



CELEBRITY GAMERS

Henry Hill plays GTA; Eminem's new game; and Angelica Bridges interviewed! (Who? Who cares!)

RENTING GAMES?

We help you save money and play more



HULK, T3, MATRIX...

Hollywood is getting involved with your videogames. Is this a good thing or a bad thing?



ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

The #1 Videogame Magazine

Hot Stuff!

TOP 20 GAMES OF THE SUMMER

Don't stay indoors without 'em!

Special Report

PLAYSTATION 3, XBOX 2, GAMECUBE 2...

What the big three have planned for you

Whip It Good!

CASTLEVANIA RISES ON PS2

You've waited an eternity for it.
We've got the exclusive screens and info.

ENTER TO
**WIN COOL
MATRIX
PRIZES!**
Consoles, videogames,
and more...
See pg. 18!



**249+
GAMES
INSIDE!**

SONIC HEROES



COUNTER-STRIKE



Legacy of Kain: Defiance • SSX 3 • Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: The Cowabunga Game
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic • Dragalia • Legacy of Goku II • Fable
Arc the Lad: Twilight of the Spirits • Wario World • Advance Wars 2 • Vectorman
Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles • Star Wars Jedi Knight: Jedi Academy • XIII • B.C.

July 2004
\$4.99 U.S.



WWW.EGMAG.COM

Display Until July '3



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

Dodgeball

Just one of seven games you can play online with *My Street*.

My Street™ is overrun with punks. Tearing up backyards with RC race cars. Dominating the beach with games of volleyball. And you've already seen what they do with dodgeballs. Create your own character and beat these bullies at their own game. Forget all about sportsmanship, and *My Street* could be all yours.





PlayStation 2



www.us.playstation.com

"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live In Your World... Play In Ours." is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "My Street" is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ©2003 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Designed and developed by Idol Minds. The "Online" icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Online play requires internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately).



Intense tactical action that requires close-range, long-range and stealth combat



A completely original and unique sci-fi experience



Use TimeDilation to stop time and cue up insane combos



Get the demo at www.alterecho.com. While supplies last.

"Alter Echo has established itself as an innovative and intriguing action game that's both unique in its approach to combat and unusual in its artistic approach to landscapes and character design."

- IGN.com



Visit www.esrb.org
or call 1-800-771-3772
for more info.

PlayStation 2



© 2003 THQ Inc. Alter Echo, Outrage, THQ and their respective logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

*In the future, the most powerful substance ever created can
control time and physics. Only a chosen few can control it.*

*But only one can **save us** from it.*



alter echo™

It's an Altered World.

Learn to Adapt.

Melee Mode

One of 3 forms you can instantly morph into. When enemies are breathing down your neck, use melee to:

- Slash and hack with your sword
- Stun your enemies into submission
- Show-off your agility with combos, double-jumps, juggles and more.

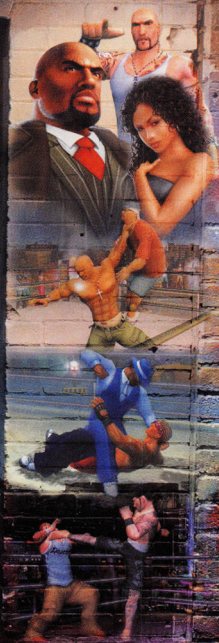


www.thq.com

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

PlayStation 2





Do something. Fight for money, power and respect in the underground. The battle begins at defjamvendetta.com.



DEEP IN CUBA, THE GHOSTS

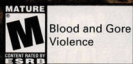


WE ARE
THE NATION'S CHOSEN FEW.
WE ARE SWIFT, SILENT, AND INVISIBLE.
WE WILL NEVER SURRENDER.
WE FIGHT, SO THAT PEACE MAY REIGN.
WE ARE THE GHOSTS.



SQUAD-BASED BATTLEFIELD COMBAT

With a new single-player campaign, 12 new multiplayer maps, and downloadable missions, the TOTAL BATTLEFIELD EXPERIENCE just got a whole lot steamier. In the wake of Castro's death, the Ghosts battle a drug-funded warlord threatening Cuba's first free elections in decades. It's up to you and your team to take the fight to the enemy in the streets, beaches and jungles of Cuba. Take on rebels, irregulars and mercenary troops to face the Ghosts' greatest challenge yet.

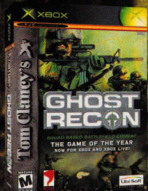


©2005 Red Storm Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. Island Thunder, Red Storm, and Red Storm Entertainment are trademarks of Red Storm Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Red Storm Entertainment, Inc. is a Ubi Soft Entertainment company. Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon is a trademark of Ubisoft, Inc. under license to Ubi Soft Entertainment. Ubi Soft and the Ubi Soft logo are trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live logo and the Xbox Logos are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

BATTLE A NEW ENEMY.



Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: The #1 XBOX™ Online Enabled Game



The original squad-based
battlefield experience



The new jungle
warfare campaign

Tom Clancy's
**GHOST
RECON**
ISLAND THUNDER™

STREETS ARE FOR WUSSIES



Visit www.esrb.org or
call 1-800-771-3772
for Rating Information.



PlayStation 2

® & © 2003 Paramount Pictures. All rights reserved. Climax and the Climax logo are trademarks of Climax Group. Eidos Interactive and the Eidos Interactive logo are registered
are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. TM, ® and Nintendo

SEE THE
MOVIE IN
THEATRES NOW!

Who needs pavement when you're behind
the wheel of a souped-up MINI Cooper?
Tear through subway stations, rip apart golf
courses, and plow through storm drains as
you pull off the ultimate gold heist.

THE ITALIAN JOB[®]



A high-octane arcade racer
based on the blockbuster movie.



Race through L.A.
driving 10 different vehicles.



Master 4 modes from death-defying
stunt driving to multiplayer madness.



Bonus features including
movie footage, interviews, and more!

CLIMAX



EIDOS

ItalianJobGame.com

trademarks of Eidos Interactive, Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. ©2001 Nintendo. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All rights reserved.



contents

issue 168 • July 2003

ENTER THE MATRIX CONTEST

131 Find five white rabbits hidden throughout this magazine, and you're one step closer to being the owner of a new console.

LETTERS

- 22** We care about what you have to say, really

PRESS START

The latest news, interviews, features, and gaming tidbits

34 NEXT

Our crystal ball sheds light on the next round of consoles

38 EMINEM

Will the virtual Slim Shady please stand up?

38 GRUDGE MATCH

The *Rushmore* geek vs. *Splinter Cell*'s stealth stud

40 NINTENDO

The big N reveals its fall lineup

42 INSTANT EXPERT

Become an anime guru overnight

44 AFTERTHOUGHTS

We ask why you can't create a nudist colony in *The Sims*

46 THE MOVIE GAME RELOADED

A look at Hollywood-inspired games that hopefully won't suck

50a EGM INTERNATIONAL

The PlayStation 2 ain't afraid of no ghosts

50b RENTAL SERVICES

Be lazy and still play the latest games for cheap

51 CELEBRITY INTERVIEW

Former Playboy model Angelica Bridges digs games. Schwing!

52 SEIZE THE GAME

Old-school handhells make a comeback

54 EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES

How Sony isn't giving up on the console version of *EverCrack*

56 HENRY HILL

A reformed gangster critiques games that he may have helped inspire

58 DOWNLOAD

New *MechAssault* online mode

58 PC GAMING UPDATE

Half-Life 2—nuff said

60 THE RUMOR MILL

O-mann hears of another "Halo killer"

62 THE HOT 5

A GameCube racer has cracked into your most-wanted list

64 COMING SOON

What's gonna keep you broke for the next two months

PREVIEWS

With so many games to talk about, we had to split them up into two separate stories

68 TOP 20 SUMMER GAMES

Go ahead and take a look at the hot games which have the EGM staff members shoving their beach towels and suntan lotion

78 ON THE HORIZON

Read up on the games that will be grabbin' your attention after the summer months, which include *Sonic Heroes*, *Counter-Strike*, *Legacy of Kain: Defiance*, *SSX 3*, *F-Zero GX*, *Fable*, *XIII*, and more



75

SOUL CALIBUR II



76

STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC



82

B.C.



86

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

REVIEW CREW

The only mag that offers three reviews for each game

- 105** Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War

- 106** Arc the Lad: Twilight of the Spirits

- 106** MotoGP 2

- 108** Unlimited Saga

- 108** Wakeboarding Unleashed featuring Shaun Murray

- 110** Robocop

- 110** Tube Slider

- 112** Chaos Legion

- 112** Ultimate Muscle: Legends vs. New Generation

- 114** Wario World

- 116** Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II

- 116** Resident Evil: Dead Aim

- 117** Sonic Pinball Party

- 118** Donkey Kong Country

- 118** Evil Dead: A Fistful of Boomstick

- 120** X2: Wolverine's Revenge

- 121** Burnout 2: Point of Impact

- 122** Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising

- 122** Bloody Roar Extreme

- 123** Dragon Ball Z: Legacy of Goku II



105

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: TIDES OF WAR



114

WARIO WORLD



116

RESIDENT EVIL DEAD AIM

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Game hints, tips, and cheats

- 126** Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War

- 128** NBA Street Vol. 2

- 129** Yu-Gi-Oh! Worldwide Edition

GAME OVER

Crud, crosswords, and comics

130 REST OF THE CRAP

Seanbaby pulls no punches with these stinkers

- 131** ENTER THE MATRIX CONTEST/CROSSWORD

- 134** HSU & CHAN

CELEBRITY INTERVIEW

Angelica Bridges: She's hot and into playing with your controller

51

46

THE MOVIE GAME RELOADED
Hollywood attempts to make games better for a change



34

NEXT

Our predictions on what to expect from the PlayStation 3, Xbox 2, and GameCube 2



92

COVER STORY:

CASTLEVANIA: LAMENT OF INNOCENCE

We're the first to open the casket on the next *Castlevania*—and guess what—it's not coming to the Game Boy Advance. Check out our exclusive hands-on report of *Lament of Innocence* for the PlayStation 2.

editorial



It's a monthly routine: I sit in front of my computer right on deadline, spending half the time wondering what the heck I should be writing for my editorial, spending the other half cursing whoever's responsible for making editorials a standard practice for magazines, cause I hate writing them.

Managing Editor Jennifer Tsao just tossed me this look that clearly told me I had better get this editorial done or else...so I better get back to work. "Well," I tell Jennifer, smiling, "I'm halfway done, and I haven't even said anything worth a damn yet!" Her slink eye doesn't lower its alert level, so back to scratching my head I go.

Maybe this is a good thing, having no bigger issues to discuss. No violence-in-gaming controversies (knock on wood), no goodbyes to any consoles heading to an early grave, no wars bringing undue attention to war games...no nothing. So this is what it's like to think about nothing but games, nothing but fun? I can use this space to nerd-out about how great *Soul Calibur II* is (are you playing the import version like we are?), or how addicting *Phantasy Star Online* continues to be (on the Xbox, I'm only a level 33 Ranger right now...how about you?). Or, I can go on about what a sick run of *Castlevanias* we've gotten so far on the Game Boy Advance (three games, three gold awards and Game of the Month honors from our Review Crew)...and now we're getting a PS2 version at last! But alas, I'm out of space. With any luck, editorializing on the fun, simpler aspects of videogaming will become a new monthly routine.

—Dan "Shoe" Hsu, Editor-in-Chief

EB GAMES™

electronics boutique®

PlayStation 2



COMING
IN AUGUST

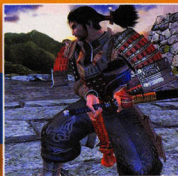
FREE
T-SHIRT*

when you
pre-purchase
Soul Calibur II
with a \$5
deposit

*While supplies last.
See store associate
for details.



Playstation 2	#233011-6 \$49.99
Xbox	#233032-2 \$49.99
Nintendo Gamecube	#233015-7 \$49.99



CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM



MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Blood and Gore
Violence



OVERTHROW HITLER'S EVIL EMPIRE.

You are B.J. Blazkowicz, a US Army Ranger recruited by the OSA and the Allies' top specialist in covert operations, heavy weapons and assassination. Hitler's head of the SS, Heinrich Himmler, is twisting science and the occult into an army capable of annihilating the Allies. The balance of victory is in your hands.

RETURN TO CASTLE Wolfenstein



Traverse vast forests, war-torn cities, Egyptian villages and ancient crypts.



Unleash a brutal arsenal of authentic and experimental weapons.



Engage in an epic, story-driven single-player campaign across over 30 levels.



Face squad-based multiplayer battles against up to 15 others via Xbox Live™ and intense split-screen co-op action.



Complete unique objectives, including silently assassinating Nazi officers.



PlayStation 2



nerve

RASTER



idsoftware.com

ACTIVISION

activision.com

Screenshots taken from Xbox™ video game system and PlayStation™2 computer entertainment system gameplay.

© 2001-2003 id Software, Inc. All rights reserved. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. under license. Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Operation Resurrection, Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War, Return to Castle Wolfenstein, the Return to Castle Wolfenstein logo, the id Software name and the id logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of id Software, Inc. in the United States and/or other countries. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the NTSC UIC designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Xbox logo and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

IN SPACE, OR ON LAND,



BLOOD and GORE
VIOLENCE

PlayStation 2



VIVENDI
UNIVERSAL
games

huntthemedown.com

I WILL HUNT THEM DOWN.



MACE GRIFFIN BOUNTY HUNTER

I used to command the Galactic Rangers. We uncovered a conspiracy that threatened to destroy the entire frontier. The corporations turned the galaxy into a battlefield. They murdered my squad. I was framed and spent ten long years in prison. Now I'm out. As a bounty hunter, I travel the galaxy bringing down criminals for cash. But the only thing I'm after... is revenge.

"Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter" interactive game © 2003 Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. All rights reserved. Mace Griffin, Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter, Vivendi Universal Games, the Vivendi Universal Games logo, Black Label Games, and the Black Label Games logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The rating icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.



YOU ARE TEX.

YOU ARE BRUTUS.

YOU ARE HAWK.

YOU ARE FLINT.

www.bruteforcegame.com



Violence
Blood



The year is 2340 and more than fifty star systems are populated with colonies. But when an alien invasion threatens to put every living organism on the endangered species list, the Confederation of worlds must dispatch its elite special forces unit, code-named Brute Force. That's you. As Brute Force, you command four separate intergalactic mercenaries. The trigger-happy assault trooper, cyborg sniper, stealthy assassin and feral alien are all played by you. As you guide these shooters through 20+ missions and 6 exotic worlds,

The image is a promotional graphic for the video game Brute Force. It features four characters in a dark, jungle-like environment. On the left is a large, green, dinosaur-like creature with red eyes and a wide, toothy mouth. Next to it is a woman with short red hair, wearing a dark, tactical suit with a zipper. In the center background is a man with short dark hair, also in a tactical suit, holding a rifle. On the right is another woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark, tactical suit and holding a large, futuristic weapon. The text "YOU ARE BRUTE FORCE." is overlaid in the center in a white, sans-serif font.

YOU ARE BRUTE FORCE.

your knowledge of squad based combat will be severely tested. Depending on the danger at hand, you'll need to utilize the right Brute Force member for the job. Whether you play alone or in co-op mode, the battles escalate, the plot thickens and the violence gets addictive. It's an experience of such epic proportion that it could only exist on Xbox. Good luck. To all four of you.

**BRUTE
FORCE**
DANGEROUS ALONE DEADLY TOGETHER

ONLY ON
XBOX

www.xbox.com

X
XBOX™

Names of actual products and companies mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners.

Letters



Orta sans headgear is a bad scene.

Letter of the month

Cuff 'em and stuff 'em

I was interested to read Aaron Marshall's letter ("You Don't Look 21") in EGM #167. He seems to advocate penalties for retailers that sell M-rated games to minors. So, for example, a retailer would face a fine for selling a game like *BMX XXX*, which contains bare breasts and profanity...in other words, things you can find in R-rated movies. Therefore, it seems reasonable that retailers should face the same penalties for selling M-rated games to minors as they do for selling R-rated movies to minors.

Except there are no penalties for selling R-rated movies to minors! By advocating fines for selling M-rated games, Marshall is putting such games in the same category as pornography. Does he want the general public to view *GTA: Vice*

City in the same light as *Booby Bangers 12*? Too bad, because they already do.

—John Evans

Although actively restricting the availability of M-rated games to underage buyers would help shield the game industry from some of the more bilious flack it receives, you make a good point—one we expect will go ignored by lawmakers and the mainstream media, as they pass outraged judgement on games they've never played. How many years before a president runs on pro-gaming platform?



Haberdashery hijinks

I recently rented *Panzer Dragoon* Orta for Xbox and thought it was pretty good, but I had a tiny problem—OK, a big problem—with the game. Where did my friggin' hat go? I know I had it on when I broke out of jail, but then I

We said it

In EGM #161 (page 56) you made a joke about the Quidditch game being so improved in EA's *The Chamber of Secrets* game that we'd have EA Sports making a standalone Quidditch title in no time. How ironic/coincidental/possibly supernatural it is that EA has now announced *Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup* [Editor's Note: see

Revolution games? I can't anymore cuz I shattered a bone in my foot while trying to do a Swanton-like Jeff Hardy. I'm so PO'd. The next two months will be torture.

—Traci R

We had a similar problem, but on account of a poorly executed triple lutz double-toe-loop salchow, death drop

"Do you still play your *Dance Dance Revolution* games? I can't anymore cuz I shattered a bone in my foot."

—Traci R

got on my dragon and poof, it was gone! Now my whole ensemble is thrown off.

—Jamie Curl

That just won't do. After you've played the game for 15 hours (or finish it on Hard), go to Box Game in Pandora's Box, select Costume, select Ending, and retrieve your precious headgear. Thought you could out-sausage Tricks Editor David Hodgson, eh? Better luck next time. Don't say we never did anything for ya.

page 38 for more info). May I request that you train me in the ways of your psychic powers so that I might use them for evil?

—Dylan Martin

Our oracular abilities are limited to forecasting events in the game industry, with occasional moments of prescience in the field of sports betting. Good luck taking over the world with that.

DDR disability

Do you still play your *Dance Dance*

into cannonball. It was definitely worth it, though, no question.

CONTACT EGM

Because we're dying to know what you're thinking, your favorite color, and what's up with this weather we're having, EGM@ziffdavis.com is your best bet, but this also works:

EGM Letters

101 2nd Street, 8th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

MISSING AN ISSUE?

Subscription delayed? Mailman gave you the stink eye? We've got a whole phalanx of people aching to solve your problems:

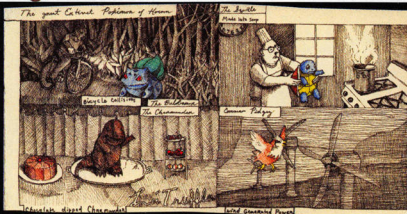
E-mail: subhelp@egmmag.com
Website: <http://service.egmmag.com>
Phone toll-free: (800) 779-1174
Old fashioned way: P.O. Box 55722; Boulder, CO 80322-5722

REPRINTS?

Looking for that one article about the stuff and that guy? We have the technology. Call (800) 217-7874 and magic will happen.

Tales of Pokedeath

Have you noticed some of the classic Pokémon you've (maybe) come to know and love have been replaced by slightly altered versions in *Ruby* and *Sapphire*? Vigilant reader Leo Hussey of Baltimore, MD, sure did. He's got some interesting theories on what went down—look for part two next month.



PIRATES^{of the} CARIBBEAN

PREPARE TO BE BLASTED
OUT OF THE WATER!

Visit pirates.bethsoft.com

- An epic role-playing game on sea and land
- Gorgeous graphics and realistic weather effects
- Open-ended gameplay set in exotic locales
- Exciting high seas battles and thrilling duels
- Inspired by the feature film coming July 9th



ALL SCREENSHOTS FROM XBOX VERSION

Bethesda
SOFTWARES
a ZeniMax Media company



1C
1C COMPANY



**PC
CD
ROM**



Visit www.esrb.org or
call 1-800-771-3772
for Rating Information.

© 2003 Bethesda Softworks LLC, a ZeniMax Media company. Bethesda Softworks and ZeniMax are registered trademarks or trademarks of ZeniMax Media Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. Audio/Visual elements © Disney. Other product and company names referenced herein may be trademarks of their respective owners. All Rights Reserved.

feedback

Last month marked the launch of our front-to-back redesign. We understand that change is frightening; despite some screaming and shouting, most of you handled it well and even had some excellent suggestions to further improve *EGM's* new look....

PROS

Wow, that's all I can say. The redesign is great. I was speechless as I opened the new issue of *EGM*. I was skeptical when I first heard about the upcoming change, but the new layouts, colors, sections, more previews, and new music (at least I thought I heard music as I turned the first page) won me over. *EGM* is now second to none. My only little gripe is that someone spilled PC in my favorite magazine [Editor's Note: the *PC Gaming Update* column, see page 54]. Well, besides that one little problem, you are and will remain The #1 Videogame Magazine.

—Frank Reese

I'm a longtime reader, and I must say the makeover is great. I think the best change is the Previews and Reviews sections; just the way everything is laid out makes it more enjoyable to read—for some reason the screenshots seem to stand out more and I get a better feeling for the games covered. Also, it's about damn time you shrunk the sales charts. It was a huge waste of space for something I, and probably many others, didn't think was that important.

Keep up the great work and don't be afraid of changing anything in the future as well.

—Philip de la Pena

Arrgh! Change! World spinning out of control! Panic engulfs me! Blackness everywhere! Panic...subsiding. Sigh...returning. World...well, the world is still spinning, just not as bad.

Redesign...still shockingly different, but not a bad thing. Good work, people.

—Kent Shambaugh

CONS

Hmm. I like the new Press Start and Letters sections, but the Reviews and Previews (the reasons I buy *EGM*) should have been left alone. The new format lacks any semblance of organization—I loved how the games in the old *EGM* were color coded and divided into sections by system. Visually, the magazine is more exciting to look at but lacks the clarity of the old *EGM*. I hope you will take these points into consideration, as I think this redesign has great potential.

—Sven

I've been a reader for about 10 years, and I just want to say that while you guys are still doing a great job staying adult-oriented with no compromise, the new magazine layout really, truly stinks. I found it exceedingly hard on the eyes and confusing to read.

The most significant disappointment to me was the complete visual overhaul of the Review section. Please, please revert back to the old format of showing the score right on the actual review from each person. I love you guys; I just want my magazine to be readable, and I was nightly disappointed last month. I'm usually eager to dig into the new issue, but I found myself putting it down out of exasperation.

—Kevin Vojdani



Shame on you all for the new art design. I have been a loyal subscriber for around six years now, and won't be renewing. I always admired *EGM* for being the smartest gaming magazine around. The new layout attempts to be dynamic and stylized, but just hits me with the same drone as so many who have pulled this crap before. I don't know where else to go for gaming news. *EGM* was the only publication left that didn't look and read like a dang circus. What's next? Cartoon characters for all the editors? I'd bitch about the articles, but this month's issue was too boring to get past the leads.

—Hines S. Grubb

Thanks to all our readers for the input, but extra thanks to Hines S. Grubb for his wonderful cartoon characters idea. Look forward to next month, when every editor will have a new, cuddly "fursionality!" Editor-in-Chief Dan "Shoe" Hsu has dibs on Angry Armadillo. The design will continue to evolve over the next few issues, so if you've got something to contribute, get on it.

"In David Hasselhoff's levels, say, he could save drowning victims...and end up hugging his son and all that."

—Beau Wilson

Public-service announcement

Here's some info for all those diabetic Game Boy Advance players out there. A new GBA is being developed that incorporates a blood-sugar monitor. Every reading in your set range will earn points, which you can redeem for special promos,

discounts, and games from Nintendo. Its called GlucoBoy—see www.glucogames.com for more info. Prototypes have already proven successful in lowering blood sugar because, well, everyone wants free stuff.

—Andrew Weber
GlucoGames

Cosplay kerner

Even though I am also a fan of Japanese bands, I was quite amused by Nailo Jiria's letter (*EGM* #167) and your response to it. I actually have a photo of a Squall (*Final Fantasy VIII*) cosplayer with a bunch of Malice Mizer cosplayers from Otakon 2000. It's not exactly Cloud Strife (*Final Fantasy VII*) and Dir en Grey, but close enough. Enjoy!

—Chocomanji



Squall meets Malice Mizer, another Japanese visual kei band, and Armageddon inches closer.

Being David Hasselhoff

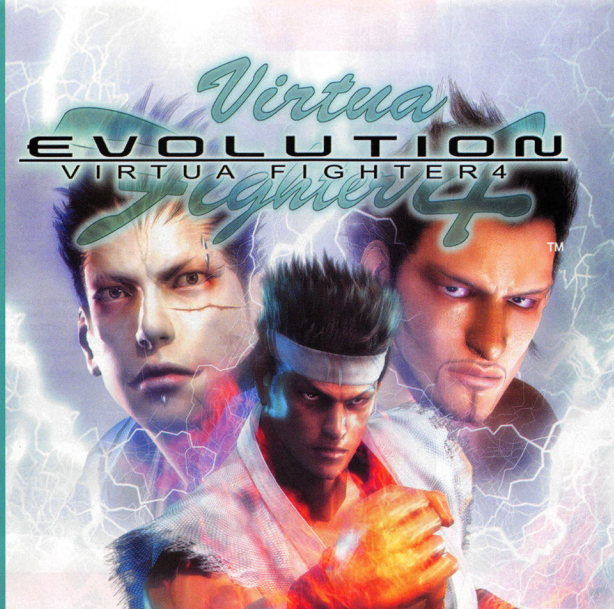
I was just watching *Baywatch* a few hours ago, and I got a killer idea for a game: *Baywatch! Picture It*—you could play as David Hasselhoff, Pamela Anderson, Nicole Eggert, Yasmine Bleeth, Alexandra Paul, and whoever else starred in it.

In David Hasselhoff's levels, say, he could save drowning victims, try to escape a crazy woman he once loved, and end up hugging his son and all that, just like in the series! Pamela's levels could maybe be T&A or something. I don't know. You could drive around the city in a *Grand Theft Auto*, go to the beach and save swimmers, or build up passionate relationships with other people! Hell, this thing could even be online. I'm not crazy. You know you want a *Baywatch* game.

—Beau Wilson

Yeah...no.





THE BEATDOWN EVOLVED



SEGA

Akira
YUKI



PlayStation.2



Suggestive Themes
Violence

Original Game © SEGA © SEGA-AM2/SEGA, 2001, 2003. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

do something
with
your
life



or not.

> A real college degree, focused on advancing technology.

Available online or on-campus.

GAME DESIGN
VIDEO PRODUCTION
DIGITAL ANIMATION
NETWORK SECURITY
E-COMMERCE
SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT
MULTIMEDIA
WEB DESIGN
DATABASE MANAGEMENT



www.uat.edu or 800.658.5744

sputtering outrage

Designer imposter

I am writing in response to my interview with Elijah Wood (*EGM* #166), star of the *Lord of the Rings* movies. My colleagues and I are somewhat frustrated about a comment you made to him at the end of the interview. You asked Elijah Wood if he would be in a new game, *Lord of the Bedspings: Eleven Girls Gone Wild*. By stating this, you have humiliated and destroyed the entire purpose of our club (to support Elijah Wood while maintaining morale [sic] values). Thus, as an online community and highly respected celebrity association, we cannot allow ourselves to continue reading your magazine.

Although many of our members are *EGM* readers, due to the unfortunate circumstances, they have publicly announced that they no longer support *EGM*, as it has no respect for morals. Our club is highly ranked in fan clubs, and I am sure that other readers who know we have cancelled our subscriptions will do the same. I am sure that this would be a great loss.

—Charles Deeter

President of the Official Elijah Wood Fan Club

[sarcastic clapping] Do you think we're idiots? Google rumbled you in about five seconds. The president of Elijah Woods' fan club is actually a gal named Colleen Lynch. And is she gonna be angry when she hears about this.



Pad problems

Why isn't there a Super Nintendo controller adapter for GameCube? Capcom vs. *SNK 2* would be a helluva lot better, and I don't think that GameCube pad that looks like a SNES controller would cut the mustard. I leave it to the fine folks at *EGM* to bitch and complain to someone who will actually give a damn. I want that adapter, gentlemen (and women), and I believe you can make it happen. Either that or I'll curl up in the fetal position and weep uncontrollably.

—Cullen

Why no SNES controller adapter for GameCube? That's like asking why game controllers don't just plug directly into the base of your spine; we could give you an answer, but it'd be



word on the street

■ WHAT INNOVATIONS DO YOU HOPE THE NEXT GENERATION OF CONSOLES WILL BRING TO GAMING?



I want to see screens built into the controllers. For those private moments, like picking your play in a football game, it's definitely a plus. Sega had something with the Dreamcast's VMU, and Nintendo's GC/GBA link-up expands the idea, but no one has used them to their full potential.

—Sean McDonald



Online components in the box, launch software that utilizes the online-enabled hardware, Capcom's *Steel Battalion* three-piece control deck and pedals licensed to all three companies and issued as standard controllers, and more games that focus on the trials and tribulations of a young man named Ryo Hazuki (*Shenmue*). If you can dream, so can I.

—Andrew Rocha



I would love to be able to buy all the console maker's earlier games directly out of the memory of the system. For example: Sony's PlayStation 1 and 2 games; Nintendo's NES, SNES, and

GameCube games (and all previous Sega consoles' games...I can dream); and Microsoft's Xbox 1 library. There'd be a little description of the game—if you wanted to buy it, you'd enter your credit card info and then the game would be unlocked, downloaded, whatever.

—Andrew Barker



Absolutely nothing but games. I don't want a DVD player, and I don't want power windows. Cup holders would be nice, but stick to games. That's what consoles are for.

—Matt Heyne

■ If you'd like to participate in Word on the Street, check our message boards at www.egmimg.com.

OOPS!

Seanbaby's *The Rest of the Crap* section isn't meant to be taken seriously—that's why games don't get scores. However, we apologize for not catching the "amazingly bad game with amazingly worse packaging" line in the *Karnaaj Rally* review (*EGM* #167, page 142), considering Seanbaby said explicitly that he was reviewing the box art, not the game (and also that he never tried the game). We will give *Karnaaj Rally* a normal review in an upcoming issue.



THE MOST UNREALISTIC RACING GAME EVER.



Heavily armed renegade racing
on 29 interplanetary tracks.

ROCK 'N' ROLL RACING

The Blizzard classic. Now on
Nintendo Game Boy® Advance.



Mild Violence

© 2003 Blizzard Entertainment. All rights reserved. Rock 'N' Roll Racing is a trademark and Blizzard Entertainment is a trademark or registered trademark of Blizzard Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. Nintendo, Game Boy and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners.



You've read the manga in Newtype USO...

now experience the anime
in your living room.

FULL METAL PANIC!

Coming to DVD 6.10.03

Volume One available as a single disc or a
Collector's Edition with a Custom Art Box
and Exclusive T-shirt.

ADV
FILMS

www.advfirms.com



SUNCOAST
This store has movie books



Postmodern videogaming

Your small boxset on Artsy-Fartsy Invaders (EGM #167, page 45) about destroying the text of postmodernist Michel Foucault, *Space Invaders*-style, made me realize that critical theory has not entered into the discourse of videogames. Existential themes like meaninglessness, dread, and individual accountability are present in most games. If critical theory took on the gaming industry, the deconstruction of videogames could lead to the rethinking of games as texts that reflect the genealogy of culture and society. Imagine leading theorists deconstructing the anthropomorphic characters in *Animal Crossing*, or the discourse of the *Final Fantasy* series being viewed as a reclamation of language!



■ Michel Foucault: not a big gamer

—Matt Healey

We imagined it, all right. We are now officially encouraging the letter-writing public to inundate us with incomprehensible game-related philosophical treatises—not that we don't get those already, mind. Keep it short.

"Can you give me Brett Isaacoff's phone number?"

—shung_monkey

completely made up. Have you actually tried Hori's SNES-like GameCube pad, though? It's great. Of course, you can't buy it here, but you can order it through importers like ncsx.com for about \$22.

Cheaters always win

I would like to start by saying that *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs* has to be one of the best games ever for PlayStation 2. However, "game enhancer" cheat devices like CodeBreaker, Action Replay, GameShark, etc., are ruining the game. There is a code for the CodeBreaker that allows players to respawn as a ghost after they die—so they're invisible, but still able to kill others. Another code disables the ability of users to vote the cheater off the server, ruining the game for everyone else. *SOCOM* developer Zipper Interactive and Sony need to step in and kick these people off. If you're against cheating, please sign the petition at www.petitiononline.com/cheatsoc/petition.html and help save *SOCOM*.

—Mark Mazur

EGM dating service

Well, that Brett Isaacoff (Letters, EGM

#166) is sexier than Vampire Hunter D and Matthew Good. Although Matthew Good still has the coolness factor...and Vampire Hunter D is a fictional character, which kind of puts a damper on things. Can you give me Brett Isaacoff's phone number? He can play me beautiful music with his bagpipes anytime.

—shung_monkey@hotmail.com

We don't see it, but whatever. Brett specifically asked us not to reveal his digits—perhaps he knew his visage would cause general swooning among the female population. You'll just have to make do with this picture, sealed with a kiss by also-dreamy Copy Editor Greg Ford. Enjoy! ☺



OOPS!

I guess you guys were in a pretty festive mood last month, what with the magazine redesign and all. However, I'm not sure tossing freebie gold awards around was the right way to celebrate. *Midnight Club II* may be a fine game, but it's not fine enough to bend the laws of arithmetic: $(9.0 + 8.0 + 9.5)/3 = 8.83$. Cheers on an otherwise spiffy change!

—Brian Handly

Oops. *Midnight Club II* should have earned a silver award. Dang new math, who understands it?

EBGAMES™
electronics boutique®

XBOX
LIVE

SHOOT TO THRILL



ONLY ON

XBOX

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM

A New Class of Monkey



Pink Monkey

Most Likely to Be a Pop Star



El Toro

Most Likely to Grab the Bull by the Horns



Harley Q. Win

Most Likely to Annoy the King



Billy

Most Likely to Get a Speeding Ticket



Monko Polo

Most Likely to Find a Legendary Banana



Natalie

Most Likely to Lose Her Wits



Marshall

Most Likely to Punch the Ref



Larry

Most Likely to Step in Monkey Poo



Mr. White

Most Likely to Be an Evil Scientist



Balboa

Most Likely to Live in a Meat Locker



Norman

Most Likely to Drive a Humvee



Specter

Most Likely to Take Over the World



Comic Mischief
Mild Violence



Catching Madness



Leo

Most Likely to Catch a Fever



Stephenson

Most Likely to Walk the Plank



Jimmy

Most Likely to Save the World



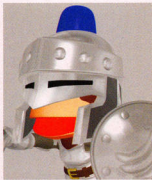
George

Most Likely to Be Inquisitive



Buzz

Most Likely to Walk Like an Eagle



Arthur

Most Likely to Get Pierced



Parka

Most Likely to Chill



Punto

Most Likely to Sink the Gondola



Cleo

Most Likely to Walk Like an Egyptian



Yellow Monkey

Most Likely to Be a Pro Wrestler



Libby

Most Likely to Swim to Ellis Island



Spud

Most Likely to Be a Hypnotist

300 monkeys. They're smarter. They're zanier.
And they're trying to take over the world.



PlayStation.2



Comic Mischief



© 2007 Activision Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Activision 02 and Warcrafting Unleashed are trademarks of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Shaun Murray is a trademark of Shaun Murray. Developed by Shaka Games, LLC. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. Licensed by Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners. Sony Computer Entertainment America takes no responsibility for this offer.

WAKEBOARDING

UNLEASHED FEATURING **SHAUN MURRAY**



**PULL OFF
CRAZY TRICKS**



TEAM UP IN 2-PLAYER CO-OP MODE

YOUR FRIEND FLIES

YOU DRIVE



Water moves. Screenshots don't. For the real experience, check out

www.wakeboardingunleashed.com

(5477566)

\$10 OFF*

Wakeboarding Unleashed™
Featuring Shaun Murray
for PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system.

*Limit 1 coupon per customer. Coupons only valid at Best Buy retail stores in U.S.A. Not good in combination with other coupons or offers. Not valid on prior purchases. Selection varies by store. Valid on in-stock items only; no rainchecks. No cash. Coupon must be presented at the time of purchase. No copies. Cash value is 1/100th of one cent. Valid through 10/4/03. © 2003 Best Buy.

Cashier Instructions: Scan coupon UPC. Scan qualifying product UPCs. Scan all other product(s) being sold. Press "Enter." Select "Yes" to apply package pricing. Write "VOID" on the coupon and place in the register coupon reader slot.



4 00054 77566 2

ACTIVISION
2
GAME SOFTWARE
ACTIVISION.COM

**BEST
BUY**
BestBuy.com



press start

gaming news, interviews, reformed gangsters, and other stuff

WHAT'S NEXT?

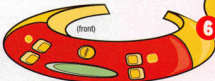
Is it too early to look toward the next wave of game consoles? Yeah, but EGM does it anyway—with your help!

The future is scary enough, what with the threat of mutant killer flus and an infinite lineup of *Who Wants to Marry a Zillionaire* *Space Alien*? reality shows. Combine that with the certainty that our game consoles will be obsolete in three years and we're ready for deep carbon freeze. But ignoring the grinding wheels of progress—and the cycle of the game-hardware market—is no longer possible, now that rumors of the next systems are flying and our industry moles are starting to blab.

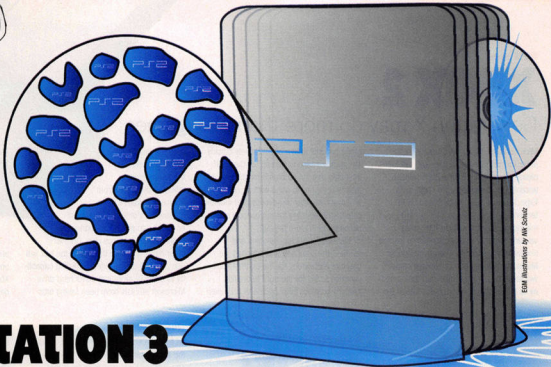
Sony, Microsoft, and Nintendo are engaged in

heavy game theory, sizing up each other's plans and trying to figure out when to unleash the new consoles. If Sony tries to milk profits from PlayStation 2, then the debut of all three follow-up systems could be pushed back to 2006. But go-time will come sooner if a rival launches a console in 2005. One thing's for sure: Sony won't have the year-long head start it enjoyed in the last generation. As Chief Xbox Officer Robbie Bach says, "We won't be late this time." EGM decided to be early. We've pulled together everything we've heard about the next wave of systems, thrown in some rampant speculation, and invited you, the readers, to send us your concepts—the niftiest of which appear right here on this page.

