

First Look At
Diddy Kong Racing
For The N64

Pg. 46

Game Informer

CRASH 2

CORTEX STRIKES BACK

Naughty Dog Does It Again

PLUS:

F-Zero 64 • Tomb Raider 2 • San Francisco Rush • Yoshi's Story • NASCAR 98
Nightmare Creatures • NHL 98 • Sega Touring Car • One • Colony Wars

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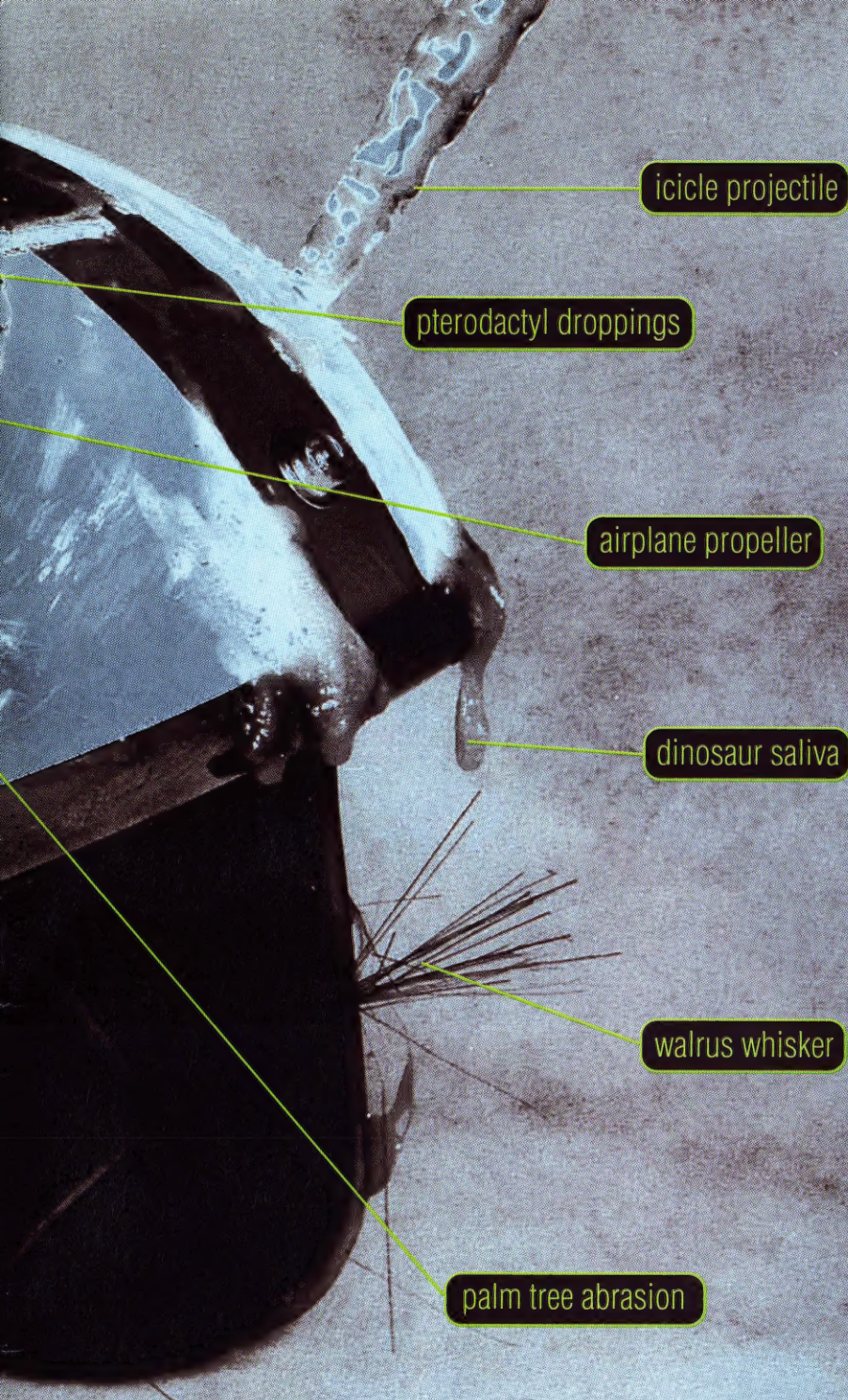
banana residue

elephant tusk impact

tire mark

third-degree lava burn





icicle projectile

pterodactyl droppings

airplane propeller

dinosaur saliva

walrus whisker

palm tree abrasion



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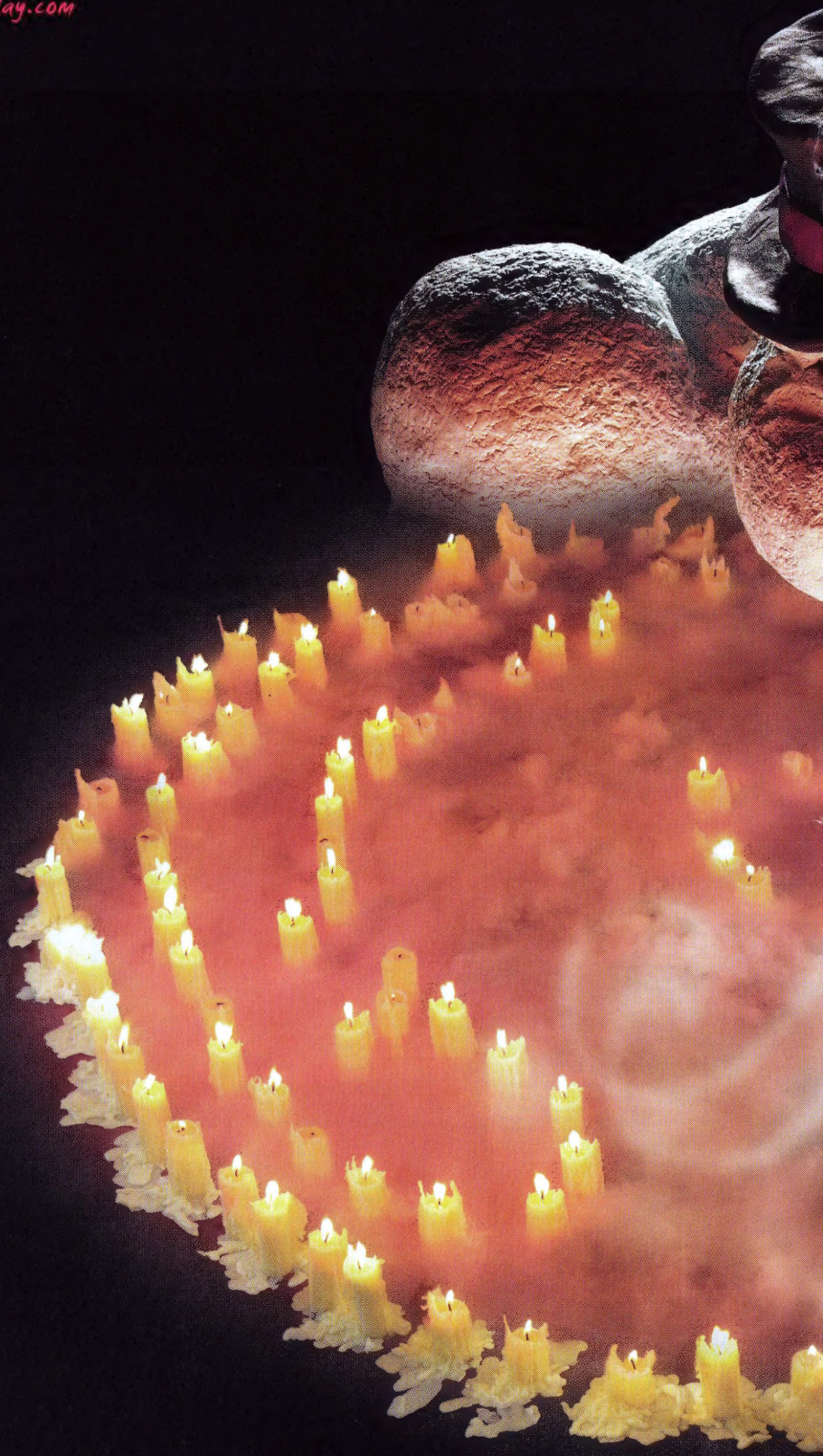
3D Breakthrough Environments



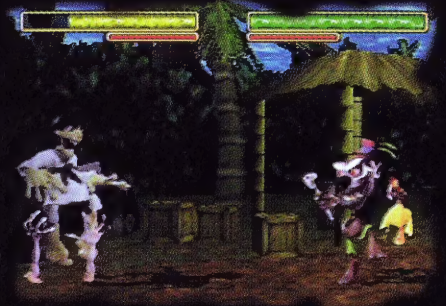
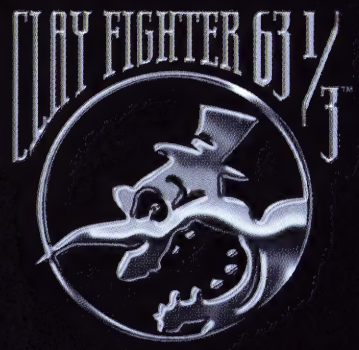
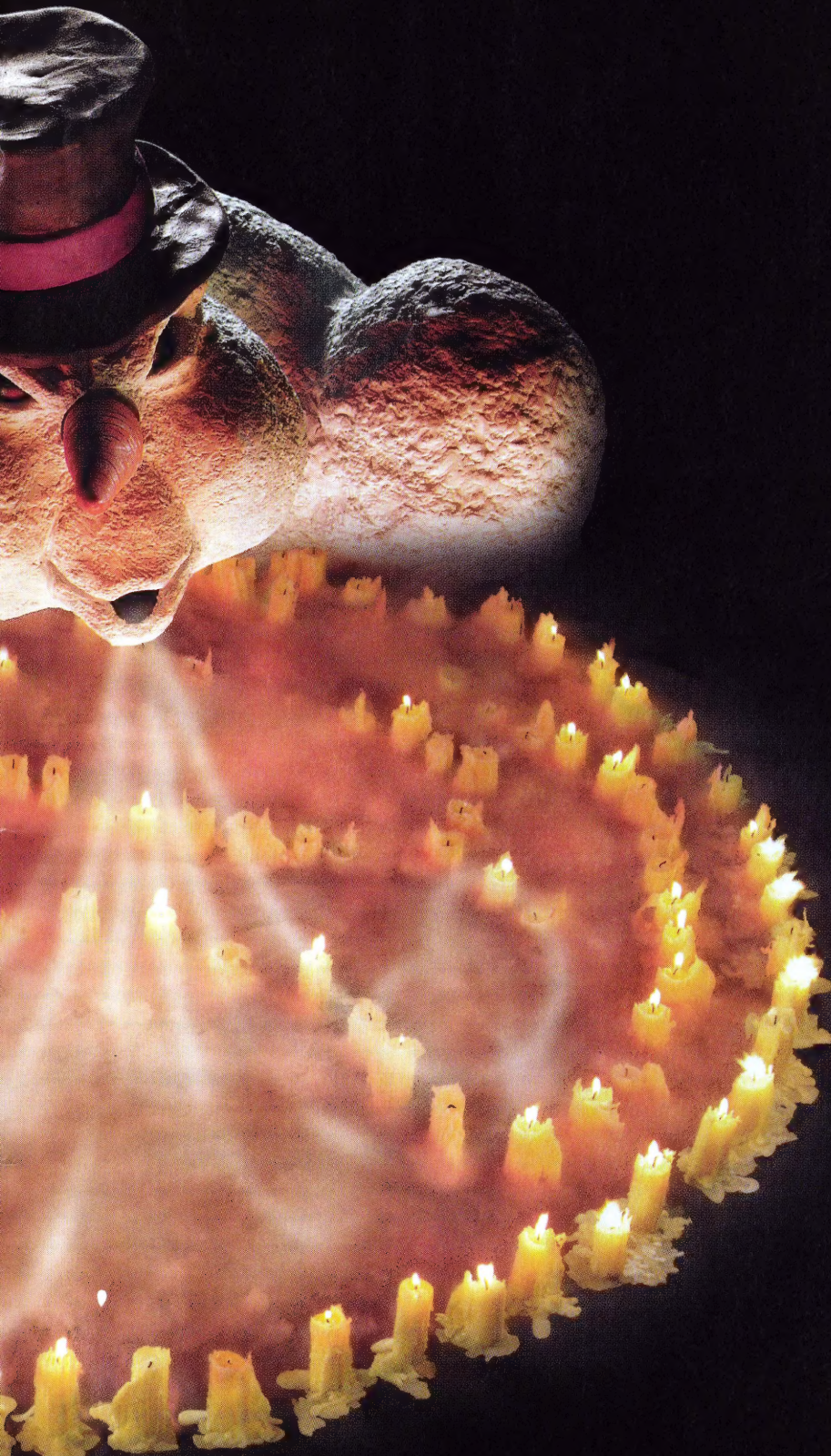
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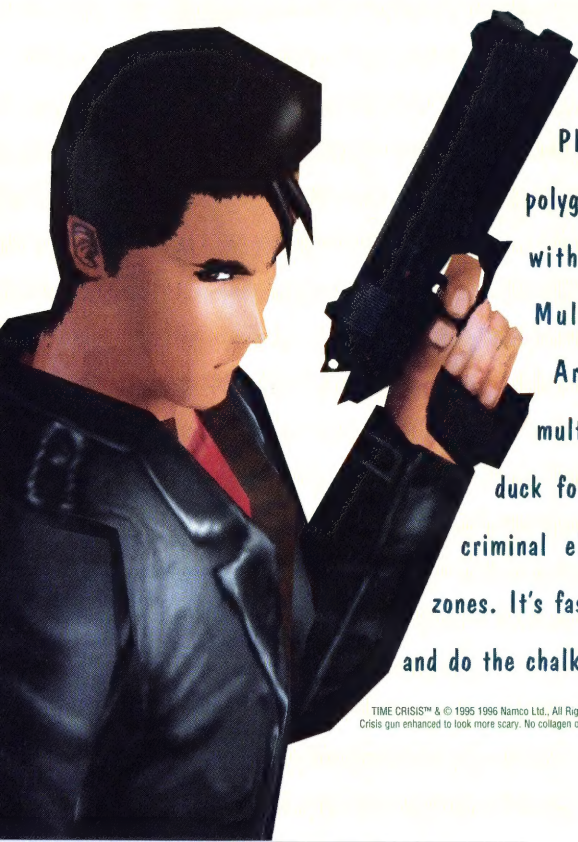
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and do the chalk outline later.  GUNZEN FOR USE WITH SOFTWARE THAT DISPLAYS THE GUNZEN LOGO.



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Correction:

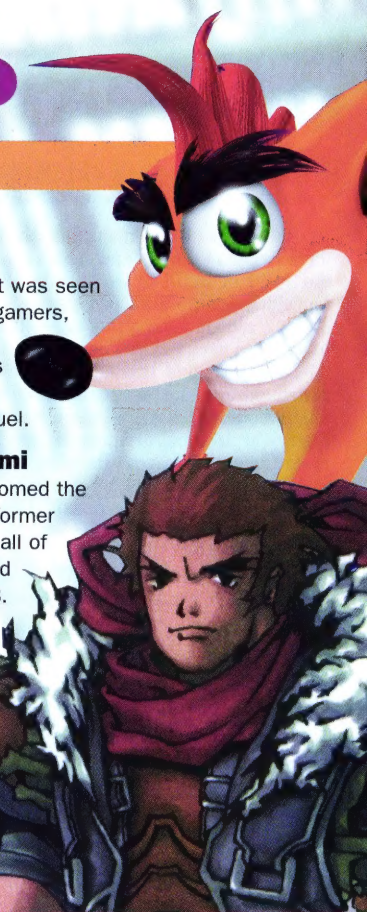
The cover story on Madden 64 in the October issue of "Game Informer" included images and player renderings from Madden 98 for the Sony PlayStation. Although both products are published by Electronic Arts, Madden 64 is not licensed by NFL Properties and does not include any NFL marks or logos. Madden 98 for the Sony PlayStation is licensed by NFL Properties, and therefore does include NFL-licensed marks or logos. The use of images and renderings from Madden 98 in the review of Madden 64 may have led readers to erroneously conclude that Madden 64 is licensed or endorsed by NFL Properties, or that Madden 64 includes NFL-licensed property. Such is not the case. Game Informer Magazine has posted this notice at the request of Electronic Arts.

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Last year a strange man dressed as an orange rat was seen prowling in the Nintendo parking lot. Unknown to gamers, this man was the prophet for the coming of the Bandicoot. Crash Bandicoot that is. And now he is back in his second adventure and Game Informer has got the goods on this superb PlayStation sequel.

22 Feature: Behind the Scenes At Konami
For the first time in history, Konami of Japan welcomed the U.S. press into their hallowed halls, and Game Informer was there to cover it. Find out the latest news on all of Konami's games including Metal Gear Solid, Hybrid Heaven, Castlevania 3D, and NBA In the Zone '98.

28 Feature: GI World Tour
In September, there are two huge video game conventions that take place on different sides of the globe – the Tokyo Game Show and the ECTS. Since you can't attend them, Game Informer did. This is a must read report that takes a glimpse into the future of video gaming and a look at the gaming oddities of foreign lands.



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Game.com
Wheel of Fortune, Indy 500



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By Andrew McNamara

Will the DD64 Ever Come Out?

As you read this magazine, Game Informer will have already been to Japan and seen the latest news concerning the 64DD (or DD64 as I have heard it referred to by Howard Lincoln himself). What we will see is unknown to me, but I do have a good feeling that the 64DD will never make it to our shores even before I get to Japan.

Now I realize this is somewhat of a controversial statement to make, but it seems to be the only conclusion about the 64DD that makes sense. Nintendo has had a long history of creating peripherals that never appear, or only materialize in Japan. Remember the SNES CD-ROM attachment called the PlayStation? Never showed. How about this...did you know the NES had a hard drive available for it only in Japan? Or what about the SNES Satellite View? Ever heard of it?

Certainly, some of our more serious readers know that most of these items are available only in Japan (the SNES

PlayStation not being one of them), but doesn't it sound familiar? Now think about the 64DD -- it has a removable hard drive called an MO and a modem. Sound like the Satellite View and a hard drive? I think so.

Now why would Nintendo want to confuse its followers with a new peripheral that only takes special games that are created especially for the 64DD, when Nintendo 64 gamers are already complaining about the lack of girth in their library? The answer is obvious -- they wouldn't.

I know the 64DD sounds like a great system (even though we really don't know that much about it), but I wouldn't start saving my pennies just yet. Nintendo is notorious for delays, so I think they'll string us along on this one for a while. But in the end, the 64DD is never coming out here. Japan? Maybe.

Paul, The Game Professor

"I've made my first reconnaissance mission to Japan and it was quite a gaming adventure. Besides the crowds of people and my ineptitude for the Japanese language, I arrived back at my cozy (and messy) desk eager to return to that gaming mecca we know as Japan. (I will hopefully have more Japanese words in my vocabulary by then.) I have to mention that I had the great honor of meeting Konami's Shigeru Umezaki who directed the development of the classic Contra for NES. After playing that game for much of the first two years of my college career, I feel I owe him for my education."

Reiner, The Raging Gamer

"Due to the fact that I was so engrossed in GoldenEye 007, I actually believed that I was the great 007 for a solid week or two. My stealth capabilities went far beyond anything I could ever imagine, plus I made myself some sweet gadgets. My rubber band slingshot which I called 'Dogwood' nailed Paul right in the back of the ear from at least forty feet away. Yeah, I don't put up with silly review comments from Paul, The Game Loser. Poke fun at me and I'll shoot your eye out! Fortunately, I recovered from this rare syndrome, but I have been playing the heck out of Castlevania. Maybe I'll rip Paul in half and chuckle as his blood gushes all over Storm."

Bergren, The Game Burrito

"Where am I? What are you doing to that action-figure? For me, being at Game Informer is a dream come true. The only problem is, Andy makes us complete a grueling two hour thumb strengthening workout every day before work. They call me the Game Burrito because I possess the gaming skills of each GI Reviewer wrapped into one hot and spicy dish. I know I've only been here a short while, but I've already seen some inspiring games. My favorite is Cool Boarders 2, but I also like NHL 98, Top Gear Rally, and Colony Wars. Go Wolves!"

Jon, The Greedy Gamer

"Playing Cool Boarders 2 has me totally stoked to search out some slopes. Even though Minnesota's flat, Montana's not too far away, and in fact, new staff addition Paul Bergren lived there for a year as a ski bum. Maybe a little road trip to Montana is in order. And by the way, we had a little GI fishing outing, and everyone caught a fish except Reiner. Well, he caught two sunnies, so technically it wasn't a skunk, but we'll definitely have to get him out on the water again for another bout with the elusive walleye."

Andy, The Game Hombre

"Everybody put your hands together for the man with the Kramer cut, Paul Bergren. I can't tell you how ecstatic I am about getting a new team member. We've missed the PC Jedi since he went back to school. He never calls, you know. Well to continue my holiday hits list: FF VII, Castlevania, Oddworld, GoldenEye, Cool Boarders 2, Treasures, and SF EX + Alpha are still on the list, but I'd like to add SF Rush, Diddy Kong Racing, and Crash 2. Till next month...don't impale yourself on your N64 controller."

Reviewers (from left): Reiner, Bergren, Jon, Paul, Andy

Game Informer

MAGAZINE

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HOW DID CROC FIND HIS COMPETITION?



DEAR G

Letters from Our Readers

Game Freaks

We think that there should be a Nintendo 64 battle racing game (like Mario Kart 64), but with all of the famous Nintendo stars (like Zelda, Donkey Kong, the guys from Spy Vs. Spy, Koopa, Bowser, Peach, etc.). It should have at least fifteen good and bad guys/girls. We also think that you should be able to choose different vehicles and the game should be called something like All-Star Racers 64. The last thing we think is that there should be glasses that allow you only to see the player's screen that the glasses are set for. This way people can't cheat by looking at other people's screens.

From Adam DePietro and Pete Thomas
Wildwood, IL

P.S. Please write back and give us Mr. Miyamoto's home address in Japan.

You guys certainly deserve the title of "Game Freaks." Now and then, we receive a few letters of game ideas and general feedback on how to make a game better, but we rarely read a letter that deals with future technologies. Honestly, the glasses idea would be cool

(if it were possible), but we probably won't see an innovation like this until the day that your console machine can walk and talk. As for Miyamoto's address? Sorry, we cannot give it out. We actually know Mr. M quite well. Storm and Paul have invited him to a few GI barbecues, and we've talked, laughed, and had a great time. He makes the greatest salsa dip in the world, but he's still a little bitter about Reiner waxing him in Star Fox 64. If you do reach him (somehow), we should let you know that the

Spy Vs. Spy characters are not Nintendo's creation. They are from Mad Magazine. Plus, do you really want to see another game like Mario Kart on the N64, now that there are already two (see pg. 46).



Yeah, baby!!!

First, I'd like to say I'm not a suck-up like those people who always write in saying how much you mag rules. But since I subscribe, you know I like the mag. I want to know if Nintendo is planning a Metroid or Punch Out for the N64?

Dave Green
Villa Park, IL

Whenever it's brought up, this question makes Andy and Reiner twitch. Will there be a Metroid for the N64? We've heard rumors that they are working on one, but nothing solid. But can you imagine what Metroid would look and play like on the N64? Oh man! They better make one. And if they don't, you can count on Game Informer to let Nintendo know how frickin' frackin' unhappy gamers everywhere will be. As for Punch Out? Who cares...Let's get back to this Metroid 64 trip! Oh yeah...Baby don't stop!!!



The Truth is Out There

First off, I want to say what everybody else says. I love your mag and blah, blah, blah! Regarding the September '97 issue and the person who calls himself 'The Rhino,' I believe that what was said was totally immature and irresponsible. Why did this impostor even take the time to write you if he hates you so much? It's stupid! Besides, the real 'Rhino' is a loyal and very experienced gamer who has found many codes and tricks for you. I salute 'The Rhino' for his devotion and hard work! Long live Game Informer!!!

Sincerely,
Jared Hollenbeck
[Address Omitted]

We're glad you took the time to write in on this dilemma, and boy oh boy, you just gave 'The



Rhino' a huge head. You'd be surprised who 'The Rhino' really is. Okay, we won't hide it any longer. After his fall from Saturday morning grace, we managed to recruit Paul Reubins (a.k.a. Pee-Wee Herman) as our code guru. He's the greatest employee we've ever had, and every time he walks into the room, we can't help but chuckle. He loves it...Sorry, we lied. We don't have Pee-Wee on our staff (it was wishful thinking though). If you really want to know who 'The Rhino' is simply say his name really, really fast. The answer will be on your tongue. If you can't get it - too bad! He deserves a secret life.

The Video Game Gun Conspiracy

Here's a simple series of questions for you. Will I be able to use any of the guns available for the PlayStation on Time Crisis? In addition to this, will I be able to use the Gun Con on any of the other gun games available for the PlayStation? Hit me.

"Unknown"

The Gun Con is only for use with Namco's gun games like Time Crisis and Point Blank. Plus, you will not be able to use other miscellaneous guns for these two games. It needs the added action button to work. Because of this, we've heard rumors that Namco may pack-in the Gun Con with all of their gun games. And no, the Gun Con will not work on any non-Namco gun games like Area 51 and so on.

You're Absolutely Crazy!!!

I have recently bought, and beaten FF7, and I have one really big gripe about this game. The Ending! Visually appealing? Yes. Full of action? Yes. Sums up the story? No!!!! How could Square put so much effort into the plot, and leave the ending just hanging? Yeah, they killed the bad dude and escaped safely, but then what? Did the humans die or not? One of the major conflicts was that Holy Materia might end the human race. This isn't the first time Square, or any other company, has given an incomplete ending. What's the matter, can't they spend a little more time making a satisfying ending? I could easily sum up an ending, and tie up all the loose ends. Why is this so difficult? It's as if, as soon as the graphics and sound got better, the endings just got worse and worse. The best endings I've seen are in FF2 and Lunar: Eternal Blue. And believe me, I have played my fair share of RPGs. I am really starting to lose confidence in video game companies. Before you know it, the endings will go back to Super Mario Bros. with "Thank you Mario! Game Over."

Frank Holtham
Webville, COM

Continued on Pg. 12

DELICIOUS!

“Like Lara Croft, CROC has more moves than you can shake a stick at.”
-PSM-PlayStation Magazine

“Move over Mario. . .and cruise by Crash. . .CROC rocks!”
- GAMEPRO

“CROC is looking to be one of the best 3D platform games for the year!”
-PSExtreme



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LEGEND OF THE GOBBOS

Continued From Pg. 10

Come on, use your imagination a little. FFI's ending is very similar to the one in the Twelve Monkeys motion picture. It doesn't resolve anything, unless you really look and link the pieces together. Remember the woman on the plane? Now for FFI, remember Red XIII and company looking in on a grass-filled civilization? Hmmm...It shows cat beasts and run-down human products complete with moss and wildlife coverings. Hmmm...Yeah, you might be right in saying that it didn't show anything, if you're absolutely blind! Play it again and we're sure you'll see what we're talking about. Remember this is the Final Fantasy for that era. Not all of them end on a happy note, and not all of them end with a solid resolve. This is an ending where you...



Skin to Win!

Good day! Everyone is doing a bang-up job at your magazine and I truly hope it continues.

I wish to impress upon you the importance of not having such an inordinate amount of advertising as all the other video gaming magazines seem to have (though this is not something advertisers in general may want to hear). Perhaps by having a select number of advertisers there is more of a tendency to pause and take a look at an ad.

I really like your page set-ups. By profiling a game on a whole page, the effect is at once clean, full, and pleasant to the eyes. This is an exceptional aspect of your magazine and I hope it can continue.

Overall, Game Informer (GI) is made clear and concise by eliminating the incidental peripherals, 'things' that do not add to the given piece or article. Many other magazines have too much about nothing that's going on.

Though this may seem a bit odd, I was wondering - what kind of censorship differences are there between the Japanese games and the American games? I am not asking specifically about translated games, but rather any given game. For example, playing Sony's Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo on the Underground disc, the character Felicia appears to show - shall we say - a lot of cleavage.

Are there many games with such intrigues, Japanese or English, that you can cite? If so, would you please cite any and all games with such interesting characters, Japanese or otherwise. We could call it, "Sexy Show-Offs: Uncut." Skin to win!

I hope you don't think I am out of line on this. I am a guy who appreciates the female form, the most beautiful thing that graces our little planet. Besides, some of the integrity is lost when others choose to eliminate an integral aspect of an art form.

Keep up the great work, it is certainly appreciated.

Shawn Ristved
Critical Fan and Less

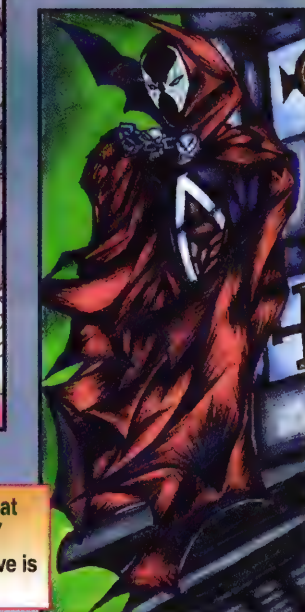
Skin can be good at times, but you have to remember that when it's shown it has to be evenly divided between the two sexes. The politically correct have whined and moped about the appearance of Lara Croft, but they've never said a word about the almost butt-naked Incredible Hulk. What gives? In Japan, their culture accepts the beauty of the human body, and their easy-to-spot manga art style basically consists of nothing but beautiful girls and huge mechanical warriors. All of the Japanese game publications we've seen feature scantily clad women on the cover (and occasionally a Square game). But that's Japan. Don't expect the U.S. (or Game Informer for that matter) to start covering, or uncovering, this unique gaming niche. Luckily, every once in a while a few things leak through. For instance, THQ will be releasing the Ghost in the Shell PlayStation title very shortly which is based on the immensely popular Dark Horse comic series and the Manga motion picture. If you're really into the skin thing, we recommend checking out the comic industry, since it's filled with nothing but overly-sized males and females.



Andrew Helms
Flushing, MI
Welcome to GI's
70's flashback hour...let's
boogie!



Royce Oatis
Merrionette Park, IL
Crash Dangerfield!



Alzaber Rucayat
Brooklyn, NY
Being introspective is
so cool.



Duane Cunningham
Shawnee, KS
"Lambsheep"

NOVEMBER WINNER

JARRETT SMITH
ELIZ, NJ

"I think if I got
a hairpiece I
would look
more attrac-
tive."

RESIDENT EVIL



Wanted: Envelope Art

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.

Meet the root
of our evil.



MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES

SUB-ZERO

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CRASH BANDICOOT™

2

CORTX STRIKES BACK



A RELUCTANT STAR RETURNS FOR THE GREATEST OF ADVENTURES

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Platform
- **Special Features:** Analog Controller Compatible; Jetpack and Rocket Surfboard Levels; New Moves Including a Belly Flop, Crawl, and Super Jump; Amusing Death Scenes; Warp Rooms Allowing for Non-Linear Gameplay; Unique Adaptive Difficulty Adjustment
- **Levels:** 27 Plus 5 Bosses
- **Created by:** Naughty Dog/Universal Interactive Studios for Sony Computer Entertainment America
- **Available:** November 4 for Sony PlayStation

THE STORY

Staring insignificantly at stars serried in rank and symbolic form, the notorious Neo Cortex gracefully drifted through the blackness of space. As he slowly approached Earth, he began to contemplate the misfortune of his recent past. But his memories were a blur, and the only solid thought that stuck in his mind was the goofy expression on Crash Bandicoot's face. He was not very fond of Crash, and as the seconds passed by, Cortex's muscles tensed up as this unbearable image stuck in his mind.

After all, Crash was the one who foiled Cortex's latest caper with a whack of his fist, launching him up to this safe and comfortable altitude of 200,000 feet. In a chilling voice Cortex finally spoke, "I will have my revenge." Following this, the awkward looking Cortex began to roll with laughter, and soon the strangest thing happened. His momentum picked up, and with each chuckle it continued to increase. In seconds, Cortex was approaching an insane speed, and before he could think of the consequences, his body entered the atmosphere. Rays of pain struck every inch of his flesh. In a world of hurt, Cortex plummeted through the sky like a cartoon anvil. His vision blurred, and moments before he blacked out, he heard a loud thump.

Awaking in a cavern, Cortex's eyes began to glow. Smack dab before him lay a valuable crystal. With enough of these crystals he could create the ultimate weapon and seek revenge on his arch-nemesis Crash (and the rest of the Earth as well). But there was a problem. He would need to find someone to search out the crystals for him as he began constructing the weapon itself. Thoughts raced through his mind as to who he would get to do his dirty work? "Why yes," he said, "who else, but my own enemy Crash Bandicoot!!!"



Side-scrolling segments still play a huge part in Crash 2.



Ring around the Bandicoot.

Crash's jetpack is cool, but it pales in comparison to Boba Fett's. It needs the rocket launcher.

THE GAME

Now that the moment is set, and all the pieces of the plot are in place (except, of course, the mystery of why Crash would choose to do Cortex's bidding), you should know what Crash's adventure will contain. Crash actually doesn't have a say in whether he'll help out or not. You see, Cortex has just created a unique warp system that nabbed Crash and dumped him in a large five level tower. There is no way to escape from this tower, unless Crash finds an exit on his own. Since falling victim to Cortex's sinister plot will surely lead to Crash's doom, you must find a way out.

In *Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back*, a lot has changed since the last installment. The biggest and most noteworthy addition is the new warp room and how it affects gameplay. Selecting levels from a path spanning across three islands has been left to rot in *Crash 1*. The warp room is similar in theory, but you will now have the ability to choose from five levels at once, as opposed to only being able to select one. Teleporting has also opened up a new system of finding hidden areas. For instance, you may stumble across an invisible transporter buried in a corner of a massive level, and before you know it, Crash will disseminate and reappear in a hidden area containing one of the more valuable Gems in the game. Captain Kirk would die for a transporter system of this caliber.

Another gigantic alteration has to do with the difficulty setting. It is once again fairly easy to beat the game and extremely difficult to find all of the hidden stuff. But now, if you are struggling at any given point in time, the game will recognize that you've failed numerous times in a row and try to help you. Developers at Naughty Dog, Universal Interactive Studios, and Sony Computer Entertainment have implemented a unique adaptive difficulty adjustment system that will help you out by reconfiguring a few things within the sector you are currently stuck on. These modifications could be as brash as a standard box changing into a checkpoint, or as simple as giving you an Aku Aku mask at the start of a level. This unique feature will allow anyone who plays to have a sporting chance. The best players won't run into reconfigurations too much, while those who have troubles will reap its benefits. The outcome – everybody wins, and no one breaks a controller.

Crash 1 was a gorgeous game that left many gamers speechless. The gameplay, on the other hand, while being complicated and extensive, was somewhat lackluster when compared to the game's appearance. All of the *Super Mario* titles have had a fairly solid balance between these two categories. What makes these *Mario* titles succeed is obvious – a wide variety of moves and random gameplay events keep the game exciting and unpredictable. *Crash 1* only featured a few moves (jump, running jump, and spin), plus the only shocking portions of gameplay occurred on the Boar levels (which only appear twice throughout the entire game). In *Crash 2*, a slew of new and somewhat revolutionary moves have been incorporated, as well as two huge (and much needed) additions – the jetpack and the rocket surfboard levels – all of which will keep gamers wondering what could possibly happen next.

Character-based action/platform games thrive on two things – challenge and wackiness. *Crash 2* emphasizes these points to such a degree that you may become flustered with a puzzle-like bonus level where you'll need to use different jumps, techniques, and perfect timing to get it down right. Then a few minutes later, there's the chance that you'll laugh yourself silly watching Crash's victory dance, which does nothing but mock the celebrations of other action/platform stars.

All together, *Crash 2* is structured almost perfectly. The game flows nicely from start to finish, and the difficulty slowly grows harder with each new level. Plus, all of the graphics and little touches to the level designs, like random dragonfly appearances and water dripping off of a pipe, show that a lot of heart and soul went into making this an exciting game that everyone will enjoy playing.

▶ THE BOTTOM LINE 9

PAUL, THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept: 9 *Crash 2* is a heck of a lot of fun. At first glance it didn't look or play much different from the first game. Like the previous game, it isn't that difficult to beat levels, but the challenge comes by breaking all the stinkin' boxes. And that is very tough in *Crash 2*. The play control is solid and the addition of the new moves and modes of transportation all add some spice to the run and jump action. However, I did find a little trouble with judging distances when jumping, but better skills always come with practice. There's no doubt that if you enjoyed the first game, you'll think the second is killer. This is the action/platform to beat on PS-X.

OVERALL:
9

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

Concept: 8 *Crash 2's* levels are much longer and offer up a greater gameplay variety than the original. The much needed new moves add so much more depth to the wickedly entertaining gameplay. *Crash 1's* play was somewhat generic, but now in the sequel, the gameplay is loaded with unexpected challenges, better enemies, and more hidden stuff. To add a gripe, I'm not too fond of the jetpack levels since they are a tad easy, but they do look absolutely stunning. In addition to this, the two endings are extremely lame and way too short. If you blink you're sure to miss them. But as a complete package, *Crash 2* is clearly the king of all PlayStation platformers, and I can't see anything in the near future that will topple its unbelievable graphics and solid play mechanics.

