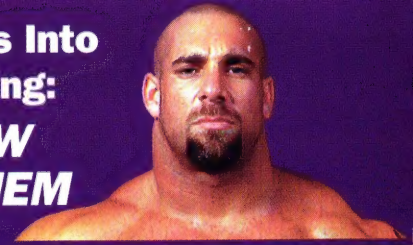


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May 1999
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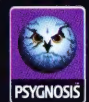


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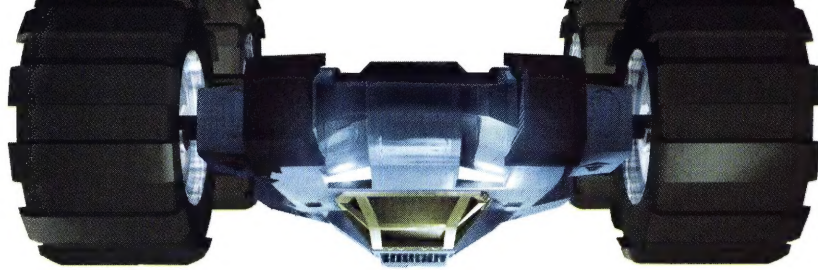
Driving on the ground is so 90's.

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10 Cover Story: Before the Storm: The Games of The Phantom Menace

The time is drawing near and we are proud to join the hype machine for the movie of a lifetime, Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace. LucasArts has created two Episode I titles for the PlayStation and Nintendo 64, and GI is here to give you the lowdown on each of them. Plus, read our interviews with the masterminds at LucasArts who create games for the ultimate license.

20 Feature: An Indepth Look at PlayStation 2

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It's that time in the video game industry, when all the talk focuses on the next generation of console systems. Dreamcast ignited the fire and now the PlayStation 2 is stoking it to even greater temperatures. Turn to page 20 for everything you need to know about Sony's new machine.

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There's been a shake up in the world of video game wrestling and as a result, the WCW has aligned itself with Electronic Arts in a five year contract. Join the Gonzo Gamer and experience his wild trip to Vancouver as he witnesses the making of EA's first WCW title, Mayhem.

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Konami displayed some games at the ASI, and GI gobbled them up. Learn about Beat Mania, Silent Scope, Guitar Freaks, and the American version of Dance Dance Revolution.

65 Play To Perfection

GI dissects the mammoth racer, Ridge Racer Type 4. Find out how to unlock all 320 cars with our comprehensive list.

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This newly designed section presents more codes and tips than ever before!

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Join us as we journey to the past and revisit Donkey Kong Country, Gun Smoke, and Herzog Zwei. Plus, tons of historic codes!



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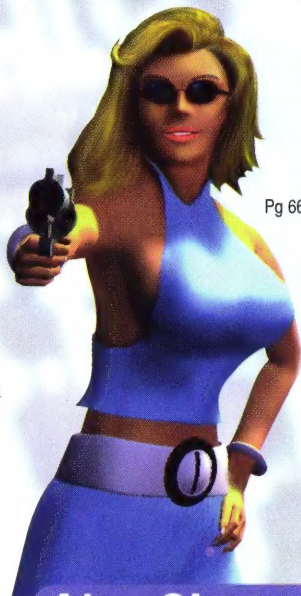
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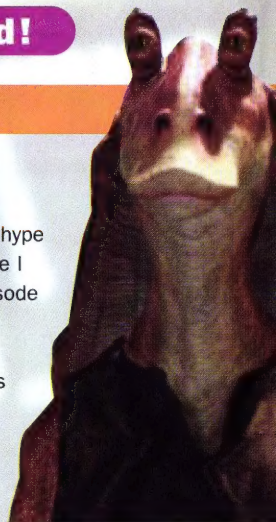
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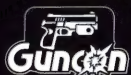
Wild game, baby.

Next party, lose the piñata. New Point Blank™ 2 allows up to 8 of your gun-crazed pals to unload on over 70 wild and wacky shooting scenarios - from fish and fowl to ninjas and gangsters. Blast through an all-new Arcade Mode, Theme Park Mode, Endurance Mode - plus a VS. Mode for the perfect head-to-head (no pun intended) party game. Point Blank 2. Time to get pistol whipped.



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Paul, The Game Professor
paul@gameinformer.com

"I just got back from Tokyo (you'll see the Tokyo Game Show Report next month) and I watched the craziness of the Japanese when it comes to games. I spent a few hours on a Sunday in one busy shop. The hot items were almost exclusively PlayStation; a ton of Um Jammer Lammys, Densha De Go 2s, and Beatmanias were flying out the door. It even seemed that Saturn games were selling more than the N64 or DC. I can't forget the Game Boy Colors and Bandai WonderSwans. The handheld market is also kickin' butt in Japan."

Andy, The Game Hombre
andy@gameinformer.com

"This just in. My secret contact at LucasFilm managed to get me some earth-shattering news about the upcoming Star Wars film. Apparently, George is using an incredible new technology for Yoda. This new science is called 'puppetry' (pronounced pup'i tré). This amazing onscreen deception is accomplished by a man placing his hand inside what my source called a 'puppet' (pronounced pup'it). Then, by opening and closing his hands he is able to give this puppet the illusion of life. It will be hard to pick out the 'puppet' in the movie, but if you watch carefully I'm sure you'll catch it."

Reiner, The Raging Gamer
reiner@gameinformer.com

"I've asked the entire staff to recite a favorite Star Wars memory or two. Bergren whined and protested this act, until I sent 10,000 volts of Force lightning through his pansy hide. That's right, I am a Jedi. I've explored the Sith and am one with the dark side. Why? Because I'm pure evil. My favorite moment from the trilogy? When those two hapless ewoks were trampled by a scout walker. Now that was rich. I also enjoyed the scene where Salacious Crumb ripped off See-Threepio's eye. Death to the droids!! Long live the Sith!!"

Bergren, The Game Burrito
bergren@gameinformer.com

"Reiner demanded everyone write about Star Wars this month. I violently resisted, since conformity makes me break out in a rash, but then he grabbed my Backstreet Boys CD and held it over the toilet until I agreed to scribble something out about his precious Star Wars. I refuse to see this movie simply because I was cheated out of the role of Obi-Wan. I had the part wrapped up, but then Ewan McGregor told me that call backs were clothing optional and George axed me."

Robert, The Game Casanova
robert@gameinformer.com

"The best memory I have of Star Wars is the day I went to see Return of the Jedi for the first time. It was opening day, and I bugged my mom all day about getting there early to ensure a ticket. She lollygagged around until about 5:30, when she decided to bring me to the 7:00 show. When we got there, there was a line around the corner of the building. She wanted to leave, but I wasn't taking no for an answer. We got a ticket about 30 minutes later, but it was for the 11:00 show. About four people behind us, the show sold out. To all of those that didn't get to see that show, but waited in the mile-long line, I say, 'ha!'"

Jay, The Gorzo Gamer
jay@gameinformer.com

"My fondest Star Wars memory? The day I realized that Boba Fett's nothing but a big wuss. Oh sure, you can quote tales from all the books, comics, and cassette dramas you like, but according to the canon which is the Star Wars trilogy, the only thing Fett's got going for him is a cool set of armor that he probably found somewhere. All he ever did was get a little smart with Vader (big deal, he's no Grand Moff Tarkin), hide in garbage, shoot a lasso (??), and not keep his jet pack in proper working order. What a loser."

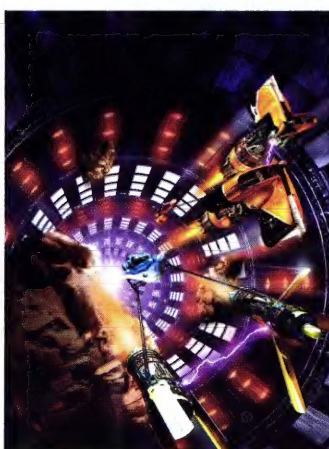
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Yes, it's true. Game Informer has jumped on the Star Wars bandwagon, and gosh-darn-it, if we're going to hop onto a hype-machine, we're going to do it right. As you can tell from the pictures below, this month's Game Informer actually features two unique covers – one for Racer and the other for The Phantom Menace. This isn't the first time in video game history that a magazine has featured multiple covers, so this is nothing groundbreaking. But we

Double Your Pleasure

BY ANDREW McNAMARA

figured if you're going to do it...hey, it might as well be Star Wars. The two issues are exactly the same, so don't think you're getting screwed because you didn't get the other magazine. Of course, if you are a true Game Informer connoisseur, you'll try to get your hands on both copies, but other than the collectability of the whole thing, it's basically just an excuse for us to get more cool Star Wars art.



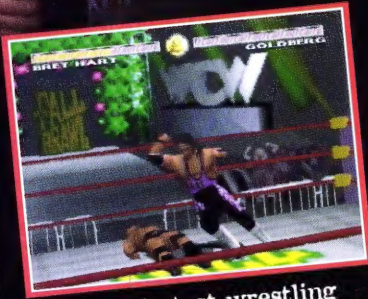
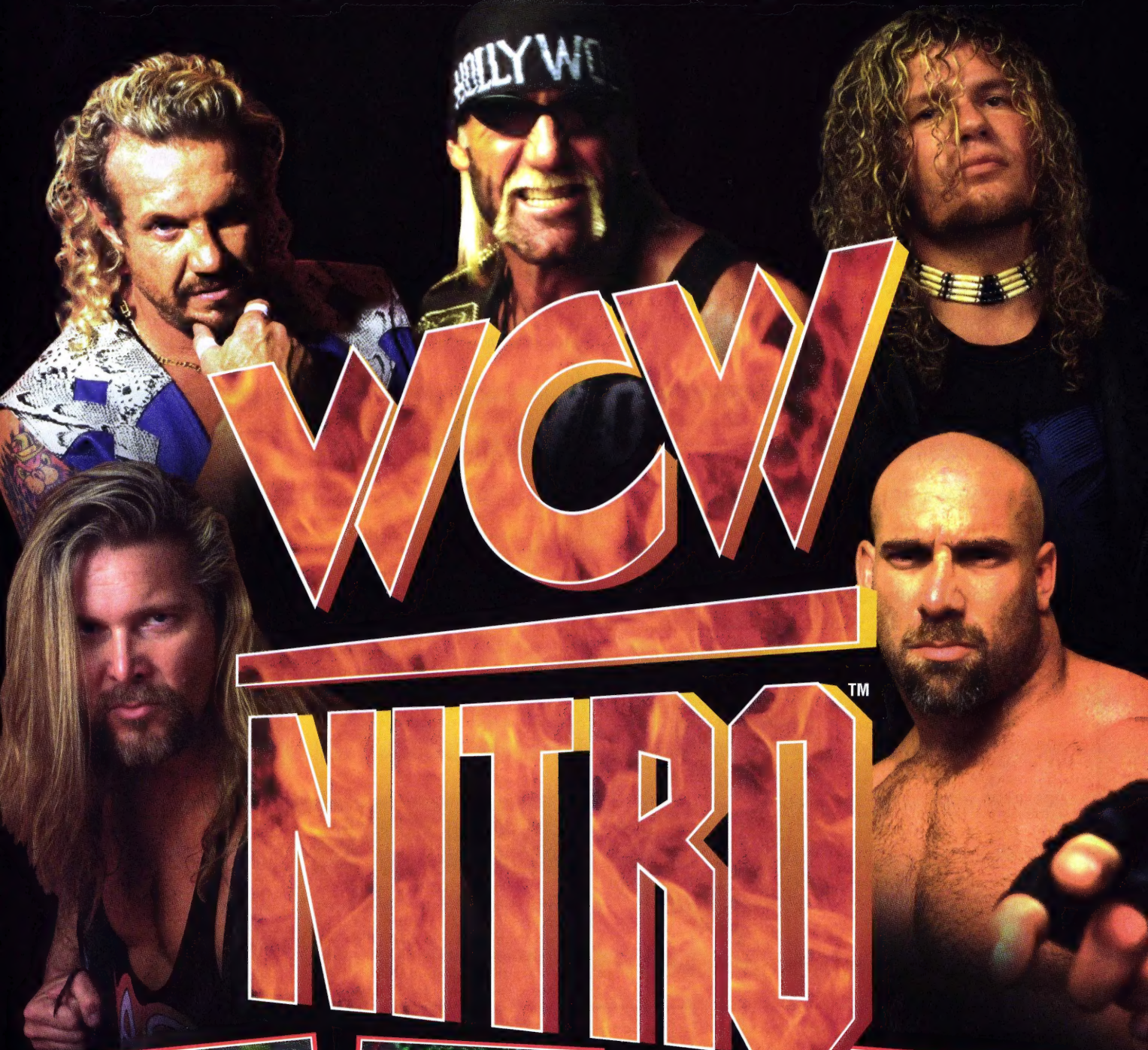
Phantom Gamers (L to R): Robert, Bergren, Reiner, Paul, Jay. Inset: Andy (R2D2 & Yoda as themselves)

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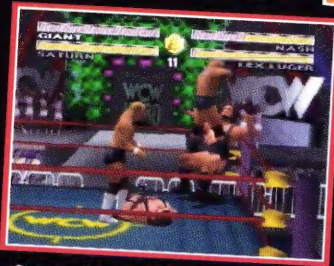


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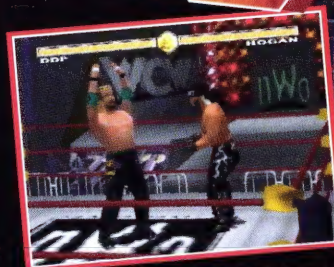
Lightning-fast arcade-style action!



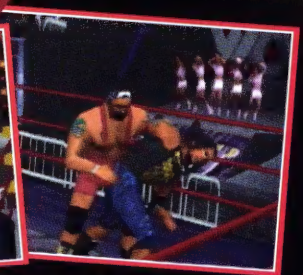
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Letters From Our Readers

Top 25 Stirs Controversy

In the Table of Contents of the March issue of Game Informer, we introduced our Top 25 PlayStation games. "They almost always cause some kind of fight," we wrote. As predicted, our feature did cause an influx of mail from readers looking for a rumble. Most letters held comments like this one from the Earth Viper: "Final Fantasy VII being placed as the best PlayStation game is a far cry from the truth." Another reader thought we "put very little thought and effort into compiling this list," then went onto suggest that we give "readers an

opportunity to vote for what we believe are the top 10 PlayStation games ever." There was plenty of dissension in the Top 25 picks, but Erik Hansson spoke for many fellow readers when he wrote, "I agree with your 25 Worst, but you forgot Bubsy 3D." For all who disagreed with our Top 25, we suggest re-reading the Table of Contents summary of the March issue. It basically sums up our point of view on this list and makes clear why magazines love to do lists like these in general.

Bitterness Is Amusing

Your staff seems to lack one of the key elements of any magazine or game studio: a true fountain of bitterness. Someone who hates his life and job almost to the point of violent disgruntled rage, and chooses to vent that resentment in a thoroughly amusing column. The "Think About This!" section comes close, but it doesn't seem to supply the fulfilling anger that many of us enjoy. Any takers? Jay? Reiner? ...Andy?

Mike, *The Not-So-Well-Adjusted Reader*
via aol.com

We're at a loss to find the festering anger you see in "any magazine or game studio." C'mon, Nintendo? A "fountain of bitterness"? As for the Game Informer staff, we all have flashes of utter contempt for games, manufacturers, and, on occasion, an obnoxious reader. If you look through the past few issues, you'll see our scorn staring you right in the face. Most of the time our angst passes quickly and we wake up from our delusion to realize that we work in the most enjoyable industry in the world.

Y2K Paranoia

Many or all of our systems [came] before companies really cared about Y2K. Now, how many of our game systems ranging from Atari and Game Boy to Dreamcast will be affected by this virus? And these are not normal

computers where you can simply reprogram them.

Matt Ross
via snet.net

To our knowledge, no video game console will be affected by the Year 2000 bug.

Got Life?

Do you guys have social lives? I just can't see any of you with girlfriends (except maybe Reiner). Do you actually go out and play sports? Or do you have genetically deformed bacteria that keep you from moving any appendages besides your thumbs? Love the magazine even if you guys are biological freaks!

John Interno
via aol.com

We have social lives. Andy lets us out of the office for two hours a day to exercise, take in a film, or maybe even shower - but that's only in the winter. In the summer, our pasty white skin is burned almost instantly

by the sun so we can only be outside for 15 minutes or so. We are never allowed to talk to girls.

Seriously, four out of six editors surveyed claimed to have significant others, with one actually wearing a ring on his left hand. Everyone knows that women dig video game players. If basketball, golf, fishing, and Dungeons & Dragons are sports, then yes we do play sports. Heck, we can school any other video games magazine's staff in basketball. Bring 'em on. (No disrespect to a former Imagine publication which, at one time, could have kicked our butts.)

Who's the RPG Fan Now?

Now [that] Jon is gone, who is the RPG fan around the office?

Justin Florio
aol.com

Andy and Reiner were RPG fans long before Jon realized that there was a company called Square Soft. While it is a toss up who is more rabid, both are extremely passionate about their RPGs. However, the rogue known as the Gonzo Gamer has been known to throw the 12-sided die on a regular basis. Yes, new associate editor Jay Fitzloff is a regular player of Dungeons & Dragons and Warhammer. Now that's an RPG fan!



System Swapper

I would like to state a problem I have with video game systems, or better yet, a problem with me. I have had this problem since the PlayStation was released a couple of years back. When the PlayStation arrived on the scene, I purchased it for \$300 by trading in my Sega Genesis and Super Nintendo for added cash towards it. I was very satisfied with it, that is, until Nintendo 64 was released. That's when I traded a friend my PlayStation for his Nintendo 64. Nintendo 64 was alright until I decided I wanted PlayStation back a couple of months later. That's when I traded in my N64 for a new PlayStation. As new games arrived, I went back to N64, then I went back to PlayStation, then back to N64, back to PlayStation, right back to N64, and now I currently own my fifth PlayStation! A lot of my friends get a huge kick out of this and I personally think I have a serious problem! I mean come on, I even had a Sega Saturn thrown in there somewhere. That's a total of five PlayStations, four N64s, and one Saturn! The thing is, I just can't be satisfied

as new games arrive. A good solution to this problem would be to buy both, but that goes against everything I believe in video game-wise. I believe you stick up for the system you own; I don't like the idea of rooting for both. I may sound a little weird, but who ever said I had to be sane? I need your help though, give me some answers on what is wrong with me! I would also like to know if I hold the record for trading systems back and forth!

Joe Andress
via usa.net

You really don't have a problem. You are merely showing the symptoms of a video game junky. You realize that every system has some games that you just have to play. To end this vicious cycle, you must keep more than one system. All this trading and changing has clearly lost you more money than it would have cost to own several systems. Get rid of the notion that you have to be loyal to one system. True gamers, like yourself, need to own them all. We're not sure if you hold the record for trading systems, but you definitely rank in the top ten for indecisiveness.

PlayStation 2 Price

Is it true that the PlayStation 2 will cost around \$400? That's ridiculous! How can they expect people to pay that much for a new system when you can buy an 8-bit Nintendo for \$20 and get some of the best games ever made for under \$5?

James F. Kerr
aol.com

I think Sony should concentrate on delivering a cheaper system with inferior graphics, instead of a system that will blow away the few people that will be able to afford it.

well. That sounds like a fairly good deal. You can pick up a cheap NES these days, but do you remember how much it was originally? It was around \$250 to \$300. You're bonkos to think that Sony should make a cheaper system. We'd just have to shell out \$200 every two years instead of \$400 every four years. A system will always seem rather expensive when it is first introduced. It is the nature of consumer electronics. Over time the cost will drop as the device becomes a more mass-marketed product. Just look at DVDs, CD Players, and VCRs.

The PlayStation 2's price has not been set, but even if it was 400 clams, you'd be getting a system that plays all the existing PS-X titles and new games as

Envelope Art

May Winner

Maldolora

Is There Money Involved?

Do you ACTUALLY make money just for playing games?

Jon "Mashed Potato Boy" Rose
via erols.com

No, we MAKE money for writing, editing, and producing a magazine and website. It's called Game Informer. Have you read it?

Where's Earthbound 64?

I think I heard that Earthbound was coming to the 64. If I am right, is that still on, and when will it come out?

Paul "The Eager RPG Gamer" Johnson
via juno.com



Earthbound 64 (known as Mother 3 in Japan) was originally announced for the ill-fated N64 Dynamic Drive (64DD). Last year, we learned that the game was going to be converted to a cartridge. Our sources have said that Nintendo is considering the release of Earthbound 64 this fall.

Is Online Gaming the Future?

With the Dreamcast having Internet play in the works, how do you think this will affect the gaming community? I have goose-bumps just thinking about it.

Rick Archer
via kiis-fm.com

For Saturn, didn't exactly change the industry. Likewise, we are still waiting for the revolutionary changes that pundits predicted for the PC community when online gaming communities started sprouting up a few years back.

Other than the influx of java-based card and board games, the growth of online gaming has been slow. We predict that the next batch of console systems will do little to speed up the trend.

We don't want to knock the possibilities of network play on the Dreamcast as we haven't tried any of the modem functions in the Japanese unit. Online gaming and consoles don't have a great track record. The X-band system that powered the 16-bit systems, as well as the NetLink

N64 Informer?

I was wondering if you ever thought of making a separate magazine for just one system. Most kids want to see a lot of one subject. I always love to read about N64 new releases. But why does a N64 fanatic want to know that Silent Hill is coming out for PlayStation? It sure would be a lot more interesting to read all about PlayStation than Nintendo 64's new graphic enhancer. I know you guys know where I'm coming from. We all love video games, but hate to have to pay \$4 for a gaming magazine when we are only going to read a section. I think you will be more widely known and sell many more copies worldwide if you take my advice into consideration.

Daniel Saccomando
Oldenburg, IN

We have considered the possibilities of doing separate magazines, but we have found that many of our readers have more than one system. There are a ton of GI faithfuls that have both the N64 and PlayStation. Some readers have the N64 and Game Boy. The list goes on. We think readers with only one system would like to know the other options they have with video games. For that reason, an N64 owner might be curious to see what Silent Hill is all about. It may make them realize that they are missing something or possibly want to purchase another system. If you look at some of the one system magazines, I bet you'll find that Game Informer covers just as much info. Plus, we are under \$4.

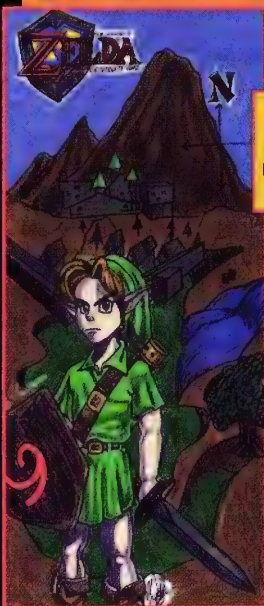


Guess where this finger was!!!



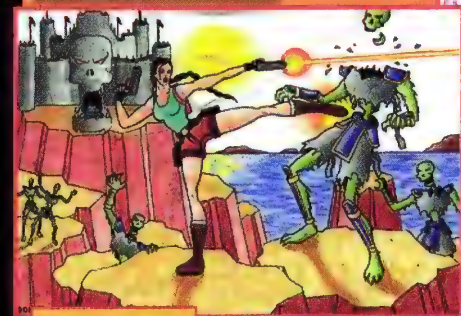
Alan Taylor
Ephrata, PA

Argh! Did someone just poke me in the butt?!



Willie McGarry Jr. Dallas, TX
You gotta be kidding me?! I have to run all the way back to the castle just to get a stupid mask?!

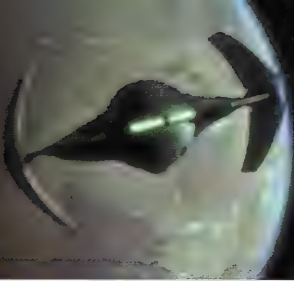
"AMO"
Annadale, VA
Reiner loves to play with his monkey...and cook acidic brew for Paul.



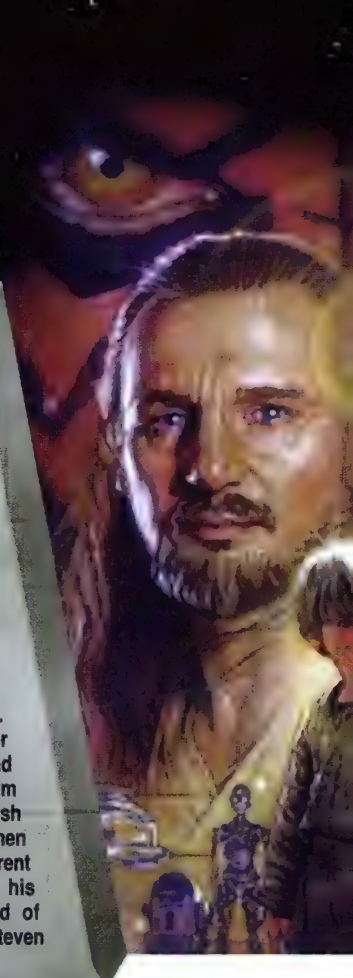
Josh Gilbert
Glendale, WI
A scene from Lara and the Argonauts.



Shelley Smith Louisville, KY
Now my banana friends, we take over the world. Ha ha ha!!!



STAR WARS EPISODE I THE PHANTOM MENACE



ANAKIN "ANNIE" SKYWALKER

"I had a dream I was a Jedi."

In Episode I, Anakin is the sweetest boy in the galaxy. He's so humble and loving that you'd never in a million years see how George is going to tie this lad to Anakin's dark future. When you first meet Anakin, he and his mother, Shmi Skywalker, are enslaved on the planet Tatooine. Through the Force, Anakin can sense how technology works, developing a natural ability to build and pilot machines. He especially enjoys manhandling the podracer, the fastest land vehicle this side of Mos Espa. Actor Jake Lloyd is the lucky child who fills the shoes of nine-year-old Anakin.



OBI-WAN KENOBI

"You will be a Jedi, I promise."

Ben is an all around good guy. He's also one of the most noble Jedi Knights ever to have lived. But were his intentions, and his devotion to the training of Anakin Skywalker, too noble? After his mistake with Anakin, we see a wiser Obi-Wan train Luke Skywalker. Ewan McGregor, of *Trainspotting* fame, fills the robes of Alec Guinness in Episode I.



QUI-GON JINN

"Feel, don't think, use your instincts."

Qui-Gon could very well be the individual responsible for the Empire's uprising, as he is the one who believed Anakin would be a pivotal piece in the growth of the Jedi. Armed with a green saber, Qui-Gon proves to be both methodical and aggressive. His Jedi skills are as strong as his will and his love of life. This determined Jedi is portrayed by Liam Neeson, and is believed to be 45 years of age in the film.



QUEEN AMIDALA

"This is my decoy, my loyal bodyguard."

Somewhere in the next two films, we believe that Queen Amidala will wed Anakin Skywalker and give birth to Luke and Leia. In her younger days (which are portrayed in Episode I), Amidala is the newly elected ruler of Naboo who will risk all to keep her people alive as the greedy Trade Federation begins an invasion. When away from the throne and in her civilian clothes, Amidala goes under the guise of Padmé Naberrie. The Professional's young star, Natalie Portman, wears the wondrous wardrobe of Amidala in Episode I.

Through chronicles of the Sith and a plethora of novels, the Star Wars universe has continued to expand, detailing the further adventures of Luke Skywalker and even the earliest days of the Force. But none of these expanded universe epics written by Timothy Zahn, Kevin J. Anderson, and nearly 50 other authors have filled in the blanks of George Lucas' creation. None of these adventures have even hinted at what happened in the years before *A New Hope*. This gap in the timeline has become known as the sacred era, a tale that George Lucas has kept close to his heart and shrouded in mystery.

When *A New Hope* debuted in theaters over 20 years ago, Lucas told reporters that he had written nine different screenplays, and this film was the fourth. He also said that he would finish all nine films. He made it as far as Episode VI, then vanished for numerous years to pursue different interests, like spending quality time with his children, producing *Howard the Duck*, and of course, engaging in a tag team venture with Steven Spielberg for another *Indiana Jones* release.

Then about four years ago, George Lucas came out of hiding and presented his plans for continuing the Star Wars saga, beginning with the first three chapters: the prequels. We thought little about these until Lucas remastered and basically refilmed the classic trilogy, creating a new theatrical release called the Special Editions. Whether these films were recreated to enrich the Star Wars universe, used as test subjects for the prequels, or (as we've guessed) a little of both, is unknown. All three of these films, which released one after the other, enjoyed enormous success and drew all the Star Wars fans out of the woodwork once again.

Now, the first installment to the long awaited prequel trilogy is just a month away. Two theatrical trailers have supplied fans with a sliver of what will become known as the movie event of the century. In each trailer, you can clearly see that Lucas has done it again. From the Kaadu walking out of the mist in a Naboo swamp,



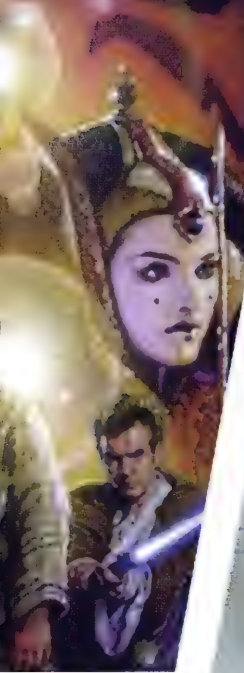
JAR JAR BINKS

"When is yousa tinkin' wesa in trouble?"

Along with See-Threepio, Jar Jar Binks (pronounced Ja Ja Binksss) is the comic relief in *The Phantom Menace*. Jar Jar is an outcast from his gungan race, which resides in the seas of planet Naboo. Upon reaching the surface and under the worst of circumstances, Jar Jar runs into his newly acquired lifelong companion, Qui-Gon Jinn. Jar Jar plays a huge role in Episode I. He may be clumsy, silly, and a major nuisance, but his multitude of mistakes may end up saving the day. Jar Jar is the first all-CG character in the Star Wars universe. He was named by George Lucas' son, Jett, and his voice is portrayed by Ahmed Best.



BEFORE THE STORM



to Darth Maul igniting both ends of his double-sided lightsaber, shivers are sent up and down our spines, and our anticipation for the film becomes more unbearable with each passing second. The time for judgment is upon us; will Lucas' new films be heralded as the next best thing, even better than the classic trilogy? Or will little things like the goofy Jar Jar Binks and the inclusion of too many classic characters, like Jabba and Bib Fortuna, make us think back to the terrifying ewok celebration and the added dance sequence in Return of the Jedi? We have faith in Lucas. If Jar Jar is annoying, then that's the way he was meant to be.

On May 19, we'll get to see Episode I, the first of three new magical releases. Episode II will debut in 2001, and Episode III in 2004. On the game scene, the movies of the century are also the license of the millennium. Instead of just one game based on the first film, LucasArts has pieced together three. Star Wars: Episode I Racer will launch on the PC and Nintendo 64 on May 17. Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace will launch on the PC and PlayStation on May 17. And last (and most certainly least), Star Wars: Episode I The Gungan Frontier will debut on PC in the summer.

In the next eight pages, in typical Game Informer fashion, we tear apart Racer and The Phantom Menace, breaking down each little tidbit of information, while never once spoiling any significant surprises – except of course Obi-Wan Kenobi's secret night life and Senator Palpatine's risqué dancing career. Both games look to be phenomenal releases, putting forth amazing graphics and heart-pounding excitement. As for Gungan Frontier? We thought it best to skip discussing that one, for LucasArts' sake. Gungan Frontier is a Lucas Learning release, filled with nothing but the tall, lanky, and overly animated gungan race. Ew! It needs a Jedi or some kind of hutt to keep us glued to the screen.

Now, sit back and enjoy Game Informer's deep look into the beginning of the Star Wars saga...



BATTLE DROIDS

"Halt! You're under arrest!"

We like to call these automated footsoldiers Jedi fodder. Both Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan slay a ton of these droids. The battle droids also pilot hover tanks and Stap vehicles. They'll march day and night, until their objective is met. The battle droids, coupled

with the power of Darth Sidious and Darth Maul, pose the greatest threat ever to hit Naboo. Most of these droids are CG, however, for close ups, a few puppets have been used.



SENATOR PALPATINE

"The senate is full of greedy, squabbling delegates."

In Episode I, Palpatine is a senator of the Republic and a politician on Naboo. His evil nature spreads phantom-like through this new film. We, the viewers, know what he's up to, but the characters in the film are blind to his corrupt actions. Palpatine is a tactical genius who reaches out to the dark side to aid him in his march toward galactic supremacy. Iam McDiarmid reprises his role, we believe, not only in Episode I, but in Episode II and III as well.



DARTH MAUL

"At last we will reveal ourselves to the Jedi. At last we will have revenge."

Maul's sole purpose, or so we believe, is to eradicate Qui-Gon Jinn and Obi-Wan Kenobi. He is an apprentice to Darth Sidious, and also holds rank as a Dark Lord of the Sith. He wields a flashy double-sided lightsaber, and wield it well he does. Maul is at one with the Force, and his skills are far greater than any we've seen before. Little known actor Ray Park plays the role that will come to be the most popular character in Episode I.



DARTH SIDIOUS

"Wipe them out. All of them."

Darth Sidious is the phantom menace. He is the mastermind behind the Trade Federation's blockade of Naboo and he is also master of Darth Maul. His Emperor-like guise may prove to be more than a mere coincidence, as his true intentions remain well hidden.

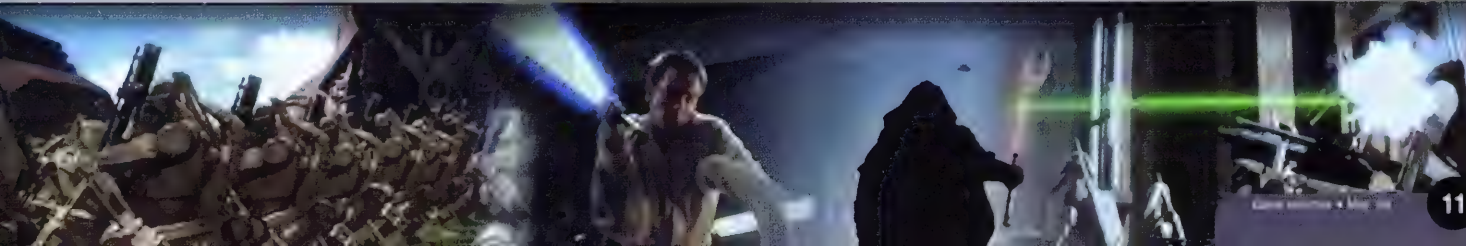


CAPTAIN PANAKA

"This is a battle I do not think that we can win."

You'll see this battle-hardened warrior slay a heap of battle droids. Captain Panaka is the Queen's Chief Security Officer. He will do anything to make sure the Queen is safe. He and his foot-soldiers will battle to the death against the onslaught of the Trade Federation. Captain Panaka is brought to life by actor Hugh Quarshie.

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STAR WARS

EPISODE I

RACER

Feel the Speed!

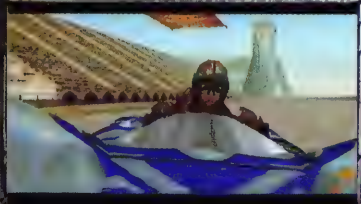
Star Wars: Episode I Racer is based on a scene that lasts approximately 13 to 14 minutes from *The Phantom Menace*. After viewing this segment, you will see why LucasArts dedicated an entire game to this small fraction of the film. The podrace is extremely intense – just as intense as the trench run in *A New Hope*.

The pilots of these Roman chariot-like vehicles are required to have lightning reflexes and nerves of plasti-steel. Many of these fearless pilots feature strange articulation, four arms, and heightened senses. None of these pilots are human,

THE DESIGN



The details in the movie are well addressed in the game.



As you can see from the comparison shots of Anakin in the cockpit, this game tries to embody as much of the movie as possible, but only in the first level. The rest of the levels are completely irrelevant to the movie. Instead of having a really short game on its hands, LucasArts expanded the Episode I universe and created different planets and tracks to race on. All 18 of the podracers from the movie are in the game, plus the three pods that LucasFilm cut. In the movie, you never really get a good look at more than three of the pods, since they all literally zoom by the screen in a fraction of a second. You'll now have the chance to get acquainted with lesser known characters like Mars Guo, Mawhonic, Teemtpo Pagalies, Boles Roor, Bozzie Baranta, and Ark "Bumpy" Rose.



Each track features an introductory cutscene. Here, Anakin's rival, Sebulba, readies for a bloody race on Tatooine.



Several views are available to the user, including the engine view as seen in the movie.



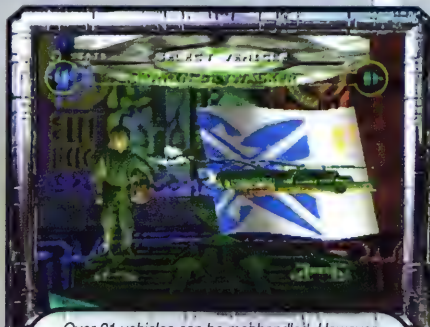
With the Expansion Pak, the graphics are extremely crisp, just like those in *Rogue Squadron*.

THE FRONT END & OPTIONS

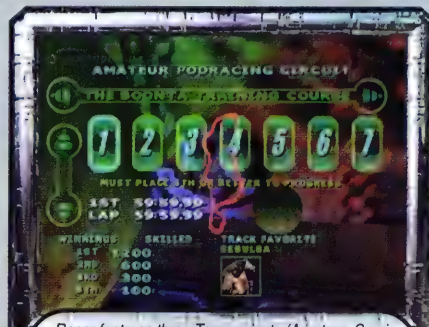
Now to the complicated stuff. The design of the vehicles and the theme of the game are definitely new innovations for the racing genre, but the design of the game is not. When you reach the Title Screen, you'll know what we're talking about. Options like Time Trial, Tournament mode, and Quick Race, which we never thought we'd see in *Star Wars*, are here. The Tournament is the bulkiest mode in the game. It consists of three difficulties, each comprised of seven different tracks. The competition picks up after each race, pushing the player to purchase upgrades like coolant systems, power boosts, traction grids, extra Pit Droids, and powerful engines from Watto. If you can't afford anything from Watto, then you can hit the junkyard for a used item. After upgrading, you can examine your vehicle. This mode comes equipped with complete camera freedom. Pan from any angle and check out your hot rod! Winning races will unlock extra characters and tracks. Just like nearly every other LucasArts' game, medals can be obtained by placing in first, second, or third.



