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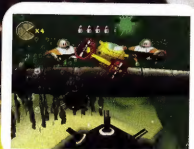
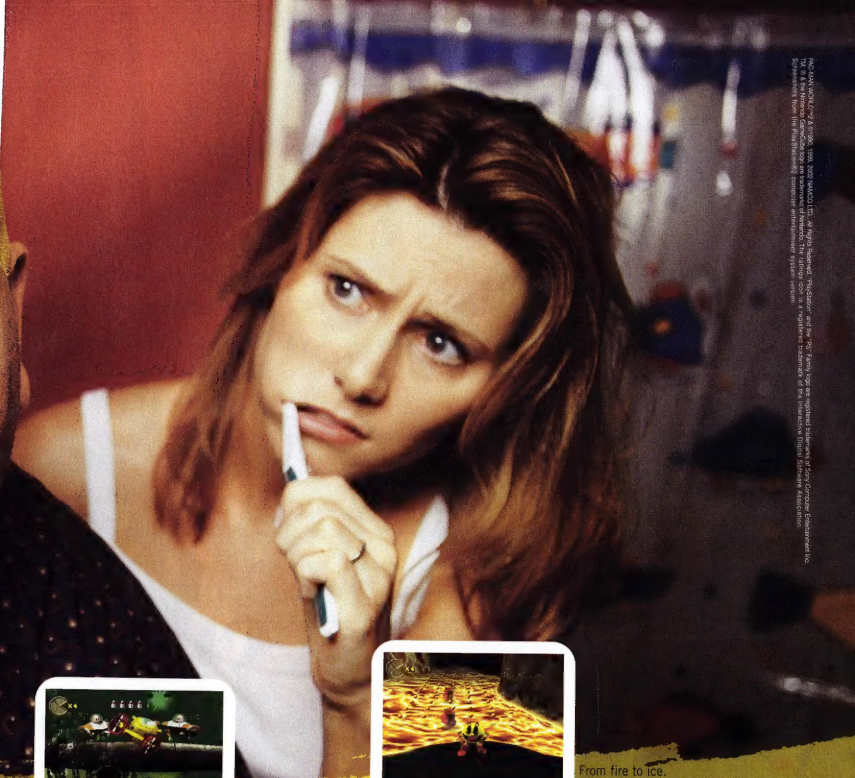
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# 幻 GENMA ONIMUSHA 鬼



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# GAMEINFORMER

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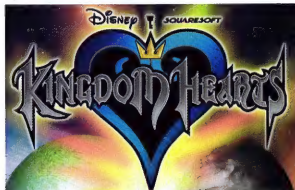
Although it seems like it would be hard to do a spoof on a magazine that's already a joke anyway, we've done it! Flip on over and take a look at what we think is the best Game Infarcier to date.



## FEATURE

### 42 KINGDOM HEARTS

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You're about to see one of the most incredible advances made to a fighting game in recent history. Learn how it was done, who's responsible, and how many souls were sold to ensure gaming perfection. As a catalyst to the creation of the ESRB, and a consistent source of controversy, Mortal Kombat has always been the one to watch – join us as we rip this bad boy wide open.







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#### 16 GI SPY

The Game Informer paparazzi stalk the video game industry, bringing you candid photos of all the action.

#### 18 DEAR GI

Well, we've finally done it – we've pissed off a group of elite special forces commandos by ripping on D&D. Therefore, this will be the last issue the current editors will be writing for the magazine. Indeed, by the time you read this, every one of us has probably been killed in our sleep by a silent assassin wearing night-vision gear. Farewell, readers.

#### 24 NEWS

If you've got a hankering for information on the new Iron Game, Grand Theft Auto 4, or the title in the works based on The Hobbit, we've got everything you want right here. Add to that some saucy he-said she-said about an upcoming Driver release and you've got yourself one heckuva news section.

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In this month's previews section, you'll find information on such upcoming blockbuster titles as Tomb Raider: The Next Generation, Stuntman, Icewind Dale II, Dead to Rights, and Soul Caliber 2. Please read these articles and have yourself a wonderful rest of the day. Thank you.

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#### 94 PLAY TO PERFECTION

You may think you know everything there is to know about the GBA port of Super Mario World, but as they say, you ain't seen nothing 'yet. Every Dragon Coin and every level ext has been meticulously

recorded within the gilded pages of Play To Perfection.

#### 100 SECRET ACCESS

This is the area where you will find codes, codes and more codes. If you have a problem with that you can take it up with Raul Julia. Since he's dead, you're just going to have to take and like it.

#### 104 CLASSIC GI

There's nothing like sitting back and catching up with an old friend. Of course, you need to know which friend will treat you right. That's where Classic GI comes in! By the way, if you look hard enough, you'll see a Breath of Fire II strategy guide. Read now, use often.

#### 110 ETC

You say you don't like playing your shiny new Xbox with that horrible controller (or 'Ol' Beefy" as we like to call it)? Well, flip on down to Etc. for a perfect solution to your problem. We also think you need to read more – especially when it's stuff we like, so dust off your reading glasses and get ready for some text-based fun (books). Chop-chop, kiddies!

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# EDITORS' FORUM

## DON'T CALL IT A COMEBACK



Who would have thought that, in this day and age of bump-mapping and particle effects, a game like Mortal Kombat would be on the cover of Game Informer Magazine? Yes, it certainly has been a while since we have seen the world's most controversial fighting game, but we all knew it was going to make a comeback; it was just a matter of when.

Of course, like the movie business that gaming so often emulates, our industry loves to revisit the franchises that left a lasting mark on our video game subconsciousness. For those of you out there that missed it, Mortal Kombat II was a video game phenomenon like few the United States has ever seen. In Japan, gamers line up for miles to get their hands on the new Final Fantasy or Dragon Quest, but only when Mortal Kombat II launched here can I think of a

time when there was so much excitement for a game.

**Will Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance bring the same electricity that MKII had when it was unleashed on the world back in 1994? Most likely not, as fighting games have unfortunately fallen out of the gaming mainstream. Would I love it if it did? You bet. American gamers have really lost touch with the fighting genre. I don't blame us, though. It's been a long time since anyone pushed the genre to really do something new — most games are either a clone or sequel to Street Fighter or Virtua Fighter. Still, I wouldn't put it past Ed Boon and his staff in Chicago to have the ingenuity to send American gamers into a fighting frenzy again. When Deadly Alliance hits the streets this fall, we just may see fighting rise again to its former glory. If Mortal Kombat can't do it, nothing can.**

*Andy*  
Andy McNameera  
andy@gameinformer.com

### REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

reiner@gameinformer.com

The winds of change have finally swept over the Game Informer office. Just a few weeks ago, I was ushered into a series of meetings by the magazine's governing forces: With subordinates firmly in place, the powers that be looked, griddled, and exacted all of the information that they needed from me. My nude gestures, incoherent rambling, and profanity-filled screams should have landed me a pink slip. I was destined to get canned. Seriously, I was already negotiating contracts with several well-known fast food chains. Lo and behold, I didn't get the boot, but was in fact promoted to the hallowed rank of Executive Editor. Say what? Congratulations to you, but seriously, I really don't care about what you have to say. The only thing that I'm concerned with at the moment is the power that I have and how I can exploit it. So, if you'll excuse me, I have to file something for giving 110% and excelling in every aspect of the job. Cheers!

### MATT, THE ORIGINAL GAMER

mattd@gameinformer.com

With Reiner joining the ranks of the elite with his fancy new title, I've been tapped to fill the position of Senior Associate Editor. Initially, I was both excited and a bit scared, and wondered if I could handle the pressure. After receiving my generous bonus check, I was escorted into the luxurious, high-security Senior Associate Editor's chamber and set down for my first day on my new job. It was then that I realized just what Reiner had been doing all these years: NOT A WHOLE HELL OF A LOT. Man, this job is easy! Usually, I roll in around noon, pretend like I'm on some "important" phone calls for a couple of hours, and then go back around the Associate Editors for awhile. After lunch, I take a quick nap, email some friends, maybe play a game or two if I feel like it, and then punch out and head home. Reiner can be "Executive Editor" forever for all I care; he'll never know how good he had it. Let's be honest, Matt. Now, I must be going as I have a message appointment with my personal trainer. Kato, would you mind bringing me a nice cup of Earl Grey? Yes, and don't forget the cinnamon stick and a touch of honey. Thank you so much, a good boy.

### KRISTIAN, THE GAME DAWG

kristian@gameinformer.com

Well, I got a whole lot more response to my blurb last month than I thought I would. A mountain of great suggestions came in, ranging from the reemergence of the Dark Lords (don't worry, it'll happen at some point), to the importance of video games in all of our lives, to the Olympics. While these are all significant topics, one stood out above the rest: I have been alerted to a conspiracy in the soft drink industry of epic proportions. On this side you have Dr. Pepper. On the other you have Diet Dr. Pepper. The latter's tagline is "Diet Dr. Pepper tastes more like regular Dr. Pepper." We all know that diet soda is barely palatable on a good day, so does this mean that regular Dr. Pepper is only a pathetic affront to a substance which could be unbelievably awesome, and to cover their tracks Pepsi Co. simply pushed the diet brand to make up for this terrible shortcoming? And you thought tobacco companies were bad! Write to your Congressman, people! We demand the good stuff!

### JUSTIN, THE DIGITAL VENTILATOR

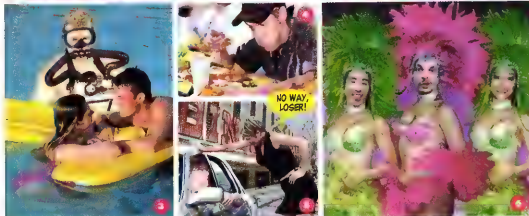
justin@gameinformer.com

As I type this, my knuckles and fingernails are still stained red. My face has a sinister hue, my white GTA 3 shirt is now pink, and even my armpits don't escape the crimson bath. Yes, friends, I saw G.I.A.R. last night. Blood Drive 2002 rolled right over Minneapolis and First Avenue, and slaughtered the unwitting inhabitants of this fair city. Once they come to your town, I urge you to donate a few pints of your own. It's for a good cause, after all. The new national from Violence Has Arrived is hardhitting, as are the swords and clubs used to destroy cultural icons like Mike Tyson and George W. Bush. While I'm on the subject of violence, some of you have asked to be informed of my writing schedule and exploits. I'm thinking of putting a mailing list together. If you're down, email me.

### KATO, THE GAME KATANA

kato@gameinformer.com

I woke up this morning with the sweet blating sax riffs of Gitaroo Man still running wild through my head from last night. And as I stared into the mirror and fought to comb down the cowlicks in my hair, I suddenly wondered something. Am I more like Gitaroo Man himself, or the inept U-17? He got the weird side sweeps in my haircut. But so they look like they belong to a tall poney (U-13) or a wild guitar-playing rock 'n' roll star like Noel Gallagher? Still, my own skills at slashing out messy riffs are underdeveloped. Then again, you should see me try to play tennis — it's like he's strangling a duck in no po skater, but am not nearly as inept as U-1. And what's with that kid's sweating problem? The only giant problem I've got is that I'm only about half a foot short of being "tall." Make some day aliens will be informed and I'll have to take up a Gitaroo and find out once and for all what I'm really made of. All I know is that I've already got the girl, so things aren't half bad.



The G editors escape the Minnesota weather with a weekend in Vegas. 1. Overcome with awe and clutching his 8 x 10 autographed glossy of his idol Wayne Newton, Matt loses control and throws his room key onstage. 2. Too drunk to care, Kristian has a quick wedding for one more chance at the nickel slots. 3. Justin checks out the action poolside... 4... then stuffs his face with three trips through the buffet line. 5. Andy offers another streetwalker his last \$5 for her to take him "around the world." 6. Kato and Reiner, having lost everything on one turn of the roulette wheel, work off their debts as showgirls in the revue.



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Violence

# GI SPY



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

**1** On a trip to England showcasing the company's 2002 lineup, Matt Frary of Infogrames and Lynn Cantel of Infogrames UK engage in some hot eye-brow basking. It's the biggest fat-to-hit Europe since Mad Cow disease and soccer riots! **2** "Yes, Stuntman is totally on schedule! Why do you ask?" Jay Sharpe, Associate Producer **3** Long live the DJ Jack Black and Kig of Tenacious D (front) get their egos stroked gently by Linn PR's Pickle King, the soon-to-be Pickle Queen, Rockstar producer Jeronimo Barrera, and pal Rocky. **4** WizardWorks/Infogrames PR manager Lucy Corey and Dragon Ball Z producer Michael Cucchiarella buck current GI Spy trends by proving that there is a place for relatively normal human beings in the video game industry. Who knew? **5** La di, da di, Scott Gamel, Jason Andersen, Dana Whitney from Electronic Arts like to party. They don't cause trouble, they don't bother nobody. **6** Tecmo's Tiffany Stratton demonstrates that a marketing coordinator in the bush is worth two in the hand. **7** Linn PR impresario Bill Linn: Still figuring out how to walk like an Egyptian after all these years. **8** Freelance journalists Suzanne Ashe, Raymond Padilla, and Peter Sulich share the love at a recent THQ event.







# DEAR GI

## SEAL DEFENDS D&D

My name is Master Chief Petty Officer Nathaniel Price, United States Navy Seal Team 3. Every time I get an issue, it gets circulated around "the den" until the magazine nearly falls apart. We are all avid gamers and enjoy the reviews written by your crack team of specialists. However, we would like to register a complaint. In your Etc. section you called anyone who plays Dungeons and Dragons a loser. Needless to say, the men were more than a little upset and picked the magazine apart at 300 meters with their M4 assault rifles. We enjoy D&D as a pastime because it keeps our creative minds ticking while letting us relax a bit. The same goes for video games. So please, in the future, try not to generalize a group of people as losers just because they enjoy something. Remember, lots of people think the same about video games and comics (something you guys upheld in Etc.). Thanks and keep up the good work.

Master Chief Price  
US Navy, ST3

First off, we'd like to say that we're honored to know that America's men and women in uniform are down with GI. Our little jab at Dungeons & Dragons players touched off a firestorm of controversy among our readers. Since the publication of the February edition of Etc., we've been inundated with angry letters protesting our labeling of the pencil-and-paper RPG faithful as "losers." Most of these were ignored, folded into paper airplanes, or used as kindling in the fagstone hearth located in the GI offices. However, your intelligent arguments -- and the fact that you and your compatriots are capable of killing us all in a matter of minutes -- gave us cause to address your complaints here in Dear GI.

So, for all those who were offended by our remarks: IT WAS A JOKE. We think that playing D&D is a fine pastime, and many of the GI staff have rolled the 12-sided die a time or two in their lives. Also, as pasty and out-of-shape professional video game nerds, we're hardly in a position to call anyone a loser. Let's face it: D&D is dorky. Video games are dorky. Obsessing over *Star Wars* and *Lord of the Rings* is dorky. We're all dorks here, so let's bury the hatchet and get back to geeking out together. Now, go get Osama and make us proud!

P.S. Please don't kill us all! Reiner wrote that We begged him not to make fun of D&D, but he wouldn't listen. He's out of control, and must be stopped! Terminate him if you must, but spare the rest of us!!!

## HIS RACIST FRIEND

Hey, first of all, let me tell you that I really love your magazine. Not only does it keep me updated on the latest games, but I also think that you guys make it really funny. What my letter is really about is my friend [name withheld]. He is racist towards the Japanese because they bombed Pearl Harbor. I keep on trying to tell him that Japan makes a lot of great games like Final Fantasy and Metal Gear Solid, and if it weren't for the Japanese we wouldn't have these great games, but he just doesn't care. He keeps on insisting that the Japanese are horrible people. What do you guys think I should do?

Kujisaga Yukisaragi  
Via email

Your friend sounds like an idiot. Tell him to quit holding grudges about events that took place 40 years before he was born, then go get some new friends. You are right about Japan and games. Many of the greatest game creators are Japanese, and Nintendo single-handedly brought the industry back from the dead in the mid-'90s. However, every ethnic group -- whether they make games or not -- deserves our respect.

## ROCKSTAR RUMORS

Hey guys, what's up? Your magazine is awesome! Anyway, I've been hearing rumors about Grand Theft Auto III being pulled from the shelves in a lot of stores around the US! I haven't heard Rockstar Games announce this, or you guys saying anything about it. So, is this "rumor" true or not?

Matt Finnegan  
Via email

Grand Theft Auto III has become the breakout hit of the last few months, and has generated an

underground buzz that even blockbusters like Final Fantasy X and Metal Gear Solid 2 have failed to match. With this word-of-mouth success comes a lot of spurious rumors about Rockstar's controversial jug-nemaat. Over the last few months, dozens of readers have written in to Dear GI with rumors ranging from an all-out ban on the game, to the ridiculous claim that Rockstar has secretly rushed a censored version of the game out to retailers without alerting the press or consumers.

We contacted a representa-

tive of Rockstar Games, who assured us that, to his knowledge, Grand Theft Auto III is readily available at every major video game retailer, including Wal-Mart (a company with a history of pulling controversial products). A brief search of retail internet sites confirmed this claim. Also, he laughed at reports that the game had been censored, stating that the company fully stands behind its product, and cited the prohibitive cost involved in retooling and re-releasing a game that has been on store shelves for several months. In a nutshell: Grand Theft Auto III is out there in its original form, ready to be purchased by anyone over the age of 17 who wishes to do so. We have no idea where this hearsay may have started. We like to think of it as the video game version of the urban legends in which rockers like Ozzy Osbourne and Marilyn Manson were said to have engaged in sundry abuses of bodily fluids and small farm animals. But, just as Ozzy never really drank a bucketful of spit or took a chainsaw to a Doberman, GTA III is alive and well in uncensored form.

## GET YOUR PROPS IN!

Okay GI, you guys are almost my only hope. I love being a gamer, but the problem I have with playing a lot is that there doesn't seem to be much point to it, other than having fun by yourself. I'm all for having fun, but I'd much rather be sharing the wealth with somebody else. A few weeks ago a friend of mine (a former gamer) said he used to write reviews for the games he'd play and post them on some guy's website. Oddly enough, this idea really stuck with me, and since my friend and I are both taking journalism in high school, it seems like the shoe fits pretty well. I know I could do this on a big gaming site like ign.com, but I'd rather get my reviews actually read than be stuck in the big "reader review" junk pile forever. Do you guys know of anywhere I could write reviews on the side for a website, or anywhere else I can post? Any nudges or tips in the right direction would be greatly appreciated.

Andrew  
Via hotmail.com

Well, you could always start your own website, and hope that you can attract an audience. Also, there are a number of well-known fan sites that you might be able to approach if you want the opportunity to shine in a more established forum. However, we need to mention that all of our readers have the opportunity to display their knowledge of games and writing abilities right here in the pages of Game Informer. In Classic GI, we post one reader's submission for the Greatest Game of All



JEREMY

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gameplay screenshot next to the title of the game mode



gameplay screenshot next to the title of the game mode



gameplay screenshot next to the title of the game mode



gameplay screenshot next to the title of the game mode

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GAME BOY ADVANCE

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Violence

Time every month. Just write a 250- to 350-word essay on why you think your favorite game should be considered the best ever, and email it to [greatestgame@gameinformer.com](mailto:greatestgame@gameinformer.com). If that sounds like too much work, but you'd still like to see yourself in the pages of GI, you can send your list of Top Five current or classic games to [top-five@gameinformer.com](mailto:top-five@gameinformer.com). Remember: Top Five entrants **MUST INCLUDE A PICTURE OF THEMSELVES** with their submissions. Pictures can either be a hard copy, which we will scan, or digital attachment sent via email. Readers without access to email can send their Greatest Game of All Time or Reader Top Five to this address:

Game Informer Magazine  
724 North First St., 4th Floor  
Minneapolis, MN 55401  
(Please specify which type of entry)

## THE COMPETITION

Are there any leading gaming magazines that Game Informer is directly competing with? My guess would be EGM.

Marc  
Via aol.com



Although the cutthroat world of video game journalism can be a petty and jealous little cesspool of egos, we here at GI prefer to take the high road. Healthy competition is the core of America's laissez faire economy, and we welcome the hearty challenge that our competitors afford us. However, there IS one magazine that makes our hearts shiver to the size of a pea, and turns our blood cold with hatred: Cat Fancy Magazine. Those mincing fops have rubbed their success in our faces from day one, and didn't even stop to acknowledge our presence at last year's Dream of Publishers Expo. Of course, they wouldn't dream of inviting us to their ultra-exclusive Kitty Promenade party at the Four Seasons in New York, which was hosted by none other than Ms. Liza Minelli this year! We were so upset we sat up all night watching *Steel Magnolias* and ate a whole carton of cookie-dough ice cream! Then, when Kato submitted his 10,000-word essay on the history of the Turkish Angora, some minx in the editorial department wrote back and said she was using it to line her litter box! Of all the nerve! Watch your back, Cat Fancy, and remember that revenge (like Whiskas) is a dish best served cold.



## APRIL WINNER!

Alfonso Ernesto Elias  
Max Payne says there's nothing sexier than the feel of bare skin on leather.



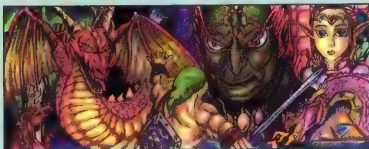
Ian Yost  
This kid is brilliant! GTT3 could be the best-selling game of all time!



Keith Kimbro  
Yes, but we don't have, nor never will own Munch's Odyssey.

Enter the Game Informer Envelope Art Contest. All you need to do is draw, paint, scratch, split, 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.

Send to:  
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Jason Rodriguez  
Great...Link's been taking steroids again.



Jose Colon  
Zoolander II: Street Fighter style.



Oh Vince, I did  
so want to move  
to Los Angeles.

Yeah, well bust out  
the mittens, Buttercup.  
I just signed for  
7 with Toronto.



Your office is a 20,000 seat arena, your salary has a whole lot of zeros, and "Who stole my stapler?" is "Who's picking up Vince on D?" You wanted real, you got real. Build an all-NBA team during the draft. Check your team's actual NBA playbook, and call those plays with real-time coaching. And details? You can count the players' cornrows. Have your secretary take a memo — this rules.

insidethedrive2002.com  
nba.com



 **NBA** <sup>2002</sup>  
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*It's a living.*

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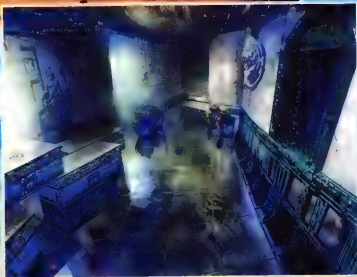
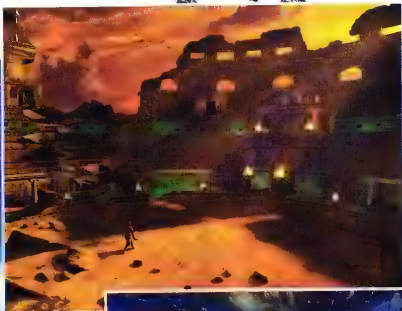
XBOX

# GI NEWS

## EXCLUSIVE LOOK AT PS2'S RYGAR

We teased you with art from an exciting new **Tecmo** title in last month's *GI News*, and now we can officially spill the beans. The company is currently working on a **PlayStation 2**-exclusive **Rygar** game to be released before the end of the year. These extraordinary shots of a few potential in-game environments speak of the detail and sweep of the third-person action/adventure title.

This new *Rygar* has not been officially titled and, in fact, may be only inspired by the old **NES** game – similar to how **Capcom** borrowed from the **Ghosts n' Goblins** series for its PS2 title **Maximo**. *Rygar's* story is still under wraps, but we do know that his classic shield/spike weapon/grappling hook combo will return, and hopefully his razor disc will also make an appearance. If the early word on *Rygar* is as good as we're hearing, Tecmo's trek back to the past could be a trip well worth taking.



## SPREADING THE MARIO SUNSHINE

**GameCube** owners are already holding their breath for Mario's first appearance on the console, **Mario Sunshine**. The game is still far off in the distance, but here are a few more shots of the hero's water-pack exploits, which include scaling perilous heights in his quest to control the flames of the land. Details? What details? We don't like to complicate the simple, but would rather torture you some more with these tantalizing screens. Actually, *GI* expects to find out more at **E3**, so stay tuned. Until then, learn more news about the squat Italian plumber in the pages of *Game Informer*, page 47.



## TRON'S KILLER VIDEO GAME APP

**Disney's** DVD release of the 20th anniversary edition of the movie **Tron** has not only rekindled the excitement of old fans like ourselves, but also fueled talk about the film's sequel, tentatively titled **Tron 2.0**. The DVD's first disc opens up with a movie-style preview for something called **Tron Killer App**, which is apparently to be released in 2003. *Game Informer* has learned that this isn't a reference to the proposed second **Tron** movie, but rather is a teaser for a video game that will be released by **Disney Interactive**.

**Killer App** is expected for all next-gen systems, including the **Xbox** and **PC**. There is even talk that the project includes plans for online play. Unfortunately, the shots we have here from the DVD teaser don't really give away much; but you can be sure that lightcycles, recognizers, and a return of probably the coolest animation design we've ever seen will be involved once again.



## MORE GRAND THEFT AUTO

**Rockstar** is rattling off a few more **Grand Theft Auto** shots, following **GTA III's** monster success on the **PlayStation 2**. Sources here it that the controversial game will spawn an expansion title to be called **Grand Theft Auto III: Miami**. In an annual report, **Take-Two** (owners of subsidiary Rockstar Games) CEO Kelly Sumner stated that a

new **GTA III** title will be out by the end of the year, and insiders firmly place it in Don Johnson's old stomping ground. No further details on **Grand Theft Auto III: Miami** have been revealed, but we're sure that fans will take to it like a bat to bone.

*Game Informer* has also been told that work on **Grand Theft Auto 4** is now underway, although the company has denied previous rumors that a **GameCube** version of **GTA III** is in the works. Expect more on both of these hot properties at this year's **E3** convention in May. See you in Miami - *GI*.





## GI NEWS

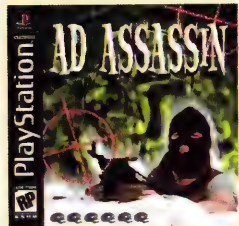


R&D

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.

## AD ASSASSIN

There is a great plague spreading over this land of ours – commercials using spokespersons who generate more aggression and hatred than a Jehovah's Witness knocking on your door at 8:00a.m. on a Sunday morning. As a member of the AA community, it'll be your sacred task to hunt down and destroy those who accost our eyes and ears on a daily basis. You are humanity's last hope for sanity. Through each level in this expansive first-person shooter, your character, Doc "The Cuisinart" Stevenson, will be armed with a staggering amount of weaponry. Traversing the different TV studios' headquarters will enable you to mow down many a robotic ad executive (real people wouldn't actually subject the public to filth like Jared, the smarmy Subway guy), and with what little ammo you have left, you'll put an end to the Pepsi-girls and Taco-Chihuahuas of this world once and for all. It's a good thing you did – they were actually aliens bent on world domination through subtle brainwashing techniques buried in their tele-triplet! Hurry up – we don't know how much longer we can stand it...



## NAME THAT GAME

In a future with two corporations vying for supremacy, the competition in this PC/PS-X sequel is deadly. Play missions as part of either Eurocorp or the Church of the New Epoch as you brainwash citizens to your cause with the Persaudetron. The game combines real-time strategy's isometric view and unit management with the action of a shooter. Rob banks and temples to deplete your foes' coffers and keep your agents equipped.



(Answer on page 33)

## SIERRA GOES THERE AND BACK AGAIN

GameCUBE's *The Hobbit* is Universal Interactive's newest addition (through Sierra) to a lineup of titles that already includes *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Released in 2003, the game is being developed by *Inevitable Entertainment*, an Austin, Texas-based outfit that is also working on *Tribes 2* for the *PlayStation 2*. *The Hobbit* is a third-person action/adventure title that tells of *Bilbo Baggins'* battle with *Smaug* and the finding of the ring, thus setting the stage for the events of the trilogy.

Universal Interactive's unique deal with the properties contained in *New Line Cinema's* series of *LoTR* films. Thus, Universal is able to exclusively bring you the events in *The Hobbit* – until a movie of *Bilbo's* adventures is made.



## SONY TITLES INCLUDE ONLINE

Sony of Japan recently fleshed out its online plans for the *PlayStation 2* in that country – including names of some first and third-party online titles. One of the more interesting names in the list is a *Resident Evil Online* game from *Capcom*. Of course, the publisher has previously signed with *Nintendo* to bring the survival horror franchise exclusively to the *GameCUBE*. *G5's* been told this will remain so, and that an RE online game would be outside of that agreement.

Also making news is Sony signing of Japan's four major internet service providers to cover over 70% of all broadband users in the country. *Sony of America* has yet to detail its online plans.

Some of the titles in the abridged list below may not appear in America, while others are merely tentatively-titled commitments from companies to Sony.

- *Resident Evil Online* – Capcom
- *Armored Core Sigma* – From Software
- *Tokyo Highway Battle Online* – Ganki
- *Bomberman Online* – Hudson
- *Clockwork Online* – Namco
- *Project Venus (working title)* – Namco
- *Hundred Swords* – Sega
- *Arc the Lad* – Sony
- *Gran Turismo Online* – Sony
- *Hot Shots Golf Others* – Sony
- *Final Fantasy XI* – Square
- *Untitled* Atlus massively-multiplayer online role-playing game
- *Untitled* Konami sports and music titles
- *Untitled* Namco shooter and sports title
- *Untitled* Sega racing title
- *Untitled* Sega simulation title
- *Untitled* Tecmo action/adventure title

# THE ARCADE SMASH THUNDERS ONTO NINTENDO GAMECUBE



# EIGHTEEN 18 WHEELER AMERICAN PRO TRUCKER



PlayStation 2

SEGA



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EVERYONE  
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB  
VIOLENCE

PlayStation 2



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## THE FIERY SPYRO FOLLOW-UP

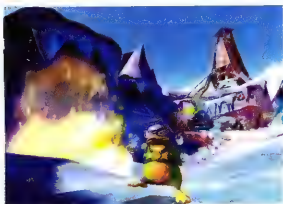
There's no better way to play with fire than with **PlayStation 2's *Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly***. Coming out in the fourth quarter of 2002, this new action/platformer from **Universal Interactive** takes place directly after the **Year of the Dragon** festival, and is the first from the franchise for the console. **Spyro** and **Sparx** must recover all of the **Dragonflies** that have disappeared from the realm.

While *Enter the Dragonfly* will contain many features that fans have come to love, **Spyro** does possess new abilities, such as being able to shoot other elemental attacks out of his snout besides fire. Larger worlds and new characters and vehicles will also vie for your gaming attention. Remember kids: Don't play with matches; do play with **Spyro**.



## XBOX'S WHACKED! ATTACK

And the hits just keep on coming...**Microsoft** has announced its newest first-party title for the **Xbox**. **Whacked!** is an 8-player free-for-all with over 40 weapons and power-ups; more than a dozen levels; and game modes including King of the Hill, Grab n' Run, and Fragfest. Also, **Whacked!** features "bizarre, yet appealing characters." Want an example? Penguins. Of course,



we can't remember the last smash-hit title with a penguin as a main character, but we're not ones to stand in the way of innovation.

Whacked! is being developed by **Prosto Studios**, the people behind **Myst III: Exile**, and should be out this fall.



**UGLY** – The video game industry's lawyer fees are enough to feed a third-world country. **Nike** is suing **Sega** over a TV commercial, who in turn is suing **Kmart** for not paying for shipments of **Dreamcasts**. **EA** and **Activision** might soon do the same. Finally, **Immersion** is suing both **Sony** and **Microsoft** for using vibration technology in its games and controllers. Rest assured, the waving of briefcases will continue.

**GOOD** – Nintendo's **StarFox Adventures** and **Eternal Darkness GameCube** titles have been delayed until June 10 and June 24, respectively. The only speck of good news in there is that GC's **Wave Bird** remote controller also comes out on June 24. Maybe next month there'll be more...umm...good news from the company.



**BAD** – A bill called the **Violent Video Game Protection Act** has been submitted in the Georgia legislature that would make criminals out of anyone selling a game rated violent by the **ESRB** rating system to a minor. Currently, retailers enforce the ratings voluntarily. Remember: It's not the games, or even the players; it's the controllers that shoot make-believe video game people.

**BAD** – The **Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA)** estimates that the U.S. video game industry lost about \$1.9 billion last year due to software piracy. Yeah, pirating games is a problem. After all, **PS2's Pirates: The Legend of Black Kat** stinks.

**GOOD** – **PlayStation 2's** got more hits than **Sadafara Oh**, and now they're cheaper, too. **Sony** has announced the console's first four "Greatest Hits" releases priced at around \$25: **Twisted Metal: Black**, **Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec**, **Dark Cloud**, and **ATV Offroad Fury**. Games that have been out for nine months and sold more than 400,000 are eligible for the discount program.



Whenever 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. 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! In the industry and to get back at the boss who fired you by spilling some secrets? Email us at [loosetalk@gameinformer.com](mailto:loosetalk@gameinformer.com) and we'll be your shoulder to cry on.

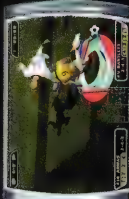
**Reflections** is working on **Driver 3**, and has been since before the **PlayStation 2** came out! All this time is paying off handsomely, as the third game featuring **Tanner** is said to be ready to blow **Rockstar's Grand Theft Auto III** out of the water.

**Bandai** has no intention of letting up on the **Gundam** goodies. The company has a slate of **PS2** titles based on the anime series stretching well into next year. The strategy/sim title **Gren's Ambition** has just been added to the docket, but before May we're going to be treated to a port of the Japanese arcade cabinet **Federation vs. Zeon DX** (released in Japan by **Capcom**). And this, folks, is just the tip of the iceberg.

In a recent interview with Japan's **Famitsu**, Nintendo's Director of Global Planning **Satoru Iwata** hinted at what **Shigeru Miyamoto** may have brewing. "He's also working on 4-5 other titles [apart from **Mario Sunshine**], some of which are sequels, others will offer completely new gameplay experiences." Could this mean **P-Zero** for **GameCube**? How about **Pikmin 2**? Or, maybe **Yoshi** is taking back the reins of **Donkey Kong** from **Rare**?

**Square** has named its **Chrono Cross** and **SaGa Frontier 2** follow-ups **Chrono Break** and **Unlimited SaGa**, respectively. The company is now concentrating on the **Final Fantasy** series and **Kingdom Hearts**, so these two **PlayStation 2** titles won't be completed for a while.

The latest from the mind of **Peter Molyneux** is a game codenamed "**Dimitri**." All the **Black & White** mastermind says on the subject is that this title won't be a good game. It is talking about the upcoming **Project Ego** or **BC?** Not likely, as they've already been officially named, therefore there would be no need for Mr. Molyneux to speak in tongues.



新感覚

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8

19

### Different Game. Different Rules.

# RedCard

2003

Calling all soccer-holics! Finally, a videogame that understands soccer—really is a contact sport! RedCard Soccer's unique adrenaline-style game play lets you kick, tackle and fight with 32 international teams all vying for the Cup Championship. Soccer. Morris. cover your eyes. Different game. Different rules.



PlayStation 2



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## VIDEO GAME TRIVIA



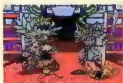
Hi, everybody! We all have our favorite character on *The Simpsons*, much like we all have our favorite games. We also like to chastise those who aren't in the know on either subject. How do you score on this month's trivia will determine who *Simpsons* character you admire the most, so get to it, fishbub.

**Question 1:** In the Sega CD adventure game *Willy Beamin'*, what was the name of Willy's trouble-making pet frog?

- A. Bugs
- B. Dennis Hopper
- C. Horny
- D. Bud

**Question 2:** Which of the following was not a place to find a GWAR ticket piece in *Beavis and Butt-Head on Sega Genesis*?

- A. The back pocket of Todd's jeans
- B. In a Burger World patron's vomit pile
- C. Under the Army recruiter's confidential documents
- D. Off a fallen fat lady at the mall



**Question 3:** Austin, Texas-based Retro Studios is currently working on *Metroid Prime* for Nintendo's GameCube. What game did the developer release before this?

- A. *Grudge Warriors*
- B. *Milo's Astro Lanes*
- C. *Barbie Pet Rescue*
- D. It hasn't released a game yet

**Question 4:** What was the first one-on-one fighting game?

- A. Capcom's *Fighting Street*
- B. *Cinematronics' Warrior*
- C. *Data East's Karate Champ*
- D. *Activision's Boxing*

**Question 5:** Which of the following characters was never on the cover of *Game Informer*?

- A. Resident Evil's Barry
- B. Editor-in-Chief Andy McNamara
- C. Felix the Cat
- D. Princess Zelda

**Question 6:** The trackball was a creative control device from the golden days of

video games, but what was the first arcade game to use this invention?

- A. *Football*
- B. *Centipede*
- C. *Bowling Alley*
- D. *Crystal Castles*

**Question 7:** Don Bluth, the man behind the cartoon-quality *Dragon's Lair* laser disc arcade game, worked on many major motion picture animated releases. Which of these did he not have a part in?

- A. *The Secret of NIHM*
- B. *An American Tail*
- C. *The Aristocats*
- D. *Pete's Dragon*

**Question 8:** Who were the heroes in Konami's legendary NES game, *Contra*?

- A. Ace and Gary from *Blue Oyster*
- B. Lance and Bill from *Red Falcon*
- C. Snake and Eagle from *Bloody Wolf*
- D. Blade and Striker from *Odyssey Future*



**Question 9:** In Yu Suzuki's action/RPG epic, *Shenmue* for the Dreamcast, hero Ryo Hazuki confronts Mad Angels' boss, Terry, in a dramatic turn in the game. The scumbag has taken the beautiful Nozomi hostage and will only let her go on the condition that you cripple which character?

- A. Gui Zhang
- B. Master Chen
- C. Mark
- D. Lan Di

**Question 10:** As catchy as the name *Crash Bandicoot* is, the orange marsupial began with a different name. What was it?

- A. Red Herring
- B. Beuford the Bandicoot
- C. Dodo the Dingo
- D. Willie The Wombat

## Score &amp; Rank

I'M A MUR-DIDDLEY-URDLE!



0-3 Ned Flanders

HEY, KIDS, ALWAYS RECYCLE TO THE EXTREME!



2-3 Poochie

MY IQ IS 99, FOR CRYING OUT FLASHEN



4-6 Prof. Frink

SHOPLIFTING IS A VICTIMLESS CRIME. LIKE PUNKING SOMEONE IN THE DARK!



7-9 Nelson Muntz

ARE YOU THE CREATOR OF HE AND LOS T BECAUSE YOU'RE MAKING ME LAUGH



10 Comic Book Guy

Video Game Trivia Answers:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

## SMALLER BOXES, BIGGER SAVINGS

Catching shoppers' eyes is a marketing science in itself — especially when you're contending with a sea of PC titles.

Companies such as **Electronic Arts** and **Eidos**, however, are spearheading a new trend towards DVD-sized boxes that is making both publishers and retailers quite happy.

These new mini-boxes are the result of a recommendation made in July 2000 by an organization that represents many game retailers, the **Interactive Entertainment Merchants Association (IEMA)**. Based on these recommendations, the **Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA)** suggested this new format to the video game industry after "a great deal of discussion and after receiving and considering comments on a draft standard from a wide array of both IDSA members and non-member publishers," said **Carolyn Rauch**, the IDSA's Senior Vice President. The IDSA expects this strictly voluntary standard to be adopted by the industry by April of this year — including many older titles.

While this format means a better visual presentation for publishers' titles (allowing you to see the whole cover and not just the spine), and therefore more dollars for retailers, what does this mean for us? **Virgin Interactive's** PR manager **Damien Sarrazin** says we're already seeing the benefits. "If we didn't change the boxes, our games would probably be available for \$30 to \$40 [instead of \$20]." This is because a company like Virgin doesn't have to spend excess money on printing costs and cardboard inserts. Instead, Virgin has put its instruction manuals on the discs in PDF form (consumers will still be able to send away for a printed version). Sarrazin also tells us the new format is better for the environment because there's less paper to be recycled. Less waste, more space, and cheaper games — everybody wins.



33% of this month's Game Inforcer is unused Loose Talk material

23% of GI editors are moonlighting as mines on the mean streets of Minneapolis

52% of Matt's soul has turned to the Dark Side. He's becoming a goth

.067% of resumes sent to GI list experience in making adult films

4% of readers say that the Sly Stallone video game *Driven* is the reason they bought a next-gen console





**A decade ago**, the video game industry was an entirely different beast than it is today. While console gaming seemed to be on the rise, making drastic leaps and innovations with each passing year, these advances paled in comparison to the heightened technologies of the arcade scene. Although impressive, home gaming was confined by the relatively primitive technical capabilities of the system of the day. Developers had to learn how to manipulate the architecture of the console to better suit their needs — constantly working around set parameters and limitations. Evolving was a burdensome process. With coin-operated machines, none of the technologies were shared. Developers designed their own circuit boards based on what they needed. Comparatively, arcade games had the luxury of advancing with each new game release; whereas the only way console titles would move forward was through the inventiveness of the development team. The differences between the mediums were as clear as day and night. The thought that console gaming would eventually overpower the stand-up machines was a far-fetched thought and little more than a passing dream.

