

THE 11TH ANNUAL VIDEO GAME AWARDS

# GAMEINFORMER

Official Word On Computer & Video Games

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Two RPG Giants  
Become One

## GAME BOY ADVANCE PLAYER

GBA Hits The  
Big Screen

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Strategy

**OVER  
675  
SECRETS  
FOR MORTAL  
KOMBAT**

## PROJECT EGO BECOMES

# FABLE

**EXCLUSIVE DETAILS ON XBOX'S MOST ANTICIPATED RPG**

**FIVE**

**CUBE**

Capcom Unveils New Games For 2003  
Including Resident Evil 4 & Killer 7 pg 26



ISSUE  
117

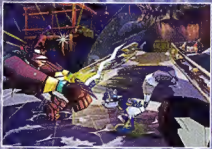
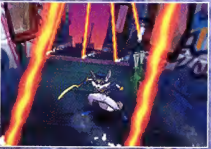
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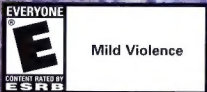
JANUARY 2003



PlayStation 2

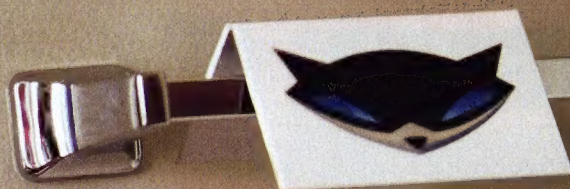


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and the  
*Thieves' Menagerie*





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*He's one cunning devious thievius raccoonus.*



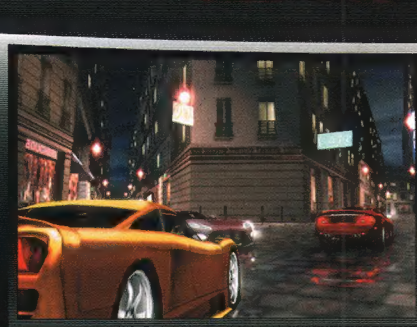




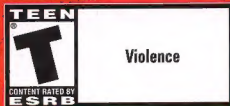
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PlayStation®2



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Religion <sup>2K3</sup>



Beat rivals in February so you can dance in March.



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USE SCHOOL AS A VERB ON THESE PLATFORMS



PlayStation 2



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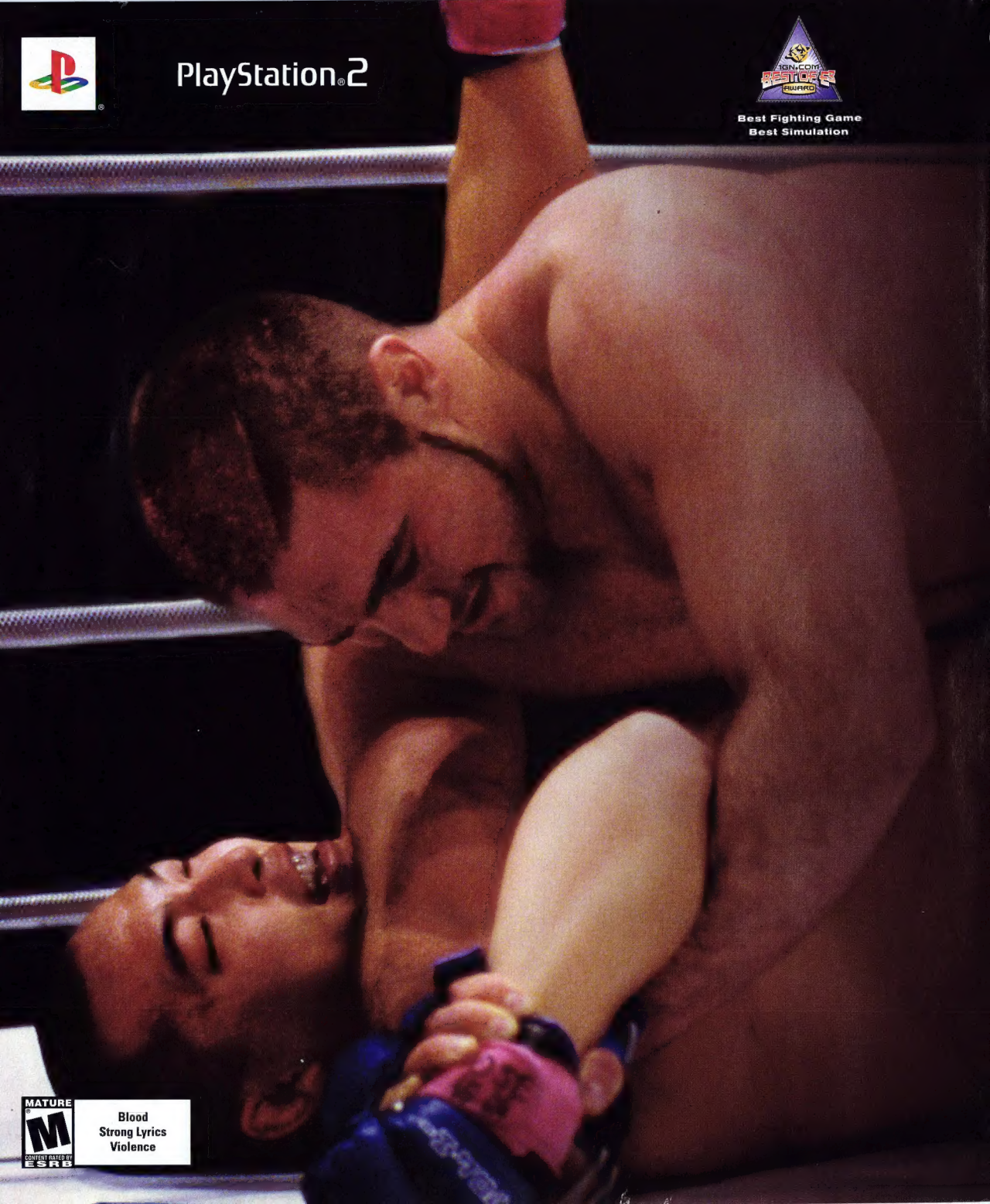




PlayStation®2



Best Fighting Game  
Best Simulation



Blood  
Strong Lyrics  
Violence





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QUITTING WOULD FEEL  
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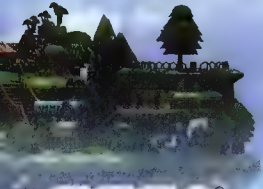




**A**s the massive Valuan airship draws near, your crew checks their weapons yet again. Ready your cutlass and grappling hooks and steel yourself for battle.



To Be Continued...



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**RP**

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# PREY ON THE DEAD... OR THE DEAD WILL PREY ON YOU.



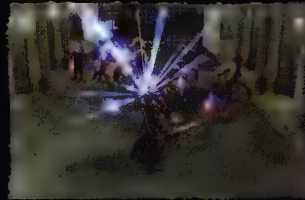
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Slay in brutal single- and multi-player action through 23 huge environments, including a prison, gothic church, cemetery and torture chamber.





# HUNTER THE RECKONING

DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

"GAME OF THE MONTH"  
—Playboy Magazine (July, 2002)

"Be warned: When you're done, your Spidey senses will be tingling almost as much as your tired fingers."  
—Entertainment Weekly

"Hunter is a joy. I dream about this game. I don't have to stop to think 'what game do I wanna play tonight,' because I already know. It's all about the Hunter." —IGN.com

"Hunter comes through as one of the most fun, frenetic, addictive, multiplayer action shoot 'em ups on Xbox, and, most likely any system."  
—Official Xbox Magazine

"★★★★★ (out of 5)...if you have even the slightest interest in removing zombie infestations, Hunter: The Reckoning is the game you've been waiting for your entire life."  
—Adrenaline Vault



Blood and Gore  
Violence



[www.interplay.com/hunter](http://www.interplay.com/hunter)

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## COVER STORY

### 34 FABLE

Nothing could prepare you for this Xbox-exclusive RPG. Start as a child, finish as an adult, and each decision in between has consequences that can haunt you deep into old age. Will you become a villain or a hero? The choices are up to you.

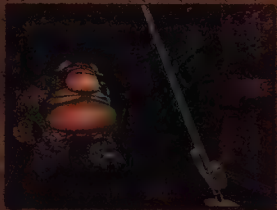
## FEATURE

### 44 GAMES OF 2002

Always up for a good debate, the office is still spinning from battles raged during this war of ultimate importance — selecting the top ten Games of 2002. See what we came up with, and let the letters of dissent roll in.







**"MORROWIND IS THE BEST-LOOKING  
XBOX GAME SINCE HALO."**

**GAMES DOMAIN**

- \* **LIVE ANOTHER LIFE.** Play any character you can imagine, from the heroic warrior to the secret assassin.
- \* **EXPLORE ANOTHER WORLD.** The enormous game world is open and free for you to discover.
- \* **NEXT GENERATION TECHNOLOGY.** Realistic textures and objects, incredible polygon counts, and advanced weather systems.

**OWN THE CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED RPG FOR XBOX**

**GAMEPRO**, 5.0 score  
**GAMEZONE**, Editors' Choice  
**GAMEOVER**, Gamer's Choice award  
**XBOX EVOLVED**, Gold Medal  
**THE ARMCHAIR EMPIRE**, 10/10  
**UGO**, A- score  
**GAME VORTEX**, 9 of 10

**IGN**, Editors' Choice  
**ADRENALINE VAULT**, Seal of Excellence  
**GAME INDUSTRY NEWS**, 5 gems  
**GAMESPOT**, Game-of-the-month  
**GDXBOX**, CD Droid award  
**XBOX MANIACS**, Editors' Choice  
**GAME CHRONICLES**, Editors' Choice

**GAMES DOMAIN**, Top Game award  
**TEAM XBOX**, Editors' Choice  
**INVISIBLE DREAM**, 99% rating  
**GAME RANKINGS**, 96% score  
**NEXT LEVEL GAMING**, 5 of 6  
**GAMINGWORLDX**, 9.0 score  
**GAMING TARGET**, 9.0 score

The Elder Scrolls III  
**MORROWIND**

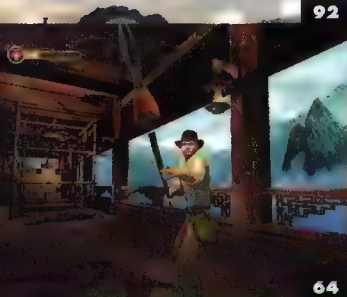


Blood  
Violence





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It was a very good year; Andy philosophizes on the year in review, and what to hope for in 2003.

### 20 GI SPY

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

### 22 DEAR GI

Fostering angry mail from ex-employees one list at a time. Who's that robed guy with the beard hanging over Rio? I want cheap games! Is chivalry dead in the GI office? We are big, stinking liars.

### 26 NEWS

Resident Evil 4 - 'nuff said. Outlaws take to the beach for volleyball fun and fighting. Nintendo is definitely going next-next gen. Shinobi heads to Hollywood and Blinx scores a sequel. GBA gets to live on the TV.

### 56 PREVIEWS

GI shows the newest info on Resident Evil Online, Psychonauts, War of the Monsters, Knights of the Old Republic, and the new Indy (-ana Jones, that is). Ogle screenshots of the greatness that is soon to come for each system.

### 56 REVIEWS

Metrod fans have a pair of great games to battle through this month, at home and on the go. Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance shatters everyone's expectations, with more than half of the staff reviewing it in some form. After a number of delays, did Splinter Cell live up to the hype? BMX XXX finally lays out its cards. Plus, a must-read review of Age of Mythology!

### 127 CHARTS

What's hot? What's not? What's up? What's down? It's not NASDAQ, it's the Retail Sales Data and the GI editors' Top 10 Games.

### 130 PLAY TO PERFECTION: SPLINTER CELL

If only the novels came with a roadmap this detailed, those conspiracy theories might start to make some freakin' sense. We take an intrepid secret agent through every last mission in a quest for the greater good. Crack through the tough spots, with your good friend, GI.

### 136 PLAY TO PERFECTION: MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

676 secrets, Fatalities unwrapped, and strategy to boot. Thank the big dork in the

sky for this one. Suck the marrow of Mortal Kombat (sadly, marrow sucking is not a secret Fatalilty) and perfect your blood-letting techniques.

### 140 SECRET ACCESS

What would video games be without sneaky codes to infuse God-like powers upon the couch-surfing masses? Hopefully, we will never know such a horror.

### 144 CLASSIC GI

Rygar's NES iteration gets a Classic Strategy treatment for the month. NES classics Pinball, Urban Champion, and Ice Climber are put through the review ringer. See how those crazy plumber brothers scored before they got "Super."

### 150 ETC

Things to put on that table in front of the couch (that's the coffee table). A new controller that makes Bond gadgets look as impressive as a block of cheese; and, to be blunt, a video card that just kicks ass.



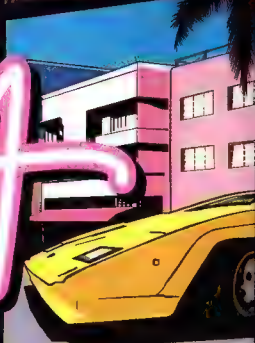
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PlayStation 2

# grand theft auto

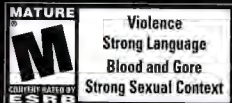
# Vice City



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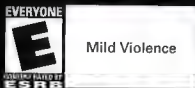
Things in the light are not the same in the dark



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



Link with up to  
4 Players





# EDITORS' FORUM

## IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR...



As I look back on the last year, and think about all the great things that happened, I can't help but be a little disappointed at the same time. In my opinion, 2001 was one of the greatest years in video game history, with the launch of two new systems and a wide array of entertaining and innovative titles that pushed gamers and the industry to new heights. On the other hand, 2002, while solid on all fronts, lacked some of the novelty that made the previous year so exciting. A lot of this is due to the fact that a number of games that I really thought were going to blow me away ended up just being better than average.

In my opinion, two of the biggest under-performers of 2002 were the first party publishing divisions of Sony and Microsoft. Both companies relied far too much on third-party publishers to deliver groundbreaking products and didn't bring enough triple-A content to the market for their respective machines. Sure, you could say I am being

a little tough on these two companies, as they did have some great games, but I expect more from hardware manufacturers. Just look at Nintendo, which had a huge year in my opinion. Not only did it put out a deluge of amazing first-party product; the company also managed to secure many high-quality third-party products, something that has classically been one of Nintendo's shortcomings.

Heading into 2003, I know I'm going to keep an eye on Sony and Microsoft to see if they can step up and continue to push the limits of both offline and online gaming, because I have a feeling Nintendo will continue to deliver. History shows that 2003 should be a strong year for the current gaming platforms, but its success or failure is dependent on whether the big three can deliver the goods. Let's all hope they do, and you can count on Game Informer to keep you updated as the year develops.

Andy McNamara  
Editor  
andy@gameinformer.com

### REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

reiner@gameinformer.com

Since I'm an evil bastard who doesn't take the time to reply to reader emails, I figured I'd answer all of your questions within this tidy little editorial space. Here goes... "Reiner, why do you suck?" Hrrmm... How did this letter get in here? It must be some kind of a mistake or something. Let's move on, shall we? "Reiner, I think you're a [expletive deleted] moron, and you should die a horrible [expletive deleted] death!" You [expletive deleted]!!!! "Um... This must be a joke. My friends are so funny! Ha ha ha! Next letter!!!" "Dear, this is your mother. I found your blanket under your bed and I was wondering if you still want it?" Of course I want Mr. Blankie, mom!!! I mean... blankets are for sissies!! This letter must be for Kristian! Well...um...look at the time! My fans are the best! [sniff]

### MATT, THE ORIGINAL GAMER

matt@gameinformer.com

We've been hearing about the inevitable console online revolution for the last few years. With the launch of PS2 online and Xbox Live, the hype has gotten overblown to the point where we're actually starting to get a lot of reader letters worrying whether single-player games are going to become an endangered species. I certainly don't think so. In fact, I suspect that console online won't become a real mainstream phenomenon until the next round of new systems. For example: What's the biggest game in recent memory? GTA: Vice City, a classic single-player game. Yes, it's fun to bond online, but don't discount the fact that a lot of people (myself included) play games because they don't want to deal with the rest of the a-holes out there in the world.

### KRISTIAN, THE VIDEO VIKING

kristian@gameinformer.com

I'm not going to lie to you people; it's been a rough, rough football season. When the Vikings lose, I can't even bear to look at my Madden 2003, let alone watch the news or come to the office and witness the barrage of tweets hurled by the unfaithful. That's really how I've rediscovered NASCAR Thunder. You see, my home-based game playing goes in fits and starts. I'll be hopelessly addicted to one game for weeks on end, then as the attraction begins to ebb, I'll throw in something I haven't played for a while, and enjoy it anew. On that note, I highly recommend everyone try out 'ooohoo as if you don't already partake on a regular basis. It's a damn fine soft drink.

### JUSTIN, THE DIGITAL DEVIANT

justin@gameinformer.com

Time for my own year-end awards. Game! Played The Most At Home: Aggressive Inline. It's huge, and getting 100 percent takes a long-ass time. Game I'll Get The Most Flack For Liking: Animal Crossing. Wussy or not, I can't resist it. Most Overrated Series: Resident Evil. I just don't dig the crappy control and cheap "scarses." Game That Elicited The Most Swearing: The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers - GameCube. Kato and Kristian were bad enough to make sailors cry. Worst Time I Had Playing A Game: Mario Party 4. It's awful, and Chet's infernal taunting didn't help. Deceased Pet Scorpion Of The Year: Pucho. Rest in peace, little stinky.

### KATO, THE GAME KATANA

kato@gameinformer.com

I was having a conversation with Matt the other day (no, we editors don't communicate with each other through video game bleeps and sound effects), and I realized that mags like Maxim are ruining periodicals. Even older pubs like Rolling Stone are falling under the spell of skin and quickie, sound bite journalism. Yes, I'm aware of how ironic this sounds coming from a writer whose maturity level never passed the fifth grade. I'm just wondering out loud when the media in general is going to stop thinking that stuffing a bikini-clad girl in my face is going to make me buy their razor or whatever. Not that there's anything wrong with seeing said woman, but nakedness becomes devoid of sexiness when it's used out of context as it is these days. They say men think about sex every five seconds. I guess I'm saying I want my four seconds back.

### CHET, THE JOYSTICK JOCKEY

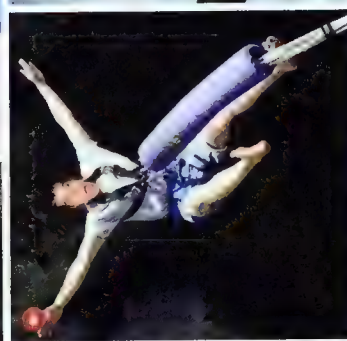
chet@gameinformer.com

When I was gaming at other places prior to GI, we had to make predictions for the events in 2002. I claimed that Midway would have a surprising year of quality software, and I am happy that that prediction is becoming a reality. Mortal Kombat, Haven, Defender, Dr. Muto, and NHL Hitz have all proven to be at least solid. In fact, the only real dud that comes to mind is that Gravity Game thing, but let's just forget about that. More than anything else, I would really love to see Midway make a comeback and reinvigorate our industry with some much needed American ingenuity. Congratulations to all of you at Midway, and keep up the good work! Oh yeah, this is an unrelated fact I discovered this month. Do you know the number one cause for the hole in the ozone is not cars, but cow gas?! A good reason to stop eating crummy fast food, no?

### LISA, LA GAME NIKITA

lisa@gameinformer.com

With the advent of DOA: Volleyball and BMX XXX, most of my mail has veered towards, "What do you think about nekkid people in video games?" Presumably, people are curious what someone with two X chromosomes thinks about the "objectification" of women in the pixel-based land of gaming. I think it's necessary. Really, the industry needs to experiment. Before we can have game styles as varied as movies, developers need to get the Porky's Revenge of gaming out of their system. I don't really believe that topless bikini will encase the crackling glass ceiling in cement, and I fail to understand why these growing pains are different than films in the '60s. That, and they're really kinda funny games.



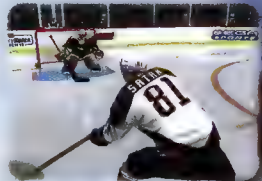
1. Despite continuous vomiting, Chet stays on for another 275 laps to set a new park record. 2. Veteran Andy signals thumbs up, but novice Reiner isn't so sure about his position or those pigeons! 3. Kato and Matt attempt to set a new land speed record at the Bonneville Salt Flats in their homemade jet car. 4. Lisa props up Kristian, who needs a beer to steady his nerves for one more shot as the "Human Cannonball." 5. Justin just realizes he's making a 200-foot jump with a 204-foot bungee cord.



FURY 2K3



This is hockey like Roenic plays it. Hard-nosed and furious.



It speeds toward you so fast you don't have time to blink.

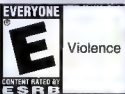


So get tough or you'll be eating ice.

NHL 2K3

SEGA SPORTS

segasports.com



WREAK HAVOC ON THESE PLATFORMS



PlayStation 2



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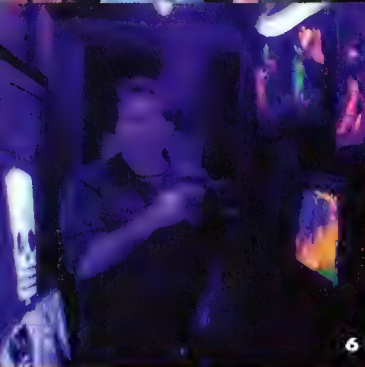


# GI SPY



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

**1** Microsoft's Xbox Live launch party drew the cream of the Hollywood crop, including our hero, Brian Posehn a.k.a. "That Wierd Guy From *Mr. Show* and *Just Shoot Me*." He is so much cooler than you! **2** Activision's Christopher Archer. Happy, Activision's Mike Larson. Sad. **3** THQ's Reilly Brennan and Outrage Games' Chris Pfeiffer watch while Andy tries to hypnotize Game Informer readers. You're getting very, very sleeeeepppy... **4** When Chet's not dressing up as a Playboy bunny, he's going to dinner with freelancer Thomas Layton, and LucasArts' Heather Twist-Phillips, Giselle Talkoff, and Alexis Mervin! We liked him better when he was a woman. **5** Elix's George Torii and Justin Lucas, waiting patiently at Platform 9 3/4 for the Hogwart's Express. **6** Welcome to the strange world of Double Fine's Tim Schafer. **7** GameSpy's Ben Turner, The Digital Deviant, and John Gibson stop by the "King's Head in a Gravy Boat" restaurant for some curry in Tokyo.

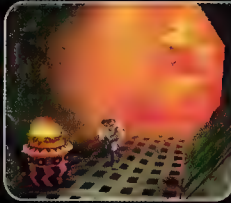
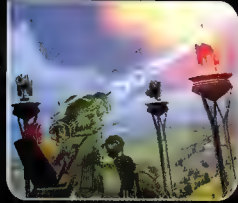




MIDWAY



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THEN IT GETS REAL.



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TEEN  
T  
Mild Violence  
CONTENT RATED BY  
ESRB

Fall 2002

Coming 2003



PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE

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# DEAR GI

## WE FAKE IT SO REAL WE ARE BEYOND FAKE

Please put this in your magazine. All my friends think that the letters are staged; let's have my favorite magazine prove them wrong.

Brad Belanger  
Via email

No problem, "Brad." We'll be sure to tell your "friends" that this letter was "real."

## GREATEST MOMENTS OMISSIONS

I loved your feature article in issue 115, "The 25 Greatest Moments in Video Games." However, I saw that nowhere on that list was the "All your base are belong to us" outscene from Zero Wing on Sega Genesis! That moment brought a tear of joy to every gamer's eye, but it was not included at all! I know you can't go and re-edit that article, even if you wanted to, but I thought it should at least get some notice in an upcoming issue. Thanks!

James Lirot  
Via yahoo.com

Either GI's editorial staff is comprised solely of video-game neophytes, or everyone there is under 25 years old; otherwise, there is no way your "25 (Lamest) Moments In Video Games" would have excluded Warren Robinett's original Easter egg in Atari's Adventure. Gaining the mysterious microdot and discovering the secret message was not only THE defining moment for the world's first electronic generation, it was a defining moment in gaming itself. Programmers revolted against the Atari juggernaut, paving the way for a long history of developer credits, splinter companies and hidden codes. Where would Secret Access be without the Adventure microdot? In fact, where would GI be? Probably being used to wrap fish along the Mississippi River.

Critical GI fan and ex-GI editor,  
Jon Storm  
Via stinkyfishbait.com

Hey, it's always a treat to get scathing emails from former co-workers, so let's all give the erstwhile Greedy Gamer a big wet kiss! It's not an easy job to boil 30-odd years of gaming history down to 25 moments, and – as we said in the introduction – our list was by no means comprehensive. We were trying to bring some fond memories to light, and, at the same time, foster a dialogue amongst our readers, even if most of said dialogue was regarding whether or not the GI staff were, in fact, "dumb asses." However, a good many readers did mention "All your base..." and the Adventure Easter egg as the most glaring omissions. So, hopefully, this will give those two memorable moments their just due. Everybody happy? Probably not, but what's a list if it doesn't make people mad? Nothing – that's what!!!

## ECONOMICS 101

Too much of a good thing is bad, right? At some tragic point in gaming history, won't it become financially



impossible to make games any more graphically detailed? People expect that future games will have the graphics of a movie like Shrek. Wouldn't this be expensive to develop? Shrek's animation cost millions of dollars. Gamers couldn't afford to pick up the cost, and most will agree when I say that 50 bucks is quite enough for a game. How are video game companies going to compete in the future? Man, now I'm depressed!

Anonymous  
Via email

The hope has always been that improving technology will make it cheaper and easier to create

more and more impressive graphics, but you do raise some good (and slightly troubling) points. In recent years, the number of people needed to make a game has skyrocketed, and development team sizes for blockbuster games can now be anywhere from 50 to 80 people. Throw in hardware investments, disc manufacturing, advertising, marketing, and administrative costs, and it's no wonder why games cost \$50. This high price of doing business is going to be one of the key problems our industry faces in coming years, and it has already caused some significant changes. For example, notice the rate at which giant corporations like Sony, Electronic Arts, Activision, and Microsoft have swallowed up smaller publishers and development houses. The reality is that a lot of small companies simply can't make it on their own in the high-risk world of next-generation console development.

## THESE CHARMING MIN

Do you guys hate each other or something? You're always talking about kicking each other in the balls and in your dislikes I always see at least one editor putting down another. I just imagine the GI office with you guys sitting around in a circle, slouched in your chairs with your pants unzipped, belching, drinking soda, eating stale pizza, and growling at each other. I don't know how Lisa can put up with it.

Sean Umphlet  
Via yahoo.com

Hate is a strong word...intense dislike is probably more accurate. In your other accusations, you're a little off the mark. Now, perhaps you and your buddies like to "[sit] around in a circle, slouched in your chairs with your pants unzipped," but we just don't get down like that – not that there's anything wrong with it. Do whatever makes you happy! However, you were dead-on regarding the stench in the GI offices. Chet,



our resident vegan, subsists on a diet of broccoli and black beans, so you can imagine the funk that spews forth from his nether regions. Actually, you probably can't imagine it, so consider yourself lucky!

## LOST CLASSIC

I just had a few things I was hoping you guys could shed some light on. It seems that Rockstar Games has become very popular with Grand Theft Auto III, but the game that showed me it was a good company was the old PS-X game, Thrasher: Skate and Destroy. After the game's release, any info on it practically disappeared, meaning that it must not have done well. I know it doesn't match up with Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, but I would really like to see another Thrasher ported over to the PS2. It was more of a skateboarding simulation game, and I think most skaters would appreciate a title like that.

Shawn Dawes  
Via msn.com

Thanks, Shawn, for reminding us of a nice little piece of extreme sports history. We also liked Thrasher, scoring it an 8 back in our January 2000 issue. It's a really underrated game, and even more noteworthy for the fact that its developer, Z-Axis, went on to become one of the masters of the genre. Since then, Z-Axis began a collaboration with Acclaim that spawned such successful titles as Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 1 & 2, Aggressive Inline, and the controversial BMX XXX. Sadly, a Thrasher update will likely never happen, as Z-Axis was recently scooped up by Activision, the home of Tony Hawk.

## GAMING HOAX?

I was reading the new issue and saw the article about the Reservoir Dogs game for the GameCube. I was just wondering if this was a bogus article or if there is going to be such a game because there is no information regarding it on Nintendo's website or on the Internet.

Chris Coker  
Via hotmail.com

In your August 2002 issue, you guys had an article about an Xbox game called Deception Revenge. I am really interested in this game and I was wondering if you have news on its release date?

Monkey RVD  
Via email

We get about a dozen of these kinds of letters a month, so we thought we'd enlighten our readers (and the lawyers for the people that own the Transformers license). Repeat this with us ten times: The R&D section of GI News is made up. Basically, it's our attempt to suggest a few concepts that we think would make blockbuster games. These ideas may be silly (Sim Phish, Rascal







## ENVELOPE ART

Extreme Racing) or serious (Reservoir Dogs, Transformers), but they are NOT actual titles in development. So, don't drive your local video game store employee insane trying to reserve a copy of a game that doesn't exist, okay?

### HALF-RIGHT

You rule! All other magazines suck!

Sandi Steeber  
Via email

Gee, that's nice of you to say, but we've always really liked *Reader's Digest*.

### BLAME IT ON RIO

I was playing Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 today with my friends. I was in the Rio level, when my system did something weird and I could move around wherever I wanted to. I was up on the hill when I noticed something strange. Why is a Jesus-like sculpture looking down on the town?

Paul Porcello  
St. James, NY



The fact that you were able to freely move about the environment in Tony 3 was probably nothing more than a random software bug, but the Jesus sculpture you refer to is no mistake. Real-world Rio is looked over by the *Christo Redentor* (Christ the Redeemer) statue, which, standing at over 108 feet tall, is the largest statue of Jesus in the world. Be sure to drop this little jewel of knowledge next time you're trying to impress a foxy geography teacher!

### XBOX GREATEST HITS?

Does Microsoft or any of its third party publishers have any kind of greatest hits lineup planned for the Xbox? Since the holidays are coming, I'm sure they could make a killing on some of their older games like Halo, Dead or Alive 3, Silent Hill 2, and Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee. Have you guys at GI heard anything to that effect? Just wondering for all the ghetto gamers out there!

Josh "The Ghetto Gamer" Fuentes  
Whittier, CA

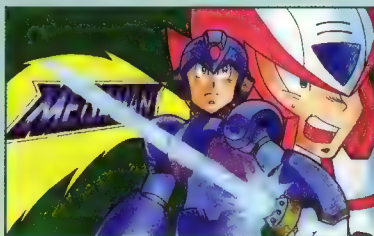
Sony's Greatest Hits series is one of the best deals in all of gaming, but if you're an Xbox fan waiting to buy Halo for a bargain price, you're going to have to wait, or pick it up used. We contacted Microsoft, and a representative commented that, although internal discussions about a discount line of games have begun, an Xbox Greatest Hits series would not begin until sometime in the second half of the year, at the earliest. Rest assured, as soon as we find out, Game Informer readers will be the first to know.



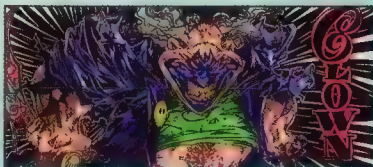
**Charles M. Atkins**  
The Disney/Square partnership has gone too far!

Enter the Game Informer Envelope Art Contest. All you need to do is draw, paint, scratch, spit, or carve the best darn 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. Sorry, art cannot be returned.

**Send to:**  
Game Informer • Envelope Art Contest  
724 North First St., 4th Floor • Mpls, MN 55401



**Salomon Campos Lazaro**  
George Lucas is going to sue somebody!

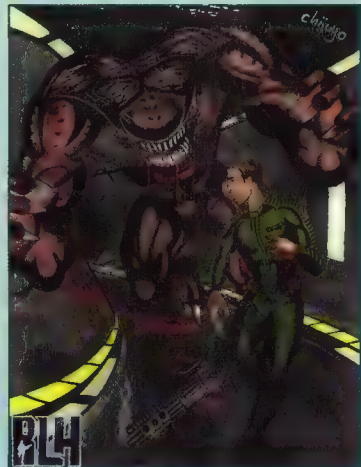


**Lorenzo Ocampo**  
The lost member of Insane Clown Posse



### JANUARY WINNER!

**Jason Rodriguez**  
"Damn you, Flanders!!!"



**Chijuyo**  
"I knew I shouldn't have worn my thong today!"



**Travis Ord**  
Knuckles does his best Lord of the Dance impersonation



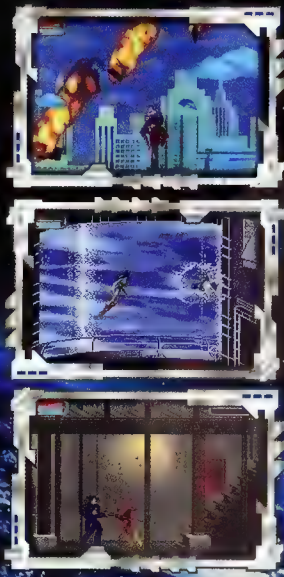
# JUSTICE LEAGUE

## INJUSTICE FOR ALL



### JUSTICE LEAGUE COMES TO THE GAME BOY ADVANCE

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



GAME PREVIEW AT:  
[WWW.JUSTICELEAGUE.MIDWAY.COM](http://WWW.JUSTICELEAGUE.MIDWAY.COM)



GAME BOY ADVANCE

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(502)



# GI NEWS

## CAPCOM REVEALS RESIDENT EVIL 4 AND MORE

Citing a "mission and responsibility to create something that is 'worth seeing' for the user," **Capcom** has created the **Production Studio 4** development team. Its mandate so far is to create five games for **Nintendo's GameCube**. The first four – **Viewtiful Joe, P.N. 03, Dead Phoenix,** and **Killer 7** – are all noteworthy for at least their visual prowess alone. But **Production Studio 4's** biggest and baddest project is the long-awaited **Resident Evil 4**.

This fourth installment in the series is the directorial debut of **Hiroshi Shibata**, a man who was involved in **Resident Evil 3**. The studio's development pedigree runs equally deep throughout all its games. The other title's directors have worked on such blockbuster Capcom games as **Resident Evil** and **Devil May Cry**. The company's website featuring these titles has an English translation, so hopefully that's a good sign that these babies will be heading our way.



### Resident Evil 4

Starring Leon S. Kennedy, this title takes place deep inside Umbrella, and early video footage of **RE 4** shows that the series is looking better than ever on the system. Enemies swirl and form around Leon out of a menacing black fog in environments that are impressive even compared to **Resident Evil 0**. Capcom hasn't set a release date for **Resident Evil 4**.



### Killer 7

Some call him "God Killer," others just see an old man in a wheelchair. The thing is, Harman Smith has seven different personalities, and he's going to have to use all of them if he's to stop his nemesis – "God Hands."



### P.N. 03

Play as Venessa Z. Schneider, a mercenary who possesses the one weapon that will tame a planet full of mechanical terrors. Directed by Shinji Mikami, **P.N. 03** looks to replicate the third-person flipping action of Mikami's famous **Devil May Cry**.



### Dead Phoenix

This title appears to be heavily influenced by **Panzer Dragon Orta**, although it remains to be seen if it can rise above that title's track shooter approach.

By [unreadable]

### Viewtiful Joe

In this side-scrolling, cel-shaded adventure, superhero Joe can activate different fighting styles like **Slow** and **Zoom-In** to defeat evil.





# SQUARE AND ENIX MERGE

RPG giants **Square** and **Enix** have shocked the video game world by announcing that they will be merging into one company to be called **Square Enix, Inc.**

This new partnership will take place in Japan, effective April 1, and is being done to maximize profitability amidst stiff competition. Under the terms of the agreement, .81 shares of Enix will be traded for each share of Square. This will essentially make Enix the controlling entity, despite Square's prominence in the company's new name. Square Enix's chairman will be **Kelji Honda** (president of Enix) and the vice president will be **Youichi Wada** (Square's chief operating officer).

"This merger is Enix and Square's answer to the biggest challenge facing every corporation in the fast-changing entertainment industry – namely to sustain continuous development," the companies said in a joint statement. "Our aim is to become the best digital-content maker in the world."

Under this new deal, it is unknown exactly what will happen to the pair's blockbuster RPG sagas – **Final Fantasy** (Square) and **Dragon Quest** (The long-running Enix series, known as **Dragon Warrior** in the U.S.). Will they be merged into one super-RPG? Will the games and their development teams remain autonomous? Little is known about Square Enix's future plans at this time. However, because one of the motivations behind the deal is to cut down on software development

costs, a merging of some teams and titles is possible.

Other issues are also at stake. Before this agreement, Square had inked deals with both **Sony** and **Nintendo**. How will these previous deals affect which consoles Square Enix's games come out on? It is very likely that this new company will stay predominately on the **PlayStation 2**, as in 2001, Sony purchased a 19 percent stake in Square. *Game Informer* contacted representatives for both Enix and Square here in America, but neither would officially comment as to how this merger would affect either company's respective American offices and products. However, a Square representative did say that it is expected that most pre-existing business deals the company had made (with Sony and Nintendo, for example) will remain intact.

Ironically, the two publishers have historically been rivals. In fact, Square's vaunted RPG series *Final Fantasy* (appearing in 1987 on Nintendo's **Famicom**) was a response to Enix's genre-defining *Dragon Quest*, which debuted in Japan on the Famicom in 1986. Since that time, *Final Fantasy* has garnered more international success, pushed graphical boundaries in video games, and even spawned a movie. *Dragon Quest*, meanwhile, has yet to appear on the PlayStation 2, although DQ VII was the biggest-selling title of 2001 in Japan on the **PSone**.

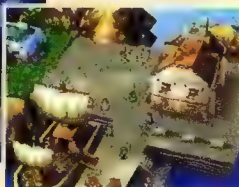
However, the two competitors (along with publisher/developer **Namco**) did swap shares in 2001 to distribute some of their development resources – a move that anticipated the formation of Square Enix, Inc.



Square's **Youichi Wada** (left) stands with Enix's **Yasuhiro Fukushima** and **Kelji Honda** (from left to right)



*Final Fantasy X* for PlayStation 2



*Dragon Warrior VII* for PSone

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



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



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.  
PLAY IN OURS.

www.playstation.com. Online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. SOCOM ©2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours" and the "Online" logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.



## GI NEWS



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.

## BLIND DATE: THE GAME



America's #1 dating show, *Blind Date*, would be the perfect vehicle to take you on an adventure of laughing, living, and – if you're lucky – loving. The first order of business is building a customized stud or babe, using the deep Dater Creator mode. It would not only

have physical options (build, hairstyle, etc.), but also personality traits. Are you generally cocky or shy? How do you react to embarrassing situations? Complete your character, and it's time for the date. Decide which places to go and what activities to partake in. Some girls may love a trip to the zoo, but others will fall sick with allergies. If you go out to the clubs, you run the risk of your better half either passing out drunk or getting picked up by someone richer, smarter, or hotter than you. Do you pull for a jump in the hot tub? Throughout the date, the AI will toss curveballs your way, which you will have to deal with as best you can. You'll never know how your date will react, or what will make them happy. After your good-night kiss (or slap in the face), it's showtime. Host Roger Lodge comes on to bring you a lengthy outscene of highlights from the rendezvous, complete with witty commentary and animated thought bubbles inserted above the characters' heads – just like the show!

## NAME THAT GAME

Using Mexican folklore and casting you as an employee of the Department of Death aren't the only notable things about this PC game. In a point-and-click world, this adventure game by LucasArts offered intuitive keyboard gameplay, complex puzzles, and a seamlessly blended story that featured more than enough humor to satisfy.



(Answer on page 32)

## TOP 10 PRESENTS GI'S X-MAS LIST

- 10 A BB gun to shoot your eyes out.
- 9 Holiday Sam's Seal colostomy bag.
- 8 *Felony: The Complete First Season* DVD.
- 7 A membership to the Potato Chip of the Month Club. We can't wait for a bag of Organic Pinto Bean Chios!
- 6 Copies of Simpsons Skateboarding. A nice fire will help keep us warm in the winter.
- 5 A Grand Theft Auto: Vice City game that doesn't freeze or have bugs.
- 4 Frothy mug of eggnog.
- 3 A trusty – A1 – rod.
- 2 Cards full of money.
- 1 Amazing Metacore.

## DEVELOPER TOP 5 SATOSHI KANEMATSU, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

- 1 *Vibrations* – Arcade
- 2 *Star Rush* – Arcade
- 3 *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* – N64
- 4 *Night in Japan* – Saturn
- 5 *Twisted Metal* – PS2



## READER TOP 5 DAMEN WILLIAMS, CHICAGO, ILL.

- 1 *Final Fantasy IX* – SNES
- 2 *Secret of Mana* – SNES
- 3 *GoldenEye 007* – N64
- 4 *Grand Theft Auto III* – PS2
- 5 *Marvel vs. Capcom 2: Age of Heroes* – Arcade



Game Informer is looking for your Top Five favorite games. Please send your Top Five, and a photo of yourself to: Game Informer Magazine, Attn: Top Five, 724 North Lincoln Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55403, email: topfive@gameinformer.com (attach digital picture). Everyone's opinions and names will be entered into a drawing to receive GI T-Shirts! (no purchase necessary.)

## THQ WIELDS WARHAMMER 40,000

Publisher **THQ** is preparing to unleash its first collaboration with **Games Workshop**: the tentatively titled **Warhammer 40,000: Fire Warrior**. The first-person shooter based on the popular tabletop war game will appear on the **PlayStation 2** and **PC** this summer. THQ expects to follow with more **Warhammer** products later.

*Fire Warrior* is being developed by the Brits at Kuju, and casts you as Kais, who is part of a team that has set out to rescue Ethereal Ko'vash from Imperial Forces. The game will take you through 17 levels and contains 22 types of foes and 16 different weapons. *Fire Warrior* also supports four-person multiplayer action.



## SEA DOGS II BOARDS XBOX/PC

**Bethesda Softworks** is back out to sea, and **Xbox** and **PC** are the ports of call for **Sea Dogs II**. Both will launch simultaneously this spring. Apart from offering tons 'o pirating fun on the poop deck, this sequel's got RPG features up the aft.

You'll take control of either Danielle or Blaze – pirates looking for the lost treasures of their native land. Like the original, you can play off the political sides of other countries, although with a more linear structure that is still littered with sidequests. Improving on the first is the fact that land-bound environments will now be more fully fleshed out. This includes pirate caves and hideouts. Just about the only thing that could possibly make *Sea Dogs II* more attractive would be a free parrot with every purchase. Even a pirate needs a friend.







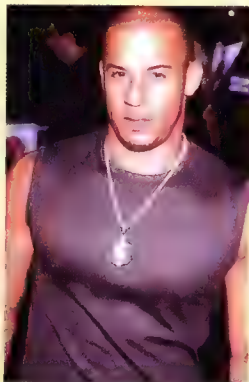
**BAD** – The European Commission has fined **Nintendo** \$146 million for conspiring with distributors to keep prices of its products illegally high. Nintendo did this in order to limit cross-country sales.

**UGLY** – **Sega of Japan** blames its sports developer **Visual Concepts** for a dip in projected profits. It is also considering dropping sports titles for the GameCube entirely.

**GOOD** – Beer maker **Anheuser-Busch** and **Microsoft** are hooking up to put **Xbox** into bars throughout the country. Strap on those beer goggles and maybe even **NFL Fever 2003** will look like a good game.

**BAD** – Actor **Vin Diesel** promises big things for his new video game company, **Tigon**. Its first product is going to be a **Grand Theft Auto III**-esque tale called **Perrone**. It can't be much worse than **Activision's XXX**. Can it?

**GOOD** – What's the one thing that could spoil **Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball** from **Tecmo**? **Dennis Rodman** in drag. Actually, the ex-NBAer will thankfully only provide the voiceover for the game's Zack character.



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 need 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.

We all want more **Grand Theft Auto: Vice City**, and that's just what we might get. With so many underutilized areas in *Vice City* (airport, military base, stadium, etc.), we could be getting an expansion pack. This looks like it could be the start of a beautiful friendship.

Here are some sequels already in development: **Sega's Shinobi**, **TDK's Robotech**, and **Sony's The Getaway**. All are believed to once again appear on the **PlayStation 2**.

*Loose Talk* has heard from a good source that **Microsoft** is indeed preparing an **Xbox** unit that will have digital video recording features within it like **UltimateTV**. It is unknown, however, if this add-on will be carried over into **Xbox II**.

Six degrees of Kevin Bacon just got tighter. **Nintendo's** website lists that **Conspiracy Entertainment** is working on a **GameCube** version of the cult movie *Tremors*, starring Mr. Bacon and Fred Ward.

Very few were disappointed that **Acclaim** decided to drop its **NFL QB Club** football franchise, and now **EA Sports** is looking to reap the benefits. *Loose Talk* has heard that the publisher is looking to hire former *QB Club* poster boy **Brett Favre** for **Madden NFL 2004**.

# Now you can honestly say the whole world is against you.



Look for this icon on **Tribes™ Aerial Assault** and other **PlayStation 2** games with online capability.



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PLAY IN OURS.™



## VIDEO GAME TRIVIA

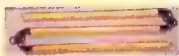
New Year's Eve is upon us. Everyone – from the most antisocial gamer to the biggest party animal – has big plans to ring in 2003. Still unsure of what you're going to be doing when the big ball drops? Let us help! Take this month's Video Game Trivia. Your score will tell you the best option for your New Year's festivities. And remember: Know when to say when.

**Question 1:** Blizzard, predominately a PC developer, is working on Starcraft: Ghost for consoles. Amazingly, the company actually has console gaming in its roots. Which of these cartridges was not developed by Blizzard?

- A. Rock & Roll Racing
- B. BlackThorne
- C. Out Of This World
- D. RPM Racing

**Question 2:** Martial arts accoutrements show up in video games all the time. One that doesn't get a lot of attention, though, is the versatile but difficult-to-master three-section staff. Which of the following titles actually features the three-section staff as a playable weapon?

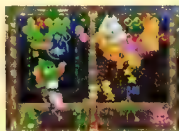
- A. Last Bronx
- B. Soul Edge
- C. Dynasty Warriors
- D. New Legends



**Question 3:** Which of the following is NOT a mission in Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4?

- A. Seek out rented skate equipment
- B. Ride behind a rampaging, pooping elephant
- C. Help a convict break out of prison
- D. Race a punk in a shopping cart

**Question 4:** Bust-A-Move games have been published by countless companies over the years. However, only one company can claim to be the originator behind the bubble-firing puzzler. Which is it?



- A. Sammy
- B. Rare
- C. Taito
- D. Acclaim

**Question 5:** Five people were racing. Edith did not come in first. Marty beat Edith. Edith beat Norman. Norman beat Sam. Abbot finished after Norman and Sam. Who finished last?

- A. Edith
- B. Norman
- C. Abbot
- D. I want a question about video games, you nerds!

**Question 6:** Game Informer put the first Tony Hawk's Pro Skater on the cover in November 1999, becoming the first magazine to jump on the Tony bandwagon. It wasn't our first choice, however. Which



game was originally pegged for that cover, but was removed at the last second?

- A. Pokémon Yellow
- B. Shenmue
- C. Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation
- D. Virtua Fighter 3tb

**Question 7:** Before Metal Gear Solid 2, reviewed in the December 2001 issue, no game ever earned unanimous 10s from the GI staff. Which of these big-time titles received a 10 from at least one editor?

- A. Resident Evil (PS-X)
- B. Sonic & Knuckles (Genesis)
- C. Donkey Kong Country (SNES)
- D. Super Mario 64 (N64)

**Question 8:** You're fighting Psycho Mantis, Metal Gear Solid's coolest boss and perhaps the best boss ever. He keeps reading your thoughts (and your memory card), and dodging any and all attacks hurled at him. What do you do, hot shot? What do you do?

- A. Smoke your in-game cigarette and let bygones be bygones
- B. Plug in the second controller and fight using it
- C. Go through the desk in the room to make him cross enough to make a mistake
- D. Shoot yourself to cause him damage



**Question 9:** The epic tale for the NES classic, Mega Man 2, supposedly took place in the future. According to the game, what year was it?

- A. 19XX
- B. 199X
- C. 200X
- D. AD 2500

**Question 10:** The Dragon Warrior RPG series is absolutely huge in Japan, where it's called Dragon Quest. Its fame led to a child-oriented spin-off featuring the series' popular and portly shopkeeper and his "Last Hope." What was his name?

- A. Turkoğlu
- B. Torneko
- C. Timpari
- D. Tonotum



## SIZZLING SETS WITH OUTLAW VOLLEYBALL

It's **Simon & Schuster's** turn to spread its toes out in the sand. The makers of **Outlaw Golf** are back at it in irreverent style with **Outlaw Volleyball**, and unlike **Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball**, this game actually has fighting in it!

The composure meter is back, and has been extended to produce some serious one-on-one fisticuffs. Also making a blazing return from her sensuous debut in **Outlaw Golf** is Summer. Play her and 15 other characters through 16 locations – including a jail cell. With these babes bouncing it up on the beach, the **Xbox** will be the place to be this spring. Things could get so hot, the publisher is even debating having two versions of the game: clean and not-so-clean. Developer **Hypnotix** is also working on **Outlaw Golf 2** for a possible summer release.



## FIRST LOOK AT MIDNIGHT CLUB II

**Rockstar** will deliver a second installment of the street racer series **Midnight Club** for the **PlayStation 2** in February. Versions of **Midnight Club II** for both the **Xbox** and the **PC** are expected to follow in spring. The **Angel Studios**-developed game will take the tire-squealing, law-breaking action of the first to new heights, incorporating motorcycle racing, and takes place in three locations: Los Angeles, Paris, and Tokyo.

Meanwhile, **Take-Two Interactive** has acquired developer **Angel Studios** and has renamed it **Rockstar San Diego**, effective immediately.



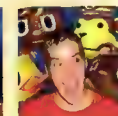
(SNIFF)



0 Burying your head under a pillow and sobbing suttly



1-2 Playing Jenga with your mom



3-4 Partying down with your Animal Crossing crew



5-6 Pooling the liquid latex off of Dick Clark's mask



7-8 Getting jiggy with Carmen Electra and 13 of her closest male "friends"



9-10 Declaring yourself Earth's Imperial Grand Master

### Score & Rank



## NINTENDO COMMITS TO HARDWARE

At the **GKM PlayTime** conference in New York City recently, **Nintendo of America** expressed a firm commitment to hardware successors for the **GameCube** and **Game Boy Advance** for the first time. Previously, the company had openly debated the need to stay in the hardware market, mulling a future where it would only make software.

**Peter MacDougall**, executive vice president of sales and marketing, stood before the audience and proclaimed, "Nintendo is in the software business – to stay. Nintendo is in the handheld business – to stay. And Nintendo is most certainly in the home console business – to stay. Work is well under way on the successor technology to both Game Boy Advance and Nintendo GameCube." No further specifics on these systems were given by MacDougall, nor was a timetable announced by when these platforms would appear.

Last summer, **Satoru Iwata**, **Nintendo of Japan's** new president, expressed his doubt on the need to constantly put out a new game console. "The effort to produce machines with better technology has reached its limit. If things continue, they may lead to the decline of the entire game industry." Nintendo has also been openly skeptical of how important online play is to home consoles, as well as outfitting systems with non-gaming functions like its competitors.

Given how everyone's raving about Nintendo's latest platform, the GameCube, it's good to hear that the company is bowing to common sense and giving us more of what we want.



Nintendo's Peter MacDougall

## PLAY GBA TITLES ON THE TV!

**Nintendo** keeps hitting us with the great peripherals. First the **WaveBird**, then the **e-Reader**, and now the **Game Boy Advance Player**. This device will allow you to play GBA and **Game Boy Color** titles on your television through a link and boot-up disc with the **GameCube**. No more squinting – this brings your favorite handheld into the big-time!

Nintendo hasn't officially announced a price, but expects the unit to sell for under \$50 when it hits the shelves before this summer. The company already expects a few games to be incompatible with this unit, but it shouldn't be a widespread problem. The Game Boy Advance Player will also support multi-player through a link cable.



# No one will mind if you play naked.



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

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PLAY IN OURS.



# FINAL FANTASY TACTICS OVERLOAD FOR GBA

Square has just totally blown our minds with a new announcement regarding **Final Fantasy Tactics Advance** on Nintendo's Game Boy Advance. It will feature over 300 missions. Yes – that's the number three followed by two zeros. This fantastic amount is no doubt the result of Tactics' unique melding of the real and fantasy worlds.

Even better is the fact that this handheld *Final Fantasy* will also feature over 40 character classes – a number that easily gives *Tactics* the most

classes of any other game in the genre. Add on the fact that this title will link up with the **GameCube**, and you've got a serious force to be reckoned with. *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* should hit America by the end of this year.

In other *FF* news, **Square of Japan** has just announced that it will put out **Final Fantasy XI: Vision of Girdle** – an expansion disc featuring a slew of patches and new content. More evidence that U.S. gamers would sure love to have a **PlayStation 2 Hard Drive**.

A casting call has gone out for actors in Hollywood to see who fits a ten-foot red cow. The **Mindfire** production company has received the movie rights to **Shinobi** from **Sega**.

In an effort to spark more **Xbox** games from Japan, **Hirohisa Ohura**, the system's managing director over there, is stepping down and moving to the U.S. to work with **Robbie Bach**, chief Xbox officer.

**Chet** jumped off of a bridge after finding out that **Unreal II: The Awakening** has been delayed until January.

**Ubi Soft** has a chance for redemption next fall, when it releases the tentatively titled **Batman 2** for next-gen systems. Hopefully this time the gameplay can live up to the already sharp graphics.

Good and gooder news for **Xbox** fans. Developer **Artoon** is already working on **Blinx 2**, while Aussies **Micro Forte** have signed up for an Xbox-exclusive massively multiplayer online RPG.

The **GameStop Road Warrior Tour** is touring all over Florida, with **GameCube**, **PlayStation 2**, and **Xbox** titles in tow. If it hits your town, be sure to stop by to play some games, participate in some of the contests, and just have a good time.

You have to give to get. In exchange for a **Brute Force** delay this spring, the **Xbox** game is strapping on some new features: system link capabilities (including co-op link play) and downloadable content.



# TWO NEW ZELDAS FOR GAMECUBE

Here's a story that is going to result in some frenzied eBay action in a few months. Those lucky gamers in Japan who pre-order **The Legend of Zelda** for **GameCube** will be treated to a special freebie disc featuring two additional Zelda games specifically made for the console.

The first is a GC-remake of **Nintendo 64's Ocarina of Time**. It is unknown at this time if the game is merely ported over to the platform or if significant changes have been made to the title.

Also on the pre-order disc is **Ura Zelda**. This game was originally planned as an expansion pack for **Ocarina of Time**, but it was never released. **Ura Zelda** was to appear on the **64DD**, the failed N64 disc drive which came out only in Japan.

**Nintendo of Japan** is reportedly preparing only 100,000 copies of this free disc.

**Game Informer** contacted **Nintendo of America** to see whether or not it would offer these *Zelda* games in a similar program. However, we only received this reply: "NOA has not confirmed its *Zelda* pre-sell program for the U.S." Hopefully, the company will deliver these exciting goodies in some form or another, regardless if it's a free pre-order gift or not.



# DATA FILE

**Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell** is splitting off into a few warring factions. The **Xbox**-first game will appear on the **PC** in January, and hit the **PlayStation 2** and **GameCube** come March.

Japanese magazine **Famitsu** is conducting a reader survey to poll opinions for **Konami's Metal Gear Solid 3**. The results will be forwarded onto the series' creator, **Hideo Kojima**.

