ZIFF DAVIS

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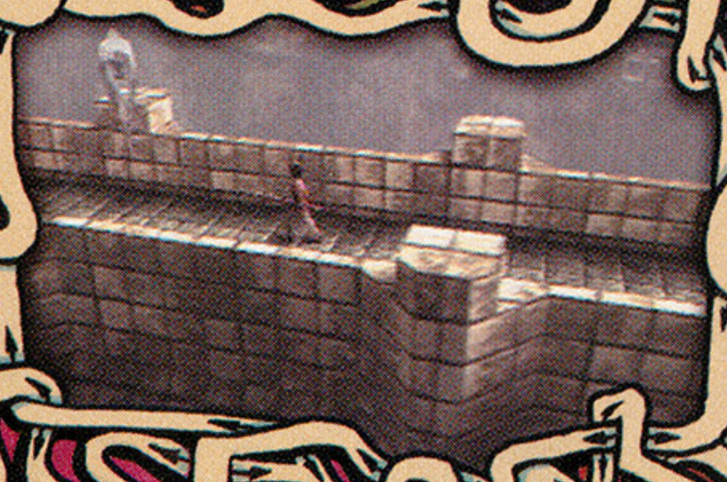
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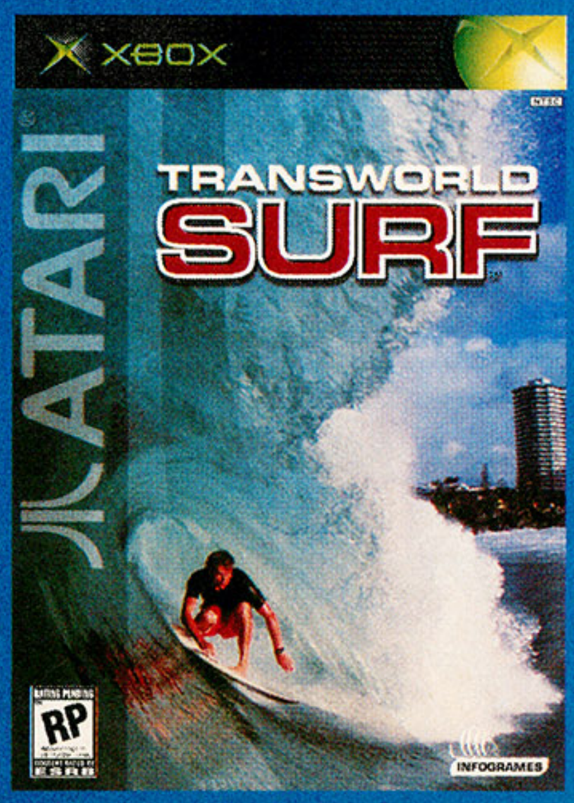
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EDITORIAL

Nintendo Blues

By Dan "Shoe" Hsu • shoe@ziffdavis.com



Dear Nintendo,

I know you, as arguably the world's best game developer, like to try new and innovative things. Hey, that's terrific. I wish everyone (cough...Tomb Raider...cough) would be so ambitious. But lemme tell you something as a gamer who's a big fan of just about every one of your franchises (and I know this is going to sound hypocritical coming from me, a game journalist/critic): Some things you just shouldn't mess with too much.

I'm talking about Link's new look for the new Legend of Zelda for GameCube (see page 24). Besides our news editor, whose mental stability is a bit questionable anyway, I don't know anyone who's actually happy to see Link with his new Looney Tunes-style antics. (The best reaction I've seen so far is a tepid and optimistic, "Let's see how the gameplay turns out.") And on an older subject, I don't know a single gamer who's looking forward to playing Metroid as a Doom clone without the platform gameplay we've grown up with during the days of the Nintendo and Super Nintendo.

Save the new direction and complete makeovers for spin-off games, new franchises or Ricki Lake. (For example, no one seems to mind Star Fox Adventures is an action-adventure game, because you're not billing it as a space-combat sequel to Star Fox 64.) But for those pillars of the Nintendo camp like Zelda, Metroid, Mario and others, you'll have to drizzle the innovation on; don't drown these classics.

Of course, I'll probably be eating my words later, when I discover that the Acme edition of Zelda is the best one yet, so I'll just save final judgement for when the games are done....

Shoe

Contributing Writers



Shane Bettenhausen

Ex-*Gamers.com* editors (who all used to work with Shoe) are in the house. Shane, Mr. Hardcore himself, is here to help out with the Xbox and Devil May Cry coverage.



Marc Saltzman

Industry freelancer Marc Saltzman went underground to get the dirt on the subject no one in our industry really wants to talk about: video game emulation.



Ethan Einhorn

Can you believe Ethan gave up earning inconsistent pay as an *EGM* freelancer to get a steady job at our new sister mag, *GameNOW*? Bitch.



Christian Nutt

Mr. Nutt (no relation to Mr. Nutz, the video game squirrel) is another ex-*Gamers.com* editor. This month, he did our great Shenmue II preview.



Bryan Stratton

No one knows wrestling better than Bryan "The Pebble" Stratton. That's why we got this ex-*Incite*, ex-*Gamers.com*-er to pen our wrasslin' feature this month.



Gary Mollohan

Fresh off his stint at *Video Game Review* and *Pojo*, Gary is now back on the team as a contributor. He's also taken to reading the socio-conscious comic-strip *Pogo*.

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see page 236 to enter.



Eat My Shorts!

Look around this issue for quotes from The Simpsons *or a famous movie. Find one, e-mail it to us at EGM@ziffdavis.com (subject: Eat My Shorts—November Issue), and you may be one of five lucky winners (chosen at random) who will win a copy of this month's Review Crew Game of the Month.*

Some quotes from the issue #147:

- "...the ol' ultra-violence..." (*A Clockwork Orange*, pg. 14)
- "...the hunter becomes the hunted." (Lots o' different movies, pg. 94)
- "We're no scienticians..." (*Simpsons*, pg.142)
- "From the mightiest pharaoh to the lowliest peasant, who doesn't enjoy a good..." (*Simpsons*, pg. 146)

Winners from the issue #146:

- Charles Messenger—Rochester, NY
- Randy Holt—Okarche, OK
- Bob Baiata—Baltimore, MD
- Paul Fuerstenau—Portland, OR
- Justin Reese—White Oak, PA

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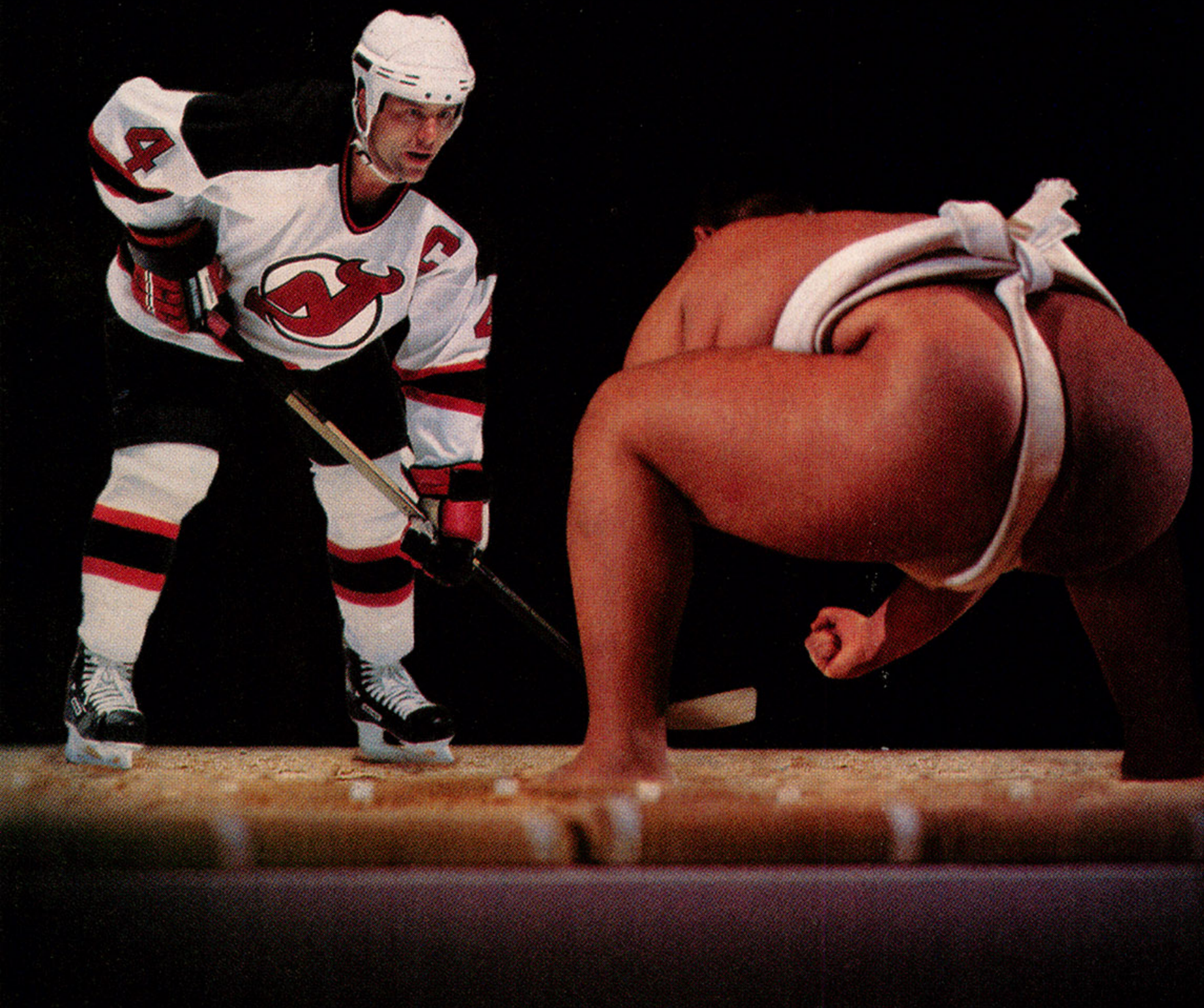
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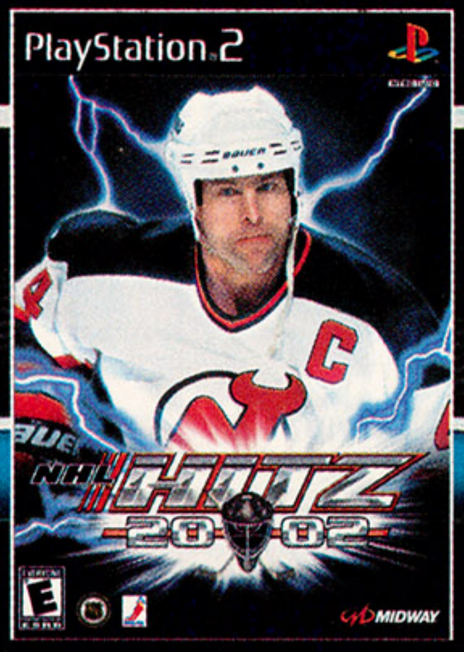


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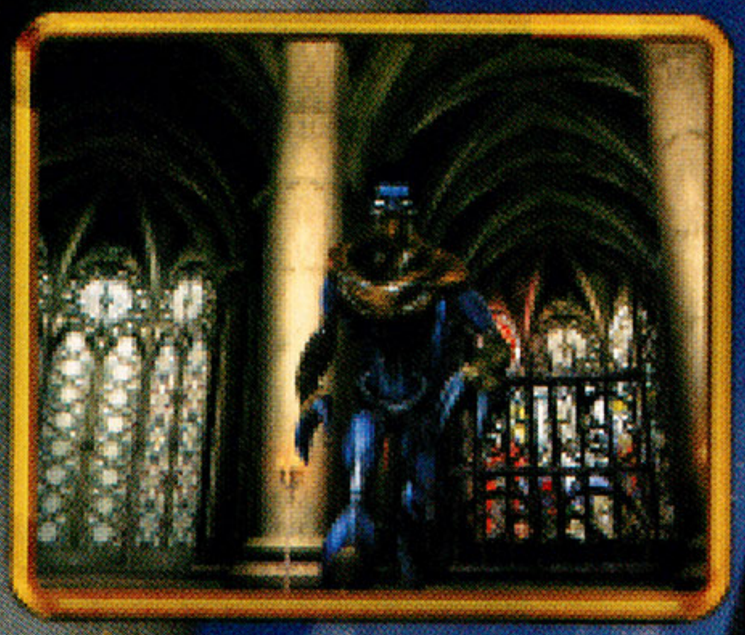
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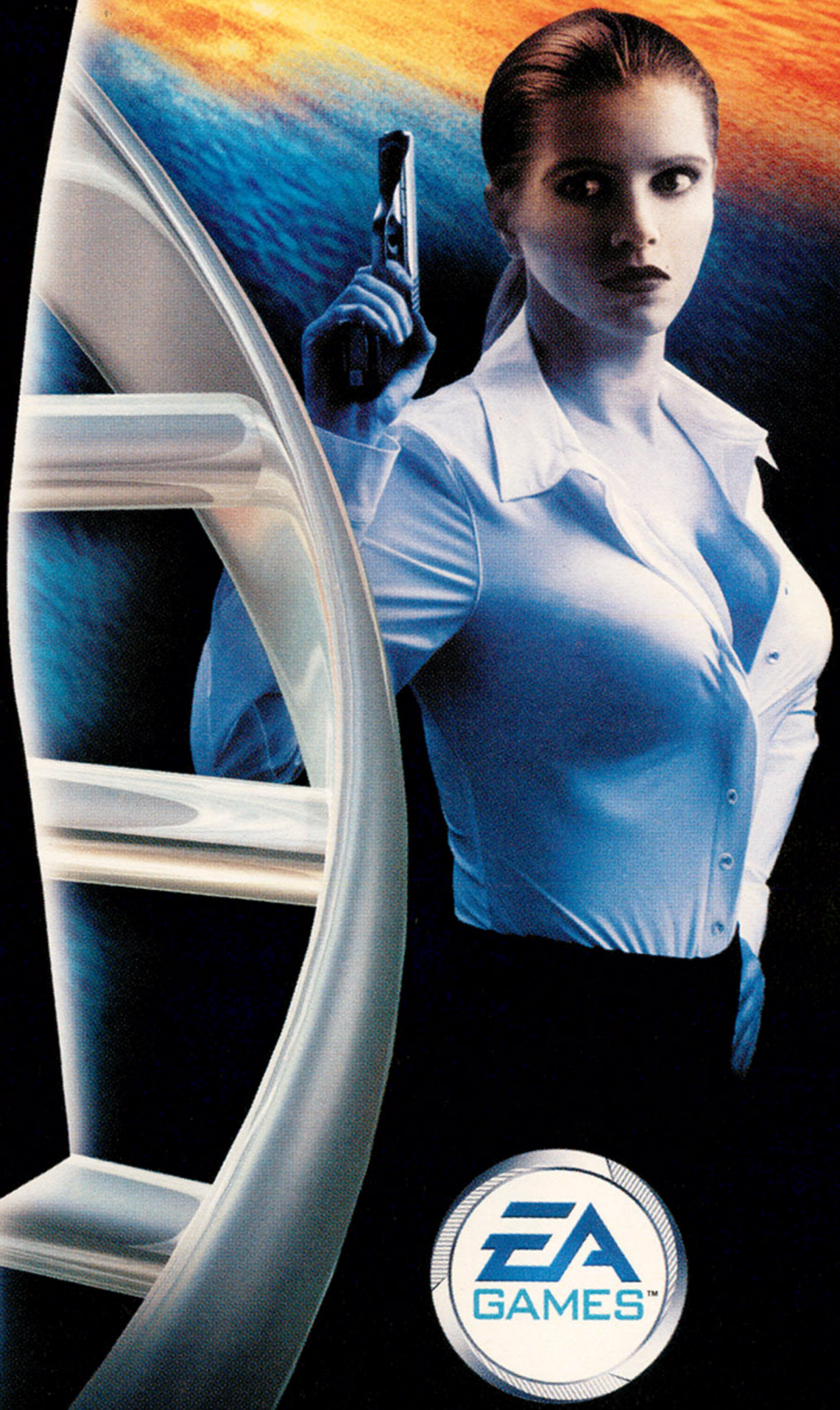
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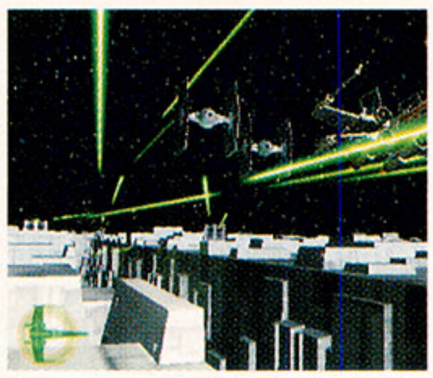
Features



Nintendo's Brave New World What's this? A new look for Link? The first in-game Metroid screens? And what the heck's that thing on Mario's back? We're back from Nintendo's Spaceworld show in Japan with the full scoop on the new Mario, Zelda and Metroid games bound for GameCube and Game Boy Advance. See Nintendo's gameplan revealed on **page 140**.



It's Wrestling-Mania We dive into the ring with this fall's big brawlers—WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It (PS2), WWF Raw Is War (Xbox) and Legends of Wrestling (PS2)—to find out which game takes the title. **Page 166**.



It just wouldn't be a Nintendo console without a Star Wars game, now would it? LucasArts has brushed aside all of that Episode I crap to give us an old-school Imperial romp that kicks ass. Come see why **Rogue Leader** is the Star Wars game we've dreamt of on **page 96.**

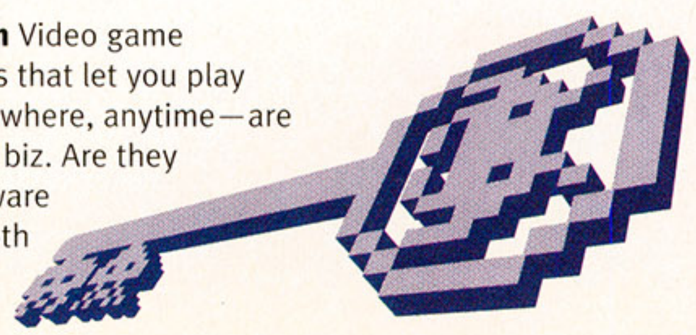


Blow Your Mind No less than eight first-person shooters are gunning for consoles this fall. We round up the action genre politicians love to hate on **page 176**.



Bold new boarders are flying high in the sequel to EA's extreme cash cow. Is **SSX Tricky** going to kick up the same amount of powder as the original? The answer's on **page 74.**

Keys to the Kingdom Video game emulators—programs that let you play nearly any game, anywhere, anytime—are a touchy topic in this biz. Are they harmless fun or software piracy? We look at both sides of the issue on **page 194.**



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Lara Croft's creator may have parted ways with his vixen, but we'll show you why he's ready to set sail with a whole new adventure. And speaking of old favorites, read about the next Ridge Racer and Soul Calibur!

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PS2 GameCube Xbox Dreamcast PlayStation Game Boy Advance Game Boy Color Arcade

Previews 64

It's time to get an early idea of what you want under the tree this holiday season, and we have a sleigh full of blockbusters to show you. Devil May Cry, Baldur's Gate and SSX Tricky are looking spectacular for the PS2. If you're thinking about buying an Xbox, then look at the 13 games we have lined up for you, including Oddworld and Dead or Alive 3.

Review Crew 204

Silent Hill 2 has gotten a lot of buzz, but is it really king of the mountain? Also, check out our Ico review, and find out why we're all humming a particular *Peter Gunn* theme around the office.

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Zelda is looking less like a serious adventure and more like a Saturday-morning cartoon. Get our take on Link's wacky, new high jinks.

SYSTEM KEY

- PS2 PlayStation 2
- GameCube
- Xbox
- Dreamcast
- PlayStation
- Game Boy Advance
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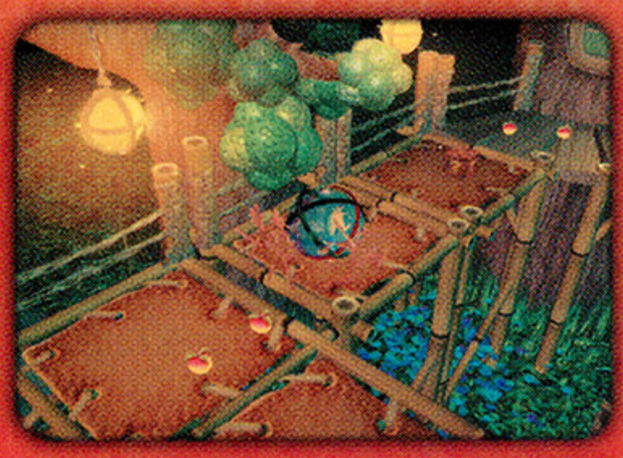
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PlayStation.2

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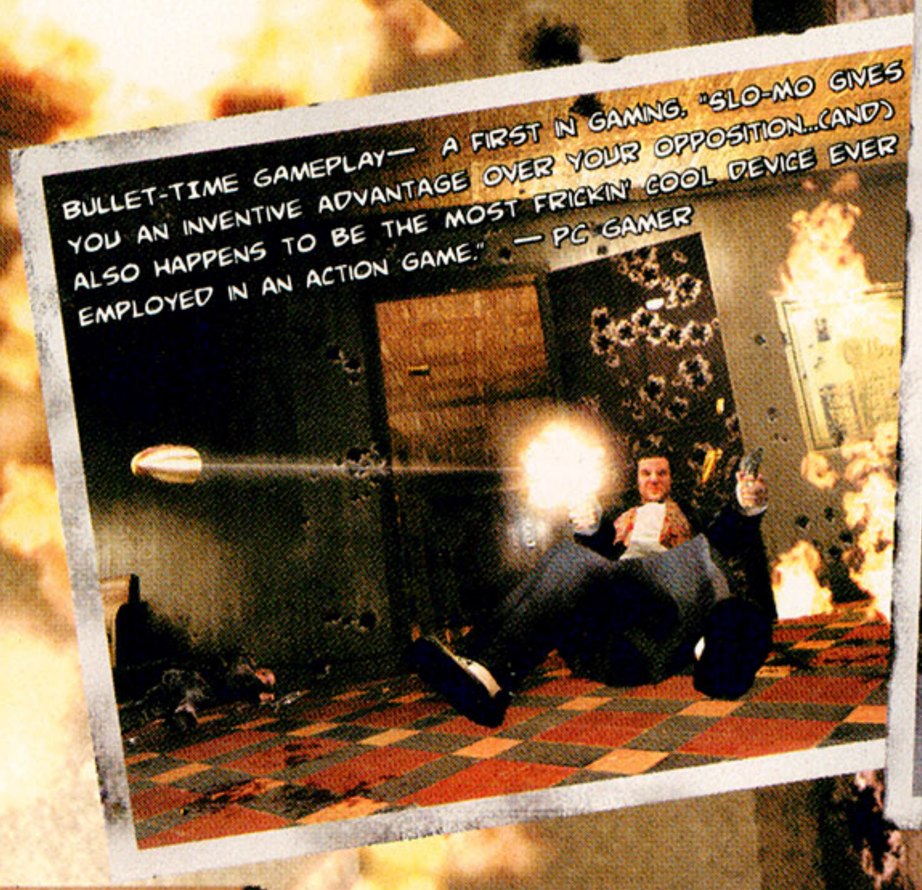
You'll need everything you've got to keep up. I own 6 Winter X-Games gold medals and I'm not slowing down anytime soon. Session with me and some of the best pro riders including Tara Dakides, Shaun White, Ross Powers, and others as you drop into 8 levels based on real world-class resorts. With an insane trick style game-play, this video game is the ultimate snowboarding challenge. Pull the sickest tricks off anything in sight, defy gravity using hundreds of realistic moves, and link combos to access epic new terrain. Still think you can ride like me? Well step up or step off.

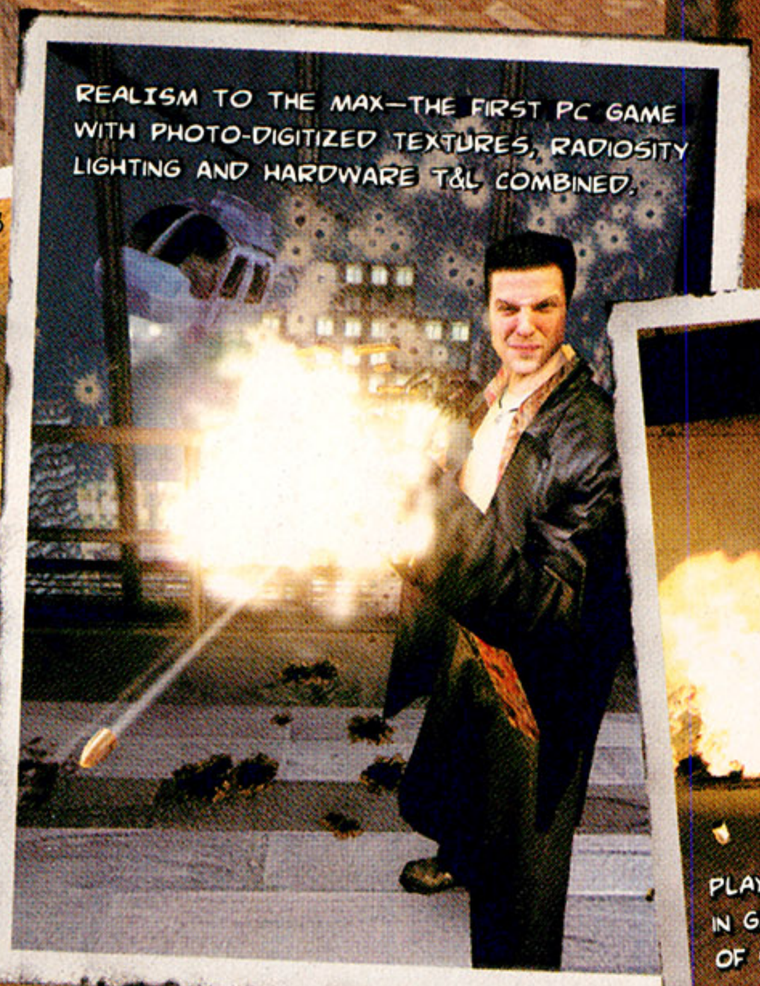
Soundtrack includes songs by Static-X, Papa Roach and Alien Ant Farm.

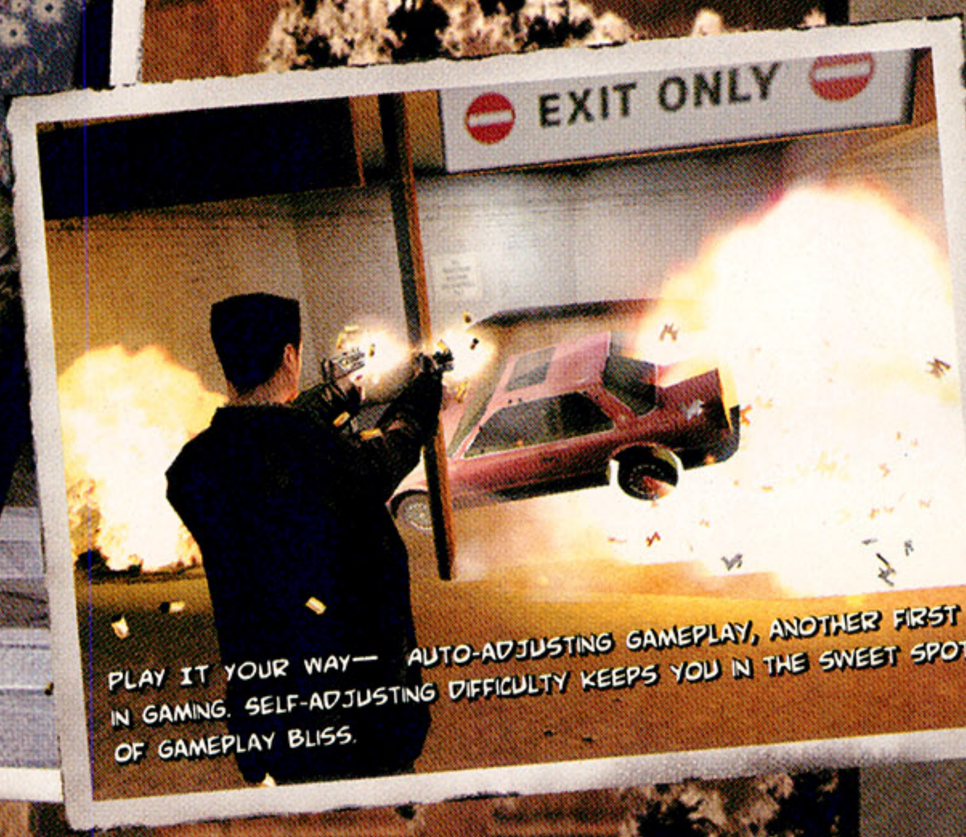
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MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

VIOLENCE
BLOOD

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WINDOWS 95/98 PC CD ROM

PlayStation 2

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EVERYTHING RIPPED APART IN A NEW YORK MINUTE... MAX PAYNE IS A MAN WITH NOTHING TO LOSE IN THE VIOLENT, COLD URBAN NIGHT. A FUGITIVE UNDERCOVER COP FRAMED FOR MURDER, AND NOW HUNTED BY COPS AND THE MOB. MAX IS A MAN WITH HIS BACK AGAINST THE WALL, FIGHTING A BATTLE HE CANNOT HOPE TO WIN. PREPARE FOR A NEW BREED OF DEEP ACTION GAME. PREPARE FOR PAIN... DEVELOPED BY REMEDY ENTERTAINMENT AND PRODUCED BY 3D REALMS, MAX PAYNE IS A RELENTLESS STORY-DRIVEN GAME ABOUT A MAN ON THE EDGE, FIGHTING FOR HIS JUSTICE WHILE UNCOVERING PLOT-TWISTS AND TWISTED THUGS IN THE GRITTY BOWELS OF NEW YORK DURING THE CENTURY'S WORST BLIZZARD.

MAXPAYNE.COM

Letters to the Editors

LETTER FACTS

- Number of letters written from correctional facilities: 2
- Most number of letters written by the same person in one month: 8
- Number of letters from people thinking they STILL won a GameShark for doing absolutely nothing: 34

LETTER OF THE MONTH

The Weakest Link?

I've been an avid reader of your magazine for quite some time now, and I just don't feel like I have anywhere else to turn during this troubled time. I have been a Nintendo fan for as far back as I can remember. But lately, it's been pretty hard to be a fan of them at all, let alone video games in general.

What I'm pointing to in particular is this new look for Zelda. I guess I'm not so much disappointed as I am insulted. I'm 20 years old, so while I got my start on the Atari 2600, my first real video game experiences took place on the Nintendo Entertainment System. To me, the best of those were the Mario, Zelda and Metroid games. The Super NES came along and made those games

"I can't get over how much I want to play a beautiful new Zelda game with *adult* Link."

spectacular by giving them an updated look while keeping the same familiar gameplay. And, of course, I can't forget the wonderful Game Boy games. In those days, I was in gaming bliss.

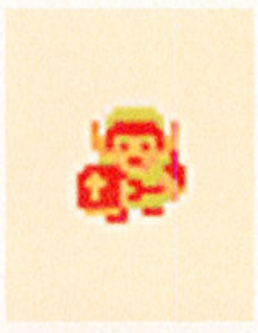
But now Nintendo has taken an amazing new Zelda video for GameCube (the Gannon fight) and turned it into a cartoon! Most of us older gamers are willing to give the new Metroid a try, but killing Zelda like that is unforgivable. By all rights, I should be leaping for joy that Soul Calibur 2 is coming to the Cube, but I can't get over how much I want to play a beautiful new Zelda game with *adult* Link.

So, I turn to you for support. My Dreamcast has been killed. The PS2 has bored me so much I haven't even felt the urge to think about buying one for any reason outside of Monkey Island, and my GameCube dreams are being smashed one by one. Gaming is my #1 hobby, but I'm having a hard time finding things to be thankful for.

Kris Randazzo
themaxx423@yahoo.com

Whoa, whoa! Nintendo killed Zelda? That sounds a little harsh, don't you think? It may not have been what you were expecting, and yeah, Link was a little too comical in the demo, but try to keep an open mind until we see some in-depth gameplay. The original Zelda is a graphical nightmare compared to any game on the market today, but it still feels and plays better than 75 percent of the stuff out there, right?

Think of all your favorite franchises that have since been tainted by technology. Castlevania got butchered in 3D, Blaster Master and Contra dried up when designers tried to make them "realistic," and arcade faves like Centipede and Pac-Man have become standard guinea pigs for lame idea testing. How much would it suck to see Zelda go down the same road? The point is, you can only do two things to preserve a killer game franchise: Let it die at its peak, or keep new installments fresh without burning the series out. Nintendo's never had a bad Zelda game on one of their consoles, and whether you're into the graphical style or not, we doubt they're going to let this one drag Link down. If it does, we owe you a Coke.







(Upper Right) Evolution: Link, From Elven NES Sprite to GameCube Boy Wonder

Congratulations, **Kris Randazzo**, you win an InterAct GameShark for PlayStation 2, PlayStation, Dreamcast, Nintendo 64 or Game Boy Color.



DreamBlasting

I have a subscription to your magazine, and I've really enjoyed it until now. It seems that you guys are really starting to make a mockery of the Dreamcast while pushing the PS2. For example, in the latest issue, #147, Madden was the game of the month with ratings of 9.0, 9.5 and 9.5, while WSB 2K2 got ratings of 6.0, 6.0 and 4.5. Come on guys, stop trying to phase out the DC with bad reviews.

kraken712@peoplepc.com

A 50-foot leprechaun wearing a horseshoe necklace couldn't luck the DC out of its downward spiral, and we object to the insinuation that the DC's demise is our fault. Ooga Booga, Sonic Adventure 2, Daytona, Unreal Tournament and Phantasy Star Online are just some of the DC games in recent times that scored at least a 6 across the board (with 5 as average, that means it's good).

The measure of a game isn't in the console it plays on or who publishes it. You'll see PS2 games get bad reviews from us all the time (check out how many PS2 games scored under 5.0 last issue). Now, if you came up with more than one example to back up your "trend," we'd go on, but it seems you're out of ammo.

Realness Kept

I just want to say that your magazine is off the hook, meaning it's the best I ever read. Some of my co-workers and also people I know outside of work tease me about the fact I play video games and watch cartoons. I don't really care; I'll probably die laughing from watching an old episode of *Tom & Jerry*. I have been reading *EGM* for three years now and you guys gave me a backbone and the strength to say: I am a proud 27-year-old father of 8-year-old twins who loves to play video games and read *EGM*. Here in NYC, you have to keep it real, meaning you have to stay true to yourself no matter what you like or do, so peace out and keep it real.

Hector Cabrera Jr.
Manhattan, NY

Play as One Eye Jack and grind, board, shoot and scratch to keep the Punkazz Aliens from gettin' phat!

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Mild Language

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LETTERS

SHORTS

Eat ours.

Kids come to me to beat games for them. They even gave me the nickname "Video Game Master." Should I charge for help?

David Milford
Giardino, CT

Of course! Roll your eyes and make fun of them a lot when they get stuck, especially the girls. Chicks dig that.

I was wondering what the qualifications are to become a gaming editor or tester?

Bun978@aol.com

In the immortal words of sassy art director Cyril Wochok: "General knowledge of plugs and outlets, familiarity with operation of on/off switches, and the ability to grasp cartridge/disc. But you can have my job when they pry it out of my cold, dead hands."

In issue #145, I saw a picture from E3 of what looked to be an Xbox and the box the unit comes in. Were they selling it and did you guys forget to tell us?

William Blackledge
Chalmette, LA



Man, we wish! We would have eBayed that junk faster than you can say, "$10,000 reserve." No, unfortunately, Microsoft just mocked up a store display to give people a feel for the packaging.

We're glad our mag has inspired you to take a stand, Hector. You've proven that even 27-year-old *Tom & Jerry* fans can live a full, happy life. You should come hang out with us sometime in Chicago...meaning please stay in New York and enjoy *EGM* from a safe distance.

15 Seconds of Fame

I was recently rummaging through my old sci-fi movies and I came across one called *Evolver*. I popped it in, and within the first hour I see half an *EGM* cover sticking out of a kid's drawer. You might want to look into this and start calling some people at Trimark. P.S. What are the chances that Soul Reaver 2 will still come out on DC?

Tim
tim942@home.com



That's funny; we keep copies of *EGM* in our dresser drawers, too. To answer your last question first: zero. Sorry. The good news is, we called some people at Trimark, and it turns out we're entitled to royalties on every single copy of *Evolver* ever sold. After we pay the postage due on our royalty check, we'll just about break even. Thanks for the heads-up.

Games, Right, Yeah...

I think people forget about their old systems too easily and how much fun classic games can be. For example, I just got done with a stimulating round of Mario Kart for Super NES. My opponent was chasing me down with a red shell and all I had was a measly green. He was approaching from behind when I had a great idea. I waited until he fired, and right before I was hit, I shot my green shell directly behind me and in the path of the red

EGM@ziffdavis.com

E-mail us your thoughts, your wishes, your gripes, your innermost weirdness...or your pictures, crazy screenshots or photos of bizarre game-related moments. By the way, "daring" us to print your letter is the quickest way to get it thrown in the trash.

Question of the Moment

Are You Missing Out On Good Games Due To Mature Ratings?

One word: grandparents!

Rogue356@aol.com

I sure am! I might not be able to play games like Dead or Alive 3 and Soul Calibur 2! Where would I be if I never played Half-Life? This makes me sick!

supermario1988@msn.com

Not really, 'cause most retailers are just looking for a quick, easy sale and don't care how old you are.

jehuty53085@yahoo.com

Yeah, we are going to be missing out. Americans are too uptight about everything! If parents are inconsiderate enough to let their children play M-rated games, well that's their bad.

Stonefox1782@aol.com

I've already missed so much, and now with Metal Gear Solid 2 and Silent Hill 2 coming out, what am I gonna play other than Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3?

KlownH8er@aol.com

Not really, because my mom wants to see the blood and gore and hear the cursing almost as much as I do!

Eman1000@hotmail.com

Only if my wife pays attention to the ratings.

scott_c_singer@yahoo.com

I feel like I am missing out on a lot of games this year because almost 75 percent of games that are any good are rated M. You have the Resident Evil Series, Silent Hill 2, Metal Gear Solid 2, Grand Theft Auto III...I mean, can't they cut out some language and gore so us younger kids can play them?

solid_snake87X@hotmail.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

What Do You Think of the New Look for The Legend of Zelda on GameCube?

Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading:

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e-mail: EGM@ziffdavis.com

Please note: We reserve the right to edit any correspondence for space purposes. If you don't want your name, city/state or e-mail address printed, tell us so (but please include your phone number, mailing address and system preference for Letter of the Month prize consideration).

Also note: Although we can't respond to every letter, as far as you know, we do read them all. Also, everything you send us is ours to keep!

shell. It struck the red and I lived to see another day! This threw my opponent into a fit of rage and we pummeled each other until we were both grounded for a week. That's how much we got into a nearly 10-year-old game, so don't forget the Nintendos and Segas that got us here today.

Max Keyser
Green Bay, WI

An interesting story Max, interesting indeed. But there is one slight technical FLAW that leaves a gaping hole in your logic. You see, in the SNES version of Mario Kart, you didn't have the ability to shoot the shells backward. That feature didn't come in until Mario Kart 64. So, who are you really, Max? (pulling back mask) Aha! It's old Mr. Pennystock from the video arcade! Thought you could scare away all the kids and keep the games to yourself, did you?

Decoding Veronica

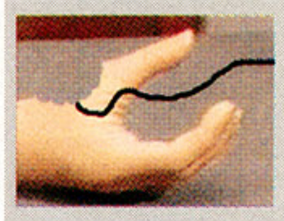
In last month's issue, I was looking at the games that were reviewed and saw that the scores for Resident Evil Code: Veronica on the PS2 were 8, 6, 2 and 5. I was sort of disappointed because it got a gold award when it didn't deserve one. No disrespect, but Sonic Adventure 2 got better scores: 8, 5, 6 and 7, and it didn't get any award whatsoever. I just think all the games should be graded fairly.

Arthur Gonzalez
Hot Springs, AZ

Apparently someone hasn't been reading his intro page to the Review Crew! Do our homely faces offend you that much? The Platinum, Gold and Silver Awards are given out based on the average of the three *overall* review scores. The four scores you listed for each game pertain to graphics, sound, ingenuity and replay. While those small scores go into determining the overall marks for each review, the final score displayed behind the review text is the one that really indicates how we feel about a game, and the one that'll score it an award if it is so deserving. And Code: Veronica is *soo* deserving.

MORE SHORTS

Has anyone ever thought about developing a game about the movies *Silence of the Lambs* or *Hannibal*?
l2ockBotm@aol.com



Yes, as well as this bite-sensitive controller for the action scenes. OK, we're lying.

What does SNK stand for?
Brandon Collins
New Orleans, LA

As reported in *EGM* #134's Press Start, it stands for Shin Nihon Kikau, which we think is Japanese for "The People's Elbow." Aren't you glad you asked?

Toadally Good Idea

Is it just me, or has everyone forgotten about the frogs? That's right, Battletoads! Whatever happened to them? Is there any word about Battletoads coming out for GameCube or Nintendo 64?



Angel Diaz
San Jose, CA

Wow, we haven't heard from the Toads since the days of the Genesis and Super NES. Well, by our best estimation, Midway should own that license about now (they bought out Tradewest, who did the original Battletoads game on the NES). Whether they know it or care is another story. Why dontcha drop them a line and remind them? N64 is probably out of the question, but there is a petition in progress on the Net for Rare to do a GBA version.

Ultra Confusing

I came across an old Nintendo game ad that features both Metal Gear and Snake's Revenge for the NES, but...it says they were both made by Ultra. Did Konami not have a piece of this great pie from the start? Did it go from Ultra to Konami along the way?

Tim Lammers
Milwaukee, WI

Actually, Tim, Ultra is a division of Konami. Back in the late '80s, when most of those games were made, Nintendo imposed a limit on the number of games any one company could publish as a quality-control measure. For some top-tier publishers, like Konami, Nintendo made an exception and allowed them to submit more titles under a different name. So, Konami set up Ultra and churned out a lot of really cool games like Metal Gear, Ninja Turtles and Skate or Die. These days, it's all just Konami, but if the MGS2 demo is any indication, the quality over there hasn't slipped any.

LETTER ART

Letter Art of the Month WINNER

Kenneth LaChapelle II• San Diego, CA



Congratulations, Kenneth LaChapelle II! Your prize is on the way—an InterAct GameShark for PlayStation 2, PlayStation, Dreamcast, Nintendo 64 or Game Boy Color.

GAMESHARK

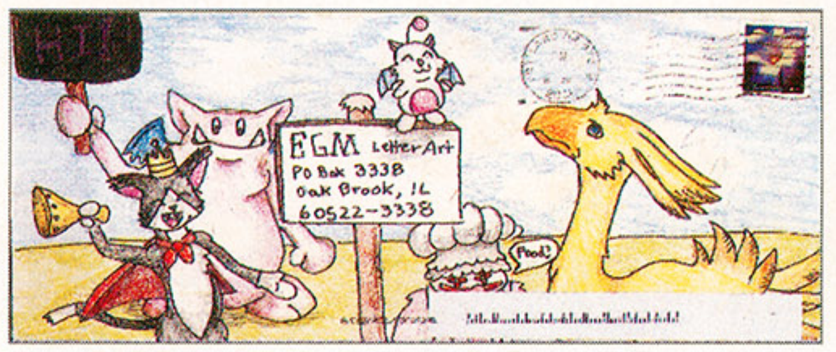
Put your creative skills to the test by decking out a #10 envelope (the long, business type) with your own unique touch. Send your letter art to:

EGM Letter Art, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338
(or e-mail EGM@ziffdavis.com)

Be sure to include a mailing address, and tell us what system you'd like your prize for, in case you win. All entries become the property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be returned!

Not quite Sharkworthy...

Bad luck to these guys.... Better luck next time.



Leslie Smith
Portland, OR



D. Phillips
Mt. Vernon, IN

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PlayStation 2

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LIKE YOUR WOMEN?

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By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@ziffdavis.com
& Jonathan Dudlak jonathan_dudlak@ziffdavis.com

Spaceworld Reveals Missing Links

Zelda pulls a Paper Mario, GBA gets wired to console as Nintendo heads into Cubist period



Illustration by Mike Reisel

Between the huge eyes, oversized shield and wispy hair, Link's a lot more like the spritely young elf we remember from the Nintendo and Super Nintendo days. Wonder what princess Zelda will think.... For screenshots and an in-depth look at everything else shown at the Spaceworld show, see page 140.

The mantra of Nintendo execs at this past spring's Electronic Entertainment Expo was "Wait until Spaceworld." Where's Mario for GameCube? Wait until Spaceworld. What about the Game Boy Advance hookup to the GC? Wait until Spaceworld. Is GameCube going to go online? Wait until Spaceworld. Well, Nintendo's oft-mentioned Japanese convention has come and gone, and they technically made good on most of their promises. Showing staggeringly brief yet brand-new clips of Mario Sunshine and Metroid Prime on the Cube, and Animal Forest and Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble for GBA (all detailed in our feature on page 140), Nintendo made it clear that they have most of their junk together. Oh, and there was one other game...

The only title to get a round of applause (the Japanese equivalent of storming the field and tearing down the goalpost) at Nintendo's press conference was The Legend of Zelda for GameCube. If you've seen any of the movies online, you already know it's taken a radical new artistic direction compared to the intense graphical detail displayed in the Link/Gannon showdown that's been circulating for over a year now. The altered visual style has been likened to everything from early Warner Bros. cartoons to PaRappa the Rapper, and has a lighter, much simpler look. The demo reel shows a cartoony Link smirking mischievously and besting bad guys in trite comical manners. Nintendo just for kids? Nah...according to designer Shigeru Miyamoto, the team wanted to get away from the realistic-looking Link on the Nintendo 64 in order to give him his own new GameCube style.

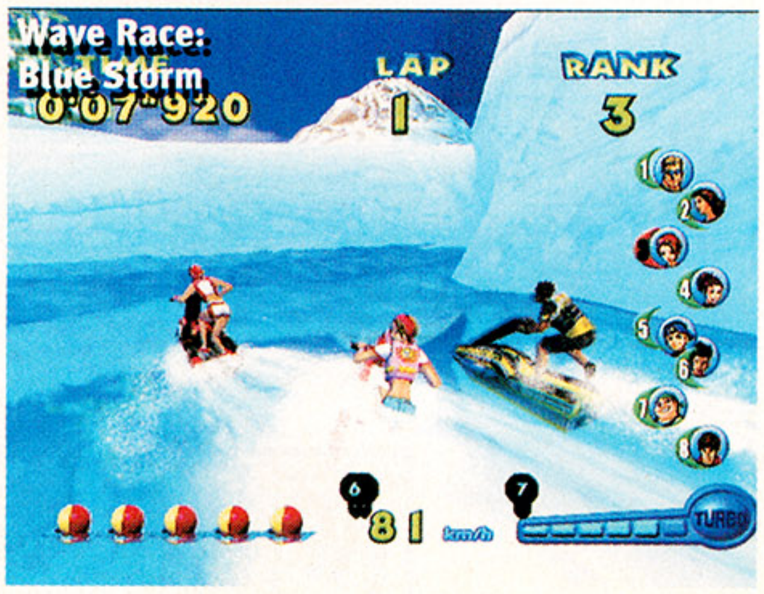
While Zelda is riding high with a new look, Metroid Prime is still walking on eggshells with the gaming public. Nintendo showed another 10 seconds of footage, all in-game this time, with the Miyamoto-mandated first-person perspective in place. Without the proper introduction, you might think you're looking at a Half-Life port to GameCube, but Nintendo is showing far too little of this game to indicate whether it's going to sink or swim.

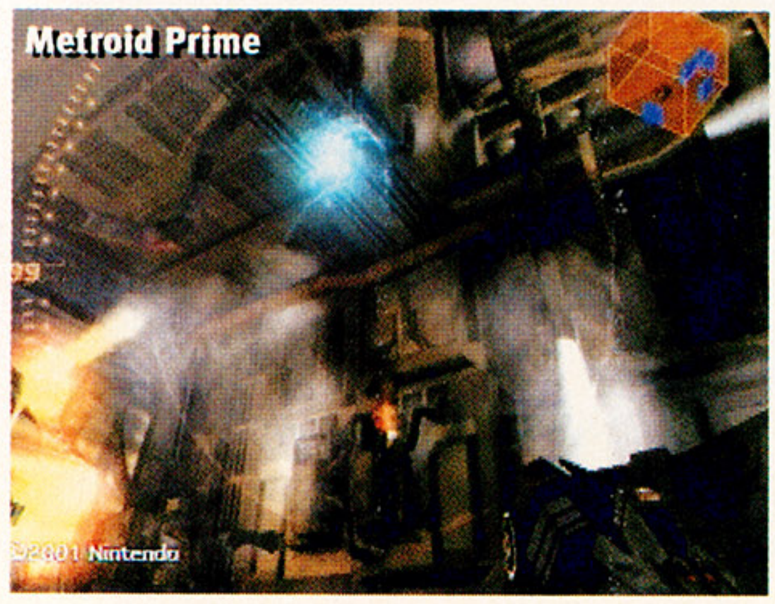
On a more positive note, Miyamoto unveiled the closest thing to Mario 64 we've yet seen for the Cube. Dubbed Mario Sunshine and shown in a brief video at the conference, the game looks like it could tip at any time toward becoming either a 3D Mario adventure or a more experimental Mario side project a la Luigi's Mansion. If there's a theme for first-party GameCube development, though, it's to keep the options open. Much like Zelda and Metroid, we may see Mario Sunshine take a new direction while under the knife.

Delay of Game

Nintendo originally scheduled the GameCube to hit retail Nov. 5. The bad news: GameCube has been pushed back almost two weeks to a new release date of Nov. 18. The good news: Nintendo's upping the quantity to 700,000 to help avoid shortages at retail. Nintendo's director of corporate planning, Satoru Iwata, explains: "For us, it was really a decision in terms of how we can best meet peoples' expectations after E3. We decided to come to market with a larger quantity of units. The actual volume of units we're going to have on the initial day is increased by about 23 percent."

Nintendo pushing their console back gives Microsoft a 10-day jump on hardware and software sales if the Xbox holds its Nov. 8 date. Iwata, however, feels that each system attracts a different kind of customer: "We just don't think that people who were going to buy GameCube are going to go out and buy Microsoft's product, be satisfied with that, and not buy GameCube."





QUALITY VIEWING

Looking for something to watch on Friday nights? Check out *Electric Playground*, shown at 7:30 p.m. EST in the U.S. on Discovery Science (different from the *Crocodile Hunter*-infested Discovery Channel) and in Canada on Space Channel at 12:30 p.m. EST. There you'll find plenty of good gaming info and reviews with hosts Tommy Tallarico and Victor Lucas. Topics on the show in October include Gundam games, NFL 2K2 Vs. Madden 2002 and a look at Jet Set Radio Future (Xbox).

"We just don't think that people who were going to buy GameCube are going to go out and buy Microsoft's product, be satisfied with that, and not buy GameCube." ***–Nintendo director of corporate planning, Satoru Iwata***







Portable Plans

While GameCube dominated the show, Nintendo revealed a lot of plans for the Game Boy Advance, many of which involved its connectivity to the GC. A new version of Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble, due out in Japan by May 2002, makes use of the same physics model as the Game Boy Color game. It can also be patched through the GameCube with the GBA as a controller via a special link cable. The GBA version of Animal Forest will also use the GC link, allowing users to draw backgrounds and textures on the GBA, then upload them into the GameCube game.

Nintendo also expanded on the GBA Card E Reader's functionality. The unit attaches to the back of the GBA and reads information from encoded data cards. It will launch for use with specialized Pokémon trading cards that hold tactical and tutorial info, minigames and short Pokémon movies, but the Card E Reader will be expanded to work with other games once it is established. Nintendo also showed several third-party GBA titles including Tekken, King of Fighters, Gradius Galaxies and Super Mario Advance 2 (essentially a port of the Super Nintendo's Super Mario World).

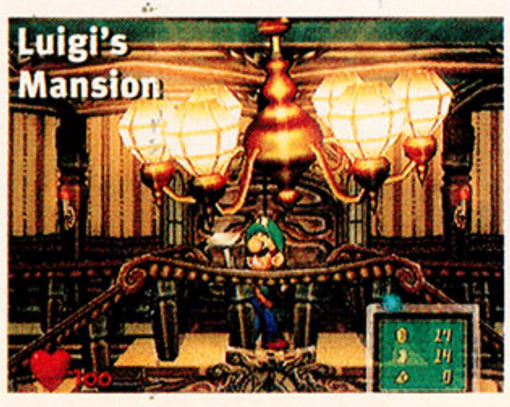
What About...?

Nobody doubts the strength of Nintendo's first-party titles; it's the third-party support that has people concerned. While Namco is bringing Soul Calibur 2 and the next Ridge Racer title to the Cube, neither of those games are exclusive to GC. Iwata is still optimistic. "It's going to be easier for third parties to develop for the GameCube now that we're no longer on a cartridge format," he reassures, citing Sega, Electronic Arts, THQ, Activision and Acclaim as current developers on board with the Cube.

Then there's the issue of older gamers being put off by Nintendo's "just for kids" image. While the PS2 and Xbox are definitely skewed toward more mature players, Nintendo considers themselves part of the teen/adult audience, as well. "Most of the time, the people saying that we make games only for kids have been our competitors," Iwata explains. "We don't want the public to have that impression. We can create games that make younger children happy, but those same games are still going to be popular with older players."

The last big question mark follows GameCube's online connectivity. "Nintendo has a different attitude regarding online," says Iwata. "It's just one portion of a larger ideal for what could happen with gaming in the future, but right now there are a lot of questions around a sustainable business model." For Iwata's comments on a plan for Phantasy Star Online and a complete breakdown of the Spaceworld show, turn to the feature on page 140.









LAUNCHING THE CUBE

New GameCube Release Stats (U.S)

Along with the release date, Nintendo has amended some of their figures for hardware and peripherals for the Nov. 18 launch of the GameCube. Here's a quick rundown of what you can expect to see and pay on day one if you're looking to score a Cube.

Launch Date: Nov. 18, 2001
North American Allocation: 700,000 units, with plans to ship an additional 400,000 units by year-end
MSRP: $199.95 (Three system colors available: Purple, Orange and Black)
Memory Card Price: $14.95
Controller Price: $34.95 (raised from original quote of $19.95)



First-Party Titles for 2001:
Luigi's Mansion (Nov. 18)
Wave Race: Blue Storm (Nov. 18)
Pikmin (ships Nov. 19)
Super Smash Bros. Melee (ships Dec. 3)
Eternal Darkness (ships Dec. 3)

First-Party Titles for First Quarter 2002:
NBA Courtside 2002
Star Fox Adventures: Dinosaur Planet



Nintendo will release a cable that enables you to connect your Game Boy Advance to the GameCube, but a street date and pricing are not yet available. In Japan, the cable sells for $1,400 yen, or approximately $12.

InterAct will have their CubeLink Advanced Cable available for $9.99 at launch.

PRESS START



RAIDER AND *FANTASY* HIT HOME

Missed this summer's *Tomb Raider* and *Final Fantasy* flicks? Both movies are coming to DVD (and home video) with enough bonus features to make up for their subpar plots. *Final Fantasy* hits first, on Oct. 23, in a lavish two-disc set with commentary by just about everybody (except director Hironobu Sakaguchi), a virtual tour of Square Pictures, and even a bonus "Thriller" video starring the CG cast. *Tomb Raider* hits DVD on Nov. 13 with deleted scenes, featurettes on the Lara Croft phenomenon, three levels from the PC games (if you play it in a DVD-ROM drive) and more.



Kombat Kontinued

It's been a long time since the word "Fatality" was uttered in a fighting game. Midway aims to correct that in 2002 with a new installment of its popular mid-'90s fighter, Mortal Kombat. Ed Boon, co-creator of the series, and his team are hard at work on the fifth installment, but whatever you do—don't call it MK5. The title is simply (drum roll please) Mortal Kombat. Fans won't find any Friendships or Babalities here. It's being pitched as a complete reworking of the game, bringing it back to its more violent roots. New characters will join familiar faces like Scorpion, Liu Kang and Kano. And yes, there will be lots of blood. At a recent Midway event, we saw a short (but promising) clip of Scorpion doin' some warm-up moves within a real-time 3D environment. Since Midway has exited the arcade business, the new MK will debut on console (specific platforms are to be determined). Also on the slate: a Game Boy Advance MK. Prepare yourself!



Xbox Japan Date, Nabs Soul Calibur 2

Microsoft sets a Japanese launch date and publishers show off new titles

Historically speaking, the U.S. always has to wait a few months for the latest video game hardware to sail across the Pacific. So maybe it's only fair that Japanese gamers will have to wait for Xbox (arguably the most promising American console in years). Microsoft broke the news during a press conference in Tokyo, held just one day after Nintendo's Spaceworld closed shop. The new Japanese launch date is Feb. 22, 2002. While keeping quiet on the system's Japanese price tag, the company did say that software would retail for 6800 yen ($56), the same MSRP as new PlayStation 2 and GameCube titles.

To soften the blow of the delay news, several key publishers were on hand to make new game announcements. Namco revealed that they will release Xbox versions of Soul Calibur 2 and the latest Ridge Racer title (expected to feature online racing). GameCube and PS2 versions of both titles are also planned. In addition, they are working on two exclusive titles: Dead to Rights (coming to PS2, too) and an unnamed action-adventure title to be shown later.

Sega had three titles to show, all scheduled for release in the first quarter of 2002: Sega GT 2002 from Wow Entertainment, and Gun Valkyrie and Jet Set Radio Future from Smilebit. Record label Grand Royal's Latch Brothers production team will provide the remixed tunes for JSRF, including hits by bands Q-Tip, BS2000 and Bran Van 3000. JSRF will hit the U.S. on Feb. 12, 2002.

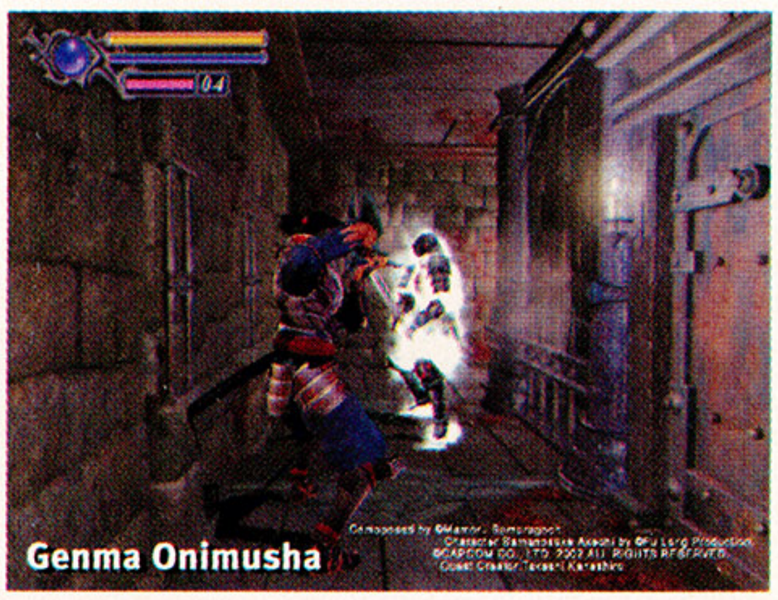
Tecmo brought a brand-new Dead or Alive 3 trailer to the party. They confirmed that the Japanese version of Dead or Alive 3 will be enhanced from the U.S. version, and Aerosmith will provide the game's title track.

Capcom's Keiji Inafune demonstrated Genma Onimusha, a remix of the PS2 game that's also scheduled for launch. This time enemies can suck souls just like the hero, and the team has added new areas, cinemas and a secret outfit.

After completing the PS2 version, Konami is hard at work on Silent Hill 2: Restless Dreams for the February launch, with a few changes and improvements. The film grain look is gone, supposedly because the game looks great without it. The team assured the crowd that this will be the ultimate version of Silent Hill 2.

It remains to be seen whether or not Xbox can succeed in Japan, especially after the headstarts the PS2 and GC will have by the time it launches. But with titles like the ones announced and displayed at the conference (shown below), it's sure going to be off to a great start in February.









PRESS START





MUSEUM OF THE RARE

The Museum at CGE 2001 featured plenty of rare items, ranging from early Atari products to the Japanese version of the NES (Nintendo's Famicom). Two of the items of note were the Intellivision III (far left) and the His & Her Atari Lynx handhelds (left). We were allowed to look, but not touch—many items were from private collections.

Spending A Weekend in the 1980s

EGM Travels to Classic Gaming Expo 2001 for a Blast Thru the Past

If PlayStation was your first exposure to video games, you probably can't imagine a time when controllers had a joystick and *one* button, and an American company dominated the hardware market. I can just barely remember browsing the aisles of the local Toys 'R' Us filled with Atari 2600 games.



It may be hard to believe, but 20-odd years after the first Atari 2600s took over homes across America, some would still rather jam on old-school systems than the latest PS2 or Dreamcast shoot-'em-ups. Are they crazy? Yes, and for one weekend they all got together to celebrate the games of old at Classic Gaming Expo 2001, held August 12-13 at Jackie Gaughan's Plaza Hotel in Las Vegas. A little older, a little wiser, this time they had more than saved lunch money to spend.

Inside the modestly sized hall, fans filled their glasses with a double shot of nostalgia. The place was buzzing with gamers relearning the patterns from mid-'80s laserdisc arcade games and browsing a museum of rare and unreleased systems, peripherals and promo items. Tournaments officiated by the Twin Galaxies score keepers (www.twingalaxies.com) were held throughout the show on the 2600 classics Kaboom! and Space Duel.



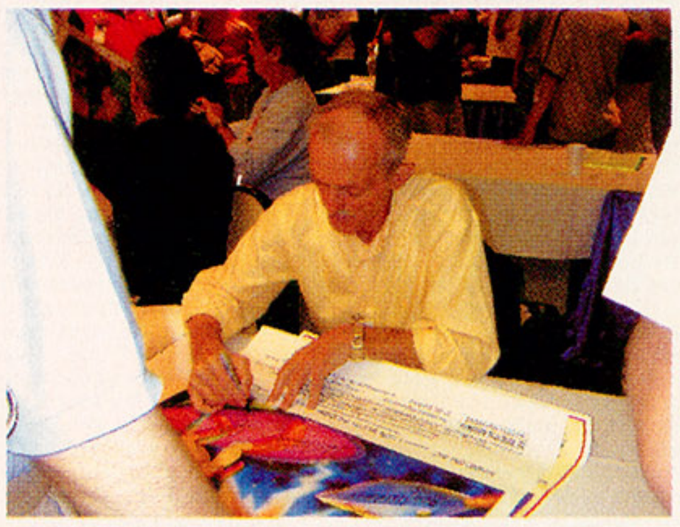
A store display for the all-in-one vector graphics Vectrex system.

Those at CGE looking to complete their game collections found plenty, spread between pre-Nintendo hardware including Atari, Colecovision, Intellivision and Vectrex. Anything post-1984 without the Atari name on it was neglected, including a large selection of Neo•Geo carts on sale from NGS-USA. Deals got gobbled up quickly by Saturday morning, leaving some prices that were enough to cause heart failure—$50 for a Miner 2049er Atari 2600 cart!? Insane!

The other big draw was the panel discussions. On the second day, I decided to check one out on programming homebrewed games for the Atari 2600. I learned that it's so easy to make one of them that a baby could do it (which started the ideas flowing through my noggin), as long as that baby's familiar with assembly language (cue my aspirations being dashed). Also great were the Dragon's Lair panel (see story below) and a highly entertaining Activision talk with three of the company's early star programmers.

It's great that a show like this exists to recognize the pioneers and history of our now old industry and for fans to get together and reminisce about the classics. If you're interested in attending next year's show, go to www.cgexpo.com for info. See ya there! —*Chris Johnston*



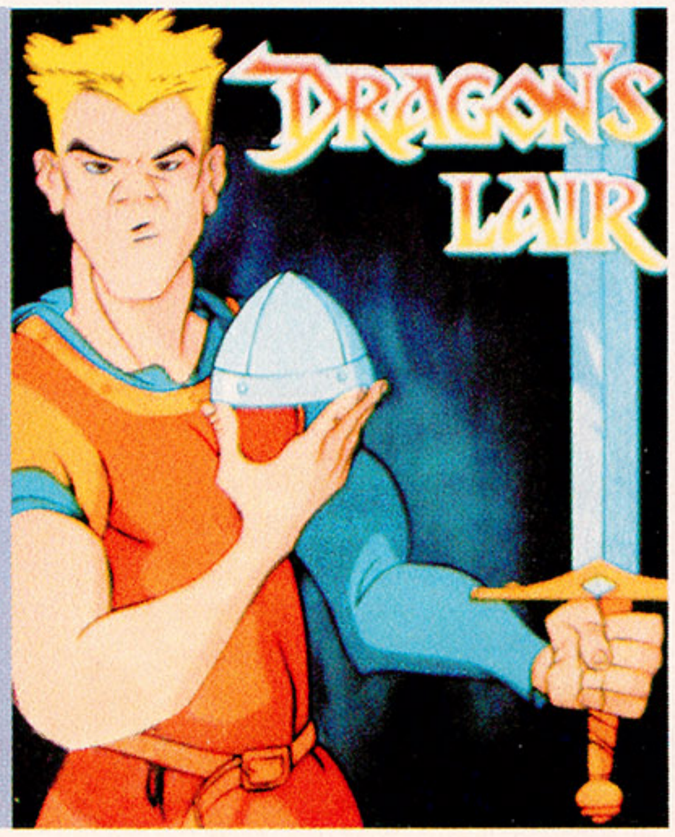


Animator Don Bluth signs a poster for the laserdisc game Space Ace.



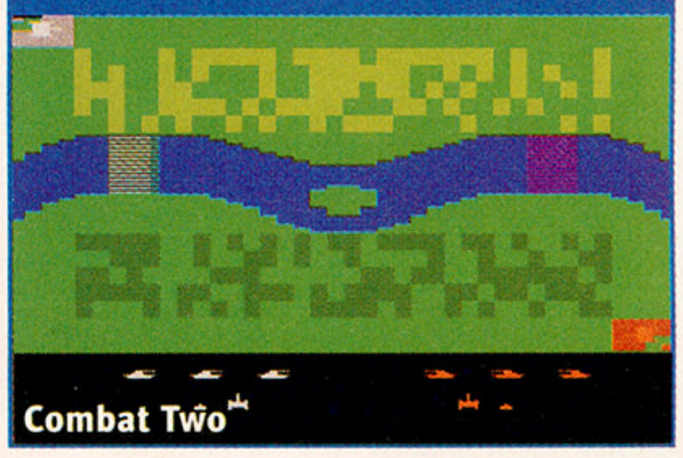
Dragon's Lair Movie in Production

Don Bluth Animation is going back to the past for its next project, a feature film based on the early '80s laserdisc game Dragon's Lair. At a panel discussion both about the old game and Dragonstone's new Dragon's Lair 3D (coming to Xbox, GameCube and PS2 next year), Bluth divulged a few details about the movie's production, based on his original script: A botched heist leaves two baby boys (one a prince, the other a ringer) in the care of Sebastian, an aging thief. Unable to tell the two apart, he ends up raising them both. One will grow up to be Dirk (check out his new look on the right), and we'll see his relationship blossom with Daphne. We'll also meet some new and old faces. The movie will include the same brand of humor and swordplay that made the original game such a hit. It's slated for a 2003 release.



Two New for 2600

Combat Two (1982, below) and Elevator Action (1983), previously unreleased Atari prototypes, were for sale on carts exclusively at the show (by Retrodesign and CGE Services, respectively).



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PRESS START

OLD SCHOOL: Ooh, Like, I'm So Scared...

Gather 'round the jack o' lantern and stuff a wad of Goobers into your mouth—it's time for *EGM*'s Halloween roundup of spooky games. We went door to door asking people to donate their scary software for a special tribute to the sinister side of gaming. After coming home and throwing out several dozen copies of Nightmare Creatures, we just decided to make our own damn list.



Fester's Quest

NES 1989

You rang? Nothing says Halloween like the Addams Family, and nothing says child molester like Uncle Fester. Still, he got top billing in this Sunsoft adventure that borrows lots of gameplay ideas from their other gem, Blaster Master.





NES 1988

Friday the 13th

The only tribute to the poster child of '80s horror flicks around, Friday mimicked the movie plot pretty closely. As one of several camp counselors, you have to save the kids of Crystal Lake from Jason, and kill the mofo to boot.





NES 1986

Ghosts N' Goblins

The scariest part of this seminal classic is how tough it is to beat. Still, Ghosts 'n Goblins will always be remembered as one of the first games to let us murder simulate scary zombies and little flying Satan babies.





TurboGrafx-16 1990

Splatterhouse

If only you were longer, more difficult, and ported from the arcade to a console that wasn't so short-lived.... Survived by two lukewarm follow-ups on the Genesis, this creepy game fertilized the survival-horror genre on the consoles of today.





Saturn 1996

Mr. Bones

You play a dead blues guitarist resurrected to join an army of skeletons ruled by a drum-banging lunatic. When Dr. Goofy finds out you're not into his scene, you've gotta haul coccyx to save yourself, and ideally, the world. Genius.





PC Engine 1993

Dracula X

Arguably the best game in the series, Drac X infused traditional Castlevania gameplay with pints of style, a killer soundtrack, and tough bosses with post-death counter-attacks. A moment of silence for this poor Japan-exclusive.



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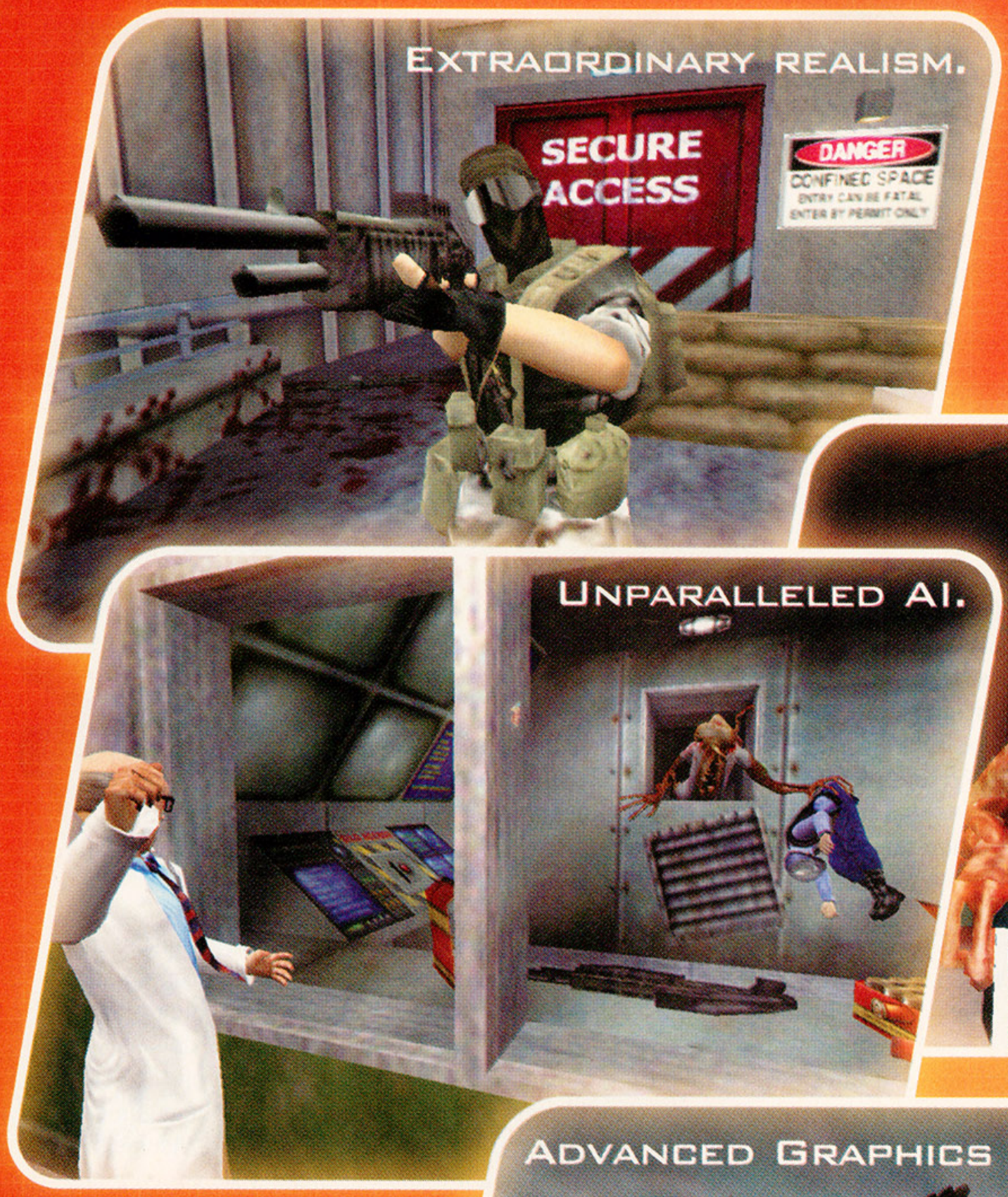
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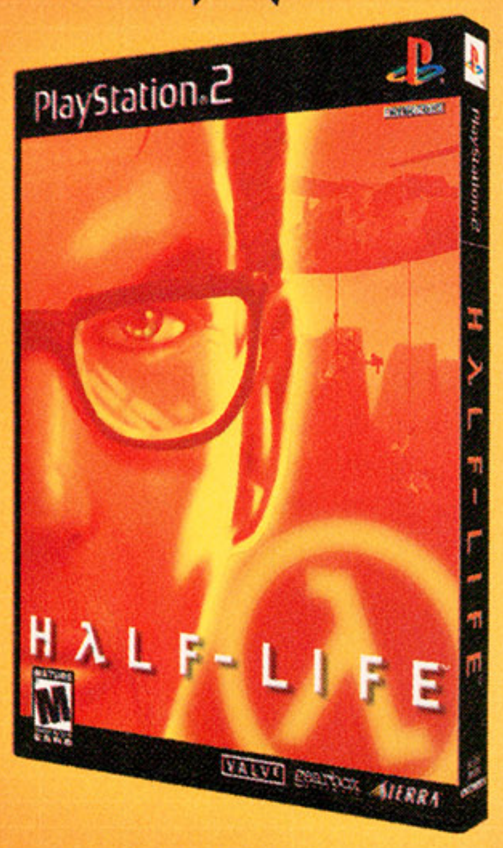
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DON'T PANIC! SEAMAN ON PS2



Vivarium, the developer who brought Seaman to the Dreamcast in 1999, has teamed up with Ascii to bring him to the PlayStation 2 in Japan this November. In case you missed it, the game stars a crotchety, talking man-fish with a penchant for vulgarities and insults. Since you "talk" to him, the PS2 version will come packed with a microphone controller for a hefty 8,800 yen ($73). Currently, Vivarium has no suitors for a stateside PS2 release.



Ever Wondered?

You got questions? We got answers. Behold, our monthly stab at solving the great mysteries of gaming...

No Business like Show Business

Q: Is the video game industry really as big as the film industry?

A: "No, but we're catching up," says Kristen Burke, spokesperson for the Interactive Digital Software Association, the organization that keeps track of this stuff. According to the IDSA, total sales of console and PC games hit $6 billion last year—well below the $7.5 billion in box-office revenue claimed by the Motion Picture Association of America. But if you add in hardware sales, Burke says, the game biz actually rakes in more money by a smidgen. Of course, we're only comparing game revenues to movie-ticket sales. Factor in theater concession profits (bought a tub of popcorn lately? Yikes!) and revenues from video and DVDs, and the film industry becomes a Daddy Warbucks colossus that the game biz just can't touch.

Games are growing much faster than the movie industry, "but in overall clout, they are unlikely to enjoy the same kind of impact as movies,"says Steven Kent, author of *The First Quarter: A 25-Year History of Video Games*. Flicks, for example, can be powerful lobbying tools: Hollywood actors help favored politicians raise millions of dollars for their campaigns and lend prestige to them through association. "Talented as Shigeru Miyamoto and Yu Suzuki may be," Kent says, "they do not have the same kind of visibility as George Clooney."

The Bit Question

Q: PlayStation 2 and Dreamcast have 128-bit processors, Nintendo 64 is 64-bit, the PlayStation is 32-bit, Sega Genesis was 16-bit, and the Nintendo Entertainment System was 8-bit. So does that mean old consoles like 1978's Atari 2600 were 4-bit and ancient systems like the Odyssey were 2-bit?

A: The trend in system bit rates may seem to hold that each new generation of hardware has twice the bit power of the last. But it wasn't always that way says Ralph Baer, who created the first gaming console—the Magnavox Odyssey—and can safely be called the Father of Video Games. "Early microprocessor-controlled video games, such as the Fairchild F-8 and the RCA Spectra, had 8-bit processors," he tells us. "So did the Atari 2600 and my Odyssey 2." But that doesn't mean there's no such thing as a 4-bit processor. "Every one of the handheld games I [invented] in the late '70s—Simon, Maniac, etc.—had a Texas Instruments TMS-1000 4-bit micro in them. However, the original Odyssey game released in 1972 had no processor. It was all built of discrete transistor circuitry."

"Talented as Shigeru Miyamoto and Yu Suzuki may be, they do not have the same kind of visibility as George Clooney."

—Steven Kent, author of *The First Quarter: A 25-Year History of Video Games*



1972's Odyssey: A whopping zero bits of power.

Blow Hard

Q: Is blowing into my old cartridges when they don't work a bad idea?

A: This is something that everyone seems to do instinctively whenever their carts act up, yet no official instruction manual has ever condoned the practice. Why all the hot air? Almost everyone agrees that blowing on a bum cartridge's dusty contacts will make it work again. But Russ Perry Jr., editor of the *2600 Connection*, a newsletter for classic game fans and collectors, cautions that "cart contacts can and do rust. A person's breath has moisture in it, so there is the possibility that blowing into a cartridge may lead to the contacts corroding, especially with bad breath. If you want to be totally safe, using something non-abrasive like a Q-tip to gently rub away dust and whatnot should do the trick." Perry also recommends using a pencil eraser to clear away the gunk. "Just be sure to blow or dump out the rubbings it leaves," he says, "or they'll end up inside your game machine. That probably won't hurt anything either, but why risk it?"

—Chris Baker

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YOU SHOOT, YOU SCORE!

Space Invaders was the first game to register a high score, which savvy players often achieved by shooting the "invader" alien that zips across the screen after you fire 22 shots, and then after each 14th subsequent shot—a strategy that earns you 300 bonus points. This feature was actually "planned in the game," says Nishikado, "but I didn't think anyone would find it out!" Never underestimate the hardcore.

Where Are They Now?

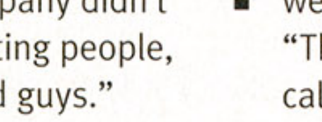


Toshihiro "Space Invaders" Nishikado

Gamefather of the Shoot-'em-up

When an arcade game spawns such a frenzy in Japan that it causes a coin shortage, you know we're talking about an epoch-making piece of interactive entertainment. That coin-op was 1978's first-of-its-kind shooter Space Invaders. We tracked down its creator to talk seafood and learn how those little marching aliens landed his mom a new TV.

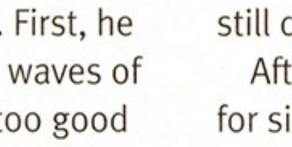
Back in July 1977 in Japan, Toshihiro Nishikado, a young developer at Taito, was given a briefing. Atari had recently stormed Japanese arcades with a coin-op called Break Out, which involved bouncing a ball into a brick wall. Gamers, Nishikado included, couldn't get enough of it. Taito wanted in on the action, and the sales department saw mountains of yen in their near future. They told Nishikado "to develop [a game like Break Out]," he recalls, "so I decided to make a more complicated game, and I adopted the idea of advancing [to new levels] from Break Out."



With a couple of simple games already under his belt, Nishikado began to ponder just what in-game obstacle could one-up Break Out's brick wall. First, he thought about advancing waves of tanks, but "they weren't too good when you moved them because of the limitation of hardware at that time," he says. The enemy was then changed to humans. "But the president of the company didn't like the idea of shooting people, even if they were bad guys."



Creatively blank, Nishikado took a break to see a movie about a galaxy far, far away. Staggered at the popularity of *Star Wars* and an avid fan of science fiction, Nishikado decided to go with aliens for his game's enemies—although he still had concerns. Taito's previous sci-fi-themed titles had all tanked. "It was a jinx for us," he says. "That's why I didn't show it to the sales people before it took shape."



Nishikado sought inspiration for the look of Space Invaders' insectile enemies from sci-fi, and the fish market, finalizing stylized aliens based on a variety of aquatic life-forms. "Originally, [the design] came from the octopus-like Martians found in novels by H. G. Wells," Nishikado tells us. "Adding to that, I came up with a squid and a crab."

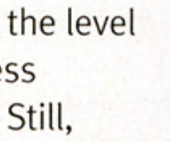
And so began the birth of Space Invaders, which actually wasn't even called Space Invaders at first. "I called it 'Space Monsters' originally," Nishikado says, "but at the last moment high-ups forced me to change it. I didn't like that. The word 'invader' wasn't familiar to Japanese ears and it was tricky to pronounce. I still don't like the name."

After working on Space Invaders for six months, during which Nishikado was responsible for its planning, graphics and programming, he presented it to Taito's suits and arcade operators. "They weren't happy about it," he says. "They thought another game called Blue Shark [a shooter featuring a shark] was better. Those people were relatively old and thought Space Invaders was too hard because the enemies attack you, unlike other games in the past."



The nation's younger players had no such qualms. Soon after the game's release, Japanese arcades were crammed with kids clamoring for more Invader action—and creating their own strategies to defeat the scuttling menace descending from the skies. The most well-known strategy, of course, is to shoot a hole through one of your shields and then blast aliens from cover. "I always use this strategy, too," says Nishikado, who admits that the best he can do is get past the third level. Then gamers came up with more cunning ways to stretch their coinage. They found, for example, that the aliens are unable to fire and thus easy to kill when they descend to the row just above your base. This strategy is known as the "Nagoya Uchi" technique, or Nagoya-style shooting. (Legend has it that an inhabitant of the Japanese town Nagoya discovered this strategy.) "This was actually a program bug," Nishikado says. "I think if there wasn't this bug, no one would get further than level 6 or 7." Nishikado realized too late that players were figuring out how to make their game last much longer than he originally expected. "But we couldn't do anything about it," he says. "We already shipped too many boards."





Bally Midway licensed Space Invaders and unleashed it stateside. It was a mega-hit here, although it never reached the level of treasury-draining success achieved in its homeland. Still, you'd expect Nishikado to be justly rewarded for creating this global hit, right? "Well, I got promoted, and my bonus that year was a little heavier than usual," he says, "and I got a special bonus from the president of the company. It was 200,000 yen [or about $950 at the time]. I bought my mother a decent TV set and that's it."

Where is he now?

Once Invaders took off, Nishikado replaced the ROMs in the original boards to make Space Invaders conversions like Balloon Bomber, Space Chaser and Lunar Rescue. After making Space Invaders Part 2, he trained Taito's younger staff, then "left video games to them and moved on to the amusement business," he says. Nishikado developed a guitar-playing robot, karaoke machines, and even a prototype game console well before Nintendo unleashed theirs, but it never materialized because of Taito's arcade-oriented sales. His karaoke system was later turned into a large-scale network, and now he heads a Japanese game company called Dreams. "We don't have a big budget," he says, adding that he's researching a mechanical prize game.

—David S.J. Hodgson

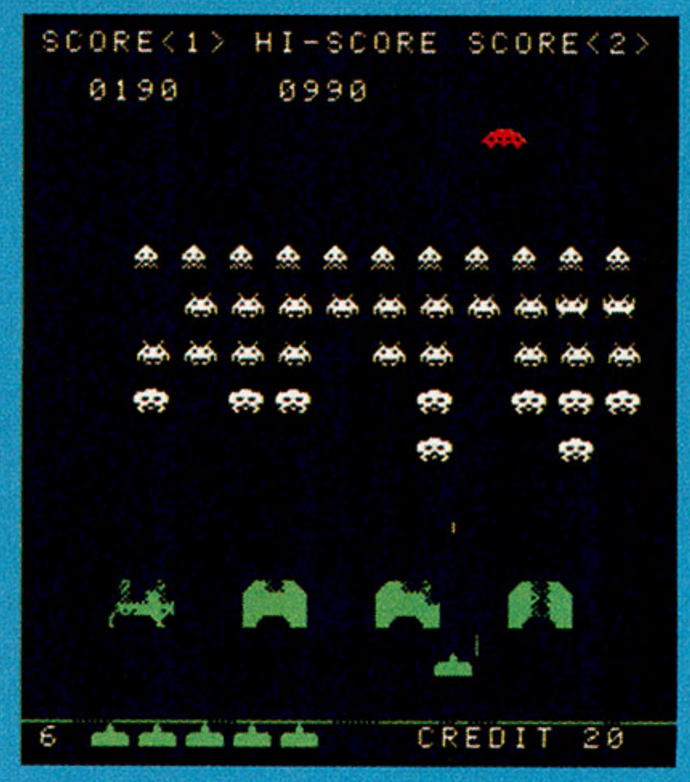
Gamester Rap: What makes this creative mind tick?

Favorite Movies?
"I like action and sci-fi movies, because you don't need to think too much or be sentimental—stuff like the Star Wars series or Arnold Schwarzenegger movies."

Favorite Game?
"Puzzle games like Tetris and Puyo Puyo or Shanghai. I also like Pac-Man. He's cute."

What is your motto?
"If you want to know what's to come, look into the past."

Gameography:
Space Invaders, Balloon Bomber, Space Chaser, Lunar Rescue, Space Invaders Part 2, Amusement Robot, karaoke and amusement machines.



"Originally, [the design] came from the octopus-like Martians found in novels by H. G. Wells. Adding to that, I came up with a squid and a crab. My favorite is the crab-like character."

—Toshihiro Nishikado

Each month, *EGM* tracks down and profiles different gaming godfathers—and finds out what they've done for us lately. Next issue: Ralph "Father of Video Games" Baer.

Photography by Shuji Kondo

PRESS START

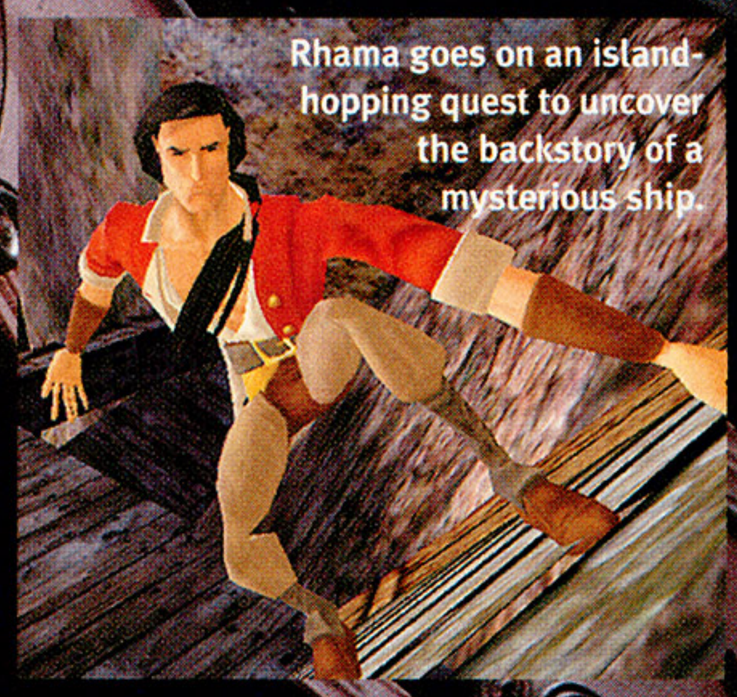
Captain of the Gard

The man who made Lara Croft is unleashing a new character—Captain Rhama Sabrier—on GameCube and Xbox.



photography by Richard Bradbury

Toby Gard is famous for two things in this biz: He created Lara Croft (and helped craft Tomb Raider), then flew developer Core Design's coop, taking about $75,000 in royalties but kissing away the fortune that the TR franchise eventually raked in. Is he a mad genius or just mad? We cornered Gard at a harbor near his new company, U.K.-based Confounding Factor, for full disclosure on life after Lara and his first game since, the third-person adventure Galleon: Islands of Mystery. It hits GameCube this winter and Xbox shortly afterward.



Rhama goes on an island-hopping quest to uncover the backstory of a mysterious ship.

EGM: So are you sick of talking about the whole Lara Croft/Tomb Raider thing?
Toby Gard: No, I suppose I'm not really sick of it. I mean, I'm still pretty pleased with having made [Tomb Raider] in the first place, so I don't mind really. I think I prefer that to people...thinking all the credit goes to Core.

EGM: Sum up for us why you left Core.
TG: The basic thing is that once Tomb Raider was finished and...beginning to grow, Eidos was beginning to move Lara out from the game and into the public eye by putting her in lifestyle magazines, etc., and there were a couple of things I wasn't too happy with.... I wasn't actually in control of the character—everything about Tomb Raider and Lara and all the designs I made entirely belong to Core. I was in a difficult position, because either I could stay and continue getting money and have at least some control over Lara, but I would be working on something else, and whatever else I made would also belong to Core. Or I could leave and trust that I could do better, and then actually own what I made next. I didn't find that a very hard decision.

EGM: Any regrets about leaving?
TG: No, don't think so. It's been good setting up Confounding Factor to be honest with you.

EGM: Do you think the reputation of the Tomb Raider franchise has gone downhill in the hands of Core and Eidos?
TG: No. I mean, the film is well done, isn't it?

EGM: Did you see it?
TG: I've seen it, yeah.

EGM: What do you think of it?
TG: To be honest with you, I was expecting it to be even worse.... [Laughs] No, no, I mean, for what it is, considering it's from a game and considering it's not trying to be clever, I thought it was one action set piece after another and it worked pretty well for that mindless-idiocy type of film watching. I didn't really have a problem with it. But I suppose I'd be biased [laughs].

EGM: Are we going to see Galleon marketed as "From the creator of Tomb Raider," or will Core and Eidos stand in the way of that?
TG: I wouldn't know what the score is, to be honest. I would be amazed if Core or Eidos were that bothered really [laughs]. They actually own the Tomb Raider license. It's not like I've made any money off of it. I don't think Interplay [Galleon's publisher] would market it like that. They have pretty much chosen the marketing tactics, so....