OVERALL:
9.25

ANDY, THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept: 9 "Compared to last year's game, *Crash 2* is much more refined. The annoying trips back to level one to collect guys are gone, the levels are much longer, the loading is almost non-existent, and the new moves for Crash are awesome.

Graphics: 9.5 Graphically, *Crash 2* ranks as one of the best. There are lots animations for all the characters, and the special effects like light source shading, reflections, and transparency are used throughout the entire quest. Overall, *Crash 2* is much more playable than the previous version. While I liked *Crash 1*, I never finished it just because I got so bored repeating levels; but *Crash 2* is much more entertaining and offers a lot more variation. Check it out, it's the best platformer on the PS-X."

OVERALL:
9

WARNING!!!

This strategy guide (if used completely) makes the gruesome task of gaining 100% much easier. We recommend playing the game through on your own, then if you happen to stumble upon something you don't know the answer to, use the strategy guide. Otherwise, don't cheat!

BASIC TRAINING

This section will give you a general idea of what to look for and what to avoid.

WAMPA FRUIT

For every one hundred wampa fruits collected, this sour but tasty treat will reward Crash with one free life.

AKU AKU

Crash 2 wouldn't be complete without the return of Crash's sidekick Aku Aku. Obtaining this mask grants you one hit point. If you hold three Aku Akus at once, you will become partially invincible.

TAWNA & COCO

Rumors surrounding the location of Crash's love interest have been hitting the tabloids for months, and the last sighting of this adorable Bandicoot was in Hollywood. Apparently, she's working on a motion picture entitled *Nightmare on Bandicoot Street IV*. Sadly, Tawna is not in *Crash 2*. She has been replaced by Crash's sister CoCo (as a helper, don't think evil!). His sister will continually contact you through the warp room transmitter, giving updates on strange developments and occurrences.

BOXES

All the original boxes are present, and they are accompanied by an iron box, and the deadliest explosive around - nitro.

EXCLAMATION POINTS

The exclamation boxes are used to transform translucent box forms into solid boxes. Plus, the nitro exclamation destroys all nitro boxes on a level.

ENEMIES

Crash 2 features a cornucopia of new faces to send to the grave. Notables are the raging bears, who try to run you down in the same manner as the boulder, log-tossing gorillas, and electric hands Ted, who will shock you if you enter his domain. The majority of the enemies can be killed by spinning, but if you look closely at certain critters, you'll see that a different action must be used to take them down.

BONUS LEVELS

These secret zones are located in almost every level in *Crash 2*. They're easy to find (since they are all highlighted with a question mark icon), but many of them pose a difficult challenge.

DEATH ROUTES

Whenever you stumble across a floating platform with a skull and cross bones on it, then you know it's time to challenge a death route. These extra level portions are much more difficult and often hold extra Gems.

OBTAINING MORE LIVES

Most action/platform games have easy 1-Up loops. This also holds true in *Crash 2*. Find a level you like and grab as many lives as you need.

CRYSTALS

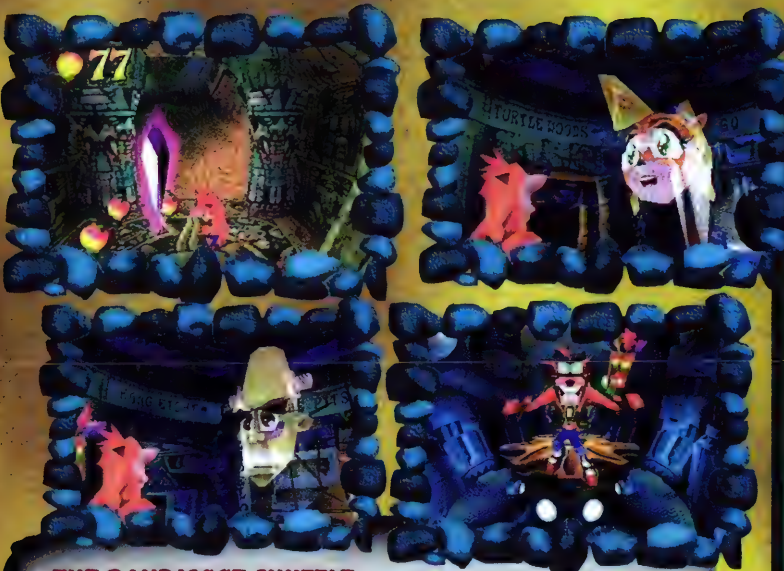
Cortex wants 25 of these priceless pieces and you'll need to find them for him. At the beginning of the game Cortex will show you what they look like. There's one Crystal per level, and all of them are easy to spot. None of them are hidden.

THE GEM HUNT AND 100%

Only the best of the best will be able to gloat as a 100% king. There are 42 different Gems located all throughout the game. Five of these Gems are colored (Red, Green, Purple, Yellow, Blue). These colored Gems open up hidden sectors on certain levels. Unlocking these Gems first requires a difficult task to be executed. Destroying all of the boxes on a level is how the majority of the Gems are found, but don't be surprised if you need to beat a level within a certain amount of time, or not break any boxes at all. Some Gems are even sitting on the level itself. Of course, these are well hidden. If you want 100% you will need to beat every level, and find every Gem and Crystal.

TEN LIVES FOR FREE (STRATEGY EXTRA)

Move up to the second warp room and belly flop the snow beaver five times in a row. Doing this will reward you with ten free lives. This can only be done once.



THE BANDICOOT SHUFFLE

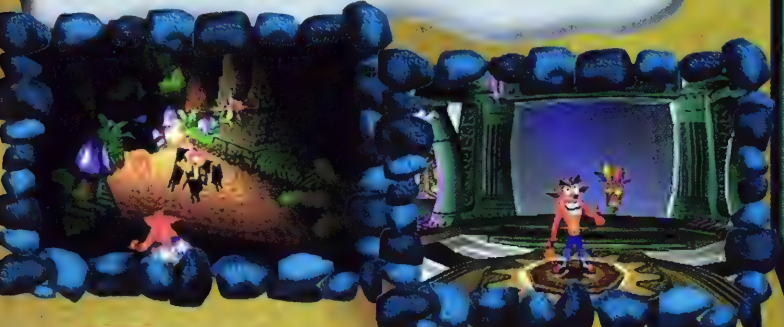
Similar to Luke Skywalker's progression through the three Star Wars movies, Crash has enlisted himself in a brutal training program between the original title and this sequel. Because of this, he now has a much larger moves list to aid him in this grueling quest. Crash has learned how to duck out of the way of head-hunting bullets, crawl under low platforms, and slide into enemies and random objects. His jumping abilities have also been improved. By crouching down and then jumping, Crash performs a super jump that launches him through the air just like David Lee Roth (it must be the shoes!). The most obscure new move is the belly flop. This move comes in handy simply because it's the only maneuver that can both destroy iron boxes and stop you from sliding on ice. All of the moves from the first game are also intact. Plus, if you use the analog controller, Crash will be able to run at different speeds, based upon how far you push in a given direction.

THE MARSUPIAL EXPRESS

In the last installment, Crash could only ride a boar. While this was fun for all who encountered this strange antic, much more was needed, and Naughty Dog and Sony answered our cries. Throughout the game you'll run into a snow beaver (actually a polar bear) that can be mounted just like the boar. Other new additions include a rocket surfboard (which allows you to perform sweet tricks) and a jetpack (for anti-gravity navigation and diagonal spinning). There are a few more moves that Crash can use, but these are restricted to certain situations. He can now dangle and monkey-swing across bars stretched along certain areas. And last but not least, he can burrow underground by taking a header into certain textured surfaces. This move will even allow you to stick your hand out of the ground to break what needs to be broken.

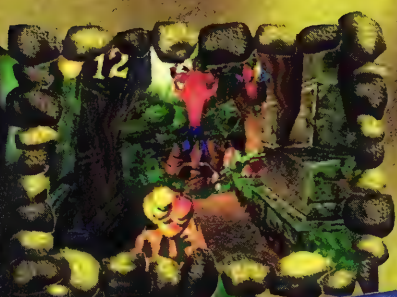
THE WARP FACTOR

The warp room is the greatest addition to the Crash Bandicoot experience. This circular room contains entrances to five different levels. Once all of these levels are conquered, the lift in the center of the room will be activated. This lift takes Crash up to the next warp room containing five more levels. There is a total of six different warp rooms (one of which is hidden). These rooms also serve as a hologram transmitter. Randomly throughout the game, Cortex, N. Brio, and Crash's sister CoCo will contact you with urgent information. All of the warp rooms also contain a load/save area, and unlike the first Crash title, you can save your game at any time.



LEVEL 0 - CRASH LANDING

This level serves as a prelude to the game. Use the time in this level to learn all the new moves. You can always do this in the warp room, but it's best to practice them in an actual level scenario with boxes and enemies. You won't need to break all of these boxes to obtain some sort of a reward. Nothing is given out in this pre-game session.



WARP ROOM 1

This is where the adventure really begins. Enjoy the quest, and keep in mind that everyone (no matter how cute they are) is the enemy.

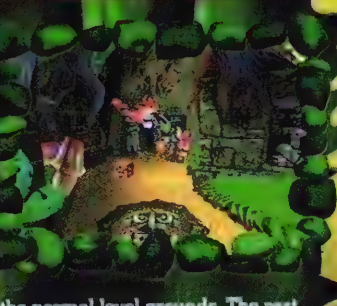
LEVEL 1 - TURTLE WOODS

UNLOCK UNLOCK

This forward-scrolling level will show you just how different Crash 2 is compared to part one. After the mud hole and the first three pits you will run into a native face ornament on the ground. Use your belly flop move to punch through it. In this secret area there is only one trouble spot. When you come to the Nitro box field (below you), use the slide and super jump to get across. From here, slide and jump off the ostrich backs and proceed back to the normal level grounds. The rest of the level shouldn't be a problem. Make sure you nail each box and grab the first Crystal, which is located between a mud hole and the third mole pit.

UNLOCKING THE BLUE GEM

Surprise, surprise! This level isn't quite done yet. To obtain the sacred Blue Gem, simply run through the level without destroying any boxes. To do so, don't enter the secret or bonus areas, and at the box stack (two high - five across), jump off the striped box (second to the left). Don't worry, you won't break it.



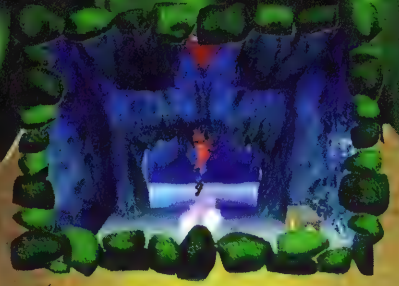
LEVEL 2 - SNOW GO

UNLOCK UNLOCK

Take your time and be careful around the Nitro and TNT boxes. If you find yourself sliding out of control on the ice, use the belly flop to come to a complete stop. It'll save your life. Right after the checkpoint you'll come across the Red Gem lodged in the ceiling. Ignore it for now. You'll need to warp to the bonus portion of this level to get to it. Now continue on, fall down the bonus area, and when you come back to the forward-scrolling segment, run straight back and hit the green exclamation box. Shortly after this you will run into two translucent boxes that require an exclamation box. You will find the exclamation box just a few feet further down the road. It's hidden above the air-mounted striped brown box. Use the concrete spring to bounce you up to it.

UNLOCKING THE RED GEM

First check out the Secret Warps - Warp 1 section to find out how to get to this unexpected hidden area. Then, when inside the Hidden Warp Room, enter the secret level that says Snow Go. In this somewhat lengthy segment, race to the right as fast as you can and be sure to hit the exclamation box or you're screwed. This extra portion of Snow Go is tough, but the outcome is well worth it. When you come to the end of the path follow the wampa fruit trail down to the Red Gem.



LEVEL 3 - HANG EIGHT

UNLOCK 2 REQUIRES

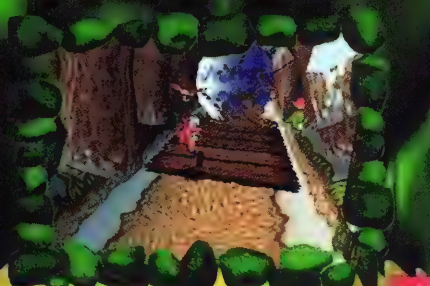
The only trouble spot on this level occurs in the hidden Blue Gem area. While riding the rocket board you'll see that a series of boxes is translucent. The exclamation box that will change these boxes into solids is located at the end of this rocketing segment. Cautiously, backtrack after you hit it. After this bonus extra you will find the crystal located halfway through the level between two hippos. To unlock the second Clear Gem you won't need to take the Blue Gem lift. Simply race to the end of the level before the timer (in the lower right hand corner) expires.



LEVEL 5 - CRASH DASH

UNLOCK

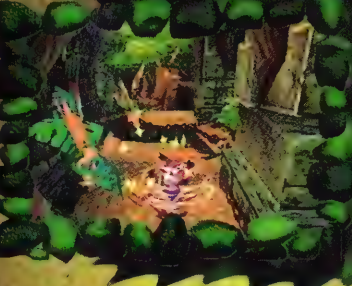
The majority of this level is easy, but after the third checkpoint make sure that you hit the box sitting on a narrow ledge surrounded by two pits. If you get a good enough jump on the boulder, the boxes behind the energy fields can be approached at almost any speed. You won't need to panic and spin frantically.



LEVEL 4 - THE PITS

UNLOCK

Halfway through this level you'll come to a fork in the road. Take the right path up to the checkpoint. Now, head back and take the left track. Stay on this until you come to the end of the fork in the road, and head back up the right track. Not very far up this track you will run into a little structure. Break the four boxes in here, and the two behind it, then head back down from where you were. Hit the bonus round, break the rest of the boxes, and this level is history.



WARP ROOM 2

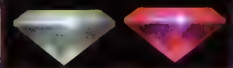
From here on in, this strategy guide will no longer hold your hand through this quest. Only the most notable sections and strategies will be outlined for each level.

AREA 1 BOSS - RIPPER ROO

This kangaroo has retained his wacky charm from the last game, and once again he's easy to beat. Stay in the lower right-hand corner (on the Roo picture facing upward), and hit him in the head after he activates the Nitro boxes. Do this again for his second pass, and then to finish him, dodge the dynamite and head over to the lower left corner. Stay here until he begins his Nitro run. Now, move over to the right a few steps, and jump when he sets the Nitros off. Clobber him in the head and he's toast!

LEVEL 6 - SNOW BIZ

UNLOCK REQUIRES



Before you try to get the Gem on this level make sure you have the Red Gem. The Red Gem area is the only troublesome spot on this level. Make sure you hit all the dynamite boxes. Sometimes this is hard to remember. At the end of this level, you can raise your head high, because you've just collected 124 boxes. Wow!

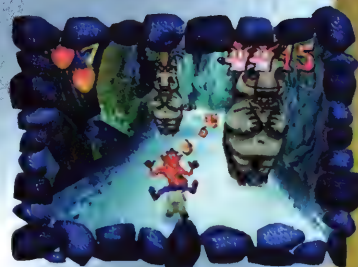


LEVEL 8 - BEAR IT

UNLOCK



You'll find the crystal just behind the first checkpoint. This level is one of the easiest, and the only strategy you'll need is to jump in the same spot as the last whale diving. Don't try and go around them, otherwise you will run into the next one coming up, and bang! No more Crash or snow beaver.



LEVEL 9 - CRASH CRUSH

UNLOCK



After the first checkpoint keep an eye to your right. The track will split in two - one going down and another going up. Take the one heading up, and smash all of the boxes. Make sure you slide then jump when engaging the second energy field. After you do this, the game will graciously plopp you back on the downward track. Continue on, but don't miss the bonus zone. Then, the crystal is located just a few steps down the path from this bonus zone. Before you know it, the level will be done, and you'll have a shiny new Gem in your hands.



LEVEL 7 - AIR CRASH

UNLOCK 2



Shortly after the bonus round section, there is a box floating in the water to the right that is extremely hard to hit. What you'll need to do is jump from the first square of the platform, angle over to the box, hit it, and then fling back to the left. Next, take the death route (skull-marked floating platform) to obtain the first Gem on this level. The second Gem is much more difficult. Don't enter the stage from the main entrance. You'll need to enter it through the hidden warp entrance (see Secret Warps - Warp 2 strategy). After entering through the back door, destroy all the boxes with the rocket board then hit the exit warp at the end of this segment. From here destroy all the boxes up to the next rocket board segment. Use the super jump to hit the platform over to the left. Use the super jump two more times so that you land on the platform holding four boxes. Destroy these then head back to the rocket board. Proceed on through the level in a normal fashion. The gem is yours.

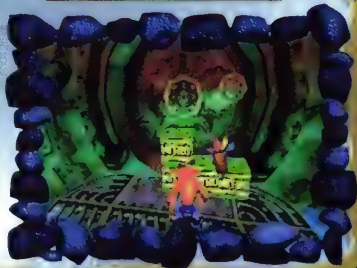


LEVEL 10 - THE EEL DEAL

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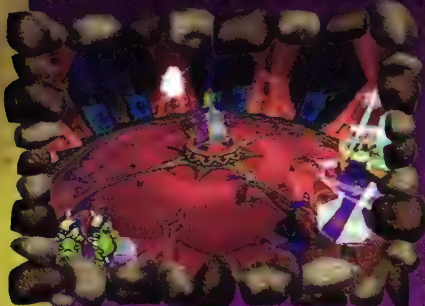


All of the boxes are easy to find. On the other hand, finding the Green Gem is extremely difficult. In fact, finding it is just dumb luck. It's hidden through the back wall in the Nitro-filled room just after the first fork in the road.



AREA 2 BOSS – KOMODO BROS.

These guys are tough. Dodge the spinning Komodo until he stops and lands on the floor. Whack him with a spin, then stand behind the Komodo in the center of the arena. He will begin to throw sabers counterclockwise. To avoid them, stay behind him at all times. After he's done he will spin his little buddy again. This time he will be throwing sabers as well. Dodge, dodge, dodge is the only strategy we can give. It may take a while to beat these goons. Don't get flustered, you'll get the hang of it.

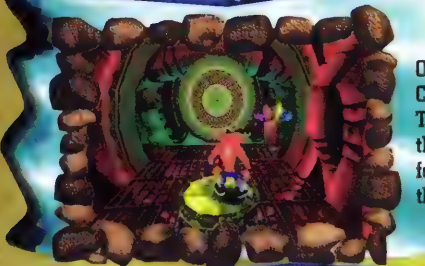


LEVEL 12 – SEWER OR LATER

UNLOCK 2 REQUIRES



On the Yellow Gem segment you will find a Clear Gem sitting in one of the hallways. The rest of the level should be easy to walk through. Just as a mental reminder, don't forget to hit the exclamation box and break the two boxes down the other hall.



LEVEL 14 – ROAD TO RUIN

UNLOCK 2



Before you start this level check out the Secret Warps – Warp 3 strategy. Run through this new segment breaking all the boxes (including dynamite – don't forget). This section will then collide with the normal game route. You should know what to do next. The second Gem is in the difficult path which is located in the foreground on the second side-scrolling segment after the first checkpoint. Avoid the log-chucking gorillas and after a few turns or two, you'll find your Clear prize.



SECRET WARPS (STRATEGY EXTRA)

These hidden teleporters are essential to your 100% quest. They're hard to find, but luckily this flock of game editors has what it takes to get the job done.

WARP 1 – ACCESSED THROUGH AIR CRASH

Maneuver your Bandicoot butt up to the first checkpoint, but instead of hopping on the rocket board, jump across the boxes to the right and veer over to the small platform which is also on the right. Beam me up!

WARP 2 – ACCESSED THROUGH BEAR DOWN

At the very end of this level (after Crash flies off of the snow beaver) walk back and jump across the icebergs so that you land on the largest one in the field.

WARP 3 – ACCESSED THROUGH DIGGIN' IT

This warp is hidden almost all the way through Diggin' It. Keep your eyes peeled for

a plant shooter on a pillar of its own to the left of the screen. There should be another plant a few feet ahead. Jump over onto the pillar with the plant and use a belly flop to destroy it. Walk into the green section and you'll warp ahead.

WARP 4 – ACCESSED THROUGH UN-BEARABLE

At the end of Un-bearable, backtrack up the course and touch the baby snow beaver sitting in the upper left-hand corner.

WARP 5 – ACCESSED THROUGH HANGIN' OUT

Go down whenever you can. And when you fall into a pool of water, head backwards. From here, fall down the hole and continue on straight. Eventually, you will run into the invisible warp hidden in a path of wampa fruits.

WARP ROOM 3

LEVEL 11 – PLANT FOOD

UNLOCK UNLOCK



You'll need to perform a series of amazing moves on the rocket board to beat this level. Bringing two Aku Akus will help. On the last rocket board segment, walk down the path to the right and kill all the plants before you jump on the rocket board. Doing this will clear a straight path with no dangerous spots whatsoever. Unlocking the Yellow Gem requires level completion before the timer runs out.



LEVEL 13 – BEAR DOWN

UNLOCK



Just ride, ride, ride that snow beaver, and break, break, break those boxes down.

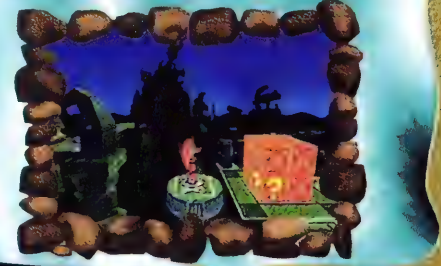


LEVEL 15 – UN-BEARABLE

UNLOCK



Halfway through this course the bear will fall through a bridge. Follow him down to a secret area. This zone is difficult, but luckily it does have plenty of Aku Akus and continue points. The rest of the level should not be too much of a problem. Now, gimme that Gem!



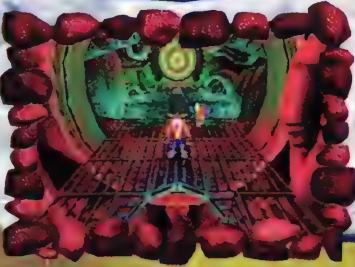
AREA 3 BOSS – TINY

This cat is simple to take down. Just make him jump on a red platform. Do this three times and then head to the far central platform.

WARP ROOM 4

LEVEL 16 - HANGIN' OUT

UNLOCK



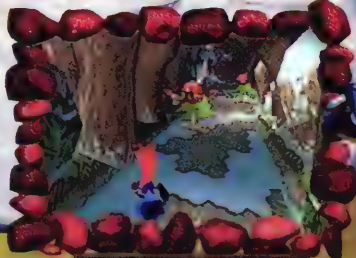
Quickly moving across the monkey bars and avoiding the spiky rats is your best bet for winning this level. Don't backtrack when you fall into the water. Make continual forward progress and this level will be over before you know it.

LEVEL 17 - DIGGIN' IT

UNLOCK 2



Near the beginning of the level you will run into an alternate death route. Take it, and you will find the first Clear Gem lying in the middle of a path. To unlock the second Gem simply explore all the unseen land and break the boxes that occupy it.



LEVEL 20 - BEE-HAVING

UNLOCK UNLOCK

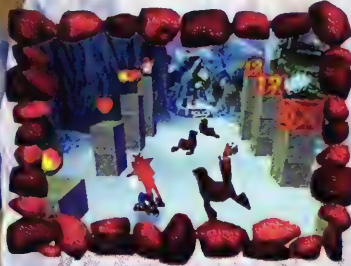


None of the boxes are hidden on this level either. It's just rather difficult to break them all in a sprint. Be sure to master the timing of diving into the ground and hitting the bees at the same time. Practice makes perfect. The Purple Gem is hidden well, and you must really look to see the secret that will unlock it. A good portion of the way through this level you will see a staircase of Nitro boxes. But, if you look closely enough you will see that they are not Nitros, since they are not bouncing. Jump off of these fake boxes and you'll warp to a hidden bonus realm holding the Purple Gem.



LEVEL 18 - COLD HARD CRASH

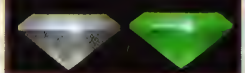
UNLOCK 2



In the bonus sector, at the two dark brown boxes which are parallel with each other, jump on the top one to uncover a hidden box. Shortly after this bonus room you'll see a death route in the foreground. On this track you will need to backtrack after you find the exclamation box so that you can destroy the one box that was not visible before. At the end of this icy run a Clear Gem awaits. After destroying the death route boxes, smash all of the remaining boxes on the regular course to unlock the second Gem. Obtaining both of these Gems is one of the hardest feats in the game.

LEVEL 19 - RUINATION

UNLOCK 2 REQUIRES

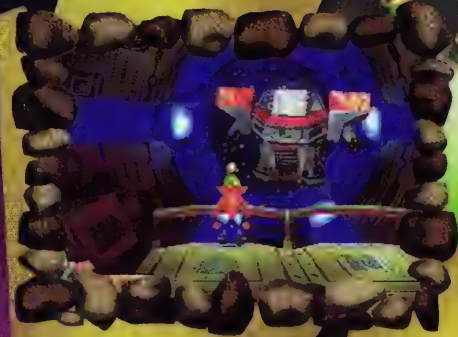


At the very end of the Green Gem section lies the Clear Gem. After you grab this continue on the regular course, and seek out all the boxes. None of them are hidden, but the bonus level will take a few tries to figure out how a couple of the chain reactions work.



AREA 4 BOSS - N. GIN

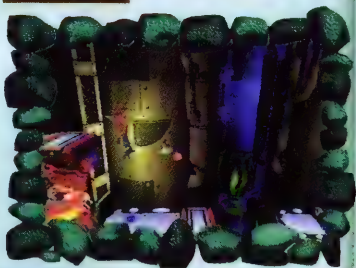
The relentless Bandicoot squares off against the most hostile of baddies - N. Gin. To beat this cybernetic goon simply throw your wumpa fruits at his guns when they open up. Then, go for the shoulders and finally the hull. When he attacks with lasers or missiles, jump them, and this menace should be nothing but a smoldering pile of circuits before you know it.



LEVEL 21 - PISTON IT AWAY

UNLOCK 2

At the beginning of this rockin' stage is a death route. Take it up to the hidden sector and after a series of difficult jumps you'll run into the first Clear Gem. The second Clear Gem will require breaking the rest of the boxes on the level. What you'll need to do is go all the way to the end of the level, and then head back and take care of the death route.

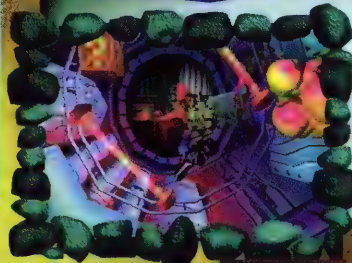


WARP ROOM 5

UNLOCK

LEVEL 22 - ROCK IT

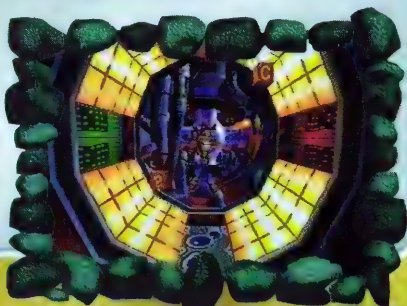
Just fly into all the boxes. Yes, while this stage looks great and plays tremendously, it's actually really, really easy.



UNLOCK

LEVEL 24 - PACK ATTACK

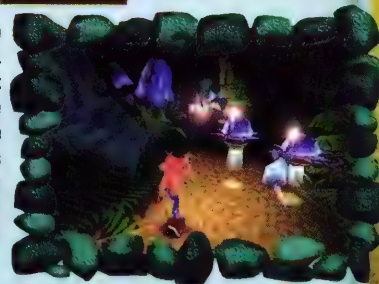
Double check the top and bottom of each doorway and you shouldn't run into a problem on this Gem run.



LEVEL 23 - NIGHT FIGHT

UNLOCK 2

Partway into the course you'll have the chance to switch routes. To the left is the death route which contains a Gem. Grab it and beat the level. To get the second Gem re-enter this level and stay on the normal course. At the bonus round don't grab the second firefly until you've broken the two boxes next to it. Now, go back to the main course and at the fork in the road go back to the left. Hit the two boxes, grab the firefly, and finish the level. The second Gem is now in your possession.



LEVEL 25 - SPACED OUT

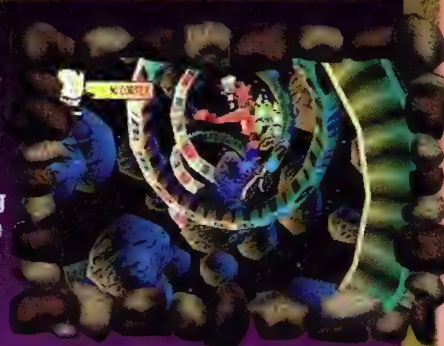
UNLOCK 2
REQUIRES ALL COLORED GEMS

The colored Gem path begins right after the first turn on this level. If you beat this section you will end up at a different goal with a Gem awaiting. For the second Gem, use the strategy you know so well - run through the level destroying all of the boxes.



AREA 5 BOSS - N. CORTEX

Simply fly at this guy and spin into him three times to bring him down for the second time in two games. The ending will follow. If you have 100%, enter this room and watch the super-secret surprise ending.



LEVEL 26 - TOTALLY BEAR

UNLOCK

This hidden level is only available after you use a hidden warp (see Secret Warps - Warp 4). There isn't a solid strategy that will work well. Memorizing this level's every niche and turn will ensure victory. Be sure to bring a bucket of lives with you.



BONUS WARP ROOM

LEVEL 27 - TOTALLY FLY

UNLOCK

There's only one trouble zone on this level. When you come to the steel-coated boxes, don't grab the nearby firefly. First, break all of the boxes, then grab the fly and proceed to the end of the level.



Behind-the-Scenes at Konami

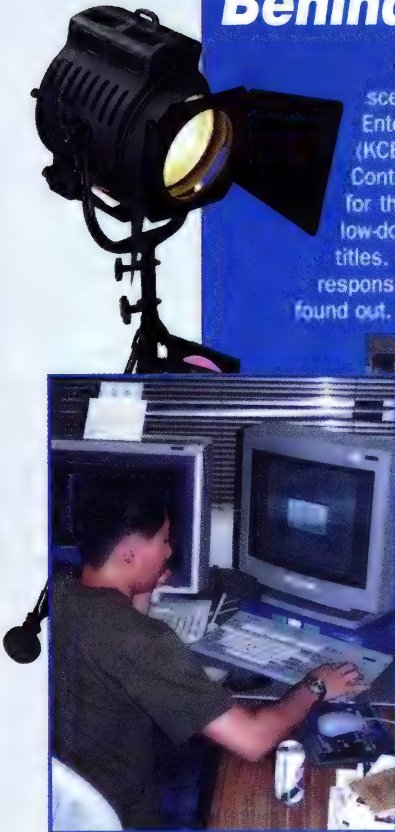
Following the recent Tokyo Game Show, Konami hosted a behind-the-scenes look at two of their top development studios – Konami Computer Entertainment Japan (KCEJ) and Konami Computer Entertainment Osaka (KCEO). With a long history of memorable titles such as Nemesis, Jackal, Contra, and Castlevania (just to name a few), Konami opened their doors for the first time to members of the U.S. gaming press and gave us the low-down on some of their upcoming Nintendo 64 and Sony PlayStation titles. Game Informer had a chance to speak directly to game designers responsible for developing the promising Konami line-up, and here's what we found out.



Konami Computer Entertainment Japan (KCEJ), Tokyo



Konami has well over 20 branches across Japan and employs nearly 2,000 people.



An artist works on animations for Nagano Winter Olympics.



Testing play control on NBA In The Zone '98.



Konami Computer Entertainment Osaka (KCEO)

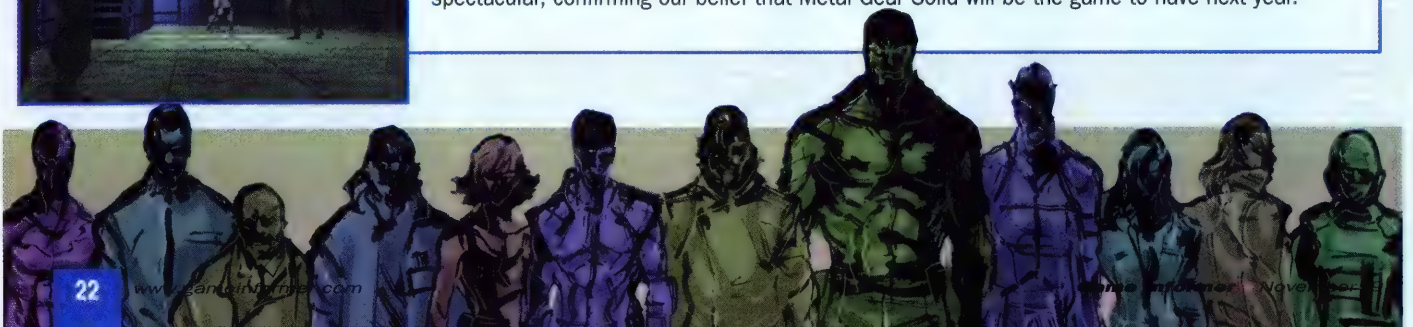
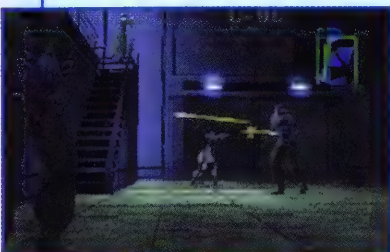
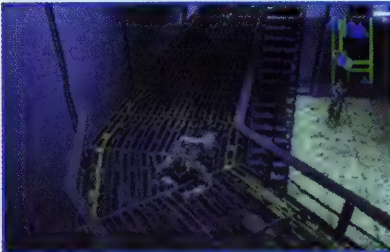
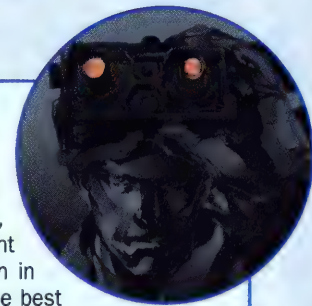
GI Feature

Metal Gear Solid - PS-X

The premier development team at KCEJ (or at all of Konami for that matter) is currently working on Metal Gear Solid for the Sony PlayStation. Lead by Konami veteran and Metal Gear creator, Hideo Kojima, Metal Gear Solid's development team consists of 20 talented programmers, artists, and sound engineers. Although we were told that the game's development schedule would push the release past the previously announced launch in March, Kojima reiterated to us that he and his team wanted to make the best PlayStation game ever created. While we had previously seen Metal Gear Solid in action through video footage, our visit uncovered some interesting new details as we talked with Kojima and witnessed the first playable level in the game.

Kojima said that approximately 80% of the game will be played in a third-person perspective, where the computer will determine the appropriate camera angle for the action. The other 20% will consist of using both a player-controlled perspective (a la Mario Cam) and a view that allows the player to peer around corners. Like the previous Metal Gear games on the NES, the main character, Solid Snake, starts the game weaponless and is equipped only with binoculars and a pack of cigarettes. The only way to acquire new weapons and items is by taking them from the enemy. Some examples of weapons are the guided missile launcher (with missile cam) and sniper rifle. Of course, just like in past Metal Gears, moving through the environment without being detected is of the utmost importance.

The playable level that we viewed is essentially a training mission that allows the programmers to test various weapons, enemy AI, and general control. What little we saw was nothing short of spectacular, confirming our belief that Metal Gear Solid will be the game to have next year.



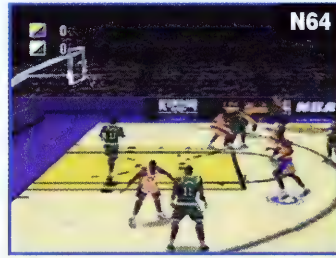
NBA In The Zone '98 - N64 & PS-X

The premier game in the Konami Sports Series, NBA In The Zone, will see its third generation on the PlayStation, as well as its inaugural debut on the N64.

The N64 version will hold the honor as the first five-on-five basketball simulation for the system. The game utilizes over 500 animations along with a host of motion-captured dunks. Each of the teams have specialized styles that mimic the NBA teams. For example, the low post game of the New York Knicks or the perimeter attack of the Charlotte Hornets shows through in the game.

The PS-X version has a bunch of new features within its options and play control. The player create mode has been further modified to include more changes with the players' appearances. New strategy elements allow for formation changes on offense and defense. Player match-ups can now be adjusted with defensive pressure meters that allow you to play tight defense on the serious threats while leaving the bricklayers alone. Another interesting element - referred to as 'Team Order' - gives players ten points to spread through strategies including the fast break, crash boards, and defensive pressure.

Both games are on schedule to release by December.