**Sega** is reading more **Phantasy Star**. This time it's in the form of **Phantasy Star Card Battle** for the **GameCube**. The title should appear this year, and will hopefully link up with the **Game Boy Advance**.

**Konami** is finally bringing the world's best soccer game to the States. **World Soccer Winning Eleven 6: World Evolution** will debut on the **PlayStation 2** this spring.

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# CONTEST

## WIN THE SWEET SOUNDS OF VICE CITY



Swearing. The thump of a bat on flesh. Gun recoil. Chainsaws. These are the sounds of **Grand Theft Auto: Vice City**. Might we suggest, however, you chill a little with the soundtrack? Enter now for your chance to win the official seven-disc box set. Other lucky winners can lounge peacefully in these stylish t-shirts. Like picking up packages in *Vice City*, huh? Well hopefully you'll be heading down to your post office for these goodies. Just don't carjack any body on the way.

### Grand Prize (4)

- The official Grand Theft Auto: Vice City soundtrack box set
- A Vice City t-shirt
- Vice City sticker

### Second Prize (4)

- A Vice City t-shirt
- Vice City sticker

### There Are Two Ways To Enter:

(1) Send a **POSTCARD** with your **NAME, ADDRESS & TELEPHONE NUMBER** to:

GI'S VICE CITY  
724 N. FIRST ST. 4TH FLOOR  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55401

(2) Send an **EMAIL** with your **NAME, ADDRESS & TELEPHONE NUMBER** to: [vicecity@gameinformer.com](mailto:vicecity@gameinformer.com)

Your name will be placed in a pool of valid entrants for a random drawing to be conducted on March 4, 2003.

### GAME INFORMERS VICE CITY OFFICIAL RULES

1. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. To enter, send your name, age, address, and telephone number on a postcard to: City Vice City 7th Floor 55401, 4TH FLOOR MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55401. Or email your name, age, address, and telephone number to: [vicecity@gameinformer.com](mailto:vicecity@gameinformer.com). Entries must be received by March 4, 2003. One entry per person. Duplicate entries will be disqualified. **Game Informer Magazine** ("Sponsor") is not responsible for cost, loss, misaddress, delay, nonresponse or misdirected entries. 2. PRIZES: Four (4) grand prize winners will receive a Vice City soundtrack box set, a Vice City t-shirt, and a sticker (approximate retail value \$100). Three (3) first prize winners will receive a Vice City t-shirt and sticker (approximate retail value \$10). Sponsor reserves the right to substitute like prize of equal or greater value if prize is unavailable. Prizes are non-transferable and no substitutions allowed. 3. WINNERS: Winners will be determined by random drawings of all eligible entries by the Sponsor, whose decisions are final. Drawing will take place on or about March 4, 2003. Winners shall be notified by email and/or telephone. Please allow six to eight weeks for delivery of prizes. 4. ODDS: OF 1:100,000. The odds of winning (based on number of valid entries received). 5. ELIGIBILITY: Prizes open to residents of United States only. Winner of any prize by any other means (including but not limited to) will result in disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected. Winner may be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility/witness of liability prior to acceptance within 14 days of receipt of mailed prize. If the winner is a minor, their parent may be required to accept prize on their behalf. 6. ACCEPTANCE: Prizes are awarded to the winner upon the date of their name and/or address listed for purposes of advertising, trade, or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of the Sponsor, Game Informer Magazine, and their parents and affiliated companies and their families are not eligible. Neither the Sponsor nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, division or related companies are responsible for any changes, losses, or expenses the winner might incur as a result of this sweepstakes or receipt of prize. 7. RESTRICTIONS: Void where prohibited or restricted by law.

Name That Game Answer:

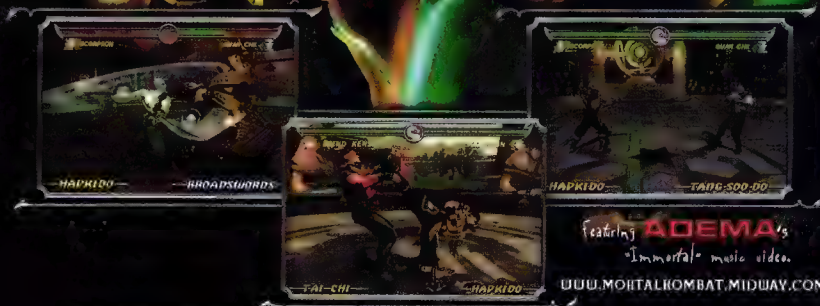
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# SO BRUTAL. SO EVIL. SO DEADLY.

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Blood and Gore  
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GAME BOY ADVANCE

PlayStation 2



MIDWAY

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# FEARFUL

Simulation And Story Collide:  
Project Ego Becomes A Reality





Game Informer was first introduced to Fable, then known as Project Ego, during a closed-door meeting at the 2001 Electronic Entertainment Expo with the enigmatic head of Lionhead Studios,

Peter Molyneux. If you have ever had the opportunity to meet Mr. Molyneux – which sadly many of you haven't – he has this ability to make any game sound like it's going to revolutionize the industry. It's an amazing skill, but lucky for us, he is usually right and tends to find developers and products that push the envelope just as he describes.

Peter's resume is proof of his ability, featuring gaming landmarks like Populous, Magic Carpet, Syndicate, Dungeon Keeper, and Black & White. There are both positive and negative observations that can be made about his former projects, but no one can deny that each and every one of these titles pushed the accepted boundaries and left players with experiences that simply couldn't be forgotten. Whether it was cruelly punishing your followers to instill fear of your god-like powers in Black & White, or simply setting a trap for the hapless adventurers who had the poor luck of wandering around your labyrinth in Dungeon Keeper,

he gives gamers memories that they will cherish for a lifetime.

So, when Peter let us in on a screening of a short preview movie of his latest masterpiece, Fable, we were more than just a little interested. The imagery that Fable delivered was amazing, but details regarding this new piece of Molyneux magic were few and far between. Thankfully, this has changed. Recently, Game Informer ventured off to merry old England to find out why many in the industry are speculating that this highly anticipated title may well prove to be Lionhead Studios' greatest accomplishment to date. Gather around the fire, we have a Fable to tell...



# The Big Blue Box And Xbox



**A**s it turns out, *Fable* is actually the work of a brand new developer by the name of Big Blue Box. However, the term "new" might be a little deceiving as its founders, Simon and Dene Carter, are longtime veterans of both the industry and Molyneux's unique approach to gaming, having worked closely with him on *Dungeon Keeper*. This partnership spilled over into the development of *Fable*, with Molyneux's Lionhead Studio giving financial and creative support throughout the project.


"The last two and half years of *Dungeon Keeper* we worked in the

back of Peter's house. There was an awful lot of conversation going on there about general game ideas, from ideas for *Black & White* to ideas for [*Fable*]," remembers Dene.

However, the origins of the game date back further than that. The two brothers, who have an uncanny knack for completing each other's thoughts, actually began conceptualizing *Fable* during their childhood. Simon continues, "[The original concept came to us] when we were about that age [pointing to a picture of them as children], because Dene and I were always coming up with new ideas for games. One day we came up with this rather fatuous

and stupid design for the perfect game, which was kind of a role-playing thing which had everything in it. It was almost like a simulation of life in a role-playing world. This game is a piece of that."

Trying since childhood to find the platform that would enable their dream to become a reality, *Project Ego* (as the game was tentatively titled) made stops on PC and Dreamcast before it finally found a home on Xbox. Once you start looking at all the pieces that make *Fable* the unlikely RPG that it is, it's easy to see why they needed a machine with the advanced capabilities of the Xbox.



The camera can be set by the user, but if left alone it will pick the most cinematic view





## Fable: The Simulation

There are various factions locked in eternal struggle during your quest. For example, if you wipe out some bandit camps outside of a village, a number of things could happen. The townspeople may take over the camps, or perhaps monsters from another area may invade to expand their domain. In this way, the game has an eternal ebb and flow

**T**he centerpiece of any RPG is the hero, but in the case of *Fable* this aspect is taken to an extreme. In reality, *Fable* isn't so much an RPG, but a simulation of a world. The hero starts off as a young boy who must write his own tale. You can be what you want to be, for good or ill.

*Fable* is built from the ground up with this in mind. All the characters have their own independent intelligence that reacts to the moral decisions you make

throughout the game. Kill everyone and everything in your path, and the game will answer accordingly. Lead a chivalrous life, and you will attract ardent fans and the admiration of the common people.

The objective here is to teach the player that everything has consequences and that you have to live with them. This aspect, at first, can be rather daunting, but once you start to see how things work it makes sense. Basically, our hero has two ways to interact with

the people. You can draw your sword or give them items from your inventory to see how they respond.

If you choose to kill them, a series of events can unfold. For example, if you slay one of the women in town and she just happens to be married, her husband will attempt to off you, and her children will cry and run away all as a result of that one choice. The amazing thing is that everything is presented to the player with very obvious animations and facial expressions from the villagers.



You start off your adventures as a young boy, and from there all the choices are up to you







Here are various examples of the looks the hero can sport



It's really quite astonishing to see. The children rub their eyes crying, and the husband runs around, shaking his fist, calling you out for the bastard you are.

Of course, the game won't punish you for being bad. It's a very viable approach to playing through Fable, but there will be consequences. If you kill more villagers, the town guards will gather a posse and track you down, and you can pretty much write off ever being able to buy any items or stay at the Inn.

Conversely, you can be the noble hero. Give a woman a box of candies and watch her blush. Do it again and she may even take a liking to you. Clear out some of the bandits patrolling close to the town and you can return a triumphant hero, with children singing your praises and clapping happily with a gleam of admiration in their eye. They may even try to look like you, because quite frankly, you are the coolest thing to hit the town since that juggler with the bad limp.

How people react to you is an easy way to monitor your standing with the

various inhabitants, but Fable also has a Renown meter to show how good or evil you are being. Plus, every town features a Hero Podium where all the people will gather around to give you the overall temperature of the current public opinion. This can be an ego boost or a letdown, depending on how you play the game.

Surprisingly, all this depth is found just in the town portion of Fable, as there is still a wide-open world full of monsters and mayhem left to explore. Advancement in Fable is not done through the conventional route of gaining experience to get more hit points and acquire new skills. Instead, your hero has all things available to him from the beginning and the player must choose which skills to develop.

If you wish to go down the path of the mighty warrior, your best bet is to use your sword in combat to increase your strength, which in time will unlock combos that enable you to unleash bigger and better flurries. Of course, there are many different paths you can choose from

as well, be it a magic user (or Fae, as it is called in the game), a bow-wielding ranger, a stealthy thief/assassin, or some combination of all of these. It all depends on the way you play the game. However, keep in mind that whatever direction you take will determine what items you can and can't use. For example, you can't be a thief in big clunky armor, and if you've never touched a bow in your adventures, you won't be able to hit the side of barn from six paces.

To bring all these different choices to life, Big Blue Box has implemented over 600 animations to show your ability or inability to do different things. Equip a sword as a weakling wizard and you will drag the blade through the dirt and give a half-hearted, pathetic-looking swing when you try to attack. Try to summon a companion as a warrior, and you won't get a fly to follow your commands. Don't even think about attempting to sneak into a house to steal some new goodies when in full armor, because your clumsy gait will surely give you away.



Master the art of stealth, and you can climb through windows and pillage homes at night



The magic system in Fable, called Fae, is more about controlling the environment than classic magic. For example, you can slow time and even move air to push enemies about





There are many types of people you will encounter in Fable, including merchants, commoners, guards, bandits; and creatures like nymphs, screamers, zombies, trolls, golems, and dragons



The wilds are full of many dangers. Some are as minor as developing allergies from sleeping outside for too many consecutive days, or as big as being bit by a Balverine and becoming a werewolf - permanently







Gain enough combat skills and you can behead your enemies, knock them back, or head butt them

## Morphing People And Places

**L**ife in Fable is in constant motion. Just because you are away from a village doesn't mean it stops growing, or that the inhabitants don't continue to go about their daily tasks. The game is meant to span a lifetime, with each adventurer defining himself with the skills he learns and traits he gives to his character. To further the impression that Fable exists in a persistent world, the developers employ a number of technological marvels and a fantastic art team to flesh out the places and its people.

For example, you will find various haircuts and tattoos that you can then take back to any town and have a local merchant outfit you with this new look. Find a fancy new cloak, try it on and see if it fits, because every person in the world has a different body type and some items just won't fit. Your character also can take on wounds in battle that, if left for too long without a bandage, will turn into scars.

The hero and all the main characters in the plot will age as the game progresses, so if you spend too much time in the sun during your adventures, you will grow into a wrinkled and suntanned old man. Choose

to travel under cover of darkness, and your character will be a pale looking creature of the night (much like many of the video game players out there).

Characters aren't the only things that react to time and the actions that take place during the game. Weather is constantly cycling between rain, snow, and sun. The wilds of the world are home to numerous factions which are constantly going back and forth controlling different points. This means that a place that was once friendly can, in time, turn into a wasteland that you wouldn't want to venture into unless covered by the veil of night. Nothing can be taken for granted to be what it once was.

The only exception we found was that the environments themselves aren't affected by seasons. However, the quest will take you to many outdoor locales, cities, and deep dark dungeons, each with its own theme. Of course, you will get to experience the snowy mountain and the volcanic rock areas that are the standards of most RPGs. However, the art team at Big Blue Box is to be commended on their work in this department, as the world

of Fable is simply gorgeous, achieving an unprecedented level of beauty. From the castles to the monsters in the world, everything has a very organic look, with some of the most detailed models we have ever seen in a real-time rendered world.

To finish off the experience, Fable will also include many audio cues and cutscenes that give the player a feeling of being part of a bigger story. These also give evildoers and other creatures that menacing backdrop that will instill the player with the sense of fear and awe that is the mark of any good story. You won't hear the hero speaking to anyone, but almost all the rest of the interactions are delivered through voiceovers complete with lip-synching.

Another interesting thing to note is the fact that you will not be the only hero in the world. Sadly, this doesn't mean Fable is Xbox Live enabled, as it is most definitely a single-player adventure, but rather that other AI-driven adventurers will be wandering the land. There are even outposts where you can check to see where you stand in comparison to the other heroes in the game, much like Pokémon Centers.





You can pick locks with practice, grow strong in battle and gain the ability to score one-hit kills, and use stealth to approach opponents and silently slay them. Or, use stealth for avoidance and become a better thief. Of course, you can't sneak in full armor, so your character will have to fit the skills and traits that you wish



COVER STORY

If you go down the evil path, the bandits will befriend you and treat you like the fellow marauder that you are

## What Is It?

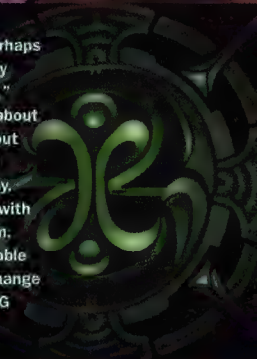
**W**hen all the pieces come together, Fable really isn't anything we expected - and that is most certainly a good thing. Dene and Simon Carter, along with the rest of the team at Big Blue Box, are looking to break new ground in the RPG realm and it shows in both the product and their attitude. "[In most RPGS] you are nothing until you have brought back someone's cat, or rescued the entire village from [some threat]," explains

Dene. "In which case, the only thanks you get is 'The thing you are looking for next is over there.' That's it. That's the sum total of your thanks. I've just saved you, your wife, your children, and your entire village, and that's all you're gonna do for me? That's pathetic."

"I hope people will actually genuinely care about their own interactions with people [in the game]. I hope they don't just wander into town and say, 'Oh, I'm gonna kill everybody.' I hope they find themselves thinking that would be

really cruel if they did that, and perhaps making moral judgements that they wouldn't normally make in a game."

As you can see, Fable isn't just about the story or the adventure, it's about the people, places, and things you come in contact with along the way. Already two years in development with no solid release date on the horizon, gamers will just have to wait for Fable to become a reality. It will likely change everything you ever thought an RPG should be.



The developers are toying with the idea of giving titles to the player by the things you do. Lose an eye and people may refer to you as "One Eye." Be good with the ladies and perhaps they will call you "The Chamer." Or, kill lots of defenseless chickens and you may be embarrassed by your title of "Chicken Slayer."





# THE BEST STORYLINES EVER. PERIOD. END OF STORY.



Mature Sexual Themes  
Strong Lyrics  
Violence

PlayStation 2



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# SHUT YOUR MOUTH.



**SMACK  
DOWN!**  
**SHUT YOUR  
MOUTH**

JAKKS Pacific



World Wrestling Entertainment

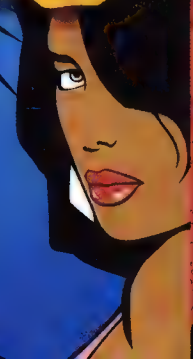


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# GAMES OF 2002



Last year, we thought, "It can't get any better than this." We were quickly proven wrong. With four gaming platforms in their prime, and the PC market churning out an unprecedented amount of great software, gamers in 2002 were like kids in a candy store. Game Informer dished out more nines than we can count. It seemed every month, another must-have was unleashed upon each platform.

Many games surprised us. Did anyone really think *Kingdom Hearts*, an RPG full of Disney characters, could be this good? What about *Steel Battalion*, which has more intricacies to its controller than a real automobile?

Then there were those hits that we could see coming a mile away. Nobody would bet against Mario or *Final Fantasy*. *GTA: Vice City* was screaming bestseller from the minute Rockstar revealed its box art.

We've been at this for a long time now - 11 years to be exact - but we can honestly say picking

the Games of 2002 was the most controversial, brawl-inducing, tear-filled debate to ever take place in the history of Game Informer. This is the fruit of our labor, whether you find it sweet or sour.



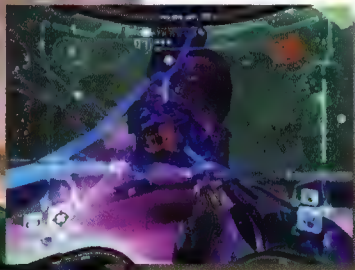
# METROID PRIME 10

**Platform** GameCube | **Developer** Retro Studios  
**Publisher** Nintendo | **ESRB Rating** T

**M**etroid in 3D seemed almost sacrilegious, until we saw things from Samus's perspective. We then uttered a Keanu Reeves-esque "Whoa..." as we witnessed just how incredible the bounty hunter's world is. The unorthodox control scheme may cause FPS veterans to frown, but the scope and presentation of Metroid Prime cannot be denied. It retains all the exploration and secrets of the classic games, but brims with next-gen grandeur.

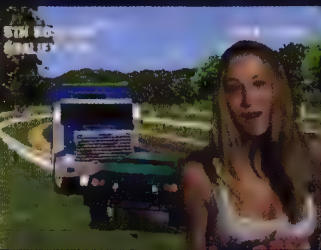
**// It's thrilling to see classic Metroid elements fleshed out in three dimensions.**

— ANDY



## Worst Game of the Year Hooters Road Trip

The saying goes, "You get what you paid for." However, for the \$10 price tag of Hooters Road Trip on PSone, it'd be a better deal to give that ten-spot to a high school place-kicker to practice his field goal form on your crotch. The main mode has you visiting various Hooters restaurants around the country. You must be knocking back quite a few brews at each location, because driving in a straight line is impossible. Additionally, the pop-up, horrible textures, and Atari Jaguar-quality car models simulate impaired vision from intoxication. In theory, the payoff for all this torture is a special greeting from a "gorgeous" Hooters gal upon arrival. However, most of the girls' parents had to tie steaks around their necks when they were kids, just so the family dog would play with them.



## Best Sleeper Game of the Year Animal Crossing

We were as skeptical as anyone when we first got whiff of this game. Cutesy characters digging holes and fishing, and you call this a game? How wrong we were. Animal Crossing fever has spread to gamers worldwide, almost purely by word of mouth. It sounds so simple in concept, but nothing could be more entertaining. It takes you into your own fictional – but real-time – village with chores to do; a house to upgrade and decorate; NES games to play; holidays to celebrate; colorful neighbors to converse with; and dozens of bugs, fish, and fossils to collect. Add GBA connectivity, e-Reader cards, and memory card village trading, and Animal Crossing is definitely Nintendo's next big thing. Fight it all you want, tough guy. Once you play it, you're hooked.



# 9 Kingdom Hearts

**Platform** PlayStation 2 | **Developer** Square Soft  
**Publisher** Square Soft | **ESRB Rating** E

**N**o video game company can make an epic like Square Soft. No company can craft a fantasy world like Disney. When these two giants pair up, the result is a grandiose action/RPG love story spanning the entire Disney universe. If seeing Cloud Strife and Winnie the Pooh in the same game doesn't send you running, Kingdom Hearts will reward you with a tremendous tale, stunning visuals, and action-packed gameplay.



**// Kingdom Hearts truly does deserve the highest of accolades.**

— REINER



**Best Graphics  
in a Video Game**  
**Resident Evil Zero**

The premier survival horror franchise has always soared visually. Capcom's GameCube remake of the original Resident Evil showed just how frighteningly good a next-gen title could look. But when it brought a new, original entry to the Resident Evil series later this year, the ante had been upped yet again. The game's character models are über-realistic, and the monsters are some of the most grotesquely detailed, putrid creatures imaginable. These two classes wage gory battles in beautifully rendered environments that push the GameCube to its limits. No longer static, the backdrops feature animations in every nook and cranny. These vivid scenes will be replayed time and time again in your worst nightmares. Sleep tight.

**Worst New Character  
in a Video Game**  
**Ty the Tasmanian Tiger**

EA took some of its billions of dollars, invested in a time machine, and traveled back to 1986. How else could you explain its new platformer mascot, Ty? Back then, Australian culture was all the rage, and long, loud snorts could be worn without fear of ridicule. No sane person could've possibly come up with the concept for Ty in this millennium. He wears coal miner's gloves, jams, and a handkerchief around his neck. He throws boomerangs. If we weren't told he's a "tasmanian tiger," we'd be clueless as to his genus and species. We won't be having a good day until Ty's foul image is gone from our memory.



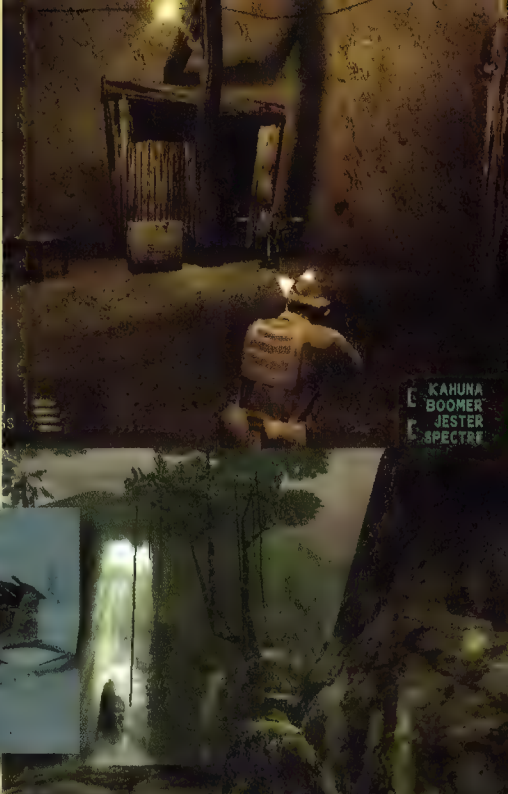
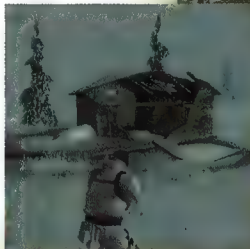
**8 SOCOM:  
US NAVY SEALS**

**Platform** PlayStation 2 | **Developer** Zipper Interactive  
**Publisher** Sony Computer Entertainment America  
**ESRB Rating** M

When Sony brought online to the millions of PS2 owners, it needed something big from the get-go. SOCOM not only gives you multiplayer, broadband deathmatching, but it does so while allowing you to seamlessly converse with anyone on your team. The single-player offline missions, which also utilize the included voice communicator, seal the deal to place SOCOM among the year's best.

**// SOCOM will  
forever change  
the way you  
play games. //**

**- REINER**



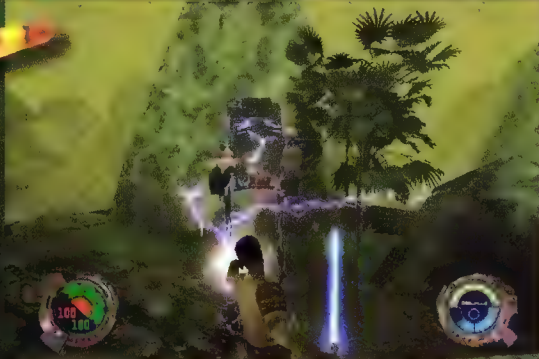
**STAR WARS:  
JEDI OUTCAST** **7**

**Platform** PC, Xbox, GameCube  
**Developer** Raven Software  
**Publisher** LucasArts | **ESRB Rating** T

A stellar Star Wars first-person shooter is damn good, but when you add unbelievable third-person lightsaber sequences, it becomes one of the Games of the Year. The sensation of using Jedi powers is captured flawlessly. Even if you can't tell a wookiee from a wedgie, Jedi Outcast is a stunning FPS of the highest caliber. The Force is strong with this one.

**// Oh dear God, this is a  
cool game. //**

**- KRISTIAN**









## FEATURE

### Best Video Game Developer Volition

THQ keeps amassing some great talent. Last year's Developer of the Year, Rainbow Studios, has been purchased by the

publisher. Now, another one of its subsidiaries, Volition, outdid itself in 2002. We all assumed Red Faction II would be spectacular, taking the environment-altering (Geo Mod

engine to new heights and bringing the battle for Mars here on Earth. We were not disappointed. What we weren't ready for was Summoner 2, the sequel to the no-norm PS2 launch title RPG. Deep combat, loads of variety, and rewarding exploration greeted us in one of the most surprising releases of the year. Volition's dedication to improvement and innovation puts it ahead of the pack.



### Best Video Game Soundtrack Grand Theft Auto: Vice City

Last year, Grand Theft Auto III hit us with more aural stimulation than we thought possible from a DVD. This year's game's soundtrack pierced our eardrums when Vice City's

leers, men get, storms on, and sets them on fire. Nine radio stations dish out more '80s hits than a TimeLife compilation, including tracks from Ozzy Osbourne, Michael Jackson, and Run-DMC. Commercials and talk radio are just as entertaining, featuring laugh-out-loud gags and spot-on social parody. The gaggle of celebrity voices is icing on the cake. This soundtrack not only serves to immerse

you into the eighties, but more importantly to bring video games some credibility as an entertainment medium equal to that of TV and motion pictures.



## 6 SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

Platform GameCube | Developer Nintendo  
Publisher Nintendo | ESRB Rating E

Instead of reinventing the genre – something a Mario game has done on numerous occasions – Nintendo merely plies its craft with expert skill to show what platforming is all about. The water cannon strapped to our hero's back adds gallons of new gameplay variety, but there is plenty of old-school flavor to retain the classic Mario feel. We all knew that Super Mario Sunshine would be a crowning achievement in video games, but as usual, Nintendo and Miyamoto still gave us more than we expected.

...the perfect sequel.

– REINER



## MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

Platform PlayStation 2/Xbox/GameCube | Developer Midway | Publisher Midway | ESRB Rating M

Five editors reviewed Deadly Alliance on one system or another this month, and each one was astounded by the leaps and bounds this new MK has taken – not only for the series itself, but also the genre as a whole. More strategy, more replay, and more blood means even more people will be screaming, "Mortal Kombat!" than ever before. This is a flawless victory in the realm of fighting games.

...the best

3D fighter to date!

– CHET





# SO WHAT IS **HARDCORE** MULTIMEDIA?

**EY** *SonicXS*



It's big fat satellites that will fill your world with **DANGEROUSLY EXCESSIVE SOUND.**

It's a massively efficient subwoofer that will **SHAKE THE PAINT** off your walls without distortion.

**EY** *SonicXS 4.1*



It's scientifically tuned horn tweeters that let you hear the **SCREAMS** of your victims in perfect fidelity.

**EY** *SonicXJR*



It's in your face audio that takes no prisoners.

## **ARE YOU READY?**

For more information and to buy now, go to [www.hardcoremultimedia.com](http://www.hardcoremultimedia.com)



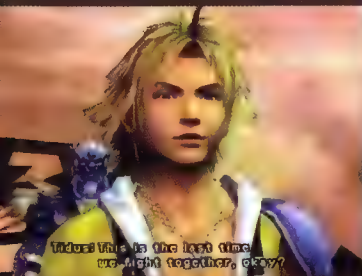
*Concert sound for your computer*



## FEATURE

### Best Ending in a Video Game Final Fantasy X

Role-playing games have a tendency to get you emotionally tied to your character(s). Final Fantasy X does this better than any other, with a varied cast and expert voice-overs. Not surprisingly, its ending is the best of the year. After a tremendously long final battle against Sin, the world as you know it opens up to several shocking revelations. What happens is indescribable, but a deep caring for those in the story overcomes the gamer, as he or she watches the scenes unfold, mouth agape. Titus may not be perfect, but we realize we have grown attached to the guy, and want to see him get the girl and live happily ever after. Does it happen? You'll have to play through to find out.



### Best New Villain in a Video Game Mz. Ruby

Platform games have a reputation for being a lot, but deep in the Bayou lies a crocodile that challenges Sly Cooper in a far more interesting way than veteran rams and predictable crocodiles. Taking a page from Parappa the Rapper and Space Channel 5, Mz. Ruby requires you to mimic her movements, repeating but presses at the same rhythm to dodge her attacks. The music is actually good enough to hang with the aforementioned titles, and the timing elements can get pretty difficult. It's nice to see props to the rhythm game genre in a more mainstream title.



## MEDAL OF HONOR: 4 ALLIED ASSAULT

Platform PC | Developer 2015 |  
Publisher Electronic Arts | ESRB Rating T

If there is such a thing as beauty on the battlefield, Allied Assault captures it. Frighteningly authentic in both graphics and sound, this crowning achievement in the Medal of Honor series is almost too intense at times. This game easily earns its place among the best first-person shooters ever released.

Watching *Saving Private Ryan* may evoke some emotion, but nothing compares to stepping into the shoes of a soldier at war, fighting for his country and his survival. Allies will crumble into a lifeless heap before your eyes. You'll hear ammo rounds whir past your head. Once you get immersed in the battle at hand, you will never be the same.

//  
**If you buy just  
one PC game in  
your life, make  
sure it's Allied  
Assault.**

— ANDY







You can't fight  
what you can't see.



Blood and Gore  
Violence



OVERWORKS™



# Shinobi

[sega.com/shinobi](http://sega.com/shinobi)



PlayStation 2

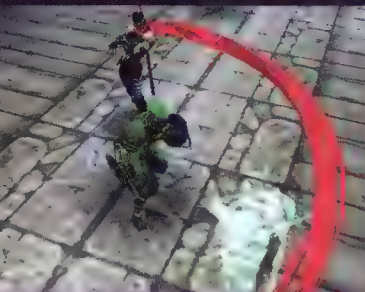




## FEATURE

### Best New Character in a Video Game Shinobi's Scarf

A ninja is just some guy with black pajamas. Shinobi's main man Hotsuma isn't too different, save for some cooler-than-average accessories. His scarf, though – that's another matter altogether! It's long. It's red. It follows him wherever he goes. The flowing garment is so advanced, it has its own physics engine! We predict women will want to wrap the scarf around every inch of their bodies. Children will want to grow up to be just like the scarf. Grandmothers will be pressured to knit their fingers to the bone, due to requests to replicate this stylish article of clothing. In scarf we trust.



### Most Inspiring Performance by a Video Game Character Mr. Resetti

Most video game characters don't care what you do. Lie, cheat, steal...it's all the same to them. Animal Crossing's Mr. Resetti, however, takes things personally. Since the game tries to be as true to life as possible, gamers may be tempted to reset their game to reverse decisions, or try new things without consequence. Mr. Resetti ends up being your consequence. If you see him pop out of the ground, be ready for a lengthy – and we mean lengthy – lecture on why resetting your game is a cardinal sin of Animal Crossing. Continue your wicked ways, and the stern talking-to's get harsher and harsher. Way to stand up for truth and justice in gaming, Mr. Resetti! We salute you.



## FINAL FANTASY X

3

Platform PlayStation 2 | Developer Square Soft  
Publisher Square Soft | ESRB Rating T

What would  
a list  
of the

Games of the Year  
be without a Final  
Fantasy? Even  
though it was one  
of the first games  
released in 2002,  
no RPG even came  
close to touching  
FF X in scope,  
visual splendor, or  
storytelling.

Square brought  
out all of the  
power and ability  
the PlayStation 2  
possesses. The character models are detailed and expressive,  
and voiceovers accompany almost all text dialogue. Tids and the  
other protagonists are not perfect, and each shows vulnerabilities  
and emotional baggage like real people. Their enemy, Sin, is a  
horrifying creation. These elements all blend together to craft a  
near-perfect role-playing game.

...a new standard  
for role-play-  
ing games, and  
video games as a  
whole.

— REINER





BEFORE THE MANSION.  
BEFORE THE DISASTER.

EVIL IS BORN.



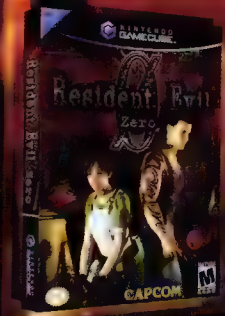
Fight for survival in this action-packed thriller with an all-new story line!



Use more strategy as you switch between Rebecca and Billy for collaborative gameplay.



Introducing a new playable character, nightmarish beasts and non-stop terror.



Resident Evil  
Zero

The brand-new Zero chapter—only on Nintendo GameCube™!



Blood and Gore  
Violence

NINTENDO  
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## FEATURE

### Lifetime Achievement Award (Posthumous) Nintendo's Former President, Hiroshi Yamauchi

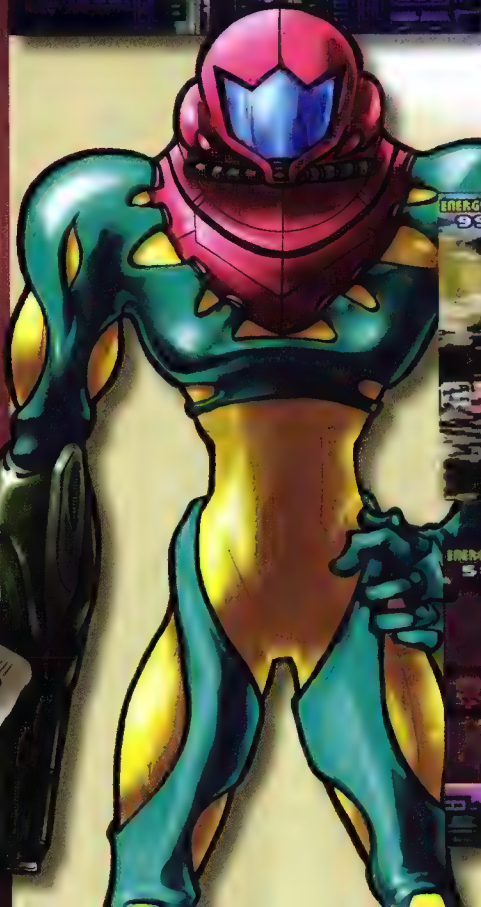
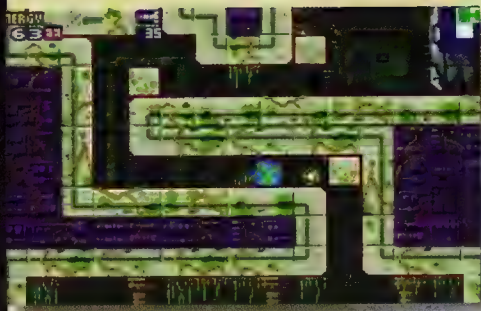


During his fifty-plus-year stint as president of Nintendo, Hiroshi Yamauchi had seen it all. When he took the company's helm in 1949, he cleaned house, firing almost everyone in power. Nintendo grew from a trading card company

into an early arcade game maker to handheld LED game manufacturer onto console gaming giant — with Mr. Yamauchi in charge of every decision. He hired the legendary Shigeru Miyamoto. He revitalized the dead video game industry with the Famicom/NES. He cancelled the Sony CD add-on to the SNES (which later became PlayStation). If something happened in video games, chances are Yamauchi was involved. Until May 31, 2002, that is, when he retired. Love him or hate him, Yamauchi was a tremendous influence on gaming, and his significance will be felt for decades to come.

### Best Peripheral of the Year Nintendo e-Reader

Who could've guessed that the NES would be reincarnated as a GBA attachment? This snazzy device lets you play old-school classics like Excitebike and Ice Climber with a few scans of specially encoded e-cards. Swipe Pokémon e-cards, and open up minigames and an expanded Pokédex. Animal Crossing cards award you with new items, songs, and other goodies in the GameCube hit. Who knows — someday we may be making car payments using this extremely versatile gadget!



## METROID 2 FUSION

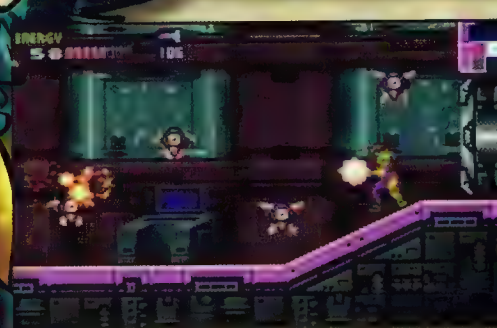
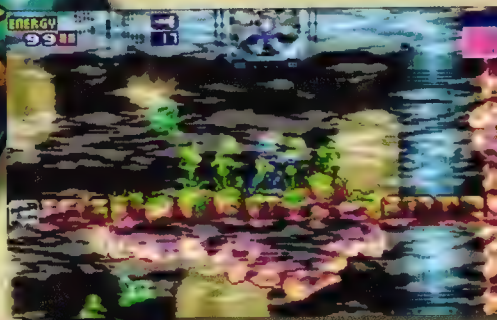
Platform Game Boy Advance | Developer Nintendo  
Publisher Nintendo | ESRB Rating E

Are you surprised to see an old-school side-scroller as the year's top Metroid game? Then obviously you haven't played the first three titles in the series. Metroid Fusion captures the essence of the franchise, which elevates it beyond all other Game Boy Advance games, and nearly every other title released this year.

The familiar gameplay mechanics and exploration have returned, and Fusion looks better than the SNES classic, Super Metroid. Where Metroid. Where Nintendo deviates from the formula is in the game's story, which twists and bends to always keep you guessing. Samus has issues. Metroid Fusion does not; rather, it's the second-best game of 2002.

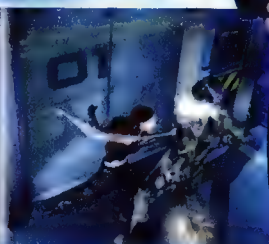
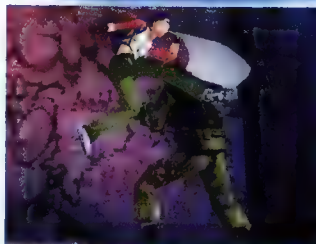
/// **Metroid Fusion**  
**is truly one of**  
**the greats.** ///

— ANDY





AVENGE HER PAST.  
DISCOVER HER FUTURE.



Dark Angel is the story of Max, a genetically enhanced soldier, who cunningly fights to reclaim her manipulated past and avoid capture through the underground landscape of post-apocalyptic Seattle.

- Original story progresses beyond the television series and features voice-overs by Jessica Alba and Michael Weatherly.
- RAGE System: Unleash over 50 fighting moves by unlocking the soldier within Max.
- Stealth Mode: Utilize unique evasive moves, plus enhanced vision.

JAMES CAMERON'S  
**DARK ANGEL**

WINTER 2002

[DARKANGEL.SIERRA.COM](http://DARKANGEL.SIERRA.COM)



PlayStation 2



VIOLENCE



## FEATURE

# GRAND THEFT AUTO: 1 VICE CITY

Platform PlayStation 2 | Developer Rockstar North  
Publisher Rockstar | ESRB Rating M

**G**rand Theft Auto III shocked the world, hooking gamers and smashing sales reports all year long. Unbelievably, it didn't prepare us for the brilliance and spectacle that is Grand Theft Auto: Vice City. This sequel took a premise that blew everyone away, and expanded it to ludicrous proportions.

Vice City's gameplay mechanics, production, and freedom far surpass its predecessor – or anything else. Riding motorcycles and helicopters, easily targeting enemies (and bystanders), listening to hours of '80s tunes, buying up property, and chatting with celebrities makes for a scale of game we never thought would be achieved. If all of this wasn't enough to convince you that Grand Theft Auto: Vice City is this year's greatest game, then we don't know what else to do. Oh, wait – we can tell you what we gave it: all tens. Game, set, and match.

**“Vice City is insanely deep, witty, open-ended, musical, star-studded, violent, addictive, and all-around the most entertaining product money can buy.”**

**– JUSTIN**





Somewhere in a city of 7 million,  
is the man who killed your father,  
the man who knows why, and the  
woman who may be your only  
chance at finding them.

# Shenmue II

Rated for ages 15 and older (ESRB)



INCLUDES  
"SHENMUE: THE MOVIE"  
on DVD



Use of Alcohol  
Gambling  
Violence

SEGA

[www.xbox.com/shenmue2](http://www.xbox.com/shenmue2)

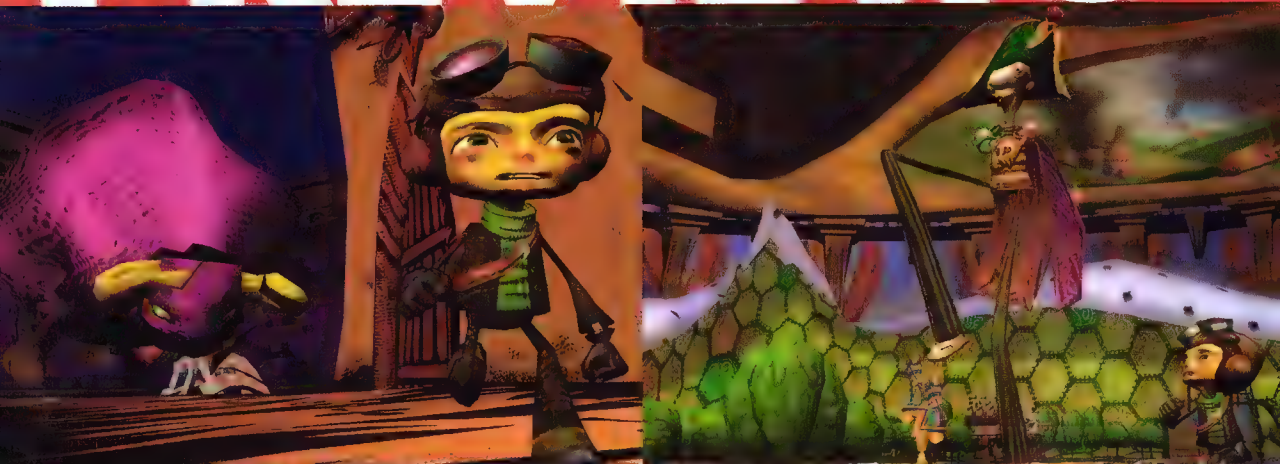
ONLY ON  
XBOX



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# PREVIEWS



Telekinesis is one of the many Merit Badges through which you'll earn your powers



All is not quiet at the camp, no matter how peaceful things seem

XBOX

## PSYCHONAUTS

### A BEAUTIFUL PSYCHOSIS

**Double Fine's Tim Schafer** is not like you. Where you see a video game, the president of the studio and creative lead for Psychonauts sees psychosis, broken dreams, and a place where art collides spectacularly with real life. This also makes Double Fine not quite like other game developers. Once you get your head around Xbox's Psychonauts, you too won't see the world in quite the same old way, either.

Believe it or not, even Tim is finding himself in a new environment. As the force behind PC titles like Grim Fandango and Day of the Tentacle, moving away from point-and-click adventure games to the more interactively demanding world of console platformers isn't a small step. What fans will recognize, however, is the Tim Burton-influenced art direction and the humor of Schafer's previous work.

Protagonist Raz is at summer camp. He is training to be a special breed of trooper — a Psychonaut — one who uses their mental powers for good. However, it's not all wienie roasts and poison ivy rashes, as things soon go wrong for the camp's kids. Raz must develop his burgeoning psychic powers and actually travel into people's minds to uncover the truth.

This game is all about design. You don't just have boring inventory screens; your interface is actually a thought bubble. You can also transform this interface into a projectile weapon and a means of transportation. You don't just enter a level (there are 12 in all); you enter the mental minefield of certain people. Boyd is a conspiracy theorist whose brain is filled with black helicopters and secret agents lurking in the shadows. Another person's area is draped in black velvet as you catch memories for a shattered lover. You must help him build a pedestal of cards so he can reach his ex-girlfriend. Each level is different from the next, and you can backtrack to each one to let your evolving skills

unlock portions that were previously unreachable. Tim explained that this menagerie was created by Double Fine's idea of "what would give us the best sandbox to play in."

No matter what world you are in, you'll collect Challenge Markers to move up in rank and earn Merit Badges. Through these you earn attacks such as Psy-Blasts and abilities like Confusion (causing your enemies to attack each other). You will be assigned other tasks as well. You might have to find a cobweb duster so you can clean a person's mind to uncover a memory, literally take care of someone's emotional baggage, or remove an emotional roadblock to progress in a level. Fred Bonaparte's landscape is different entirely. His Napoleon complex is so bad he's recreating the Battle of Waterloo in his mind. You must use your powers of telekinesis to move pieces around a grid like a board game.

We welcome you to Tim's latest creation — a truly unique and innovative title for the Xbox, and video games as a whole. What a long, strange trip it's going to be, and we can't wait.



Your menu interface also functions as one of your weapons and means of transportation

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** DOUBLE FINE PRODUCTIONS ■ **RELEASE** FALL





When kids start sneezing their brains out at the Psychonauts summer camp, it's time to investigate. Or demand better oatmeal



Yes, traversing the unique level designs...



...can give you a substantial headache



This level presents its own hax-based, Stratego-like board game



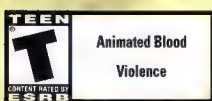
Whoever's nightmare this is must have had a damn spicy burrito before bed





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

**“TOP 5 PS2 GAMES” *EGM***



**GAME BOY ADVANCE**

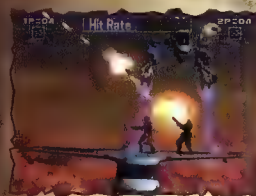
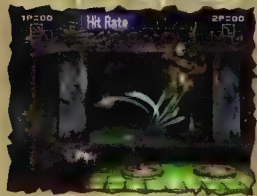
**PlayStation.2**



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# THE ULTIMATE RUN AND GUN SHOOTER RETURNS



# CONTRA

SHATTERED SOLDIER™





PLAYSTATION 2

# WAR OF THE MONSTERS

## RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!!!

With development spearheaded by the team that brought us *Twisted Metal: Black*, one can't help but wonder what the true inspiration for this game is. On the surface, it would appear to be directly influenced by the monster movies of old. You can definitely see tones of *King Kong*, *Godzilla*, and B-grade monster flicks from the fifties and sixties dispersed throughout every inch of this game. At the same time, however, you have to keep in mind that the kings of vehicular combat are overseeing development. They've already blown up cars a hundred times over, and are desensitized by the sight of a vehicle catching fire and exploding into a billion little pieces. They probably went into development thinking, "If we replaced the cars with gigantic creatures, what level of destruction could we create?"

Whatever the thinking, the outcome is an entirely unique and welcome addition to the PlayStation 2 library. Infogrames' recently released *Godzilla* game for the GameCUBE has already achieved a cult-like status, and we have a feeling that *War of the Monsters* will become an even larger hit.

*Godzilla* did a phenomenal job of capturing the true essence of the license it was based on. As amusing as the title ended up being, it didn't deliver a very deep gameplay experience.



The introductory CG sequence depicts an interesting origin story for the monsters

*War of the Monsters* specializes in just this. While destruction reigns supreme, the combat system is so complex that it actually rivals most fighting games. All 10 of the monsters feature unique attributes, combo chains, and special attacks. Outside of the hand-to-hand combat basics, players will also be able to interact with the environments, and in many cases, use them as weapons. You'll be able to pick up any vehicle that crosses your path. In addition to hurling it at your adversary, it's possible to use it like a baseball bat to beat your opponent senseless. Buildings create interesting strategies as well. Not only is it possible to hurl enemies into structures – which brings about a magnificent level of destruction – strategically knocking over towers to crush unsuspecting foes is also possible. If your beast has an arsenal of deadly projectile attacks, ascend skyscrapers by scaling the side of them, then rain down death from a much safer position.

While you'll always want to keep a close eye on the rival monster, you'll also have to monitor the activity of the civilians. Armed forces may show up at any given moment and pump your beast full of lead within seconds. Of course, you can also fight back by squashing soldiers, snatching helicopters out of the air, and crushing tanks.

In true Inog fashion, the single-player experience is rather extravagant. Within the parameters of a limited number of lives and continues, your goal is to work your way across the world and eliminate all of the monsters that infest it. The journey starts out fairly easy, but the odds will quickly turn against you as you'll find yourself combating three beasts at once and squaring off against a well-armored boss. Following in the tradition of the *Twisted Metal* games, each monster features a unique ending movie.

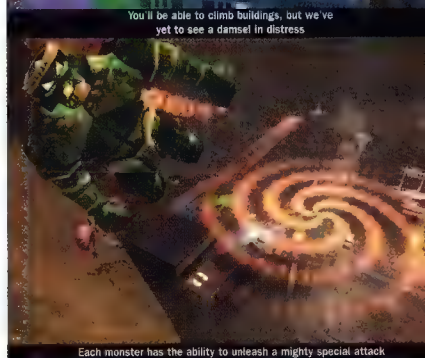
Seeing that Inog is already fluent with online capabilities, it would have been nice to see this game online, but to much dismay, the only multiplayer component is two-player split-screen. Regardless though, the single-player game is shaping up quite nicely and should be the driving force behind this unique and stylish game.



Bugs are cool...but robots are so much better!



You'll be able to climb buildings, but we've yet to see a damsel in distress



Each monster has the ability to unleash a mighty special attack

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA ■ DEVELOPER INOG, INC.

■ RELEASE JANUARY 15



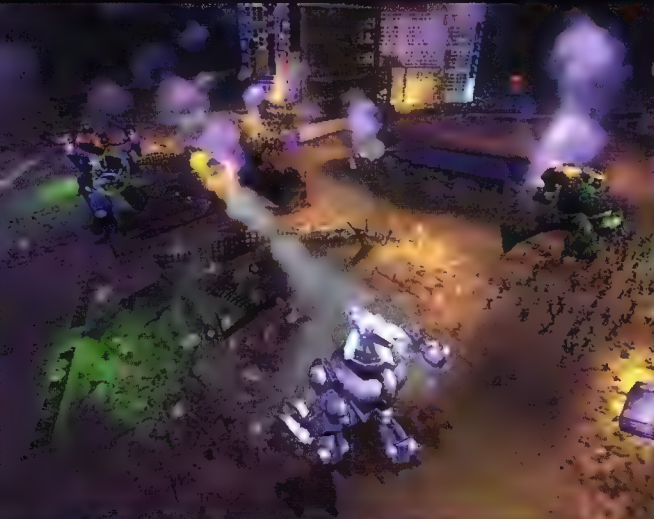


The humans show great resilience, but usually end up squashed



PREVIEWS

The monster named Kineticlops shows Ultra-V the true power of kinetic energy



At times, you'll find the odds stacked against you as you try to combat multiple monsters at once



WINS 1



WINS 0

Multiplayer is limited to two-player split-screen, but is still a blast



Falling buildings will squash and immediately kill monsters



Almost every object in the environments can be used as a weapon





PLAYSTATION 2/XBOX/PC

# INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB

## THE ORIGINAL TOMB RAIDER

**Lara Croft** is set to return to the PS2 sometime next year, but she'll face some competition from Indiana Jones, the original tomb-raiding hunk. If you're looking for a different spin on the genre, then Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb might just be your ticket.

Set prior to the events in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, you'll play as a slightly younger Indy, who sets out to solve the supernatural mystery behind an ancient Chinese emperor's obsession with immortality. To unlock the tomb, players must travel to myriad locales to find the key – the Mirror of Dreams. Cities, temples, abandoned ruins, factories, and tombs are just a few of the places you'll visit.

The wide variety of environments will allow the developers to offer players an interesting mix of gameplay styles. For example, while in the city, Indy will have to brawl with the Chinese mafia in a restaurant scene that resembles the one in *Temple of Doom*, and then mow them down with a mounted machine gun during a car chase through the streets. The tombs and ruins will play out as you might expect – you'll hop pits, dodge traps, solve puzzles, and swing around on your whip. Fortunately, these expeditions are interspersed with varied scenarios, like fighting atop a moving train!

The combat itself is as important as the adventuring aspects; and fortunately, since it runs on the same engine as Collective's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, it's well executed. Indy

has a number of attacks at his disposal. He can punch enemies out with hand-to-hand combos that resemble *Buffy's* fighting system, whip enemies at a distance to inflict damage, or grab them with it to draw them into melee combat. The developers also permit Indy to use anything in the environment, so any weapons or guns lying on the ground or in enemy hands are fair game.

Many titles of this ilk simply employ combat as a means to intersperse variety between more important gameplay mechanics (like *Dragon's Lair 3D*). However, in *Emperor's Tomb*, actually mastering the various tactics will become necessary, as the game's AI presents a good challenge. In the demo we watched, taking down just one enemy required calculated effort and quick precision.

Graphically, the game is on par with *Buffy*. The environments are elaborate and sometimes very large; the textures are clean and sharp; and the animations move decently. However, some of the characters appear a little plain and rigid, although Indy's model looks detailed and smooth. At any rate, the graphics and sound don't seem to hinder the experience in any manner.

If you're a fan of the movies, you should be happy to know that *Emperor's Tomb* has the potential to be the best game bearing the Indy name, and fans of the genre should keep an eye on this, especially in lieu of the not-so-surprising *Tomb Raider* delay.