Now, we just have to wait for about two years to see if any of us is right.



Illustrations by: 1) Andy Hopson, created first for GMR magazine; 2) D.J. Dalton; 3) Mark Gulickson; 4) Anonymous, via the Internet; 5) Anonymous, via the Internet; 6) Dmitry Pavlovsky; 7) Tim Forbrook; 8) Eric Pinder; 9) Paolo Piro; 10) Jeremy Catlin; 11) Anonymous, via the Internet



■ ETA: 2005

PLAYSTATION 3

Sony banks big on cellular theory

Sony declined our request for a comment on its PS3 strategy, but the company has already spilled the guts of its gameplan in a few ways. In 2002, Shinichi Okamoto, chief technology officer for Sony's games unit, outlined the technology the company will use as the brains of its third-generation machine. The system will pack a new microprocessor jointly developed by Sony, Toshiba, and IBM at an estimated R&D cost of \$400 million. "Moore's Law is too slow for us," Okamoto said, referring to the computer-geek axiom that chip performance doubles roughly every 18 months. "We can't wait 20 years to achieve a thousand-fold increase in PlayStation performance."

Recent patent disclosures show that PS3's "cell-computing" architecture will pack many processors onto a single chip, as opposed to just the one processor that's on conventional chips. This cell technology—described as a "supercomputer on a chip"—will break down processing duties and assign them to the various processors. In a way, it works like a beehive, in which tasks are parceled out to specific worker bees.

Since programming duties could even be buzzed across a network—passed via PS3's sure-to-be-included broadband connection—there's wild speculation that the system could tap other machines over the Internet for extra processing power. Okamoto said the console would be capable of 1 trillion floating-point operations per second, or the processing equivalent of 100 Pentium 4 chips (just one of these chips serves as the brains of a modern PC).

Graphics-card makers Nvidia and ATI Technologies are itching to get their technology inside PS2's successor, but Sony's engineers could simply dedicate a separate cell chip to the task of crunching graphics. However, Nvidia CEO Jen-Hsun Huang says that bypassing the graphics-chip makers'

shader technologies would be a big mistake. (Shaders are miniprograms that can quickly and easily draw effects such as reflective surfaces.)

The reaction from game developers is mixed. Some express awe at the machine's proposed power. But others, like Epic (*Unreal Championship*) President Tim Sweeney, say it would be virtually impossible to program games for a system with so many processors working in parallel. "I've never heard

processing for a single game across a network, since the delays in fetching results from a remote console are huge compared to the speed of internal processing.

Beyond the chip front, we've heard much speculation that the next generation of Sony's machine will act as a home server, with a hard drive, TV-like recording capabilities, PS1 and PS2 backwards compatibility, and Web-browsing capabilities. "Sony's next box will make good on the unfulfilled

Philips." Of course, Sony made the same prelaunch pie-in-the-sky predictions about PS2, and three years later, we're still waiting for the hard-drive add-on. One chipmaker says Sony may include CD- or DVD-burning capabilities in its next box. Rumors suggest that Blu-Ray, a technology co-developed by Sony that fills discs with five DVDs' worth of data, will also be used. But the old question remains: Is this box for gamers or for an entire family looking to control all of its digi-

"Using a ton of processors in parallel would be very difficult. It's already hard to use the processors in the PS2 correctly."

—A developer who spoke on condition of anonymity

from Sony [about] how they intend for people to use the hardware," Sweeney says. "I can't imagine how you will actually program [for that console]." Meanwhile, Peter Gaskowsky, editor of *Microprocessor Report*, says it doesn't make sense to spread the

promise of the PlayStation 2." Okamoto said in a speech to game developers. "It will compete not only with game consoles from Nintendo and Microsoft, but also with PCs from the likes of Dell...and Hewlett-Packard, and with TV set-top boxes from Motorola and

tal entertainment? And since the processes to mass produce cell chips will be unavailable until at least 2005, could Sony run into the same manufacturing problems that plagued the PS2 graphics chip and led to shortages at the system's launch?

the future is (sorta) now

SO IT'S NOT THE PS3—OR EVEN THE PS2.5—BUT IT'S STILL NEW

Can't wait for PS3? Then look to Japan, where a new PlayStation has already landed. Don't get too excited—it's actually just a PS2 with a few key enhancements for the same price. The biggest tweak: The unit can play DVDs in progressive scan, a higher-res video mode for Richie-Rich gamers who own high-definition televisions. Other enhancements include a built-in receiver for the DVD remote, the ability to play home-burned DVD-R videos, and a new cooling fan that makes 30 percent less racket. But all that unbelievable luxury comes with one wee sacrifice: The FireWire port, which allows system-link gameplay in a few titles, has been removed from this model. Sony won't confirm whether this new-fangled PS2 will come Stateside, but we expect it to arrive eventually.

■ The new PS2 lacks a FireWire port and has two new remote buttons—Open/Close (for the system's disc tray) and Power. Time to fire the gentleman manservant who turns on your PS2.





■ ETA: 2005

XBOX 2

Generation Y may do more than play games

Microsoft's next box, code-named Xenon (after the inert, colorless gas—no fart jokes please), is scheduled for a 2005 release, according to developers we spoke with. Expect it once again to be based on PC technology, with a single Intel or AMD microprocessor or multiple Intel chips working together in multiprocessing fashion like today's servers do. The advantage for Microsoft: The use of conventional chips worked fine with Xbox, allowing the company to make its processor choice late in the

game and still field a box relatively quickly. The disadvantage is that an off-the-shelf Intel chip may be no match for the performance Sony has in mind with its cell processor. Another disadvantage of multiple chips: Programming for the console could become much more difficult.

Meanwhile, ATI Technologies and Nvidia—the company that supplied the graphics technology for the original Xbox—continue to bid for the right to provide Xenon's graphics chip. Microsoft may even

consider developing its own chip; the Xenon project inherited designers from Microsoft's WebTV team. However, it's unlikely this untested group can pull off an extremely sophisticated graphics chip. On the other hand, it's more than likely the box will use WebTV's digital-video recording capability to store TV programs on its hard drive. Microsoft officials have been taking bids

from hard-drive manufacturers for Xenon, claiming they need 40GB drives (the current Xbox's drive is 8GB).

We fully expect the next Xbox—like the original—to come with a built-in broadband port and to continue driving the growth of Xbox Live, Microsoft's burgeoning online gaming service.

■ ETA: 2005
on a GameCube successor due out "around the same time as rival makers' [consoles]." The only solid information so far is that Nintendo will once again tap ATI Technologies, the Canada-based graphics-

solely on Wavebird-like wireless controllers. Given Nintendo's we-only-care-about-games philosophy, it's a safe bet the Cube follow-up will lack the home-server/set-top-box features Sony and Microsoft are hyped about. We

CUBE²

Is online in the gameplan?

While Sony and Microsoft officials might hold out hope that Nintendo—like Sega—will give up on the hardware business, Nintendo President Satoru Iwata has confirmed the company is working

...we expect the console will rely solely on Wavebird-like wireless controllers.

chip maker. Odds are pretty good that Nintendo will also use IBM and the PowerPC microprocessor architecture again.

Otherwise, we figure Nintendo's next system will support or link up with whatever Game Boy iteration is ruling portable gaming in 2005, and we expect the console will rely

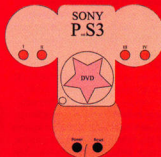
are hoping, however, that Nintendo will finally incorporate built-in online features into its system. The only other big question mark is the system's shape. Nintendo's already done a cube. What's next? A pyramid?

Hey, it could happen. —Dean Takahashi

nightmare Future

THE BEST OF THE WORST READER CONCEPTS

Some of you readers, bless your heart, didn't let laziness or lack of artistic talent or a crippling mental handicap stop you from submitting sketches and renders of the next systems. Avert your eyes from these reader-made concepts that are so bad, they're good—and by good, we mean just plain awful.



Alfred Hitchcock and the Hitchcock likeness are trademarks and copyrights of The Hitchcock Trust, licensed by Universal Studios Licensing LLLP. All rights reserved.



marc eckō
scopes

THE
peeps!



complex
magazine

published by Marc Eckō
subscribe online at
complexmagazine.com

eckō.com
shop online

Danny Masterson
in the Peeps

■ That ****ing Tetris game ain't s****, dawg



SHADY'S DEAL

Eminem "Loses Himself" in first videogame

As hip-hop heads are aware, there's a thin line between fan and "Stan." Just ask Conspiracy Entertainment. At this summer's Electronic Entertainment Expo game-biz show, the publisher will show off PS1 budget title *Mix TV Presents Eminem*, the first interactive tribute to rapper Marshall "Eminem" Mathers. Due in June, the game fuses video clips from timeless family hits like "The Real Slim Shady" and "My Name Is..." with traditional mini-game challenges like slider puzzles (you know, those tiles you move around to make a picture). Billed as a form of "enthusiast appreciation," the title is the first in a proposed series of PS1 pop-culture-oriented offerings that will sell for a decidedly non-bling-bling 10 bucks a pop.

—Scott Steinberg

GRUDGE MATCH

Nerd vision vs. night vision in the final staredown



MAX FISCHER VS. SAM FISHER

Sure, *Splinter Cell*'s Sam Fisher is crafty and good with the stealth kills, but he never wrote a hit play, attempted to seduce a first-grade teacher, or saved Latin like *Rushmore*'s Max Fischer. They're both sneaky bastards, to be sure, but there can be only one Fis(c)her King....

THE UNIFORM

Crested blue blazer, glasses...beret?

Flattering fatigues, slimming fanny pack, gun holster, night-vision goggles
Advantage: Sam

MAIN SQUEEZE

The beautiful Brit teacher gets away, but Max still ends up with a cute (and age-appropriate) nerd girl
Advantage: Max

The trigger of his 5.72mm SC Pistol

WEAPON OF CHOICE

Pellet gun capable of pissing off a Scotsman from three yards

SC-20K M.A.W.S. rifle capable of bringing down nonfriendlies from 1,000 feet
Advantage: Sam

NAME ANAGRAM

Fax me Chris

Smash Fire
Advantage: Smash

LIKELY TO BE PLAYED IN TV MOVIE BY

Paul Pfeiffer from *The Wonder Years*

That dreamy George Clooney
Advantage: Unless Winnie Cooper stars opposite Paul...Sam

SEQUEL POTENTIAL

His theatrical adaptation of *xXx*, set in ancient Greece, earns him a postgraduate year at *Rushmore*

Has at least one follow-up mission left before getting too old for this s***
Advantage: Sam

LAST MAN STANDING: Sam Fisher

Sam handily disarms the *Rushmore* dropout and caps him right through the goofy hat as the Cat Stevens fades in.

NEWS BITS: READ THEM ALL AND YOU CAN HAVE DESSERT



■ When Lady Miss Kier sues Utala, we all lose.



DEE-LAW-SUIT

The divine Lady Miss Kier of the now-defunct band Dee-Lite is suing Sega for \$750,000, claiming that Utala, the main character in Sega's *Space Channel 5* series, copies her "de groovy" image. The world awaits the verdict.

A GETAWAY MOVIE

How weird is this—a film based on a game based on the style of Guy Ritchie's films? According to *The Hollywood Reporter*, a big-screen version of Sony's *The Getaway* is scheduled to start production in 2004 and hit theaters in time for the game's sequel.

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME QUIDDITCH?

We called this one. EA recently announced a new *Potter* game that could fit right in with their sports line—*Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup*, coming to all consoles. We hope John "A trick play is a give-up play" Madden will be commenting.





Savage by nature.

Play as young knight, Seig Wahrheit, who must face off
against an old friend in this gothic action adventure.

To fight, summon and command seven different warrior legions
each with their own signature weaponry.

Chaos Legion...a graphic masterpiece and savage gothic opera
played out over 13 levels of real time, cut-throat action!

"If you loved Devil May Cry,
you'll love Chaos Legion!" - PSM



CHAOS LEGION

PlayStation®2

CAPCOM
capcom.com



Blood
Violence

NINTENDO SPEEDS AHEAD

The big N rolls out its big titles for fall

Two pair in poker, that ain't so hot. But two pair of new Nintendo games? That'll get us reaching for our wallets. Check out a couple new sequels that stress two-player gameplay and a couple remade classics, all due later this year. As for more screens and hands-on impressions next month, you can bet on it.



MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH

It's always tough to do other things while you're driving—changing a CD, making a call on your cell phone, nailing the guy on your tail with a turtle shell, etc.—and that's a problem Nintendo plans to address in this GameCube update to its battle/racing franchise. Pair up any two Mario characters, then place one up front to drive while the other rides shotgun off the back, tossing items to help you get (and keep) the lead. You'll find special items only certain contestants can use, so it's a good thing you can swap partners on the fly. Oh, and two- to four-player splitscreen won't be the only multiplayer—hook up two GameCubes via broadband adapters and play with up to eight (mama mia!) people at once on two TVs.



PIKMIN 2

Like *Mario Kart*, this sequel to Nintendo's (sort of) real-time strategy game stresses the joys of cooperation: Big-nosed astronaut Captain Olimar has brought along his assistant this time, and together (either two-player splitscreen or single player and switching between them), the two will raise an army of the ant-like Pikmin plant people, commanding them to attack enemies, retrieve treasure, destroy obstacles, or do whatever other dirty work stands in the way. Two new types of Pikmin—purple and white—join the old cast of yellow, red, and blue. And since each color has its own unique ability, that means new gameplay. Plus, *Pikmin 2* has no time limit, so hopefully, it will last longer than the short-but-sweet original.



■ Hopped on magic mushrooms and fire flowers, Mario and Luigi didn't spot Captain Olimar and his assistant crossing the road until it was too late.



METAL GEAR SOLID THE TWIN SNAKES

GameCube owners, lemme hear ya say "ye-ah!" *Metal Gear's* espionage action sneaks its way back onto a Nintendo system as *Eternal Darkness* developer Silicon Knights (under the watchful eyes of Nintendo and Konami) handles this remake of the original *MGS*. No screenshots yet; only the new artwork you see above, showing hero Solid Snake (on the left) and his evil genetic twin Liquid Snake—the "Twin Snakes" from the title, in case you were wondering. We expect at least *MGS2*-caliber graphics and gameplay features (like the ability to switch to a first-person view for shooting), plus a few new surprises, but we'll know much more by next issue, after we've given it the once-over at the Electronic Entertainment Expo.



SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 4

OK, *Super Mario Advance 4* is actually a graphically enhanced version of the 8-bit Nintendo classic *Super Mario Bros. 3*, which is why it looks almost identical to the last *Mario 3* remake included on Super Nintendo's *Super Mario All-Stars*. Confused? Don't be. All you really need to know is that this game takes the 2D platforming foundation laid by the original *Super Mario Bros.* and powers it up with 100 mushrooms' worth of improvements—tons of new enemies, new powers for Mario (fly, slide, and turn into a statue, among others), and more than sixty levels that put them all to the test. Yes, it's one of the greatest games of all time, and no, we can't wait to play it in portable form. 🍄

—Mark MacDonald



■ Somewhere right now, big robots—such as these mechs—are totally whaling on each other.

INSTANT EXPERT: ANIME

From zero to otaku in 60 seconds

If you think anime (say it right: ah-ni-may) is a sticky tree sap used by varnish makers, then you're absolutely right—and absolutely weird ('cause, like, why do you know that?). You're also missing out on a type of made-in-Japan animation that goes hand in sweaty hand with game culture. Study up to filly your way into the import-store crowd....

He is your god

Start worshipping Hayao Miyazaki, the writer/director/lead animator of *Princess Mononoke*, *Kiki's Delivery Service*, *Castle in the Sky*, and 2002's Oscar-winning *Spirited Away*, all available on DVD.

Don't get caught without these classics...

- **Neon Genesis Evangelion**—An artsy, psychological action-drama series that has become an anime legend.
- **Akira**—A sci-fi masterpiece, as stylish as it is nonsensical.
- **Love Hina**, **Tenchi Muyo**, and **Ranma 1/2**—Among the best series in the popular "wacky romantic-comedy" genre.
- **Grave of the Fireflies**—A beautiful, tragic gut-punch of a movie.

Build street cred with these terms...

- **Hentai**—Means "pervert." Also used to describe the pornographic anime subgenre (which may involve tentacles).
- **Mecha**—Anime subgenre that stars super-duper robots.
- **Otaku**—An extreme fan, someone likely to dress up as his or her favorite character, watch only Japanese-subtitled shows, and blitch on the Internet about American anime companies.



Bone up for nothin'

The Cartoon Network is hip to anime, with so-so kid-friendly shows like *Dragon Ball Z* and *Yu Yu Hakusho* airing in the afternoons and edgier fare like *Trigun* in the wee-hour Adult Swim lineup. Best of all is the stylish *Cowboy Bebop*, on Sunday through Thursday at 1 a.m. EST. Oh, don't go blowing \$25 on a DVD without reading a review at animeondvd.com or animenewsnetwork.com. And be on guard for that whole tentacle thing.

—Casey Lee

OLD SCHOOL 10 years ago in EGM

■ On the cover: Jungle Strike/Jurassic Park



Game of the Month:

Pocky & Rocky

We won't hold it against you if you've never heard of Natsume's top-down, vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up *Pocky & Rocky*. But this cartoony one- or two-player game set in feudal Japan and starring a cute female priestess and her trusty raccoon pal sure scored well with the Review Crew. If you're curious, check out the recent portable version for your Game Boy Advance (*Pocky & Rocky and Becky*).

Virtual Calamity

After the movie *The Lawnmower Man* made the term "virtual reality" a household word, Sega jumped on the bandwagon with Sega VR—a head-mounted display for its 16-bit Genesis. "Sega VR will change the way people play and are entertained at home," Tom Kalinske, then Sega's president and CEO, said at its June '93 debut. The \$200 device and four planned games (which all sucked, frankly) never saw the light of day.

Three-Dee-Wha?

In 1993, 3DO had hopes of making the next big console. Its 3DO Multiplayer was shown in public for the first time that year before going on sale for \$700. A rep for the project stated, "We're doing everything we can to establish 3DO as the next standard in consumer electronics." Yep, right up there with Betamax.

Big Cat

Also in June '93, Atari laid out plans to release its Jaguar game system. We now know it would eventually fail, but at first, the Jag sounded so...nitty. "The idea of a 64-bit system is earth-shattering, and kids and adults will be amazed at both the imagery and manipulative capabilities," said Atari President Sam Tramiel. "And we are proud that our entry will be fully made in America." Yes, people really used to talk like that.



BY THE NUMBERS

Raw data that proves you are not gaming alone



145,000,000

The number of Americans who say they played videogames and computer games in 2002. GTA, anyone?

221,000,000

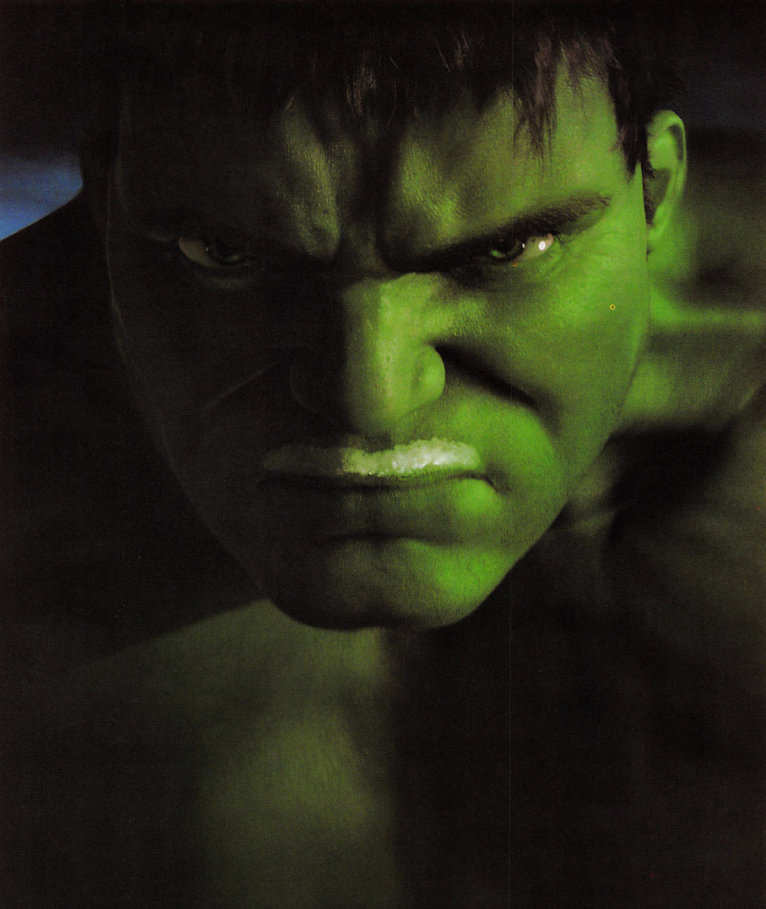
The number of games sold in 2002 to those 145 million people (about one-and-a-half games per person).

\$6,900,000,000

The amount of money those 145 million people spent on games in 2002 (\$5.5 billion on console games).

41%

Percentage of Americans who say they'll buy at least one game in 2003. Percentage of those people who will actually finish the games they buy? We're gonna guess 10%.



Milk make bones strong. Bones no break when Hulk drink milk.

got milk?

HULK ©2003 AMERICA'S DAIRY FARMERS AND MILK PROCESSORS. "THE HULK" music: ©2003 Universal Studios. Licensed by Universal Studios Licensing LLP. "THE INCREDIBLE HULK" and all related comic book characters: ™ & © Marvel Characters, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



AFTERTHOUGHTS: THE SIMS

Pestering the guy who lets us play God

Everything's better with videogames, even basic bodily functions. That's one lesson we've learned since *The Sims*, the hugely popular life simulator, invaded all three consoles. Another thing we've learned is that holding a conversation with Michael Perry, design director for *The Sims*, is tough. There's the whole subpar personal hygiene issue, and then every couple minutes he jumps up, sprints to the bathroom, goes and makes lunch, or possibly gets in the hot tub (where, curiously, we're always compelled to join him). He talks in this funny Charlie Brown's teacher's language, and what's with all the weird pictograms? Oh wait, we were just having another *Sims* dream. Never mind.

EGM: Is there anything you tried for the console version that had to be cut or just didn't work?

Michael Perry:

Yeah, we tried a few different things. For a while we were trying to decide if we should add a lot of traditional console elements to *The Sims*, meaning action, button-mashing stuff. We even had a design where the player could have their Sim bump into objects and these little karma coins would pop out. And it seemed like a great idea for a game like *Sonic*, but *The Sims* is such a unique gameplay experience that it felt like it wasn't *The Sims* anymore.

EGM: What do you think of the TV commercial with the plastic-looking mother and daughter playing strip poker? Or did we misread what was going on there entirely?

MP: [laughs] I love that commercial. When we created new objects exclusive to the console versions of *The Sims*, we really tried to come up with some of the craziest things we could think of, and the strip poker table and the bug zapper were two of the first we designed. During the process we tried to think of how they would look in an ad or on TV, so it's great to see the strip poker table made it into the commercial.

EGM: You came up with some pretty bizarre ones, like the monkey butler and teppanyaki table—was anything too far out there to make the cut?

MP: We were experimenting with some two-player, kinda button-mashing game objects—games you could put in your backyard. While we could make each one of these into fun little minigames, well, it didn't feel like *The Sims* anymore. It felt more appropriate for something like *Super Monkey Ball*. So maybe they weren't really far-out objects, but they weren't *Sims*-style objects.

EGM: So is there a nude code or what? The

world wants to know! Presumably.

MP: There isn't one in the game itself, but if you get some of the cheat hardware, you can do it with that.

EGM: Has anyone broken the news to [Sims creator] Will Wright that the videogame version of *Battlebots* has been cancelled, seeing as how he's such a fan of the show and all?

MP: I don't know. Will has a really cool place [in Berkeley, CA] called the Stupid Fun Club, which is full of robots. If you've ever wanted to feel like you're living inside a videogame, that's the place. 

—Dorian Linn



summer fashion tips

When it comes to Sim fashion, we stick with the mustachioed balding guy wearing hot pants, sock garters, and little else. But that's us. If you're more of a *Sims* clotheshorse, Design Director Michael Perry has a hot tip for you: Be social. "Every Sim you meet has a unique skin—mohawks, liberty spikes, miniskirts, etc.—that you can put on your own Sim," he says. "And the way to unlock all those skins is to make friends with every last one." So there you have it. Now get out there and talk, talk, joke, talk, and compliment your little heart out.





NAVAL OPS

WARSHIP GUNNERTM

Build a state-of-the-art war machine. Sail it into the heart of enemy waters, engage hostile vessels, avoid high-G anti-ship missiles, and put it to the test. You won't just prove your ship in battle... you'll prove yourself, too.

July 2003



●Arm your ship with weapons systems, propulsion solutions, defensive hardware, and even aircraft. Access over 800 components, 200 aircraft, and over 400 armament types.

●Invest in new technology, salvage parts from enemy wrecks, and earn items using completion bonuses.

●Real arcade shooting action 40 across deadly missions ●Build destroyers, battleships, carriers, and more ●Parts and vessels from WWII to present-day weapons systems, and arsenals of the future ●Warship Evaluation System, Survival mode, WWII mode, plus much more

PRODUCTS RANGE FROM
RATING PENDING TO EVERYONE
RP-E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB



"In war there is no substitute for victory." - General MacArthur
NAVAL SUPREMACY and GLOBAL CONQUEST
AVAILABLE NOW

P.T.O.I.V
The Ultimate Operator's Manual

The KOEI logo is a trademark of KOEI Co., Ltd. in Japan and/or other Countries. Naval Ops: Warship Gunner and P.T.O.I.V are trademarks of KOEI Corporation and KOEI Co., Ltd. © 2003 MICROBRAIN CORP./© 2003 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

THE MOVIE

A slick new breed of big-screen videogames proves that the game biz has finally figured out how to play nice with Hollywood



GAME: RELOADED

Somewhere in the deserts of New Mexico lies a potent reminder of the checkered history of movie-based videogames. It's there that in September 1983, 14 tractor trailers pulled up to a landfill and dumped their cargo: 5 million unsold Atari 2600 cartridges of *E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial*, the videogame based on Stephen Spielberg's classic film. The game—which cost \$20 million to license and was developed in only six weeks—was a failure of epic proportions, largely because of its cruddy gameplay (most copies were returned to stores). It also ushered in the long-standing trend of blah games based on blockbuster flicks. For years, seeing a movie game on a store shelf was akin to spying Pauly Shore's name on a movie poster. The message: Run for your life.

But things may be changing. Movie games are going through a creative renaissance, fueled by a burgeoning collaborative relationship between Hollywood and the games industry, and the stigma of the movie game as a cheap cash-in is melting away. While we've played a handful of good movie

games (*Aladdin* for Genesis, *GoldenEye* for Nintendo 64), they've been the exception rather than the rule. But lately, several solid movie titles have hit in rapid-fire succession. It started last year with the better-than-average *Spider-Man* and the even better *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*. This year, games like the just-released *Enter the Matrix* are showing how far the relationship between developers and filmmakers has come. Gone are the days of movie-themed titles that seemed to exist only to lure in

matching a great movie license with a great game can be an explosive combination. The proof is in the numbers: Last year's *Two Towers* game earned Electronic Arts \$175 million, more than what most movies make at the box office. Similarly, Activision's *Spider-Man* has racked up more than \$200 million in sales. Not surprisingly, those blockbuster figures have changed the way film executives approach movie games. In the past, "executives making [movie game] deals couldn't give a rat's ass about what

with rushed production schedules and lousy sales. Now, after years of this vicious cycle repeating itself, executives finally understand that a movie star's face on a game box won't trick people into parting with their cash. License or not, it's the game inside the box that matters.

Along with realizing the importance of gameplay, film producers and directors are also beginning to show interest in games as a storytelling medium. "Filmmakers used to see films as the apex of a [property's] uni-

"No one looks at the *Godfather* film and says, 'Oh, it's just an attempt to cash in on the book.'"

—Electronic Arts Producer Neil Young

mainstream consumers who don't know any better. Today's movie games aspire to be gripping experiences that complement and expand on rich film universes.

Why the change? In short, Hollywood and the games industry finally realized that

kind of game experience would fall out on the other end," says Shiny President Dave Perry, designer of *Enter the Matrix*. "[The executives] were just making money, putting together deals." But more often than not, those deals resulted in shoddy movie games

verse, and everything else was derivative, like lunch pails and action figures," explains Paul Baldwin, VP of marketing at *Tomb Raider* publisher Eidos. "But now, games are the first merchandising opportunity where

(continued on page 48)

■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

THE HULK

■ VU Games ■ Movie: June 20 ■ Game: Out now

As the *Hulk* film arrives in theaters, it already has a sequel: the videogame. "[The *Hulk* game] is deliberately set after the events of the movie, with a new story line that extends beyond the film," says Nicholas Longano of Vivendi Universal. The game also blends the movie's story with the Hulk's comic-book roots, adding villains such as Flux, Rampage, and Half-Life. Although the game has a unique story line, it's still tied to the movie. "We had access to the sets and access to the digital-effects work being done during production," says Longano. One product of this collaboration is the in-game model of

the Hulk, which was created with the help of Industrial Light & Magic, the company responsible for the movie's visual effects. The actor who plays the Hulk, Eric Bana, also lends his voice and likeness to the game. (You play as both Bruce Banner and his destructive alter ego.) And while no one will confirm it, we've heard that by closely watching the movie, players may gain insights into the game's hidden features. So pay attention! "We think a great theatrically inspired game can only serve to boost the franchise as a whole," explains Longano. For once, it's going to be easy being green.



■ Hulk smash? Yes, of course. But Hulk sneak? Well, sorta. As wimpy Bruce Banner, you must avoid bad guys.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES

■ Atari ■ Movie: July 3 ■ Game: Fall 2003

John Botti, president of Black Ops Entertainment, has been on both sides of the movie-game fence. "In the early '90s, I programmed a *RoboCop* vs. *Terminator* game, and we certainly didn't have Arnold Schwarzenegger," he remembers. But times have changed, and now the King of action heroes is lending his voice and likeness to Atari's upcoming T3 game.

"It changes the whole feel of the game to have Arnold saying one-liners as you walk through levels," says Botti. *Rise of the Machines* will also feature other members of the film's cast, including Claire Danes and Kristanna Loken, the *Terminatrix*.

The game—a first-person shooter that includes third-person hand-to-hand fighting levels—mostly follows the film, so expect to battle on top of the yellow crane seen in the trailer. But about 40 percent of the game involves a futuristic story line that's only mentioned briefly in the movie. "What happened in the future before the Terminator is sent to find John Connor?" asks T3 film director Jonathan Mostow.

"Why do all Terminators look the same? These are the kinds of mysteries the game can explore in greater detail." On top of all that, T3 will include extra movie scenes you won't see in theaters. "After *Enter the Matrix*," says Steve Allison, Atari's VP of marketing, "we knew our T3 game had to include Arnold and extra film footage."

the game can match the cinematic and emotional appeal of a film." Filmmakers like Sam Raimi

(*Spider-Man*), Peter Jackson (*Lord of the Rings*), Jonathan Mostow (*Terminator 3*), Ang Lee (*The Hulk*), and the Wachowskis brothers (*The Matrix*) have started collaborating with game developers. Just ask Shiny's Perry, who thought he'd have to beg to get one exclusive movie scene for *Enter the Matrix*. As it turned out, the Wachowskis shot an hour of film footage specifically for the game. They also gave Perry's team complete access to the film's sets and crew. Still, you have to wonder why directors are suddenly giving game companies such unprecedented resources. According to *Terminator 3* director Jonathan Mostow, it all comes down to the allure of an expanded film universe. "There's only so much story we can squeeze into a two-hour movie," Mostow says. "But the game provides limitless hours of play and a myriad of opportunities to explore [other] aspects of the *Terminator* legend."

All the accoutrements of Hollywood participation, however, don't necessarily lead to compelling gameplay. The biggest challenge for movie-game makers is delivering an experience that feels like a film but also works as a game. "If you were adapting a

■ I'll be jacked: T3's developers appropriated Arnold's looks and voice—a first for a game.

■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING

■ EA Games ■ Movie: December 2003 ■ Game: November 2003

It turns out last year's *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* game had one very important fan: the film's director, Peter Jackson.

"Peter thought we did such a good job that we're taking the collaboration to the next level this year," explains Neil Young, the game's executive producer. That's

no halfling-sized statement, given that *The Two Towers* is already considered a turning point in movie-game collaborations—all the film actors, not to mention exclusive movie footage.

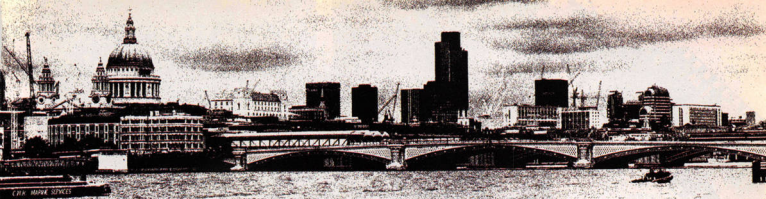
So what's the next level? This year, EA has members of its game team on the set in New Zealand, working alongside the film's special-effects group. Even the movie's stunt team performed for EA's motion-capture studio. "We're taking the actual digital models for characters from the movie and putting those into the game," Young explains.

Beyond the richer access to film assets, EA is promising this year's game will have deeper gameplay and be roughly a third longer than *The Two Towers*. Best of all, Gollum finally makes an appearance. "Peter wanted to keep him secret in last year's game, but this year, he's definitely in there," says Young. How precious.



■ With this ring, blood we'll shed: Don't let the solo play in these screens fool you—King returns with co-op play.





— MAXIM

the **Getaway**

SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA PRESENTS A TEAM SOHO PRODUCTION STARRING DON KEMBRY RICKY HARDS ANNA EDWARDS MICHAEL PRESTON JOE RICE
DIRECTORS OF PROGRAMMING WILLIAM BUROON AND NARESH HIRANI DIRECTOR OF ANIMATION GAVIN MOORE ART DIRECTION SAM COATES AND RAVINDER SINGH PRODUCTION DESIGN SIMON WOOD
WRITTEN BY BRENDAN MCNAMARA AND KATIE ELLWOOD ORIGINAL SCORE ANDREW HALE GAME DESIGN CHUN WAH KONG DIRECTED BY BRENDAN MCNAMARA

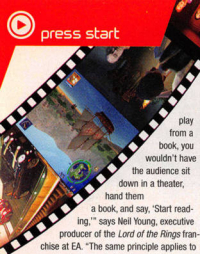


Blood
Drug Reference
Strong Language
Strong Sexual Content
Violence

PlayStation 2



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.



play from a book, you wouldn't have the audience sit down in a theater, hand them a book, and say, "Start reading," says Neil Young, executive producer of the *Lord of the Rings* franchise at EA. "The same principle applies to movies being made into games. We have to adapt the film in a way that allows for great gameplay." Eventually, Young hopes movie games will be seen as a form of adaptation on par with how great books are turned into Oscar-winning films. "No one looks at the *Godfather* film and says, 'Oh, it's just an attempt to cash in on the book.'"

Over time, movie games may turn into more than straight adaptations. At their best, these games may give room for film universes to expand and persist long after the credits roll. This summer's *The Hulk*, for instance, tells a unique story set a year after events depicted in the film. And *Enter the Matrix* features its own story line that runs parallel to *The Matrix Reloaded*. "[All our research shows] players don't just want to replay the movie story," explains John Heinicke, Activision's director of global



■ **Bulletproof Junk:** Even if *Enter the Matrix's* gameplay doesn't make you go "whoa" (read our review next month), you'll still need to play it to get the whole *Matrix* story.

brand management. For developers, the challenge becomes building a game that maintains consistency with the film universe but also includes fresh new elements. "For *Spider-Man*, gamers expect to be able to swing on webs and crawl up walls while foiling arch-villains, not racing go-carts," says Heinicke. *Star Wars Super Bombad Racing*, can we get a witness?

These new movie games also serve as a sneak preview of where videogames may go

next—as star-powered vehicles that aren't adapted from a film. French actor Jean Reno recently agreed to lend his likeness to Capcom's *Onimusha 3*. And this fall, Jet Li is starring in Sony's *Rise to Honor*. (To be fair, let's not forget the lackluster Bruce Willis PS1 title *Apocalypse*, which showed that even the biggest stars can't save a subpar game.) Perry thinks we may soon see an influx of Hollywood stars going digital. "Since we announced [*Enter the Matrix*], I

have asked movie stars if they would be willing to work with us at this level," he says. "Where they used to answer, 'Talk to my agent,' now they say 'Absolutely.'"

Could Tom Cruise star in *Metal Gear Solid* creator Hideo Kojima's next game? Could J. Lo show skin in *Dead or Alive: Extreme Bouncing Watersports*? E.T., you'd better phone home with the news: The curse of the movie game may finally be over. **AB**

—Geoff Keighley

coming attractions

ADVANCED SCREENING OF THE REST OF THE YEAR'S MOVIE GAMES

- PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
- FINDING NEMO**
- THQ
- Movie & Game: Out now



Willem Dafoe recorded dialogue for last year's *Spider-Man* game. Now he repeats the favor for this kiddie game based on Pixar's latest animated film. He's got all his demographics covered, except the pinocchio crowd.

- PlayStation 2, GameCube
- CHARLIE'S ANGELS**
- Ubi Soft
- Movie: June ■ Game: July



Cameron, Lucy, and Drew lend their likenesses to this action game based on the film franchise. Throw in a three-way catfight and we're so there.