In 1992, the arcade movement continued to gain momentum when Midway (also known as Williams) and two of its brightest designers, Ed Boon and John Tobias, ushered in a controversial, yet incredibly inventive fighting game entitled *Mortal Kombat*. With pockets overflowing with quarters, gamers flocked to arcades in droves, waiting in hour-long lines only to have their character's head lopped off by the reigning local champion; who was knowledgeable in the game's most coveted secrets, and in all likelihood, hadn't lost a match for six hours running. Unlike the fighting games before it, a knockout wouldn't suffice in the world of *Mortal Kombat*. The allure that kept gamers coming back was the chance to permanently dispose of the opposition with a trademark tactic called a *Fatality*. Rather than simply twisting a neck or putting a gun to an opponent's head, these maneuvers were graphically violent, and consisted of blood-soaked decapitations, combustion, and even tearing an adversary completely in two. In what seemed like an overnight occurrence, *Mortal Kombat* became the most popular game on the planet, and the most talked about arcade release since *Dragon's Lair*. People couldn't get enough of it. Media outlets began reporting on its unprecedented level of violence, and much like the hysteria surrounding the Beatles, it became a part of American pop culture. *Mortal Kombat* was here to stay.

# A NEW BEGINNING





# MORTAL KOMBAT®

## DEADLY ALLIANCE

By this time, the technological gap between the arcades and consoles had begun to shrink. Although not a perfect translation of the original arcade game, Midway (working in unison with Acclaim) managed to port Mortal Kombat onto the Super Nintendo and Sega Genesis. Always protective of its large audience of young children, Nintendo forced Midway to remove all of the blood and alter some of the game's most gruesome Fatalities. Sega embarked on a similar quest, but allowed gamers to view the game in its purest form by inputting a code. The sanitized SNES version didn't go over well with fans.

Reports show that the Genesis release sold roughly four times as many as the SNES Mortal Kombat. The popularity of the game eventually caught the eye of US Senator Joseph Lieberman's chief of staff, Bill Andersen. Apparently, Andersen's nine-year-old son wanted to add the game to his collection, and media reports on the MK's troubling content led Andersen to investigate the title. Wary of the excessive violence within the game, Bill brought Mortal Kombat to Lieberman's attention and it quickly became a national concern. Before long, Sega implemented a ratings board of its own, and a Congressional hearing over the Mortal Kombat controversy led to the institution of the ESRB rating system that has become the industry standard today.

In the following year, Midway answered the demand for a sequel, and Tobias and Boon gave gamers everything they could ever want. Mortal Kombat II was bloodier, more diverse, and even a little lighthearted at times – allowing gamers to make peace with their opponent through a new finisher called the Friendship (a feature that was added to appease critics of the series). Again, arcade goers went wild for the action at hand. Acclaim quickly fashioned home translations – this time without toning down the violence or gore. Even with the hysteria at an all-time high, Tobias and Boon wanted to take their time with the third installment in the series. Although more complex in its composi-

tion, the 1995 Mortal Kombat 3 well as the previous which was discouraging, especially considering that New Line Cinema had just released a major motion picture based on the series. The hype surrounding this fighting game titan had definitely faded, but the biggest blow to the series came from the rise of new console machines, primarily the Sony PlayStation.

While arcade games still looked slightly better than home games, the differences were not as distinguishable as before. Instead of dropping a coin for a minute of thrills, gamers were becoming more engrossed with productions that offered real substance. Whether it was the invention of dynamic story-telling or the sheer depth of gameplay offered by early PS-X hits like Tomb Raider, video game fanatics began to abandon the arcades in favor of the home console experience. The Mortal Kombat franchise received another crippling blow when competing developers began to utilize new polygonal graphic techniques. Mortal Kombat's digitized characters were as real as could be, but compared to fully 3D characters, Midway's technology appeared quite dated. Taking pictures of actors in costumes only allowed for a limited degree of character movement. With 3D graphics, the characters could interact seamlessly, move in multiple directions, and perform hundreds of moves. Once revolutionary, the Mortal Kombat formula was now of little value. For the first time, it seemed that the series had run out of steam.

Faced with stiff competition from ascendant fighting franchises like Tekken and Virtua Fighter, Mortal Kombat finally made the transition to the third dimension in 1998. In an attempt to keep the continuity of the series in tact, Tobias and Boon fashioned the gameplay much like its predecessors. This proved to be a costly maneuver. By this point, gamers wanted something different, and even

release of didn't go over as two installments; into all involved, that New Line Cinema

though it was completely 3D, Mortal Kombat 4 was just another rehash of the original MK formula. Even with a huge fallout of fans, Midway continued to release new Mortal Kombat updates, and even tried to take the series into the action genre with the excruciating Mortal Kombat Mythologies: SubZero. None of these ventures fared well. Wounded like a warrior within its digital seams, Mortal Kombat retreated, and ultimately faded into obscurity. By this time, rumors began spreading across the industry that Boon and Tobias had disbanded their partnership. No one knows what happened exactly, but the legendary team did in fact break apart. Whether it's a coincidence or not, the death of the Mortal Kombat franchise and the demise of arcade gaming seemed to happen at precisely the same time.

The resurgence of arcade gaming will never happen. That aspect of the industry is but a faint glimmer that continues to grow weaker by the day. After taking a much-needed sabbatical from the action, Ed Boon took a good look at the state of fighting games, viewed what he had done in the past, and ultimately saw an opening that he could exploit. The series may have crashed and burned harder than any before it, and gamers reared on Tekken and Soul Calibur might remain skeptical, but Ed Boon is determined to make Mortal Kombat the king of the fighters once again. His newly assembled development team is wiser, much larger in size, and fueled by vengeance. This fall, Mortal Kombat will make its triumphant return, and a bounty has been placed on every other fighter on the market. Boon is keeping this project under tight wraps, but he granted us the world exclusive on its unveiling. Expect to be blown away. Expect to be showered with blood like never before. Expect to have your perception of fighting games forever changed. Mortal Kombat is back and looking better than you could ever imagine. Let the Fatalities begin.

# DEADLY DESIGN

## SHANGTSUNG

## QUAN CHI

## SNAKE

## CRANE

Visible damage will be shown on the characters. You may bruise a face, cut a lip, or even knock off a piece of clothing.



Ed Boon breaks down the design of *Deadly Alliance*.

The new fighting system allows players to change martial arts styles on the fly. Pictured here, Jax leads with a Muay Thai jab and follows up with a Tang Soo Do uppercut.

"We have a lot more experience than we did 10 years ago," comments Boon.

"More so than we did with the first *Mortal Kombat*. That's one

of the reasons why we are so excited about *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*. We are taking everything we've learned in making the first four *Mortal Kombat*s and applying it to this redesigned fighting engine." This is the first game that Boon and his team have developed exclusively for consoles. It's a different science than arcade gaming. "[Console development] requires a lot of time and effort to learn," comments Boon. "We've always wanted to release the next *Mortal Kombat* on all the systems and these three consoles are VERY different from each other."

Take into account the fact that the team is essentially working on a brand new game, and you can see why *Mortal Kombat* hasn't resurfaced yet. Even before beginning the initial design, Boon knew where the series was going and how he wanted the game to turn out. "We are putting more emphasis on the single player game, console controllers, and the story element. In comparison to the existing series, *Deadly Alliance* is an altered reality with less emphasis on teleporting, projectiles and other magic spells. Instead, we are focusing more on punching, kicking, weapon fighting, and the strategies involved with those mechanics."

One of the most interesting and unique concepts that has been implemented into this sequel stems from the traditional character moves. If you look at *Mortal Kombat*, and every fighting game for that matter, the characters are actually one-dimensional in design. Even if they are trained in several different fighting styles, they usually rely on just one method. The only game to truly embark on diversifying a character's move set is *Tekken*. If you are familiar with this series, Lei Wulong can switch between a handful of martial arts styles on the fly. However, controlling these transformations proves to be somewhat cumbersome and limited in scope. Boon obviously liked

SCORPION



TAE KWON DO

MUAY THAI

SCORPION



TAE KWON DO

TANG SOO DO



the idea and expanded upon it in Deadly Alliance. Right now, all of the combatants come equipped with a wide variety of fighting tactics. Boon added, "At any time during the match, each fighter will be able to switch between three of his own fighting styles, each with its own stance, punches, kicks, counters, and secret moves. Some fighting styles will involve weapons; some are more offensive-oriented, and some more defensive. It's the combination of these fighting styles that will define the character's abilities. This really opens the door to some cool combos. For instance, you can start a combo while in the 'Tai Chi' fighting style, change to 'Tae Kwon Do' and finish off the combo in that style. We are very excited about this feature and how it will allow players to create their own custom combo strings."

Another innovation that seems to have been absent from most current fighting games is the use

of visible character damage. If you walked over and smacked your friend in the face, you'd leave a mark. It seems silly that every fighting game doesn't include this feature. Other than Art of Fighting and a handful of boxing simulations, this graphical nuance has been completely overlooked. In Deadly Alliance, the flurry of attacks you throw at the opposition will be reflected in real-time. If you punch Sonya in the face, there's a chance that she may bruse up. More interesting yet, there's a chance that you may knock a piece of a character's costume clean off. By the end of the fight, you may not even be able to recognize the combatants.

Picking up where Mortal Kombat 4 left off, weapon warfare will play a large role in the complexity of combat. Keeping with the realistic tone, if you jab a sword into someone, it will turn the tides of the battle. As such, the player who receives the blow will

begin bleeding and his or her energy will slowly drain.

If you continue chopping away, you really won't need to perform a Fatality as they'll already be a bloody mess. Some of the weapons are tied with different fighting styles. Other armaments are hung on arena walls. Characters can counter these attacks by knocking the weapon out of your hand, but it won't be nearly as easy as it was in the previous installment. Once again, if a weapon is disposed of and it's in the general vicinity, anyone can pick it up. Not one to alienate the fans, the game will still retain several of the qualities of the original. Boldly speaking, Boon comments, "Of course there are some things we wouldn't dare remove from the game, like Scorpion's spear, but some of the old fashioned moves are simply not useful in this new 3D fighting engine."





**The Mortal Kombat story** arc has become somewhat convoluted over the last few entries into the series. For Deadly Alliance, the story is being scooped back and centers solely on Shang Tsung and Quan Chi's quest for immortality. Of course, additional side stories are in place for the remainder of the characters – some of which will add and intertwine with the tale at hand. Boon and his team are running the gamut with how the plot will be told. You'll see highly-detailed CG movies, real-time sequences, high-resolution screen renders, and other mediums as well. On the right-hand page, you can see two storyboard illustrations – one for Quan Chi, and the other for a new character named Drahmin (the Oni-Tormentor).

In total, Deadly Alliance will boast roughly 20 to 24 playable characters – half of which should be entirely new to the series. Along with completely redesigned models of Sonya, Cyrax, Rayden, Kitana, Reptile, Jax, and Scorpion, the team has gone out of its way to create some of the coolest new characters we've seen in quite some time. Blind Kenshi is by far our favorite, and his back-story puts him over even more. It turns out that the Kenshi was pursuing lost ancestral knowledge within a labyrinth of catacombs.

He soon discovers the forbidden well of souls. In peering into its depths he sees a horde of super-

natural spirits flowing into the Outworld. Unable to cope with the vision, his mortal form is forever blinded and his spiritual self is stripped of its innocence. Lost and alone, The Kenshi wanders the depths of the forbidden place.

On another interesting note, SubZero will be represented in two different ways. Along with the form we know and love, Boon filled us in on an interesting addition to the Lin Kuei roster. "Since the first Mortal Kombat, we've always talked about introducing a female SubZero character and now we actually did. Although, we haven't determined if she is going to be good or evil."

Boon went on to say, "Some of the characters didn't make it in. This is always due to the fact that we don't have unlimited time to work on the game. A perfect world would let us put every character we think of in the game, but then we probably would never finish the game." Right now, the list of characters looks fantastic, but since the gameplay has changed so drastically, picking a fighter you've used a million times in the past should be a completely different experience. Boon told us that projectiles and magic don't play as large of a role in this game. SubZero was the living essence of magic. It'll be interesting to see how they transform his fighting style. The same goes for Rayden. Can he still project lightning, and fly through the air like Superman?

As you've probably noticed by now, Liu Kang has not been mentioned through the entire article. In a surprising turn of events, Liu Kang dies at the beginning of the game. Will he rise again? Will his soul live on in another host? You'll have to wait and see!

If you look closely at the in-game screenshots on the previous and later pages, you can see incredible detail has been applied to the character models – each consisting of over 6,000 polygons. All of their garments and hair flow with movement and sway in the wind. The lighting for each arena is also displayed on the models realistically. The shadows move across the floor, and light reflects off of metal objects. When you see the game in action, it will leave you breathless and craving more.



# Quan Chi

A NEW BEGINNING

AFTER HIS SECRET JOURNEYS THROUGH THE LOWER PLANES SEEKING LONG FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE OF THE DARK ARTS, **QUAN CHI** RETURNS AT THE PEAK OF HIS SORCEROUS POWERS AND IN POSSESSION OF A MYSTERIOUS LIVING WEAPON AS WELL.

## The Legend of the ONI-Tormentor

ONCE A RUTHLESS AND POWERFUL WARLORD, **DRAWHAM** FELL FROM THE EYES OF MORTAL MAN WHEN HE WAS BANISHED TO THE **ANTHREZELUM**.

IT IS HERE THAT ABYSMAL POWERS BEGAN TO REDESIGN THE FALLEN RULER INTO AN **ONI-DEMON** FEARED AND HATED THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRES OF THE OUTWORLD.

**DRAWHAM'S** SENTENCE TO THE DEPTHS OF THE NETHERREALM WOULD LAST FOR 500 YEARS, HIS BODY AND SANITY RAVAGED BY THE UNSPEAKABLE TORTURES INFLICTED UPON HIM. THE END PRODUCT OF THESE HIDEOUS MACHINATIONS WOULD BE A BEING FUELED BY AN UNDISCOVERABLE INSANE FURY.

UNFOCUSSED WITH HIS MURDEROUS INSANITY, **DRAWHAM** IS A MONSTRIOUSLY FEROCIOUS OPPONENT. IT IS WHEN HE DONNS HIS ARTIFACT MASK, THE **FACE OF KUN-LO**, THAT HE CAN CENTER HIS POWER INTO A PRECISE LETHAL FIGHTING STYLE THAT HAS MADE HIM INTO THE LEGENDARY **ONI-TORMENTOR**.

# CONTROLLING THE CARNAGE

**At this early stage** in development, all three versions of the game are identical, and Boon predicts that there will be few differences, other than some subtle graphical alterations. The team has studied each system's controller closely, and has designed a formula that works well for all three. Boon broke it down for us: "The control scheme is more flexible and elaborate. Players will control both 2D and 3D walking with either the directional pad or the analog stick. Attacks will be performed with the traditional right face buttons. The shoulder buttons will be used for another special attack, blocking, and changing your fighting styles."

Instead of offering a button sequence that initiates throws and counters, the different fighting styles for the characters determines how they fight. "Grappling and countering is one of the areas where the different fighting styles will really play a big role," Boon said. "Some fighting styles will be more defensive and will emphasize counters while others will be more offensive and focus more on aggressive moves. The good players will be able to use all of a player's fighting styles in combination to take full advantage of a character's abilities. The key will be to learn which fighting styles are most effective in the various situations you will find yourself in during the game."



Scorpion's fighting styles rely heavily on weapons

## FATALITIES!

**As for the overall design** of the game, it will in fact be quite different and fashioned more like Soul Caliber. Boon explains, "Now that we are designing this game for the console systems, we are going to greatly expand on the single player experience. Not only will we have the normal 'move up the ladder then fight the boss' mode, but also a mission

mode, Test Your Might (from the first Mortal Kombat), Test Your Sight, and a variety of other minigames."

For the purist out there, a few of the original MK team had a hand in creating this offering. Dan Forden will once again record an original soundtrack for the game. Also, word has it that a popular band is recording an original song for Deadly Alliance.

Always one to toy with your emotions, we've saved the best for last. As has been the case for every

Mortal Kombat game, the Fatalities will be the moves that everyone is gunning to perform. Rather than regurgitating tactics that characters have leveled opponents with in the past, all of the Fatalities in Deadly Alliance are completely original. Boon filled us in on one of the

original deaths. "I don't really want to give away any surprises, but I suppose I can tell you that Scorpion's Fatality involves his spear and his opponent's head.

Without spelling out everything for you, let's just say that Scorpion does a good job of pulling off more than just this move." Boon also felt that the variety between the finishing moves had to be scaled back. "People got such a kick out of Mortal Kombat 2's Friendships and Babilalities that we went overboard on Mortal Kombat 3 with more of them and added Anamailities. Mortal Kombat 4 got back to being more serious and dropped the comedic 'alities'. In Deadly Alliance the only 'ality' we are planning on keeping are Fatalities. While people have always loved doing Fatalities, I believe the focus on this game will be the completely new play mechanic, new characters and backgrounds, and even the deeper storylines." None of the Fatalities should be shown at this time, but are ready to be up and running by this summer - at which time we'll have exclusive coverage showing the gore in full effect. Stay tuned!



Early sketch work of Goro's Palace



SHANGTSUNG

SCORPION

SNAKE

BROAD SWORD

By performing specific moves, players will be able to disarm the opposition

SUBZERO

SUBZERO

CYRA

In addition to the normal attire, most of the combatants can also wear alternate costumes. Cyra looks familiar now, but his secondary gear gives him a different appearance altogether

SubZero has aged significantly through the years

TAE KWON DO

TAE KWON DO

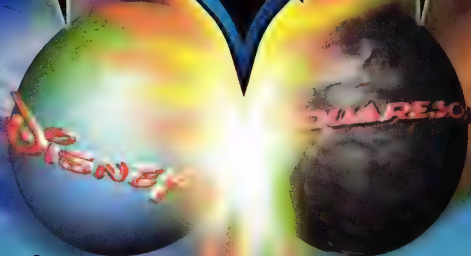
TAE KWON DO

GAME INFORMER 41  
TAE KWON DO

# WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

Disney SQUARESOFT

## KINGDOM HEARTS



**Renowned** for its award-winning work on the Final Fantasy series, Square Soft, the legendary Japanese development house, is shifting gears and collaborating on the creation of what could be the next groundbreaking action/role-playing game series. Square's devotion to innovation can not be questioned. With each passing Final Fantasy title, Square continually raises the bar, setting such a high standard that no developer would dare to compete. While the Final Fantasy series is still considered to be this company's bread and butter, a new project has emerged and is receiving the lion's share of Square's attention—more than any other project in company history. This imaginative new game is Kingdom Hearts, a joint venture between Square Soft and Disney.

Just a few years ago, Capcom and SNK formed an alliance for a handful of arcade fighting games. The Kingdom Hearts amalgamation goes far beyond anything we've seen before. Not only will each world be seamlessly united; four never-before-seen Disney characters will make their debut. This is of special interest because these

characters were created collaboratively by Square's Tetsuya Nomura and Disney's artists. Rumor has it that these unique creations will eventually migrate from gaming into other forms of multimedia.

The overall story arc focuses heavily on the Disney angle, but also showcases a witty and genuine tale that is quintessentially Square. The plot revolves around the tale of Sora, a 14-year-old boy whose life is changed forever when a storm slams into his island home and he is separated from his two best friends—Riku, 14, and the lovely Kairi, 15. After the storm scatters these lifelong

companions to places unknown, Sora picks himself up and begins the quest to find his friends in a new and mysterious land. Before too long, Sora links up with Court Wizard Donald and Captain Goofy, protectors of the Disney Castle, and learns that these characters are on a mission to find King Mickey. As their journey unfolds, the group discovers the existence of a terrible evil—creatures known as the Heartless. Devoid of feeling and hailing from an unknown dimen-

sion, these are the beings responsible for the horrible storm that upset so many lives. The Heartless aim to recruit Disney villains to help in the theft of the pure hearts and souls of the land's inhabitants. It will be your job to save the universe from the Heartless and return the King to his throne—not to mention find your friends. Of course, you'll have plenty of help.

Over 100 Disney characters will make cameo appearances in Kingdom Hearts, many of which will run at your side. At the same time, however, a slew of Square Soft characters will grace the screen as well. The world itself spans across the entire Disney universe and players will find themselves exploring familiar landscapes from Disney's finest animated feature films.

Breaking from the turn-based Final Fantasy gameplay model, Kingdom Hearts will feature a real-time engine that allows players to freely navigate their surroundings and engage in intense battles. As a Square property, Kingdom Hearts will undoubtedly exhibit eye-popping graphical displays that not only apply to the detailing in the characters and levels, but also in the story presentation. Set to release in the fall, this title is already shaping up to be one of the most exciting



Tetsuya Nomura is not only the creative genius behind the character designs, he's also the Director of Kingdom Hearts.

■ PLATFORM PLAYSTATION 2 ■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION/RPG  
■ PUBLISHER SQUARE SOFT ■ DEVELOPER SQUARE SOFT/DISNEY INTERACTIVE ■ RELEASE FALL

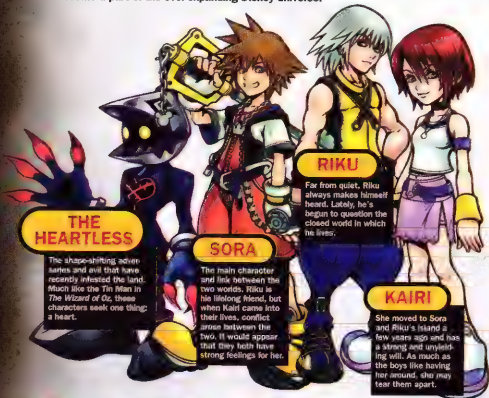
# New Disney Characters

The star power in Kingdom Hearts far exceeds anything you've seen in a game thus far. The characters you'll be spending the most time with are actually new creations that will become a part of the ever-expanding Disney universe.

## WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

# Classic Disney Characters

As the quest unfolds, over 100 of Disney's most recognizable characters will cross your path. Among the more notable friends and foes you'll encounter during your time in-game are Winnie the Pooh, Jafar and Genie from *Aladdin*, Clayton from *Tarzan*, Hades from *Hercules*, The Queen of Hearts and the Chessboard Cat from *Alice in Wonderland*, and Pluto. Two of Disney's legendary faces, Donald and Goofy, will run at Sora's side through a good majority of the game as secondary NPCs.



### THE HEARTLESS

The obscuring adventures and evil that have recently infested the land. Upon see the Tin Man in The Wizard of Oz, these characters seek one thing: a heart.

### SORA

The main character and link between the two worlds. Riku is his shadow's friend, but when Kairi came into their lives, conflict arose between the two. It would appear that they both have strong feelings for her.

### RIKU

Far from quiet, Riku always makes himself heard. Lately, he's begun to question the closed world in which he lives.

### KAIRI

She moved to Sora and Riku's island a few years ago and has a strong and unyielding will. As much as the boys like having her around, she may tear them apart.



### DONALD

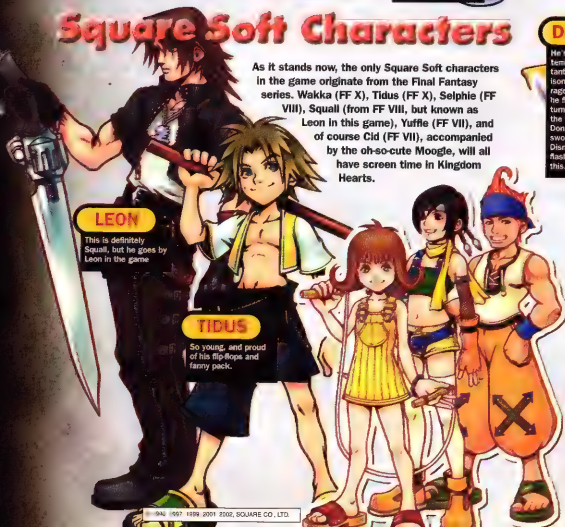
He's always had a temper, but all of his tantrums pale in comparison to the explosive rage he unleashes when he finds out Mickey has turned up missing. With the title Court Wizard, Donald is one of the sworn protectors of Disney Castle and his flashy new attire reflects this.

### GOOFY

Goofy is one of Mickey's guardians and is the Captain of the Disney army. His new wardrobe is an ornate, new-age ensemble. Unlike Donald, he actually remembers to wear pants.

# Square Soft Characters

As it stands now, the only Square Soft characters in the game originate from the Final Fantasy series. Wakka (FF X), Tidus (FF X), Selphie (FF VIII), Squall (from FF VIII, but known as Leon in this game), Yuffie (FF VII), and of course Cid (FF VII), accompanied by the oh-so-cute Moogles, will all have screen time in Kingdom Hearts.



### LEON

This is definitely Squall, but he goes by Leon in the game.

### TIDUS

So young, and proud of his flip-flops and fanny pack.





# Ring of Worlds

Since every classic Buster Disney motion picture is reimagined for a new generation, the most recent instance, a film is transformed into an interactive experience that players can freely explore and interact with. If you've seen the films that these lands are based on, you'll quickly realize that you're experiencing key events from the original story. To take a few examples, in the *Alice In Wonderland* segment of the game, you'll normally shrink to pass through the tiny door, meet the Queen, and even save Alice from being behemothed by the Queen. Within *The Little Mermaid*, Donald will transform into an octopus. Goofy will take shape as a turtle, and Sora's physique will change to that of a mermaid (complete with fins and gills). These character alterations are hysterical, especially since the key facial traits and likenesses are still represented. Of course, most of your time under the sea is spent swimming, but you'll also be helping Ariel and her companions Sebastian and Flounder combat Ursula and her forces. Additionally, you'll trek through

worlds based on *The Lion King*, *Hercules*, *Aladdin*, *Tarzan*, and even *The Nightmare Before Christmas*.

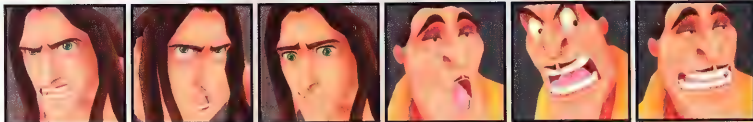


All of the dialogue in the game will come through in recorded voice overs. Nothing is confirmed yet, but word has it that Square and Disney are trying to secure some of the talent from the films to reprise their roles.



## Animating a Journey

The production quality at Square Soft is second to none, and all the stops are being pulled out for the animation in Kingdom Hearts. Lip-synched facial movements will accompany the spoken dialogue. The characters will also show a variety of facial expressions depending on the situation at hand. Since the game uses a real-time engine, one that can best be described as a conglomeration of the recent Mario and Zelda games, a wide variety of movements had to be created for Sora. As you can see, he can climb on objects such as poles, ladders, and trees; swing on vines; hang off of ledges; swim; walk; run; and also pick up environment objects.



# Combating the Heartless Forces



In addition to the abundance of exploration, combat will rear its head at any given point during gameplay. Usually, you'll enter battle against the Heartless - whose appearance changes drastically with each world you enter. More often than not, they attack in groups, clouding the screen with their black hides. Thankfully, you're equipped with the tools needed to take them down. With his magical key at his side, Sora can string together incredible combo sequences, and can call upon magic if he chooses to. All of the combat is presented in real-time, and is tailored similarly to the Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time. In such, players can lock-on to enemies, perform evasive maneuvers, and counter almost everything that is thrown Sora's way. For boss battles, you'll usually be required to target specific hit zones. Sora's key can be upgraded throughout the course of the adventure, and different spells can also be obtained.



Typical Square - a fair of minigames are included in Kingdom Hearts. In this sequence, Tidus challenges Sora to an old-fashioned duel.



Sometimes the enemies within the given worlds will attack, rather than the Heartless.



The boss battles are both breathtaking and challenging. New supporting characters will do what they can, but it's up to you to slay the beast.

## Special Summons



The highly animated, yet microscopic Mushi is just one of many summon creatures.

Magic has always played a role in most of Square Soft's premiere franchises. It won't be as significant in Kingdom Hearts as it is in Final Fantasy, but it will allow players to propel elemental blasts as well as summon creatures onto the battlefield. Instead of restructuring lift, the summon creatures are taken straight from the Disney universe. They may seem a little too cute to level the playing field, but you'd be surprised what these characters are capable of. Sora jumps onto the back of Dumbo, who then becomes controllable, and douses the opposition with a trunk full of water. Of equal interest, you'll also have the luxury of calling upon Simba, Mushi, Bambi, and a host of additional characters.



Sora can cast a number of elemental-based magic attacks.



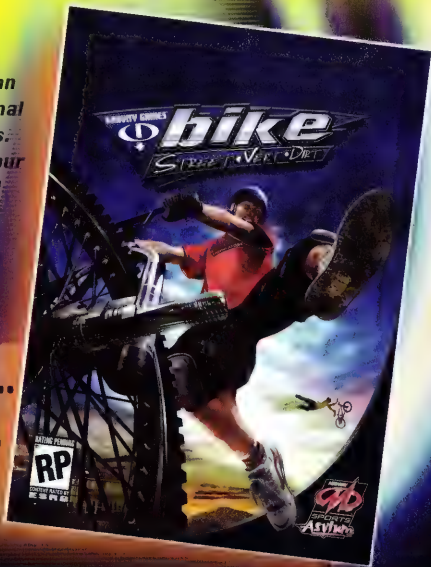
Much like Final Fantasy, players can summon a number of characters to aid in battle.

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The First Word On Innuendo & Misinformation

## SUPER TOP SECRET TITLE REVEALED!

GI UNVEILS A GAME SO SECRET,  
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW ITS NAME YET

- ONE SCREENSHOT
- NO INFO
- EIGHT PAGES!

### MOCKSTAR'S PETTY MISDEMEANOR IV

Jaywalking, Littering, and More!

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# EDITORS' FORUM

## WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS...



...Just how amazingly AWESOME this issue of Game Infarcer is. I mean, this has been the most awesome start to what is going to be the most supremely

awesome year ever!! In my third year as Editor-in-Chief of GI, I'm finally starting to get some respect around the industry as the super-cool stud bait editor of the whole video game business. Like, check this out: The other day I was at a Nintendo press conference, and who do you think I talked to? Huh? Who? None other than the best game developer ever, Shitatsu Mimisoda! Who's that, you ask? Well, DOY! He's only the most excellent creator of the Legacy of Zero and Retardio series!! Anyway, after the Q&A session (that stands for "Question and Answer" for you dopes that don't work for magazines), I walked right up to him and had him autograph my special platinum cartridge edition of

QuasarFerret 48 and said, "Hey man, we should totally hang out sometime!" And do you know what he said? Do you? Well, my loser non-game journalist friends, he was totally into the idea and exclaimed, "Yeah, sure. Whatever." ARE YOU GETTING THIS? Let me repeat: YEAH, SURE. WHATEVER!!!!!! I'm so down with Mimisoda, and all you guys, and my stupid little sister are going to be sooo jealous when we're hangin' together at next year's E4. Maybe he'll even make Sintendo make me a character in the next Perfect Dork game. Then, I'll be even cooler than I already am. Sure, like that's possible. Smell ya later, weiners. Oh yeah, check out our new crew of editors. What a bunch of geeks.

Lord Garnadan

Lord Garnadan  
Editor  
Liege-Lord of Garnadina



### RUDY LEE, THE REDNECK GAMER

Shee-oo! I don't know why these dang Yankee crackers lierd me to work on your damn fancy-pants maggie-zeen arry damn way! Hell, I ain't got all that book-learnin' and ritin' stuff, but I can skin a possum faster'n you can say grits n' biscuits! Dang vidya games is fer fannies, if'n ya ask me! Makes me hotter'n a two-dollar pistol when my boy's always turning on his Atari when I'm tryin' to watch Springer on telly-vision. Only game we used to play back when I wuz a young'un was "Creep up on a Sheep"! Now that there's some real fun, I tell ya boy! Fast li' critters, them sheep. Now, stop pestamin' me, and GET OFF MY DAMN LAWN fer I point my twelve-gauge at yer tight n' curies!



### JOSHUA, THE FAN BOY GAMER

I know everyone out there has just got to be as pumped as I am that Manga Spectra has just reissued the entire original Zebrahead Fun Detective: Spawn of the Spider-Colon animated series on DVD! Finally! This overlooked masterpiece will find its way to the States! Yay, yay, WY! Other than that, I've been playing nothing but the newest DragonRobo CyBerBat XI Japanese import for the late, lamented Mega Uranus system (R.I.P.). Let all those sheep play their big budget, mainstream games that are fun to play - We know better, don't we? The Uranus was THE best system ever, and would have been a big success if those jocks at Phony hadn't killed it off with their PlainStation. Morons. On the bright side, I hear that Ween and They Might Be Giants have new albums coming out this year! Rejoice, fellow Earthlings!!!



### DECEMBER, THE GOTH GAMER

The goddess spake wisdom from the cup of eternity, as rain tears collect upon my bosom. Pain hushed limpid languid dewdrops reaped from leopard print curtains. Nevermore to feel, mine eyes reflect the dawning of the night. Absinthe anodyne to those lost ravens - no celestial lawmower to seal your fate! No more shall we part, looking upon such beautiful creatures of scorn. We seek the agony of destiny, fun size preferably. Sad solace, beat thy wings upon the posterior of the moon. In your fleeting gaze, a coven of sorrow. These fragile fields bear no fruit, only blind catacombs envelop my shroud. Anon, bitterness fares, your hula hoop ritual of the salted snacks is unending.

## GI SPY

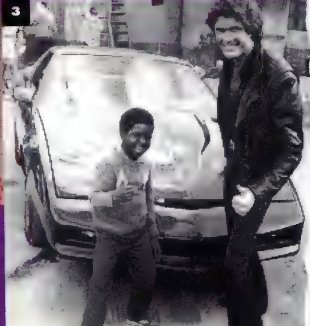
1 2



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

1 The United States' new weapon in the war on terrorism. Beware the killer gophers!!! 2 Myra Lynn, newly engaged to Gil's Rudy Lee, poses sweetly for the Game Infarcer camera. 3 Gary Coleman and David Hasselhoff stop by the Game Infarcer offices to promote their new PlainStation 2 game...The Adventures of Stud n' Spud.

3









PLAINSTATION 2

## DOUG SWINGLEY'S PRO DOG SLEDDER

### STARIN' THE DOG IN THE ASS

**If you can't** bring with the big dogs, go all on the snow, because if you're not the lead dog, the snow never changes. Also, if you can't pee (aka fly hydrant), you better go poop (aka the Post Office). Think you're a bootlicking dogged champ? Well, you ain't a frozen huskie lurd compared to Doug Swingley, the four-time idlered champ who has teamed with SmackAdvisor, and Neverhad to bring the action/sports genre to the next level. You think of pulling a 900' Christ Air is a chore? Well, try getting a team of mulefuckers to pull a Backside Reverse Indy (Crotch Sniffer) Year!

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER CANINE/SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** SMOACKADVISOR  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** NEVERHAD  
 ■ **RELEASE** SOMETIME LAST WEEK



XXXBOX

## STREET MAGE

NONE OF Y'ALL SUCKAS SHALL PASS

**Str8 from da slumz** of Middle Earth, it's that crazy drunk magic man Street Mage. When he's not cappin' on foos, quilin' out his magic missiles on suckas, and mainrain' in the Shizzy (that's the Shire, for all y'all haters), Street Mage breaks down the 411 on the story behind the king skinny pimp of the wizard biotchess, elevatin' your mind with the saga of how our boy lost that tingling ring, then got a book from them Hobbit shortsies with the rudiness, and then had that damn tight, melted-down and turned into a nice set of platinum teeth. Now that's ill, almost as ill as the way Street Mage's turn-based battle system takes it to the house with ill combos that let you merge dope ass magic missile attacks with straight up AKs and Tech 9s. To the streetz is watching, and so far our mans on the down low at D&D-0-Doubt-0 dropped some jewels about the game's plot, which takes Mage from BX all the way to New Jersey where he has to bust down some bootlegz that's been running underground craps games with loaded 12-sided die.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/RPG/ANGST ■ **PUBLISHER** MACROHARD  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** D&D-0-D-DOUBLE-G SOFTWARE  
 ■ **RELEASE** HOLLA WHEN YOU HEAR DIE

LAME BOY COLOR

## POOPIMON PLAID

HATS OFF, SINTENDO!

**A**s the most knowledgeable gamer on this pathetic Muggle planet, I've been following the Poopimon series since 1982, when Sintendo released a series of Puse Critter (the original Japanese name for Poopimon, you heathen!) LCD watch games that were only available in the jungles of Papua New Guinea and certain cities in Uzbekistan. Anyway, I'm sure you trend-hoppers only just heard about them when they got all commercialized, so I won't attempt to frazzle your feeble minds with the complex hierarchy of the Poopimon universe any further. Besides, I'm saving it for my Cultural Studies Master's thesis, which I hope to complete after nearly 10 years of painstaking research. Suffice it to say that Poopimon Plaid, while containing the exact same levels, gameplay, character, and battle system as every other Poopimon title, manages to totally reinvent the series by giving our hero, Sooty, a new plaid baseball cap! Genesis! Of course, the plaid hat is all part of Poopimon's Byzantine semiotic system, which embraces elements of Shinto, Buddhism, and Star Trek, but I won't go into that, since you could never understand anyway. How I pity you. — **JOSHUA**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER REHASH ■ **PUBLISHER** SINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** CRITTER INC.  
 ■ **RELEASE** THIS FINANCIAL QUARTER

GAMESPIRE

## GOONY THE GOPHER: RAPID RETURN

HOLY FLAMING CRAPBURGERS!

**I**'m sure you all know how super cool Mega's Goony the Gopher games are, but I am here to tell you that Rapid Return is the bestst game ever, even better than that funny feeling I get when I climb the rope in gym class! Ormgod-go-GOD! Mega's new Stick Shading technology makes this game look so cool, like a flipbook come to life! It's so cool that I totally can't stop playing it. I love video games and this is the best one ever! I hope I never stop playing cool games like this. My Mom says I'm getting to "that age" where I'm going to stop loving games so much and start liking gross girls, but that will never happen to Garmadan. Just because I have new hairs in some places doesn't mean that I'm going to



be all gross and kissing girls and stuff. No way! I never worry about that, even though I did have a weird dream last week about this yucky girl Cindy in my roomerom and Mom was mad because she had to do an extra load of laundry, but that doesn't mean I don't still love games, because I do. Really, Goony the Gopher is the best, way cooler than that dark Cindy. — **LORD GARMADAN**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/VERMIN ■ **PUBLISHER** MEGA ■ **DEVELOPER** EMC2  
 ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 2008

THE BOTTOM LINE

LOW SCORE  
 M  
 C  
 H  
 W

38.5

- **Concept:** The exact same game as Poopimon Brown, Poopimon Green, Poopimon Orange, Poopimon Fuchsia, and Poopimon Burnt Limber, with new hat!
- **Graphics:** Features all new hat renders!
- **Sound:** New digitized voices provide commentary on the hat!
- **Playability:** The old levels and battle moves are even more fun with hats!
- **Entertainment:** Better than Cats! Or the Cat in the Hat! Or the 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins!
- **Repeat Value:** Moderately Medium

SECOND OPINION

What is the Sun Hill is a Poopimon? Looks like a GOT-DM average person to me. Them game things better stay OFF MY LAWN or me an' Mya'll be eatin'! Poopizoo steaks tonight!

RUDY LEE — **HH**

THE BOTTOM LINE

G  
 H  
 W  
 M

A+

- **Concept:** Wow, it's cool!
- **Graphics:** Whoot!
- **Sound:** Whoot!
- **Playability:** Super amazing!
- **Entertainment:** Golly gee willikers!
- **Repeat Value:** Higher Than High!

SECOND OPINION

Never have I known such irresponsible humor. Centuries pass as I sat aimlessly on the rock of my own despair: Naked and alone, my soul wanders through a deserted Applebee's with no buffalo wings to feed my sorrow, no ranch dressing to quench my insatiable thirst. Damn this, cruel fate!

