

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

**YOSHI'S
STORY**

Nintendo
Rehatches
A Classic

Also Featured:

Rebus • Snowboard Kids • Point Blank
Resident Evil 2 • Klonoa • WarGames
Diablo • Mystical Ninja • Winter Heat
Virtual Chess • Dead or Alive • Tekken 3
Shining Force III • SaGa Frontier • NHL 98

March, 1998
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104



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"But Susan, I have Klonoa."

"Hey baby, I WANT Klonoa!"





Everybody wants Klonoa. He's the fantasy creature from Phantomile. He's wacky. He flaps his over-sized ears to fly. He kills his enemies by inflating their bodies and launching them from any available mountain top. He's also the star in Namco's new action-adventure game in a 3-D trippy landscape. Once you've got Klonoa, you won't want to get rid of it.



KLONOA *by* **namco**[®]
Klonoa & Phantomile

b l o w u p o r s h u t u p

Editorial

By Joe Funk • joe_funk@zd.com

Readers ask us all the time about including a retro-gaming section in *EGM*. Not the 8-Bit and 16-Bit stuff (heck, a lot of those games still rank as the best of all time—see our Top 100 Games in issue #100), but the ancient relics from before the mid-'80s market crash. I'm talking arcade games, plus the very first home systems like Atari 2600, Magnavox, Vectrex, Intellivision, ColecoVision, etc.

It's a question that stirs debate in just about every editor here, but the answer always comes back the same.

Usually, we struggle to find space to cover all the current products being released in our bustling industry. It's not that we're philosophically against covering retro games, it's just that practicality in the form of a finite amount of editorial space dictates our coverage.

We're certainly not against covering gaming's heritage (witness our timeline in *EGM* #101 and the second part of our History of Arcades in this issue). If it wasn't for games like Pong and Adventure and Defender and Pac Man, we wouldn't be playing the games we are today. No doubt, replaying those old games and reliving those experiences is priceless. But how many of you out there have found that after playing those old games a few times, they just don't have enough depth to hold your interest for very long? You find yourself saying, "I spent all that time way back when playing this simple game? Geez, I don't remember my life being that boring."

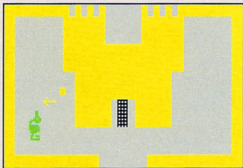
While hearing the sounds and seeing the sites of a Defender or Centipede stirs the adolescent in all of us and conjures memories of those halcyon days after school at the dimly lit neighborhood arcade, the truth is those warm and fuzzy feelings bend our memories. It's like having the chance to go back and rekindle an old flame—more often than not, we'll find we put the other person (or thing) on a pedestal and make him/her/it out to be more than he/she/it really was. It's human nature.

Still, the opportunity to relive a part of our past is priceless. It's a core part of why we all play games in the first place: It makes us feel like kids again, and it's an escape to another time and place. We salute Namco, Midway and anyone else who releases classic games, for they are an indelible part of our industry's heritage, and will always hold a special place in the pantheon of video gaming.

Nonetheless, don't expect a retro-gaming section to show up in the pages of *EGM* any time soon. It comes down to a simple formula: not enough space. What would you rather have? A four-page preview on Zelda 64 or a three-page preview with a page on games that have been out 20 years? A story on the future of Sega or a focus on 2600 sports games? Technology fuels our industry, and what's next will always be sexier than what was.

While that might be bad news for the retro-buffs among us, the good news is you will be able to find a gradual increase of retro-gaming coverage on our spanking new Web site, videogames.com. Consider this a manifestation of two of *EGM*'s important traits: We listen to our readers, and we respect the history of our industry.

Looking ahead, you can bet that people playing today's generation of games will wax nostalgic about Goldeneye and Colony Wars the way we do now about Adventure, Smurfs and Intellivision Football and Hockey. Time always marches on, and hey, if nothing else, future EICs of *EGM* can re-use this article by simply replacing the underlined words with the hottest titles of their day.



The Atari 2600 hit, Adventure, dredges up many good memories, but it won't excite today's gamers.

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You're going to be away a long time.



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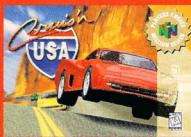


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A "BAYWATCH"
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PLAYERS CHOICE GAMES NOW \$39.95*



Have you heard? Your favorite games for Nintendo® 64 are now just \$39.95. Is your heart thumping? Is your blood pumping? These are the greatest video games ever made. And if you don't have them, you're gonna wanna get them. Just look for the Players Choice seal. That means each title has sold over a million copies. Great games, great price. What else do you need? Hey man, if this doesn't get you all lathered up, check your pulse, because you just might be dead.





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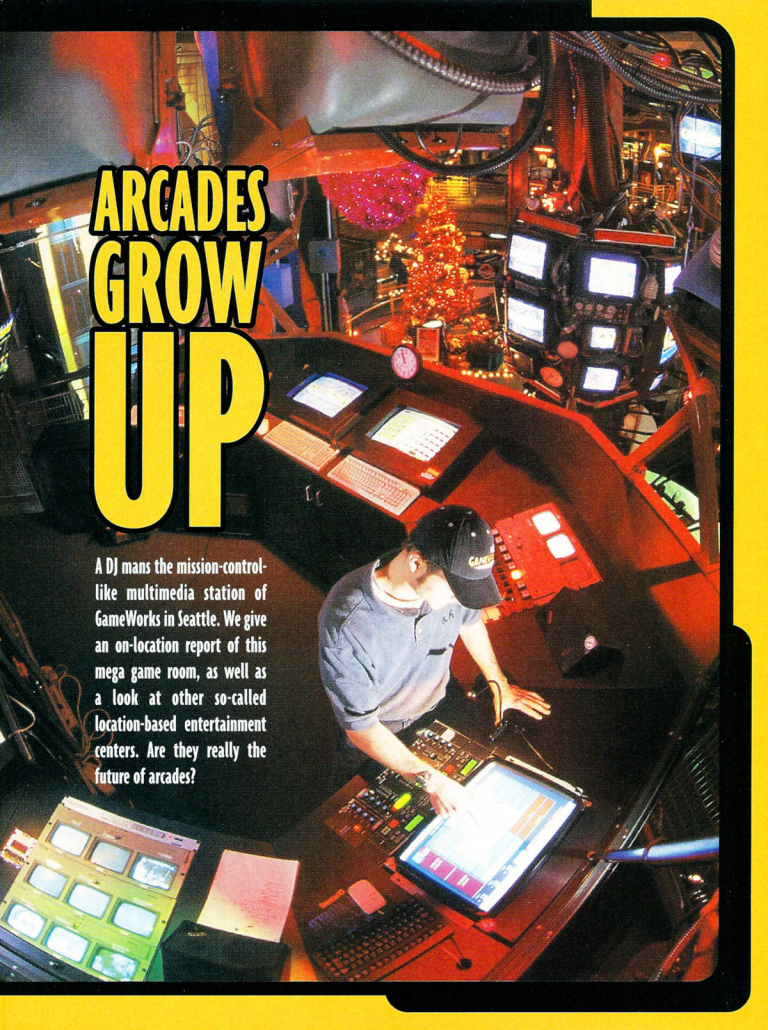
What exactly does a Game Boy Mode do for an N64 game?

140 - Get Some!

How about a \$5,000 dino? No, we're serious this time.



Nintendo's long-awaited follow-up to Yoshi's Island is finally in our grasp. How does the "2 1/2-D" super-sequel stack up? Head to page 78 to get the full scoop on Yoshi's Story.

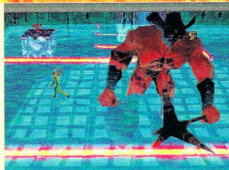
A high-angle, low-key photograph of a DJ working at a multimedia station in a GameWorks arcade. The DJ, wearing a blue polo shirt and a black baseball cap with "GAMEWORKS" on it, is focused on a large tablet computer. The station is cluttered with various pieces of equipment, including a turntable, a mixer, and several monitors. In the background, a brightly lit Christmas tree is visible, adding a festive atmosphere to the scene. The overall lighting is warm and colorful, with red and orange tones dominating the foreground and background. The DJ's hands are positioned on the tablet, and a keyboard is visible in the lower foreground. The scene captures the modern, multimedia-driven nature of contemporary arcades.

ARCADES GROW UP

A DJ mans the mission-control-like multimedia station of GameWorks in Seattle. We give an on-location report of this mega game room, as well as a look at other so-called location-based entertainment centers. Are they really the future of arcades?

THE POINT OF THE JOURNEY IS NOT TO ARRIVE...

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You've learned what it means to be one step from death.



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HOW TO START THE MOTHER OF ALL WARS

{or why deception, cruelty and betrayal are your friends}



To start "The War of the Lions," you must use bold strokes. Regicides, double-crosses, violations of queens, good options all. Whatever your plan, once begun, a war of this magnitude is not to be trifled with. This is a brutal conflict of epic proportions, where each hallowed victory brings you closer to the very heart of darkness. Battle after battle, you will command your fighting party across magical lands protected by hostile forces. You will need the help of the bravest warriors, as well as armor, weapons, intricate battle plans and magical spells. Be ruthless. Be clever. Or be dead.




TRAINING AN ARMY

{or how to ensure the biggest, baddest, meanest SOB's are on your side}





In Final Fantasy Tactics, you are Ramza, a young squad leader and an ally of Princess Ovelia. It's up to you to lead an elite fighting squad of your own choosing into battle. You must train them to be powerful Black Mages who can cast magic spells, Summoners who can awaken terrible beasts, Wizards,



Ninjas, Bards, Archers, Thieves and more. There are nineteen fighting classes and four hundred abilities to master. If you go into battle ill-prepared, may the enemy make the blood run cold from your heart. 

EFFECTIVE BATTLE STRATEGIES

{or further discussions from the annals of shoot first, ask questions later}

 As the ancient history of warfare reveals, you will survive if your battle strategy is strong, and perish if it is not. You will lead the charge through impressive lands trying to gain the best strategic positions in forests, castle ramparts, swamps and valleys. You can buy and sell equipment, hire new soldiers and plan glorious battle strategies. May you conquer the enemy or may you die trying. 



SQUARESOFT

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS


Compiled by: Dan "Shoe" Hsu

Letter of the Month

Hope For The Future

I have noticed lately there have been a few gripes about lame endings and low replay value in video games. I think I know why things are the way they are. You see, the whole idea of game "endings" is still a fresh concept.

I am an "old-school" gamer and have been playing video games since the late '70s. All of the now-classic games that I played didn't have endings. They just looped over and began again...some, maybe with a faster twist than before. So the whole point back then was to beat the highest score on the roster or your own personal high.

Nowadays the emphasis is placed on beating a game A.S.A.P. I think this is one of the reasons why video games have become so easy. Just the other day, I played through and finished a game I got for Christmas before I even got a chance to take the wrapping out to the garbage! Don't get me wrong, I think Fighting Force is a very beautifully rendered game with lots of action, but it was "too easy" and too short. I blazed through the stages with ease.

But you see, this is what I think the majority of the consumers want—a fun and easy game that isn't too frustrating. The trick is finding that happy medium, where the game isn't too hard or too easy. I think this is where the programmers are having trouble, and they end up with a disposable product that has no replay value.

You have to look at the whole problem this way: Most of the programmers are "old-school" gamers, like myself, who played games that never had an ending. They like me, are used to plain, never-give-up, fight 'em until you feel freezes, then fight 'em on ice-type games that never ended but in turn rewarded you with a harder level for every one completed. And if you did reach the last level, it repeated at a much faster, harder rate. The next day you could then brag to your friends about how many times you flipped the score to "o" and how few quarters you used to do it.

So you see, my guess is that the whole “ending” and “replay value” thing is still a bit new, and I think that as time progresses, through trial and error, programmers will eventually get the endings and replay value to everyone’s liking. Just hang in there. I hope you are just as excited as I am about what possibilities the future holds.

CJX@concentric.net



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controller. You will
be receiving a
Barracuda (PS), a
Eclipse Stick (SAT)
or a SharkPad Pro
64² (N64).

[illegible]

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Belated Holiday Wishes

What's the best gift to give to me?
 How 'bout Resident Evil 2 on the Sony p?
 Who do I want knockin' at my door?
 The UPS man with Duke 64.
 What would look good sittin' under my tree?
 LucasArts' Rebellion for my PC.
 What's that other thing I'm wishin' for?
 An early release of MK4.
 What's something cool I'd like to see?
 A Director's Cut worth buyin'...um...*(tempo change)*...
 Play Street Fighter 2 with Dan Hsu,
 Kick his *BLEEP* and when I'm through,
 I won't bother with stretch and flex,
 When next I take down Sushi-X,
 Have an RPG party with Kraig Ricciardi,
 Over at the awesome pad of Ed Semrad,
 The bowl of fruit pickards from Kelly Rickards,
 And when it's all over, take a nap like Crispin Boyer.
 I think I've said too much...Happy Holidays Y'all!

Chris Shattuck — barryleesober@juno.com

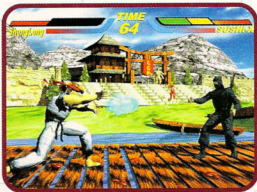
After John Ricciardi read this poem, he asked, "Did Kraig and I get married? At least I got to keep the name..."

Sushi-X's Dream Game

I figured that since I'm trying to get into the video game business as an artist, I thought it would be nice to send you renderings for your dream games [Area 52, issue #100]. I'm starting with Street Fighter: The Summoning, Sushi's dream game. I'm working on all six games, one at a time. Yes, I'm working on Firefighter Fighter too.

P.S. Dear Sushi, expect a gift in the mail soon. Hint: You have one on your back, but this one is only about 2 inches long. Hope you like it.

Christopher Bryan—CPU64@aol.com



Thanks for the picture, although we're not exactly sure what you're referring to in your P.S. We did overhear Sushi-X saying, "Wow, two inches! That's over twice as long as mine! But what does he mean 'on my back'?"

Is The Truth Out There?

I would really like you guys to come clean about your tricks section. I say it is a near impossibility to find a cheat code, yet every month, we see "somebody" sends one in. I think you guys (especially the Trickman) are working in conjunction with some invisible government agency and several large gaming companies intending to mislead the American people in the biggest cover-up since Roswell. Is the Trickman real? Or is he a computer-generated hologram with a bad haircut?

Steve Robles—Sacramento, CA

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-P.S.X.

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-GAME INFORMER

"...one truly entertaining title."

-OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE

"...my pick for game of the year."

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egm letters



Oh, we can assure you, Trickman Terry is real. And ever since he took on his new Euro-punk House of Pain look, he's been real popular with the ladies. Bad haircuts are things of the past for Terry.

Sports Games In the 21st Century

You know all those sports games that have a year in their name, like NHL 98 and Triple Play 98? How will their names change going into the 21st century? Will we get an NHL 00? Or how about a Triple Play: The New Millennium?

nm007001@inter.net.co

A representative from EA Sports, who wished to remain anonymous, told us that the names for their sports lineup in the year 2000 are absolutely TOP SECRET. He gave us the old, "We can tell you, but we'd have to kill you" routine. Don't worry. We'll eventually find out...even if it kills us. But whatever EA Sports decides to name their future games (we kinda like the sound of "NHL 2000"), it better be good. How cool can the name of a game get to be such a hush-hush secret?



NHL 98 (pictured here) looks and plays pretty good. But can you imagine what an NHL 2000 might look like on a PlayStation 4 or a DualShock? We're drooling in anticipation.

How NOT To Do Secret Messages

Phew! So after hours of searching, I found your hidden message [issue #100], X-Men rule. Super way of hiding the message by giving a clue on page 229. Uh...it was hard, but I also found the hidden message in issue #102 in your response to Tom Donohoe's letter. Keep on putting hidden messages in your magazine, EGM does rule! So does the N64! (How else was I going to get an X in there? Give me a break guys!)

Ryan Sikrski—oldcrab@erols.com

SUKES? Holy bad secret message! Oldcrab here demonstrates exactly how doing secret messages can majorly backfire on you if you try too hard. Elephants are fun animals, if not a bit forgetful. If you insist on making secrets, you should double check your spelling. Sigh...youth these days. Kidding you of course, Mr. Sikrski (in case you couldn't tell, we like to give our readers a hard time once in a while). Isabelle is a girl's name. No it isn't. Gabriel is, however.

Saturn X-Men Vs. Street Fighter Update

I want to encourage Saturn owners to write or e-mail Sega of America to release X-Men vs. Street Fighter for the Saturn. If you want to see this game released in the U.S., write them and let them know!

Henry Suh—HenrySuh8821@juno.com

Well, it's not SoA that you want to contact, it's Capcom Entertainment here in America, but even that might not help at this

point. At the time of this writing, Capcom's sales force is out meeting with retailers to see how viable bringing out an American Saturn X-Men vs. Street Fighter would be.

The problem is, several major retail outlets, including Wal-Mart and Target, are clearing out their Saturn hardware and software inventory this spring. If too many stores are discontinuing Saturn products, then Capcom won't have enough ways to get the game into players' hands. This is unfortunate, but the hard truth of the matter is, the Saturn is not doing well here in the States. And as great a game X-Men vs. Street Fighter is, Capcom can't afford to market, package and distribute a game if no one is willing to sell it for them. We still have hope in the Best Buys, Toys 'R' Us and specialty shops, which is what Capcom is checking into right now. We'll let you know what happens next issue.



How does an arcade-perfect, virtually no load time X-Men vs. Street Fighter sound? Believe us when we tell you that this game (Japanese version shown here) is awesome. Let's cross our fingers and hope this game will see the light of day in America.

Men Against Women Against Sexism

In response to all the girls complaining about how there should be more pictures of scantily clad men in your magazine: I'm sorry, but they should be thankful (including "Terra" from the 100th issue). In your December and February issues, you guys printed a Crash Bandicoot 2 advertisement and there were—huh? How many? Four muscular men in skimpy leopard-skin Speedos! And in the WCW vs. NWO and WCW Nitro ads, there were a total of eight men in Spandex wrestling suits. Altogether: 12 men. Looking through the issue, I only found five women in skimpy outfits. So "Terra" and her followers should lighten up and quit complaining!

Alex Kritselis—Naperville, IL

We could be wrong, but we don't think that many females consider Giant in his tight wrestling outfit to be particularly sexy.

It's All Foreign To Us

What is the Japanese writing on the pages of the Import/Japanese previews? Are they the games' names in Japanese?

oUltiMa@aol.com

It says "International Previews." In the International News section, the Japanese text says "International News." Pretty creative, huh?

Question of the Moment

What classic games would you like to see revived for today's systems?

I would like to see TRON make a comeback.

ken.jalen@

saltriver.pima-maricopa.nsn.us

Call me crazy, but can anybody recall a decent home translation of Double Dragon?

TommyHand@classic.msn.com

Just to name a few: Solar Fox, Tron, Gorf, Karate Champ, Mat Mania, Zaxxon, Mouse Trap, Smurfs, Carnival and Renegade. Hope I brought back memories.

Inferred1@aol.com

Kangaroo—Atariz600.

cyberchimp@hotmail.com

Two words...Zelda Trilogy!
naka@koan.com

Metroid. Definitely.
Snix03@aol.com

How about a 3-D River Raid?

cloudx@acsworld.net

I think Bubsy needs to be revived, even if Bubsy 3D sucked.

MASE4@prodigy.net

I'd like to see ASTEROIDS or, er, I mean ASTROD come back with killer graphics.

storm1271@aol.com



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-Nintendo Power, Pak Watch, Volume 103

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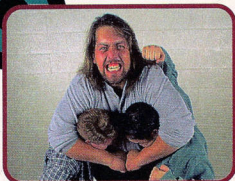
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egm letters



WCW's (or is it NWO's?) Giant shows Shoe and Crispin what happens when someone insults him in the pages of EGM. Chances are, we won't be doing it again anytime soon.

Mystery Game Still A Mystery

I know for a fact that the game in question (in your January and February EGM Letters) IS NOT ASTROD. I have played the game myself, and I own it. I don't quite remember its name, but it came out for the Atari 800XL. The game had you flying around an asteroid field and shooting at the engine of some yellow alien ship and pushing it through the asteroid field. The game came out on either a cartridge or a 5 1/4" floppy. This was my favorite game from the early '80s. I believe it was called "Saturn Rings" or something like that.

Eddie McIntosh—emac@mindspring.com

Oh, OK. Thanks.

Psycho Goodwill Message Of The Month

Hil This is Cloud! I think your magazine rules! (Thanks for making our game "Game of the Month.") I suppose you're all wondering what happened to us at the end of the game. Well I'm finally with Aeris again, and we're planning on getting married this January. A strange force somehow sent us here to your planet. We have to change our names to protect our identity. But I think I now know why we are here. We are here to save your dying planet! Never have I seen a planet so polluted! We are wondering if we should let Aeris do all the fun, but naah. I know you're laughing right now, but you'll see!

P.S. Please do not print my e-mail address (and my other name) as I do not want people to send me e-mail messages telling me I'm a crazy person!

Name and address withheld

Still Not Dealing With Sega

Is Working Designs planning on bringing out any games for Sega's new Dual system?
denmj12@aol.com

The ever-quotable and outspoken president of Working Designs, Mr. Victor Ireland, replied, "Not unless the management changes [at Sega of America]." Mr. Ireland then went on and told us that his relationship with Sony is rosy as can be, so we can continue to expect PlayStation games from Working Designs. What about all the people who want to play Working Designs games but don't own a PlayStation? "I don't buy it when people say they can't afford another system," says Ireland. "For the cost of three games, they can save

up enough money to buy the 'other' system and get to play any game they want." Mr. Ireland did hint that he would love to bring out Dragon Force II for a Sega system in America... provided of course the management at SoA changes.

Can't we all just be friends? If for nothing else but to see Dragon Force II in the U.S.? Oh well, maybe Sega will bring it out themselves (PLEASE??). Make sure to check out the International Preview of DFII in this issue.



Hey, look at what we found—the original arcade AstroD, a.k.a. Saturn Rings.

Time To Put This To Rest

In your last two issues, you've talked about the Atari 2600 game, Asteroids (in the Letters section). It seemed that the question has been answered, right? Wrong. I have a 2600, and I have the game. It is called ASTEROIDS.

NLraider@concentric.net

WE KNOW! For crying out loud, can't you people tell when we're being sarcastic? Do you honestly think we're not familiar with games BM (Before Mario)? We've played Asteroids (and its sequels and spin-offs) countless times. We've played the flickering, epileptic attack-inducing 2600 version when we were in our wonder years. Now please stop trying to enlighten us. We know what the game is called.

P.S. The only thing we do need help on is in obtaining a working copy of ASTROD. Any help there would be greatly appreciated.

AMAZING!

For the first time in three months, we don't need an OOPS section to correct our mistakes from the previous month. How about a nice round of applause? We'll savor the moment cuz it'll probably never happen again.



Letter Art

Where creativity, your favorite video game and a stamp can make you immortal!*

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Flavio Mireles
Monterey Park, CA

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1920 Highland Ave. Suite 222
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Close, but no controller



Juan Aguayo
Calexico, CA



Mark Crawford
Lexington, KY



Rit Lon
Silver Spring, MD

*Or at least get your name and work in the magazine and win yourself a great prize (FIRST PLACE ONLY).

Wanted: Non-Lara Croft and non-Dragon Ball Z envelope art. We've seen enough of those, don't ya think?