- PlayStation 2
- CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON**
- Ubi Soft
- Movie: Out now ■ Game: August



Based on Ang Lee's art-house chop-choy flick, this game even has Mandarin dialogue with English subtitles to keep up the artsy foreign-film feel. Seriously.

- Xbox
- PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN**
- Bethesda
- Movie: July ■ Game: Summer



Keep your hands and arms inside the vehicle at all times in this hefty high-seas RPG packed with plundering opportunities. Rated "Arrrrr!" Sorry.

- PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
- THE ITALIAN JOB**
- Eidos
- Movie: Out now ■ Game: June



Try to keep with us: *The Italian Job* is a Mini Cooper—racing game based on the new Mark Wahlberg remake of the Michael Caine original, making it a high-gloss version of the PST budget driving title from two years ago. Whew.

- PlayStation 2, Xbox
 - BAD BOYS II**
 - Empire
 - Movie: July ■ Game: Fall
- Martin Lawrence and Will Smith lend their talents to this third-person action-shooter. We're hoping the line "Don't hate the player—hate the game" from the movie trailer isn't literally true.

- PlayStation 2, Xbox
 - BULLETPROOF MONK**
 - Empire
 - Movie: Out now ■ Game: Fall
- This third-person action-adventure

expands on the plot of the recent film starring Seann William Scott and Chow Yun-Fat. It also includes a battle-arena multiplayer mode...with Tibetan monks. The film was a mess, which makes us wonder if we really need a game that mixes *Stiff* with *The Matrix*?

- PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
- HAUNTED MANSION**
- TDK Mediactive
- Movie: Fall ■ Game: October



The game's set inside Disney's *Haunted Mansion* ride—which is about to become a movie—and stars Eddie Murphy. You can't scare us, Eddie. We've already seen *Pluto Nash*.

- PlayStation 2, Xbox
- THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS**
- VU Games

■ Movie: Out now ■ Game: Fall
Take part in street racing with customizable cars. The primary objective: Avoid getting caught by Johnny Law. The secondary objective: Try to understand one word Vin Diesel says.

GAMING BEAUTY

Although hardly your typical console owner (after all, she sports a bubbly personality, a cheery demeanor, and breasts), actress and former *Playboy* model Angelica Bridges still finds time for the odd round of *Hot Shots Golf*. Now that her stints on *Baywatch* and *Mortal Kombat Conquest* (the short-lived TV series that ten people in the world watched) have wrapped, you can catch her as the absolute baddest babe in 3D's *Street Racing Syndicate*.

EGM: Do girls just wanna have fun?

Angelica Bridges: Yeah. We're not into stress or drama.

EGM: So why don't more women play the videogames?

AB: There's something in our brain that guys don't have. It starts at birth. Our parents raise us like we're porcelain and will break. Piloting spaceships or shooting aliens doesn't translate into the mind-set.

EGM: Perhaps you could recommend some titles that'd get a girl in the mood for "Force Feedback"?

AB: The bad thing is, most games are competitive. That's not a turn-on. Maybe *Super Mario Sunshine* or *Ms. Pac-Man*—that's a favorite. If a guy sat and played that with me, it'd be a huge aphrodisiac.

EGM: And if a gamer cleans up the old pizza boxes and *Zelda* toys? That's like a double-mega-aphrodisiac, right? 'Cause if not, we just wasted five minutes.

AB: Oh yeah. Make sure the apartment is nice and tidy, boys. There better not be any sweaty socks, crumbs, or empty beer cans lying around.

EGM: Crap, that's a lot of work to do on a regular basis. Couldn't we just pick up a chick in an arcade?

AB: Absolutely. If she's there, she automatically has something in common with you. That's the ultimate icebreaker.

EGM: Would you date an out-of-the-closet hardcore gamer?

AB: Some girls would. Me, I'm afraid I'd never get any attention. Trying to pry you guys off *Metrod Prime* isn't easy.

EGM: Strike one. Got any hot trends into the hobby?

AB: Not really. As a whole, we're raised to

be girlie, not chop heads off *Mortal Kombat*-style. In grade school I might have, but now? Sorry....

EGM: So what's currently on your playlist, then?

AB: *NHL 2K3* is the top one for sure. You can be a player from any team, start fights, and beat the crap out of guys with the stick.

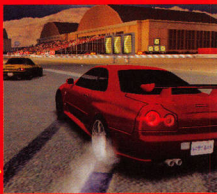
EGM: Biggest drawback to being a "grrr gamer"?

AB: I can't come off all sweet and pretty while playing. It's like Tourette's behind the gamepad...I just got frustrated. That reminds me. A hot tip for you guys out there: Always let the girl win. ♡

Life in the Fast Lane

Respect is the name of the game in *Street Racing Syndicate*, the *Gran Turismo*-style racer out this July for PlayStation 2, Xbox, and GameCube.

To get that respect, you've got to earn it by winning races, amassing a fortune by gambling your cars and cash, and wooing the classy ladies (like Angelica here) who hang out at the raceways. 3DO says that these "girlfriends" are for more than just show; they'll provide you with info on races, cars, and other drivers—and they can also be (gulp!) added to the stakes when you wager.



SEIZE THE GAME

Four retro wares put the past in your palm



Mattel Handheld Football

■ Mattel ■ \$15

What it is: A reissue of the handheld sports games (baseball and basketball are also available) from the 1980s. You remember: It's all about moving the red LED blips across the field while riding across the country in the family stationwagon.

Cool factor: ★★★★★

These games serve up competition in its purest form. The chirpy sounds get annoying after a while, but it's a small price to pay for the ultimate in retro play.

Dork factor: ★★★★★ You'll be the envy of every old-school gamer in town.



Atari Classics 10-in-1 TV Games

■ JAKKS ■ \$20

What it is: This vintage, battery-powered Atari 2600 controller plugs into the back of any television, letting you play built-in oldies like *Asteroids*, *Breakout*, *Pong*, and more. **Cool factor:** ★★★★★ Just why BYOB to the party when you can BYOMC (as in *Missile Command*)?

Dork factor: ★★★★★ There's a good reason these things used to be called joysticks—that's particularly evident when you're twiddling the rod in your lap. Try not to get too excited while you're playing *Centipede*. Save that for, uh...*Gavitar*.



Electronic Simon Handheld Simon

■ Hasbro ■ \$13

What it is: A slimmed-down version of the ol' *Simon* Says-themed game that was a '70s phenomenon. Players try to mimic the flashing lights in sequence. It's a lo-fi answer to *Dance Dance Revolution*.

Cool factor: ★★★★★ *Simon's* claim to fame is that it was among the first electronic handheld games, although this tiny version is unrecognizable compared to the Technicolor frying-pan-sized original.

Dork factor: ★★★★★ Good luck impressing the ladies with your *Simon* skills now that those damn videogames have rotted your brain.



Ms. Pac-Man Color FX II Classic Arcade Game

■ MGA ■ \$15

What it is: A Lilliputian version of the pellet-munching classic coin-op. *Pac-Man*, *Missile Command*, and *Centipede* are also available.

Cool factor: ★★★★★ Nice idea, poor execution. We doubt these tough-to-see LED graphics would've been state of the art in the Middle Ages.

Dork factor: ★★★★★ The Day-Glo see-through plastic isn't exactly macho—we've seen manlier Hello Kitty cell-phone covers. Plus, unlike a real arcade machine, this gizmo can't take a kick when you get pissed.

—David Kushner

CHARTS

TOP 10 BEST-SELLING GAMES OF MARCH 2003

1	The Legend of Zelda: Wind Waker GC	Nintendo
2	Pokémon Ruby	GBA, Nintendo
3	Pokémon Sapphire	GBA, Nintendo
4	Tenchu 3: Wrath of Heaven	PS2, Activision
5	The Getaway	PS2, Sony CEA
6	Def Jam Vendetta	PS2, EA Games
7	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	PS2, Rockstar
8	Xenosaga: Episode 1	PS2, Namco
9	Yu-Gi-Oh! The Duelists of the Roses	PS2, Konami
10	MVP Baseball 2003	PS2, EA Sports

TOP 10 GAME RENTALS FOR THE WEEK ENDING 4/20/03

1	Midnight Club II	PS2, Rockstar
2	Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell	PS2, Ubi Soft
3	Def Jam Vendetta	PS2, EA Games
4	X2: Wolverine's Revenge	PS2, Activision
5	Grand Theft Auto: Vice City	PS2, Rockstar
6	Yu-Gi-Oh! The Duelists of the Roses	PS2, Konami
7	All-Star Baseball 2004	PS2, Acclaim Sports
8	The Getaway	PS2, Sony CEA
9	Dragon Ball Z: Budokai	PS2, Infogrames
10	X2: Wolverine's Revenge	Xbox, Activision

LI'L PREVIEWS: UPDATES ON UPCOMING GAMES

■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

THE HOBBIT: THE PRELUDE TO THE LORD OF THE RINGS

■ Release Date: September 2003

How did Bilbo Baggins get the One Ring to begin with? It wasn't a raffle. Sierra's action-RPG *The Hobbit* tells the whole bloody tale while cashing in on the solid-gold *Lord of the Rings* license in the process.



■ Xbox

OUTLAW VOLLEYBALL: SPIKE OR DIE

■ Release Date: June 2003

You won't find any pantywaist swimsuit collecting here, just an Xbox Live-enabled volleyball game where you get to beat up opposing players if they block your spike. And, of course, lots of tiny swimsuits on the female players.





Only in Donkey Kong Country.



Runaway mine carts, blasting barrels and one swimming gorilla.



© 1994, 2003 Nintendo. TM, ® and Game Boy Advance SP are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2003 Nintendo. Game and Game Boy Advance SP sold separately. www.donkeykongcountry.com



WHERE'S THE PARTY?

PS2 gamers just say no to EverCrack—so far

Ask any PC gamer about *EverQuest* and you'll likely hear sordid tales about how they've played it for four days straight with no sleep. It's a phenomenon that's broken sales records, won awards, and spawned multiple expansion packs, support groups, and even real-life romances. It seemed a safe bet, then, that when *EverQuest Online Adventures* hit PlayStation 2 last February, the console's 50-million-plus owners worldwide would help repeat its PC success.

That hasn't happened—at least, not yet—



■ So what if *EQO4*'s so-bad-it's-good TV ad has become the butt of many a message board denizen's joke? "I'm so proud of the game itself," says EQO4 Producer Ben Bell. "I'm just so excited that there's an ad."

though it isn't for lack of trying. The game received heavy play in print, TV, and in-store ad campaigns. But its debut was more lamb than lion. "I think [Sony] thought it was going to blow the doors off the place," says a head buyer for a large retail chain, who asked to remain anonymous. "Up to now, we've sold a respectable number, but [Sony] was expecting to sell that many in the first or second week—not the first three months."

After that quiet start, Sony took drastic steps to bolster lagging sales of *EverQuest*: it bundled the title with the PS2 Network Adaptor—free of charge—in hopes of getting those new to online gaming to give the game a shot (and then pay the monthly \$10 basic subscription fee to keep playing). Also, less than two months after its initial release, *EQO4*'s standalone retail price was reduced from \$39.99 to the value price of \$19.99. Despite these deals, *EQO4* still hasn't been able to break into the list of top 20 best-selling PS2 games. In fact, in its first month, it ranked 32nd on the PS2 sales chart and 46th overall.

But, unlike many games that don't live up to expectations and fade quietly into oblivion, *EQO4* isn't going anywhere—Sony Online Entertainment has no plans to abandon the project. "We're really happy with the way the product has been received," says Ben Bell, producer for *EQO4*. Bell points out that ongoing updates to the game—the trade skill system that allows players to craft unique items, in-world auctions, and other added features—will only improve the experience and lure in more subscribers.

And subscribers are what *EQO4*'s busi-



■ One of the many "who's got the biggest sword" contests you may see going on online.

ness model is about. Sony doesn't worry over the fact that the game is now selling at a discounted rate. "That's really not a sign of failure on our part," Bell says. "A big part of our business is game subscriptions...we're really

gaming is now a fact of life," says Bell. "It's only going to grow in popularity."

If you're still hung up on the graphics and gameplay issues that many fault the game for (*EGM*'s review scores ranged from 5.0 to

"We're really happy with the way the product has been received."

—EQO4 Producer Ben Bell

interested in getting the game out there and also promoting the Network Adaptors."

Bell—and Sony—may have a point. Though the original PC *EverQuest* experienced more explosive growth, that's partly because most home computers were already equipped with Internet connections. "Online console

7.5), Bell says you won't have much to complain about for long. "The total game experience is bigger than the graphics," he says, "[but in] anything that this team does in the future, you're going to see a great improvement in that department."

—Jennifer Tsao

expanding your horizons, literally

Norrath (*EQO4*'s persistent world) gets bigger this October when the first expansion pack, *EverQuest Online Adventures: Frontiers*, comes out. Besides increasing the world's size to 500 virtual square miles (from its current size of around 300), the game will include enhanced character models and armor; a new playable race (Ogres); new items, spells, and enemies to battle; streaming in-game music; and a heightened level cap (now you can get up to level 60). It looks like Sony may also address some complaints: A tutorial, controller

instructions, improved communication and travel options, and in-game customer service are planned (as are, we hope, new TV ads).



EBGAMES™

electronics boutique®

FREE

Nintendo GameCube GAME!
when you purchase a new
Nintendo GameCube Console.*

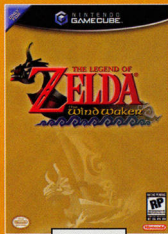


* Plus FREE
Preview Disc with
Playable Demos!

*Offer valid 5/4/03 - 7/26/03. The free game offer is only valid on the 4 featured boxes. Offer not valid with pre-owned or refurbished GameCube systems. See sales associate for details.



***Choose one of these great games for free!**



#220147-3 \$49.99



#220169-7 \$49.99



#217434-0 \$39.99



#224382-4 \$49.99

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM

ORIGINAL GANGSTER

We have a bad guy play bad-guy games. And he steals our GameCube

You know that movie *Goodfellas*? Yeah, you do. It's based on the life of this guy right here, Henry Hill. He worked for the Mob, took part in the \$6 million Lufthansa heist in '78 (the biggest ever at the time), then turned state's evidence and helped put away the Lucchese crime family. We thought the guy who lived *Grand Theft Auto* back in the '60s and '70s should play it, so we called for a sit-down and brought in *GTA: Vice City*, *Hitman 2*, *The Getaway*, and, for the hell of it, *Animal Crossing*. Along for the meeting: Julian, Hill's 14-year-old son and videogame consigliere.





■ PlayStation 2
**GRAND THEFT AUTO:
 VICE CITY**

EGM: Here's the opening sequence.
Henry Hill: Very good. Very funny.
EGM: Here's the crooked lawyer.
HH: Been there, done that. [laughs]
EGM: OK, now press Triangle, jump in that car.
HH: I want that Lincoln! Where the—where'd he go?
Julian Hill: Press Triangle!
HH: I am. Everyone's watching me f*** this up here! I never played one of these....
JH: You're not supposed to hit everything, Henry. You're supposed to avoid it. You're driving like in real life.
EGM: You're gonna get a DWI, Henry. Go up to that guy. Now hit him.
HH: Julian, help! I feel like such a retard! My brain doesn't fire the way these kids' brains do.
JH: Follow the map. The pink dot. Follow the pink dot.
HH: What pink...oh, that thing. First of all, that's purple.
JH: Whatever, just follow—
HH: Show me where the money is. I'll get the money. Oh, I'm in South Beach!
JH: They got money, Henry. Hit 'em! Go up and punch 'em!
HH: Wait, the girl on the roller skates, I want her! Where'd she go?
JH: Don't worry about that—hit the guy. Use the gun! Press Circle.
[Henry shoots some Vice City denizens before the cops arrive and make the collar.]
JH: Bustled!
HH: Yeah? You just lost your college fund, Julian.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
**HITMAN 2:
 SILENT ASSASSIN**

HH: What's this? Italy? Yeah, I'm half Sicilian. That's where I learned to cook, from my mother. The other half's Irish. That's where I learned to drink.
JH: You're not supposed to drink.
EGM: OK, we're in Sicily. Your character's a gardener. And a hit man.
HH: I like that. I want those tomatoes.
EGM: Been to Sicily much?
HH: I was over there a bunch of times. I had to testify. What kinda hit man is this? Wait, he's going to confession? This is supposed to be fun?
EGM: He's got a conscience.
HH: These Sicilian hit men have no conscience. Dime a f***ing dozen. I'm telling you. We called 'em zips. They zip in, they zip out. So I'm supposed to what, here?
JH: Go in the gate. Now hit that guard.
EGM: I think that's the mailman.
JH: Hit the mailman!
HH: The milkman? I'm trying!
JH: Henry, you're not—
HH: I'm running all over the place. Screw this. Only reason I go to Sicily is to get tomatoes.



■ PlayStation 2
THE GETAWAY

HH: What's this, English gangsters? What the f*** are they saying? And why that guy so ugly? Like his face got caught in the sausage machine.
EGM: OK, that aside, how do you like it so far?
HH: This is like that other stupid one—I'm dying all over again. How do you drive? Ah, s***, wrong side of the street! Bad enough I gotta learn this complicated apparatus—
JH: It's a controller—
HH: It's a torture device. Look at these f***ing buttons—where am I going? What the f***? We're in Brooklyn!
JH: It's London.
HH: I know. Let's kill some guys. Can I kill a cop? The Queen, is she dead? Somebody....
JH: You have to follow the mission.
HH: There's too much traffic. This is like the freeway—why would I wanna do that at home?
JH: Finish the mission!
HH: Julian, I can't even get in this car. How am I gonna finish anything, here? This game sucks. I'm gonna go have a smoke break.



■ GameCube
ANIMAL CROSSING

HH: What kind of...what sex are these things? What is this, X-rated? Oooh! Good cast! Where is this? This is up in Pennsylvania, right? Look! I'm fishing!
JH: Hey, there's a fish! Head the other way!
HH: No, it's coming down here.
Current's running this way. It's swimming upstream. Probably spawning. They get pregnant; they run away. Wish they all did that. Ah, I don't wanna catch a pregnant fish. But I do want this game!
JH: We can rent it, Dad.
HH: I'm not renting this! I'd be too ashamed...Iemme talk to this walrus, here. Ah, f*** it. I like this music. Nice.
JH: This game's for little girls.
HH: I will master this frickin' game! I gotta take this home.
JH: Henry, it belongs to EGM.
HH: Bill me for it. Call San Francisco [EGM's home office]. I want this.
JH: It's for little girls, Dad!
HH: Girls, boys, whatever. Hey, I never had a childhood. Growing up with Paullie [former mob boss Paul Vario], you don't have a childhood. My childhood was taking a Molotov and throwing it through a window.
JH: You played games, Dad.
HH: If it didn't have dice, cards, or pistols, I never played it.
EGM: So you'd never played a videogame before today?
HH: The only one I played was Bong.
EGM: Uh...Pong?
HH: Bong, yeah.
JH: It's Pong, not Bong.
HH: This animal thing here, this is the longest I've ever been attached to a game. Julian, I could play this with your mother. Give us something in common. Besides sex.
JH: Oh, God. Can we go now? *[sighs]*

—Alex Porter



'What's this, English gangsters? What the f* are they saying?'**

—Reformed gangster Henry Hill



No, it's not the world's lamest robot parade—the red mech stole the flag in *MechAssault*'s downloadable CTF mode.

ONLINE THIS MONTH

Squeeze more assault out of your mech



Get your mech-piloting suit back on—Microsoft has just added a second batch of Xbox Live downloadable extras for *MechAssault* that will make destroying your friends even more enjoyable.

The biggest addition is a Capture the Flag (CTF) mode, plus two new maps—Desert Storm and Midtown Mayhem—to try it in. If you've played a first-person shooter online in the last two years, you already know how CTF works: Two teams, two bases, two flags; storm the opposing team's headquarters, steal their flag, bring it back to yours, repeat. But that's not all. Two new

mechs, Loki and Hellbringer, are also newly available. These similar-looking behemoths have slightly different characteristics (the 'bringer jumps, Loki doesn't) and weapons (Hellbringer packs a flamer, autocannon, and Javelin long-range missile battery; Loki has a pulse laser, autocannon, and Crossbow short-range missiles). Let the robot-on-robot carnage commence.

On egmmag.com

Log on to our website and keep up with the Belmonts via full interviews with the *Castlevania* team and an extensive history of the series.

What, you want more? OK, you can also read all the extra stuff from our Henry Hill interview we couldn't fit into the print version on page 56. Extended online remix! And if you're really, really hardcore into *The Sims*, check out our uncult Afterthoughts. Plus, we've got interviews for ya with the designers of *Legacy of Kain: Defiance* (PS2, Xbox), *SSX 3* (PS2, Xbox, GC), and *Counter Strike* (Xbox).

PC GAMING UPDATE

The big news happening on that "other" platform



Grand Theft Auto III: Vice City is finally coming to PC, and guess what! It's pretty much the exact same game you've been playing the last bajillion months or so! Oh, yeah, it'll have sharper graphics and mouse control, and it will let you play your own MP3s (finally! A place for your entire Glass Tiger collection!). It'll be big on PC, just like it is on PS2, but you know what, who really cares? Yawn, shrug, la-di-dah, this is sooo not the big news for the PC.

No, the big deal is that *Half-Life 2* will be out by Christmas. The sequel to the biggest PC game of the last five-plus years, *Half-Life 2* looks even better than the first game, with a state-of-the-art engine that trumps the more ballyhooed *Doom III* code and features killer artificial intelligence and character animation. Barring a catastrophe, this will be the best game of the year on PC and exactly the sort of game—a first-person shooter—that the PC does better than any console. Yes, the overly praised *Halo* will join *Vice City* in finally jumping to PC this year—sharper graphics, mouse control, yadda yadda—but *Half-Life 2* is going to be the Lord King God of PC gaming for this year and the next.

—Robert Coffey
Computer Gaming World

must-hit websites



www.klov.com — Looking for the name of that one arcade game you used to play? Maybe the one where you bumped cars off the road and jumped really high over water? And all you remember is it started with "B"? Go to the Killer List of Videogames (KLOV) and look it up. Ah—here it is, *Bump 'N' Jump*.



www.gametags.com — If you're stuck in a game and don't know where to turn, point your browser to this handy site. Here, you'll find gamer-created walkthroughs and tips for the latest games, plus hardcore message boards for any other questions (say, how to get the Venus suit in *DOA Volleyball*).



www.gamerankings.com — Looking for an opinion on a game? Surf on over to Game Rankings, a depository of review scores from websites and magazines for thousands of titles with links to the full text (if available). Definitely a handy resource if you wanna know which *Castlevania* is the best.



PC gamers will come runnin' for the great taste of *Half-Life 2*.



RESIDENT EVIL®

DEAD+AIM

Face your gravest fears in an all-new, nightmarish first-person action-shooter adventure for your PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system. Encounter a new level of horror as you battle flesh devouring zombies and murderous mutants to regain control of a sea-jacked cruise ship lost in the Atlantic.



Intense blend of action, puzzle solving and DEAD-ON graphics

UPGRADE your weapons as you progress through the game

Supports GUNCON 2 light gun and DUALSHOCK 2 controllers



Blood and Gore
Violence

CAPCOM
capcom.com

PlayStation 2



GUNCON2

© CAPCOM CO. LTD., 2003. © CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2003. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM, the CAPCOM logo and RESIDENT EVIL are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. RESIDENT EVIL is a registered trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. Guncon™ 2 & ©2000 NAMCO LTD., ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo and DUALSHOCK are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.



THE RUMOR MILL

Gossip that walks 'n' talks

q-mann



GAME ON

Welcome friends, your maestro of gaming's hottest gossip has returned to conduct his monthly symphony of scuttlebutt. This installment's rondo is especially tender and finely aged, its flavor emerging like a just-hatched butterfly from its cocoon...or something. Let's get it on! And if you feel like dropping me a line, send it to quartermann@ziffdavis.com. See you in another 30....

—The Q



Samurai Hyakkimaru and pal from *Dororo*

bits of q



SNK Back in the Saddle

Hallelujah! SNK, purveyors of arcade fighting games aplenty, has returned to the U.S. after three years in the wilderness. It has a new Stateside subsidiary all set to release titles like *Metal Slug Advance* and *The King of Fighters 2001* later this year. Dare we dream of a new *Card Fighter's Clash*?

Sega's "Halo Killer"

I know, I know—the words “Halo” and “killer” have appeared together so many times they’ve lost all meaning. And I really didn’t want to use them here...but what the hey, too late now. Sega’s working on (if The Q’s spies are to be believed) an awesome first-person shooter so top-secret it won’t be revealed at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3). I wish I could say more, but....

Sony enters the engine business

When the PS3 hits, Sony wants developers to be ready for future shock. To help them cope, the company will offer a huge amount of middleware code—like a generic driving game engine, a first-person-shooter engine, etc.—developed by its own studios. Jak & Daxter creator Naughty Dog is doing the honors on the platformer engine, using the bits and pieces it has from its secret PS3 platformer already in development. If lots of games are running on the same underpinnings, though, might they start to look and feel a bit similar?

Dororo set to Wow

If you claim to be an anime or manga fan, then you know that Osamu Tezuka (aka the “god of comics”) is the Japanese equivalent of Walt Disney, thanks in part to Astro Boy, his excellent series of graphic novels. Well, Sega’s Wow Entertainment is doing a game based on one of Tezuka’s other classic titles—*Dororo* (try saying that one five times fast). This 3D actioner follows samurai Hyakkimaru as he hacks and slashes through hordes of monsters, while on a search for his, er, stolen body parts.



NEWS BITS

Web-slinger for hire

The Q’s spies hear that the next *Spider-Man* title from Activision will take a cue from the free-roaming gameplay of *Grand Theft Auto* and allow you to wander the crime-ridden streets, going wherever your web-slinging takes you. Tinging yet?

Merger talk part XXVI

How about we just say in five years there’ll be one software publisher and leave it at that, eh? No? Ah well...the most recent rumors of consolidation (depending on who you believe) have Namco and Sega merging, or Microsoft buying Sega, or EA buying Sega, or everyone buying everyone. Stop the train, I wanna get off....

New Pilotwings

Speculation abounds that a new installment of Nintendo’s arcade-style flight simulator *Pilotwings* is coming to the Cube. Word has it the as-of-yet-unnamed developer is *Star Wars Rogue Squadron* maker Factor 5, though by the time you read this, the cat may already be outta the bag. Hey, don’t yell at me, my fingers are flyin’ on this column weeks before E3 goes down in the City of Angels. Would someone please hurry up and invent a telepathy machine already?



■ **Evil movie sequel**—A sequel to the *Resident Evil* movie begins filming this fall. It couldn’t possibly be as bad as the first one, could it?

■ **Chinese PS2 release pushed back**—Gamers in China will have to wait till later this year to get their hands on an official Chinese PS2, as the government there is unsure whether to classify it as an entertainment device or high technology.

■ **Sony combines PS2 chips**—In a move to save on production costs, Sony has found a way to combine the two main chips inside every PS2—the Emotion Engine and Graphics Synthesizer—into one.

SEPARATED AT BIRTH



■ **Hitman 2’s silent assassin**, known only as Agent 47



■ **Democratic spokesman James Carville**, aka the “Ragin’ Cajun”



Pokémon Lite

Pokémon Box Ruby/Sapphire isn’t a real *Pokémon* game for GameCube, but it’s as close as you’ll get right now. *Box* is actually just a glorified Pokédex, allowing you to store your monsters on a GameCube memory card and check out their stats. It’s out in Japan now; expect U.S. release info soon.



Lupin Steals PS2 Spotlight

If you got hooked on *Lupin the Third* during its run on Cartoon Network’s *Adult Swim*, you’ll no doubt be happy to hear there’s more of the suave thief coming your way—in game form. This fall, you’ll be able to sneak, steal, and ogle gal-pal Fujiko on PlayStation 2, courtesy of Bandai.

MIDWAY



IT'S TIME TO GET YOUR FREAK ON

Explore, dogfight and race with some of the most freaky characters you have ever played with, in the first-and-only, fully-open, interactive, 3-D, racing videogame.

- 13 alluring characters and dozens more hidden
- 12 massive and enticing tracks
- Enthralling race and dog fight modes
- Unique and mesmerizing mini games
- Amazing head-to-head multiplayer action



Get your interactive freak on at
the amazing Freaky Flyers website.
Log onto www.freakyflyers.com



PlayStation 2





THE HOT FIVE

Where your votes tell us what to write about

Vote for your most-anticipated games each month between the 1st and the 15th at www.egmmag.com.



1

■ Xbox
HALO 2
■ Publisher: Microsoft
■ Genre: Action
■ Release: Early 2004

While you wait for *H2*, you need to see Red vs. Blue's *Blood Gulch Chronicles* (www.redvsblue.com), a series of witty *Halo*-themed parodies set during a supposed post-*Halo* civil war.

An excerpt from Episode 3, *The Rookies*: "You know what? Forget what I said before. We can definitely pick up chicks in this [tank]. Probably two or three chicks apiece." "What are you going to do with two chicks?" "Women are like *Voltron*. The more you can hook up, the better it gets."

2

■ GameCube
FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES

■ Publisher: Nintendo ■ Genre: RPG
■ Release Date: Winter 2004

Big, bad news since last month: *Crystal* has been delayed (from spring to summer in Japan, fall to winter in America), and the entire battle system is being reworked. A highly anticipated GameCube game delayed at the last minute? Who would have guessed? Another potential buzzkill: The guy behind Square's supremely un-fun *Unlimited SaGa* is overseeing *Crystal*. We're going to keep an open mind...but it had better not suck, Mr. Kawazu.



■ *Crystal* has four-player simultaneous play

3

■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube
SOUL CALIBUR 2

■ Publisher: Namco
■ Genre: Fighting
■ Release Date: August 2003

We admit that we've probably been spending way too much time lately with the SC2 import, but we think the backgrounds in Namco's *Soul* series of fighters are some of the best in the genre. While no company has yet managed to beat *Street Fighter II*'s best stages, on account of their kitsch/nostalgia factor, a few *Soul* settings come close.

■ Real-life



■ In-game



THE THAI/CAMBODIA STAGE: Based on Thailand's Grand Palace (pictured), and Cambodia's Angkor Wat temple appears elsewhere in the background. Even better than SF2's workmanlike Thailand stages.

■ Real-life



■ In-game



THE JAPANESE PALACE STAGE: In the original *Soul Calibur*, Namco based Mitsurugi's stage on the real Takamatsu Castle, a water castle in Japan. It's not Ryu's, but it is damn cool.



■ PlayStation 2
FINAL FANTASY X-2

■ Publisher: Square Enix
■ Genre: RPG
■ Release Date: November 2003

We know you want it. We want it. Everybody wants it. Just remember: Square's upcoming RPG—its first-ever direct sequel—is kinda like *Final Fantasy X* with the tongue-in-cheek feel of the *Charlie's Angels* movie. And its effects are already visible in the cosplay community—at a recent parade in San Francisco, we spotted two different, rather rotund gals dressed as the hot-pants-clad Yuna from this sexed-up sequel. Phwoar.

4

5

■ GameCube
F-ZERO GX

■ Publisher: Nintendo
■ Genre: Racing
■ Release Date: Fall 2003

On one hand, *F-Zero GX*'s a no-brainer. Fast. Looks wicked. Made by Toshihiro Nagoshi, Sega's *Daytona USA* designer. But hey, wasn't Super Nintendo's *F-Zero* something more than just speed and huge jumps? Isn't that why it hooked us? Ah, screw the old days; just bring on the giant R.O.B. robots and cruise ships (!) we've seen in recent shots.





How many colleges have
their own landing strip?

See the world, earn credit for college and experience adventure you just can't find on any other campus. To learn more, log on the Life Accelerator at navy.com or call 1-800-USA-NAVY.

NAVY
accelerate your life



COMING SOON

Want to know what games are on the way? (Just nod your head)



PlayStation 2 GameCube

CHARLIE'S ANGELS

Release Date: June

(Action) We still know next to squat about the game starring these three absolutely ravishing P.I.s, so, as Natalie Cook says, "feel free to stick anything in my slot."

JUNE

Aliens vs. Predator: Extinction (Strategy) PS2, Xbox

After this, a Freddy vs. Jason online RPG would only be a slight surprise

Dragon Ball Z: Legacy of Goku II (RPG) GBA

Super Saiyans seem more like UPS delivery guys in this DBZ fetch-quest

Donkey Kong Country (Action) GBA

DK was once king of the consoles, but you won't go ape over his handheld comeback

Freestyle Metal X (Sports) Xbox, GC

Dave Mirra with a motor—and Motorhead—comes in three ass-crack-ugly covers

G1 Jockey 3 (Racing) PS2

With 6,000 horses and adjustable mouth bits, it's *Gran Turismo* for country clubbers

The Italian Job (Racing) PS2, Xbox, GC

"The game definitely embodies the spirit of the movie," says F. Gary Gray, the director of this summer's high-octane heist flick



PlayStation 2

SPLASHDOWN 2: RIDES GONE WILD

Release Date: June

(Racing) Look what happens when you cross thrill rides with tequila shots and a camcorder....

Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter (Action) PS2, Xbox, GC

First-person shootouts and space dogfights are a stellar idea, but it's running so late

Midnight Club II (Racing) Xbox

The Xbox version of Rockstar's street racer gets better visuals and voice-chat support

Midtown Madness 3 (Racing) Xbox

Start as a delivery driver protecting precious cargo and rise to the rank of special agent

Outlaw Volleyball (Sports) Xbox

Guaranteed to out-slut Tecmo's *Dead or Alive: Xtreme Beach Volleyball*

P.N.03 (Action) GC

Heroine Vanessa Schneider dispatches enemies with a high-caliber dance routine

The Pirates of the Caribbean (Action) Xbox, GBA

Disney's dousing its animatronic marauders in WD-40 for movie and console comebacks

Resident Evil: Dead Aim (Action) PS2

Swab the decks of a zombie-filled ship with lead in this light-gun shooter

Rally Championship (Racing) GC

Compete in six international off-road rallies

Rock N' Roll Racing (Racing) GBA

Ozzy would love this remake of the auto-combat classic, if he could turn on a GBA

Soldier of Fortune II: Double Helix (Action) Xbox

Featuring hit-specific damage, this sadist's shooter promises unsurpassed gore

Sonic Pinball Party (Pinball) GBA

Use flippers to knock Sonic against flashing bumpers and through corkscrewing ramps

Starsky & Hutch (Action) PS2, Xbox

With a driving wheel and a light gun, you and a friend will look like dorks playing this

Street Racing Syndicate (Racing) PS2, Xbox, GC

Use your girlfriend as collateral in this extra-sexy take on underground motorsports

Unlimited Saga (RPG) PS2

Square's latest RPG is definitely different. It's just that it's different in a lot of bad ways

Wakeboarding Unleashed Featuring Shaun Murray (Sports) PS2, Xbox

Activision applies the tried-and-true Tony Hawk formula to another pseudo-sport

Wario World (Action) GC

Mario's opportunistic alter ego butt-stomps and butt-rushes baddies to retrieve his loot

JULY

Ape Escape 2 (Platform) PS2

Like the novel original, with more gizmos

Arc the Lad: Twilight of the Spirits (RPG) PS2

The latest Arc boasts a bigger story, better graphics, and beefier turn-based battles

Armored Core 3: Silent Line (Action) PS2

AgeTec insists on retrofitting its mech combat fleet one colossal bolt at a time

Chaos Legion (Action) PS2

Burgeoning death-metal-band name or sharp action/adventure game? You decide

Dinotopia (Action) Xbox, GC

This prehistoric paradise where man and dino live peacefully is in trouble. Big trouble

Downhill Domination (Racing) PS2

How developer Inoc went from *Twisted Metal* to downhill racing is beyond us

Freaky Flyers (Racing) PS2, Xbox, GC

Look, up in the sky! It's a...kart-racing game from Midway

Ice Nine (Action) PS2

This stealth-based first-person shooter is so secret it's not even listed on Bam's website

K-1 World Grand Prix (Action) PS2

Bouts in this squared circle involve more than just fisticuffs—there's kickin', too

Mario Golf (Sports) GC

Fore! It's a-him, Mario. Come join his friends and enemies for a round or two on the links

Red Dead Revolver (Action) PS2

Hopefully, this old west action/adventure will meet its summer release date

Romance of the Three Kingdoms VIII (Strategy) PS2

Play as up to eight different characters in your quest to unify China. How edutaining!

Shrek: Reekin' Havoc (Action) GBA

Anything that has a "reekin'" in its name is bound to stink, right?

Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic (RPG) Xbox

We're guessing that most EGM readers will lean toward the Dark Side of the Force in our number-one most-wanted game of this summer (see page 76)

Tetris Online (Puzzle) Xbox

Want details? It's Tetris...online

Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Island

Thunder (Action) Xbox

Unlike the PC version, you don't need the original *Ghost Recon* to enjoy this add-on

Warship Gunner (Simulation) PS2

We now have a good reason for yelling, "You've sunk my battleship!" in the office

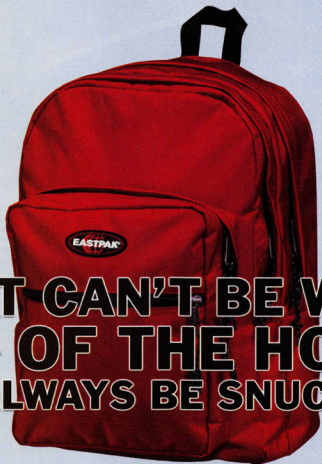


■ Xbox

DRONEZ

■ Release Date: July

(Action) In the future, all restaurants are Taco Bell and disputes are settled with dinner plates. OK, that's just the vision of the future that the *Deadly Discs of Tron*-inspired *DroneZ* makes us want to see. With no port of *Tron 2.0* (PC) in sight, this is our Ultimate Frisbee.