DECEMBER — **HH**

## CINDY

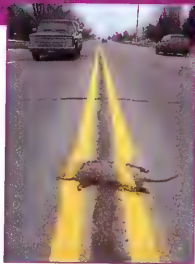
**Manufacturer:** All The Angels in Heaven  
**Website:** [www.geocities.com/garnadanand-cindydlittinginatreek-1-s-s-r-n-g.html](http://www.geocities.com/garnadanand-cindydlittinginatreek-1-s-s-r-n-g.html)  
**List Price:** Priceless

Hey GI readers, this is your favorite superstar video game editor Lord Garnadan, and I'm writing this because I have this friend who likes this girl whose name is Cindy. Anyway, my friend really likes Cindy a lot but he's kind of scared to talk to her even though he has a really cool job and is probably like the best video game player ever and even works for a magazine and makes lots of money and is friends with Shitsu Mimisoda and stuff. Of course, my friend didn't want me to use his name, because he's so shy. Anyway, sometimes my friend fantasizes about him and Cindy living together in Hawaii and having a bunch of cats that could run around

the beach and he would even let Cindy touch his Star Wars figures collection (which is, like, probably the best in the world, except for George Lucas') and even his rare white Ewok baby stuffed animal. Sigh. Cindy's eyes are like little diamonds.



Cindy



## ROADKILL

**Manufacturer:** Interstate 72  
**Website:** What the hell're you talkin' about, boy?  
**List Price:** Free

Now, you high falutin' Yankee might be used to eatin' all them gor-may foods like Hamburger Helper and Chef Boyardee raviolis, but folks down in my neck o' the woods got ourselves a hot little dish we like to call roadkill. If you ain't never ate a three-day old raccoon that's been fermentin' fer three days on a lonely stretch a' asphalt, well then you ain't never ate, boy. Hell, my momma used to make the best dang squirrel stew in all of Eugene Parish! Now, if you might be so kind as to GET OFF MY DAMN LAWN before I pull out ol' trusty and blow you a new cakehole, you dang sissy!!!

## MEGAULTRAHAND CONTROLLER

**Manufacturer:** Mad Dogz  
**Website:** [www.maddogzgottaaat.com](http://www.maddogzgottaaat.com)  
**List Price:** \$1999.99

Everyone and their kitty cat are going to be Jones' for the MegaUltraHand, Mad Dogz latest and greatest controller sensation. Weighing in at 74 lbs. and compatible with the Sintendo GameSphere, Phony PlainStation 2, and Macrohard XXXbox, this puppy features four analog sticks (plus one stick button), four d-pads, 16 face buttons, a two by three-inch full color LCD screen and four lights that serve absolutely no purpose at all. Also, a port in the back can be used to play Lame Boy Advance cartridges or to store matchbooks and spare change. Oops! We almost forgot about the Swiss Army knife on the side, complete with fish scaler and toothpick. Awesome!!!



# CLASSIC GI



Oranges are high in vitamin C, and have been shown to reduce the risk of some forms of cancer

## THE HISTORY OF VIDEO GAMES

First, a guy made Puck, then a guy made Dot-Man and a lot of people liked it and there was even a song about it. Then video games started to suck and no one bought them and all the companies went out of business. So, then Sintendo made the SES system and Super Retardio Bros. was cool and everyone thought video games were cool again. Then Mega made the Revelation and that was awesome and everyone played hockey. But then, Sintendo made the Super Sintendo and Donkey Dong Country was rad and everyone bought that. After that, the Phony PlainStation came out and it was even better than any system before and it was really popular with people. Then the PlainStation 2 came out which was better, so no one bought the Mega Dreamblast and Mega lost money. Finally, the Macrohard released the XXXbox and Sintendo came out with the GameSphere and everyone lived happily ever after. The End.



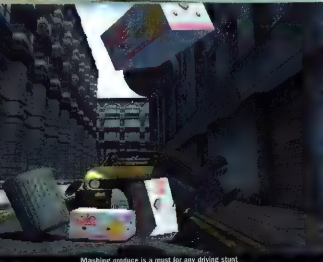
Blind people did not buy the Super Sintendo in record numbers

## CLASSIC STRATEGY PUCK

As the puck moves across the screen, estimate its trajectory. Then, turn the paddle left or right to move your cursor to a position where it will intersect with the puck's trajectory. Upon making contact with the puck, the puck will change direction, moving towards your opponent. **NOTE: Be aware! If your opponent makes contact with the puck, it will be deflected back in your direction. Now, repeat this process until you win.**



# PREVIEWS



Mashing produce is a must for any driving stunt.



Explosions will be a dangerous, but necessary part of your job.

PLAYSTATION 2

## STUNTMAN

LEE MAJORS NOT INCLUDED

**As a game** that is starting to create some sizable anticipation ripples in the gaming community, *Stuntman* is gaining momentum by the week. Authored by the same team who brought us *Driver* and *Driver 2*, Reflections Interactive is now looking to inject gamers into the persona of a rookie stuntman trying to break into the big time. The game will open with your character taking on increasingly difficult (and lucrative) driving assignments in various films. You'll need to pay your dues in a couple of low-budget indie flicks before moving onto the greener pastures of the major studios, though.

The career of this particular stuntman will take place in five different locales—London, Switzerland, Monaco, Louisiana, and Bangkok. Each of these areas will be bursting with features, so don't think that you're going to be stalling through all of them in one day. To successfully finish a movie to the director's liking takes a lot of skill and a little bit of luck. The films themselves will be clever distortions of actual releases. *Toothless in Wapping*, a comedy set in London, takes cues from *Snatch* and *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. An action release dubbed *A Whoopin' and a Hollerin'*, set in Louisiana, has definite *Smokey* and *the Bandits* themes woven into it; while *Blood Oath*, another action film, set in Bangkok, is obviously inspired by various John Woo creations. Crossing genre lines, you'll be asked to drive in political thrillers such as *Conspiracy*, set in the Swiss Alps; and *The Scarab of Lost Souls*, an Indiana Jones piece which takes place in Cairo. As the piece de resistance, a 007-inspired secret agent film, *Live Twice for Tomorrow*, will call on every bit of

driving ability you've been able to garner throughout the game so far. Each of the aforementioned movies will require you to complete a number of different takes within a certain time limit. If you're successful, you'll be given access to a preview trailer which incorporates parts of your best driving run into the footage.

Aside from the career mode, there will be plenty of extras to keep you busy. Filmmography, basically a way to replay levels you've completed, will allow you to improve your score on courses that may have gotten the better of you. Your score is calculated at the end of each scene you drive, and is a combination of your daily pay, how accurate your run was, and how much time you have left on the clock when your run is over. Good scores will unlock a number of goodies within the stunt arena level of the game. In the stunt arena you'll be able to work on your skills in front of a crowd, and even set up your own track of death-defying tricks and features with a stunt construction mode. There is also the obligatory training mode, which will help you hone your skills for the demanding driving sessions you'll be faced with later in the game.

From the look of these shots, *Stuntman* will be visually astounding as well. Featuring dynamic lighting effects and an engine that will suck every last bit of processing power out of Sony's latest console, this is not a game that will lack visual flare. Steel will be crunched, glass will be shattered, and a whole lot of practical animations are on the way as well. We're as excited as you to get our hands on this one. Hopefully, we'll have it in-hand before too long—and as usual, you'll be the first to hear about it.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRADES ■ **DEVELOPER** REFLECTIONS INTERACTIVE  
■ **RELEASE** JUNE 25





This little vehicle may be slow, but it's maneuverable!



"Lee! (cough) L-Lee! (cough cough) Can I get your autograph?? I promise I'll quit calling your house!"



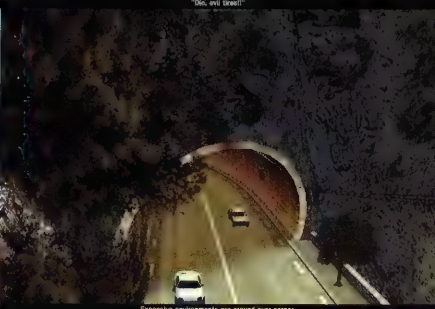
This man is staring danger right in the grill



"Do, evi steel!"



The arena will house some incredible stunt opportunities



Expansive environments are around ever corner



GAMECUBE

# DIE HARD: VENDETTA

## A FAMILY AFFAIR

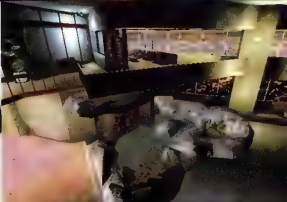
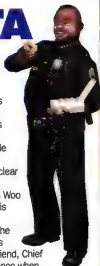
**On February 19,** Vivendi Universal and Bits Studios finally pulled away the curtain on the top secret Die Hard project they've kept under wraps for the last few years. Of much interest, Die Hard: Vendetta is not a video game remake of the established motion-picture trilogy. The story is a straight-up sequel that takes place just a few years after Die Hard: Vendence. As history has shown, John McClane is a magnet for trouble. He should probably retire and move on to more luxurious things like daily golf outings and Monday night poker, but he insists on making the world a better place. However, he may rethink his future after this tale comes to a close. Hitting a little too close to home, John's daughter Lucy has just graduated from the police academy and is on her way to following in her father's footsteps – in more ways than one, actually. The son of Hans Gruber, John's European adversary from the first film, has his eye on Lucy, and revenge is his intention. So, for the fourth time running, John is thrust into a do or die conflict.

The development of Die Hard: Vendetta has been underway for quite some time, and Bits Studios is doing everything in its power to make the game just as explosive as the films. Rather than follow Fox Interactive's lead of making the game a medley of different genres, Vendetta is a straight-up first-person shooter. Through 12 massive missions, the focus of gameplay constantly changes and emphasizes such tactics as stealth, sabotage, and full-on shootouts. Much like the recently released James Bond title, Agent Under Fire, each level will

unfold through a number of objectives, parameters and bonus assignments. Bits Studios boasts that Vendetta will feature state-of-the-art artificial intelligence for its enemies and slow-motion, *Matrix*-style effects, much like *Max Payne*. With a wide variety of weapons, players can target specific enemy limbs, use explosives to clear out rooms, and crush adversaries using objects within the environment. The John Woo aspect of wielding two weapons at once is also part of the picture.

Along with timely in-game cinematics, the plot will be expressed through CG movies and mission updates. McClane's good friend, Chief Al Powell, will be on hand to lend assistance when needed. Even better yet, the story focuses heavily on Lucy. When John is tied up, players will take over as her persona.

Of course, what would a next-generation shooter be without multiplayer? Bits Studios is cranking away on a bevy of modes and exclusive multiplayer maps for two- to four-player skirmishes. Right now, GameCUBE's future looks extremely promising. From *Metro* to *Zelda*, Mario to *Die Hard*, big-name franchises are being thrown around left and right. A solid release date has not been set, but the game will make its formal debut at this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo and should be on retail shelves before the end of the year.

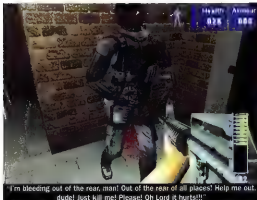


The adventure spans across numerous locales, including a brief stop at Times Square Plaza.

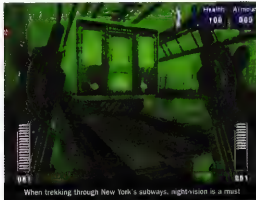


Stealth plays a large role in the game. If you're spotted, it's lights out.

This boss has a nice place to blow up!



"I'm bleeding out of the rear, man! Out of the rear of all places! Help me out, dude! Just kill me! Please! On Load it hurts!"



When trekking through New York's subways, night-vision is a must.

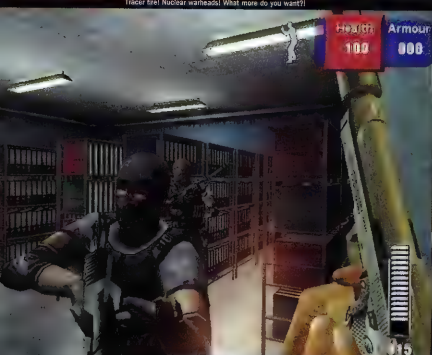
■ **STYLE** | TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** | FOX INTERACTIVE/VIVENDI UNIVERSEL ■ **DEVELOPER** | BITS STUDIOS  
 ■ **RELEASE** | WINTER



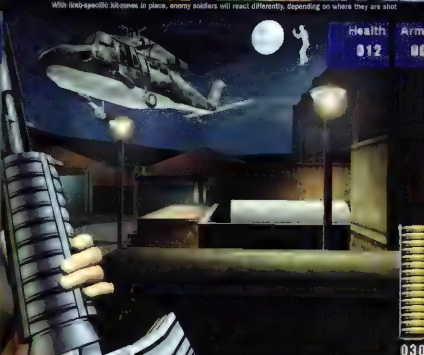
Tracer fire! Nuclear warheads! What more do you want?!



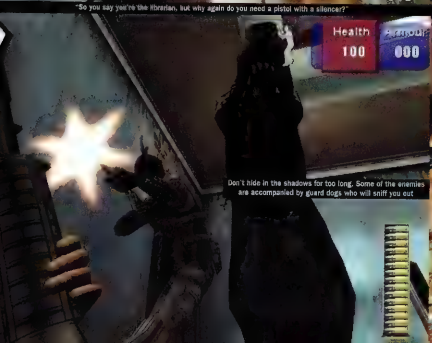
With level-specific licenses in place, enemy soldiers will react differently, depending on where they are shot.



"So you say you're the fibreflex, but why again do you need a pistol with a silencer?"



"A first-person shooter with a helicopter battle? Get out of town!"

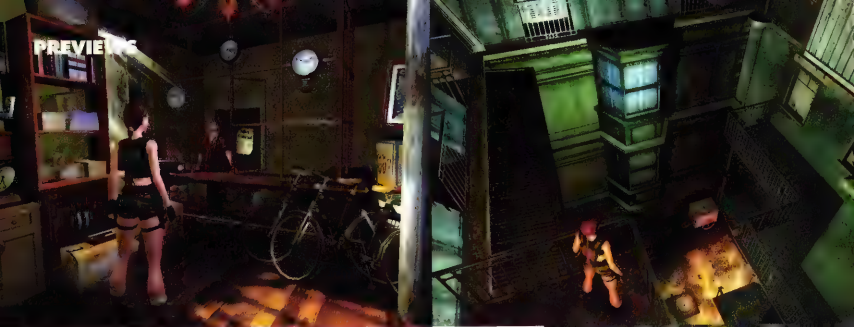


Don't hide in the shadows for too long. Some of the enemies are accompanied by guard dogs, who will sniff you out.



"This bum has a big-screen TV, a nice sofa, and a case of beer. I wanna be homeless, too!"





PLAYSTATION 2

# TOMB RAIDER: THE NEXT GENERATION

LAZARUS LARA



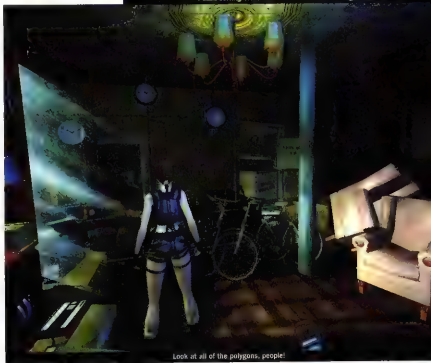
**The year 2002** will prove to be exciting for many steadfast Tomb Raider fans. Eidos knows that you can't go for more than a few months at a time without another fix of your favorite jiggy, gun-toting sanctuary striker, so it's put Core to the task, and we'll hopefully see the fruits of their labors sooner rather than later. Until that fateful day arrives, bask in the glory of these brand-spanking new screenshots. From what we've seen of Lara's next-gen offering, the design team will be staying very close to the tried and true gameplay formula that made this series such an enormous success in the first place. It seems as though many of the characters and environments will have that familiar Tomb Raider look to them, but taken to the next level with the power of this generation's consoles.

Through the years, Tomb Raider has accomplished what many of its followers have attempted time and time again: the definition of a genre. With its innovative controls and a charismatic heroine, the titles bearing the Raider moniker have etched out a slice of the action/adventure market all their own. As a frequently referenced play-style (i.e. "this game has a Tomb Raider-esque concept"), Lara and company have a lot to live up to. Will this next addition to the steadily growing library of releases be able to satiate the desires of a markedly more particular and critical audience without alienating its core gamer base? We have a feeling it will exceed everyone's expectations, and bring even more into the Eidos fold.

In another impressive move for the Lara-based dynasty, the sequel to the first motion picture is in production. Unprecedented perhaps, but not all that surprising considering the success of the first effort. We were worried about this follow-up for a number of reasons: First, how would this affect the games? Would the game-bound Croftmeister be contorted to look more like Angelina Jolie? Would the games be more focused around the plot of the movies than an original story? Thankfully we can breath a sigh of relief - neither of these possibilities will come to fruition. In fact, the development team has spent a good deal of time making Lara Croft look more like the art we've all seen, rather than a bunch of polygons thrown together with guns and boobs.

If this is any indicator of how much more visually impressive TNG will be than its predecessors, Lara's model alone will have a 1000% increase in polygon count - up to roughly 3,500. If one character has been brought up to that level, we can only imagine what environments and enemies we haven't seen yet look like. Pretty friggin' awesome, we'd be willing to wager. Although there's no definite time on when we'll see this game on shelves, Christmas might be a good target to shoot for if you're in a gambling state of mind.

Puzzle-solving elements will be back with a vengeance



Look at all of the polygons, people





The big boys square off



Whip us, Eve. Whip us good



Astaroth looks in control, but he's leaving a very vulnerable spot open right now

PLAYSTATION 2

## SOUL CALIBUR 2

### ANOTHER STAB AT GLORY

**What can we** say about this series that hasn't already been said? Probably nothing, but we can certainly echo past sentiments. The first console game in the franchise, *Soul Blade* on PS-X, was easy to dismiss as *Tekken* with weapons at first glance. Once you played it, though, the intricacies in the gameplay quickly became apparent. The replay-filled *Edge Master* mode sent you on a mission-based quest to find new weapons and secret characters. We can't forget the CG intro, which was the best of its time.

The sequel, *Soul Calibur*, was a launch title for Sega's Dreamcast, and still stands as one of the console's true killer apps. Its graphics reigned as king of the fighting game hill for an unprecedented length of time, the motion-captured demonstrations were unbelievably realistic, and the addition of parries really broadened defensive capabilities.

*Soul Calibur 2* has been a long time coming, and we couldn't be more excited. With promises of versions on all three of the next-gen platforms, everyone will be able to get in on Namco's melee action. Details are at a minimum, but we couldn't resist showing these incredible new screens. You can be sure to see an updated roster, new story (who will wield the *Soul Edge* this time?), and plenty more particle-filled eye candy. We're not even sure on the release date yet, but know this: when *Soul Calibur 2* comes out, you're gonna want it.



Oh, Eve. So hot. Want to touch the helix. Anoo!



You can just hear the clang of metal as parries abound



We hope Sophia's new 'do happened from a sword strike, and not on purpose



Hwang is at a definite reach disadvantage here

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ PUBLISHER NAMCO ■ DEVELOPER NAMCO ■ RELEASE FALL





XBOX/PLAYSTATION 2

## DEAD TO RIGHTS

GOOD, BAD – I'M THE GUY WITH THE GUN

It's been a while since we visited with the man they call Jack Slade, and his gun-toting exploits. When games stay undercover this long, we begin to worry for their future, but Namco has just been working meticulously (i.e. slowly) to make this extant game the best it can be. As proof, we've been granted a few more snapshots of Slade in action, as he busts caps and kicks craps.

Amazingly, the artistic style of Dead to Rights seems entirely reworked. Jack is now more properly dressed for the job, and even the interface has changed. Different doesn't necessarily mean better, though, as DTR's look is very

similar to Time Crisis and Extermination, and seems to be far behind Metal Gear Solid 2; but this game's graphics weren't what initially impressed us anyway. Being the multifaceted individuals we are, it was the action-packed blend of gameplay and martial arts that tickled our fancy. At last year's E3, it appeared to have much in common with Max Payne – containing John Woo diving, *Matrix*-style bullet-time sequences – but with a little more hand-to-hand than Rockstar's successful title.

These new screens take place in two very different stages. The first is a construction yard, which acts as a tutorial. Yes, it gets you acquainted with aiding your enemies in weight loss by removing large masses of flesh with your ammunition. It also teaches DTR's intricacies like disarming, lock-picking, and taking captives to be your human shield. The targeting is a dream, but we prefer point-blank headshots over pistols from 300 paces.

The other level – a nightclub stage – shows that, even unarmed, Slade ain't goin' out like that. With thugs all around him, Slade sends them screaming home to mommy with lethal kicks, punches, and a few throws. We're hoping for an appropriate techno beat to accompany this environment.

Dead to Rights is still a ways away from release on PS2 and Xbox. By that time, you'll have hopefully mastered Metal Gear and drained Max Payne, and be salivating for the next big thing in action/adventure. Here it is, big shooter.



People are already practicing for the next Olympics' para figure skating.



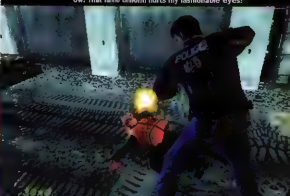
"Faster, great!" "Less filing!"



Witness the power of Gas Boot.



"Thanks for wearing that bright orange vest, moron."



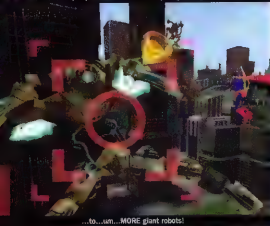
"Ow! That lame uniform hurts my fashionable eyes!"

"You're a great criminal...for me to SHOOT ON!"

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ PUBLISHER NAMCO ■ DEVELOPER NAMCO HOMEENT ■ RELEASE WINTER



In his adventures, Superman will battle everything from giant robots...



...to...an...MORE giant robots!



The Metropolis skyline is as detailed as can be, and looks absolutely gorgeous on the Xbox

XBOX

# SUPERMAN: THE MAN OF STEEL

INFOGRAMMES SUPERSIZES THE XBOX

**The nineties were not kind** to DC's Man of Steel, who watched his popularity wither in the face of a new, darker breed of comic book heroes like *Spawn* and *Preacher*. The Superman franchise reached its nadir in 1992, when DC, frantic to revive interest in the sagging property, took the desperate measure of actually killing off the erstwhile Clark Kent. Of course, this "death" only lasted for about a year, but it was clear that most comic fans had lost interest in the character's wholesome heroics. Then, in 1998, the ultimate Kryptonite kick to Superman's crotch was delivered in the form of an absolutely horrible Titus-published Superman game for the Nintendo 64.

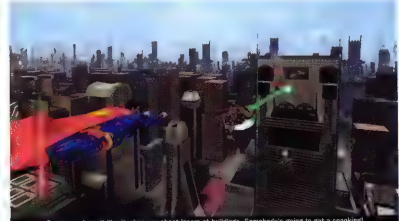
Following the tragic events of September 11th, Americans seem to have redeveloped a taste for old-fashioned apple-pie values, and patriotic heroes like Superman and Captain America are once again in the limelight. All this bodes well for Infogrames, the new caretaker of the Man of Steel's video game heritage. We might be a little apprehensive at seeing the classic American hero in the hands of yet another French company, but hey, they did give us the Statue of Liberty. In partnership with upstart developer Circus Freak, Infogrames

seeks to restore the luster of the franchise with two totally original Superman titles — *Superman: The Man of Steel* for the Xbox and *Superman: The Shadow of Apokolips* for the PlayStation 2. While information on the PS2 title is scarce, we were able to secure these impressive screenshots and some key game play and storyline details for the Xbox title.

Superman: The Man of Steel's plot traces the return of Brainiac 13, who has come back to reclaim his futuristic technology from Lex Luthor, who has had free run of Metropolis' criminal underworld in his absence. This clash of supervillains has put life in Superman's hometown at a standstill, and now the Last Son of Krypton is the only one that can put things right.

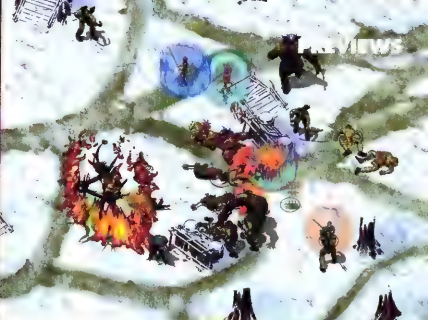
In terms of gameplay, the Xbox Superman is an action game through-and-through, and features an intuitive combat system that incorporates everything from punches and kicks to a host of superpower attacks. Most of the game takes place high above the city, so flying skills will also be key as you battle hordes of Brainiac's robotic minions. In addition to Brainiac 13 and Luthor, other familiar baddies from the Superman universe, like Mongul, Metallo, and the Cyborg, will also be on hand to cause our hero a planet-sized headache.

As you can observe from these screens, the developers are using the power of the Xbox to create a striking visual package, and have constructed a fully-modeled cityscape that is as detailed as any we have seen so far. The characters are equally as intricate, and have been created in the spirit of the comic series' signature visual style. Even better, Infogrames has promised us that this game contains absolutely no "flying through rings" sequences. Rejoice!



Superman doesn't like it when you shoot lasers at buildings. Somebody's going to get a spanking!

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER INFOGRAMMES ■ DEVELOPER CIRCUS FREAK ■ RELEASE FALL



PC

# ICEWIND DALE II

GET READY FOR SOME ICE, BABY

**Few could argue** that Interplay currently has a stranglehold over the PC role-playing market. That's what happens when you produce epic title after epic title for a number of consecutive years.

We admit it—we're hopelessly addicted to the brilliant gameplay formulas developed for both the Icewind Dale adventures and the Baldur's Gate series. We thought we had seen the absolute pinnacle of what the Infinity Engine could muster with the release of the Throne of Bhaal expansion, but we were wrong. Not only will Icewind Dale II incorporate numerous winning gameplay elements from its cousins, but it will usher in the use of D&D Third Edition rules for the first time in a game of this magnitude. Not a bad way to build a sequel, is it?

We know the question burning in all of your minds: Will you be able to import your character from the first Icewind? The answer, unfortunately, is no. Now that you've picked up the magazine after throwing it across the room, and taken a time-out after hearing that disappointing news, let us explain why. This Icewind incarnation will take place one generation later than the events of its progenitor. Thus, both newbies and veteran players like us can jump right in and feel like they are a part of the story. There will be a flock of references to prior events, locations, and people, but for the most part it's going to be brand spanking new—except for the characters who make cameo appearances, of course.

As mentioned earlier, the Third Edition rules are coming home to roost with this release. That means we're going to have to bid a fond farewell to THAC0 and negative AC. True, these elements were confusing to some and baffling to many, but those who understood them, loved them. Will the Third Edition detract from the overall experience of the game? We thoroughly doubt it. In fact, you might not even

notice it, what with the introduction of new character kits like the Mercenary, Dreadmaster of Bane, and Votary. Not only are the kits expanded, but you'll now be able to choose between a number of subclasses such as Draw or Tielings. On top of this, over 50 new spells are being added, bringing the grand total to well over 300. Oh, and did we mention new ninth-level spells? Impressive, indeed.

Black Isle is also promising a heaping helping of gameplay hours. Many people were disappointed with Heart of Winter's skimpy play length (which is why Trials of the Luremaster was released), but that is a mistake Icewind Dale II will not make. Also increased is the number of onscreen enemies, and how difficult it will be to eliminate them. Heart of Fury mode is back for those who are gluttons for punishment, but some incredible weapons of never-before-seen power will be in store for those who can survive. This all sounds incredible, but we're sure it'll play even better. Game Informer will bring you more updates as we get them, but until then, mark May 28 down as the day you'll lose control of your free time.



This is Magic Country



'I hate you, Cyclops!'



'Like a bridge over troubled water, I will beat you down.'



These giants won't fall easily

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 6-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** INTERPLAY ■ **DEVELOPER** BLACK ISLE STUDIOS  
 ■ **RELEASE** MAY 28



## PREVIEWS



XBOX

## GUN METAL

TED NUGENT'S FAVORITE GAME

If there's one thing wrong with the world, it's the fact that there aren't enough games featuring transformable robots that have to save the planet. Luckily, Majesco has noted this gaping hole in the fabric of humanity, and decided to fill it the best way it knows how. Enter: Gun Metal. Being touted early as a game that will put real-life explosions to shame, this is a title that puts you in control of a ton-meat-tall mecha, which houses the capability to transform into a fighter jet on command.

You see, YOU are your army's last hope. As you run, jetpack, or fly over a vast array of environments; you'll need to call on every last round in your extensive arsenal to vanquish your foes. Each level you enter will be fully interactive, allowing you to crunch rocks, knock down trees, rip chunks of twisted metal and concrete out of buildings, and burn entire areas to the ground. Twenty-five different missions await your discovery, each filled with enemy units ranging from tiny foot soldiers to enormous citadels. The intelligence your unit is fed during the heat of battle will be essential to the survival of your forces as they make one last stand for freedom. There's even a minigame where you get to kill deer as you enter a forest level. Okay, we made that up, but we know Ted would love it if there was.



"I've got good tone...Firing!"



PLAYSTATION 2

## ARMORED CORE 3

EXCEEDING ORBIT

From Software's tireless devotion to the Armored Core series is second to none. With two PlayStation 2 sequels already in the bag, From has taken a step back and redesigned a good portion of the game. Along with a host of innovations, this installment is the first with four-player support—complete with two-on-two team battles and free-for-alls. For those of you who thrive off i-Link play, four PS2s can be connected, and get this: a fifth link and monitor can be installed for spectators who want to watch the action unfold. This will also be the first Armored Core with Dolby Surround Pro Logic II support. Agatec is quite pleased with the progress the game is making and hopes to have it on retail shelves this summer.



When a weapon runs out of ammo, you can drop it, and pick up other firearms



Exceed Orbit is a new suit function that allows players to equip hovering parts that free up AC weight



All the parts have been completely redesigned or changed



If the funds are available, you can employ AC units as backup...



...and give them orders mid-mission

### ADDITIONAL FEATURES

Rather than just adding new parts to the mix, From Software has essentially started from scratch. All the customizable equipment it is being redesigned or changed, a completely new unit function (Exceed Orbit) is in place, and a never-before-seen part is implemented as well. When your weapons run out of ammo, you'll now be able to drop them on the battlefield and pick up a different firearm. The most exciting addition to this installment is the option of employing ACs or MTs as backup, or for lack of better terminology, wingmen who will fight at your side.

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER MAJESCO  
 ■ DEVELOPER RAGE SOFTWARE ■ RELEASE FALL '04

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER AGATEC ■ DEVELOPER FROM SOFTWARE ■ RELEASE SUMMER



PLAYSTATION 2

## SUMMONER 2

SUMMONER SECOND COMING

**The original Summoner** was a tale of depth, drama and surprises. The combat system was both engaging and formidable. It also contained vast landscapes that were not only large in scope, but also provided hours upon hours of sidequests. Oh yeah, Summoner was a PlayStation 2 launch title. That it managed to stand tall above the rest wasn't just due to the inferior competition, but was also an indication of how much developer Volition had already mastered the platform.

Now Volition is returning with its work out for it, especially considering the RPG competition. The sequel's story is just as engaging and deep as the first, only this time a new summoner has been found. Unlike Joseph from the original, the Queen of Hellaspar has been aware of her powers from the beginning – they are why her people revere her as a goddess. She is not without her enemies, however. Wrath forces are amassing at your borders and other, far-more sinister forces are at work behind the scenes. Similar to the first installment, you'll find yourself drawn into a detailed world where the plot moves to-and-fro with ease, revealing numerous sidequests along the way. In fact, an appearance by Joseph himself hasn't been ruled out.

The real-time party system returns and brings all of its combos and customizable skills back to the forefront. This time around, however, your party has expanded to include a maximum of eight characters, and allows you to control as many as three of them at a time. But perhaps the best thing of all is that Volition now has the ability to squeeze even more out of the console. If there was a problem with the first Summoner, it was that graphics had to sometimes be sacrificed for the good of the story's size. This is no more. Draw distance has been greatly improved, and calling on your spells and summons, such as the Blood Juggernaut, is impressive. The RPG field on the PlayStation 2 has received a vast influx of quality since the release of the first of this series, but we think that it will once again stand above the masses.



"She's got beautiful eyes and swords that go on for miles"

Parties have been expanded to include eight, although the real-time carnage continues

Summoner 2 boasts 3D-levels, trails, and a story that just won't quit

Battle sounds have been made richer

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** THQ ■ **DEVELOPER** VOLITION ■ **RELEASE** FALL



GAMECUBE

## ETERNAL DARKNESS: SANITY'S REQUIEM

ETERNALLY IN DEVELOPMENT

**Somebody should hand** Silicon Knights an award for redefining video game development. If our assessments are correct, Eternal Darkness could quite possibly have the longest development cycle in the history of gaming. How long has Silicon Knights been laboring away at this title? It seems like a decade, and if Nintendo continues to delay it, this could actually be the case. As it stands now, Nintendo has Eternal Darkness billed as a June 24 release the same day as the Wireless Wave Bird controller.

At last year's E3, Eternal Darkness looked as though it could run on a Nintendo 64 (without the Expansion Pak). Recently, however, the game has finally begun to take shape and actually looks quite nice. The perception across the industry is that the gameplay will be similar to Konami's Silent Hill. This really isn't true, however. Yes, there are a number of door and key puzzles, but the combat is more along the lines of an action/RPG, and get this, you'll actually be able to lock-on and dismember specific enemy limbs. Nintendo boasts that the quest will offer over 60 hours of gameplay, not including alternate paths. All the more intriguing, the story spans across 20 centuries, and instead of warping to different eras, players will assume control of 13 playable characters.

Eternal Darkness sounds like one heck of a game, but the question remains: Will we actually have the chance to play it?



Eternal Darkness offers a unique targeting system that enables the dismembering of specific body parts

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** SILICON KNIGHTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** JUNE 24

## PREVIEWS

Soku®, the Defender

105



800000
700000
600000
500000
400000
300000

Power: Raise your anger 2 levels at the end of any

GAME BOY ADVANCE

## DRAGON BALL Z: COLLECTIBLE CARD GAME

THE AMAZING, PORTABLE  
VEGETA PICCOLO

**Kids these days** know all about wheating and dealing with decks of cards – and it ain't because of any crusty Kenny Rogers song or their moms' Richard Simmons diet plan. Phenomenons like Dragon Ball Z offer card-based battle games as another outlet not only for their fandom, but also their strategic minds. Based off of other popular card games like Magic: The Gathering, this DBZ card game is a perfect fit for a generation of tykes addicted to fighting Cell on the small screen and now the even smaller screen of their Game Boy Advance.

DBZ: Collectible Card Game is patterned after the actual card sets of the same name, and replicates the look and rules perfectly. It encompasses the Saiyan, Frieza, Trunks, and Android sagas of the show, and contains over 300 cards – including ones that are not found anywhere else. Throw in a special collectible card for the real game and the ability to link up and play or trade with your friends, and you've got gold.

There are three ways to win, but it's not nearly as easy as that. You must outlast your opponent by draining his/her Life Deck (Survival Victory), collect all seven Earth or Namek Dragon Ball cards, or build up your Main Personality card to the highest level. Mastering the Toki-Waza combat styles/defending successfully, using allies, and managing your

anger level in order to achieve higher, stronger levels are just as important as in the card game itself. Players will battle it out, unlocking new characters along the way, until you earn the right to face off against

Cell. Have no idea what's going on? You'd better get cracking with the card game before some nine-year-old kid throws your Red Implosion Lunge back in your face and laughs.



■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2 PLAYER STRATEGY  
■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMS/WIZARDWORKS  
■ **DEVELOPER** INFOGRAMS ■ **RELEASE** JUNE 1



GAME BOY ADVANCE

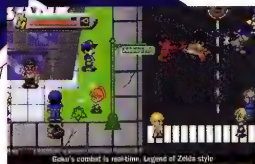
## DRAGON BALL Z: THE LEGACY OF GOKU

### GOKU'S LITTLE BABY

The world's been screaming for a next-gen Dragon Ball Z game, and it's here – sort of. The Game Boy Advance isn't everyone's first choice for the video game return of the series, but it's what's up first. Still, developer Webfoot has worked closely with Toei Animation in Japan to make sure that it fits this console's bill.

Legacy of Goku draws from the Saiyan, Namek, and Frieza Sagas, and starts out as Goku's half-brother, Raditz, steals little Gohan. From here you'll roughly follow the TV series' storyline, as you travel to Namek in search of the Dragon Balls and encounter more than 75 characters – including a confrontation with Frieza. Sidequests will be littered throughout the game's large maps. In fact, your first of such missions – finding Master Roshi's collection of girly mags – is a good indication of how closely the game echoes the show's strange sense of humor. Plus, the game had to go through such a rigorous approval process, even the hand animation for Goku's Ki Blasts had to pass muster.

Legacy's combat is in real-time, lending the title an action feel that offsets its RPG aspects. The combat can be frustrating at times, but it demands you level-up constantly and keep an eye on your inventory of herbs and Senzu Beans. However, it won't be long before you learn to assault bosses with the Solar Flare and Kamehameha. Goku also has limited flying abilities, and can heal himself between battles. Legacy of Goku attempts to meld these two gaming styles into a combo that will appeal to both fans of the series, as well as the average gamer. This GBA Dragon Ball Z game steps away from being a fighting game like the DBZ vids before it, and in doing so, might have enough depth to tide starved fans over until the end of the year when Infogrames starts hitting the big consoles.



Goku's combat is real-time. Legend of Zohis style



Goku links his twice-daily fix: drop medicine

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMS/WIZARDWORKS ■ **DEVELOPER** WEBFOOT TECHNOLOGIES  
■ **RELEASE** MAY 14



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Blood  
Suggestive Themes  
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# PHOTOPHILE

PLAYSTATION 2/XBOX/PC

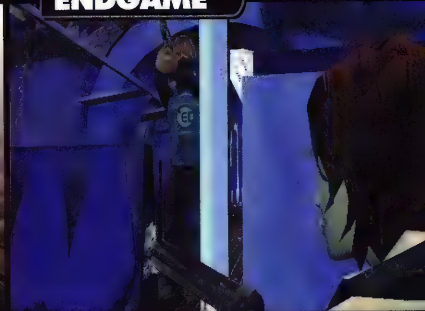
## DREDD VS. DEATH



Rebellion, the developer who brought us the PC hit *Alien vs. Predator*, are now reanimating the most vicious, brutal, and feared British anti-hero to ever grace the comic book scene. The law will be upheld in two completely different games. The PC version will be a traditional first-person shooter, while Xbox/ps2 may feature a more cinematic play style planned for the PlayStation 2 and Xbox incarnations. Development is still early, yet Rebellion was wise enough to give us a sneak peak. All three versions should be available in early 2003. An interesting side note: Skywalker Entertainment is currently shooting two new Judge Dredd movies back-to-back.

PLAYSTATION 2

## ENDGAME



The creative masterminds at Coming Developments have staffed the light-gun market, and concluded that most of the games within this genre are way too short, being under the traditional arcade format. *Endgame* is compatible with almost every light-gun peripheral on the market, and is actually quite lengthy in size. Along with 20 different locations, players can also compete in a 10-revenue "game within a game" training mode, where the main characters, Jade, perfect her skills in her favorite colony, Mighty Joe Justice. For those of you who enjoy John Woo films, you can wield dual pistols and completely obliterate the destructible environments. Published by Empire Interactive, *Endgame* should be available sometime this spring.

PLAYSTATION 2/XBOX

## COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE



Building on the success of the PC version, Eidos has decided to spread the love to the console troopers as well. Sifted for a spring release on both systems, *Commandos* attempts to inject gamers into historically accurate battle situations which took place in World War II. Team-based combat (similar to that evidenced in the *Falcom* series), mixed with high suspense and intense action, is part of what has made *Commandos 2* one of the most successful titles of this genre. Their missions taking place over 10 environments, including Paris, Russia, the South China Sea, and the Solomon Islands, will be sure to dazzle even the most jaded war-gamers.

GAMECUBE

## EVOLUTION WORLDS



In this, Ubi Soft's first venture into the top-down world of GameCUBE role-playing games, *Evolution Worlds* will feature turn-based combat as it follows the grand adventure of heroes Mag and Linus. Hailing from the first two *Evolution* titles which were so popular on the Dreamcast, these unlikely protagonists are out to stop the evil wanders of the Elgith Empire from getting the first magical piece of Evolids — a substance which could change the course of history. Along with their friends Chai, Gai, Payer, Spray, and their butler Gre Nade, Mag and Linus must race against time to save civilization! Get ready to do this one up on your GameCUBE sometime this fall.

TBA

## NIGHTMARE CREATURES 3: ANGEL OF DARKNESS



Activision hesitated the publishing for the first Nightmare Creatures release, then Kinema bravely stepped forward to ensure gamers could get their fix with a sequel. This time around, Ubi Soft is handling the Kallisto Entertainment production where players assume the identity of a young 19th-century lass who "accidentally" stumbles upon a world of chaos in Prague. Neither Ubi Soft nor Kallisto would comment on which platforms the title is being developed for, but our money is in the industry before it will grace the PlayStation 2, Xbox, and PC in the second quarter of 2005. It's a ways off yet, but should be well worth the wait.