Wonder Women

Sidekick gals Faith (left) and Mihoko add more than just a woman's touch to Galleon. "They follow you," Gard says, "and you can command them to do extra stuff." Using a menu, you might have them hit a switch or join a battle, for example. "They are just there to help, like tools that come along."





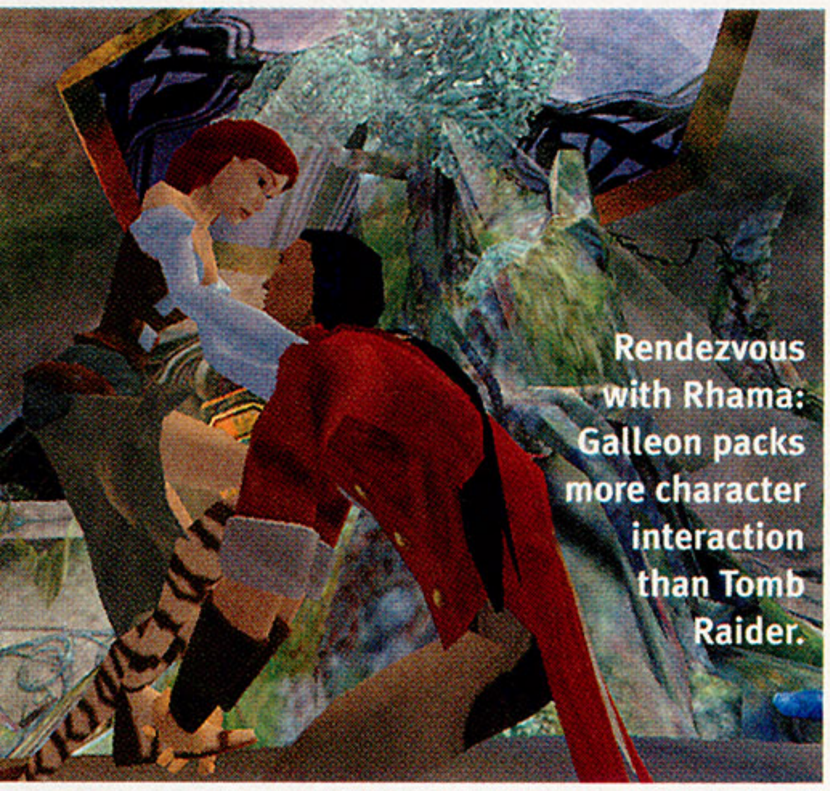
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EGM: You left Core Design not long after finishing up the first Tomb Raider. What's taking you so long with this new game, Galleon?

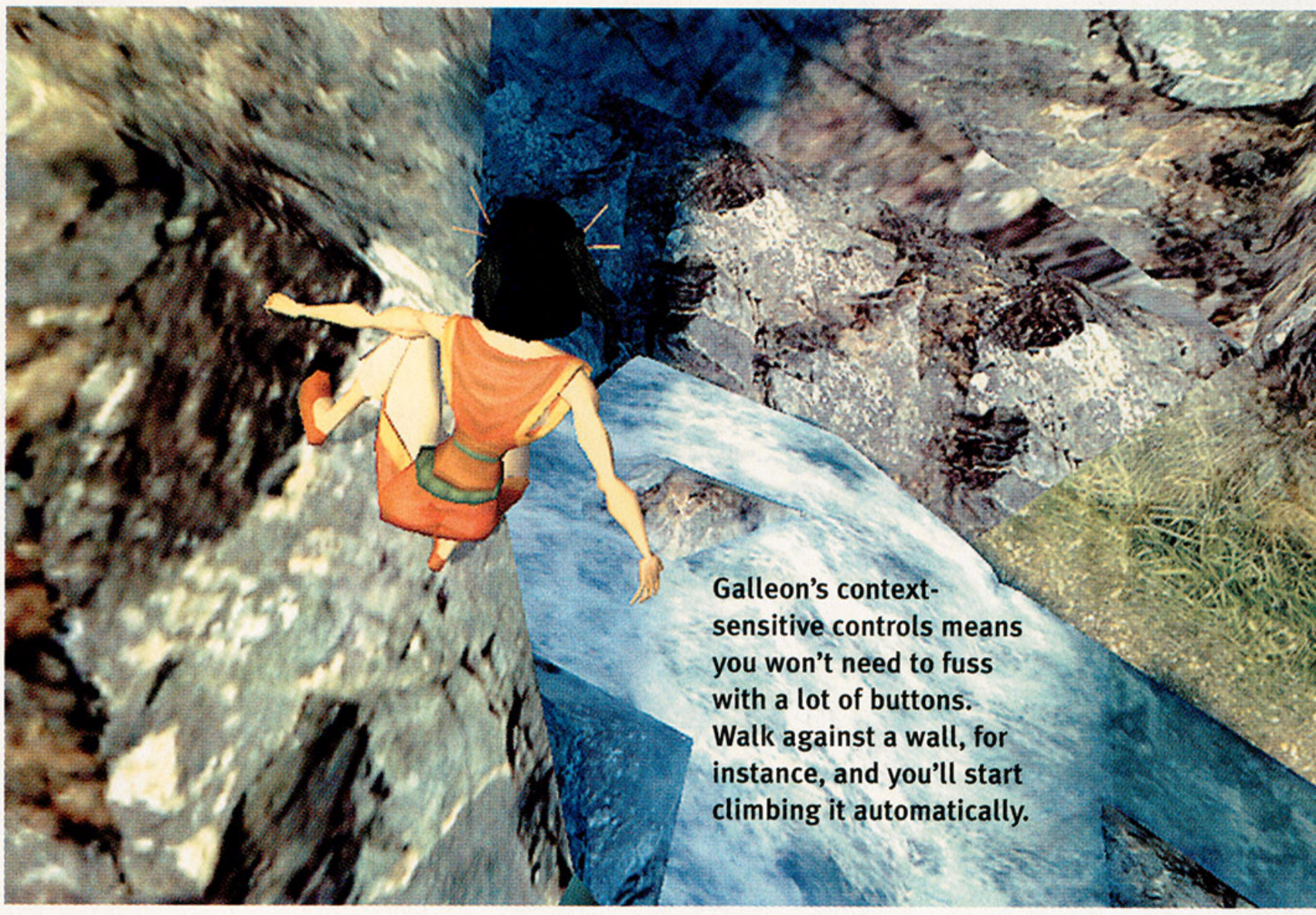
TG: It takes a long time to get yourself together and learn what you must do to create a company. And negotiating the contract with Interplay took nearly six months. We didn't have any cash until after that, and it was still more time before we could get offices and start paying people. And keep in mind that we started from absolutely nothing, because we obviously didn't take the technology and game engine—that belonged to Core Design. The programmers had to start from phase one, even for something small like putting a polygon on screen or reading the hard disk. They had no libraries at all. It was hardcore. And we were a small team in the beginning, just four of us.

EGM: Galleon is hitting GameCube, Xbox and PC. Why are you avoiding the PlayStation 2?

TG: [Laughs] Well, it's not true that we are avoiding it as such. As far as I'm concerned, a PS2 version will be in the cards—I'm hoping anyway. But the truth is we started developing Galleon some considerable time ago and were building it on the basis that the PC would be a reasonable example of where the consoles would be in the next round of systems. We were spot-on with Dreamcast, Xbox and GameCube. But PS2 is just *nothing* like a PC and the conversion to it is just a *humongous* job. It's frightening. It's not that it's bad; it's just that it does things its own way and it's hard to reverse and go back from where we are. We're doing so much stuff that's not supported and would require all this low-level programming to make work on the PS2. We're putting it on the consoles that it goes onto easily first...and we're hoping to come back to PS2 when we've got the time to sit and hardcode everything on the graphics processors.



Rendezvous with Rhama: Galleon packs more character interaction than Tomb Raider.



Galleon's context-sensitive controls means you won't need to fuss with a lot of buttons. Walk against a wall, for instance, and you'll start climbing it automatically.

EGM: When you were designing Rhama, did you keep asking yourself, "Is he as good as Lara?"

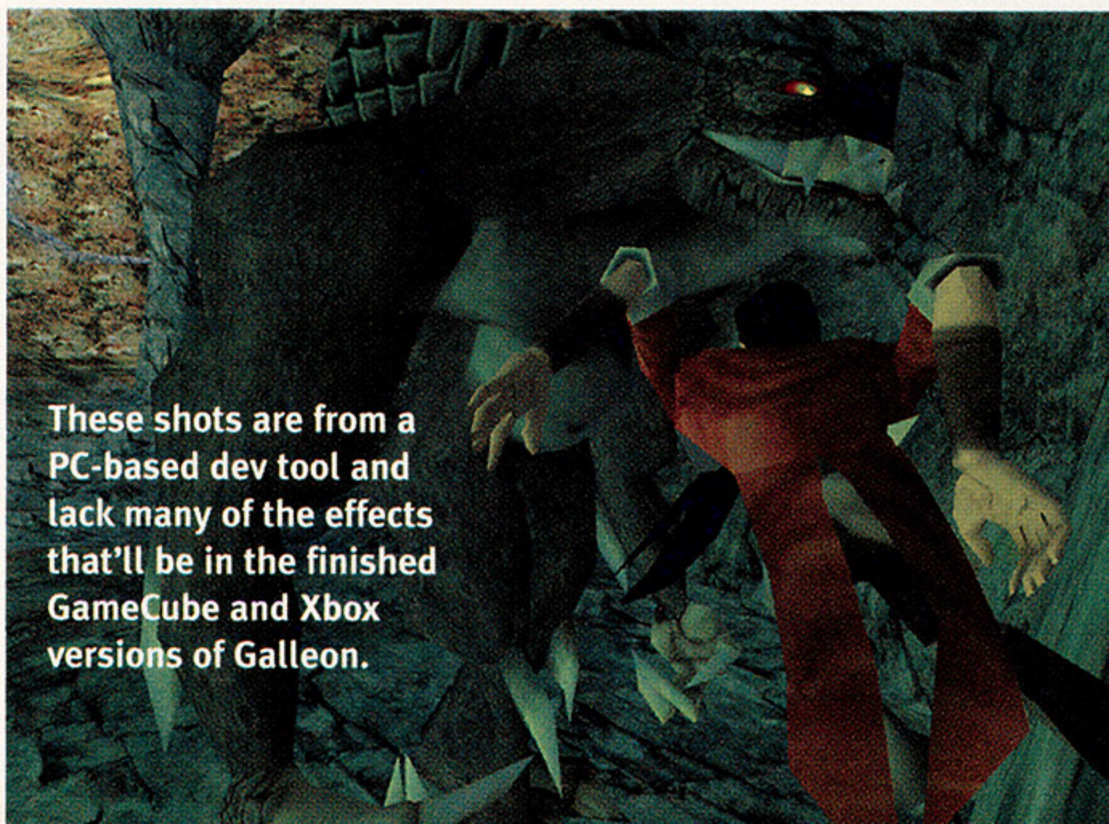
TG: I'm not sure, really. I think you get into a character as you make it, as you bring it to life, give it story, make it move around, etc. That's what makes characters good in the first place. The thing with Lara is, to a large extent she is a contemporary character in a setting which is not miles away from reality. That helps people identify with her. And her being a girl obviously helps with the male audience, doesn't it? It would be pretty hard to re-create a character who will be that successful, and that's not really what I've been trying to do. For me, it's about making a really good game that people want to play, and I think Tomb Raider was about the same.

"After playing Galleon, you just can't play Tomb Raider. It's just not acceptable. Playing Galleon pretty much spoils playing a lot of those third-person games."

EGM: Why a male lead character this time?

TG: We wanted to do the opposite of what we did last time. That was the whole point of Tomb Raider, as well—to do the opposite of what people were expecting—so now we're doing the opposite again. I also wanted to do something more stylized and exaggerated, because I found animating Lara a bit boring toward the end of Tomb Raider. I was always having to keep reasonably realistic movement in mind. She could jump higher than normal

Cont. on page 42



These shots are from a PC-based dev tool and lack many of the effects that'll be in the finished GameCube and Xbox versions of Galleon.

THE GAME HAS ARRIVED

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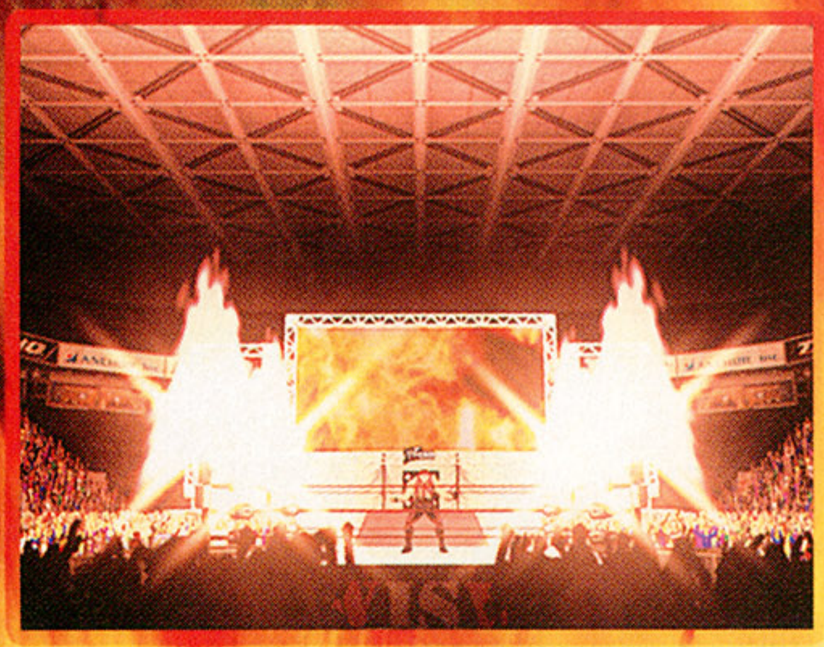
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"Galleon is so much better and more advanced in every way than Tomb Raider, and the character is so much better, the way he moves and interacts with people and everything."

Cont. from page 39

people, of course, but generally she wasn't bending the laws of physics in any large way. I wanted to do something that is much more extreme this time. That's what Rhama is like, since he can lift up giant boulders and do all sorts of crazy things, which is a lot more fun.

EGM: Are you dreading the inevitable comparisons between Rhama and Lara?

TG: Well, I'm not that worried. Without wanting to sound too boastful [laughs], we're doing so much more and Galleon is so much better and more advanced in every way than Tomb Raider, and the character is so much better, the way he moves and interacts with people and everything. I mean, when you disassociate the Lara Croft phenomenon from the game, in terms of the characters I think Rhama and Galleon are much better. But in terms of the phenomenon, I can't imagine Rhama will measure up. Everyone has gone *mad* about Lara, so what can you do?

EGM: Make a better game, we suppose. So how is Galleon an improvement over Tomb Raider?

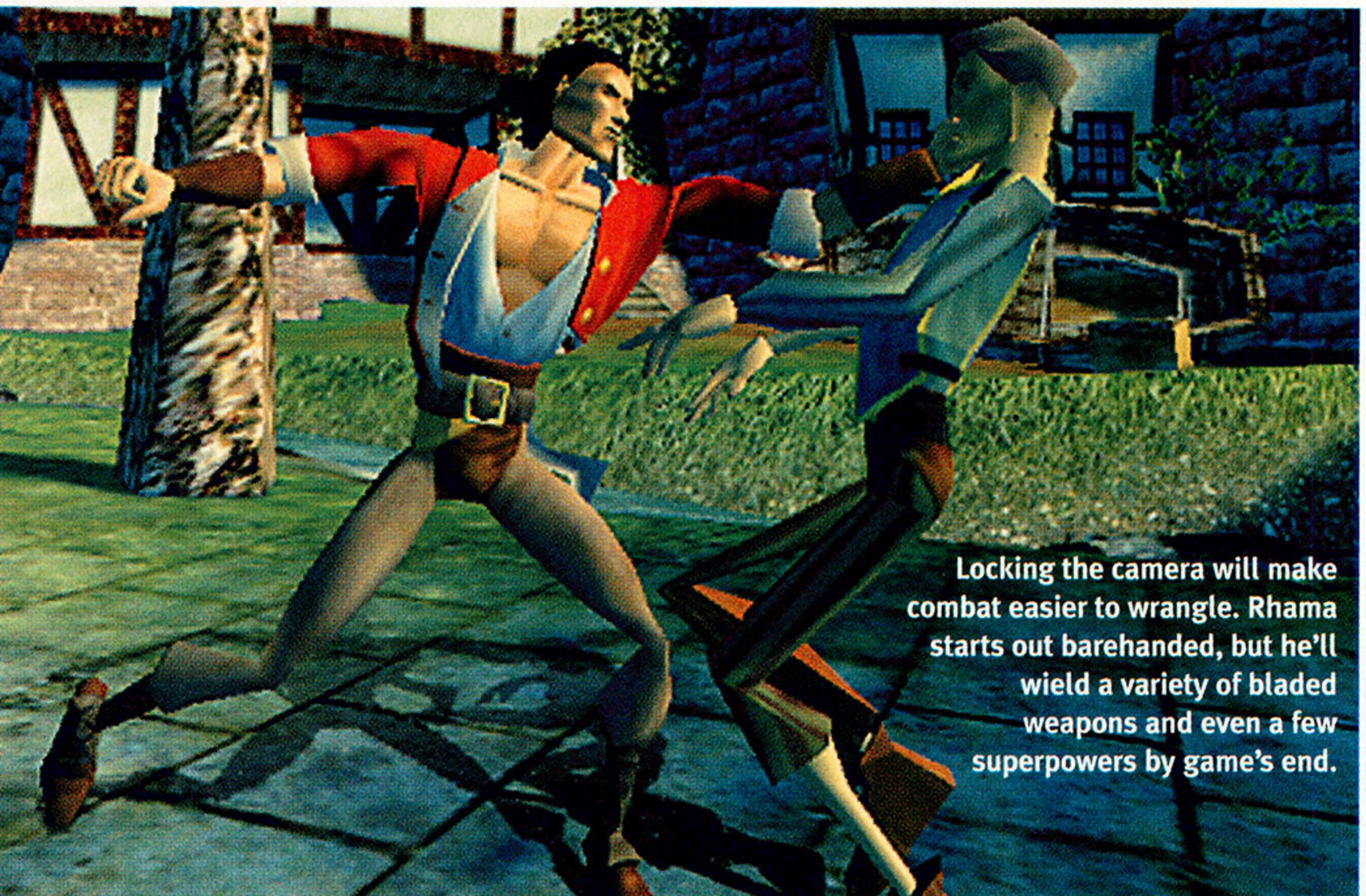
TG: It's hard for me not to go through a massive list here, but in general I'd say Galleon has a more coherent and integrated story. It's got a lot more personality in the characters, because there are several of them and not just one person running around empty places.... We've gone for a completely analog control system that is context-sensitive and extremely easy to control, but at the same time has loads of stuff you can do once you get your head around it. It's not the frustrating kind of God-why-isn't-it-doing-what-I-want type of thing, if you know what I mean. We've opened up the environment in such a way that you can just kind of play, like you're mucking around in them. It's a different way of building the usual platform game, where it's just like "this platform is placed here so you can just jump to the other platform." It's not at all like that. It's like, "What if I jump up there and run up that wall? Then what's gonna happen?" And we have the secondary-character stuff going on where he can order around these two other characters. There's more than two actually, and they have different abilities.

EGM: And what about the camera?

TG: The problem with the Tomb Raider camera is...you've got a decent idea of what's going on, but the lag on the camera meant that you often found yourself turning and then not knowing what way you're turning, and then you'd hit a wall because you had overturned. And that was its main flaw, I thought. That and also probably the backing-against-the-wall stuff...

EGM:...where the camera would get all screwy?

TG: Yeah, exactly—where it would pop up and look down and you couldn't see where Lara was facing. Now *that* was a bit of a pain as well, you know [laughs].... So what we've done is we've reversed the way the camera works. The lag is on the character...well, he's not really lagging, but you're controlling the camera. So you can take the camera around and he heads in the direction it's facing, which means you can run really fast down a corridor and turn the camera really quickly and jump, and he jumps off exactly in the direction you would expect—unless the floor is slippery because we've got the physics system [affecting] our control system, as well.



Locking the camera will make combat easier to wrangle. Rhama starts out barehanded, but he'll wield a variety of bladed weapons and even a few superpowers by game's end.



EGM: So if the floor is slick you might keep sliding instead of jumping the way you want?

TG: Right, and then you'd jump in a slightly odd, skewed direction if Rhama didn't get a full grip. It probably makes people who watch and don't play seasick [laughs], because the camera can whip around as fast as you like since we really wanted to make it responsive. So I guess you can compare it to a first-person-style speed of camera movement. It just means that you don't have any lag problems; it's very precise control. Then we also opted for this lock-on mode that pervades the rest of the game.... By locking onto an object—which can include just about anything, like a wall or ceiling or bit of floor—the camera will just stay at that point and the character then runs [in the direction you push]. So if you think it would make things easier, you could basically lock onto the end of the room and then jump that way across it. But to be honest, the other camera method works so well that I don't think anyone actually will bother. But you will need to lock on if you want to get into more strategic fighting and for using objects.

EGM: Do you think your work on Tomb Raider hinders or helps Galleon's chances for success?

TG: I think at least it helps get people interested enough to look this way. Galleon kind of suffers from the fact that it doesn't come across that good in screenshots, so I'm glad that [my] name is making people look at it instead of dismissing it at first glance. Oh, yeah—and whether it will bias reviews, well, I don't know... [laughs]

EGM: You don't have to worry about that with us, but we imagine some gamers will be critical of Galleon because they know it's from the guy who made Tomb Raider. Don't you?

TG: I'm not too worried about that. People are still buying the original Tomb Raider, just that it's now Tomb Raider 6 or 5 or whatever. And if they still like that, then they'll like Galleon a hell of a lot better.

—Axel Strohm

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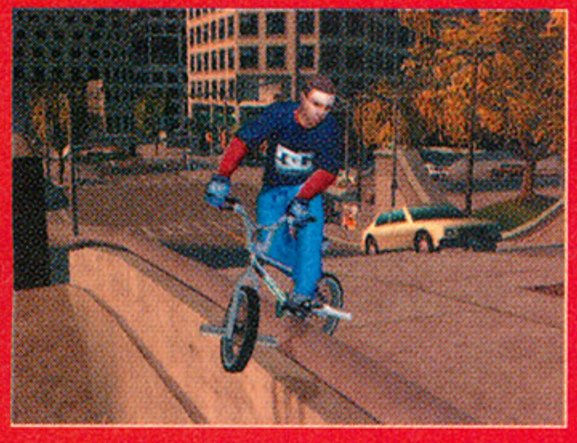
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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Mild Lyrics

PlayStation.2 GAME BOY ADVANCE NINTENDO GAMECUBE XBOX

PRESS START

"We view Madden as our #1 competitor because it is simply the best and has been for a long time."

—Jeff Luhr, assistant producer of NCAA Football at Tiburon/Electronic Arts



AFTERTHOUGHTS:

NCAA Football 2002

In each installment of Afterthoughts, *EGM* takes a game that's already on store shelves and asks the developers for their thoughts, post-release. This month, we chose EA's NCAA Football 2002, since it has a stranglehold on the sports nuts in the office. We launched a bullet pass of questions at Jeff Luhr, assistant producer of NCAA Football at EA's Tiburon Studio, and here's what he had to say.

EGM: This is definitely a more wide-open game than Madden. Why is that?

Jeff Luhr: That's what college football is all about! With so many different teams, formations and playing styles, every game offers a new challenge. Plus, in college football the all-star players really stand out more than in the NFL. If you look at Michael Vick when he was at Virginia Tech, he could single-handedly destroy an opposing defense. But in the pros you won't see this happen because the all-around talent of everyone else is so much better. This is exactly how it feels when playing NCAA.

EGM: Why is the punt return defense weak?

JL: Just like blocking field goals and punts, this is one of the toughest areas of gameplay tuning. However, I don't think the punt return defense is all that bad. If you're having difficulty getting your coverage downfield, try calling a Max Cover Punt. Plus, adjust your punt trajectory so that you don't out-kick your coverage.

EGM: Is the ranking formula derived straight from the Bowl Championship Series System? Or is it an EA spin loosely based on the BCS?

JL: It's pretty close to the real thing. We take into account the Media & Coaches Polls, Computer Average, Schedule Rank and Losses. The big difference with ours is that we don't use the real logic from the eight different computer polls like the Billingsley and Sagarin ratings. As far as I know, their logic is kept secret.

EGM: Are certain scenarios predetermined? Does the computer randomly generate them?

JL: Nothing is predetermined. Every time you play you're going to have different results.

EGM: What was the most challenging thing to develop in the game?

JL: There were so many, but if I had to pick one I'd have to say TV commentary because it was brand-new. This is the first year that the NCAA franchise has ever had TV commentary and we took on the additional challenge of having a three-man booth with Nessler, Corso and Herbstreit. Definitely a challenge, but it was well worth it in the end.

EGM: What kind of competition is there between you guys and the Madden NFL 2002 team? Do you share ideas frequently?

JL: Without a doubt, it's very competitive. We (the NCAA team) view Madden as our #1 competitor because it is simply the best and has been for a long time. Any time we can be compared to a product like Madden, we know we're on the right track. Of course, it helps that we are all under the same roof here at Tiburon, because we share some of our ideas and base technology. But at the same time, we have always made it a goal to offer very unique products with Madden and NCAA Football.

EGM: Do you think you will ever be allowed to license real NCAA names for the players?

JL: This is a complicated issue and we'd welcome the opportunity, but we want to work with the NCAA to uphold their standards for student athletes.

EGM: Will next year's game include deeper stats on potential recruits?

JL: Yeah, we're investigating additional stats and comments to display for our prospects.

EGM: Are you looking at giving the player more control of how his/her team improves in the next game? Like setting offseason training priorities, such as speed, power...etc.?

JL: You know, it's funny that you ask that because we were just talking today about ways to add more user control to Dynasty Mode. I've always been keen on the idea of setting your training priorities in the off season. It gives you total control in determining how your players will progress over the course of their college career. So yes, we're definitely looking into it.

EGM: Is online play a viable option for next year's game?

JL: We're looking into this, but I can't really comment on it yet.

Jeff Luhr's Playbook

Can't win to save your life? Try taking a page out of Jeff's book. After all, who would know how to win better than the game's creator?

OFFENSE

Ace Spread - PA Fake Toss "This is my favorite play-action pass. When the defender controls the safety, he will surely bite on the fake."

Shotgun Split - Double Flats "This is a good one to use against a heavy blitz. Keep an eye on the backs out of the backfield."

Wishbone Normal - Tr Option Cntr "My favorite triple option play."

Double Wing - WR Around "Excellent misdirection play that can fool someone."

Wishbone Tight - HB Over "Nice fake pitch and give up the middle."

DEFENSE

4-4 QB Contain "Puts those pesky QBs who like to roll out on their ass."

5-2 Cheat Strong "If you guess the side they're running too, you'll pancake the RB."

Nickel Man Under 2 "A great, base pass defense. Shouldn't give the big play often."

REPRESENT.



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PlayStation®2

CD-ROM PC

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PRESS START



Nope, this isn't a group of pals enjoying a rerun of *Mama's Family*—it's Team *EGM* living the drama of an interoffice, NCAA Football tournament.

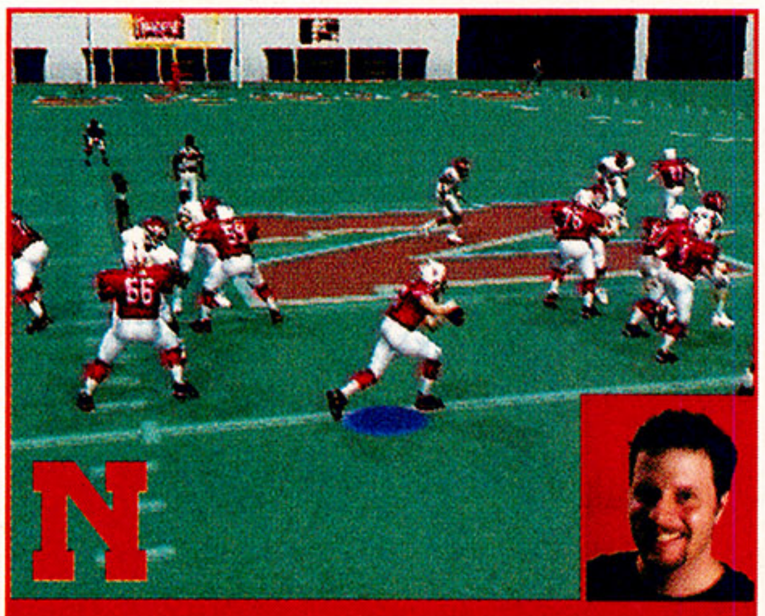
Whoa Nelly!

Team EGM locks horns in a crazy season of NCAA Football



Two of Dean's biggest fans were ecstatic—and aroused—when he brought the National Championship trophy back to Nebraska.

Rarely does a game take our office hostage like this one did. We lined up five editors (two *EGM*, two *Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine* and one *GameNOW*) who each took a team and steered it through the highs and lows of a full season. Despite work piling up and pleas from managerial types, the tourney went on. We've got alumni and cheerleaders to please, you know.



Nebraska Cornhuskers - Went 14-0 and won the National Championship, #1

Dean Hager, Managing Editor: I ran the power option until I wore out my cleats. After routinely slashing for big yards with my freaky-fast QB and HB combo, coaches breathed a sigh of relief when I dropped back to pass. My runs were pretty tough to stop, but I'll admit Kraig did the best job of snuffing it out. If I didn't go World War II on him, he might have won the Championship. My "bombs away" attack just proved to be too potent. So much for the beloved underdog. To add icing to the cake, my QB, Eric "crazy legs" Crouch won the Heismann.



Texas A&M - 10-3 Lost to Dean in the Big 12 Championship Game and ended #7

Kraig Kujawa, Senior. Assc. Ed.: Being the underdog can be a fun role to have, but I didn't realize that it could be such a pain in the ass, too. **I had no choice but to use a plodding run offense** whose only big plays came when I bored defenses just long enough to lob a 40-yard pass when they got groggy. To beef up my runs, I used motion to stuff an extra blocker at the point-of-attack. I beat old man Leahy with it, but Dean..his crazy QB was too much. I often took four minutes to score, only to have his lob-and-pray offense respond in 30 seconds. Oy.



Kansas State - 10-2, Fiesta Bowl winner, finished with a #3 ranking

Dan Leahy, Editor in Chief, *GameNOW*: I wanted a decent team to compete with Dean and Kraig in the Big 12, and K-State seemed to fit the bill. **A lack of big-play WRs cost me in a late-season showdown** with Dean, but my team featured a balanced attack and a bend-but-don't-break defense. If I had to do it over again, I would have gone for two instead of going to overtime against those nasty Huskers. Also had a barnburner in an evenly matched contest against A&M, but Kraig's coma-inducing offense proved too much in a 21-17 win. Oh well, there's always next season.



Tennessee - 7-5, Music City Bowl winner, finished with a #23 ranking

Chris Baker, Previews Editor, *OPM*: I knew it was going to be a long season for my beloved alma mater by the end of game two. **My sure-footed kicker was ready to break the tie** against the Razorbacks and send the Vols to victory in the final seconds. Only he shanked a 45-yard attempt and Arkansas won in overtime. The rest of the season was a defensive struggle. I was up on Todd by 16, only to have him shut me down and blow me out by three TDs. I might as well have had my mascot start at QB. At least he would look more amusing while he got sacked.



Notre Dame - 7-6, Gator Bowl loser, finished out of the Top 25

Todd Zuniga, Assc. Editor, *OPM*: I'd like to ramble on with a series of sports clichés about how we played hard and we did our best. But, as a long-time college football hater, I didn't even know the rules. Then, as if lit up by lightning, **I was inspired by the discovery of what the collegiate faithful lovingly refer to as "The Option"** in my third game of the season. Mix my option idiocy with a devastating loss in OT to Dean and an auspicious 0-4 start and you're feasting on quite a Fighting French-Irish stew. My biggest joy? Stomping C-Bake by three TDs.

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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Comic Mischief
Violence

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XBOX

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VIDEO GAMES...ANIMATED

Kirby and Final Fantasy are two new 'toons debuting on TV this fall in Japan. FF is still shrouded in mystery. Will it be CG, or based on one of the games? No one knows for sure, although we've gotta admit that FFIX is the best candidate for toonification. Kirby, on the other hand, is targeted to a younger audience and definitely uses hand-drawn animation.

DEVELOPER PROFILE



Year Founded: 1995
Location: Cambridge, MA
Web Site: www.harmonixmusic.com
# of people: 27
Previous work: Harmonix previously just produced music education software for PC. Frequency is our first video game, and so we brought a team together to work on it whose credits include Thief: The Dark Project and System Shock for PC; Supercross 2000 and NHL 99 on console.
Story behind our name: "Harmonics" is a word used by musicians and audio-heads, and we just liked the way it sounded.
Why did you start your company? Playing music feels so damned good, and most people never get to experience [it], because learning to play music the old-fashioned way is so hard. We started this company to create software that lets non-musicians experience the thrill of playing music.
Why create a music game? We noticed what was happening in Japan with PaRappa, Beatmania and other rhythm-action games. The core gameplay was so addictive and playing them really evoked the buzz of playing music, so we became determined to bring music games to the U.S. We're convinced that music gaming is poised to explode here.
How did you come up with the idea for Frequency? As good as the Japanese music games are, they're still lacking: The music and graphics are cheesy; there is no interesting multiplayer interaction; there is no musical creativity involved. Frequency pushes the music gaming experience much further: deeper gameplay, kick-ass music from top artists, hypnotic graphics, cool multiplayer features, and a lot of DJ-style creative freedom woven into the game.

Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

Get out your secret decoder rings, Quarterfriends. The Q-Mann is back again, ready to light the fires under a rumor stew that's bound to whet your appetite. And it's a mighty delicious soup this month if I do say so myself. OK, enough talk—have at you!

...Big rumblings inside Capcom. The Q has learned that the **Resident Evil series** is coming to **GameCube** in a big way. Starting with **Resident Evil 4**, the GC will become the "home" platform for the series. That's three RE games already Cube-bound: **Resident Evil Zero** (aka Bio-Hazard Zero) is still in development, **Resident Evil 1 Remix** (with completely real-time graphics—nothing prerendered) and **Resident Evil 4**. These beauties aren't going to hit all at once. Expect a pretty staggered schedule for 'em beginning as the movie release approaches in spring 2002. After that news, the Q-Mann thinks it's pretty clear the GC isn't going to be your kid brother's system. Expect to see some RE goodness at the Tokyo Game Show in October....

...If you were planning to buy an **Xbox** just for the new **Medal of Honor** game, it's time for a new plan. Electronic Arts has put the title on **indefinite hold** due to the Xbox's uncertain future. Yours truly has unearthed info that other companies are also moving their X projects into a similar abyss, to be awakened only as the system gains street cred.... Also on the EA front, look for the company to announce a big **new racing series** in the coming months.... Speaking of **Xbox,** Microsoft's gone on record to deny it a buncha times, but The Q still hears mumbles that the system is going to be **pushed back a few weeks** in the U.S. If it does get pushed back, the furthest it'll go is to Thanksgiving weekend, right next to GameCube's new date (well, lookie here...Nintendo thought they could get away, huh? Not so fast!).... Whatever the case, we'll all be broke this November. The Q will have to dip into his savings!

...From the file of "Things The Q Has Heard But Doubts Will Actually Happen": **Square's** next game in the **Chrono** series will be...(wait for it) **...on Xbox.** Here, have a grain of salt on ol' Q. It would indeed be a huge coup if Microsoft was able to entice Square to their system. But even if Chrono does show up on the box, like Ridge Racer and Soul Calibur, it might be one of those multiplatform deals. And let's face it, that weakens the impact of such news. In any case, you heard it here first...



Lastly, kiddies, The Q wants to give a hearty and much deserved shout-out to *EGM* mainstay Trickman Terry, who is leaving the pages of the mag. You shall be missed, friend. Got somethin' ta say? E-mail me at quartermann@ziffdavis.com. —The Q

Chrono Goes Greatest Hits

If you missed it last year, Square's highly acclaimed non-Final Fantasy PS1 RPG Chrono Cross is now a $19.99 Greatest Hits title. To make it even more special, Square's added the never-before-published English lyrics to "Radical Dreamers," the game's ending theme.

All-Region DVD Player for PS2



Datel Ltd. has released a product called DVD Region X, which allows you to play DVDs from any region on your PS2. It works like a GameShark and requires no internal modification, though we only got it to work on an older PS2 with version 1.20U DVD player software. Load it up, swap it out with your favorite DVD (probably from Region 2, Japan, since they get all the cool releases!), and enjoy. Currently it's only available from importers such as NCS (www.ncsx.com) or Tronix (www.tronixweb.com) for about $30. Check www.dvdregionx.com for details.

Midway Updates Defender

Seven Studios is doing the honors on a new version of Defender for Midway. We're not so sure the "real-time strategy elements" they're adding are gonna work with the classic gameplay of Eugene Jarvis' arcade original.

GET THE SKILLS TO
MAKE THE KILLS




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shattered skies

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EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
MILD LANGUAGE
VIOLENCE

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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Violence
Mild Lyrics

Crazy Taxi New York Style.

CRAZY TAXI 2™

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~Shenmue II.~™

12.04.2001





TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Gambling
Use of Tobacco and Alcohol
Violence

SEGA-AM2

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PRESS START

The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of July 2001

In a shocking turn of events, **Sonic Adventure 2** actually moved *up* the chart from its debut last month at number seven. **Dreamcast** fans, take note: This could be the last time you see a non-sports DC game in the Top 20. **GT3** may've edged out **Pokémon** for the top spot this time, but you can bet Pikachu and his pals will have their revenge. **Pokémon Gold and Silver** stayed strong this month, but can they hold onto a chart position much longer? Will a day come when there will be no Pokémon in the Top 20? Horror of horrors! Oh, and whoever bought that copy of **Frogger**...we know where you live.

1 Gran Turismo 3 A-spec
Sony CEA

NEW! | 10 Che | 10 Greg | 10 Jonathan | PS2 | EGM Platinum



2 Pokémon Crystal
Nintendo

NEW! | 7.0 Chris | 7.5 Jeanne | 3.5 Mark | Game Boy Color



3 Super Mario Advance
Nintendo

9.0 Chris | 8.0 Mark | 8.0 Shoe | Game Boy Advance | EGM Silver



4 NBA Street
Electronic Arts

9.5 Dan L | 8.5 Dean | 7.5 Kraig | PS2 | EGM Silver



5 NCAA Football 2002
Electronic Arts

NEW! | 8.5 Dan L | 9.0 Dean | 9.0 Kraig | PS2 | EGM Silver



6 Sonic Adventure 2
Sega

7.0 Chris | 8.0 Greg | 7.5 Milkman | Dreamcast



7 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Activision

9.0 Crispin | 9.0 Dean | 7.5 Greg | Game Boy Advance | EGM Silver



8 Twisted Metal: Black
Sony CEA

8.5 Che | 9.0 Kraig | 8.0 Shoe | PS2 | EGM Silver



9 Final Fantasy Chronicles
Square Electronic Arts

8.0 Greg | 9.0 Milkman | 8.0 Shoe | PlayStation | EGM Silver



10 Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Seasons
Nintendo

10 Chris | 9.0 Mark | 9.5 John R | Game Boy Color | EGM Gold



11	Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Ages Nintendo	EGM Gold, Game Boy Color
12	Gran Turismo 2 Sony CEA	EGM Platinum, PlayStation
13	Pokémon Silver Nintendo	EGM Silver, Game Boy Color
14	Pokémon Gold Nintendo	EGM Silver, Game Boy Color
15	Mario Party 3 Nintendo	N64
16	MX2002 Featuring Ricky Carmichael THQ	PS2, NEW!
17	Super Mario Bros. Deluxe Nintendo	EGM Silver, Game Boy Color
18	Frogger Infogrames	PlayStation
19	NASCAR Heat 2002 Infogrames	PS2, NEW!
20	Castlevania: Circle of the Moon Konami	EGM Gold, Game Boy Advance

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service. Call Kristin Barnett-von Korff at (516) 625-2481 for questions regarding this list. Chart description written by *EGM* staff. Psst, the secret code is 007 373 5963. That will lead you to the champ, Little Mac.

JAPAN TOP 10

1	Minna no Golf 3 Sony CEI	PS2
2	Mario Kart Advance Nintendo	Game Boy Advance
3	Golden Sun Nintendo	Game Boy Advance
4	One Piece Bandai	PlayStation
5	Final Fantasy X Square	PS2
6	Bekuten Shoot Beyblade Broccoli	Game Boy Color
7	Gran Turismo 3 A-spec Sony CEI	PS2
8	Derby Stallion 64 Media Factory	N64
9	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters 5 EXPERT Konami	Game Boy Advance
10	Super Mario Advance Nintendo	Game Boy Advance

The N64 hasn't had a game on the Japanese charts in months. All it needed was a version of Derby Stallion, the Gran Turismo of horse racing that has hit just about every system in the last three years (including the Sega Saturn). Took long enough! The game's been on the schedule for the last two years. Who would've known it would be the N64's last big game?



Derby Stallion 64

Source: Weekly Famitsu, week ending 8/19/2001



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Compiled By Jonathan Dudlak jonathan_dudlak@ziffdavis.com

PRESS START

Coming Soon

October

PlayStation 2

18-Wheeler—Acclaim	Racing
Ace Combat 4—Namco	Action/Sim
Batman: Vengeance—Ubi Soft	Action
Conflict Zone—Ubi Soft	Strategy
Crash Bandicoot—Universal	Action
Devil May Cry—Capcom	Action
Evil Twin—Ubi Soft	Adventure
Giants: Citizen Kabuto—Interplay	Adventure
Grand Theft Auto III—Rockstar	Action
Guilty Gear X—Majesco	Fighting
Guitaroo Man—Koei	Music
Half-Life—Sierra	Action
Herdy Gerdy—Eidos	Adventure
Kinetica—Sony CEA	Racing
NFL 2K2—Sega	Sports
No One Lives Forever—Sierra	Action
Okage: Shadow King—Sony CEA	RPG
Shaun Palmer Snowboarder—Activision	Sports
SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs—Sony CEA	Action
Smuggler's Run 2—Rockstar	Racing
Supercar Street Chlng.—Activision	Racing
Time Crisis:Project Titan—Namco	Action
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3—Activision	Sports
WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It—THQ	Action

Dreamcast

Bomberman Online—Sega	Misc.
NBA 2K2—Sega	Sports
NFL 2K2—Sega	Sports
Tennis 2K2—Sega	Sports

PlayStation

Castlevania Chronicles—Konami	Action
Hoshigami—Atlus	RPG/Strategy

Game Boy Advance

Breath of Fire—Capcom	RPG
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX—Activision	Sports
Mega Man Battle Network—Capcom	RPG
Shaun Palmer Snowboard—Activision	Sports

November

PlayStation 2

Baldur's Gate—Interplay	Adventure/RPG
Blood Omen 2—Eidos	Adventure
Capcom vs. SNK 2—Capcom	Fighting
Deus Ex—Eidos	Action
Dynasty Warriors 3—Koei	Action
Eve of Extinction—Eidos	Action
Frequency—Sony CEA	Music
Max Payne—Rockstar	Action
Metal Gear Solid 2—Konami	Action
Namco Museum—Namco	Misc.
NBA 2K2—Sega	Sports
NBA Live 2002—Electronic Arts	Sports
Police 911—Konami	Action
Resident Evil Survivor 2—Capcom	Action
Simpsons Road Rage—Electronic Arts	Action
SSX Tricky—Electronic Arts	Sports
Tetris Worlds—THQ	Puzzle

GameCube

Luigi's Mansion—Nintendo	Adventure
Madden NFL 2002—Electronic Arts	Sports
Pikmin—Nintendo	Misc.
Star Wars: Rogue Leader—LucasArts	Action
Wave Race: Blue Storm—Nintendo	Racing

Xbox

Amped—Microsoft	Sports
Azurik: Rise of Perathia—Microsoft	Adv.
Dead or Alive 3—Tecmo	Fighting
Halo—Microsoft	Action
Mad Dash Racing—Eidos	Racing
Madden NFL 2002—Electronic Arts	Sports
NFL Fever 2002—Microsoft	Sports
Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee—Microsoft	Adv.
Project Gotham—Microsoft	Racing
WWF: Raw Is War—THQ	Sports

Dreamcast

Evil Twin—Ubi Soft	Adventure

PlayStation

Dragon Warrior VII—Enix	RPG
Harry Potter—Electronic Arts	Adventure
Mega Man X6—Capcom	Action
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3—Activision	Sports
Twisted Metal Sml. Brawl—Sony CEA	Action

Game Boy Advance

Harry Potter—Electronic Arts	Adventure
Klonoa: Empire of Dreams—Namco	Action
Sonic the Hedgehog—Sega	Action
Spyro the Dragon—Universal	Adventure

December

PlayStation 2

Jak and Daxter—Sony CEA	Adventure
Galleon—Interplay	Adventure
Grandia 2—Ubi Soft	RPG
Rayman Arena—Ubi Soft	Action
The Lost—Crave	Adventure

GameCube

Eternal Darkness—Nintendo	Adventure
SSX Tricky—Electronic Arts	Sports
Sup. Smash Bros. Melee—Nintendo	Fighting

Xbox

Star Wars: Obi-Wan—LucasArts	Adventure

Dreamcast

Shenmue II—Sega	Adventure

PlayStation

Cubix—3DO	Action

Game Boy Advance

Columns—Sega	Puzzle
Doom—Activision	Action
MX 2002 Ricky Carmichael—THQ	Racing
Tetris Worlds—THQ	Puzzle
X-Men—Activision	Action

IMPORT CALENDAR

Seigi no Mikata



Import Pick of the Month: Ever wish you could produce your very own Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers knock-off? You can with the help of Sony CEI's wacky new PS2 game Seigi no Mikata ("Friend of Justice" in English). You design your own hero and do battle with mutated, other-worldly vegetables in an MMPR-style show. Keep the action flowing and you'll stay on the air. Fail and your tights-wearin' booty will be kicked to the curb in no time flat.

PlayStation 2

9/27	Silent Hill 2, Konami (Survival Horror)
9/27	Shake It Bravoes!, Sony CEI (Music)
Sept.	Sky Gunner, Sony CEI (Shooter)
10/4	King's Field IV, From Software (RPG)
Oct.	Seigi no Mikata, Sony CEI (Misc.)
Nov.	Busin: Wizardry Alternative, Atlus (RPG)

GameCube

10/26	Pikmin, Nintendo (Misc.)
11/21	Dairantou Smash Brothers DX, Nintendo (Fighting)

Dreamcast

9/27	Garou: Mark of the Wolves, SNK (Fighting)
10/10	Eldorado Gate Vol. 7, Capcom (RPG)

PlayStation

9/20	Dance Dance Revolution 5th Mix, Konami (Dance)
Oct.	Gamera 2000 (re-release), Four Winds (Action)
Nov.	Zanac X Zanac, Compile (Shooter)

Game Boy Advance

9/27	Z.O.E. 2173 Testament, Konami (Strategy)
10/18	Puyo Puyo, Sega (Puzzle)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import game store for the latest release info. Yes that's a big, walkin' and talkin' red pepper.



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HOO-YEAH!
...MAYBE WE COULD TURN IT INTO A RACING HYBRID -- ADD FATALITIES OR SUCH--
AH, HELLO, VIDEO GAMERS! I'M HSU TANAKA, THIS IS MY BROTHER CHAN, AND WE'RE COMING TO YOU LIVE AND RINGSIDE AT THE WORLD ORDER OF FIGHTERS "WORLD-O'-HURT" PAY-PER-VIEW EVENT, HERE IN EXOTIC TOLEDO!
YESSIREE, WE'RE GONNA BE SEEING UNGODLY AMOUNTS OF BODY HAIR TONIGHT!
W.O.O.F.
WHEE.
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WE'RE VERY EXCITED ABOUT THE VENTURE, AS YOU CAN SEE!
YES, WITH SUBJECT MATTER AS VERSATILE AS THIS, WE CAN'T LOSE! WE... WE... WHO ARE WE KIDDING?! IT'S A DEAD HORSE! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO WAIT ANOTHER FIFTY YEARS UNTIL WRESTLING BECOMES POPULAR AGAIN! =SOB!=
SMILES, CHAN! SOMEONE'S COMING!
HALLO! YOU ARE GAME MAKERS, ARE YOU NOT? I AM THE GREAT E. SAK, HERE TO SHOW YOU AROUND THE MAZE OF WONDERS THAT IS W.O.O.F.! WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE FIRST, LOCKER ROOM OR INFIRMARY?
WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE ANYTHING THAT DOES NOT HEAVILY INVOLVE BODILY FUNGUS.
AH, I GIVE YOU SHORT TOUR, THEN. FIRST, WE SEE RING!
HERE IS WHERE WARRIORS OF THE SQUARED CIRCLE BATTLE FOR CRUEL AMUSEMENT OF MANY FANS! GAZE UPON THE GLORY!
YIKES! LOOKS DANGEROUS!
SOME DANGER IS INVOLVED, BUT MANY PRECAUTIONS ARE TAKEN TO ENSURE SAFETY OF PERFORMERS!
AAAIGH! I CAN'T FEEL MY LEGS!!
CUT THE CAMERA! CUT THE CAMERA!
WOO! HE'S HARDCORE!
OKAY, WE MOVE ON NOW.
NOW I INTRODUCE YOU TO OTHER WRESTLERS.
THIS IS MYSTERIO TURTLE XI, FIERCE WARRIOR, FRIEND OF CHILDREN...
¡HOLA!
EZEKIEL, THE BARBARIAN WARLORD OF THE AMISH...
ARR! PEACE BE WITH YOU!
...AND ROGER, LIVING REMINDER OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER LANDINGS IN HIGH-RISK MANEUVERS!
YO! DON'T DO DRUGS!
YOU SEEM TO HAVE SKIPPED OVER ME, MY FRIEND.
YOU!
NOT THAT ANY INTRODUCTIONS ARE NECESSARY.. I'VE MET THESE FELLOWS MANY TIMES BEFORE.
BUT IN CASE THEY DO NOT REMEMBER...
MY NAME IS LUCIFER, FATHER OF DARKNESS.
PUT 'ER THERE.
WAIT! NO!
¡MALO!
SHRKK!
AAAIGH! MY HAND!
BEGONE, FOUL THING! YOU'LL DO NO MORE EVIL HERE TONIGHT!
THAT SHALL BE DETERMINED IN THE MAIN EVENT, MY FRIEND.
AS FOR YOUNG HSU HERE...
I'LL BE SEEING YOU SOON.
YOU HAVE BEEN MARKED, LITTLE FRIEND! THIS IS NOT GOOD! YOUR SOUL IS IN JEOPARDY!
WHAT?! WHAT'S GOING ON? I THOUGHT THIS STUFF WAS ALL FAKED!
666
THEY JUST SAY THAT TO CLEAR THE CENSORS. HMM... PERHAPS SOME BACK-STORY WOULD HELP!
I COME FROM A TRIBE OF HOLY MEN LIVING HIGH IN THE CARPATHIANS. OUR MEN ARE GREAT FIGHTERS AS WELL AND, DUE TO SOME ANCIENT AGREEMENT WHICH WE ASSUME INVOLVED MUCH ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION ON OUR PART, THE TASK FELL UPON A CHOSEN ONE OF OUR PEOPLE TO FIGHT SATAN HIMSELF ONCE EVERY FIVE YEARS FOR THE FATE OF ALL MANKIND!
WHEN I CAME OF AGE, I WAS ALREADY DEEPLY INTO THE LOCAL WRESTLING CIRCUIT, SO THINGS SORT OF SPIRALLED FROM THERE.
YOU MEAN-- YOU BUILT A PAY-PER-VIEW EVENT AROUND A BATTLE FOR THE SUBJUGATION OF ALL HUMANITY BY THE DEVIL?!
... ACTUALLY, THAT KIND OF MAKES SENSE, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT.
IT REALLY BOOSTS THE T-SHIRT SALES! BUT FOR NOW, IF WE ARE TO SAVE YOUR IMMORTAL SOUL, YOU MUST JOIN ME IN THE RING!
WHAT? ME AGAINST SATAN?! I DON'T THINK I'M UP TO THE TASK! I CAN'T--
WE GIVE YOU SNAPPY RING MUSIC!
YOU'RE ON!
AT LAST, MY TWO CHALLENGERS ARRIVE! FOUND SOME COURAGE, HAVE YOU, BOY? SPLENDID -- I HATE A SHORT FIGHT.
UNFORTUNATELY, EVEN THE BRAVEST OF MEN TREMBLE ONCE I HAVE REVEALED...
MY TRUE DEMONIC FORM...
FOOM!
HA HA HA! TREMBLE!
HAIL LORD SATAN!
YES! YES! WORSHIP ME, YOU PATHETIC BUFFOON!
HEY! THAT WAS MEAN!
THIS IS IT, LITTLE FRIEND! HAVE COURAGE! THIS WILL BE EPIC BATTLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL, WHICH WORLD WILL NOT SOON FORGET!
ACTUALLY, WE'RE RUNNING LOW ON PANELS-- CAN WE JUST CLOBBER HIM WITH A CHAIR OR SOMETHING?
HMM. YOU PLAN WELL, LITTLE FRIEND.
EEP!
AND THUSLY...
THE DEVIL IS BEATEN, MY HAND'S BACK TO NORMAL, AND ALL THE WORLD IS SAFE!
MAY WRESTLING AND WRESTLING PROGRAMS BE BLESSED!
LET'S GO BEAT SOMEBODY UP!
'TIL NEXT TIME, VIDEO GAMERS, THIS IS CHAN TANAKA REMINDING YOU TO BEAT PEOPLE UP ONLY UNDER CLOSE ADULT SUPERVISION, AND ALSO TO SNAP INTO A SLIM JIM!™
GOOD NIGHT, AND GOD BLESS.
¡OLE!
THE END!

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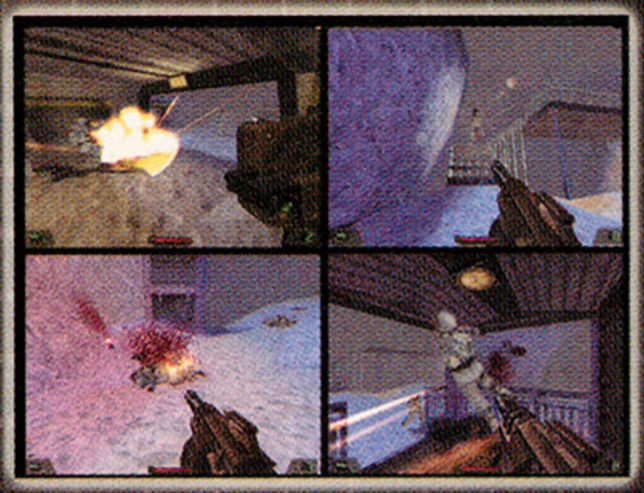
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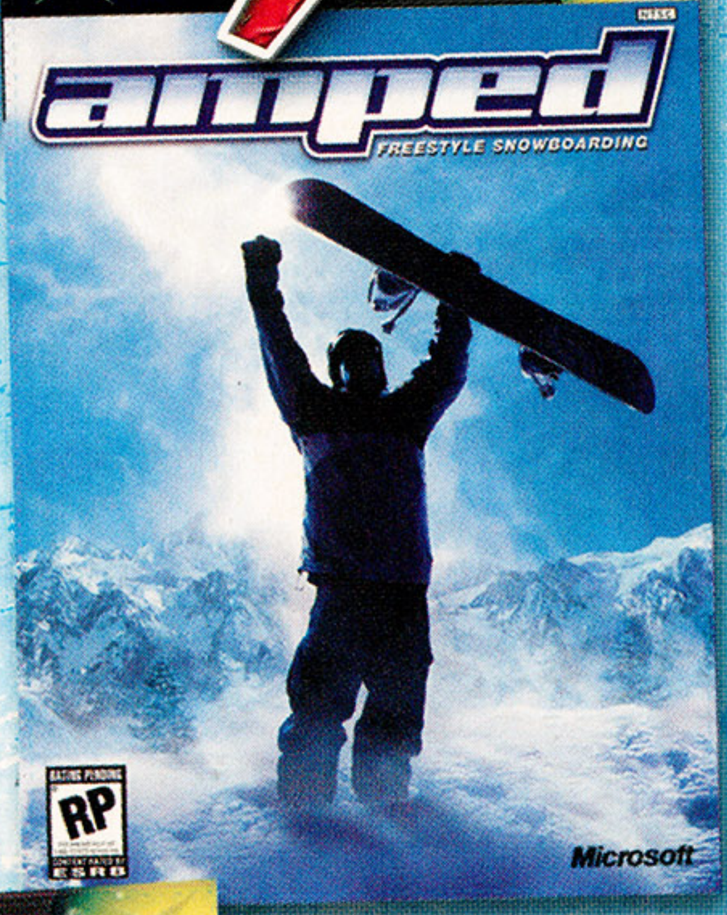
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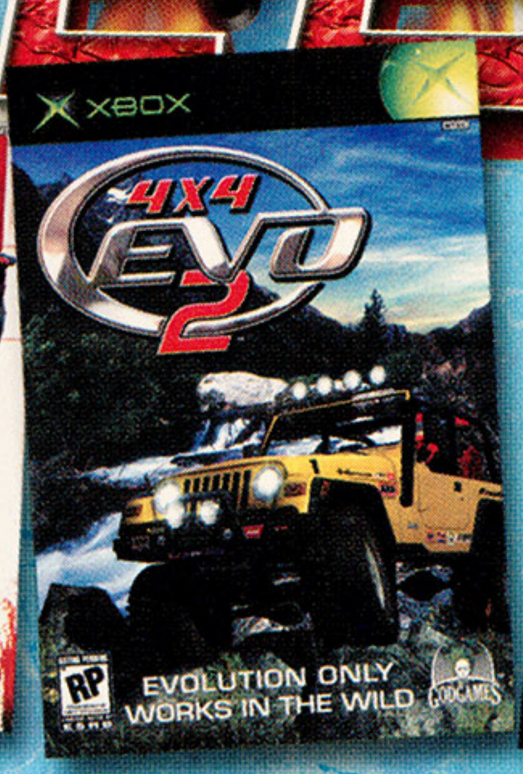
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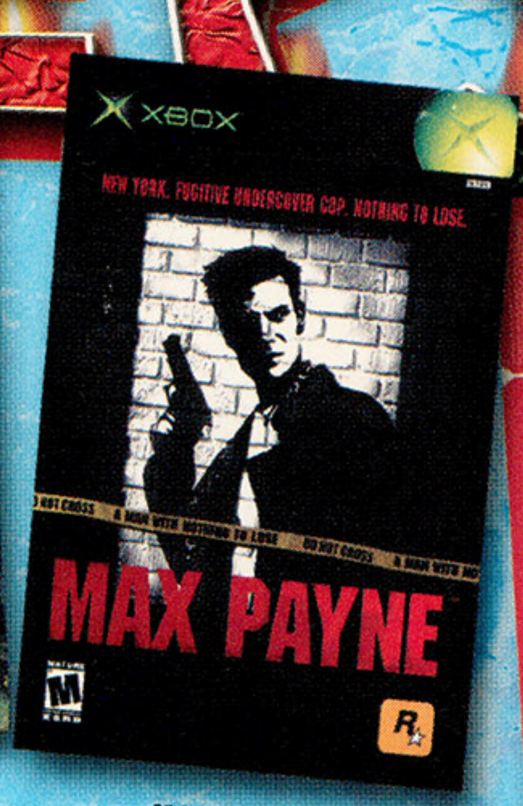
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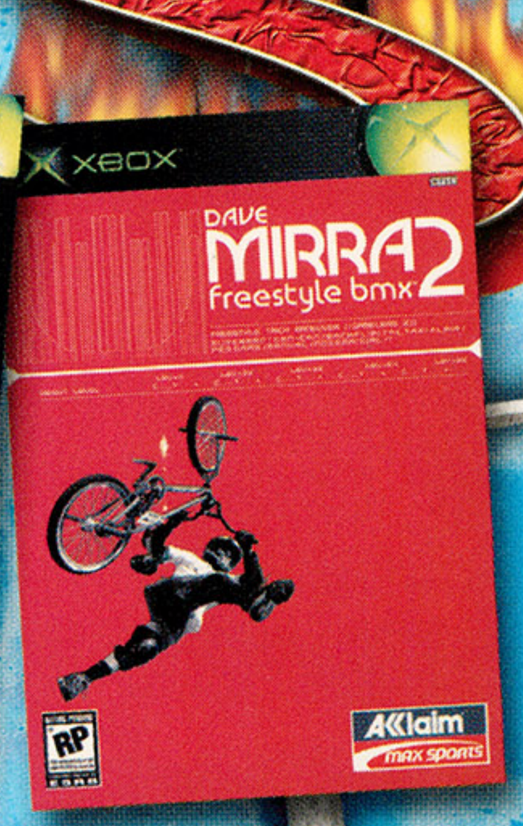
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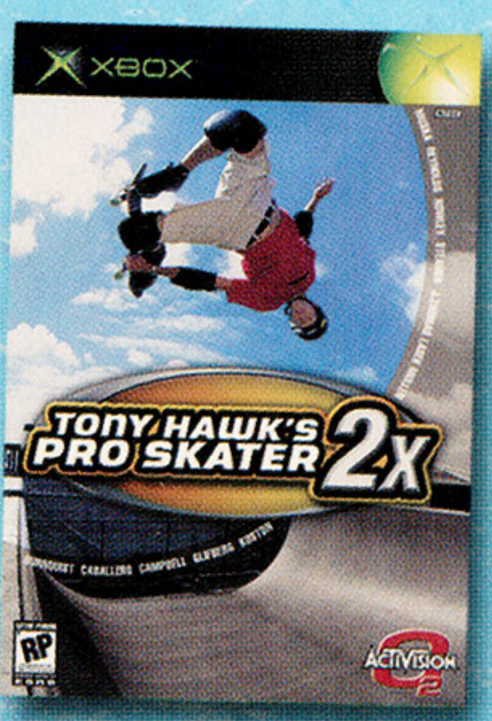
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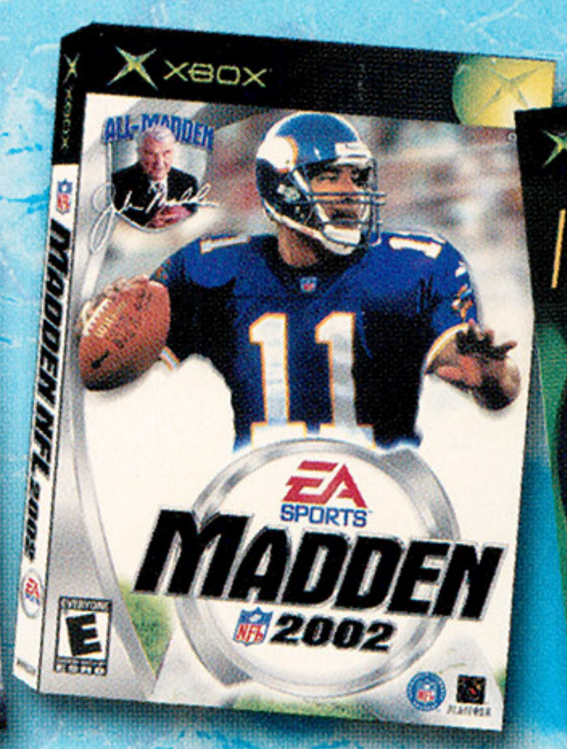
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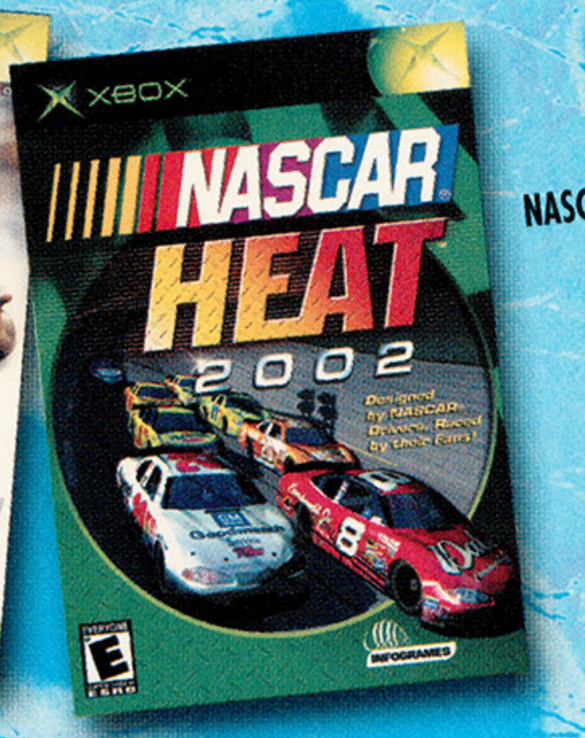
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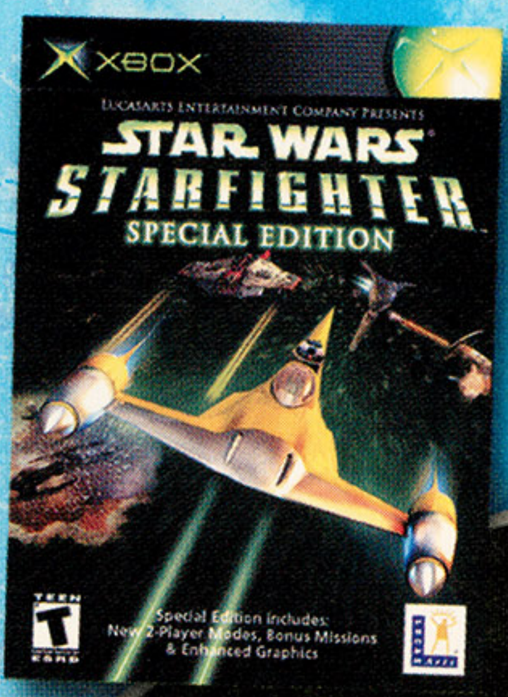


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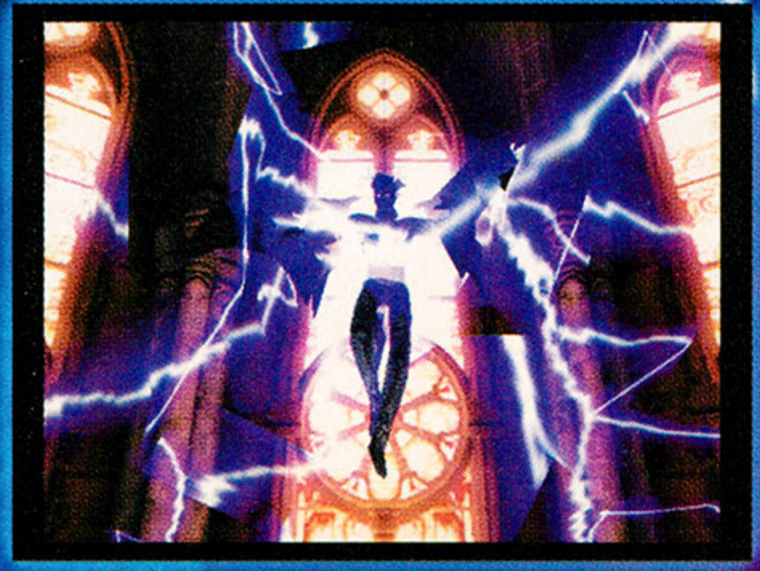
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BUT THERE'S A BULLET
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Violence

PlayStation.2

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EONS AGO, IN THE DARKEST REACHES OF HELL, A DEMON SWORDSMAN NAMED SPARDA WAGED A ONE-MAN WAR TO SAVE THE HUMAN WORLD FROM DAMNATION. 2000 YEARS LATER, A SHADOWY FIGURE NAMED DANTE FINDS CLUES THAT THE DEVIL WILL RISE UP AGAIN. SOMEWHERE BETWEEN A MAN AND A DEMON LIES OUR ONLY HOPE FOR SALVATION.

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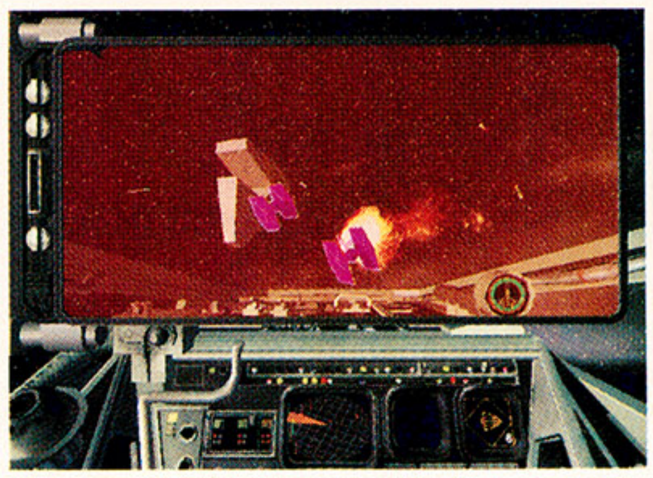
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This Month in Previews

It's hard to believe that this time next month most of us will be broke thanks to GameCube and Xbox purchases. All except *EGM* editor in chief Dan Hsu, who can afford both (he's the only one who doesn't get paid in chocolate bars and nylon stockings around here).

And while a lot of people seem to be poo-pooing the Xbox before it's even had a chance to prove itself (especially since that ho-hum showing at the 2001 Electronic Entertainment Expo), anticipation for it in our offices has started growing dramatically. After we got to see the latest versions of games like Dead or Alive 3, Munch's Oddysee and NFL Fever in motion, even one of our more jaded editors—let's call him Chris J. No wait, that's too obvious...C. Johnston—begrudgingly admitted all hope is not lost for Microsoft.

But let's be honest. Rogue Leader on the GameCube (page 96) could easily steal the thunder away from those Xbox games come November. Not only because it's a Star Wars game (which is normally enough to make an *EGM* editor wet his pants with glee), but because it looks so damn good! The game really makes you wonder if you're watching the old movies sometimes.



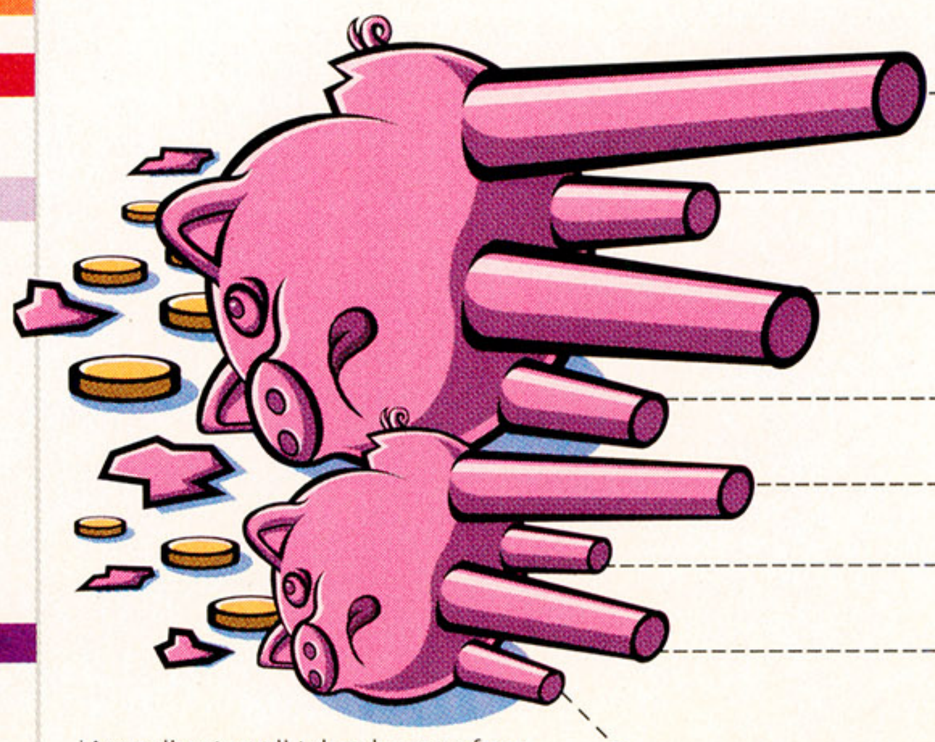
Need a reason to buy a GameCube? OK...need *another* reason to buy a GameCube? Check out Rogue Leader on page 96 and drool a lot.

No matter how you cut it, this Christmas is gonna rock. Nintendo's primed to return to glory, Sony's firing on all cylinders, and Microsoft looks stronger than ever. And hey, we'll get Sega games on every console. Life is good!

TOP 5 Preview Picks

1. Star Wars: Rogue Leader	GameCube, November
2. Devil May Cry	PlayStation 2, November
3. Shenmue II	Dreamcast, December
4. Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee	Xbox, November
5. Golden Sun	Game Boy Advance, October

How are you raising money for an Xbox and a GameCube?



*According to poll taken by 100 of our imaginary friends.

30%	Playing the lottery, 'cause odds are better than a Sasquatch encounter, and even cousin Earl saw him once
9%	Renting to own at Rent-A-Center
20%	Waiting a month and buying significantly cheaper "Ninetedo" from Hong Kong
7%	Buying console and returning a box of rocks to the store
15%	Holding breath until mommy buys it for us
5%	Adding console of choice to teacher-issued school supply list
10%	Taking out second mortgage on houseboat
4%	Will pawn wedding ring right before systems hit stores, but for sure will buy it right back after next paycheck

PlayStation 2

twisted metal: BLACK™








MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Violence

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PlayStation®

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Language
Mild Violence
Suggestive Themes







In the world, only this island is...



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PS2

PREVIEW

Devil May Cry

Publisher:	Capcom
Developer:	Capcom
Players:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	95%
Release:	October 17, 2001
Also Try:	Onimusha
Web Address:	www.capcom.com

The Good: All the horror fun of Resident Evil without the stilted gameplay.

The Bad: The dorky dialog and cheeseball acting drain the drama.

And The Ugly: Is Trish supposed to be hot? She looks like a homely Silent Hill reject.



Dante first meets Trish when she busts into his crib and impales him with a sword. After that they become fast friends.



Apparently, they were all out of scythes at the local bad-guy supply shop. Dante punishes the ghoul for running.

Resident Evil fans don't have much to be thankful for these days. Code: Veronica X has very little new content, RE Zero for the GameCube was a no-show at Spaceworld, and a true PS2 RE sequel is starting to seem less likely by the day. However, all is not lost. RE Creator Shinji Mikami's first PS2 project, Devil May Cry, combines the macabre mood of survival horror with some of the deepest and most fulfilling action gameplay this side of Konami's recent Castlevania titles. In fact, DMC is so swell that you may not mourn the lack of Resident Evil at all after playing it.

"[DMC's] in-game engine is more beautiful than the CG movies in the original Resident Evil." ***—Shinji Mikami***

The game's stunning opening introduces Dante, a fair-haired, half-demon badass who hires out his services as a private investigator of the paranormal. "Devil May Cry" is the grammatically challenged name of his agency. The narrative explodes when a mysterious hottie crashes into Dante's office and thrusts a sword through his heart. After casually removing the blade from his sternum, Dante demands answers from this vile temptress with the foreboding name of Trish. She warns Dante that the ancient demon Mundus has returned, and that he may be responsible for the death of Dante's family. Trish vanishes and our hero sets out on his journey with his father's mighty sword.

Unlike Resident Evil, this game is broken up into individual levels, 24 in all. The levels themselves are fully interconnected, however, so you will become intimately familiar with the layout of DMC's castle during your journey. Dante is equipped with a massive blade and a pair of pistols loaded with conveniently unlimited ammo. A deadly arsenal of sword moves are earned throughout the game, so it's not just a button-mashing hack-a-thon. Plus the game rates your attacks based on creativity and style—comboing slashes with gunfire yields higher marks.

And luckily, whether you adored or abhorred Resident Evil's control scheme, you'll likely be enamored with DMC's amazingly tight gameplay.

DEVIL MAY SWIM

Genre Pool



We were pleasantly surprised when Devil May Cry briefly transformed into an underwater first-person shooter about halfway through the game. While it's no competition for full-fledged shooters, it's a cool addition that offers a refreshingly aquatic change of pace.

The genre-blending experimentation doesn't end there. You'll also be treated to two brief vehicle shooter sequences late in the game. This shocking excursion into variety is initially jarring, but proves that these guys can make more than zombie-filled horror games. Who knows, maybe DMC2 will feature a toe-tapping dancing level.

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION: A COMPENDIUM OF THE



Dante wields two pistols at once in classic John Woo style. (Minus the slow-motion shots of flying doves, that is.)



Nothing's messier than shotgunning a giant roach at point-blank range. Well, except maybe blasting 20 bugs.

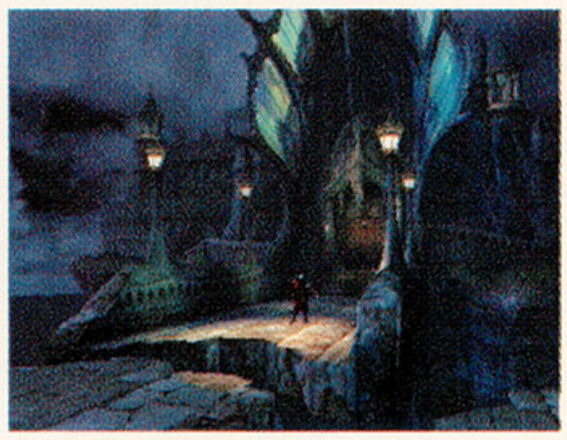


CELEBRITY DEATHMATCH

A devil who's seen the light from the skies, or a dashing, dapper devil in disguise? DMC's main meanie Sparda versus Batman: Both are called "Dark Knight" by those who know them, but who would win in a fistfight? One's a black warrior written about in epic prose, the other's a disturbed vigilante dressed in pantyhose. Sparda does have demonic powers on his side, while Bruce Wayne has a utility belt and a rubber suit with nipples. Hmm...we'll have to go with Sparda.











The clunky, tank-like walking controls of RE are history; Dante simply runs in the direction that you press on the control stick. Double-jumps and a quick side-roll add to your impressive maneuverability.

While the game is fairly combat-heavy, there are also puzzles sprinkled throughout the levels. Most of these brain-teasers involve finding a rusty key or placing a gem in a hole, so the game never degrades into confusing drudgery of equation solving. While some stages only require puzzle solving to clear, others are a bit more climactic. The boss encounters are dramatic, impressive and most importantly, difficult. These vile behemoths are also tenacious, so you've rarely seen the last of them even after several victories.

Devil May Cry presents a formidable challenge by not exactly allowing infinite continues. You begin the game with a limited number of tries represented by Yellow Orbs. When these run out it's Game Over. You can also save your game at the start of each level, but if you meet an untimely fate with no orbs left, it's back to the start of that stage.

Complementing the deep gameplay and old-school challenge are some of the most jaw-dropping visuals yet seen on the PS2. From both an aesthetic and a technical standpoint, the graphics in Devil May Cry are among the best on the system, providing ample competition for Metal Gear Solid 2, Final Fantasy X and Ico. Dimly lit castle corridors, crumbling courtyards and dank caverns have all been created with an eye for subtlety and detail that no previous game can match. Later levels include an awesome moored ghost ship and a gooey internal-organ extravaganza—these are the kinds of kick-butt graphics you bought a PS2 for.

DMC is due out next month, but if you just can't wait for a taste—and you shouldn't—check out the playable demo that comes with Resident Evil Code: Veronica X. You won't be sorry.

—Shane Bettenhausen

DIALOG MAY SUCK

One of the only negative aspects in DMC is the somewhat laughable dialog. Despite the serious nature of the narrative, much of the acting fails to convey the gravity of the situation. When Dante squeals: "I wanted to be the one who filled your dark soul with LIGHT!" you'll likely be doubled over laughing instead of engrossed in the narrative. Bear in mind, this is from the people responsible for the "master of unlocking" debacle in Resident Evil (PS1), so we were not too shocked by the less than natural-sounding script.

DANTE'S INFERNO

Hell-bent?



In Devil May Cry, a mysterious hero braves the depths of the Underworld on a quest to rid the world of an insidious evil. Ever wonder where he got his cool name? His moniker is a nod to 13th-century Italian poet Dante



Alighieri. His most famous work is *The Divine Comedy*, in which he travels through hell and purgatory to reach paradise (also the basis for Crave's upcoming The Lost for PS2). The plot of Devil May Cry echoes many of the classic themes presented in Dante's yarn.

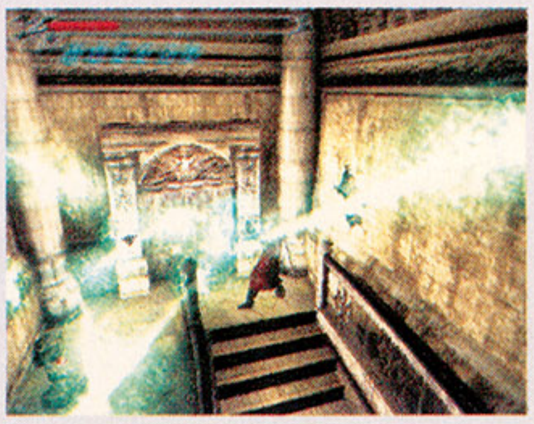
Another famous Dante is Dante Hicks, the main character in the cinematic classic *Clerks*. He may not travel through hell or anything, but watching *Clerks* is way more fun than reading *Paradise Lost*. DMC's Dante doesn't really have much to do with *Clerks*, but both have some real laugh-inducing dialog.



VARIOUS GATTS AND GLOCKS AT DANTE'S DISPOSAL

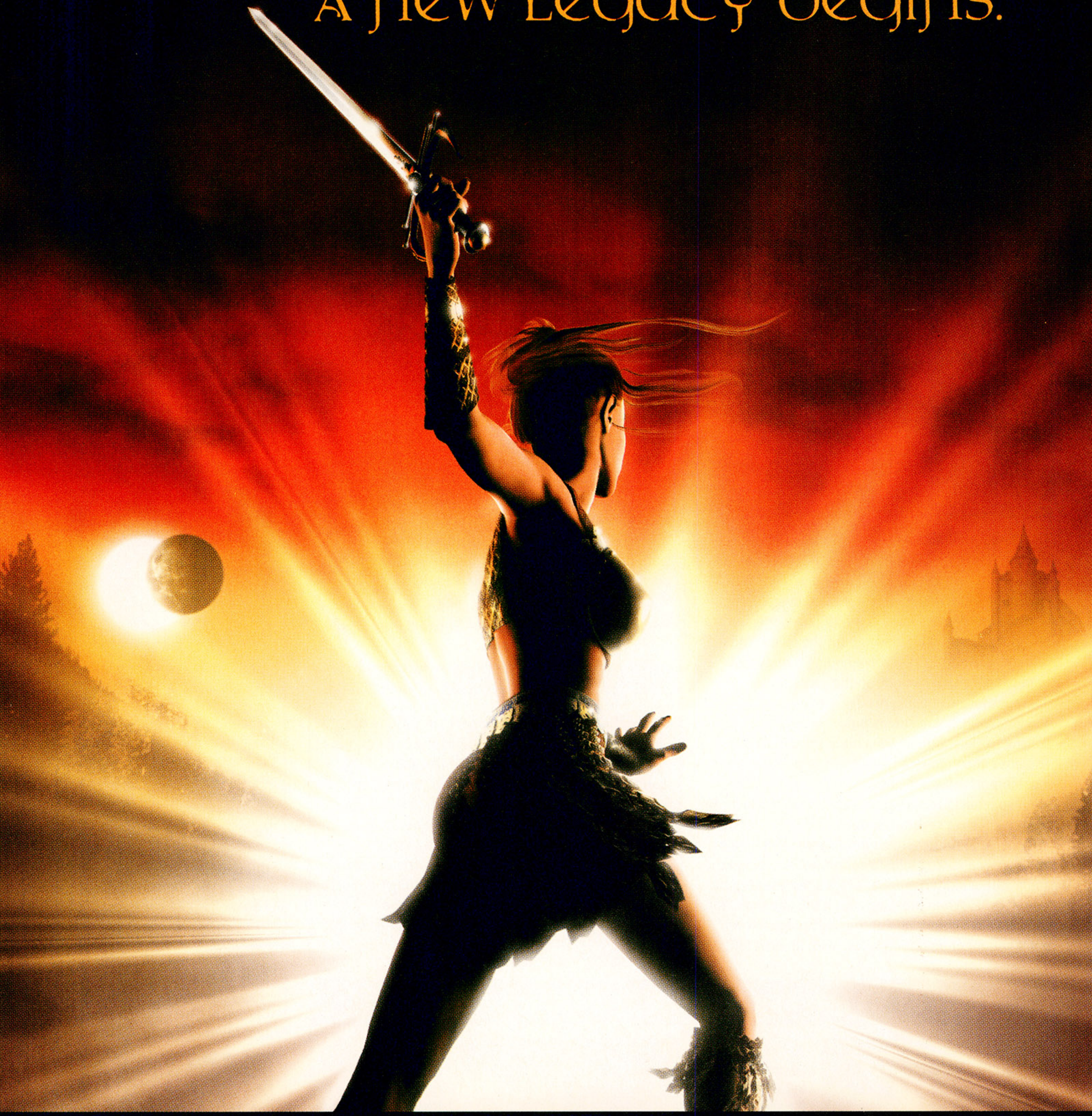


The grenade launcher might not have the finesse of your father's sacred sword, but it sure blows up real pretty-like.



The final gun Dante finds is the high-tech Nightmare Beta, a crazy laser that turns corridors into a disco of death.

THIS FALL,
A NEW LEGACY BEGINS.



RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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PlayStation.2

BLACK ISLE studios

Interplay™

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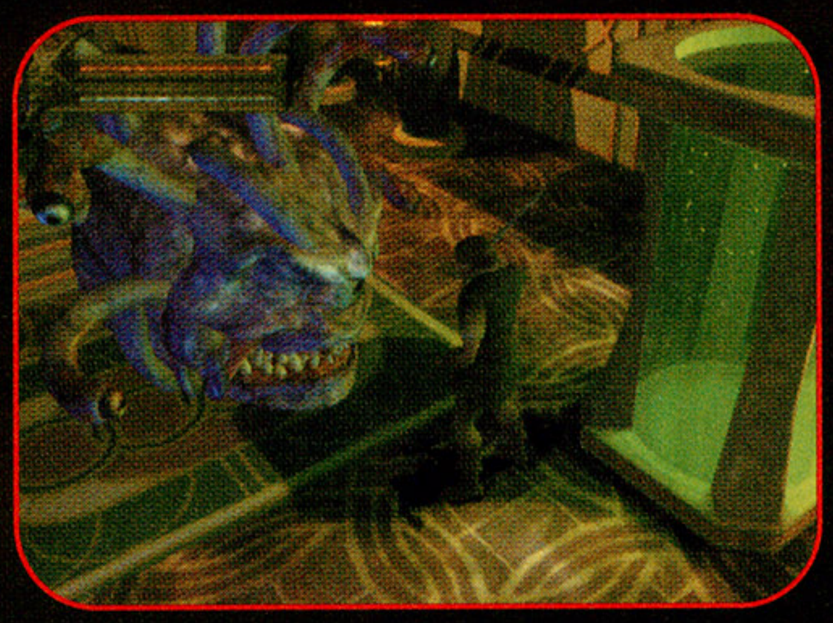
FORGOTTEN REALMS

Baldur's Gate™

Dark Alliance™



HACK YOUR WAY THROUGH COUNTLESS OPPOSITION



ENCOUNTER MYSTICAL BEASTS



EXPLORE FANTASTIC ENVIRONMENTS

"...IT BLOWS AWAY ANY PS2 GAME ON THE MARKET..."

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Quiet, please. Match in progress.

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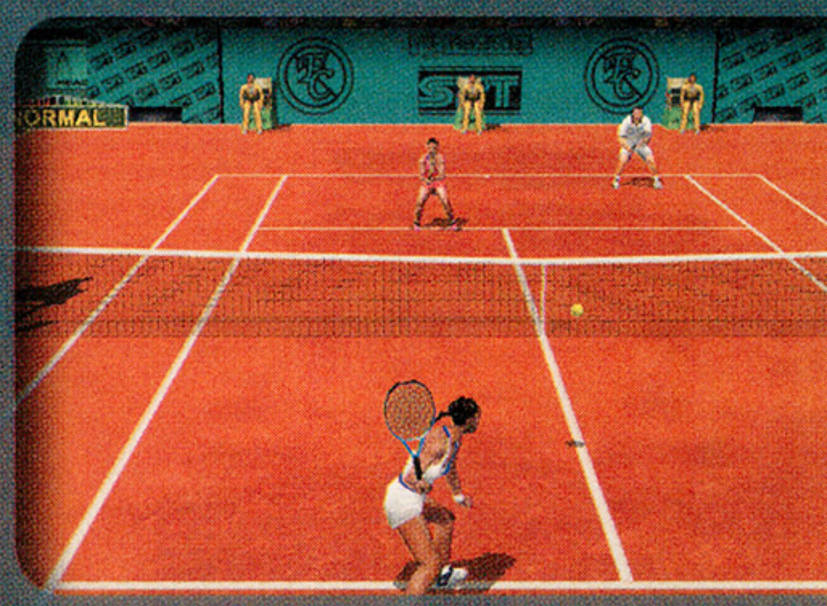
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Create your own champion to play against the world's best.



Dreamcast™

SNOW JOB

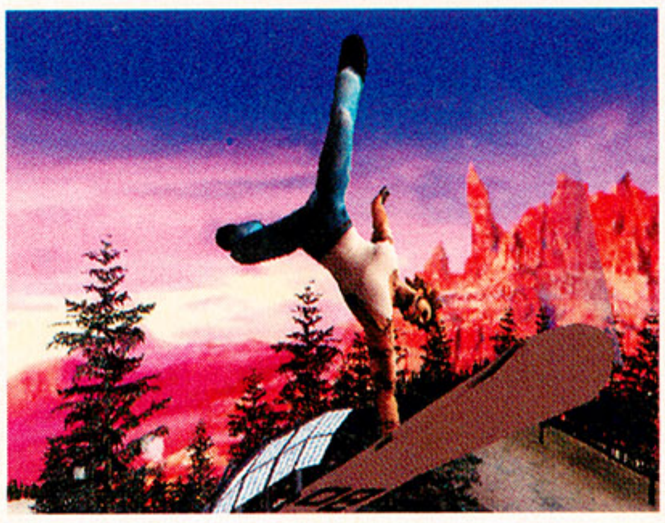
9.0 Average score given to the original SSX by the *EGM* Review Crew.