Nagano Winter Olympics - N64 & PS-X

The 1998 Winter Olympics are set to begin on February 2, 1998 in Nagano, Japan and Konami will bring the video game version of the Olympiad to the N64 and PS-X in January. Using actual data from the various event sites in Nagano, the games will recreate a number of events from skiing to curling.

The biggest difference between the N64 and PS-X versions, other than the cleaner look of the N64 graphics, will be in the play control. The PS-X version of Nagano relies more on the Konami International Track & Field interface, with plenty of button tapping in many of the race events, such as speed skating. The N64 version will have some button tapping, but for the most part relies on the 3D joystick and timing.

The N64 and PS-X versions will have 12 and 13 events respectively, and each will have athletes representing 16 different countries.



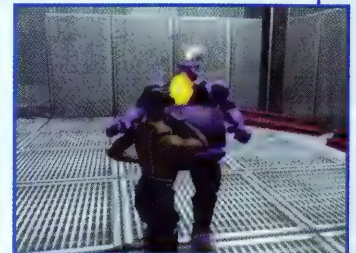
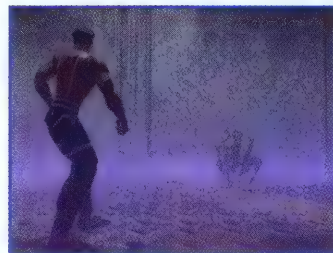
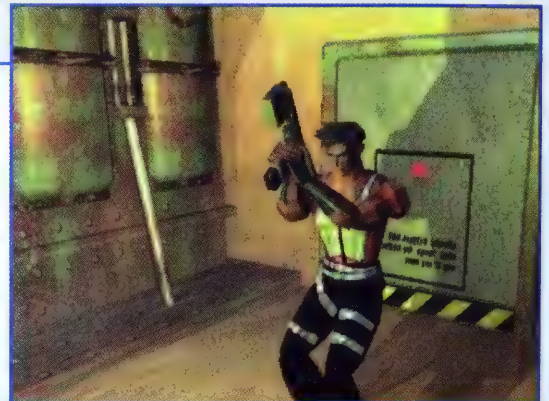
Hybrid Heaven - N64

Konami has created an early buzz on this N64 title by releasing two movie files of Hybrid Heaven over the Internet. While this footage is taken off of an SGI development system, the game's director, Mr. Daikai, said it is a good representation of the graphic quality his team will attempt to duplicate on the N64. Not scheduled to release in the U.S. until 1999, the team behind Hybrid Heaven is currently reworking some of the game's design. Apparently, Hybrid Heaven was said to be too close to the design of Metal Gear Solid. As competitive rivals with the KCEJ studio, the development team of Hybrid Heaven wants their game to stand alone, rather than be coined 'the N64's version of Metal Gear.'

The plot of Hybrid Heaven revolves around the main character, Johnny Slater, and involves both action elements and RPG-like battles. Slater is a member of a team of special agents sent to a futuristic Tokyo, in an attempt to stop a set of crazy genetic experiments that have evolved life forms into dangerous hybrids. The animation styles for battles will be similar to those of a standard fighting game, but will also feature RPG-styled attack selects that leave the player to watch. Additionally, other techniques such as defensive and evasive techniques can be used in battles as well.

Although Hybrid Heaven has been in development since April, the game is still quite early, and many of the concepts are still only on paper. While the game concepts and overall design look promising, Hybrid Heaven could still evolve into a completely different game as it comes closer to completion.

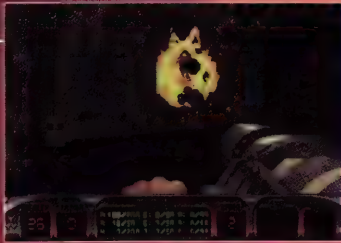
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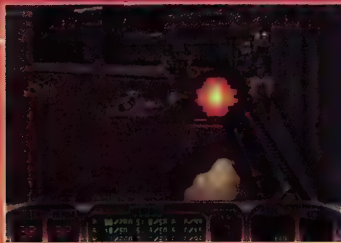
Development Images Shown



Laugh while you frag, from Hollywood to outer-space!



Bag some aliens with over a dozen hi-tech weapons!



An all-out overload of non-stop carnage!

DUKE NUKEM: TOTAL MELTDOWN

Duke's in town. And there's nothing he hates more than an army of alien punks crowding his space, 34 levels of freak-smashing 3D mayhem should see to it.

Gigantic guns! Gruesome enemies! Total interaction!

And all-out devastation! Don't mess with The Man!



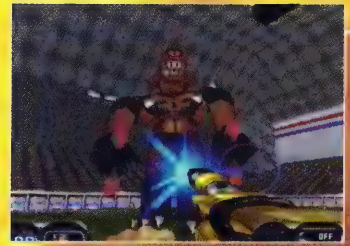
Developed by



www.3dreams.com

HE'S GOING TO GET YOU

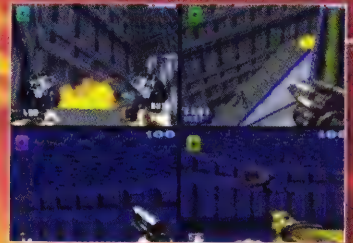
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Big weapons and bigger bosses for a fun-filled fragfest!



Earthquakes, exploding buildings and working subways!



Four-player, split-screen Dukematch action.

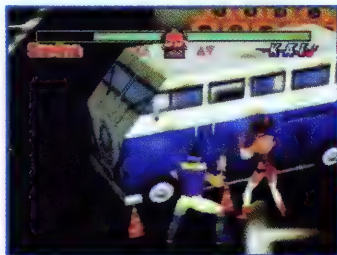
DUKE NUKEM 64

From L.A. to the moon – 32 towering levels of 100% interactive carnage! On film sets, in bars, on moving subways...no butt-ugly alien is safe from the wrath of Duke! Grenade Launchers. Shrink Rays. Hardcore 3D action. And graphics to kill for! Duke's coming to take out the garbage!

COMING SOME!



G.A.S.P - N64



G.A.S.P. (short for "Generation of Arts, Speed, and Power") was originally announced by Konami as Battle Dancers and may again see a name change as Konami of America is currently evaluating both the title and the game.

G.A.S.P. is a fairly straightforward fighting game with eight characters. The control is based on a three button configuration with an assortment of combos, throws, and counterattacks. G.A.S.P. features interactive 3D environments, as well as two boss characters. The big "if" currently surrounding G.A.S.P. is the fighter create feature. This feature would allow players to develop their own fighter by picking out various body types and choosing other appearance variables. Currently, this feature is being worked into the game, but it is unclear whether it will make it into the final version.

With the changes coming to the game, the U.S. release is still up in the air. Game Informer speculates that the game will not make it to the U.S. until at least the summer of '98.



Castlevania 3D - N64

Castlevania has obviously been one of Konami's flagship franchises for many years, and word of an N64 version has been circulating for a number of months. Castlevania 3D (working title), like Hybrid Heaven, is still early in development and will not appear in the U.S. until late '98. The shots shown are from development systems, but do show off some of the characters that players will be able to control.

Three characters (with the possibility of additions) will have varying abilities that essentially change the game's difficulty (depending on which one is chosen). The most familiar to Castlevania players will be Schneider, who is a member of the Belmont family. He will also brandish the classic whip. The other characters will be a magic user, Carrie, and the powerful but slow Cornell. Like Castlevania games of the past, players will fight to defeat the evil Dracula and encounter scores of vampires throughout the game. One of the key concepts of Castlevania 3D is the game clock which, in time with the setting sun, will unleash hordes of vampires. The change between night and day can make areas easier in daylight and harder in the darkness. The light of the sun can also be used as a weapon, since luring a vampire into the light will mean instant death for your foe.

Much of the game will be action-based, but the game's director, Mr. Yakushiji, said there will also be puzzle solving, item bartering, and other traps that players will encounter.



Development Images Shown

Names and Faces



Mr. Kinoshita, President KCEO. A 16 year Konami veteran, he gave the green light to open the doors of KCEO.

Mr. Shinkawa, Art Director - Metal Gear Solid.

Although this is his first game, Mr. Kojima had high praise for the man who designed all of the artwork for the game. Kojima said of Shinkawa, "His talent is something you see once every ten years."

Mr. Kojima, Creator & Director - Metal Gear Solid. The brains behind the entire Metal Gear series and the top game creator at KCEJ.

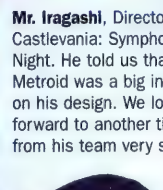


Mr. Umezaki, Director & G.M. - KCE Kobe. A very unassuming man who manages numerous undisclosed N64 products, he is the original director for Contra for the 8-bit NES. Pretty close to a saint in our book.



Mr. Okuda, Director, Int. Superstar Soccer 64. You had better believe that this man is working on the next N64 soccer game.

Mr. Nagae, Director & G.M. - KCEO. Mr. Nagae oversees development of all N64 products at KCEO.



Mr. Iragashi, Director, Castlevania: Symphony of the Night. He told us that Super Metroid was a big influence on his design. We look forward to another title from his team very soon.

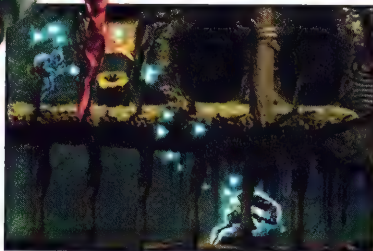


Mr. Yakushiji, Director - Castlevania 3D. Bringing Castlevania into 3D will be a challenging task for him, but his team's concepts and work look great so far.

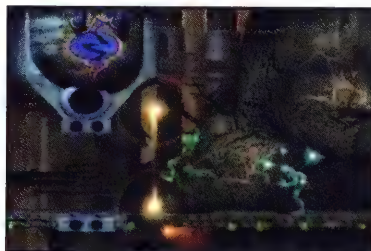
In other games you kill your enemies.
 In Oddworld, you make them do the killing for you.



Got some nasties to off? Why get your hands dirty? Possess one of them and let him do the blasting for you.
 Sound Odd? Welcome to Oddworld.



see the slig. be the slig.



a quantum leap in gameplay.



it's a hostile takeover.

A.L.I.V.E.
 Aware Lifeforms In
 Virtual Entertainment



Strategy Guide
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**ODD WORLD
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 www.oddworld.com



**GT Interactive
 Software**
 www.gtinteractive.com

Spanning the globe to bring you a constant variety of video games, *Game Informer* recently traveled to Japan and Great Britain to uncover the games of both the Tokyo Game Show and European Computer Trade Show (ECTS). Two of the largest video game related shows outside of the U.S.'s Electronic Entertainment Expo, both of these gaming shows are held on the very same weekend in September. The triumph and agony of gaming came together as the *Game Informer* staff sampled some of the video games that you will definitely see in the coming months, as well as the strange game oddities that will likely never see the light of day in North America.



GI Feature



Sony shows off a GT car for their game *Gran Turismo*.



Tokyo Game Show-Autumn '97

The third annual autumn Tokyo Game Show was held September 5-7 at the Makuhari Messe in Chiba, Japan. *Game Informer* was on hand for this three day event that, unlike U.S. events, is open to the gaming public on two of the three days. The industry's big names like **Sega**, **Konami**, **Capcom**, **Namco**, and **Sony** (Nintendo does not participate because of this month's Nintendo Show) give the masses of Japanese gamers (and us) a chance to sample the upcoming holiday line-up of video games.



Like many game shows *Game Informer* has attended in the past, the biggest news from the **Tokyo Game Show** was not the playable games on display, but the list of anticipated games that were either shown only on video or completely absent. **Namco** again taunted gamers with a possible PS-X version of **Tekken 3** by only setting up a few arcade machines. **Konami** kept **Metal Gear Solid** (PS-X) and **Hybrid Heaven** (N64) under wraps (see pg. 22). **Capcom's** much talked about **Resident Evil 2** (*BioHazard 2* in Japan) was only highlighted in a jam-packed Capcom Theater. **Square's** previously announced **Parasite Eve**, **Sou Kai Gi**, and **Chocobo Mysterious Dungeons** enthralled the gaming public on Square's huge video wall

but were not playable. The rumors and speculation surrounding a Saturn version of **Virtua Fighter 3** continue, but Sega made no mention of the title in their area. Finally, Sony went for the minimalist approach by only featuring two main titles (**Gran Turismo** and **F1 Championship**) and had only a total of four games on

display. Yet even with the absence of many of these high profile titles, there were still a huge amount of new announcements and playable games worth noting.

Sega's booth was filled with gamers sampling **Burning Rangers**, the newest game from **Nights** creator Yuji Naka. **Burning Rangers** is still very early, but the game will make its way to the U.S. next spring (see pg. 73). Sega reintroduced their classic RPG series on the Saturn with **Shining Force III**. The highly acclaimed series will be released in three separate installments. No U.S. release has been announced, but we speculate that it should make it to the States by next fall. Another interesting game that Sega debuted was **Wrestling Featuring Virtua**. The game has already been released in Japan and includes Jeffrey and Wolf from *Virtua Fighter*.

Square had five playable games



Gamers lined up for blocks to see the sights.



Capcom's booth was heavily guarded.



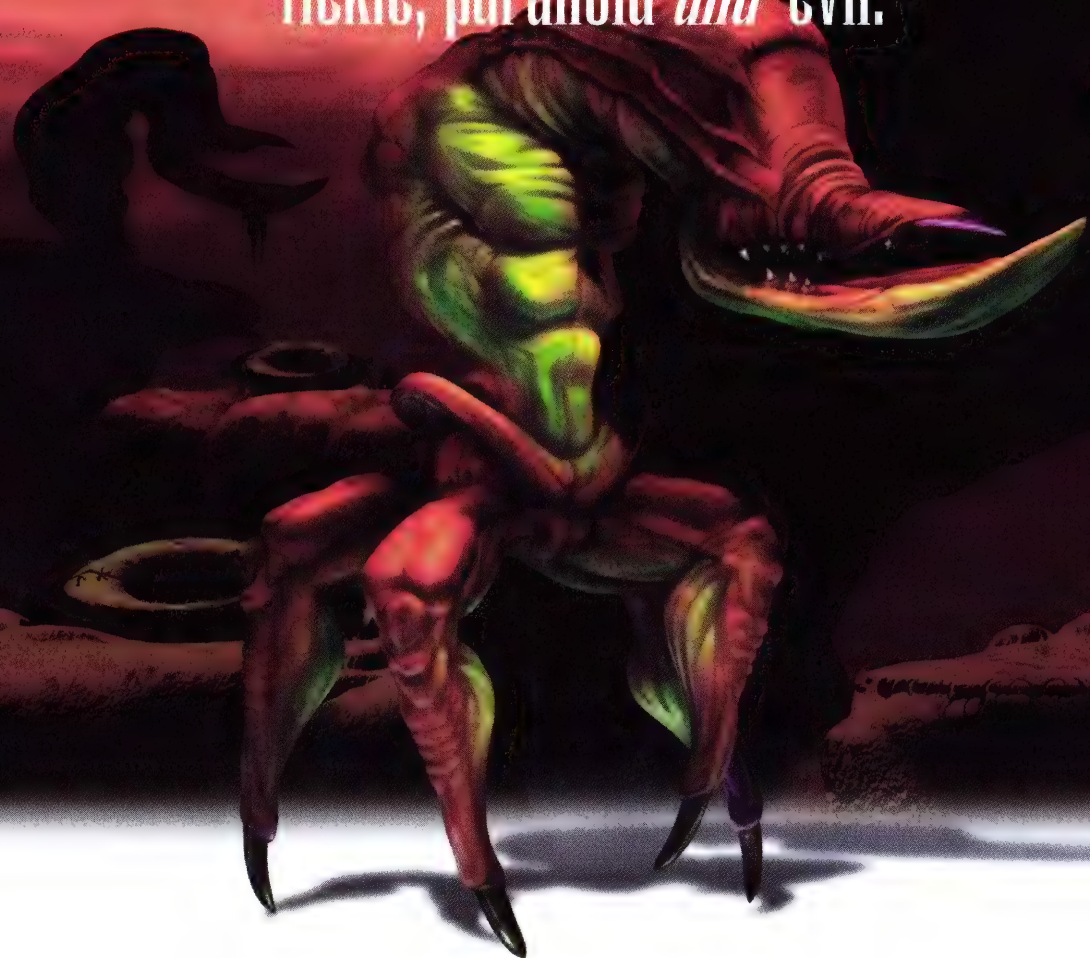
Xenogear - Square



Hey! It's Crash!

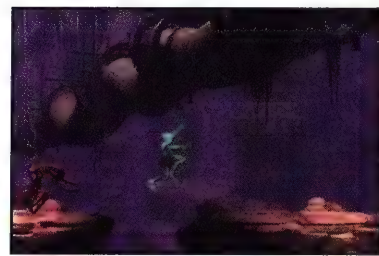
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In other games enemies are evil.
 In Oddworld, they're moody, territorial, lazy, hungry,
 fickle, paranoid *and* evil.

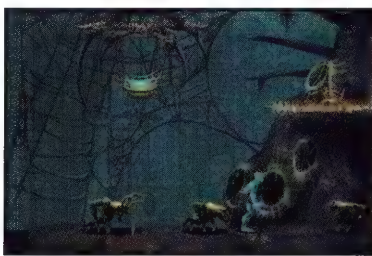


If you don't know what makes other characters tick, they just might explode.

Sound Odd? Welcome to Oddworld.



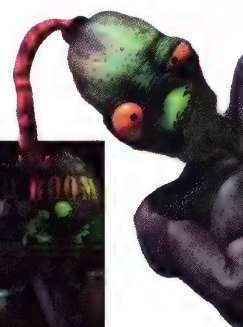
scrabs ahoy!



paramites on the prowl.



every slog will have his day.



A.L.I.V.E.
 Aware Lifeforms In
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(continued from pg. 28)

including strategy games *Front Mission Alternative* and *Front Mission 2*, the impressive 3D shooter *Einhander*, an action/RPG entitled *Xenogears*, and a horse racing simulator called *Grade 1*. Japanese gamers will also get the chance to play the U.S. version of *Final Fantasy VII*. Square recently released *FF VII International* that includes an extra disc chronicling the development of the triple platinum selling game. Square also announced a fighting game called *Sou Kai Gi*. This title looks similar to *Bushido Blade* and is scheduled for the PS-X next year.

The Konami booth was packed with games and people. People not only flocked to see games, the lines were long at Konami's game shop where they sold a host of game related artwork, clothing, and action figures. For the complete lowdown on the Konami software line-up, be sure to see our Konami feature on page 22.

Sony, as previously mentioned, had only four titles at their booth; however, *Gran Turismo* proved to be the best racing

game of the show. The graphics and huge selection of cars are hard to beat. Sony also introduced an action/RPG entitled *Granstream Saga*. While it is unclear whether it will make it to the States, *Granstream Saga* definitely looks impressive.

Hudson Soft had their upcoming **Nintendo 64 Bomberman** release, as well as versions for PS-X and Saturn. They also introduced a fighting game called *Bloody Roar*. This game was actually displayed by Sony at the E3 as *Beastorizer* and should be published in the U.S. by Sony sometime in 1998.

Other titles to keep an eye out for are *Snowbow Kids* (N64, Atlus), *Fighting Cup* (N64, Imagineer), *Tamagotchi* (N64/GB, Bandai), *Dead or Alive* (SS, Tecmo), *Overblood 2* (PS-X, Riverhill Soft), *Masters '98* (N64, T&E Soft), and *K1 Revenge* (PS-X, XING). While there were tons of other titles displayed at the Tokyo Game Show, including a huge number of RPGs, most of them will unfortunately not reach the U.S. shores.



Bloody Roar - Hudson Soft



Masters 98 - T & E Soft



Dead or Alive - Tecmo



Overblood 2 - Riverhill Soft

We have assumed control... we have assumed control.



The 1997 ECTS

In the land of Robin Hood, Fish & Chips, and Westminster Abbey there occurs the yearly video game rite of passage known as the **ECTS**. Similar to America's **E3**, the ECTS spotlights European developers, as well as American and Japanese products destined for the shores of Europe. Typically a disappointment, the ECTS always plays second fiddle to other worldwide trade shows. This year was no exception, as the entire show was dominated by mediocre **PlayStation** titles. So why attend the ECTS? Because in between the mediocre and terrible lie a few potential gems. Also, the European market is a growing market, and European developers such as **Argonaut**, **Psygnosis**, **Ubi Soft**, **Infogrames**, **Eidos**, **Bullfrog**, and **Rare** always seem to have something up their sleeves.

One of the most interesting games of the show appeared in the **Sony** booth. *Kula Quest* is a new puzzle game created by Swedish developers **Game**



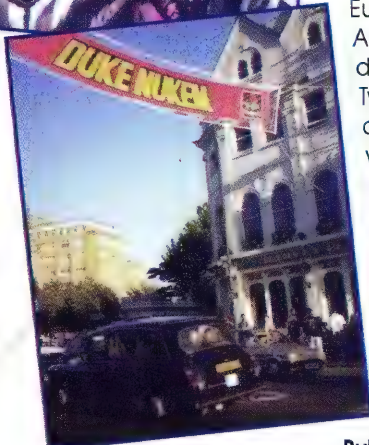
Design. The game takes place on an interconnected series of beams. The object is to touch each section on each side of each beam. The game is quite original, but it might not make it to the U.S. Sony was also displaying two games from Sony Computer Entertainment Europe - *Rosco McQueen* and *Medieval*. *Rosco* is a 3D adventure starring a firefighter, while *Medieval* is a 3D adventure starring a medieval skeleton/warrior. Both games are pretty lame, and Sony is still unsure as to whether the games will

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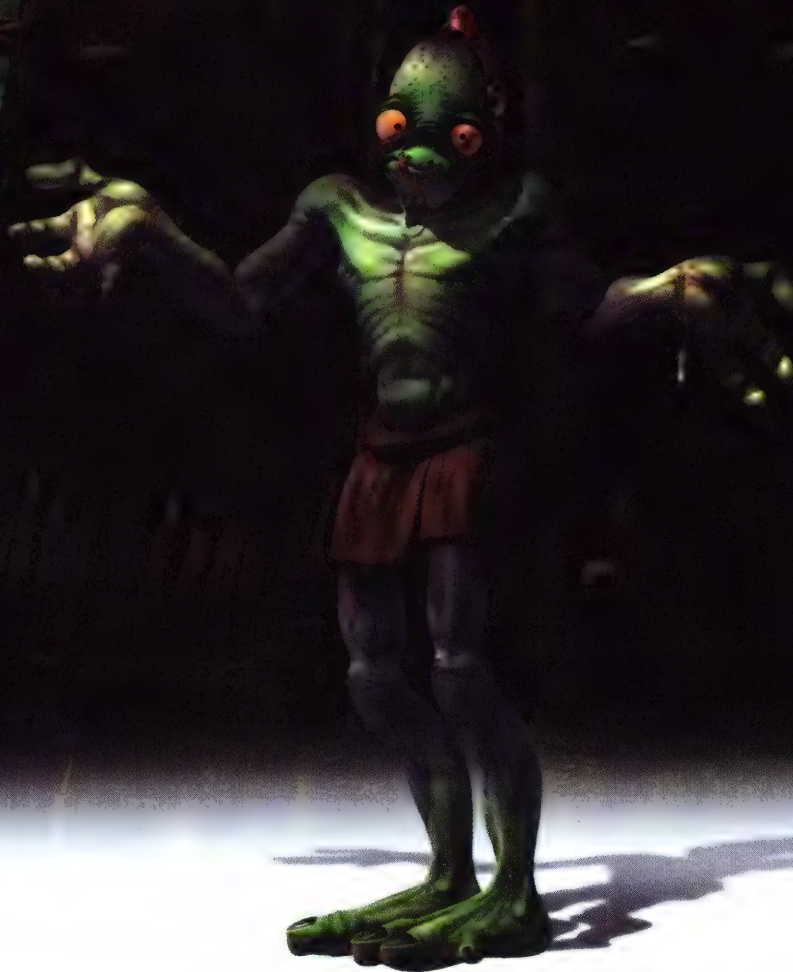


A bird's eye view of the ECTS.



Duke Nukem for Parliament. Yeah!

Other games talk about their characters, Oddworld's characters speak for themselves.



In a lush world of diabolical danger, you're Abe... the skinny guy with no weapons.

Your mission is simple...run, jump and talk your way out of this ravaged world.

You heard me... Talk! With just your D-pad or keyboard and your brain. It's called Gamespeak.



And when you've got an entire race to save from the deli counter it could come in handy.

For Odd's sake, do something different. Chow down on ODDWORLD's pure nugget of surreal, sensory overload gaming.

You'll never be hungry again.

ODDWORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE

G A M I N G G E T S O D D

A.L.I.V.E.
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(continued from pg. 30)

be published in the States. **Rapid Racer** is one game we might see here in the U.S. Also developed by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe, **Rapid Racer** is a boat racing game that plays well, but offers nothing exceptional in the department of entertainment.

Gremlin had a decent line-up anchored by a version of **Men in Black** running on the PC. **Men in Black** features a play-style similar to **Resident Evil** (painted backdrops, third-person perspective) and the characters actually look like **Tommy Lee Jones** and **Will Smith**. Like the movie, **Men in Black** is a humorous game. Gremlin is currently seeking a U.S. publisher for the PlayStation version. **Judge Dredd** for the PlayStation also looked impressive. With the comic book license and noteworthy graphics, **Judge Dredd** may prove to be more than just another light gun game. Unfortunately, Gremlin was not showing the much guarded **Body Harvest** for Nintendo 64.

Acclaim was showing a running version of **Batman & Robin**. Just like almost every other 'new' game in the world right now, **Batman & Robin** is a free roaming 3D action/adventure. Batman must gather clues, battle villains, and snuff out evil in this mediocre looking movie translation. Acclaim was also showing **Bust-A-Move 3**, which looks to be exactly the same



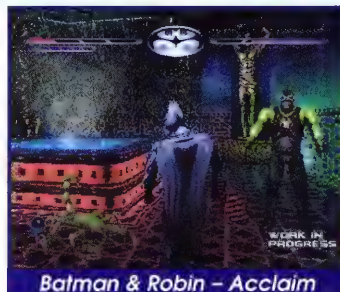
The 5th Element - Kalisto



Men in Black - Gremlin



Powerboat VR - Interplay



Batman & Robin - Acclaim



GT - SCEI



C & C: Red Alert - Westwood

as **Bust-A-Move 2**.

Interplay showcased a running version of **Powerboat VR** and **Crime Killer**, both for the PlayStation. What stands out about **Crime Killer** is the size of your police car. Other than that, the game seems pretty average. Likewise for **Powerboat VR** - it's another racing game, except it's on water.

There were a number of real-time strategy games on display for the PlayStation, the best of which was (of course) **Command and Conquer: Red Alert**. **MGM** bragged of a new game based on the movie **War Games**. This real-time strategy offering allows players to play as **WOPR** or **David**. The game is developed by U.K. based **Interactive Studios**, and **MGM** is looking to publish it here in the States sometime after Christmas.

Infogrames' V Rally was a standout in the racing department. The game sports an excellent first-person view, with 7 tracks, changing weather, and adjustable car settings. **Electronic Arts** will publish the game here in the States at the end of October.

Other notable games were **DreamWorks' Skullmonkeys** for PS-X, **Sunsoft's Chameleon Twist** for N64, **Hudson Soft's Bloody Roar** for PS-X, **Kalisto's The Fifth Element** for PS-X, and **BMG's Grand Theft Auto** for PS-X. ■



Chameleon Twist - Sunsoft



VRally - Infogrames



Judge Dredd - Gremlin



Rapid Racer - Sony Europe

GAZETTODOR

**CHEAT - FIGHT - SWING - RUN - BATTLE - SHOOT - DRIVE - BLAST
 DESTROY - FIRE - JUMP - BOMB - POWER-UP - SLIDE - RACE - KICK
 TACKLE - SKATE - TRICK - BLOCK - BLOW-UP - ATTACK - SCAM**

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SuperPad[®] 8 for SEGA SATURN[™]

- Eight fire buttons
- Circular directional pad
- Auto-fire
- Slow motion



GamePad for SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

- Six fire buttons
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- Six button arcade layout
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Cleaning Kit for NINTENDO[®] system and games (V135FUN)

Cleaning Kit for GAME GEAR[™] system and games (V134FUN)

Game Informer's



Editors' Top Ten Console Games for November

- 10 Star Fox 64 - N64
- 9 GoldenEye 007 - N64
- 8 Madden 64 - N64
- 7 Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS-X
- 6 NHL 98 - PS-X
- 5 San Francisco Rush - N64
- 4 Cool Boarders 2 - PS-X
- 3 Crash Bandicoot 2 - PS-X
- 2 Castlevania: Symphony of the Night - PS-X
- 1 Final Fantasy VII - PS-X

Readers' Top Ten Console Games for November

- 10 Madden NFL 98 - PS-X, SS
- 9 WCW Vs. The World - PS-X
- 8 Triple Play 98 - PS-X
- 7 Resident Evil - PS-X
- 6 Tomb Raider - PS-X, SS
- 5 Star Fox 64 - N64
- 4 Turok: Dinosaur Hunter - N64
- 3 Abe's Oddysee - PS-X
- 2 GoldenEye 007 - N64
- 1 Final Fantasy VII - PS-X

Top Ten Signs You've Played Too Much Final Fantasy VII...

- 10 You're scared to reprimand your dog for messing in the house, fearing that he may one day rule the world.
- 9 Anytime you get angry you say, "If I wasn't such a nice guy I'd summons your @\$\$. "
- 8 You heal the bosses to extend the battles.
- 7 You raided your mom's jewelry box, and glued all the stones to a plastic sword.
- 6 You always carry a PlayStation controller to help advance through boring conversations.
- 5 You're constantly in trouble because you mistakenly call your girlfriend Aeris.
- 4 You walk around singing Madonna's song... "We are living in a Materia world, and I am a Materia girl."
- 3 You keep repeating the Slums level to see all the "cute" outfits Cloud gets to try on.
- 2 After attempting to breed Chocobos, you move on to the family pet.
- 1 You start watching old tennis matches because you think Sephiroth is Steffi Graf.

Game Informer is looking for your Top Ten favorite games. Please send your Top Tens to:

Game Informer Magazine
Attn: Top Ten
10120 West 76th Street
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

Everyone that enters every month will be entered in a drawing to win a GI Secret Access T-Shirt! So get writing!



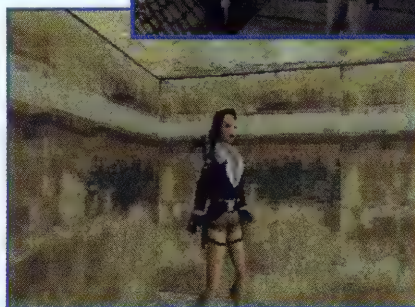
Shining Force III For Saturn

After a five year wait, **Sega** has finally decided to start development on another **Shining Force** title. As with the previous titles, gameplay consists of turn-based strategy combat; but this time, the battle arenas will be in 3D (as seen in **Final Fantasy Tactics** and **Vandal Hearts**). Also, **Shining Force III** features rendered characters, rather than the sprite or polygon-based characters so common in today's games.

Shining Force III is being developed as three scenarios, each one to be sold separately. **Scenario One** will hit Japanese retailers this December, **Scenario Two** is set for a spring release, and **Scenario Three** will be available in the summer. This is definitely an interesting venture for both Sega and the game industry, and hopefully it will catch on. Unfortunately, no plans for a U.S. release have been announced. Where are you **Working Designs**?

Sony Grabs Tomb Raider Exclusive

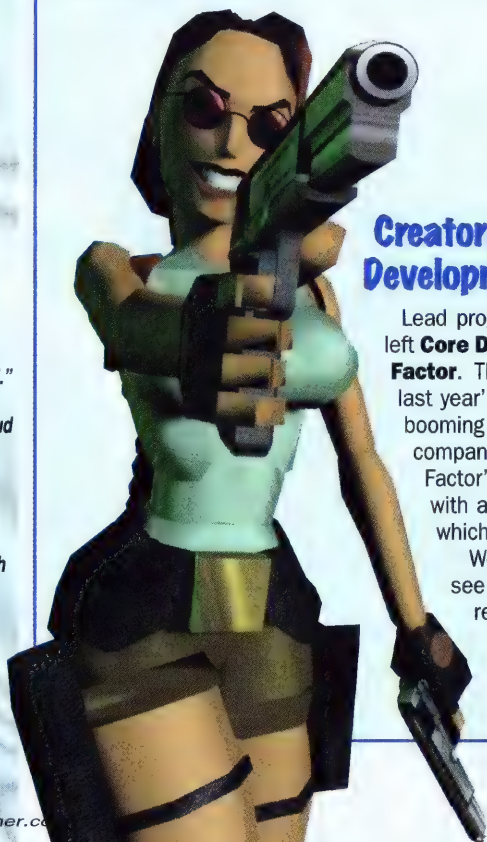
Sony Computer Entertainment has signed a deal with **Eidos Interactive** that grants Sony exclusive rights to the next three **Tomb Raider** related console releases (which includes **Tomb Raider 2**). Therefore, if Lara were to venture off into another game, it would still be exclusive to the **PlayStation**. Any PC versions of **Tomb Raider** are not affected by this deal. Considering the fact that **Tomb Raider** was one of the best selling and most popular games of 1996-97, Sony has yet again secured a major coup against the likes of **Nintendo** and **Sega**.



Creators of Tomb Raider Form New Development Company

Lead programmer Paul Douglas and lead graphics artist Toby Gard have left **Core Design** to start a new development company named **Confounding Factor**. The two men were a large driving force behind the creation of last year's **Tomb Raider**, and are considered a hot commodity in today's booming video game industry. **Interplay**, who helped this **Britsoft** company form, also has worldwide publishing rights to all of **Confounding Factor's** software. Their debut game, **Leviathan**, will be a 3D adventure with a release date slated for 1999, but there is no information as to which platform it will appear on.

We had a chance to talk to Eidos (publishers of **Tomb Raider**) to see how much this emigration will hurt their future products. Eidos responded by stating, "Core has up to 75 people in-house, and they are constantly adding new talent. The Core guys [Toby and Paul] weren't working on **Tomb 2**. It's a team that makes the games, not individuals."



According to our sources at **Acclaim Entertainment**, *Shadowman* will no longer be in development for the **Nintendo 64**; however, it will be coming to the **Sony PlayStation**. Our source stated that the game was not a friendly one, and would have to change if published on the N64. Apparently, the game is too violent for **Nintendo's** tastes.

Earlier this year, **Midway** revealed to *Game Informer* their plans to release a version of the upcoming **Fast Break** basketball game (formally **Hardwood Heroes**) on the **Nintendo 64**. While Midway still plans to release a 64-bit version of the game, it will not happen this year. Previously, Midway was looking into the purchase of an N64 basketball game from another company (not **Visual Concepts**, who is already busy creating the PlayStation version); but Midway then decided that this unnamed game doesn't live up to the Midway name brand. Instead, Midway is going to let **Visual Concepts** create the game for the N64, moving the release to the later half of next year.

Vic Tokai, publishers of *Dark Rift* for **N64**, have announced that they have secured the distribution rights to **Video Systems'** N64 title, **Aerofighters Assault**. It is a one or two-player air combat game being developed by **Paradigm Entertainment** (of *Pilot Wings* fame). The game is called **Sonic Wings Assault** in Japan.

In case you have yet to beat this year's **Nuclear Strike**, take note: a few moments after the closing sequence, a secret trailer appears revealing plans for the upcoming title **Future Strike**. As the third installment in the PlayStation *Strike* series, *Future Strike* will feature ground-based mechanized combat. Mecha units will be included (as seen in the briefing for the final *Nuclear Strike* mission), and the classic *Strike* difficulty will be retained. The game is already in development, and could ship as early as next spring.

Electronic Arts stated that current work on **Road Rash 3D** for the **Sony PlayStation** (see *GI News*, Sept. '97) is behind schedule. The projected ship date, originally announced as December, has been moved back to February. However, EA did state that we should see some actual gameplay (screens or footage) very soon.

There are many rumors regarding the release of a "Jack" title being developed by **Sony's** Foster City, California development house. *Jack*, a spiky-haired rouge, is the star of this new 3D action/platform game. Sony is hoping *Jack* will be the **PlayStation's** answer to *Super Mario 64*. While release details are sketchy, it is possible the game could ship as early as December '98.

Psygnosis' Answer to Legacy of Kain

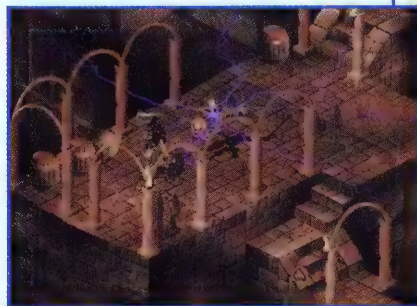
Developed by **Haiku Studios** and based on the creations of fantasy writer **Michael Moorcock**, *Elric* is **Psygnosis'** newest game for the **PlayStation**. Similar in look and concept to games like **Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain** and **Diablo** (for PC), the hero *Elric* will hack and slash his way to victory armed with a trusty sword and mysterious magical powers. *Elric* is currently scheduled to arrive in the first quarter of next year.