PLAYSTATION 2

## THE LORD OF THE RINGS



If you are not a fan of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, you might as well paint a big "L" on your forehead because you're lame. Without a doubt, *The Fellowship of the Ring* was the best film of 2001; perhaps the best film in recent memory. Electronic Arts' video game translation of the movie is beginning to take shape, and *F.O.R. The Two Towers* is any indication of the detail that will accompany the journey, look out! It's going to be huge! Stylized as an action/adventure title with a complex tactical combat system, the game centers on the exploits of Gollum, Aragorn, and Legolas. The remainder of the Fellowship, while not playable, will have an active role in this quest as well.

PHOTOPHILE

PLAYSTATION 2

## DOWNFORCE



This May, there is not to show us that the "F" in F1 can stand for "Fun". As an arcade racer with high-speed straightaways and hairpin turns, *Downforce* will showcase some of the most spectacular crashes you've seen this side of a driver's ed program in rural Mississippi. With 14 playable vehicles (four unlockable), 21 different routes through night locations (Las Vegas and Hong Kong to name a couple), seven game modes, three difficulty modes, and a TV-style replay for all of those great crashes, there's no wonder why this game will lecture a crash helmet to the best. Okay, it won't - but it should.

GAME BOY ADVANCE

## SPY HUNTER



Don't you wish you could carry your PlayStation 2 around with you so you could play *Spy Hunter* wherever you wanted? Well, your wish is Nintendo's command, and on June 2, your favorite game featuring a really crazy instructor will be hitting the shelves. Here's an idea: you could play this game while in a moving vehicle, thereby avoiding the feeling of vehicle down roads and assorted waterways. Just don't do that while you're driving - that's what picking your nose is for.

XBOX

## CHASE



As *Chase Coronado*, a skilled and cunning stunt driver, you must maneuver a number of different vehicles to achieve various mission-based objectives through five level sets and one training mission. As you might expect from the game's title, play will revolve around your character chasing after certain things, and being pursued by others. Does that sound crazy enough for you, your instructor? Being developed by a South African based team dubbed Himgame, *Chase* will likely arrive on US shelves this fall.



# REVIEW

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 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 the 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 presented.

### 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.



**ANDY**  
**Handle:** The Game Hombre **Expertise:** RPGs, Action/Platform, Driving, First-Person Shooters **Interests:** The Newcastle England Bar Scene, Nyaq, Indie Rock, Night Train **Dilekks:** Budget Cuts, Incessably Crappy Star Wars Games, The Lack Of Boicoots Around The Office **Current Favorite Games:** Advance Wars, Super Mario World: Super Mario Advance 2, EverQuest: Shadows of Lucin, Shurtman

When Andy's not yelling at a game for "rappin' him off," he plays drums in Minneapolis indie rock band, Unbelievable July Machine. A longtime fan of Metrodud, 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.

### RENER

**Handle:** The Ragging Gamer **Expertise:** RPGs, Fighting, Action/Platform, Sports **Interests:** Comic Books, DVD Movies, Wu-Tang's Clever "The Year Shoes" Song, The Power To Destroy Someone's Life **Dilekks:** Ben Affleck Being Cast As Daredevil, Mint Scuffles, Nintendo's Endless Game Delays **Current Favorite Games:** All-Star Baseball 2003, Kingdom Hearts, Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance

Rener 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 553 times. A fan of all game types, role-playing games are his strong suit. In his six years as a professional gamer, Rener has achieved the impossible, penetrating the paid boundary, he not only plays games, he's in one, and can be shot daily in the epic N64 release, Perfect Dark.



**MATT**  
**Handle:** The Original Gamer **Expertise:** Pacing, Puzzle, Action/Adventure **Interests:** Philip Pullman's His Dark Materials Novels, The Bernie Mac Show, Krutrock, Investing, Wu-Tang's Inspiring Return To Form **Dilekks:** Being Disappointed By Highly-Touted Xbox Games, Not Having A New G Editor, My Girlfriend's Cat **Current Favorite Games:** Maximo, Knockout Kings 2002, State Of Emergency

While record collecting, watching reality television, and playing video games might sound like a state of retarded adolescence, Matt manages to sort 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 eclectic than his colleagues, Matt prefers traditional action and platform games.

### KRISTIAN

**Handle:** The Game Dawg **Expertise:** RPGs, Strategy, Sports **Interests:** The 2001 Anniversary Edition DVD, DVD, iPod, Bob Costas, The US Curling Team **Dilekks:** McLeod USA, Papa John's Pizza, Yellow Cars, Cell Phones Ringing In Movie Theaters **Current Favorite Games:** Back In Black: Throne Of Bhaal, Madden NFL 2002 (Xbox), Hot Shots Golf 3

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 old RPG fan, he can always find time to spend out a good sports game.



**JUSTIN**  
**Handle:** The Digital Deviant **Expertise:** Action/Platform, Fighting, RPGs **Interests:** Second-Rate Uber Dancers, Cardio, Bowling, Editors, GWAR Blood Dilekks: SUFFING People With The Tajiri Kick, Gm Patrons Who LIT Wrong, Wasters Who Take Forever To Bring The Check, Post-GWAR Mess **Current Favorite Games:** Super Mario World: Super Mario Advance 2, Max Payne (Xbox), Final Fantasy X, Tactics Ogre: Knight Of Lodis

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

### KATO

**Handle:** The Game Katana **Expertise:** Sports, Action/Adventure, Action/Platform **Interests:** Anoraks, OrcaEelBacon.org, Eating The Best Pizza In The World While In England (Up The Street From The Finbury Park Tube Stop) **Dilekks:** Drew Carey, Not Hating The Stripes, The Worst Extreme (And The Bard) **Current Favorite Games:** RailShot Challenge, Hot Shots Golf 3, Gitaroo Man, Star Wars: Rogue Leader, World Tour Soccer 2002

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



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 *Zoro of the Endless and Geonist*.

**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.

**CD** - *Compact Disc-Rom*.

**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.

**fussy bird** - A good looking woman.

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

**frames** - The frames of animation used to create the illusion of movement.

**front-end** - A game's menus and options.

**GB** - Game Boy.

**GBA** - Game Boy Advance.

**GBC** - Game Boy Color.

**GC** - GameCUBE.

**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.

**jingles** - 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.

**mifigame** - A small, single 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*.

**popup** - 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 *Chi Chi Rocket!*.

**redie** - 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 *Genesis*.

**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.

# SUPER MARIO WORLD

## SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2



**GAME OF THE MONTH**  
**SUPER MARIO WORLD:**  
**SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2**

Now available for the Game Boy Advance. The Mario Bros. archives will be back on the shelves...



THE BOTTOM LINE

M  
17+  
ESRB

8

- **Concept:** An update of classic arcade hits like Smash TV, with Rockstar attitude and a violent mean streak
- **Graphics:** I don't think the PS2 could handle this many characters onscreen at once
- **Sound:** Humorous voice-over help, but the soundtrack is strangely generic by Rockstar standards
- **Playability:** "Runnin' and gunnin'" ain't too difficult, but a targeting system would have been nice
- **Entertainment:** Sneak a case of beer into your dorm room, throw on some tunes, and you'll be in meathread heaven
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

## SECOND OPINION

Without question, *State of Emergency* is the most highly anticipated game of the spring, and one of the most controversial releases to ever grace the video game scene. Does it live up to the lofty expectations? In terms of nonstop violence and shocking content, it certainly does. Bodies burn, blood flies, and hundreds of hapless citizens run for their lives. It's gory, it's glorious. The visuals will amaze you, yet I have a feeling that the graphical showcase is the only aspect you'll truly enjoy. The combat system is very generic and too dependent on repetitive combo strings. The gameplay is moderately entertaining, but it's far from inventive and doesn't really have much depth. When you truly break it down, *State of Emergency* is just another street brawler that can best be described as a 3D *Final Fight* or urban *Dynasty Warriors*. Amusing, yes. Revolutionary, no.

REINER — 8

PLAYSTATION 2

# STATE OF EMERGENCY

## THE GAME YOUR PARENTS WARNED YOU ABOUT

Unless you've been living under a rock for the past few months, or have no interest in video games at all, you've probably caught wind of some of the controversy surrounding this game. Upon the announcement of *State of Emergency* last year, the mainstream press decried the game's level of violence, and pointed out that its themes of urban unrest bore an uncomfortable resemblance to the Seattle WTO riots of 1999. After spending a good deal of time with SOE, we can safely say that these charges are totally false. The plot, in which you and the other members of the political resistance group, Freedom, riot against an oppressive corporation that has taken control of society, is essentially just a silly little collection of B-movie clichés. It's good fun, but it's no more edgy or political than any early-'90s sci-fi slasher you might see on late-night cable. If anything, it feels like a tacked-on afterthought, albeit a light-hearted and sometimes-amusing afterthought.

Strip away all the hype, and *State of Emergency* reveals itself to be more of a throwback to classic arcade shoot-'em-ups like *Berserker* and *Smash TV*, than a cinematic epic like *Grand Theft Auto III*. It's all about running and gunning, and SOE ratchets up the pace of the gameplay to frantic levels that its predecessors could have only imagined. With the number of onscreen characters approaching 250 at certain times, you'll be amazed at how alive this game feels. It's quite a technical achievement, and VIS should be com-

mended for pulling it off with a minimum of visual glitches.

While I was taken with SOE's Zen-like simplicity and devotion to sheer action above all else, I also feel that this game isn't quite the masterpiece it could have been. A better targeting system would have been a welcome addition, and having to constantly manually adjust the camera can become bothersome at times. Also, I think a two-player cooperative mode would have gone a long way toward adding some depth to a game that can sometimes feel a bit repetitive. The single-player *Revolution* mode has a ton of missions to complete, but most of them are of the simple "escort" or "demolition" variety. I preferred the *Last Clone Standing* mode, which dispenses with any semblance of purpose or plot and lets you concentrate on creating havoc with a plethora of armaments. Despite these reservations, I must recommend that you give *State of Emergency* a chance. In my mind, it's the perfect "break" game, for when you just want to run amok in a digital environment for an hour or so before going back to playing something more involved. It's also perfectly suited for passing around during all-night dorm parties, and I expect that it will find a large college audience. As a note to parents, I must stress that this is an extremely violent game, and most definitely not for young children. However, if you're of age and looking to let off a little stress with a good old-fashioned imaginary killing spree, I say go for it. — **MATT**

"If you're of age and looking to let off a little stress with a good old-fashioned imaginary killing spree, I say go for it."



This doesn't look promising



"See? They shoot better when you hold 'em sideways."



Make fun of his pants at your own risk



SUV owners fight for their right to pollute the planet with hope, ugly girls gunners



Raving from the fashion police





**"Rogue Leader  
looked fantas-  
tic, but Jedi  
Starfighter  
outperforms it  
with ease."**

PLAYSTATION 2

# STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER

## SEND IN THE CLONES

"I felt a great disturbance in the Force...As though millions of voices suddenly cried out in terror and were suddenly silenced. I fear something terrible has happened." This timeless quote spoke volumes in the film, but also lends itself nicely as a tagline to the assortment of Episode I games. With Racer being the lone exception as a praiseworthy release, most gamers feel that the gaggle of Episode I software should be tossed into a trash compactor. With the arrival of Episode II, LucasArts has a chance to redeem itself, but if Jedi Starfighter is any indication, I fear the same mistakes are already in motion.

Haunting the Episode II property is one thing, but sacrificing the integrity of a respected series is another beast altogether. Granted, the original Starfighter was founded on the Episode I license, but if you truly break apart the composition of this product, it really has nothing to do with the film in any shape or form. None of the characters within the game were represented on the big screen, yet for some reason, they came across as the heroes who saved the day. What about the gungans, Obi-Wan, and Padme? Call me a stickler if you want, but I firmly believe in continuity, not milking the cow for all it's worth. With the sequel, Jedi Starfighter, LucasArts has fastened itself tightly to Episode II and has once again based the story around the events that unfold within the motion picture. As I tried to digest the confusing plot, I rolled my eyes whenever Jango Fett would

make a cameo. I'm shocked that LucasArts didn't attach a streamer that said "Come see Attack of the Clones on May 16!" to the back of Slave I. The Episode II stuff doesn't really have a place in this game, but to its benefit, it doesn't dominate the entire story (it's primarily on the side).

As far as the visual presentation is concerned, LucasArts uses the same bag of tricks as before. Other than a few effects, this is an exact graphical replica of the first title. After seeing the visual splendor within Rogue Leader, traversing back to an archaic engine that isn't nearly as luxurious or finely polished is a difficult thing. Jedi Starfighter doesn't look bad, per se, but it's definitely a generation behind.

Without question, the development team really outdid itself with the gameplay package. The variety between missions, overall difficulty curve, and control schemes are all right where you'd want them to be. Rogue Leader looked fantastic, but Jedi Starfighter outperforms it with ease. Along with the ability to propel Force attacks at enemies, and slow down the game with heightened Jedi reflexes, more emphasis has been put onto the zoom-sniping and wingman commands. You can also play the game cooperatively through two-player split-screen if you desire.

Jedi Starfighter excels in a number of ways, but is in dire need of a graphical facelift. Still, Star Wars fans should be quite pleased with how this one turned out. —RENER

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** LUCASARTS ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 11



Two players can team up cooperatively, or battle it out against one another in a number of Versus modes



"I am Count Dooku...the most humbly named Star Wars character since Jar Jar."

While playing as Aki Gollis, players can propel a number of Force-based attacks



Players can unlock a number of craft, including a TIE Fighter, X-Wing, and Episode II's Slave I.



Within one of the missions, you'll need to escort an army of clone troopers to safety.

THE BOTTOM LINE

**T** **8.5**

- **Concept:** A straight-up sequel with a handful of Episode II tie-ins
- **Graphics:** Rogue Leader raised the bar, but LucasArts didn't answer the call. Decent, but severely dated by comparison
- **Sound:** Vest amounts of spoken dialogue with several of Johnny Williams' greatest hits on the side
- **Playability:** Excellent. The Force powers are seamlessly combined with the existing formula, and the missions are just as diverse as before
- **Entertainment:** The cooperative play, head-to-head modes, and multitude of secrets should keep Star Wars fans entertained for an extended period
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

SECOND OPINION

Since I haven't read all the plot spoilers for Episode II, my perspective while playing this title was less caught up in the hype of Star Wars, and more focused on the gaming itself. Jedi Starfighter makes great controls with hectic space combat like you'd expect, but I was a little disappointed in the new Force Powers for Aki. Sure, fighting is cool, but I wish that using them had demanded a whole new gameplay experience from me. Instead, they're like the old 6-pad wingman commands. Why not make summoning The Force the complex task that it is? This, combined with the notion of Jedi flying around like space pirates, seems to somehow obscure their noble nature. Jedi Starfighter is still great at what it does, but I feel there are graphical areas that weren't improved from the best PS2 Starfighter — and this far along in the system's life, I expect more. It's a huge Star Wars hit, but this game only stands on its own two feet — and that's all.

KATO — B



22 - 16ft



THE BOTTOM LINE

SEAL OF QUALITY  
**E**  
9.25

"Suffice it to say that Clap Hanz has turned this franchise around in a spectacular manner."

PLAYSTATION 2

# HOT SHOTS GOLF 3

## GET YOUR HOLE ON

**T**here are few things in life that give me as much joy as a well hit drive when I'm out on the course.

Unfortunately for me, that's a feeling that comes around twice, maybe three times a year if I'm lucky. After being escorted off of four different courses for wrapping my clubs around assorted shrubbery, I've decided to invest all of my time into the pursuit of digital precision, instead of the manual, outdoorsy kind. Luckily for me, and that oak tree on the ninth hole of the Hiawatha public course, Hot Shots Golf 3 has arrived.

It wouldn't be doing this game justice to compare it to its most recent predecessor – we might as well be comparing the Who with and without Keith Moon – they're just too different. Suffice it to say that Clap Hanz has turned this franchise around in a spectacular manner. The second edition to the Hot Shots dynasty was a bit of a disappointment, and it looks like the Clap-sters have taken what works from the first one, dumped what didn't from the second, then added a whole lot of sweet, sweet gameplay to the third.

The play mechanics are basically the same as you remember them – the three-click swing is still in place, but assorted distance meters have been added around the display, which make shot estimation much easier than before. Additionally, there are now more ways to judge the length of your hits. For example, if you've laid up close to the hole, you're able to change the maximum strength of your

next stroke to 15 yards, thereby ensuring you won't get crazy and boom the ball a mile over the flag. It's play improvements like this that make HSG3 such a great sequel.

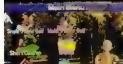
Of course, that's not the only thing that'll put rous in your corn. The sheer amount of unlockable goodies to explore and uncover is enough to give you a nod-to-fresh feeling just thinking about it. I won't get into all the details when it comes to what exactly is in there – you don't want me to ruin it for you, do you? I will tell you this: Hot Shots Golf 3 has one of the best ideas I've ever seen implemented to increase replayability. Sony has set up a website, [www.hotshotsgolf3.scea.com](http://www.hotshotsgolf3.scea.com), where players will be able to register their scores for participation in Internet tournaments. How sweet is that? Now we'll all see if our bark is as good as our bite.

The only quail I have with the game is the sometimes inconsistent camera work when it comes to seeing your ball through different obstacles. A transparency feature would have done away with that little problem, but now I'm just being picky. This is a fantastic game – get off your can and get it before that fat guy across the street beats you to the store. —KRISTIAN

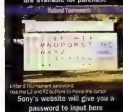
■ STYLE | 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS ■ PUBLISHER SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA ■ DEVELOPER CLAP HANZ LIMITED ■ RELEASE MARCH 12



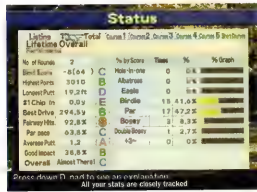
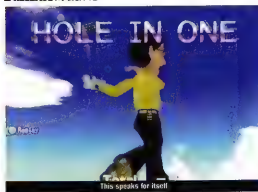
The more you see this type of thing, the better your score is going to be!



Unlockable wrap-ups, like this one, are available for purchase.



Let's get started! Enter the code and you'll be able to play the game. Sony's website will give you a password to load here.



### SECOND OPINION

As that old NFL Films voice says: "The autumn wind is like a pirate." You may cringe as I compare golf to football, but you've never been on the Baglio Classic while a stiff 6 m.p.h. wind laughs in your face. As I pull back my spangled club, I nail the three-button meter in all the right places and think I've just landed my ball between a trio of bunkers. Then, I watch as the wind takes my shot and berles it to the sand like a cat bird. As John Daly would say, "I need a drink." Such is the frustration, and the incredible fun of Hot Shots Golf 3. It gives you just about everything you could think of to aid your judgement. Now your ball lays on the grass is just as important as putting the right shape on it. The greatest thing about the title is the real-time particle grid on the green that shows you its contours. There it all is: the unlockable goodies, and this Hot Shots goes some way to restoring the glory of the series.

KATO — 8.5



PLAYSTATION 2

# FATAL FRAME

GHOST IN THE MACHINE

**W**e've all been to that county fair/high school haunted house. You walk through, maybe put your hand in some bowls of spaghetti masquerading as brains or something, but it's definitely somewhat of a passive experience on your part. All you have to do is walk. While I wouldn't go so far as to say that Fatal Frame is just a big show that doesn't require much from you, I think you know where I'm going with this review.

The game's problem isn't that you're a girl walking around a haunted mansion with a camera. No, Fatal Frame does manage to overcome this clichéd story by simply making you proceed through the title on one big wave of fear. This is done through pacing, and by using different noise filters to produce a Silent Hill-esque shroud around things at certain key points. Other tricks such as using black and white graphics, and a story touching on Shinto sacrifice and dead children also help. The sound, however, is probably the game's biggest asset. This includes everything from the weight of a shifting door to cacophonous or ghostly voices.

The problem is that when Fatal Frame goes back to reality (i.e. said clichéd story), it can't keep you on that knife-edge of expectation because of the gameplay. Although you can upgrade your camera, enemy battles merely consist of snapping pictures of ghosts. Add to this the fact that your interaction with environments is minimal, and this valuable aspect of any video game becomes mundane in comparison with some of the thrills you've experienced. — **KATO**



This photonegative effect is just one of the practical tricks up Fatal Frame's sleeve.



Spooks lurk around every corner and down every hallway.



The Papazaki catch Christina Ricci first thing in the morning.



Fatal Frame features the world-renowned Sigma Sings. Good seats still available.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** TECMO ■ **DEVELOPER** TECMO  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 5

THE BOTTOM LINE

**T** 7

■ **Concept:**  
Go for the scare, but will you stay for the gameplay?

■ **Graphics:**  
The use of noise filters, black and white, and other effects produces a tense atmosphere at all the right times.

■ **Sound:**  
Half of the scanniness, as well as coolness of the game, is due to its awesome sound.

■ **Playability:**  
The simple controls betray the lack of thrilling gameplay.

■ **Entertainment:**  
Fatal Frame delivers the spooks, but leaves out the rest.

■ **Replay Value:**  
Moderately Low

## SECOND OPINION

I won't even pretend to understand Fatal Frame's bizarre plot, which weaves a macabre tale of obscure Japanese novelists, otherworldly specters, and ritualistic torture. However, even as I scratched my head over the obtuse storyline, and yawned at the strangely repetitive combat system, I had to admit that Fatal Frame does have its own old charm. The developers made great use of ambient sounds, and the numerous cutscenes utilize the grainy, washed-out look of High-8 handheld camera stock, much like the long-forgotten PS-X point-and-click Juggernaut. Yet, there was definitely something missing from Fatal Frame. In the end, all the scary atmosphere in the world can't distract you from the fact that it's just another Easter egg hunt, which offers little more to do than scrounge around in the dark for the key or clue you need to open the next in an endless series of locked doors.

**MATT — 7**



PLAYSTATION 2

# HERDY GERDY

THE LIFE OF AN ADOLESCENT SHEPHERD

THE BOTTOM LINE

**E** 6

■ **Concept:**  
Herdy wild creatures to escape through Lemmings-esque puzzles.

■ **Graphics:**  
Unlike most on-rails games, this one has a distinct cartoon feel that doesn't look superimposed.

■ **Sound:**  
The soundtrack is decent, but the voiceovers are painful and long-winded.

■ **Playability:**  
The entire gameplay design is very unique, but also poorly executed. The controls are too loose and the puzzles are obvious.

■ **Entertainment:**  
True to life, herding doesn't prove to be the most exciting of affairs.

■ **Replay Value:**  
Moderately Low

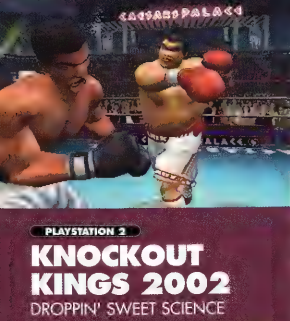
## SECOND OPINION

This is one of those games that I hate giving a bad score. The developers obviously put a lot of time and effort into creating Herdy Gerdy's unique concept and pretty, watercolor visuals. Unfortunately, this came at the expense of perceiving more crucial facets of the engine like the camera system and framerate. As it stands, it's an action/platformer without much action or platforming, and the hiding elements aren't deep enough to be compelling in their own right.

**MATT — 6.5**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** EIDOS  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** CORE DESIGN  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 12





PLAYSTATION 2

## KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002

DROPPIN' SWEET SCIENCE

**T**he major problem with real-life boxing is that it seldom lives up to the hype. The highest-bouted fights end up lasting a few scant minutes, champions are afraid to take on real competition, and controversy and sour grapes abound. I feel the same way about Knockout Kings. It's not bad, but it is really supposed to be the best boxing in video games?

I expected realistic fisticuffs with some great features, including an in-depth career mode. What I got was a decent punching game, but little else. The power creator was pretty ok, best, and training was nonexistent. Once the fighters squared off, punches were exchanged in satisfying fashion. The variety of jabs, hooks, and special shots are solid, but I think the defense is lacking. As nice as the visuals are, collision problems prevent you from feeling the pain. This is evident when watching knockdown replays where the knocker barely touches the knockee.

Matt's continuous edition over this series makes me think he's been in all in the head a few times too many (thanks, Steve Kent). I realize you can only do so much with two guys in oversized gloves, but I think there should be more replay and immersion than this. —JUSTIN

THE BOTTOM LINE



7.75

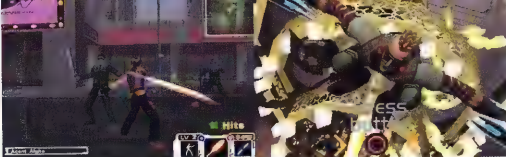
- **Concept:** Keep your gloves up and come out fighting.
- **Graphics:** Detailed models and arenas, solid 3D physics engine.
- **Sound:** Trademark EA hip-hop and good play-by-play, some using the scope of the box.
- **Playability:** Punching is satisfying. Defense isn't.
- **Entertainment:** Knockout Kings has some good moments, but broadens the title due to a lack of competition.
- **Replay Value:** Moderate.

SECOND OPINION

Knockout Kings 2002's revamped fighting engine improves over the plodding feel of last year's version, and the inclusion of Felix Trinidad and a few canny fantasy fighters adds some entertainment value to the mix. However, I was disappointed that the in-depth training mode was taken out. Still, Knockout Kings remains the console champ.

MATT — 8.25

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 26



PLAYSTATION 2

## EOE: EVE OF EXTINCTION

BOE: BETTER OFF EXTINCT

**H**oly both sides of the spectrum, Batman. I went from disliking the lack of depth in EOE, to enjoying all the extras, to getting fed up with the control flaws; all in the span of one sitting!

EOE's story is a weird one. It starts with a big bioengineering corporation whose secret goal is global domination — big deal, right? Well, the oddity stems from their secret weapon, which actually contains the soul of a human girl — more specifically the main character's girlfriend. So, in essence, your hero's got the hots for his girlfriend. This game offers many weapons to play with, and a few cool combos. There is targeting, but it's inefficient; still, it's nowhere near as bad as the camera. I struggled to see myself onscreen, much less enemies. This also led to mad death from all the jumping required. EOE's taken this long to come out with this many faults? For shame!

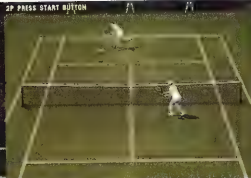
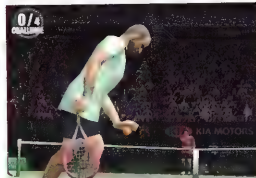
I did get into the hidden items, bonus modes and button-pushing cutscenes, but EOE's gameplay and overall look were just too clunky and unpolished for me to recommend it as more than a rental. —JUSTIN

SECOND OPINION

This game has some good ideas, but doesn't execute. Combos and Legacy Drives sound good on paper, but are rendered joyless due to EOE's horrible camera. I guess this makes reading the instruction manual more fun than playing the game, and that's not right.

KATO — 6

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** EDIOS ■ **DEVELOPER** YUKE'S ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 26



PLAYSTATION 2

## SMASH COURT TENNIS: PRO TOURNAMENT

A NICE VOLLEY

**S**aying that Smash Court Tennis is the best tennis game on the PS2 right now is a bit of a lukewarm endorsement, given that Sega's brilliant Virtua Tennis has yet to see a post-Dreamcast resurrection. With the real deal currently missing in action, Namco decided to bring a new version of its long-running Smash Court series to Sony's commercial powerhouse. And, as a no-frills tennis game, it does a decent job of providing you with your grass court kicks. On the plus side, Smash Court's roster of players is studied with stars, including Andre Agassi, Martina Hingis, Pete Sampras, Monica Seles, and that not-talent tropol Anna Kournikova for you hairy-palmed types.

Sadly, the aforementioned stars look a little chunky, due to the odd character models, and move like they've hit the Wimbledon locker-room buffet one too many times, giving the game a much slower feel than Virtua Tennis. Also, the career mode is not dazzling, with ho-hum prize points (which allow you to unlock pictures of Yevgeny Kafelnikov — Yef!) taking the place of Virtua Tennis' wacky minigames. —MATT

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 4-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** NAMCO ■ **DEVELOPER** NAMCO  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 27

THE BOTTOM LINE



6.5

- **Concept:** A determined man fights for the love of a knifeline.
- **Graphics:** Not much to look at, and a bad camera to see it with.
- **Sound:** Relatively interesting techno vibe, and moderately cool voice-overs.
- **Playability:** Combos get deeper the further you progress, but the platform-style jumping sinks.
- **Entertainment:** Too many problems overwhelm what little there is to like about EOE.
- **Replay Value:** Moderate.

THE BOTTOM LINE



7.75

- **Concept:** Bring together the best players in tennis in one game. Then throw in Anne Kournikova for "other" reasons.
- **Graphics:** Every aspect of the presentation, from the character models to the plain-Jane courts and arenas, falls in comparison to Virtua Tennis 2K2.
- **Sound:** The voice-over talent has the spotty tennis-announcer accent down pat.
- **Playability:** Not bad, but a little rough around the edges.
- **Entertainment:** Until Sega unleashes VT on the PS2, this isn't a bad bet for racketheads.
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High.

LAP: 1/3  
 TIME: 1:15.76  
 LEAD: 0:11.89



210  
 THE BOTTOM LINE  
**T**  
**6.5**  
 REVIEW

PLAYSTATION 2

# STAR WARS: RACER REVENGE

THE FORCE IS TOO STRONG WITH THIS ONE

I absolutely adored the first entry in the Racer series, and I nearly passed out with joviality when I heard that LucasArts was creating a sequel and that the development was being spearheaded by Rainbow Studios. The prospects were grand indeed. The kings of physics would take on the most physics-based fantasy concept in recent memory. I truly believed that this would be one of the most enjoyable racing games around, and this feeling remained even after I started playing the game. The incomprehensible speed was greater than I imagined and the physics of the pod and engines felt all too real. Before long, however, a dizzy spell of nausea passed over me. The pods didn't resemble the film counterparts, but rather giant eggs with insane decals and a little creature strapped atop. I also noticed that the environment textures and colors were a tad funky—almost as though they were thrown into a washing machine with a pastel pallet.

One thing was certain, though. The gameplay was right on the money and was in fact designed much better than the original release. A steady framerate brought about unprecedented control, applying a turbo boost required just one button press rather than three, and realism reared its head in the damage system. If a pod explodes, it's out for the race, so constant engine repair is a must. You could also use this as an advantage and knock opponents out for the count. Unfortunately, the game relied on this aspect way too much. If I wasn't bumping and grinding with Sebulla, then I was probably in first place. Speeding ahead of the pack is much too easy, and once you're there, losing is next to impossible.

I completed the game three times and managed to place in first on every single track. Racer tested your skills and reflexes, Racer proved your endurance and patience. If Rainbow would have made it competitive, I would have loved it, but without challenge, there really is no reason to continue playing. I've noticed that kids jump for joy whenever the pod race scene appears in the movie. I'm not a betting man, but I have a hunch that this is the audience LucasArts was aiming to appease with this release. Simply said, if you're still in grade school, it doesn't get much better than this. If you're any older or can hold your own in most games, I have a feeling that Racer Revenge will be of little interest to you. **Bummer. —REINER**



Advanced controls allow players to accurately pilot a pod, where each analog stick controls the movement of an engine. The races are hectic early on, but after applying a few boosts, you'll find yourself well in front of the pack.

- Concept:** Developed by the kings of physics, Rainbow Studios, this sequel is just as fast and furious as the original. **NSA** net.
- Graphics:** The pods look a little large and the environment featuring is a tad off. Nice particle effects, though.
- Sound:** John Williams is God.
- Playability:** The design of the game insists that players smash and bash with the opposition, yet this aspect isn't mandatory. You can also zoom ahead and finish in first.
- Entertainment:** The overall difficulty is lacking and is targeted toward Anakin-aged kids.
- Repeat Value:** Moderate.

## SECOND OPINION

As a fan of the first Star Wars Races, I had high hopes for this follow-up that had found its way into the hands of Rainbow Studios—a developer I have grown to respect over the last few years. Sadly, much like Episode I, this follow-up has been damped-down and transformed into a kiddie game. From the simplified controls to the pathetic challenge, everything is sub-standard. I'm not sure if Rainbow Studios just didn't care about this game since the company was being purchased by THQ, or if LucasArts actually gave them a target market of six- to nine-year-olds. Either way, Racer Revenge is a poor addition to the Star Wars universe and should only be played by the most die-hard of Star Wars fans.

**ANDY — 6**

## REVIEWS



PLAYSTATION 2

# SLED STORM

STORMY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN

**W**hen compared to the original Sled Storm for PlayStation, there is little doubt that this new incarnation is bigger, faster and more outrageous. However, there is something oddly missing, and it's not hard to pin down after a few minutes with the game. Sled Storm for PlayStation 2 has forsaken its snowmobile roots and becomes a sled version of SSX.

This similarity is not necessarily a bad thing, as there are seven gigantic tracks to race with a plethora of hidden shortcuts and lots of tricks, but other than a couple of areas in each track, you don't feel like you are racing in snow. Plus, the challenges in the game have been reduced, since you can catch up at pretty much anytime, so the only key to winning is not to screw up on the last lap.

Overall the production value on this game is solid, but since the gameplay is neither groundbreaking nor terrifically engaging—the game just falls right into the middle of the pack. Not a bad rental, but not the sequel I had hoped it would be. **—ANDY**

THE BOTTOM LINE  
**E**  
**7**  
 REVIEW

- Concept:** Takes what worked in SSX, throw it at every sport—in this case snowmobiling—and see what sticks.
- Graphics:** Some nice particle work, but overall the game's graphics are just mediocre.
- Sound:** Proves that licensing music and hiring WWF announcer Jason Gene and Sportscast's Matthew Liard for voices doesn't always work.
- Playability:** Solid controls with plenty of tricks to bust out.
- Entertainment:** Easily the best snowmobiling option out there, but it's just SSX with breaks—so it's not as good as it could be.
- Repeat Value:** Moderate.

## SECOND OPINION

I have some very mixed feelings about Sled Storm. On the one hand, it's a nice-looking racer that delivers punning, breakpoint action from start to finish. On the other, I have a problem with the way that EA Big seems to have stripped the Sled Storm franchise of the unique personality it once had. SS is just SSX with sleds, and I already own Trickz.

**MATT — 7.5**

STYLE | OR 2-PLAYER RACING | PUBLISHER LUCASARTS | DEVELOPER RAINBOW STUDIOS | RELEASE FEBRUARY 13

STYLE | OR 2-PLAYER RACING | PUBLISHER EA GIG | DEVELOPER EA CANADA | RELEASE MARCH 12



PLAYSTATION 2

## ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2003

KING OF THE DIGITAL DIAMOND

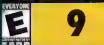
As developers continually try to make one another's landscape of video game sports is rapidly changing. EA Sports is leading the way in football. Sega has basketball looked up. And Acclaim is doing its part to become the leader in baseball.

From a first glance, All-Star Baseball 2003 may not seem like too much of a revelation. The gameplay engine is very similar to last year's release. However, if you're an enthusiast of the sport, you'll notice that Acclaim has finely incorporated all of the rules into the game. Passed balls, dropped third strikes, erratic throws, and broken bats are all included. The TV-style presentation has also been overhauled to show bullpen activity, fan support, and exciting replays. The entire gameplay package is actually quite impressive, but the fielding AI could still use some refining.

Outside of the action, Acclaim has implemented everything you could ever want from a sports game. Continuing seasons, a deep expansion mode with an extensive create-a-team mode, Cooperstown Legends, collectible Donruss baseball cards, a trivia minigame—you name it. Everything is here.

Like I said, the feeling is the only aspect that could still use some work. Otherwise, this is as good as digital baseball gets. —**REINER**

THE BOTTOM LINE



■ **Concept:** An attempt to top the competition with a great baseball AI.

■ **Graphics:** Fun and addictive, but the graphics won't dazzle you, but the way they're used is, something to admire.

■ **Sound:** You may prefer to play above the volume in favor of your own tunes, but don't—the commentary is great.

■ **Playability:** The fielding can be a little awkward at times, but there can be no comparison to this game's speed and depth.

■ **Entertainment:** What else is there to play other than "Awesome"?

■ **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

Yes, Yes, YES. This is how you make a baseball game. The card-buying system is awesome, and the game mechanics are very well done. The only beef I have with the PS2 version is the obscenely long loading times. Oh, P.S. The commentary is fantastic whenever you play ASB 2003.

KRISTIAN — 8.75



PLAYSTATION 2

## TRIPLE PLAY 2002

A SWING AND A MISS

For the second season running, Triple Play is the graphical slinger that simply crushes everything else on the market. If you look closely at the stadiums, you can see that no detail was spared. You really couldn't ask for much more from the visuals. With the gameplay, Pandemic tried to fix the problems, but didn't mend everything—primarily the unmanageable fielding mechanics. When the ball is hit, you have but a brief second to react. Pandemic's solution was to add a quick flash replay that shows where the ball is heading before you assume control of the fielder, but it doesn't really make a difference. The batting and pitching are decent, but the fielding is atrocious.

Triple Play also strikes out in the game mode department. You can play through an entire season, draft a team, create-a-player, and compete in the Home Run Derby, but that's about the gist of it. No flash, no pop, just a straight-up baseball game that looks great and plays okay. —**REINER**

■ **STYLE 1** OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** PANDEMIC  
■ **RELEASE** MARCH 12

SECOND OPINION

Unfortunately, the only thing this game does well is make the stadiums look spectacular. Everything that happens inside the stadiums, however, is where Triple Play takes a cleat to the groin. The fielding is miserably bad, and the AI is suspect on a number of levels.

KRISTIAN — 5



PLAYSTATION 2

## HIGH HEAT MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL 2003

A NON-THINKING MAN'S BASEBALL

This is about as close as you're going to get to a purely arcade-style baseball title. The gameplay is lightning quick, and with the absence of an aiming lock during both hitting and pitching, things just go that much faster. There's a little bit of control given when you pitch and where you swing the bat, but when it comes to taking cuts, pressing a button at the right time is all you have to do to make contact.

There are the obligatory gameplay glitches, like fielders standing under a fly ball only to have it drop a foot to the side of them, just to remind you that you're playing a 3DO game. However, I must admit that in terms of baseball games, 3DO made EA look like a bunch of monkeys this year. High Heat has a number of graphics modes to mess around with, and for the most part the gameplay is solid. If the different had been up to you, we might be looking at one of the best MLB games to come out this year, but above-average ain't half bad. —**KRISTIAN**

■ **STYLE 1** OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** 3DO ■ **DEVELOPER** 3DO  
■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 12

THE BOTTOM LINE



■ **Concept:** The second season of next-gen EA Baseball.

■ **Graphics:** A visual triumph with amazing stadium details and authentic batting stances.

■ **Sound:** Did Bob Costas read from a baseball encyclopedia? Tons of voiced stats. Very cool.

■ **Playability:** The pitching and batting mechanics work well, but the fielding is still difficult to manipulate.

■ **Entertainment:** Decent, but lacking in fantasy options.

■ **Replay Value:** Moderate

THE BOTTOM LINE



■ **Concept:** Baseball for those who hate to wait.

■ **Graphics:** Most of the player model looks the same, and the stadiums look terrific.

■ **Sound:** Nice commentary, average batting and fielding effects.

■ **Playability:** As easy to slip into as silk as baseball.

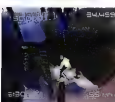
■ **Entertainment:** This is a fun game, but it's not going to change the way you think about video baseball.