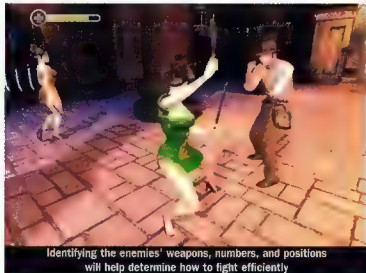
The train scene should offer some intense action



Along with the action, there will be some platforming and plenty of puzzles and obstacles to overcome



Emperor's Tomb will offer a variety of game mechanics to keep things interesting



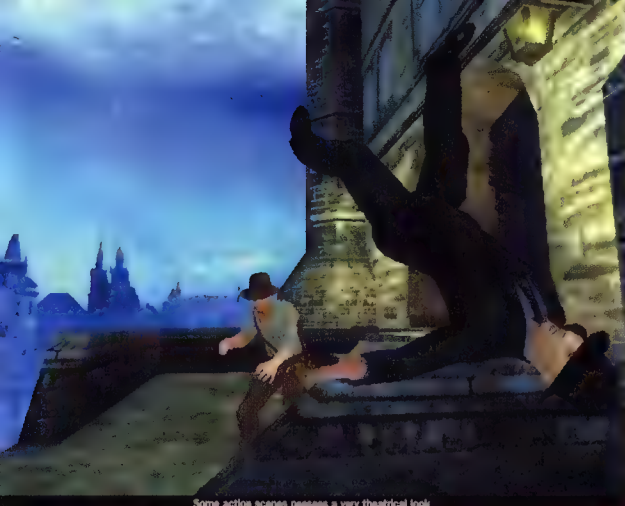
Identifying the enemies' weapons, numbers, and positions will help determine how to fight efficiently



Alligator wrestling will be a minigame – just kidding

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** COLLECTIVE STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 17 (XBOX, PC), MARCH 17 (PS2)





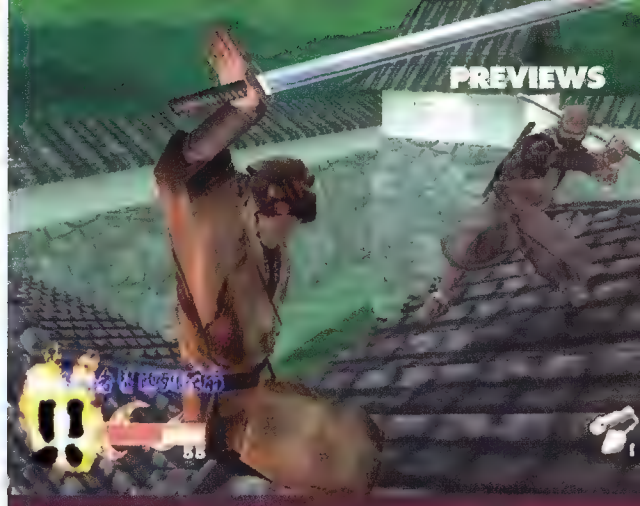
Some action scenes possess a very theatrical look



The sound of the gun shots are sampled straight from the movie



The whip can be used as a weapon or to swing over pits



PREVIEWS

PLAYSTATION 2

# TENCHU 3: WRATH OF HEAVEN

TENCHU, I CHOOSE YOU!

**Sega's Shinobi is** already waving its blade in your face, but the new Tenchu continues to lurk in the shadows. Ninjas are good at that, you know. Ayame and Rikimaru will be slapping you upside the head with a roundhouse kick in March. Anticipation is growing, and is the feeling that this will be the finest installment to the series yet.

If you dug the original Tenchu, you're going to soil your pajamas over this one. Rikimaru is not dead after all, contrary to what we saw at the ending of Stealth Assassins. However, with the title Wrath of Heaven, everything may not be kosher in Ninjaville. Whatever gets thrown at the two sneaky protagonists, we're pretty sure they can handle it. Magic plays a role this time around, unleashing devastating blows to the enemy. New stealth kills for both characters increase the bloodshed. Perhaps the coolest gameplay addition is the ability to stick to the ceiling, then drop down on your unknowing victim. The lone swordsman theory gets shattered thanks to a cooperative mode, which lets both Ayame and Rikimaru team up in co-op specific levels. We've been told these stages will have double-teaming stealth kills. Oh, yeah!

We'll continue sharpening our blades and cooking up poison nec bows as we wait for Wrath of Heaven's release.



Did you think you were the only ninja in the game? You're so vain

This will teach him to steal the last marshmallow at the bonfire



"Rikimaru, where are you boy? Get your butt in here and unclog this toilet!"

We're glad Ayame isn't wearing the traditional ninja hood. She's a hottie

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER ACTIVISION ■ DEVELOPER K2 INTERACTIVE  
■ RELEASE MARCH 5





PLAYSTATION 2

# RESIDENT EVIL ONLINE

## ZOMBIES IN CYBERSPACE

The possibilities seem endless when trying to surmise what type of game Resident Evil will be online. Populating a world with roughly two or three dozen players individually charged to proceed through the game as he or she desires would be ideal. However, based on snippets of information we've obtained, it appears that RE Online will take a more concentrated approach.

Capcom seems to have constructed the playfield into large sections of Raccoon City. These include forests, a hotel, city streets, an underground tunnel, a train, a lab, a mansion, and more. Within any of the large areas, teams of two, three, or four players can roam around; and individuals actually have the freedom to come and go as they please.

However, since the multiplayer component is the game's main feature, team cooperation will be the key to success. Teammates can aid each other during an attack, swap various weapons and items, and help out when someone is injured. Since each of the eight characters (a plumber, fireman, police officer, surgeon, and more) has his or her own special abilities, we suspect that team tactics will play a significant role, too. For example, in a boss fight, two of the quicker members could act as a distraction while the other

pair unleash an offensive. Furthermore, since the screenshots depict individual characters and teams of two moving about, we believe certain scenarios will require the group to split up for smaller missions in order to overcome more important obstacles.

Interestingly, each time you hop online, your party will consist of different users, which ultimately affects the game's story and ending. This sort of approach begs the question of how Resident Evil Online's events will unfold. Perhaps the story will be open-ended to allow gamers enough freedom to play a number of scenarios at anytime. Or, Capcom may establish a progression in which only users of the same level can participate.

If you happen to be an RE fan who unfortunately lacks online access, you should still be able to enjoy the adventure. Although we're uncertain whether a single-player quest will exist, in Japan we witnessed a demo that connected players via i-Link, and a fifth monitor that displayed each of the four scenarios. If we're very lucky, Capcom will also include a four-player split-screen mode so that the troublesome LAN setup isn't necessary. Viva la living dead!



Each player has a different insight into their predicament



Considering backgrounds aren't prioritized as much, the graphics still look impressive



Real-time shadows are always an awesome spectacle

If you don't have a weapon, some will be around for you to pick up



You can even help teammates by carrying them

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER CAPCOM ■ DEVELOPER CAPCOM ■ RELEASE TBA





ACCESS GRANTED.





I ALONE HAVE THE FIFTH FREEDOM.

THE RIGHT TO SPY, STEAL, DESTROY AND ASSASSINATE.

TO ENSURE THAT AMERICAN FREEDOMS ARE PROTECTED.

IF CAPTURED, MY GOVERNMENT WILL DISAVOW

MY KNOWLEDGE OF MY EXISTENCE.

I AM SAM FISHER.

I AM A SPLINTER CELL.



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Violence







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



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



Blood and Gore  
 Violence



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PlayStation 2



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Enter to

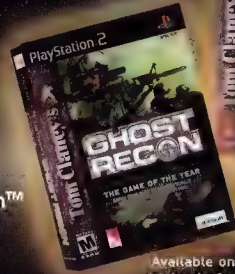
# WIN

## The Night Vision Sweepstakes

# Tom Clancy's GHOST RECON™

**Three (3) Lucky  
Grand Prize Winners  
Will Receive:**

- One pair of Rigel Optics 3200 Night Vision Goggles
- One copy of Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon™
- One Prima Official Strategy Guide



Available on multiple platforms.

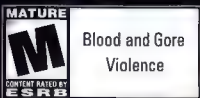


**Fifteen (15) Second Prizes:** One copy of Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon™ (available on multiple platforms)

**Fifty (50) Third Prizes:** One of thirty (30) Spy Ear Audio Boosters, Telephone Voice Changers, or Spy Surveillance Glasses from SpySight.com; or one of twenty (20) Mad Catz Memory Cards

No purchase necessary to enter or win.  
Mail in to win. Visit [www.ghostrecon.com/gi](http://www.ghostrecon.com/gi)  
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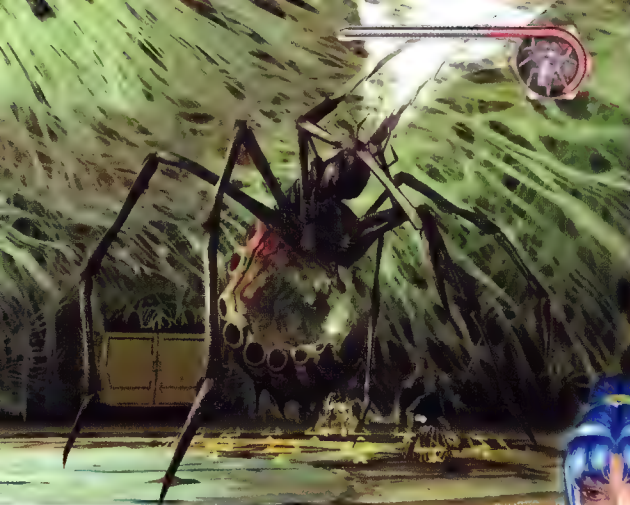


PlayStation 2



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XBOX

# SUDEKI

## AN EXOTIC BLEND

**Things aren't what they seem** with Microsoft's *Sudeki*. In fact, we have to start this preview out with a little background in order for you to fully appreciate it. First off, it's no secret that the company and its console haven't been doing too well in Japan, the Mecca of gaming. This has meant that the console has come up short in the one area where the Japanese excel in creating hits – role-playing games.

But *Sudeki* isn't a normal RPG. In order to capture some of the feel of this genre, Microsoft has hired developer Climax. Contrary to our previous reports, the studio is actually English. So what we have here is a bunch of Brits who are influenced by a classic Japanese genre, but are also trying to incorporate their own gameplay elements to create a product that is neither totally an action title nor an RPG.

Breaking from the mold of role-players, *Sudeki*'s fighting is based around real-time combat. Also, there are no more pesky random encounters. But unlike most titles, the game's simultaneous action even extends into your inventory screen. While you are busy picking out a healing spell or fussing over weapons, enemies will continue to fight you in slow-motion, hitting you for damage if you tarry too long. This is no small

problem, as you could easily spend precious seconds mulling over the multitude of spells. Best of all, your characters' special attacks can be linked with the other three members of your party to produce over 40 spectacular combo results. Swordplay is exciting as well, and requires fighting game-esque timing to land successful strings of hits.

Another key component to the game's combat is the party system. You can switch to any of the other people in your group, although at this time, Microsoft tells us that CPU-controlled characters won't cast major spells. This aspect of the game could be a possible hiccup for *Sudeki*, as squad-based vids usually mean that your partners aren't the sharpest tools in the shed. Still, this title is 11 months out, and we've been told *Climax* is doing everything it can to give you smart help.

Given *Sudeki*'s lead time, it's looking good, even though a PR manager recently told us nervously that all the Xbox-exclusive graphical thingamajigs weren't in yet. The Japanese-influenced character designs and the outdoor environments are looking smooth and express detail.

*Sudeki*'s stew of different influences and gameplay features is certainly an intriguing one, and is something that could melt into an experience well worth tasting.

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** CLIMAX GROUP ■ **RELEASE** FOURTH QUARTER



Developer Climax wants the worlds to offer plenty of exploration



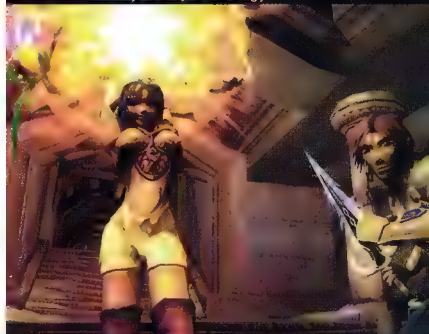
Spells can be linked or cast individually



Switch from character to character at whim while the CPU-AI watches your back



"Somebody sure hit you with the ugly stick. Time to die!"

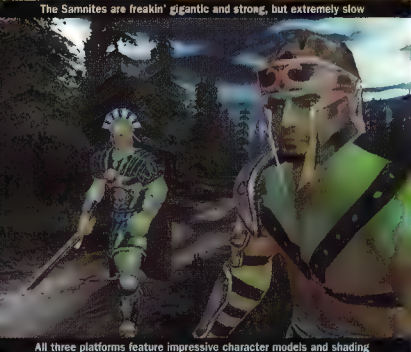


Nice orbs





The Samnites are freakin' gigantic and strong, but extremely slow



All three platforms feature impressive character models and shading



These strange creatures are really based on a historically correct character class from 88 B.C.

PLAYSTATION 2/XBOX/GAMECUBE

# GLADIUS

EXTREME SPORTS, B.C. STYLE



With each passing month, we can't help but grow more excited about *Gladius*, LucasArts' most ambitious project outside of the Star Wars universe. Although Lucas hasn't released much info since our preview in the June issue, we are happy to discover that *Gladius* will be less linear than previously suspected.

The overall story will, of course, maintain a straightforward progression. In order to advance the plot, players must meet certain criteria and collect certificates from each successful battle. However, you can go about meeting guidelines and collecting these highly coveted certificates at your own discretion. So, if you desire to gain experience to learn new skills, travel around in search of new members for your school, or obtain new armor and weapons, you can simply ignore the necessary objectives and complete them later.

The school building component also permits a significant amount of freedom. LucasArts will offer nearly 30 different character classes, 16 of which are based on historically accurate models. The other dozen or so are derived from fantasy; these include spell casters, wild beasts, and mythical monsters. The player can go about composing a group of students that consist

of one or two types, or try to balance it out with monsters, gladiators, and magicians. The creation process gets even more interesting once you discover that certain factions dislike each other. For example, if you pursue a band of sorcerers, they might not take any interest in your school if they dislike a certain member or race already present. Furthermore, the decisions you make as a leader might also affect whether someone will join.

Once you enlist a character, you'll have complete freedom to customize him or her as you see fit. There are over 100 character types, whose color and names can be altered; more than 1,000 items, hundreds of skills, and 400 unique weapons, helmets, and shields. The sheer number of articles and the open-ended design ensures that players can go through the adventure four or five times and not have the same experience.

In total, LucasArts anticipates that it will take roughly 35 hours for most gamers to finish. And, since there are two protagonists with distinct storylines, you can double that number. To increase the replay value even further, up to four players can battle against each other in an exhibition mode, or work together in the game's cooperative mode! Until May, when *Gladius* is released, just gaze at these wonderful pictures and wait.

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ PUBLISHER LUCASARTS ■ DEVELOPER LUCASARTS ■ RELEASE MAY 10



Some of the wild beasts include these giant scorpions



It's a Medieval recreation of the last scene in *Apocalypse Now*



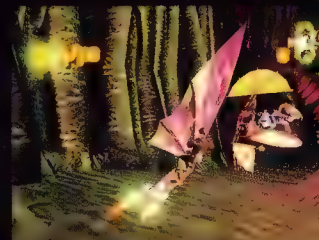
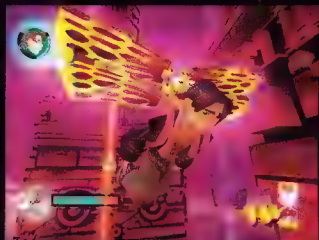
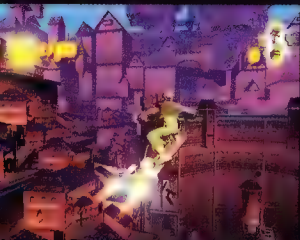


LIVE IN YOUR WORLD  
PLAY IN OURS™



Solar surfing. Beware of the locals.

# Disney's TREASURE PLANET



Space pirates. Alien robots. Not the kind of guys you want to drop in on while solar surfing the new frontier. Set sail on an intergalactic treasure hunt on *Treasure Planet*. Also available on PlayStation. Based on the Walt Disney Pictures film *Treasure Planet*, in theatres now.

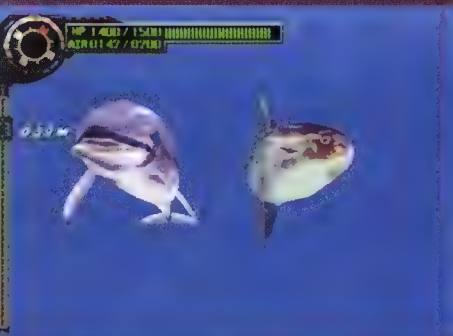


Mild Violence

PlayStation 2



## PREVIEWS



PLAYSTATION 2

## EVERBLUE 2

A SLEEPER... WITH FISHES!

**Welcome to Grand Theft Aqua.** No, you won't be jacking subs or soliciting tuna. You will, however, get open-ended gameplay that focuses on exploration. It's amazing that a game about deep sea diving could be so... well, deep.

At the start, you're only able to dive about 10 meters below the surface. Salvaging is job one, and a handy metal detector points out items, which you then must have appraised to determine their value. Soon, an underwater camera allows you to photograph and chronicle over 70 types of marine life. They range from sharks to starfish, biofish to dolphins. Combined with the plants and coral, Everblue 2 really recreates life below the ocean floor. You can save 20 photos in your album, to view at any time.

Missions pop up often, as upgraded equipment allows you to go deeper, and stay down longer. Different tools will detect glass, or attract fish to you. Grab a trophy from a sunken ferry. Rescue a pilot from a crashed airplane. There are also side missions, like getting dog tags for one person, or finding heavy objects for someone else. Even with the cheesy Japanese vibe, the game keeps you hooked. Plus, it has all the makings of the ultimate chill-out title, for times when you just want to unwind with a game. The idea of a scuba diving title may sound fishy, but it has the potential to be the catch of the day.



Meet Aquaman's little friends



PLAYSTATION 2/XBOX

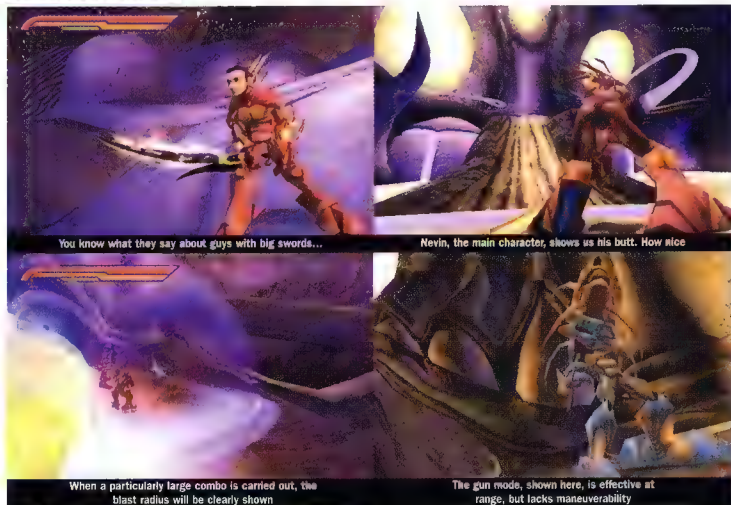
## ALTER ECHO

TIME TO MORPH

**Many a game** has used the warping of time to inject a little intrigue into its play components. Look at all of the flo-mo *Matrix* clones that we've seen recently. It's about time someone came up with something a little on the crazy side when it comes to altering the flow of time. Speaking of altering things, Alter Echo intends to do exactly that! How's that for a segue? This single-player title is seeking to change the way gamers look at brawlers.

Game Informer had the opportunity to play an early version of this title at our offices recently, and we were impressed with both its scope and features. As we mentioned earlier, Alter Echo is a brawler – even if Outrage representatives resist giving it that classification. While we saw many of the usual staples a game of this ilk must use to be successful (complex combo strings, differentiated weapons, crazy environments, etc.), there were a number of innovations present as well.

Your character is able to morph into three different forms – Melee, Gun, and Stealth – each with its own advantages and techniques; and you'll also be able to utilize a feature dubbed TimeDilation, the game's main driving force. When activated, this ability brings up a separate screen where players maneuver a symbol in a lightcycle-esque manner; all the while steering the ever-growing trail with your controller as it grows via a button-timing element that flashes on the bottom of the screen. If done correctly, your character will then perform a number of lightning-quick combos on nearby foes with devastating effects. An interesting idea – we'll see if this, and its other intriguing features, will be able to capture the imaginations (and dollars) of gamers come this spring.



You know what they say about guys with big swords...

Nevin, the main character, shows us his butt. How nice

When a particularly large combo is carried out, the blast radius will be clearly shown

The gun mode, shown here, is effective at range, but lacks maneuverability

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER THQ ■ DEVELOPER OUTRAGE GAMES ■ RELEASE SPRING

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ADVENTURE ■ PUBLISHER CAPCOM  
 ■ DEVELOPER ARIKA ■ RELEASE JANUARY 15







## PREVIEWS



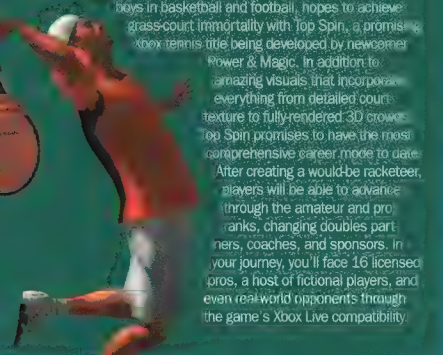
XBOX

## TOP SPIN

EVERYTHING BUT YANNICK NOAH

As the world's most popular sport, tennis is often the genre that plays a deciding factor in which system rises to the top in the competition for consumers' dollars. Actually, that's a complete lie. Nobody watches tennis anymore, especially the moribund men's game, save for a few hairy-palm'd perverts hoping to catch a glimpse up Anna Kournikova's micro-mini. That doesn't mean that tennis can't be a compelling video sport, as Sega's excellent Virtua Tennis series has demonstrated over the past few years.

Microsoft, which has struggled to compete with the boys in basketball and football, hopes to achieve grass-court immortality with Top Spin, a promise Xbox tennis title being developed by newcomer Power & Magic. In addition to amazing visuals that incorporate everything from detailed court texture to fully rendered 3D crowds, Top Spin promises to have the most comprehensive career mode to date. After creating a would-be racketeer, players will be able to advance through the amateur and pro ranks, changing doubles partners, coaches, and sponsors. In your journey, you'll face 16 licensed pros, a host of fictional players, and even real-world opponents through the game's Xbox Live compatibility.



"...and another thing - I hate your goatee!"

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4 PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** POWER & MAGIC ■ **RELEASE** FALL 2005



XBOX

## KAMEO: ELEMENTS OF POWER

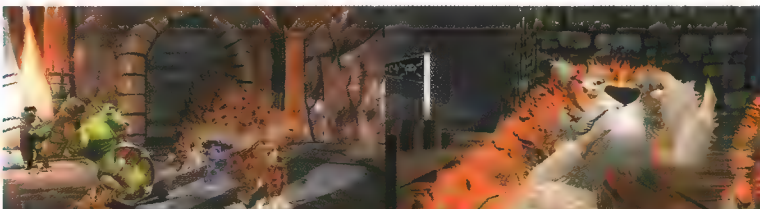
AN AMAZING FAIRY TALE

It certainly feels strange to be talking about Rare's new game for Microsoft, but after looking at these awesome new GameCubes screens, it's obvious that GameCubes' loss is Xbox's gain. It's been a while since we saw this title at E3 2001, but it's looking even better than we could have imagined, and will no doubt continue to evolve as Rare begins to tweak the game to make the most of Xbox's much-ballyhooed technical capabilities.

Thus far, Kameo's origins have been shrouded in mystery, but Rare has lifted the veil to reveal a backstory that is, frankly, pretty damn convoluted. Here's the short version: Kameo is the daughter of Theena, and a Princess of the Fairy race. Years ago, Theena and her family fought against the Dark King Thorn in the last Great Battle. Theena's siblings sacrificed themselves to entrap Thorn in a magic curse. However, as evil masterminds are wont to do, Thorn has freed himself from the trap, and is now intent on decimating the

remaining population of Fairies and defiling the lush land that they call home. What a jerk! Of course, Kameo is now responsible for defending the cause of good.

Luckily, Theena passes onto Kameo her ability to take control of the various beasts that roam the land. Players will capture, train, command, and ultimately transform themselves into a variety of wildlife ranging from wee little monsters to gargantuan titans. Every creature in Kameo's menagerie is based on one of six elemental fields - Fire, Water, Wind, Plant, Ice, and Rock. As Thorn's mutant army is also subject to natural law, you'll have to be wise in selecting which type of creature you send to combat your enemy. Combining strategy with morphing combat is clearly the concept that Rare hopes will make Kameo stand out from the legion of third-person action/adventure titles on the market. It will be interesting to see how successful the developer is at blending these disparate elements into a cohesive whole.



You'll have a dope zoological posse to administer your beatdowns for you

In its follow-up to Star Fox Adventures, Rare continues to impress with realistic fur textures



We can't wait to take control of this huge beast

We don't think these two are here to make s'mores

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** RARE ■ **RELEASE** TBA



**NAMCO**

WWW.NAMCO.COM

PlayStation 2

tick

tick

tick

tick

tick

**BOOM!**

Push any good guy too far, eventually he's gonna make some bad things happen. Ex-cop Jack Slate is no exception. But when he explodes, things are going to be worse than you can ever imagine. So be sure to watch your backs, thugs. Your time's running out.



# Dead to Rights



Blood  
Mature Sexual Themes  
Violence



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## PREVIEWS



PLAYSTATION 2/GAMECUBE

### RTX RED ROCK ONE-ARMED FIGHTING MACHINE

**Oddly, lacking an arm** has given our hero, Wheeler, an interesting and diverse arsenal to combat the aliens that have invaded the Human colonies of Mars. He's able to attach myriad tools and weapons to his cybernetic prosthetic. These include a grabbing hook, a taser, a laser, and various pistols and guns.

In between the bouts of alien destruction, players will be charged to complete a number of puzzles. Interestingly, many of these challenges involve interacting with machines, which adds an element of variety since many of them offer different functionality.

With a diverse number of environments and situations, RTX is shaping up to be surprisingly impressive. Granted, it lacks a fancy license, but let's hope that this third-person action game rectifies the travesty that was *Bounty Hunter*.



Machines are needed to complete certain puzzles, like removing this deadly gas.



When you're outside, a suit is necessary, of course. You can also use jet packs!

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS  
■ **DEVELOPER** LUCASARTS ■ **RELEASE** FALL

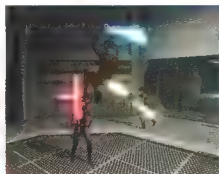


XBOX/PC

## STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC

### TRAVERSE BACK TO THE GOLDEN AGE

**Set 4,000 years before** *The Phantom Menace*, when the Force prevailed and Jedi numbered in the thousands, *Knights of the Old Republic* takes gamers back to the Golden Age of the Republic. Formatted as a complex RPG, players will at long last be able to experience Star Wars in its fullest. You'll hire mercenaries, race on swoops, travel to different planets, and turn the tides of a war all within an evolving world. Slated to release exclusively on Xbox this spring, *Knights of the Old Republic* is shaping up quite nicely and should appeal to Star Wars and role-playing fans alike.

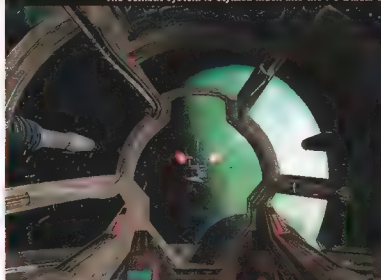


#### FORCE DECISIONS

The actions you make during the quest will determine whether you are a part of the Light or Dark side of the Force. For instance, you'll come across a pool of water infested with deadly creatures. If you leave the pool alone and find other means to get around it, your affiliation sways closer to the Light side. Conversely, if you poison the water to kill all of the aquatic beasts, you'll come one step closer to becoming a part of the Dark side. Elements within the game will change based on the path you choose.



The combat system is stylized much like the PC *Baldur's Gate* series.



Track-shooting levels accommodate space travel.



You'll be able to amass a party of 10 characters.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** BIOWARE  
■ **RELEASE** SPRING (XBOX); SUMMER (PC)





## 112% NBA

Anyone can give 110%. NBA Inside Drive 2003 is now loaded with a 25-season dynasty mode that includes player management, timely trades, intense drafts, play design and stars that improve with age. Will purple reign? Will the windy city rise again? It's your team, kid.



More basketball than basketball

[www.nbainsidedrive2003.com](http://www.nbainsidedrive2003.com)

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XBOX



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## PREVIEWS



PC

# HIGHLAND WARRIORS

## OF SKIRTS AND SWORDS

**It's amazing how** an axe to the skull can reduce one's quality of life, but in medieval Scotland, this was the way of the world during the years surrounding the country's struggle for independence.

Highland Warriors takes an in-depth look at this conflict and gives players the ability to play from many different sides. Take part in the festivities as the hated English, or choose a plan that can rise to the top and secure Scotland's freedom. Historic figures such as William Wallace (Mr. Braveheart), Robert the Bruce, Edward the Longshanks, and others will be included and available for play, as well as a host of specialized military and economic units. Look for this one to hit shelves early in the new year.



If you look closely, you can see that famous highland mullet



Men wearing huge metal masks tend to give opponents that "not so fresh" feeling

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER ACTION/STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** DATA BECKER ■ **DEVELOPER** SOFT ENTERPRISES  
 ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY



GAMECUBE

# WARIO WORLD

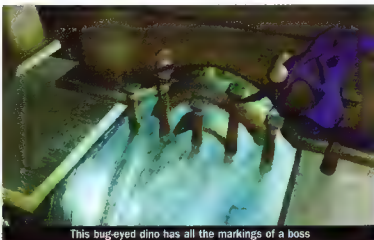
## I DON'T NEED YOUR CIVIL WARIO

**Wario gets no respect.** His only platformers have been on Game Boy systems. Nintendo gave him a Jimmy Durante nose, so is there any wonder he turned out a little less than valiant? Even you don't give him his just props. Yeah, you! How many times did you pick him in Mario Kart, huh? You always have to be Yoshi, or that squeaky punk Toad, don't you? We thought so.

Wario is getting his revenge on those who have dissed him. Come February, he'll get a brand new platformer. This time, it's on GameCube, and will get all the applicable trimmings. The graphics have the sharp, cartoony splendor of Mario Sunshine. Wario himself moves just as you'd expect from a rotund, jaded star with his belly jiggling as he waddles around. The game's fixed camera eliminates complaints that it's in the wrong place at the wrong time, so if you mess up, Wario has every right to take it out of your behind.

Since Wario is the anti-hero, expect some of his trademark misfortunes-turned-powerups. This guy has a way of not letting anything hold him back from his greedy goals, and taking every consequence in stride. The new 3D perspective, as opposed to the side-scrolling that the yellow fellow is used to, obviously affects the gameplay. Wario engages in hand-to-hand combat often, punching and kicking his foes with reckless abandon. He'll also use his girth to lift enemies overhead, and give them a good toss.

It won't be easy for a perennial 2D game to make the transition to three dimensions, but it would be absolutely moronic to bet against a Nintendo property—especially after the string of hits it has done on GameCube. Wario is a unique character, so detestable that you can't help but laugh at him. Let's just hope this console game finally gives him the respect he deserves.



This bug-eyed dino has all the markings of a boss



Wario's so bad, he'll pile-drive a snake!



This guy looks like a Pokémon reject...



...while these enemies resemble Pikmin mummies

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





# STAR WARS™ JEDI KNIGHT™ II JEDI OUTCAST™



Jedi. Outcast. Rebel. Mercenary. You have one lightsaber and eight Jedi Force powers, including Jedi Mind Tricks, Force Lightning and Force Grip. With a devastating arsenal of weapons like disruptor rifles, thermal detonators, trip mines and a Wookiee bowcaster you must battle a hoard of new enemies. Fight in single mode or go lightsaber in split-screen multiplayer Jedi arena — or die trying. Learn more at [jedioutcast.com](http://jedioutcast.com)



Official Star Wars Web Site: [www.starwars.com](http://www.starwars.com)



Violence





# PHOTOPHILE

PLAYSTATION 2

## GALERIANS: ASH



Enterbrain is banking on the idea that people will remember Ash's PlayStation precursor enough that they'll be interested in purchasing a sequel. This installment has Rin battling against the Last Galerians – a breed of psychic computer creations that are threatening the world. You see, Rin is the only person on the planet with the mental powers to defeat these nefarious foes. What will happen? We have no clue, nor do we want one. Ash is due to release this winter.

PLAYSTATION 2

## AERO ELITE COMBAT ACADEMY



Aero Elite is looking to eclipse the intensity and realism of games like Ace Combat 4 with numbers and action. Over 60 of the world's most high-performance aircraft will grace your screen – but they won't all be jets. Sure, you'll have the requisite supersonic fighter planes, but you'll also fly nimble and heavily armed attack choppers as you gear up your character for intense aerial combat. Sega hopes to have this title on store shelves by the end of March.

XBOX

## FLAT-OUT

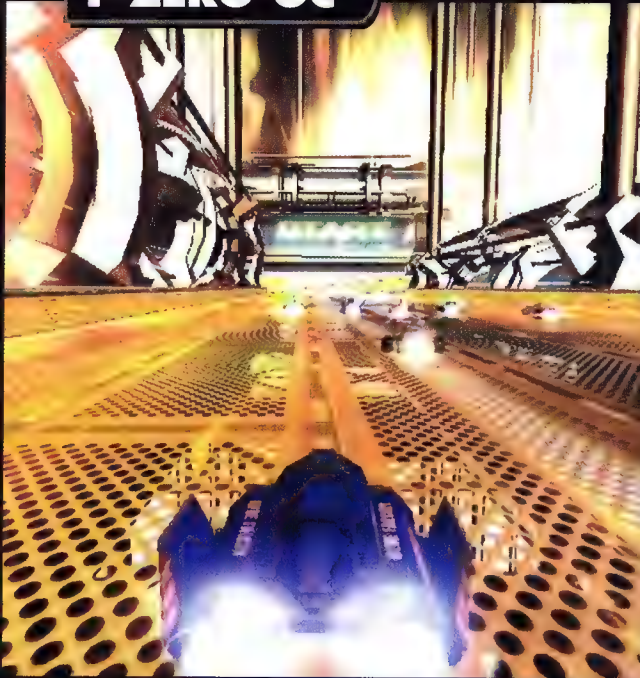


Here's a racer with a little more depth than meets the eye. Flat Out is being developed by a Finnish firm dubbed Bugbear, and interestingly enough, the title will have nothing to do with Dungeons & Dragons. This online-compatible racer will give people a car's-eye view as well as a third-person perspective which will allow gamers to walk around their environments and talk with other characters without that pesky windshield getting in the way. Flat Out is scheduled to release in the summer and will feature Xbox Live compatibility.



GAMECUBE/ARCADE

## F-ZERO GC



F-Zero was the shizzy on the SNES, good fun on the GBA, and decent on the N64. Now, Nintendo has tapped Sega's Amusement Vision development house to create a brand-new GameCUBE update of the legendary racer. Captain Falcon is back, along with a host of characters both old and new. Nintendo and AV are promising that this new F-Zero will have the graphics and speed it takes to compete with the best next-gen racers. In addition to a deep multiplayer mode and a possible track editor. Even better, you'll be able to take your save data to the arcades and upload it into a new arcade unit, entitled F-Zero AC.

PLAYSTATION 2

## UNLIMITED SAGA



There are high hopes, and even higher demands on the impending release of Unlimited Saga. The team building the game is captained by Akitoshi Kawazu, who is known for his efforts in previous Saga titles, as well as The Legend of Mana. Look for more info on the American version of Saga as its springtime release date grows nearer.

PHOTOPHILE

PLAYSTATION 2

## CLOCK TOWER 3



It's going to be a scary winter, especially with Clock Tower 3 on the way! Capcom is giving horror buffs another way to get their fill with this sequel. The main character, Alyssa, will find many bizarre happenings inside a London hotel. After falling into a dimension created by a time/memory warp, she is assailed by evil spirits and restless ghosts, and can eventually explore the entire city. Hold on to your colostomy bag, grandma! Things are about to take a turn for the weird.

PLAYSTATION 2

## GUILTY GEAR X2



If you're anything like *Chet*, you can't wait to play this game. ("It's sooo cool that they used high-res sprites for this game, unlike *Capcom Vs. SNK...*") This is true, but the fact he knew this off the top of his head is as impressive as it is pathetic. Regardless, Sammy's next-gen fighter is looking polished and clean, and we hope to be seeing it in stores sometime this winter.

XBOX

## MURAKUMO



Ubi Soft is bringing a very Japanese battle mech game, *Murakumo*, to American shores this spring. Featuring mobile armored suits called A.R.K.s (Artificial Reflexive Kineticoid), this game revolves around robots gone wild! It's your duty to protect the Earth from A.R.K.s that want to destroy everything. How do you do that? By destroying the destroyers, of course. Huge environments await your devastation, but try to take out the bad guys too, okay?



# REVIEWS

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



## THE SCORING SYSTEM

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



### ANDY

**Handle:** The Game Hombre **Expertise:** RPGs, Action/Platform, Racing, First-Person Shooters **Interests:** Creating The Ultimate In-Home Computer Network, High-Res Flat Screen Monitors, South Park Season One DVD **Dislikes:** Initiators And Player Haters, Whoever Is Taking My Pen, Internet Service Providers **Current Favorite Games:** EverQuest: Planes of Power, Metroid Fusion, Metroid Prime, Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance

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



### MATT

**Handle:** The Original Game **Expertise:** First-Person Shooters, Puzzle, Action/Adventure, Action/Sports **Interests:** The Packers Getting Smacked Down At The Dome, Devin The Dude: Underrated Rap Genius, Billy's Victorian, Mission Of Burma **Dislikes:** Contrarian Fake Packer Fans, Having No Willpower, Credit Card Debt **Current Favorite Games:** Grand Theft Auto: Vice City, James Bond 007: NightFire, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4, Crash Bandicoot: N-Tranced

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



### JUSTIN

**Handle:** The Digital Deviant **Expertise:** Action/Sports, Action/Adventure, Fighting, RPG **Interests:** Girlfriends Who Survive The Mosh Pit For The Whole GWAR Show, Family, My 40,000+ HRA Rating, Cee-Lo Green **Dislikes:** Falling On My Ass, Bugs In Released Games, Having To Call The Cops On My Neighbors At 5:00 AM **Current Favorite Games:** Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance, Metroid Fusion, Grand Theft Auto: Vice City, Animal Crossing: NBA 2K3

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



### CHET

**Handle:** The Joystick Jockey **Expertise:** Fighting, Action, RPGs, FPS, Shooter, Platform, RTS **Interests:** Pecan Cheese, Buy Nothing Day (Nov. 29), Michael Moore's Stupid White Men And Bowling For Columbine, Horror Flicks And Books **Dislikes:** WTO, SUVs, McDonalds, Taco Bell, Wendy's, Burger King, White Castle, Andy's, Carl's Jr., Jask In The Box, Kentucky Fried Chicken **Current Favorite Games:** Capcom Vs. SNK EO, Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance, Haven: Call Of The King

*Chet considers gaming to be a lifestyle, which means that he spends a ridiculous amount of time with his games. He's not in an intense session with his UT clan, or relaxing with one of his consoles, he's hopelessly seeking out arcades where fighting games still rule. Although he places all other activities at a distant second, he realizes the importance of society. Unfortunately, mimicking the motions for Dragon Punches and Fireballs only confuses and scares most people.*



### REINER

**Handle:** The Raging Gamer **Expertise:** RPGs, Fighting, Action/Platform, Strategy, Sports **Interests:** Book-To-Move-To-Game Translations (I Just Like Saying It), Star Wars: Episode III (T-Mug 943 Days And Counting), The Care Bears **Dislikes:** Matt's So-Called Chamber Of Secrets (Gross, Dude!!!), Casey Affleck (He's Related To Ben So He Must Suck), Rainbow Brite **Current Favorite Games:** Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance, Haven: Call Of The King, Sukudon III, Metroid: Fusion, Metroid: Prime

*Reiner considers himself the biggest Star Wars fan in the world. Along with his impressive collection of Star Wars action figures, he has seen the trilogy 615 times. A fan of all game types, role-playing games are his strong suit. In his six years as a professional gamer, Reiner has achieved the impossible. Penetrating the pixel boundary, he not only plays games, he's in one, and can be shot daily in the epic N64 release, Perfect Dark.*



### KRISTIAN

**Handle:** The Video Viking **Expertise:** RPGs, Strategy, Sports **Interests:** Replica NFL Mini Helmets, A&W Root Beer Floats In A Frosty Mug, Josh Wink, Amp **Dislikes:** Car Trouble, The Fact That Athletes From Other Countries Train And Live In The U.S. Then Don't Represent The U.S. In International Competition **Current Favorite Games:** NASCAR Thunder 2003 (Xbox), MechWarrior: Mercenaries, Age Of Mythology

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



### KATO

**Handle:** The Game Katana **Expertise:** Sports, Racing, Action/Adventure, Action/Platform **Interests:** The State Of Hockey, Sarah Shannon, The Ring, Punch-Drunk Love, Reading Instead Of Always Playing Vids **Dislikes:** Getting Suckered Into Special Edition 4-Disc DVDs (And Linking It), Bandwagons **Current Favorite Games:** Psychonauts, V-Rally 3, The Lord Of The Rings: The Two Towers, Shenmue II

*When not buying copious amounts of records, Kato can be found exercising good taste, feeding the goats, and trying in vain to update his wardrobe into the 21st century. Like other young men of his generation, he quickly found out that the one true real world application of good games 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.*



### LISA

**Handle:** La Game Nikita **Expertise:** Puzzle, RPGs, Action/Platform, Horror **Interests:** The Lord Of The Rings (Long DVD Version), Roasting Vegetables And Not Ending Up With Mueh, Dreadlock Maintenance, Jewelry **Dislikes:** Street Cleaning At Inopportune Times, Sold-Out Animal Crossing Cards, Tape That Doesn't Stick, Dogs That Bite **Current Favorite Games:** Resident Evil O, Animal Crossing, Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance, Fatal Frame

*Barring a brief and ill advised "I want to be popular, so I'll stop playing games" phase in late junior high, Lisa has been subjecting her friends to drawn out boss battles since age 8. She has been known to wax philosophically about why Jigglypuff is desperately under-appreciated and wish that some "big" games were more fun, even if that means less pretty.*

## 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.





## NEWBIE CHEAT SHEET

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

- action** – A term we use for games like *Zone of the Enders* and *Gauntlet*.
- adventure** – A term we use for games like *Myst* and *Escape From Monkey Island*.
- AI** – Artificial Intelligence. Usually used to refer to how well the computer reacts to a human opponent.
- board** – A term we use for games like *Jeopardy!* and *Mario Party*.
- bump-mapping** – A technique where varying light effects simulate depth on textures.
- cel shading** – A technique used to create 3D rendered objects that resemble hand-drawn animation cels.
- CG** – Computer-Generated graphics.
- E3** – Electronic Entertainment Expo. The world's largest convention for video games.
- fighting** – A term we use for games like *Street Fighter* and *Dead or Alive*.
- FMV** – Full Motion Video. Usually refers to an animated CG cutscene.
- FPS** – Frames Per Second. How many animation frames happen in one second. Also used to denote First-Person Shooters like *Doom*, *GoldenEye*, & *Unreal Tournament*.
- framerate** – The frames of animation used to create the illusion of movement.
- frontend** – A game's menus and options.
- 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.
- jaggies** – Graphical lines that are jagged when they should be straight.
- LAN** – Local Area Network. Connecting computers or consoles together within a small space to allow communication between them. Provides fast, simultaneous gameplay.
- minigame** – A small, simple game within a larger one.
- motion-capture** – Using human models and infrared cameras to record movement for game animation. Also mocap.
- motion blur** – Phantom frames follow an object to give the impression of realistic speed.
- NS4** – Nintendo 64.
- NES** – Nintendo Entertainment System.
- NPC** – Non-Player Character. Those people and creatures you see wandering around in games that are not being controlled by actual humans.
- peaces** – The new slang Chet recently used instead of saying "peace out," his usual parting remark.
- platform** – A term we use for games like *Super Mario* and *Crash Bandicoot*.
- pop-up** – When onscreen objects, usually distant, suddenly appear.
- PS2** – Sony PlayStation 2.
- PS-X** – Sony PlayStation.
- particle effects** – Things like smoke or sparks created in real-time.
- PKer** – Player Killer. This is a person who thrives on killing newbies or vulnerable characters in MMORPGs or shooting their teammates in games like *Counter-Strike*.
- puzzle** – A term we use for games like *Tetris* and *Chu Chu Rocket*.
- racing** – A term we use for games like *Gran Turismo* and *Mario Kart*.
- RPG** – Role-Playing Game. A game that involves character improvement through collecting and spending points. A term we use for games like *Final Fantasy* and *Dragon Warrior*.
- shooter** – A term we use for games like *Mars Matrix* and *Gradius*.
- SNES** – Super Nintendo Entertainment System.
- sports** – A term we use for games like *Madden NFL*.
- 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.

## REVIEWS



# METROID FUSION



## GAME OF THE MONTH METROID FUSION

There is little doubt that GameCube's *Metrod Prime* is one fantastic game, but we were more than a little surprised at how much punch *Metrod Fusion* packed on the Game Boy Advance. Armed with all the graphics, gameplay, and exploration that any *Metrod* fan could want, *Fusion* proves to be the ultimate accessory to the game, on the go, if not the best *Metrod* game ever created. Meet your destiny on page 120.





**"I'll even go out on a limb and say that Deadly Alliance is the best 3D fighter to date!"**

PLAYSTATION 2

# MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

FATALITIES, GRAPHICS, AND GAMEPLAY...OH MY!

**M**y brain feels like mush, I can't concentrate, the joints in my fingers hurt, my eyes are strained; and it's all because I've been playing Deadly Alliance for two weeks straight. Yet, despite my physical ailments, I still want to bust up more virtual mortal combatants. Why? Because MKDA is that damn good. I'll even go out on a limb and say that Deadly Alliance is the best 3D fighter to date!

MKDA's got it all: an open-ended combat system, tons of combos, cool character designs, gruesome Fatalities, a solid single-player mode, myriad secrets (over 600, which we've unlocked for you), interesting stages, killer graphics, compelling sounds and music, and kick-your-ass-over-and-over-again AI. Even so, MK's crowning achievement is its strategic and well-balanced gameplay.

Instead of overwhelming players with an obscene number of moves (as in Tekken and Virtua Fighter), players only have access to a few special attacks, and about a dozen different standard moves. This constrained approach eliminates superfluous attacks, and allows players to focus on the strategic element of the combat (like many 2D fighters). So, you won't discover 10 subtly different ways to hit low; rather, MKDA might offer four or five, which is enough to keep your enemies guessing.

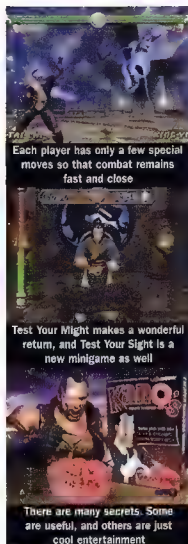
This might seem indicative of slow, combo-less battles. However, frantic melee fighting almost always ensues, since

most moves and small combos deal minor amounts of damage, and the de-emphasis of special attacks makes distant fighting impractical. The combo system is elaborate, yet easy to understand. Every character supports three fighting styles – two standard martial arts, and a weapon form. By linking smaller combos from each style together, players can create heavy-hitting offensives. This approach not only heightens the variety and strategic components, it prevents combat from relying too heavily on button-mashing. Therefore, your non-gaming buddies won't be able to make triumphant claims of skill by pulling an Eddie Gordo.

The developers even managed to create a fully realized cast. Each character supports a unique design, and offers an exclusive arsenal, which means that every combatant is useful in his or her own way. Also, because Midway thoroughly balanced out the characters, nobody is too strong or too weak.

The only thing I can really fault MKDA for is its single-player mode. While the numerous secrets will certainly keep you hooked, the standard human versus computer scenario needs more depth. Something like Alpha 3's World Tour mode or VF4's Kumite should be standard. Ideally, I would love to see a fighter of this caliber support more adventuring, as in Way of the Samurai. If Midway can implement a better one-player experience for the sequel, we'll have perfection. If it can manage to include online, that would be utter bliss. – **CHET**

■ **STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION** ■ **PUBLISHER MIDWAY** ■ **DEVELOPER MIDWAY** ■ **RELEASE NOVEMBER 18**



Each player has only a few special moves so that combat remains fast and close

Test Your Might makes a wonderful return, and Test Your Sight is a new minigame as well

There are many secrets. Some are useful, and others are just cool entertainment



The detail in the characters is stunning, even rivaling DOA 3



Blood (and lots of it) literally flows off of characters

**THE BOTTOM LINE**

**M** **9.5**

- **Concept:** It's MK in 3D again, but refined to the point of being one of the best (if not the best) in the genre
- **Graphics:** The best in this category on PS2. Only DOA 3 on Xbox beats it out
- **Sound:** All of the sounds are sweet and the music is appropriate
- **Playability:** The control is fantastic. I have zero complaints in this department
- **Entertainment:** This is the most fun I've had with a fighter since Street Fighter Alpha 3. It's highly addictive and offers an amazing combat system, plus more secrets than any other fighter
- **Replay Value:** High

**SECOND OPINION**

Mortal Kombat is back with a vengeance, breathing new life into the fighting genre, and eclipsing everything that has been attempted before it. Clinging tightly to the blood and gore that put this series on the map, Ed Boon and his team have adopted a sleek gameplay engine, drop-dead gorgeous character models, and an unprecedented amount of secrets. While I was a tad disappointed to see only one Fatality per character, the depth and polish of the fighting system more than makes up for it. Unlike most 3D fighters, you won't be able to burton-fall your way to victory. Deadly Alliance is all about progressive skill and the ability to manufacture devastating combo sequences. Even though Vice City will win all of the awards, I truly feel that Deadly Alliance is the most surprising, accomplished, and addictive game of the year.

**REINER – 9.5**





PLAYSTATION 2

# STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER

## YOU FOUL-MOUTHED NERFHERDER!!!

"At long last, there's finally something in the Star Wars universe that's worse than Jar Jar."

Some people call it foolish. Others label it as a dork obsession. The way I see it, though, being a Star Wars fan is an exercise in pain. Not only are we forced into camping overnight to secure tickets to the first showing of the upcoming film, but we have to deal with Hindenberg-sized disasters like this game. At long last, there's finally something in the Star Wars universe that's worse than Jar Jar.

Ever since *The Empire Strikes Back*, I've wanted nothing more than to assume the identity of the galaxy's most feared bounty hunter, Boba Fett. LucasArts has finally created a game that allows just this. Actually, it's Boba's father Jango, but when it comes down to it, he's basically the same character.

LucasArts definitely had the right idea for a Fett-inspired game. Jango proves to be just as ruthless as I hoped, and his arsenal is brimming with possibilities. He uses his flamethrower to cut through metal dividers; soars through the air with his patented jetpack; collects bounties by binding thugs with his whipcord; launches missiles from his back; and flips through the air while locked onto targets.

As giddy as I was going into this review, and as cool as the gameplay dynamics sound, by the time I was done playing, my entire world had come crashing down, and one of my fondest childhood memories was tainted forever. As grand a vision as this game paints, its onscreen reality is the exact opposite. With an archaic graphics engine, dreadfully awful

camera tracking, extensive load times, and some of the most atrocious mission challenges known to man, it becomes quite clear where this game went wrong. Rather than focusing just on the action, LucasArts made an effort to incorporate extensive platforming segments as well. As one might gather, it's not entertaining to leap from rooftop to rooftop, nor is it amusing to shimmy across pipes.

The only qualities that are remotely impressive actually have nothing to do with the gameplay package. Industrial Light and Magic created a handful of stunning out-of-game CG story sequences that perfectly accommodate an interesting tale showing us once and for all why Count Dooku chose Jango as the primary cloning gene. On top of this, LucasArts enlisted the voice-talents of Episode II's stars Temuera Morrison and Leanna Walsman to reprise their respective roles as Jango Fett and Zam Wessell, respectively.

As disappointing as this game is, I did learn a valuable lesson: George Lucas killed the Fetts for a reason. They certainly look cool, but give them the chance, and they'll stab you in the back. I do recommend that Star Wars junkies work their way through the miserable gameplay to see the new story material and detail that went into them, but everyone else should look elsewhere for their Star Wars thrills. — **REINER**

TEEN  
T  
5.75

- **Concept:** Jango Fett's bogus journey
- **Graphics:** The uninspired environment designs and froaty character animations look quite awkward stacked up against the finely sculpted out-of-game cinematics by ILM
- **Sound:** A handful of tracks from John Williams' Episode II score, new compositions by Jeremy Soule, and voice work by Temuera Morrison and Leanna Walsman
- **Playability:** Slippery controls, ridiculous missions, and atrocious combat
- **Entertainment:** Cool in that "It's Star Wars" kind of way, but ultimately low on thrills
- **Replay Value:** Low

### SECOND OPINION

The one thing I wanted from this game was to keep Jango Fett cool. After all, acting tough with a bucket on your head takes some brass balls. Through murky game design and controls, however, LucasArts has blown his mystique. Frankly, he's become a bore. While the levels were inventive in their layout, it simply wasn't fun going through them. I also think this game should have been a first-person shooter. My natural inclination was to control Jango this way, and it would have solved having to constantly babysit the bad camera. Heap on top of this a poor targeting system and uninspired combat, and Jango's merely a guy running around with a kick-ass utility belt and a phallus jutting out of his back. That's just not cool. Bounty Hunter is not as bad as Boba dying in the Saracc pit, but this game will be slowly digested in the bargain bins for a thousand years.

**KATO - 6.5**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** LUCASARTS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 20



Jango uses his flamethrower to cut through a grate

ILM's CG sequences are wickedly cool

Capture thugs to collect a bounty at the end of the level



Hmmm...fitting



The character movement is extremely sensitive and a real bear to control successfully



## REVIEWS



PLAYSTATION 2

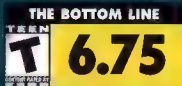
### DYNASTY WARRIORS 3: XTREME LEGENDS

A DYNASTY OF GAMES – OVERKILL?

**T**his series has become Koel's most profitable franchise, so it's no surprise to see it trying to capitalize on this grandiose brawler. Make no mistake though; this isn't new as much as it is an expansion pack through and through.

Therefore, the differences between Xtreme Legends and Dynasty Warriors 3 are minimal. Players can adventure through the stories of a few other characters; customize each of their bodyguards; complete some new challenges; gain access to a fifth weapon; and have the ability to use features from this version in DW 3. Overall, these additions will certainly appeal to serious fans of the series, especially since XL comes priced at only 30 bucks. However, if you've never been partial to these games or brawlers in general, there's absolutely no reason to bother with a purchase.

Fans will be saddened to discover that not only have the problems with the previous installment gone overlooked, but XL comes with a new one. For whatever reason, the graphical quality has decreased – usually the exact opposite of what you want to accomplish in an upgrade. – **CHET**



**Concept:**

They actually look worse as Dynasty Warriors 3 with a few new features and story elements.

**Graphics:**

They actually look worse – curious.

**Sound:**

The yells and screams of hordes of enemies and allies still get you into the action.

**Playability:**

The control is okay, but the camera presents a few problems.

**Entertainment:**

It's a button masher that gets old after a little while, but if you love these games then this is another way to squeeze out more entertainment for \$30.

**Replay Value:**

Moderate.

#### SECOND OPINION

Xtreme Legends offers a smattering of new stuff, but until significant changes are made to this series (like fixing the camera and expanding the combat), I'm afraid it's passed its expiration date. Oddly, I swear the game looks worse than the original DW 3. The price is the only thing that keeps this from being a full-on shakedown.

**KATO – 7**



PLAYSTATION 2

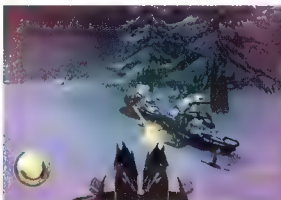
### JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE

LIVE OR LET DIE?

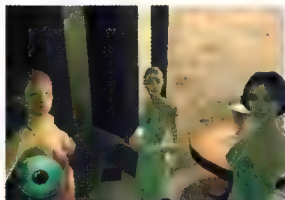
**T**he likeness of Pierce Brosnan validates the experience more than any other Bond game before it, and the cinematic story sequences glisten with Hollywood qualities. Outside of these dynamic visuals, if you were to take the time to break down every little difference between NightFire and the precursor in the series, Agent Under Fire, you'd come to the startling conclusion that very little has changed between the two games.