Psygnosis Investigates New Racer

Given their success with the mainly European and Japanese-purchased **Formula 1** series, **Psygnosis** is reportedly investigating licensing deals with members of the **CART** racing teams.

Unlike licensing deals surrounding **Formula 1 (FOCA)**, which is a package deal including teams, drivers, and courses, the **CART** teams and race locations all follow under separate contracts. **Psygnosis** is reported to be in negotiation with the **Newman/Haas Team** featuring **Michael Andretti**. The game, if all works out for **Psygnosis**, could surface by the end of next year.



PC images shown



New Final Fantasy Game Announced

Recent information has surfaced concerning the newest **Final Fantasy** title in the pipeline. Much to our surprise, it's not *FF VIII*. Instead, a four-disc set was released in Japan on October 2 that features the complete **U.S. Final Fantasy VII** (with new bosses and features), and a never-before-released companion disc.

The companion disc contains missing scenes; data on the enemies, characters, and ships; and a huge map section which gives information on what everything is (even little things like a desk). There are other rumored features in this four-disc set such as the ability to snowboard with every character, and a new plot twist surrounding **Aerith**, but at this point these rumors are unconfirmed.

At press time, **Sony** or **Square** had no plans to bring *International* to the States, but this could change considering current U.S. sales numbers concerning *FF VII*. **Sony Computer Entertainment America** recently declared *Final Fantasy VII* "the best-selling video game of 1997 after a mere three days on the shelves." During that time, *FF VII* sold over 330,000 copies, grossing \$16.5 million. If you think that is impressive, consider that fans in Japan engulfed about 2.5 million copies during the first three days of the game's release. In comparison to other entertainment earnings, **Sony** was also quick to point out that *FF VII* outsold **G.I. Jane**, the highest grossing Hollywood film (\$11.1 million) to debut during the Labor Day weekend.



IN
:06 SECONDS,
THE COMPUTER
PILOT IN
ACE COMBAT 2
WILL SEND
YOUR JET
CRASHING
TO EARTH.

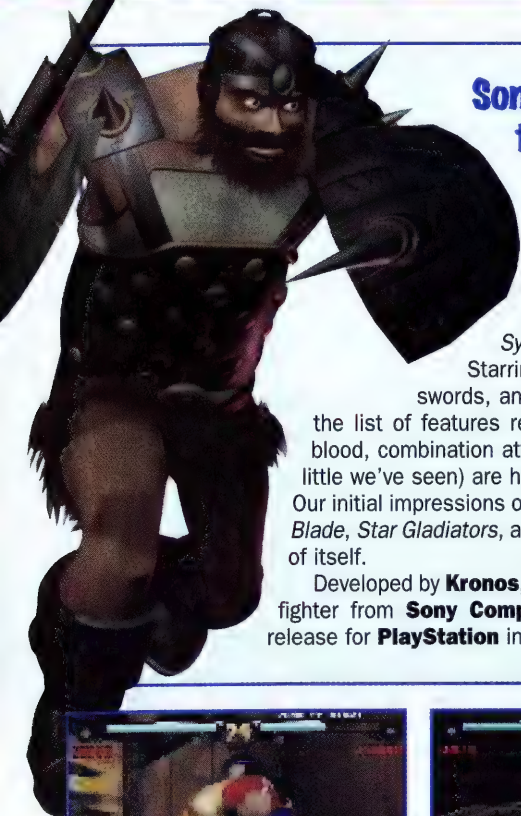
YOUR EGO
WILL FOLLOW
SHORTLY
THEREAFTER.



Uh-oh.



SUPERIOR ENEMY INTELLIGENCE



Sony's Cardinal Syn Coming to PlayStation In January

First seen at the 1997 E3 with less than a handful of characters to play and little fanfare, new information has surfaced on **Sony's** head-to-head fighter, **Cardinal Syn**.

In the likeness of many fighters, but especially drawing similarities with **Midway's Mace**, **Cardinal Syn** features 3D fighting arenas and graphic violence. Starring 18 medieval fighters armed with battle axes, swords, and the rest of those large iron medieval sharp things, the list of features reads like a typical amalgam of finishing moves and blood, combination attacks and blood. To its credit, the graphics (from the little we've seen) are highly detailed and the characters extremely imposing. Our initial impressions of the play control had us drawing comparisons to *Soul Blade*, *Star Gladiators*, and even *Bushido Blade*. All tributes to the game in and of itself.

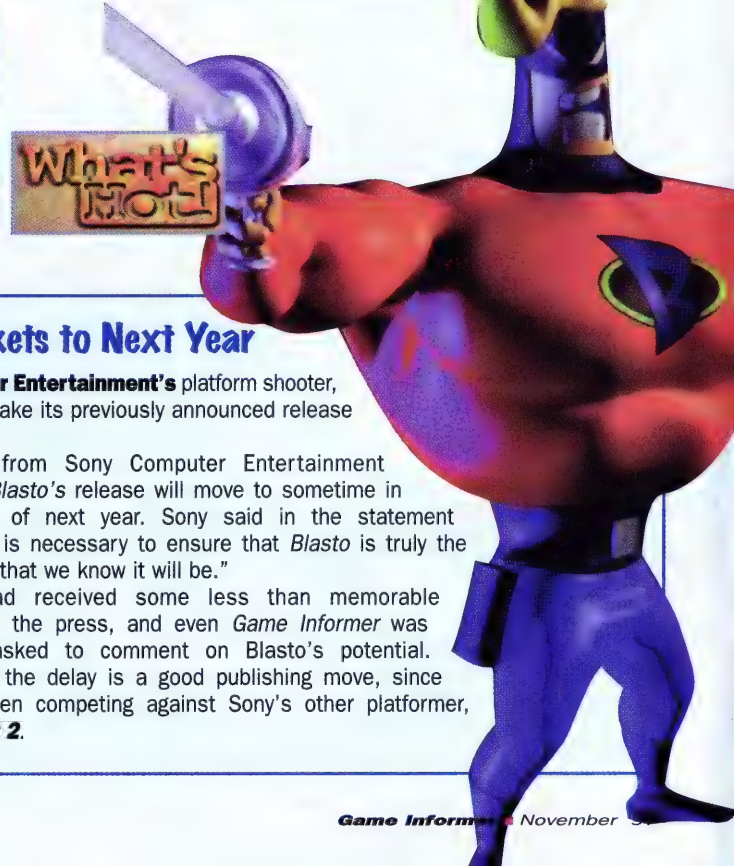
Developed by **Kronos**, **Cardinal Syn** is the first U.S. published and produced fighter from **Sony Computer Entertainment America**. It is scheduled to release for **PlayStation** in January.



Konami's Cobra to Strike

Konami's next arcade fighter, although previously announced, has finally been given a name (or two).

The game is now playable in Japanese arcades as **Fighting Wu Shu**, set to debut later in the U.S. as **Fighting Bujutsu**. Easily compared, in appearance, to **Sega's Virtua Fighter 3**, the game utilizes Konami's long-awaited "**Cobra Technology**" hardware (see specs below). Konami also plans to release its "Cobra" driving title, **Racing Jam**.



Blasto Rockets to Next Year

Sony Computer Entertainment's platform shooter, **Blasto**, will not make its previously announced release of October 21.

A statement from Sony Computer Entertainment announced that **Blasto's** release will move to sometime in the first quarter of next year. Sony said in the statement that, "[the delay] is necessary to ensure that **Blasto** is truly the remarkable game that we know it will be."

The game had received some less than memorable commentary from the press, and even *Game Informer* was cautious when asked to comment on **Blasto's** potential. To Sony's credit, the delay is a good publishing move, since it would have been competing against Sony's other platformer, **Crash Bandicoot 2**.

COBRA BOARD SPECS:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|
| Main CPU | | Shading |
| • Power PC603e | 100MHz | • Anti-aliasing by Subpixel Sampling |
| Sub CPU | | • Flat Shading |
| • Power PC604 | 100MHz | • Gouraud Shading |
| with Power PC403 | 33MHz | Lighting |
| High Speed Network Communication | | • Linear Fog |
| Performance | | • Exponential Fog |
| • 1 to 5 Million Polygons/sec | | Texture Mapping |
| • 50 to 250 Million Pixels/sec | | • Perspective Correction Mipmap |
| Resolution | | • Bilinear and Trilinear Filtering |
| • 640 x 400 to 1,280 x 1,024 Pixels | | |
| • 144 Bits/Pixel Frame Buffer | | |
| • 256 Level Alpha Blending | | |

Sony Establishes The "Power Price"

Sony Computer Entertainment America's new pricing strategy that recently saw many retailers offering **NFL GameDay '98** at \$34.95 will be offered on four additional Sony PlayStation releases.

Sony announced that **Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back**, **Bushido Blade**, **Parrapa the Rapper**, and **Intelligent Qube** will also carry Sony's "Power Price," which means an MSRP of "no more than \$39.95." Of course, like *GameDay '98*, many retailers should offer these games at \$34.95.

Sony stated that current "Power Price" pricing will be limited to the five aforementioned titles.

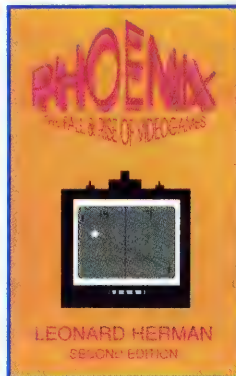


Phoenix: The Fall and Rise of Video Games

Those interested in the history of video games might have come across a book by Leonard Herman entitled **Phoenix: The Fall and Rise of Video Games**. As long time fans of the book, *Game Informer* is happy to see a second edition surface with the promise of increased distribution.

This insightful, informative, and thorough summary of the history of home video games and video game systems now comes packed with pictures, new appendices, and updated chapters (up to and including 1996). Author Leonard Herman is beyond a doubt a serious gamer, and his narrative is an entertaining balance between fact and industry analysis. Everything from the thousands of *ET* cartridges at the bottom of a landfill, to the origin of the **Sony PlayStation**, to the many lawsuits and rifts that formed the basis of today's software and hardware development wars, are explained in clear and concise detail. *Phoenix* will humble any braggart who claims to know all about home video gaming.

The book itself is available at a price of \$19.95. For information on how to order, write to Rolenta Press, P.O. Box 3814, Union, NJ 07083 - 1891.



Charles and Shaq are Back

After a long hiatus, both **Charles Barkley** and **Shaquille O'Neal** will be appearing in all upcoming basketball games that feature the **NBAPA** license. For years, both players had paid to keep themselves out of the NBAPA, but with no video game companies willing to sign either player to a new exclusive deal, both Shaq and Charles are back for your gaming pleasure. However, **Michael Jordan** still considers himself an elite property, and since it costs a game company at least \$20 million to even get near Jordan, he will no doubt dwell in video game obscurity for years to come.

Look to see Shaq and Charles in these upcoming NBAPA licensed games: **NBA Fast Break (PS-X)**, **NBA Action '98 (Saturn)**, **NBA Live 98 (PS-X)**, **NBA Shoot Out '98 (PS-X)**, and **NBA In The Zone '98 (PS-X, N64)**.



ACECOMBAT 2

SUPERIOR ENEMY INTELLIGENCE



- The most realistic dogfights ever created for the PlayStation™ game console.
- Total 3-D polygon environment - fly freely and unload your arsenal with reckless abandon.
- Advanced artificial intelligence - cunning and calculating enemy pilots.
- 30 formidable missions - nearly double the missions of Air Combat.
- Awesome mission debriefings - dynamic diagrams and moving maps for surgical strikes.
- Secret planes and hidden missions - the better you fly, the more you'll reveal.

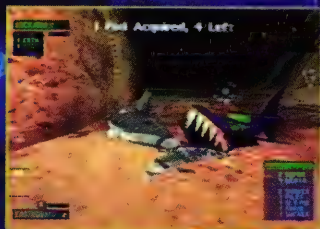
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KISS THE ABYSS



IMPLOSIVE REAL-TIME 3D GRAPHICS.



DEEP SEA MULTI-PLAYER
GAME MODES.



10 TOTALLY DIFFERENT
HULL-CRUSHING ENVIRONMENTS.



PIRANHA SWARMS, MAGNETIC SUCKERS,
DEPTH CHARGES AND MORE!

This is what they really mean when they talk

about totally immersive gameplay. Take a dip in

these sub-infested waters for a spot of nuclear

fishin'. 12 subaquatic psychos want to send you

down and they've got the torpedoes to prove it.

Don't worry. You'll know you're in too deep

when the water pressure caves your head in.

Looks like you're in deep simp.

**FROM THE DEVELOPERS OF TWISTED METAL™
JET MOTO™ AND WARHAWK™**



LOCKJAW



ARMAGEDDON



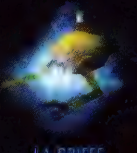
BOTTOM LINER



STALINGRAD



ARCHIMEDES



LA GRIFFE



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Game Informer's Site O' The Month



Smithsonian Institution

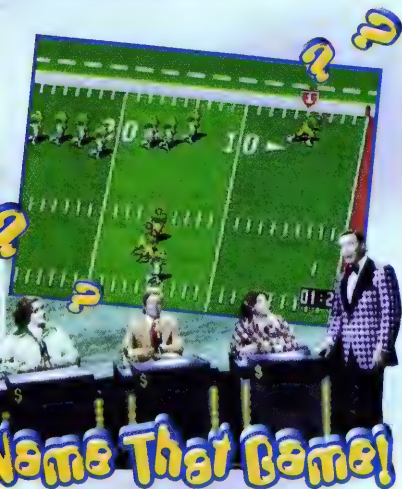
Absolute PlayStation International
<http://www.absolute-playstation.com/>

With content originating mainly from the United Kingdom, this site is vigorous with its reviews and coverage of Europe.

VIDEO GAME TRIVIA

1. What system did the first Final Fantasy appear on?
2. What football game on the N64 has the NFL license?
3. In what country were the enemies in the N64 game Turok changed to robots?
4. What company invented Icon Passing?
5. Name the only game that was designed and created by Square's Redmond office before it was disbanded.

(Answers on the bottom of page 43)



Originally created by the same Midway developers who went on to code and produce NBA Jam and Mortal Kombat, this football game was published on the 16-bit machines by Acclaim's Arena Entertainment. What game is it?

(Answer on the bottom of page 43)



Sony to Publish Bloody Roar in the U.S.

One of the most impressive new fighters at both the **E3**, **Tokyo Game Show**, and **ECTS** (see pg. 28), **Bloody Roar** is unique in that it allows characters to morph into beasts. Like the special meters found in games such as **Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha**, once **Bloody Roar's** Rave Meter reaches maximum, players can push the morph button to turn into a deadly beast. The character then remains in Rave Mode (beast mode) until a certain level of damage is sustained.

Bloody Roar features polygon graphics with brilliant KO cut scenes, caged arenas, 8 characters (plus 8 beast counterparts), and a number of secret modes such as Kids, Big Head, and First-Person. The basic moves are **Tekken**-styled, but each character also has access to a few special moves that feed off of **Street Fighter**-esque quarter and half-circles.

Bloody Roar is developed by **Hudson Soft** and will be available in Japan this November. **Sony** is hoping for a first quarter release here in the States.

Tentative Plans Revealed for New Sega System

Rumors have been running through the industry concerning a new console system from **Sega**. As promised, **Game Informer** refused to report on misguided rumors and half-truths. That wait is now over, as the **Nikkei Daily News** (a Japanese news information service) reported that **Microsoft Corp.** and **Sega Enterprises, Ltd.** are currently negotiating a joint development deal that will allow the two companies to create computer games that run on both a personal computer and a new 128-bit console machine. The software itself would run on Microsoft's operating system, which should be implemented into the console machine. The operating system itself will be based on **Windows CE**.

SEGA™

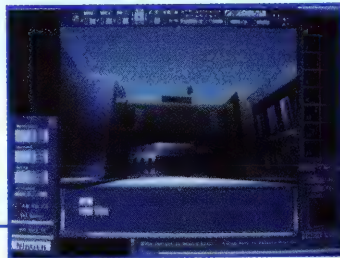
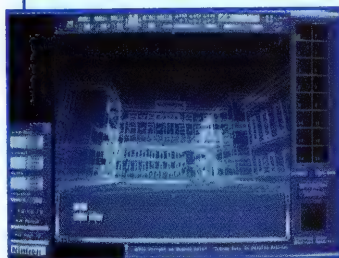
The console machine is estimated to sell for 30,000 yen or less (\$300). A modem will also be installed into the machine allowing for net play from a console to computer. Lastly, the machine is rumored to use a 128-bit microcontroller (which is currently being developed by **Hitachi Ltd.**), making it ten times more powerful than the **Saturn**. Sega and Microsoft are expected to ink the deal by the end of the year.

Microsoft®

What's Hot!

Turning a 3D Place Into 3D Space

Many fans of first-person shooting games rave about **Nintendo's GoldenEye 007**. One reason for this praise is its exceptionally high quality, detailed graphics. The 3D environments in the game are based on actual **GoldenEye** movie props. The photos here show the steps of transforming a set from the movie into a computer generated environment in a game. The graphic artists also relied heavily on the actual blueprints from the movie, to help create wireframes on their trusty **SGI** computers. Light sourcing and shading are added to finish the effect. Which only leaves one question - where's that tank?



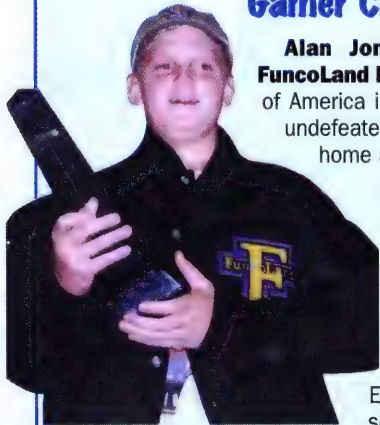
What's HOT!

Tiger Creates Star Wars Pets

Tamagotchi, the leading virtual pet on the market, could very easily lose its title of industry leader when **Tiger Electronics'** new line of **Giga Friends** hits retailers. This line features the **Star Wars** license, and everyone thinks (including us) that **Star Wars** is cool. The first batch of **Star Wars Giga Friends** showcases three different pets (**Yoda**, **R2-D2**, and the **Rancor**). Hopefully, the Rancor's food consists of nothing but plump and tender Gamorrean Guards.



Gamer Crowned National Champion

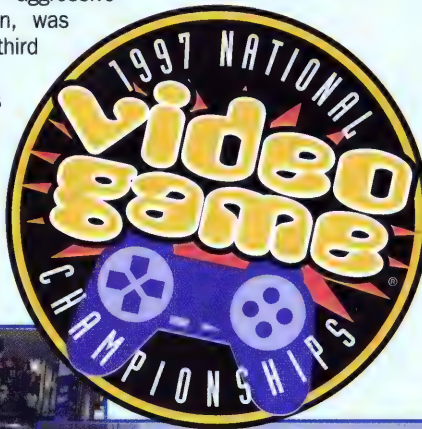


Alan Jones was crowned National Champion at the **FuncoLand National Video Game Championships** at the Mall of America in Bloomington, MN. Jones, of Eagleville, PA, went undefeated in the double-elimination tournament to take home a \$25,000 college scholarship.

Dueling on the **PlayStation's CART World Series** from **Sony**, 15 of the nation's top gamers qualified on the first day of the competition (fully *GI* sanctioned and approved), and were then paired off for the next day's head-to-head championship flights. Jones, **Paul Ayala** of Houston, TX and returning competitors **Winer Raymond** of Brockton, MA and **Sovichet Ly** of East Windsor, CT advanced to the semifinals. A series of close races ended with a finals match-up of Jones versus Ly for the title. Jones ran away with

the victory after an early wreck by his aggressive opponent. Ly, taking the runner-up crown, was awarded a \$5,000 savings bond. Ayala took third place and received a \$2,500 savings bond.

Contestants qualified by playing Sony's **Rally Cross** at FuncoLand locations across the country and the top 15 finalists surfaced from a sea of over 3,000 gamers. *Game Informer* was on-hand to witness some intense racing. Congratulations to all of who showed off their gaming skills at the championship.



Regional Champions:

- New York**
Nicholas Markoutsakis
- NJ/CT**
Sovichet Ly
- Chicago**
David Zohdy
- Milwaukee**
Aaron Munson
- Kansas City**
Sinuhe Viramontes
- Michigan**
Dan Scardina
- Dallas**
Faisal Esaadi
- Houston**
Paul Ayala
- D.C.**
Brandon Elias
- Philadelphia**
Alan Jones
- New England**
Winer Raymond
- Minneapolis**
Alvin Singh
- San Francisco**
Paul Doherty
- Seattle**
Justin Hanson
- USA CUP**
Marco Alfaro, Jr.



Gamers go head-to-head on CART World Series.

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Video Game Trivia Answers:

1. The 8-Bit NES
2. NFL Quarterback Club '98
3. Germany
4. Sony Interactive Studios
5. Secret of Evermore

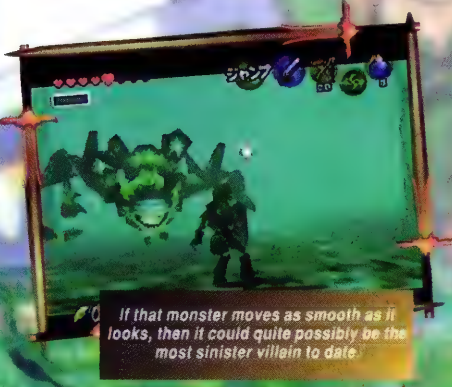
Name That Game Answer:

Super High Impact

- **Size:** 256 Megabit
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/RPG
- **Special Features:** Game Design by Shigeru Miyamoto; Continual Weapon and Item Obtaining; Life-Like Animations (Wading in Water, Climbing, Sword Swinging, Pushing, and Pulling); Platform Jumping; Collect Gems (Cash); Specialty Weapons (Bombs, Hammer); Amazing Lighting Effects
- **Created by:** Nintendo
- **Available:** 2nd Quarter '98 for Nintendo 64 (December '97 in Japan)

ZELDA 64

A Link to the Future



If that monster moves as smooth as it looks, then it could quite possibly be the most sinister villain to date.



Jump!



The heart health meter should work the same as in the other Zelda releases.



Luckily, his horse is not like one of those mystic ones in Gulliver's Travels, so Link will be able to ride it.



It's going to take quite a bit more than a teenager's body to move this wall.



Here's a portrait of Link and his fairy friend Navie.



Link is equipped with a bow, and hopefully, waterproof boots.

There's no second guessing it, Zelda 64 is going to rock the Nintendo 64 like never before. Weighing in at a gargantuan size of 256 megabits, Zelda is easily the largest Nintendo product ever released. To give you an idea of how large this cart actually is, think about this - Super Mario 64, which we all racked up some serious hours on, is 64



Megabits - Zelda is 4 times this size. Just imagine how many hours we'll spend on Zelda!

Details on Zelda 64 are extremely rare at the moment, but we have uncovered some facts. The gameplay will be a mix between Zelda 1 and 2. Meaning that you will now be able to jump and move freely in a 3D world (kind of like a 3D version of the platforming in Zelda 2), while sticking to the classic adventure roots of the Zelda series. Also, weapons and items will all work the same. We've seen screens of Link using his bombs while still wielding his sword, so the dual usage is still intact.

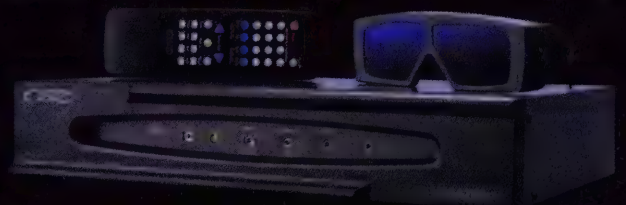
Other new features in Zelda 64 include life-like animation (yes, he no longer has the lego-man big head syndrome), ledge climbing, a fairy sidekick named Navie (who will help guide you on your quest), and multiple camera views (possibly a 'Link cam'). And of course, there will be awesome graphics, but for now the rest is unknown. In the meantime, bask in the delight of these new screen shots.





LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD JUST WET HER PANTS.

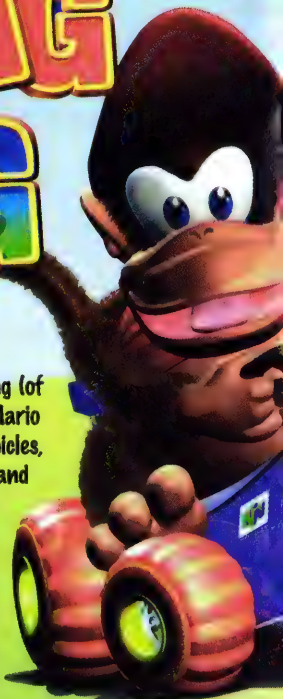
Don't laugh. You just might wet yours when you see the in-your-face 3D effects the Chequemate C-3D™ Imaging System adds to your video games. Connect C-3D to your TV and game system, and BAM!—images explode out of the screen while awesome visual depth sucks you right into the game's environment. Best of all, C-3D works on any video signal from any source*—so if you can see it on TV, you can see it in 3D. Think you're ready for something this wild? Call 1-800-889-9791, ext. 9 for the C-3D dealer nearest you. And tell 'em the big bad wolf sent you.



C-3D
IMAGING SYSTEM

Breakthrough or Redo?

DIDDY KONG RACING



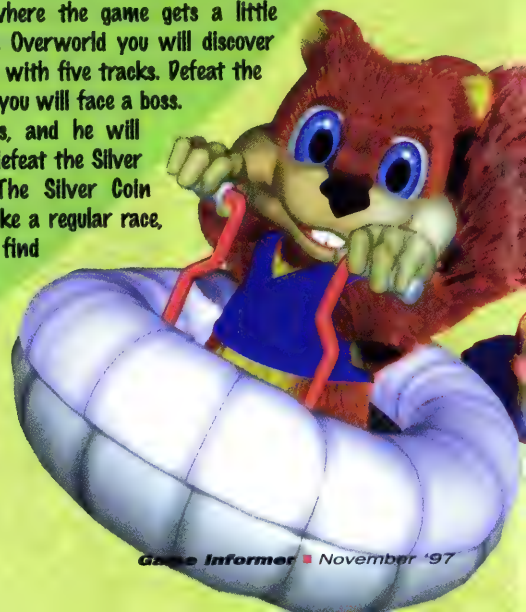
Nintendo said it themselves...take Diddy Kong (of Donkey Kong Country fame). Put him in Mario Kart 64. Update it with new characters, vehicles, gameplay techniques, and better graphics and Nintendo will once again have a hit on their hands. This is exactly what Diddy Kong Racing is, an update. But don't let this scare you, because this game has more to it than meets the eye and it will definitely be a hit.

The first innovation to this title is the addition of hovercrafts and airplanes to the already familiar karts. Any of these vehicles can be used against any other vehicle since the game has been balanced and designed to give both land, air, and sea vehicles different advantages and disadvantages (at this point we only know of one track where this is not the case). Control of these vehicles will be familiar to any Nintendo fanatic. The hovercraft reminded us of Wave Race 64 and the plane had a distinct PilotWings feel. Luckily, there is also an addition to the kart's control. While it still has the standard drift, Nintendo has also implemented a two-wheeled hard turn that enables the player to turn on a dime.

The one-player game in this cartridge is referred to by Nintendo as an Adventure/Racing game. The reason for this is that the game takes place in an Overworld, where you can drive around and select your destination. To further the adventure aspects of this game, Nintendo added in balloons for you to collect. Like Mario 64, you must have a certain amount of balloons to get into different areas. You get balloons by finding them throughout the Overworld, and defeating the various tracks and bosses.

Now here's where the game gets a little tricky. From the Overworld you will discover four areas, each with five tracks. Defeat the five tracks and you will face a boss.

Defeat the boss, and he will challenge you to defeat the Silver Coin challenge. The Silver Coin challenge is just like a regular race, but you must find



2nd 00:05:05

1st 01:10:40

2nd 01:10:41

8TH LRP 1/3 x5 00:59:10

1st 01:23:71

2nd 01:23:71

3 00:20:57

2 00:20:57

2 00:16:72

3 00:16:72

2 00:09:22

4 00:09:22

7TH LRP 1/3 x1 00:14:10

Watch out for the dinosaur wandering around the track!

The magnet weapon pulls you closer to your opponents.

Diddy launches into the lead by utilizing the turbo zippers.

A classic rivalry: Kart Vs. Plane Vs. Hovercraft.

Timber activates his shield to avoid any more damage.

Four-player is always a blast!

Diddy slides to the outside.

- **Size:** 128 Megabit
- **Style:** 1 to 4-Player Adventure/Racing
- **Special Features:** 5 Areas Plus The Overworld; 25 Races; 9 Bosses; 3 Overworld Challenges; 8 Characters (Plus 3 Hidden); 25 Silver Coin Challenges; 4 Trophy Cups; 4-Player Split-Screen; Battle Mode; Rumble Pak Compatible; Controller Pak Compatible; Zipper Speed Boosts; Weapons With 3 Levels Of Attack Power
- **Created by:** Rare for Nintendo
- **Available:** November 24 for Nintendo 64

eight silver coins placed throughout the level (both hidden and obvious). If you can complete this challenge (which isn't easy), you get to face a different boss and then compete in the Trophy challenge. Collect all four Trophies and a fifth area will open up. At this point, we've heard that some people at Nintendo have collected as many as 47 balloons, and we have even heard a rumor that there are other Overworlds to find. We have only played Diddy Kong Racing for one day, so we won't know for sure until next month.

As far as the graphics are concerned, you can expect nothing but the best from Nintendo's first ever 128 Megabit Nintendo 64 cart. This game is also the first to feature a new graphics technique created by Rare called Real-Time Dynamic Animation (RDA). This technique allows full use of real-time specular highlighting which makes images look more realistic (as you can see, the light on a curved surface moves appropriately). While it may be hard to tell what this new technique really does, it is easy to see that Diddy and all his friends including Banjo the bear, Conker the squirrel, Krash the alligator, Timber the tiger, Pipsy the mouse, Bumber the badger, TipTup the turtle, and Drumstick the rooster all look great.

Sure, many people (including ourselves) will call this game "Diddy Kart" or "Mario Kart 64 2," but there is a lot to like about this game. It's fun to play, there's tons of hidden stuff, and the graphics look great. Watch as Nintendo gamers everywhere go crazy for Diddy Kong Racing on November 24.



The all-hovercraft races play a lot like levels of Wave Race 64.

Use the turbo zipper to the right to get an extra boost.

Collect bananas to increase your top speed.

After you defeat an area, you get a chance to race in the Overworld.

Arr! To the pirate ship ye go!

You can do barrel rolls and loop to loops when you are flying the plane.

It takes a steady hand...

Diddy checks out the lava flow.

TipTup moves into position to out off Timber.

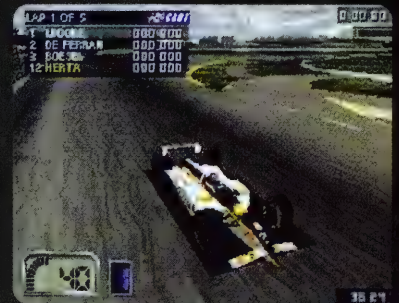


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F

EAR WILL ALWAYS BE IN THE CAR
WITH YOU. YOU JUST CAN'T LET IT DRIVE.



CART WORLD SERIES

PROPERTY OF PLAYSTATION
ATHLETIC DEPT.

Yoshi's Story



Mario is Finally Off His Back

- **Size:** 128 Megabit
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Platform
- **Special Features:** 6 Different Playable Yoshi Characters (All Colored Differently); Egg Tossing; 2D Gameplay With Slight Movements Into 3D Space; Wacky Level Designs; Gold Coin, Red Coin, and Flower Collecting
- **Created by:** Nintendo
- **Available:** February 9 for Nintendo 64

Yoshi's Island for the Super Nintendo was an easy title to like since it took familiar Mario gameplay in a new and unexplored direction. The game mixed basic action/platform elements with a unique egg shooting system that allowed the player to shoot eggs to kill enemies and uncover secret areas. This formula is still the same in the sequel, but obviously, the analog stick will add a lot to the egg shooting.

Another interesting aspect of Yoshi's Island was the vibrant watercolor scheme that brought the game to life. Unfortunately, this stylish appearance is not found in Yoshi's Story, but it has been replaced with something else. Take that weird Nickelodeon goo and mix it with the claymation of the Rudolph the Red-Nose Reindeer Christmas special, plop it into 3D, and this is basically how the game looks. If you look at the screens you'll see that almost everything, even the environments, are alive at times with gigantic slug creatures, cardboard cut-out stars, and floating yarn balls.

True enough, this game is going to be extremely strange; but once again, it will offer something familiar yet different. The grading system of collecting flowers, gold, and red coins has returned as the key to unlocking a slew of hidden stuff. Yoshi's Story deals not only with the adorable green fellow, but an entire group of Yoshi's tribe. Throughout the game players will assume the role of six different Yoshi characters all sporting unique colors and special moves.



Bad fish!



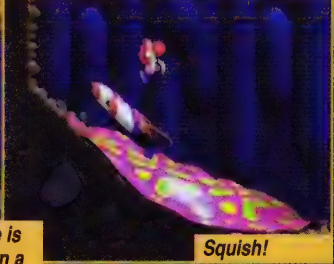
Into 3D space you go.



If it pans anymore, Yoshi will look like a Lemming.



The premise of the game is that Yoshi gets trapped in a storybook and must escape.



Squish!



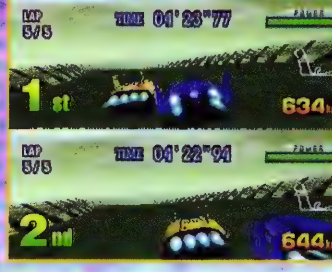
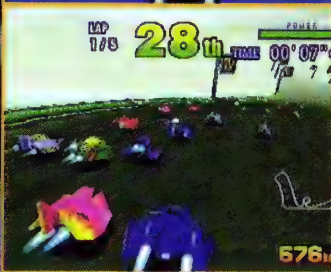
Goodbye Mode 7, Hello 3D

- **Size:** 128 Megabit
- **Style:** 1 to 4-Player Anti-Gravity Racing
- **Special Features:** 30 Car Field; 4-Player Split-Screen Racing; 20 Courses; 12 Machines To Choose From
- **Created by:** Nintendo
- **Available:** 4th Quarter 1998 for Nintendo 64

It's been over six years since their debut in 1991, but the Blue Falcon, Golden Fox, Wild Goose, and Fire Stingray are back in the sequel to the Super NES smash hit, F-Zero 64. Left in their wake is the long forgotten graphics technique known as Mode 7 and in its place comes the vivid 3D environments of the Nintendo 64. And with new graphics come new characters as Nintendo plans to introduce four new characters with new crafts and ratings.

Featuring nearly 20 courses full of loops, screws, and half-pipes you can expect this new version of F-Zero to be more challenging than before; especially when you consider that the field of anti-gravity racers is now a full thirty vehicles. As with the original version, you will be expected to use power refilling pit-stops, jumps, shortcuts, and limited turbos to reach the checkered flag.

At this point, Nintendo has not announced a release date for this new racer, but at a recent press event Mr. Miyamoto stated that he planned on finishing the product sometime in the later half of 1998. Let's hope so. This game is easily one of the most anticipated titles coming to the N64.





Rumble in the Asphalt Jungle

SAN FRANCISCO RUSH

EXTREME RACING

ANDY, THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept: 9 "Rush was a great arcade game, and it is an even better home game. While the home version is missing the awesome force feedback steering wheel from the arcade, the Rumble Pak does an outstanding job of relaying the feel of the tires on the road. Plus, the new tracks and the hidden keys give the game legs the arcade game could never have. In the crowded racing market on the N64, San Francisco Rush is a definite standout. The racing is fast and furious, and the shortcuts and hidden keys will keep you exploring the environments long after you've defeated the game."

Graphics: 9.25

Sound: 9

Playability: 9

Entertainment: 9

OVERALL: 9

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

Concept: 9 "I've never recommended that anyone purchase an accessory with a new game before, but with Rush, I insist that you add a Rumble Pak to your collection. The different degrees of feedback sensitivity are truly remarkable. Mix this with an anime-like soundtrack, enormous tracks filled with jump after jump, crash after crash, and hard right after hard left, and it's hard not to have a great time playing Rush. Rush does push a hefty amount of polys, and in the split-screen you will find a reduction in the frame rate, but it's not serious enough to screw with your racing. Trust me, this game is mighty impressive."

Graphics: 8.25

Sound: 8.5

Playability: 8.75

Entertainment: 9.25

OVERALL: 8.75

PAUL, THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept: 8.75 "Even though there are way too many racing games for the N64 (with even more on the way), I'd have to say that SF Rush is where it's at. While the general appearance isn't all that spectacular (especially the cars), the track design and crash animations are exceptional. The control is great and even better with the Rumble Pak shaking away. The feedback gives a fairly close representation of what you would feel on the arcade machine. Rush is a good translation of a great arcade game, but the home version gives you a bunch more with the extra tracks, hidden cars, and a ton of secrets to discover."