PS2

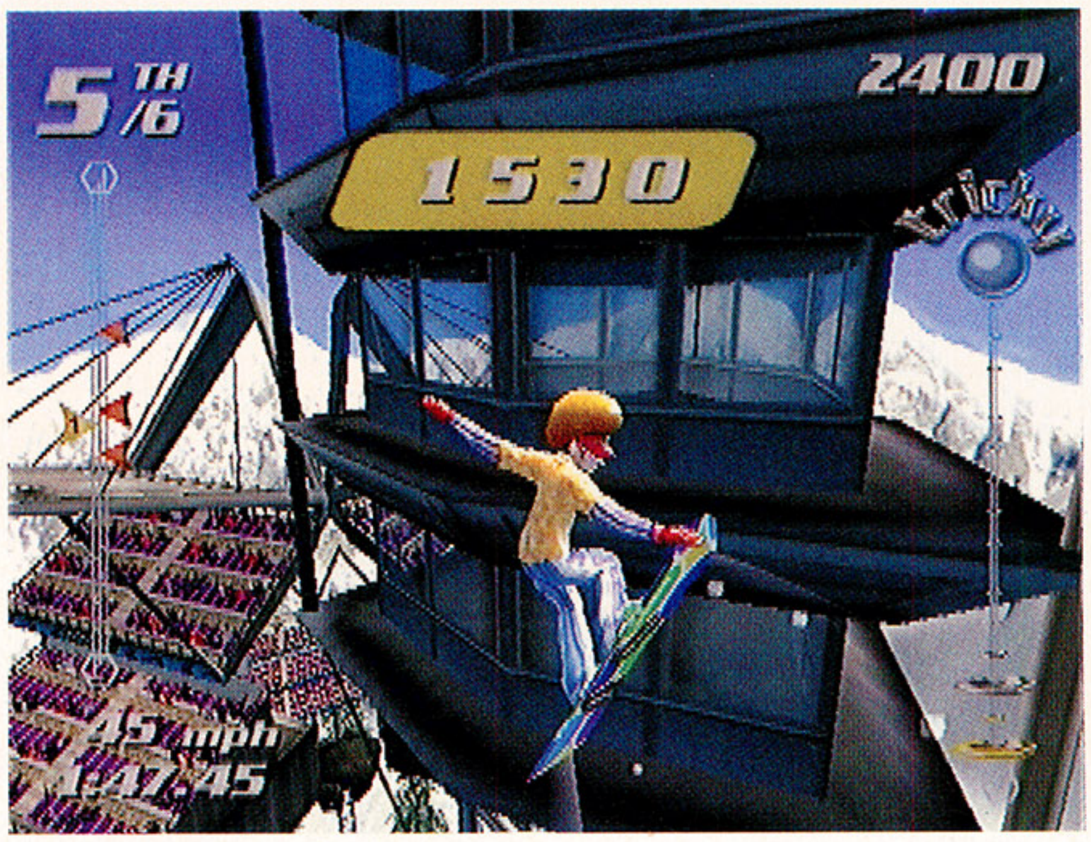
PREVIEW

SSX Tricky

Publisher:	Electronic Arts
Developer:	EA Canada
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Extreme Sports
% Done:	15%
Release:	Winter 2001
Also On:	GameCube, Xbox
Web Address:	www.ea.com
The Good:	New "Uber" tricks.
The Bad:	Not a full sequel.
And The Ugly:	A character voice provided by "Mr. Courtney Cox" (aka David Arquette).

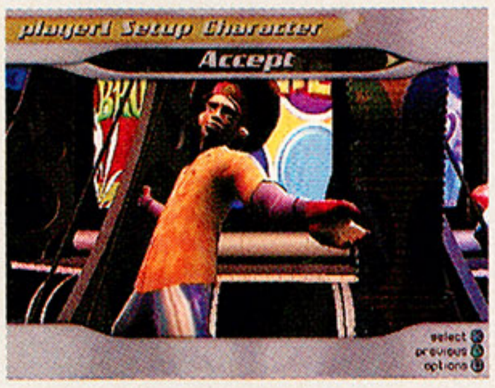


In Tricky, your rider has the ability to throw off the shackles of boardly oppression (uh, the bindings) and flip that junk around six ways from Aspen.



NOW HEAR THIS

Celebrity Voices



SSX Tricky's international cast of characters is voiced by a number of well-known actors and musicians, including:

David Arquette
(Eddie Wachowski)
Oliver Platt
(Luther-Dwayne Gaady)
KP Precise
(Mac Fraser)
Nick Malaperiman
(Moby Jones)
Bif Naked
(Zoe Payne)
Lucy Liu (Elsie)
Jim Rose
(Psymon Stark)
Macy Gray
(Seeiah Owens)
Billy Zane
(Brodi Case)
Patricia Valesquez
(Marisol Diez Delagado)

First, *Spy Kids: Special Edition*, and now a "director's cut" of one of the best PlayStation 2 games to date?! Life is good.

The original SSX more than held its own against other PS2 launch titles like Madden 2001 and Tekken Tag Tournament, blowing away gamers with its mix of over-the-top snowboarding action, phat beats and visual pyrotechnics. SSX Tricky, a "half-sequel" of sorts, delivers more of the same.

The game includes redesigned versions of all the original courses, chock-full of new paths and shortcuts, in addition to two new World Circuit stops, Garibaldi and Alaska. Garibaldi, located in British Columbia, Canada, begins with a gut-renching 200-foot base jump—the perfect opportunity to charge up your trick meter early. Set in the wilds of Alaska, the other new course features a rapid-fire succession of cliffs that resemble giant roofing shingles.

Six new riders—including Zen master Brodi, the ultra-buff Psymon and the knit Reggae cap-wearing Eddie—join six returning favorites, including Moby, Zoe and the curvaceous Elise (Jurgen and Hiro apparently failed to make the cut). For the "Director's Cut," all of the characters have expanded facial animations and are voiced by a number of different celebrities (see sidebar).

The package also includes new DVD material, such as behind-the-scenes and "making of" footage, and another killer soundtrack, featuring Run DMC, Mix Master Mike, Aphrodite and more.

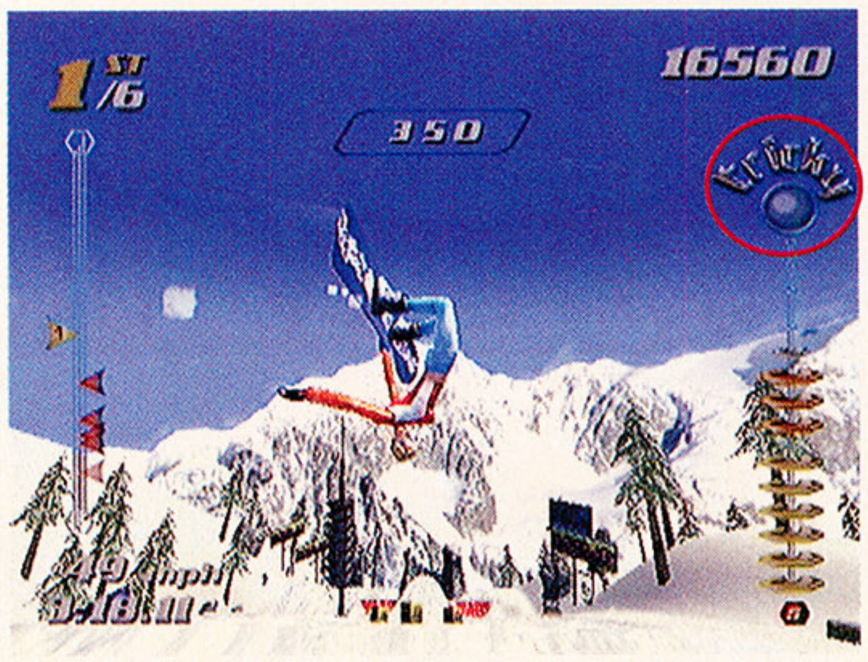


The already uncorked action has been pumped up with the addition of new "Uber" tricks. During these less-than-serious stunts, riders detach themselves from their boards and perform headstands, karate moves and other impossible feats.

When your trick meter is completely full, listen for Run DMC's "Tricky" to start playing...that means you'll have 20 seconds to pull off an Uber move. Land the move, and the "T" in "tricky" will light up. Spell the entire word, and you can perform unlimited Uber moves for the rest of the run to rack up a sick score.

Graphically, the game is everything you'd expect from a second-generation PS2 title; all full-screen modes run at a crisp and smooth 60 frames per second. The game also includes Dolby Digital 5.1 audio and wide-screen support, making it a great home-theater showpiece.

Non-PS2 owners don't have to worry about being left out in the cold, either; although the series was born on PS2, SSX Tricky will also be landing on GameCube and Xbox this winter. *–Gary Mollohan*



Nail all your jumps and try not to screw up too often in order to max out the "tricky" meter. Then it's time for some serious signature stunts.

BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN THE USA?

Oklahoma Alliance for Geographic Education: That's what OKAGE means in the United States. It's an organization devoted to providing a better standard of living for children who have had their shadows stolen by giant, smiling demons. Or maybe not.



PS2

PREVIEW

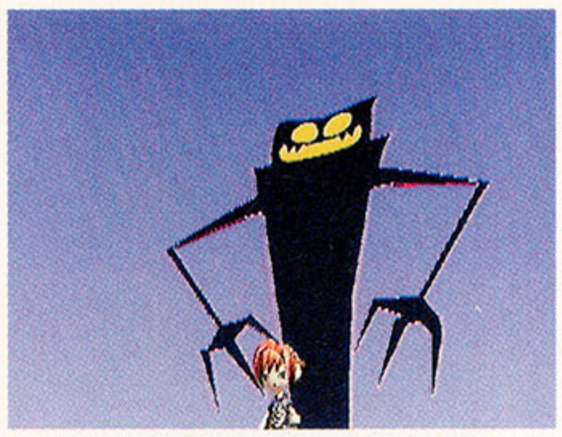
Okage: Shadow King

Publisher:	Sony CEA
Developer:	Sony CEI
Players:	1
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	80%
Release:	Fall 2001
Also Try:	Dark Cloud
Web Address:	www.scea.com

The Good: A whimsical, totally unique set of characters.

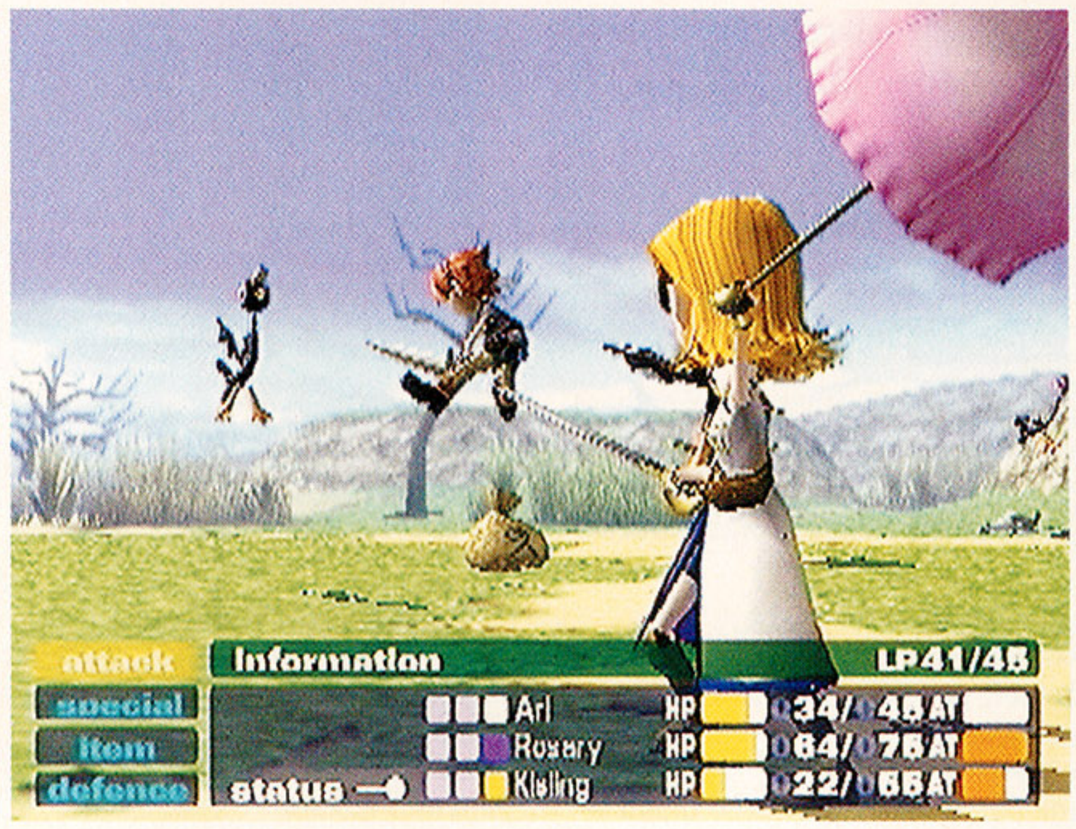
The Bad: Battle system may feel a bit too familiar.

And The Ugly: Watching the king of all evil get his feelings hurt...



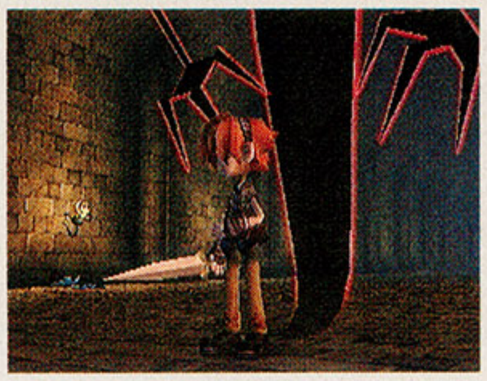
Ari, the game's hero, harbors an evil spirit in his shadow. At inopportune times, the demon pops up to speak of his plans for world domination.

The battle system does not match the level of innovation reached by the game's character designs, but it does the job.



WHAT THE...?

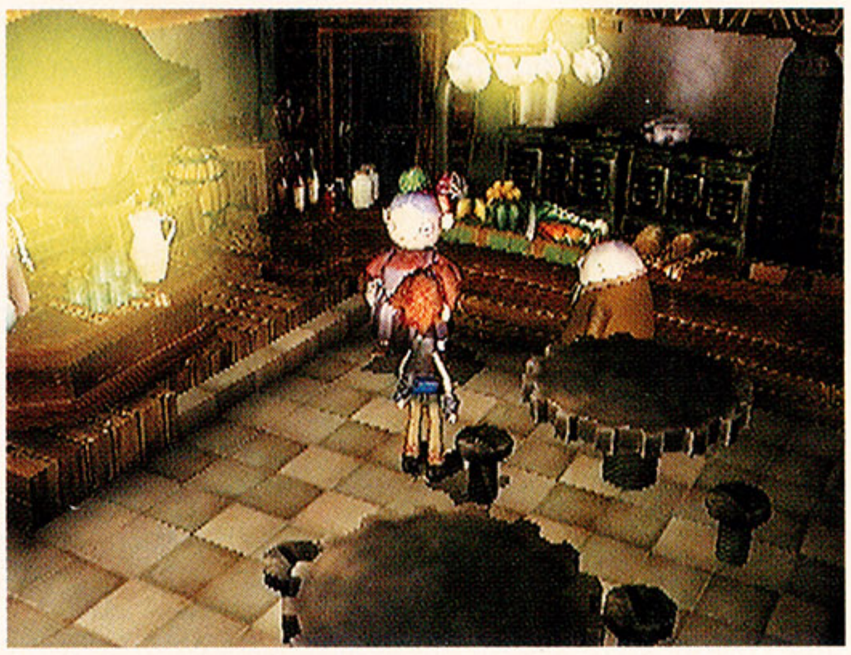
There's Weird, and Then There's Okage



"Weird" doesn't even begin to describe Okage's loony-bin story. All is well in young Ari's medieval community until his sister is suddenly stricken with a debilitating illness—one that forces her to speak exclusively in pig latin. No conventional cure exists for this ailment, so Ari's parents take a "holistic" route: They revive an evil demon and exchange Ari's soul for their daughter's voice. The ritual works but comes with an odd side effect. Ari's sister, upon waking, finds that her shadow has been tinted neon pink. The family is horrified by this, but is indifferent to the sight of a demon forcing their son to embark on a journey leading to almost certain death.

Time to go down the RPG checklist. Does Okage feature a young male hero on a sprawling quest? Yup. Does it have a cute, flirtatious love interest? Of course. What about a menu-driven battle system, towns populated by smack-talking locals and medieval-style backdrops? Yes, yes and yes. So, what makes it stand apart from every other RPG ever made? A demon named Stan.

As the game begins, this sinister spirit—the self-proclaimed "king of all evil"—has just been woken from a century-long nap. He dreams of world conquest (naturally), but his slumber has weakened him, and he's lost his physical form. In order to begin regaining his powers, Stan requires a human host to possess and control, so he latches onto a lanky, socially awkward 15-year-old boy named Ari.

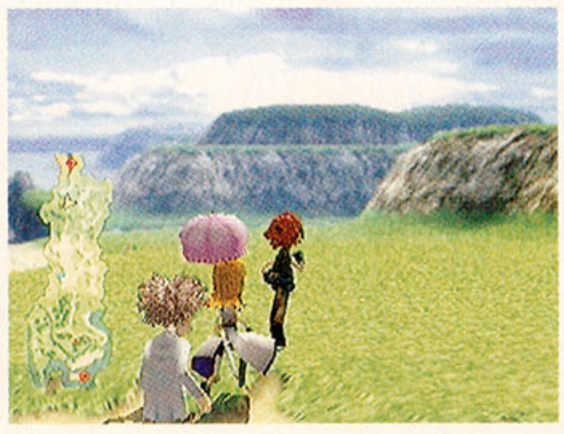


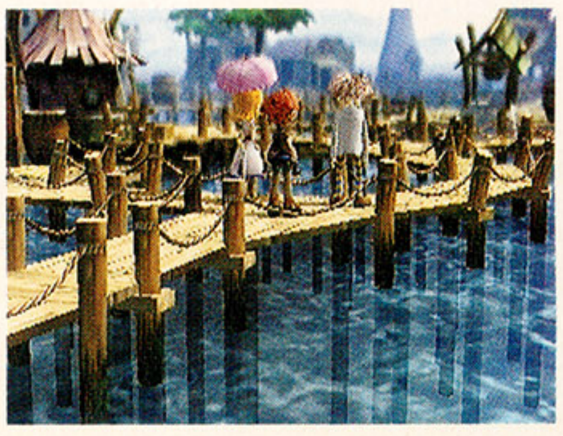
Upon contact with Stan, the boy's shadow contorts into the shape of a demon; when the spirit wishes to speak, the shadow's pointed arms thrash up and down wildly, and its "eyes" blink with frustration and disbelief. Nearly every comment uttered by this malevolent spirit is a side-splitter. If monsters had their own stand-up comedy circuit, Stan could hold his own against Freddy Krueger any day. And he's given good reason to be snippy; as he slept, a handful of lower-level deities started laying claim to his unprotected throne. His mission (and, by default, Ari's): to eliminate those goons, absorb their powers, and return to greatness.

Gameplay is fairly linear. The worlds are expansive, but there's never any question as to where you need to go next. Battles, while frequent, are not random; like the Game Arts titles (Lunar, Grandia), you can always see enemy groupings on the horizon (which gives you the option to either jump into a fight or seek a safer route). The scuffles themselves are turn-based and feature all of the standard RPG elements (spells, special moves, etc.), but don't seem to offer much in terms of innovation. A shame, but the game's witty dialog and glossy, cartoon-like visuals more than make up for this deficiency. All said, Okage is one of 2001's coolest surprises.

—Ethan Einhorn







"Those were lovingly animated and detailed, and took quite some time."

–Darren Monahan, producer, Black Isle Studios, commenting on the barkeep's distracting breasts

PS2

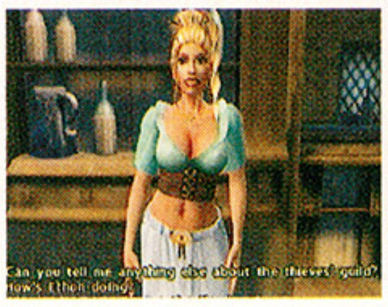
PREVIEW

Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance

Publisher:	Interplay/Black Isle
Developer:	Snowblind Studios
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Action-RPG
% Done:	75%
Release:	November 2001
Also On:	PC (four other games)
Web Address:	www.interplay.com
The Good:	Dungeon water never looked so good.
The Bad:	You'll need to take a week off of work to finish this.
And The Ugly:	Dungeons after a huge battle. The splattered blood turns the room into abstract art.







This barkeep (right) looks innocent, but all she does is send you on deadly breas... ahem... quests.

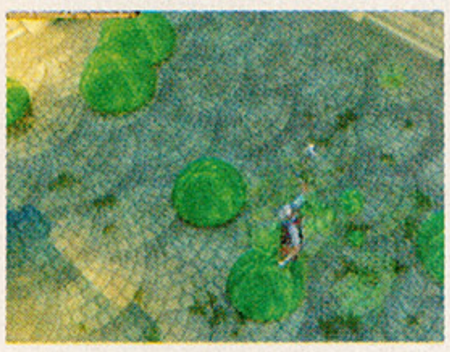
BURNING QUESTION

Goo Who?

Check out this handy guide to the sticky stuff you'll find roaming the local dungeons.



Gelatinous Cube: A five-ton puddin' pop. Unabsorbed parts are stuck in their bodies.



Green Slimes: Not to be mistaken with paranormal goo in *Ghostbusters*.



Jell-O: For cripes sakes, run, and don't look back.

Hacking and slashing zombies into Gordita meat is fun with a keyboard and a mouse, but Black Isle Studios and Snowblind Studios are wagering that it's more amusing with a Dual Shock. If you're familiar with PC games, then chances are you've heard of Baldur's Gate. It's a popular action-RPG franchise that managed to do what few others could: Put a chink in Diablo's armor. That success makes it surprising that the Dark Alliance has so little in common with its PC predecessor. Granted, both have lots of butchering, fireball hurling and weapon accessorizing, but that's where the similarities end.

Before "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" comes to mind, remember that console ports of PC games rarely shine—especially complex ones. Black Isle came to the same conclusion and moved the series in a new direction. "We've been forthcoming that DA isn't just a port of the PC game," said Darren Monahan, producer at Black Isle. "It has its own story and focuses on action, not hardcore D&D role-playing. Its setting is within the Forgotten Realms world, but that's about all the two have in common." Translated: Get your trigger finger ready.

To hell with lengthy introductions; this adventure starts off with a bang. To your head, that is. After selecting your character, you're let loose on the city of Baldur's Gate, only to get clubbed in the noggin during the medieval equivalent of a New York mugging. Your character (a human ranger, a dwarven fighter or an elfin sorceress) awakens with a bump on his or her head and gets the wise idea of exacting some revenge. That quest leads to others, and before long you'll find that there's much more trouble in town than just a gaggle of thieves.

Cleaning up Baldur's Gate (the city) is more intense than your usual action-RPG. You can block, slash and use magic to progress through more than 50 levels, and when the going gets rough, you can resort to jumping over monsters. (When's the last time an RPG let you do that?) Sometimes you can even back them into a corner and barricade them in with crates. If you're not too nimble, don't worry; buying the right equipment can make up for your reflexes. So in theory, wearing the right pair of pants could save your life.

A familiar isometric bird's-eye camera presents the action, but the visuals are anything but ordinary. "I've been working on RPGs and games for a while," said Monahan, "and I think the great thing here is its presentation...the visuals are just stunning." We're inclined to agree. Most games in this genre combine 2D graphics and 3D environments, but DA is fully 3D from top to bottom. This looks great and is useful when you're slicing enemies to bits. If skeletons are dicing you from different sides, you can use the shoulder buttons to rotate the view and get a bead on your attackers. Unlike the PC versions, you can't add warriors to your party to cover your back unless you play cooperatively with a second player. And it's probably a good idea to have some company, since it'll take about 25 hours to beat. –*Kraig Kujawa*

FASHION POLICE: IS YOUR FIGHTER DRESSED FOR SUCCESS?

Joan Rivers: (gagging noise) Honey, that bulge makes you look like you have two helmets on!



Joan Rivers: Can we talk? I think the Ron Jeremy thing is hip. But do you think we can lose the Pampers?



Joan Rivers: Oh honey, which weapons do you want to impale Orcs with? Please, put on a sweatah!



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TEEN
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Violence

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
GAMES WITH CHARACTER

CORE

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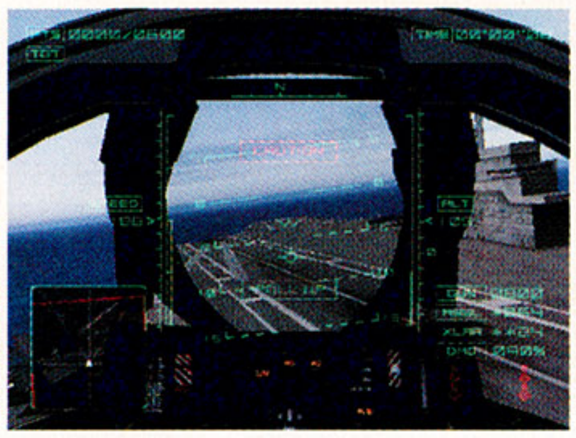
PREVIEW GALLERY

CAMP TOP GUN

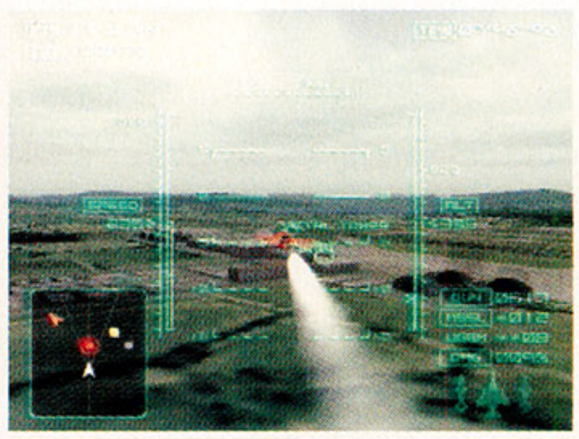
Shooting down bogies on your PS2 not real enough for you? Then take the Aviation Challenge. This one-, two-, or three-day camp, located in Huntsville, Ala., lets would-be top guns live the life of a fighter pilot. The camp includes simulator training, centrifuge rides and ground survival training. The camp culminates in an aerial-combat competition that puts campers at the controls of a real T-34 equipped with laser guns. Count us in!

Ace Combat 4

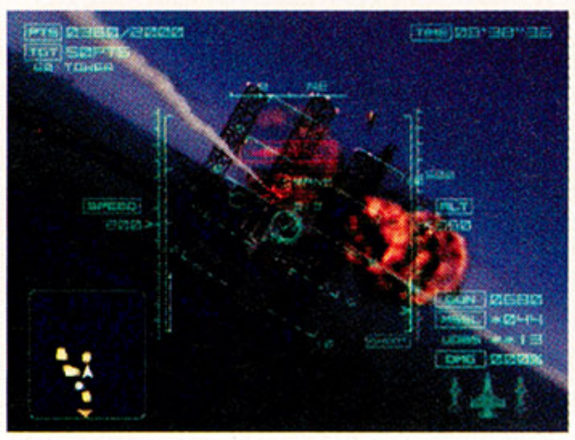
Hold it right there, Mr. I'm-not-interested-in-flight-sims. Not all flying games have to be heady and boring—Ace Combat 4 is the most approachable mission-based flight game yet. It's being developed and published by **Namco**, so it's no surprise that AC4 has a very arcadey feel. Dozens of planes and an equal number of missions "take you right into the danger zone," as Kenny Loggins might say, but the combat exercises don't drag on for ages like most games of this genre. You'll be in and out of most missions, whether you like it or not, inside of a few minutes. Some of the stages are worth completing just so you can watch the Gran Turismo 3-style replays of your craft skimming over mountaintops and waterways. While the fall is fairly crowded with PS2 releases, leave some time space on your plate for AC4 this **November**.











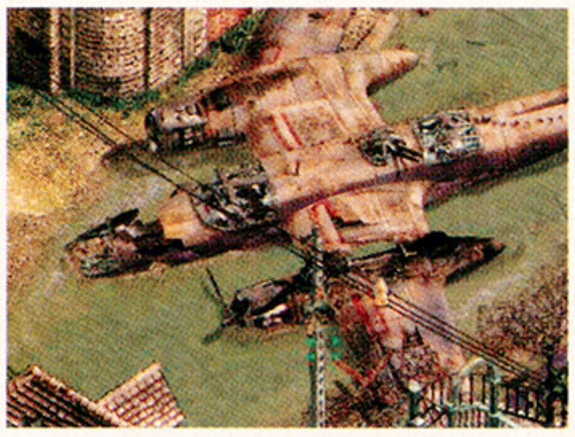


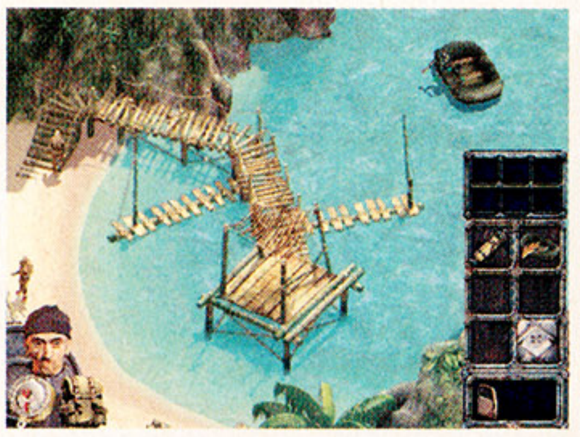
Commandos 2

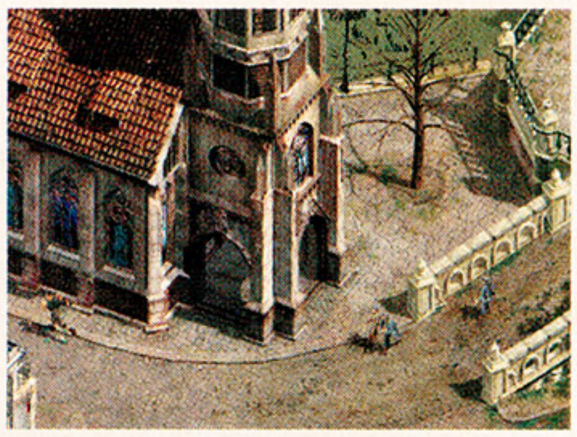
If you don't dabble in the world of PC games, chances are, you never knew there was a Commandos 1. For the sequel on the PS2, developers **Pyro Studios** ditch the PC-mouse-click gameplay and opt for an action experience with the Dual Shock controller.

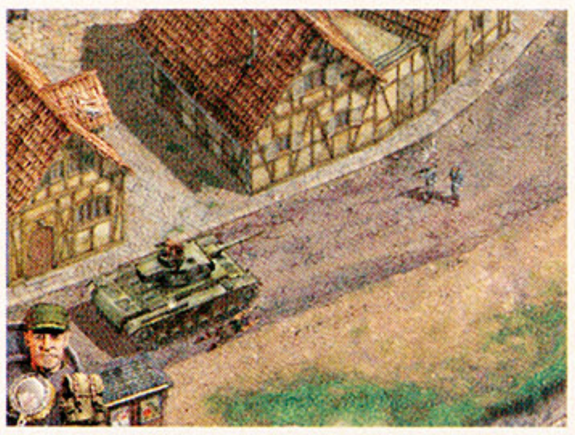
Commandos 2—which is set in WWII—puts you in charge of a ragtag crew of soldiers, each an expert of his craft. Since the missions themselves are open-ended, it's entirely up to you how you use each of your men to accomplish the task at hand.

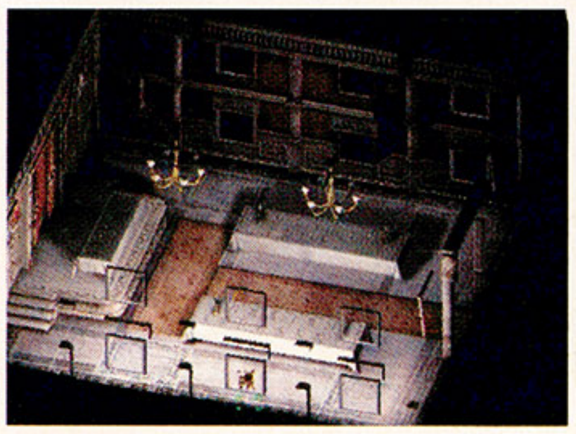
If you think, with all the graphical detail, that the environments here are 2D, better take a closer look. These are entirely 3D levels in which you can rotate, zoom and even peer into windows of buildings. Publisher **Eidos** will fight the good fight this **September**.

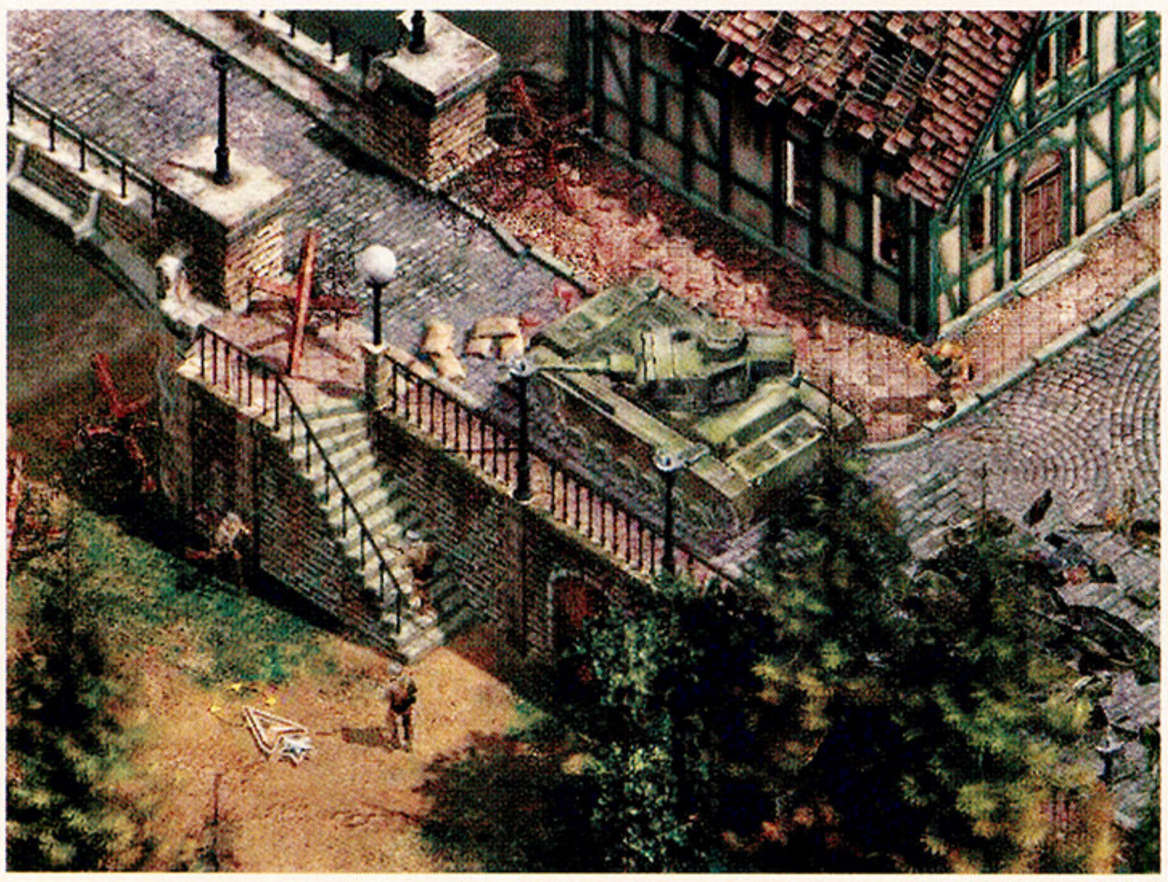












Acclaim SPORTS

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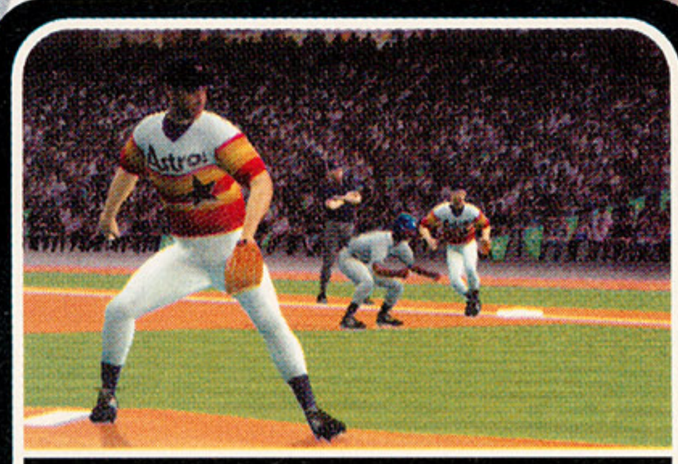
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PS2

PREVIEW GALLERY



SOME THING SIMILAR

Wait, didn't The Thing already come out for Dreamcast? Oh, wait, that was Warp's D2, a survival-horror RPG that featured a surprisingly similar premise to the movie. Kenji Eno, president of Warp, has stated in interviews that John Carpenter's 1982 classic *The Thing* was a definite influence. Check your local bargain bin for D2.

The Thing

Those of you old enough to have seen John Carpenter's *The Thing* back in the glorious '80s never saw extra-terrestrials in quite the same way again. As an unofficial sequel to the Carpenter film, the game begins where the movie left off. You're a member of the special-force unit sent in to investigate a distress beacon at a deserted outpost in the Antarctic. Since you're dealing with aliens that assume the form of their human hosts, paranoia is the name of the game. Sending your men off on errands might save you some time, but also leaves them open to catching a nasty case of...y'know, the *Thing*. Lose the confidence of your squad and they won't hesitate to bust a cap in you either. Nobody is above suspicion, not even you.

Of course, this is an ambitious project. If developer **Computer Artworks** can mess with your head and still provide you with fast, seamless action, then **Universal Interactive** may finally deliver survival horror from the clutches of Resident Evil. We hope they do the right thing in **Q2 2002**.











NFL 2K2

When a player gets cut from a team, the first thing that is taken away is his playbook. To some of us they're chicken scratch, but to others, they're golden diagrams. Maybe that's why **Visual Concepts** decided to focus so much on their plays that they've scrapped NFL 2K's entire playbook and playcall system and hired Coach's Edge, a football think tank, to make people rethink the way they call plays. "You can run any play out of any formation," said a VC rep, "different timings, different strengths—there's more unique plays than ever before." The playbook isn't the only thing getting a facelift. NFL 2K2 on the PS2 promises to have grittier-looking players, improved animations ("our quarterback won't be as stiff-looking anymore") and new moves that take advantage of the Dual Shock. See the difference on the gridiron this **October**.

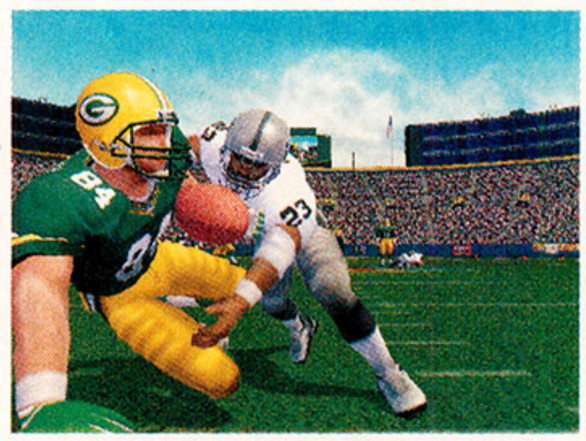






NFL GameDay 2002

Once regarded as the best PlayStation football franchise, GameDay has stumbled and bumbled, only to fumble that crown back to Madden. If the game is to regain its lost luster, **989 Sports** has a lot of ground to cover. They've been shy about letting us have an early peek at their pigskin, and its release date has mysteriously slipped to **October** (late by their standards). Maybe it'll be worth the wait. 989 promises improved computer intelligence and upgraded graphics, but they've said that before (and not delivered), so we'll have to wait and see. If they fix the buggy gameplay in last year's edition that made us pull our hair out, that alone will put this title on the road to wellville. If not, we'll just have to keep some Rogaine handy.





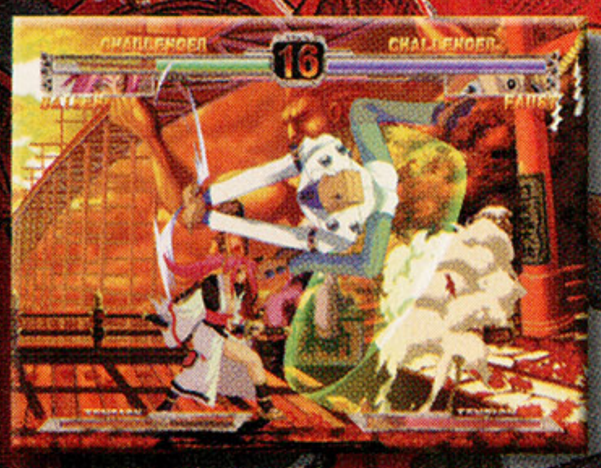


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[BY YOUR SIDE "G.GEAR"]



When magic was finally harnessed, it created an uproar. But when Gears received free will, it created an uprising. Welcome to the 22nd century-where the battle line between human and Gear has been drawn. In an epic tournament that not only tests the skills but also the will of those bold enough to enter, only one race can survive the pain.



TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Violence

PlayStation 2

ARC SYSTEM WORKS

Sammy

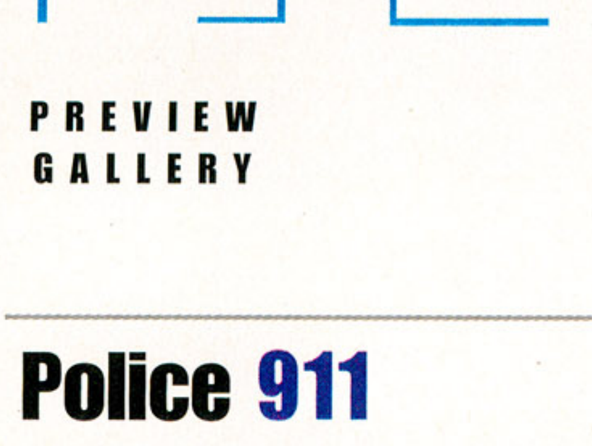
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NASCAR ON NBC

Anyone hankerin' to see NASCAR Thunder 2002 in motion should tune into one of NBC/TNT's NASCAR broadcasts on any given Sunday. You'll notice on the prerace show that the announcers use Thunder to analyze each track for the viewers.

Police 911

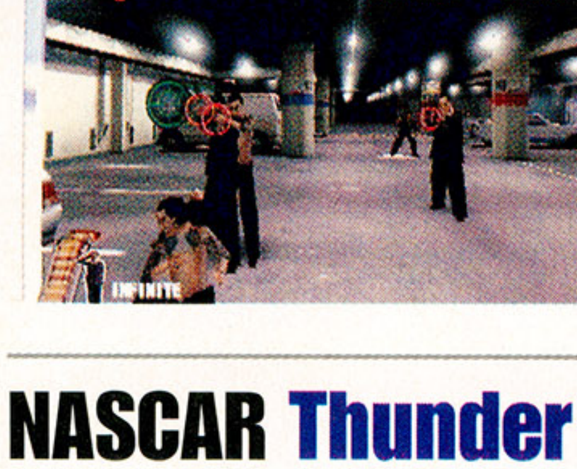
Strangely, **Konami**'s arcade-to-PS2-port of Police 911 has more in common with Namco's Time Crisis franchise than their own Silent Scope games. Using either the dual analog sticks on the PS2 controller or a USB mouse, your job is to mow down the bad guys using a duck and reload interface veterans of Time Crisis will find familiar. Police 911 will ship this **November**.



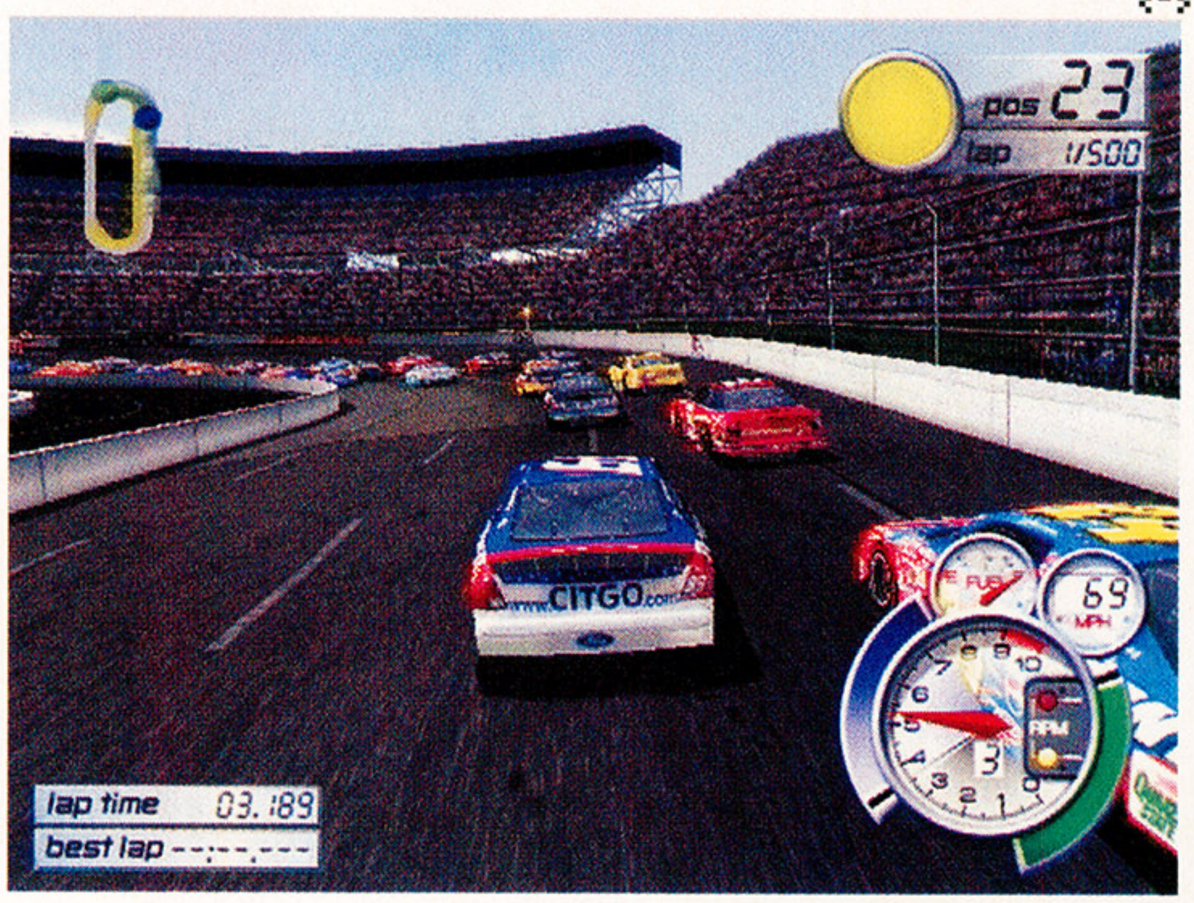


NASCAR Thunder 2002

EA is finally going to treat NASCAR like a real sport in **October**. Not only does the game feature every NASCAR track and a 43-car field (finally!), but offers a full career mode in which you have to buy upgrades for your car and can even win rides away from competitors. New drivers include Ryan Newman, Kevin Harvick and Jeff Green. We can already hear the cheering south of the Mason-Dixon Line.





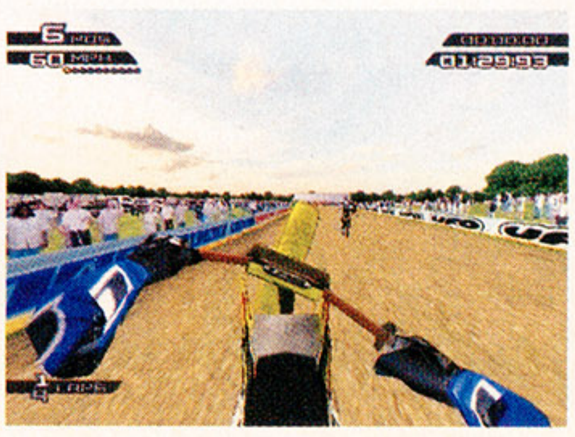


MXrider

Ever feel like flying 40 feet through the air with 200 pounds of motorcycle between your legs? MXrider can fulfill that fantasy and more. Seriously, **Paradigm**'s **October** motocross game is already showing signs of success: It's fast, realistic and the AI riders know how to keep a race competitive. On a unique note, the game has many useful cameras. Just for kicks, we put it through the paces in the first-person view. To our surprise, it works well. Normally that perspective is about as practical as the blimp cam in Madden Football. Other standout features include a freestyle mode, licensed bikes, and both front and rear brake control.











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Winter. It's just better. Cool Boarders® 2001. Ride massive arcade style courses against real world class pros like Todd Richards, Tara Dakides, Kevin Jones and Michele Taggart. Rest up. It's gonna be a long season.



Jeremy Jones casually tweaks a switch 1440 stalefish over a 70 foot+ cliff band.



Amateur rider Trent covers huge distance with this late 180 tail grab in Canada.



Blinding speeds and endless combinations are Tara Dakides key to boardercross.



Todd Richards gets big style points with this inverted backside 180 in the Highland Half Pipe.

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PS2

PREVIEW GALLERY



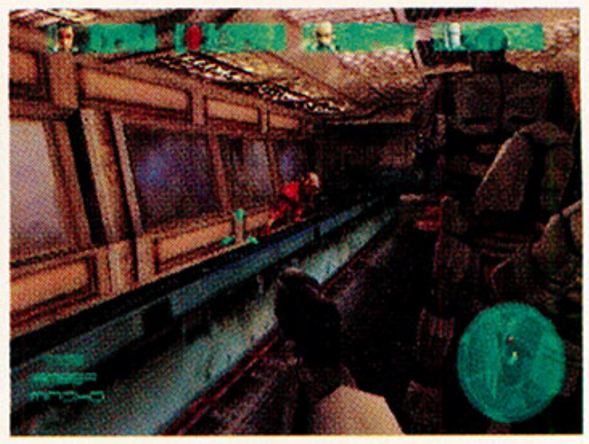
THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Genesis, 2:8 "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." Hmm. So God made Adam and Eve and gave them a nice happy garden to play in. Eidos makes Eden and gives you a bunch of guns and lots of things to kill. Disturbing.

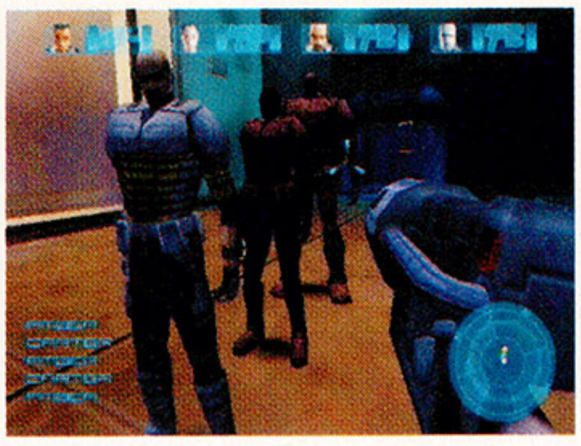
Project Eden

Control a group of four characters in this team-based first- (or third-) person shooter set in *Blade Runner-y* locales. Switch between any of the four on the fly and issue commands for the other three CPU/AI drones to follow, a la X-Squad. As Urban Protection Agents, you must survive the mysteries of Project Eden using a diverse array of weaponry and gadgets. **Eidos's** cyberpunk shooter **should be out** as you read this.













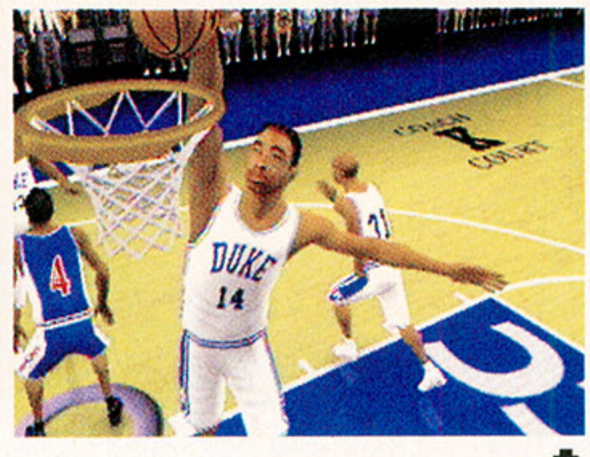
NCAA Final Four 2002

We usually live vicariously through the players when we play college-sports games. But what about the coaches? They may not woo the cheerleaders, but they do rake in the bucks. If you've ever wondered why they're so highly paid, NCAA Final Four's unique Dynasty mode might give you some insight and a swift kick in the junk. Unlike other sports games that hand over the keys to a team because you hit a button, Final Four lets you pay your dues by working as a lowly assistant before you get to be the overlord of a college program. In short: You have to make the cut before you get to cut players. Coaching is only as fun as the action on the court, and we're optimistic that **989 Sports** will deliver. Last year's Final Four made a great PS2 debut, and there's no reason to think that this won't do the same in **November**.









Splashdown

Look at that purdy water! No doubt about it, this jet-ski game has the most realistic H2o effects since Wave Race on the N64. **Rainbow Studios** did a fine job with the always-tricky water physics. You get a good sense of the shifting waves and how they affect your craft, especially when cornering and accelerating from a standstill. As far as gameplay is concerned, think Rainbow Studios' other racer, ATV Offroad, on the open seas: Long jumps, loads of mid-air tricks and cool maneuvers (like the submarine dive). Eighteen courses, two-player support and a bounty of real SEA-DOOs round out the highlights in this **November** release title.











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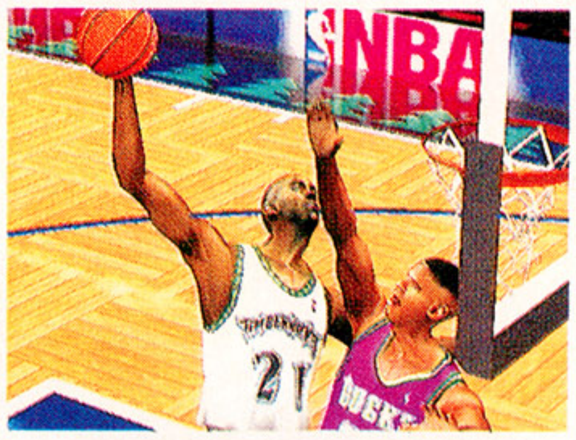
© 2001 Hasbro, Inc. Batteries not included.

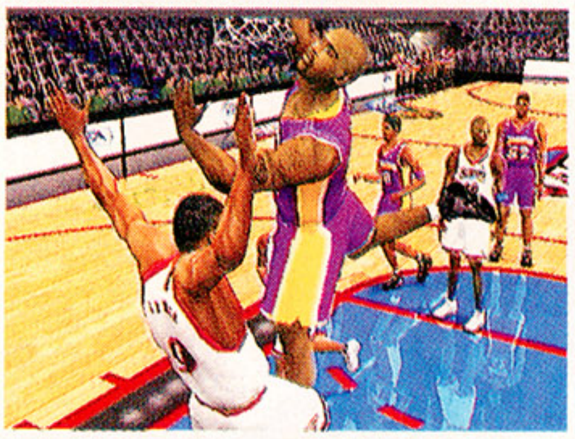
PS2

PREVIEW
GALLERY

NBA Live 2002

Just about every NBA franchise nowadays has a trade in the works that will make or break their team for years to come, and now it's your chance to get a piece of the action. Due in **October**, **EA Sports'** NBA Live will have the same signature gameplay but will finally get its very own Franchise mode that lets you slip into the shoes of a general manager and make horrible trades, cut players for kicks, and ruin rookies' dreams. All the improvements aren't off the court: When you put your team together, you'll get to see the fruits of your labor, not only by playing with them, but by seeing the whiney hoopsters argue with refs, other players and even the coach. You see, EA upgraded the graphics to make the players use their faces and mouths as much as their skills. That alone should make it one of the most realistic pro sims ever.





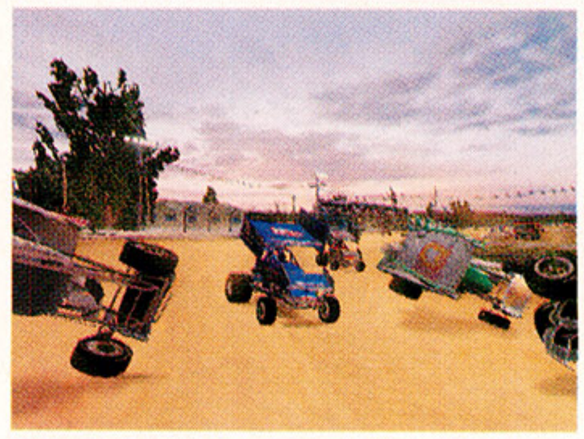


World of Outlaws

If NASCAR racing doesn't make your mullet tingle, perhaps you're a dirt fan. You'll be pleased to know that **Infogrames** and **Ratbag** (known for their dirt-track racers on the PC) will bring World of Outlaws to the PS2 in **October**.

Sprint jockeys will get 12 real-world tracks to compete on, as well as a Career mode that lets you upgrade your ride and sign new car sponsors based on your success or failure.



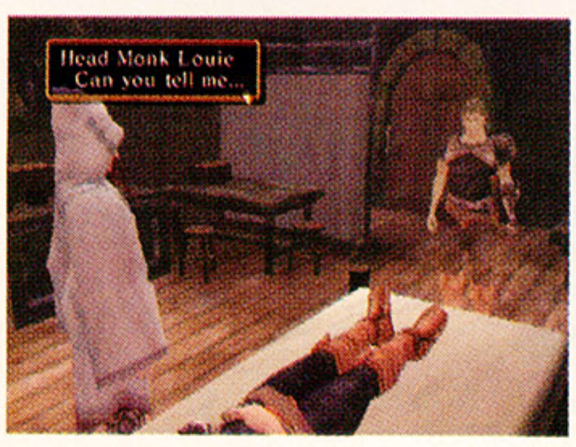






Tsugunai

This **winter**, **Atlus** will release **Sony**'s Tsugunai, an RPG where your character, a soul in search of redemption, possesses the bodies of others to help them solve their problems (*Quantum Leap*, anyone?). This collection of unique quests keeps the game fresh and interesting at every turn. To round out the package, Yasunori Mitsuda—of Chrono Cross fame—is supplying the score for the game.





Wizardry: Tale of the Forsaken Land

The classic PC RPG series Wizardry—which is still really popular in Japan—will be making a comeback on PS2 this **winter** from **Atlus**. Tale of the Forsaken Land features 3D dungeon-style questing like the past games, but with much improved graphics and special group attacks that vary depending on the characters' relationships with one another.









Burnout

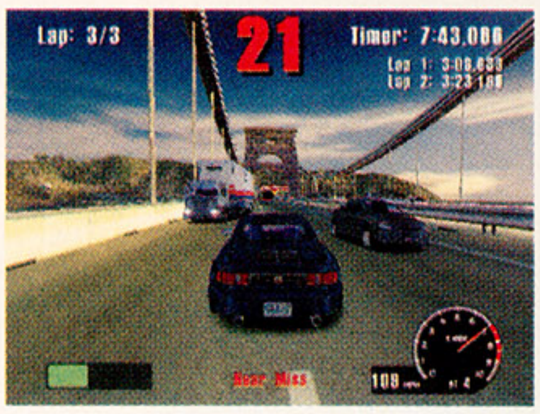




Picture this: You're flying through rush-hour traffic at 120 mph, swerving in and out of congestion, driving on the wrong side, swiping everything in your path. Then suddenly that narrow lane between the bus and the 18-wheeler closes up. BAM! The camera pulls back to display—from multiple angles—the horrendous crash you just experienced. That's the gist of **Acclaim**'s Burnout. You race from point A to point B as quickly as possible. And the riskier you drive, the more points you get. The premise isn't super original; games like Vanishing Point have already dabbled in this genre, but developer **Criterion** is refining it with smarter computer traffic. They've given the game "fully reactive AI." This means computer cars respond to your actions and don't just travel a predetermined path. Their actions are also randomized every time you play (very cool feature). Race modes in this **November** release include Duel (you vs. a computer foe), Single race, Survival (no wrecking) and two-player split-screen.







Thunderstrike: Operation Phoenix

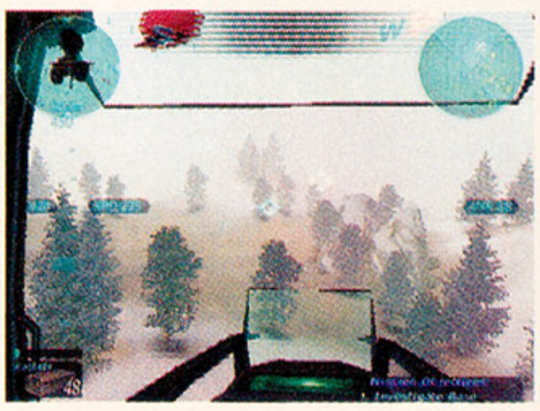


In **Core**'s pre-Lara period, those wacky Brits were best known for Thunderstrike, an impressive helicopter sim for the ill-fated Sega CD. Basically a helicopter (or "gunship") combat game, the series has risen from the ashes (get it?) for 2001 with seven campaigns, 20-plus missions, and both ground and air-based battles. Whether you play in Arcade or Campaign modes, you can upgrade your arsenal by stealing technology and weapons from the enemy. Operation Phoenix, which **Eidos** is shipping this **September**, also features deformable environments, inclement weather effects, and day-to-night-time changes. Try blowing your friends out of the sky by putting a sidewinder on their six in a variety of deathmatch modes, or play against the computer. Ka-boom!









10.98

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PREVIEW GALLERY



HOLY MOSELEY

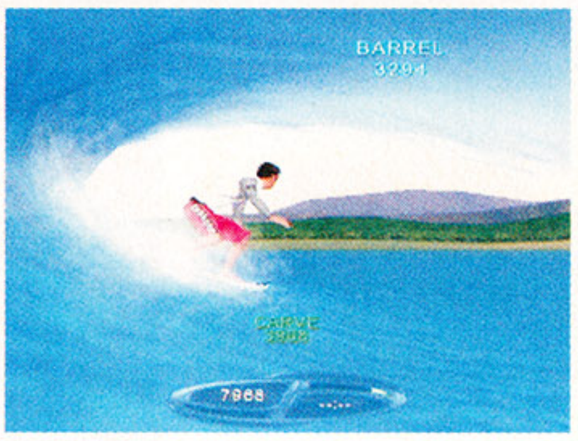
Johnny Moseley won the Gold Medal in the 1998 Winter Olympics in the freestyle mogul event. He is known for his "extreme" style and "360-mute grab."

Sunny Garcia
Surfing

Can a chessmaster put his pawns away long enough to make a great surfing game? Terry Coleman, producer of Garcia Surfing (due this **fall**), cut his teeth on the Chessmaster franchise and "looked forward to trying something different." So **Ubi Soft** teamed him up with the world's top-ranked surfer, Sunny Garcia. It's an odd couple, even for this industry, but they managed to whip up a realistic game with an edge. You can surf 10 fantasy beaches, each sporting its own unique weather, waves and breaks. One doozy is even topped off with mines. Coleman hoped to throw in a few sharks to liven things up to the extreme, but Sony did what Florida beachgoers couldn't. "They killed them," says Coleman, "because it's a family game."







Johnny Moseley
Mad Trix

Pulling off amazing feats in extreme sports is all well and good, but let's face it: Fame, fortune and especially the women are why we dream of pulling off the perfect ollie. Few games focus on that more than 3DO's new testosterone pumper. "Chicks will either pay you no mind or fawn all over you, depending on how you are doing," said Kudo Tsunoda, executive director at 3DO. As you win free-style competitions or make better extreme ski videos on Big Mountain, you earn fame by wooing the press and sponsors. This isn't just about photo-ops and snowbunnies, though. "You can do a lot cooler tricks and get more variety," explained Tsunoda, "by having two skis instead of just one board." Find out if that equates to a great game when it arrives this **October**.







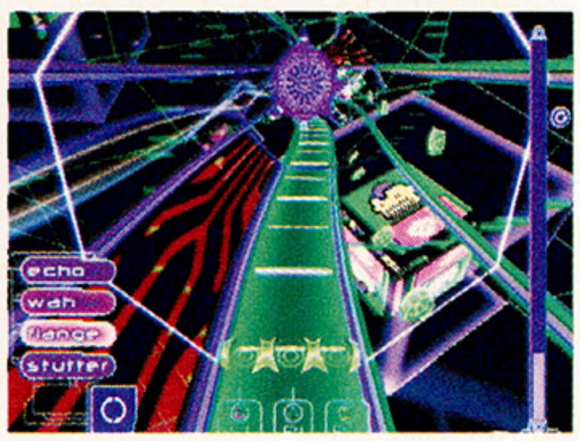
Frequency

Though it may look like a psychedelic Wipeout game, Frequency is really **Sony CEA**'s trippy music generator. It's their first project with developer **Harmonix**, and it's due in **November**. As you glide down the funky rhythm tube, lay down tracks from the 'lectronic likes of Orbital and Dub Pistols by building individual parts. Set a track, spin the wall to cut another, then scratch freestyle with the analog stick once the music's flowing.









Akira
Psychoball

Right on the heels of the re-released movie and manga collections, **AIA** is spinning Akira in a whole new direction. Pinball guru Roger Sharpe (the wizard behind Williams' popular Addams Family pin) is lending Japanese developer **Kaze** a hand in designing the tables for this cyberpunk flipper-fest. The unique layout provides for several different tables interchanging as you send the ball down different paths. To top it all off, video screens display familiar Akira movie scenes as you trigger events on the table, which should help make Psychoball the most distracting pinball game to date. Barring any more unforeseen outbursts from Tetsuo, AIA is planning to ship this one in time for the holidays this **December**.







PS2

PREVIEW
GALLERY

Stuntman

Infogrames strikes back with a vehicle-based action game set in the world of professional stuntmen. Barrel roll through dozens of death-defying stunts and see replays mixed in with CG cinemas for the ultimate director's cut. Infogrames is planning a **Q2 2002** release.









11.01

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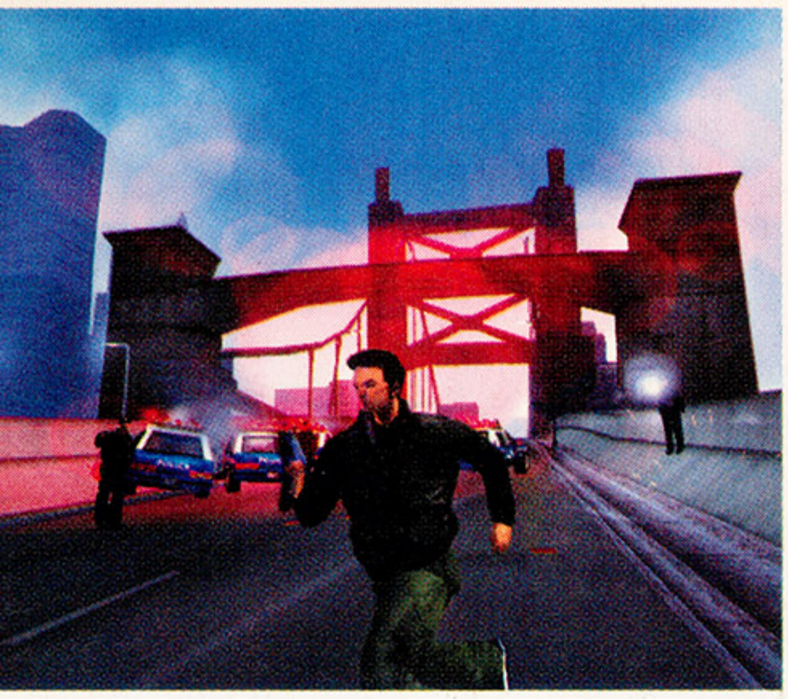
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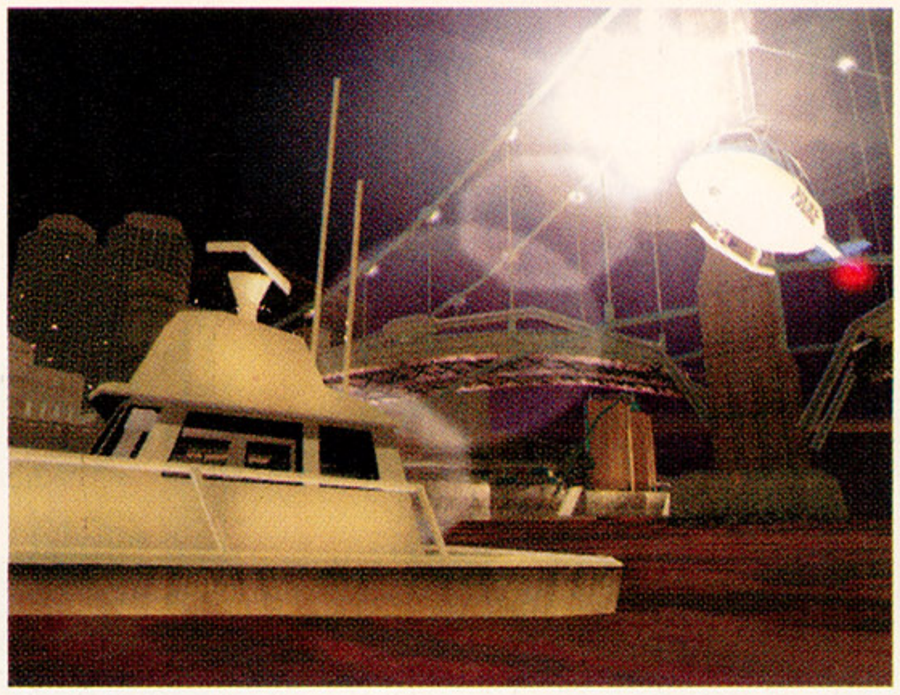


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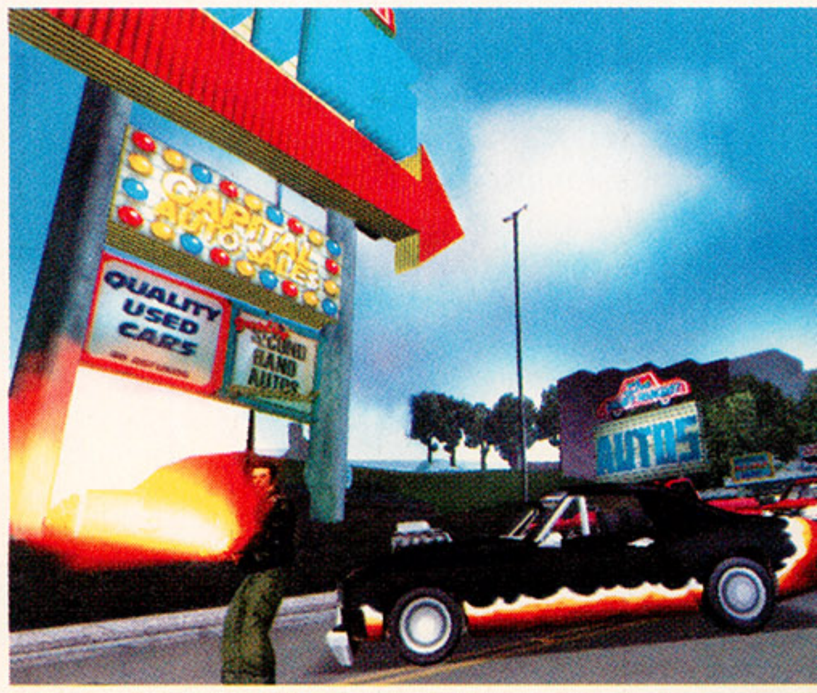
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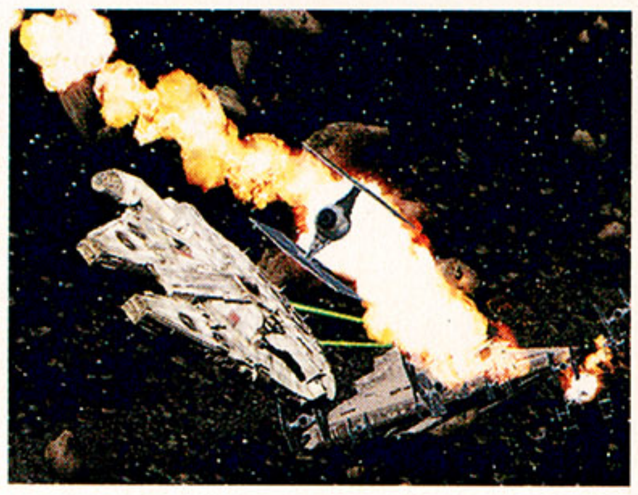
Star Wars: Rogue Leader

Publisher:	LucasArts
Developer:	Factor 5/LucasArts
Players:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	70%
Release:	November 2001
Web Address:	www.lucasarts.com

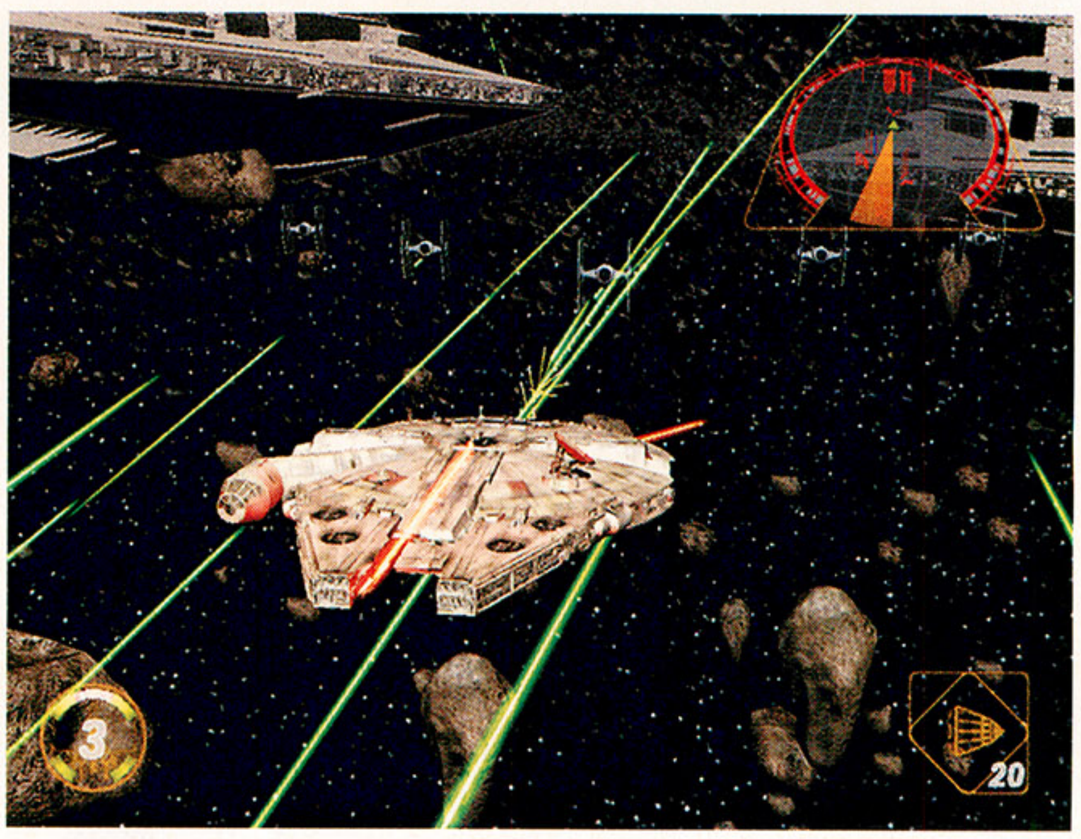
The Good: It's classic Star Wars, which means no kid Anakin, no attacks from clones and no Jar Jar!

The Bad: You can't put a proton torpedo up Jar Jar's keister.

And The Ugly: Ordering the Rebel troops to charge into certain death because it's, like, funny.



Rogue Leader's first confirmed secret ship just happens to be the fastest hunk of junk in the galaxy. The Millennium Falcon's flight through the asteroid field—as seen in *The Empire Strikes Back*—is a bonus mission that ends when you latch on to the derriere of a Star Destroyer.



I am hard on the throttle in Star Wars Rogue Squadron II: Rogue Leader and your X-wing folds its wings for an extra boost of high-octane zing. But the guys making this killer-looking GameCube launch title say there's really no need for all this speed. "You'll miss cool little graphical details if you fly too fast," says Brett Tosti, the game's producer at LucasArts. "Like on the Bespin level—you can actually see little stormtroopers working the turret lasers."

Chances are you've already heard lots of other nifty nuggets about Rogue Leader's stellar visuals by now (if not, here are four pages of exclusive screens so you can see for yourself), but like Tosti says, the game is crammed with easy-to-miss details. The sun in the Hoth mission's sky, for instance, serves as the level's light source, causing everything beneath it—including troops, hills and the scattered clouds—to cast realistic shadows. Asteroids in the Falcon bonus mission whirl and collide with each other. The starfighters themselves were created using texture data provided by Industrial Light and Magic, who got their data from high-resolution close-up photography of the actual plastic movie models now mothballed in Lucasfilm's archives. Long story short: Rogue Leader's fighters look nearly as good as the computer-generated ships in the special edition *Star Wars* flicks.

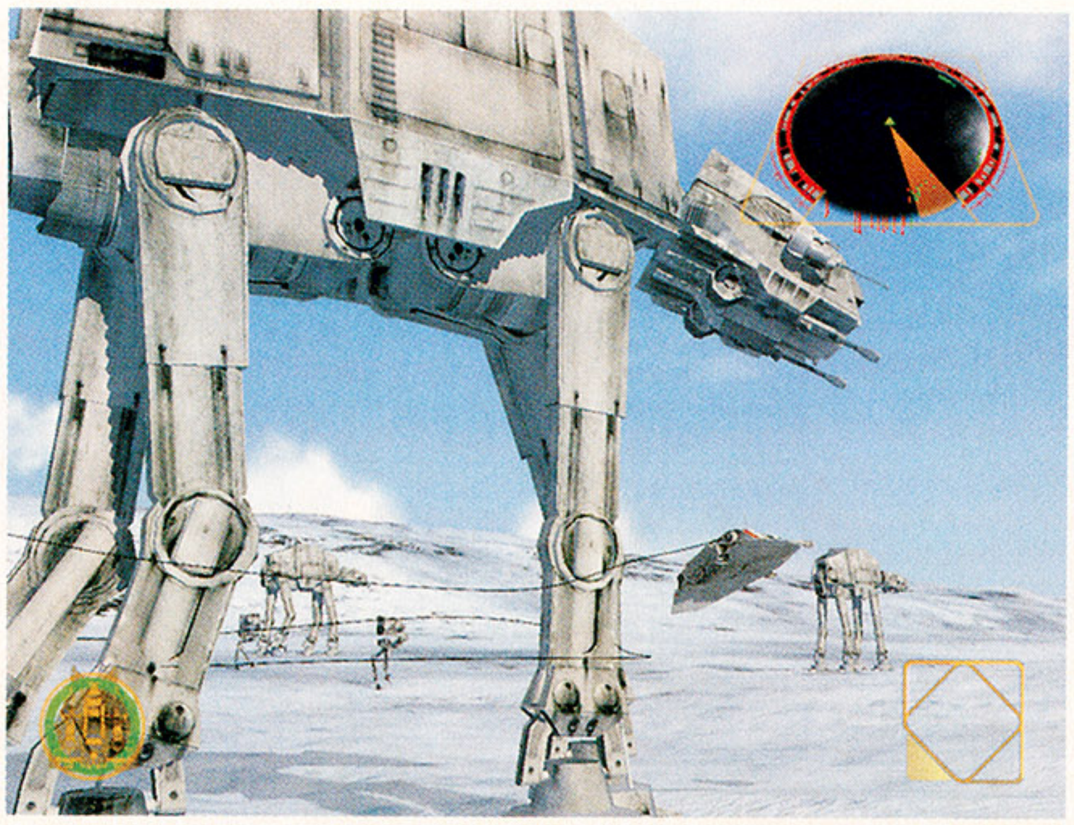
Other in-game effects have even stronger ties to the films. The artists at Rogue Leader co-developer Factor 5—the same team behind the original Rogue Squadron and Battle for Naboo—are in the process of lifting video clips from the *Star Wars* trilogy and integrating them into the game's real-time graphics engine. So, for instance, when you blow up the Death Star in Rogue Leader's first level, you'll see the actual movie explosion erupt behind the fleeing Rebel starfighters—which are rendered in real time and overlayed atop the film clip—during the post-mission cutscene. "Everyone remembers that classic explosion so well that to re-create it in real time is practically impossible," says Factor 5 president Julian

WING COMMANDER

You Da Boss

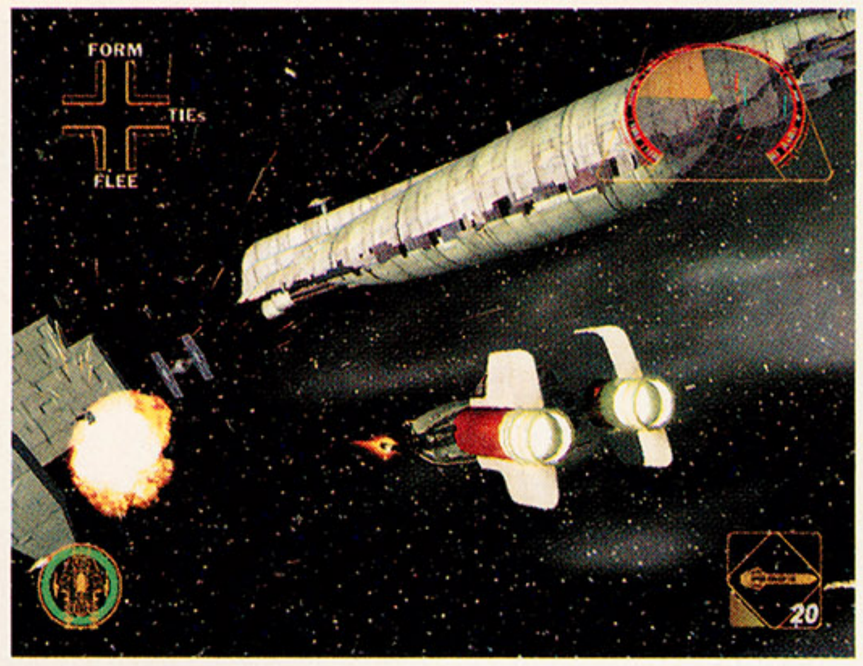


Your wingmen may have been mindless boneheads in the original Rogue Squadron and Battle for Naboo, but in Rogue Leader they're yours to command. Tapping the digital pad will order your two wingmates to flee the battle, form on your wing, or take out particular types of targets (later in the game you'll find an advanced targeting computer that lets you sick wingmen on individual enemies and ship parts). "You can complete missions sooner if you send wingmen to complete dangerous objectives," says producer Brett Tosti, "but they may die and you won't get as good a medal." Even ground troops heed your call: Fly overhead and you can make them charge into battle or run like wussies.





Rogue Leader is the perfect showpiece for the GameCube's texturing prowess. Every building in Cloud City (above), for instance, boasts six layers of textures, including metallic highlights and environmental reflection. The end result: It looks right outta the flick.

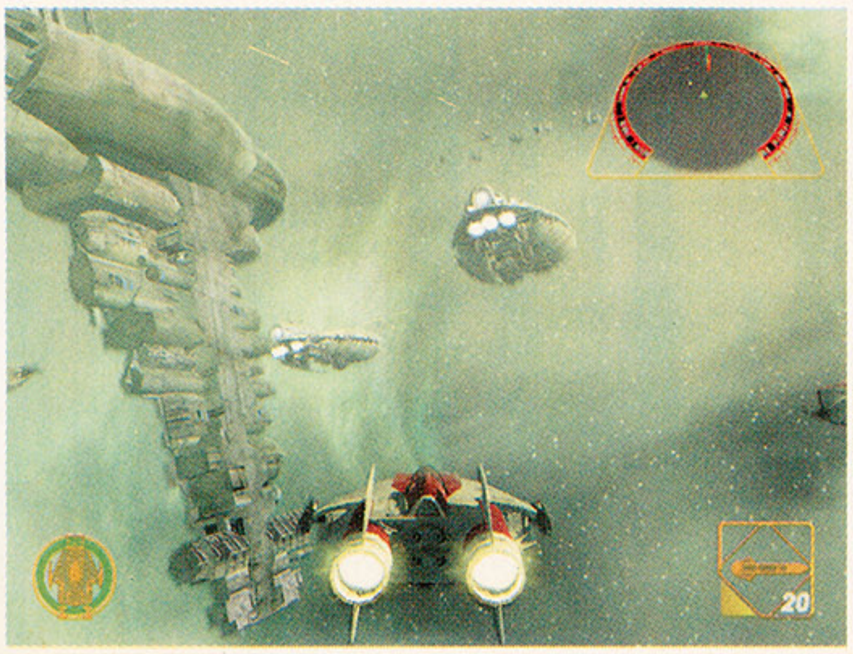


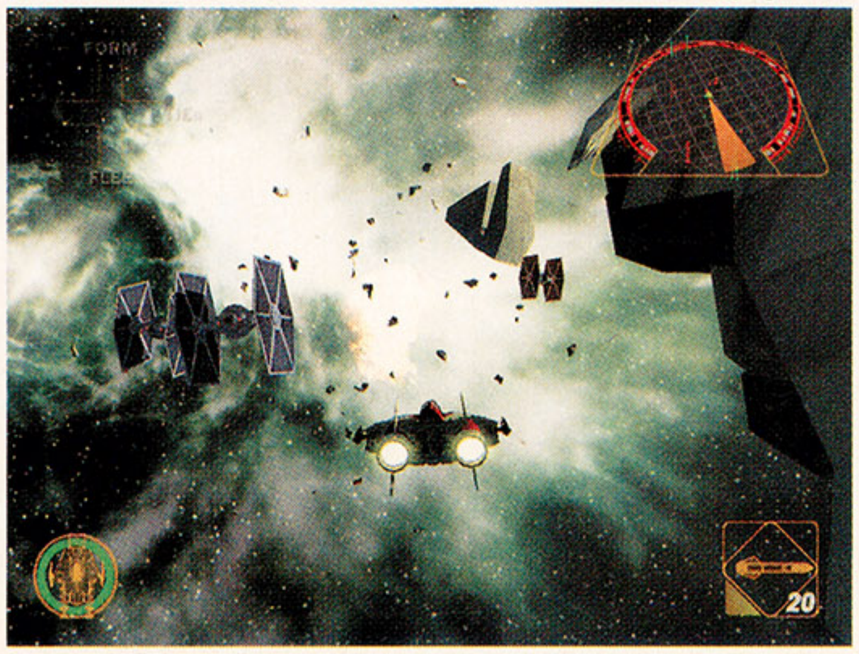
Eggebrecht, adding that they're using the "shockwave-enhanced" Death Star explosion from the special edition of *Star Wars* rather than the untouched big bang from the original version. Another example of this film-integration effect: You'll see a clip of a capital ship blowing up—taken from *Return of the Jedi*'s space battle finale—seamlessly integrated into the background during one of the later missions.

It all adds up to a game best described as the ultimate "greatest hits" collection of the classic trilogy's most bitchin' space battles. Rogue Leader packs 11 planetside and space-based combat missions in all (as well as bonus levels—see the "Hidden Stuff" sidebar on page 100) that are divided into multiple objectives. The game starts with the assault on the first Death Star, where you'll need to take out the surface turret towers first, then shoot down waves of TIE fighters, then scoot up the trench to deliver that fatal proton torpedo (oh, and don't forget to turn off your targeting computer at the proper time to get a better ranking). Other straight-from-the-flicks missions include the battle over Hoth and the climactic attack on the second Death Star. "This game is a mix of the best of what you saw in the movies and then what logically should have happened between the big scenes," Tosti tells us.

Take the second mission (seen above), for example, which is set right after Rebels destroy the first Death Star and are fleeing Yavin before the

Cont. on page 100





SOUND FAMILIAR?

Listen Up

Now that they're working with the GC's much roomier mini-DVD format, Factor 5 is making Rogue Leader their most dialog-rich title yet. "Where we could take lines from the movies, we did," says Factor 5's Julian Eggebrecht, adding that they could sample movie lines from every *Star Wars* actor except James Earl Jones (Darth Vader) and Alec Guiness (Obi-Wan Kenobi), who own the rights to their voices. That means you'll hear Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher and the rest of the gang barking famous quips ("Great shot, kid!") at the right times. New Luke dialog was recorded by a Hamill-sound-alike, while Dennis "Wedge" Lawson provided his own voice.