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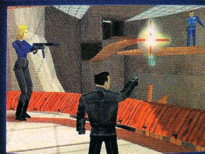
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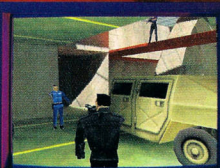
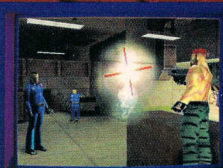
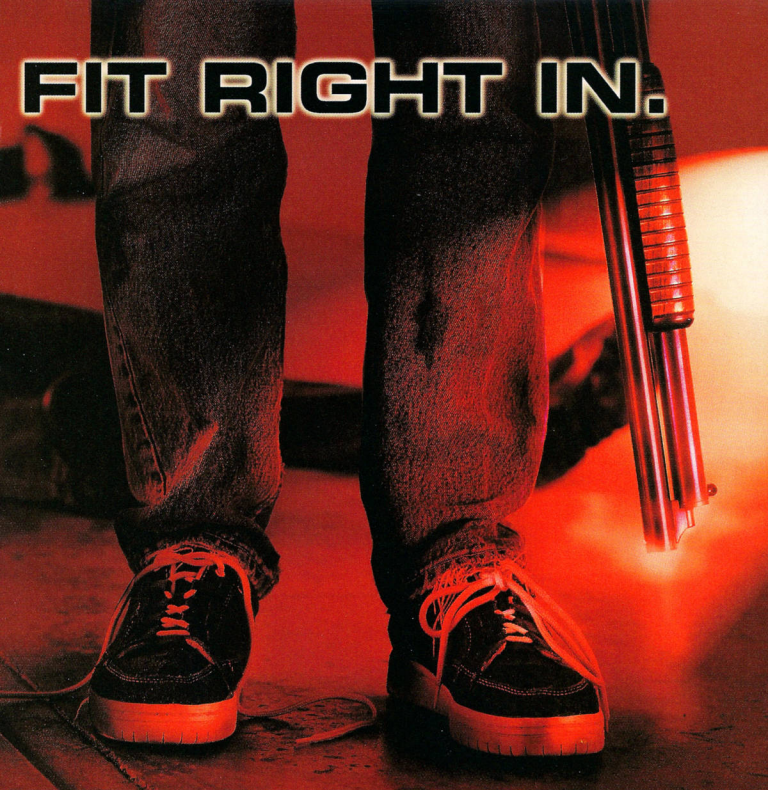
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Video Game News

The hottest gaming news on the planet

Can Sega Be Saved?

Sega's next system could take them to the next level or get them marooned on a distant planet

Things are not well at Sega of America headquarters. Having suffered a bleak 1997, Sega announced in mid-January that it has laid off 30 percent of its workforce, including marketing, public relations and product development staff. With that announcement, Sega officially confirmed the existence of a new "super" console (which is referred to here as Dural) to be released in North America in 1999.

"After evaluating the current industry situation and our plans for a new video game platform, we do not believe that launching this year is in the best interest of our customers, retailers or software partners," said Sega COO Bernie Stolar. "To be fiscally responsible and competitive tomorrow, we have to make some difficult decisions today that will put us on the right path for long-term success."

Sega's current position can be traced to the early days of Saturn. From the start, the Saturn had a tough time gaining popularity. Former Sega President Tom Kalinske, who is currently president of Knowledge Universe, an education technology firm, said that early on the price of Saturn was a huge roadblock. "The price issue caused us to do all kinds of things that if it had been priced correctly to start with, we wouldn't have done. We knew that Sony was going to come out at a lower price, and if we had been able to price correctly, we wouldn't have launched in the hurried fashion that we did and in just a few places. We would have launched everywhere at a lower price. In truth, [the Saturn] shouldn't have been launched at the time it was, and certainly we should have waited until we had both pricing and proper

software available."

Looking at Sega after he left, Kalinske says a few things have gone neglected that shouldn't have. "The thing that I think has gone wrong for them is they've walked away from some very important software franchises—there should be better Sonic the Hedgehog games out, there should be better sports games out from Sega, not just third parties."

It's clear that mistakes from the early days of the Saturn cannot be repeated with Dural. As the Saturn disappears from the market and Sega's official confirmation of the Dural's existence, it's time to turn to look at how the company can regain its market dominance. Here are our suggestions for Sega:

THE DEAD PLANET

There is still a handful of loyal Saturn fans out there itching for new games, but with retailers quickly abandoning the system, it's going to be extremely difficult to get new software to players. There are going to be a handful of "must-have" games coming

Tom Kalinske gave Sega its most successful years with the Genesis, but left when the company landed on Saturn.



out in Japan that would be great to have English translations of (Grandia, X-Men Vs. Street Fighter, Phantasy Star Collection and all three scenarios of Shining Force III) in 1998. Fans have already begun petitions on the Internet to get some of these games released here. It's going to be important to cater to the loyalists in '98, even if that means resorting to direct sales to get software into gamers' hands. While some will say that Sega should kill the system off and be done with it, there's a lot to be said for keeping fans happy. Pick a few of the best Japanese games, and license them.



CLEAN HOUSE

Many of the Saturn's woes are pinned on the guy who's currently at the wheel—Bernie Stolar. His comments at last year's E! that "the Saturn is not our future" all but doomed the system to obscurity, a move which did nothing to reassure fans of the system's continued strength. The Internet has been ripe with comments like, "Bring back Tom Kalinske," and while that's not going to happen, SoA needs a strong leader and the kind of winning team that brought the Genesis to the forefront in the early '90s to usher in Dural.

WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN

Sony may have scored a hit with the PlayStation, but as Sega has proven before, they can topple a monopoly with the right hardware and games. "There's no monopoly long term," said Al Nilsen, the "father of Sonic" and former group director of global marketing for Sega. "When we were first starting out with the Genesis, the consensus was that no one could knock Nintendo from their perch, and we did it." A '99 release of the Dural in America, which is what Sega says they're going to do, could come at the right time. Who knows when Sony will have PlayStation 2, so get in early.

BUILD IT RIGHT THIS TIME

The Saturn was criticized by some as a difficult machine to develop for. Take your time with Dural, and make it developer-friendly.

Manufacture the hardware yourself, don't take the 3DO approach. "It concerns me that I'm hearing all these rumors about different manufacturers making Sega's next machine. JVC and NEC and all those companies want to make money on hardware, they're not into the game of making money on the software," says Dave Perry, president of Shiny Entertainment, who says "They need to build it themselves."

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

It's worth looking at Nintendo's strategy with the N64—fewer games of better quality. Fortunately for Sega, their arcade teams have helped keep the Saturn afloat longer than it would have without them. Sonic Team and Team Andromeda (behind the Panzer Dragon series) need to be tapped to give the Dural a strong lineup at the beginning. Give us a real Sonic game for once, no Sonic 3-D Blast or Sonic Jam—a 2-D game is not a bad thing! Nilsen says, "It's not what's under the hood, it's what you do with what's under the hood. We couldn't agree more."



Bernie Stolar will oversee Sega's first steps into Dural territory. Will he be able to steer Sega back to industry dominance?

PRICE IS EVERYTHING

Consoles may be cheaper than high-end PCs, but are still expensive when they're released. The PlayStation debuted with a \$300 price tag, double what it retails for now. If you make the Dural inexpensive at the outset, pricing it competitively, there's a much better chance that gamers will want it. "I think in the end, a lot of people have looked at that \$199 price point as maybe a good starting point," said James Lin, an industry analyst at Webbush Morgan Securities. "If you start out at \$249, you'll get a lot of the early adopters buying it, but Sega really needs to be aggressive with this new system." If it is in fact as "super" a system as Stolar says, then what better way to convince gamers that this is a must-have than to price it at \$250 or lower. As 3DO learned, a higher initial price is not a good thing—even if that's the way most major consumer electronics work.

MAKE IT WORTHWHILE

Whatever form Sega's next machine takes, it's going to need games from third-party developers to be a success. Victor Ireland, president of Working Designs, suggests Sega reduce their royalty fees to 1/4 of what they are now. Sega currently charges third parties as much as Sony to make games for the Saturn, a choice which hasn't done the system any good. Perry says that it's not royalty fees that will entice developers, but the quality of the hardware. Anticipate what kind of challenge Sony's next system will present.

As Sega gears up for the challenges ahead in 1999, the company's Saturn releases will probably slow to a crawl. If the rumors and speculation about its power are true, then gamers are going to be in for a treat. We'll be here in another year when Sega releases their new hardware in North America, ready to play.

Ingredients For Success

We talked to a few industry experts to get their thoughts on what Sega's next moves in 1998 with the Dural should be. We asked them what three or four things they would suggest Sega of America do in the months to come to push their next system to the kind of stellar success the Genesis had between 1989 and 1994. Here are some of the responses we got:

Al Nilsen, former group director of global marketing, Sega of America

- "Concentrate and focus efforts on a small number of titles that have the greatest potential to be great."
- "Develop a plan and execute it beautifully. Don't go into this willy-nilly. Decide what, when, how and do that in advance. Anticipate your competitors."
- "Introduce your new platform at an aggressive price."
- "Do it when you're ready, not before."

Victor Ireland, president, Working Designs

- "Change management—specifically, send Bernie back to Sony."
- "Drop royalties by 3/4; put it at 1/4 of what it currently is."
- "Increase advertising."

Dave Perry, president, Shiny Ent.

- "Build the next machine yourself."
- "Use the arcade arm and that strength as much as possible."
- "Charge the least that your spreadsheets will allow for the machine from day one."

James Lin, vice president of research, Webbush Morgan Securities

- "Marketing."
- "Look at your competition."
- "Don't try to rush a system out there just for the sake of getting a system out and being first to market."

What's Sega really planning for their next system? At this time, it's nothing more than speculation. But the above advice to them should definitely be things at the top of Sega's list. It's going to take a combination of the things we've said here for them to do it. Now, it's up to Sega.



Tidbits...

MK Goes Prime Time

According to a Variety report, Mortal Kombat is headed to TV in syndicated form next fall. Mortal Kombat has already been seen on the big screen in two successful films and in animated form on the Fox Kids Network, but this will be the first time the game's plot and characters show up in an hour-long weekly live-action show. Each episode will feature plentiful handfuls of Kombat action and special effects. The series will be run in syndication and produced by New Line Television and distributed by Warner Bros. This is the first time that a live-action television show based on a video game (other than the live-action segments from the Super Mario Super Show) has aired on U.S. TV.



Lower Price, Longer Wait

Nintendo lowers game prices but pushes back upcoming games

First the good news: Nintendo is lowering the price of seven top-selling Nintendo 64 games. But don't celebrate yet—there's another round of software delays headed your way.

As the new year began, Nintendo was back to work flexing its marketing muscle by announcing a "Player's Choice" line of Nintendo 64 titles, re-released at an MSRP of \$39.95 beginning Jan. 26. They include Nintendo's flagship N64 title Super Mario 64, as well as Mario Kart 64, Star Fox 64, Cruis'n USA, Wave Race 64, Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire and Acclaim's Turok: Dinosaur Hunter. A similar Player's Choice price plan has been in place for Super NES and Game Boy titles for some time.

Offering all of Miyamoto's N64 titles at such a price is undoubtedly a move to compete with Sony's "Power Price" structure announced last fall. While numbers on just how well Sony and Nintendo did this past holiday season haven't been released yet, it's sure to be a heated battle. Aside from lowering the price of software, both companies have one more step to try to one-up each other: hardware price drops. Those will most likely occur this spring at or before the annual Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in Atlanta at the end of May.

A few days after unveiling the N64 Player's Choice line, Nintendo announced another round of game delays, putting some of their most

anticipated games further away than ever. Yoshi's Story will still appear on March 9, but Rare's Banjo-Kazooie has been pushed back to July 27, and MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr. has been pushed back to May 25. These delays also spell trouble for Zelda: The Ocarina of Time and F-Zero X, both of which are now next quarter 1998 releases or later. On the good side, at least Nintendo's spacing of quality titles means that N64 players will have at least one good game a month.

www.nintendo.com

Mark Your Calendars...

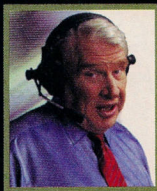
Yoshi's Story March 9	1080 Snowboarding April 1	NBA Courtside April 27
MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr. May 25	Cruis'n World June 29	Banjo Kazooie July 27

QBC Tackles Madden

Acclaim trounces Electronic Arts at their own game

Released in October, Electronic Arts' Madden 64 found itself as the only Madden game in recent memory to not sport the NFL team and logo license. This was caused by Acclaim's shrewd marketing move of securing the NFL license exclusively for Nintendo 64 games during the 1997 NFL season through the Super Bowl in January. Madden and Quarterback Club duked it out on the air in a flurry of commercials for the two titles, promoted by their respective pitchmen, John Madden and Brett Favre.

The absence of the NFL license, along with Quarterback Club 98's ground-breaking graphics seems to have made a significant impact on the sales of Madden, propelling Acclaim's licensed game well above Madden 64 in the sales and rental charts. According to numbers compiled through November from the NPD Group, Quarterback Club was second among video games sales leaders, while Madden 64 trailed behind at number nine. Although numbers for December have not been reported, it is highly likely that the trend will continue, keeping Quarterback Club high atop its rivals.



Not even John Madden's mug on the box could save Madden 64.

www.acclaimnation.com, www.easports.com

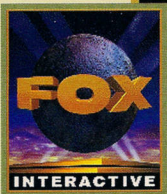
Breaking a Sweat

Fox begins developing sports games

Fox Interactive announced in December that it is entering the highly competitive arena of sports video games with a brand-new label—Fox Sports Interactive. To support the new line, Fox has hired the talents of British developer Gremlin, known for their Actua sports series of games in the U.K.

The first games to come out of the Fox Sports Interactive label will be Fox Sports Hockey, Golf, Tennis and Soccer. All of these titles will be released on PlayStation and PC, and the hockey game (to be released at the start of the '98-'99 season) will carry the NHL and NHLPA licenses. "Having established Fox Interactive as a significant competitor in the video game arena, leveraging Fox Studio properties as well as developing our own characters and game franchises, we're eager to partner with Fox Sports to enter the sports video game market," said Jon Richmond, president of Fox Interactive. "The combination of that powerful branding with outstanding gameplay will produce the next generation of sports video games."

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Tidbits...

Cool As Ice

Nintendo announced there will be a limited-edition "ice blue" version of their hugely successful Game Boy Pocket on store shelves beginning in February. The price will be the same as current GB Pocket systems.

EVERYONE



Give Me An "E"

The Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB) is making a change to their ratings system beginning immediately with all new software titles released. They have changed their previous K-A rating—

meaning Appropriate for Kids to Adults, to E—meaning Everyone.

The explanation is that the ESRB always wanted to use the E icon as a rating, but until now was unable to get permission from another company (not a ratings company) to use it. Now that that has happened, they have removed the K-A rating and replaced it. The new rating will only appear on new games; older titles will still carry the K-A symbol.

DigiCube Breaks 10 Million

Recently the DigiCube video game vending service announced that they have sold more than 10 million software units since the service started in Japan in November 1996. Retail revenue for the system is estimated at more than 60 billion yen (over \$400 million). The game that really made the DigiCube system work was Final Fantasy VII, which helped the company top 5 million units sold in May 1997.

At that time, 31 titles by 14 companies were offered. Today, that number has nearly doubled to 61 titles by 29 companies.

View to a Million

According to Nintendo, Diddy Kong Racing has become the fastest-selling video game in the U.S., selling more than 1 million units in 21 days after its release in late November 1997. DKR becomes the fifth No. 1 game to break 1 million in 1997, a list which includes Mario 64, Star Fox 64, Mario Kart 64 and GoldenEye 007.

Sega President Steps Down

Reports out of Japan indicate that Sega Enterprises President Hayao Nakayama will step down from his position, and that Sega of America Chairman and CEO Shiohiko Irimajiri will replace him. The replacement will occur in February.

Irimajiri, 58, joined Sega as vice president in 1993, after almost a 30-year career at Honda. There is speculation Nakayama is stepping down in order to take responsibility for the failed Sega-Bandai merger from last year, and Sega's less-than-stellar performance with the Saturn. Sega's expected to announce their new console in Japan this spring.

A Tale of Convergence

This year's Winter CES proved to be a digital experience

This year's Winter Consumer Electronics Show was held in Las Vegas from Jan. 8-11, sprawled across the Las Vegas Convention Center, the Las Vegas Hilton, the Sands Expo Center and Alexis Park. No video game companies were in sight, however, there were a bunch of new video game products there including peripherals, licensed products (like Mario cameras) and small TVs so you can take your game on the road.

But this year's Winter CES focused on high-end digital technology, including DVD, DSS, HDTV, DTV, Divx and all those other high-tech phrases you've probably already heard a little bit about.

DVD, Digital Video Disc or Digital Versatile Disc, depending on who you talk to, was a dominant attraction at this year's show, just about every hardware manufacturer had several new, sometimes cheaper models with additional bells and whistles tacked on for good measure. Panasonic's DVD-L10 was the most impressive of the new DVD products. It's a portable DVD video player with a 5.8-inch wide, 16:9/4:3 widescreen display. Weighing less than two pounds, this is a pricey portable at \$1,299.95.

Meanwhile, Sharp and Circuit City

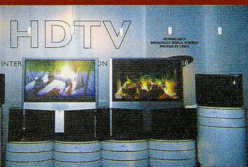
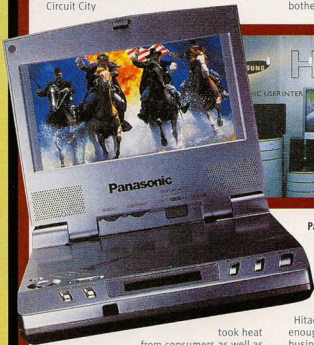


The Winter CES took place during a particularly rainy January day in Las Vegas, Nevada.

become a success, and no company showed a Divx player on the show floor.

High Definition Television (HDTV) was on display again at this year's show, and it looks as if it might be closer than ever to reality. Satellite programming provider DirecTV was the first to demo a high-definition signal to the show. HDTV and DTV are both digital formats, resulting in a crisp, clear, high-resolution image.

One of the other "watch the demo but don't bother asking about the price" products are



Panasonic's portable DVD-L10 is small enough to hold in your hand, but HDTV isn't.

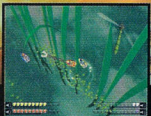
plasma televisions. Unbelievably flat (under six inches deep), Fujitsu's PlasmaVision and similar products from Mitsubishi, Panasonic, Philips JVC and Hitachi were also the talk of the show. Thin enough to hang from a wall, it's expected that businesses will be the only ones capable of affording the \$10,000+ price tags of these new television sets.

Microsoft was in full force touting their Palm PCs, running on its Windows CE operating system. Windows CE was in other new electronic conveniences too, like cable boxes, car computers and digital organizers.

Those are just a few of the highlights of Winter CES. This is just the first trade show of the year—we will see many more, including the Tokyo Game Show in March and E* at the end of May. We'll have coverage of those shows as they happen on www.videogames.com.

took heat from consumers as well as producers of DVD titles with their Divx format. Divx is an encoded DVD that will only play on Divx-compatible players (that also play standard DVD titles). You buy a Divx disc for \$5 and can play it as much as you want for 48 hours. Then your player will stop playing the encoded disc unless you pay for additional viewings through the Divx player. Designed to take out DVD rentals, the "format" has been criticized because it could easily lead to unwanted Divx discs stacking up like unused America Online discs. The DVD format continues to strengthen, making it less certain that Divx will ever

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Codemasters



International News

インターナショナル ニュース

Invasion of the Seizure-inducing Cartoons

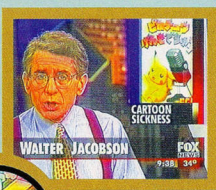
Nintendo's *Pokemon* lights up controversy around the world in less than five seconds

While Pocket Monsters (*Pokemon*, for short) hasn't been released anywhere outside Japan, it's already making headlines worldwide. The highly successful Nintendo Game Boy title's animated counterpart became the center of attention following the show's Dec. 16 episode. During the episode in question, the characters were caught inside a computer being invaded by agents of evil. When an anti-virus program began firing missiles on the heroes and villains, Pikachu, the show's star, used his electrical field to destroy

frequently in girls age 6-12 but can occur at any age regardless of gender. In fact, it was reported that a 58-year-old man was among those affected by the *Pokemon* episode.

Nintendo Co. Ltd. immediately distanced themselves from the show, saying that they have nothing to do with its production other than the fact that it's based on their most popular video game series. Photosensitive epilepsy is also occasionally triggered by flashing lights in video games, which is why most games now carry epilepsy warnings.

The U.S. press grabbed hold of the story and quickly found those who blamed it on the nature of Japanese animation. "Japanese animation is so different from what airs here," Mike Lazzo, vice president of programming for the Cartoon Network, told *USA Today*. "It's far edgier, more adult and violent. Anime isn't very story-based and is driven by intense moments. The story is hard to follow." Most critics have disagreed in the past, crediting anime with some of the best, most mature stories present in animation. In fact, there is a handful of Japanese animated series running on U.S. television, includ-



Pokemon was all over the news. Hey, what's that logo over there?

ing *Dragon Ball Z*, *Sailor Moon*, *Speed Racer* and *Voltron*. None of those shows have caused symptoms like those from *Pokemon*, nor is U.S. animation completely invulnerable from triggering photosensitive epilepsy.

However, the hype surrounding *Pokemon*, the cartoon that made so many Japanese children sick, made it an instant curiosity. So much so that New York-based 4 Kids Entertainment announced in early January their intentions to bring it to the U.S., which probably wouldn't have happened without the publicity triggered by the seizures. 4 Kids also said the flashy special effects will be removed from the show in its North American form. There is no word yet on exactly when the show will appear here.



These flashing blue-and-red lights sent Japanese kids to hospitals.



Sega Buys Into ASCII

Two Japanese media companies join forces

While in the U.S. we were celebrating the holiday season, in Japan, Sega and ASCII were busy announcing a new partnership. ASCII (makers of the extremely successful *Derby Stallion* PlayStation title) announced that they would allocate 5.5 million new shares of stock to CSK Corp., and 3.3 million to Sega Enterprises. Ko Okawa, CSK and Sega chairman, will serve as a special advisor to ASCII while ASCII director Sadahiko Hirose

will be a special advisor to Sega.

The deal forms a partnership between the two companies (CSK owns Sega) for the development of new business, software development and redemption of convertible bonds.

CSK said in a statement that the three companies will exchange advanced technologies to establish a solid future for CSK in the multimedia industry. No doubt this deal will also affect software for Sega's next system.

www.sega.co.jp, www.ascii.co.jp



Top 10 in Japan

The 10 Best-Selling Games As of Dec. 28

- 1 Densha De Go! (Taito)-PS
- 2 Grandia (Game Arts)-SS
- 3 Crash Bandicoot 2 (Sony)-PS
- 4 Rurouni Kenshin (Sony)-PS
- 5 Pocket Monsters (Nintendo)-GB
- 6 Front Mission Alternative (Square)-PS
- 7 Yoshi's Story (Nintendo)-N64
- 8 The Company 2 (Human)-PS
- 9 Rockman Dash (Capcom)-PS
- 10 Everybody's Golf (Sony)-PS



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The undisputed
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racing games!"

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before
you
do.

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What Kind of a Maniac Takes a Semi



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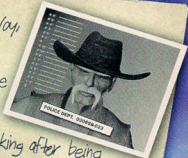


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Meet Conroy,
righteous
leader of the
Vigilantes.