Graphics: 8.75

Sound: 8.5

Playability: 8.25

Entertainment: 9

OVERALL: 8.75

If you thought the Rumble Pak experience in Star Fox 64 was something to behold, wait until you feel what San Francisco Rush has in store for this nifty little accessory. Through every turn, down every straight-away, and on every kind of terrain, Rush pushes the Rumble Pak to such a degree that your hands almost feel numb from the extensive force feedback. Is this the closest a racing game has come to mimicking the original arcade experience? Graphically, no. But physically and mentally, most definitely. And the great thing is, you won't have to keep feeding it quarters to produce the thrill of launching through San Fran over and over again.

When we say it doesn't stack up graphically, it's all because of the Nintendo 64's limitations. For instance, the resolution is not as sharp, the level environments are not as detailed, and the fog effect has been beefed up to both reduce pop-up and make the advanced Circuit tracks much more difficult. But otherwise, the frame rate, smooth control, and car physics are almost identical. There are also three game modes to choose from (Practice, Single Race, and Circuit), with the ability to manipulate the game's configuration (number of drones, effect of the fog, wind, difficulty, and deaths).

The most obscure (yet greatest) addition to Rush is the hidden keys on each of the six tracks. In the Practice Mode you will have the luxury of searching for these strange items without a time restraint, but you won't be able to obtain them for keeps. Instead, you'll need to find them again in either the Circuit or Single Race Mode. These keys will unlock secrets and an oodle of wonderful new things (perhaps even a new car or two).

Rush pumps a difficulty that should be more than enough to challenge even the best N64 gamers. The first task to master is to keep your car from blowing up (which is much harder than it sounds), and the second is to find all the keys. There is no doubt about it, once you fire up this game, you will feel the rush.

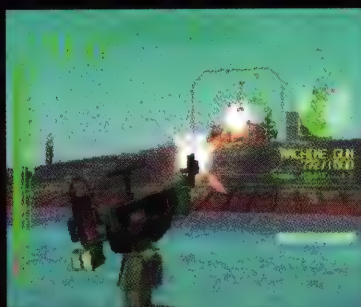
- **Size:** 64 Megabit
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Racing
- **Special Features:** Single Race, Circuit, and Practice Modes; Hidden Keys; Shortcuts; Powerslide Button; 6 Tracks With Mirror Mode and Reverse; 8 Cars (Plus 2 Hidden); 4 Views; Rumble and Controller Pak Compatible
- **Created by:** Atari Games Corp. for Midway Home Entertainment
- **Available:** November for Nintendo 64 (December for Sony PlayStation)

▶ THE BOTTOM LINE 8.75



GET IN TOUCH WITH
YOUR GUN-TOTING,
TESTOSTERONE
PUMPING,
COLD-BLOODED
MURDERING SIDE.

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**ARMORED
CORE**

Last month, we previewed a version of Tomb Raider 2 that only had a portion of the Tibet level playable, plus a brief demo of other levels. From this, we could obviously see two things. One - the game plays almost identically to the original, and two - there are a few new features that will improve its gameplay. But now, we have a nine level playable version (yes it's good to be a gamer!). And from this demo we can tell you about a couple of new additions.

Okay, so saying "a ton of new features" may be going out on a limb, but when you hear what these features are, we're sure you'll love what's been implemented into this game. From reading last month's article, you already know about the rock climbing (which now includes wall mounted ladders), and the flares (which are used for illuminating completely black caverns), but did you know about the grenade launcher, or the M16? With these powerful weapons, Ms. Croft can basically launch a grenade down a tiger's mouth, leaving nothing but a few scraps for the rats to eat. Or she can clear out a room full of bounty hunters simply by holding down the trigger button and laying a spread of fire so thick that all who oppose it will easily be crushed. Excellent.

Another new feature is the spring-loaded floor tiles, which when stepped on, send Lara a good twenty-to-thirty feet into the air. The use of these is for the most part unknown, but it doesn't take much to guess that they will be used to either: A) Help you reach an unreachable area, or B) Cause trouble (yes, another booby trap). As for scuba diving, one of the levels does start out in an

ocean with Lara wearing a snorkel and wet suit, but this will probably lead down to the sunken ship level or vice versa. This level allows you to explore a fairly large ocean gorge, and use the new harpoon gun on hungry sharks. The other levels are as they should be - vast, beautiful, tricky, and full of danger. Tomb 2 also features outdoor levels like the Great Wall of China and the streets of Tibet. However, you may not notice that you are outside since the skies are pitch black. Hopefully, this will change.

Core and Eidos Interactive even took the liberty of adding a higher polygon count to Lara's adorable figure. With both games (the original and the sequel) running side-by-side, you can easily see the difference between Lara 1 and Lara 2. Even though we haven't heard too many complaints about Lara's original appearance, some have noticed that she was quite blocky. Now, with the new polygon count, she is much more well-rounded and has a smoother appearance. The other portion of the poly count was implemented into her new hairdo. This rather large (and well braided) ponytail is just as alive as its living host, and when she performs any of her super hero-like moves, the tail follows her lead and swings about realistically.

If you haven't played Tomb Raider, then get off your duff and go buy a copy, because Tomb Raider 2 will be released in the middle of November. Eidos did state that there will be a few new surprises added to the game. Whether they are even more exciting than the newly added snowmobile is unknown. Yeah, you heard us right. Lara will ride a snowmobile through a section of the Ice Caves level.

TOMB RAIDER

STARRING LARA CROFT 2

The Countdown Continues

- Size: 1 CD-ROM
- Style: 1-Player 3D Action/Adventure
- Special Features: Rock and Ladder Climbing; New Weapons (Harpoon Gun, Grenade Launcher, M16, Automatic Pistols); New Darker Environments (Need to Use Flares); Better Light Sourcing; Walking in Shallow Water; Three Different Outfits (Wet Suit, Bomber Jacket, and Original Duds); More Human Enemies; Snowmobile Riding
- Created by: Core for Eidos Interactive
- Available: November for Sony PlayStation



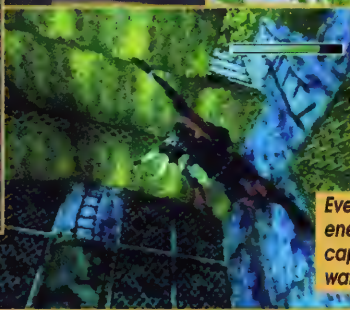
Simply stunning.



Mow 'em down!



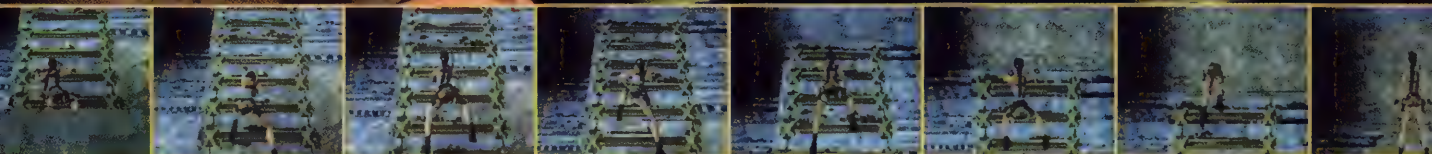
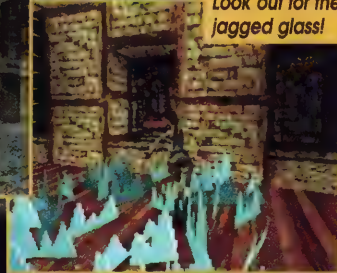
Even the human enemies are capable of water warfare.



Check out the new grenade launcher!



Look out for the jagged glass!



ARMORED CORE

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Bipedal Battle Mechanism Combat
- **Special Features:** Almost Unlimited Number of Mech. Designs; Jump Jets; Hand and Back-Mounted Weapons; Customizable Colors; Edit Team Logos; Money Management; Interesting Missions and Level Designs
- **Created by:** From Software for Sony Computer Entertainment America
- **Available:** Late October for Sony PlayStation

How Large is Your Gun?

JON, THE GREEDY GAMER

Concept: 8 I like to think of Armored Core as Carnage Heart meets Twisted Metal 2. It has all the mecha upgrades and assembly options of Carnage Heart, but the missions take place in large levels instead of arenas (which also makes it much cooler than Virtual On). With the jump jets, the levels have excellent vertical space, and the various environments and missions push Armored Core well above games like Brahma Force. The control for the strafing and jump jets is easy to pick up, so novice shooters won't have a problem getting into the game. The two-player split-screen adds to the play value as well. With the variety of body upgrades and easy control, Armored Core is worthy of your attention.

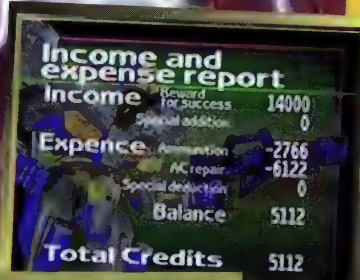
Graphics: 8.75

Sound: 8

Playability: 8.75

Entertainment: 8.5

OVERALL: **8.5**



Not bad, but you took way too much damage.



I'll take the grasshopper legs and a six pack of coke.

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

Concept: 9.25 I'm a firm believer in the mechanical revolution, and Armored Core presents a futuristic scenario I wouldn't mind living through. This title won't appeal to everyone, since the front end and options available will easily lose the hyperactive 'must click button' gamers, but it's mainly for those who have the patience to sit down and take the time to create their own robotic shell. I don't see anything wrong with this title. You can design your own vehicle (and even customize the color and logos to your liking); there are tons of missions which are often completely different than the last one completed, the effects rock, and the combat is sophisticated and captivating. If you like Transformers, MechWarrior, Voltron, or even Micronauts, Armored Core should be right up your alley.

Graphics: 8.75

Sound: 8

Playability: 8

Entertainment: 8

OVERALL: **8.75**



BOOM!

ANDY, THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept: 8.5 For mecha lovers, or people who like mechs, this game is a dream come true (even though FASA would say otherwise since this game is not endorsed by them). If you're looking for something with plot, you aren't going to find it here; but you will find lots of items and weapons to purchase, tons of upgrades for your mechas, and plenty of action. While entertaining, this game's levels can become somewhat repetitive, so if you aren't in it for the upgrades, you'll find nothing here.

Graphics: 8

Sound: 7.5

Playability: 7

Entertainment: 7

OVERALL: **7.5**



Jump jets are extremely cool!

That had to hurt.

In Armored Core you'll obtain power through the size of your gun and how well you use it (no innuendo intended). The larger and more powerful weapons require a bipedal battle mechanism that is customized to hold this kind of arsenal. To obtain a machine of death like this you need to learn how to fight efficiently and how to make a steady profit. Most militaristic factions don't allow their pilots to create their own combat units, but in Armored Core they see you as a king among metal kings, and whatever you want, you will get (if the budget allows it).

The entertainment factor in this bipedal battle mechanism title is split into two categories. One – research and development, and two – intense warfare. R&D is used to create the ultimate war machine for a current scenario. R&D is expensive. To fund R&D you'll need to assign yourself to a mission, enter the campaign, eliminate your targets, and walk out with as little damage as possible. If you complete a mission, your faction rewards you with a set gross in cash. After the mission you are greeted by an expenses screen which shows the balance you've earned, tallies in any added bonuses, and subtracts certain amounts for the ammo used and damage taken. Thus, you need to be conservative and elusive through each mission if you want to earn a larger net bulk.

With the money, head to the local war machine shop and purchase upgrades for your current machine. This shop holds everything you'll need (with new stuff being added periodically). But here's the catch – while you can purchase whatever you like, you need to make sure that your combat unit can withstand the weight. So to equip the best weapon, you first need to make sure your body, engine, and CPU chips are all capable of using a weapon of this caliber. There are nearly 50 different attachments with various colors and decals that you can design, so the number of mechas you can create is almost limitless.

With your unit customized to your liking you must then head back to battle. Each and every mission presents a different challenge. Sometimes you'll need to take down a fleet of renegade chicken-walkers and other times you'll go head-to-head against a new proto-machine. Hence, you'd better make sure your unit is developed properly so that you can either eliminate your target efficiently, or take a beating and still come out the victor.

Unlike the other comprehensive PlayStation geek game – Carnage Heart – Armored Core will actually allow you to participate in combat. In each scenario you will have the ability to use your jump jets to catch some serious air, strafe left and right, and pitch your head up and down. The level designs range from barren deserts, to secret underground bunkers, to busy city streets. Armored Core features a slew of missions, but sometimes you'll return to the same scenario with a few changes in the basic level design and enemy count.

The graphics in this game are clean and fairly impressive and the machine designs are very similar to those found in the popular TV series Transformers. All the sounds are appropriate and the soundtrack is as thumping as it can get. Armored Core is a fast and ferocious game that not only demands the player to play well, but to use his or her brain to blaze a trail to glory.



Two players can compete head-to-head.

▶ THE BOTTOM LINE 8.25



FIGHTING FORCE

It's Like Double Dragon, But 3D

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Progressive 3D Fighter (Brawler)
- **Special Features:** 4 Different Playable Characters (Alana, Hawk, Mace, Smasher); Over 40 Attacks Per Character; Interactive Environments; 2-Player Modes (Standard Co-Op Game, Head-To-Head Duel); Combos; Bosses
- **Levels:** 7 Levels (30 Stages)
- **Created by:** Core for Eidos Interactive
- **Available:** November for Sony PlayStation

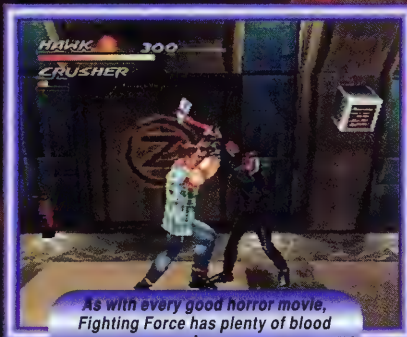
Similar to a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly, the progressive fighter genre has quickly matured into a completely different entity. While featuring controls similar to any fighting game, the progressive fighters have always had an appearance that is very similar to basic action titles. The only difference was the pan (isometric) view which allowed for players to move in and out of the fore and backgrounds. The combat was limited to one plane and you always had to fight the baddie to your left or right. You could never take on an enemy above or below you. This minor detail was never seen as a problem (since we didn't know better); but now, as fighting games move into complete 3D, so should the progressive fighters. Sega's Die Hard Arcade came close (and faked it well), but it still featured one plane combat.

Like Perfect Weapon by ASC Games, Fighting Force will allow the player to use a full 360° of movement. It also incorporates a long-forgotten feature that made the very first progressive fighters so entertaining - interactive environments. Almost every one of the thirty different environments in Fighting Force features some kind of structure that can either be destroyed or used as a weapon. For example, in one level there is a pop machine in the corner. If you beat on it for a while the machine will shake, take on cosmetic damage, release a few pop cans, and eventually be completely destroyed. The pop cans can either be drunk to regain health or thrown as a weapon. Another nice feature with these items is that they don't flash and disappear before you have time to pick them up. They will stay on the screen until you pick them up or leave the area.

One really noticeable feature in this title is the smoothness of character animation. All four playable characters (Alana, Hawk, Mace, and Smasher) have unique attributes and are

equipped with up to 40 plus moves (which range from standard attacks, reverse attacks, combos, throws, jumping, running, and sliding). Even the enemies feature several different animations, especially the bosses. You can almost use the number of animations as a guide. The weaker enemies basically stand around doing nothing, and the tough guys pick you up and smash your head into the pavement a thousand different ways. All the enemies (like yourself) have health bars and some enemies have more health than others. Thus, you will have to think quickly on who to take out first, since certain stages will feature up to five enemies in a room at a time.

There really isn't too much more you can say about Fighting Force. It's a gorgeous progressive fighter that delivers one punch after another in the graphics and gameplay categories. The combat is extremely well done, all the environments look outstanding, the weapons (like the machine gun) add some interesting gameplay variables, and the two-player (head-to-head or versus) modes are entertaining.



As with every good horror movie, Fighting Force has plenty of blood and axes.



Nice Move!



Smasher takes down three baddies at once.



Impressive.



Hit 'em where it counts.

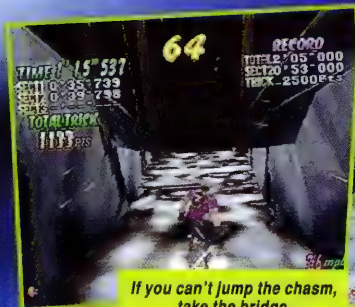


Take on a friend in the 2-player duel.



He's a very large version of John McClane.





If you can't jump the chasm, take the bridge.



Tweeeeeaaak!



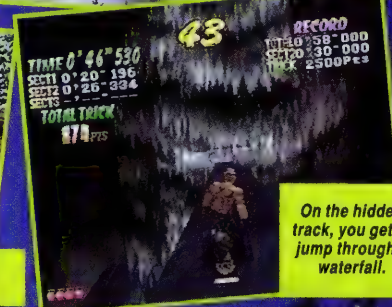
Go to the Board Park to perfect your moves.



Watch your run on the replay to check out all your cool tricks.



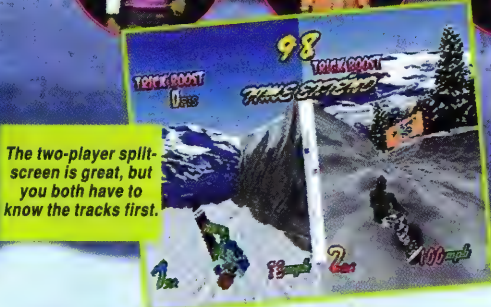
Rail slide!



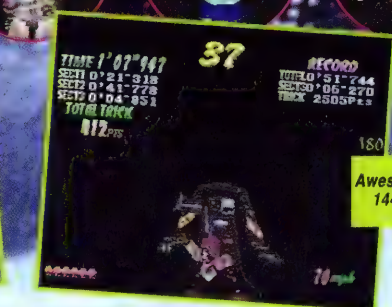
On the hidden track, you get to jump through a waterfall.

COOL BOARDERS 2

How Cool R U?



The two-player split-screen is great, but you both have to know the tracks first.



Awesome Misty 1440 dude!

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Snowboarding
- **Special Features:** 2-Player Split-Screen; 18 Real Budton Snowboards; 31 New Tricks; 10 Runs; Multiple Characters; A Board Park; Board Edit Mode; Big Air Contest; Trick Master; Mirror Mode; Hard Mode; Contest Mode; Halfpipe
- **Created by:** UEP Systems for Sony Computer Entertainment America
- **Available:** November for Sony PlayStation

JON, THE GREEDY GAMER

Concept: 9 "Cool Boarders 2 has grown by leaps and bounds over last year's game. First of all, the new grabs are amazing. Then there's the half-pipe. Wow! It's just hours and hours of awesome tricks. You'd pretty much have to be an idiot not to love this game. It's got a Competition mode, Big Air contests, and a two-player split-screen. Plus, it'll take plenty of time, to win each course for tricks, best time, and overall score. Then, you can design your own board, which is totally cool. CB 2 should be in everyone's library. It's easily one of the most entertaining games of the year."

Graphics: 8.5

Sound: 8.5

Playability: 9.25

Entertainment: 9.5

OVERALL: 9

ANDY, THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept: 9 "I loved Cool Boarders. Even after I beat it, I could boot that game up and play it over and over just to pass the time. The great part is, Cool Boarders 2 leaves that game in the dust. First off, the halfpipe is unbelievable. I would buy this game for that mode alone. Then you throw in 10 courses in the Freestyle mode, 31 new grabs, a two-player split-screen mode, plus hidden boards, characters, and courses to find – and I think I'm in snowboarding heaven. About the only complaint I have is that it didn't include the original tracks so I wouldn't have to ever take this game out of my PS-X. If you don't like this game, you don't know what video gaming is all about."

Graphics: 9

Sound: 9

Playability: 9

Entertainment: 9.5

OVERALL: 9

PAUL, THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept: 9 "There is no doubt that this is one of my favorite games for the PS-X. I can easily put in four hours without blinking an eye. The addition of the new grabs, halfpipe, and big air are all welcomed and a huge advance over last year's game. CB 2 still suffers from strange little graphic oddities, but the tight control and variety of challenges more than make up for that. Skateboard and snowboard junkies take note: this game is a must. There hasn't been something like this since 720."

Graphics: 8.5

Sound: 8

Playability: 9.25

Entertainment: 9.75

OVERALL: 9

For snowboarding fans, the first Cool Boarders was THE best game on the PlayStation. The reason we say it "was" is because Cool Boarders 2 makes the first installment look like a Geriatric Olympics game.

The control of the game is basically the same as last year's, except UEP has added a whole slew of new grabs (31 total, that can be strung together), rail slides, quick spins to fakie, and a tuck for increased speed. Also, most of the levels have been opened up to give the player a better sense of an actual run. For instance, if you are heading down the hill and you see that you can jump off the cliff and cut the turn, you can do it.

As with last year's game, Cool Boarders 2 features a Freestyle mode where you compete to win trophies in three categories: Time, Trick, and Total. This mode is basically the same as last year's game, except now there are ten courses to master and the tracks feature numerous short-cuts and alternate paths. Of course, you will be rewarded with hidden tracks and boards for collecting trophies.

New to this year's installment is a Halfpipe, a Board Park obstacle course, a Big Air Contest and Master Mode, and a Tournament Contest Mode. As you may have already guessed, the Halfpipe mode lets you pick your board, your boarder, and then tear up the pipe. While it does take a little practice, you'll be pulling Alley-Oop Crippler 540s With a Mute to Indy Grab in no time. Simply put, the Halfpipe is awesome.

The Board Park is basically a training mode (if you hit Select the game will walk you through various moves), but it is also fun to just cruise around the park and pull tricks on and off the different cars, barrels, and pipes that are located throughout the course.

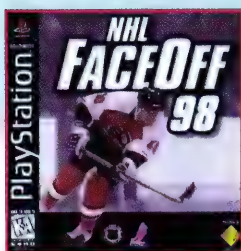
The Big Air contest is just one big jump, but this mode gives you a chance to practice up for the Contest mode where the Big Air contest becomes very important. In Contest Mode, you are given two jumps off one of the three Big Air ramps. How you score in the Big Air contest will determine where you start in the eight man grid of boarders for the second part of the contest (which is a downhill race consisting of all the runs from the Freestyle mode). You'll need to score well on the Big Air mode so that you can place first for the entire nine round season and unlock the other characters and modes hidden in the game.

For snowboarding fans, there is no other game that comes close to the excitement and speed that Cool Boarders 2 offers. While snowboarders may be the only gamers interested in this title, game fanatics everywhere should give Cool Boarders 2 a try when it hits the slopes this November. It rocks!

▶ THE BOTTOM LINE 9

It's Time to Drop the Gloves

NHL Face Off '98



- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Hockey (Up to 8-Player Via Multi-Tap)
- **Special Features:** Icon Passing; User Records; Full Season With Playoffs; Stats Tracking; Create, Trade, and Release Players; Controlled Trading; Fighting; Real NHL Awards; Shaking Glass; Practice Mode; Game Speed Toggle; Control Non-Puck Handler; Team Strategies
- **Created by:** Killer Game and Sony Interactive Studios for Sony Computer Entertainment America
- **Available:** Now for Sony PlayStation

▶ THE BOTTOM LINE **8.25**

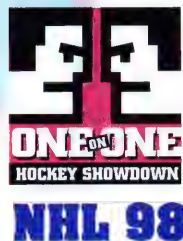
Without a doubt, EA Sports' NHL franchise has achieved legendary status; but Sony's Face Off series is now making its third appearance on PlayStation and earning a name for itself as well. Remember, Sony released the original Face Off in '95, and an EA Sports hockey game didn't surface until more than a year later. By that time, Sony had discovered a way to include a new invention termed Icon Passing. Now, both companies enjoy a strong history of 32-bit development, and these two games are the best hockey titles available this year.

Control

Each company takes a different approach to video hockey. Sony's Face Off uses every button (including Select) on the PlayStation controller, whereas EA Sports' NHL 98 relies primarily upon three buttons. The NHL button layout is much like the Genesis versions of the game with shoot, pass, and speed burst. NHL 98 also includes a special move button, which is used in conjunction with the d-pad. This special move button is difficult to learn, but can be used to pull off some tricky delay shots and spins. Face Off, on the other hand, demands that players be well accustomed to the PlayStation controller. L2 lights up the icons, the other shoulder buttons are used for hip checks and goalie saves. Each Icon button is employed differently for offense and defense, and Select brings up the line change window. The use of Select for line changes is pretty lame since it's tough to get in the open and dump for a clean change while searching for the Select button, then back to the icon buttons to continue the play. As for an overall judgment, we like NHL's approach, where fewer buttons make for better, more manageable gameplay.

Passing

How much does Icon Passing matter? In October we voiced our complaints about last year's Face Off. The games were too high scoring and the icon passes ripped too fast around the ice. This year, Sony did include a game speed toggle, and we prefer playing the game at a speed of 25 (default speed is 50 on a scale of 100). This does make the icon passing more defensible, but the general feeling in the office is that Icon Passing is not a big deal in hockey games. But the problem with Face Off is that the game forces you to use Icon Passing; if you don't, the regular passes miss the mark and scream down for an icing call way too often. There seems to be only one speed of pass, and even sending the puck around the boards from behind your own net will result in an icing as well. NHL's passing is much more natural in execution. The passes work at different speeds depending on body position and direction of pass, while the one-time shot and give-and-go pass offer a comparable equivalent to the benefits of Icon Passing. NHL wins this battle.



- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Hockey (Up to 8-Player Via Multi-Tap)
- **Special Features:** User Records; World Teams; Full Season With Playoffs; Stats Tracking; Create, Trade, and Release Players; Fighting; Real NHL Awards; Play as Single Position; Shoot Out Contest; On-The-Fly Strategy Calling; Special Move Button
- **Created by:** EA Sports
- **Available:** Now for Sony PlayStation

▶ THE BOTTOM LINE **9**

Rosters

In regards to roster options, both games score the same. NHL and Face Off feature excellent Create Player features, with a number of categories in which to allot points. Both games also allow you to save and load line-ups, and in the event of mid-game injuries, the computer will substitute accordingly. Of course, you can rearrange your lines whenever injuries or major penalties occur, but this tends to slow the game down. NHL does offer a third scoring line to bring the total to four regular shift lines, which helps in longer games, since you'll be able to cycle star players with high endurance into odd shifts.

When it comes to trading players, Face Off is more sophisticated, because a trade must be approved. For instance, you will not be able to trade Mark Messier for some first year scrub. This is an interesting feature, and it's fun to balance out creative trades. However, Face Off does not include a trade deadline. EA Sports' trade deadline is a good feature that will surely be a factor if key players are injured late in the season. For those who care, NHL 98 also includes world teams, Face Off does not.

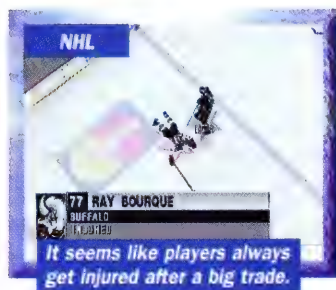
Graphics and Sound

NHL 98 takes home the title in both these categories. NHL 98 sports a brand new look with awesome stick and skating animations. Also, NHL's goalies feature the coolest, smoothest animations we've ever seen in a hockey game. Face Off has a number of animations, but in general they're not as realistic as NHL's. In fact, it's the different animations in NHL that make the passing so intuitive – since momentum, direction, and timing are all important in working the offense. Face Off does feature shaking boards, but the stiff player and goalie animations lose out to NHL. One thing that NHL does suffer from is excessive cut scenes, but these can be sped along by pressing buttons.

The sound in NHL is also superior, with more organ sounds, blaring rock music for the menu screens, and two-man commentary that follows the play closely. We just hope EA Sports dumps Jim Hughson for next year's game. His voice just doesn't fit the hockey experience. Any hockey commentator from around the States or Canada would have been much better. Sony stuck to their formula of an 'at the game' experience, but EA's TV-style presentation and organs take home the cup.

Conclusions

In the end, these are the two best hockey games of the year. There are things to like about both games, but since most gamers have to make a choice, so do we. Therefore, we choose NHL 98 as the winner. Overall, the gameplay of NHL can't be beat. Games are lower scoring and harder fought, with a simple control interface and better balance of gameplay. But as we always say, listen to the reviewers before you make a final decision.





FACE OFF
Face Off's boards wobble just like real NHL glass.



FACE OFF
That shot was delivered at 76 mph.



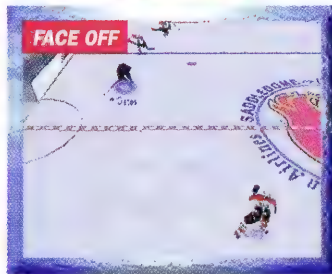
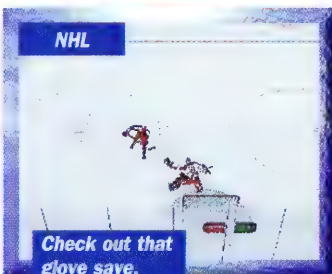
FACE OFF
He beats him through the 5 hole.



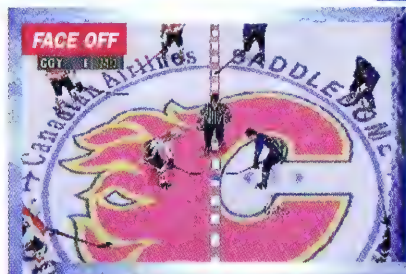
FACE OFF
Look at that vicious hook.



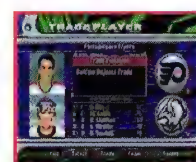
NHL
Check out that glove save.



FACE OFF
Turgeon winds up for the one-timer.



FACE OFF



PAUL, THE GAME PROFESSOR

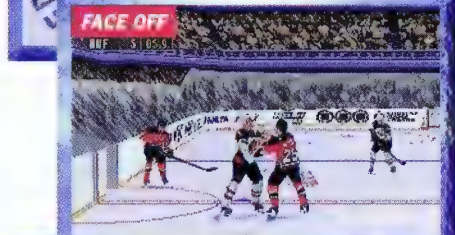
	NHL	Face Off	
Concept:	8.75	8.75	<p>"While these games have been out for a few weeks, now that the NHL season is in full swing it's time to play some video hockey. Both games have great new graphics engines and the player animations look sweet. The board rattling animation in Face Off is a fantastic touch. However, the edge goes to NHL in the graphics department. A lot of small details have been added to NHL's players while Face Off's players look disproportionate. In terms of play control, neither game really stands out, but I do regret the fact that Face Off pretty much forces you to use icon passing. Both games have good stats and player create features. Face Off has the speed and quick loading and NHL sweats the details and has the extras for the veteran hockey fans. In the end, I found myself standing in the corner of NHL for its big improvements in graphics, sound, and options."</p>
Graphics:	9	8.5	
Sound:	9	8.5	
Playability:	9	8.5	
Entertainment:	9	8.5	
Overall:	9	8.5	

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

	NHL	Face Off	
Concept:	9.25	7	<p>"Aside from a few outstanding features like fluctuant boards and a well developed icon passing system, NHL Face Off '98 looks like a game that was developed three years ago when compared to EA's NHL 98. Yes, Electronic Arts has done it again. This year's installment focuses more on solid gameplay and overall realism. NHL has a TV-styled presentation consisting of beautiful camera work during game breaks and dual announcing which is often hilarious. Plus, EA has developed this game so that you can really get into the players' heads. When there's a serious goalie duel, you'll know it. On the other hand, Face Off doesn't offer anything like this. It's just straight-up hockey. NHL has better graphics, smoother animation (especially the goalies), and a superior front end. Also, both games are extremely difficult."</p>
Graphics:	9	8.25	
Sound:	8.5	8	
Playability:	9	8.25	
Entertainment:	9.25	8.25	
Overall:	9	8	

JON, THE GREEDY GAMER

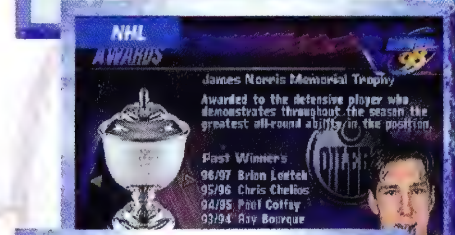
	NHL	Face Off	
Concept:	8.5	8.25	<p>"First of all, both of these games could have been a lot better. Face Off is basically the same game as last year, and the sticks are still very disproportionate, reminding me of the Chexx bubble-hockey games. This might not matter to some, but it's one example of Face Off's less than stellar graphics. NHL's animations, on the other hand, are truly outstanding. The way players guard a puck on their stick, spin, or chase down the puck with their stick out in front of them now sets a new standard. The biggest problem I have with Face Off is the scoring. Most goals come from non-scoring situations, like shooting from well above the top of the circle. This makes the game too high scoring, especially playing longer than five minute periods. In terms of season and roster options, both games come out about the same. NHL 98 is far and away the superior game, and the head-to-head battles are incredible."</p>
Graphics:	9.25	8.5	
Sound:	8.5	8	
Playability:	8.75	8.25	
Entertainment:	9	8	
Overall:	8.75	8.25	



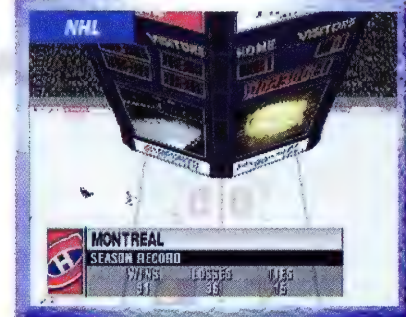
FACE OFF



NHL



NHL AWARDS



MONTREAL SEASON RECORD

NASCAR 98

BURY THE HATCHET

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1- or 2-Player Racing
- **Special Features:** Molly Hatchet Featured on Soundtrack; Official NASCAR License; Jeff Gordon Drives Like the Real Jeff Gordon; 8 Ovals and 9 Road Tracks (Including NASCAR Short Tracks); Custom Race Options; Pitting and Drafting; Caution Flags With Wrecker On Track; Practicing and Qualifying; 2-Player Split-Screen for Single Race; Championship Season; Memory Card Save
- **Created by:** Stormfront Studios for High Score and EA Sports
- **Available:** Now for Sony PlayStation (Sega Saturn Version To Ship in Early November)



Drafting is a crucial part of NASCAR 98.



Look at Gordon making it up in the turn...



...now he's doing it to you!

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

Concept: 8 "As you might have known, I'm not very fond of southern rock music (like country lovin' Storm), so Molly Hatchet didn't do it for me. Actually, it drove me freakin' insane! As for the game, it's not too shabby. Electronic Arts did a smash-up job on making this title as realistic as it could get while keeping a solid gameplay and graphic presentation. All the cars look perfect (especially the Hot Wheels car), it displays a few nice effects (like smoke and driving in the grass), and the competition is as harsh as it will ever be (get out of my way Wallace!). The only bummer with this game is the fact that you'll need to know something about configuring a car to win. The racing itself doesn't require as much determination as the arcade racers like Ridge Racer and Daytona."

Graphics: 9

Sound: 6.5

Playability: 7.75

Entertainment: 8

OVERALL:
7.75

If you're a fan of NASCAR racing, this is the game you've been waiting for. Just in case you're a little sour over Sierra's pitiful PlayStation offering last spring, get ready to bury the hatchet (Molly Hatchet that is). This game IS NASCAR. Everything from the brilliant body paint, to Jeff Gordon's aggressive racing, to the kickin' beat of southern rock blasting away as you accelerate out of a turn, just screams excitement. In fact, this game is so much like NASCAR, the only thing it's missing is a party in the parking lot and the Brickyard 500.

NASCAR 98 is running off of the Andretti Racing engine, so much of the turning and braking physics are the same. However, NASCAR 98 features a field of twenty four cars (all playable), and unlike Andretti's split-screen, two players compete in NASCAR 98 against a field of six other cars. The car tuning is also similar to Andretti racing, except players who race the default amount of laps will not need to worry about pitting for fuel. Fuel only becomes a factor as races get up into the fifteen to twenty lap range. During longer races players will also have to pit in order to repair car damage and change tires.

Ovals are an important part of NASCAR 98, and the key to success is feathering the gas. With speed sensitive steering, players must let up on the gas just enough to start the turn, keep a manageable line, wait for the right moment, then accelerate through the apex and win the race to the wall. Couple all this with real engine sounds, recorded at Atlanta and Darlington Motor Speedways, and you'd swear you were behind the wheel of the world's fastest stock cars.

NASCAR 98 strikes a good balance between the simulation and arcade racing experience. Turns are very manageable, and the caution flags and car damage are entertaining without detracting from the game's appeal. During caution laps, the line of cars cuts back and forth to keep debris off the tires, and the wreckers can be seen hauling wounded cars off the road. NASCAR 98 also features spectacular crashes, and just like the real cars, roof flaps pop up during spin-outs. In fact, NASCAR 98 is so close to the real thing, you can almost smell the gasoline.