As each Tournament progresses, the competition will increase, so upgrades must be purchased.



Over 21 vehicles can be mahhhanded. However, only a handful are available from the beginning. The others must be unlocked by winning races.



Racer features three Tournaments (Amateur, Semi-Pro, and Pro). Each of these Tournaments consists of seven different races.

THE VISUALS

Some of the tracks in *Racer* are amazing in composition, featuring asteroid belts in the background, crazy lighting effects produced by lava flows, and remarkable space station textures. LucasArts also did a commendable job making this game move fast. The textures actually look like there's a motion blur to them when you really get hauling, and when you leave the track, particles and other environmental effects spray toward the screen. The vehicles are also recreated with authentic details. From the moving flaps on the side of the pod to the magbeam holding the engine together, every little detail is there.



Nintendo 64 Cover Story

- **Size:** 128 Megabit (With Built-In Save)
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Racing
- **Special Features:** Incredible Speeds; 21+ Vehicles; 21+ Tracks on 8 Worlds; Pod Upgrades; 3 Tournament Modes; Taunts; Soundtrack by John Williams; Expansion Pak Compatible
- **Created by:** LucasArts
- **Available:** May 17 for Nintendo 64

95% Complete

RACING

The pods actually hover above the ground. They don't need to take off. The manner in which they hover is strange, not allowing the podracer to pull more than ten feet off the ground. They're stuck there on an invisible track. The pods, however, can turn on their sides and barrel roll through zero gravity tubes. The engines come equipped with turbo boosters. The pilot can summon these boosters at anytime, but if too much is given at once, the engine will overheat. When this happens, the engine will ignite in flames. If the pod is equipped with the tools needed, these flames can be put out during play. But if nothing is done, the pod will explode. There is no pitting, and the race won't end when this happens, you'll simply be reset on the track with new engines and a few seconds of delay. The pods can also smash into walls, lose an engine and spin out of control, and launch into bottomless pits.



SIGHTS & SOUNDS

There are over 20 tracks spread across eight different worlds. All of the tracks are accompanied by musical triggers, taken from John Williams' Episode I soundtrack, and sound effects directly from the movie. The engine hum, the grinding of gears, and the silence created by hitting jumps are all part of this package.

The tracks differ drastically from one another. From icy lakes to treacherous mining colonies, Racer offers up plenty of variety. Each of the

eight planets feature three tracks. In addition to the Boonta Eve race, Tatooine features two other courses. All of these tracks feature tons of shortcuts, obstacles like Sandcrawlers, Tusken Raider attacks, and closing doors. Some obstacles can be used to your advantage. If a pod is on your tail and you cross over a methane lake, then look out! The second the flames from your engine ignite the lake, the trailing player is in for a world of hurt!



OUTLOOK

If LucasArts can create competitive AI at breakneck speeds, then Racer will definitely be a hit. The graphics are there, the license cannot be topped, and the concept is one of a kind. It's going to be hard not to drop 60 big ones on this game. Hopefully, you already pre-ordered a copy.



AN INTERVIEW WITH JON KNOLES



If you thought the Speederbikes or Swoops hauled, then think again. Podracer is fast; faster than anything you could think of. LucasArts granted us the privilege to play this explosive title over at its San Rafael headquarters, and after participating in the Boonta Classic Podrace, which took our breath away and peeled our eyelids back, we decided to hunt down someone involved with the Podracer project. Lo and behold, we spotted Jon Knoles, Racer's senior artist and co-project leader. Jon was more than willing to let us know everything about this highly anticipated game. There was also a certain degree of mystery in his responses, almost like a disturbance in the Force. Jon insisted that his answers fall under the name "JONK". We granted him this, fearful that he may use the Force to choke us to death if we said otherwise. Alas, the interview...



around in the tight turns represented by the sketch at that scale was impossible at those speeds, so we shrunk the Podracers by almost half, thereby increasing the perceived scale of the track to 30 or 40 miles in length. Then it felt right, but at 400 miles per hour, the long straight areas took forever to cross, and a lap took 6 minutes! It would take all day to play a 3 lap race! So we kept tweaking the scale and speeds until we could drive one lap of the Boonta Classic Podrace course in 2 1/2 minutes at speeds high enough to peel your eyelids back.

GI: What about the other tracks, did LucasFilm stick a hand into the design of these, or did you guys have freedom to create what you wanted?

JONK: We came up with our own world ideas with the exception of Tatooine's Boonta Classic, then submitted them with some art to LucasFilm Licensing for approval. In the film, the Podrace only happens on Tatooine. Podraces, being an almost "outlaw" sport, would not take place on any of the other planets in the film. You'll understand when you see the movie. But we wanted to incorporate some of the vehicles, creatures, and other things from the new movie, so we designed worlds that would be similar in some respects to these. We wanted to avoid using worlds from established Star Wars lore, as this may have tied us down with timeline contradictions. Plus we want to move on, invent new locales with which to play in. That's some of the most fun about working in the Star Wars Universe—it's always expanding. We always have a surprising amount of creative freedom considering the license, but we are trusted by LucasFilm to do justice to Star Wars.

GI: How do you cut away from the movie and enter the expanded universe?

JONK: Great gameplay is always our primary objective when designing a game. Fitting the game into the grand scope of a big movie like SW Episode I is not always easy, and you want to let players feel like they're part of the environment they experienced when they saw the movie, but not tied too closely to the film's plot. Sitting back and watching a great story is fun for the movie-going audience, but gamers want to experience a game. We take certain liberties with plot and characters to make the game more fun, without sacrificing any of the credibility of the game as a movie tie-in. For example, in the film, the Podrace only happens on Tatooine. Furthermore, Anakin only races on Tatooine—he's never been off the planet before, to our knowledge. Since we knew most everyone would want to race in Anakin's Podracer (I sure did!), we thought it would be a real let-down if we were bound to this plot idea, so we invented other new planets to host Podraces. We felt this was perfectly within reason, since all Podrace pilots except Anakin are aliens. We also felt, in a racing game such as this, it would be okay to let Anakin travel from one Podrace to another on different worlds. This is where you step away from the reality of the story line a bit and let players accept this as unique to the game – not part of the factual, but more the overall feel of the Star Wars: Episode I experience. LucasFilm agreed with our idea.

Game Informer: What other games has the Racer team worked on?

JONK: Here are some LucasArts games several of us have worked on in the past: Shadows of the Empire N64, Rogue Squadron N64, Jedi Knight, TIE Fighter, X-Wing, Rebel Assault 1 & 2, and the SNES Star Wars Trilogy.

GI: Do you prefer working on Star Wars games rather than original material?

JONK: People often ask me if I ever get tired of working on Star Wars games after 8 years and over a dozen of them behind me now. I say, "No way!" If I had been working that long on Hockey games or something, I might have jumped in front of a train by now. I was a fan at 8 years old and I'm a fan now. Most of the people on the Episode I: Racer team are big Star Wars fans, too. We are very proud of all the original titles LucasArts produces as well, like our award-winning Grim Fandango, Herc's Adventures, the Monkey Island series, and so on. We also try to keep the ratio of license games like Star Wars or Indiana Jones and original LucasArts titles fairly even. As you can imagine with the upcoming films, the ratio is skewed slightly heavier on the side of Star Wars. This kind of opportunity doesn't come along often. This is an exciting time for all of us at LucasArts, and we're not simply taking advantage of a big marketing opportunity—we're striving to make the best games we know how, based in the ever-expanding, wonderful Star Wars Universe that George Lucas has given us.

GI: Who came up with the concept of creating a game based on this epic racing scene? Did you guys pick over the script and say "This is it baby." Or did LucasFilm say "Do this now...so says God?"

JONK: Eric Johnston (co-project leader and lead programmer) and I were clued in early on to the key action sequences of the film – in a very vague sense, of course. We knew of a space battle, some ground battles, some underwater sequences, and the Podrace. The Podrace really grabbed us. Just the thought of a chariot race at 400 to 600 miles per hour was quite a thrilling concept. Wow. George Lucas did not pull us aside and say "This part of my movie would make a great game!" He's a filmmaker. He was busy making his movie, but was gracious to give us access to the ideas and concepts going into it. LucasArts works closely with LucasFilm Licensing when making a Star Wars product, but the game ideas are not hatched in "high-concept" meetings with marketing people and what-not. The idea for the game and the decision to make it really rests with the game designers and, of course our President, Jack Sorensen.

GI: How far in advance did you see the Podrace? And were there any big changes between what you originally saw and what is in the final cut?

JONK: Quite a while ago, in spring of '97, we saw some rough footage of an animatic version of the Podrace scene from Episode I that LucasFilm shared with licensees. Even in its rough state, we were in awe. The speed, the thrills, the crashes—it was very exciting. As time went on and new shots were added or deleted, our team would have small screenings (on videotape) of the latest Podrace sequence. This was very helpful in keeping us abreast of what was happening in the film, which is very important when you treat the Star Wars license as carefully as we do. We wanted everything to look and sound just right. There were a few changes to the movie's Podrace sequence over the course of development, but George Lucas had a very clear vision of what this scene was all about, and the pace, blocking, and editing were worked out pretty early on. It's amazing how true the final sequence is to the essence of the original animatic.

GI: How long has this project been in the works?

JONK: Eric Johnston, Mark Blattell, and I came off of Shadows of the Empire N64 and PC CD-ROM versions and got right to work planning our next game. We were working on some low-altitude flight sim action game ideas, taking the more successful elements of that game and expanding on them when we were shown the concept sketches for the new movie. We immediately decided we would need some time to work out a new game engine for the Podrace sequence of Episode I. Eric and Mark began writing a new physics engine while I started working on placeholder art and track designs. This was back in mid to late '97. Around January of '98, two level designers from Jedi Knight joined our team (Duncan Brown and Jacob Stephens), as well as our user interface programmer Darren Johnson, followed by our awesome 3D artists, Jim Rice, Clint Young, Lisa Wong, Christina Napier, and Armando Lluch. The rest of the team joined on over the next few months. So the whole team has been in full-tilt boogie for about a year and 3 months.

GI: Was it difficult to recreate the track featured in the movie?

JONK: The Podrace course featured in the movie, The Boonta Classic, was a tough one to do because of its vast open areas in some places and very tight turns in others, so I started with that first. We wanted to see how big we could make these courses. We made a decision early on to try to match the scale speeds of the Podracers in the movie—400 miles per hour. This is a tall order when you consider a Daytona-sized track (2 1/2 miles or so) would be covered in 15 seconds! That's no fun. So we started by making a Tatooine course roughly 20 miles in length, based on a sketch from Lucasfilm. We found out, however, that driving

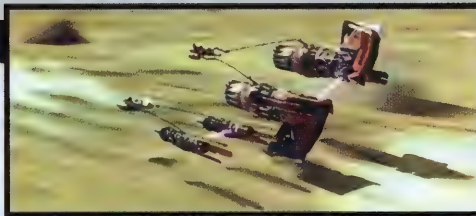


GI: The pods are rather odd in design. How difficult was it to create the physics for these high-speed vehicles?

JONK: Eric and Mark spent months perfecting the physics engine for SW Episode I Racer. We really worked it over and over until we got it right, too. For the reasons like varying terrain types and extremely high speeds, this was a very difficult task for our programmers. It's much easier to design a tight, clean, realistic physics engine when you know that the track will always be x-units long and have walls at x-angle. But we didn't want to design NASCAR or Wipeout-type tracks for this game. It didn't sit right with what we see in the film. Plus, hovering vehicles that skim across the ground at 600 mph and bounce over rolling hills while steering you with no realistic aeronautic control isn't an everyday physics problem, no matter what planet you're from. Actually, some of the inspiration of the swinging motion of the Podracer cockpits came from the way Eric daringly (I say recklessly!) exercises his Labrador retrievers. He hangs onto two ropes tied to the dogs' harnesses as they pull him around the neighborhood while he's riding behind them on a skateboard.

GI: With these strange physics, how hard was it to create the gameplay?

JONK: The idea that you are in a pod pulled by two massive jet engines like a Roman chariot (talk about



Chariots of Fire!) is a pretty unusual one – making the player experience this was a good challenge for our programmers. We also worked hard to design the controls around an analog joystick. You're not just turning left and right, but "reigning-in" the engines, almost like horses. You pull back to slow down a bit and take sharper turns, push forward to really gun it, but lose some cornering ability. The Podracers themselves hover, but not in a loose, "swishy" way. They use stiff repulsorlift antigravity generators (for Star Wars purists) to hover a few feet above the ground. This is totally different than most racing games, especially when you consider that we allow the player to cross vast open and uneven terrain, like an off-road rally racer, rather than being forced down a chute or trench. But this is all transparent; learning the controls is very easy and intuitive in this game.

GI: With other games, when a car breaks two hundred miles per hour, there really isn't a significant difference between that and one hundred miles per hour? How exactly did you make Racer run so freakin' fast?

JONK: The immense scale of our worlds means the Podracers cover huge distances in any given frame, but much of the sensation of skin-peeling speed is also a result of detailed ground textures, many objects to the sides of the track like rocks, trees, machines, etc., and a camera that falls back and wide as the Podracers reach maximum speed. We pulled every trick we knew of to make this game feel really fast. In many racing games, the speed indication number is pretty arbitrary. It says 200 miles per hour, but is it? In Episode I Racer, you really are traveling at scale speeds. We cheated things a bit compared to the movie by allowing the Podracers to go much faster than 500-580 miles per hour when they upgrade their vehicles and use their boosters. When you get the best parts, you're going so fast you might as well go out and get your headstone engraved – you won't survive a mishap.

GI: Did Jake Lloyd get involved with this project in any way?

JONK: Jake Lloyd, who plays Anakin Skywalker in The Phantom Menace, did a terrific job of reading lines written especially for our game. He trades insults with the other Podracers with exclamations like, "Eat my dust, slimeball!" and holds his own with the tough-bargaining Watto. From the sound of it, he had fun doing it, too. I'm told he likes video games and I can't wait for him to play this one. We also had Andy Secombe, who is the voice of Watto, and Lewis Macleod, who is the voice of Sebulba, read lines for our game as well. They are all wonderfully talented actors who lent a great deal of authenticity to Episode I: Racer.

GI: Do you get to run over any gungans or ewoks?

JONK: Nope. We did try filling the tracks with some scurrying creatures, but at the speeds you're traveling, you'd never see anything so small. For example, for a person standing along the track to be visible at 400+ miles per hour, he'd have to be like 20 or 40 feet tall!

GI: Lastly, do you think Anakin's evil tendencies were conceived through the vigorous competition of the Podrace? And if so, do you think everyone who plays this game will join the dark side as well?

JONK: Anakin, although destined to become the evil Dark Lord of the Sith we all grew to love/hate, is a good boy in this movie. But he doesn't take any bull from the likes of Sebulba or Watto either, so you get the sense that he is a strong-willed independent person, much like his descendants eventually will end up becoming. Gamers who play our game will get the chance to play the movie's Podrace villain, Sebulba, once they defeat him at the Boonta Classic. Everyone who sees this dastardly Podracer in the movie will get a real kick out of him. He's a dirty rat and a real meanie, but man, his Podracer is awesome! And he's got a nasty surprise built into his Podracer that Episode I game players will enjoy using on other Podracers. Let's just say Sebulba really cooks!

ANAKIN'S PODRACER

POD

This is where the pilot sits, tightly fastened in. There isn't much room for maneuverability in the drivers seat, so a smaller pilot is needed.

FLAPS

By pulling on the pod's levers, the flaps will change, propelling the pod in the desired direction. These can be used for braking as well.

ENGINES

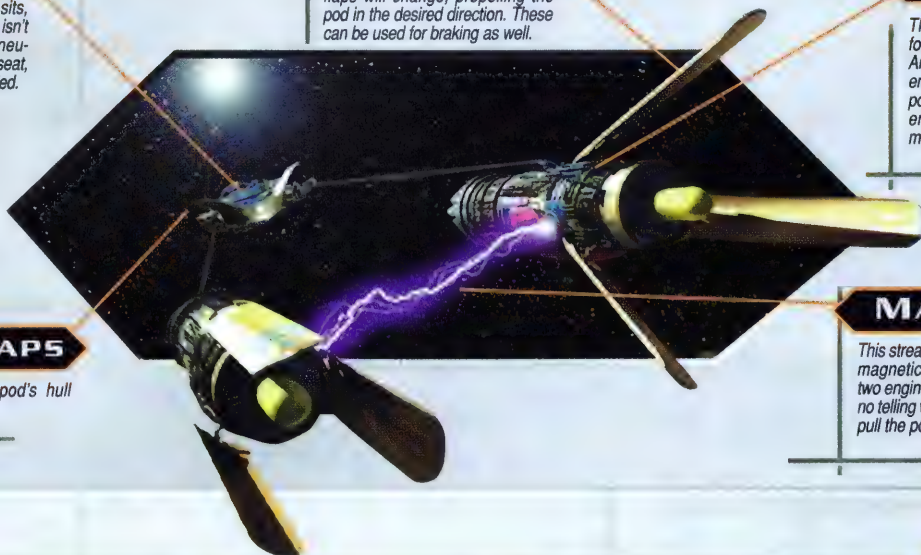
The engines pull the pod forward like a Roman chariot. Anakin's pod features two T-14 engines that can propel his little pod to lightning speeds. These engines can overheat if too much pressure is applied.

REAR FLAPS

Two flaps pull off the pod's hull delivering tighter control.

MAGBEAM

This stream of energy creates a magnetic tether between the two engines. If it breaks, there's no telling where the engines will pull the pod.



STAR WARS

EPISODE I

THE PHANTOM MENACE

The Adventure of a Lifetime

This title is constructed just like the Super Star Wars trilogy for the Super Nintendo. The entire movie is documented into this game in some form or another. Many of the scenes have been altered to deliver more action and combat sequences, but some, like the great Lightsaber duels with Darth Maul, are identical. It's up to you to make them look just as good as the movie, or expand upon them and add a little zest of your own.

The Phantom Menace is a gigantic story that takes place 32 years before A New Hope and spans to the far reaches of

THE CHARACTERS



Obi-Wan Kenobi

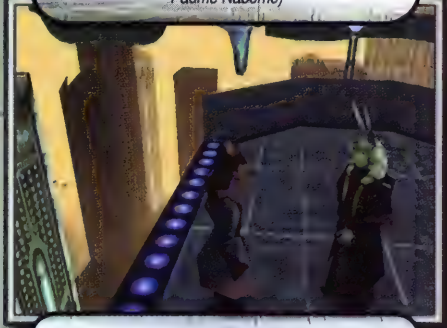
The player will assume the roles of four different characters through the course of the game. However, the characters cannot be selected. Each level features a pre-set character that must be played. Sometimes, a computer ally will be added to help you out. Qui-Gon and Obi-Wan are the GI favorites. Their Lightsaber work and Force technique are awesome. They can propel enemies away by unleashing a Force Push blast. They can try to persuade local villagers to do as they ask, and they simply kick major butt with their impressive combat techniques. If the Lightsaber isn't doing the trick, then hand-to-hand combat is a must. The Jedi can also obtain blasters and different weapons throughout the game. Though Queen Amidala and Captain Panaka, the queen's go-to guard, cannot wield a Jedi tool, they also have a variety of weapons to commandeer. The Queen showcases many of her ceremonial outfits, and her alternate disguise as Padmé Naberrie is also included. Panaka is a ferocious warrior who will protect the Queen at all costs with his pinpoint accuracy and undying commitment to rid the galaxy of the Trade Federation.



Queen Amidala (shown disguised as Padmé Naberrie)



Qui-Gon Jinn



Captain Panaka

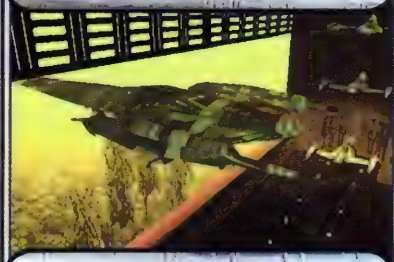
VISUALS & SOUNDS



Lucas' magnificent story is told through real-time...



Many of the environments are breathtaking and are accompanied by dramatic camera angles.



...and pre-rendered cutscenes.



The game begins in this room aboard the Trade Federation Flagship.

LucasArts has really outdone themselves with this release. The concept is right on the money, delivering exactly what we crave — nonstop Star Wars action. The graphics are also phenomenal, presenting gorgeous scenery and effects straight out of the movie. When you enter buildings and different dwellings, the ceiling fades away to reveal what lies inside, instead of loading a whole separate image. The entire game keeps loading at a minimum.

The little details are also in place. The Lightsabers flare up and sound just like they do in the movie, humming at every quiver, and the blaster fire is lightning quick and accompanied by authentic sound. There's plenty of indigenous life in each level as well. Little creatures scurry across the streets of Naboo, and Gamorrean Guards protect wealthy visitors in Mos Espa. Like the main characters, the wide variety of creatures that can be approached and talked to feature authentic voices and sounds. Jabba's Huttese language is present, and the horrible dialect of the gungans also comes into play.

The story unwinds in several different ways. Much of the plot is divulged through character interaction during gameplay, but real-time and CG cutscenes also deliver filler material and the most explosive confrontations. There are eight different CG scenes that accompany the 11 levels. These scenes show ships flying to planets, battle droids on the march, and some crazy Jedi antics. The real-time cuts that are dispersed through each level show some big moments, but mostly these scenes deliver level-related incidents and conversations between the main characters.

space, visiting familiar locales and adventurous new worlds. The game focuses mainly on the Jedi, Qui-Gon Jinn and Obi-Wan Kenobi, not young Anakin Skywalker, the focal point of the film. LucasArts wanted this epic tale to be as exciting as possible, and a little boy won't deliver the caliber of thrills that two highly toned Jedi can.

This release is one of the most exciting of the year, and the most anticipated game ever

for diehard Star Wars fanatics. John Williams' complete soundtrack has been integrated into this title, as well as hours upon hours of dialog. You'll twitch when Obi-Wan says, "Do not defy the Council Master, not again!" and you'll squirm all over again when Jar Jar Binks blurts out, "Woah, yousa guys bombad!" A majority of the dialog from the film is in this game, there are also tons of new lines and scenes exclusively created for the game.

PlayStation Cover Story

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action
- **Special Features:** 4 Playable Characters (Obi-Wan, Qui-Gon, Queen Amidala, & Captain Panaka); 11 Levels With Side Quests; CG Clips; Character Interaction; Force & Lightsaber Techniques; Soundtrack by John Williams
- **Created by:** Big Ape Productions/LucasArts
- **Available:** May 17 for PlayStation

90% Complete

GAMEPLAY & COMBAT



Not every fight is necessarily fair. One tank could never take out a well-trained Jedi.



Through the course of the adventure, new weapons and allies will come into play.

The Phantom Menace delivers 12 incredibly long levels that stretch from the rooftops of Coruscant to the swamps of Naboo. The goals on these levels vary and offer plenty of variety. The first mission pushes you to reach the hangar bay and escape the confines of the Trade Federation flagship. In this stage, combat is the primary focus. Battle droids swarm from every direction and destroyer droids roll into the scene, all immediately opening fire on your head. Later in the game, you'll find yourself confronting the leader of the Gungan's, Boss Nass, asking for his help against the Trade Federation. You'll even need to bargain with Jabba and Watto to help out little Anakin.

As displayed in many of the screenshots, the Lightsaber handiwork is very impressive. Lasers can be blocked and deflected back at the enemy with ease, and the blade can cut into destroyer droids and battle droids like butter. Some levels will even push the Jedi to hop across narrow platforms, scale large ropes, push enormous blocks, pilot a Stap, and escort Queen Amidala to safety. When the Jedi explore new towns and areas, they'll more than likely want to keep their weapons at bay. If the saber or blaster is drawn, the village folk will react accordingly, fleeing and even opening fire. Each level features side quests and secrets scattered about. It'll take the bravest of souls to find everything on a stage.

Besides the constant action and dialogue, the player will also be forced to manage an inventory consisting of first-aid tools and plenty of weapons and items. The PlayStation controls are nice, with one button set aside for jumping, one for the Lightsaber, and one for running.

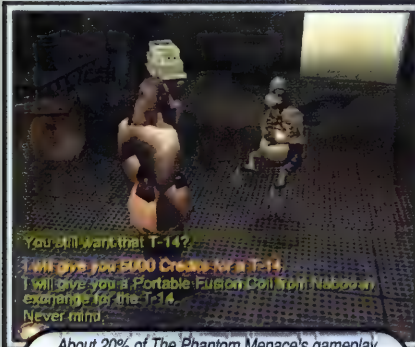


The blaster capitalizes on distance, but lacks any kind of defensive capabilities.



The battle droids are everywhere in this game. They attack without fear and in great quantities.

CHARACTER INTERACTION



You still want that T-14?
I will give you 5000 Credits for a T-14.
I will give you a Portable Fusion Coil from Naboo in exchange for the T-14.
Never mind.

About 20% of The Phantom Menace's gameplay involves character interaction. Here, Qui-Gon bargains with Watto for a T-14 engine.

Most of the gameplay is about nonstop action, particularly chopping battle droids in half. However, you'll also have to use your brain by gathering information from villagers, and solving tricky puzzles. The character interaction is implemented nicely, allowing for long conversations and several different responses to each question or comment. In many of the conversations, the Jedi can attempt persuasion; but be warned, some of the creatures in this game catch on to the Force and become hostile when this happens. They cry for help, run and hide, or even call upon ground mounted turrets to rail you to death. You have to be extremely careful whom you talk to. One slip of the tongue could mean your doom.

OUTLOOK

It's safe to assume that this game will sell regardless of how it turns out. From what we've seen, the play is quite enjoyable; but at press time, the animation for the main characters was a little on the weak side. Really though, who cares if Obi-Wan walks flat footed? All that matters is that you get to duel Darth Maul with a saber, run side by side with the Queen, and romanticize the Star Wars legacy with John Williams' outstanding new soundtrack. This is a must for the Star Wars crowd.



A WORD WITH DEAN SHARPE



Game Informer yanked Dean Sharpe of the Phantom Menace team aside for a quick interview. While not the most talkative lad (maybe LucasFilm had his tongue), Dean provided a few morsels of information that prove to be interesting.

Game Informer: What other games has Big Ape Productions developed? And if you don't mind us asking, where in the world did the company's name come from?

Dean: Previously, Big Ape developed *Zombies Ate My Neighbors*, *Metal Warriors*, and *Herc's Adventures*. As for the name, I'm not quite sure. We tossed around a few ideas. "Big Nose and Glasses" was our favorite for a while, then we had "Flying Cow", but decided the whole cow thing was too trendy. Most importantly, we didn't want to have some geeky computer name. I remember Mike (Ebert) just walked into the office and blurted out, "BIG APE". I don't think there was any inspiration or anything. He was just so sold on it, I said sure, what the heck.

GI: How long has this game been in development?

Dean: It's been in development for 20 months.

GI: Since *The Phantom Menace* game was developed side-by-side with the film, how difficult was it to piece this game together? Was LucasFilm gracious in helping you guys out?

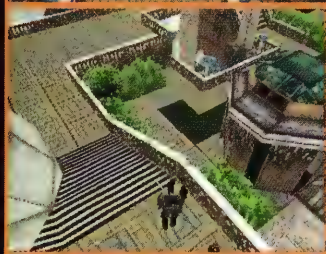
Dean: The development of the game followed the production of the film very closely. In the beginning, we had an opportunity to read the script, so we were quite familiar with the story line. In addition, we were able to view a great deal of production art and a wealth of stills from the film, and see rough cuts, so we had a very good idea about the look we needed to achieve. That being said, we did encounter a few challenges since some things like costumes, CG characters, and sets and locations were not finalized in the film, so we had to go by concept art. LucasFilm was extremely forthcoming though, providing us with as much information as we needed throughout development of the game.

GI: How much freedom did you have in designing sequences and events not shown within the movie? Did LucasFilm supply material? Or did you have complete creative freedom?

Dean: We did have an opportunity to create some side-stories and to create a few original characters with the caveat that they could not affect the overall story. None of this was supplied by LucasFilm but we were well aware that anything we created had to be consistent with the Star Wars canon.

GI: Did you develop anything that had to be cut?

Dean: Yes. There was an instance where we included creatures from the



classic Star Wars Trilogy to enhance various environments throughout the game. However, we took them out because they obviously weren't appropriate to *Star Wars: Episode I*.

GI: Working with a structured plot must have been a serious hassle. What solutions did Big Ape come up with for the movie scenes that lacked any kind of action?

Dean: We employed a couple different genres within the game, either action or adventure, depending upon what was happening in the film. For instance, on Mos Espa the player will encounter a lot of characters and will have to talk to them and solve a variety of puzzles to complete the level. On the other hand, the first level is more action-oriented, requiring a lot of lightsaber combat.

GI: What about the podrace? When the player gets to the racing part of the game, what will they run into? And please don't say it's an order form for *Episode I Racer*?

Dean: Ha, ha! That's not a bad idea. If we only had more time! In all seriousness, the podrace level requires light puzzle solving, but the player never actually races a podracer.

GI: Since the PC was the original development format for this title, did anything need to be changed in the PlayStation version? Are there any significant differences between the two?

Dean: The two platforms are virtually identical.

GI: We noticed that there's a ton of Lightsaber work in this game. Are Captain Panaka and Queen Amidala at a disadvantage since they do not wield the

power of the Force?

Dean: No. Captain Panaka and Queen Amidala have their own unique attack styles.

GI: In the Super Star Wars trilogy, Luke had the ability to perform several Force techniques not featured in the movies. Will Obi-Wan or Qui-Gon have any exclusive abilities in the game?

Dean: Yes, they both can use the Force push and the Jedi mind trick. In addition, because they're both Jedi Knights, they have the ability to jump higher and farther than other characters in the game.

GI: Talking to villagers and answering questions seems to play a significant role in the outcome of certain stages. Can multiple paths or secrets be unlocked through answering questions differently?

Dean: There are several side-missions players may engage in that are not necessary to complete the game. However, some of the characters you encounter may show up later in the game to assist you.

GI: Are there any vehicles in the game? Do you get to pilot one of those groovy hover tanks? Or ride on Jar Jar Bink's back?

Dean: There are several vehicles that players will have to battle against.

GI: Did any of *Episode I*'s actors record extra dialogue specifically for the game?

Dean: No.

GI: Okay... How much original footage from the film has been implemented into the game?

Dean: None. The film was certainly used for inspiration, but all the cutscenes were rendered by the team.

GI: Approximately how long is this adventure? Will you need to collect Medals or anything to unlock something special?

Dean: Depending upon ability of course, we estimate it will take players somewhere between 30 to 40 hours to complete. As I mentioned earlier, there are several side-missions and hidden areas the player can explore that will enhance the overall experience.



THE LICENSE OF THE MILLENNIUM

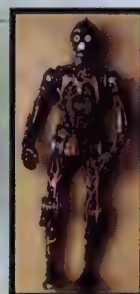
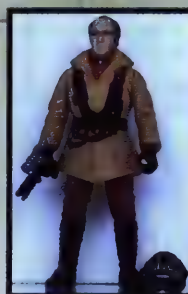
TOYING AROUND WITH EPISODE I

Through extensive field testing, Game Informer learned that a majority of its readers collect Star Wars toys and merchandise. So it only seemed natural that we cover these goods as well. Starting on May 3, a truckload of new Episode I items will be released by Hasbro, Applause, Galoob, Pepsi, and even Lego. If you were able to look into the Game Informer office, you'd be amazed by the amount of Star Wars merchandise lying about. Large Stormtrooper cutouts, a stuffed ewok on a dart board, the tennis shoes Mark Hamill wore on the second day of the fourth week of shooting for Return of the Jedi, and nearly 100 Hasbro figures are scattered about the office, some in battle formations, others interacting with one another in obscure ways. The Game Informer staff claims to be the biggest group of Star Wars fanatics in the industry; they'd bet their lives on this statement. It may just be GI's enthusiasm for the upcoming toy lines, but we find the info below to be just as exciting as the upcoming video games. After all, there's no better way to decorate a game room than with Star Wars.

If you're a collector of Hasbro's toys, then you better take out a loan. It appears that Hasbro has sculpted a figure of every character and little critter from the film. Even a number of the vehicles, including several pods, are on the way. The first figures (series 1) will debut on May 3. These figures are Anakin Skywalker, Darth Maul, Jar Jar Binks, Obi-Wan Kenobi, Padmé Naberrie, Queen Amidala, Qui-Gon Jinn, and a Battle Droid. All of these figures are sculpted superbly, mimicking their movie counterpart to a tee. All of these figures also come packaged with a CommTech Chip. This little chip is worthless by itself, but when you buy the CommTech Reader and fasten the chip onto it, the figure will speak, mouthing off several lines from the movie. Some of the chips even work together, allowing for two characters to hold a conversation. This interesting device will work for every figure, but of course, because of the new ability to speak, the price on each figure has skyrocketed to nearly seven dollars.

After series 1, Hasbro has nearly 50 more figures planned for the remainder of the year. We'll see deluxe Jedi figures who spin at the waist, a Jabba that oozes slime, accessory kits from the Sith and Naboo, plus a ton of vehicles and large creatures. That's right, characters like Watto, the junk dealer, Ki-Adi-Mundi, a Jedi council member, Ric Olié, a Naboo fighter pilot, and Boss Nass, leader of the gungans, are all on the way to a toy store near you. We're most excited about the upcoming Royal Starship. This spacecraft is gigantic. From what we hear, you'll need to be rich to pick up this toy, since it will cost over 100 big ones. Ouch!

We could ramble for years about Hasbro's great toy lines, but we can't neglect the other properties on the way. Lego gives Star Wars fans the chance to build their own vehicles and scenes from the movie. Piece together Anakin's Pod or recreate the Sith Infiltrator with your bare hands. Applause and Galoob probably have the most Star Wars merchandise on the way. For Applause, if you saw it in the movie, then you'll either see it on a keychain or on a mug in some fashion. Likewise for Galoob. If it's in the film, you'll find a toy of it shrunk down to microscopic proportions. Lastly, Pepsi is presenting cans tattooed with characters from the movie. Slam down a Queen Amidala or smash a Darth Maul on your forehead. In May, be prepared to be blown away by Episode I. It's going to be everywhere. If you seek more info, check out Sir Steve's Star Wars site (at www.sirstevesguide.com) for all of the latest and greatest Star Wars merchandising news.



PS2 NEWS



Ken Kutaragi
"Father of the PlayStation"



Teruhisa Tokunaka
SCEI CEO

Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.
Headquarters

Sony Computer Entertainment Unveils The Technology Behind PlayStation 2

On March 2, 1999, Sony Computer Entertainment showed its vision. Not just a glimpse of the future of video game entertainment for Sony, but of its ability to see and understand it. The announcement of PlayStation 2 shows Sony Computer Entertainment understands the video game business. As Game Informer has said in the past, history shows that each new generation of consoles must not only match the current PC power, but significantly surpass it. Sony understood the past and saw the future, for it has made a bold statement with its technology demo of PlayStation 2 – a backwards compatible, CD and DVD-ROM reading powerhouse.

At the heart of the PSX2 is the world's first full 128-bit CPU, christened the Emotion Engine, that was co-developed by SCEI and Toshiba. Blessed with a cornucopia of components on a single wafer, the Emotion Engine is more powerful than any chip available on the market today, with benchmarks that outperform even the most powerful SGI workstations. The biggest reason for the Emotion Engine's high performance (besides its 300 MHz clock speed) is its ability to do ten floating point calculations at once, generating a massive 6.2 GFLOPS (that's 6,652,600,000 Floating point Operations Per Second for those of you scoring at home).

The Emotion Engine's partner in crime is called the Graphics Synthesizer, and was developed by Sony Computer Entertainment. The GS is basically a rendering processor that works in parallel with the Emotion Engine. One particular innovation of note is its use of 4 megabytes of Rambus Direct RAM built right onto the chip. This enables developers to move massive amounts of data, and as one developer put it, "without it, moving data is similar to emptying a pool of water with a bucket – with it, it's like connecting a huge drainpipe." Add to that the GS's 48-Gigabyte memory access bandwidth, and the PSX2 pumps out colossal pixel fill rates that double even SGI's Infinite Reality 2 workstation.

At peak performance, the Graphics Synthesizer is capable of drawing 75 million small polygons per second or 150 million particles per second. Obviously, it can't do both at once, but with its large drawing power it should be able to create images close to movie-quality.

An example of the kind of power we are talking about here is that the PSX2 should be able to create 20 million textured polygons a second with full Z-buffering, lighting, and alpha blending (transparency). Compared to a Model 3 board's one million or the Dreamcast's three million equally effected polygons per second, the number seems mighty impressive.

Supporting the PSX2's power is a Sound Processing Unit that delivers 48 channels of sound (plus software programmable voices) at a sampling frequency of 44.1 of 48 KHz. Redbook audio can also be read by the PSX2's 8x speed DVD/CD-ROM drive. The incorporation of the DVD drive and the PSX2's MPEG2 technology would also make it possible for PSX2 to run DVD movies. Unfortunately, at this point Sony is not quite sure if it will incorporate such a feature. However, a game will be able to run high quality video if the designers choose to do so. Which, through PSX2's digital outputs, should look quite nice.

The last new feature of PSX2, but certainly not least, is its backwards compatibility with all PlayStation 1 games. The PSX2 is the first home console unit to incorporate such a feature in the modern gaming era. The chip for this function will be created once again with LSI Logic, and will also serve as the input/output processor (I/O) of the PSX2. In other words, a PlayStation 1 CPU will do all the menial functions like talking to the controller, universal serial bus, and PCMCIA slot (modem/communication). Besides the fact that it's quite funny that a PlayStation 1 has taken on these responsibilities, it is also interesting to note that with all these high speed ports, the PlayStation 2 is capable of talking to almost any digital device (like digital cameras, PCs, Internet, etc.).

With PlayStation 2, the possibilities are indeed endless.