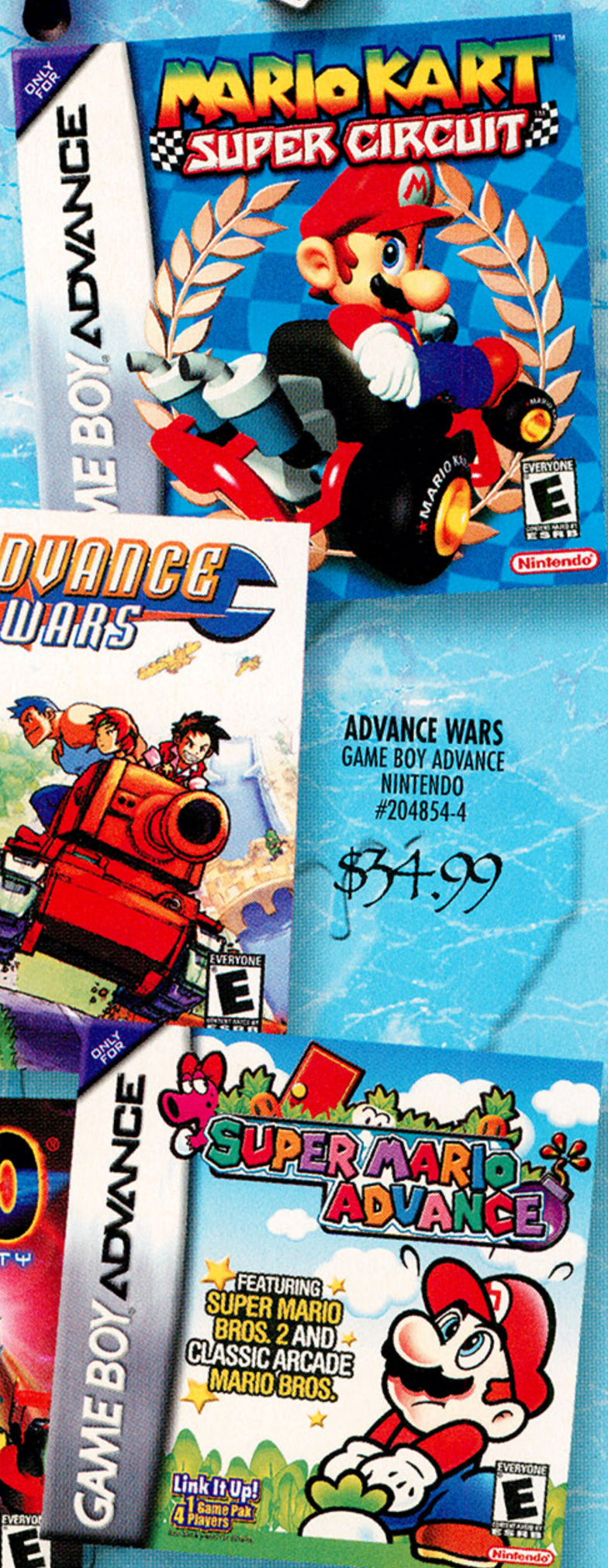
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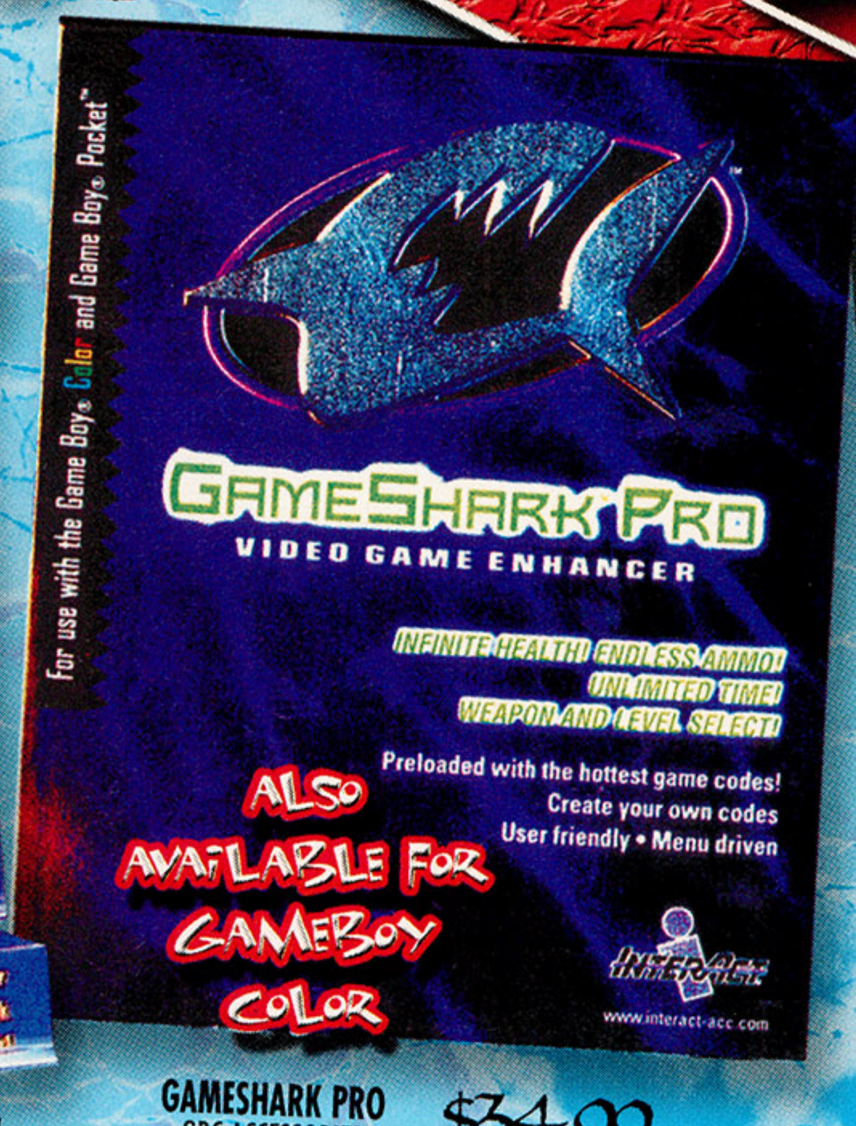
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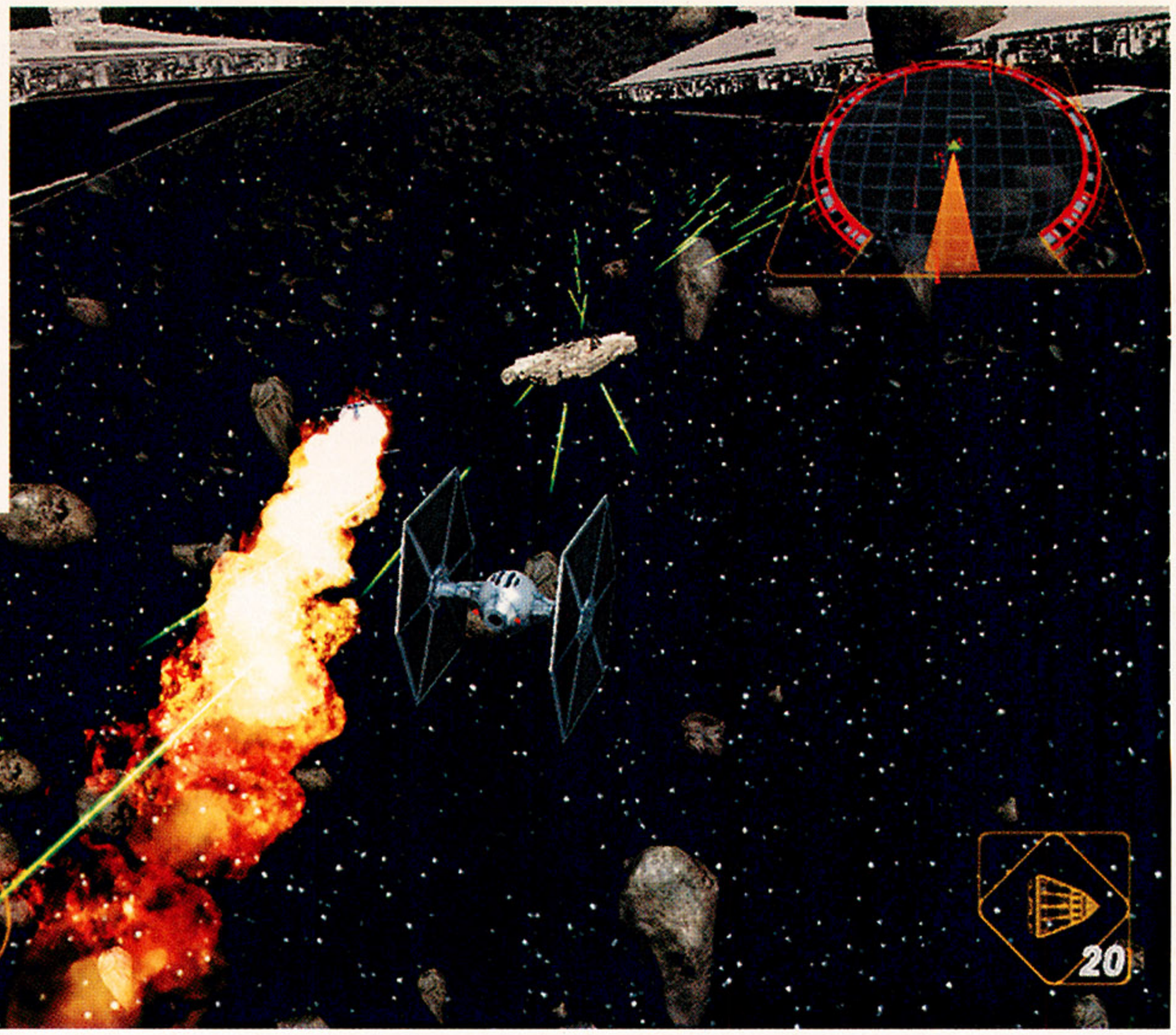


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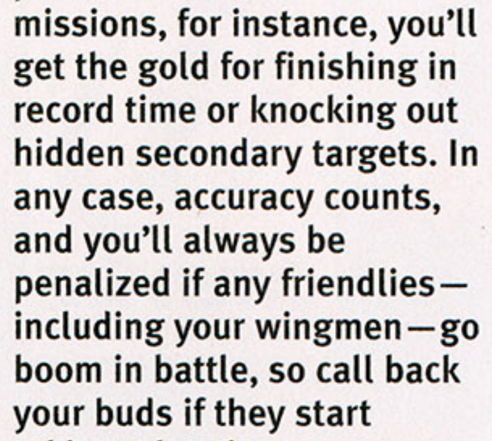
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MEDALS OF HONOR

Hidden Stuff



Instead of offering different difficulty levels, Rogue Leader keeps the same medal-ranking system of Rogue Squadron and Battle for Naboo. Put simply, you earn either a bronze, silver or gold medal after each mission depending on your performance. In some missions, for instance, you'll get the gold for finishing in record time or knocking out hidden secondary targets. In any case, accuracy counts, and you'll always be penalized if any friendlies—including your wingmen—go boom in battle, so call back your buds if they start taking a beating.

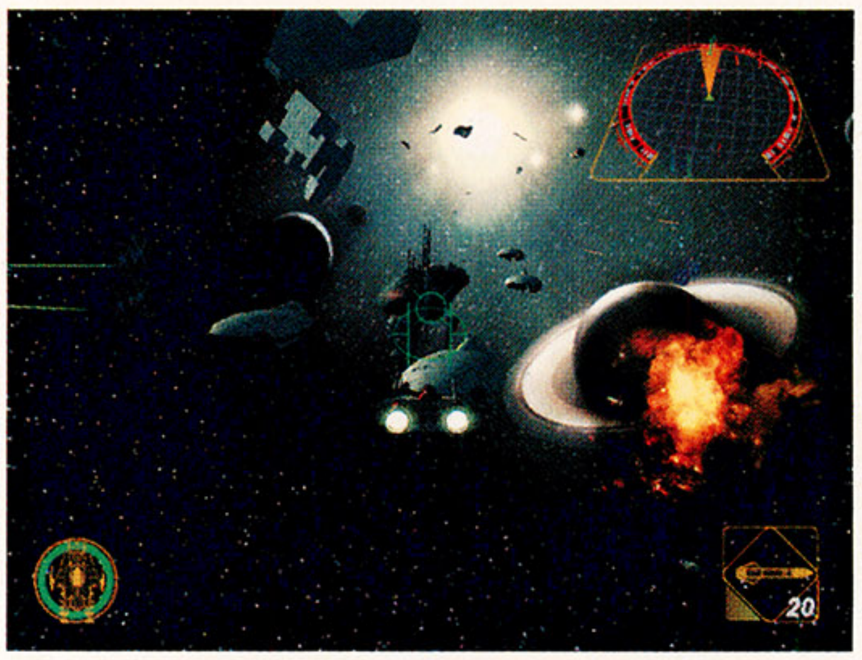
The good news is you no longer have to wait until you've earned medals in every level before you can access juicy extras. "If you acquire enough medals, you can actually unlock bonus missions before completing the game," producer Brett Tosti says. It's simple: Via a special menu, you "spend" the medals you've accumulated to buy secret missions and their nifty bonus ships, such as the Falcon above. And if you fear we've spoiled too much of the game already with this tidbit, "don't worry," Tosti says. "We have a lot more hidden stuff."

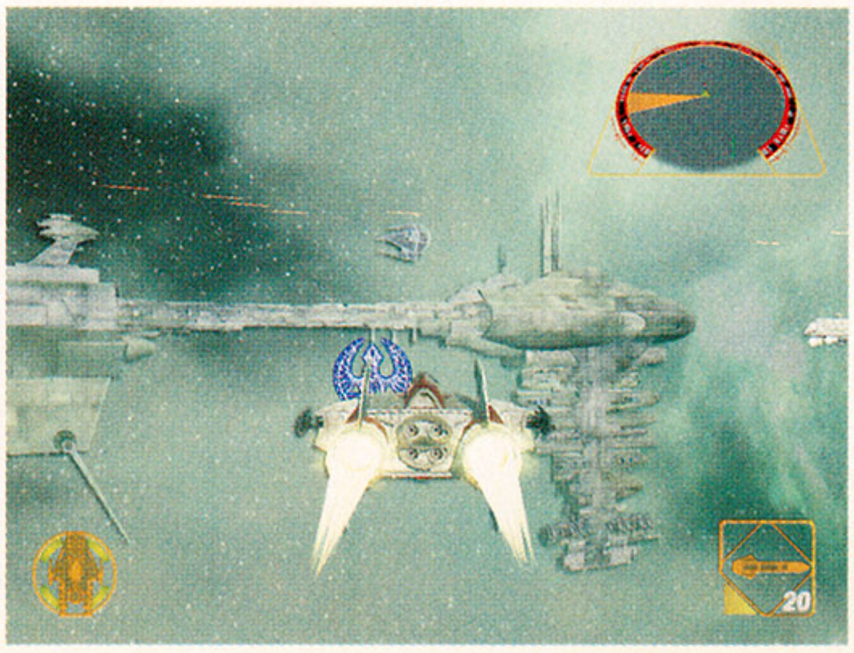
Cont. from page 97

Empire drops the hammer on their whole operation. You're charged with escorting the Rebel fleet through space to their new base on Hoth. Turns out the first wave of fleeing Rebels ran into a Star Destroyer, a massive battle ensued, and you've stumbled upon the aftermath, which is why you see drifting bits of destroyed Rebel and Imperial ships floating through the nebula gases seen in the screens below. You need to defend the rest of the fleet from incoming Imperials before the Rebels suffer more losses. "This is the only protection mission in the game," Eggebrecht says. "We wanted to do it right away, because everybody severely hates these kinds of missions." Halfway through the battle, you'll have the option of switching to an A-wing fighter, which at this point in the Star Wars chronology is still a prototype craft. You switch ships by pulling up to the Rebel symbol-shaped icon (seen in the screen below). Once you figure out what you're doing, it'll take you about 15 minutes to meet all the objectives in most missions.

A small portion of Rogue Leader has you filling the flightsuit of Luke Skywalker, but for the most part you take the role of Wedge Antilles, the unsung Rebel pilot hero who popped up in all three installments of the Star Wars trilogy but never got his medal (and only recently got an action figure). Outside the cockpit is a different story: Unlike in the original Rogue Squadron, you now have computer-controlled wingmates to whom you issue orders with the D-pad (see sidebar on page 102). In fact, the developers made it a top priority to ramp up the tenacity of all the game's computer-controlled characters, both friends and foes. "Factor 5 hired a programmer whose number-one job was making some really good

Cont. on page 102







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LITTLE BIG MEN



Think Rogue Leader's flocks of ground troops (left) are impressive? Get this: Any one member of this swarming grunt army is built from twice as many polygons as a single enemy (right) in Shadows of the Empire for Nintendo 64.



Cont. from page 100

artificial intelligence," Tosti says. Now, clusters of TIE fighters—and even ground forces like snowtroopers and AT-STs—follow a "flocking" mentality. In other words, each group has a leader who reacts intelligently and guides the cluster until he's killed and control passes to a new leader. At any given time, individual TIE fighters will break out of their clusters to engage you in dogfights. "If one of these TIEs survive," Tosti says, "you'll even see him rejoin his squadron after his attack run." It makes for much more convincing enemies than the seemingly "on-rails" bogies of N64 Rogue Squadron.

Despite having only about eight months to put the project together, Rogue Leader's developers have crammed the game with plenty of features, thanks to Factor 5's extensive experience with the GameCube system (they helped design the console and have had dev kits as long as any of Nintendo's own teams). So far, the game fills 900 megabytes of the GameCube's proprietary 1.5-gigabyte disc, and Factor 5 plans to stuff the remaining 600 megs with movie clips for the game's DVD-like opening menu and option screens. Rogue Leader supports HDTV and is even the first game to work with Dolby's new Pro Logic II 5.1 surround sound (as long as you have a Pro Logic II-compatible receiver). Seems like the ultimate Star Wars package, right? "Not quite," jokes Eggebrecht. "If it really had everything, you'd be able to crash on Hoth, climb out of your snowspeeder, and use your grappling hook to zip under an AT-AT and blow it up like Luke did in *Empire Strikes Back*. Maybe a future game will let you do that, but it'll take some convincing to get LucasArts to do another game with a Hoth level [laughs]." —*Crispin Boyer*

"This game is a mix of the best of what you saw in the movies and then what logically should have happened between the big scenes."

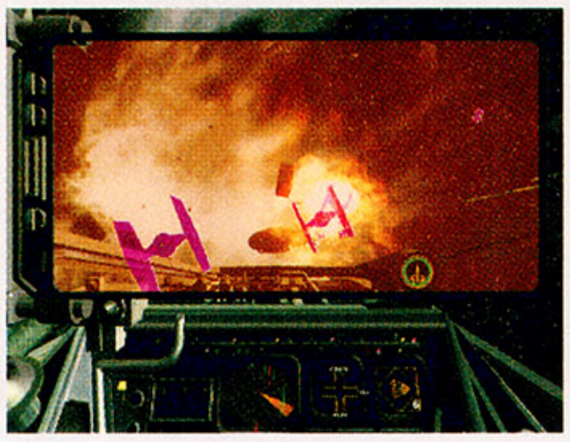
—Producer Brett Tosti

LET'S TAKE THE GAMECUBE CONTROLLER FOR A TEST FLIGHT...

Our concerns about the GameCube controller were obliterated after extensive hands-on time with Rogue Leader. The game uses every button on the funky pad, yet we never fumbled about or felt the need to keep looking at the button layout. Here's how Rogue Leader puts the pad through its paces...

L R

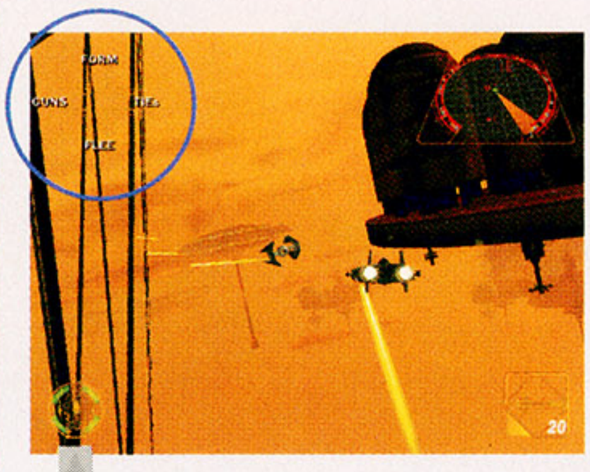
Use these top-mounted analog buttons to vary your speed. Press R all the way in until you feel it click and your X-wing will close its wings for super-fast flight. Depress L until it clicks for braking speeds that allow tighter turns.



Y Activates your targeting computer, which swings in front of your face like in *Star Wars*.



X Toggles between the virtual cockpit and behind-the-ship viewpoints.



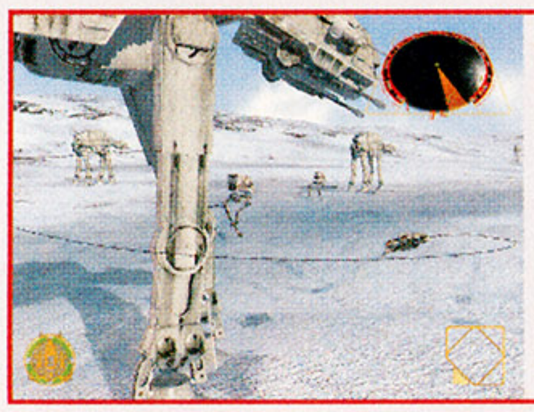
The analog stick controls flight.



Z Hold this button and you can roll your ship with the analog stick. Z is awkward to reach, so we didn't use it much.

A This big ol' boy is your primary fire button, and fiddling with it will soup up your shot pattern. Hold A in the X-wing, for instance, and each of your four laser cannons will fire in a rotational pattern. Rapidly tap the button and two of your guns fire with each button press. Or you can lay off A until the lasers charge, then fire all four in one go.

Press a direction on the digital pad to issue orders to your wingmates and ground troops. The cross-shaped icon at the screen's top left shows you which commands correspond to D-pad directions.



B Fires secondary weapons such as proton torpedoes or your snowspeeder's tow hook, which works like it did in Shadows of the Empire: Just get close to the AT-AT's legs and fire!

C Wiggle the camera stick to peer around your virtual cockpit or eyeball your ship's exterior. Press up and down to vary your view distance from your fighter.




wounds will
heal...

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 seems destined to land on every system under the sun, including GameCube. Judging from these screens, **Activision**'s crown jewel looks like a carbon copy of the ultra-snazzy PS2 version.

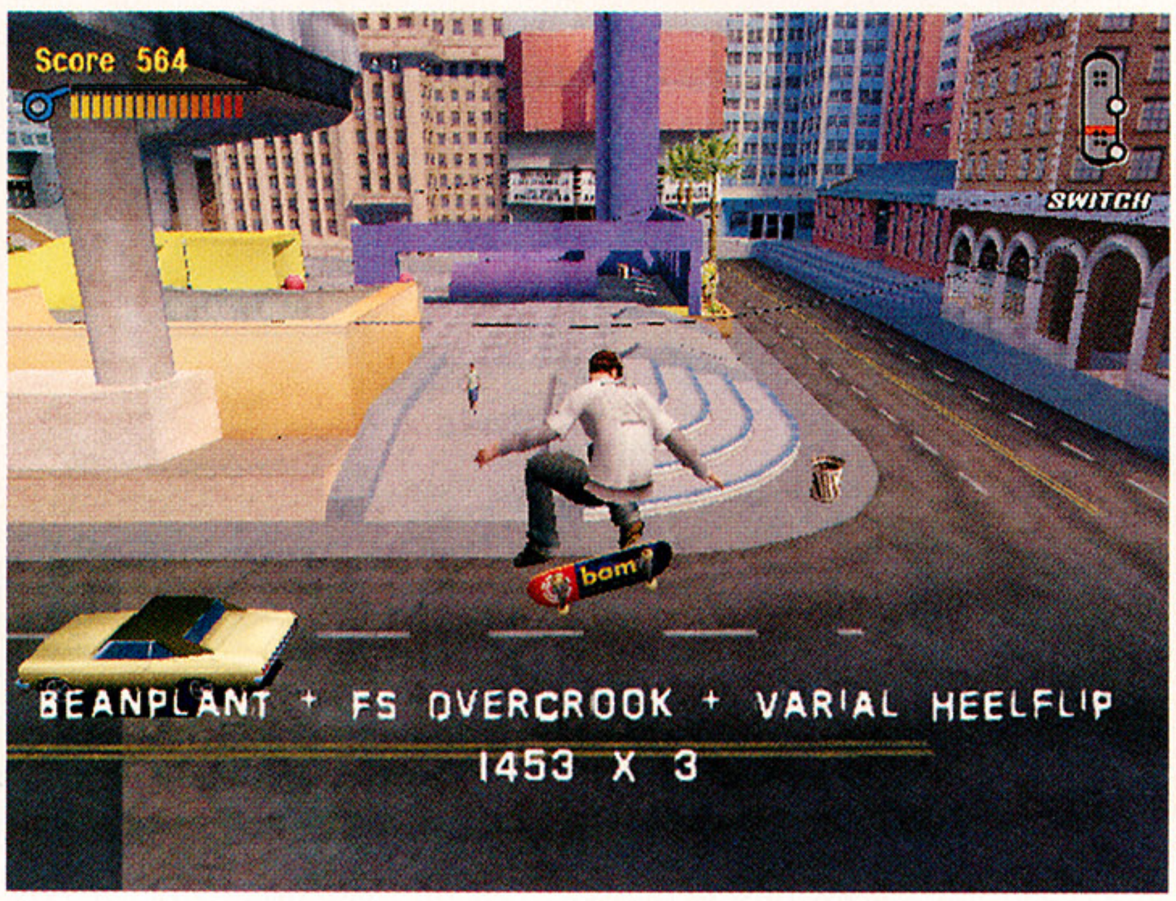
It will have all of the huge, highly interactive levels and gameplay mechanics found in its PS2 cousin, including the "revert" and balance-oriented flatland tricks. Look for it **this holiday season**.

















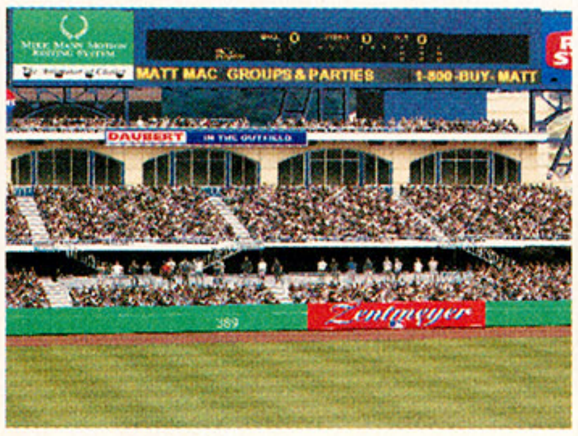
All-Star Baseball 2002

You probably noticed that there aren't any players on these fields. Nope, it's not an experimental ballpark builder—it's the first pics (however sparse) of ASB 2002 for the GC. **Acclaim** tells us it's virtually identical to the PS2 version, both visually and in the gameplay department. If they can duplicate the killer batting interface, while avoiding the nasty fielding bugs, it'll be an awesome game.













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Violence
Blood and Gore

PlayStation®2

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You can't just toss in a lure and expect them to bite."

"Hey, Phil. There's a shiny thing over there.
Let's go eat it."

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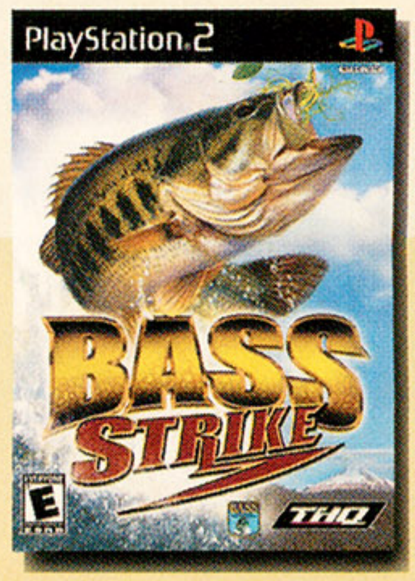




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PREVIEW

Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee

Publisher:	Microsoft
Developer:	Oddworld Inhabitants
Players:	1
Genre:	Action/Adventure
% Done:	95%
Release:	November 2001
Also Try:	Abe's Oddysee (PS1)
Web Address:	www.oddworld.com

The Good: Innovative gameplay ideas and splendid graphics abound.

The Bad: The preachy storyline and gross-out humor are a bit much.

And The Ugly: Munch looks more like the bastard offspring of a fish and a chipmunk than a platform hero.



Not all of Abe's enemies are multinational corporations. Here we see rampaging wildlife seeking a Mudokon snack.



Munch may not be much of a looker, but his devilish charisma influences these Fuzzles to kill (not unlike Charles Manson).

Coming some four years after a Mudokon named Abe first farted his way into players' hearts, this Xbox launch title is actually the second chapter of the ambitious Oddworld Quintology. That's right, the second Oddworld game, Abe's Exoddus, was merely a supplementary story to the overall epic. Don't let the daunting history spook you, though. Experience with the first games isn't a prerequisite, and newcomers will feel right at home in this creepy yet charming world.

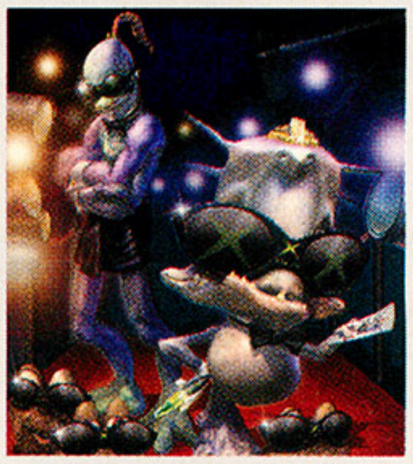
Say hello to Oddworld's newest star: Munch, the world's last living Gabbit. As an aquatic creature, he's not too hot on foot, but with the aid of a rickety wheelchair he becomes a handi-capable hero. Although he is the titular character, Munch shares the spotlight with Abe, the lovable abolitionist with the laced-up mouth from the Oddworlds of yore. Together, these two characters must traverse Oddworld on a mission to liberate Mudokon slaves, fight environmental abuse, and rescue Abe's mom.

Munch isn't the first platformer to feature duo-based play, but it does take the concept to new heights of complexity. Abe and Munch each have a slew of unique abilities: Abe can possess enemies and regenerate Spooce (a type of um, psychic currency...trust us) while Munch can operate machinery and unleash his cybernetic sonar.

Each hero can also use GameSpeak to communicate with certain races: Abe can befriend his Mudokon brethren while Munch can charm the Tribble-like Fuzzles. Chatting up these pals becomes an integral facet of the gameplay, as you can lead small armies of friends into battle or put them to work in order to solve puzzles. The level design is incredibly varied, as each new area presents unique challenges and mind-slamming puzzles. The

CHOOSING SIDES

Sorry, PS2



Munch's Oddysee was originally announced for the PS2. In fact, the game was shown in playable form at E3 in 2000. Why did Oddworld choose to ditch Sony and jump in bed with Micro$oft? Oddworld co-founder Lorne Lanning tells it straight: "It was apparent only the Xbox offered us the future-generation technology and streamlined architecture we needed to bring our full vision of Munch's Oddysee to life." Consequently, the PS2 version was scrapped and Oddworld pledged to produce the next three games for the Xbox.

VISIT SCENIC ODDWORLD





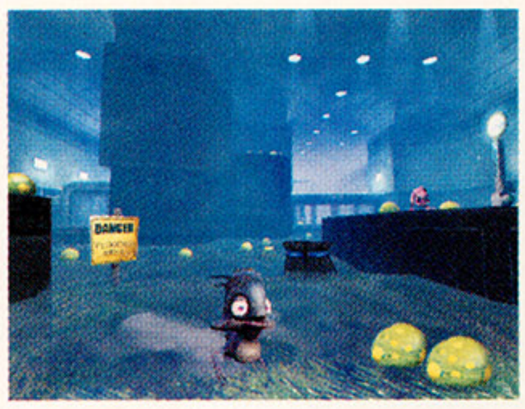






Figuring out how to use both Abe and Munch to successfully solve each section is engaging, Abe's psychic possession and Munch's mechanical manipulation are your main tools for outwitting your foes.





(Above) Munch is hella lame on land, but in the water he's a graceful being of speed and elegance. (Left) Oddworld meets Command and Conquer as Abe leads his fellow Mudokons into battle against an army of nasty Sligs.

developers also sought to eliminate frustration by offering quick saving and limitless extra lives so that you'll never toss your Xbox out the window after playing the same stage 53 times.

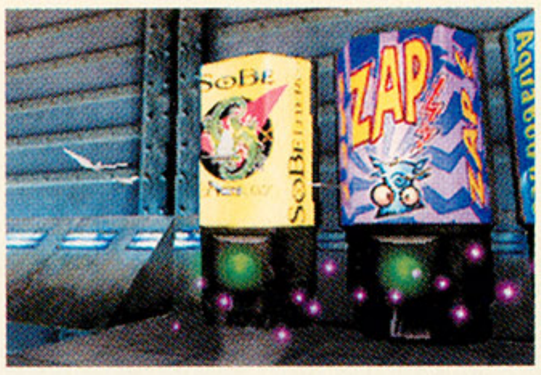
Graphically, Munch struts down the Xbox catwalk as a prime example of glorious visual excess. The outlandish artistic style of the developers has blossomed in full 3D, as smog-shrouded rivers, majestic mountain peaks and grimy factories are all realized in stunningly realistic polygonal form. Whiz-bang Xbox special effects like bump mapping add a final gloss of eye candy that will make you pause and scream, "Oh my god, look at that water...it looks like actual water!"

Oddworld Inhabitants also brings its unique skills to the audio portion of Munch's Oddysee. Specifically, company co-founder Lorne Lanning brings his shocking vocal talents to nearly every denizen of Oddworld. The hilarious dialog and innovative GameSpeak are nearly 100 percent Lorne, and it's darn funny stuff.

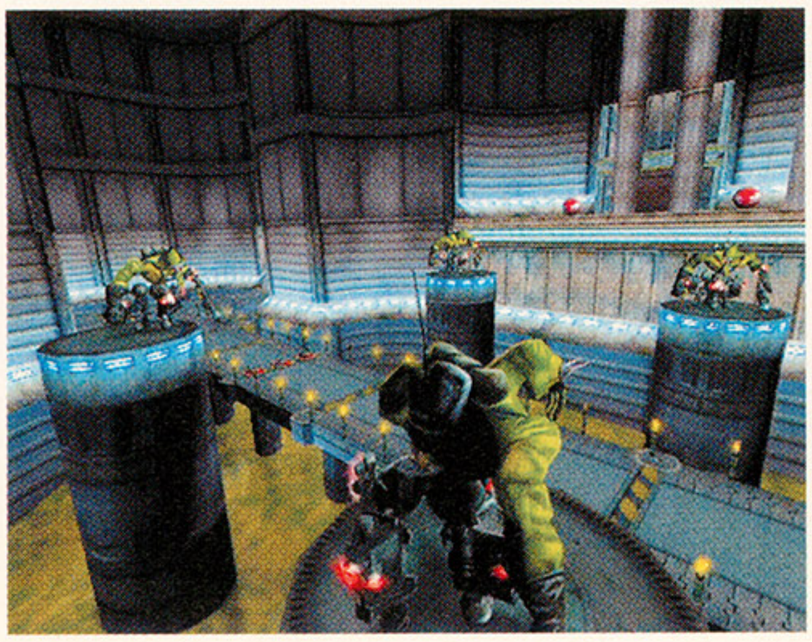
Will the public embrace these unlikely heroes as makeshift Xbox mascots? It's difficult to tell, but Abe managed to attain a great deal of popularity on the PS1 by just being himself. While this latest Oddworld adventure may be a high-profile Microsoft production, it still has the independent spirit, toilet humor and unique gameplay that made the original such a hit.

—Shane Bettenhausen

PRODUCT PLACEMENT



In the previous Oddworld game, Abe fought against evil, money-grubbing corporations that ground his ancestors' remains into a frothy soft drink. In Munch, you regain health by using SoBe vending machines. A dash of postmodern irony? Perhaps. A low-down case of corporate sponsorship? Yep.





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RELEASE DATE
FALL 2001

www.rockstargames.com/smugglersrun2

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Dead or Alive 3

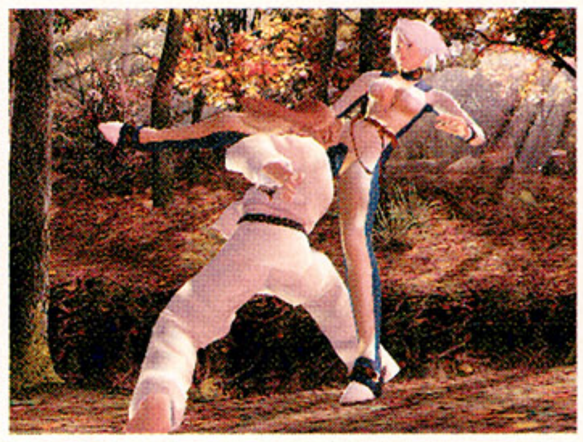
Dead or Alive, the fighting series known for its silicone implants and abusive reversal techniques, is expected to do great things for the Xbox come **launch day**. This month, Seamus Blackley, Xbox's technology director, swung by *EGM* to showcase an early playable version of DOA3; he's brimming with confidence, and probably for good reason.

The game will have at least three new characters: Christie, a feisty silver-haired British assassin with a weakness for fast cars and crumpets; Brad Wong, a hunky, square-jawed drunken boxing master who looks neither drunk nor Chinese; and Hitomi, the cute tomboy in your high school aikido club whom you were afraid to date. For each character, **Tecmo** plans to implement visual details like sculpting actual muscles and animating their movements. Admittedly, we saw none of these features in our hands-on test, but both Blackley and Tecmo assure us that by the time we get down with the final DOA3, the upgrades and additional content will be anything but subtle. We'll see.

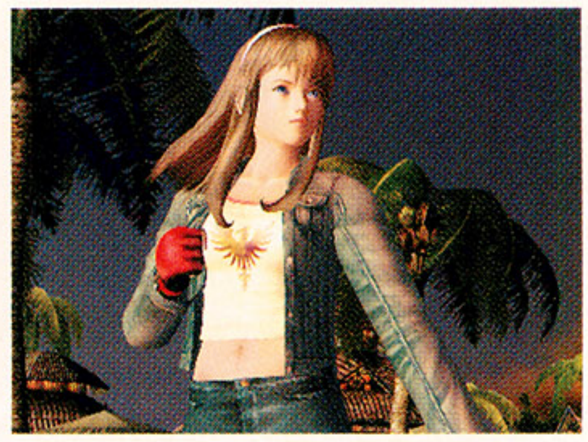
So what else is new? How about (at least) four spankin' new stages. Developer **Team Ninja** continues to lead the way in fighting-game real estate—these muthas are huge. Go for romantic fisticuffs on sandy beaches, kick up dead leaves in dense autumn forests, and catfight in Japanese palaces. The fighting arenas themselves are so big, you'll actually be able to kick ass both indoors and out. (In fact, we think some of the screens here actually show off different parts of the same stage.) Team Ninja is still being tight-lipped about DOA3's gameplay and its new story mode details, but we expect them to punch us in the neck with all sorts of information soon. In the meantime, we'll dream of Hitomi.

Cont. on page 114















f a m i l y

MY ANTI-DRUG.

I LIKE WRESTLING.

I LIKE WRESTLING.

I THINK CARTOONS ARE FOR KIDS.

I THINK CARTOONS ARE FOR KIDS.

I GRIND HANDRAILS.

I GRIND HANDRAILS.

I DON'T SMOKE WEED. IT'S NOT MY THING.

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He's your little brother. Don't do anything you wouldn't want him doing.

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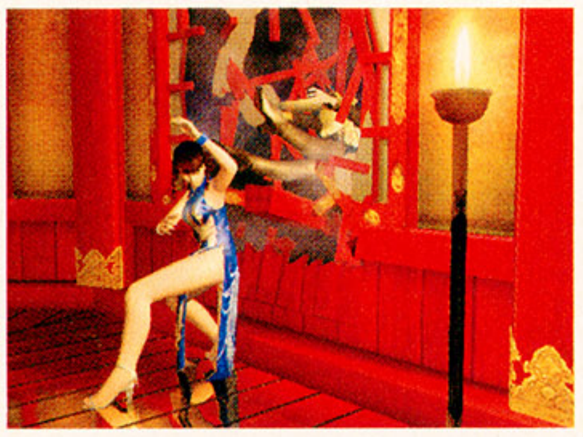
INFLATED NUMBERS

288,044 The number of silicone breast-implant procedures performed last year.

Dead or Alive 3, cont.



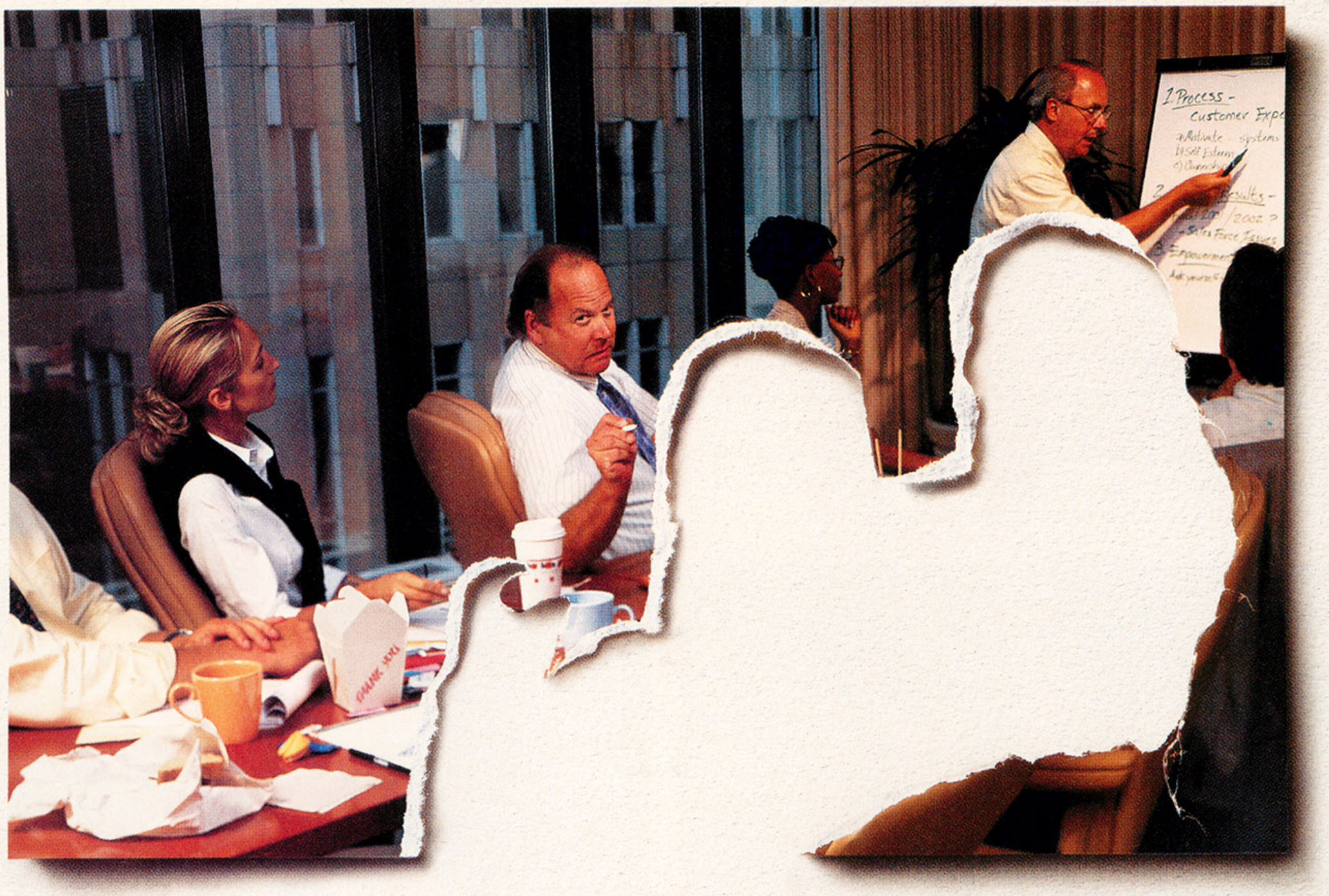






Scenic levels were a mainstay in Dead or Alive 2, but they don't even approach what's going on in DOA3. A pan of the tropical beach level (below left), for instance, lets your eyes travel out to the horizon, rest momentarily on distant palisades, then follow the swirl of a dozen seagulls, each flapping about on their own. It's downright inspirational, Jack Handy style. The gallery of screenshots here also gives you a good sense of what's new for DOA3. Check out the subtle swells of sand or the mounds of snow that give the characters uneven footing on terrain, or the structural complexity of the glass house (far left) behind Jann Lee and Lei-Fang just begging to be shattered.

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PREVIEW GALLERY



SNOWBOARD COMMANDOS

What does Microsoft's new snowboarding game have to do with sniper rifles? Surprisingly, the program manager for Amped is Carl Schnurr, the creator of Rainbow Six. Although you won't find any squad-based combat on the slopes, the same attention to detail and dedication to realism are shared by both games.

Nightcaster

Due out this **winter**, **Microsoft**'s action-RPG will attempt to fill the role-playing niche in the system's embryonic library. Arran, the lead character, uses over 40 spells derived from four schools of magic: light, dark, fire and water. Strategic use of these spells can make life much easier for the player. Age also factors in the game, with Arran gaining magic prowess as he grows older, at the expense of his physical abilities.









Amped

In late **November**, **Microsoft** will be breathing some life into the snowboarding genre with this serious shredding sim that focuses on freestyle trickery rather than traditional racing. Media super-stardom is your ultimate goal, and while pulling off mad tricks might land you on the cover of *Snowboarder* magazine, wiping out on a tree will only get you a story on the back page of your grandma's family newsletter.

Real-life boarders will appreciate the nearly photo-realistic renditions of Utah's Brighton, Vermont's Stratton and California's Snow Summit peaks. You can also challenge one of the insane fantasy courses to achieve maximum vert. More than 150 wildly varied songs provide a massive soundtrack, but you can also rip your favorite tunes to the hard drive for customized jamming.











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PlayStation 2

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DEAD OR

CHRISTIE

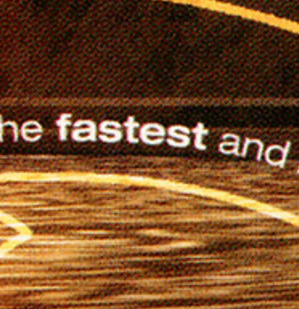
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Gorgeous and **fierce** female fighters.







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Multi-tiered fighting environments

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XBOX

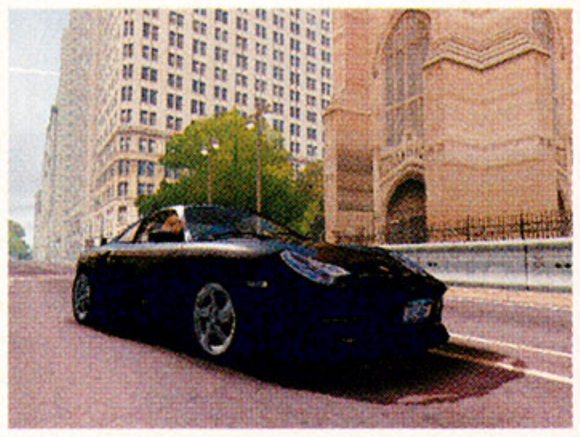


CHEMICALLY ENHANCED

The soundtrack of MSR for the DC was generally reviled, with its craptacular fake bands and obnoxious DJs. Luckily, Gotham's soundtrack does everything right: Legitimate DJs spin hit tunes by artists like Chemical Brothers and Stereo MCs. Or you can always rip your own CD collection to the Xbox hard drive while drifting across those bends.

Project Gotham Racing

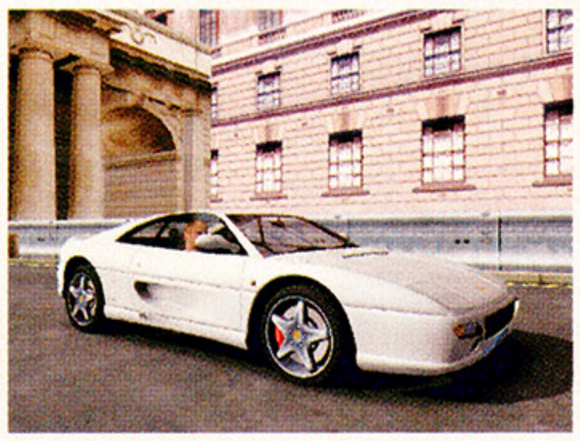
Bizarre Creations unleashed MSR on the Dreamcast earlier this year, but it hit a nasty speedbump with its mind-destroying difficulty. Luckily, their pseudo-sequel has been fully retooled. Like MSR, it has four incredible cities, flashy cars and razor-sharp controls. However, the easier difficulty curve, improved Kudos system, and new music options may make Gotham the Xbox's answer to GT3. Look for it in **November**.













Buffy the Vampire Slayer

Being a modern-day high school chick is such a hoot! As 17-year-old Buffy Summers, your goal is to prevent the Old Ones and their demonic army from taking over the Earth. And you thought your homework was lame! **EA**'s newest licensed franchise features your favorite characters from the TV show as well as their most popular hangouts. Use your "slayer powers" to kick undead ass when Buffy ships in **Q1 2002**.











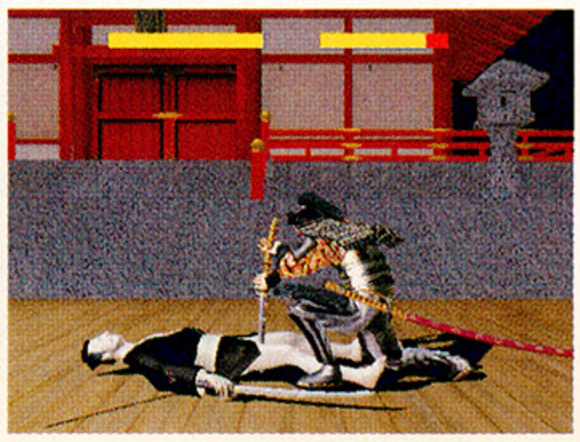


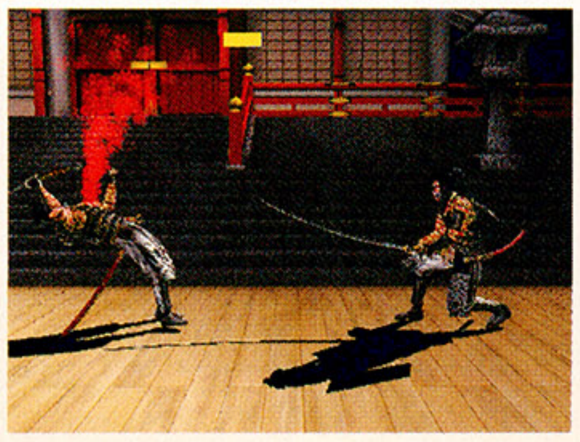
Kabuki Warriors

Crave and developer **Lightweight** (Kengo, Bushido Blade) team up once again for yet another swords-swingin', arterial sprayin' fighter which pits your troupe of actors-turned samurai against competitors from other clans. Combine sword technique with intimidating dancing (like the lambada, the macarena and the hustle. Just kidding.) to overwhelm your opponents, then enlist your defeated rivals to fight alongside you. It's looking pretty plain so far (just look at those stairs in the background—blah!), so hopefully KW will shape up quick before its **November** release.











PlayStation 2

GOOD vs. or EVIL

Go with evil. You can hit restart when you get to hell.



As Rick you'll have a cool arsenal of swords, shotguns and revolvers.



As Imhotep, you'll use brute strength and have the awesome power to cast spells.



Your quest to defeat the Scorpion King takes you to London, Cairo, and the Hamunaptra ruins.

Wanna be bad? Good. In the Mummy Returns video game, you can be heroic Rick O' Connell or evil Imhotep. But either way you'll be facing pygmy mummies, Anubis warriors and mummified baboons, bringing all the soul-sucking fun of the movie to life in eye-popping next-gen graphics. Survive all that, and you get to battle the Scorpion King. Pray there's an afterlife.



TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Violence

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ULTIMATE FIGHTING CANADIAN

EGM **previews editor Greg Sewart's ugly mug can be found in the Create-a-Fighter mode in Ultimate Fighting Championship for the PlayStation.**

Ultimate Fighting Championship: Tapout

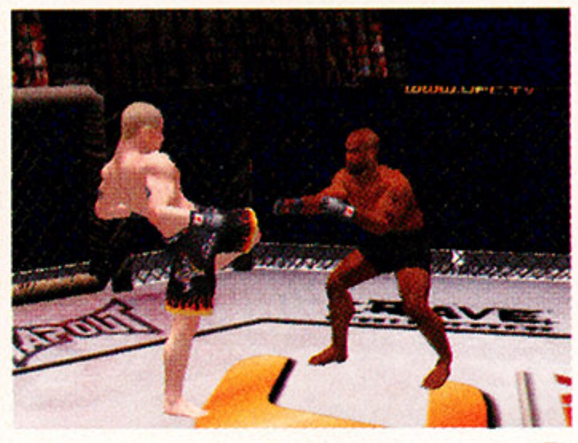
Crave continues their successful line of Ultimate Fighting Championship games with UFC: Tapout, which is slated to arrive this **winter**. Developed by **Dream Factory** (The Bouncer, Tobal No.1), Tapout maintains the control scheme of the Dreamcast prequel, while boasting a roster of 25 head-banging fighters, each rendered with over 10,000 polygons for a high level of detail. Sweat, blood and sometimes tears are painfully visible, thanks to the Xbox's advanced graphics chip. Cornermen, dual referees, an expanded create-a-player mode and the game's tournaments—which support between eight and 16 players—round out the brain-bashing fun.











New Legends

THQ and developer **Infinite Machine** are delivering Hong Kong action-flick chop suey to the Xbox this **November**. Think Soul Calibur with its exaggerated weapon-based combat, but in an action game/beat-'em-up environment. "We actually referenced Soul Calibur for some of the moves, because [Soul Calibur] is so good," Gregg Nakawatase, the game's producer, told us.

To take on the onslaught of enemies, you get two weapons at a time, which should get your testosterone pumpin'. They range from simple wooden staffs to guns. The melee stuff looks pretty cool in motion, too. "The developers got this guy who helped with the fight scenes in *The Matrix*, and filmed him wielding different weapons," says Nakawatase. "He was swinging around a 60-lb. sword like it was nothing! The developers then hand-animated the action from the film." Combine this with super moves and a futuristic/mystical Chinese setting, and you have an action game that shows what yellow power is all about.









MX2002 Featuring Ricky Carmichael

While the PlayStation 2 version of MX2002 has great rider physics and control—you can preload your shocks to nail triple jumps (a la ATV Offroad Fury) and pop the clutch after landing for a speed burst—it's a bit lacking in depth. (OK, you can choose between an O'Neal or a Fox helmet, but that's not the kind of tweaking most MX fans are looking for.) **THQ** hopes to remedy this with the "new-and-improved" Xbox edition. In other words, this is like an MX2002 Director's Cut.

The game will contain a sorely needed Career mode, with bike upgrades and tuning not found in the previous version. It will also have two exclusive freestyle tracks—Washington, D.C. and Tacoma—and a new H.O.R.S.E. minigame, in which players try matching each other's stunts. But that's the extent of the planned upgrades.

The starting gate drops this **fall**.









XBOX FEVER

Shortly after Peyton Manning was spotted wearing an Xbox cap, Microsoft made it official: The most important Colt will be throwing neon passes for NFL Fever. Manning has had a bad eye infection for a while, so we wonder if he's even seen the game yet.



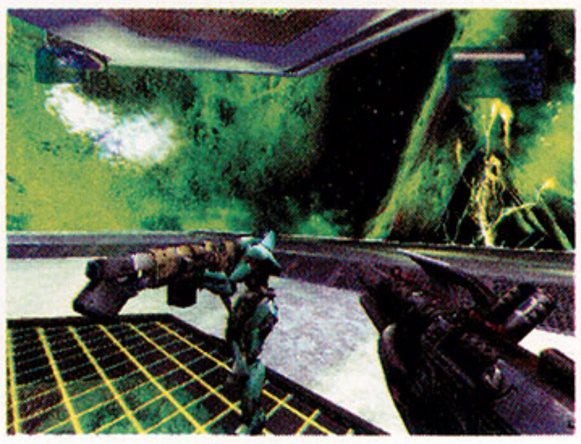
PREVIEW GALLERY

Unreal Championship

"It's your choice: Live or die," pretty much sums up this exclusive Xbox title developed by **Digital Extremes**. Although UC is set for a **Q1 2002** release, clear signs on the blood-stained horizon show it's ready to pounce on all other first-person shooters to date with its drop-dead gorgeous graphics and up to 32-player online frag fests. Kill a lot, but kill in style. That's the UC way.







NASCAR Heat 2002

Infogrames intends to win over the good ol' boys during **Xbox launch week** with this game. Featuring all the stuff that made it cool on PS2—Race the Pro, Beat the Heat and Season modes—the Xbox version of Heat will come complete with a 43-car field in each race and a link mode that'll allow up to 16 players to compete. Or for those of us who don't have 16 friends with Xboxes, a four-player split-screen option.







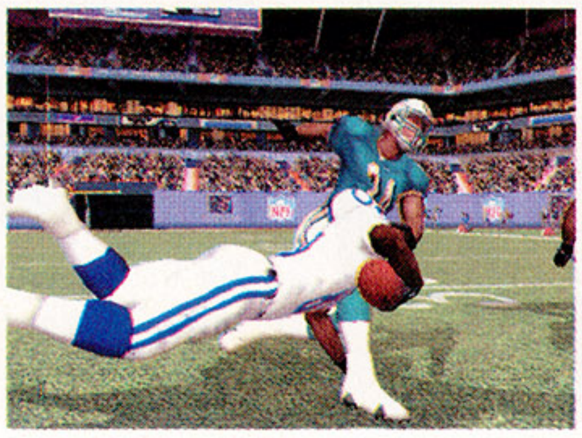
NFL Fever 2002

Microsoft has a lot to prove with its homegrown effort, but they've got a lot of talent and a beefy system behind them. Fever is designed by the creator of the legendary Front Page Sports Football series on the PC, so the game has some strong heritage behind it. Those brains and the system's brawn (you can see players' muscles flex and faces cringe when they exert effort) could give Madden a run for its money this **November**.













PREVIEW

Shenmue II

Publisher:	Sega
Developer:	AM2
Players:	1
Genre:	FREE (Full Reactive Eyes Entertainment...or "Adventure" if you hate AM2's pretensions)
% Done:	85%
Release:	December 2001
Cheaper Than:	Plane fare to Hong Kong
Web Address:	www.shenmue.com
The Good:	Lots more action.
The Bad:	It's still hard to steer Ryo around town.
And The Ugly:	Aside from the lovely Joy, the thuggy inhabitants of Hong Kong.





Shenmue II offers a handy little 3D map that will help you get from place to place. You can also talk to the cheerful palmist (above), who will guide you for $20.

Last fall gamers got a chance to visit Japan thanks to Sega's AM2 development team and the vision of Yu Suzuki, Shenmue's creator. It was an adventure that brought you into the life of Ryo Hazuki, a young martial-arts student whose father was slain by a mysterious man. Unraveling this mystery leads Ryo to Hong Kong, and that's where Shenmue II picks up.

Unfortunately, slow pacing kept action fans from enjoying Ryo's first adventure. If you couldn't get excited about the first Shenmue—if you just wanted to beat up fools, but started yawning while quizzing strangers about the mysterious black car—Shenmue II should be right up your alley. From the moment the game starts, as Ryo steps off the boat in HK, you realize things are much different than in his sleepy native Yokosuka, Japan.

It's a whole new attitude in Hong Kong, a city that doesn't take kindly to strangers. The first kid you meet in the city sets you up for a mugging instead of asking you to care for a cute little kitty. And gone is the original's bookish, soft-spoken Nozomi; the female lead of Shenmue II is a fiery-haired vixen named Joy who insults and cajoles Ryo incessantly as she tools around on her motorcycle.



It's not just the atmosphere that's changed for this sequel. In the original, you had to go searching for people and places with no idea how to find them. Other times, you were forced to kill time waiting for a shop to open or someone to get home from work. Shenmue II fixes that. The mixture of much better pacing and the ability to skip dead periods allows for a much more involving adventure.

Of course, it's Ryo's investigation into the secrets stemming from his father's demise that forms the core of Shenmue's gameplay. Thankfully, he's armed with the knowledge and belongings he gained in the first game. In fact, if you have an old save file, you can start with your stuff from the end of Shenmue. Don't worry if you never touched the original. It's just a prelude to the series' main story and you won't find yourself too lost. AM2 has also included a quick recap of the original game's events if you need to learn what Ryo was up to before he left Japan.

Shenmue II features small innovations that assure you won't be on the wrong track. On every street,

Cont. on page 126

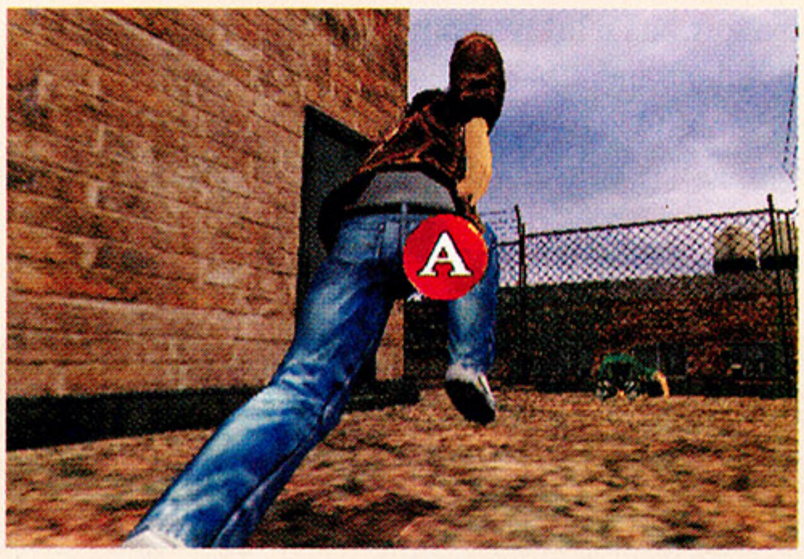
GET RICH QUICK

Cash Money



If you hated driving a forklift in the first game, there are better ways to make money this time around. You can sell your cute little Sega toys for money at the pawnshops throughout Hong Kong. Surprisingly, a store that only seems to carry old vases and a couple of microwaves is run by a guy who's thrilled at the idea of buying Ryo's Virtua Fighter figures. You can also find odd jobs if you hook up with the foxy Joy or gamble your pocket money at Pachinko, a Japanese-style combination of slot machines and pinball that can be pretty lucrative. Best of all, you can take part in illegal street fighting matches and make serious bank beating up all comers. Finally, Ryo's years of training *really* pay off.

QUICK TIME EVENTS



The Quick Time Events from the first game are back. Shenmue II also has "Combo QTEs," which involve multiple button presses to mimic in a row.

In this game of survival you're not voted off the island, you're zapped, run over and blown away.









As one of four tribal witch doctors trying to win the heart of goddess Ooga Booga, you'll arm yourself with shrunken heads, fireballs, tornadoes, traps and mines for a fun, fast and hilarious battle of survival. Summon meteor showers, grab a bird and launch an airborne attack or hop on a wild boar and mow down your foes. Offline or online, up to four players can put their survival instincts to the test in this ultimate grudge match vacation package.

Multi-player combat with a tropical punch

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Violence

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REMEMBER 1997?

Why does Hong Kong looks so much like England? In 1997, England returned Hong Kong to China after ruling it for more than a hundred years. The British won the territory in the Opium Wars of the 1840s. Moral of the story? Don't smoke opium, kids.

Shenmue II cont.

WELCOME TO HONG KONG


1


2

1. Scenic Hong Kong, China. It's a combination of stately vistas and...

2. ...seedy alleyways.



3


4

3. The locals, including our mohawked friend Cool Z, don't give Ryo the warm welcome he might have been hoping for.

4. That's all right, though, because he's perfectly prepared to take care of business. Years of training have prepared him for this adventure.

Cont. from page 124

you'll find a stand that sells maps. Often times, a 3D map will appear on the bottom left of the screen, with your destination marked by an X. Sometimes, people will even draw detailed maps for you. If all else fails or you have a bent for the occult, there's a helpful palmist who will tell your fortune, giving you a hint. Once you know where you need to go, just try asking a passer-by. More often than not, they'll lead you there, although it's awfully curious to find a city full of people who have nothing better to do than play tour guide to a stoic foreigner.

Gameplay enhancements are not limited to mapping features and speeding up time. AM2 improved the fighting, and a new first-person mode is often available; sometimes, you'll see the action through a ghosted-out Ryo. Of course, if this leads to some kid wandering his high school beating the snot out of everyone with Kung Fu, Yu Suzuki could be facing a tedious senate hearing about video game violence.

From the first glimpse of Hong Kong across the rolling waves, you'll be immersed. This is Asia, and it's teeming with life. With the constant sound of the sea, people and traffic fading in and out, not only does the experience seem more real than your average game, the original's low-key ambience is seriously outclassed. Taking a cue from gamers' wishes and offering up more action without casting off the realism that makes the series so remarkable, Shenmue II begins the next generation of adventure and is AM2's DC swan song.

—Christian Nutt

HONG KONG VISTAS



If you've played the first game you know that it was tops in graphical detail and intricacy. The new one packs the same level of architectural advancement, in a new Hong Kong setting.



The layout of HK calls for open plazas and crowded streets lined with brickwork, a great change from the claustrophobic Yokosuka streets. That doesn't mean the quality is lessened at all.



Among the market stalls and storefronts you'll find many more people milling around than in the first game. Whatever anyone else says about Shenmue, you can't fault its graphical realism.

TURNING JAPANESE

FREE Speech



Unlike the original game, Shenmue II won't be the home to a load of sometimes questionable English voice acting. That's right—fanboys can commence dancing in the streets, because Sega isn't planning to dub the game's dialogue into English.

When asked, Sega representatives cited a number of reasons for this move. Top on the list: wanting to get the text translation as accurate as possible without having to concentrate on rewriting the verbiage to fit the constraints of spoken dialogue. Another reason: Fans of the first game were pretty vocal about the low quality of some of the English acting. Finally, Shenmue II has more than 1,000 speaking parts, more than twice as many as the original—it's a pretty insurmountable task to dub them all into English.

No hint of budget constraints was mentioned as a reason for the dubbing/subbing decision, but we know that this will significantly cheapen the cost of bringing Shenmue II to the U.S. Of course, if your eyes get tired from too much reading, this is small comfort. Still, it's a game about Japanese people! It makes sense the voices stay in Japanese, doesn't it? Well, no, since the vast majority of characters in Shenmue II should be speaking Cantonese...

...Are you receiving this?...

I do no read you... [send...]

not re target site.

...[have] enco ed

eavy resistance...

need ku atley

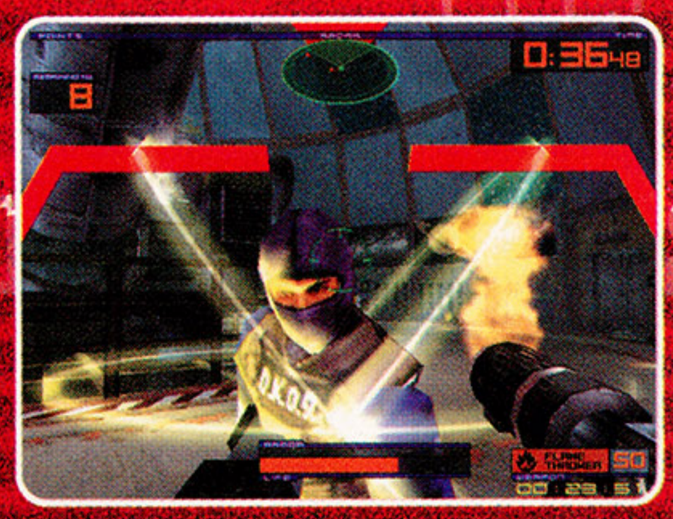
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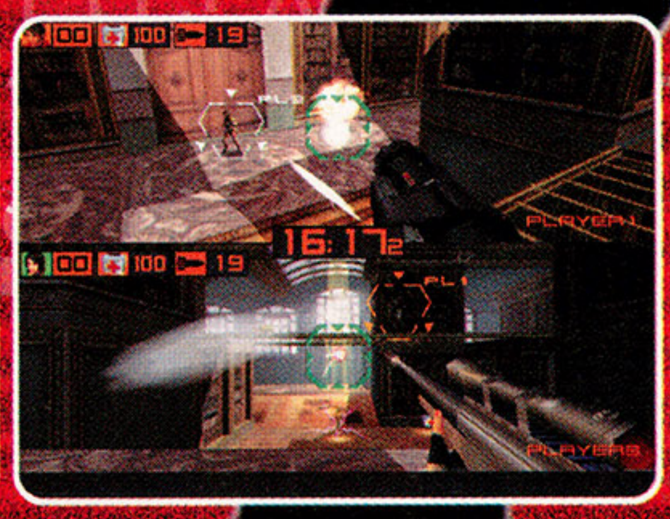
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IN A WIDE VARIETY OF LOCALES



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WITH INSANE FIREPOWER AND
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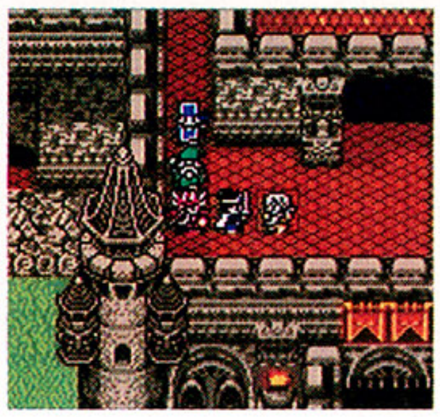
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Violence

Dreamcast

ONLINE MULTI-PLAYER

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PREVIEW GALLERY



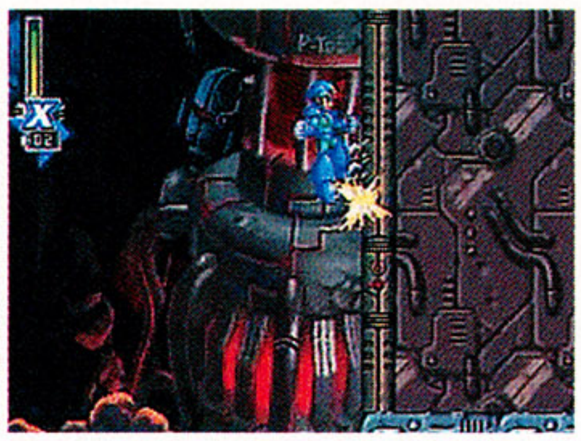
REMIXIN' ENIX

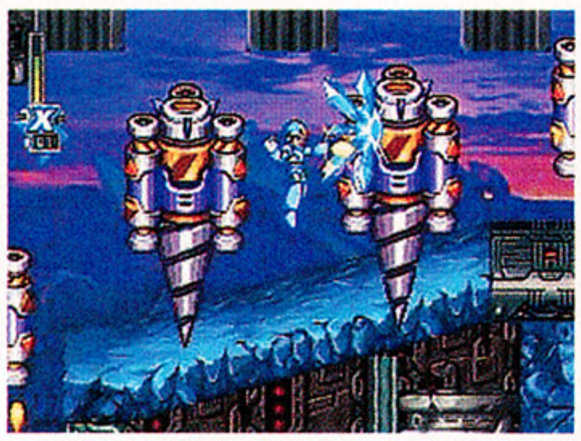
Here's Enix's three-step Dragon Quest (Dragon Warrior) remake policy in Japan:
Step 1 - Release a new Dragon Quest game.
Step 2 - Remake an older Dragon Quest game using that same engine.
Step 3 - A year or two later, remake it again, only this time for a handheld.
We can now predict that a Game Boy Advance version of Dragon Quest IV will turn up sometime in 2003. Remember, you heard it here first!

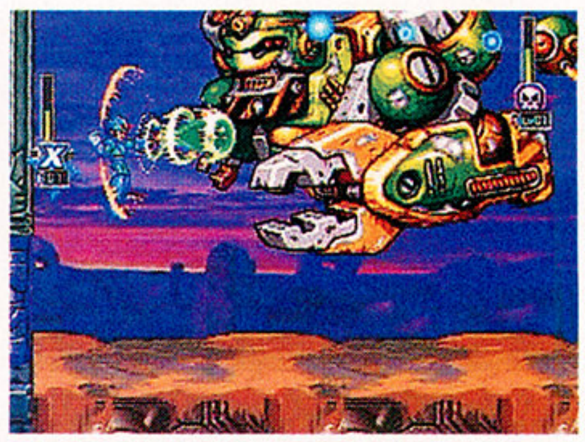
Mega Man X6

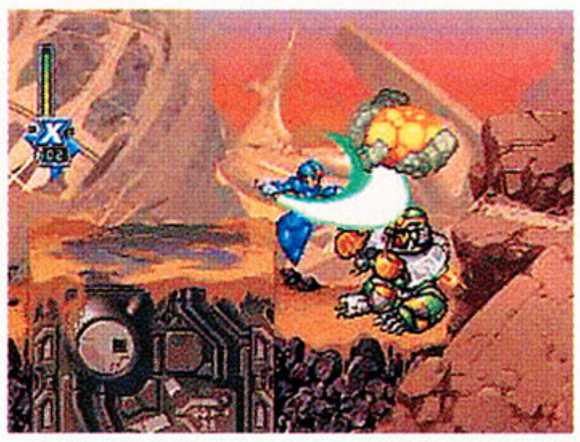
The original Mega Man series may have hit a dry spell, but the X games are still going strong. If this keeps up, **Capcom** is going to have to invent new species of animals to model robotic bosses after. Evergreen evildoer Sigma is back, threatening the planet's well-being just shortly after his antics in X5. But to give X6 a fresher feel than its recent predecessor, Capcom has made the game more responsive to the player's performance. Enemies, traps and paths in later levels will change depending on how you perform on the front end.

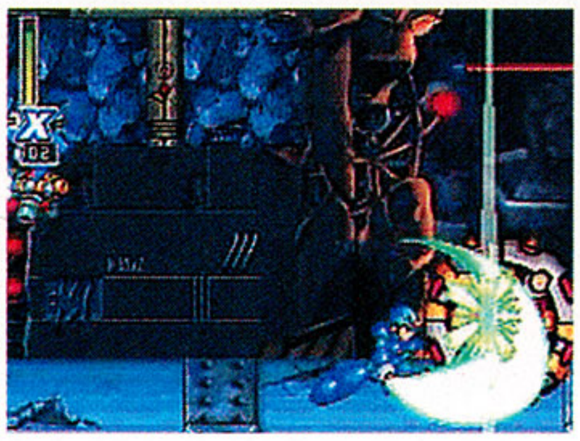
One thing you will notice is the marked lack of Zero's presence in these screens. Well, Mr. Zero, he dead. After sacrificing himself at the end of X5 (whoops, did we just give that away?), it's doubtful his flowing blond mane will ever grace this series again. We'll have to wait 'til **November** to find out for sure.













Dragon Warrior IV

Hot on the heels of Dragon Warrior III's Game Boy Color release, **Enix** is back with yet another old-school remake, only this time it's not for a handheld system. Dragon Warrior IV, the last (and arguably best) 8-Bit Dragon Warrior game, is getting the full makeover treatment, and will return in full 3D on the PlayStation.

Utilizing the 3D game engine of Dragon Warrior VII, Enix has rebuilt Dragon Warrior IV from the ground up with a host of enhancements. The entire game world is now fully rotatable, and many of the other new features from DWVII will be included as well (animated monsters, the ability to talk to your partners during battles, etc.). No word yet on whether or not movie cutscenes will be incorporated.

The original Dragon Warrior IV only saw a limited release in the U.S., but it was still met with critical acclaim. It features a unique system that breaks the game up into five separate chapters, each starring one or more of the game's supporting characters. It all culminates in a final chapter where the different plotlines collide. It's also the chapter where you meet the main character for the first time.

And yes, Enix has confirmed that Dragon Warrior IV will see a domestic release on the PS1 sometime in the near future. Besides the fact that Enix plans to translate and release the game rather quickly, that's about all we know. No release date has been set.

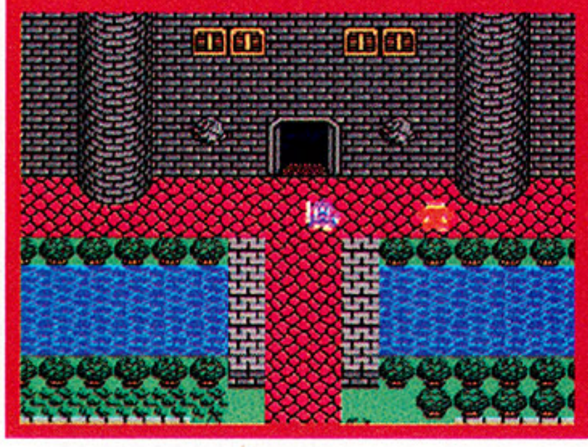








Dragon Warrior IV has come a long way in the nine years since the 8-Bit Nintendo version (left) was released. Compare:





Sunny Garcia Surfing

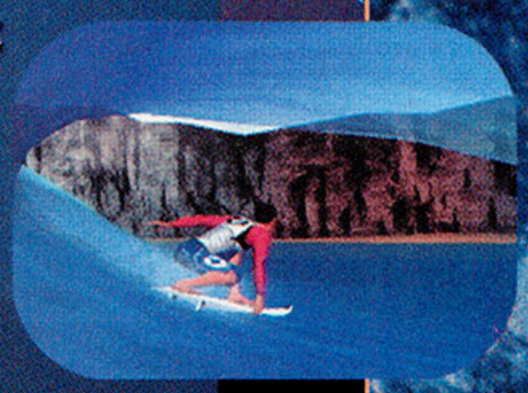
SURF LIKE THE PROS

Suit up as World Champion Sunny Garcia or 7 other World-Class Surfers such as Cory Lopez, Shea Lopez, Shane Beschen and more.



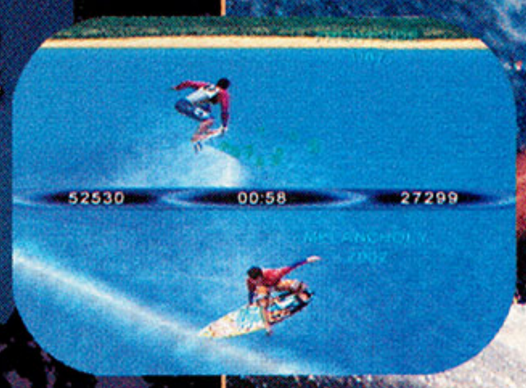
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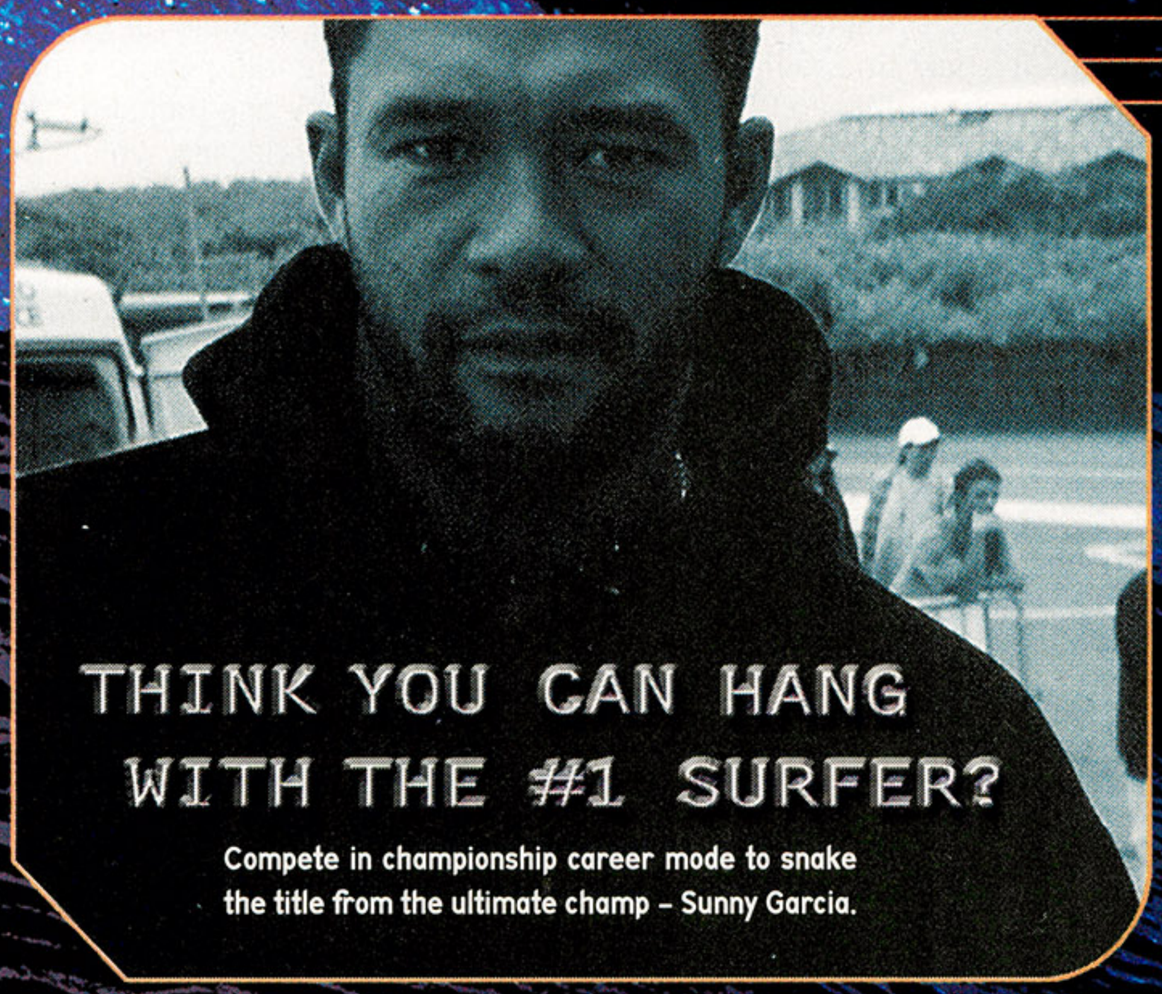
PADDLE OUT SOLO OR WITH FRIENDS

7 modes of gameplay offer up endless hours of single and multi-player action.





RIP IT UP AGAINST THE WORLD CHAMP!



THINK YOU CAN HANG WITH THE #1 SURFER?

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Off-Shore Winds...Barreling!
It's time to grab your stick and get ready to go off! Sunny Garcia Surfing captures the true essence of surfing as you travel the world in search of the perfect wave. Drop in on a gnarly Fiddlesticks 30-footer or have crazy fun sessions with Sandy Beach's 3 to 4 foot sets. Packed with ultra-realistic moves, you'll be stoked as you link together all of today's sickest surfing tricks including round-house cutbacks, lippers, floaters, barrel rides and unreal airs.
SO GRAB YOUR 6'7" SQUASH TAIL AND RUSH IT!
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AT SANDY BEACH

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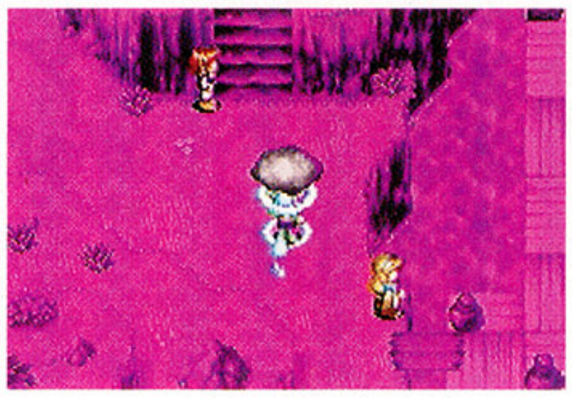
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GAME BOY ADVANCE

PREVIEW

Golden Sun

Publisher:	Nintendo
Developer:	Camelot
Players:	1-2
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	90%
Release:	October 2001
Also Try:	Lufia (GBC)
Web Address:	www.nintendo.com
The Good:	Great graphics/sound.
The Bad:	Fairly linear quest.
And The Ugly:	This game is a distant cousin to the terribly lame RPG, Beyond the Beyond (PS).



Make some stormy weather for your foes with powerful "Energy" spells that really dish out the pain.



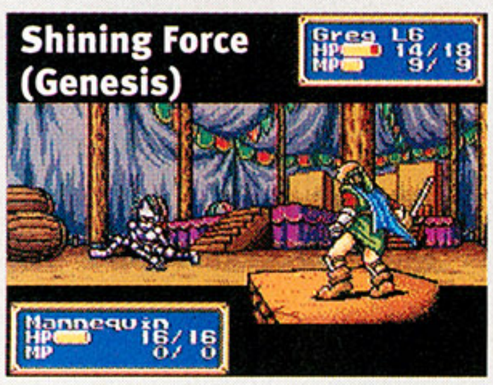
See kids? This is what happens if you eat too much broccoli. Actually, ol' tree head is one of the cool battle summons in GS.

LOTS O' CAMELOT

Shiny History

Camelot, formerly known as Sonic Software Planning (no relation to Sonic Team), is responsible for a ton of great games. Sure, they let slip a couple of duds (Beyond the Beyond and Shining Wisdom), but most of their products have been topnotch. Behold, the complete Camelotography (U.S. releases only):

Shining in the Darkness (Genesis, 1991)
Shining Force (Genesis, 1992)
Shining Force: The Sword of Hajya (Game Gear, 1993)
Shining Force II (Genesis, 1993)
Shining Force CD (Sega CD, 1994)
Shining Wisdom (Saturn, 1996)
Beyond the Beyond (PS1, 1996)
Shining the Holy Ark (Saturn, 1997)
Shining Force III (Saturn, 1998)
Hot Shots Golf (PS1, 1998)
Mario Golf (N64, 1999)
Mario Golf (GBC, 1999)
Mario Tennis (N64, 2000)
Mario Tennis (GBC, 2001)
Golden Sun (GBA, 2001)



When Nintendo fans think of Camelot, they probably think of last year's excellent N64 and Game Boy Color sports titles, Mario Golf and Mario Tennis. But Camelot's career didn't begin with Nintendo. Long ago, on a little 16-Bit system known as Sega Genesis, Camelot (then known as Sonic Software Planning) created the first in a trilogy of strategy-RPGs that have gone on to become one of the most treasured role-playing franchises of all time: Shining Force. This association should have role-playing fans paying close attention to Camelot's next title, Golden Sun.

Golden Sun is a traditional turn-based RPG with an overhead view and an impressive pseudo-3D battle system that emphasizes magic over hand-to-hand combat. The main characters of the game are known as "Energists," gifted types who wield a special power known as—surprise—Energy, a cross between psychic power and magic. Each character learns several different Energy spells, which can be used both in battle and in the field. It's here that Golden Sun really gains its appeal, because the use of Energy outside of battle opens up lots of interesting action and puzzle elements. You can "Move" objects, "Grow" vines, "Read" minds, and so on.

Complementing over nine different energy types are "Jins," cute but vicious little monsters that you collect during your travels. Each Jin has an elemental attribute and can either be "Set" to your character to alter stats and abilities, or put on "Standby" to be summoned during battle. Each character can utilize up to four Jins at once for gorgeous summon attacks that vary depending on how many Jins you have on Standby at any one time. Carrying Jins also allows you to change classes, which in turn affects which Energy spells you learn as you level up.

With an engaging plot, tons of well-designed dungeons, fantastic music and a two-player mode, this is one RPG that really shouldn't be missed. Plus, Golden Sun is just one side of a larger story. A sequel, which will focus on the exploits of different characters, is due out next year. —*John Ricciardi*



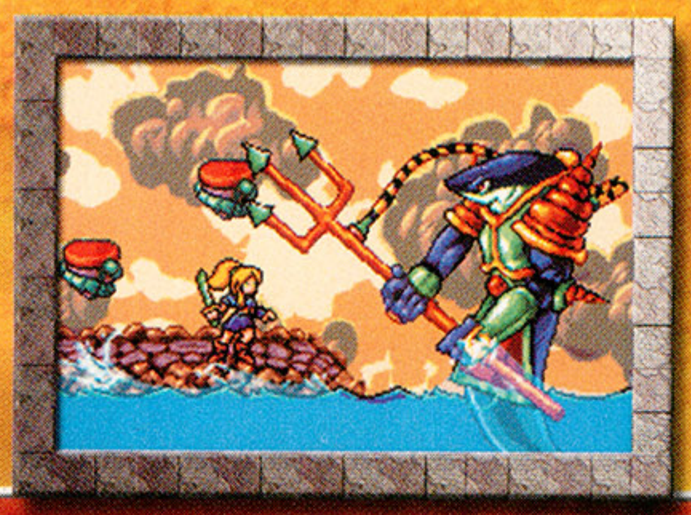


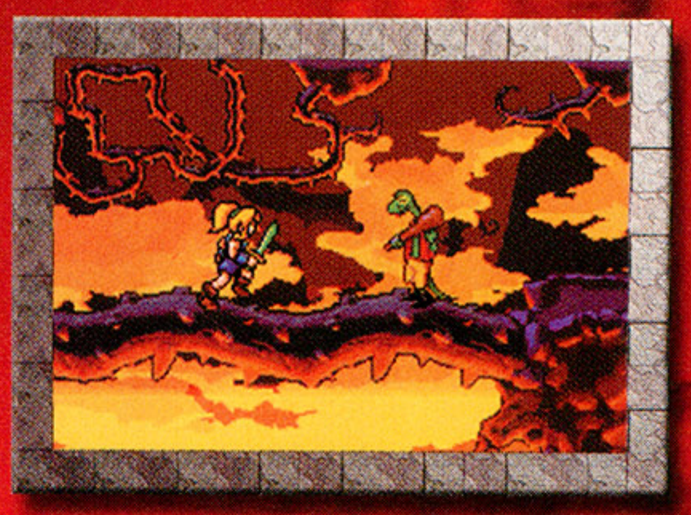




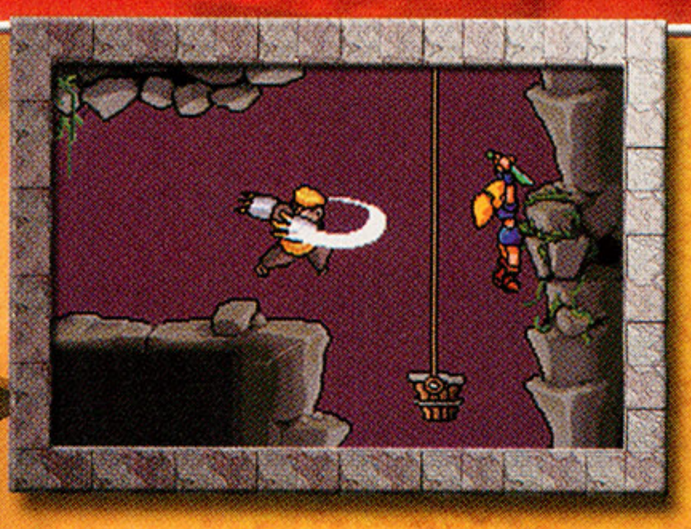


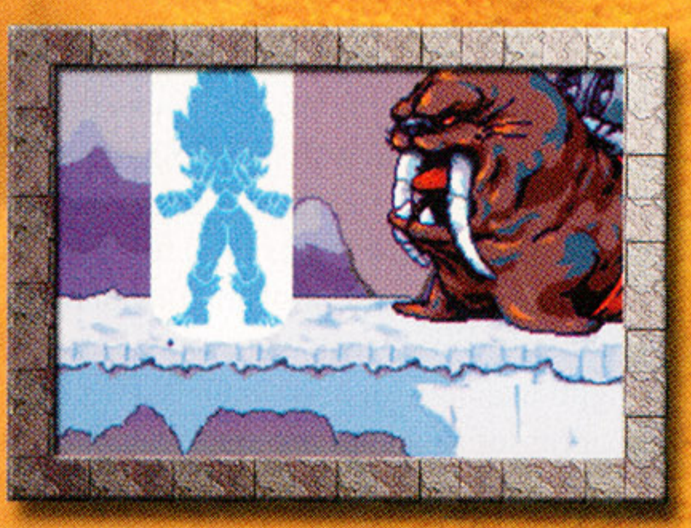
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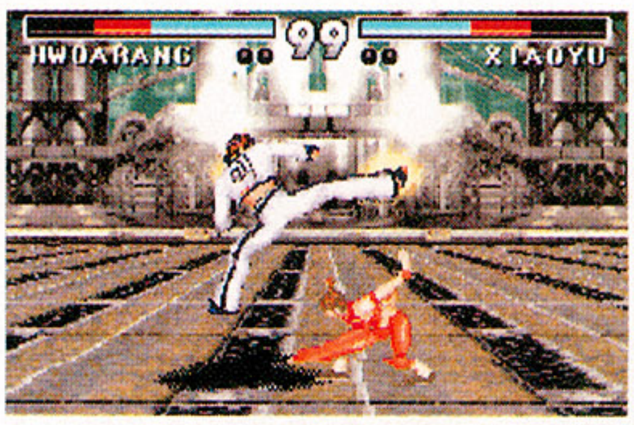
PREVIEW GALLERY

Tekken

Apparently the Japanese cell-phone version of Tekken got **Namco** thinking that portable fighters are a good idea. With at least 10 fighters and the traditional semi-3D perspective, the GBA version (due out in **November**) will most closely resemble Tekken 3 in terms of gameplay and characters. And yes, it's fully linkable if you have two copies of the game.