■ **Replay Value:** High



## JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** 3DO  
 ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 28



Vets of a game as accomplished as SSX will scoff at Jonny Moseley, but I challenge them to not have a good time with this title. It's high-flying fun with a Tai Pan tweak. This is mostly due to its tricks, which are comfortably assigned to

your controller. Although the number of them available to you is large, the collision isn't the greatest. Also, the environments are huge, but they don't totally make up for Jonny's lack of multiplayer. Still, it's a good start and a direction I encourage 3DO to explore with more time and money. —**KATO**

**7.25**

## TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2002

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 6



Going from Hot Shots Golf 3 to this game in the space of a couple days called for a pretty drastic changing of my gaming gears. This year's Tiger features a contact system that forces players to pull one of the analog sticks towards them for the back-

swing, then pitch it forward for the follow-through. Any deviation from a perfectly vertical line, and you'll will slice or hook accordingly. I have a feeling golf enthusiasts will love the amount of detail EA has sunk into this game, but for the average gamer, this one is bound to go straight into the long stuff. —**KRISTIAN**

**7.75**

## ESPN NBA 2NIGHT 2002

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** KONAMI  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 13



Holy cow, someone listened! Konami fixed most every beef I expressed with the original PS2 NBA 2Night. It's even gotten up to speed with Franchise mode, injury stats and attributes, its look and play (rim physics, shots in paint, etc.) are still lacking some smoothness and the audio's pretty sad (lime music and play-by-play), but ESPN NBA 2Night definitely receives the Most Improved Award here. There's good offense, defense balance, rebounding, blocking, and nice extras like dubs and the endgame Double Clutch recap. —**JUSTIN**

**7.5**

## MAD MAESTRO

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** FRESH GAMES  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 26

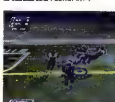


While not as quirky as Gitaroo Man or Parappa, there is a lot to like in this release. Using the Dual Shock 2's pressure sensitive buttons as ingenious, Mad Maestro has a good deal of extras. The songs—while not rocking material, per se—are all classics (Wagner, Brahms, Mozart, etc.), and blend well with the gameplay. The main problem I see is that Maestro could go over a lot of gamers' heads. I say get Gitaroo Man hands down, but check this out too for some worthwhile musical sophistication. —**JUSTIN**

**7.5**

## NFL BLITZ 2002

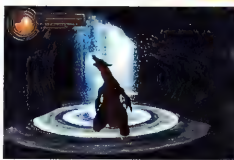
■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** MIDWAY  
 ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 7



The one good thing about the Blitz franchise is its dedication to post-play roughhousing. Even Madden has abandoned this long-lost art. Other than that, I personally don't find much in this series. Sure, I'll make a quarter or two on it

at the arcade, but \$50? C'mon... There are some additions, but I still can't stand the passing system, and I'm certainly not going to fork over the cash just for better looking players. The fact that NFL Fever's models are as unrealistic as these should make Fever's fans shudder. However, Fever believers can fall back on the comforting fact that they've at least got newer rosters. Blitz still lists Drew Bledsoe as the Patriot's quarterback. —**KATO**

**5**



## KING'S FIELD: THE ANCIENT CITY

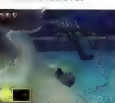
■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/RPG  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACEITEC  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 5

King's Field has always been the slowest moving RPG on the market, and this next-generation sequel falls right in line. The only difference between this title and the 32-bit quests is that it is now displayed in high-resolution. Back in the day, I thoroughly enjoyed text-based adventures, and amazingly, this isn't too much of a departure. The storytelling is very methodical, and the customizable options are in line with the most complex of PG RPG's. Even with these intriguing traits in place, King's Field: The Ancient City will bore approximately 99.9% of the gamers out there. Primarily because the gameplay is so incredibly slow and burdensome. I could probably pop a bag of popcorn in the time it takes to actually swing a sword. I kid you not. King's Field is essentially a first-person shooter that plays like a point-and-click adventure. You truly must be a hardcore role-playing fanatic to get into this series. Buyers beware. —**REINER**

**6.5**

## MR. MOSQUITO

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** FRESH GAMES  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 26



There's gold in them there hills, so do vie in Japanochilles will undoubtedly love this game, but the rest will need a little more convincing before buying Mr. Mosquito. The gameplay of being a mosquito doesn't surprise or challenge (although there are plenty of bonus items to fly around and find), but there is something to be said for this title due to its pure outrageousness. After all, even a mosquito bite sticks around for a while, and I think you'd want to satiate your itchy curiosity. However, as the game says:

—**KATO**

**7**



PLAYSTATION 2

MONSTERS, INC.  
CLASS DISMISSED

I might as well admit this from the start: I'm probably being harder on Monsters, Inc. than I should be. Sure, it's a pretty lackluster platformer, but it is hardly worth getting my panties in a bunch over, right? Wrong. If this had been the first, or even the third, so-so action game based on a big Disney property I'd reviewed, since I started working here, I wouldn't care in the least.

However, I'm starting to feel like a college professor who has watched his Tau Kappa Epsilon students in his class hand in different variations of the same old biology paper for 10 years. After awhile, you get fed up with the lack of creativity and effort, and start failing people on principle.

As games go, Monsters, Inc. works reasonably well, and recreates many of your favorite locations and characters from the film. However, it's tough to be impressed by a game based on a Pixar movie, when it's a given Pixar's OG is 2,000 times better than anything a current game system could offer. The one thing I did enjoy

was DVD-style extras on the disc, including concept art, making-of shorts, and scenes from the movie. This game might be a nice purchase for PS2-owning parents who want a non-threatening game for their kids to enjoy, but those of us who have left our elementary school days behind us should take a pass on Monsters, Inc. —**MATT**

THE BOTTOM LINE

**E** **5**

■ **Concept:** A PS2 game based on this hit Disney film was as inevitable as death and taxes, and is about as much fun.

■ **Graphics:** Pales in comparison to what you saw in the movie.

■ **Sound:** Nice voice-overs feature some excellent John Goodman and Billy Crystal impersonations.

■ **Playability:** Solid camera systems are important, people.

■ **Entertainment:** me-d-e-o (mE-d-e-o) King's Field: The Ancient City. Mosters to Inferior in quality ordinary. See synonyms at average.

■ **Repeat Value:** Moderately Low.

## SECOND OPINION

I would have to agree with Matt that most of the Disney action/platformers are less than spectacular, but as a whole they do hit the mark as good family fun. Personally, I wouldn't play this game, but I would send it to a nephew or niece who was just starting up in gaming. I'll give it a six, but if you are so you would think it was an eight.

**ANDY - 6**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** WALT DISNEY INTERACTIVE  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** MIZALP INTERACTIVE ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 19



## GAMECUBE

## SOCCER SLAM

### SLAMMA-JAMMA DING DONG

**B**eing that Soccer Slam is about as explosive as the game of soccer has ever gotten, you'd think that its realistic foundation would be a contradiction in disguise. This game's adherence to some of the basics of soccer is almost as advantageous as Maradona's Hand of God.

Soccer Slam has two types of slow-mo power kicks. It's got team-specific special forms that you can learn through racking up combo shots and steal points. It's got violence. It's ready to tumble. That stuff's sexy and all, but the game succeeds because it mixes this glitz with real-life soccer fundamentals. Passing is paramount. You can't leave players unmarked in the box. You have to utilize probing skills, give-and-gos, and one-ticks.

Unfortunately, the title doesn't always excite well. Because the shoot button is always shared with the hit command, these two actions can be performed at the wrong time. Also, detection issues occur sometimes when the ball's in space. Such things aren't major detractors, but they should be ironed out next time. I'd also like to see the give-and-go be more responsive, and it would be awesome if the crowd could factor into things.

Soccer Slam is a solid game with some career bonuses to make it attractive, despite its corny play. This makes it an arcade sports title that's worthy of the upper terraces.

KATO

■ **STYLE** 1v1, 4-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA SPORTS  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** VISUAL CONCEPTS ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 26

## THE BOTTOM LINE

**E** **7.5**

■ **Concept:** The power-up to the sport AND out something that'll appeal to the system's target audience.

■ **Graphics:** The power-up states for the teams are pretty cool, and they don't slow down the last play one bit.

■ **Sound:** Unfortunately, this is one game from Mike's book that shouldn't have been taken.

■ **Playability:** A nice blend of real soccer moves and tactics that demands some skillful timing.

■ **Entertainment:** Soccer Slam is a good time for what it is, but there's only so much.

■ **Replay Value:** Moderate.

## SECOND OPINION

In terms of fast-paced soccer titles, this one is the cream of the crop. There's a lot of fun to be had here if you can get used to the controls, and the multiplayer aspect is a treat if you're looking for something you can scream about with your buddies. Even those who aren't Mike Hamm staffers can get behind Soccer Slam.

KRISTIAN — 7.75



## GAMECUBE

## BLOODY ROAR: PRIMAL FURY

HUDSON'S ANIMAL INSTINCT

**A**n anomaly within the fighting game genre, the Bloody Roar series — while not critically acclaimed — has garnered fan praise and a cult-like following. I've always admired what Hudson Soft has done with the series, but if I had to make a choice as to what fighting game I would purchase next, I would always choose a Tekken, Virtua Fighter, or Dead or Alive over Bloody Roar. The gameplay is thoroughly captivating, yet it lacks the depth of the aforementioned titles. Bloody Roar has always been, and probably always will be, a button masher for the masses. The way the fighting mechanics are structured allows everyone to jump in and find instant success. I usually frown on people who flail on the buttons, yet it seems to fit the Bloody Roar bill. If you take the time to study the gameplay and apply yourself to learning the special moves and combo strings, there's actually quite a bit of strategy involved, although it's not a necessity.

For Primal Fury, Hudson Soft finally decided to optimize the game to hang with the current crop of fighters. Along with a handful of flashy effects, like heat trails and dynamic lighting, the character models now feature intricate details, smoother movements, and improved collision fields for articles of clothing and interaction with other characters.

As for substance, Primal Fury introduces two new characters and a handful of sorely needed gameplay modes. The roster has always had a nice balance to it, but it never really had a trailer — a Zangief, if you will. This void has finally been filled. Ganesh is the heavyweight I've been waiting for. His movements are slow yet powerful, and his elephant transformation is testament to this. The other recruit, Cronos, adds something different to the table as well. Rather than morphing into just one animal, which happens to be a cute little penguin, he can tap into a second metamorphosis — a fire-breathing phoenix.

Besides the unique zoanthropic morphing, this release won't do much for hardcore fighting fanatics, but as I've said before, it's a great release for newcomers to the ring. As it stands now, this is the only traditional fighting game for the GameCube, and will remain so until the distant releases of Soul Calibur 2 and Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance. — REINER



Two never-before-seen characters are included in this GameCube exclusive sequel.

Along with improved character details, every combatant can perform a handful of new moves.

■ **STYLE** 1v1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION ■ **DEVELOPER** HUDSON SOFT  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 26

## THE BOTTOM LINE

**T** **8**

■ **Concept:** A drastically overhauled version of Bloody Roar 3 with new characters, arenas, modes, and improved graphics.

■ **Graphics:** At long last, the character models now embody the essence of realism, however, the stages are still barren, and the arenas are a tad quirky.

■ **Sound:** Synthesized Japanese rock.

■ **Playability:** Button mashing devastates CPU opponents, yet strategy does play a role in heated two-player matches.

■ **Entertainment:** Too simple for fighting game veterans, but a perfect fit for rookies.

■ **Replay Value:** Moderately High.

## SECOND OPINION

The name Primal Fury says it all. Bloody Roar, despite its animal morphing, is a rather addictive fighting game. As a human, you've only got a punch and kick button to work with. This doesn't leave much room for depth. There's little in the way of grappling, and you end up facing the wrong way too often. When beatdown is things get a tad more interesting, and the transformation button is used for attacks, too. On the positive flip, breakthrough environments are always fun, and side-scrolling is well done. Modes are light, without a world tour or tag battle. I also have issues with the fighter balancing. Some of the beast forms sound new, especially with the impressive visuals (despite an unimpressive character); however, many of the human characters are just plain lame. I'm a fighting game fan, but I grew bored with Bloody Roar pretty quick. Even the anime was shoddy. Walk for Soul Calibur 2.

JUSTIN — 6.75



THE BOTTOM LINE



GAMECUBE

# SMASHING DRIVE

BUST A TRAVIS BICKLE - PLEASE

**W**hy a taxi? Smashing Drive isn't about picking people up for "crazy money," and it's definitely not about a cab driver who gets a mohawk, blows people's hands off, and rescues an underage strumpet named Iris. Maybe Namco didn't have enough money to get Robert DeNiro on the cover? Beats me. I do know, however, that anyone thinking the taxi on the cover means that this game comes close to competing with the likes of a Crazy Taxi is mistaken.

Oh, I get it! The taxi is a video game symbol that stands for madcap, high-flying racing adventures. Now there is something that Smashing Drive can lay claim to. Its sensation of speed is good, and the ambient life comprised of traffic and peds never slows the title down. Your job is to race through the streets of New York chasing a CPU competitor. The only way to beat it (and get time extensions) is to hit the ramps and shortcuts hidden throughout the levels. This is almost the only way to collect power-ups such as Turbo, Repair, and Sonic (which enables you to destroy impeding cars with your horn). Shortcuts are a lot of fun as you barrel through the halls of office buildings, and even race vertically up their sides.

Being an arcade game, however, fun isn't the problem with Smashing Drive - it's the lack of replay. It won't take you too long to get through the main portion, and multiplayer and Survival modes aren't anything outstanding. There are some bonus levels that can be hard to earn, but I feel Namco could have put a little bit more horsepower in this conversion. Okay, I get it, driving a taxi is wacky - now what? - **KATO**



■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** NAMCO ■ **DEVELOPER** POINT OF VIEW  
 ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 20

■ **Concept:**  
 You aren't gonna get crazier than Crazy Taxi by emulating San Francisco Rush - in New York

■ **Graphics:**  
 Apart from its speed and ambient life, the game rides the Dreamcast/N64 vice

■ **Sound:**  
 Change the Saturday-morning cartoon-esque original song. Please

■ **Playability:**  
 This will be no problem to play for the younger audience who will be drawn to it

■ **Entertainment:**  
 Finding all the shortcuts and earning the bonus levels will suck you in, but what you see is what you get

■ **Replay Value:**  
 Moderate

SECOND OPINION

Smashing Drive, to me, can be summed up as San Francisco Rush with more power-ups. Maybe it's more like a faster, not-so-linear 28 Wheeler. Either way, it's very obviously an arcade racer. You want to find alternate routes which string together with turbo boosts and can-can-gliding sonic beams. The abundance of traffic is neat, but it's more of an annoyance than a thrill. I almost have to tell myself to move on it, rather than just enjoy it naturally. Like both of the above-mentioned games, Smashing Drive has some of the most gag-reflex-inducing music this side of an evening with Jewel. The amount of driving here is more than a lot of quarter-munchers, but it still pales in comparison to what gamers expect on a console. Smashing Drive wasn't worth a single dollar out of my wallet in the arcade, and it's definitely not getting my 50 bucks on GameCube. Arcade funds may want to check it out, though.

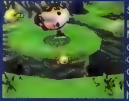
**JUSTIN - 6.5**

REVIEWS

GAMECUBE

## PAC-MAN WORLD 2

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** NAMCO  
 ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 26



Since Namco obviously didn't put any effort into fixing Pac-Man World 2 when bringing it over to GameCube, I've decided to do a quick re-run of my review of the PS2 version from last month. It's hard to pinpoint just where this game went wrong, but I think it has something to do with the decision to move away from the essentially side-scrolling nature of the first Pac-Man World. Of course, this is much more difficult to accomplish, and the developers failed to develop a camera system capable of dealing with the 3D action. Don't call it a comeback, because it's not. **Yep, it still sucks. - MATT**

**E 5.5**



GAMECUBE

## 18 WHEELER AMERICAN PRO TRUCKER

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCCLAIM/SEGA  
 ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 20

A trucker's life isn't a pretty one: There's beef jerky indigestion, having to shower at gas stations, and watching after your mischievous pet orangutan. In the same respect, this is quite the ugly game. There's more poop than a toaster, and the music is unappealing to anyone without a straw hat. The gameplay is somewhat engaging, though, as you travel the countryside with your freight. Amazingly, your semi can cover the continental US in about 10 minutes. Still, I'd rather just get out and walk. **- JUSTIN**

**E 6**

GAMECUBE

## ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2003

■ **STYLE** OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCCLAIM  
 ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 20



Accclaim dropped the ball with the GameCube version of All-Star Baseball 2002, but fortunately, the same cannot be said about this year's update. The only aspect that is still suspect is the fielding. The rest of the game has been reworked and tweaked, with extensive additions. New to the game are an Expansion mode, farm team management, collectible trading cards, broken bats, enhanced rules, a trivia minigame, Hall of Fame inductions, bean ball reactions, a real-time ticker, and advanced GM trade logic. It looks a heck of a lot nicer, plays better, and offers more than you could ever imagine. **- REINER**

**E 9**





XBOX

# WRECKLESS: THE YAKUZA MISSIONS

## A KILLER COMMUTE

In my pursuit for gaming knowledge, I frequently visit video game retailers to listen to what the consumers have to say. What are their favorite games? Which system do they prefer? More intriguing yet, which upcoming titles are they looking forward to playing? I was quite taken aback when almost everyone I chatted with said they couldn't wait to play Wreckless. Certainly, it's a beautiful-looking title, and one of the more diverse Xbox releases as of late; yet I remained completely dumbfounded by these statements. My reason? Well, for curiosity, I probed deeper and asked these giddy individuals if they have ever played *Felony 11-79* or *Super Runabout*. Nobody, not a single soul, had a clue, not even a faint memory of the games I mentioned. For all intents and purposes, I wouldn't be too far off of the mark if I said *Wreckless* is the sequel to *Super Runabout*, which in turn is a spin-off of *Felony 11-79*.

The overall game design is one and the same, and a good majority of the development team migrated from Climax Entertainment - creator of *Felony 11-79* and *Super Runabout*. Nobody played either of these games. If they did, the disturbing revelation is that they don't remember - which never bodes well for a pseudo sequel. People are excited about this release because of its visual flair. That's it. In all fairness, I continually found myself staring in awe at the highly detailed cities, massive amounts of destruction, and superb lighting. Finely animated pedestrians jump out of the way of your car, fences crumble into thousands of pieces, binding your reactions

ricochet off metal surfaces, and neon signs explode, showing particle effects onto the streets. *Wreckless* truly is a visual feast for the eyes, but it seems that the developers were too caught up in how the game looks and didn't spend enough time creating a solid gameplay package.

At times, *Wreckless'* design does prove to be intense and inventive; but as a whole, the missions are mostly tedious. For instance, in one stage it's your duty to combat a dump truck carrying barrels of TNT. To destroy this slow-moving menace, you'll need to launch off of inclines and crash into the barrels within its bed. On another stage, you'll find yourself cruising down a runway, trying to launch onto an airplane that was about to take off. I enjoyed these missions, but I'm afraid that these were the rare exceptions. The remainder of the assignments usually consist of ramming into cars until they explode, or grabbing a certain number of items on a stage. Equally as distressing, most of these tasks can be completed within a matter of minutes, and you won't have the luxury of exploring the city, as you're constantly racing against a clock.

To be dead honest, playing *Wreckless* is much like watching a fireworks show. I sat in wonderment and let out an "ooh" and an "ahh," but quickly grew disenchanted. Fireworks only light up the sky for a few minutes, and the same can be said about *Wreckless*. The visuals are worth seeing, and the massive amounts of carnage are mind-blowing, but the play is far from entertaining. - REINER



THE BOTTOM LINE  
**T** **7**

■ **Concept:**  
 A mission-based driving game in the same vein as *Felony 11-79* and *Super Runabout*.

■ **Graphics:**  
 The high levels of destruction are captured with the utmost realism. The lighting and abundance of particle effects are equally as impressive.

■ **Sound:**  
 Grinding steel, whiny characters, and revving engines.

■ **Playability:**  
 Sleer on the gas and ram into things before time expires.

■ **Entertainment:**  
 A sensory overload that quickly mutates into a pounding migraine.

■ **Replay Value:**  
 Moderate.

### SECOND OPINION

Looking at these screenshots, it's going to be hard for me to convince you that *Wreckless* isn't everything it's cracked up to be. I'll admit it - this is probably one of the most amazing-looking console games I've ever seen. Bunkasha's intricately modeled Hong Kong cityscapes are quite simply a work of art. Unfortunately, you can't play a work of art, and that's why *Wreckless* falls from lofty status into the ranks of the average. It's just not that fun. It's surprising that, for all the advanced thought that went into the visual side of this game, the developers couldn't find anything more interesting for you to do than crash into things, which seems to constitute the bulk of the gameplay. Also, despite what your sponsor meter reads, you never really get a sense of speed playing *Wreckless*, something I feel to be absolutely necessary in making a great racing game. My advice is: Borrow *Wreckless*, invite your friends over and impress them for a half an hour, then return it and go back to beating Halo for the millionth time.

MATT - 7.5

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION ■ **DEVELOPER** BUNKASHA PUBLISHING ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 5



By the time a mission comes to a close, a good portion of the city will be demolished.



Save your best runs and replay them for friends.

"...playing  
 Wreckless is  
 much like  
 watching a  
 fireworks  
 show."



Along with a tank, players can unlock a monster truck.



The explosions are accompanied by heat trails, particle effects, and billowing banks of fire.

The real-time car damage shows just how talented a driver you are.



"RalliSport is a well-balanced racer that throttles on the fun."

XBOX

# RALLISPORT CHALLENGE

## THE MICHELIN MAN CAN

**W**hy do you mock me, Michelin Man, with your heavy thumbs up and constant smile? As I was making the rounds of RalliSport's courses, my concentration would be periodically broken by the rolund tire mascot. His signs surrounded the tracks, warning me that going straight wasn't an option. Unfortunately, my attention would be thrown off by his strange smile, and I'd soon find my car with a cracked windshield, fendering on two wheels. Ah, but it was all good.

I'm curious why Microsoft chose a niche racing genre like rally racing instead of something more popular and Gran Turismo 3-like, but overall I'm not complaining. Similar to Project Gotham Racing, tracks are often mere snippets of larger courses—some of which don't even contain cars to race against. Interestingly, however, this is true to rally rules where you often race against time rather than physical opponents. Still, you can compete against a field of three other cars at all times in the Single Race mode that features the same tracks. Between the Rally, Ice Racing, Hill Climb, and Rallycross events, there is plenty of terrain to cover. Sim fans will miss being able to tweak their cars with customizable parts, but RalliSport does a good job of having the cars property tuned to increase your learning curve as you progress. For example, you can drive some newly

unlocked car that has a ton of horsepower, but you handle and harness its torque through the turns?

This is where RalliSport hooked me. Some of the tracks may have been short, but I felt forward to squeezing every tenth of a second out of their corners and perfecting the movements of my car. I guess the bite-sized chunks that the game comes in seemed like stages to be conquered every step of the way, and not just a collection of tracks and cars. Similar to GT 3, I felt compelled to perfect my times on the smaller groupings of jaunts in preparation for the larger cups, which were comprised of the tracks I just finished.

There is room for improvement for RalliSport. With the Xbox as its system, I ask questions like "Why not a larger field of cars?" and "How come the weather and time of day isn't truly variable?" Opponents' AI could be improved also, as it sometimes causes the cars to take some strange routes—especially as they crash into each other at the start of races. Regardless, RalliSport is visually impressive, and is a well-balanced racer that throttles on the fun. Oh yeah, one more thing. I'm fluffed that for all his invaluable insight, my trusty, astute co-driver didn't point out that Michelin Man in the twists of the Vista Peak Summit's track that was waiting to throw me off the course. Once again, I guess I was just too sucked in to notice. —KATO

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** MICROSOFT ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 7



THE BOTTOM LINE

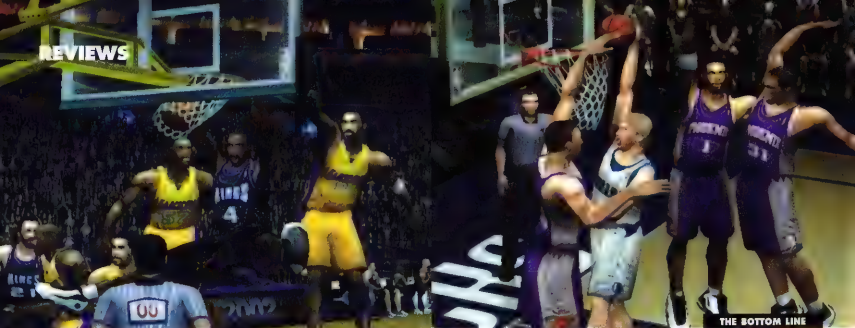
8

- **Concept:** Microsoft's second racer is almost as specialized as the first, but solid nonetheless
- **Graphics:** Wonderful textures, of course, and damage is a nice touch
- **Sound:** Who needs XM when you've got wind shear, stressed engines, and the Earth under your "tyres"
- **Playability:** Managing your slides is still key, but I used the brakes a little less than normal
- **Entertainment:** Neither sim-heavy nor arcade-stupefied, the game's a will-you-and-play title that will demand your skill and respect
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

### SECOND OPINION

How's this for a gamer's ACT quest: American football is too naggy as NASCAR Thunder 2002 is to what? A) A Bob Dylan concert B) A handful of Pop Secret Ultra Butter popcorn C) RalliSport Challenge D) A matinee E) All of the above. The correct answer (as it usually is) is choice "C". I could have really gotten into this game if I knew a lot about the subject in general, but gameplay wise, I was happy playing it for a solid hour, then putting it down. The environments look unbelievable and the car models are awesome, but just being able to unlock cars and tracks didn't quite hook me. I wanted to be able to play around with my ride's technical specs, or even my crew. Instead I was left with a terrific-looking game that I would probably rent on a Tuesday night. It would behoove you to do likewise.

KRISTIAN — 7.5



XBOX

# NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2002

## A TRIP IN THE DUNK TANK

“...this is a  
rookie

with solid  
fundamentals.”

I know my scoring for basketball games is really cluttered around the 8 range, but much like both conferences this year, it really is a tight race. NBA Inside Drive does well as a newcomer. It's got the goods to compete with Live 2002, but plays totally different.

Inside Drive is a lot like an enthusiastic NBA rookie. It has a very quick pace, and fast breaks are the order of the day. It's also a streaky shooter. It seems I was either whupping up on the computer with a big run or it was schooling me, with very little middle ground. This will have you talking mad smack to the AI, but also cursing the cheap tactics it uses to gain the advantage, which are most obvious when it comes to notching steals. This only serves to make the suspect passing more aggravating, as there are far too many lay lobbs to the paint. Most other gameplay functions work well, and I still think the Xbox controller is tailor-made for hoops. Threes are tough to make, but leasers, fade-aways, and other shots were realistic. I like the moves big men do in the post, though they're not the most accurate out there. You'll also be able to play some good defense, but it won't come easy. Isn't that what makes it fun, though?

High Voltage went out of its way to accentuate both the deking and the arenas, neither of which ended up impressing

me much. At first, I thought the ballhandling would rival NBA Street because of all the fancy moves cited in the manual, but they didn't live up to their billing. As for the courts, who cares? It's what happens on the court that matters, not being able to see deep into the confines of Gund Arena.

Inside Drive's graphics are a mixed bag. It does have some of the best looking uniforms, complete with mesh holes and wrinkles. The player models themselves, though, just look kind of awkward. I was more impressed with the audio, which features Sir Mix-A-Lot dropping rhymes in the theme song. The commentary is choppy at times, but Marques Johnson kicks some keister on color, including a very well-placed reference to the cult classic flick, The Warriors.

Franchise mode and many other options (create-a-player, street ball, etc.) are absent, and Season mode has problems; most specifically with trading (no two-for-one trades, and many teams just won't deal). If these things had been in place, I might be heralding this game as among the best. Still, this is a rookie with solid fundamentals. I give an emphatic nod to the veteran NBA 2K2 on Xbox—or any system—but inside Drive is definitely a player I'll keep my eye on. —JUSTIN

THE BOTTOM LINE

**E** 8.25

- **Concept:** A first-party ball franchise on Xbox is born
- **Graphics:** The stadiums and impressive jersey wrinkling were great, but something isn't right about the player faces
- **Sound:** Entertaining commentary, especially with Marques Johnson on color, but it's a little choppy
- **Playability:** Admirable control here, save for some sub-par passing
- **Entertainment:** Inside Drive is a decent basketball title. Unfortunately, the best hoops arena (NBA 2K2) is also on Xbox
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

### SECOND OPINION

The competition within the sports market has escalated into a full-on battle. Defying the odds of success, Microsoft decided to enter the fray as an expansion team. Usually it takes years to establish a franchise, but for the second time running, Microsoft has achieved this nearly impossible goal on the first try. NFL Fever was rock solid, and NBA Inside Drive is on par with a lot of basketball titles. It may not have a Franchise mode, create-a-player, or a bevy of options to dicker with, yet the gameplay is exceptional and towers over Live and Courtside. I especially liked how aggressive the computer was. Its teams never give up. NBA 2K2 is the best basketball game of the year, and Inside Drive has a ways to go to catch it, but come next season, I can easily see these two titles knocking each other senseless in the paint. Basketball fanatics should check it out.

REINER — 8.5





## TRIPLE PLAY 2002

- **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS
- **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS
- **RELEASE** MARCH 19



Well, it was bound to happen at some point — EA has finally released a professional sports title that makes cleaning out the inside of a honeywagon sound fun. Not only is this year's Triple Play terrible

when it comes to gameplay, but it's paired Bob Costas (the godfather of baseball commentary) up with some joker who says "that guy looked like a gazelle!" Do yourself a favor and steer clear of this stinker. — **KRISTIAN**

**E 4**

## TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

- **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS
- **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION
- **RELEASE** MARCH 5



They say that the early bird gets the worm, but sometimes it's better to wait. To make the five-month-late release of Tony Hawk 3 on Xbox enticing to everyone, even those of you who already played the

game on the PlayStation 2 and GameCube, Neversoft has included a handful of interesting extras not featured in any other version. By playing Career mode, players can unlock a new level, which is amazing in multiplayer, and one of the most diverse environments in the game; as well as a brand-new character, which I found to be cheesy and unneeded. Even better yet are the new link capabilities, allowing four Xboxes to be connected for intense head-to-head action. The gameplay is as silky smooth as ever before — which is a feat in itself, considering how clunky the Xbox controller can be, and how obscure the physics were in Tony 2x. If you haven't had the privilege of putting this game through its paces yet, run out and buy it today! — **REINER**

**T 9.75**



## KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002

- **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS
- **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS
- **RELEASE** MARCH 5

Yes! Knockout Kings for the Xbox shows a marked improvement over the PlayStation 2 version, with buffed-up character models, faster action, and more responsive analog-stick control. Everything else, from the cool fighter-create functions to the awesome custom tournaments, remains the same. This game flat-out rules, and any fighting fan owes it to himself to step into the ring with Knockout Kings. Sorry PS2 owners, but I have to score this round for Xbox.

— **MATT**

**T 8.75**

## CIRCUS MAXIMUS

- **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING/ACTION
- **PUBLISHER** ENCORE SOFTWARE
- **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 26



For chariot racing fans, especially those who don't die a thousand years ago, this is the game you've been waiting for. However, I think fans of traditional vehicular combat games like Twisted Metal and

Road Rash will want to pass on Circus Maximus. Although it looks nice, this game has a number of problems; the fact that chariots are really slow and tip over very easily is the most glaring. It's fun in multiplayer, when you can team up with a buddy, but trying to control both the direction of your chariot and your gladiator at the same time in single-player gets a bit distracting. — **MATT**

**T 6**



## ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2003

- **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS
- **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION
- **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 26

All hail the king of baseball games for the 2003 season. This title has anything and everything a fan of this sport could ever wish to see in a video version of their beloved pastime. The hitting has good pace, the graphics are gorgeous, and the fielding is on par. Aside from the well-balanced gameplay, ASB's most notable improvement is the implementation of a system which allows you to purchase collectible cards with the points you've accrued throughout a game by executing good plays. Talk about adding to replay value! — **KRISTIAN**

**E 9**

## ESPN WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING 2002

- **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS
- **PUBLISHER** KONAMI
- **RELEASE** JANUARY 15



This series is still coming along, but I will give kudos to it for presenting quite an impressive career mode. It's got lit passes, video filming, and even tracks you right down to awarding attribute points

after every run. Unfortunately, I take issue with the game play. You have to make sure to input your spins very early. This means that you can't make those minor corrections that can be so crucial to landing tricks. Also, similar to SSX, you can't reset yourself once you crouch to jump — you're locked in. With a frontend this good, all ESPN needs is a few refinements to bust this franchise out. — **KATO**

**E 6.75**



XBOX

## NEW LEGENDS

YOU'RE PULLING MY LEG-END

**N**ot many games feature a feudal Chinese warrior shooting a cannon at 72era aircraft. However, this is about where the innovation for New Legends stops. It's your run-of-the-mill hack 'n slash, but given the fact that most Xbox owners are probably wearing out their Halo discs, it'll most likely be welcomed by many.

The main gimmick here is weapons. There are countless melee and ranged weapons which you can mix and match to your specifications. Split a pair of claws, or do the blunt/slice combo of club and sword. Shotguns can be thrown in for that extra oomph, too. Each hand has its own button, and you can mash your way to combos galore. Another button parries to ward off enemy strikes. At times, you'll be brawling amidst a massive sky or tackling a dozen foes all by your lonesome.

The camera is smooth in open areas, but things get ugly indoors. The left analog controls its direction and height, and the right shoulder button zips it back behind your shoulder. This same paradox occurs with the graphics and story, mixing good and bad points. When I was turned into New Legends, I enjoyed myself. When I died, though, there wasn't a fire-burn'g inside me to aveng'e protagonist Sun So's death. I hate to say it, but the dearth of respectable titles on Xbox since the launch means this mediocre title is probably one of your best bets. — **JUSTIN**

THE BOTTOM LINE

**T 7**

- **Concept:** Feudal Asia and modern technology clash in action/adventure.
- **Graphics:** Gloomy particle effects and cloudy textures pretty much cancel each other out.
- **Sound:** Good effects and speech mean you're in the mood for the savage.
- **Playability:** Dullon mashing with a variety of weapons.
- **Entertainment:** A reasonably good time on the Xbox. New Legends does't wow in any way, but still fares on all cylinders.
- **Replay Value:** Moderate.

## SECOND OPINION

If I worked at a retail store, I'd place New Legends right next to Gamma Omicron. The catch is, I'd have a huge animated arrow pointing toward Omnicron that says, "Don't be a fool...buy this hack 'n slash instead." I checked out the cheesy plot, riddled with laughter over the huge game mechanics, and walked away with a tear in my eye. Modularity at its finest!

**REINER — 6.5**

■ **STYLE** 1 PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** THQ  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** INFINITE MIND ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 19



"C&C: Renegade is basically a run-of-the-mill FPS experi-  
ence..."



The Obesisk ahead has been disabled, but it's nice to have a tank and infantry support just in case.



The requisite sniper headshot shot.



You're able to shift your view to third person whenever you feel the need.

PC

## COMMAND & CONQUER: RENEGADE

A VEGEMITE SANDWICH

**Y**ou have to admit that this is a great idea for a game. Take one of the most popular RTS titles to ever hit the market, then throw players smack-dab in the middle of the action with a well-done first-person engine. Everyone who has played C&C (or any RTS for that matter) has wanted to lead their troops from the ground, so it would stand to reason that Westwood would appease its audience's wishes — as it has a tendency to do.

C&C: Renegade is basically a run-of-the-mill FPS experience that stays amazingly true to its source material. A gargantuan number of units and structures from the RTS series make appearances in Renegade, and you can manipulate most of them in one way or another. Each enemy structure has a central control console that you'll need to destroy to take the building out of use. For example, destroying the console in the Hand of NOD will drastically reduce the number of foot soldiers you'll have to fight. These references, and the ability to commander assorted GDI vehicles (the Mammoth Tanks are awesome) really gives you the sense that you're in a C&C war zone.

Graphically, Renegade has a bit of catching up to do when it comes to competing with some of its contemporaries.

True, the environments are enormous, but their size seems to come at the expense of the general quality of your surroundings. Most characters and buildings end up looking rather blocky upon close, or even medium range inspection, and textures inside structures can look thrown-on from time to time. But (and this is a big but), as I mentioned before, the levels are gigantic. I was able to run around a level for half an hour, never experiencing any loading, and never seeing the same thing twice. That in itself is quite impressive. Couple that with a solid selection of weapons, and you've got a good game with a great premise.

Unfortunately, as the novelty of the C&C setting begins to dissolve, you're left with a decent FPS that quickly becomes as easy to put down as it was to pick up. The controls and menu systems are nice, but the overall quality of the experience is hampered by the fact that most of what Renegade does has been done better elsewhere. I guess I was hoping for a little bit more from this game, but with all things said and done, the satisfaction of playing a well-built first-person shooter was there when I turned it off. It's worth investing in if you're a C&C freak, but otherwise I'd say there are bigger fish to fry out there. —**KRISTIAN**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 16-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** WESTWOOD STUDIOS  
■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 26



You'll find people down in a number of different environments.



Peering over at people's heads is this character's way of saying, "I said 'no'."

THE BOTTOM LINE



8.25

- **Concept:** Get a ground-level take on what it's like to run around one of those chaotic C&C battlefields.
- **Graphics:** Decent graphics accent the absolutely enormous environments.
- **Sound:** There are some nice nocotch effects and a bunch of voice-overs, but everything seems pretty status-quo in this department.
- **Playability:** Any fan of this genre will be able to skip the tutorial and jump right into the game.
- **Entertainment:** Renegade is a good time, but it probably won't dominate your life.
- **Replay Value:** High.

### SECOND OPINION

There are a couple of ways you can look at *Command & Conquer: Renegade*. Standing alone as a first-person shooter, it's pretty much middle-of-the-road with the nice feature of being able to drive all the various vehicles included in the game. On the other hand, you can look at *Renegade* as a way to expand the *Command & Conquer* experience and take us S.A.M. sites or the Hand of NOD up close and personal. If you are like me, and have played every *Command & Conquer* release, blasting through *Renegade's* levels is a great new way to enjoy the franchise. If you are just a first-person shooter fan, *Renegade* doesn't live up to the *Allied Assaults*, *Unraids*, and *Wolfenstein* of the world.

ANDY - 8.5



PC

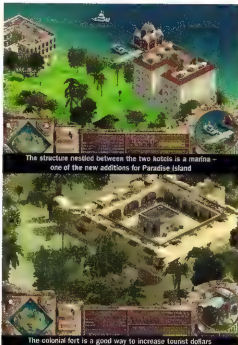
# TROPICO: PARADISE ISLAND

A COMMIE'S COMMUNE

**A**ny yanqui capitalist should feel right at home with Paradise Island, because it's basically a clone of the first Tropic offering. The add-ons are too few to be really interesting, and I found they don't really tip the scales one way or the other when it comes to increasing this game's appeal.

Let's put that into perspective a little bit, though. Tropic itself is a killer-app. It has a hilarious premise that has never been done this well before, and graphics that put a lot of big-budget PC titles to shame. Paradise Island does a good job of building on its strengths — there are more structures, more edicts, different ways to control your population, and a much-needed increase in the time it takes for your workers to finish a building you've slated for construction. Certainly, this is all very nice, but it does little to make me want to invest a lot of time in this game all over again.

While I was happy with the updates that were available, I was looking for a little more detail in this version. As it stands, however, Paradise Island delivers what I think it wanted to: a good-looking expansion of a game that had a lot of good instincts to begin with. —KRISTIAN



The structure nestled between the two hotels is a marina — one of the new additions for Paradise Island

The colonial tent is a good way to increase tourist dollars



THE BOTTOM LINE  
T 7.5

- **Concept:** More ways to put down your citizens means more fun!
- **Graphics:** The same as before — which is pretty damn good
- **Sound:** The great music soundtrack has been expanded for this release, giving players over two hours of different tracks
- **Playability:** This is an expansion that requires the origins to play — you're not going to play this if you haven't before, and there aren't any surprises
- **Entertainment:** It's fun, but there hasn't been much improvement over the original
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

## SECOND OPINION

You probably wouldn't want a flustered president with Tourette's Syndrome, but that unlikely marriage is just the sort of juggling act you'll have to perform in this 3Dc. Paradise Island's expanded tourist services give you more to worry about — as if giving to your peasants with one hand and taking with the other weren't enough already. Then again, isn't that the name of the expansion game — more? Although Paradise Island solves some problems and contains some nice additions — like faster building construction, more edicts and an army base — small sticking points remain. One: Cruel dictator or not, I like to keep a tight infrastructure of roads (à la Sim City) for everyone, but it didn't seem to help productivity at all. Still, you wouldn't want to change Tropic's great gameplay too much, because that would surely make a lot of 3Dc Presidents quite mad.

KATO - 8



# STAR TREK: BRIDGE COMMANDER

HE'S NOT HEAVY, HE'S MY FIRST OFFICER

**D**eveloped by the same company that made the highly popular and incredibly awesome X-Wing and TIE Fighter series, Star Trek fans should be foaming at the pants to get their chubby little fingers around this game. There are a ton of intricate options and tactical scenarios, as well as some high-quality cameo appearances by Patrick Stewart and Brent Spiner. Couple this with a decent plot, good-looking graphics, and nice gameplay, and you're staring straight down the gullet of a Trekker's dream come true.