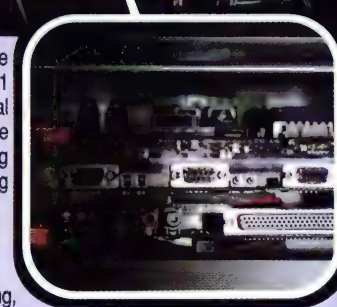
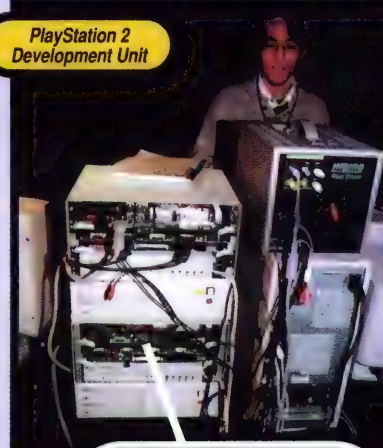
WHAT IT ALL MEANS

Technical jargon aside, Sony Computer Entertainment is trying to do something, but what that something is we're not quite sure. The numbers that PSX2 can put up are startling, and the applications of such a unit are multi-fold. Ken Kutaragi, the creator and father of the PlayStation 1 & 2, stated that the real-time media trend is heading towards delivering a new kind of entertainment. Games, but games on a scale that encompasses music, movies, and what we perceive as the standard computer entertainment.

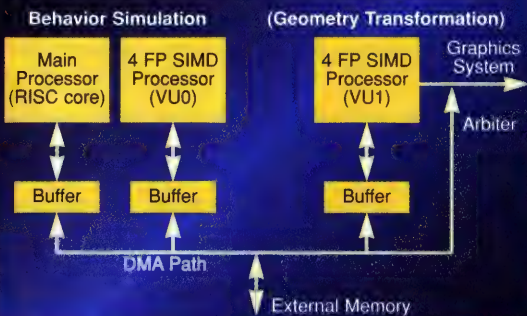
Games, in the present sense of the word, are driving a race, jumping lava pits, or leading an adventure. The choices are finite. This character says this or does that. He/she follows this path and then fires a weapon. All standard computer logic that we see in today's games. Of course, all of this is possible with the PSX2. But the possibilities don't end here.

PlayStation 2 could be a glimpse at Hollywood of the 21st century. Developers with this kind of power in their hands could theoretically create real-world environments, with living breathing characters all affected by real-world physical attributes such as gravity, friction, and mass. Plus, PSX2 can accurately simulate different materials such as water, wood, metal, and gas. Real worlds that look like real worlds. Full motion video that's not full motion video, but real-time gameplay with speaking characters, fluid motions, and facial expressions.

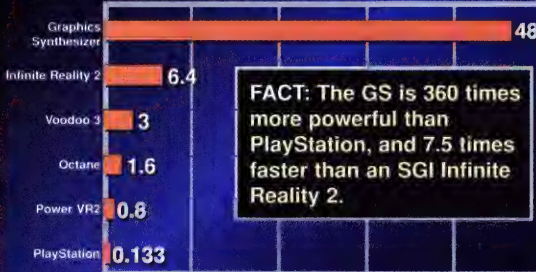
PlayStation 2 Development Unit



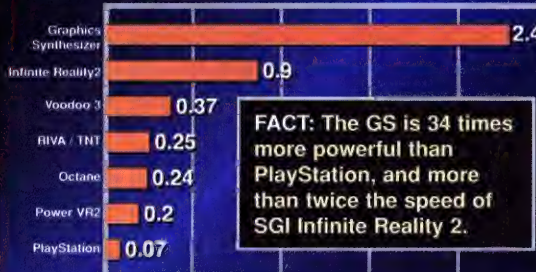
DESIGN CONCEPT



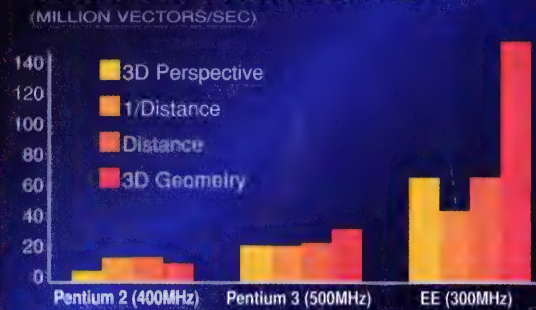
BANDWIDTH (GFLOPS/SEC)



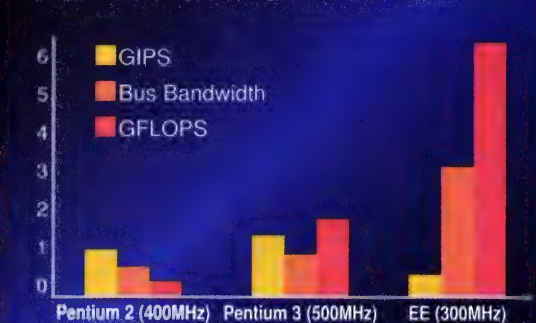
PIXEL FILL RATE (G PIX/SEC)



FLOATING POINT VECTOR CALCULATIONS (MILLION VECTORS/SEC)



PEAK PERFORMANCE



A prime example of what the future may hold may very well be the Final Fantasy movie that is currently in the works at Square. Square obviously has development units for PlayStation 2, and if you believe for a second that the models and motion-capture for the movie are going to stop there, you will be sadly mistaken. After the movie is launched, Square will more than likely release games based on the characters in the movie, and will let you play out other parts of their lives or adventures.

Imagine if weeks after the Empire Strikes Back hit the movie theaters, a game was released would let you take on the role of Boba Fett as he hunted down Han Solo. The adventure would be a sub-plot where you encountered fellow bounty hunters, caught different glimpses of Han as he managed to escape your grasp, and then ultimately claimed him as your prize before Jabba the Hutt.

The problem with the theory is where will you find a developer who could create such a quest. Square has proven that if you throw 100 people at a game, you can do almost anything. But what other developers out there can make that kind of commitment? As a matter of fact, games such as these are probably not on the horizon with PSX2. At least not for while. In all probability, most companies will probably publish many of the first games for the PSX2 on the CD-ROM format.

If developers publish games for the PSX2 at all, manufacturers will be faced with the choice of going cutting edge on the PSX2 and facing the prospect of selling less, or creating games on a lower scale to play on the PlayStation 1 that will have an installed base well over 20 million units in the US alone.

While we may be faced with a slower transition with the advent of the PlayStation 2, it will also mean that it will be smoother. In the past, when a newer system came out, almost all development for the older system screeched to halt. This will probably not be the case with PSX2, but you can rest assured that developers will be making games for this monster, if for no other reason than to say they did.

WHAT ABOUT THE COMPETITION?

Obviously, Sony just can't release some cool specs and expect the competition to run away and hide. Sega is still alive, and Nintendo has even gone as far as to state that its new machine, currently under development at Art-X, will be more powerful than Sony's.

But it is hard to ignore the situation that Sony has created for itself. Backwards compatibility is an awfully nice feature to have on your box, as is the library of over 650 titles that goes along with it. However, there are some stumbling blocks in the road ahead.

First of all, Sega is going to have a head start in the video game rat race. Which Saturn proved doesn't mean much, but it does carry some weight if Sega can create that one piece of "super software" (like a Mario, Zelda, or Crash) during this window of opportunity. That could make the race very interesting. At that point, Nintendo could quickly find itself on the defensive (though we highly doubt it), or Sony could find itself on the outside looking in.

Now this may seem like an odd scenario for such a powerful machine, but it's possible nonetheless. If PSX2 has trouble meeting a market-friendly price point (DVD isn't cheap, nor is the chip process that Sony's using for its CPUs), it may find itself sitting in 3DO-ville. Do we think this is likely? No. Sony just spent \$200 million on R&D for its new console, and an additional \$1.1 billion on plants to create them, so if it wanted to, it could give away the PSX2.

Perhaps the real challenge for PSX2 will be if developers can harness the power of this monster. Already there is talk that programming for it will be man's work, leaving the boys on the side of the road. This would be the ideal situation for Sega, as the Dreamcast is very programmer friendly, since it uses many tools and chips that are familiar to many programmers. And if this sounds like a story you've heard before, you just may remember all the talk about how difficult it was to program the Saturn, causing developers to hop on the PlayStation wagon.

Sony may be able to rectify the situation with a new middleware developer program which gives companies a license to create tools and programs that it can sell to developers to help ease the process of creating games for the PSX2. But any self-respecting development house will create its own tools, rather than buy them off the shelf.

But after talking to many of the developers at the unveiling, they didn't seem to be too concerned about developing for PSX2. Jason Rubin, president of Naughty Dog, summed it up with a simple, "Dreamcast is a turd...PlayStation 2 kicks its f---ing ass." He even went on to state that Sony has, "put the smack down on the other companies."

Mark Cerny, president of Cerny Games, was more diplomatic, but his thoughts were much the same. "Tens of millions of polygons is a lot of power! In fact, I didn't think we'd see a system of that level of capability until around the year 2002 or 2003."

Game Informer won't be so bold as to make any predictions in the upcoming video game war, but we will say that the good money's on Sony. It made the right move to create a system powerful enough to leapfrog the PC market and bring consoles back to the forefront of graphics technologies. But with development kits just getting out, and the Japanese launch planned for this winter, things are going to be tough. Even the American launch, which is scheduled for 2000, will be an ambitious goal to meet. But if Sony can do it, Ken Kutaragi, the father of the PlayStation, will have written himself a place in history.



SYSTEM OVERVIEW

128-bit CPU core "Emotion Engine"
 GS Graphics Synthesizer
 SPU2 Sound Synthesizer
 I/O Processor
 8x Speed DVD/CD-ROM Disc System
 Digital I/F



Emotion Engine



Graphics Synthesizer

EMOTION ENGINE

The Emotion Engine incorporates two 64-bit integer units (IU) with a 128-bit SIMD multi-media command unit, two independent floating point vector calculation units (VU0, VU1), an MPEG 2 decoder, and high performance DMA controllers. Humming along at 300 MHz, the Emotion Engine has a floating point calculation performance of 6.2 GFLOPS.

Vital Stats

CPU Core	128-bit RISC (MIPS IV-subset)
Clock Frequency	300MHz
Integer Unit	64-bit (2-way Superscalar)
Multimedia extended instructions	107 instructions at 128-bit width
Integer General Purpose register	32 at 128-bit width
TLB	48 double entries
Instruction Cache	16KB (2-way)
Data Cache	8KB (2-way)
Scratch Pad RAM	16KB (Dual Port)
Main Memory	32MB (Direct Rambus DRAM 2ch@800 MHz)
Memory Bandwidth	3.2GB/sec
DMA	10 Channels
Co-processor1	FPU (FMAC x 1, FDIV x 1)
Co-processor2	VU 0 (FMAC x4, FDIV x 1)
Vector Processing Unit	VU 1 (FMAC x 5, FDIV x 2)
Floating Point Performance	Micro Memory (I: 16KB D: 16 KB) 6.2 FLOPS

Geometry

+ Perspective Transformation	66 Million Polygons/sec
+ Lighting	38 Million Polygons/sec
+ Fog	36 Million Polygons/sec
Curved Surface Generation (Bezier)	16 Million Polygons/sec
Image Processing Unit	MPEG 2 Macroblock Layer Decoder
Image Processing Performance	150 Million Pixels/sec

GRAPHICS SYNTHESIZER**Vital Stats**

GS Core	Parallel Rendering Processor with embedded DRAM
Clock Frequency	150 MHz
No. of Pixel Engines	16 (in Parallel)
Embedded DRAM	4MB of multi-port DRAM (Synced at 150 MHz)
Total Memory Bandwidth	48 Giga Bytes per Second

Combined Internal

Data Bus bandwidth	2560 bit
Read	1024 bit
Write	1024 bit
Texture	512 bit
Display Color Depth	32 bit (RGBA: 8 bits each)
Z Buffering	32 bit
Rendering Functions	Texture Mapping, Bump Mapping, Fogging, Alpha Blending, Bi- and Tri-Linear Filtering, MIPMAP, Anti-Aliasing, Multi-Pass Rendering

Rendering Performance

Pixel Fill Rate	2.4 Giga Pixel per Second (with Z- Buffer and Alpha blend enabled)
	1.2 Giga Pixel per Second (with Z-Buffer, Alpha, and Texture)
Particle Drawing Rate	150 Million/sec
Polygon Drawing Rate	75 Million/sec (small polygon)
	50 Million/sec (48 quad with Z and A)
	30 Million/sec (50 Pixel triangle with Z and A)
	25 Million/sec (48 Pixel quad with Z, A, and T)
Sprite Drawing Rate	18.75 Million (8x8 Pixels)

Display Output

NTSC/PAL, Digital TV (DTV), VESA (maximum 1280 x 1024 pixels)

Sound Processor

48 Channel ADPCM (2xSPU)
 CPU Software Voice
 CD Audio
 3D Sound (Dolby AC-3 or DTS)
 44.1 Khz or 48 Khz

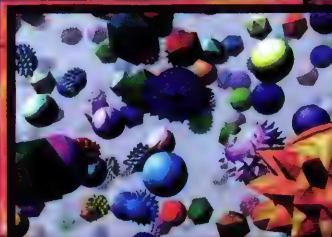
I/O Processor

CPU Core: PlayStation CPU
 Clock Frequency: 33.8 MHz or 37.5 MHz (selectable)
 Sub Bus: 32-bit

Digital Interfaces

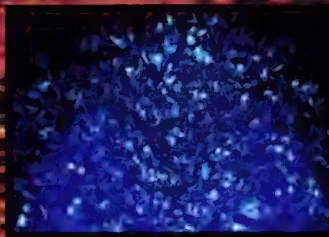
IEEE1394 (Digital A/V)
 Universal Serial Bus (USB)
 PC-Card (PCMCIA) for Modem/Communication
 Memory Card
 Controller

The demo portion of the presentation started with Crash Bandicoot marching over a hill. Yippee! But right behind him was a legion of what appeared to be 500 penguins breathing smoke particles, seamlessly animated, with bodies as smooth as a baby's bottom (no blocky polygon people here!), and to top it off they had real shadows. After Crash's little jaunt, the series of technology demos began, and we'll break them down one by one.



Burr

Basically, it was just a ton of polygonal rendered shapes, with burrs and without, flying at the screen like mad.



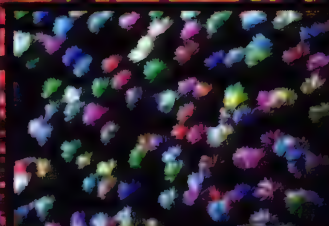
Feather

An impressive swirling tornado of thousands of small, translucent feathers tumbling delicately in the wind.



Bath

The most impressive of the technology demos, Bath showed a sub, a rubber ducky, and a can in a kitchen sink. Whenever an object was moved (in real-time we might add) it sent shockwaves across the surface. Certainly impressive, but we were even more amazed when Sony drained the water from the sink, and then refilled it; with each change in the environment affecting all the objects.



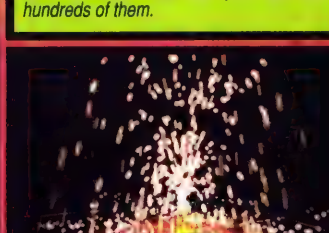
Fluff

This demo was created to show the line-draw capabilities of PSX2. Featuring puffballs made of hundreds of straight lines coming from a single vortex, this demo showed how even the smallest lines could be seen onscreen (for when they met, you could see the other ball behind). And just about the time you realized how incredible these little tribble-like creatures looked, Sony pulled the camera away to show that PSX2 could create not just 50, but hundreds of them.



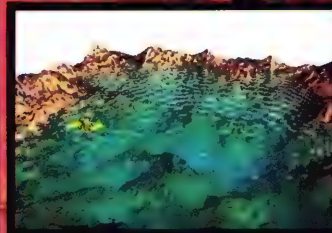
Depth of Field

Globular trapezoids of mercury zoomed around the screen, reflecting images and changing shape. As the globs spun around in circles, seamlessly growing and shrinking to show true depth, they came in and out of focus with the camera.



Fireworks

This demo showed the particle power of the PSX2 by placing a single firecracker in a dark room. Once ignited, it spewed forth a continuous stream of sparks (or particles) that flew into the air, then bounced off the floor in a breathtaking display. Sony claims that the PSX2 was creating 600 frames of animation per second for the sequence, and that the machine was choosing a random frame every ten to create 60 FPS animation. Impressive in its own right, but then Sony stopped the demo so you could see that everything onscreen was affected by motion blur to give the animation a very fluid motion picture-esque appearance. Did we mention that they were spinning the image in real-time?



Wave

It may look like a simple pool of water on the surface, but underneath the hood of this pond were real-time waves and reflections that distorted a fish below and bird flying above.

Curved Expressions

A polygonal head made of millions of polygons that morphed from fish, to alien, to a hairy duck.



Gran Turismo 2

Using the textures and models from the PlayStation title GT2, it was obvious that the perspective correction and lighting that the PSX2 provided made these "old" models look better than Sega Rally 2. Certainly there were some rather cheesy graphics, like the single pane buildings, but what can you expect from a demo? However, we were unexpectedly surprised by this quick port when we discovered that the game was playable. As a matter of fact, we played it.



Skeletons

Software showed a demo that featured 11 detailed skeletons standing around in a moonlit graveyard. At the back of the screen, a fairy (complete with a glowing trail of dust) flew in and around the skeletons. The skeletons crumbled, then reformed into a massive skeletal beast. Not terribly mindblowing, but nice nonetheless.



FACIAL ANIMATION

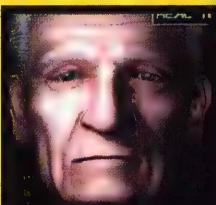
REAL TIME DEMONSTRATION



TEXTURE 52%
POLY 50%
VERTICES 76857
RATIO 1/60

The Face

Square's first demo was a facial expression demo using the model that was first shown at SIGGRAPH. Square changed the lighting and made facial expressions on the model, but that's about it. Great to look at, but it was basically just a really fantastic model of a head.



Tekken

Namco had a version of the Tekken 3 fighting engine running in a brand new environment that was truly amazing. The character models were extravagant for both the fighters in the ring and the 28 other animated characters that were huddled around the fight. As they played the demo, the camera zoomed around the arena, showing off the incredibly detailed backgrounds that included a huge reflective tanker truck, a beat-up taxi, as well as many other things that fill your average city streets. It looked like a scene from the movie Roadhouse, with the extras cheering on the fight.

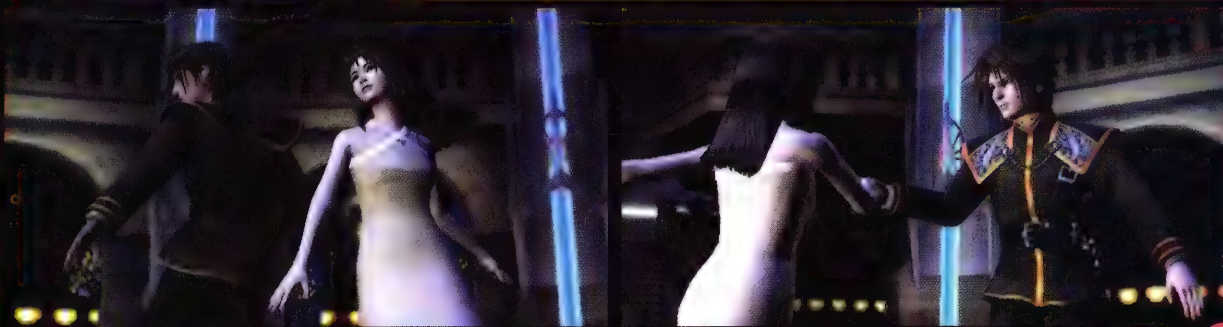


Fighter

Final Fantasy VIII

If you've played FFXVIII, you've seen the pre-rendered dance scene that takes place when Squall meets Rinoa. Well, this demo on the PSX2 was the same sequence, but done all in real-time. And believe it or not, it was almost equally as stunning as the pre-rendered FMV. Square swung the camera around the dancers, removed and replaced different characters in an instant, and overall impressed everybody that was in the auditorium. If all the games for the PSX2 look this good, we are all in for some mind-melting gaming.

Square's second demo was a video of a fighting game that featured eight characters duking it out in a bar. The characters threw each other over balconies and onto tables, which is great, but the demo didn't look as good as Tekken.



Fear & Loathing in Vancouver

A Gonzo Report on EA's WCW Mayhem

The Beginning

Electronic Arts is kind and/or foolish enough to invite yours truly, the Gonzo Gamer, to their new global studio headquarters in British Columbia. The purpose: to witness a few of the big boys from WCW do motion-capture for their upcoming Nintendo 64. I agree to go, but only on the usual conditions that they tour me around in a fully stocked stretch limousine at all times, and keep the wrestlers from asking me too many questions about whether video game journalism is faked. These issues settled, I head up to Canada with all my necessary gear.



The Gonzo Gamer always flies solo.



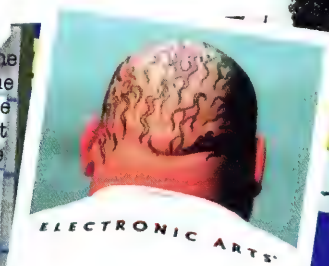
Mayhem's producers tell all.

Form with fields for 'APPLICANT', 'NAME', 'ADDRESS', and 'CITY'. Includes a small photo of a person.

Day One

After instructing the airline pilot to pick up the pace a bit, I land in Vancouver early. Heading immediately for the airport's public house, what should I see but the unmistakable tattooed skull of

row's motion-capture. Bam Bam confides in me that he's pretty interested in the mo-cap process, because it's been quite some time since his involvement in a video game, back in the days when dressing up in a sensor suit wasn't required. When my limo shows, Triple B begs me to give him a ride, but I explain that the Gonzo Gamer always flies solo. Arriving at the hotel, I order room service, figure out how to score free movies, open my special bag, and begin mental preparation for the next day.



My flamin' friend, Triple B.

Day Two

If there's one thing that garners respect from large and successful companies, it's letting them know that you, not they, are in control of the schedule. Therefore, I don't set my alarm and accordingly show up at EA's new building fashionably late. I make a note of its Schwarzenegger-Running Man quality, and then push my way to the front of the complimentary buffet line. At press check-in, EA has me sign a waiver that says I can't sue for any bodily harm due to flying objects. Strange,

airborne things, as well as bugs crawling all over me, being nothing new, I head on in to the giant EA motion-capture studio.

A squared circle is set up in the center of the floor, with ten infrared cameras surrounding the ring. Bam Bam Bigelow and a WCW Power Plant trainer by the name of Sarge are dressed in their black body suits covered with the gray bulbs that the cameras detect. Computers are set up on the side, and engineers behind a glass enclosure work feverishly to interpret the information the cameras are receiving. It's especially hard when the wrestlers lock up, as they so often do, because neither cameras nor computers can differentiate between the two men when they are so close.

The frustration of a long day is evident on the faces of Bam Bam and Sarge. The director asks them to perform a move, sensors fly off as bodies hit the mat, and the wrestlers are reprimanded for overdoing it. I'm convinced that some scrawny programmer is going to hear Greetings From

Asbury Park before the day is through. As soon as the EA representative explaining the process mentions that Goldberg and Konnan will be in for motion-capture later in the day, Bam Bam snaps and angrily starts taking off his equipment.

The headman of WCW security, Doug Dillenger, tries to calm Bam Bam down, but when Goldberg and Konnan walk in the door moments later, the time for talking is over. Konnan takes Bam Bam to the outside, and they smash monitors, keyboards, and anything else they can find over each other's bald heads. Meanwhile, Goldberg starts beating on, then overhead pressing, Sarge, eventually throwing him on BBB on the outside. And just when I think Sarge, who had a hand in training all these guys, is nearly dead, Goldberg finishes him off by running him through a wall.

Security runs in and clears the place faster than carnies do when a bikini-clad blonde turns into an ape. Did you see the fracas replayed on Nitro and Thunder? I'm the guy being held back by the guard-rails, screaming for blood.

After some clean up, WCW Mayhem producers Steve Rechtschaffner, Chuck Osieja, and Gary Lam first apologize for the incident, then field questions about their first venture into the wrestling game market.



Goldberg



POLICE LINE

DO NOT CROSS

What You Might Not Know About WCW Mayhem

EA is pulling out all the stops for Mayhem. They were unwilling to discuss exact dollar amounts, but did note that during the five years EA would have the WCW license, they planned to make their line of WCW games the most involved and intricate fighters available for any system - of today or of the future. Money being well spent now will provide the foundation for all things WCW to come.

Their research for Mayhem included going to smaller, non-televised house shows, to get the wilder feel of up close and personal wrestling action. They witnessed fights in the ring, on the entrance ramp, backstage, and in parking lots; then, they put in around two months worth of twelve hour motion-capture days to accurately simulate the chaos that is inherent in the wrestling trade.

The producers made the bold statement that any feature currently found in any wrestling game will be included in Mayhem, plus many more. They want the moves to be executed faster and smoother, with more counters and reversals possible, all with the action moving at a brisk clip. Collision detection is also going to be much improved, which will allow the wrestlers to be accurately represented physically. In other words, Rey Mysterio, Jr. will be noticeably smaller than Kevin Nash, but the empty space above Rey can't be put in a headlock.

Mayhem will also have more moves and more wrestlers than any other wrestling game. Not all wrestlers will be able to perform each of the 600+ moves that EA is shooting for. If a certain hold isn't in a wrestler's repertoire, he or she will not be able to do it. But, even if two bruise or share some maneuvers, each will perform them in their own distinctive style. As for how many wrestlers will be available, EA wouldn't comment, but did

mention that WCW currently has about 130 ring performers under contract.

Most importantly, however, the Electronic Arts team has realized something that will be vital to the enjoyment of Mayhem and all wrestling games to come after it: the main excitement of wrestling derives from what happens outside the ring. Plans to incorporate more storylines, backstabs, and that soap opera feel between bouts should bring wrestling games closer to the excitement of the real thing. Players will sometimes have options to refuse a match, knowing that entering the ring could hurt their career more than help it.

Mayhem will have so much that it won't have room for any recorded wrestler voices, but it will have commentary and announcing from Bobby "The Brain" Heenan, "Mean" Gene Okerlund, and Tony "Couldn't Call A Match If It Bit Him In The Ass" Shavone. Mayhem will also be a 4-player game on both Nintendo 64 and PlayStation, with Rumble Pak/Dual Shock compatibility.

As a final note, WCW Mayhem will not be an EA Sports title. Take that to mean whatever you like.

Knowing that I have interviews with Goldberg, Konnan, and Bam Bam Bigelow the next day, I make a mental note to limit myself to a mere 20 drinks that night.



Motion-capture suit

Day Three

Editor's Note: At this point, Jay's report turns into a fragmented mess of practically unreadable notes and garbled cassette recordings. The Day Three report has been assembled from these and Canadian police reports.

Wake up at four in the morning to regurgitate. Drink a lot of water and pass out. Wake up at eight, sweating profusely and think I have a hangover. By nine, I have to pull myself away from the toilet to try to go to the EA building.

Get in a cab, go three blocks, yell for the car to stop, throw the guy a five, and roll out the door to puke on the sidewalk. This couldn't be alcohol; this is a deliberate poisoning perpetrated last night by some jealous video game journalists. They know I have superior knowledge and skill, and fear my fantabulous interviewing skills. Could also be some wrestlers not wanting me to drive them to tears with my biting questions.

Crawl back to hotel room and pass out.

Wake up at 10:45. I have to check out. Throw everything into my bag, grab an ice bucket, fall asleep in the limo.

Everybody in the airport does me the favor of telling me I look sick. I tell them to shut up before I chew their eyeballs out. Throw my stuff on a seat near the bathroom, throw away my ice bucket, and go to give communion to a porcelain altar. As I'm washing my face and rinsing my mouth, some

jerk behind me feels the need to tell me I look like hell. I grab my keys, put them between my fingers for a rebuttal, and turn around - there's Bigelow.

I apologize to Triple B for not being able to give him the pleasure of my presence at the interview. He says it's all right, but he needs my help. Goldberg is in the airport and he wants to get him. I'm in no shape to school Goldberg, but straighten up and go out to give him a stare down. Fear forms in Goldberg's eyes from the mad dog looks BBB and I am giving him, Goldberg moves to some other part of the airport. Victory.

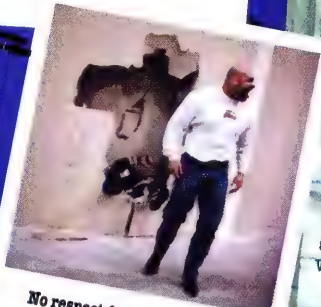
Turns out, Goldberg's on my flight. He lets me know I'm next. The joke's on him; I spend the rest of the flight in the lavatory, practicing my contortionist retching act.



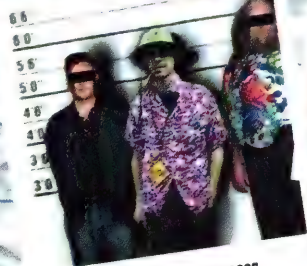
No respect for Sarge.



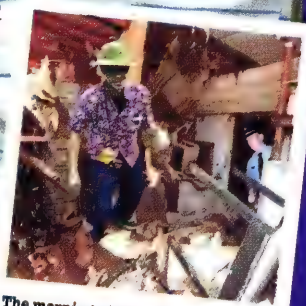
PO



No respect for EA's property.



...and the consequences.



The morning after in the hotel room...

Acclaim Lets It All Hang Out



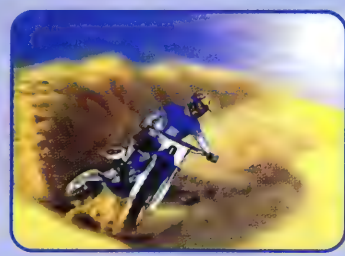
Velocity



Velocity



Super Cross 2000



Super Cross 2000



Re-Volt



Re-Volt

Last March, **Acclaim** showed off a number of its upcoming software titles to the gaming press in Park City and Salt Lake City, Utah. Why the exotic location? In addition to strange liquor laws and jagged mountains smothered in snow, Utah is home to **Iguana West** studios. Operating four studios, Iguana is Acclaim's biggest developer.

Acclaim began its event with a showing of **Shadowman** for the PlayStation, N64, and PC. Developed at Iguana U.K., this third-person action/adventure game is definitely not for the weak of heart. There's a heavy voodoo element to the story, plenty of violence, and strong language. It's appropriate for the twisted story that sends a former hit man, Mike Le Roi, on a quest to destroy a mass of undead serial killers. To do this, Mike Le Roi travels between two alternate realities, the Liveside and the Deadside. When Mike travels to the Deadside, he takes on another identity - Shadowman. One of his most useful characteristics is that he is ambidextrous and can therefore use two weapons and/or items at once. The game, releasing this summer, will also be Expansion Pak compatible, have two different endings, and contain an estimated 70 hours of gameplay.

One of the biggest morsels on Acclaim's plate was its newest and final **WWF** title. This behemoth weighs in at a whopping 256 megabit. From the looks of it, the new game, **WWF Attitude**, will be a super-enhanced version of **War Zone**. The Career mode has been expanded; there are over 150 new moves; and the sound has been overhauled, beginning with a total digital package. The PlayStation version will use over 10,000 audio cuts, and the N64's sound will be compressed 300% more than normal. **Attitude** will release in May for the PlayStation and June for the N64. For more on this game, check out the N64 Preview on page 35.

Acclaim also showed off a brand new game called **Velocity** (working title) for the **Dreamcast**, and possibly other platforms, including PC. This stunt-based racer looks a lot like GT's **Streak**, except the graphics are sharper and there is more freedom in doing tricks. Landing tricks successfully is also one way to attack opponents on the track. The tricks are fairly innovative - they often look like dancing - and can be linked together. **Velocity**, which will hopefully be available for the Dreamcast's American launch, will also have a half-pipe, a skate park, and multiplayer options. In addition, players will be able to plan race routes through the pre-made environments.

Jeremy McGrath Super Cross 2000 was also on hand, but we didn't get to see a lick of it. It was interesting, however, to hear Acclaim talk about the game because it was up front about its disappointment with last year's version, even though it sold well. To remedy this, the development of **JMSC 2K** was moved from an external Swedish studio to a team inside the walls of Iguana West. That alone is promising, but Iguana has also included a 3D tile-based track editor, 16 outdoor and indoor tracks, front and rear brake controls, and as many as eight open environments that allow players to cruise around and jump their bikes anywhere with no time limit. Look for this franchise on the PS-X, N64, PC, and Game Boy Color this fall.

For shooting fans, **Probe Studios** is using the **Turok 2** engine and some **Forsaken** technology to deliver **Armorines**, another game from the Acclaim comics property. Playable in 1st- and 3rd-person, the game has Deathmatch and Cooperative modes that let two players play through the one-player missions. Slated for the '99 holidays, **Armorines** will also use rail levels that let players engage in activities like shooting alien bugs from the side door of a moving helicopter.

Other Acclaim games on hand were **Re-Volt**, a remote-controlled racing game due out this fall (see GI April, 1999); **All-Star Baseball 2000**, already available for the N64 and Game Boy Color (page 34); and **NBA Jam 2000**, which will hopefully be ready by November 1, 1999. One interesting note is that Iguana is considering including the classic 2-on-2 gameplay that made **Jam** famous, along with the serious 5-on-5.



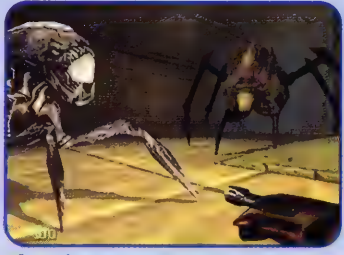
Shadowman - PS-X



Shadowman - PS-X



Armorines

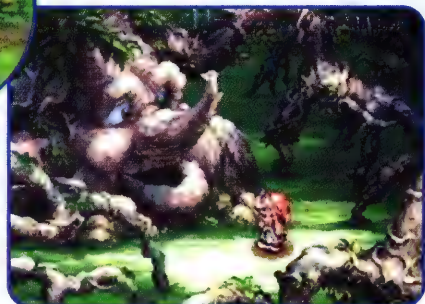


Armorines

Square's Secret Returns

On a recent business venture to Japan, a *Game Informer* reporter met secretly with a notorious spy who has been known to secure the most juicy news in the Japanese video game scene. Our first question for this devious personality, who was dressed from head to toe in black, was whether or not **Square Soft** was working on a new **Chrono Trigger** yet. His response...well...it was in Japanese, but his dumbfounded look and raised arms led us to believe that he didn't know a thing. However, he did hand over a metal suitcase containing several materials on Square's upcoming line-up. Amongst folders for **Racing Lagoon**, **Front Mission 3**, and **Saga Frontier 2**, was a file for **Seiken Densetsu 4** (better known as **Secret of Mana** here in the States). The Japanese contact pointed at the *Seiken Densetsu 4* logo and said, "**Legend of Mana** for PlayStation!", then turned face, ran, and jumped over a bush. We don't have any other details now, but we predict that Square will debut *Legend of Mana* for the PS-X at this year's **Tokyo Game Show**.

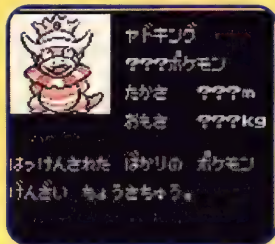
Alas, we scored some images early and from what we can see, this sequel will feature a gameplay style very similar to the original releases. Multiple playable characters, detailed environments, and a ton of exploration, look to be some of the qualities in this anticipated sequel. As of now, there is no official word that this action/RPG will make its way to the States, but don't be surprised if Square squeezes it into its line-up for the fourth quarter.



Pokémon Gold & Silver Coming to Game Boy

Pokémon Gold and **Pokémon Silver** are new versions of the **Nintendo** powerhouse, **Pokémon**, featuring over 250 monsters, as well as new transformations for any old monsters you may have maxed out on the Blue or Red versions. Over 200 tricks can be learned as well, and different Pokémon can be cross-bred to form a Poké-baby. Of course, since there's breeding, there are male and female versions of each monster.

Monsters can now sleep, and some can only fight during certain times of the day, thanks to the new clock feature. Some of the new Pokémon's names are Mariru, Buru, Togepy, and DonFan. **Pokémon Gold** and **Silver** will be available in Japan this April for **Game Boy Color**, and an American release should be announced later this year.



Pokémon To Get Novelized

Sybox, makers of countless strategy guides for the PC and console systems, has announced that it is publishing an officially licensed Pokémon book. Titled **Pokémon: Pathways to Adventure**, the fully illustrated book follows the journeys of Ash as he travels about the world in search of all 150 Pokémon. Written by **Jason Rich**, a well-known scribe of strategy guides, the Pokémon novel features an exciting story that many already know and love, and that others will find entertaining as well. While reading the story, players can also learn hints and clues on how to beat the game and other hidden secrets.

"Very few games have created a worldwide phenomenon like *Pokémon*," said Rich. "What makes this concept different from other licensed game novels is that, as someone reads the story, they'll discover valuable gameplay strategies and secrets that will actually help them beat the game. This novel will appeal to *Pokémon* fans of all ages."

The Pokémon novelization is the second in the *Pathways to Adventure* series from Sybox, which takes video games and transforms them into written form. **Roger Stewart**, associate publisher at Sybox, commented that "while this retelling of *Pokémon* in story form provides readers with the clues they need to find the best pathways through the game, as well as catch, train, and fight Pokémon, it can also be enjoyed completely on its own for the exciting adventure."

Pokémon: Pathways to Adventure is available now for \$9.99.



reader's top ten

- 1 Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped - PS-X
- 2 WWF War Zone - N64, PS-X
- 3 Gran Turismo - PS-X
- 4 GoldenEye 007 - N64
- 5 Guardian's Crusade - PS-X
- 6 WCW/NWO Revenge - N64
- 7 Tenchu: Stealth Assassins - PS-X
- 8 The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time - N64
- 9 Pokémon - GB
- 10 Syphon Filter - PS-X

editor's top ten

- 1 Pokémon - GB
- 2 Legend of Legaia - PS-X
- 3 Tenchu: Stealth Assassins - PS-X
- 4 The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time - N64
- 5 Power Stone - DC
- 6 Guardian's Crusade - PS-X
- 7 Syphon Filter - PS-X
- 8 Need For Speed: High Stakes - PS-X
- 9 Super Smash Bros. - N64
- 10 Final Fantasy VIII - PS-X

top ten intelligent email quotes

- 1 I don't like racing games, because all you do is race.
- 2 How the old Game is Jedi?
- 3 Sega and Nintendo do exist, despite what you may think.
- 4 Do you guys know the camel in Treasure Cove?
- 5 Be your own boss!!! Work at home!!!
- 6 What were you guys smoking when you reviewed (name of crapola game here)?
- 7 Is he/she male or female??? I'm dying to know!!!
- 8 I think South Park is a great RPG.
- 9 What's wrong with Madonna doing Parasite Eve?
- 10 #*\$% YOU!!!