**WHAT CAN'T BE WORN
OUT OF THE HOUSE
CAN ALWAYS BE SNUCK OUT.**

LOITER AT



Built to Resist™



TAKE OUT THE COMPETITION. And a mailbox. And three fire hydrants. And a mime. And a pedestrian mall. And anything else that gets in your way. Because with *Midtown Madness 3*™ you set the course. If grass seems faster, by all means drive on grass. If the sidewalk's to your liking, you definitely have the right of way. Race through Washington, DC, and Paris and leave your impression on both. *Wanna take the mayhem to*

Microsoft
game studios



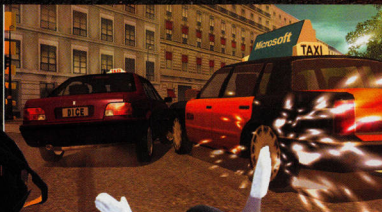
Violence



Official Licensed Product
Midtown Madness 3

ONLY ON
XBOX

Microsoft, the Microsoft Game Studios logo, Midtown Madness 3, Xbox, Xbox Live, and the Xbox logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. The MINI Trademarks are owned by BMW AG and



another level? Then go online with Xbox Live™, face off against other like-minded opponents and talk all the trash your pretty little head can think up. Just remember, there's no right way to get there, as long as you get there first.

MIDTOWN MADNESS 3

www.xbox.com/midtownmadness3

are used under license. MUSTANG 2+2 FASTBACK is a trademark used under license from Ford Motor Company. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. ©2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. ©2003 Digital Illusions. CE AB.

XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED



THE 20 HOTTEST GAMES OF THE SUMMER

We delved through this summer's release calendar and voted for the games that shine the brightest. Now find out which games *EGM*'s editors are most excited to play during this year's hottest months instead of...shiver!...going outside



20

PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube, PS1

MADDEN NFL 2004

Publisher: EA Sports Developer: EA Tiburon Release Date: August 2003

Madden NFL 2004's new Playmaker Control feature has us charged; now you can make offensive and defensive adjustments without tipping off your opponent. And the practically limitless options in Owner's mode (like, say, determining the price of the concessions in your stadium) should produce even more playing hours. While PS2 players enjoy online tournaments with up to 32 teams and headset voice-chat support, GameCube owners can access exclusive content through a GBA connection. (Exactly what content is still a mystery, but we hear the GBA won't be used as a playbook.)



It looks like somebody has been getting into the hallucinogens over at Outrage Entertainment, but we figure we'll see how this 3D action-adventure game pans out before staging an intervention. Though *Alter Echo's* trippy art style is an immediate attention-grabber, the character-morphing gameplay and time-stopping (literally) combos could end up causing the most commotion. You play as Nevin, a shapeshifter capable of assuming three forms that range from a hulking gun-wielding behemoth to a wall-climbing four-legged creature specializing in stealth kills and general sneaky. The Time Dilation combo system further shakes up traditional action conventions, incorporating music-and-rhythm-game aspects into combat. Expect the unexpected from this one.



Is he strong?
Listen, bud, he's got
radioactive blood.



PlayStation 2, Xbox

BACKYARD WRESTLING:
DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME

Publisher: Eidos Developer: Paradox Release Date: August 2003

In a thousand years, anthropologists may dig up copies of *Backyard Wrestling*, see its Insane Clown-on-Insane Clown violence (courtesy of celeb thugs Insane Clown Posse), and know exactly when 21st-century civilization fell apart. But for those of us living in the here and now, it feels like the perfect time for this cheap blue-collar brawler. "Throwing thumbtacks at someone is just fun," says Kevin Gill, *Backyard's* lead designer, describing one of a hundred ways you can turn up the hurt. Arenas are multileveled and crammed with hazards. "When an opponent follows me up a ladder in the slaughterhouse," Gill says, "I can bash him over the head with the coffee machine, then throw him through the window of the upstairs office and watch the office worker whale on him with a clipboard." Sweet, sweet catharsis.



Xbox

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE
II: DOUBLE HELIX

Publisher: Activision Developer: Raven Release Date: June 2003

The Shop, a private antiterrorism organization, is paying good money to whoever can put the kibosh on some lunatics wielding biological weapons. Mercenary John Mullins takes the job, lugging his dozen-plus guns to Prague, Colombia, Hong Kong, and beyond in this realistic first-person shooter. Solid voice acting (in multiple languages, no less) gives this adventure the feel of an international spy thriller, and online play via Xbox Live simply sweetens the deal.

17



■ Xbox

16 MIDTOWN MADNESS 3

■ Publisher: Microsoft ■ Developer: Digital Illusions ■ Release Date: June 2003

You're a pizza delivery boy, and if you don't get a pie to a group of foreign dignitaries in the next two minutes, it comes out of your paycheck. You never cared much for traffic laws anyway, did you? In Microsoft's first non-PC *Midtown Madness* game, you get behind the wheel and speed around Paris and Washington, D.C. in a variety of Career mode missions (pizza delivery boy, limo driver, paramedic, etc.) and street races in your quest to become the ultimate king of the road. And you can hop online and race against your friends on Xbox Live.

■ Xbox

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: ISLAND THUNDER 14

■ Publisher: Ubisoft ■ Developer: Red Storm

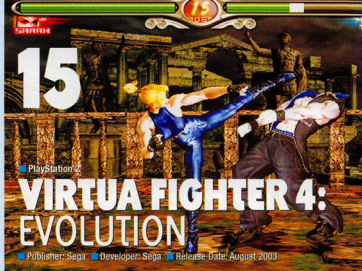
■ Release Date: July 2003

Leave behind Eastern Europe's dreary skies and head for warmer climes. Don't get the wrong idea—there'll be no R&R, just more S&D (that's "search and destroy," greenhorn). You're headed to post-Castro Cuba, which needs a little help to eliminate its lingering warlords and build a viable democracy.

Unlike the PC expansion pack, this *Island Thunder* is a standalone game sold at a reduced price (\$39.99). It includes eight single-player missions, plus four maps each from the original *Ghost Recon* and the *Desert Siege* PC expansion. Play online in a dozen different multiplayer modes, complete with voice communication—crucial for squad coordination in this realistic military sim. But you knew that.



■ With Castro out of Cuba, you'll be smoking Havana's finest in no time.



Ever since Capcom opened the not-quite-a-sequel floodgates with *Street Fighter II: Champion Edition*, fighting-game fans have suffered under the yoke of never-ending updates that offer little more than minor tweaks. *Evolution* bucks the trend by giving gamers a substantial bang for minimal bucks.

First off, you'll find two new characters here—Goh, a vaguely vampiric-looking judo master, and Brad Burns, a slick Italian kickboxer with mad dodging skills. They're both excellent additions to the roster and offer even seasoned players new challenges. The other big addition is the Quest mode, a wildly deep single-player experience that pits you against A.I. versions of Japan's greatest *VF4* players. Other improvements include faster loading times, cleaner graphics, tweaked stages, and tons of silly accessories to customize your fighters with. All for the low, low price of \$20.



■ Below: Goh's chest tattoo reads: "Pick up milk and eggs. Stop by tanning salon. Practice katas. Kill Akira."



13 MIDNIGHT CLUB II

■ PlayStation 2, Xbox

■ Publisher: Rockstar ■ Developer: Rockstar ■ Release Date: June 2003

Xbox Live players have been sorely missing an online arcade-style racer, but they'll soon have one of the best with *Midnight Club II*. Sharper visuals aside, the main advantage this version has over its PlayStation 2 counterpart is chat support—a big deal if trash talking is an integral part of your game plan. The battle for street cred begins in earnest this summer.

Brave souls,
come forth!

Romance VIII of The Three Kingdoms

Bitter Enemies, allied schemes, and War Council directives intertwine in a rich tapestry of intrigue!

- 54 Scenarios plus one fictional story
- Over 600 Commanders plus 100 Officers you create.
- 1 to 8 players, with over 40 different endings
- Forge relationships through new events such as "Marriage" and "Sworn Brother"
- 15 new Tactical skills including "Flaming Arrows," "Surprise Attacks," and "Sorcery"
- Begin the game at any year

PlayStation®2 July 2003

STRENGTH. COURAGE. DESIRE.

"... the best-looking game in the series yet." - ign.com

AVAILABLE NOW



The KOEI logo is a trademark of KOEI Co., Ltd. in Japan and/or other Countries. Romance of The Three Kingdoms and Dynasty Warriors are trademarks of KOEI Corporation and KOEI Co., Ltd. ©2003 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

12

GameCube

WARIO WORLD

Publisher: Nintendo Developer: Treasure
Release Date: June 2003

Nintendo has been oddly quiet about *Wario World*. But now that we've finally gotten to play it ourselves (see Review Crew this issue for the whole story), we're happy to report that developer Treasure (*Kiruga*, *Mischief Makers*) managed to capture the tight platforming and offbeat essence of the Game Boy's *Wario Land* series, while injecting its own patented flavor of crazy. Want proof? Four words: killer clown cream pies.



■ He's not a bad man, just ambitious.



PlayStation 2

CHAOS LEGION

Publisher: Capcom Developer: Capcom Release Date: July 2003

Capcom combines the genres it's best known for—action, fighting, and role-playing—in *Chaos Legion*, a darker take on *Dynasty Warriors*' screen-filling melees. Inspired by a Japanese novel, *Chaos Legion* begins as standard slasher fare but hooks you with great revisionist fantasy-character designs, experience points, and computer-controlled "legions" to command. What? *Devil May Cry* wasn't eerie enough for you?

11

GameCube

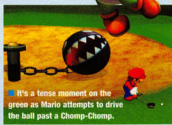
MARIO GOLF: TOADSTOOL TOUR

Publisher: Nintendo Developer: Camelot
Release Date: Fall 2003



10

It may look like a kids game, what with all the cartoony backgrounds, crazy effects, and club-wielding turtles, but Mario actually plays one mean game of golf. Expect a version of the sport with enough nuances for links fans (including weather effects, wind speed, and ball spin), but also easier controls and the friendly Mario coat of paint for casual players, plus link-up support for a forthcoming GBA *Mario Golf*.



■ It's a tense moment on the green as Mario attempts to drive the ball past a Chomp-Chomp.



PlayStation 2, Xbox

WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED

Publisher: Activision 02 Developer: Shaba Release Date: June 2003

It has been years since *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* reinvented radical—now X-games of every niche, from Razor scooter to erotic bikin', have nabbed a piece of the action-sports pie. So you can imagine our surprise when a sport as marginal as mock surfing made a splash around the office.

How'd *Wakeboarding Unleashed* featuring Shaun Murray make this list? Genius catch-and-release rope mechanics developed in lockstep with levels that maximize use of the maneuver, mainly. Apply *THPS*'s infallible stunt system to a wealth of multiplayer modes and minichallenges, and you've got cause to care about action sports again.

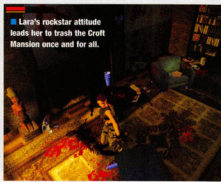
9

PlayStation 2

TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS

Publisher: Eidos Developer: Core
Release Date: June 2003 (We'll believe it when we see it.)

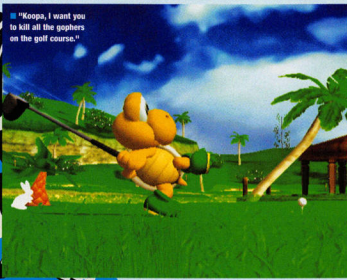
If "well-known" meant "beloved," Lara Croft would be higher on this list, but too many *Tomb Raider* rehabs have left us skeptical. What could make this one different? *Angel of Darkness* features plenty of (ahem) curved surfaces, stealth sequences, bodypart power-ups, new moves, and multiple characters—in addition to the series' standard run/jump/climb gameplay. We'll live with the French backdrops. But we're spooked by delays and still wonder how Lara will feel...er, controlwise, of course.



■ Lara's rockstar attitude leads her to trash the Croft Mansion once and for all.

8

■ "Koopa, I want you to kill all the gophers on the golf course."



EB GAMES™

electronics boutique®



\$99.99 EA.

#232610-2 Platinum
#232607-8 Cobalt



#233034-8 \$49.99



#217030-6 \$14.99



\$69.99 EA.

#207796-0 Arctic
#204850-3 Fushia
#207790-9 Glacier
#207794-5 Indigo
#218385-2 Platinum
#230230-5 Pokémon Gold

*Colors may vary by store.



#233046-2 \$29.99



#233048-8 \$29.99



#233035-5 \$29.99



#221588-7 \$34.99



#232562-9 \$34.99

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM



7

Is it just us or does Heather seem unnaturally calm in this picture?

PlayStation 2

SILENT HILL 3

Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami Computer Entertainment Tokyo
Release Date: August 2003



Where other frightfests settle for mere scares, *Silent Hill*'s hard-edged horror would rather scar your mind. Indeed, if the second *Hill* adventure is on par with a Trent Reznor video, the third's like touring a diseased organ on the tip of an endoscope. (When you squirm through a corridor of charred filth and pulsating tissue, you'll know precisely what we mean.) Your enemies, too, look like walking autopsies, and even the esoteric puzzles—one of which requires you to douse a raw liver in chemicals in order to oxygenate a fire—reflect the same foul obsession.

As for the plot, we know little other than heroine Heather's days as a mallrat are done. Konami's hush-hush, but it hints that *SH3*, although not a direct sequel, just might reveal something about the series' overall mythology.



5

PlayStation 2

APE ESCAPE 2

Publisher: Ubi Soft Developer: Sony Computer Entertainment Japan Release Date: Summer 2003

We humans think of monkeys as sidekicks we can dress up as secret agents or baseball players for our amusement. But with access to brain-enhancing helmets and a time machine (long story), monkeys often reveal their insatiable thirst for world domination. As in *Ape Escape* (PS1), the superintelligent monkey Specter and his simian minions will erase humankind from history

unless spiky-haired hero Jimmy captures them.

Luckily, he has a slew of appropriately wacky gadgets for the job. With the slingshot, he hits distant switches or airborne bad guys. A radio-controlled car lets him shepherd monkeys hither and yon or press otherwise-unreachable floor switches. And once he has tracked down the escaped primates, he snags 'em in the Time Net, zapping them back to the present, where their



Game Boy Advance

ADVANCE WARS 2: BLACK HOLE RISING

Publisher: Nintendo Developer: Intelligent Systems Release Date: June 2003



When squashed-down army men and cartoon tanks clash, you know you're decidedly *not* in a world of s@#s—so it's safe for pocket generals everywhere to check out *Black Hole Rising*, the sequel to Nintendo's hit turn-based strategy game. Just like before, you're out to build armies, take over bases and towns, and wipe the enemy off the face of your GBA. New improvements include an AT-Alt-like walking tank, two super-powers per commanding officer (a normal super one and a...uh...super super one), a greater variety of objectives, and map-specific features (like missile silos you can capture and use).

Advance Wars is the most Japanese-looking series to never come out in Japan.



Like Charlton said, "It's a mad house! A mad house!"



thinking caps are confiscated. The right analog stick directs Jimmy's movements.

This sequel plays just like the much-acclaimed original, but has improved graphics and level design, more collectibles and minigames, and three all-new gadgets (for a total of 11). Remember: With great monkey-catching power, comes great monkey-catching responsibility.

4

Hawk runs point while the others actively avoid seeking cover.

Xbox

BRUTE FORCE

Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: Digital Anvil
Release Date: May 28, 2003



Few games (well, no games really) promise to make their participants best friends forever, but then few games play like *Brute Force*, a high-concept shooter-meets-buddy-picture title that has up to four players covering each other's keisters. Once you choose who's controlling each of the four characters—sniper, scout, gun nut, man-lizard—your team plays together via splitscreen or system-link modes. Solo players can switch among characters and give orders to computer-controlled squad mates. But whether you play en masse or solo, teamwork is everything. "The four characters have different abilities," says Producer Erin Roberts, "so you'll get the best experience from coordinating the squad's activity to achieve your goals."



PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

SOUL CALIBUR 2

Publisher: Namco Developer: Namco Release Date: August 2003

It's safe to say that *Cal 2*, the second coming of the world's finest weapons-based fighter, should deliver with pure panache on every front.

For one, it's certifiably stunning. Clothing flaps on windswept battlefields, and speed lines trace swords' trajectories. Yet unlike other recent gorgeous titles in the genre, *SC2*'s combat system is even more sophisticated than the game's appearance. Every agile move your character

executes has some practical importance. Take, for instance, twin-bladed terror Taki: Her swords catch the sun for a split second as she cartwheels like a human buzz saw, but it's the move's ability to advance around her enemy and strike from the side that really matters. Each challenger's arsenal boasts more than a hundred such attacks—every last one devilishly appropriate to a different circumstance. In fact, *SC2* is so

superbly balanced, you could justifiably call it chess on a sword edge.

Unlocking hundreds of character-specific weapons that you can equip in versus play will keep your inner collector occupied well into the crack-head hours of the night, long after the competition has gone home. We've been playing the import version for weeks now, and we're still completely hooked.

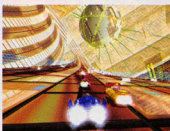


GameCube

F-ZERO GX

Publisher: Nintendo Developer: Amusement Vision/Sega
Release Date: August 2003

3



It's a lot easier to forget about Wipeout now.



As anyone who tried the previous Super Nintendo, N64, or GBA *F-Zero* incarnations will tell you, the series appeals to more than just race fans. Sure it has the subtle controls (leaning into turns is key) and customizable vehicles (with different body, boost, and grip ratings for each) for the car nuts, but it also has the futuristic settings and alien drivers sci-fi geeks love; the winding, roller-coaster-style tracks, huge jumps, and turbo boosts for the speed freaks; and ramming damage and exploding cars for aggro combat fiends. And look at these screenshots—graphics whores should enjoy just watching *F-Zero GX* zip along. And all this comes together under the watchful eye of Sega's Amusement Vision, who knows a thing or two about racing games from its days creating the megapopular *Daytona* titles.



Console-exclusive characters like Zelda's Link (below) and comic-book anthro Spidey (left) are hot extras.



1

Xbox

STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC

Publisher: LucasArts | Developer: BioWare | Release Date: June 2003

Remember in *Empire Strikes Back* when Darth Vader says to his (newly handicapped) son, "If you only knew the power of the dark side..."? Though Luke never followed in his dad's footsteps, we've always wondered what the life of a dark Jedi would be like and are pleased to report that the upcoming *Knights of the Old Republic* offers the opportunity to find out.

During your quest to save the Republic from the evil Lords of Sith, several decisions can sway your character's moral pendulum to light or dark. Some choices are simple: For instance, walking through the lower-city section of Taris, you'll come across brutish bounty hunters harassing a civilian for cash. Want your character to lean toward the light side of the Force? Help the poor guy out. But if you don't mind (or are actively interested in) fuel-

ing your darker side, ignore his pleas and let him fend for himself.

Other choices are more complex. On the water planet Manaan, for instance, a monstrous beast impervious to your attacks guards an item you must retrieve. The easier way to circumvent this roadblock is to poison the water, killing the creature but also forever damaging the planet's ecosystem. A true Jedi will take the much tougher avenue and discover routes around the creature in order to recover the object. You quickly realize that following the light side is the harder road to travel.

"That's intentional," says Producer Michael Gallo. "[This] fits into the *Star Wars* mythology that the dark side is the quicker, easier path."

Gallo tells us that if you make more dark decisions, your character's skin will even turn pale—think of the Emperor minus the crown's feet. Your Jedi's light/dark status will



■ The good, the bad, and the oh-so-ugly. Take a guess which one would be part of Vader's crew.

also affect which new missions open up for you in *KOTOR*.

As in the movies, the game offers a moment for redemption. "Around 7/8 of the way through, you'll have to make the ultimate choice [about which path to follow]," Gallo says. *KOTOR* packs both light- and dark-side endings, which LucasArts says will translate into roughly 80 hours of gameplay. From where we're sitting, these elements make this title look like the best choice for your summertime gaming thrills.

Say good-bye to the sun now.

taking out
the sith



The battles in *KOTOR* are a mix of action and turn-based combat, as in BioWare's *Baldur's Gate* series for the PC. You'll actively control one of your three party members while the other two follow battle scripts. Of course, skirmishes have that *Star Wars* atmosphere as your character's arsenal includes double-bladed lightsabers, blasters, and Force powers.



■ Below: Your Jedi spins the lightsaber for good old-fashioned double-blaster action.



■ Minigames include swoop-bike races, a card game called Pazaak (it's a lot like blackjack), and turret shooting.

TEST YOUR SKILL IN THE GREATEST YU-GI-OH! TOURNAMENT EVER!

© 1996 KAZUKI TAKAHASHI



It's time to duel! Yu-Gi-Oh! Worldwide Edition: Stairway to the Destined Duel features over 1000 cards, updated rules, enhanced AI and dozens of duelists to prepare you for the tournament of your life. Coming in Summer 2003, the Stairway to the Destined Duel Tournament will give you a chance to win exclusive cards, become the worldwide dueling champion and be crowned the new King of Games! Go to www.konami.com/yugiohtournament for the latest details.



Yu-Gi-Oh!
Worldwide Edition
Stairway to the Destined Duel



Mild Violence

GAME BOY ADVANCE

www.konami.com/usa



KONAMI

Konami is a registered trademark of KONAMI CORPORATION. TM, © and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

ON THE HORIZON

The games of summer not to your liking? Here's a look at many of the titles coming this fall and beyond



Illustration by Thomas Breake



WHAT IS IT?

The *Heroes* moniker might fool you into thinking Sonic's gonna bust out his chain-mail and go medieval on some ring-stealin' dragons. You'd be wrong, of course, but this isn't exactly the same-old *Sonic*. Instead of roaming the Green Hills solo, you control one of four themed teams—Sonic, Dark, Rose, or Chaotix—each with three characters from the Sonic universe. Each group has its own unique stages, stacked with multiple paths and missions to complete (although we hope *Sonic Adventure 2*'s hellish "find the Chaos emerald with your radar" missions aren't repeated), and the always-connected group moves in a pack, letting you switch the lead character whenever you want.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Heroes marks the first time a Sonic game has been released simultaneously on multiple platforms. Aside from that, it's a combination of tried-and-true Sonic gameplay and a new form of the multiple-character model from *Sonic Adventure*. Say you're playing as the Sonic team and you need a burst of superspeed—put Sonic in the lead and off you go. Or maybe there's a chasm you need to fly over. Pop Tails in front and use his propeller tail to float the party over the danger. Need to reach the top of a cliff? Switch to Knuckles and climb. Now, let's get really crazy and say there's an enemy floating in the air in front of you. Switch to Tails, fly over and tap attack to "throw" your pals at the would-be foe. Now that's teamwork!





■ PlayStation 2, Xbox

LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE

■ Publisher: Eidos ■ Developer: Crystal Dynamics ■ Release: Fall 2003

WHAT IS IT?

Defiance continues the tale of two vampires, Raziel and Kain. These sanguinary heroes have quite a twisty history, spanning Raziel's two *Soul Reaver* games, Kain's two *Blood Omen* titles, and five systems (PS1, DC, PS2, Xbox, and GC). Together, their tales weave a dense fabric with more than a few loose ends—understandably daunting to the uninitiated (or easily confused).

But fear not. Eager for new blood, the developers are keen to make *Defiance* accessible to neophytes. In fact, now is a good time to get acquainted with the series. Rather than rehasing four games' worth of zigs and zags, *Defiance* briefly illustrates the lay of the labyrinth, then begins a new chapter of the story. This episode delves into the underlying mythology of Nosgoth, the dark and velvety (and, yes, gothic) world where the action takes place.

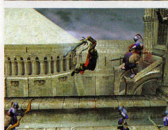
WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

We should say. Nosgoth is the world where a lot more action takes place. Combat is the linchpin of *Defiance*. Both Raziel and Kain have a variety of melee moves, including opponent-lifting uppercuts and aerial attacks reminiscent of *Devil May Cry*. In the early version we saw, eight human soldiers surrounded Kain. He began by dispatching three at once with his sword; then he raised another with an underhand stroke before jumping up to the hapless human and kicking him off a cliff. He was already dicing two more soldiers as the falling fellow's scream reached their ears. And of course, Kain drank blood from the last warrior's neck and walked away from the tussle with full health.

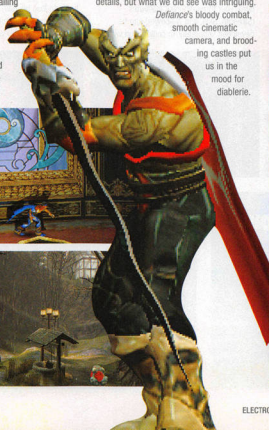
In *Defiance*, players control Raziel and Kain in alternating chapters of the story. As the tale progresses, both characters will gain new abilities—some shared and some unique to each. For example, we saw Kain float gently down a 200-foot drop, while Raziel quickly scaled a sheer wall with his claws. Both characters have telekinesis, which they can use hurl enemies onto spikes or smash them into each other—or to break the humans' furniture out of spite.

Our early look at the game showed few puzzles, no boss fights, and zero story details, but what we did see was intriguing.

Defiance's bloody combat, smooth cinematic camera, and brooding castles put us in the mood for diablerie.



■ Kain juggling enemies?!? The devil may cry.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox

STAR TREK: SHATTERED UNIVERSE

■ Pub: TDK Mediactive

■ Dev: StarSphere ■ Ret: Sept 2003

Man an original *Star Trek*-inspired fighter in this space-combat game that takes place during Captain James T. Kirk's era (in the dark mirror universe). Sultry alien seductresses not included.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox

LORD OF THE RINGS: TREASON OF ISENGARD

■ Pub: VU Games

■ Dev: Surreal ■ Ret: Oct 2003

This game is based on *The Two Towers* book instead of the film, but the slash-em-up song remains much the same. And, like EA's *Return of the King*, it supports two-player co-op gameplay.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

■ Pub: VU Games

■ Dev: Warthog ■ Ret: Sept 2003

Play as young Ensign Adama in this space shooter designed by the guys responsible for the *Colony Wars* series (PS1) and set forty years before the classic sci-fi TV series. Geeks (like us) will be happy to hear that you'll even fly a Cylon Raider in one mission.





Xbox

FABLE

Publisher: Microsoft Developer: Big Blue Box Release Date: "When it's done"



This character has taken a darker path, as evidenced by his snappy sense of style.



WHAT IS IT?

This is the story of a hero. And since this hero is—in fact—you, he's perhaps the greatest swordsman and doer of good deeds ever, a knight so saintly, sunshine pours from his rear. Or maybe he's a downright creep, the kind who would rob a blind beggar and then use the stolen loot to buy a sword to stab him. Perhaps he's even the sort who likes to wear a chicken suit into combat while fighting off his foes with a frying pan.

Formerly known as *Project: Ego*, *Fable* promises epic RPG action and a totally malleable hero. Game designer Peter Molyneux has gone on record claiming

this Xbox game will be the best RPG ever, and although the jury is still out on that boast, there's no doubt *Fable*'s creators at Big Blue Box are aiming sky-high. The game takes place over the course of the hero's lifetime, sending him on an epic quest to find his parents' killers—and then on to explore the larger mystery of how their deaths fit into the world around him.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

What you do in *Fable*'s world shapes your hero; your three different attributes (Strength, Skill, and Willpower) can be developed separately, in conjunction with

one another, or not at all. "If you just hit things over the head all the time with the sword," says Lead Programmer Simon Carter, "your Strength will go up. If you take things a bit more carefully and use your bow and stealth-attack people, your Skill will go up. And if you use your magic an awful lot, your Willpower will go up. As you develop all these things, your hero will slowly change." Specifically, your hero's appearance changes to reflect his development; a magically inclined character will begin to lose his hair, sport arcane tattoos, and eventually be trailed by a silverish-blue haze. Moral choices will also have an

effect—a totally evil character will draw bugs. "Flies are obviously attracted to evil," Lead Designer Dene Carter points out.

Fable's world is inhabited by (among others) huge rock trolls, pants-stealing nymphs, and werewolf-like creatures called Balverines that can infect the hero with lycanthropy. It's a European fairy tale brought to life, and from what we've seen, it looks gorgeous. In motion, the real-time combat and icon-based spellcasting system seemed smooth, but the real test will be how well the developers can balance the need for combat options while not pulling players out of the fantasy.



Your character grows old over time. Eventually, you'll turn in your vorpal blade for a walker.

Xbox

ARMED & DANGEROUS

Pub: LucasArts Dev: Planet Moon
Rel: Winter 2003

A band of Scottish rebels attempts to pull off the biggest heist in history in the midst of a huge war, in a quirky first- and third-person shooter from the makers of *Giants* (PS2).



PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

THE SIMS: BUSTIN OUT

Pub: EA Games Dev: Maxis
Rel: Early 2004

The second console edition of the best-selling PC game of all time has hundreds of new objects, characters, careers (mobster, athlete, rock star, slacker), and locations.



Xbox

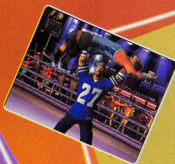
HEADHUNTER: REDEMPTION

Pub: Sega Dev: Amuze Rel: Winter 2003

Assassin-for-hire Jack Wade returns with a wily female protégé in this follow-up to Sega's *Metal Gear Solid*—meets-*Shenmue* game (which snuck out almost unnoticed).



PLAY OUTSIDE THE BOX!



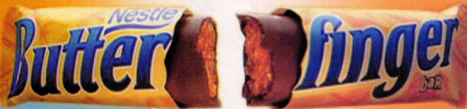
NOT YOUR ORDINARY **GAME**

DEF JAM: VENDETTA PS2/GC

Three parts brawler and one part hip-hop video, Def Jam: Vendetta is clearly one of the most unique wrestling games available. Here, you've got a wrestler that puts gameplay before pageantry, offers action in place of entrance videos, and prizes super-sized special moves over the all-flair-but-no-pain People's Elbow. Plus, there's a story. And while the story isn't Pulitzer-worthy, it'll keep you battling through to the finale. The action starts with you picking a hero who's returning to his old stomping ground to help out an old friend who owes a dangerous man some money. His life's in danger, and since your old pal can't fight, you're drawn into an underground fight-club atmosphere ruled by money, power, gold chains, and corrows. While the machismo gets laid on thick, it all works together here. After all, this game's backed by a rap label. The Def Jam crew members are the villains, with each artist acting as a boss. As you climb the ranks in Story mode and struggle to get the girl (well, girls—there's more than one), you'll earn cash, which you can use to buy attribute upgrades. There's all kinds of other stuff to unlock, too: new fighters (39 in all), stages, and even swank Phat farm threads, in case your wardrobe is low on powder blue track suits.



BREAK OUT OF



BREAK OUT TRICKS

DYNASTY WARRIORS 4 PS2

GET THE ECLIPSE
Under the hard difficulty play the Hu Lao Gate level on the Allied Forces side. You must have a level 9 Star Pike. Defeat Lu Bu to get the weapon. You can get this weapon in Free Mode.

GET THE PHOENIX TAIL
At the Yellow Turban Fortress, as the Allied Forces under the hard difficulty setting, kill the following in this order: He Yi, Pei Yaun Shao, and Chen Yaunzhi. You must complete killing them in under six minutes. The weapon will have +54 attack power and at Level 9.

GET THE CHARGE BRACER
Play the Sun Jian Invasion Battle Level on Yuan Shao's side. Before the enemy backup troops arrive, enter the castle from the top. A supply team will appear to the south of the castle. If you defeat the Supply Captain of the Supply Team, you will get the Charge Bracer.



SWEET CODES

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER® 4 PS2/XBOX/GC



MASTER CODE
Enter the options menu, then select "Cheats." Enter `whack_me_xplode` to unlock all cheats.

UNLOCK HIDDEN SKATERS
Enter the options menu, then select "Cheats." Enter `homieli` to unlock Mike Valley and other secret skaters.



DARE TO LOG ON TO **BUTTERFINGER.COM**

Butterfinger and Butterfinger are trademarks of Nestlé. Def Jam: Vendetta is published by Electronic Arts, Inc. ©2003 Electronic Arts, Inc. Def Jam and Def Jam VENDETTA and all associated logos and marks are used under license from DJR Holdings, LLC and The Island Def Jam Music Group, a division of UMG Records, Inc. Phat Farm is the property of Phat Fashions, LLC and is used under license. Dynasty Warriors 4™ is a trademark of KOEI Co., Ltd. ©2003 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4 is published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. ©1999-2002 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Activision and Pro Skater are registered trademarks, and Activision 02 and Sports Revolution are trademarks of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Tony Hawk is a trademark of Tony Hawk. All other trademarks and trademarks are property of their respective owners.



■ Xbox

B.C.

■ Publisher: Microsoft ■ Developer: Intrepid ■ Release Date: Fall 2002

■ Sometimes you eat the dino; sometimes the dino eats you.

WHAT IS IT?

Five hunters, all carrying wooden spears, cautiously approach a T-Rex. In videogame terms, this is known as a "bad idea." When they toss their spears, the Rex rises up. It's pissed, and someone's going to get hurt badly. And we're sad to say that the red stuff spurting out of the dinosaur's wounded belly and spraying from the hunter's wounded corpse crunched between its jagged teeth isn't raspberry jam.

Peter Molyneux, the brains behind such PC classics as *Populous* and *Black & White*, calls B.C. "the goriest game ever." When watching hunters get torn apart, smashed, and otherwise divested of their lives in the most painful ways imaginable, we'd have to admit he may be right. B.C. makes no bones about life being cheap and death being free and all-too-easy. Call it the first third-person "existence is suffering" simulator for Xbox.

Players control a tribe, one member at a time, during their 100-mile journey to reach a safe haven. Along the way, you discover fire, build settlements and temples, invent new tools, craft weapons, and play havoc with the game's environments. In this fantastical world, early humans coexist with dinosaurs, so brains are the only way brawn can be beaten. Use fire to wipe

out a stand of fruit trees, and the animals eating the fruit will flee, as will the carnivores that feed on them; block off a water supply by building a wall around it, and watch all the animals head out in search of another drinking spot.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

All the game's creatures, from the fearsome T-Rex down to the lowliest rat, will be influenced by hunger and thirst. In addition, every animal in the game, save for one quite notable exception, has been plucked directly from the fossil record. "Real creatures were as exciting and as ferocious as anything we could come up with here," says B.C.'s Development Director Matt Chilton, "especially the underwater ones."

Oh, and that notable exception? According to Lead Designer Ben Cousins, it's something completely different. And quite horrible. "Along the way," Cousins told us, "they'll meet another [animal] that we're not talking about. What we're doing is we're kind of thinking about a hypothetical prehistoric past where man was directly competing with another type of intelligent creature." It's kill or be killed when B.C. ships this fall.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

XIII

■ Publisher: Ubi Soft ■ Developer: Ubi Soft ■ Release Date: October 2003

WHAT IS IT?

Ubi Soft's first-person cartoony shooter is based on a similarly named French political-thriller comic. Think about the classic films *Parallax View* and *The Manchurian Candidate*, then add hand-drawn, moody styling reminiscent of Eidos' *Fear Effect* (PS1) and comic expletives ("Bam!").

An amnesiac with a tattoo bearing "XIII" wakes up on a beach after a presidential assassination, and is soon on the run from the FBI and the XX, an organization set to kill him. Did XIII pull the trigger or was he trying to intervene? You'll have more than 30 levels to figure that out. Bottles, ashtrays, and anything else you can pick up complement standard weapon accoutrements, and players can use stealth, sniping, and a "sixth sense" (displayed in comic-style window panes) for tactical, heady gameplay. With any luck, you'll see plenty of dead people.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

XIII's dark, seductive theme is emphasized through its art, but the game's modus operandi is action. Producer Damien Moret offers an example: "You escape from a military base in a cable car. You that think [you're] OK, but soldiers are attacking you with bazookas, so you have to leave the cable car before it crashes..."



■ Above/below: The first GameCube shots.



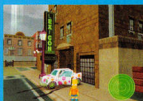
■ Above left: Failing to rub this giant gator's belly fast enough, you die.

■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

THE SIMPSONS HIT & RUN

■ Pub: VU Games ■ Dev: Radical
■ Rel: Sep 2003

Run or drive on Springfield's streets, explore hot spots like the Kwik-E-Mart, and listen to hundreds of lines of dialogue created by the show's writers in this *Grand Theft Auto* clone.



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

HE-MAN: DEFENDER OF GRAYSKULL

■ Pub: TDK Mediactive
■ Dev: Savage ■ Rel: Nov 2003

What to do with a cartoon about greased-up, muscle-bound men in loincloths? Make an action-adventure game complete with Battle Cat ride! and sword fightin', of course!



■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER 2: CHAOS BLOODS

■ Pub: VU Games ■ Dev: Eurocom ■ Rel: Aug 2003

In this game, set as a "lost episode" from Buffy's fifth season, you must stop evil from seeping in from a dimensional bleed while playing as Buffy, Angel, Willow, Spike, and more.



Join the Anniversary
BASH



WHY SURF THE NET WHEN YOU CAN CONTROL IT.

Mega Man Battle Network 3: Blue version and White version are the biggest, most exciting Battle Network action-role playing adventures yet! Join Mega Mega.EXE, his pal Lan and friends as they keep the net safe from viruses, cyber criminals and a slough of other net-based menaces. Each version features different Mega Man styles, Battle Chip types, enemies, bosses and other surprises to discover and trade!

CAPCOM

GAME BOY ADVANCE

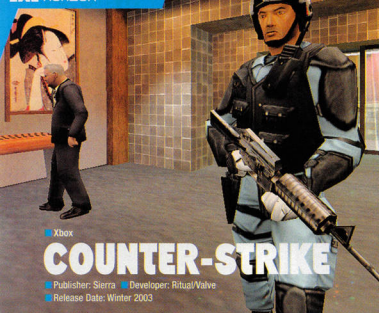
www.capcom.com/megaman

EVERYONE



Mild Violence

© CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2003. © CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2003. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM LOGO are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. MEGA MAN BATTLE NETWORK is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2003. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Licensed by Nintendo. NINTENDO, GAME BOY, GAME BOY ADVANCE, AND THE OFFICIAL SEAL ARE TRADEMARKS OF NINTENDO. © 2001 NINTENDO. All other trademarks are the property of their respective holders.

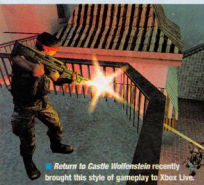


Xbox

COUNTER-STRIKE

Publisher: Sierra Developer: Ritual/Valve

Release Date: Winter 2003



Return to Castle Wolfenstein recently brought this style of gameplay to Xbox Live.