He quit trucking after being
ambushed by the rival oil-thieving
"Coyotes" for the last time.
Now he's taking the law into his
own hands.

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So Much Power
It's Crazy.

- Eight Battle-Anywhere, Fully Destructible Arenas
- Eight Character-Based Muscle Cars, Trucks and More
- Over-the-Top Weapons and Attack Moves
- Unprecedented 3-D Graphics and Effects
- Two-Player Split-Screen Auto Combat
- Behind-the-Wheel or Behind-the-Car Views

- Bad news from Nintendo Japan
- The resurrection of Blanka?
- Even worse news from NoA
- Hyper-fighting on the Saturn?
- N64 successor due no time soon
- Two-player Time Crisis sequel

Quartermann

Welcome to this month's episode of Quartermann. Terry Aki (EGM's naughty Nipponese news ninja) is back at his HQ in Shinjuku, Japan. Our new Italian informant, Tommy Gotchi has settled into our European base in Manchester, England and I have entrenched myself at my home in sunny Silicon Valley, Calif. Springtime signals the time of the year when we all unplug our suitcases; fire up our computers and, for once, call our homes, home.

● TROUBLE BREWING AT NINTENDO

(Kyoto, Japan) Terry Aki reports that a major 64-Bit shakeup is due from Nintendo. According to our Japanese super-sleuth, Nintendo's new 64DD peripheral is at the epicenter of this quake. Although everything about the 64DD is going according to plan in Japan, NCL (Nintendo of Japan) will be delaying the U.S. intro of the 64DD to first quarter '99 at the earliest and there's even a chance Nintendo may not release the N64 upgrade at all in the U.S. From what we hear, the reasons for this uncertain thinking are as multifaceted as the potential fallout. First of all, although games like *Pokemon Snap*, *Talent Machine* and *SimCopter* should fly high in Japan, none of these games will sell hardware in the U.S. Although certain DD games on the horizon could make a killing here (*The DD version of Zelda* is one and *Mario 64 II* is another), none of those games will be ready for the U.S. in 1998. So...problem #1: lack of software. Another problem is NCL's lukewarm interest of the U.S. market. In Japan, where the N64 is #3 behind the PlayStation and Saturn, releasing the 64DD is crucial. Japanese gamers haven't exactly welcomed cartridges with open arms and because of this (plus the fact that the goods costs of N64 carts are much more expensive than a CD), the Japanese third-party development community has slowly warmed to 64DD development. The 64DD could change all this since DD goods costs should be much more competitive with CDs and popular games (in Japan) such as RPGs and sims should be easier to produce on 64 Megabyte DD disks, plus the writability aspect of the DD64 caters to RPGs and sims better than action games anyway. In the U.S., it's a much different story. Hardware upgrades in the U.S. don't have the same history of success (or any success for that matter) as the Japanese upgrades (the PC Engine CD was a roaring success). This is compounded by the fact that the N64 is a big success in the U.S., and as such is a reliable revenue stream for Nintendo of Japan. If the 64DD is released in the U.S., Nintendo will be forced to spend big marketing dollars to convince consumers that they can't live without a 64DD. Now, that money will have to come from somewhere (either Nintendo will devote some of the N64's marketing dollars over to the DD or cough up even more bucks solely for the 64DD). To Nintendo of Japan (and have no illusions, NCL calls all the shots), spending money in the soft Japanese market makes more sense than spending that same money in a robust U.S. market that doesn't need it quite as badly. Translation: If it ain't broke, why spend millions to fix it? Although both of us wish it weren't so, Terry assures me that yes, the American 64DD is on life support and is fading fast. My one question in this whole drama is this: If the 64DD doesn't materialize in the U.S., how is NOA going to fill its gap with N64 games?...read on...

● AH, BUT THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING

(Redmond, Wash.) If you think news of the 64DD not making it to the U.S. is bad, then you're gonna just lose it when you hear what NOA is planning now. Our sources tell us that since Nintendo of America probably won't have a 64DD to sell, they plan on stretching out the release schedule of their N64 games. Bottom line: delays, delays and more delays. You may have already read about the delays of Ken Griffey and Banjo-Kazooie in this month's Video Game News section of *EGM* (page 28), but I assure you this is just the tip of the massive iceberg. Don't expect to see *F-Zero X* any sooner than third quarter '98 and *Conquest Quest* is said to be a late

November release. So you think you're gonna play *Zelda 64* in 1998? Dream on. We hear *Zelda 64* will be a first quarter 1999 release at best. "But why would NOA risk burning their loyal followers with even more delays?" you ask? Well...because they can't remember the Nintendo/Yogi Berra mantra? If it ain't broke, why fix it? Well, almost every first- and second-party N64 game has been delayed at some point or another and Nintendo's followers have shown their displeasure by buying the games in record numbers. I mean, do you really think a six- to eight-month delay of *Zelda 64* is going to prevent the game from selling millions of copies? *Zelda 3* wasn't released until after several delays and that game went on to become the best-selling SNES game up to that point. As a sidenote, the successor to the N64 (not to be confused with the Lido 239 project) is well under development at MIPS/Silicon Graphics and due to hit Japan early in 2001, a mere two years after we get to play *Zelda*. If Nintendo gets their way, we get to line their silk pockets with buckets of cash earned from the bones they throw our way every few months. Do you ever notice how the more things change, the more they stay the same?

● AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

(Osaka, Japan) Unlike some OTHER companies, Capcom has plenty of games to entertain us in 1998. First is *Vampire Savior* for the Saturn. VS is already up and running but will require the 4 Meg RAM cart. Look for *Vampire Savior* this summer in Japan. Another arcade game coming to the console is *Puzzle Fighter/Gem Fighter*. Look for this title on the Saturn and PS around the third quarter in Japan and Christmas '98 here. The big news at Capcom, however, surrounds SF Collection 2. Since Capcom has sold enough copies of the SF games nobody asked for, they can now release the games we really want, *Namely Street Fighter*, *SF2*, *SF3*: CE and *Hyper Fighting*. Unlike the first collection, this compilation will put all five games on only one CD. The release date is up in the air right now but the games are coming out this year. On the arcade tip, look for some killer games to surface at the AOU show this month in Japan. First on the list is *SF Zero 3*. Known as *Alpha 3* in the U.S., *Zero 3* is said to feature new (or is that old?) characters to the Zero series including Guile, Honda and (drum roll please) the long-awaited return of Blanka. The CPS-2-powered *Zero 5* is due out in Japan in May and *Alpha 3* will come our way in July. The AOU show will also mark the official rollout of *Final Fight EX*, *Marvel vs. Capcom* and *Rival Schools*. Unfited by Fate, Capcom's latest 3-D fighter. At past AOU shows, Capcom traditionally previewed one game on tape that they would later show at the Jamma show in the fall. We hear that the game in question will either be *Star Gladiator 2* or *Akira Nishitani's* newest fighting game, *Street Fighter EX 2*. Another Jamma rumor is that there's a chance Capcom's booth will be the host to a prototype version of the Dural arcade board.

● QUICKIES

Speaking of the AOU show, other high-profile coin-op games are due to appear there, including *Virtua Cop 3* and the final version of *Virtual On 2*. Both games will run on Model 3 hardware. VC 3 is due out in the third quarter of 1998; *Virtual On 2* should hit Japanese arcades second quarter '98.

Namco will use the AOU to show off *Time Crisis 2*. Although we don't know exactly what hardware *Time Crisis 2* will run on, we do know the game is a two-player title with dual monitors and dual pedals. The idea here is that one player can cover the other while the ducking player reloads. TC2 is also due out this summer in Japan.

Sony is planning to release a *Godzilla* game for the PlayStation this summer. Based on the upcoming major motion picture, Sony's game is their big title for this summer and is said to be quite hot.

Well sports fans, that wraps up another issue of Quartermann. Next month we have lots of cool rumors and gaming dirt to satisfy even the hungriest gaming appetite. Tune in next month when we uncover news on Namco's new fighting game as well as more Dural info. Keep in mind, you can observe a lot just by watchin'.



www.psychosis.com



GIVE HISTORY A WEDGIE

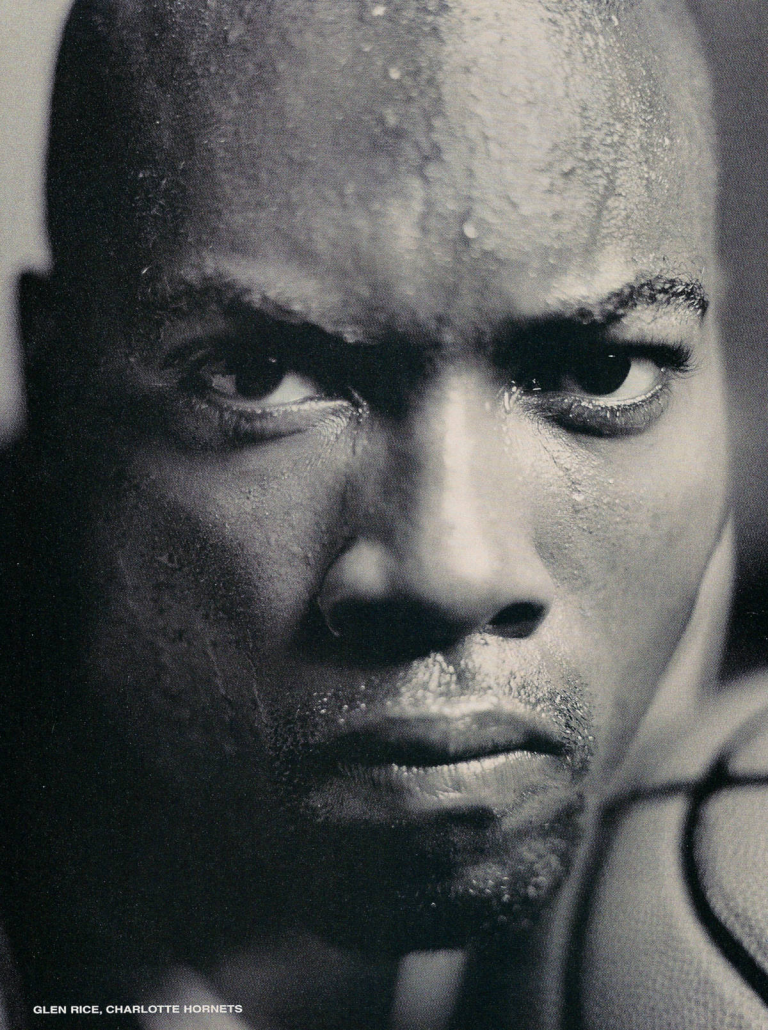
Historical bad guys are screaming, thanks to a sneaky kid named Rascal. He's on a mission to rescue his dad from an evil TimeLord. As he travels through time, he'll explore 18 different levels spread across past, present and future. He'll also have to zap Aztec gods, cowboys, and pirates within worlds that display "...some of the most impressive 3D graphics in a PlayStation game..." (Next Generation). So keep your eyes open. And bad guys, watch your backs.



RASCAL
3-D ACTION
ADVENTURE GAME



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GLEN RICE, CHARLOTTE HORNETS

I'd go to the schoolyard
and shoot 'til it got dark.
And then I'd keep shooting.
So I can make this shot
with my eyes closed.

**But now, my hands
are your hands.
Drain it.**



Nintendo 64

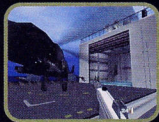
Previews

Game Directory

- Mystical Ninja Starring Goemon
- NHL Breakaway '98
- Virtual Chess 64

In Nintendo News...

As expected, Nintendo had an excellent holiday season. Software sales were brisk, and GoldenEye cartridges were extremely hard to come by. In an effort to keep the fervor alive, Nintendo recently announced their Player's Choice line of games which sell for \$39 games. Also, Yoshi's Story finally launched in Japan to a surprising reception. Only 50,000 units were sold in the first week, which by Japanese



GoldenEye was the benefit of a sales revival, becoming a scarce commodity during the holidays.

sales standards is a very lukewarm reception. Such is indicative of Nintendo's position in Japan, which could best be described as precarious.

Help may be on the way for Nintendo, as popular software developer Squaresoft is rumored to be an official N64 licensee and will release their first game in 1999. Their first title is allegedly the next Secret of Mana game, Square's only series that has not yet been ported to the PlayStation. If this proves true, it takes away the biggest asset the PlayStation had against the Big N. We'll keep you updated.



The Legend Returns—Finally

Mystical Ninja starring Goemon

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Konami Konami	1 Action	95	March 1998
Web Address: www.konami.com			

As many veteran gamers will surely remember, The Legend of the Mystical Ninja series first appeared on the Super Nintendo shortly after it debuted in 1991. The game drew a loyal following, but those followers have been kept waiting an uncharacteristically long time (close to seven years to be exact) for the next in the series—even though several Japanese sequels were made that never made it to U.S. shores.

For those of you who might not have played this title's predecessor, Mystical Ninja is a game carved from an odd niche. It combines adventure, RPG and arcade elements, and melds it all into an action game with a wacky and off-beat sense of humor. What other game would put you in perilous danger for calling a character a weirdo?

You control Goemon, a blue-haired, anime-style ninja who is given the tall order of saving feudal Japan from a weird, peach-shaped U.F.O. that has appeared in the peaceful town of Oedo. To remedy the situation, Goemon must travel around Japan and specifically, the countryside surrounding Oedo, in an effort to equip himself with powerful weapons and objects. These include giant robots, various magic spells and different types of pipes, hammers and armor in



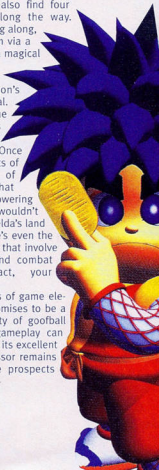
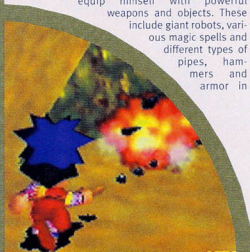
Walking around town to find and buy various items before going into battle is essential.



addition to normal ninja fare. Goemon can also find four different allies along the way. Instead of having them tag along, he simply turns into them via a press of the button and a magical puff of smoke.

Thanks to the game's 3-D makeover, Goemon's world is incredibly visceral. In fact, one might argue that Mystical Ninja looks like a cross between Zelda 64 and Mario 64. Once Goemon leaves the streets of Oedo, there's plenty of Mario-esque terrain that must be explored. Here, towering castles can be found that wouldn't be out of place even in the land of Hyrule. And then there's even the action-packed sequences that involve first-person, hand-to-hand combat which includes Impact, your trusty robot.

With its colorful canvas of game elements, Mystical Ninja promises to be a popular game with plenty of goofball elements. Whether its gameplay can make the game live up to its excellent Super Nintendo predecessor remains to be seen. So far, the prospects look good.



NHL Breakaway '98

Acclaim Ices Their N64 Sports Lineup



Following the success of their popular N64 football game, NFL Quarterback Club '98, Acclaim hopes to accomplish the same feat on ice with NHL Breakaway '98. Consequently, you'll see some similarities between the two games, namely the 3-D hi-res graphics that garnered so much praise for the aforementioned pigskin game.

Aesthetics aside, Breakaway is a little different from the average hockey title. Players can win points during the season that allow them to improve coaching, player development and injury therapies in addition to just having the requisite season options. Kinda makes it sound like a sports RPG in a way, doesn't it?

Even though it has these eccentricities, Breakaway still strives to be a realistic hockey simulation. Teams play their respective strategic styles, you can use different coaching strategies, and player weights and sizes are factored into checking. Also, Breakaway is the only N64 hockey game to allow you to use Olympic teams in addition to the usual NHL suspects (unlike Midway who broke these teams into two separate games).

Although the PlayStation version of Breakaway wasn't too impressive, it is entirely possible that this one could spark a turnaround for the series by taking advantage of the N64's hardware as well as more development time. ☺



Breakaway's hi-res graphics allow for plenty of on-screen action.



Oh, yes, the glowing puck made famous by FOX Sports is available as an option.

Virtual Chess 64

It's no secret that chess games aren't the favorites of most gamers, but there are those people out there who fancy themselves armchair strategists, or are just curious about this so-called "high-brow" game. For this reason, Titus is bringing us Virtual Chess 64 for the Nintendo 64.

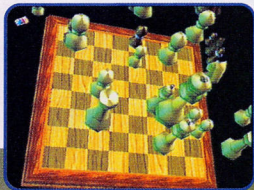
From what we've seen from screen shots, VC64 resembles Battle Chess with its unique chess pieces battling each other along with their humorous animations.

Instead of sprites duking it out like in Battle Chess, this one features full polygonal graphics and multiple camera angles.

Besides the nice-looking graphics, the title also features Titus' award-winning chess-specific AI technology. Their AI automatically adjusts its difficulty depending on the player it's up against. If you're a novice, the computer opponent will change accordingly,

and vice-versa. This one should appeal to both die-hard fans of chess as well as those who simply want to dabble.

Chances are you'll be able to rotate the chess board to any angle for the best view.



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

You've been warned.

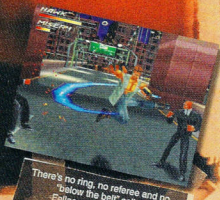
CORE



Go play in traffic. Use oncoming cars to turn hoodlums into hood ornaments.



Fight alone or share the carnage with a buddy. Mix it up with Mace, Hawk, Smasher & Alana.



There's no ring, no referee and no "below the belt" calls. Fellas, meet Mr. Knee.



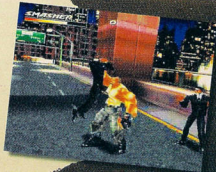
**"LOOK BOTH WAYS
BEFORE CROSSING THE
STREET. THEY USUALLY
ATTACK IN PAIRS."**

- Hawk Manson

YOU WANNA FIGHT?

**TAKE IT OUTSIDE. BECAUSE THIS BATTLE IS TOO BIG FOR SOME SKINNY
ASS ARENA. 4 KILLER CHARACTERS. DOZENS OF BRUTAL WEAPONS. TONS OF CRUSHING
MOVES. AND VICIOUS 3D ACTION THAT GOES SO FAST, THERE'S ONLY TIME TO REMEMBER HALF THE
GOLDEN RULE.**

**SO BY ANY AND ALL MEANS, DO UNTO OTHERS. BECAUSE IN YOUR HANDS, ALMOST
ANYTHING CAN BECOME A WEAPON. JUST REMEMBER TO WASH THEM AFTERWARDS.**



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Saturn

Previews

Game Directory

- Shining Force III
- Winter Heat
- Dragon Force II
- D&D Collection
- Solo Crisis

In Sega News...

The Saturn's fate has finally been sealed by an official announcement from Sega confirming that they are developing a new console system that will be released in North America in 1999. Bernie Stolar, COO of Sega of America, also confirmed that Sega has begun the process of briefing third-party developers on the new platform in addition to working with retailers on the transition between the Saturn and the new system. In the meantime, Sega eliminated 30 percent of their workforce, citing that the company needed to "remain financially responsible in the interim."



The finished X-Men Vs. Street Fighter is presently on hiatus because of the Saturn's demise.

Such a statement has already caused ripples throughout the industry, as retailers have begun marking down their Saturn titles to unbelievably low prices in an effort to clear them out. Also, it has made software developers uncertain on whether they should go forth with games already in development or ready to ship. The most high-profile game in this situation is Capcom's X-Men Vs. Street Fighter, which is in a constant state of flux as to its arrival in the States.

The Classic Strategy/RPG Returns

Shining Force III

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega of America Sonic Soft./Camelot	1 Strategy/RPG	50	May 1998
Web Address: www.sega.com			

Sega's Shining Force series was the first 16-bit strategy/RPG series to really take off in the U.S. After a three-year hiatus, the latest addition to the series, Shining Force III, is finally on the way.

Shining Force III is actually just the first part of a three-disc story. In Japan, this one is known as Scenario 1 (which was just released in December), and once you finish it (it's as long as your average one-disc game, which is a big plus), you'll be able to move on to Scenario 2 which is due out in Japan in the spring. The unique method of storytelling is dubbed the "Synchronicity System," where each

Scenario will take place during the same time period, but from different sides of the same large story. Sounds very cool to us. Unfortunately, only the first Scenario is scheduled for U.S. release right now (too bad, since Europe is getting all three in one package), but there's still a chance we'll get lucky and see the whole thing.

Shining Force III improves upon its predecessors in many ways. First and foremost, the entire game world is constructed of polygons for a completely 3-D environment. The result is stunning. You can rotate the camera 360 degrees in either direction using the L and R buttons, and there are three viewpoints you can choose from as well (near, medium and far). The ability to move the camera around is great when looking for hidden treasures and characters that you might not have normally seen. Game characters are still 2-D (don't worry, it mixes well), but when the game switches to the up-close battle sequences (for which previous Shining Force games were very popular), everything changes to a



completely 3-D polygonal environment with gorgeous animation and special effects. Just as the old 2-D battles were a marvel for the Genesis, such is the case now with these new 3-D battles on the Saturn. Impressive.

There's also new types of spells (like ones that summon monsters), new battle techniques (in particular, the ability to develop stronger friendships with certain characters, thus increasing battle abilities when the two are near, is very cool) and even analog control.

Saturn fans may not have as many games to look forward to this year as they'd have hoped, but Shining Force III is certainly going to be one to watch for. It's currently due out in May, and we'll be back with a review when we receive a finished version of this very promising game.

Every gamer appreciates a fancy explosion like the ones in Shining Force III.



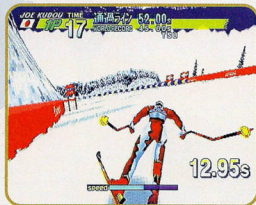
Battles take place on gridded battlefields, only now all of the game environments are fully 3-D.

Winter Heat

Nagano
Olympics,
DecAthelete
Style

After playing DecAthelete time and time again, many of us here at EGM wondered if we'd ever be fortunate enough to play a sequel. Well, some time has passed and now we're happy to say yes. Winter Heat gives us the same fun and excitement that DecAthelete gave, except this time it all takes place in a winter wonderland.

Winter Heat plays off of the whole Nagano craze (due to the fact that the Winter Olympics are taking place this year). But unlike other Olympic games that have recently landed on store shelves, Winter Heat takes the style of gaming back to the arcade. Gamers not familiar with the DecAthelete style of play need



Watch those corners while on the bobsled or you'll do the old floppy, floppy.



Watch your stamina level closely, or your character will make a silly noise.



The changing camera angles in Winter Heat are simply stunning.

only think back to the days of Track & Field, and the blisters and/or callouses caused by rapid-fire button tapping.

Besides the standard finger speed test, many of the events like bobsled and speed skating have you manipulating the D-pad as well as making timed button taps.

For example, the downhill skiing event has you controlling the character down the course, tapping a couple buttons for speed now and again, and hitting another button to prepare for small jumps along the way. Although these controls may sound complex, they're far from that. Before each event,

much like DecAthelete, a graphical tutorial explains how the controls in the event work (and what'll happen if you don't do it right). After this, the events start and there's no looking back.

With eight characters and 11 events to select from, you won't run out of fun too quickly. The characters, most of whom are from DecAthelete, all have unique abilities which allow them to excel in a particular event or two. On top of these original players, Winter Heat has two new Olympians for you to experiment with.

Whatever character you may choose, the events will have you trying your hardest to break world record after world record. Of course, playing a relatively sporty game all by your lonesome can be tedious at times. That's why Winter Heat allows you to compete against a friend and try to beat their best time, score or distance.

