Amherst, NY





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PlayStation®2



Violence

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Our Gaming Under Fire feature touched off a strong response amongst our readers. These issues are still very crucial to the future of our industry, but due to the recent tragic events in both New York and Washington, DC, seem much less important in the grand scheme of things than they did just a few months ago. The Media Marketing Accountability Act is still in committee in the Senate, but we don't expect that it will be a priority for Senator Lieberman or his colleagues, given that they are now struggling to deal with a grave threat to the survival of our nation. We will continue to cover this story as it unfolds.

## HE'S SINGLE, LADIES!

I am 14 years old. I am dateless and friendless. Am I on my way to becoming a video game magazine editor?

Odin Lowe  
Via hotmail.com



Stop showering and you're in, comrade!

## SILENT TREATMENT

I just wanted to say I felt that giving Silent Hill 2 a mere 7 as a rating is a travesty. I generally trust your reviews and almost did not buy the game because of it. Boy, would that have been a mistake! I had never played the first one, so I came into this one not really knowing what to expect. When rating the game you certainly neglected to consider the fact that this game was meant to scare the crap out of people and it did one hell of a job living up to this task. You seemed to only be concerned with the fact that it was too dark. Now, I concede that it is a bit dark, but if you could see as little as you claimed, then I suggest you purchase a nice thick pair of glasses. You completely overlooked the spine-tingling sound effects and music, great cutscenes, and intriguing storyline that make Silent Hill 2 an all-around incredible gaming experience!

Adam Florida  
Via hotmail.com

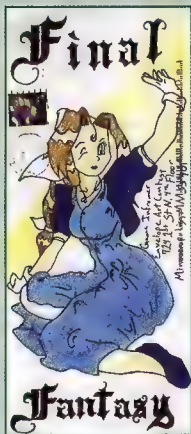
I just read the Silent Hill 2 review and I would just like to tell you that I'm glad your magazine doesn't buy into the hype. I know how annoying the damned lighting system gets. I think that they should have instituted a system where you chose what type of lighting you want to use. I know it would take a lot more work, but the rewards for the player would be great.

DJ Bass  
Via yahoo.com

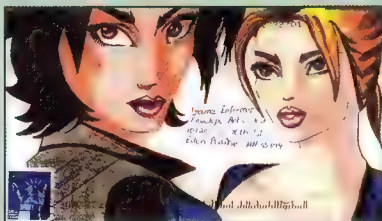
The Silent Hill series is what we refer to as an acquired taste. Some love its creepy atmospherics, while others decry its dim lighting and slow pace. A lot of people love Silent Hill, but unfortunately, none of those people happen to be employees of Game Informer Magazine. Reviewing video games is ultimately a matter of taste, and, while a writer can admire the effort that went into producing a game, he or she can only base their review on whether or not they had a good time playing it. Justin didn't enjoy the time he spent playing Silent Hill 2, and his review reflected that experience.



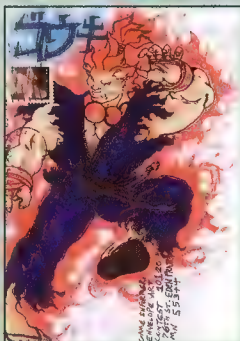
**Ruben Gonzales**  
"Tastes great, less filling. Tastes great, less filling"...and the debate continues.



**Chris Lara**  
"Help, my eye is missing!"



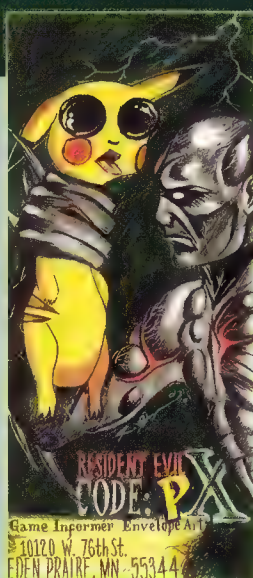
**Eda Utku**  
"Hey sister, soul sister, better get that dough sister!"



**P. Crawford**  
"There...smell that...and you thought my breath was bad."



**Samuel Velardo**  
"Do you ever have that feeling that someone's watching you?"



Game Informer Envelope Art  
10120 W. 76th St.  
EDEN PRAIRIE, MN 55344

## DECEMBER WINNER!

**Louie Podlaski**  
"Hey – wait a minute – I'm not even in this game!"

Enter the Game Informer Envelope Art Contest. All you need to do is draw, paint, scratch, spit, or carve the best damn envelope art you can think of and send it to us. Please include your name, phone number, and return address on the back of the envelope. If you're the monthly winner, we'll feature your work in GI and you'll receive a video game prize from the Game Informer vault.

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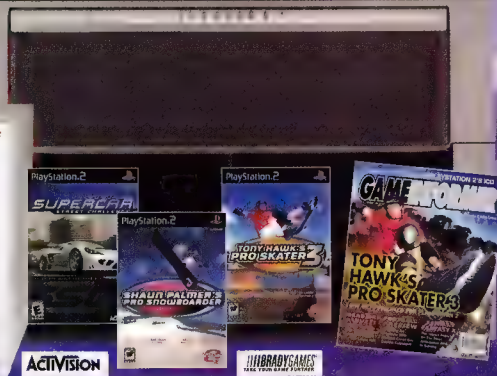
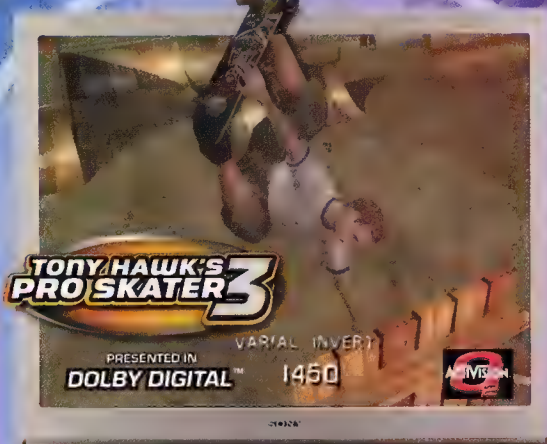
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# GI NEWS

## SHENMUE II, PSO GO XBOX

The slow death of **Sega's Dreamcast** is a situation that started some time ago, despite a slew of strong sports properties and the console's corner on the online home console gaming market. As third-party titles, and first-party ones such as **Propeller Arena**, were either cancelled or given little developmental love, DC owners had their eye on one title in particular which they felt would be the system's last call to glory – **Shenmue II**. Sega has now shocked the gaming public by announcing that the sequel by Sega genius **Yu Suzuki** will appear exclusively on the **Xbox** here in America. **Shenmue II** has already been released in Japan for the Dreamcast and will come out, as scheduled, in Europe.

Although some fans may feel cheated at this development, the decision to move the game to Xbox was far from a well-orchestrated move. Advertising had been running for it as late as last month (check out page 89 of the previous issue of *Game Informer* for what could have been). In a chat with *GI*, Vice President of Strategic Planning and Corporate Affairs for Sega of America, **Charles Bellfield**, reiterated this point by saying that, "it was always slated for the Dreamcast." In fact, Mr. Bellfield told us that Microsoft originally approached them solely in regards to the third edition of the innovative adventure.

"[*Shenmue II*] was not one of the titles we were shopping or talking to the companies about." But despite these intentions, market forces required that the company make moves to ensure that the series itself survived. "When it became very obvious over the last three or four months that premium price content on the Dreamcast was not selling towards its quotas, we had to question the viability of continuing that price point on the Dreamcast for this holiday [season]. There is so much sunk cost into **Shenmue**, not just the original, but also **Shenmue II**. We want to keep the franchise alive beyond **Shenmue II** itself. Of course, Microsoft did not stipulate the cancellation of the Dreamcast version; that was a mutual decision between the two companies." This new version of the saga will feature enhancements and should see the light of day in the spring of next year. Interestingly enough, this may not be the end of the relationship between Microsoft and the Yu Suzuki-led **AM2** studio. We're told that the Xbox

benefactor is hoping this is just the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

On the same day, Sega further delineated its commitment to the new console on the block by announcing a version of **Phantasy Star Online** for both Xbox and **PC**. This now means that every major platform, aside from the **PlayStation 2**, will have an edition of the game. When we pressed Mr. Bellfield about the hot topic of cross-platform gaming, he wouldn't give anything away. "We know what they're doing, we know what we're doing, and we know the timeframes by which we are doing it in.

**Out Run 2** was being considered as a product for this board, which would make for quick porting between the two gaming formats. Sega is currently looking to its past for title possibilities across all of the platforms at its disposal. In a speech during **Tokyo Game Show**, COO of Sega **Tetsu Kayama** said that everything from **NIGHTS** and **Space Harrier** to **Enemy Zero** and **D's Diner** are being weighed as options. Also on tap are three unnamed companies which will license characters from Sega's vaults for use in their own titles.

Sega, however, definitely isn't only looking at familiar franchises for its next hit. Despite the current modus operandi of bringing Dreamcast titles to other consoles, Kayama has promised no less than 10 original games for the 2003 fiscal year (which starts next March) and 15 the year after that. "Innovation is still continuing. At the same time, we are bringing content from one platform to others. Secondly, we're bringing old franchises back again," says Bellfield, and despite our disappointment at the realignment of **Shenmue II**, we can't help but believe that the company knows what it's doing.



**Shenmue II**

We are working with each platform company to get over any tentative barriers, and trying to demonstrate in delivering a community of gamers around a particular game instead of limiting it to a particular platform. It would be in Microsoft's interest to ensure that there was a big installed base of **PSO** players online using two of Microsoft's platforms." In other back catalog moves, the much-loved **Skies of Arcadia** will head over to **PS2** and **GC**, while **Hundred Swords** will go to Sony's system.

Moving forward, Sega definitely hopes that nobody will be left behind. Both the Dreamcast and PlayStation 2 had arcade boards designed after their hardware, and now the Xbox is looking to do the same. Sega has said it would help in this endeavor, and the fruits of this collaboration are already being dreamed up. Yu Suzuki stated that

### SOME SEGA TITLES ON OTHER PLATFORMS

#### XBOX

- Phantasy Star Online
- Sega GT 2002
- Shenmue II
- Panzer Dragoon
- GunValkyrie
- Jet Grind Radio Future
- Various Sega Sports titles

#### GAMECUBE

- Super Monkey Ball
- Phantasy Star Online
- Sonic Adventure 2
- Virtua Striker 3
- Skies of Arcadia
- Various Sega Sports titles

#### PLAYSTATION 2

- Virtua Fighter 4
- Rez
- Various Sega Sports titles

## SONY'S NETWORK ADAPTER DELAYED

At this year's **E3**, **Sony** was proud to tout that it would have a **56K analog modem/Ethernet Network Adapter** to enable you to finally play online with the **PlayStation 2**. Those plans have gone awry, however, as the Adapter and its accompanying network have been bumped from their November release until spring of next year. This info comes from none other than one of the premier titles set to use the console's upcoming capabilities,

**Activision's Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3**. The title's instruction booklet lays bare Sony's delay. Furthermore, first-party game **SOCOM: US Navy Seals** was to usher in the broadband device, but it too has gone AWOL until February of 2002.

During a recent meeting on Activision's quarterly financial earnings, an official with the company confirmed this news. "Sony isn't quite ready with its online infrastructure yet, but that should come early next year, and when it is, we'll be fully prepared for it. Early next year *Tony Hawk* will be on the forefront of the console online future." The executive also talked about what we might be able to expect from Sony's online strategy from a fee standpoint. "In terms of a business model it looks a lot like the **PC** gaming business model. Most of it will be free, but later as developments ensue, there may be more opportunities with additional levels and players. For now it is nothing concrete." Stay tuned as Sony itself sheds more light on this important new frontier to next-gen

gaming. Note, the third-party adapters below will enable you to play online with *Tony 3* until Sony's plans are implemented.



### ETHERNET USB

- LinkSys EtherFast 10/100 USB Network Adapter
- D-Link DSB650TX
- SMC EZNET-USB
- SOHware 10/100 Mbps USB Network Adapter

### USB MODEMS

- Zoom FaxModem 56K USB
- USB Pocket 56K NetSurfer
- MultiTech Systems MultiModemUSB
- Actiontec Call Waiting USB Modem
- Compaq 56K USB Fax Modem



Network/Modem Adapter

## SONY BUYS STAKE IN SQUARE

**Sony** and **Square** blindsided the gaming world when they announced that Sony had purchased a 19% interest in the company behind the **Final Fantasy** series. Square sold 11.2 million shares of its stock at the cost of 1,330 yen apiece. The total investment of 14.9 million yen (or \$12.4 million) now means that Sony is the second largest shareholder of Square. According to its President, **Nao Suzuki**, the cash infusion was necessary in order to mitigate the damage done by solely focusing on the *FF* franchise. "We risked running the *FF* franchise into the ground by concentrating everything on it. In the next year or two, though, I want to see Square making several million-selling titles per year. I want to see Square selling a million of games other than *FF*."

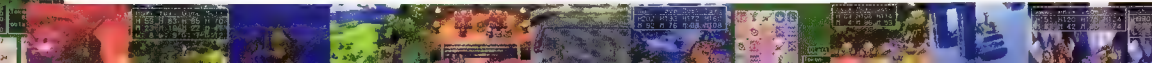
Square's recent failure with the CG movie, **Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within**, was also thought to be to blame for the poor financial situation. It is estimated that the film recuperated only a third of its \$100 million profit projection in the US, and it even single-handedly caused the company to pull out of this entertainment market. "We won't continue in the movie business, and we want to recover earnings by focusing on game production," said COO **Yoichi Wada**. Still, the movie's CG production is being thought of as a valuable asset for future video games.

These developments come after months and even years of rumors of Square getting in bed again with **Nintendo** and even **Microsoft**. The possibility of a Square/Nintendo partnership was one that was eagerly eyed by gamers, as the two companies have been adversaries ever since Square split with the makers of Mario to bring *Final Fantasy* to the **PlayStation**. In fact, many thought that this announcement was actually going to be about a reconciliation between the two. The door isn't completely closed on seeing the two collaborate, however. In a recent press conference, no less than Sony's President, **Ken Kutaragi**, stated, "We're not asking Square to make games only for PlayStation and PlayStation 2. We're simply asking them to make fun games that everyone can get into." Square's head honcho, Suzuki, proceeded to point out that a deal is still being worked out for titles to appear on **Game Boy Advance**, but the final approval for that ultimately lay with Nintendo. He felt that the GBA market was not a conflict – unless, interestingly enough, Sony decided to put out a handful of its own.

Ultimately, apart from questions of exclusivity, this move should have a long term impact on Square's **PlayOnline** network. Up until this point, Square had planned a whole host of different entertainment features for the service, the biggest of which was to play **FF XI** with others. It is unknown at this moment if there will be a shift towards Sony for **PlayOnline**, as well as what this may mean for the PlayStation 2 giant's own Internet plans. Also, both **Enix** and **Namco** had previously signed with Square for the development of games utilizing the online service.



Final Fantasy XI







## GI NEWS



**R&D**  
Game Informer's research and development operatives search the globe, seeking out the untapped licenses that will become tomorrow's killer games. If you have any great ideas for games of the future, be sure to drop us a line. Maybe we'll use our godlike power over the video game industry to turn you into a millionaire – or just steal your idea.

## CONVOY

Put the hammer down, keep your crank case full, and if any smokeys give you static, it just might be time for a convoy, good buddy. Convoy puts you behind the wheel of a big rig destined for more problems than just axle-weight limits and making time. The interstates of this game



are loaded to the hilt with road blocks, police hassles, and drivers filled with rage. It's all too easy to make enemies, but luckily, you've got some friends with 18-wheelers of their own.

Ideally played on an Xbox both connected to the Internet and with the Voice Communicator accessory, the safest way across the US of A is with an online group of truckers squawking in your ear through the CB radio. With teamwork, your convoy will be able to stay in the jet stream and out of the back of a cop car by making short work of any objects, animals, or people that get in your way – and make a healthy profit off quickly-delivered cargo to boot! With your hard-earned dollars, you'll be able to buy engine upgrades, better fuzzi-busters, mud flaps with the silhouette of nude women, and CW McCall 8-tracks.

With multiple routes to try and tons of obstacles to overcome, Convoy would play like a multiplayer movie chase scene that constantly unfolds. Think up a handle and keep the pedal to the metal, because you've got a long way to go and a short time to get there.



## LUCLIN ADDS EQ TEXTURES

**EverQuest: Shadows of Luclin** will pack with it a bonus disc that will add a heapin' helpin' of pixels this December. Players will receive a complete upgrade of all the textures to the world of *EverQuest*. You can update the 32x32 resolution of old to 256x256 and even 512x512 pixel textures. The *EverQuest* team went through and applied high-resolution textures completely by hand – just for your benefit! Also available is an alternate advancement system for those over level 50. Two experience pools will be created between which you can switch freely with no penalty. One is for leveling up, while the other will be for ability increases. Various enhancements will be on offer to you, including some skills that are not attainable by others. All of this, of course, is on top of the joy that already is *Shadows of Luclin*. Wonderful, we say, just wonderful!



## REZ BRINGS CROSS-GENRE BEATS

**Tetsuya Mizuguchi**, creator of *Space Channel 5*, has a new creation set to hit the **PlayStation 2** in January. This comes after persistent assertions from **Sega of America** that the game wouldn't make it to America, which is perhaps half true, as the **Dreamcast** version of *Rez* is nowhere in sight. Formerly known as **K-Project**, *Rez* is being billed as a cross between a shooter and a music game.

Players swim down surreal levels, creating lines of music by stringing shots together. In turn, your successful progression through the boards will change the intense visual landscape around you. The game's story is equally warped. As a hacker, you must revive a global data network named **Eden** that has gone into a coma due to the fact that it has become aware of its own existence. Apart from the cornucopia of sampled music, the unlockable features, and pretzel-twisting gameplay, *Rez* sports a USB peripheral called the **Trance Vibrator**. This go-anywhere device amplifies the **Dual Shock** to new heights, and should have you humming *Rez*'s tunes quite happily. Sega of America has made no announcements regarding bringing the Trance Vibrator over to these shores.



## NAME THAT GAME

Sega CD owners were able to take a bite out of time crime in this early-'80s laser disc game by controlling a scantily clad heroine. Using anime graphics and a playing style similar to *Dragon's Lair*, players would have to correctly select actions at the appropriate time during the title's 16 levels. These ranged from the Stone Age, through the world wars, and on to the future. Your mission was to stop the evil Luda from altering history in order to rule the planet.



(Answer on page 39)

# THE ARCADE SMASH THUNDERS ONTO PLAYSTATION 2

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Rough 'n rambling Arcade Mode and tons of twisted trucker mini-games

# EIGHTEEN WHEELER AMERICAN PRO TRUCKER



2-player, split-screen "Versus Mode," featuring 4 different raceways



PlayStation 2

SEGA

Acclaim

acclaim.com

EVERYONE



VIOLENCE

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## STARFIGHTER II UNDERWAY

After a barrage of *Star Wars: Episode I* games on all consoles, **LucasArts** had promised a more concentrated video game effort by the time next summer's *Attack of the Clones* arrives. Work has already begun on *Starfighter II*, and we are confident that the company will make good on its word in spectacular fashion. *Starfighter II* has its work cut out for it now with *Rogue Leader* raising the standard, but the early word on the game is that it is coming along quite nicely. The fate of the universe and the progressing of Jedi unfold in the game via the spectacular action. Force powers are being incorporated into the sequel to go along with the dogfights, and several new ships are included. Obi-Wan's Episode II Jedi starfighter (nicknamed The Wedge after its likeness to an Imperial Star Destroyer) will be joined by a host of other craft. Adia Gallia and other council members will up the aerial ante when *Starfighter II* takes off next summer.



## PS2'S A RAINBOW

Bucking the criticisms that it's just a cold piece of home stereo equipment, **Sony** has issued color versions of the **PlayStation 2** in commemoration of the shipment of its 20 millionth unit worldwide. These stylish platforms come in five new glossy metallic finishes: red, silver, blue, white, and yellow. Matching controllers and stands are also available separately.

These limited edition systems are being dubbed the **European Automobile Color Collection**, although 666 units per color will be allocated for sale in the United States. **Sony of America** has yet to officially announced just how and when it will make these consoles available. Sony of Japan also plans to put several packages up for sale consisting of all five color units through its website.



## THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UGLY

**UGLY** – There is deep division in the office over **Jay's** Pilot-made Koei pen, **Matt, Justin,** and **Kato** have been told they will never be able to use the controversial writing instrument. **Kristlan,** on the other hand, has promised to use the pen on the condition that he doesn't look at it. This situation is proof that there is definitely no way we can all just get along.

**GOOD** – VP of Product Development **Bret Berry** of **Ubi Soft** has issued a letter of apology and explanation regarding troubles around PC title **Pool of Radiance: Ruins of Myth Drannor**. Some consumers have experienced problems installing and uninstalling the game. Ubi Soft has promised the full cooperation of its tech support and has said it will issue a patch as soon as possible.

**BAD** – **TDK Mediactive** has scored the rights to make video games based on the **DC** comic book character **Aquaman**. Our first question isn't when the next-gen vids are going to come out (sometime in 2002), but is this: hook or no hook? Second question: **Aquaman?** Are you serious?! His Underoos weren't even worthy of a skid mark back in the day.

**GOOD GOD** – Word from Japan is that **Sega** is planning to release an updated **PlayStation 2** edition of **Panic!** (a.k.a. **Switch**) – the second weirdest video game ever, according to *GI* issue #100. Not only do the graphics remain unchanged, the game's premise of saving the world by pushing the right buttons is still present. Will it make it to these shores again, and what will the ESRB rate it this time around?

**UGLY** – **ASCII's GameCube** keyboard and controller combo is something only a mother or a **Nintendo** freak could love. Taking up two whole controller ports, this behemoth is a marvel of mechanical engineering. The question here isn't how, but why. Since Nintendo hasn't outlined a clear online strategy, what games would you possibly need this for?



## LOOSE TALK

Wherever there's a juicy rumor in the industry, *Game Informer* experts are on it like a fly on stink. If loose lips are spraying hot gossip, we're sucking up the secret saliva and drooling it all over this section. *Loose Talk* exposes inside rumors for all to see. These leads may turn out to be 100% untrue, but then again, they could also be dead honest, and you've just learned about them months before anyone else!

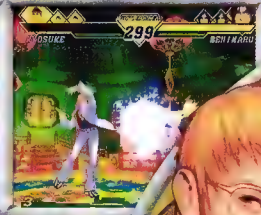
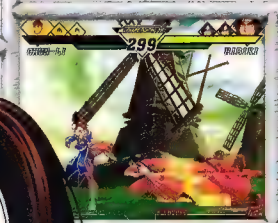
**Sega's Sonic the Hedgehog** may be one of the company's most famous characters, but soon he may not be for everyone. During a recent **Tokyo Game Show** speech, higher-ups hinted that he might be restricted to **Nintendo's GameCube** and **Game Boy Advance** from now on. This is due to the console's younger age demographic; one that Sega says is where the majority of Sonic's fans lie. Because of this data, Sega also admitted that it might have been a mistake to debut **Sonic Adventure** with the **Dreamcast**.

Many are anxiously waiting for the next **Matrix** films, as well as **Shiny's Xbox** games based on them. *Loose Talk* has heard, however, that the titles are dangerously behind and the first one likely won't be ready by the time the sequel hits theaters.

Still bowled over by the news in the last *GI* about **Resident Evil** heading exclusively to **GameCube?** *GI* has now found out that the cozy **Capcom/Nintendo/Shinji Mikami** relationship doesn't end there. The **RE, Devil May Cry,** and **Dino Crisis** wunderkind is also working on an all-new, exclusive game for the system.

According to comics magazine **Wizard**, **THQ** is very interested in bringing a bevy of **Marvel** characters to a platform near you. **Ghost Rider, Thor, Namor, War Machine, Elektra, Punisher, Silver Surfer,** and **Iron Flat** have all caught the eye of the publisher. It is particularly keen on a creating a first-person Punisher vid. **Marvel** has told **THQ** it will happily provide any storylines needed.

Japanese company **Koei** wants to get in on the online gaming stakes in a bad way. It has penciled in a strategy to make it the number one Internet gaming provider. Key to these plans is an all-new, unnamed online franchise created by **Kessen** mastermind **Kou Shibusawa**.



# Love At First Fight.



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PlayStation®2



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# VIDEO GAME TRIVIA



Plastic surgery is the rage these days, but it's never really made an impact in gaming. Matt, our fashion guru, did some extensive fieldwork on this subject. Rather than just learning about the procedures, Matt actually went under the scalpel to see which surgery best fits into the video game world. If you're thinking about altering your appearance, this quiz will pinpoint what body augmentation best fits you. Snip snip!

**Question 1:** What was the name of the polygonal fighting game planned for Super Nintendo, but never released?

- A. Super Smash Bros.
- B. FX Fighter
- C. Killer Instinct 2
- D. Tekken

**Question 2:** Eurocom has established itself as one of the most sought-after developers of action/platform games, most recently scoring a hit with Disney's Atlantis: The Lost Empire. From the list below, which of these games did Eurocom not have a hand in?

- A. Maui Mallard in Cold Shadow
- B. 40 Winks
- C. Disney's Hercules
- D. Disney's The Emperor's New Groove

**Question 3:** Before Xbox, what codename did Microsoft's new video game machine go under?

- A. Midway
- B. The X-Factor
- C. Project: Raven
- D. D.O.I

**Question 4:** What handheld video game system had the first TV tuner, allowing you to watch television on it?

- A. Atari Lynx
- B. Neo Geo Pocket Color
- C. Turbo Express
- D. Game Gear

**Question 5:** Which of the NES Dragon Warrior games features the character, Princess of Moonbrooke?

- A. Dragon Warrior
- B. Dragon Warrior II
- C. Dragon Warrior III
- D. All of the Above

**Question 6:** In the classic Atari 2600 game, Adventure, what creature would steal items?



- A. Dragon
- B. Bat
- C. Minotaur
- D. Ghost

**Question 7:** Not too many people know Sonic the Hedgehog's origin story. As illustrated in the ongoing Archie comic series, Sonic's fur changed from brown to blue when he broke the speed of sound. His home planet is Mobius. If you truly are a Sonic fan, can you name the scientist who created Sonic's super sneakers?

- A. Dr. Robotnik
- B. Dr. Steven Frost
- C. Dr. Ovi Kintobor
- D. Dr. Windune

**Question 8:** In the SNES action/RPG classic, Secret of Mana, your final boss was the Mana Beast. Who did you fight immediately before it?

- A. Dark Lich
- B. Blue Dragon
- C. Lime Slime
- D. Aegaropilion

**Question 9:** In 1986, Yuji Naka created three Sega Master System games. Of course, Phantasy Star and Space Harrier are the most notable, but what was the third title?

- A. Alien Syndrome
- B. Miracle Warriors: Seal of the Dark Lord
- C. Black Belt
- D. Psycho Fox

**Question 10:** Computer industry giants, Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, both worked at a video game company in their teen years. Which company do we speak of?

- A. Coleco
- B. Mattel
- C. Atari
- D. Activision

### Score & Rank

"HEY, WHO TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS?"

"THIS KIND OF SUCKS."

"I'LL NEVER LEAVE THE HOUSE!"

"I CAN SIT ON MY RUMP FOR DAYS!!!"

"NOW I CAN PLAY XBOX!"



1 Hair Implant



2-3 Nose Job



4-6 Breast Enlargement



7-9 Cushy Butt Cheeks



10 Finger Extensions

## SUPER SMASHBROS. Melee



Super Smash Brothers: Melee, only for Nintendo GameCube.

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Comic Mischief Mild Violence





## DATA FILE

► **CESA**, the organization behind the bi-annual **Tokyo Game Show**, has decided to cancel the spring leg of the event. The move was done due to declining attendance figures and lack of material. Publishers often like to save games for May's E3 convention here in America.

► Japan's **Nihon Keizai Shinbun** newspaper reports that Nintendo is setting up a funding program for small software developers to put out game demos. The hope is that the 10 to 20 million yen investment will enable Nintendo to cultivate the next surprise hit. The **Pokémon** phenomenon was created by just such a start-up company.

► **Treyarch** has agreed to become a wholly owned subsidiary of **Activision**. The developer behind **Spider-Man** and **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2** for the Dreamcast is continuing to work on titles such as **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2x** (Xbox) and **Spider-Man: The Movie** (PlayStation 2).

► Word has it that **Namco** and **Nintendo** are working on an arcade board that is based on the **GameCube's** architecture. This will result in a fluid transition between arcade titles and the console, and vice versa. Rumor is that the **Space World** footage of **Soul Calibur 2** was running on this hardware.

► **Infogrames** has played a lot of second fiddle with its **Alone in the Dark**, and it **Resident Evil** will also go at it on the big screen. **Dimension Films** and **Angry Films** have started the conversion, which has included bringing in screenwriter **Hans Rodionoff** (**Man-Thing**). No actors or a release date have been announced yet.

► **Peter Molyneux's** Xbox game, **Project Ego**, is receiving all the press, but the leader of **Lowhead Studios** has another title in the works for the console. **BC**, developed by side studio **Intrepid Games**, is a prehistoric action game charging you with the survival of the human race through dark times.

► **Bethesda Softworks** has confirmed that its **Elder Scrolls: Morrowind** PC and Xbox titles have been delayed. No exact answer has been given for the setback, although the company states that the previously pre-Christmas game will now arrive in the spring of 2002.

► **Shining Soul** is the name of the new **Shining Force** title. The 2002 Japanese game will appear on the **Game Boy Advance** and feature character and monster design by **Shining Force** luminary **Yoshitaka Tamaki**. Four-player simultaneous play and customizable players are also a part of the experience.

Name That Game Answer:  
Time (8)

## JOIN THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GAMERS

No longer will people laugh at you as you walk the city streets in brightly colored tights! **Cryptic Studios** is preparing a massively multiplayer online comic book extravaganza for next summer entitled **City of Heroes**, where such ridiculous attire is positively encouraged. Also par for the course will be making the length and breadth of **Paragon City** safe from its evil elements within. Create your hero from a background of your choosing. Is s/he a tech-obsessed geek with a vengeance, an exiled mutant, or merely a well-endowed überhuman? City's 40 powers range from being elemental-based to physical skills like flight and all points in-between. Assigning them will have you in a quandary just as much as whether you like starbursts or skulls on your costume.

Fighting sinister organizations of villains such as The Fifth Column or The Rikti will require more than super hero status alone. Earn Fame points and you can advance levels and gain skills and power-ups to help your cause. Characters can band together to form their own do-good groups, and massive skyscrapers can even be bought to headquarter your band of crime fighters. An Arena area will be created for those players looking for a fight against their own superhero ranks, although **City of Heroes'** slew of missions, thousands of possible users, and endless possibilities should keep you pretty busy.



15% of the offices in our building have been driven out by the fumes from our floor staining. Our master plan is now 54% toward completion

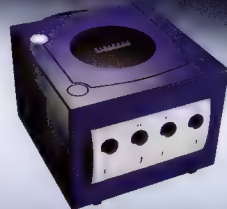
51% of Reiner's day is taken up watching and re-watching the new Star Wars: Episode I DVD. If only Kristian had a DVD player

23% of conversations with Jay end up turning into bets between him and the other person

0% of duplicate contest entries are considered eligible when winners are drawn

65% of our TVs have been saved from flying out the window in a gust of wind due to the handy Xbox weights that sit on top of them

# WAVE RACE BLUE STORM



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EVERWON  
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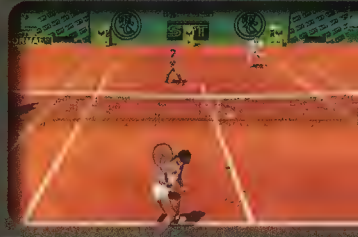
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Quiet, please. Match in progress.



SEGA  
SPORTS

TENNIS



Dreamcast

EVERYONE  
E

131 km/h



TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION

# METAL GEAR SOLID<sup>®</sup> 2

SONS OF LIBERTY™

**Hideo Kojima** once told us that he'd rather be a David Lynch than a Steven Spielberg. This is of course a direct reference to his workload – he'd rather oversee the development of one product as opposed to trying to coordinate the creation of a handful of separate projects. As we see it, Kojima is more likely to wear the shoes of George Lucas than those of any other Hollywood director. His focus, determination, and dedication to the Metal Gear series is similar to Lucas' love for Star Wars. To ensure that his latest effort perfectly reflects his original vision, Kojima gave a startling statement to the gaming world at this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3): "I will enter covert operations until the resurfacing. And I shall cut off all contact until the game is done."

Within the six months that he has been submerged, not a murmur has been heard from him or his team. Devotion like this is rare, especially since

the team has already invested several years of their lives into this game. During this time, they have literally been sealed off from the rest of the world. This really is no surprise, however, as Kojima has always been a perfectionist. When Kojima joined Konami in 1986, it was always his goal to create the ultimate video game. Viewing Kojima's portfolio clearly states that Metal Gear was in fact his first game release. This is an impressive start to say the least.

However, if you dig for dirt and talk to the right people, you'll find out that Kojima's first title, a game called Lost World, never made it off of the cutting room floor. Our sources tell us that Lost World was very much like Super Mario Bros. with a heavy focus on storytelling. Sadly, before Kojima could put the finishing touches on this title, Konami cancelled the project.

In the wake of this setback, Konami asked Kojima to create a war game for the Japanese personal computer, the

## THE BEST KEPT SECRET IN VIDEO GAMES

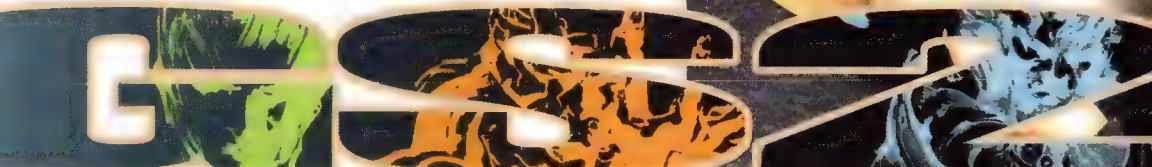
MSX-2. Seeing that the MSX-2 had limitations with sprites, Kojima had reservations at first. He soldiered on, but during the development of this title, several problems arose. If there were too many characters occupying the playfield, the screen would start blinking and the game would slow down. Rather than scaling back his vision, or just living with the imperfections, Kojima came up with a solution. In place of all-out combat, an emphasis was placed on evasive stealth tactics. After implementing these play mechanics and reducing the action ever so subtly, Metal Gear took shape and the action ran smoothly. The MSX-2 version never made it to the States, but an NES port of this title, which Kojima had little to do with, did.

While the majority of gamers fell in love with this revolutionary game, Kojima didn't feel the port was up to his standards. To make matters worse, Konami decided to create a sequel to the game without Kojima's involvement. You see, Kojima was assigned to the development of MSX-2 games. The sequel, Snake's Revenge, was a Famicom (NES) title. Doing what every loving father would, Kojima set out to create a sequel of his own for the MSX-2. Both of these titles, Snake's Revenge and Kojima's Metal Gear 2: Solid Snake, released in 1990, and these dual sequels fought for the admiration of Japanese consumers. In a cruel twist of fates, the true

screen lit up, and a video of Metal Gear Solid played. The crowd, who was screaming like teenage girls at a Beatles concert, ended up giving the game a standing ovation, proclaiming it the coolest game they had ever seen.

When Metal Gear Solid released a year later, gamers joined in the celebration. The game flew off of retail shelves. To this day, it remains one of the PlayStation's biggest successes. Thankfully, Kojima had no plans of retiring the series again. Immediately after finishing this long overdue follow-up, he began work on a sequel for the PlayStation 2 console. It wasn't until 2000 that Kojima felt confident in unveiling his work. Not one to jinx his success, he arranged to show this product at E3, this time on a Universal Studios movie screen. Through a larger than life presentation, Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty finally crawled out of the shadows. Saying that gamers rejoiced is an understatement. Saying that they freaked out, and to this day salivate just at the thought of this game, is more accurate. After teasing gamers again at the following E3, Kojima made the announcement that he was going to lock himself to his desk until the game was finished.

Six months have passed since this time, and the game is finally complete. Konami awarded us the opportunity to be the first



## THE BEST KEPT SECRET IN VIDEO GAMES

follow-up, Solid Snake, never made it off the shores of Japan. Instead, US gamers had to wade through the misery that the impostor delivered so carelessly.

After concluding his MSX-2 career, Kojima hung up his Metal Gear hat and pursued other ventures for several consoles. Almost every one of his side projects, (Policenauts, Snatcher) went on to garner a following, yet they directly linked back to his Metal Gear roots. After lying dormant for nearly a decade, Hideo decided to reawaken the beast. With video game technology making a drastic leap, the means to create the ultimate Metal Gear adventure were now in place. Silent as ever, Kojima and his team worked in secrecy, shrouding this top-secret project at all costs. It wasn't until 1997's annual E3 show that the game was finally uncovered and publicly shown. At a closed meeting, roughly 50 video game journalists were huddled into a small room, not having a clue as to what was about to take place. Just when it seemed that Konami was about to perform mass murder, a

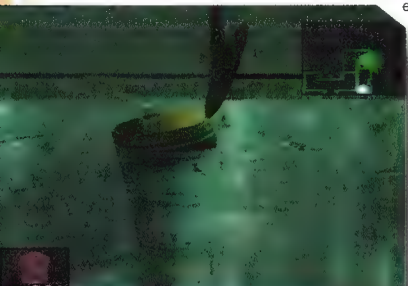
people in the world to play the game in its entirety. Rather than just sending us a beta disc, Konami actually sent out a security guard with Metal Gear Solid 2 fastened securely in a shiny silver briefcase. We've played through every inch of this amazing game and would love to tell you about every little detail. Yet for the first time, we can't say a word. It's not that Konami has our tongues in a vice. Just mentioning the events that occur in this game will ruin it – much like someone giving away the ending to *The Sixth Sense*. We can say that you will be shocked beyond your wildest imagination. Hideo put some serious thought into this title, touching on everything from politics to the dangers that reside within technology. To this day, we still can't comprehend what took place in this astounding title. As a whole, Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty is the best-kept secret in video games – and you'll need to play it to find out why.

## IN THE DETAILS

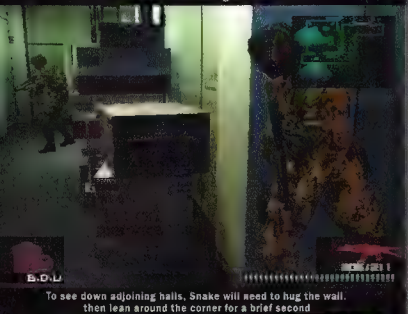
**Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty** is a success story on every level and the lengthy developmental process hasn't dated the game in any way, either. The extra time Kojima and his team spent only enhances this product – allowing for the insertion of the smallest of details and the fine-tuning of the engine. Because of this, you'll never see graphical flickers, obscure camera movements, or even a missed line within the accurate lip-synching. Every little aspect reflects realism. If Snake shoots a wine bottle, it won't spontaneously burst like we've seen in other games. Depending on where you shoot the bottle, it will crumble, shards will crash to the ground, and it will fall over realistically. Details like these are found within every room, and with almost every object or item you come across. Even Snake's motions reflect those of the real world. The camera system is also tied to these movements.

Throughout most of the adventure, the game unfolds through an isometric perspective. When Snake hugs a wall and slides to a corner, the camera is set parallel with Snake, not allowing the player to see what resides in the adjoining hallway. To peer down the hall, Snake will either have to walk around the corner, which would surely result in a bloody firefight, or continue clinging to the wall, and peek around the corner

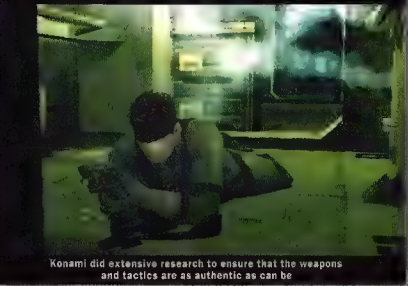
eyeing where the guard is. Kojima and his team brought about the sense that the camera is actually in the environment. If Snake jumps into a pool of water, droplets will splash up onto the camera. If you enter the first-person perspective and see the world from Snake's vantage point, the same theory applies. If you stand in the rain and turn into the wind, the rain will bounce off of the screen. If you turn around, you'll see the rain streak by opposed to hitting you in the face. As far as the technology in the game is concerned, Hideo did his research, visiting ship factories, Japan's National Self-Defense Force, a NYPD bomb squad, and a nuclear fuel processing plant.



This can bob realistically within the water, filling with more water and moving with the waves



To see down adjoining halls, Snake will need to hug the wall, then lean around the corner for a brief second



Konami did extensive research to ensure that the weapons and tactics are as authentic as can be



I'm like you...I have no name.

The story makes several unexpected turns, culminating in surreal events and unbelievable plot twists

Raven!?

Familiar faces from the past continually pop up throughout the course of the game

Gurlukovich, you and your...

The facial animation is outstanding, capturing a wide variety of emotions and perfectly lip-synching all of the dialogue

## EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT

**Metal Gear's ability** to express realism also touches on a side of gaming we really haven't witnessed yet – emotion. As cutscenes flash across the screen, all of which scream beauty in the character animation and environmental details, cinematic techniques are used to draw out the feelings of the digital actors. The mannerisms and facial expressions that the characters deliver are as real as can be. Given the situation, the game also utilizes camera movement, such as zooms and pans, to heighten the sensation. Much like movies, the soundtrack plays a vital role, always reflecting the mood of a given scene.

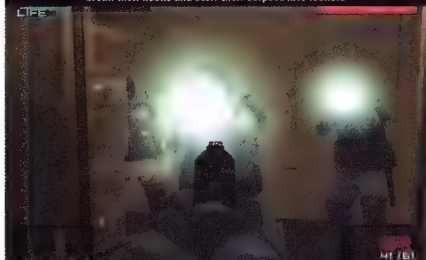
It may not sound like much on paper, but this truly is an accomplishment on Konami's part.

Games may have the ability to display gorgeous visuals, but they've always lacked the true essence of human behavior. No matter how realistic the characters may look, they're still two-dimensional. In *Sons of Liberty*, an emotional tie is created between the player and the characters in the game. You'll feel remorse for them, cheer them on, and often question their stupidity. Square Pictures tried to capture this aspect in *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*. Even after throwing countless millions at this project, the characters in the movie still came across as zombies. Konami somehow managed to accomplish this "impossibility" within the cutscenes of a game.

## CASUALTIES OF WAR



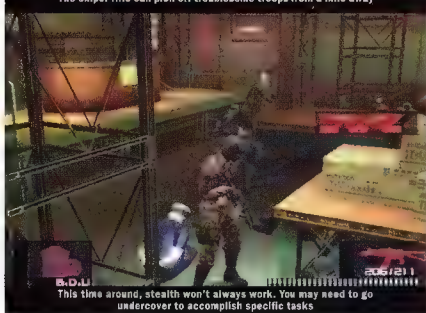
If guards are patrolling the perimeter, you may need to clear a path. Possibly throwing a soldier or two overboard. If you choose to, you can even break their necks and stuff their corpses into lockers



The first-person combat is greatly enhanced, allowing players to lean around corners, duck, and even step up on their tiptoes if they need to peek over the top of a crate



The sniper rifle can pick off troublesome troops from a mile away



This time around, stealth won't always work. You may need to go undercover to accomplish specific tasks

**The gameplay within** the Metal Gear series has always been heralded as its most noteworthy facet. Even if Konami decided to create ten different Metal Gear titles a year, we have a feeling that Kojima would keep this formula intact and wouldn't change a thing. If you've played any of the games before, you can already fathom how this game is going to control and what is demanded of you. Kojima is the father of stealth and we have a feeling he'll always be the man that makes advancements in this field.

Activision's Tenchu posed a threat to this position, delivering a handful of innovative techniques, but the play in Sons of Liberty far surpasses any skills Rikimaru brings to the table. In addition to the standard bag of tricks, like being able to hug walls, monitor guard movement, and hide beneath boxes, players can now drag soldiers and stuff them in lockers or throw them overboard. When the radar goes down, the most vital tool in the stealth aspect, players will now need to monitor the shadows that guards cast.

Since the enemy behavior has been greatly enhanced – reacting accordingly to

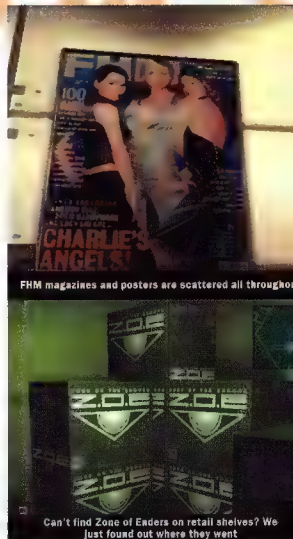
sound and movement – the surroundings cannot be altered, bodies cannot be left out in the open, and time needs to be taken to study the patrol grids. Since the security is so tight, you may be forced to dawn a disguise to blend with the soldiers. These situations are demanding of your patience. The guards will recognize if you are holding a weapon that isn't up to protocol, and will even become alarmed if you accidentally graze their shoulder.

If players seek to take out frustration and would rather play the role of Rambo than the Invisible Man, the game is designed to allow this behavior as well. A wide variety of weapons are included, for both short and long range affairs. Snake's hand-to-hand combat prowess is also greatly enhanced, devastating the opposition with a roundhouse kick, a mighty punch combo, and a ferocious lunge assault. However, as Kojima says, the ultimate way to play this game is using nothing more than the tranquilizer gun. As we've learned, it is possible to work your way throughout the game without killing a soul.

## TRICKS OF THE TRADE

**As video games** continue to evolve, more companies are steering away from inputting codes that allow players to freely cheat whenever they see fit. The current trend is the embedding of secrets. Metal Gear Solid was loaded to the hilt with interesting goodies and obscure events. This tradition continues on in the PlayStation 2 sequel. At any point during the quest, something bizarre could happen. Just to give you an example, we ran into a fairly uncomfortable situation with three guards bearing down on our location. In a last ditch effort to escape, we ran to a door and spun the wheel to open it. With one mighty yank, Snake pulled the wheel off of the door. We, and Snake, paused for a second in disbelief. Snake even tried to refasten the wheel. Of course, at this point, the guards were on us, and we were soon filled with lead.

Within the course of one game, which should take gamers approximately 20 hours to complete, you'll run into dozens of interesting things. Much like the last release, players will eventually pick up a digital camera that can be used to snap shots of the strange occurrences in the game. You can even pose sleeping guards in compromising positions if you feel like it. The game saves every photo you take, and you'll even be able to alter the color and tint on each shot. Where's the PlayStation 2 printer?!