However, the average gamer may be unable to overlook some of Bridge Commander's rather glaring problems. The first, and in my mind most annoying aspect (or lack thereof) is the absence of a save-on-demand feature. Instead, the game will only save between missions, forcing you to repeat the same busywork mission crop time after time until you get to the part that's giving you problems. I also got the feeling that my ship was more in control of me than I was of it — which means I had to rely on AI piloting. That might be fine in docking situations, but it stinks in combat. Trekkies: Buy. The Rest of Us: Look before you leap. —KRISTIAN

THE BOTTOM LINE  
E 7

- **Concept:** Pretend you're on the bridge of a ship, but really this game is an exercise in micro-management
- **Graphics:** Nice models and environments deliver the desired effect
- **Sound:** A lot of big-time voice talent has been shunted into this one
- **Playability:** Getting the lay of the land will take you a while, but if you're a fan you won't mind
- **Entertainment:** This game doesn't do a lot to reach out to non-Trekkers, but for those in the fold, Bridge Commander will delight
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

## SECOND OPINION

Although shallow in gameplay, Bridge Commander's production qualities are commendable and something that Star Trek fans can really sink their teeth into. The voiceovers are excellent and the ordering system is easy to manipulate, but complex strategies never really come into play.

REINER - 6.5

■ **STYLE** | PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** BREAKAWAY GAMES ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 7

■ **STYLE** | TO B PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION ■ **DEVELOPER** TOTALITY GAMES ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 26





**"Super Mario World represented the best of gaming a decade ago, and it has only become better with age."**

GAME BOY ADVANCE

## SUPER MARIO WORLD: SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2

### MARIO'S CAPE CHRONICLES

**T**here are few games I like or have played more than Super Mario World. It's almost an annual occurrence to go through it on my SNES and beat every level imaginable. Thus, I was extra critical of this handheld port; which makes me even more enamored with how it turned out. Super Mario World represented the best of gaming a decade ago, and it has only become better with age.

This time around, Luigi plays a larger role in things, as he and Mario can be swapped at any time in the overworld. He's got a more fluttery, Mario 2-style jump, and runs slightly slower than his brother. Since his outfit matches Yoshi's green, the dinosaur companion will not immediately swallow non-Koopa enemies; instead, you can spit them out to defeat other foes. Yoshi has a few differences as well, and you'll see non-green species showing up with more frequency than in the original.

Visually and sonically, I can't fault this version. The graphics, which are extremely bright and colorful, show up surprisingly crisp on the GBA screen. The speech is a nice touch, and most of the music is just as good. I didn't miss the extra buttons of the SNES controller, except for those times when I had to either quickly dismount Yoshi or die. I was still doing swift Koopa-popping tactics like the good 'ol days. Flying seemed a tad different, but since you have to collect all five of each stage's Dinosaur Coins, you won't be

saiking over levels as much anyway. This really extends the gameplay experience, and – to a certain extent – the difficulty. If you're unfamiliar with this game, the amount of variety is mind-boggling. Mario has more tricks than ever before (or ever since), and Yoshi adds a whole new gameplay element to the series. The Mario brothers find themselves underwater, in dungeons, floating above endless chasms, and facing more enemies than a plumbly of go-piers. The way the levels are laid out gives you plenty of choice in which order to tackle them, rather than platforming days of old when you were forced to hit them in succession.

Record keeping is a clever addition, especially for someone as stat-driven as I am. You can see how long it took to save Peach, and get head-to-head numbers on which character you've beaten the most levels with. You can save at basically any point, and this time it keeps track of your lives and power-up situation. No more loading up a game and being stuck with a mere five lives and small status. The multiplayer is the same from the first Mario Advance, which means you can play against people using either title.

I know that Andy, as well as many of you, are screaming for a new GBA Mario. I, for one, can keep beating all 96 of Mario World's stages till the cows come home, and am perfectly happy wating. Nintendo has another must-have cart on its hands. — **JUSTIN**



THE BOTTOM LINE

**E**  
ESRB  
**9.5**  
IGN

■ **Concept:** Shrink and shine a SNES legend to portable size

■ **Graphics:** Amazingly faithful to the original, with great animation, scrolling backgrounds, and vivid colors

■ **Sound:** A tad tinier than on the console, but with new voices adding to its value

■ **Playability:** Mario World's play is flawless. What little variation there is in this version is easily grasped

■ **Entertainment:** The addition of stats and minor gameplay enhancements makes Super Mario World even better, and a perfect handheld game

■ **Play Value:** High

### SECOND OPINION

I am disappointed that Nintendo hasn't brought out a new Mario adventure for the Game Boy Advance, but it is hard to complain when you get great re-releases like Super Mario World. I never would have guessed that I would be able to play a near-perfect version of this Super NES classic on a handheld system back when it first saw the light of day in 1991. But improved with better voice-overs and the ability to play as Luigi? Impossible! Lucky for gamers everywhere, it's a reality and well worth a purchase. It's easy to see and play on the Game Boy Advance, and will have you playing and re-playing for years to come.

**ANDY — 9.25**



■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** NINTENDO ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 11





GAME BOY ADVANCE

# BREATH OF FIRE II

A TIMELESS CLASSIC

**T**he Breath of Fire series has never received the attention it truly deserves. With Final Fantasy basking in the spotlight year after year, these finely crafted adventures have been thrown aside and labeled as "the next best thing." If you didn't splash for these games back in the day, I strongly recommend you invest in the handheld versions.

The first entry in the series is the perfect primer, but quickly shows its shortcomings when stacked up against the follow-up, Breath of Fire II. Like a line-wire, this superb title withstands the test of time and becomes all the more classic with each year that it ages.

Outside of the incredibly fluid combat animations and inventive battle system, the thing that hooked me the most was the dedication to constantly diversifying the quest. Menigamis run rampant throughout every inch of this game, whether it be visiting a circus, or draining your GBA batteries within a fishing hole. Equally as notable, the plot is continually shifting and transforming, which of course creates an exciting and unpredictable story. To modernize the quest, if you will, Capcom added a new feature to the field map, touched up the facial graphics, and implemented a quick save feature. From the gameplay and balancing, to the visual content and story, you really couldn't ask for much more from a 16-bit RPG. —REINER

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERETT

**E** 8.75

- **Concept:** A flawless conversion of the 1996 Super Nintendo game with a new dash maneuver, touched-up facial graphics, Link Cable item trading, and a quick save function.
- **Graphics:** Even by today's standards, the battle animations and character sprites are simply breathtaking.
- **Sound:** The best best thing to Final Fantasy.
- **Playability:** Complex combat techniques, innovative character usage, and a well-balanced difficulty curve.
- **Entertainment:** A lengthy quest with amusing dialogue, shocking story twists, and finely polished gameplay.
- **Replay Value:** Low.

**SECOND OPINION**

So far, Game Boy Advance is kicking the crap out of GameCube and Xbox in terms of role-playing games. I was very into the first Breath of Fire on GBA, and now BoF II provides even more to be impressed with. The quest is longer, it looks better, and it's just a damn fine game. If you've already played Golden Sun, make this your next target. (Viva traditional RPG!)

**JUSTIN — 8.5**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM ■ **DEVELOPER** CAPCOM ■ **RELEASE** APRIL 13



THE BOTTOM LINE

TEAM

**T** 8

GAME BOY ADVANCE

# TACTICS OGRE: THE KNIGHT OF LODIS

WE FIGHT HERE!!!

**H**ere's a perfect example of a niche game. Those of you who have attention-deficit problems or severe sugar ingestion issues will not like Tactics Ogre. As a strategy/RPG, there's a lot of thought and well, strategy, that goes into each and every battle. Turn-based titles are a difficult thing to get used to if your background is in higher-octane releases. However, for those who can sit and calmly play a game (or read a book not related to school) for more than five minutes without some kind of explosion happening on or off the screen, you may want to pop in TO when you have a few minutes to kill.

The plot itself is rather involved, having to do with a daughter of some Duke who believes that her Uncle is responsible for dear-old dad's untimely death 15 years ago and, to tell you the truth, I couldn't really tell you what else was happening. I skipped through A LOT of text to get to the outfitting and fighting portions of the game. At first the story was interesting, but after one seemingly endless plot exposition, I decided I had heard enough. Less talking, more fighting is a mantra TO could have done well by, but when there is fighting, it's pulled off in near-flawless fashion. Tons of power-ups and special abilities await your discovery, as well as a host of customizable features for each of your characters. This title may become your best friend on a long trip, just don't go into it expecting to play Ker-Smasho 2003. —KRISTIAN

- **Concept:** This is a turn-based strategy in its purest form.
- **Graphics:** You will definitely get the feeling that you're playing an SNES game when you pop this one in.
- **Sound:** Not bad at all, considering the size of the speaker this game has to work with.
- **Playability:** There is a bit of a learning curve for those who are unfamiliar with this genre.
- **Entertainment:** You'll either love it or leave it.
- **Replay Value:** Low.

**SECOND OPINION**

The deviant broken record says: Game Boy Advance has another shining achievement in role-playing. This time, it's a strategy/RPG that had my heart warm. I admit I haven't played Advance Wars yet (yes, I feel bad about it), but I've saved time on many role-players throughout gaming history — and Tactics Ogre is extremely splendid. The story is a winner, and I got sick of even reading the text; but the battles themselves are a thing of beauty. Surpassing the depth of most console strategy/RPGs (PS-X's Hothgami comes to mind), Knight of Lodis resembles good battling with useful, spitty emblems. These pop up for various reasons, and you never know when one will boost your character. Hidden treats are also scattered throughout the environments. It was sweet to pit my own allies against each other in training sessions, especially since they would gain experience. Tactics Ogre rocks the GBA party that rocks my body.

**JUSTIN — 8.75**



■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER STRATEGY/RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** ATLUS SOFTWARE ■ **DEVELOPER** QUEST ■ **RELEASE** APRIL 15



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## DARK ARENA

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** MAJESCO  
 ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY 22



Flashbacks may be a common occurrence for those who delved into the counter-culture revolution of the late sixties and early seventies, but I never would have

suspected playing a GBA game would bring one on. Dark Arena is almost a carbon copy of Doom — the only major differences are the characters, the plot and the weapons. That's not necessarily a bad thing, what was fun then is definitely fun now, but Dark Arena seems to easily fall into the clutches of mediocrity. The multiplayer mode is nice, though. — **KRISTIAN**

**1** **7**

## SALT LAKE 2002

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** 1001 SOFT  
 ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY 31



I'd avoid this game faster than doing the skeleton nude. The modes are no fun — and neither is the gameplay. No button mashing is a good thing, but in this case it turns out to be just boring. The isometric view on the downhill and slalom events is a nono, and all the other events are simply not engaging. Except, of course, the curling segment — which still could use some work. And let me say what we're all really thinking here: Where's the biathlon? 'Nuff said. — **KATO**

**E** **5**

## MONSTER JAM: MAXIMUM DESTRUCTION

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** 1001 SOFT  
 ■ **RELEASE** APRIL 1



Everyone who's been waiting with bated breath for a GBA monster truck game should run out and buy this now. Okay, now that we've got those guys out of the room, let's talk facts about Monster Jam. Sure, it's a relatively decent little game, and its top-down view and power-up system did give me a brief twinge of nostalgia for R/C Pro Am. However, there really isn't enough game here to justify a purchase. — **MATT**

**E** **6**

## MOTOCROSS MANIACS ADVANCE

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** KODAK  
 ■ **RELEASE** APRIL 1



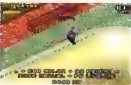
An amalgamation of California Games, Uniracers and Excitebike; Motocross Maniacs Advance on the GBA is in a class all its own.

Instead of using Mode-7, it's a side-scroller. The courses are vast and power-up filled, and doing loops and tricks is very satisfying. Hit the nitro, watch your gas tank, and plow through obstacles. Maniacs will keep you happy and occupied on the go, even if some of the characters and modes are hokey. — **JUSTIN**

**E** **8.25**

## TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 5



As expected, this sequel has been retrofitted with all of the innovations included in the console versions. Along with smoother animations, detailed skater models, and pedestrians roaming the levels, players can now perform the ultimate Revert trick. Once again, however, exploration is overly frustrating. This, of course, stems from the bothersome isometric camera view and larger level sizes. Memorizing the layout of the terrain is the only way to truly succeed. Thankfully, though, the gameplay is thoroughly engaging and reason enough to spend time with this finely polished release. — **REINER**

**1** **9**



## SONIC ADVANCE

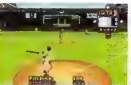
■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA  
 ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 3

Sega has struggled in bringing its blue icon to the three-dimensional world of the next-generation systems; Sonic Advance might be a good argument for the fact that the Sonic franchise belongs in 2D. This all-new GBA adventure is — amazingly! — graphically superior to any of Sonic's Genesis adventures, and adds a ton of replay value with no less than four playable characters (Sonic, Tails, Knuckles, and Amy) who each have their own unique moves and abilities. To sweeten the pot even further, you can link two GBAs together for multiplayer, and even grow Chaos to import into the GameCube for use in Sonic Adventure 2 Battle. It's too bad the single-player mode is a bit short, or this would have been darn near perfect. — **MATT**

**E** **8.5**

## HIGH HEAT MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL 2003

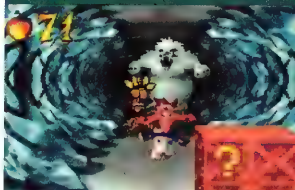
■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** 2DC  
 ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 21



As far as handheld baseball games go, this one is probably the best I've seen. There are a number of different modes to explore, accurate player statistics

and some nice animations. However, when it comes down to actual gameplay, things are a little lacking. Let's put it this way — if I'm able to steal second base nine times out of ten, something isn't quite right. If you're after more of a baseball simulation than a baseball simulation, though, this one is right up your alley. — **KRISTIAN**

**E** **7.25**



GAME BOY ADVANCE

## CRASH BANDICOOT: THE HUGE ADVENTURE

BIG THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES.

Vicious Visions' enlargement wit' Crash Bandicoot is the perfect marriage of game and developer. As if the polygonal character models in Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 and 3 weren't enough, Vicious has once again pushed the GBA hardware to the limit and has completely blown the doors off of what we can expect from this handheld in the future. The technological achievements range from gigantic pre-rendered creatures with silky smooth animation, to incredibly fluid scrolling backdrops. To top it all off, Crash is a highly detailed polygonal model.

A marvel to the eyes, Vicious has also done its homework and incorporated all of the gameplay intricacies embedded within the 32-bit Crash Bandicoot trilogy. From the general character movement to the collision fields and enemy AI, the play mechanics are essentially perfect. While this title glisters like no other, it would appear that a price had to be paid for Vicious to push the envelope. The levels, which look fantastic, are incredibly short. I'd even go as far to say that if you link, you'll miss a third of the game.

Even with this unfortunate drawback, Crash's first handheld effort is nothing short of a tour de force. It may not be the lengthiest of adventures, but it does prove to be *unfathomable*. — **REINER**

THE BOTTOM LINE  
**E** **8.5**

- **Concept:** A flashback to Crash's simpler side-scrolling days
- **Graphics:** The pre-rendered character models look fantastic and move just as fluidly as the polygonal 32-bit counterparts. The environments are colorful, yet lack animated objects
- **Sound:** A tad funny, but as its fruits as it's always peep!
- **Playability:** The play mechanics are simple, use-friendly and complex.
- **Entertainment:** The levels are incredibly short, but the challenge is definitely in place.
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

## SECOND OPINION

My stars, what have we here? A top-quality action/platform game for GBA that's NOT made by Nintendo — that's what. While Mario has been busy reliving his SNES glory days as of late, Vicious Visions proves that the GBA hardware can come close to emulating a 32-bit classic. All in all, it's pretty damned impressive, and is better than the recent Crash games for PS2.

**MATT — 8.5**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** VICarious VISIONS  
 ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 26



# 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

Launched Based Upon NPD Data For February 2002 Based On Units Sold

RANK	NO.	GAME	SYSTEM	SCORE	RELEASE DATE	PRICE POINT
1	1	<b>Grand Theft Auto III</b>	PS2	9.5	1-Oct	\$51
<p>We knew this game was here to stay – and we were right (of course). For the second month running, GTA III is in sole possession of the top spot on the sales charts. There's just no denying that gamers are turning up by the boatload to experience everything this incredible game has to offer. Will it hold on for a third month running? We'll all find out next issue.</p>						
2	N/A	<b>State of Emergency</b>	PS2	8	1-Feb	\$50
<p>It seems that an intriguing premise can be a huge catalyst to increased sales figures. State of Emergency may not be the most original game, but we'll be doggone if it isn't a great way to blow off some steam. Coming out of nowhere to show up at the number two spot is an impressive feat – but we're not sure if SoE has the staying power to keep this position. It certainly has the moxie, though.</p>						
3	N/A	<b>Super Mario Advance 2</b>	GBA	9.5	1-Feb	\$27
<p>It's nearly impossible to have a Top 5 without having to include the name "Mario" in some way. Gamers have made it abundantly clear that they just can't get enough of this portly plumber and his cohorts. The number three spot is solid, but expect to see this one move up as more units hit the shelves.</p>						
4	N/A	<b>WWF Raw</b>	Xbox	6.5	1-Feb	\$50
<p>Finally, all of you wrestling fans have something to cheer about. There has been a bit of a drought in decent titles for this popular pastime, but that all comes to an end right here. Expect the unexpected with this blockbuster title – we were doubtful it would make it up the list this far, but it turns out we didn't smell what THQ was cookin'.</p>						
5	N/A	<b>Sonic Advance</b>	GBA	8.5	1-Feb	\$36
<p>Your favorite blue hedgehog is currently undergoing a resurrection of sorts on a many of the world's GBA screens. He does all of the same crazy platforming you remember from other titles, but now you've got Chao to deal with! They're so cute we just want to poke ourselves in the eye! Plus you've got that whole GBA/GameCube connection to explore...Enjoy!</p>						

RANK	NO.	GAME	SYSTEM	SCORE	RELEASE DATE	PRICE POINT
6	2	<b>Final Fantasy X</b>	PS2	9.75	1-Dec	\$51
7	N/A	<b>Sonic Adventure 2 Battle</b>	GC	7.5	1-Feb	\$50
8	N/A	<b>Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions</b>	Xbox	7	1-Feb	\$52
9	12	<b>Max Payne</b>	PS2	7.75	1-Dec	\$51
10	N/A	<b>NBA 2K2</b>	PS2	8.75	1-Jan	\$51
11	5	<b>Madden NFL 2002</b>	PS2	9.75	1-Aug	\$48
12	8	<b>Halo</b>	Xbox	9.5	1-Nov	\$50
13	N/A	<b>Maximo: Ghosts to Glory</b>	PS2	9	1-Feb	\$51
14	4	<b>Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty</b>	PS2	10	Nov-01	\$50
15	15	<b>Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec</b>	PS2	9	1-Jul	\$50
16	N/A	<b>Max Payne</b>	Xbox	9	1-Dec	\$51
17	17	<b>NBA Live 2002</b>	PS2	8.5	1-Nov	\$50
18	9	<b>James Bond 007 In...Agent Under Fire</b>	PS2	9.25	1-Oct	\$45
19	N/A	<b>NBA Inside Drive 2002</b>	Xbox	8.25	1-Jan	\$50
20	N/A	<b>NFL Blitz 2002</b>	PS2	5	Feb-02	\$51

Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment Service • NPD Entertainment Intelligence (NPD-EI) 0516-825-2883

## JAPAN TOP 10

Based On Units Sold

RANK	NO.	GAME	SYSTEM
1	1	<b>Gran Turismo Concept 2001 Tokyo</b>	PS2
2	2	<b>Mobile Suit Gundam: Federation Vs. Zeon</b>	PS2
3	N/A	<b>Momotarou Densetsu X</b>	PS2
4	3	<b>World Soccer Winning Eleven 5 Final Edition</b>	PS2
5	6	<b>Super Smash Bros. DX</b>	GC
6	9	<b>Animal Forest</b>	GC
7	5	<b>Dragon Quest IV: Guiding Friends</b>	PS-X
8	N/A	<b>Choro-Q HG2</b>	PS2
9	N/A	<b>Pikmin</b>	GC
10	8	<b>Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty</b>	PS2



## GAME INFORMER TOP 10

The GI Staff's Favored Pick

RANK	NO.	GAME	SYSTEM
1	N/A	<b>Super Mario Advance 2</b>	GBA
2	2	<b>Final Fantasy X</b>	PS2
3	3	<b>Super Smash Bros. Melee</b>	GC
4	N/A	<b>All-Star Baseball 2003</b>	Xbox
5	4	<b>Grand Theft Auto III</b>	PS2
6	1	<b>Medal of Honor: Allied Assault</b>	PC
7	5	<b>Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty</b>	PS2
8	N/A	<b>State of Emergency</b>	PS2
9	6	<b>Maximo: Ghosts to Glory</b>	PS2
10	N/A	<b>Star Wars: Jedi Starfighter</b>	PS2



## PC TOP 10

Based On Monthly Units Sold. Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment Service

RANK	NO.	GAME	MONTH	PRICE
1	N/A	<b>Medal of Honor: Allied Assault</b>	Nov-01	\$43
2	1	<b>The Sims: Hot Date</b>	Dec-01	\$28
3	N/A	<b>Serious Sam: Second Encounter</b>	Jan-02	\$17
4	3	<b>The Sims</b>	Feb-02	\$42
5	2	<b>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone</b>	Mar-02	\$28
6	N/A	<b>NASCAR Racing 2002</b>	Apr-02	\$50
7	4	<b>Roller Coaster Tycoon</b>	May-02	\$19
8	6	<b>Zoo Tycoon</b>	Jun-02	\$26
9	N/A	<b>Ultima Online: Lord Blackthorn's Revenge</b>	Jul-02	\$30
10	N/A	<b>Backyard Basketball</b>	Aug-02	\$17



PlayStation 2

A SHADOWY CORPORATION HAS SEIZED CONTROL OF YOUR COUNTRY.  
THE PEOPLE HAVE TAKEN TO THE STREETS IN PROTEST.  
A STATE OF EMERGENCY HAS BEEN DECLARED  
AND IT IS NOW TIME FOR YOU TO FIGHT FOR YOUR FREEDOM.



# STATE OF EMERGENCY



TRY TO TOPPLE THE CORPORATION  
OR SIMPLY CAUSE COMPLETE MAYHEM



PREPARE FOR CHAOS AS HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE  
FILL THE SCREEN -  
EACH CITIZEN REACTS DIFFERENTLY TO EVENTS



WATCH YOURSELF - DEATH SQUADS PROWL  
THE STREETS LOOKING FOR TROUBLE



Blood and Gore  
Violence







# NEW RELEASES ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE CALL YOUR LOCAL RETAILER FOR MORE DETAILS

Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor	System	Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor	System	Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor	System
3/15/02	Batman Dark Tomorrow	THL Soft	GC	4/1/02	Solitaire: James Ulmer	Macquae	PC	5/14/02	Legends of Wrestling	Activision	GC
3/15/02	Beast Assault	3DO	PS2	4/1/02	Star Wars Jedi Knight 2	LucasArts	PC	5/14/02	Zoo Cubes	Activision	GC
3/15/02	Army Men: RTS	3DO	PC	4/1/02	Star Wars Jedi Outcast Collector's Edition	LucasArts	PC	5/14/02	3D Zoo Cubes	THL	PS2
3/15/02	Mad Dog McRae	Digital Leisure	PC	4/1/02	Star Wars Jedi Outcast Collector's Edition	LucasArts	PC	5/14/02	Chris Edwards Aggressive Inline	Infragistics	PS2
3/15/02	XBladder: Invasor Shaking	GBA	GBA	4/1/02	Star Wars Jedi Outcast Collector's Edition	LucasArts	PC	5/14/02	Space Ace	Infragistics	PS2
3/15/02	War of Wits: Dark Ops: Stories	Agfa Soft	PC	4/1/02	Dungeon Siege	Microsoft	PC	5/14/02	Legends of Wrestling	Activision	GC
3/15/02	James Bond 007...Agent Under Fire	Electronic Arts	GC	4/1/02	NASCAR Heat	Infragistics	GBA	5/15/02	Star Wars Episode III: Attack of the Clones	THL	GBA
3/15/02	NBA 2K3	Sega	GC	4/1/02	Samurai's Run	Destruction Software	GBA	5/15/02	Axis Fights	Rainbow Interactive	PC
3/15/02	Command & Conquer: Red Strike Bundle	Electronic Arts	PC	4/1/02	Star Wars Jedi Outcast Collector's Edition	LucasArts	PC	5/15/02	Star Wars Episode III: Attack of the Clones	THL	PS2
3/15/02	Hostile Road Trip	Xbox	PC	4/1/02	Banquet	Activision	GC	5/15/02	Evil Twin: Captain's Chronicles	Rainbow Interactive	PC
3/15/02	Sniper	3DO Interactive	PC	4/1/02	Hidden Invaders	Activision	PC	5/15/02	Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius	THL	PS2
3/15/02	Hotshot Road Trip	Ubi Soft	PSX	4/1/02	Hit Me: One Line Runner	Viewtiful Games	PC	5/15/02	Rayman Arena	Ubi Soft	PS2
3/15/02	War of Wits: Dark Ops: Stories	Ubi Soft	PSX	4/1/02	Hit Me: One Line Runner	Viewtiful Games	PC	5/15/02	Smashing Pumpkins	Ubi Soft	PS2
3/15/02	Yagot's Fishbowl Memories	PSX	PSX	4/1/02	Hit Me: One Line Runner	Viewtiful Games	PC	5/15/02	Worms Blast	Ubi Soft	PS2
3/15/02	Devil Ex: The Conspiracy	Elpis	PS2	4/1/02	Hit Me: One Line Runner	Viewtiful Games	PC				

## MLB SLUGFEST 2003

■ **FORMAT:** PLAYSTATION 2 ■ **STYLE:** 1 CR 2-PLAYER SPORTS  
■ **PUBLISHER:** MIDWAY ■ **RELEASE DATE:** 3/19/02

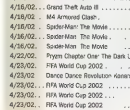


With the tag line, "There's a hot at the bat rack," you should be able to draw your own conclusions as to what kind of a game MLB Slugfest is. Intentionally benched batters, hit mile long home run shots, stampeede through catchers, just don't play the sport in the way it was meant to be. As Midway says, "This is baseball without the lolypopping between pitches." America's favorite pastime just got violent. When you see the animations that Midway has in store for this game, you'll know exactly what we mean. Look.

3/19/02	Monsters, Inc.	Sony	PS2
3/19/02	Red Card Soccer	THL	PS2
3/19/02	Toto: Worlds	THQ	PS2
3/19/02	Yogi Berra 2002	Electronic Arts	PS2
3/19/02	Virus Fighter 4	Sega	PS2
3/19/02	Gun Valley	Xbox	PS2
3/19/02	Phantas: The Legend of Black Kat	Electronic Arts	PS2
3/19/02	Yogi Berra 2002	Electronic Arts	PS2
3/20/02	5x Fists	3DO	PS2
3/22/02	Muspet Football Manham	NewsCoo	GBA
3/25/02	Brinyx's Dance Beat	THL	PS2
3/25/02	Hopping Friends: The Movie	Infragistics	GBA
3/26/02	Atlant Anniversary Adventure	Infragistics	GBA
3/26/02	Decathlon Adventure	Infragistics	GBA
3/26/02	Ice Age	Ubi Soft	GBA
3/26/02	Monster Jam: Maximum Destruction	Ubi Soft	GBA
3/26/02	Mutators: Maxima Adventure	Ubi Soft	GBA
3/26/02	Space Invaders	Activision	GBA
3/26/02	Space King: Battle of Orion, The	Viewtiful Games	GBA
3/26/02	Bloody Road: Final Fury	THL	PS2
3/26/02	Donkey Kong: Don Quacques	Ubi Soft	PS2
3/26/02	Power Plan: Final	THL	PS2
3/26/02	NFL to 2003	Midway	GC
3/26/02	Soccer Slam	Sega	GC
3/26/02	Campanos: Campanos	Infragistics	PC
3/26/02	Elite Soccer: Elite Warriors	Infragistics	PC
3/26/02	Freedom Forces	Electronic Arts	PC
3/26/02	Ghost Recon: Mission Pack #1	Red Storm Entertainment	PC
3/26/02	Halo 2	Ubi Soft	PC
3/26/02	Medal of Honor: Frontline	Infragistics	PC
3/26/02	Rayman Arena	Ubi Soft	PC
3/26/02	Rock Vocation	Infragistics	PC
3/26/02	Tommy Toilet: Beachball 2003	Infragistics	PC
3/26/02	Sins and Glories	Infragistics	PC
3/26/02	Tommy Hawk's Pro Skate 3	Activision	PC
3/26/02	Power Play: Superstar 2003	Ubi Soft	PSX
3/26/02	Power Play: Superstar 2003	Ubi Soft	PS2
3/26/02	Army Men: RTS	3DO	PS2
3/26/02	Cassara's Palace	3DO	PS2
3/26/02	High Five: The Accident City	THL	PS2
3/26/02	Legends of Honor: Blood Omen 2	NewsCoo	PS2
3/26/02	Smash Court Tennis: Pro Tournament	THL	PS2
3/26/02	Transworld Surf	Infragistics	PS2
3/26/02	Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex	3DO	PS2
3/26/02	James Bond 007...Agent Under Fire	Electronic Arts	GBA
3/26/02	Legend of Kage: Blood Omen 2	Edios	GBA
3/26/02	NFL Elite 2002	NewsCoo	PS2
3/26/02	Supremacy	3DO	PS2
3/26/02	Heroes of Magic & Magic IV	3DO	PS2
3/26/02	Shinake of Zoro	Destruction	PC
4/1/02	Home & Away	GBA	GBA
4/1/02	Lucas Art	Ubi Soft	GBA
4/1/02	Dragon's Lair 3D	Ubi Soft	GBA
4/1/02	Evil Twin: Captain's Chronicles	Ubi Soft	PC

## MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE

■ **FORMAT:** PLAYSTATION 2 ■ **STYLE:** 1 CR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SHOOTER  
■ **PUBLISHER:** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **RELEASE DATE:** JUNE 4



The PlayStation 2 is already overflowing with first-person shooters, but we have a feeling that Medal of Honor will tower above them all. World War II is a touchy subject, but as we've seen through two installments already, you really couldn't ask for a more realistic or gripping re-creation. While some may think it's just a game, it's more an interactive history lesson that covers just about every aspect of the war, putting players closer to the intense emotions of WWII than any movie could. Suit up, soldier. The war begins again this June.

4/1/02	Austin3: Austin3's Greatest Victories	Activision	PC
4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
4/1/02	Hit: Armored Chase	Viewtiful Games	GC
4/1/02	SpaceMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Resident Evil: Garden	Capcom	GC
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Austin3: Austin3's Greatest Victories	Activision	PC
4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
4/1/02	Hit: Armored Chase	Viewtiful Games	GC
4/1/02	SpaceMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Resident Evil: Garden	Capcom	GC
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Austin3: Austin3's Greatest Victories	Activision	PC
4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
4/1/02	Hit: Armored Chase	Viewtiful Games	GC
4/1/02	SpaceMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Resident Evil: Garden	Capcom	GC
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Austin3: Austin3's Greatest Victories	Activision	PC
4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
4/1/02	Hit: Armored Chase	Viewtiful Games	GC
4/1/02	SpaceMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Resident Evil: Garden	Capcom	GC
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Austin3: Austin3's Greatest Victories	Activision	PC
4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
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4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Resident Evil: Garden	Capcom	GC
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Austin3: Austin3's Greatest Victories	Activision	PC
4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
4/1/02	Hit: Armored Chase	Viewtiful Games	GC
4/1/02	SpaceMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
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4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Austin3: Austin3's Greatest Victories	Activision	PC
4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
4/1/02	Hit: Armored Chase	Viewtiful Games	GC
4/1/02	SpaceMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Resident Evil: Garden	Capcom	GC
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Austin3: Austin3's Greatest Victories	Activision	PC
4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
4/1/02	Hit: Armored Chase	Viewtiful Games	GC
4/1/02	SpaceMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
4/1/02	Resident Evil: Garden	Capcom	GC
4/1/02	SolarMan: The Movie	Activision	GBA
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4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
4/1/02	Hit: Armored Chase	Viewtiful Games	GC
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4/1/02	Great Trek Auto B1	3DO	PC
4/1/02	Hit: Armored Chase	Viewtiful Games	GC

# PLAY TO PERFECTION

## SUPER MARIO WORLD SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2

**Mario World** was the first, and easily one of the best, Super Nintendo games in the 16-bit console's library. It introduced us to Yoshi, and expanded on the nonlinear style of Super Mario Bros. 3, allowing you to choose which stages to play.

Now that it's being re-released as Super Mario Advance 2 on Game Boy Advance, we felt it was a good time to tell you all the ins and outs of one of Mario's greatest adventures. Amazingly, Nintendo further advanced this great game by making Luigi more of a factor, and increasing the importance of the Dragon Coins on each level. Read on as we break Mario World wide open.

### BASIC TIPS:

- You can quickly exit levels you've already beaten by pausing and selecting Back. Use this to your advantage to collect powerups and extra lives with ease. However, this will not count the Dragon Coins collected, even if you get all five.
- The spin jump (B-button) is more powerful than the standard jump. It can destroy more enemies, and even shoots fireballs on its own when Mario or Luigi are fire-equipped.
- It's important to master flying. When you sprint then take to the skies, tap backwards to fly soft. Press forward slightly to gain speed, or hold it to a super-fast dive, which will crush unsuspecting enemies.
- The colored Koopa shells Yoshi eats give him different powers. While green are generic, red shells let him spit fire, yellow make a powerful stomp, blue make him fly, and the elusive blinking shells give him all three. If you

- find a colored Yoshi, he will get his color-coded power from every shell he eats, no matter the hue.
- If you're hurting for 1-Ups or are just plain greedy, each enemy or red apple Yoshi swallows gives you a coin. Also, eating a pair of pink apples will make a coin-tossing cloud come out.
- If you miss all five Coins in a castle or fortress, worry not. Once you beat Bowser, you can go back to them just like other levels.
- Luigi's jumps are higher than Mario's, and float further. However, they're more difficult to control. When Luigi sees Yoshi, your dino friend will keep gobbling enemies in his mouth long enough to spit them out: as opposed to his quick swallowing while Mario is mounting him. Experiment with each character to see which suits your liking.
- If you carry an item through the exit gate, it will either turn into a power-up or 1-Up mushroom.

## 96 THINGS WE LOVE ABOUT MARIO

Mario World actually has about 75 individual levels, but many have multiple paths, adding up to 96. You want to beat them all, don't you? OK then. Follow this walkthrough to learn the best order and strategies for doing just that. We'll also tell you the hard-to-find Dragon Coin spots.

### 1. YOSHI'S ISLAND 1

When you see a vacant red shell, toss it up to make the 1-Up move right. Follow and catch it. If you're unfamiliar with the mechanics, you'll get your bearings here.



### 2. YELLOW SWITCH PALACE

Jump on the P-Switch and reap the monetary benefits. Now just mosey through the pipe and hop on the big yellow switch. Every space with dotted yellow lines is now filled with yellow blocks.



### 3. YOSHI'S ISLAND 2

In the beginning, grab the red shell and toss it on the higher platform. Run behind it, and you'll get a 1-Up for all the Koopas it trounces. In the pipe with flying blocks, jump, then hit R to jump off Yoshi to reach them all. One has a 1-Up in it.



### 4. YOSHI'S ISLAND 3

When riding the circular-moving wooden platforms, look below for yellow blocks to jump down to. They usually hide pipes or powerups.



### 5. YOSHI'S ISLAND 4

Along your journey, you'll see a shell. Toss it on the block under the P-switch (or double-jump with Yoshi). Before standing on it, though, get the star. Now run right, killing Koopas and floating spikes to get 1-Ups and sprint to the finish.



### 6. IGGY'S CASTLE

Hit the fences, then dodge the crushing pillars. Play king of the hill with Iggy. Just jump on him when the platform is slanted a certain way, or shoot him with fireballs to knock him off the base.



### 7. DONUT PLAINS 1

This is the first stage you'll learn to fly in. Either hit a shell-less Koopa with a fishing wing to get a feather, or go into a pipe to find loads of coins.



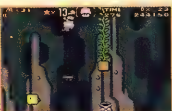
### 8. DONUT PLAINS 1 PART II

Near the end, there's a section with a wall of green-dotted line blocks. You can get the Green Switch Palace to run up these, but you don't have to wait that long. While riding Yoshi, jump on the purple-fish triangle. If you get a good leap, jump off Yoshi and hold your right on the speed. You'll be able to walk up to the key and hole to beat the alternate path of Donut Plains 1. If this is proving too tough, just skip it and do it after level 10.



### 9. DONUT PLAINS 2

The alternate path is the first one to beat, since it takes you to the Green Switch Palace. Go in the second green pipe, which is hanging above you. When there, spin jump to grab the blue shell. Use it to hit the highest yellow block, and climb the vine up to the key and hole.



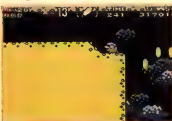
### 10. GREEN SWITCH PALACE

To get the extra life in the pre-switch room, you must use the red shell to take out all shelled Koopas. Ignore the naked one, bounce the shell off the wall, then chase after it.



### 11. DONUT PLAINS 2 PART II

Now you can work all the way through this level. There is little to no advice we can give, except not to get killed by the forced scrolling.

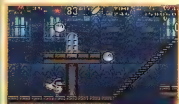


**12. DONUT GHOST HOUSE**

This route unlocks one of the most helpful things in the game: Top Secret Area. This room-sized stage has power-ups and easy access. To get there, have a Feather in the Ghost House. Run toward the right, then sprint back left and fly up the left side of the screen. You'll be able to run along the ceiling all the way to a doorway. Now Top Secret Area will be above the house on the map.

**13. DONUT GHOST HOUSE PART II**

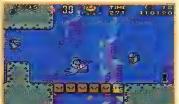
Now you have to beat this level for real. There are two identical rooms which can be confusing. One has a P-switch that unveils a door. The other has a Piranha plant vine going up to the end gate.

**14. DONUT SECRET 1**

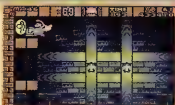
Spin around back to the water level. The first gray pipe takes you to a wild room where your character turns into a floating balloon. There's a 1-Up mushroom high above, as well as two of the Dragon Coins (one on each side, though you don't need them both). You can't make it all the way up without getting a second balloon power-up near the left-hand side. Don't waste too much time here, though, as the clock is ticking.

**15. DONUT SECRET 1 PART II**

You'll finally be able to get to that lower-right Ghost House with this alternate route. You should run across a P-switch past the halfway marker. Grab it and carry it to where the hole is. Activate it, and go down to find the key, which you bring up to finish this level again.

**16. DONUT SECRET HOUSE**

This is the most confusing level yet. Ignore the trampoline and the big Boo and go in the door. In the next room, take the P-switch and get the coins that look like they're outlining a door. Hit the switch, and find out that they are. Go in this blue door to exit.

**17. DONUT SECRET HOUSE PART II**

Things are tougher the second time around. You need a cape, so use Top Secret Area if you don't have one. This time, the P-switch should be used to go in the door where the yellow blocks are. Go in the right-hand door, gathering the Dragon Coins along the way. Get the 1-Up, and go through the door. You'll end up in the same room again. There is a Dragon Coin on the high left side. Now, grab the P-switch and fly up-right to a landing. There's the last Dragon Coin. Use the P-switch for the secret door, and lob blocks at the Boo to kill it.

**18. DONUT SECRET 2**

Go in the pipe accessible after 1.6 to get a sneaky peek at Bowser's lair. Inside, the ground is very icy. At the end, jump on the highest-flying Koopa, and bump each one on the way down for a 1-Up.

**19. DONUT PLAINS 3**

Since this level takes place above a seemingly endless sea, the cape is a nice thing to have. You'll be riding lots of platforms. Try to stay as high on their tracks as possible, since a pipe and most Dragon Coins are there.

**20. DONUT PLAINS 4**

Not much here, save for lots of Goombas. Dragon Coins are easy to find, and there aren't many perils. Cakewalk to the castle.

**21. MORTON'S CASTLE**

The key here is to have patience. When traveling upwards, take your time—especially since many Dragon Coins are only visible some of the time. When fighting Morton Koopa Jr., though, speed it up. Hit him fast, let him recover, then hit him again. Repeat once more to take him out before he even climbs the wall.

**22. VANILLA DOME 1**

This is a Buzzy Beetle central right here. There is a 1-Up among all the yellow blocks near the beginning of the level. For one of the Dragon Coins, you'll need to be small.

**23. VANILLA DOME 2**

Worry not—this level isn't all underwater. The first order of business is to go the key/hole route, so you open up another switch palace. Go up at the opening with the power-up block, and swing left. Take the P-switch all the way left, then use it to go further. Down below you'll find the dry key and the wet hole.

**24. RED SWATH PALACE**

Spin jump to kill the flashing shell. Now grab the next Koopa's covering, hit the P-switch, and launch the shell. If you keep up, you'll receive a 1-Up for the carnage.