Ken Griffey Jr.'s Slugfest



R-Type DX

Mucho Releaseo For Game Boyo

There isn't any shortage of upcoming releases for **Game Boy Color**. **Konami** is giving kids everywhere the chance to play their favorite hell reject, **Spawn**, sometime in May. Featuring classic side-scrolling platform elements, **Spawn** should entertain until the apocalypse. **Nintendo** isn't slacking either. **Ken Griffey Jr.'s Slugfest**, shipping on May 10, features a 2-player game via link cable, a new easy to comprehend fielding view, and a battery back-up that saves all season progress and statistics. **R-Type DX**, being released on June 28, combines **R-Type 1** and **2** into one massive GBC shooter. **Pokémon Pinball**, also releasing on June 28, uses the new rumble technology and stars those cute little monsters that the world just can't stop loving. Is it any wonder that Game Boy Color is selling so well?



Pokémon Pinball

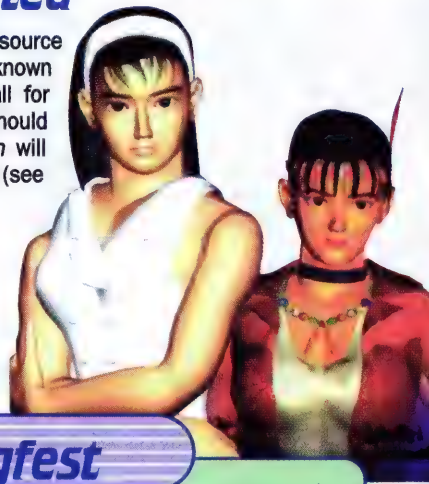


Spawn

A New Tekken and Everyone's Invited

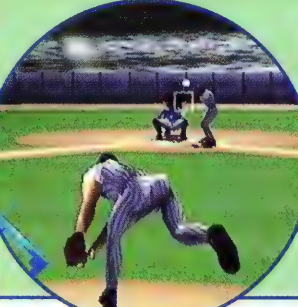
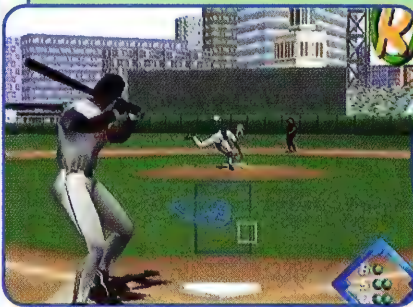
Shortly before the **Tokyo Game Show**, *Game Informer* learned from a source within **Namco Japan** that Namco will release a new **Tekken** title - currently known as **Tekken 3.5** - sometime this June in Japanese arcades and this fall for **PlayStation**. The arcade game will use the **System 15 board**, which should make it relatively easy to port over to the PlayStation. The new **Tekken** will contain all of the characters from **Tekken 2** that aren't already in **Tekken 3** (see list below), and hopefully some new fighters as well.

- Alex & Roger
- Baek
- Kimnitsu
- Michelle
- Wang
- P. Jack
- Bruce
- Jack-2
- Lee
- Jun
- Kazuya
- Gan Ryu
- Devil & Angel
- Armor King



Nintendo's Slugfest

Looking at all the baseball titles coming out, it almost appears as if it's a popular spectator sport. **Nintendo** hopes to further that illusion by releasing **Ken Griffey Jr.'s Slugfest** for the **Nintendo 64** on May 10. Up to four players can hit for any of the 30 Major League Baseball teams in all 30 MLB stadiums, playing a standard team member or creating their own Major-League. Other features include improved animation, Expansion Pak compatibility, commentary by Dave Niehaus, and, you guessed it, an endorsement by Ken Griffey Jr.



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

Namco To Bring Fighter to Dreamcast

Namco has announced its first Dreamcast title. In a move that still seems amazing, **Soul Calibur**, the hot arcade fighter, will head to the Dreamcast later this year. In *Soul Calibur*, players take on the roles of different characters trying to locate the **Soul Edge**, a mysterious weapon said to have limitless powers. But the weapon corrupts anyone who touches it, attempting to take the soul of the owner.

This is a pretty big title for **Sega** to get. Is the Dreamcast going to be the fighting game nut's system? It's starting to look that way. Here are some pictures of the DC version of *Soul Calibur*.



Rockstar In The House

It's controversial, it's edgy, and it isn't afraid to rock. **Rockstar** is the name of **Take-Two Interactive's** new subsidiary that wants to shake, rattle, and roll your world. How hard do they plan to rock? One of the many titles planned for the year 2000 is **Kiss: Psycho Circus** for **PlayStation** and **Game Boy Color**. Just about everything on this game is shrouded in mystery, but it will most likely not feature *Kiss* working on their retirement stock portfolios and HMO structures.

If that weren't rocking enough, another new millennium title will be **Thrasher: Skate and Destroy** for **PlayStation** and **Nintendo 64**. Rockstar is getting a big assist on this game from *Thrasher* magazine and claims that this will be the first "real" street skateboarding game available. What the heck that means is anybody's guess.

Other upcoming Rockstar titles include **Earthworm Jim 3D** for PS-X and N64, **Wild Metal Country** and **Max Payne** for Dreamcast, and a new **Duke Nukem** game for an as yet unnamed system. Rock on!



Tony Hawk Teams With Activision

Tony Hawk, the man regarded as the undisputed king of the field, is teaming up with **Activision** and developer **Neversoft Entertainment** to create **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater** for the **PlayStation**.

"I have always wanted to help create a video game that represented the reality and excitement of professional skateboarding," said Hawk. "Activision has given me the opportunity to make this dream a reality. With their track record, I know this will be a groundbreaking venture."

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater will have feature upon feature. A trick and combo system will allow players to perform hundreds of moves and stunts in real-world tracks, secret areas, and environments ranging from malls and freeways to elementary schools and congested downtown areas.

A Career mode will allow gamers to play the life of a skater, beginning as an unknown street skater and working his or her way up the ranks to become a multi-sponsored superstar. Split-screen two-player will have skaters competing on ramps and skateparks, racing on tracks, or playing a brutal game of tag.



Game Informer's Site O' The Month



The Force.net
<http://www.theforce.net/>

Star Wars interviews, surveys, technical commentary, humor, trivia, collecting, fan fiction, and the best prequel news around. If you can't find it on this site, then it must be from *Battlestar Galactica*.

VIDEO GAME

TRIVIA

- 1 What will EA name their first WCW title?
- 2 What is the trademarked name of the PlayStation 2's CPU?
- 3 What city is considering the incorporation of Game Boys into its mass transit system?
- 4 True or False: Dreamcast will have DVD capabilities upon release.
- 5 What laser disc arcade game, released in 1984, had a Tolkien-esque theme and utilized a membrane keypad rather than a joystick?

[Answers on the bottom of page 32]



Name That Game!

In 1994, **Capcom** faithfully ported the first of this popular PC trilogy to the SNES. In this **Advanced Dungeons & Dragons** based RPG, you formed a party of four and ventured into the sewers under **Waterdeep**, but soon found yourself on another world. Your goal was to kill **Xanathar**, an eleven-eyed tyrant that was just too evil to live. What game is it?

[Answer on the bottom of page 32]

Data File:

It's clear that the marketing campaign for the Dreamcast's U.S. launch is full steam ahead. **Sega of America's** most recent addition to staff is **Peter Moore**, formerly of **Reebok**, as senior vice president of marketing. Moore, who has 16 years experience in the marketing biz, will oversee **Sega's** impending \$100 million advertising blitz. Sega is promising that its campaign will be something which the video game industry has never seen the likes of.

➤ **GT Interactive's** new CEO, **Ron Chalmowitz**, has decided to move the company headquarters from Manhattan to Los Angeles. The relocation will most likely happen after this year's E3 in mid-May.

➤ **GT Interactive's** *Driver* is slated to release for **PlayStation** on July 8.

➤ **GT Interactive** and **IMS Properties** announced that the two companies have entered into a long-term global publishing agreement for the **Indianapolis 500** and its sanctioning body, the **Pep Boys Indy Racing League**. Under the terms of the multi-year global agreement, GT Interactive obtains exclusive interactive software rights to the Indy 500, Indy Racing League, Indianapolis Motor Speedway, and Indy Racing League teams and drivers, for all PC and console platforms.

➤ **Electronic Arts** has secured the rights to the **Formula One** license. Planning to develop games for the PC and all consoles, EA is doing what it does best.

➤ **THQ** announced it will publish a new pool simulation called **Ultimate 8 Ball**. Expect it on the **PlayStation** and PC in June.

➤ **Nintendo** has drawn up plans for the **London Underground** Jubilee line that incorporate **Game Boys** affixed to the vertical handrails. Passengers, who are frequently mashed together, would need only enough space to use their thumbs to play.

➤ **Electronic Arts** announced that **Madden NFL 99** was the number one selling **PlayStation** sports video game for 1998 in North America. Selling 1,128,366 units (according to TRSTS data), **Madden NFL 99** outsold its closest sports competitor (**NFL GameDay '99**) by over 160,000.

➤ Last month, we reported on three great Dreamcast titles that **Visual Concepts** was cooking up for the U.S. launch. Unfortunately, a certain lackadaisical reporter didn't spell VC's action/mystery title correctly. It's **Floigan Bros**. Soory about tht.

Wild, Wild West Coming to PlayStation

SouthPeak Interactive announced it will make a game based on this summer's upcoming movie, **Wild, Wild West**, for the **PlayStation** and PC. The game is based on two government agents, James T. West and Artemus Gordon, who are great at charming the ladies and utilizing many different disguises. The film, based on the 60's TV show that starred Robert "Black Sheep" Conrad, is essentially James Bond in western duds. The new film stars Will Smith and Kevin Kline.

"Developing these games based on *Wild, Wild West* is a tremendous honor and responsibility for SouthPeak Interactive," said **Armistead Sapp**, president of SouthPeak. "Warner Bros. has placed a lot of faith in us to deliver a game that's as exciting and entertaining as *Wild, Wild West - The Movie* will be, and we intend to deliver."

So, watch the movie on July 2, and prepare to rumble through the *Wild, Wild West* video game this holiday season.



Our Dinner With Bernie

It's not every day you get to sit down to dinner with **Sega of America's** COO and president, **Bernie Stolar**. When you get that opportunity, you first try and get him to pay for your meal, and then you pick his brain about the state of the **Dreamcast** in America. We had this very opportunity during the **Game Developer's Conference** in San Jose, California last March.

After a couple of crab cakes, *GI* finally got around to discussing Sega's new console with Mr. Stolar. We started out by asking him if he was worried that America's biggest third-party software publisher, **Electronic Arts**, had not yet committed to the Dreamcast. According to Stolar, that support will come eventually because he totally expects the Dreamcast to sell enough units so that EA's stock holders will demand it support the console.

Nintendo has Mario and Genesis had Sonic. What game would best help boost Dreamcast sales? According to Stolar, **Shen Mue** is that title. Sega refuses to classify the game into any one genre and, to its credit, *Shen Mue* does seem to have a little bit of everything. Role-playing, fighting, adventure, and action are some of the elements to *Shen Mue*. Plus, the game will come in 16 different installments. To finish the story, consumers will have to buy all 16 discs. It sounds like an interesting concept, but during our visit to the **Tokyo Game Show** last March, we came away with sense that there will be better games for the Dreamcast.

Before dessert arrived, we got into the Dreamcast's inevitable clash with **PlayStation 2**. In *GI's* opinion, it seems most of the gaming press is a little more excited about the PlayStation 2. We asked Stolar what he would do to try and change this perception, and he said he was not concerned with what the gaming press thought, and was only interested in what consumers thought about the Dreamcast. That statement has some merit, however, the gaming press is also made up of consumers and they probably play video games more often than most people. And while the gaming press knows that its readers have their own opinions, we believe they also listen to our opinions, otherwise they wouldn't support the dozens of gaming magazines out there.

The day after our dinner, Stolar gave a speech at the Game Developer's Conference and discussed more Dreamcast topics. "At launch," said Stolar, "look for **Mortal Kombat 5** and **Ready to Rumble** from **Midway**, **Castlevania** from **Konami**, **PowerStone** from **Capcom** and **Soul Calibur** from **Namco**." When asked if Dreamcast has **DVD** in it's future, Stolar replied, "Absolutely. When DVD reaches a comfortable price point for consumers and developers. That's when we will add DVD to Dreamcast." Also, Bernie announced the modem for Dreamcast would be of the 56K variety, rather than the older 33.6K.

Certainly, there are reasons to wonder about the future success of Dreamcast in America, but it is far too early to write it off, even with the release of PlayStation 2 looming in the not-so distant future.



"Pass the Maalox please."

Shen Mue





CURRENT HIGH SCORE



Can you land a lunker? There's no need to exaggerate the size of your skill, with Fisherman's Bait you can prove it! Number One Rated arcade game now on PlayStation® Two player versus mode - fish against a friend. Dual Shock function lets you feel the bass biting

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New Final Fantasy VIII Toys

Here are some pictures of the **Final Fantasy VIII** toys from **Bandai**. There will be six **Final Fantasy** figures, with an emphasis on articulation. Bandai again holds the rights to the **FFVIII** fantastic plastic. Here they are. Watch for them in the States this fall.

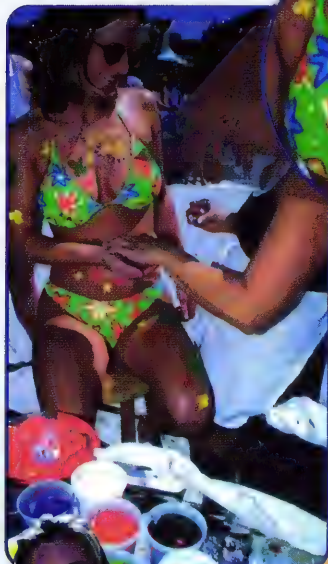


Nintendo Signals Apocalypse

Just when we thought the world might be turning into a better place, a news piece like this comes along. **Nintendo** painted bikini-clad college students in the shades of its new **Game Boy Color** units, and you can take a look at the action.

To quote the site, "Picture this...hundreds of crazy, bathing suit-wearing, party-ready college kids getting their bodies painted with the new Game Boy colors: Kiwi, Dandelion, Teal, and Berry. This colorful event is a 'bright' way for college students to enjoy their time away from school."

Sigh. Well, at least they didn't have them beer-bong Kiwi and Teal colored ale. Or did they? Biblical scholars wanting to see the world going to hell in a handbasket can check the video out at <http://www.newstream.com/99-100.shtml>. But please, pray for your immortal soul before typing in that address.



Video Game Trivia Answers:

1. WCW Mayhem.
2. Emotion Engine.
3. London.
4. False.
5. Thayer's Quest.

Name That Game Answer:

Eye Of The Beholder

NOT GETTIN' ANY?



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THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UGLY

GOOD - Black Ops Entertainment, famous for **Treasures of the Deep**, is hard at work on a Jurassic Park-licensed fighting game. **Game Informer** has learned that the game is under the direction of **DreamWorks** and **Electronic Arts**. **Jurassic Fighter** (working title) is scheduled to release for the **PlayStation** (and maybe **Nintendo 64**) this fall.



GOOD - Just when you thought all the good motor oil games had come and gone, **Electronic Arts** announces **Castrol-Honda Superbike Racing**. Developed by **Intense Interactive**, the sludge-inspired racer will be appearing in late spring for **PlayStation**.

BAD - **ASC Games** has unfortunately informed us that the futuristic **PlayStation** racer **Jeff Gordon XS Racing** has been delayed all the way back to fall of this year. It was originally scheduled to release on **PlayStation** this month, but **ASC** will take the extra time to hopefully make the title even better. However, it is not a completely sad day, as **ASC** also stated that the **PC** version will make its way to stores in the coming weeks. Keep a lookout for more information on this hot racing title.



WELL - On the most recent issue of the **PlayStation Underground** CD-magazine, **Game Informer** editors Andy, Paul, and Reiner appear in several spots during the **Spyro** party segment. Shown running rampant in casinos, as well as enjoying other entertaining misadventures in Las Vegas, the **GI** editors had a blast. Take a glance at the **GI** sighting in the latest **PlayStation Underground**, and look to www.playstation.com for more information on how to receive **PlayStation Underground**.

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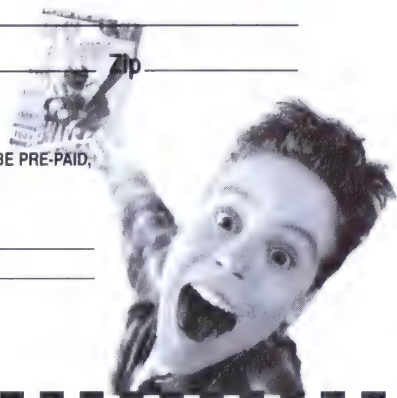
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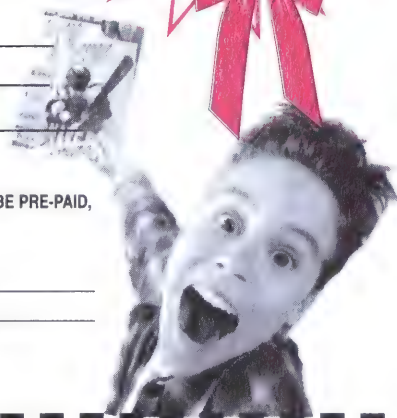
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KEY

(Note: All moves are shown for characters facing left)

- A: Weak Punch
- B: Weak Kick
- C: Strong Punch
- D: Strong Kick
- P: Press A and C simultaneously
- K: Press B and D simultaneously
- /: Either (i.e. ←/→ = either back or forward)
- Charge: Hold in the next listed direction for two seconds

From: Do after move listed in command (Counter): Indicates a counter-attack

- ←: Back
- : Forward
- ↑: Up
- ↓: Down
- ↻: Quarter Circle Forward, or ↻ to ↻ to ↻
- ↻↻: Quarter Circle Back
- ↻↻↻: Half Circle Forward, or ↻↻↻ to ↻↻↻ to ↻↻↻
- ↻↻↻↻: Half Circle Back

TRAINING CARD #46

Take this card with you to your local arcade and show'em who knows all the moves!



Part 3 of 3

YASHIRO NANAKASE

- Regert Bash: → + A
- Step Side Kick: → + B
- Upper Duel: → ↓ ↻ + P
- Sledgehammer: ↻↻↻ + K
- Missile Might Bash: ↻↻↻↻↻ + P
- Jet Counter: ↻↻↻↻↻ + P
- Jet Counter Still: ↻↻↻↻↻ + P From ↻↻↻↻↻ + P
- Final Impact: ↻↻↻↻↻ + P, hold P and release
- Million Bash Stream: ↻↻↻↻↻↻↻ + P, tap P rapidly

SHERMIE

- Shermie Stand: → + B
- Shermie Whip: ↻↻↻ + P
- Axle Spin Kick: ↻↻↻ + K
- Shermie Spiral: ↻↻↻↻↻ + P when close
- Shermie Shoot: ↻↻↻↻↻ + K

- Shermie Clutch: → ↓ ↻ + K
- Shermie Cute: ↻↻↻ + K after a command throw
- Shermie Flash: ↻↻↻↻↻, ↻↻↻↻↻ + P when close
- Shermie Carnival: ↻↻↻↻↻, ↻↻↻↻↻ + P when close

CHRIS

- Spinning Array: → + A
- Reverse Anchor Kick: → + B
- Carry Off Kick: ↻ + B
- Slide Touch: ↻↻↻ + P
- Scramble Dash: ↻↻↻ + K
- Direction Change: ↻, ↻, ↻ + P
- Hunting Air: → ↓ ↻ + K
- Shooting Dancer Thrust: ↻↻↻↻↻ + P
- Shooting Dancer Step: ↻↻↻↻↻ + K
- Glider Stamp: Jump, ↻↻↻ + K
- Chain Slide Touch: ↻↻↻, ↻↻↻ + P
- Twister Drive: ↻↻↻, ↻↻↻ + K

RYUJI YAMAZAKI

- Bussashi: → + A
- Hebi Tsukai (Gedan): ↻↻↻ + A, hold A to delay
- Hebi Tsukai (Chuudan): ↻↻↻ + B, hold B to delay
- Hebi Tsukai (Joudan): ↻↻↻ + C, hold C to delay
- Hebi Damashi: Press D while delaying
- H. Tsukai
- Bai Gaeshi (Kyuushuu): ↻↻↻ + A
- Bai Gaeshi (Dan Haassha): ↻↻↻ + C
- Sabaki no Aikuchi: → ↓ ↻ + P
- Yakiri: → ↓ ↻ + B
- Suna Kake: → ↓ ↻ + D
- Sadamazo: ↻↻↻↻↻ + K
- Bakudan Pachiki: ↻↻↻↻↻, → + P when close
- Guillotine: ↻↻↻, ↻↻↻ + P
- Drill: ↻↻↻↻↻, ↻↻↻↻↻ + P when close

BLUE MARY

- Hammer Arc: → + A
- Climbing Arrow: ↻↻↻ + B
- Double Rolling: ↻ + B
- M. Spider: ↻↻↻ + P
- Spin Fall: ↻↻↻ + K
- Vertical Arrow: → ↓ ↻ + K
- M. Snatcher: → ↓ ↻ + K From → ↓ ↻ + K
- Straight Slicer: Charge ←, → + K
- Crab Clutch: ↻↻↻ + K From Charge ←, → + K
- M. Reverse Facelock: ↻↻↻ + B
- M. Head Buster: ↻↻↻ + D
- Backdrop Real: ↻↻↻↻↻, → + P when close
- M. Splash Rose: ↻↻↻, ↻↻↻↻↻ + P
- M. Dynamite Swing: ↻↻↻, ↻↻↻ + K
- M. Typhoon: ↻↻↻↻↻, ↻↻↻↻↻ + K

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STAMP
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BILLY KANE

Dai Kaiken Geri: → + A
Boukou Tobigeri: → + B
Senpoo Kon: Tap A rapidly
Shuuten Renha Kon: Tap C rapidly
Sansetsu Kon Chuudan Uchi:
←←↓→ + P
Kaen Sansetsu Kon Chuudan Tsuki:
↓→ + P From ←←↓→ + P
Sen'ten Satsu Kon: →, ↓, ↘ + P
Kyoushuu Hishou Kon: →, ↓, ↘ + K,
move ←/→
Karyuu Tsuigeki Kon: ↓← + B
Suiryuu Tsuigeki Kon: ↓← + D
Chou Kaen Senpoo Kon: ↓↘→,
→↘↓← + P
Dai Senpoo: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + P

IORI YAGAMI

Ge Shiki Yumebiki: → + A, A
Ge Shiki Gou Fu In "Shinigami": → + B
Ge Shiki Yuri Ori: Jump, ← + B
Shiki Yami Barai: ↓↘→ + P
Shiki Aoi Hana: ↓← + P (perform 3
times)
Shiki Oniyaki: →, ↓, ↘ + P
Shiki Sou Kushi: →, ↓, ↘ + K
Shiki Koto Tsuki In: →↘↓← + K
Kuzukaze: →↘↓←, → + P when
close
Kin Shiki Ya Otome: ↓↘→, →↘↓←
+ P
Ura Shiki Ya Sakazuki: ↓←←,
←←↓→ + P

MATURE

Despair: ↓↘→ + P
Sacrilege: →, ↓, ↘ + P
Ebony Tears: ↓↘→, →↘↓← + P
Death Row: ↓←← + P (perform 3
times)
Metal Massacre: ↓←← + K
Decider: ←←↓→ + K
Heaven's Gate: ↓←←, ←←↓→ + K
Nocturnal Lights: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + P

VICE

Monstrosity: → + A
Mayhem: ↓←← + P
Outrage: ↓←← + K
Ravenous: Jump, ↓←← + K
Gore Fest: →↘↓←, → + P when
close
Blackened: ←←↓→ + P when close
Decider: ←←↓→ + K
Mithan's Robe: ↓↘→ + P From
←←↓→ + P/↓←← + P
Negative Gain: →↘↓←, →↘↓← +
K when close
Withering Surface: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + P

HEIDERN

Critical Drive: In air, any dir. but ↑ +
C/D
Shooter Narnagel: → + B
Cross Cutter: Charge ←, → + P
Moon Slasher: Charge ↓, ↑ + P
Neck Rolling: Charge ↓, ↑ + K
Storm Bringer: →↘↓← + P when
close
Killing Bringer: →↘↓← + K
Final Bringer: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + P
Heidem Fnd: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + K

TAKUMA SAKAZAKI

Oniguruma: → + A
Kawara Wan: → + B
Ko Ou Ken: ↓↘→ + P
Mouko Burai Gan: ↓←← + P
Zanrets Ken: →↘↓← + P
Shouran Kyaku: →↘↓← + K
Haou Shikou Ken: →, ←←↓→ + P
Hien Shippuu Kyaku: Charge ↘, → + K
Ryuuko Ranbu: ↓↘→, →↘↓← + P
Shin Kishin Geki: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + P
when close

SAISHU KUSANAGI

Ge Shiki Gou Tsuchi: → + A
Ge Shiki Atama Tsui: → + B
Shiki Yami Barai: ↓↘→ + P
Shiki En Jou: ↓←← + P (perform 2
times)
Shiki Oniyaki: →, ↓, ↘ + P
Shiki Nataguruma: →, ↓, ↘ + K
Shiki Shin Ken: →↘↓← + K
Ura Shiki Orochi Nagi: ↓←←,
←←↓→ + P
Shiki To Bou Gai: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + P

LUCKY GLAUBER

Dunk Otoshi: Jump, ↓ + A
Lucky Kick: → + B
Death Bound: ↓↘→ + P
Lucky Vision: ↓↘→ + K
Death Dunk: ↓←← + P
Cyclone Break: ↓←← + K
Death Heel: →, ↓, ↘ + K
Death Shoot: ↓, ↓ + P/K
Hell Bound: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + P
Lucky Driver: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + K

HEAVY D!

Rock Crush: → + A
Rolling Soul Diver: ↓↘→ + P
Ducking Combination: ↓←← + P (per-
form 2 times)
Blast Upper: ↓↘→ + K
Soul Flower: ↓←← + K
Dancing Beat: →, ↓, ↘ + P when close
Shadow: ↓, ↓ + P, then perform any
move
D. Magnum: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + P
D. Crazy: ↓←←, ←←↓→ + P

BRIAN BATTLE

Buster Tomahawk: Jump, ↓ + A
Brian Tornado: ←←↓→ + P
Hyper Tackle: ←←↓→ + K
Rocket Tackle: →, ↓, ↘ + K
Scw Body Press: Jump, ↓↘→ + P
Brian Hammer: ↓←← + P
Double Hammer: ↓←← + P From B.
Hammer
DDT: ↓←← + P From D. Hammer
Tiger Driver: ←←↓→ + P From B.
Hammer
Samurai Bomb: ↓, ↓ + P From Tiger
Driver
Shoulder Backbreaker: ↓, ↓, ↓ + P
From Tiger Driver
Buster Bomb: ↓, ↑ + P From S.
Backbreaker
American Supernova: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ +
P
Big Bang Tackle: ↓↘→, ↓↘→ + K

new releases

All dates subject to change.
Call your local retailer for
more details.

Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor	System
APRIL			
4/10/99	Rugrats the Movie	THQ	GBC
4/13/99	Bust A Move 4	Acclaim	GB
4/13/99	NBA In the Zone 99	Konami	GBC
4/13/99	Bust A Move 99	Acclaim	N64
4/13/99	Fighting Force 64	Crave	N64
4/13/99	Bust A Move 99	Acclaim	PS-X
4/13/99	High Heat Baseball 2000	3DO	PS-X
4/13/99	Shadow Madness	Crave	PS-X
4/15/99	Kluster	Infogrames	GBC
4/15/99	Smurfs Nightmare	Infogrames	GBC
4/15/99	Top Gear Pocket w/rumble	Kemco	GBC
4/15/99	V-Rally	Infogrames	GBC
4/15/99	Charlie Blasts Territory	Kemco	N64
4/15/99	Evil Zone	Titus	PS-X
4/17/99	Bomberman Fantasy Race	Atlus	PS-X
4/19/99	Logical	Sunsoft	GBC
4/19/99	Quest Fantasy Challenge	Sunsoft	GBC
4/19/99	Chameleon Twist 2	Sunsoft	N64
4/20/99	3 Xtreme	989 Studios	PS-X
4/20/99	Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	PS-X
4/22/99	Shanghai	Sunsoft	PS-X
4/25/99	Deer Hunter	Vatical	GBC
4/26/99	Super Smash Bros.	Nintendo	N64
4/27/99	Spy Hunter & Moon Patrol	Midway	GB
MAY			
5/1/99	Spiderman	Crave	GBC
5/1/99	Spy vs. Spy	Kemco	GBC
5/1/99	X-Men	Crave	GBC
5/3/99	Barbie Ocean Discovery	Mattel	GBC
5/4/99	G-Police 2	Psygnosis	PS-X
5/4/99	Ridge Racer 4 (R4)	Namco	PS-X
5/5/99	Vigilante 8 w/rumble	Vatical	GBC
5/6/99	Point Blank 2 w/Gun	Namco	PS-X
5/6/99	Point Blank 2 w/o Gun	Namco	PS-X
5/10/99	Conker's Pocket Tales	Nintendo	GBC
5/10/99	Griffey's Slugfest	Nintendo	GBC
5/10/99	Super Mario Bros.	Nintendo	GBC
5/10/99	Griffey's Slugfest	Nintendo	N64
5/11/99	Superman 64	Titus	N64
5/15/99	Return of Ninja	Tommo	GBC
5/15/99	Skateboard Kid	Tommo	GBC
5/15/99	Spawn	Konami	GBC
5/15/99	Wild Gun	Tommo	GBC
5/15/99	All Star Tennis 99	Ubi Soft	N64
5/15/99	Caesar's Palace	Crave	N64
5/15/99	Monaco Grand Prix	Ubi Soft	N64
5/15/99	All Star Tennis 99	Ubi Soft	PS-X
5/15/99	Bugs Bunny Lost in Time	Infogrames	PS-X

Release Date	Title	Publisher/Distributor	System
5/15/99	Cabella's Big Game Photo Shoot	Vatical	PS-X
5/15/99	LeMans	Infogrames	PS-X
5/15/99	Loony Tunes Lost in Time	Infogrames	PS-X
5/15/99	Monaco Grand Prix	Ubi Soft	PS-X
5/15/99	Vermin	Eidos	PS-X
5/17/99	Star Wars Episode 1: Racer	Nintendo	N64
5/18/99	RC Stunt Copter	Midway	PS-X
5/24/99	Legacy of Kain 2: Soul Reaver	Eidos	PS-X
5/25/99	San Francisco Rush	Midway	GBC
5/25/99	WWF Attitude	Acclaim	GBC
5/25/99	Quake 2	Activision	N64
5/25/99	WWF Attitude	Acclaim	PS-X
JUNE			
6/1/99	Centipede	Hasbro	PS-X
6/1/99	Tetris, The New	Hasbro	PS-X
6/8/99	Gauntlet Legends	Midway	N64
6/8/99	Gauntlet Legends	Midway	PS-X
6/15/99	Asteroids	Crave	GBC
6/15/99	Babe	Crave	GBC
6/15/99	Dracula Returns	Tommo	GBC
6/15/99	Duke Nukem	GT Interactive	GBC
6/15/99	Godzilla	Crave	GBC
6/15/99	Legend of the Sea King	Natsume	GBC
6/15/99	Micro Machines 1&2	THQ	GBC
6/15/99	Motocross Maniacs 2	Konami	GBC
6/15/99	Paper Boy	Midway	GBC
6/15/99	Yoda Stories	THQ	GBC
6/15/99	Zebco Fishing w/rumble	Vatical	GBC
6/15/99	Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko	Eidos	N64
6/15/99	Goeman's Great Adventure	Konami	N64
6/15/99	GT Rally	Midway	N64
6/15/99	Hybrid Heaven	Konami	N64
6/15/99	Rugrats Scavenger Hunt	THQ	N64
6/15/99	Space Race	Infogrames	N64
6/15/99	Tonic Trouble	Ubi Soft	N64
6/15/99	World Driver Champion	Midway	N64
6/15/99	Air Race 2	THQ	PS-X
6/15/99	Iron Soldier 3	Vatical	PS-X
6/15/99	Knights of Carnage	THQ	PS-X
6/15/99	Mission: Impossible	Infogrames	PS-X
6/15/99	Pool Shark	THQ	PS-X
6/15/99	Toonstein	Vatical	PS-X
6/28/99	Pokemon Pinball	Nintendo	GBC
6/28/99	R Type DX	Nintendo	GBC
6/28/99	Command & Conquer	Nintendo	N64
6/28/99	Pokemon Snap	Nintendo	N64
6/30/99	Shadowgate 64	Kemco	N64

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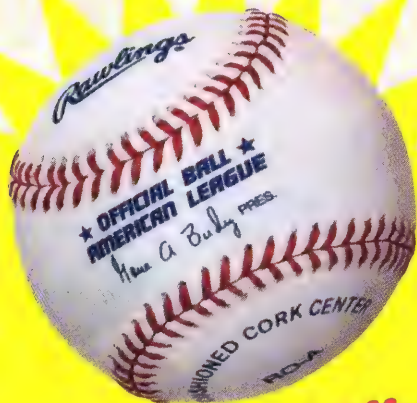
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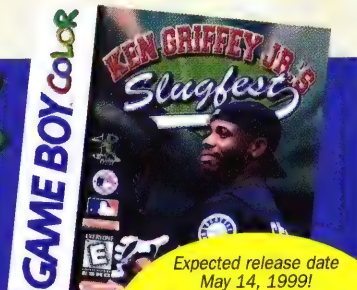
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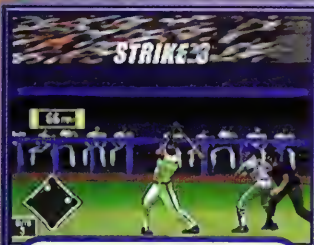
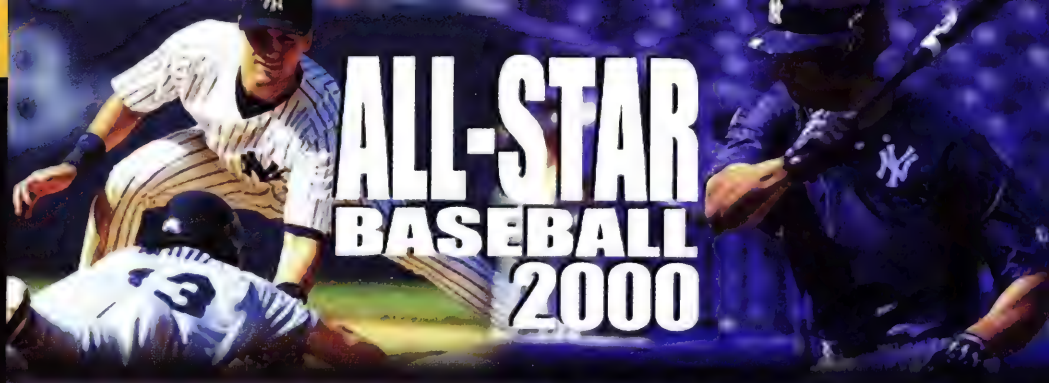
For more on Ken Griffey Jr.'s Slugfest for N64
or Game Boy visit @ www.nintendo.com

New colors coming • Berry • Kiwi
May 14, 1999 • Dandelion • Teal

Nintendo 64 Review

- **Size:** 128 Megabit
- **Style:** 1 to 4-Player Sports
- **Special Features:** 2-Man Commentary; Phenomenal Animation; Fantasy Draft; Create Player; Stat Tracking; Improved Hitting; Rumble & Controller Pak Compatible
- **Replay Value:** Moderate
- **Created by:** Iguana for Acclaim Entertainment
- **Available:** Now for Nintendo 64

Bottom Line: **8**



An erratic helicopter swing ends the inning.



Playing it off the fence.



Lining the batting cursor directly atop the pitch location equates to big contact.



The beanballs come packed with tons of animation.

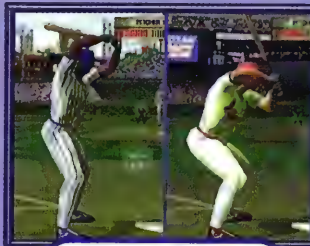
** At review time, created players' simulated season stats would malfunction. Acclaim addressed this problem and stated that it would be fixed in the final version.

A first-generation gameplay engine is bound to land a fair share of bugs. However, most developers make sure these bugs are eradicated before the product ships. We don't know who is to blame, Iguana or publisher, Acclaim Entertainment, but last year's All-Star Baseball shipped to retail as a broken product. It didn't work properly, nor did Turok 2, Quarterback Club, or NBA Jam. All of these games, which happen to be developed by Iguana, either malfunction or freeze up. Fathom, if you will, sitting in a movie theater, watching Star Wars Episode I for the first time. Two Jedi are beating on each other in a glorious battle. At the most intense moment, the scene freezes up, jumps ahead ten seconds, and the sound becomes muffled. This is what playing last year's All-Star Baseball was like. It was seriously bugged, and didn't allow the player to retrieve a saved season without the stats messing up.

This year is a rebuilding year. A year to iron out the wrinkles. All-Star Baseball 2000 is indeed a fixed product. The gameplay is very smooth and impressive – leaps and bounds better than what was offered last year. The stat tracking is also improved, but not completely perfect.** All-Star Baseball 2000 is once again the graphical baseball king on the Nintendo 64, and it doesn't utilize the Expansion Pak to deliver the higher resolution. From the new beanball animations, to the players leaping in the air and climbing on the fence, All-Star looks hot. Even the swing, which was a tad cumbersome in the last game, is smoothed out and now very realistic.