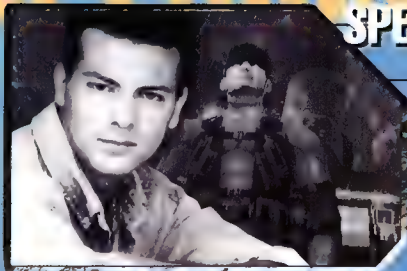


FHM magazines and posters are scattered all throughout

Can't find Zone of Eiders on retail shelves? We just found out where they went

# SPEAKING WITH THE SNAKE

## AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID HAYTER



**Game Informer:** Before signing on to this project, did you know anything about the Metal Gear games?

David Hayter: No.

**GI:** Would you consider yourself a hardcore gamer?

DH: While I actually had to put my PS2 Star Wars: Starfighter on pause to do this interview, I would not consider myself a hardcore gamer. I really enjoy the time I get to play, but I don't think it's a good idea to be a hardcore anything.

**GI:** As a screenwriter, what is your take on the script for Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty?

DH: Great. Much better than the first. The dialogue is much more natural, and the fact that we had the same director (the video-game-revolutionizing Kris Zimmerman) and many of the same actors, we all had a better idea this time of who the characters were, which gave us more confidence to delve into them. There are some scenes between Otacon and myself that are extremely funny.

**GI:** Solid Snake's raspy voice is a staple within the video game industry. Everyone knows it, and everyone tries to do his or her best impersonation of it. Is the transformation into this gaming icon as simple as lowering your voice?

DH: I have never heard anyone do an impression of Snake, but it's a cool concept that they would. Snake's voice came out of the picture that they showed me. It was a concept drawing of Snake,

(you've all seen the one I mean) wearing the bandana, holding his gun. He looked like he'd been down a hundred miles of bad road. I looked at him and tried to hear his voice in my head. That's what came out.

**GI:** As you well know, Snake has a tendency to say some strange things. Did you ever have to hold in a laugh when reading the dialogue?

DH: I think Snake occasionally suffers from translation. There was an alternate take on the first game when someone is talking about radioactive Material Unaccounted For – But he calls it M.U.F. Snake replies, "Muff?" in a very sly, intriguing tone and it was very funny. But they used the other take.

**GI:** In either of the games, what line took the most takes?

DH: I can't remember. There are lines that come up, however, where I have the distinct memory of never wanting to hear that particular series of words ever again.

**GI:** Were you allowed to improvise?

DH: A little. You don't want to get too far from the translation, but if we did anything interesting, Konami was really great about letting us put it in.

**GI:** Do you have any interest in writing a screenplay based on the Metal Gear universe?

DH: I certainly think it could make a great movie. (Plus, I want them to make it CG animated so I can still do the voice.)

**Most gamers don't know** who David Hayter is, but his voice is unmistakable. With a raspy Snake Plissken-like tone, David voiced all of Solid Snake's dialogue for Metal Gear Solid and Sons of Liberty. He's also the same guy who penned the script for *X-Men the movie*. Currently, he's also working on scripts for *The Hulk*, *X-Men 2*, and *Pitch Black 2*. We managed to track David down, and actually had to break into his house to make him answer our questions. It was well worth a night in the slammer. By the way, David's living room carpet is to die for!

**GI:** We absolutely adore *X-Men*, and can't wait to see what direction the sequel will take. We've heard rumors that two different scripts are being written by you and Zak Penn. Has Fox chosen one or the other, and if so, can you give us any insight as to what to expect this second time around?

DH: Zak and I have both been writing and the final script will likely be a perfect blend of both. We are honing in on the final story now, but I can't get into specifics. It will be bigger. It will be cooler. It will ideally make the first look like the first act of a much bigger story.

**GI:** How is *Pitch Black 2: The Chronicles of Riddick* coming along?

DH: Awesome. Vin just closed his deal and we are putting the finishing touches on the final script. That movie is going to blow that universe – and that character – wide open.

**GI:** We've also heard that you're attached to *The Hulk*? What kind of silver screen treatment do you have in store for this big green lug?

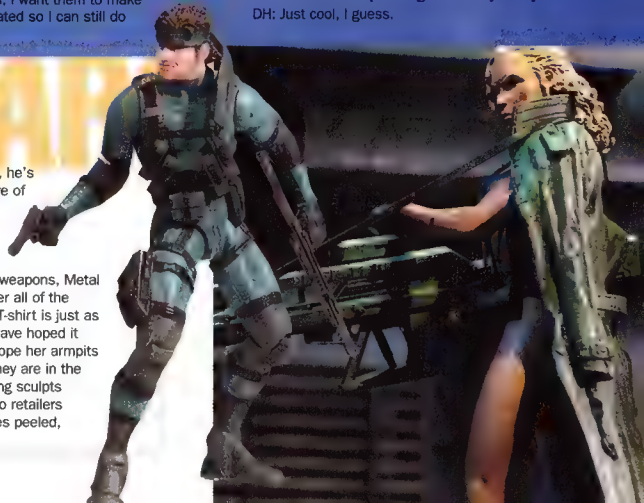
DH: Can't say. Information regarding the future of your favorite costumed (or non-costumed, as the case may be) heroes is jealously guarded by the studios. But I have spoken to Ang Lee about some of his thoughts and the man is remarkably brilliant. It couldn't be in better hands.

**GI:** How does one person get so many cool jobs? DH: Just cool, I guess.

## TOYING AROUND

**Now that nobody** wants to see Todd McFarlane's balls, he's reverted back to what he does best – making toys! Todd's first wave of Metal Gear Solid figures accurately captured the likeness of the characters, but this second series, which is entirely devoted to Sons of Liberty, really puts his previous efforts to shame. Snake

comes with a handful of different weapons, Metal Gear RAY towers over all of the figures, and Olga's T-shirt is just as tight as you would have hoped it would be. We just hope her armpits aren't as hairy as they are in the game! These amazing sculptures should be heading to retailers soon! Keep your eyes peeled, kiddies!





## HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION



### METAL GEAR

**Format: MSX-2**  
**Release: 1987 (Only in Japan)**

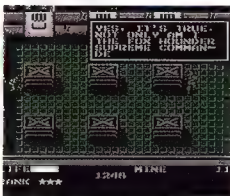
Led by mastermind Hideo Kojima, Metal Gear makes its debut on the Japanese MSX-2 personal computer. Tapping into the MSX-2's powerful 8-bit processor, Metal Gear revolutionized gaming with its realistic visuals and unique gameplay chemistry. For the first time, gamers were forced to lay down their firearms and use stealth to complete their objectives.



**The golden age** of console gaming is an interesting study. As we've already learned from Square Soft and its Final Fantasy franchise, the US audience doesn't necessarily see the big picture. We just see snippets from it. Back when the US market was still growing, games originating in Japan didn't trickle down to the States as frequently as they do now. While Metal Gear's history seems somewhat comprehensive, it's actually fractured and incomplete.

### METAL GEAR

**Format: NES**  
**Release: 1988**



Under the Ultra Games moniker, Konami released a port of the MSX-2 title in the United States. The game went on to find great success.

However, it should be noted that the translation didn't go as smoothly as it should have. Along with several changes to the background artwork, a handful of the maps were altered, and the story was seriously butchered. As Hideo told us, "The actual Metal Gear doesn't appear in the NES version."

### METAL GEAR SOLID: VR MISSIONS

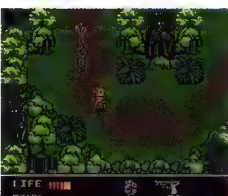
**Format: PS-X**  
**Release: 1999 (Only in US)**



The US market may have missed out on the enhanced adventure within Metal Gear Solid Integral, but we did get a fair replacement. In a surprising turn of events, Konami decided to release the VR Training disc from Integral as a stand-alone title. Aptly named VR Missions, players finally had the chance to hone their skills through the green shaded VR world, and could also play as the Ninja in three amazing bonus stages.

### SNAKE'S REVENGE

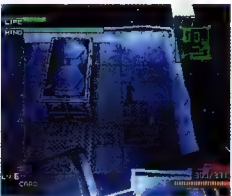
**Format: NES**  
**Release: 1990**



This sequel is related to Metal Gear only by association. Hideo Kojima had nothing to do with this game. Fans of the original release scoffed at this title's unnatural side-scrolling segments, confusing story, and complete detachment from the Metal Gear universe.

### METAL GEAR SOLID INTEGRAL

**Format: PS-X**  
**Release: 1999 (Only in Japan)**



By today's DVD standards, Metal Gear Solid Integral could be considered to be a Director's Cut. Exclusive to the Japanese market, several interesting alterations were added to the mix. This class set featured the American version of the game (mainly to show off the brilliant voice work). In addition to this, it featured a Very Easy mode that started players with a powerful weapon and infinite ammo. Integral also brought about a surprise – a first-person perspective. Interesting indeed, the most notable bonus item in this set was the VR Training disc that offered hundreds of interesting (and often times amusing) mini-quests.

### METAL GEAR 2: SOLID SNAKE

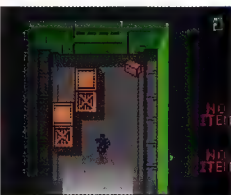
**Format: MSX-2**  
**Release: 1990 (Only in Japan)**



Continuing the Metal Gear saga, Hideo and his team constructed a sequel for the MSX-2. Set within 1999, the world is threatened by an energy crisis. With the world on the brink of collapse, a Czech biologist, Dr. Kio Marv, creates the OILX project – a microorganism capable of creating a purified form of petroleum. Just before finishing his research, Dr. Kio disappears, and Solid Snake is brought in to investigate. As the plot unfolds, Snake eventually ends up on Zanzibar Land. Amongst the nuclear silos, a new Metal Gear is under construction, and Big Boss has been spotted lurking in the shadows. Sadly, this title never made its way to the United States. Those who've had the rare pleasure of playing this game cherish it as one of the greatest within the series. Konami just released a long forgotten Belmont adventure (Castlevania Chronicles), and we wouldn't be surprised if Metal Gear (namely this title) eventually receives the same treatment. As for now, however, Konami's statement is: "There is no official plan."

### METAL GEAR SOLID

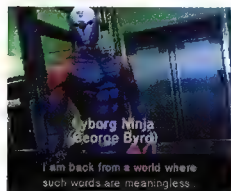
**Format: Game Boy Color**  
**Release: 2000**



In Japan, this handheld title was called Metal Gear: Ghost Babel. For some strange reason, one that brought about a lot of confusion, Konami named the US release Metal Gear Solid. The game is in fact completely different than the PlayStation counterpart, reflecting the styling of the original NES release more so than any other entry in the series. Taking into account the limited capacities of the Game Boy Color, this was an impressive release and a welcome addition to the ever-expanding Metal Gear series.

### METAL GEAR SOLID

**Format: PS-X/PC**  
**Release: 1998**



After completely bypassing the 16-bit era of gaming and lying low for nearly a decade, Metal Gear finally makes its triumphant return. Along with a drastically altered appearance, the game took on the guise of a movie as it seamlessly integrated cutscenes into the gameplay. Stealth, of course, outweighed the need to kill. Always the inventive type, Hideo Kojima unearthed a handful of new gaming concepts that took gamers hours just to comprehend. Nostalgia was brought forth in several ways as well. Many gamers, including dozens who cast their vote to help compile Game Informer's Top 100 Games of All Time, list Metal Gear Solid as the best game they've ever played.



**SIX-MAN TAG TEAM  
WHIPS CROWD INTO  
FRENZY**



**THE  
SMACKDOWN! NEWS**

**Where Anything's Possible**

**THE UNDERTAKER<sup>®</sup>**

**INFLECTS  
PAIN WITH  
THE CHOKESLAM**



Mild Language  
Violence

Wrestling Entertainment

PlayStation.2

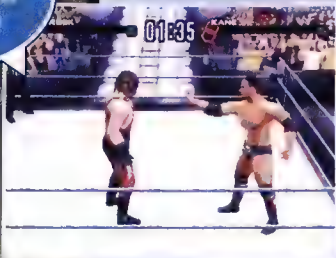


# TAZZ™ AND MICHAEL COLE CALL **THE RINGSIDE ACTION**



The Rock wants  
Ken's Will to  
bring it

**Chaos  
spills  
out  
onto  
the  
streets!**



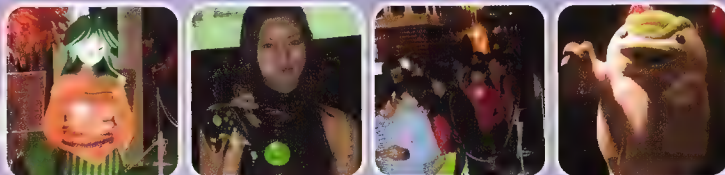
**ALL THIS  
AND MORE  
IN...**



# TOKYO GAME SHOW

Perhaps due to reports of there no longer being a Spring version of the show, this season's Tokyo Game Show was one of the best ever in terms of software showings and surprises. With over 400 games being displayed on the floor of the Makuhari Messe Convention Center, there was a near-E3 level of video game delights to be played.

PlayStation 2 retained its position of television dominance at the show, but Xbox wasn't too far behind with Microsoft using the event as a last great public showing before its console's Japanese launch on February 22. There were even a few new GameCube titles present, something Nintendo normally reserves for its annual Space World show. Combine all this gaming goodness with the TGS standards - crowded shopping booths, legions of costumed fans, bizarre stage shows, and tightly-clothed company girls surrounded by shutterbugs - and it all added up to quite a remarkable presentation. Game Informer was fortunate enough to be present, and here's all the poop we could scoop from the show.



## SEGA STRIKES BACK

GunValkyrie - Xbox



Like a phoenix with good business acumen, Sega held a press conference at the Tokyo Game Show to announce that it would rise from the Dreamcast's ashes to become the world's largest software company. To prove that this wasn't just prideful boasting, the head of every major Sega development studio came onstage and gave the crowd a tour of what their division was currently working on. These clips, in addition to the wealth of titles on the show floor, clearly illustrated Sega's take no prisoners - and remain true to no single console - attitude.

The surprises Sega revealed for Xbox were many. In addition to announcing that Shemue II and Phantasy Star Online were headed to the Microsoft stable (see GI News, page 28 for more details), and showing a teaser clip for an Xbox Panzer Dragoon, playable versions of Sega GT 2002, GunValkyrie, and Jet Set Radio Future were present at Sega's booth.

Illustrating that it most definitely is not supporting Microsoft to the exclusion of Sony, Sega announced tons of games for PlayStation 2. A port of Eternal Arcadia was shown, as were more obscure games such as Rez, Cudcept II, Hundred Swords, and Aero Dancing 4. Although the PS2 version of Space Channel 5 was playable next to a video of the game's imminent sequel, this did little to diminish the crowds waiting to play Sega's show-stealer - Virtua Fighter 4. Nearly completed, VF 4 looked every bit the equal of Dead or Alive 3. The game's most interesting feature was a fighter appearance editor similar in function, if not scope, to those common in wrestling games.

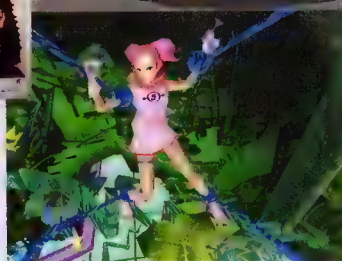
Sega also showed that it would be second only to Nintendo in support of GameCube. In addition to the already released Super Monkey Ball, owners of the cutest box on the block can look forward to ports of Eternal Arcadia, Phantasy Star Online, and Sonic Adventure 2, as well as the very sharp-looking soccer game, Virtua Striker 3. Game Boy Advance will also get its fair share of Sega love with the GameCube compatible Sonic Advance (see page 76 for details), the classic puzzler Puyo Puyo, and the sure to be bizarre The Pinball of the Dead.

Will Sega's multi-platform attack plan work? It's impossible to tell at this point, but it is worth noting that its booth was much more crowded at this TGS than it ever was during the Dreamcast days. This could be attributed to the inflatable monkeys being giving out for trying Super Monkey Ball, but we think it was something more.

Sega GT 2002 - Xbox



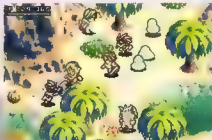
With Michael Jackson on its side, Sega can't lose!



Space Channel 5 - PlayStation 2



For Space Channel 5 Part 2, Ulala will be dressed in white as shown in this wall from the Sega booth



Shining Soul - Game Boy Advance

# W 2001 AUTUMN



Phantasy Star Online - GameCube



The Pinball of the Dead - Game Boy Advance



Virtua Striker 3 - GameCube



Virtua Fighter 4 - PlayStation 2



Jet Set Radio Future - Xbox



Rez - PlayStation 2

The giant screens at Sega's TGS booth clearly illustrated the company's new platform agnostic attitude

The heads of Sega's development studios presented the projects they were currently working on



Sonic Advance - Game Boy Advance



**"METAL GEAR FANS,  
GRAB ON TO SOMETHING-  
YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE AMAZED. AGAIN."**

**PSM**

**"GROWN MEN HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO  
WEEP AT ITS MAGNIFICENCE."**

**OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE\***

**"MGS2 HAS ONCE AGAIN STUNNED US,  
AND WE ARE ONCE AGAIN ON OUR KNEES  
TO KOJIMA-SAN AND HIS HEROIC TEAM."**

**IGN.COM**

**"AS OF NOW, WE'VE SEEN NOTHING  
-ABSOLUTELY NOTHING- TO SUGGEST THERE  
WILL BE A BETTER GAME ON ANY SYSTEM THIS YEAR.  
PERIOD."**

**THEXGENERATION**

\*BASED ON THE 2001 U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE, AND THE 2002 U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE. © 2001 THE PLAYSTATION BRAND AND ALL TRADEMARKS.



# RPG FEVER

Role-playing games are much more popular in Japan than they are in this country, and this fact was readily apparent at TGS. The overwhelming leader in both quantity, floor space, and popularity, it was hard to find a place to stand where you weren't in sight of a great RPG. Luckily, almost every one of these potential blockbusters will find their way to the US. Here's a quick tour of what to look forward to.



## Metal Dungeon – Xbox

Probably the most traditional RPG yet seen for Xbox, Metal Dungeon involves exploration from a 3D isometric view that switches to an over-the-shoulder party angle when the turn-based battles begin. As the name of the game implies, there's both fantasy and technology elements.

## Xenosaga Episode 1: Der Wille zur Macht – PlayStation 2

It seems the more this Namco game gets delayed, the longer its name gets. Playable for the first time at TGS, Xenosaga proved to share many gameplay aspects with its predecessor, Xenogears. In dungeons, enemies can be avoided by staying away from them or luring them into traps that freeze them. Button combos are used to pull off attacks during combat, and the look of battles, especially when mecha were involved, was reminiscent of a high-res Front Mission 3. The demo was very short, yet still enough to make the wait for Xenosaga seem inexorably long.



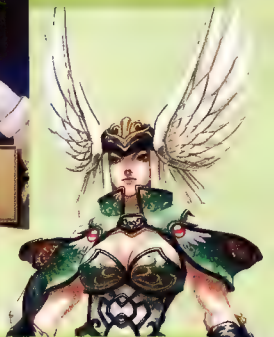
## Wild Arms Advanced 3rd – PlayStation 2

For the wild west themed third installment to the Wild Arms series, not only will there be four characters in the party, the entire game will take on a fully 3D, cel-shaded look. Combat seems to have remained true to the series, but conversations will be more player controlled thanks to the ASK system. Standing for Approach to Selected Keywords, this system allows any green-colored word within a text box to be selected to change the topic.



## Kingdom Hearts – PlayStation 2

Thanks to being playable at TGS, we discovered that Kingdom Hearts went against the grain of all our expectations. It was so different, it takes two pages to describe. Turn to page 66 to learn more.



## Ex-Chaser – Xbox

Best described as Idea Factory's take on Gauntlet, this hack 'n' slasher lets four players mix it up with hordes of monsters.



## Star Ocean 3: Till the End of Time – PlayStation 2

Enix had a very early version of Star Ocean 3 running at its booth, but refused to give any screens or allow any pictures to be taken. All you were able to do in the game was wander around town, and there were no battles to be fought. We can only relay that the game is fully 3D, and a ways from being finished.

## Gaia Blade – Xbox

Gaia Blade is an action/RPG that uses the abilities of the Xbox to create some interesting twists within genre standards. Choosing from 12 races, players must not only gain experience for themselves, but also troops that must be recruited for a war. To keep track of your comrades, a pop-up window will allow you to see what they're up to.





**Jade Cocoon 2 - PlayStation 2**

The original Jade Cocoon on PS-X was a good RPG that, despite its favorable similarity to Pokémon, never achieved the sales level it deserved in this country. Hopefully, its PS2 sequel will do better when it releases with no next-gen Nintendo product to go up against. Over 400 monsters will be available for your character to discover and train in the game's super-lush environments. Combat and spell casting take place in real-time, and look as smooth and beautiful as the rest of the game.



**Final Fantasy XI - PlayStation 2**

Square is still being very secretive about its first foray into the massively multiplayer online world, and showed only the briefest of gameplay clips at its booth. The closest visual comparison that can be made is to the exploration phases of FFXIII. Sakaguchi hopes to make the game more story driven than other MMORPGs, but how this will be accomplished is shrouded in mystery.



**Grandia Xtreme - PlayStation 2**

A video of GameArts' newest Grandia was shown on a small screen at Enix's booth. The game has received a next-gen facelift, but other than teamwork moves, the combat looks to remain largely the same. Rumors abound that the game will have an online component of some type, yet no one working near the display was willing to give details...at least not in English.

**Wizardry: Tales of the Forsaken Land - PlayStation 2**

Based on the classic computer series, this Atlus RPG looks and plays very much like a multiple-character King's Field with turn-based battles. The most interesting aspect of the game is that every character is assigned a personality, and how well party members get along decides what group attacks become available.



**Legaia Duel Saga - PlayStation 2**

This sequel to PlayStation's Legend of Legaia plays just like the original, and that's not a bad thing at all. With a party again three characters strong, players must input move combos during combat that can sometimes reveal supers known as Hyper Arts. This time around, though, characters will be able to unlock tandem supers known as Variable Arts. Legaia Duel Saga looks like a great update to an unjustly overlooked game, and is one to watch out for on PS2.

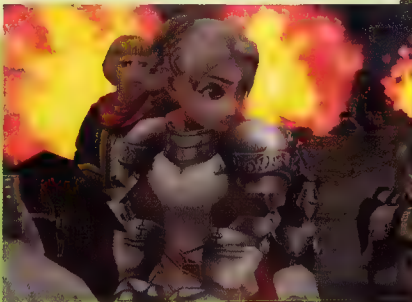


**Breath of Fire II - Game Boy Advance**

Capcom will complete the handheld translation of its Super NES role-playing pair with the release of Breath of Fire II. Like the first, expect a near-exact port.

**Suikoden III - PlayStation 2**

As it moves to a new console, the third installment of Suikoden seems to be going in a completely different direction. Although it will certainly have a multitude of people to interact with, the game will focus on three main characters who give players three separate perspectives on the adventure at hand. After battles, characters will earn skill points to distribute amongst abilities as they like. Will this major shift in focus be a welcome change, or a reviled smudge on the Suikoden name? Probably the former.

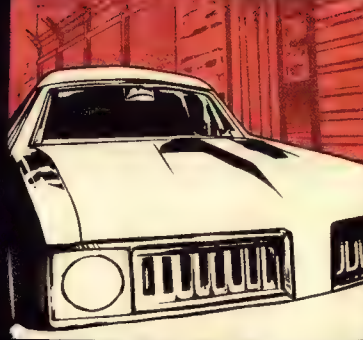


**Fengshin Yangi: Legends of Gods and Heroes - PlayStation 2**

Koei continues its love affair with ancient China with this action/RPG set in the Shang Dynasty. Controlling the main character, Ci Ga, players not only take part in the real-time battles, they take charge. Commands issued to other party members decide what actions they'll take, and will help in the unleashing of powerful combo attacks.

"A MAFIOSO MASTERPIECE" - MAXIM

# Grand Theft Auto III



[WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/GRANDTHEFTAUTO3](http://WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/GRANDTHEFTAUTO3)

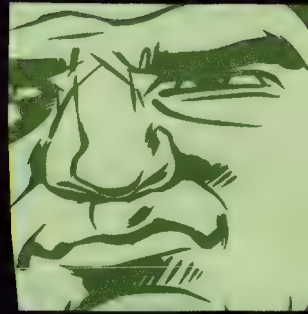
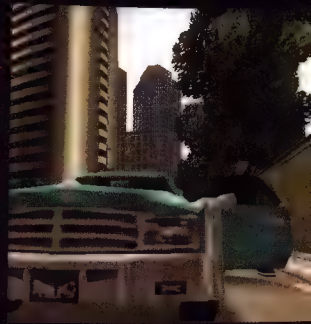


**MATURE**  
**M**  
CONTENT RATED BY  
ESRB

**Blood**  
**Violence**  
**Strong Language**

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Note: Rockstar will be following IDSA guidelines for M rated games in the marketing of this game.  
This game contains violent language and behavior and is not intended for persons under the age of 17. It is a comic interpretation of gangster activity and the story, names and incidents portrayed herein are fictitious. No identification or similarity to actual persons, living or dead, or to actual events is intended or should be inferred. Any resemblance is coincidental. The makers and publishers of this videogame do not in any way endorse, condone or encourage this kind of behavior.

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PlayStation 2

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# PlayStation 2 Stands Strong

Although plenty of great titles were on display for Xbox, GameCube, and Game Boy Advance, there was no denying that PlayStation 2 titles were the most prevalent at Tokyo Game Show. Having at least twice as much software showing compared to any other console, titles for PS2 represented all genres for all ages.

Sony itself asserted the variety available on its system with the eclectic selection of games at its booth. As well as Japanese versions of Ico, Jak and Daxter, and Formula One 2001, players were given the chance to conduct an orchestra in Bravo Music.

Although it seems unlikely to be brought to the States, Seigi No Mikata certainly looked like an interesting action/adventure. Presented in very lifelike graphics, players take the role of a superhero trying to get through a day in a city filled with turmoil. This conversation-heavy game was laced with humor, and played out like an episode of Mighty Morphin Power Rangers.

The most fascinating demonstration Sony had, however, was of the new PS2 headset microphone and the game that required its use – Yoake No Mariko. In this very animated game, up to two players attempt to do voice-overs for characters performing onscreen. The closer your sounds are to the lip movements, the better your score. After completing a stage, the entire challenge gets repeated back to players in the form of a movie. Very interesting indeed.

Tecmo showed it knows more about monsters than simply how to raise them with its horror title, Zero. The game looked heavily inspired by Silent Hill, except with less realistic character designs and play focused on getting photographs. In other knock-off news, From Software somehow managed to piece together Armored Core 3 in less than eight months. This version features two-on-two online battles. Amazing!

From didn't have the market cornered on sequels, however. Genki showed footage of Kengo 2 in which fights against multiple opponents were stressed. This display of bushido was unfortunately outmatched against Capcom's revealing of the first playable Onimusha 2. In addition to having a new main character, even more extensive motion-capture will be used for the FMVs, and the combat has been smoothed to an almost Devil May Cry degree.

Rounding out the list of PlayStation 2 notables was a home version of Konami's Police 911, complete with a motion sensor peripheral. The device worked nearly identically to its arcade counterpart, and certainly made the potential for a console MoCap boxing seem feasible.



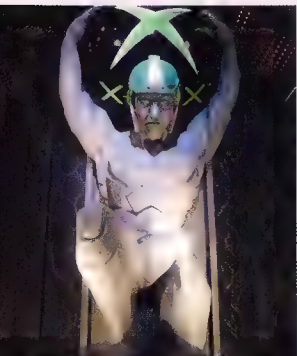
Yoake No Mariko



Sony's Yoake No Mariko headset isn't just for albinos, it's for everyone



# Xbox Hypes Right



Learning from its E3 mistakes of the past, Microsoft made sure that its Tokyo Game Show Xbox presentation – the last large public impression it would get to make before the console's launch – was an impressive one. In addition to a booth filled with booming music, monolithic statues, and dazzling light displays, all of the games displayed were top notch. Surefire hits already available in the US, such as Dead or Alive 3 and Halo, were receiving huge crowds, but so were a plethora of previously unseen games.

Most interesting amongst the Xbox titles was Nezmix. Similar to Pikmin in concept, Nezmix has players fill the small shoes of a take-charge mouse. The goal is to keep the house you live in free of rival rodent gangs and other hazards to your minute lifestyle. To do this, you'll need to seek out and recruit other mice, giving them commands to solve puzzles and win battles.

Other first-party ventures of interest were Maximum Chase, Project K-X, and Jockey's Road. Maximum Chase puts players behind the wheel of a wide variety of officially licensed vehicles that are continually on the run. The developers hope to create the feeling of a constant cinematic chase scene, and to this end, players can switch from a driving view to that of a first-person shooter. From this vantage point, shots can be taken at pursuers' tires, engine blocks, or faces.

The ever-mysterious fighter, Project K-X, had a gameplay video constantly playing. It was easy to see that realism is the ultimate goal with this title. The lighting, shadow casting, and environment effects were some of the most amazing we'd ever seen, but the fighters' animations still needed plenty of work. However, Microsoft's promise of your fighting ability being weakened due to fatigue, injury, or death has us keeping an eye on this one.

On the lighter side, there's Jockey's Road. Normally, we wouldn't bother to report on a horse racing RPG (no, that's not a typo), but word is that this game will be released in the US. Look forward to over 3,000 horses, a deep story, and Tecmo being angry at Microsoft for cutting in on a market it thought it had cornered.

Third-party support for Xbox was just as strong, if not stronger, than first-party. In addition to the heaping helping of games offered by Sega, Konami was showing off a slightly updated version of Silent Hill 2. Of more port interest was Capcom's Genma Onimusha. Not only did the playable Xbox version have a sharper look, it also featured a slightly modified combat engine, enemies able to absorb souls, and a new ninja-like playable character. So impressive was this update that the crowds waiting to play were nearly as large as those for Onimusha 2.

Not straying too far from its tried and true formula, From Software showed video of Murakumo, a mecha action game it was readying for Xbox's Japanese launch. Finally, in the "no chance it's coming here" category, Raits pranced Style Laboratory down the Microsoft catwalk. Not quite a game, this title allowed you to design clothes, then put them on a model that would then take them for a stroll. Unfortunately, there were no transparent materials to work with.



Maximum Chase



# TOKYO GAME SHOW 2001 AUTUMN

PLAYSTATION 2 SHOGUN STRONG - PLAY STATION 2 SHOGUN STRONG - PLAY STATION 2 SHOGUN STRONG



PROJECT K-X - XBOX - HYPER FIGHT - XBOX - HYPER FIGHT - XBOX - HYPER FIGHT



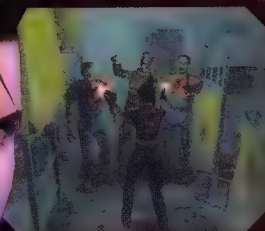
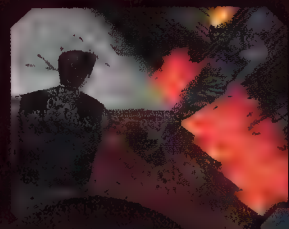
Project K-X

Silent Hill 2



Jockey's Road

# FULL-FRONT FEAR.



**MATURE**  
**M**  
Blood and Gore  
Violence



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S.T.A.R.S.

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A L



*Celebrate the 5th anniversary of the most terrifying game series ever as it mutates onto the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system. Join Claire Redfield, as she searches for her missing brother, Chris, and dig deeper into the evil doings of Umbrella Corporation. Flesh eating zombies and bio-tech monstrosities haunt your every move. As an added bonus, this special edition includes never-before-seen cut scenes and an interactive demo of the highly anticipated, Devil May Cry.*

# RESIDENT EVIL CODE: Veronica

# X

CAPCOM PlayStation 2

# PREVIEWS



PLAYSTATION 2

## TIMESPLITTERS 2

THE SECOND TIME'S THE CHARM

**In retrospect**, we probably overstated the virtues of TimeSplitters when we gave it a 9.5 in December of last year. This isn't to say that it didn't have a lot of things going for it. The graphics engine ran fast and furious with few, if any, technical problems. The frenetic action was a welcome throwback to the days when Doom ruled the first-person roost. There was even a reasonably complex level editor, something that was virtually unheard of in console gaming at that time. However, the pressures and time constraints of creating a launch title for an unfamiliar platform did force Free Radical to jettison some key elements of the game, most notably the storyline. In comparison to later first-person shooters like Red Faction and Halo, TimeSplitters just doesn't hold up.

Free Radical, a company founded by several former Rare employees who were members of the original GoldenEye team, is now intent on reclaiming its crown as the King of the first-person shooter. Now freed from the limitations that

were placed on the development of its first Eidos product, the team has been working hard to ensure that TimeSplitters 2 will have that firepower to take on any and all comers next March.

Not surprisingly, much of the inspiration for TimeSplitters 2 comes from GoldenEye. A fleshed-out plot, told through impressive real-time cutscenes, will provide gamers with a motive for their epoch-hopping escapades, and the objective-based level goals that have become a standby of the genre are well in place as well.

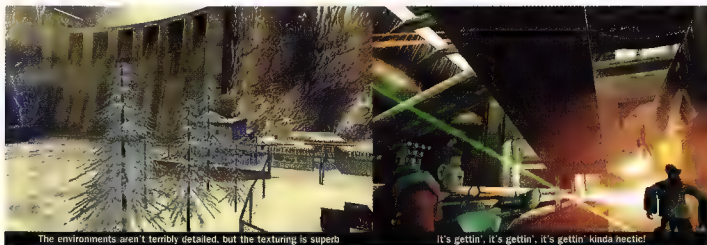
As before, the game spans the centuries, and the selection of weapons will reflect the different eras in which you must mercilessly slay baddies. The level we played was set in a modern-day military complex, and featured armaments like silenced pistols, remote mines, and even an automatic rifle that was equipped with a grenade launcher attachment. Reportedly, this is not the only weapon in the game that will have a dual function. In



addition to the standard weapons, some sequences will have you gain control of larger weapons in the environment, like mounted gun turrets.

The level editor, a highlight of the first game, will be revamped with many striking improvements. You will now be able to place doorways and windows on any wall. Also, you can set complex one-player objectives instead of just multiplayer games like Capture the Flag.

So far, we are extremely pleased with what we've seen of TimeSplitters 2. It looks crisp and clean, and the gameplay is finely honed for a project so early in development. If you were among those that were disappointed with Perfect Dark, this just might be the game you've been waiting for.



The environments aren't terribly detailed, but the texturing is superb

It's gettin', it's gettin', it's gettin' kinda hectic!

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER FREE RADICAL ■ DEVELOPER EIDOS ■ RELEASE MARCH





"Uh...dude, your face is, like, melting."



This is a deleted scene from the last episode of *Airwolf*



In snow, enemies will track your footprints and bust you down



Only a sick bastard would hurt an innocent monkey



He shouldn't have had Taco Bell for lunch



As in the first *TimeSplitters*, firefights will be frenzied

PlayStation®2

# SMUGGLER'S RUN 2

## HOSTILE TERRITORY

COMING  
**FALL 2001**

[WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/SMUGGLERSRUN2](http://WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/SMUGGLERSRUN2)

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Buggy Image ©Jim Sugar Photography/CORBIS.

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



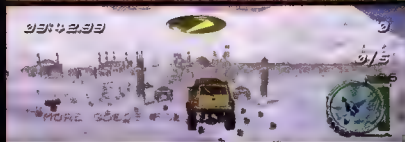
Race anywhere across the world's most hostile territories



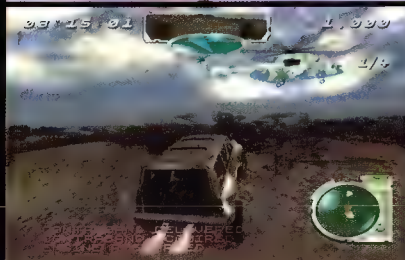
Fully integrated plot increases the adrenaline and ups the stakes



Deliver the goods through mine fields, avalanches and enemy crossfire!



Outrun and outwit your enemies head-to-head in split screen multiplayer mode!



6 all new mission types



Violence





PLAYSTATION 2

# KINGDOM HEARTS

AN ADVENTURE UNLIKE ANY OTHER

**Initially billed as** a traditional Square role-playing game featuring characters and settings from the Disney universe, this fall's Tokyo Game Show revealed Kingdom Hearts as a title that is destined to defy all our expectations. Playable on the show floor, Kingdom Hearts drew huge crowds throughout the three-day convention, and all who had a chance for some hands-on time came away awestruck by the game's combination of platforming, real-time combat, and magic casting.

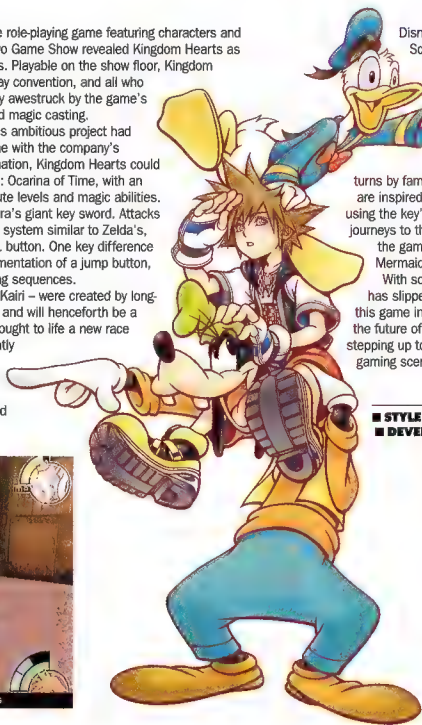
The fact that Square was taking the helm of this ambitious project had previously led us to believe that it would fall in line with the company's tradition of turn-based RPGs. Upon closer examination, Kingdom Hearts could more accurately be compared to Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time, with an added focus on improving your characters' attribute levels and magic abilities. The majority of combat is accomplished using Sora's giant key sword. Attacks are directed at enemies using a lock-on targeting system similar to Zelda's, and a spell menu can be brought up using the L1 button. One key difference between Zelda and Kingdom Hearts is the implementation of a jump button, which you will need for some acrobatic platforming sequences.

The game's main characters – Sora, Riku, and Kairi – were created by long-time Square character designer Tetsuya Nomura, and will henceforth be a part of the Walt Disney universe. Nomura also brought to life a new race of villains, the Heartless, who will appear frequently throughout the game to thwart your efforts at conquering the adventure.

Alongside these new characters, several heavyweights from the stables of both Square and

Disney will be making appearances throughout your quest. In the Square corner, wearing the blue trunks, we have Tidus (FF X), Selphie (FF VIII), and Wakka (FF X). Representing the Disney camp are Minnie Mouse, Daisy Duck, Pluto, Donald Duck, and Goofy. All these characters will pitch in at some point during gameplay, and may even be playable characters. The Disney influence extends further into the structure of Kingdom Hearts than a few mere cameo turns by familiar superstars. According to Square, many of the game's levels are inspired by Disney films, as your characters leap from world to world using the key's magic powers. For example, during one level, your party journeys to the Mideast and encounters Aladdin and Jafar. Another section of the game takes you under the sea, where you rub flippers with the Little Mermaid and Ursula the Sea Witch.

With so many high-profile games coming out this fall, Kingdom Hearts has slipped under our radar for quite some time. After actually witnessing this game in action, we can guarantee that it won't soon be forgotten. With the future of Zelda uncertain, we're certainly glad to see that Square is stepping up to the plate to deliver the epic third-person adventure that the gaming scene needs so desperately.



Sora and Dumbo go backwld on some badlides



Your teammates will aid you in combat

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION/RPG ■ PUBLISHER SQUARE/ELECTRONIC ARTS  
 ■ DEVELOPER SQUARE SOFT/DISNEY INTERACTIVE ■ RELEASE FALL 2002



コマンド  
たたかう  
まほう  
アイテム



The environments have a distinctly Disney look to them



PREVIEWS

What's with Square heroes and sissy-boy haircuts?



コマンド  
たたかう  
まほう  
アイテム



You don't want to mess with this dude



Like most attractive, talented young ladies...



Besides functioning as a weapon, Sora's key can unlock many secrets in Kingdom Hearts



...Kairi is sad on the inside





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BONE-SHATTERING FINISHERS



WAGE WAR WITH TOP  SUPERSTARS MODELED IN AMAZING DETAIL



ASSAULT OPPONENTS ON  
THE WAY TO THE RING



COMPETE IN A VARIETY  
OF MATCH TYPES





The lightsaber leaves scoring marks on the walls



Obi-Wan can perform a variety of acrobatic maneuvers



Use the Force to disarm the opposition

XBOX

## STAR WARS: OBI-WAN

### PADAWAN POWER!

**The theatrical release** of *Attack of the Clones* is only six months away! The way we see it, there are only two ways to get your Force-powered fix in the meantime. You can sit in your parents' basement and fondle your lightsaber as you surf the web looking for compromising photos of Natalie Portman. If you ask us, this isn't a bad way to waste away a life. However, if you're smart, you'll run out and pick up a copy of *Star Wars: Obi-Wan* for Xbox.

Rather than following the Episode I story arc verbatim, LucasArts created a side story that ever so briefly intersects with the film. The game starts out in the underbelly of Coruscant with Obi-Wan trailing a mysterious adversary. The entire story revolves around this new threat and slowly unravels across all 15 stages. From the dust storms on Tatooine to the colorful city streets of Theed, Obi-Wan will confront the worst scum and villainy in the galaxy, some of which have never been seen before. If you thought the droidkas were impressive, then you'll love the design of the assassins droids.

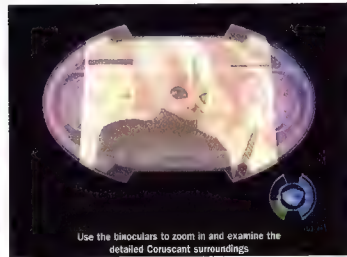
So far, none of the *Star Wars* games has successfully delivered comprehensive lightsaber controls. *Jedi Power Battles* allowed players to deflect laser blasts, and use character specific Force maneuvers, but the majority of action still suffered from button flailing. In *Obi-Wan*, players will have complete control over how the lightsaber is

handled. Instead of assigning a series of attacks to one button, all of the lightsaber actions are assigned to the right analog stick. Obi-Wan will slash in whatever direction you press. If you tap right, he'll slash to the right. If you press up, he'll perform an overhead chop. If you hold down, he'll raise the saber in a block position – and yes, you can repeal lasers this way. This system is integrated beautifully, allowing players to create their own combo strings.

All of Obi-Wan's Force powered abilities are included. Basically, if you saw a maneuver you liked in Episode I, then you can use it in the game. Since the controls are so complex, LucasArts has inserted an extensive Training mode complete with Jedi sparring. Almost every warrior is in the game, including Qui-Gon Jinn, Ki-Adi-Mundi, Saessee Tin, and Mace Windu.

The sheer scope of detail that went into the environments is quite impressive. Reflective water mapping, realistic shading, and ambient life are scattered throughout every inch of this game. On Coruscant, you'll even see animated billboards featuring a handful of recognizable *Star Wars* musicians and dancers. This said, we've yet to see a version of Obi-Wan that runs smoothly and doesn't slow down when a battle ensues. As we all know, LucasArts' track record is shaky at best, and many of its games are loaded with technical problems. Hopefully, Obi-Wan won't share a similar fate.

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** LUCASARTS ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 3



Use the binoculars to zoom in and examine the detailed Coruscant surroundings





Instead of just jamming on a button to initiate a combo, the lightsaber controls are very complex, allowing players to manipulate every directional movement



Obi-Wan uses the Force Jump to evade Plo Koon



Familiar species, detailed character models, and big-time effects



PLAYSTATION 2

## KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER

TASTY WAVES

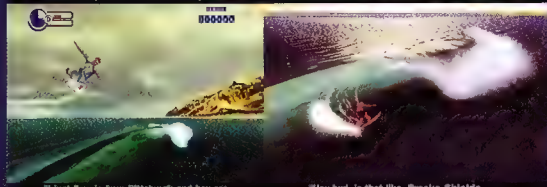
**You may think** that Activision has done action/sports to death, but then, again, we never thought that the succession of Tony Hawk games would be blowing our minds as much as they have. So, now it wants to try surfing, huh? Well, according to the plan that Activision has on paper so far, it looks like all the right ingredients are in place for another combo-laden thrill ride.

Real surfers and real locations? Yep. Pro wave riders including Kelly, Tom Carroll, Lisa Andersen, Donovan Frankenreiter, and more will be hitting the re-created beaches of South Africa, Hawaii, Australia, and a few other surfing hot spots. Developer Interactive Republic has created a specially-designed engine to replicate the motion of the waves in order to convey the speed of shooting the barrel and the rush of getting some huge air. The game is still early, but it appears that the runs will be timed and a special meter will again be your call to glory. It may seem like the scope of a surfing title may be limited, but with the amount of air you are capable of, anything is possible. We also wouldn't be surprised if Slater implements some sort of unique balance controls, like Tony 3 has. If Activision's track record is anything to go by – and it should be – then we can expect unprecedented depth in this latest challenge to the boundaries of the action/sports genre.



Looks like you can catch some major air

Is this the oceanic incarnation of Ollie the Magic Bum?



"I just flew in from Pittsburgh and boy are my arms tired" <Goonoo>

"Hey bud, is that like, Brooke Shields drowning in the distance?"

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS ■ PUBLISHER ACTIVISION ■ DEVELOPER INTERACTIVE REPUBLIC ■ RELEASE MARCH 1



**he land was eternally dark,  
evil prevailed, and there appeared  
to be no hope at all.**

And as if that wasn't enough, the young wizard had aged 30 years in a day and a pack of wild hell hounds was trying to devour him. He used his orb and a lava spell to torch the wretched beasts and ran for his life. He continues on his quest to become a master sorcerer, but he still has nowhere near the 45 spells he needs to defeat the darkness.