If you're a fan of the series, this is fantastic news. However, if you didn't enjoy the first installment in the series, you'll walk away disappointed again. As was the case before, Bond's high-tech adventure unfolds within first-person, driving, and track-shooting styles. All three of these are very dynamic and look absolutely fantastic, but since the levels are quite short, the variety hits you too fast, which in turn makes the quest feel somewhat disjointed. While you'd like to spend more time within one particular level or gameplay style, dividing the action into different sequences keeps it fresh. The problem is, if you know how to use a controller, you're going to whip through this game and run headlong into the ending credits within a matter of hours. The difficulty level never escalates to a fevered pitch, and the stages are short, simple in design, and entirely too linear.

In this regard, NightFire feels more like a movie than a game. That is, unless your sole interest is the multiplayer component. With a host of game modes ranging from Team King of the Hill to Assassination, and a wide assortment of modification options like number of bots, mini-vehicles, weapon assortments, and friendly fire, NightFire's true calling comes within the two to four-player skirmishes. The adventure Bond embarks on certainly is amusing, especially since you'll make out with at least five different hotties within the span of an hour, but since it is short, it's only a sound investment if you intend to use it for multiplayer. – **REINER**



In one sequence, you'll find yourself in a hair-raising track-shooting stage set on the back of a snowmobile.



"Let's see here... I'll have the blond on Wednesday the redhead on Thursday, and the brunette for brunch on Friday."



Roger Moore isn't the only one who can drive cars underwater.

THE BOTTOM LINE



**Concept:**

A cookie-cutter first-person shooter with amusing driving and track-shooting levels thrown in for good measure.

**Graphics:**

Highly detailed character models, impressive explosions, and motion-picture quality CG cutscenes.

**Sound:**

Bond to a tee. It even has a sultry NightFire theme song.

**Playability:**

The missions are as diverse as can be and the controls are easy to maneuver.

**Entertainment:**

A wild ride, but the missions are fairly short and the game can be completed within hours.

**Replay Value:**

Moderate.

#### SECOND OPINION

This game is very deceiving. Upon first look, most will be impressed with NightFire's graphics and overall polish in a number of areas. However, once you get the chance to sink your teeth into it, you'll soon discover that most of the work went into the presentation while the game design took a backseat. The missions are generally extremely short, and with only about a dozen, you'll complete the entire adventure in four or five hours. This problem is further compounded by each level's simple linear approach. Perhaps the only redeeming element to the entire experience is the multiplayer component, but even that pales in comparison to TimeSplitters. If you're a seasoned gamer or specialize in FPSs, you don't need to bother with NightFire. This will appeal only to the casual gamer who happens to enjoy Bond flicks.

**CHET – 6.75**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** KOEI  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** KOEI ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY 15

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** EA GAMES/MGM INTERACTIVE  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** EUROCOM/EA GAMES ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 14





PLAYSTATION 2

## HAVEN: CALL OF THE KING

RUN...JUMP...EVOLVE

**M**y score doesn't necessarily reflect the statement that I'm about to make, but I can honestly say that Haven is one of the most enjoyable platformers on PlayStation 2. The secret to its success is variety. From the opening cinematic to the ending credits, the gameplay is in a continual state of metamorphosis. Whether the game's progression offers subtle changes to the basic play mechanics, the introduction of new puzzles, or sequences that adopt the identity of different genres, there's always something new to experience. Other platformers have tried to broaden their horizons with the incorporation of diversified gameplay, but none even come close to touching the vicissitude of Haven.

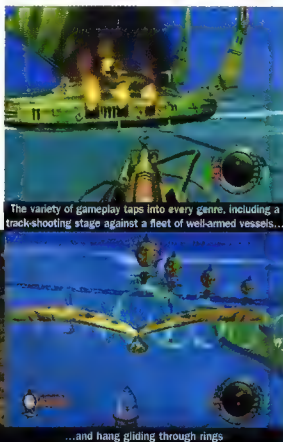
I kid you not when I say that by the end of the game you'll have experienced almost everything video games have to offer. You'll compete in boat races, hang glide through a storm, don a water cannon for firefighting, mount a turret on a train, bombard ground targets in a biplane, rocket into space in a ship, speed across sand dunes in a buggy...the list goes on and on. If a particular scenario is repeated, there's usually a unique twist thrown in to make the experience unquestionably different. The variegated gameplay styles are definitely the main attraction of this game. Considering how much material is actually included, the graphics are quite good.

The problem that Haven runs into is its execution of the basics. The platforming segments simply lack polish. The collision fields are suspect at times, the camera doesn't show the best angles, the yo-yo attacks are hard to control, and targeting is incredibly sloppy. That's not to say that the platforming is a complete loss, however. With an intense difficulty level and the same amount of diversity distributed between the puzzles and jumping exercises, it's hardly a bore. It still plays well, but is a much lower grade than the Sly Coopers and Ratchet & Clanks in the world.

Even with a few drawbacks, Haven truly is a trend-setting effort and an absolute must-have for platforming fanatics. — REINER



...a three-lap buggy race...



...and hang gliding through rings

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** MIDWAY ■ **DEVELOPER** TRAVELLER'S TALES ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 18

THE BOTTOM LINE

**T** **8.25**

■ **Concept:**  
An entertaining platformer that breaks free from the traditional mode and tries something a little different

■ **Graphics:**  
Crisp and clean. The engine is also capable of displaying over 1,000 characters onscreen at once for flocking effects

■ **Sound:**  
Very typical for a platformer

■ **Playability:**  
The integral platforming segments are decent, but dwarfed by the immense number and quality of other play styles

■ **Entertainment:**  
Keeps you on the edge of your seat wondering what will come next

■ **Replay Value:**  
Moderately High

### SECOND OPINION

This fall is probably one of the best seasons for character action games I've ever seen. Things will get even better when Haven, one of this year's biggest surprises, hits the shelves. Although not as polished in terms of control and camera work as some of the giants in the genre, Haven is a deep and satisfying platforming experience. It melds traditional running and jumping with a wide variety of action sequences that see you participating in a dune buggy demolition derby, manning the cannon on a monorail, and even using a jetpack to save a burning village. Better yet, the hectic action starts immediately, and you don't have to endure any pointless tutorial levels. The only downside is that the main character is pretty generic (except for sporting a ludicrous set of Iverson crowns), and your primary weapon (a yo-yo) isn't particularly effective or easy to target.

**MATT** — 8.75



PLAYSTATION 2

## DEAD TO RIGHTS

MAKING THINGS RIGHT

**D**ead to Rights on Xbox, while an extremely high-quality title, was not without flaws. In bringing it to other platforms, Namco did right by the game, as this port solves many of the problems in an otherwise excellent offering. Sometimes it pays to wait.

DTR is loaded with great missions and excellent moves. Its pacing on Xbox, however, made you do a lot of menial things to get to the good stuff. This isn't the case here. Instead of wallowing

endlessly in prison, you're out much faster. Battles that would've otherwise taken several tries to conquer are easier. Yes, it's sort of weak to cut down the difficulty, but it increases the chances of gamers seeing more of the cool levels — rather than getting frustrated and quitting. This is possibly the most

versatile gunslinger in video games. Targeting enemies is a breeze, and there are a plethora of weapons to use. Diving, using flashy disarms, hugging walls, and taking human shields are all options, too. Hand-to-hand combat comes into play often, and is a nice break from bullets. Props for the minigames, which value timing over button mashing.

I put Dead to Rights at the top of the list of gun-based games. Even though I'm giving it the same score as on Xbox, this version is noticeably more user-friendly. Become that user, and buy it. — JUSTIN

**ANDY** — 8.25

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** NAMCO ■ **DEVELOPER** NAMCO ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 19

THE BOTTOM LINE

**M** **9.25**

■ **Concept:**  
A tale about a boy and his dog, and the criminal conspiracy to kill them

■ **Graphics:**  
Slightly degraded from the Xbox version

■ **Sound:**  
The voiceovers amusingly poke fun at celebs. I'm indifferent in regards to the music

■ **Playability:**  
Re-mapped buttons slightly enhance the already smooth controls. It just takes awhile to memorize all the functions

■ **Entertainment:**  
Great story, action, and extras make DTR the cream of the PS2 crop

■ **Replay Value:**  
Moderately High

### SECOND OPINION

Since I played Max Payne on PC, Dead to Rights is basically a poor man's version of what I consider to be a superior game. However, Max Payne on PS2 was a lackluster port and lacked the mouse control that made it such fun. Dead to Rights scores in my book as the better game on PlayStation 2, since its interface is much more controller-friendly. The disarms are definitely worth seeing and the gun combat is fast and furious. I could do without the hand-to-hand portions of the game, but overall it's good stuff.



## REVIEWS



PLAYSTATION 2

# BMX XXX

NOT THE END OF THE WORLD

**F**irst off, let me get you perverts out of the way. Sony made Acclaim take the female frontal nudity out of BMX XXX, so if you're buying this for the boobies, look elsewhere. That's not to say that this is for kids; there's enough swearing going on here to make Eminem wash Z-Axis' mouth out with soap. Is it funny? Sure, but it's just clever-dumb *South Park* potty humor, and nothing that would raise an eyebrow on HBO. Basically, if you're old enough to buy the game, you're too old to be shocked by it.

BMX XXX is really the descendent of this year's excellent Aggressive Inline, and features the enormous levels and scripted events that made that game so noteworthy. Unfortunately, it doesn't come close to matching Aggressive Inline's level of quality. For one, too many of the missions are annoying scavenger hunts.

Two, with no cutscenes to give you hints, it's difficult to tell just what to do for many of the missions. This is made more annoying by the fact that the riders who give you tasks aren't always at their posts, forcing you to wait for them to return before you can give it another try. Lastly, it's clear that the "adult content" is the focus of BMX XXX, as Z-Axis has not made the significant gameplay refinements (like being able to swap tricks in and out) that have made Neversoft's Tony Hawk games a premier franchise. —MATT

THE BOTTOM LINE

MATURE

**M 7.75**

- Concept:** Popular BMX franchise ditches Dave Mirra, embraces naughty humor, foul language, and sexually suggestive themes.
- Graphics:** Nice looking, but there are some serious collision problems and characters tend to get stuck in platforms.
- Sound:** Most of the dialogue is funny in a fifth-grade Not Just Another Teen Movie kind of way, but the music is pretty mediocre.
- Playability:** Modifier button, flatland tricks: Nice. Not being able to edit your trick list, no special meter or moves: Weak.
- Entertainment:** If you like these kinds of games, it's worth your time, but be prepared to deal with some annoyance.
- Replay Value:** Moderately High.

### SECOND OPINION

While I do miss nipples (taken out of this version), what I miss more is smooth, tight gameplay. BMX XXX lags far behind both Tony 4 and Aggressive Inline. If you've seen all there is to see in those two, though, this is worth a look. It's entertaining, despite the numerous flaws. I suggest picking up the better-looking, topless Xbox version.

JUSTIN — 7.75



PLAYSTATION 2

# ATV OFFROAD FURY 2

FOUR-WHEEL BLISS

**M**uch like the first incarnation in the series, Rainbow Studios has forged an extravagant gameplay package with realistic physics models for the quad bikes, surprisingly intelligent CPU opponents, and track designs that are as treacherous as they are creative. You'll actually have to shift your driver's weight to pre-load the suspension for jumps, counterbalance around hairpin turns to avoid flipping, and limit the air you catch to avoid nasty crotch-mutilating bails. You really couldn't ask for much more in terms of control or authenticity. Rainbow always strives for realism in its games, and this is the closest it's come to authenticating vehicular physics. You'll even encounter enhanced friction zones for variant surfaces like mud and sand.

On the other hand, Rainbow's games have never showcased longevity. Outside of the dynamic gameplay, the first ATV came up short in game modes and reasons as to why people should spend more than a day with the game. Knowing full well that gamers wanted a much deeper experience, Rainbow decided to blow the doors off of how deep a racing game could be. With 40 environments divided between five event types, a slew of modes, and the ability to earn cash to shop for new ATVs, outfits, and minigames, you get more than enough bang for your buck. But it actually gets better. The single player experience pales in comparison to the multiplayer component. Along with the standard split-screen play, this game supports LAN, i-Link, and online multiplayer for both broadband and dial-up connections.

The gameplay truly is a work of art, and now that it has depth on its side, ATV is nothing short of a force to be reckoned with. If there's even a smidgen of racing in your blood, run out and buy this game. It's one of the best gaming investments you'll make. —REINER



Since the entire game is physics-based, you'll need to shift your weight for jumps, landings, and turns



By earning cash, you'll be able to unlock new gear, vehicles, and minigames like hockey...

...and the wildly popular King of the Hill for split-screen or online multiplayer

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE

**E 9**

- Concept:** The same great physics-based gameplay with newfound depth and online play.
- Graphics:** The rider and ATV models glisten with authenticity, but the effects and environments are fairly generic.
- Sound:** A rockin' soundtrack with Korn, Filter, Garbage, Cypress Hill, and Jurassic 5.
- Playability:** Dynamic controls, realistic physics, big time crashes, amazing CPU AI, and trucks galore.
- Entertainment:** A finely crafted racing experience that will keep you occupied for months on end.
- Replay Value:** High.

### SECOND OPINION

For a sequel that delivers everything you could want and a little bit more, I was surprised to find myself less than engaged by ATV Offroad Fury 2. Don't get me wrong, the pre-race jumping and online components are right on in execution and design, but the racing is missing the spark that once made it so great. In every race in the single-player mode, I always felt like the last series of jumps and how well I approached them made the difference between victory and defeat — not how well I had need up until that point. That said, as one of the few racing games currently online for PS2, Fury 2 delivers a rush when going head to head against human opponents. Sure, there are some cheap components to the racing in multiplayer, but your knowledge of the track and how to hit all the jumps are the keys to victory. This is the best ATV racer yet, but the single-player component still isn't on par with the rest of the racing world.

ANDY — 7.75

■ STYLE 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING ■ PUBLISHER SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA ■ DEVELOPER RAINBOW STUDIOS ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 12



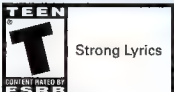
THE ONLY THING THAT  
CAN STOP THE RACE IS  
GOOD WEATHER



# WHITEOUT



Experience the thrills, spills and sub-arctic chills of authentic snowmobile action. Careen along snow-packed trails in blinding blizzards. Bust big, frosty air with over 30 different tricks. And pray for endless winter storm fronts. It's Whiteout. And it's got racing down cold.





## REVIEWS



PLAYSTATION 2

# HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

HERE'S THE SECRET: IT'S BORING

Let me preface my remarks by saying this: If you're shopping for a certified J.K. Rowling fanatic this holiday season, this game should do well enough to fill their Potter-centric gaming needs. If you're young, and in love with a fictional wizard from England, you'll probably eat this up like a box of Bertie Botts Every Flavor Bean! Woo-hoo! Hey, how's that for a pull quote? Moving on, let's discuss whether or not Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets is worth the recycled plastic disc it's burned into. In a word, no.

While it's marginally interesting to collect and assign new spells to your HUD, that's about the only thing that even came close to jarring me from the lazy daze I fell into playing Harry Potter. It's sort of odd that the developers again opted for the Zelda/Star Fox "no jump" control scheme, because de-emphasizing the action element means you have to have some pretty unique puzzles and levels to keep our attention - which this game definitely doesn't. Also, a few elements of the film/book that would have made killer sequences (especially taking the flying car to Hogwarts) were relegated to outscene detail. Larne. —**MATT**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 16



- **Concept:** The weakest book in the Harry Potter series gets the video game treatment.
- **Graphics:** There is really no excuse for a framerate this slow, especially when the game isn't exactly pushing the envelope in other areas.
- **Sound:** I wanted to strangle Harry every time he cried "Fluendo!"
- **Playability:** Erratic, clumsy, and no fun.
- **Entertainment:** It's fun to check out all the Potter marginalia contained in the levels, but it's just too damn dull to recommend.
- **Replay Value:** Low.

### SECOND OPINION

The Chamber of Secrets is crammed to capacity with meticulously detailed Hogwarts authenticity and seamlessly integrated story sequences, yet the variegated gameplay segments tend to be quite tedious or executed poorly. A no-brainer for Potter fans, but it'll hold little interest for anyone else.

**REINER - 6.5**



PLAYSTATION 2

# TREASURE PLANET

WINDSURFING AND COINS

While the new Disney movie still looks hit-and-miss to me, the PlayStation 2 version of Treasure Planet is an ambitious stab at breaking the "games based on movies all suck" stereotype. In some ways, Bizarre was quite successful.

Taking advantage of its cartoon tie-in, each level is intercut with scenes from the movie, the voice work is all done by the famous actor types that star in the feature, and the graphics walk a fine line between cartoony and being strikingly realistic.

The gameplay tries to capture that madcap feel of cruising on a windsurfer over a crescent-shaped city, while at the same time urging traditional platforming values. Each mode is unfortunately marred in some way. The windsurfing levels contain too much exploration, and not enough racing. The platforming levels, on the other hand, are imaginatively designed but require the ubiquitous and mundane task of cruising around and finding coins.

This is not to say, though, that the graphics, controls, and sound don't more than make up for its lack of mission creativity. To progress through levels, one needs to complete a certain number (which is not all) of the tasks listed. In theory, you can skip most of the more monotonous missions, and concentrate on the few originals in each level.

Treasure Planet is a great starter platform game: the missions are short, you advance quickly, and the design quality is what you'd expect from any Disney feature. —**LISA**



- **Concept:** Live the cartoon epic by exploring brave new worlds populated with Disney's minions.
- **Graphics:** In-game models don't seem out of place with the outscenes - a good balance.
- **Sound:** Famous people who are routinely paid to act supplied voices, and it is gratefully appreciated.
- **Playability:** Split into two distinct realms: platform exploring and racing on a windsurfer with rockets. I wish they hadn't tried to merge the two in some levels.
- **Entertainment:** Like a Disney movie without the song and dance.
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High.

### SECOND OPINION

It was only a matter of time: Treasure Planet is the first Jak and Daxter clone. The main characters look, move, and even gather powerups just like Naughty Dog's platforming heroes. I'm not complaining, though; it's a good one. Maybe clone isn't the right term, as the space windsurfing sections are unique, if not entirely successful. If anything, I wished the developers had eschewed these sections altogether and focused more on crafting the platforming levels. While Nintendo, Naughty Dog, Rare, and Insomniac rule the roost in the world of character action games, companies like Treasure Planet developer Bizarre Creations, Sucker Punch (Sly Cooper), and Traveller's Tales (Haven) are quickly closing the quality gap. I just hope that gamers aren't so addicted to running down pedestrians in Vice City that they forget that there is some great gameplay to be had in the good old platformer.

**MATT - 8**



■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT ■ **DEVELOPER** BIZARRE CREATIONS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13



*Geidoe will defend Harmonia at all costs.*

*With the help of his allies, the beautiful heroine Yuna and the Dragon Summoner,  
if he can't be convinced, he'll defeat them with his own special weapons and force them to pay for it.*



# Suikoden

幻想水滸伝

**- Unleash the power of three on a quest for peace -**

*The fates of three opposing heroes are forever altered in a battle that will determine the destiny of the entire land.*

*Uncover the 108 Stars of Destiny, create a homeland castle town,  
discover the secrets of the 27 True Runes, and save the world from destruction.*



Mild Violence  
Suggestive Themes

PlayStation.2



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PLAYSTATION 2

# JAMES CAMERON'S DARK ANGEL

DARK INDEED

I admit to never having watched the *Dark Angel* television series, but after playing this game, I'm not surprised it tanked after two seasons. Trying to duplicate Buffy's "hot back-talking chick with fancy moves" formula is a little harder than it may seem—as is making a decent video game. *Dark Angel* fails at both.

This is a brawler. It allegedly has stealth, too, but it's the most pathetic, poorly done sneaking around I've seen. So, we'll just ignore that claim entirely. Basically, you get spotted by an enemy, engage an entire platoon, find the keycard or other item needed to advance, then repeat. And repeat.

*Dark Angel*'s combat itself isn't so putrid. Each face button on the controller is used. Grappling is the best offense, but plenty of kicks and punches exist as well. Combos abound. Jumps and first-person shooting on the "stealth gun" are both too buggy to be of use, and the camera is a chore to deal with. Cameos by characters from the series and a decent Jessica Alba model aren't enough to hook even hardcore fans of the show. —JUSTIN

THE BOTTOM LINE

**T** 5.25

- **Concept:** Hot girl, sweet combat moves, but a lame game.
- **Graphics:** Wow! This is the best-looking PS-X game I've ever... Huh? It's PS2?!
- **Sound:** Club beats and canned one-liners. This will do.
- **Playability:** The fighting itself is well done, as there are plenty of ways to kick ass. However, the stealth and other gameplay features are a joke.
- **Entertainment:** The only fun here comes from the battles, which get repetitive after the third fight.
- **Play Value:** Low.

SECOND OPINION

Fans of the cancelled show won't find solace in this game. Your path through levels is short but not sweet. You can kick dumpsters, but can't jump up on a box to explore areas. The stealth portions are plagued by a bad camera and poor enemy AI. Fighting sequences, however, do let Max show off some good moves. This game will peter out faster than the TV show itself.

KATO - 6

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** SIERRA  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** RADICAL ENTERTAINMENT  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 19

# PLAYSTATION 2 QUICKIES

## NCAA FINAL FOUR

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** 989 SPORTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 12



This game is so bad, I actually had to bump up my other NCAA game scores to make sure Final Four's was that much lower. I considered making this the first game to ever receive a negative score, but the player models lifted it above a zero. It would take more paper than the Sequoia National Forest could produce to list everything wrong that happens in a single half of Final Four. The only thing that could make this worse would be if the game was broken, but then you'd at least be spared the agony of playing it. —JUSTIN

**E** 1.25

## DROME RACERS

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS/LEGO INTERACTIVE  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 19



Another promising game struck down by execution. *Drome Racers*, which is based on those kind of advanced, expensive Lego kits that require you to hold a B.A. in mechanical engineering. The off-road and city racing modes work well, but the drag racing is not fun in the least. Also, the game isn't really that challenging; you either coast to victory or get screwed by a lucky enemy's power-up attack. Although there is a car-building mode you can unlock, I wish that the focus had been more on experimenting with the various Lego sets and parts at the outset of Career mode. —MATT

**E** 7

## NCAA MARCH MADNESS 2003

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 21



*March Madness 2003* isn't perfect, but it's easily the best option for college hoops fans. It's got fast-paced gameplay and excellent analog stick control. The atmosphere of the collegiate game is really captured here. It's too easy to score and the ball collision is lacking, but those were the same flaws in *NBA Live 2003*, too. *March Madness* is the basketball series that graduates with honors this year. —JUSTIN

**E** 8

## NCAA COLLEGE BASKETBALL 2K3

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA  
 ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 10



This is perhaps the crummiest hoops game from Sega that I've ever played—and I've played them all. It's as if you're playing *NBA 2K3* through some bizarre vortex, as it sort of resembles that game, but has few of its strengths. The AI is horrendous, all the great tweaks in *NBA 2K3* are MIA, and most of the fun is gone, too. I do like the random name generator, which isn't in the other collegiate titles. People in dorms are going to have to get pretty drunk to get any enjoyment out of this. —JUSTIN

**E** 5.75

## SUB REBELLION

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER SHOOTER  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** METRO 3D  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 11



This game's catch—controlling a submarine—is also its downfall. *Sub Rebellion* moves slower than Jacques Cousteau on the toilet. For a shooter, this is a negative. Regardless, I did enjoy having to manage my targets above and below the water's surface, including everything from depth charges to helicopters. And notable are the treasure items you can pick up and the radar system used to sniff them out. *Sub Rebellion* is in many ways a very basic game (one featuring obscure controls that take a while to get used to), but it just manages to carve out a niche for itself. —KATO

**T** 7.5



## DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTER  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMES  
 ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 4

Infogrames scores another win with the *Dragon Ball* crowd, but to the exclusion of mainstream success. Fans of the show will drool over the voices, music, and perfectly replicated look of the animated series. On the gameplay side, *Budokai*'s basic fighting moves are saved only by the immense customization of skills and the unlockables available. Getting seriously involved in the building of your characters, however, requires wading through average combat that you may tire of before too long. Get this only if you're already down with chillin' with Krillin. —KATO

**T** 7.25

## V-RALLY 3

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMES  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 23



Is Colin the best? I may have spoken prematurely. This game is essentially its equal, and even bests it in one key department—the career mode. You'll switch teams from year to year and rise to the challenge of bringing your carmaker to the top. As far as your ride's handling, however, I prefer Colin. *V-Rally* is a little squirrely, even if you tweak the steering response. Otherwise, I cannot commend developer Eden Studios enough for everything from top-notch presentation to delivering a white-knuckle rally ride that'll have fans enthralled. —KATO

**E** 8.75



SHE PRESSED AGAINST HIM  
HE COULD NOT RESIST HER NEEDS  
HE WOULD DIE FOR HER



PC  
CD



PlayStation 2



"I COULDN'T PUT IT DOWN."  
-ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

...ONE OF GAMING'S MOST SENSUAL BABES...  
-PLAY

...A FAST AND FURIOUS ACTION/  
ADVENTURE THAT OOZES STYLE."  
-GAMEPRO

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GAMECUBE

# METROID PRIME

PRIME TIME FOR NINTENDO

**"From utter blasphemy to unadulterated praise, my time with Metroid Prime stimulated a whirlwind of emotions."**

**F**rom utter blasphemy to unadulterated praise, my time with Metroid Prime stimulated a whirlwind of emotions.

As a lifelong aficionado of the series, I had doubts as to how Retro Studios would successfully incorporate Metroid's high-flying, two-dimensional gameplay into the framework of a first-person shooter. It didn't seem like a viable genre for a game of this caliber, but to a certain extent, Retro Studios proved me wrong. The only aspect of the Metroid universe that isn't expressed to its fullest capacity is Samus' leaping prowess. In such, you won't find yourself spinning frantically as you bound from wall to wall. You can leap across platforms and will eventually unearth a double-jump upgrade, but as a whole, these movements seem more appropriate for a space-age wheelchair with jump jets than the powered armor that we know and love.

Samus' acrobatic abilities may have mysteriously vanished, but I can confirm that everything else you've come to expect from a Metroid game is represented in some fashion. Retro didn't just include these elements to appease the fan boys. The development team did a phenomenal job recreating the atmosphere and general vibe of the series. Unlike most shooters, this adventure unfolds naturally and isn't broken up into stages or acts. The entire world is available to gamers from the outset, and the story progresses as players unearth new routes and items.

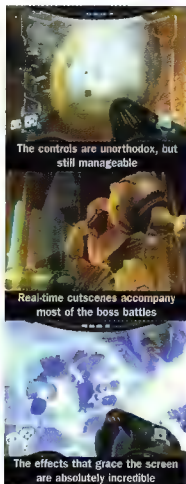
Exploration has always been one of Metroid's strong points,

and Prime absolutely nails this aspect. You'll find yourself searching high and low for secret passages, little holes that you can roll through, pits that you can grapple across, and discolored walls that will crumble upon missile detonation. The amount of investigation involved is staggering, but more impressive yet is how deep it actually is. With a robust assortment of gadgets at your disposal, you'll find yourself constantly flipping between different weapons, visors, and items to reach new areas.

When stacked up against other first-person shooters, Metroid Prime stands out like a sore thumb, and not just because it has a heavy focus on exploration. Rather than sticking with the standard FPS gameplay formula, Metroid Prime's controls are completely unconventional. Movement is designated to just one analog stick, and you'll actually have to hold the Left Trigger to strafe and the Right Trigger to alter your pitch. Why not just put these movements on the C-Stick? Or better yet, allow gamers to customize their own controller settings. It still plays fairly well, and I can see why Retro designed it this way, but everyone plays first-person shooters differently. Control configuration is a must nowadays.

Even with a number of control misuses and inconsistencies with the side-scrolling lineage, Metroid Prime is a welcome addition to the series and an experience that avid fans and newcomers alike should add to their gaming repertoire. — **REINER**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** RETRO STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 18



The controls are unorthodox, but still manageable

Real-time cutscenes accompany most of the boss battles

The effects that grace the screen are absolutely incredible



Many of the enemies have specific weak zones. For instance, this beast has a hard shell on its head, so you'll need to lock-on, circle, and blast its back



The morph ball has evolved, but the old "bomb and jump" trick still works

THE BOTTOM LINE

**T**  
TEEN  
ESRB
**9.5**
**■ Concept:**

A laudable attempt at transforming Samus' legendary exploits into a high-powered next-generation FPS

**■ Graphics:**

A visual tour de force that lights up the screen with breathtaking effects, awe-inspiring constructs, and incredible character designs

**■ Sound:**

Eerie sci-fi melodies with a nostalgic kick

**■ Playability:**

Glorious exploration elements, tons of weapon and suit upgrades, and an awkward control schematic

**■ Entertainment:**

An incredibly lengthy adventure that is as finely polished as it is well paced

**■ Replay Value:**

Moderately High

**SECOND OPINION**

My dislike of the unorthodox FPS control scheme in Metroid Prime almost made me write this game off before I finished the opening scene, but I persevered and it paid off. Once Metroid Prime takes you to the planet surface and gets back to its exploration roots, it reminded me why I was so excited about the evolution of this series to the GameCube. Sure, this title would have been better in 2D (and much less clumsy if Retro had used the standard FPS control style), but it really is amazing to see Metroid from this perspective. As a matter of fact, that is the main reason I enjoy Prime. It's just absolutely gorgeous to look at, and it's thrilling to see the classic Metroid elements fleshed out in three dimensions. Just don't let my frustration with the control keep you from giving Prime a go, as it really is a great experience that, at times, shines bright.

**ANDY — 9.75**





GAMECUBE

# THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

## A MAGNIFICENT UNION

"Two Towers is a blueprint on how to make a very good movie-based game."

There is much more to J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy than just swordplay, but Electronic Arts and developer Stormfront Studios have done such a good job with this game that all you'll care about is skinning orcs hide. Better yet, because of the balanced and effective use of scenes from the movie, you still get a good flavor for the drama and tension inherent in Tolkien's arching story—even if some important bits from both movies have been left out. Between utilizing the films, the actors' voices, and offering extras, *Two Towers* is a blueprint on how to make a very good movie-based game. Of course, you can't forget the gameplay.

This title is far from a mindless brawler. Its pace is expertly mapped out. You start out enjoying a few combos here and there, and can even let your bow hone in on some eye sockets. By the time you reach Moria, though, you'll stand defiantly in the door to Balin's Tomb and welcome the hordes of orcs that will pour in on you. As you level up, the combos never become overwhelming. When you reach the Helm's Deep stages and the odds mount, they will fly from your fingers, and are the only way you'll survive and advance. If you really get on a roll, your sword will start to glow, and for a short time, getting Perfect-grade strikes is easier—

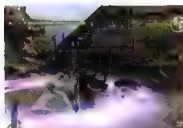
which earns you more experience points.

As you progress, varied objectives will help further spice things up. The first of the three Helm's Deep stages has you running around battling foes and kicking off ladders from the stronghold to stem the tide of orcs. There's no boss battle; your enemy is time. Similarly, you'll sweat it when protecting the citizens of Rohan from wave after wave of attackers. The action was also diversified by some clever camera angles, but there were more than a few times when I would get confused by them or be surprised by off-screen enemies.

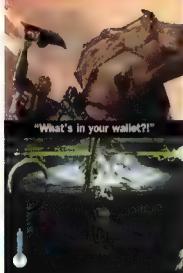
The problem with all of this frenzied combat, however, is your bow. While I loved integrating arrow strikes while swinging my sword, I really wanted a hard lock-on. Too many times I would either slip off of a target, or wouldn't fire on the obvious enemy.

Still, *Two Towers* is easily a game I could see myself playing through several times over just to get all three characters' combos and to unlock the secret stages—a pretty strong testament to deliver to an action title. The thing is, EA has created an experience that manages to extend itself beyond that limited video game genre, and one which stands out in a *Lord of the Rings* universe already filled with failures. —KATO

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ DEVELOPER STORMFRONT STUDIOS ■ RELEASE DECEMBER 20



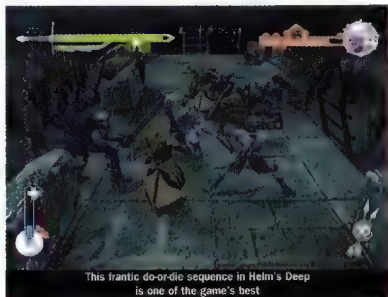
Bandal the Party Wizard throws down some wicked magic



A cool moment in the movie; a cool moment in the game



This cave troll will make you cry at first, but later in the game, he's a pushover



This frantic do-or-die sequence in Helm's Deep is one of the game's best

THE BOTTOM LINE

T 9.25

### Concept:

EA has expertly blended gameplay with scenes from the films to create perhaps the best movie licensed video game ever

### Graphics:

Stormfront had enough confidence in its models that the real-time outscenes merge into movie shots

### Sound:

From the score to the actors' voices, it's all too good to ignore

### Playability:

A more rock-solid auto targeting system for your bow would have been nice

### Entertainment:

If this doesn't get you to spring for a replica battle-axe, nothing will

### Replay Value:

Moderately High

## SECOND OPINION

This is a brawler; there can be no doubt about that. Because of this fact, players are going to be dying a lot. To think someone will plow through this game without their character going to that big J.R.R. Tolkien place in the sky is simply shortsighted.

This fact should spawn a developer to inject a number of different save points into the title, but they are conspicuously missing. To be sure, it's a lot of fun to upgrade your attacks and perform eye-widening combos, but once you've sliced through innumerable soldiers, the boss battles can go beyond frustrating and into the realm of infuriating. This, and the fact that for some odd reason you can't jump up a two-foot embankment to dispatch missile enemies is enough to give me pause. The game does look fantastic, however, and the extras are cool. Having the cast available to do voice work adds a lot of depth as well. Too bad the gameplay couldn't match the presentation.

KRISTIAN — 8



## REVIEWS



GAMECUBE

# DIE HARD: VENDETTA

THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF JOHN MCLANE

**T**he basic goal of most video game developers is to craft a title that is pretty darn good in every conceivable category. Die Hard: Vendetta takes the road less traveled, and is pretty lame in almost every way, shape, and form.

This is a new story in the Die Hard universe, and one that shows you why Hollywood writers get paid so much for what they do. At least the banter between McClane and bystanders and colleagues is somewhat entertaining. The gameplay is by-the-numbers FPS, with auto aiming, double-fisted handguns, and little else. Jumping is required way more than it should be as it just doesn't work well. Even climbing ladders can be cumbersome.

The missions try to flow nicely, but Bits Studios fails here, too. Many times, I would walk into an innocent-looking room, only to have the scene inside cause me to fail my mission, and send me far back into the level. That's just bad design, folks. Die Hard doesn't even feature multiplayer.

Bruce Willis has always played a gruff, rugged character. Vendetta is the same way: ugly and bumbling. It tries to use stealth and bullet-time to pretty itself up, but it still ends up far behind the Bonds and Medal of Honors of the world. Leave this one for dead. — **JUSTIN**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** SIERRA  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** BITS STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 20

THE BOTTOM LINE



■ **Concept:**

A faceless John McClane grabs his gun yet again. Maybe he should've just stayed on the couch.

■ **Graphics:**

I didn't see one thing that I thought looked particularly good. At least a lot of it is interactive.

■ **Sound:**

Decent voiceovers, with a Willis-esque lead character, and Carl Winslow from Family Matters. A few fanheimsers.

■ **Playability:**

Slightly below average, with shaky targeting and awkward jumping.

■ **Entertainment:**

A lowrent FPS. It's the equivalent of a husky guy in a wifebeater.

■ **Replay Value:**

Moderately Low.

SECOND OPINION

The best part about this game is the naughty language. The dialogue can be interesting from time to time, but the gameplay is so horrible I ended up laughing hysterically as I watched Sergeant Powell take a slug in the teeth. Was that wrong?

**KRISTIAN — 6**



GAMECUBE

# MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

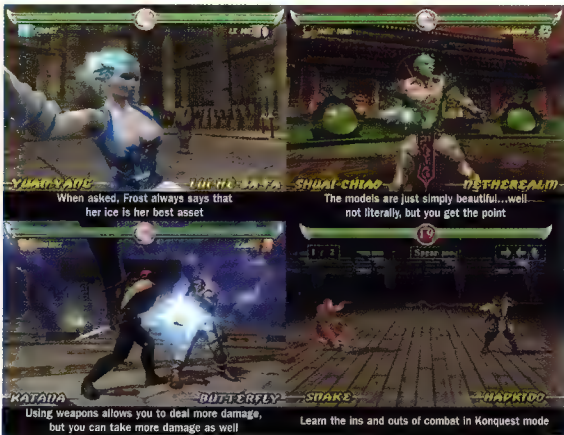
KUBE-ALITY

**A**fter a long hiatus Mortal Kombat has finally returned, and I'm happy to report that Midway didn't pull any punches with Deadly Alliance. In fact, this is easily the most hard-hitting MK in the series yet.

The biggest advancement that Deadly Alliance brings to the genre is the addition of fighting stances. Each of Mortal Kombat's 21 fighters has three fighting styles that they can access with a simple press of the left trigger during combat. This opens an array of strategies, because each one has its own set of combos. Chaining combos and styles is the key to unlocking the most devastating attacks, which challenges the player with a whole new set of tactics.

Luckily, learning these new techniques is easy through Deadly Alliance's rather helpful Konquest mode, where you must complete a series of tests for each character. These challenges, in turn, reward the player with "koins" that you can then use to purchase one of Deadly Alliance's 676 secrets (which include art, hidden characters, movies, and a sea of fun stuff). Koins can also be collected by competing in the Arcade mode that challenges the player with a classic series of battles.

On Xbox, PlayStation 2, or GameCube, Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance looks equally gorgeous. For GameCube fighting gurus there really isn't much choice: You must get this game. It's that good. — **ANDY**



■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** MIDWAY ■ **DEVELOPER** MIDWAY  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 29

THE BOTTOM LINE



■ **Concept:**

Restore Mortal Kombat to its former glory by pushing the combat in new directions

■ **Graphics:**

Some of the animations are a little clunky, but overall the models and environments are fantastic

■ **Sound:**

The voice-over guy stinks, but the rest of the sound works

■ **Playability:**

The use of three fighting styles opens up new possibilities that challenge the player with advanced techniques

■ **Entertainment:**

If you ever liked Mortal Kombat this game has everything you have been waiting for

■ **Replay Value:**

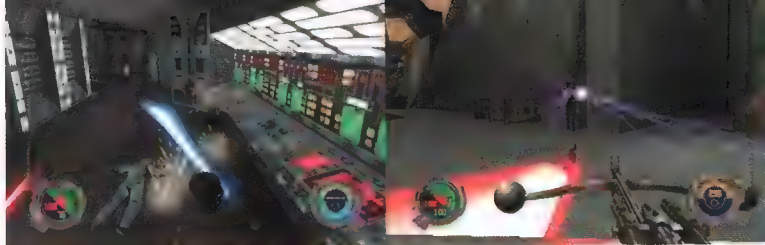
Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

Being a bit of a Kung Fu Theatre geek, Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance's multiple fighting styles more than made my day. Although I don't have the authority to state conclusively, it looks like each of the styles is "authentic." At the bare minimum, they look freakin' cool. Exalting a shameless extravagance of blood unrivaled by even *Evart Horizon* has always been a hallmark of MK games, but I do believe that Deadly Alliance takes it to the next level. Power moves with your weapons leave the opponent stuck like a dead pig, spurting blood for the rest of the match. The only teeny, tiny fault crackling the surface of MKDA isn't even its own—the GameCube's 4-pad is tiny, so a larger third-party peripheral may be in order. But really, with great models, creative soundings, and more combo moves than you can shake a stick at, what more could you ask for?

**LISA — 9**





GAMECUBE

## STAR WARS: JEDI OUTCAST

THE NEW REPUBLIC

I'm usually not excited about Star Wars material that isn't tied directly to the movies. That being said, I have grown tired of LucasArts' recent by-the-numbers vehicular combat titles. Not only does Jedi Outcast succeed in drawing me into protagonist Kyle Katarn's world, but it also brings first and third-person action together fairly well.

Although you could consider Jedi Outcast a game of two halves, where you are either with or without Force Powers, I love it all. From the run and gun corridor shoot-outs with stormtroopers to the lightsaber wielding, this is all Star Wars, all the time. This console version (as well as the one on the Xbox), however, is a step down from the PC's, due to the fact that you just can't scroll through the Force Powers fast enough. Another mark against this otherwise fine game is the multiplayer, which encompasses only two players and doesn't go online. Between this and Rogue Leader, the GameCUBE now has two of the best Star Wars titles ever made. — **KATO**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** VICARIOUS VISIONS/RAVEN SOFTWARE ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 19

## SECOND OPINION

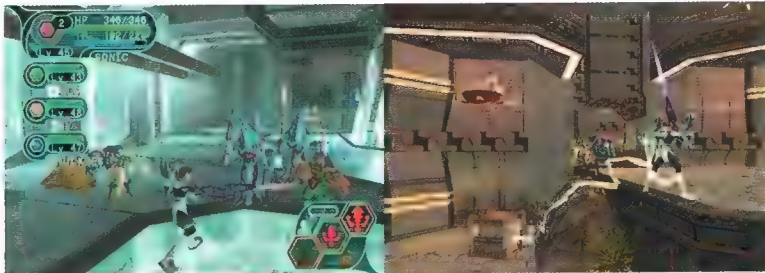
The texturing and quality of the out-of-game sequences are not as lustrous as the PC and Xbox versions, but outside of these minor graphical issues, the game still has it where it counts. The lightsaber duels are brilliantly depicted, the FPS components are rich in depth and greatly varied, and the story brings back fond memories of the classic trilogy.

REINER — 9.25

## THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN  
**T** 8.75

- **Concept:** Even as a less-than-perfect port, Outcast is a formidable package
- **Graphics:** Some textures are bad and the cutscenes look like Bantha doo-doo
- **Sound:** John Williams' score from the movies just keeps getting better and better
- **Playability:** The game's use of the third person isn't perfect, but the Force Powers rock
- **Entertainment:** Grips aside, this is still a must-have Star Wars title if there ever was one
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High



GAMECUBE

## PHANTASY STAR ONLINE VERSION I & II

FOR DREAMCUBE, OR IS IT GAMECAST?

Phantasy Star Online fills me with so many conflicting feelings that it's hard to keep them straight. On the one hand, you have a competent RPG that delivers a great gaming experience and gives console gamers the opportunity to venture (for the first time for many) into the realm of online gaming. On the other hand, you also have a game that is limited on so many levels by the amount of things it can do (simply because it tries to appease offline and online gamers at the same time) that the design is light years behind the PC market.

That said, chatting with friends and venturing off to conquer monsters with companions is a treat. Be warned, however, that the gameplay can be rather repetitive. Plus, since this is the only online game available for GameCUBE, it's quite an investment. Luckily, Sega included a four-player split-screen version so online play isn't required — which is a definite plus in my book. — **ANDY**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/RPG (ONLINE PLAY AVAILABLE VIA MODEM)  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA ■ **DEVELOPER** SEGA ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 30

## SECOND OPINION

PSO is a fine RPG and pretty damn fun, but only if you're online. If you're not, the single-player experience isn't worth it. What's more, since this is GC's only online title, you're going to spend quite a bit just for this game.

CHET — 8.25

## THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN  
**T** 8

- **Concept:** Continue bringing Phantasy Star Online to as many platforms as possible until people get it
- **Graphics:** Not much different than the original Dreamcast version, but that's not a bad thing
- **Sound:** Not bad, but it drains after awhile
- **Playability:** Communication is a tad clumsy without a keyboard, but the playcontrol is solid
- **Entertainment:** For those unfamiliar with massively multiplayer online RPGs, this is a great place to start
- **Replay Value:** High



GAMECUBE

## SPYRO: ENTER THE DRAGONFLY

MASCOT ROADKILL

While I'd like to say that this is one of the biggest

disappointments of the year, I have a feeling that the hysteria surrounding this platforming sensation has died down significantly since its inception. The truth of the matter is, there are probably more people in the world who are still torn up over NBC's decision to cancel Blossom than there are gamers waiting with bated breath for this sequel.

Rather than trying to make the leap to the next-generation of gaming, Spyro's new

adventure remains firmly planted in the 32-bit era. Even with a new developer leading the way, nothing has changed, and believe it or not, it's gotten a lot worse. Spyro has always been about hyperactive gameplay, where racing after thieves, flying through rings, and ramming adversaries at breakneck speeds are the norm. Check Six did a decent job of capturing the intricacies of gameplay, primarily Spyro's arsenal of moves, but completely neglected everything else. The challenges are so easy they're laughable. The graphics haven't improved. The framerate chugs. The list goes on and on.

Once a platforming king, now mascot roadkill. It would be in your best interest to look the other way, and let your purple friend die in peace. — **REINER**

## THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE  
**E** 4.75

- **Concept:** A high-end sequel that misses every mark
- **Graphics:** Similar in design to the 32-bit series, but the worlds are not nearly as detailed, the framerate skips like a broken record, and the effects belong on the Atari Jaguar
- **Sound:** Catchy jingles and goofy, high-pitched character voices
- **Playability:** The gameplay has been replicated nicely, but there's nothing new to experience, and the entire adventure is void of challenge
- **Entertainment:** Proof that a little purple dragon can physically kiss his own ass goodbye
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

## SECOND OPINION

At the risk of sounding like a grumpy sumbitch (too late!) I have to say that this looks like a PS-X game and the framerate seems to be clocking in at about 20 fps. The on-legendary Spyro franchise has fallen hard and fast. Even worse, it's the same tedious gem-collecting sleepwalk that has been done to death a million times before. I could really give a flying dragon fart about this game.

MATT — 4

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** EQUINOX/CHECK SIX STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 19





GAMECUBE

# JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE

THE INTERACTIVE BLOCKBUSTER

I thoroughly enjoyed *Agent Under Fire*. However, there were a lot of people that didn't, most of whom felt the game was too easy, too short, and not as conceptually complex as many top console FPS titles. I expect that gamers will be equally split over *Nightfire*, a sequel that follows closely in the footsteps of its predecessor. Whether or not you like this game is going to depend on what kind of a person you are. If you're a hardcore FPS fanatic, the kind that spends sleepless night fragging with your clan on Unreal Tournament or Counter-Strike, I doubt that you'll find the first-person segments of *Nightfire* to be demanding or innovative enough to be worth the time. But, if you love the slick, fan-fetched vibe of the films, and want a game that tries to encompass many different aspects of the Bond mojo into one attractive package, this should do the job nicely. The single-player mode is a blast, weaving in racing, vehicular combat, rail-based shooting, first-person action, and some gorgeous cinematics into an over-the-top storyline. Unfortunately, it's also very short, which means that you'll have to get your money's worth in the excellent multiplayer modes. —MATT

THE BOTTOM LINE

**T** **8**

- Concept:** A breezy mix of racing, first-person action, and track shooter gameplay set in an alternate Bond universe.
- Graphics:** The face models are impressive, and the environments exhibit a lot of detail.
- Sound:** A nice score, witty Bondisms, and a hilarious *Nightfire* theme make for winning audio.
- Playability:** The autotargeting isn't the greatest, but all three facets of the gameplay package are well done.
- Entertainment:** Don't think too hard and you'll have a great, if brief, time, with *Nightfire*.
- Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

I like this game's inclusion of driving and rail shooting in theory, but it's this sort of bite-sized Bond action that makes this title, in practice, less of the first-person shooter that I wanted it to be. Between that and the sometimes iffy targeting, this is *glitz* that won't garner some of the FPS glamour. Of course, it's still entertaining — which isn't a bad thing to have going for it. —KATO — 7.5

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 19

SHREK: EXTRA LARGE

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** TDK MEDIA/ACTIVE  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 30



Playing this game is like someone shoving a wire brush down your esophagus then pulling it out your you-know-what. It's painful; it's embarrassing; and it's something that you try to forget about the moment it's over. Any game that's plot is built around Merlin (the most powerful wizard who ever lived, according to Arthurian legend) being taken prisoner by some sort of *facetta* ice queen deserves nothing short of a slap. —KRISTIAN

**T** **3**

BLOOD OMEN 2

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** EIDOS INTERACTIVE  
 ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 3



Nine months and no enhancements later, *Blood Omen 2* hits the 'Cube. Surprisingly, it's still darn good to be evil with Kain and his vampiric ways. Both the puzzles and combat are simplistic, but still offer enjoyment. The gothic atmosphere is a great setting for a game, too. I'd like to see some depth added to the series next time, with more of both speed and stealth. This and *BloodRayne* are almost dead even for gory action/adventure honors. —JUSTIN

**M** **7.5**

SWINGERZ GOLF

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** EIDOS INTERACTIVE  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 24



If there are any golf title developers reading this, please take the following to heart: Enough with the damned analog swing already! I know it's trendy right now, but so were legwarmers at one point. I like the presentation, but the wind's effect on your ball seems to be inconsistent when I was counting on it. These issues, coupled with the inaccurate distance metering and ball control, leave us with a good, but not great, golf game. —KRISTIAN

**E** **7.5**

DEAD TO RIGHTS

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** NAMCO  
 ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 5



*Dead to Rights* was great on Xbox, and the GameCube version's streamlined control scheme (which allows you to quickly sic Shadow on foes and showcases improved auto-targeting) makes it a boon to 'Cubeiros looking for some balls-out action. Another thing I like was that the emphasis on the at-times frustrating minigames has been diminished. Still, I'm really not a fan of the brawling sequences. Why should I have to duke it out like some back alley palooka when I could be enjoying DTR's acrobatic and fluid gunplay? If you're a Nintendo loyalist who's never experienced Max Payne, this should be the next game you buy. —MATT

**M** **8.75**

FIFA 2003

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 5



Maybe it's just me, but I could swear that this FIFA has good headers and even some juggling — unlike the PlayStation 2 version. What still remains, however, is some uneven AI that made my CPU-controlled teammates seem totally lost at times. While EA's frontend is usually irreplaceable, I wish it would have focused less on Champions League-style events and put in more international teams (where's Japan?). Oh yeah, EA will probably make me buy a separate game for that. It's still a good game, but one in need of a definitive step forward. —KATO

**E** **8**



X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** THQ  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 22

X-Men fans have plenty to get excited about with this title. Not only is it the best in the series, by far, but it actually supports a decent combat system with a fairly balanced cast. Unfortunately, the graphics and animation aren't much better than in the previous PS2 version, and the controller will take time to get used to. If Activision can improve the superficial aspects and make the combat deeper and more precise, this series can be a serious contender. —CHET

**T** **7.75**

WRECKLESS: THE YAKUZA MISSIONS

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13



This is essentially a slightly better-looking version of the PS2 *Wreckless*, which means that it doesn't have the eerie sepia-tone realism of the gorgeous, but not entirely fun, Xbox disappointment. The addition of weapons and two-player mission are welcome indeed, and the more modest graphical presentation means that your dune buggy actually feels like it's travelling faster than 40 mph. However, I wouldn't go so far as to call this a must-buy game. The city is often hard to navigate, and the directional arrow is not very helpful. Also, although it's impressive to see so many people and objects onscreen at once, it often feels like clutter for the sake of clutter. —MATT

**T** **7.75**



# TOP GUN™

## COMBAT ZONES

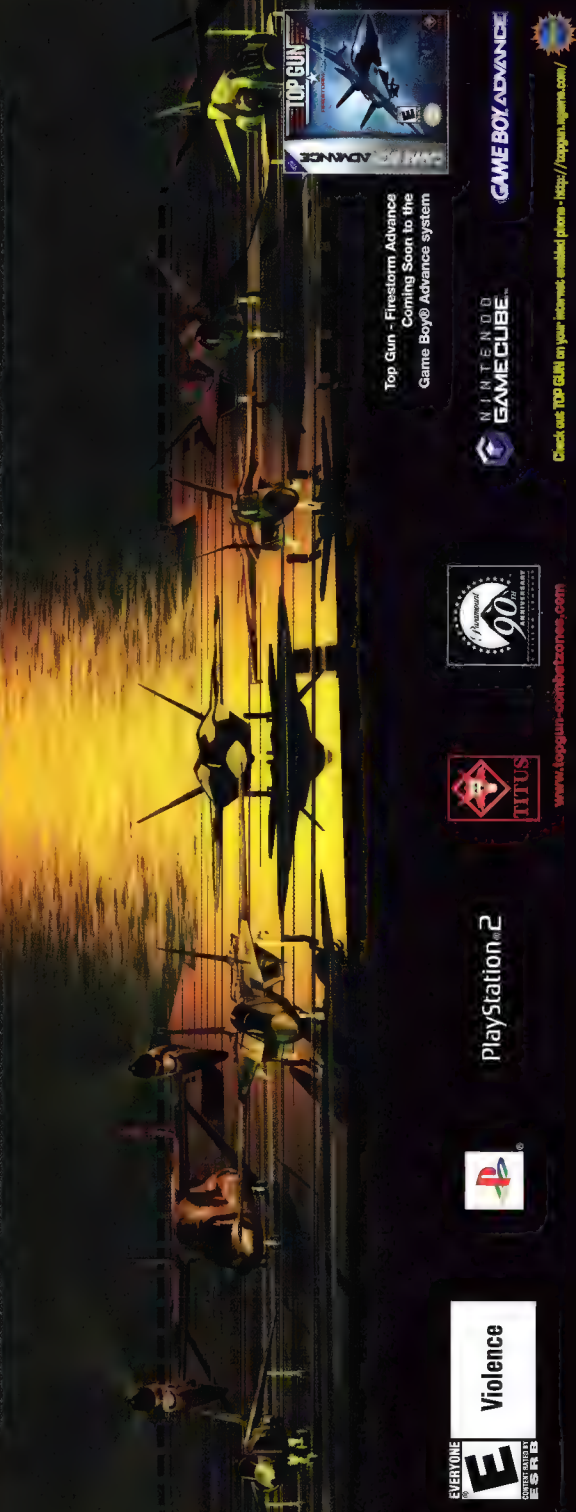
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THE BOTTOM LINE



8.75

XBOX

# SPLINTER CELL

MADE IN THE SHADE

"Splinter Cell is in the top three most graphically astounding video games I've ever played."

This game has received far more than its fair share of hype from the media, which is due to a number of factors. Number one: Ubi Soft really, *really* needs a smash hit console title. Sure, it's seen some successes with other Tom Clancy titles, but an Xbox game that everyone can get on board with is something that is very high on the wish list of Ubi Soft brass. Number two: The Xbox is also in dire need of a smash hit. Remember Halo? Yeah, so do we, and we're looking forward to the sequel, but it sounds like most of us will be collecting social security by the time it finally rolls out. There hasn't been anything exclusive for the 'box that has been worth a damn since that faithful launch title, so Microsoft has been pulling with both arms to get this game on the map, too. Number three: Splinter Cell looks bloody amazing. That in itself will create a goodly amount of buzz. Add these together, and you have a product that everyone wants to like, but one which is bound to be heavily examined.

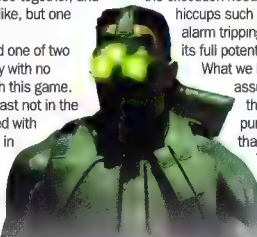
Expectation and scrutiny will usually breed one of two things – elation or disappointment. I can say with no qualms whatsoever that I am not elated with this game. However, I'm not disappointed either – at least not in the truest sense of the word. I am quite satisfied with the game's graphics. In fact, Splinter Cell is in the top three most graphically astounding video games I've ever played. Every nuance of the visual presentation has been delivered with razor-sharp precision.

From soft glow lighting effects to environmental animations (a thick plastic curtain will behave exactly like its real-world counterpart if disturbed), to the unbelievable shadowing system, this game has set a graphical benchmark in the field.