ANDY, THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept: 9 "When it comes to racing games they are generally either simulation or arcade-styled. Yeah, sometimes they do both, but rarely do they mix the two together to make a realistic, yet very fast and entertaining game. EA Sports has accomplished this task with NASCAR 98. Luckily, they don't stop there. The graphics in this game are some of the best I've seen, with huge cars and good looking tracks. My only complaint, which would be the same problem I have when I watch NASCAR, is there aren't enough crashes. But, hey, at least the racing is intense."

Graphics: 9

Sound: 7.5

Playability: 9

Entertainment: 9

OVERALL:
8.5

JON, THE GREEDY GAMER

Concept: 8.75 "Any racing fan will like NASCAR 98. Any hard-core fan of NASCAR will think this is the greatest racing game ever made. The colors, the real tracks and drivers, the engine sounds, and awesome rock soundtrack recreate NASCAR in perfect detail. Although eight ovals is a lot of ovals, the variety of lines and optimum speeds are good. The nine road courses are adequate, but aren't as fun as those in Andretti Racing. I'm pretty bummed that you have to race a lot of laps before fuel becomes a factor, because I really liked the pitting setup in Andretti Racing. But in the end, when you pull away from the pack with the engine roaring and Molly Hatchet cranked up full blast, it's a racing experience that's hard to beat."

Graphics: 8.5

Sound: 9.5

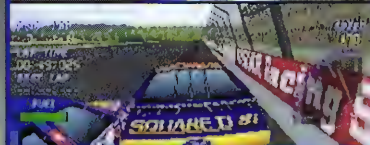
Playability: 8.25

Entertainment: 9

OVERALL:
9



The two-player split-screen.



Search Point is a technically exciting road course.



The wrecker can only be seen during caution laps.



Pitting is only important in long races.



There's trouble up ahead.



He's lost it through the turn.

▶ THE BOTTOM LINE **8.5**

THIS SEASON'S UNDERDOG

ONE

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Action/Shooter
- **Special Features:** Unique Rage Health/Weapon Meter; Alternating 2-Player Modes; Three Difficulty Levels; Assortment of Weapons; Awesome Lighting Effects; Five Gigantic Worlds With Level End Bosses; High Tension Wire Swinging; Complex Controls (Auto-Targeting, Duck, Walk, Double Jump, Uppercut, Hang and Climb)
- **Created by:** Visual Concepts for ASC Games
- **Available:** November for Sony PlayStation

This year's holiday crop can nastily be classified as the season of sequels, and for newcomers like ONE, it's going to take more than just being a quality title to launch it to the top of the charts. For starters, we chose ONE as an E3 Best of Show game (along with fourteen other titles), and we've been impressed by the Alpha and Beta burns we've seen so far. It may not be as well-known as Tomb Raider or Crash Bandicoot, but hopefully, after all is said and done, ONE will find its audience and receive the fame that it deserves.

Right now the game looks really good. A flashier presentation of special effects and explosive gameplay cannot be found this holiday season. As we've said before, ONE is a momentum game that strives to be entertaining and completely insane at the same time. For example, one of the levels places the player (John Cain) on top of a city's rooftops. As you play through this stage you'll come across enemies with laser sightings, and airplanes that launch rockets at you. Rockets that miss their target will either destroy the platform you are standing on, or simply destroy a building near your locale. Plus, you'll need to destroy random obstacles blocking your path, shoot down a billboard to create a bridge to the next rooftop, and eventually square off against a deadly boss.

The gameplay itself is a blend of the classic Contra and not-so-classic MDK. Players will have freedom to maneuver about any given area in complete 3D. John's moves range from a highly useful double jump, to hanging and climbing up platforms. There is no health in ONE, and in order to stay alive you will need to kill as many enemies and destroy as many obstacles as you can. Doing this will change your rage meter from green (passive), to yellow (semi-aggressive), and then eventually to red (rage). When the meter is red, John can unleash an attack that destroys everything on-screen. But be careful - if you take on enemy fire and sustain damage, your rage meter will drop.

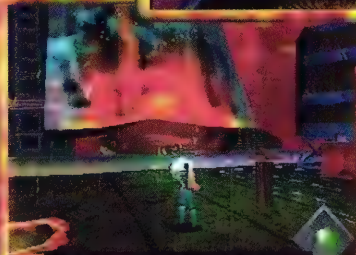
ONE has the potential to be one of the best action/shooters on the PlayStation, but at the moment the game is extremely difficult, and the camera views (which swing all about) are frustrating. Hopefully, Visual Concepts and ASC Games will be able to find a steady balance between gameplay and the camera problem. And if they do, look out! This underdog title could easily stir-up a massive holiday commotion.



This level will put your action/platform skills to the test.



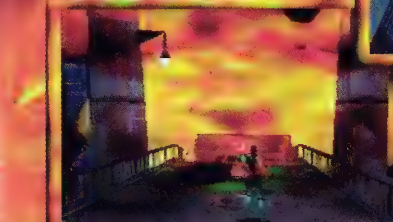
With your rage meter in the green, this heli-enemy could very well be too much to handle.



Shoot down this billboard to create a path to the next rooftop.



Shoot random objects to build up your rage meter.



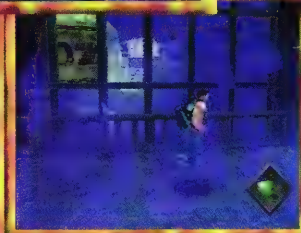
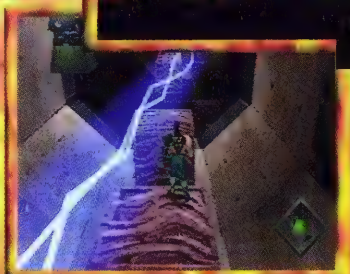
Keep an eye out for falling debris.



This could possibly be the largest spider to ever cross the video game scene.



This boss packs some serious firepower.





- **Size:** CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Platform
- **Special Features:** Continues, Lives, and Difficulty Toggle; MK4 Preview; Item Collecting; Gaining Experience Unlocks Special Moves (Ice Blast, Slide, Etc.); Continue Points; Memory Card Save; FMV Cut Scenes
- **Levels:** 8
- **Created by:** Midway Home Entertainment
- **Available:** Now for Sony PlayStation (November for Nintendo 64)

► **THE BOTTOM LINE** **6.5**

MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES

SUB-ZERO

EXPERIENCE THE HEARTWARMING SAGA OF POPSICLE BOY

Sub-Zero is one of the few characters to appear in every Mortal Kombat installment, and even though many call him a cheap character (because of his freeze moves), he is one of the most popular combatants to ever grace the MK scene. He now stars in the first Mortal Kombat action game – Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub-Zero. Within this quest you will learn more than you ever thought possible about Sub-Zero and the MK universe.

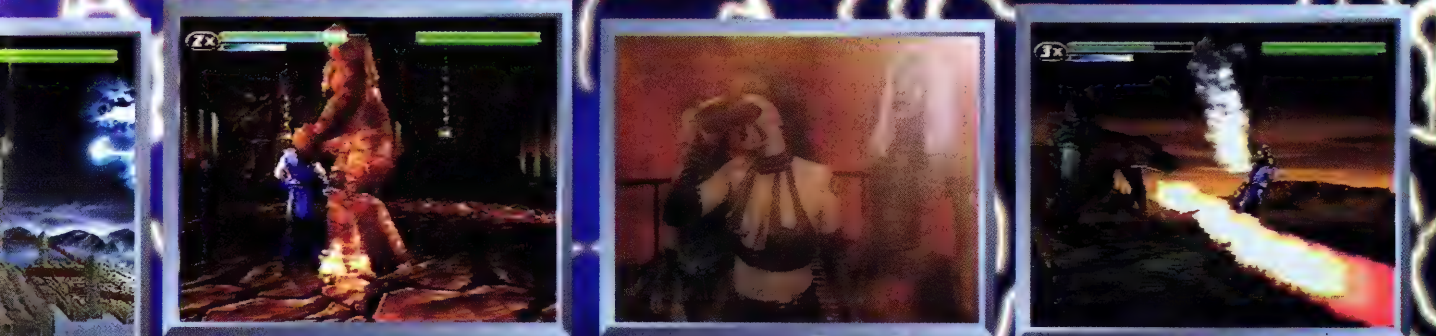
While the gameplay and basic structure are presented in the form of an action/platformer, the action/platform junkies probably won't get into this title. It's strictly for those who feed off of the MK experience. The combat is identical to MK3, where you'll need to use specials and combos to destroy enemies. The only difference between the combat in the MK fighters and this game is that the screen scrolls, the combat zone is limited, and the enemies don't have a life bar. Otherwise, it's MK3 all over again with the addition of platforming – like jumping from ledge to ledge and avoiding deadly obstacles.

At the start of the game, Sub-Zero will not be as deadly as he usually is. In fact, he won't have any special moves except for the MK3 combo. To unlock the ice blast, slide, ice puddle, and other ice moves, you will

need to gain experience by killing enemies. After a certain amount of experience is obtained, Sub-Zero will learn a new move. But even if you are good enough (and you can fly through each level), it could still take quite a while to learn all of these moves. Additionally, experience gaining isn't the only RPG-like aspect of this quest – you will also need to use items, keys, and health power-ups.

The graphic display in Mythologies is somewhat strange. All the characters are 2D (as in MK3), and all the environments are polygonal. Sometimes you will find yourself on a track, which will zoom in and out of 3D space; but for the most part, the game will make you run from left to right. At the end of each level you will encounter a boss (many of which are new to the MK universe), and you will need to push your MK skills to the limit to beat them. And yes, on some you will be able to finish them.

The story presented in Mythologies (through cool FMVs) links directly to MK4, and as Midway has promised, you won't be able to decipher the complete MK mystery unless you beat both games. Mythologies is a tricky game (to say the least) that will surely frustrate everyone who challenges it. Getting the hang of the gameplay, and memorizing each level is the only solid foundation for victory.



GETTING STARTED

Here's a little strategy breakdown for the first two levels. This game is extremely difficult, and you'll probably need a little help to get you started. If you find yourself stuck on the first two levels, check this guide for assistance.

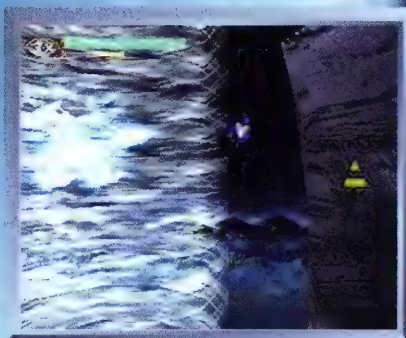
SHAOLIN TEMPLES (CHINA) — STEAL THE SACRED MAP OF ELEMENTS

On this level you should be able to obtain enough experience to unlock the Ice Blast. To do so we recommend an MK3 strategy. Run directly into your enemies and then use this combo: HP, HP, LP, LK, HK, B + HK. As far as level strategy goes, approach the crushing pillars slowly and simply tap Punch when close to them. When the pillar begins to rise, run past it. At the end of the upper floor, jump onto the fence to proceed down to the lower level. Use the same strategy to get past the pillars, kill all the enemies, and then take down Scorpion. Be sure to use your herbs and potions if your health gets low. After toasting him, grab the scroll, and then head back to the rope that you passed by earlier. Climb it, and swing over to the right to move on to the next level.



WIND SHRINE — COLLECT THE THREE ICONS REPRESENTING WIND

First, proceed across all the platforms to the right. A good strategy that works against the baddies standing on the smaller platforms is to hang off the side of the ledge they are on, then jump kick them off the edge. Once you pass by the first series of windmills and ropes, head to the left. At the very end of this series of platforms you will find the first Wind Icon. Bring this back to the right and use it on the platform tattooed with a yellow symbol. Using this will summon the winds. Jump into the wind and press Punch to lower yourself. When you are equal in height to your starting position, jump out to the right. Immediately after this, fall down on the bridge that breaks. Directly to the left you will find the second Wind Icon (run to get it).



Now, backtrack to the wind and head all the way up and to the right. Kill the enemy, and step on the floor switch. From here, quickly run through the timed door, and let it shut. Proceed over to the right and grab the last Wind Icon. Run back out, fall through the wind, and head to the right. After you cross a series of windmills and swinging platforms you'll come to the end of the level and a boss. This boss is extremely tricky. Stay away from him and use your ice blast to freeze him on the ground (unless you've obtained the extra directional blasts). Once his health is drained, head to the far right and run into the wind. After about ten seconds, he will give up and explode.

PAUL, THE GAME PROFESSOR

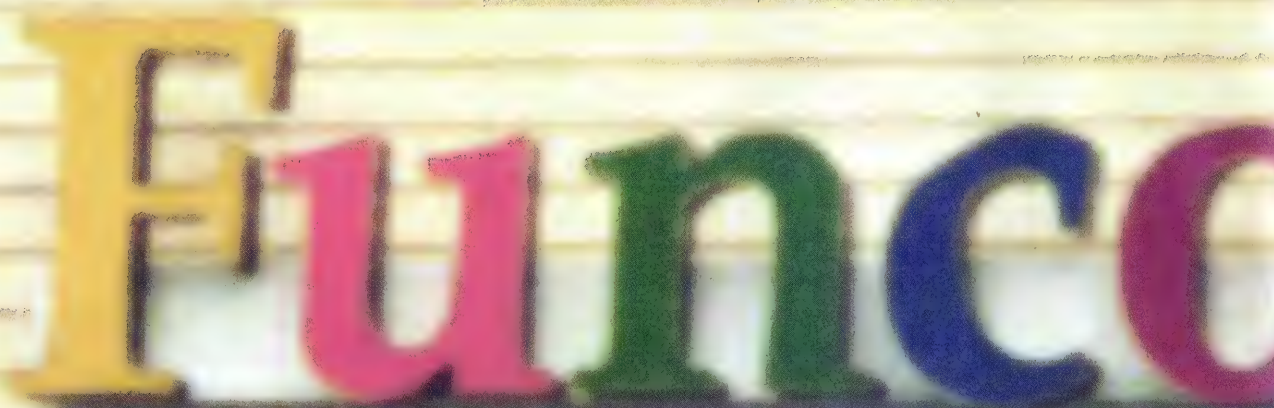
Concept:	9	"This is not a game that you just blast through in one sitting. The pace of the game is primarily set by trial and error, which can become more frustrating than it is fun. If I have to watch the falling death animation one more time, I'll never play an MK game again. Hardcore MK fans will likely enjoy using some of the old combos and other moves to annihilate enemies, but the control in general is a little cumbersome. Although the game environments look fairly cool, the player animations are almost comical. MK fans should at least try this game, but anyone else should steer clear."
Graphics:	8	
Sound:	8	
Playability:	7.75	
Entertainment:	7.75	
OVERALL:	8	

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

Concept:	2.75	"Before you castrate me for giving an MK game such a low score, let me explain why. The gameplay in this title is absolutely wretched. The first level is done perfectly, but after that (when the platforming really kicks in), everything goes downhill. The only way to win this game is through memorizing levels and hoping that you time your jumps correctly. I liked the combat, but when it's surrounded by this platforming junk, it's hard to enjoy since you know something ridiculous and horrible is just a step away. They should have used polygon characters instead of the (somewhat) replicated MK3 Sub-Zero. Only those who love MK will find this game entertaining, but I know that there will be a tear in your eye...and no, the 'I'm crying because this game rocks!' explanation will not work."
Graphics:	7.5	
Sound:	7.25	
Playability:	4	
Entertainment:	4.5	
OVERALL:	5.25	

ANDY, THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept:	7	"When I first heard about an MK action game starring Sub-Zero I was truly excited. The idea of playing MK in a moving, breathing environment certainly had my brain doing loops. Unfortunately, the reality is that this game is horrible. Previous MK games have managed to have decent gameplay, so you could let the bad animation slide by, but this game has such horrendous play mechanics that the poor animation becomes all the more annoying. Couple that with the bad acting, boring AI, regenerating enemies, and mediocre controls and you can see why I hate this game. Certainly funny for a while, but eventually this game gets just plain exasperating. Rent it first, if you don't believe me."
Graphics:	6.5	
Sound:	5	
Playability:	3	
Entertainment:	5	
OVERALL:	5.25	



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Store on the web at <http://www.funcoland.com>



- Size: 1 CD-ROM
- Style: 1 or 2-Player Basketball (Up to 8-Players Via Multi-Tap)
- Special Features: NBA & NBA A License; Full NBA Season; 16 Offensive Plays; Custom Defensive Settings; Variable Game Speed; Arcade and Simulation Modes; Unique Practice Mode
- Created by: Visual Concepts for Midway
- Available: December 5 for Sony PlayStation

Will Midway's new Fast Break (the artist formerly known as Hardwood Heroes) be able to compete with reigning video basketball champs NBA Shoot Out and NBA Live? The game, developed by Visual Concepts, should be available by December 5th for all to judge.

Fast Break certainly does the things well. The game includes an extensive offensive playbook with 16 different plays. Choose between the pick and roll, cross box, pick the picker (gross), four twirl, and the zipper to name a few. Select three of these plays to be implemented on the fly while running the offense.

On defense, the intensity of a team's pressure, man coverage, aggressiveness, and board crashing can all be adjusted. Furthermore, you can customize these traits into three different presets that can be called up for certain in-game situations. The double-team function is also nice. Where some games just let you turn the double team off and on, Fast Break allows you to double-team a specific player.

The graphics of this game are good, but nothing revolutionary. The flow of the game is smooth and the detail of the court is as good as any game. One cool thing - if you shoot with your back facing the basket, the player on the court will lob it up over his back instead of automatically doing the turn around.

Options-o-plenty can describe Fast Break. Almost every rule of the game can be adjusted or turned off. For example, the shot clock and goal tending can be turned off. The likelihood of three seconds in the lane, reach-in and shooting fouls called can be manipulated. Quarter length (3, 5, 8 and 12 minutes) and game speed (slow, normal, fast and fastest) can also be varied.

Fast Break appears to be an average basketball game, but hopefully by the time it is released, it will prove to be much more.



Googs takes flight.



The Marbury Man toys with the full-court press.



Garnett has the authority.



Climbing the ladder.



Unstoppable!



- Size: 1 CD-ROM
- Style: 1 or 2-Player Racing Simulation
- Special Features: 1997 F1 Teams & Drivers (Except Villeneuve); 17 Authentic Tracks; Arcade & Grand Prix Modes; Vertical or Horizontal Split-Screen; 4 Difficulty Settings; Adjustable Car Damage; Disqualifications; Variable Race Length
- Created by: Bizarre Creations for Psygnosis
- Available: Now for Sony PlayStation



Excluding the United States, the world's premier racing series is Formula One. The grueling 17 race season takes place on four continents and pits race car versus race car, driver versus driver, and nation versus nation. The prestige, history, and intense competition of the F1 Championships make it like no other racing series in the World.

Last year, Psygnosis released the first installment of their F1 game to rave reviews and over a million copies in sales worldwide. Now, Bizarre Creations and Psygnosis are back with Formula 1: Championship Edition. Based on the actual 1997 F1 season, this game packs in the sounds, sights, and personalities of the volatile and glamorous racing circuit. In Grand Prix mode, the player jumps into the true simulation. Tracks can be played individually or raced in a 17 course season. A huge selection of options can tailor the races to a wide range of abilities and preferences. The game will even give you assistance in steering and braking if you need the help.

The Arcade mode in F1: Championship Edition is also offered for competition. Here the emphasis is less on the simulation, as cars will not be drastically affected by leaving the road or crashing. The Arcade mode also features a powerslide button that works using the brake button. Races are set up in three difficulty settings with five laps in each. The player starts the five lap race in last position and must battle his way up the ranks.

Beautifully recreated tracks and cars, authentic racers, and a long list of customizable options make F1: C.E. equally as impressive as the first game. If you're a hard-core racing fan, or just want to know more about the premier racing series in the World, Psygnosis' game will blow you away.

Andy, The Game Hombre

"I like my racing games to be quick and in-your-face. F1 is certainly quick, but unless you're willing to put in the time to master the Simulation mode this game isn't in-your-face. Sim fans rejoice... arcade racers avoid."

Paul, The Game Professor

"Schumacher, Hill, and Hakkinen may not be as popular as Gordon or Labonte in the States, but I much prefer the world of F1 to NASCAR. Racing the streets of Monaco sure beats the oval at Bristol. Try this game if you want to know what real racing is all about."

Jon, The Greedy Gamer

"F1 C.E. is an outstanding simulation that incorporates everything that was missing from last year's game. However, unless you are into race ejections and caution flags, CART World Series from Sony offers friendlier open wheel action. Since the Arcade mode is nothing to brag about, F1 C.E. is for serious sim fans only."

Reiner, The Raging Gamer

"This is a decent racing sim for purebred racing fans, but it does have one serious problem. While the Grand Prix mode is outstanding, the racing itself is plagued by background pop out. If you can live with this then you'll enjoy this title, otherwise you might want to look elsewhere. Drat!"

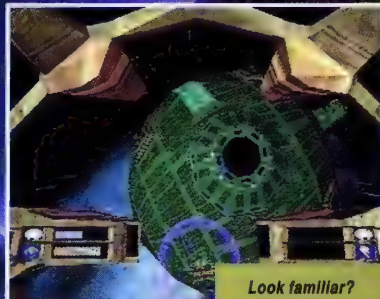
	Andy	Paul	Jon	Reiner
Concept:	8	8.75	9	8
Graphics:	8	9	8	7.75
Sound:	7	9.25	8.5	6.75
Playability:	8	9.25	8.25	7.25
Entertainment:	5	8.75	7.75	6.25
Overall:	7.25	9	8.25	7.25

▶ THE BOTTOM LINE **8**

COLONY WARS

- **Size:** 2 CD-Roms
- **Style:** 1-Player 3D Space Combat
- **Special Features:** 5 Solar Systems Containing 40 Planets; 6 Pilotable Craft; 56 A.I. Driven Ally and Enemy Craft; High Resolution Graphics (Thirty FPS, 512 x 240 Resolution); 14 Weapons
- **Levels:** Non-Linear Mission Structure With Over 70 Missions and 6 Possible Endings
- **Created by:** Psygnosis
- **Available:** November for Sony PlayStation

Psygnosis Takes Polygon Shooters To New Levels



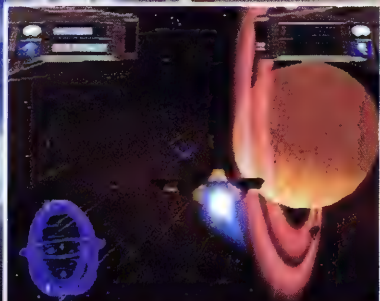
Look familiar?



You might need some missiles.



You must protect her from the enemy.



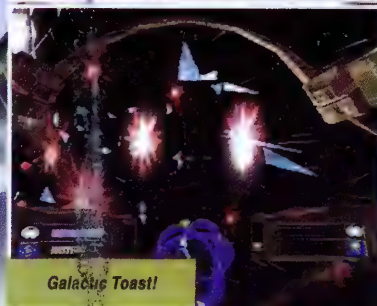
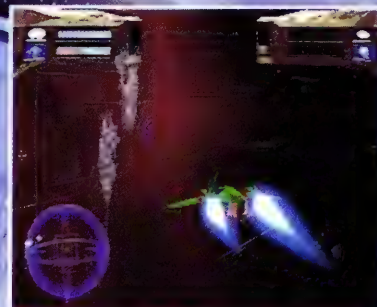
Psygnosis has created a masterpiece with Colony Wars. The story of the game puts you in the middle of a rebellion in the Gallonigher solar system located at the end of a warp-tunnel far, far away from earth. The seven planets of Gallonigher have formed the League of Free Worlds with four other solar systems in order to escape the oppression of the evil Earth Empire. As part of the League forces, you are the pilot of six different combat-oriented spacecraft. Your goal – defeat the Empire. Your assigned missions include objectives such as escorting fleets through hostile territory, taking over enemy space stations, and conducting intelligence reconnaissance. What makes these missions so cool is that they are non-linear. In other words, there are multiple endings to the game. Six to be exact. What this boils down to is lots of combat, mano a mano, against the skilled and lethal pilots of the Empire.

Detail abounds in Colony Wars. The storyline contains an FMV history of the conflict between the League and the Empire along with general, historical, and military data on each of the five solar systems and their 40 planets. Furthermore, there are 62 fighter and fleet craft. The different fighter classes are scouts, interceptors, strikes, bombers, stealths, and heavy support. Both the League and the Empire use the same classes.

Of course, these ships wouldn't be worth spit if there wasn't a respectable arsenal of weaponry to go along with them. The weapons of Colony Wars are divided into primary and secondary categories. There are five primary weapons that consist of assorted ray guns. Lasers are standard and they come in single, dual, and tri configurations and are primarily used to inflict hull damage. Anti-shield lasers destroy a target's shield, but are unable to damage hulls. There are also electro-magnetic pulse (EMP) guns, plasma cannons, and perhaps the most effective primary weapon – scatter guns. The scatter gun has the fastest rate of fire and a wide spread.

The nine secondary weapons are made up of missiles, torpedoes, mines, and a grapple gun. The motion missiles are powerful, but inaccurate, and the anti-shield missiles and torpedoes eliminate a target's shield. You can also unleash the fury of tracker and stun missiles along with plasma and burst torpedoes.

All of this detail creates a very engrossing game. The graphics of Colony Wars' space environment also contribute to the space ambiance. While flying around at speeds too fast to comprehend in our primitive society, the graphics flow by smoothly at a respectable thirty frames per second. And the backgrounds are filled with distant planets, warp-tunnels, star nebulas, asteroids, and various space stations. To sum it all up, this game rules.



Galactic Toast!



First-person is great for a dog-fight...



...but attack the big boys in third.

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

Concept: 8.25 "I'm by all means not a misanthrope, but I would rather have seen some serious alien action in Colony Wars, as opposed to just a struggle between mankind." **Graphics:** 9 "Plus, the real-time cut-scenes (not the FMVs) could have been illustrated much better. They really stick out when compared to the rest of the game." **Sound:** 8.5 "Otherwise, I think Colony Wars is outstanding. The controls allow for some serious space combat maneuvering, the special effects are perfect (especially the in-your-face explosions), and the computer AI will keep you on your toes. Even the measly fighters pose a threat. With six different endings, multiple paths of gameplay, and beautiful polygon graphics, Colony Wars is a serious space sim tour de force (no pun intended Star Wars fans)." **Playability:** 8.5 **Entertainment:** 9 **OVERALL:** 8.75

JON, THE GREEDY GAMER

Concept: 8.25 "Colony Wars is a well put together game. Mission-based space shooters have been around for a long long time, and Colony Wars executes with impressive graphics and smooth ship control. There's no need for flight sticks since the standard d-pad is perfect for your ship's real physics. I was less than impressed with the weapons though. Standard lasers and a few smart bombs get boring after a while. Also, the missions get pretty repetitive. This is probably done to keep a cohesive story, but that doesn't mean I like it. Colony Wars is a good game, but by no means exceptional." **Graphics:** 9 **Sound:** 7.75 **Playability:** 8.75 **Entertainment:** 8 **OVERALL:** 8.25

PAUL, THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept: 7 "Even though it is developed by a completely different company, I view this game as essentially a second generation Wing Commander without the cheesy FMV. Colony Wars' graphics are really killer. The weapon effects, explosions, lighting, and ship designs are all impressive. I did notice it has some minor problems with slow-down, but for the most part it was the sweetest of eye candy. The control left a little to be desired, as the rocket thrust works more as a gas pedal and switching over weapons is tough. Those are fairly petty gripes about a very challenging and long series of campaigns that will please any space jockey. Anyone who enjoyed Wing Commander or Descent will be blown away. Otherwise, a test run should be in order." **Graphics:** 9 **Sound:** 8.75 **Playability:** 8.75 **Entertainment:** 8.5 **OVERALL:** 8.5

▶ THE BOTTOM LINE **8.5**

NIGHTMARE

CREATURES

A New Vision of Horror

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Fighting Adventure
- **Special Features:** 2 Playable Characters, Numerous Attack Moves and Combinations; Hidden Passages; Unique Adventure Meter; Auxiliary Weapons and Power-Ups; Self-Drawn Map
- **Levels:** 15 (Plus 4 Bosses)
- **Created by:** Kalisto for Activision
- **Available:** Now for Sony PlayStation



Direct Hit!

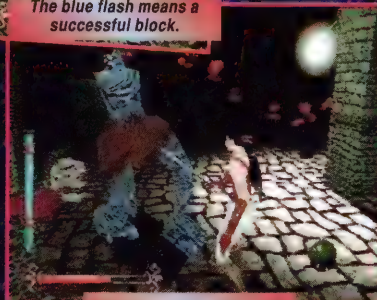


This Bumble doesn't bounce.

The blue flash means a successful block.



Big Problems.



You can blow his arms off.



Three Bosses: Sewer Snake, Snowman, and Jose Manuel.



ANDY, THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept: 8 "This game is cool. Yes, it does have its little hitches, but they are easily overlooked once you start fighting. You could say the game is a mix of Tomb Raider, Street Fighter, and Resident Evil, but that would be incorrect and correct. In other words, there's adventure (but not that much), fighting (that's not that complex), and it's scary (but not as scary as Resident Evil). In the end, however, this mixed breed pulls off the experience quite well. This game could use some work, but it's definitely a PlayStation game that you don't want to miss."

Graphics: 8.75

Sound: 8.5

Playability: 8.75

Entertainment: 8.75

OVERALL:
8.5

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

Concept: 9 "Now this is what the combat in Tomb Raider should have been like. Nightmare Creatures features an amazing combat system which is executed quickly and smoothly. Some of the levels could have been a little longer, but I can't really complain since I had a great time slicing zombies in half, and being scared by creatures that jump out of nowhere. Adventure and action fans will easily take a liking to the sophisticated level designs and tricky level end bosses. And fighting fans will absolutely fall in love with the freedom of combat and the gazillion combos and specials for each of the two characters. I'll definitely buy this title."

Graphics: 9

Sound: 8

Playability: 9.5

Entertainment: 9.25

OVERALL:
9

JON, THE GREEDY GAMER

Concept: 8.5 "What's cool about Nightmare Creatures is that you get to cruise around foggy London, taking down all sorts of really nasty enemies. The game pushes you to move quickly through the levels, and the control (especially the different combos) is top notch. Plus, it's one of the fastest free-roaming games I've ever seen, and the characters and enemies are all huge. However, considering the setting in Victorian London, I was very disappointed in the lack of story. I also thought the Adrenaline Meter was kind of lame, but since the game isn't exploration-based, it's not that big of a deal. In short, Nightmare Creatures is not like Tomb Raider, it's just kill, kill, kill."

Graphics: 9

Sound: 8

Playability: 8.5

Entertainment: 8.25

OVERALL:
8.5

Some of us at GI get the same feeling playing Activision's Nightmare Creatures as we do reading the graphic novel Gotham by Gaslight (only because they both take place in the 19th Century). The plot behind Nightmare Creatures begins with Adam Crowley, a once respected scientist turned mad. Practicing some demented form of black magic, Crowley wants to destroy all of London. And it will be up to you, as the staff-wielding Ignatius or the sword-bearing Nadia, to track and kill him before all of London is swallowed in flames.

Nadia and Ignatius have other differences besides their weapons. Even though they share some of the same basic fighting combinations, they also have their own exclusive attacks. You might also discover that Nadia is quicker when executing her moves. The game is set throughout the city of London, with levels like Regent's Park, Hamstead Heath, Marylebone, and four additional boss levels. The bosses (Sewer Snake, Snowman, Jose Manuel, and Adam Crowley) each present difficult challenges that require timing and weapons. For instance, the Snowman hurls boulder-sized snow balls at you. If you get too close to the Snowman, barrages of lethal icicles will pelt you from above, so you will probably want to stand back and shoot a gun or throw sticks of dynamite.

There are all sorts of goodies to obtain as you progress through the levels. You can get 2 types of guns – the single shot pistol and a sweet triple barrel pistol that spins the character around while mowing down monsters on all sides. You will also find weapons like a circular saw-blade, mines, and a vile of green stuff that when thrown on the ground creates a cloud of gas, rendering your opponent helpless and vulnerable. In addition, there are health boosts and extra lives to acquire.

A unique aspect of Nightmare Creatures is the Adrenaline Bar that drains if you are not fighting an enemy. Once the Adrenaline Bar is fully depleted, the Health Bar will begin to fall. Find an enemy and the Adrenaline Bar will stop going down. If the kill is made, the Adrenaline returns to full. The Adrenaline Bar adds a cool and different aspect to gameplay and forces you to keep moving through the levels in search of the next Nightmare Creature, but the bar drains fast and leaves almost no time for exploring the different levels.

Nightmare Creatures is a challenging game that combines 3D adventure and fighting into one title. The gameplay is smooth as Nadia and Ignatius are able to move quickly through the many eerie environments. The variety of evil monsters that bleed profusely when slain also makes Nightmare Creatures a truly horrific pleasure.

► THE BOTTOM LINE **8.75**

NUCLEAR STRIKE

THE SEQUEL TO SOVIET STRIKE

- Size: 1 CD-ROM
- Style: 1-Player Action/Combat
- Special Features: Two Difficulty Levels; New HUD Directional Indicator; Improved Targeting System; 15 Playable Vehicles Including Helicopters, Planes, and Jeeps; Command Ground Forces
- Created by: Electronic Arts
- Available: Now for Sony PlayStation

► THE BOTTOM LINE **9**

STOP NORTH KOREA BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE



Drop off this treasure to bribe a local mercenary.



Just like in Apocalypse Now, Wagner's Ride of the Valkries accompanies this mission.



Deploy ground units to reinforce your position.



Check out the armor on this baby.

The DMZ (de-militarized zone) splits the peninsula of Korea in two. Across the world's most dangerous flashpoint, two armies stand and stare directly into each other's eyes. Now that North Korea is laughing in the face of the U.N. by secretly developing nuclear arms, the DMZ is more dangerous than ever. Strike.net has discovered that North Korea is on the move. Your job as a Strike agent is to shut down any aggressive move by North Korea, thus maintaining the fragile balance of power that characterizes the region known as Southeast Asia.

Nuclear Strike requires an exceptional level of video game skill; however, alongside this skill, players must also analyze data and make split-second command decisions. Expanding on last year's Soviet Strike title (particularly Mission 3), players must now command a number of different ground and air forces in defending against North Korea's aggression. Using these ground units is essential. One mission in particular has the



Here comes the fire department.

entire North Korean army moving down the map. Players must continually fly along the battle front – moving troops into strategic positions, calling in airstrikes, and deploying crucial supplies.

Nuclear Strike also offers 15 different vehicles. Using intelligence gathered from Strike.net, players must decide whether each vehicle is an advantage or a disadvantage. The game can be won with the default vehicle for each level, but some of the advanced choppers and warplanes will make the job easier.

The interface system is identical to Soviet Strike with the exception of a new navigational arrow and on-screen radar. This makes flying and avoiding enemies much easier. Anyone who liked Soviet Strike will agree that Nuclear Strike is a more expansive, in-depth, and detailed title that forces players to think and react like a seasoned battle commander. It's yet another solid installment in the greatly revered and respected Strike series.



The tank packs an incredible amount of explosive power.

JON, THE GREEDY GAMER

Concept: 9.25 *Nuclear Strike expands on the basic Strike formula, creating a game that is deeper and more entertaining than the previous Strike. There are so many different ways to complete each mission. Commanding alternate vehicles, deploying ground and air troops, and the painstaking analysis of intelligence puts a huge demand on gamers. It takes skill, a lot of skill, to play Strike. For first time 'Strikers,' EA added an easier difficulty level without 'dumbing down' the game, and the new radar and direction arrow on the HUD really speed up gameplay. Nuclear Strike is a must play title for any fan of tactical intelligence and combat. The attention to detail is incredible.*

OVERALL:
9

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

Concept: 9 *The environment scrolling still chugs a little due to vehicle elevation changes, and it's still rather difficult to pinpoint a target; but otherwise, this Strike installment is rock solid. The new explosions, thirteen playable vehicles, new directional radar, and multiple objectives fill in the void of what was missing in last year's installment. Unfortunately, this Strike still has the problem of being wickedly difficult. I'm sure the majority of gamers out there will struggle with each and every mission (the two difficulties don't make that big of a difference). But if you can get the hang of it, or if you have the patience, Nuclear Strike proves it is one of the best, if not the best, combat simulator on the market. It's easy to control, yet extremely complicated and comprehensive.*

OVERALL:
8.75

PAUL, THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept: 9 *Last year's game was clearly one of my favorites, so I was pretty stoked to get my hands on Nuclear Strike. The graphics, especially the explosions, are better than ever. Adding all the new vehicles to pilot was a much needed feature, even though some of the planes shouldn't be able to hover. While the controls and most of the main features haven't changed, I do like the fact that there are now difficulty settings and other options to make some gamers' lives (like Reiner's) easier. The targeting and radar screen will make it easier for all those who complained about last year's game (like Reiner). Nuclear Strike is a killer action game that shouldn't be missed. If you have the skills, it has plenty to offer.*

OVERALL:
9.25

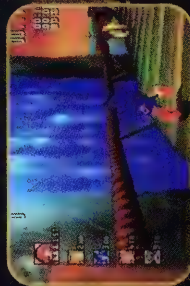
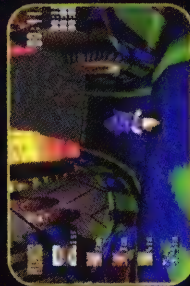


SLOWER TRAFFIC
KEEP
RIGHT

sonic r **SEGA**[®] hard stuff

www.sega.com

Say hello to life in the fast lane. Sonic R for Sega Saturn is a full-on, pedal-to-the-metal hi-speed dash through five 3D courses, each rendered in full 360 degree panoramas. Choose from 5 different Sonic characters to race. Uncover hidden characters and secret shortcuts along the way. Whether you race tag team, relay or split-screen against your buddy is your call. You'll be flossing bug guts out of your teeth for weeks. Yum.