**Not even near the end**

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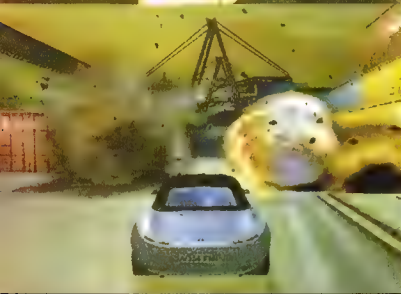


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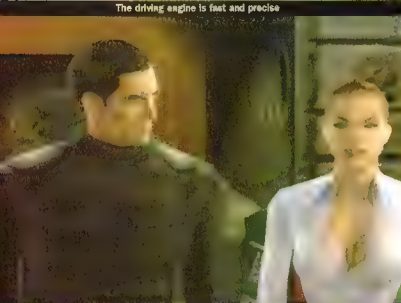
ONLY ON  
XBOX



XBOX



The driving engine is fast and precise



The real-time cutscenes are extremely impressive



Take a seat, chunky

PLAYSTATION 2

## JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE

EA'S TRIPLE THREAT

**With the new** generation of machines finally closing in on the graphical capabilities of the PC, the first-person genre is flourishing. Red Faction and TimeSplitters were early watermarks for next-gen shooters, and now titles like Halo, Metroid Prime, and TimeSplitters 2 threaten to blow away everything we've seen before. Since GoldenEye is often credited for establishing the genre as a console standby, EA is taking its time to make sure that Agent Under Fire, the newest James Bond game on the block, is ready to take on any and all comers.

The fine folks at Electronic Arts were nice enough to bring a preview build of Agent Under Fire to the GI offices, and suffice it to say that we were very impressed at the progress this title has made. As with most games, the first thing that grabs your attention is the graphics. EA has spent a lot of time and effort in creating detailed environments, painstakingly crafted character models, and impressive explosive effects. The in-game visuals are indeed a sight to behold, but what really sets Agent Under Fire apart from the crowd are the amazing cutscenes. EA tapped the legendary CG wizards at Industrial Light and Magic (*The Phantom Menace*, *Jurassic Park*) to create the character models used in the cutscenes. These are some of the most realistic looking characters we've ever seen rendered in real-time.

After playing through four levels of the game, it's obvious that Agent Under Fire is intent on pushing the boundaries of

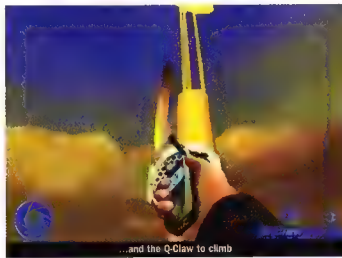
gameplay as well as graphics. The game is more than just a first-person shooter, as a full third of your quest revolves around racing, in addition to a few track shooter levels in which you take the role of a gunner in a number of vehicles driven by a computer-controlled colleague. The racing levels are very well done, with control and vehicle physics that rival many driving games now on the market.

Of course, the heart of Agent Under Fire is still the first-person experience, and the game excels here as well. Aside from the traditional running and gunning, James uses a variety of Q-Gadgets, like the Q-Claw (which lets him rappel up the sides of buildings) and Q-Laser (which can conveniently cut through locks). Also, there will be 12 unique multiplayer levels, many of which feature interactive elements like a wire press that can be used to crush your opponent. A number of different multiplayer modes have been implemented, including Antiterrorist, Protect the Flag, and Escort missions. So far, this looks like a sure hit. Our only misgiving is the fact that the game may be a bit short. There are only 12 single-player missions, and the four that we tackled were not especially long. However, an EA spokesperson promises us that there are some serious surprises in store further in, and that later missions will be extremely deep and difficult. Let's hope that he's right, because this game has a shot at being one of the top titles of this upcoming holiday season.

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ DEVELOPER ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 13



Use the Q-Laser to slice through locks...



...and the Q-Claw to climb

ತುಳುಕುಹಿಡಿದು ಒಂದು ಸುಮಾರು ೫೫೫೫೫೫ ೫೫ ೫೫೫೫ ೫೫೫೫೫೫೫೫೫೫

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GAMECUBE

# SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE

SONIC<sup>3</sup>

**As we bid** adieu to the Dreamcast in this, the last holiday season it will likely see any new releases or identifiable sales, the good folks over at Sega have done the unthinkable by bringing its blue-haired buddy to Nintendo's next-gen system. We've heard all about the resiliency of Sega as a company, but now we're about to experience it first-hand. As the thawing of the classic console cold war continues we, the gaming public, will be the ones to reap the benefits. Few can debate the fact that Sega has been a giant in the arena of innovative game design and software engineering, and its willingness to impart this knowledge by developing games for multiple systems should provide us with a lot of gaming goodness in the months and years to come.

During the Tokyo Game Show, Sonic Adventure 2, the first GameCube addition to the Sonic lineup, was shown. The playable demo gave gamers the choice of being any of the game's six characters. Each had their own stage to run through, a few of which included Sonic tearing about the Green Forest level, Shadow exploring the Radical Highway, and Rouge running around the Dry Lagoon.

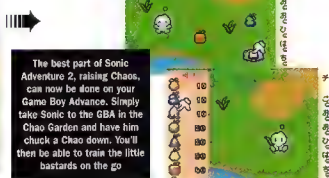
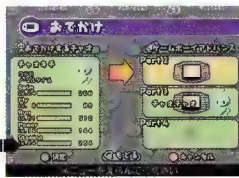
In addition to the single-player experience, this version of

Sonic Adventure 2 also showcased the game's extra two-player modes. Many of the Sonic faithful will recognize faces in the roster of selectable characters. You'll be able to take on the role of Mecha Sonic from the Genesis days, Tikal and Chaos from Sonic Adventure, and hero and dark Chao mechas piloted by the appropriate Chao. As we fiddled around with the minigame abilities of this massive release, we found a scavenger hunt type endeavor which pitted two players against each other in an effort to grab a shard and take it to a specific location first, a standard two-player race, and a battle game in which players pilot Chao mechas and attempt to obliterate one another.

All of this is nice, but the most impressive portion of Sonic Adventure 2 for the GameCube is its ability to link with the Game Boy Advance title, Sonic Advance, which will open up a host of options for Chao breeding. The minigame entitled Chaos Garden Advance for the GBA would allow those lucky enough to have both systems to raise Chao on the go, then upload them into their GC. This exciting enhancement, along with many others, will ensure Nintendo fans see a lot of bang for their buck when it comes to their time spent with Sonic and his family.



■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ PUBLISHER SEGA ■ DEVELOPER SONIC TEAM ■ RELEASE TBA



The best part of Sonic Adventure 2, raising Chao, can now be done on your Game Boy Advance. Simply take Sonic to the GBA in the Chaos Garden and have him chuck a Chao down. You'll then be able to train the little bastards on the go.

# JEREMY McGRATH supercross world

McGRATH // BORN 11.19.71 // PRO SINCE 1989  
 COIN HOLDER, MOST SUPERCROSS WINS EVER  
 7-TIME AMA SUPERCROSS WORLD CHAMPION

TRACK LEVEL

LEU 03  
INDOOR

LEU 08  
OUTDOOR

LEU 12  
BAJA

LEU 22  
FREESTYLE

LEU 25  
STUNT



Jeremy McGrath and freestyle phenom Travis  
 Wastrand

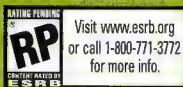
indoor supercross, freestyle and outdoor  
 supercross venues

tricks, supermans, fender grabs, 360s and  
 barrel rolls

head-to-head split-screen mode

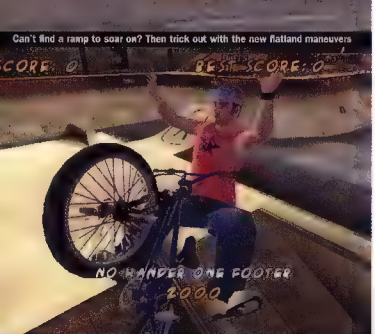


THERE ARE MANY RIDERS.  
 BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE KING.



nintendo





PLAYSTATION 2

# MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2

## A WAR FOR THE AGES

**Dave Mirra stopped by** the office last week and had some interesting things to say about Activision's BMX superstar, Mat Hoffman. For starters, he said that Mat smells like a rotten tuna. We totally believed him. He then went on to say that Mat is a total posur, and he cries like a little baby whenever he falls or loses a competition. We nodded our heads in agreement and said, "Totally." So, Mat? What do you have to say for yourself? Loser! For those of you who are good friends with Dave, don't say a word about any of this to him. He...uh...said that he would deny any such involvement because...um...he doesn't want to hurt Mat's already fractured ego.

If you want to accuse us of trying to start a war between these two BMX titans, go right ahead. It was never our intention. Now that you mention it, though, wouldn't it be awesome if those guys went at each other like rabid dogs, tearing at each other's flesh? While it would seem as though this article is here simply for your amusement, it actually reflects one of the most intense wars in gaming. Activision wants to repeat its success of the Tony Hawk franchise with the Mat Hoffman games. As it stands now, however, Acclaim's Dave Mirra series is the fan favorite. Activision even went to great lengths to enlist the talents of Rainbow Studios to assemble the PlayStation 2 sequel. Other than the screenshots scattered across this page, Activision hasn't leaked out any gameplay details, probably in fear that Acclaim will scarf them up and make the necessary adjustments in a forthcoming Dave Mirra title. As amusing as this conflict has been to watch - or intensify - on our part, we actually dug up some interesting details about Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2, and

we can honestly say that Dave Mirra and Acclaim are in for a world of hurt.

The graphics, as you can clearly see, speak volumes. The detail that went into each character model is incredible, and even more impressive than those within Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3. Rainbow Studios also has plans to greatly enhance the gameplay in a number of ways. We've learned that players will be able to create new tricks on the fly with a component dubbed the Trick Morphor. Instead of just having a handful of tricks at your disposal, this system literally will open up thousands more. Yes, we said thousands. Right now, Activision has 11 athletes signed on, and it sounds like several others will be added to the roster shortly.

As for the levels and parks, Pro BMX will take players on a road trip across America to eight well-known cities. From animated pedestrians to cars, boats, and helicopters, each stage is teeming with life. Apparently, the game will now unfold in a nonlinear fashion with multiple objective tiers. Once the game is over, replay value resides within the drastically overhauled Park Editor and wide variety of multiplayer modes, including Wreck, Havoc, and Horse. Altogether, this release truly sounds incredible. We also have a feeling that Rainbow Studios will jam-pack this sequel with tons of interesting stories and bonus items.

Since the battle is just beginning on the PS2 frontier, we can't choose a winner just yet. Acclaim already has a significant head start with Dave Mirra 2, but if we know Activision as well as we think we do, it's a warrior that is determined to turn the tides and sit on the throne as king of the BMX and action sports world.

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS ■ PUBLISHER ACTIVISION ■ DEVELOPER RAINBOW STUDIOS ■ RELEASE MARCH



Each environment features a wide variety of animated objects, ranging from pedestrians to boats

With the Trick Morphor, players can create thousands of new tricks

Rainbow Studios (ATV Offroad Fury) has been assigned the developmental duty of taking Mat Hoffman to the next level





PC

# COUNTER-STRIKE: CONDITION ZERO

## A CONDITIONED RESPONSE

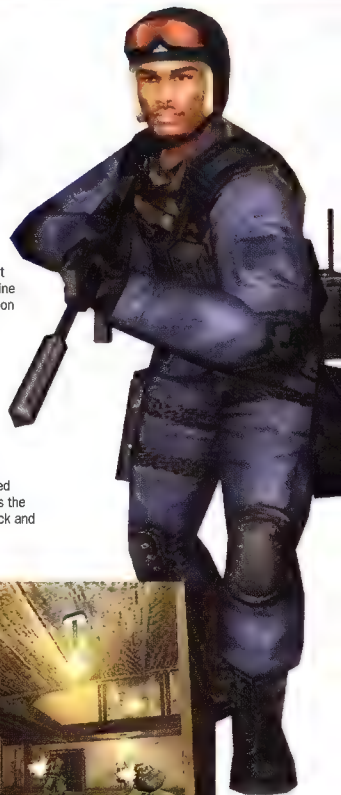
**It's really no secret** that Half-Life: Counter-Strike is one of the most successful and best put together multiplayer experiences the PC gaming industry has ever seen. Differing from most other online shooters, Counter-Strike veterans will tell you that if your team doesn't work together, everyone on it is destined for extended periods of whining about lop-sided teams in the chat room as they wait for a new game to begin. Drawing on this kind of strategic team thinking and fast action, Condition Zero's development crew will attempt to re-create the elements that made its predecessor so successful and morph it into a single-player game.

To ensure gamers find the same kind of experience they've grown so accustomed to, this offering will put players in the role of counter-terrorism experts, and will follow an extensive campaign. Presently boasting over 20 missions with more than 200 different objectives, the architects of this long-awaited release are trying to ensure that one does not fly through the game in a single abbreviated sitting. Further heeding the cries from diehard fans, designs to include the burdensome activities of puzzle solving or maze exploration have been completely abandoned in favor of a more tactical gameplay structure.

With this type of play formula, fans will be treated to a more intense structure than the online component can deliver.

The powers that be over at Gearbox want to make it clear that this is less of a sequel than it is an extensive addition. The online segment will still be as important as it ever was, but new mission types, maps, weapons, and uniforms will be added to ensure both the old-guard and newcomers can partake in something neither has ever seen before. In terms of what exactly will be new is being kept secret at this point, but count on the incorporation of the elite Russian Spetsnaz troopers on the counter-terrorist side, and the terrorist faction will receive new militia extremists who will be used in US domestic missions.

As with many highly anticipated games, there is a lot of expectation inherent in Condition Zero. Gearbox has the honor, but also the responsibility of upholding the groundbreaking gameplay it's concocted and seeing to it that we're more dazzled than ever. At this point it looks like it's on the right track, but as the saying goes, the proof is in the pudding. All we can do is sit back and hone our skills until the big day arrives.



■ **STYLE** 1 TO 32-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** VALVE SOFTWARE ■ **DEVELOPER** GEARBOX STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** Q1 2002



Take that, terrorist!



The updated unit models are much less blocky than before

## PREVIEWS



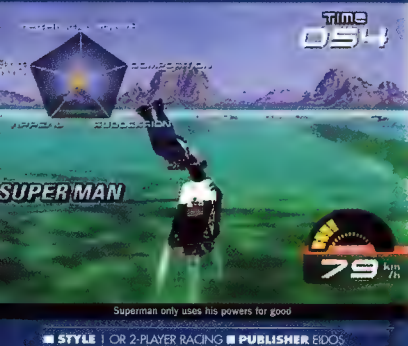
PLAYSTATION 2

## WAVE RALLY

SKIP AROUND LIKE A STONE

**What better symbol** of freedom is there than the right to choose between the bevy of next-gen water sports titles out there? Whether it's Splashdown or GameCube's Wave Race or Kelly Skater's Pro Surfer, you'll be knocking the water out of your ears for quite some time, and none of these goes for a bigger splash than Eidos' Wave Rally. Japanese developer Opus has utilized the GZ Wave Engine to create constantly changing, rolling waves that react to your craft and behave quite realistically. Visually, this provides some amazing distorted water reflections for you and any surrounding objects.

The crux of the game is the international races spanning from Florida to New Zealand to Venice, Italy and beyond. Throw in stormy weather, alternate routes, and some pretty tight turns and spaces, and you're ready to bump and lean your way to the top. Instead of a straight course, buoys have been placed to create a sort of zigzag slalom course complete with jumps — some of which are not so expected. Freestyle courses let you cut loose with Rally's roster of tricks even more, this time grading your performance on elements such as Composition, Appeal, and Technical points. This combination of racing splish and freestyle splash may just be enough to drown the competition.



Superman only uses his powers for good

■ **STYLE 1** OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** EIDOS INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** OPUS CORP. ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15



GAME BOY ADVANCE

## TEKKEN ADVANCE

TEKKEN MY BREATH AWAY

**Tekken has always** been at the forefront of technology, with the smoothest polygonal models, nicest animation, and largest fighter list. Thus, you can forgive us for letting out a surprised gasp when we heard the title would be brought onto the Game Boy Advance. Arguably the best 3D fighting game series of all time on a system that isn't supposed to be able to do any 3D? You can't be serious.

Namco is serious. The company is working hard to make this a worthy translation. The version we have played, though three months from release, shows more promise than we ever thought possible on a handheld. Packed in this ambitious cartridge are eight modes and at least nine fighters. You've got Arcade, Vs., Time Attack, Survival, Team Battle, Vs. Team Battle, and Practice. The initial characters are Tekken 3 favorites Xiaoyu, Yoshimitsu, Nina Williams, Forrest Law, Gun Jack, Hwoarang, Paul, King, and Jin Kazama.

Though these characters are sprites, it's very difficult to tell them from 3D models when playing on the small screen. The plane still scrolls around with every dodge, and the camera even zooms in at times. The familiar commentator has also reprised his role. With a mere three main attack buttons, most of the familiar moves and combos Tekken fans love are still here. The control configuration gives one button for punching, one for kicks, and another for throws. It doesn't sound like much, but you have to remember there are different strikes depending on the direction you're pressing.

We have already been amazed with what GBA can do with the fighting genre, as evidenced by the faithful (and enhanced) port of Super Street Fighter II: Turbo Revival. However, we didn't think the same could be said of a 3D fighter. Go figure.



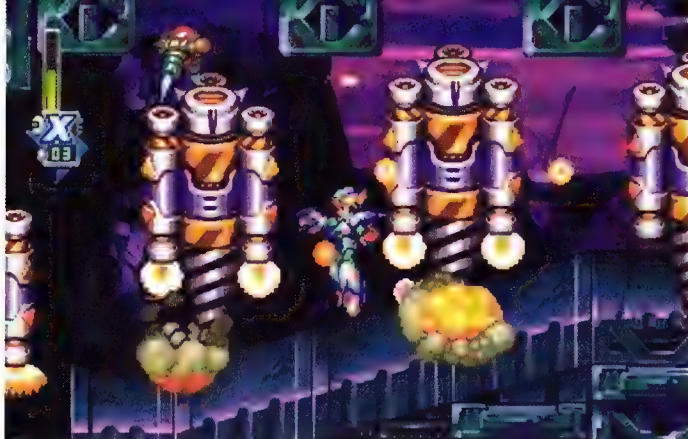
Paul's still got that great hair

Xiaoyu charges through Jin

Big combos cause the camera to move in

Tag mode is here in full force!

■ **STYLE 1** OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** NAMCO ■ **DEVELOPER** NAMCO ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY 29, 2002



PLAYSTATION

## MEGA MAN X6

### REPLOID REPERCUSSIONS

**Keeping the two-dimensional** sidescroller alive, the release of Mega Man X6 comes just ten months after Mega Man X5. This incredibly short development period may beg the question, "Did Capcom actually make an effort?" The gameplay hasn't changed too terribly much, but the overall design is easily the most ambitious entry yet.

Each stage still comes to a close with a boss battle, and rather than creating a host of new bosses, the game recycles five from Mega Man's past. The beauty of this project lies within the construction of the levels. Through a mode called The Nightmare System, player actions and decisions will bring about changes in other stages.

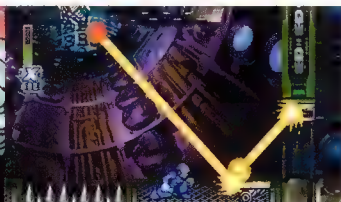
Defeating a specific boss may open a hidden path, or will generate new enemies in a different level. Equally as intriguing, each level map is randomly generated and is different each time the player enters. Unlike the previous

titles in the series, the most noteworthy power-ups are obtained by saving bio-humans named Reploids. If you rescue a specific Reploid, you'll unlock a rare part or weapon. As you can see, Capcom really made an effort to create a sequel that has a high replay value.

To keep the continuity of the series moving forward, X6 takes place just three weeks after Zero protected the Earth. Zero's efforts brought about a number of repercussions. A majority of the land has been vaporized and is now a wasteland. The humans create Reploids to rebuild the landscape. One of the Reploids unexpectedly malfunctions and wages a new war against the humans. It's up to Mega Man and his team to put this dangerous opponent out of commission. Zero still hasn't returned from this mission, but his spirit lives on through Mega Man, who now wields Zero's sword in addition to his trusty P Shooter.



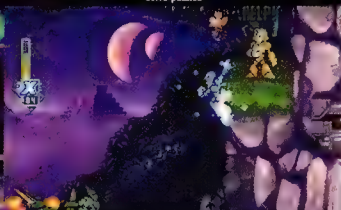
アイソップ  
すでにしっぺおるかと思うが今かく地で  
不可解なげんし、ようがおきてる  
All of the still-frame cutscenes are brought to life with spoken dialogue



The gameplay is as action-packed as ever, but now players will need to solve puzzles

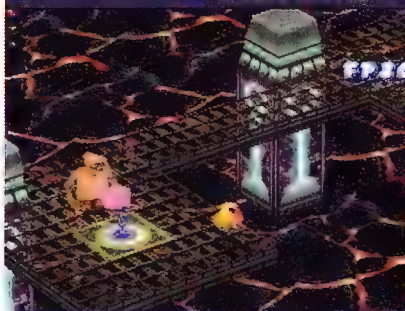


Zero's legacy lives on through Mega Man,  
who now wields the almighty sword



Save the Reploids to gain new parts and weapons

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER CAPCOM ■ DEVELOPER CAPCOM ■ RELEASE DECEMBER 5



PLAYSTATION

## E.T.: INTER-PLANETARY ADVENTURE

### LANDFILL HO!

**E.T. The Extra Terrestrial** is a legendary Atari 2600 game. Unfortunately, it's for all the wrong reasons, as it is basically considered the Titanic of the video game realm. Many cite Atari's asinine claim that it would be able to sell more copies of the game than there were Atari 2600 units in the US as one of video game's biggest blunders, and a major contributor to the great video game crash of 1983. Bringing this game back to life is like starting up an airline service from New York to Martha's Vineyard: and calling it the Kennedy Express. However, NewKidCo just couldn't resist creating games to go along with the release of the 20th Anniversary DVD edition of the movie. The PlayStation game shown here is just the beginning of what will be a total of seven E.T. titles for systems ranging from Game Boy Color to PlayStation 2.

This edition of the game features E.T. using telekinesis, healing, and telepathy, to find plants he can heal and then...well...eat. After playing the game, we are beginning to believe that like its 2600 forefather, this game was developed by a staff of one and could quite possibly be the most horrific game we have ever seen. Your phone is ringing E.T. — it's the landfill on line two.



E.T. has the magic touch

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER NEWKIDCO  
■ DEVELOPER NEWKIDCO ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 5

# REVIEWS

Our crack (or crackhead, we can never decide which) review team rates games in a number of categories to help you sort out the great from the stuff you hate. Each game is reviewed by at least two staff members, and you will find both their opinions on each review. To make things a little easier we have put together some definitions of what the numbers mean, what the reviewers are like (so you can find the reviewer most like yourself), what we look for in a game, and also a cheat sheet so the newbies can understand our advanced video game jargon. Read on and soon you will be talking FPS and FMV with the best of them.

## THE SCORING SYSTEM



Game Informer's rating system ranges from 0 to 10, and is similar to school grading. 7 is average, 9 and above is exemplary work, 5 and below is a failure. Aside from concept, entertainment, graphics, playability, sound, and replay value (all explained to the right), other factors that influence a game's final score are how much game you get for your money and how all the game's elements come together.

**10** – Perfection. One of the best games of all time, if not THE best game of all time. This game has no flaws, and thus this rating is rarely given out.

**9** – Worth owning. Fans of the genre should definitely enjoy this game, but even those who don't normally like this type of game may find themselves getting hooked.

**8** – Worth playing. Still a great game, but arguably so. It may not be the best ever, but there's enough to keep your fingers wrapped around the controller for some time.

**7** – Worth renting. Unless you're a fledgling gamer, you've probably seen everything this game has to offer before. Still, just checking it out won't ruin your weekend.

**6** – Limited appeal. There are always a few people that will fall in love with a game of this caliber, but for the most part, those playing it will be yearning for something more.

**5 & BELOW** – Garbage. From this point down, it's just a matter of how much of a failure the game is. The lower the score, the more you're hating life for playing it.

### CONCEPT

What new ideas the game brings to the table and how well old ideas are reprinted.

### GRAPHICS

How good a game looks, taking into account any flaws such as bad collision or pop-up.

### SOUND

Does the game's music and sound effects get you involved or do they make you resolve to always play with the volume down?

### PLAYABILITY

Basically, the controller to human interface. The less you think about the hunk of plastic in your hands, the better the playability.

### ENTERTAINMENT

Flat out, just how fun the game is to play. The most important factor in rating a game.

### REPLAY VALUE

The longevity of the title.

- **High** – You'll still be popping this game in five years from now.
- **Moderately High** – Good for a long while, but the thrills won't last forever.
- **Moderate** – Good for a few months or a few times through.
- **Moderately Low** – After finishing it, there's not much reason to give it a second go.
- **Low** – You'll quit playing before you complete the game.

Content suitable for persons ages 7 and older.

Content suitable for persons ages 6 and older.

Content suitable for persons ages 13 and older.

Content suitable for persons ages 17 and older.

Content suitable only for adults.

Product a swearing, final rating.



### JUSTIN

**Handle:** The Digital Deviant **Expertise:** Action/Platform, Fighting, RPGs **Interests:** GWAR's Violence Has Arrived, Hugs Workspaces, Tenacious D, Tortillas **Dislikes:** My Luck, Not Having Time To Do Laundry, Shaving **Current Favorite Games:** Grand Theft Auto 3, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Dead Or Alive 3, Guitar Freaks

Unlike most gaming jargonists, Justin knows there's life outside video vegetation. He moonlights as wrestler Justin Lee in the Minnesota independent scene, where he violently bonds with other sweaty mates – a practice that just gets blank stares when attempted on other GI reviewers. Though the youngest on staff, Justin's tastes are highly old-school, and he plays 16-bit classics as often as he plugs into the latest titles.



### ANDY

**Handle:** The Game Hombre **Expertise:** RPGs, Action/Platform, Driving, First-Person Shooters **Interests:** Late Night Visits To The Acme Comedy Club Bar In The Basement Of Our Building **Dislikes:** People Who Talk About Meta Gear Solid 2 In Front Of The People That Didn't Get To Play It **Current Favorite Games:** Dead Or Alive 3, Giants: Citizen Kabuto, Soul Reaver 2, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

When Andy's not yelling at a game for "rppin' him off," he plays drums in Minneapolis indie rock band, Unbelievable Jolly Machine. A longtime fan of Metrodroid, Andy has been reviewing video games professionally since the days of the 8-bit NES. While a big sports fan in real life, Andy isn't the first to line up for sports titles, but is always willing to put in the extra hours to play a good RPG or strategy game.

### REINER

**Handle:** The Raging Gamer **Expertise:** RPGs, Fighting, Action/Platform, Sports **Interests:** Talking About Metal Gear Solid 2 In Front Of People Who Didn't Get To Play It (You Guys Won't Believe How Cool Psycho Mantas' New Attacks Are!) **Dislikes:** Santa Claus Breaking Into My House And Eating All Of The Cookies (I'll Get That Fat Freak!) **Current Favorite Games:** Metal Gear Solid 2, Sons of Liberty, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Star Wars: Rogue Leader, Halo

Reiner considers himself the biggest Star Wars fan in the world. Along with his impressive collection of Star Wars action figures, he has seen the trilogy 536 times. A fan of all game types, role-playing games are his strong suit. In his six years as a professional gamer, Reiner has achieved the impossible: Penetrating the pixel boundary, he not only plays games, he's in one, and can be shot daily in the epic N64 release, Perfect Dark.



### JAY

**Handle:** The Gonzo Gamer **Expertise:** Strategy, Puzzle, RPGs **Interests:** Dungeons & Dragons, Comic Books, Wrestling, Silver Elite Status **Dislikes:** Friel Octopus Balls, Losing Levels, Cancelled Developer Meetings, Games **Current Favorite Games:** Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance, Kingdom Hearts, Ace Combat 04: Shattered Skies

Jay lives in his mom's basement just like you. Adding further fuel to his archetypal nerd fire is his love for comic books, metal miniature painting, and twice weekly pencil-and-paper RPG sessions. In fact, he's such a D&D fanatic, he hates professional football simply because it interrupts his Sunday gaming schedule. Par for the course, his favorite games are often obscure ones. He is also one damn handsome man.



### KRISTIAN

**Handle:** The Game Dawg **Expertise:** RPGs, Strategy, Sports **Interests:** Moving Into My Newly Purchased Home, The Charlie Brown Christmas Special, Tom Clancy, Cranium **Dislikes:** Moving Into My Newly Purchased Home, The Vikings O-Line, **Current Favorite Games:** Command & Conquer: Yuri's Revenge, Project Gotham, NASCAR Thunder 2002 (Xbox)

Kristian enjoys opening a can of whoop-ass on his buddies at the ping pong table, then running off to the driving range for a lesson in humility and anger management. The original text-driven Zork started Kristian on the gaming road; Ultima 6, NES Baseball, and Zelda made sure he stayed. Still an avid RPG fan, he can always find time to pull out a good sports game.



### MATT

**Handle:** The Original Gamer **Expertise:** Racing, Puzzle, Action/Adventure **Interests:** The Carpet In Our New Offices, Northeast Minneapolis, Acme Comedy Club, John Kongos **Dislikes:** Head Injuries, McDonald's, Toilets That Don't Flush **Current Favorite Games:** Grand Theft Auto 3, Syphon Filter 3, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, TimeSplitters 2

While record collecting, watching reality television, and playing video games might sound like a state of retarded adolescence, Matt manages to scrap together an almost meaningful existence out of these activities. His encyclopedic knowledge of pop culture is either amazing or annoying, depending on how close your desk is to his. Less esoteric than his colleagues, Matt prefers traditional action and platform games.



### KATO

**Handle:** The Game Katana **Expertise:** Sports, Action/Adventure, RPGs **Interests:** Charlatans' Wonderland, P.A. and Dubay's Love Coverant, The Lawn Wranglers **Dislikes:** The New York Yankees, Night Raving, Spec Ops: Covert Assault **Current Favorite Games:** Metal Gear Solid 2, Sons of Liberty, Star Wars: Rogue Leader, NASCAR Thunder 2002

When not buying copious amounts of records, Kato can be found exercising good taste, feeding the gods, and trying in vain to update his wardrobe into the 21st century. Like other young men of his generation, he quickly found out that the one true real world application of good grades was the free arcade tokens that were given out at as reward. With allegiance to none, he takes on every game with an equal eye.

## NEWBIE CHEAT SHEET

For our newer readers, here is a glossary of terms and acronyms that commonly appear in the magazine. Video game veterans should move along; these aren't the droids you are looking for.

**action** – A term we use for games like *Zone of the Enders* and *Gauntlet*

**adventure** – A term we use for games like *Myst* and *Escape From Monkey Island*

**AI** – Artificial Intelligence. Usually used to refer to how well the computer reacts to a human opponent

**board** – A term we use for games like *Jeopardy!* and *Mario Party*

**CG** – Computer-Generated graphics

**crow** – What Jay ate after Packers-Vikings game one

**DC** – Sega Dreamcast

**E3** – Electronic Entertainment Expo. The world's largest convention for video games

**fighting** – A term we use for games like *Street Fighter* and *Dead or Alive*

**FMV** – Full Motion Video. Usually refers to an animated CG cutscene

**FPS** – Frames Per Second. How many animation frames happen in one second. Also used to denote First-Person Shooters like *Doom*, *GoldenEye*, & *Unreal Tournament*

**frame-rate** – The frames of animation used to create the illusion of movement

**frontend** – A game's menus and options

**GB** – Game Boy

**GBA** – Game Boy Advance

**GBC** – Game Boy Color

**GC** – GameCube

**Holiday Sam** – Tom's arch nemesis

**isometric** – Three-quarters top down view, like *StarCraft* or *Red Alert 2*

**ISP** – Internet Service Provider. The company that provides you with access to the Internet

**Jaggies** – Graphical lines that are jagged when they should be straight

**LAN** – Local Area Network. Connecting computers or consoles together within a small space to allow communication between them. Provides fast, simultaneous gameplay

**mini-game** – A small, simple game within a larger one

**motion-capture** – Using human models and infrared cameras to record movement for game animation. Also mo-cap

**N64** – Nintendo 64

**NES** – Nintendo Entertainment System

**platform** – A term we use for games like *Super Mario* and *Crash Bandicoot*

**pop-up** – When onscreen objects, usually distant, suddenly appear

**PS2** – Sony PlayStation 2

**PS-X** – Sony PlayStation

**puzzle** – A term we use for games like *Tetris* and *Osu! Tatakae!*

**racing** – A term we use for games like *Gran Turismo* and *Mario Kart*

**RPG** – Role-Playing Game. A game that involves character improvement through collecting and spending points. A term we use for games like *Final Fantasy* and *Dragon Warrior*

**SG** – Sega Genesis

**shooter** – A term we use for games like *Mars Matrix* and *Gradius*

**SNES** – Super Nintendo Entertainment System

**sports** – A term we use for games like *Madden NFL*

**SS** – Sega Saturn

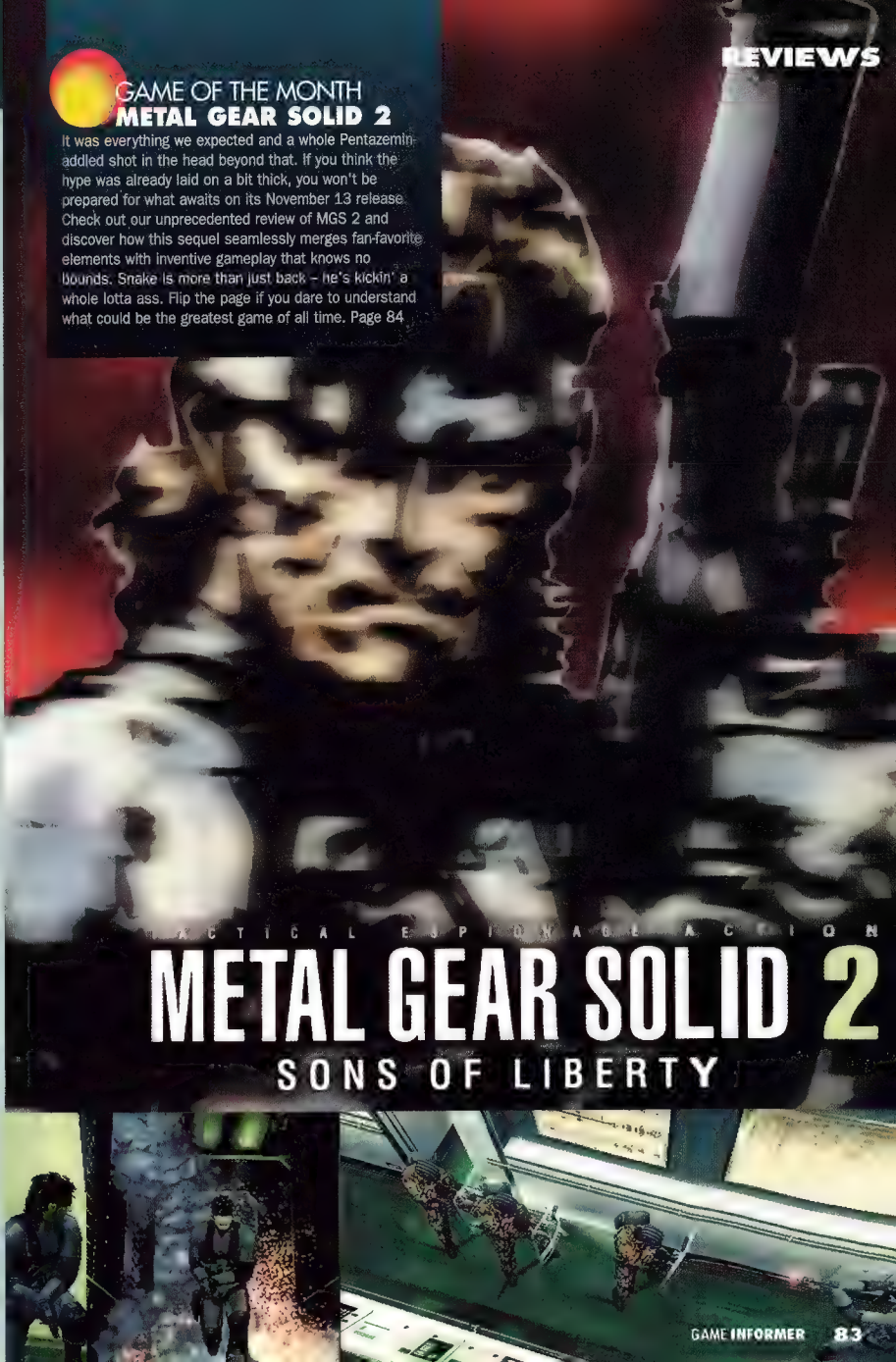
**strategy** – A term we use for games like *Command & Conquer* and *Fallout Tactics*

**third-party** – Something made for a console by a company other than the console manufacturer



## GAME OF THE MONTH METAL GEAR SOLID 2

It was everything we expected and a whole Pentazemine-addled shot in the head beyond that. If you think the hype was already laid on a bit thick, you won't be prepared for what awaits on its November 13 release. Check out our unprecedented review of MGS 2 and discover how this sequel seamlessly merges fan-favorite elements with inventive gameplay that knows no bounds. Snake is more than just back – he's kicking a whole lotta ass. Flip the page if you dare to understand what could be the greatest game of all time. Page 84





PLAYSTATION 2

# METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

## FUTURE PERFECT

**T**he appearance of Metal Gear Solid 2 on the PlayStation 2 is more than just the latest celebration of this famed series on a more powerful console. Kinship and genetics were large parts of the story when we last left Snake, and Hideo Kojima now presents us with the next generation of the title in every way – with some very tangible looks at the past included. It's not just a better game by the addition of more of what you've liked before. New controls have been added AND your command of the environments is greater. The game looks better, but it even lets you manipulate the cutscene camera and the images on your Codec. MGS 2's story has its surprises, but it also resonates on fundamental levels (such as playing video games themselves) and grows in ways unimaginable. The legacy of Metal Gear is forever changed and a new dawn has begun for everyone.

The demo of the game that was included in Z.O.E. wasn't just a PR nicety; it was an invaluable introduction. MGS 2 requires stealth capabilities that are matched only by the requirements on your trigger finger. Using the first-person camera while popping out from around a corner to shoot, getting on your tiptoes for better aim, and carefully uncocking your gun via slowly depressing analog buttons will have you playing the controller like a miniature fiddle. The thing'll even throb when soldiers get too close to the locker you're hiding in. Failure to remain undercover will unleash some relentless enemy AI that includes impressive executed patrol routes for hand-to-hand combat and specially evaded patrol routines when you are spotted. Shootouts are stunning, with bloody entrails and muzzle flashes lighting up the screen in a first-person visceral feast. I couldn't figure out whether sneaking around or getting into firefights was more fun, because the title's experience is so complete and tailor-made for both. Then again, that's the beauty of Metal Gear Solid 2 – you can decide in which gameplay direction you want to tip the scales. There's no dispute, however, about the boss fights. Whether it be these nemeses rocking the cool-factor off the charts, or in their dramatic involvement with the plot, you'll look back at these bested baddies with a huge grin.

Sons of Liberty gives you a degree of freedom not reached previously in action video games. Shakedown hostage

soldiers for their collectible dog tags or use them as a human shield. Choose to shoot a radio out of someone's hand or silence them with a bullet in the groin instead. Exercise your own free will and play the game with the routes and tactics you choose – including how and when you use your items. Many times during the game, Remer and I came up with different, yet equally effective, ways around a problem. Playing through MGS 2 twice will be a must for even the mildly curious gamer, whether it be for the collectible goodies to see what you've missed the first time around, or to approach playing it with a different strategy altogether. I think it's amazing that, for once, what you have your character do is just as deep as how you physically control them.

All of this is wrapped up in a story that simply defies explanation and graphics that are the best yet seen on the console. We've all experienced the driving rain on the deck of the tanker Discovery, but would you believe that there are better water effects still waiting? Such stretches of imagination are the kind of exercises Metal Gear Solid 2 performs on your mind. If there is a birth of the next generation of gaming, it is here with this title. If I've played a vid that has been more satisfying on almost every level, I'm not sure what it would be. What will your experience be? I can't say definitely, but I do know that Hideo Kojima has given you all the tools to make it as great as you want it to be. – **KATO**



Biten off more than it can chew?

Aaaaaarghhaaaah!!!

Is that Doc Ock at the hand of the torture chamber?

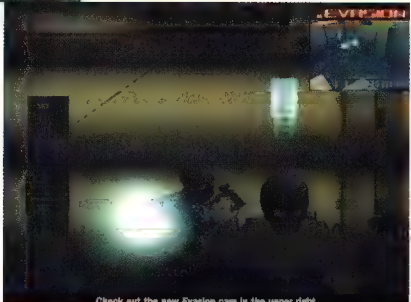
Bring out yer dead!

What are you staring at?

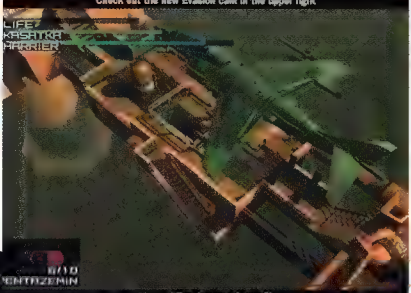
■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER KONAMI ■ DEVELOPER KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT JAPAN  
■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 13



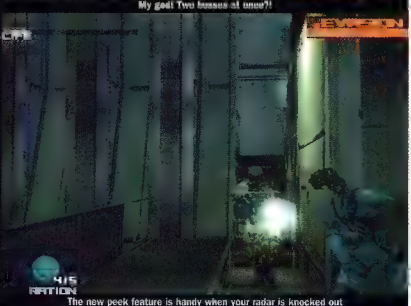
"If there is a birth of the next generation of gaming, it is here with this title."



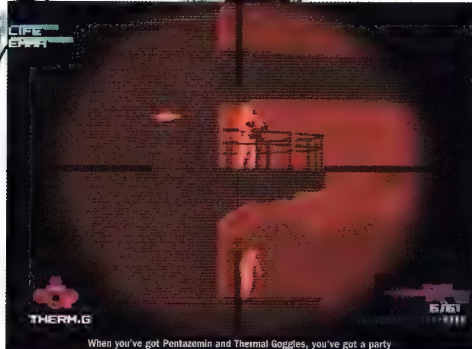
Check out the new Evasion cam in the upper right



My god! Two bosses at once!



The new peek feature is handy when your radar is knocked out.



When you've got Pentazemin and Thermal Goggles, you've got a party

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

**M**

**10**

- **Concept:** Kojima's grand tale taps the PS2 and uses epic surprises, the baddest bosses, and great gameplay to keep you sitting in rapture
- **Graphics:** No detail was spared. The water droplets, rolling fog and mist, reflections, and shadows are exquisite
- **Sound:** The directional mic is one of the coolest uses of sound and shows the depth of the MGS 2 experience
- **Playability:** Complete control over your own actions and those of the environment make anything possible
- **Entertainment:** Rarely has there been a more rewarding gaming experience
- **Replay Value:** High

**SECOND OPINION**

Clearly expressing the emotions I went through when I played Metal Gear Solid 2 is impossible. I can honestly say, though, without the slightest hint of doubt, this is the greatest game I've ever played. From the attention to detail that went into the graphics to the sophistication of gameplay, Hideo Kojima and his team set out to create the perfect game, and the result is nothing short of this. If you're not staring in awe at the visuals that flash across the screen, or applauding the clever play mechanics that change from mission to mission, you'll find yourself completely entranced, overwhelmed, and shocked by the story, the directions it takes, and the outcome at the end of the game. I've never given a game a 10, yet I wish I could give it an even higher score. This is the kind of release that will forever change the shape of video games. A new standard has been set. An absolute must-have for everyone.

**REINER - 10**



PLAYSTATION 2

# TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

EVERYTHING YOU EXPECTED & SO MUCH MORE!

"Tony Hawk 3 is the most rewarding, playable, and addictive game on the PlayStation 2."

For three years, and after two dominating Tony Hawk releases, Neversoft ruled the 32-bit age of gaming with an iron fist, inspiring countless clones and topping sales charts with each of its efforts. The scary thing is, you haven't seen anything yet.

Neversoft's work on Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 simply crushes everything you've become accustomed to. On the graphical end, the Tony Hawk titles have always excelled, delivering amazing character animation that reacts accurately to situations, and the level of environmental detail has always been something to admire. For the most part, Tony 3's graphics are comparable, yet the animation is much smoother and more diverse. The parks now boast unparalleled realism: crowds of people, highly trafficked streets, and authentic, real-world sights. Amidst the plethora of new animations, you'll now see the little things that count. For example, skaters counter-balancing during a grind, and a wide array of ball animations that range from simply losing your footing on the board to slamming your head onto a wall.

For those of you who still play Tony 2 religiously, the gameplay is somewhat of a departure from the formula you know. The speed is greatly increased and the physics are skewed slightly to incorporate realism. The arrival of Tony 2 brought about the Manual maneuver. Tony 3's most notable

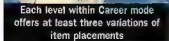
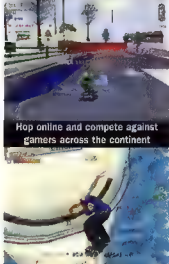
play mechanic is the Revert. This landing trick will allow players to link a vert trick with the Manual, resulting in the ability to infinitely link every kind of trick. Neversoft has also implemented flatland special moves (à la Rodney Mullen), and hidden combos – all of which are welcome additions.

The structuring of Career mode is similar to Tony 2, but instead of collecting cash, you'll now need to locate Stat Points. To give the game a jolt in longevity, the location of the goal items changes from character to character. In total, I'd say each level has at least three variations of item placement. All the multiplayer modes are still intact, as is the Park Editor. Even without Tony's online up and running, Tony 3 still features Internet play, allowing four players to thrash simultaneously from across the bitstream.

Once again, Tony 3 came close to achieving a perfect score, but there's one aspect – a small one mind you – that I wasn't happy with. The beauty of the previous installments was listening to the underground bands. Sadly, Tony 3's soundtrack is as mainstream as it gets. Sellouts!