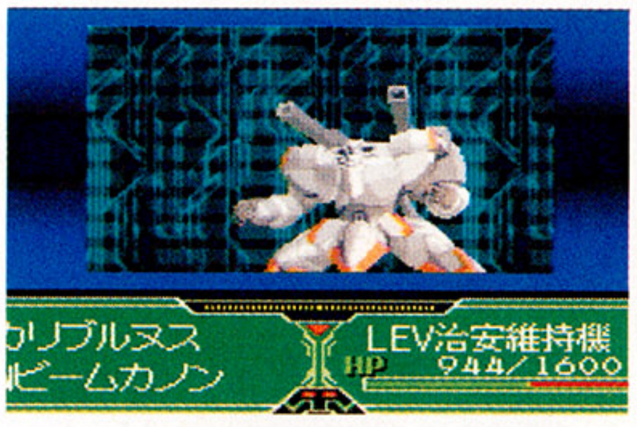


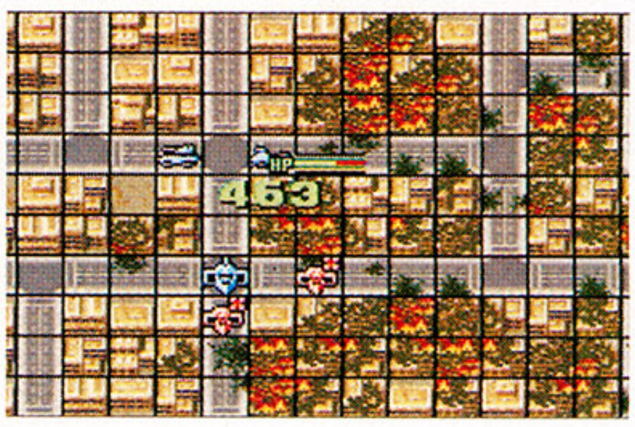




Zone of the Enders 2173: Testament

Before you get too excited, know that ZOE for the GBA has little or nothing to do with its MGS2 demo-packin' brother of the same name. Rather than (inadequately) re-create the same game on the GBA, **Konami** has opted to go the more cerebral route. In Testament, you control an army of huge mechs, tanks and support units and engage in all manner of turn-based strategy mayhem on a grid-like map. In between missions, you have the option of accessorizing your mechs, leveling up your characters, and taking dates out for joyrides in your giant cockpit. No, scratch that. What with taking on evil military forces and pondering the morality of war, Testament's protagonist, Cage, has no time for chicks. The good news? You won't be subjected to the horrors of ZOE's voice-acting. The bad news? Testament won't be out 'til **Q1 2002**.





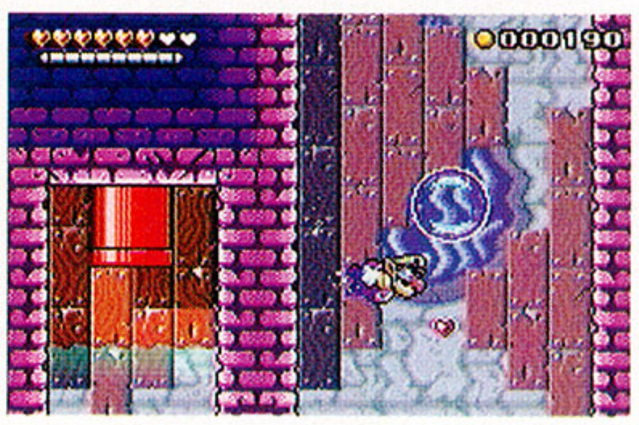




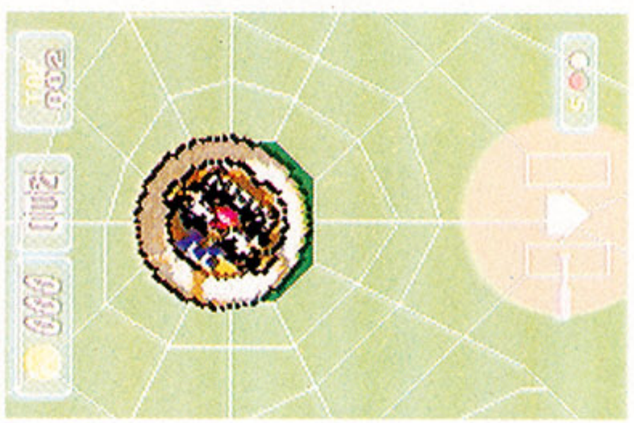
Wario Land Advance

Leave it to **Nintendo** to turn a relatively lame concept (we can see the brainstorming session now: "Get this, he's Mario, but eeeeevil") into one of portable gaming's most popular characters. The fourth installment of the Wario Land series is the first GBA title featuring Wario's treasure-hunting action/platform antics. The action takes place inside a golden pyramid that supposedly holds a wealth of untold treasures, which Wario is attempting to track down like any villain should. Gameplay is similar to past Wario games (which is good), but the moustached marauder is no longer invincible, meaning you'll have to be a bit more careful as you search for riches untold. The bright, colorful graphics show up boldly on the GBA's screen, and players can take a break from the normal game for a chance to pick up some extra coins in one of several minigames. It's out in Japan now, but Wario Advance should be translated for American audiences by **November.**









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KUNG FOOL

Jackie Chan sustained a brain hemorrhage, the most serious injury of his career, after falling and hitting his head on a rock during the filming of 1986's *Armour of God*.

Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2



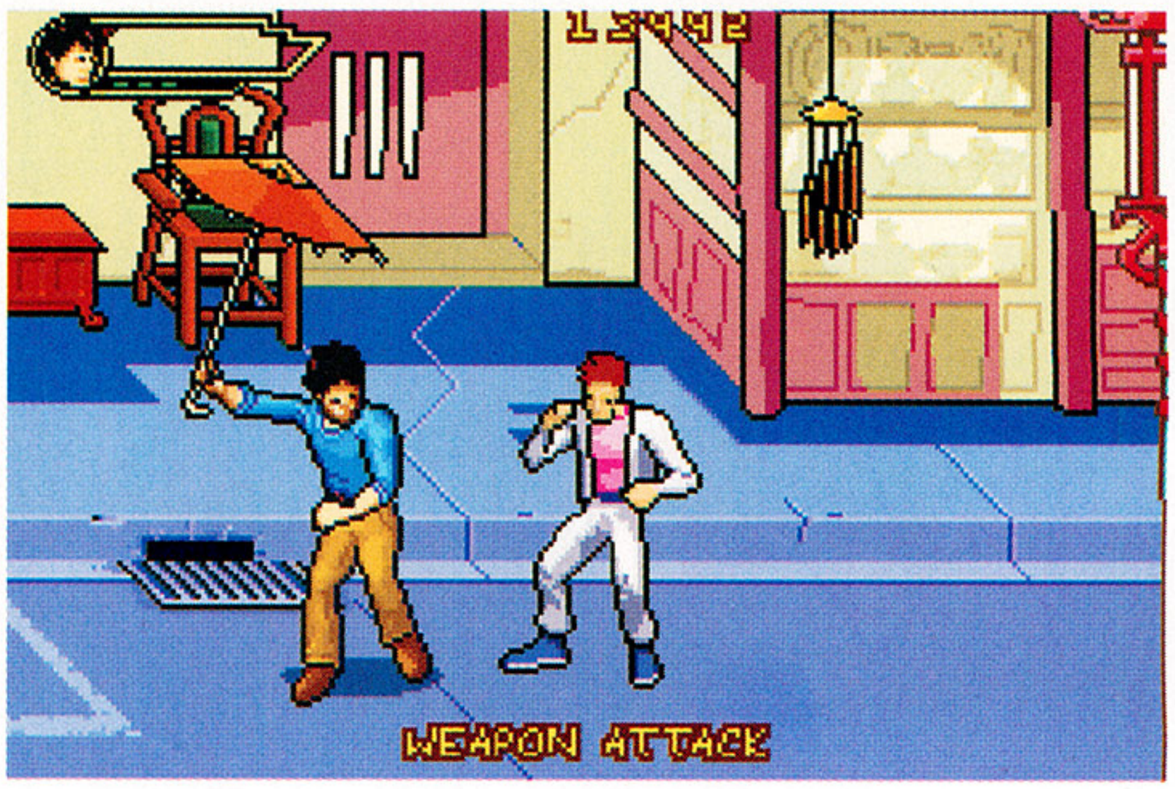
Where Activision's Tony Hawk games goeth, so too doth **Acclaim**'s Dave Mirra franchise, and now the BMX king grinds onto the GBA.

This **November**, X-gamers (or "action sports" gamers, if you wanna get picky about it) can bunnyhop to their hearts' content on vert, dirt, street and park courses, with more than 800 tricks to perform and Proquest, Freeride, Session and Training modes to master. Twelve riders, 13 environments and 30 mission objectives flesh out the BMX package.

Tony Hawk 2 set huge standards on the GBA, but Acclaim's positive Mirra's up to the challenge.

Jackie Chan Adventures

Global chop-socky star Jackie Chan will bring his trademark blend of action and comedy to the Game Boy Advance, courtesy of **Activision**, this **November**. The game is based on Jackie's Saturday-morning animated adventures, currently airing on Kids' WB. On the show, Jackie and his 11-year-old niece, Jade (no word on whether or not she's able to play Game Gear without a cartridge like Jackie's *Rumble in the Bronx* sidekick), try to prevent 12 magic talismans from falling into the hands of a shadowy crime organization. Hope it's better than that PS1 Jackie game....



Dokapon

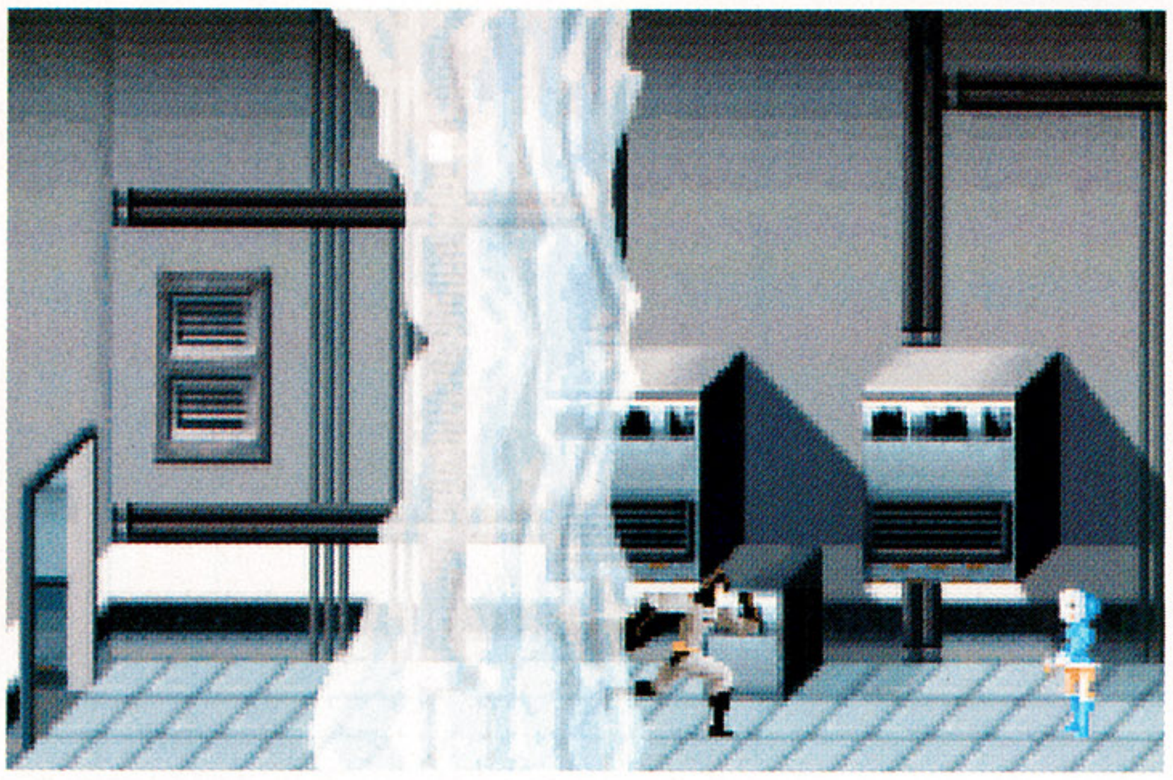


The quirky, pastel-palleted adventures of a smiley young hero are the focus of **Asmik Ace**'s first RPG for the GBA. Dokapon's premise is consistent with the flavor of the day: Collect and train monsters to fight for you during enemy encounters. But it also puts your main character in control of more than 100 different weapons for use in battle against as many different monsters.

Players' offensive and defensive battle prowess is determined by a rock/paper/scissors-style showdown during each skirmish, so countering your enemy's selection will require a spot of luck, as well. **AIA** is still tweaking the game, but they plan to bring Dokapon to the U.S. this **October**.

Batman: Vengeance

The Dark Knight's latest adventure finds Gotham in a state of turmoil. The Joker's recently expired (we'll believe that when we see it), and supervillains Poison Ivy and Mr. Freeze are attempting to gain control of the city's criminal element. That means you'll need to guide the caped crusader through a dozen standard-fare, side-scrolling levels in Batman: Vengeance on the GBA. Kicks, punches and a plethora of those wonderful toys will be at your disposal in order to teach Gotham's lawbreakers some respect in this **November** release from **Ubi Soft**.



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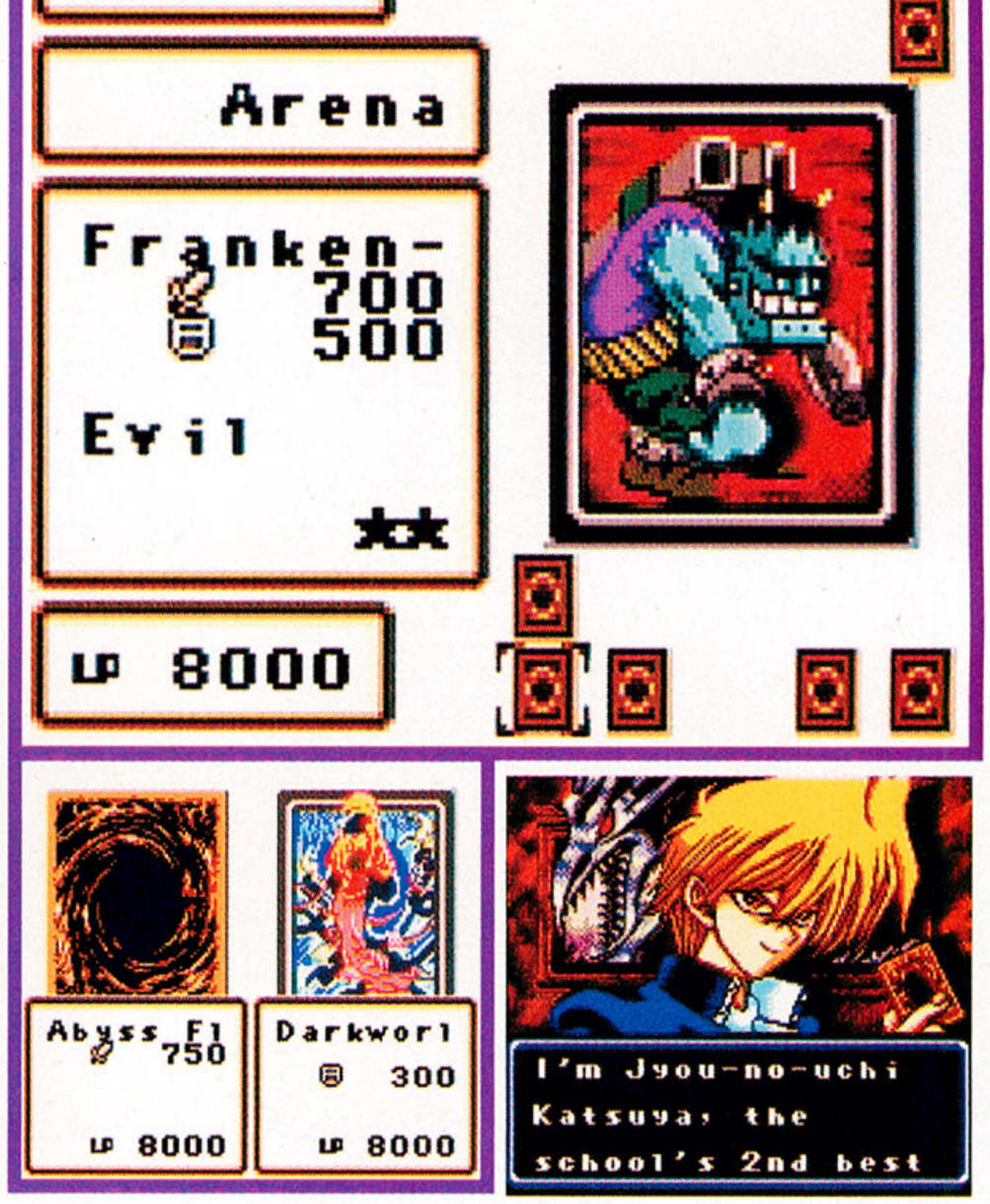
GAME BOY COLOR

PREVIEW GALLERY

Yu-Gi-Oh!
Dark Duel Stories

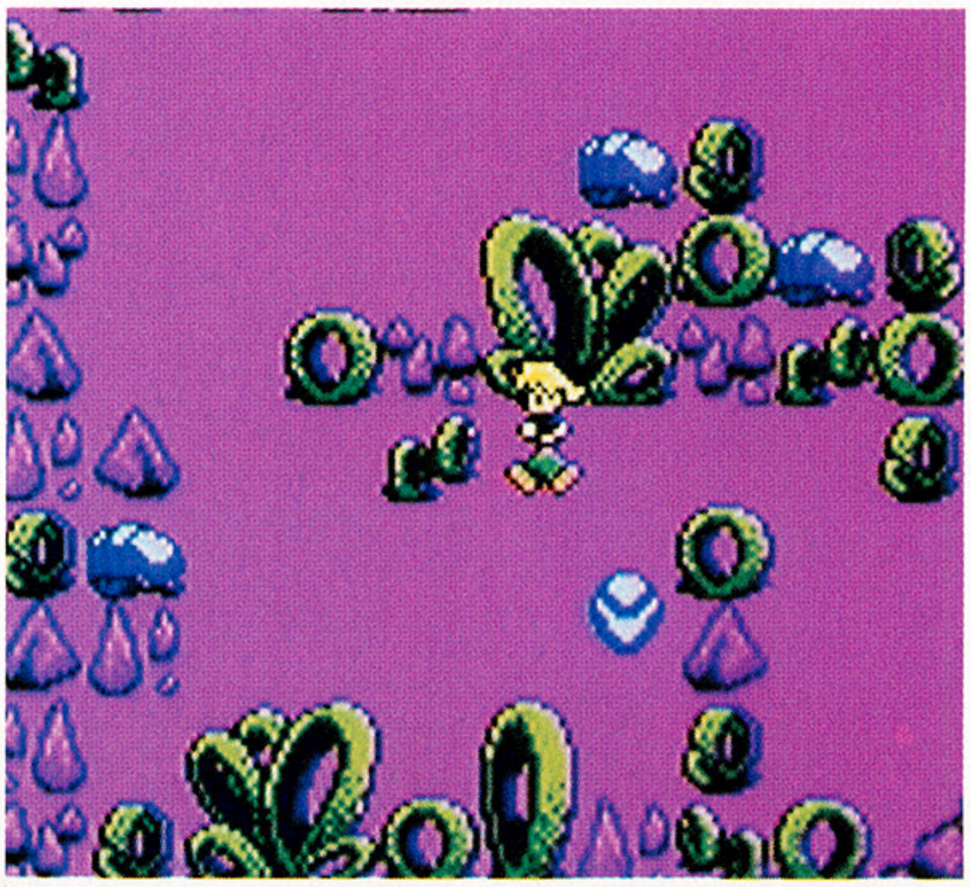
Digimon who? In **November**, **Konami**'s Yu-Gi-Oh! lands stateside, enticing those addicted to the cartoon to buy boatloads of licensed merchandise (sound familiar?). Work your way through card battles against uppity rivals and their freakish beasties using monster-summoning cards. You can also take on a friend via a link cable. Forget Pikachu—I choose you, Frankenstein!

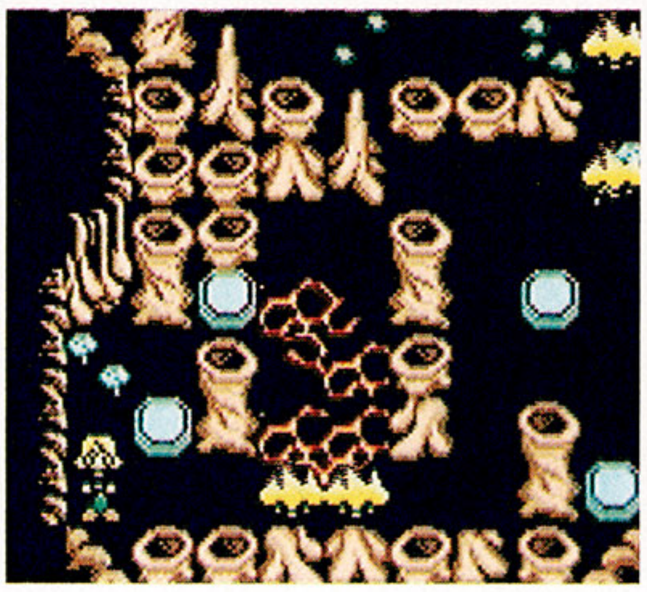




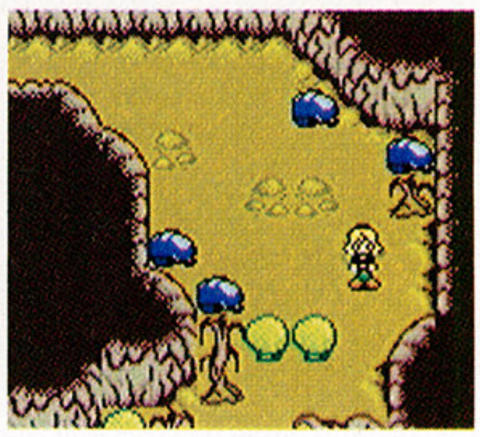
MagiNation:
Keeper's Quest

The original MagiNation game for Game Boy Color was recognized as one of the better Pokémon clones out there, but that didn't stop **Interactive Imagination** from going back to the drawing board for its follow-up, coming in **November**. MagiNation: Keeper's Quest ditches its predecessor's monster breeding in favor of Monster Rancher Explorer-style action and puzzles.







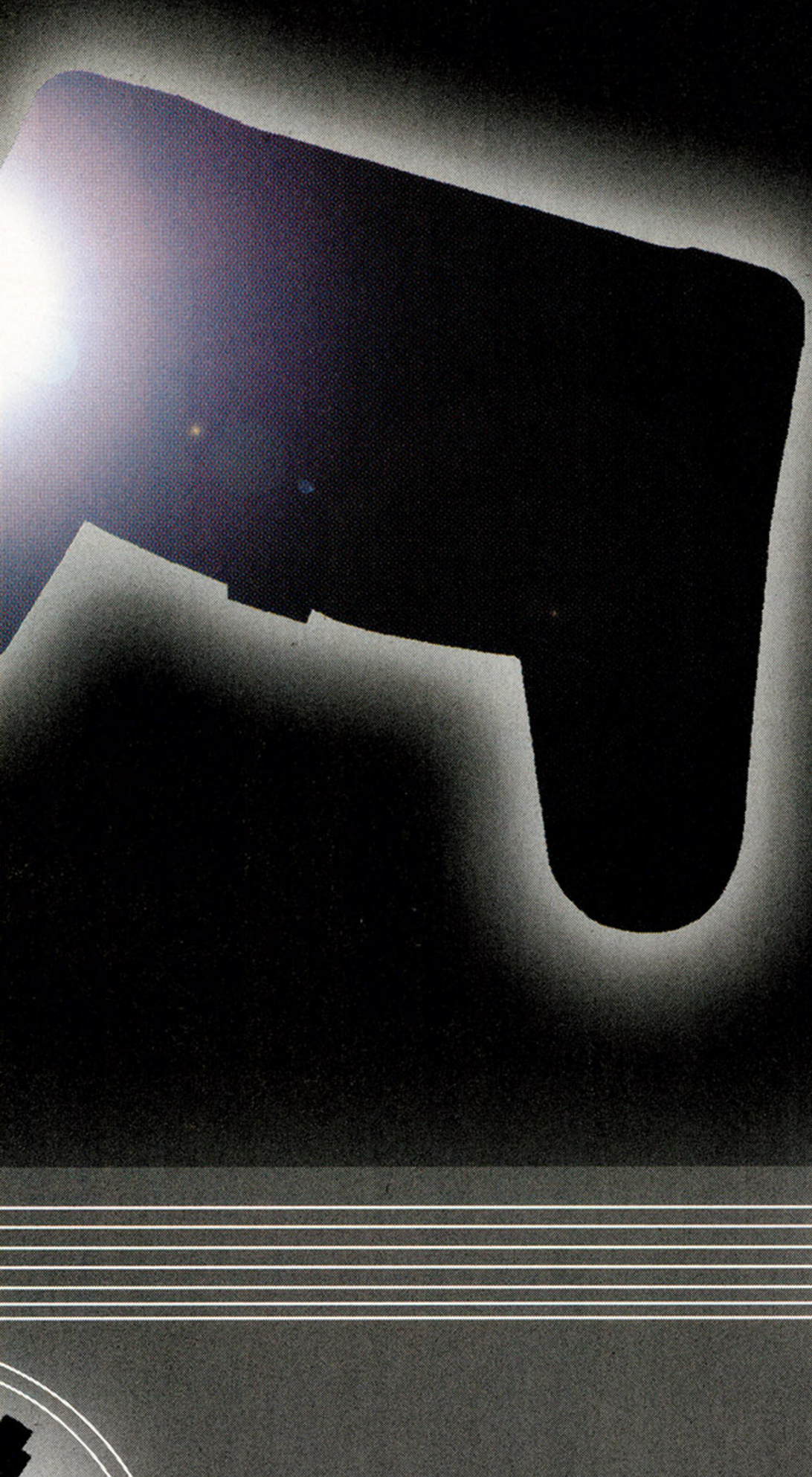




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By Mark MacDonald
and John Ricciardi

Illustrations by
Pixel Pushers Design

Nintendo's Brave New SpaceWorld



Mario Sunshine



Metroid Prime

Travel with us (and a few old friends) as we take a look at what's in store for the GameCube this year and beyond...

Some say Nintendo lives in its own little world. Take a few recent decisions: Sticking with the cart format for the N64, developing Metroid as a first-person shooter, giving Zelda a cartoony new look—this company marches to its own drummer. They even make it a habit to ignore their own launch dates: GameCube now hits the U.S. on Nov. 18, two weeks later than originally announced. So it makes sense that Nintendo has its own trade show—Spaceworld—where it unveils its big games each August just outside Tokyo. We're fresh back from the most recent show with interviews, impressions of upcoming titles and more. Just remember: It's Nintendo's world. We're just visiting.....



The Legend of Zelda

Developer: Nintendo Release: TBA (U.S.) Summer 2002 (Japan)

Nintendo's top-secret new Mario title finally sees the light of day...sort of

mario sunshine

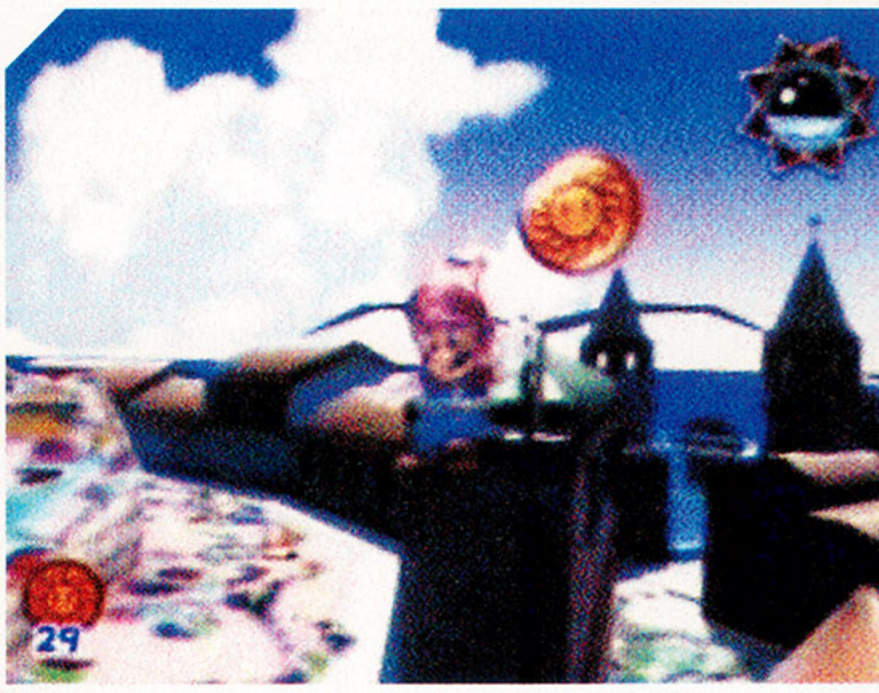
(working title)

GameCube may be the first Nintendo home system to launch without a Mario game, but Nintendo top-dog designer Shigeru Miyamoto reassured everyone that a new title starring the famous plumber was in the pipeline. He showed a short clip of Mario Sunshine, due next summer.

Most of the footage showed Mario frolicking and bounding around the buildings, streets and rooftops of a small seaside village. But aside from these new urban surroundings and some fresh friends and enemies, we couldn't shake the feeling that it all looked so...familiar, especially for a series well known for changing radically from one game to the next. Miyamoto explained that the shades of Mario 64 we saw in the demo weren't indicative of how Sunshine will play. "Since it won't hit the market anytime soon," he said, "I deliberately chose to show images that wouldn't tell a lot so you could not see the secrets, and competitors wouldn't be able to imitate it."

Well, mission accomplished. Actually, come to think of it, there was one big difference: Mario has a huge gizmo strapped to his back. Miyamoto implied that this item was key, although he gave no clues as to how it would work. "Of course it contains some secret," he told us, "but I can't say what at this time. All I can say is we are progressing fine on this game and hope you will look forward to it." Still not convinced? How 'bout this guarantee, from the man himself: "It will be the properly evolved version of Mario 64."

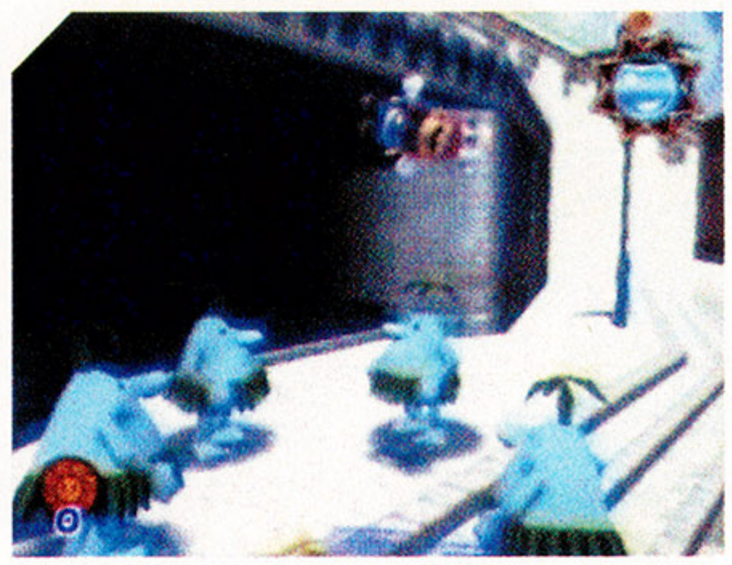








Why do these shots look so grainy? Sunshine is still top-secret, so we had to grab pics from our tape of the video. Forget those plain old gold coins and check out the new, improved, super sunshine coins above! Also note the sun-shaped icon in the upper-right corner; it changes from night to day. Hmm.







What's that on Mario's back?

The world wonders. Our best guesses:

- **Refillable watertank, with nozzle on top and hoses off the sides, that he uses with "sunshine" to make things grow.**
- **Bigger, better vacuum than that damn launch-game-limelight-stealing bastard Luigi's dumb, clunky contraption.**
- **Some kind of water-powered jetpack-and-weapon-in-one.**
- **A magical happiness dispenser that sucks the sadness out of all the world's weeping children.**
- **Two words: colostomy bag**
- **An industrial-strength Starbucks Espresso Cross-Marketing WonderTank.**

In other Mario news,

Miyamoto confirmed that he is working on another project starring the plumber, currently called **100 Marios.** But he also confirmed that mystery game **Marionette** is not an online Mario game as some guessed (Mario-net, get it?). In fact, it actually has to do with marionettes—as in the stick-and-string puppets. Duh.

Mario's super new wall jump

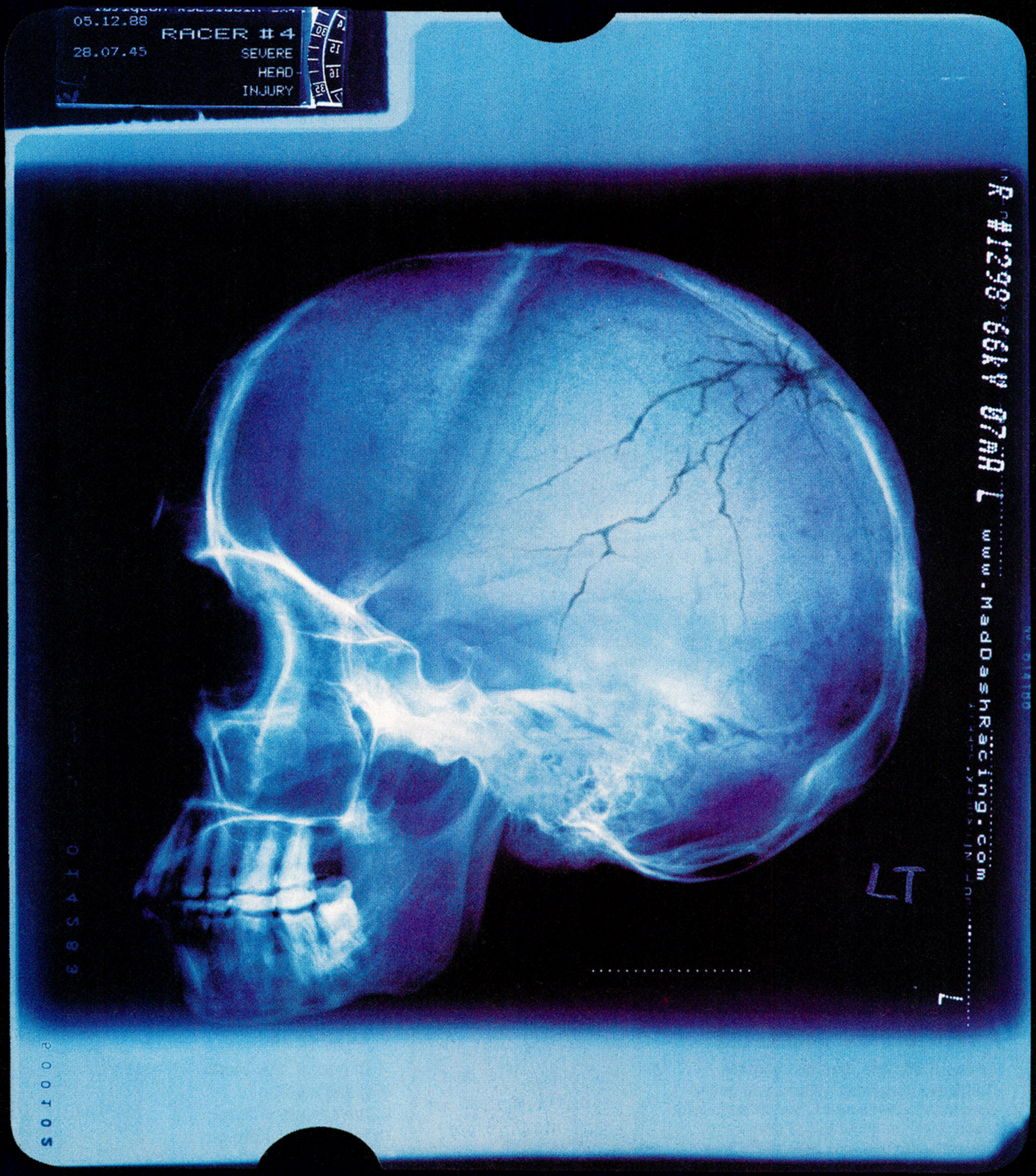
Of course any Mario game's going to have loads of leaping, but the little guy was like an Italian jumping bean in the Sunshine demo. He bounced all over the place, often double- and even triple-jumping back and forth off objects like these two buildings.







XBOX



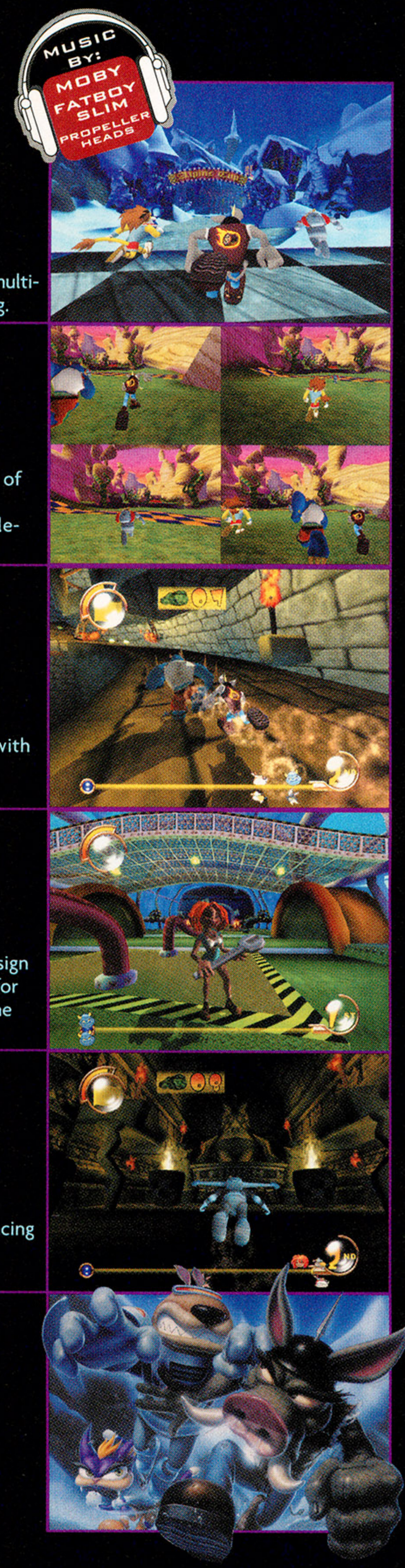
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Nintendo teases us with a small taste of the one game they know we are all dying to see...

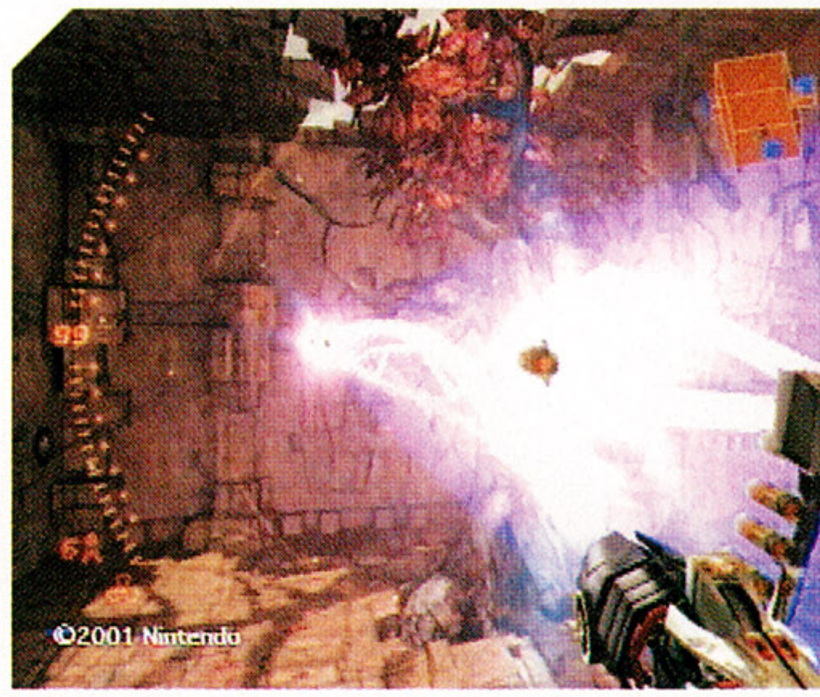
Metroid Prime

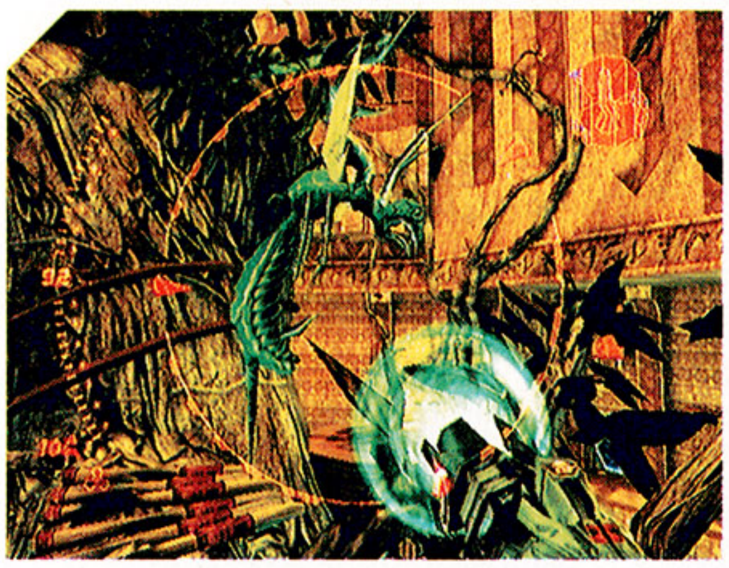
With all the hub-bub over Zelda's new look (turn the page if you somehow haven't heard already), the first ever in-game screens and 10 seconds of Metroid footage leaked out of Nintendo without much fanfare. This wasn't entirely by accident, as Miyamoto jokingly explained, "We were going to show more footage of Metroid—actually I have it right here in my bag—but (public relations manager Yasuhiro Minagawa) said if we showed it, this entire interview would be you all asking about Metroid."

According to Miyamoto, Metroid's development is going quite well ("We are already at the stage of fine-tuning and putting on the finishing touches," he said), and the game was almost going to be shown playable at Spaceworld, but a lack of sound effects and some remaining issues with the controls made him decide to wait.

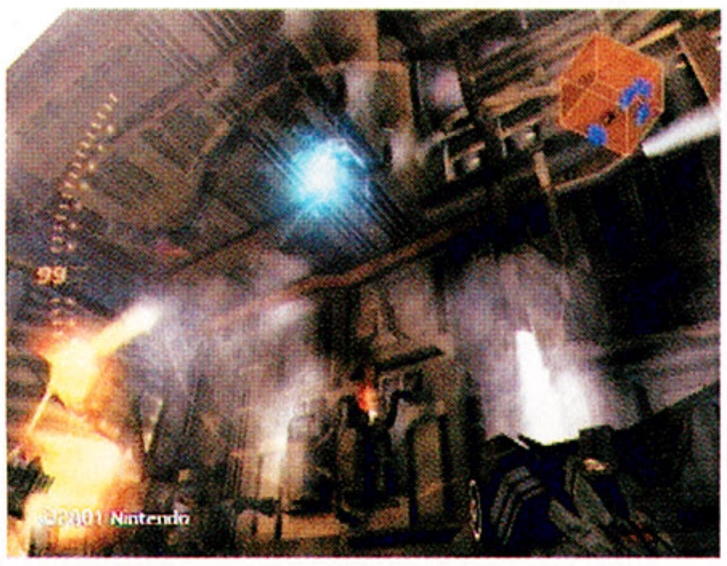
Miyamoto also went out of his way to ease our concern over untested developer Retro Studios being handed such a beloved Nintendo franchise. He let everyone know the big N is definitely taking an active role in the game's development. "We give suggestions all the time," he said. "At least every other week we have a teleconference (with Retro), and once every month or two we have a face-to-face meeting."

Ok, fair enough, so when can we try it out?



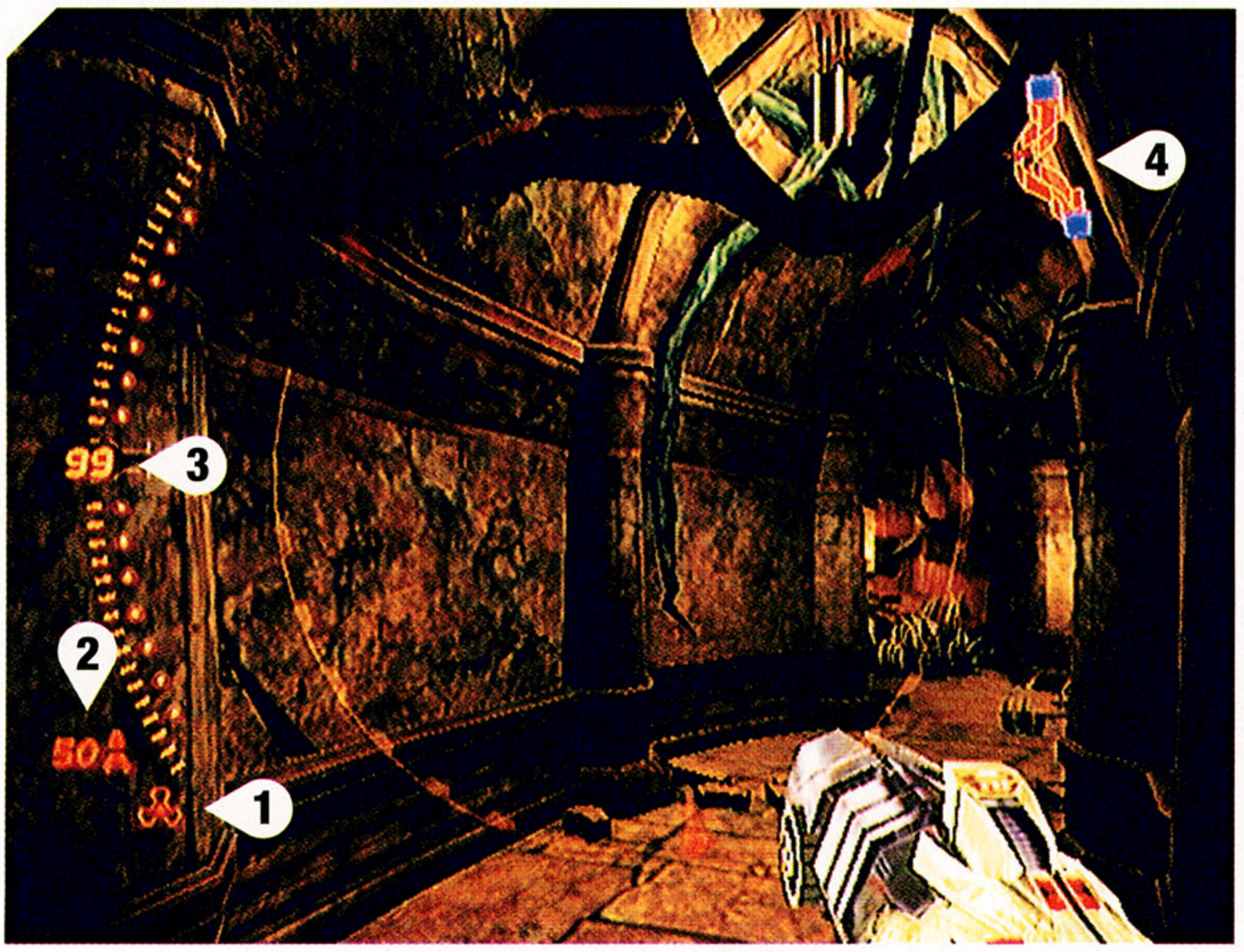






Primed But Not Ready to Go

We were as shocked as the next guy when we heard Prime would be a first-person game, but we must say so far it looks pretty good. The levels are incredibly detailed, even in outdoor areas, and it all ran very smoothly. Well, for the few seconds we got to see it in motion, anyway. We want more!



Sam 'A' Us

Most everything in Metroid Prime is seen as if you really are Samus—right down to the meters and stuff that show up on the inside of her helmet. Here's what we can make sense of so far:

1. **Currently selected weapon** Samus' arm can transform on the fly into several different guns.
2. **Number of missiles** In past Metroids, these are important both as powerful weapons and as keys to open doors.
3. **Health gauge** We're guessing, but it seems likely since it goes to 99 like the older games.
4. **Map** This 3D level map spins as you do. It displays all doors in and out of the room in blue.



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Developer: Nintendo Release: 2002 (U.S. and Japan)

Everyone's jaw dropped—some out of awe, some out of disgust—but all in complete surprise at the radical new look of...

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

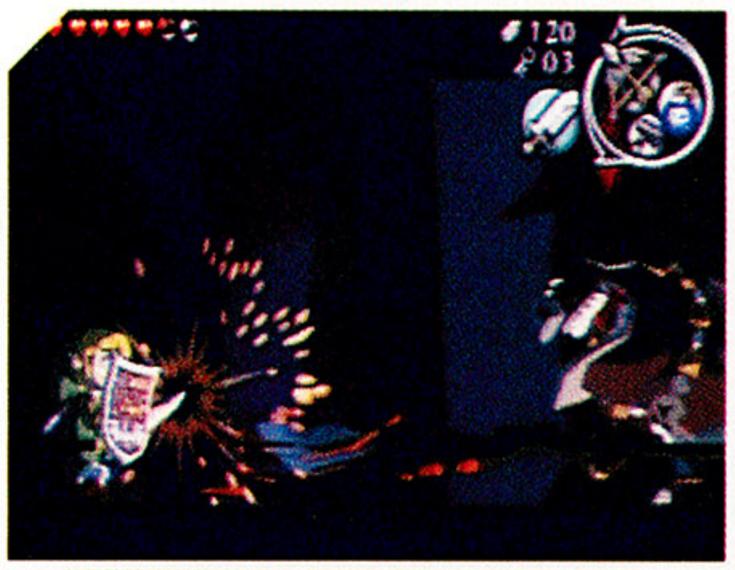
2D versus 3D. Columbine. Mature games sold to kids. And now Zelda. Take a gander at these screens and prepare to choose a side in the biggest controversy in gaming since we heard Metroid Prime would be a first-person shooter.

Just minutes after a radically redesigned Zelda was shown—only on video (hence the crappy screen quality seen on these pages)—at the pre-Spaceworld press conference, the gathered press in Tokyo and indeed the entire Internet was aflame with anxious fans and critics dissecting the cartoony cel-shaded new look of "Cel-da" with a passion that makes abortion protesters seem positively laid back. Some notable comments: "Anyone over 17 should be ashamed to play a game that looks like that!"; "It may look cool, but it's just not Zelda!"; and "What the hell is Nintendo thinking?!?" Well, in a later interview Miyamoto answered the last question at least. "As we were trying to make an even more adult-looking and even better proportioned, real, human-like Link than [the one from Ocarina of Time], I started to feel a little strange," he said. "Instead, [I thought] we should challenge ourselves to make a new expression of Link, something really Nintendo-like, [that would also make] use of GameCube's abilities."

It's ironic that, from the short video clip shown (less than a minute from start to finish), the gameplay in this new GameCube Zelda actually appeared almost identical to the last two N64 games: Link locks on to enemies with the same screen-shrinking Z-targeting system from Ocarina of Time and Majora's Mask. He uses his shield to block attacks, and can still set his bow, bombs and other items to three shortcut buttons displayed at the top of the screen. Familiar key, Rupee (money) and health hearts round out the display. Even the music was quintessential Zelda—an awesome new version of the classic overworld theme.

While reactions to the footage were decidedly mixed, at least one heavyweight voiced his support. "The thing I like most is that it has a very warm-hearted look," Sonic Team's Yuji Naka told us the next day during our interview. "And the animation is superb. I didn't much care for the fact that they changed Link's face, but overall, I think it's great. It's very provocative."







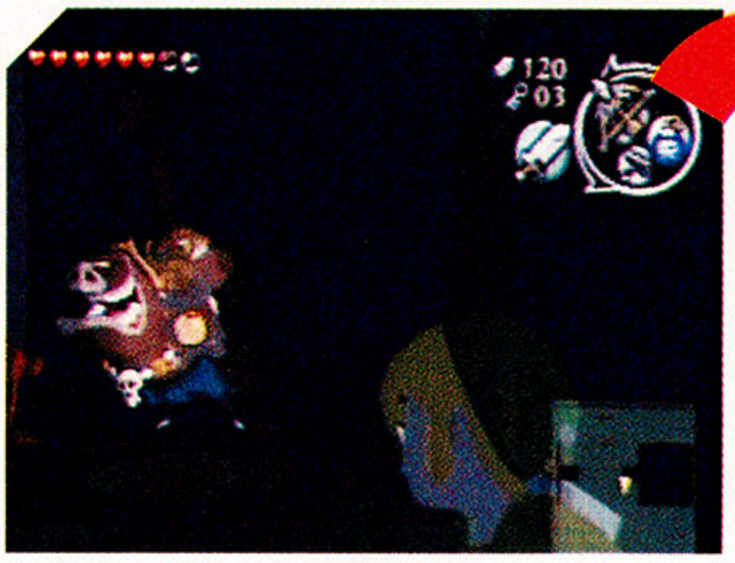


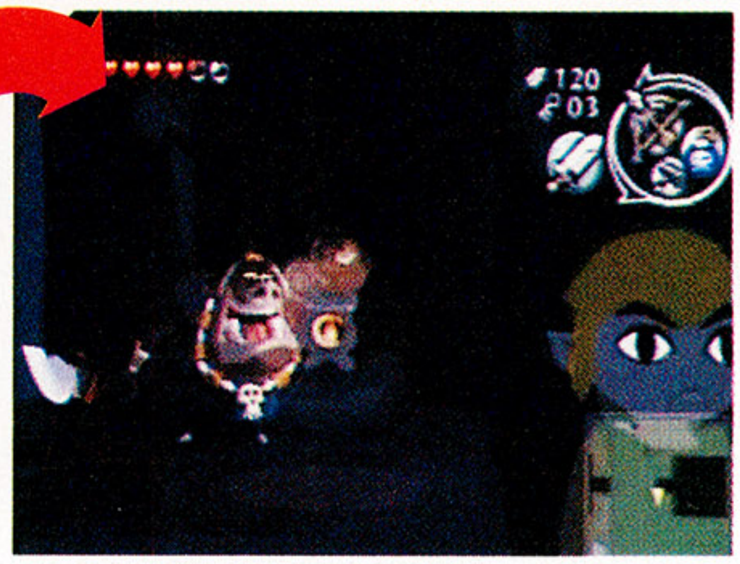




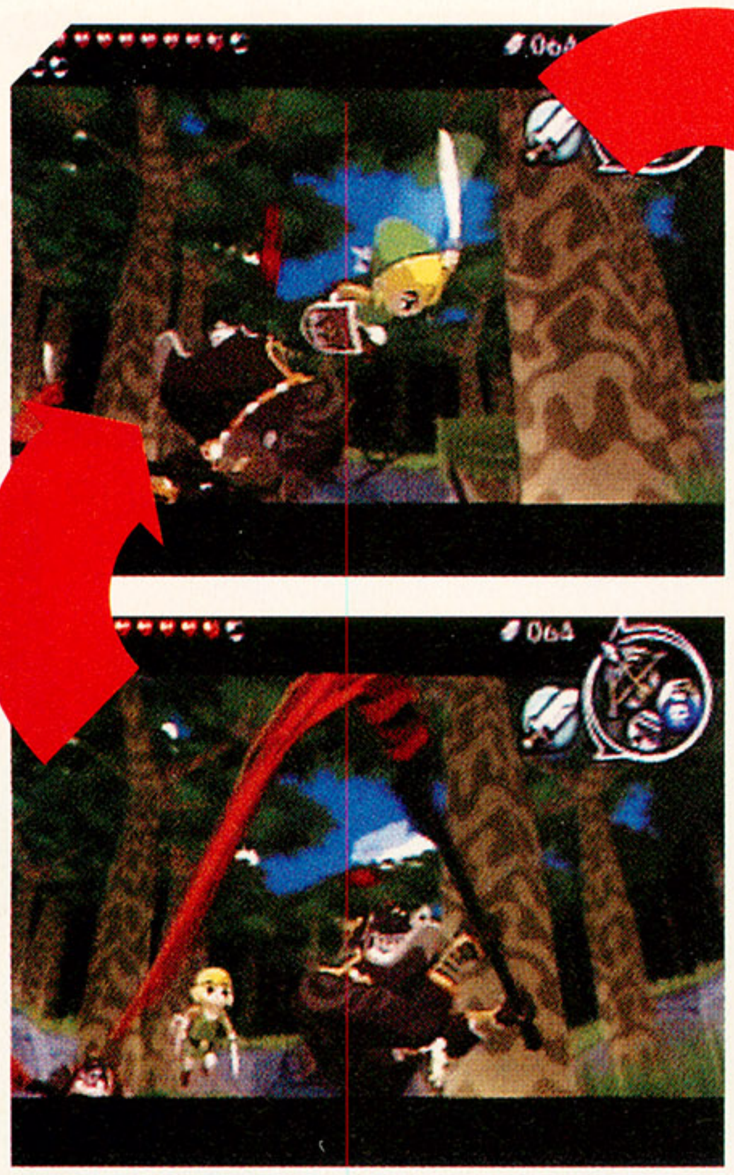
The evil boar-like guards run in place in the air, Wile E. Coyote-style. Could these enemies be the new incarnation of Link's old buddies, the Molblins?







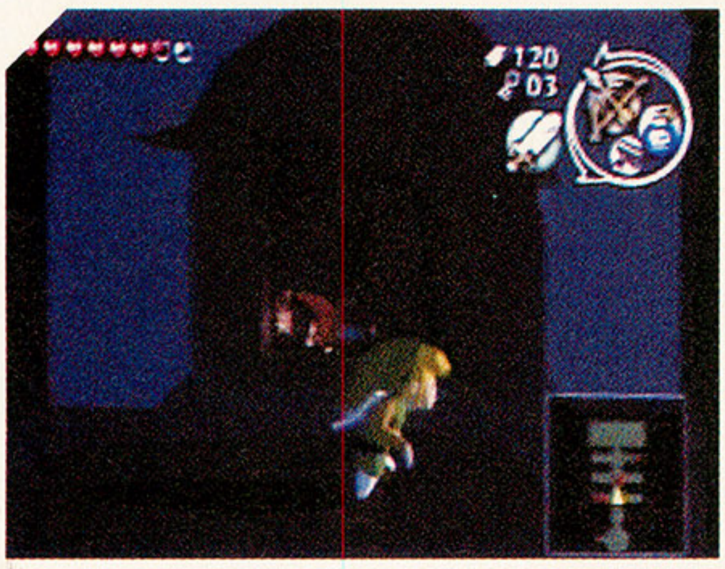
PEEK-A-BOO Someone's been training with Solid Snake in the off season: Link leans out from behind a column to spy on an unsuspecting guard. What we wouldn't give to see the cute lil' guy sneak over and snap his neck.





"UP AND AT THEM!"

Link jumps over the swooshing spear and tags the bad guy's ass in mid-air (complete with full-flip flourish) before landing on the other side. Stylin'!







Our hero avoids detection by tip-toeing (above) past the guards, and a pic from the old GameCube Zelda footage (right) from last year's Spaceworld.

"For people seeing [this Zelda] for the first time, it's a big shock. But after that first shock, if people stop and think about it, they think 'Wow, this actually might work out.'"

-Satoru Iwata
general manager, Nintendo

THE MISSING LINKS

Where exactly did the inspiration for Zelda's makeover come from? Some might say Disneyworld. Others claim it was heavy, heavy drugs. But after literally hundreds of seconds of serious study, we think we have it figured out. Take a look:



Start with the earliest drawings of Link from Zelda 1...

+



...add a dash of Hermey, the elf who dreams of being a dentist in *Rudolf, the Red-Nosed Reindeer*...

×



...multiply with Looney Tunes' animated quality and "wacky" disregard for physics and you get...

=



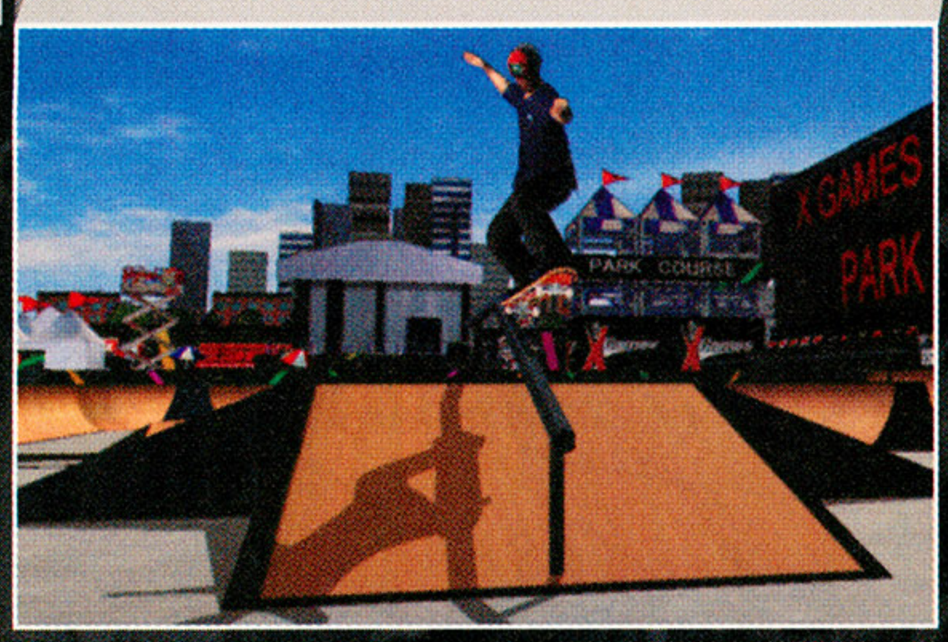
The new style for Link and company on the GameCube!

>

Don't like it? Could be worse: May we present Link from the rare CD-i version of Zelda? Augh! Look away! It burns, IT BURNS!!!

DETAILS. DETAILS.

11 NUMBER OF RAMPS ON THE X GAMES STREET COURSE.



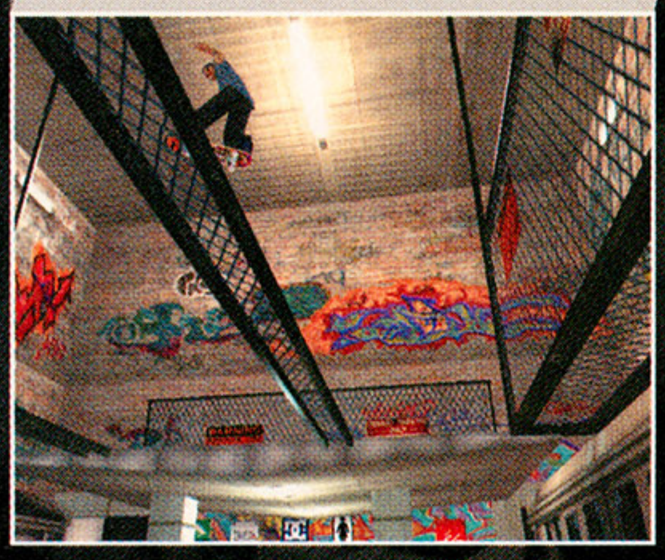
8,460 NUMBER OF BOARD SET-UP COMBINATIONS AVAILABLE.



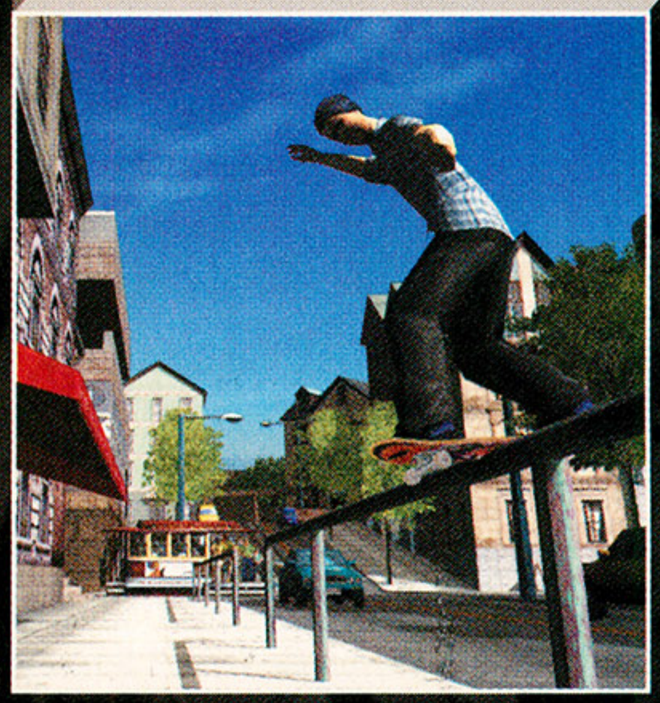
13 NUMBER OF KICKFLIP COMBINATIONS



1,000 POINT VALUE FOR GRINDING ACROSS A SUBWAY STATION.



3 NUMBER OF LOCATIONS TO SKATE AND COMPETE IN.



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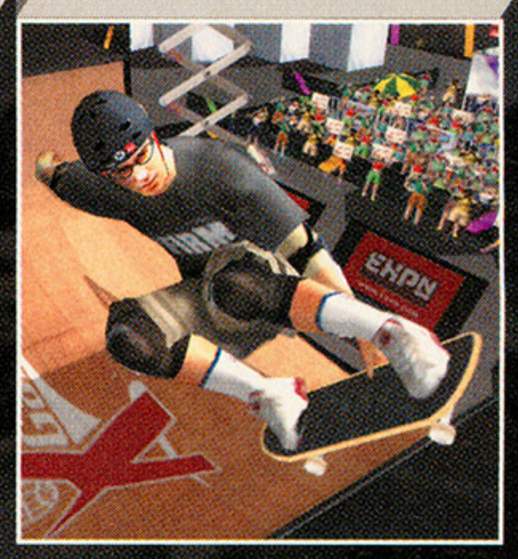
DETAILS.

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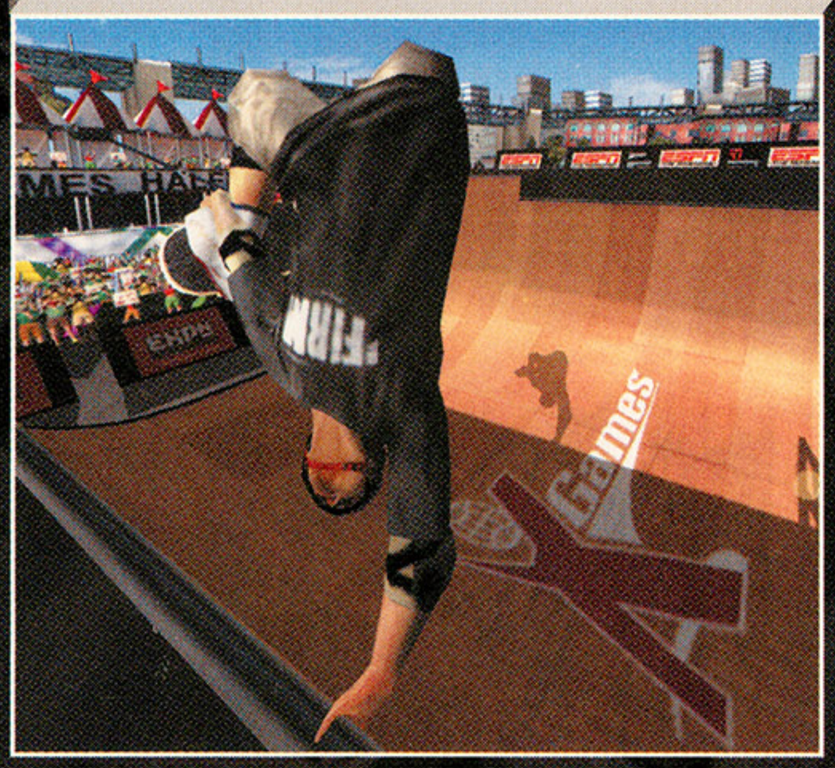
8 NUMBER OF PRO'S YOU CAN PLAY AS.
RICK MCCRANK, LINCOLN UEDA, KERRY GETZ, COLIN MCKAY, CHRIS SENN, CHAD FERNANDEZ, CARLOS DE ANDRADE, BOB BURNQUIST



2,009 NUMBER OF POLYGONS USED TO MODEL BOB BURNQUIST.



2.4 Billion TOTAL NUMBER OF TRICK COMBINATIONS.



201,126 NUMBER OF ATTENDEES AT THE 2000 X GAMES IN SAN FRANCISCO.



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levels from the X Games to the decks of a passenger liner with hidden challenges and secret areas. With ESPN X Games Skateboarding, it's the details that count.

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X Games skateboarding

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Developer: Nintendo Release: Nov. 18 (U.S.) Sept. 14 (Japan)

Who you gonna call? LOU-EE-GEE!

Luigi's Mansion

With Mario Sunshine not due until next summer, the weight of carrying GameCube's must-own launch game falls on Luigi's overall-supporting shoulders. And after the fun but fairly straightforward demo we played last May, we wondered if Mario's little brother's ghost-busting adventure would be up to the task. Fortunately, the version we tried out at Spaceworld gave us a better peek into the deeper levels inside Luigi's Mansion.

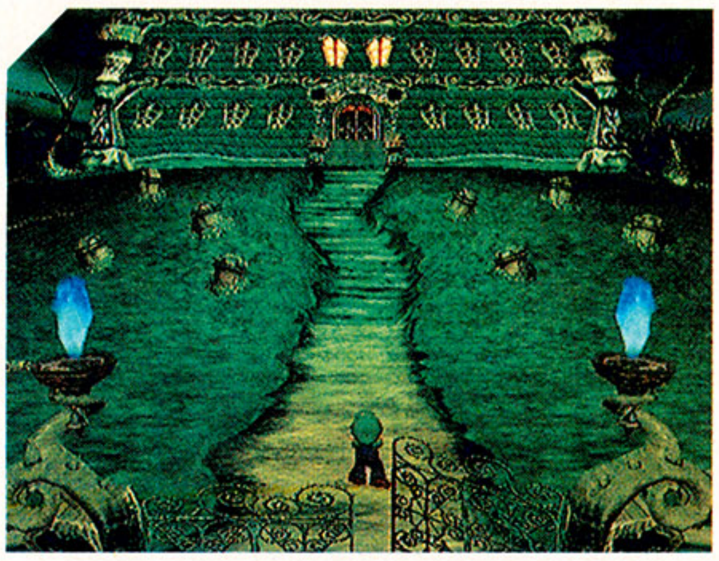
You still travel room to room in an old haunted house, sucking up ghosts with a vacuum and collecting cash (in the form of coins, bills and gold bars). Now you can also search parts of the rooms, walk up to just about anything (vases, drawers, wardrobes) and tap a button to pop 'em open. Maybe you'll find an item or ghost inside.

Your vacuum can be used for more than just capturing ghosts, too. Try sucking up a big ball and letting go to fire it at enemies, or use its draw to pull down keys from shelves high out of reach. It also factors into puzzles, like one where you use it to open the drapes and use the wind to make a ghost appear, or another that has you blowing out some lit candles to proceed.

More uses were revealed for Luigi's ever-present Game Boy Color as well (actually, it's labeled Game Boy *Horror* in the game—see right). Not only does your GBH keep track of money and other items, but it also contains a 3D map to help navigate the mansion's five levels, and a first-person viewing mode where you can analyze objects, getting hints for how to solve certain puzzles.

Luigi's Mansion will be out in Japan by the time you read this, so check back next issue for more.









A few other recognizable faces show up in Luigi's Mansion: Every once in awhile you'll stumble into Toad, who will help you save your game. And of course eventually you'll run into Mario, whom you've come to rescue.





Developer: Silicon Knights Release: Dec. 3 (U.S. and Japan)

Finally, a GameCube game that's *not* suitable for all ages...

Eternal Darkness

Comparisons to Silicon Knights' GC adventure and a certain Capcom survival-horror game are inevitable, so let's get it out of the way first: Eternal Darkness isn't much like Resident Evil. Yes, there are shotguns, and yes, there are undead creatures, but from there the two games diverge. For one, there's at least three different characters in ED to play, each in his or her own unique time period (from Roman times to the 19th century). You can also target enemies' specific body parts—arms, legs, the head or torso—to try to find their weak spots. Other stuff includes tons of traps (pits, swinging blades, etc.) and the very good chance that your character might go insane. Yikes. Look for it this fall—in case you have trouble, it'll be the GC box with the "M" rating on it.





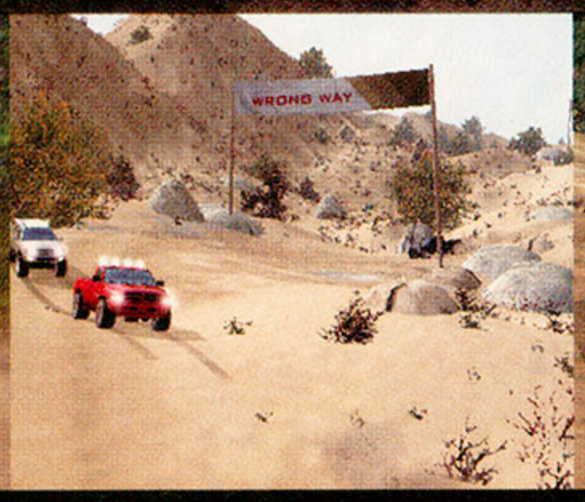
Yes, these screens are from the same game. When you change characters you change time

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Developer: Nintendo Release: Nov. 19 (U.S.) Oct. 26 (Japan)

An army of one (hundred or so)...

PIKMIN

As Nintendo's own press release admits, Pikmin is a difficult game to categorize. Their best attempt is Action/Sim; we'd put it closer to real-time strategy games like Starcraft, but admittedly that's a stretch as well.

You control a wee little button-nosed astronaut stranded on an alien planet, gathering parts of your crashed spaceship so you can return home. Problem is you can't do it alone. Enter the Pikmin, a race of tiny ant-like creatures who blossom out of the ground like plants. Starting with just a few of these cute little helpers, you begin to clear the area around you, grabbing stray coins from plants and defeated bugs. The coins are then redeemed to create more Pikmin. Slowly your army of these servants builds until you can marshal several different groups of them to do tasks simultaneously: One group could be knocking down a wall, while another builds a bridge, while yet another attacks a rampaging insect. Miyamoto stresses that the Pikmin grow to love you like a parent, but with all the little guys we set to hard labor and sent flying off into the grinning, razor-sharp jaws of almost certain death, they seemed more like adorable little soldiers or slaves to us. Yes, cute little slaves...bowing to our every whim...obeying our every order, without question or hesitation...

...Ahem. Anyway, the Spaceworld version of Pikmin was just as fun as the earlier build we played last May. The controls are ridiculously simple (almost everything is done with just two buttons) and the gameplay is so refreshing and intuitive it was hard not to giggle with glee. Again our play time was limited, so the only question that remains is how deep do these Pikmin grow?









We saw a few larger enemies this time, including one that "sneezes" away Pikmin, and this guy above (an Octorok from Zelda? He even shoots rocks!).





Developer: Namco Release: TBA

The soul still burns...

SOUL CALIBUR 2

Six seconds. That was the length of Soul Calibur 2's video footage at Spaceworld, but it was enough to remind us that the once and future king of fighters is about to jump back into the ring again. Since our world-exclusive report on SC2 for GC last month, Namco has officially announced versions of the game for both PS2 and Xbox, all due hopefully sometime in the next year. Where will the definitive Soul Cali 2 reside? Hey, at this point, your guess is as good as ours. But what we do know is that SC2 will retain its 8-Way Run system, incorporate "Avoid!!" and "Break!!" techniques (although we still aren't sure exactly how these will work), and feature at least four new characters. And beyond having a bunch of new levels, each of them will also be bigger and more complex. Frankly, we couldn't be more excited to enter the next stage of history.

What do you see in this screenshot? 1) Hwang vs. Astaroth? 2) A new background with both wall-interaction and ring-out possibilities? 3) Hwang wearing a halter top?



A DARKER JUSTICE MUST BE SERVED

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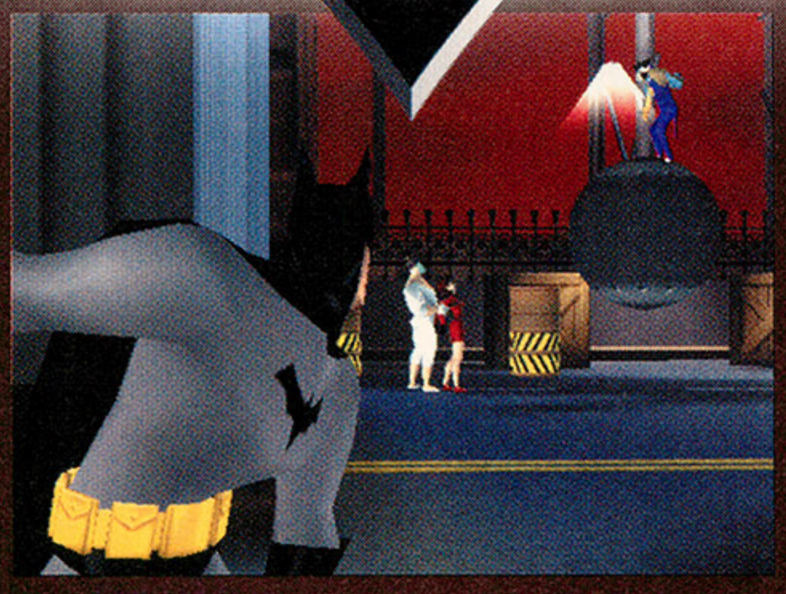
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Developer: Sonic Team Release: TBA

If Nintendo won't take the GameCube online, Yuji Naka and thousands of PSO fans will...

Phantasy Star Online

The exciting part about the new version of Sonic Team's online RPG at Spaceworld wasn't the four-player splitscreen mode (yeah, it's cool, but we'd already seen that). It was the kiosk with four GameCubes playing PSO together online. Lag and gameplay felt nearly identical to the game's Dreamcast counterpart, with the GameCube's four main buttons and two shoulder pads making the control transplant a painless affair. Two new characters were on display, as well—a female android Hunter and a male human Force. We're sure new quests, items, mags and other goodies will be included too, but so far Sega's been mum on the subject.

The more important question is how will the game work online? Nintendo went out of their way at Spaceworld to stress they have no solid online plans as of yet, so will the GC modem even be available by the time PSO hits? Or might it even be packed in with PSO itself? "It's up to Nintendo," Sonic Team president Yuji Naka told us. "We have talked about (bundling the modem with PSO), but there are a lot of issues involved." Hmm, all right, so what does Nintendo have to say about it? "(Sega) believes in the online business and they want to engage in the online business, so we are not going to stand in their way," Nintendo general manager Satoru Iwata told us, adding that we should expect an announcement on the subject very soon. "There are ways we can cooperate with them and make it happen."

The only other big question that still remains is will GameCube PSO characters be able to play online together with their Dreamcast counterparts? "The current GC version is compatible, but I have a lot of concerns if it should be," Naka said, "because the DC users have had so much more time to play. Sometime soon I will have to decide." Allow us to toss in our two cents: MAKE THEM COMPATIBLE, FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD!











Although they dropped the 'Ver. 2' moniker from the title, the GameCube PSO looks like it will include everything from the second Dreamcast version (like the Ice Dragon boss above), plus a few of its own exclusive goodies.

Developer: Sonic Team Release: TBA

Sega's trademark hedgehog switches sides...

Sonic Adventure 2

Sonic Team's next GameCube title is a mystery no longer: The latest Dreamcast Sonic game will be spinning on Nintendo's machine soon. Like PSO, the GC version of Sonic at the show was a dead-ringer for its DC brother—no better, no worse. Sonic papa Yuji Naka told us improvements for the final version will include a smoother two-player mode (including multiplayer versions of some levels that couldn't be done properly on the DC) and other surprises he wasn't ready to spill the beans on just yet. Might one new feature include a link-up game with the upcoming Game Boy Advance Sonic title? "Maybe if we have time," Naka told us with a smile. Naka didn't address the wishful thinking that he and Miyamoto would work on a game together, but he did mention he would love to see the Sonic characters in a Smash Brothers game someday. Tails versus Pikachu? Sounds like a fair fight to us.

How did Sega's Yuji Naka feel about exhibiting at ex-archrival Nintendo's Spaceworld expo? "It's not really sadness, just...it's the 21st century, and the industry has changed," he said.





BUST IT

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Developer: HAL Release: Dec. 3 (U.S.) Nov. 21 (Japan)

Who wouldn't want to kick Kirby's flabby ass?

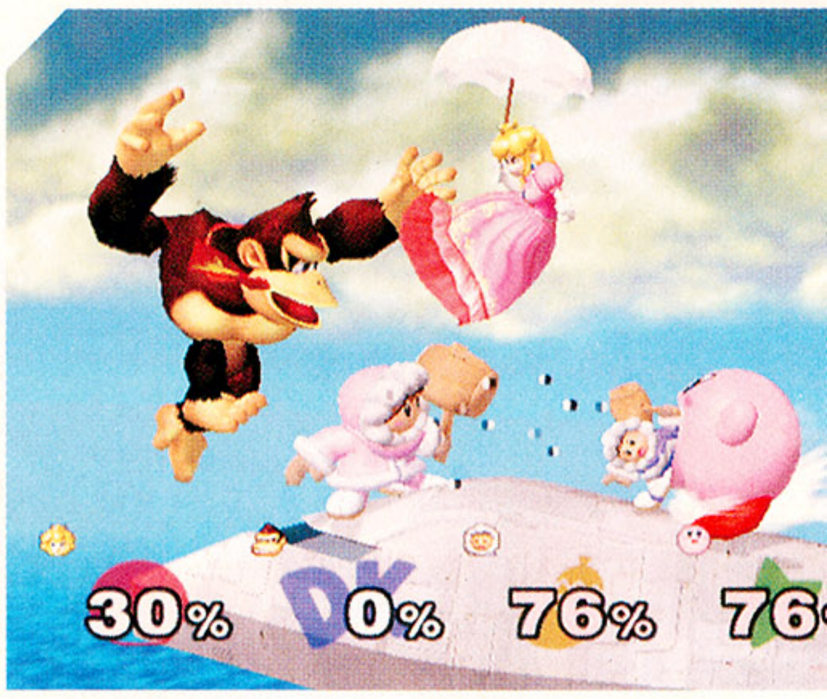
SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE

They may be the world's most beloved video game characters, but everyone sure seems to like kicking the stuffing out of Nintendo's cadre of cartoony superstars. Super Smash Bros. Melee was clearly the highlight at Spaceworld: Lines formed to try the four-player fighting sequel the instant the doors opened to the public, often forcing people to wait for up to two hours just to get some hands-on play time. Why all the aggression? The Spaceworld version of SSBM featured 13 of the initial 14 playable characters, as well as a small sampling of the game's many extra play modes. Creator Masahiro Sakurai told us there would be plenty more extras in the final game, which is impressive since we've already seen at least four one-player modes, three multiplayer modes, and several other bonus options and goodies. Our favorites so far include the Adventure mode, where you run through special-themed environments based on classic Nintendo games to get to each fight, and the Figure mode, in which you can buy and view 3D action figures of famous Nintendo characters (plus a few obscure ones, like the ducks from Duck Hunt) using coins earned in battle. Also worth mentioning is the Super Mushroom, the new item that allows you to grow about five times normal size. Hey you, Pikachu! Time to die!





Shopping spree: You can spend coins earned during battle on collectible action figures in the Figure mode.



Some moves are pressure-sensitive, meaning the harder you press the button, the stronger the attack will be.

Developer: Nintendo Release: Nov. 18 (U.S.) Sept. 14 (Japan)

Speedvision meets the Weather Channel in this wet-and-wild remake...

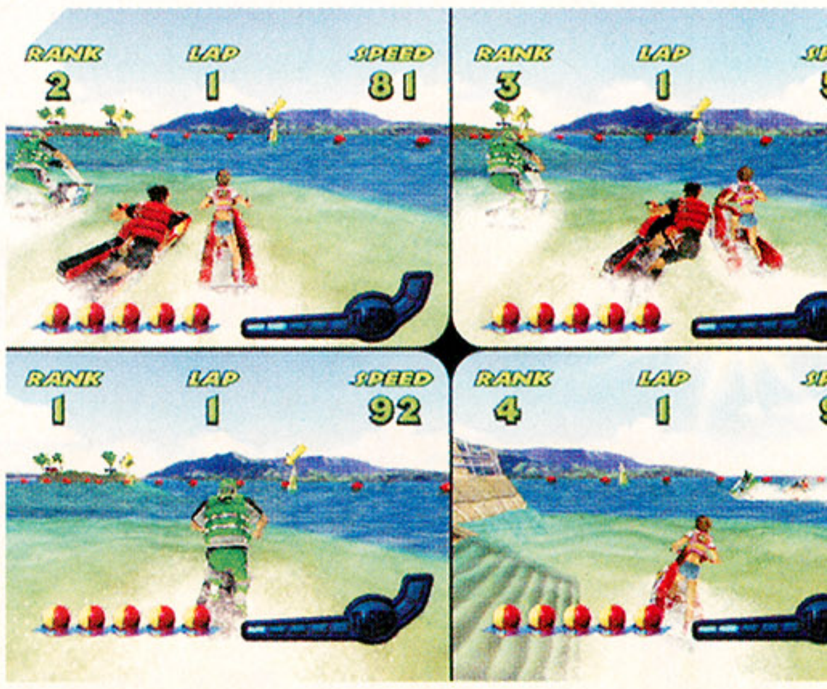
WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM

The GameCube's "other" first-party launch title, Wave Race was 100 percent complete at the show and will already be out in Japan by the time you read this. So how is it? Blue Storm plays a lot like a souped-up version of the N64 original: a huge boost in visual quality (especially those crazy-wave water effects), but most of the actual gameplay enhancements are minor—more characters, some nifty new courses, four-player play, etc. The two biggest improvements are a turbo boost that'll help you find shortcuts and new weather effects that greatly affect play. Depending on the forecast for any day's race, water levels and wave height can vary, sometimes making different paths through the same levels available. And wait until you see the effects on an all-out downpour—this game can whip up some serious storms, including a blurring effect where the rain hits the screen itself! While it may not have the originality the first game had going for it, our time with Blue Storm left us with the impression of a solid racer with incredible physics and tight, balanced play.

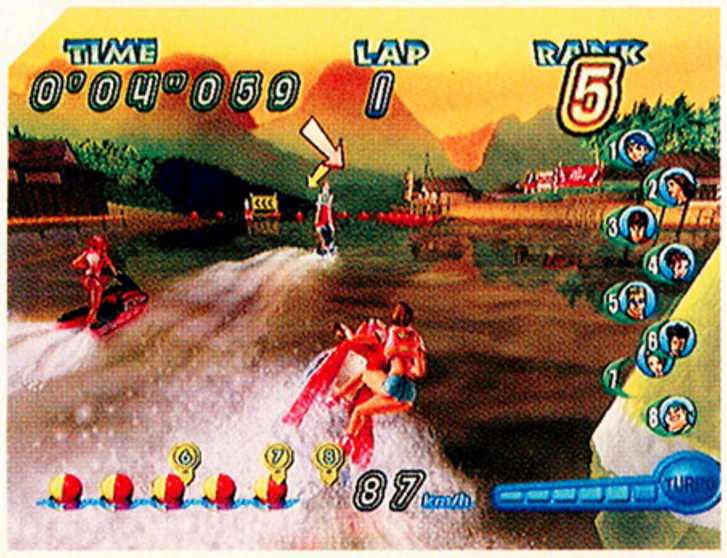




Skimming past icebergs...in a tanktop? At least put on a wetsuit fer crissakes.