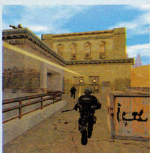
WHAT IS IT?

Few first-person shooters could possibly fill the hole left by *Halo 2* in this year's Xbox holiday lineup. In theory, *Counter-Strike* is one of them. Released four years ago as a free multiplayer patch to Valve's *Half-Life*, *Counter-Strike* is still the most-played networked PC game in college dorms and cyber-cafés around the world. As in *SOCOM*, players are assigned to one of two warring teams: Soldiers or Terrorists. This simple, storyless formula of real weapons and intense action has hooked millions of arm-chair commandos.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Valve promises the Xbox edition will have better special effects, improved characters and environments, richer sound, and levels from the PC sequel, *Condition Zero*, plus Xbox-exclusive multiplayer maps and two new solo missions for good measure.

Though Valve excitedly notes that *Counter-Strike* will support Xbox Live for online play, PC players who hope to compete against Xbox owners will be disappointed to discover that the versions won't connect. Valve also hasn't decided whether Xbox users will be able access player-created content, one of the most popular features of the PC game. Will *Counter-Strike* conquer the console world? We'll know soon enough.



Xbox

DEAD MAN'S HAND

Publisher: Atari Developer: Human Head Release Date: Fall 2003



WHAT IS IT?

Human Head, maker of *Rune: Viking Warlord* (PS2), is charting new frontiers by tackling an Old West motif in this first-person shooter. As the double-crossed desperado El Tejón, your lust for vengeance leads you to myriad good, bad, and ugly Wild West-themed mission-based scenarios, including showdowns, poker, and horseback and train-top gunfights.



WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Dead Man's Hand holds a couple of aces, like the Legend system, which offers rewards for clever play. For instance, hurl a whiskey bomb at an opponent in an out-house instead of spraying him with bullets and you'll gain the ability to fire special trick shots, which are sure to come in handy. Also, Xbox Live deathmatches promise to have your saddles blazing.

PlayStation 2, Xbox

SWAT: GLOBAL STRIKE TEAM

Publisher: Sierra Developer: Argonaut Release Date: October 2003

WHAT IS IT?

You have the right to remain anxious. *SWAT: Global Strike Team* promises to blend the strategy and tactics of *Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon*, the kind of action found in shooters like *Halo*, and *Splinter Cell*-style lighting and shadows.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

The main twist to the game is that you're supposed to arrest more gang members than you kill. Also, voice recognition via a headset controller lets you order around computer-controlled partners, or you can split the screen for cooperative and death-match modes. Expect over 20 levels, including futuristic Los Angeles, Costa Rica, London, and Siberia missions. Online play is noticeably absent, but Xboxers will be able to download extra levels.



Xbox

SHADOW OPS: RED MERCURY

Pub: Atari Dev: Zombie Ref: June 2004

Screw the action-movie story for this first-person shooter. It's the bivy of online capture the flag and deathmatch modes that really has our attention. We hope it keeps it, too.



Xbox, GameCube

THE GREAT ESCAPE

Pub: Gotham Dev: Pivotal Ref: July 2003

Escape from a WWII POW camp in this game based on the classic film. Gotham licensed deceased actor (and former sex symbol) Steve McQueen's likeness and voice, which is at once creepy and cool.



Xbox, GameCube

TRINITY

Pub: Activision Dev: Gray Matter Ref: Winter 2004

This single-player-only shooter looks like a near-future variant of *Return to Castle Wolfenstein*. In it, you play a bio-enhanced vigilante out to save a plague-ridden city.



THE GREAT ESCAPE™

Shot down behind enemy lines.
A prisoner of the Nazi war machine.
You must guide your band of heroes in the
greatest escape in history.

Strike at the Reich with an
authentic WWII arsenal.

Commandeer motorcycles, jeeps,
and other military vehicles as
you speed to freedom!

Attack from the shadows as you sneak
past Nazi guards and the Gestapo.



PlayStation 2



RATING PENDING



Visit www.esrb.org or
call 1-800-771-3772
for Rating Information.

THE GREAT ESCAPE: Interactive Game (certain audiovisual components) TM & © 2003 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc. THE GREAT ESCAPE: Motion Picture © 1961 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc. THE GREAT ESCAPE: Interactive Game (software) © 2003 SGI Games Limited, developed by Proxel Games Limited. Steve McQueen TM Licensed by Chadwick McQueen and The Terry McQueen Testimonial Trust represented by The Roger Richmond Agency, Inc. "PlayStation" and the PS Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Gotham Games and the Gotham Games logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. 2003 Take-Two Interactive, Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

SSX 3

Publisher: EA Sports Big Developer: EA Canada Release Date: Fall 2003

WHAT IS IT?

Instead of having tracks placed around the world, the latest SSX attempts to fulfill all of your snowboarding desires on a single lonely mountain. After seeing the game, we can attest to Producer Larry LaPierre's claim that said mountain is indeed "\$400 big!" Courses are spread across three seamlessly interconnected peaks, and rival boarders challenge you to both race- and trick-focused events as you ride down this side of Mother Earth. Thankfully, producing stylish runs should be easier this time around. "The core tricks have been redone to give an even better feel," says LaPierre.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

It's quite a departure having one grandiose mountain that's totally accessible without any loading breaks—and it works pretty well from what we've seen so far. The single-player mode takes full advantage of this feature, as the finale consists of a 30-minute sprint down all three intertwining peaks against your character's main rival. But there's still much to accomplish after you're declared king of the hill. SSX 3 includes more than 100 challenges, such as hand planting a fence or grinding billboards. And if you have the skills to complete these tasks, you'll gain access to unique character apparel, including new jackets and those oh-so-wacky Dr. Seuss-style top hats.



Expect songs by Queens of the Stone Age, X-Ecutioners, H.E.R.D., and more.



WHAT IS IT?

Deavouring countless pizza slices over the years hasn't stopped the world's most famous turtles from getting' back into shape for their highly anticipated return to the gaming world. This action beat-em-up has cartoon-style visuals and Story and Versus modes, where mastering the katana, bo staff, nunchaku, and sai enables you to make mincemeat out of Shred-head and his nefarious Foot clan.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Back in the day, many of us plunked down massive coinage on the addictive TMNT arcade games, so it's good news Konami

has brought back some of those team members to advise on this project. "We incorporated their feedback and experience," says Producer Kengo Nakamura, "and created new features to make sure these games keep what was fun about the old games, but [also] evolve for next-generation videogame systems."

Too bad Story mode only supports two-player co-op rather than four like the now-ancient arcade brawlers. But at least we can knock the snot out of a friend in Versus mode with nonturtle characters like April O'Neal and Shredder. And fear not, Vanilla Ice won't be reviving his ninja rap (from the second TMNT film) for the game.



PlayStation 2, GameCube

TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU

Pub: THQ Dev: Avalanche Rel: Fall 2003

Guide this unlikely hero through a world where puzzles abound, pole-vaulting is required, blowpipes are the weapon of choice, and a chicken suit can save your life.

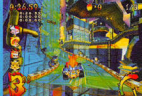


PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

CRASH NITRO KART

Pub: VU Games Dev: Vicarious Visions Rel: November 2003

In this follow-up to *Crash Team Racing* (PS1), you compete in an intergalactic kart competition and can even play with up to eight players in multi-player via linked systems.



PlayStation 2, Xbox

CHAIN GANG

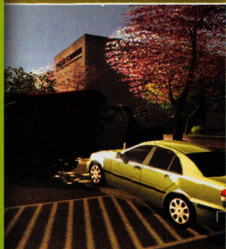
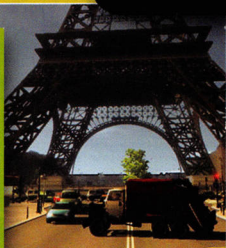
Pub: Eidos Dev: Crystal Dynamics Rel: Fall 2003

Down with animal testing! Shock-therapy victim Spanx and cosmetics subject Redmond the Rabbit must escape this evil testing facility while chained together.



EB GAMES™
electronics boutique®

XBOX
LIVE



ONLY ON

XBOX

#225499-3 \$49.99

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM

■ Xbox

MORROWIND GAME OF THE YEAR EDITION

■ Publisher: Bethesda ■ Developer: Bethesda
■ Release Date: Fall 2003

WHAT IS IT?

Think of it as *Morrowind-Plus* with braggadocio: This value-priced package rolls together 2002's Xbox hit first-person RPG *Morrowind* plus two new expansion packs (which were sold separately on PC). Fans appreciated *Morrowind*'s 20-plus character classes and sprawling 3D world full of quests. This edition augments that world with more. A lot more.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Bethesda's *Tribunal* expansion adds new armor, weapons, enemies, and a continuation of the previous story line, while the *Bloodmoon* scenario splits off with a new emphasis on werewolves, winter weather, and the wilderness. Newbies can play through *Morrowind*, fans can resume their previous saved Xbox games, and anyone can bark at the moon from the start.

■ PlayStation 2

VECTORMAN

■ Publisher: Sega ■ Developer: Pseudo Interactive ■ Release Date: January 2004



WHAT IS IT?

Looking at these screenshots, you may not think this is the same *Vectorman* from the late days of the 16-bit Sega Genesis. That's because this new ass-kicking V-man is more Master Chief than the big pile of balls he used to be. But don't worry, he's still saving the universe from technology run amok in this third-person actioner.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

It makes our extremities tingle to think about another 16-bit franchise getting a 21st-century overhaul. But to satisfy our trigger finger's urge for carnage, *Vectorman* will have access to an arsenal of 15 weapons and 25 upgrades, including incinerators, Freon cannons, starblasters, bazookas, and grapplers. (Aw, he's Ratchet and Clank.) Most of the environments are destructible, too, so, for example, you could destroy a huge pillar and then use it as cover while you plan your next attack.



■ Choose a hilt and blade color to produce your own unique lightsaber.

■ Xbox

STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT: JEDI ACADEMY

■ Publisher: LucasArts ■ Developer: Raven ■ Release Date: Fall 2003

WHAT IS IT?

Xbox-owning Padawans, pack your bags—it's time to visit Jedi Master Luke Skywalker and learn the ways of the Force. Jetting across the galaxy to tackle missions might make your classmates label you a teacher's pet, but at least your customizable character will be rewarded with new techniques and Force powers (like Force Push and that blue lightning).

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Unlike its predecessor (*Jedi Outcast*), *Jedi Academy*'s combat is definitely lightsaber-centric. You can switch to first-person perspective and complete the game using traditional weapons like blaster rifles and Wookiee bowcasters, but, as Producer Brett Tosti puts it, "That's not the way of a true Jedi." We respectfully submit that bad coiffures and facial hair shouldn't be either.



WHAT IS IT?

The fact that Xbox desperately needs another RPG notwithstanding, *Sudeki* is pretty intriguing. It's an action-RPG chronicling the journey of four heroes on a quest to save their shattered land. Looks and sounds like another Japanese RPG, right? Wrong! It's being created by Climax (*Speed Kings*, *MotoGP 2*) from jolly ole England. The art and gameplay design just have a strong Eastern influence.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Sudeki gives you the interesting ability to command four characters in realtime. While you directly control one hero's actions, the other three react to your orders and specific battle situations. Each of the gunslinger, huntress, wizard, and swordsman characters is distinctly different—and have different moves, spells, and team attacks—so expect to jump around among them.

■ PlayStation 2, GameCube

SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY

■ Pub: LucasArts ■ Dev: Totally ■ Rel: Early 2004

Avoid anti-aircraft fire in more than 20 authentic World War II-era planes as part of an elite Allied flight squadron on a mission to knock the Third Reich's forces plumb out of the sky.



■ Xbox

SAM & MAX

■ Pub: LucasArts ■ Dev: Infinite Machine
■ Rel: Spring 2003

The classic PC adventure game about a dog detective and his rabbit sidekick gets a sequel. Expect surreal humor. Expect the freakish. Expect to sit in the mouth of a metallic fish.



■ Xbox

ARX FATALIS

■ Pub: Dreamcatcher ■ Dev: Arkane
■ Rel: Nov 2003

First-person RPGs don't usually turn out that well, but this one sounds cool (although hard to pronounce), especially since you can create your own weapons and spells.





it's your
funeral.

THE 7 TOUGHEST ADVENTURES
YOU'LL NEVER SURVIVE.



PlayStation 2



Mild Violence
Suggestive Themes



SQUARE ENIX.



© 2003 SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. All Rights Reserved. Image Illustration, Tetsuya Nomura. The SQUARE ENIX logo and UNLIMITED SAGA are trademarks of Square Enix Co., Ltd. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The U.S. SAGA logo is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Dolby, Pro Logic, and the double-D symbol are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories.

WANTED BY THE C.I.F.R.

PARTICIPATION IN PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATION;
UNLAWFUL FLIGHT TO AVOID PROSECUTION — MURDER

LUCAS BENJAMIN AKER



Aliases: Lou, Luc, "Commander," Benjamin Jaker, Lucky

DESCRIPTION

Date of Birth:

August 6, 1961

Height:

5' 8"

Scars and Marks:

Aker has a U.S. flag
tattooed on his right shoulder

Eyes:

Blue

Complexion:

White

Nationality:

American

Remarks: *A self-taught commando, Aker has worked as a freelance mercenary. This hyper-patriotic militia leader is responsible for leading organizations that train in covert warfare, specifically against the U.S. Government. His militia organization is dedicated to "preventing the disintegration of America." Aker has run camps in Alabama, Florida and Utah.*

CONSIDERED ARMED AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS

REWARD

\$100,000

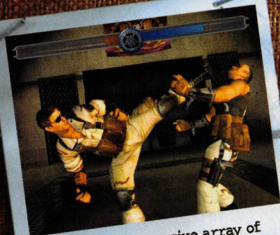


PlayStation 2



BLOOD AND GORE
STRONG LANGUAGE
VIOLENCE

Dead or Alive – You
Can Decide As You Go...



There is an impressive array of lethal and non-lethal weapons at your disposal. The more bounty money you bring in, the more you can buy, the more dangerous you become.



Your mission – to hunt the CIFR's Most Wanted. A web of terror will take you to exotic locations worldwide, eventually leading you to the Middle East.



These are the world's most dangerous criminals. They are heavily armed and highly skilled, with small armies of bodyguards. Engage with extreme prejudice.

WEAPONS:

Flechette Dartgun

Tactical Shotgun

Dragon Flamethrower

Car 4 Assault Rifle

AK74

Enforcer Pistol

Sniper Rifle

Grenade Launcher



**FUGITIVE
HUNTER**
www.fugitive-hunter.com

ATARI

CASTLEVANIA REVAMPED

Konami digs straight to the roots to rebuild this classic series for its PlayStation 2 debut

By Shane Bettenhausen

In halls are drafty, its walls could use industrial-strength spackle, and its basement is infested with acid-spitting mermen, but 17 years after its bloody groundbreaking ceremony, Castlevania is still home, sweet home to hardcore gamers. Certainly, the ultra-Goth skyscraping castle at the center of the Castlevania series has had its share of renovations. History looks kindly on the successful refits (the infusion of role-playing elements into *Symphony of the Night* for PlayStation)

and longs to forget the gaudy decorating missteps (the chunky 3D *Castlevanias* for Nintendo 64). But overall, the series has weathered the years in fine form, considering how many Belmont boys—Castlevania's lineage of whip-cracking heroes—have crumbled its castle to rubble.

But that sturdy legacy also presents a homeowner's headache for developer Konami. Current gamers who weren't around for the series' classic installments may not get its old-school appeal, and its convoluted chronology—boss vil-

lain Dracula has come back from the dead enough times to make Cher jealous—is bound to baffle even longtime fans. If Castlevania is to lure in a new generation, change is in order.

Castlevania: Lament of Innocence, due exclusively for PlayStation 2 in November, seeks to suck in new-blood gamers by tossing out the series' heavily marked-up blueprints. *Lament* unleashes a new beginning—a new hero, a story line that finally explains the genesis of Dracula, and a revolutionary 3D reworking of the series' gameplay.

Artwork by Charles Erwin



Your first bite

"It's funny how there are vampire myths all over Europe and Southeast Asia, yet the only story people seem to remember is Dracula," says Koji Igarashi—he'd rather you call him "Iga"—the producer who holds the keys to *Castlevania*. (He's been involved with the series since *Symphony of the Night*.) Tall, pale, and clad entirely in black, Iga would make a fine Dracula in a monster flick. Well, a Japanese Dracula, anyway. It makes us

undead—and that makes him perfectly suited for the task of re-imagining the rusty Belmont-whips-Drac mythos. "I love the world of Dracula," says Iga, "and I want to debut on the PS2 very dramatically by making this the best *Castlevania* ever."

One of Iga's first steps for his latest *Castlevania* was to devise a new setting within the series' already overstuffed timeline. "It's hard to fit in new games, since Dracula is only supposed to revive every 100 years.... We're out of possible

"I want to debut on the PS2 very dramatically by making this the best *Castlevania* ever."

—*Castlevania* Producer Koji Igarashi

wonder if there's more to his "vampire myths all over Southeast Asia" comment than he's letting on. (Our hands cover our throats a few times during our interview with Iga at Konami's Tokyo HQ.) The man holds an interest in the macabre that extends far beyond the games he designs—he's genuinely intrigued by the world of the

centuries," he says. "Also, in the previous games, the Belmont clan and Dracula are already established—you never really know why they keep fighting." Rather than attempting to squeeze in yet another vampiric rebirth of the stock characters, Iga has chosen to tell the origin of the entire franchise. "In *Lament of Innocence*, I want to explain



■ Leon's confrontation with Drac (right) unfolds in a slick real-time cinema...with lots of styling products. One of Leon's whip combos (far right) flicks foes into the air for juggle combos.



188

■ Sure, it'll put you in fanciful, empyrean suits for decades, Leon, but the People for the Ethical Treatment of Minibosses won't like what you're doing to poor Medusa.



where my Dracula came from and why the Belmonts became vampire hunters," he tells us. So, the game is set in the 11th century—a full 500 years before the earliest of the already-chronicled *Castlevania* events—when Dracula first becomes a vampire.

Leon Belmont stars as *Lament*'s pretty-boy

helping young heroes ('cause he used to be a vampire hunter himself). He hands over his trusty whip to Leon, and the adventure begins. "When Leon goes after Sara, he has no foreknowledge of Dracula or the monster that took his girl," says Iga. "He just goes in to save her, and his destiny is waiting for him in the castle."

"I seriously feel like I've looked at every 3D game ever made."

—*Castlevania* Producer Koji Igarashi, on his research for *Lament*.

hero and progenitor of the famous clan. Unlike past whip-toting Belmonts, he's no random stud in leather shorts; rather, he's a knight in the service of a local baron, so he's actually a well-respected, upstanding chap. His happiness heads south, however, when a creepy beast kidnaps his fiancée, a demure cutie named Sara. Before he can rescue his intended, Leon must get permission from the Church—but the clergy's too busy waging the Crusades to look into the matter. So Leon turns in his sword, gives up his rank, and thumbs his nose at their indifference.

As he follows the beast's trail to the cheery-sounding Dark Woods, he runs into Rinaldo Gandolfi, a crusty alchemist with a soft spot for

Blood simple

"What I care about is bringing in just enough story, not to overwhelm or spoil the action," Iga explains. "The story must serve to elevate the experience." So, once the cinematic opening does its thing, the game gets down to business, and you, as Leon, embark on your whipping frenzy in Dracula's abode. And if you thought the 11th-century backstory drew new blood from the series, steady yourself—the radically rethought gameplay taps an even greater vein of inspiration.

First and foremost, *Lament of Innocence* completely reworks the series' traditional 2D side-scrolling gameplay into 3D. And while it's not the first *Castlevania* attempted in *tres dimensiones*, it

beyond castlevania

ACTUAL (NO, REALLY) IDEAS FOR FUTURE SERIES INSTALLMENTS

Castlevania mastermind Koji Igarashi has a stockpile of game concepts lurking in his coffinlike mind. Ask him the right questions (or offer him the right beverages) and they start spewing out like mad. We can't guarantee that any of these ideas will come to fruition, but we've concocted some illustrative screenshots just in case. Note: We did not make these game concepts up. Honest.

CASTLEVIRUS



"Imagine a cyber *Castlevania* world in which Dracula is a computer virus and Belmont is the virtual vaccine who must defeat him," says Iga. Our response to this way-out-there futuristic idea? "Whoa."

BLAXPLOVANIA



"I really enjoyed the vampire movie *Blade*," says Iga. "So, if the game took place in modern times, maybe a black guy could be the hero of *Castlevania*." Picture a game mixing all the wicked undead monsters we love with a dose of urban flava. Hell, it would have to be better than the anime *Blade II* for PS2 and Xbox that crawled to store shelves last year.

Continued on page 100

cool fusion

MAGIC ORBS PUMP UP YOUR SUBWEAPONS

Like his many Belmont descendants, Leon tosses a mean flask of holy water. He also finds daggers, axes, crosses, and crystals (an all-new item that works like a land mine) as he explores the castle. Heaving these handy pickups at foes is fun, but soup-thing them up with magic is even better. As in *Castlevania: Harmony of Dissonance*

(GBA), you can imbue each subweapon in *Lament* with seven different effects by combining them with Red, Blue, Yellow, Green, White, Black, and Purple Orbs.

Each of the 35 possible Orb-weapon combos offers a powerful, screen-searing attack. Among the jaw-dropping ones we witnessed: a flying dragon made of daggers that swirls across the screen and trounces enemies; a duo of massive ax blades that orbit Leon, providing powerful defense; and a massive crucifix of light that obliterates all onscreen foes.



■ Leon prepares to flip the hell out of this switch.

LOOKING FOR A NEW HERO!



RENT A HERO No. 1™ LYTE-O-



Comic Mischief
Mild Violence

SEGA

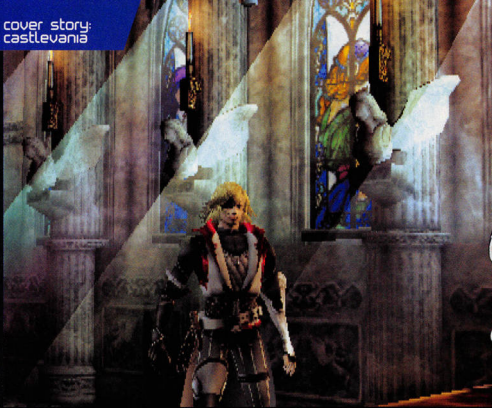
CREATED BY AND PRODUCED BY

AIA

PUBLISHED BY

XBOX

Rent A Hero No. 1 © SEGA CORPORATION, 1991, 2000, 2003. All Rights Reserved. Created by and produced by SEGA CORPORATION. In cooperation with CoolNet Entertainment Co., Ltd. Published by AIA USA, Ltd. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners.



■ Leon's distressed damsel: Sara Trantoul

is the first one Konami has done right. Iga adamantly believes. "There are many problems with the N64 *Castlevanias*," he says, "the biggest being that it just isn't fun to control your character." While he and his team had no involvement with those games, they've studied them closely as examples of what *not* to do while making theirs.

Gameplay research wasn't limited to games within the *Castlevania* family. "I seriously feel like I've looked at every 3D game ever made," says Iga, laughing. "Perfecting the camera is the most difficult aspect. In a 2D game, it's easy to see the distance between your character and an enemy. But in 3D, it's tough to display the distance properly because the camera is always changing." He made the decision to eschew the admittedly cool-looking cinematic camera style of Capcom's *Devil May Cry* (PS2) in favor of a fixed overhead camera

that swoops and pans only in areas with no combat. The end result is a perspective similar to that of the novel PS2 adventure *Ico*; you'll never be surprised by a confusing angle shift while you're in the thick of skeleton-whipping action.

And whip you will—prepare to lash out at a massive legion of 70-plus beasts. *Lament* abandons the RPG-tinged swordplay of *Symphony of the Night* in favor of classic whipping action. Although you'll find subweapons, armor, Relics, and other items during your quest, the whip is the only weapon Leon wields. However, your trusty leather lash changes as you progress. "The alchemist eventually powers up the whip into the legendary Vampire Killer," explains Iga, "and you can also change the whip's properties by applying magic like Flame or Frost." Oh, and it's handy in peacetime situations, too: Use it to swing between

better, stronger, faster

NEW RELICS BRING BIONICS TO THE MIDDLE AGES

Blistering spell-fusion attacks provide the meat of your offensive capabilities, but Leon has a few supernatural powers up his sleeve, too: He finds some legendary Magic Relics stowed away in Drac's castle. The catch? Leon can't use these skill boosters right away. "Guys like Alucard and Dracula can use magical Relics because they're not human," explains Konami's Iga. "The alchemist performs some enhancements to Leon's left arm so he can use them, too." A bionic vampire hunter from a millennium ago? That's why we love videogames. You'll find 10 Relics in all, and we give you a peek at five of them:



■ Leon sparkles with the magically delicious healing power of Stardust.

LEG OF THE WOLF—Equip this severed lupine appendage to give Leon superhuman speed. "There are places in the castle that are only accessible when you use this magic," explains Iga.

STARDUST—Turn on this fantastical fairy powder to regenerate your health. Handy during boss encounters, but it wastes away your Magic meter.

INVINCIBILITY POT—Remember the jug you'd pick up to become invincible for a few seconds in the original NES *Castlevania*? It's back, in Relic form. And boy, does it use up Magic points like crazy.

LUCIFER'S SWORD—This demonic Relic transforms Leon's body into a human Ginsu. Hurl yourself at enemies to cut like a knife.

SVAROG STATUE—While holding this mysterious idol statue, Leon leaves a trail of fire in his wake that damages enemies if they touch it.



ULTIMATE MUSCLE

THE KINNIKUMAN LEGACY™

Some wrestling
games are Nice,
Fun to Play
games.

Others will
SMACK that
stupid grin right
off your pansy
little FACE.



"Just when you thought
wrestling-styled games couldn't
get any crazier, along comes Aki
with (WWF) WrestleMania (N64) with
Ultimate Muscle, one of the
fastest, most intense brawlers
yet on Nintendo GameCube."
- IGN

WHICH ONE ARE YOU GOING TO PLAY?



Comic Mischief
Violence



GAME BOY ADVANCE



Ultimate Muscle™ The Path of the Superheroes © 2003 YUETAMAGO/SHUEISHA, TOEI ANIMATION. Program © 2002 Bangpreto © 2003 Bandai America Inc. Ultimate Muscle™ Legends vs New Generation
© 2003 YUETAMAGO/SHUEISHA, TOEI ANIMATION © 2002-2003 Bandai.™, ®, Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo.
The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.



■ Leon's whip is handy for both swinging through the belfry (above) and smiting foes (below).



platforms or to pull Leon up onto a high ledge.

The shift away from *Symphony's* stat-building and role-playing elements means *Lament* doesn't dish out experience points. Although Iga is eager to draw new players to the series, he feels the level-up system might have made the game too easy. "In *Symphony*, less-skilled players can level up until they're able to progress," he says. "It's a drawback for skilled gamers who find the game too easy as they gain levels." Now, talented players will be challenged throughout, and weaker players must explore every nook and cranny of the castle to find power-ups and healing items.

Teeth sunk in

So, we have the remarkably stylish Leon Belmont on a quest to save his beloved, armed with his whip and exploring a dangerous castle in full 3D...but what does it actually feel like to play? Damned fun. Even at this early stage, we can tell that painstaking research went into perfecting the gameplay. Movement is swift and tight. Leon double-jumps like a pro from the outset, and the fixed-camera perspective provides a stable view of the onscreen chaos.

Combat also provides monumental thrills. You have two attacks: a weak, speedy Light Attack

digging too deep

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS IN CASTLEVANIA HISTORY



THE HAUNTED CASTLE AD

It's amazing how much the image of *Castlevania* has changed over the years. Now, we have lush paintings of dapper heroes advertising the games, but back in 1988, Konami hawked the *Haunted Castle* arcade game with this ad. And you wonder why you've never heard of it.



and a powerful, slow Heavy Attack. Mix them in combos and Leon dishes out a Gothic ass-whipping that's as impressive to watch as it is rewarding to pull off with the controller. But wait, there's more: You can catch groups of vile monsters in your whip's wake to rack up multihit combos. Or bust out a nasty kick between whip licks, side-dash to avoid getting hit, and execute timely parry moves with expert presses of the Block button (each successful block raises your Magic meter). No past *Castlevania* title offers so many ways to crack undead skulls.

Of course, Leon's trek through the castle is

illustrator of the undead

AYAMI KOJIMA GIVES DRAC'S WORLD A WOMAN'S TOUCH



Back when Producer Koji Igarashi was working on *Symphony of the Night* for PS1, he decided *Castlevania* needed an image makeover. "In old *Castlevania* games, you see a macho guy," he tells us, "but the story and character designs were lacking." So Iga sought out a romantic, beautiful art style with which to brand the series. After rummaging through a bookstore looking at cover illustrations, he found his artist: Ayami Kojima. And, yep, the character illustrations you see scattered throughout this cover story are hers. We had a rare opportunity to ask Miss Kojima a few questions about her work on the series, and we quickly discovered that she's full of surprises. You can find the full interview transcript at egmimg.com, but here are four things you might not have guessed about this petite, demure illustrator.

SHE'S ENTIRELY SELF-TAUGHT—That's right, she has no art-school education. In fact, she attributes her success to being unlimited by the conventions of rules and styles. "I think that I'm doing much better than those who went to art school because I just go with my gut feelings," she says.

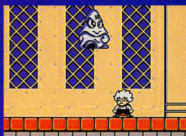
SHE PREFERS OLDER MEN...DRAWING THEM, THAT IS—You might imagine that Kojima revels in drawing the fanciful, effeminate *Castlevania* heroes, but the young guys aren't her favorites. "I love drawing middle-aged guys," Kojima explains. "I really like drawing Count Dracula."

SHE DIGS KUNG FU AND ROBOT COMICS—Kojima prefers violent boys' comics to more girly stuff like *Sailor Moon*. Her favorites include *Fist of the North Star*, *Astro Boy*, and *2001 Nights*. "The themes in girls' comics are too boring," she says. "I wasn't satisfied with those books, so I gravitated to the boys' books for exciting heroes, villains, and action."

SHE'S AS WEIRDED OUT BY COSPLAYERS AS WE ARE—Cosplaying (in which fans dress up as their favorite game or anime characters) is always a little shocking, but Kojima has had encounters with it that hit especially close to home. "I once saw a bunch of guys who looked strangely familiar, and then I realized that they were cosplaying as my characters!" Kojima says. "I was shocked, but flattered, too—I asked if I could take their picture."

digging too deep

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS IN CASTLEVANIA HISTORY



KID DRACULA'S BOSS

In Japan, a zany *Castlevania* offshoot called *Kid Dracula* graced that country's version of the 8-bit NES. How zany? Above, that's Kid Dracula fighting a giant KKK member wearing a swastika-emblazoned hood. Runner-up for weirdest boss: the Statue of Liberty, which attacks by asking questions about America.

more than a berserker barrage of undead whippings. You solve tricky puzzles, locate hidden passageways, and navigate past some malicious traps. We trekked through areas crammed with colossal swinging blades. We trod on floors teeming with deadly spikes. We even experienced a bizarre, speedy challenge Iga calls the castle's "roller coaster." Trust us, you're not ready for it.

Just as in *Symphony of the Night*, the physical castle here isn't a linear progression of stages. Instead, it's a complex labyrinth of rooms and hallways demanding exploration. Five distinct areas comprise the castle: cathedral, laboratory, garden, opera house, and dungeon. But don't take that to mean this game is a mere five-level romp. Each area is massive, with plenty of places to explore and minibosses to conquer, plus a final

melee with a titanic boss monster (known as an Elemental Knight). Since this is *Castlevania*, the castle isn't entirely unfamiliar to longtime fans. "I'm not sure gamers will recognize them, but yes, some of the areas are from past games," explains Iga. "But you won't find a clock tower level here, since mechanical clocks weren't invented until the 13th century." Historical accuracy—the calling card of a developer who really gives a damn.

Sandcastlevania

Despite its 2D limitations, *Symphony of the Night* offered fantastic, ornate visuals. Conveying a similar level of Gothic beauty in three dimensions requires a lot of work. *Lament's* development team is four times larger than *Symphony's*, and mastering the PS2's proclivities took the group some time. "Designing a game is like building a sand castle," says Iga. "You'll build it all up, but when you come back later, it's collapsed and you have to start over from scratch." So, despite working for more than two years on *Symphony*, Iga and his team abandoned everything they'd created to start again on the PS2.

Though the graphics are crucial, it's still the gameplay that's integral to the *Castlevania* experience. So, before any regal rooms were mapped out, Iga focused on a barren engine with a place-holder character (a 3D model of *Symphony's* Richter Belmont) whipping his way through building-block environments that looked straight out of a *Metal Gear Solid VR* mission. Once the gameplay foundations were in place, the team started painting the castle walls.

It may not match the grisly grandeur of *Silent Hill 3*, but *Lament* already looks sweet—and in the screens here, the final pass of visual polish hasn't yet been applied. Much of the next six months will be spent refining the lush environments. You're also being denied the game's most impressive feature, since screens can't illustrate

■ Leone's gadget man: The Alchemist



■ Gothic stone-hewn gargoyles were relatively hip and new in the 11th century. Dracula's were especially cool, since they killed people.



the excellent motion-captured animation: Leon's whip moves with realistic fluidity and physics. A veteran director of stage productions helped design all of his acrobatic movements. "It's an

feel. "Since the story is set in such a different age from that of *Symphony*, I decided electric guitars would be out of place," says Yamane. "Instead, I used natural instruments for a more classical

"The first thing I asked of my team was to make sure the game is very fast and smooth to play."

—Castlevania Producer Koji Igarashi

old-timer's way of thinking," says Iga, "but the first thing I asked of my team was to make sure the game is very fast and smooth to play."

Iga chose longtime Konami composer Michiru Yamane, the woman behind *Symphony of the Night*'s memorably morbid tunes, to create *Lament of Innocence*'s all-new soundtrack. She brings a familiar blend of up-tempo beats and eerie classical beauty to the 40-plus tracks in *Lament*, but the music definitely has a unique

feel. (For our full interview with Michiru Yamane, head to egmmag.com.) The music we heard was stunning—so good, in fact, that Iga is considering packing a copy of the soundtrack with the game (as Konami is doing with *Silent Hill 3*).

On the voiceover front, *Lament* will ship with both English and Japanese dialogue tracks. The English acting we heard sounded just fine—probably since Iga personally oversaw its production at a professional recording studio in Hollywood.



■ Leon fends off encroaching mermen with his Orb-powered dagger-spell prowess.

beyond castlevania

TWO MORE ACTUAL IDEAS FOR FUTURE SERIES INSTALLMENTS

CASTLEMANIA



In Japan, Konami produces several hit rhythm-action games, like *BeatMania* and *DrumMania*. Castlevania Producer Iga says he sees potential in a music game based on the funky pipe organs, moaning choruses, and haunting oboe solos in *Castlevania*'s tunes. Frankly, we'd rather see DJ Drac do some mad scratchin' before we play another Britney Spears game.

DRACULA MAKER



Perhaps drawing upon his work on Japan's *Tokimeki Memorial* dating-game series, Iga says he's conceived a sim game in which you raise Dracula through his formative teen years. Rigors of undead adolescence include awkward candlelight dinners at an Italian restaurant (watch out for garlic) and the issue of whether to bite on the first date. Again, we are not making these ideas up (although Iga is no doubt having a bit of fun with us).



Microsoft, the Microsoft Game Studios logo, Inside Pitch 2003, Xbox, Xbox Live, and the Xbox logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of the Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Major League Baseball, Red Sox, and copyright are used with permission of Major League Baseball Properties, Inc. Visit the official Web site at MLB.com. ©2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.



How will you get ready for the most competitive, trash-talking, online baseball league in the world? Well, you'd better



practice. Offline. Because when you play Inside Pitch 2003, the only baseball game on Xbox Live, you're playing the best.



INSIDE PITCH 2003



www.xbox.com/insidepitch2003



XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED



Get ready for hyper-gaming.



The sound effect you're not hearing accompany Leon's Thunder-whip attack sounds something like "Bra-kooms!"

Fans needn't worry about a repeat of *Symphony of the Night*'s groanworthy writing and acting. "That wasn't my fault!" exclaims Iga. "I was told that the game wasn't going to be dubbed, but then they changed their minds and we had to do it really quickly here in Japan." He proceeds to mimic awfully acted lines like "Who are you?"

But if you're wishing for an Xbox or GameCube version of *Lament*, don't get your blood pressure up. "I chose to make the game for the PS2 simply because it has the most users," says Iga. And since he's spent so much time building this PS2 sand castle, he's not interested in moving to another console's beach. That doesn't

"I chose to make the game for the PS2 simply because it has the most users."

—Castlevania Producer Koji Igarashi

and promises never to let acting like that happen again.

Not the last bite

Iga's explanation of *Castlevania*'s continued appeal is simple: "Foremost, it's the gameplay that draws people to the series, but the cool vampire mythos and excellent music help." He's definitely covered those bases while crafting this PS2 re-introduction to the classic series, and it should get both hardcore fans' and newcomers' blood boiling this fall.



For such an evil guy, Dracula sure has quite an ornate church built inside of his house. What a kook.



digging too deep

EMBARRASSING MOMENTS IN CASTLEVANIA HISTORY



FRED ASKARE AND PAULA ABGHOUL

We're still not sure who's responsible for naming this ghostly waltzing duo from *Super Castlevania IV* (Super Nintendo), but we know that we hate them. We take our *Castlevania* games pretty seriously, and we don't ever want to be interrupted by thoughts of MC Skat Kat from the "Opposites Attract" video.



WarioWare, Inc.
Over 200 lightning-quick
microgames in one serving.