Regardless, though, Tony Hawk 3 is the most rewarding, playable, and addictive game on the PlayStation 2. Just wait until you see who the hidden characters are! Skateboarding stalwarts rejoice! – **REINER**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION ■ **DEVELOPER** NEVERSOFT ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 30



THE BOTTOM LINE



9.75

- **Concept:** Neversoft takes video game skateboarding to the next level, offering the same great play on a much higher plane
- **Graphics:** Realism is achieved within the environments, and hundreds of animations have been added to make the skaters seem more lifelike
- **Sound:** The effects are brilliant as always, but the soundtrack is way too mainstream
- **Playability:** Incredibly playable and nothing short of perfect
- **Entertainment:** You'll play it forever, gasp at the hidden characters, and make new friends online
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

Just as the arrival of part 2 smashed the egos of supposed experts, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 will re-educate console boarders everywhere. With a framerate running at a constant 60 fps, the game moves faster than ever before, creating a new level of combusting fun. With the switch from PlayStation to PlayStation 2, every aspect of this franchise has been expanded. There are bigger levels, more moves, plenty of Create-a-Skater options, and secrets aplenty to unlock. Yet, despite all these improvements, some of the decisions made for the Career mode disappoint me. Most notably, the fact that any skater has access to every special move without having to earn them. Obviously, though, any complaint I have is minor when put up against this ultimate numbing action game. I'd even go so far as recommending you buy a PS2 expressly for the purpose of playing Tony 3.

JAY – 9.75





THE BOTTOM LINE



9.5

"Although many will make comparisons with Driver, GTA 3 shatters the standards set by its predecessors."

# PLAYSTATION 2

# GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

## ROCKSTAR'S RESERVOIR DOGS

In the past, the controversy surrounding Grand Theft Auto always seemed a bit out of proportion to the games themselves, which were modest, if interesting, action games hampered by anachronistic graphics and an awkward control scheme. Similarly, Rockstar Games, the champions of DMA Design's GTA franchise, have succeeded more in creating an image as a hip, cutting edge game company than actually putting out hip, cutting edge games. All this will change with the release of Grand Theft Auto 3, a stunning tour de force that is so masterfully realized, so ambitious, that I doubt anyone in the video game industry will be able to ignore DMA or Rockstar any longer.

The game's hard-boiled storyline and the bloody nature of the gameplay will no doubt attract the attention of the mainstream press. I, for one, hope that this title will be remembered for its true accomplishment – it's the first console game that allows the player to freely roam through a living, breathing virtual world while at the same time implementing compelling gameplay elements and plot points. This is even more impressive when you remember that a creator no less than the legendary Yu Suzuki tried to do this with Shenmue and the results were – how shall I say it? – boring as hell.

While the basic premise (working as a hired gun for Liberty City's various criminal organizations) is the same as the

previous GTA games, doing so in a realistically rendered environment is an entirely new experience. To say the levels are massive would be an understatement. This fictional city is so large that you'll often struggle with the very real-world problem of becoming lost in its expanse.

The game's 72 missions run the gamut of the criminal lifestyle; from drive-by hits to dropping off payments to crooked cops, but that's not all that GTA 3 has to offer. Hop in a cab, and you'll be able to pick up fares for money. Steal a cop car, and you can run down criminals in a Vigilante mission. You can even hijack an ambulance and take wounded victims to the hospital. In addition, there are stunt jumps placed throughout the city, Rampage missions, and 100 Hidden Packages to find. All in all, I'd estimate that it should take you at least 60 hours to experience everything this game has to offer. That doesn't even take into account the fact that you can waste many hours just randomly killing pedestrians and searching for the hottest cars to heist.

Although many will make comparisons with Driver, GTA 3 shatters the standards set by its predecessors. The only thing that prevents GTA 3 from winning Game Informer's highest honors are some moderate pop-up issues, and a slightly cantankerous targeting system. Point blank – you really can buy this game. – MATT

■ **Concept:**  
Extrapolate the GTA series' free-roaming, open-ended gameplay into a gigantic 3D world

■ **Graphics:**  
Pop-up problems aside, it's pretty amazing considering the size of the environments

■ **Sound:**  
Features nine different radio stations, plus tons of hilarious voice-overs

■ **Playability:**  
The driving engine is great, but the combat is somewhat clunky

■ **Entertainment:**  
GTA 3's epic scope and detailed environments make this the best gangster sequel since *Godfather II*

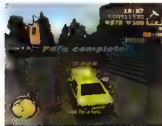
■ **Replay Value:**  
High

### SECOND OPINION

Rarely will a game reign over my life, but rarely does a game like GTA 3 come along. I could not stop playing it. The environments of Liberty City are stunning in scope and detail, dwarfing anything I've ever seen, and your choices are endless. Aside from missions, you can hunt for secrets and rare cars, drive a taxi to earn cash, commit senseless acts of violence, or even pick up ladies of the night! You have carte blanche to do basically whatever you want. Aside from combat that's a tad quirky, it all comes off perfectly. There's nothing like doing a drive-by, waiting for the EMTs to show up, wasting them, ganking the ambulance, then junking it. With such an elaborate world and virtually no load time, a few graphical hiccups occur. That's a small price to pay for one of the most ambitious and satisfying titles I've ever gotten my greedy hands on.

JUSTIN - 9.5

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ROCKSTAR GAMES ■ **DEVELOPER** DMA DESIGN ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 23



GTA 3 lets you play as a cabbie.



...a sailor...

...or a sniper



Some citizens of Liberty City don't take kindly to car jackers



Old school GTA fans can chose to play with the familiar top-down camera



THE BOTTOM LINE



9

PLAYSTATION 2

# GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

MAYHEM FOR THE MASSES

"[Giants] features some of the greatest cutscenes in video game history, giving Conker a run for its money as the funniest game ever"

**G**ame Informer dropped many accolades when it featured *Giants: Citizen Kabuto* as the Game of the Month in February of this year. Hence it was a no-brainer for Interplay to port this game to PlayStation 2. During the last eight months, however, screens of the game made me, and I'm sure many others, doubt how good this game would come off once it was ported down. Let me be the first to assure you that even though some shortcuts have been taken, *Giants* is just as glorious on PS2 as it was on PC.

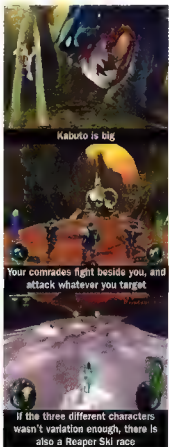
*Giants* follows the tale of five Meccaryn – British-accented mates in power suits – who haphazardly land on a planet amidst a racial war for power between the Smarties and the Sea Reapers. In the beginning you start off playing the role of one of these Meccs, blasting through various missions trying to save your buddies and help the Smarties.

As a Mecc, the game is much like a classic first- or third-person shooter as there are a number of weapons and items, as well as a jetpack to assist you. This portion of the game is lengthy to say the least (about eight hours) and features some spot-on controls.

Then the plot twists, and the gameplay does as well. All of a sudden you take control of one of the Sea Reapers named Delphi, and work your way through another long portion of the game as a magic-user with a host of spells at your fingertips, as well as a sword and bow.

Just when you think the game couldn't go on any more,

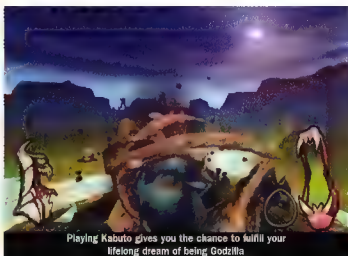
■ **STYLE** | PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** INTERPLAY ■ **DEVELOPER** DIGITAL MAYHEM/PLANET MOON STUDIOS  
■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 1



Kabuto is big

Your comrades fight beside you, and attack whatever you target

If the three different characters wasn't variation enough, there is also a Reaper S&amp;I race



Playing Kabuto gives you the chance to fulfill your lifelong dream of being Godzilla



Here you must kill the Offspring. For anyone who has played Crazy Taxi, this is yet another lifelong dream

you find yourself taking control of the giant himself, Kabuto. Thus you embark on yet another set of missions where you get to tower over your opponents as this walking fortress, eating evil Smarties to create Offspring, and dropping butt siams and belly flops to wreak havoc on all that oppose you.

If this long list of gameplay depth and options isn't enough to delight the gamer in you, I'll describe the little touches that complete the polish. For one, between each mission the game features some of the greatest cutscenes in video game history, giving Conker's *Bad Fur Day* a run for it's money as the funniest game ever.

Next, the action is just hectic. With Rippers popping out of the ground, Sea Reapers casting awe-inspiring spells, and you just blasting, casting, or bashing (depending on which character you are controlling) your way through wave after wave of baddies, you get addicted to the madness. Plus, it's all fleshed out with great particle and lighting effects to give you more than enough eye candy to keep the framerate near in you happy.

It is a shame the game is not quite as sharp as its PC counterpart and that the multiplayer game is absent, but once you start playing you quickly forgive these little flaws. If you didn't get a chance to play *Giants* on PC, I can't recommend this game enough. It's solid through and through, with a lengthy quest, lots of challenge, a great story, and plenty of variety. – **ANDY**

■ **Concept:**  
Blast your way through a crazy tale using three different races

■ **Graphics:**  
Not as crisp as the PC version, but still delightfully smooth

■ **Sound:**  
Top-notch voice-over work with a classic movie score soundtrack

■ **Playability:**  
Surprisingly easy to control for a third-person game on a console

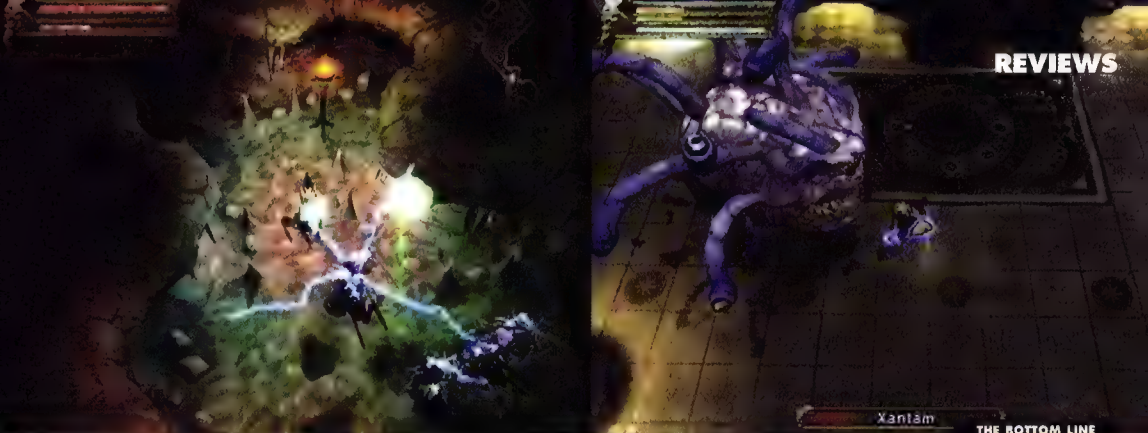
■ **Entertainment:**  
Frenzied combat coupled with a hilarious tale equals one hell of a good time

■ **Replay Value:**  
Moderately Low

## SECOND OPINION

As on the PC version of this title, the PlayStation 2 attempt is an exquisitely conceived piece of work. Although the controls take some getting used to, the witty dialogue and surprisingly engrossing plot serve to keep your butt glued to your seat, and your fingers on your controller. I have rarely seen a PC port done this well on a console, and it speaks volumes of the developers' skill and dedication that things didn't turn into a jumbled mess. I thought the PC's controls would make a hash out of the PS2 controller's capabilities, but thankfully I was wrong. There's a lot of game to be had here, although the replay is severely limited – once you make your way completely through there really isn't anything left that would hold your interest. Replay notwithstanding, PS2 owners shouldn't hesitate to add this awesome game to their collection.

**KRISTIAN – 8.5**



**"Dark Alliance is just a button-mashing beat-em-up in fantasy clothing, but what a fabulous controller cruncher it is."**

PLAYSTATION 2

# BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE

## BUGBEARS ATE MY BABY!

Using Dungeons & Dragons for its rules, and the Forgotten Realms campaign setting as its world, the Baldur's Gate series has dominated the PC role-playing category for years. Long have there been rumors of bringing one of these titles over to console, and personally, I was always convinced it would never work. The games' real-time battles demand the use of hot keys and quick mouse movements that could never translate to any standard controller. Perhaps sharing a similar viewpoint with yours truly, Interplay's first Baldur's Gate game away from the PC is totally unlike what's been done before.

One or two players choose to take on the role of a dwarven fighter, an elven sorceress, or a human ranger, and get thrown directly into a plot that threatens the city of Baldur's Gate, if not the entire Realm. Rather than a point-and-click interface, players of Dark Alliance are treated to a more action-oriented control system. Attacking, spell casting, and jumping are all a button press away, as is drinking potions that restore hit points and spell points.

If you stop to think about it, Dark Alliance is just a button-mashing beat-em-up in fantasy clothing, but what a fabulous controller cruncher it is. Graphically, the game is totally

astounding. Despite the isometric view, the detail and animation of the character models shines through, as does the incredible environments. Indeed, the interactive rippling water is so breathtaking, you'll likely spend ten minutes jumping around the first pool you come across. Even more amazing is that the sound is just as good. Well-produced voices, distinct monster growls, and gripping music simply hint at the audio experience awaiting you.

On the gameplay side, there is plenty of hacking and slashing to be done, but there's also a fair amount of puzzle solving and platforming to mix things up. This balance is the key to Dark Alliance's thrills. Just when you're beginning to tire of killing a certain monster type or partaking in a side quest, something entirely new and different comes along to pick you right back up.

The fact that there are only three playable characters is a drawback (and that ranger is a class choice over rogue or cleric bothers me a bit), but each is so different—and the game itself so entertaining—most will enjoy finishing Dark Alliance with each character, and perhaps again in multiplayer. —JAY

THE BOTTOM LINE



8.75

- **Concept:** Dungeons & Dragons goes Diablo style
- **Graphics:** The lighting is amazing, the characters are detailed, and the water effects are the best ever seen in video games
- **Sound:** If you listen carefully, you can tell what kinds of monsters are about by the snarls they emit
- **Playability:** It's hard to imagine a better control scheme, and the Dual Shock heartbeat warning of low hit points is a life saver
- **Entertainment:** A game that presses you to finish it not once, but thrice!
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

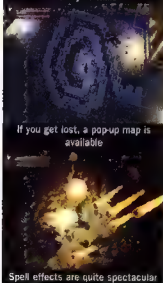
### SECOND OPINION

Dark Alliance has taken giant steps forward from when I last saw it. Although it looked good then, it looks fantastic now—and that's saying something for a PlayStation 2 game nowadays. As far as the gameplay goes, the crew over at Snowblind has their shizzle together in a big way. The third edition rules have been followed surprisingly well sooting as how this genre of game doesn't lend itself very well to the minutiae of the D&D universe. Along with engaging quests and an inspired multiplayer capability, Dark Alliance is just plain fun to play. Spitting sewer rats in half and lighting bugbears on fire is the perfect way to let off steam after a long day of collating accounts receivable files. The only thing I would have liked to see was more options for setting up your character. Other than that, I would say this game will make a great addition to your PS2 library.

KRISTIAN — 8.5



At every level increase, players get to distribute points amongst a variety of skills



If you get lost, a pop-up map is available

Spell effects are quite spectacular

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** INTERPLAY ■ **DEVELOPER** SNOWBLIND STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15



No matter how far back in the game you kill or destroy something, if you return to that point it will lie exactly where you felled it



Very well... I'll find our alien brothers and light the signal fire as quickly as I can.  
Many close-up conversations help move the story along



**"Moving to PS2 has also done SmackDown's gameplay a world of good, allowing for many new techniques and features."**



90 GAME INFORMER

PLAYSTATION 2

## WWF SMACKDOWN! JUST BRING IT

### WHAT BETTER THAN SMACKDOWN?

**A**s the only video game journalist (to my knowledge) who doubles as a pro wrestler, I know about the complexity of a wrestling match. There is more to it than one would dream. Maybe that's why I've never been in love with the SmackDown series. Its engine is too simplistic, and the list of moves per character is severely limited, especially compared to Aki's N64 titles like *No Mercy*.

What I have liked about these games is the Story Mode. Last year's had problems, such as the inability to bypass cutscenes and infrequent bookings of your characters, but for the most part it did a great job of giving you TV-style storylines. *Just Bring It's* Story Mode is by far the series' best, offering a first-person romp around all the locales, and more choices on where your career goes. It's too easy to win belts, but defending them is really where it's at.

Moving to PS2 has also done SmackDown's gameplay a world of good, allowing for many new techniques and features. Eight players can fill the ring at once. Referees are in almost every match, can be bumped like anyone else, and exert their authority if you break too many rules. Wrestlers can now brawl in the stands, as 2D fans clear a path. Each object, from a steel ladder to the Lita mark in the first row, has its own physics, and reacts to contact. The environments are very interactive, and whipping opponents

into objects yields funny results. I'm glad to see more reversals, and wrestlers selling the moves more realistically. I hated when one punch caused a knockdown that made you want to shout "Timber!" in the early SmackDowns. These aspects still have a ways to go, but improvement is good.

This sequel's load times and graphics are light years ahead of its predecessors. Gone are the long waits for each entrance, or the 30 second pause before a 30 second cutscene. Wrestler models are amazing facially, but their bodies appear to be high-res versions of the PS-X titles'. Lighting is a major factor, as Kane's fire bathes the arena in red, and camera flashes during high spots reflect onto characters. Too bad the sound blows; commentary is i-ber-repetitive and painful to hear.

Development time hurt this game. Big names like Rob Van Dam and Booker T didn't make it, and many slots are filled with long-gone workers like Crash and Malenko. Even some popular stars that are included, like Rhyno and Tajiri, must be unlocked. This isn't THQ's fault, but it still blows.

I can talk about lack of gameplay depth all I want, but WWF SmackDown: *Just Bring It* is tremendously fun to play. You'll want to unlock all the characters and moves, master each gimmick match, and see every cutscene. If you're a wrestling fan, just buy it. — JUSTIN

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ PUBLISHER THQ ■ DEVELOPER YUKE'S ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 14



Regal, with Tajiri in tow, lets Tazz decide his fate



Eddie and Dean's battle spills into the 2D crowd.

#### THE BOTTOM LINE



8

- **Concept:**  
Try to keep up with the constantly evolving world of the WWF
- **Graphics:**  
The new faces are great, but most of the other graphics are mediocre
- **Sound:**  
I hate the new commentary, and the background music is unnecessary
- **Playability:**  
More reversals and improved physics add to one of wrestling games' weaker engines
- **Entertainment:**  
With cards to unlock, real-time outscene vignettes to watch, and wrestlers to create, every wrestling fan will enjoy
- **Replay Value:**  
High

#### SECOND OPINION

Wow! I'm amazed by the newest SmackDown! Amazed because it's so rare to see a series take such a large step backwards. About the only advancement I can think of is the expected graphical improvements in the move to PlayStation 2. Yes, the commentary during matches is new, but it's so halted and repetitive it only takes a few minutes before you're sick of it. In gameplay, a premium has been placed upon reversals to an almost ridiculous degree. The key to winning seems to be waiting for your opponent to do a move, reversing it, and following it up with a grapple of your own. My biggest disappointment, though, has to be Story Mode with its generic choices for all wrestlers and the plethora of useless backstage chores you have to endure. Just Bring It isn't a bad wrestling game, but the fact is I had a better time with its PS-X counterparts.

JAY — 7.5



THE BOTTOM LINE



8.75

PLAYSTATION 2

# SOUL REAVER 2

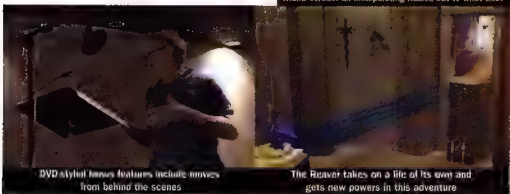
THIS TIME, IT'S PERSONAL

I was one of the many who were disappointed with the "To Be Continued..." ending to the first Soul Reaver. So much so that I had lost interest in travelling down the Soul Reaver path again. Despite my indifference going in, Soul Reaver 2 is actually quite engrossing.

The engine is basically the same as its PlayStation counterpart, but the graphics, framerate, and textures are upgraded due to the increased power of the PS2. Combat is noticeably improved as well, although still slightly sticky. Like the previous installment, Soul Reaver 2 involves a number of puzzles that require moving blocks, placing mirrors, and using the various powers you acquire during your adventure in order to move forward in Raziel's tale.

The story is really what Soul Reaver 2 is all about, and is the thing that really got me hooked. I was pretty confused for the first couple of hours, but once the plot starts to unravel, I couldn't put the controller down. Sure, some of the puzzle logic is insane, and the time travel story gets a little convoluted, but overall Soul Reaver fans will get everything they could ask for from this sequel.

- ANDY



DVD styled bonus features include movies from behind the scenes

The Reaver takes on a life of its own and gets new powers in this adventure

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER EIDOS INTERACTIVE ■ DEVELOPER CRYSTAL DYNAMICS ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 1

## CONCEPT

Make a game good enough to appease the angry gamers still upset from the first installment

## GRAPHICS

Great environments, lighting, and weather effects give each area a life of its own, and a time of its own (chew on that one for a while)

## SOUND

Soul Reaver has always had great voice-overs and the sequel is no exception

## PLAYABILITY

Prepare yourself for some annoying puzzles and some draining combat, but it's all worth it in the end

## ENTERTAINMENT

Trying to decipher who is out to screw Raziel is quite entertaining

## REPLAY VALUE

Moderately Low

## SECOND OPINION

The first entry in the series ended on an anti-climatic note, so I think it's safe to assume most gamers will run out and purchase Soul Reaver 2 for curiosity's sake alone. I don't blame you, though. A fiery rage built up inside me when "To Be Continued..." flashed across the screen, but as time passed, my anger transformed into anticipation. Was it worth the wait? Most definitely. The storytelling is once again where this title shines, and yes, there is closure this time around. Since this project has been in development for so long, its age shows in the combat and sparsely decorated environments. The texturing is decent, as are the effects, but it still feels like a high-resolution PlayStation game. I slammed the first game for its unsatisfactory finale, but I walked away from the sequel completely satisfied.

REINER - 8.5



PLAYSTATION 2

# HALF-LIFE DECAY

LIVING THE HIGH LIFE



8

## THE BOTTOM LINE



## CONCEPT

The first Half-Life sequel, again with two playable characters that complement the original

## GRAPHICS

As good, if not better, than the PC version in some cases, with a few visual road blocks

## SOUND

The voice work is excellent, the rest of the sound package is standard

## PLAYABILITY

A lock-on system makes make the game more enjoyable on console, but it still feels clumsy

## ENTERTAINMENT

The original installment is what you have never played, and the best co-op missions are great if you have a partner

## REPLAY VALUE

Moderately High

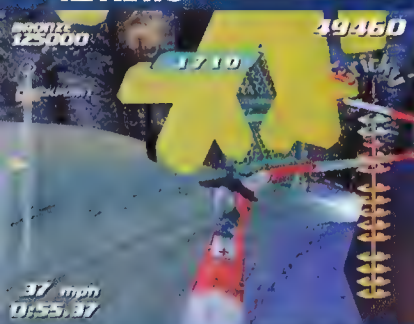
## SECOND OPINION

Being such an old PC game, I didn't expect much from Half-Life. How surprised I was to get immersed in the well-told story. It can still hang in terms of both looks and play, and the co-op mode was very innovative. As Bob Marley once sang, "I don't want to walk in vain for Half-Life." Well, Bobby, you have nothing to worry about.

JUSTIN - 8.25

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER VIVENDI UNIVERSAL ■ DEVELOPER VALVE/GEARBOX ■ RELEASE OCTOBER 29

## REVIEWS



PLAYSTATION 2

# SSX TRICKY

TEACHING AN OLD DOG  
NEW TRICKS

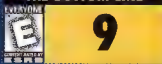
**S**ince the amount of new material seriously outweighs the old, you really can't label SSX Tricky a Special Edition or a Director's Cut. Through clever disguising and heavy modifications, EA managed to transform this release into a full-fledged sequel. All of the tracks make a repeat performance, but they're hardly recognizable. Other than familiar landmarks, the terrain for every course is completely different, offering more jumps and grinds than before. To differentiate between Race and Showoff modes, EA actually created track variations for each course.

To give the game more personality, EA has enhanced the characters. Along with celebrity voices (Oliver Platt, Lucy Liu, Billy Zane), the AI for each boarder is unique and based on the character's personality. The only aspect that hasn't been completely revamped is the gameplay. Other than the implementation of the insane Uber tricks, which specifically target skilled players, the controls are identical.

The environments may be the same, but the number of tracks have doubled, and the play is even more engaging than before. For snowboarding fans, SSX Tricky is, once again, the game to get.

REINER

THE BOTTOM LINE



**Concept:** SSX's second season is rounded out with redesigned tracks, rookie boarders, and continuing storylines for the returning characters.

**Graphics:** All of the hills now offer two track variations. The framerate is also much smoother.

**Sound:** The celebrity dialogue lends itself nicely to the character personalities, but it is rather repetitive.

**Playability:** Uber tricks! Uber tricks!!

**Entertainment:** Twice as long and all the more outrageous.

**Replay Value:** High.

### SECOND OPINION

Similar to a Criterion edition DVD of a blockbuster motion picture, SSX Tricky improves on the original snowboarding sensation by adding new characters, making drastic alterations to favorite tracks from the past, and having two completely new runs. This is probably only for hardcore fans, but SSX is still the biggest, fastest, and most fun snowboarding game out there.

MATT - 9



THE BOTTOM LINE



8.5

PLAYSTATION 2

# NBA LIVE 2002

GOT HEART LIKE JOHN STARKS

**L**ast year's NBA Live was disappointing. Thankfully, Live 2002 outplays it in every respect. Movements flow much smoother. The defense is excellent - players hunch down or take swipes at the ball. The alley-oop button is a beautiful thing. As usual, rebounding is the sole black mark on gameplay. No matter how well jumps are timed, you will likely be out-rebounded by the computer.

The new Franchise mode is sadly not what I had hoped. I want to draft a team to build into a dynasty, but you can't do it here. Trades are also a problem due to salary cap restrictions. Most teams are over the limit, so you can't make deals with them. To be positive, the GM's Desk gives a sea of info, from scouting reports to league news. I can't think of a statistic that isn't kept, so you can be aware of every ounce of productivity your players put out.

Props to Live for its graphics. It has the best looking players I've seen, and each is easily identifiable. While insignificant, the cutscenes are brilliant. Players argue with refs. Moving eyes scan the court on an inbound. Teammates push and shove for seats on the bench during a time out. The crowd is much improved over 2001's ugly mess, showing that player models weren't the development team's only focus.

I know I've been a little negative, but I truly enjoyed NBA Live 2002. I wish Franchise was deeper, but it's better than nothing. Until Sega's NBA 2K2 shows up on PS2, Live can't be stopped. You can only hope to contain it. - JUSTIN

**Concept:** EA's second most popular sport tries to keep up with the Madden's

**Graphics:** Aside from an abundance of glare on faces, visuals are vastly improved

**Sound:** I wasn't into the commentary, but everything else was arena accurate

**Playability:** Tenacious! Big, plus great ballhandling and physics. Rebounding is still weak

**Entertainment:** There are some missing elements, but Live is much more competitive this season

**Replay Value:** Moderately High



That dam Sprewell is at it again

Did we need another MJ comeback?

Players are much more expressive

There are fewer camera angles, but they're all good

### SECOND OPINION

After a year of rebuilding, NBA Live steps onto the court as an entirely different game. The most noticeable alteration is displayed within the graphics. The character models accurately portray their real-world counterparts, and at long last, TV-styled cutscenes occur whenever there is a break in the action. To say the very least, it really does look too good to be true. As for the gameplay, EA expanded the shot selection for the low-post position, implemented 30 new dunks, and improved the AI in the post defense. Unfortunately, rebounding is still a frustrating affair, and driving to the bucket remains a walk in the park. Certainly, it's a fun game to play, but its play doesn't offer the complexity or realism of Sega's NBA 2K series. Hopefully, next year's developmental process will specifically target the gameplay.

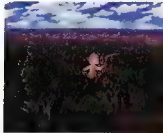
REINER - 8.5

■ **STYLE 1** OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** EA BIG ■ **DEVELOPER** EA CANADA ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13

■ **STYLE 1** TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS ■ **DEVELOPER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 6

## HARVEST MOON: SAVE THE HOMELAND

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** NATSUME  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 30



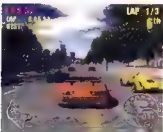
A lot of changes have been made to the traditional Harvest Moon formula. For starters, the game now features nine different endings. It also allows you to train dogs and racehorses. Even

though it offers more diversity, the gameplay still revolves around farming and tending to livestock. It's fun for a while, but let's face some facts here - farming is a job, not a game! - **REINER**

**E** 7.5

## SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 23



There is little doubt that the cars in SSC are super, but the game itself is only mediocre. I like that winning races unlocks new parts and shapes for you to customize your vehicle with, but that thrill only lasts so long. In the end it's all about the racing and nothing here is that compelling. Average car models, average racing, and average challenge make for...you guessed it...an average game. - **ANDY**

**E** 6

## GUILTY GEAR X

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** SAMMY  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 9

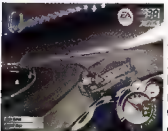


Not only does Guilty Gear X not push the 2D fighter envelope, it doesn't even give it the slightest nudge. Hell, it doesn't even throw the envelope a nasty glare. It's okay due to its reliance on proven genre standards, but there are many better prospects in the PlayStation 2 field. Since it's especially weak in the singles game, consider purchasing Guilty Gear X only if you and a friend want to go at it. - **JAY**

**E** 6

## NASCAR THUNDER 2002

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 16



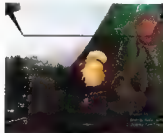
Here's a shot of what might be the new reality for PlayStation 2 owners. Xbox's NASCAR Thunder is better. I found myself missing the Xbox edition while playing this one, even if they have the

same features. We all expect the graphics to be better, but considering that this is an area of great difference between 2002 and 2001, already - it's an element of the game that can't be ignored. You'll be happy when you buy this Thunder, but you may also be envious. - **KATO**

**E** 8.5

## THUNDERSTRIKE: OPERATION PHOENIX

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** EIDOS INTERACTIVE  
 ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 12



Developed by Core Design, Thunderstrike's graphics and sound are what you would expect from a title in this vein. It even features some interesting missions that take you from Alaska to

the Middle East, and some great weaponry like the Inferno bombs or the user-guided Raven torpedoes. Unfortunately, this is not an easy game to play and had me contemplating suicide on a number of occasions. The difficulty wouldn't be so frustrating if you could quickly retry the mission, but the load times are unforgivably long. - **ANDY**

**E** 4



## SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 20

This PS2 version of EA's Crazy Taxi knock-off is virtually identical to its Xbox brother, and features all the great voice-overs and Simpsons marginalia that make this title a must-have for fans of the series. It looks a little worse than the Xbox version, but moves a bit faster and controls slightly better. That's about the only difference I could discern. With so many games scheduled for release on both platforms, I don't think this will be the last time I make that observation.

- **MATT**

**E** 8

## FIFA SOCCER 2002

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 6



Another solid FIFA title, one that has gone through some good and bad changes. A couple special moves have been

removed while a new passing system offers more control through a power meter. Ironically, even without some of the old tricks, 2002 doesn't seem as smooth at times. There is redemption, however, in the new World Cup qualifying rounds and a host of new teams. FIFA still does soccer best, but there is room for improvement. - **KATO**

**E** 8



... NOISE MANUAL + 30-30 + FRONT FLOP + 30-30 + NOISE MANUAL + 50-30 + 50-30 + FRONT FLOP + 30-30 + NOISE MANUAL  
 83300

PLAYSTATION 2

## SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER

### FROZEN FRUSTRATION

A division's determination to meld all of its sports titles into a universal entity is a classy move and a rewarding experience for Tony Hawk fans.

As expected, Shaun Palmer's gameplay fits like a glove, delivering an unmistakable control schematic and familiar level designs within its objectives and levels. Rather than starting out in a somewhat simplistic manner, the game completely alienates newcomers and specifically,

targets players who have excelled in Tony Hawk. The strange thing is, even if you can rack up a 1,000,000 point trick in Tony 3, this game is, for a lack of better phrasing, \$#!%ing impossible.

If you enjoy challenging games or simply enjoy getting your ass handed to you, Shaun Palmer is a dream come true. By the third stage, you'll be asked to rack up a score of 320,000. It's possible, but perfection is a must. The levels don't lend themselves to scoring, and landing is a

challenging affair in itself. I applaud UEP Systems for pushing gamers to master the gameplay, but this will only lead to frustration for casual participants.

I would have scored Shaun Palmer through the roof for its steep difficulty, but its plain texturing and uninspired level designs don't look too hot, especially in comparison to SSX Tricky's pristine graphics. - **REINER**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION ■ **DEVELOPER** UEP SYSTEMS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13

THE BOTTOM LINE  
**E** 8.25

Concept: Tony Hawk-styled gameplay brought to you by the creators of Cool Boarders

Graphics: The snow effects and character animation are exceptional, but the texturing is bland and the environments lack detail

Sound: Big bands...fresh effects

Playability: Very precise and easy to grasp. However, flipping the somewhat strange affair

Entertainment: One of the most difficult games on the PS2...especially if you've never played Tony Hawk

Replay Value: High

## SECOND OPINION

This amalgamation of Tony Hawk and Cool Boarders is very deep and features some nice lines for grinding, but still falls well short of Activision 2D standards. It's not much to look at, and the extremely high degree of difficulty will frustrate even the most seasoned gamer. But, if you're man enough, you'll get a lot of playtime out of this one.

**MATT - 8**

## REVIEWS

\$1.26.59

\$29.619

CONFRONT DEL  
LAW ENFORCERS  
DETECTED

PLAYSTATION 2

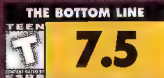
# SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORY

## SMUGGLE UP BUTTERCUP

**D**uring the somewhat lackluster PlayStation 2 launch, Smuggler's Run stood out as a fun, frenetic racing game that featured huge environments and graphics that were amazing for the time. Smuggler's Run 2 improves on the original in almost every respect. The environments look better, the game moves faster, the cars aren't subject to as much damage as before, and each vehicle now has unlockable countermeasures like oil slicks, super boost, and exploding barrels to thwart enemy pursuers.

So, why didn't I fall in love with this one like I did the first? Chalk it up to the passage of time. In the year since the PS2's debut, I've seen scores of fast, good-looking racing games. I've played of Road Racers, 4x4 Evolution and ATV Offroad Fury most notably, that make Smuggler's Run seem like little more than the glorified pizza delivery game that it is. Play just 15 minutes of Rockstar's own Grand Theft Auto 3, and you'll see just how far the concept of delivering illegal packages in a real-world environment has come.

That's not to say that you won't have a good time playing Smuggler's Run 2. It's still a blast to recklessly hurtle over the countryside, avoiding psychotic police and enemy factions. However, after a few hours you'll grow tired of the simple game play dynamic. — **MATT**



- **Concept:** A four-by-four free-for-all in the wilds of the former Soviet Union.
- **Graphics:** The environments are simplistic, but nicely textured, and the framerate is swift.
- **Sound:** Repetitive techno and engine noises—Welcome to Mgraine City!
- **Playability:** It's a little loosey goosey, but that's part of the charm.
- **Entertainment:** This isn't as impressive as it was a year ago, yet it's still a reasonably good time.
- **Replay Value:** Moderate.

### SECOND OPINION

This video game version of office gopher is more sophisticated than before, but it's still not enough to hold my interest for long. Driving is fun, but all the missions are basically the same. This lack of variation burned me out fast, leaving me to believe that this game would have been a better arcade game than a home release.

**ANDY - 6**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** ROCKSTAR GAMES ■ **DEVELOPER** ANGEL STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 29



PLAYSTATION 2

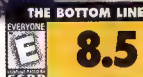
# NHL HITZ 2002

A FUN TIME WITH THE ONE-TIME

**P**layStation 2 is no slouch in either the hockey or arcade sports realm. If you're reading this with any amount of interest, you've probably played your fair share of EA's NHL or NBA Street. I have to say that, while a step off from the two aforementioned great games, NHL Hitz 2002 is a viable and entertaining alternative to either one.

Lack of replay has kept past Midway sports games from being much more than weekend rentals. Hitz, however, excels in this regard, as well as most other facets. You can build a team of custom characters and increase their attributes with skill points, much like NBA Street. Put them in the Franchise mode, and climb up the ranks. You can also trade for real players, or take real teams to the Cup in Championship. Even exhibition games are worth playing, because you earn credits to spend in the Hockey Shop on unlockable arenas, teams, and the like. Similar to Hoopz, skill-building minigames are worth a play or two, as well.

Extras aside, Hitz plays amazingly well, with lots of fancy tricks and smack-talk-worthy checks. The Limp Bizkit track may be the bane of my existence, but otherwise I had a blast with NHL Hitz, and it didn't wear thin nearly as fast as I thought it would. — **JUSTIN**



- **Concept:** Hockey simplified to all hitting, shooting, and fighting.
- **Graphics:** Good player models, particle effects, and crowd make for a granical hat trick.
- **Sound:** Same voice you've heard in EVERY Midway title. The money used licensing Limp Bizkit could've been better spent.
- **Playability:** Crisp play and the feeling of ice under your skates.
- **Entertainment:** A milestone for Midway in evolving its arcade sports legacy.
- **Replay Value:** High.



"By the power of Grayskull..."

People with glass barriers shouldn't throw body checks

Hat tricks are cause for the sombrero toss

Each game, sign-wielding fans give you a code

### SECOND OPINION

I'll start out by saying that I was never a fan of Midway's Open Ice series. Furthermore, I've always felt that games based on the NBA Jam formula have been shallow and unrewinding. Hitz is yet another extension of this arcade-driven genre. Instead of presenting a season mode, you'll need to work your way through tournament ladders. Statistical tracking is nowhere to be found, and the Jam announcer, who I was sick of back in '93, is still under contract. Light Unlike Open Ice, Hitz offers exciting game play that is precise, user-friendly, and in many ways comparable to EA's NHL releases. The goals are victimized by the dreaded one-timer way too often, and the fighting is lackluster, but the play mechanics are right on the money. It may not offer up the simulation options you crave, but it is an enjoyable release—especially for multiplayer matches.

**REINER - 8**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** MIDWAY ■ **DEVELOPER** MIDWAY ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 25



## NO ONE LIVES FOREVER

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** SIERRA STUDIOS  
 ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY 6, 2002



No One Lives Forever first appeared on PC back in November of 2000 and was heralded as one of the best first-person shooters of the year, and for good reason. As super spy Cate Archer you embark on an adventure set in the psychedelic '60s armed with plenty of weapons and Bond-esque gadgets. Unfortunately, the game looks a tad dated and isn't quite as smooth as its PC counterpart. Great action, but mediocre production.

—ANDY

**E** **7**

## MXRIDER

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMES  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 30



It seems the motocross genre is torn between being wild and trick-oriented, and still trying to get people interested in the races themselves. MX's freestyle portion has its moments, such as

jumping over pools of sharks, but the actual bike controls don't compare to the pre-loading of Ricky Carmichael. I will say this, though, the courses are twisted and the mud splatters nice and thick. —KATO

**E** **7**

## VAMPIRE NIGHT

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SHOOTER  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** NAMCO  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13

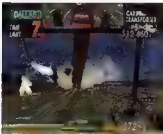


Namco and Sega are the two kings of gun games, so I guess it's only natural that they steal from one another. Vampire Night borrows heavily from Sega's House of the Dead, with the spookified settings and creepy monsters. It's generic in just about every way, from cheesy dialogue to predictable enemies. Gore is missing, perhaps to keep it from the M rating. The most fun I had was tackling this with twin Guncon 2s, but that's still nowhere near the price of admission. —JUSTIN

**E** **6.5**

## 18 WHEELER AMERICAN PRO TRUCKER

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM/SEGA  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13

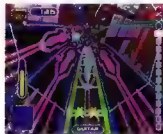


It's easy to have missed 18 Wheeler on Dreamcast — or any DC game released in the last year, for that matter. For your benefit, the folks at Acclaim have decided to port the Sega arcade racer to PlayStation 2. I liked it for its originality the first time I played it. Now, with the lack of added features or graphical upgrades, it seems content to hang in the slow lane, while more ambitious PS2 projects pass it by. —JUSTIN

**E** **7.25**

## FREQUENCY

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** SONY  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 20



For a button timing game that revolves around filling in different tracks to popular songs, Frequency has a knack for making the seemingly mediocre an incredible success. Not only are you able to unlock additional songs and environments by completing others, but you can then remix tracks and trade them online. This is a must for any self-respecting PS2 owner who fancies him or herself a music fan.

—KRISTIAN

**E** **8.5**



## CAPCOM VS. SNK 2

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 7

We all know Capcom and SNK's fighters get refreshed all over the place, yet we still buy them. Why? The gameplay is always spot-on, and each one gets a glossy new finish. Capcom vs. SNK 2 is no exception. Fighting fans will jump right in with no problem. I love the color edit and backgrounds, and the character list can't be beat. It's the same old formula (with lots of broken English), but I'm not quite tired of it.

—JUSTIN

**E** **7.75**

## NCAA FINAL FOUR 2002

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** 989 SPORTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13



I wanted to objectively weigh Final Four's positives and negatives. Then my stats screwed me. Without warning, none of the career numbers matched. I should've known better, since this is a 989 game. Other problems are more forgivable, like backward control, bad passing, and easy difficulty. I liked the shot control and extras like cheerleaders and highlights. Still, Final Four gets a nonstop trip to Dumpsville. —JUSTIN

**E** **5**



PLAYSTATION 2

# SPLASHDOWN

SLAP MY CHEEKS AND RIDE THE WAVES

Living in Key West, Florida a few years back, I tried making ends meet by working part-time cleaning water-runners. Aside from learning that a cup with four parts water, one part gasoline can eat through a Dixie cup, I gained an appreciation for watercraft. Seeing Splashdown at E3 this spring, I was enthralled by its great physics and realistic water-effects. I hate to say I told you so, but this game lived up to its potential.

A waverunner handles differently than any other vehicle you may race in a video game, due to the water beneath your craft. It requires a constant weight shifting, and the need to anticipate your moves, steering beforehand, then nailing the accelerator. Splashdown replicates all these things with pinpoint accuracy.

Many of the courses share this flair for realism, too. Twenty locations is loads more than Wave Race's handful of tracks. Some let you out loose by being wild and fantasy-based, while still adhering to the laws of physics. Tricks and shortcuts come into play, and there's air aplenty. It all looks wonderful, too, proving that PlayStation 2 does have a powerful motor under the hood. GameCube's Wave Race will receive the hype this holiday season, but Splashdown's sexy curves and what it can do with them are just more appealing to me. —JUSTIN

THE BOTTOM LINE  
**E** **9**

- **Concept:** Show how Earth being covered with 75% water is a very good thing.
- **Graphics:** Stunning water effects aren't as particle-heavy as Wave Race, but neither is real life.
- **Sound:** I liked the soundtrack until I heard a song by Smashmouth.
- **Playability:** The superior physics come tremendously close to feeling identical to riding a Sea Doo.
- **Entertainment:** The perfect watersport alternative for those of us in land-locked locations.
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High.

## SECOND OPINION

Awesome tracks, varying difficulties, fantastic graphics, a tight soundtrack, and spot-on game controls are just a couple of the highlights. Not as many waves as Wave Race, but lots of speed that reminds me of Jet Moto. Thumbs up!

ANDY — 8.75

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMES  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** RAINBOW STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13



THE BOTTOM LINE



9.5

GAMECUBE

# STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER

A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH

"...Rogue Leader is the ultimate Star Wars experience."

**R**ogue Leader best represents what the GameCube hardware is capable of. Whether it be the daunting size of a Star Destroyer that houses over 300,000 polygons within its body, or incalculable amounts of fighters crammed onscreen, you can feel the power being pumped through this tiny machine. Even after playing thousands of games in my tenure at Game Informer, I'm completely dumbfounded by the level of detail that went into this project. The texturing on the vehicles – which accurately maps laser reflections and light sourcing – is identical to that in the films. This level of detailing is accurately used on all fronts. When an X-Wing flies by, you can see an animated pilot in the cockpit, and a fully functional R2 unit busily slaving away.

As Justin so clearly pointed out, "It looks better than it does in the movies." This is a blasphemous statement for George Lucas fanboys, yet one that speaks volumes. I wouldn't say that the technology in video games has surpassed the special effects used in feature films, but it is comparable.

In terms of gameplay, Rogue Leader is designed with simplicity in mind, as was the case with its precursor, Rogue Squadron. Everyone can suit up and pilot an A-Wing – that's a given. However, complexity is delivered through the

missions, asking that players accomplish feats that can best be described as impossible. Can a B-Wing single handedly disable a Star Destroyer? Apparently, yes. Almost every significant battle from the classic trilogy is re-created flawlessly. Hundreds of ground troops swarm the terrain in the Battle of Hoth, and TIE Fighters feverishly try to knock you out of the trench in the Death Star run.

Always one to improve upon its previous work, Rogue Leader's developer, Factor 5, has enhanced every aspect of the game. In Rogue Squadron, enemy fighters were basically sitting ducks, doing little to evade your attacks. This time around, they'll do whatever is necessary to turn the tables. Since the screen is constantly clouded with laser fire, dozens of vehicles, and crazy environmental effects, a targeting computer has been implemented. You'll also have the ability to give orders to your wingmen and ground troops – hopefully easing the weight on your shoulders.

Just to give you an example of how engrossing this game is, I actually found myself bouncing in my chair like I was a real-life X-Wing pilot. I never thought I'd see a game accurately deliver the essence of the films, yet here it is. Simply said, Rogue Leader is the ultimate Star Wars experience. – **REINER**

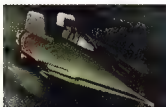
■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** FACTOR 5/LUCASARTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 18



For the Y-Wing hunting runs, the perspective shifts to an overhead view.



The cockpits are re-created perfectly. You can even move your head to look out different windows.



You can switch to other ships mid-mission.



The training level is almost like a scavenger hunt.



All of the classic battles, including Hoth, are here.

■ **Concept:**

Plot vesse's from the classic Star Wars trilogy in 11 missions based on popular segments from the films.

■ **Graphics:**

Unparalleled realism is achieved in the vehicle designs and terrain mapping.

■ **Sound:**

Entirely authentic.

■ **Playability:**

The complex mission objectives and interaction with your wingmen are beautifully integrated within the simple control scheme.

■ **Entertainment:**

Finally, a game that does justice to Star Wars' legendary battles.