GameCube Wave Race includes smooth, four-player splitscreen play.



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PlayStation.2

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Violence

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Developer: Amusement Vision
Release: Nov. 18 (U.S.) Sept. 14 (Japan)

The title pretty much says it all...

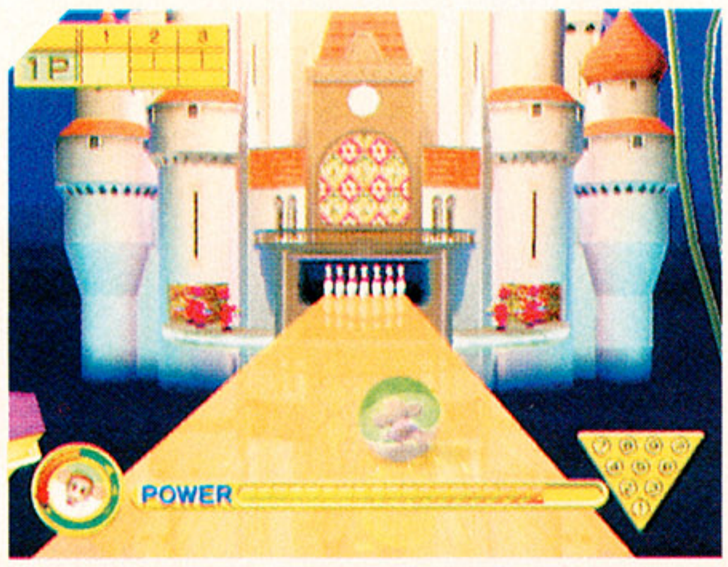
SUPER MONKEY BALL

Even more so than Pikmin, this port of a Sega arcade game features a back-to-basics sense of design: Simply move the analog stick to tilt the level, and guide your alter ego (a cute little monkey in a ball) toward as many bananas as possible on your way to the goal. It sounds easy—and it is—but the levels quickly get complicated, with moving platforms, huge hills, loops and more. But, not content with the over 100 levels of the arcade game, Amusement Vision added some impressive extras for the home audience as well: a four-player splitscreen version of the standard game, a new battle mode, plus simple racing, golf, bowling and billiards contests—all featuring monkey balls, of course. Best of all it'll be one of the few games available at launch in both Japan and the U.S.

We had a chance to try SMB in the arcade (complete with banana-shaped controller), and It was actually a lot more fun than we expected. The added multiplayer modes on the GC should make it an awesome party game.





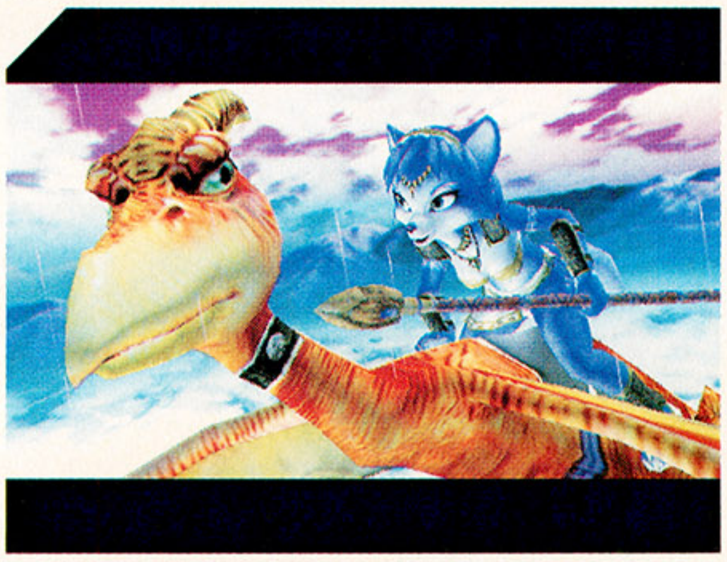




Developer: Rare
Release: February 2002 (U.S. and Japan)

Houston, the Fox has landed...

Star Fox Adventures: Dinosaur Planet



The Japanese version of Rare's first GameCube effort was on hand at Spaceworld, and in better shape than the unstable and glitchy early version we saw at last May's Electronic Entertainment Expo. And yes, to answer your burning question right off the bat, Star Fox Adventures is still much more of a 3D exploration title than a traditional space shooter. In fact, the gameplay here is remarkably similar to the two N64 Zelda games, right down to Z-targeting during fights. The game's graphics are shaping up, with vast environments, massive bosses and detailed animation. As for the character designs—don't ask. But to us ol' Star Fox softies, the main draw of the Spaceworld demo was that we could play the Arwing flight missions. The look is very similar to Star Fox 64, but with the massively improved visuals and intense lighting effects you'd expect from the GameCube. Also shown on video was a new speederbike-esque racing sequence in a dark cave. It looks like Rare's trying to pack something for everybody in this game.







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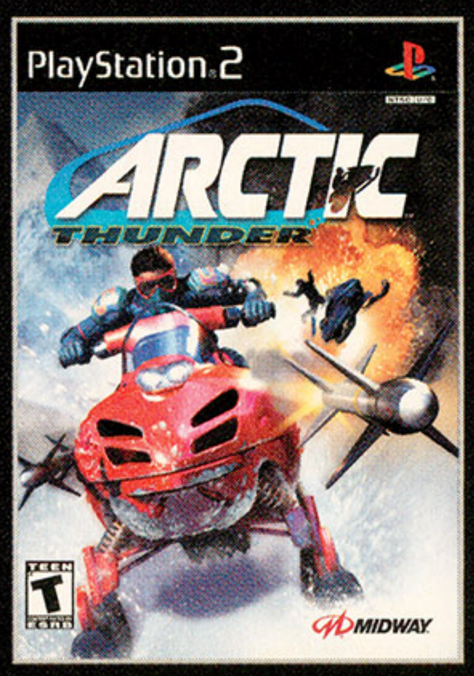
Throttle the competition with hard-core hand-to-hand combat.



Hyper-realistic racing velocity and major air give new meaning to "breakneck speed."



Make 'em feel you with combat weapons like snow bombs, missiles, and The Atomic Snowball.



Sneak Preview @ www.arcticthunder.midway.com

ARCTIC THUNDER

PlayStation 2

XBOX

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Violence

Game Boy Advance

Forget about the GBA? Of course we didn't! What do you think we played on the plane the whole way to and from Tokyo? Nintendo didn't forget about it either, showing off a couple of cool new peripherals coming for their best-selling handheld.

First came a demonstration of different uses for their GameCube/GBA link cable (due this fall in Japan; no U.S. date yet). Remember Kirby Tilt 'N' Tumble, the Game Boy game that had you tilt your system to move in the game? It's coming back as a GameCube game you can play using your GBA. Allow us to explain: You buy the Kirby game for the GameCube, plus a blank GBA cartridge that also includes a tilt sensor. When you connect your GBA (with the tilt cart) to a GC (with Kirby) via the new link cable, a version of the game will download into your handheld. Then you can use your GBA to control the GC game. (Sometimes Kirby will even "fall" out of the GC game and appear on your GBA screen!) You can also disconnect and play it just as a GBA game if you like. Other games can use that same blank GBA cart/tilt sensor for similar uses—it's kind of like a GC/GBA memory card that stores games instead of saves!

Another use shown for the new link cable was with Animal Forest (both GC and GBA versions of the game are on the way). You can design textures on-the-go with the GBA cart using its simple paint program, then upload them to the GameCube title to plaster on signs and such.

Finally, we got more on the Card E Reader: Take any specially marked playing card and run it through the slot on this GBA peripheral to add characters or other information to specially designed games (see the Pokémon game preview below for more information).

We end with a peek at just a few of the titles that were on display at the show; check back next month for much more on other Advance games we got to play, including Guilty Gear X, Magical Vacation and Street Fighter Alpha 3.



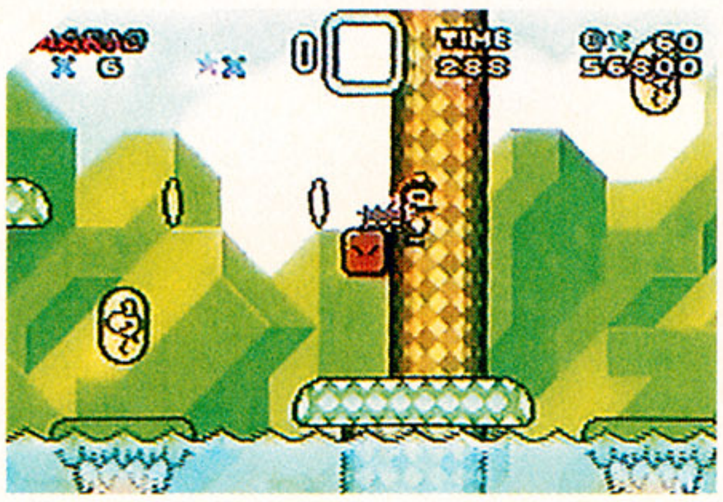
The new Kirby Tilt 'N' Tumble running on GC (top) and GBA at the same.

Pokémon



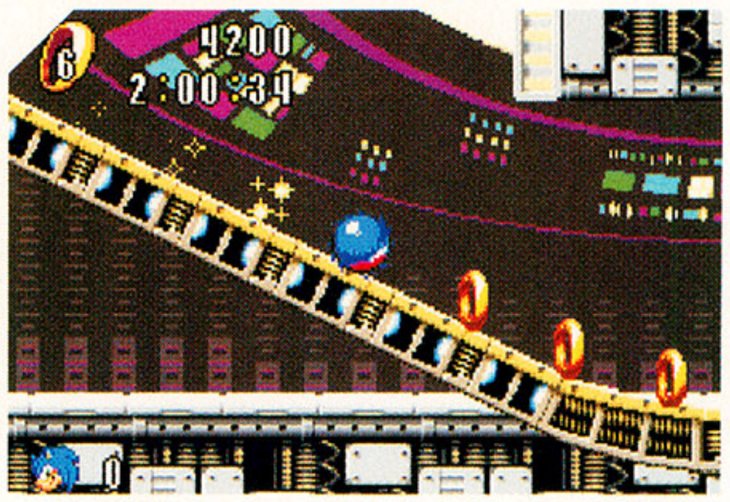
The game chosen to show off the Card E Reader was (surprise!) a Pokémon title. A special compatible Celebi card was even given out at the show. The super-simple demo didn't gets us too excited, but the possibilities for sports—or even RPGs—definitely could be cool. Hopefully Nintendo will use it for more than just kids' games.

Mario Advance 2



Nintendo has apparently skipped the third NES platformer (it's still on the way) and jumped right into part 4, Super Mario World, for their second GBA Mario game. What we played at the show looked, sounded and felt exactly like the Super Nintendo classic—fine and dandy with us. The four-player GBA battle mode returns as well.

Sonic Advance



Take any of the Genesis Sonic games, add better animation, crisper graphics and new levels (most of which look definitely inspired by the earlier games) and you get GBA Sonic. The cool news is each of the four character you can choose from plays differently: Sonic can spin, Tails can fly, Knuckles has his punches, and Amy has her big mallet.

Developer: EA Sports
Release: Winter 2001 (U.S. and Japan)

Getting smooth graphics? It's Tricky...

SSX Tricky

EA Sports' follow-up to their hit extreme (as in Mountain Dew extreme) sports title looks great in screenshots and on the PS2 (check out our preview on pg. 74), so why was the GC version bogging down every now and then on the playable version at Spaceworld? 'Cause it's not finished yet, stupid! We aren't worried—we saw almost the exact same slowdown the first time we saw SSX running on the PS2, and that turned out just fine. Besides, even basic effects like the powder coming up off the board weren't in yet. Expect all the big air, speed and smoothness of the PS2 version by the time it's ready to ship.





Obligatory game characters: '80s: ninjas; '90s: zombies; today: The Guy With The Big Afro™.

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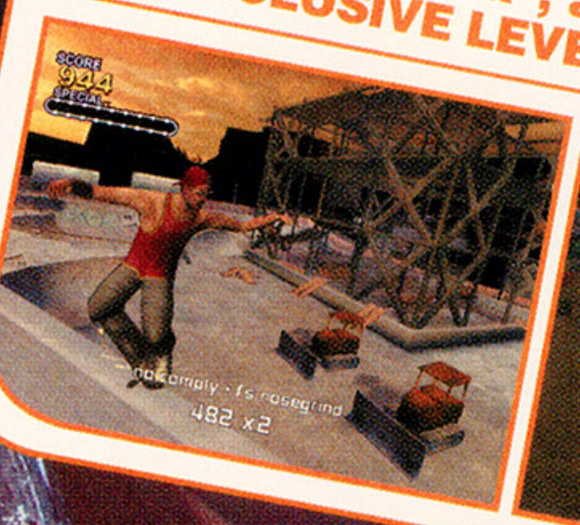
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Developer: Hudson Release: TBA

The party-game favorite explodes on to GameCube...

Bomberman Generations

The pyromaniac spaceman is back. You play either the standard multiplayer battle game or a single-player adventure. It's not announced for the U.S., but we're sure it will be soon.



First he went into 3D, and now he's jumped on the cel-shaded bandwagon as well. We hope Generations is better than the so-so N64 B-man games.

Developer: Marigul Release: TBA

It's like a god game meets Stretch Armstrong...

New Doshin the Giant 1

Formerly released for Nintendo's ill-fated 64DD N64 add-on in Japan, Doshin the Giant is making a return appearance on GameCube. Unfortunately, Nintendo released no details on the GC version, so we figure it's just like the critically acclaimed original, where you control a giant who is the "god" of the land. Doing good deeds makes him bigger, while evil activity makes him smaller. Of course, it sure is fun to throw them wee villagers around....



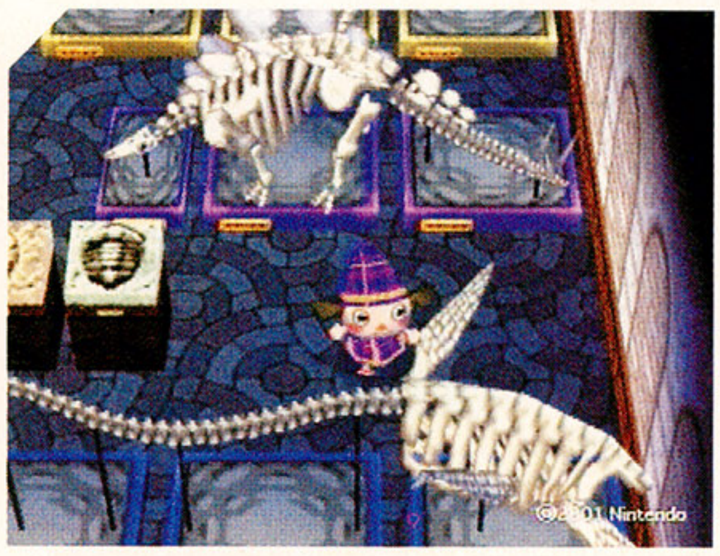
Developer: Nintendo Release: TBA (U.S.) Dec. 14 (Japan)

Some work but all play in this oddball life sim...

Animal Forest+

Like Doshin, Animal Forest+ is a remake of an extremely original N64 game that never made it to America. AF Plus lets you do just about anything you want in your little village, from fishing and catching bugs to working part-time jobs or playing classic NES games. (Sounds like the good life to us.) The GameCube version features enhanced graphics, new items and events, new NES games (like Punch-Out!!), the ability to design your own clothes and wallpaper, and—best of all—Game Boy Advance connectivity. By linking to your GBA, you design textures on the go and find a special "island" that you can't otherwise access.

Animal Forest+ is definitely not your standard video game; we can't wait to finally see a U.S. version.



Developer: Left Field Studios Release: TBA

Nintendo finally returns to the slopes...

1080° Snowboarding 2

The sequel to the N64 shredder was shown in video form for the first time at Spaceworld, and all we can say is screenshots don't do the game justice—you really need to see it in motion. Movement is quick and fluid, and the boarders are highly detailed, with smooth animation and outfits that actually flutter in the wind.



1080° eschews the over-the-top antics of games like SSX in favor of a more realistic approach.

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Mild Language
Violence

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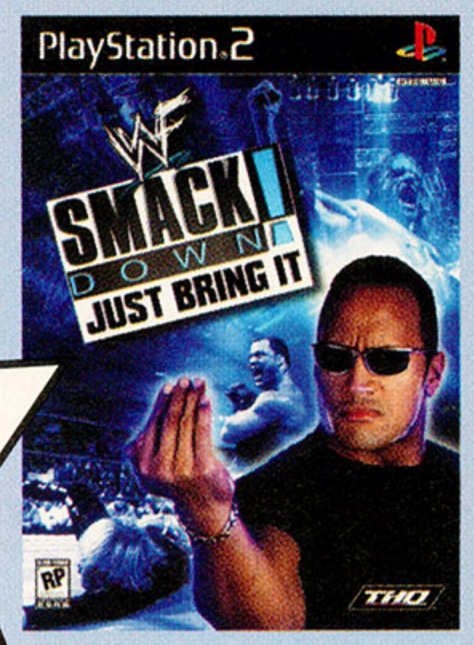


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RING

THQ unleashes two WWF games this fall, while Acclaim is looking to make a "legendary" comeback. Let's limber up for the next generation of wrestling games...

by Bryan Stratton

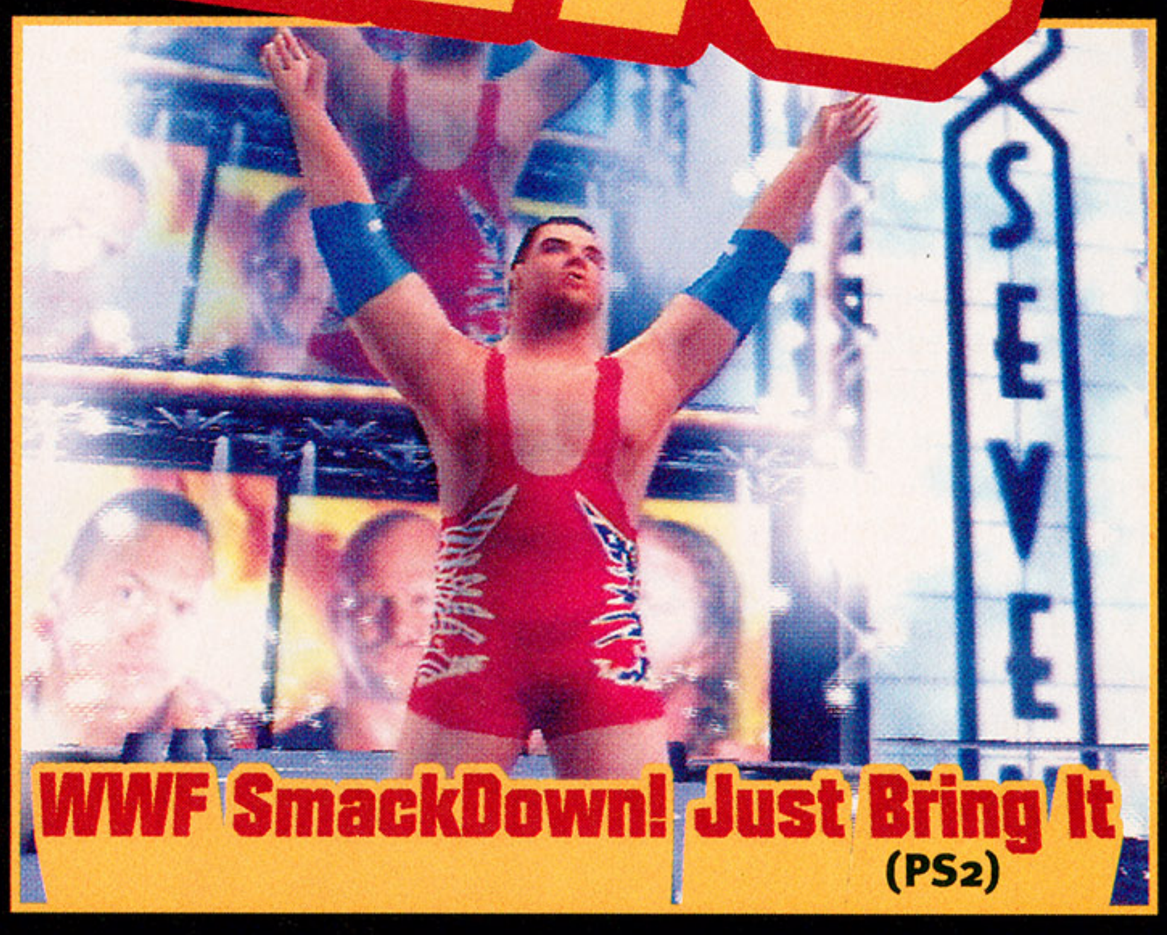
LEADERS

Ever since it snatched the WWF license out from under Acclaim's nose almost two years ago, THQ has delivered chairshot-size hit after hit to wrestling fans. This fall, the company hopes to capitalize on the next-gen revolution with two big titles that'll probably top every kid's wish list: WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It, due for PlayStation 2 in late October, and WWF Raw Is War, which hits Xbox at launch.

SmackDown! Just Bring It is the third title in the acclaimed SmackDown! series for the original PlayStation. Yukes, the developer responsible for the first two SmackDowns, is on board for the third, which is essentially a faster, prettier version of its previous incarnations, with the same control scheme and deeper gameplay options.

Raw Is War uses a completely new engine crafted by Japanese developer Anchor. And although it's still early in development, the game looks gorgeous. THQ hopes to make it an Xbox launch title, and the crisp detail on the wrestlers and environments speak highly of the console's potential to be a graphics powerhouse.

THQ's WWF titles, however,



WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It (PS2)

WWF Raw Is War (Xbox)

Legends of Wrestling (PS2)

ain't the only games in town. Acclaim, which raised the hackles of wrestling fans by reusing the same hard-to-master gameplay engine for its WWF products year after year, is back with Legends of Wrestling, a completely new take on the genre due in November for PS2. Instead of representing a single federation, Legends offers a grab-bag of more than 40 legendary wrestlers, including heavyweights like Jerry "The King" Lawler and King Kong Bundy.

Will THQ's WWF titles remain the most electrifying games in sports entertainment? Does Legends of Wrestling have what it takes to wipe years of bad karma off of Acclaim's mat? Let's dive into the ring and find out...

The Rosters...

The closest THQ ever came to dropping the WWF ball was with Royal Rumble for the Dreamcast, which featured only 20 wrestlers even though its main selling point was the 30-man Royal Rumble tournament. But have no fear: Raw Is War does not repeat that mistake. Of all three games, it boasts the biggest roster: 50 WWF grapplers, according to THQ executive producer Tim Flaharty.

SmackDown! isn't far behind, with a projected 45-man roster. The incredibly detailed create-a-wrestler feature is back, with an even more ridiculous amount of customization options. There's even a rumor floating around that Limp Bizkit's main mook, Fred Durst, is an unlockable character: good news for those of us who have long dreamed of beating Mr. Break Stuff into a quivering lump. Due to licensing restrictions, neither WWF game will feature WCW wrestlers, nor will they include any ECW wrestlers added



WWF Raw Is War

The wrestling world has been in chaos ever since the WWF bought ECW last March, but no worlds collide in Raw Is War or SmackDown! Both pack WWF wrestlers only. Expect the InVasion to begin in a future title.







WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It







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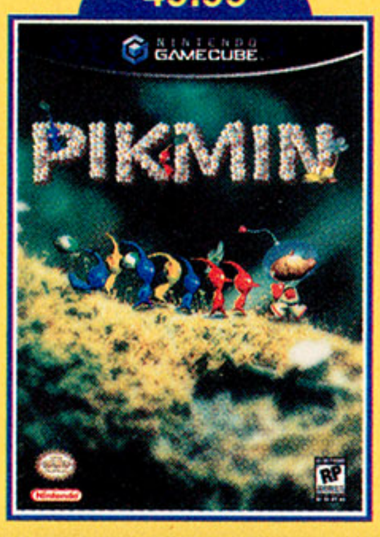
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Nintendo GameCube System

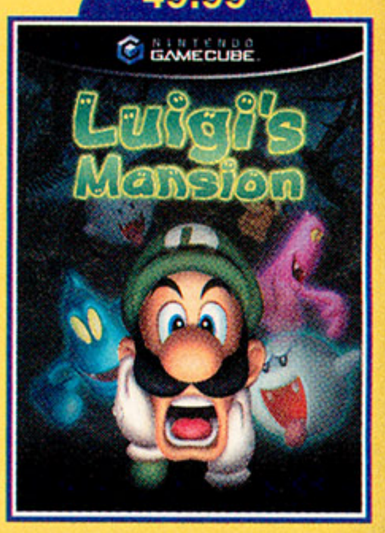
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Raw Is War can show up to six wrestlers in the ring. Legends of Wrestling (top two shots to the right) can handle four. SmackDown! (bottom right) supports eight.







after this summer's "InVasion" storyline, such as Rob Van Dam or Tommy Dreamer. Spike Dudley and Tajiri are fair game, however.

Ironically, Van Dam does show up in Legends of Wrestling, as does ECW's Sabu. The rest of the 43-man roster reads like a who's who of wrestling's 1980s heyday, with unforgettable names as The Iron Sheik, Nicolai Volkoff, Hawk and Animal, Captain Lou Albano, Jerry "The King" Lawler, Bret "The Hitman" Hart, George "The Animal" Steele, Jimmy "The Mouth of the South" Hart, Greg "The Hammer" Valentine, and a whole slew of other guys with nicknames in quotation marks.

Legends of Wrestling doesn't pack any female brawlers (sorry, Moolah fans), but the game's impressive create-a-wrestler feature does let you make girl grapplers. And contrary to what you might have heard in earlier reports, Jake "The Snake" Roberts, Bobby "The Brain" Heenan, and Andre the Giant are not in Legends of Wrestling.

The Look...

Without a doubt, Raw Is War is the most visually stunning wrestling game ever. For those diehard gamers who have a hard time even looking at PlayStation or Nintendo 64 graphics anymore, Raw Is War is a godsend. The visual realism that THQ strives for in every WWF title hits a new high point here.

SmackDown! isn't too far behind its Xbox cousin. Screenshots of the game don't do justice to its fluid animations and its crisp detail. Some critics have already commented that this first PS2 WWF title didn't take the graphical leap they expected from a next-gen system, but SmackDown!'s wrestlers are comparable to the smooth character models of Royal Rumble for Dreamcast. For a first-generation title for PS2, SmackDown! holds its own just fine—especially considering that it can handle eight on-screen wrestlers, plus a referee.

"I've become addicted to Ms. Pac-Man for some reason. Is that the lamest thing ever? I'm in the Luxor Hotel in Vegas the other night, with all these casinos and everything, and I'm upstairs playing Ms. Pac-Man."



—WWF Light Heavyweight Champ Scotty 2 Hotty



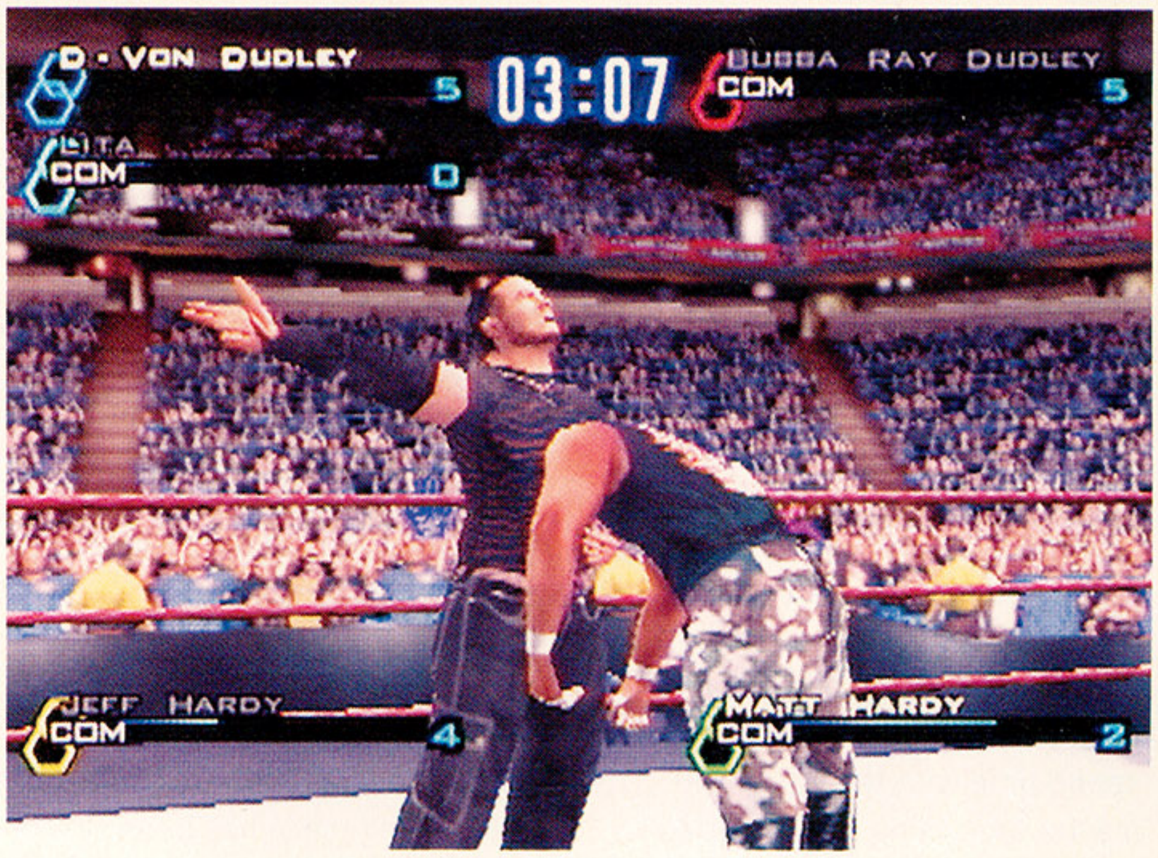
History repeats itself: Legends lets you relive the Cold War days in so many ways. Why not pound Koloff in the junk for the good ol' US of A?

As a contrast to THQ's attempts at creating ultra-realistic character models, Legends of Wrestling takes a more stylized approach. Acclaim's designers went with a slightly exaggerated, almost cartoony style that gives the wrestlers a timeless quality (and that's a good thing, if you've seen the shape the Iron Sheik is in these days). As a result, you get old-time wrestlers who still look like they're in their prime, or even better. Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka, who stopped by Acclaim's Salt Lake City studio before going off to wrestle at a local speedway, commented that he wished he still looked as good as he does in Legends of Wrestling.

The Gameplay...

"If there's one thing that I want you to mention in your article," Legends of Wrestling producer Mike Engberg says to us, "it's that we completely scrapped the old WWF/ECW engine and started from scratch." Taking a cue from THQ's pick-up-and-play style, the Legends crew came up with a deep control scheme that only requires pressing one or two buttons to execute a move. When you perform a maneuver, your opponents have a chance to counter it if they press the counter button with good timing, and you can execute a follow-up move in exactly the same manner, stringing together a long chain of

What SmackDown!'s models lack in detail, they more than make up for in character animation. Gameplay is extremely fast and fluid, as well.



Long Live the King

A former WWF announcer, wrestler and partner in crime with the late goofball comedian Andy Kauffman, Jerry "The King" Lawler was already widely considered a "legend" of wrestling long before Acclaim approached him to be in their game. We corner this 20-year veteran of the ring—who got his start in wrestling by drawing caricatures of wrestlers in his hometown of Memphis, Tenn.—to find out just how good it is to be king.



EGM: How does it feel to be named a "Legend of Wrestling"?
Jerry Lawler: Naturally, it's nice to be spoken of in the same breath as some of the other people who are considered legends in this business, but by the same token, I still consider that I have a long time left in my wrestling career. I feel as if I'm probably in the best shape I've been in my entire career.

EGM: What do you think it takes to earn the right to be called a "Legend of Wrestling"?
JL: Well, certainly I think one of the things is time in the business. I've been in the business for more than 20 years, and I try to think of how many guys have been around that long and still to this day remain a viable commodity. I try to change with the times and stay current with things that are going on and happening.

EGM: Have you seen or played Legends of Wrestling yet?
JL: I have not. I've only just heard about it so far, and everything I've heard is great. I can't wait to actually get it in my hands, see it and play it myself. Hopefully, I can be able to kick some serious butt as my character.

EGM: Are you a big video gamer?
JL: I know this is an interview for a video game magazine, but to be perfectly honest, I have some video games but I'm not addicted to them. I got to where all of a sudden I'd sit down on the computer and, three hours later, I'm saying, "What the heck? I've gotta get out of here, I gotta do something else!"

EGM: Legends of Wrestling is the first non-WWF game you've appeared in. How does it feel to now be on the other side of the fence?
JL: I'm excited about it. I think that there's definitely a market out there for product other than the WWF, and I think that competition is good for everybody. It's even good for the WWF. I don't think that they want to be the absolute only game in town. Not that it's being monopolistic, but it's good for people to have a choice, and then they decide for themselves which thing they like better.

EGM: Ever since you left the WWF, there have been daily rumors about you coming back. Is that in the cards for you?
JL: Right now, I haven't talked with anybody in the WWF for a couple of months. A couple of months ago, they called and made me the offer to come back, and at that time, I wouldn't come back without my wife, Stacy, and so the offer was pulled off the table. Since that time, Stacy and I have separated and are going through a divorce, so she would no longer be a part of that equation. I'm assuming that if there was interest two months ago, there might still be interest now. I realize in retrospect that they were in the right and I was in the wrong, and I'll admit that. But now I think it's one of those situations where I'm waiting for them to call me one more time, but they may be thinking, "We've called him enough; if he wants to come back, he's gonna have to call us." So that may be where we are. I may have to break down and make the call [laughs].





Legend's roster of wrestling favorites still isn't complete. Expect announcements of additional big-name wrestlers soon.

maneuvers and/or reversals (although executing follow-up attacks becomes increasingly difficult).

The end result is that anyone can pick up a controller, pull off impressive-looking moves, and even win matches, but those who spend time with the game and master the timing are rewarded with enough combo momentum to grapple their opponents into submission. And with an exhaustive career mode that sends you to auditoriums and gymnasiums across different regional federations, collecting (and unifying) championship belts along the way, you'll definitely want momentum on your side.

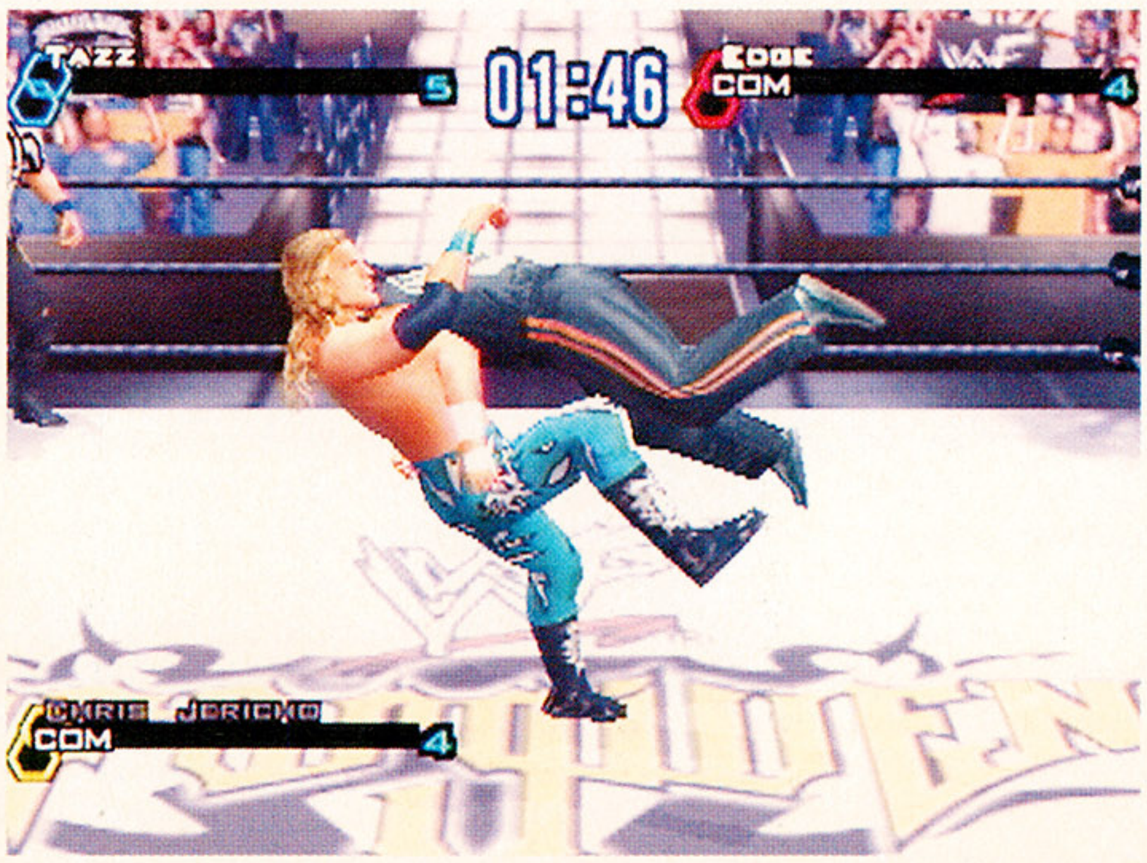
SmackDown! does not have a new control scheme, but then again, it didn't really need one. THQ and Yukes got it right the first time, and they certainly weren't looking to mess with success. SmackDown! contains the same storyline elements in its career mode as SmackDown! 2 had, but with more than 70 match types, 20 game modes, double- and triple-team moves, in-game commentary by Tazz and Michael Cole, and almost no load times whatsoever, Just Bring It is the ultimate version of the ultimate wrestling game franchise.

Raw Is War's gameplay is still up in the air at the moment, primarily because of the rapidly shifting Xbox technology. "Obviously, the Xbox is very impressive," says executive producer Flaharty. "What we can depict on screen is very cool. The challenging piece has been managing the development process in the face of emerging technology. The period of time between final hardware and launch hardware is the shortest yet seen in our industry."

Anchor is shooting for a more simulated wrestling experience using a grapple and counter system—an ambitious goal for a title that's supposed to ship with the release of the Xbox in November. Still, with team members who can claim Tekken 1, 2 and Ultimate Fighting Championship on their résumés, Anchor could very well pleasantly surprise critics when Raw is War hits.

The Decision...

Of all the wrestling titles coming out this fall, SmackDown! Just Bring It is the one gamers should worry least about. Yukes has added all the right features,



Like SmackDown! 2, the new PS2 installment packs game modes and options out the wazoo, including the return of Hell in a Cell and I Quit.



Raw Is War's wrestlers are built from beefier character models than Just Bring It, so they look smoother and more lifelike. They bleed, too.

corrected all the right glitches, and left everything else alone. Gamers are going to lose weeks to this game if everything goes according to plan. Raw Is War is a little more iffy, because it's a first-generation title on a completely new console with a short development cycle. If nothing else, however, Raw Is War is going to be a big bag of mind-blowing eye candy, with strong potential for sequels.

Legends of Wrestling is a harder one to call, but Acclaim has made all the right decisions so far. They've come up with an original premise, they have a truly original look and feel for the game, and they're working with a completely original game engine and leaving their sordid past behind them. Legends could well develop into a genuine sleeper hit that will appeal to wrestling marks and nostalgic gamers alike. At any rate, the next generation of wrestling games is about to arrive, and it's definitely worth the price of admission. And that's the bottom line, 'cause *EGM* said so.

"The WWF always has been and always will be the number-one brand in sports entertainment, when it comes to T-shirts, when it comes to video games, when it comes to anything."



—WCW/ECW Alliance member Tommy Dreamer

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BE READY

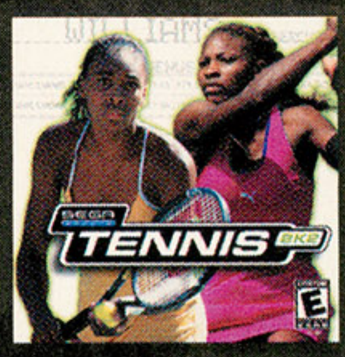
THE BIGGEST HEROES.
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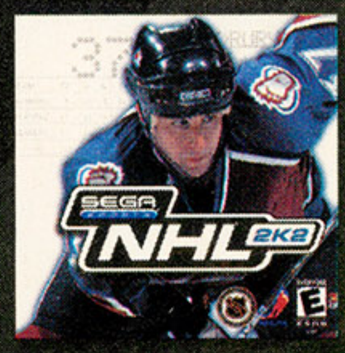












XBOX *

PlayStation.2 *

Dreamcast™

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EVERYONE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

first-person shooters unleash a full-scale assault on the consoles this fall, but which game is right for you? Whether you wanna put on that thinking cap or just run and gun, our bulletproof guide helps you pick the perfect title that'll...

BLOW!!

by Che Chou

When it comes to first-person shooters, they just don't make 'em like they used to. We here at *EGM* see that as a good thing. Gone are the sophomoric, fire-and-forgettable exploits of pissed-off cooks in outer space or sadistic dino hunters; in their wake are a heap of cool shooters for just about every kind of first-person gamer. So you got your ass to Mars at the beginning of summer and sparked a revolution in Red Faction for the PS2, but you've still got an itch on that trigger finger? No problemo. The first-person shooter genre heats up this fall with no less than eight games all gunning for your almighty dollar. Do you fancy yourself a thinking man? Do you like to avoid confrontation, conserve ammo, and creep about like a pansy? Or perhaps you're the type of guy who sets his phasers on "phun" and daydreams about hotties like Seven of Nine? Whatever your type, we help you pick the perfect FPS by rounding up and breaking down the games that'll blow you away this holiday season. But first, let's define the different kinds of first-person gaming aficionados...



SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs (PS2)

Team Player

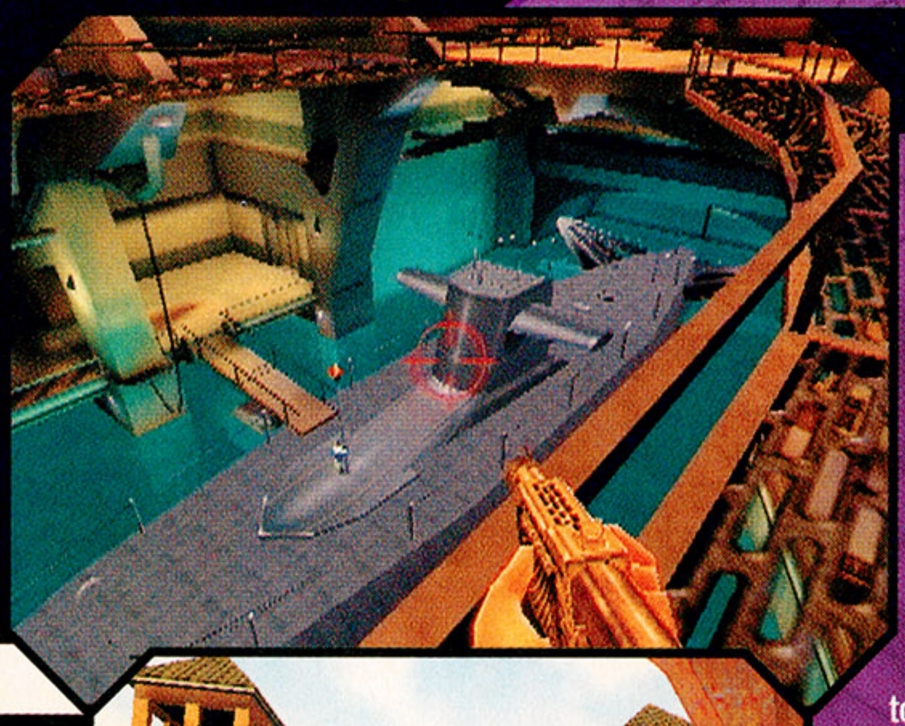
While playing 8-bit Contra on the Nintendo as a kid, your parents taught you to share the weapons and to always, *always* wait for the other player before jumping up to advance the screen. Now you're the kind of FPS player who'll gladly take one for the team. March to **page 190** for full disclosure on these games for people who need people.



Tribes Aerial Assault (PS2)

Tribus Callosum

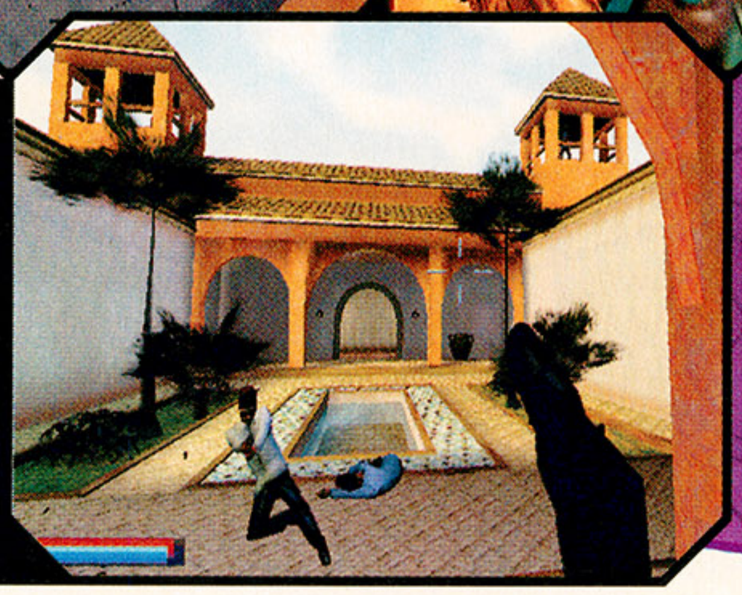
Medulla Oblongoldeneye



James Bond 007 in Agent Under Fire (PS2)

Super Spy

By day you sit in a classroom or a cubicle and replenish your mojo. By night, you hook up with sexy double-agents, jet to exotic locations, infiltrate hollowed-out-volcano fortresses and foil criminal masterminds. This fall, be the original playboy with a license to kill or get to know Austin Powers' smarter, sexier baby sister, Cate Archer, star of No One Lives Forever. It all starts on **page 188**.



No One Lives Forever (PS2)

Your Mind

The Thinking Man

You've seen *Die Hard* 328 times and relate to Chow Yun-Fat rather than Dolph Lundgren. And when it comes to first-person shooters, you like 'em the way you like your shepard's pies: nice and meaty. You wanna play a shooter that drops you into a believable situation, puts the tools in your hands, and gives you the freedom to do your thing. Plus, the game has to pack a solid story with lots of twists, so you actually feel smarter when you figure things out in the end. All this talk of guns and pies got you droolin'? Turn to **page 180** and let the feast begin...

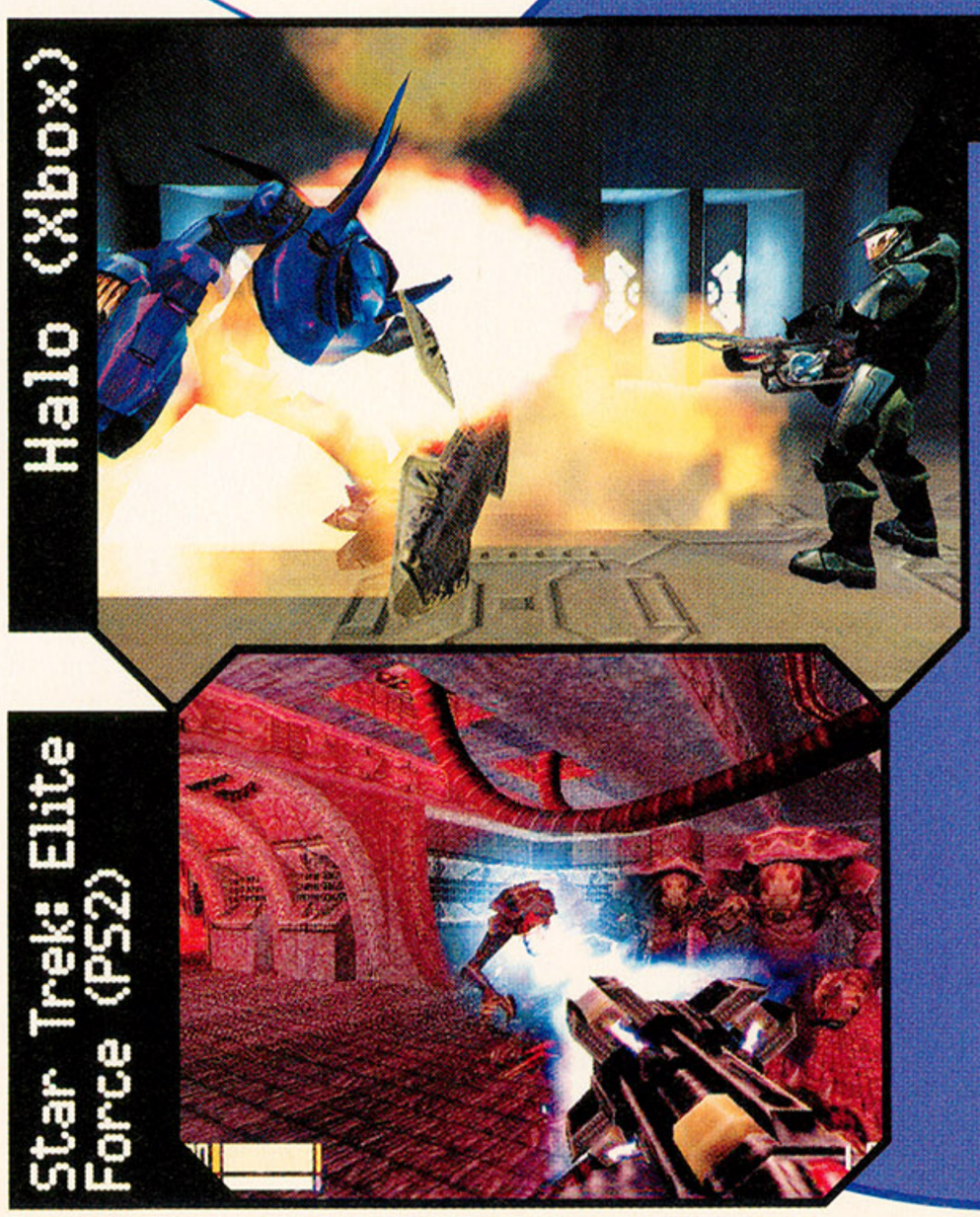






Choroid Deusplexus

Pituitrekkie Gland



Technophile

You know who you are, and we know what gets you off: stuff like pointy ears, TekWar memorabilia, Tricorder schematics and fan-fiction that pits Darth Vader against Dr. Who. Your idea of a good time is a week's vacation on Babylon 5 surrounded by exotic foreheads. But hey, whatever charges your Dilithium crystals! Come this fall, show your true colors with these two kick-ass sci-fi shooters, energizing onto your Xbox and PS2. Beam me up to page 184, Scotty.

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PLAY



PlayStation.2

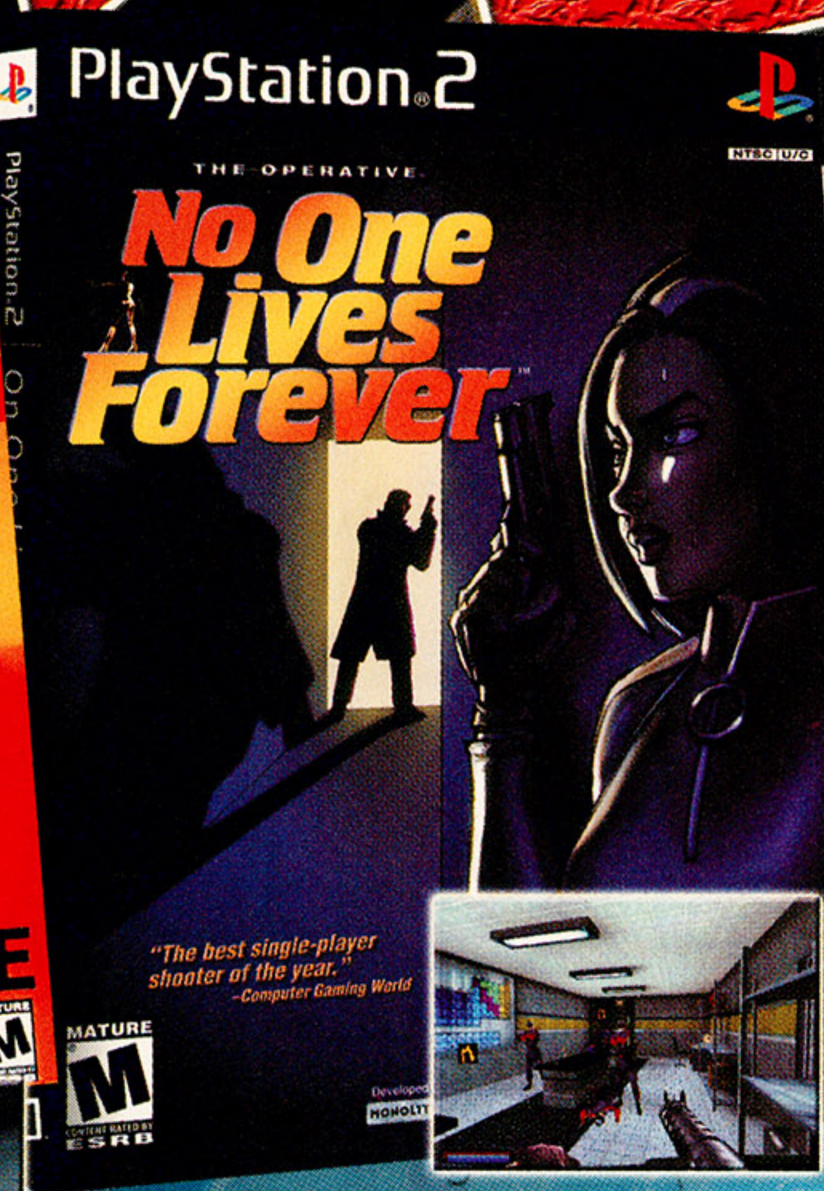
HALF-LIFE

MATURE M

SIERRA STUDIOS

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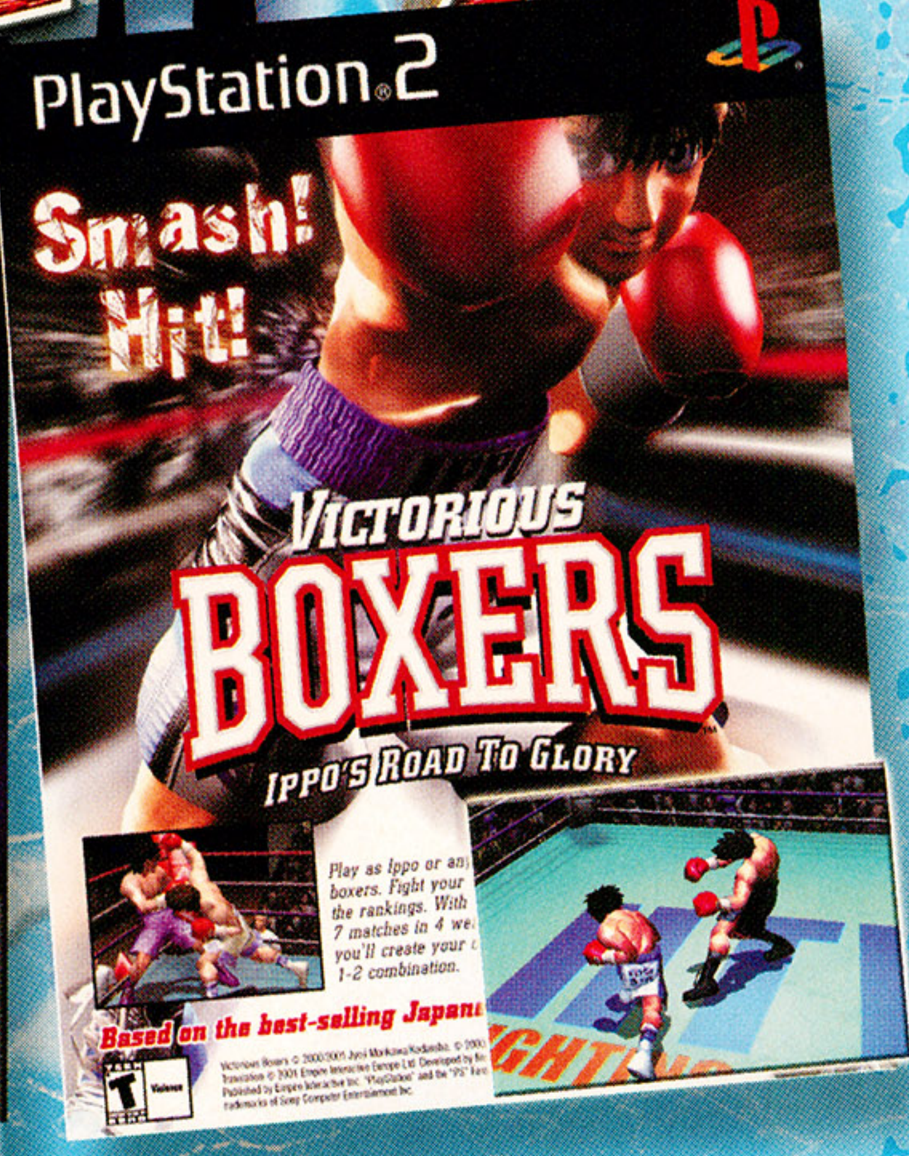
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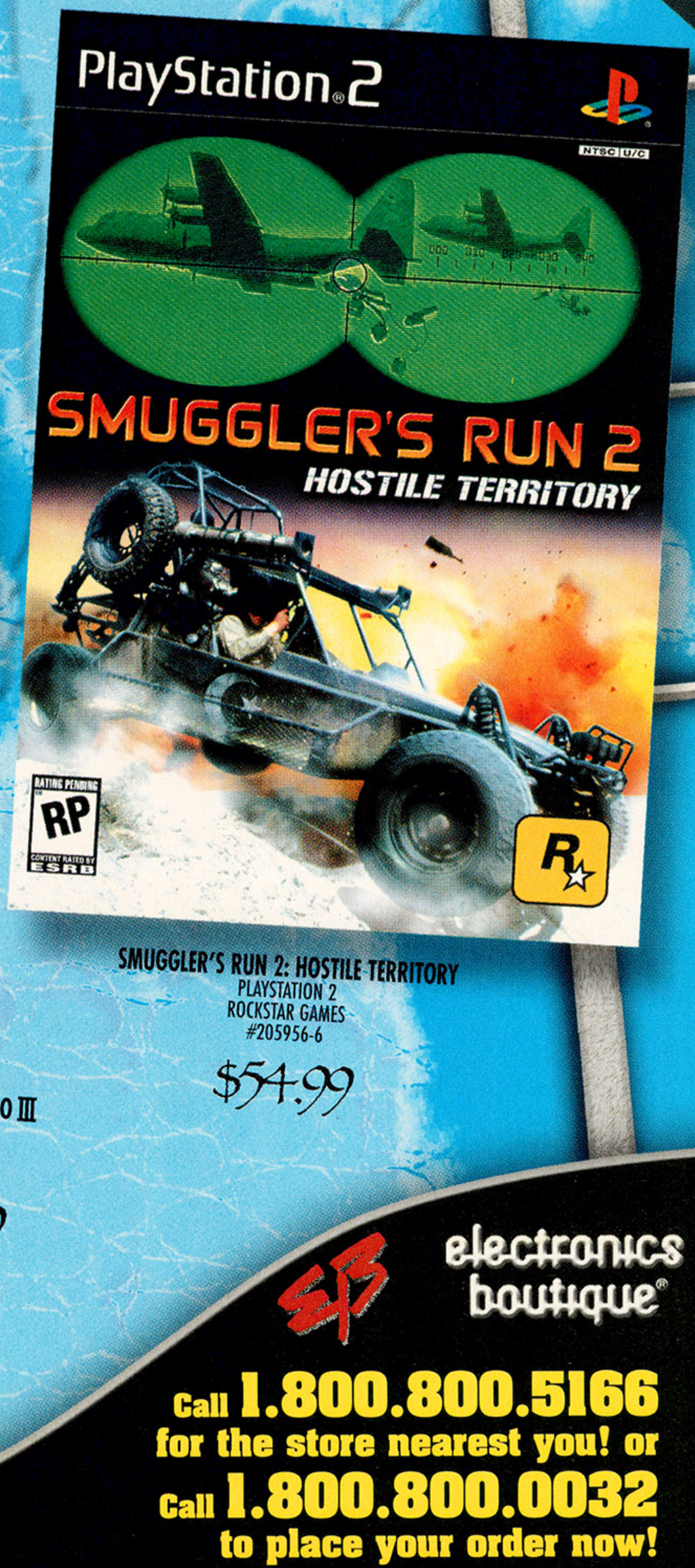
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HALF-LIFE

System: PS2
Release Date: October 2001
Publisher: Sierra
Developer: Gearbox Software
Multiplayer: 1-4 player splitscreen

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

You kill:
Unwelcome alien visitors and special-op dudes

Controversy Rating:
Most of the bullet fodder in HL bleeds green, but you do mow down an entire squad of humans. This probably won't sit well with politicians.



It's entirely possible you've missed all the hoopla over Half-Life when it singlehandedly redefined the FPS genre on PCs back in 1998. We understand. After all, life as a console gamer is consuming enough without having to worry about kicking your kid sister off her AOL account for a little game time. But now that HL will finally see the light of day on your PlayStation 2 (a moment of silence for the cancelled Dreamcast version, please), you're about to experience, first-hand, what all the fuss is about.

Randy Pitchford, president of developer Gearbox, thinks HL's engrossing experience represents the future of the FPS genre. "The characters and plots of first-person action games are beginning to rival Hollywood in terms of getting an emotional investment out of [the audience]," he tells us. "So, in terms of single-player gaming, we're putting people in the middle of situations that, up to this point, they've only seen larger-than-life actors deal with on the silver screen."

You slip into the lab coat of Dr. Gordon Freeman, an Area 51-esque researcher who's accidentally drawn into an inter-dimensional disaster that turns his workplace into a feeding grounds for aliens. Your task? Get topside and call for help. It's sort of like *Die Hard*—except Hans and Helmut are now mutants and tentacled beasts. Put your people skills to the test as you form a small party of eggheads and rent-a-cops who'll open locked doors and help cover your back. These AI friends of yours, however, probably won't last too long.

Most of the time, you'll tackle HL's many situational puzzles alone. But we're not talking about obscure Resident Evil-style riddles here. You figure things out in HL based on what makes logical sense in your surroundings. Got a blue-skinned pest that just won't listen to your gun? Bait him toward an unstable generator, flip that switch and watch him fry. We won't spoil all the cool surprises, but just remember to use your head—you never know when it'll save your butt.

Two Heads are Better Than One

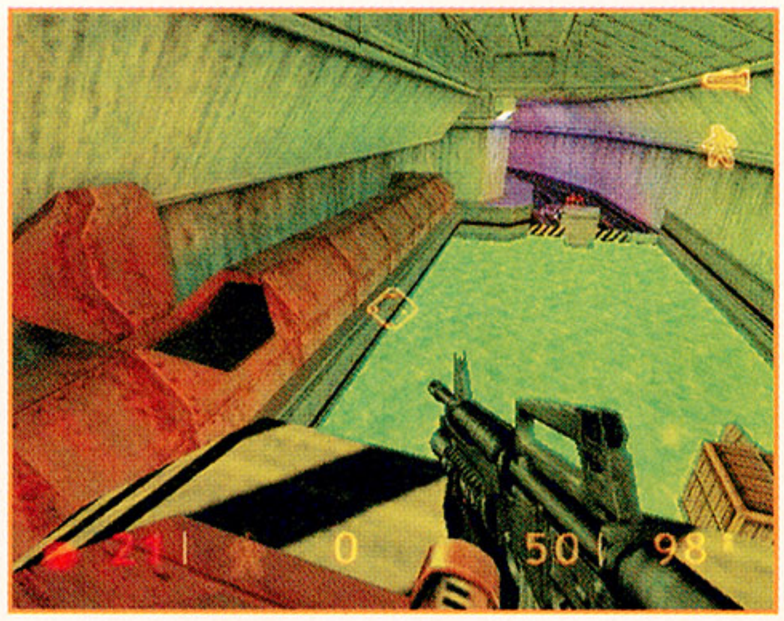
Now that HL has blown the single-player experience wide open, what's next? How about transplanting that same intelligent, story-driven gameplay to a multiplayer context? To that end, HL on the PS2 will feature Decay, an all-new episode built specifically for two-player co-op.You and a friend tackle both puzzle-oriented and combat-heavy missions. Should one player die mid-level, both of you will get the shaft and start over. Be excellent to each other.

"We're putting people in the middle of situations that they've only seen larger-than-life actors deal with..."
-Gearbox President Randy Pitchford

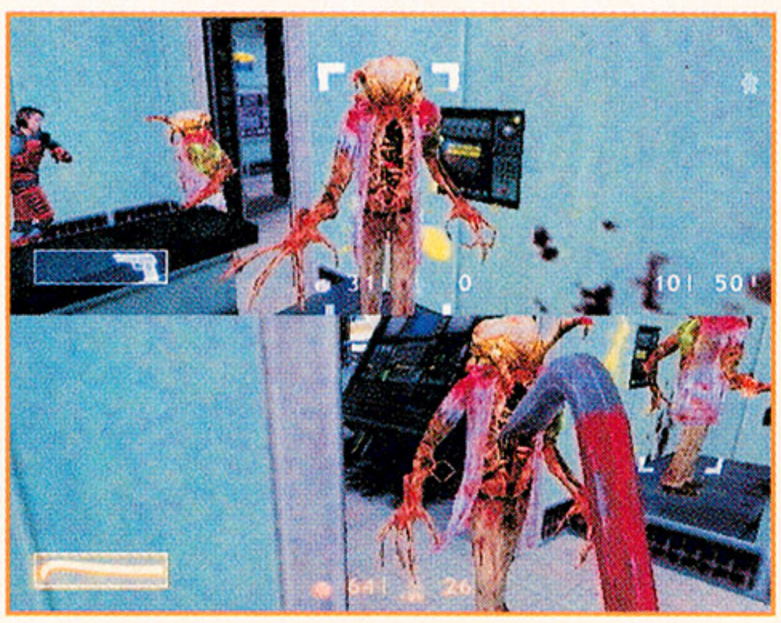
Opening the Valve:



Half-Life put Valve on the map as one of PC gaming's top developers. We caught up with Gabe Newell, founder and managing director of Valve, to ask him about all the me-too story-driven first-person shooters HL has spawned. "I'd love to see more of them," he says. "It would be absurd for us to ever complain about people copying HL given how much HL itself is rooted in the work of people like John Carmack [Doom], Doug Church [Ultima Underworld] and Warren Spector [System Shock]." But HL kicked off so many clones, we had to wonder if these guys had time to play them all. "People at Valve play pretty much everything that comes out on every platform—except for that Extreme Parachuting game, and that was simply because we couldn't find a retailer who stocked it."









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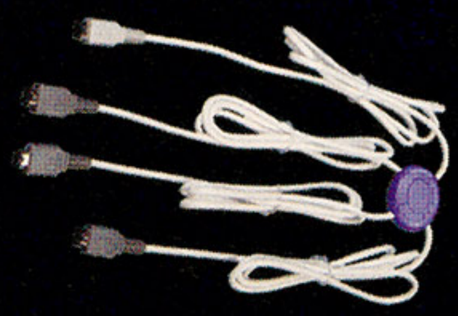
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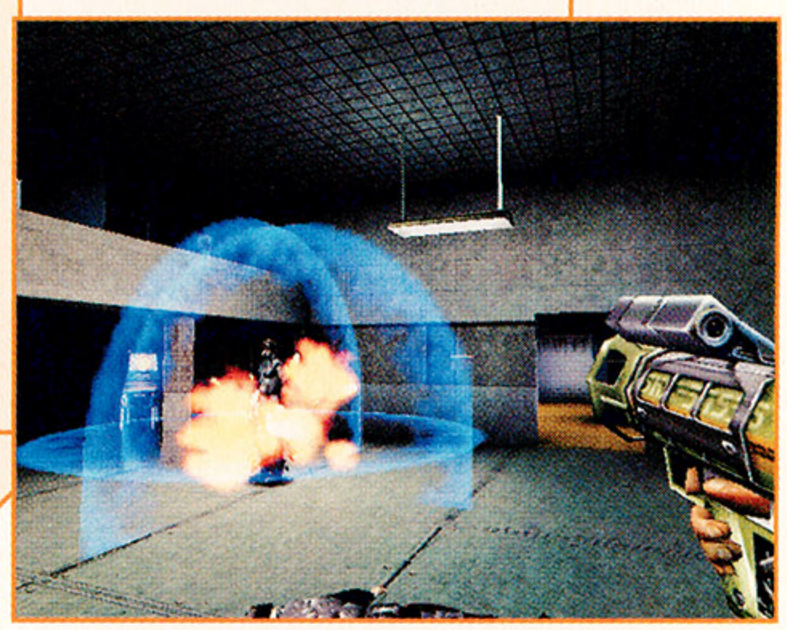
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DEUS EX: THE CONSPIRACY

System:	Release Date:	Publisher:	Developer:	Multiplayer:
PS2	Winter 2001	Eidos Interactive	Ion Storm	Not available

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

You kill:
Anyone or no one. The choice is up to you, really.

Controversy Rating:
It's a game about government conspiracies, big brother and maniacal despots plotting to rule the world. Politicians will hate it, but what's not to like for us gamers?

No first-person shooter lives up to the motto "think before you shoot" more than Ion Storm's cyber-thriller Deus Ex (sound smart and say it "day-s-eks"). Set in a dystopian future where government forces, terrorist factions and secret societies clash for supremacy, the game stars J.C. Denton, a rookie with the U.N. Anti-Terrorist Coalition (UNATCO) charged with investigating an epidemic plaguing New York City. With all the men in black you keep running into, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that something's rotten in the state of Denmark. The serpentine plot and the game's four different endings will keep you on your toes. And just when you think you've got it all figured out, Deus Ex makes short work of your theory, and you're left with another red herring.

Warren Spector, creator of Deus Ex and executive producer at Ion Storm, is dogmatic about his definition of a good game. He even laid down a manifesto of rules before work began on Deus Ex. "Games are a new and unique medium," he says. "They're not movies, despite what some developers may want you to believe, nor are they novels. They're about player experience. What [games] can do over these other mediums is let players make the decisions, drive the action, and tell their story. [Our] role is to provide a context for this to happen."

In part, the cerebral qualities of Deus Ex are attributed to the staggering number of choices you make in the game. Basic stuff, like how you deck out your character's cybernetic skills and enhancements, factor in to make a huge dent in how you play the game. Want to be a badass sniper who picks off his victims from afar? Well, you can—except you'll be a sitting duck when the bad guys get in your face. Or how about a stealthy hacker type who stays out of harm's way but reprograms robots and turrets to do his dirty work? Again, no problem—except for the loss of life every time you're nowhere near a keyboard. Of course, busting through the front entrance in a blaze of glory might actually be the better alternative. Look, you make the call. "You build an alter-ego and apply real-world common sense to situations and solve them the way you want to," says Spector. "I don't think it's an exaggeration to say there has never been a game on any platform that's allowed you to do that."



PC or Not PC?

With something like 34 game-of-the-year awards under their belt for Deus Ex, Spector and his team aren't exactly rookies. The biggest challenge they've faced bringing the game onto the PS2 is figuring out how *not* to dumb it down for consoles. "Ultimately, I think the gameplay ideas behind Deus Ex are platform agnostic," says Spector. "It crosses genres as well as platforms, and I think console gamers are no different from PC [fans]. We're all just gamers. Everybody wants choices."

Coming November 2001

SHREK™



Easily the most impressive aspect about the game is its graphical prowess.

– GameSpot July 2001

Shrek looks gorgeous and its attention to detail is astounding...

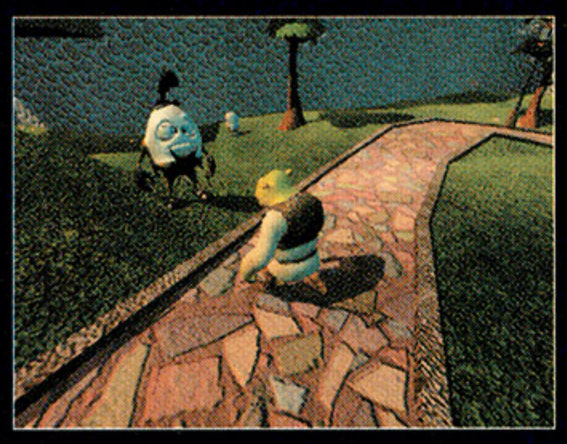
–Expert Gamer September 2001

The production values are movie-like...They'll wonder if you are playing the game 'Shrek', or watching the movie *Shrek*. And people will get hooked.

– cnn.com May 2001











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SHOOTERS FOR SCI-FI FANS: THAT'S NOT A CELL PHONE—IT'S A "COMMUNICATOR"

HALO

System: Xbox
Release Date: November 2001
Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: Bungie
Multiplayer: 1-4 player splitscreen, 1-16 players via link

You kill:
A vast assortment of alien freaks collectively known as the Covenant

Controversy Rating:
Since you're blasting xeno-things instead of innocent humans, the whole affair has a patriotic, *Independence Day* vibe that is A-OK for politicians.



Halo's official subtitle is "Combat Evolved," and it really lives up to that epic claim. You portray a marine engaged in a massive interplanetary war. Sci-fi junkies will surely dig its heroic cyborgs, sinister aliens, ancient mysteries and even a sultry female AI voice that keeps you company when the sound of gunfire subsides. Graphically, no other game offers such massive environments with seamless indoor/outdoor transitions. And those of you worried by reports that early versions of Halo moved like molasses can now rest easy: The entire game runs at a rock-steady 30 frames per second and stays smooth even in four-player split-screen mode. For all you audio buffs out there, Halo supports true Dolby 5.1 surround sound, so you'll actually hear the screams of your squadmates in dizzying 3D space.

Oh, and did you ever wonder how that Doom marine managed to stash all his weapons in that green spacesuit of his? So did Bungie. Hence, your alter ego in Halo can only carry two implements of destruction at one time. What, tired of your standard issue rifle? Walk over and pry your enemy's gun from his cold, dead, blue fingers.

—Shane Bettenhausen

Baby, You Can Drive My Car

Sure, most first-person shooters have mastered the art of on-foot combat, but Halo offers fully functional vehicles. Your cyborg marine can leap into the driver's seat of jeeps, tanks, aircrafts and even captured alien war machinery.





Say Hello to Halo



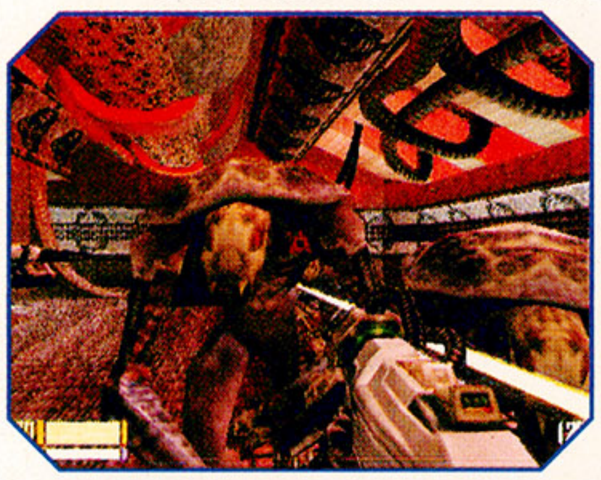
Although it began as a third-person PC shooter, Microsoft's acquisition of Bungie quickly secured Halo as a flagship Xbox title. Being the kind benefactor that he is, Bill Gates gave the studio lots of much-needed love...and money. The end result: Microsoft is pushing Halo as one of its premiere Xbox launch titles.

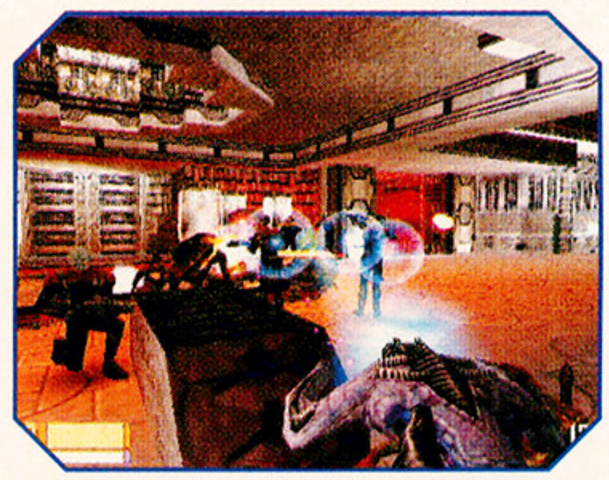
STAR TREK VOYAGER: ELITE FORCE

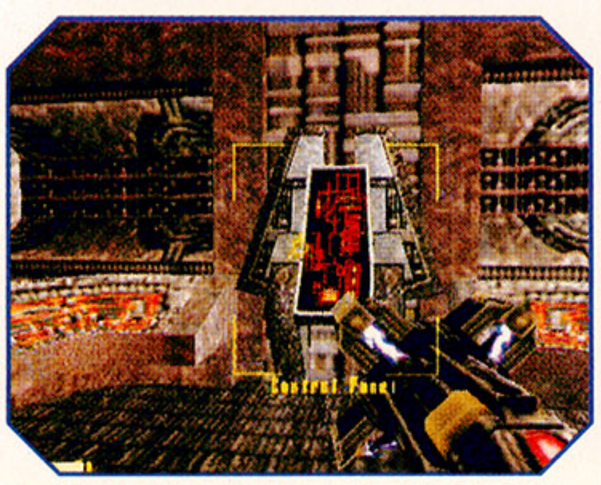
System: PS2
Release Date: November 2001
Publisher: Majesco
Developer: Pipe Dream Interactive
Multiplayer: 1-4 player splitscreen

You kill:
Hordes of mindless Borg drones and Klingon scavengers

Controversy Rating:
The only Star Trek violence worth a damn took place in *Wrath of Khan*.









Elite Force is an almost-identical port of the PC game, which has already been out for a year and uses the Quake III Arena engine. But don't hold that against this shockingly playable PS2 version. You join a group of elite security officers led by Commander Tuvok on a series of brutal away-team missions in the Delta Quadrant. Unlike the dispensable red-shirt ensigns, you have access to nine different instruments of sci-fi death, each with a secondary attack. Excessive? Nah. You'll definitely need 'em as you say adios to the prime directive, cover your teammates' backs and slog through 40 levels of gritty space battles. Live long and prosper—and kick ass!

—Shane Bettenhausen

Breast to Impress



Q: Will Seven of Nine's model use 90,000 polygons so she can be made super curvy?
A: No.
Q: Will there be a nude Seven of Nine in the game?
A: Not unless *Voyager* becomes a Showtime series.

—Choice excerpts from the official Elite Force FAQ



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PlayStation 2

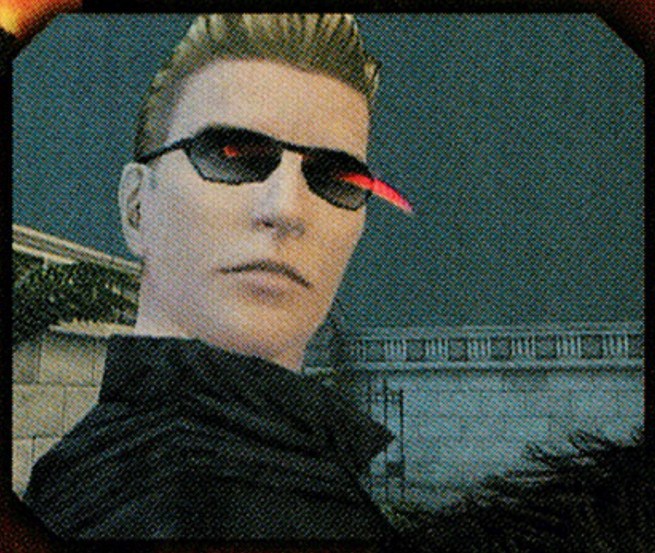
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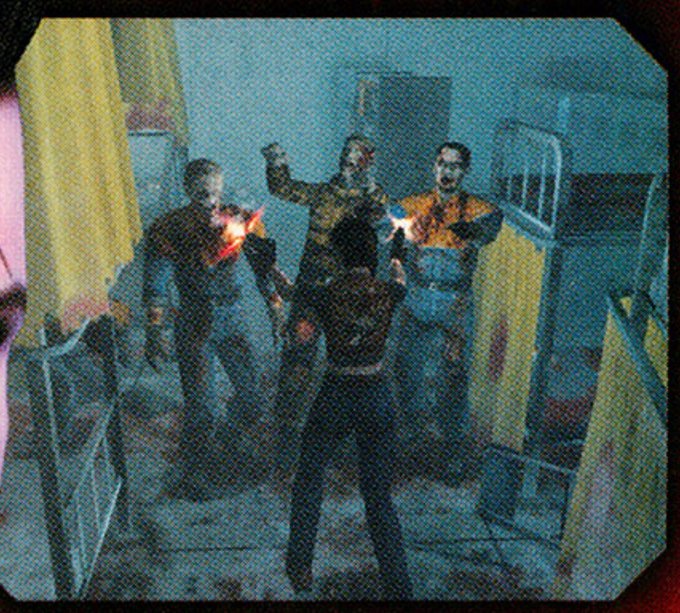
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RESIDENT EVIL CODE: Veronica X

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JAMES BOND 007 IN AGENT UNDER FIRE

System: PS2

Release Date: Winter 2001

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: Electronic Arts

Multiplayer: 1-4 player splitscreen

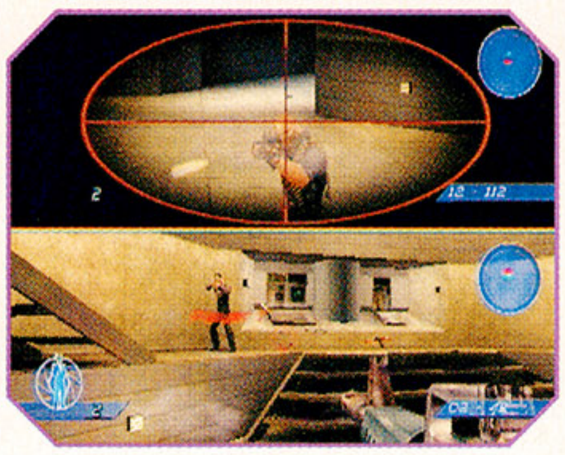
You kill:
Malprave's evil minions: assault-rifle-totin' salarymen by day, family men by night.

Controversy Rating:
Like 007 himself, any game with the James Bond label automatically packs a license to kill. Politicians love James Bond because he used to take on evil communists. Besides, the Bond films have always felt more like video games than movies to us.











"We definitely want to capture the magic of GoldenEye's multiplayer."

-Jon Horsley, executive producer at Electronic Arts

If driving fast cars, schmoozing loose women, and saving the world from megalomaniacs is your idea of a good time, then nothing personifies your ideal superspy lifestyle better than James Bond. But what's this? You've never heard of a movie called Agent Under Fire? Well that's 'cause this is the first Bond game not based on a movie but rather developed as its own independent story. But what does this mean for the story behind AUF? Did a bunch of greasy programmers cough up a janky 007 storyline over some pizza and an N64 session of Perfect Dark?

Not exactly. Working with the James Bond license has been a balancing act of pleasing both the fans and the suits. "As you might expect and can respect, MGM and Danjaq [the companies that own the 007 franchise] are careful about how Bond and video games come together," says Jon Horsley, executive producer at Electronic Arts. "We collaborated with MGM and Danjaq on the story, and then worked with Industrial Light & Magic plus Pacific Data Images to animate and choreograph [it all]." In AUF, Bond has to stymie Malprave, an evil mastermind planning to control the world with an army of clones. (First Metal Gear Solid, then *Star Wars Episode II* and now 007—there's just no escaping the clone thing, is there?) The missions themselves, which are spread over 10 exotic locales, vary in their gameplay styles. Some require you to sneak around unseen by using Bond's collection of issued gadgets, while others require you to exercise that royal trigger finger.

And what's a male fantasy without a fleet of exotic and heavily armed vehicles at your disposal? About a third of AUF takes place on the road, with you behind licensed Bond mobiles like the Aston Martin DB5 and the BMW Z8. So does this mean the crappy 007 Racing franchise that debuted on the PS1 last year is cancelled? Well, yeah—but we're not complaining.

Spy vs. Spy

So does AUF's multiplayer live up to standards established by GoldenEye on the N64? EA certainly hopes so. To rekindle the magic, the team is including spy gadgets in deathmatch, so the game is more than just Quake in a tuxedo. Better pick up a multi-tap for your PS2 if you want to experience AUF's four-player action.

Q Stands for Quirky

AUF features a familiar cast, including decrepit ol' gadget man Q (as voiced by a John Cleese imitator). Touch base with Q from time to time to receive toys The Sharper Image only dreams about. The old coot is also something of a trickster. Early on in the game, you stumble into an apartment where a naked woman lathers in a steamy shower. Oh wait, that's just Q and his wacky bombshell hologram! Gets us every time.



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THE SUPER SPY
SECRETLY SERVICE HER MAJESTY

NO ONE LIVES FOREVER

System: PS2
Release Date: November 2001
Publisher: Fox Interactive
Developer: Monolith Productions
Multiplayer: Not available

You kill:
Entire clans of generic henchmen and other spy movie stereotypes

Controversy Rating:
Having a woman superspy running the show scores points for being progressive, even if you're still just shooting bad guys.

If you've ever frowned at the lack of femme-fatale secret agents, chances are you'll enjoy this first-person shooter's hefty dose of female empowerment. No One Lives Forever drops you into the high heels of operative Cate Archer, a gun-wielding, cat-suited vixen who must diffuse crises and spew clichés ripped from spy films. Don't expect gritty action or highbrow plots. N.O.L.F. is more Austin Powers than GoldenEye, right down to the silly British accent, '60s-era clothing and shameless sexual innuendo. The game opens with Archer having to save a bumbling Moroccan ambassador from being assassinated by the terrorist group named H.A.R.M., whose henchmen attackers scream obscenities in the heat of battle, while others comically yell and duck for cover. As Archer, you'll get to tour the world behind the crosshairs of your gun, meet an assembly line of sub-bosses and well...put 'em out of commission. N.O.L.F.'s look is unique, too: The entire game looks like it's drenched in coats of retro-mod technicolor.

—Kraig Kujawa



Artificially Challenged

While your enemies in N.O.L.F. act like goofballs sometimes, they do sport some cool artificial intelligence. If you leave bodies out in the open, they'll stoop down to investigate. Creep up behind them and you'll hear entire conversations. Once you're discovered, keep an eye on the furniture. They'll actually kick over tables and sofas to take cover, making your arrival an interior decorator's worst nightmare come true.



THE TEAM PLAYER
ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR FUN

SOCOM: U.S. NAVY SEALS

System: PS2
Release Date: Winter 2001
Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Zipper Entertainment
Multiplayer: 1-4 players splitscreen 1-16 players online

You kill:
Terrorists and Navy Seals alike, depending on the color of your uniform

Controversy Rating:
With its true-to-life tactics and assault rifles, SOCOM is the kind of "murder simulator" politicians love to hate. So watch out for LieberMAN69 while playing online.



Despite how rough this game was when we last saw it, SOCOM interests us because it's the first PS2 game to deliver the online squad-based thrills previously only found on PC. When it hits late this year, you can take on all 16 missions by yourself or play with and against others online. Just don't go bouncing will-nilly around the killing fields and expect to last long in this realistic shooter. Medic!

Let's Talk This Out...

SOCOM supports real-time voice communication via a microphone, although there's no word on the mic's release date or price. We know Sony's in talks with Logitech to make the peripheral. You can even issue simple orders to your AI squad buds.

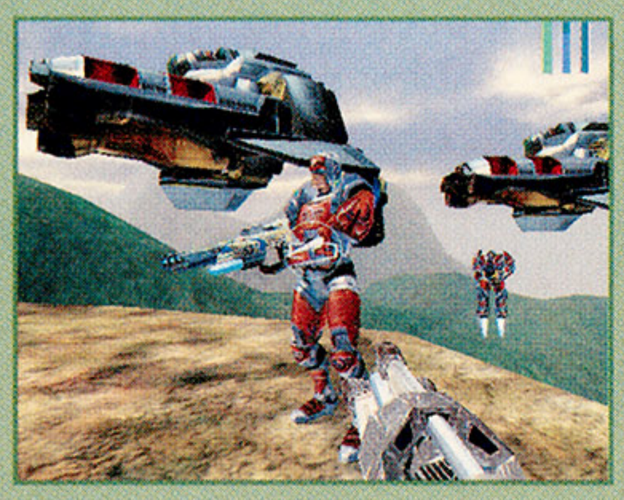
TRIBES AERIAL ASSAULT

System: PS2
Release: Winter 2001
Publisher: Sierra
Developer: Inevitable Entertainment
Multiplayer: 1-32 players online

You kill:
Dozens of other human players just like yourself

Controversy Rating:
Given Tribes' lack of gore and its cache of unrealistic weapons, politicians will probably find another FPS to scapegoat.

If you dig team-based shooters but can't stomach the über-realism of SOCOM, perhaps Tribes Aerial Assault is more your thing. Grab your death-ray pistol, strap on that jetpack and—whoosh!—take to the skies over massive rolling terrain and shower your enemies with retribution. Like SOCOM, Tribes is another game that must be played online to be fully realized. Appropriately enough, the game's motto is "team combat on an epic scale." Once you're online, tango with up to 31 other players on a single server in deathmatch, capture the flag or four other team-based variations.



Shake Your Bot

Don't want to play online? That's OK. Tribes allows you to customize your own matches with a handful of bots to cherish and abuse. You can also serve 'em up for practice before going online for the real thing.