My 2 Cents

I am a big fan of DecAthelete, so I was obviously excited to hear about Winter Heat. So far, the game is really nice—easily the best Winter Olympic game out there right now. I love the easy-to-use control, sharp graphics, cool events and fun characters. This is what an Olympic game should be. Now, let's hope the final version stays good!

—Shawn Smith



Mike Hewitt / Allsport



Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega Enterprises, Ltd.	1 Strategy/RPG	N/A	March 1998
Sega Enterprises, Ltd.	Strategy/RPG	N/A	Japan
Web Address: www.sega.co.jp			

インターナショナル プリビューズ

Dragon Force II

The Ultimate War Game Returns



You can say we're fans of Dragon Force. After all, it won Game of the Month, 1996 Saturn Game of the Year, 1996 Strategy Game of the Year and came close to winning the 1996 Overall Game of the Year. Now, the EGM office is buzzing with excitement after seeing early screen shots of the sequel. But this excitement quickly grew to disappointment upon realization that chances of this game coming to America are next to nothing.

Dragon Force II, like its predecessor, is a strategy game of grand proportions. You command huge armies of up to 100 troops. You must decide which army (based on the general's statistics, unit type and magical items equipped) to send into which battle against whom. Success all depends on intelligent battlefield decisions.

What's new in the sequel is still sketchy at this point. We do know that DF II has a sub-leader system (possibly meaning lower-ranked commanders who help out generals) and a laboratory system (now you have a new command "research" on your administrative screens—this will allow you to learn new abilities). We also know some battles can take place underground in dungeons.

The biggest change from the first game, however, is how troops are deployed in battle. It looks like



100 unit-groups are still the largest possible, but now you can have two different types in the same outfit. You'll be able to split up your forces and have ground troops supported by air troops in the same skirmish.

One thing's for sure: Working Designs will NOT be bringing this game over to the U.S. And with the Saturn business being the way it is, it's highly doubtful that Sega of America will bring out the game themselves (strategy games generally don't sell into very high figures, and most retailers aren't selling Saturn games anyway—double whammy).

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Capcom Co., Ltd.	1-2 Action	65	2nd Qtr. '98
Capcom Co., Ltd.	Action		Japan

Web Address: www.capcom.co.jp

Dungeons & Dragons Collection



Capcom's popular Dungeons & Dragons arcade games are finally on the way to the Saturn in Japan in one hot compilation called Dungeons & Dragons Collection. The two games, Tower of Doom and Shadow Over Mystara, look hot, and Shadow Over Mystara will support the new 4-Meg RAM cart that was introduced with X-Men Vs. Street Fighter. If the conversions are as perfect (yes, PERFECT) as X-Men Vs. Street Fighter, we'll all be in for a nice treat. Sadly, it's doubtful that it'll make it to the U.S., though a slightly inferior PlayStation version is expected to be released here later in the year. Expect an in-depth preview of that one later on when it nears its completion.

EGM 48

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
ESP Quintet	1 Simulation	100	Now Japan

Web Address: www.quintet.co.jp

Solo Crisis

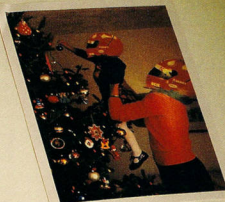
Quintet, the Japanese development team responsible for many 16-Bit classics, including ActRaiser, Soul Blazer, Illusion of Gaia and more, are about to release their first Saturn title—a polygonal strategy sim called Solo Crisis. Gameplay takes place on gridded battlefields (similar to say, Vandal Hearts or Tactics Ogre), and the object is to do battle for the forces of God against the devil and his armies. Many factors come into play, including terrain, faith of the population, magic power and more.



Considering Quintet's track record for uniqueness, Solo Crisis has the potential to be a big hit with strategy fans. Too bad we'll never see it in the U.S.



The French sure know
how to drive.



I sure hope Santa brings
us a new turbocharger!



Christian makes
us proud, again.



Granny can get that
chain moving!



Rex - our team dog.

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We've got racing in our blood.



racing.psygnosis.com

PlayStation

Previews

Game Directory

- Diablo
- Need For Speed III
- Tekken 3
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- Running Wild
- Dead or Alive
- Bloody Roar
- Rebus
- Tactics Ogre
- WarGames
- Supercross '98
- ReBoot
- SaGa Frontier
- G-Darius

In Sony News...

Sony remains quiet about the PlayStation's future in 1998, but it is certain that the end of 1997 was an excellent one. In fact, a million systems were sold in the month of November alone. In software news, Einhandler, Square's first shooter (a 3-D one), will be brought to the States by Sony in addition to Gran Turismo, an incredibly



Strangely, nothing is better than being able to drive your own car in a video game. Pictured is the Acura Integra, Cyril Kraig and Andrew's vehicle of choice.

In-depth racing game. Hopefully when it arrives in the U.S. most of the car licenses will remain intact. We have our doubts, however. Also, if you want to control these new games with something different, the Dual Shock Analog controller is available throughout Japan. This analog controller is a little different, as it causes vibrations on the left and right sides of the controller independently. Hopefully, this whimsical vibrating controller will (and should) make it to U.S. stores within a few months.



Take A Shot At The Devil

Diablo

The PC version of Diablo is one of the rare American games that found overwhelming success in both the U.S. and Japan. Such conditions guarantee a console conversion, and finally, here it is.

For those who don't pay attention to computer games, Diablo is a unique action-RPG whose game design transcends typical genres. Exploring dungeons and improving your characters is a large part of this game, but being quick with the controls will help you live longer. Combat is fast-paced, but is executed by highlighting the enemy you wish to attack and then pressing the button.

Although that might not sound action-packed, it actually is because you must quickly readjust your point of attack or select different spells so that you can compensate for ever-changing dangers. Once the battle gets heated, it is advisable to rely on your arcade skills and quick reactions to move your character out of harm's way.

These skills will only get you so far. There are over 300 different items that include staffs, swords, shields, rings, helmets and potions for you to find in the 16 different labyrinths. If you get wealthy enough from slaughtering its inhabitants, you can even buy some interesting things in town. Which items you can use depend on your character class (Warrior, Rogue, Sorcerer). For example, a Warrior is at home slicing and dicing with a huge axe, while a Sorcerer can't even hold it.



Multiple firewalls are guaranteed to clear the halls of dungeon vermin.

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Electronic Arts 1-2 March
Climax Ent., Ltd. Action/RPG 70 1998

Web Address: www.aa.com

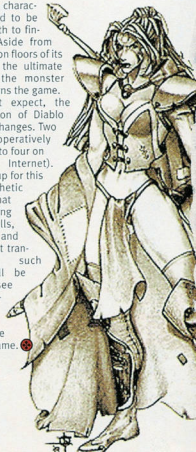


Look busy? This is typical of many dungeon encounters in Diablo, where the action is furious and often fatal (above).



Regardless of which class your character is, you'll need to be armed to the teeth to finish the game. Aside from wiping the dungeon floors of its resident vermin, the ultimate goal is to kill the monster whose name adorns the game.

As you might expect, the PlayStation version of Diablo has some major changes. Two players can cooperatively play, as opposed to four on the PC (via Internet). Partially making up for this are some aesthetic enhancements that include new lighting effects on spells, dungeon lighting and some day-to-night transitions. With such changes, it will be interesting to see how these trade-offs impact the first console adaption of the blockbuster PC game.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Electronic Arts Electronic Arts	1-2 Racing	75	March 1998

Web Address: www.ea.com

Need For Speed III

The Best NFS Yet?

Need for Speed III is a game searching for an identity. We can't make any definitive judgments yet (it's still early, ya know). So far, it looks like NFS III is borrowing several of NFS II's elements, such as the general look of the cars as well as a similar frame rate. This edition, however, has wider tracks, better scenery and smarter opponents. Think of it as Porsche Challenge meeting the original Need for Speed—not a bad combination.

Eight new licensed cars include: Ferri 550 and 355 F1, BMW Nazca C2, Lamborghini Diablo SV and Countach, Jaguar XJR-15 with others to be revealed later. Add in some really annoying cops and a bunch of Sunday drivers and you have the recipe for destruction.

Driving modes include: Pursuit (insane road battles with the cops), Single Race, Two-player and Practice (with ghost car). The 10 tracks can be raced backward, forward or mirrored. The game also has variable



Night driving is intense, having nothing but your headlights and the occasional police cherries to light your way.



Leafy roadways make for slippery driving.



weather and night driving (with a wicked set of high-beams lighting the path). Shortcuts can be accessed later in the expert levels.

The wider tracks and improved gameplay make NFS III very much arcade-action oriented, shedding much of the sim qualities of the original. But this third installment definitely improves on NFS II's lackluster appearance and gameplay. It's not a sure bet that the game will conquer mediocrity, but at this point it looks like NFS III is a step in the right direction. **B**

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Namco Namco	1-2 Fighting	N/A	2nd Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.namco.com

Tekken 3



If you're wondering what exactly is going to make the PlayStation version of Tekken 3 different from the arcade version, then this update is for you. Last issue we gave you the general info on the arcade hit—this time around, we're giving you a look at this new, PlayStation-exclusive character.

The little dino in the pics is a popular Japanese comic book personality named Gon. This small-fry may not look like much, but as you might guess, he packs quite a punch. Looking at the screenshots, you can see he's kicking the living crap out of Jin.

Chances are, the arcade secret characters will be included in the home version, but we'll have to wait and see if Namco will put in more PS-exclusive fighters. Keep an eye out for future EGMs for more updates.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Interplay Pixelogic, Ltd.	1-2 Driving/Action	60	April 1998
Web Address: www.interplay.com			

Crime Killer

A few issues back (*EGM* #101) we gave you an early look at a title coming from Interplay called *Crime Killer*. At that time it wasn't playable, so all we worked off of were a few screenshots. Now we have a nearly complete version in our hands which we've been able to run through pretty thoroughly.

This updated version of *Crime Killer* features a speedy frame rate and hi-res graphics. It also has all the vehicles working, including the car, motorbike and jet. So far, the missions have you running through various parts of a city taking down, following or racing bad guys. While making your way through the streets and tunnels of the city, look out for civilians as you try your best to blow away the enemy. If you're not careful, an ill-placed rocket will turn that evening commuter into a char-grilled delight! Also, expect to see some incredible rendered cinemas.



Heart of Darkness

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Interplay Amazing Studio	1 Action/Adventure	N/A	April 1998
Web Address: www.interplay.com			

The guys at Interplay describe *Heart of Darkness* as an interactive animated film with a *Toy Story*-esque look and feel.

In this action-adventure game you play as Andy, a young boy with a vivid fear of the dark. The game tells the story of Andy's frightful descent into a dark and evil world where he must rescue his lost dog Whiskey. Players have nine levels of mazes, wild atmospheres and strange creatures to deal with on their way to conquering Andy's innermost fears in this animated wonder. Look for more on this game in the coming months.



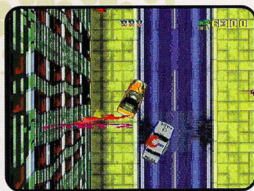
Grand Theft Auto

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
ASC Games DMA Design	1 Action	80	April 1998
Web Address: www.ascgames.com			

Whether you want to call it creative license, a marketing ploy or bad taste, *Grand Theft Auto*'s theme is sure to raise some eyebrows (and become the target of an annoying senator or two seeking attention).

Think of everything vile (cussing, senseless violence, blood, mayhem, cop killing, running over people) that can be blatantly thrown into a video game, and you'll get an idea of what to expect in *Grand Theft Auto*. You assume the identity of a newly hired henchman who works for a mobster with a bad attitude (don't they all?). Just like any hired gun, you're given your marching orders via public payphone. At first, they consist of menial tasks such as stealing cars. When your boss gains confidence in you (and you earn his trust), you'll be assigned more complex and important missions which consist of assassinations, carbomb runs and mass killings. Sometimes you'll even have to kill people so that your boss can win a bottle of tequila (he occasionally bets that you could kill a certain amount of people in eight minutes).

The battles takes place in large, 3-D cityscapes (three different ones in all) that are viewed through a bird's-eye perspective. How you navigate within this environment is up to you—but rest assured, there are plenty of ways for you to make the commute. Just about any type of vehicle can be commandeered (30 in all) ranging



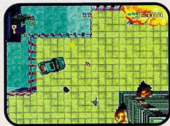
Knocking off a cop, and then stealing his car is one of the most satisfying accomplishments of the game.

from sports cars to school buses. It's as easy as walking in front of a car in traffic to make the cautious driver stop, at which point you yank him out the door so you can jump inside. You can even punch the driver, or just coldly run him or her over after-the-fact. Once you arrive at your destination, a large array of weapons (that include machine guns, flame-throwers and rocket launchers) allow you to turn the city streets into a bloody warzone.

Undoubtedly, *Grand Theft Auto* is the kind of game that is going to make consumer groups sweat. Regardless, we just hope that its gameplay is as entertaining as the controversy it will inevitably stir up.



Jump out of your vehicle and break out the machine guns and rocket launchers to really cause trouble.



38

Reversals

24

Overhead grabs

36

Combination moves



You figure it out !

DEAD OR ALIVE™



**COMING
FEBRUARY**

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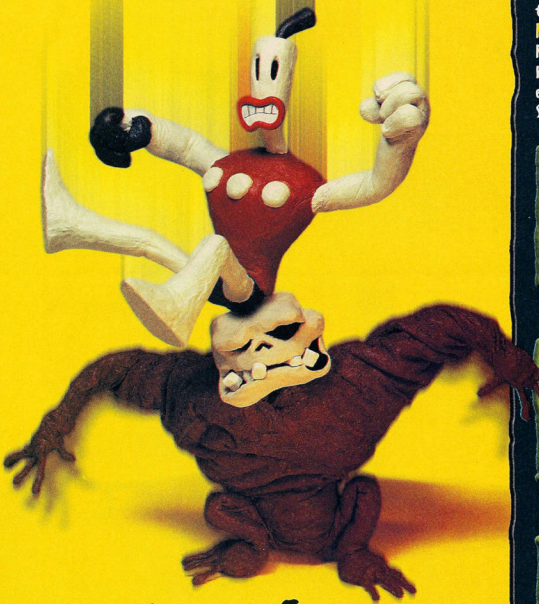
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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Universal Int. Blue Shift	1-4 Action/Racing	80	March 1998
Web Address: www.universal-interactive.com			


Running Wild

Chariots Of?

Running Wild combines the novelty of upright running animals and crazy obstacle-filled courses with classic cartoon elements to create one wacky racing game.

The contest features five animals: Boris the Elephant, General the Ram, Coronado the Bull and Mei Ling the Panda. Each one has a signature running style not to mention certain other special attributes. The General (for example) uses his horns to bump others out of the way while Gwynne the Rabbit has the ability to leap over danger. The special abilities help, but simply running and winning a good race is the main object of the game.

Six courses take you through some interesting terrain including lava fields, frozen rivers, drainage tunnels and city streets. A variety of power-ups give you speed bursts, size increases, invisibility and the ability to fly. Attaining top speed is done by avoiding contact with walls and other players so that your power meter stays full.

What it all boils down to is running fast, avoiding obstacles and hitting all the power-ups you can. A very simple and original new game. 



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Tecmo Tecmo	1-2 Fighting	N/A	March 1998
Web Address: www.tecmo.co.jp			

Dead or Alive

If you know anything about Tecmo's Model 2 arcade game Dead or Alive, then you probably don't care very much that the Saturn version played better than the coin-op and packed an extra character.

And you probably don't care that the forthcoming PlayStation version adds two new fighters, more moves, a higher polygonal count, more skimpy alternate costumes and a brand-new soundtrack. All you probably want to know is if the female characters still, shall we say, jiggle when they wiggle.

Fear not. Dead or Alive's large selection of well-endowed femme fighters are rendered with the same trademark bounciness that made the arcade game famous. And if you'd get your minds out of the gutter for a second, you'll be happy to hear that Tecmo is making this the best version of Dead

or Alive yet. In fact, the development team—made mostly of the original crew that created the coin-op—has said the PlayStation version could almost be called Dead or Alive 2.

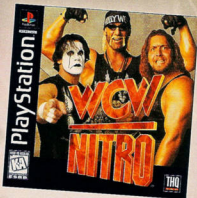
The game packs 11 characters (including Ryu Hayabusa, ninja star of the NES Ninja Gaiden series). It uses a three-button fighting engine similar to VF2, with a kick, punch and evade (instead of block) button. Although we haven't received a playable version yet (and therefore can't confirm whether the 3-D backgrounds of the arcade game made it into this version), the game is generating plenty of anticipation around the office. But does Dead or Alive have what it takes to topple Tekken 3? We'll see.



Yeah, it's pretty clear this game was made with a male audience in mind.



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Bloody Roar

Bloody Good Fun



Despite the game's high graphical detail, frame speed is impressive.



Remember when you had to buy a separate version of a game to get the fighting kids?

Bloody Roar stands to freshen up the fighting genre with its unique morphing fighters, intense speed and unorthodox fighting methods.

Each player has a deep story line as well as the common trait of Zoanthropomorphism, allowing him/her to change into a beast counterpart at any time. Once in the more powerful Beast Mode, the Rave option can even further the aggression. Each player has 50 moves, not including combinations and multi-punch strings. On top of that, another tricky option lets you create your own combos and save them to a memory card. Some wrestling moves are also included for the friskier opponents.

Beyond the novelty of morphing, this game has a number of good and original things going for it. For example, you can select fighting kids as well as big-head fighters when you need a change of pace—no code needed here. For added destruction, another option lets players knock down walls and barriers, expanding the fighting area to new areas. Shut off the blood if you wish, though it isn't that disturbing...even for Junior.

While the aesthetic elements are all impressive, gameplay is still the number-one priority in a fighting game and it's evident through early play testing that this title has a healthy dose of it. Keep an eye out for this one. ☺



Some really cool non-traditional moves are available like this "swing-em-by-the-tail" maneuver.



Rebus



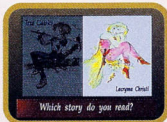
not ours) an easy-to-use "Tactical-RPG" that is "a new concept which is easy to get into." In actuality, the game is very much like Konami's Vandal Hearts or even Tactics Ogre.

Rebus takes place in a 3-D world, and that perspective plays a large role in strategic decisions since terrain is so vital in your conquests. Land masses may be in the way of your armies, forcing you to lower them with magic so that you may get to the territory beyond. Spells are acquired through the use of magic cards that work fine by themselves, or in

combinations. For example, players may acquire a "Fire" card, which lets them emit Fire spells. If they also get a "Flame" card, they can put them together to create powerful Fire Flames, and so forth. The utilization of such magic is essential to complete the scenarios.

Each of the game's scenarios are divided into chapters, introduced by impressive FMV. These intros hint as to the goal of each mission by showing a certain object or picture of the objective, in addition to revealing more of Rebus' story (which revolves around two characters—a boy and a girl).

So far, Rebus appears to be on course to delivering a good strategy-RPG. It's still a long way from being completed, so it's too early to make an accurate, final judgement. ☹



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Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Atlus
Atlus 1-2 Strategy/RPG 95 March 1998

Web Address: www.atlusion.com

Tactics Ogre

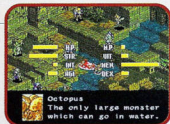


The graphics are a bit disappointing when compared to the beautiful Final Fantasy Tactics.

Like Ogre Battle before it, Tactics Ogre is making the jump from 16- to 32-Bit. In case you're not familiar with the game, Tactics Ogre is a 3-D tactical turn-based strategy, similar to Vandal Hearts or Final Fantasy Tactics. We're previewing the game again to show you updated screenshots of the almost-finished product and to tell you why the game's been delayed.

The game could've been put in stores a little earlier in the year. Atlus purposely delayed Tactics Ogre until after Final Fantasy Tactics' release. They knew if Squaresoft's high-profile title came out second, it would pretty much stop any further sales of Tactics Ogre. Atlus also hopes that Final Fantasy Tactics will introduce many new fans to the genre. This way, new fans who are looking for more (after beating FFT) can turn to Tactics Ogre. Make sure to check out this month's Review Crew (where we rate Final Fantasy Tactics) and next month's (where we should be reviewing Tactics Ogre) to see how the two stack up to each other.

The opening cinema introduces you to a few of the characters and their statistics.



Special magical spells can turn the tide of the battle...hopefully in your favor.

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

MGM Interactive
Interactive Studios 1-2 Action N/A May 1998

Web Address: www.wargamesmgm.com

WarGames: Defcon 1



Battles take place in alpine, jungle, lowland, urban and desert environments among others.



WarGames was about an out-of-control mainframe, and whenever you have a popular movie that has a computer as one of the main plot elements, it's a safe bet a video game bearing its name will arrive. It's just a little surprising that WarGames took this long.

WarGames: Defcon 1 takes place 20 years after the movie, and involves WOPR, the same military computer that caused trouble before. He's up to his old tricks, and has decided that wiping out the human race will prevent war from happening again. In this game, you can either help WOPR, or try to stop him.

Players control up to eight units at a time within 32 unit armies. These units consist of tanks, helicopters and some futuristic weaponry known as an MK-4 walker. Battles are waged in various environments that reside in 30 global "hot spots." Interestingly enough, John Badman, the director of the feature film, is scripting the missions.

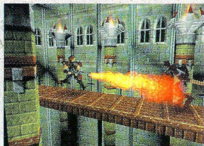
While details are still sketchy, it appears that this title is stretching the boundaries of using a movie license. Nevertheless, as long as MGM makes sure it's a good game, most players probably could care less.



We don't remember any of these things in the original WarGames. Perhaps Matthew Broderick is inside one of these vehicles. Hopefully he's in the one exploding.

There's only one thing
more torturous than playing
Deathtrap Dungeon.





IAN LIVINGSTONE'S
DEATH TRAP
Dungeon

“Beat me. Whip me. Just don’t hit that Quit button.” Consider it your battle cry. Then bring on the skeletal warriors, zombies and over 50 other undead denizens. Each one is a chance to slice and dice like a Ginsu knife gone bad. An opportunity to master the 13 death implements at

Not playing it.



www.deathtrapdungeon.com

your disposal. Or play the PC version and leave the other on-line players crying for more. Because in these 10 cavernous levels of evil traps, it's all about blurring that fine line between pleasure and pain. And just when you think you can't take it any longer, consider the alternative.

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

You've been warned.

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Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Acclaim
Probe 1-2
Racing 50 April
1998

Web Address: www.acclaimnation.com

Jeremy McGrath Supercross '98

Prepare To
Eat Some
Dirt



Look out for objects in the environment that do damage.



It's official. Motocross guru Jeremy McGrath will lend his name and influence to the newest entry in the growing motocross genre—Supercross '98.

In Supercross '98 you will compete for points and money in the Championship series, upgrading bikes as the winnings allow (sorry, no licensed bikes here). Time Trials are also mandatory, complete with best-time ghost riders as well as two-player split-screen competition. Several 125 and 250cc bikes will be available and are ranked on their power and handling abilities. Play as Jeremy or create your own bike and persona as well as custom tracks—up to 30 on one memory card. The game is also compatible with the analog pad for precise control on the twisting, variable weather courses.