The gameplay was our biggest concern, but Iguana came through and delivered a blockbuster release. The batting, pitching, and fielding are all easy to manipulate, and never once hindered by any kind of bug. This year, it's much easier to make contact and pull or push the ball. Strikeouts are still a problematic factor – but not with every other at bat, like before. The batting view is also quick to change over to fielding, allowing for plenty of time to react to a grounder or a hard-line drive. The pitching is faster, but still basically the same in delivery. Pick a pitch, place it on the plate, then send it flying.

All-Star Baseball's front-end is massive. A dynamic fantasy draft, an option heavy Create Player, and a ton of stats await for all who have the baseball itch. Don't fear, Sammy Sosa (EA's cover boy) and Mark McGwire are both in the game, and it doesn't appear as though either player will sell out like Michael Jordan, Shaq, or Charles Barkley did. Nintendo's Ken Griffey release has been pushed back until July, making All-Star Baseball the baseball to get for the first-half of the season. Its play is now just as impressive as its look.



There they are, the kings of spring.



Big time graphics...big time plays.

Can a Buggy Past Lead to a Bright Future?

ANDY
THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept	7
Graphics	8.5
Sound	6
Playability	7.5
Entertainment	6
OVERALL	7

"We haven't had a chance to play Ken Griffey Jr.'s Slugfest yet, but at this point, All-Star Baseball looks to be the best option on the N64. The gameplay moves at a snail's pace. This is great for the purists, but I don't have two hours to sit and play a baseball game, so I found this little aspect to be pretty annoying. Otherwise, the batter animations are improved over last year's game (as is the AI), and the pitching and batting interface is still the best around. In the end, **this game is just too slow for my tastes, but overall, it's still a solid title.** If you've got the time, or should I say stamina, to sit through hours of baseball at a time, then this game is for you."

PAUL
THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept	8.75
Graphics	8.75
Sound	8
Playability	8.75
Entertainment	8.5
OVERALL	8.5

"Acclaim learned a lot from the last installment of its baseball title. For one thing, the players in this year's game actually look like they've swung a bat before. However, the computer still blindly takes cuts at thin air. That small gripe aside, the crazy computer base running is no longer an issue and in the time I played, I experienced no memory pak troubles. Again, **this game is loaded with options and stats up the wazzoo.** The fantasy baseball fanatics should be pleased. Games speed along at a nice clip, but are sometimes dull because of the repetitive announcing crew. The two-player games are definitely more entertaining. Griffey is also around the corner and I have to recommend to hold off on All-Star until he shows his face."

REINER
THE RAGING GAMER

Concept	8.5
Graphics	9.25
Sound	7
Playability	8.5
Entertainment	8
OVERALL	8.25

"As expected, All-Star Baseball is a real work of art. The graphics and animation are simply breathtaking, and the front-end is overflowing with fantasy options. Latched onto all of this is a solid gameplay engine. Last year, All-Star was good, but it wasn't great. The fielding seemed a little on the floaty side and strikeouts dominated the batting. This year, both the **fielding and batting have been polished up, and ultimately, improved to a nearly flawless state.** Sometimes the players may make a weird move toward the ball, but as a whole, the play is very tight. With Griffey on vacation until summer, I recommend All-Star as the baseball to get, but I advise doing a little research before purchase, because surprise-surprise, All-Star may have shipped buggy just like it did last year.**"



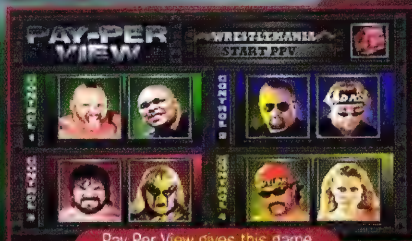
A Blaze of Glory

Nintendo 64 Preview

WWF ATTITUDE

- **Size:** 256 Megabit
- **Style:** 1 to 4-Player Fighting
- **Special Features:** Massive Create Wrestler; Edit Move; 150 New Moves; Over 40 Wrestlers; 15 Game Modes; 7 Title Belts; Improved Sound & Entrances; Rumble Pak Compatible; No Paul Wight
- **Created by:** Iguana West for Acclaim Entertainment
- **Available:** Late June for Nintendo 64

70% Complete



Pay Per View gives this game more attitude.



In the world of pro wrestling, wrestlers form and break alliances as often as they flex and tell us how great they are. One of the long-standing alliances, ten years between Acclaim and the WWF, is coming to an end and will be finalized with WWF Attitude.

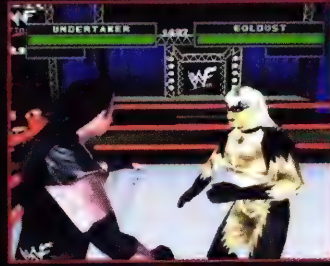
Wrestling fans are insanely devoted to their passion. Some show off signs, others paint their faces, and a few of the truly whacked even believe that the stuff is real. When playing a wrestling game, wrestling fanatics pay attention to the smallest details, and if something is wrong, they make themselves heard. In the case of Attitude, the fans' devotion is paying off. Iguana Studios, the minds behind the recent WWF titles, have closely tracked every review of it's last WWF title, War Zone, from magazines to fan sites. Iguana has listened to the criticisms with an open mind and has put forth an earnest effort to make Attitude its crowning achievement.

One of the most notable features of War Zone was its superior create player. Attitude's will be even better. Players will have more control over facial features and will be able to customize move sets by selecting moves from featured wrestlers like Steve Austin. Moves can even be renamed. There will be a

number of outfits to choose from and players will also be able to adjust the length of pants and shirt sleeves, and then write messages on the clothes to express even more attitude. There are also 64 nicknames to choose from and the announcers will even use them when announcing the bout.

Attitude has 15 game modes including a King of the Ring event that allows up to eight players to participate in a round robin-style tournament. But perhaps the greatest addition is the Create Your Own Pay Per View mode. You can select the wrestlers, format, and even create your own atmosphere in the arena by controlling the lights and putting up banners. While not required, you can even send Acclaim \$30 every time you want to play in your own Pay Per View event.

War Zone was a solid game and we believe Attitude could surpass it in every respect. The create player, the modes, and the sound have all been improved. The gameplay, while basically unchanged, will even have a couple of extras packed in. For instance, players can now fake being stunned to set up a counter move to an opponent's finisher. All of these additions will help send Acclaim and Iguana out of the WWF in a blaze of glory.

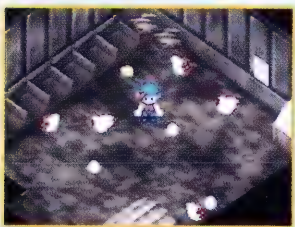
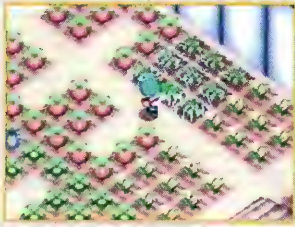


Preview

- **Size:** Unknown
- **Style:** 1-Player Role-Playing Game
- **Special Features:** 50 Non-Player Characters; Over 400 Subplots; 5 Women To Court; Power-Up Tools; Customize Your Home; Part-Time Job System; Horse & Dog Racing; 13 Special Events & Holidays
- **Created by:** Natsume
- **Available:** Fall for Nintendo 64

40% Complete

A Country Boy Can Survive



Harvest Moon was a very unique title for the Super Nintendo and the Game Boy. Role-playing, combined with the simulation aspects of farming and courtship, earned kudos from many critics and Harvest Moon became a sought-after title.

Now, there is another opportunity to experience this game. Harvest Moon 64 features the basic gameplay of the first, but is expanded to a larger realm. The goal is to have a profitable farm and find a wife who suits you. Fifty townsfolk will interact with the main character, and will have different responses and attitudes based on how much they like him. For example, if you are interested in a girl, another character may begin to dislike you and try to prevent you from marrying. Over 400 subplots exist, as you choose from one of five women to try and marry.

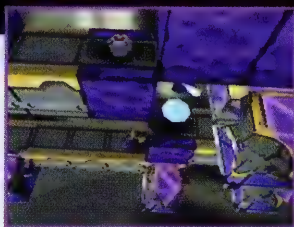
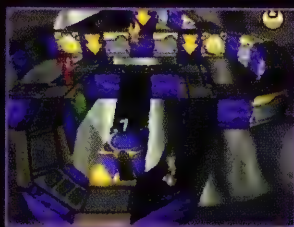
Of course, there is the farming as well, with many choices of plants and animals. Raise these resources and bring them to the 13 harvests and special events that occur throughout the year to impress others and make some money. If you are low on funds, and the crops are bad, you can take up a part-time job. Unlike other RPGs, however, there is no fighting. Although this may sound dull, the extensive amount of things to do will keep you intrigued.

For fans of the first game, as well as the Game Boy incarnation, Harvest Moon 64 will be a must buy. And for all of those neglected, starved, RPG-loving Nintendo 64 owners, this game offers a great glimmer of hope.

Review

- **Size:** 64 Megabit
- **Style:** 1-Player Puzzle
- **Special Features:** 5 Worlds; 136 Levels; 20 Bonus Levels; Fully Moveable Camera; Over 18 Devices; Rumble Pak Compatible
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low
- **Created by:** Big Bang Software for Infogrames
- **Available:** April for Nintendo 64

Bottom Line: 6.5



	ANDY	PAUL	REINER
Concept:	8	5	8.75
Graphics:	6	7	5.5
Sound:	6	5	6.25
Playability:	7	5	8.5
Entertainment:	7	5	8.75
Overall:	6.75	5.5	7.5



A Classical Refresh

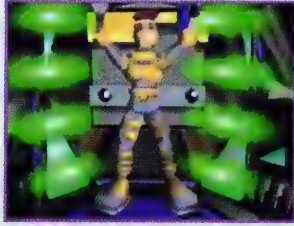
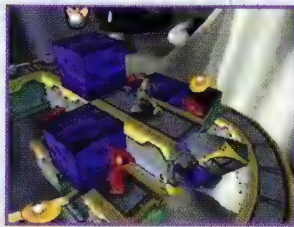
For those who don't know, the object of Lode Runner is to grab all the gold without getting caught by monks or accidentally killing yourself. Your only sidearm is a gun that can dig holes in the soft, regenerating ground. Luckily for old Lode, these monks aren't the brainy types, and often trap themselves in these holes, allowing Lode to tap dance over their craniums.

Lode Runner 3-D does exactly what you'd expect from the title; it adds another dimension to this puzzler of bygone Commodore days. How challenging can such a simple game be? Consider this - you're awarded a free life both for every level you complete and for extra life tokens that are scattered generously about, and gems send you to bonus life levels. Yet all can be lost in one mind-screwing level.

To ease your gold-grabbing vexations, Big Bang incorporated total camera control into Lode Runner 3-D. Feel free to pan up, down, left, or right, and zoom in and out on every little thing to figure out just what the heck to do.

The third dimension also allows some new pieces to be added to the classic formula. For example, floating platforms usually carry you to a different part of the board, but sometimes they move you to an entirely new section you didn't know existed.

Lode Runner 3-D is the kind of title you'll either hate loving or love hating. It will challenge you like no other game, forcing you to stare at the screen for a few minutes before even beginning a level. This much thinking drives some to play more, but has others drive a control pad through the screen.



Andy, The Game Hombre

"Lode Runner 64 is an excellent remake of the gaming classic; however, this puzzler ain't for everybody as patience and serious problem-solving skills are a must. If you're interested, rent it first."

Paul, The Game Professor

"I have to mention that I played this game a ton on the Apple II and it rocked. This new version does a great job of reviving the lost runner, but does little to keep me interested. Unless this game is priced at \$20, skip it."

Reiner, The Raging Gamer

"You gotta be a geek-a-holic to get into this blast from the past. Lode Runner is a thinking man's game that proves to be as addictive now as it was way back when. With over 100 levels to cut through, this puzzler will boggle your mind for days and stretch your patience to the limit. But it's not for everyone. It's strictly for puzzle fanatics."

Nintendo 64 Preview

- **Size:** 128 Megabit
- **Style:** 1-Player Action
- **Special Features:** 60 Exposures Per Roll; Pokémon Portfolio; Study Pokémon Behaviors (Excluding Breeding); Camera With Zoom Lens; Luring Techniques
- **Created by:** Jack for Nintendo
- **Available:** June 28 for Nintendo 64

85% Complete

Safari for the Elusive Squirtle



The better the picture...the more points you'll receive.



"Say cheese!!!"



Now that's a nice shot.



You'll need to perform certain feats to lure the Pokémon into the open.



"You're on Candid Camera!"



The Zero 1 shuttle will help you locate Pokémon more quickly.

Apparently the Game Boy just wasn't big enough to contain all 150 Pokémon. Now, the cute little critters are spilling over onto the Nintendo 64, where they'll have complete freedom to interact with one another, go into hiding, and display their true behavior patterns. It's up to you and your trusty camera to catch their every act.

Pokémon Snap is about as original as a game can get. The goal is to photograph Pokémon in their natural habitat, then compile all of the photos into a Portfolio for the world to see and study. Pokémon Snap was originally intended to be one of the first 64DD titles that would capitalize on its massive storage functions. But as you might have guessed, the DD isn't coming any time soon. So...Pokémon Snap is now an ordinary Nintendo 64 title that will make its debut Stateside on June 28.

Taking pictures of Pokémon sounds easy. Just stand and shoot, right? Wrong. Professor Oak is grading you on each photo you take. The critter has to be centered perfectly, it has to be caught in the act, and the shot has to make clear what the Pokémon is doing. Sometimes, the Pokémon are shy or in hiding. To capture the best shot, you'll need to toss apples to lure certain Pokémon into the open. Toss rocks into brush to make the airborne species hit the sky. And play the flute to make some (like Pikachu) dance. Your camera is limited to 60 exposures and comes packed with a handy zoom lens for distance shooting.

Steve "The Croc Hunter" Irwin would have a hey-day with this game. "Oh look there! It's a lil' Charmander. He's a real feisty bugga, and he may spray us with fire if we get too close... Let's go pick 'im up. Look at 'im! Dat's a bute."

We can't wait for this one! Let's hope that the animation and sound effects are just as cute and lively as they are in the cartoons.

Nintendo 64 Preview

- **Size:** 128 Megabit
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Racing
- **Special Features:** 34 Cars & 15 Racing Teams; 10 Tracks With Tons of Variations; 20 Events; Replay Save; Controller & Rumble Pak Compatible
- **Created by:** Boss Game Studios for Midway Home Entertainment
- **Available:** June 16 for Nintendo 64

70% Complete

Is There Life After California Speed?



177 EVENTS 34 RACING TEAMS...



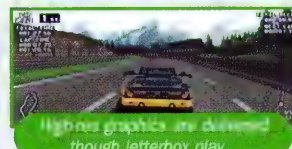
and over 100 track variations.



The graphics look hot.



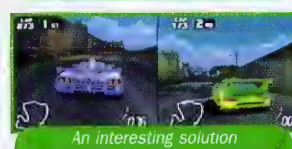
You can customize the replay and save it to the Controller Pak.



High-end graphics are delivered though letterbox play...



...with no Expansion Pak needed.



An interesting solution to multiplayer.

Midway Home Entertainment claims that GT: World Championship Driver is the most gorgeous racer ever to cruise onto the N64. The screenshots definitely speak volumes, showing intricately detailed cars and realistic lighting effects. But, to be quite frank, we could care less about the look of this game. It could be the most photo-realistic game ever to hit a console, and we still wouldn't care. The Nintendo 64 has a severe population problem on its hands. There are more racers on this machine than any other genre, and most of these games are completely worthless, fronting an attractive graphical cover to mask a diseased gameplay engine. If Midway wants to catch the consumer's eye, then it's going to have to get down and dirty and show us what's under the hood. The look is more or less irrelevant at this point.

Thankfully, World Championship Driver not only looks great, but its engine has an attractive purr to it. The garage will feature 34 exotic vehicles that can be powered-up and abused on 10 different tracks. These tracks are designed quite nicely, offering up a ton of variations. Midway states that these variations will create over 100 different track experiences. GT also sports a solution that will save gamers a few bucks. For high-resolution, the Expansion Pak is not needed. GT simply shrinks the screen size to letterbox to recreate the same ultra crisp graphics.

World Driver will also come packed with a unique Career mode that delivers over 20 racing events, over 15 distinct racing teams, and some of the most ferocious AI around. GT will even allow you to customize and save your instant replays. This racer definitely sounds (and looks) exciting; but, as we learned with California Speed, all upcoming Midway racing games should be fully revealed before being hyped for sale.

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64 TURBO



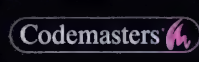
Get your elbows off the table, pal. And put your wheels on. Welcome to the first of eight gigantic worlds.



Pick one of 32 vehicles and put it in gear. Who knows? You might catch a whole inch of air!



Kick up some sand as you race against up to eight players and over a bikini or two.



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PlayStation Review

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Platform
- **Special Features:** Improved Camera Physics; Tons of New Costumes & Gexisms; Same Classic Gameplay; Memory Card & Password Save; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High
- **Created by:** Crystal Dynamics for Eidos Interactive
- **Available:** Now for PlayStation

Bottom Line:

8

With a hype machine made of titanium steel at the tip of his tail, and an industry in love with his floppy tongue, Gex was destined for greatness. He was to be the next platform superstar, the greatest thing since the blue hog and the orange coot. But his color didn't sit well with the gaming nation. Despite the praise that the press dished out, Gex's first 3D adventure, *Enter the Gecko*, failed to rock the retail world. It just sat on the shelf.

To this day, only 250,000 units of *Enter the Gecko* have been sold. This number might seem big, but compared to sales figures for *Crash Bandicoot*, or even the newcomer, *Spyro the Dragon*, it's chump change. *Enter the Gecko* didn't have the universal appeal of these games. It was designed for an older audience. Its camera controls were too complex for beginners, and the wacky Gexisms were targeted specifically for adults. Kids didn't really understand what Gex was saying. He was talking their ears off, but it didn't register as anything other than blather. Now, if he had periodically farted or used different vocabulary like "dumbohead" or "poopie," then he would have done just fine, and may have had the chance to join *Crash Bandicoot* on his soaring retail pedestal.

In the sequel, *Gex: Deep Cover Gecko*, it would have been easy for Crystal Dynamics to learn from its mistakes and calibrate the appeal for a wider audience. But Crystal did nothing of the kind. *Deep Cover Gecko* is a straight-up sequel to *Enter the Gecko*. Granted, the camera has been improved so it is more playable, but the humor and attitude are the same. We'd even say that Gex's tongue is more sinister and abrasive. In *Enter the Gecko*, Gex played around with a handful of lines from *Austin Powers*, and he occasionally made reference to that thing men and women do together when they're alone. But in *Deep Cover Gecko*, he goes all out. Almost every line ends with *Austin Powers*'s classic, "Baby!" Gex is uncensored and raring to go with this sequel.

As far as gameplay is concerned, *Deep Cover Gecko* is much larger and more difficult. Tail bouncing, tongue grabbing, crazy leaping, and Remote Control searching are all ingredients that make this platformer so addictive. One big change is the overworld. It's gigantic and very much like that found in Rareware's *Banjo-Kazooie*. Crystal D even included a few friends for Gex to hang with, and the most skilled players can unlock and play as these new zards on the block for a bonus level or two. Gex's animation and moves are basically the same, but his wardrobe is larger and quite different. We'd say he throws on about 20 different guises. These fashions cover cowboys, firemen, anime characters, super heroes, and even a snowboarder.

Deep Cover Gecko's gameplay is much better, the voice-overs are more outrageous, and the graphics are improved tenfold. If you liked the last game, this sequel delivers the same ol' Gex goodness.



He's Coming Again, Baby!

ANDY

THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept

7

Graphics

8

Sound

8.25

Playability

8.5

Entertainment

8.5

8

OVERALL

"Nothing will change the fact that Gex (in any form) is fun, but it's hard not to talk about its obvious shortcomings. Hey, I like the one-liners and the Baywatch babe popping out of her outfit just as much as the next guy, but all these extras can only take Gex so far. While the reworked camera is better than previous Gex installments, it's still obviously outclassed by other entries in this genre. To its credit, Gex features very well-designed levels, plus lots of action. But without some new elements to the engine, *Deep Cover Gecko* feels like just another game from the Gex assembly line. Which is a real shame, because this is an ingenious product that will more than satisfy platform fanatics. But to get me back into the fold, Crystal needs to do more than create new levels, add babe, then mix."

PAUL

THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept

7

Graphics

8.5

Sound

9

Playability

7

Entertainment

7.75

8

OVERALL

"In little over a year, a lot has happened to the action/platform genre on PlayStation and unfortunately Gex has not kept up with the times. With killer titles like *Crash* and *Spyro* setting the curve, the lizard is struggling to find third place with that other green guy named *Croc*. This game, like its predecessor, is huge and offers plenty of challenge. As usual Gex's wisecracks are plentiful and very humorous. The sad thing about this game is the camera perspective. It is so cumbersome and really makes it hard to play. *Crystal D* was attempting to add some variety with new games and vehicles, but I think it was all in vain. Make sure to try this game before throwing down the cash."

REINER

THE RAGING GAMER

Concept

7.75

Graphics

9

Sound

8.5

Playability

7.25

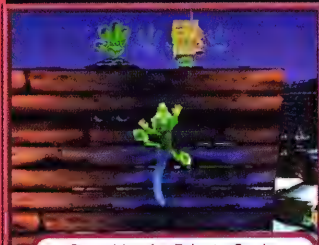
Entertainment

7.75

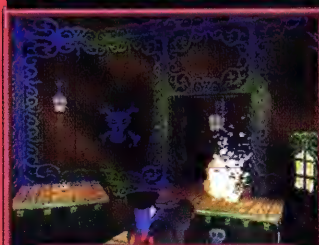
8

OVERALL

"*Deep Cover Gecko* isn't too much of an innovation over last year's release, but it offers up just enough variety to keep you hooked a second time. The biggest gripe with the last game, the camera, is partially fixed, but is still a little on the buggy side and often creates frustrating situations. As for gameplay, Gex is once again well executed. The controls can get sloppy at times and strange collision occurs, but for the most part, the play is very precise and user-friendly. *Deep Cover Gecko*'s platforming is challenging as all heck, and the expanded overworld delivers a less linear quest and a heap of exploration. *Deep Cover Gecko* isn't the most spectacular platformer on the PlayStation, but it's good and delivers a difficult challenge. It's a great rainy day game for this spring."



Searching for Private Gecko.



Minigames periodically appear during the quest for the Remotes.



Meet Gex's butler and in-game trainer, Alfred.



Gex's tail is as lethal as ever.



Gex can now ride on a handful of different critters.



That crazy gecko is as amphibious as a frog.





PlayStation Review

Are We Still Needy?

"Whoa! I did not expect this game to kick so much butt, but man does it ever. Not only are the tracks fantastic, the control is superb. And if that weren't enough to sell me, EA threw in and improved the Hot Pursuit mode, where you get to dodge the cops (a laugh riot); High Stakes, where you gamble for cars (I've never been as nervous as I was racing for pink slips); and the Special Events mode, where you get to experience such wonderful things as high speed racing through traffic (a delightful experience). This game may have some technical issues to deal with, but the gameplay is right on. **This is the ultimate racing solution until Gran Turismo 2 hits the streets.**"

ANDY
THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept **9.5**

Graphics **8.75**

Sound **8.25**

Playability **9.5**

Entertainment **9.5**

9

OVERALL

"This year's installment of EA's long-running racing series has improved in about every category. **The track designs, car models, and lighting effect are superb.** I found the frivolous environment additions (like the hot air balloons) to tax the fluidity of the game, creating some choppy action at times. Hot Pursuit mode still rocks, but it is even better because you can play on both sides of the law. I never thought that being a cop would be fun. The heart of the game, the Tournament, is far more entertaining than last year's version. When you throw in the Special Events, this game packs a lot of racing action. The only drawback to this title is that it has the need for cars. Some muscle cars, SUVs, and a couple Japanese sports cars could make it great."

PAUL
THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept **9**

Graphics **8.5**

Sound **7**

Playability **9**

Entertainment **8.5**

8.5

OVERALL

"I've always admired the NFS series for its ability to deliver mammoth crashes; however, I could never really get into the play since it was hampered in physics and control. High Stakes is a step in the right direction. The crashes are as dynamic as ever, and the play is quite satisfactory. For multiplayer, **the High Stakes mode is awesome** and forces a player to hand over a car when he or she loses. The single player modes are excellent as well. The Hot Pursuit is even better than it was in the last game, and the Tournaments are tough, pushing you to race like a madman. As with the earlier games, the loading times are still way too long, and the framerate is a tad sluggish, but the variety in modes, the creative tracks, and beautiful graphics more than make up for any discrepancies."

REINER
THE RAGING GAMER

Concept **9.25**

Graphics **8.75**

Sound **8.5**

Playability **8.75**

Entertainment **9.25**

9

OVERALL

The Need For Speed series has been rolling with PlayStation for a while now, with every sequel stomping its predecessor. Need For Speed: High Stakes (NFS:HS) once more takes it to the next level. Aside from the standard graphic and lighting improvements, NFS:HS has an overhauled physics engine, vanity plates, and the actual recorded engine burn of every car. Add in new modes, cars, tracks, and a player budget, and NFS:HS starts to make Need For Speed III look like a go-cart racer.

Previously, races had to be won to unlock better cars. In NFS:HS, all your dream autos are going to cost you a pretty penny. A new player starts off with just enough cash to buy a no-frills BMW Z3 Roadster or Mercedes SLK 230. From there, the long road to the \$500,000 McLaren F1 GTR begins. A variety of tournaments and special events can be entered (for a price), with prize money given to the top three finishers. In some special events (like the Corvettes Only race), a one of a kind boss-mobile will be the prize for the winner.

The economic system, coupled with having to pay for the damage caused during a reckless run, brings a new level of thought to the track. A player can use earned money to purchase one of three upgrades for the car he or she has, sell a car off, buy a new car, or maybe save a little extra in case a difficult tournament, along with the entry fee, is lost. With one memory card, players can assemble a garage full of nice toys.

Once you've built up an impressive array of cars, it's time to risk it all in High Stakes mode. Two players enter their memory cards and race what they think are their sweetest rides. The winner steals the loser's car, keeping it for bragging rights or selling it for spite.

The popular Hot Pursuit mode also makes its much improved return. Playing as the law; call for backup, lay road spikes, or set up a road block. Luckily for all would-be perps out there, a police scanner spouts all the info a well-trained ear would need to avoid trouble. Best of all, Hot Pursuit can be played in 2-player split-screen, either as a team or as law vs. law-breaker.

Standing on its own, Need For Speed: High Stakes is the best there's ever been for the series. The only question is, how does it compare with the multitude of other PlayStation racers out there?

Bottom Line: 8.75

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Racing
- **Special Features:** Test Drive, Single Race, Hot Pursuit, Tournament, Special Events, & High Stakes Modes; 14 Cars; 10 Tracks; Visible Car Damage; Random Track Events; Economy System; Analog Compatible
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High
- **Created by:** Electronic Arts
- **Available:** Now for PlayStation



PlayStation Review

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Fighting
- **Special Features:** Beast Morphing; 8 Characters Plus More Hidden; 6 Modes; Sidestep (Custom Mode Only); Kid, Big Head, & Big Arm Character Models; Hi-Res Graphics; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible; 8 Difficulties
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High
- **Created by:** Hudson Soft for SCEA
- **Available:** May 25 for PlayStation

Bottom Line: **7**



SPLIT DECISION

ANDY

THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept	8
Graphics	9
Sound	7.5
Playability	9
Entertainment	7

8

OVERALL

"Bloody Roar II comes back at ya with the same great gameplay that made the first a solid fighter. On the outside, it's obvious that there has been a lot done to improve this game. The graphics are now hi-res with blazing frame-rates, there are a number of new modes, and the moves are better and flashier than ever. But when you get down to the real nitty-gritty, this game still only has 11 playable characters. Which is a real shame, because Bloody Roar II rocks; but it's basically just Bloody Roar 1 in a new hard candy shell. If you own the first one, there isn't much reason to buy the second (except maybe the so-bad-it's-funny Story mode). If you've never played Bloody Roar, it's at least worth checking out."

PAUL

THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept	7
Graphics	8
Sound	5.75
Playability	8
Entertainment	1

5.25

OVERALL

"I normally don't pay much attention to intros in games, but this one caught my eye. It is truly an ugly site when you fire this game up. FMV that is not even full screen? Yuck. The Story mode is also poorly done. Compared to the previous version, the graphics engine has been vastly improved. The characters are nicely designed and the effects are terrific. Yet, it pales in comparison to Tekken 3. In Bloody Roar II there's the token blood, simplistic combos, and some beast transformations. It all isn't very exciting and the game does little to push the fighting game genre in any direction but down. Do yourself a favor and forget about this title. You'll be glad you did."

REINER

THE RAGING GAMER

Concept	8
Graphics	8.75
Sound	7.75
Playability	8
Entertainment	8

8

OVERALL

"Bloody Roar II's front-end and graphical prowess are improved, sporting several new game modes (including a horribly written Story mode) and beautiful hi-res graphics. Its gameplay isn't necessarily improved, but slightly changed. Amidst its sea of combos and juggles, Bloody Roar II is nothing more than a button masher. If you don't take the time to master its complex combat system, then victory can also be achieved by simply slamming the buttons on the controller. Even if you do just tap, tap, tap, Roar II's gameplay proves to be quite enjoyable, as it delivers unique gameplay attributes, and lightning quick play that looks simply stunning at 60 fps. If you haven't played Roar, then I recommend clawing your way into Roar II."

The Beast Within was a horror film from the 1980's. When we were young, it horrified us to watch the main character begin his painful transformation into a hideous monster. This morphing concept has been used far and wide, including in the Bloody Roar series from Hudson. But unfortunately, the transformation process in Bloody Roar is quick, painless, and far from hideous. An elaborate morphing sequence with screams, blood, and cracking flesh would break up the action, but it would be a lot more realistic.

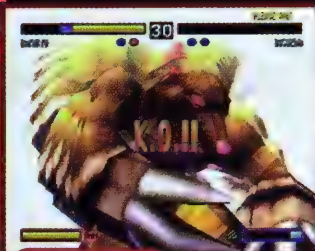
Although we find the morphing process in Bloody Roar II boring, the concept is wonderful. Since there aren't a whole lot of characters in this game, the morphing effectively doubles the size of the cast by changing the look of a character into a ferocious beast, as well as increasing his or her strength and attack variations.

There are some basic strategies to use when morphing. When a fight begins, the beast meter will be about half full. You can choose to morph immediately, but you may want to wait for the meter to fill up so you can enjoy the advantages of the beast state for as long as possible. Another reason to hold off on morphing is that, as a beast, you can add to your health meter by beating the tar out of your opponent, unlike the original Bloody Roar, where morphing would fully refill the health bar automatically.

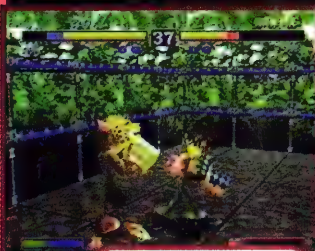
But BR2 is not just about fighting. There is a story to this game that unfolds through the Story mode. People that have the morphing ability are called zoanthropes. Some were born that way and some have been genetically altered. Each character has a unique story that is unraveled with hand drawn artwork, written dialogue, and, to a lesser degree, the fights that ensue.

The Custom mode is another solid feature that allows you to select different character models like big head, kid bodies, and big arms. You can also select a practice bout to work on your moves, as well as choose a sidestep move to be used during combat. Strangely, the sidestep is not offered anywhere else in the game.

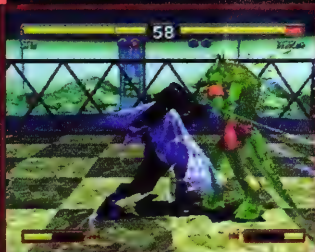
We would lastly like to touch on some other differences between the first and second Bloody Roar games. Unfortunately, the Rave meter has been omitted, as has the blood toggle. On the bright side, BR2 uses hi-res graphics and, of the eight initial characters, five are brand new to the Bloody Roar experience.



Mole wins!



The kids are back.



Sacrifice your beast meter for a super special.



Take flight as the Bat.



R4 RIDGE RACER TYPE 4

Real Racing Revolution?

"The Ridge Racer series is still one of the best, and R4 continues the tradition. While I'm not a big fan of the cars that use the grip setup (which unfortunately takes up half of this game), the drift vehicles bring back memories of Ridge Racer Revolution and why you play racing games – for an intense, high speed adrenaline rush. As would be expected, **R4 offers plenty of challenge with multiple tracks to master and hundreds of cars to collect.** (Though I doubt I would collect all the cars if you couldn't trade with the PocketStation.) For racing fans who prefer arcade-styled racing, R4 definitely delivers (especially with the Ridge Racer 60FPS bonus disc). It's not as good as Gran Turismo, but it certainly doesn't suck. Four-player rocks!"

ANDY
THE GAME HOMBRE

Concept	8
Graphics	9.25
Sound	9.5
Playability	8
Entertainment	8
OVERALL	8.5

"I have always enjoyed Namco's efforts with PlayStation racing games and R4 is no exception. It looks fantastic and the playcontrol has returned to the classic style that was absent in Ridge Racer. Like the previous games, I was hooked into popping slides and powering around the opposition. The volume of cars to unlock is impressive, but after unlocking about 20 or so, the game gets extremely repetitive. Yes, you can acquire cars by swapping with other PocketStations, but **many of the cars seem virtually identical.** Ridge Racer is a good racing game, but is overshadowed by Gran Turismo, Need For Speed, and Test Drive. This is a rental at best."

PAUL
THE GAME PROFESSOR

Concept	7
Graphics	9.25
Sound	9
Playability	9
Entertainment	5
OVERALL	8

"If Type 4 is any kind of example, all racing games will now be divided into two categories – the ones made before Gran Turismo and those made after. Type 4 delivers a truckload of options, but misses out on presenting the key ingredient that made all of the previous Ridge Racer titles so entertaining. It lacks challenging play. The CPU racers lack aggression and skill. And the powerslide is way too mechanical, allowing for perfect turns almost every time. On the other hand, **the multiplayer is pretty slick.** The variety in cars is also nice, but the means to unlock them is pretty weak. Type 4 pushes you to trade cars with friends via the PocketStation. It's gaming suicide to gather 'em all through play. All in all, This is a decent sequel, but Revolution is still the best in the series."

REINER
THE RACING GAMER

Concept	7.25
Graphics	9.5
Sound	8.75
Playability	7
Entertainment	7
OVERALL	8

Both Ridge Racer and Ridge Racer Revolution soared to the top of the charts for one reason and one reason alone – gameplay. Granted, excessiveness wasn't a factor at the time, but both of these racers capitalized by delivering the minimum. One track and a handful of cars was all it took to grab the crown of racing king. This series took a step to the side when Namco tried to implement a different direction with the third release, Ridge Racer. This racer sported improved graphics, more tracks, upgradeable cars, and tweaked play mechanics. But instead of praise, the majority of the gaming nation frowned upon this release and said that Revolution was still the best in the series. Improving the look was definitely a step in the right direction, but the new tracks showed poor design, and the new play took most of the arcade qualities out of the game. Now, even bigger changes are on the way in Namco's latest offering, Ridge Racer Type 4. But are these the changes we crave?

Instead of reverting back to the classic roots, this new Ridge Racer reached out and latched onto the bumper of the prestigious PlayStation racer, Gran Turismo. In Type 4, the arcade vibe that made the first two releases so exciting plays second fiddle, and the primary focus isn't necessarily based on intense racing. Type 4 pushes gamers to become infatuated with collecting all of the hidden vehicles. It's like a Pokécar game. Type 4's lot is crammed to capacity with 320 unlicensed speed demons. That's almost one for each day of the year. Yowza!! Some of the cars show NASCAR and Indy-like qualities, while others reveal far-fetched space-age designs. However, none of these cars come for free. They have to be individually unlocked before they can be accessed.

The biggest addition to this Ridge Racer is the Gran Prix mode. When you start a Gran Prix, you'll first be asked to join one of four teams: France, Japan, Italy, or the United States. After this you'll need to select one of four different car manufacturers: Assoluto, Lizard, Terrazi, or Age Solo. Each of these manufacturers brings forth twenty different cars. Do a little math (20 x 4), and the car total jumps to 80. Mix in the four paint jobs from each of the teams, then do a little more math (80 x 4), and 320 cars are born. To get these cars, you'll need to beat the Gran Prix mode over and over again, unlocking one... maybe two... and if you're lucky... three cars at a time.

The Gran Prix mode consists of eight tracks. Some of these tracks require cat-like reflexes and use of the patented powerslide. Other tracks demand that you put the pedal to the metal and floor it from beginning to end. The last track is something new...and something odd for the Ridge Racer universe. It's a high speed ring; an oval track that pushes the player to corner tightly and block out the opposition.

Type 4 is a leap and bound above what we've seen in the previous installments. Some will say the powerslide is too mechanical. Others will complain about the noisy car designs. All complaints aside though, Type 4 delivers breath-taking graphics, tight gameplay, and tons of single and multiplayer options. Namco even created a new controller, the JogCon, just for this title. The new PocketStation peripheral is also compatible for trading cars.

- **Size:** 2 CD-ROMs
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Racing (Up to 4-Players Via Link)
- **Special Features:** 320 Cars; 8 Tracks; 14 Songs; Bonus Disc With Original Ridge Racer (60 FPS); Dual Shock, JogCon, PocketStation, & Analog Compatible
- **Replay Value:** High
- **Created by:** Namco
- **Available:** May 5 for PlayStation

Bottom Line: 8.25



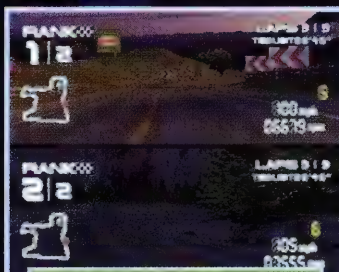
The arcade play delivers awesome powerslide techniques.



The competition can bump, grind, and block.



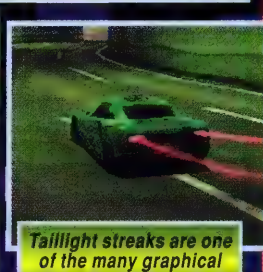
The high-speed ring is the newest addition to the Ridge Racer series.



Race your fastest machines against a friend's stock.



Take 'im from behind.