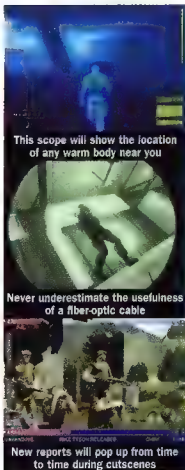
Unhappily, the game begins to run into some fairly significant problems as the levels progress, and the complexity of their goals mounts. The ultimate outcome of Splinter's perhaps overzealous mission structure is a common one: Every level increasingly becomes a lesson in trial and error. The question isn't, "Okay, how am I going to get through this level?" It instead becomes, "How am I going to get to the next save point without dying because I know I'm going to be using it a lot?" Do you see the difference? I would be the first to say that the missions are interesting from a plot perspective, but the execution needs attention. This, coupled with systematic hiccups such as poor collision detection and strange alarm tripping serve to keep Splinter Cell from realizing its full potential.

What we have on our hands is a game that is most assuredly good, but far from the masterpiece that Halo was. If I could rate a game based purely on its graphical power, there's no doubt that this would have been given a 10 instantly.

The gameplay simply acts as a moderate restraint on the overall enjoyment the title can deliver. It's worthy of purchase, but not worship. – KRISTIAN



■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER UBI SOFT ■ DEVELOPER UBI SOFT MONTREAL STUDIOS ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 12



This scope will show the location of any warm body near you

Never underestimate the usefulness of a fiberoptic cable

New reports will pop up from time to time during cutscenes



This soundproof room is as pretty as it is quiet



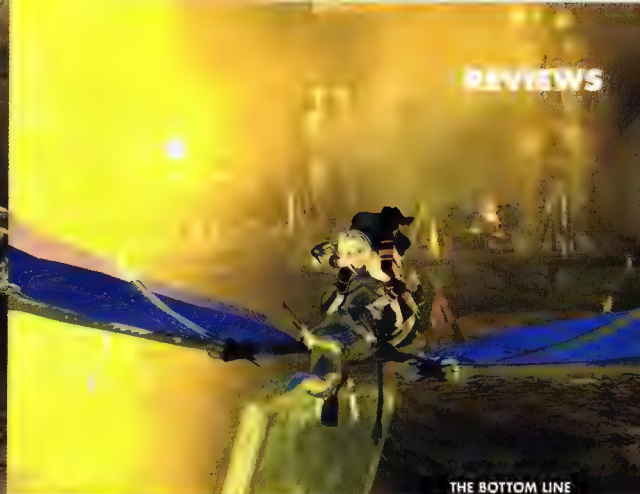
Stairs are for weenies

SECOND OPINION

This is certainly a worthy Xbox exclusive, but one that stumbles in the face of hype and high expectations. Mainly, Splinter Cell lacks polish in a number of key areas. Head shots don't always connect – a real pain during stealth missions. Detection sometimes elicits inconsistent effects, so stealth missions simply become tedious tests of trial and error. Also, the stage design can occasionally feel disjointed and unclear, which means that during certain levels you'll spend considerable time confused about your next action. While these are serious faults that cause frustration throughout, Splinter Cell still manages to be enjoyable more often than not. If you go into this expecting a MGS 2 killer, you're going to be disappointed. Nevertheless, it's one of the better stealth games available and will definitely wreak havoc on a boring weekend.

CHET – 8.75





THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN  
T  
ESRB

8.25

"...Orta actually comes packed with a few surprising enhancements, injecting some depth into the gameplay."

XBOX

# PANZER DRAGOON ORTA

SPREADING ITS WINGS ON XBOX

**P**anzer is back in action, but certainly not in its coolest form. As soon as Sega hinted that it would resurrect the franchise, I prayed to the almighty Dragon that it would be a sequel to perhaps the previous generation's best RPG, Panzer Dragoon Saga. However, Sega had other plans. Instead, we get the third incarnation in the shooter line, which definitely isn't a bad thing.

In fact, while I sort of expected Sega simply to poop this one out, Orta actually comes packed with a few surprising enhancements, injecting some depth into the gameplay. First, players have the ability to jet forward and backward. This mechanic comes in handy when dodging attacks and busting through encroaching enemies, but its main purpose allows the player to circle a target – which is somewhat similar to Saga's combat system. Second, the dragon can change into one of three forms on the fly. Each type has its strengths and weaknesses, which means that you must constantly consider which form will be most advantageous.

Furthermore, I am absolutely stunned with Orta's presentation. Although the story can feel convoluted at times, the

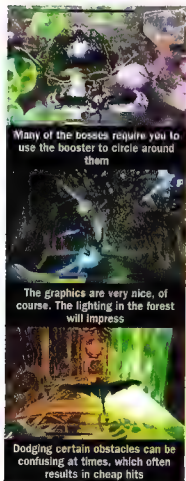
graphics, the environments, the music, and especially the language really help to immerse you in the experience. Throughout the adventure, the characters speak a language that actually combines German, Japanese, English, Latin, and a few others.

Unfortunately, Orta isn't without a few annoying problems. First, despite the additions, it still plays a little too much like its predecessor, which means that you're stuck on a linear flight path most of the time. I had sincerely hoped that the new development team at Sega would be more innovative with this product, or at least grant the player a little additional freedom to move. Second, like in previous installments, dodging objects and enemy fire still seems to depend on luck more than skill, which often results in taking an unfair amount of damage. And, on a few occasions, you simply don't see where the attack is coming from until you get hit three or four times!

Fans of the series will definitely erupt with joy the moment they pop this bad boy into their Xbox. Even if you're not a fan, though, Orta will definitely keep you amused for a weekend.

-CHET

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA ■ **DEVELOPER** SMILEBIT ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY 14



Many of the bosses require you to use the booster to circle around them

The graphics are very nice, of course. The lighting in the forest will impress

Dodging certain obstacles can be confusing at times, which often results in cheap hits



The offensive dragon has the firing power, but can't use the booster



There are some cool events, like killing all of the dragons that have yet to be given life

## SECOND OPINION

From the ashes of the Sega Saturn cometh one of the most stylistic and gameplay intensive shooters in all of gaming. Panzer Dragoon is most certainly back in all of its splendor. While it would have been nice to move the series to complete 3D, developer Smilebit did a commendable job recreating the gameplay intricacies and general atmosphere that the series' original developer, Team Andromeda, had laid forth. The lock-on technology, timed events, and end of level grading system haven't changed in the slightest. The only significant enhancements are more or less limited to a new dash maneuver, which manifests new strategies, and the ability to level up and switch dragons on the fly. Of course, the graphics are simply out of this world, tapping into every facet of the Xbox hardware. I loved the Saturn series, and this entry is just as good, but more so in that nostalgic kind of way.

REINER - 8.25





“Like a real strip club, BMX XXX loves to tease you. But at the end of the day, you feel a bit ripped off.”

XBOX

# BMX XXX

YOU WANT THE BREAST, YOU GOT IT

No doubt you've heard the buzz on this game. We bought into the hype as much as anybody. Still, I had high hopes that Z-Axis, a developer with the ability to topple Tony Hawk, would give me plenty of other reasons to love this game besides a peep show. While BMX XXX takes a step forward in bringing adult content to games, it also takes a step backwards in the gameplay department.

BMX XXX has all the features I've come to expect – massive levels, no time limit (but a well-done health meter), and creative missions. Flatland tricks give you more to do out of a manual, and the excellent trick modifier is expanded. Many of the tasks your character is charged with completing are hilarious. One requires scoring 30,000 points while carrying a guy in a port-potty to cure his constipation. Another mission makes you grind around a huge, inflatable woman's breasts, which causes her to deflate and land in an amusing position. The script, while groan inducing at times, has plenty of laughs in it.

Two of the eight stages are actually competitions. They are very demanding, and deviate from the typical (and boring) scoring challenge. Instead, creativity and variety are required. Tricking in the same half-pipe for the entire run won't get you very far. Wall-rides, grinds, and flatland tricks are all needed to earn a medal.

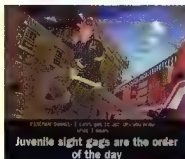
The main draw here – and the reason you're reading this – is the adult content. Indeed, XXX delivers with topless riders (albeit without the promised adjustable bustline) and nude FMV. The game's not just giving the stuff away, though. You'll work your butt off for these rewards. Each level has videos of

Scores strippers to unlock – either by collecting the 40 to 50 items in a stage, finding all 20 level gaps, or getting first place in the competitions. It's motivation to persevere, but most adults have plenty of other, easier means to view a nice rack.

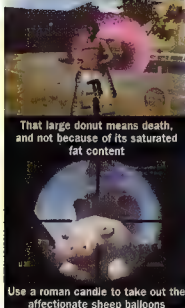
With awful collision and controls that make even the simplest moves inconsistent, I don't know who cursed more: the characters in the game, or me. Without a Revert, combos are continued by doing very awkward stalls. The goals have very vague or non-existent directions. Discovering what the hell it is you're supposed to do is half the challenge – the half I don't like. If it had Aggressive Inline's infinite completion time, this wouldn't be a problem. Unfortunately, XXX takes Tony 4's timed mission approach, without the auto restart. I'm not all that thrilled with the amount of “break four of this” or “bring me five of these” missions, either.

If all you want is a game with boobies and four-letter words, this is your only choice. If a good action/sports game is what you're after, there are better options out there. Like a real strip club, BMX XXX loves to tease you. But at the end of the day, you feel a bit ripped off. – JUSTIN

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS ■ PUBLISHER ACCLAIM ■ DEVELOPER Z-AXIS ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 19



Juvenile sight gags are the order of the day



That large donut means death, and not because of its saturated fat content

Use a roman candle to take out the affectionate sheep balloons



I know there's a like in this picture somewhere, but I'm having trouble focusing on it



This is what we call product placement

THE BOTTOM LINE  
MATURE  
7.75

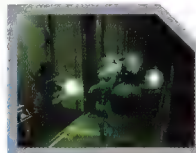
- **Concept:** Will people buy a mediocre action/sports game if it has breasts and Fomobs?
- **Graphics:** While there are some sweet effects, many things in the environment – especially NPCs – just look bad
- **Sound:** You'll be singing “You can get this lapdance here for free” all day. Great voiceovers, too
- **Playability:** Buggy and unpolished control left me very disappointed
- **Entertainment:** Humming dogs and girl-girl video is all well and good, but I wish XXX offered more of the things I loved in Aggressive Inline
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

## SECOND OPINION

As a big fan of both the Dave Mirra series and developer Z-Axis, I have to say that I'm disappointed by BMX XXX. The much-publicized portion of the game – the down n' dirty comedy and frontal female nudity – is definitely going to be the reason a lot of people buy this game. Although I did get some chuckles from the humor, the nudity seems to be a cheap gimmick. Is it worth putting in dozens of hours winning the game's difficult competition levels to open up some 3.5-second glimpses of bare breasts? If I was 15, I might say yes, but I suspect older gamers have better things to do with their time. Still, there is some solid gameplay here; I especially like the flatland tricks and perfecting the use of the modifier button. However, the myriad annoyances – like bad collision and unclear level goals – keeps BMX XXX from reaching the level of Aggressive Inline or Tony Hawk 4.

MATT – 7.75

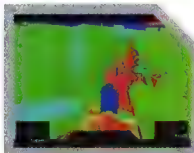




TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION

# METAL GEAR SOLID<sup>®</sup> 2

SUBSTANCE



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EUROPEAN EXTREME MODE  
HIDDEN PLAYABLE CHARACTERS

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ENTIRE SONS OF LIBERTY™ GAME!

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BOSS SURVIVAL MODE  
MERYL RETURNS!

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XBOX

THE BOTTOM LINE  
T 7.75

"Trite or no, this is a decent title from a company that has continually shown a tradition of gaming excellence"

# JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE

## MONEYPENNY, YOU AROUSE ME

**N**ightFire is a game full of payoffs; that is, it makes all the right moves in all the right places. But that's all it does. If a game could be shoved through a cookie-cutter and placed on store shelves, NightFire would fit the bill perfectly. That being said, if I'm going to play a game built around focus-testing and corporate bureaucracy ("Gentlemen, we need a game that will make us a lot of money. Suggestions?" "How about a James Bond game that has something to do with nukes?") "Brilliant, Johnson! You're getting a big raise!!"), I'm glad it's from EA. Trite or no, this is a decent title from a company that has continually shown a tradition of gaming excellence.

First and foremost, James Bond has never looked better than he does in this installment – video game-wise, anyway. The environments you travel through are impressive to say the least, especially the water-oriented levels. It's obvious that the developers took full advantage of the processing power they had at their disposal, as the character models and vehicles accent the rich world through which you traverse. Unfortunately, the bodies of your blasted enemies disappear almost immediately after they fall. This may be due in part to the game's T rating, but it's disappointing nonetheless.

Also annoying is the mission saving layout. Case in point:

During one mission, I was trying to be as stealthy as possible while I inched along a wall with three windows in it. On the other side of the wall were two guards who walked back and forth along the hall on their patrol. Naturally, if one of them saw me sneaking past the window they'd sound the alarm. Well, as you may have guessed, I was sniffed out during my first attempt, so I restarted to what I thought would be the last load point, but no. It took me back to the beginning of the *entire level*. If you die, however, you're started at or near your last load point. Strange, no?

All complaining aside, this is a Bond game, and there are a lot of cool secrets and shortcuts to explore and discover. Plus, the action is quite intense and expertly paced. From piloting a car that converts into a submarine, to wading through waves of gun-toting naughty people, I was having a lot of fun – even if I did have a pretty good idea of what was going to happen next. Is it as good as GoldenEye? In most ways, yes it is. Obviously, the graphics are much improved, but I also got the thrill of the kill, and the satisfaction from knowing I had found those little 007 stealth paths. Not a bad game, but it's nothing more than what you're expecting. – **KRISTIAN**

■ **Concept:**

Join Mr. Bond as he infiltrates secret enemy bases and comes on his man-whore tendencies

■ **Graphics:**

The water effects are particularly stunning in a graphical palette that shows few weaknesses

■ **Sound:**

The same Bond-ish music you remember from the movies, but consciously absent are the umpteenth remakes of *Live and Let Die*

■ **Playability:**

Some may grow to hate the default auto-aim feature, as it drastically reduces run-and-gun headshots

■ **Entertainment:**

A first-person shooter done by the numbers

■ **Replay Value:**

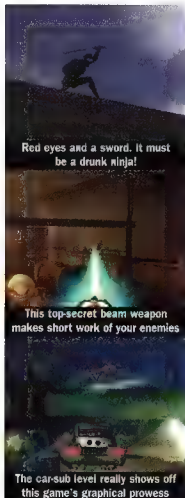
Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

There is just something about the whole Bond package that can take an average game and make it better. NightFire is a perfect example of just such a game, because if this title were devoid of the Bond universe, I would definitely score it lower. As it stands, it has all the gadgets, guns, cars, stunts, and voluptuous ladies that make for a pleasurable experience to any 007 aficionado. The adventure is a tad short, and the game control lacks the up-close and personal weapon smash that I so love to use when changing ammo in first-person shooters, but the game is competent. I don't really understand why this version isn't Xbox Live enabled, but I'll just chalk that one up to a mistake on EA's part and hope that it corrects this oversight in the next installment.

ANDY – 7.75

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** EA GAMES/MGM INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** EUROCOM/EA GAMES  
■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 14



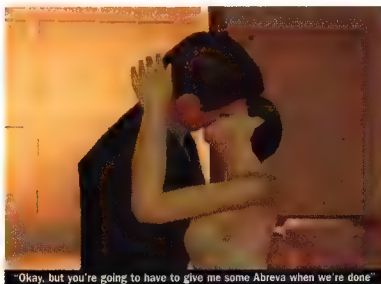
Red eyes and a sword. It must be a drunk ninja!

This top-secret beam weapon makes short work of your enemies

The car-sub level really shows off this game's graphical prowess

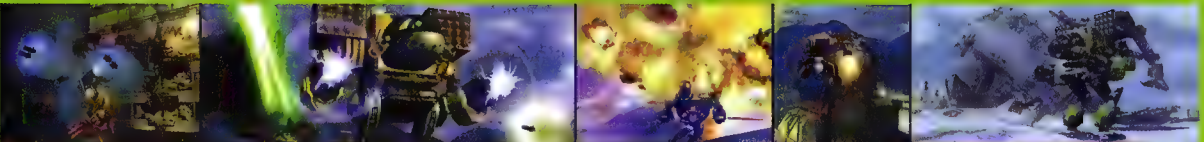


"You're hot, I'm hot...let's make out."



"Okay, but you're going to have to give me some Abreva when we're done"





# GAVE PEACE A CHANCE.

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



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

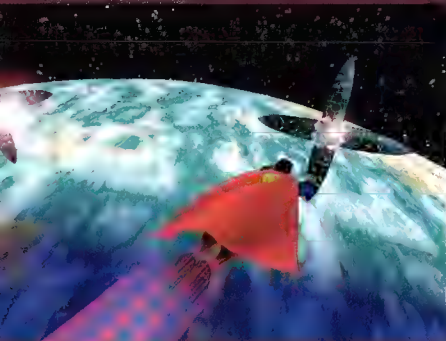


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## REVIEWS



XBOX

# SUPERMAN: THE MAN OF STEEL

STUPID, MAN!

**T**his iconic superhero supposedly follows the creed of truth and honor; yet there is neither truth nor honor in a game potent enough to induce projectile vomiting at the mere thought of it. Perhaps Superman is added toward Xbox for its overuse of the Kryptonite-green color. Or maybe, just maybe, a Batman fanatic cursed this license, preventing it from ever transforming into a significant video game.

One thing is certain: You should avoid this game like you would skinny-dipping with your grandparents. Its only redeeming quality is Superman's cape, which flaps around in the wind and uses a realistic physics model. I kid, you not, people. Outside of this mesmerizing visual, every aspect is atrocious in design, highly frustrating, or just flat-out stupid. The aerial combat makes use of an obnoxious paint-by-numbers, color-coding system that asks players to use certain powers (heat vision, freeze breath, etc.) for specific colored enemies. I'm Superman, damn it! My fans should level towns! I should be able to destroy adversaries any way I see fit! If this wasn't bad enough, a good majority of the missions are just confusing or out of context.

All around, this game is the polar opposite of super. Do me a favor and run if you ever find yourself within 1.0 feet of it.

REINER



- **Concept:** A revolting action game with the Superman license plastered on top.
- **Graphics:** The environments are teeming with details and the real-time cloth technology on Superman's cape is mesmerizing.
- **Sound:** The orchestrated score is decent, but Superman's voice sounds like a robot on Vicodin. "Must... save... Lois."
- **Playability:** Intuitive flying controls with assisting aerial combat annoying missions, and a blistering difficulty.
- **Entertainment:** The video game equivalent of getting punched in the eye and kicked in the groin at the same time.
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low.

### SECOND OPINION

I swear—Superman just can't get a break. I don't think he's ever been in a game that was worth a crap (the Atari 2600 Superman isn't as cool as you remember, old timers), and this Xbox dud isn't going to change that fact. Focused on tedious flight combat, saddled with poor control and annoying color-coded enemies, Superman: The Man of Steel is a super-sized dookie in the Metropolis municipal swimming pool.

MATT - 4



XBOX

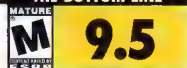
# MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE

BLOODY BRILLIANT

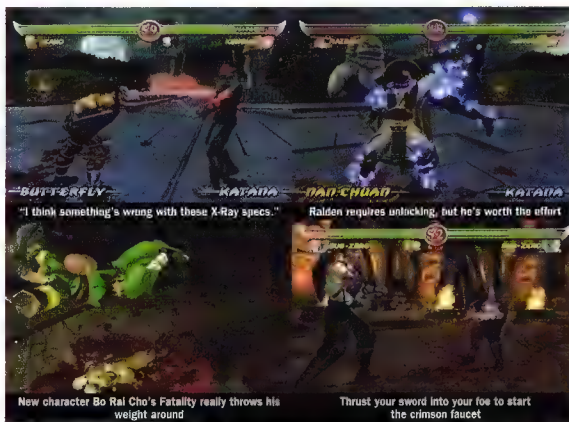
**D**eadly Alliance is the Mortal Kombat evolution I've waited for since MK II. Gone are the days of shared moves for every character. These fighters have three unique styles—including one for weapons. Each style brings about accurately modeled moves and combos, and can be switched on the fly. The gameplay features less button-mashing than Tekken or even Virtua Fighter. That doesn't mean fewer combos, however; it equals more strategy. It makes the game more of an art to master.

Seeing everything Deadly Alliance has to offer will take you an eternity. Every hard-fought victory earns "koins" of various colors, to be spent at the Krypt. Buy a "koffin" to win a prize. It's like 676 Christmas presents—some sweaters and tube socks, but lots of good stuff, too. You'll unlock characters (over 20), costumes, and wacky videos. The Konquest (mission) mode is an effective and lengthy training course, and really helps you get to know the fighters.

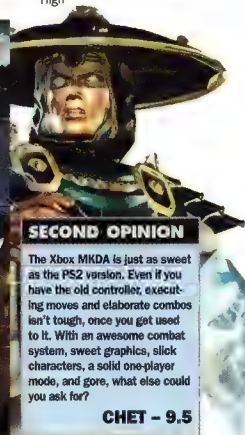
Visually, Deadly Alliance trails only Dead or Alive 3. Characters just look bad ass, and the blood effect rules—it actually rolls down body parts and splatters on the ground. Cool points are off the chart in this game, and I'm willing to bet sales will be, too. Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance isn't all hype, and should be the next fighter you own. —JUSTIN



- **Concept:** Midway takes its time, and delivers one of the best fighters around.
- **Graphics:** The blood falls like rain out of wicked-looking character models.
- **Sound:** The metal-on-metal clang of weapons is a wondrous thing.
- **Playability:** The fighting styles, reversals, and combos rock. Only one Fatality each, though.
- **Entertainment:** This is definitely a meaty, drool-worthy fighting game. Picture a dripping pink 36 oz. Porterhouse with a sword sticking out of it.
- **Replay Value:** High.



■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** MIDWAY ■ **DEVELOPER** MIDWAY  
■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 18



### SECOND OPINION

The Xbox MKDA is just as sweet as the PS2 version. Even if you have the old controller, executing moves and elaborate combos isn't tough, once you get used to it. With an awesome combat system, sweet graphics, slick characters, a solid one-player mode, and gore, what else could you ask for?

CHET - 9.5

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ATARI  
■ **DEVELOPER** CIRCUS FREAK STUDIOS  
■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 5





XBOX

# UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

## A NEW ALIAS FOR UT 2K3

Originally, Epic planned to design Unreal Championship as an FPS for the console, meaning that it was taking into consideration the controller interface. However, it changed its game plan, turning UC into a port of Unreal Tournament 2003.

While Microsoft is lucky to have UT 2K3, the original design calls for the precision of a mouse and keyboard to truly appreciate the experience. Before you console gamers start grumbling, hear me out. UT 2K3 features an elaborate, fast-paced combat system. The controller simply lacks the precision to effectively transform a dodge into a flip, and then nail the enemy. Furthermore, the maps combine a mix of vertical and horizontal targeting that make using precision weapons impractical. As a result, the intended experience is, in part, lost.

Nevertheless, if you're new to UT, you'll probably overlook these problems, especially since UC is the most addictive multiplayer FPS on Xbox. There are a variety of weapons, maps, mods, and game types. If UC catches on, you can expect more content, thanks to the hard drive.

Although UC is predominantly multiplayer, it features a decent single-player mode, which is mostly useful for learning the game's intricacies. But even with the challenging bots, the single-player experience alone may not be worth a purchase. Buy it if you've invested in Xbox Live. Otherwise, rent it first. —CHET



The split-screen option is available, but not the best way to play

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 16-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMES ■ **DEVELOPER** EPIC  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 12

THE BOTTOM LINE  
**M**  
**8.75**

### ■ Concept:

One of the best multiplayer FPSs, which is almost the same as the PC version, but with a few different maps

### ■ Graphics:

Damn nice looking, but it is slightly inferior to UT 2K3 on a good PC

### ■ Sound:

The sounds and taunts rock, and the music, which has been changed some, is better or worse depending on the map

### ■ Playability:

Since this game is designed for PC, the control is less precise on the Xbox, but fares well against other Xbox FPSs

### ■ Entertainment:

A great FPS that will certainly burn up many, many hours on Xbox Live. Outside of the sports games, there's no better reason to play online

### ■ Replay Value:

High

### SECOND OPINION

I'm not sure how much I can say about this game, because there really isn't much to it. Here it goes: This is meant to be a multiplayer game — and that's it. Playing single-player is interesting to a point, but ultimately it becomes a lesson in repetition: Shoot at someone in a poorly lit environment with lots of crap everywhere, and continue to do so until your target is dead or your Ritual runs out. The multiplayer component is filled with action, and if you're on a board filled with people who enjoy the strategic elements of play, things can get interesting quickly. Thus, Xbox Live is almost a required component to really enjoy UC the way it was meant to be. Sure, you can invite a few friends over and have it out, but those small, segmented screens are taxing on the eyes after a while. That's not the game's fault, it's just the nature of the beast.

KRISTIAN — 7.75



XBOX

# SHENMUE II

## A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

Those who've played the first Shenmue are accustomed to hero Ryo's joyless demeanor. The guy rebukes advances from babes; all he wants to talk about is his dead dad; and for heaven's sake — change your clothes! No, Ryo hasn't changed for this sequel, and there's a lot that remains the same. I discovered that I mainly wanted to play this title to see what would happen with the story, rather than for its gameplay.

The one big advantage Shenmue II has over its predecessor is that it's much larger. While the Xbox still has to load each section of the town, there is much more to marvel at and participate in. Earning money, and more QTEs, minigames, and Free Battles will make downtime more bearable. Moreover, saves are available anywhere, and time can be compressed if you so desire. However, having to move crates and books remain the boring tasks that they are. I can appreciate the realism of making money, but it wears thin after awhile. Perhaps the worst thing that's the same is Ryo. His script is still fixed on the task before him, which means that for all its gifts of freedom, Shenmue II still largely plays out in a rather linear fashion. If you've played through the first one, you'll want to do so with this sequel — warts and all. Although I'm glad to be included in that group, the rest of you might want to proceed with caution, if at all. —KATO

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN  
**T**  
**8**

### ■ Concept:

Picks up right after the original in both story and spirit

### ■ Graphics:

Apart from a few upgrades, this game still looks like it's on the Dreamcast

### ■ Sound:

The great voice-overs, environmental sounds, and sweeping music add a lot

### ■ Playability:

Contains a deep fighting system all its own, but Ryo still moves like he's got a stick up his butt

### ■ Entertainment:

Ryo's quest may be larger, but I'd be surprised if this title garners a larger audience on the Xbox

### ■ Replay Value:

Moderately Low

### SECOND OPINION

It really comes down to this: Are you interested in playing a Dreamcast game? I, for one, am not. Yes, Shenmue II is entertaining in its own quirky way, but just can't get over its antiquated appearance and horrendous load times. I enjoyed the minigames, but there isn't nearly enough here for me to recommend a purchase.

KRISTIAN — 7

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** AM2 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 30



## REVIEWS



# PHANTOM CRASH

WELCOME TO PHANTOM PLANET

I don't think I've ever come across a mech game quite like *Phantom Crash*. For instance, its characters seem more out of an RPG than some typically boring tale about futuristic military operations. In this sense, the title brings some unique traits that your average mech fan may or may not appreciate.

*Phantom Crash's* universe is made up of isolated battles called Rumbles. Everyone is a contestant in these melees, and as such, has a story to tell. Like some online RPG, this setup makes the battlefield a little more personal. More typical of the genre is the outfitting of your mech. Here, you'll find a good amount of variety, as you can customize how strong some of your upgrades are by a slider bar that makes them progressively more expensive.

Combat is where I began to have my doubts about this title. Like its fast-paced nature and appreciate the fact that I lost two of my weapons because my arm got blown clean off. But while the levels' layouts are cool, there are only three of them. Secondly, the game rewards you for leaving arenas early, because if you die, you'll have to spend your winnings paying for repairs. This left me torn between slaying and fighting, or being a chicken. I think most gamers will be as equally divided about this fun-but-flawed title. —KATO

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER ENCORE ■ DEVELOPER PHANTAGRAPH INTERACTIVE ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 6

### THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN **T** **7.5**

■ **Concept:** *Phantom Crash* combines mech customization with deathmatch chaos and wraps them in a foxy Japanese wrapper.

■ **Graphics:** The muzzle flashes, glowing disguises, and missile trails are cool.

■ **Sound:** Offers an eclectic Japanese soundtrack, but battle sounds are subdued.

■ **Playability:** Simple controls, but a lock-on system would be welcome.

■ **Entertainment:** I love the game's story and customization, but the combat structure is repetitive.

■ **Replay Value:** Moderately high.

### SECOND OPINION

*Phantom Crash* is the Gran Turismo 3 of mech games. It has a stylish hub screen, gameplay centered around earning cash to purchase upgrades, and complete mech customization. It's a cool idea and it looks fantastic, but it's just not that much fun to play. The gameplay is shoddy at best and the arena-style battles wear thin within minutes.

REINER — 7



### XBOX

# METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE

ARTHRITIC WITH AGE

The proverb "good things will come to those who wait" doesn't exactly exemplify the experience Xbox owners will have with this year-late incarnation of Hideo Kojima's critically acclaimed *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty*. To be quite frank, it's more of a love/hate relationship. On the one hand, this is one of the greatest games of all time, and it's loaded to the hilt with Xbox-exclusive excess. At the same time, however, Konami didn't take the time to optimize the game to run smoothly on this powerful console, which becomes readily apparent when the game slows down and chugs during intense action sequences and moments where visual effects are in great abundance.

So basically, what Konami is proposing is an eye for an eye. "Here's a bunch of amazing new material, but it's not going to run as smoothly as it should." Don't get me wrong, even with occasional moments of slowdown, this is still one amazing game and something Xbox fans should run out and purchase immediately. I just can't believe Konami didn't take the time to add the polish that would have made this the definitive version. Worse yet, this is going to give PlayStation 2 owners a nuclear-sized weapon for the age-old console debate. "It runs fine on my system, man. The Xbox must suck!"

However, Xbox owners can trump their chests a bit over the new material that is included. The PlayStation 2 version is a thoroughly satisfying experience in and of itself, but it doesn't come close to touching the Xbox version. With 350 new VR missions, which are referenced periodically throughout the story, giving it a unifying theme, and 150 alternative missions that throw new twists to familiar scenes; the "substance" will definitely hold your interest. A majority of it may resemble Hogan's Alley, but Konami did a phenomenal job mixing up strategies and making each game as intense as possible. The rewards that you'll unlock within these modes will push you to complete everything. You'll discover new characters, hidden missions, alternate costumes, and even additional modes.

Once again, though, Konami's effort is in question. Some of the new modes offer story sequences, but instead of creating cinematics, Konami opted to insert simple sheets of text instead. You may even find yourself reading 12 pages of dense copy before starting a mission.

As a whole, *Substance* feels as though it was rushed off of the development floor well before completion. As it stands, you'll need both versions to experience the best this game has to offer. —REINER



Completing the VR Missions will bring about hidden bonuses, like being able to play as Ninja

Snake Tales gives Snake the starring role on the Plant

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER KONAMI ■ DEVELOPER KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT JAPAN ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 5

### THE BOTTOM LINE

MATURE **M** **9.25**

■ **Concept:** A "Special Edition" re-release that includes the entire *Sons of Liberty* game and a ton of bonus features.

■ **Graphics:** Konami neglected to tap into the power of Xbox, as the framerate slows when the action becomes frenzied.

■ **Sound:** Phenomenal voice-acting and a gripping score.

■ **Playability:** The controls are just as responsive as the PS2 version, and the new minigames bring about different strategies.

■ **Entertainment:** The same great game with newfound longevity.

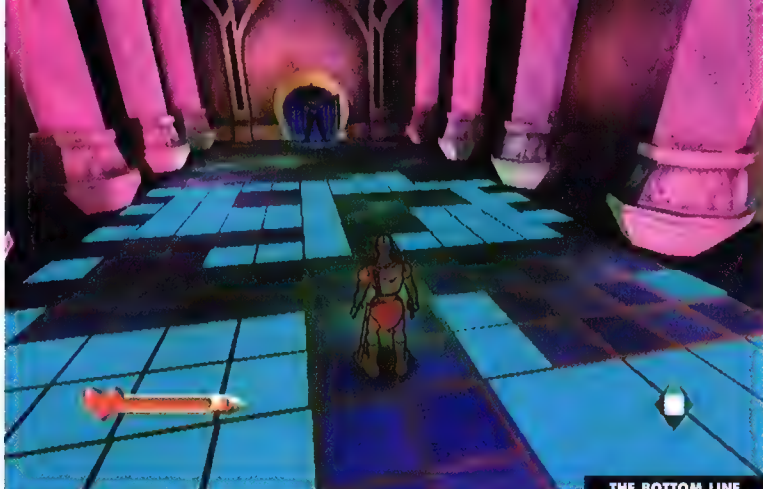
■ **Replay Value:** High.

### SECOND OPINION

Is this the best *Metal Gear Solid 2*? I'd have to say yes, but it's a tentative nod, rather than an emphatic one. First, let me say it's a must-have on either console. The AI and gameplay variety are still worlds ahead of most action games, and the story is completely riveting. The added material on Xbox just isn't as wowing as I thought it would be. VR missions are lame, and a lot of the alternate missions lose a little when not in the context of the actual story. Playing as Ninja is wicked wild, and the Snake Tales are beefy, but they both have a limited appeal. I dig the graphical advancements, but the bouts of slowdown and the lack of voiceovers on the new missions show that Konami didn't put in a full effort here. If you haven't played either version, pick up the PS2 Greatest Hit for \$20. If you're an Xbox elitist, however, get this one and enjoy flaunting its bonuses.

JUSTIN — 9.5





XBOX

## DRAGON'S LAIR 3D

A NOSTALGIC SUCCESS

I haven't enjoyed an adventure starring Dirk, the bumbling hero, this much since the arcade decades ago. Drawing only inspiration in look and setting, Dragon's Lair 3D features play mechanics entirely new to the series, which are more akin to games like Tomb Raider and Pitfall.

Players will spend most of their time overcoming myriad obstacles and solving puzzles. Fortunately, this element of the gameplay is executed very well; new and interesting situations to keep you hooked are plentiful. Combat does play a role, but it's clearly secondary to the adventuring component, thank goodness. Enemy AI and targeting are very suspect.

DL's only other faults are its control and camera. Movement of Dirk is particularly fidgety and imprecise, but it's adequate enough for players to grow accustomed to after an hour or so. The camera gets hung up in corners and narrow spaces; and when it's out of your control, doesn't always provide an optimal vantage point. Although these problems often result in cheap deaths, Dragonstone remedied the frustration that would normally accompany this with more than enough checkpoints.

Despite these problems, fans of the original and of the genre will certainly appreciate the overall product. If you're just a curious gamer, rent it first. — **CHET**



Dirk shows us his disco moves

The boss fights are the more interesting parts of combat

Quick reflexes are sometimes necessary for puzzles...

...and sometimes patience is key

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** UBI SOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** DRAGONSTONE SOFTWARE ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 18

### THE BOTTOM LINE



#### ■ Concept:

The original only inspires this game. It plays more like Tomb Raider or Pitfall, which is good

#### ■ Graphics:

The graphics certainly could've been better, but they at least retain the original's cartoon appearance

#### ■ Sound:

The music is decent and the sound effects are nostalgic

#### ■ Playability:

This is DL's biggest fault. The camera and control are a little spastic and imprecise, sometimes resulting in cheap hits

#### ■ Entertainment:

Overall, this is a good package that has finally been done well enough to do justice to the original arcade game

#### ■ Replay Value:

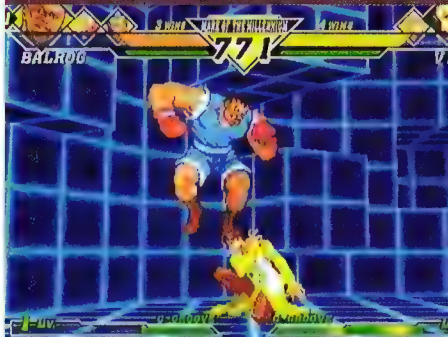
Moderate

### SECOND OPINION

I can't even begin to explain to you how much of a Dragon's Lair dork I was as a child. Let me just put it to you this way: I could defeat the end boss with my eyes closed, and I thought it made me cool. If that doesn't scream goon, I don't know what does. So to say I am disappointed in Dragon's Lair 3D would be an understatement. I certainly appreciate all the nods to its old school heritage here (and I definitely got a kick out of them), but I would have gladly traded all the nostalgia for a game that plays better and offers more interesting puzzles. The controls are actually surprisingly good in 3D. However, the use of a run button in this day and age is completely unacceptable, especially when the walk mode is just so painfully slow. This begs the question: What exactly did the developers think an analog joystick was for? Old school fans will get a kick out of rental and that's where I'd leave it.

ANDY — 6

## REVIEWS



XBOX

## CAPCOM VS SNK 2 EO

STREET FIGHTER'S SECOND COMING??

If you read any of our reviews of this game for Dreamcast, PS2, or GameCube, you know that the Xbox version is almost exactly the same. Basically, you get a whole host of Capcom and SNK characters duking it out. And, like in the GameCube version, the EO indicates that players can use the right analog stick to perform special and super moves — a lame addition that any Street Fighter purist will hate.

The Xbox version differs from the others in one key area, though. For the first time in history, you can play Street Fighter online through Xbox Live! Of course, this is going to attract hardcore fighting fans no matter what. However, before purchasing Live and the game just for this experience, be aware that even with a solid ping, it can be difficult to play. As in any fighting game, exact precision is key, so a mere two or three frames of missing animation can make a significant difference.

Although it's not perfect, there will certainly be plenty of people online getting their Street Fighter on, so as long as you can find somebody somewhat close to you, latency shouldn't present a huge problem. As a fan of 2D fighters for more than a decade, you can count on seeing me throwing a few Shoryukens and Hadoukens in cyberspace. — **CHET**

### THE BOTTOM LINE



#### ■ Concept:

Street Fighter online for the first time

#### ■ Graphics:

They're decent; mediocre animation, low-res sprites against high-res backgrounds

#### ■ Sound:

Most of the music and sound effects are generic

#### ■ Playability:

Not too bad with Controller 3, but the original Xbox pad will take some getting used to

#### ■ Entertainment:

If you can deal with the problems inherent to cyberspace, you could play this forever!

#### ■ Replay Value:

High

### SECOND OPINION

I put the Capcom vs. SNK series at right about the middle of the Street Fighter heap. The cast is deep, there are some good style options, and the backgrounds are impressive. Of course, this version's online component changes everything. I still saw some lag, but this is what every Street Fighter fan has dreamed of. The voice communicator trash-talking only serves to sweeten the deal. Chet's being overly picky here. In my opinion, and EO is an undeniably important title — both for Xbox Live, and fighting fans the world over.

JUSTIN — 8.75

■ **STYLE** OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM ■ **DEVELOPER** CAPCOM ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 10





XBOX

# KAKUTO CHOJIN

AS FORGETTABLE AS ITS NAME

Coming from the creators of the Tobal series, I expected its next

venture into the genre to fair well. I really don't understand why, but instead of evolving Kakuto Chojin into the next Tobal, Dream Publishing (a.k.a. Dream Factory) simply ripped off Tekken, and did a sub-par adaptation of that.

The combat feels relatively imprecise, button-mashy, and quite random. Either playing on the defensive and then counterattacking, or simply crushing buttons present themselves as the only means of fighting practically, which of course doesn't actually work every time. As a result, instead of making me feel as if I have built technique by accomplishing something, I felt as if my victories were more the result of luck.

Superficially speaking, *KC* strikes me as one of those ignorant, low-budget American martial arts flicks. Many characters appear goofy in design and in animation, but the sound effects take the cake. After punching an enemy for the first time, I immediately grew annoyed of the accompanying sound effect—two wooden blocks being slammed together incessantly just gives me a headache.

The only redeeming element of any significance is the character models; they offer extreme detail and nice effects. However, this area alone shouldn't persuade you to pick this up instead of *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance* or *Dead or Alive 3*. —CHET

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT  
 ■ **DEVELOPER** DREAM PUBLISHING ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 12

TEEN  
**T** **6.25**

■ **Concept:** A complete, definitely inferior rip-off of Tekken.

■ **Graphics:** The character models are spectacular, but the stage designs are lame and the animations are goofy for some characters.

■ **Sound:** I liked the music on a few stages, but the rest is awful. I swear, hitting someone sounds like two wooden blocks being smashed together.

■ **Playability:** The control is a little sticky but adequate.

■ **Entertainment:** The annoying sound effects, mediocre combat, and other problems make this game hardly any fun to play. If you're thinking Tobal 3, think again.

■ **Replay Value:** Moderately Low

**SECOND OPINION**

There's nothing wrong with this game, per se. But to tell you the truth, I'd rather talk politics with Anna Nicole Smith, or better yet, stop myself senseless for a good hour than spend another second with it. The character models are extravagantly detailed, and the lighting is rather impressive, but outside of these graphical touches, there really is nothing else to it. It's a bare-bones fighter that doesn't have a personality, or a rhyme or reason as to why you should play it.

REINER - 6

# XBOX QUICKIES

## TOTAL IMMERSION RACING

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** UBI SOFT  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 5



This is the racer I've been waiting for, and I don't mean that in a good way. Xbox is just the haven for this sort of thing—a soulless racer that the developer tries to make look good. The thing is, the cars may be shiny, but they have no damage, show very little shadow play, and in no way look like they are actually driving on the track. Although I like the attention paid to the finer points of acceleration, the cars feel like soap gliding around a bathtub. Also, I'm sick of bumper car racing as a way to win—even NASCAR games are more sophisticated these days. —KATO

E 6.5

## FATAL FRAME

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ADVENTURE  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** TECMO  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15

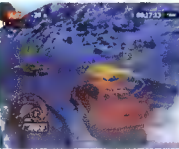


"Disconcerting" clearly describes *Fatal Frame*. Since I dig disconcerting, I dig the game. Although it takes terrible screenshots, the graphics are grainy for a reason, and it adds to the general uncomfortable feel you have while playing it. Like the PS2 version before, *Fatal Frame* has some of the best sound ever heard (and in 5.1 on the Xbox). Also, Tecmo has graciously included more items, ghosts, and a better save system. Those rare folk that love both *Myst* and *Resident Evil* should praise the heavens. —LISA

T 9

## RALLY FUSION: RACE OF CHAMPIONS

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER RACING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 13



It's the same excellent-looking title that we saw on PlayStation 2 last month, featuring even better texturing and fewer jaggies on the Xbox. As before, the head-to-head racing circuits are one of the best reasons I could think of to give rally racing a try, although some of the challenge modes are difficult to the point of frustration. My only concern for this game is that it might not be focused enough to find an audience. I suspect that it's not realistic enough for hardcore rally fans, and casual racing folk may find it a bit too difficult. —MATT

E 8

## TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ATARI  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 23



In the grand scheme of action/sports games, *Transworld Snowboarding* is so average it hurts. The trick scheme, which utilizes the analog sticks, is unique, but not necessarily that good. I like doing things like running over reindeer and setting my board on fire, but the bulk of the content here is the same thing you've played a million times before. It's clunky, and some stages are just plain dumb. *Transworld* is just another log to toss on the fire. —JUSTIN

T 6.5

## SHREK: SUPER PARTY

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER BOARD  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** TDK MEDIALIVE  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15



Tears of joy rolled down my cheeks at the exact moment that I ejected this game from my Xbox. I then proceeded to toss it to the floor and violently smash it with a sledgehammer into a thousand little pieces. As much as I despised this meaningless party game, I will say that it is a far better than *Mario Party 4*. The board game isn't nearly as wearisome and while it only has 30 different minigames, some are actually enjoyable. My favorite part of *Super Party* is how it abruptly ends. There's no celebration or anything. It just kicks you out to the Main Menu. Kids may dig it for its simple nature, but I couldn't find one redeemable quality. It's a real bore and another pointless party game. —REINER

E 3.25

## SEABLADE

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SHOOTER  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** SIMON & SCHUSTER INTERACTIVE  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 20

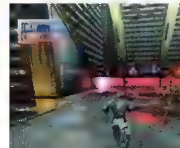


You know the image from *Jackass the Movie* of the midget kicking himself in the head? Well, that's what playing *SeaBlade* made me feel like. You see, because *SeaBlade* is an outrageous flight game where you blast enemies in both the air and...you aren't going to believe this...in the water!!! Wow! Featuring perhaps the worst outscenes I have ever seen, and gameplay that is tedious at best, there really isn't much *SeaBlade* has to offer. I will say the hangar is perhaps the coolest one ever, but outside of that one high point this game is one big stinker. I smell it, but Simon and Schuster most certainly dealt this craptacular game. —ANDY

T 4

## DEATHROW

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** UBI SOFT  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 24



Ubi Soft is billing this as a futuristic "sports" title of sorts, but I don't think that Madden or FIFA have anything to worry about. In *Deathrow*, you run around the arena, trying to pass a disc through your opponent's small circular goal. Basically, it's lacrosse meets *Tron* with a lot of fighting. There are some nice features here, like customizable rules, eight-player LAN capability, a deep career mode, and unlockable arenas and players; but ultimately, the game itself just isn't interesting enough to hold up to long-term play. I applaud the effort to expand gamers' horizons beyond the usual sports fare, but *Deathrow* just doesn't offer enough depth or strategy. —MATT

M 5



**MIDWAY**

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Screenshot from PlayStation®2  
video game system

Screenshot from Xbox™  
video game system

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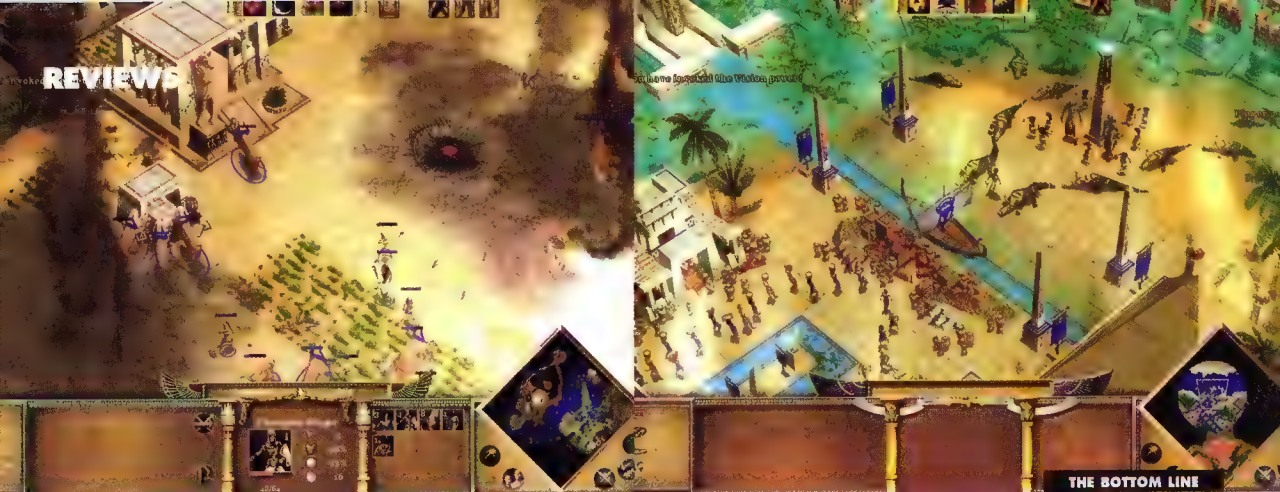


Violence



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"Age of  
Mythology  
drives the  
gameplay stake  
through the  
heart of this  
genre, and  
keeps on  
stabbing"

PC

# AGE OF MYTHOLOGY

## BACCHANALIA

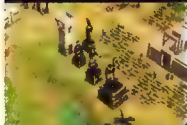
As the release date for a game I've been following and anticipating for a long time draws ever closer, I tend to find myself getting nervous. Will it play as well as it did in the beta version? Is it going to be buggy? Have I been drawn in by hype, only to be left cold and alone with a vacuous piece of garbage that rots my PC's innards? These are important questions, people. I've been burned before, but not this time. Age of Mythology drives the gameplay stake through the heart of this genre, and keeps on stabbing with sure-to-be award-winning graphical acuity, sound design, and production value.

It certainly cannot be denied that Age of Mythology is a visual thoroughbred. Everything from the largest structures to the smallest icon has been engineered to please the eye and mesh with the title's design concepts. Even your menu displays will feel unique when you switch between different civilizations, but none of their effectiveness or ergonomic feel is sacrificed in the least. Additionally, each outscene is manufactured from the in-game engine—bringing the player near the action, and allowing an up-close look at the fantastic character design. I wish there were an easy way to zoom in on your units during missions, but seeing them from the traditional middle distance provided enough enjoyment that I wasn't left feeling cheated out of a more intimate viewpoint.

In terms of how well the game actually plays, rather than how it looks, I couldn't be more pleased. It seems to me that the Ensemble team took to heart all of the suggestions and

concerns garnered from fans of the Age of Empires series, and implemented them with precision and tact. I never felt that I was playing catch-up with my scenario; that is, I always had the sense that I was in control of my surroundings, instead of the other way around. In many civilization-building titles, it seems that players are often set upon a predetermined path, and if we don't follow criteria X, Y, and Z, we can forget about graduating to the next level or plot point. This title fosters a do-it-your-own-way attitude—I may concoct a completely different solution to get to the end of a level than you will, but the game allows both of us to explore these venues without penalizing us for coming up with something the designers didn't foresee or intend.

On the other hand, I am disappointed with how the single-player scenario panned out. Yes, the story is excellent, and I loved the characters and setting; but I don't like the fact that you're forced to play one civilization until the writers come up with a way to incorporate the second and the third. I wish there had been three separate campaigns for the Norse, Egyptians, and Atlantians. I mean, I've already bought the game; of course I'm going to play through all of the different cultures. StarCraft was (and still is) a great example of how a partitioned campaign structure can work, and work well. If you're like me, however, you'll be able to absorb this, and enjoy the game for hours upon hours anyway. Criminy, the multiplayer section alone is worth a purchase. Don't miss out on this title—it's one of the best empire-builder/RTS hybrids that has ever been released. —KRISTIAN



### THE BOTTOM LINE

T  
9.5

- Concept:**  
The empire-building concept gets blown out in spectacular fashion
- Graphics:**  
A zoom feature would have been a nice touch—especially since the unit models are so gorgeous
- Sound:**  
Keeping your speakers turned on will be a good idea if you want to catch the voluminous amount of voice acting
- Playability:**  
What a great interface—I never felt like I was battling the system instead of my opponent
- Entertainment:**  
What was once good is now even better. The Age of Empires series has been officially left in the dust
- Replay Value:**  
High

### SECOND OPINION

If the thought of watching a Cyclops toss an elephant 50 feet into the air isn't enough to convince you that this game is an absolute necessity, then maybe the fact that it's one of the best real-time strategy games of all time will do the trick. As an avid fan of the Age of Empires series, I feared that Age of Mythology would be the same game with a gimmick. Comparisons can definitely be made between the titles, but Age of Mythology outperforms and elevates every little aspect of its predecessor. The gameplay is all the more refined, intuitive, and extravagant. The graphics have also been enhanced to omnipotent proportions with the finest of details accompanying every unit and structure. With a thoroughly rewarding multiplayer component, and unparalleled variety within its campaigns and deities, Age of Mythology truly is a game for the ages.

REINER — 9.5

■ STYLE 1 TO 12-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ PUBLISHER MICROSOFT ■ DEVELOPER ENSEMBLE STUDIOS ■ RELEASE OCTOBER 31







## REVIEWS



PC

# MEDAL OF HONOR: SPEARHEAD

SAY HUH?! CRAZINESS!

**F**irst things first: The opening scene in this game is superb. Jumping from a hectic transport plane into the serenity of a parachute fall while watching the world blow itself to hell below you is an experience not to be missed. At the same time, the level this scene is set in is the best in the game. The other stages are decent, but tend to be fairly pedestrian for the most part. This, coupled with the fact that the entire single-player portion is probably a whopping five hours long – at the most – should be reason enough to give you pause before slapping down \$30.

Another nagging problem is the obnoxious track level that wheedles its way into play about halfway through the title. With such a short life span, EA should be injecting more content and intrigue into what it has to work with rather than doing a boring, point-and-shoot capsule that allows no room for player creativity. Spearhead does allow for a good amount of fun during its tried-and-true FPS scenarios, but the driving gimmicks and track segments should be saved for a time when there's more room for variety. All in all, Allied Assault owners will enjoy Spearhead, but might want to wait until it drops in price before investing. **KRISTIAN**

### THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN  
**T**  
ESRB  
RATED  
FOR  
AGES  
13  
AND  
UP

**8.25**

- **Concept:** Continue the assault in true Medal of Honor fashion – for four, maybe five hours. Then the game ends.
- **Graphics:** Still quite good, but they are beginning to look a little rough around the edges.
- **Sound:** The best in the business. You simply will not hear better ballistics audio anywhere.
- **Playability:** I liked the controls for Allied Assault, and nothing has changed.
- **Entertainment:** Short and sweet, but the game's brevity saps some of its strength.
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High.

### SECOND OPINION

I was expecting a lot from this expansion, and Spearhead's opening scene featuring a spectacular parachute drop into war-torn France doesn't disappoint. Sadly, this is the only time this expansion hits the same stride as the original. The level designs and objectives just aren't as clever and the game itself is rather short, even for inexperienced FPS players. For thirty bucks, there are a lot worse ways to waste four or five hours, but it really makes you wonder if Spearhead is worth it.

**ANDY - 8**

■ **STYLE 1 TO 16-PLAYER ACTION** ■ **PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS** ■ **DEVELOPER EA GAMES** ■ **RELEASE NOVEMBER 12**

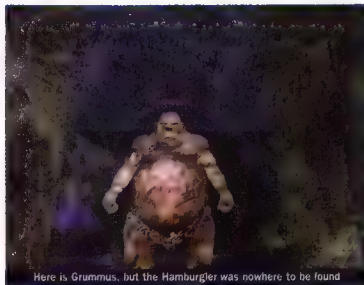


PC

# EVERQUEST: THE PLANES OF POWER

A NEW HOPE

**A**fter the debacle that was the Shadows of Lucin launch and all the problems that it brought to the EverQuest userbase over the following year, it is nice to see Planes of Power so well executed on many levels. For the design team at Sony Online Entertainment, this launch was more than just another expansion, it was a challenge to see if it could find a new direction for the ailing EverQuest game



Here is Grummus, but the Hamburger was nowhere to be found.

design that was showing wear from years of overhauls.

To get the game back in balance and bring back fun to both the large-scale guild encounters and experience grind, many of the classes were re-balanced so that tired player strategies wouldn't be the cornerstone of all combat. This gave the game designers an opportunity to take the game in a new direction that I find to be oddly console in feel. For example, to progress in the Planes of Power you must work your way through certain zones by defeating a boss or series of tests put before you. Success gives players a flag that enables them to advance to new zones or continue forward in a large-scale quest. Not only is progression given in a very linear, console style, but many of the boss encounters scream classic console RPG; with gods splitting into six mirror images leaving the players to try and attack the correct one, or bosses being invulnerable until other monsters are destroyed.

In the end, this new approach is both a blessing and a curse. Since every player must get these flags, many guilds are forced to revisit old content to keep themselves outfitted for later encounters. However, compared to many individual key-time sinks, this new approach enables a guild to key lots of people at the same time. This is most definitely a plus for guilds as a whole. Actually, if I had to sum up my review in one statement it would be just that: a plus for guilds. This is because a lot of the content doesn't offer much for the solo player, other than the ability to raise the max level from 60 to 65 and unlock a number of new alternative advancement skills.