OK, enough with the stats. Early play testing revealed great graphic detail and killer animations in this game. The bikes and riders look in scale to each other and to the backgrounds (something other motocross games have goofed on). Attention to form is also evident in the little details: variable exhaust smoke, dirt rooster-tails and best of all—good rider animation all add to the realism of the game. You'll notice their bodies reacting to jump landings, wheelies, corner turning and 360s, all alleviating the stiff look nicely. Wreck animations are looking good with riders flying off the bikes in several body-crushing ways depending on how hard they bail. Background and track detail are nice as well, with plenty of shading and light sourcing to emphasize the realistic look.

Most encouraging is the game's performance when the traffic gets thick. Very little slowdown occurs in one-player and it's actually easy to keep an eye on your bike in the stew of riders.

Although there are only a few other motocross games out there, Supercross '98 seems poised to take the hole shot when it is released this summer.

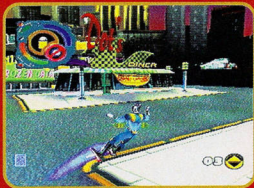
All seems calm while exploring these dungeons until an enemy appears and the game turns into a fighter.



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Electronic Arts
EA-Canada 1
Action 70 March
1998

Web Address: www.ea.com



Under development for roughly two years, ReBoot is a sci-fi action game that borrows heavily from its TV brother of the same name.

You play as Bob, the game's protagonist. Your environment is the innards of a vast mainframe computer in which an evil robot named Megabyte is attempting to seize control of by using his viral army. Megabyte has planted "Tears" (bombs) within the mainframe that will eventually explode if left alone. You must seek out and defuse these

virus-laden bad boys before they go boom, ruining you and the computer.

The large 3-D play areas are covered with streets, buildings and polygonal structures. As you explore the regions you will also need to take down enemy hovercraft, gun turrets and the occasional sea slug. Sounds easy but when you realize you have a time limitation, it gets a lot harder. Half the fun of playing this game is learning how to maneuver the hovering zipboard around the various terrain and obstacles in a smooth and efficient manner. Certain areas actually resemble skate parks, complete with bowls, half-pipes and giant ramps. Part sci-fi shooter, part skateboard challenge is one way to describe this unique 3-D game. With over 18 levels and 30 enemies (not to mention an inspiring spy thriller soundtrack), ReBoot could be one of the more creative and quirky titles of the year.

ReBoot



ReBoot shows off some neat special effects and smooth graphics.



One Wicked Weasel!



*Over 30 huge levels with multiple pathways and bonus levels!
Think you've played it all?
Think again!*

*Action packed - in the air, on land and underground, in the water too!
Thrash, skate, dig, glide and jump past legions of mutant mice!
Filled with that classic 2D action that everyone's been talking about!*

Viva Las Punky



Gettin' Vertical



Aggressive Moves!



Tomb Wader



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Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

SCEA Square 1 RPG 65 March 1998

Web Address: www.playstation.com

SaGa Frontier

With Final Fantasy Tactics just arriving in stores this month, Sony is already preparing to unleash Square's next big RPG, the latest entry in the long-running SaGa series (which, aside from the Game Boy titles which were brought over as the Final Fantasy Legend series, have never been ported from Japan), SaGa Frontier.

In SaGa Frontier, you get to play through seven different quests, each starring a different character (which you choose at the outset) with his/her/its own diverse story line. For example, Emelia is a girl who's been accused of murdering her boyfriend, and begins in a prison with a narrow chance of escape. Red is a boy who witnesses his father's abduction from an evil syndicate known as "Black X," only to be granted the powers of a superhero from an outsider from a foreign land of heroes. This is just a twinkling of the several huge stories that unfold, and each is quite different from the next. What's more, the game allows you to play through all seven on the same Memory Card file, meaning there's a chance that stories may intertwine later on (we haven't played far enough to find out yet—this literally came in at the very last minute).

Expect a review soon (possibly next month), as the game is due to be released on or around March 24.

Each of the seven characters in SaGa Frontier has their own completely separate story.



Emelia's story starts out in a dank prison, where she's being held for allegedly killing her boyfriend.



Like Final Fantasy VII, backgrounds are prerendered, but the characters are sprite-based, rather than polygonal.



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Taito Taito 1-2 Shooting N/A Spring 1998 Japan

Web Address: www.taito.co.jp

G-Darius



The graphics on the PC version seem good—hopefully they will be on the PS version too.



Taito recently announced plans to bring their intense 3-D arcade shooter, G-Darius (ver. 2, the most recent release), home to the PlayStation. G-Darius is the latest sequel in the long-running Darius series of shooters, and is now for the first time completely comprised of polygons for a slick three-dimensional look and feel.

The biggest new feature in G-Darius is the ability to use Capture Balls (the bombs that sucked in enemies, if you've played Darius Golden on the Saturn or in the arcade) to suck in enemies and have them fight alongside you during play. If you need to get out of a tight spot, you can detonate the captured enemy, creating an explosion that wipes out anything it touches (except you, of course). Two-

player simultaneous play is supported in the arcade version, and will most likely be supported in the PS version as well (though we couldn't confirm 100 percent at press time).

G-Darius is a graphical wonder, containing some of the best twitch shooting to come our way in a while. Hopefully a wise U.S. publisher will hop on this one ASAP. It's due out in Japan this spring.

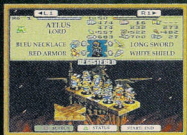


Tactics Ogre

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Ogre Battle™ Series.

A land torn apart by war.

An epic struggle between good and evil.



Available Exclusively
For The PlayStation™
Game Console



- 100 plus hours of gameplay.
- 8 different possible endings.
- Non-linear storyline.
- 3-D isometric battlefields.



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ATLUS



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"Dazzling! *Action* Shooters are back!!!"
-Game Fan

"Levels which are virtually infinite in size."
-Official PlayStation Magazine

"**Completely Insane!** ASC and Visual Concepts really wanted to make **ONE** a killer game and they've succeeded in more ways than **ONE**."
-Game Informer

"The **Rage Meter** is a brilliant concept that keeps the *action* at a fever pitch at all times."
-Next Generation Online

"**ONE** pulls out all the stops and comes out a **winner** ... there is only **ONE** game in town."
-Game Pro

"**Action Game of the Year!**"
-PS Extreme





www.ascgames.com

Co-Developed by



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Arcade

Previews

Game Directory

- Marvel vs. Capcom
- Rapid River

That time of year...

It's almost time for the arcade shows again. ATEI (the big coin-op show in England) is happening as you're reading this. Big news from the floor of this show is Namco's unveiling of System 23 and Time Crisis 2. All previous simulation games (Air Combat 22, Tokyo Wars, Final Furlong, etc.) were on System 22. Not much is known about System 23, except it will have more polygons and lighting effects (basically, more of what you like).

After ATEI, it's back to the U.S. for ASI (one of the two big arcade shows in the U.S., the other being AMOA). It's still too early to speculate what will be there, but Capcom's Rival Schools (a 3-D polygonal type game that has gotten HUGE reviews) should be there. Sega is sure to have their Motor Raid and Model 3 water skiing games.

SNK is almost ready to push out Neo 64 and Road's Edge as well as a newly revamped Samurai 64. Our man at SNK promises SSG4 "should have everything a player should want to see." That's pretty tough, but we have faith in their abilities.



The Latest In Cloning Technology

Marvel vs. Capcom: Clash of Superheroes

The latest (and last?) in a long line of Street Fighter clones will be hitting arcades soon. If not for the 14 that came before it, this game would straight out rule. The fact is, you know the drill: a two-player fighting game in the style of X-Men (or X-Men Vs. SF or Marvel Vs. SF) with 36 characters (of which only 15 are playable). Some characters are from Marvel Comics and some have been seen in previous games: Captain America, Wolverine, War Machine, Incredible Hulk, Gambit and Venom.

What makes this game cool is the fact that the "Capcom" side of the game features characters not seen in this type of game before: Strider, Mega Man, Captain Commando, Marvel vs. Capcom also has a classic group of fighters: Ryu, Chun-Li, Zangief, Morrigan and Jin from Cyberbots. These are just the straight-out playable characters in the game.

The gameplay is similar to previous titles as well, with a couple changes. One addition is a cooperative



attack that allows you to control both of your characters at once. In the previous games, you picked a tag team, where you would play as one character while the other is recharging. For Marvel Vs. Capcom, you still get a tag team, but you choose a special partner as well. This character isn't playable and can only be called upon for help. The roster of these special partners includes extra Marvel characters such as Thor, Magneto, Rogue and Jubilee as well as more cool Capcom characters like Arthur from Ghouls and Ghosts.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Capcom Capcom	1-2 Fighting	90	2nd Qtr. 1998
Web Address: www.capcom.com			



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Namco Namco	1-2 Simulation	100	Now
Web Address: www.namco.com			

Rapid River

The "RR adventure" can be played with one or two players. The goal is to reach the end of one of the three different routes. A multibranching course provides different routes for depth and variety.

Each branch is themed differently. The Grand Canyon is a fast-paced white-water river, where players must quickly maneuver around boulders to

avoid being crushed. There is a jungle in the Jurassic Period branch where players drift by dinosaurs of all kinds. Rapid River is on a motherboard roughly referred to as System 22.5 with some



Fighters Destiny

Fighters Destiny will take everything you have, and throw it right back at you. This brawler, which Next Generation Online calls "The best playing 3D fighter for N64" will challenge your skills with its Point-based contests. This point system allows you to come from behind, and win - if you can throw the right combo.

Learn moves in the "Training Mode" and perfect your skills for the 4 other fighting modes. These include: Vs. Computer, Vs. Battle (two player), Record Attack and Master Challenge.

Fighters Destiny includes 10 Fighters, plus special hidden characters and masters. Find out why N64.com raves "Smooth graphics, fast gameplay and more options than any other fighting game for the N64."

Available at a store
(and rental outlet) near you!



FACE YOUR FATE



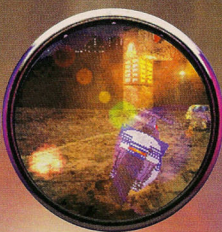
Your Destiny Awaits!




An Infogrames Entertainment Company

NOTHING OUTRUNS THE LONG ARM OF THE LAW.

In the 21st century, a license to kill and heavily armed, turbo-charged patrol vehicles are all you need to keep the peace. Just don't get blown to pieces in the process.



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- 
- Patrol the streets at a breakneck speed of 60 frames per second*
 - Bring in law breakers dead or alive (or barely alive) with high-powered non-lethal or lethal weapons like the Vulcan Cannon
 - Maintain the peace with the Turbo Patrol Car, Bike or Wing – you're a crack shot from each
 - Real-time 3D environments with complete freedom of movement for clean shots in the back
 - Over 20 levels of adrenaline-pumping high-speed criminal pursuit missions – all caught on interior or exterior cameras
 - Call for back-up with 1 or 2-player split screen action on the Sony Playstation, or with 4-players via LAN on the PC.

* Sony PlayStation™ version only

CRIME KILLER™

THE PURSUIT BEGINS SPRING '98



**"AT 60 FRAMES PER SECOND,
THE... VIEW ABSOLUTELY SCREAMS."**

- ULTRA GAME PLAYERS

March 1998

Coming soon

Compiled by: John Stockhausen

PLAYSTATION

Batman & Robin	Acclaim	March	Action
Blasto	Sony Computer Entertainment	March	Action
Bloody Roar	Sony Computer Entertainment	March	Fighting
Breath of Fire III	Capcom	March	RPG
Broken Sword	TTHQ	March	Adventure
Dead or Alive	Techno	March	Fighting
Deathtrap Dungeon	Eidos	March	Act/Adv
Diablo	EA	March	Action/RPG
Forsaken	Acclaim	March	Action
Master of Monsters	ASCII	March	Strategy
NBA ShootOut 98	Sony Computer Entertainment	March	Sports
Need for Speed 3	EA	March	Sports
Newman/Haas Racing	Psygnosis	March	Sports
Pitfall 3D	Activision	March	Action
Plum Blank	Namco	March	Light Gun
Rascal	Psygnosis	March	Action
ReBoot	EA	March	Action
Road Rash 3	EA	March	Act/Racing
Running Wild	Universal Studios	March	Racing
Saga Frontier	Sony Computer Entertainment	March	RPG
San Francisco Rush	Midway	March	Racing
Youngblood	GT Interactive	March	Action
Constructor	Acclaim	April	Sim/Strategy
Crime Killer	Interplay	April	Action
Elemental Gear Bolt	Working Designs	April	Shooter
Grand Theft Auto	ASC Games	April	Action
Heart of Darkness	Interplay	April	Act/Adv
Jack Nicklaus Golf	Accolade	April	Sports
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 98	Acclaim	April	Sports
Mega Man Neo	Capcom	April	Action
MLB Baseball 99	Sony Computer Entertainment	April	Sports
Populous: The Third Coming	EA/Bullfrog	April	Sim/Strategy
Theme Hospital	EA/Bullfrog	April	Sim/Strategy
Triple Play 99	EA	April	Sports
VR Baseball 99	Interplay	April	Sports
VR Sports Powerboat Racing	Interplay	April	Sports
Warhammer 2: Dark Omen	EA/Maxis	April	Strategy
Addict Power Soccer 98: WC	Psygnosis	May	Sports
Azure Dreams	Konami	May	RPG
Bass Masters Classic: PE	TTHQ	May	Sports
C	Konami	May	Action
Hardball 6	Accolade	May	Sports
Ninja	Eidos	May	Action
Violante 9	Activision	May	Action
Wiz Games	MGM Interactive	May	Action

NINTENDO 64

Deadly Arts	Konami	March	Fighting
Mystical Ninja	Konami	March	Act/Adv
Quake	Midway	March	First-Person
Rampage	Midway	March	Action
Snowboard Kids	Atari	March	Act/Sports
Yoshi's Story	Nintendo	March	Side-Scrolling
1080 Snowboarding	Nintendo	April	Sports
All-Star BB 99	Acclaim	April	Sports
Bio F.R.E.A.K.S.	Midway	April	Fighting
MLB StrikeZone	GT Interactive	April	Sports
NBA Courtside	Nintendo	April	Sports
Quest 64	TTHQ	April	RPG
Virtual Chess	Titus	April	Simulation
Forsaken	Acclaim	May	Action
MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr.	Nintendo	May	Sports
Tonic Trouble	Ubi Soft	May	Action
Wrecking Balls	Acclaim	May	Action

Quake on the Nintendo 64 is the best version we've seen so far. The animation is ultra-smooth and the textures look terrific. Too bad it doesn't support four-player deathmatch (it only supports two).



The mega-popular 16-Bit Shining Force series is getting a 32-Bit update. We expect Shining Force III to hit it off big with Saturn owners this late spring/early summer.



Born out of a successful Saturday-morning program featuring the adventures of "Bob," ReBoot for the PlayStation takes the series to the next level by combining sci-fi elements with hoverboard riding action.

Last year's MLB 98 for the PlayStation was a big hit at EGM. In fact, it made our Top 100 Games of All Time list. Obviously, we can't wait to get our hands on this year's edition.



SATURN

Burning Rangers	Sega	March	Action
Magic Knight Rayearth	Working Designs	March	RPG
Panzer Saga	Sega	March	RPG
House of the Dead	Sega	April	Light Gun
Ninja	Eidos	May	Action
Shining Force III	Sega	May	RPG/Strategy

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MACHINES
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"EVEN MORE GORE."

— PSM MAGAZINE



"THE GAMING NOTHING ELSE

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You see evil. You hear evil. You're overwhelmed by evil, as you fight through hordes of flesh-starved zombies, blood-thirsty beasts and other mutations of modern science.

Will you survive the horror?

RESIDENT EVIL
CAPCOM
2

IF THE
SUSPENSE
DOESN'T KILL
YOU, SOMETHING
ELSE WILL.



Twice the blood. Twice the gore.

To enter the Resident Evil 2 Sweepstakes, complete an official entry blank or print your name, address and phone number on a 3x5 card and mail to: Capcom Entertainment, Resident Evil 2 Sweepstakes, © CAPCOM CO., LTD. 1998 © CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 1998 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. RESIDENT EVIL is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. CAPCOM is a registered

"SOMEBODY
PINCH ME,
I THINK I'M
IN HEAVEN."

- ULTRA GAMEPLAYERS



Splatter entrails all over
Raccoon City. Inflict grotesque
wound effects on the undead.

EVENT OF 1998. EVEN COMES CLOSE."

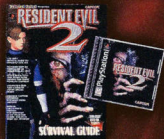
- GAMEFAN



A mysterious virus has
mutated the local inhabitants
into flesh-eating monsters,
hell-bent on snacking on your
still-warm spleen.

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THAT CHILLS THE SPINE."

- GAME INFORMER



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YOSHI'S

By John Ricciardi

Yoshi Strikes Back

Maybe it was the undeniable dino charm. Maybe it was the insatiable appetite that put fellow foe-eater Kirby to shame. Or maybe it was the status of being Mario's newest best buddy. Whatever the reason, gamers took an immediate liking to Yoshi and his multicolored kin when Super Mario World hatched him into the pantheon of classic game characters.

And in 1995, when Nintendo released Yoshi's Island, the tongue-fllicking former sidekick suddenly became the star of one of the coolest, most challenging and most original platform games of all time. Marking the 10th anniversary of the original Super Mario Bros., and billed as the sequel to Super Mario World (although it wasn't a sequel in Japan), the Super FX-based Yoshi's Island stunned all with its huge worlds, astonishing depth of play and incredibly rich graphics. Now, three years later, Nintendo intends on blowing us all away once again with the long-awaited sequel to Yoshi's Island, Yoshi's Story. But can the big N possibly top what has been hailed by many as the greatest platform game ever made? Read on...



The Story Behind the Story

Yoshi's Story stars six baby Yoshis who set out on a quest through a living picture book that was once their homeland, Yoshi's Island. It seems Baby Bowser has stolen the Super Happy Tree from the island, taking away any and all happiness from the Yoshis that live there. To make matters worse, the fire-breathing little brat turned the whole island into a picture book filled with strange enemies, traps and puzzles. While 99.9 percent of the Yoshi population may have been thrust into a deep depression because of the theft of their "Happy Tree" (and you thought YOU had problems), there's still hope. Somewhere on the island, six Yoshis are about to hatch who have no knowledge of the Super Happy Tree, and therefore will be born immune to the curse Baby Bowser has laid upon the land. These babies are the six Yoshis you control. They're the keys to giving Baby Bowser the spanking he deserves and bringing happiness (and normality) back to Yoshi's Island. And these Yoshis have one less thing to worry about, too—this time Baby Mario is nowhere to be found.



STORY™

Yoshi's Short Story?

Yoshi's Story contains six worlds to explore, each composed of four areas for a total of 24 stages. Each world in the Story Mode (or Page, as each world is referred to as) has a different theme (for example, Page 2 is mostly underground caverns, while Page 5 takes place in the jungle), and each of the 24 stages has its own artistic uniqueness. The graphics are simply incredible (easily the best 2-D stuff we've ever seen), and the 60 fps animation is smooth as, well, a baby Yoshi's bottom. There's a nice variety of music too, although some of the Yoshis' headache-inducing singing (more like whining) between stages can get on your nerves.



That's the good news. The bad news is that, similar to Star Fox 64, it's impossible to play through every stage in one sitting of Yoshi's Story. In Star Fox that isn't so bad because there's a lot of variety between the stages, and there are rewards for getting Medals

A Rainbow of Yoshis



on each stage. In Yoshi, you can only play through six stages in any one sitting, and there's (apparently) no reward for getting high scores during play, leaving gameplay to an uninspiring hour or two each time before seeing the ending. Fans of the original Yoshi's Island will surely be disappointed by this (we sure were), but it's quite obvious that Nintendo had a younger (or shall we say "broader") market in mind when they developed Yoshi's Story, leading to a simpler, but still enjoyable game.

You Gotta Have Heart(s)

When you first begin play in the Story Mode, you'll be at Page 1, where you can choose any one of the four Page 1 stages. Each stage contains three "Special Hearts" that are well hidden and necessary for opening later stages. If you complete a stage in Page 1 without finding any Special Hearts, you'll only have 2-1 to choose from when you reach Page 2. But depending on how many Special Hearts you find, that many more stages will be open upon reaching Page 2. So if you find all three Special Hearts, for example, every Page 2 stage will be selectable when you arrive (2-1, 2-2, 2-3 and 2-4). Again, you'll only be able to choose ONE of them to play each time, but this is how you progress through the game.

Once you complete a stage, it'll change from Blue to Red on the Map Screen the next time you play, letting you know that you've already cleared that stage. Then, it becomes permanently selectable in the Trial Mode, where you can pick any stage of the game that you've already finished for practice purposes (and to try to top your High Score).

Fruit Pursuit

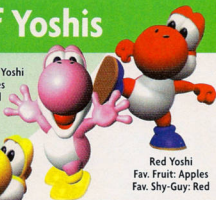
Clearing a stage is simple—merely find and consume 30 fruits. Fruits are hidden all over each stage, and the ones you've already eaten will be displayed in the configurable border that surrounds the playfield (you can hide it completely, or move it in and out of the screen as you wish). Gone are the Super NES original's multiple objectives of each stage, which needed to be completed in order to get perfect scores and open up hidden levels. Now you just find 30 fruits and that's

Yoshi's Story: The First Draft

These screens are from the video shown at the 1996 Space World show in Japan when Yoshi was displayed for the first time. What happened? Did this world just disappear? Was it merely to show off the game engine? Or is it still hidden somewhere in the game? We may never know, but as it stands now—we haven't found this (or some of the other areas shown on tape) anywhere in the game's 24 stages.



Pink Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Apples
Fav. Shy-Guy: Red



Red Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Apples
Fav. Shy-Guy: Red

Yellow Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Bananas
Fav. Shy-Guy: Yellow



Green Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Watermelons
Fav. Shy-Guy: Green



Blue Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Grapes
Fav. Shy-Guy: Blue



Light Blue Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: Grapes
Fav. Shy-Guy: Blue

White Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: All
Fav. Shy-Guy: All



Black Yoshi
Fav. Fruit: All
Fav. Shy-Guy: All



it. In fact, there's not even a physical "end" to any stage. Each stage has four checkpoints (found by the rotund little sleeping fellow known as Mr. Warp), and once you've reached the fourth one, you'll usually find some kind of Jar or other means of transportation that'll take you back to the beginning of the stage to continue your search. You can warp to and from any of the four Mr. Warps at any time by simply jumping on their heads.

Sounds too simple, doesn't it? Well, there's a catch—sort of. In order to get a really high score, you'll want to collect ONLY Honeydew Melons (the fruit of choice for today's distinguished, health-conscious Yoshi). Since there are ONLY 30 Honeydew Melons on each stage, and some of them are VERY well hidden (using the R button to have Yoshi



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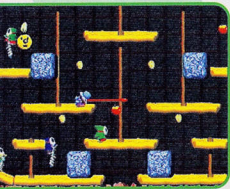
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sniff for clues is a must), this will make exploration a lot tougher and more time consuming. The problem with all this? SO FAR (we're not ruling anything out—yet) there doesn't seem to be any payoff to doing this other than obtaining higher scores. The original Yoshi at least provided some super-challenging extra stages and special bonus rounds that were only available once you got perfect scores on every stage. There's also a different "Lucky Fruit" every time you play that you select before beginning that is worth more points than the other fruits, but if you're after the Honeydew Melons, the Lucky Fruit really doesn't make a difference. And finally, if you collect six of any one fruit in a row, you'll get a special Heart Fruit that will make Yoshi temporarily invincible, with an unlimited amount of eggs and a tongue that's nearly double its normal length.