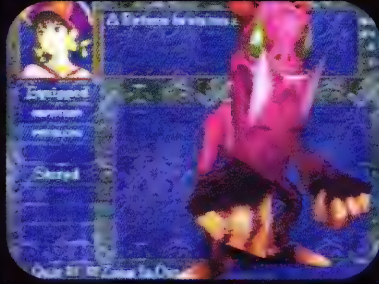


Taillight streaks are one of the many graphical enhancements.





Uniquely immersive role-playing experience is limited only by your imagination.



Collect over 150 creatures including rare and ultra-rare breeds. Then custom combine them into millions of powerful new monsters.



Strategically use your monster's dominance of one of the four elements: Earth, Wind, Fire or Water.

INFINITE MONSTERS



Pit your creation against a friend in the arena mode.

Welcome to the world of Jade Cocoon: Story of the Tamamayu. As Levant, a Cocoon Master, you will engage powerful monsters in deadly one on one combat. As the magic and talon clash of these titanic battles turn to your favor you can call on the mystic Cocoon powers and capture a fallen foe as they are on the brink of death. Once captured these mighty creatures can be trained to fight for you and combined with other monsters to form millions of new beasts. Once created these creatures will be your key to surviving the perils of the forest.



LEARN THE SECRETS OF THE TAMAMAYU. VISIT WWW.CRAVEGAMES.COM

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COMING JULY 14, 1999



JADE EGG

STORY OF THE TAMAMAYU

PlayStation Preview

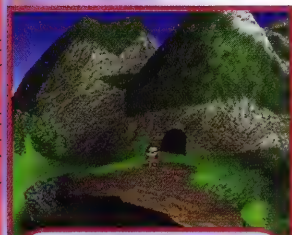
- **Size:** 2 CD-ROMs
- **Style:** 1-Player Role-Playing Game
- **Special Features:** 12 Hours of Spoken Dialog; Anime FMV; Unique Elemental Weapon System; Memory Card Save; Dual Shock Compatible
- **Created by:** Red Company for Atlus
- **Available:** 3rd (Possibly 4th) Quarter for PlayStation

60% Complete



Hardcore Anime Invasion!

Style



Complete camera control is available in towns and in the overworld.

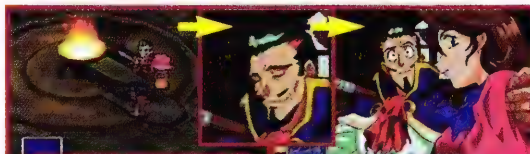
This two disc epic is loaded to the hilt with personality. Play wise, it's similar to most of the RPGs on the market. Talk to villagers, fight random monsters, run along a linear path...it's the same ol' song and dance we know so well. But don't write this game off as another RPG zombie just yet. Its look is unique and oh so stylish, and some of the techniques that are tossed out are wild and original. The development team tried to incorporate anime into every inch of this game. If not in a cutscene, then you'll see it in combat, or maybe even in a random chat with a villager. The entire game features 2D sprites shackled to beautiful 3D environments. Red Company was also quite clever with the camera angles. First-person, isometric, distance pans, and over the shoulder... it's all here. Thousand Arms also features over 12 hours of spoken dialog re-recorded in English.



人が 仕事のじゃまだ
な 今日は何でくれ

Thousand Arms boiled in the development brew for over three years before its Japanese debut on December 12. Hardcore developer, Red Company, of *Bonk's Adventure* fame in the States and *Sakura Taisen* fame in Japan, went the extra mile to make sure that this RPG was as close to perfect as could be. Japan seemed to think the wait was well worth it, and now, druids and clerics in the States will have the pleasure of biting nails in anticipation as Atlus readies a *Thousand Arms* port for this summer. Atlus emphasized that this is the most ambitious localization project in its ten year history. With *FFVIII* on the way and a surprisingly fruitful RPG market of late, this RPG better be extraordinary. We think it will be.

The Tale and the Faces



Sometimes the camera will pan down showing an animated conversation.

なー何を言ってる? 死は嫌いか?
おしは、あまえお、そんなふつに言てた
つもりはないよーおー



To win the affection of women, you'll need to do strange things.

Players assume the role of Meis Triumph, a young noble who enjoys blacksmith work almost as much as he does women. Whenever a young gal crosses his path, Meis freaks out, a heart appears in a thought balloon over his head, and his feet float off the ground. Through the course of the game, you'll need to help Meis hook himself up with a lovely lady. When you talk to the womenfolk, you'll be asked to answer specific questions correctly (and carefully). One slip of the tongue and BAM!!! You may end up with a black eye. Meis will even be forced to conquer minigames to win the affection of a hot mama. There are a handful of other characters that will join your party, and we'd love to tell ya who's who, but many of their origins are tied heavily



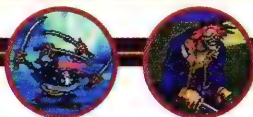
Meis



into the plot...and, teasers that we are, we don't want to say a word. Think evil...the world hanging in the balance...and tons of ladies.

Combat

The battle formula is a little strange. Full parties can enter the fray, but are split into specific zones. The front character (who is always onscreen) has the ability to duke it out hand-to-hand or to cast magic. The back characters, on the other hand, can only cast magic and direct projectiles. They will also have the ability to cheer on the front man, which in turn adds an extra hit point or two to the front man's current stash. The fights are all turn-based, where the most experienced opponent attacks quicker.



The sharp 2D animation is accompanied by 3D backings.



All weapons can be endowed with elements to create different spells and attacks.

Anime

There's a ton of video in this game, and while not pictured in this bar, some of the animation utilizes CG and real video footage.



STAR OCEAN THE SECOND STORY

Enix Finally Returns

- **Size:** 2 CD-ROMs
- **Style:** 1-Player Role-Playing Game
- **Special Features:** 2 Playable Characters; 80 Possible Endings; 3 Combat Styles; Side Quests; Specialties; CG Cutscenes; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible; From the Makers of Dragon Warrior
- **Created by:** Tri-Ace/Enix for Sony Computer Entertainment America
- **Available:** June 8 for PlayStation

90% Complete

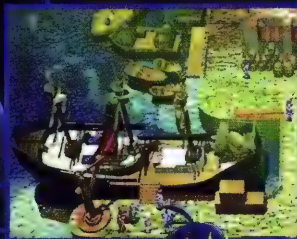
It's definitely been an RPG festival this year, and it seems like the party will keep going until the wee hours of the morning with more solid RPGs still on the way like Jade Cocoon, Final Fantasy VIII, and Star Ocean. From the makers of Dragon Warrior, Star Ocean uses incredible detail, from item creation to emotional levels, designed to wrap players up in the experience.

The Story

Star Ocean begins on two planets, Earth and the primitive Expel. It seems some angry gods have hurled a deadly meteorite through space in order to destroy all life in the universe. The meteorite collides with Expel and is planted deep within its crust. The people of Expel, somewhat superstitious, dub this rock the "Sorcery Globe." Soon, strange things begin to happen, including monsters surfacing to terrorize the people. Two characters meet and decide to investigate the Sorcery Globe, but not just to save Expel. One seeks answers so he can return home to Earth. The other seeks answers about her past and her natural mother.



The Sorcery Globe approaches Expel.



The Cast



Hero select Select your character.

Claude C. Kenny
Son of Earth Federation Army hero Renzō J. Kenny. Claude has his doubts, but he's still attending the Federation Academy. A typical 19-year-old, his mother is a former Basic Combat Arts. But...

Claude C. Kenny.

There are two playable characters in Star Ocean, but you will meet others who can join your party. You can have as many as eight in your party, but only four at a time can be used in combat.

Claude C. Kenny is one of the playable characters. Nineteen, he is a new Lt. Commander of the Earth Federation. His father is a military hero, leading Claude to struggle for his own identity. While on his first mission, Claude has an accident that sends him through a warp portal to the planet Expel.

The other playable character is Rena Lanford. Seventeen, she is from a village called Arlia on the planet Expel. She has a strange ability to heal and her past is filled with many questions. She has a strong desire to find out who her real mother is and why she has her unique healing powers.



Hero select Select your character.

Rena Lanford
Creative and a dreamer, Rena is a 17-year-old girl. She generally likes Physical Arts and has a mysterious healing power. She lives in Arlia in the southern regions of Planet Expel.

Rena Lanford.

Combat



Celine unleashes a very potent attack.

In Star Ocean, there are three battle modes to choose from - Standard mode, which is turn-based; Semi-Active mode, which is real-time and allows some freedom of movement; and Full Active mode, which is also real-time and allows for complete freedom of movement. In Full Active mode, you could, for example, move away from your partner and act as a decoy or guard someone who is casting a spell.

Although the other characters in your party fight without your controlling them, you can set the AI for each character. Each has six options that are slightly unique. Also, there are 13 different formations you can apply to your party.



In combat, you can roam wherever you want.

Private Actions

Private Actions are the side quests you will come upon during the game that can change the story line. These allow characters to build relationships as well as emotional levels.

Emotional Level

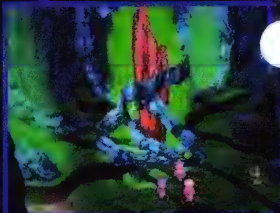
All characters have an emotional level in relation to the other characters. This bond characters form can actually change the way they reminisce about their adventures at the end of the game. Even better, if two characters have a strong bond and one is killed during combat, the survivor can attack with rage and cause extra damage.



We have no idea what that thing is.

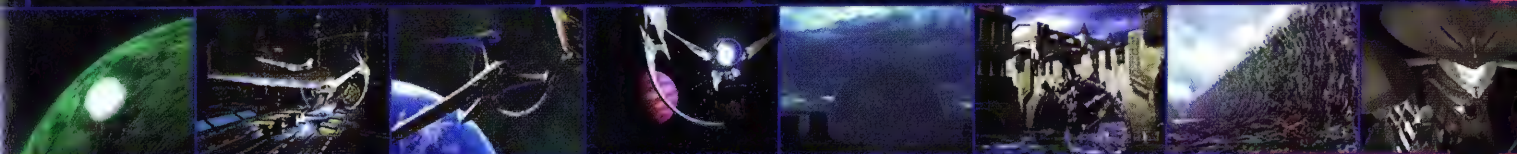
Specialties

Normal moves are the basic attacks characters use in combat. However, even if a character has no traditional magic powers, he or she can spend Magic Points with Specialties or Killer Moves. These Killer Moves can also be combined together to form a Link Combo to deliver even more damage. But first, you must find the Link Combo item hidden somewhere on the planet. Lastly, there are the Super Specialties that are created cooperatively by the party. For these, certain conditions and skills apply.



Item Creation

While items can be found or bought, some must be created. To do so, you must first be proficient at a skill, like cooking, compounding, alchemy, or metalwork. Then, you need to obtain the raw materials to work with, like seafood, grains, gold, or crystal. Work with a material and something will be created, but the result can be completely unexpected. The specialty level, skill level, and talents of the character will all affect the outcome.



PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Role-Playing Game
- **Special Features:** Over 160 Monster To Capture & Combine; Summons; Four Types of Magic; Voice-Overs; Over 600 Beautiful Pre-Rendered Backgrounds; Art Direction by Katsuya Kondoh; Anime Intro
- **Created by:** Genki for Crave Entertainment
- **Available:** July for PlayStation

60% Complete

JADE COCOON The Collection of Minions

The early part of this year saw Guardian's Crusade, Legend of Legaia, and Shadow Madness. And more of the same is on the way with titles like Lunar the Silver Star Story, Star Ocean, and FF VIII. While RPGs will never be the most dominant genre in America, they have seen such an increase in numbers lately that we're tempted to proclaim 1999, The Year of the Geek...er...RPG. Sorry about that. But hey, having a streak of geek is of little concern when you have all these games to choose from. Jade Cocoon, from the creators of the recent Virtua Fighter 3tb for the Dreamcast, is an upcoming option.

In Jade Cocoon, players take on the role of Levant, a young Cocoon master. Levant has the ability to capture evil minions and keep them trapped in cocoons. Such a prison is called a Firefly Cocoon. But this is worthless to a master like Levant without the help of a Cocoon Sorceress, who can purify the minion within. Once purified, the new White Cocoon can serve two ends. It can be spun into silk by the sorceress and then traded for cash, or the purified minion can be summoned by the Cocoon Master in battle. But that's only the beginning, because the minions can be combined together by a sorceress to form a new and more powerful monster. These combinations are seemingly endless because each combination can then be joined with other combinations! But beware. Cocoons purified by anyone other than a female sorceress are tainted and must never be touched.

Once you have purified a minion, it effectively becomes a member of your party. While you can store a wide number of minions, only three at a time can be equipped and used in battle. The bummer is, when you summon a minion to battle, it takes your place instead of fighting by your side. However, you can switch back and forth as much as you like and it doesn't always cost an attack turn.

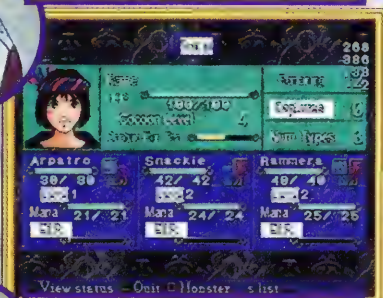
Enhancing the game further are stunning character models and painted backdrops that are rich in color and finely detailed. The game's art director is Katsuya Kondoh, who has been the conceptual artist and director of popular anime films like Totoro My Neighbor, Ki Ki's Delivery Service, and Princess Mononoke. The graphics and gameplay of Jade Cocoon definitely make it one to watch.



Mavoo, a sorceress and possible love interest, purifies a minion caught by Levant.



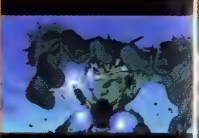
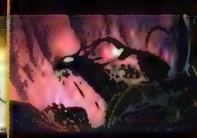
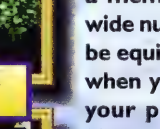
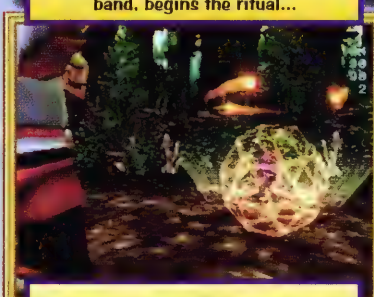
Visit the blacksmith to buy some goods.



Levant has access to three minions during battle.



Once in battle, you can summon a minion to take your place.



Monkey
Madness!!!

PlayStation Preview

Ape Escape

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action (2-Player Minigames)
- **Special Features:** Analog Required; 25 Levels; Minigames Such as Boxing, Skiing, & Galaxy Monkey; 10 Gadgets; Bosses; Tank & Raft Vehicles; Worldwide Launch; Memory Card & Dual Shock Compatible
- **Created by:** SCEI for Sony Computer Entertainment America
- **Available:** June for PlayStation

80% Complete

In Japanese, the name of this game translates into "Monkey Get You." Oddly, in the American and European markets, the game is known as Ape Escape. Calling a monkey an ape...there has to be some animal rights group out there that's upset about this one. Erroneous vernacular aside, Ape Escape is a wild game. After over two and a half years of development, Ape Escape is ready to shock the world as the first game that requires an analog controller. It stars the young upstart Kakeru on his quest to capture renegade bands of monkeys that have been turned intelligent and evil by a siren-equipped helmet. The goal on each of Ape Escape's 25 levels is to capture the monkeys hidden throughout. Some of these devilish little fellows are easy to find, while others are cleverly hidden.

Controlling Kakeru is easy. The left analog stick maneuvers him both on land and in water (standard analog rules apply – press lightly to walk, push all the way to run), and by pressing down on this stick you can also crouch or crawl (which is good for sneaking up on cheeky monkeys). The symbol buttons serve as a quick interface for choosing gadgets, with the shoulder buttons delivering camera controls and the ability to jump. The right analog stick controls the gadgets that Kakeru finds during his quest. For example, when you press the stick in a direction with the club equipped, Kakeru takes a swing. Spin the stick 360 degrees and Kakeru arcs the club around him. The stick works differently with each gadget, so mastering each is essential for solving the various puzzles and passing the platform pratfalls that await.

Some of the more unique gadgets that Kakeru will find include the Remote Control car (that Kakeru drives using the right analog stick); the radar (that you can use to deliver live broadcasts of the monkeys in their hiding spots); the dash hoop (that with some quick spins of the right analog stick sends Kakeru shooting across the screen); the sling shot (that takes the player to a first-person view where you pull back and release the right analog stick to fire); and the propeller (that you spin with the analog to achieve flight).

Ape Escape is mostly an action game, but there are plenty of platforming elements to keep things interesting. For example, at one point in the game, you are charged with the task of hitting a switch using the slingshot from a moving platform. Certainly nothing new there, but check this out. At another point in the game, you must drive the RC car through a series of obstacles on a level below you, while you control Kakeru on a glass structure above. If that's not rubbing your belly and patting your head at the same time, we don't know what is.

Ape Escape also features 60 specter coins for you to collect that will unlock even more zany fun in the form of Ape Escape's minigames. Using the two analog sticks, you can unlock a skiing game, a 1 or 2-player boxing game, and even a very Asteroid-esque game called Galaxy Monkey. Also, if you clear a level of all the monkeys, you are given a chance to challenge a time attack mode where you can race against the clock.

Ape Escape may be the first game to be exclusive to the analog controller, but we're willing to bet that it's not the last. While controlling all aspects of the game using the analog sticks is a tad clumsy at first, it soon becomes second nature and creates a new experience in the world of video games.



The Boxing Minigame is a Rock'em. Sock'em good time.



That's no spacestation... that's a monkey.



Sweet Sassy Mollassey!



What? Did you think finding the monkeys was going to be easy!



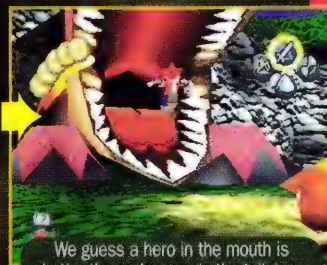
Kakeru must be careful in these shark infested waters.



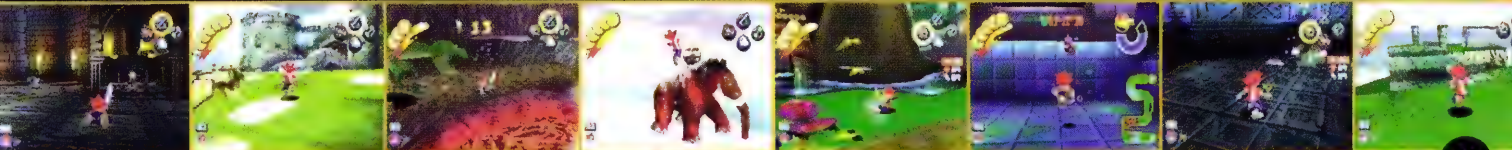
Go ahead, touch my monkey. TOUCH HIM!



If you were a monkey, where would you hide?



We guess a hero in the mouth is better than a banana in the tailpipe.



PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Racing
- **Special Features:** Over 400 Cars; 60 License Exams; 20 Tracks; Sounds Recorded At 3 Actual Racing Tracks; PocketStation & Dual Shock Compatible; 5 American Manufacturers; Rally Racing, Drag Racing, & Mountain Climbing; Help Mode
- **Created by:** Polyphony Digital for Sony Computer Entertainment America
- **Available:** September for PlayStation

70% complete



Extending The Legacy

Kazunori Yamauchi has already accomplished one of the toughest feats in the dog-eat-dog world of game design. His genre-defining game, Gran Turismo, set new standards for the rest of the industry – standards that no one had ever achieved, nor could surpass. But Yamauchi was not satisfied. His desire with GT was to make the game equivalent of an "encyclopedia of cars." That's a lofty goal; one that is likely never to be accomplished.

But don't tell him that. He's determined to hit that pinnacle, and Gran Turismo 2 is the next step towards racing nirvana. Featuring over 400 real cars and 20 tracks, GT2 can easily be described as the most encompassing racer ever designed. His team of 40 developers (out of the 60 employed by Polyphony) will attempt to defy the odds once again and create the single greatest racing game ever. Round the clock since April of 1998, Yamauchi and Co. have worked feverishly to create a racing game that is so realistic, so deep, that few (if any) racers will ever top it. His team went out and tested cars around the globe, noting the nuances of each. They even recorded sounds for over 120 of the cars at three different racing venues in America and Europe (Sears Point Raceway and Laguna Seca in the U.S.; Donnington Park in Europe), keeping track of the smallest details. GT2 currently includes five different American manufacturers (Ford, Chevy, Dodge/Plymouth, Shelby, and Vector) and has licenses for 39 American cars, with more pending. In terms of realism, everything imaginable has been done to achieve Yamauchi's impossible dream, and to make every racing enthusiast around the world happy.

Gran Turismo 2 also has refined physics and graphics engines, squeezing the PlayStation until it turns blue (you gotta love it when a developer says, "there was a little bit more room, so we used it"). The AI of computer opponents has been increased dramatically, making the player earn that first place finish. Sixty license exams ensure that players know how to drive with the precision of a steel-nerved pro. For those that can't cut the increasingly difficult exams, a help mode is added, allowing the less-skilled driver to enjoy every inch of this title. There are also a couple of added racing modes including rally racing, drag racing, and mountain climbing up Pike's Peak.

As if all this weren't enough, Gran Turismo 2 will support the PocketStation, allowing drivers to save their fastest times and share them with others, creating a ranking among friends. Players can also trade cars through the PocketStation.

Gran Turismo 2 is still a couple of months off, but there isn't much doubt that this will be the greatest racer ever seen. Especially since the first still hasn't been eclipsed.



Um Jammer Lammy™

Keep On Rockin'
In the Free World

For the groove impaired, there is still hope. If you have trouble tapping your feet to the simplest of rhythms, Um Jammer Lammy can give you a little soul. Like its predecessor, PaRappa the Rapper, this game is about performing along with the music. Take the stage with a number of strange characters and, like Def Leppard, rock rock 'til you drop. But instead of rappin' like PaRappa, this game puts a six-string ax in your hands and dares you to grind it out.

Um Jammer Lammy is the next best thing to being a rock star. In a way it's better, because you don't have to travel in a smelly old van or sleep in a musty room. As Lammy, you'll progress through the game by successfully performing with the different musicians. It's basically a listen and answer concept where you listen to the singer rattle off a verse and then answer with your guitar. To jam successfully, you'll have to copy the rhythm, as well as the pattern by inputting the correct button sequence.

Like PaRappa, your performance will be graded on a scale of awful to cool, with bad and good in-between. Each individual lick is judged and, depending on the result, you'll gradual-

PlayStation Preview



- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Action
- **Special Features:** Earn & Collect Guitar Effects; 7 Levels; Pitch Bending; 2-Player Vs. or Cooperative; 2 Difficulty Levels; Cutscenes; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible
- **Created by:** Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.
- **Available:** Now In Japan for PlayStation (U.S. Release in '99)

Translation Analysis

Easy - Text and speech can both be experienced in English.



Chop Chop Master Onion!!!

A Mast from the past.



Go head to head against Lammy's clock and white turn.



Thanks a lot!

PaRappa is a hilarious character.



On this level, the better Lammy jams, the higher the boss jumps.

ly move up or down the scale. If you ever dip down below awful, you'll have to play the song over.

Lammy and her guitar are not the only new things. After each successful song, you'll receive a new effect for your guitar that can be used in the following show. The effects include distortion, a harmonizer, reverb, wah wah, and a flanger. If that isn't enough for you, there is also a pitch bender so you can rock like Eddie Van Halen.

PaRappa may not be the star of this game, but after you beat it, you'll unlock him as a playable character. You can use PaRappa in either single- or two-player modes. In two-player, you can either go cooperative or head-to-head. You can also do the cooperative mode with the computer. Head-to-head is just like the movie Cross Roads when Ralph Macchio plays guitar against the Devil. Trade off licks and whoever has the best one earns points, the other loses some. Each player starts with 300 points and if you reach zero, you lose. Otherwise, high score at the end of the song wins. In addition to having both players on guitar, one can rap once PaRappa is unlocked.

When PaRappa released, it was a bold move in creativity. Although Um Jammer Lammy isn't as ground breaking, it offers some new features that PaRappa fans are sure to enjoy.



Acquire all kinds of effects to jam with.



That is so sick.



Yeah!
My guitar is in my mind.



That doesn't mean.

One of the coolest features.



One! Two! Three! Four!



Leave it to Lammy!



What a nightmare...?



I'm a rock star!



I'm a rock star!



I'm a rock star!



I'm a rock star!



I'm a rock star!

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 Player Action/Adventure
- **Special Features:** Interactive 3D Environment; Dinosaurs Stalk & Disarm Characters; Weapon Combining & Creation; Blood Trails; Spooky
- **Created by:** Capcom
- **Available:** 3rd Quarter for PlayStation

DINO CRISIS

Like JJ Walker. Dino Mite!

50% Complete

Just when it looked like dinosaurs might get jammed into that cute and cuddly category that the vicious unicorn and deadly pegasus got stuck in, Capcom leaked the word on its next grisly thriller that's sure to earn fearful respect for all the Jurassic killers: *Dino Crisis*.

As Regina, you lead a team of government agents to Ibis Island on a simple mission: capture Professor Kirk and nab the plans to his energy experiment. As per usual, things quickly spiral out of control when it's discovered that carnivorous beasts of a reptilian nature are all over the island. Is there a relation between Kirk's experiment and the dinosaurs? Probably, but you'll have to get off the island alive to make your report.

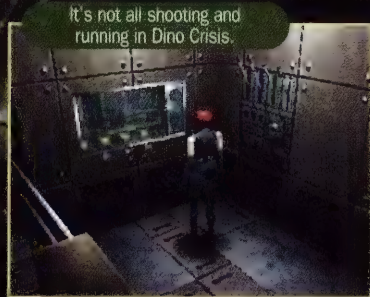
Produced by Shinji Mikami, the man behind the *Resident Evil* series, *Dino Crisis* promises to be an experiment in survival and horror. The raptors don't just appear at set points in the hallway and wait for you to gun 'em down. No, they stalk and toy with you, even knocking weapons out of your hands if they get

the chance. Luckily, Regina knows how to put two weapons together when she finds them in the fully 3D polygonal environment. A smart player will come up with a unique arsenal she can shove down a rex's throat.

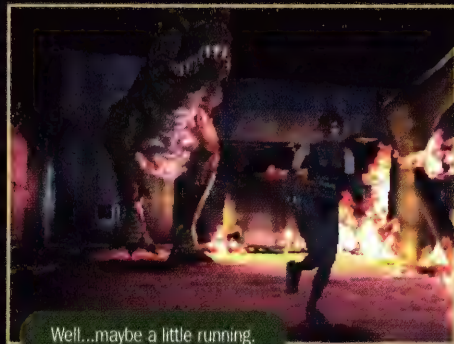
Then there's the little touches. Characters begin walking in a cautious manner when they (not you) suspect danger is near. Better safe than sorry, since a severely injured character will leave a trail of blood behind them wherever they go – and these dinosaurs love blood. Secret missions don't come any scarier than *Dino Crisis*.



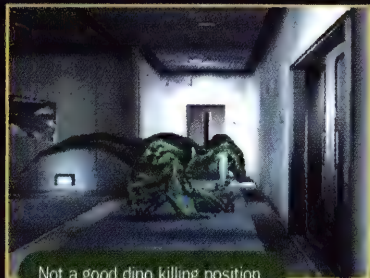
"My stained glass window!"



It's not all shooting and running in *Dino Crisis*.



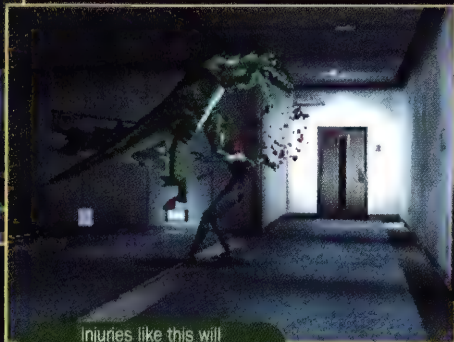
Well...maybe a little running.



Not a good dino killing position.



Investigating Professor Kirk's lab.



Injuries like this will cause trails of blood.



PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Action
- **Special Features:** 3 Perspectives of Play (Foot, Skiing, Driving); Wide Variety of Stealth & Combat Tactics; Sniping; Nonlinear Mission Select; Multiplayer With Several Character Choices; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible
- **Created by:** Black Ops for MGM Interactive/Electronic Arts
- **Available:** Summer for PlayStation

65% Complete

007 Tomorrow Never Dies

The Name's Bond, PlayStation Bond

James Bond is as much of a dominating force on the Nintendo 64 as he is in the field of global security. Now, he has a new villain to conquer...the PlayStation. On the Nintendo 64, Bond slipped into a comfortable groove, delivering first-person wizardry and some of the most explosive gameplay to date. On the PlayStation, he's been banged up and listed as MIA for over half a year now. Thankfully, he hasn't been replaced by another 00 agent just yet. Bond, while both shaken and stirred, will finally make his 32-bit debut in the summer. Black Ops has struggled with development, but hopefully these massive delays mean good things...very good things.

If you're looking for another game just like GoldenEye, then you're going to be seriously disappointed. Black Ops didn't want to make another GoldenEye. Sure, we would have liked to have seen another needle-in-the-arm, first-person, multiplayer extravaganza, but let's face the facts: Rare is tough to beat, and a first-person game on the PlayStation will never look or play as good as on the N64. Black Ops is better off starting from scratch, rather than mimicking Rare's brilliance. So far, things look good for PlayStation Bond. He's a little late in coming, but so was the Nintendo 64 Bond. Is this a sign? No...but we need some kind of security to pull us through the day.

This Bond game is much more diverse than the N64 offering. Some of the same action elements are in place, like specific hit zones on enemies, stealth, and distance sniping, but this Bond is constructed more like Fox Interactive's Die Hard Trilogy. It's like three games in one. The majority of the action takes place in the third-person mode, where players duck and roll, dive and fire, and sneak through enemy barracks and fortified zones. Bond won't be the only hero in this adventure. When Bond is away playing in his hotel room, Wai Lin will stand in for a few missions. Tomorrow Never Dies also features a skiing mode that spans across a few levels, delivering break neck speeds and awesome battles for slope supremacy. Last but not least, is the driving mode. Here, Bond will race against the clock and duke it out tire to tire with some mean machines.

Even now, Tomorrow Never Dies still looks like it's fairly early in the development cycle. The gameplay is far from polished, but you can tell from the excellent animation, realistic sound and graphical effects, and the complexity of missions, that this game may turn out to be just as big of a success as Syphon Filter or Metal Gear Solid. Hopefully, sales will come through the game...not necessarily just the name. Black Ops has also included several 2-player modes crammed with multiple characters. If the 1-player game becomes old, then this mode will surely keep you playing as you splatter your friend's brains across the battle field in a friendly game of war.

Cross your fingers, folks, and pray for this game to be good. Both Syphon Filter and Metal Gear have been amazing releases, let's hope the PlayStation continues to shoot perfectly in this newly revamped action genre.



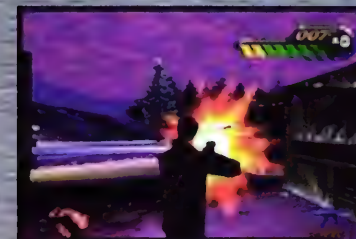
Picking off enemies in the distance calls for Sniper Rifle accuracy.



Just like in Bond's Nintendo 64 adventure, enemies react realistically according to where they are shot. A bullet in the head is instantaneous death.



Bond's maneuvers include strafing, a 360 tuck and roll, dive and fire, and sneaking.



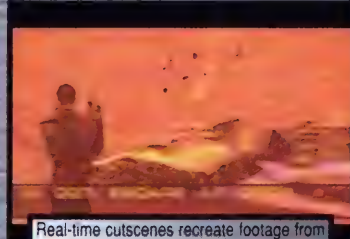
There's nothing like the smell of heavy artillery in the morning.



Bond's many gadgets play a huge role in completing missions. Here he uses a camera to uncover a communications array.



The player has a slew of targeting modes to choose from, one even features a transparent Bond.



Real-time cutscenes recreate footage from the movies and even offer up a few scenes not featured in the film.



PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Adventure
- **Special Features:** Chakram (Xena's Trademark Weapon); 8 Different Environments; Hidden Weapons; Locations From Popular Episodes; Ambiguous Love Interests(?)
- **Created by:** Universal Studios Digital Arts for 989 Studios
- **Available:** August for PlayStation

80% Complete

Chakram Flyin' Action

There is a land where the forces of ancient mythology, medieval superstition, and campy mock-comedy coexist. This land is a land beyond time, beyond history, and beyond belief. It's the land of the Action Pack, and home to heroes Hercules and Xena. Fans everywhere must be asking, when will I be able to play an Action Pack Interactive game? Game Informer never thought to ask such a question, because quite frankly, we didn't care. Xena is great for television, and the struggle of good vs. evil is a gripping journey through fantastic lands, but a video game? C'mon!

As big-time Xena enthusiasts, Game Informer wonders what 989 Studios and Universal Digital plans for our beloved Warrior Princess. Perhaps an ambiguous love story, with an underwater kiss. Perhaps it's a spellbound Joxer, obeying the command of some devilish monster. We just had to find out what lay in store for Xena and her trusty sidekick Gabrielle (we call her Gabby). What did we do? We called 989.

The Xena: Warrior Princess game for PlayStation takes us deep within the world of Xena. Her latest adventure brings Xena face-to-face with the dreaded Minotaur King and Amazon Queen. You see, the evil pair plans to kidnap Gabrielle, then use her as a sacrifice to an evil sorceress. To rescue Gabrielle, Xena and her trademark weapon, the Chakram, do battle against the hordes of Hades. It seems the entire underworld has risen to meet Xena - even Dyzan, the fire-breathing gatekeeper of Hades. In Xena, all of the settings are taken straight from the TV show, and Action Pack fans (like us) will recognize: Valarian's Castle, Hades' Underworld, and the Temple Of The Pinnacle.



PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Shooting
- **Special Features:** 4 Vehicles; 25 Weapons; New Echolocation Device; 3 Difficulty Levels; 30 Missions; Ground Troops; Memory Card Save; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible
- **Created by:** Psygnosis
- **Available:** June for PlayStation

70% Complete

Three feet in front of Your Face



A look at the amazing Raptor.



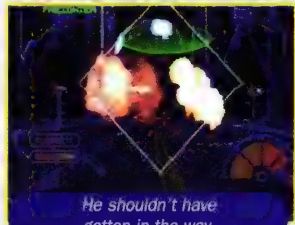
An easy kill.



Launched straight into the air.



Wireframes stretch the horizon a bit more.



He shouldn't have gotten in the way.



The other new member of the squad, the Havoc.

The first G Police entered the game world with mixed reviews. Some felt that the game was huge and intuitive, while others believed the game was fundamentally flawed with its difficult control scheme and limited visibility. Psygnosis responded to these often-heard complaints while creating G Police: Weapons of Justice.

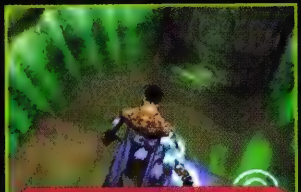
The biggest enhancement is the new wireframes that go up before getting too close to buildings, helping to prevent many of the unnecessary collisions that plagued the first game. Now, when you start getting close, a green frame of the upcoming object appears. The control has also been simplified, allowing the novice to have fun while giving the veteran ultimate freedom of movement.

Four different vehicles are another improvement over the original, with ground vehicles like the Havoc (a small assault car) and the Raptor (a two-legged attack robot). The Havoc can get around the city pretty quickly, and is very responsive. The Raptor has the ability to leap high into the air and hover about, making it the most versatile of vehicles.

Thirty missions will keep even the most seasoned officers on their toes, complete with new enemy AI, three levels of difficulty, new ground troops, and more. Can G Police: Weapons of Justice deliver on its promise of righting the wrongs, and produce a title that is astonishing? The answer will be here this summer.

PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Adventure
- **Special Features:** Vampires; Soul Sucking; Interactive Objects; Gliding; Spectral & Material Planes; Real-Time & FMV Cutscenes; Wall Climbing; Recruit Help
- **Created by:** Crystal Dynamics for Eidos
- **Available:** May 24 for PlayStation



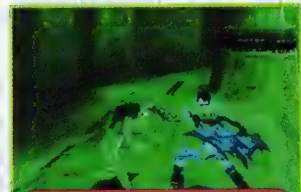
It's a long drop...



...but hey, you've got wings.

80% Complete

**Despite Hype,
Future Is Foggy**



"Let me touch your forehead."



Raziel sizes up the competition...



and jabs it with his trusty staff.



Sometimes you hear about a game and want it to fail miserably (like Rob Liefield's Youngblood). Other times you hear about a game and want it to revolutionize the industry. Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver falls into the latter category. Early versions of Soul Reaver hint at huge level designs, inspiring graphics, and excellent control. Yet, as much as we want Soul Reaver to be a great game, we nervously await its May release date.

In its early form, Soul Reaver has yet to demonstrate any cohesion or flow to its adventure, and concerns regarding the camera still loom heavily. Manual camera adjustments in 3D games used to be acceptable, but that time has passed. So it must be the game's potential that has us all stoked.

Kevin Garnett gets \$126 million and Raziel gets his face plastered on a dozen covers of various gaming magazines. But remember, it is potential we're talking about. Except for some people at Crystal and Eidos, no one has gotten a good look at this game, just bits and pieces. We still remain hopeful, though, because Crystal says it will (or, at least, it would like to) delay Soul Reaver if it's not up to snuff. Of course, Crystal won't wait too long and have a Wild 9 fiasco on its hands. Lastly, consider that Eidos has the final say. And who would be surprised if Eidos held Soul Reaver back, not necessarily to perfect it, but to include it in its 1999 holiday lineup, filling the void temporarily left by its action/adventure cash cow, Lara Croft?

This is all speculation, but then again, so is claiming that Soul Reaver is "one of the most epic gaming masterpieces of the year."

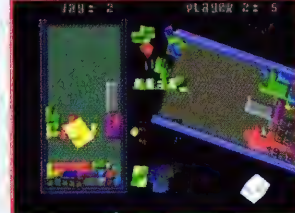
PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Puzzle
- **Special Features:** Cascading Blocks; Time Trial, Vs., Marathon, & Classic Modes; Spinning Playfields; Player Record & Leader Board Save Via Memory Card
- **Created by:** Blue Planet Software for Hasbro Interactive
- **Available:** June for PlayStation



70% Complete

Your Next Addiction



Hasbro Interactive is in league with the loony bins. The asylums haven't been filled with the Tetricized freaks out there in a while since, given time, the block-fitting dreams have subsided. But now, those susceptible to line madness better beware - The Next Tetris cometh!