This November, gamers should find the new console version of Sega's Touring Car Championship available at their local retailer. This racing staple doesn't offer any new concepts for the racing genre, but the smooth gameplay and detailed graphics (both back and foregrounds) create an entertaining racing environment.

Fans of the arcade version will be delighted that the home version, complete with Arcade and Saturn sides, will have two new circuits to race on, as well as the three pre-existing ones. In the Championship mode, found in both the Arcade and Saturn sides, racers begin with a time trial on the Country circuit in order to get positioned for the eight car race on the same track. The Country circuit is a fairly basic track, but there are two deceiving turns at the beginning and end of the track. When approaching these turns, it appears that you might be able to go full throttle through them; however, that might cause you to ride up onto the shoulder and lose valuable seconds.

Then you'll move on to the Grunwald circuit, surrounded by the inspiring Austrian Alps. This course, though technically more difficult than the Country circuit, is actually easier to place well on. Like the Country circuit, the first turn is long and deceptive. It will suck you out to the shoulder if you are not cautious. Turn eight is another difficult turn that requires a hard powerslide to the right.

After Grunwald is the considerably more difficult Brickwall Town. There are at least four turns that approach, achieve, or exceed 90°. Racers who are unable to drive successfully through these turns will find themselves short of a checkpoint when time expires, so be generous with the brakes. Successfully completing these three courses will bring you to an extra track.

The new Urban circuit dips and banks through a city with narrow roadways surrounded by barricades that can cause huge pile-ups with even a seemingly minor driving mishap. In addition to the Urban circuit, there is a mystery course too secret to discuss in this publication.

Touring Car simulates four vehicles that you can choose from. There is the Opel Calibra V6, Alfa Romeo 155 V6T, AMG Mercedes C-Class, or the traditional Toyota Supra. On the Saturn side, gamers are allowed to manipulate a car's specifications to fit their own performance needs. You can tinker with its final gear ratio, handling response, tire hardness, brake sensitivity and front and rear suspensions.

The Arcade and Saturn sides have different options. In addition to the previously mentioned Championship mode, the Arcade side also has a Grand Prix mode that is still in development. The Saturn side has a Time Attack mode, Exhibition mode for racing individual tracks, and a Head-to-Head mode. As far as options go, both the Arcade and the Saturn sides allow you to adjust the difficulty (easy, normal, hard or expert) and the number of laps (2, 3 or 5), but the Saturn side also contains car boost and damage features.

The lack of cars and tracks are disappointing, but the smooth graphic displays, the split-screen competition, and the challenge of the Brickwall and Urban courses make Sega Touring Car an enjoyable racing experience.



The Long Road Home

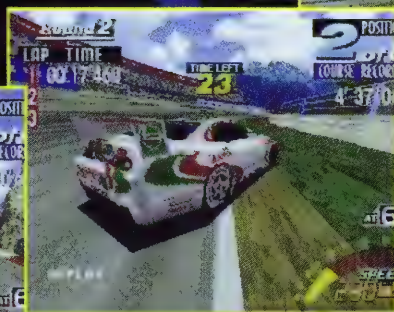
- Size: 1 CD-ROM
- Style: 1 or 2-Player Racing
- Special Features: Variable Race Length; 3 Difficulty Settings; Arcade and Saturn Modes; Automobile Customization; 3 Tracks (Plus 2 Hidden)
- Created by: AM3 for Sega
- Available: November for Sega Saturn



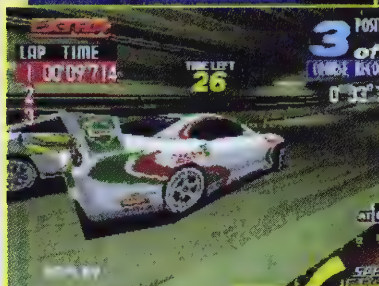
Irwin M. Fletcher you choose.



Breathtaking.



Slide DiMaggio!



On your right...



Coming through!



Sweet machine.



You're going the wrong way.



Ten Pin Alley

Ten Pin Strikes Again

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 to 6-Player Bowling Simulation
- **Special Features:** 3 Alley Environments; Tournament Play; Detailed Bowler Profiles; Season Statistics
- **Created by:** Adrenalin Entertainment for ASC
- **Available:** Now for Sega Saturn

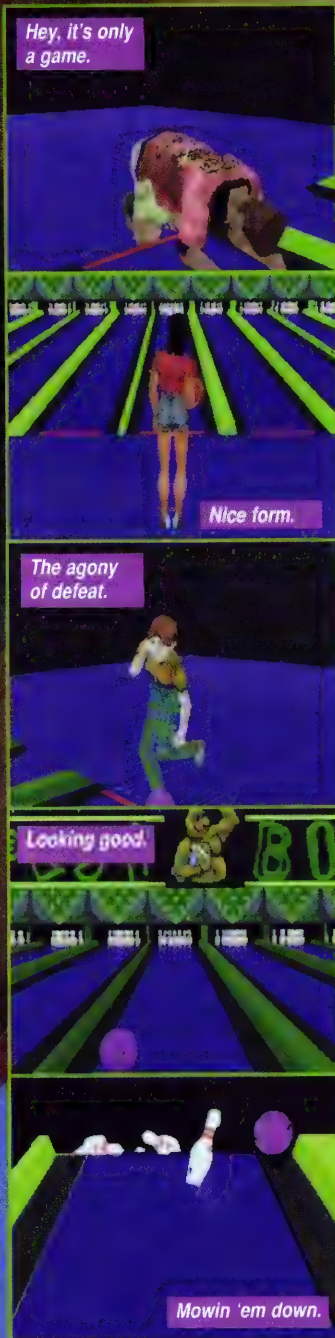
Do you smell that? The sweet aroma of cheap beer, cheaper cigarettes, and stale shoes pouring out of the TV once you begin playing Adrenalin Entertainment's Ten Pin Alley for Sega Saturn? The gameplay is so smooth and realistic you and your friends just might give up going to your local bowling alley all together.

One great thing about this game is the number of options gamers have. For example, there are three different alleys to choose from (Ten Pin Alley, Maui Bowl, and Congo Bowl). The Congo Bowl offers the most unique graphics with a "Moonlight" bowl feel to it, complete with a glowing blue floor.

Ten Pin also lets you choose your own bowler that can be used in practice, open play, team, and tournament modes. There are numerous characters to base your bowler upon. Each character has degrees of power, accuracy, and spin. The characters range from a beer-swilling fat man to a nerd with pants pulled up well past his waistline. You can also give a character specific qualities to fit your most secret bowling desires. Choose either a plastic, urethane, or resin covered ball (which can be varied from 8 to 16 pounds), as well as your bowler's outfit, hair, and skin color.

Each character also reacts differently to how well the game is being played. For example, after a strike, a bowler might do a back flip, a little break dance, slap their rear end, or a number of other humorous graphic sequences. But things can go the other way. For instance, if you don't release the ball properly you might go sailing down the alley, fall on your back, or drop the ball on your foot.

Ten Pin Alley also keeps great stats. It will record your game average, high game, earnings, strike %, spare %, and your overall tournament record. But what really makes this game great is the gameplay. The bowling is challenging and even more fun if you have a friend or two to play with.



Hey, it's only a game.

Nice form.

The agony of defeat.

Looking good.

Mowin' em down.



The Newest Effort from the Creator of Nights and Sonic

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action
- **Special Features:** Directed by Nights Creator Yuji Naka; Based on Nights Graphics Engine; Five Playable Characters; Character Unique Weapons; Health and Weapon Power-Ups
- **Created by:** Sonic Team for Sega
- **Available:** Spring '98 for Sega Saturn

News of an upcoming Saturn game from the creator of Nights is a welcome announcement for any Saturn owner. The almost legendary Yuji Naka, responsible for creating Sonic and the previously mentioned game, has introduced his latest Saturn creation called Burning Rangers.

Unveiled at Sega Gamer's Day (see GI News, October '97), Naka and his Sonic Team have developed a game based loosely on the Nights graphics engine. The storyline involves the adventures of five playable characters who are members of the Burning Rangers team. An elite fire and rescue team of the future, the Rangers are not only given the job of battling flames and assisting those in need, they police situations by protecting against giant enemies set on destruction.

Each member of the team possesses a rocket-assisted suit and a character unique fire-fighting weapon. The powered suits allow for extended jumps over and through burned out floors and other obstacles. Weapons can contain fires and damage enemies with a short burst or be charged-up to unleash a devastating blast of power. The basic goals of the levels we've seen are primarily structured around the simple task of completely exploring the 3D environments, rescuing survivors, and squelching ravaging flames. However, the game promises randomly generated obstacle and victim locations for each environment. Additionally, Burning Rangers will place a heavy emphasis upon sound-bites like Backdraft wisps that signal impending explosions and a "voice navigation system" that aids in finding survivors.

At press time, the newest Saturn game from the creator of Sonic and Nights was only 60% complete. Burning Rangers is scheduled to release in Japan by year's end, but unfortunately will not reach U.S. shores until next spring.





last bronx





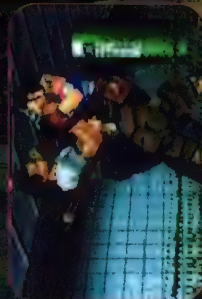
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AGES 13+
RATED BY
ESRB



PC
CD-ROM



You've heard about an ice cream headache. Wait 'til you feel the throb of a non-brain headache. One's coming your way in Last Bronx™, the wicked new martial arts fighting game based on the smash arcade hit. Choose from one of eight warriors, each with their own arsenal of martial arts weapons and dozens of tasty finishing moves. All in high-res, 60fps eye candy. Next time you hear bells ringing, it won't be the ice cream man.



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CLASSIC GAME INFORMER

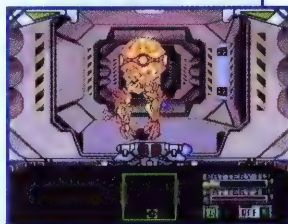
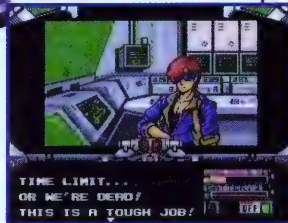
GAMING FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

Silent Debuggers

TurboGrafx-16 (TurboChip)
Availability: Moderately Rare
Replay Value: Low
Similar Games: Kileak: The DNA Imperative (PS-X); Epidemic (PS-X); Brahma Force: The Assault on Beltlogger 9 (PS-X); Uninvited (NES); Space Hulk (3DO, PS-X); Battlecorps (Sega CD); Eye of the Beholder (PC, Sega CD, SNES)

Created by: Data East
Access Tip: Use your map as much as possible, and don't wander around. You're on a time limit through each and every stage, and you must eliminate the alien vermin as quickly as possible.

Overall: 6.75
 Huge flying alien hordes have infiltrated your space station, and only you and your unlimited supply of ammunition can exterminate them. Silent Debuggers uses a simplistic first-person frame-by-frame walking interface, and mediocre weapon effects and enemy animation to bring the action of alien killing to life. The entertainment is found within the complex menus and options available. Choose from over a dozen weapons, track the aliens using motion detectors, and talk to those who've survived the attack thus far. This title is strictly for those who like sci-fi first-person alien stompin' games.

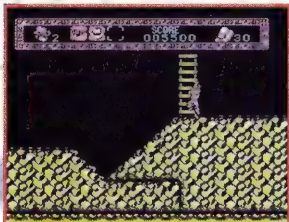
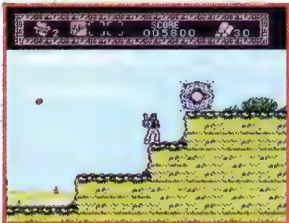


The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles

NES
Availability: Rare
Replay Value: Medium
Similar Games: Indiana Jones: Last Crusade (SG, NES, GB, GG); Indiana Jones Adventures (SNES); Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (NES)

Created by: Jaleco
Access Tip: Search each and every level for power-ups. The gun is the best weapon you'll obtain. Hold onto it as long as you can when you do find one.

Overall: 7.5
 So you thought Harrison Ford portrayed the great Indiana Jones better than anyone ever could? Well, you were wrong. This younger sprite version of Indy is ten times as dynamic as Mr. Ford, and with some skillful playing you'll be able to make your own Indy adventures as exciting as the movies. This game doesn't feature the best graphics in the world, or the best gameplay either; however, it is extremely intense, violent, and above all, entertaining. If you like Indy or standard action/shooters, then you'll probably take a liking to this game. If you do play, wear the hat, snap the whip, and place your knowledge ahead of your will to kill.

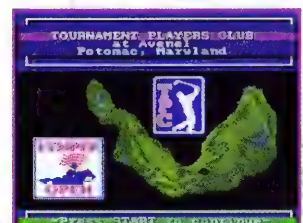


PGA Tour Golf

SNES
Availability: Extremely Rare
Replay Value: High
Similar Games: PGA Tour 96 (SNES); PGA European Tour (SNES); Pebble Beach Golf (SNES); Wailaie Country Club (SNES)
Created by: Sterling Silver Software for EA Sports

Access Tip: In Tournament Mode, save your game after each successful shot. If you subsequently duff a shot, you can reset the game and reload the shot.

Overall: 9
 The flagship of EA Sports' golfing franchise appeared on the SNES in 1991 and has never been surpassed by the others that followed. The graphics may seem a little outdated at first glance, but the speed of play is unparalleled. One of the best features graphically is the EA Ball-Cam. After the stroke is played the camera scales upward and follows the ball through the air. The Ball Cam is a feature that you won't find on any other 16-bit console version of the game. It can be said that the ball physics, swing meter, and selection of game modes are a little too simplistic. Yet, with four courses, real players, and solid control, it stacks up against the others available and proves to still be one of the best golf games to ever grace the Super Nintendo.

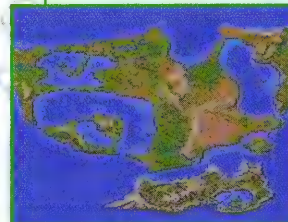


Dark Wizard

Sega CD
Availability: Rare
Replay Value: High
Similar Games: Ogre Battle (SNES, PS-X); Allied General (PS-X); Panzer General (PS-X); Iron Storm (SS)

Created by: Sega
Access Tip: Always do all of your preparations before entering battles. Be sure to leave a soldier or two behind at your base when pursuing the enemy.

Overall: 8
 The Sega CD wasn't exactly a system loaded with quality software. The select few games that were impressive really didn't appeal to the full spectrum of the gaming audience since they were mostly RPGs and strategy titles. For those who do get into these games, we recommend Sega's Dark Wizard. This turn-based strategy game features an easy to use interface, three different playable characters, loads of in-game strategies, and complicated fighting tactics. Of course, since this is a CD title, it does take time to load different scenarios and combat sequences, but then again, this is a slow moving game to begin with, so the lag really isn't a problem.





We are sad to say that we have yet to find a replacement for the PC Jedi, but the rest of the Game Informer staff put our heads together to fill in. While we may not be as strong in the PC force as Erik, we are by no means inexperienced. Erik is probably quicker to pick out the stinkers since he did the page for so long, but we always checked out the gems he'd find on the PC. That's enough chat...let's get to the reviews.

Hexen II – Raven Software 9

One of my first real PC love affairs was with **Doom**, so I was crazy about **Hexen II**. The truth of the matter is, it's hard for me to dislike any first-person shooter (so I'm biased, at least I'm honest). But technically, **Hexen II**, featuring the **Quake** engine, isn't just a shooter because a player can engage in a lot of up-close combat with swords, battle-axes, and the like.

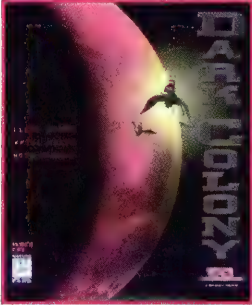
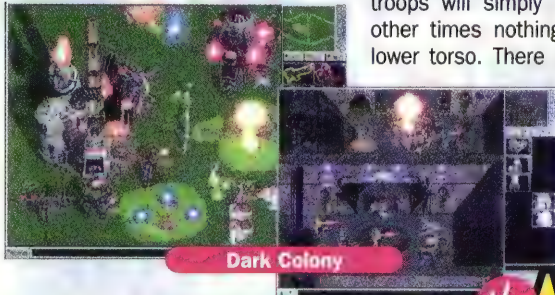
You can choose one of four characters (Crusader, Paladin, Assassin, or Necromancer) in your quest to defeat Eidolon, the last known Serpent Rider, and his Hell-spawned henchmen. Each character has his or her own unique weapons and combat traits. For example, the powerful Paladin prefers the sword and likes his combat up-close and personal. The Necromancer is fragile and uses magic from a distance to defeat his enemies.

Hexen II is a definite improvement over the original. The story is engrossing as you travel over four continents, the graphics show more detail, the enemies are more vicious, and the levels require greater skill to solve and defeat. This game is a must for fantasy fans and shooter fans alike.



Dark Colony – GameTek 8.75

Real-time strategy games are everywhere nowadays. Even scarier, most of them start with the word **Dark** (**Dark Reign**, **Dark Colony**). Out of these we chose to review **Dark Colony** for one reason – cool FMVs. We've never seen FMVs this graphic or violent before. In one scene a human holds an alien by the neck, yells some 'humans are the best' gibberish, and then blows the alien's head off. Ouch! The gameplay is also just as gruesome. Sometimes your troops will simply fall over and die, and other times nothing will be left but their lower torso. There are thirty missions (all fairly interesting), multiple upgrade options for every unit, day and night effects, and wicked animation. This is a good real-time strategy title that kind of reminds us of **Starship Troopers**. Check it out if you like sci-fi and C&C-style games.



recent releases



NHL 98 – EA Sports
 9 The graphics on this game are amazing. In replay mode you can see the players' eyes blink. A great hockey sim that will take some graphics adjustment to flow smoothly on a 133 MHz processor.



Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain – Crystal Dynamics
 8 Kain's a lot cooler on PC since there's no load time, but it's not as difficult nor as deep as **Diablo**. A good hack and slash with excellent voices and story, but a tad late in coming.



Shadows of the Empire – LucasArts
 9 This version is best when run with a 3Dfx card, but it's OK on just a standard PC. The addition of the animated cut-scenes and force feedback make this a must for any Star Wars fan.



AD&D Birthright – Sierra
 6.75 Although the graphics aren't anything spectacular, the range of options, including the choice of real-time or turn-based battles, give gamers a wide range of game styles. Nothing brilliant, but it may appeal to the D&D fans.



Dark Earth – Microprose
 8.75 Developed by the creators of **Nightmare Creatures**, this game is an action adventure with brilliant graphics, intriguing story, and solid action. It's a lot like a futuristic **Resident Evil**.



Pax Imperia: Eminent Domain – TH*Q
 7.75 Choose your species, explore and colonize numerous worlds, engage in R&D, manage your planet's resources, form and undermine alliances, and (of course) take over other planets. **Pax Imperia** is a good title for real-time sim fans.

the NEWS MATRIX



In Europe, console gaming is starting to catch on, but PC games are a much bigger market. Many of these PC games wouldn't appeal to U.S. gamers, especially the soccer and rugby management games, but European gamers do have a passion for first-person shooters and real-time strategy. So it was no surprise to see a strong line-up of PC titles at this year's **ECTS** (see pg.30).

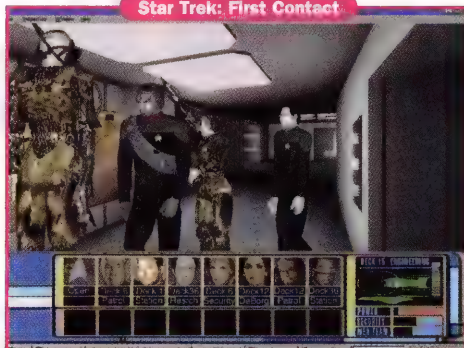
With the acquisition of **Maxis**, **Electronic Arts** was showing a trailer video of **Sim City 3000**. What's especially interesting about this third installment is that each building will be treated as a micro simulator. Not only does this create a more organic micro-system, but it will alter the typical zoning strategies as well. You'll still be able to zone, but you'll also be able to pick individual buildings to micro-manage. Each building in the game is created as a separate unit, and although you can assign advisors to oversee buildings, they will never do a top notch job (when compared to your own trusty hand). **Sim City 3000** promises more player control over every aspect of the city and its people. It will also include disaster scenarios. There is no word yet as to a release date.

Microprose was showing a very early version of the new game **Star Trek: First Contact**. Slated to release during the second quarter of '98, **First Contact** uses **Unreal's** 3D engine. The game begins moments after the movie ends, and the Borg queen has put herself into the computer. Of course, you

must exorcise the queen from the system through strategic command decisions. As players control strategies from different computer terminals around the ship, they will also need to conduct research and think of different ways to achieve objectives. Often, crew members will have to be sacrificed in order to win (too bad Wesley's no longer on-board). **First Contact** includes two holodeck levels (1930's and Klingon), as well as levels outside of the ship (just like in the movie). In other Microprose news, comic company **Wild Storm** will be producing a one-shot comic for the upcoming strategy title – **Guardians: Agents of Justice**.

Lucas Arts was at the show, exhibiting a trailer video of their latest PC project – **Grim Fandango**. The game is largely based upon stories from Mexican folklore, all set within a film noir atmosphere. **Tim Schaeffer** (**Day of the Tentacle**) is heading up development of this 3D graphic adventure. The game should ship by summer '98.

Star Trek: First Contact



Blizzard has announced development of **Diablo 2** (duh!). **Diablo** has now sold over 1 million units worldwide. **Blizzard** will not be releasing an expansion pack for **Diablo**, but parent company **Sierra** plans to release a **Diablo** expansion disc titled **Hellfire** in November. **Hellfire** will feature four quests, a new Monk character class, and two new dungeon areas. Also, **Blizzard's Warcraft Adventures**, originally planned for a Christmas release, has been bumped back to second quarter '98.



- **Size:** Arcade (Classic Stand-Up or Deluxe Sit-Down)
- **Style:** 1 to 4-Player Off-Road Racing
- **Special Features:** 8 Different Trucks; Speed Shop For Vehicle Upgrades; Roadkill
- **Tracks:** 5 (Plus Hidden Tracks)
- **Created by:** Midway
- **Available:** Now At Your Local Arcade

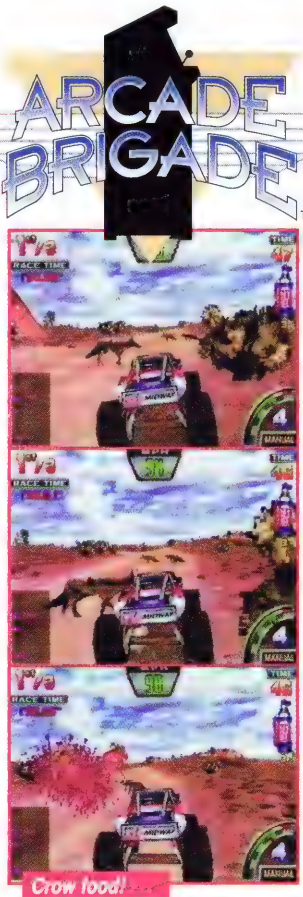
The Road Not Taken

Midway has announced the release of yet another arcade racing game, this time in the form of Off-Road Challenge. Those who love the thrills and spills of Rally Cross might want to check this baby out. Sure, there are a million different racing games to choose from, but how many are endorsed by Ivan Stewart, the man with more off-road victories than anyone in the history of the sport? Not only does Ivan rave about the realism of Off-Road, he also likes the fact that racers have to win money in order to improve and ultimately succeed.

Off-Road gives you a place to spend your winnings. Take your cash into the Speed Shop and soup up your racing machine by increasing top speed and acceleration. Or you might want to invest in some beefy tires or nitro tanks for turbo bursts of speed. But if you do not possess the same racing prowess as Ivan Stewart, and are unable to accumulate enough cash to stay competitive in the circuit, do not fret. Off-Road Challenge allows you to pump your own quarters into the game in order to boost your buying power.

The courses have varying environments, but all are off-road with ample opportunities to catch boneshaking air. Courses include: the Mojave desert, the El Paso ghost town, the Baja coast, Pike's Peak, and the challenging Las Vegas course which contains a spoof of Area 51. To conquer these courses, racers choose between eight different trucks that differ in size, acceleration, center of gravity, top speed, and handling.

On the course, you can pick up different bonus items. There are nitro tanks, helmet icons that improve the structural integrity of your vehicle, and money bags that can be spent in the speed shop (much better than spending your own money). Also be on the lookout for animals crossing the road. There is no bonus for tagging coyotes with your front bumper, but it is cool to see them go splat all over the road.



Saturn

PREVIEW

Quake

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1-Player First-Person
Action/Shooter
Special Features:
4 Episodes Containing 39
Levels; 8 Weapons; 12
Weapon and Ammo Power-
Ups
Created by:
id/Lobotomy for Sega
Available:
Now for Sega Saturn

Dim the lights and bring home Quake for a romantic evening with your Sega Saturn. Nothing comes close to the intense and furious action of a first-person shooter and the Sega Saturn is definitely in need of a new one. With Duke Nukem 3D also coming to Saturn, things are looking up. Quake, at this point, looks like it will play just as well on the Saturn system. The 3D environments are not as sharp as they would be on the PC (duh), but the flow during gameplay is good and fast. Included in Quake will be 4 episodes (39 levels), 8 weapons (like the axe, nailgun, and thunderbolt), and 12 ammo and weapon power-ups to collect and use.



PlayStation

REVIEW

6.75

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1 to 4-Player Golf
Special Features:
8 Different Modes Including
Tournament, Shoot-Out,
Stroke Play, and Skins; 5
PGA Courses (Including
Pebble Beach, Sawgrass,
and Colonial C.C.); 14 PGA
Tour Personalities
Created by:
EA Sports
Available:
Now for Sony PlayStation

PGA Tour 98

With games like NHL 98 and Madden 98, EA Sports has proven they can produce some of the best sports titles in the industry. Unfortunately, PGA Tour 98 falls well short of these standards. Load time is slow and occurs often. For example, after double tapping on the swing bar, there is a delay before the golfer even begins his or her swing motion. The graphics for PGA Tour 98 are acceptable, but hardly a breakthrough. Golf titles on Sega Genesis or SNES have graphics that rival those of PGA Tour 98. One positive is the eight different modes including: Tournament (18, 36, or 72 holes), Shoot-Out, Skins, and Stroke Play.

PlayStation

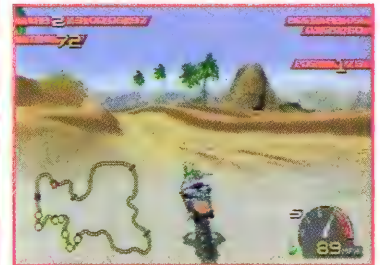
REVIEW

8

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1 or 2-Player Racing
Special Features:
3 Racing Modes; 3
Difficulties; 4 Views;
6 Tracks (4 More Hidden);
Analog Compatible; Memory
Card Save; Turbo/Trick
Button; Mirror Mode;
2-Player Split-Screen
Created by:
Delphine Software for
Electronic Arts
Available:
Now for Sony PlayStation

Moto Racer

As far as Motorcycle racing games are concerned, this game is one of the best. As far as racing games are concerned, Moto Racer falls somewhere in the middle. Certainly the graphics are fantastic and the sound is great, but where it comes into a problem is the only way to play successfully is with an analog controller. So obviously, if you already have an analog controller this game becomes a lot more attractive. It makes the turns smooth, the acceleration exact, and the game fun. Otherwise, Moto Racer is frustrating with standard digital control.



PlayStation

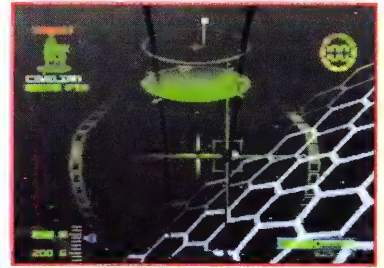
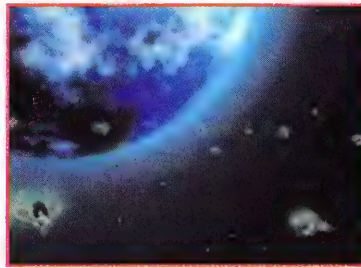
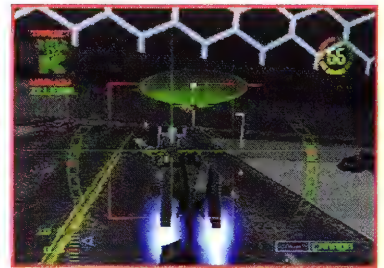
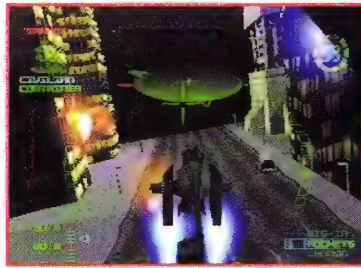
REVIEW

7.25

Size:
2 CD-ROMs
Style:
1-Player Futuristic Shooter/Simulator
Special Features:
Detailed Geodesic Dome Cityscapes; Targeting Analysis System; Lengthy FMV Cut Scenes; Several Camera Views; Multiple Weapons; Varying Mission Objectives
Created by:
The Wheelhaus for Psygnosis
Available:
Now for Sony PlayStation

G-Police

The FMV sequences are gorgeous and fairly entertaining to watch, the light sourcing and cityscape detail are beautiful and very realistic, but the gameplay is confusing and executed poorly. G-Police has the look it needs to impress, but the background and object popping really interfere with the gameplay. At times you will find yourself chasing an enemy chopper, and just a mere 30 feet away (game scale), the ship will vanish into blackness. Where did it go? Nowhere, it's still there, but you can't see it since the ship popped out into the "unseen." The whole game is filled with popping everywhere, which makes the playing experience rather annoying. It's too bad though, this game looked like it could have been cool.



Saturn

REVIEW

7.75

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1 or 2-Player Retro Collection
Special Features:
Includes 3 Sega Arcade Translations; Variable Difficulty Settings; Adjustable Lives
Created by:
Sega of Japan for Spaz/Working Designs
Available:
Now for Sega Saturn

Sega Ages (3 in 1)

Sega Ages is a compilation of three classic Sega arcade games that appeared in the middle 1980s. Space Harrier is a surreal third-person perspective shooter where players do everything from blasting giant heads to taking down caterpillar dragons. Out Run lets you and a computer companion climb into a Ferrari and drive the countryside on levels of increasing difficulty. After Burner II is another third-person perspective shooter, only this time you're taking down bogies while maneuvering an F-16 jet. All three games have the look and sound found in their original arcade counterparts and all are extremely challenging. By today's standards, the graphics may not be up to snuff, but the gameplay is rock solid.

Nintendo 64

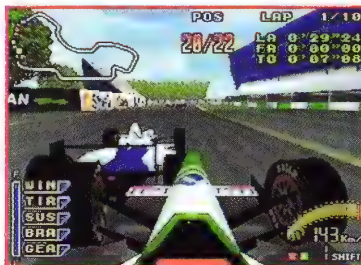
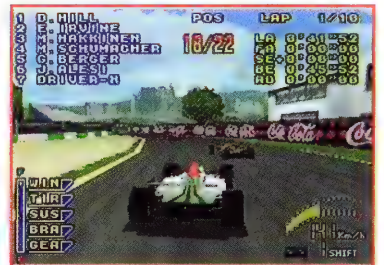
REVIEW

7

Size:
64 Megabit
Style:
1-Player Racing
Special Features:
Advanced Car Tuning Options; 16 Real F1 Tracks; 22 Drivers; Arcade and Simulation Modes; Realistic Brake, Tire, Gear and Suspension Deterioration
Created by:
Human for Ubi Soft
Available:
Now for Nintendo 64

F1 Pole Position 64

The Nintendo 64 now has its first professional racing sim. Unfortunately, the results are rather disappointing. Even though F1 Pole Position 64 offers a great wealth of car configuration options and even has the F1 license, the control is far short of spectacular. The cars seem to jerk back and forth instead of gracefully rounding through the curves. Also, for an N64 game, the graphics are dull and it doesn't seem like you're going close to 250 mph. To the game's credit, hard-core sim fans will enjoy the gearbox and suspension wear, but these same fans will regret the lack of realistic wheel lock and bumping. Sometimes you even seem to pass through the rear end of cars.



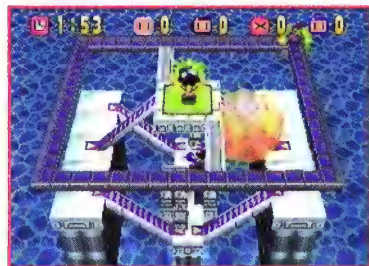
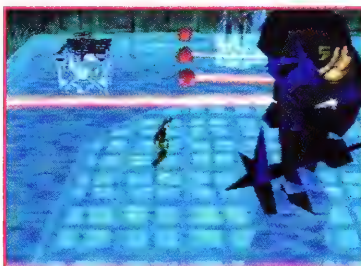
PlayStation

PREVIEW

Pitfall 3D: Beyond the Jungle

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1-Player Action/Platform
Special Features:
Rope Swinging; Tricky Platform Jumping; Pick-Axe Attack; Evasive Roll; Gigantic Bosses; Large Level Designs
Created by:
Activision
Available:
February for Sony PlayStation

The legendary Pitfall Harry has returned. This time his exploits take him beyond the jungle in the first three-dimensional Pitfall adventure. All the traditional elements are present, only now they occupy 3D space. Thus, Larry will not only rope swing side-to-side, but into the fore and backgrounds as well. All the levels pose a great challenge and you'll need to make some tricky platform jumps while facing deadly enemies. Of course, Harry is an adventurer and at the end of each level a worthy reward awaits. Pitfall 3D is still in the early stages of development, but we can tell you that the gameplay is a mix between Crash Bandicoot and Pandemonium! (with more emphasis towards Pandemonium!'s level structures).



Atari

PREVIEW

Bomberman 64

Size:
64 Megabit
Style:
1 to 4-Player
Action/Adventure/Battle
Special Features:
Battery Back-Up Save; Two Different Multi-Player Battle Modes (Team and Single); New Power-Ups, Create Your Own Character; Two Difficulties (Normal and Difficult); Puzzles
Levels:
5 Worlds - 20 Levels
Created by:
Hudson Soft for Nintendo
Available:
December 1 for Nintendo 64

An old-fashioned Bomberman appearance collides with large puzzle-filled levels to create this, the first Bomberman adventure. As with every other release, Bomberman 64 is complete with an intense multi-player Battle mode and a difficult challenge for the 1-player crowd. The gameplay is basically the same as in past games, only now you will need to explore much larger lands and backtrack to find valuable items. One newly added feature will even allow players to create their own character, set their attributes, choose their weapon assortment, and then head out to cream the competition. New bombs, new power-ups, and all-new action round out this millionth B-Man sequel. Bomberman 64 should be hitting retail shelves on December 1.

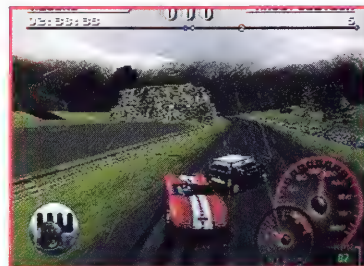
PlayStation

PREVIEW

Test Drive 4

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1 or 2-Player Racing
Special Features:
Drag Racing; 2-Player Split-Screen or Link Play; 5 Different Cup Modes; 10 Cars (5 Muscle and 5 Exotic); 6 Tracks; Powerslides; Huge Jumps; Massive Wrecks; Doppler Effects
Created by:
Accolade
Available:
December for Sony PlayStation

Similar to Need for Speed, Test Drive 4 combines the might of legendary muscle cars and exotic super cars in a free-for-all joy-ride through familiar city streets and famous locales. The single-player game features five cup modes, where it's you against the most aggressive and ill-tempered AI racers around. Plus, as you race for the gold, it appears that the police will play a huge part in the racing (as in the previous installments). The 2-player options available are outstanding. You and a buddy will be able to compete head-to-head through a split-screen or link mode in regular racing or drag racing conditions. The gameplay is also very much like Need for Speed, except a Ridge Racer-like powerslide has been implemented.