All About Yoshi

You can choose from six Yoshis in Yoshi's Story, not including the two hidden Yoshis (Black and White) that have to be found during the game and rescued by completing the stage with their respective eggs intact. Controlling Yoshi is a cinch, thanks to the N64's Analog Control Stick (this is a first for a 2-D game). Yoshi controls much like he did in Yoshi's Island,



although certain control elements have been dumbed down a bit (which in effect, dumbs down some of the gameplay, unfortunately). Yoshi can still run, duck, jump and "Pound the Ground" like he used to (which gives off a pretty strong shock if you've got a Rumble Pak inserted, by the way). Pressing the A button after jumping will still make Yoshi hover for a bit before landing. And, of course, you can still hurl eggs as your main means of offense, this time by using

the Z Trigger to move the target anywhere on the screen before releasing the egg. If you lose a Yoshi, the only way to get him back is to find one of the elusive White Shy-Guys hidden throughout the game, who will then show up on the Select Screen before the next stage where you can choose him instead of a Yoshi (he'll fly to the castle and bring back one of your lost Yoshis).

There are two main changes to the gameplay from Yoshi's Island that should be noted: First of all, eggs no longer ricochet off of walls and the ground. So no longer will you have to carefully aim eggs in certain areas to ricochet around the



screen if you can't reach a certain item or enemy. On the other hand, eggs do leave behind a small starry cloud when they're destroyed (for a split second) which can be used to strategically take out certain enemies (especially Bosses—of which, by the way, there are only five in the entire game). And secondly, Yoshi no longer has the choice to create eggs or spit out enemies when he consumes them. Now, all enemies are turned into eggs instantly.

In addition, Yoshi no longer has the ability to morph into other objects (like the chopper and the sub from the original). Fortunately he CAN swim now, and there are some other cool modes of transportation, like giant springs that send Yoshi sky-high, special rail lifts that change direction each time you jump on their backs, propeller-based platforms that sway from side to side as Yoshi's weight shifts, feathers that blow in the wind and more.

Closing the Book

Yoshi's Story is a fantastic game for what it was meant to be—an easy to get into, visually appealing game geared toward children. So far it appears that if you were a big fan of the original, chances are high you're going to come away disappointed with the sequel. Still, it's an extremely playable game, and with the slight changes Nintendo is making to the final U.S. release (like moving certain items around and altering the Save feature a bit), there's a twinkling of hope that it'll still meet our high expectations.

Yoshi's Island Vs. Yoshi's Story

Soon the Review Crew will be taking on the final U.S. version of Yoshi's Story. For now, take a look at some interesting numbers we put together...

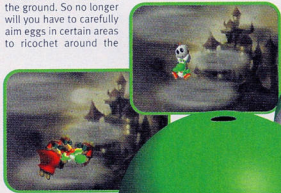


Yoshi's Island

Yoshi's Story

Cartridge Size:	16 Megabits	128 Megabits
# of Stages:	54 (60 with Mini-Game Areas)	24 (25 with Practice Stage)
# of Bosses:	12	5

Three years later, with eight times as much cartridge space to play with, there's less than half as many stages as the first runaround. Needless to say, this is disappointing.



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For the first time in history, NHLPA™ pros are descending upon the Olympic Winter Games. Be a witness as former teammates go head to head. Kamensky and Yashin are headed for Russia. Kariya and Roy will be playing for Canada. Modano and Leetch are in for the United States. The rosters are real. The graphics will make you sweat. It's country against country in this engagement. And the price of glory isn't gonna be pretty.

Please see Hockey on Page 38.

Please see Hockey on Page 3B.



LIMITED EDITION

The logo for the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan, featuring the words "OLYMPIC HOCKEY" in a stylized, bold font. "OLYMPIC" is in red with a white outline, and "HOCKEY" is in blue with a white outline. Below "HOCKEY" is a black hockey puck with motion lines. To the right of the puck is the number "98" in red with a white outline. In the top right corner, there is a small logo for the National Hockey League (NHL) and the text "NAGANO 98".

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THE GALAXY IS FAR, FAR AWAY.
THE FIGHTING IS
UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL.



Editors' Choice Awards

It's not tough being an *EGM* editor. We get to play every video game that gets made, day in and day out. What is tough, however, is trying to decide what games are the best in any given year. Out of the hundreds of games we saw in 1997, we have to pick and choose who we're going to recognize with a coveted *EGM* award. It's truly a privilege and a pleasure to call up a game company and tell them that because their product is so awesome, we're going to send them a trophy (which

they'll get to display in the lobby of their main headquarters). But it's even more fun just being able to tell the whole world what we thought were the best games of last year.

So here are the 1997 *EGM* Editors' Choice Awards (followed by the 1997 Readers' Choice Awards). Don't forget, only games that were released sometime in 1997 (from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31) are eligible for nomination. That's why you won't see certain games like *Suikoden* or *Virtua Cop 2* here (they were both released at the very end of 1996).

All Systems



GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

It took a team of creative programmers (Rare) and the desire to break out of traditional molds (Doom clones) to bring us the game that was voted 1997's Game of the Year. *GoldenEye 007* is a runaway hit with the *EGM* editors. The fast-paced espionage action combined with gorgeous

graphics and a killer soundtrack gives players everything they'd ever want in a James Bond video game. But the excellent one-player game is only the half of it. *GoldenEye 007* also boasts one of the most frantic, most addicting multiplayer games ever. When we were all finished with the single-player missions, we could still be found deathmarching until the wee hours of the morning. Whether you're talking about *GoldenEye 007* one-player or four, you have one of the best action games of all time, period. If you have a Nintendo 64 (or are looking for a reason to buy one), look no further for that killer game that puts all others to shame. This is the single best game of 1997, hands down.

RUNNERS-UP

Castlevania: SotN - PlayStation
Final Fantasy VII - PlayStation

Nintendo 64



GOLDENEYE 007

Although Nintendo 64 software this past year was few and far between, you couldn't deny that the quality was there. Hits like Mario Kart 64 and Star Fox 64 kept hungry N64 owners going. But it was GoldenEye 007 that stole the show. This relatively low-hyped game started out as another first-person shooter in the masses, and ended up being one of the best games we've ever seen in our lives. It was a pleasant surprise, to say the least.

RUNNERS-UP

International Superstar Soccer 64

PlayStation



CASTLEVANIA: SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT

You can dazzle us with fancy 3-D graphics, and you can tantalize us with beautiful full-motion video, but in the end, it's gameplay that rules. Castlevania: Symphony of the Night

takes us back to our roots. It's a traditional 2-D side-scroller that has more depth than 99 percent of today's games. The sheer size of this game and classic style of play has hooked many EGM editors for countless hours. If you miss the yesteryears of video gaming, don't pass up the chance to play this latest installment of the long-running and highly acclaimed Castlevania series.

RUNNERS-UP
Final Fantasy VII
Colony Wars

Saturn



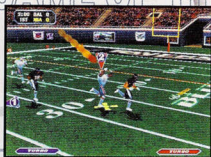
SATURN BOMBERMAN

Only a Bomberman game can get away with winning a Game of the Year award based solely on its multiplayer aspect. Saturn Bomberman is simply the finest edition of the long-running series. This version has a few new features, but they are all overshadowed by perhaps the most important one: allowing up to 16 players to battle at one time. We all love party-type multiplayer games, but how much cooler can playing Bomberman with nine other people be?

RUNNERS-UP

Street Fighter Collection
Madden NFL 98

Arcade



NFL BLITZ

It's been done for hockey, and it's been done for basketball. It's about time someone did an NBA Jam-style no-holds-barred pigskin game: NFL Blitz has everything you'd want in a football arcade game: no timeouts, no penalties, easy play selection, sharp graphics, big plays and necessary roughness. This is the simple and catchy type of game that draws both football and non-football fans alike.

RUNNERS-UP

Tekken 3
The Lost World: Jurassic Park

Action



GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

Are you sick of reading about GoldenEye 007 yet? Well, here's yet another award that it won by a comfortable margin. Although the competition in the Action category is pretty tough, no one can forget the best one of them all. Great graphics, realistic animation, tons of weapons, missions, secrets, etc., all place GoldenEye 007 on a level all its own. In case you haven't got the message yet, this is a must-play experience.

RUNNER-UP

Castlevania: SotN - PS

Sports



INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER 64 - N64

It seems like just about every soccer video game has at least one big weakness. This can't be said about Konami's ISS 64, a

soccer game that deftly combines realism with great gameplay. Such an impressive feat can be overlooked because of ISS 64's fluently animated 3-D player graphics that are second-to-none. Rarely does a sports game excel in so many different ways like this one.

RUNNERS-UP

Madden NFL 98 - PS, Saturn
NFL GameDay '98 - PS

Fighting



STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION - PS, SAT

Perhaps the most over-populated genre, fighting games seem a dime-a-dozen these days. They can go 3-D and become more realistic, but one thing's for certain: Street Fighter is still king of the hill. Most of the EGM staff would gladly give up all the other fighting games in the world to keep any one from the SF series. With SF Collection, we get three excellent titles, giving us enough Street Fighter to keep us happy for a long time to come. These may be the best 2-D fighting games we'll ever see in our short lifetimes.

RUNNERS-UP

Street Fighter EX Plus α - PS
Soul Blade - PS

Racing



DIDDY KONG RACING - N64

Diddy Kong Racing proves that improving on a successful formula (Mario Kart 64) can pay off big time. DKR takes the Mario Kart magic to new levels by including more than one vehicle to choose from and huge, rule-bending Bosses to race against. DKR also gives you a huge Adventure Mode, to ensure the one-player game is just as fun as the multiplayer game.

RUNNERS-UP

NASCAR 98 - PS, Saturn
Rage Racer - PS

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Role-Playing



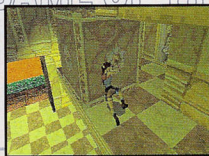
FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

The PlayStation finally made an impact on the RPG scene this past year, and did so almost all on the efforts of one monumental game: Final Fantasy VII. The anticipation for this game hit such feverish levels, that half the EGM staff imported, and completed, the game before the American version was even released. When the American version did finally come out, the other half of the staff got to see what all the well-deserved buzz was about. Don't miss this RPG event of the past year.

RUNNERS-UP

Alundra - PS
Wild Arms - PS

Adventure



TOMB RAIDER II - PS

Behind all of the hype and anatomically impossible...uh...polygons, Tomb Raider II starring Lara Croft proves that it has what it takes to be a solid adventure game. Not only is the game huge, it presents challenge after challenge. In what other PlayStation game can you swim, snowmobile, jump from platform to platform (with deadly lava flowing underneath, no less) and avoid a countless number of traps, only to encounter a sword-wielding statue after that? Yes, Tomb Raider II is da bomb.

RUNNER-UP

Enemy Zero - Saturn

Side-Scrolling



CASTLEVANIA: SOTN - PS

Traditional 2-D side-scrollers are rapidly becoming an endangered genre as technology ushers in more and more 3-D. Thankfully, a few do pop up once in a while

and take gamers back to the good ol' days of gaming. Castlevania: Symphony of the Night is one of those games. It is arguably one of the best games in the series, even though many liken the playing style more to Metroid than to Castlevania. Nevertheless, it was an instant love affair between Symphony and the critical EGM staff. Everyone was hooked on the traditional style of game and found the great 2-D graphics to be a refreshing change of pace from all the 3-D eye candy we're so used to seeing these days.

RUNNER-UP

Mega Man X4 - PS, Saturn

Strategy



COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT - PS

Traditionally, console strategy games take a back seat to the more popular genres (namely, everything else), but that doesn't

mean that there aren't any good ones. This past year, we were treated to the best console realtime strategy game of all time. Command & Conquer: Red Alert has everything going for it: a great interface, simple controls, death and destruction, fast and frantic strategy, a wide variety of missions and cool FMV to tie it all together.

RUNNERS-UP

WarCraft II - PS, Saturn
Vandal Hearts - PS

Shooter



STAR FOX 64 - N64

The original Star Fox was one of the best shooters (3-D or otherwise) of all time, and Star Fox 64 ranks right up alongside it. Multiple pathways, fantastic graphics and great replayability (getting all those Medals

on the Extra Mode sure ain't easy) all add up to one of the most enjoyable gaming experiences on the N64 to date. Add to that a ton of real voice (no more blip-blip-dabba), very cool realtime cinematics and a fun Multiplayer Mode (though not as great as Mario Kart 64's or GoldenEye's), and you've got a game that no Nintendo 64 owner should be without.

RUNNER-UP

RayStorm - PS

1-800-882-9600

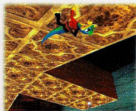
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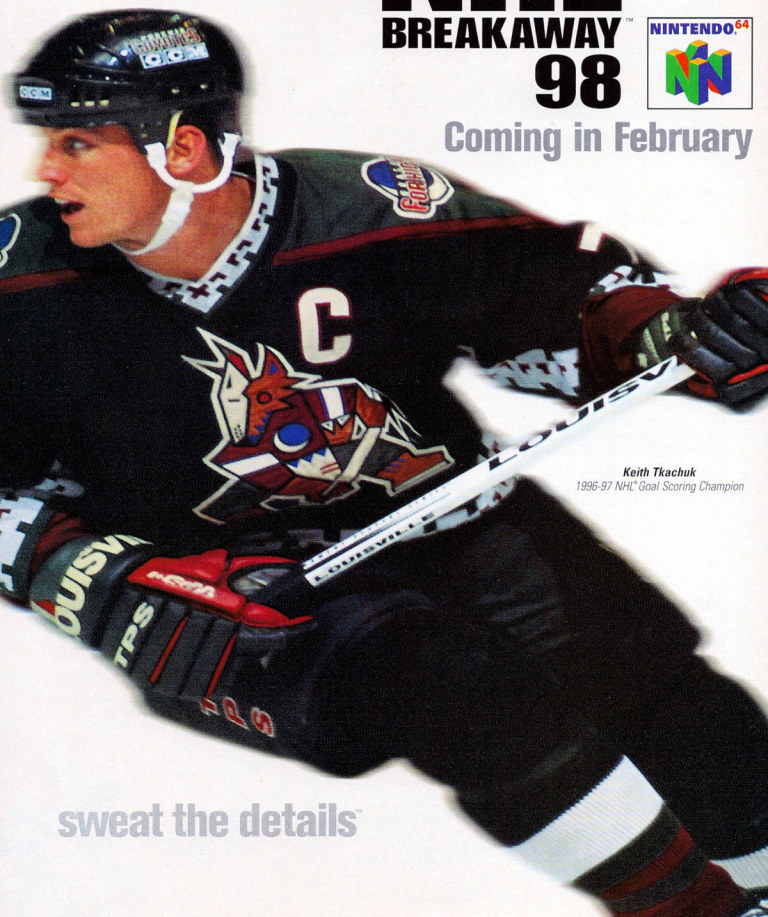


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Multiplayer



SATURN BOMBERMAN - SAT

This was a hotly contested category, but Saturn Bomberman has one advantage all the PlayStation and N64 nominees don't

have: 10-player capability. Saturn Bomberman is a great improvement over its predecessors—new features (like team play) are only part of the fun. But you haven't really played Bomberman until you've played with nine other people, all crowded around a (hopefully) big-screen TV. Plus, what better way to show off to your friends than to be declared a winner in a 10-way battle royale? Rub it in while you can...it's not easy being the survivor of the fittest.

RUNNERS-UP
GoldenEye 007 - N64
Mario Kart 64 - N64

First-Person Shooter



GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

In a sea of copy-cat first-person shooters with little or no innovation, GoldenEye 007 stands out like a beacon in the night. While everyone else is rushing to make the next

hot run-around-and-mindlessly-shoot-things Doom clone, GoldenEye took a bold step forward and added what was noticeably absent from its competitors: variety. Each stage has you doing something different. For once, you actually have more to do than just find this key or click this switch. You also have to play the game like a spy and not a gung-ho Rambo space marine—anyone who's played GoldenEye can tell you that stealth is usually more effective than blazing guns. Trust us when we tell you that GoldenEye 007 has set the example for all other first-person shooters to follow.

RUNNER-UP
None

Most Original



PARAPPA THE RAPPER - PS

Flat 2-D Colorform-like characters moving around in wildly cartoonish worlds. Awesome music with cheezy lyrics. An eternally hungry bear who DJs for

a living. A love affair between a sunflower and a rapping puppy. An onion who teaches kung-fu. We can go on and on about how strange and surreal PaRappa the Rapper is, but it still wouldn't do it justice. This is just one of those types of games that you simply must see to believe. The humor, music and graphics are unlike anything you've seen before. Don't be fooled by the childish nature of the game—you'll find yourself hooked and coming back for more. If you're looking for a game that is 100 percent fresh and original, and you're looking for a laugh or two, don't miss this wonderful title.

RUNNERS-UP
Monster Rancher - PS
Blast Corps - N64

Light Gun



TIME CRISIS - PS

What's this? No Runner-up? Yes, Time Crisis is so good that nobody voted for anything else! This isn't much of a surprise, though, considering some of the competition was Maximum Force, S.C.U.D. and Lethal Enforcers I & II. For a conversion from the arcade, Time Crisis on the PlayStation just plain rocks! The graphics are amazing, as are the sound effects. Namco even added extra modes of play to increase the replay value. Time Crisis gives you what a gun game should give: an increased heart rate.

RUNNER-UP
None

Puzzle



BUST-A-MOVE 3 - PS, SAT

Bust-A-Move 3 is not the most mind-challenging puzzle game on the market, but it is definitely one of the easiest ones to pick up and master. The extremely simple and addictive nature of the game helped it to win this award. Bust-A-Move 3 gives you new characters (with different modes of attack) and a few new tricks (like bouncing balls off the ceiling) to help spice up this familiar formula.

RUNNERS-UP
Intelligent Qube - PS
Super Puzzle Fighter II
Turbo - PS, Saturn



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Graphics



FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

When you have three CDs packed full of rendered full-motion video, you know your eyes are in for a treat. Final Fantasy VII takes these gorgeous cinemas and seamlessly combines them with lively characters and amazing backdrops. FFVII looks simply incredible.

RUNNERS-UP

Colony Wars - PS
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

Music



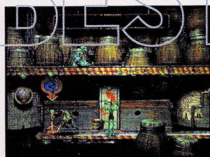
PARAPPA THE RAPPER - PS

No other game this past year has us humming its tunes more than PaRappa the Rapper. The catchy and quirky songs can stay in your head for days. Some of us even imported the CD soundtrack, so we could listen to the music even when we're not playing the game.

RUNNERS-UP

Castlevania: SotN - PS
Soul Blade - PS

Sound



ODDORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE - PS

Abe's Oddysee became an instant hit with everyone at EGM for plenty of reasons, but no one can forget the amazing sound effects. The voices, explosions, machine guns and yes, even the farts, are all incredible to hear.

RUNNERS-UP

GoldenEye 007 - N64
Colony Wars - PS

Mascot



PARAPPA

The lovable hip-hop puppy is the perfect mascot for us 20-somethings at EGM. He has rhythm, he's a love artist and he's all around too cute to ignore. We think Sony should even trade Crash Bandicoot up and make PaRappa their official spokesperson.

RUNNERS-UP

Lara Croft
Crash Bandicoot

Peripheral



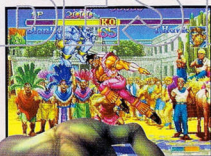
RUMBLE PAK - N64

This innovative little product gives console gamers controller tactile feedback for the first time ever. Whether someone's shooting at your ship in Star Fox 64 or a grenade's exploding at your feet in GoldenEye 007, you'll know it 'cause you'll feel it.

RUNNERS-UP

Sony Dual Analog Joypad - PS
Namco Guncon - PS

Compilation



STREET FIGHTER COLLECTION - PS, SAT

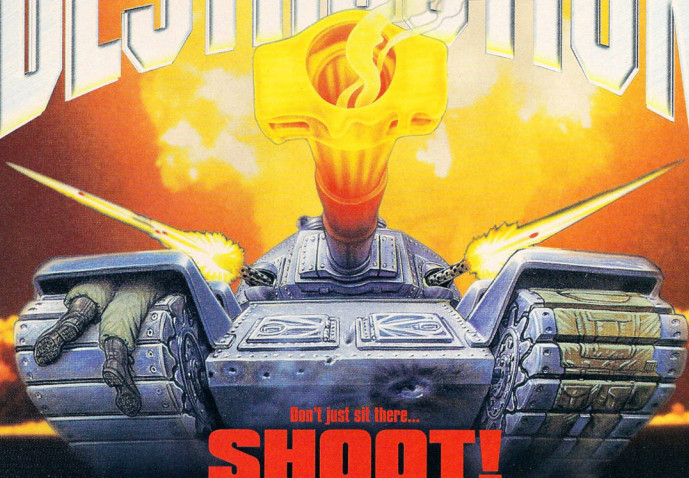
This may not be the most ideal Street Fighter compilation we could dream up, but that doesn't mean it's not a fantastic one on its own. This two-disc set gives you an improved version of SF Alpha 2 and the classic Super SF 2 and Super SF 2 Turbo. It's a great value considering the SF games are the best 2-D fighters around.

RUNNERS-UP

Namco Museum Volume 3 - PS
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Midway Coll. 2 - PS



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Readers' Choice Awards

You've sent in your votes. Now, after several mind-numbing weeks of counting ballots (and a few paper cuts later), we have the final results. You spoke your mind, and now we're letting the industry see

what you, its bread and butter, think are the best games of 1997. Counting your votes has been fun and all, but we think we're going to implement some sort of Scantron system for the 1998 Readers' Choice Awards...

All Systems



FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

The voice is loud and clear-Final Fantasy VII is your favorite game of 1997 by a comfortable margin. This game is perhaps the most highly anticipated 32-Bit game ever, and for good reason. When it finally arrived, it lived up to almost everybody's expectations. The story, graphics and music kept us all enthralled for days. Sony and Squaresoft scored big with this one, no doubt about it. (And to think, SCEA once had an anti-RPG attitude...)

RUNNERS-UP
GoldenEye 007 - N64
Diddy Kong Racing - N64

TOP WRITE-IN
Colony Wars - PS

Nintendo 64

GOLDENEYE 007

RUNNERS-UP
Diddy Kong Racing
Star Fox 64

TOP WRITE-IN
WCW vs. NWO

PlayStation

FINAL FANTASY VII

RUNNERS-UP
Tomb Raider 2
Castlevania: Symphony of the Night

TOP WRITE-IN
Moto Racer

Saturn

MADDEN NFL 98

RUNNERS-UP
Saturn Bomberman
Fighters MegaMix

TOP WRITE-IN
Enemy Zero

Arcade

GAME OF THE YEAR

TEKKEN 3

RUNNERS-UP
Mortal Kombat 4
House of the Dead

TOP WRITE-IN
Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter

Action

GAME OF THE YEAR

GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

RUNNERS-UP
Castlevania: Symphony of the Night - PS
Crash Bandicoot 2 - PS

TOP WRITE-IN
Tomb Raider 2 - PS

Sports

GAME OF THE YEAR

MADDEN NFL 98 - PS, SAT

RUNNERS-UP
NFL GameDay '98 - PS
International Superstar Soccer 64 - N64

TOP WRITE-IN
NFL Quarterback Club '98 - N64

Racing

GAME OF THE YEAR

DIDDY KONG RACING - N64

RUNNERS-UP
Extreme G - N64
NASCAR 98 - PS, Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN
Mario Kart 64 - N64

Fighting

GAME OF THE YEAR

STREET FIGHTER EX

RUNNERS-UP PLUS α - PS
Soul Blade - PS
Street Fighter Collection - PS, Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN
Bushido Blade - PS

Role-Playing

GAME OF THE YEAR

FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

RUNNERS-UP
Wild Arms - PS
Albert Odyssey - Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN
Vandal Hearts - PS



"Best Flight Sim/Shooter."