This time around, not only will you have to consider where a block must be placed for maximum efficiency, but also how it will break and cascade. That's right, multi-colored blocks will split apart when they reach their target point, sliding down if space is available. This simple feature adds volumes to the already mind-numbing Tetris placement strategies. But if this gets to be too much for your addled brain, you can always retreat to Classic mode, which harkens back to simpler Tetris times.

When you've built up your personal record and skill level, you and a friend (or better yet, a bitter Tetris rival) can plug your memory cards into the PlayStation and face off in split-screen. In addition to the cascading blocks, 2-player gives opponents the ability to spin their adversary's playing field whenever a particularly brilliant bit of block laying is performed. Make sure to take your Dramamine before getting into serious competition in this mode.

The Next Tetris should make everyone happy. It has all the elements of the original, plus enough new options to keep its crown as the king of the puzzlers. Open the sanitariums!

Dreamcast Preview

ONLY IN JAPAN

- **Size:** 1 GD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Fighting
- **Special Features:** Full 3D Arenas; 8 Characters (Plus More Hidden); Multiple Weapons & Power-Ups; Interactive Arenas; Unlock New Items & Power-Ups; 3 VMU Games
- **Created by:** Capcom
- **Available:** Fall for Dreamcast (Now in Japan)



FIGHTING FOR HONOR

Translation Analysis

Playable – The options are in Japanese, but it is simply a fighting game.



Love is in the air.



He'll feel that in the morning.



Characters change forms once all the Power Stones are obtained.



Characters can interact with the environments, such as climbing poles.

For years, the fighting genre has been stagnant. Ever since Street Fighter, the only significant advances have been the 3D graphics and the side-step maneuver. However, there has been a recent increase in completely new styles of fighters. Super Smash Bros. features up to four players at once, on levels with multiple tiers. Ehrgeiz features a huge 3D arena, and a quest mode where items can be picked up and used. And Destrega also uses the 3D arena format, with players flitting about all over the place, smacking each other with projectile attacks.

Now, Capcom hopes to succeed in this new 3D fighting market with the release of Power Stone. With depth and imagination never seen before, Power Stone is simply awe-inspiring. Grab anything in the room that's not nailed to the floor and huck it at your adversary. Leap up and grab the beam supporting the room and shimmy to the top for a better position. Swing by the rafters, waiting for opponents to be in the right place, and put the drop on them. It's all up to you to exploit the numerous ways to win. So numerous, in fact, that unlike other fighting games, a certain character does not have to do the same moves to maximize his or her effectiveness. Instead, the player can play more in his or her own style. Are you a long-range fighter? Send some boxes toward the opponent, or pick up a gun and use it. Do you like to spend your time up close and personal? Multiple combos, as well as swords, hammers, pipes, and more appear, specifically for whacking on someone's head. Are you the grapplin' type? Use one of the many grab attacks and smack the beasts around.

But this description does not even begin to uncover the excellence of Power Stone. In fact, the thing that puts this fighter over the top has not yet been mentioned. What could that be? Why, the Power Stones, of course. On each level players attempt to possess all three Power Stones. As the stones are being collected, the players can beat each other down and knock the stones loose, creating a sub-game of tag. And keep those Power Stones away from your opponent at all costs! For whoever acquires all three Power Stones powers-up and transforms into a dangerous, super-powerful being, able to unleash dangerous super attacks on the other person with ease. Considering that there are only three stones on the board, the battle for these are very important indeed.

As it stands, Power Stone is easily one of the most unique fighting games out there. But is it a game that will enable Sega to gain a foothold? We shall see as September arrives – and with it, the release of the Dreamcast.



Along with dangerous weapons like the Grenade Launcher...



...there are also defense items, like the shield.



There are many ways to attack your opponent.



This super is pretty painful and quite colorful.





Chameleon Twist 2

For those who didn't get enough tongue action in part one, here comes Chameleon Twist 2 from Sunsoft. Choose from four different chameleon characters (which differ only in hue) and venture about an adorable Technicolor world, using your tongue as a weapon and main mode of transportation. In addition to the various tongue maneuvers of the first game, all chameleons now come equipped with a retractable parachute. Chameleon Twist 2 is a platformer of the most difficult caliber, but it crosses that fine line between challenging and frustrating. The timing required to pull off the moves that this game demands will quickly anger most players. However, if you were a fan of the original, enjoy shouting profanity, or love throwing controllers in disgust, you might want to check it out.

Nintendo 64

Review

- **Size:** 64 Megabit
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Platform
- **Special Features:** 4 Characters; Parachute; Tongue Snatch; Tongue Stand; Tongue Vault; Tongue Flip; Rumble & Controller Pak Compatible
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low
- **Created by:** Sunsoft
- **Available:** Now for Nintendo 64

Bottom Line:
6.5



Micro Machines 64 Turbo

If you've played the PlayStation version of Micro Machines, then you've played this one. Micro Machines 64 Turbo has only one new feature: you can adjust the speed of the races with a turbo setting. Up to four players can race with cars won from beating the challenges. For those who enjoyed games such as R/C Pro Am, MM 64 Turbo is a perfect choice. The tracks are themed; some of them are at the beach, others are on the dinner table, still others have different variations. Trade cars that you win with other players, and race them against each other. If you don't already have the PlayStation version, take a look. You might be surprised.

Nintendo 64

Review

- **Size:** 128 Megabit
- **Style:** 1 to 4-Player Racing
- **Special Features:** Collect Cars To Trade With Friends; 4 Modes (1-Player, Multiplayer, Teams, Party Play); Same as PlayStation Version; Controller & Rumble Pak Compatible
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High
- **Created by:** Codemasters for Midway
- **Available:** Now for Nintendo 64

Bottom Line:
7



Fighting Force 64

After arriving on the PlayStation well over a year ago, Fighting Force has finally made it to the N64. Essentially, it's the same game, minus the excessive loading time. Fighting Force is no ordinary fighting game, using an action format to bring players on a quest to stop the evil Dr. Zeng from destroying the world. During this quest, players encounter interactive objects, weapons, power-ups, and alternate paths. This solid concept is heightened by good graphics, but the combat is lackluster. Novice fighters will enjoy it, but if you're looking for a challenge, look elsewhere. Forget about combos and juggles, Fighting Force is serious button mashing. Combine that with wave after wave of unexceptional enemies, and you have a forgettable action game.

Nintendo 64

Review

- **Size:** 128 Megabit
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Action/Fighting
- **Special Features:** 4 Playable Characters; Power-Ups & Weapons; Breakable Foreground Objects; Level Branching; Rumble & Controller Pak Compatible
- **Replay Value:** Moderate
- **Created by:** Core Design for Crave Entertainment
- **Available:** Now for Nintendo 64

Bottom Line:
6.75

Nintendo 64

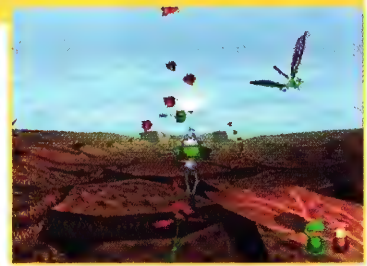
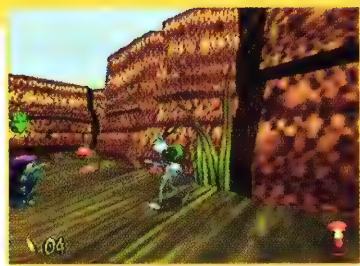
Preview

- **Size:** 128 Megabit
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Platform
- **Special Features:** Same Game as PlayStation Version; 15 Levels; Multiple Power-Ups; Collect Many Different Tokens; Based on the Hit Movie; Secret Areas Located All Over; New Challenge Mode
- **Created by:** Traveller's Tales for Activision
- **Available:** Spring for Nintendo 64

90% Complete

A Bug's Life

A Sony-published platformer has managed to make its way to the N64. Developed by Traveller's Tales for Activision, A Bug's Life casts the player as Flik, and reenacts the entire movie from start to finish. Collecting items, throwing berries, and discovering secret areas are all part of the package. If you have already seen this game on the PlayStation, you know what to expect. However, Traveller's Tales has included a new feature called the Challenge mode, where players are pushed to complete certain tasks in a set time. There are 60 of these challenges, which will unlock more secrets as they are completed, as well as give players bragging rights on how fast they can collect grain.



Nintendo 64

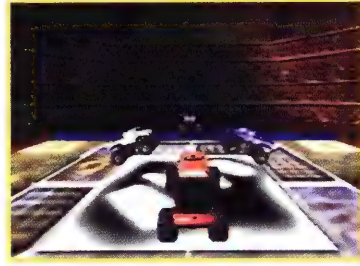
Preview

- **Size:** Unknown
- **Style:** 1 to 4-Player Racing
- **Special Features:** 20 Authentic Monster Trucks; Commentary by Army Armstrong; Realistic Dashboard Instrumentation
- **Created by:** Edge of Reality for Gathering of Developers/Take-Two Interactive
- **Available:** July for Nintendo 64

60% Complete

Monster Truck Madness

Monster Truck Madness is the newest repackaging of the genre that has overrun the N64: racing. In a truck with oversized tires, smash cars on the way to the finish line. Or, just run around and smash cars. Army Armstrong, the voice of monster truck racing, provides the commentary for the more interesting moments. Realistic dashboard instrumentation allows the player to look at multitudes of gauges that are probably foreign. Five modes of play and eight tracks offer some variety of gameplay. Power-ups are also added for more entertaining races. Featuring 20 licensed trucks, including Bigfoot and Gravedigger, as well as WCW-themed trucks, Monster Truck Madness could fill a small niche in the oversaturated N64 racing market.



PlayStation

Review

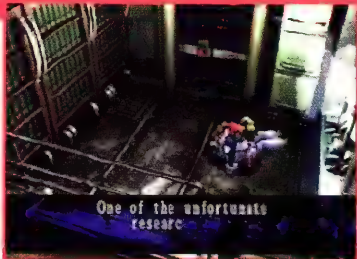
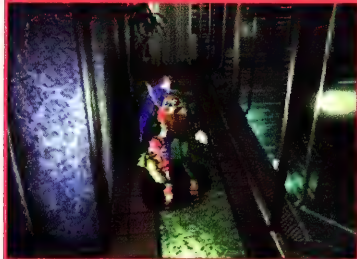
- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Sports
- **Special Features:** All New Graphics; Slam Dunk & 3-Point Shooting Contests; Icon Passing & Switching; All 29 NBA Teams & 300 NBA Players; 3 Modes: Exhibition, Season, & Playoffs; 5 Difficulties
- **Replay Value:** Moderate
- **Created by:** Konami Computer Entertainment America
- **Available:** Now for PlayStation

Bottom Line: 6

NBA In The Zone '99

This game was actually close to being really good. From a unique slam dunk contest to great animation, NBA In The Zone '99 is much improved from last year. There are a number of preset camera angles, plus you can adjust the zoom and height. But ITZ '99 has two major shortcomings. Although it's customizable in almost every way, you can't speed up the painfully slow gameplay. More importantly, the control is horrid. Players on court respond slowly, and sometimes begin an animation sequence that overrides the control. You could have a fast break and want to push the ball down the floor, but your player may pull up and slow down, no matter how hard you press that d-pad. Frustrating!!!





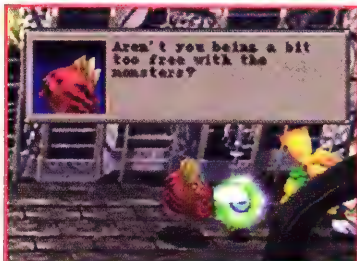
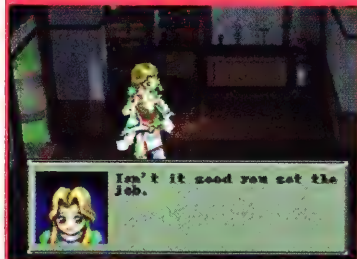
T.R.A.G.

While this game may not be the next Resident Evil, it is certainly one nice title. Play as multiple members of the Tactical Rescue Assault Group, while you attempt to stop terrorists from eliminating a crew of scientists and accessing a top-secret experiment. Multiple weapons, tough puzzles, and a solid fighting base ensure that the player has a good time. Each of the five characters have combo attacks to use on the opponents, and characters can be swapped anytime after meeting the other characters. Also, multiple pathways offer diverse gameplay. Although the voice-overs are a little stale, and the game isn't quite as gripping as Resident Evil, there is a lot of action in this title. For the unsure, rent it; but for avowed fans of the RE type of game, this is a must buy.

PlayStation Review

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Adventure
- **Special Features:** 5 Playable Characters; Can Switch Between Characters at Any Time; Combo Attacks; Similar to Resident Evil
- **Replay Value:** Moderate
- **Created by:** Sunsoft
- **Available:** Now for PlayStation

Bottom Line:
7.5



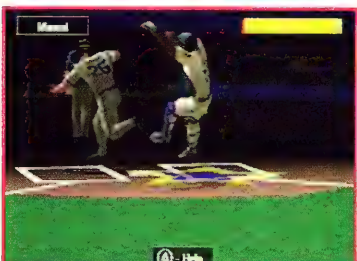
Monster Seed

Although Monster Seed is a valiant effort at showcasing the collectible items idea, the game falls short in a number of ways. The translation is horrid, leading to confusion and making otherwise simple situations tough. The control is more complicated than it should be, and getting around is slow. However, behind these flaws, players will find an interesting strategy game that requires them to collect seeds to hatch new monsters. Some of these monsters are very powerful, while others are extremely weak. The game also has a 2-player mode for battling. If you are a strategy fiend in need of a fix, check out Monster Seed. Otherwise, stay away for fear of a boredom-induced death.

PlayStation Review

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Strategy/Simulation
- **Special Features:** 50 Different Seeds To Collect; Gene Splicing; Strategy-Based Battles; View Monsters; 2-Player Battles; Monsters Have Own Personalities
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High
- **Created by:** Sunsoft
- **Available:** Now for PlayStation

Bottom Line:
6



Triple Play 2000

While Triple Play 2000 is quite a step up from its predecessor in terms of gameplay and speed, the game still has a long way to go. The camera angles are the biggest concern, causing trouble for the defense. Another major problem is that the game is inconsistent with logic and general baseball teachings, making the player switch fielders every time a ball is put into play. Batting is extremely simple, with strikeouts a rare occurrence. As important as the pitcher-batter confrontation is in baseball, you would expect it to be a little tougher to hit. Check it out, sports fans, but don't expect any amazing progressions in Triple Play this year.

PlayStation Review

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Sports
- **Special Features:** Create Player; Facial Expressions; Multiple Batting Options; Career Mode; Home Run Derby; Commentary by Buck Martinez & Jim Hughson; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High
- **Created by:** EA Sports
- **Available:** Now for PlayStation

Bottom Line:
6.5

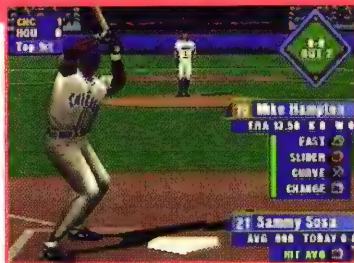
PlayStation Review

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Sports
- **Special Features:** Spring Training, Season, & Home Run Derby Modes; Player Collisions; Stat Tracking; Trade & Create Player; 175 Personalized Moves & Stances; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible
- **Created by:** 989 Sports
- **Available:** Now for PlayStation

Bottom Line:
8.5

MLB 2000

As last year's pick for PlayStation baseball, we were very eager to put MLB 2000 through the paces. What we found is a game virtually identical to MLB '99. This isn't a bad thing, because features such as the fantastic Spring Training mode are still intact. 989 Studios made the obligatory updates to rosters, stadiums, and menu aesthetics. There is also new General Manager options, as well as color commentary by ESPN's Dave Campbell. Our biggest complaint with last year's game was the overabundance of home runs and 989 has addressed this issue, but you can still jerk them out with the power hitters. This is essentially the same game with minor tune ups. A solid game, but a little disappointing.



PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action/Platform
- **Special Features:** 5 Villages With 10 Levels Each; New Croc Moves; Gobbos To Rescue & Get Clues From; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible
- **Created by:** Argonaut Software Ltd. for Fox Interactive
- **Available:** Summer for PlayStation

70% Complete

Croc 2

Awwww...Look at the cute little baby crocodile. He makes such cute little noises and does such cute little things. He even has a cute little sequel: Croc 2. This time, Croc has to leave the island inhabited by the cute Gobbos to find his parents. On the mainland, he runs into all-new cute Gobbos that give him clues and sometimes fight alongside him. What other cute things will Croc do in this new adventure? He'll pick up some new cute moves like the high tail attack, power flip, hanging kick, and the boost super jump. Croc will use crystals to buy extra lives, jellyjumps, and clockwork Gobbos. He'll even travel back in time, 20,000 years before Croc existed. If you're hooked on Croc, then Croc 2 is sure to delight with its improved color and textures, and smoother gameplay. How cute!



PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Shooter
- **Special Features:** 9 Zones With Both a Mid & Last Boss; 1st & 3rd Person Camera Views; Full Replay With 4 Camera Angles; 2 Weapons With Multiple Power-Ups
- **Created by:** Polyphony for Sony Computer Entertainment America
- **Available:** 3rd Quarter for PlayStation (April 22 in Japan)

90% Complete

Omega Boost

Omega Boost may be a shooter, but it's a shooter with incredible graphics and a rather silly story line. Charged with the mission to take a giant mecha into the past and replace a vacuum tube on the ENIAC, you can't get much sillier than Omega Boost. Yet, armed with a Razor and Vulcan Cannon, you can't get much more intense action than ripping through the legions of Alpha Core enemies, defeating gigantic bosses along the way. And, while the story may be silly, the graphics are no joke. Not only does this game look like a movie, it treats the player to some of the most amazing graphics on the PlayStation. At one point, you take on a giant metallic head that morphs and stretches with each hit. Impressive. Most impressive.





Grand Theft Auto: London 1969

Shooting people and stealing their cars is a long-standing American tradition that dates back to 1924, when Henry Ford first said, "Git yo' self outta my Model T for'n I tizommy gun y'arse." Was it any wonder, then, that Grand Theft Auto succeeded? Capitalizing on that success, Take-Two Interactive's new edgy-content subsidiary, Rockstar, is not only going to release a GTA sequel, but also the first PlayStation add-on pack – Grand Theft Auto: London 1969. The expansion will give players the chance to cruise the streets of the U.K., committing larceny and avoiding bobbies in the European cars of yesteryear. These were the halcyon days of police without guns, hippies on parade, and good-natured souls all around. They'll never expect a car-jacking maniac. Good hunting.

PlayStation Preview

- **Size:** 1 CD-ROM
- **Style:** 1-Player Action
- **Special Features:** Cars & Scenery From London's Past; Many Hidden Vehicles; Shoot People for Their Cars; Controversy; Dual Shock & Analog Compatible
- **Created by:** DMA Design for Rockstar
- **Available:** October for PlayStation

45% Complete:



NFL Football

Visual Concepts' NFL Football (working title) will be one of the first sports titles for the American Dreamcast and will help set the tone for the system's reputation as a sports machine. We showed a glimpse of this game last month and now have some new and improved pictures of it. Note the detailed crowd. Instead of using painted backdrops, the crowds are animated, as are the bench players and camera crews. Plus, check out the ref running down the sideline in an attempt to follow the play. Attention has also been put on collision. When a player is struck by another, how he responds will depend on where he is struck (low, middle, or high) and from which of eight directions. Expect to see NFL Football as a launch title this fall.

Dreamcast Preview

- **Size:** 1 GD-ROM
- **Style:** 1 to 4-Player Sports
- **Special Features:** NFL & NFLPA Licenses; Animated Crowds; All 31 NFL Stadiums; VMU Compatible; Season Mode; Create Player; On-Field Refs
- **Created by:** Visual Concepts for Sega
- **Available:** September for Dreamcast

30% Complete:



Top Gear Pocket

As far as racing games go, there aren't that many on the Game Boy Color. Top Gear Pocket tries to be a nice racer, but falls short in key areas. Firstly, this game is very unoriginal, laid out exactly like the old classic, Rad Racer. Secondly, the different cars don't seem to be that different, and finally the challenge is nearly nonexistent. The tracks all seem the same. The rumbling is kind of nice, but it doesn't even come close to saving this cart. However, the control is solid, albeit exceptionally simple and mundane. Of course, racing games don't exactly shine on the Game Boy. Kemco should have realized this before attempting Top Gear Pocket.

Game Boy Color Review

- **Size:** 2 Meg Cart
- **Style:** 1-Player Racing (2-Player via Link)
- **Special Features:** 8 Cars (Plus More Hidden); 6 Tracks (Plus More Hidden); Rumble Cart; 3 Modes (Championship, Time Attack, 2-Player Vs.)
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low
- **Created by:** Kemco
- **Available:** Early April (tentative) for Game Boy Color

Bottom Line:

6

Game Boy Color Preview

- **Size:** Unknown
- **Style:** 1-Player Role Playing Game
- **Special Features:** Over 100 Monsters To Join Your Quest; Unique Battle Interface; Fuse Monsters for New Personas
- **Created by:** Atlus
- **Available:** July for Game Boy Color

40% Complete

Revelations: The Demon Slayer

Persona: Revelations enjoys a strong underground following, with multiple fan sites dedicated to this obscure series. Atlus finally plans to reward the faithful with Revelations: The Demon Slayer. Armed with weapons, a sharp mind, and a handful of clues, players set out to gather over 100 monsters that can be convinced to join their group, allowing them to create new personas. Battles are not the same as most RPGs, as the player is constantly trying to convince the monsters to join. Fighting is always used as a last resort. For a new RPG that's portable and not Pokémon, Revelations: The Demon Slayer looks like it will be fun and original.



Game Boy Color Preview

- **Size:** Unknown
- **Style:** 1 or 2-Player Action/Platform
- **Special Features:** Contains Original Super Mario Bros.; Identical to Arcade/NES Versions; All Old Bugs & Cheats Included; New 2-Player Vs. Mode; 32 New "Challenge" Courses; Game Boy Printer Compatible
- **Created by:** Nintendo
- **Available:** May 10 for Game Boy Color

85% Complete

Super Mario Deluxe

Nintendo has found a great way to resurrect some classic NES games that would otherwise never be played again. Using the newly found power of the Game Boy Color, Super Mario Deluxe will feature the same gameplay and levels found in the NES version that took the world by storm. All of the classic "secrets" are included, like hopping on the turtle in world 3 to get more lives, as well as the minus world. This resurrection is also equipped with a new 2-player mode and over 30 new challenge courses. A generation was infected by Nintendo because of this game, and now a whole new generation gets to experience it anew. But this time, it's playable anywhere. Let's hope that Nintendo continues to resurrect NES titles for the GBC.



Game Boy Color Preview

- **Size:** 4 Megabit
- **Style:** 1-Player Action
- **Special Features:** 6 Intricately Detailed Environments; Secret Areas & Hidden Items; 3 Battery-Backed Save Slots
- **Created by:** Rareware
- **Available:** April 26 for Game Boy & Game Boy Color

90% Complete

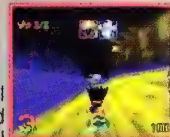
Conker's Pocket Tails

The Nintendo 64 game vanished from the face of gaming, and to be frank, we don't know if it's ever coming back. But alas, the cute squirrel known as Conker is still a part of the gaming scene. He'll always be remembered as that pesky squirrel in Diddy Kong Racing, and now, he'll be thrust into his first full-on adventure for the Game Boy. Rareware has claimed that this title is very reminiscent of Zelda: Link's Awakening because it delivers the same kind of action and RPG elements. Yeah right! This game is nothin' like Zelda, because Link ain't no freakin' squirrel. Link would eat the squirrel to rejuvenate hearts. Only kidding. Conker's looks like it has great potential. The colors are vibrant, the minigames look like a riot, and the exploration aspect seems interesting.



Snowboard Kids 2 – Nintendo 64 Bottom Line: 6.25

This unexpected sequel is a leap and a bound better than the original offering, yet it still misses out on delivering any kind of challenge. The speed is too slow; the weapons remain too powerful; the tricks are extremely easy to pull off; and the play is too drawn out. The kiddies might enjoy it, but don't be surprised if they get bored rather quickly.



Charlie Blast's Territory – Nintendo 64 Bottom Line: 3

If the name of the game and the character design don't turn you off instantly, then the gameplay will. This poorly designed puzzle game struggles to deliver complex riddles and adequate graphics – and fails miserably. If one game had the potential to take down the entire industry, this would be it!



WCW Nitro – Nintendo 64 Bottom Line: 4.25

We wanted to run this review last month, but we decided to hold off and analyze this game for another month just to make sure that we weren't crazy for thinking it was a pile of junk. It looks like we wasted our time. This game blows chunks and doesn't come close to topping the dynamic play of WCW/NWO Revenge.



Fisherman's Bait – PlayStation Bottom Line: 6

While this game is a lot of fun, its replay value is pretty low, as players will tire of simply tapping buttons over and over on this low-strategy title. Real fishing nuts may want to hold out before buying.



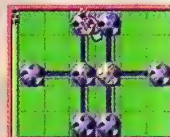
NBA Jam 99 – Game Boy Color Bottom Line: 7.5

Well, all right!!! NBA Jam 99 holds true to the series' original design. It has fast 2-on-2 action where anything goes...big dunks, slaps to the face, you name it. The gameplay is impressive on the Game Boy Color and the graphics are crisp. However, you'll need to squint to see the ball, and it's hard to tell when a bucket is made. If you have eagle eyes, then slam into this pocket delight.



Logical – Game Boy Color Bottom Line: 5

While Logical is pretty fun at first, its repetitious gameplay and lack of challenge leaves much to be desired. It's fun...for about 30 minutes, then it becomes rather annoying.



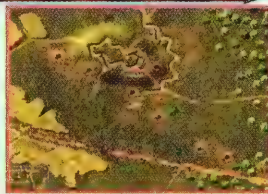
by Bergren, The Game Burrito

Stephon has left, but I don't care. That's because I've been able to lose myself in Heroes of Might and Magic III. The pleasure of this strategic masterpiece is only overshadowed by the horror that is Extreme Bullrider. Don't step in that one.

WHERE DOS & WINDOWS COLLIDE - WHERE DOS & WINDOWS COLLIDE -

8 Close Combat III: The Russian Front - Microsoft

If you are a WWII buff, then dig in to this real-time strategy game and lead the Russians against those pesky German fascists. There are tons of missions in three formats:



single battles, operations (a series of battles), and campaigns (a series of operations). Overall, CC3 is a good challenge that requires excellent strategy and management skills. Plus, the interface is easy to use and keeps me very informed during battle. However, a couple things bothered me, like a lack of flexibility. For instance, you can't divide up an infantry unit to perform separate functions. Then, there's this weird quirk. Let's say two infantry units are side by side. If one gets slaughtered, it surrenders instead of joining the other's ranks. It's ridiculous to watch 15 soldiers fighting while one or two wave the white flag. Aside from these petty complaints, I liked CC3 quite a bit and would recommend it to strategy fans who like to focus on warfare.

7.75 Superbike World Championship - EA

If you like Superbike racing (crotch rockets on pavement), then you'll love this game. The sim side of the game is thorough, including a number of real professional bikers and bikes from Honda, Ducati, Suzuki, Yamaha, and Kawasaki. Plus, there are a number of real tracks, including Laguna Seca and Hockenheim. You can also tweak your bike so it performs just the way you like it. There are a number of viewpoints, including two dizzying first-person views. Personally, I get a little bored with racing games like this since I prefer weapons, big air, and power-ups. But there are some pretty sweet wipeouts in Superbike, and there is no denying the overall quality of this superb-looking game. Just make sure you have a graphics accelerator and a controller of some sort because the keyboard control is horrid.



preview Alien vs. Predator - Fox Interactive

This game could be very sweet, but then again, Fox could screw it up. Honestly, I liked what I saw of this three-level demo. AvP is a first-person shooter that lets you take three perspectives, that of the Alien, Predator, or Marine. Each is unique. Aliens have no weapons, but they can climb walls and ceilings, and move as fast as Marbury's pen once he stepped off the plane in Newark. The Predator has cloaking ability, good strength, and alien weaponry, but I thought it was the least interesting. The Marine doesn't really offer anything you haven't experienced before, but there is something to be said for the terror instilled by Aliens tracking you with incredible speed and stealth. When your proximity radar first starts beeping, you'll definitely feel your heart shake your rib cage. The graphics are really good, but sometimes the Aliens look a little small and disjointed when running at you. Regardless, AvP is scary and will be worth a look when it's released in the middle of May.



8.75 Resident Evil 2 - Capcom

If you've played Resident Evil 2 on the PlayStation, then there isn't much of a reason to play it on the PC. Still, it's a great game for those who like horror and violence. Capcom refers to this particular RE2 as the Platinum Edition for a couple of reasons. Least important is the inclusion of an RE2 screen saver. There is also a new Arrange game that places items in different places than in the original version, as well as a Gallery with a variety of artwork, including sketches and short movie clips. Lastly, the Extreme Battle mode does not need to be unlocked and is available from the start. My big disappointment with the game is that the lengthy load time is still intact. Bummer. But if you've never played RE2 and have a PC, this game will not disappoint.



0.8 Extreme Bullrider - Head Games

That's one-tenth of a point for each second I was allowed to ride the bull. I was actually interested in what this unique-sounding title might have to offer, but it only lasted for about...eight seconds. Although the game's called Extreme Bullrider, that only tells half the story. There is also a Bullfighting mode where you take on the role of a rodeo clown and clash horns with the bull of your choice, rodeo-style. But alas, the bold direction Head Games took with this title was not enough. I found the graphics acceptable, but everything else bored me to tears. The control is incredibly primitive and to stay on your bull you just move your mouse back and forth. To bullfight, race around and pick up power-ups while avoiding a slow-moving bull and green cow pies. I'm quite sure my rodeo-loving relatives in Nebraska would scorn Extreme Bullrider and I do too. Even Luke Perry did a better job of capturing rodeo excitement.



7.25 Recoil - EA

Recoil offers some furious arcade shooting action in the first- and third-person from behind the controls of a high-tech tank. The levels are fairly large and open, and the graphics are pretty sweet with an accelerator card. However, perhaps the best feature of Recoil is the fluid and natural control. You'll immediately be able to speed around with precision and destroy everything in your path. Power-ups are littered everywhere and the six single-player campaigns consist of several mission objectives. There is also a story to this game, but it's practically worthless and conveyed through some of the cheesiest FMV ever. Your best bet is to ignore the story and just aim for anything that moves. There are also seven multiplayer levels that are loosely based on the campaign environments. If there is any depth to this game, it is most definitely in the multiplayer. If you just want to shoot and destroy, Recoil is for you, but I definitely wanted a little more substance to keep the itch in my trigger finger.



preview Kingpin: Life of Crime - Interplay

Developers have started to come up with different approaches to set their first-person shooters apart from the herd. Some games, like Thief, drastically changed gameplay to lure buyers. Xatrix, the creators of Redneck Rampage, have taken a more sensationalist approach with Kingpin. Extreme depravity and violence have garnered a lot of hype for this game. But that's to be expected when your ultimate goal is to ascend the ranks of a seedy underworld. In a city marred by urban decay, gangs rule the streets. In Kingpin, you'll start a gang of your own and if one of your members shows some disrespect, you'll have to waste him. It's a cold and brutal world, but if you want to become Kingpin, you'll have to be all that and more. Yes, this game will be very violent, but other aspects, like character interaction, stealing, and item shops will hopefully add some variety too. Look for Kingpin this June.



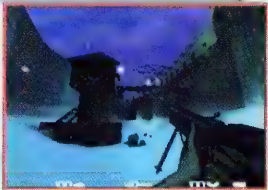
8.75 Heroes of Might & Magic III - 3DO

A lot of folks have been waiting for Heroes III, and it appears to have been worth the wait. What's great about this game is that it combines turn-based strategy, role-playing, and a solid adventure into one CD-ROM for a gaming treat that's bursting with fruit flavors. Building up towns and armies is fun in itself, but you also get to save your homeland of Erathia and battle hordes of enemies on the hard, cruel battlefield. But make no mistake, the strategy aspect of the game is the main focus; so if you don't like that, forget about it. However, even players who have not dedicated their lives to simulated tactical warfare, or have no past exposure to the Heroes series, can still enjoy this game. Plus, there is enough deviation from past versions (but not too much) to make Heroes III a safe bet for those who have played the other two. Basically, if you like strategy and fantasy, you'll like this game. The character development and adventure are just a great bonus.



preview Mortyr - Interactive Magic

This is another first-person shooter, but Mortyr is special because it pays homage to the forefather, Wolfenstein 3D, by dropping players into a world ruled by Nazis. Society often frowns on excessive violence (especially in video games), but when a Nazi is getting his brains blown out, the squeamish seem to find it less offensive. Go figure. The story goes like this: the Nazis won WWII and the future in the late 21st century is bleak. Two officers in the German high command, a father and son duo, discover that they have been living in an alternate universe, and that the Germans actually were supposed to lose WWII. The son, Sebastian Mortyr, travels back to the year 1944 to set things right. It's one man, and a technologically advanced arsenal, up against the Nazi army. I like those odds. Mortyr should be in stores this spring.





This month we focus on Konami, who has decided to release a few titles that we were certain would never make it stateside. We thought the 1999 ASI show would simply be filled with games that we already knew about. Instead, Konami wowed us, and will release these games in the U.S.

Dance Dance Revolution

Dance Dance Revolution is one interesting game that has spawned a legion of fans in Japan, as well as numerous sequels and PlayStation titles. In the game you dance as best you can to the beat of the music by yourself or against another player. In Japan, this game is a major phenomenon, with dedicated players dressing up as their favorite characters and really getting down; doing spins, leg kicks, and more. You don't want to miss the action on this one...or at least the hilarity of watching some brave soul step onto the machine for the first time. But it is fun. Trust us.



Beat Mania

Although the rapper has been the focal point of a lot of hip hop music, nothing can be done without the DJ. Konami is answering the call to aspiring DJs out there by releasing Beat Mania in the arcades. Basically, players mix and scratch the tunes available on the machine, trying to score points and extend their time. While playing, interesting music videos appear to keep onlookers occupied. Two players can battle it out in DJ Battle mode, each trying to punk each other off the decks. Multiple songs allow the player to play quite a few times without ever hearing the same songs twice. Beat Mania is second only to Pokémon in terms of popularity in Japan. Beat Mania is everywhere in Japan, from the Game Boy to the WonderSwan, as well as on the PlayStation. It even has a special controller for the PlayStation version, available in different colors and designs.



Silent Scope

We have one more tidbit of information for you from Konami, though this game was not at the ASI. Silent Scope, an innovative light gun shooter, was showcased at the recent AOU in Japan. It's a game where you shoot the opponents that appear, but these opponents don't appear on the screen. Instead, players have to use the small screen located inside the scope of the gun to pinpoint enemies. Then, you aim and fire. The dead terrorists appear on the main screen and you get points based on how many you kill. It's a very unique idea, and it should be quite the game to play.



Guitar Freaks

Although you probably will have to look to some of the more upscale arcades to find this one, it is around. Basically, like PaRappa the Rappa, Guitar Freaks lets players pick up a miniature guitar and strum away at the baby, scoring points while keeping up with the music. Three buttons allow the player to stay in key, and point bonuses can be obtained by hitting a series of the right notes in order. Up to two players can play at a time, though it is not known whether or not the players can compete against each other. It definitely looks unique, and we'll try to get our hands on one as soon as we can for a review.





WARNING:

This guide reveals elements of the game you may want to discover by yourself, thereby possibly reducing your enjoyment of the game. USE AT YOUR OWN RISK!

R4

RIDGE RACER TYPE 4

In the previous Ridge Racer releases, the method for unlocking vehicles pushed the player to kick the living tar out of the game. In Type 4, unlocking the vehicles is a whole different bag of tricks. The procedure to unlock all 320 of Type 4's vehicles is more a science than a gameplay technique. Read on to find out what kind of dirty work is needed to unlock all the hot rides.



The Car Breakdown

Out of the 320 cars, 304 must be unlocked through the Gran Prix mode. The remaining 16 cars must be unlocked through the Extra Trial mode (which is accessible after the Gran Prix is beaten). In the Gran Prix, each of the four teams has the ability to unlock 80 different rides.

These teams actually represent a game difficulty: Micro Mouse Mappy (Easy), Pac Racing Club (Normal), Racing Team Solvalou (Hard), Dig Racing Team (Expert). Out of the 80 cars for each team, 20 come from each of the 4 manufacturers (see diagram above). So...20 x 4 = 80, 80 x 4 = 320. Get it?



Getting Specific Cars

If we haven't lost you already, then prepare to be shot out of a cannon and launched into the galaxy of the confused. Each time you beat the Gran Prix, you'll have the ability to unlock a maximum of three or four different cars. Which cars you receive depends on how you place in each of the eight Gran Prix races. We've compiled a complex flow chart showing you how to unlock all 19 cars. The chart below is one of the many ways to obtain all 19 cars available in the Gran Prix. Remember, the 20th car is unlocked by beating the Extra Trial and you always start with car 1. As you can see, the Gran Prix will have to be conquered seven times to unlock all of the cars.

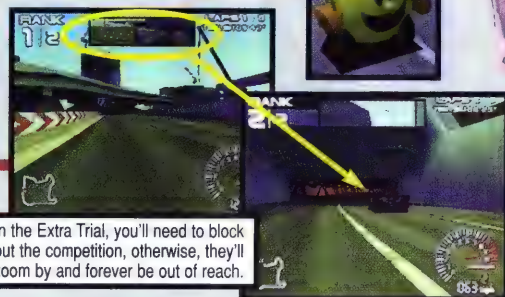
	1st Heat Race 1 & 2	2nd Heat Race 3 & 4	Final GP Races 5-7
Place In	3,3 (Car 2)	2,2 (Car 6)	1,1,1 (Car 13)
	3,3 (Car 2)	1,2 (Car 7)	1,1,1 (Car 14)
	3,3 (Car 2)	2,1 (Car 8)	1,1,1 (Car 15)
	3,3 (Car 2)	1,1 (Car 9)	1,1,1 (Car 16)
	2,2 (Car 3)	1,1 (Car 10)	1,1,1 (Car 17)
	2,1 (Car 4)	1,1 (Car 11)	1,1,1 (Car 18)
	1,1 (Car 5)	1,1 (Car 12)	1,1,1 (Car 19)



Extra Goodies

Car Number 321 - Unlock all 320 cars and this Pac-Man car will appear in the Garage.