**25. VANILLA DOME 1 PART II**

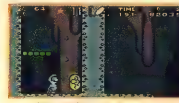
Back to the back to the dome, y'all. After hitting the red switch, you can now get this alternate path. Go forward until you see the red stairs. Take 'em up, climb the vine, and put the key in the hole.

**26. VANILLA DOME 2 PART II**

Go back here, and beat it for real. Time and Dragon Coin locations are again hurried in your quest. One of the Coins is near the key, and you've got to place the spring on the red block to get back on track.

**27. VANILLA SECRET 1**

This level is very vertical and pretty short. Two of the Dragon Coins require either flying or use of the springs.

**28. VANILLA SECRET 1 PART II**

Make sure you're cased, and go right back into this stage. Work your way to the area before the flying Koopas block your path up. Drop to a larger flat surface, and fly up to the far left. There's a pipe to enter. You get another Star Road entrance, but hold off on going inside yet.

**29. VANILLA SECRET 2**

Take the newly opened pipe up to the surface. Koopa Parasitescopes inhabit this level. Yoshi's a huge help. If you can time your jumps on the Koopa's heads, you can pick up a few more 1-Ups. There's also a switch by the spiny guys that'll turn things into silver coins, and gives you up to three lives for the coins. Don't forget the green pipe containing a Dragon Coin.

**30. VANILLA SECRET 3**

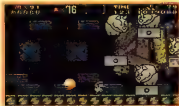
Do!phins! That Yoshi can eat! Woo-hoo! Try to stay out of the water, as a prickly puffer fish will put a hurtin' on you. This is a straightforward level, so just collect your coins and work to the end.





**31. VANILLA FORTRESS**

This is your first fortress, and it's a trial by fire—or rather, by water. This whole stage (save for Reznor) is underwater. Who's Reznor, you ask? The four-dino boss, of course. They're on a rotating platform, spewing fireballs, and the bridge to them rapidly disappears. To kill them, hit the bottoms of as many pedestals as you can, then jump up on one and clean up.

**32. VANILLA GHOST HOUSE**

Come back underground and hit this Ghost House. If you're collecting Dragon Coins (which you should be) there's one you have to use a vine to reach. Said vine is in the yellow blocks by the big Boo. The transparent green globes can go through solid surfaces, so be careful. To find the only ending, just get the coins on the far right, then activate the Switch.

**33. VANILLA DOME 3**

Ride those skulls! In the section with the two tall orange pipes, if you've got a cape, you can get your hands on a 34½ moon. Fly up left from this area, and you'll find a hidden passage in the wall. Cha'ching! Fly right and straight from there to a pipe with a bonus game.

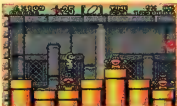
**34. VANILLA DOME 4**

Bullet Bills will give you headaches here, especially when they come at you in fours. The silver jumping Piranha plant pipe has a Dragon Coin in it. A Cape definitely comes in handy here.

**35. LEMMY'S CASTLE**

No, this isn't the guy from Mötörhead, which makes him a lot easier. The wizards, however, complicate things. There's another coin/P-switch/secret door trick in this room. In the rising/falling floor part, you'll find it tough collecting Dragon Coins using Mano, but Luigi is slightly easier. Lemmy's lair has a perpetual fireball and two decoys. Just hit

the real deal three times when they emerge from the pipe.

**36. STAR WORLD 1**

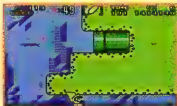
Since your skills should be honed by now and you have the Switch Palaces you need, it's time to tackle the Star Road. For the first one, stay on the right side of the second section of spin-jumpable yellow blocks to find the key and hole for the secret passage.

**37. STAR WORLD 1 PART II**

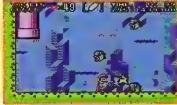
You must beat each Star Road twice to get full credit—the key/hole way and the regular way. The regular way is pretty easy, so we'll just tell you the Dragon Coin locations. The first Coin is on the right side of the first block section. Go left to the next section for number two, then left again. There are two more on the left in the section after the stars.

**38. STAR WORLD 2**

Swim along to the pipe exit, but go under it instead. You'll find the key and hole, and be livin' large.

**39. STAR WORLD 2 PART II**

Just swim, grab Coins, and exit. Let the Starman go into the baby Yoshi's mouth to grow him up in a hurry. Don't miss the final Dragon Coin above the end pipe.

**40. STAR WORLD 3**

Hit the switch to make Lakitu toss coins, then either fly up the middle of the stage, or

hit Lakitu with a block and use his cloud to float up. The key's on the left, hole's on the right.

**41. STAR WORLD 3 PART II**

This should be easy, right? Uh, no. Three Dragon Coins are on the other side of the end gate. Get them by tossing a block at Lakitu, pulling a few blocks from the ground, then floating underneath the end gate to the Coins. Whew!

**42. STAR WORLD 4**

Mosey along until you see some colored blocks underneath your path. Follow the multi-colored road to a block with a key, and a hole. If you're capeless, there's a Feather in the right-most green block. This will actually open a path to Bowser's front door, if you want to end the adventure early.

**43. STAR WORLD 4 PART II**

Two tricky Coins are located down on a four-story Koopa platform early on, and above the multi-colored blocks from 41, respectively.

**44. STAR WORLD 5**

Unfortunately, you won't be able to unlock the key/hole way easily on this level until you get the Blue Switch Palace. Just beat it by racing to the finish to make one less thing for you to do later on. Again, having a Cape is a very smart move, especially when collecting Coins.

**45. BUTTER BRIDGE 1**

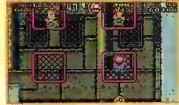
Go back to the Vanilla Fortress, and the level it opened up. This stage is a bear. Have a Cape and Luigi for the easiest run. That way, you can float through without spending so much time on the lowering platforms. The scrolling plane speeds and slows at random, so watch out.

**46. BUTTER BRIDGE 2**

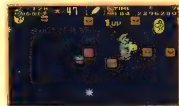
Is this level as hard as the previous bridge? Oh, yeah. This stage is a nudist colony for Koopas, and there will be many shell-less enemies zipping past your head. If it weren't for the Dragon Coins, you could fly right over everything; but because of them, you're stuck in the trenches. There's one high above where you toss the green shell at the lofty question box. Get the last Coin either by sacrificing Yoshi to save your own life, or have a Cape and float down from the higher platform.

**47. LUDWIG'S CASTLE**

Here's another Koopa kid to kick. In the falling pipe ceiling room, make sure you're springing in the straightaway, or you'll get caught and flattened. The cage room has the majority of the Dragon Coins, as well as plenty of power-ups. To annihilate Ludwig, jump over his fireballs and hit him. Dodge his shell spinning and repeat. Easy.

**48. CHEESE BRIDGE AREA**

Tie up some loose ends before entering the forest. Go back through Vanilla to the lower bridge section. Bring Yoshi and snag the wings after the three moving platforms to grab a bunch of Dragon Coins. This will also give you a quick exit.



## 49. CHEESE BRIDGE AREA

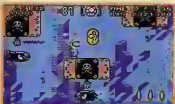
## PART II

Keep your Yoshi from **48** and make your way through the level. A cape is vital to this exit, too. When you reach the long rope, don't abandon your steed. Instead, just hop on the chainsaws to get to the end gate. Instead of using it, jump under it, then hop off Yoshi to end up past it. There's a 3-Up moon and another alternate gate.



## 50. SODA LAKE

In Minnesota, they call it Pop Lake. This is a standard swimming level, aside from the large missiles being fired at your Italian rear end. At this point, though, you should have little problems seeing it. You now have another Star Road point.



## 51. COOKIE MOUNTAIN

Are all the real names getting you hungry? Skip the cookies and soda, and have some protein bars. Little gopher creatures inhabit this area. Their emergence from the ground is unpredictable, so be patient. Don't bother going in any tubes, because the puffer fish place it warps you to blows.



## 52. FOREST OF ILLUSION I

This is a simple jaunt through the forest. The first Coin is behind the tree trunk right at the start. If you're not too powered up, carry the spring for height. Look out for blocks that break and rain down enemies. Yoshi's a good vacuum here.



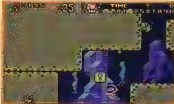
## 53. FOREST OF ILLUSION I PART II

You probably already saw the hole. To get there, go slightly past it and hit the question block to get the balloon power-up. Now float left, past the flying Koopa, and get the key from the question block by the hole.



## 54. FOREST OF ILLUSION 2

This level's huge for a water stage, so collecting Dragon Coins will be tough. Forget them until Part II and concentrate on the alternate path here. A bit past the halfway checkpoint, you'll be going downward. Keep this up, and you'll see a yellow block. There's a fake wall there. Go left for the key and hole.



## 55. BLUE SWITCH PALACE

This is the last switch palace. First, clear away the coins. Then activate the blue P-switch, followed immediately by the silver one. Run back and forth to get the silver coins.



## 56. FOREST GHOST HOUSE

Dodge ghouls until you reach the second room. Take the P-switch below the line of coins and get the blue door. Now, work all the way left to the last door. You'll get a 3-Up moon and one exit.



## 57. FOREST GHOST HOUSE

## PART II

Do the same as above. This time, though, go through the first door on the left, not the last.



## 58. FOREST OF ILLUSION 4

Be either capped or have a Yoshi. If you grab the 1-Up from Fishin' Lakitu, he'll start throwing spiny guys at you. It's best to avoid this as long as possible. Past the halfway checkpoint there's a silvery blue pipe

suspended in the air. Get in and you're in keyville.



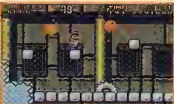
## 59. FOREST SECRET AREA

Ride the winged platform! Stay on the first one to get the first three Dragon Coins, then switch at the blue blocks to grab number four. Go back to the original one for the fifth, and take 'er home. Don't worry about the 1-Ups on the other side of the goal. You'll get credit for them just by crossing the gate.



## 60. FOREST FORTRESS

Don't stack or you'll miss the Dragon Coin above your head when you start. You're going to take some hits to get the other Coins. Go up and over the red door for the final Coin. Now you just have to beat Reznor again to be victorious. This opens another portal to Star Road.



## 61. FOREST OF ILLUSION 4

## PART II

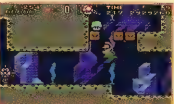
For one of the Coins, you'll have to get in Lakitu's cloud, fly, or be clever with the P-switch. This spot is after the steps where the flying Koopa is. There are coins high above that can be turned to blocks, and a Dragon Coin above.



## 62. FOREST OF ILLUSION 2

## PART II

Take the plunge yet again. Time is of the essence for Coin grabbing. The only one that's really out of the way is found by going low in the section after you swim up through fish and find a power-up block. It's at a dead end where you can't go up because of invisible coin blocks and a 1-Up.



## 63. FOREST OF ILLUSION 3

This isn't the most fun level out there, but you have to beat them all. Bubbles are everywhere. Most contain a Goomba or a Bob-omb - neither of which is a good thing. At least Dragon Coins are easy to find.



## 64. FOREST OF ILLUSION 3

## PART II

After all these pipes, one of the last you come across leads to the key and hole. It's the big green one immediately after the football player guy who splits in three if given the chance. Time to wax of Roy.



## 65. ROY'S CASTLE

Forget Roy. He's a dork. He just tries to be like his brother, Morton Koopa, Jr. His stage is easy, too. Stay in the middle of the traveling Toadste Roll and nab the Coins. The fireballs shot by the statues can't be ducked.



## 66. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 1

New enemies, slidy gameplay. Take the pipe to the left of the red blocks to get a 3-Up and a dangerous upstream, then get shot out to the last Dragon Coin and the level end.



## 67. CHOCO-GHOST HOUSE

The ghost house greets you on the brown ground. You'll need some fancy jumping to avoid all the enemies. When you enter the second room, the three gray blocks below the question block are ghosts. Bait to the right of the high door, and face them so they're scared. Hop up and you're Audi. Don't forget the two Dragon Coins to the right of there, though.

**68. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 2**

There are many rooms in this stage. The strange thing is, they're very based on the speed you enter the first pipe. Take your time on the first room for this exit; have a look around for a while. The first section has dinosaurs and two Coins. The next has the two-hit monsters; followed by a section with lots of floating mushroom bubbles and one of two P-switches that would be tough, were it not for us opening all Switch Palaces already.

**69. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 2 PART II**

This time, quickly get into the first pipe - you have time to grab Yoshi, though. Notice anything different? Now you've got a red Koopa-filled, slanted section. Keep your speeding ways, though (exiting with 250 left on the timer), and you'll get to a room with baseball tossers. Use the colored blocks to stay above them, and put the key in the hole.

**70. CHOCOLATE SECRET**

Grab the pipe and get another look at Bowser's world. As you drop into the level, don't move. Don't miss the Coin in the green pipe. In the second room (sliding down), just keep holding down to pick up some 1-Ups. When the flat, yellow ground sinks into the lava, make sure you're running fast enough to grab the Dragon Coin and make it to the other side.

**71. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 3**

This is a wild level. Getting the Coins isn't too tough; just keep your eyes open. There's a pipe that will take you to a coin-filled area, but you may want to backtrack a bit when you exit it. At the end, take the vine to the top and hit the gate.

**72. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 3 PART II**

Do the same thing as in 71, up until the end gate. Instead of going up, fly to the right.

You'll find an alternate gate and three 1-Up mushrooms. Score!

**73. CHOCOLATE FORTRESS**

This fortress looks cool, but it's pretty easy as far as fortresses go. You never find out where the fireballs come from, and the Thimps have predictable jumping patterns.

**74. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 4**

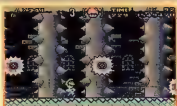
Another cool level, this time all indoors. After getting across all the floating, slanted platforms (don't fall into the Ovatine ocean), go below for some extra lives. Grab the P-switch hidden in the third diagonal yellow block from the top and use it. Grab the Coin in the first opened slot, then go into the pipe below that. Hit the P-switch, then wait eight seconds (even if you've got a cape already) before you drop down. You'll land by a feather. Now fly up a level for five 1-Ups. Whoohoo! One of the Dragon Coins is here too, though. To get it, go back into this pipe, use the P-switch right away, and float to the third opening down. That she be, mately.

**75. CHOCOLATE ISLAND 5**

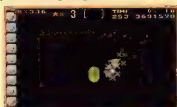
Take the P-switch and grab the previously unattainable Coin, then go into the pipe. Once you exit, backtrack and go in the other pipe. You should be one obvious Coin away from all five. You'll even run across number six, too.

**76. WENDY'S CASTLE**

Nice to see someone at Nintendo giving props to deceased punk rocker Wendy O. Williams. In the dropping splices and sawblade room, look for safe spots where you can stand unarmed. A few of the Coins in the moving platform sections are a bit tough, but just be patient. Wendy's style is identical to Lemmy's.

**77. SUNKEN GHOST SHIP**

When the ghosts make the noise that signals they're going to appear, don't move. Then, swim around them slowly. Even with a cape (which you need), it's going to be tough to grab the five Dragon Coins during the free-fall. Forget the star and just float, hitting Koopas that you meet. The first Coin is slightly right from where you drop down. Go right again for the next. The following coin is in the same proximity. When you get to the platform in the middle with a question block above it, jump off a bit. Then, when you see the section with coins, stay near the middle. This may take you a few tries. Once you reach the bottom, jump in the water for some floating 1-Ups. The level ends when you touch the green globe.

**78. VALLEY OF BOWSER 1**

You're in the jungle, baby. You're gonna dieeeeeee. Or, not. Go to the bottom section for the first Coin. In the three-way fork, go to the top for Coin two. Go second from the top in the four-way fork. Go down one, then drop down again for the fourth. The final is at the far right section, going above and right from the end pipe. Also, look for a high section with one blue block up it. Get up there (fly jump off bath) for a 3-Up moon and the checkpoint (rate a gopher across the dangerous creatures).

**79. VALLEY OF BOWSER 2**

Bring a Yoshi here with you. In the second room, take off with the wings. There are four Coins here, and you should've grabbed the high one in the first room. Ba'ah'bring!

**80. VALLEY OF BOWSER 2 PART II**

When going through the shifting maze, plan ahead. There are times when you must wait for the ground to go either up or down before it's safe to move again. In the next room, jump above the ceiling and go left unassisted.

No cape? No problem, just run. You'll find a key and hole for your use.

**81. VALLEY FORTRESS**

This leads to the back door so, when you want to take on Koopa, you need not bother with the other rooms leading to him. The level's extremely short. All you need to do is avoid the fireballs and spines to get to Reznor. There's a good chance you'll take a hit or two going for the Coins.

**82. VALLEY GHOST HOUSE**

Activate the P-switch (don't forget the Coin above it) for paths in the seemingly dead-end room. Go left first, but wait for the star. You'll wind back around the same way. Next time take the right path. The third and fourth doors lead to an exit. The last door leads to a new room that connects to the secret from 83 and has a superfluous Coin.

**83. VALLEY GHOST HOUSE PART II**

Have a cape, and go left at the P-switch room. Fly up in the next room, and you'll see a key and hole, but with a tiny opening to it. Fly above it, get out of your flying stance, float to the ledge, and duck. Now duck-jump through the crack, and do your key thing.

**84. VALLEY OF BOWSER 3**

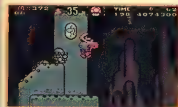
Yet another new gimmick: the numbered platform. Their uses are obvious, as is the helpfulness of a cape. You can find a gold pipe with a shell game for a few lives, but for the most part, you should breeze straight through.



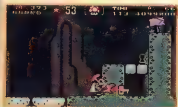


**85. VALLEY OF BOWSER 4**

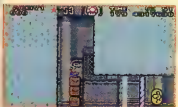
Do those thrower guys ever run out of new stuff to chuck at you? The pipe before you goes into the vine holes a Coin. Then it's a mad dash, avoiding asty soccer ball things and fiery lava to the end.

**86. VALLEY OF BOWSER 4 PART II**

There's a Yoshi after the vine. The mission, should you choose to accept it, is to keep said Yoshi the entire way through. This is because the only way to grab the key near the end is to have Yoshi snag it with his long tongue. A good strategy is to jump off him every time you encounter a tosser (if you're big, that is).

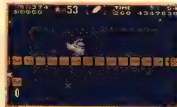
**87. LARRY'S CASTLE**

Here's a longer Toadste Roll to travel on. There are three obvious Coins in this first room. The other two are pretty darn tricky. Instead of jumping off at the door, ride down the seemingly endless hole. Vialit! Hit the other Coins, a halfway marker, and a Mushroom.

**88. STAR WORLD 5 PART II**

You're not done yet, but you're on the home stretch. Go back to Star World 5 again, and

have a cape handy. Your goal is to fly as high as possible, until you land on a yellow block platform, which leads to the key and hole. You may not get the height at the beginning, so go to the P-switch and activate it. Next, hit the question block, and press right to get yourself a nice runway.

**89. GNARLY**

You're in the special area now, punk. Can you handle it? If you sit on the overworld portion long enough, you'll hear some classic Mario music. In this first stage, hit the yellow blocks on your way up. When you find the P-switch, take it to the top of the stage (not as easy as it sounds). Activate it, then jump down, hugging the right wall. You'll enter a pipe to get three Coins. Now hit the other switches and book right.

**90. TUBULAR**

This stage is one of the toughest, so you'd better be capped. Get the first balloon power-up and work to the next one. This time, try to stall as long as possible before grabbing it. Don't forget the Coins. Now hold down jump for when the helium runs out, and you should glide to the finish.

**91. WAY COOL**

Take a Yoshi with you. Make the first lever OFF, then have the other ones be ON. Now, grab the wings from one of the early question blocks after the conveyor, and grab the rest of your Coins.

**92. AWESOME**

You still have your '91's Yoshi, right? Eat either a flashing shell or a blue one, then fly slightly above the mess; but be low enough to spot the Coins. With Yoshi, if you miss one of the later jumps, you can just hop off him to save your skin. Should this fail, use the P-switch to grab the star after the ground disappears.

**93. GROOVY**

This is quite the list of cheesy phrases here. Again, Yoshi's great to have (if you have a cape, there's one in the level), especially for his ability to eat the cacti. Remember, as Luigi, Yoshi can spit the pieces at enemies. Grab the Starman from the rotating power-up dispenser to play through trouble.

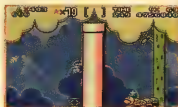
**94. MONDO**

Yoshi is once more vital (and available). He can stand on plexiglass Mario and Luigi can't, and he's easy to get back if you lose him. After the Yoshi-giving block, go down a pipe

for a nice slide to a Coin. Just make sure you don't get caught in bottomless areas once the tide goes down.

**95. OUTRAGEOUS**

Yoshi may be able to eat the flames, but he makes you too big of a target to bring with for the first half of this level. It's a pain, but take the spring thing all the way right, until you see the orange-ish tube. That's the only way over it. Now grab the Yoshi, and it should be moderately easy to get to the finish.

**96. FUNKY**

Last one! Time is your worst enemy here, as the stage just keeps going. It's not that hard, though. Grab shells for weaponry, and don't dilly-dally. The star in the right-most note by the two sums will help you cruise. You'll then get a coin message, and the overworld will change color—not to mention tons of the enemies.

**OTHER GOODIES****BOWSER'S CASTLE BACK DOOR**

Bowser's not that tough, especially after all you've been through. You can beat him anytime. It doesn't really matter. First, he'll just fly around, looking bad. Jump on the Mechakoopas and throw them so they land on Bowser's head. He'll disappear and come back. This time, he'll lose large balls in between the Mechakoopas. Jump over them. In the final confrontation, his ship will bounce after you. Dodge away. Beat him, and get a smooch from Peach. Woo-hoo!

**SPEED-BEATING**

If you care not for thorough completion and just want to beat the game as quickly as possible, we'll still help you on one condition: you hang your head in shame as you read this. Do these steps in the order: 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 15, 17, 37, 39, 41, 43, then go to Bowser's lair. Keep in mind that things are tougher without the switch palaces beaten, but such is the price for speed.

**BONUS GAME**

When you hit the end gate, you're rewarded based on how high you touch the stick. Once you've gathered 100 stars, you're taken to a bonus game. To maximize the lives you win, stay in one spot and jump straight up over and over. As long as your timing's right, you'll get the same coin each hop, and be rewarded at least four 1-Ups.

**1-UP LOOP**

There are near-limitless places to collect extra 1-Ups, as evident by our tally of 396 lives upon completing this guide. Some of the best include getting a cape and jumping from Koopa to Koopa while holding down the jump button, or to keep hitting Koopa shells with your cape, racking up points and then 1-Ups. Our favorite is in Forest of Illusion 1. At the halfway point, you'll see a rotating power-up shooter. Hit it on Flower, and grab when it's Starman. Now, speed to the right, running into as many enemies as you can. The extra lives will rack up like mad. If you've beaten the level already, just pause and hit select before you finish, and repeat the process as many times as you want.





## PS2 PLAYSTATION 2

**MAX PAYNE**

Enter all of these codes from the in-game pause screen. Note: Some of these cheats need to be re-entered after an auto-save.

**All Weapons & Full Ammo** - L1, L2, R1, R2,  $\Delta$ ,  $\square$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\square$

**Infinite Bullet Time** - L1, L2, R1, R2,  $\Delta$ ,  $\times$  (x2),  $\square$

**Invincibility** - L1 (x2), L2 (x2), R1 (x2), R2 (x2)

**Max Pain Killers** - L1, L2, R1, R2,  $\Delta$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\square$ ,  $\times$

**Slow Motion Sounds** - L1, L2, R1, R2,  $\Delta$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\square$ ,  $\times$

Jesse Williams  
Houston, TX

**EVIL TWIN: CYPRIEN'S CHRONICLES**

Enter all of these codes at the Cheat Codes menu.

**Bounces** -  $\square$ ,  $\square$ ,  $\Delta$ ,  $\times$

**Gun Sights** -  $\times$  (x2),  $\times$ ,  $\Delta$ ,  $\square$

**Infinite Lives** -  $\times$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\Delta$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\square$

**Rapid Fire** -  $\square$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\Delta$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\square$

**Sniper Mode** -  $\square$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\Delta$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\square$

**Super Shots** -  $\square$ ,  $\Delta$  (x2),  $\square$ ,  $\times$

"Air Akira"  
Bons, NM

**JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX**

Enter this cheat at the Press Start screen to unlock everything, including all of the levels, outfits, and the mysterious Skier X. A sound won't confirm correct entry, so make sure you nail it before pressing Start.

**Master Code** - Press and hold L2, L3, R1, Down,  $\square$ ,  $\square$  (in this order).

Tad Dungle  
Salt Lake City, UT

**PIRATES: THE LEGEND OF BLACK KAT**

Enter all of these codes during gameplay.

**Command & Conquer Kane** - Hold R1 and R2, then press  $\Delta$ , L2, L1,  $\square$ , L3,  $\times$ , L3,  $\square$ , R3. Select. Now, whenever a character is poisoned, the head of Kane will appear atop their body.

**All Treasure Chest Keys** - Hold R1 and R2, then press  $\square$ , Select,  $\times$ ,  $\square$ , R3, L1, L3, L2,  $\Delta$ , L3.

**Easy Chest Location** - Hold R1 and R2, then press  $\square$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\square$ ,  $\Delta$ , L1. Select, L3, L2, L3, R3. An X on the Captain's Map will now denote all of the buried chests in the game.

**Easy Chest Location 2** - Hold R1 and R2, then press R3,  $\times$ ,  $\Delta$ , L3,  $\square$ , L1. Select, L3,  $\square$ , L2. Likewise, this will reveal all unopened chests on the Captain's Map.

**Hellum Mode** - Hold R1 and R2, then press R3,  $\square$ , Select,  $\times$ , R3,  $\Delta$ , L1,  $\square$ , L2, L3. All of the speech will now be high-pitched.

**Infinite Items** - Hold R1 and R2, then press  $\Delta$ , L1. Select, L2, R3, L3,  $\square$ ,  $\times$ , R3.  $\square$  From here on in, all of the items you purchase will be 3 in supply.

**Infinite Wind Boost** - Hold R1 and R2, then press Select, L1, R3,  $\square$ , L3,  $\square$ , L2,  $\Delta$ ,  $\times$ , L3.

**Invincibility** - Hold R1 and R2, then press  $\times$ ,  $\square$ , L3,  $\Delta$ , R3. Select, R3, L1, L2,  $\square$ .

**Invincible Wind Dancer** - Hold R1 and R2, then press Select,  $\Delta$ , L1,  $\times$ , R3, L2,  $\square$ , R3,  $\square$ , L3.

**New Sword** - Hold R1 and R2, then press R3, Select, L2, L3,  $\square$ ,  $\times$ , L1,  $\square$ , L3,  $\Delta$ . Katarina's sword will change to the next one available.

**SSX Music** - Hold R1 and R2, then press L1,  $\times$ ,  $\Delta$ , L2,  $\square$ ,  $\square$ , L3. Select, R3, L3. You'll only hear it when you slide down the Glacial Gulf slope.

**Tons of Cash** - Hold R1 and R2, then press  $\Delta$ , R3, L1,  $\square$ ,  $\times$ , R3. Select, L3,  $\square$ , L2.

**Valkyrie Cheerleader** - You won't need to enter a code sequence for this one. To activate this silly routine, allow the Valkyrie to kill Katarina without damaging the Valkyrie herself. She will then perform a dance number for your amusement.

**Wild Dancer Galloon Upgrade** - Hold R1 and R2, then press L2,  $\Delta$ , R3, L3,  $\times$ ,  $\square$ , R3. Select, L1,  $\square$ . Now, when you sail to another map, you will have the Galloon.

"The G Star"  
Minneapolis, MN

**NFL Blitz 2002**

Input the following Player ID/PINs to unlock several of the hidden player models in the game.

Player	Player ID	PIN
Bear	BEAR	1985
Clown	CLOWN	1974
Cowboy	COWBOY	1996
Deer Hunter	DEER	1997
Dolphin	DOLPHIN	1972
Eagle	EAGLE	1981
Horse	HORSE	1999
Indian	INDIAN	1992
Lion	LION	1963
Ram	RAM	2000
Pinto	PINTO	1966
Pirate	PIRATE	2001
Tiger	TIGER	1977
Viking	VIKING	1977

Below is a listing of the Programmer Cheats. All of these codes are entered at the Match-Up Screen. The digits represent the number of times the Match-Up screen icons must be changed. In such, L2 changes the first icon, R2 the second, and  $\times$  the third. Once the sequence is entered, tap the listed direction.

**Always Quarterback** - 2, 2, 2, Left

**Always Receiver** - 2, 2, 2, Right

**Armageddon Team** - 5, 4, 3, Right

**Big Feet** - 0, 2, 5, Left

**Big Head** - 2, 0, 0, Right

**Big Heads Team** - 2, 0, 3, Right

**Blders Team** - 3, 1, 0, Up

**Brew Dawgs Team** - 4, 3, 2, Down

**Butter Fingers** - 3, 4, 5, Up

**Chimp Mode** - 0, 2, 5, Up

**Chrome Ball** - 0, 3, 0, Down

**Classic Ball** - 0, 3, 0, Left

**Clear Weather** - 1, 2, 3, Right

**Crunch Team** - 4, 0, 3, Right

**Extra Code Time** - 2, 1, 2, Right

**Extra Game Time** - 0, 0, 1, Right

**Extra Offensive Plays** - 3, 3, 3, Down

**Faster Passing** - 2, 4, 0, Left

**Faster Running** - 0, 3, 2, Left

**Ground Fog** - 2, 2, Down

**Guns Team** - 5, 0, 1, Up

**Header Head** - 1, 4, 5, Left

**Indians Team** - 0, 4, 5, Left

**Infinite Turbo** - 4, 1, 5, Up

**Intelligent CPU** - 3, 1, 4, Down

**Midway Team** - 2, 5, 3, Right

**Neo Tokyo Team** - 3, 4, 4, Down

**No CPU Assist** - 0, 1, 2, Down

**No First Downs** - 2, 1, 0, Up

**No Fumbles** - 5, 2, 3, Down

**No Interceptions** - 3, 5, 5, Up

**No Punting** - 1, 4, 1, Up

**No Receiver Highlighting** - 3, 2, 1, Down

**No Tokyo Team** - 5, 5, 4, Right

**Out of Bounds** - 0, 2, 1, Left

**Power Loader** - 0, 2, 5, Right

**Power Up Defense** - 4, 2, 1, Up

**Power Up Linemen** - 5, 2, 1, Up

**Power Up Offense** - 4, 1, 2, Up

**Rain** - 5, 5, 5, Right

**Roller Team** - 2, 5, 4, Up

**Show More Field** - 1, 2, 1, Right

**Show Time** - 3, 5, 1, Right

**Snow** - 5, 5, 5, Left

**Super Blitzing** - 0, 5, 4, Up

**Super Kicking** - 1, 2, 3, Left

**Tournament Mode** - 1, 1, 1, Down

Josef Tenale  
Orlando, FL





### CEL DAMAGE

To enter these codes, head to the Character Selection screen, then head into the Load screen. From here, input the cheat below.

- All FMV Clips – MULTIPLEXI
- Jeep World – TWRECKSPAD
- Movement Power-Ups – MOVETINOW
- Ranged Weapons – GUNSMOKEI
- Space World – BRAINSALAD

If you truly want to freak out the competition, enter the cheat below.

**Big Heads** – During gameplay, simultaneously press and hold Up, and the L and R buttons. Since the game is touchy, we recommend holding this combo from the pause screen, then returning to the game.

David Jones  
Charlotte, NC

### STAR WARS: ROGUE LEADER

**Death Star Escape** – Head to the Passcodes screen and input “PYST?000”. Unlike the majority of the codes in the game, R2 won't beep in acceptance. From here, input “DUCKSHOT”. This time around, R2 will flip a lid as the code will be activated. Now, head into a game and press Up on Death Star Attack to find the bonus level.

**Level Select** – Head to the Passcodes screen and input “1??QWTTJ”. Unlike the majority of the codes in the game, R2 won't beep in acceptance. From here, input “CLASSIC”. This time around, R2 will flip a lid as the code will be activated.

**Millennium Falcon** – Head to the Passcodes screen and input the code. Unlike the majority of the codes in the game, R2 won't beep in acceptance. From here, input “OHIBUDDY”. This time around, R2 will flip a lid as the code will be activated.

**Naboo Starfighter** – Head to the Passcodes screen and input “CDYXFP?A”. Unlike the majority of the codes in the game, R2 won't howl with glee. From here, input “ASEPONEI”. This time around, R2 will jump for joy as the code will be activated.

**TIE Fighter** – Head to the Passcodes screen and input “ZI?IRGBA”. Unlike the majority of the codes in the game, R2 won't beep in acceptance. From here, input “DISPSBLE”. This time around, R2 will flip a lid as the code will be activated.

Lyra Daemon  
Mendoza, KY



### THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

Enter all of these cheats within the Options screen. A noise will confirm correct code entry.

- 2D Characters** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press X (x4).
- Additional Camera Views** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press B (x4).
- Christmas Mode** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press B (x2), X, B.
- Collision Lines** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press B (x2), A (x2).
- Extra Cash** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press Y (x4).
- Halloween Mode** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press B (x2), X, A.
- New Year's Mode** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press B (x2), X, Y.
- Nightmare Mode** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press A (x4).
- Nuclear Bus** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press B (x2), Y, A.
- Smithers' Car** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press B (x2), Y (x2).
- Soapbox Car** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press B (x2), Y, X.
- Thanksgiving Mode** – Hold the L and R Buttons, then press B (x2), X (x2).

“The Gaming Wizard”  
Rockford, IL



### WWF RAW

Wrestling fanatics jump for joy! Fred Durst is in another game! Below is a listing of the techniques needed to unlock all of the hidden wrestlers.

- Fred Durst** – Win all of the Championship Belts.
- Shane McMahon** – Win the Hardcore Title.
- Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley** – Win the Women's Title.
- Vince McMahon** – Win the WWF Heavyweight Title.

“Joystick Juggalo”  
Detroit, MI

### MAX PAYNE

**Cheat Menu** – Enter a game, then press the Back button to bring up the Main Menu. Now, press and hold the L Button, R Button, click the Left analog stick, click the Right analog stick, then quickly tap White, Black (x2), White (x2), Black. If entered correctly, a cheat menu will appear with a Refill option for Ammo, Pain Killers and Bullet Time. Other cheats will be added to the menu throughout the course of the game. This code is extremely fidgety and must be nalled on the first try whenever you leave the game. Good luck!

“Daddy Fat Sacks”  
Memphis, TN



### WRECKLESS: THE YAKUZA MISSIONS

Below you'll find a listing of how to unlock all of the vehicles in the game.

**4x4 Monster Truck** – Enter Mission B-3 and locate the question mark on the map. Hit this mark, then complete the mission.

**AUV** – Complete Mission A-9.

**Dragon-SPL** – Simply complete Mission A-1.

**Kowloon Medallion Taxi** – Enter Mission A-7 and locate the question mark on the map. Hit this mark, then complete the mission.

**Police 3x4 Monster Truck** – Enter Mission A-4 and locate the question mark on the map. Hit this mark, then complete the mission to add this monstrous ride to your garage.

**Super-Car** – Complete Mission B-1.

**Tank-90** – Complete Mission B-9. Press Y to fire the cannon.

**Tiger-SPL** – Complete Mission A-8.

**Vaultsafe** – Enter Mission B-2 and locate the question mark on the map. Hit this mark, then complete the mission.

**Yakuza Car** – Complete Mission B-8.

Jamie Redmond  
Lake City, WA

### BLOOD WAKE

Enter all of these codes at the Title Screen. Note: If the code doesn't activate on the first try, you'll need to reset the Xbox and try again. A subtle swooshing sound will ring out when a cheat is entered correctly.

- All Arenas** – X, Y, Up, Right, Left, Down, Up, Down, L Button (x2), Start
- All Battle Modes** – Y, A, X, B, click Left analog, click Right analog, Black, White, R Button (x2), Start
- All Boats** – Up, Down, Left, Right, L Button, B, X (x2), click Right analog, Start
- Infinite Ammo** – Black, White, L Button, R Button, click Right analog (x2), Y, X, Start
- Infinite Turbo** – Up (x2), Down (x2), Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A, Start
- Invincibility** – Click Left analog, click Right analog, Down, Left, Down, Left, B, Y, Start

Michael Gram  
Newport, MA



## GENMA ONIMUSHA

**Bishamon Ocarina** – Complete all 20 levels in the Dark Realm, then open the chest within the final room. To get to the Dark Realm, enter the well entrance within the western area.

**Bishamon Sword** – Just after defeating the Marcellus, play the Bishamon Ocarina near the goofy-looking wall to reveal the Sword.

**Dragon Costume** – Collect all 30 Fluorite fragments, then beat the game.

**Easy Mode** – Simply die five times under the Normal game setting to unlock this simplistic mode.

**Hard Mode** – Complete the game in under three hours.

**Ogre Armor** – Complete all 30 levels of Ogre Tower to get this amazing defensive armament.

**Oni-Spirits Minigame** – Collect at least 20 Fluorite fragments, then complete the game.

**Panda Costume** – Complete the game under the Hard difficulty setting with an S Ranking. If you press the Black button while wearing this costume, the baby panda will jump out of the pouch and will hunt down items (such as Fluorite).

**Secret Key** – Complete all 10 levels of the Dark Realm, then open the chest within the final room. The location of this Dark Realm is near the entrance to the Keep.

**Ultimate Mode (Easy & Normal)** – Complete all 12 levels of the Oni-Spirits minigame.

**Ultimate Mode (Hard)** – First, unlock Ultimate mode for the Easy difficulty, then beat the game on the Hard difficulty.

Simon Leer  
Los Angeles, CA



## NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2002

Enter all of these cheats from the Codes screen.

**ABA Basketball** – OLDSCHOOL  
**Chicago Rooftop Court** – WINDYCITY  
**Infinite Turbo** – CARDIGMAN  
**Soccer Ball** – HOOLIGAN  
**Tiny Players** – SMALLSHOES  
**WNBA Basketball** – GOTGAME  
**Xbox Ball** – BACHMAN

**Get Ejected** – To get thrown out of the game, run over to the referee (you must be out of bounds) and press the Back Button.

Ivan Lewis  
Minnetonka, MN

## GAME BOY ADVANCE

### MORTAL KOMBAT ADVANCE

**Human Smoke** – Complete the game under the Warrior difficulty setting. Now, begin a new game and select the blank character square.

**Motaro** – Complete the game under the Master difficulty setting. Now, begin a new game and select the blank character square.

**Shao Khan** – Complete the game under the Supreme difficulty setting. Now, begin a new game and select the blank character square.

Pete Hoff  
Minot, ND



### DARK ARENA

Enter all of these codes at the Password screen. If a code is entered correctly, it will disappear from the Password screen.

**All Keys** – KNIGHTSR  
**All Maps** – UMSPLNG  
**All Weapons** – THRBLDNR  
**Infinite Ammo** – NDCRSDRT  
**Invincibility** – HLGNDSDR  
**Level Skip** – NFRWLLH (Press Select at the Map screen to warp to the next stage)  
**Sound Test** – CRSDR

Dwayne Anderson  
Florence, IA

### MIDNIGHT CLUB RACING

Enter all of these cheats at the Password screen.

**All Emilio Races Complete** – NIML  
**All Kelko Races Complete** – LGKG  
**All Larry Races Complete** – GTBP  
**All Races Complete** – LAPC

Don Mattingly  
New York, NY

## GAME SHARK

### PSE PLAYSTATION 2

#### MAXIMO: GHOSTS TO GLORY

**Master Code (Must Be On)** –  
 0E3C7DF21853E59E  
 EB9C4D46BC9D8622

99 Death Coins –  
 CE992826BCA9986E

99 Iron Keys –  
 CE992826BCA9986E

99 Lives –  
 CE992826BCA9986E

999 Coins –  
 CE9928222BCA996EA

999 Spirits –  
 CE992826BCA9986E

Armageddon On Weapon-Up –  
 CE992812BCA99887

Cow Boxers –  
 CE9928D6BCA99887

Death Touch –  
 CE992F84BCA99888

Flame Tongue On Weapon-Up –  
 CE992812BCA99884

Frost Biter On Weapon-Up –  
 CE992812BCA99885

Gallery Mode –  
 CE20584BCA99884

Gold Shield –  
 CE9928CEBCA99887

Infinite Armor –  
 CE99281EBCA99893

Mastery Mode –  
 CE9205FBCA99884

Monogram Boxers –  
 CE9928D6BCA99884

Pow Boxers –  
 CE9928D6BCA99885

Story Sequences –  
 CE20544BCA99884

#### DRAKAN: THE ANCIENTS' GATES

**Master Code (Must Be On)** –  
 0E3C7DF21853E59E

EB2A8C6BCF4A112

Infinite Cash –  
 DE4F355E3BA89AC8

Invincibility –  
 DE4F3542F4344C8

Max Skill Points –  
 DE4F356A2F439AC8

Quick Level Up –  
 DE4F35623BA89AC8

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# CLASSIC

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF MARIO



Everyone has a favorite video game character; but for most of us, the mascot closest to our hearts is Mario, the portly Italian plumber who introduced an entire generation of American children to the joys of video games. Mario was not the first great star of the gaming pantheon, but he has proven to be the most enduring. Since his birth in 1981, Mario has been successful in every era, and on every Nintendo system. While Pac-Man and Frogger are now mere footnotes in pop culture history, Mario remains a bankable star, and is soon slated to make his latest comeback with the release of Mario Sunshine for the GameCube. Inspired by this month's Super Mario World: Super Mario Advance 2, we've decided to take a look back at the career of Nintendo's most valuable player.