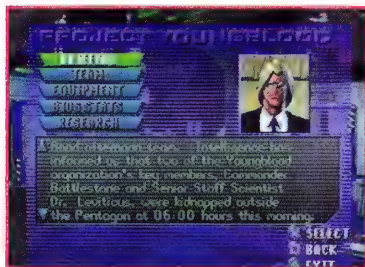
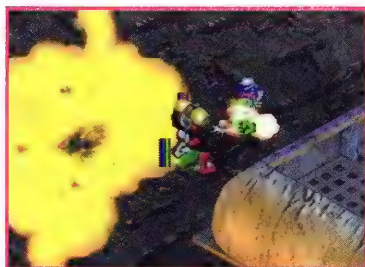
PlayStation

PREVIEW

NBA Shoot Out '98

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1 or 2-Player Basketball (Up To 8-Player Via Multi-Tap)
Special Features:
All 29 NBA Teams; 350 NBA Players (including Charles Barkley and Shaq); 30 Different Dunks; New 2-on-2 Contest; NBA All-Star Game; Total Control Passing, Shooting and Dunking; Real NBA Awards; New NBA Playbook
Created by:
Sony Interactive Studios America for SCEA
Available:
December for Sony PlayStation

The programmers at Sony Interactive Studios America have been busy adding improvements to make Shoot Out even better than before. For starters, Shoot Out has added Charles Barkley and Shaq. But that's just the beginning. Shoot Out features Sony's new Total Control passing, dunking, and shooting. For passing, this means behind the back, no-look, and fake passes. You can also control cutters, screens, and double-teams. For dunking and shooting, you can choose between a player's four signature dunks, and control his shot arc. In addition, Sony has added a 2-on-2 play mode, the deeper three-point line, an all new NBA playbook, and the NBA All-Star Game.



PlayStation

PREVIEW

Youngblood

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1 or 2-Player Real-Time Action/Strategy
Special Features:
11 Playable Characters Including Badrock, Shaft, and Riptide; Training Room; 2 Player Death Match or Cooperative Modes; Comic Cut Scenes; Weapon and Item Management
Created by:
Realtime Associates, Inc. for GT Interactive
Available:
November for Sony PlayStation

As far as comic titles go, Youngblood is one of Game Informer's least favorite (since we think Rob Liefeld is a weenie), but the game itself has some serious potential. Eleven characters, a training room (not to be confused with the X-Men's Danger Room), and weapon and item management make this complex action/strategy title a serious brain teaser. All throughout gameplay you will need to keep track of your characters (1 to 4 at once). The combat and general appearance is very similar to Project Overkill, but is based on icons rather than simple button pressing. Comic cut scenes loaded with drama (who is Shaft's love interest?) are implemented throughout each mission.

At a Glance

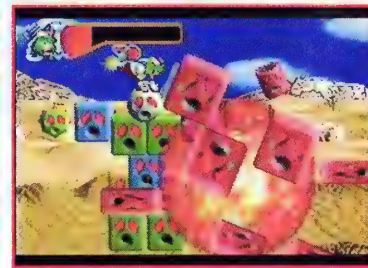
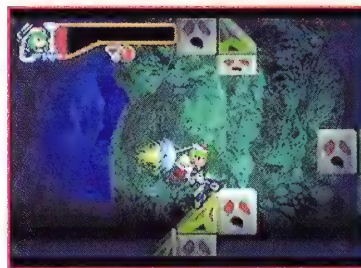
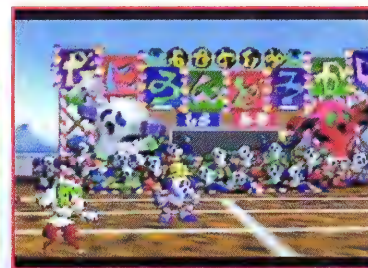
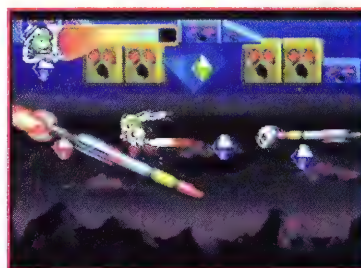
REVIEW

7

Mischief Makers

Size:
64 Megabit
Style:
1-Player Action/Platform
Special Features:
Bizarre Puzzle-Oriented Levels; Multiple Ways to Beat Levels; Grade Assigned After Each Level; 2D Pre-Rendered Graphics; Battery Backup Save; The Unmistakable Stamp of Japanese Culture
Created by:
Treasure for Nintendo
Available:
Now for Nintendo 64

If this title was graded on originality alone, it might have scored a 9. Otherwise, the game is short and can be beaten in one sitting. Although you can go back to each level to locate hidden gems and improve overall times, the question is – will you want to? As for the game itself, it is mostly 2D. The levels are both bizarre and entertaining. Mischief Makers is definitely addictive the first time through because you'll always want to see what strange twist the next level offers. The bosses are easy to beat, but in order to get the best score you'll need to defeat them quickly. The seven-event olympics are an excellent treat, but overall most gamers should rent Mischief Makers for the weekend.





PlayStation

REVIEW

7.75

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1 or 2-Player Combat/Tank Simulator
Special Features:
11 Different Tanks; Eight Head-To-Head (2-Player) Levels; Three Difficulty Settings; Two Modes (Quest and Arcade); Three Controller Configurations (Beginner, Thumb Saver, and Expert); Bubble Shielding
Created by:
Chantemare Creations, Inc. for Sony Computer Entertainment America
Available:
Now for Sony PlayStation

Steel Reign

Steel Reign, while pushing the player to use strategies during gameplay, features toned down user-friendly control (similar to that in Super BattleTank). The main focus in this game is to have fun blowing up everything that crosses your path. Plus, for the hardcore players, you will need to search each level carefully for hidden tank cards that reward you with a new playable vehicle at the end of each gameplay segment. In total, there are eleven different tanks, a slew of weapons (including the missile cam – very cool), and vastly different terrains and levels to explore. A good purchase for those who thrive on games like WarHawk, Black Dawn, and Treasures of the Deep.



PlayStation

PREVIEW

Auto Destruct

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1-Player Combat Racing
Special Features:
Detailed City Driving Environments Including San Francisco, New York, London, and Tokyo; 20 Missions; Hidden Bonuses and Power-Ups
Created by:
Neurostone for Electronic Arts
Available:
December for Sony PlayStation

In Auto Destruct, the new combat racer from Electronic Arts, the main character is a former motor racing champion who turns vigilante after seeing his wife and daughter murdered by a cult called the Disciples of Lazarus. Now, he is seeking revenge by completing missions that will foil the Disciples' evil plots. Every finished mission provides the vigilante with more information about the Disciples' plans, as well as the cash and equipment needed to destroy them. Auto Destruct is not yet complete, but the driving environments, like San Francisco, are large and detailed. Players also must manage fuel, ammunition, armor, and beat the clock.



PlayStation

REVIEW

6.75

Size:
1 CD-ROM
Style:
1 or 2-Player Football (Up To 8-Player Via Multi-Tap)
Special Features:
Playbook Editor, All 30 NFL Teams and Players, Adjustable Season Length, Adjustable Camera Views During Gameplay, Practice Mode, Season Stats, Player Create, Memory Card or Password Save
Created by:
Gametek for Interplay/VR Sports
Available:
November for Sony PlayStation

Jimmy Johnson's VR Football '98

After months of reporting on Interplay's first football title under its VR Sports label, we finally have the bottom line on the game. While we did review it last spring, it was in a completely different form. The game's graphics went through an extensive reworking and look far more detailed. The speed of gameplay has also been drastically increased. However, the game is plagued by jumpy animation that could be the direct result of trying to speed up the game. The play control is also rather boring. VR Football '98 is the only game with a play creator and team-specific playbooks, yet it comes in a distant third behind Madden and GameDay.



Magic: The Gathering
PlayStation
Overall: 6.5

It's not nearly as entertaining or complex as the Wizards of the Coast card game, but the plethora of scenarios and game options easily make up for the simplistic gameplay. It's okay, but a serious disappointment for Magic fans.



Grand Tour Racing
PlayStation
Overall: 7.75

Combining four different racing worlds into one package is a nice treat for gamers, and the physics for each will keep you on the edge of your seat trying to find that solid turning ratio. But there's one problem, the car speeds are way too slow. It says I'm going 120 mph, but it feels like 35 mph.



NHL Breakaway 98
PlayStation
Overall: 7.75

Acclaim loaded this game with every option imaginable, but options alone do not a game make.



Wheel of Fortune
game.com
Overall: 7

With an easy to use touch screen interface, the thrills and spills of Wheel of Fortune are portrayed almost perfectly in this portable package.



Indy 500
game.com
Overall: 4.25

Where'd that turn come from? This game is way too choppy to be anything but bad.



VMX Racing
PlayStation
Overall: 6

We've already reviewed this game (March 97, Pg. 56), and the changes that PlayMates incorporated didn't improve this title.



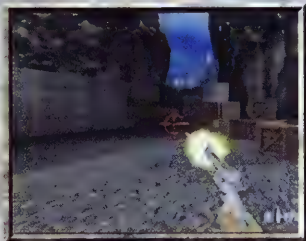
Rampage World Tour
PlayStation
Overall: 6.25

This game is basically the same as before, but the graphics have been fine-tuned. Rampage just isn't as fun as it used to be, even when battling in 2-Player mode.



SECRET ACCESS

HELPFUL HINTS • PASSWORDS • CODES



GoldenEye 007 - Nintendo 64

Unlock Hidden Levels - To unlock the Aztec level you must beat the game on Secret Agent. To unlock the Egypt level you must beat the game on 00 Agent.

Unlock 007 Mode - To unlock this useful mode (which allows you to configure the enemy AI and various other things) turn the difficulty to 00 Agent and beat every stage (even the hidden Egyptian and Aztec stages).

Unlock Bonus Weapons - Simply beat any of the levels below to unlock these new weapons:

Magnum - Beat Janus Base
Laser - Beat the Aztec Complex
Golden Gun - Beat the Egyptian Temple

Unlock Cheats - To unlock these fascinating codes, simply beat a level within a given amount of time. Note: Sometimes it will require a different difficulty setting to accomplish.

Level 1 (Dam) - Acquire **Paintball Mode** with the difficulty set to **Secret Agent**. Time to beat - 2:40.

Level 2 (Facility) - Acquire **Invincibility** with the difficulty set to **00 Agent**. Time to beat - 2:05.

Level 3 (Runway) - Acquire **DK Mode** with the difficulty set to **Agent**. Time to beat - 5:00.

Level 4 (Surface) - Acquire **2x Grenade Launcher** with the difficulty set to **Secret Agent**. Time to beat - 3:30.

Level 5 (Bunker) - Acquire **2x Rocket Launcher** with the difficulty set to **00 Agent**. Time to beat - 4:00.

Level 6 (Silo) - Acquire **Turbo Mode** with the difficulty set to **Agent**. Time to beat - 3:00.

Level 7 (Frigate) - Acquire **No Radar Multiplayer** with the difficulty set to **Secret Agent**. Time to beat - 4:30.

Level 8 (Surface 2) - Acquire **Tiny Bond** with the difficulty set to **00 Agent**. Time to beat - 4:15.

Level 9 (Bunker 2) - Acquire **2x Throwing Knives** with the difficulty set to **Agent**. Time to beat - 1:30.

Level 10 (Statue) - Acquire **Fast Animation** with the difficulty set to **Secret Agent**. Time to beat 3:15.

Level 11 (Arch) - Acquire **Invisibility** with the difficulty set to **00 Agent**. Time to beat - 1:20.

Level 12 (Streets) - Acquire **Enemy Rockets** with the difficulty set to **Agent**. Time to beat - 1:45.

Level 13 (Depot) - Acquire **Slow Animation** with the difficulty set to **Secret Agent**. Time to beat - 1:30.

Level 14 (Train) - Acquire **Silver PP7** with the difficulty set to **00 Agent**. Time to beat - 5:25.

Level 15 (Jungle) - Acquire **2x Hunting Knives** with the difficulty set to **Agent**. Time to beat - 3:45.

Level 16 (Control) - Acquire **Infinite Ammo** with the difficulty set to **Secret Agent**. Time to beat - 10:00.

Level 17 (Caverns) - Acquire **2x RC-P90** with the difficulty set to **00 Agent**. Time to beat - 9:30.

Level 18 (Cradle) - Acquire **Gold PP7** with the difficulty set to **Agent**. Time to beat - 2:15.

Level 19 (Aztec) - Acquire **2x Lasers** with the difficulty set to **Secret Agent**. Time to beat - 9:00.

Level 20 (Egyptian) - Acquire **All Guns** with the difficulty set to **00 Agent**. Time to beat - 6:00.

*"The Rhino"
Toledo, OH*

GoldenEye 007 - Nintendo 64

Two Guns Trick - First make sure that you have two different sets of two guns (the Archive allows for this). Then scroll up to the second set of two guns. Now press and hold **A**, press **Z** twice, release **A**, press **A** again (don't hold it), and finally hit **Z** to fire two or three times. This code must be entered extremely fast, and you'll know it works when one of the guns locks into place.

*"The VidMan"
Uptown, MN*



ClayFighter 63 1/3 - N64

Enter all of these codes at the Character Select screen.

Unlock Dr. Kiln - Hold the **Left Shoulder Button** then hit **LP, MP, HP, HK, MK, LK**.

Unlock Sumo Santa - Hold the **Left Shoulder Button** then hit **LK, MK, HK, HP, MP, LP**.

Unlock Boogerman - Hold the **Left Shoulder Button** then hit **Up, Right, Down, Left, Right, Left**.

All the moves listed below are Claytalities.

LEGEND

LS - Left Shoulder

RS - Right Shoulder

() - Where to Stand Next to Opponent

BLOB

Da Bomb - (Next) **←→ + RS**

Meat Grinder - (Next) **↘↘ + LS**

Hit and Run - (1 Hop Back) **↘↘ + HP**

Pac-Man - (Next) **↘↘ + RS**

Squeeze - (2 Steps Back) **↘↘↘**

Squish - (Next) **LS RS ↘**

Bite - (Next) **LS ↘↘ RS**

Knock Off - (Next) **↘↘ + RS**

Launch - (Next) **↘↘ LS ↘**

BAD MR. FROSTY

Hat Smash - (Next) **RS ↘↘**

Snowcone Squeeze - (Next)

↘↘↘ + LS

Knock Off - (2 Steps Back) **↘↘↘**

Squish - (2 Steps Back) **↘↘↘**

Launch - (Next) **22 LS RS**

BONKER

Drum - (1 Step Back) **↘↘**

Cannon - (Next) **↘↘↘**

Headbutt (Next) **↘↘↘**

Launch - (Next) **↘↘↘**

BOOGERMAN

Flaming Fart - (2 Steps Back)

↘↘↘↘ + RS

Toiletality - (1 Hop Back) **↘↘↘**

+ MP

Knock Off - (Next) **↘↘↘ + RS**

Squish - (Next) **↘↘ + LS**

Squeeze - (Next) **↘↘ + RS**

Launch - (Next) **↘↘↘ + LS**

DR. KILN

Death X-Ray - (1 Step Back)

↘↘↘

Blood Pressure Squeeze - (1 Step Back) **↘↘**

Cut-In-Half - (Next) **↘↘↘**

Launch - (Next) **↘↘↘**

Earthworm Jim

Cow From Sky - (1 Hop Back)

↘↘ RS LS

Knock Off - (Next) **↘↘ + RS**

Squish - (Next) **↘↘↘ + RS**

Squeeze - (Next) **↘↘↘ + LS**

Launch - (Next) **↘↘↘ + RS**

HOUNGAN

Hand Grope - (Next) **↘↘ + LS**

Bad Grope - (1 Hop Back) **↘↘↘ + RS**

Bad Mojo - (1 Hop Back) **↘↘↘ + LS**

See Ya Clucky - (1 Step Back) **↘↘↘**

ICKYBOD CLAY

Demon Spin - (1 Step Back)

↘↘↘ + LS

Scary - (1 Step Back) **↘↘↘**

+ RS

KUNG POW

Bruce Lee Squish - (1 Step

Back) **↘↘**

Slice & Dice - (1 Step Back)

↘↘↘

Round Toss - (Next) **↘↘↘**

Pan Toss - (2 Steps Back)

↘↘↘

SUMO SANTA

Phat Assault - (1 Hop Back) **↘↘**

+ RS

Sumo Squish - (2 Steps Back)

↘↘↘

T. HOPPY

Rabbit Pellets - (1 Step Back)

↘↘↘ + LS

Rabbit Out of Hat - (1 Step Back)

↘↘↘ + RS

Thwomp - (Next) **↘↘↘**

TAFFY

Slap Silly - (1 Step Back) **↘↘↘**

+ RS

Who Da Man! - (Next) **↘↘ RS**

Fireworks - (1 Step Back) **↘↘↘**

Splat - (1 Step Back) **LS RS**

LS RS



Madden NFL 98 – PlayStation/Saturn

Enter all of these codes at the Create Player screen (it doesn't matter what kind of player you make). Save and Exit, and then enter the Exhibition Mode to unlock these new options.

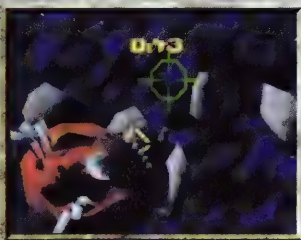
Hidden Stadiums

Dallas – **GHOST TOWN**
Astrodome – **JETSONS**
Cleveland – **DAWG POUND**
Oakland – **SNAKE**
Tampa Bay – **BIG SOMBRERO**
Miami – **DANDAMAN**
Washington – **OLDDC**
Tiburon – **SHARKSFIN**

Hidden Teams

NFC – **ALOHA**
AFC – **LUAU**
All 60's – **PAC ATTACK**
All 70's – **STEEL CURTAIN**
All 80's – **GOLD RUSH**
All-Time Leaders – **LEADERS**
All-Time All Madden – **COACH**
Tiburon – **LOIN CLOTH**
EA Sports – **ORRS HEROES**

Jacob Henry
Chicago, IL



Pitball – PlayStation

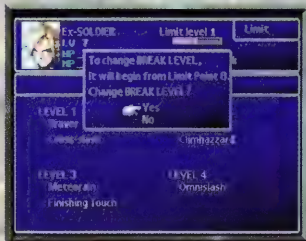
View FMVs – Go into the Options and highlight the FMV Test. At this point press **Left**, **Right**, **■**, **●**. After this is entered all the FMVs in the game will appear.

Play Hidden Game – Once again enter the options and highlight the FMV Test. From here highlight any of the unlocked FMVs and hit **■** and **●** simultaneously to bring up this interesting game.

Jacob Ville
Tampa Bay, CA



ATTENTION!
Codes only work with InterAct's GameShark enhancer attachment.



Final Fantasy VII – PlayStation

Unlimited Gil – **8009d260 ffff**
All Limit Breaks (Cloud) – **8009c75a 0fff**
All Limit Breaks (Tifa) – **8009c862 0fff**
All Limit Breaks (Barrett) – **8009c7de 0fff**
First Character Limit Breaks Every Time – **800f5e6a 00ff**
Second Character Limit Breaks Every Time – **800f5e9c 00ff**
Third Character Limit Breaks Every Time – **800f5ed2 00ff**
One Time Max Materia – **8009ce62 0100**
No Battles – **8007173c 0000**
No Battles on World Screen – **8011627c 0000**
Save Anywhere – **8009d2a6 0000**
65535 Experience After Each Battle – **8009d7d8 ffff**
50000 AP After Each Battle – **8009d7dc c350**
9999 Gold Points at Golden Saucer – **8009d3d2 270f**
50000 Battle Points at Golden Saucer – **8009d3d8 c350**

Lucky 7's Fever (Cloud) – **8009d85c 1e61**
8009d85e 1e61
Lucky 7's Fever (Tifa) – **8009dc9c 270f**
8009dc9e 270f
All Characters at Level 99 – **801fdd6 0100**
8009d7da 0100 (Make sure you have the GameShark off when you are in battle. Then at the victory portion of the battle, turn it on again. Finally, make sure it is off before you enter the experience and finds screens. After this everyone who joins your battle party will be at Level 99.)



MATERIA

Note: Changing the last two numbers with different numbers or letters will grant you different Materia. Here's a quick list of the most useful Materia.

MP Plus – **8009D086 0000**
HP Plus – **8009D086 0001**
Experience Plus – **8009D086 0005**
Enemy Plus – **8009D086 0008**
Chocobo Plus – **8009D086 0009**
Mega All – **8009D086 000c**
Enemy Skill – **8009D086 002c**
Ultima – **8009D086 0048**
Chocobo/Mog – **8009D086 004a**
Shiva – **8009D086 004b**
Ifrit – **8009D086 004c**
Titan – **8009D086 004d**
Ramuh – **8009D086 004e**
Odin – **8009D086 004f**
Leviathan – **8009D086 0050**
Bahamut – **8009D086 0051**
Kjata – **8009D086 0052**
Alexander – **8009D086 0053**
Phoenix – **8009D086 0054**
Neo Bahamut – **8009D086 0055**
Hades – **8009D086 0056**
Typhoon – **8009D086 0057**
Bahamut Zero – **8009D086 0058**
Knights of the Round Table – **8009D086 0059**
Master Summon – **8009D086 005a**

"The Headless Gamer"
Webville, COM

ACCESS ALLIES

OPERATION: CODE HUNT

Hey GI readers, how would you like to become our ally? Send in your codes for the games listed below and help out a fellow reader in a scrape. Or if you're stuck on a game, send us a letter requesting codes and we will help you access the secrets right here in Secret Access.

Nintendo 64

Clay Fighter 64/3
Madden 64
NFL Quarterback Club '98

PlayStation

Bushido Blade
Cool Boarders 2
Croco: Legend of the Gobbos
Extreme G
Fantastic Four
Ghost In the Shell
NHL 98
NHL Breakaway '98
NHL Face Off '98
Nuclear Strike
Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha
Time Crisis
Treasures of the Deep

Sega Saturn

Sonic R

Genesis

The Lost World: Jurassic Park

Arcade

Mortal Kombat 4

Send Secret Access Requests To:
Access & Allies • Game Informer Magazine
10120 W. 76th St • Eden Prairie, MN 55344

E-Mail: gionline@winternet.com



SEGA

Sega Game Play Assistance
900-200-7342 (SEGA)
\$.85 per minute for automated assistance and
\$1.05 per minute for live help.
Canada 900-451-5252
\$1.25 per minute automated

NINTENDO

Game Counseling
900-288-0707
\$.95 per minute
Canada 900-451-4400
\$1.25 per minute
Nintendo's Automated Power Line!
206-885-7529

SONY

900-933-SONY(7669)
\$.95 per minute

Note: These lines may not have information for all titles. If you're under 18 be sure to get your parent's permission.



NFL GameDay '98 – PlayStation

Enter all of these codes at the Easter Eggs menu.

- Loud Announcer – **loud mouth**
- Easy to Block Passes – **rejection**
- Harder Hits – **crunch time**
- More Penalties – **busy ref**
- Less Penalties – **blind ref**
- Mute Spectators – **quiet croud**
- No Heads – **horsemen**
- Faster Players – **fire drill**
- Super Fast Players – **juice**
- Higher Kicks – **thin air**
- Unstoppable Stiff Arm – **jack hammer**
- Longer Kicks – **big foot**
- Show Credits – **credits**
- Easier to Catch – **gloves**
- Easy to Burn Defense – **toast**
- Better Coverage – **leech**
- Mite Size Players – **flea circus**
- Stupid Computer – **watery ai**
- Flat Characters – **virtual polygons**
- Higher Difficulty – **gd challenge**
- Better CPU Offense – **cpu offense**
- Better CPU Defense – **cpu defense**
- Tougher Defense – **psychic**
- ???? – **deep gray**
- ???? – **hatchet**
- ???? – **nyse**

*Hokem & Hex
Sarasota, FL*



Triple Play 98 – PlayStation

Play In Your Jock – First enter the Exhibition Mode and set the stadium to the Polo Grounds (G/July '97). Then, while choosing a team, press **L2, R2, L2, R2, ●**. Doing this will activate the EA Dream Team. Choose the newly added EA squad to play as the home team and pick the San Diego Padres as the visitors. If you do this correctly, the EA team will be wearing nothing but a thin white jock. This also works when you choose both teams as the EA Dream Team.

*Todd White
Los Angeles, CA*



Rush Hour – PlayStation

Unlock Bonus Cars – At the 'Press Start' screen hit **Up, Left, Right, ✕, ●, ■**.

Unlock Metal Cars – At the 'Press Start' screen hit **L1, R1, L1, ■, R1, Up**.

Unlock a Hidden Track – At the 'Press Start' screen hit **✕, Up, ▲, Down, R1, L1**.

Unlock Backwards Championship Mode – At the 'Press Start' screen hit **Left, ▲, R1, ●, L1, Down**.

Unlock Super Championship Mode – At the 'Press Start' screen hit **Right, ■, Left, ●, Up, ✕**.

*David Lynch
Hudson, LA*

Time Crisis – PlayStation

Unlock Hidden Options – At the Main Menu shoot the 'R' in 'Crisis' twice, then shoot the '+' over 'Time' twice. Doing this successfully (and accurately) will unlock the hidden Options menu with lives and continue toggles.

*Louis Carter
Webville, COM*

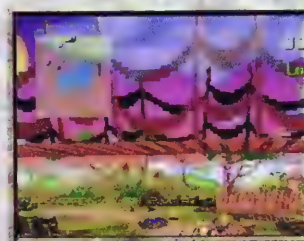


Xevious 3D/G+ – PlayStation

Unlimited Continues – At the Game Selection screen press and hold **L1, R1, L2, R2, and ●** until the game begins.

Unlock Heiachi – At Title Screen press and hold **✕, Left, ●, and Start** until the game begins.

*"The VidMan"
Uptown, MN*



Street Racer – Saturn

Unlock Cheat Mode – All you have to do is enter your name as **TURGAY** to unlock this useful Mode.

*Anthony Hopkins
Mt. Morris, IL*



CoolBoarders – PlayStation

Unlock High-Pitched Announcer – Enter the Options screen and press **Select** forty times to give the announcer a high-pitched squeal.

*Laura Graving
Boston, MA*

Sonic Jam – Saturn

Bonus Images – Simply place your Sonic Jam game into your PC to unlock a series of screen shots and wall paper. These files are located in the Extras folder.

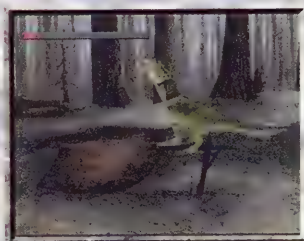
*Curt Boeving
Salt Lake City, UT*

Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha – PlayStation

Barrel Busting – Note: This may only work on the Japanese version.

At the Mode Select Menu highlight Practice and press **Start, Up, Up, Right, Up, Right, Up, then Start**. Now, head into the Practice Mode and a new option called 'Bonus Game' will be in your menu.

*"The Rhino"
Toledo, OH*



The Lost World: Jurassic Park – PlayStation

Enter all of these codes at the Password screen.

Play as a Hunter – **■, ✕, ●, ▲, ✕, ●, ■, ▲, ■, ✕, ●, ✕**. After entering this, the game's sound will be turned off. Exit the game. Enter the options and turn on the sound. Now re-enter the code to play as a Hunter.

Play as Prey – **▲, ✕, ▲, ✕, ●, ✕, ■, ▲, ▲, ●, ✕**.

Play as a Raptor – **■, ✕, ●, ▲, ✕, ●, ■, ▲, ▲, ✕, ■, ●, ✕**.

Play as a T-Rex – **▲, ■, ●, ■, ✕, ▲, ▲, ●, ■, ▲, ▲, ✕**. After entering this the game's sound will be turned off. Exit the game. Enter the options and turn on the sound. Now re-enter the code to play as a T-Rex.

View Compy Gallery – **✕, ▲, ▲, ■, ✕, ●, ▲, ■, ▲, ●, ✕, ●**.

View Hunter Gallery – **▲, ✕, ■, ▲, ●, ✕, ■, ●, ▲, ■, ✕, ●**.

View Prey Gallery – **▲, ■, ●, ■, ✕, ▲, ▲, ●, ✕, ■, ▲, ▲**.

View Raptor Gallery – **●, ■, ▲, ▲, ✕, ●, ▲, ■, ✕, ●, ■, ▲, ▲**.

View T-Rex Gallery – **▲, ▲, ●, ■, ▲, ✕, ▲, ■, ■, ✕, ▲, ●**.

Begin With 59 Lives – **▲, ✕, ■, ▲, ●, ✕, ■, ●, ■, ▲, ✕, ●**. After entering this code the game's sound will be turned off. Exit the game. Enter the options and turn on the sound. Now re-enter the code to start with 59 lives.

Unlock All Levels – (This code must be entered three times) **■, ✕, ●, ▲, ▲, ✕, ■, ●, ▲, ●, ✕, ■**.

*"Lenny, The Lunatic Gamer"
Helena, MT*





Machine Hunter – PlayStation

Unlock Cheat Mode – Go to the Password screen and input '??HOST???' to unlock a fairly useful cheat screen.

Level Passwords

- Level 2 – HIABY_EUHQ
- Level 3 – FQAJA*EQPR
- Level 4 – CYQJQIDMQQ
- Level 5 – BEBQQAYRQ
- Level 6 – ZNBRRHAQNG
- Level 7 – AQRDYOGA!B
- Level 8 – A!RIIYCAWQ
- Level 9 – AECYDDQTB
- Level 10 – QMSKQMDQ_B
- Level 11 – AWCLI*HAMA
- Level 12 – A?CMQXEA#R
- Level 13 – IBTLJEACB
- Level 14 – QMDEIVFMR
- Level 15 – QQDNIDEAIQ
- Level 16 – !?DVK?HQWB
- Level 17 – ACE!KYDYLR
- Ending – AMUIFCIEQ

Carl Sagan
Garrett, ND



Saturn Bomberman – Saturn

Unlock Ending – During the opening sequence (with two Bombermen dancing) hold the **Left** and **Right** Buttons, then press **Down** and **Z** simultaneously.

New Pause Screen – While in gameplay, pause, and then hit **X**, **Y**, and **Z** to remove any wording from the screen.

Start With Six Lives – Turn the Saturn's internal clock to a time between 10:00 and 11:00 am to start a game with three extra lives.

Joel Karington
Westport, IN



Shadows of the Empire – Nintendo 64

Fly an X-Wing or TIE Fighter (No Challenge Points) – In the final stage, during gameplay, turn the controls to the traditional setting, Pause, then press and hold the **Left C Button**, **Down C**, **Right C**, the **Left Button**, the **Right Button**, and **Z**. While holding these press **Up** or **Down** on the directional pad to change the Outrider into an X-Wing or TIE Fighter.

Wampa Sound Test – At the name entry screen input **R Testers Roar** to activate a strange sound cheat. *Note: Make sure you have a space between all of the words.*
Lance Johnson
New York, NY



International Superstar Soccer 64 – Nintendo 64

We printed these codes in July, but we thought we'd print them again since the game was released later than we originally estimated.

Big Head Mode – At the Title Screen press **Up C**, **Up C**, **Down C**, **Down C**, **Left C**, **Right C**, **Left C**, **Right C**, **B**, **A**, then quickly press and hold **Z**. Now, hit **Start**.

Extra Teams – At the Title Screen press **Up**, the **Left Button**, **Up**, the **Left Button**, **Down**, the **Left Button**, **Left**, the **Right Button**, **Right**, the **Right Button**, **Left**, the **Right Button**, **Right**, the **Right Button**, **B**, **A**, then quickly press and hold **Z**. Now, press **Start**.

"The Human Torch"
New York, NY



Hercules – PlayStation

Enter all of these level codes at the Password screen.

The Hero's Gauntlet – **Serpent, Medusa, Coin, Medusa**
Centaur's Forest – **Centaur, Hercules Silhouette, Minotaur, Archer**

The Big Olive – **Centaur, Coin, Serpent, Hercules Silhouette**
Hydra Canyon – **Coin, Gladiator Helmet, Coin, Soldier**

Cyclops Attack – **Gladiator Helmet, Pegasus, Hercules Silhouette, Archer**

Titan Flight – **Soldier, Coin, Coin, Thunder Bolt**

Passageway of Eternal Torment – **Medusa, Soldier, Centaur, Pegasus**

Vortex of Souls – **Soldier, Lightning Bolt, Soldier, Centaur**

The End – **Pegasus, Soldier, Centaur, Soldier**

"Virtua Gap Boy '97"
Minneapolis, MN



Warcraft II: The Dark Saga – PlayStation

Enter all of these cheats at the Password screen.

- Game Victory – NTCLNS
- Game Loss – YPTFLWRM
- Enable God Mode – TSGDDYTD
- Cash – GLTTRNG
- Oil – VLDZ
- Lumber – HTCHTXNS
- Magic – VRYLTLL
- Upgrades – DCKMT
- Show Map – NSCRN
- Fast Build – MKTS
- End Game Victory – THRCBNBL
- Neverending Game – NVRWNNR

Michael Richards
Huntington, NY

Secret Access Notice:

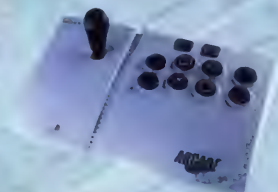
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FOR EXAMPLE.

BEHIND A TREE.

AND HIDE

FOR THE WOODS

LIKE HIGHTAIL IT

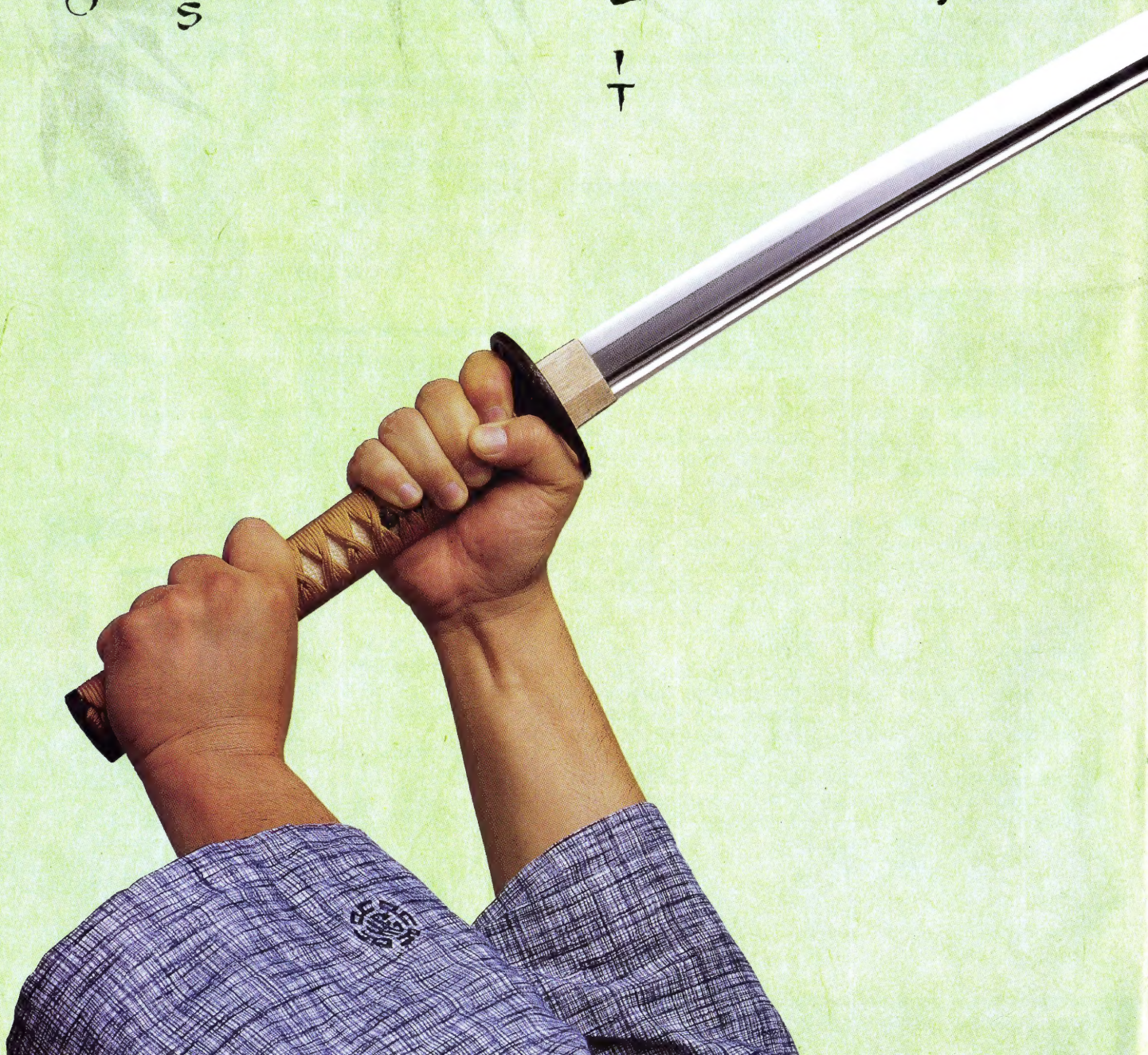
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