■ **Replay Value:**

Moderately High

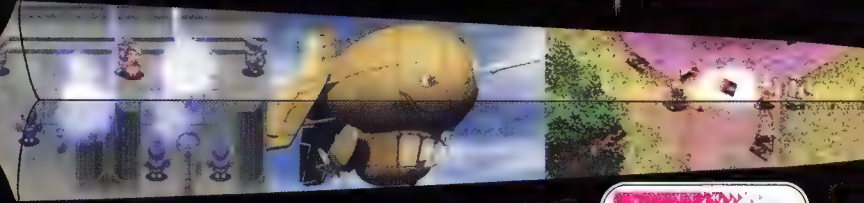
SECOND OPINION

PlayStation 2's Starfighter was fine, but it didn't remind me of why I love Star Wars like Rogue Leader. It's not just that I got to fly the classic ships, or even that some of the missions are from the movies – it's Factor 5's detailed perfection. For example, TIEs will now around in packs until their number is depleted. The remaining few will then break off in a desperate attempt to save their lives. You can cover your own butt with d-pad instructions to your wingmen or through the on-screen-controlled first-person view. You can even turn on an enemy cam that pulls back to show any fighters that are on your six. Leader's graphics are equally up to the task of portraying these epic battles. I just about lost it when I noticed that TIEs would not only self-shadow, but also contain reflections cast from your glancing laser fire and those two red taillights that they have in back. Now, "out the chatter Red Two" and go buy it.

KATO - 9

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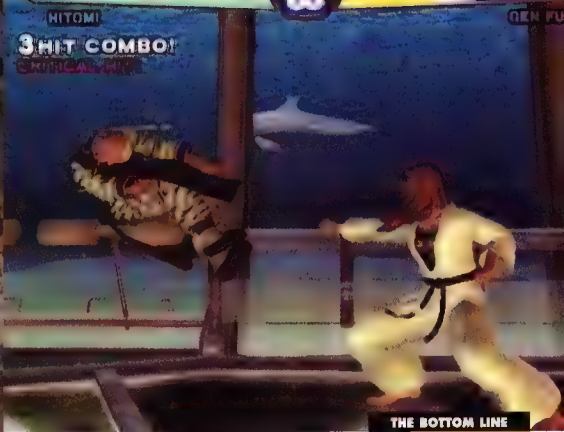


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"[DOA3] delivers flawless fighting in its purest form, while at the same time looking better than you could imagine possible..."

XBOX

# DEAD OR ALIVE 3

## DEAD AND GONE TO FIGHTING GAME HEAVEN

Fighting games have unjustly become the black sheep genre in video games. Copycats and pretenders, as well as pseudo sequels, served to make gamers forget the truly Zen experience of mastering your onscreen alter ego while physically abusing anyone who dares cross you. Dead or Alive 3 is the wake up call that will rouse you from your drowsy, ignorant stupor. It delivers flawless fighting in its purest form, while at the same time looking better than you could imagine possible on a console.

The genius of DOA 3 is how intuitive and deep the gameplay is. Grab a controller and mash the buttons, and you'll be satisfied. Take your time to perfect the numerous counters and throws, learn to exploit the environments, and you will become a hopeless addict. After hours with the same character, I was still finding more moves. You only need to consult the command list to see just how many attacks there are. Throw careless punches, and the computer will pitch you like a softball. This engine is superior to Tekken, Virtua Fighter, or any of the other hand-to-hand brawlers out there.

Equally impressive are Dead or Alive 3's graphics. I don't know if it's because of the power of Xbox, or the talents of Team Ninja, but nothing comes close to looking this good.

Real-time graphics with CG quality have now become a reality. Every inch of the characters' bodies ripple and tense with each movement. The animation is smoother than Matt Macking on hoochies at the club. Moves flow together seamlessly, and the collision is about as close as you can get. I still can't believe how detailed the environments look. Snow gives way under footsteps, and landing on the ground in the forest kicks up colored leaves.

Having this game on Xbox brings up a very interesting twist. This is one of the first console titles you have to install in order to play. It takes up a large chunk of your hard drive space, but there is one benefit. Dead or Alive 3 has next to no load time at any point in the game. Finish one fight, and the next stage appears in the blink of an eye. Yes sir, I like it.

With all the graphical and gameplay musculature, there are a few aspects of DOA 3 that are a little thin. As is tradition with the series, there isn't much in the way of storylines for the characters. End movies, while entertaining, do little to build a character's personality. Also lacking is any type of world mode or missions. These are what gave Soul Caliber and Street Fighter Alpha 3 so much replay value. I'm not going to complain much, though, because Dead or Alive 3 is a masterpiece in both form and function. —JUSTIN



Hyabusa huddles with Ayane for warmth.



Omega DOA3's boss, Isoc, is one tough customer.

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ PUBLISHER TECMO ■ DEVELOPER TEAM NINJA ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 15



Bass forcefully pins Lei Fang against a tree trunk.



With no elevator, Leon helps Jann Lee exit the building.

THE BOTTOM LINE



9.25

- Concept:**  
Let Xbox strut its stuff in a masterful fighting sequel
- Graphics:**  
DOA3 is the measuring stick of how far graphic technology has come, with beautiful characters, realistic animation, and immersive environments
- Sound:**  
Licensing Aerosmith was unnecessary. The sound effects are adequate accompaniment
- Playability:**  
Immeasurable depth with all the counters and tag throws
- Entertainment:**  
Straight up fighting doesn't get any better than this
- Replay Value:**  
Moderately High

### SECOND OPINION

Fighting games aren't as popular as they once were, but if there ever was a reason for them to reclaim their former glory, Dead or Alive 3 is it. Quite simply the most amazing looking console game to date, Dead or Alive 3 screams off your screen and punishes your fingers with lightning-quick action. The story mode is a tad short, but the spectacular ending movies make it worth beating with every character. Plus, the Tag Team mode can just be played until your arms ache. With practically no loading, and nice big fighting environments overflowing with great lighting and particle effects, there is little doubt that Dead or Alive 3 is a fighting game lover's dream come true. If you buy an Xbox, and liked fighting games at some point in your life, if even for a moment, Dead or Alive 3 is a must.

ANDY — 9.5

# CHECK IT! IT'S THE AMPED GUIDE TO FREESTYLE!



**THE RODEO FLIP** Also known as the "Don't Try This At Home." The nice part of this trick is that once you're insane enough to try it, you're probably ready for a magazine cover.



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KEY:  
F FREESTYLE AREA  
D DOWNHILL AREA

A BASIC GUIDE TO THE MOUNTAIN



## POCKET PHRASE TRANSLATOR

ENGLISH:  
"THAT WAS A NICE TRICK."

FREESTYLE:  
"DAG!"

ENGLISH:  
"I LIKE YOUR PANTS."

FREESTYLE:  
"DAG."

ENGLISH:  
"I THINK I'VE FRACTURED MY PELVIS."

FREESTYLE:  
"DAG."



MILD LYRICS

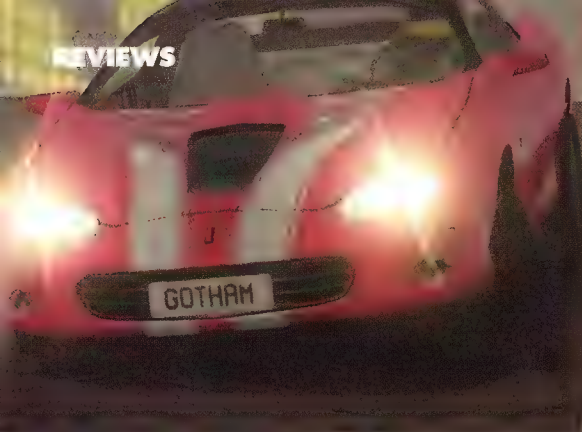


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JUST KIDDING

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XBOX

# PROJECT GOTHAM RACING

## NO BATS ALLOWED

"...it's hard to miss the stunning realism incorporated into each segment of every course."

Racing games are a tricky little segment of the gaming marketplace. Some releases emphasize more role-playing elements, while others focus on simply beating the guy in first place. It seems some sacrifice graphics for performance or visa versa, and each release grasps at some type of realism—whether that is intricately modeled sci-fi vehicles or a nuts-and-bolts re-creation of dream machine automobiles. I find the efforts toward creating a realistic racer (using actual cars) with a taste of career building to be the most entertaining. Luckily for me, Project Gotham is striving to be exactly that.

Taking cues from its successful Dreamcast title, *Metropolis Street Racer*, Bizarre is giving us another game where your driving will do the talking. By showing off your driving skills you will be rewarded with points called Kudos. As you can imagine, you'll still have to win your races and beat certain times to advance through the game, but Kudos will help you unlock different items, and in some instances you'll find earning them as a track objective all on its own.

While tearing around the tracks it's hard to miss the stunning realism incorporated into each segment of every course. As you may or may not know (you do read our previews, don't you?) the team over at Bizarre meticulously

went over each of the four host cities (Tokyo, London, San Francisco, and New York City) and reconstructed them as accurately as possible. What this all boils down to is fantastic racing environments with vehicles that are eerily similar to their real-world counterparts. You've got to love that.

You may be thinking to yourself that this sounds a lot like *Gran Turismo*. Well, it's in the same vein as GT, but Project Gotham seems to be geared more towards an audience with a slightly shorter attention span. I got the distinct impression during my time with this game that there was an arcade-like slant to how you progressed through different levels and unlocked items. That's not necessarily a bad thing, just something to keep in mind if you're looking for this game to rival GT 3 in terms of depth. I personally didn't like it as much, but ultimately the game's graphics and addictive scoring design more than make up for it.

The Xbox has once again shown that it can indeed deliver a great game that looks fantastic, which leaves me running out of reasons not to go out and snatch one up myself. With games like this in its arsenal, I would be surprised if the Xbox didn't hit the ground running. —KRISTIAN

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING ■ PUBLISHER MICROSOFT ■ DEVELOPER BIZARRE CREATIONS ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 15



THE BOTTOM LINE



8.5

- **Concept:**  
It's a razor sharp racer that revolves around Kudo points awarded for tricky driving
- **Graphics:**  
I've rarely seen vehicles so accurately portrayed
- **Sound:**  
A nice soundtrack adds to the vrooming sounds
- **Playability:**  
The controls are easy enough to pick up, but the gameplay is decidedly hard to master
- **Entertainment:**  
Let there be no mistake, this game has the potential to suck you in for days at a time
- **Replay Value:**  
High

SECOND OPINION

This is a shrewd move on the part of Microsoft. Give gamers a title that immediately plays to their need for a racer with depth, but won't be unfathomable to a first-time player. Gobbling up Kudos by catching air, powersliding, and other driving feats is highly addictive. Although they don't buy you engines or parts for your rides, they can be bartered each race. As you progress, the cars unlocked are helpful as well as being rewards. The Booster may be flashy, but in fact, the MINI Cooper S might be smarter on a particular course. Visually, Gotham is a sight to behold. Cars reflect light like crazy, and they even take damage such as losing their headlights. There's nothing like racing through Times Square with only the billboards' neon to guide you. Finally, creating your own soundtrack from the hard drive is mad fun. Gotham may seem like just an endless series of challenges, but you'd be a fool not to step up to this one.

KATO — 8



THE BOTTOM LINE



7

XBOX

## ODDORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSSEE

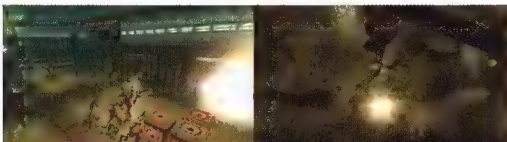
MUNCH THIS!

**T**here are a lot of things I admire about Oddworld Inhabitants. Unlike so many developers, Oddworld really concentrates on the story and character development. You don't just play an Oddworld game; you feel it.

Unfortunately, its passion for creating unique experiences gets out of hand and the games become a monster all their own. The Gamespeak and platforming elements that were so fun in 1997 are now tedious and require you to be an obsessive compulsive who must collect all the Spooce and Fuzzles, or complete whatever strange errand Oddworld has you on at the moment. I understand the need for platforming games to make you collect items - Mario has done it for years - but Munch's Oddysee takes it to a painful new level and ultimately fails to entertain.

Couple the endless collecting with having to master complex controls and commands for the two main characters, and the few other things you take command of along the way, and Munch's really backs the player into a corner. Be hardcore, or don't even attempt to play.

For a small crowd out there, Munch's will be considered a masterpiece, and I can see why. The game is beautiful to look at and the characters are great. Unfortunately, I am not a part of that crowd and I don't think many people are. - **ANDY**



Sometimes the game plays like a shooter and you get to get in the mix and blast away at the enemy through various radio controlled devices

During parts of your adventure you take control of a crane to drop bombs or pick up items



Don't get close to the recycling bay or you're meat

Complete puzzles and get a panoramic view of the gorgeous environments

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** ODDWORLD INHABITANTS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15

### SECOND OPINION

Even after making the transition to the third dimension, the Oddworld universe hasn't changed in the slightest. The alterations that are in place, like having to collect Spooce orbs, are inconsequential, adding only a degree of variation to the original template. As expected, most of your time is spent solving puzzles through teamwork. With more expansive environments, the challenges are more diverse and complex, but the majority of play still boils down to talking to your fellow man, and convincing them to pull a switch for you. My favorite aspect from the original series, the platforming, has been butchered and is no longer demanding of precise gaming skills. Thankfully, the puzzles remain quite clever, pushing your patience to the limit. In many ways, this is the same Oddworld all over again, but at the same time, it's taken a turn for the worse. I expected so much more.

REINER - 7

## REVIEWS



XBOX

## CEL DAMAGE

SOMEONE SPIKE THE PUNCH BOWL

**I**'m all about smashing stuff up and knocking people into next week, but I'm also a sophisticated criminal-type. Like other super villains, I like to at least have a motivation for my mayhem. Cel Damage, while undeniably great looking (especially for its quick and constant bombardments of color), gave me little reason to willingly partake in its destruction. The game is organized in three events: Smack Attack (hit as many people as possible before time runs out), Gate Relay, and Flag Rally. The problem here is that I wasn't interested in the latter two events' rules, and yet Smack Attack was too simple to really demand an intelligent strategy. Although each area has its own weapons available, such as ice rays, chainsaws, portable black holes, and grenades, you can only hold one at a time. Sometimes, what weapon you have doesn't even matter, because only in Cel Damage does a guy with an axe beat out a galling gun. The one thing I did like was the radar system, which represented other players through moving icons on the perimeter of the screen.

Cel Damage is a chance to get younger kids interested in the new console, but it's not the solution. For that, I suggest you turn to page 108 and check out Fuzion Frenzy. - **KATO**

THE BOTTOM LINE



5

- **Concept:** A party-game capcophony of color, explosions, and sound
- **Graphics:** The constant action makes for a gorgeous cel-shading experience.
- **Sound:** Players are equipped with a horn and taunts for their amusement
- **Playability:** No secrets here, although this game isn't for pacifists
- **Entertainment:** May not bring the desired party effect for your next soiree
- **Replay Value:** Low

### SECOND OPINION

This game gave me cancer! No, scurvy! Actually, it didn't affect me at all. I'm just trying to keep you from playing this atrociously designed vehicular combat title. The cel-shaded animation is breathtaking, and the vehicle physics are impressive, but the gameplay is problematic and confusing. I like the idea of one-hit kills, but it doesn't work in a fast-paced game like this.

REINER - 5.5

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** PSEUDO INTERACTIVE ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15

# 200 Miles Per Hour. 1000 Decisions Per Second. >>



>> Catching air in SF. Looks good, earns style points and offers tasty view of the bay. But you lose lap time and



>> Backing it into a corner. It earns mad style points, but increases risks. A.K.A. crashing. And crashing equals



>> Welcome to NYC. Circuit #178. Virgin run and you're off pace. You can learn the line. Or just go for style points.



[microsoft.com/games/projectgotham](http://microsoft.com/games/projectgotham)

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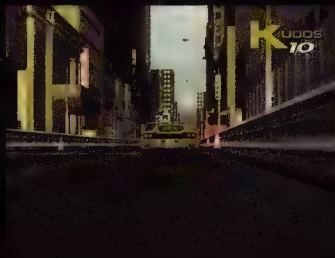




possibly your bet: What do you do? That's your decision, baby.



demis: Demis equal less kudosis. Less kudosis equals loser. Better think fast, chief!



and live to race another day. You need more, can only choose one. Again, your call, tough guy.

With over 25 cars, 4 cities and 200+ circuits,  
what will you do? It all depends:

What's driving you?

**PROJECT GOTHAM**  
RACING

XBOX

## REVIEWS



XBOX

# AMPED: FREESTYLE SNOWBOARDING

NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

One thing is for sure—Amped is not your average snowboarding title. The game's Career mode is a hoot, filled with tons of unlockable clothing, boards, and odd prizes like free hot dogs. Also, there are a number of photographers' hiding throughout the runs that will snap pictures of you that you can save in your scrapbook. These prizes are awarded to you in bizarre cutscenes that display primitive Monty Python-style animation, and a severely demented sense of humor.

There was obviously a lot of effort put into this game on the graphical side as well, as it features beautiful texturing and snow effects, huge courses, and other boards that sometimes become a hindrance to your progress. All this is accomplished with absolutely no pop-up or other visual miscues.

It's too bad that all these extras outshine the game's dull and problematic gameplay. While Amped moves fast, the physics are unrealistic and severely deficient. Coming off a jump, you will rocket into the air, as if not bound by the laws of gravity. You can tilt your player in any direction, and he will continue to fly sideways or upside down until you hit the ground. This flaw makes pulling off speedy trick combos a chore, and ultimately ruined the experience for me. —MATT



**Concept:** A realistic snowboarding game with huge mountains, a lengthy Career mode, and a weird sense of humor.

**Graphics:** The runs are among the largest I've seen, and the texture of the snow is breathtaking.

**Sound:** The enormous soundtrack features over 150 independent bands.

**Playability:** The trick system is nice, but the physics are just plain awkward.

**Entertainment:** Amped brings some unique ideas to the table, it's too bad the gameplay wasn't better.

**Replay Value:** Moderately High

### SECOND OPINION

Through stinky and unresponsive controls, Amped's gameplay can best be described as a frozen turd. I do give credence to the creative design and incredible soundtrack, but as a whole, it just doesn't stack up against SSX or Shaun Palmer.

REINER - 6.5

■ STYLE 1 OR 2 PLAYER SPORTS ■ PUBLISHER MICROSOFT ■ DEVELOPER MICROSOFT ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 13



XBOX

# NFL FEVER 2002

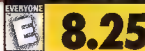
DEEP THREAT IN THE SLOT

If NFL Fever wasn't a good game, you could hardly blame it. It's Fever's first year on a console, and while I wouldn't call it the LaDainian Tomlinson of football games, this title has worked hard to overcome the odds and take on the competition.

It may sound outrageous to be dazzled by frontend features, but with Training Camp, the Trophy Case, a fantasy tourney, and more, this title leaves few stones unturned. Before the snap, I was able to assign a bevy of hot routes to receivers—including posts, slants, and fades not found in Madden. I could also use a pullout camera on defense to see both the offenses' formation and what each of my guys was going to do for that play. After the ball was snapped, the game was just as fun to control. Blocks are set up well for the running game, allowing you to get a good look at your holes. Fever tends to lean towards the offense, although blitzes can be fast and disruptive. Your secondary will get a few cheap picks (with few interference calls) making this the least fluid aspect of Fever. Similar AI problems exist in the sometimes-stiff offensive line and the trouble-diplomacy can have shedding blockers.

I think Xbox owners should buy this one on launch day and feel good that they got a game solid enough to stand on its own two feet. You don't have to look forward to next year, but if you do, this franchise is only going to get better. —KATO

THE BOTTOM LINE



**Concept:** Does Fever get homefield advantage over Madden on the Xbox?

**Graphics:** Details abound, from the players' jerseys to stumbling animators to the stadiums' moving cameramen and luxury boxes.

**Sound:** The grunts in the trenches sound like they come from a live mic on the field.

**Playability:** Complex enough but not confusing, even though it has its frustrations.

**Entertainment:** More than an obligatory football title, this is a great treat for the franchise.

**Replay Value:** Moderately High

### SECOND OPINION

I don't usually like starting off on a negative note in what will ultimately be a positive review, but the commentary in Fever is some of the worst I've ever heard. It's so choppy and generic I eventually just turned it off completely. Aside from that, this is a decent football game with some interesting features. Dynasty mode adds a heaping helping of replay to the mix, and all of the audible options make sure that the defense never sees the same thing twice. Although Fever lacks Madden's realistic player models, it makes do with eye-catching stadium effects and nice animations. The running game is easy to catch on to, but the Xbox controller seems to pull down the overall efficiency of controlling both your offense and defense. All in all, this is a nice little football offering that will definitely provide many hours of entertainment, but I wouldn't get this without at least trying Madden first.

KRISTIAN - 8



Blitzing is just about the one sure way of getting to a runner.

Picks are just as prevalent as footprints on a snowy field.

Unlockable teams, field degradation, and Xbox gloves are all part of the package.

© 2001 Player IFC Games Team

Retiring jerseys is just one part of Fever's deep franchise features.

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS ■ PUBLISHER MICROSOFT ■ DEVELOPER MICROSOFT ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 15



XBOX

# THE SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE

WRITE YOUR OWN DAMN SIMPSONS REFERENCE!

If you're a hardcore Simpson devotee – the type that has Radioactive Man tattooed on your rump – it's safe to say that you're going to have to pick this baby up. Fortunately for us more casual fans, *Road Rage* is actually a solid game in its own right, with gameplay that continues to entertain long after the novelty of driving around Springfield has worn off.

As games go, *Road Rage* is as derivative as it gets. The Crazy Taxi formula has been copied to the letter, although the cel-shaded environments do give the game a uniquely Simpsons look. However, a few of the more subtle control techniques that made Crazy Taxi such a sublime experience, like Crazy Dash and Crazy Drift, are missing from the equation. Still, the gameplay is definitely solid, and the polygonal Springfield environment is large enough to keep you exploring for days, earning cash to unlock new characters and vehicles.

The one aspect of *Road Rage* that really sticks out is the sound. There are dozens of unique soundbites in the game, with each character spouting off lines from the show as well as some all-new quips. The second you hear Ralph exclaim, "A leprechaun tells me to burn things," you'll know that this is a Simpsons game for the ages.

I could mark off for lack of originality, but after suffering through Simpsons Wrestling I'll gladly settle for a competent refresh. – **MATT**



Features nifty real-time cutscenes that look way better than the episode when Homer went into virtual reality. Every area is littered with references to the show. Here's the Lord Lad Donut shop.

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** EA/FOX INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** RADICAL ENTERTAINMENT ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 14

THE BOTTOM LINE



8

■ **Concept:**

Attempt to blatantly copy Crazy Taxi using characters and vehicles from the Simpsons universe

■ **Graphics:**

Radical utilizes cel shading to accurately mimic the look of the show

■ **Sound:**

Amazing. Simpson fanatics will be pleased with the plethora of voice-overs and dialogue

■ **Playability:**

Luckily, they remembered to copy Crazy Taxi's excellent gameplay as well

■ **Entertainment:**

I wanted to hate this, but it's more fun than a trampoline, darn it!

■ **Replay Value:**

High

## SECOND OPINION

As much as *Road Rage* is an out and out Crazy Taxi wannabe, I can't help but love the Simpsons-related antics, its ambience is this game's best point, and every fan of the show will eat it up. Milhouse, Bumblebee Man, and Otto are all here, and each character has a wealth of phrases both new and lifted from the cartoon. The locations you'll take them to are also familiar, from obvious spots like Moe's and Springfield Elementary, to obscure locales like the Frying Dutchman and Noleland Arcade. Controls are a tad primitive compared to Taxi, but the skid's still useful. Loading's a pain, even on abbreviated midgame missions. If you worship the show, *Road Rage* is a worthwhile trip. If you couldn't care less about the Springfield residents, this game is still more fun than hanging under a car driving through a cactus patch, a la Sideshow Bob.

JUSTIN – 8



XBOX

# DARK SUMMIT

THQ'S TWIN PEAKS



7

■ **Concept:**

Introduce unique challenge modes and a plot into the tried-and-true snowboarding genre

■ **Graphics:**

The course, character models, and snow effects are gorgeous, rivaling anything SSX has to offer

■ **Sound:**

I really think this whole "techno" thing is really starting to catch on with the kids

■ **Playability:**

The physics are floaty, and the special combo system is a bit off

■ **Entertainment:**

Looks great and has some neat ideas, but somehow feels like a letdown

■ **Replay Value:**

Moderately High

## SECOND OPINION

You can see what Radical Entertainment was trying to achieve with *Dark Summit*. However, it's also painfully apparent why this project didn't come together. Floaty physics, fruity storylines, and frustrating load times bog this title down, leaving an alright game where a great one could have stood.

JAY – 7

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** THQ  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** RADICAL ENTERTAINMENT  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15



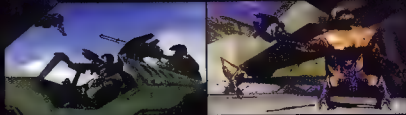
**MATURE**  
**M**  
CONTENT RATED BY  
ESRB

**VIOLENCE  
BLOOD AND GORE**



**ONLY ON  
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## REVIEWS



XBOX

# NASCAR THUNDER 2002

## DAZE OF THUNDER

For those who don't drive Monte Carlo's at almost 200 mph or don't go to the races, enjoying NASCAR from the couch is as close to the fun as you're gonna get.

Putting a controller in your hand and NASCAR Thunder in da box is just another way of doing it.

Gran Turismo 3 is all about the cars and tracks. Who's to say Thunder isn't? Use its Race Weekend to the fullest. Take hot laps to get a feel for Bristol's tight track and how much gas you'll burn. Change your tire pressure to increase your handling and practice more to qualify better. Knowing your car and the tracks—that's the challenge of NASCAR Thunder. Career mode adds further strategy through the sponsors you choose. Maxwell might want you to finish in the top 25 over three races for a chunk of change, but perhaps accepting its offer is a bad idea because you don't like The Glen.

NASCAR is boring? Well watch this: Thunder gives plenty of sparks, smoke, real-time lightning, and loose stuff to make things interesting. Xbox's ability to keep persistent effects like burning cars and tire skids as extras to the already textured tracks. Pay attention to the marks piling up on turn three—they're telling you something. For my part, I say that everyone into racing should check this game out. You'll be able to find a nice ass-groove on the couch and a fast one out on the track. —KATO

THE BOTTOM LINE



■ **Concept:**

Tiburon takes EA's NASCAR wheel and steering.

■ **Graphics:**

Not having full rearview mirrors, but the sparks, smoke, and tire skids are impressive.

■ **Sound:**

Using Skynyrd's Sweet Home Alabama is awesome, but it's very, very loud.

■ **Playability:**

Controls are simple, but you'll need them all, including your brake.

■ **Interactions:**

Joe and Jane gamers should pay attention—this has more strategy than most average races.

■ **Replay Value:**

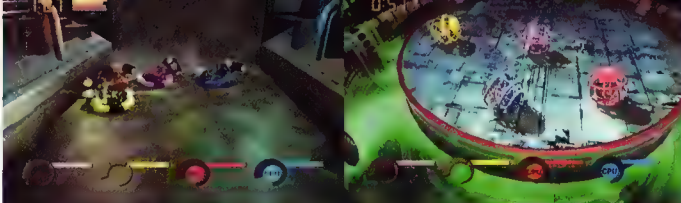
Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

You'd think that racing a car in an oval time after time would get dull, but not so with this game. Thunder absolutely screams on the Xbox with very short loading times and beautifully rendered environments. That coupled with a large variety of modes and customizable features make this title an absolute necessity for any proud Xbox owner.

KRISTIAN — 9.25

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS ■ **DEVELOPER** TIBURON ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 6



XBOX

# FUSION FRENZY

## MICROSOFT PARTY

In this newest version of Mario Party...or, I mean Crash Bash...no, Sonic Shuffle...wait, wait, what game is this again? Oh yes, Fusion Frenzy. Well, in this latest addition to the inexplicable party game genre, up to four players get to go at it in over 45 minigames guaranteed to turn friends into bitter rivals.

There are two things I like about Fusion Frenzy—it doesn't have a console mascot attached to it (but what could it have been this early in Xbox's life, Munch's Mayhem?), and it forgoes any board game elements. Then again, there are plenty of things I don't care for as well. Poor graphics, many of the games sharing a similar play style, and having to repeat the same mediocre minigame at the end of each round are just a few examples of said disliked features.

Fuzion Frenzy is alright, but not to the tune of \$50. If you like this type of game and can get it cheap, though, you'll find it a fair way to pass the time with your buds. —JAY

SECOND OPINION

Fuzion Frenzy is mindless fun. In a genre laden with excrement like Mario Party and Sonic Shuffle, I fancy FF to be tops of the minigame-fests — though that isn't saying much.

JUSTIN — 6.5

THE BOTTOM LINE



■ **Concept:**

Microsoft joins the party game fray right out of the starting gates.

■ **Graphics:**

Not horrible, but not exactly great either when stacked up to other Xbox games.

■ **Sound:**

The game would have been better off without the snide remarks from the characters.

■ **Playability:**

The controls are as simple as can be, and are varied from event to event.

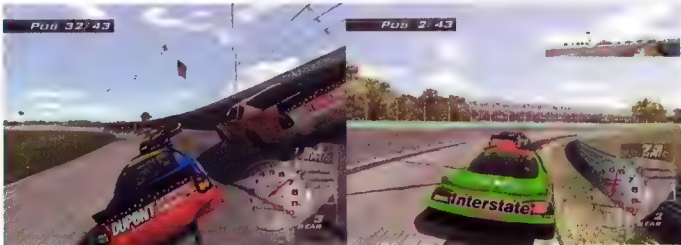
■ **Entertainment:**

Something that will keep you and some friends entertained for a night or two.

■ **Replay Value:**

Moderate

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** BLITZ GAMES ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 14



XBOX

# NASCAR HEAT

## THE PURIST

EA's new NASCAR Thunder 2002 has plenty of flash and a nice Career and Car Create mode, where you can come to being a real beer guzzling, butt-crack showing NASCAR fan, Heat can't be beat.

The Career mode is great, but easily my favorite part of NASCAR Heat is the Beat the Heat mode, where you are faced with various racing scenarios that are challenging to complete and also teach about the intricacies of the sport. Compared to its PS2 counterpart, it's easy to see that the Xbox version is much sharper and smoother, but when it came to play, I will have to give the nod to the PS2 version. The Xbox version, for reasons I just couldn't define, is much more difficult and really requires you to push your skills to the limit. However, either version is a great way to bring the NASCAR experience home.

For some, NASCAR Heat's pulse pounding reality will be just what they are looking for. For the less inclined, Thunder's flash may be the ticket. For me the choice is easy, I'll be hanging with the beer guzzlers playing Heat. —ANDY

SECOND OPINION

I prefer EA's Thunder—but not by much. Beat the Heat is awesome, the cockpit is cool, and Heat has more car tweaks and replay options. Still, Thunder's more in-depth Career mode means that fans will find both games easy to enjoy.

KATO — 8

THE BOTTOM LINE



■ **Concept:**

All the thrills of NASCAR without risking your life or giving up your favorite chair.

■ **Graphics:**

Amazingly detailed tracks, and a smooth 60 frames per second makes this one easy to look at.

■ **Sound:**

Nothing to see here, move along.

■ **Playability:**

The Career and Stability Help options make the game as hard or as easy as you like.

■ **Entertainment:**

NASCAR's faithful will appreciate its attention to detail.

■ **Replay Value:**

High

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING (UP TO 32 VIA LAN) ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAVES ■ **DEVELOPER** MONSTER GAMES, INC. ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15

## AIRFORCE DELTA STORM

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** KONAMI  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15



After enjoying the thrills offered by both Top Gun and Ace Combat 04 for PS2, I couldn't wait to see what kind of mach 1 excitement the Xbox could offer. It didn't take long for disappointment to set in.

Airforce Delta Storm not only plays like the similarly named game Konami launched with Dreamcast, it looks like it as well. This is currently your only air combat choice on Xbox, but I would think something better will soon be along. — **JAY**

**6.5**

## NHL 2002

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 11



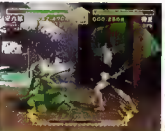
For hardcore hockey fans, the Xbox version features several interesting alterations over the PlayStation 2 version. The rosters are more current, and the framerate is incredibly smooth. EA has

taken the liberty to enhance the graphics to include both reflections and shadows. The only downfall is that the players don't look as sharp. They all have a fuzzy tint to them. — **REINER**

**9.25**

## KABUKI WARRIORS

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER FIGHTING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** CRAVE  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 23



Quite frankly, this game is a joke. The fighters you face early on are so easy to beat, I literally won a match just bashing the controller against my ass. I wish I was joking, but the score is seriously Kabuki

Warriors zero, my ass one. Some of the warriors are cool to look at with all their elaborate garb and authentic dance, but the fighting is pathetic.

— **ANDY**

**0.5**

## TEST DRIVE OFF ROAD WIDE OPEN

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAAMES  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15



Basically, Wide Open is a direct port of the PS2 version of the same name, and as such I will give it the same score. The game is certainly competent, and a solid member of the 4x4 sub-

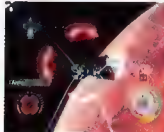
racing genre, but being average isn't what anyone aspires to be. If you absolutely must have some off road action on your Xbox, it's either this or 4x4 Evolution, and I probably wouldn't choose either.

— **ANDY**

**6.5**

## STAR WARS STARFIGHTER: SPECIAL EDITION

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SHOOTER  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 19



I guess I'm the Starfighter conscientious objector in the office. Even though this edition has extra bonus missions, more multiplayer options, and looks a little better, I had a hard time getting into

that whole saving Naboo trip again. The Xbox's controller was a mixed bag of good and bad (the positioning of the analog sticks being a bonus) and die hards will delight in the new scenarios' extra difficulty. Star Wars Starfighter: Still solid, but it's no Rogue Leader. — **KATO**

**8**



## DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2

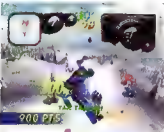
■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15

It's tough to distinguish between this and the PlayStation 2 version I reviewed, and that's...okay. Mirra 2 is a sweet game, no matter which controller you're holding in your hands. Of course, I'd rather be holding the Dual Shock 2 than the hamburger-like Xbox controller, but this version's lack of pop-up evens things out. It's good enough; it's smart enough; and — doggone it — freestyle fans will like it. — **JUSTIN**

**9**

## ARCTIC THUNDER

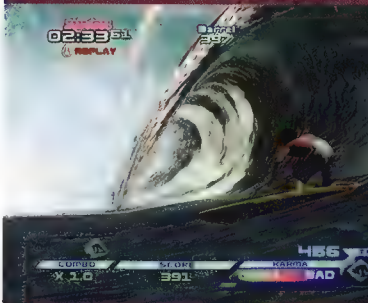
■ **STYLE** 1 OR 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** MIDWAY SPORTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 16



Same crap, different console. This Arctic Thunder looks a touch better than the PS2 version, but so what? You'd have to look past the blinding power-ups, simplistic gameplay, and

inconsistent return placement to notice. Being able to be an ape on a snowmobile is this game's best feature. — **JAY**

**5**



## XBOX TRANSWORLD SURF SURF SUCKARAGUA!

**T**ransworld Surf follows in the tradition of such recent surfing titles as Surf Riders and Surfing H30 — a tradition of totally sucking. Those that engage in real-life surfing claim that it is the most spiritual of all sports, so maybe that's why no video game developer is enlightened enough to

produce a video version on wave riding that's fun or interesting. I don't know. What I do know is that Transworld Surf doesn't come close to delivering a satisfying gaming experience. The main flaw in the game, as with most surf games, is that pulling off tricks is frustrating at first, and boring and simplistic once you get the hang of it. Part of this stems from the decision of Angel to use the analog stick for character control instead of the digital pad. The analog just doesn't lend itself well to combos — it never has; never will. But I think the greater problem lies in the premise of the game. A large part of the appeal of other extreme sports titles, especially skateboarding and snowboarding games, is in the exploration of levels; finding grinds and hidden routes. In surfing, it's just wave after wave of the same thing. This isn't really the fault of the developers, just a fact of life. — **MATT**

### THE BOTTOM LINE

**TEEN**  
**5.5**

■ **Concept:** Angel Studios attempts the impossible — making a surfing game that's fun to play.

■ **Graphics:** The reflective water effects are nice from afar, but things get ugly up close.

■ **Sound:** Good features underground noises like Nebuta, Love & Laughter, and Cali Agents, so you know who they are — congrats! — you're as big a geek as I am!

■ **Playability:** When will you learn? Please do use the analog stick; it combos always suck!

■ **Entertainment:** Not as good as Point Break with Patrick Swayze.

■ **Replay Value:** Low.

### SECOND OPINION

Being a Minnesota boy, I have a hard time identifying with this game. The biggest waves I see on a consistent basis are those created from behind my family's fishing boat. That does not stop me from enjoying this game, but the fact that all you're doing is going up and down wave after wave does. The game looks good, but it ends up getting boring before very long.

**KRISTIAN — 6**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAAMES ■ **DEVELOPER** ANGEL STUDIOS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15



"... Tony Hawk 3 has only proven to me that part 2 was such a monstrous release, not even its masters could defeat it."

## PLAYSTATION TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 PLAYSTATION PERFORMS A NO COMPLY

When I gave Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 a perfect score of 10 a year ago, many questioned my judgement. All too often I was asked, "What will you give Pro Skater 3 then? An 11?" At the time, however, I truly felt Neversoft had achieved a level of perfection that would never be matched on PlayStation. It turns out I was right. The PS-X version of Tony Hawk 3 has only proven to me that part 2 was such a monstrous release, not even its masters could defeat it.

Using Neversoft's PlayStation 2 work as a model, Shaba has attempted to bring much of the action from that version of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 to those who haven't stepped up to Sony's newest hardware. Thus, many of the new tricks are present, as are new combo-stringing strategies such as the revert, and a reworked Career mode that makes you hunt for points to increase your skaters' stats. All of the game's levels are very similar to those in the PS2 version, but with goals that more resemble the earlier versions of the game. In all, I'd say that Shaba has done an admirable job in transferring much of Tony Hawk 3 from PS2 to PS-X — but therein lies the problem.

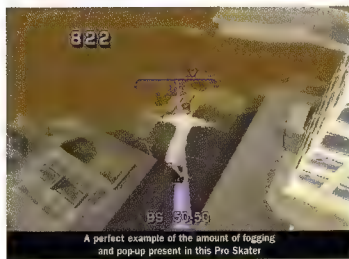
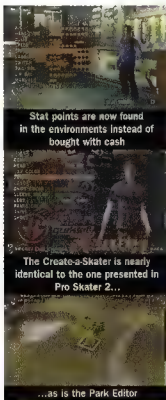
While Tony Hawk 2 took PlayStation to the limit, Tony Hawk 3 takes it well beyond the limit, causing immense graphical flaws that detract from the gameplay like its predecessors

never did. The levels are bigger than ever, but this causes an unprecedented amount of pop-up that players can't help but be distracted by. Acerbating this major problem are character and environment textures that are so washed out you might think someone smeared petroleum jelly across your television screen. Of course, knowing that there's an infinitely superior PlayStation 2 version does little to lessen these pains.

Despite all these problems, there's still a hell of a game to be had here. The intense action and that "one more time" feeling that keeps you up until the wee hours of the morning is still present and accounted for. Those who have been with the series since the beginning, however, will likely blow through the game in no time, and perhaps feel there's really nothing new to be experienced.

What Shaba should have done (or been instructed to do) was go in its own separate and distinct direction. Having previously created Grind Session, the closest thing to Pro Skater any non-Neversoft company had ever created, this team obviously has the qualifications. Then we might truly have received acceptable closure to this legendary PS-X trilogy, instead of the watered down end that this game delivers. — JAY

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION 02 ■ **DEVELOPER** SHABA GAMES/NEVERSOFT  
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 30



### THE BOTTOM LINE



# 8.5

#### ■ Concept:

Make a version of Pro Skater 3 that will hopefully appease those that haven't yet upgraded to a PlayStation 2

#### ■ Graphics:

Muddy textures and an unbelievable amount of pop-up

#### ■ Sound:

What's up with editing the Ramones' 'Blitzkrieg Bop'?

#### ■ Playability:

Using the revert out of the ramp is much more difficult than on PS2

#### ■ Entertainment:

Good, but Shaba should have taken the PS-X THPS 3 in a different direction than the PS2

#### ■ Replay Value:

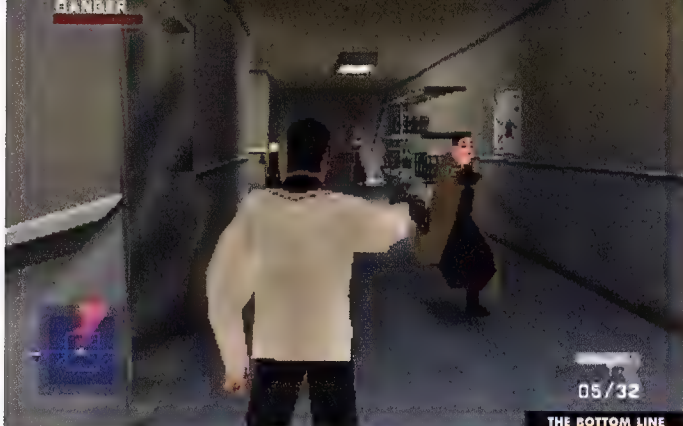
High

### SECOND OPINION

Can anyone say "Twisted Metal III"? Tony Hawk 3 might give gamers flashbacks to the days of mid-90s when 989 Studios scrounged the reins of the TM franchise from SingleTrac and delivered a sequel that paled in comparison to the second iteration of the vehicular combat series. Simply put, this is a huge step back from THPS 2, and isn't even on the same planet as the PS2 version of Tony 3. Shaba attempted to emulate the huge levels of the PS2 version, and, as a result, the texturing and draw distance have suffered immensely. Yes, the revert rocks, but in a game where split-second timing is everything, a chuggy framerate hugely diminishes the gameplay experience. I still had fun playing — it IS Tony Hawk — but this falls well short of expectations. A while back, one reader suggested that we might want to marry Tony, due to all the praise we've lavished on the series. Well, it looks like the honeymoon is over.

**MATT — 7.75**





THE BOTTOM LINE



9

**Concept:**  
Syphon Filter 3 reverts back to the series' original action roots — where running and shooting greatly outweigh the challenging stealth aspects

**Graphics:**  
Impressive lighting effects and beautiful environments push the PS-X hardware to the limit

**Sound:**  
Tons of spoken dialogue and authentic weapon sounds

**Playability:**  
The most explosive entry yet, offering smooth controls, outrageous armaments, and ingenious missions

**Entertainment:**  
Easier than the previous two, but longer and geared more toward replay

**Replay Value:**  
Moderate

## SECOND OPINION

It's been quite a wild ride for the Syphon Filter franchise, and I will be sad to see it go. Call me a hovelite, but I actually prefer the over-the-top, expansive gameplay of Syphon Filter to the Metal Gear series. In my mind, SF has come the closest to making me feel like I was the star of my own action movie. Syphon Filter 3 is definitely for the fans, and probably won't win many new converts. Sony didn't tinker with the control scheme one bit, but there are a few new playable characters, a great MiniGame mode, and one very cool new weapon that will put a smile on the face of any SF veteran. The storyline is great as well, wrapping up many loose ends and revealing the true origin of the virus. Of course, like many Hollywood blockbusters, the ending does leave the door open for further adventures for Gabe and the gang, so maybe this isn't the end after all. I certainly hope not.

MATT - 9.5

PLAYSTATION

## SYPHON FILTER 3

KEEPING 32-BIT GAMING ALIVE

With Syphon Filter 3, Sony continues to prove that there is still a place for 32-bit gaming. I can't help but agree with its decision to end this trilogy on the machine it was born on. You may swool at the pixelated textures and the limited draw distance, but after you play through the game, I think you'll be happy that you did so on the PlayStation. This is the game that answers all of the questions, and finally reveals the mastermind behind the Syphon Filter virus. If you've played through the first two installments, this is what you've been waiting for.

For this reason, I'm glad Syphon Filter 3 remained 32-bit. I honestly don't believe the experience would have been as grand if the environments looked differently or the atmosphere changed. For those of you who complained about the difficult stealth in the second chapter, you'll be happy to hear that SF 3 blazes forth as a straight-up action game where running and gunning outweigh the need to sneak. I enjoyed the second entry, but it's hard to deny the satisfaction garnered by simply blowing away terrorists on the run. As an added bonus, you'll also get to play as Lawrence and Teresa for the first time.

If you are concerned that the focus on action will make the game too simplistic — never fear. The missions are just as creative and diverse as before, the main difference is that it's a smidgen easier. That's it. The graphics may be dated, but it's still an amazing game. — REINER



■ **STYLE** 1-OR-2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 25



PLAYSTATION

SPEC OPS:  
COVERT ASSAULT

WHERE'S MY CYANIDE PILL?

Looking back at my time put in with this title's predecessor, Spec Ops: Ranger Elite, I'd be tempted to say that this third Spec Ops game, Covert Assault, has made a change for the worse. Well, that's only partly true. What makes this game score a point lower is that it hasn't changed, and has made little effort to improve itself. Trust me, kids, there is plenty of room for this game to get better. The targeting square from the original Spec Ops is missing yet again, and it looks like Runecraft would have had better luck with the graphics if they'd been created by a room full of squirrels. What is left is another excursion that's lack of improvements makes for a frustrating experience. Only this time when the inaccurate collision robs you of a kill, your shouts of "Golly!" may be replaced by language that is a little stronger.

I know it's only ten dollars, but my question to you is this: Why don't you demand more for your money? After all, if you owned a Dreamcast, you could get Virtua Tennis, Jet Grind Radio, or UFC — games that are triple the quality of Spec Ops for the same price. I think Alexander Hamilton would be furious if he knew you were wasting him on Covert Assault. — KATO

■ **STYLE** 1-OR-2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** TAKE INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** RUNECRAFT  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 29

THE BOTTOM LINE



4

**Concept:**  
Do we have to go over this again? It's a ten dollar game — nuff said.

**Graphics:**  
Just to the right of abysmal and a little to the left of horrible.

**Sound:**  
You're covert, so what's the hear?

**Playability:**  
The Syphon Filter-like controls are the only good thing about this game.

**Entertainment:**  
I wish this series would utilize its camouflage and make itself disappear.

**Replay Value:**  
Low.

## SECOND OPINION

As I ran my machine gun trooper around a level looking for what was shooting me, I choiced upon a bad guy and proceeded to empty an entire clip at him from close range to no avail. After promptly dying, I found my backup trooper was stuck in a small creek and could not make his way out. After five seconds of struggle he also died, as did my instage.