© 2003 Nintendo. TM, ® and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2003 Nintendo. Game and Game Boy Advance sold separately. www.warioware.biz



Comic Mischief



review crew

Your monthly guide to gaming's winners and losers

THE RATING SYSTEM

Each reviewer assigns an overall grade to each game, on a scale from 0 to 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured that it's one of the best games ever made, a classic that will endure throughout the ages. Conversely, when a game gets a 0.0, it's complete and utter crap and should be treated like a deadly biohazard. We utilize the entire scale, so a game that gets a 5.0 is average, not bad. **We repeat: 5.0 IS AVERAGE.** The scores are now color-coded, so the brighter the reds, the better the game.

**0-4.5
BAD**

**5.0-6.5
FAIR**

**7.0-10
GOOD**

OUR AWARDS



Platinum Awards go to games that get all 10s, the ultimate review a game can get.



Gold Awards go to games with an average score of 9.0 or higher. Quality stuff.



Silver Awards go to games that average at least an 8.0 (but are lower than 9.0).



This honor is bestowed upon the highest-reviewed game each month that gets unanimously bad scores.



This dishonor goes to the worst game each month that gets unanimously bad scores.

ESRB KEY (Also check out www.esrb.com)

EC-Early Childhood: Games bearing this mark are suited for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

E-Everyone: Wholesome fun for the whole family, devoid of profanity, blood, and sexual content.

T-Teen: Like PG-13 movies, these games feature mild violence, drug, and sexual content.

M-Mature: Whereas these games offer all the gore, sex, drugs, and fun of T-rated fare.

A0-Adults Only: A rare find. We haven't seen an A0 game since *Floral Dance* on the 3DS.

GAME OF THE MONTH



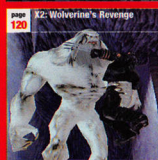
■ PAGE 116

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE I & II

Sure, we already smote about 45,000 Rag Rappies in the last three versions of PSO, but the addition of Xbox Live voice chat has us enthralled by this awesome online RPG all over again.

directory

- 105 Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War
- 106 Arc the Lad: Twilight of the Spirits
- 106 MotoGP 2
- 106 Unlimited Saga
- 110 Wakeboarding Unleashed featuring Shaun Murray
- 110 Robocop
- 110 Tube Slider
- 112 Chaos Legion
- 112 Ultimate Muscle: Legends vs. New Generation
- 114 Wario World
- 116 Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II
- 116 Resident Evil Dead Aim
- 117 Sonic Pinball Party
- 118 Donkey Kong Country (GBA)
- 118 Evil Dead: Fistful of Boomstick
- 120 X2: Wolverine's Revenge
- 121 Burnout 2: Point of Impact
- 122 Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising
- 122 Bloody Roar Extreme
- 123 Dragon Ball Z: Legacy of Goku II



■ Other weapons may have longer range, but then, they don't make your foes run around on fire.



■ If you have to shoot Nazis, might as well make them statuesque, leather-clad, high-heeled female Nazis, right? That's all we're saying, ya know?



■ The two-player split-screen ain't quite *Halo*-smooth, but it's still a blast.



■ These after-school specials were right—cooperation really is fun!

■ Xbox / Also On: PlayStation 2

ONLINE

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: TIDES OF WAR

Mein Lieben! This is what you bought Xbox Live for

PAUL: Europe, 1943. The Nazis' research on the occult yields an unstoppable army of zombies, gun-toting robo-hounds, and lightning-handed priests wearing stylish velvet robes. But undead soldiers can't mend the chink in the Nazis' Aryan armor—ein Amerikaner with a surfeit of movie can bring down the whole shebang. Like *Wolfenstein 3D* (PC), its old-school namesake, *Tides* challenges players with enemies' toughness and sheer numbers rather than clever artificial intelligence. Be prepared for lots of trial and error.

The story is compelling, but it's not actually integrated into gameplay. You need to read your journal to figure out where you are, what you're doing, and why you're throwing so many damn switches. Still, aside from some frustrating moments, the single-player campaign is well-paced and entertaining.

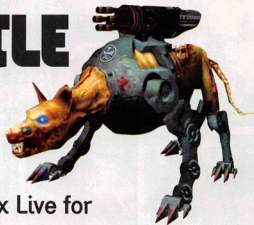
Tides is even better with a partner. In Cooperative mode, progress comes at a steady clip and with fewer do-overs. Different play styles are an advantage: Shawn's precise sniping paved our

way forward while my berserker spaz-outs saved our bacon from Nazi ambushes. That's synergy! And if you think hooking up with one comrade is fun, try blasting with 15 real people—*Tides* is an absolute blast on Xbox Live. Team members of all four classes must coordinate their efforts to succeed in the superb objective-based scenarios. If any element is lacking (e.g., no lieutenant, poor communication), you'll lose and deserve it. But when your team comes together, victory is sweet.

SHAWN: Don't fret if you prefer your shooters on the serious side—*Tides* isn't all mecha-Nazis and walking cadavers. The forces you'll face in its excellent online mode are firmly rooted in reality. And fighting on these richly detailed multiplayer maps makes it all worthwhile. An amphibious assault on a fortified seaway is infinitely more engrossing against live targets. When a silent slug hurls your squadmate into the concertina wire, you lament his loss—and feel perversely satisfied

when you incinerate the responsible sniper. Add objectives that elevate matches above banal blood-baths, like seizing Nazi strongholds and extracting encrypted documents, and you've got a game that is, at least in part, better than *Halo*.

MARK: Despite its occasionally confusing level layouts (you'll often wander around looking for newly opened doors), single-player *Tides* offers a rock-solid game of good ol' fashioned Nazi-killin': satisfying weapons, natural—and very customizable—controls, and objectives that make your straightforward tasks (often just "find the switch") somehow seem more exciting. But we all agree that what elevates this *Wolf* above the FPS pack is its online aspect. The different playable characters and match types give multiplayer a unique emphasis on teamwork that's a perfect match for Xbox Live's voice-chat capability. Sure, I wish the graphics were a bit more detailed, but I'm having too much fun storming Nazi beach strongholds to really care.



Zombie's Revenge: Years ago we mocked horror-rocker Rob Zombie and his song "Dragula" for being on so many game soundtracks. Now his grained likeness appears in two games in one month, first as a dead-ringer for the final *Wolf* boss above, and later in *X-2* (page 120). Which brings us to the inevitable question, "Why does God hate us so?"

Soldier needs ammo...badly

Online, you'll select one of these classes. Each one has special abilities to support your teammates.

Soldier:

The heart of any fighting unit, he wields the biggest guns.



Lieutenant:

He dispenses ammo and calls in airstrikes.



Medic:

Dr. Pain heals himself over time and revives fallen comrades.



Engineer:

Need something exploded? Repaired? Here's your guy.



■ Sniping online can be tricky (since even slight lag can throw off your shots), but offline, it's pure bliss.

Good: Xbox Live-enabled mayhem

Bad: Surprise! Another ambush!

Omitted From Our History Books: Sexy Nazi dominatrix corps



PAUL

8.5

SHAWN

9.5

MARK

8.5

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Nerve Software/Id Software
Players: 1 (2 Co-op, 2-16 online)
ESRB: Mature

www.gamers.com/85520

■ PlayStation 2 / Also On: None

ARC THE LAD: TWILIGHT OF THE SPIRITS

Not exactly a lad, but not quite a man, either



■ Darc's fetching breastplate/skirt combo will be a cosplay favorite in no time flat.

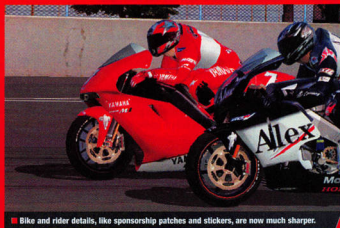


■ (Center) No squares or hexes here—you're free to run wherever you choose during combat.

ONLINE ■ Xbox / Also On: None

MOTOGP 2

Kinda like the first one—but that's good



■ Bike and rider details, like sponsorship patches and stickers, are now much sharper.



■ (Right) Motorcycles and rain: the dream of personal-injury lawyers everywhere

Good: Cool intersecting story lines

Bad: Roller-coaster difficulty level

At least it's not: Six years old and \$70 like *Arc Collection* (PS1)



GREG S: I thought the first three *Arc* role-playing games were mediocre, and this one's only marginally better. The old games' pseudostrategy battles normally degraded into surrounding an enemy and hacking away until it died. Sadly, *Twilight's* combat suffers from the exact same problem, but with the added bonus of crazy, uneven difficulty. Once in a while the game dishes up a particularly crucial battle that requires you to defeat multiple foes with one guy or protect self-destructive characters from harm. These skirmishes, while cool from a plot standpoint, screw up the difficulty curve and game progression, often requiring three or four replays to be successful.

But if you can deal with the severe challenge (and I know some people will), *Arc's* story is surprisingly cool. You divide your time playing as two separated-at-birth brothers who are drawn together by fate, and it's a neat payoff to merge their disparate tales. Also, plenty of subtle references to previous *Arc* games will surely please series fans. Overall, *Twilight* is a serviceable RPG, just not a great one.

SHANE: I'm not sure why Greg has such a hate-on for the *Arc* franchise. I think he's being a little rough on *Twilight*. I feel the combat is unique and fun—you're not limited to moving on a grid, allowing fluid, free-form strategy. And while it's true that some battles are indeed hard, I never found 'em frustrating. He's right about the parallel-perspective plot, though: It's absolutely engaging. This 40-hour quest could've really used a few legitimate dungeons to explore, but the narrative and combat alone kept me hooked.

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAG—SAM:

While I have to agree with Greg about the occasional tricky battles, I guess they don't bother me as much. And I certainly don't think he's giving enough credit to the combat—there's lots of strategy involved. *Arc* had me surprisingly captivated throughout. Mainly because of the interesting story and characters, but also because of the solid graphics and wonderful music. It may not be perfect, but it is the perfect RPG escape for these long summer months.

GREG S.	SHANE	SAM
6.0	7.0	8.0

Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Cattle Call
Players: 1
ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/1342649

Good: 16-player Xbox Live racing furor

Bad: Beginners, good luck keeping the bike on the track

New for the Fashionable Racer: Custom-designed leathers



DEMIAN: If you've played THQ's previous *MotoGP* game—not to be confused with Namco's PS2 series bearing the same name—don't expect any revelatory surprises from *MotoGP 2*. It has six new tracks and an updated roster of cycles and drivers from the 2002 *MotoGP* season, but perhaps the most noticeable change is bikes that no longer sound like 180 mph weed whackers. So that's a plus. Other entries in the "new for '03" column: slightly rejiggered game modes (a Stunt mode replaces Arcade); an extra difficulty level; three challenges on each track that, if completed, improve your rider; and adjustable power-slide sensitivity.

The tweaks are slight, but not a whole lot needed fixing. *MotoGP 2* remains an intense, unforgiving, but ultimately satisfying racing sim—and the only one of its kind you can play online. While the servers weren't exactly bumping when we hit the track (before the game's on-sale date), we expect the same excellent racing experience the original delivered—but with a lot less cheating, thanks to new strategically

placed walls that make off-road shortcuts impossible. Thank you, Jeebus!

GREG S: Yup, Demian's right—this is pretty much the same game as the first *MotoGP* for Xbox. But since that was my favorite motorcycle racer, it's fine by me. I love the way it rewards mastery: Once you learn how to set up for each turn and master the front and rear brakes, your lap times will drop dramatically. A high level of rider and bike customization and goodly amount of attribute points to be earned mean you'll be playing this one for quite a while.

BRYAN: I'm less of a video grease monkey than Demian or Greg, but I enjoyed *MotoGP 2* all the same. The photorealistic visuals look amazing, and the Career and Stunt modes continually reward you with new bikes, riders, tracks, and wacky unlockables (like changing the game's looks with cartoon shading). Aside from the lack of a true tutorial to ease newcomers into the demanding controls, *MotoGP 2* is a worthy sequel.

DEMIAN	GREG S.	BRYAN
8.5	8.0	8.0

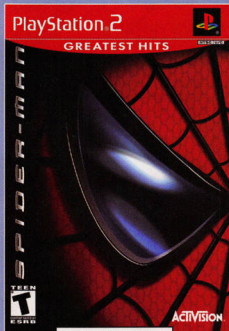
Publisher: THQ
Developer: Climax UK
Players: 1-4 (1-16 online)
ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/1308995

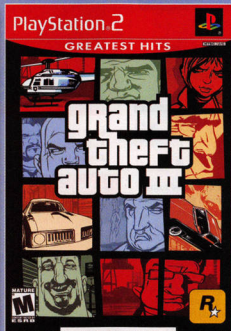
EB GAMES™

electronics boutique®

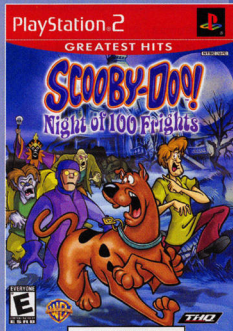
PS2 GREATEST HITS \$19.99 EA.



#215132-2 Activision



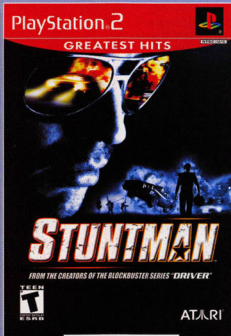
#198102-6 Rockstar Games



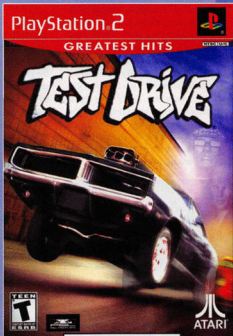
#217406-6 THQ Inc.



#200037-0 Universal Interactive Studios



#215850-9 Infogrames



#209305-2 Infogrames

CALL 1-800-800-5166 FOR THE STORE NEAREST YOU OR VISIT US AT WWW.EBGAMES.COM



Sparkly stars and pink triangles didn't even faze us after 150 hours of Saga pain.

■ PlayStation 2 / Also On: None

UNLIMITED SAGA

Unlimited frustration, tedium, and anger

Good: The music, the intro movie, and the FFX-2 preview
Bad: Fantastically awful gameplay
Might Appeal to Fans of: Watercolor paintings of flowers



JOHN R: The Saga series has always had a reputation for being a little different, with its extremely nonlinear stories and unorthodox role-playing. Over the years the games have become progressively stranger, but nothing could've prepared anyone for this latest installment. To be perfectly frank, this game sucks.

Unlimited Saga exemplifies everything that's wrong with RPGs today and throws it all together in one deluxe package for all to avoid like the plague.

For starters, exploration in *Saga* is boring as hell. Towns consist of one screen with a bunch of menus to navigate, while dungeons involve you moving your character one space at a time around a giant board. Thrilling, eh? Battles are far too random and tedious to be even remotely enjoyable, which is a serious problem considering how often you fight. And the graphics are terrible. Nearly every area in *Saga* looks like a cheap painting, and the characters animate like castaways from the 16-bit era. If you crave something really different, or your name is Seanbaby, by all means, give this a rent.



SHANE: Few games have raised such a hateful ire in me. *Saga* is so fundamentally flawed that it's ridiculous. I'm all for experimenting with new role-playing concepts, but uh, I like to walk in my RPGs. Sorry, moving my party like a Monopoly token through ugly metadungeons isn't fun gameplay. The uninteresting narratives, damnable difficulty, and mediocre graphics only drag it further down. A beautiful soundtrack and creative battle system rise to the surface of the cesspool, but it's still a lost cause.

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAG—GARY:

Wow...this pig of a game ain't fun at all—and really, that's all that counts. *Saga* is a lot like playing a pen-and-paper RPG using a board game as your map, with the most arbitrary, cruel, and spiteful dungeon master ever. Yet I respect *Saga* for what it's trying to accomplish: This is a bold experiment that ultimately fails, but it fails brilliantly. Rent it once, just to experience something different. As a side effect, you'll probably appreciate traditional RPGs like *Final Fantasy* even more.



■ PlayStation 2 / Also On: Xbox, Game Boy Advance

WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED

Whatboarding?



Wakeboarding is not a crime. Grinding cultural treasures, however, is.

Good: Ingenious level design

Bad: Too similar to *Tony Hawk* for some
Kountry Korner: Dueling Banjos attack challenge



SHAWN: Set aside your extreme-sports snobbery for a second and *Murray* may actually appeal to you. Imaginative challenges, like leading a captive orca to the open sea and ferrying stranded livestock to safety, complement the first-rate water effects. Of course, even immaculately rendered H₂O can get monotonous, but look at the screens on this page and you'll see that *Murray* does more than wakes.

To reach the riverside houses and roller coasters bracketing the banks, though, you have to part with the horsepower that pulls you. And therein lies one clever-as-hell catch: When you release your towline, you lose momentum. To avoid being stranded and forfeiting accumulated combos, you have to reconnect to your tether by getting your waterlogged ass back to your boat. Ending your off-the-leash acrobatics with a coordinated rope catch gives your combos a sense of stone-solid completion you won't find anywhere else.

JENNIFER: This game gets no points for creativity whatsoever (no, discovering yet another sport to exploit with the footproof *Tony Hawk* formula doesn't count). That said, *Murray* is loads of fun and provides that twirly instant gratification every well-implemented action-sports title should. Like Shawn, I discovered a new sense of possibility once I learned how to manipulate the physics of that boat-rope combo, and the multiplayer co-op mode where one player drives the boat is way cool. It may be just another *Pro-Extreme-Sporter* like so many that came before, but

that ain't necessarily a bad thing.

JOHN D: I've been an action-sports-hating curmudgeon up until now, but damn it if this wakeboarding nonsense isn't fun. My *Hawk* and *Hoffman* experience has been mostly limited to yelling, "Quit grinding on my rails, ya punk kids!" so this *Hawk*-derived gameplay is fresh to me. Messing with the boat's towrope opens the trick book way the hell up, and I had a blast coming up with my own unique towline maneuvers. Landing the right tricks to complete stages did present a serious challenge—extreme wusses like me might want to rent first.



JOHN R.

2.0

SHANE

4.0

GARY

4.0

Publisher: Square Enix
 Developer: Square Enix
 Players: 1
 ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/1192558

SHAWN

9.0

JENNIFER

8.0

JOHN D.

7.5

Publisher: Activision 02
 Developer: Shaba Studios
 Players: 1-2
 ESRB: Everyone

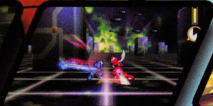
www.gamers.com/1134736

MEGAMAN NETWORK TRANSMISSION

Mega Man's first adventure
on the Nintendo GameCube™!



Story-line tie-in to the Mega Man Battle Network games.



Collect battle chips to stop your enemies & solve puzzles.



Uncover secret characters from the Mega Man universe.



Join the Anniversary
BASH



Mild Violence



CAPCOM

www.capcom.com/megaman

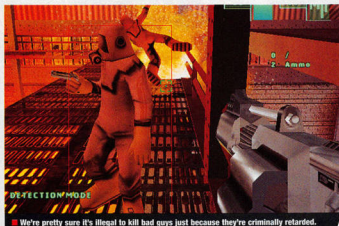


©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2003 ©CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2003. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. DEVELOPMENT BY ARIKA CO., LTD. ©CAPCOM, Shogakukan, ShoPro, TV Tokyo 2002. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM logo are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. MEGAMAN NETWORK TRANSMISSION is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube are trademarks of Nintendo. ©2001 Nintendo. ©, TM Warner Bros. 2003 The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

■ Xbox / Also On: None

ROBOCOP

Part man. Part machine. All crap



■ We're pretty sure it's illegal to kill bad guys just because they're criminally retarded.



■ (Left) Remember when RoboCop hunted giant rats in pools of milky sludge? Neither do we.

Good: Makes *RoboCop 3* seem not half-bad

Bad: No self-destruct button

Prime Directive: Run from this game



CRISPIN: Get Terminator on the blower—his baby-food-guzzling fellow cyborg RoboCop needs an intervention. Of chrome dome's first-person shooter suffers more major malfunctions than an AIBO robo dog run through a dishwasher. It starts with a story—some cliché-factory crud about a drug named BrainDrain—that makes *RoboCop 3* seem like...well, *RoboCop 1*. Then you get the legally insane enemy A.I., putrid visuals, crummy dialogue—the other reviewers will cover these misdemeanors. I'll lock onto the game's felony crime: It's plain of poorly assembled. Although the levels are the grimy kind of neo-urban settings we saw in the flicks, they feel slapped together. You just clock around for switches and keycards to reach the next area. Some doors open. Some don't. Even with *RoboCop's* "advanced" sensors (basically a filter that turns your screen blue), I still got lost and resorted to trial and error. And someone really needs to calibrate 'Cop's targeting sensors. He shoots locked-on bad guys exclusively in their 'nads. As if these numskulls didn't have enough grief.

BRYAN: If it's RoboCop's duty to serve and protect innocent civilians, then it's mine to protect you from purchasing this doodle. Fifty bucks for what? Mentally handicapped enemies, repetitive mission objectives, and some of the least-intentionally humorous dialogue ever. One look at the pools of stagnant, diluted milk that pass for water and you'll know what to expect visually. And I'm actually glad there's no multiplayer, since I wouldn't wish this pain on anyone else. Avoid this pile and go buy *Wolfenstein* if you're longing for a new shooter.

XBN—GREG O: You have the right to remain silent, dumfounded at the thought of having spent so much for so little. You have the right to blast endless poorly animated thugs who won't fire upon RoboCop when he's five feet away. You have the right to shoot crates, pull levers, and collect keycards until boredom becomes your new best friend. You have the right to sing the blues and stare at dull, washed-out levels for the duration. If you give up these rights, well, then bully for you.

CRISPIN	BRYAN	GREG O.
2.5	2.5	3.0

Publisher: Titus
Developer: Titus
Players: 1
ESRB: Mature

www.gamers.com/277424



■ *Slider* was made by the developers of *F-Zero* for GBA. Which begs the question: What happened?

■ GameCube / Also On: None

TUBE SLIDER

Who wants to slide some tube? C'mon, anyone?



■ It's like a water slide...except there's no water, bikinis, or fun.

Good: Vehicles reminiscent of *Wacky Races* (the cartoon)

Bad: All the other parts

We'd Rather Play: The original *Wipeout*



DEMIAN: *Tube Slider* takes a cynical view of the future...apparently there's nothing better to do than race homemade jalopies in big tubes at decidedly sensible speeds. While other postapocalyptic racers, like *Wipeout* and *F-Zero*, try to entice gamers with speed, sharp controls, more speed, and possibly crazy weapons, *Tube Slider* doesn't go for all that malarkey. It's dog slow, with shallow gameplay and a whole three varieties of power-ups (two of which give you a turbo; the third is an energy boost that, uh, allows you to turbo). But hey, let's not forget, it does have tubes.

Tube Slider's main gameplay innovation, aside from the tubes, is a tractor beam that siphons energy from racers ahead of you—it works OK and adds a bit of strategy, but it's not worth hanging a game around. A limp techno soundtrack and the most basic array of game modes possible (Tutorial, Grand Prix, Versus, and Time Attack) round out the forgettable experience. By the way, if the future does turn out to involve tube-based racing, I think I speak for Paul and Andrew when I say we're gonna be pissed.

GMR—ANDREW: Pissed is right. *Tube Slider* is the NASCAR of the 24th century: boring tracks, boring cars, and boring racing. My biggest problem with it is not knowing where to be on the track for maximum speed—the game obviously encourages tube sliding, so why can't I use the whole tube? And what good is the energy-jacking system when you're rarely close enough to someone for it to work? After experiencing the genre devotion that is *Tube Slider*, Sega's new *F-Zero* looks even better.

PAUL: Begin with *Wipeout*. Take away the varied terrain, all the weapons, the thumping soundtrack, and its ships' cool plasma-trail exhaust. Replace them with a turbo-stealing system that doesn't work very well, an eye-straining mishmash of backgrounds, and A.I. drivers who behave like bellicose fratboys in a mosh pit. Just for good measure, throw in some weak techno and questionable physics. Roll the whole mess into a tube and give it a name that inspires juvenile innuendo. Congratulations, you've created *Tube Slider*.

DEMIAN	ANDREW	PAUL
3.5	4.5	4.0

Publisher: NEC
Developer: NDCube
Players: 1-4
ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/1309391



Experience the action and excitement of Thoroughbred Racing!



G1 JOCKEY 3

- 10 racetracks with 35 courses including steeplechase races
- 4,000 playable horses with unique characteristics
- Ultimate realism! Changing weather and track conditions, Steward's inquiries, and falls
- Arcade action! 2-player split-screen racing
- Over 100 rival jockeys

- Start as a rookie and race to the elite G1 class! Compete for the best rides. Learn racing tactics from veteran jockeys. Work your horse into top form, set a racing schedule, and ride to victory!

JUNE 2003



The KOEI logo is a trademark of KOEI Co., Ltd. in Japan and/or other Countries.
G1 JOCKEY™ 3 is a trademark of KOEI Corporation and KOEI Co., Ltd.
© 2003 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved.
"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.
The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

PlayStation®2





■ Arcia lays down the law with twin peacemakers for one *Devil May Cry*-ish level.

■ PlayStation 2 / Also On: None

CHAOS LEGION

Rally a band of otherworldly brothers

Good: Building up your Legions adds depth
Bad: Too few enemy types makes it repetitive
Siest Androgynous Character: Delacroix



SHAWN: At first glance, *Chaos Legion* looks suspiciously like its hack-and-slash Capcom cousin, *Devil May Cry*. But in reality, it plays like a tactical strategy game that places you in near-complete control of units rather than having you issue orders with icons and cursors.

Commanding an entourage of supernatural soldiers is heady but fulfilling work. Some of your minions specialize in combating mechanical creatures, while others fare better against flesh and blood—so to eviscerate the opposition, you'll need to plan accordingly. Factor in artillery and protective units and the potential for strategy is staggering.

Yet because you do all this while controlling your own character, in reality, you'd need the dexterity of *Star Trek's* Data to consistently carry out all your calculations. Luckily, this inherent complexity is more rewarding than frustrating—spearheading your phalanx is always fun, even though enduring the pandemonium is the most you can hope

for at times. And you can always revisit completed levels, both to refine more-graceful approaches and to gain experience points for Legion upgrades—which, for me, ranks high on this game's long list of ingenious features.

JON D: Damn you, Capcom, for stealing the name of my future death-metal band! But bless your heart for attaching it to a gorgeous, action-laden game worthy of the rulesome name. *Legion* isn't just mindless melees—allies that grow with experience add the strategy and RPG-ish depth that make playtime fun. But my excitement started to deflate a few stages shy of the end. As the button-mashing ramps up near the too-sonic climax, the game relentlessly recycles the same enemies and bosses over and over. For the few hours you'll spend, *Legion* has "rental" written all over it—Shawn and Bry are just easy-to-please gaming newbies, I guess.

BRYAN: In addition to its lush visuals, *Legion* excels in two areas where most hack-and-slashers don't. First, it provides an engaging story (told through beautiful cut-scenes) that kept me on my toes till the very end. Second, as Shawn said, building up each legion's stats keeps the action from feeling monotonous. Sure, some of the dialogue is over-the-top hokey, and the game's *Spawn*-like creature collection could be more diverse—but these are really minor problems. I can only hope a sequel is on the way.



■ This massive boss changes its form more often than Michael Jackson.

■ GameCube / Also On: None

ULTIMATE MUSCLE: LEGENDS VS. NEW GENERATION

So much muscle, it's illegal in Uzbekistan



■ Wally Tusken is not as lovable and friendly as his name implies.



Good: Puts every *WWE* title's gameplay to shame
Bad: Some might find it too cartoony and simplistic
Best Character Name: Dik Dik Van Dik

CJ: Even though this is wrestling, it's unfair to put *Muscle* in the same ring with *WWE* games. The slow, plodding, and overly technical style of your run-of-the-mill wrestling game is gone, replaced by incredibly fast and furiously fun gameplay. The object here isn't to pin your foe, but rather to bust him out enough over-the-top moves to KO him flat on the mat. As if that isn't a different and welcome enough change, *Muscle's* cool cartoony visuals, whack-ass characters, and absurd plots separate it from the norm even further.

Of course, there are still areas to improve: The Story mode is short, there's no outside-the-ring action, some characters' attacks are way too powerful, and the Create-a-Character mode is low on options. But I've grown so tired of the same old never-changing "aim" wrestling games year after year that playing *Muscle* is like taking that first breath of fresh air after a decade of being trapped in a bank vault with the smelliest hobo on Earth.

BRYAN: Hulk Hogan, your T-shirt-ripping days are over. Games like *Muscle* prove the *WWE's* meatheads aren't essential for superior videogame grappling. You won't be disappointed with this game's high-octane pace, simple arcade controls, and flamboyant finishers. But, sorry CJ, not being able to pin opponents, brawl outside the ring, or use weapons lowers my excitement to the middle turnbuckle. Even so, *Muscle* whups *Wrestlemania X's* ass and clearly challenges *Def Jam Vendetta* for the Cube's championship belt.

SHAWN: It neither stars Ron Jeremy nor lengthens your wang, but *Ultimate Muscle* makes for a satisfying weekend nonetheless. And don't let the cutesy tone deter you; after all, *WWE* wrestlers wear their seriousness on their Technicolor codpieces, too. But I'll take *Muscle's* simplistic gameplay over the painfully slow pantomiming of true-to-life alternatives any day. Like the lighthearted rumbles of decades past, it's instantly accessible and satisfyingly fast. Simple but effective evasion and countering also offset the limited move lists, and *Muscle*-heads will appreciate the trove of unlockable toys.



Beyond the Mat

You can unlock more characters in Story mode by completing it with each New Generation wrestler. Once you've snagged all of those, though, opening the last few requires you to gather more of the collectible *Muscle* figures by cashing in your winnings. A new wrestler will appear when you've reached 100-, 200-, and 300-figure milestones.

SHAWN	JON D.	BRYAN
8.5	6.5	8.5

Publisher: Capcom
 Developer: Capcom
 Players: 1
 ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/151727

CJ	BRYAN	SHAWN
8.5	7.5	7.5

Publisher: Bandai
 Developer: AKI
 Players: 1-4
 ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/1132233



INDYCARTM SERIES

Featuring the
**INDIANAPOLIS
500**

THE OFFICIAL VIDEO GAME

Featuring the 14 venues of the IndyCarTM Series, including Indianapolis, Texas and Chicagoland.

All the speedway stars, including Sam Hornish Jr., Sarah Fisher and Dario Franchitti.

Up to 32 accurately modelled and visually stunning cars on track at once.

Thrash your rivals in Full Season, Single Race and Multiplayer game modes, plus the legendary Indy 500[®].

Refine your racing technique in the IndyCarTM Series Masterclass hosted by Indy 500[®] winner Eddie Cheever Jr.

Choose your gameplay –
arcade action to hardcore sim.

Create your own driver, and
unlock cool bonus features.

TV-style presentation
and atmosphere.



*"The speed, the sound, the sensation –
this game has it all."*
Sam Hornish Jr.

AVAILABLE MAY

Pre-order your copy online
www.codemastersusa.com



Visit www.esrb.org or
call 1-800-771-3772
for Rating Information.



PlayStation 2

Codemasters

GENIUS AT PLAYTM

© 2003 The Codemasters Software Company Limited ("Codemasters"). All rights reserved. "Codemasters" is a registered trademark owned by Codemasters. "GENIUS AT PLAY" is a trademark of Codemasters. "IRL", "Indy Racing League", "Indianapolis 500", "Indy 500" and "Indianapolis Motor Speedway" are registered trademarks of Brickyard Trademarks, Inc., used under license. "IndyCar" Series is a trademark of Brickyard Trademarks, Inc., used under license. All other copyrights or trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Developed by Brain in a Jar Limited. Published by Codemasters. "X" and "PlayStation" are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved.



Wario doesn't need fancy-pants water guns to settle his differences—he employs glittering fisticuffs instead.



GameCube / Also On: None

WARIO WORLD

Another Nintendo mega-franchise? Not quite

G. FORD: Mario's unscrupulous rival Wario is finally getting his big-time console break, and I'm diggin' it. First off, he's a cool character—Mario's goody-two-shoes antics just aren't connecting with the surly, *Grand Theft Auto*-lovin' kids of today, so a greedy anthero like Wario should be right up their alley. And to inject street cred into this GC debut, Nintendo enlisted the capable action vets at Treasure (makers of *Ikaruga* and the epic *Gunstar Heroes* for Sega Genesis), who've created an inventive, gameplay-rich run-and-jump romp.

As in a *Mario* game, Wario travels through a wacky 3D world trying to recapture a variety of delightful shiny objects. But this hop-n-bop miscrae isn't afraid to brawl, pulverizing enemies with his fists, smashing them with satisfying piledrivers, crushing them with his ample behind, and spinning them dizzy. The fighting system proves easy, responsive, and intuitive, and it delivers tons of fun. Even though most enemies are unremarkable, kicking the crud out of them never is, and it gets even

better during the amazing boss battles.

Wario World has a couple flaws, though. Offering only four worlds with two levels in each, the game ends far too soon. An ill-advised Continue system compounds the problem, letting you restart from the exact spot you die for a measly 50 coins (I had more than 25,000 by game's end). Wario delivers a great time while it lasts and is well worth checking out. Just don't expect a *Mario*-quality adventure.

C.J.: On the one hand, I like *Wario World*. It feels like an old-school 8-bit Nintendo platformer perfectly remade in 3D. The levels are tight, fast, and fun—less about aimless exploration and more about reflex-testing action. But on the other hand, I'm a little disappointed that it's so short and simplistic, and that it doesn't take more advantage of the GC's hardware. Plus, we hardly get to see a hint of Wario's innately evil personality (or any humor at all, really). That's forgivable in light of the fun gameplay, but the game's length and super-easy

difficulty aren't. *Wario World* could've been great—as it is, it's just good.

JENNIFER: I'm with CJ on the cool level design, but that's pretty much it. Wario's mindless punching gets real old real fast. Enemies respawn so quickly—move 10 steps and then double back and you'll generally find the pests back on the attack—that pummeling them gives you no advantage. I liked the first two worlds when I thought of them as a platformer with training wheels—just what the Cube kiddies need, right? Well, sort of. About halfway through, the training wheels come off, and your safe neighborhood street becomes an icy mountain road at night—a perilous journey only the most seasoned jumping-puzzle zealots (like, apparently, G. Ford and C.J.) will enjoy. Plus, the fiercely annoying boss battles had me fuming, hurling away the controller, and shouting expletives at the screen. *WW* might keep you entertained—if you like that sort of self-flagellating frustration.



Free sample of videocrack:

Owners of a Game Boy Advance and GC-to-GBA Link Cable get a neat bonus in *Wario World*. Certain treasures Wario finds allow you to transfer a trial level of the stunningly brilliant *Wario Ware, Inc.* to your GBA. Well, if you already own *Ware* it's a moot point, but these demos will likely hook some new microgamers.

Fun on a colossal scale

The boss-birthing masters at Treasure deliver a pantheon of mostly awesome end-of-level foes.



Treasure's platform games are renowned for offering plentiful encounters with massive, challenging bosses. *Wario World* doesn't disappoint. Granted, some are less-than-inspired and annoying (like *The Mean Emcee* of level 4-1), but others get pretty intense—like the first world's behemoth, *DinoMighty* (pictured). And unlike in Treasure's bargain-bin *Stretch Panic* for PS2, the levels before each boss are pretty damned fun, too.



Good: Classic, action-packed gameplay
Bad: Not nearly long enough
Garlic: Replenishes health; repels the ladies



G. FORD

7.5

CJ

7.0

JENNIFER

6.0

Publisher: Nintendo
 Developer: Treasure
 Players: 1
 ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/1153878

Wer ist Deine Mutti?
(Translation: Who's your mommy?)



\$5 OFF

Return to Castle Wolfenstein

Cashier Instructions: Scan coupon UPC. Scan qualifying product UPCs. Scan all other product(s) being sold. Press "Total." Select "Yes" to apply package pricing. Write "VOID" on the coupon and place in the register coupon media file.

© 2003 Best Buy



Good only at Best Buy retail stores in the United States. Not good in combination with other coupons or offers. Limit one coupon per title per customer. Not valid on prior purchases. Valid on in-stock items only. No dealers. Coupon must be presented at time of purchase. No copies. Coupon value is 1/100 of one cent. Good through 9/6/03.



Represents Mature Rating



Return To Castle Wolfenstein and all the games you're into,
and everything to play them on.

BestBuy.com



Hildebear
Attribute: Native

The bigger they are, the harder they beat the crap out of you.

Xbox / Also On: GameCube



PHANTASY STAR ONLINE: EPISODE I & II

Still addictive, now with voices in your head

Good: Voice chat makes this the best *PSO* yet

Bad: Spitscreen is almost totally useless

Don't Play With: "EGMshawn"—he's greedy times 10



SHOE: Mindless, repetitive, pointless story line...yet this action-RPG has managed to keep me enthralled for triple-digit hours' worth of gameplay through four versions now. Am I insane? Perhaps, but *PSO* fills that intrinsic gamer need to level up characters and find better and rarer items. It does this particularly well because of its sick graphics and cooperative online format (as with deathmatch shooters, it's so easy to get hooked when playing with friends). Just be warned that this addiction doesn't come cheap: You have to pony up the bucks for the game, Xbox Live, and a monthly fee (although in true drug-dealer style, Microsoft will give you the first two months free). It's worth it—as opposed to previous *PSOs*, you can voice chat here, which improves cooperative play tenfold. Once you get used to the slight lag, you'll never want to Phantasize with one hand on the keyboard again.

If you won't be going online, pass on *PSO*; spitscreen (with bad camera angles and an incomplete interface) and single-player don't offer the same buzz.

CJ: After logging a ton of hours in three prior versions, you'd think I'd be sick of clearing Rago's picturesque forests of Rappies by now. But like the other guys, I find *PSO* so addictive and fun to play that I just can't say no—and this Xbox incarnation is the best yet. Being able to use voice chat instead of stop-and-go typing improves gameplay so much that I require all future online RPGs to offer mic support. *PSO* is precisely the killer app Xbox Live needed. See you online!

MARK: To paraphrase Michael Corleone, "Just when I thought I was out of *PSO*, it pulls me back in." With so many ways to customize and improve your character (gain levels; find new armor, weapons, and spells; boost your Mag robot sidekick), this wildly addictive game is once again keeping me up all night—even two years after I first started playing it. Gripes? A few: Some graphics still pop into view, and the camera in spitscreen is atrocious. Still, voice chat makes this, by far, the best version of an already amazing experience.