1981

### THE BIRTH OF A LEGEND



Until the release of Donkey Kong in 1981, Nintendo had not been a major force in the arcade scene. After an early Nintendo arcade unit, Radar Scope, failed dismally, the company had to construct another game in order to

use up the leftover Radar Scope circuit boards. A then-unknown Shigeru Miyamoto was tapped to create Donkey Kong, a new title inspired by the film classic King Kong. The game's short, stooky main character was originally named Jumpman. However, legend has it that a Nintendo of America executive, upon seeing the game, remarked that the character bore a striking resemblance to the landlord of their offices, a man named Mario Sengali.

1983

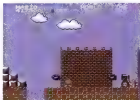
### HE AIN'T HEAVY, HE'S MY BROTHER



Donkey Kong was a tremendous success, and established Mario as one of the rising stars in video games. As a result, Nintendo decided to let Mario out from under the shadow of the simian, and gave him a game all his own. Of course, this wasn't totally true, as multiplayer concerns necessitated the creation of a svelte sibling for Mario, named Luigi. Their first game together, Mario Bros., was a moderate hit, and is fondly remembered for its simple, yet addictive gameplay.

1985

### THE BREAKTHROUGH



Super Mario Bros., which we picked as the second best game ever made in Gi #100, has achieved an iconic status that few games could ever dream of. While it is debated whether it's

the first side-scroller ever made, it most certainly established the blueprint for thousands of action/platform titles that came after it. By spurring on sales of the Nintendo Entertainment System (which came packed with a copy of SMB), it also helped to pull the entire video game industry off life support after the meltdown of 1983.

1988

### A SEQUEL OF SORTS



Super Mario Bros. 2, considered by some to be the black sheep of the NES trilogy, is most significant for the fact that it was not really a Mario game at all. Instead of releasing the Japanese version of Super Mario Bros. 2, which used the original SMB engine enhanced with new, more difficult levels, Nintendo simply inserted Mario Bros. characters into an already released title called Doki Doki Panic. Some felt the results were not up to Miyamoto's exacting standards, but it still stands as an amazing game in its own right, and was recently re-released for Game Boy Advance as Super Mario Advance. The Japanese Super Mario Bros. 2 eventually appeared in the US as "The Lost Levels" in Super Mario All-Stars for the SNES.

### CEREAL ADVENTURES



Nineteen eighty-eight was also the year that saw Mario receive what might be pop culture's highest honor: his very own breakfast cereal. Dubbed the Nintendo Cereal System, the unique boxes actually held not one, but two, types of sucrose-laden puffed treats (the other being modeled after the Legend of Zelda series). The dual-chambered boxes had two openings, each dispensing a different kind of sickly-sweet corn nugget, much like the containers for the popular Nerds candy of the '80s.

1989

### LET'S GET SMALL

To jumpstart its nascent Game Boy handheld system, Nintendo launches the unit with a Mario title (Super Mario Land); a tactic the company would employ with every hardware launch until the GameCube.

### SATURDAY MORNING FEVER

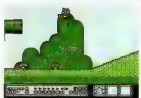


With the land of cereal already at his feet, Mario conquers Saturday morning television, another staple of the children's market. In September of 1989, the Super Mario Bros. Super Show debuts in syndication across the United States. Starring WWF wrestling manager and Cyndi Lauper associate Captain Lou Albano as Mario, the show (which lasted for 65 episodes) aired animated shorts based on Mario and other popular Nintendo franchises, including the Legend of Zelda.



1990

## ANOTHER MASTERPIECE



Just as the NES' wave of success crested, Miyamoto released *Super Mario Bros. 3*, a game some consider the apex of his 8-bit Mario series. This amazing title trumped

both its predecessors by incorporating amazing new animal outfits, like the Frog and Raccoon, that gave Mario theretofore-unimagined powers. Simply put, *SMB 3* still might be the most fully realized Mario title ever.

1991

## WELCOME TO THE NEXT LEVEL



After falling behind Sega and its successful Genesis system, Nintendo aimed to reclaim its dominance over the game industry with the launch of its Super Nintendo.

Entertainment System. Of course, the big gun in its software arsenal was *Super Mario World*, a game that built on the advancements of *Super Mario Bros. 3*. It was not the dramatic re-invention of the series some had hoped for, but it was a masterfully done title that also introduced a new character to the Mario universe, a small green dinosaur named Yoshi.

1992

## RACING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Already well established as the king of the action/platformer, Mario conquered racing games in 1992, with *Super Mario Kart*, a cartoonish driving title featuring a veritable who's who of Nintendo's well-loved character roster.

## THE MYSTERY MARIO



In this same year, the most obscure Mario game in history, *Hotel Mario*, was also released.

Created by Philips for its ill-fated CD-i console, *Hotel Mario* was reportedly an unimaginative puzzle title that sold poorly. More interesting than the game itself is the story behind it. Apparently, Nintendo had been working with Philips to create a CD-ROM peripheral for SNES. The project was ultimately abandoned, but Philips' contract with Nintendo stipulated it had the right to produce four Nintendo-licensed games for the CD-i. *Hotel Mario* was one of these, along with three *Zelda* titles including *Zelda's Adventures* and *Zelda: The Wand of Gamelon*.

## THIS MONTH IN GAMING HISTORY

This month in gaming history marks a little-known, but tremendously important court decision for the game industry. In April of 2000, US District Judge Edward Johnstone dismissed a lawsuit against Sega of America, Sony Computer Entertainment, Atari Corp., Palm Pictures, and other entertainment companies, filed by the families of three victims of the 1997 Paducah, Kentucky school shootings. The lawsuit stated that Michael Carmel, a 14-

year-old student, who fired shots into a school playground meeting, had been influenced to do so by violent video games, films, and television. While expressing sympathy for the victims, Johnstone struck down the suit, stating, "This was a tragic situation, but tragedies such as this simply defy rational explanation and the courts should not pretend otherwise." If successful, the suit would have likely opened up the video game industry to any number of similar suits, with possibly disastrous financial implications.

1993

## TRUE HOLLYWOOD STORIES



Even though he was a few years past his late-'80s saajid days, Mario finally made it to the big screen in 1993, in the dreadful *Super Mario Bros.* Starring a woefully miscast Bob Hoskins and John Leguizamo as Mario and Luigi, the film was applauded by both critics and the public. It did win one award, however — as esteemed critic Gene Siskel named it his "Worst Film of 1993."

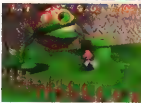
1996

## PLAYING A NEW ROLE

Already having mastered platforming and racing, Mario does Bo Jackson one better by branching out into the role-playing realm in *Super Mario RPG: Legend of the Seven Stars*. Nintendo wisely delegated the game's development to Square Soft, allowing the RPG powerhouse to produce an amazing visual masterpiece.

1996

## A WHOLE NEW WORLD

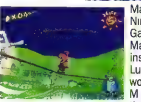


If *Super Mario RPG* was noteworthy in terms of visuals, our hero's maiden Nintendo 64 voyage was utterly mind-blowing. Using the N64's powerful graphics chip, *Super*

*Mario 64* was one of the pioneers in the use of fully polygonal 3D environments. This game broke the series' well-worn mold, allowing Mario to freely explore, swim, and even fly through the gorgeous landscapes. Once again, Nintendo had set a new standard in both gameplay and graphics.

2002

## THE RETURN?



Many were puzzled when Nintendo launched the GameCube without a Mario title, opting instead for the modest Luigi's Mansion, and wondered when the Big M would come back into the fold. These doubts

were allayed during E3 2001, when Nintendo debuted footage of *Mario Sunshine* during its press conference. To date, little is known about this game, other than the enigmatic water gun unit Mario appears to be wearing on his back. We know one thing: We can't wait to find out more, and Nintendo promises to shed more light on *Mario Sunshine* in the coming months. See page 25 for more.



CLASSIC 01

# GREATEST GAME OF ALL TIME

By Derrick Shamblin

Every month one of *Game Informer's* readers picks his or her personal choice for Greatest Game Of All Time.



## BUBBLE BOBBLE

FORMAT NES/ARCADE  
PUBLISHER TAITO

When in the course of electronic entertainment events, it becomes necessary for one video game company to break the bonds of the cinematic evolution of the gaming world and create a game that is so simple and cute, it's just plain fun. *Bubble Bobble*, on the classic (but not dead) NES, is this game. With its adorable characters and great replayability, this is a title not to be forgotten by the wheel of time.



The plot couldn't be simpler. The love interests of our heroes are captured and it's up to them to save their chicks. There's just one catch: Our pimps were transformed into short, squat dinosaurs whose only basic attack is to spit bubbles out of their mouths. The gameplay is not too complex, either. All the

levels are just one big square with oddly shaped platforms. If you fall off the bottom of the screen, you disappear at the top but don't be deceived, there are some elements of strategy involved. The only way to proceed to the next level is to defeat all the enemies in the room. To do this, the adversary must be trapped in a bubble and then popped by jumping directly on top of it. If the bubble is left unpoped, the enemy will break free and turn pink with anger, allowing it to move and attack twice as fast.

Besides bubbles, certain items appear which grant special abilities. Two spell books make the room fill with either thunder or lightning. Magic crosses allow the dino to spit things like fireballs from their mouths. A necklace makes a ball of light (similar to the diamonds in the Castlevania games) bounce around the room and kill everything it hits. Besides these three, there are other items which enhance abilities or allow level skips. However, these items only appear on the board for a certain period of time. The thrill of frantically trying to capture these items before they're gone is one of my favorite aspects of *Bubble Bobble*. Upon beating the game, a password is given that allows the player to replay the game with different and more difficult enemies in the levels. Also, there is two-player mode that allows some friendly point-gathering competition. The hardest thing to figure out is how to get the true ending. In the second to the last level, a crystal ball appears. This must be captured before disappearing and the character who captures it must not die before, or while, fighting the final boss. I won't give away what this crystal ball does, but I will say that the girls would be much happier with it.

All in all, *Bubble Bobble* is a game that offers so much, given the tiny 8-bit processor that supports it. No one should go without trying this game.

## TURBOGRAFX 16

### MILITARY MADNESS



RETRO RATING  
**9**



When gaming just started to get into the 16-bit swing, strategy fans were few and far between. However, both new systems had their strategic superstar: Genesys got Herzog Zwei, and TurboGrafx had Military Madness. Using a hexagonal grid to plot their moves, Blue and Green armies would wage war on dozens of militant map areas. At first, only tanks and foot soldiers were in your arsenal. As you progressed, you moved access to bigger, better weapons. Each had its own attack and defense statistics which changed depending on the terrain and the supporting troops in the vicinity. Flying craft could move to any location at will, and long-range firearms made it impossible to counterattack. Factories were even set up to keep pumping out the cannon fodder. Each attack displayed a close-up of the firefight, and a point graph at the level's end would show the balance of power. Expanded later as Nectaris on PlayStation, Military Madness earns the Silver Star in the field of video game armed forces battles.

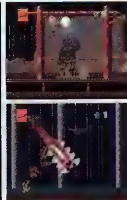
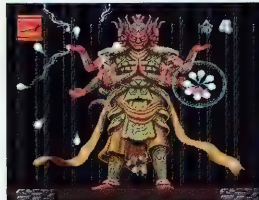
■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** NEC ■ **DEVELOPER** NEC  
■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1989

## TURBOGRAFX 16

### NINJA SPIRIT



RETRO RATING  
**8.5**



When you think of great ninja games, what do you think of? Tenchu? Ninja Gaiden? What about Ninja Spirit? Chances are, if you weren't a TurboGrafx owner, you missed out on the letter, and that's a shame. While not too sneaky and not very story-driven, Ninja Spirit was a heck of a lot of fun to play. Originally an arcade title, it followed a slain warrior on his path to vengeance. Hundreds of enemies would die by your sword, but most times the odds were against you. To even things up, you can get up to two more shadow ninjas, who mimic your every move, but are a step behind you. If you jump and then stand still, they'll hover in the air to take out higher foes. Power-ups also make you a more lethal assassin. The bosses are impressive and the action intense. If you missed Ninja Spirit, you missed sword-slashing arcade gameplay at its finest. Hang your head in shame, young grasshopper.

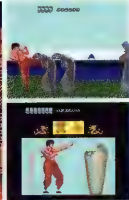
■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** NEC ■ **DEVELOPER** IREM ■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1990

## TURBOGRAFX 16

### CHINA WARRIOR



RETRO RATING  
**3.5**



With every update in video game technology, there are those titles that are basically identical to games of previous generations, but with better graphics. China Warrior exemplifies this phenomenon to a tee. Little more than a gussied-up version of the arcade classic Kung Fu, this title merely offered some sharper visuals in punch, kick, jumpkick, and ducking punch. These were used on robed monks who walked forward with no purpose, hummingbirds that fluttered by, and knives that came at you out of nowhere. Bosses were prevalent, but these were far from Street Fighter II-worthy fights. The difficulty was extremely high, but it's not like you'd want to continue your game after dying anyway. While the sprites are large, there is no other reason to play China Warrior. Away with ye!

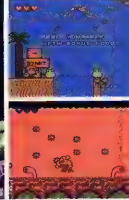
■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** NEC ■ **DEVELOPER** HUDSON SOFT  
■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1989

## TURBOGRAFX 16

### BONK'S ADVENTURE



RETRO RATING  
**8.75**



Even if you didn't own a TurboGrafx, you knew Bonk. This lovable, bald-headed caveman was put into the mascot role for the TurboGrafx, much like Sonic was for the Genesis. While TurboGrafx eventually gave up the ghost, Bonk's games were some of the best of that era. Bonk's Adventure was full of all the platform goodness one would expect: bonus levels, swimming areas, and big bosses. Keeping with the caveman gimmick, Bonk loved grabbing big chunks of meat (which gave him a power boost), and used his teeth to climb up ledges. His main means of offense was a massive headbutt, and he could travel long distances by somersaulting through the air. TG16's turbo controllers really aided in this activity. Bonk's graphics were vivid and bright, with just the right amount of parallax scrolling. The adventure was a tad easy, but that only served to appeal to a broad demographic. Years later, after the Turbo had already died, Bonk was ported onto various other systems, including the NES and Game Boy. Is nothing sacred?

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** NEC ■ **DEVELOPER** HUDSON SOFT  
■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1990

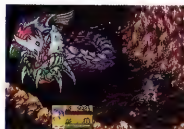
SNIES/GAMEBOY ADVANCE

# BREATH OF FIRE II



## PROLOGUE

After the introductory scene comes to a close, head downstairs and talk to your father. Now, chat with the women in front of the church. With a new clue in hand, head north and you'll run into a bush. Press A to pass through to the forest. Proceed forward to Yua's location. At the worst possible time, a boss will appear. Combat this beast until your HP reaches 7. At this point, your father will come to the rescue. From here, return to the village and enter the church. Talk to Hulk, then rest. When you awaken, you'll see a thief steal a candle.



After a brief story break, tell the miscreant that you'd like to stay. Bow will now join your party. Now that it's night, sneak out of the village through the gate. Head for shelter in the northwest cave. You'll need to use Bow's candle to illuminate the cavern. As you meander forward, you'll eventually run into the boss, Barubary. Don't even bother fighting, just give in and lose the battle. You can't win.

## CHAPTER 1



When you come to, you'll quickly learn that ten years have passed. Ask the elder for work. He'll ask that you find a pig named Suzy. Before embarking, search the town carefully, then level up a tad (level 4 is preferred) and buy some new equipment for your team. Also, grass may appear on the overworld after battles. If you need health, head into these areas and hunt to obtain meats and roasts. When ready, traverse south to the circus.

You can skip this portion if you like and head straight for Mount Fubi, but the turtle is worth seeing. Now then, continue south to Fubi. Work your way along the treacherous path to the boss trio: Palo, Puti, and Peach. Start out with Ryu attacking, then have Bow cast DefUp on Ryu. Now, just pound away. Exit the mountain and push the rock out of the way to create a new entrance. Pass through and grab all the goodies along the way. You'll eventually reach a room with Azusa inside. Take into consideration what he has to say, then

leave Fubi and head west to the building ruins. Battle the pests and slay the Roach boss. Nirol will thank you for the assist and ask if you'd like to feast upon a pig. Gulp! Rescue Suzy and bring her back to your hometown. You'll have to pass through Fubi again, but a shortcut is now available. Talk to the elder in the guild and hand over the swine to Mina. Now, fulfill Bow's wish of resting. During the night, Kilgore will appear and Bow will leave the party.

Not one to sleep, you'll awaken in the night. Exit the house and head north through the previously unavailable area. Talk to Kilgore (in the mansion), then return to your room and speak with Bow. Answer "no" to Bow's stealing inquiry, and he'll hide in a trashcan when a soldier knocks at the door. Leave the house and head south. Talk to the soldier to pass. Re-enter Fubi and head to the hideout. Nirol will suggest heading to Coursair.

## CHAPTER 2



Make sure your level is at least 7 and you have the best available equipment. Maneuver east across the bridges to Coursair. Talk with all of the villagers, then converse with the pub's bartender to advance the clock to night. Talk to Rand to learn of the coliseum contestants. Leave the town and head north to Tag Woods. Work your way through this area to the tree house. Ride the senes of buckets to Baba's location. He isn't pleased with your late arrival, so you'll need to knock him silly before he'll cooperate. It's now time to enter the coliseum. Before you can enter, you'll need to talk to Rand at the pub.

With a slew of Herbs in your pocket, approach the coliseum. Pass the test by beating the instructor, then speak with the manager. If you can avoid the darts, a 1,000 coin reward awaits in your locker

room. If you pass, don't speak to any guards, then grab it and store it (along with the rest of your loot) in the bank. Rand will eventually confront you in the locker room and ask for all of your money. Good thing you just deposited it.

Continue forward and you'll run into Katt. Knock her out, and save her from the needle shower. Katt will now join your party. Buy her some equipment, then return to the coliseum.

August will mutate and attack. As luck would have it, Rand just joined the fight as well. After the battle, head back to the ruin hideout. Rand will tell you of a mystical school - which just happens to be your next stop.

Return to your hometown and enter the Magic School. Head upstairs and eavesdrop on the conversation. A startling





event will take place and reroute your quest to the northeast. Your destination is the cave surrounded by mountains – better known as Mount Rocco. Enter and talk to the hood. He'll attack, but he's no match for you. Continue forward to the opening to the northeast. Tell the hood that the boss' nephew is named Pain. If you answer correctly, a fight awaits. You'll now have access to pass through the gate, but you'll be tricked and will fall into a hole. The lead person in your party will be poisoned, so plan accordingly. Work your way along the path and up the stairs. After a series of battles, Joker will emerge. Use Nina's Tornado whenever you can and slash away. He's difficult, but should fall if you keep an eye on your health.

Nina will now want to go to Windia, which is to the north west of Tag Woods. To reach this sacred place, you'll first need to pass through the maze (left, left down, right, down, then up the stairs). Move south to the magic show where Sten will join the party. Continue mingling with the Windians, then head west to the town known only as Captain. If you choose to, you can enter another circus along the way. Just before reaching Captain, you'll see a log cabin nearby. Check it out for items and info, then proceed into town. Talk to everyone you see and stock up on supplies. Throw caution to the wind and drop into the dry well. Explore every room and ride the turtles. After a brief scene, you'll eventually run into another boss. Afterwards, talk to Ray. A tidal wave will knock the villagers deeper within the well. Save all six of them and tell Ray that you've completed his mission. You'll eventually pop out of the well and Ray will thank you. If you saved all of the villagers he will give you the Renewal spell. Continue exploring the Captain region (with Ryuu as your lead). Talk to Sana to awaken the dragon in Ray. After burning down the house, return to the hideout and talk to everyone. You'll now need to backtrack to Captain in find a carpenter. First, talk to the man standing by the inn. Again, retreat to Captain and pick out the house of your dreams (we recommend the regular design). Once you've decided, head north to the harbor and use the boat.

## CHAPTER 3



When you reach land, enter the forest (near the sign). Here, you'll run into a pond full of frogs. One of them will begin conversing with you. He asks for your help.

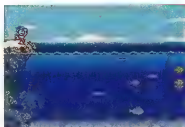
Come on, how can you refuse a talking frog? Depart and head north to the Watch Tower. With Ryu in front, enter and step on the obscure tile. Inevitably stepping on it until the witch opens the passage. Avoid the chests (traps) and ride the leftmost lift to the boss' location. If you have some time on your hands, ride the other lifts to riches galore. After defeating this monstrosity, cure the frog and head back to the Simafrol. Before doing anything in this town, a side-quest awaits. Head north-west of Simafrol to the

Wild Cat Cafe. Follow the owner's instructions, and say you like your meal rare. You, of course, are the meal. Defeat the cat boss, and follow him wherever he goes. Tell him that you're not mad about the eating thing and that you actually are seafood's #1. He'll now teach you the Chop-Chop technique. Before returning to Simafrol, head to the waterfall. Use Jean's transformation to reach the cave where Ryu will learn a new drag-on power. You can also head back to the hideout to learn of some new character abilities.

At long last, enter the elusive Simafrol. Once inside, you'll be forced out. After a strange sequence, the princess will give you girls. Head north to the far side of the fort and descend down the stairs. You'll eventually reach a jail. Free Jean and ask for his help. Now, leave Simafrol and head to the Wild Cat. Maneuver to the back room, then after conversing in the bathroom, jump into the toilet, then head south to find the ring. The only thing you can do now is head back to Simafrol. Talk to Jean again and you'll be thrust into a cooking contest. You'll need to return to the dungeon to find three ingredients: WormMeat, RochMeat, and GoldFly. From the kitchen, locate the king's chamber and enter the right opening behind the throne. Head up the stairs and search in front of the arrow to find a secret entrance. Continue upward, then help the soldier. You'll find Fiolina in front of the pond (downstairs). Trail her to Kata and he will hand you two keys. Use the keys to open the nearby buildings, then head to the basement via the buckets. A little ways down, you'll run into the Gold Fly. Battle it, then give chase. When you reach the bridge, a boss will confront you. Defeat it to get the WormMeat. Follow the Fly again and work your way along the path from the main room to the next boss. If you win the battle, you'll receive the RochMeat. Continue north and you'll snag the GoldFly.

Return to the kitchen and wait in the dining room. Talk to the guard to trigger the taste test contest. Take a nibble yourself, and Petape will be displeased with your input and will threaten to blow up the castle. Find the secret entrance in the room marked WC, then take the hidden elevator down. Move to the right to find Jean and another boss. Dragon attacks will quickly dispose of this demon. After the battle, Jean will join the party. Pillage the castle of all its chests and you will also run into the real thief – this time, a boss. Name it's now time to return to Home Town.

## CHAPTER 4



Place all of your money in the bank, then talk to the guard to enter Trout's house. Converse with him, then search the house. Leave, then talk to Kilgore. Add Bow to your active party and head to Kilgore's house. Confront Trout again and a massive battle will ensue. Cut your way through the soldiers and work your way to the mirror. It's actually a secret door leading to the real basement. After a brief cutscene, Trout will attack. If you didn't put your cash in the bank, Trout will steal your loot. Slay him as quickly as you can. After obtaining the Magic Hood, proceed to the city entrance, and you'll be swept away to the guild. Leave the city and trek across the sea once again. Head south and use Jean's frog power to navigate the rivers. Now, continue east. Enter the house on the peninsula. The man inside will direct you to Whale Cave. Head outside and fall in the hole. Use Jean's field ability to remove the fence. Move through the second opening. After talking with Mayuru, head north. You'll run into the stone doll. Of course, a boss battle awaits. Defeat the Munmar and head back to the Adam's apple you passed up earlier on. Use Katt's ability to whack it.

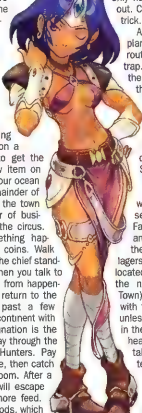
After an amusing sequence, you'll end up on a shore. Talk to Mayuru to get the Whale Bell. Use this new item on the shore to bring about your ocean transportation for the remainder of the game. Head south to the town of Tunlian. The first order of business here is to head to the circus. This time around, something happens. Pay the man 100 coins. Walk past the demon cages to the chief standing beside Grass Man. When you talk to him, try to stop the show from happening. Exit the circus, then return to the water. Head northeast past a few islands, then over to the continent with a bridge on it. Your destination is the nearby cave. Work your way through the cavern to the Uparupa Hunters. Pay them the coins they desire, then catch an Uparupa in the next room. After a brief fight, the Uparupa will escape and you'll need to find more feed. You'll find some in Owl Woods, which is west of Windia. To get there, you'll need to pass through a lodge. As you head up, you'll encounter you a girl who happens to be an extremely difficult boss. We suggest leveling up prior to this battle. Victory will

reward you with OwlFruits. From here, backtrack to Uperupa Cave. You'll now need to catch two of these critters. These are right of them, but you can only be able to snag two. For completing this task, you'll get a special item. You can free the Uparupas now to make two hidden chests appear (you'll need to reenter the room for the second).

Return to the circus, and tell the chief that you won't give up your right of course, will become enraged and fight you. He's susceptible to fire attacks, so make sure Sten is in your party. When he falls, Grass Man will free himself. Place him in the front of your party and trek to the forest just south of Simafrol. After conversing with the Wise Tree, make way to Highfort. The villagers speak a different tongue, so you'll need to find the Famous Flute next. Warp to Town Ship, then call Grandpa from the shore. Float south to the shore of a new continent. Use Jean's frog power, then head east (passing the house for now). Enter the castle Town of Highfort. Have Sten swing across to the other side. Next, tell Sten that you must continue onward, then talk to the gate guard. Sten will now depart on his own. When you regain control, talk to Sten. From here, head back up the stairs. After the bridge breaks, you'll continue forward past the war meeting and you'll fall into a trap. Control will be handed over to Sten. Head down to the dungeon to locate some amazing equipment. Now, backtrack to where you met Gayne, Maneuver north and Trubo will battle Sten. When the bridge breaks, you'll only have three rounds to take him out. Casting Flame twice will do the trick.

After the fight, stick with the plan, explore the multitude of routes, then work your way to the gate. You'll now be rejoined with the party. Work your way through the dungeon to the teleporters. Step on the middle one to warp to Trubo. Open the gate and a boss will attack. Dispose of this goon and continue onward. Navigate the dungeon and you'll run into Shupkey up the last staircase. She's one of the easiest bosses in the game, so don't worry. After the action-packed sequence, you'll receive the Famous Flute. Leave the castle and return to Tunlian. Meet with the queen and talk with the villagers. The man you're looking for is located at Mount Maori, which is to the northeast (just above Home Town). Pass into it and speak with the old man. He'll ramble on, unless you talk to him with a female in the lead. With Gedd in the party, head back to Tunlian. When he talks to the queen, bring his letter back to you. Meet with the assistant's advice, then use Sten's ability to navigate the path. Maneuver through the mountain. Grab the mushroom room that matches the one the assistant showed you and hand up to get to the Mountain.

Return to Tunlian and talk to Gedd. He will shrink you and insert you inside the



queen's body. Gross! Stay all of the monsters here and you'll be rewarded with the Therapy Pillow (which you'll have to locate and retrieve from a guarded chest in the castle). Just search the castle and talk to everyone to get it. Make sure Spar is in your party, then return to the Wise Tree.

## CHAPTER 5



Enter Ganaroo's mind and explore the town to the west. Chat with everyone, then head to the east to the next town. Mingle again, then make way for the last city. Locate the pub and talk with Barose to learn new magic. Make sure you heard everything the locals have to say, then return to the first village you visited. Everything will now be different. This dungeon is very confusing, so take your time. Talk to the old man to have him teleport you through the darkness. After traversing all seven levels, you'll run into a boss. Thankfully, he's not very tough. Wheel Cast Exit to leave the dungeon. From here, return to the northernmost town and talk to the child to the right of the counter. Retreat from Ganaroo's mind and head south to Fog Valley. It is, of course, too foggy to navigate, so you'll first need to go to Sky Tower, located on the ocean to the north of Turlan. Explore the tower and talk to Wind Shaman. She will remove the fog, allowing you access through Fog Valley. Work your way through this area to the south. You'll run smack dab into a giant tree. Use Jean's power to reach it, then switch to Spar to reach what the tree has to say. Now, continue south to Farm Town.

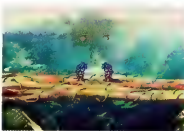
Place Rand in the lead and talk with everyone. A scene will take place where a person gets knocked out of a house. Enter this house and speak with Daisy. Plow her fields, defeat the enemies, then return to the house. The next morning, converse with Daisy one more time to learn of Namanda—your next destination just to the west of Farm Town. Hear what the villagers have to say, then head north through a series of rooms. Step on the box in the center of the room. If you donate 20 times, you'll be able to obtain the Earth Shaman later on. From here, leave the city and head to Gunz, south of Turlan. Buy the equipment you need, then leave and work your way south to the hut on Monster Island. Hey! It's Bo and Kam from the original Breath of Fire. This is a great place to level up—by now most of your characters should be at level 32 or higher.

After this brief, yet helpful detour, return to Daisy's house. A cutscene will take place, and before long, Rand will be thrust into battle. Eliminate this bothersome paladin, then talk to everyone in town again to learn about the church. You can either con-

tinue on to Windia, or head back to Namanda to learn a new spell. In Namanda, locate the room with the men ringing bells. A man will tell you to play the Prayer Song (on the A and B buttons). Memorize the sequence, then play it back for him. If you do it correctly, you'll be rewarded with the Bombada spell. If you completed this sidequest, now may be a good time to recruit two more tenants. Hire Hanz from Home Town, then head to Windia, and employ Daiyo. Now, return to the Wise Tree to learn of Eichichi. With this tip in mind, return to Gunz and talk to Eichichi (she'll only be there if you entered the well in Town Ship). When she departs, warp back to Town Ship and drop into the well. She will tell you that you should go to Windia. Place Nina in the lead and talk to the guard at the castle gate.

At this point, speak with the king. Head outside into the Sky Cave basement and carefully explore the northern surroundings to find a weapon for Nina. Now, proceed west, then down a series of stairways to a status. Have Nina speak with this inanimate object to open a new route. Move quickly so that the boulders don't block your path. In due time, you'll reach the guardian. When he attacks, Freeze magic will deal the most damage. Just pound away until he collapses. After the battle, you'll receive the mark of the wing. Rejoin the party by confronting the statues. It's now time to speak to the king with Nina in the lead. The party will rest, but while doing so, someone will steal the mark. Traverse west and descend the southern staircase to the Ceremonial Tower. Use the stairs to reach Mina, who transforms into the Great Bird. When this amazing sequence concludes, she will fly you wherever you desire. If you re-enter Windia, the king has given you permission to open all of the chests. Next, fly just south of Gunz to Evral.

## CHAPTER 6



Again, lend your ear to the townsfolk. If you spoke with everyone, you won't be able to leave the city, but try to do so. Head into the house to the north and Cleiris will help you out of town. The secret passage is the toilet. If you cast Smoke, you should be able to hop into the holes fairly quickly. When you resurface, head

upstairs and snag the CharmRod from the dresser. You can use this Rod in a secret fishing hole west of Town Ship. You'll need to bait repeatedly to make the hole appear. We recommend doing so because you'll hook an extremely powerful weapon for Ryu. From here, head toward Farm Town, but veer south to Cot Land.

Katt can knock away the boulders that block the path. Speak with Tiga and you'll find out that you should enter the Thieves Tomb next. You'll find this obscure shrine in the desert south of Highfort. Enter the Tomb, and mess around with the tiles (smiley faces bring fortunes). Work your way to Patty and free her from her prison. Follow her to the next room, then examine the treasure to find a hidden switch. In this chapter, you'll find the evidence you need. Now, cast Exit and return to Cot Land.

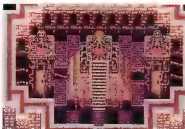
Enter Tige's house and tell her that you are Katt's friend. Before departing for Bando, return to Town Ship and add a fourth member to your team. You can also make Nina a Shaman. Bando is just south of Cot Land. The first stop here is the church. Enter the secret passage that Katt uncovers. Navigate the halls of this dungeon and step on the switch four times to reveal the next area. Navigate this bizarre habitat and you'll run into Father Manson—who happens to be completely evil! Destroy his zombie army, then take it to his next. He's incredibly tough and really doesn't have any weaknesses. DefUp everyone and cast as much magic as you can.

When he sees the light, you'll be rewarded with Evral Rod. Tell Katt that you are upset, then listen to what Tiga has to say. Before heading to Claris's house, first go to Home Town and donate 20 times at the church to get the Evans Bell. Return to Evral and check out Claris's crib. Tiga will inform you that Claris is out. When asked a question, answer Evans (as you just learned to be granted access to St. Eva Church). Explore this beautifully detailed chapel, then a startling cutscene will take place, followed by a battle against Ray. There's a big buildup for this battle, but it really couldn't be much easier. From here, ascend the stairs and release Daisy. Have Rand roll through the walls that block your progress. Continue up the stairs and Habaruku will confront the party. Follow him when he flees (to the east). Tricky as ever, he had a trap waiting for you. Explore the new area you fall into and you'll stumble upon a room with two platforms. To get the chest from here you'll need to enter the pattern: right, up, right, right, down, up, down. To reach the stair, input this sequence: right, up, right, right, down, up. Trek deeper into the church.

At this point, your actions will determine

what ending you get. When the Oldman and Guardeyes attack, do not attack the Oldman. You'll need to save him to produce a better ending sequence. When all three of the Guardeyes are disposed of, the church will begin to collapse. The Oldman will teleport the party back to Town Ship. Exit the carpenter's house and move to the eastern portion of Town Ship. Head into the well to check on Eichichi. She's discovered that the Town Ship can actually fly. Woo! After Ganar connects to the machine, talk to Eichichi again to move the controls. With your flying ability, soar high to Farm Town. If you donated 2,000 coins at the shrine, step on the plowing field to get the Earth Shaman. The Holy Shaman can also be picked up at this time within the Bando basement. From here, zoom over to the Wise Tree and learn of the evil that is sucking the life out of the land. At long last, you can finally head to Gate (north of Turlan, by a burning forest).

## CHAPTER 7



Head into the forest where you met Yua years ago. Speak with Father Huk, then leave the city. You'll now need to locate Patty. Start your search in the Cot Land, when you hear She's gone; continue on to Smafort café, over to the Thieves Tomb, and finally to Town Ship. Chat with them, then return to Father Huk's side. Babaruku will attack. When he falls, select Defeat as your answer, otherwise the game will end. The sacred dragon will awaken and reveal the entrance to Infinity. This freaky zone consists of 40 barrowing floors. Explore each one carefully. At the end, you'll reach Dologary. After getting caught up on the events at hand, and partaking in a flashback sequence, it's off to the second section of Infinity. Drink from the altar and talk to the monk dressed in red. Tell him that you won't sacrifice anybody, then navigate the four levels.

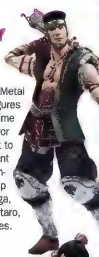
Barabary awaits. Use all of your powers to topple this behemoth. Take the teleporter to the final segment of the game. Enter the northern door. Ryu will suddenly blink. Rotate the control pad as fast as you can to free him of the curse. Ryu will lunge at Deathman and the final battle will ensue. You've come this far and should know how to manage your team in combat. This battle may seem like it never ends, and you may not be able to cast spells, or may succumb to the Death spell more than you care to, but if you can pull through, an amazing ending awaits. Congratulations!

# ETC

## ONIMUSHA 2: SAMURAI'S DESTINY

Manufacturer: McFarlane Toys  
Website: [www.spawn.com](http://www.spawn.com)  
List Price: TBA

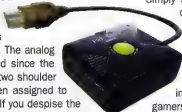
The creators of the intricately detailed Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty action figures are reentering the digital bitstream, this time taking a stab at Capcom's survival horror title, Onimusha 2: Samurai's Destiny. Set to hit retail shelves in May, this assortment accurately captures the likeness of each in-game character model. The exciting lineup consists of Jubel, his nemesis Nobunaga, secondary characters Oyu, Magoichi, Kotaro, and the mysterious adversary Gogardantes.



## THE X-CONNECTOR

Manufacturer: Innovation  
Website: [www.innovation1.com](http://www.innovation1.com)  
List Price: \$24.99

We've received thousands of emails from readers complaining about the awkward size and obscure button layout of the Xbox controller. Our good friends over at Innovation have concocted a solution that should make your Xbox gaming sessions stress-free. The X-Connector will allow gamers to connect Sony's Dual Shock and Dual Shock 2 controllers to the Xbox. This device works surprisingly well. The analog sensitivity is right on par, and since the Xbox controller only features two shoulder buttons, L1 and L2 have been assigned to the Black and White buttons. If you despise the Xbox controller, we strongly recommend investing in this secondary option.



## HIS DARK MATERIALS

Manufacturer: Ballantine Books  
Website: [www.randomhouse.com/features/pullman/index.html](http://www.randomhouse.com/features/pullman/index.html)  
List Price: \$20.97 (Paperback Box Set)

If you've already reread *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, and have grown tired of waiting for J.K. Rowling to finish the long-awaited *Harry Potter: The Order of the Phoenix*, we strongly recommend you take some time to explore Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* series. In the three novels that make up the trilogy, Pullman, a respected children's author who won England's prestigious Carnegie Medal in 1996, has created perhaps the most intriguing and finely wrought fantasy saga in recent memory. The books follow the story of Lyra, an orphan girl (much like Harry Potter) with burgeoning occult powers and a mysterious family lineage. Through elegiac prose, a fascinating imaginary world is created, one that is a magical parallel to 19th century England. On her journeys, Lyra encounters all manner of interesting characters, from the noble Gypsy king John Faa to the fearsome Goblins, all the while confiding in her daemon, Pantalaimon (a shape-shifting spirit creature that is her constant companion). Pullman is a master writer, and *His Dark Materials* are a spellbinding and fast-paced read. If you're looking for the next big thing in fantasy, this is it. This series blows the doors off *Harry Potter*, and we wouldn't be surprised to see a bidding war erupt over the movie rights. Fiction just doesn't get much better than *His Dark Materials*.

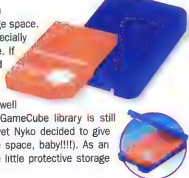


## NYKO GAMECUBE MEMORY CARDS

Manufacturer: Nyko • Website: [www.nyko.com](http://www.nyko.com)  
List Price: \$14.99 (4Mb), \$19.99 (8Mb), 16Mb & 64Mb (MSRP TBA)

We'll admit it, the GameCube memory card is extremely limited in storage space.

Simply said, 4Mb (59 blocks) just doesn't cut it nowadays – especially considering many sports games consume most of this space. If you tire of constantly deleting game saves, Nyko has created a number of options that should cater perfectly to your gaming needs. Along with a standard third-party 4Mb card, Nyko is also manufacturing an 8Mb card (double the space), as well as a 16Mb card (four times the space). Seeing that the GameCube library is still incredibly small, there really is no need for anything larger, yet Nyko decided to give gamers the full Monty with a massive 64Mb card (eight times the space, baby!!!). As an added incentive to buy, all of these cards come packaged with a cute little protective storage case. Neat!







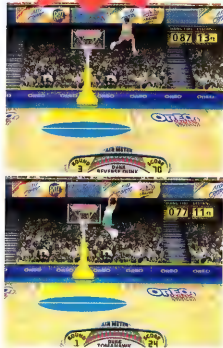
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## BUNK 'N SLAM

From these tracks, Richard's quest isn't a full-out one who has to be shown into and the judge that you've got your own slams like the floor systems around the room.

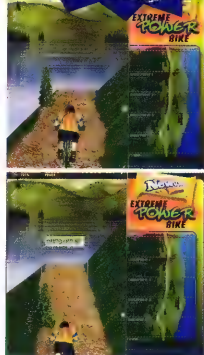


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## SPACE CONQUEST

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# THE GAME



PlayStation®2



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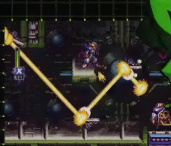
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