KRISTIAN - 4



**"It's gameplay that you're shooting for, and NBA 2K2 is nothing but net."**

DREAMCAST

# NBA 2K2

HOOP'S ON!

**V**isual Concepts knows what it is doing when it comes to basketball games, plain and simple. After watching other companies struggle with ten guys and two hoops for years, it has come in and ruled over all, including the mighty EA. Its sophomore effort, NBA 2K1 was, in my opinion, the best basketball simulation ever made. That is, until I played this one.

Having just completed my review of NBA Live 2002 on PS2, I was less than amazed with this game's graphics. The crowd and coaches look awful, and the player models are generally hit or miss, especially when compared to PS2's finest roundball title. The gameplay look is still pretty swift, and a few editors commented it looked better in action than Live. However, if you're a true b-ball aficionado, graphics mean little. It's gameplay that you're shooting for, and NBA 2K2 is nothing but net.

Not to steal another company's catch phrase, but you feel in the game with NBA 2K2. Your actions directly affect whether the ball gets turned over, or goes in the hoop. This can be mostly attributed to the phenomenal AI. While I have experience with the previous 2K incarnations, I was still squeaking by with single digit victories on the default setting. Compare this to the blowouts with the same difficulty on Live, and you'll see some smarter ballers here.

The post game is still king, rebounding is better than ever, tip-ins occur often, and steals are much more realistic. Also, you'll see computer defenders with high levels of awareness, as they strip your ball or intercept passes. All is not perfect, though, as dishing the ball to your teammates still has some unnecessary difficulty, and at times your guys will be running the wrong way when you get control of them, leading to some grumble-inducing turnovers.

The frontend remains basically untouched, with Franchise mode still being every basketball fan's dream. However, I'm not too thrilled with the analog menu screens. I also wish the substitution screen showed more stats, and that they would adjust the rest of the league's numbers to compensate with your game lengths, so you won't be playing four minute quarters, yet the league leaders are scoring 27 points per game. My sworn hoops game enemy, the auto subs, shouldn't be the default setting. Nothing's worse than seeing players stroll onto the court who you didn't want to sub in.

While little has changed in the year since 2K1, NBA 2K2 still stands atop the basketball game heap. I can't wait to see what the series does on other systems. Well, yes I can. I'll be too busy playing this to notice the time passing.

— JUSTIN

THE BOTTOM LINE



**Concept:** Improve upon the only basketball game to make GI's Top 100

**Graphics:** While other series are improving this realm, 2K2 seems to have fallen a bit behind

**Sound:** Little in the way of new commentary, but still great player chatter abound

**Playability:** New steal and rebounding physics add to an already great-playing game

**Entertainment:** No other game combines the options, tactics, and immersive basketball experience of NBA 2K2

**Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

Instead of initiating a complete overhaul, as EA has performed with this year's Live, Visual Concepts has kept the award-winning formula intact and has subtly added to it where needed. If you enjoy the online aspect, your win/loss record will now be tracked, allowing players across the globe to see how they stack up against you. The gameplay is identical to last year's release with subtle improvements in the team rotation, steal system, and man and zone defenses. NBA 2K2's street ball mode now features a handful of courts, including Oakland's Mosswood Park. Like I said, the alterations are minimal. While the graphics remain sharp, they no longer stack up against Live's dynamic character models and impressive TV-style presentation. As far as playability goes, the only aspect that truly matters, NBA 2K2 is still king of the court.

REINER — 9.25

■ STYLE | TO 8-PLAYER SPORTS ■ PUBLISHER SEGA SPORTS ■ DEVELOPER VISUAL CONCEPTS ■ RELEASE OCTOBER 23



Shaq clears another board



Big men rely on garbage points like this



Stockton hits Malone for an alley-oop



The computer will strip the ball if you aren't careful



Vince Carter picks off a pass meant for Finley



DREAMCAST

## HEAVY METAL: GEOMATRIX

HEAVY METAL POISONING

This is a significant game, if only for the fact that it's rare for normally stellar Capcom to release a product of such low quality. The only two Capcom products I can remember in recent times that were this bad are Resident Evil: Survivor and Spawn: In The Demon's Hand, the game that is the basis for Heavy Metal: Geomatrix. Like Spawn, Heavy Metal is an arena-based brawler, one that unfortunately inherits most of the bad traits from its ancestor. Foremost among these flaws is the camera, which is so poor that it almost defies imagination. Whether you're running, jumping, or getting blasted from an opponent, the camera will almost never be where you would like it to be. Even worse, it often gets hung up behind a ramp or platform, totally obscuring your vision of the action. Even without this glaring flaw, there wouldn't be a reason to recommend this game. The arenas are unimaginative in design, and the generic characters are difficult to control. The combat is tedious, featuring only a handful of moves and combos, and the lackluster weapons are not terribly useful. Dismissed!! — **MATT**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM ■ **DEVELOPER** CAPCOM  
 ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 19

### SECOND OPINION

Do you lack imagination and have a love of bad camerawork? Then this is your game. This title is as unimportant and uninspiring as Rob Halford's post-Priest career. Don't play at your own risk, don't even bother.

KATO — 3

### THE BOTTOM LINE



3

- **Concept:** The hellish spawn of Capcom's hellish Spawn arcade game
- **Graphics:** I swear to God that this is one of the worst camera systems ever
- **Sound:** Lives up to its name, delivering true metal tracks by Halford, Entombed, CoC, Megadeth, and others
- **Playability:** The control is erratic and ultimately frustrating
- **Entertainment:** A sluggish slugfest with little in the way of variety, depth, or fun
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low



DREAMCAST

## DEATH CRIMSON OX

DEATH BEFITS HER

Just like Soul Calibur was the premier fighting game that was never bested during Dreamcast's entire existence, House of the Dead 2 will forever remain tops in the console's light gun shooter category. Need proof? Try Confidential Mission. Still not convinced? Alright, go ahead and play Death Crimson Ox, but don't say I didn't warn you.

Best described as a House of the Dead knock off with mecha replacing zombies, Death Crimson Ox gives you plenty of targets, but no real reason to keep pulling the trigger. The levels contain few surprises, the cutscenes leave you confused at best, and the game's challenge can be equally attributed to both the poor controls and ridiculous enemy design.

You know what my biggest complaint about Death Crimson Ox is, though? Before the title started, I was warned that "this game may cause temporary muscle convulsions or loss of consciousness." Neither of these things happened, and I was forced to remain in complete control of my body and senses throughout. —**JAY**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** SAMMY ENTERTAINMENT ■ **DEVELOPER** ECOLE  
 ■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 7

### SECOND OPINION

Death Crimson is not a bad House of the Dead rip-off. The story is completely insane, but so is the action. It won't be your favorite gun game, but it's wild enough to be one that you will remember.

ANDY — 6.75

### THE BOTTOM LINE



4

- **Concept:** The last light gun game on Dreamcast is also the last game you'd want to play
- **Graphics:** Pretty sharp, but some character models obviously had more work put into them than others
- **Sound:** Other than a minute amount of voice-overs and a faint guitar tune, there's only the report of your guns
- **Playability:** If you don't have a light gun, don't even bother
- **Entertainment:** Lackluster gameplay and a wretched plot don't do this game any favors
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low



DREAMCAST

## MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX

RIDING ON TWO FLAT TIRES

I've always been in favor of multi-system ports. The fact of the matter is that most people don't have the luxury of running out and purchasing every system on the market. Choices have to be made. As experienced in my youth, I always looked to the greener pastures, and craved games for consoles I didn't own. If a company does decide to spread the wealth across the entire gaming spectrum, its efforts have to be timely.

The release of Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX came too late on the PlayStation, and its arrival on Dreamcast can almost be viewed as a classic re-release. I applaud

Activision's determination in bringing this release to Sega's last frontier, yet it's an act similar to selling rotten fruit. If you've already put Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 through its paces, the gameplay in Mat Hoffman will instantly age before your eyes. This entire release is sculpted after the original Tony Hawk. To make matters worse, the Dreamcast version really doesn't stand out as an improvement over the founding PlayStation release. Sure, the textures are sharper, but the framerate is still inconsistent, and the camera is extremely buggy.

It's a decent game, especially if you've never touched an Activision O2 game before, but for the majority of gamers, it's too little too late. —**REINER**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION ■ **DEVELOPER** RUNEFACT  
 ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 10

### THE BOTTOM LINE



7

- **Concept:** Running on the THPS engine, players must perform insane stunts, link together huge tricks, and soar for gold medals
- **Graphics:** Sharper textures, but the framerate and camera are still inconsistent and detrimental to the gameplay
- **Sound:** The sound effects capture realism, whether it's pegs grinding on wood or concrete
- **Playability:** The controls are magnificent, and the play is easier to grasp and master than any other BMX title
- **Entertainment:** Great fun...if you haven't already played THPS 2
- **Replay Value:** High

### SECOND OPINION

Hoffman is aging like the green frosting/most-looking thing in your fridge. It's nice to see a DC port, but better graphics can't compensate for buggy physics and inconsistent tricks. Pro BMX may be fun if you have very limited video game experience, but there are much better fish in the freestyle ocean.

JUSTIN — 7.25



THE BOTTOM LINE



8.5

"...a release finally worthy of the fans who have been waiting patiently for it."

PC

# CIVILIZATION III

CIVILIZATION GIVETH

**A**fter seeing Civilization III at E3 this year, I had high hopes for this game. After being bitterly disappointed with Call to Power II, I thought Sid and his team had lost their touch—there was just too much clunky gameplay for me to even start enjoying it. After loading up Civ III for the first time, it became quite clear that this game is one that many will enjoy, myself included. From tighter controls to more intriguing play elements, this is the Civilization that we've been waiting for.

Graphically, Civ III is nothing extremely special. There have been improvements made of course, but basically it all boils down to the fact that everything looks much sharper. Not sharp as in when your uncle sees you in your tax book before your sister's wedding and says, "Hey kid! Lookin' sharp!" Sharp as in noticeably increased texture and modeling qualities. This looks nothing like the Civ you played in grade school, but that exciting and addictive gameplay is back in a big way.

In a bold move, Firaxis has decided to inject culture into the main gameplay formula. Culture is exactly what you would expect it to be—the influence your civilization spreads through its achievements and improvements. Your culture manifests itself through points which are incorporated into the game by boundaries which expand or contract depending on how strong your leadership is. In an interesting twist, it's now possible for you to

capture foreign cities through cultural influence. During one game, I had surrounded a small city with a number of my own. As my culture grew, my influence spread and eventually the people of the town asked to join my empire because they no longer wanted to be a part of their own. Capturing real estate without the loss of units is a way to make any General smile.

When the troops are needed, things still seem to be muddled and confused. I didn't like the military interface, and I thought troop movements should have been much more intuitive. In lieu of troops, your advisors have received an overhaul, and prove to be much more useful than they were in the past. Of course, I don't think I used them at

all in the past, so the fact that

I found them useful in the least means some long hours were spent to make sure you were given as immersive an experience as possible.

This Civilization offering is a release finally worthy of the fans who have been waiting patiently for it. If you've been anxious to see if you're in for another disappointment before spending your cash, rest assured your keyboard is safe when you put this one through its paces. —KRISTIAN

- **Concept:** It's the Civilization you remember with a few more bells and whistles
- **Graphics:** They're better than before, but you won't be blown away by any means
- **Sound:** The subtle soundtrack is easy on your ears, and the effects are decent
- **Playability:** The tutorial system could use some work, but if you're a Civ vet, you won't need it anyway
- **Entertainment:** A much improved offering for this exalted line of titles
- **Replay Value:** High

## SECOND OPINION

It's impossible for me to deny that Civilization III is better than its predecessors. The graphics are better, the options are expanded, and the controls seem to have been streamlined. The game is bigger and badder than ever, and that's precisely my concern. Sid Meier and crew have created a game that will satisfy hardcore Civ fans worldwide, and will simultaneously alienate any new or casual player curious as to what all the hubbub is about. Civilization is obviously meant for those with an attention span able to grasp things deeper than MTV's late night programming, but it's getting to the point where a flight simulator would be easier to master. Because of its technical achievements and foundation III is built upon, I'll give Civilization III a good score, but just understand that this rating is prefaced with a learning curve warning.

JAY — 8



The city overview is much more detailed

Building Wonders is still an important part of the game

A handy pop-up window makes navigation easier

■ STYLE | 1 TO 8-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ PUBLISHER | INFOGRADES ■ DEVELOPER | FIRAXIS GAMES ■ RELEASE | OCTOBER 30



THE BOTTOM LINE

**3.75**

“...an uninspired nightmare that tarnishes the Star Wars name.”

PC

# STAR WARS: GALACTIC BATTLEGROUNDS

I DID IT ALL FOR THE WOOKIEE

**T**here's no denying that Galactic Battlegrounds was a monumental undertaking for LucasArts. The amount of work that went into this project is very impressive, encompassing every aspect of the Star Wars universe. Instead of focusing on a specific timeline, LucasArts tapped into the classic trilogy, Episode I, the expanded universe, and was also granted the freedom to design its own stockade of vehicles, troops, and structures. Rather than scrutinizing which vehicles and factions should be included, LucasArts threw caution to the wind and incorporated everything. Within the six civilizations, players can construct and command over 300 different units for skirmishes over land, sea, and air.

Given the fact that the game is running on Ensemble's Age of Empires RTS engine, creating engaging air battles isn't possible, yet LucasArts seemed determined to try it anyway. The land warfare is decent, although none of the troops are scaled accurately, and hardly any of them seem to move appropriately, either. The air battles are nothing short of blasphemous. Instead of zooming across the screen, the ships maneuver as though someone were tugging them along with a string. When they engage a target, they stop, hover motionless, then fire. At this point, Galactic Battlegrounds, a game with great potential, quickly

transforms into an uninspired nightmare that tarnishes the Star Wars name.

On another note, the building aspect, which you manhandle throughout every second of the game, doesn't make much sense, and is filled with tedious tasks that you shouldn't have to do. For example, why do battle droids have to eat food? Why do I have to chop down trees to make metal structures? Why in the hell did LucasArts decide to release this miserable game?

The biggest complaint I have, as if it could get worse, deals with the graphics. I'm no rocket scientist, but I do know there are more than 256 colors. Furthermore, I know it's possible to include more than three frames in an animation sequence. I've played a lot of games, and I do know that it's possible to create a realistic explosion that doesn't look like a smear on the screen.

To its benefit, and I'm going out on a limb here, the gameplay balance is decent, and the computer opponents are actually quite intelligent. Much like Force Commander, this release had great potential, but LucasArts didn't recognize it. It went too far and tried too much. I cherish Star Wars — I basically live for Star Wars. This is a mockery of everything it stands for. — **REINER**

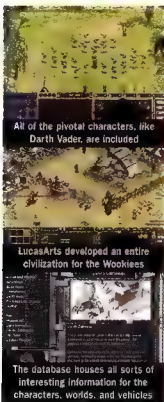
■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** ENSEMBLE/LUCASARTS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13



War erupts on land, sea, and air.



Throughout the six factions, over 300 structures and vehicles can be built.



All of the pivotal characters, like Darth Vader, are included

LucasArts developed an entire civilization for the Wookiees

The database houses all sorts of interesting information for the characters, words, and vehicles

■ **Concept:**  
A real-time strategy game with a variety of troops, vehicles, and structures from the classic trilogy, Episode I, and the expanded universe

■ **Graphics:**  
Even in a microscopic form, the miserable animations and effects stick out like a sore thumb

■ **Sound:**  
The score and sound effects are recycled from the four films.

■ **Playability:**  
A complete mockery of everything Star Wars stands for

■ **Entertainment:**  
If this game doesn't make you cry, nothing will

■ **Replay Value:**  
Moderate

## SECOND OPINION

This game is a blemishing of the Star Wars name. Not only is it dull and irritating, but it isn't even technically compliant with the subject it attempts to represent. For example, during one mission TIE Bombers were sent in to assist in one of my objectives. When they arrived they didn't perform a bombing run as you and I know it. Instead they hovered over a building, dropped what I assume was a bomb, then left. Although it doesn't really sound like that big of a deal, it's indicative as to the game's overall tone. Poorly developed mission structure, lackluster graphics, and ally storylines hamper this game, but ultimately it becomes obvious that not a lot of work went into Galactic Battlegrounds. It seems a complete travesty that the powers that be can't seem to get a Star Wars RTS right with all of the potential there is for something spectacular.

**KRISTIAN — 4.5**



PC

# THRONE OF DARKNESS

I ABSOLVE YOU

**T**hrone of Darkness is your quintessential bargain bin release.

Over here you've got mediocre gameplay, average graphics, and typical sound. Then on this side you've got a loose storyline, uninteresting characters, and a poorly designed menu system. If this were released for seven dollars, I would say you've got yourself a doozy of a game. However, shelling out 50 bucks for something you're going to forget about the second you quit playing is a little like buying an expensive dinner then throwing it directly in the toilet.

Although you Diablo freaks out there might appreciate the genre ToD is attempting to extend, you'll be disappointed to see that the game can't quite wrap its fingers around the type of play Click set out to duplicate.

The menu systems seem benign at first, but they become this game's Achilles' heel. More often than not you'll find yourself frantically switching between screens as your party gets slaughtered. Not only that, but things just get plain boring after the first hour and a half of play. If you're thinking of getting this game for Christmas, I would suggest spending those dollars on a nice sweater, or perhaps some gourmet nuts — they'll last you longer.

**KRISTIAN**

THE BOTTOM LINE



**■ Concept:**

A Japanese Diablo, but not as well done, and not nearly as entertaining.

**■ Graphics:**

Some nice spell effects and environmental backdrops, but rather run-of-the-mill otherwise.

**■ Sound:**

The clang of battle and Japanese accents abound.

**■ Playability:**

If you're able to grasp the concept of clicking a mouse, you'll have no problem.

**■ Entertainment:**

It takes a while for things to get interesting, but when they do you don't care.

**■ Replay Value:**

Moderately High.

**SECOND OPINION**

To say that Throne of Darkness is like Diablo 2 set in feudal Japan isn't a fair comparison because it might mislead people into thinking this game is cool. Quite the contrary, everything about this game screams Blizzard rip-off, and an exceptionally poor one at that. Go buy the Diablo 2 expansion pack instead.

**JAY - 4**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 35-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** SIERRA STUDIOS ■ **DEVELOPER** CLICK ENTERTAINMENT ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 25



PC

# COMMAND & CONQUER: YURI'S REVENGE

YAR, IT BE A REVENGE GAME

It really isn't fair that Westwood can be this good at one thing. True, it's had it's less-than-great attempt (Emperor), but even that was head and shoulders above any other RTS that came out around that time. With Yuri's Revenge, Westwood shows us once again that it knows how to improve upon near perfection. Not only that, but it also had the good sense not to interfere with the main ingredients that make the C&C universe so attractive.

In my experience, finding and experimenting with new units and structures is half the fun of an expansion set. Therefore, I will tell you that there are now over 30 new units, structures, and tech buildings, and everything is much more balanced (no more Russian obliteration). The gameplay is still beautifully conceived, and the graphics are among the best in the business. Multiplayer is better than ever, and with ten cooperative missions along with the usual head-to-head play, this is the game that gives and keeps on giving. If you own Red Alert 2, you must get Yuri's Revenge. There can be no argument. If there was ever an expansion set that drew on the parent game's strengths and out its weaknesses, this is the one. — **KRISTIAN**



Tanya and the good professor get reacquainted

Yuri has a lot of tricks up his sleeve, but a good defensive network will serve you well.

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** WESTWOOD STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 9



**■ Concept:**

The expansion set for Red Alert 2. If you don't understand that, the rest of this article will be very confusing.

**■ Graphics:**

There's no striking upgrades, but the graphics were good to begin with.

**■ Sound:**

The same control room banter is present, and the atmospheric effects have received a shot in the arm.

**■ Playability:**

If you're buying this game you've probably played it before. The controls are still as smooth as silk.

**■ Entertainment:**

Westwood knows how to put together a real-time strategy title, and they've nailed this one.

**■ Replay Value:**  
Moderately High

**SECOND OPINION**

Yuri's Revenge is an expansion worthy of the king of all real-time strategy games, Red Alert 2. This game doesn't mess around; the missions are challenging right from the get-go, quickly removing the RTS cobwebs from your mouse finger. All the missions pit either the Allies or the Soviets against the psychic, Yuri, and his band of freakish enemy units. His arsenal features many mind-control devices that add an interesting twist to the gameplay, as you must use new strategies to counter their ability to turn your units against you. The Soviets and Allies also have a number of new units to command as well to help keep the balance of power, but it's a shame there are no missions for the Yuri forces. Luckily, they can be played in multiplayer. If you are low on RTS — and I know you do — Yuri's Revenge is a no-brainer.

**ANDY - 8.75**



# MONOPOLY TYCOON

ROLL WITH IT

**R**emember those days sitting around the house as a kid and having nothing to do but play Monopoly with your siblings? I certainly do. Those were some of the most scarring hours of my young life. Indeed, I had many a painful flashback during my time with Monopoly Tycoon, but the fact that this game is fundamentally different from my childhood nemesis made my eyebrows raise in delight (or something like that).

This title takes the board game and twists it into something familiar, yet completely new. The customary square layout of the board has been abandoned for a more city-like atmosphere. Additionally, there are no pieces to move. Your piece is essentially your character, and thusly any properties you build will be identified by this component and the name you choose to give it. The game is basically mission-based, where you have certain goals you need to achieve to gain access to the next level. To do this, players must buy different businesses and place them strategically around the map to maximize their earning potential. Although there are variations on how to do this, that's what this game is about in a nutshell – and man does it rock. I've never had this much fun with a Monopoly title. This one's a sleeper. Get it while you can. – **KRISTIAN**



■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMES ■ **DEVELOPER** DEEP RED ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 8

EVERYONE  
**E**  
8.5

- **Concept:**  
A thinking person's Monopoly, but without your cousin who cheats all of the time
- **Graphics:**  
Excellent graphics for a game that didn't really need them to get its point across
- **Sound:**  
Nice music and enough interactive sound to make you feel like you're getting your money's worth
- **Playability:**  
The tutorials are a very good idea – you'll be lost without them
- **Entertainment:**  
A great idea for an already great game
- **Replay Value:**  
High

## SECOND OPINION

It contains nothing original or revolutionary, but all the elements of Monopoly Tycoon have been put together so well that it seems unlike anything else out there. The closest comparison one could make would be Sim City with an emphasis placed on making a quick buck. Building apartments is merely a necessary evil to pull in a customer base for the many stores placed on city blocks you hope to buy out and collect rent from. Monopoly Tycoon creates an interesting gameplay mix of city planning and profit projections, yet many of the mislans in the solo game cut you off before you get the chance to truly storm on your opponents and take over Atlantic City. If you get into it, Monopoly Tycoon will keep you hooked. It's a solid game that is worth playing, but not to the exclusion of other PC titles.

JAY – 7.5

## REVIEWS



# ZOO TYCOON

ZOO ME, BABY

I've used this term before, and I'm going to use it again: Zoo Tycoon is a meat-and-potatoes release. There's nothing in here that's going to give you whiplash from its incredible gameplay. Similarly, you won't walk away from a play session disappointed or confused. If you're looking for a middle-of-the-road game this holiday season, that won't offend and won't come up short on the replay side of things, here it is.

As Zoo director, you'll be in charge of the everyday management responsibilities of your facility (hiring staff, placing structures, keeping animals and guests happy), and the overall aim of your zoo (building new exhibits and expanding earning potential). Placing things from pizza stands to building a new giraffe enclosure are just a couple of things to make sure you can continue to put dollars in your pocket. These things along with a host of others will ensure that you'll enjoy your time with Zoo Tycoon on some level, but this game really lacks the addictive teeth that many other sim games seem to have. Overall I thought this title was fun for what it was worth, but I didn't have a problem walking away from it when the time came.

– **KRISTIAN**

EVERYONE  
**E**  
7.5

- **Concept:**  
Live out all your wildest zoo keeper fantasies
- **Graphics:**  
As far as simulations of this type go, everything is here that needs to be graphically
- **Sound:**  
You could have just as much fun playing this game with the sound turned off
- **Playability:**  
The small tutorial helps, but you probably won't need it
- **Entertainment:**  
This is an easy game to lose, a few hours in
- **Replay Value:**  
Moderate

## SECOND OPINION

Kristian deserves to have his head stuffed up a rhino's rump! This game rocks! It runs on a similar engine as Roller Coaster Tycoon and allows players to build and customize every little aspect of the park. If you play this game in an unorthodox manner, like I do, you'll smile rawly as lions tear apart your hapless visitors, and polar bears feast on a baby fox. The options available truly are endless. You'll need to micromanage every little detail of the zoo, all while making sure that your animals are healthy and content with their habitats.

REINER – 8.75

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** BLUE FANG GAMES ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 18



GAME BOY ADVANCE

DOOM

HELL IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

As hard as it may be to believe, Doom runs almost flawlessly on the GBA. There's no denying this is a classic, but noticeable alterations slightly hamper this version's enjoyment. For starters, the controls are somewhat cumbersome. The general movement is solid, but switching weapons is a three-button process. You'll need to hold both shoulder buttons, then press either Up or Down to scroll to the next firearm. Another complaint centers around the lighting – or rather the darkness – within some of the rooms. Squinting as hard as you can won't help you get through these areas on the GBA. The only solution is to pause the game, then max out the brightness level. Also, instead of cluttering the screen, dead bodies disappear immediately.

Since the GBA's memory is limited, only 24 of the original 29 stages are included. Amazingly, all of these stages can be linked, up for two-player cooperative play. Best of all, though, four GBAs can be connected for deathmatch in eight stages.

Even with a handful of minuscule changes, Doom remains immensely entertaining. In my opinion, just seeing this technology in action is worth the price of admission. – REINER

THE BOTTOM LINE  
**7.5**

- **Concept:** One of the greatest games of all time shrunk down to fit on the GBA.
- **Graphics:** Identical to the PC version, with the exception of bodies disappearing after death.
- **Sound:** All of the trademark grunts and groans.
- **Playability:** Except for weapon changing, the play works surprisingly well on the GBA. Lighting is an issue, though.
- **Entertainment:** Team up with a friend and cooperatively tackle all 24 stages, or link up for four-player deathmatch in eight action-packed arenas.
- **Replay Value:** Moderate.

SECOND OPINION

Doom on GBA is not a bad version of the PC classic at all, but it is painfully dark and I found it unplayable unless you pump up the brightness and switch to static lighting. Sure this makes the graphics a tad washed out, but it's a small price to pay for FPS mayhem on the go.

ANDY - 7

■ **STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION** ■ **PUBLISHER ACTIVISION**  
 ■ **DEVELOPER DAVID A. RAJMEI PRODUCTIONS/ID**  
 ■ **RELEASE OCTOBER 25**

COLUMNS CROWN – GBA

■ **STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER PUZZLE**  
 ■ **PUBLISHER SEGA**  
 ■ **RELEASE DECEMBER 5**



Sega has done a nice job of updating Columns for the Game Boy Advance, implementing a story mode that gives the player some motivation for plowing through endless boards of colored gems and some new power-ups that tweak the original gameplay formula. However, Columns has never been – and never will be – as good as Tetris or Bust-A-Move. Even with all the new features, it's still the least compelling of the "classic" puzzle games. – MATT

**6**

NFL BLITZ 2002 – GBA

■ **STYLE 1 PLAYER SPORTS**  
 ■ **PUBLISHER MIDWAY**  
 ■ **RELEASE SEPTEMBER 24**

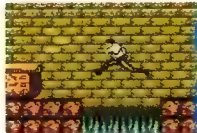


I thought that Blitz on Game Boy Advance would be a perfect fit, especially when it advertised minigames and a full season. I soon found out, however, that the passing icons were less than ideally functional, and that Midway considered being able to read Blitz's rules a minigame. How about kicking field goals for bonus fun? Don't think so. Playing the trivia games was about as fun as Blitz got. – KATO

**5**

THE MUMMY RETURNS – GBC

■ **STYLE 1 PLAYER ACTION**  
 ■ **PUBLISHER UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE STUDIOS**  
 ■ **RELEASE OCTOBER 17**



The gaming gods are not pleased with me. By playing this game I have desecrated their altar, and the mere fact that this game appears in the same magazine as Metal Gear Solid 2 makes me gag. It's not the ridiculous controls, the awful graphics, the virtually non-existent plot line, or the fact that Brendan Fraser is even remotely associated with it. It's the fact that this is one steaming, frothy, filth-pile of a game. Fair enough? – KRISTIAN

**3**

ECKS VS. SEVER – GBA

■ **STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION**  
 ■ **PUBLISHER B&M ENTERTAINMENT**  
 ■ **RELEASE NOVEMBER 1**

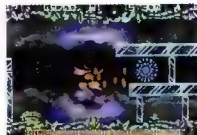


If you're going up against a title like Doom, your game has to be at least as good as that eternal classic. Ecks Vs. Sever is a far cry from Doom. The textures are even blockier and the effects entirely lackluster. Worst of all, getting the elevators to work seems more a matter of luck than anything else. It isn't absolutely horrid, but it should have been much better. – JAY

**5.5**

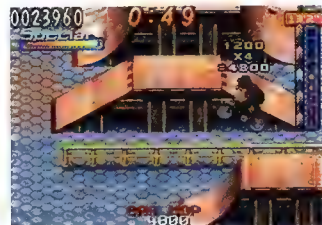
GRADIUS GALAXIES – GBA

■ **STYLE 1-PLAYER SHOOTER**  
 ■ **PUBLISHER KOEI-NAMI**  
 ■ **RELEASE NOVEMBER 6**



It takes thumbs and nerves of steel to navigate Gradius Galaxies' onslaught of alien scum. By collecting power-ups you are able to follow different weapon trees that let you take a defensive or offensive posture. Featuring tons of classic Gradius action, this GBA title is sure to please old-school side-scrolling shooter fans with updated graphics that pay homage to all its various incarnations. Be warned – even on easy with max lives this game is a challenge. – ANDY

**7.25**



MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX – GBA

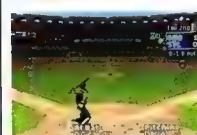
■ **STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS**  
 ■ **PUBLISHER ACTIVISION 02**  
 ■ **RELEASE NOVEMBER 14**

This handheld version of Mat Hoffman is based on last year's Road Champs. In creating a game worthy of the Hoffman name, there are some improvements in the Road Champs formula. For example, the trick system, which made pulling off grinds a bit difficult, has been smoothed out significantly, and the right shoulder button can now turn any trick into a fakie. However, I am a disappointed that the environments were not opened up as they were in the GBA version of THPS 2. The game is still basically a 2D title with multiple horizontal planes. – MATT

**7.5**

HIGH HEAT MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL 2002 – GBA

■ **STYLE 1-PLAYER SPORTS**  
 ■ **PUBLISHER 3DO**  
 ■ **RELEASE SEPTEMBER 23**



High Heat doesn't come equipped with all the bells and whistles you've come to expect from baseball games, but its gameplay is functional and true to the sport. It even features a Home Run Derby and a full 162-game season. Of course, it doesn't track stats, nor does it allow drafting or trades. The good thing is that High Heat has it where it counts. It looks fantastic, and plays surprisingly well. – REINER

**7.5**





PlayStation 2

Welcome to the Funky World!

# Yanya Caballista City Skater



Included! Unique  
"fingerheart" controller!

- Unique skateboarding/adventure game that pits you against mysterious alien creatures!
- In addition to the 10-stage Street Mode, practice tricks and combos in the Challenge Mode!
- Unlock different parts of the City using 8 wacky characters!
- Lay music tracks in the Ramp Mode, or challenge a friend in the Versus Mode!




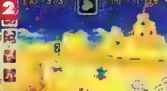
# CHARTS



In association with the NPD TRSTS Video Games Service, Charts presents an in-depth listing of the best-selling software on a month-to-month basis. Are the games you spend your hard-earned dollars on top sellers? Take a look below to find out. We've also compiled a listing of the top-selling Japanese software, and, of course, we included a Top 10 list of the games the GI staff is currently enjoying.

## NPD TOP 20

Listings Based Upon NPD Data For September 2002 Based On Units Sold

RANK	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE	PRICE POINT
1	1	<b>Madden NFL 2002</b>	PS2	Aug-01	\$50
2	6	<b>Mario Kart Super Circuit</b>	GBA	Aug-01	\$30
3	2	<b>Pokémon Crystal</b>	GBC	Jul-01	\$30
4	N/A	<b>Silent Hill 2</b>	PS2	Sep-01	\$51
5	N/A	<b>NFL 2K2</b>	DC	Sep-01	\$40

**1** This week in charts features a lot of new titles making a splash with consumers, but EA's venerable Madden franchise holds steady at the top spot for the second month running. With the real-life football season in full swing, we wouldn't be surprised to see Madden pull a three-peat next month.

**2** As GI's Game of the Month for September, Mario Kart Super Circuit continues to impress with its blazing handheld racing action. Apparently, the public agreed with our assessment, and is buying it in droves, as the game rockets from number six to number two on the charts.

**3** These guys again? Damn, we almost forgot about Pokémon for a minute. Luckily for Nintendo, the franchise's loyal fans are still content to play the same game over and over again. Expect the GameCube debut of Pokémon to cause a similar stir on the charts when it's released sometime in 2010.

**4** Despite our criticism of the series, Silent Hill still has what it takes to make a splash at retail. Who'd have known that walking around in the dark was the recipe for video game gold? Hey, different strokes for different folks.

**5** Even with the Dreamcast in decline, Sega's pigskin powerhouse NFL 2K2 can still make people stand up and take notice. When you consider that there are only about 5 million Dreamcasts out there, compared to 20 million PlayStation 2s, this top five debut is an even more impressive feat.

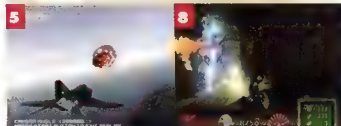
RANK	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE	PRICE POINT
6	N/A	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	N64	Aug-01	\$50
7	3	Super Mario Advance	GBA	Jun-01	\$30
8	10	Madden NFL 2002	PS-X	Aug-01	\$40
9	7	Resident Evil Code: Veronica X	PS2	Aug-01	\$50
10	N/A	Driver 2	PS-X	Nov-00	\$20
11	N/A	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	PS-X	Sep-00	\$22
12	N/A	Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2	PS2	Aug-01	\$51
13	N/A	NHL 2002	PS2	Sep-01	\$51
14	N/A	Spy Hunter	PS2	Sep-01	\$52
15	N/A	NCAA College Football 2K2: Road to the Rose Bowl	DC	Aug-01	\$40
16	5	NCAA Football 2002	PS2	Jul-01	\$51
17	N/A	Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec	PS2	Jul-01	\$50
18	N/A	Advance Wars	GBA	Sep-01	\$31
19	11	Gran Turismo 2	PS-X	Dec-99	\$21
20	13	Spyro: Year of the Dragon	PS-X	Oct-00	\$20

Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment Service • Kristen Barnett-Von-Korff (156) 629-2481

### JAPAN TOP 10

Source: Game Japan  
Based On Monthly Units Sold

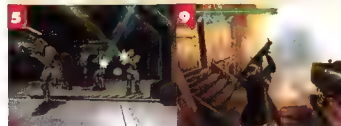
POS.	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM
1	N/A	<b>Dynasty Warriors 3</b>	PS2
2	N/A	<b>Time Crisis 2</b>	PS2
3	N/A	<b>King's Field IV</b>	PS2
4	N/A	<b>Silent Hill 2</b>	PS2
5	N/A	<b>Ace Combat 04: Shattered Skies</b>	PS2
6	N/A	<b>Super Robot Big Battle Infinity</b>	GBA
7	N/A	<b>Digimon Tamers Battle Spirit</b>	WSC
8	N/A	<b>Lugli's Mansion</b>	GC
9	N/A	<b>Capcom Vs. SNK 2 Millionaire Fighting 2001</b>	PS2
10	9	<b>Wario Land 4</b>	GBA



### GAME INFORMER TOP 10

The Staff's Favorite Picks

POS.	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM
1	N/A	<b>Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty</b>	PS2
2	1	<b>Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3</b>	PS2
3	N/A	<b>Star Wars: Rogue Leader</b>	GC
4	N/A	<b>Grand Theft Auto 3</b>	PS2
5	2	<b>Halo</b>	Xbox
6	7	<b>Dead or Alive 3</b>	Xbox
7	N/A	<b>Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance</b>	PS2
8	N/A	<b>Giants: Citizen Kabuto</b>	PS2
9	3	<b>Devil May Cry</b>	PS2
10	N/A	<b>Syphon Filter 3</b>	PS-X



### PC TOP 10

Based On Monthly Units Sold. Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment Service  
Kirsten Barnett-Von-Korff (156) 629-2481

POS.	L. MO	GAME	MONTH	PRICE
1	N/A	<b>Pool of Radiance: Ruins of Myth Dramor</b>	Sep-01	\$40
2	3	<b>The Sims</b>	Jul-01	\$40
3	1	<b>Diablo II: Lord of Destruction</b>	Jul-01	\$32
4	8	<b>Roller Coaster Tycoon</b>	Mar-99	\$20
5	N/A	<b>Operation Flashpoint: Cold War Crisis</b>	Aug-01	\$41
6	5	<b>The Sims: House Party</b>	Mar-01	\$29
7	6	<b>The Sims: Livin' Large</b>	Sep-00	\$29
8	N/A	<b>Commandos 2: Men of Courage</b>	Sep-01	\$34
9	N/A	<b>Diablo Battle Chest</b>	Sep-01	\$44
10	7	<b>Diablo II</b>	Jun-00	\$35



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Age: \_\_\_\_\_

What Gaming Systems Do You Own?

(please check all that apply)

PlayStation \_\_\_\_\_  
PlayStation 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Nintendo 64 \_\_\_\_\_  
Game Boy Color \_\_\_\_\_  
Game Boy Advance \_\_\_\_\_  
Dreamcast \_\_\_\_\_  
XBox \_\_\_\_\_  
Computer \_\_\_\_\_

What Types Of Games Do You Own?

(please check all that apply)

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Fighting \_\_\_\_\_  
Driving \_\_\_\_\_  
Sports \_\_\_\_\_  
Arcade \_\_\_\_\_

What Gaming Systems Are You Likely To Buy In The Next 12 Months?

(please check all that apply)

PlayStation \_\_\_\_\_  
PlayStation 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Nintendo 64 \_\_\_\_\_  
GameCube \_\_\_\_\_  
Game Boy Color \_\_\_\_\_  
Game Boy Advance \_\_\_\_\_  
Dreamcast \_\_\_\_\_  
XBox \_\_\_\_\_  
Computer \_\_\_\_\_

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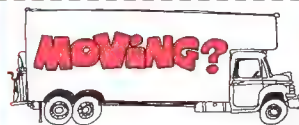
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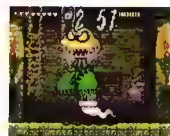


# NEW RELEASES ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE. SEE YOUR LOCAL RETAILER FOR MORE DETAILS

Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor	System	Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor	System	Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor	System
11/15/01	Driven	Bam! Entertainment	GBA	11/30/01	Finalizer	Microsoft	PC	1/1/02	Colums Crown	THQ	GBA
11/15/01	Ecks vs. Sever	Bam! Entertainment	GBA	11/30/01	Legends of Wrestling	Acclaim	PS2	1/1/02	Land Before Time	Crave	GBA
11/15/01	Smagler's Run	Destination Software	GBA	12/3/01	Monster Rancher Advance	Tecmo	GBA	1/1/02	Yugi-oh! Dark Duel Stories	Konami	GBC
11/15/01	Tom & Jerry: The Magic Ring	NewKidCo	GBC	12/3/01	Muppet Battle Pinball	NewKidCo	GBA	1/1/02	18 Wheeler: American Pro Truckee	Acclaim	GC
11/15/01	Diva Stars	Wendy's Unleash	GBC	12/3/01	Mr. Croak 2002	Acclaim	GBC	1/2/02	Whodunnit Typoon	Monie Crato	PC
11/15/01	All Star Baseball 2002	Acclaim	GC	12/3/01	Planon	Nintendo	GC	1/1/02	Industry Typoon 2	Computer Publishing	PC
11/15/01	100 Great Action Arcade Games Vol. 5	Globi Star Software	PC	12/3/01	Super Smash Bros. Melee	Nintendo	GC	1/1/02	Conflict Zone	Ubi Soft	PS2
11/15/01	Really Troop	Machin Computer	PC	12/3/01	Cubbie Robots for Everyone: Race 'N' Robots	3DO Company	PC	1/1/02	Duke Nukem	Take 2	PS2
11/15/01	Are the Lid Collection	Working Designs	PSX	12/3/01	Dragon's Lair 3D	Ubi Soft	PC	1/1/02	ESPN Winter Sports 2002	Konami	PS2
11/15/01	Baldi's Gate: Dark Alliance	Disney	PS2	12/3/01	Everquest: Shadens of Luclin	Verant Interactive/PC	PC	1/1/02	Final Fantasy X	Electronic Arts/Square	PS2
11/15/01	Wave Rally	Eidos	PS2	12/3/01	Deus Ex: The Conspiracy	989 Studios	PC	1/1/02	Hot Shots! 3	Electronic Arts	PS2
11/15/01	Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding	Microsoft	Xbox	12/3/01	Dragon Rage	3DO	PS2	1/1/02	King of the Field IV	Tommo	PS2
11/15/01	Dead or Alive 3	Teamo	Xbox	12/3/01	Jonny Moseley Mad Trick	3DO	PS2	1/1/02	NBA ShootOut 2002	Sony	PS2
11/15/01	Halo	Microsoft	Xbox	12/3/01	Shifters	3DO	PS2	1/1/02	Shadow Man 2: Second Coming	Acclaim	PS2
11/15/01	NFL Fever 2002	Microsoft	Xbox	12/3/01	Tetris Worlds	THQ	GC	1/1/02	Woody Woodpecker	Dreamcatcher	PS2
11/15/01	Ozword: Munch's Odegspe	Microsoft	Xbox	12/3/01	Star Wars: Obi Wan	LucasArts	Xbox	1/1/02	Zoro	Dreamcatcher	PS2

## WARIO LAND 4

■ **FORMAT** GAME BOY ADVANCE ■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 19



Much like the evolution between Super Mario Bros. 3 and Super Mario World, Wario Land 4's graphical qualities are astronomical—displaying over 7 effects, realistic weather conditions, and colorful texturing. Through roughly 20 stages, the goal of the game is to retrieve four relics, locate the key, and then get out before time expires. When the timer ticks away, the level will shake—much like the ending sequence in Super Metroid.

11/15/01	Project Gotham Racing	Microsoft	Xbox
11/18/01	LEGO Racers II	Lego Media	GBC
11/18/01	Dragon's Lair II: Time Warp	Digital Leisure	GBA
11/18/01	Mega Race 3	Dreamcatcher	PC
11/19/01	Arcic Thrasher	Midway	Xbox
11/19/01	Conflict Zone	Ubi Soft	PC
11/19/01	Frogger's Adventures: Temple of the Frog	Konami	GBA
11/19/01	Greatest Arcade Hits	Midway	GBC
11/19/01	Hot Wheels: Burnin' Rubber	THQ	GBC
11/19/01	Jurassic Park II: Island Attack	Konami	GBA
11/19/01	Planet of the Apes	Ubi Soft	PC
11/19/01	Rampage Puzzle Attack	Midway	GBC
11/19/01	Wario Land 4	Nintendo	GBC
11/19/01	Disney's Tarzan Untamed	Ubi Soft	GC
11/19/01	Luigi's Mansion	Nintendo	GC
11/19/01	Wave Racer: Blue Storm	Nintendo	GC
11/19/01	Frogger: The Great Escape	Konami	PS2
11/19/01	Legend of Arion '01	Ubi Soft	PC
11/19/01	MX 2002 featuring Ricky Carmichael	THQ	Xbox
11/20/01	Deathspan Advance	Infragames Inc	GBA
11/20/01	PowerPuff Girls: Mojo Jojo Go-Go	Bam! Entertainment	GBA
11/20/01	Racer Freestyle Scooter	Crave	GBC
11/20/01	Star Wars Episodes: Jedi Power Battles	THQ	GBC
11/20/01	Mary-Kate & Ashley: Crush Course	Acclaim	GBC
11/20/01	FIFA Soccer 2002	Electronic Arts	GC
11/20/01	Combat	Infragames	PC
11/20/01	Il-2 Sturmovik	Ubi Soft	PC
11/20/01	Moto Racer 3	Infragames	PC
11/20/01	Army Men World War II: Team Assault	3DO	PSX
11/20/01	Buster Beasts: Blasting Again	Crave	PSX
11/20/01	Chess	Tommo	PSX
11/20/01	Eternal Eyes	Crave	PSX
11/20/01	Frequency	Sony	PS2
11/20/01	NFL 2K2	Sega	PS2
11/20/01	Simpsons Road Rage	Electronic Arts	PS2
11/20/01	Toucan! Monstercat	Ubi Soft	PC
11/21/01	Darkened Slope	Machin Computer	PC
11/21/01	Cruiser's Velocity	Publishing	PC
11/21/01	ESPN Great Outdoor Games	Midway	GBC
11/27/01	Bass Fishing 2002	Konami	GBC
11/27/01	Madson NFL 2002	Electronic Arts	GBC
11/27/01	Moto GP	THQ	GBC
11/27/01	Super Bust-A-Move	Ubi Soft	GBC
11/27/01	Batman: Vengeance	Ubi Soft	GC
11/27/01	Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2	Acclaim	GC
11/27/01	Evil Twin	Ubi Soft	PC
11/27/01	Infected: Mad Small Brawl	Sony	PSX
11/27/01	Dynasty Warriors 3	PS2	PS2
11/27/01	Evil Twin: Operation Chronicles	Ubi Soft	PS2
11/27/01	Forever Kingdom	Tommo	PS2
11/27/01	Jeremy McGrath's Supercross World	Acclaim	PS2
11/27/01	Azurik: Rise of Persetha	Microsoft	Xbox
11/27/01	Crash Tag Team	Acclaim	GC

## DEUS EX: THE CONSPIRACY

■ **FORMAT** PLAYSTATION 2 ■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** EIDOS INTERACTIVE ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 3

Deus Ex is an epic first-person journey which goes above and beyond FPS classification. Both your character and his weapons can gain points that affect performance. If you like the thrill of the snipe, then use skill points to improve your marksmanship. If you'd rather go the postal route, you can become a machine gunner extraordinaire. Basically, you can choose whether your gameplay tactics will be stealthy or balls-out action.