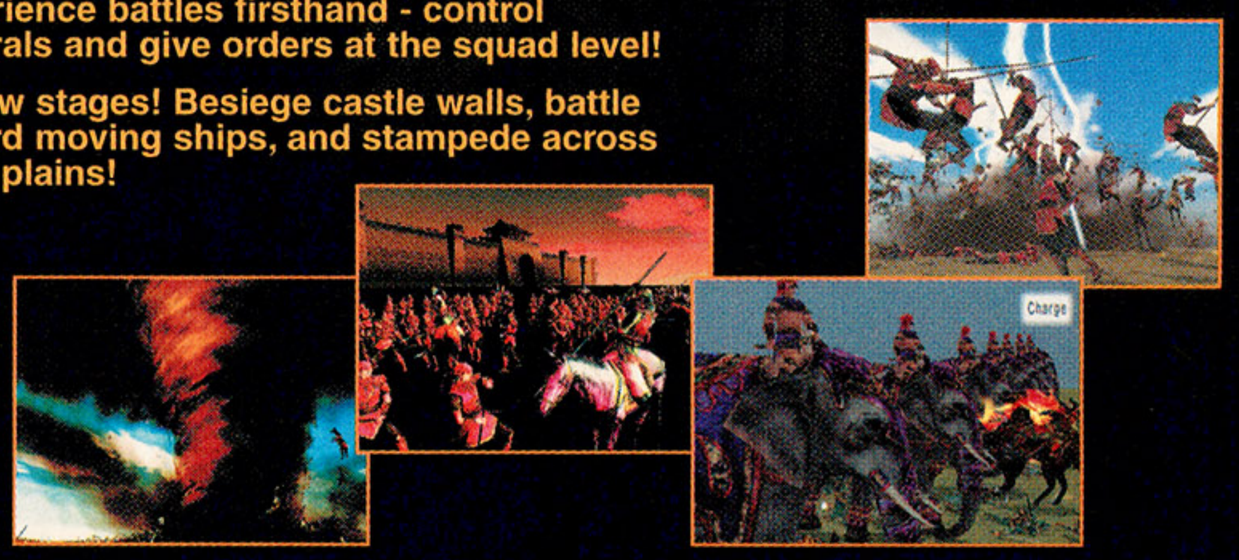
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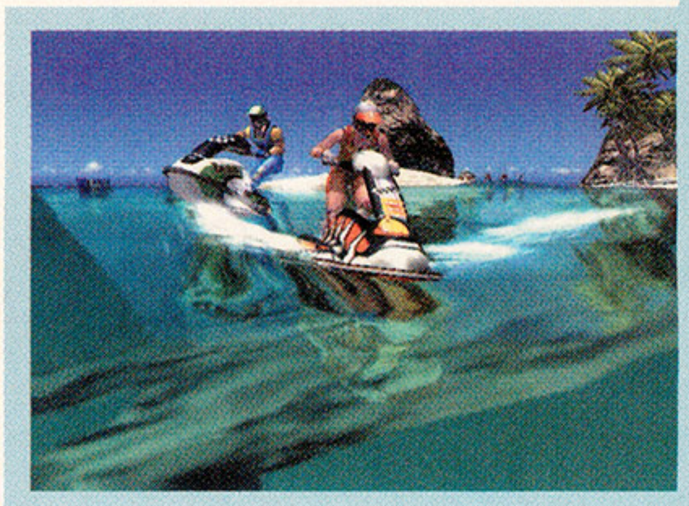
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CANDY ASS

THE KAWASAKI JET SKIS STAND YOU UP. JUST SO

OUR GZ WAVE GENERATOR CAN KNOCK YOU BACK DOWN.

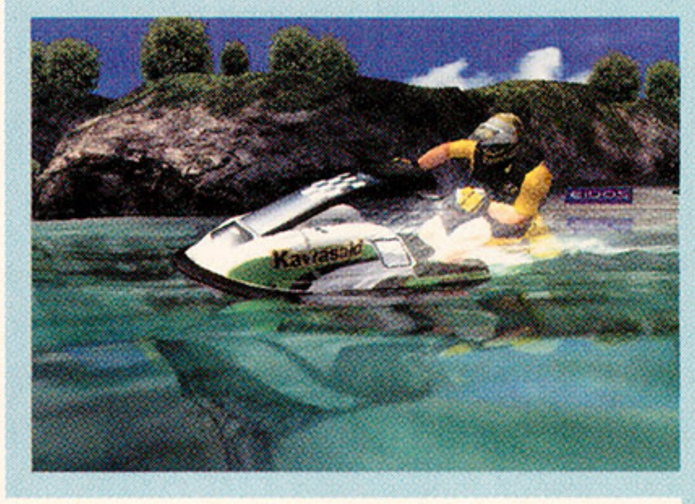








WAVE RALLY



JETSKI watercraft Kawasaki

Kawasaki

JETPILOT

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VIDEO GAME EMULATORS LET YOU PLAY ANY GAME, ANYWHERE, ANYTIME. BUT ARE THEY A HARMLESS FORM OF SOFTWARE PRESERVATION OR OUTRIGHT PIRACY? *EGM* INVESTIGATES...

Keys to the Kingdom

BY MARC SALTZMAN

Imagine you're at school, work or on an airplane when the guy next to you flips open his laptop, pulls out a game pad, and starts blasting away in a heated round of Robotron. "Wow, this shareware clone looks pretty authentic," you think, until you realize it isn't another knock-off created by an amateur copycat game designer—this *is* Robotron. "Hmmm, Midway must have released another Williams compilation for the PC or something," you figure. When you glance back at the screen, the dude is now deep into a game of the Super Nintendo's Secret of Mana. Later he launches the Genesis classic Sonic The Hedgehog before jumping into a Pokémon Silver battle, a race in Gran Turismo 2, and a few minigames in the new Mario Party 3.

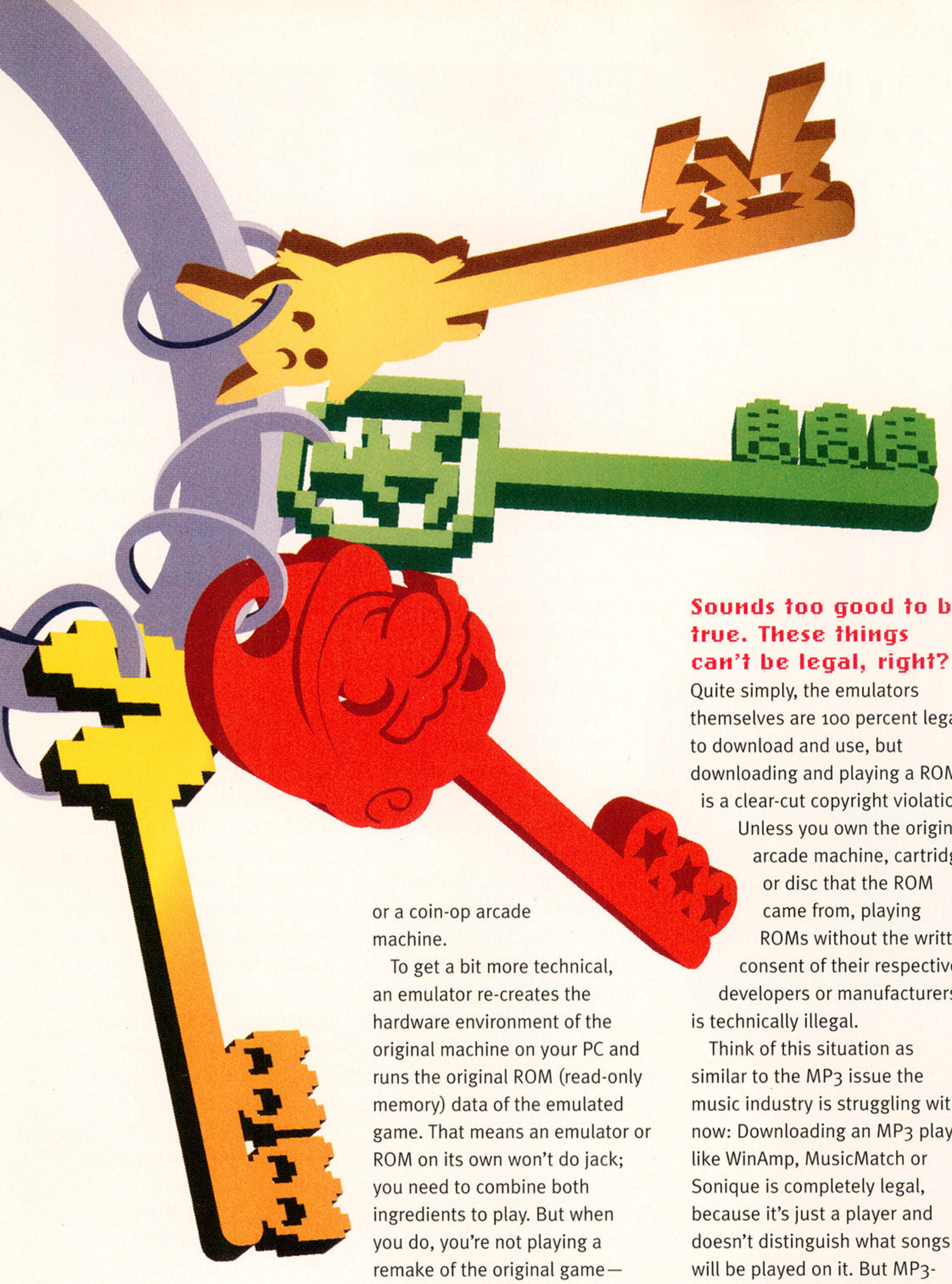
What's going on here?

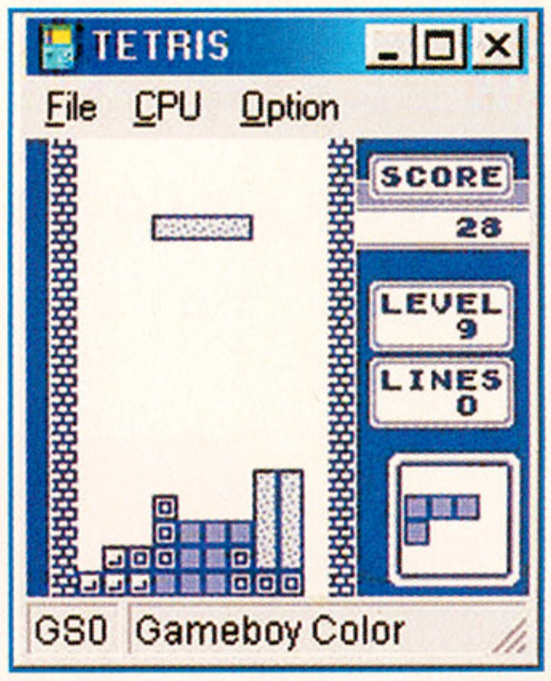
A few years ago, savvy programmers found a way for PC users to play most video games from the good ol' days, regardless of the platform these classics were originally developed for. This once-underground pastime for those in the know has grown into a somewhat mainstream phenomenon, and today it's even possible to play current console games on a PC, not to mention on Palm and PocketPC devices, as well. The kicker? It's all absolutely free. Say what?



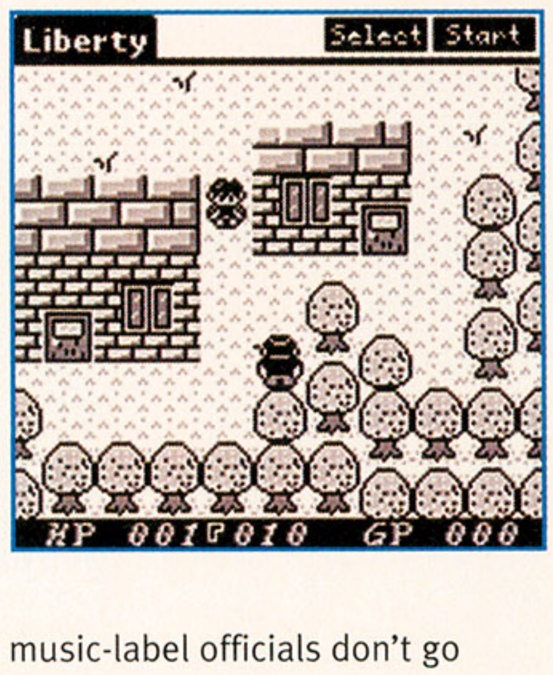
Is it real or is it Mario? UltraHLE brings N64 to the PC.

Welcome to the wild, wired (and now wireless) world of video game emulation.





Emulators play more than just ROMs of older games (like Game Boy Tetris, above). Some developers are coding new shareware emulator ROMs, such as Horrible Demon II, below.



So, what the heck is emulation, anyway?

Let's cover the basics: An emulator is any program that allows one device—be it a PocketPC, a game console or, most commonly, a PC—to run software written for a different machine. For gaming fanatics, this means that if you have the right emulator you can play almost any game, for any platform, on your PC, whether it was originally designed for a video game console (Atari 2600, Intellivision, PlayStation), a computer (Apple II, Atari ST, etc.) or a coin-op arcade machine.

To get a bit more technical, an emulator re-creates the hardware environment of the original machine on your PC and runs the original ROM (read-only memory) data of the emulated game. That means an emulator or ROM on its own won't do jack; you need to combine both ingredients to play. But when you do, you're not playing a remake of the original game—you're playing the real deal. In fact, the software doesn't know it's not being played on its target platform. Some emulators even let you play the ROMs' two-player games (such as Mortal Kombat 2's versus mode) with others online.

Emulation fans typically download emulators and ROMs off the Web. The ROMs find their way online courtesy of tech heads who build or purchase ROM readers or EPROM (erasable-programmable read-only memory) readers for arcade games and console cartridges, then copy and upload that data to the Internet.

Sounds too good to be true. These things can't be legal, right?

Quite simply, the emulators themselves are 100 percent legal to download and use, but downloading and playing a ROM is a clear-cut copyright violation. Unless you own the original arcade machine, cartridge or disc that the ROM came from, playing ROMs without the written consent of their respective developers or manufacturers is technically illegal.

Think of this situation as similar to the MP3 issue the music industry is struggling with now: Downloading an MP3 player like WinAmp, MusicMatch or Sonique is completely legal, because it's just a player and doesn't distinguish what songs will be played on it. But MP3-swapping services like Napster and Web sites that have posted tunes without the consent of the music labels have all been hit hard by the recording industry for copyright infringement. Needless to say, the Internet will continue to threaten control over intellectual property, be it music, movies, books and, yes, games.

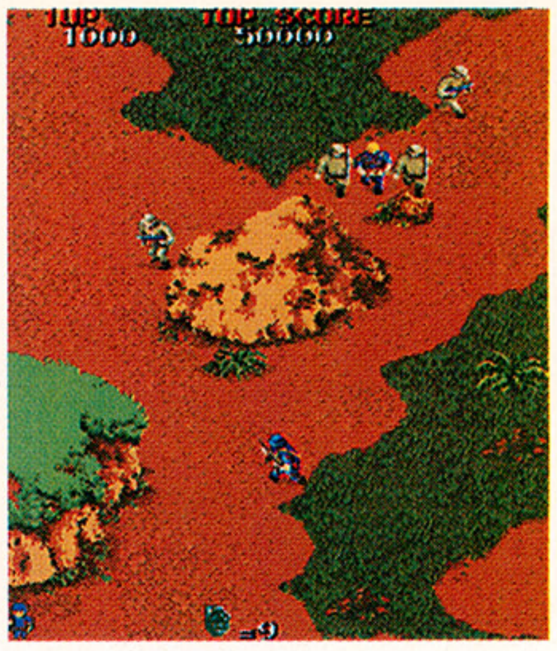
Now you don't have to worry about industry goon squads busting into your bedroom and handcuffing you for playing a Pac-Man ROM on your PC just yet. The biz hasn't cracked down on individuals participating in video game emulation, just like music-label officials don't go after you for using Napster. Instead, it's those who make ROMs available online, and in large quantities, who run the risk of getting into trouble. The ownership and distribution of ROMs were overlooked by game companies for years until Nintendo began sending cease-and-desist letters to Webmasters carrying Game Boy ROMs and then Nintendo 64 ROMs after that. Sega followed suit when it sent out similar threats to Web sites that carried downloadable Genesis games. Suddenly, an anti-emulation crusade was under way in the industry.

Billy Pidgeon, an analyst with Jupiter Media Metrix, a leading research and measurement company, confirms there is a distinct grey area when it comes to downloading ROMs. "If the copyright owners choose not to enforce their copyrights, [playing

"OUR WORK IS CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT: WE ARE TRYING TO PRESERVE ALL THESE GAMES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS."

—M.A.M.E. CREATOR NICOLA SALMORIA





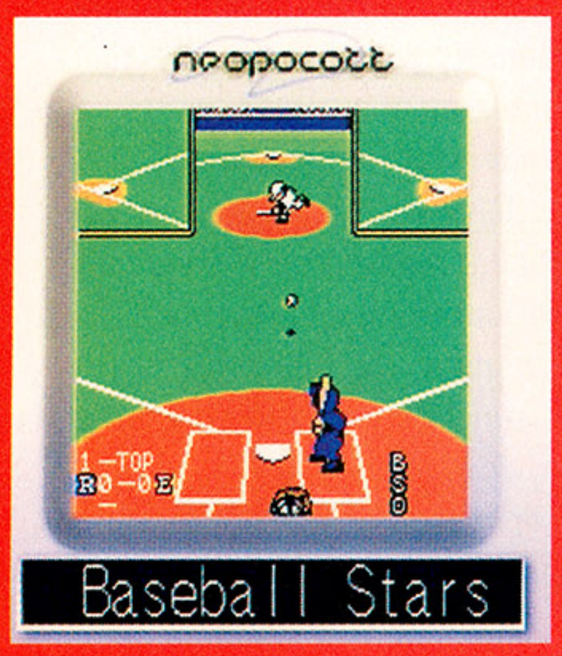
Dig Dug (left) and Commando, emulated on PC via M.A.M.E.

Casting for the classics

While the bleemcast! and its ability to play PlayStation titles on your Dreamcast dodges legal fire from Sony, underground developers are busy coding away in their garages and coming up with DC emulators that let you play the classics. Using a freely available programming library called LibDream, these hobbyists have built emulators for the Genesis, Neo•Geo Pocket Color and more. Although getting these programs up and running is a bit complicated, in a nutshell all you do is burn the emulators to a CD, pop the disc into your Dreamcast and—pow!—you're playing the old stuff (you'll need to burn the ROMs, too, but we're not tellin' how to find those). Keep in mind these discs only work on DCs sold before January 2001; the newer models can't read CDs. Head to www.dcemulation.com for a round-up of all the homebrewed DC emulators.



DreamSNES is a slow but stable Super Nintendo emulator for DC.





Neopocott (left) emulates the NGPC, while Nester DC (below) plays NES ROMS.

ROMs] remains tacitly legal at their indulgence," he tells us. "But technically, copying copyrighted software without permission is piracy, while using software...to mimic another platform is not. And game emulation is not piracy if it enables playing software *bought* by the user for use on another device, such as playing PlayStation games on a Dreamcast using bleemcast!"

Nevertheless, that hasn't stopped Sony from unleashing a legal assault on bleem!, the Los Angeles-based company whose commercially sold emulator bleemcast! lets you play PS1 games on the Dreamcast (see sidebar on page 190 for their legal war stories). Faced with a similar thrashing in the courts, software company Connectix agreed to stop selling its Virtual Game Station, which emulates the PS1 on Macs and PCs.

While it does little to protect them, Web sites have been posting disclaimers warning not to "download any files unless you are legally entitled to do so" and that their ROMs "must not be distributed with any emulators or provided to anyone for profit." Other precautionary messages insist the ROMs must only be used to "evaluate these games for 24 hours. After such time you must buy the machine or commercial package or delete the [ROMs]." Such disclaimers offer no legal protection, however; downloading ROMs is still a form of piracy.

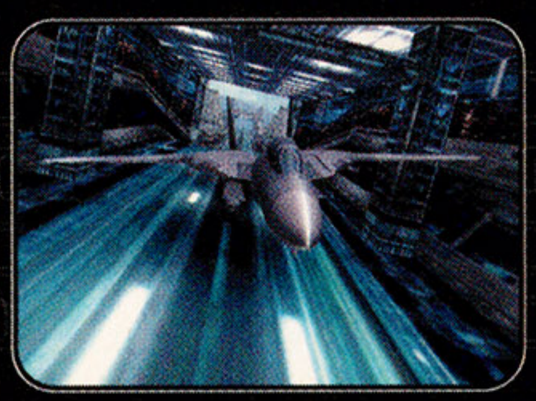
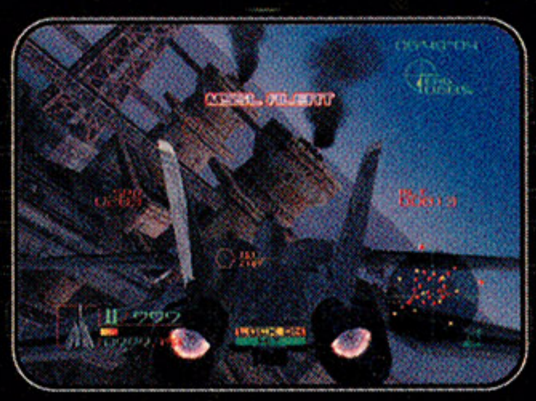
What's your M.A.M.E.?

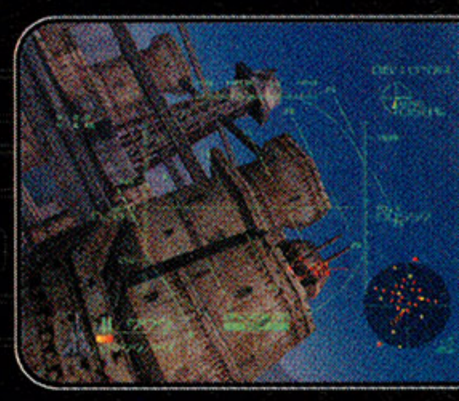
The most popular game emulator is undeniably M.A.M.E., which stands for the Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator. As the name suggests, this program emulates older coin-op arcade machines, supporting over 2,000 games ranging from the late 1970s to the mid-1990s, including Donkey Kong, Paperboy and Street Fighter, just to name a few. M.A.M.E. was created by Italian programmer Nicola Salmoria, and it has been a work-in-progress since its inception more than five years ago, with multiple versions available for varied platforms and a core team of more than 20 unpaid gamers from around the world coding new titles (or updating older ones) or tweaking new versions of the emulator. For the love of the game, as they say.

Not only does M.A.M.E. play the classics just as you remember them, it offers enhancements, too, such as the ability to save your game's progress, support for multiple inputs and much more. It's a nifty program, for sure, and of course M.A.M.E. creator Salmoria is one of its biggest defenders. "While using the ROM images if you are not entitled to them is technically illegal," he tells us, "we are not really doing any harm by playing 10- or 20-year-old arcade games. They are no longer being sold, and the copyright owners have already earned all the money from them that they could. More importantly, our work is culturally significant: We are trying to preserve all these games for future generations. Emulation is

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EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — VIOLENCE

XBOX

www.konami.com

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"ANYBODY WHO IS USING M.A.M.E. BECAUSE IT'S, YA KNOW, CHEAPER THAN BUYING NEW GAMES SHOULD SERIOUSLY LOOK INTO GETTING A LIFE."

—ATARI'S MIKE ALBAUGH

IS THAT AN ARCADE IN YOUR POCKET?

M.A.M.E. (www.mameworld.net/mamece3/) is just one of many emulators available for Windows CE-based Personal Data Assistants. You'll find PDA emulators for nearly every platform, including Game Boy and Atari 2600. Sega is even readying an official Game Gear emulator for Pocket PCs.



the only viable option, because it's too hard to keep the original boards in working order."

Orlando, Fla.'s Mike Balfour, who has worked on close to 25 Atari and Sega games for M.A.M.E., claims that the emulator does not facilitate piracy but rather is designed to play older games that would otherwise be forgotten. "There certainly seems to be a mentality among the emulation community that time makes a difference," he says. "That is, there still seems to be an opinion that it's important to only emulate machines for defunct markets." Yet Balfour admits, along with Salmoria, that downloading ROMs is not truly legal, except for games released to the public domain (such as Midway's Pac-Man-esque coin-op Robby Roto) or homemade shareware titles.

Nintendo gets tough

In early 1999, some time after Nintendo had already made it clear they would not go easy on the growing Game Boy-emulation craze, the company's worst fears surfaced in the form of a Nintendo 64 emulator dubbed UltraHLE (Ultra High-Level Emulation). Gamers could download the tiny 170 kilobyte emulator and play N64 ROMs in resolutions up to 800 x 600—much sharper than the N64's standard 320 x 240 resolution. The ROMs themselves range in size from 8MB to 40MB. And let's face it: High-speed modems such as cable, DSL or T1 lines make it quite painless to download even the largest N64 ROMs, which are easy enough to find online if you poke around. "Emulation is a big issue for Nintendo because it represents a big threat to the intellectual property rights of video game developers," says Perrin Kaplan, vice president of corporate affairs at Nintendo of America. "And the Internet is a fast and pervasive way to spread illegal software, especially if offered for free to the user."

Nintendo doesn't see a distinction between emulators for long-dead systems and those for the newest consoles; they're all bad, in Kaplan's opinion. "All emulation activities are of concern to us, regardless of the age of the product," Kaplan says. "Our copyrights are valid for 75 years from the date of the first publication, which many people may not know. And emulation of any of these games crosses over

EMULATORS ON THE WEB

You say you'd like to try your hand at emulators, huh? Well, the following are some of the most widely used programs, listed per platform, that let you resurrect long-lost games on your PC. And if you're looking for a one-stop spot to find most of these programs, head to www.classicgaming.com. When it comes to finding the game ROMs, though, you're on your own, since they're not exactly legal. And be sure to do searches for old computer emulators to revisit classic machines like the Apple IIe, Vic-20, Commodore 64, Amiga, Atari ST and Spectrum.

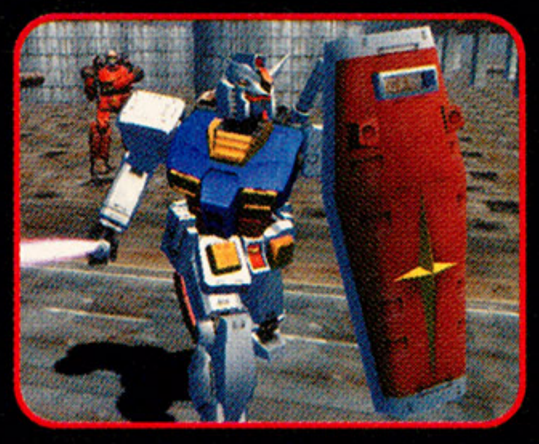
Emulates System:	Emulator Name:	Web Site:
Vectrex	DOS Vectrex Emulator	www.arcadeathome.com/dve
Atari 2600	Stella	http://stella.atari.org
Intellivision	Intellivision Lives	www.intellivisionlives.com
ColecoVision	Virtual ColecoVision	www.classicgaming.com/vcoleco
NES	NESticle	http://bloodlust.zophar.net/NESticle/nes.html
Master System	Meka	www.smspower.org/meka
TurboGrafx-16	MagicEngine	www.magicengine.com
Genesis	Genecyst	http://bloodlust.zophar.net/gen/genecyst.html
Super NES	ZSNES	www.zsnes.com
Arcade Games	M.A.M.E.	www.mame.net
Arcade Games	Raine	www.rainemu.com
Capcom Coin-ops	Callus	http://bloodlust.zophar.net/Callus/callus.html
PlayStation	bleem!	www.bleem.com

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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Violence

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the line of intellectual-property rights. The newer the game, though, the more immediate unforeseen sales we lose."

To curb emulation—which Nintendo flat out views as software piracy—NOA has a special division that focuses heavily on tracking misuse of their products. "This group, with a legal background, also works closely with Congress and elected officials," Kaplan says, "as well as other companies in our field, to combat the epidemic. We don't hesitate to use our legal rights whenever possible. All of our systems [including the GameCube] are built with the best anti-counterfeiting technologies possible. Those who are in the field of counterfeiting and emulation are as strategic with their abilities too, so it is a constant challenge."

But what about game-development companies such as Midway, Activision and Infogrames, which still make money from repackaging older games (which, ironically, are emulated) for today's systems? We approached Ed Logg, a well-known and highly respected game designer who helped create many of the classic '80s arcade games now available via M.A.M.E. Logg has been designing and programming games for more than 20 years and is best known for helping create coin-op classics Asteroids, Centipede, Millipede and Gauntlet, plus Nintendo 64 titles such as Wayne Gretzky 3D Hockey, San Francisco Rush and San Francisco Rush 2 (see "Where Are They Now?" in *EGM* #143). He says he doesn't have a problem with the PlayStation emulators for the PC or Dreamcast because users need to buy the games for these programs to work. He does, however, make the ethical distinction between these emulators and M.A.M.E. "If someone copied a CD or downloaded a game [ROM] off the Internet, then I have a problem with it," he says, adding that his beef with ROM-copying isn't financially motivated, since he doesn't own the rights to his old games.

Mike Albaugh is another seasoned Atari employee (since March 26, 1976, to be precise). He has been a support, tools and pick-up programmer on a number of well-known and celebrated titles, such as Atari Football (which, by the way, pioneered the trackball) and Destroyer, and he worked on Tempest and Battlezone. Like Logg, he's not a fan of folks who download ROMs, either, but he admits game emulation has its place. "I like the way emulators allow a historical perspective, and I have to admit a perverse sort of pride," he tells us, "but anybody who is using M.A.M.E. because it's, ya know, cheaper than buying new games should look seriously into getting a life." Albaugh also expressed his disgust with pirated software and agreed he can see why the console companies are upset with the recent PS1 and N64 emulators.

Do the right thing...

All parties interviewed for this story on both sides of the issue agreed emulation isn't going to die out anytime soon. And don't doubt for a moment that one day soon we'll see PlayStation 2, GameCube and Xbox emulators available for download. In fact, just recently we learned of three different Game Boy Advance emulators already available online: iGBA, Virtual Game Boy and Boycott Advance.

So if you're hellbent on fiddling with emulators, all we have to say is do it with the best intentions. Emulate the classics because it's convenient (why drag out your Atari 2600 every time you want to play Pitfall?) or because you want to keep these old games alive. Downloading new games 'cause you're too cheap to buy them is just plain ol' piracy. Playing that game hurts the industry and—in the long run—all gamers.

The bleem! Scene

You can't talk about emulation without talking about bleem!, whose PC- and Dreamcast-based PlayStation emulators have landed the company in a legal battle so brutal it's pushed them to the brink of bankruptcy. The original bleem! emulator hit stores in May 1999 and allowed gamers to play hundreds of PlayStation games on their PCs (users needed the original PlayStation game CDs to play them on the emulator). The company's premier product right now is bleemcast!, which is sold in individual packs that emulate a particular PlayStation game on the Dreamcast. The first bleemcast! installment, which hit last May, supports Gran Turismo 2, and a second bleemcast! version for Metal Gear Solid should be in stores now.



Bleemcast!'s big lure is that it uses the DC's 3D hardware to soup up the emulated game's visuals.

Sony, however, is not impressed. From the get-go, they've seen bleem! as an infringement on their intellectual-property rights and have engaged the company in a protracted legal battle that's got bleem! against the ropes. "They've been getting away with murder for two years, costing us almost $2 million in legal fees and tens of thousands of dollars' worth of taxpayers' money for the courts," says David Herpolsheimer, bleem!'s president and CEO. "They simply say, 'We believe bleem! infringes on certain intellectual-property rights' and leave it at that, and no one seems to have the guts to push them on it.... We'll stand up and defend our position in court or on a street corner to anyone who has interest. Why won't Sony do the same?"

Representatives from Sony had no comment on the matter. Meanwhile, bleem! is down to three people working out of their homes, with all testing done by volunteers. Head to www.bleem.com for updates. "While you can," Herpolsheimer adds.





Tekken 3 is next up for bleemcast! treatment, followed by WWF SmackDown! 1&2, Driver 1&2 and the Final Fantasy series.

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Review Crew

Our Philosophy

EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 0.0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AVERAGE. Simple, ain't it?

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

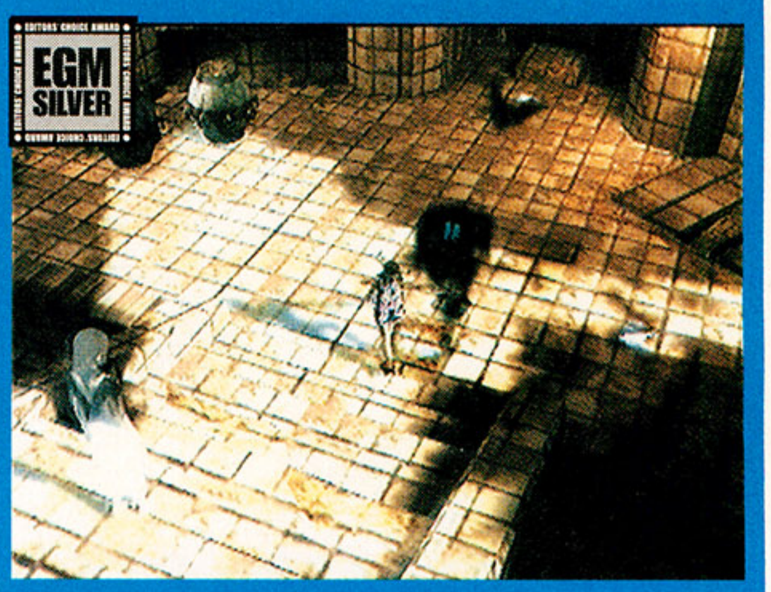
Our Awards

Platinum Awards go to games that get all 10's, the best and rarest review a game can get.

Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.

Games that average at least an 8.0 (but lower than 9.0) receive **Silver Awards.**

Game of the Month



Ico pg. 208

When you think about it, Ico's like a lot of us: terribly horny (his hat, silly) and a total pushover when it comes to the ladies. Maybe that's why Sony's little gem is our Game of the Month. Or it could be the refreshing gameplay and pretty graphics...nah.

The Crew



Crispin Boyer
Features Editor

Since the IRS $300 tax refund covers the cost of an Xbox, Cris is pretending that Uncle Sam is handing out free game consoles. He hopes to return the favor by mailing in old Jaguar carts in lieu of paying taxes.

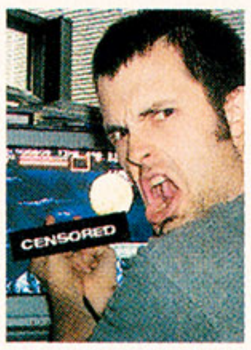
Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure
Current Faves: Zelda: Oracle of Ages, Ico



Dan "Shoe" Hsu
Editor in Chief

Shoe tried entering this issue's big contest (page 236), so we reminded the senile old geezer that he's an employee here and thus, ineligible. He started crying, but then he forgot why he was sad and moved on.

Favorite Genres: The video game genre
Current Faves: Final Fantasy Tact., Murder Sims



Mark MacDonald
Executive Editor

Mark disappointed scientists worldwide this month when they discovered that most of his unprecedented 80 percent use of total human brain capacity is employed inventing expletives to yell at Castlevania.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure, RPG
Current Faves: Devil May Cry, Castlevania Chron.



Che Chou
West Coast Editor

With the launch of the GameCube and Xbox so close at hand, Che decided to have an early celebration in the office this month. Just don't tell Shoe all this partying went on during deadline. Bottoms-up!

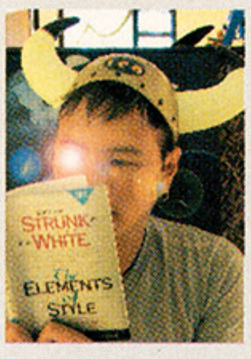
Favorite Genres: Fighting, Racing, RPG
Current Faves: Devil May Cry, Half-Life



Chris Johnston
News Editor

With GameCube and Xbox so close, what's Chris been playing? Inspired by his trip to the Classic Gaming Expo, his time's been taken up by retro games like Kaboom!, Frogger and E.T. Now that's gameplay!

Favorite Genres: Adventure, Puzzle, Music
Current Faves: Pokémon Crystal, Combat Two



James Mielke
West Coast Editor/Webmeister

The Milkman has rediscovered the joys of reading, realizing that it is, in fact, fun-damental. Not as fun as wearing a pair of horns though (as seen here). Who says you can't have your cake and eat it too?

Favorite Genres: Anything that's good
Current Faves: NBA Street, NHL Hitz, Spy Hunter



Jonathan Dudlak
Games Resale Technician

After playing far too much Silent Hill 2, Jon couldn't eat without thinking about all the game's decaying flesh and bloody monsters...and how good they'd taste compared to strawberry Yoohoo.

Favorite Genres: Adventure, Fighting
Current Faves: Silent Hill 2, Castlevania Chron.



Jeanne Kim
Associate Editor/Art Director

Designing the "murder simulator" feature got Jeanne double fisting Red Faction and Max Payne. But no worries. We don't think she's any more violent now than before; except regarding Sewart, of course.

Favorite Genres: RPG, Action, Adventure
Current Faves: Red Faction, Max Payne (PC)



Greg Sewart
Previews Editor

Sewart spent the better part of the month looking for an American girl to marry him. Applicants must be young, pretty and share the same unholy love for Gran Turismo 3 that he does. We wish him luck.

Favorite Genres: Racing, RPG, Action
Current Faves: GT3, Ico, Final Fantasy (NES)

Team EGM

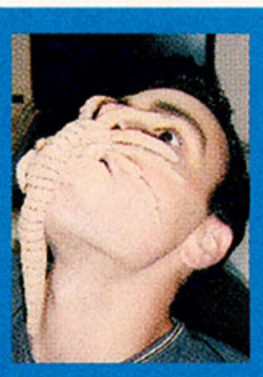
These are the sports nuts on the Crew, but that doesn't mean they're not into all types of games. It just means you can be sure that sports reviews are being done by the sports enthusiasts and not by some schmucks.



Dean Hager
Managing Editor

Now that the PlayStation 2 is finally getting some great sports and racing titles, Dean could care less about those fancy new systems coming out this fall. Well, maybe he cares just a little bit.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Racing
Current Faves: NCAA Football 2002, Spy Hunter



Kraig Kujawa
Senior Associate Editor

By now, Kraig is usually busy making his Green Bay Packers into champions on the best NFL game, but Season 2 of *EGM*'s NCAA Dynasty has him completely pigskin whipped, with no end in sight.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Action, Adventure
Current Faves: NCAA Football 2002, Spy Hunter



Dan Leahy
Editor in Chief, *GameNOW*

Dan, aka Hoss, has been muttering senseless terms such as 5-2 flex, YAC yards and blocking audibles. We'd guess that it has something to do with the glut of good football games on the market. Hike!

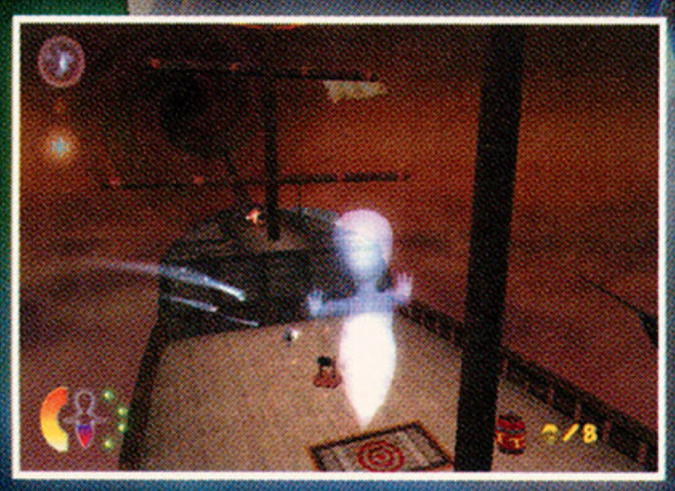
Favorite Genres: Sports, Action
Current Faves: Madden 2002, NCAA 2K2

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PlayStation.2

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Arctic Thunder



Publisher: Midway
Developer: Inland Productions
Featured In: *EGM* #146
Players: 1-2
Also Try: Hydro Thunder (DC/N64/PS1)
Best Feature: New points/upgrade system
Worst Feature: Choppy framerate
Web Site: www.midway.com

Two years ago, I was hopelessly addicted to Hydro Thunder. Since it was a hit, Midway capitalized on its success by creating a string of games using the Thunder moniker. Arctic is the worst of these knock-offs, and the PS2 version is just as much of a choppy, chaotic mess as its arcade cousin. It's as if **the game was designed to match someone's checklist of buzzword-filled features:** bucketloads of radical weapons, huge tracks with lots of eye candy, tons of alternate routes and mind-blowing tricks ("because we hear those extreme sports are all the rage"). That sounds good on paper, but in the process someone forgot to make a cohesive game. If the framerate wasn't so poor and the weapon effects weren't such a sensory overload, the tracks would've been fun. By far the biggest problem is the tacked-on and shoddy combat system. So many different yet similar-looking icons (11 total) are strewn around the track that it's hard to remember what they stand for. Even after figuring them out, the inability to switch between weapons in races makes it impossible to formulate any kind of attack strategy. I found myself just firing everything, hoping I'd eventually get to the right weapon. The gameplay's so flawed that none of the modes added to the home version can save AT from its identity crisis. Melt the snow, forget the combat and bring in the Hydro Thunder boats, and you'd have a decent game. Say, isn't it about time for a Hydro sequel? **Chris**

High-speed snowmobiles. Weapons. Tracks so wild they make Hydro Thunder's look like a backyard romp through the lawn sprinkler. What's missing? Oh, a little something called a framerate, a foreign term to Arctic Thunder that describes how smoothly the graphics run. **As soon as the race starts, the game becomes unglued and falls apart.** All the explosions, fighting and chaos cause so much screen clutter and ch-cho-pi-nes-s, that it's impossible to use any "skill" here. Just fire your weapons blindly and don't let up on the accelerator—you'll do just fine. Split-screen battles are no better; again, you can just fire haphazardly and do well in the game. **Shoe**

Why doesn't Midway concentrate on making a sequel to the awesome Hydro Thunder instead of churning out these awful spin-offs? Arctic Thunder was a pretty weak arcade game to begin with, but this choppy PS2 port makes it that much worse. On a system this powerful, **nausea-inducing framerates should be a thing of the past.** What's more, the big, ugly weapon effects that tend to cover most of the screen make it next to impossible to navigate some of the tracks. In a game like this, your biggest challenge should be your opponents, not dealing with shoddy programming. Just add Arctic Thunder to the do-not-buy list and play Rumble Racing instead. **Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
2	4	3	7

Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2

EGM SILVER EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Z-Axis
Modify: Just about any trick
Players: 1-2
Also Try: Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX (PS1)
Best Feature: Huge levels
Worst Feature: Wild camera may give you nausea
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

My biggest problem with the first Dave Mirra game (on the PS1) was the ugly-ass graphics. So even if it had an innovative trick system and some pretty sweet controls, I still had to look at blocky, warpy textures and strangely sluggish gameplay, courtesy of Z-Axis' Thrasher engine. It's different this time around. Dave Mirra 2 on the PS2 keeps all the stuff that worked about the first game, and throws it all into a stunningly beautiful engine. Just check out the complexities within levels like the Galloon Water Park, where you get to ride down waterless slides and carve into dozens of empty swimming pools; or the view you get on a 30-foot vert trick at the cavernous Devil's Peak. The game even includes a level editor on par with Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 in terms of size and functionality. These niceties aside, **the real star of Dave Mirra 2 is the gameplay**. With the modifier button you tack on little tweaks and variations to your standard assortment of tricks and spins, creating a chain of custom combos limited only by your imagination. Like the manual method in Tony Hawk, the modifier here really keeps you coming back for more. It also doesn't hurt that Dave Mirra 2 sports one of the best soundtracks in recent extreme-sports memory, featuring acts like Gang Starr, Ozzy and A Tribe Called Quest. If you're into Tony Hawk but haven't tried a BMX game before, do not hesitate to pick this up. **Che**

I'm usually in favor of a really smooth running game and speedy gameplay, but this is nuts. **DM2 has got to be the fastest-moving sports game on the planet**, but it is so fast, and the camera just a bit too flamboyant, that I can't play this for more than five minutes at a time without getting woozy. Beyond the vertigo-inducing spins, the game continues to provide the same well-balanced offerings as it did in previous incarnations. The trick-based fare, which is based around the almighty modifier button, makes DM2 as good as the person controlling it. The environments are huge, the soundtrack pumpin', the graphics solid, and the options plentiful. **Milkman**

I don't care if it's completely unbelievable; I love that you can launch 30 feet off a vert ramp while linking a jaw-dropping assortment of maneuvers—it's freakin' great. You could literally spend weeks mastering the catalog of tricks and modifiers packed in this game. It's by far the strongest part of Dave Mirra 2, with the level designs a close second. **They're uh, big...really big.** Just when you think you've found everything in an environment, you'll come across some nook filled with creative new obstacles to ride. What other BMX game lets you disrupt a go-kart race by grinding off the racers' helmets? There's a lot to like about Dave Mirra 2. Mat Hoffman better pay attention. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	5	8

Extreme-G 3



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Acclaim Studios Cheltenham
Featured In: *EGM* #146
Players: 1-2
Also Try: Extreme-G, Extreme-G 2 (N64)
Best Feature: Tight control
Worst Feature: Been there, played that
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

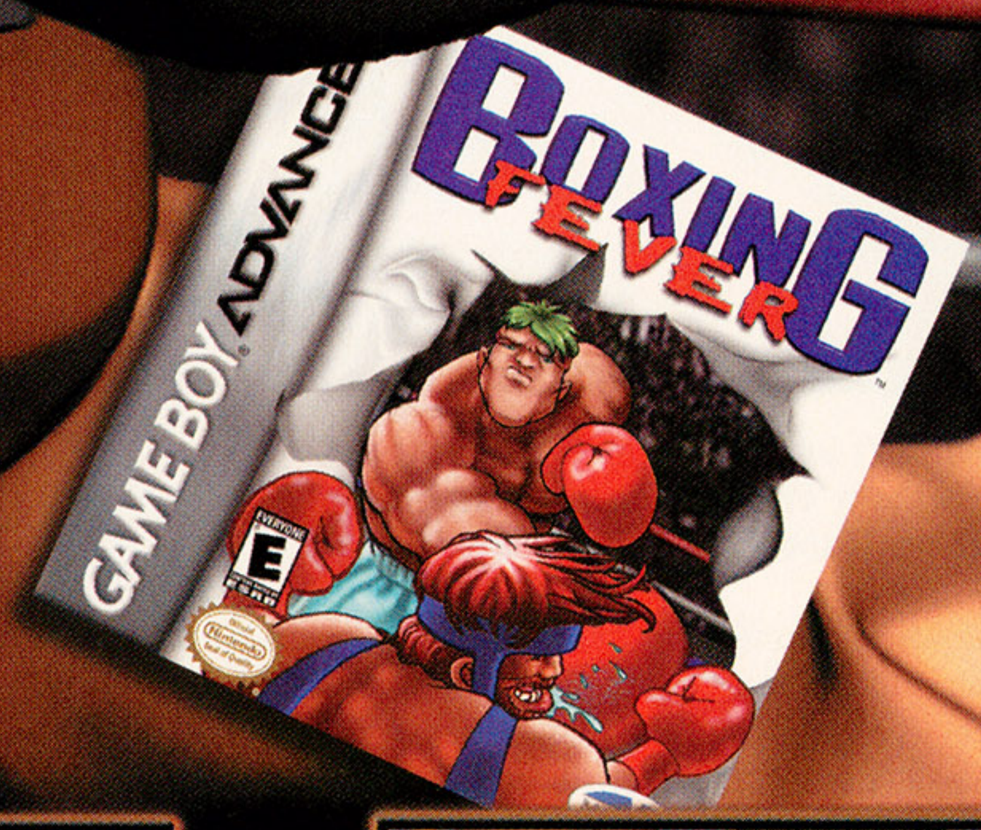
I don't know why, but I've been less and less enthralled by games of this type since the release of the original WipeOut. I guess racing on giant, suspended Hot Wheels tracks while trying to avoid bouncing off the walls just doesn't grab me by the short-'n-curlies like it once did. That's not to say that the developers didn't do an admirable job; Extreme-G 3 looks sharp and is loaded with the obligatory colored lighting and transparency effects all futuristic racing games are federally mandated to contain. Tracks are large and filled with plenty of vertigo-inducing loops, corkscrews and trackside eye candy. (The Egyptian level looks particularly cool.) Controls aren't too shabby either—once you customize them to your liking, that is. (The default configuration will have your hands cramping after about 20 minutes.) There are lots of little nuances to master, like "rocket" starts and the ability to speed up on hills by adjusting your pitch. **Too bad it's nothing we haven't seen a million times before.** Everything about the game, from the weapon upgrades to the team logos and vehicle designs, seems strangely familiar. Another minor gripe: Crashing during a League race automatically ends your career. I'm sure plenty of casual gamers will like EG3, especially if they have never played WipeOut or its sequels, but the game will leave everyone else longing for more originality and replay value. **Gary M.**

Man, playing G3 makes me wanna go to Six Flags and hit the roller coasters. **The track designs are just nuts.** Most of them are suspended way in the air, so you get an eerily realistic sense of how high you're climbing, or even better, how far you're falling (big-time stomach drops). The developers did a bang-up job on that part. The bikes handle better than they ever did on the N64. The amount of time spent scraping the walls, compared to gliding down the center of the track, is minimal. Fans of the series will certainly be satisfied. Everyone else, however, should rent first. G3 will grow tedious for those who aren't impressed by flashy lights and effects. **Dean**

Few racers come close to the intense visuals in this puppy, but you can only stop to admire the winding corkscrews for so long, especially when you're flying by at 500 mph. Sadly, even at those speeds, **the heart-pounding moments are too few and far between**. Close finishes are rare, and shootouts even less frequent. It's almost like everyone keeps to themselves like on the first day of school. A missile will fly by or a few rounds will spray, but the lame, unimaginative weapons don't encourage combat. With such an awesome canvas to play with, I don't know why this game holds back. The lukewarm action makes this pretty racer more of a spectator sport. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	4	6

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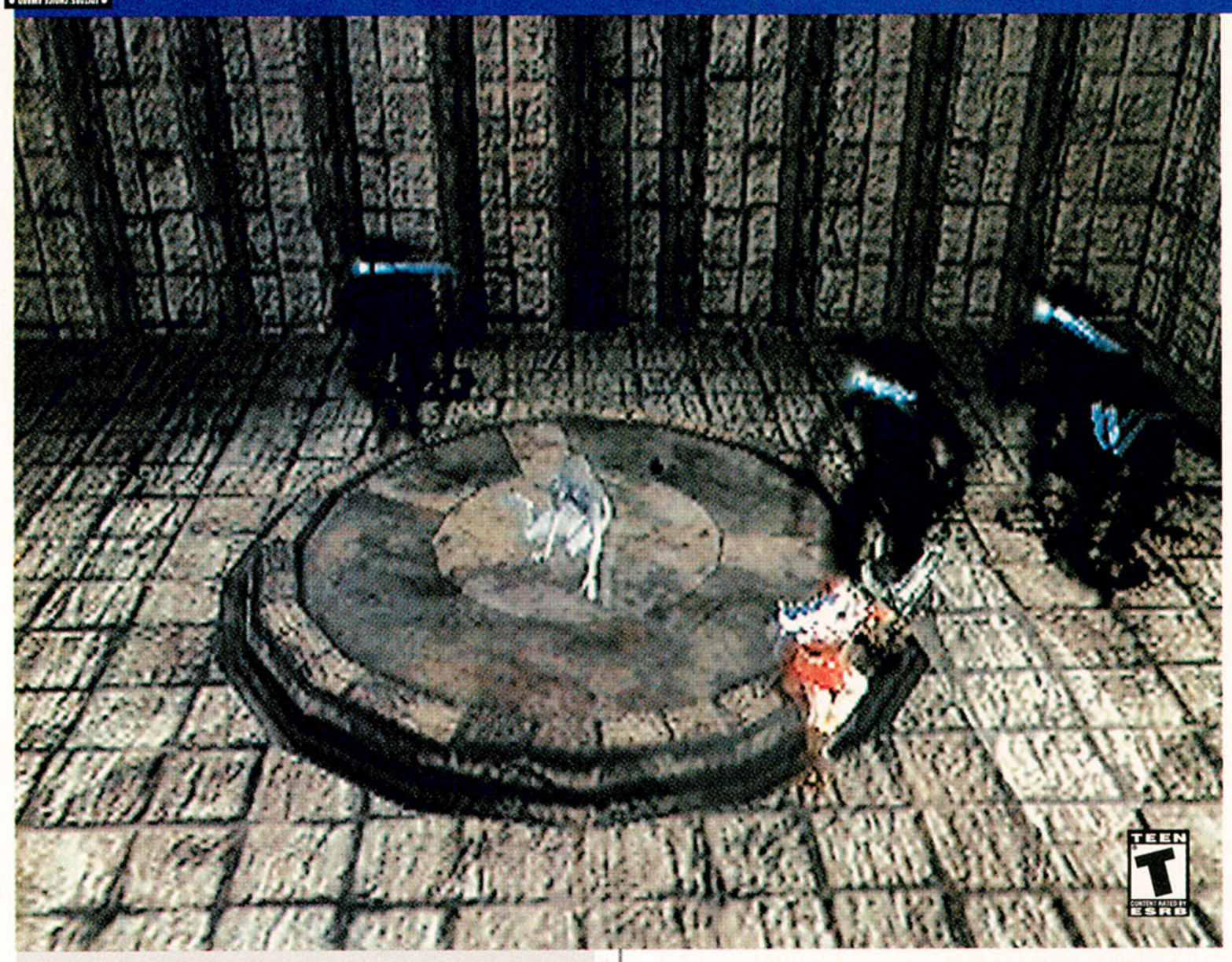
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Ico

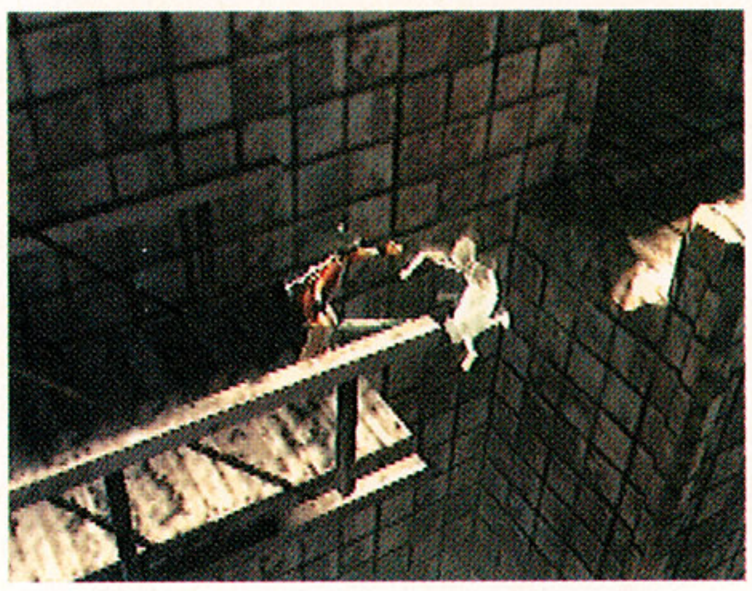
EGM SILVER EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD



Publisher:	Sony CEA
Developer:	Sony CEI
Featured In:	*EGM* #146
Players:	1
Unlike:	Anything you've ever played
Best Feature:	Stunning graphics
Worst Feature:	It's over too soon
Web Site:	www.scea.com

Ico is absolutely breathtaking. Yeah, we know you've heard that before about a dozen other games, but it's true. It's not just the level of detail in the textures or the excellent animation of the characters, but the overall aesthetic of the entire game. The architecture in the huge castle that serves as a prison to both Ico (the hero) and Yorda (the girl he leads around by the hand) is simply beautiful. And when the sun glints over the castle walls just right, you'd swear you're looking at a photograph.

But it's not all about graphics. The Prince of Persia-inspired puzzles that make up the bulk of Ico (plus a few battles with shadow monsters once in a while) are superbly implemented and always logical. If you take the time to think things through in every room, you'll never get truly stuck in the game (unless your name is James Mielke).



Yorda can't jump as far as Ico, but she can still make it over small gaps. Plus Ico can catch her if she doesn't quite make it.

But you know there has to be a down side. It seems that in concentrating so much on the gorgeous presentation and tight gameplay, the developers of Ico blew their wad way too soon—the game is over in approximately seven hours. Since Ico so completely sucks you in, that's not nearly long enough to be satisfying. While that's the only problem in an otherwise excellent game, it might make you think twice about dropping $50 on it.

SAY WHAT?



Though none of the characters in Ico speak English, all of them (save Yorda) are translated through subtitles for the player. Sony originally planned to translate Yorda's speech after the player had finished the game once. Alas, this feature was dropped in the end, all but destroying Ico's replay value and leaving Yorda's legions of fans forever confused.

(Left) Throughout the game these shadow monsters will attempt to capture Yorda. If they succeed, it's Game Over. Use Ico's stick or sword to fend them off before they get their claws on her.



Ico reminds me a lot of Snatcher on the Sega CD. It's **an interesting, under-hyped game that not everyone knows about, but everyone should play.** And like that classic Sega CD game, Ico is something you'll reminisce about years from now. You'll remember where you were and how you felt the first time you ever played it. The question, though, is whether that's enough to make Ico worth buying. I'd have to say yes, but I'm also the type who'll buy a game I know to be less than stellar simply to complete a collection or because I think it's an important title. That's not to downplay Ico's accomplishments. I don't think I've ever played another adventure game with control this good. It's responsive, intuitive and makes the game a downright pleasure to play. And the puzzles...oh baby. The one time I even got a little bit stuck in Ico was entirely my fault, not due to bad puzzle design. Simply standing back and taking a long, hard look at your surroundings always reveals where you have to go or what you need to do next. And the impressive graphics pull the whole thing together beautifully—even despite everything being so...brown. So why not a higher score from yours truly? Well, once the game's over, it's over. Sure, you might go back a year later and relive the adventures of Ico and Yorda, but about seven hours after you start Ico for the first time, you're done. And there's no real incentive to play again. **Greg**

Imagine a dream in which you are awake. Ico is that waking dream. **Less a game than an interactive fairytale, Ico, without a wisp of pretense, is one of few games that legitimizes video games as art.** Simplicity in form and function is key. Solve one vast, multidimensional puzzle in the form of a prison castle hiding vaporous dangers, with only a few different items and resources at your disposal. That's it. It may appear uninteresting at first, but that's what makes Ico so extraordinary. It draws those willing into a whisper of a world that leaves one feeling as if he or she is part of something even after it ends. Don't let Ico fall through the cracks. It's worth it. **Jeanne**

I adore Ico in much the same way I adore the Panzer Dragoon games. It is evocative and beautiful, but over far too soon. With its sumptuous visuals, intuitive problem solving, and affectionately crafted storyline, **Ico is like a favorite bedtime story that bears listening to over and over again**. Which is a good thing, since it will take savvy gamers no longer than six or seven hours to finish. While there is little beyond the beauty of the gameplay itself to inspire multiple replays, helping Ico to free himself and the princess from the evil queen's castle is among the most wonderful experiences in gaming. Rent or buy, but absolutely play this game. **Milkman**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	9	9	3

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Monster Rancher 3



Publisher: Tecmo
Developer: Tecmo
Featured In: *EGM* #143
Players: 1-2
Supports: Picture Paradise Camera
Best Feature: Great combat system
Worst Feature: Nothing much new
Web Site: www.tecmoinc.com

The Monster Rancher team must have the saying, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" plastered all over their walls. Number three's more refined, but is basically the same monster-raising and battlin' game as it was when it last appeared on PS1 two years ago. The only big differences are the cel-shaded, kid-friendly graphics and the ability to use DVDs to create monsters. Its similarity to its predecessors is both a blessing and a curse. On one hand, **the combat's more fun and involving than anything in Pokémon Stadium.** But the rest of the game hasn't changed much. The cel-shaded monsters look so good in battles that I wish the whole game would have adopted the same style. Everything outside of training and battling takes place in menus and dialog boxes. How fun would it be to actually walk around with your monster, talk to people, see new places (besides the same damn ranch)—all in this cel-shaded style? C'mon, it'd be great! It'd be a lot more exciting than waiting for visitors to land on your doorstep with nothing interesting to say (though maybe that's more a function of the poor translation). And it'd be nice to have something else to do than the repetitive training. To their credit, Tecmo added more you can do to beef up your stats besides train, but it doesn't go far enough. Rancher stalwarts will appreciate the new look, but I was hoping the series would break out of its shell. **Chris**

Don't ask me why, but I like the CD-spawning gimmick that powers the Monster Rancher games. With a 3,000-plus CD collection at my disposal, plus more DVDs than you can shake a Suezo at, **discovering what sort of monsters you can spawn is half the fun of MR3**. The other half of the game is purely vanilla, and follows the template set by the prequels almost to a tee, so if you're looking for surprises, there aren't any. Most of the adjustments occur in the training modes where the more complex exercises, which raise multiple stats, aren't found until later in the game. The cel-shaded visuals are nice, but this is still the same ol' Monster Rancher. **Milkman**

In typical Monster Rancher fashion, MR3 doesn't have any major innovations, but it has enough small ones to make it well worth a look for fans of the genre. Fights remain simple and intuitive, and you can still let your monster fight on its own if you've gotta go to the can. The new mixed breeds, such as the tropical Suezo or cold-weather Suzurin, and the accessories you can collect not only look funny, but also add a lot of replay value. Probably the coolest addition, however, is a new encyclopedia which lets you regenerate a favorite monster without having to dig up the CD you originally used to create it. **All in all, MR3 is a great sequel.** **Gary M.**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	3	7

Portal Runner



Publisher: 3DO
Developer: 3DO
Also try: Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Best Feature: Some nice visuals
Worst Feature: Shoddy control
Web Site: www.3do.com

Portal Runner features a spunky, barely dressed hottie heroine; a lion sidekick named—wait for it—Leo; dinosaur and martian baddies; and a boss shaped like a giant brain. Now if only we could add a brawny android with a Schwarzenegger accent and some painful one-liners like "That's gotta hurt!" to this list, then Portal Runner would officially pack every cliché known to man. Er wait—the game *does* have that stuff. OK, it's clear that the plot and themes here are tired and derivative, but then compelling storytelling has never been a hallmark of the Army Men series. And in their defense, 3DO does say this game is geared toward kids (although main character Vikki sure shows a lot of skin—must be something the artists stuck in for dad). But while the kindergarten crowd might like their plotlines trite, I doubt they crave shoddy control and dull fetch-the-item puzzles. Vikki's jumps are too jerky, and both she and Leo tend to slide forward slightly when turning. It makes for deep trouble when you need to hop between platforms, which are everywhere in this game. Portal Runner does a few things right. Its visuals are crisp and colorful. You get one intense level in which you guide Leo through some brutal traps. But everything else here is just uninspired collect-the-crystals, find-the-switches sorta stuff. **The game will keep youngins busy**, but if any gamer over 10 gets stuck playing this thing, well, that's gotta hurt! **Crispin**

PR begins with Barbie, adds a pinch of Lara Croft, and a dollop of Army Men. Blend them 'til smooth and sexy, and voilá! Vikki G.—the plastic eyeful who rides lions bareback and talks like a kindergarten teacher—is born! This hot plastic plaything's the best thing in PR, except to toddler gamers who'll love how easy it is to win. Still, to be fair, a well-paced story that kids will enjoy, few bosses (but enough to keep it interesting), and Vikki's platform-style kinetics keep the ego uppity enough to keep the tots playing. If you're a dad, get this game for your kids to show that "you're cool too." Plus, you get to check out Vicki's butt without getting into trouble. Otherwise, **label as: "7 and under."** **Jeanne**

One thing I've noticed over the years is to **be wary of games held together by warp gates.** They often serve as a crutch to let designers string together levels that otherwise have nothing to do with one another. My theory couldn't have been more validated with this compendium of crap. Playing this reminded me of every bad game I've ever laid my eyes upon. An oversized toy level, a prehistoric level, a futuristic level, a fire level. All tied together by portals, clichés, moronic characters and forgettable graphics. I mean what in the hell is up with a plastic human-looking girl fighting to save a green army man with a lion and a bow-and-arrow? You don't wanna know. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	2	4

Spy Hunter

EGM SILVER — EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD



Publisher: Midway
Developer: Paradigm Systems
Featured In: *EGM* #146
Players: 1-2
Also try: Rumble Racing
Best Feature: Intense action around every corner
Worst Feature: Wish the game was even longer
Web Site: www.midway.com

Like a lot of people, I assumed this game would be a typical, half-assed 3D incarnation of a former coin-op standout. Whoa nelly, was I wrong. Honestly (I'll try not to gush like a schoolgirl), **this is the best remake I've ever played.** The Spy Hunter themes are present (black cars, weapons trucks, "Peter Gunn" music), but basically it's just a great action game, regardless of the nostalgia. OK, let's get scientific for a moment. If you break Spy Hunter down to its core elements, first and foremost you have a kick-ass racing game. Paradigm must have some secret formula for speed because both this title and their former hit for the N64—Beetle Adventure Racing—are movin' mothers. The second element is great level design. The environments are laden with twisty roads, winding rivers, shortcuts and tons of objects to destroy. The third ingredient is a simple, yet engaging storyline. That's the meat of the title. But trust me, it's loaded with so many interesting nuances I couldn't possibly list them all. OK, I'll mention one: On a mission in Europe, you suddenly find yourself among a pack of F1 cars racing on the famous Monte Carlo circuit. If you're feeling evil, you can even unload your machine guns on 'em. That's awesome! As for two-player action, yup it's in there, and it's fast and fun. I only wish there were even more levels, but that's just me being greedy. It doesn't matter if you remember the old Spy Hunter or not, buy this one now. **Dean**

Fast, transformable cars with missiles, guns and oil slicks? Sign me up! I'm surprised it took Midway so long to remake this awesome arcade game, but it was worth the wait. The remixed "Peter Gunn" tunes are superb and the *Mission: Impossible* presentation put me in the mood to be a super-spy badass. More so than usual, anyway. The objective-filled missions make this more than just a steer-'n'-shoot game. To advance to later levels, you'll have to explore new paths, make tricky jumps, and as a bonus, run over roosters. I still wonder how this would have looked with a bird's-eye view like the classics but I couldn't be happier with how well this turned out. **Kraig**

When I think Midway, I generally think bad spinoffs of once-successful franchises (see Arctic Thunder). But Spy Hunter is different. It's like the publisher wanted a game they could actually take pride in without the word "Blitz" in the title. And they got what they wanted. Outside of the somewhat annoying need to replay missions over and over in order to move on in the game, **Spy Hunter is totally solid.** It's fast and the action never lets up for even a second. I like the multi-objective mission setup, too. Without becoming overbearing, it requires you to pay attention to your weapons. Check this one out if you're into either racing or car-combat games. **Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	6	7

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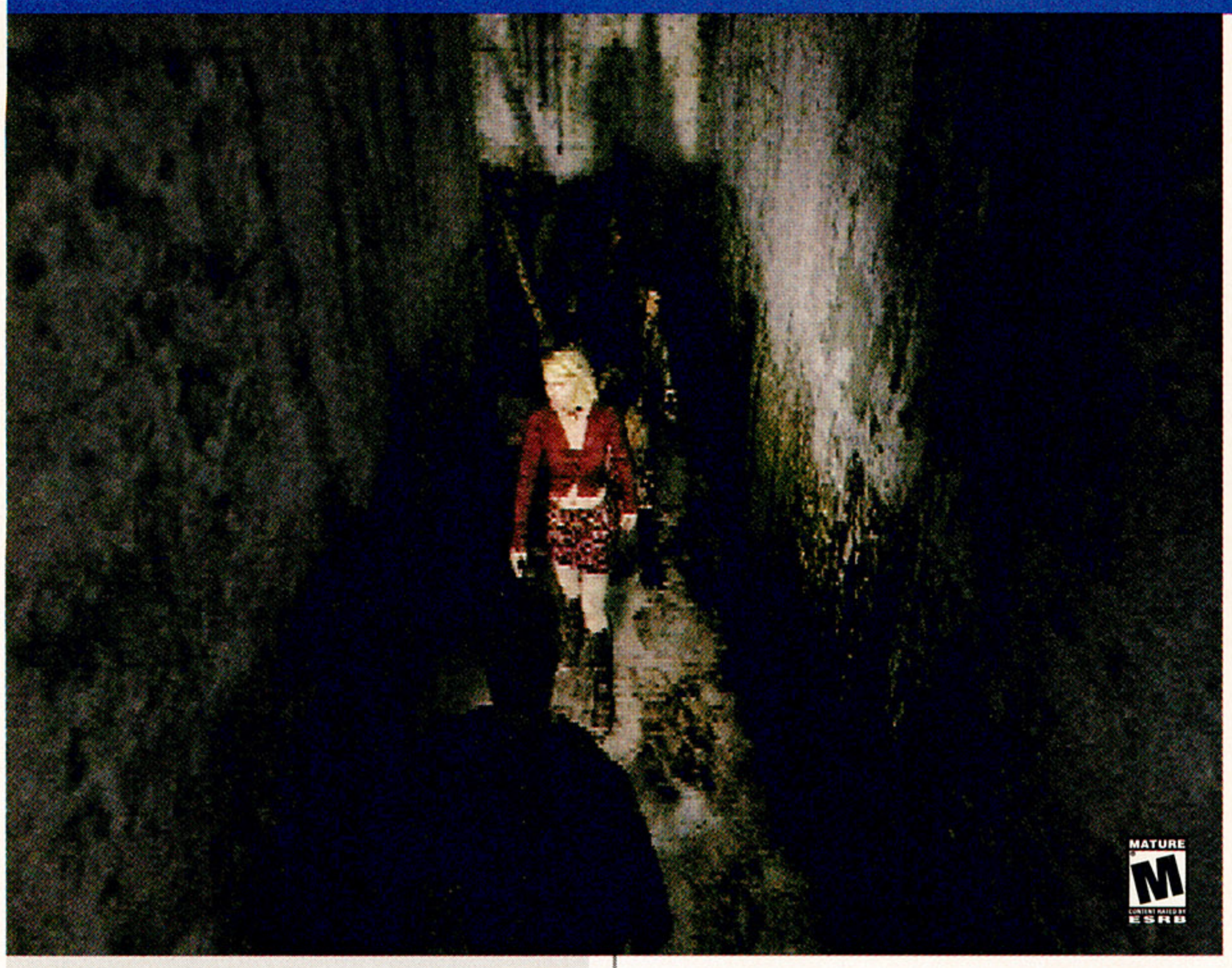
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Silent Hill 2



Publisher:	Konami
Developer:	Konami CET
Featured In:	*EGM* #147
Players:	1
Also try:	Silent Hill (PS1)
Best Feature:	It's darn freaky
Worst Feature:	The puzzle interface is trying
Web Site:	www.konami.com

Calling Silent Hill 2 a game is like calling Jennifer Lopez an actress. Both technically qualify, but anyone who's experienced either can probably think of far more accurate descriptions for each. One might better label SH2 as the most interactive top-tier horror film around, because it does so much more than just entertain. It is so engaging, so emotionally taxing, that it leaves you feeling both mentally and physically weary after just a couple of hours. To those who thought the creators would be hard-pressed to top the thrill factor of the first game: You have no idea what you're in for.

Silent Hill 2 leads us through everyday edifices gone bad much the way SH1 did, but the muscle behind the PS2 and further warping of the designers' minds have opened the flood gates for some strikingly surreal content. You're not just wandering through a dark school or chunkily fogged alleyway anymore. You're descending hundreds of feet into Silent Hill's historical society to stumble into an abandoned prison, where the names of murderers and psychopaths you've been hearing about along the way haunt empty cells in the form of paintings, newspaper clippings and freaky artifacts.



Such a twisted atmosphere fuels the perpetual feeling that something might be waiting in the cramped room just ahead, or even worse, standing in the blackness just next to you. Your instincts are constantly at odds with the game's progression, trying to prevent you from getting into situations where you don't have complete control when that's exactly what the game forces you to do—act against instinct. Thanks to an ambient score and sound design that are nothing short of genius, you're completely immersed in protagonist James Sunderland's world, and for 10 unforgettable hours, your life is his.

Make it through the game and some cool new options become available. One lets you turn the grainy filter off for a cleaner, more graphically defined look. See the kitty?



Despite James's best efforts to entertain and excite the contestants with the comedic stylings of Louie Anderson, *Family Feud* somehow never worked out in the town of Silent Hill.



I wish I could accurately put into words the way I felt after playing Silent Hill 2 for several hours. I walked away feeling like I had personally experienced half of the things that went on in the game, and I was totally drained until I woke up the next day. While I can't tell you how the game's creators induced this disorienting state, I can say that **SH2 does everything so well, it doesn't surprise me that it had an eerie impact on my own life.** I felt so intensely immersed that, even though I might have been busting with ammo and first-aid kits, I didn't want to send James down another narrow passage because I couldn't emotionally deal with a surprise enemy encounter. Even when I knew an ambush was coming, it still freaked me out because the monsters move and attack so sporadically you never know how you're going to fare. If you want to get the complete experience and really enjoy the game, play it with headphones or crank the volume on your TV/sound system. The audio is a gigantic part of what makes the ambience so creepy and is simply too brilliant to miss. It's hard to find fault with this stylish beauty, but I might take issue with some of the camera angles and all the menu navigating that's required for some puzzles. If that was the worst I could say about every game, though, we'd be out of a job over here, and there would be nothing but killer apps on the store shelves. **Jonathan**

Silent Hill 2 is, hands down, the scariest game ever made. Just writing about it gives me the creeps. But does that chill factor translate into greatness, or is it just aesthetic fluff? To their credit, the developers have done a lot of control tweaks to make SH2 one of the more playable survival-horror titles. Plus, the story, with its surprises and multiple endings, is much more compelling and makes more sense than the prequel. But to experience all of that, you've got to wade through some **incredibly tedious and arbitrary puzzles** and lots of fetch the key-style gameplay. If you're patient enough, SH2 will cough up the goods. Otherwise, you may get frustrated. **Che**

Partway into this game (it was late at night and the staff had already gone home), I had to make a decision. Do I continue playing this, in a lonely and quiet office? Or do I play it safe and stop for the night, before the game's fright factor *really* got to me? SH2 does such a tremendous job of tapping into your most primal fears with its use of sound and visual effects. It puts most anything "horror" to shame, including the terror incumbent, Resident Evil. SH2's unnerving mood is so immersive, almost deafening, that it overshadows some of the technical faults. Resist the urge to turn on the lights or play this with company. **This game *will* scare you.** **Shoe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	10	7	6

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Phantasy Star Online Ver. 2



The first boss is now an Ice Dragon on the Ultimate setting. We are scared.

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sonic Team
Featured In: *EGM* #146
Players: 1 (1-4 online)
Supports: Keyboard, SegaNet
Best Feature: All the new stuff to find
Worst Feature: Pay-to-play online? C'mon...we're too spoiled for that
Web Site: www.sega.com

Hack. Slash. Cast spells. Kill monsters. Build up your character. Find rare items. And do it all with up to three friends online. That's all Phantasy Star Online has to offer, really. Version 2 gives you all of that and a bit more, but it isn't a full sequel. This update offers a couple of minor new modes (see sidebar) and the Ultimate Difficulty setting, which contains old monsters dressed up in new outfits and lots of new/rare weapons and items for you to find. PSO Ver. 2 also lets you grow your character to level 200. Good luck accomplishing that in this lifetime.

PAY TO PLAY?

Unlike in PSO ver. 1, you're going to have to pull out the credit card and give up its digits to play online. The cost? For three months of unlimited playtime over SegaNet: $15. Is it worth it? Look at what $15 can get you nowadays. It's a very tough call...

3	months of SegaNet play for PSO v. 2
60	packages/meals of instant ramen
300	minutes of calls on 10-10-220.
1	payment (of seven) toward a Flowbee Haircutting System

THE NEW MODES



Battle Mode: Take a break from fighting monsters, and beat up on your online friends instead. Too bad PSO's game engine isn't meant for this sort of deathmatch-type gameplay.



Challenge Mode: It's just like the normal game, 'cept timed and a lot less fun. See how quickly you can finish a level without the use of your normal inventory or Techniques. Also see how pointless this is since you can't keep any experience points or items gained!

If you're really bored, you can mess around in the new soccer lobbies. Only if you're *really* bored. Here you see a ChuChu Rocket!-themed match, with a giant stuffed cat for a ball, and mice to celebrate a goal.



If you were to ask me why PSO and PSO Ver. 2 are so enthralling, I'd have a tough time explaining it to the non-PSO player. The games are boring, repetitive and devoid of anything resembling an immersive storyline. So why have I spent more than 100 hours so far on the two games? It's an almost inexplicable addiction. It helps that the games are a marvel to look at—they're simply beautiful. But it's really that intangible "goodness" that sucks you in and keeps you there until you realize a chunk of your life has passed, never to return. I'm talking about playing online with friends and that never-ending quest to build the ultimate character and find the ultimate equipment. That's where Ver. 2 comes in. Ultimate Difficulty gives PSO addicts (that's me) a bit more of what we'd want: new items to find, with a fresh coat of paint for the levels and monsters. Sure I agree with the other critics: Ver. 2 is a major disappointment because it doesn't have *enough* new. (Oh, and the new modes are weak, and who wants to pay for online play that we've been getting free for months?) We want a true sequel with brand-new stages, monsters and character classes! But just knowing this game will have lots of new goodies for me to find brings me much joy. Sad, I know. **If you haven't tried this series yet, you are really missing out on the nicotine/booze/sugar/sex of video gaming.** If you've gotten enough of Ver. 1, however, Ver. 2 won't do much for you. **Shoe**

In case you missed my review of the original PSO, I was a huge fan. Sure, single-player sucked, but the character building and online social aspects were so addictive I thought every console gamer should give it a try. Ver.2 is basically the same game, so I feel the same way. But **if you have played the first, it's a bit disappointing**: Many minor annoyances remain, there's no new classes or true levels, battle mode is sloppy, lobby soccer is a joke, and the extra $15 fee sucks. The only cool additions are Challenge mode, (hopefully) no more cheating and some of the new items. Is that worth another purchase (since you can't rent it and play online)? For me, barely. **Mark**

I was fanatical about PSO for about a month last February. It's a classic and addictive as hell. So when I heard about Ver. 2 and saw that picture (you know the one) of the Genesis Mag, I couldn't wait to get my hands on it. But Ver. 2 **just adds to my desire for a true sequel.** As much as I love the old areas, it doesn't have staying power the second time through. Challenge mode and Ultimate Difficulty are the only new stuff worth a dime. Battle mode and Lobby Soccer are lame. If you're a PSO/DC newbie, it's a must-have (add 2.5 to my score). Otherwise, think before you upgrade. Forty bucks plus 15 more every three months is hefty for such minor upgrades. **Chris**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	4	9

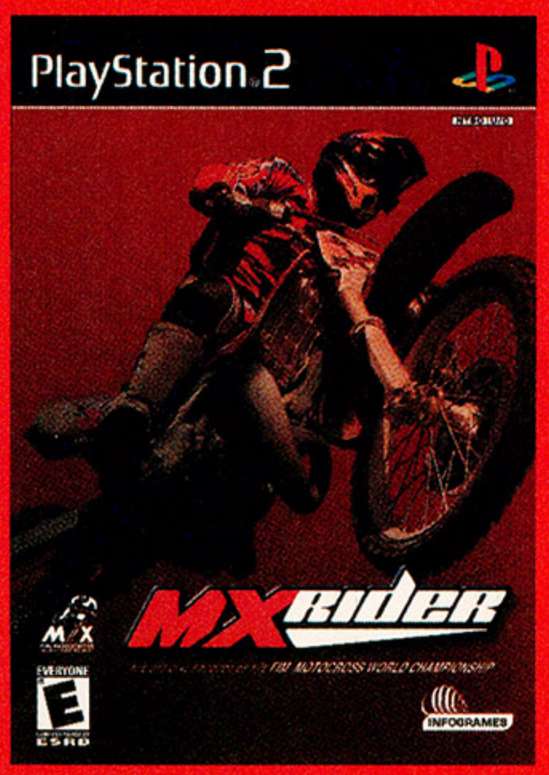
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
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MX FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

INFOGRAMES

PlayStation 2

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NCAA Football 2K2



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Visual Concepts
Featured In: *EGM* #146
Players: 1-4 (1-8 online)
Supports: VMU, SegaNet
Best Feature: Online play
Worst Feature: Player models
Web Site: www.sega.com

Dreamcast fans should be happy in the fact that Visual Concepts—in the midst of transitioning to other consoles—is offering them an online college football game. **The good news about NCAA 2K2 is that it plays almost exactly like NFL 2K1.** That's also my main gripe, as it's hard to believe I'm basically playing NFL 2K1 12 months after it was released (with minor improvements). Still, NCAA has some worthwhile features. The mere inclusion of 117 Division I-A college teams, their uniforms, and their stadiums makes the game a solid purchase. Add a Legend Mode where you assume all recruiting/roster management and online play, and you've got a definite winner. Gameplay is fast, especially compared to EA's college offering, and demands quick decision-making. Spins, jukes and the use of "money plays" (slants, outs, corners) can lead to a somewhat arcadish brand of football, but most tactics can be countered. The stadiums are cozy and definitely make you feel the college atmosphere, but that's the highlight of the visual appeal. The player models are roughly hewn together and range from tolerable to downright goofy. VC's superb animation talents are evident as always, and you'll look at more than your share of spectacular replays. And what's better than watching those replays at the expense of your online opponent? I know I'll be taking the Buckeyes online in coast-to-coast battles. **Dan L.**

It's not surprising that NCAA 2K2 suffers from the same problem that most new college-sports games do: It fails to establish its own identity from its pro counterpart. If you're an NFL 2K1 player, you'll step right in and throw touchdowns in this game without blinking. Unfortunately, NCAA isn't nearly as polished as that series. The computer defense makes silly errors, the action slows down, and the awkward controls for pitching the ball made me avoid using option plays altogether (sucks if you're a running team). If you love the 2K1 style of play, these flaws can be overlooked. The rest of us might **wonder if it was worth the money just to get a coat of collegiate paint.** **Kraig**

I'm trying my hardest not to think of this as NFL 2K1 masquerading in college garb, but the thought keeps creeping back into my melon. But honestly, is that such a bad thing? Nope, it's not at all. **Why mess with a great game engine when all it takes is some collegiate aesthetics and an option play or two to please a nation of rabid fans?** I'm sure it's a lot more complicated than that, but bottom line—we finally have Internet-ready college ball. I, for one, can't wait to hit the wires with my Huskers and raise some hell. I'll be the guy who runs it up the gut so much his halfback begs for mercy. But that's the beauty of NCAA, it accommodates all styles of play. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	4	8

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Runecraft
Also Try: Dave Mirra BMX 2 (PS2)
Players: 1-2
Bootylicious: Soundtrack
Web Site: www.activision.com

Best Feature: It's Tony Hawk on two wheels
Worst Feature: Feels a little sluggish overall

DC owners shouldn't see Mat Hoffman as sloppy seconds, even though it's **nearly identical to its PS brethren**. Like other Tony Hawk transplants, Mat Hoffman DC offers cleaner textures, better looking player models, and real-time shadows. Sure, these things don't change the game none, but when your controls are based on something as proven as Tony Hawk, better graphics can only help your cause. Despite the better visuals, however, the game feels strangely sluggish. You get used to it after a while, but considering that it's running on the DC, a better sense of speed would've been nice. For better or worse, Hoffman feels a lot like its Pro Skater cousin. Although the gameplay differences are subtle, I would've liked something that felt more unique to the physics of freestyle BMX. On the other hand, it's good to know that extreme sports doesn't always spawn music from the Ozzfest. I love Hoffman's superb soundtrack, and if you dig hip-hop, you will too. As support for the DC trickles out this year, it's great to see a title diehard fans can look forward to. **Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	9	3	7

One Piece Mansion



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: *EGM* #143
Players: 1
Supports: Rent-control
Web Site: www.capcom.com

Best Feature: Unique puzzle-game mechanics
Worst Feature: Steep learning curve

The premise behind your role as Polpo, an apartment manager in One Piece Mansion, is deceptively simple: Keep your tenants happy and make money doing it. While this may sound like a piece of cake, it is anything but. The maddening pace of the game (whether managing tenants, putting out apartment fires, or catching burglars) is enough to keep even the nimblest superintendent at his wits end. Although the characters are well-designed, it can be hard to keep tabs on the masses (and their moods) when you build larger apartment complexes. This causes the camera to pan out, reducing the well-drawn sprites to really *small* well-drawn sprites, which in turn makes it hard to identify your tenants, and knowing them and their idiosyncrasies is half the battle. Considering the game's geared toward the typical softcore puzzle-game player, **OPM, despite its cuddly allure, is intimidating in its depth and requires considerable commitment to master.** It's a good thing to see a change from the usual block-dropper, but this is tough stuff. **Milkman**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	7	7	7

Castlevania Chronicles



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami CET
Featured In: *EGM* #146
Players: 1
Also try: Castlevania: Symphony of the Night
Best Feature: It's 2D Castlevania!
Worst Feature: 14th-century graphics
Web Site: www.konami.com

Just when I started to think every quality game series I once loved had gone 3D without looking back, Konami swaps in a little English text, mocks up a weak Photoshop title screen, and stamps out a limited (30,000) U.S. release for Castlevania Chronicles. I couldn't be happier. It's like Konami boiled down Castlevanias 1-4 on the Nintendo and Super Nintendo and skimmed off the fatty excess (comprised mainly of weirdness from 2 and inconsistencies from 4). The result is a 2D adventure that feels like a **perfect fit between the early Castlevania games and their headlining act: Dracula X** (for the Japanese PC Engine). It's cool to see all the influences from these games come into play, from the enemies to the level layouts to the remixed music. I found myself charging through it again and again to unearth every hidden gold crown and make it as far as I could without dying. Why? Because like most Castlevania games, Chronicles has a ton of moments where the developers are just egging you on: "You wanna jump here? Fine. Deal with this Medusa head and spiked ceiling!" Something eternally satisfying comes from making it through those spots without getting annihilated. Konami did add an art gallery and video interview with the game's producer for the U.S. release, but the rest of the disc is pretty bare-bones. Nonetheless, it's worth the sub-$20 price tag (yep, that's right) and then some, so buy it without fail. **Jonathan**

Consider this before you read my review: I am a Castlevania freak. Big time. All right, now take a quick look at the sub-scores below: As far as graphics and sound, CC is nothing special. In fact, younger gamers who only know Symphony of the Night will likely turn up their noses. But **as another edition in one of my favorite series of all time, I couldn't help but love it**. Mr. Belmont doesn't have the range of moves you'd expect from a modern-game hero (although he can whip down and on an angle, and change direction in mid-jump), but Chronicles has the classic formula I've come to know and love. Frustratingly good difficulty, cool extras—an oldie but a goodie. **Mark**

While I'd much rather have a completely new Castlevania adventure on the PS, this'll do. Most fans of the series will find this game a whole new experience, as it was never released in the U.S. But first they'll have to see past the very dated graphics and play mechanics. Those of us, however, who have fond memories of Simon Belmont's earliest exploits and are looking for all the controller-snappin', expletive-screaming difficulty of the old Nintendo games will feel right at home. The extra stuff—like the interview with CC's producer—rounds out this package rather nicely. Not as much as a Dracula X remake would, though...we can dream, right? **Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
2	6	3	6

PlayStation®2

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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
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Spider-Man 2 Enter: Electro



Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Vicarious Visions
Featured In:	*EGM* #146
Players:	1
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Topnotch graphics
Worst Feature:	Unfriendly controls and camera
Web Site:	www.activision.com

Activision knew they had a good thing going with the original Spider-Man game, so you can't blame them for milking that model for Spidey 2. It plays almost identically to its recent predecessor (Spider-Man is barely a year old on the PS1). But the developers have worked in a couple of extra features to make sure "true believers and newcomers alike," as Stan Lee would say, enjoy it.

The most obvious point played up for this sequel is Spidey's personality. With consistent wisecracks and scenario-specific observations throughout the game, it's a little less serious than the first game. Moreover, the hero's lighthearted spirit makes SM2 feel even more like a page out of the comics, as the mocking commentary flows as fast as the webbing from his wrists.

Spider-Man 2's boss battles have been ramped up as well. For example, in order to take out the slippery Sandman, you've got to holster your attacks until dousing him with water from a nearby pipe, which requires turning a valve that builds up the water pressure. We saw ideas like this in the first game, but the developers have obviously made an effort to make this type of depth the standard rather than the exception. Between that and a beefy variety of stage-clearing goals that range from solving puzzles to beating the clock on timed missions, the game does a lot to keep itself from falling into the standard punch-and-kick gameplay trap.







Spidey has to use his webs and wits to solve assorted puzzles, including halting planes, catching trains and saving automobiles.

Many wondered why Activision didn't hold Spider-Man 2 for the PS2, but check out how clean the graphics ended up on the PS1 hardware. Looks like that ol' gray box has some surprises in her yet.