—Ultra Game Players, Holiday '97

Score: 5 out of 5.

"Colony Wars puts all other space shooters to shame."

—PSM, January '98

"Colony Wars ranks as the best space combat game on the PlayStation."

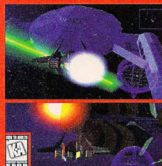
—GamePro, November '97

COLONY WARS

Blast the chains of slavery straight to Hell. Join the rebellion and fly the hottest ships in the stars. You'll master six unique craft in your quest, each with different flight characteristics and weaponry. You'll fly more than 70 unique missions, success or failure determining a destiny that lies along one of five different paths. The cost of freedom is high. Are you willing to pay it?



EPIC SPACE CONFLICT



Readers' Choice Awards

Adventure GAME OF THE YEAR

TOMB RAIDER II - PS

RUNNERS-UP

Resident Evil: Director's Cut - PS
Enemy Zero - Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN

Treasures of the Deep - PS

Side-Scrolling GAME OF THE YEAR

CASTLEVANIA: SOTN - PS

RUNNERS-UP

Mega Man X4 - PS, Saturn
Mischief Makers - N64

TOP WRITE-IN

Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

Strategy GAME OF THE YEAR

C & C: RED ALERT - PS

RUNNERS-UP

WarCraft II - PS, Saturn
Vandal Hearts - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

Shooter OF THE YEAR

STAR FOX 64 - N64

RUNNERS-UP

RayStorm - PS
Nanotek Warrior - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Colony Wars - PS

Light Gun OF THE YEAR

TIME CRISIS - PS

RUNNERS-UP

Crypt Killer - PS, Saturn
Maximum Force - PS, Saturn

TOP WRITE-IN

None

First-Person Shooter OF THE YEAR

GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Duke Nukem - N64, PS, Saturn
Turok: Dinosaur Hunter - N64

TOP WRITE-IN

Doom 64 - N64

Puzzle GAME OF THE YEAR

TETRISPHERE - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo - PS, Saturn
Intelligent Qube - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Tecmo Stackers - PS

Multiplayer GAME OF THE YEAR

GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Diddy Kong Racing - N64
Mario Kart 64 - N64

TOP WRITE-IN

NFL GameDay '98 - PS

Most Original GAME OF THE YEAR

PARAPPA THE RAPPER - PS

RUNNERS-UP

Blast Corps - N64
Monster Rancher - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Final Fantasy VII - PS

Best Compilation OF THE YEAR

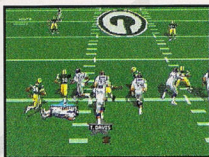
**STREET FIGHTER
COLLECTION - PS, SATURN**

RUNNERS-UP

Sonic Jam - Saturn
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Midway Coll. 2 - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Resident Evil: Director's Cut - PS



Best Graphics OF THE YEAR

FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

RUNNERS-UP

GoldenEye 007 - N64
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

NFL Quarterback Club '98 - N64

Best Music OF THE YEAR

FINAL FANTASY VII - PS

RUNNERS-UP

PaRappa the Rapper - PS
Castlevania: Symphony of the Night - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

GoldenEye 007 - N64

Best Sound OF THE YEAR

GOLDENEYE 007 - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Star Fox 64 - N64
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee - PS

TOP WRITE-IN

Final Fantasy VII - PS

Favorite Mascot OF THE YEAR

LARA CROFT

RUNNERS-UP

Mario
Crash Bandicoot

TOP WRITE-IN

Cloud

Best Peripheral OF THE YEAR

RUMBLE PAK - N64

RUNNERS-UP

Sony Dual Analog Joypad - PS
InterAct GameShark - N64

TOP WRITE-IN

ASCii Grip - PS



VIDEO GAMES: PLAYSTATION

Title	Release Price	Disc	Release Price	Disc	Release Price	Disc	Release Price	Disc
ASDigi Sphere 360	\$19.98	\$69	Dead Dr. Alive	\$19.98	\$46	Lethal Enforcers 62	\$29.98	\$62
Acc Combat	\$19.98	\$44	Deadly Days	\$39.98	\$49	Lost Vikings 2	\$29.98	\$39
Alundra	\$19.98	\$44	Death Trap Origin	\$19.98	\$44	Lost Vikings 2	\$29.98	\$39
Apocalypse	\$29.98	\$46	Duke Trilogy	\$29.98	\$44	Lost in Time	\$19.98	\$38
Armored Core V	\$19.98	\$44	Duke World 2	\$29.98	\$46	MGS	\$49.98	\$49
Armored Core V	\$19.98	\$44	Duke World 2	\$29.98	\$46	MGS	\$49.98	\$49
Batman & Robin	\$29.98	\$44	Dungeon Keeper	\$19.98	\$46	Mask: Dark Age	\$19.98	\$44
Beast Wars	\$29.98	\$42	Dynasty Warriors	\$29.98	\$46	Max Payne	\$29.98	\$44
Bravo Air Flight	\$29.98	\$46	Earthworm	\$29.98	\$46	Max Payne	\$29.98	\$44
Breath of Fire 3	\$29.98	\$44	Final Fantasy	\$19.98	\$44	Monopoly	\$29.98	\$44
Bubble Bobble	\$29.98	\$44	Final Fantasy VII	\$29.98	\$46	Monster Rancher	\$29.98	\$44
Bushido Blade	\$29.98	\$44	Frogger	\$29.98	\$44	Myth: II: Raven	\$29.98	\$44
C & G 3rd Fleet	\$29.98	\$44	Fighting Force	\$29.98	\$42	NAMCO Museum 3	\$29.98	\$44
Caesar's Palace	\$29.98	\$46	Final Doom	\$29.98	\$46	NAMCO Museum 4	\$29.98	\$44
Cardinal Sins	\$29.98	\$44	Final Fantasy	\$19.98	\$44	NASCAR 98	\$29.98	\$44
Castlevania	\$29.98	\$44	Final Fantasy VII	\$29.98	\$46	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Caylefish 3	\$29.98	\$46	Frogger	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Crash Team	\$29.98	\$44	Frank's Fast	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Croak Wars	\$29.98	\$44	G-Police	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Corona	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
CowBoys 2	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Cover Girls	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Crash Bandicoot 2	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Croc	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Cruiser	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Darius	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Darklight Conflict	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44
Darkstalkers 3	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$44

VIDEO GAMES: SATURN

Albert Odyssey	\$29.98	\$44	Dawn of Darkness	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Armored Core	\$29.98	\$44	The Hard Arcade	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Battle Monitors	\$29.98	\$44	FIFA Soccer '98	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Battlemasters	\$29.98	\$44	Fighters Megamix	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Blades of Rage	\$29.98	\$44	Hercules' Adventures	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Blades of Rage	\$29.98	\$44	Hypocrite	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Burning Rangers	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Command & Conquer	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Counter Crisis	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Croc	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Crypt Killer	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Darklight Conflict	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44
Darkstalkers 3	\$29.98	\$44	IL-2	\$29.98	\$44	Mad Max 3	\$29.98	\$44

VIDEO GAMES: SNES

Emmett Smith	\$29.98	\$19	NHL Hockey '98	\$29.98	\$19
George Foreman	\$29.98	\$19	SNK vs. Capcom	\$29.98	\$19
Harvest Moon	\$29.98	\$19	Street Fighter	\$29.98	\$19
Mad Max '98	\$29.98	\$19	Super Mario Kart	\$29.98	\$19
Marvel Kombat 3	\$29.98	\$19	Ultimate MK 3	\$29.98	\$19
NBA Live '98	\$29.98	\$19	WWE	\$29.98	\$19
NHL Live '98	\$29.98	\$19	WWE	\$29.98	\$19
NHL Hockey '98	\$29.98	\$19	WWE	\$29.98	\$19

VIDEO GAMES: NINTENDO 64

Banister 64	\$29.98	\$19	Legend of Zelda	\$29.98	\$19
Chameleon Twist	\$29.98	\$19	Mad Max	\$29.98	\$19
Diddy Kong	\$29.98	\$19	Master Maker	\$29.98	\$19
Duke Nukem 3D	\$29.98	\$19	Play Pings 64	\$29.98	\$19
Earthbound	\$29.98	\$19	Star Wars 64	\$29.98	\$19
F-Zero 64	\$29.98	\$19	Star Wars 64	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA Soccer '98	\$29.98	\$19	Star Wars 64	\$29.98	\$19
Golden Eye '00	\$29.98	\$19	Star Wars 64	\$29.98	\$19
Killer Instinct Gold	\$29.98	\$19	Star Wars 64	\$29.98	\$19

BOARD GAMES

Akio & Ali	\$29.98	\$19	Ruby Rally	\$29.98	\$19
Battlefield 4th Ed	\$29.98	\$19	Samurai Swords	\$29.98	\$19
Car Wars Deluxe	\$29.98	\$19	Setters of Canis	\$29.98	\$19
The Game	\$29.98	\$19	Space Chess 3D	\$29.98	\$19
Infinity Builder	\$29.98	\$19	Space Chess 3D	\$29.98	\$19
Grand Prix	\$29.98	\$19	Star Wars 64	\$29.98	\$19
Knightsman Chess	\$29.98	\$19	Star Wars 64	\$29.98	\$19
Lionheart	\$29.98	\$19	Star Wars 64	\$29.98	\$19
Lucky Money	\$29.98	\$19	Star Wars 64	\$29.98	\$19

COLLECTIBLE CARD GAMES

Effect Monarchs	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Tempest 3D	\$29.98	\$19
Battlefield	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Visions	\$29.98	\$19
Battlefield	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Weatherlight	\$29.98	\$19
Battlefield	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Weatherlight	\$29.98	\$19
MTG: 5th Ed 6P	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Weatherlight	\$29.98	\$19
MTG: 5th Ed 6P	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Weatherlight	\$29.98	\$19
MTG: 5th Ed 6P	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Weatherlight	\$29.98	\$19
MTG: 5th Ed 6P	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Weatherlight	\$29.98	\$19
MTG: 5th Ed 6P	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Weatherlight	\$29.98	\$19
MTG: 5th Ed 6P	\$29.98	\$19	MTG: Weatherlight	\$29.98	\$19

VIDEO GAMES: GENESIS

Demolition Man	\$29.98	\$19	NBA Shootout '98	\$29.98	\$19
ESPN Hockey	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19

VIDEO GAME HINT BOOKS

ASDigi Sphere 360	\$29.98	\$19	Dead Dr. Alive	\$29.98	\$19
Acc Combat	\$29.98	\$19	Deadly Days	\$29.98	\$19
Alundra	\$29.98	\$19	Death Trap Origin	\$29.98	\$19
Apocalypse	\$29.98	\$19	Duke Trilogy	\$29.98	\$19
Armored Core V	\$29.98	\$19	Duke World 2	\$29.98	\$19
Armored Core V	\$29.98	\$19	Duke World 2	\$29.98	\$19
Batman & Robin	\$29.98	\$19	Dungeon Keeper	\$29.98	\$19
Beast Wars	\$29.98	\$19	Earthworm	\$29.98	\$19
Bravo Air Flight	\$29.98	\$19	Final Fantasy	\$29.98	\$19
Breath of Fire 3	\$29.98	\$19	Final Fantasy VII	\$29.98	\$19
Bubble Bobble	\$29.98	\$19	Frogger	\$29.98	\$19
Bushido Blade	\$29.98	\$19	Fighting Force	\$29.98	\$19
C & G 3rd Fleet	\$29.98	\$19	Final Doom	\$29.98	\$19
Caesar's Palace	\$29.98	\$19	Final Fantasy	\$29.98	\$19
Cardinal Sins	\$29.98	\$19	Final Fantasy VII	\$29.98	\$19
Castlevania	\$29.98	\$19	Frogger	\$29.98	\$19
Caylefish 3	\$29.98	\$19	Frank's Fast	\$29.98	\$19
Crash Team	\$29.98	\$19	G-Police	\$29.98	\$19
Croak Wars	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
CowBoys 2	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Cover Girls	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Crash Bandicoot 2	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Croc	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Cruiser	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Darius	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Darklight Conflict	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Darkstalkers 3	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19

COMPUTER GAMES

Demolition Man	\$29.98	\$19	NBA Shootout '98	\$29.98	\$19
ESPN Hockey	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19
FIFA 98	\$29.98	\$19	NFL QB Club	\$29.98	\$19

ROLE PLAYING GAMES

ASDigi Sphere 360	\$29.98	\$19	Dead Dr. Alive	\$29.98	\$19
Acc Combat	\$29.98	\$19	Deadly Days	\$29.98	\$19
Alundra	\$29.98	\$19	Death Trap Origin	\$29.98	\$19
Apocalypse	\$29.98	\$19	Duke Trilogy	\$29.98	\$19
Armored Core V	\$29.98	\$19	Duke World 2	\$29.98	\$19
Armored Core V	\$29.98	\$19	Duke World 2	\$29.98	\$19
Batman & Robin	\$29.98	\$19	Dungeon Keeper	\$29.98	\$19
Beast Wars	\$29.98	\$19	Earthworm	\$29.98	\$19
Bravo Air Flight	\$29.98	\$19	Final Fantasy	\$29.98	\$19
Breath of Fire 3	\$29.98	\$19	Final Fantasy VII	\$29.98	\$19
Bubble Bobble	\$29.98	\$19	Frogger	\$29.98	\$19
Bushido Blade	\$29.98	\$19	Fighting Force	\$29.98	\$19
C & G 3rd Fleet	\$29.98	\$19	Final Doom	\$29.98	\$19
Caesar's Palace	\$29.98	\$19	Final Fantasy	\$29.98	\$19
Cardinal Sins	\$29.98	\$19	Final Fantasy VII	\$29.98	\$19
Castlevania	\$29.98	\$19	Frogger	\$29.98	\$19
Caylefish 3	\$29.98	\$19	Frank's Fast	\$29.98	\$19
Crash Team	\$29.98	\$19	G-Police	\$29.98	\$19
Croak Wars	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
CowBoys 2	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Cover Girls	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Crash Bandicoot 2	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Croc	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Cruiser	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Darius	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Darklight Conflict	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19
Darkstalkers 3	\$29.98	\$19	IL-2	\$29.98	\$19

TOMB RAIDER 2 Lara's back, and better than ever, with new moves, a new underwater environment and a whole new arsenal. Explore huge, exotic, platform-based 3D environments around the world, solve puzzles and kill badies.

Fidos (Adventure)
Release Date: NOV PSX \$46

'RESIDENT EVIL 2 Join rookie-on-the-job Leon Kennedy as he splits through the chaos of streets littered with debris. Pursued by zombies, he must make it to the Raccoon City Police Headquarters. The heart-quakers equals Resident Evil's mansion in sign and progress. It's a new experience.

Capcom (Roleplaying)
Release Date: 2:98 PSX \$44

BREATH OF FIRE III Immense environments allow characters to roam in great hidden pathways, items, secrets and treasures. Find the secret of the Dragon shrines or become an apprentice to learn magic and special abilities.

Capcom (Roleplaying)
Release Date: 2:98 PSX \$44

'POWER WHEEL' was designed to bring realism and playability to the video game player. Provides smooth four direction shifting. Brake and gas pedals provide a realistic feel and are ergonomically designed to be used either sitting or standing. Steering column can be adjusted for correct height.

Game Source (Hardware)
Release Date: NOV PSX/SAT \$52

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON This ultimate dungeon brawler is based on the fantasy gamebook series and offers 10 horridous levels of combat. Armed with swords, missiles, mages, mages, magic spells and more, you can fight solo or in multi-player combat in an entire dungeon atmosphere.

Eidos (Roleplaying)
Release Date: 1:98 PSX \$44

'MAGIC KNIGHT RAYARTH' Over 300 Japanese school-style martial arts 2-D moves to master. The first in a fantastic anime-style action with over 30 minutes of audio. When you talk to characters in the game, they reply!

Working Designs (Roleplaying)
Release Date: 2:98 SAT \$52

CONSPIRACY 'X' In a world of dark secrets, the only certainty is nothing is what it seems. The president may not be human. The sign carrying paramed on the street running redneck control vehicles may be right.

New Millennium (Pen/Paper Roleplaying)
Release Date: NOV RPG \$20

'SPACE HULK' The space is hot and furious, with tension growing every hour. Space Marines must save humanity from savage alien Genestealers hiding in derelict space craft.

Games Workshop (Board Game)
Release Date: NOV BG \$66

'DIDDY KONG RACING' While focusing on high-speed, entertaining racing action, Diddy Kong Racing also throws in the works by adding a large dose of adventure and exploration. Diddy Kong and crew either parachute into a race through a total of 20 beautiful 3-D courses with rivers, waterfalls, tunnels, canyons, lava snow, rolling hills, and giant lagoons.

Nintendo (Simulation)
Release Date: NOV N64 \$54

'MAGIC THE GATHERING 5TH EDITION' This deck contains 60 tradable game cards, randomly assorted, plus a rule book. Each player must have a deck. This deck may be enhanced with more cards sold in booster packs.

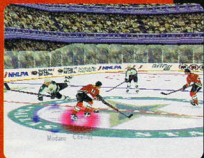


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G

**EVEN THE AMOUNT OF EFFORT IT
TAKES TO SCORE, IT SEEMS ONLY FITTING
THAT IT'S CALLED A GOAL.**



**NHL
FACEOFF
98**

**PROPERTY OF PLAYSTATION
ATHLETIC DEPT.**

ARCADES GROW UP

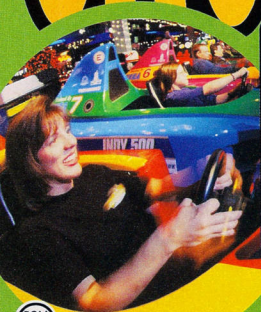
Last month we showed how game rooms have outgrown your local mall. Now, we visit the biggest of the big arcades to see if these titanic entertainment centers live up to the hype.



I t's a three-story video game, a towering mass of big-screen monitors, hanging seats and joysticks. Called Vertical Reality, this game-ride hybrid launches 12 players—all harnessed into independently moving chairs—up its jet-black superstructure. As crosshairs zip like electric insects across stacked rear-projection displays, players blast on-screen baddies. The higher their score, the higher their seats loft skyward, leaving no doubt as to who's the game's current guru. The best players reach Vertical Reality's summit, 24 feet off the floor, before plunging earthward at the close of a five-minute game that cost \$3.

And this titanic piece of gaming hardware is the first thing you see when you step into Steven Spielberg's GameWorks in Seattle. Fitting, since Vertical Reality embodies much of what GameWorks and other location-based entertainment (LBE) centers are seemingly all about: It's cutting edge, it pits gamer against gamer in a social environment, and—as critics like to point out—it's pricey and not exactly rich in replayability (especially after the novelty wears off). It's also something you definitely can't play at home—or in your local game room.

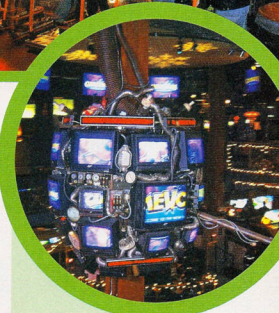
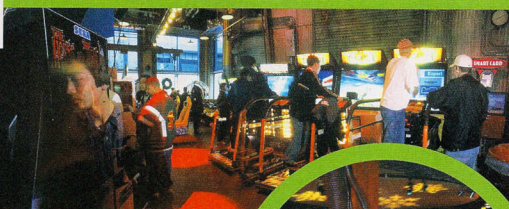
If you read last month's feature on the



Only the best players reach the tippy top of Vertical Reality, one of Spielberg's ideas. "He wanted something that let you physically see who's winning," said Doug Juhn, the senior computer artist who helped design the massive ride/game.

LBE—What is it? Typically, LBE sites combine eateries with an arcade that's crammed with the newest games, many of them linked to foster a more social atmosphere. As a high-tech hook, LBEs also offer VR gear and moving-ride games, and some even have Internet lounges. As a rule, LBEs are expensive places to play (expect to drop about \$40 a visit), and all are much bigger than

your typical arcade. To give you a sense of scale, the average mall arcade is between 2,000 and 4,000 square feet. LBEs range from 50,000 square feet (Dave & Buster's) to 100,000 square feet (DisneyQuest). LBEs are the newest catchphrase in the industry's alphabet soup of abbreviations, which also includes CECs (Children's Entertainment Centers, such as Discovery Zone) and FECs (Family Entertainment Centers, such as Chuck E. Cheese's).



evolution of arcades, you learned that LBEs like GameWorks and their over-the-top attractions are the latest prize of the coin-op industry's eternal quest for the Next Big Thing, that elusive entertainment experience that'll draw gamers away from their home systems and into the arcade. As you'd expect, these high-tech clubs aren't without their critics, who fault them for being too expensive and too gimmicky. So this month we checked out GameWorks first hand, as well as looked at other pioneering LBEs and some on the horizon, to see if the critics are right.

Why did we focus on GameWorks? It's certainly not the first venue to combine eateries, arcade games and ride-game gadgetry under one roof. But with parent companies Sega, DreamWorks SKG and Universal Studios behind it—as well as big-name investors like Bill Gates—GameWorks has become the headline-making LBE to watch ever since it was founded in 1996. Even more noteworthy is GameWorks' behind-the-scenes talent. Its chairman and CEO is Skip Paul, former president of Atari's coin-op games

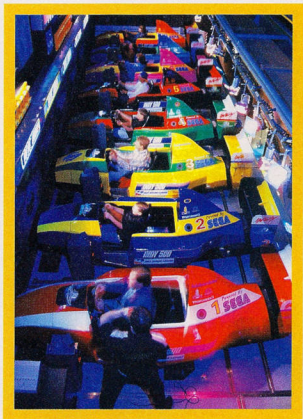
division. Heading up the design team is Jon Snoddy, a former Disney Imagineer who founded the Walt Disney Virtual Reality Studio. Yet much of GameWorks' look, feel and content is the brainchild of its famous co-creator, Steven Spielberg, who by all accounts is the most die-hard gamer in Hollywood (lore has it he even lugs arcade machines with him on shoots). All eyes are now on this technology-friendly director to see if he has invented the next arcade paradigm.

If there's not a GameWorks near you, just wait. Since the first center opened in Seattle last March, four other GameWorks have sprung up across the country, in Las Vegas; Ontario, Calif.; Grapevine, Texas; and Tempe, Ariz. Others will open this year, including one in Miami, Chicago and Brazil. As many as 100 additional GameWorks will open internationally over the next five years.

The five current GameWorks all share a similar look, although each packs enough little touches to tie it in with the local landscape (Seattle's site features a coffee house, while Las Vegas has adopted an Area 51 look). Most are about

GameWorks' roving cameras and multimedia DJ are always seeking something to put up on the arcade's TV cluster—meaning you could wind up a small-screen star if you're leading the pack in Indy 500. Just remember not to pick your nose.





At four bucks a pop, GameWorks' eight linked Indy 500s are the most expensive game in the joint. But this Sega racing masterpiece does come with every imaginable perk, including moving seats, six-foot screens, cockpit cameras and a live announcer to point out your racing prowess—or lack of it.