Personality Check: Here are the types of players you'll encounter online.

Nice Guy Will be your pal and share treasure and money. Great to play with.	Greedy Grabs all the rewards for himself, even if he doesn't need 'em.	Loser Actually role-plays and demands that you stay in character.	Alpha Is just there to bother you. Voice chat is his deadliest weapon.	Waste-sid Can't play without first getting f'd up. Funny yet sad.	Motherly Takes care of Mags better than real-life pets. Fears Waste-olds.



Remind anyone else of *The House of the Dead*?

PlayStation 2 / Also On: None

RESIDENT EVIL: DEAD AIM

Misses the mark

Good: Creepy atmosphere

Bad: Too easy and short

Still Way Better Than: *Resident Evil: Survivor* (PS1)



MARK: If there's one area where this *Resident Evil* shooter is right on target, it's atmosphere. The undead shamble into the dim glow of your flashlight (a creepy effect stolen from *Silent Hill*), heads bobbing with eerily realistic animation. Shoot them just right and you'll blast zombies clean off their feet, blood splattering and smearing all over the walls. You can see why, despite its lack of storage boxes and (unfortunately) any real puzzles, *Dead Aim* nails that spooky *Resident Evil* vibe; it's too bad that, as a light-gun shooter, it's so far off the mark. The new stealth aspect—enemies don't attack until they see or hear you—is an interesting idea, but in practice it adds little technique. Actually, along with the fact that your mutated opponents can't open doors or handle stairs, it further encourages simply running past the bad guys—the most effective and least enjoyable way of playing the game. Other disappointments include noninteractive backgrounds (windows don't even shatter), precious few moments in which aiming or timing is necessary, and little reason for replay (despite a playtime of under three hours).

JOHN R: With all the advances in game-play and technology that we've seen over the years, you'd think Capcom would be able to come up with a light-gun game that involved more than just shooting the same three or four enemies through the same dull, repetitive environment for three hours. *Dead Aim* brings absolutely nothing new to the genre. Destructible

environments? Nope. The ability to blow off zombies' limbs? Not here. Some puzzles, or a two-player mode at least? Bzzt. The result? A game you really don't need to play.

CRISPIN: Snore...snore...huh...whazzat? It's my turn to chime in? Sorry, but the near total lack of horror in this survival-horror gun game bored me plumb to sleep. I'm not sure what zombie Love Boat Mark was on, because *Dead Aim*'s cruise ship and water-treatment plant locales are just so...dead. Most of the bland corridors and rooms look alike, turning much of the game into an aimless trot through a maze full of zombies you can easily troop right past. Of course, you'll get maximum enjoyment if you play with a light gun, but the bosses and story are strictly low caliber. OK, back to bed.



Fighting a boss while a timer counts down? In a *Resident Evil* game? No way!

SHOE	CJ	MARK
9.0	9.0	9.0

Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: Sonic Team
Players: 1-4 (spitscreen or online)
ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/269919

MARK	JOHN R.	CRISPIN
5.0	4.0	4.0

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Players: 1
ESRB: Mature

www.gamers.com/268659



The vile Robotnik returns in the form of a largely nonthreatening pinball target.

Game Boy Advance / Also On: None

SONIC PINBALL PARTY

Sonic + balls + your pocket = party



You'll fling your balls through a variety of tables based on the series' most memorable levels.

Good: Awesome table variety
Bad: Uneven difficulty level
Sonic Team Tease: Where's the new Nights game?



SHANE: No videogame can truly re-create the intoxicating mix of flashing lights, satisfying physics, and smoky back-alley sleaze that typifies a real-life arcade pinball experience. So all virtual pinball games should do what *Sonic* does here—sweeten the deal by offering tons of different tables, minigames, and bonus features.

With a handful of unique *Sonic*-themed tables, a few based on *Nights: Into Dreams* (Sega Saturn), and even a wildly fun *Samba de Amigo* (Dreamcast) stage, it's damned near impossible to get bored here. Plus, in addition to the quick thrills of the Arcade mode and the sizable challenge of the Story mode (beating Metal Sonic requires mad flipper dexterity that John and Jen evidently lack), you can spend the rings you earn in a variety of zany Casinopolis minigames. Still want more goofy distractions? Link up with some friends and engage in fun multiplayer games like *Hockey* and *Hot Potato* (all with only one cartridge, to boot). All told, *Sonic* kept my GBA happily buzzin' through many bus trips and comes highly recommended.

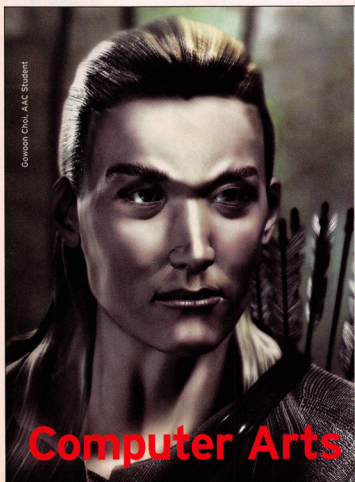
JOHN R: It's hard to get terribly excited about new pinball games these days, but of those currently available for GBA, *Sonic Pinball Party* is definitely my top pick. *Sonic's* tables aren't especially innovative, but they do offer quite a bit of variety, and the gameplay is fast-paced and fun. Also, the Story mode makes for a nice touch, though it's too tough, honestly. And serious pinheads may want to lower the volume, as the sound effects are rather disappointing, but everything else in *Sonic* is good to go.

JENNIFER: *Sonic* achieves a nice balance: With solid pinball play, it evokes memories of simpler times while still offering up fun little multiplayer gems and surprising unlockable minigames. Also, I truly dug the rockin' music and cool graphics. But I never achieved pinball bliss. The menu interface keeps you from being able to restart new games quickly, and the time limit in some Story mode stages just seems pointlessly difficult. Nonwizards will be stuck on that second battle for way too long—not fun.

SHANE	JOHN R.	JENNIFER
8.0	7.5	7.0

Publisher: Sega
 Developer: Sonic Team
 Players: 1-4 Linked
 ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/1301071



Corvosa Choi, AAC Student

2D & 3D Animation | 3D Modeling
 Character Design | Computer Graphics
 Digital Imaging | Filmmaking | Game Design
 Visual Effects | Web Design | And more...

AA | BFA | MFA Degrees
 Portfolio Development | Online Programs

Apply Now for Fall, Spring & Summer Semesters
 High School Scholarships & Teacher Grants Available



AcademyOfArtCollege
 SAN FRANCISCO

1.800.544.ARTS | www.academyart.edu
 79 New Montgomery St., San Francisco, CA 94105
 Nationally Accredited by ACICS, NASAD & FIDER
 Founded in 1929

Computer Arts

■ Game Boy Advance / Also On: Super NES

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

DK's banana horde is looking a little overripe



■ An annoying minecart level? That's spelled F-U-N!



■ These graphics once set the gaming world ablaze. Now, not so much.



■ Mix State of Emergency with the contents of an unflushed toilet and you'll have Boomstick.

■ PlayStation 2 / Also On: Xbox

EVIL DEAD: A FISTFUL OF BOOMSTICK

Proof that videogames do incite violence



■ Asherdaam Vallon avenges his slain father by attacking waves of retarded zombies.

Good: Country fans can revisit this antiquated bestseller
Bad: This Donkey's characters are for the bib-and-cribble set
Time Has: Not been kind to this game's once-rare visuals



CJ: When *Donkey Kong Country* first came out on the Super NES nine years ago, everyone (including myself) loved it because of its newfangled "rendered" graphics. But time has made DKC's narcotic visual effects wear off, and I now see it as an average platformer filled with gimmicky nonsense, collect-a-thon gameplay, and some of the lamest characters ever.

Look at the screenshots here—remember when you thought this looked incredible? The enemies, with their can't-be-more-than-two frames of animation, just look ridiculous now, and the silly-ass bosses are even worse. The gameplay hasn't aged gracefully either. Most of DKC's levels have some inane, unfun theme, like run-away minecarts or shooting DK out of a barrel. As if the memorization-based gameplay wasn't already annoying, the screen has been cropped to fit the GBA. Now, you'll wrestle with unfair blind jumps and unseen enemies...enough to make you want to throw your GBA at the nearest wall.

My advice: Keep those fond DKC memories intact by never playing it again.

G. FORD: It's probably better to revisit this *Country* via nostalgic SNES memories than by actually re-playing it. Besides the graphics, which (despite CJ's whining) still look good, the game has not held up well. Sure, the minecart riding and barrel hopping remain mildly fun, but you can only spell "Kong" so many times before the thrill disappears. There's probably enough fun here to warrant one play-through, but only if you've already conquered the comparably timeless *Mario Advances*.

CRISPIN: CJ and G. Ford are spanking these monkeys too hard. Yeah, DKC is kiddy, has weak bosses, and suffers from many stupid character design (although the animation is slick—again, don't listen to CJ). But despite all that, the game offers more variety than the zillion other me-too sidescrollers on GBA. Nearly every level has its own twist—minecarts, swinging vines, baddie-freezing stoplights, etc. It adds up to a fun, challenging time, although the busy backgrounds make play on the backlit GBA SP a must.

CJ	G FORD	CRISPIN
5.0	6.0	7.0

Publisher: Nintendo
 Developer: Rare/NST
 Players: 1-2
 Rating: Everyone

URL: www.gamers.com/117340

Good: Bruce Campbell's sporadically funny quips
Bad: Sense-bending puzzles
Legal Note: Deemed inhumane for use in POW interrogations



SHAWN: Playing Boomstick is more excruciating than having your spincter sewn shut and being force-fed prunes. Honestly, I would've paid to not play this game. Counterintuitive puzzles eke several hours out of a single level but fail to create even the illusion of progress. What seemed to be part of a solution always betrays another puzzle in infinite regress until nothing short of a phone call to the game's producer for help can end your agony (which, I kid you not, is what I resorted to).

When it comes to venting steam on the decomposing Dearborn townsfolk, you'd assume a sawed-off shotgun, diamond-toothed chainsaw, and Bruce Campbell's canned one-liners would suffice. Instead, you're repeatedly blindsided and slain by countless cheap shots. And if you didn't tap one of your limited save tokens, it's back to square fricken' one. Pointlessly retracing steps of ill-conceived puzzles and memorizing cut-scenes I couldn't skip only multiplied my misery. Pay someone who hates you 20 bucks to hide your car keys instead.

XBN—GREG O: This sugar, baby, tastes oddly like Gym Sock Surprise—and we ate it so you don't have to. Hero Ash, normally a kick-ass brawler, has been turned into a mere errand boy in the frustrating *Boomstick*. He has to perform numerous dull fetch quests, but since none of the game's environments has a map, you'll have no solid idea where to go. Ammo and health packs are limited, too, ensuring Ash is only suited for either running away or dying. Ouch. Hail to the sting.

DEMIAN: I don't expect a high degree of believability from my *Evil Dead* games, but when a zombieified saber-toothed tiger gives up shotgun shells when killed, well, the impulse to set the controller down and walk away is irresistible. Shawn and Greg outlined the game's major faults—but I'd like to heap a little more scorn on the combat system. Who needs combos or special moves? Not us, apparently. It's more fun to run away, attack briefly, and then run again. Not even Ash's signature double entendres can save this thing.

SHAWN	GREG O.	DEMIAN
2.0	3.0	3.0

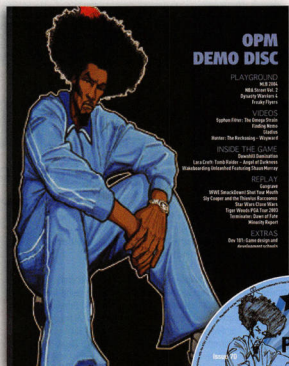
Publisher: THQ
 Developer: VS Interactive
 Players: 1
 Rating: Mature

URL: www.gamers.com/1143623

If you bought all
these games, it
would cost about
\$186.



**Why not try them all first in the
Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
for less than \$10?**



PLAYABLE DEMOS

- MLB 2004
- NBA STREET VOL. 2
- DYNASTY WARRIORS 4
- FREAKY FLYERS

REPLAY

- GUNGRAVE
- WWE SMACKDOWN! SHUT YOUR MOUTH
- SLY COOPER AND THE THIEVIUS RACCOONUS
- STAR WARS CLONE WARS
- TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003
- TERMINATOR: DAWN OF FATE
- MINORITY REPORT

INSIDE THE GAME

- INSIDE THE GAME
- DOWNHILL DOMINATION
- LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER-ANGEL OF DARKNESS
- WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED FEATURING SHAUN MURRAY

EXTRAS

- DEV 101: GAME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS

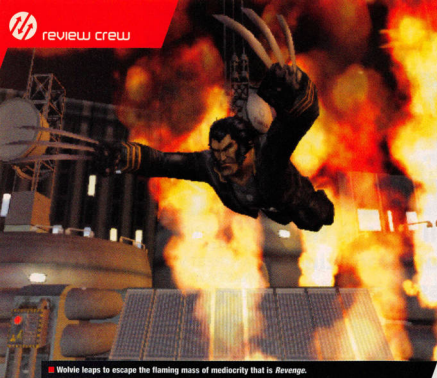
VIDEOS

- SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN
- FINDING NEMO
- GLADIUS
- HUNTER: THE RECKONING-WAYWARD

**LOOK FOR DISK 70 IN THE JULY 2003 ISSUE OF
OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE ON SALE NOW!**

DISC 70 PRESENTED BY OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION
MAGAZINE AND PLAYSTATION UNDERGROUND

 **PlayStation**
MAGAZINE



Wolverine leaps to escape the flaming mass of mediocrity that is *Revenge*.



Logan attacks Lady Deathstrike in a fit of manicure envy.

PlayStation 2 / Also On: Xbox, GC

X2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE

A slight cut above most steaming coils of comic-book-based crap

SHAWN: If as a kid you used kitchen utensils to pantomime Logan's claw strikes, you're in for some bittersweet gaming. No other *X-Men* game so fully realizes the Canuckhead's many talents or captures the character's essential badassness as well as *Revenge* does. I rarely tire of springing from the shadows to disembowel unwary watchmen. And while most of the levels are set in a visually drab military complex, there's enough diversity in their design to keep things exciting.

But several problems keep *Revenge* from being a stellar action game instead of a semisolid use of licensed material. The boss battles epitomize most of the game's shortcomings: It's obvious that butchering superfoes was meant to require improvisation, yet the correct approach always feels contrived, such as impaling Sabertooth midleap. And long after you identify your adversary's weakness, you'll keep combating uncooperative controls, continue after continue, before claiming victory. The same quality-control prob-

lems carry over to the stealth missions—there's rarely more than a single intended path to circumvent booby traps, and shadow kills, though rewarded, are only sporadically necessary. When secrecy is a must, the stodgy A.I. insists you follow its hard-and-fast rules rather than showing any real creativity. He may be the best there is at what he does, but Wolverine still has a few gaming lessons to learn.

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAG—CHRIS B: It's a good thing I don't have adamantium claws myself—there's a good chance they'd have taken out a few controllers as I played *Revenge*. This game is tough...but usually for the wrong reasons. I can't help feeling I would have had a much easier time getting through it if the shoddy control—especially noticeable during boss fights—had received a little more attention. What's with making me awkwardly hold down L2 to stay in Stealth mode? Also, while the game looks all

right, the environments lack detail. Despite these shortcomings, I still had a genuinely good time playing as one of my comic-book heroes—but it's by no means a great game. Logan's diehard followers should give it a rental.

JOE: A comic fan couldn't ask for a better story line or cast of characters in a Wolverine game, but unlike Chris, I wouldn't even recommend *Revenge* as a rental. It's unnaturally hard, with save points so few and far between, you'll definitely relate to Wolverine when he goes into a Berserker Rage. I'm a pretty even-tempered cat, but I came close to eviscerating my television several times—it's that frustrating. I was even forced to replay a half-hour stretch of the game six times. Unfun.

There are good ideas behind *Wolverine's* stealthy gameplay, but his mutant powers are poorly implemented and the game camera will simply slay you. Don't be fooled by its excellent production values—it's just beautiful junk.



Boss Battle Catharsis: Each boss fight is more infuriating than the last, but we guarantee that after dueling his cheap ass, you'll want to buy a Sabertooth action figure just so you can force-feed it to a garbage disposal. (Save yourself an hour of tedious trial and error by executing a Strike move as he leaps at your head.)

X-Men Xtras

There are plenty of unlockables to keep patient gamers playing. Here's some of the sweeter swag.



Strike Attacks: Quiet kills earn you dog tags. Grab 10 tags to learn a new combo.



Costumes: Search the levels for costumes from Wolverine's classic wardrobe.



Cerebro: You can also uncover entries in Xavier's mutant encyclopedia.



The harking Wolverine head near the Health bar conveys mad emotional range. Guest star Rob Zombie on the bottom right doesn't appear too pleased, either.

Good: Explores Wolverine's other, often overlooked talents
Bad: Bothersome boss battles
Lady Deathstrike: Ain't half as hot as the flick's hoochie-mama



SHAWN

5.5

CHRIS B.

5.5

JOE

4.0

PUBLISHER: Activision
 DEVELOPER: Genepool/Warthog
 PLAYERS: 1
 ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/97728



■ If you think this racing looks sweet, imagine doing it to a Manowar soundtrack!

■ Xbox / Also On: PlayStation 2, GameCube

ONLINE

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

Creating 20-car pileups for fun and profit

Good: Risk/reward system
Bad: No licensed cars
The Cure For: Sunday drivers



G. FORD: Reviewing *Burnout 2* for GameCube last month, I got my first taste of the series and was totally blown away. I've always enjoyed good arcade racers (with fond memories of *SF Rush* for N64), and *Burnout 2* is this generation's king. It jump-starts the genre with a vicious kick to the teeth—an ingenious risk/reward system that gives you boosts for pulling stunts like dodging traffic, catching air, and drifting.

Xboxers luck out with the most polished *Burnout* yet, and a handful of thoughtful tweaks will inspire envy in PS2 and GC vets. On the other consoles, after unlocking three cars or so, you earn a practically maxed-out car, giving you no incentive to use weaker unlockables. Now, new cars gradually improve in various areas, so you'll actually want to check out each successive ride. The other big improvement: music. This Xbox revision gives you a wider soundtrack selection (some are at least bearable, if not enjoyable). Plus, you can rip your own tunes into the game. In all, this is the best version of an already addictive experience.

BRYAN: Shame on me for waiting so long to try out this glorious racer. *Burnout 2*'s kamikaze driving had me hooked—I couldn't stop until I'd unlocked every vehicle and course in the single-player campaign. Multiplayer is also a blast, and the Crash minigames are superaddictive. The Xbox Live score-ranking feature is barely worth mentioning, though. Hopefully, a sequel will offer real online action (and licensed cars). Wish list aside, if Ford's comments and mine don't convince you to play *Burnout 2*, then shame on you.

PAUL: *Burnout 2* will thrill lead-footed gamers with its awesome boost system and wicked sense of speed. It's a great game with some rough edges, like occasional rubbery physics and an irritating parade of recap screens after every damn race. Unlike G. Ford, I think the car selection remains weak: There's always one ride that clearly trumps the rest. Music doesn't really affect gameplay, but the Xbox's ability to play the Pixies (or even Poison) while you compete is a nice addition to this swift arcade racer.



G. FORD

8.5

BRYAN

8.5

PAUL

7.5

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Criterion Games
Players: 1-4
ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/56243

S A

i Y U K



THE JOURNEY BEGINS INCLUDES 5 EPISODES, A BONUS POSTER AND COPIOUS DVD EXTRAS

ALSO AVAILABLE IN A SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION WITH AN EXCLUSIVE T-SHIRT AND A CUSTOM ART BOX

APRIL 2003



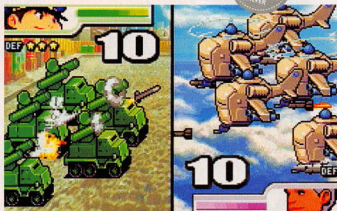
WWW.ADVFILMS.COM



Game Boy Advance / Also On: None

ADVANCE WARS 2: BLACK HOLE RISING

War: Who is it good for?



The classic Army vs. Air Force rivalry gets out of hand sometimes.



(Left) Some levels let you fire wide-area missiles. (Right) Scope out your stylish user-created map.



(Left) Heavy getting zool! Crie! (Center) Lione from the Thundercats strikes a pose.

Xbox / Also On: GameCube

BLOODY ROAR EXTREME

This ailing beast needs a trip to the vet



Images courtesy of the Fox network's When Animals Attack!

Good: The Campaign mode now has much more variety
Bad: Basic gameplay has hardly changed
Hardcore: The final continent. Newbies need not enlist



SHOE: This war is one helluva mixed bag. Veterans from the first *AW* will be a little disappointed that the designers poured all of their energy into making the Campaign mode more interesting, and almost none into making new units, which would greatly spice up the gameplay. How hard would it have been to rip off ideas from any other strategy title, like burrowing tanks or demolition crews? As it is, the *déjà vu* in *AW2* hits you like a 40-megaton bomb. Even the new walking-tank unit and super-powers don't freshen up the experience. Is *AW2* meant more for first timers, then?

Luckily, that Campaign mode is one fantastic peace offering. Fans will dig the insane variety—from explosive volcanoes to objectives involving pocket-sized weapons of mass destruction, and more. The later stages are tough, though—so tough that you really have to play through them with the exact strategic plan the designers had in mind; you almost feel like a rat in a brain-slumping maze. Halfway through *AW2*, nonhardcore players will give up and go *AWOL*.

BRYAN: Shoe's dead-on about how little has changed from the first *AW*. The sequel packs the same simple visuals and strategy system, but I think the rewarding gameplay's even better this time around. Trust me when I say you'll work your noodle overtime commanding troops and plotting the best routes to seize enemy bases. Diverse mission objectives spice up solo play, and challenging (and usually losing to) strategy gurus like Shoe in multiplayer still rocks. Military analysts predict that *AW2* is about to invade my personal GBA library.

JOE: If you loved *Advance Wars*, you need to play *Advance Wars 2*, and if you missed the last game, this is a superlative to start. It's incredibly fun and addictive. Be warned, though, it's *hard*. And I mean hard to the point where if you make one wrong move, it might be best just to start a round completely over. Still, it's very worth the serious time and effort you'll invest plowing through its tactical depths. Just be prepared to ignore work, school, and loved ones for awhile. A long while.

SHOE

8.0

BRYAN

8.0

JOE

8.5

Publisher: Nintendo
 Developer: Intelligent Systems
 Players: 1-4 (Link or Hot Seat)
 ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/1294626

Good: Puffin-tastic characters are so bad they're good
Bad: Jenny the Bat is naughty
Still Better Than: *Kakuto Chojin*



PAUL: Contrary to its name, *Bloody Roar Extreme* is anemic, mewling, and mild. As in the series' previous games, fighters begin as humans and transform into feral beasts midbout to tear each other apart with claws and fangs. That notion could make a fine fighter, but *BRX* is eviscerated by stylistic and technical failings.

First off, you'll find a particularly motley (read: embarrassing) crew of brawlers here. The Chameleon, Rabbit, and Cat-girl look downright ridiculous next to more toothsome competitors like the Wolf and Lion. And why include losers like the Mole and the Insect before nature's better fighters?

Laughable characters aside, this game just ain't fun. It's so simple that even experienced players fare better pounding one button than trying to execute combos or reversals. I had *Karate Champ* (NES) flashbacks when my characters refused to take their opponents. The lack of moves lists in Training mode, absurdly cheap A.I. opponents, and dull arenas make *BRX* even harder to enjoy. Even the tykes for whom it's intended should avoid this shambles.

SHAWN: Why visit this unaccredited zoo of mediocrity when you can get more satisfying thrills from the non-furry stars of *DOA3* or the upcoming *Soul Calibur II*? *BRX*'s sickly critters are so sloppy that strategy is moot—pecking a single button produces seven-hit strings, shockingly misstepping results in beasts that bare more back than fang, and throws skip jarringly into preset cut-scenes. You can't expect studied grace from animals, but where's the ferocity and guile? *Bloody Roar's* keepers best clean this cage quick if they want any visitors.

GAMENOW—SUSHI-X: I am usually at peace in the world of beasts, but *BRX* is something else entirely. Its goofy characters and lackluster environments pale compared to those in other Xbox fighters. And the simplistic button mashing combat mucks the natural ferocity, grace, and patience that my real-life animal friends once channeled into my deadly mantis stance. Infected by *BRX*'s mediocrity, I now move in lame, predictable ways, and require months of meditation and fasting to regain my power.

PAUL

4.0

SHAWN

5.0

SUSHI-X

4.0

Publisher: Konami
 Developer: Hudson Soft
 Players: 1-2
 ESRB: Teen

www.gamers.com/1061089



■ Gohan hones his martial arts skills against a dastardly band of wild bears and snakes.

■ Game Boy Advance / Also On: None

DRAGON BALL Z: LEGACY OF GOKU II

More of the same, if you know what I'm Saiyan



■ (Left) Saddened by our mediocre reviews of his new adventure, Goku jumps off a cliff.

Good: Play as five of the most popular *DBZ* characters
Bad: Too much random wandering and boring fighting
Covers the: Trunks, Android, and Cell sagas



CJ: Like its predecessor, *Legacy of Goku II* has a lot going for it—impressive visuals, a decent soundtrack, and boatloads of beloved *DB* characters that will no doubt endear it to the Z hardcore. But underneath the surface, it suffers from a few annoying problems. For starters, while this is a longer quest than the original *Legacy*, its length is mostly due to having to level up via lots of repetitive, random battles. Would a Saiyan warrior like Piccolo really spend half an hour killing woodland creatures to gain experience? I don't think so. And the combat stinks—attacks often look like they're striking the air, yet they still somehow manage to connect. Bah! Padding out the gameplay even further is a boatload of fetch quests, like the unbelievably complicated task of getting Gohan past a crowd of people, which involves finding a sandwich, a newspaper, an antique record, and a crashed school bus in order to start a parade. Hey, wait...couldn't Gohan just, ya know, fly over? Unless you're a huge *DBZ* fan already, you'll probably want to skip this *Legacy*.

SHAWN: Why are Super Saiyans running endless errands for every schmuck they encounter? Every minute squandered fetching autographs and snack food is time I could've spent saving the world. And if I really do possess the power to annihilate whole planets, why couldn't I keep a few stray dogs at bay? Seriously, for most of the game, if I wasn't being someone's bitch, I was running scared from pissant critters. The overarching plot is fittingly epic and the graphics are fine, but plebeian puzzles and problem-fraught combat guarantee frustration in this humdrum quest.

JOHN R: Despite its numerous flaws and ridiculously short length, I somehow managed not to utterly despise the first *Legacy* game. This sequel is definitely better, yet it still suffers from many of the same fundamental problems. Most notably, the shoddy hit detection makes fighting enemies highly frustrating. On the good side, the graphics and sound are very solid, and the controls much better. As a *DBZ* RPG it suffices, but doesn't particularly impress.

CJ

5.5

SHAWN

5.0

JOHN R.

6.0

Publisher: Atari
Developer: Webfoot Technologies
Players: 1
ESRB: Everyone

www.gamers.com/134060

REVIEWS WRAP-UP

Slipping through the cracks of gaming



In addition to the games our Crew judged this month, a few other titles will stealthily creep onto store shelves in the coming weeks. We had a chance to check them out, but due to space constraints, global marketing concerns, and the mysterious power of sunspots we weren't able to give 'em full reviews. Here's a quick look.

Chessmaster

First off, we've always loved the Chessmaster himself—the wild-eyed hobo whose face has graced every Chessmaster box since we were young. He's a stunning archetype for every filthy psycho you see playing street chess. Ubi Soft's PS2 game is definitely worthy of his mug—it offers bitchin' 3D-animated pieces, online play, and tutelage from a chess whiz. Plus, it's only 20 bucks.



Shrek Super Party

When we asked CJ (who suffered through the Xbox version in *EGM* #163) to play the GameCube version of TDK's *Super Party*, he replied simply, "F*** you." Apparently, this turd is unpolishable, and he advises that even devoted Shrek fans avoid it at all costs and buy *Mario Party 4* instead.

High Heat MLB Baseball 2004

Since the PS2 and Xbox versions of 3DO's *High Heat* ranked as our favorite hardball sims this year, we're pleased to announce that their tardy Cub cousin is just as great. You'll have to look past the slightly lame visuals, but the awesome gameplay and bottomless statistical depth make it the serious baseball fan's best bet.

G1 Jockey 3

It seems that every month's Wrap-Up is



contractually obligated to feature at least one horse-racing sim. And Koel's *G1 Jockey 3* for PS2 is even a tiny bit better than last month's *Gallop Racer*, since *G1* has over 4,000 unique horses! Seriously, check it out if you dig the horses.

Also, a few games we expected to review never made it to the party: *Enter the Matrix*, *The Hulk*, and *Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness* all failed to arrive in time for judgment. They'll all be out by the time you read this (well, except *Tomb Raider*). The *Hulk* and *Matrix* publishers claimed that review copies weren't available because they contained sensitive movie assets, so you'll be heading into the unknown if you lay down the cash.

Meanwhile, Lara Croft's true fate remains entirely shrouded in mystery,

■ (Left to right) The Chessmaster will take your queen and your wallet; don't RSVP for Shrek's Party; and *G1 Jockey* fulfills your wildest equine fantasies.



REVIEW ARCHIVE

A second look at notable releases from days gone by



.hack Part 2: Mutation PS2 (Also On: None) 6.5, 6.5, 8.0
■ An average RPG with a neat concept—you play in a virtual online world gone berserk

Apex XB (Also On: None) 8.0 **Silver**
■ You don't just haul ass in this racer—you build your own autos and run a car factory

Auto Modellista PS2 (Also On: None) 5.0, 5.5, 7.0
■ Crappy handling ruins a gorgeous-looking online racer

Batman: Dark Tomorrow GC (Also On: XB) 2.0, 1.5, 1.0 **Shame**
■ Gaming's answer to the box-office hemorrhoid *Batman and Robin*

BMX XXX XB (Also On: PS2, GC) 2.5, 3.0, 3.5
■ Less about strippers than it is about making you play a stripped-down *Dave Mirra* clone

Burnout 2: Point of Impact PS2 (Also On: GC) 8.5, 8.0, 8.5 **Silver**
■ The sequel to this arcade racer fixes a lot of the issues we had with the original

Capcom vs. SNK 2: EO XB (Also On: PS2, GC) 7.5, 7.5, 9.0 **Silver**
■ Xbox Live is the real draw in this fighting fan's dream come true

Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow GBA (Also On: None) 9.5, 9.0, 9.5 **Gold**
■ With its excellent soul-stealing system, *Aria* outclasses its forerunners



Conflict: Desert Storm 5.5, 5.5, 6.5
GC (Also On: PS2, XB)
■ Co-op combat nearly saves the day

Dark Cloud 2 8.0, 8.0, 9.5 **Silver**
PS2 (Also On: None)
■ An addictive action-RPG with a sim twist

Def Jam: Vendetta 7.0, 8.5, 7.5
PS2 (Also On: GC)

■ *Aria of Sorrow* has golems aplenty.
■ Hip-hop stars and wrestling actually works. Word to your mutha

Devil May Cry 2 PS2 (Also On: None) 7.0, 7.0, 8.0
■ Dante and hottie-in-need Lucia blast through a cruddy plot in this too-easy sequel

greatest hit or miss?



PS2

STUNTMAN

■ Publisher: Infogrames
■ Developer: Reflections
■ Originally Released: June 2002

Original Scores: 6.5, 4.5, 8.5

Maybe more of a near-miss than a full-on dud, *Stuntman* failed to live up to most gamers' lofty expectations. Despite its pedigree with the mega-popular *Driver* series, developer Reflections didn't deliver—choppy visuals, sluggish control, and unforgiving difficulty leech most of the fun from this Hollywood stunt-driving sim.

Dead or Alive: Xtreme Beach Volleyball
XB (Also On: None) 7.5, 8.0, 6.0

■ Scientists are working to invent a nude code for this beach sport's bouncing she-ninjas

Dragon Ball Z: Budokai PS2 (Also On: None) 8.0, 7.5, 7.0
■ *Budokai* stands above any of the previous attempts to turn the series into a fighter

Dragon Ball Z: Ultimate Battle 22 PS1 (Also On: None) 2.0, 1.5, 2.0
■ Someone crapped in a jewel case and passed it off as a *DBZ* game

Dynasty Warriors 4 PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 7.0, 8.5
■ Obese warriors in obscure settings snacking on dim sum and severing heads

EverQuest Online Adventures PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 5.0, 6.0
■ Ugly visuals hampered our online quest for fun

The Getaway PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 6.0, 8.0
■ It looks like a *GTA* clone but plays like a Guy Ritchie flick, complete with naughty words

Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee GC (Also On: XB) 7.0, 7.0, 7.5
■ It's all fun and games till some monster gets hit in the eye with the Seattle Space Needle

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City PS2 (Also On: None) 10, 10, 10 **Platinum**
■ As if you don't already know why this game received our highest award

High Heat Baseball 2004 PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 9.0 **Gold**
■ The most realistic baseball sim on the market—period

Hitman 2 PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 9.0 **Gold**
■ With elements from *MGS* and *Max Payne*, *Hitman 2* is, quite simply, a hit

The House of the Dead III XB (Also On: None) 7.5, 7.0, 7.0
■ Nothing new will shock you in this formulaic zombie shooter, but it's still solid fun

Ikaruga GC (Also On: None) 8.5, 8.0, 8.0 **Silver**
■ One incredibly innovative, wickedly addictive shooter

Indiana Jones & the Emperor's Tomb XB (Also On: PS2) 5.5, 8.5, 8.5
■ Looks like Ms. Croft has some competition raiding tombs

Legends of Wrestling II GC (Also On: PS2, XB) 7.0, 6.0, 5.0
■ More like local-access television than *Wrestlemania*'s glamorous theatrics

Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker GC (Also On: None) 9.5, 10, 10 **Gold**
■ GC owners can't go wrong with *Zelda*'s gorgeous cartoon visuals and classic gameplay

Magic Pengel: The Quest for Color PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 8.0, 7.5
■ Homemade monsters add color to mundane battles

Medal of Honor: Frontline GC (Also On: PS2, XB) 7.0
■ The last great war makes for a great old time—especially with multiplayer

MLB Slugfest 20-04 PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 8.0, 7.0, 6.5
■ Tons of multiplayer fun, but don't expect the depth of a baseball sim

Midnight Club II PS2 (Also On: XB) 9.0, 8.0, 9.5 **Silver**
■ An unrelenting sense of speed and total disregard for realistic physics

NBA Street Vol. 2 PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 9.5, 8.5, 8.5 **Silver**
■ A mix of both new- and old-school flava makes this baller a rockin' sequel

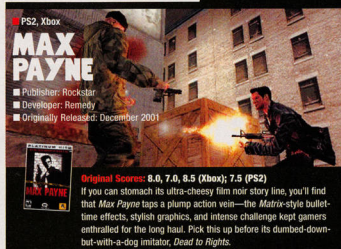
Panzer Dragoon Orta XB (Also On: None) 9.0, 8.5, 9.0 **Silver**
■ Most beautiful on-rails shooter imaginable, with a vast trove of amazing secrets

greatest hit or miss?

PS2, Xbox

MAX PAYNE

■ Publisher: Rockstar
 ■ Developer: Remedy
 ■ Originally Released: December 2001



Original Scores: 8.0, 7.0, 8.5 (Xbox); 7.5 (PS2)

If you can stomach its ultra-cheesy film noir story line, you'll find that *Max Payne* taps a plump action vein—the *Matrix*-style bullet-time effects, stylish graphics, and intense challenge kept gamers enthralled for the long haul. Pick this up before its dumbed-down-but-with-a-dog imitator, *Dead to Rights*.

Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire GBA (Also On: None) 7.5, 6.5, 7.5
 ■ Pikachu and pals are back, but precious little has improved since *Gold/Silver*

Primal PS2 (Also On: None) 6.5, 6.5, 8.0

■ A beautiful, interesting adventure kinda compensates for crap combat

Shinobi PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 7.5, 7.0

■ Slick bosses and perfect control thrill, but the extreme difficulty cuts like a 3-foot Ginsu

The Sims PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) 9.5, 8.5, 8.0 **Silver**

■ Virtual soap-opera teems with innovation and freedom

Skies of Arcadia Legends GC (Also On: None) 9.0, 9.5, 9.0 **Gold**

■ This phenomenal skyfaring quest is the GC's role-playing savior

Star Wars: The Clone Wars XB (Also On: PS2, GC) 7.0, 7.0, 6.5

■ Online support puts this prettier version a few parsecs beyond its PS2 and Cube cousins

Tao Feng: Fist of the Lotus XB (Also On: None) 4.0, 6.0, 3.5

■ Ineffective blocking and generic characters do not a quality fighter make

Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 7.0, 7.0

■ Ninjas rock, but somehow a lackluster story and horribly stupid A.I. snuck in

Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon XB (Also On: PS2, GC) 8.0, 7.5, 8.0

■ Team-based online squad combat and Xbox Live's first nearly killer app

Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell GC (Also On: PS2, Xbox) 8.5, 9.5, 9.0 **Gold**

■ The GBA radar is a nice addition, but Sam Fisher isn't as pretty on the purple purse

War of the Monsters PS2 (Also On: None) 9.5, 6.5, 7.0


■ Manages to make the woefully underrepresented monster genre fun

World Series Baseball 2K3 XB (Also On: PS2) 8.0, 8.0, 8.0 **Silver**

■ *WSB* stands out with countless customization options and first-rate player models

World Soccer Winning Eleven 6 Int. PS2 (Also On: None) 9.0 **Gold**

■ Can this natural-feeling soccer sim take 2003 Sports Game of the Year?



Xenosaga: Episode 1 PS2 (Also On: None) 8.0, 8.0, 6.5
 ■ You don't so much play this RPG as watch its loopy plot unfold in hours of cut-scenes

Zone of the Enders: The 2nd Runner PS2 (Also On: None) 7.5, 9.0, 8.5 **Silver**
 ■ Eye-popping pandemonium with a hairy-balled hero—no winners this time

■ *Skies of Arcadia Legends*—the best GC RPG

10 GAMES YOU MUST FINISH THIS SUMMER

As usual, sequels—a-plenty are headin' your way this fall. Now's your chance to catch up on the top-quality originals you've been meaning to beat for months.