## STATE OF EMERGENCY

■ **FORMAT** PLAYSTATION 2 ■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ROCKSTAR GAMES ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY 15



At its heart, State of Emergency looks to be an old-fashioned brawler in the tradition of the classic 16-bit Streets of Rage series. However, new-school technology has allowed developer VIS to incorporate a tremendous amount of detail in

the environment. Every bit of the cityscape from storefronts to street signs can be smashed, bashed, or blown up. Lost stores to obtain new weapons, make your own out of an old pipe, or steal one from a doofed officer—it's up to you.

1/1/02	New Legends	THQ	Xbox
1/2/02	Creatures	Crave	GBC
1/7/02	NBA 2K2	Sega	PS2
1/8/02	Majesty Gold	Infragames	PC
1/8/02	Orion II	THQ	PS2
1/8/02	NBA 2K2	Sega	Xbox
1/14/02	NBA Courtside 2002	Nintendo of America	GC
1/15/02	Duke Nukem	Take 2	GBC
1/15/02	Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	GBC
1/15/02	Dark Summit	THQ	GC
1/15/02	Disciples II: Dark Prophecy	Infragames	PC
1/15/02	Duke Nukem Forever	Take 2	PC
1/15/02	Duke Nukem Hungry	Gathering of Developers	PC
1/15/02	Mafia	GT Interactive	PC
1/15/02	Star Wars: Starfighter	LucasArts	PC
1/15/02	Caesar's Palace	Take 2	PS2
1/15/02	Moto GP 2	Namco	PS2
1/15/02	Rear View	Sega	PS2
1/15/02	Salt Lake 2002	Eidos	PS2
1/15/02	State of Emergency	Infragames	PC
1/15/02	World of Warcraft: Spont Cars	Bethesda Softworks	Xbox
1/15/02	Edo Scrolls II: Morrowind	Sega	Xbox
1/15/02	NFL 2K2	Sega	Xbox
1/15/02	Salt Lake 2002	Eidos	PS2
1/15/02	Mannix: Streets to Glory	Capcom	PS2
1/15/02	Germa Onimusha	Capcom	Xbox
1/16/02	Sonic the Hedgehog Advance	THQ	GBC
1/21/02	Deion	Dreamcatcher	PS2
1/26/02	Tekken	Namco	GBC
1/26/02	Sid Meier's Sim Golf	Electronic Arts	PC
1/26/02	Glance Man	Koe	PS2
1/31/02	Hidden & Dangerous II	TalonnSoft	PC
1/31/02	Medal of Honor: Allied Assault	Electronic Arts	PC
1/31/02	O.R.S.	Infragames	PC
2/1/02	Roboco	THQ	GBC
2/1/02	Tears World	Crave	PS2
2/1/02	Heroes of Might & Magic IV	3DO Company	PC
2/1/02	Jack On Modern Air Combat	Ubi Soft	PC
2/1/02	Air Ranger	Bam! Entertainment	PS2
2/1/02	Downforce	Taus	PS2
2/1/02	Monsters, Inc.	Sony	PS2
2/1/02	SOCOM: US Navy Seals	Sony	PS2
2/1/02	The Last	Crave	PS2
2/1/02	ESPN National Hockey Night 2002	Konami	Xbox
2/1/02	ESPN NBA 2K2002	Konami	Xbox
2/3/02	Command & Conquer: Renegade	Woodhead Studios/EA	PC
2/4/02	WWE WrestleMania 2002	THQ	GC
2/4/02	Arx Fatalis	Fishnik Interactive	PC
2/4/02	Beam Riders	Fishnik Interactive	PC
2/4/02	Call of Duty	Midway	PC
2/4/02	MM Amored Clash	WizardWorks	PC
2/4/02	Dungeon Siege	Microsoft	PC
2/4/02	Tetris Worlds	THQ	Xbox

# PLAY TO PERFECTION

## T A S C T F I E C H A J L S E R S P I E O N N A J G E R A C T F I O N

# METAL GEAR SOLID 2

## SONS OF LIBERTY™

### BASIC TRAINING

Here's a quick breakdown of commands, procedures, and techniques you'll need to master. Many gameplay elements have transferred from the first Metal Gear Solid, but there's still much to learn.

#### QUICK EQUIP

If you find yourself in a very uncomfortable combat situation, quickly tapping R2 or L2 will revert back to the last weapon or item you've used. Hopefully, it's a gun.

#### USING THE RADAR

If you look at the Radar, you'll see the enemy's line of sight in the form of a ray. If the enemy doesn't know of your whereabouts, the ray will be blue. If they suspect your presence, the ray will change to yellow. At this point, their speed of movement will increase. They'll even leave their patrol path to investigate. If they do spot you, the Radar will disappear and reinforcements will be called in. If you don't see a ray next to an adversary, there's a good chance that they are sleeping. The Radar can also be used to monitor camera placement and movement.

#### MAP TRACKING



Using your map will allow you to see where you need to go – basically leading you in the correct direction. If you don't use it, navigating this huge complex is next to impossible.

#### ENEMY EMOTIONS

All enemy emotions are displayed through an icon over their heads. If you see a question mark, that means they are curious. The exclamation point means that you've been spotted. If you shoot them with a tranquilizer dart, Z's will appear over their head. Also, if you knock them out, little birdies will spin around their noggin. As time progresses, one

bird will fly away, then another. When all the birds are gone, the enemy will regain consciousness and continue his patrol.

#### STEALTH MANEUVERS



(by pressing L2) will illuminate what resides around bends. Rather than opening fire on everyone you encounter – an action that will surely lead to additional troops being called in – use the M9 frequently, and sneak up behind as many enemies as you can. When you stand behind an enemy, pressing ■ will initiate a grab maneuver. If you keep pressing ■, you'll eventually break their neck. There's always a probability that more guards are on patrol, so dragging the body out of view is necessary. You can stuff the corpses in lockers and behind anything you desire. You can even throw them over a deck if you find a gate.

#### SPOTTING LASERS

If you know of a set of lasers but cannot see them, light a Cigarette and blow the smoke in the direction of the lasers to illuminate the red beams. If a fire extinguisher or pipe is nearby, shooting them will produce steam that will light up the beams.

#### PENTAZEMIN

Got the shakes? Are you too nervous? Just pop a Pentazemin to cool your jets. This drug comes in handy when using the PSG-1 (sniper rifle).

#### PICKPOCKET

Whether an enemy is dead or unconscious, grabbing and shaking them (by wiggling the analog stick) may cough up a valuable item. Just keep shaking and something may pop out when you set them down.

#### DISABLING TECHNOLOGY

The Chaff Grenades will temporarily disable machinery. If there's a series of cameras that you need to pass, drop a Chaff grenade then run through. While the cameras are offline, you can permanently remove them if you desire.

#### CANCELING REINFORCEMENTS

If an enemy spots you and begins calling in for back up, one quick shot to the walkie-talkie will disable his communications. He'll also sit and shake the broken object, giving you the opportunity to quickly retaliate.

#### REGENERATING HEALTH

When wounded to the point where the health meter is either red or orange, crouching will slowly regain health up to the point where it's blue. This technique can also be used to stop bleeding in lieu of using a bandage.

#### EAVESDROPPING



When you obtain the Direction Mic, it can be used to monitor sounds and conversations. Who knows, you may learn some valuable hints or crucial plot points if you use it frequently.

#### CONSTANT COMMUNICATIONS

If you get stuck – which you shouldn't if you use the guide – or simply want to hear more about certain situations, dial up your buddies on the Codec. There's no telling what these allies will say.

#### ROLLING

If you find yourself in a situation that you cannot win, try hitting ✖ while running to roll out of the way or knock over a series of baddies like bowling pins. This may sound cheesy, but it's a lifesaver and one of the most used techniques in the game.

#### INVENTIVE INVENTORY

You'll get a plethora of equipment during the game. Be aware that some of them may be used in ways beyond their original intent. Exploring their uses is just one of the ways MGS 2 provides depth of gameplay.



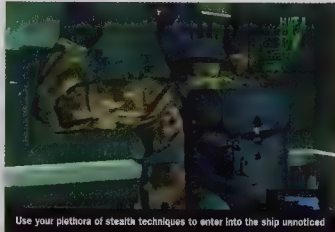
## WALKTHROUGH

Only use this strategy guide if you're completely stuck. If you're determined to cheat (shame on you!), you'll be happy to hear that this guide is mostly spoiler free. Yes, there are pictures of things to come, but nothing about the story is divulged.

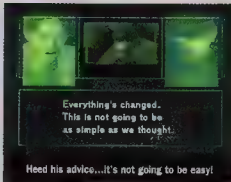
## 1: INFILTRATING DISCOVERY

After the stunning FMV comes to a close, you'll find yourself on Discovery's Aft Deck. As you work your way toward the bridge, stealth is the key. Your goal is to ascend the second ladder on the right-hand side of the boat and enter the door. Before you head in this direction, several items can be obtained. If you maneuver to the left side of the boat,

Bandages rest under the stairs, and Rations are in the far corner. Searching the right side of the boat will reveal Chaff Grenades behind a crate up the first flight of stairs. You'll also find Pentazemine under the second staircase. Now, ascend this stairwell and quietly dispose of the two guards. Before opening the door that leads to the Deck-B Crew Quarters, be sure to search the corner first to find Bandages.



Use your plethora of stealth techniques to enter into the ship unnoticed



If you look behind the stairs you'll find M9 bullets. Rather than heading up to the next floor, run around the corner and enter the hallway. In a nook down the hallway and around the bend there are USP bullets which must be collected after you get the USP. Around the perimeter you'll find guards stationed. Do not engage them, instead head in the first door that you encountered when entering the deck, which brings you to the Crew's Lounge.

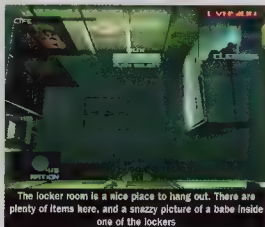
Take out the soldiers stationed here, preferably with your M9. Take a look around the area and you'll find rations and M9 bullets in the bar. Exit out the left door (on the bottom level of the lounge) and proceed through the bottom door to the Crew's Quarters Port.

Move down the hall and enter in the first door on the left. Search the left bank of the lockers. One reveals Rations while the other is a pleasant surprise for the

eyes. In the last bank of lockers on the right side are more M9 bullets.

Make your way back up to the crew's lounge.

Cut across the lounge to the right, and descend the stairs to find the Stun Grenades. Down the stairs on the left will be USP bullets. Now return to the Deck-B Crew Quarters, Starboard. Go up the stairs on the left side of



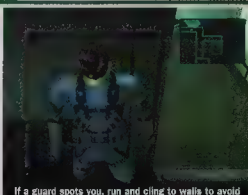
the ship to Deck C.

Get past the guard and hug the wall to avoid the surveillance camera. In the stairwell at the end of the hall you'll find a locker.

Opening it will give you Chaff Grenades. Continue down the hall. Get down into the crawl space before the blocked stairwell to find a ration. Backtrack to the stairs with the locker and proceed up them to Deck D.

All the way to the right and up the hall is a storage room with Box One and M9 bullets. Clear the guards, and heed Otacon's advice about the infrared beams and the explosives. Use your smokes to see the beams. Crawl under them to gain access to the Cafeteria (do not go up the stairs just yet). Sneak past the camera just inside the door and dispatch the troops. Inside the kitchen resides a Ration. Now, maneuver out to The Bridge.

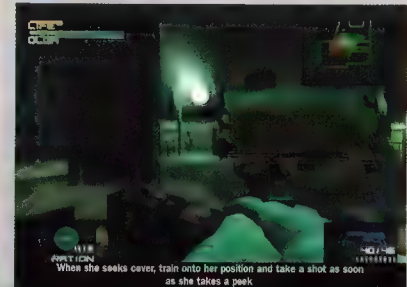
Watch the outscene with the remains of the bridge crew and the arrival of reinforcements via the Kasatka choppers. Exit out the door on the left. After catching a glimpse of Olga's hairy pits and her bullet-shooting knife, battle begins.



## "Go ahead. Shoot me. I'm already dead..." - Fatman

## 2: BOSS BATTLE (OLGA GURLUKOVICH)

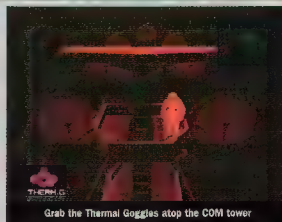
If you move down on either side of the bridge, you'll find M9 bullets and some Rations to help you out. The strategy here is to pop out and shoot her from the first-person view as you find cover to the left and right. Beware of her grenade throwing. After the battle, be sure to get a Ration on the top right of the screen as well as her tags (shake her body) before you leave.



## 3: INTO THE UNDERBELLY

Hop over the boxes and proceed down and to the right. Go up the stairs and climb all the way to the top of the COM Tower. Here you'll find the Thermal Goggles. Go back down and continue to the right. Take down the guard coming out the door, and pick up the Wet Box. Go back into the bridge and pick up the USP bullets. Work your way back to the lounge. Go to the right and down the stairs.

When you turn the corner, you'll see that the threat isn't what you'd expect it to be. It's just a toy...a McFarlane toy. If you switch to first-person and shoot it, a funny little animation sequence will commence. Grab the USP bullets and check the lockers for a surprise. Back out into the hall and exit through the door to your left. Beware of the guard. Drop down the rail and time your descent so you squash the guard below. Make your way down the stairs, dispatching guards along the way. Cross over the small bridge and pick up the Ration. Continue down make and go up the stairs. Turn right and make your way up to the top. Kill the guard, then cross over and grab the USP bullets. Ascend the stairs after going around the



bend. From here, enter the door on the left, being careful of the guards that will greet you as soon as you do.

If you don't take them out (your best option), proceed to the left and hide in one of the lockers. Snap the USP bullets from atop the crate then walk up the screen very slowly. Otacon will warn you of the lasers nearby. Climb back onto the crate you snagged the bullets from and switch to the first-person perspective. Pressing L2 and R2 will elevate Snake onto his tiptoes, allowing you to shoot the

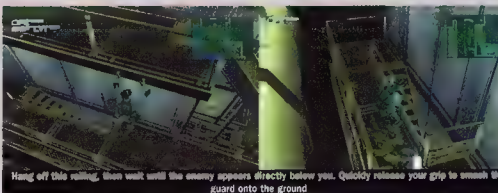
(continued on page 126)

## 3: INTO THE UNDERBELLY

*(continued from page 125)*

green light on the explosive mechanism (the dart gun won't work for this). Next, duck down near the explosives and take out the other lasers – one to the left, and one to the right. Once disabled, continue forward to Deck-2, Port.

In this expansive hallway, hit your first right to find a Ration. Further down the hall you'll stumble across a dead body (cool). USP bullets to the right, and a guard hiding in the shadows. Blow him away, then move on, blasting anyone that gets in your path. At the end of the hall, USP bullets await. Turn to the right and maneuver through the corridors, grabbing the items along the way. If you find yourself struggling, try shooting the pipes to release steam. At the end of this jaunt, open the door directly ahead.



Hang off this railing, then wait until the enemy appears directly below you. Quickly release your grip to smother the guard onto the ground.



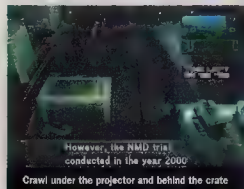
When you take an enemy down in this plant, drag their body into a corner to avoid detection from another guard.

Now that you are Starboard, take a right into another lengthy hallway, then maneuver into an opening on the left. Hug the wall to obtain the USP bullets. Continue down the hall and a cutscene will commence. The guards will spot you, and you'll be forced to fight. The easiest way to take them out is to crouch behind a box, popping up to dish out a quick shot. Be warned, though,

you'll need to eliminate the threat quickly, or grenades will be flung your way. If you need ammo or Rations, head back down the hallway for a quick pick-me-up. When the action ends, head to the door at the end of the hall. A series of beautiful cutscenes will bring you up to speed to the events at hand.

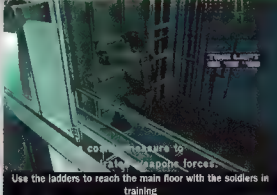
## 4: IDENTIFYING RAY

The goal of this area is to snap shots of Metal Gear RAY. The photos you'll need are front, front right, front left, and the Marine Corps insignia. Quickly hit L2 and select the Camera. Back out of the item menu and use the ladders to reach the hanger bay. If you look closely at the group of soldiers, you'll see that one is wearing boxer shorts. Sneak



However, the NMD trial conducted in the year 2000

Crawl under the projector and behind the crate



Use the ladders to reach the main floor with the soldiers in training

behind the soldiers (crawling under the projector). Open the panel on the far left and crouch to crawl into the vent. Continue crawling to the next vent off to the right. At the end, pop out of the hatch and enter Hold No. 2.

Use the tactics from the first hold in this one as well. Once again you'll find yourself crawling through a series of vents. When you

come to the end of the first vent, wait until the Marine drops his wallet, then continue forward when the coast is clear. When you run into a junction in the vent, take a left. Another amazing cinematic will unfold. Metal Gear! Go to the right within the room, then crawl through the vent (sigh). Climb up the ladder, and slide down the pole. From this vantage point, pull out your camera and take the shots you need. Don't worry about the drill sergeant's commands...they're just training (whew!). The timer is somewhat bogus as well. More time will be added, and the sergeant's dialogue will become somewhat goofy. To successfully take the other shots, walk around RAY and hug the wall to pass by the sleeping guard. Crouch below the opening so that the guards can't see you. Snap a shot. Then, proceed around the other side to the back of the room and snap another shot. You should have taken four. It doesn't matter what order you take them in, so don't stress it.



Use the ducts to sneak over to RAY

Now, head to the right. At the bottom of the room (just below where you originally entered from), you'll find the terminal where you must upload the pictures. This sequence with Otacon is hilarious, especially if you take tons of random pictures. You never know what he'll say. That goofy bastard! Once you get the shots, prepare for a mind-altering sequence.



Take the photos you need, then work your way in the back right corner (behind the guards) to upload the photos

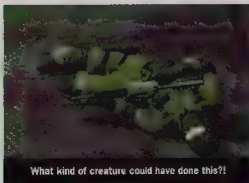
## 5: DRASTIC CHANGES

Now that your world is forever changed, get to know your surroundings and take a dip. Next, crawl into the bug-infested tunnel and pick up the Rations on the other side. Another Ration resides in the central locker. Open the door and you'll spot an enemy sentry. When the guard disappears, enter the hall and out to the right. Head up and activate the Node. From here, run back to your starting location within this room. A



Get ready to fast rope down to Shell One!

Welcome to your new home



What kind of creature could have done this?!

message will play, giving you the Save frequency 140.96. From here, hide behind the crates holding the Rations (you'll need to duck). When the elevator lowers, drop down and take out the guards. If you feel uncertain, you can always sneak behind him when his back is turned and run to the elevator taking it to Strut A Pump Facility.

Hop onto the crates and pick up the item. Head into the lower right corner and run as fast as you can over the seagull droppings. Funny, huh? Now, head to the top left corner and crawl through the hole in the fence (it's hard to see). Pass through the door to enter the Pump Room.

Descend the stairs, then maneuver to the right and sneak past the guard. Download your map from the Node to the right. Open the lockers next to the right stairwell to find Rations. Now, head up the stairs to the roof to find Chaff Grenades. At this point, backtrack past the guard and enter the orange door at the top of the room. Run down the hall and pass through the opening to the left. When you get close to one of the guards (with their back turned), flip over the railing and shimmy past, flipping back up when the coast is clear. Continue forward to the Transformer Room.

As soon as you enter this area, a gorgeous cinematic will introduce one of the many new characters in the game. Remember the frequency 141.80. When

the gameplay commences again, descend the stairs and grab the SOCOM bullets. Activate the Node next to the bullets, then head out the door up the stairs to the left. Head up and open the lockers at the end of the hall. You'll find Rations. From here, enter the door to the immediate left. After the cutscene, head up through the pass and cross the bridge, picking up the Chaff Grenades along the way. At the end, you'll enter Strut C.



Is this the man responsible for all of these murders?

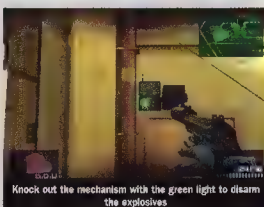


## 11: UNDERCOVER

After Mr. X hands over the disguise, backtrack to Strut F. As soon as you enter this section, head to the left and enter the second door you come across. It's a level 2 door you couldn't enter previously. Before making a step into this room, disarm the explosive mechanism by shooting out the blinking green light on top of the locker. Grab the M4, then head back to the lobby and proceed to the right. Flip over the railing to drop to the lower level. The nearest door (level 2) holds the valued AK-47, as well as plenty of ammo (M4, SOCOM, and AK-47). Go back across the EF Connecting Bridge and hang a left at the junction in the middle. As soon as you walk down the half-flight of stairs on the gangway, start flipping all the way across in order to avoid the trap doors.

Before you enter the Shell 1 Core 1F, be sure to don your disguise and AK-47. Once inside the Core, take out the camera with the SOCOM and continue. Once amongst the guards, be sure not to arouse their suspicions. Proceed down the hall and to the left. Duck into the first room and search the lockers near the door in order to get the Claymores and an issue of FHM. Search the lockers in the back to find M9 bullets and Chaff Grenades. Also be sure to activate the Node in the upper right hand corner of the room. Exit the room to the left and head up the hallway. The first opening to the left holds SOCOM bullets. Proceed further down the hall and press the key lock to the right of the elevator. Descend to B2, and work your way down the stairs to the command room. Grab Box 4, the Directional Mic, and the AK-47. There's also a Node in the right corner. If you view the parakeet in first-person, it'll give you a hint as to how to get another FHM. We accidentally (wink wink) tried to shoot it in the head. Oops! With the goods in hand, return to the elevator and ascend to B1. Head to the right to find a Ratton in a locker and another Node. Now, head past the elevator and enter the lounge. Here you'll find Stun Grenades and SOCOM bullets stuffed in lockers. Wait until one of the soldiers starts to leave this room. Use the butt of your gun to knock him out. Drag his unconscious body to the retinal scanner next to the door adjacent to the lounge. Wait until he wakes up, then prop him on the scanner. This won't work unless his eyes are open. Very clever.

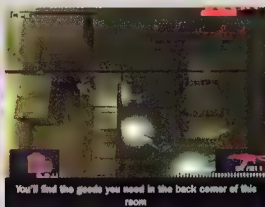
In the hostage room, go down to the bottom wall and use the Directional Mic on the man in front of the left-most table. His heartbeat is erratic. Perfect! With the Mic drawn press **A** to communicate with Ames. Be sure to be out of uniform, otherwise he won't acknowledge you. After the cutscene, use the Mic to listen to the conversation. Immediately after this, pull out your gun and don't move. After Mr. X comes to your rescue, re-enter the elevator and head up to floor 1. Use a Chaff grenade to knock out the cameras. Run to the right and around the corner. Pass through the opening to the right, then crush over the bridge (remember it has trapdoors on it). Head down to Strut F and make use of the level 3 pass card. Head left and down, then explore all four of the level 3 doors. Inside you'll find the RG86, C4, SOCOM bullets, Grenades, the PSG-1, and Claymores.



Knock out the mechanism with the green light to disarm the explosives



Flip over the railing to descend to the lower level



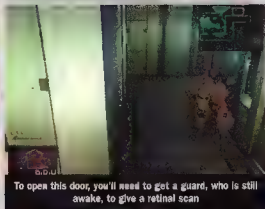
You'll find the goods you need in the back corner of this room



Meet Metal Gear's newest star! Meet... radar... thing



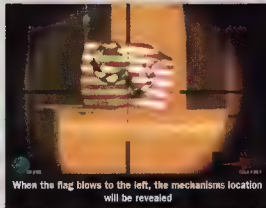
Work your way to Strut D



To open this door, you'll need to get a guard, who is still awake, to give a retinal scan



Use the Directional Mic to locate Ames. Listen for the irregular heartbeat



When the flag blows to the left, the mechanism's location will be revealed



Don't forget to target the Cypher

The room holding the PSG-1 has a crawl space next to the McFarlane Toys boxes. Duck down and enter this hole to get the PSG-1.

At this point you need to work your way up to Strut D. You've done it a million times already, and if you don't remember how to get here, our condolences. This time around, instead of cutting to the left in Strut D, head up and enter the door atop the stairs. You'll find yourself on the Shell 2 connecting bridge. Grab the ammo to the

right. Pull out your PSG-1 and snipe the flashing green lights on the explosive mechanisms. There are plenty of lights to nail, including one behind the flag to the left and another by the pigeons on the right. Oh yeah, there's one right behind you as well. The last one, the tricky one, is on the Cypher floating in the distance. Zoom in so you can get a good look at it. If you're struggling with aim, use your Pentazemin to keep a steady hand.

"It seems our friend Fatman is out of control." — Vamp

## 12: BOSS BATTLE (HARRIER)

With the Stinger Missile Launcher in hand, wait until you hear a lock-on beep (indicated by a red target) before firing a single shot. The strategy here is to unload when the Harrier is in sight. This is almost a quick draw of sorts — to whomever fires first go the spoils of war. Continue dueling it out, hiding and flipping when missiles or machine gun fire rain down. This battle is extremely difficult, but thankfully, additional Rations will be dropped onto the bridge. Just keep fighting, and this unfair duel will eventually come to a close.



Hide when the Harrier unloads its rounds, then counter with a rocket blast of your own

## 13: PRESIDENTIAL ESCORT

The goal is to get into Shell 2. Make your way along the gray beam, then drop down to the yellow pipe; being careful not to slip on the bird droppings. You can also flip to the other side (which is easier, but not nearly as cool) to get the ammo and the AK Suppressor. Make use of the coolant to put out any fires you run across. There's only one way to go from the blocked Shell 2 entrance. Maneuver across the catwalk leaping over the falling panels. When you see

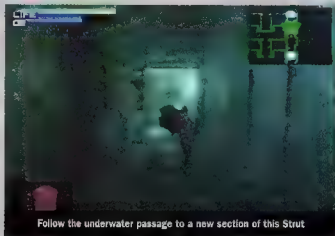


Use the Coolant Spray to douse the flames

a bridge below, hang, then drop to it. Snipe the guards, then flip over the first gap and shimmy across the second. Ascend the ladder to L Perimeter, then duck under the windows to avoid alerting the guards sweeping the area. To pass the large gap around the corner, duck and hug the wall, tip-toeing along the narrow ledge. When the guard takes a pee, use it to refresh yourself...seriously. Stand under his juice. It's fun!

Next, hang then drop to another bridge. Snipe the hovering sentry. From here, crawl along the bridge and ascend the stairs. If you need SOCOM bullets, crawl to the left. This is also a great spot to snipe the mechanical sentries. At this point, locate the Shell 2 complex. Head

toward it using the skills you've mastered to cross the broken bridge. You'll enter the Shell 2 Core. Pull out your Mic and listen to Olga's conversation. Go down the stairs, then move across the room to another set of stairs. Ascend them, then enter the first room to your right. Toss a Chaff grenade in to confuse the cameras, using your SOCOM to shut them down permanently. In the second room on the right awaits a Node. Jack in. Now, make your way to the elevator and hit B1. Exit right and activate the Node. Descend the stairs and dive into the water. Swim forward and get some air from the opening which is indicated on your radar in blue. Get wet again, and you'll eventually run into the Nikita. Head back to the camera room to get more ammo for this powerful weapon.



Follow the underwater passage to a new section of this Strut

Return to the area with the two stairwells. On the far wall is a duct. Use your new armament to launch a missile into the vent. You'll need to control the rocket. When maneuvering it, go straight, up the ramp, hard left, around the bend, up another ramp, then right. Don't hit the Prez, unless you want a quick laugh. Your target is the metal

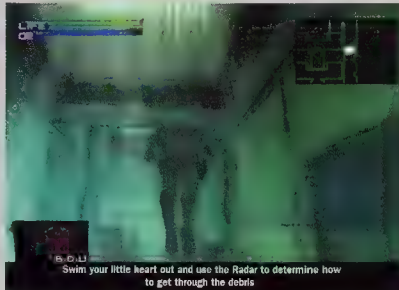
containers in the back of the room. Just steer between the bars to hit it. Now, that the floor is deactivated, go back up the right staircase. Head up the hall to the left across the now safe floor. Happy birthday, Mr. President! After this strange figurehead gets a little personal and fills you in on government secrets, a new mission will be presented.



Use the guided missile to knock out the electric floor

## 14: UNDERWATER PASSAGE

Return down elevator and take another dip. This time around, pop out of the same gap to get air, then swim to the right to get the Night Vision Goggles. Continue forward, avoiding the mines that paint your path. Open the underwater door, then use your Radar to determine how to get through the debris. At the end, you'll run into another door. Breathe in some air, then swim up the stairwell. Proceed through the door, and you'll run into Vamp – who happens to be a very talented dancer we might add.

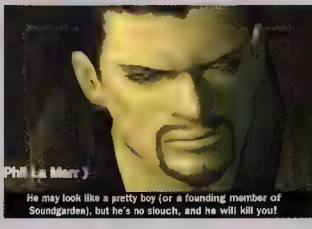


Swim your little heart out and use the Radar to determine how to get through the debris

**"Why am I the only one that can't die?" – Fortune**

## 15: BOSS BATTLE (VAMP)

You won't have much room to run around in this area; so use the heaviest of weapons you have in your possession. We recommend the Stinger and Grenade Gun. Your SOCOM and AK-47 are only useful if you can get a headshot. The goal here is simple: Fill him full of lead. You can even hit him when he submerges – aiming is critical, though. When he launches an attack, get out of his way. He's quick, precise, and above all, deadly. If you're truly talented, you can shoot the knives he flings at you. If you accidentally fall into the water, you're dead. What a battle!!



Phil La Marr

He may look like a pretty boy (or a founding member of Soundgarden), but he's no slouch, and he will kill you!



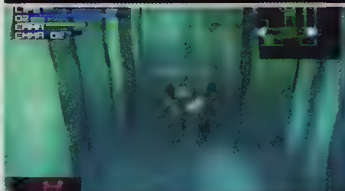
When Vamp surfaces, use the grenade launcher or Stinger to knock him silly

## 16: THE RESCUE

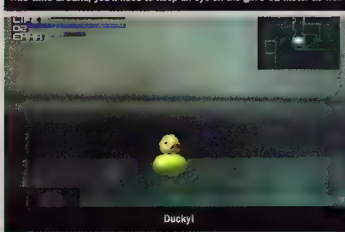
Head straight up then take a plunge into the water down the stairwell. Work your way along this underwater path, again following the mines. Snag any items along the way, including the Body Armor Unit. At the end awaits a stairwell that leads up to a Node. Search all of the lockers. One of them will trigger a cutscene. You'll need to help your new accomplice throughout the area



You'll find the girl in one of the lockers



This time around, you'll need to keep an eye on the girl's O2 meter as well



Ducky!

by dragging her through the water. Swim as fast as you can back out of this area. You'll need to keep an eye on both O2 levels. You'll arrive in Vamp's chamber. Exit through the door, occasionally choking the girl to lift your spirits. Get wet again and work your way along the path, passing through the debris once again. If you keep your eyes peeled, you'll see a rubber ducky in one of the air ducts. Cute!

When you reach the goal, ascend the stairs and drag the girl along. When you get to the bugs, use the spray to clear a path, or if she truly gets on your nerves, shoot her with a tranquilizer dart. Call the elevator and drag her into it. Take it up to floor 1. Shoot the guard in the room to the left. Continue dragging the excess baggage to the left and down the hall. Remove another pesky guard, then continue downward and to the right. Descend the stairs and repeat the process and ascend the stairs to the right. Just keep heading right through the hall to the bridge.

The time of day has changed...cool! Remove the hovering sentries, giving you access to safely cross the bridge. Head down, and spray the fire. If your friend accidentally steps into the flames (wink wink), try again. Enter the door and eliminate the threat as quickly as possible. Spin the wheel to open the next door. After the cutscene, lay down cover for the girl as she works her way across the piping. Support will be supplied when she passes Strut E. When she starts walking, shoot the Claymores, then the guard on the lower portion of the tower. As she approaches the first tower, she will be sited. Clear the summoned guards once they are alerted to her presence. While she is on the strut, several Cyphers will pop up. Check behind you and back along the gangway for more ammo. Be careful, after she passes the second tower, guards will continue to appear, even after you've cleared the area. Also, be sure to pick off the Claymores en route to the third tower. At the end of this long journey, Vamp will take the girl hostage. When he swings the victim to the side, apply a series of headshots to Vamp.

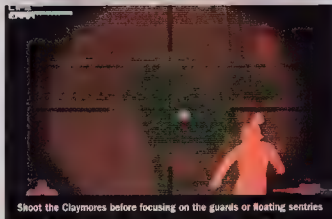
After the cutscene, pass through the door and head back to the basement of the Shell 1 Core (floor B2 to be exact. Along your way, check out the level 5 door in Strut E (the Parcel Room) to find a Digital Camera. Continue forward, flipping over falling grating on the connecting bridge that leads to the Core. Use the elevator to reach B2. Let the tears flow.



Spray the bugs to clear a path



Don't let this happen...although it is amusing



Shoot the Claymores before focusing on the guards or floating sentries



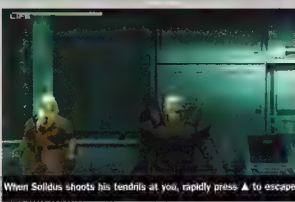
Apply a quick round of headshots to end this hostage situation

"I'm like you...  
I have no name." — Mr. X

## 17: IN THE BUFF

When you awaken in the hospital wing, quickly jam on ▲ to detach the mechanical arm. Now that you have your totally awesome new outfit, head out the door and activate the Node. Pass through another door to the right to reach the hanger. Cling to the crate, then flip to the other crate and ascend the stairs. Answer every call you get when you reach the top floor. Odd stuff, huh? Head up and flip over the catwalk. Drawing enemy fire won't matter too much

(especially if you have plenty of Rations). Head into the tunnel and continue answering the calls that come in. What in the world is going on in this game? There's nothing you can do here, but don't leave. Just wait it out. Eventually, a comrade will confront you.



When Solidus shoots his tennis at you, rapidly press ▲ to escape

## 18: SLICE &amp; DICE

After the cutscene, run out and use your sword to chop up those who stand in your path. Block all the shots that you can. Just keep pressing onward until the threat has ceased. You'll now be brought up to speed as to what the heck is happening with nano-communications. Pass through the door and you'll enter Sigmoid Colon. Run out onto the circular platform and slice all the meat that drops down. When a strange message appears, just keep battling. Huh? It'll happen again...but only one more time. If you will now put your hands together for...

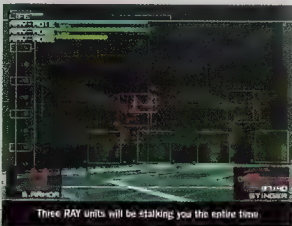


Hackling away in first-person is a bloody good time

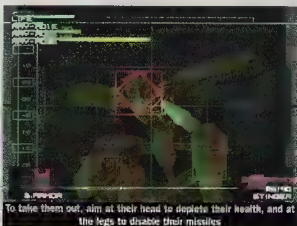
## 19: BOSS BATTLE (RAY)

1 010100111010 100

They're big. They're mean. But they can't take a hit. Just keep dodging their rockets and rain attacks, occasionally unleashing a fury of your own. Keep attacking, taking one down at a time. You'll have to take out quite a few of these bad boys, so grab the Rations that drop and, like we said, open fire like nobody's business. Hitting the RAYs in the leg will temporarily disable them. The head is where you want to aim though. After a few minutes, they'll jump onto the platform, making this battle even more troublesome. Your every skill will be tested here. Good luck.



These RAY units will be stalking you the entire time.



To take them out, aim at their head to deplete their health, and at the legs to disable their missiles.

"I'll never trust a Frenchman." — Ocelot

## SECRETS

Just like the original Metal Gear Solid, there are a ton of secrets in this game. We've listed the few that we managed to find in compiling this guide. The more you play, the more you get. Just keep hunting and send us an email ([reiner@gamelinformer.com](mailto:reiner@gamelinformer.com)) regarding what you found and how you got it.

## DIRECTOR MODE

During most of the cutscenes and any of the Codec conversations, maneuvering the analog sticks allows you to zoom in, pan out, or cut to something off screen. It's almost as if you are holding the camera and are shooting the scene.

## DIRTY BIRDS!

If you see a seagull and don't much care for them, go ahead and blast them. As trivial as this may be, Konami actually put a lot into this aspect. The animation, explosion of feathers, and thud of the dead bird hitting the ground is perfectly re-created.

Not that we'd know what it really should be like, but...uh...Hey! Look over there!



It may not be the humane thing to do, but if you choose to (we did it to relieve stress) blast a seagull out of the sky.

## FHM MAGAZINE

As you progress through the game, you'll run into tons of FHM Magazines. You really have no use for these, but the enemies love reading them — for the articles, of course! Drop one onto the floor where an enemy patrols. Once he sees it, he'll pick it up and start reading.

## LOVE ON THE RUN

Has this mission gotten to you? Do you need to take a load off? Well, you can. Literally. Within many of the lockers in the game are pictures of women. You can

actually do a number of things with these. If you enter the locker, close the door, and press forward, Snake will kiss the poster. If you stare at the poster in the first-person viewpoint and point your gun at "random" locations of the girl, another obscure event will occur. If you stare at the poster in first-person and call Otacon, prepare for a shock!

## RANDOM OBJECTS

Studying each environment often brings about strange sightings. We've seen Zone of the Enders boxes, posters for Policenauts, a rubber ducky in the water, and McFarlane toys based on the characters in Metal Gear Solid 2 scattered everywhere.



It's a McFarlane toy! Cooooooool!

## DOG TAGS



Circle the guard when his arms are raised and aim at his face (or groin) to get the Tags.

on, go back into first-person and aim at his face or groin. He'll gladly hand over the Dog Tags. Collecting all of them may unlock an interesting bonus. Hmmm?

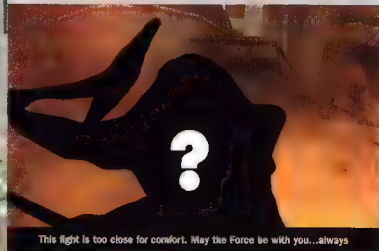
## ATTENTION TO DETAIL

If you shoot a tray of ice cubes (you'll usually find them in a bar), the tray will move, and the cubes will

## 20: FINAL BOSS BATTLE

1 11 01001011

Another jam session on the ▲ button is the beginning of this long and difficult fight. Before you can really get going, a lengthy cutscene will ensue. The only weapon you have is your trusty sword. This sequence actually pans out more like a fighting game than anything else. It may seem like this boss blocks every job you throw his way, but angles can be found. For example, getting behind him when he attacks leaves a gaping attack zone. Immediately engaging him after a fire blast or missile attack has a high percentage of success as well. Halfway through the fight, your adversary will become enraged. Avoid his streak attacks at all costs, and continue using the methods you originally found success with. When the events finally come to a close, be sure to wait until the credits end for an additional scene. If you beat the game on Normal mode, you'll unlock the Digital Camera, Extreme mode, new Main Menu artwork, and a level skip of sorts.



This fight is too close for comfort. May the Force be with you...always

fall out. If you shoot the cubes, they'll disintegrate. If you leave them be, they'll slowly melt. For some reason, there are swarms of bugs everywhere. When you step on them, their splattered shells will remain on the floor. Shooting magazines flings pages into the air. Blasting a TV will make the image disseminate slowly. The list goes on and on. Amazing stuff to say the very least.

## KNOCK OUT

Specific doors in the game can be punched off of their hinges (usually lockers). Just keep hitting the door and it will fall off and land on you.

## IMPOSSIBLE MANEUVERS

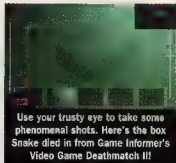
If you try impossible things, like rolling up a stairwell, an amusing animation will take place — usually resulting in injury.

## CODEC

Try calling your contacts at weird times, like in a locker for example. Strange conversations will take place. Hideo Kojima told us that the script for the game, and such secrets as these, weighed in at roughly 1,000 pages. Basically, there's a ton of dialogue to unlock.

## DIGITAL CAMERA

Once you get the Digital Camera, you may never play the game the same way again. You can snap shots of everything, and prop up enemies into strange positions for a once in a lifetime shots. The great thing is, much like the Dog Tags, the game saves each photo you take.



Use your trusty eye to take some phenomenal shots. Here's the box Snake died in from Game Informer's Video Game Deathmatch II!

# SECRET ACCESS

## PS2 PLAYSTATION 2



### DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2

Enter this code at the Main Menu. You'll hear a snapping sound when the cheat is inputted correctly.

All Park Editor Themes – Up, Left, Down, Right, Down, Up, Down, Right, Left (x2),

"The Rhino"  
Toledo, OH



### GUILTY GEAR X

Enter this code at the Press Start screen. If entered correctly, you'll hear a girl say something in Japanese.

Unlock Dizzy & Testament – Down, Right (x2), Up, Start  
David Vedder  
Washington, DC

### SILENT HILL 2

Bonus Riddle Mode – Complete the game on all three Riddle Difficulty settings to unlock another.

Extra Options – Enter the Option menu, then simultaneously press L1 and R1.

Scratchy Filter – Beat the game, then input the code for the Extra Options. This new feature allows players to view the action through a cleaner picture.

Set Ammo Allocation – Beat the game, then input the code for the Extra Options. This new feature allows players to manipulate how many bullets each pick-up holds.

"Daddy Fat Sacks"  
Memphis, TN

### SPY HUNTER

For now, the only way to unlock cheats within this amazing game is to complete the mission objectives within a specific amount of time. Once you do unlock something, which is quite challenging, head into the System Options menu, then choose Extras, followed by Cheat Grid. Good luck!

- Camera Flip – Complete Mission 11 in 3:10
- Concept Art Video – Complete Mission 9 in 3:45
- Dizzy Camera – Complete Mission 12 in 3:30
- Early Test Anamatic Video – Complete Mission 5 in 3:25
- Extra Cameras – Complete Mission 6 in 3:45
- Fisheye View – Complete Mission 10 in 3:15
- Green HUD – Complete Mission 2 in 3:35
- Hover Spy – Complete the game
- Inversion Camera – Complete Mission 8 in 3:05
- Making Of Video – Complete Mission 13 in 2:15
- Night Vision – Complete Mission 4 in 3:15
- Rainbow HUD – Complete Mission 7 in 3:10
- Saliva Spy Hunter Video – Complete Mission 1 in 3:40
- Saliva Your Disease Video – Complete Mission 3 in 2:40
- Super Spy – Complete all 65 objectives
- Tiny Spy – Complete Mission 14 in 5:10

"GI Droid"  
(location unknown – last seen  
protesting the acorn industry outside of the GI offices)



### ARCTIC THUNDER

Enter all of these codes at the Mode Select screen. None of these cheats have any effect in Point Races.

- All Invisible –    R2,  (x2), Start
- Atomic Snowballs –  (x3), L1,  Start
- Boost Mode –  R1 (x2),  R2, Start
- Catch Up –   (x2),  Start
- Clones – L1, L2 (x2),  L1,  Start
- Grappling Hooks –  (x2), L2,  (x2), L1, Start
- No Drones –  (x2),  (x2), L1, R1, Start
- No Power-Ups –    R2,  Start
- Random Power-Ups – R1, R2,   R1, R2, Start
- Rooster Tails – R1, R2, L2, L1,  Start
- Snow Bombs –  (x2), R1, R2, Start
- Super Boost –  L1,  R2,  L2, Start

Carla Kink  
Houston, TX



### NHL HITZ

Input all of these cheats at the Versus screen. The numbers for the code represents the number of times you'll need to press each button.  changes the first digit,  the second, and  the third. Once the button sequence is entered, press the d-pad in the direction listed. The name of the code will flash up on the screen.

- Big Heads – 2, 0, 0, Right
- Big Heads Team – 2, 2, 0, Left
- Big Hits – 2, 3, 4, Down
- Big Puck – 1, 2, 1, Up
- Bulldozer Puck – 2, 1, 2, Left
- Domino Effect – 0, 1, 2, Right
- First to 7 Wins – 3, 2, 3, Left
- Hitz Time – 1, 0, 4, Right
- Hockey Ball – 1, 0, 4, Left
- Huge Heads – 3, 0, 0, Right
- Huge Heads Team – 3, 3, 0, Left
- Huge Puck – 3, 2, 1, Up
- Infinite Turbo – 4, 1, 3, Right
- Late Hits – 3, 2, 1, Down
- More Code Time – 3, 3, 3, Right
- No Crowd – 2, 1, 0, Right
- No Fake Shots – 4, 2, 4, Down
- No One-Timers – 2, 1, 3, Left
- No Puck Out – 1, 1, 1, Down
- Pinball Boards – 4, 2, 3, Right
- Rain Mode – 1, 4, 1, Left
- Show Hot Spots – 2, 0, 1, Up
- Show Puck Speed – 1, 0, 1, Up
- Skills Versus – 2, 2, 2, Down
- Snow Mode – 1, 2, 1, Left
- Tennis Ball – 1, 3, 2, Down
- Turbo Boost – 0, 0, 2, Up
- Win Fights for Goals – 2, 0, 2, Left

Kevin Harlan  
New York, NY

### NHL 2002

Barenaked Ladies Players – To re-create this high profile band in NHL 2002, enter the Create Player mode and input any of the names below. These cheats are not case sensitive. Both upper and lower case work.

Jim Creighton  
Ed Robertson

Kevin Hearn  
Tyler Stewart

Steven Page  
Marcus Robinson  
Alpena, MI



## SECRET ACCESS

### PS2 PLAYSTATION 2

#### NBA STREET

Bring up the Enter User ID screen, bring up a profile. Go ahead and create one if there are no profiles saved. From here, bring up the User Records screen. Now, enter any of the codes below.

**3LW Team** – Hold R1, then press Left (x2), Right, Down, X.

**Dream Team** – Hold R2, then press Up (x2), Right (x2), X.

**SSX Team** – Hold L2, then tap Up, Down (x2), Left, X.

**NYC Legends Team** – Hold R2, then press Down (x3), Left, X.

Tim Duncan  
San Antonio, TX

### NINTENDO GAMECUBE GAMECUBE



#### LUIGI'S MANSION

**Another Mansion** – Complete the game, then save your data. At the Main Menu awaits a new mode that rearranges several elements within the quest.

**Teleport** – Simply stand in front of any mirror that isn't infested with ghosts, then turn on your Game Boy Horror monitor and press A to warp back to the entrance of the mansion.