Planes of Power is certainly a great addition to the EQ universe, but falls short of the Scars of Velious expansion, which is still the best in the series simply because it offered so much content. Planes of Power rides the razor's edge. If your guild is powerful enough to take it on full force, you can run this gauntlet and it will be your greatest EQ experience yet. However, if you let up, you will quickly be left behind and see that Planes of Power's lack of diversity has left you with nothing. **- ANDY**

■ **STYLE MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER ONLINE ROLE-PLAYING GAME** ■ **PUBLISHER SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT** ■ **DEVELOPER SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT** ■ **RELEASE OCTOBER 21**

### THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE  
**E**  
ESRB  
RATED  
FOR  
AGES  
13  
AND  
UP

**9.5**

- **Concept:** Keep expanding EQ until people stop playing.
- **Graphics:** It's the same old graphics engine, but better models and textures give it a new shine.
- **Sound:** The MP3 audio is a nice addition, but the overall sound is still lackluster.
- **Playability:** Basically EQ requires you to ask for assistance to even begin to fathom all the things you can do.
- **Entertainment:** For long time EQ players, Planes of Power is a must, for others it's just a way to get to level 65.
- **Replay Value:** High.

### SECOND OPINION

There's no denying that Planes of Power is a big step forward for EverQuest fanatics, but you'll need some pretty heavy PC artillery to enjoy all of the technological enhancements Sony Online has included. Most of the precious hour-stealing additions have been geared towards players who are level 60 and higher. If you haven't spent most of your waking life leveling your character, chances are you're not going to be able to enjoy PopP's assorted realms as much as, say, Andy would. There are other notable enhancements, however. The updated character models make Planes of Power the most graphically stunning addition yet, but there's no getting away from the fact that only a select few will enjoy all of it. This is an expansion for the most devout of EQ addicts, the rest of us will nod dumbly as the dorks tell us, "No, seriously! This rules!"

**KRISTIAN - 8**





THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN **T** 9.25

PC  
**STAR TREK: STARFLEET COMMAND III**  
FLIPPING THE BIRD (OF PREY)

I don't by any means count myself as a Trekkie, but I liked *The Next Generation* and hated *Voyager* as much as the next guy. As with *Command's* precursors, this fact made little to no difference in how much I enjoyed the game. The story was compelling not because I knew the intricate workings of the political climate between the Federation and the Klingons, but because it was well written, and expertly implemented. The three campaigns (Klingon, Romulan, and Federation) acted as sounding boards for different sides of the same story, and there was never a time when the plot suffered so there could be an equal number of missions for each campaign. Additionally, the RPG-like elements of starting with the command of a small ship, then working your way up through the ranks and buying better ships and equipment with points gained through successful mission completion are inspired. Sure, it's not groundbreakingly original, but it works, and that's what counts.

On the other hand, there are some rather irritating bugs in this game. Some are graphical, and some are balance related, but those of you without an Internet connection will be cut off from the patch that will doubtlessly make its appearance rather soon. You'll also have to go without the wild multiplayer side of the game—a feature that is not to be missed. —KRISTIAN



Cubism at its worst



It may be small, but it's got a lot of bite



Say goodbye, you filthy Romulan

- **Concept:**  
Enjoy a robust single and multiplayer Star Trek title with none of the guilt
- **Graphics:**  
Great damage modeling, but there were some bugs and glitches that I could have done without
- **Sound:**  
As with the other titles in this series, a lot of the audio from the shows and the films made its way into the game
- **Playability:**  
The camera and controls are still rather clunky, but that's the nature of the beast
- **Entertainment:**  
An excellent buy for both Trekkies and the PC faithful
- **Replay Value:**  
High

**SECOND OPINION**

My first act as commander was, "Warp seven to Kirk's Planet of Green Women!" This wasn't possible, because *Starfleet Command III* is now set in the Next Generation universe. Besides, this series excels at sinking your torpedo into Klingons. I can't say enough about how cool and easy the interface was. At no time was I scratching my Tribbles in confusion. From landing marines to managing my firing arcs, it was a blast. This latter tactic was key in battle. I liked to perform the "ass shot," where I'd swivel around and fire my rear-facing weapons. By the time I completed my revolution, my forward armaments were ready to go. Best of all, recruiting new officers helps you optimize the performance of your ship, as do the MechWarrior-esque customizations of your craft. Now that my blood lust is satiated, where are those alien women with the phasers set to start?

KATO — 8

■ STYLE 1 TO 128-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER ACTIVISION ■ DEVELOPER TALDREN ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 6

REVIEWS



PC

**MECHWARRIOR 4: MERCENARIES**

PAY ME

**M**echWarrior 4: Mercenaries is a near-perfect marriage between a furiously intense action title and a complex role-playing/simulation game. As a hired gun, Cyberlore has given you control of your own destiny. After allying yourself with one of three sponsors, you'll take on missions in the Inner Sphere and build up two lances (there are four mechs per lance) of hardened warriors while at the same time outfitting them with the best machinery your money can buy. Successfully completing missions will give you contract money (you're not working for free!), as well as salvage from the smoldering hulks you left on the battlefield. From there, you can choose to use what your salvage team has gathered, or sell it off like the crap that it is.

This play formula works seamlessly, and the open-ended story line provides for the kind of replay value you won't see in the multiplayer portion. I loved upgrading my mechs and watching my team kick ass in the field, but the AI is quite suspect at times, and the terrain looks decidedly dated. The mechs, on the other hand, have been molded with the attention and precision of a master craftsman. The control is also good, but the menu systems need an ergonomic overhaul. Who cares? This game rules. Get it. Now. —KRISTIAN

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN **T** 9.5

- **Concept:**  
Walk softly and carry 50 tons worth of guns
- **Graphics:**  
I wish the environment looked better, but the mech models are stupendous
- **Sound:**  
Some of the radio chatter is cool, but the music (industrial rock) is not my cup of tea
- **Playability:**  
Using a good joystick is almost required if you want to have a rewarding play experience
- **Entertainment:**  
This is one of the most impressive mech games released on the PC thus far
- **Replay Value:**  
High

**SECOND OPINION**

A suitable follow-up to *Vengeance* that does away with the epic story line in favor of blowing the living daylight out of anything that moves. With 40 new missions, 49 multiplayer maps (with two new game modes), and a brilliantly executed balance between action and simulation, it's well worth shelling out the big bucks for.

REINER — 8.75

■ STYLE 1 TO 16-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER MICROSOFT ■ DEVELOPER CYBERLORE STUDIOS ■ RELEASE NOVEMBER 12



# GAME OF THE MONTH METROID FUSION



"From beginning to end, Metroid Fusion is everything you could want from a Game Boy Advance game..."

GAME BOY ADVANCE

# METROID FUSION

BEST. METROID. EVER.

**P**lain and simple, Metroid is the most kick-ass game of all time, and Fusion for Game Boy Advance delivers everything a fan of the series could want, and a whole heck of a lot more. Check this out.

Upon returning to SR388, Samus becomes infected with an unidentified life form known as X that consumes her Power Suit and leaves her on the brink of death. In an ironic twist, a cell from a Metroid is used to create a vaccine that saves her life. But Samus is changed forever, as she and the life form become one when the vaccine fuses the mutant genes with her Power Suit. Now immune to the deadly virus, she is the only thing that can stop it from taking over the galaxy. The hunted is now the hunter.

I can't reveal the plot twists that take place, but I can tell you it's the most gripping tale to date, and will surely blow your mind. This is only fitting, since the rest of the game is so perfectly Metroid in every classic sense, that the game needed a story that matched its powerhouse gameplay.

Not only are all the classic elements of the previous installments here in their glory, many new moves and innovations take the series to a higher level. Samus now has the ability to hang from ledges, which makes the secrets more difficult to uncover, and the play control is much smoother. For example,

you can jump up and hang from a ledge then flip right into a ball to fit into tight passages. A handy maneuver, to say the least. Also, a new navigation room has been added to keep the player focused on individual goals and enable more story elements to unfold. At first, this new component bothered me, as it makes the quest rather linear at the beginning. However, as the game unfolds, this addition allows the developers to challenge the player with more difficult puzzles later in the game.

From beginning to end, Metroid Fusion is everything you could want from a Game Boy Advance title — high-powered original content that surpasses the old 8-bit and 16-bit games that they are derived from. Nintendo put the original team on this product and their care and technique shows, as Metroid Fusion is truly one of the greats. Long live Samus! — **ANDY**

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE  
**E**  
ESRB  
RATED  
FOR  
ALL  
AGES

**10**

- **Concept:** Explore, evolve, and eradicate
- **Graphics:** Easily the best looking 2D Metroid yet
- **Sound:** Plenty of classic tracks with some new ones added for good measure
- **Playability:** The play control is so tight, it's almost like second nature
- **Entertainment:** If you love Metroid, this is an absolute feast
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High



## SECOND OPINION

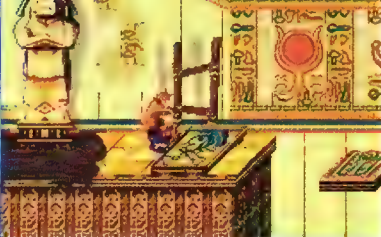
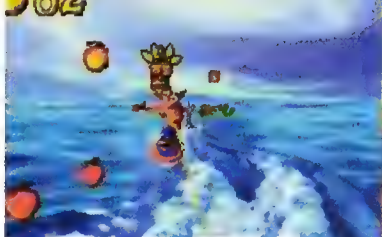
With razor-sharp gameplay, unanticipated plot twists, open-ended exploration, and stunning visuals, Metroid Fusion rekindles the grandeur of Samus Aran's side-scrolling exploits and elevates the series to a towering new level. Not only is this a suitable follow-up to the Super Nintendo classic, it steers the series in a new direction as it reinvents our beloved hero for the next generation of gaming. The surprising developments in the story directly affect the gameplay, producing an interesting variation on the play mechanics that gives the game a unique, yet familiar feel. Of course, you'll still find yourself flipping through caverns, bombing through walls, and freezing enemies. But as you'll see, all is not as you would expect. I'm sure you'll agree that Fusion is the most desirable Game Boy Advance game on the market, one of the top 10 games of the year, and the best Metroid title to date.

REINER — 10

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** NINTENDO  
■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 18







GAME BOY ADVANCE

## CRASH BANDICOOT 2: N-TRANCED

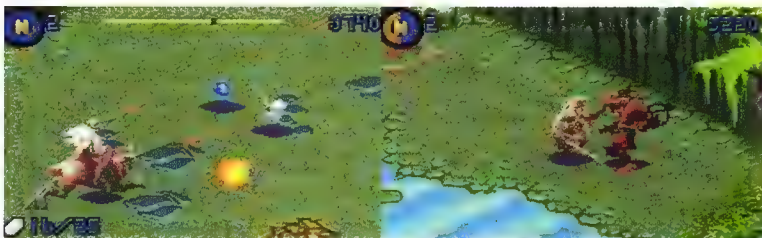
### WALKING THE SAFE ROAD

**C**rash's latest foray into the handheld arena holds tight to the tried and true. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but certainly doesn't pummel into new ground, as we're used to the old Bandicoot doing.

While busying himself saving the world (again), our fearless hero must break boxes and collect crystals and spin away enemies and...well, it's all been done before. Crash, though, does do it through some really imaginative levels. Cruising on foot is a staple, but he also chills on a magic carpet, gets towed behind a boat, and moves via other crazy means.

Having no discernable plot holding the locations together allows for certain freedoms and the ability to use the GBA for all it's worth. Credit must be given for the sheer use of colors and details, while keeping it clean and visible on the teeny GBA screen. The important thing is that Crash's latest romp is fun, but does not reinvent the wheel. However, dependability does have something going for it – and this is a thoroughly dependable title. – **LISA**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** VICARIOUS VISIONS ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY 7



GAME BOY ADVANCE

## MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE: HE-MAN - POWER OF GRAYSKULL

### FISTO MY SNOOT SPOUT

**W**hen I think Masters of the Universe, I think of the old cartoon. He-Man, Ram Man, and Mekaneck battle Clawful, Whiplash, and Kobra Khan (who had a squirt bottle for a head) in a half-hour toy commercial that got me to beg my mom for every product it showed. I hope that when the kids of today grow up, they won't associate Masters of the Universe with this crappy cartridge.

This game is flatter than He-Man's squishy, rubber head. The levels are lazily crafted, isometric mazes. Instead of nonstop tussling with bad mofos like Trap Jaw and Beast Man, the so-called "master of the universe" spends most of his time battling spiders and birds. The lay of the land is such that, if He-Man steps out of bounds onto a puddle or sand dune, he dies. My hero!

Power of Grayskull could've easily been adequate, if it took the Double Dragon, side-scrolling approach. Instead, it's ugly and boring. The cartoon made me want to play with the toys. The game will likely make kids do their homework, clean their rooms, or go to sleep – anything to avoid having to play it again. – **JUSTIN**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** TDK ■ **DEVELOPER** TANIKO ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 30

### SECOND OPINION

The Crash series isn't what it used to be on the big screen, but it is carving out a niche as one of the best handheld platformers out there. Sharp graphics (dig the cool water effects), solid control, and a lot of gameplay variety puts this one up into the leagues of the pint-sized elite.

**MATT - 8**

### THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE **E** 7.5

- **Concept:** Once again, Crash needs to save a visually eclectic world
- **Graphics:** While not quite at the pinnacle of graphical prowess, it has a unique and detailed look
- **Sound:** By far, the least imaginative part of this adventure
- **Playability:** Features easy and consistent control
- **Entertainment:** A good script and nice level designs make Crash balanced fun
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

### SECOND OPINION

Wow. If I didn't know better, I'd say that TDK is involved in some unholy alliance with Skeletor to ruin He-Man's good name once and for all. If you're a fan of terribly executed, amateurish hack n' slash action, put this on the top of your Christmas list.

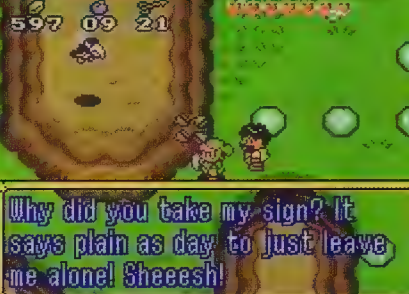
**MATT - 3**

### THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE **E** 3.75

- **Concept:** TDK continues to gobble up licenses, amazed that nobody else picked them up
- **Graphics:** Those blurry blobs kind of look like He-Man and friends – if you squirt really hard
- **Sound:** Is Eternia the drum-and-bass capital of the universe? It would appear so
- **Playability:** Four buttons, four actions: slash, jump, block, run
- **Entertainment:** No matter how much you like He-Man and want to see the figures in game form, it's just not worth it
- **Replay Value:** Low

## REVIEWS



Why did you take my sign? It says plain as day to just leave me alone! Sheesh!

GAME BOY ADVANCE

## THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST

### THE MISSED LINK

I have fond memories of this game back on the SNES. Keeping the Nintendo port streak alive, A Link to the Past is an extremely accurate representation of a quality title and is a must-have for Game Boy Advance.

This title is the definition of perfect pacing. The large map unfolds bit by bit, as you pick up various items and abilities to further exploration. The quest itself is lengthy and entertaining, with great dungeons and plenty of puzzles. The extras are even better, as you dig holes for rupees, bash into trees, and hurl chickens. It puts most paper-thin GBA games to shame.

A few things do cross my mind as I guide young Link around. First off, story lines have come a long way since 1992. I really couldn't care about boring orbs, maidens, or any of that junk. I just want to play the game. The graphics, while accurate to the 16-bit cart, are a bit bland and outdated now – even on GBA. I didn't play this for the graphics then, and I don't now, so that's not a huge deal.

Four Swords, the included multiplayer game, is a neat little variation to the familiar Zelda theme. However, finding three more friends, each with a copy of the game, is a daunting task. Overall, A Link to the Past holds its own as an amazing action/RPG with mass appeal and long-term enjoyment.

– **JUSTIN**

### THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE **E** 9.25

- **Concept:** One of the best action/RPGs in video games, delivered on a platter to GBA owners
- **Graphics:** They represent the SNES version well, but are a little sub-par for GBA
- **Sound:** Some new speech, reminiscent of the N64 Zelda. Great music
- **Playability:** You would think the game was originally designed for GBA. Great control and button layout
- **Entertainment:** This is one of the greats, and it is still amazing today. If you can find enough people to play Four Swords, you'll be rewarded.
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

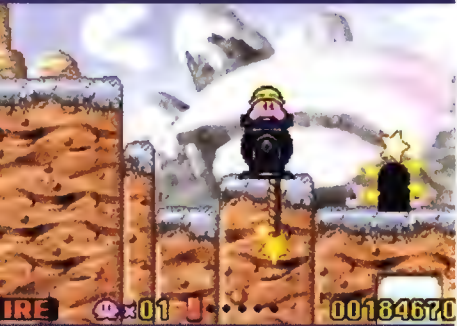
### SECOND OPINION

Surprisingly, this is nearly identical to the SNES version in every way. Great graphics, sound, music, and stellar gameplay are just a few of the aspects that stand out. Furthermore, players can link GBAs together for four-player action, or connect this version to the GC game for increased functionality. With so much to offer, A Link to the Past shouldn't be missed.

**CHET - 9.5**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** NINTENDO/CAPCOM ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 31





GAME BOY ADVANCE

**KIRBY: NIGHTMARE IN DREAMLAND**  
SUCK IT IN

**R**eally, who can say that a little, pink, marshmallow-looking fellow isn't just the epic hero America has been hungering for? I certainly can't, because Kirby is a pudgy, floating ball of fun.

Starting with everything that's right in Kirby just might quickly take me over my space limit, but I have to gush about the seeds of abilities the little dumpling can absorb from inhaled enemies. We've got Laser, Fire, Ice, Sword, and Super Jump; just about anything they can do, you can do better -- even boss abilities.

Then there are the graphics, which lend themselves to Kirby's quirky world with sharp colors, detailed backgrounds, nice special effects, and the standard-setting character animations. Kirby squishes, inflates, and swashbuckles with ease through levels that don't revolutionize the world of platform gaming -- but which are more than good enough at encouraging exploration and minimizing cheap deaths.

My point is this: Kirby good, Me like. You buy. All happy. -- **LISA**

**THE BOTTOM LINE**  
EVERYONE **E** **8.75**

- Concept:** Pink balloon-type fellow saves the day in Dreamland while absorbing the powers of enemies.
- Graphics:** Quirky but colorful and detailed. Kirby's animations are excellent.
- Sound:** No noticeable difference in the soundtrack between levels.
- Playability:** Intuitive and solid. Tiny platforming done right.
- Entertainment:** With plenty of skills to grab and a decent variety within levels, Kirby is fun for hours.
- Replay Value:** High.

**SECOND OPINION**

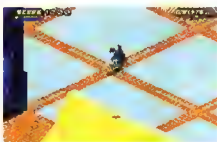
I've been waiting for a Kirby resurgence, and this is what I wanted from a GBA game with my pink pal. It brings back memories of the minigame-filled NES original, with better graphics and more cool powers. Like all Kirby games, it's a little easy, but the fun is in exploring to find everything in every level.

**JUSTIN - 8.5**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** HAL LABORATORY  
 ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 12

**TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 24



Like its big brothers, the handheld version of Tony 4 now has the ability to perform a spine transfer, but other than that and some new areas, this feels a lot like THPS 3

to me. Nevertheless, it's another fine translation to GBA featuring precise control, lots of challenges, and impressive graphics and tunes. Unfortunately, the game's biggest weakness remains the isometric perspective. Although you get used to it, the numerous blind spots are highly annoying. -- **CHET**

**E** **8**

**WACKY STACKERS**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER PUZZLE  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** CONSPIRACY  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 20



This is pretty much a status quo Puyo Puyo-style puzzle game featuring a license (Tiny Toons) that ran its course a decade ago. The only aspect of this game that stands out is the special attacks. These allow you to either manipulate your opponent's board, or clear your board of pieces. If you seriously still enjoy the cartoon, or just love puzzle titles, I recommend checking out Wacky Stackers.

Otherwise, stick with ZooCUBE. -- **CHET**

**E** **6.5**

**ROCKY**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** UBI SOFT  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 14



I didn't think a side-scrolling boxing game would work in this day and age, but Rocky comes through as a solid, if unspectacular, GBA title. Strategy is definitely necessary,

and you'll enjoy the battles once you hone your skills. Unfortunately, the ring length is goofy and the uppercut is utterly useless. The cutscenes are truly phenomenal. I won't say they're photo quality, but they're damn close, given the technology. This may be the best boxing game on GBA, but it's still not too impressive.

Overall. -- **JUSTIN**

**E** **7.5**

**TOMB RAIDER: THE PROPHECY**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** UBI SOFT  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 11



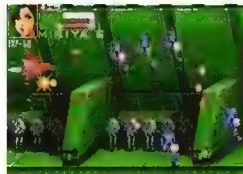
The Game Boy Advance is a good place for Lara these days, but this title quickly wears out its welcome. Yes, Prophecy's brand of adventuring is done well here, but the

problem is that it's still the same boring stuff. I love that the levels are huge, have some detail, and that Lara has some moves. But, when you're pulling switches, backtracking, and participating in boring combat through these large areas, you tire quickly. Lara's funbags have deflated and withered long ago. -- **KATO**

**T** **6.5**

**ROBOTECH: THE MACROSS SAGA**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 3-PLAYER SHOOTER  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** TDK MEDIACTIVE  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 16



I hate to say it, but I wonder if this is the game that should have graced the big consoles instead of Robotech: Battlecry. It's got wicked shooter action and, like

its big brother, Macross absolutely demands that you use all three of your Veritech's forms. While I wouldn't necessarily say it's better than Battlecry, this game has an advantage: You can play as several Macross characters, including Ben Dixon and Max Sterling. The only downside is there is the occasional slowdown.

Saga's difficulty and old-school shooter spirit make it a must-have trapped in a Game Boy Advance body. -- **KATO**

**E** **8.5**

**MONSTER RANCHER ADVANCE 2**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER STRATEGY/FIGHTING  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** TECMO  
 ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 4



Following the same tried-and-true formula that worked so well for the first entry in the series, this new incarnation simply gives players more to mess around

with. The changes that have been implemented include a much deeper coaching system, which allows specific monsters to receive a more complex training regimen, and an interesting link option that lets players introduce their beloved monsters to their friends' beasts. As always, Monster Rancher Advance 2 delivers infinite replay value and a sound investment for anyone who has a craving for an aggressive virtual pet. -- **REINER**

**E** **8.5**

**VIRTUA TENNIS**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS  
 ■ **PUBLISHER** THQ/SEGA  
 ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 10



Another great entry for the handheld tennis crowd (all six of you); Virtua Tennis has the same impressive and deep career mode featured in Virtua Tennis 2

for the Dreamcast. Basically, you'll take both a female and male pro up through the ranks, competing in tournaments and using skill-building minigames like Disc Shooter and Burger Chef to boost your attributes. Heck, it even features a few new games that weren't in VT 2 (or Tennis 2K2, as it was called on PS2). My only complaint is that the shoulder buttons (which I call a great deal of depth to WTA Tour Tennis) aren't utilized in the single-player game, which means no drop shot. -- **MATT**

**E** **7.75**



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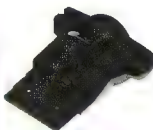
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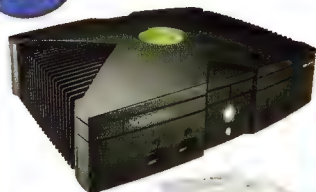
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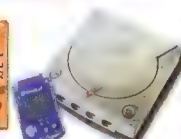
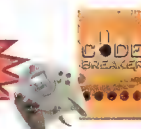


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# CHARTS

In association with the NPD TRSTS Video Games Service, Charts presents an in-depth listing of the best-selling software on a month-to-month basis. Are the games you spend your hard-earned dollars on top sellers? Take a look below to find out. We've also compiled a listing of the top-selling Japanese software, and, of course, we included a Top 10 list of the games the GI staff is currently enjoying.



## NPD TOP 20

Listings Based Upon NPD Data For October 2002 Based On Units Sold

RANK	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM	SCORE	RELEASE DATE	PRICE POINT
1	N/A	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	PS2	10	Oct-02	\$48

To honor the eighties resurgence that Vice City has spawned, we all grew fat, feathery mullets, and bought Air Supply t-shirts. Instead of it earning us a handful of hot babe action, it only got us an eye-ful of Security Plus brand pepper spray. One tiny shot rates an impressive two million on the Scoville Heat Units scale! It's thug tested, woman approved.

2	N/A	NBA Live 2003	PS2	8.75	Oct-02	\$50
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EA Sports' b-ball franchise is totally redone, with a new engine and faster gameplay. This thing hauls! Unless, of course, you play as Rockets rookie Yao Ming. The guy's 7'6", 300 lbs. of lean, mean, three-toed sloth. He's so slow, it takes him an hour and a half to watch 60 Minutes. We're joking. He could crush us like matchsticks. Please don't tell him.

3	2	Kingdom Hearts	PS2	9.5	Sep-02	\$50
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Donald and Goofy are freaking out about Mickey's disappearance, but Sora just wants to get his make-out on with Kairi. Who can blame him? Sora's a red-blooded young man, after all. Of course, if we were him, we would've stopped in Atlantis a little longer to lock gills with Little Mermaid's Ariel. We're willing to bet that fish don't stink.

4	1	Madden NFL 2003	PS2	9.5	Aug-02	\$50
---	---	-----------------	-----	-----	--------	------

To quote the great Hank Williams, Jr., "Are you ready for some football?" Take our advice: Don't step on the field without protecting the boys. Wear a cup. You're a good-looking youngster with a long life ahead of you. It'd be a shame to damage that all over one horrific shot "down there." Don't believe us? We got two words for ya: Mike Tyson.

5	N/A	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	PS2	8.5	Sep-02	\$50
---	-----	---------------------------	-----	-----	--------	------

Agent 47 is back, but this time, he's a new man. Gone are the contract killing days of old. That is, until your clergyman mentor gets hijacked. Then, you get to bust caps all over the place. Game Informer does not advocate the use of pistols or other firearms, however. We recommend using the dental floss-type weapon and choking those mofos out for good! Bam!

RANK	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM	SCORE	RELEASE DATE	PRICE POINT
6	N/A	Yu-Gi-Oh! The Eternal Dualist Soul	GBA	N/A	Oct-02	\$28
7	N/A	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	PS2	9.25	Oct-02	\$50
8	N/A	The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	PS2	9.25	Oct-02	\$50
9	N/A	Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	PS2	8.75	Sep-02	\$50
10	5	Tekken 4	PS2	9	Sep-02	\$50
11	14	Super Mario Advance 3: Yoshi's Island	GBA	8.75	Sep-02	\$29
12	N/A	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Xbox	8.5	Sep-02	\$51
13	N/A	NBA 2K3	PS2	9.25	Oct-02	\$50
14	N/A	Mario Party 4	GC	3	Oct-02	\$50
15	10	Yu-Gi-Oh! Forbidden Memories	PS-X	5.5	Mar-02	\$29
16	7	Yu-Gi-Oh! Dark Duel Stories	GBC	5.5	Mar-02	\$29
17	N/A	NHL 2003	PS2	7.75	Sep-02	\$50
18	6	Star Fox Adventures	GC	8.75	Sep-02	\$50
19	N/A	Red Faction II	PS2	8.75	Oct-02	\$50
20	N/A	TimeSplitters 2	PS2	8.25	Oct-02	\$49

Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment Service • Kristin Barnett/Korff (516) 625-2481

## JAPAN TOP 10

Source: Game Japan Based On Monthly Units Sold

POS.	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM
1	N/A	Dragon Quest: Torneko's Big Adventure 3	PS2
2	N/A	From TV Animation ONE PIECE: Treasure Battle	GC
3	N/A	Kirby: Nightmare in Dreamland	GBA
4	N/A	Final Fantasy II	PS-X
5	N/A	Final Fantasy	PS-X
6	N/A	Ultraman: Fighting Evolution 2	PS2
7	N/A	Final Fantasy I/II Premium Package	PS-X
8	N/A	Tales of the World: Narikiri Dungeon 2	GBA
9	N/A	Medal of Honor: Frontline	PS2
10	N/A	Simple Character 2000 Series Vol. 13	PS-X



## GAME INFORMER TOP 10

The Staff's Favorite Picks

POS.	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM
1	N/A	Metroid Fusion	GBA
2	1	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	PS2
3	N/A	Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance	PS2
4	N/A	Metroid Prime	GC
5	6	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	PS2
6	N/A	Age of Mythology	PC
7	2	Animal Crossing	GC
8	N/A	ATV Offroad Fury 2	PS2
9	7	The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	PS2
10	N/A	Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance	Xbox



## PC TOP 10

Based On Monthly Units Sold. Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment Service. Kristin Barnett/Korff (516) 625-2481

POS.	L. MO	GAME	MONTH	PRICE
1	1	The Sims: Unleashed	Sep-02	\$29
2	N/A	EverQuest: The Planes of Power	Oct-02	\$28
3	N/A	RollerCoaster Tycoon 2	Oct-02	\$26
4	6	The Sims Deluxe	Sep-02	\$41
5	4	Unreal Tournament 2003	Sep-02	\$44
6	N/A	Spongebob Squarepants: Operation Krabby Patty	Sep-01	\$17
7	8	RollerCoaster Tycoon	May-99	\$16
8	3	Warcraft III: Reign of Chaos	Jun-02	\$51
9	2	Battlefield 1942	Sep-02	\$47
10	N/A	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Sep-02	\$47









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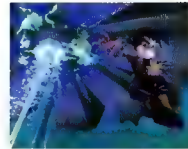


# NEW RELEASES ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE CALL YOUR LOCAL RETAILER FOR MORE DETAILS

Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor
<b>PLAYSTATION 2</b>		
2/11/03	hack	Bandai
2/20/03	Air Force Delta 3	Konami
3/17/03	Auto Modelista	Capcom
3/4/03	Batman: Dark Tomorrow	Konami
1/21/03	Battle Engine Aquila	Infogrames
2/19/03	BattleBots	THQ
1/28/03	Black & Brused	Majesco
3/3/03	Bombberman Kart	Konami
2/18/03	Breath of Fire: Dragon Quarter	Capcom
2/19/03	Cobra 6: Off Road Adventure	Ubisoft
3/1/03	Chessmaster	Ubisoft
2/18/03	Chop Lifter: Search and Rescue	Capcom
3/18/03	City Race	Ubi Soft
3/4/03	Colin McRae Rally 3	Infogrames
2/10/03	Cloud Cloud 2	Sony
3/28/03	Devil May Cry 2	Capcom

## VEXX

■ **FORMAT** PLAYSTATION 2, XBOX, GAMECUBE ■ **STYLE 1** TO 4-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 11



Technically, Vexx is an action/platform game at heart, but it's kind of the bad seed in the group - the kid in school who would cut class to have a cigarette in the bathroom. The nature of the game is dark and violent. The gameplay further separates Vexx from the normality of the action/platform genre. Jumping from ledge to ledge is an integral part of the game, but it's executed with a lightning-quick vigilance. Vexx can soar into the air, flip up into double jump, and then kick over and rise upward into a triple jump.

1/14/03	Disaster Report	Agetec
3/11/03	Dragon's Lair 3D	Encore Software
3/11/03	Duke Nukem	Take 2
1/15/03	Dynasty Warriors 3 Xtreme Legends	Koei
3/17/03	Dynasty Warriors 4	Koei
2/11/03	Elder Scrolls Adventures	Bethesda Softworks
1/14/03	EverQuest Online Adventures	Sony Online
3/3/03	Falcone: Into the Maelstrom	Titus
3/17/03	Fair Fight 3	Edios
1/21/03	Fisherman's Challenge	Midway
2/3/03	Freaky Flyers	Konami
1/14/03	Frogger Beyond	Konami
1/21/03	Gateway, The	Sony
3/10/03	Gladius	LucasArts
3/18/03	Gunfighter 2: Return of Jesse James	Ubi Soft
3/2/03	High Heat Baseball 2004	3DO
3/17/03	Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb	Motocx
2/18/03	Jane's Air Force	Capcom
3/18/03	Jeopardy	Infogrames
1/22/03	Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventure	Capcom
2/4/03	Jungle Book: Rhythm 'n' Grow	Ubi Soft
3/4/03	Kengo 2	Ubi Soft
3/11/03	Mafia	Take 2
2/3/03	Mallory	Vivendi Universal
2/10/03	Microchampions	Titus
2/11/03	Midnight Club II	Take 2
2/25/03	MotoGP 3	Namco
3/3/03	Motocx	Konami
2/10/03	My Street	Sony
3/3/03	NBA Ballers	Midway
2/11/03	Pnde FC	THQ
2/10/03	Primal	Sony
2/18/03	PTO 4	Koei
3/4/03	Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc	Ubi Soft
3/17/03	Red Dead Revolver	Capcom
2/25/03	Return to Castle Wolfenstein	Acclaim
3/18/03	Risk	Infogrames
3/3/03	Robocop	Titus
3/17/03	RTX Red Rock	LucasArts
2/14/03	Seek and Destroy	SVG
3/4/03	Shaun Murray's Pro Wakeboarder	Acclaim
1/14/03	Sims, The	Electronic Arts
3/3/03	Sims Cars	MicroSD
2/10/03	Tankers	Titus
3/11/03	Tenchu 3: Wrath of Heaven	Atreion3D
3/4/03	Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Raven	Ubi Soft
3/15/03	Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell	Ubi Soft
3/4/03	Tom Clancy's Sum of All Fears	Ubi Soft
2/25/03	Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness	Edios
2/17/03	Toon Shade Racing	THQ
2/10/03	Vexx	Acclaim
1/14/03	War of the Monsters	Sony
3/25/03	Wheel of Fortune	Infogrames
2/10/03	World Tour Soccer 2003	Sony
2/25/03	Xenosaga	Capcom
3/4/03	XIII	Ubi Soft
2/18/03	Yu-Gi-Oh! The Duelist of the Roses	Konami
3/11/03	Zone of the Enders: 2nd Runner	Konami

Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor
<b>PLAYSTATION</b>		
2/18/03	Big Strike Bowling	Take 2
2/17/03	Black & White	Bethesda Softworks
2/4/03	Bratz	Ubi Soft

Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor
<b>GAMECUBE</b>		
2/3/03	Army Men: Air Combat	3DO
3/2/03	Army Men: Sarge's War	3DO
3/4/03	Batman: Dark Tomorrow	THQ
3/4/03	BattleBots	Infogrames

1/28/03	Black & Brused	Majesco
3/18/03	City Racer	Ubi Soft
2/18/03	Conflict: Desert Storm	Take 2
2/3/03	Cube Robots for Everyone: Showdown	3DO
1/4/03	Disney Sports Basketball	Konami
12/30/02	Dragon's Lair 3D	Encore Software
3/11/03	Enclave	Vivendi Universal
2/25/03	Evolution Snowboarding	Konami
5/10/03	Gladius	LucasArts
3/3/03	Haven: Call of the King	Midway
3/3/03	High Heat Baseball 2004	3DO
12/24/02	Jimmy Neutron Boy Genius	THQ
3/1/03	Legend of Zelda, The	Nintendo
2/3/03	Microchampions	Infogrames
3/4/03	NBA Ballers	Midway
12/17/02	NCAA College Basketball 2K3	Sega
1/1/03	Rally Fuzion: Race of Champions	Acclaim
3/4/03	Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc	Ubi Soft
1/7/03	Resident Evil 3	Capcom
1/7/03	Resident Evil 3	Capcom
1/28/03	Risk	Infogrames
3/17/03	RTX Red Rock	LucasArts
3/4/03	Shaun Murray's Pro Wakeboarder	Acclaim
1/28/03	Siles of Arcadia Legends	Sega
2/23/02	SpongBob SquarePants, R.F.D.	THQ
3/3/03	Tankers	Titus
1/28/03	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Ubi Soft
3/4/03	Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Raven Shield	Ubi Soft
2/18/03	Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell	Ubi Soft
3/4/03	Top Angler II	Capcom
2/11/03	Vexx	Acclaim
1/31/03	Wario World	Nintendo
3/4/03	XIII	Ubi Soft

Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor
<b>XBOX</b>		
3/4/03	Batman Dark Tomorrow	Konami
1/21/03	Battle Engine Aquila	Infogrames
2/3/03	Brute Force	Microsoft
3/4/03	Chessmaster	Ubi Soft
3/4/03	Colin McRae Rally 3	Infogrames
12/17/02	Crimson Sea	Koei
1/2/03	Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge	Microsoft
1/1/03	David Beckham Soccer	3DO
1/14/03	Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball	Tecmo
2/3/03	Dino Crisis 3	Capcom
2/3/03	Dromed	Metro3D
3/3/03	Falcone: Into the Maelstrom	Titus
3/3/03	Fighter X	Konami
3/4/03	File Tennis Champions	Capcom
2/3/03	Frisky Flyers	Midway
3/17/03	Fuei	Dreamcatcher
5/10/03	Gladius	LucasArts
3/3/03	Haven: Call of the King	3DO
3/3/03	High Heat Baseball 2004	3DO
2/17/03	Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb	LucasArts
1/2/03	Kung Fu Chaos	Microsoft
3/18/03	Lamborghini	Majesco
2/3/03	Melice	Vivendi Universal
2/11/03	Meloni vs. Capcom 2	Capcom
3/3/03	Mercedes Benz World Racing	TDK Mediasoft
3/11/03	Microchampions	Infogrames
3/3/03	Midtown Madness 3	Microsoft
3/3/03	Motocx	Capcom
12/26/02	Motocx: Road World Challenge	Capcom
2/25/03	Murakumo	Ubi Soft
3/3/03	NBA Ballers	Midway
3/3/03	Ninja Gaiden	Tecmo
3/4/03	Operator Flashpoint	Infogrames

## NINJA GAIDEN

■ **FORMAT** XBOX ■ **STYLE 1**-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** TECMO ■ **RELEASE** MARCH 3



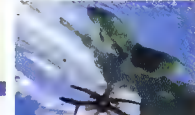
Ninja Gaiden's main man has more moves than Patrick Swayze and Kevin Bacon put together. He'll flip like a burger on a griddle before launching his katana in your throat. He'll bounce off walls like a kid after a pack of Pixie sticks, and toss shurikens (throwing stars) faster than Brett Favre throws interceptions. Sometimes, Ryu resembles a firearm-less Dante from Devil May Cry, with plenty of air juggles. Other times, he's more like the one-on-one fighting game star he portrays in DOA 3.

1/14/03	Parazer Dragon Orta	Sega
2/18/03	Pro Race	Infogrames
3/4/03	Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc	Ubi Soft
3/25/03	Return to Castle Wolfenstein	Acclaim
3/3/03	Robocop	Titus
3/4/03	Sea Dogs II	Bethesda Softworks
3/3/03	Sergeant Cruise	Acclaim
3/4/03	Shaun Murray's Pro Wakeboarder	Acclaim
3/4/03	Sniper	Capcom
1/15/03	Steve	Metro3D
2/17/03	Star Wars Knights of Old Republic	LucasArts
2/18/03	Star Wars Jedi: The Academy of Time	Take 2
3/3/03	Suldoon III	Konami
3/4/03	Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Raven Shield	Ubi Soft
3/3/03	Top Angler II	Capcom
3/3/03	Top Angler III	Titus
1/15/03	Unseen, The	Microsoft
2/11/03	Vexx	Acclaim
3/4/03	XIII	Ubi Soft

Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor
<b>PC</b>		
1/20/03	1503 A.D. The New World	Electronic Arts
1/27/03	1914. The Great War	JoWood
1/15/03	Airport Tycoon II	Global Star Software
2/3/03	American Conquest	CD Projekt
1/15/03	American Conquest	JoWood
1/15/03	Austin Powers Pinball	Global Star Software
1/14/03	Battlefield 1942 Southern Front	Electronic Arts
2/25/03	BloodRayne	Majesco
1/1/03	Call of Cthulu	Fishark Interactive
2/18/03	Castles & Catapults	Infogrames
1/27/03	Cold Zero	JoWood
1/27/03	Command & Conquer: Generals	Electronic Arts
3/4/03	Crusaders Kings	Strategy First
2/18/03	Delta Force: Black Hawk Down	Electronic Arts
3/3/03	Delta Force: Black Hawk Down	Electronic Arts
2/25/03	Devil May Cry	Capcom
2/25/03	Dragon's Lair II: Time Warp	Digital Leisure
3/11/03	Enclave	Vivendi Universal
3/3/03	Eye Online	Vivendi Universal

## CRIMSON SKIES: HIGH ROAD TO REVENGE

■ **FORMAT** XBOX ■ **STYLE 1** TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **RELEASE** JANUARY 2



Combining the thrilling aspects of low-altitude air combat with the high-octane feel of an action movie, players who pop in *Crimson Skies* are in for an aerobic treat. As the air pirate Nathan Zachary, gamers will launch themselves headlong into 1930s America as Nathan soars the land to find those who murdered his best friend. Featuring an enormous world - in which you can fly anywhere you can see - CS will allow you to interact with your environment in unique and interesting ways. Players can trigger landslides on some levels, collapse water towers and bridges on others and engage in a bunch of other destructive behavior that will likely dazzle and delight those who just can't get enough of airborne mayhem.

2/4/03	Fire Department	Infogrames
1/27/03	Godie	JoWood
3/25/03	Harpoon IV	Ubi Soft
1/22/03	Highland Warriors	Data Becker
2/4/03	Il-2 Shurmovik: Forgotten Battles	Ubi Soft
1/9/03	Impossible Creatures	Microsoft
2/17/03	Indiana Jones & the Emperor's Tomb	LucasArts
3/14/03	Inquisition	Strategy First
1/28/03	Jurassic Park: Operation Genesis	Vivendi Universal
3/11/03	Leon Heart	Vivendi Universal
3/11/03	Look On Modern Air Combat	Ubi Soft
1/1/03	Lords of the Realm III	Vivendi Universal
2/4/03	NASCAR Racing 2003 Season	Vivendi Universal
12/24/02	Operation Steel Tide	Infogrames
12/20/02	Pacific Gunner	Infogrames
3/4/03	Pianissimo	Warner Interactive
2/17/03	Practitioners	Edios
2/25/03	Project 032: Covenant Strike	Codemasters
3/4/03	Project 032: Covenant Strike	Electronic Arts
3/3/03	Return to Castle Wolfenstein	Acclaim
12/16/02	Riddle of the Sphinx II: Omega Stone	Dreamcatcher
2/3/03	Rise of Nations	Microsoft
3/21/03	Sargus Sam Gold	Bethesda Softworks
2/3/03	Shadowne	Ubi Soft
1/14/03	Sim City 4	Electronic Arts
1/17/02	Sims Online	Electronic Arts
2/26/03	Space Ace	Digital Leisure
3/18/03	Star Trek: Elite Force 2	Activision
3/17/03	Star Wars: Battle Galaxies	LucasArts
1/15/03	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Gold Pack	Ubi Soft
1/21/03	Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell	Ubi Soft
2/17/03	Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness	Edios
2/1/03	Tren 2 0	Micro 3D
2/11/03	Ultima Online: Age of Shadows	Electronic Arts
1/21/03	Unreal II: The Awakening	Infogrames
2/4/03	Wildtong	Take 2
2/1/03	World of Warcraft	Digital Leisure
2/11/03	World Of Outlaws Sprint Car Racing 2	Infogrames

## GAME BOY ADVANCE

1/2/03	Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance	Electro Source
2/3/03	Bratz	Ubi Soft
1/7/03	Crash Bandicoot 2: N-Tranced	Vivendi Universal
1/2/03	Creatures	SVG
1/14/03	Daredevil	Encore Software
2/14/03	Digimon Battle Spirit	Bandai
12/17/02	Dora the Explorer: Search for Pirate	Take 2
1/15/03	High Heat Baseball 2004	3DO
2/11/03	Jungle Book	Ubi Soft
1/2/03	Medabots: Metabee Gold	SVG
1/2/03	Medabots: Rokusho Silver	SVG
2/18/03	Mega Man and Bass	Capcom
3/11/03	Ninja Soldier	Konami
3/3/03	Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc	Ubi Soft
2/18/03	Samurai Jack: The Amulet of Time	Electronic Arts
1/2/03	Sim City	Electronic Source
2/4/03	Super Puzzle Fighter II	Capcom
2/18/03	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Ubi Soft
1/2/03	Wizardry: The Summoning	SVG
1/15/03	Woody Woodpecker: Crazy G.A.S.	Konami
3/4/03	Worms Blast	Ubi Soft
2/18/03	Yu-Gi-Oh! Dungeon Dice Monsters	Konami



# PLAY TO PERFECTION

## Tom Clancy's **SPLINTER CELL**

*This walkthrough details how to complete each objective of each mission. Since new objectives sometimes appear during missions, you'll find that it is easier to follow the guide starting at the beginning of a mission. Also, if there's one thing you shouldn't forget throughout your covert exploits, it is to hide bodies well. Very well. Good luck!*

### MISSION 1

#### MEET THE CONTACT



Go right towards the ladder. If the guard spots you, just stop in some shadows and you'll be fine. Get on the ladder and enter the trap door. Climb up the pipe and ride the zip line. Follow the woman's instructions through the fire. Meet your contact and then you'll come to a smoky room; quickly turn on night vision and shoot out the glass above. Enter the door to the right.

#### BLAUSTEIN'S BLACK BOX



Just proceed quietly over the wooden planks. Go to the end and jump the gap. Kill the guards after the guy outside finishes his phone conversation. Walk to the end of the house to the bedroom. Inspect the picture of the lake. Check your notes to open the door in the bedroom. Turn left and use the zip line from the balcony. Grab the ropes of the elevator and slide down.

#### FIND GURGENIDZE'S DEAD DROP



Pick the lock and proceed through the hall. Walk slowly down the stairs. You'll encounter two men talking about an "assault." Pop both in the head when the guard on the catwalk isn't looking. Quickly grab the bodies and carry them into the shadows. Get the Dead Drop from the body on the bench. Just sneak past the above guard, and turn left down the alley. Wait for the guard on the ground level to disappear. Enter the cove on the right. Wait for the guard on the ground to pass. When he returns, wait for him to pass again, but this time, get him with a headshot. Go up the stairs. Watch out for the guard in the far window on the second floor. Walk slowly to the gate that is to the right of this building. At the gate, turn right and walk to the corner. Duck and enter this hidden path. Check the computer.

#### GET INTO POLICE PRECINCT



Leave, but beware of the patrolling guard that has appeared. Kill him quietly, or just sneak. Go through the gate; the guy on the ground is a civilian, and the one just above him is a guard. Sneak past both; but if he spots you, guards will come. Proceed to the left to the end. You will encounter another guard. Sneak up and pop him in the head. Enter the gate to the veranda-like area. Go to the dumpster to the left and get on top. Kick off the wall on the left and climb over the wall. Go downstairs and enter the code.

#### LOCATE AGENT BLAUSTEIN



A guard will walk away from you. Follow him closely, but don't alert him. When he's in the office, sneak towards the open window quietly and off him before he trips the alarm. Get the data stick from the computer in the office. You will encounter another guy shortly after; knock him out. Pick the lock on the door on the left. Go to the next room and get another data stick. This room leads to the morgue, which houses a security camera. Go behind the plastic curtain to the right and face forward; the camera is to the right on the ceiling. Shoot it out. You'll find Blaustein here, unfortunately.

#### ACCESS SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM



You'll head up some steel stairs and enter a door. Be quiet here, as there are two guards ready to take you out. Wait like 20 seconds so the one guard leaves. Now, make a slight sound near the office to get this guard's attention; run next to the door you entered and duck. When he comes around the corner, hit him on the head. Go left through the steel bars and up the stairs, but be quiet. Sneak up to the first guard at the desk on the left. Put him in a chokehold and take him down the stairs, where you should knock him out. Do the same to the second guard. Check the computers. Go through the door at the end on the right. Go in quietly and pop the guard in the head. Enter the rooms on the right and you'll find some useful items. Go downstairs and head to the double doors.

### MISSION 2

#### INFILTRATE THE EAST WING (Don't Trip Alarms)

Go to the little tin chimney on the roof and rappel down the wall. Enter the open window. Kill the guard that comes in between the bookcases before he leaves. If he goes to the open part of the room, a camera will detect the kill. Now, shoot out the camera on the right side of the wall.

#### INTERROGATE GRINKO'S DRIVER



Go in between the bookcases, duck and shoot out the camera from here. Turn out the light, turn on night vision, and draw the guard outside the door and down the hallway into the room. Position yourself across from the door and duck. When he enters, blast away. Enter the hallway. Sneak and kill the guy out here. Go to the last door on the right; open it but don't enter. There's



a camera right above the doorway. Shoot it out. Return to the hall and enter the other door on the right. First go upstairs for the Medical Kit, and then head downstairs. Stand on the middle of the second staircase and destroy the camera. Begin descending and do the same thing again. Go through the door and hit the camera on the right wall. Once you turn right and encounter the car, proceed slowly. Take out the camera ahead, which is to the right of the car. Quickly retreat or the guard will be alerted. Wait for him to disappear, and follow quietly. Turn on night vision and wait for him to begin urinating. Now grab and interrogate him. Knock him out.

### INFILTRATE THE SOUTH WING



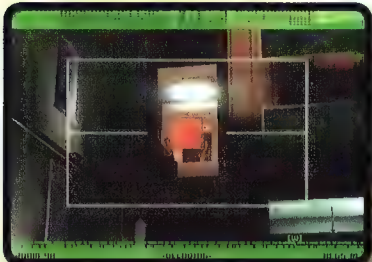
Head upstairs and turn left when you enter the hallway. Go into the office with the two computers and go through the door to the outside. On the right is a pipe; jump on the rail of the balcony and then to the pole above. Shimmy around to the open window. Fall and duck on the window. Fall while you're ducking and hide behind the material in front of you.

### DEACTIVATE THE LASER GRID



Wait for the guard to leave, grab a bottle on the shelf to the right, and then chuck it into the freezer. One guy will go to the freezer; let him. The other one will stop in the middle. Knock him out and then the one in the freezer. Enter the door. Wait at the door in the dark with your night vision on. Shoot the enemy that comes in. Go downstairs. On the second level will be one guard; grab him, take him upstairs, and then knock him on the head. Go a quarter of the way down the stairs on the left of the first and second level. Shoot the guard near the computers in the head. Maneuver down the opposite staircase and sneak up on the guard at the door. Use the computer to deactivate the grid.

### LASER-MIC THE GLASS ELEVATOR



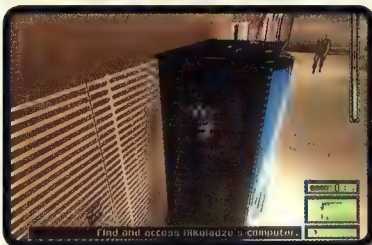
Wait by the staircase on the left, opposite the one the colonel descends. He will go to the computer. When he does, immediately sneak behind him and grab him. Place his eyes on the scanner. Destroy the camera in the next doorway. It can't see you if you're all the way against the wall. Slowly creep left. When half of it appears, shoot it. Laser-mic the elevator.

### INFILTRATE THE NORTH WING



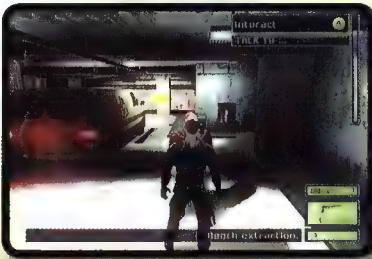
Go across the courtyard on the left side. You can try to take out the three guards if you like, but you can sneak past them and climb the latticework next to the door without disturbance.

### ACCESS NIKOLADZE'S COMPUTER



Two enemies will appear from the elevator. Kill them quickly. Go up to the top floor. Hit the camera and hide behind the soda machine facing the camera. When the guard walks by, knock him out. Now enter the door next to the elevator and use the computer. Jump on the desk and get up in the airshaft. There are two paths to take. At the end, there is a grate; go through the open one. Shoot the camera, or sneak past it. At the end of the hall, you'll turn left and encounter a room with three enemies. Make some noise to draw two of them out. Crouch in the corner in the dark so that you're facing the enemies. When one returns to the room, shoot the remaining enemy in the head. Check the computers and return to the area near the camera. Enter the door on the right. Get the items and climb the ladder to the roof. On the edge will be a small metal chimney. Use it to descend the side of the building. Shoot out the window, making sure that you're just above the window. When the guard comes and looks out the left or right windows, shoot him in the head. Enter the room, turn off the lights, and check the computer. When the guards come, make sure you're in a corner. Throw a grenade near the entrance and shoot the rest.

### REACH EXTRACTION



Leave the room. Go left and then turn right. Enter the previously locked door and descend the stairs. Go outside and be prepared to kill two guards that approach from behind. Enter the elevator and fall towards the middle pole; you should grab it. Slide to the bottom and jump. Meet your contact where you interrogated the driver.

## MISSION 3

### INFILTRATE THE OIL REFINERY

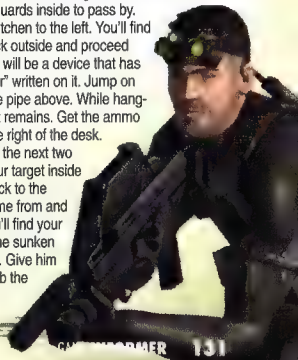


Follow the path. Fall to the right, grabbing the edge of the pipe you're walking on to pass the obstruction. After the save, look to the right and slide down the wire. Crawl under the large red pipe and then climb the small silver pipe. Get inside the hole in the large red pipe.

### TRAIL THE MERCENARY TECHNICIAN



Once you're outside, don't walk forward too fast; a guard will spot you. Wait a few seconds and they'll pass by on your left. Kill the guard that remains patrolling on the catwalk above. Climb the steel beam on the left (which is in front of you). When you can proceed no longer, fall to the left and hang. Get to the other side of the catwalk and jump the railing. Head upstairs. Let the guards walk ahead. You'll encounter one; kill him, but let the second one go ahead untouched. Go around the corner and wait until the people walk in the door. Kill the two guards stationed in front. Wait for the guards inside to pass by. Enter and go to the kitchen to the left. You'll find a Medical Kit. Go back outside and proceed ahead. On your right will be a device that has "Domestic Cold Water" written on it. Jump on this and then grab the pipe above. While hanging, kill the guard that remains. Get the ammo on the structure to the right of the desk. Proceed upstairs. Kill the next two guards and follow your target inside the room. Now go back to the staircase you just came from and head downstairs. You'll find your guy crouching near the sunken boat at the beginning. Give him a swift elbow and grab the briefcase.