- 1 Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance** 9.5, 9.5, 8.5
 PS2 (Also On: XB) **Gold**
 You knew MGS creator Hideo Kojima had enormous cajones when he decided to pull Solid Snake from the spotlight
- 2 Final Fantasy X** 9.0, 9.5, 9.5
 PS2 **Gold**
 Discover how Yuna survived the threat of Sin (and found love in the process) before she takes center stage in *FFX-2*
- 3 Silent Hill 2** 8.5, 7.5, 9.0
 PS2 (Also On: XB) **Silver**
 SH2's snapshot of an unraveling mind is quite disturbing, and it also features some damn impressive fog
- 4 Pikmin** 8.0, 8.0, 8.5
 GC **Silver**
 What could Nintendo mastermind Shigeru Miyamoto possibly be growin' in his garden that inspires a game like this?
- 5 Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers** 8.5, 8.0, 8.0
 PS2 (Also On: XB, GC) **Silver**
 This precious movie-based beat-em-up goes beyond random button jackhammering
- 6 SOCOM: U.S. Navy Seals** 9.0, 9.5, 9.5
 PS2 **Gold**
 Barking orders at your numbskull partner Boomer is all right, but the real action's online
- 7 Ratchet & Clank** 8.0, 8.0, 9.0
 PS2 **Silver**
 Ratchet and his robot sidekick wield goofball weapons in this fun action-platformer
- 8 Halo** 10, 10, 10
 XB **Platinum**
 Sickly smart A.I., splendid scripting, and immaculate multiplayer set the standard for first-person shooting
- 9 Grand Turismo 3 A-Spec** 10, 10, 10
 PS2 **Platinum**
 Self-respecting speed freaks know this consummate racing sim leaves no belt untightened
- 10 Super Mario Advance 2** 9.0, 9.0, 9.0
 GBA **Gold**
 Replay the platforming masterpiece that started your SNES cartridge collection



tricks of the trade

strategies, codes, cheats, and other ways to ruin your games

trickster



Killing Nazis? Great! Killing rob-Nazis with embedded Gatling guns? Even better. Hence the success of *Return to Castle Wolfenstein*. Need some help playing *Wolf* on Xbox Live? I'm your new drill sergeant, maggots! Just don't freak out in the middle of the night and shoot me with rifle named Shariene, mmkay?

—David S. J. Hodgson
tricks@ziffdavis.com

old-school fools

Our fabrication about de-fabricking the ladies of *DOA: Xtreme Beach Volleyball* earned us some extreme ill will. Man, some of our readers sure can hold a grudge. With death threats still coming in, we wondered how our latest toolfoolery, aehm, stacks up to *EGM* tricks of yesteryear. Get it? Stacks? Never mind. Which was your favorite *EGM* April Fools' Trick?

9% The misspelling of "Streets of Rage." Hilarious!

21% Vibrating "GameShortz" pants.

21% Belmont appears in *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

47% I hate them and you equally. **WINNER!**

Source: *Games.com* poll, April 2002

TRICKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PRIMA GAMES

These strategies for *Wolfenstein*, *Yu-Gi-Oh!*, and *NBA Street Vol. 2* were hand-picked from a bountiful crop of seasonal strategy-guide fruit. For more succulent and nutritious hints, look for *Prima* flavor anywhere games are sold.



■ Xbox

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN

Get online and get killing. But how? If you remember nothing else, remember this: Play as a member of the team, not as an individual. This means, for starters, don't kill your teammates. That's not fun for anyone. You might think you're having fun, but actually, you're being a jerk. Common mistake. The four character classes in the multiplayer game are designed to complement one another, and a winning team plays accordingly.

New to multiplayer? Here are some simple tricks that'll make you an asset to your team from the get-go: If you're on defense, arm yourself with the *Venom* and hide out in an objective room. Shamelessly camp near the documents or the radio that the opposing team needs. When any member of the other team shows up on your turf, promptly serve 'em a lead salad. If you're a rookie on offense, try being a *Medic*. Follow your more knowledgeable teammates and provide support until you learn your way around the battlefield.

Once you have your bearings, it's time to specialize. Try each class to see what suits you. Whichever you choose, use your special abilities to help your team attain victory. Here's how.



■ Yep. Just standing around, guarding the radio room, all alone. Talking to myself.

Soldier

A specialist in all types of armament, the *Soldier* can choose any weapon. He should always be in the thick of the fray, covering a strategic location or defending a crucial objective. In addition to wielding weapons the other classes cannot use, the *Soldier* starts with the most ammunition (except for grenades). Because he constantly engages the enemy, however, his ammo supply and health need regular replenishing. Back him up with a *Medic* and a *Lieutenant*. The following strategies make the *Soldier* even more effective.

Aim for the head. One or two headshots are worth half a clip of body shots.

Call for ammo and health. Press Left on the D-pad for medical attention, Right to plead for ammo from the *Lieutenant*.

Cover objectives. *Soldiers* pack a lot more heat than other classes. Use it for important jobs, like guarding or assaulting team objectives.

Snipe. Use the *Mausers* to assist team members from a distance by picking off the enemy. Remember, aim for the head.

Protect Engineers. As a *Soldier*, it is your job to keep the *Engineer* alive while he tries to complete demolition objectives. If you're outnumbered while on escort duty, go ahead and bite off more than you can chew. Spread your fire around. Get the enemies' attention and earn your teammate valuable time. It's better for your team if you're executed by three enemies while your *Engineer* succeeds than if you take out two opponents while the third nixes your *Engineer* before his work is done. Take one for the team.

Engineer

A specialist in explosives, the *Engineer* breaches fortified locations and destroys objectives. He can defuse the enemy's explosives before they go off, negating the resources and time they spent planting them. The *Engineer* can also repair broken stationary guns. And his many grenades are perfect for clearing out a room or



■ That's right, Dude, headshots are much more effective than firing at Jookie's body.



destroying a gun emplacement. By now, it should be clear that the Engineer is often the pivotal figure in a battle's outcome. The wise Engineer doesn't behave like a Soldier; he conserves his ammo for necessary self defense and concentrates on doing his job.

Blow things up. The Engineer sets explosives to open a path for his team or to destroy an objective. The red dots on your compass lead you to obstacles or objectives you can destroy. The larger the dots grow, the closer you are.

Planted dynamite, which glows yellow, needs to be armed before it can do its work. Use the pliers on planted dynamite until the blue progress bar is full. When the dynamite is armed, it glows red.

If you complete your demolition duty, switch to grenades and destroy camping enemies and enemy-held MG42s.

Repair stationary guns. Only an Engineer can repair a destroyed MG42. To fix the broken weapon, use the pliers as you would to arm dynamite. Be sure to tell your team that the gun is up and running again. They might not notice your handiwork in the heat of battle.

guns. lots of guns

This chart shows each class' starting ammunition with all available weapons. (Note that the Colt and Thompson are Allied weapons. The Luger and MP40 are their respective Axis counterparts. Note further that Axis grenades have stupid-looking wooden handles. They still blow up real good, though.)

Weapon	SOLDIER	ENGINEER	MEDIC	LIUTENANT
Colt	32	32	32	32
Luger	32	32	32	32
Grenades	4	8	2	1
MP40	96	64	32	64
Thompson	90	60	30	60
Sten	96	-	-	64
Mausers	20	-	-	-
Shotgun	30	-	-	-
Panzerfaust	4	-	-	-
Venom	500	-	-	-
Flamethrower	200	-	-	-



Everything will be OK now that Dr. Feelgood is here. He'll make the pain go away.

Medic

He heals the wounded and revives the fallen. When a Medic spawns, all his teammates gain an additional 10 Health Points. He carries little ammunition and has no choice in primary weapons.

Bear in mind the old adage, "Discretion is the better part of valor." Running from battle serves the Medic well, because he heals himself over time and has the highest health limit. The Medic can help his teammates attack the enemy, but he should not do so alone. Mainly, he should spend his time aiding wounded or incapacitated teammates. An adept Medic can make sure his team is always fighting, leaving little time for the opposing force to catch its breath.

Heal the wounded. Give medkits to teammates in need. Dispensing first aid kits depletes your power, which regenerates over time. When you're temporarily unable to drop first aid kits, simply wait until your power bar refills, then continue the healing! A full power bar yields four first aid kits.

When a teammate calls for a Medic, an icon appears over his head. If you are far away, follow the icon on your compass to locate him. The closer you are, the bigger the icon grows. When you find him, patch him up pronto. If no one else needs immediate attention, escort a Soldier or two and help them fight rather than wandering aimlessly or hanging back waiting to be called. Be proactive. Just because you're a healer doesn't mean you can't dispense a little pain.

Revive the fallen. Look for incapacitated men reaching for the sky and screaming for you. They need your attention. To revive a fallen man, pull out a syringe and give him a shot. You have only 10 syringes, so use them carefully, according to your team's needs.

Lieutenant

The Lieutenant is like a scaled-back Soldier with some crucial special abilities. He can call in massive air strikes to destroy barriers or clear out a group of hostile soldiers. Less flashy but perhaps more important, the Lieutenant provides his teammates with extra ammunition. He can use his binoculars to gather intel about troop movements and warn his

squad of imminent danger.

He shouldn't charge in on the front lines like a Soldier, but neither should he be too far away from the action, where his ability to call in air strikes and distribute ammo are near-worthless. Try pairing the Lieutenant with a Medic so he can use his combat skills to inflict damage and never want for health.

Distribute ammunition. Drop ammo packs at the feet of team members in need. If you run out, just wait a while to recoup your power. A full power bar yields four ammo packs.

When a teammate calls for ammo, an icon appears over his head. If you are far away, follow the icon on your compass to locate him. The closer you are, the bigger the icon grows. (Sound familiar?)

Don't get unnecessarily sidetracked by firefights; remember your role on the team. It's better to distribute ammo and have multiple effective combatants than for you to play Rambo while your team is trying to fight with pistols and knives.

Bomb 'em. Pick a spot ripe for an air strike and plant a smoke canister there. Shells will strike a large area surrounding the smoke. Bombs fall straight down toward your marker, so air strikes won't be effective under overhangs or arches. And obviously, you cannot use this ability indoors. You need 50 percent of your power bar to call for an air strike.

Try calling in a strike behind opposing snipers, who can't see past the view of their scopes and won't notice the signal smoke before the bombardment sends them to hell—uh, that is, to the reinforcements queue. This trick works on outdoor MG42 emplacements, too.





■ PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube

NBA STREET VOL. 2

It's tempting to try for the biggest, phattest moves all the time, but a clever player will take advantage of your misplaced zeal and beat you to 21 faster than you can say "Kareem Abdul-Jabbar." These tips will steer you right. Listen up.

Offense

To squeeze the last drop of talent from your boys, study the players' ratings and make sure you're putting them in the right situation. Don't try slamming over Shaquille O'Neal with Steve Nash, and don't bust out fiery dribbles with Yao Ming. Simple enough. When you've got the hang of these fundamentals and you're ready to elevate your game, try the following pimped-out strategies.

Get to the basket. When you're rushing the lane looking to make something happen, there's nothing worse than seeing seven feet of defender in your way (unless it's *not* seeing the seven feet of defender in your way). When it looks like your dunk will be skunked, make a mid-air transition to a layup. Start a dunk, and when the defender goes up for the block, tap Shoot again. Your player will dipside-down and gently loft the ball home for two.

Handle the situation. Take on the big men with your team's top handler. Trick into their bodies to knock 'em down. Big guys don't usually have a high Handles or Steals ratings, so they won't be picking your pocket. Once you leave them in the dirt, you'll have a clear path to the hoop and possibly an alley-oop opportunity.



Use the pump fake. Tap Shoot quickly to perform a pump. If they don't bite, pass. Even better, hit two Turbos and Pass to perform an Off da Heezzy, bouncing the ball off your opponent's dome. Use a combination of pump fakes and passes to move the ball around and keep the defense off-balance.

Work the whole court. Draw the opposing team's best defender away from the hoop by swinging the ball to the weak



■ With your team's best handler, knock a defender on his ass by tricking into him.

side of the court. Setting picks is another good way to deal with lane congestion.

Mix up your timing. Try running past a defender and then doubling back with a trick. This can throw the defender off and earn you some easy Trick Points. If you're facing someone who's really good at Trick Counters, get used to interrupting your moves. Tap Pass during the animation to cancel your trick in order to stifle the steal.

Don't get too fancy in the lane. Even if you knock one defender down, there's probably another nearby ready to counter your scoring attempt.

Control the ball. When rebounding, you'll have an advantage if you box out. Wedge your player between an opponent and the hoop before you go up. This way, you have a better chance of sticking your missed shot. (Tap Shoot and hold Turbo for the tip-slam.) At the jump ball, don't mash buttons. Stay calm and tap Shoot once before the ball reaches its peak. Practice your timing.

Defense

Even when you're trailing, don't lose heart. If there's any game in which a come-from-behind victory is possible, it's this one. Tightening up your D can make all the difference because it will lower your opponent's morale. Use these handy techniques to rein in a gloating winner and get back in the game.

Own the goal. In streetball, blocking every shot is fair and square—they don't call goaltending. Be sure you have a tall player near the rim at all times, as super blocking is a sure way to frustrate any opponent. To deny a shot with authority, hit Shoot/Rebound while holding Turbo and jumping into the ball's path. It sounds easy, but to block consistently, you'll have

to keep a watchful eye on your turbo meter and court position.

Learn to lag. As the offense approaches, don't be too eager to "man up," since it makes you vulnerable to knockdown tricks. Keep a fair distance from your man until you see an advanced trick move, then tap Turbo and Steal for a Trick Counter. The other benefit of keeping your distance is that if a shot goes up, you'll have time to fade back and attempt a block. If you're really tight on a man and he gets a shot off, you'll have to switch defenders and hope someone's close enough to try for the block.

Don't fall for pump fakes.

If an open player manages a three-point shot, you should have time to block it. Most shots will be dunks or short-range attempts that you can reject or alter. Falling for pump fakes adds to the other team's Gamebreaker meter. Don't be a chump.

Watch the clock. Pay attention to the shot clock. Look for rushed scoring attempts as time ebbs away. When five seconds remain, tighten the defensive screws. At three or less, be up on your man and ready to catch the shot right off his fingertips.

Practice thievery. If your opponent is fond of the

half-court pass and fast break, practice jumping in the path of the ball for the steal. Or steal his inbound passes: As your opponent is about to inbound, dart toward the receiving player. Tap Steal just as the opponent begins his ball-catching animation. Time it right and you'll wrest the rock from your opponent just when he's dreaming of a flashy dunk. Sweet.

Always play tenacious D. Don't give up on the play. It's difficult, but we've seen a baller come from behind the play and block the shot. Great recoveries are what it's all about. Challenge every shot. Simply having a player in your opponent's face as he shoots significantly reduces the shot's scoring chance. Try to have at least one player in your lineup with a top Blocks rating and another with a high Steals rating. This way, you'll put pressure on the offense anywhere on the court.

Be tricky, not tricked. Don't bust out Trick Counters willy-nilly. Wait and watch to make sure the offensive player has started doing an advanced trick, then

make your move. Your opponent will be much less willing to cancel, and you'll have a better chance at the Counter. Plus it's a better psych-out to counter an advanced trick.



■ Game Boy Advance

YU-GI-OH! WORLDWIDE EDITION

Knowing the rules of the Duel hardly guarantees victory. The best Duelists have the game half won before they step onto the field. They spend hours building their decks, carefully adding and subtracting cards according to a focused strategy. They're rather clever (and scary) individuals, and we're here to turn you into one of them by showing you the best cards in the game. But remember—don't include these "best" cards if they don't support your deck's strategy.

Best Attack Monsters

Card	ATK
Goblin Attack Force	2,300
Zombiyr the Dark	2,100
Dark Elf	2,000
Panther Warrior	2,000
Gemini Elf	1,900
Slate Warrior	1,900
Verse Raider	1,900
Mechanicalchaser	1,850
7 Colored Fish	1,800
Battle Steer	1,800
Bistro Butcher	1,800
Dunames Dark Witch	1,800
Gearfried the Iron Knight	1,800
Giant Red Seasnake	1,800
Harpie's Brother	1,800
La Jinn the Mystical Genie	1,800
Copy Cat	0

Best Defense Monsters

Card	DEF
Aqua Madoor	2,000
Banisher of the Light	2,000
Giant Soldier of Stone	2,000
Humanoid Slime	2,000
Mystical Elf	2,000
Prevent Rat	2,000
Spirit of the Harp	2,000
The Forging Maiden	2,000
Copy Cat	0

Semi-Limited Cards

Backup Soldier
Graceful Charity
Morphing Jar #2
Nobleman of Crossout
Sangan

Limited Cards

Bell of Destruction
Call of The Haunted
Card Destruction
Ceasefire
Change of Heart
Confiscation
Cyber Jar
Dark Hole

Delinquent Duo

Exodia the Forbidden One
Harpie's Feather Duster
Heavy Storm
Imperial Order
Jinzo
Left Arm of the Forbidden One
Left Leg of the Forbidden One
Limiter Removal
Mage Power
Magic Cylinder
Mirror Force
Monster Reborn
Morphing Jar
Painful Choice
Pot of Greed
Premature Burial
Raijeki
Right Arm of the Forbidden One
Right Leg of the Forbidden One
Slate Warrior
Snatch Steal
Swords of Revealing Light
The Forceful Sentry
United We Stand
Upstart Goblin
Witch of the Black Forest

Best Fusion Monsters

Beastking of the Swamps
Cyber-Stein
Fusion Sage
Goddess with the Third Eye
Monster Eye
Mystical Sheep #1
Magician of Faith
Polymerization

Best Magic and Trap Cards

Monster Destruction
Card Destruction
Damage Prevention
Magic and Trap Prevention

Best ATK for Level 5-6 Monsters

Amphibian Beast
Cyber-Tech Alligator
Jinzo
Summoned Skull

Best DEF for Level 5-6 Monsters

Beast of Giffir
Boulder Tortoise
Illusionist Faceless Mage
Labyrinth Wall
Millennium Golem
Millennium Shield
Total Defense Shogun

Best ATK for Level 7+ Monsters

Blue-Eyes White Dragon
Cosmo Queen
Tri-Horned Dragon
Sengenjin
Wingweaver

Best Fusion Monsters

Blue-Eyes Ultimate Dragon
Gate Guardian
Metecar B. Dragon
B. Skull Dragon
St. Joan



Best 7+ Star Monsters for Defense

Valkyrior the Magna Warrior
Hyoanryu

Cards Allowing Special Summons

Elegant Egotist
Giant Rat
Sangan
Witch of the Black Forest

Cards that Prevent Monster Attacks

Nightmare's Steelcage
Swords of Revealing Light

Cards that Negate Damage

Kuriboh
Magic Cylinder
Tornado Wall
Wakobu

Traps that Stop Monsters

Gravity Bind
Shadow Spell
Spellbinding Circle

Cards that Neutralize or Destroy Individual Monsters

Acid Trap Hole
Bell of Destruction
Crush Card
Hane-Hane
Man-Eater Bug
Michizure
Nobleman of Crossout
Penguin Soldier
Solemn Judgement
Trap Hole
Tribute to The Doomed

Vazhar
by Full Sail Student
Brian Germain



FULL SAIL
Real World Education

School of:
Game Design
Computer Animation
Digital Media
Film
Audio
Show Production

800.226.7625
www.fullsail.com

3300 University Boulevard
Winter Park, FL 32792

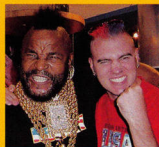
- Financial aid available to those who qualify.
- Job placement assistance.
- Accredited by ACCSCT.

©2001 Full Sail, Inc. All rights reserved. The terms "Full Sail," "Full Sail Real World Education," and the Full Sail logo are either registered service marks or service marks of Full Sail, Inc.

THE REST OF THE CRAP

Seanbaby suffers so you won't have to

sound off

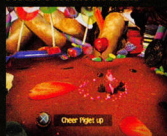


MY JOB SUCKS

There are times during everyone's career when they think they might have chosen the wrong line of work. For example, when a fugitive wearing a wet suit and night-vision goggles is hiding in the bottom of an outhouse, some poor police officer has to drag him out of there and arrest him. One day that cop and his talking dog were kung-fu'ing cocaine smugglers, and the next day fate spits on his head from his kick-ass flying fate motorcycle. But know this: Every time a cop handcuffs a man covered in redneck excrement, he radios in, "Dispatch, this is toilet patrol. At least I didn't have to review a game about Piglet. Over!"

—Seanbaby

PlayStation 2 PIGLET'S BIG MOVIE GAME



Publisher: Gotham Games
ESRB: Everyone

This is a tough game to judge—it's clearly made for people too young to distinguish between it and food. It's so infantile that players will receive a nomination from the Academy for their brave portrayals of retarded characters. At one point, my pathetic pig had to rescue Pooh from a pile of sticky caramel he sat on. To give you an idea of the intellectual journey this sent Piglet's brain on, Pooh suggested I use a

stick. Four inches away, the only item on the screen just happened to be a giant glowing stick. But I was not about to let a piglet I'm controlling take advice from someone who lost a life-and-death battle of wits to an ice-cream topping.

Drawing upon my vast knowledge of adventure-game logic puzzles, I knew Pooh's best chance was for Piglet to infect him with exotic ass warts that secrete caramel solvent. I'm embarrassed to admit I couldn't locate the combination of items to trigger that reaction, but I'm more embarrassed to admit that I let out an audible "Hooray!" after I discovered that when you kick the giant cupcakes, they launch cookies!

Bottom Line: Even mentally impaired players may find this game lacking in complexity and challenge.



PlayStation THE THREE STOOGES

Publisher: Metro 3D
ESRB: Everyone
This is an exact port of a Game Boy Advance game ported from an old NES game ported from a Commodore 64 game based on a TV show that went off the air before half of the current world's population was born. It would have saved everyone some time if this game came packaged with a garbage can already built around it. Your goal is to prevent the foreclosure of Ma's Orphanage by forcing the Stooges into random jobs, none of which manages to generate more fun than filling out a real-life job application.

There are a few positions where you get to exploit the Stooges' penchant for slapstick violence, like when they, for reasons we can't possibly understand, are hired by a restaurant to throw pies at customers. The game quickly takes a turn for the tragic, though, when they're hired as orderlies. At that job, you knock dying people off their stretchers during a high-speed dash through a hospital. I lack the philosophical background to judge whether one orphanage is worth the cost of hundreds of sick people toppling to their deaths in a hallway, but I do know that if the only people interested in saving an orphanage are three lunatics slapping

each other in the face, they probably shouldn't be raising children.

Bottom Line: Playing this game could conceivably damage your ability to enjoy any form of entertainment.

PlayStation BRATZ



Publisher: Ubi Soft
ESRB: Everyone

Videogames can make our wildest dreams come to fruition. And I guess enough people have listed "tapping my thumb against things" as a personal dream in market-research polls, 'cause someone releases a horrible rhythmic-dance game every seven hours.

You'll find that *Bratz* has worse music than most, but there's good news: The game's sassy voice is so busy congratulating or mocking your ability to tap the controller correctly, you usually can't hear the music. In a matter of seconds, it builds you up from "Cool!" to "Amazing!" to "Your thumb transcends my wildest erotic tapping fantasies!" and then after one miss, it hits you with, "Oh, I don't think so!" Tease. Plus, check out the stylized "Bratz" girls' below—sexualizing young girls has never been this scary.

Bottom Line: No, really, this is the worst button-tapping simulation yet. This time I mean it. I swear.



classic crap

ALF

In a fantastic clash of phenomenal gameplay failures, the 8-bit Sega Master System game *ALF* managed to disappoint even *ALF* fans. Which, according to modern science, should have been impossible.



Game Boy Advance THE MUPPETS: ON WITH THE SHOW!

Publisher: TDK Mediactive
ESRB: Everyone

The *Muppet Show* delivered comedy skits, musical numbers, and Hollywood's hottest guest stars with the promise that at least once every episode, Gonzo would hint that he was about to have sex with a chicken. And though singing puppets managed to make alien-on-chicken bestiality palatable enough for children's programming, nothing could save this videogame.

Putting *The Muppets: On With the Show!* into your GBA is like taking yourself prisoner in your own portable torture camp. And like all good forms of torture, it doesn't confine itself to just one type of indescribable pain. There are several different minigames, most of which require you to dodge slowly moving objects for 30 or 40 seconds. This is only challenging because the felt monstrosities you control take little or no interest in the directional commands you input. Still, if you manage to get to the store, buy this game, and get back to your car without ramming into any more than 13 or 14 walls, playing *On With the Show!* will probably be an insult to your motor skills.

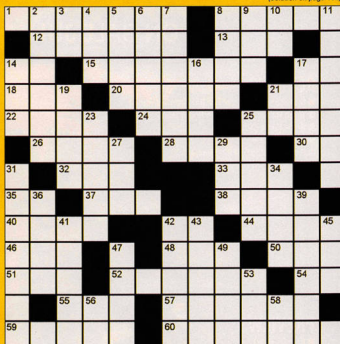
Bottom Line: I'd rather watch the two old Muppet dudes in the balcony make out than play this. 🐻





CROSSWORD: CASTLEVANIA

(Solution on page 132)



ACROSS

1. Castlevania bloodline
8. Tony Hawk rail slide
12. One who is scared of Castlevania's (NES) fifth boss?
13. Three strikes in *All-Star Baseball*
14. Game-to-TV freq. modulator
15. Like NES's *Bignose*
17. Home to the E3 convention
18. You have to change it in *Gran Turismo*
20. Increases with your experience in *Phantasy Star Online*
21. Namco's main ...-Man
22. Obnoxious Castlevania foe
24. You find one behind the observatory's star chart in *Shadowgate* (NES)
25. Extremely well-versed gamer?
26. Goonies II sidearm
28. What the sun will do to break a curse in *Simon's Quest*
30. *World Series Baseball* league, for short
32. *Tiger Woods* Golf association
33. Used to play *Dance Dance Revolution*
35. From Software PS2 title, for short
37. Sony's new (and Working Designs' former) RPG star
38. Like arcade's 51
40. May lock behind you in a horror game
42. Xbox team-based shooter, for short
44. A record of game data
46. Proof of game purchase
48. Use the gun sight in a first-person shooter
50. When foes are weaker in *Simon's Quest*
51. Jet ... *Radio Future*
52. Like Banballo's skin in *Blizzard* (DC)
54. Madden offensive position, for short
55. Mini white PlayStation, PS_
57. Hsu & Chan surname
59. Like Daxter of *Jak and Daxter*, or the title of a now-defunct girl's magazine
60. Dracula's son

DOWN

2. One of three keys to the Enchanted Gladius in *Eternal Darkness*
3. *Test Drive* ... Mans
4. Little *Punch-Out!!* (NES) protagonist
5. Xbox Live chat method
6. When *Tetris* ends?
7. Fought Dracula in *Castlevania III*
8. Early Jaleco soccer game for NES
9. Double-tap the D-pad to do it in *Symphony of the Night*
10. Came from the Desert in a TurboGrafx-16 CD game
11. Alucard's father
14. King, to a French *Tekken* player
16. Kit that heals in *Half-Life*
17. Ms. Croft
19. Videogame music pattern
21. GBA's ...yo Pop
23. Wields Diskarmor
25. Climb these in *Castlevania* clock towers
27. Magic item in *Zelda: Oracle of Ages*
29. Place to replenish health in *River City Ransom* (NES)
31. Arguably the most annoying Castlevania baddies
34. Evil ... or Red ... *Revolver*
36. Used to climb in *Tenchu*
39. *Ultima*'s main dude
41. *Zelda*'s "...roks" and Atari's "...pus"
42. *Phantasy Star* ice spell
43. *Lap Twin* or *Doom*
45. Magtali's weak point in *Zelda: WW*
47. What allies do to your commands in *Kessen*
49. The Start button usually brings one up midgame
53. Converts video and audio signals in CD-based consoles (abbrv.)
56. Atari game featuring robotic Stalkers, for short
58. Mr. Mosquito's Japanese alias

MATRIX CONTEST:

ROUND TWO

Enter the Matrix...and win lots of cool stuff!



Are you The One? In celebration of the *Matrix* movies and game, *Computer Gaming World* and *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, in coordination with our sponsors—Nintendo of America, Sony Computer Entertainment America, Integrames, and Warner Home Video—challenge you to follow the white rabbit through our magazines this month and uncover the truth! Just find all five (5) rabbits hidden on the pages of each magazine and submit your answers at <http://gamers.com/feature/matrix/>. All correct entries will be entered in a random drawing for a chance to win one of the following great prizes:

Grand Prizes (We're giving away five (5) of each!)

Sony PlayStation 2
Nintendo GameCube
Microsoft Xbox

First Prizes (10 for each platform!)

Integrames' *Enter The Matrix* game for PC, PlayStation 2, GameCube, and Xbox

Second Prizes

30 *Animatrix* DVDs
20 *The Matrix Special Edition* DVDs
10 *The Matrix* DVDs (regular version)

Runners-Up Prizes

20 one-year subscriptions to *Computer Gaming World*
20 one-year subscriptions to *Electronic Gaming Monthly*

HOW TO PLAY

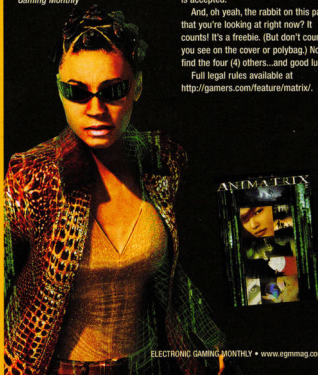
CGW and EGM will each have five (5) white rabbits hidden on five (5) different pages of our July issues. To enter, you need to:

1. Find the five (5) pages with white rabbits in EGM
2. Find the five (5) pages with white rabbits in CGW
3. Log on to the contest page at <http://gamers.com/feature/matrix/>
4. Enter the five (5) white-rabbit page numbers for CGW in sequential order from lowest to highest
5. Enter the five (5) white-rabbit page numbers for EGM in sequential order from lowest to highest

All correct entries received by July 1, 2003, will then be entered into a drawing for the prizes! Only one entry per person is accepted.

And, oh yeah, the rabbit on this page that you're looking at right now? It counts! It's a freebie. (But don't count any you see on the cover or polybag.) Now go find the four (4) others...and good luck!

Full legal rules available at <http://gamers.com/feature/matrix/>.





FEATURES

We're off to gaming's Graceland, the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3). We'll eavesdrop on the big three console makers' war rooms, survey their secret weapons, and pop the lid on who's plotting what behind closed doors. What we find is guaranteed to keep your eyes glazed for the year to come. We've also got exclusive screens and the scoop on a certain hedgehog's upcoming sprint to all three consoles. Seems Sonic is dashing into new territory—you control three characters at a time to tackle obstacles as a team. Trust us, you've never seen Sega's prickly mascot like this before.

REVIEWS

- Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic (Xbox)
- Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness (PS2)
- Brute Force (Xbox)
- Mario Golf (GC)
- Enter the Matrix (PS2, Xbox, GC)



PREVIEWS

- Halo 2 (Xbox)
- Gran Turismo 4 (PS2)
- Mario Kart: Double Dash (GC)
- Resident Evil Online (PS2)
- Ninja Gaiden (Xbox)



ADVERTISER INDEX

A.D. Vision	
www.advision.com	28, 121
Academy of Art College (Stephens Inst)	
www.academyart.edu	117
Activation	
www.activation.com	16-17, 32-33
AIA USA Ltd.	
www.aiaughgsmes.com	95
Bandai America, Inc.	
www.bandai.com	97
Best Buy	
www.bestbuy.com	115
Bethesda Softworks	
www.bethsoft.com	23
Capcom USA, Inc.	
www.capcom.com	28, 59, 83, 109
Codemasters, Inc.	
www.codemastersusa.com	113
Eastpak	
usa.eastpak.com	85
Echo Interactive	
www.eko.com	37
Edios Interactive, Inc.	
www.pisces.com	18-11

Electronic Arts	www.ea.com	8-7	Sega of America	www.sega.com	25-136
Electronics Boutique/Els Cat	www.elscat.com	15, 29, 55, 73, 86a-86b, 87	Sony Computer Entertainment	www.scea.com	2-3, 49
Entertainment World	www.ewf.com	129	Square Enix U.S.A.	www.squareenix.com	88
Infogrames, Inc.	www.infogrames.com	30-91	Takara Interactive Software	www.takara2games.com	85
Koei Corporation	www.koegames.com	45, 71, 111	Target Stores	www.gotintothegame.com	74a-74b
Konami America	www.konami.com	77	THQ, Inc.	www.thq.com	40-41
Microsoft	www.microsoft.com	20-21, 66-67, 101	Ubisoft Entertainment	www.ubisoft.com	8-9, 20-31
Midway Games, Inc.	www.midway.com	81	University of Advancing Computer Tech	www.uact.com	36
Nintendo	www.nintendo.com	43	Navy History Recalling Command	www.navy.com	62a-62b, 63
Natusme	www.natusme.com	135	VUG - Black Label Games	www.blacklabel2games.com	18-19
Nesite Food Company	www.butterfinger.com	81	VUG - Blizzard Entertainment	www.blizzard.com	27
NetEntertainment of America	www.netent.com	53, 102, 103	VUG - Universal Interactive	www.universalinteractive.com	50-51

ANSWERS TO CASTLEVANIA
CROSSWORD *on page 131*

on page 131

[illegible]

THE ESRB VIDEO & COMPUTER GAME RATINGS

**Find out whether a
computer or video game
is right for your home.**

Learn more about the Entertainment Software
Review Board rating system and how games
get rated on www.esrb.org.



EARLY CHILDHOOD

Titles rated "Early Childhood (EC)" have content that may be suitable for children ages three and older and do not contain any material that parents would find inappropriate.



EVERYONE

Titles rated "Everyone (E)" have content that may be suitable for persons ages six and older. These titles will appeal to people of many ages and tastes. They may contain minimal violence, some comic mischief (for example, slapstick comedy), or some crude language.



TEEN

Titles rated "Teen (T)" have content that may be suitable for persons ages 13 and older. Titles in this category may contain violent content, mild or strong language, and/or suggestive themes.



MATURE

Titles rated "Mature (M)" have content that may be suitable for persons ages 17 and older. These products may include more intense violence or language than products in the Teen category. In addition, these titles may also include mature sexual themes.



ADULTS ONLY

Titles rated "Adults Only (AO)" have content suitable only for adults. These products may include graphic depictions of sex and/or violence. Adults Only products are not intended to be sold or rented to persons under the age of 18.



RATING PENDING

Product has been submitted to the ESRB and is awaiting final rating.

This message is brought to you by the Editors of:

 **ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA**
GAME GROUP

**ELECTRONIC
GAMING
MONTHLY**

PlayStation

**COMPUTER
GAMING
WORLD**

GAME NOW

XBN
THE NATION'S LARGEST VIDEO GAME STORE

**POCKET
games**

GAMING.COM



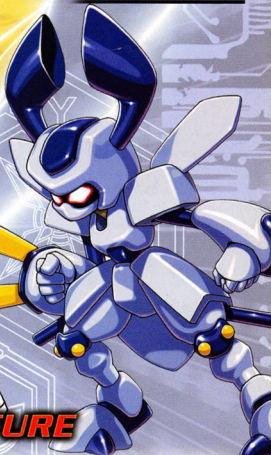
MEDABOTS

MORE MEDABOTS. MORE POWER.

ROKUSHO



METABEE



AN RPG ADVENTURE

Kids everywhere are losing their prized Medabot Medals and Medaparts to a diabolical team of warped Medamaniacs! Join Ikki and his friends as they track down the source of the trouble and beat the Rubberobos at their own twisted game!



All your favorite Medabots characters!



A 30+ hour adventure!



Trade and RoboBrawl with friends!



NATSUME®

Serious Fun™

www.natsume.com / www.medabots.com

Natsume is a registered trademark of Natsume Inc. Serious Fun is a trademark of Natsume Inc. © 2002, 2003 Natsume Inc. All Rights Reserved. Character Design by Horagane. "Medabots" is a trademark of Kotensha and is used under license. © 1997-2002 Imaginer Co., Ltd. © 1997-2002 Natsume Co., Ltd. Published by Natsume Inc. Illustrations Copyright © 1997 Imaginer. Nintendo: © 1989 Nintendo. TV Tokyo: We do use the Nintendo Game Boy Advance logo as trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

GAME BOY ADVANCE

The cover art for Sonic the Hedgehog DX Adventure Director's Cut features a large, vibrant red Chaos Emerald in the center. Sonic the Hedgehog is prominently displayed on the right side, looking towards the viewer. In the background, various characters and scenes from the game are depicted: Knuckles the Echidna on the top left, Tails the Fox on the top center, and a large, menacing Eggman on the top right. The bottom left shows a smaller Sonic character and a McDonald's Happy Meal promotion. The bottom right features the game's title and a Nintendo GameCube logo.

Total CHAOS



NEW electronic
Sonic games available
June 27th!

SONIC DX
ADVENTURE
Director's Cut™

ALL THE EPIC THRILLS • BONUS MINI-GAMES • NEW MISSION MODE

EVERYONE



Violence



NINTENDO
GAMECUBE™

SEGA®

SONIC TEAM™

Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. SEGA, the SEGA logo, Sonic Adventure and Sonic The Hedgehog are either registered trademarks or trademarks of SEGA CORPORATION. Original Game ©SEGA ©SONICTEAM/SEGA, 2003. All Rights Reserved.™, ®, and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association, www.sega.com
© 2003 McDonald's Corporation. All participating McDonald's while supplies last.

RETROMAGS

Our goal is to preserve classic video game magazines so that they are not lost permanently.

People interested in helping out in any capacity,
please visit us at www.retromags.com.

No profit is made from these scans, nor do we offer anything
available from the publishers themselves.

If you come across anyone selling releases from
this site, please do not support them and do let us know.

Thank you!