Hank Sanders  
Orlando, FL

### XBOX XBOX



#### NHL 2002

**Barenaked Ladies Players** – To re-create this high profile band in NHL 2002, enter the Create Player mode and input any of the names below. These cheats are not case sensitive. Both upper and lower case work.

Jim Creeggan  
Ed Robertson

Kevin Hearn  
Tyler Stewart

Steven Page

Marcus Robinson  
Alpena, MI

### PLAYSTATION

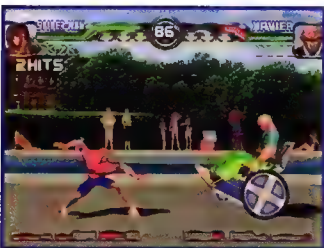
#### CASTLEVANIA CHRONICLES

**Art Gallery** – To unlock beautiful artwork, simply complete stages within Arrange Mode. One piece of artwork is unlocked for each stage that you beat.

**Extra Option** – At the Main Menu, input Up (x2), Down (x2), Left, Right, Left, Right, O, X. Upon correct entry, a bonus screen will appear allowing the player to change the display and date.

**Sound Module Settings** – When selecting Original or Arrange mode, hold L1 and R1 to bring up this interesting setting.

"Tony, The Tubular Gamer"  
Vermilion, NH



#### X-MEN: MUTANT ACADEMY 2

**Cheat Mode** – At the Title Screen, enter Select, Down, R2, L1, R1, L2 to unlock all of the secret characters, alternate costumes, endings, movie pictures, and arenas.

**Spider-Man** – To unlock this Marvel legend, input the code for Cheat mode, then highlight Cyclops and press L1.

**Xavier** – To unlock this awesome character, input the code for Cheat mode, then highlight Magneto and press L1.

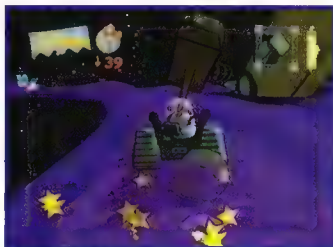
Jean Grey  
Los Angeles, CA



#### WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM

**Alternate Uniform Colors** – At the Character Selection screen, highlight a rider, then press Z to bring up a color pallet screen.

Billy Crystal  
Duluth, MN



#### CEL DAMAGE

Enter this code as a new name within the Create/Load menu.

**Unlock Everything** – ENCHILADA!

Kyle Rasmussen  
Ontario, Canada

## CODE OF THE MONTH

### STAR WARS STARFIGHTER: SPECIAL EDITION – XBOX



Enter all of these codes at the Code Setup screen within the Options menu.

**Christmas Video** – WOZ

**Development Team** – TEAM

**Director Mode** – DIRECTOR

**Hero Gallery** – HEROES

**Hidden Message** – LTDJGD

**Invincibility** – MINIME

**Jar Jar Mode** – JARJAR

**My Day At Work** – JAMES

**No HUD** – NOHUD

**Planet Gallery** – PLANETS

**Ship Gallery** – SHIPS

**Simon Day** – SIMON

**Two-Player Missions** – ANDREW

**Unlock Everything** – OVERSEER

Tim McGuire  
Green Haven, NJ



**MEN IN BLACK: THE SERIES**

Enter all of these codes at the Password screen.

- Level 2 – FCHTRMNS
- Level 3 – HSDSHSBS
- Level 4 – MXNXMSNG
- Level 5 – THXKXSCK
- Level 6 – NNTNDWNY
- Ending – NFNTMMDD

Sarah "Will Smith Lover" Ford  
Webville, CO



**SPIDER-MAN: MYSTERIO'S MENACE**

Enter all of these codes at the Password screen.

- Black Costume – JV31-
- Level Select – C01Q
- Super Code 1 – 7V84Z
- Super Code 2 – RV8WJ
- Super Code 3 – SP1DY
- Super Code 4 – JV37T
- Super Code 5 – JV33R

Manny Ramirez  
Poncha, OK

**BOXING FEVER**

Enter all of these codes at the Password screen within the Setup menu.

- Amateur Series Complete – 90HG6738
- Top Contender Series Complete – H7G49DHS
- Pro Am Series Complete – 2GG48HD9
- Professional Series Complete – 8G3D97B7
- World Title Complete – B3G58318
- Survival Mode Complete – G51FF888

Andrew Reynolds  
Las Vegas, NV

**TETRIS WORLDS**

Original Tetris – At the Main Menu, highlight the Marathon option, then hold the Left Button and press Select.

"The Rhino"  
Toledo, OH

**PAC-MAN COLLECTION**

Pac-Attack Appendix – Enter the Pac-Attack game, then highlight the Puzzle mode option and press Right and A. In this slightly altered version, Pac-Man appears less often and none of the clusters are random.

Jason Saris  
Austin, TX

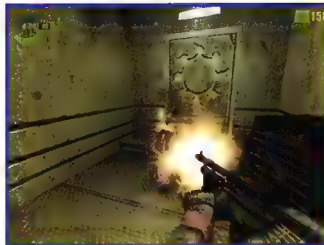


**NFL BLITZ 2002**

Input all of these cheats at the Versus screen. The numbers for the code represents the number of times you'll need to press each button. L Button changes the first digit, B the second, and A the third. Once the button sequence is entered, press the R Button. A sound will ring out to signal that the code is working.

- Infinite Turbo – 4, 3, 2, R Button
- Invisible Players – 3, 1, 3, R Button
- No Random Fumbles – 3, 2, 1, R Button
- Ogre Field – 1, 3, 2, R Button
- Snow Field – 2, 2, 5, R Button

Neil "Turn on Your Heart Light" Diamond  
Sydney, Australia



**RED FACTION**

During gameplay, press – to bring up the console window. At this point, any of the cheats below may be entered.

- All Weapons & Ammo – bigbugmug
- Alternate Camera View – camera[1-3]
- Flight mode – heehoo
- God Mode – vivaheivig

"Mr. Monday Night"  
 Fargo, ND

**GANGSTERS 2**

All Spy Reports – To unlock this valuable information for all of the gangs, change your leader's name to "bangagong".  
Samuel Shepherd  
Santa Reef, WA

**DREAMCAST**

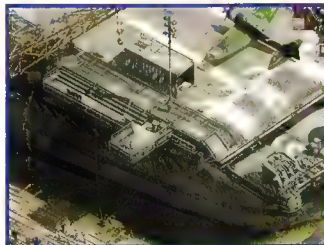


**OOGA BOOGA**

Enter these cheats at the Codes screen within the Options menu.

- Abe Kahuna – AHOUSEDIVIDED
- Birds – AVIARY
- Boar Polo Ruleset – TRICKSHOT
- Boars – PORKCHOP
- Death Kahuna – SALMONMOUSE
- Disco Kahuna – DOTHEHUSTLE
- Dwarf Kahuna – HEIGHTCHALLENGED
- Leprechaun Kahuna – BLARNEYSTONE
- Level 2 Kahuna Masks – ICHEAT
- Level 3 Kahuna Masks – THEREFOREIAM
- Level 4 Kahuna Masks – SOVERYVERY
- Level 5 Kahuna Masks – WEAKANSAD
- Pirate Kahuna – WAREZWRONG
- Rodeo Ruleset – SADDLEUP
- Super Guy Kahuna – SECRETIDENTITY

Thomas Diaz  
Harrington, SD



**COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE**

Cheat Mode – Simply enter the name of your character as "GONZOANDJON" to activate this mode. Now, any of the cheats below may be entered.

- Invincibility – [Control] + I
- Instant Kills – [Control] + [Shift] + X
- Invisibility – [Control] + V
- Teleport – [Shift] + X

**Level Codes**

Enter these codes at the Keypad Mission prompt after activating Cheat mode.

- Level 2 – WKUC4
- Level 3 – YSM51
- Level 4 – B7D8F
- Level 5 – 3GHSL1
- Level 6 – AZLM1
- Level 7 – JAHSG
- Level 8 – UN63A
- Level 9 – VAZ2P
- Level 10 – 9TT5W

"Master Gamer"  
Webville, CO


**GAME SHARK**
PS2 **PLAYSTATION 2****SPY HUNTER**

Master Code (Must Be On) –  
ec8783c414317de4

Camera Flip –  
4ca1ffbc1456e7a6

Dizzy Camera –  
4ca1ffd41456e7a6

Extra Cameras –  
4ca1ff441456e7a6

Fisheye View –  
4ca1ffa41456e7a6

Green HUD –  
4ca1F0e41456e7a6

Hover Spy –  
4ca1ff1c1456e7a6

Inverse Camera –  
4ca1ff741456e7a6

Night Vision –  
4ca1fc141456e7a6

Objective Points Agent 1 –  
4cde4d041456e766

Objective Points Agent 2 –  
4cde51a41456e766

Objective Points Agent 3 –  
4cde55441456e766

Rainbow HUD –  
4ca1FF5c1456e7a6

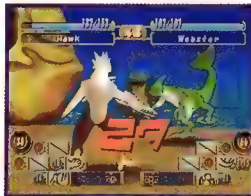
Super Spy –  
4ca1fe341456e7a6

Tiny Spy –  
4ca1ff041456e7a6

**SILENT HILL 2**

Master Code (Must Be On) –  
ee8dbed014431f04

Infinite Health –  
4ca9f29a145625dd  
4ca9f2a2145625dd

**MONSTER RANCHER 3**

Master Code (Must Be On) –  
ecbca14c14318edc

Infinite Cash –  
1ca24054144f25cc

Infinite Hit Points –  
4ca2ccc81456e404

4ca2ccc1456e404

Infinite Hit Points (Player 2) –  
4ca2d1a01456e404

**OKAGE: SHADOW KING**

Infinite Hit Points (Big Bull) –  
4ccb9e341456e404

Infinite Hit Points (Kisling) –  
4ccb9fe41456e404

Infinite Hit Points (Linda) –  
4ccb9e841456e404

Infinite Hit Points (Rosalyn) –  
4ccb9f941456e404

**KINETICA**

Master Code (Must Be On) –  
ec83f268143ca034

Infinite Retries –  
4c8a4c941456e7a3

**BATMAN: VENGEANCE**

Master Code (Must Be On) –  
ecb8850c143afe1c

All Levels –  
3c13f3e81456e7b4

Infinite Batarangs –  
4c2064d41456e79c

Infinite Batcuffs –  
4c2064d61456e79c

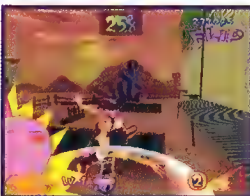
Infinite Electronic Batarangs –  
4c2064d01456e79c

Infinite Flash Bombs –  
4c2064d81456e79c

Infinite Nets –  
4c2064d41456e79c

Infinite Remote Charges –  
4c2064d21456e79c

Infinite Stunners –  
4c2064ce1456e79c

**YANYA CABALLISTA:  
CITY SKATER**

Master Code (Must Be On) –  
ec8782a04318194

All Levels –  
1ca7e781355e6A6  
4ca7e78c1456e7a6


**PLAYSTATION**
**CASTLEVANIA CHRONICLES**

Infinite Health –  
8005a8220010

Infinite Lives –  
800592920063

**GAME BOY ADVANCE****LADY SIA**

All Prisoners Rescued –  
1d583ebad35d3943

Infinite Health –  
21de6bfc9be93e4e

Infinite Lives –  
5b8766a82ffdd41c

Infinite Ring Power –  
5ba78165600a8d4e

**X-MEN: REIGN OF APOCALYPSE**

Master Code (Must Be On) –  
e85e92d2cad6381  
e42fbb9a8ba0187a

Infinite Health –  
3e9d1e974700c7c3

Infinite Lives –  
2992bc498baec33f

Infinite Mutant Power –  
1bc0f0c54338ef4

Infinite Time –  
294d885516291fc0  
96e955b602bcef39

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Send in your codes and passwords, and if we choose your entry as Code of the Month you'll win a wonderful prize from the Game Informer Vault! All other entries printed within these hallowed pages will receive a Secret Access T-shirt.

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# CLASSIC GI

## WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

### HOW COMPUTER SPACE FAILED AND STARTED A REVOLUTION

**E**ven as video games have grown into a multi-billion dollar industry, their evolution can be defined by failures as much as successes. Thousands of games are released each year, but apart from a handful of hits, most will languish on store shelves, destined only for the bargain bin. Some of the most innovative consoles ever made – the first home video game system (Magnavox Odyssey), the first 16-bit handheld (Atari Lynx), and the first home system with a built-in modem (Sega Dreamcast) – were commercial disasters one and all. Perhaps it's appropriate, then, that Computer Space,



Nolan Bushnell today

the very first video game ever commercially released, was not met with open arms.

It's also appropriate that Computer Space was the creation of Nolan Bushnell, the brash young entrepreneur who founded the Atari Corporation, and probably the person most identified with the early days of video games.

Because of both Computer Space and his success with Atari, Bushnell is frequently referred to as the "Father of the Video Game Industry," and, in a way, he is. Computer Space was the first commercially manufactured video game. This is a fact. However, as with many achievements in Bushnell's career, the bare facts don't begin to tell the full truth.

A flamboyant and outspoken figure, Bushnell has sometimes been accused of standing on the shoulders of giants to achieve his lofty goals. In the case of Computer Space, this giant was Steve Russell, a quiet MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) student who laid the foundation for Bushnell and all those who followed in his footsteps.

Russell was a junior member of MIT's Tech Model Railroad Club, a small group of computer enthusiasts who were among the first amateur hackers.

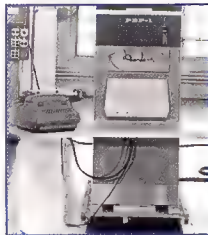
Working on MIT's massive mainframe computers, the TMRC worked on a variety of creative computer projects for their own amusement. In 1961, Russell became infatuated with the

school's newest computer, the Digital Equipment PDP-1, and decided to make an interactive game.

A fan of pulp science fiction, Russell decided to set his game in outer space, and some six months later, completed work on the project he had dubbed

Spacewar. The game was basically a shoot-out between two rocket ships the player controlled via switches built into the PDP-1. Later, other members of the TMRC would make improvements in Russell's original program, adding graphical touches like stars, and even a sun with a working gravitational field.

A few years later, Nolan Bushnell enrolled as a computer science major at the University of Utah. There, he became fascinated by the possibilities of computer games. Even though Bushnell had a hand in creating several original games during his career as a student, Russell's Spacewar remained his favorite computer game. Upon graduation, Bushnell took a job at



Steve Russell created his original Spacewar program on this Digital Equipment PDP-1 machine



This Computer Space cabinet has a bitchin' '70s blue metal-flake paint job

the Ampex Corporation, and began to dream of creating a machine that would bring Spacewar into the hands of consumers.

Using spare electronic components from the Ampex labs, and a black and white television purchased from Goodwill, Bushnell eventually succeeded in creating a serviceable, albeit less graphically sophisticated, version of Spacewar entitled Computer Space. Seeking to bring the machine to arcades, Bushnell entered into a partnership with Nutting Associates, a small-time coin-op distributor, to produce Computer Space cabinets.

Bushnell's eye for creative marketing led him to design a very stylish cabinet to house Computer Space's rather primitive circuitry. Constructed of contoured fiberglass, and manufactured with a variety of brightly colored finishes, the unit is very striking and a collector's item today. Perhaps as a result, Computer Space was quite popular among Hollywood set designers of the mid-'70s, making famous appearances in movies like *Jaws* and the Charleton Heston cult classic *Soylent Green*.

If only it had been so loved by arcade customers. As fate would have it, Computer Space was just too far ahead of

its time for a public used to the simple pleasures of pinball and pool. The control scheme, which was so complex it required users to read through an instruc-

tion book to master the intricacies of gameplay, turned many away from the game. After the initial curiosity wore off, most went back to more traditional arcade pursuits. Only 1,500 Computer Space cabinets were ever manufactured, and many of those were never sold.

This setback didn't deter Bushnell from his dream of bringing video games into the mainstream. Shortly after severing his relationship with Nutting Associates, Bushnell founded a new partnership called Atari with Ted Dabney (another former Ampex employee) and Larry Bryan. Bushnell, who felt that Computer Space's elaborate gameplay was in large part to blame for its failure, decided his next project would be extremely simple. This game, a 2D approximation of table tennis, was called Pong. Pong was, to say the least, a massive success — one that would rocket video games into the American consciousness and establish Bushnell as a visionary.

As for Computer Space, the game lives on as a treasured piece of video game history. Years later, its basic concepts would return in such games as Space Wars (a Spacewar knock-off that had the good fortune of

being released during the height of Star Wars mania), and the wildly successful Asteroids.



Computer Space machines make appearances in the films *Soylent Green* (top) and *Jaws* (bottom)



Computer Space's control scheme, which featured different buttons for thrust, rotate, and fire, proved too difficult for most arcade goers

## THIS MONTH IN GAMING HISTORY

It's a classic that endures to this day. Consumers flocked to stores to buy Donkey Kong Country, and the game sold 500,000 units in its first month of release, making it the fastest-selling game of all-time. It went on to sell 6 million copies worldwide, and still stands as one of the best-selling games ever.

This month in 1994, Nintendo released the landmark SNES title, *Donkey Kong Country*. The game had been designed by Rare using sophisticated Silicon Graphics workstations, and featured rendered characters and quasi-3D effects that were unheard of at the time. This graphical mastery was coupled with addictive gameplay, making



CLASSIC GI

# GREATEST GAME OF ALL TIME

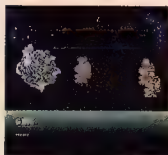
By Dave Davis



Every month one of *Game Informer's* readers picks his or her personal choice for Greatest Game Of All Time.

## FINAL FANTASY III

■ FORMAT SNES ■ PUBLISHER SQUARE SOFT



Who can deny that this game just plain rocks? No matter what you are looking for in an RPG, Final Fantasy III delivers. If you are looking for a great story, it has the best in the series. Looking for great characters? Final Fantasy III has a ton of them, each with unique attack types. Who can forget Sabin's Blitz attacks, Cyan's SwdTech attacks, or Terra's Morph skills (the very foundation for FF IX's Trance mode)? Plus, this was before all the specialized characters in Final Fantasy were replaced with fighter/mage/thief/healer crossbreeds.

The game was huge and made for quite a lengthy adventure. About halfway through the game, though, a certain earth-shattering event caused the beautiful World of Balance to become the post-apocalyptic World of Ruin. This opened up a whole new epic adventure, which required you to stop the evil Kefka. The magic system involved equipping Espers (the precursor to FF VII's Materia and FF VIII's Guardian Forces) so even non-mage characters could cast magic. Equipped Espers could also be summoned once per battle.

Final Fantasy III was also an innovator in graphics, sound, and gameplay. It was the first RPG to have multi-party battles, similar to those in *Ogre Battle* and other strategy games. The graphics were amazing for the time and are still beautiful today. The music was wonderfully designed and sounded like you were playing a game based on an opera. Final Fantasy was arguably the best game in the best RPG series ever created. What better game to be my Greatest Game Of All Time?

NES

## IKARI WARRIORS



RETRO  
RATING  
**8**



As the Minnesota Twins made their way to the World Series, SNK released an enduring classic in *Ikari Warriors*. Ikar is actually a country that had been enslaved by foreign powers. Not a nation to put up with things like this, the US sends in two American soldiers to liberate the entire country. Showcasing addictive multiplayer abilities and fast-paced action, this release allowed players to move through various landscapes on foot, tank, or even helicopter if you made it far enough. Power-ups and enemies abound throughout this title, though mortal gamers may need to partake in assorted codes to make decent headway. The cooperative multiplayer capability was awesome, as was the ever-present search for vehicles to commandeer. Although not heaping in replay value, *Ikari Warriors* is still a great catch.

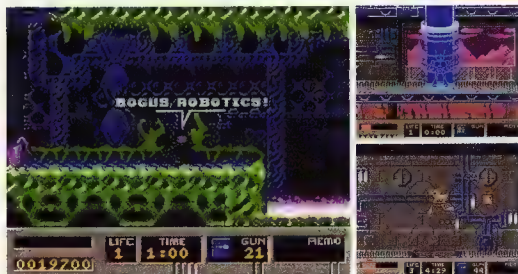
■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** SNK ■ **DEVELOPER** SNK  
■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1987

GENESIS

## B.O.B.



RETRO  
RATING  
**7**



Imagine yourself as a robot. Then imagine that your robot father has just given you a lengthy lecture about this and that, and all you really want to do is get into his car so you can go pick up your date. On the way to your date you crash into a giant asteroid and not only total the car, but get stranded on the vile Planet Goth where evil robots (not angst-filled teenagers) try to turn you into scrap metal. If you don't want this wonderful fantasy to end, you need look no further than B.O.B. for the Sega Genesis. Fortunately, B.O.B. has a few tricks up his sleeve that will give him a chance to get home again. Armed with a laser gun, B.O.B. is able to upgrade his weapon to a triple-shot, flame-thrower, rocket launcher, bolt, wave, or in times of dire emergency he can punch things. Although a basic platformer, this title has some ingenuity to it, and would be a welcome surprise for anyone who has a hankerin' for Genesis lovin'.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** FOLEY HI-TECH SYSTEMS ■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1993

NES

## R.B.I. BASEBALL



RETRO  
RATING  
**6.75**



In one of the first sports titles to have actual stats and players from the big leagues incorporated into the game, *R.B.I.* made huge strides towards bringing sports gamers closer to the real thing. Although there is a healthy dose of nostalgia that comes with seeing some of the old greats take the field again, this game doesn't stand the test of time very well. The fielding controls are abysmal and the pitching formula is poor at best – even for a game released in 1987. It's a shame really, because this game seems to have a lot to offer. As many of you know, the game *Baseball Stars* stands as a beacon of baseball quality from this bygone age, but you'd be doing yourself a disservice to count this one out just because some of the controls are lacking. Those who are seeking a snootful of what once was a great baseball game would probably love to spend a few quality hours with this game, then they can get back to something that won't spank their gaming intelligence so much.

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** TENGEN ■ **DEVELOPER** TENGEN  
■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1987

GENESIS

## PAC-MANIA



RETRO  
RATING  
**3**



Although *Pac-Mania* shares part of its name with a wildly popular and still entertaining arcade classic, it comes up far short of anything resembling a good game. Essentially a bad 3D version of the game we all know and love, *Pac-Mania* throws in a few new elements like power-up items and jumping ghosts in an effort to make you feel better about yourself after putting down your hard-earned cash for something you won't like in ten minutes. Although the graphics seem to be at about par for a Genesis title of this era, there really isn't a lot of complexity that would make them all that difficult to produce. There are very few (if any) 3D *Pac-Man* games that are very good, but one thing's for certain – *Pac-Mania* isn't one of them. It isn't for lack of trying, but the genre just doesn't lend itself well to this type of game.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** TENGEN ■ **DEVELOPER** SCULPTURED SOFTWARE  
■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1991

## NEO GEO POCKET COLOR

### METAL SLUG: FIRST MISSION

**Invincibility** – With difficulty at normal or higher, complete the game with a ranking of 23/23. When this is done, you'll be able to take all the hits you want without flinching. You're only susceptible to holes and pits.

**Level Select** – When the game is beaten, S-Continue is automatically unlocked, giving you access to every one of the game's great levels.

**Playable Boss** – If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. To control the boss, defeat the game on the toughest difficulty. The next game will let you be the bad guy himself.

**Playable Girl** – To get in touch with your feminine side, simply beat the game, and let the credits run. Now you can choose a female character.



### POCKET TENNIS COLOR

**Alternate Costumes** – Instead of hitting **A** to pick your tennis pro, use the **B** button. They will now be sporting a new costume.

**Playable Amoeba** – For a character not of this world, defeat the three opponents in tournament mode. You'll now have access to a blob that turns itself into a racket when it hits the tennis ball.

### SNK VS. CAPCOM: MATCH OF THE MILLENNIUM

**Play As Akuma** – When you beat the game three times with Capcom characters, the mysterious Street Fighter Akuma will be selectable.

**Fight Handicap Matches** – Pick either tag or team mode. On the character select screen, pick a character and hit **Option**. Now the computer won't let you pick any more fighters, but it will choose the regular number for itself. Pound its cheating behind.

**View Ending Cinemas** – Select **Option** when the title screen appears. You'll reach an animation selection screen. From here, you can see the ending for each of the fighters.



## SEGA MASTER SYSTEM

### ALEX KID IN MIRACLE WORLD

**Buy A Continue** – When you're told game over, don't fret. Just hold **Up** and hit **Button 2** eight times, and you'll get a continue. You need \$400 first, though.

### DOUBLE DRAGON

**Unlimited Continues** – Immediately upon entering Round 4, perform between 20 and 30 leaping kicks. You won't be alerted to the fact, but you'll now have as many credits as you'll need to save your girlfriend.



## SEGA SATURN

### DUKE NUKEM 3D

**All Weapons** – Pause the game and press **Z, X, X, Z, Y, Z, Y, X, Y**.

**God Mode** – Pause the game and press **X, Z, Z, X, Y, X, Y, Z, Y**.

**Level Select** – Be on the main menu, and hit **X, Y, Z, Z, Y, X, Y**.

**Monster-Free Levels** – At the screen for selecting your skill level, hit **Z, Z, X, X, Y, Y, X, X, Z, Z**. Ya big wuss.



**Tiny Duke** – Set your difficulty to "Damn I'm Good." Make sure you're laden with codes. Hit a bad guy with the shrink ray. Don't stomp him, but shoot him with the chaingun, shotgun, or handgun until he's toast. Later on, he'll respawn but still be small. Kind of a stupid code, but maybe somebody out there will appreciate it.

### SONIC R

**Bonus Characters** – Get all five of a race's Sonic Tokens while finishing in the top three. Now you'll take on the hidden character on the track. Resort Island has Mecha Sonic. Radical City has Mecha Tails. Regal Ruin has Egg Robo. Reactive Factory has Mecha Knuckles.

**Bonus Course** – To unlock more levels, just finish first in the initial four courses. Now you've got Radiant Emerald for your racing enjoyment.

**Head Start** – To get a leg up on the competition at the race's start, hold **Down** and rapidly press **B**. When the race begins, release **Down**.

**Secret Song** – To hear more enchanted Sonic melodies, go to the Radiant Emerald stage with Super Sonic as your character, and you'll notice some different music. Rock on, dude!

**Playable Dr. Robotnik** – The egg man himself can be yours to control. Simply dominate Radiant Emerald by getting first place, and you'll have him in your stable of racers.



**Playable Super Sonic** – If you want a Sonic even better than the regular Sonic, you merely need to find all the Chaos Emeralds. Sounds tough? Well, here's where they are:

**Island** – Look behind the 50-ring door  
**City** – The first emerald is behind the 20-ring door down the hole after the tunnel  
**City** – Emerald two is behind the 50-ring door  
**City** – You must be Sonic for this one. Head left after the 90 degree turn on the main

course, and do a double-jump onto the platform. You'll see the emerald ahead  
**Ruins** – The first here is behind the 50-ring door located on the left of the course by the arcades  
**Ruins** – The second is behind the 50-ring door after the ramp  
**Factory** – Emerald one is behind the 50-ring door after the loop  
**Factory** – Look for a 50-ring door after the loop with the accelerator. It'll come out of a submarine

**999 Rings** – In Reactive Factory, keep straight after the accelerator. At the fork in the road, head left. You'll pass a sign saying Ring. Just chill by it and you'll get 999 rings. Woohoo!



NES

# METAL GEAR

## BASIC TRAINING

- *Conserve ammo and rations. They don't grow on trees. However, you can take advantage of their spots. When you find them, use your transceiver, exit, and the item will be right back in place again.*
- *Your radio allies can give great assistance (though not as much as this guide). Especially helpful is Diane, at frequency 120.33. She'll give you battle tactics for bosses.*
- *If you're spotted, duck out of the room instead of trying to fight. You'll save both bullets and health.*
- *Enemies respawn and reposition when you enter a room. Be ready to fight.*
- *Pits spell instant death. To stop them, use the same trick you do to respawn ammo and rations. This will freeze their growth, but will also cover up the open area so you can't see it.*

## WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

After receiving a message from Big Boss, head right. Allow the guard to fall asleep (you'll see the comic ZZ's above his head), and pummel him. Move down to the three dogs (there are no bad dogs, only bad trainers). Walk down the middle, and you can avoid damage. Take the right path down. Outrun the next dog. You'll find another sleepy soldier, and a truck containing binoculars.



Below, be on the right, but above the top guard's vision. Wait for the right moment and waste him. Stand in his spot until you can safely stretch the second. Sneak down to the dog, punch him, and continue downward. There's a building with guards on either side. Waste one and move down. Go into the top covered truck for card #1, then enter the lower one to haul out.

Don't worry about the guard. Grab the rations in the top truck. Yummy. Move to the right truck. After another trip, you're in front of building #3. Take the vehicle under you. Go down two screens until you reach another patch of trucks. In the upper one are explosives. The lower right contains card #4. Take the last vehicle back to the jungle area where you can go to building #1 again, thus completing the loop.

## INSIDE JOB

Use card #1 to go inside. Walk up through the jeep passage and to the right. Go up, avoid the guard, and use card #1 to go in the room. Some quick punching, and you'll have the gas mask. Punch as soon as you leave the room to dispose of the guard.

Stroll left until you reach the three-guard room. You don't want them calling backup, so tactfully make your way to the left path up. Here, you find two more guards. Take your lumps and run up. In the room with a lone guard, work right. You'll see three trucks and a jeep. Go in the left one for your first firearm, but don't use it until you get the silencer later. Fists will do for now. Go to the right-most truck to get landmines. When you exit this truck, go into the middle, leave it, then go into the handgun truck. This way, the guard can't get you.

## MOVING UP IN THE WORLD

Get on the elevator, and ride to the third floor. The next room has two roving cameras. Stay left and move down to the next room. Now go left, and find some ammo. Use the respawn trick to max out at 50, and walk down to rescue your first POW. Immediately upon entering the next room, put on your gas mask. Baby, it stinks in there! Go to the door, remove the mask, and use your card #1 to go through. The next room has a camera and some closed doors, but ignore both and go right.

## INCENSE AND ROLLING PINS

Go into the open door to find a huge rolling pin. If you don't have the plastic explosives yet, they're on the left. Otherwise, roll right and go through. Two guards walk down. The next room has a pair of cameras and doors. Head to the right side door first, and get card #2. Now work back to the first door, and get rations.

With card #2, you can head back to those two doors you left alone. The top has remote control missiles. The bottom (opened with card #1) has another POW. Now come back right to the two cameras, two door room, and go up. Don't touch the floor, 'cuz it's electric; and if you touch it, you get shocked. Instead, send a remote missile at the purple switch, and deactivate the ouchy. Stay left and nail the first guard. Here's another poor POW, who'll give you Diane's frequency (120.33). Call it from this room for some sexist humor.

## THINKING INSIDE THE BOX

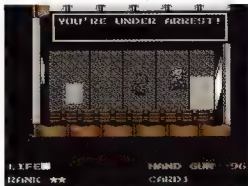
Go up, then left. Weave around, killing the guards so you can go into the north door. Here you'll get what your heart desires most: the cardboard box! Go back out and quickly head left. Go in the door for the nifty silencer, and use card #1 to go

right for the rocket launcher. Good things, both.

Move right two rooms, then up to the elevator. Go down to the second floor. Dodge the security cameras' views, and head down. Put the guard on permanent nap, and go down again. Follow these directions to a tee, because the next two rooms are sensor-filled. Take the narrow gap to the right side straight down to the next screen. When there, hug the wall with the door. Inside is your fifth POW, upping your rank. Leave, and go up the same way you came. Before the sleeping simpleton room, veer right to avoid his lazy eyes. Use the path on the left this time, and gank the three guards. In the unlocked rooms next door are plenty of ammunition and explosives. Bling Bling.

## BUSTED!

Back to the elevator, and down to the first floor. Avoid the spot between the crates, and work your way down. The door on the left (use card #2) has a POW. Go down, and be prepared to bust caps. With card #2, go in the right door and retrieve the machine gun. The left door requires card #1, and has yet another POW (at least the bad guys take prisoners). Go out, enter the truck, walk left, and you'll be busted.



Though it's hard to tell from Big Boss' broken English, you want to punch the middle of the left wall, leading to Grey Fox. His weak butt can't escape, though you can by punching the middle of the bottom wall of this cell. Move right to confront Shotgunner, your first boss.

How can you fight him with no weapons? You can't, so go in the bottom right door to find your stash. There's a new item, a transmitter. This gives enemies a bead on you, so toss it ASAP. Arm the grenades, and alternate between lobbing them at Shotgunner and ducking for cover. Four blasts (or ten handgun hits) will shut his yap but good.

## BUILDING SECOND

Go in the lower left room to get card #3. Use it on the door at right, and kill the dog. Down is some handy body armor. Travel up and right, using card #2 on the high wall. The bomb blast suit is in there. Go down

and left, and have card #3 on you to fetch the uniform. Use card #3 on the right to leave building #4 behind with a whole wardrobe in your pack.

Once outside, head right, and right again. You'll be in a familiar location. Go down a few screens, then enter the building with card #4. Work right to the elevator, where you'll want to go to the second floor, and head left. Card #3 opens the previously locked room, but you may want to stock up on ammo below first.

## LET SLEEPING GUARDS LIE

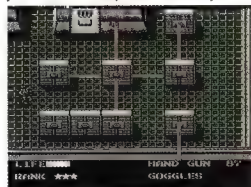
As soon as you enter the next left door, walk forward to keep on pace with the rolling pin. Move left when you get in the next room, and go down. Three guards will feel your fury as you take the bottom left passage. The open doorway leads to three napping guards, who you can cap with ease, and some land mines. Now exit to the right, using card #1 to save a POW. Go below.



You'll have to maneuver so the guard doesn't see you, or he'll activate the electric floor to fry you. Card #3 on the left leads infrared goggles, and card #4 on the right leads to Machine Gun Kid, boss #2. To beat him, stay along the left wall and go up. When he takes a few steps away, shoot him, then hold left. Just avoid touching him, and the boy's toast. Suck on that one time!

## CHANGE OF SCENERY

With Kid dead, get the iron glove above with card #1, and open the right door with card #3. In the cell you'll receive a POW for a new rank. Whoohoo! Entering the next room, get your goggles on, and avoid the beams, heading up. Take the elevator to the roof. Listen to Big Boss and wear the bomb blast suit while you move left. Keep going that way, and stay above when entering the third room. Now go down. The right door will let you replenish your bullets, which you probably need to do. A POW is just a card #2-compatible door away.



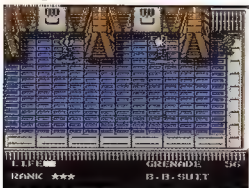
You'll need to backtrack to the middle room up top, then go down. Cross a pair of



shaky bridges. Take it slow, and you'll come out alive. Go west in the next room. The guard on the left will activate the blue floor panels if you're spotted. Use card #3 to get the mine detector. Take the lower right path in the one guard room. Beat down the next guards, and go right to Twin Shot, the game's third boss(es).

**BUNCH OF BOSSES**

Sprint right, and get in the corner niche so you're not in firing range. Use the grenade launcher to kill the twin next to you. Now take his spot and paste the other with grenades. Use card #3, and you'll find NO Dr. Pettrovich. Bummar. A POW in the left room (use card #2) tells you he's in building #2, so head out.



Exit this building, then head north. You'll run into the Tank boss. Hopefully he won't run into you. You want body armor on, and run alongside the alley. When it backs up, plop a few mines in its path. The magic number is 11 hits.

Above Tank's realm, have the mine detector handy to do its duty. On the next screen, switch it with the uniform to go in the door. Make sure to note the new frequency for Big Boss (120.13), Schneider (120.19), and Diane (120.91). Inside, head left and use card #4 to get more ammo. Next, take the watery section around to Bulltank. If you don't know what you're doing, Bulltank will mow you down like a blade of grass. First thing to do when you enter the room is to STOP. Lob grenades at him, and that's about all you'll need to do. Sayonara.

The next room has more infrared beams, only this time they switch up on you. Pass them to the elevator, and go all the way up. Bash the guard fodder, and use card #2 to open the left-hand door for more POW rescuing fun! In the next room, take the first down path, cap the one guard, and travel down. Card #4 opens the door to card #5. Work right and up to go into another elevator, hitting the ground floor again.

Look out for the pit on the right side of this room, and go left. You saw the other side of the water before. Go left and card #5 the door for a ration stock. Now take the north path. Hold tight until the guard looks away. Card #2 will open the left door, and the antenna will allow you to again communicate with your associates.

Go around the water, and use card #5 for another POW to add to your collection. Go in the water now, staying high and left, then winding around. You'll get to a pathway

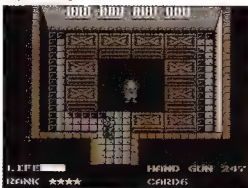
with a guard to cap, and a door to open with card #5. Inside is card #6. Dive back in, and hit the small walkway that takes you up to the infrared beam area, and the building's first elevator. Go to the second floor.

**RING AROUND ARNOLD**

Lay waste to the room of rubes, and go right. Keep going, use card #6, and snag the antidote. Work back so you can go south. Card #1 opens the door, which leads to boss-man Arnold. Don't take him on yet. Instead, head to the down-right door. The door below is unlocked, and contains a POW (why couldn't he escape on his own?). You are now a four-star badass.

Go back to Arnold, and take the right door (use card #5). Use the same card up top, and find another POW. He gives you the frequency of Jennifer (120.48), who only talks if you have four stars. Leave and go right, then give her a call. She'll give you the rocket launcher in the other room (use card #6).

Go in the lower left door in Arnold's room using card #1. The open door leads to ammunition. Now go in the upper door. Up top, card #6 will lead the way to Dr. Pettrovich. Hmmm, something's not right here. Back up to avoid the pit, and cap the imposter if you'd like.

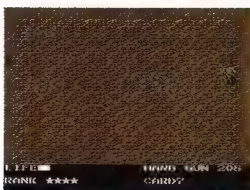


It's time to put Arnold on Ice. Yet another boss encounter coming your way. Arnold's only offense is to run into you. Armor up and keep your distance. Then fire some rockets. Four will beat each incarnation. You'll receive card #7 for your nominal effort.

Use card #2 for the upper right door, and cap the baddie immediately. Stroll right and fire off some more rounds. Talk to Jennifer, open the door with card #1, and get the compass alluded to by the POW. Back to Arnold's room AGAIN, and this time use card #5 in the bottom-right door. Roll right, cap sleepyhead, pass the rolling pin, and go down to the first floor.

**POISON SCORPIONS, COWARD DUCK**

Break up to the water again, but go as high up as you can. This door opens with card #7, which leads outside. Equip the compass, go north, and look out for scorpions. If they sting you (even the best scorpions make mistakes), use the antidote. You can get ammo in the lower truck, then use card #7 to get in the building.



Big Boss will tell you to go left. Defy him, because there's just a pit in there. Instead, go up. There are more pits. Use the trick from basic training to make it to the elevator, and – like the woman in the Love In An Elevator song – go down. Two mean cameras await you in the basement. Use card #7 on the middle door to get the oxygen tank. Now work all the way back up, leave the building, and take the desert trail back into the building again. The dark water can now be traversed with the tanks on. Go up the loch, and stay the course. Be wary of the electric floor, and stay aligned with the store when you go up. Destroy the panel with a missile, then card #7 the door on the right, leading to another boss.

Coward Duck is a punk. He's got hostages. Go left, then straight up. You'll rescue the left prisoner. From this corner, just cap him with the handgun. There is a middle pit, which will surprise you, even after Duck's dead. Grab card #8, and leave the building, back to the desert.

**DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE**

Go left at the screen after the desert, and you'll enter the maze area. Follow this path to escape: left, left, up, left. Use card #6 to enter. Card #5 opens the left top door, with another POW. They're not increasing your rank, but you might as well save them. Now put on the gas mask, and work your way to the unlocked room, filled with plastic explosives. Another rolling pin to dodge, and you go left. The open door's got a flashlight, and a punch to the left wall leads to Fire Trooper.

This boss is even easier than most. Avoid his flames, run up to him, and shoot him 15 times. Card #6 opens the door to Dr. Pettrovich. He wants his daughter rescued in building #4. Backtrack to the first room, use card #5 on the left door, get out the gas mask, and punch the top wall for another hidden door.



**PITS APLENTY**

The first door on the path has a POW, and can be opened with card #1. The next in the path has rations, and uses card #5. Go right and down, then hit the middle of the left wall for a secret entry. A pit is in the middle, so stick to the edges. Hit the north-west wall for a hidden room with ammo. Card #6 opens the south door, and leads to blackness. Fire up the flashlight and be VERY wary of the pits in the next four rooms.

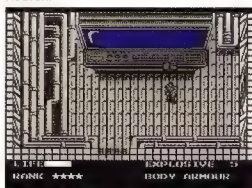
Post-pits, there's a card #1-using door at the bottom. Kill the dogs inside, go down, kill the guards, then use card #6 to the right. More pit action to look out for. Stay low and punch the right wall. Here's Ellen! Use card #6 below, then keep heading right with card #3 until you're out of the building.

**MAN VS. COMPUTER: THE FINAL CHAPTER**

Breathe in the fresh jungle air, then work your way to the trucks to the right twice and down a few screens. Do the truck hop until you get to building #3, and go through the maze to building #5. Dr. Pettrovich will tell you how to destroy the Super Computer. Restock your gear, and go to building #3 for the final showdown.

Enter the building with card #7. Don't forget about the pit traps, and go back down to the basement. Card #8 opens a door to one last POW. Keep rolling, avoiding cameras. Card #5 opens the next door. Get on the gas mask, hugging the right wall to avoid some mines. Card #1 is the one to call upon now. You'll need to run across the electrified floor like a madman, using rations before you die. Now it's Super Computer time.

Think this is going to be tough? Fool. Gat the guards, walk up to the Super Computer, strap 16 explosives to it, and ba-da-bing. Go right to fight the hated leader of Outer Heaven.



Gasps, it's Big Boss! You fiend! Have a smoke to add time to the timer, preventing that from becoming a factor. Get across the screen from Big Boss, and time missile lobs. If he's along the bottom, he'll generally not attack you. Ten hits are all it takes. Now pick the left elevator and get the hell outta there! Good job, Snake.



## TEKKEN FOREVER COMIC BOOK

Manufacturer: Image Comics  
 Website: [www.tidalwavestudios.com](http://www.tidalwavestudios.com)  
 List Price: \$2.95 an issue

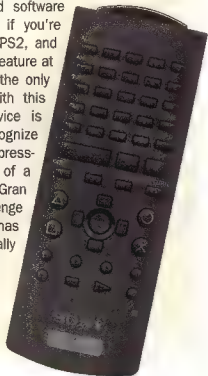


There's been quite a few video game to comic book translations in the last few years, but rarely do they look as well-drawn or interesting as Tekken Forever. Written by David Chi and penciled by Paco Diaz, this four-issue limited series follows Kazuya's quest to destroy his father and take his power. Many characters from the Tekken universe will be appearing throughout the comic's run, making this series a guaranteed entertainment bet for fighting game fans across the country. Tekken Forever should be available as you're reading this, so brave the sights and smells of your local comic store and go pick up a copy.

## PLAYSTATION 2 REMOTE CONTROL

Manufacturer: Sony • Website: [www.scea.com](http://www.scea.com)  
 List Price: \$19.99

Tired of fumbling with your Dual Shock every time you want to watch a movie on your PlayStation 2? For a mere 20 bucks, you can make your life a lot easier. Just plug the infrared sensor into a controller port, and download the included software onto a memory card if you're using an older model PS2, and you'll have every DVD feature at your fingertips. About the only complaint we have with this sleek, lightweight device is that it doesn't recognize simultaneous button presses, so the possibility of a party game involving a Gran Turismo 3 racing challenge using only the remote has been rendered practically impossible.



## MAD CATZ XBOX CONTROLLER

Manufacturer: Mad Catz • Website: [www.madcatz.com](http://www.madcatz.com)  
 List Price: \$34.99



Affectionately referred to around the office as, "what the official Xbox controller should have been like," this Mad Catz product should get some official consideration for your holiday stocking stuffer list. The buttons are more evenly placed, the grips are rubberized and at a more comfortable angle, it has a Macro button so you can program in combo strings, and it's officially licensed by Microsoft so it's just as sturdy and affordable as the standard controller. Anyone who plans on having a second Xbox controller should make this their number one priority.

## 900 MHZ DUAL FORCE WIRELESS CONTROLLER

Manufacturer: Mad Catz • Website: [www.madcatz.com](http://www.madcatz.com)  
 List Price: \$59.99

It's just a touch on the pricey side, but this is one peripheral that's hard to live without once you've tasted its brilliance. Aside from being of the highest quality and having a Macro button that allows users to program in combos, this surprisingly light controller is completely wireless. Using radio frequency instead of infrared, the Dual Force Wireless works perfectly at a range of 50 feet, and can even function through walls (although Game Informer must mention that attempting to play video games through solid barriers is not recommended for those lacking X-ray vision). It even comes with its own charging station so there's never a need to buy batteries.



## GAMECUBE MOBILE MONITOR

Manufacturer: InterAct • Website: [www.interact-acc.com](http://www.interact-acc.com)  
 List Price: \$149.99

InterAct strikes again! Just like it allowed PSone owners to game on the go, its new GameCube Mobile Monitor will give on the move Nintendo lovers a similar opportunity. This 5.4-inch color LCD screen attaches to the back of the GameCube, and can fold down over the top of the console when it's not in use. The monitor comes built-in with two stereo speakers, two headphone jacks, volume and color control, a car adapter for power, and an A/V input port that allows it to be used with VCRs and DVD players as well. Of course, all this goodness isn't cheap, as the steep \$150 price tag attests to – and a two hour battery pack will set you back another 50 bones! Nobody said the jet set lifestyle came cheap.



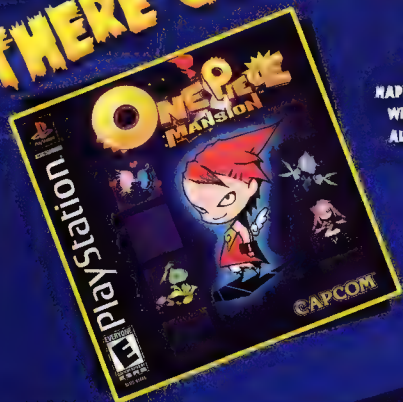


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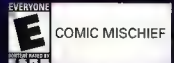
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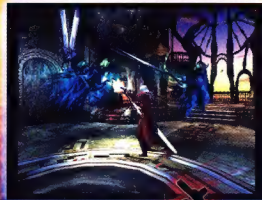
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