Because I enjoyed and respected the first Spider-Man a great deal with the exception of one major point, you can imagine my frustration when I found the same issue had gone virtually untouched in SM2. It's a wonder Spider-Man didn't turn to the developers halfway through production and say, **"My Spider Sense is telling me that this camera bites!"** Anytime you change direction when climbing or whirl around to face an enemy, things fall apart faster than the Firestones on your mom's Explorer. The control scheme changes on the directional pad, and the camera swings around so you have no indication whatsoever of where you're at. At first it's just annoying, but by the time Hammerhead is picking you off the wall with a machine gun from god knows where (actually, if he had Spider-Man's view, he wouldn't know either), you're actually severely impaired by it. Aside from the camera and control issues, SM2 is a nicely touched-up expansion on the first game. Although the selection of villains is made up of mostly second-string bad guys, they almost all require some creativity to conquer. Puzzles, stealth combat and old-fashioned pummeling are squarely balanced across all the stages, and whether these screens do it justice or not, the game looks great on the PS1. Definitely check it out, but be prepared for some lame artificial difficulty that stems from (you guessed it) the wanky camera. **Jonathan**

The last Spider-Man game, developed by Neversoft, is one of the best superhero games around. It's a shame then that Spider-Man 2, developed by Vicarious Visions, is not. While the challenges in the first game were usually simple delights, **in Spider-Man 2, the wallcrawler's duties are at best, utterly mundane**. More often than not, level requirements are nothing more than swinging around and beating up underpowered thugs, while other stages are so short, they're almost insulting. Compounding the misery is horrible collision-detection, sluggish button response (especially while web swinging) and poor camera work. Disappointing. **Milkman**

If there's ever a case for packing a bottle of Tylenol in with a game, this has gotta be it. No game's shoddy camera in recent memory has given me more headaches than this one, and it couldn't have happened to a better game. I know that it must be hard to keep an eye on Spidey crawling all over the place, but all of those of high nooks and crannys in the levels didn't make life any easier. Fighting the bosses was excruciating and half the time I never saw what hit me. Fortunately, what I did see made me want to play further. The story and graphics are inviting and let me tell you, slinging webs just doesn't get old. More Tylenol, please. **Kraig**

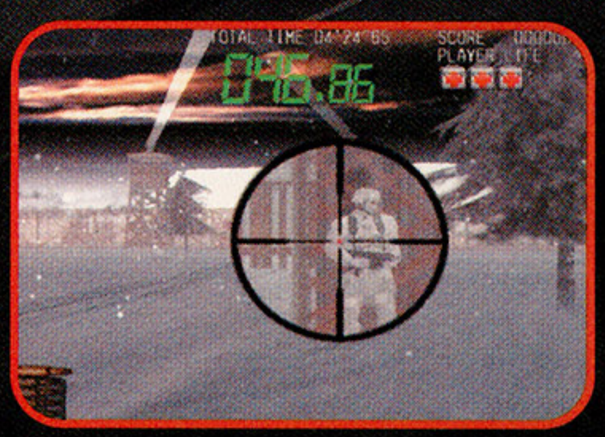
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	3	5

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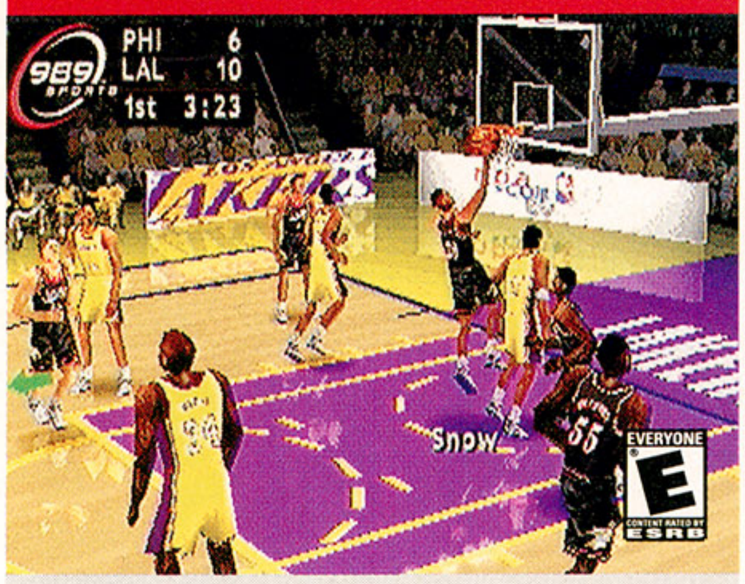
Blood
Violence

PlayStation®2

www.konami.com

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NBA ShootOut 2002



Publisher:	Sony CEA
Developer:	Killer Game
Also Try:	NBA Live 2002
Players:	1-8
Supports:	Multi-tap, Dual Shock
Best Feature:	You can create your own dunk
Worst Feature:	No zone defense. Uh, hello?
Web Site:	www.989sports.com

When I was sitting back in my captain's chair playing this game, my first impression was that 989 Sports finally got their act together and fixed this franchise after years of problems. But then I noticed something funny: All of my players were defending their players man-to-man. Hoops fans know that the recent controversy with the NBA revolves around the league allowing college "zone" defenses. It's a move that promises to substantially alter the game more than any other rule change before. Players who drive to the hoop (like Steve Francis) hate it because it allows big men to hover around the paint and swat down lay-ups, while pure shooters, such as Glen Rice, will relish at wide-open shots from the holes in the zone. Well, **I guess the developer of this game didn't get the memo about the zone defense.** That, or they didn't care enough to completely rework the game to comply. I'll let you decide which. If you don't mind this obvious omission, then maybe you'll like ShootOut. It's a fast hoops game with good graphics, decent computer intelligence, and some sweet dunks. The animations are a little choppy, but that has been the norm with PS basketball games, unfortunately. If you do care about realistic basketball and strategy, then throw the idea of getting this game right out the window. It's a shame, because if it didn't have that fatal flaw, NBA ShootOut would be much better than it has been in years. **Kraig**

Why I'm looking at an NBA game in late August is beyond me, but I guess 989 figures if you can't be the best (see NBA Live), then you may as well be the first. First doesn't equal fun though, as proven by ShootOut 2002. **The game is packed with lame trademarks, as Icon Screening™, Touch Shooting™, Advanced Dribbling Control™ and Auto Defend™ are old gameplay elements disguised as "revolutionary new features."** Too bad 989 doesn't have the one trademark that matters...Fun Game™. Aside from the tired gameplay, ShootOut lacks basics like NBA rule changes and the new zone defenses. Yuck. **Dan L.**

Have I fallen into some parallel universe where NBA ShootOut is actually a decent basketball game? Seriously, I'm shocked to report this former underachiever is not only improved, it's flirting with *gasp, wince,* being above-average! I know it's outlandish considering the track record of the series, but I like what they've done. The players move 10 times better than last year. Most notably, there's no more awkward hiccup when they attempt a special maneuver. The defensive AI is more adept as well. Don't get too excited though, **it's far from perfect**. But if you can overlook the lack of a zone defense and a few other snafus, it's easily the best ShootOut yet. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	4	5

X-Men Mutant Academy 2



Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Paradox
Also Try:	Marvel vs. Capcom
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Aerial combos
Worst Feature:	Recycled graphics
Web Site:	www.activision.com

After the lukewarm reception of last year's Mutant Academy, I was a little surprised to see a sequel at all, much less so soon. I happened to enjoy the original, and now that Mutant Academy 2 has expanded the first game's air combos into all-out aerial raves (in the style of Marvel vs. Capcom), the gameplay is slightly more exciting. Now is the time when I'd normally expand on all the cool changes made since the first game, but there just aren't any more. Aside from the revised aerial combos and a roster expanded with some of the more obscure X-Men, **you've seen all this in the first game**—including some of the exact same backgrounds and dull graphics. To make matters worse, it's glitchy. Not even Toad could pick off all the bugs in this game before it was crammed out the door. Most of the ticks that couldn't get fixed in time are minor and infrequent, but the one that might be an issue for hardcore fighters places player 1 almost on top of player 2 at the start of the round, making for an awkward and potentially biased beginning. Balancing apparently got thrown to the wayside as well. For example, Beast is a veritable tank on offense *and* defense, and has far too much time in between moves to string together an inescapable combo. I feel sorry for the developers who were forced to put their pencils down on this game midsentence. With a little more time, MA2 could have been a strong contender. **Jonathan**

Judged on appearances alone, Mutant Academy 2 looks pretty sweet. The graphics (especially when used with the PS2's texture-smoothing) are excellent, showcasing detailed character models, a surplus of impressive special effects, and animated 3D backgrounds. What hasn't gained any ground is the gameplay. It's obvious that the developers researched many a fighting game while designing MA2, but despite being a touch more difficult than the first Mutant Academy, **the AI is so completely non-existent that the old "whack one button and win" strategy still works wonders**. Great stuff for X-Men fans, but utterly average. **Milkman**

X-Men Mutant Academy 2, while a huge improvement on its predecessor, is, like its title suggests, sophomoric. At the risk of sounding like I actually own hundreds of X-Men comics, polybagged in mint condition somewhere, none of the characters here fight how they normally would in the funny books. Still, with a new, robust combo system, air blocks, counters, dynamic cameras (showcasing the new moves) and better controls, **MA2 takes one step closer to fighting game legitimacy.** Hardcore fans of the genre probably won't find it too engrossing, but the casual fighting fan will dig the low learning curve and high combo count. **Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	4	6

Final Fight One



Publisher:	Capcom
Developer:	Capcom
Featured In:	*EGM* #144
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Link Cable
Best Feature:	This is a great version of Final Fight if you don't mind...
Worst Feature:	...that they replaced the risqué dominatrix with Billy the punk rocker
Web Site:	www.capcom.com

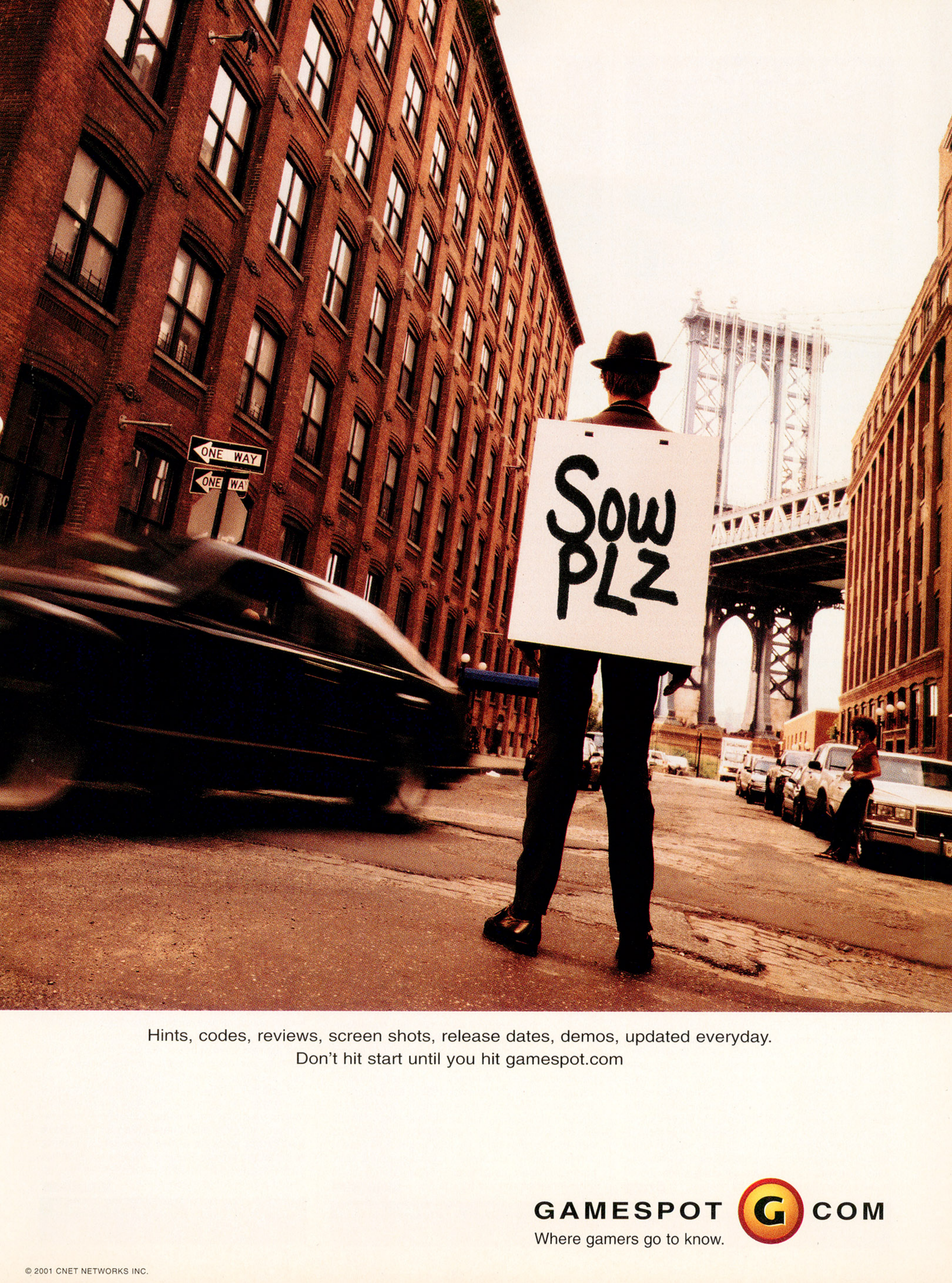
GAME BOY ADVANCE

Want proof that the GBA is more than just a handheld Super Nintendo? Just pop in Final Fight One and enjoy **one of the finest 2D brawlers ever made**. Whereas the old SNES version had flakey graphics and slowdown problems, FFO on the GBA cooks like it did the summer of 1990 when it was at the height of its popularity at the arcades. And while Capcom's stayed true to the look and feel of Final Fight (sorry, no crazy pseudo 3D effects here), the game still looks damn good for being 11 years old. Best of all, cleaning up Metro City with a friend in two-player link-up mode is a lot of fun. Are they pushing GBA hardware to the hilt? Who knows, and to be honest, who cares. Not only is FFO technically sound, Capcom had the foresight to give the game a lot of replayability. As you pummel through the levels, every thug you lay out gives you "fighting points." You use these points later on to unlock a list of goodies, including extra lives, stage select and Alpha costumes for both Guy and Cody. Since you will inevitably unlock everything (provided you keep playing), FFO gives you a sense of progress and rewards those persistent enough to keep trying. Playing FFO was also a nice reminder of how deep the fighting system is—at least for a 2D brawler. This game is the forefather of fighting mainstays like chain combos and 2-in-1 hits. If you work at it, you can perfect your technique and master the game. And that, my friends, is a beautiful thing. **Che**

FFO feels kind of like hanging out with your high-school friends after a couple of years away at college; sometimes things just aren't as good as you remember them. FFO is a pretty straight port of the original and looks great on the GBA, but its repetitive beat-'em-up gameplay **had a definite time and place, and it's just not here and now**. You'll enjoy linking it up with your friends for cooperative games, and it's cool to see where ideas for modern Street Fighter characters came from (heroes and bad guys in the game inspired several SF characters). But after a few rounds, the fun factor decays exponentially, and it's just kinda uncomfortable. **Jonathan**

When I crammed this cart into my Game Boy Advance, I thought to myself, "Well, this should be fun for about two minutes." (Ya see, I've played Final Fight to death years back, and I was sure I've outgrown it and moved on to more sophisticated forms of entertainment.) Two hours later, I'm still playing the darn thing. **It feels good knowing something so basic and mindless can still be fun today.** I wish this were a better upgrade or a new sequel (extra moves or characters would've been nice), but what's in the cart is pretty cool as is. Final Fight One is repetitive, primitive and even a bit tedious...and I dug every minute of it. **Shoe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	2	7



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High Heat Major League Baseball 2002



Publisher: 3DO
Developer: Mobius
Featured In: *EGM* #144
Players: 1
Nastiest Curve: Randy Johnson
Best Feature: Batting interface is very respectable, especially for a handheld game
Worst Feature: No two-player mode
Web Site: www.3do.com

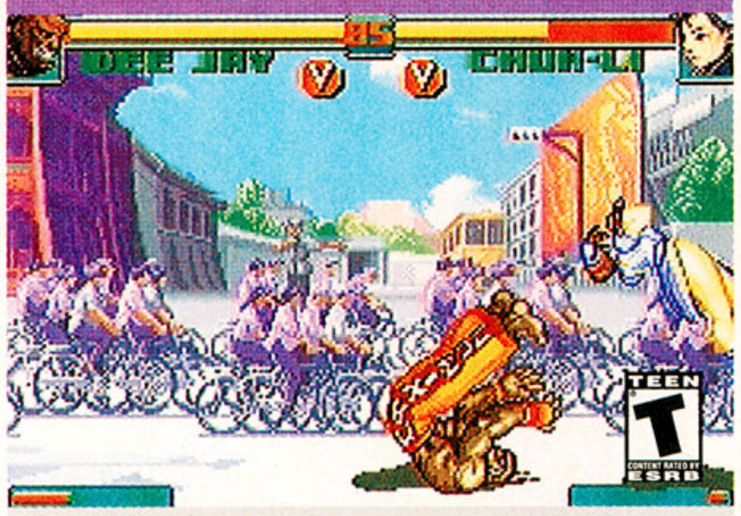
A big yahoo to Mobius for coming up with such a functional batting interface in a handheld baseball game. Even without the aid of a cursor, hitting feels downright natural. You'll be scattering line drives, bloopers, doubles and even triples all over the field. Even more impressive are the barely fair line-huggers. **That's a lot of hit variety for a pint-size baseball game.** Pitching is equally meaty, thanks to the diversity of throws (sliders, fastballs, curve balls, etc.) and the ability to aim them with a fair amount of accuracy. The importance of the batter/pitcher duel was obviously a high priority to the developers and it shows. I like the camera angles as well. The all-important bat-to-ball contact is visible for a split second, followed by a decent, wide-panning view of the outfield. Seeing the ball jump off the bat as it rockets toward the outfield is oh-so satisfying. Overall, in spite of the constraints of a handheld game, HH 2002 plays almost as nicely as its PS2 brother. But unfortunately, it doesn't offer all the same features yet. So here's my wish list for next year's edition. 1. Please give us the ability to make fielders jump and dive. 2. Allow us to steal bases, or transversely, throw runners out who lead off too far. 3. Get the crowd more involved with the game (more cheering). And most importantly, include a multiplayer option so two humans can experience the great batting/pitching interface at the same time. **Dean**

The best things really do come in small packages. After a year of general disappointment with the next-gen baseball titles, I've finally found one which makes me smile. **Complete rosters and statistical tracking complement a simple, quick and fun game engine.** Pitching is awesome, as the top hurlers in the game can deal some nasty stuff. Hitting is all timing based, and the different number of hits is impressive. In the field, you have complete control over snagging grounders and pop flies, but there are no extra moves like dive or leap. Modes include season, playoffs and home-run derby, allowing for a quick fix or extended replay. **Dan L.**

This proves what Baseball Stars fans have known for ages: **Sports games don't need to be fancy to be fun.** 3DO always touted High Heat's realism, but they've scaled down this edition's complexity (who wants to think while playing a game on the crapper?). The simple pitcher-batter duel feels very Super Nintendo-like and has a wide variety of pitches that give it just enough sophistication. The only nuisance was getting used to the strike zone. The grapefruit-sized ball makes it easier to spot, but harder to judge strikes. If you don't mind whiffing while learning the calls, give this a try. Playing just one season should make a long shuttle to Mars fly right by. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	4	7

Super Street Fighter II Turbo Revival



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: *EGM* #144
Players: 1-2
Supports: Link Cable
Also Try: Final Fight One
Best Feature: The graphics are mighty impressive
Worst Feature: Street Fighter just ain't Street Fighter without all six buttons
Web Site: www.capcom.com

This version of Street Fighter II is incredible for a handheld game. The characters are larger than life, making them really easy to see on the small screen. The moves are a breeze to pull off with the diminutive control pad and buttons (except for 360-degree maneuvers like Zangief's spinning piledriver, which are hard enough to pull off without a joystick, let alone the Game Boy Advance's dinky D-pad). The animation is as good as anything we've seen on the Super Nintendo. The new artwork gives the game that Street Fighter Alpha anime look. The cart is packed full of stuff to open up, which will keep you coming back for more and more. Everything screams, "This is a perfect portable Street Fighter II." But man, you just can't do it. You can't play SFII without six buttons (no, Select and Start don't count). It's not Capcom's fault, but **the GBA just isn't equipped to play something that needs three punches and three kicks**. It's too bad, because the game is just fine otherwise. Sure, some characters can get by with a four-button control scheme, but even that doesn't work very well since two of the buttons are the shoulders. Be prepared to do lots of control reconfiguring, especially if you're an SFII veteran. Want Honda's 100-Hand Slap? Then you may need to swap out the B button's hard punch for a lighter one. Want Ryu's fastest fireball? Then stick that hard punch right back in there. What a pain. **Shoe**

If the idea of playing a portable, roughly Super Nintendo-quality version of this classic fighting game sounds good, get SFII Revival—you won't be sorry. Of course the rarity of friends with another cart and a link cable (**couldn't even a couple of characters been available for one cart multiplayer?**) means you'll have to settle for beating on the so-so computer more often. Also bothersome are the two levels of button presses (tap button for one strength attack, hold for another); you get used to it but it still bugged me now and then. When's my six- button GBA with a backlit screen coming? Still, a very solid fighter in a typically weak genre for handhelds. **Mark**

This is the **first fighter I have ever felt truly comfortable playing on a portable**. SSF2R is far from perfect (it's missing a lot of the original's voices and sounds), but still an awesome game to play against a friend. Hardcore SF fans will be instantly annoyed having to use a light tap on the buttons to accommodate two of their six striking moves—it's too hard to pull off reliably. If you can survive with four buttons and are just looking for a casual way to start fights with friends, you can't go wrong with this mostly faithful remake. A couple of mild graphical ticks popped up here and there, so a rental may be in order if that's a concern for you. **Jonathan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	2	7

Fortress



Publisher: Majesco
Developer: Pipedream Interactive
Featured In: *EGM* #144
Players: 1-2
Supports: Link Cable
Web Site: www.majescosales.com
Best Feature: The two-player mode
Worst Feature: Gameplay lacks depth

Fortress is an oddball title—not quite a puzzle game, not quite a strategy game—that has you building castles with Tetris-style blocks while trying to demolish your opponent's fortress. So the cool twist here is that you can play Fortress in different ways. Treat it like a Tetris clone and you'll focus on linking wall portions for combo points and skill bonuses. Or you can get more strategic and concentrate on placing the wizard towers and cannons used to pummel your enemy. That's the theory, anyway. Trouble is, **the game never becomes as deep or addicting as the best puzzlers**. For starters, the combo system lacks oomph. The best you can do is earn score multipliers for building four walls in a row, which really ain't all that hard. And since the goal of the game boils down to which side can achieve a high score first, all you really end up doing is trying to build four walls in a row, then another four, and so on. It's fun, sure, but never reaches its potential. More one-player modes would've helped. Only the two-player linked mode held my interest after a few days of play. **Crispin**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	3	8	7

X-Men: Reign of Apocalypse



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Digital Eclipse
Featured In: *EGM* #144
Players: 1-2
Supports: Link Cable
Web Site: www.activision.com
Best Feature: Play as one of four X-Men
Worst Feature: More monotonous than a conveyor-belt assembly line

The best part about the X-Men comics, cartoons and movies is how pleasingly unrealistic the fighting is. If we had to watch Wolverine walk up and do the same five-hit combo on a dozen Sentinels in the new X-Men flick, the thing would tank worse than *Waterworld*. So I can't get my head around why anyone would enjoy making him do it in a video game. The stages, each of which would be all of 100 feet long in reality, all play out the same: Take out the first wave of enemies, the screen scrolls literally one inch, and the next wave appears. No, wait, that's not true. Some stages take place entirely on one backdrop. My bad. So why don't The Uncanny X-Men figure it out and just make a run for the end of the stage that's a whole 50 feet away? By the time I was fighting Magneto with my usual boring combo and the occasional air juggle, **I would have killed for a puzzle, a kart racing level, an X-Men bake sale...anything to break the tedium**. Plus, the in-game dialogue has all the creativity and wit of a Fred Basset cartoon. Too bad, the game *looks* excellent. **Jonathan**

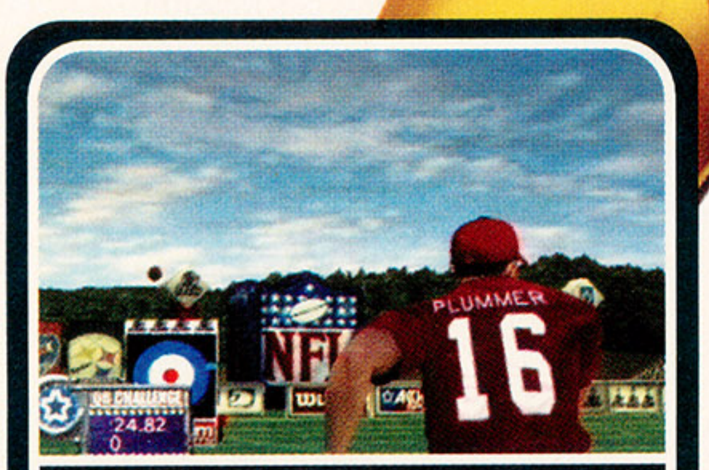
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	5	3	3

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True-To-Life TV Style Presentation And Play-By-Play From Kevin Harlan And Bill Maas



Unlock Retired Greats Like John Elway, Dan Marino And Steve Young

PlayStation®2

PLAYERS INC

N.F.L. Q.B. CLUB

NFL

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

NINTENDO GAMECUBE™

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Tricks of the Trade

By Trickman Terry
tricks@ziffdavis.com

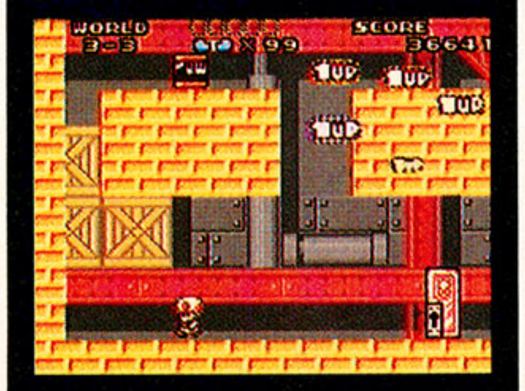
TRICK OF THE MONTH

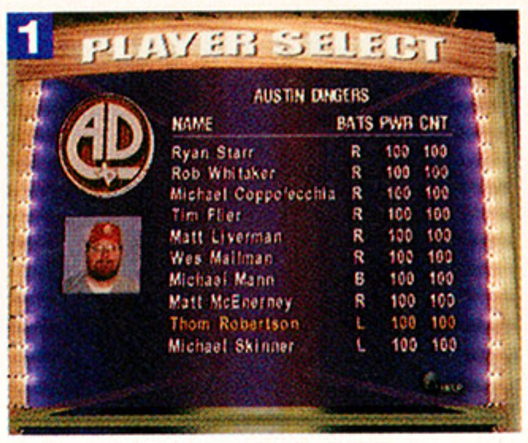
Super Mario Advance

GAME BOY ADVANCE

EASY 99 LIVES

On Stage 3-3, choose Toad and go through the door that leads outside at the beginning of the level. Travel right through the stage until you get to the door that leads you back underground. Upon entering the door, you will notice three plants to the left, and one to the right. The first is a bomb, the second is a potion, the third is a red shell, and the fourth is a POW block. Move to the left, dig up the shell, and throw it at the two purple enemies. Now run to the right and dig up the POW block. While carrying the POW block, run to the left until you see two spark enemies circling around two square blocks. When you see them, throw the POW block, hold the B button, and run as fast as you can to the left. By doing this, the POW block will hit all the enemies in your way and give you up to five lives. Do this multiple times to get up to 99 lives!





PS2 PLAYSTATION 2

All-Star Baseball 2002

1 AUSTIN DINGERS IN BATTING PRACTICE

From the Main Menu screen, choose Batting Practice. Next, move down, highlight Derek Jeter, and press X. On the Player Select screen, press L1+R1+L2+R2 simultaneously. Once you do this, the Austin Dingers team will appear. You can choose any player from this team for batting practice.

Derek Menefee
Abington, PA

Gran Turismo 3: A-spec

2 INEXPENSIVE UPGRADES

You must have two memory cards to make this trick work. Make sure the memory cards are in the two slots in the PS2. From the Main Menu screen, choose Simulation Mode. On the Simulation Mode screen, choose Home. Next, pick the Save Game option and save your game onto both memory cards. Go back to the Simulation Mode screen and choose the Car Dealer. Buy a car and then go to the Tune Shop and upgrade it as much as you can. Go to the Home option again and save your game onto memory card 2 only. After you've done this, go back to the main menu and choose Load Game. Load the save-game data from memory card 1. This will be the original save before you purchased anything. Go back to Home in Simulation Mode and access the Trade option. Load the data from memory card 2. The name of the car you purchased will be flashing on the Trade screen. Choose this car and you will be able to buy it for the original purchase price, even after you put upgrades on the car! Do this trick when you have a lot of money and you will save yourself thousands of dollars in upgrades!



Time Crisis II

UNLOCKABLE TRICKS

Arcade Mode Secrets

Extra Credits

Play through Story Mode and use all three of your credits to earn a fourth credit at the start of your next game. You can keep doing this until you get nine credits.

Free Play

If you've earned nine credits in Story Mode and still use up all your continues, you'll activate Free Play, where you have infinite continues.

Extra Life

When you unlock Free Play, you can go to the "Game Options" screen and change the number of health boxes that you have during the game. Instead of the standard three lives, you can have up to nine.

New One Stage Trial Stages

Get to Stages 2 and 3 in Story Mode.

Auto Bullets

If you finish Story Mode twice, players 1 and 2 can select Auto Bullets. Auto Bullets act like the game's machine gun (unfortunately, you will have to keep reloading when you use this feature).

Infinite Bullets

Finish Story Mode with Auto Bullets and both players can select Infinite Bullets, so they never have to reload.

Wide Bullets

Finish Story Mode with Infinite Bullets and both players can select Wide Bullets. These bullets are like a shotgun blast, giving the player a huge shot radius.

3 Mirror Mode

Finish the Story Mode without continuing and you open up Mirror Mode, a flip-flopped version of the game.

Crisis Mission Tricks

To unlock the hidden Crisis Mission extra game, simply finish Story Mode. In this bonus game, you must clear missions, such as scoring so many points in a round or killing a certain number of enemies. The game consists of five "Days", with each Day containing five missions and one EX mission.

Days 2-5

Complete most of the missions in the current Day to open up the next Day.

EX Missions

Complete all the missions in a day to open up the EX mission.

Final Mission 2

Complete all of the hidden missions and the lost mission to unlock the real final mission.

Music Player

Complete Crisis Mission and you'll unlock this sound test mode.

Cont. on page 226



XG3
EXTREME G™ RACING

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WHAT'S BETWEEN YOUR LEGS
IS ALL THAT COUNTS.

Your pulse quickens. Your stomach drops. You feel it in your toes. With an intense 60+ FPS frame rate and speeds over 750 mph, XG3 is super-charged, gravity-defying combat motorcycle racing that will blow your mind. Get it before your parents make you sit down and talk about it.



12 different super-charged bikes packing serious firepower



9 incredible racing circuits with gut-wrenching loops, twists, spirals & drops



Futuristic, interactive racing environments: city, desert, arctic, ocean & canyon

EVERYONE
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Violence

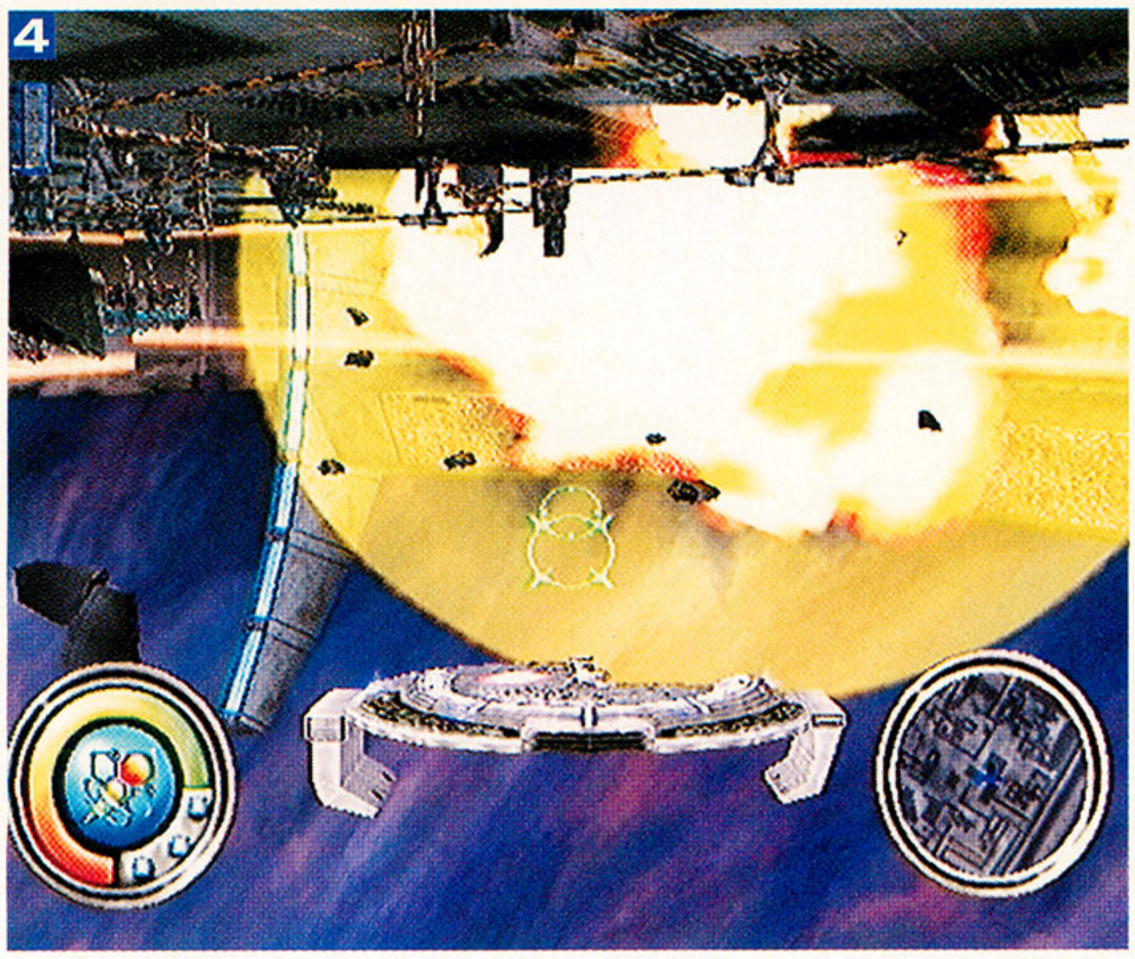
NINTENDO GAMECUBE

PlayStation®2

In-game music by MINISTRY OF SOUND

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Cont. from page 224

Quick & Crash Trick
Extra Modes
To unlock three new modes of play, earn a score in the top five: Chain Hit, One Shot and 10 Seconds.
Shoot Away II Trick
Extra Mode
To unlock an updated version of the classic game, earn a high score in the retro mode.

War Jetz

TONS OF TRICKS

From the Game Setup screen, access the Input Codes option and put in any of these passwords for the results as shown.
Level Select
JMPTT
Fast Planes
ZPPY
Top Gun
DH
Ghost Mode
SNKY
Show Boxes
BXDRW
Thick Armor
MRRMR
Dual Fire
NDBMBS
Valhalla
WNRLFST
Weapon Up at Lvl. 3
PYRS
Rapid Fire
FRHS
4 **Bigger Guns**
HMMR
Biggest Guns
QD
Switch Plane
NDCSN
Speed Shots
NSTNT
Invulnerable
DNGDM
Plane Wins
SMSHNG
Extra 10 Bux
WNNNGS
Double Bux
TWFSTD
Shields on Roll
SCRW
Spin Shots
DZZY
Waypoints
WYPNT
All FMV
GRTD
Overlords
VRLRDS
All Cheats
TWLVCHTS

DREAMCAST

Razor Freestyle Scooter

SECRET CHARACTERS

Press START to pause the game. Now you can enter any of the following tricks to automatically unlock these new characters.
Daryl
Left, Down, Left, Down, Right, Up, Right, Up
Hector
Left, Left, Left, Left, Left, Right, Left, Right
Brittany
Right, Left, Right, Right, Left, Right, Right, Right
Tito Ortiz
Down, Up, Right, Down, Up, Left, Down, Up
Chippie
Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Right, Right, Down
5 **Tikiman**
Left, Down, Up, Left, Right, Up, Down, Left
Norton
Left, Right, Up, X, Y, X, Up, Right

NINTENDO 64

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

SWEET CHEATS

In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, enter any of these codes. You will see the screen shake when they are entered correctly.
6 **Infinite Special Meter**
C-Left, C-Down, C-Up, Right, C-Right, Right
Skater's Stats at 10
Down, Up, C-Up, C-Left, Down, Up, C-Up
Speed Increase
C-Left, C-Down, C-Up, Down, Up, Right
Ultimate Balance
C-Down, Right, Down, C-Left, C-Down, C-Up, C-Right, C-Left

PLAYSTATION

Battle Hunter

SECRET CHARACTERS

From the main menu, choose the first "card" icon and then register a new hunter. Enter your name as either VIKEIF or SHUICHI to play as these hidden

TOP 10 TRICKS

The top 10 games of the last month given the full-on *Trickman* treatment:

1. Twisted Metal: Black

PS2

Incredible Tricks
In the middle of the game, press and hold L1+L2+R1+R2. Keep holding this button combination down and enter one of the following codes. Make sure you have the control settings on "Classic" before entering these tricks. The trick you just entered will appear on the screen if done correctly.
Invulnerability: Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Left, Down, Up.
God Mode: Up, X, Left, Circle.
Killer Weapons: X, X, Up.
Mega Guns: X, X, Triangle.
Weapons for Health: Triangle, X, Square, Circle.
New View for Weapons: In the game, press Right+SELECT to get a different look for your weapon icons.

2. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

GAME BOY ADVANCE

Cool Codes
Enter the following tricks from the Main Menu screen. You will hear a sound and the wheel will spin around when you enter these codes correctly.
Cheats Opened
Hold the R button and press B, A, Down, A, START, START, B, A, Right, B, Right, A, Up, Left. Now access the Options and the Cheats option will be available.
Smiley Face Blood
Hold the R button and press START, A, Down, B, A, Left, Left, A, Down.
No Blood
Hold the R button and press B, Left, Up, Down, Left, START, START.
Constant Zoom In and Out
Hold the R button and press Left, A, START, A, Right, START, Right, Up, START.
Unlock Spider-Man
Hold the R button and press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A, START (Spider-Man will be available from the Select Skater screen in Free Skate and Single Session modes).
Level Select
Hold the R button and press A, START, A, Right, Up, Up, Down, Down, Up, Up, Down.
Level Select and Lotsa Money
Hold the R button and press B, A, Left, Down B, Left, Up, B, Up, Left, Left.



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  (padded, w/zipper, handle and embroidered dragons)
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  (25 songs from Beethoven to the Beatles)
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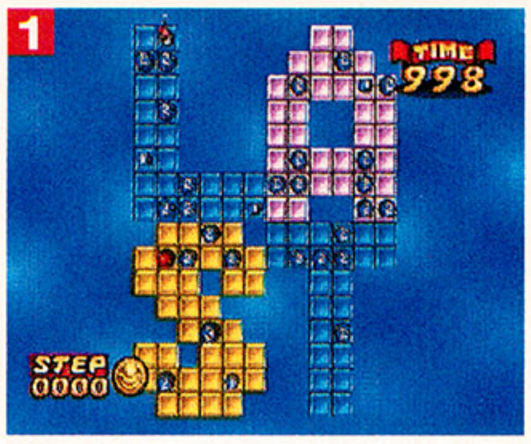
TOP 10 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

3. NBA Street PS2

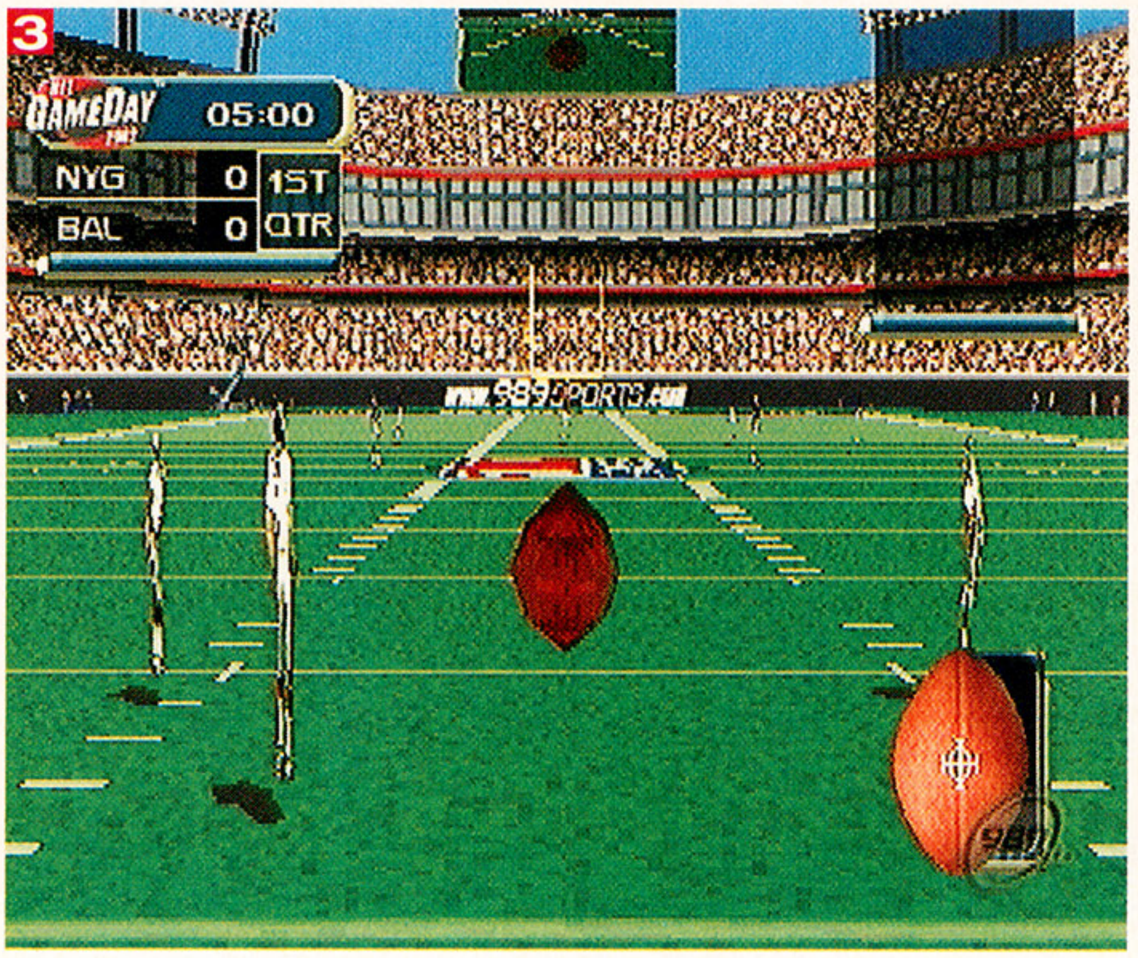
Street Cheats
On the "Enter Cheats" screen, change the four basketballs into other symbols by pressing the buttons the number of times shown, and then press Down on the D-pad. For example, 4,1,3,2, Down would be Square four times, Triangle one time, Circle three times, X two times and then Down on the D-pad.
Summertime Joe "The Show": 1,0,0,1, Down.
Athletic Joe "The Show": 1,2,0,1, Down.
Springtime Joe "The Show": 1,1,0,1, Down.
Player Names: 0,1,2,3, Down.
Less Gamebreakers: 1,3,4,2, Down.
More Gamebreakers: 1,4,3,2, Down.
No Gamebreakers: 1,4,4,2, Down.
No Dunks: 3,0,1,2, Down.
Mega Dunking: 3,0,1,0, Down.
Explosive Rims: 1,2,4,0, Down.
No HUD Display: 1,4,1,2, Down.
Casual Uniforms: 1,1,0,0, Down.
Authentic Uniforms: 0,0,1,1, Down.
Unlimited Turbo: 2,0,3,0, Down.
Harder Distance Shots: 2,2,3,0, Down.
No Juice: 1,4,4,3, Down.
No Auto Replays: 1,2,1,1, Down.
Captain Quicks: 3,0,2,1, Down.
NuFX Ball: 0,1,3,0, Down.
Beach Ball: 0,1,1,2, Down.
Volleyball: 0,1,1,4, Down.
EA Big Ball:0,1,4,0, Down.
ABA Ball: 0,1,1,0, Down.
Medicine Ball: 0,1,1,3, Down.
WNBA Ball: 0,1,2,0, Down.
Soccer Ball:0,2,1,0, Down.
No Cheats: 1,1,1,1, Down.

4. The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Seasons GAME BOY ADVANCE

Hidden GBA Area
Using a Game Boy Advance to play this game will gain you access to a new area. In Horon Village, go to the house of the "Know-it-all birds" and the door to the right will be open. Go inside the door and you will enter the 100 Rupee Advance Shop. Everything







characters. These hunters only have a level 1 status, but they have high statistics for level 1 hunters. Since their stats can't be raised, you will want to use them in multiplayer games rather than missions in the Story Mode.

The Bombing Islands

STAGE PASSWORDS

These nifty passwords will get you through the toughest of the game's levels and the ending cinema as well.

1 **Stage 50**
7 of Clubs, 5 of Clubs, 7 of Hearts, 2 of Hearts, 7 of Diamonds
Stage 51
7 of Clubs, 7 of Clubs, 3 of Spades, 10 of Diamonds, 7 of Diamonds
Stage 52
Jack of Clubs, Ace of Diamonds, 2 of Diamonds, 2 of Diamonds, 5 of Spades
Stage 53
Jack of Clubs, 7 of Diamonds, 4 of Clubs, 7 of Clubs, 5 of Clubs
Stage 54
6 of Clubs, King of Spades, 6 of Clubs, 4 of Clubs, 9 of Diamonds
Stage 55
4 of Diamonds, 3 of Diamonds, 9 of Diamonds, 4 of Diamonds, 7 of Hearts
Stage 56
Jack of Spades, 9 of Clubs, 8 of Diamonds, 9 of Spades, 6 of Diamonds
Stage 57
Ace of Clubs, King of Clubs, 6 of Clubs, 5 of Spades, 6 of Hearts
Stage 58
8 of Clubs, 9 of Hearts, Jack of Diamonds, 4 of Clubs, 7 of Diamonds
Stage 59
6 of Clubs, 7 of Clubs, 8 of Hearts, Jack of Diamonds, 9 of Clubs
Stage 60
10 of Spades, Queen of Diamonds, Queen of Hearts, Queen of Hearts, Ace of Clubs
2 **Ending Cinema**
6 of Spades, 10 of Diamonds, 6 of Diamonds, 8 of Diamonds, 6 of Hearts

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

DISPLAY BALANCE METER

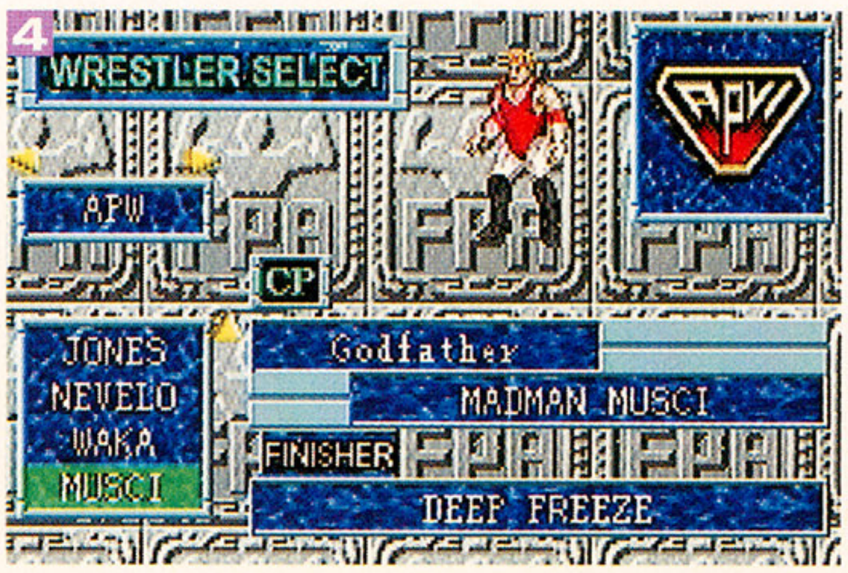
Press START to pause the game. Now press and hold L1. While holding it, press Left, Circle, Square, Triangle, Square, Circle, X.

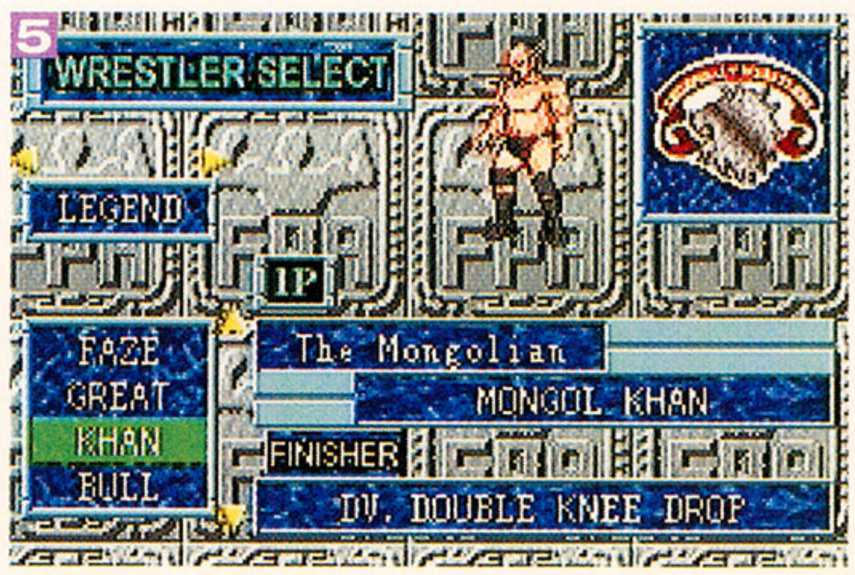
NFL GameDay 2002

TONS OF TRICKS

From the Main Menu screen, go to the Options. On the Options Menu, choose the Code Entry option. On the Code Entry screen, put in any of these passwords for the results shown.
3 **Huge Football**
BIG PIG
Floating Team
POP WARNER
Huge Team
TINY
3 **Tall and Thin Team**
PENCILS
GameDay Stadium
GRUDGE MATCH
Great Defensive Line
LINE BUSTER
Heightened Endurance
ENDURANCE
NBA Players
BASKETBALL
See Credits
CREDITS

Cont. on page 230





Compatible with Game Boy® Advance

Lufia
The Legend Returns

- Twelve playable characters, each with their own unique personality and special attacks!
- Immerse yourself in a compelling story line filled with love, hope, honor, terror and revenge!
- Explore the 200 levels of the Ancient Cave!
- Master various skills and techniques in a new Active Matrix System!

The island of the Sinistrals, Doom Island, sank deep into the sea after the Second Doom Island War. It was believed to be in an eternal sleep, but has once again begun silently beating, preparing to make its appearance in the sky for the third time.

The evil Sinistrals have again been resurrected and released an unforeseen terror on the land. A force has awakened within you...a Spiritual Force that draws you to a conflict that will save the world! The power of Maxim's legendary bloodline lives in you...

The thread of destiny guides you through an adventurous journey looking for an unknown destination!

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EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

GAME BOY COLOR

Official Nintendo Seal of Quality

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Cont. from page 228

U.S. Presidents
OVAL OFFICE
Super Running Back
SUPER FOOT
Euro Stars
EURO LEAGUE
Less Fatigue
FATIGUE
Cheerleader Pics. After Game
FASHION SHOW
989 Programmers
989 SPORTS
All Bobo Team
ALL BOBO
Red Zone Programmers
RED ZONE

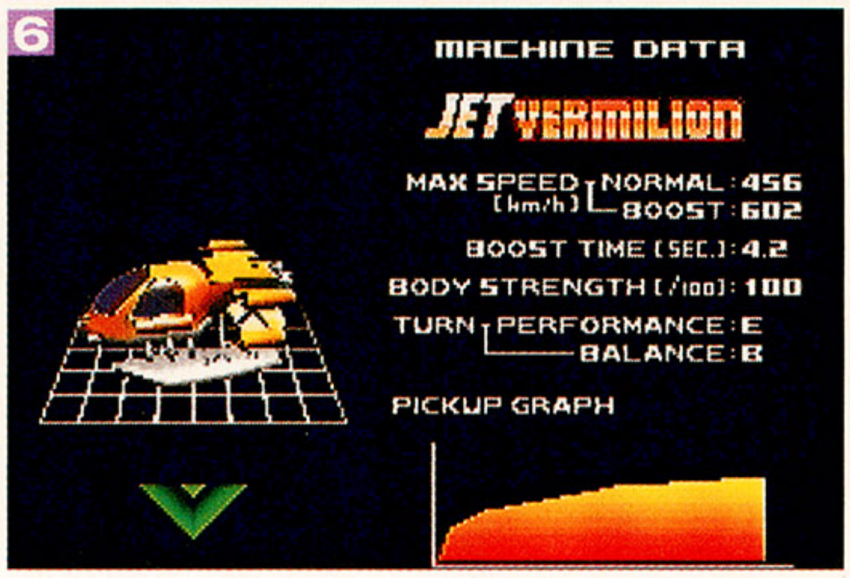
GAME BOY ADVANCE

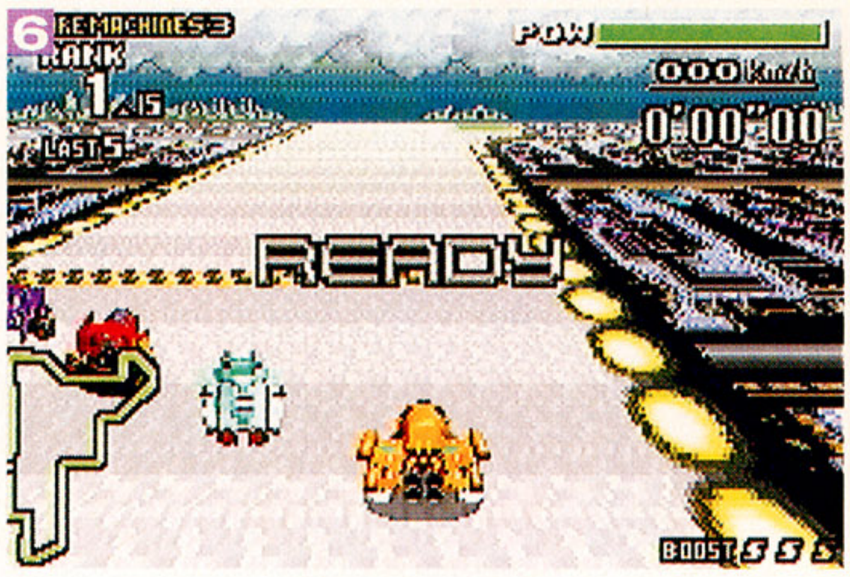
Fire Pro Wrestling

ALL WRESTLERS AVAILABLE

From the main menu, choose Edit. On the next screen, choose Edit Wrestler. On the Wrestler Edit menu, access the Name Entry screen. Now put in the word ALL for the nickname, the first name as STYLE, and the last name as CLEAR. Make sure you use all capital letters. Now press the START button. Press B continuously to move backward through the screens until you reach the main menu once more. Choose Exhibition from the Main Menu screen and begin a single, one-player match. Now when you scroll through the list of wrestlers in each league, you will notice that more have been added to the list. Here is a list of the new wrestlers found in each league:

APW
OMEGA – The Lastman
KLEEBO – The Runner
4 MUSCI – Godfather
AWG
KILLA – Darkman
MANN – Slim Jim
OHHASHI – Dragon Soldier
ECLIPSE
SAEBA – The Fight King
H-CLASS
HIGAKI – The Clone
DOCKEN – The Killer
GRAPPLE
NICK – Mr. Perfect
ALEVIN – The Titan
FAGG – The Stylist
FREE
NOGAWA – Judo Master
KAGURA – Kabukiman
DANGER – The Arab
TIGER – The Untamed
LEGEND
RIKIOZAN – Zeus the Moose
KLAUSER – Commandant
FAZE – The Champ
5 KHAN – The Mongolian
BULL – The Brain
ROZHMOV – The Mountain
ROCHE – The Lost Boy
BRIGHT – The Inventor
MAVERICK – Mad Dog
McLand – Shamrock
VJP
MUSASHI – The Legend
RIKIMARU – The Patriot
MASA – Dr. Voodoo
YAMAMOTO – The Master
WAKAMOTO – Drill Sgt.
PANTHER – Fantastic Hero
KID – Mad Bomber
IGARASHI – Dark Hunter
OJP
SHIBA – Super Giant
TOMMY – The A-Bomb
YAJIMA – The 49er
BOGGY – Dr. Nuke
PEACE – The Peacemaker
HARRY – The Lone Star
IW
HAICHI – White Thunder
KISHITA – Mad Bull
YUKIGUNI
CONDOR – The Condor
EAGLE – The Eagle
DRAGON
AZTECA – Shining Dragon





F-Zero: Maximum Velocity

6 EASY ACCESS TO JET VERMILLION

(Note: At the time of this writing, the listed Web site URL is in service, but subject to change.) Now you can get the Jet Vermillion vehicle by just entering a password! First, you must have access to the Internet and a Web browser. In your browser, type in http://**www.nintendo.co.jp/no8/afzj/vermil/index.html** to access the Japanese Web site. Scroll to the bottom of the page and you will see a keypad with numbers, letters and symbols on it. Enter the name of your game file by pressing the keys of the keypad with your mouse. You will see three buttons underneath the keypad. When you are finished entering the file name, click the one on the far right. This will bring up another page with a password in large, white letters. This is the password that will give you access to Jet Vermillion. Now go to your game and choose Grand Prix Mode. At the Ship Selection screen, press L, R, START, R, L, SELECT. A Password screen will appear. Enter the password you saw on the Web site and you will hear a sound. Go back to the Ship Selection screen and scroll up until you see Jet Vermillion. Now you can play as the hidden car!

TOP 10 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

inside costs 100 rupees. The items include a Gasha Seed, an Advance Ring and a Magical Ring.

Chicken Attack
The old chicken attack method works with this game. Start slashing a chicken with your sword. Continue doing this and you will get a barrage of chickens attacking you! Remove yourself from the area to stop the chickens.

5. Sonic Adventure 2

Chao's Pumpkin Head
From the Stage Select screen, choose Rouge or Knuckles and go to the Chao Garden. Start digging into the ground until you find a pumpkin. If you give it to a newly hatched Chao, it will play with the pumpkin and then throw it. If you give it to a more advanced Chao, it will put the pumpkin on its head!

6. Castlevania: Circle of the Moon GAME BOY ADVANCE

Mode Codes
From the main menu screen, choose "Data Select." Begin a new game, and, on the Name Entry screen, put in one of these names to access different modes for your character. You may have to complete the game the number of times shown in each mode before the tricks will work.
Magician Mode
Beat the game once. Put in FIREBALL for your name to give your character magician stats. During the game, press START to bring up your statistics. Choose DSS and you will see that you have all the cards. "Magician" will replace "Vampirekiller" in the upper left-hand corner.
Fighter Mode
Beat the game twice. Put in GRADIUS for your name to give your character fighter stats. During the game, press START to bring up your statistics. "Fighter" will replace "Vampirekiller" in the upper left-hand corner.
Shooter Mode
Beat the game three times. Put in CROSSBOW for your name to give your character shooter stats. During the game, press START to bring up your statistics. "Shooter" will replace "Vampirekiller" in the upper left-hand corner.
Thief Mode
Beat the game four times. Put in DAGGER for your name to give your character thief stats. During the game, press START to bring up your statistics.

MT. GARRICK, ONCE A PEACEFUL MOUNTAIN RETREAT. IN A STRANGE TURN OF EVENTS, THE SECRETIVE **CHIEF O'LEARY** HAS RECENTLY CLOSED IT OFF TO VISITORS.

WHAT'S GOING ON UP THERE?

NO BOARDING ALLOWED

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IT'S NOT WHAT IT SEEMS.

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COMING THIS **FALL**...

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

PlayStation.2

XBOX

radical entertainment

THQ
www.thq.com

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TRICKS

TOP 10 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

"Thief" will replace "Vampirekiller" in the upper left-hand corner.

7. Mario Party 3

Super Hard Difficulty
Complete Story Mode on Hard difficulty with any character. Once you do this, you will be able to choose the Super Hard difficulty setting in Party and Story Modes.

8. Pokémon Gold/Silver

Duplicate Pokémon and Items
WARNING: THIS TRICK AFFECTS YOUR SAVED GAMES. USE WITH CAUTION! First, you must decide on the Pokémon and item you want to clone. At any time during the game, press START and access the Pokémon option. Choose the Pokémon you want to clone and make it hold an item that you also want to clone (such as a Master Ball).

Next, go into a town and find a Pokémon Center. Move in front of the PC and press START. Move down the menu and access the Save option. After saving your game, press the A button to turn on the PC. Access Bill's PC and deposit the Pokémon you want to clone into one of the boxes. Then choose "Change Box" and move to an empty box. Press A and choose "Switch." When it asks if you want to save the game, choose "Yes."

Now, this part is very important and requires precise timing. The game will tell you that there is already a save file, and it will ask you if it is OK to overwrite the file. Choose "Yes" and immediately turn off the Game Boy. Be sure to turn it off before any words other than "Saving" appear on the screen, or the trick will not work. Turn the Game Boy back on again. Check your party status and you should see the Pokémon you wanted to clone still in your party. Access Bill's PC and look at the box in which you deposited the Pokémon. The Pokémon and the item it was holding will be cloned inside the box, and still in

GT Advance

CARS, TRACKS AND UPGRADES

All Cars Available
On the Title screen (where Press Start Button is flashing), press and hold L+R +Up+Left. While holding these buttons, press B. All of the cars in Quick Race, Time Attack and Practice mode will be open.

Every Track Open
On the Title screen (where Press Start Button is flashing), press and hold L+R +Up+Right. While holding these buttons, press B. All of the tracks in Quick Race, Time Attack and Practice mode will be open.

All Tune-Ups Available
On the Title screen (where Press Start Button is flashing), press and hold L+R+Down+ Right. While holding these buttons, press B. All of the tune-ups in Quick Race, Time Attack and Practice mode will be open.

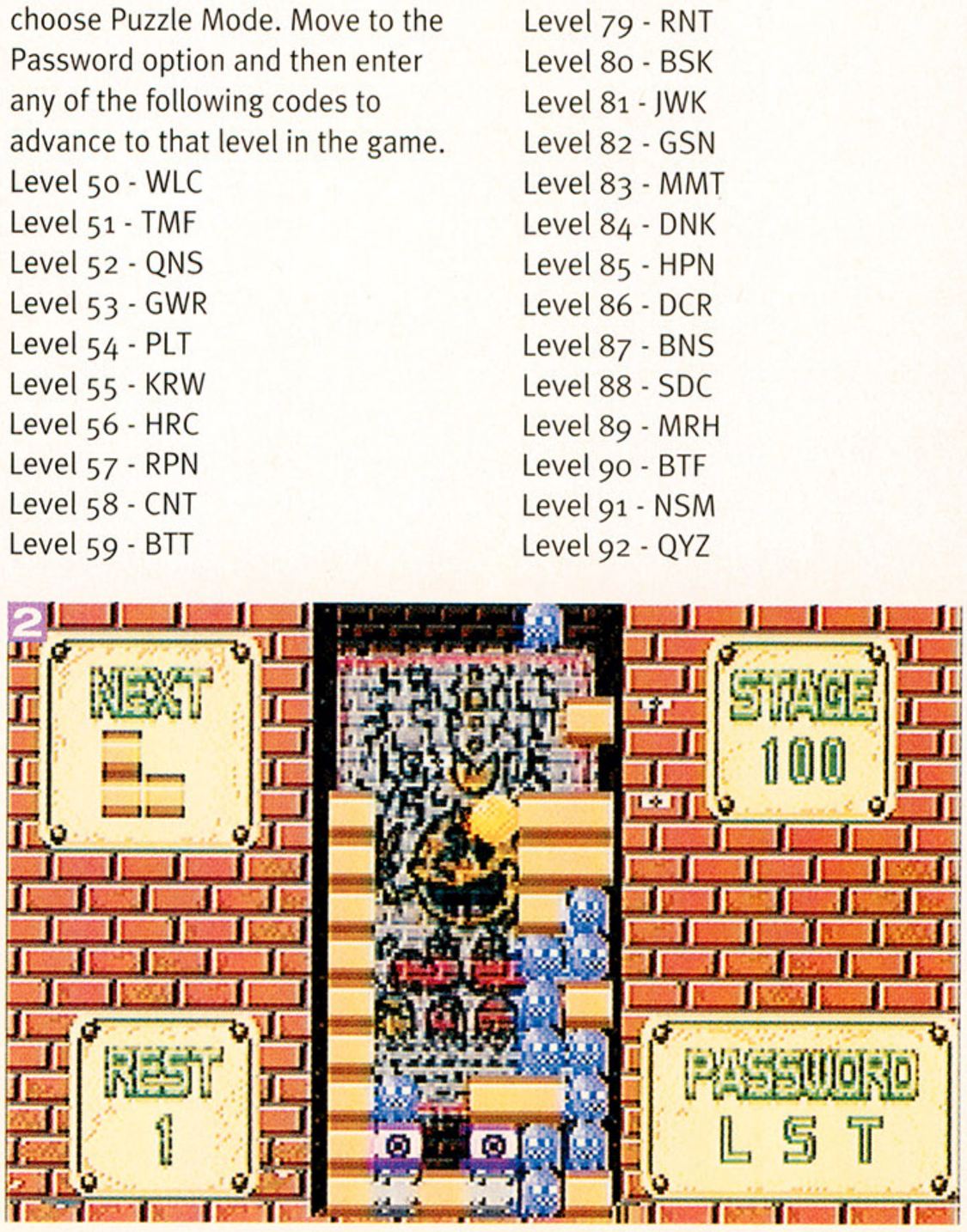


Pac-Man Collection

PAC-ATTACK PASSWORDS

On the Pac-Attack main menu, choose Puzzle Mode. Move to the Password option and then enter any of the following codes to advance to that level in the game.

Level 50 - WLC
Level 51 - TMF
Level 52 - QNS
Level 53 - GWR
Level 54 - PLT
Level 55 - KRW
Level 56 - HRC
Level 57 - RPN
Level 58 - CNT
Level 59 - BTT
Level 60 - TMP
Level 61 - MNS
Level 62 - SWD
Level 63 - LDM
Level 64 - YST
Level 65 - QTM
Level 66 - BRP
Level 67 - MRS
Level 68 - PPY
Level 69 - SWT
Level 70 - WTM
Level 71 - FST
Level 72 - SLW
Level 73 - XWF
Level 74 - RGJ
Level 75 - SNC
Level 76 - BKP
Level 77 - CRN
Level 78 - XNT
Level 79 - RNT
Level 80 - BSK
Level 81 - JWK
Level 82 - GSN
Level 83 - MMT
Level 84 - DNK
Level 85 - HPN
Level 86 - DCR
Level 87 - BNS
Level 88 - SDC
Level 89 - MRH
Level 90 - BTF
Level 91 - NSM
Level 92 - QYZ
Level 93 - KTT
Level 94 - FGS
Level 95 - RRC
Level 96 - YLW
Level 97 - PNN
Level 98 - SPR
Level 99 - CHB
Level 100 – LST



Mike Ryan
Chicago, IL

Cont. on page 234



HEY, YOU! WANNA WIN FREE STUFF?

If you are given credit for submitting a trick, you will win a free game. If your trick is selected as Trick of the Month, you will also win a GameShark from InterAct, and a controller from Blaze.

Note: Please include your real name, mailing address and what system you'd like your prizes for.

No Purchase necessary. For complete contest legal rules, please visit www.egmmag.com or write us at: EGM Contests - Legal Rules Request, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338.

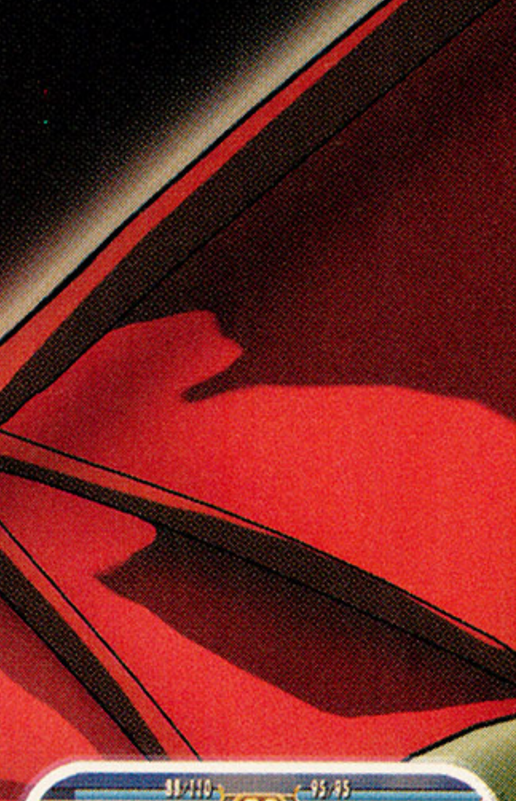
Send your best tricks, codes, and tips to:

Tricks of the Trade
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook IL
60522-3338

or send e-mail to:

tricks@ziffdavis.com

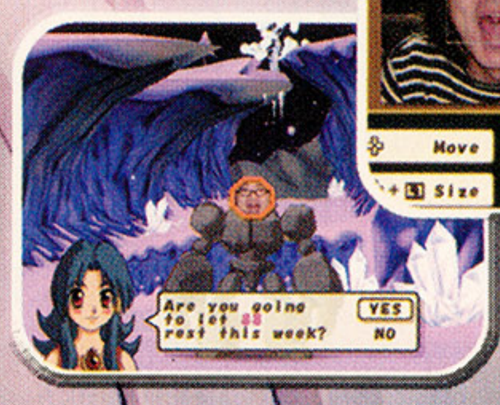
PlayStation 2





PictureParadise lets you put your digital image into the game!









LOOKING TO PICK A FIGHT?

Monster Rancher 3 is back with a vengeance! Endure many hard weeks of training, transforming your monster into a fine-tuned fighting machine. Then enroll your personal gladiators in tournaments, where they battle tooth and claw for supremacy against monsters of rival breeders, or your friends! With its completely immersive breeding system, the ability to generate original monsters from DVD's, CD's and other video games, and the revolutionary new PictureParadise technology, Monster Rancher 3 puts YOU into the game!

Monster Rancher 3

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

TECMO 100% GAMES

PictureParadise

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PlayStation Greatest Hits Tricks

Crash Team Racing

UNLOCK CHARACTERS

On the main menu screen, hold L1+R1 and press the following button combinations to get the results as shown. You will hear a noise when entered correctly.

Unlock Komodo Joe
Press Down, Circle, Left, Left, Triangle, Right, Down. You can play as Komodo Joe in any mode except Adventure.

Unlock Papu Papu
Press Left, Triangle, Right, Down, Right, Circle, Left, Left, Down. You can play as Papu Papu in any mode except Adventure.

Unlock Pinstripe
Press Left, Right, Triangle, Down, Right, Down. You can play as Pinstripe in any mode except Adventure.

Unlock Ripper Roo
Right, Circle, Circle, Down, Up, Down, Right. You can play as Ripper Roo in any mode except Adventure.

Unlock N. Trophy
Down, Left, Right, Up, Down, Right, Right. You can play as N. Trophy in any mode except Adventure.

Spyro: Year of The Dragon

TONS OF TRICKS

In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Then enter any one of these codes for the results shown.

Spyro's Huge Head
Up, R1, Up, R1, Up, R1, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle.

Flat Spyro
Left, Right, Left, Right, L1, R1, L1, R1, Square, Circle.

More Hit Points
Circle, R1, Circle, L1, Circle, R2, Circle, L2, Circle.

Easier Game
Circle, Square, Right, Left, Right, Square, Circle, X.

Harder Game
Circle, Square, Right, Left, Right, Square, Circle, Square.

Syphon Filter 2

LEVEL SKIP AND SUPER AGENT

Level Skip
Pause the game in the middle of play. On the Pause screen, highlight Map and press and hold these buttons in this order: Right+L2+R2+Circle+Square. With these held, press X. You will hear a sound when entered correctly. Now go to the Options screen and enter the Cheats option. You'll find an option to end your current level and go to the next.

Super Agent
Pause the game in the middle of play. On the Pause screen, highlight Weaponry and press and hold these buttons in this order: L2+SELECT+Circle +Square. With these held, press X. You will hear a sound when entered correctly. Now go to the Options screen and enter the Cheats option. You'll find an option to turn Super Agent on or off.

GameShark Codes

PLAYSTATION

Final Fantasy Chronicles (Chrono Trigger)

Crono: Infinite HP In Battle
80023E3003E7
Crono: Max HP In Battle
80023E3203E7
Crono: Infinite MP In Battle
80023E340063
Crono: Max MP In Battle
80023E360063
Crono: No Damage Taken In Battle
80028D9C0000
Merle: Infinite HP In Battle
80023EB003E7
Merle: Max HP In Battle
80023EB203E7
Merle: Infinite MP In Battle
80023EB403E7
Merle: Max MP In Battle
80023EB603E7
Merle: No Damage Taken In Battle
80028DA00000
Have All Items
5000FF010001
300204000001
Infinite All Items
5000FF010000
300205000063

DREAMCAST

Outtrigger

Infinite Strength
DFD89B5A00000130
Infinite Ammo (All Weapons)
2F7F72DF00000063
Max Combo Gauge
24FF7BC000000130
Max Score
F5F970C905F5E0FF
Infinite Time
D08086D800000005

PLAYSTATION 2

Gran Turismo 3: A-spec

Code Must Be On
EC87829C1437062C
10 Trillion Dollars
1C0411241456DEAD
1C04112OD26487A5
Max Series Points
0D6B32D81456E7A5
4D6B32D81456089C
SIM-1 Lap=Finish
0D6E6FBC1456E7A5
3D6E6FBC1456E7A7
3D6B3C7D1456E7A8
3D6DC0A41456E7A8
SIM-Instant Win
0D6E6FBC1456E7A5
3D6E6FBC1456E7A8
3D6B3C7D1456E7A8
3D6DC0A41456E7A8

GAME BOY COLOR

Tomb Raider: Curse of the Sword

Infinite Health
91EA92C1
Infinite O2
91EA93C1
Have Unlimited L.Health Paks
9163B3C1
Have Unlimited S.Health Paks
9163B4C1
Have 99 Door Keys
9163B5C1
Have Sub Dock Key
9101B6C1
Have 99 Dynamite Sticks
9163B7C1
Have 99 Cannon Balls
9163B8C1
Have Fire Exit Key
9101B6C1
Have Generator Key
9102B6C1
Have Chemical Plant Key
9104B6C1

TOP 10 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

your party! You can clone up to five Pokémon and items at one time by doing this trick.

9. Rayman Advance

GAME BOY ADVANCE

99 lives, all Levels, etc.
Pause the game during play and enter these button codes. You will hear a sound when they are entered correctly.
99 Lives
Left, Right, Down, Right, Left, R-Shift.
All Levels Open
Up, Left, Right, Down, Right, L-Shift.
Every Power Available
Down, Left, Right, Left, Up, L-Shift.
Refill Health
L-Shift, Down, Left, Up, Down, R-Shift.

10. Namco Museum

GAME BOY ADVANCE

Non-Violent Galaga
In Galaga, you can get the enemies to stop shooting. To do this, you must first let all of the waves of enemies get into formation on the first stage. Once you do this, you may begin shooting the enemies, but make sure you leave the blue and yellow Galaga on the far, lower-left corner of the screen alone. Finish off all of the enemies except for this one. Wait for this enemy to dive at you and shoot, avoiding its bullets all the while. Wait until it stops shooting at you (this will take a long time, so be patient), and let it pass a couple more times to make sure it has stopped. Now shoot it and end the stage. On the next stage, all of the enemies will come in formation as usual, but they will not fire at you! Now you can play the rest of the game without enemies shooting at you.







Trevor Vines

sobeadrenalinerush.com

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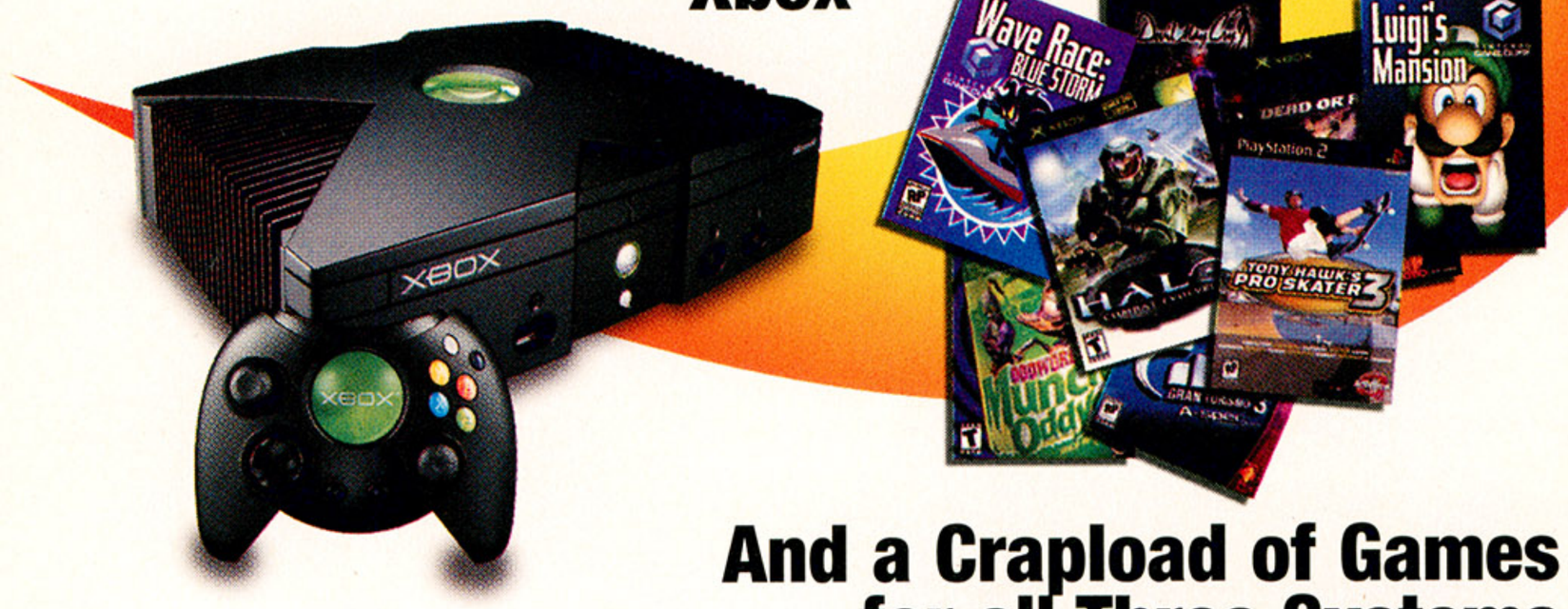
A Nintendo GameCube

A Sony PlayStation 2



want to win ALL THiS?

A Microsoft Xbox



And a Crapload of Games for all Three Systems

(titles may differ from what's shown here)

Announcing *Electronic Gaming Monthly's* most incredible giveaway of the millennium!*

Six (6) Grand Prize Winners will win the ULTIMATE CONSOLE PACKAGE:

- Nintendo GameCube console
- Microsoft Xbox console
- Sony PlayStation 2 console
- 3 GameCube games (our choice)
- 3 Xbox games (our choice)
- 3 PlayStation 2 games (our choice)

(that's right...the Ultimate Console Package includes ALL of the above)

And if you don't score one of those bundles, you may have a crack at winning one of our 15 first-place prizes.

Five (5) First-Place Winners will win the GAMECUBE PACKAGE:

- Nintendo GameCube console
- 3 GameCube games (our choice)

Another five (5) First-Place Winners will win the XBOX PACKAGE:

- Microsoft Xbox console
- 3 Xbox games (our choice)

Five (5) more First-Place Winners will win the PLAYSTATION 2 PACKAGE:

- Sony PlayStation 2 console
- 3 PlayStation 2 games (our choice)

Here's what you have to do:

Go to **http://contest.egmmag.com** and answer the following questions. Hint: You can use the issue you're holding in your hands—EGM #148—for help on these.

1. **Metroid Prime for the Nintendo GameCube is what type of game?**
   a. Real-time strategy
   b. Driving
   c. First-person shooter
2. **Which game won this issue's Review Crew Game of the Month?**
   a. Ico
   b. Mr. Nutz
   c. Bubsy 3D
3. **Which horror-themed game is NOT featured in this issue's "Old School"?**
   a. Mr. Bones
   b. Fester's Quest
   c. Army Men: Sarge's Heroes
4. **What was Space Invader's original title, according to its creator?**
   a. Squid Invaders
   b. Space Monsters
   c. Monster Invaders
5. **What real-life product is featured in our review of Phantasy Star Online Ver. 2?**
   a. Nads hair-removal system
   b. Flowbee haircutting system
   c. Ab-Doer make-you-not-fat system
6. **The developers of Project Gotham Racing for the Xbox also created what other racing title?**
   a. MSR for Dreamcast
   b. Speed Racer for PlayStation
   c. Top Gear Rally for Nintendo 64
7. **What previously unreleased Atari 2600 cartridge was sold at the 2001 Classic Gaming Expo?**
   a. Combat Two
   b. The Dreadnaught Factor
   c. AD&D: The Treasure of Tarmin
8. **What real-life actor is pictured in our Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance preview?**
   a. Adam Rich
   b. The kid who played Corky on *Life Goes On*
   c. Bill Cosby

Answer all of these questions correctly, and you'll then be entered in a random drawing for the prizes. We'll be running this contest for three issues (#148, #149 and #150), then picking the winners after that. (Yup, that means we won't be handing out the prizes until after January 2002. Sorry if this messes with your holiday gaming plans.)

PLEASE NOTE: You can only enter once per issue the contest is running in, and if you answer any questions incorrectly, you won't get a second chance for that entry! Be sure of your responses before answering.

Go to http://contest.egmmag.com for full contest rules and all the legalities. (It's a thorny legal issue, all right. We'll need to refer to the case of Finders versus Keepers.)

* (so far)

PlayStation 2

Smash! Hit!

VICTORIOUS BOXERS™

IPPO'S ROAD TO GLORY



Play as Ippo or any one of 43 other boxers. Fight your way to the top of the rankings. With 10 locations and 7 matches in 4 weight classes, you'll create your own awesome 1-2 combination.



Based on the best-selling Japanese comic book "Hajime no Ippo"

TEEN T — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Violence

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FINAL WORD

Kid Stuff, A State of Nintendo Address



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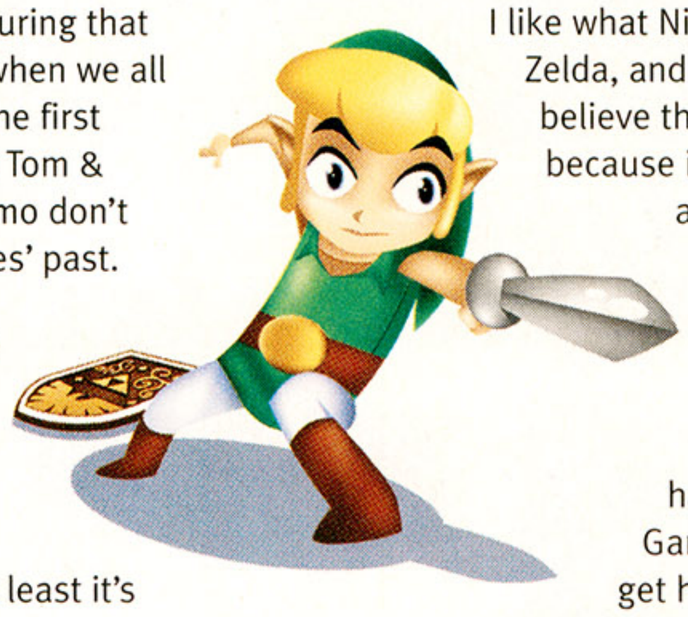
Che Chou
West Coast Editor



John Ricciardi
Escaped Convict

Shoe: I cannot STAND Zelda's new look for GameCube. What's going on with the Tom & Jerry antics? This isn't the Acme Hour. This is freakin' Zelda, one of the coolest franchises in gaming history! This Looney Tunes business should've been saved for a new game, or even Mario. Not Zelda....

Chris: All you whiny babies who think Zelda's new look is poo-poo can go suck it. If you want the same kind of game year after year, system after system, go play Tomb Raider. This is all about reinventing a character that we've all grown up with. I'm excited the series is going in a different direction, one that'll hopefully be successful in capturing that same kind of magic when we all played Zelda 64 for the first time. I agree that the Tom & Jerry antics in the demo don't feel right for the series' past. But the battling, character design and animation look great. Who knows, even with the physical comedy, it could be amazing. At least it's not called Legend of Zelda: Attack of the Clones.



Kraig: Just because it's different doesn't mean it's good. Go take that reinvented crap and apply it to a different game. Leave my Zelda games alone!

Greg: I still say it's not right. Man, the darker atmosphere of Majora's Mask and then that cool, older demo of Link fighting Ganon on the GameCube had me psyched for a grown-up Zelda game. I mean...the new game will likely be awesome, but now I'll always be wondering what could have been. And what the hell is up with the slapstick comedy?

Mark: Look at Zelda: Link to the Past on the Super Nintendo. That game did *not* try to look realistic *at all*; it went for the cartoony style as well. Zelda's new look may not be a continuation in the same direction as the last two games, but it's not out of step with the series as a whole. As for the more slapstick elements, they may have been there just for the sake of the video clip at Spaceworld; who knows? Give it a chance and wait until you can play it before you decide if it works better for this specific game than a more "realistic" style would have...

Shoe: I'm not saying it won't play well. I'm just saying that video makes the new Zelda look dumb.

Mark: I'm not saying you're saying it won't play well. I'm saying you should wait to see what the game plays like before deciding what kind of style would work better for it.

Shoe: You are wrong. I am right.

Mark: Your mama.

Milk: You guys (except CJ and Mark) are all punks. So what if the "new" Zelda is whimsical? Since when is Ocarina of Time or Majora's Mask the de-facto standard? I like what Nintendo has done with Zelda, and I find it hard to believe that you wouldn't play it because it's too cute. I'm always up for a new experience. While we're on the subject, I think Mario Sunshine kicks all kinds of asses. I can hardly wait for my GameCube to get here.

Greg: Hey, I'll play the darn game. And I've got nothing against "whimsical." Hell, I work with the most whimsical staff on the planet (especially Chris "CJ" Johnston). I just think the style in the new Zelda looks stoopid.

John: I'm torn on this one. On one hand, I thought the video Nintendo showed of Zelda was really beautiful—the animation was wonderful, and the bits of gameplay they showed looked exciting and fun. It's like they took the artwork out of the old Nintendo Zelda instruction manual and turned it into a game. On the other hand, I'm going to be really sorry if we never get to see a new Zelda game using the original Ocarina-style engine.

Che: I'm with Shoe on this one. Giving Zelda that cartoony look is like when Superman got a mullet in the late '80s in an attempt to make that old stick-in-the-mud hip again. Don't get me wrong, I think it's cool that we can now play a cartoon in real time, but it just doesn't feel right for Zelda. Speaking of weird, what's with Metroid Prime looking like some of its levels take place on Tatooine? That's wack.

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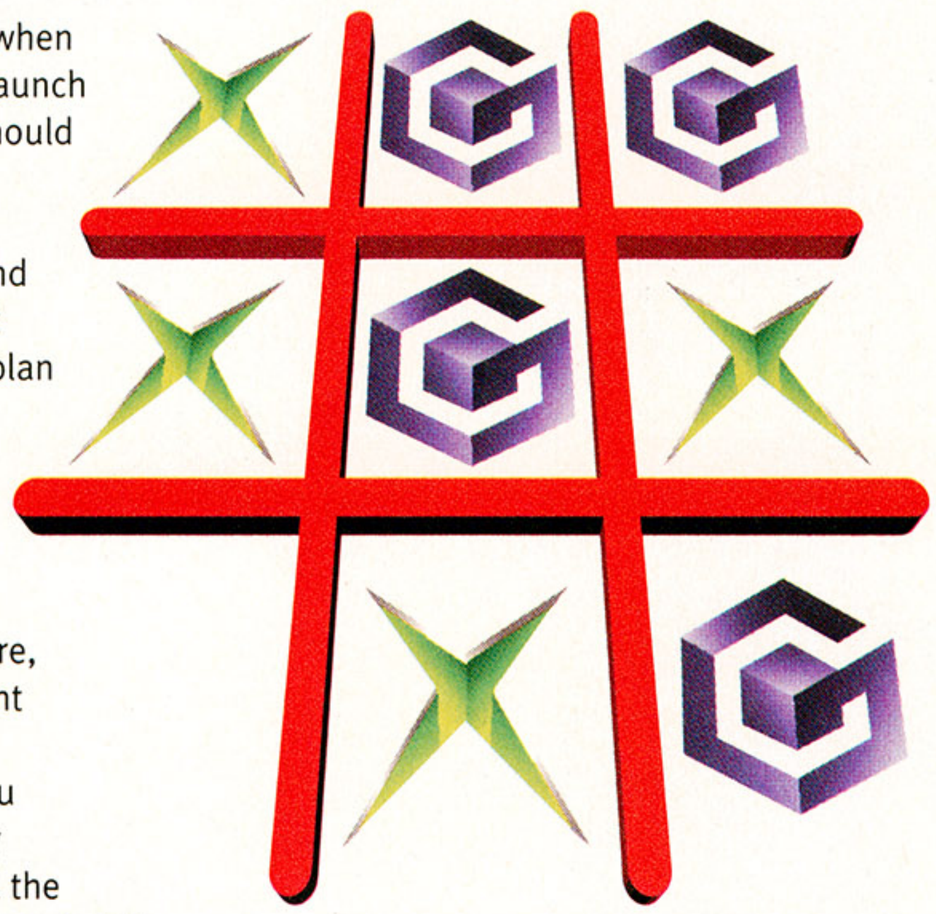
NEXT MONTH

December 2001 (Issue #149)

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GameCube vs. Xbox: Round one—fight!

Which System Should You Buy?



It's console armageddon this winter when supersystems Xbox and GameCube launch mere days apart. So which system should you buy? We go straight to the top brass at Microsoft and Nintendo and also chat with game developers to find out whose console packs the biggest punch, reveal each company's gameplan and—most important of all—tell you which system has the best games. From hands-on looks at the launch titles to a rundown of all the best peripherals, we're delivering the ultimate double-system launch feature, guaranteed to help you make the right buying decision.

But that ain't all: We'll also give you an exclusive look at this fall's fantasy star—Harry Potter—who is hitting all the systems that matter, courtesy of Electronic Arts.

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Grand Theft Auto III

This month, take a look at the highly controversial game Grand Theft Auto III. You'll find all of the gritty little details behind Rockstar's surefire hit. In addition, you'll be able to get special previews of Okage, Kessen II, Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2 and a whole lot more.



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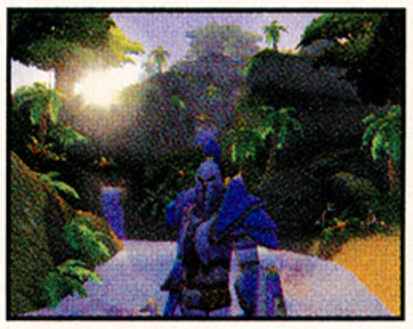
GameNOW!

What is *GameNOW*? It's a new magazine, featuring multi-console coverage, reviews, previews and all the great tricks and strategy you've come to expect from *Expert Gamer*. For starters, it'll have a huge preview on the PS2's newest RPG, Okage. On the Nintendo front, *GameNow* will explore the GameCube's software lineup as the American launch date nears. Plus, more codes and a walk-through of Ico.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

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- Max Payne
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Previews

- Ghost Recon
- MechWarrior IV Expansion
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