## MISSION 4

RETRIEVE THE 5C - 20K



Head towards the large gate on the left, following the periphery of the wall. Take it around, slowly approaching the guards near the van. You'll encounter a fence. Climb over it through the hole in the barbwire. Jump off of the generator to the vent in the building. Jump on the catwalk and wait for the guard to leave. Climb over the fence and knock out the guard when he returns. At the end of the hall there's a camera. Use the covers in the wall on the left to sneak past it. Now you'll go upstairs and encounter two guards. Before you do, make a little noise to bring the first guard down. When he inspects the noise, knock him out. The other guard should come. Just wait under the staircase and knock him out too. You'll encounter another long hallway. Take the first door on the right. Get the kit and check the computer on the table. Go through the next door. Wait until the guard in the window in the room opposite of you leaves. Sneak through the metal detector on the right. Wait for the guard talking on the phone to use the elevator, and then distract the guard standing next to the elevator. He'll eventually go into the room with metal detectors. When he does, take the elevator down. In the next hall, wait for the guard to pass and the office person to enter the copy room on the left. Knock the office worker out and enter the room he came from. Check the computer. Wait in the dark at the fork in the hallway. Knock the guard out when he walks by. Go left and enter Security Station A. Quietly knock out the guard here, but be sure the guard patrolling in the hallway isn't walking past. A worker will come shortly, so be out in the hall waiting for him. Now go get the guard patrolling the hall; stay in the shadows and you should have no problems. Return to the security room to get the items and check the computers. Now return to the fork in the hallway. Enter the last door on the left and grab the Lock Pick. Enter the room next to the soda machines. The code is 7687. Enter the door in stealth and wait for the one guard to pass by. Creep up to the guy on the left and knock him out. Then quietly knock out the guard at the far end of the room. Check the computer and get the code from the data stick. It is 110598. Proceed slowly through the door. Take out the two workers; wait for the first worker to get close to the corner near the stairs. He'll turn his back, at which point you should grab him and knock him out. KO the next worker. Go upstairs and get the 5C - 20K from the shelf.

ACCESS THE CIA CENTRAL SERVER



Take out the guy at the soda machine and follow the sign to the server room. Wait for the guard in the hall to leave, and sneak up on the guard to the right. Wait in the shadows for the guard in the hall to come, and then knock him out too. Hide these bodies where you found the 5C - 20K. Proceed through the automatic double doors into the server room. Put in 2019 in the keypad and proceed slowly inside. Go to the middle of the room. Quickly run down the stairs a little and then back up into the shadows. This will alert the guard. When he comes, use the Sticky Shockers on him. Do the same to the guard crouching in the next room. Now access the computer.

TAP DOUGHERTY'S COMPUTER



Go through the door and head upstairs. Enter the office and take out the two workers in stealth; doing this is not necessary, though. Go down the hall and use Sticky Shockers to take out the guard in the window. Enter the next door, but watch out for the cameras on the ceiling in the center of the room. You can't shoot them, so watch them carefully to pass them. Also, watch out for the guard at the stairs. Use the partitions and pillars to avoid detection. When it is safe, run to the other side to get to the next hallway. When you turn the corner, quickly take out the worker in the room on the left. Now go down the stairs; sneak past the camera and enter the only door here. The code is 110700. Be quiet, or the camera will catch you! Quietly enter the door, and take out the guard in the room on the left. Enter the next room and head into the elevator. Sneak behind the movie curtain and the desks to get through the next room. Go around and enter the door on the right. There will be two offices in the next area. The office on the left is Dougherty's.

KIDNAP MITCHELL DOUGHERTY AND TAKE HIM TO THE RENDEZVOUS



Carefully proceed down the hall to the right. There is a camera and a guard at the end. Sticky Shock the guard and carefully pass the camera. If you sit in the corner, the man at the soda machine (Dougherty) won't see you. When he walks away and the camera is pointing in the other direction, follow Dougherty. Knock him out, duck, pick up his body, and creep by the two guards watching TV, and the worker getting coffee. Go to the double doors and enter 0614 as your code. Enter the door on the left marked UFO. Check the computer. Enter the next door. The code is 020781. Now go back out to the hall and enter the glass smoking room. Move around a little so you alert the guard outside. When he comes in, quickly shoot him with a Sticky Shocker. Go outside and head to the left through the gate. Descend the stairs.

INCAPACITATE THE CIA SECURITY

Go in the building, down the stairs, drop the body, and take out the guards. Make a little noise near the doorway. A guard will come. Crouch in the corner next to the staircase and take him out. Use one Ring Airfoil Round when he's completely in the room, then quickly run up to him as he's stunned and give him an elbow. Do the same thing with the second guard. If you run up the staircase a little, you'll alert the second guard. Drag their bodies under the staircase. Go outside, crouch and turn left so that you're looking down the stairs. A guard will come in front of you. Use two Airfoil Rounds on him, grab Dougherty, and head towards the truck. When you encounter the second staircase, a guard will come up. Just stand at a distance and Sticky Shock him when you have a shot. Go down the staircase and drop Dougherty's body near the last dumpster on the left. Sneak up and Sticky Shock the one guard near the truck standing in between the two truck drivers. Bring Dougherty's body to the truck.

## MISSION 5

INFILTRATE KALINATEK



Take out the two guards. Just wait for one to patrol the back area. Enter the office and get the Medical Kit. Pass through the door next to the office. Go up the stairs. Before you emerge from the door, let the two finish talking. When the guard on the left leaves, grab the guy on the right, drag him into the staircase area, and knock him out. Take out the next guards, which might be tough. If you're spotted, go down the first staircase and break out your sniper. Zoom in with your scope from this position and you should be able to pick both off. When you're done, climb through the opening on the right side of the wall. Jump to the set of hanging boxes and climb across the length of the crane's arm. When you fall to the next structure, turn around and jump to the building. Walk over to the small chimney and rappel the wall. Once you're on the glass roof, go to the end and shoot a hole through one pane. Fall in. Kill the guard through the automatic doors and enter.

DISARM THE BOMB



Go through the office. When you find a dark room, enter the vent that is broken open. After the cutscenes take out the two guards in the hall. The narrow path on the right has a Medical Kit. It's



at the end on the wall. Enter the elevator. Stay in the elevator, creeping out of the opening slowly without emerging completely. When the lights come on and fighting ensues, get back in the elevator. Snipe at the enemies from in here. Continue down the hall and you'll encounter two more guards. Without getting spotted, take these two out sniper style. Go into the burning room to the two hostages, but watch out for the wall mines. Approach the mines slowly and hit A as soon as the light blinks green. Run down the hall to the left and input the code, 33575. Just before the fire, there's a door on the right, which is trapped by mines. Run into the room quickly; just haul ass through all of the subsequent rooms since all of them are booby-trapped. When you get to the hall, you'll encounter the Archives room, which is locked. Pick it and enter. Climb the file cabinet and defuse the bomb on the other side.

### RESTORE POWER TO THE FIRE DOOR CIRCUIT



Leave the bomb room and head left. There will be two guards. Snipe the one at the base of the stairs from a distance. When the other guard emerges, quickly nail him too. Go behind the auditorium for a cutscene. Quickly set wall mines at the top of the stairs for a few easy kills. Back off a bit and open fire to get the rest of the scum. Go downstairs and get the items off of the table. Flip the switch on the wall.

### OPEN THE FIRE DOORS SURROUNDING IVAN



When you come upstairs there will be an enemy in the upper seating. Snipe him before he can do any damage. Go up the staircase on the right and enter 1250 as your code. Kill the two enemies with your rifle who are in the room straight ahead on the second floor. Talk to the fallen NPC in the second room on the left. Pick him up and drop him off at the infirmary. Kill the guard that comes to the infirmary entrance and talk to the fallen NPC again. Turn the corner and walk slowly past the enemy in the room on the left. Take him out with a headshot and check the computer to open the fire doors.

### FIND IVAN BEFORE THE RUSSIANS AND TAKE HIS ENCRYPTION KEY

Proceed through the opened door. Go up the stairs and open the door. Snipe the two enemies in the next room. Head into the bathroom and get into the vent. Kill the guard harassing Ivan. Talk to Ivan. Leave him. Take the elevator up.

### GO TO EXTRACTION



There will be three guards ready to attack you when you get off the elevator. Shoot them quickly. Go to the right side towards the guards; proceed to the last room. Get on the crates and get on top of the wall to the right. Once you get to the other side, fall and proceed. You'll encounter two more enemies. Quickly off them. The next room you'll find three more guards. Kill them. You'll go up some stairs and encounter three more guards. Go up a second set of stairs and turn left. Kill some more guards in a blue corridor. Turn the corner and you'll see two doorways. Go in the second one and haul ass. Some mines will soon explode. Kill another guard and you'll be outside. Kill a few more guards and you'll come to a cutscene. Now snipe the two enemies straight ahead and to the right of the opening. The three of them are in the red catwalks. When they're dead, ascend the catwalks up to the chopper.

## MISSION 6

### RENDEZVOUS WITH THE AGENCY CONTACT



Turn right down the little alley and climb over the wall. Maneuver down this alley and quietly grab the guard with his back turned and knock him out. Make a little noise to attract the other guard. Either sneak up on him or shoot him with Sticky Shocks. Turn left and enter the building with the fire. Go up the ladder. Proceed quietly so that the guards on the streets cannot hear you. At the end of the catwalk, jump to the rope above. Quietly move across the rope when all three enemies have their backs to you. Walk along the ledge of the building and head down the ladder. When the guards converge at the ladder and then leave, quietly make your move to the street. Go behind the jeep and follow the wall to the corner. Hug the corner and let the guard in front of you pass. When he does, proceed ahead. Go to the right and hide in the junk. Wait for the two guards to pass by. Now enter the hole in the black fence across your way. Enter the sewer. At the first junction, turn left. Proceed straight, letting the guards go ahead of you. When they stop for the first time, wait for them to stop talking and move on. One will turn down a corridor to the right. Take him out quietly. The other two will probably be alerted. Just wait in a dark area and Sticky Shock them as they approach. When you emerge from the sewer, wait for the guard on the left to walk away. Quietly get out and grab the other guard. Take him around the corner and knock him out. Wait for the other guard to return. When he turns his back, shoot him with an Airfoil Round, which should be followed up with an elbow. Climb the catwalk on the left. Enter the building through the broken window. Climb the pole and you'll find your contact at the top.

### FOLLOW THE TRUCK INTO THE EMBASSY



Rappel down the wall. Enter the structure on the right and stand against the far wall. When the guard enters, knock him out. Grab his satchel, and quietly proceed ahead. Just before you enter the light ahead, go to the right next to the telephone pole. Move back into the darkness next to the red bars and wait for another guard to come. Use an Airfoil Round to KO him. Be sure to hide the body. Run across the street to the catwalk. Climb it. Enter the building through the busted window. You'll pass some boarded windows on your right, and then turn a corner. Be quiet; there will be a guard standing in the doorway. Sneak up and grab him. Take him into the house and bop him on the head. Go outside, quietly use the wire to get to the other buildings. Hop to the awning of the building next to you. Fall to the ground when the guards to the left and right aren't looking. Go down the first alley on the left, but be sure the guard at the end of this alley is climbing the ladder. Now, quietly proceed on so as not to alert the guard ahead of you. Sneak up on him and knock him out. If you have any Airfoil rounds, use them here. When the guard walks away, quietly move to the area behind the van. Move to the area behind the dumpster. Now shimmy along the wall in the darkness to the right. Wait at the edge. When the guard patrolling the van area leaves, turn the corner, shimmying along the wall in the darkness. Eventually, you'll want to sneak up to the guard that stands in front of the barricade and knock him out. Drag him to the dark corner on the right. The dumpster guard will soon appear, so wait. When he leaves, quickly run over to the wall across the street. Crouch and sneak past the camera and enter the gate.

### COLLECT INTELLIGENCE WITH THE LASER-MIC AND LASER-MIC HIS CAR



Run to the trailer while crouched, and go under it. Make sure that the guard on the other side of the trailer is actually behind it; otherwise he'll spot you quickly. When he's facing the loading dock, emerge from the front and go to the area underneath the trailer across from you. Get in front of the trailer's supports and up against the wall. You'll want to shimmy along the wall until you get to the bridge. Be very careful of the rottweiler. The animal and its master will move in a counterclockwise motion. When the guard starts moving from 6 o'clock to 1 o'clock, make your move. Remain crouched and haul ass towards the bridge. Get under it for a minute to make sure that the dog has stopped pursuing. Now cross the water and pass the gazebo. Cross the water again and pass through the opening on the right. Creep toward the light, but stay in the dark. Aim the recorder at the left most window on the second floor.



RENDEZVOUS WITH COEN



Go to the left towards the red light, using the shadows to move stealthily. When the guard leaves, move past the glass double doors to the other side of the building, which is dark. Now creep along the left side of the wall to the area behind the gate office. On the wall you'll see a pipe; use it to climb over the wall. Your contact will be waiting here.

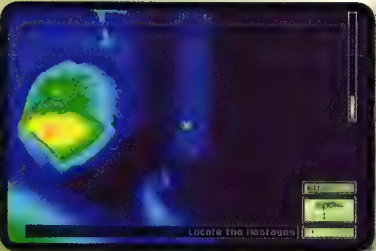
MISSION 7

DESTROY THE ANTENNA BROADCAST ABILITY



You can sneak past these three guards at the beginning, but killing them is just as effective. Hop the fence on the right. A guard will walk in the small building. Follow him in and take him out quietly. Get the items and check the computer. Head back outside. Use the thermal goggles here, since there are land mines in the field. The route to the right is impossible, so you have to go around to the left. Just be sure to move when the light isn't shining. Get to the back left corner of the area. There will be a silver door on the left, which has a mine in front of it. Now pass this door to the opening directly across from you. Get the Medical Kit. Get on the dumpster and jump off of the wall on the right to the opening directly above you. Do not step on the metal roof in the next section. Travel on the beams to the other side. Also, do not move when the lights are on; and don't let your shadow get cast on the billboard. Stand just before the beginning of the billboard. When it goes dark, jump over the window to the other ledge. Follow the wooden planks to the platform. At the end, jump to grab the rope. Move yourself over to the stable ledge. If you get caught, the guards will come up. If they don't hit the alarm, kill them. But if they do, start over. When you're done, climb the fence to get to the antenna. Hit the switch.

LOCATE THE HOSTAGES (BEFORE THE EXECUTIONERS)



Run across the roof and go up the stairs. Go just beyond the door into the shadows. Wait, draw your gun and kill the guard that emerges. Kill a second guard that emerges as well. Go through the door. Go down the stairs on the left. Behind the furthest barrel is a Wall Mine, so be careful and disable it. Get the goodies and check the computer. Go back upstairs and through the door. Go down the stairs and enter the door on the left. Kill the two guards below you and then use the steel beams above to get down. Fall to the lockers below and quickly kill the third guard that enters. Fall to the ground and get the Medical Kit. Check the computer and leave. Go through the double doors on the left. All of the doors will be impassable, except one. Ignore that enemy, and check the grates on the floor. Enter the open one. Climb the pipe and be quiet in the ceiling. When you get to the opening in the ceiling, throw the grenade between the three guards. Quickly fall and turn around. Kill the guard if he comes through the door; he might not. In the meat locker you'll encounter two guards. Kill them. After you pass some machinery, there will be a lot of smoke; in this smoke is an automatic turret. To pass it, jump on the last machine on your left just before it. If you jump over this machine, you can safely fall next to the turret and shut it off. There will be three more enemies just through a second set of plastic curtains. With your Thermal Goggles on, shoot them through the plastic, and you won't get hit. There will be another plastic doorway with a turret just on the other side. Kill the guard over there. Now get on the steel beam that goes through the doorway. This will allow you to pass the turret without injury. You'll come to a save point and then three more guards. Take them out by sniping them with the Thermal Goggles. In the back of this room, you'll find another open grate. Fall in. Get out and go down the stairs slowly. Kill the guard. Flip the switch on the wall and fall into the center groove. Go through the open passageway. Take the two guards out quietly. The passage to the right is where you need to go. There will be a guard patrolling this area too, so try and take him out quietly. In the last stall on the left, there will be a turret. Just run past it quickly and turn it off. Turn left when you leave the stalls. To your right will be some more stalls with two guards patrolling. Just shoot them in the head. Also there are turrets in some of these stalls. If you enter the first one on the left, there will be a crawl space in the back. Use this to shut off the first turret. Run past the last one. You'll encounter two more guards. Just hide in one of the semicircular indentations and let them pass. You'll turn a corner and encounter a large room on the right. There's some ammo on a metal shelf next to the third entrance. If you take the middle path to the turrets in this room, you can go right in between them safely. Deactivate the turrets.

PROTECT THE U.S. SOLDIERS AND CHINESE DIGNITARIES



Go to the American army officers on the right; set a Wall Mine in the stall that is to the left of the Americans. Go back out and activate the turrets but make sure the Disable function is off so that they will attack guards too. Get in the stall on the left and kill the two guards that come. Now go in between the turrets, kill the guard in the red beret that comes down the center path. Next launch a Smoke Grenade into the area where you planted the Wall Mine. Next, you must kill Grinko. Carefully make your way to the front silver barriers. Position yourself behind the one furthest on the left so that you can see the right-most entrance into this room. Go into sniper mode and wait for Grinko to enter. Immediately peace him out.

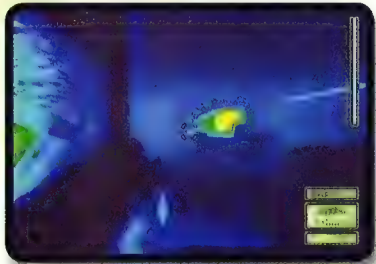
MISSION 8

INFILTRATE THE EMBASSY VIA THE UPPER FLOOR



Enter through the glass doors on the left. Take out the two guards eating, and then the cook. To the left of the cook in the corner is a ladder. When you get to the top, run into the other building, and then run back. Go into sniper mode and look through the doorway of the other building. Kill the guard that comes. When you emerge from this building, there's a pipe just behind you. Use it to get to the next building. Stealthily go across this building without getting seen by ground guards or other guards in the building. When you turn the corner, get on the ledge. It will take you to a pipe that leads to an entrance.

ACCESS FEIRONG'S DATA IN THE BASEMENT



Go into the closest room and enter the hole in the wall. Shimmy along the wall to the pipe. Continue along the next wall until the opening. Kill the guard standing there, and then launch a smoke grenade at the other two. Kill them while they're choking. Check the computer in the red room.

DESTROY THE TRUCKS CARRYING NUCLEAR WEAPONS



Go through the door and enter the first room on the right for some goodies. Make a little noise to alert the guard at the top of the stairs. Go down and wait for him under the staircase. Take him out with a Sticky Shocker. Shoot the other guard in the head. Take out the camera that is up and slightly to the left of



the first doorway. Go to the yellow hallway and enter the first door quietly. Sneak into the dark part of the room, make some noise to wake the guards, and throw a grenade between them. You should get at least one. Take out the other one with either another grenade or a head shot. Now wait until you hear the guards come. Run to the other door (the one you came from), and open it. When you see only one guard standing there, take him out with a Sticky Shocker. Run and stand in the doorway. Stop at the entranceway, since there's a turret on the right. Just stay close to the wall and go up the stairs to the left. You'll probably get shot at, which will alert the other guard. Go halfway up the second small set of stairs and wait for the guard to come. Hit him with a Sticky Shocker. Go around and turn off the turret on the ground. Get on the shelf just above this turret and go through the hole in the railing. Just disable the turret for a second. It will kill two guards. Now deactivate it and hide the bodies. Go back downstairs and activate and disable the turret; jump up to the other one and do the same thing. Just above the opening in the railing, there is a pipe. Use it to get to the other side. Wait for the one guard to enter; now sneak up to the guard, fall to the ground and hit him with an Airfoil round. Get behind him and grab him. Use the retinal scanner. Kill the guard inside and open the window on the left. In the next area there will be three guards and a dog. Take the dog out first and then the three guards. If you snipe, you shouldn't have any problems. Go through the door in the right corner of this area. Shoot the guard and the camera in the next area. Go through the door. You'll come to a warehouse; a guard will be at the other end, ready to put in his code for the keypad. Be quick. If you're too quick though, you'll alert him. Again, if you're fast, you can get to the door before it closes! Kill the guard quietly. There are two guards in this next warehouse. You can either kill them (the easy way), or sneak around using the right side of the wall. To get to the steel catwalk above, go to the boxes near the area of the second camera. There is a single box; use it to get up. Now run as fast as you can around the catwalk until you're facing the ends of the trucks. Hurry and shoot the fuel pump between them.

#### ACCESS FEIRONG'S COMPUTER



Shoot the guy in the back of the head, and then follow the other guard when he goes to resolve the situation. The code to unlock the door is 1456. The code to the next door is 1834. The third code is 7921. When the cutscene is over, just grab Feirong and move him towards the computer; choose Use Computer.

#### MEET COEN FOR OSPREY EXTRACTION



The path to the extraction is linear. Just go where the fire isn't. When you get to the steel staircase, go to the window. Now duck, and then slide the window open.

## MISSION 9

### RECOVER THE ARK INTERROGATION FILE



Just do jumps and double jumps off of the walls to pass the beginning section. Once you get to the top, go to the left-most part near the tower. Jump over the railing and take the dog out with an Airfoil round. Take the guard out with one too. Attract the second dog and take it out as well. You can KO the second guard too, if you like. Go to the statue just out and to the left. Snipe the guard in the tower. Run to the opening in the bushes. Take the middle path, and you'll encounter a guard at the exit of this bush maze. Grab him and knock him out. There will be a guard beyond the fountain and gate. Snipe him as well. Put in 2126 as the code to the gate. Veer to the left and enter the grate near the door of the tower. Go up the stairs and enter the museum. Follow the center path, as there are laser traps along the sides. Wait in the far right corner, and guards will come. After they start going away, enter the large double doors close to you. Come out and either kill the guards or try to sneak past them. You need to get to the double doors in the right of the room. Turn on night vision and watch for the beams on the stairs. Jump over the ones at the base, and jump over the railing before the ones at the top. Go into the only unlocked door. Sneak around carefully to the guard on the second level. Follow him around, grab him, and knock him out. When the guard above walks away from the stairs, sneak up to him, grab him, and knock him out. For the two on the bottom, just snipe or leave them alone. Put in 70021 as your code for the door. Make your way downstairs to get the Medical Kit. Sneak up on the guard on the right; approach him as he walks down the short hallway. Grab him and pound him on the head. Sneak past the two guards patrolling the hall. Enter the little hallway; the last one on the left. Watching out for the camera above, pick the lock, and enter. The lasers aren't too tough. The first one you just need to crouch and crawl under the upper lasers when the lower ones go off. For the second set, jump over the lower one when the upper ones disappear. After this, you'll hear a guy talking; no matter what you do, he'll hear you. So just hide for a second, and he'll go stand guard. Sneak up to him and take him out quietly. Use the computer.

### USE NIKOLADZE TO OPEN THE RETINAL SAFE



Go into the next room and get the Medical Kit, then return to the hall. Use the Camera Jammer to get past the camera. When the guards go right down the hall, turn the corner and go left through the double doors. Remain behind the stand in this room, since there's a camera. Use the Jammer here, too. Go through the next set of double doors on the left. Put in 66768 as your code for the next door. To deal with these three guards, make some noise in the hall, and then lure them into the previous room. Since it's dark, hit them in the head, one at a time, as they walk in. Take the elevator down. Get off quickly and hide behind the bookcase on the right. Aim your weapon up to the right at the catwalk. An enemy will come shortly, so snipe him. Launch a Smoke Grenade in between the elevator and the bookcase you're hiding behind; this will kill two enemies that come. There is one more enemy. He's on a staircase directly ahead. Just go into sniper mode and start to move backwards. The enemy's head will appear between the books and the second shelf. Hit him at your leisure, since he won't be able to hit you. Enter the small doorway just to the left of the staircase. Grab Nikoladze and then use the retina scanner. Everything will go black. Turn around and run to the left corner. Hide in between the box and the stone pillar. When the second guard comes over, creep out just a little so that you can throw a grenade between the box on the left and the box on the right. This will kill the two guards waiting there. Move out to the right with thermal vision on; creep slowly. There will be another guard hiding behind a pillar. Once you see the edge of his body, start shooting. There will be another one crouching that is just to the left of this guard. The last one will be near the exit. He's just to the right of the corner of the box you were originally hiding behind.

### KILL KOBAYN NIKOLADZE

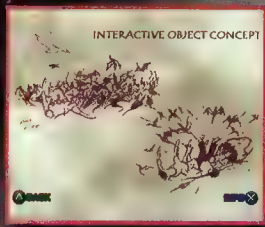


Go to the library. When you get outside, there are guards on both sides. They walk in sequence, so you just need to watch one. When they begin to walk away, go straight down the center, making sure never to get ahead of them. Get in the fountain and go all the way to the end. When you get to the end, crouch, and remain in front of the last sculpture. The guards won't see you. When they start walking the other way, run to the pole on the wall to the right. Climb it and get in the opening to the left. The target is just off to the right. Hit him in the head and run to the dark corner behind you. When the enemy appears from the door, shoot him in the head and enter that door.

### RENDEZVOUS WITH OSPREY FOR EXTRACTION

Go downstairs and head left into the room at the base. Shoot out the two lights and position yourself at a distance in front of the entrance. When the one guard walks in, hit him in the head. Kill the other two by luring them in here and doing the same thing. Go through the double doors. Open either of the doors in the room and then quickly retreat to your dark room. Kill each guard as he enters, but make sure he's alone. If they stop coming, go out a little, and you may see them patrolling the dining area. Snipe them. Go back to the double doors where the guards came from. There might still be one more there; just quickly take him out, or use the previous tactics. You're home free!





- A T Swamplands Sketch
- A U Shang Tsung Character Bio
- A V Senate of the Elder Gods Test Video
- A W 88 Ruby Koins
- A X Quan Chi's Inner Sanctum
- A Y Concept Characters
- A Z Test Your Sight Concept
- B A Lin Kuei Temple Concept
- B B Sub-Zero's Medallion
- B C Giant Drummer Detail
- B D Kano Costume
- B E Swamplands Sketch
- B F 120 Jade Koins
- B G Baphomet Sketch
- B H Ultimate MK3 Arcade Marquee
- B I Sonya Concept Sketch
- B J Ghost Ship
- B K Drum Arena Details
- B L Portal Sphere
- B M Character Concepts
- B N The Grid: Guest Stars
- B O The Grid: Noob Saibot
- B P The Grid: MK Ninjas
- B Q Princess Kitana Costume
- B R FK: Fly Killer Hint
- B S Mavado Sketches
- B T Blood Energy Drink
- B U Reptile Skin Lotion
- B V Backstage: MK 4 Commercial
- B W Backstage: MK 4 Commercial
- B X Backstage: MK 4 Commercial
- B Y MK Gold Logo
- B Z MK 4: Sonya and Tanya
- C A Shang Tsung's Palace Sketch
- C B Octo Garden Sketch
- C C Book of Destiny
- C D Shang Tsung Soul Concept
- C E Great Dragon Egg
- C F Female Character Concepts
- C G JT: Johnny's Tapes Hint
- C H 92 Sapphire Koins
- C I Test Your Sight Concept
- C J Quan Chi Sketches
- C K Wu Shi Academy
- C L 492 Onyx Koins
- C M House of Pekara Concept
- C N **Cyrax**
- C O Kano's Cereal
- C P Carlos Pesina
- C Q Senate of Elder Gods Concept
- C R Raiden Sketch
- C S 143 Ruby Koins
- C T Dragonfly Story
- C U Swamplands Sketch
- C V 71 Jade Koins
- C W Academy Promo Render
- C X Scorpion Goes Back to Hell Video
- C Y Soul Cage Concept
- C Z Hsu Hao Concepts
- D A 18 Sapphire Koins

**KUFFINS SECRETS**

- A A Quan Chi Costume
- A B Kung Lao Sketch
- A C Li Mei Character Bio
- A D Moloch Sketches
- A E MK 2 Cabinet Security Panels
- A F RO: Rip Off!!! Hint
- A G Deadly Alliance is Born
- A H Shang Tsung Sketch
- A I Quan Chi's Tattoos
- A J 38 Gold Koins



- A K Moloch Promo Render
- A L Shang Tsung's Palace Art
- A M Mavado Coat Concepts
- A N PD: Pay Day!!! Hint
- A O 57 Sapphire Koins
- A P Quan Chi's Throne
- A Q Scorpion Concept Sketch
- A R Nitara Costume
- A S Palace Exterior Sketch



- D B Soul Chamber Concept
- D C MK 3: Kung Lao vs. Jax
- D D Lifeguard Sonya
- D E Character Concepts
- D F Dan 'Toasty' Forden (MK Team)
- D G Sonya Blade Character Bio
- D H Shokan Warriors
- D I Quan Chi on the Sax
- D J 98 Ruby Koins
- D K Johnny Cage Costume
- D L Scorpion Cloth Test
- D M Acid Bath
- D N 18 Jade Koins
- D O 221 Onyx Koins
- D P Mortal Kombat 2 Print Ad
- D Q SF: Smelly Feet Hint
- D R Mavado Sketches
- D S Nethership Arena
- D T Li Mei Sketch
- D U MK3 Behind the Scenes
- D V **Empty Koffin**
- D W Cave Arena Concept Video
- D X 579 Ruby Koins
- D Y SS: Sword Sale Hint
- D Z **Empty Koffin**
- E A The Lost Tomb



- E B Ed Boon (MK Team)
- E C Swamplands Sketch
- E D 949 Platinum Koins
- E E Mythologies Home Version
- E F Quality Assurance: Chicago
- E G MK 3 Arcade Marquee
- E H Reptile Sketch
- E I Action Figures
- E J Action Figures
- E K Action Figures
- E L Action Figures
- E M Action Figures
- E N Action Figures
- E O Action Figures
- E P Action Figures
- E Q Action Figure Vehicles
- E R Bo' Rai Cho Character Bio
- E S MK 3 Ultimate Print Ad
- E T Quan Chi's Face Texture
- E U Dairou Drawings
- E V Drum Arena
- E W Quan Chi's Chest Armor
- E X ST: Sarna Test Hint
- E Y Cyrax Sketch
- E Z Blood Stone Mine Concept
- F A Cyrax Test Render
- F B A Long Time Ago... Arcade Montage
- F C A Softer Side to Cyrax
- F D Portal Story
- F E Li Mei Sketch
- F F MK 1: Sub-Zero vs. Scorpion
- F G Dragonfly Concept Render
- F H House of Pekara Concept
- F I Deadly Alliance Koins
- F J MK 3 Arcade Cabinet

- F K Bug Blaster
- F L Early MKDA Promo
- F M Palace Exterior Sketch
- F N 1,800 Jade Koins
- F O MK 2 Characters
- F P Palace Exterior Sketch
- F Q MK T-Shirts
- F R MK Youth Clothing
- F S MK Sweatshirts
- F T MK T-Shirts
- F U **Empty Koffin** (Funny...FU ...Get it?)
- F V 243 Platinum Koins
- F W UH: Unleash Hell Hint
- F X Comic Book Art, 1 of 41
- F Y Comic Book Art, 2 of 41
- F Z Comic Book Art, 3 of 41
- G A Comic Book Art, 4 of 41
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- H K Comic Book Art, 40 of 41
- H L Comic Book Art, 41 of 41
- H M Bank Interior Sketch
- H N Lung Hai Temple Sketch
- H O Scorpion Preliminary Model
- H P **House of Pekara**
- H Q Sektor's Helmet
- H R Konquest Mode Concepts
- H S Herman Sanchez (MK Team)





- H T Ice Palace Test Video
- H U MK Pinball
- H V MK Gold Print Ad
- H W Fire Well Concept
- H X 38 Jade Koins
- H Y Kenshi's Sword
- H Z Shang Tsung's Soulcard
- I A MK4 Logo
- I B Forest Sketch
- I C MK Rock 'Em Sock 'Em
- I D Sub-Zero's Coffee Mug



- I E 32 Pack of Adult Diapers
- I F River Front Concept
- I G Lava Shrine Exterior Concept
- I H IV: icy Vixen Hint
- I I **Lava Shrine Arena**
- I J Quan Chi's Amulet
- I K Lava Shrine Priest
- I L DK Dressed to Kill Hint
- I M Church Concept
- I N 57 Gold Koins
- I O PH: Phat Hint
- I P Halloween Masks
- I Q Fortress Exterior Sketches
- I R 91 Sapphire Koins
- I S Sub-Zero's Blade
- I T Character Concepts
- I U Dairour Sketch
- I V **Frost**
- I W CN: Cyber Ninja Hint
- I X MKDA Merchandise
- I Y MK Gold Endings
- I Z Jax Renderings

- J A Kuantan Palace Render
- J B Programmers (MK Team)
- J C Frost Sketches
- J D Swamplands Test Render
- J E 59 Ruby Koins
- J F Drum Arena Sketch
- J G Jon Greenberg (MK Team)
- J H Hsu Hao Sketches
- J I MK 4 Print Ad
- J J 772 Sapphire Koins
- J K Li Mei Sketch
- J L 92 Gold Koins
- J M Shang Tsung Drawings
- J N John Nocher (MK Team)
- J O MK2 Arcade Board
- J P John Podlasek (MK Team)
- J Q Kitana Sketches
- J R Raiden Costume
- J S Dragonfly Render
- J T Johnny Cage Videos
- J U Palace Interior Sketch
- J V John Vogel (MK Team)
- J W Kano's Reminder
- J X Raiden Test Render
- J Y MK 4 Home Version
- J Z **Empty Koffin**
- K A Swamplands Sketch
- K B Elder God Hall Sketch
- K C Dragonfly Test Video

- K D Artists (MK Team)
- K E Nitara Sketch
- K F Mavado Character Bio
- K G Edenia Golf Outfitters
- K H Can Of Squid
- K I **Princess Kitana**
- K J MK Baseball Caps
- K K MK 4 Characters
- K L Cyrax Sketches
- K M MK Strategy Guides
- K N 15 Gold Koins
- K O Konquest Mode Concepts
- K P MW: Mongol Warrior Hint
- K Q Alexander Barrentine (MK Team)

- K R **Palace Grounds Arena**
- K S 216 Jade Koins
- K T Moloch Test Render
- K U 322 Platinum Koins
- K V Arena Concepts
- K W **Empty Koffin**
- K X Li Mei Costume
- K Y MK 1: Kage vs. Kano
- K Z Character Concepts
- L A Blood Particle Details
- L B Gameplay Wall Trick Ideas
- L C Gameplay Kicks and Dodges
- L D Gameplay Fatalities
- L E Gameplay Face Strikes
- L F Gameplay Special Moves
- L G Gameplay Throws
- L H Gameplay Fatalities
- L I Gameplay Throws Sketches
- L J Nitara's Crystal
- L K Wu Shi Acad Test



- L L **Reptile**
- L M Luis Mangubat (MK Team)
- L N Chrome Bling
- L O Deadly Alliance Website
- L P Sub-Zero Sketch
- L Q MK 1 Arcade Goro
- L R MKDA Box Art Concepts
- L S MKDA Box Art Concepts
- L T MKDA Logo Concepts
- L U MKDA Box Art Concepts
- L V MK Vengeance Box Art Concepts

- L W Midway Creative Team
- L X **Empty Koffin**
- L Y MK 4: Scorpion vs. Raiden
- L Z FL: First Look Hint
- M A Johnny Cage Character Bio
- M B Mike Boon (MK Team)
- M C Wu Shi Academy Sketches
- M D Tools and Technology (MK Team)
- M E MDKA Print Ad
- M F 102 Onyx Koins
- M G MK 4 Road Tour
- M H MK 4 Road Tour
- M I MK 4 Arcade Debut
- M J **Empty Koffin**

- M K MK 1 Arcade
- M L Shang Tsung Costume
- M M Bride Arena Concept
- M N Portal
- M O Drahmin Sketches



- M P MK Basketball Concept
- M Q 412 Jade Koins
- M R Lung Hai Temple
- M S Outworld Concept Sketch
- M T Mike Taran (MK Team)
- M U Sarna Ruins Concept
- M V Hsu Hao Sketches
- M W **Hsu Hao**
- M X Palace Exterior Sketch
- M Y Moloch's Ball Sketches
- M Z Assassin for Hire
- N A Sonya Sketch
- N B House of Pekara Render
- N C Nigel Casey (MK Team)
- N D **Empty Koffin**
- N E Jax Concept Sketch
- N F Scorpion Promo Render
- N G 252 Platinum Koins
- N H Hachiman Sketch
- N I Kitana Sketches
- N J MK Lunch Time
- N K 116 Onyx Koins
- N L Wu Shi Academy Monk
- N M Scorpion Online Promo Image
- N N Blaze Sketches
- N O Kabal's Helmet
- N P MK3: Scorpion vs. Jade
- N Q Quan Chi Promo Render
- N R BT: Blood Thirsty Hint
- N S Nick Shin (MK Team)
- N T Arctic Hold
- N U Quan Chi's Fortress Sketches
- N V Kenshi's Glass Eyes
- N W Lost Tomb Sketch
- N X Damnation Charcoal
- N Y Brian Lebaran (MK Team)
- N Z The Mine Arena Concept

- O A Movie Storyboards 1 of 8
- O B Movie Storyboards 2 of 8
- O C Movie Storyboards 3 of 8
- O D Movie Storyboards 4 of 8
- O E Movie Storyboards 5 of 8
- O F Movie Storyboards 6 of 8
- O G Movie Storyboards 7 of 8
- O H Movie Storyboards 8 of 8
- O I Midway Movie Group
- O J Interactive Arena Concept
- O K **Empty Koffin**
- O L Evil Master Sketch
- O M 177 Jade Koins
- O N Quan Chi Sketches
- O O Mortal Kandies
- O P 125 Gold Koins
- O Q MK 4 Logo Treatment
- O R Alan Villani (MK Team)
- O S **Empty Koffin**
- O T 222 Onyx Koins



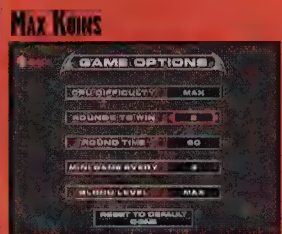
Beat all of the training missions and unlock Raiden to play as this hidden bad-ass, (you might have to unlock Blaze's Bio). At the player selection screen, highlight Raiden's icon and press Down on the d-pad and Start.



Once you unlock Cyrax (you might also have to unlock Mokap's Bio), highlight Cyrax's icon and press Down on the d-pad and Start.



Highlight Shang Tsung for player one and Quan Chi for player two. Press Up on the d-pad and hit Start to select a character randomly.



Beating the game on Max difficulty will yield the most amount of Koins per fight. The best way to win is to understand how to dodge attacks using 3D movement. When the computer misses, counterattack. Also, concentrate on doing small combos that don't leave you open to attack for very long. This will usually cause the computer to make a mistake.



O U Back to School With MK  
 O V Reptile's Lair Concept  
 O W Fallen Giants Arena Sketch  
 O X 352 Gold Koins  
 O Y Blade Arena Test  
 O Z IS: Ice Sword Hint  
 P A Lung Hai Temple Concept  
 P B 6 Platinum Koins  
 P C Football Raiden  
 P D 1,056 Platinum Koins  
 P E Kung Lao Render Test  
 P F Reptiles De-Evolution  
 P G Paulo Garcia (MK Team)  
 P H Bo Rai Cho Costume  
 P I HP: Haunted Place Hint  
 P J Drum Arena Details  
 P K 475 Platinum Koins  
 P L Dojo Concept  
 P M Kenshi Sketch  
 P N **Blaze**  
 P O 108 Gold Koins  
 P P MK Gear  
 P Q Lava Shrine Sketch  
 P R 25 Sapphire Koins



P S Moloch The Hobbyist  
 P T Slaughter Yard Concept  
 P U 267 Onyx Koins  
 P V **Empty Koffin**  
 P W **Sarna Ruins**  
 P X Goro Statuette  
 P Y Backstage: MK Mythologies  
 P Z Lava Shrine Sketch  
 Q A Quality Assurance (QA):  
 Chicago Photo  
 Q B Mavado Sketches  
 Q C **Lin Kuei Temple**  
 Q D MK 4 Arena Concept  
 Q E **Empty Koffin**  
 Q F MKDA Hats and Shirts  
 Q G LL: Lurking Lizard Hint  
 Q H 638 Onyx Koins  
 Q I Lung Hai Temple Sketch  
 Q J **Empty Koffin**  
 Q K Kenshi Character Bio  
 Q L MK3 Promo Art  
 Q M MK 1 Characters  
 Q N 147 Gold Koins  
 Q O Fan Art, 1 of 5  
 Q P Fan Art, 2 of 5  
 Q Q Fan Art, 3 of 5  
 Q R Fan Art, 4 of 5  
 Q S Fan Art, 5 of 5  
 Q T Get Over Here! MK 1 Image  
 Q U MK 4 Logo Designs  
 Q V Reptile's Past  
 Q W MK 2 Arcade  
 Q X Hsu Hao Costume  
 Q Y MKDA at E3 Expo 2002  
 Q Z Quan Chi's Fortress Gallery  
 R A XG: Ex-God Hint  
 R B Robert Blum (MK Team)  
 R C Midway Creative Media

R D Mavado Costume  
 R E MK 3 Print Ad  
 R F Swamp Bird Test Video  
 R G Sub-Zero Sketch  
 R H Bridge Arena Concept  
 R I 28 Jade Koins  
 R J MKDA Print Ads  
 R K Evolution of Kombat  
 R L 159 Onyx Koins  
 R M Kuatan Palace Sketch  
 R N 208 Gold Koins  
 R O 1 Shiny Ruby Koin  
 R P MK 1 Test Your Might  
 R Q Shang Tsung Sketches  
 R R Shang Tsung's Palace Sketch  
 R S Randy Severin (MK Team)  
 R T 258 Platinum Koins  
 R U Lava Shrine Sketch  
 R V MK Musik  
 R W Shang Tsung's Palace Sketch  
 R X **Empty Koffin**  
 R Y Mavado Sketch  
 R Z 473 Gold Koins  
 S A **Yax Briggs**  
 S B Steve Beran (MK Team)  
 S C Shawn Cooper (MK Team)  
 S D Quality Assurance: San Diego (Picture)  
 S E Kirehashi Blade  
 S F Shang Tsung's Insouls  
 S G 97 Platinum Koins  
 S H Sonya Blade Costume  
 S I Tiamat Sketch  
 S J MK 4 Scorpion  
 S K Jax Preliminary Model  
 S L Tools and Technology (MK Team)  
 S M MKDA Print Ad (GI Cover Art)  
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 S P **Empty Koffin**  
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 S T Sarna Ruins Test Video  
 S U Kenshi's Story Sketch  
 S V 36 Sapphire Koins  
 S W Drahhmin Costume  
 S X MK 4 Arcade Marquee  
 S Y Cyrax's Arm  
 S Z Kung Lau Bio  
 T A Todd Allen (MK Team)  
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 T C Palace Exterior Sketch  
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 T F MK 4 Characters  
 T G Tony Goskie (MK Team)  
 T H Konquest Mode Concepts



T I **Nitara**  
 T J Koin Sketches  
 T K RD: Red Dragon Hint

T L Acid Bath Sketch  
 T M Hsu Hao Sketches  
 T N Early MKDA  
 T O Early MKDA Screenshot  
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 T Q Early MKDA  
 T R MKDA Promo Image  
 T S Artists (MK Team)  
 T T Test Your Might Sketch  
 T U 98 Onyx Koins  
 T V Wu Shi Academy Sketches  
 T W 180 Gold Koins  
 T X Goro's Throne Sketch  
 T Y Baraka Bio Image  
 T Z Animators  
 U A MK 4 PC Version  
 U B Frost's Alternate Costume  
 U C 320 Onyx Koins  
 U D Drahhmin Sketch  
 U E WT: Winged Transport Hint  
 U F MK 4 Liu Kang Fatality  
 U G 67 Platinum Koins  
 U H Scorpion Costume  
 U I Cooking With Scorpion Video  
 U J Goro on The Kit Picture  
 U K 45 Platinum Koins  
 U L Kai Sketch  
 U M 50 Gold Koins  
 U N MK 4 Print Ad  
 U O MK Trading Cards  
 U P MK Trading Cards  
 U Q Undefeatable Army  
 U R **Drahhmin**  
 U S 32 Sapphire Koins  
 U T Bridge Concept Arena  
 U U **Empty Koffin**  
 U V 520 Sapphire Koins  
 U W Adema Live at E3 Expo  
 U X Scorpion Bio  
 U Y MK Hits the Big Screen  
 U Z 107 Ruby Koins  
 V A Shao Kahn's Armor  
 V B Blaze Sketch  
 V C 3 Pt Staff, Butterfly Knives



V D Aikido (MK Team)  
 V E Bajji Quan and Crab (MK Team)  
 V F Basic Fighting Strikes (MK Team)  
 V G Basic Fighting Strikes (MK Team)  
 V H Broadwords (MK Team)  
 V I Cudgel (MK Team)  
 V J Drunken Master Photos (MK Team)  
 V K Dragon and Eagle Claw (MK Team)  
 V L Escrima And Crane (MK Team)  
 V M Shuai Chiao and Shaolin Fist (MK Team)  
 V N Hapkido and Nan Chuan Pictures (MK Team)

V O Hookswords and Sai (MK Team)  
 V P Hung Gar and Jujustu Photos  
 V Q Jujustu Photos (MK Team)  
 V R Judo (MK Team)  
 V S Kai Sticks and Nunchaku  
 V T Kama and Katana (MK Team)  
 V U Karate (MK Team)  
 V V Long Fist and Muay Thai Pictures (MK Team)



V W Motion Capture Markers  
 V X Pi Gua and Jeet Kune Do (MK Team)  
 V Y Praying Mantis, Lui He Ba Fa Pictures (MK Team)  
 V Z Sambo (MK Team)  
 W A Straight sword (MK Team)  
 W B Tai Chi (MK Team)  
 W C Tae Kwon Do (MK Team)  
 W D Tonfa (MK Team)  
 W E Tong Bei and Yuan Yang (MK Team)  
 W F Wing Chun and Snake (MK Team)  
 W G Xing Yi And Tang Soo Do (MK Team)  
 W H 18 Ruby Koins  
 W I Story Mode Concept Sketches  
 W J 248 Sapphire Koins  
 W K Frost Sketches  
 W L 44 Jade Koins  
 W M **Empty Koffin**  
 W N Sub-Zero Bio  
 W O Acid Buddha Detail  
 W P Drahhmin Sketches  
 W Q 78 Onyx Koins  
 W R Ultimate MK3 Home Version  
 W S 165 Platinum Koins  
 W T **Lung Hai Arena**  
 W U Dragon Temple Sketches  
 W V 97 Jade Koins  
 W W Dragon Arena Concept  
 W X Hsu Hao Implant  
 W Y Bo' Rai Cho Sketches  
 W Z Kano Character Bio  
 X A The Grid  
 X B Cage Sketch  
 X C Quan Chi's Sanctum Sketch  
 X D Acid Buddha Detail  
 X E 294 Onyx Koins  
 X F **MK60** Characters  
 X G **Raiden**  
 X H Cyrax Sketches  
 X I MK 2 Arcade Marquee  
 X J Quan Chi Render  
 X K DS: Death Ship Hint  
 X L 3 Ruby Koins  
 X M SA: Steel Arms Hint  
 X N **Empty Koffin**  
 X O Reptile Costume  
 X P MK 4 Gift Cards  
 X Q Raiden Performance Audio



- X R Konquest Mode Concepts
- X S Kung Lao Sketch
- X T MK 3 Characters
- X U Mortal Friday
- X V Organic Arena Concept
- X W Baraka's Demise Video
- X X MK Memorabilia
- X Y Shang Tsung's Palace Story
- X Z The Marsh Concept
- Y A Sub-Zero Costume
- Y B Ketchup and Mustard
- Y C Moloch Promo Render
- Y D MK Stickers and Tattoos
- Y E Temple Oarsman
- Y F 64 Platinum Koins
- Y G Swamplands Test Render
- Y H 82 Sapphire Koins
- Y I MK 2 Arcade Marquee
- Y J Kung Lao Costume
- Y K Dragonfly Concept Model
- Y L Jax Concept Sketch
- Y M Kenshi's Costume
- Y N 26 Gold Koins
- Y O Sonya Sketch
- Y P **Mokap** (Hidden Character)
- Y Q Tools and Technology Photo (MK Team)
- Y R MK 3 Home Version

## FATALITIES

Listed in the order of PS2, Xbox, GameCube.

- 1 - □, X, B
- 2 - △, Y, Y
- 3 - X, A, A
- 4 - ○, B, X

\*This key is based on the default button configuration. Changing it will alter the button you must press to execute a fatality.



**Sonya:** Back, Forward, Forward, Down, 2

**Scorpion:** Back, Back, Down, Back, 4

**Johnny Cage:** Back, Forward, Forward, Down, 2



**Kitana:** Down, Up, Forward, Forward, 2

**Sub-Zero:** Back, Forward, Forward, Down, 3

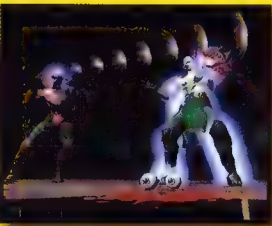
**Nitara:** Up, Up, Forward, 1

**Frost:** Forward, Back, Up, Down, 1

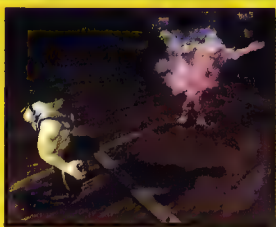
**Raiden:** Back, Forward, Forward, Forward, 3

**Bo Rai Cho:** Back, Back, Back, Down, 4

**Li Mei:** Forward, Forward, Down, Forward, 4



**Kenshi:** Forward, Back, Forward, Down, 3



**Hsu Hao:** Forward, Back, Down, Down, 2

**Kano:** Forward, Up, Up, Down, 1

**Jax:** Down, Forward, Forward, Down, 2

**Mavado:** Back, Back, Up, Up, 1

**Reptile:** Up, Up, Up, Forward, 3

**Quan Chi:** Back, Back, Forward, Back, 3



**Kung Lao:** Down, Up, Back, 2

**Cyrax:** Forward, Forward, Up, 2

**Shang Tsung:** 2, Up, Down, Up, Down, 2

**Drahmin:** Back, Forward, Forward, Down, 3



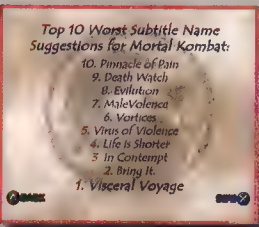
## GET ONYX AND PLATINUM KOINS QUICKLY

If you're playing alone, create a second profile. Now go to the Gameplay Options and set the frequency of minigames to occur every three fights. Go to the Versus mode. Load your profile and the profile of the second player. Set the second player's handicap to 10%. After you beat the second player three times, you'll both go to a challenge. If you get Test Your Might, you'll have to quickly do both yourself. The easiest way to get a lot of power is to get a pen or pencil, hold it horizontally, and quickly rub it across all four face buttons. Now both players will have Koins. In the next match do a wager, betting the maximum amount of Koins allowed. Win the next match and you'll receive the second player's Koins. Do this to your heart's content.



## BEAT MOLOCH

Pick a character who you can complete a long combo with. Now, at the beginning of the match, just back up as he does forward thrusts with his large ball, but don't get too far away. Stay far enough away so that he can't throw you. When he does a swinging hook with the ball in his hand, quickly move in and perform a combo. When you're done, quickly get away before he throws you. If you find yourself backed into a corner, or about to be forced into the corner, move left or right to get out of the way. There are two other attacks you should look out for. One is a breath sucking attack, which will draw you in. He does this often when you're far away, or when you're about to get up after being knocked down. Just block to avoid this attack. The other is an unblockable move. Moloch will slowly swing his arm into the ground with a white trail coming off of the ball. He'll slam the ground and cause damage, even if you're blocking. To avoid this attack, simply jump backwards.



- Y S 10 Worst MKDA Subtitles
- Y T 227 Sapphire Koins
- Y U MK 4 Comic Book
- Y V Graveyard Concept
- Y W Fashion Model Li Mei
- Y X 242 Ruby Koins
- Y Y **Empty Koffin**
- Y Z Kenshi Test Render
- Z A **Empty Koffin**
- Z B Spider Arena Concept
- Z C Frost Color Sketches
- Z D Moloch's Lair Arena
- Z E Zebron Sketches
- Z F Lava Shrine Sketch
- Z G Facial Animation Test
- Z H The Krypt Concept
- Z I Hell Concept
- Z J Water Temple Concept
- Z K 164 Sapphire Koins
- Z L Drum Arena Sketch
- Z M Jax Briggs Costume
- Z N **Empty Koffin**
- Z O LO: Log On Hint
- Z P MK 1 Print Ad
- Z Q Sub-Zero Promo Render
- Z R 600 Gold Koins
- Z S MK Home Graphics
- Z T Animators
- Z U Kuantan Palace Sketch
- Z V 116 Ruby Koins
- Z W Cyrax Costume
- Z X BD: Black Dragon Hint
- Z Y The Fans Speak
- Z Z 355 Ruby Koins



# SECRET ACCESS

PS2 XBOX NINTENDO GAMECUBE

## PLAYSTATION 2/ XBOX/GAMECUBE



### TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

**Bonus Neversoft Skaters** – Simply enter the names listed below as names of created skaters. If entered correctly, their look and attributes will appear.

#\$\$%&!@	Kraken
Aaron Skillman	Lindsay Hayes
Andrew Skates	Lisa G Davies
Andy Marchal	Little Man
Angus	Mariena Rixfor
Atiba Jefferson	Mat Hoffman
Ben Scott Pye	Matt Mcpherson
Big Tex	Maya's Daddy
Brian Jennings	Meek West
Captain Liberty	Mike Day
Chauwa Steel	Mike Lashever
Chris Peacock	Mike Ward
ConMan	Mr. Brad
Danaconda	Noian Nelson
Dave Stohl	Parking Guy
DDT	Peasus
DeadEndRoad	Pete Day
Fritz	Pooper
Gary Jesdanun	Rick Thorne
grjost	Sik
Henry Ji	Stacey D
Jason Uyeda	Stacey Ytuarte
Jim Jagger	Team Chicken
Joe Favazza	Ted Barber
John Rosser	Todd Wahoske
Jow	Top Bloke
Kenzo	Wardcore
Kevin Mulhall	Zac ZIG Drake

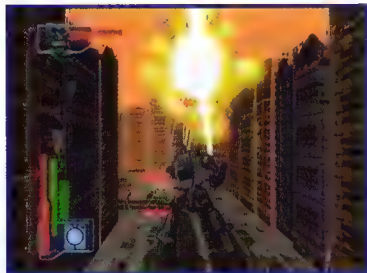
Karl Young  
Clear Lake, MS

### NBA 2K3

To activate the codes below, enter the Options menu and access Game Play. Hold the directional pad Left and the left analog stick Right, then press Start to bring up the cheats menu. From here, back out to the Options screen, and enter the newly accessible Codes screen. Enter either of the case-sensitive codes below.

**Bonus Teams** – MEGASTARS  
**Trash on Street Levels** – SPRINGER

Laverne Roleson  
Greenboro, RI



### ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY

To activate these cheat codes on the PlayStation 2, enter into the New Game or Load Game screen, hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press Left, Up, Down, X, Right, Δ, Start. At the same screen on Xbox and GameCube, hold the L and R Buttons, then press Left, Up, Down, A, Right, B, Start. Entering these cheats correctly will bring up the cheat window. From here, simply type in the desired codes below. A message will appear when the cheat is entered correctly.

**All Multiplayer Levels** – MULTIMAYHEM  
**All Veritech Models & Awards** – WHERESEX  
**Alternate Paint Schematics** – MISSMACROSS  
**Disable Codes** – CLEAR  
**Invincibility** – SUPERMECH  
**Level Select** – WEWILLWIN  
**One-Hit Kills** – BACKSTABBER  
**One-Hit Kills (Sniper Mode)** – SNIPER  
**Quick Gunpod Ammo Replenishment** – SPACEFOLD  
**Quick Gunpod Missile Replenishment** – MIRIYA  
**Quick Missile Replenishment** – MARSBASE

Hilary Bisenieks  
Philadelphia, PA

### TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003

Enter all of these codes at the Cheat Codes menu. You'll hear Tiger scream when a code is entered correctly.