Hidden Decals and Team Trophy - Place in first for all eight GP races and a new trophy and decal will be your reward.



The Rip Roarin' Rides

Here is a listing of every car and its top speed. It took approximately 200 hours to compile this list. Cherish it for life. Note: All Stage 01 cars have four gears; all Stage 02 cars have five gears; and all Stage 03 and 04 cars have six gears.

Assoluto		Maximum Speeds Per Team			
Team: Italy		D.R.T.	M.M.M.	P.R.C.	R.T.S.
Car No.	Car Name				
Stage 01					
01	Promessa	103	101	106	112
Stage 02					
02	Promessa	112	111	116	120
03	Bisonte	115	113	119	124
04	Regalo	119	116	123	127
05	Fatalita	122	121	126	132
Stage 03					
06	Promessa	122	121	124	132
07	Bisonte	126	122	129	134
08	Regalo	129	126	132	139
09	Fatalita	132	127	135	140
10	Rondine	139	132	138	145
11	Cavaliere	144	134	140	147
12	Infinito	138	138	144	150
Stage 04					
13	Promessa	177	175	180	187
14	Bisonte	182	178	184	190
15	Regalo	184	181	188	194
16	Fatalita	188	184	191	197
17	Aquila	194	188	195	200
18	Estasi	201	191	197	203
19	Squalo	121	195	199	206
20	Vulcano	224	222	222	232

Age Solo		Maximum Speeds Per Team			
Team: France		D.R.T.	M.M.M.	P.R.C.	R.T.S.
Car No.	Car Name				
Stage 01					
01	Prophetie	102	99	105	111
Stage 02					
02	Prophetie	112	107	116	112
03	Dirigeant	116	111	118	116
04	Bataille	117	114	121	117
05	Megere	124	118	123	124
Stage 03					
06	Prophetie	122	119	124	122
07	Dirigeant	124	121	127	124
08	Bataille	126	124	129	126
09	Megere	131	126	135	131
10	Antilope	136	129	136	136
11	Averse	142	133	139	142
12	Licorne	152	136	143	152
Stage 04					
13	Prophetie	173	176	179	178
14	Dirigeant	180	179	183	180
15	Bataille	183	180	187	183
16	Megere	186	185	189	186
17	Espion	194	188	191	194
18	Sorciera	198	188	196	198
19	Supernova	208	192	199	208
20	Ecureuil	187	195	183	196

Lizard		Maximum Speeds Per Team			
Team: USA		D.R.T.	M.M.M.	P.R.C.	R.T.S.
Car No.	Car Name				
Stage 01					
01	Bonfire	102	101	105	111
Stage 02					
02	Bonfire	111	109	114	121
03	Detector	114	111	118	123
04	Wisdom	117	114	121	126
05	Officer	117	118	121	126
Stage 03					
06	Bonfire	121	119	123	131
07	Detector	124	122	127	133
08	Wisdom	127	124	129	136
09	Officer	127	124	129	136
10	Colleague	137	131	136	143
11	Comrade	143	134	139	146
12	Ignition	153	136	143	149
Stage 04					
13	Bonfire	177	174	180	187
14	Detector	180	177	183	191
15	Wisdom	183	180	187	194
16	Officer	183	180	187	194
17	Tamer	192	186	193	199
18	Cataract	198	188	197	201
19	Reckless	208	192	198	204
20	Nightmare	229	219	219	222

Terrazi		Maximum Speeds Per Team			
Team: Japan		D.R.T.	M.M.M.	P.R.C.	R.T.S.
Car No.	Car Name				
Stage 01					
01	Ambitious	103	99	106	112
Stage 02					
02	Ambitious	113	109	116	123
03	Troop	116	112	119	126
04	Rumor	119	116	122	129
05	Wildboar	126	119	125	132
Stage 03					
06	Ambitious	121	117	126	131
07	Troop	124	122	129	134
08	Rumor	127	126	131	138
09	Wildboar	132	127	135	140
10	Capital	136	131	136	143
11	Cowboy	143	133	139	146
12	Starlight	153	137	144	149
Stage 04					
13	Ambitious	178	173	181	187
14	Troop	179	176	184	188
15	Rumor	184	179	186	193
16	Wildboar	187	183	191	197
17	Decision	192	187	192	198
18	Terrific	199	191	196	203
19	Destroyer	209	192	198	206
20	Utopia	245	245	248	246

Nintendo 64

Mario Party

Bumper Ball Maze 1 – Reach the goal of Mini-Game Island and defeat Toad in Slot Car Derby 2 to unlock this wild game.
Bumper Ball Maze 2 – Beat all 50 Games on Mini-Game Island then talk to Toad at the goal line.
Bumper Ball Maze 3 – Set a new record on Bumper Ball Mazes 1 & 2 and this Maze will magically appear.
Magma Mountain Board – Play on all of the standard boards (at least 35 turns), and the Magma Mountain Key can be purchased from the shop for 980 coins.
Eternal Star Board – Capture 100 Stars to unlock this awesome game board.
Free Money – Enter Mini-Game Stadium and set the computer difficulty to Hard. Use handicaps and set 50 coins for every player. Set the game for 30 turns, then when you near the end of the game, turn the computer players into human players (by pausing and accessing the controllers in the Options screen). This mischievous trick will land you approximately 700 to 1000 coins. Stars can also be obtained! Wahooo!
Mo Money – Enter the Mini-Game house and look in the pot next to the mushroom man to rake in the cash.

Hasan "The Hassassin" Rizvi
Sayreville, NJ

International Superstar Soccer 64

Extra Teams – At the title screen, press **Up, L, Up, L, Down, L, Down, L, Left, R, Right, R, Left, R, Right, R, B, A**, then hold **Z** and press **Start**.

"The Vid Man"
Uptown, MN



Clover

Enter all of these codes at the Pause screen.
Control Ball – Left C, Right C, Left C, Right C, Up C, Down C, Right C, Right C
Death Spell – Up C, Left C, Left C, Left C, Left C, Up C, Right C, Up C
Hercules Mode – Down C, Down C, Down C, Left C, Left C, Down C, Right C, Left C
Infinite Lives – Up C (x5), Right C, Down C, Right C
Infinite Power – Right C, Right C, Down C, Right C, Right C, Right C, Up C, Left C
Invisible Ball – Down C, Down C, Left C, Left C, Up C, Up C, Down C, Up C
Level Select – Up C, Right C, Right C, Down C, Left C, Down C, Up C, Right C
Low Gravity – Left C, Left C, Up C, Left C, Right C, Up C, Up C, Up C
Power Ball – Up C, Down C, Up C, Down C, Up C, Down C, Left C, Up C
Speed Up Glover – Left C, Left C, Right C, Up C, Right C, Left C, Down C, Down C
Summon Ball – Up C, Left C, Left C, Up C, Right C, Left C, Down C, Up C
Turn Off Cheats – Down C (x8)

Julian Moore
Claire, IN



Extreme-G2

Enter all of these codes at the Password screen.
All Bikes – 3GP8ZKW76ZMW
All Tracks – 8KLSZKW76ZM7
All Multiplayer Arenas – N31GG76CG9DZ

"The Kramer Gamer"
Whitefish, MT

Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire

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

code of the month

Vigilante 8

Enter all of these codes at the Password screen.
Invincibility – LIVING FOREVER
All Endings – LONG SLIDESHOW
Duplicate Cars – MIX MATCH CARS
All Cars – GANGS UNLOCKED
Flying Saucer – GIMME DA ALIEN
No Enemies – POPULATION OUT
Hidden Levels – LEVEL SHORTCUT
Hardest Difficulty – I AM TOUGH GUY
Slow Mode – GO REALLY SLOW
Highest Res – MAX RESOLUTION
No Weapon Delays – FIRE NO LIMITS



Enhanced Missile – MISSILE ATTACK
Reduced Gravity – A MOON GETAWAY
Unlock Everything – JTB77CFD1LRMGW

Kevin Parker
Houston, TX

ENTER TO WIN!

Send in your codes and passwords, and if we choose your entry as Code of the Month you'll win a wonderful prize from the Game Informer Vault! All other entries printed within these hallowed pages will receive a Secret Access T-shirt.

Send To:
Secret Access
 Game Informer Magazine
 10120 W. 76th Street
 Eden Prairie, MN 55344
 E-Mail:
 secretaccess@gameinformer.com

Diddy Kong Racing

Enter these codes at the Magic Code screen.

No Bananas (Multiplayer) – NOYELLOWSTUFF

Bananas Reduce Speed – BOGUSBANANAS

Start With Ten Bananas – FREEFRUIT

All Bananas Are Green – TOXICOFFENDER

All Balloons Are Yellow – BODYARMOR

All Balloons Are Rainbow – OPPOSITESATTRACT

All Balloons Are Red – BOMBSAWAY

All Balloons Are Blue – ROCKETFUEL

2-Player Adventure – JOINTVENTURE

No Balloons (Multiplayer) – BYEBYEBALLOONS

Horn Taunts – BLABBERMOUTH

Unlimited Bananas – VITAMINB

No Zippers (Multiplayer) – ZAPTHEZIPPERS

Power Balloons – FREEFORALL

Sound Test – JUKEBOX

Large Players – ARNOLD

Small Players – TEENYWEENIES

Four Wheel Drive – OFFROAD

Credits – WHODIDTHIS

Good CPU – TIMETOLOSE

Same Player – DOUBLEVISION

Unlock Drumstick – First unlock both Amulets and win all four trophy races. Then, go into the overworld and squash the frog with the red rooster head. When you do this, Drumstick will fly into the sky and will land in your playable character list.

Unlock T.T. – Choose a character, then select Tracks and turn on the Time Trials. Now, head to any level and use the default vehicle to beat the best time on that track. When you beat this time, you will race T.T.'s ghost. Beat his time on all of the tracks and he will be added to your playable character list.

"The Rhino"
Toledo, OH

Mortal Kombat Trilogy

Unlock Blue & Red "?" Menus – At story screen (during the intro), press the following buttons very quickly: **HK, LK, RN, LP, HP, HP, LP, LP**. If this is inputted correctly you'll hear a sinister voice.

The Game Junkie
Minneapolis, MN

Playstation

Silent Hill

Advanced Options – Head to the Options screen and press L1, L2, R1, or R2.

Alternate Endings – Silent Hill comes packed with four different endings. Here's how to get each one.

Bad Ending
Don't do anything that Dr. Kauffmann leaves in the bar. Also, don't save Cybil.

Moderate Ending
Don't do anything that Dr. Kauffmann leaves in the bar. But this time, save Cybil.

Good Ending
Do the things that Dr. Kauffmann leaves in the bar. But don't save Cybil.

Best Ending
Do the things that Dr. Kauffmann leaves in the bar and save Cybil.

Next Fear Mode – To unlock this mode you'll need to beat the game. To access this mode, simply return to the Title screen after the ending comes to a close. Here's how to get the new weapons.

Chainsaw
Simply head to Cut-Rite Chainsaws. Be warned though, if you pick up this weapon you won't be able to grab the Rock Drill. You can only have one of the two. However, if you beat Next Fear, you'll be able to grab both.

Rock Drill
This awesome weapon can be found in the lower door of the Bridge Control Room.

Katana
You'll find this hard-to-use weapon in the locked house on Bachman Street.

Gasoline
Where else? This stuff can be found at the Gas Station. Use this stuff to start up the Chainsaw or Rock Drill.

Channeling Stone + UFO Ending
This strange tool can be found in the Convenience Store only if you beat the game with a Good+ rating. Now enter the Next Fear mode and immediately use the Channeling Stone at these locations:

- On the roof of the Alternate School.
- Outside the Hospital (before fighting the Moth creature).
- Norman's Motel (in front of the apartments).
- On the roof of the Lighthouse.
- On the bridge of the boat.

Hyper Blaster
Obtained through unlocking the Sci-Fi ending.

"The Rhino"
Toledo, OH



Syphon Filter

Level Select – Pause the game and enter the Options Menu. Highlight Select Mission and press and hold **Left, L1, R1, Select, ■, ✕** (in this order).

All Weapons & Ammo – Pause the game and highlight the Weapons option. Now, press and hold **Right, L2, R2, ●, ■, ✕** (in this order).

Weaker Enemies – Pause the game and highlight Maps. Press and hold **Right, L2, R1, and ✕** (in this order).

Kenny Lodges
Fargo, ND

Knockout Kings

Instant Wins – This trick only works in the Career mode, and requires that the opposition be knocked to the mat. At almost the exact moment that you knock out the opponent, press **Start** and throw in the towel. If you pressed **Start** at the correct time, the game will be tricked into thinking that the CPU threw in the towel rather than you.

Mustang Thunderjam
Teseroo, AK

Uprising X

Enter all of these codes at the Password screen.

Level 2 – Left, Left, Up, ▲, ▲, ✕, ●, ●

Level 3 – Down, Down, ■, ▲, Down, ▲, Down, ▲

Level 4 – ●, ●, ●, ✕, ✕, Down, ✕, ●

Level 5 – Right, Right, ▲, ■, ▲, Left, Right, ▲

Level 6 – Up, Down, ▲, ■, ✕, ●, Left, Left

Level 7 – ▲, ■, Left, Left, Right, Up, Down, I

Level 8 – ▲, ▲, ■, ●, Up, Up, ■, ●

Level 9 – Left, Left, Right, Up, Up, ■, ■, ●

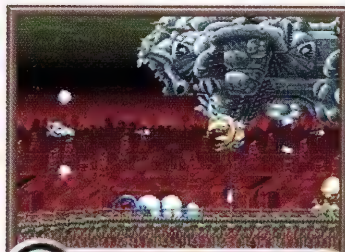
Level 10 – ✕, ✕, Left, ✕, ■, ■, ▲, ✕

Level 11 – ■, ▲, ▲, ■, Up, Up, Right, Up

Level 12 – Down, Down, Right, ■, ✕, ✕, ■, ✕

All Weapons – Left, ●, Right, ■, Down, ▲, Down, ✕

Oppie Doppie
Hickleton, CT



R-Types

Level Select – At the Title screen, highlight either R-Type or R-Type II and quickly tap **L2** (x10), then **R2** (x10). Now start a game to choose which level you would like to go to.

Enter these codes at the Pause screen for R-Type or R-Type II.

All Weapons – Hold **L2** and press **Right, Up, Left, Right, Down, Left, Up, Right**, followed by one of these various weapons – ▲, ■, ✕, ●, or R1.

Super Speed – Hold **L2** and press **Right, Up, Right, Up, Down, Left, Down, Left**, followed by ● to boost the speed, or ✕ to decrease the speed.

Slow Mode – Hold **L2** and press **Right, Up, Right, Up, Down, Left, Down, Left, ✕**.

Joe "Master of All Evil" Hanks
San Rafael, CA

The Fifth Element

Enter this code at the Main Menu.

Debug Menu – L1, L2, R2, R1, Select, Start

Jasper Harenut
Ballsworth, NH

Need for Speed: High Stakes

Easy Cash – This is a cheap trick, and not really sporting; but if you really suck at this game, we recommend that you cheat like mad and launder some funds. After you build up a car or two, transfer your save to another memory card. Perform a High Stakes race against your copied vehicles, then sell them off. Cheap, but efficient.

Auto Readjust – If you find yourself spinning out of control or piled up in a huge wreck, simply press **Select** to center your car on the track with a safe starting speed of 0 mph.

Joxer Ronin
St. Budweiser, KY



Gex: Deep Cover Gecko

Note: This code was tested on the beta version and may not work on the final.

Level Select – With the game paused, hold **L2** and press **Up, ●, Right, Up, Left, Right, Down**. Now return to gameplay and press **Select** to bring up the Level Menu.

David "Sponge Face" Wetingback
Innerhole, OR

Dead in the Water

Enter all of these codes at the Main Menu. After you enter each code, tap ■ & ● to display the Cheat screen.

- God Mode** – R2, L2, R1, R2
- All Tracks** – L2, L2, R1, L1
- Big Waves** – R2, L1, R1, R1
- Chicken Mode** – R1, R1, R2, L2
- RC Boat Mode** – L1, L1, L2, L1
- Unlimited Special** – R1, L1, L2, L2
- Unlimited Turbo** – L2, R2, L2, R1
- Unlimited Missiles** – L1, R1, L1, L2
- Level 2 Boats** – R2, R1, R1, L1
- Level 3 Boats** – L1, R2, L2, L1

Sean "The Dark Jedi" Davis
Flint, Michigan

Circuit Breakers

All Tracks – Pause a race and enter the Options Menu. From here, select Sound and highlight FX Volume. Simultaneously press **L1** and **L2**, then back out and quit the race. Return to the Track Selection screen and every track will be open.

Backwards Tracks – At the Track Selection screen simultaneously press **L2, R2, ✕, and Down**. If entered correctly, an arrow will appear onscreen. Now, choose any track you desire.

"Virtual Gap Boy 2000"
Phoenix, AZ

Nightmare Creatures

Debug Menu – At the Password screen enter: Left, Up, ✕, ■, Down, ▲, ■, Down.

Morris Hews
Oakland, CA



Blast Radius

Enter all of these codes at the Main Menu.

Powered-Up Ships – Press **Right, L1, Up, Up, Down, Right, R2, L2, R2, Down, Up, Down**. Now begin gameplay, then quit to activate this code.

Wraith Ships – First enable the Powered-Up Ships code, then press **Left, Right, L1, Left, Right, L1, R2, R2, L2, Left, Right, Up**. Now begin gameplay, then quit to activate this code.

New Planets – First enable the Powered-Up Ships code, then press **Down, Up, L1, Right, L1, Up, Right, Select, Right, R2, L1, L2**. You won't need to quit to make this code work.

Bonus Levels – **L1, Left, L2, Down, Select, Left, Down, R2, R2, R2, Select, Up**. You won't need to quit to make this code work. However, this code won't work when the Powered-Up Ships or Wraith Ships codes are entered.

Sean "The Dark-Jedi" Davis
Flint, Michigan

Final Fantasy VII

Item Cheat – To get this code to work, you will need the W-Item Materia. Follow the commands below to master this trick.

- 1) Enter any combat scenario.
- 2) Go to the W-Item and select the item you want to cheat with.
- 3) Now, click on another item but don't use it.
- 4) An arrow should be pointing to someone in your group. Alternately hit the **X** and **●** buttons to use the item.

Note: This code works great for Magic Pots. You'll never run out of elixirs.

"The VidMan"
Uptown, MN



Destrega

Dynasty Warriors Characters – Beat the One-Player mode with any character on any difficulty level, then head back to the Character Selection screen and highlight the character you just beat the game with. Press **R2** while selecting that same character to unlock an alternate Dynasty Warriors combatant.

Tony Hawk
Oakland, CA

Die Hard Trilogy

Enter all these codes at the Password screen. All these codes require that a memory card not be present. Note: "_" represents a single space.

Die Hard
Last Level (Fully Equipped) –
B42_RJ498VGPC
7S8DVXY2P2NB5
8P2NBKB58P2PB
PB58P2NBKB58J

Die Harder
Last Level (5 Lives) –
N_1B58Y3N2JB1
85_N2JHHP2N2Z
JB_76LXXNV195
4N2JB185_N2J_

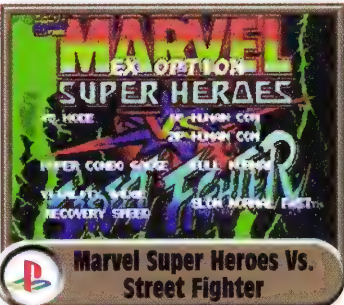
Die Hard: With a Vengeance
Last Level (100% Complete) –
9N24LMLG9P6NV
MBF9P6QJWBC9T
6NW8V2YX72L82
C89248C9MQZN_

Samuel L. Jackson
Santa Villa, FL

Cool Boarders

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



Marvel Super Heroes Vs. Street Fighter

EX Options – Highlight the Options icon at the Main Menu, then quickly press **R1, ●, Left, ▲, ▲** to bring up this helpful menu.

Carla Dimple
Freckland, MD

Castlevania: Symphony of the Night

Enter both of these codes at the Name Entry screen. All three of these codes demand that a saved game file featuring the game beaten at least once be present.

Play as Axe Lord – AXEARMOR
Enhanced Luck – X-XIV"Q
Play as Richter – RICHTER

Richter's Special Moves
(all these moves are listed as facing right)

- Whip Uppercut** – **Down, Up** and **X**
- Run** – **Right, Right** (hold after second press)
- Whip Twirl** – hold **■**, then tap any direction repeatedly
- Slide** – **Down** and **X**
- Slide Jump** – **Down** and **X, X**
- Back Flip** – **X, X**
- Whip Dash** – **Up, Down, Down/Right, Right** and **■** (Richter is invulnerable when performing this)
- Whip Lunge** – **Left**, then **Right** and **■**

Jason Todd
Telanap, MI

Alien Trilogy

Enter all of these codes at the Password screen.

Invincibility – 0BL10NTR1PT0F1N1SH0FF
Infinite Ammo – B0X0VTR1CKS
All Weapons – DY1NGT0N1GHT
Level Select – Type G0LVL, followed by the level number you wish to go to.

Theodore Clamp
Locheat, IL

Moto Racer 2

Enter these codes at the Name Entry screen. After entering a code, the game will ask for your name again. At this point, enter whatever you want.

All Tracks – cdnalsi
Reverse Tracks – cesrever
Tiny Bikes – ctekcop

Reik, Metasu
Washington, DC

Soul Blade

Alternate Endings – During the ending sequence, the screen will fold down to letter box, at this time an action can be implemented to change the ending. Here's the list of the buttons that must be pressed for each character. Note: Certain moves require specific timings.

NOTE: A = Slash Attack
B = Fierce Attack

- Hwang** – Press A.
- Li Long** – Press A and B repeatedly to make him stand.
- Rock** – Press B.
- Cervantes** – Press B.
- Siegfried** – Press B.
- Mitsurugi** – Press Left or Right to avoid Tanegashima's bullet, then press B to attack.
- Seung Mina** – Quickly press **Down, Up** to make her dodge.
- Sophitia** – Tap to the Right.
- Taki** – Press Guard to block the attack.
- Voldo** – Quickly press **Up, Down** until the Soul Edge breaks.
- Ending Camera** – You can also manipulate the camera during the ending. Hold A to zoom in, B to zoom out. Press **Up** to activate a top view, **Down** for a horizontal view. And **Left** or **Right** to spin to the sides.

"GI Droid"
(Location Unknown – last seen slamming shots of WD-40)

Worms

Secret Weapons – Go to the Weapons Select screen through the Options menu. Now press **X** and **■** simultaneously about 10 times. When you start a new game, Sheep of Death, Banana Bombs, and Miniguns should be available.

Elaine Martin
Centerville, IA

Game Boy

Pokémon

Unlock Missingno Pokémon – Head to Cinnibar Island and pay a visit to the Pokémon cloning lab. Talk to the stranger who wants to trade Ponyta for Seel. Trade for the Seel, then head to the nearby Pokémon Center and deposit the Seel. Withdraw enough Pokémon so that your party is full, then go outside and step into the water to the right of the gym. Whatever you do, DO NOT surf to the right. Stay along the coast and cruise the strip (mainly Up and Down). Eventually, your screen will go completely blank for a few seconds, then a battle with Missingno will commence. This trick is very difficult to access. Be patient and you'll eventually get your hands on this glitched Pokémon.

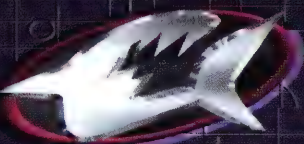
Unlock ---'m--- Pokémon – Go to Viridian City and chat with the lad holding the coffee. Ask him to show you how to catch Pokémon. Immediately after doing this, fly to Cinnibar Island and surf Up and Down in the water, just like you did for Missingno. This time around you will fight a powerful Snorlax, a Nidorino, and the new Pokémon by the name of ---'m---.

150 of Any Item – Have the desired item in the sixth place of your item holder. Get into a fight with ---'m--- and beat it or run away. Doing this will bring up a picture that has a random icon and then a 1 for whatever item was in the sixth slot. Up to 150 items can be acquired this way.

Safari Zone Pokémon – Enter the Safari Zone and head to the area where the Pokémon you desire reside. Let the time run out then surf south of Fuchsia City. Do not encounter any Pokémon at this time or the trick will not work. Now, surf along the Seafoam Island coastline. Now, all of the Pokémon from the Safari Zone will appear in this area.

Slot Trick – The slot machines are a serious pain in the butt. Here's a trick that will cut the time spent on these machines. All of the slots have different odds that are completely random. Play each machine 4 times. If you score 2 or more times, then stick with that machine since it's hot. If you don't strike at least 2 times, move on to another machine. If you nearly hit a 777 or triple Bar, then stick with that machine. It will more than likely cough up the big score.

John "Pokéfreak" Fontaine
Westport, MA



ATTENTION!

The codes below only work with InterAct's GameShark enhancer attachment.

GAMESHARK VIDEO GAME ENHANCER



Pokémon

Unlock All Pokémon – 01XXd8cf (Replace the XX with the number of the Pokémon you desire. Then, simply walk in the grass to unlock the Pokémon you want. When you fight one of these Pokémon, it will appear as a distorted blur on the screen. Don't fear, they'll revert to normal after they are captured.)



- Bulbasaur – 99
- Ivysaur – 09
- Venusaur – 9A
- Charmander – B0
- Charmeleon – B2
- Charizard – B4
- Squirtle – B1
- Wartortle – B3
- Blastoise – 1C
- Caterpie – 7B
- Metapod – 7C
- Butterfree – 7D
- Weedle – 70
- Kakuna – 71
- Beedrill – 72
- Pidgey – 24
- Pidgeotto – 96
- Pidgeot – 97
- Rattata – A5
- Raticate – A6
- Spearow – 05
- Fearow – 23
- Ekans – 6C
- Arbok – 2D
- Pikachu – 54
- Raichu – 55
- Sandshrew – 60
- Sandslash – 61
- Male Nidoran – 0F
- Nidorina – A8
- Nidoqueen – 10
- Female Nidoran – 03
- Nidorino – A7
- Nidoking – 07
- Clefairy – 04
- Clefable – 8E
- Vulpix – 52
- Ninetales – 53
- Jigglypuff – 64
- Wigglytuff – 65
- Zubat – 6B
- Golbat – 82
- Oddish – B9
- Gloom – BA
- Vileplume – BB
- Paras – 6D
- Parasect – 2E
- Venonat – 41
- Venomoth – 77

- Diglett – 3B
- Dugtrio – 76
- Meowth – 4D
- Persian – 90
- Psyduck – 2F
- Golduck – 80
- Mankey – 39
- Primeape – 75
- Growlithe – 21
- Arcanine – 14
- Poliwhirl – 6E
- Poliwhirl – 6E
- Poliwrath – 6F
- Abra – 94
- Kadabra – 26
- Alakazam – 95
- Machop – 6A
- Machoke – 29
- Machamp – 7E
- Bellsprout – BC
- Weepinbell – BD
- Victreebel – BE
- Rattata – A5
- Tentacool – 18
- Tentacruel – 9B
- Goedude – A9
- Graveler – 27
- Golem – 31
- Ponyta – A3
- Rapidash – A4
- Slowpoke – 25
- Slowbro – 08
- Magnemite – AD
- Magneton – 36
- Farfetch'd – 40
- Doduo – 46
- Dodrio – 74
- Seel – 3A
- Dewdong – 78
- Grimer – 0D
- Muk – 88
- Shellder – 17
- Cloyster – 8B
- Gastly – 19
- Haunter – 93
- Gengar – 0E
- Onix – 22
- Drowsee – 30
- Hypno – 81
- Krabby – 4E
- Kingler – 8A
- Voltorb – 06
- Electrode – 8D
- Exeggcute – 0C

- Exeggutor – 0A
- Cubone – 11
- Marowak – 91
- Hitmonlee – 2B
- Hitmonchan – 2C
- Lickitung – 0B
- Koffing – 37
- Weezing – 8F
- Rhyhorn – 12
- Rhydon – 01
- Chansey – 28
- Tangela – 1E
- Kangaskhan – 02
- Horsea – 5C
- Seadra – 5D
- Goldeen – 9D
- Seaking – 9E
- Staryu – 1B
- Starmie – 98
- Mr. Mime – 2A
- Scyther – 1A
- Jynx – 48
- Electabuzz – 35
- Magmar – 33
- Pinsir – 1D
- Tauros – 3C
- Magikarp – 85
- Gyarados – 16
- Lapras – 13
- Ditto – 4C
- Eevee – 66
- Vaporeon – 69
- Jolteon – 68
- Flareon – 67
- Porygon – AA
- Omanyte – 62
- Omastar – 63
- Kabuto – 5A
- Kabutops – 5B
- Aerodactyl – AB
- Snorlax – 84
- Articuno – 4A
- Zapdos – 4B
- Moltres – 49
- Dratini – 58
- Dragonair – 59
- Dragonite – 42
- Mewtwo – 83
- Mew – 15

Anthony "Pokégod" L
Hotmail, COM



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STILL STUCK?



These lines may not have information for all titles. If you're under 18 be sure to get your parent's permission. All calls cost between \$.95 and \$1.25 per minute.

Acclaim

516-759-7800

Capcom

900-976-3343

Electronic Arts

900-288-4468

GT Interactive

900-225-5248

Konami

900-896-4468

LucasArts

900-740-5334

Midway

903-874-5092

Nintendo

900-288-0707 (Game Counseling)

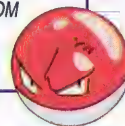
425-885-7529 (Automated)

Sony

900-933-7669

THQ

900-370-4468



Donkey Kong Country

Availability: Common
Replay Value: Moderate
Similar Games: Donkey Kong Country 2 & 3 (SNES), Super Mario World (SNES), Yoshi's Story (SNES)
Created by: Rare for Nintendo
Access Tip: Wait until Cranky Kong (the old donkey) takes the stage playing the phonograph. Hit **Down, Y, Down, Down, Y**. If this is done correctly, you will get to play all the bonus levels.
Overall: 9.5

If you've been gaming religiously for the last four or five years, you already know how Donkey Kong Country took over the

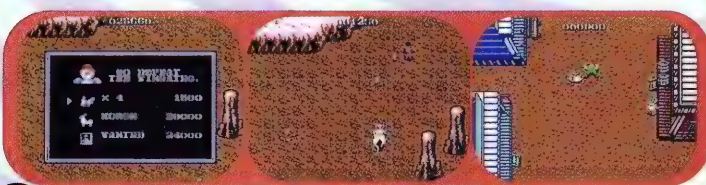
SNES. The holiday SNES hit of 1994, DKC was crafted by the masters at Rare. It spawned two sequels on the SNES and (in case you haven't heard) Donkey Kong will debut on N64 this fall. We can still remember the summer day in '94 when Nintendo surprised the gaming community by unveiling this never-before-seen game at the Consumer Electronics Show. Dazzled by the phenomenal graphics and the fantastic playcontrol, we were amazed that the game was actually running on the SNES. Donkey Kong Country has really stood the test of time with graphics that are still killer. Next to Super Mario World, the Donkey Kong Country games are the pinnacle of action/platforming on the SNES.



Gun Smoke

Availability: Common
Replay Value: Moderate
Similar Games: Commando (NES), 1942 (NES), Smash TV (NES)
Created by: Capcom
Access Tip: To start the game with a machine gun, press **A, A, A, A, Select, Select, Select, Select, Right, Right, and Start**.
Overall: 9

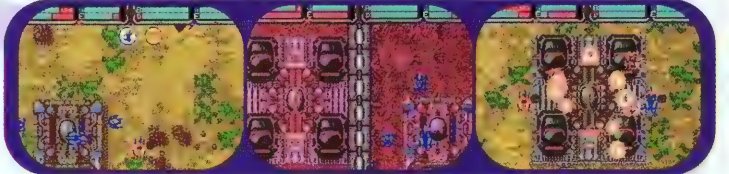
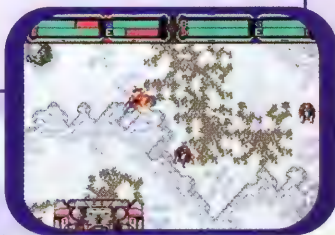
The NES has a rich heritage of shooters that range from the military-styled Contra and 1942 to the space-age blasting of Life Force and Gradius. One shooter that doesn't exactly fall into one of these neat shooter pigeonholes is Gun Smoke. Originally created for the arcade by Capcom, Gun Smoke hit the NES in 1988. This vertical scrolling shooter puts the player in the role of a six shootin' sheriff on the trail of the most wanted desperadoes. What makes Gun Smoke so great are the controls and power-up system. The control, or more specifically, the shooting is three directional. The B button shoots left, the A button shoots right, and both buttons shoot straight. As for power-ups, the game rewards with cash which then can be used to purchase such items as the shotgun, magnum, and even a horse. Gun Smoke is a rootin'-tootin' shooter, pardner.



Herzog Zwei

Availability: Uncommon
Replay Value: High
Similar Games: Dune (SG), Command & Conquer Series (PC, PS-X, SS)
Created by: Techno Soft for Sega
Access Tip: Secure the minor bases to gain additional resource power.
Overall: 9.75

Long before the real-time craze swept the gaming scene with such titles as Dune and Command & Conquer, a little known game from Techno Soft quietly hit the Sega Genesis. The year was 1989 and the game was Herzog Zwei. Even though this title was (and still is) virtually unknown in the Genesis circles, there are legions of underground gamers who consider this the best Genesis game ever created. The premise of the game pits two factions against each other in a kill or be killed scenario. Played against the computer or in a fantastic head-to-head mode, players quickly build an army of infantry, tanks, and other weapons to defeat the enemy's base. Battles, especially in two-player mode, can last for hours and offer truly intense action. Commanding troops, defending outposts, and monitoring the oppositions is hectic, but this game offers so much. Herzog Zwei is truly a classic.



Pilotwings - SNES

Level Passwords
 Level 1 - 000000
 Level 2 - 985206
 Level 3 - 394391
 Level 4 - 520771
 Helicopter 1 - 108048
Expert
 Level 5 - 400718
 Level 6 - 773224
 Level 7 - 165411
 Level 8 - 760357
 Helicopter 2 - 882943

Super Black Bass - SNES

Lake Passwords
 Clear Lake - HJR222P5Z5H1F
 9PBRL33171319
 Lake Murphy - HNR222P5Z5P1F
 9PJDL531V3L3R
 Bluestone - H5P5Z5R222B3L
 9JN7H731FT11J

Super Return of the Jedi - SNES

To get these codes to work, you must turn on the game and touch nothing until the Start/Options/Password screen appears. Then hit the buttons listed below and press start. If the code doesn't work, turn off the power on your SNES and try

again. Note: just hitting reset won't do it - you must try the codes after turning on the power.
 99 Lives - X, X, B, A, Y
 7 Continues - A, B, A, Y, A, X
 All Characters Available - X, X, Y, Y, Y, X
 All Characters, Infinite Detonators, and Debug Menu - A, A, B, X, X, Y, Y, A, B, X, Y, A, B, X, Y (Access the debug menu by pressing L & R on Controller Two)



Pirates of Dark Water - Genesis

Level 3 - NCOOKIE
 Level 4 - ALEXISK
 Level 5 - SCOOBYD
 Level 6 - STYOYODA
 Level 7 - ZEROTKS

Streets of Rage 3 - Genesis

More Players - Go to the Options screen, and press and hold these buttons on Controller Two after you highlight the players menu: **Up, A, B, and C**. Then use Controller One to choose your number of players.

Spanky's Quest - Game Boy

Music Test - Enter the password **1007** to call up a music menu.

Stage Select - To execute, enter the password **0119**.

Kirby's Dream Land - Game Boy

Continue - At the Title screen, press **Up + Select + A**. The screen will say "Extra Game" and you'll have one Continue.
Extra Lives and More - This trick will give you a menu where you can select your starting lives, listen to the game's sounds, and more. At the Title screen, press **Down + Select + B**.

Crystalis - NES

Warp - To warp from one place to another while playing, do this: Press **A + B** on Controller One while holding A on Controller Two. A screen will appear where you can warp to several different places.

N.A.R.C. - NES

Continue - At the Title screen, hold **A + B + Select + Start** and press **Up-Right**. When you die, a Continue screen will appear.

This is your game.



This is your game on the blink.



ANY QUESTIONS?

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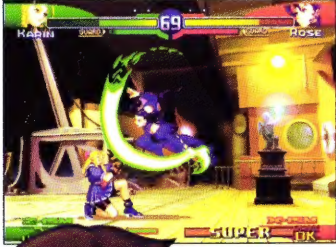
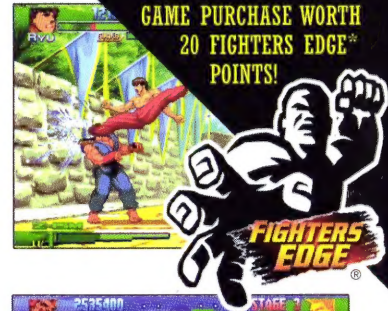
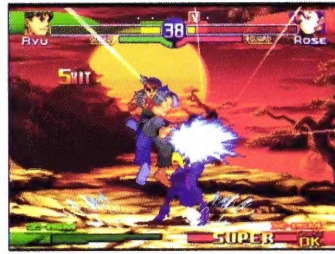
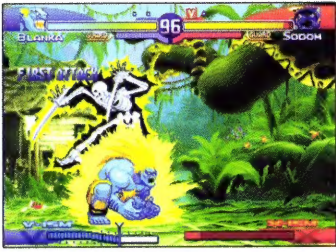
TEEN
13+
ACTIVISION
ESRB

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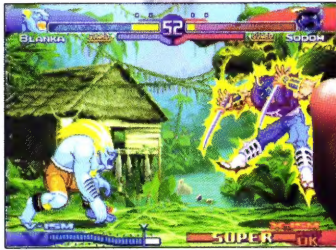
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