**All Courses** – 14COURSES  
**Brad Faxton** – XON  
**Charles Howell III** – BANDPANTS  
**Dominic Donatello** – GODFATHER  
**Hamish** – MCRUFF  
**Joy Scott** – SUPERSTAR  
**Justin Leonard** – JUSTINTIME  
**Kelle Newman** – COWGIRL  
**Melvin Tanigawa** – YOYOYO  
**Notah BeGay III** – NOTABLY  
**Solita Lopez** – SOLITARY1  
**Steve Stricker** – SS  
**Stuart Appleby** – ORANGES  
**Super Tiger** – SUNDAY  
**Takeharu Moto** – 2TON  
**Ty Tryon** – TYNO  
**Vai Summers** – VALENTINE  
**Vijay Singh** – VJSING

Greg Norman  
Sarasota, FL

### BLOODRAYNE

Enter all of these codes at the Cheat menu or in-game pause menu. A message will confirm correct code entry. You'll need to head to the pause menu to activate these cheats.

**Freeze Enemies** – DONTFARTONOSCAR  
**God Mode** – TRIASSASSINDONTDIE  
**Gratuitous Dismemberment** – INSANEGIBSMODEGOD  
**Juggy** – JUGGYDANCESQUAD  
**Level Select** – ONTHELEVEL  
**Louisiana Level** – BRIMSTONEINTEHBAYOU  
**Programmer Message 1** – TERMINALREALITYRULES  
**Programmer Message 2** – ALBATROSS  
**Programmer Message 3** – SATANRULES  
**Programmer Message 4** – TERMINALREALITYSCOOL  
**Programmer Message 5** – IAMANGRY  
**Programmer Message 6** – NAKEDHOOKER  
**Programmer Message 7** – IAMNAKED  
**Programmer Message 8** – TERMINALREALITYSLAME  
**Programmer Message 9** – UVULA  
**Programmer Message 10** – XXX  
**Replenish Bloodlust** – ANGRYXXXINSANEHOOKER  
**Replenish Health** – LAMEYANKEDONTFEED  
**Show Weapons** – SHOWMENYWEAPONS  
**Time Factor** – NAKEDNASTYDISHWASHERDANCE

"Daddy Fat Sax"  
Memphis, TN



### JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE

**Shelby Cobra Car** – Head to the Enemies Vanquished level and pause the game. For Xbox, hold L Button, and press B (x2), X (x2), Y, then release L Button. For PS2, hold L1, then press ○ (x2), □ (x2), △, then release L1. For GameCube, hold L Button, then press X (x2), B (x2), Y, then release L Button. The Shelby Car from the Paris stage will replace your current ride.

Enter these codes at the Secrets Unlock menu within a Profile.

**Assassination Mode** – SCOPE  
**Explosive Scenery (Multiplayer)** – BOOM  
**Level Select** – PASSPORT  
**Protect Mode** – GUARDIAN  
**Team King of the Hill** – TEAMWORK  
**Uplink Mode** – TRANSMIT

"The Sundance Kid"  
Atlantic City, NJ





## PLAYSTATION 2/XBOX



## BMX XXX

Enter all of these codes at the Cheats menu within the Acclaim Extras screen.

- All Bikes – 65 SWEET RIDES
- All Levels – XXX RATED CHEAT
- All Movies – CHAMPAGNE ROOM
- Amish Boy's Bikes – AMISHBOY1699
- Bonus Movie 1 – THISISBMX
- Bonus Movie 2 – KEEPITDIRTY
- Fluffy Bunny Mode – FLUFFYBUNNY
- Ghost Control Mode – GHOSTCONTROL
- Green Skin Mode – MAKEMEANGRY (Xbox Only)
- Night Vision Mode – 3RD SOG
- Park Editor – BULLETPPOINT
- Play as Amish Boy – ELECTRICITYBAD
- Stage Select – MASS HYSTERIA
- Super Crash Mode – HEAVYPETTING
- Visible Gap Mode – PARABOLIC (PS2 Only)

David "I Did It All for the Nookie" Craw  
Indianapolis, IN



## XBOX/GAMECUBE



## ROCKY

Enter all of these codes at the Main Menu. You'll hear a grunt when a code is entered correctly.

- All Boxers & Arenas – Hold R Button, then press Right, Down, Up, Left, U, L Button.
- Double Speed – Hold R Button, then press Down, Left, Down, Up, Right, L Button.
- Full Stats (Movie) – Hold R Button, then press Right, Down (x2), Up, Left, L Button.
- Increase Punch Damage – Hold R Button, then press Right, Down, Left, Up, Left, L Button.
- Rocky Statue – Hold R Button, then press Right (x3), Left, Right, L Button.

Celine Dion  
Las Vegas, NV

## PS2 PLAYSTATION 2

## CODE OF THE MONTH

## GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY



Enter all of these codes at any point during gameplay. A message will confirm that the cheats have been entered correctly.

- Aggressive Traffic – R2,  R1, L2, Left, R1, L1, R2, L2
- Alter Wheel Size – R1, , ,  Right, R2,  Up, Down,  Armor – R1, R2, L1, , Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up
- Black Traffic –  L2, Up, R1, Left, , R1, L1, Left,  Bloodring (Version 1) – Up, Right (x2), L1, Right, Up,  L2 Bloodring (Version 2) – Down, R1,  L2 (x2), , R1, L1, Left (x2)
- Caddy –  L1, Up, R1, L2, , R1, L1,   Cars Drive On Water – Right, R2,  R1, L2,  R1, R2
- Chicks With Guns – Right, L1,  L2, Left, , R1, L1, Left (x2),
- Destroy Cars – R2, L2, R1, L1, L2, R2,    L2, L1
- Dodo Car Physics – Right, R2,  R1, L2, Down, L1, R1
- Faster Cars – Right, R1, Up, L2 (x2), Left, R1, L1, R1 (x2)
- Faster Gameplay –  Up, Right, Down, L2, L1,  Faster Time –  (x2), L1,  L1,  (x3), L1,   Female Pedestrians Follow You –  , L1 (x2), R2,
- Floating Cars – Right, R2,  R1, L2,  R1, R2
- Flying Boats – R2,  Up, L1, Right, R1, Right, Up,   Foggy Weather – R2, , L1 (x2), L2 (x3),
- Heart Attack – Right, L2, Down, R1, Left (x2), R1, L1, L2, L1
- Hotring (Version 1) – R1,  R2, Right, L1, L2,  (x2),  R1
- Hotring (Version 2) – R2, L1,  Right, L1, R1, Right, Up,  R2
- Improve Driving Skills –  R1 (x2), Left, R1, L1, R2, L1
- Lower Wanted Level – R1 (x2),  R2, Up, Down, Up, Down, Up, Down

- Love Fist Limo – R2, Up, L2, Left (x2), R1, L1,  Right
- Normal Weather – R2, , L1 (x2), L2 (x3), Down
- Overcast Weather – R2, , L1 (x2), L2 (x3),
- Pedestrian Riots – Down, Left, Up, Left, , R2, R1, L2, L1
- Pedestrians Wield Weapons – R2, R1, , ,  Up, Down
- Pink Traffic –  L1, Down, L2, Left, , R1, L1, Right,  Play as Candy Suxxx –  R2, Down, R1, Left, Right, R1, L1, , L2
- Play as Hilary King – R1,  R2, L1, Right, R1, L1, , R2
- Play as Ken Rosenberg – Right, L1, Up, L2, L1, Right, R1, L1, , R1
- Play as Lance Vance –  L2, Left, , R1, L1, , L1
- Play as Love Fist (Version 1) – Down, L1, Down, L2, Left, , R1, L1,  (x2)
- Play as Love Fist (Version 2) – R1, L2, R2, L1, Right, R2, Left,  L1
- Play as Mercedes – R2, L1, Up, L1, Right, R1, Right, Up,
- Play as Pedestrian – Right (x2), Left, Up, L1, L2, Left, Up, Down, Right
- Play as Phil Cassidy – Right, R1, Up, R2, L1, Right, R1, L1, Right,
- Play as Ricardo Diaz – L1, L2, R1, R2, Down, L1, R2, L2
- Play as Sonny Forell –  L1,  L2, Left, , R1, L1,  (x2)
- Rainy Weather – R2, , L1 (x2), L2 (x3),
- Raise Wanted Level – R1 (x2),  R2, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right
- Replenish Health – R1, R2, L1,  Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up
- Rhino Tank –  (x2), L1,  (x3), L1, L2, R1,
- Robocops –  L1, Down, L2, Left, , R1, L1, Right,
- Romero's Hearse – Down, R2, Down, R1, L2, Left, R1, L1, Left, Right
- Sabre Turbo – Right, L2, Down, L2 (x2), , R1, L1,  Left
- Slower Gameplay –  Up, Right, Down,  R2, R1
- Sunny Weather – R2, , L1 (x2), L2 (x3),
- Trashmaster –  R1,  R1, Left (x2), R1, L1,  Right
- Weapon Assortment (Grade 1) – R1, R2, L1, R2, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up
- Weapon Assortment (Grade 2) – R1, R2, L1, R2, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down (x2), Left
- Weapon Assortment (Grade 3) – R1, R2, L1, R2, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down (x3)
- When Pedestrians Attack! – Down, Up (x3), , R2, R1, L2 (x2)

Gillian Winters  
Rockford, IL

## TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

Enter these codes at the Cheat Codes screen.

- Hidden Skaters (Excluding Hot Chick) – homielit
- Moon Physics – superfly
- Slow-Motion Mode – nospoon

Dan Henderson  
Gaines, IA

## X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION

Enter the cheat below at the Main Menu.

- Unlock Everything – Hold L1, then press Right (x2), Left (x2), Down, Up,

"The Game Molester"  
Washington, DC

## ATV OFFROAD FURY 2

Enter these codes at the Cheat Codes menu within the Profile/Unlock Items screen.

- 1,000 Profile Points – GIMMEPTS
- All ATVs – SHOWROOM
- All Championship Events – GOLDCUPS
- All Equipment – THREADS
- All Games – GAMEON
- All Tracks – TRBLAZR
- Challenging CPU AI – EATDIRT
- Disable Wrecks – FLYPAPER
- San Jacinto Isles – GABRIEL
- Unlock Everything – IGIVEUP

"GI Droid"  
(location unknown – last seen doing the humpty hump in the streets of San Francisco)





## STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER

Enter all of these cheats at the Code Setup screen within the Options menu.

- All Concept Art – R ARTISTS ROCK
- All TGC Cards – GO FISH
- Chapter 1 – SEEHOWTHEYRUN
- Chapter 2 – CITYPLANET
- Chapter 3 – LOCKDOWN
- Chapter 4 – DUGSOPLenty
- Chapter 5 – BANTHAPOODOO
- Mission 1 – BEAST PIT
- Mission 2 – GIMMEMYJETPACK
- Mission 3 – CONVEYORAMA
- Mission 4 – BIGCITYNIGHTS
- Mission 5 – IEATNERFMEAT
- Mission 6 – VOTE4TRELL
- Mission 7 – LOCKUP
- Mission 8 – WHAT A RIOT
- Mission 9 – SHAFTED
- Mission 10 – BIGMOSQUITOS
- Mission 11 – ONEDEADDUG
- Mission 12 – WISHIHADMYSHIP
- Mission 13 – MOS GAMOS
- Mission 14 – TUSKENS R US
- Mission 15 – BIG BAD DRAGON
- Mission 16 – MONTROSSISBAD
- Mission 17 – VOSAISBADDER
- Mission 18 – JANGOISBADDEST

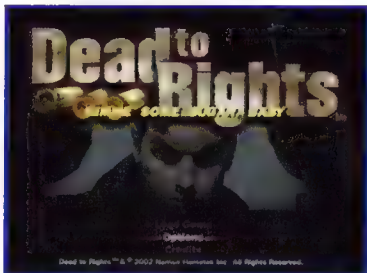
Vincent Edwards  
London, England

## RED FACTION II

Enter all of these codes at the Cheat screen located within the Extras menu. All of the cheats, excluding Level Select, will appear above the Enter Code meter. The Level Select will appear within the Single Player menu.

- All Cheats – □, ○, △, □, ○, ×, △, ×
- All Game Modes – △ (x2), × (x2), □, ○, □, ○
- Director's Cut – □, ×, ○, △, ○, ×, □, △
- Gibby Bullets – ○ (x4), △, ×, ○ (x2)
- Gibby Explosions – △, ○, ×, ○, ○, ×, □
- Instagib Ammo – × (x4), □, ○, × (x2)
- Level Select – ○, ○, ×, △, □, ○, × (x2)
- Rain of Fire – □ (x8)
- Rapid Rails – ○, □, ○, × (x2), △ (x2)
- Super Health – × (x2), □, △, ○, △, ○
- Unlimited Ammo – □, △, ×, ○, □, ×, △
- Unlimited Grenades – ○, ×, ○, □, ×, ○, ×, ○
- Wacky Deaths – △ (x8)
- Walking Dead – × (x8)

Thomas Harding  
Santa Monica, CA



## DEAD TO RIGHTS

Enter all of these codes at the New Game screen. A message will appear under the title when entered correctly.

- 10,000 Bullets Mode – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press Up, Left, Down, Right, ○
- All Disarms Unlocked – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press □ (x2), ○ (x2), Right
- All Enemies Disarmed – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press Right, □, Left, ○, △
- All Headshot Kills – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press □ (x3), Down, Right
- Double Melee Damage – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press ○ (x2), Up (x2), □
- Infinite Armor – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press Up (x3), □, Down
- Invincible Human Shields – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press □, △, ○, △, □
- Invisibility – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press △ (x2), Up (x2), △
- Level Select – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press Down, Left, Down, △, Down
- More Accurate Enemy Fire – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press △, □, Left (x2), ○
- Powerful Punches & Kicks – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press Down, ○, Left (x3)
- One-Shot Kills – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press △, ○ (x3), Left
- Unlimited Adrenaline – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press Left, Right, Left, ○, □
- Unlimited Dual Guncons – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press △, ○, Up (x3)
- Unlimited Health – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press □, △, Left, Up, Right
- Unlimited Shadow Stamina – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press ○, □, △, ○, Down
- Unlimited Shotgun Ammo – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press Right, ○ (x3), □
- Wussy Mode – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press □, Left, △, Up, Down

Robin Williams  
Noteverfunny Village, ID

## CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER

The classic Konami code is still around. It simply received a next-generation upgrade. This cheat can only be entered at the Title Screen with the second controller. A sound will ring out when the code has been activated.

- 30 Lives – Up (x2), Down (x2), L1, R1, L2, R2, L3, R3
- "The GI Staff"  
Minneapolis, MN



## THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS

Enter all of these codes from the in-game pause menu. A sound will confirm correctly code entry.

- 1,000 Experience Points – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press ×, Down (x3). Keep entering this code to raise your character level.
- Level 2 Skills – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press ○, Right, ○, Right
- Level 3 Skills – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press △, Up, △, Up
- Level 4 Skills – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press □, Left, □, Left
- Level 5 Skills – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press × (x2), Down (x2)
- Replenish Ammo – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press ×, Down, △, Up
- Restore Health – Hold L1, L2, R1, and R2, then press △, Down, ×, Up

"The Rhino"  
Toledo, OH

## RATCHET & CLANK

To activate these cheats, you'll first need to complete the game. Now, perform the moves below with Ratchet during gameplay to activate the corresponding cheat within the Goodies menu.

- Clank Big Head Mode – Flip Back, Hyper-Strike, Comet-Strike, Double Jump, Hyper-Strike, Flip to the Left, Flip to the Right, Crouch
- Enemy Big Head Mode – Stretch Jump, Flip Back (x3), Stretch Jump, Flip Back (x3), Stretch Jump, Flip Back (x3), Crouch
- Mirrored Levels – Flip to the Left (x4), 3-Hit Wrench Combo, Hyper Strike, Double Flip to the Right, Flip to the Right, Flip to the Right, Double Jump, Crouch
- NPC Big Head Mode – Flip to the Left, Flip to the Right, Flip Back (x2), Comet-Strike, Double Jump, Comet-Strike, Hyper-Strike
- Ratchet Big Head Mode – Flip Back (x3), Crouch, Stretch Jump, Glide
- Temporary Invincibility – Comet-Strike (x4), Flip Back, Crouch, Flip Back, Crouch, Comet-Strike (x4)
- Trippy Contrails – Wall Jump (x10), Double Jump, Hyper-Strike

Susan Graz  
Queens, NY





**WHACKED!**

Enter all of these codes as Profile Names within Gameshow mode.

- All Arenas, Movies & Weapons – AROUNDDAWORLD
- All Characters & Food Products – FOODFIGHT
- Uber Mode – UBERHUNGARIAN

*"The Infamous Poop Stain Guy"*  
Skidmark, SD

**NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2003**

Enter all of these cheats at the Codes screen.

- More Alley-Oops – DUNKYOUU
- More Three-Pointers – THREE4ALL
- Skyline Court – CITYHOOPS
- Unlimited Player Creation Points – MOMONEY
- Unlimited Turbo – SPEEDY
- Volleyball Ball – SPIKEIT
- WNBA Ball – WEGOTGAME
- Xbox Ball – XBALL

*Shaq O'Neal*  
Burgerkingorbust City, CA



**SUPERMAN: THE MAN OF STEEL**

Enter this code from the in-game pause screen. You'll have to enter the sequence very quickly. When you do it correctly, a sound will ring out.

- Unlimited Health – Black, White, L Button, X, L Button, White

*Jimmy Olsen*  
Worstcomiccharacterever Town, ND

**DYNASTY WARRIORS 3**

**Bonus Video** – Highlight the Replay option at the Opening Edit screen, then hold the L and R Buttons and press A. Doing this will bring up an amusing video of soldiers dancing.

*Henri-Georges Clouzot*  
Detroit, MI



**X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION**

Enter the cheat below at the Main Menu. Once activated, you may insert the card and save.

- Unlock Everything – Hold L Button, then press Right (x2), Left (x2), Down, Up, B.

*"GI Droid Jr."*  
(location known – he's in your mom's panty drawer! Go find him while she sleeps!)

**SERIOUS SAM**

**All Cheats** – Head to the Main Menu, then click and hold the left analog stick and press Black, White, Y. If entered correctly, the Cheats option will appear below Credits. Enter this menu to find toggles for weapons, lives, health, and levels.

*"Crazy Kenny"*  
Jamestown, MA

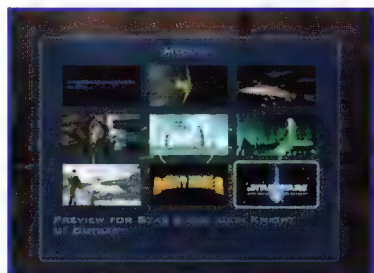


**MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE**

Enter all of these codes at the Enigma Machine. The lights will turn green if the code is entered correctly.

- Animation Reel – FLIPBOOK
- Bullet Shield Mode – NOHITSFORU
- Complete Previous Mission With Gold Star – SALMON
- Mission 2 – BASS
- Mission 3 – STURGEON
- Mission 4 – PIKE
- Mission 5 – TROUT
- Mission 6 – CATFISH
- Paintball FMV – COTOBREATH

*Benny Jets*  
Brisbane, IL



**STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS**

Enter these codes at the Password screen.

- All Movies – CINEMA
- Battle Droid (Academy: Geonosis) – ROGERROGER
- Bonus Missions for Prior Mission Complete – YUB\_YUB
- Developer Pictures – SAYCHEESE
- Infinite Special & Secondary Weapons – CHOSEN1
- Invincibility – 1WITHFORCE
- Multiplayer Level Select – FRAGFIESTA
- Wookie (Academy: Geonosis) – FUZZBALL

**Ewok Theme Song** – Enter the Options menu, then press Up (x2), Down (x2), Left, Right, B, A, Start.  
*"The Rhino"*  
Toledo, OH

**MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE**

Enter all of these codes at the Enigma Machine (in the options menu). The lights will turn green if the code is entered correctly.

- Rubber Grenade Mode – BOUNCE
- Silver Bullet Mode – SILVERSHOT
- Snipe-O-Rama Mode – SUPERSHOT
- Mission 2 – EAGLE
- Mission 3 – HAWK
- Mission 4 – PARROT
- Mission 5 – DOVE
- Mission 6 – TOUCAN
- Mission 7 – SEAGULL

*Adam Sandler*  
New York, NY

**X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION**

Enter the cheat below at the Main Menu.

- One Hit Kills – Up (x2), Down (x2), X, Y (x2), X
- Toggle AI – Up (x2), Down (x2), A (x2), B (x2), X (x2), Y (x2)
- Unlimited Supers – Up (x2), Down (x2), A, X, A, X
- Unlock Everything – Up (x2), Down (x2), Left, Right, Left, Right, A, B, Start (x2)

*"The Game Molester"*  
Washington, DC

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# CLASSIC GI

## THE KEEPER OF THE FLAME

GI INTERVIEWS INTELLIVISION'S KEITH ROBINSON

*While it was never the commercial success that the Atari 2600 was, the Intellivision has always held a special spot in the hearts of old-school game enthusiasts. Known for its impressive (for its day) graphical prowess and some of the best early sports games ever created, Intellivision is a well-loved piece of video game history. For Keith Robinson, the Intellivision has been much more than an old piece of hardware; it has been one of the central facets of his life. Starting as a young programmer for Mattel in 1981, Keith wore many hats at the company, overseeing development teams, starting its French offices, and even designing box art and illustrations for cartridges. He was also the lead programmer on the well-remembered Tron: Solar Sailor.*

*Today, Keith is also the man who is charged with keeping the spirit and memory of Intellivision alive. Through his independent company, Intellivision Productions, he has overseen the release of several compilations of classic Mattel software for PC, Mac, PlayStation, and, most recently, cellular phones. Classic GI recently talked with Robinson, gathering some of his thoughts and reflections on Intellivision's past, present, and future.*

**First off, how did you get into computers and video games in your youth, and how did you come to be involved with Mattel and the Intellivision?**

I was working in special effects in Hollywood. I had an interest in both art and computers, and I was looking to merge them, so I did some special effects work. Through another guy that was doing special effects, I was introduced to a guy that was doing the movie *Tron* at Triple-I in Culver City. So, we were talking



Keith Robinson, working the crowd at the Classic Game Expo

about *Tron*, and that got us talking about video games. That got me curious about how video games were being produced, because I didn't know much about them. Coincidentally, a day or two later, I heard on the radio that Mattel was having a job fair because they were looking for Intellivision programmers. I went to see what it was all about, and they snared me.

**Talk about the Blue Sky Rangers [the name given to the original Intellivision programmers]. You guys seem like you were a pretty close-knit group. What was it like back in the heyday in terms of the working environment? It must have been a pretty crazy place to work...**



**As an Intellivision programmer, Keith's biggest success was *Tron: Solar Sailor***

The best description anybody ever gave it, and I've used it before, was when somebody said that it was like living in the dorms. The Mattel Electronics building that Intellivision was in was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There was never a time that you went in there when somebody wasn't already working. You go in, Sunday at 3 a.m., yell out, "Hello!" and there was somebody there, working on a game. An important part of Intellivision was that cross-pollination of everyone working on games and looking at other people's games and that competition between programmers.

**Did management give you a fairly long leash?**

Yes. They really looked at how the game was progressing, not what hours you were there. There were some people that never showed up until three in the afternoon, and worked all night, and there were some people



that kept a nine to five. Most of us were under 25, for a lot of people it was their first job out of school, so we were kind of undisciplined to begin with. It allowed free reign and free creativity, and it was more based on what the results were. It didn't really start getting to the point of being really corporate and really structured until about the middle of 1983.

**Why do you think that the Intellivision was never able to close the gap with Atari? Was it bad business decisions?**

They had the advantage because they had the arcade division. Name brands are a big part of it. If you want to play Pac-Man, Defender, or Asteroids, you get an Atari 2600. The biggest names in the arcades were on the 2600. Also, they had a two-year head start on us, and, for most of the time, it cost about half of what an Intellivision cost. If what you wanted was something that was based on a name brand, you got an Atari. The fact of the matter was that many of those arcade translations weren't very good. In a lot of cases, we had games of a similar type that were more fun. Something like Lock N' Chase was better than the Atari Pac-Man that came out.

Now, I always feel bad when I pick on some of the 2600 games. I was in an interview for television once, and they asked me what caused the crash and I said, "Well, there was a glut and you just a lot of bad games; look at E.T., for example. That was a terrible game." Then, Electric Playground immediately cuts to the guy that had



programmed E.T. [Howard Scott Warshaw] He's going, "Well, I only had two months!" [Laughs] So, there I am trashing this guy's game, and he's saying, "I did the best I could!" [Laughs] I'm certainly not saying that I could have done better in two months, but that was the reality of the situation then. Companies bought a brand name, and the game came second.

**How did you guys in the Rangers feel about the M Network Games - Mattel making games for Atari and other competing systems - was this basically a sign that the company was giving up?**

We didn't feel they were giving up on Intellivision, but...um...I was in the room when they announced it to the programmers that were going to have to do it. [The programmers] were kind of like, "Eh...well, yeah, okay." The reality is, at the time they did it there were three million Intellivisions in homes and 12 million Atari 2600s. Realistically, if we can do Astromash, and then do Astroblast - which was the 2600 version - there's another 12 million units we could sell. It made sense on that score. But, once they started saying, "Here's a game that's great on the Intellivision, how are you going to do it on 2600?" You'd say, "Well, we can't do it on 2600." They'd say, "Well, then we're not going to do it at all." That was what started happening in 1983. If the game couldn't be done on all systems, then they really didn't want to do it.

**Describe what it was like to be around for the crash of '83-'84. Was this something you saw coming, or did you think the boom would last forever?**

Pretty much all of 1983, there was a feeling that things were in bad shape, but there was still hope that we would pull out of it. [The feeling was] "Wait till they see the new products we've got, things are going to be great!" They were waiting for the Consumer Electronics Show of June 1983. CES came and went, and everyone said, "Well, that's okay - nothing great." That was when everybody realized we were in real trouble. We couldn't go on the way we were going on. I think that most people knew by the Christmas of '83 that this was it, and we weren't coming back. Even Gabriel Baum, the vice president who did the toast at the Christmas party, was very careful not to make it sound like a real rallying cry for Mattel. It's very interesting the wording he used. He said that this was a very good group, and how he looked forward to all the projects

we'd be working on in the future. But he never made it sound like we'd be doing those projects at Mattel! [Laughs]

**Were you involved with the new INTV corporation that Mattel sold off?**

The senior vice president of marketing at Mattel, Terry Valkeski, had joined the company in the summer of '83. He joined when they got rid of the old people. He looked at the numbers and [noticed that] the demand for video games was actually increasing. He said, "Well, if everybody else is going to get out of the market, that's a great time to get into the market." He found some investors, and said, "Look, Mattel's got all this inventory sitting around. Let's buy it and liquidate it." So he bought all the rights to the Intellivision, and he liquidated everything. Then, on a shoestring budget, he started building new consoles, and hired back some of the old programmers to do new games. By doing a nice economical three-or-four-games-a-year plan, he kept going through the end of the '80s. I stayed on and designed most of the packaging for the games. I did their packaging, illustrations, and advertising pretty much through the end of the '80s. I did a catalog in 1990, which was the last one.

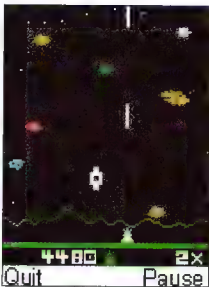
**Talk about some of your efforts to keep the Intellivision name alive. How did you get the rights back? What projects do you have going in the future?**

The most important thing is to keep Intellivision out there, so people can keep playing the games. I'm pretty happy that right now between the two compilations we have - Intellivision Lives and Intellivision Rocks - we have all 50 of the games from Mattel and INTV and 20 of the games from Imagic and Activision.

We did PC and Mac, Activision did the PlayStation collection, and we've got them on cell phones now. Nextel, Sprint, and some of the other providers have Astromash, Skiing, and some of the sports games. I've talked to a lot of people that really miss their Intellivision. People say, "I'm so glad you're doing this. I loved it, but I went back home and my Mom had sold it at a garage sale." There's that nostalgic thing about it, but what's nice about it - especially on the cell phones - is that, in certain situations, those are the games that people want to play. If you're standing in line at the post office, you want to play a quick little game like Astromash.



**In partnership with THQ, Robinson's Intellivision Productions has released several classic games for many popular cell phone providers**



## THIS MONTH IN GAMING HISTORY

Way back in January of 1983, Mattel announced its plans to produce the Intellivision II, a smaller and more affordable version of its existing system. The Intellivision II featured a host of improvements, most importantly detachable keypads that could be replaced if broken. Also, there were plans to market an Intellivision Computer

Adaptor, which would allow for keyboard functionality and increase its processing power. Additional plans called for a musical keyboard attachment. Unfortunately, this unit came out right as the game industry was beginning to collapse, so it was doomed to failure.



CLASSIC GI

# GREATEST GAME OF ALL TIME

By Taylor Nuttycombe

Every month one of Game Informer's readers picks his or her personal choice for Greatest Game Of All Time.



## FINAL FANTASY VII

■ FORMAT 1-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME  
■ PUBLISHER SQUARESOFT

Way back in the autumn of '97, I received this game as a gift since its release was only a few days prior to my birthday. Although I received other presents that day, this is the only one I looked at until that Christmas. I barely took my eyes away from the screen; and then only during those few painful moments when I felt my bladder was going to explode, did I press pause. Final Fantasy VII was like a drug and I was addicted.

Whenever I pop this game into my PlayStation, I'm still amazed. The graphics were second-to-none at the time, with jaw-dropping FMV sequences in abundance. The story-line was just as (if not more) impressive as the graphics. The plot always had you guessing as to what was going to happen next. The plot twists had you surprised for weeks, such as Aeris' famous death midway through the game. As always in FF games, the gameplay was superb. The ATB system was still used, as in the previous three titles in the series. Characters were highly customizable through the Materia system, which was much like the Espers of FF VI, allowing players to use whatever spells they have attached to their equipment as well as learn new ones through fighting.

If you were to forget everything I stated in the previous paragraph, there is still one thing that made this game like no other. This is the title that allowed those not familiar with the RPG genre in on the fun. The difficulty was lower than that in the previous ones in the series, allowing newcomers to ease into a different kind of game. Final Fantasy VII could be called the universal RPG.

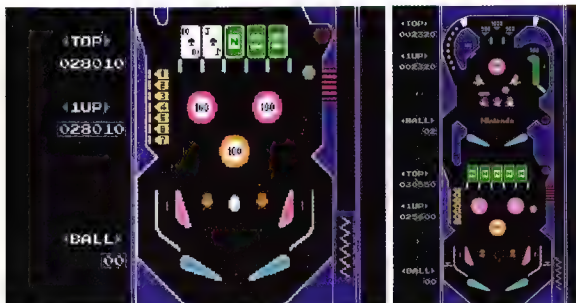
Now that you've heard the details, let me give you the reality of this game. I've never played such an interesting RPG in my life. Even now, almost five full years later, I still play and enjoy it. I've wasted countless hours of my life with this in my PlayStation and am still not done with it. This is the type of game you will want to find and do everything in, and by everything I mean EVERYTHING. I've taken time out of being with my friends and family so I can finally breed a Golden Chocobo. I've lost much needed sleep to level up my characters so I might have a chance against Ruby Weapon. I even decided to use this Sunday night to write into some stupid magazine on how this is the greatest game of all time.

NES

## PINBALL



RETRO RATING  
**8**



Long ago, mythical beasts ruled the arcades. These mammoths were five feet tall and six feet long. People repeatedly gave them money to appease their ominous form. They were called pinball tables. Video game representations of the silver ball have been going on for over two decades now. Nintendo's Pinball released with the NES, and gives you one, two-screen table. While this even seemed kind of stingy back in the day, the physics still work well today. The same strategies you use in bars and bowling alleys work well here. Hold your flipper to stop the ball, use it's end to send the little sphere soaring, etc. Slight bonuses and table modifications occur, giving you some variety. Seals balance balls and little chicks pop out of eggs, but there isn't much graphical eye candy to be seen. Pinball couldn't be more simplistic, but there is enough entertainment value here to justify buying it for the e-Reader, or searching it out in *Enough Crossing*.

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER NINTENDO ■ DEVELOPER NINTENDO  
■ YEAR RELEASED 1985

NES

## ICE CLIMBER



RETRO RATING  
**7.5**



Virtually forgotten since its release on NES, *Ice Climber* has seen a resurgence in the last year. First, the two hammer-wielding tots were playable characters in *GameCube's* *Super Smash Bros. Melee*; and recently, this game was released as an e-card. It's about time this title got the respect it deserves. It took some of the same themes used in *Donkey Kong* and *Mario Bros.*, and turned out to be an improvement over both. The hammer you carry is used to both smash the ice above you, and beat baby seals – hey, it was the politically incorrect '80s, okay? Each of the 32 mountains (which you can select from at the title screen by hitting up or down) features many levels of climbing. The jumping is more precise than *Mario Bros.* – you can control direction mid-jump – the combat is entertaining, and there are even *Super Mario*-style floating platforms. *Ice Climber* is a classic in every way. It amuses and challenges at the same time, and offers gameplay that doesn't get stale.

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER NINTENDO ■ DEVELOPER NINTENDO  
■ YEAR RELEASED 1985

NES

## URBAN CHAMPION



RETRO RATING  
**8.25**



One-on-one fighting games have had ups and downs in this industry. Many like to credit *Street Fighter II* as the first great one, and rightly so. However, *Urban Champion* deserves some respect, too. It's a war to rule the 'hood. The blue-haired gangstas are fighting the green-haired thugs for supremacy. While they only have two moves (face punch and body blow) in their arsenal, there is a lot more strategy to these brawls than meets the eye. The A button punches are faster, but do less damage than B button ones. Hitting up guards the face, and down does the same for the body. Hits can be avoided by tapping backward to dodge. Opponents can be stunned by flowerpots tossed out of windows by concerned citizens. Backing someone into an open manhole will end things really fast. If the cops come around, just try to act casual until the heat is off, then resume the slaughter! The loser gets carted off to juvi by the fuzz. There's even a multiplayer mode here. This is also one of the best e-card games released yet (along with *Excitebike*). Go for it.

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ PUBLISHER NINTENDO ■ DEVELOPER NINTENDO  
■ YEAR RELEASED 1986

NES

## MARIO BROS.



RETRO RATING  
**7**



Exhausted with hunting giant monkeys, Mario took to plumbing. Before revolutionizing video games with the NES all-time great *Super Mario Bros.*, the brothers Mario paid their dues in this classic title. First appearing in arcades in 1983, *Mario Bros.* dumps you in a pipe-filled sewer. Your mission? Get rid of the naughty turtles and other creatures strutting around like they own the place. Each one-room level has a few floors of platforms. To eliminate the wildlife, Mario (or Luigi, in two-player) jump while below a baddie to knock it upside down. Then, it's just a matter of going up and kicking the enemy to send it packing. Unlike every *Mario* game since, the plumbers die if they jump on the heads of their foes. Also, Mario doesn't have the sweet control he's known for. The two-player mode features a nice competitive atmosphere, but the fun probably won't hold up for more than an hour or two. This game has shown up on each of the three *Super Mario Advance* carts, as well as an e-card. Pick it up for a history lesson more than a good time.

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ PUBLISHER NINTENDO ■ DEVELOPER NINTENDO  
■ YEAR RELEASED 1986





NES  
**RYGAR**

**THE BASICS**



**Stats**

**Tone** – Measures your strength. Increases with kills and the higher it is, the easier it is to slay foes.  
**Last** – Experience. As it builds up, extra health will be added to your overall total.  
**Mind** – Used to cast spells. Obtained by picking up the star icons from enemies. Seven points is the maximum.

**Spells**

**Power Up** – Costs three points and gives you added strength until you're killed.

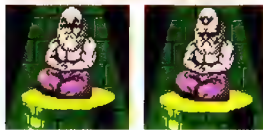
**Attack & Assail** – Extends the hit radius of the Diskarmor for a limited time. Costs five points.

**Recover** – Uses all your Mind points, and will give you full health.

**Items**

These are rewards you will receive during your quest. They will be outfitted automatically when you get them. Only the Recovery Medicine and the Pegasus Flute on the left side need be selected in order to use.

**HERMITS AND INDORAS**



Hermit

Indora

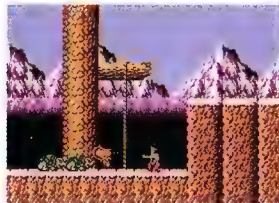
These mellow cats hang out in caves throughout the game. Visit them for quest clues, a replenishment of health, and to receive important items.

**COMBAT STRATEGIES**

• Enemies like Rollers and Pragokelis can be momentarily stopped in their tracks (like in Super Mario Bros.) by jumping on top of them.

- Get used to quickly switching sides from left to right while throwing your Diskarmor out.
- Always watch for enemies from behind.
- When you are hanging by the Grappling Hook, you can still use your Diskarmor.

**TRICKS**

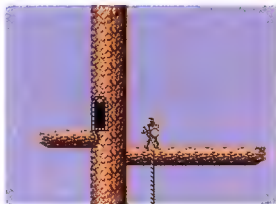


• One easy way to build up Tone and Last points – especially early on – is to back yourself against a platform. This means that enemies only spawn and come at you from one direction, making for easy kills and mucho points.

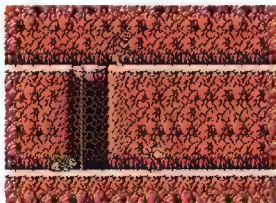
• While you are fighting Belgar, if he knocks you out the door with one of his missiles, you will find yourself outside of Ligar's Castle when you die and restart the game.

• To skip backtracking through levels in order to get back to Garloz, commit suicide. When you restart, you will respawn at the beginning of the level. Then you can duck left through the door and skip walking all the way through the area.

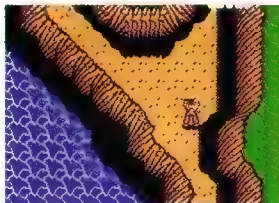
**GRAN MOUNTAINS**



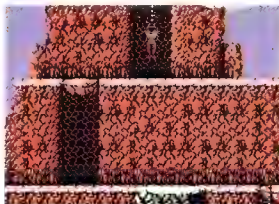
Proceed across the plain. Do the experience trick if you wish. When you come to the second rope, shimmy up and go into the doorway. Get the clue from the Hermit and leave. Don't go back down the rope. Jump to your right and scale down from here.



Once on the ground again, beware of the Phollorakos which will drop down from the ledges above. Go all the way to the right and ascend the last rope you see. Enter the door to your left. If you want to explore this area, you can do so and meet up with some Hermits who will give you various hints. However, you will return here later in the game.



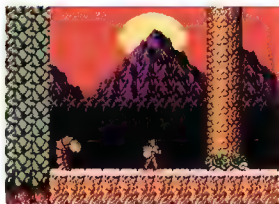
Move north, looking out for the Hyokings that will appear out of nowhere and charge down at you. Standing your ground while letting your Diskarmor fly is another way to rack up the experience. Take a left at the crack in the screen. March north, take the right-hand branch and beware of the Kinoble, which will spit orbs at you. The best way to beat this tree is to strike as soon as he appears, and then run away to avoid being hit. Follow the path as it curves around to the right. Once you are out in the open, you will find a flight of stairs if you walk down and right. Go up and enter the hut to receive the Grappling Hook. Use this by pressing up or down and B.



If you want to return to Gran Mountains, you can do so now. Go up to the third tier (with the help of your new tool, using it at the rope-less passages of the mountain) and all the way to the left, and you'll find a rope at the edge of a cliff. Ascend it to meet a Hermit who will recharge your health. Now return to the beginning of Garloz and take a right instead of a left. Continue up and around the water. Turn right at the first opportunity. Go up the stairs to reach the next stage. If you're in need of a health boost, walk diagonally right of the stairs and up on the following screen. At the top of this clearing is a helpful Hermit.

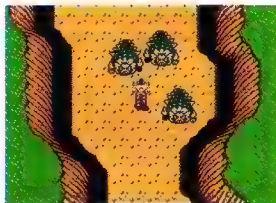
**WALKTHROUGH**

**SUERU MOUNTAINS**

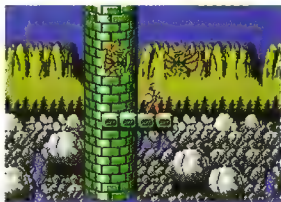


Do not tarry. As soon as Rygar appears onscreen, go right and watch your back for Rollers. Before you jump up to the platform, face left and start killing spawning enemies to pick up some easy experience.

**GARLOZ**



## ROLSA VALLEY



As you walk along, you'll encounter the dragon-like Olbis. These guys attack you with two patterns. Either they fly up and over you to attack from the opposite side, or they descend at you diagonally. Regardless, they are no big whoop. Send your Grappling Hook up (do this even if you can't see a platform above you to hang it on – if it catches, you're in business) and hop across the towers to cross the water chasm.



Out of thin air, the bat/devil hybrid Molgoljin will appear. Keep flailing your Diskarmor until he's toast or simply jump up and hit him. Don't bother climbing all the way up the stone beanstalk in the middle of the stage just yet, Jack, it won't do you any good at this point in the game. After doing some careful jumping from pillar to pillar, continue all the way to the right to reach the Forest of Eruga.

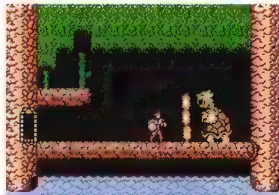
## FOREST OF ERUGA



Move along the screen's bottom, defeating the Olbis and spike-shooting Kinatarnos till you can't continue anymore. Take the nearest rope up and skip across the treetops. You'll basically continue this process until the end of the forest. When you encounter Kinatarnoses lying on the bottom branches, the best thing to do is to cast Attack & Assail and hit them from a dis-

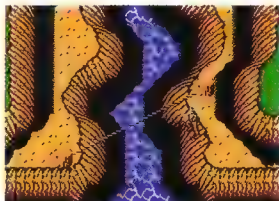
tance. Otherwise, jump to avoid their attack and land close to them. As soon as you land, crouch and extend your Diskarmor.

## BOSS BATTLE: Eruga



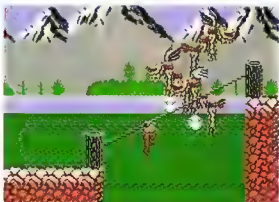
The best strategy here is to run up to the boss as soon as you enter the room. Start pummeling him without stopping. He'll hit you once, but since you can still strike him while you are invincible, this baddie will go bye-bye quickly. Pick up the Wind Pulley and find yourself back in Garloz.

## GARLOZ



You'll appear back at the entrance that led to Rolsa Valley. Go down and exit at the left. Take the rope across the river. The Wind Pulley will attach itself automatically, but the best way to ensure this (and to avoid dying needlessly) is to lineup Rygar's waist with the rope and then slowly inch forward. When the pulley connects, he'll go into a hanging pose. Now you know it's safe to go across. Continue south till you can't anymore, and take a left. Slide across the rope and keep going left until you come to a cave at the top of the screen.

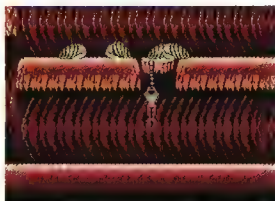
## MOUNT PRIMEVAL



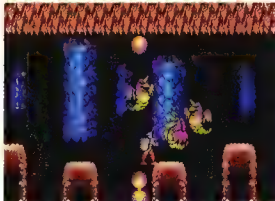
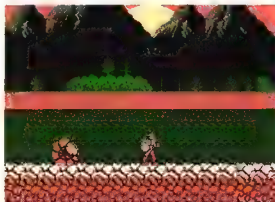
Don't rush into this level. As soon as you see yourself, stand your ground and

unfurl the Diskarmor. A Roller will come at you from out of thin air. This level is difficult, due to the onslaught of foes from above and below. The best thing to do is to make sure your health is at full and cast Power Up and Recover if you can. Also, to overcome the flying Epolcon, jumping with the Diskarmor is recommended. Luckily, it's a fairly short jaunt.

## SAGILA'S CAVE



Need a little recharge? Make your way down two levels (you can use the Grappling Hook to climb down at the little island spot) and all the way to the left for a health pick-up from a Hermit. On your way there, beware of the Sunyugi, who will jump off the ledge above you. The enemies here, however, can all be killed in familiar ways. Don't bother going all the way to the bottom area of the caves. Instead, return to the level you started on and continue heading right. When using the Pulley over the chasm, you can avoid the orbs by sliding under, not over them.



You'll find yourself outside briefly, but there are no surprises here. After returning to the caves, go down two levels. Beware of the Molgoljin, who will pass through the environments to get you. Once you're at the bottom, hop across the platforms to the left. The best way to pass the gap is to shoot the orb and

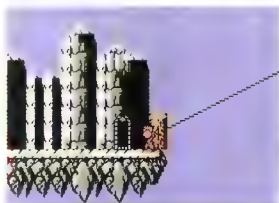
then immediately jump across. As soon as you land, cast Attack & Assail in order to face the hoard of Molgoljin who will converge on you as you platform. Go down at the end of this area and do more of the same to the right.

## BOSS BATTLE: Sagila

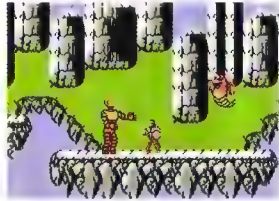


Sagila will come at you straight away, but ignore him and go to the middle of the screen. Send your Grappling Hook up, and hang in mid-air. Now all you have to do is whip him as he moves around you. If you can't use Attack & Assail, this may take a while, and you may incur a couple of hits; but this guy's easy like a Sunday morning. Exit stage right and pick up your parting gift – the Crossbow.

## LAPSI



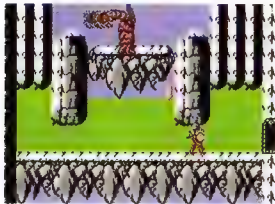
To get to Lapsis, return to the healer in Garloz. After refilling your health, proceed down and all the way to the right. Go up the stairs and into the hut. This beginning area is very sparse. After visiting the Hermit, return to the platform below him, cross to your right and send your hook up to continue, where you'll run into the robot Bargan. For an easy kill, duck into the doorway. When you come out, Bargan will respawn by falling from the sky. Even before he lands, start wailing on him and he'll die quickly.





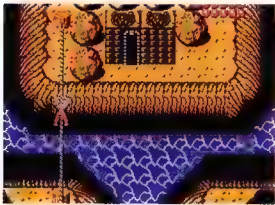
You can now send out lines from the tree stumps with your Crossbow (using the B button). Do this until you run into the well-spoken but violent Hermit, then hook downwards. Continue with Grappling Hook and Crossbow – remember that you can dispatch foes while hanging in mid-air. After wading through some Bargan (when they bookend you, be sure to jump and bounce off their heads), take the Hermit's advice and go down. Head left and take care of some old friends before entering Belgar's lair.

**BOSS BATTLE: Belgar**

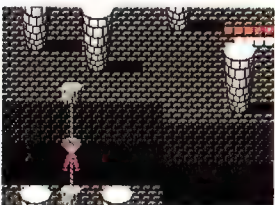


Here's a cheap but effective way to get rid of Belgar. As soon as you enter the room, grapple down into empty air. When you come back up, this boss will be lower in the sky. Now all you have to do is jump up, hit him with your Diskarmor, and dodge his intermittent shots. Pick up your door prize – Warrior's Coat of Arms.

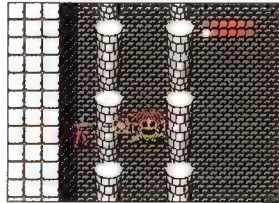
**DRAGO'S PALACE**



To get to Drago's Palace you'll have to trek to the opposite side of Garloz. Proceed like you were going to go to Mount Primeval – feel free to stop by that healing Hermit you've visited before walking there. Instead of going to Mount Primeval, however, keep circling around the island to discover a pulley stump without a rope. Using your Crossbow, create a way across to Drago's Palace.



Once inside, beware that this top-down level features many of the same enemies as Garloz, but they're faster. March up to the pillars in the middle of the room and hang a right. Make your way up the screen. When the room opens up, crossbow across and go to the right. Visit the Indora, get a health boost, and the Recovery Medicine. If you return here, he'll give you the medicine each time. Return to the previous area and keep going left. Move down on the next screen and shimmy across the divide.



Go around the elbow and beware of the bulldog-like Germans which will chase you as soon as you appear. Follow this path left around another bend and up the screen. Make a right and keep going until you reach the area with a path of pillars with Kinobles in it. Due to a useful collision bug, you can throw your Diskarmor through the pillars to wax them.

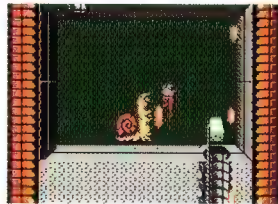
**BOSS BATTLE: Drago**



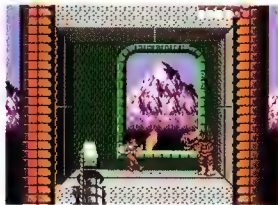
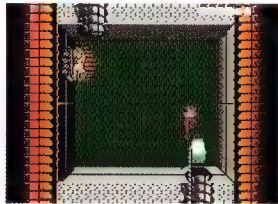
By now you should have at least 10, if not 11, health spheres, so this battle should pose no problem to you. Maneuver yourself to the center of the room and go to town on him. You should still have Recovery Medicine from earlier, but you most likely won't even need it. Make short work of him and get the hell out of Dodge with Indora's Suit of Amor in tow.

**TOWER OF GARBA**

After defeating Drago, you'll find yourself in Garloz. Backtrack to the beginning of the level and return to the Gran Mountains. Make your way to the stumps near the top, and crossbow your way to the right for the entrance to the Tower of Garba – look out for the Epolcon.



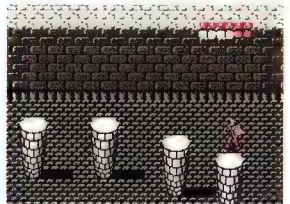
The tower is basically five boss battles. The first few you'll meet will be standard fare, while Demoro Bruzer is similar to the spider Saglia. Cast Attack & Assail and you'll be alright through all of them, including Deathpigor, the last boss here. There isn't a lot of room to maneuver, so we suggest you dodge a few bullets and just get close and flail away. You'll take a couple of hits, but that brief period of invincibility will be a great asset. For your trouble you receive the Pegasus Flute.



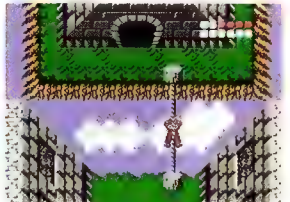
**LIGAR'S CASTLE**



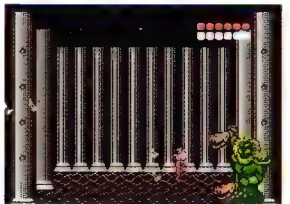
To get to the final confrontation, you'll have to return to Rolsa Valley. Remember that huge tower in the middle where the Hermit said you couldn't continue? Well, now you can by playing the Pegasus Flute. As soon as you get to the top, two Molgolins will attack. Leap over them and onto the top of the tower for the best vantage point.



This stage of the level is one large maze. To enter, go right and follow the perimeter walls until you find an entrance. The enemies here are difficult because of their speed and the small spaces they're in. The strategies for beating them are the same, however. Head through the doors until you come upon a courtyard offering three choices. Go down and to the right to meet an Indora who will give you Recovery Medicine. Return to the crossroads. Go left, down across the water, right, down and left through the pillars. Now go up, use your Crossbow, turn right, and proceed across to Ligar's Castle.



**BOSS BATTLE: Ligar**



You'll need most of your health for this final confrontation. Dodge a few bullets before getting in his face and letting go with the Diskarmor. For a brief respite, play the Pegasus Flute and Ligar will stop spitting his missiles. Keep an eye on your depleting health, and use the Recovery Medicine. Before long he'll be pushing up the daisies, and you can crown yourself a hero.



## ROBOTECH: THE MACROSS SAGA

**Manufacturer:** Ballantine Books  
**Website:** [www.randomhouse.com/BB/](http://www.randomhouse.com/BB/)  
**List Price:** \$6.99

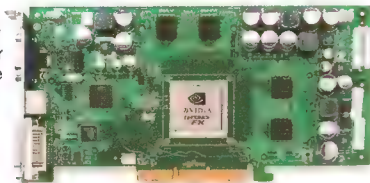
Can't you people take a hint? You need to read more! Your eyeballs are going to melt, what with all that television viewing. Reading opens your mind, dude, so open it to this: The new Robotech books not only have no pictures, but they have single-spaced lines too! When you read one of these things, you'll be all grown up. Plus, the books tie into the Robotech games that you own for your favorite next-generation console. This is a trend we're seeing more and more of, so it stands to reason that if you're a fan of a tried-and-true subject matter like Robotech, you'll probably see books coming your way that will enhance and expand the universe you've come to love.



## NVIDIA GEFORCE FX

**Manufacturer:** Nvidia  
**Website:** [www.nvidia.com](http://www.nvidia.com)  
**List Price:** \$360

Holy smoking graphics processor, Batman! This is the fastest son of a gun yet! Warning – You are about to enter an extreme nerd zone. The FX's statistics breakdown a little something like this: 256-bit chip technology, 128/256 MB of memory, 500MHz GPU Clock, a TV encoder on-chip, and a bunch of other stuff we can't even pronounce, let alone understand. Suffice it to say that if you buy this card, it's going to kick a whole lot of ass. There's even new heat-sink technology that will keep your newest investment free from meltdown.



## 1 000 GAME HEROES

**Manufacturer:** Taschen  
**Website:** [www.taschen.com](http://www.taschen.com)  
**List Price:** \$39.99

Are you in the market for a coffee-table book with a whole bunch of video game art in it? If so, *1000 Game Heroes* is for you. The text consists of a brief breakdown of each game displayed, but the display itself is the real hook. Thousands of gorgeous pictures have been put between the covers – some of them quite racy, if we do say so ourselves. The title of the book is a little odd, however. We're not quite sure where the Game Hero is in a title like Microsoft Flight Simulator 2002, but who's keeping track? The pictures are nice, and that's what counts. Plus, you can read about each game in three different languages! *Vive la Deutschland!*



## MOMO RACING FORCE FEEDBACK WHEEL

**Manufacturer:** Logitech • **Website:** [www.logitech.com](http://www.logitech.com) • **List Price:** \$99.95



Racing game enthusiasts, listen and listen well. This premiere wheel from Logitech is blazing a new path in the world of racing peripherals – and it has some pretty serious foot pedals as well. Take that NASCAR title to new heights, or drive drunk from the comfort of your own home; it's all possible with Logitech's help. If you get sick of racing, feel free to mount it on your passenger's side dashboard so your buddies can feel included in your real-life road trip. Remember these things, though: Rubbing is not racing when you're on an interstate highway; and yes, cutting people off is fun, but getting your face pounded is not. Capiche?

## STEALTH CONTROLLER

**Manufacturer:** Pelican Accessories  
**Website:** [www.pelicanacc.com](http://www.pelicanacc.com)  
**List Price:** \$19.99

Pelican is nothing if not persistent, and to reinforce this idea, it has come out with yet another iteration of the PlayStation 2 controller we all know and love. This model has headphones that plug directly into the unit, a "satin grip finish" that helps you hold on to your controller, repositioned L2/R2 buttons for comfort, heavier counter weights for more rumble, and a cord that's 25 percent longer than the Dual Shock's. You can practically order pizza on this sucker. In fact, if you got to a portion in a game where you were able to write out text, you could type in "Get me pizza," and if someone saw it, they just might do it. True, you could do that with most any controller, but you wouldn't look nearly as cool.





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