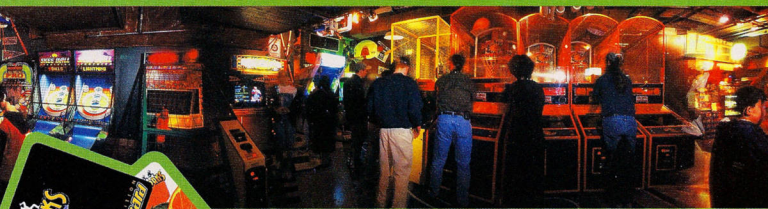


30,000 square feet, with Las Vegas' 50,000 square-foot site being the largest. The decor itself is a mix of spiral staircases, mast-mounted TV screens and cement-slab floors. Pre-stressed and rust-painted conduits and sheet metal dangle from ceilings and brick walls—all lending credence to GameWorks' imaginative design premise. "The idea behind GameWorks' look is that it's an old, abandoned game factory," said Jordon Eagan, operations manager of the Seattle GameWorks. "The story goes that a bunch of hardcore gamers have come in and taken it over, replacing old games with all the newest, cutting-edge stuff."

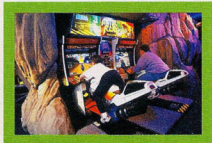
The newest of this new stuff sits in one of GameWorks three zones, the Loading Dock. Here, under an ear-bending blare of alterna-rock from the supercharged sound system, guests play the latest games from Sega, Namco, Konami,

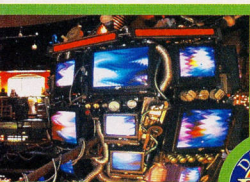
Midway and Capcom, including The Lost World: Jurassic Park, House of the Dead, Top Skater, NFL Blitz and linked Tokyo Wars and Super GTs. Players will even find new Sega games that have yet to debut in other arcades. "When one of your parent companies is Sega, you get those fringe benefits," Eagan said.

Another perk—this one a key part of Spielberg's gaming philosophy—is that you'll never have to play a GameWorks game alone if you don't want to. "Steven Spielberg didn't want just an arcade where people go in and stand by themselves and play games," Eagan said. "He wanted a kind of social environment where people look forward to meeting other people. Our crew members on the floor are called Game Hosts, and they're down there to provide or at least initiate that interaction." Sure enough, this teen and 20-something team of arcade wonks will hop on a game and teach newbies its tricks or play against anyone looking for two-player action. They'll even match you up with another guest if you're both seeking some head-to-head MK4 or VF3 fisticuffs.



Pick a card: Forget about feeding dollars into token machines. LBEs rely on so-called Smart Cards, which guests purchase, fill with credits, then slip into each game's slot. Incidentally, the cards also make it less glaringly obvious that you're spending a buck or more per play.





But if the Loading Dock is supposed to be the most competitive zone in GameWorks, another zone, the Arena, is the most kinetic. Here, guests find the really, really big stuff, the proprietary games exclusive to GameWorks. Vertical Reality is one of these machines. Another is Surge Rock, an interactive indoor climbing wall located at the Las Vegas GameWorks. But while these two ride-games offer a fun, novel, gimmicky experience, it's the Arena's third attraction—Game Arc—that holds the most promise. Game Arc is a high-end network of eight game stations, each with 6-foot convex screens that provide a 90-degree field of view for several familiar 3-D games. The system is currently running modified versions of Interplay's *Descent 2* and Redneck Rampage. For 25 cents a minute, as many as four players can stalk each other in the games' Deathmatch Modes.

New Game Arc games are on the way, including air and space combat sims and the king of multiplayer PC titles, *Quake*. "We eventually want to have a different game playing each day so



The Prototype: Dave & Buster's

GameWorks may be getting all the attention these days, but it certainly didn't pioneer the concept of the high-tech club. "You have folks on Wall Street coining phrases like 'eaterainment' 10 years after we were doing it," said David Paine, VP of communications for the mega-successful LBE chain Dave & Buster's.

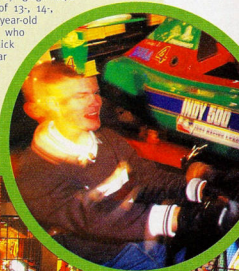
Since founders Dave Corriveau and Buster Corley opened the first of these restaurant-arcade combos in a converted Dallas warehouse in 1982, Dave & Buster's has grown into a 12-location phenomenon that stretches across the United States and into the U.K. (with plans for D&Bs in the Pacific Rim and Mexico). Like GameWorks, each 50,000-square-foot D&B packs the latest arcade games—especially linked titles such as *Tokyo Wars* and *Daytona USA*. Also like GameWorks, these games aren't cheap, most costing at least 75 cents per play (oh, and don't forget the \$5 cover charge). D&B also features a mock casino, pool tables, skee-ball, VR gear and ride games in a more upscale environment than that of similar venues.

So far, this mix has worked better for D&B than anyone else (the company earns about \$15 million annually—which, incidentally, is roughly how much it costs to build one GameWorks). It's no surprise then that the chain is seen as the prototype for success. "We offer a model for a lot of people now," Paine said, "but there's still no one

toward a younger crowd. We've always been an adult concept."

That's what gives D&B's game room its uniqueness—it's not for kids. Guests can buy \$3 beers at the bar, then set them on drink tables that stand beside each game. No one under 21 is let in without a guardian, and all underage guests must leave at 10 p.m.

But the D&B experience may turn off gamers who crave a more chaotic arcade environment. There's a dress code. Show up in your favorite dirty T-shirt and you probably won't get past the front desk. No hats allowed. And if your buddies get too rowdy, the restaurant's well-dressed security staff remind them of the house conduct rules. But don't expect D&B's adults-only policies to change. After all, the formula's working, and it's certainly appealing to casual gamers (who may not be as keen on games as *EGM*'s editors and readers). "A lot of guys who like to play games here won't play at a kid arcade," Paine said, "because that's exactly who you're playing against, a bunch of 13-, 14-, and 15-year-old experts who will kick your rear all day long."



Young guns: Guests rarely have a tough time finding other players for competition. GameWorks is usually a pretty busy place, with about 50,000 gamers a week visiting the Seattle location. Nearly 3 million guests have hit all five sites since the first GameWorks opened last March.



Although the jury's still out on whether GameWorks' over-the-top approach to arcades will be a long-thriving success, other big names in the entertainment game are jumping into the LBE business. Biggest among them is Disney, whose two smaller Club Disney centers are a hit with the tyke set. Disney's next feat of imagining is the highly hyped DisneyQuest, a five-story indoor theme park set to open in Florida's Walt Disney World Resort in the

DisneyQuest, and the Rest

summer of 1998, with a smaller site opening in Chicago in '99 and more than 20 centers to follow.

Similar to GameWorks, the 100,000-square foot DisneyQuest will be divided into several zones, which rely heavily on proprietary ride-based VR adventures—many starring Disney characters. Guests will enter the Explore Zone, for instance, and ride a magic carpet through the world of *Aladdin*. In the Score Zone they'll become human pinballs in a ride/game called the *Mighty Ducks Pinball Slam*. Also proposed is the Create Zone's Imagineering Studio, where guests can design their own roller coaster, then go for a test ride in a 360-degree moving simulator. True to the LBE formula, DisneyQuest will offer a restaurant and Internet lounge.

Following Sega's lead, Namco Cyberainment, the world's largest arcade operator, has recently stepped up its LBE interests by buying heavily into Skyline Entertainment's XS arcade concept. The first XS center, located in New York's Times Square, is strikingly similar to GameWorks. It packs most of the same games, moving-sim rides, laser tag, an Internet lounge and the usual steep prices for game credits. Namco will open XS sites across the country.

And there's no end in sight to the list of forthcoming LBE projects. Sega is preparing Sonic City, an international chain of more than 30 VR arcades. Even Sony is building a four-story LBE in San Francisco, with plans for similar venues in other cities. Heck, if we listed all the other laser tag, Battletech and sportsbar/arcade centers popping up (and, in some cases, shutting down) across the country, we'd fill the rest of this magazine.



Spielberg, who colleagues label a "crazy gamer," is no stranger to the arcade he helped create. He often brings his kids to GameWorks, or helps crack open the crates of new Sega games at Stage 35, where he holds the record on Super GT.

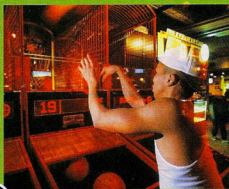
people won't get tired of it," Eagan said. GameWorks is also upgrading Game Arc's hardware. They hope to link it with Game Arcs in other cities so guests can engage in nationwide deathmatch mayhem.

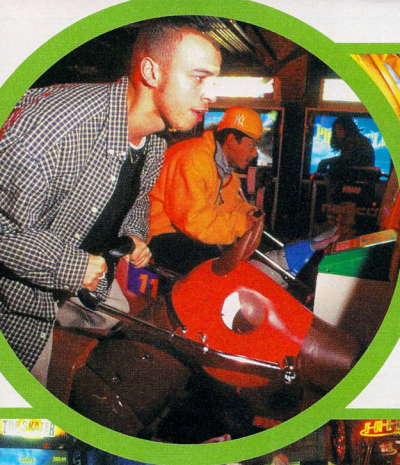
All of GameWorks' proprietary games, as well as the look of the centers themselves, are developed in a seemingly appropriate place—a soundstage deep in the backlot of Universal Studios. Called Stage 35, this expanse of workstations, wall-to-wall concept art and scattered Sega games is where Spielberg, Snoddy and the rest of the GameWorks creative team invent the high-tech arcade's newest toys. Even Sega's AM teams drop by now and then to talk gaming shop.

Ideas flow through Stage 35 constantly, but so far one particular hardware topic has remained taboo. "We really want this to be more of a high-tech club than an arcade," said Doug Juhn, Stage 35's senior computer artist, "and something about the VR headsets, they're a very private experience, and it doesn't encourage a lot of interaction. Some of

the reasons for Game Arc and its very large screens or Vertical Reality, which is half a ride and half a game, is to have some sort of spectator appeal and to make this more of a social thing, where people are looking at each other while they're playing. If we could somehow take VR and make it into more of a social experience, then we'll do it." Stage 35's current project is Night Raptor, a ride-game that uses scent jets and a revolutionary audio system to put you in the middle of Jurassic Park at night, where you must rely solely on your senses of hearing and smell to avoid being raptor chow. The game will ship later this year.

GameWorks guests looking for a more subdued gaming experience can head to the third zone, the Loft, where they'll find pool tables, a cozy Internet lounge (where, for 15 cents a minute, they can browse the Web and send e-mail) and classic arcade games set in a bank of wooden cabinets. But it's also here that the high prices of GameWorks' games become most obvious. You'll pay 50 cents to play Donkey Kong, Missile Command and Phoenix—classics that





By day, GameWorks' clientele is a varied lot of teens, businessmen on lunch break and the kindergarten crowd. But underage guests are shoed away at 10 p.m., when the arcade takes on a night-club feel.



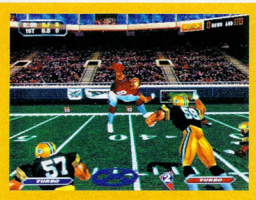
have never cost more than a quarter. The newer games, of course, are even more expensive. Linked Daytona USA costs \$2 per play. VF3 costs \$1.25. You'll pay 75 cents for Soul Blade. In fact, expect to blow about \$40 during a typical two-hour visit to GameWorks—unless you walk in the last two hours before closing, when \$10 buys unlimited playtime.

But industry gripes aimed at GameWorks and other LBEs go beyond high game prices. "I don't think they have enough new, interesting things," said Atari founder Nolan Bushnell, whose Chuck E. Cheese's entertainment centers helped mold the LBE model. "I think now they're just glorified arcades. They really need to have a better focus on some of the other elements of the family. If you really look at it, they're still focused primarily at males."

Another concern is that LBEs may knock smaller arcades off the map, just as Blockbuster and Borders brought doom for mom-and-pop video and book stores. After all, very few independent arcades can afford Sega's ultra-deluxe \$20,000 arcade machines. But don't

worry about the little guys just yet. With Intel, Microsoft and the AMOA pushing for the development of cheaper, PC-based arcade games, the smaller arcades will soon have affordable options. And not all game developers are creating super-expensive titles. "That's why companies other than Sega or Namco exist, such as us," said Roger Sharp, Midway's marketing director (Midway's relatively inexpensive stand-up NFL Blitz is the current star of the arcades, raking in more quarters than any other game). "We're making affordable games, and we're doing it for a broad market. If the other guys want to do the big stuff, then go ahead and do it. Knock yourselves out."

But what do we think about GameWorks, which, admittedly, is still a work in progress? We have to say, Spielberg's neo arcade offers an exciting mix of the latest games and exclusive thrill-ride attractions. It's the price that makes us think twice. We'll no doubt pay occasional visits to our local GameWorks when it opens in Chicago. But between paydays, the local mall arcade will still suit us just fine. ☺



While LBEs can afford The Lost World: Jurassic Park, Super GT and other super-big, super-expensive machines, it's affordable arcade titles like Midway's megafun NFL Blitz that'll keep the smaller arcades in business. Of course, you can play Blitz at GameWorks, too.

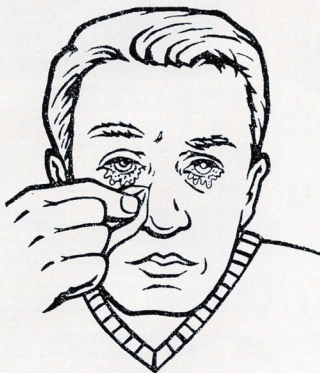


Depression hurts. *Fighting Force* and *Tomb Raider II* can help.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

- | | |
|---|---|
| ■ | Persistent sadness and or irritability. |
| ■ | Recurring thoughts of how much better life would be if you had <i>Fighting Force</i> or <i>Tomb Raider II</i> . |
| ■ | Statements such as, "I'm bad. I'm stupid. No one likes me." |

When depression strikes, immediately seek the help of a trained professional at your local video game store.



Wiping secretions



Research shows that the leading cause of depression among gamers is a noticeable lack of Eidos games.

Fortunately, this deficiency can be treated both safely

and effectively with games like Fighting Force

or Tomb Raider II. But early intervention is crucial. Or else,

it's only a matter of time before they threaten to do something really stupid, like go to therapy.



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You've been warned.

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Review Crew

Our Philosophy

Whew, the rush is over! Ninety-nine reviews in three months was a lot of work! Anyway, here's how we do it: Each reviewer gives a game an overall score, which is displayed behind the review and based on how the game compares to other titles for the same system. In addition, the reviewers rate each game's graphics, sound, ingenuity and replay value. The averages of these scores are listed at the bottom.

Editors' Choice



Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.



Games that average at least an 8.0 receive Silver Awards.

Rating Scale

10-Perfection

An absolutely flawless experience. It doesn't get any better

9-Virtually Flawless

Drop what you're doing and buy this nearly perfect game

8-Semradical

Delivers everything you'd want in a game, despite minor flaws

7-Worthy

A solid title that you won't regret buying

6-Good, Not Great

Sure, it has its problems, but it's still fun to play

5-Average

Not great, not crap. A ho-hum title that isn't for everybody

4-Rent First

We have problems here. Definitely try before you buy

3-Time Waster

Playing it for more than 10 minutes gives you a migraine

2-Don't Even Rent

The only point in playing this garbage is to make fun of it

1-Flush It

Run for your life if you see it, or use it as a coaster

Guest Reviewer

Chris Johnston

EGM News Editor

Chris is the guy responsible for the Video Game News section at the front of this very magazine and on our online site www.videogamespot.com. A big fan of Japanese animation, Chris digs action-platform and puzzle games and the occasional life sim (Tokimeki Memorial). For the record, he has seen *Titanic* only three times, not four as the rest of the office seems to believe. The youngest of the EGM staff members, Chris came back from the Winter CES disappointed that he couldn't gamble, but after bringing back information on some new Michael Jackson shelf speakers, all is well.

Current Favorites

Alundra
Klonoa
Kirby's Star Tracker
Resident Evil 2
Favorite Genres: Action/Puzzle



Shawn Smith

March Madness has hit Shawn! Instead of getting his usual Fritos-brand corn chips out of the vending machine, he gets two packages of Twinkies! Whoa, he has really gone over the deep end. Whatever state he's in, he's still stoked about all the games due out this year—nearly all of which have yet to be released! This is a good year to be a gamer.

Current Favorites

Point Blank
X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Resident Evil 2
Galaga

Favorite Genres:
Strategy/Puzzle

Dan Hsu



Shoe is running around telling everyone that John was weeping like a baby while playing Resident Evil 2. But in fact, it was Shoe who jumped out of his chair during several scary R2 scenes. In other news, Shoe is going nuts looking for a copy of GameBreaker '98. He's hoping to relive the Michigan Rose Bowl/National Championship glory!



Crispin Boyer

Cris spent much of this month checking out super-size arcades for his feature on LBEs. He said the big ride-game attractions were fun, but nothing beats his all-time favorite thrill: racing his car around the office's ice-covered parking lot at night. Now, if only there was a way to keep the lot icy all year long. How about it, science?

Current Favorites

NFL Blitz (Arcade)
Resident Evil 2
Mystical Ninja 64
Colony Wars

Favorite Genres:
Sports/Strategy

Kraig Kujawa



Kraig has just finished yet another book—this time *The Ultimate Guide To Tomb Raider II*. Luckily for him, he finished it just in time to watch his Packers try to make a return trip to the Super Bowl. By the time you read this, you'll know whether Kraig is home crying, or rejoicing due to the fate of his cheese-powered team.



John Ricciardi

John's been spending an abnormal amount of time with Final Fantasy Tactics and Tactics Ogre. He's obviously been bitten by the strategy bug, and it's only a matter of time before he begins referring to everyone as "units" and commanding Tricaman Terry to burn down local villages in hopes of bringing back treasure. Sad, really sad...

Current Favorites

X-Men Vs. SF (Japanese)
Yoshi's Story
Rival Schools UBF (Arcade)
Street Fighter Collection

Favorite Genres:
Fighting/Racing

Kelly Rickards



With spring just around the corner and cupid's arrows flailing about, it's no wonder the look of love is in Kelly's eyes. Upon further investigation, we discovered the recipient of Kelly's passion is the Japanese Saturn version of X-Men Vs. Street Fighter. When prompted, Kelly said that his 2-year-old daughter, Kasia, holds the key to his heart.



Sushi-X

Kelly's visit to our offices this month was rather eventful...he actually beat Sushi in SFA2! Either Sushi is losing his touch, or he's distracted by the news of Zelda's release delay. Never fear, our masked man will be on his feet again soon. We hear he's already planning his revenge. Maybe Kelly should hide next month! Sushi may never be the same...

Current Favorites

Street Fighter Collection
Klonoa
Street Fighter EX Plus α
Tomb Raider II

Favorite Genres:
Fighting/RPGs

AEROGAUGE



Publisher: ASCII
Developer: Locomotive
Featured In: EGM #103

Number Of Players: 1-2

AeroGauge is cut from the same cloth as futuristic racers like WipeOut XL and Extreme-G. Unfortunately, it couldn't hold their jock-strap, so to speak. The fancy-looking flying cars are the highlight of the game. They consist of radically different designs, complete with moving flaps when you make turns. Also, they race on some neat courses, one of which spirals around an island then ends in an undersea tube. That's where the competitors end. Technically, AeroGauge is very lackluster. Although the tracks look good, the polygonal pop-up is very annoying—it's so extreme in places that it can mess you up by inconveniently popping things up in front of you at inopportune times. This adds a little frustration to a game that isn't too much fun to begin with. Even though you can fly and perform impromptu speed bursts, **AeroGauge**, for the most part, is a mundane racing game. Perhaps weapons or defensive countermeasures could have done a lot to make the races more interesting—there just isn't enough to do. One thing is certain, the horribly synthesized music here doesn't help the dull and boring game. I was forced to lower the volume and pop in my own CD. AeroGauge isn't a bad game, but it falls into the rapidly filling bucket of mediocre Nintendo 64 games that refuse to offer anything special to set them apart.

Kraig

Best Feature: Vehicle Design

Worst Feature: Horrible Track Pop-Up

I would best categorize AeroGauge as a futuristic hovercraft racing game in the mold of F-zero or WipeOut XL, though the craft in AeroGauge can fly around a bit Star Fox style. The graphics are good and the track design is interesting, but with only four tracks at the start, there's not much variety early on. Additionally, it takes a lot of practice to turbo around corners, which is rather essential if you want to win races.

Kelly

The first thing that struck me as strange about this title is how smooth the hovercraft flies through the air. The physics are truly amazing, and some might experience a feeling of vertigo. I was sadly disappointed at the ridiculous amount of pop-up, but even more jaded at the insane difficulty level. I don't think novices should have to learn the most difficult maneuver in the game—turbo rolling—to win a rare early on.

Sushi

All the intensity of racing—without the fun. Yeah, another disappointment this month. AeroGauge could've been something more, but it ends up looking like a lame version of Extreme-G (except in this game you can fly). The graphics may be decent and the music catchy, but that just doesn't cut it. On top of this, the computer AI is a bit on the hard side. Maybe some power-ups would've helped along with less horizon pop-up.

Shawn

FIGHTER'S DESTINY



Publisher: Ocean
Developer: Imaginer
Featured In: EGM #103

Number Of Players: 1-2

This is the best fighting game on the N64. What's the catch? The N64 is full of crappy fighting games. On its own merits, Fighter's Destiny is not a bad game. It gradually grew on me the more I played it. It's very different from anything you've seen before. My favorite part of the game is its scoring system. Instead of winning rounds by depleting your opponent's energy, you have to win by scoring a certain amount of points. This one feature is enough to hold my interest in this game longer than most others (since these points are determined by how you bring down your foe: choke, throw, ring-out, knock-out, special move or judge's decision). I almost feel like I'm playing a wrestling or a boxing game, rather than a Street Fighter clone. I also love the way the game lets you learn new moves (and save them) for overcoming certain challenges. A few faults, however, hold this fighter back. First, I don't like the actual fighting engine. Although you get a ton of very cool moves, they are all executed with only two Attack buttons (making a lot of the game a button-mashing contest). Second, slowdown and the occasional pause (especially after throws) interrupt the flow of the game. The counters and throw escapes are cool, but the few problems keep this game from scoring too high.

Dan

Best Feature: Fresh Concepts

Worst Feature: Too Much Button-Shopping

While it's nothing revolutionary, **Fighter's Destiny** does have a few innovations—namely, a customizable point-scoring system and the ability to learn new moves by beating a master Boss. Its simple fighting engine lets you pull off a lot of cool moves, throws and counters, but matches can get boring when you put two throw-happy grapplers against each other. The graphics and character designs are dull, with lots of slowdown.

Crispin

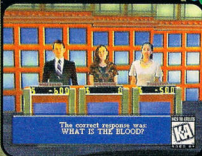
I'm not sure where "Destiny" plays a part in this knock-down fighter, but it's a very respectable game in my book. I like the innovative gameplay engine, using a point system rather than just energy bars. Of course, you can play the standard free-fighting title, but you'll enjoy the fresh challenge provided by the unique engine. I only wish the fighters were cleaned up a bit with more polygons and better-looking costumes.

Sushi

Fighter's Destiny is the first fighting game for the N64 that's decent. What really bothers me about this game, a lot of people spelt by the luxury of CD ROM, is that the voices are muffled and rather "bos in nature" (Party on!). The graphics are average at best, with that N64 static look to them, a look I'm tired of. There are tons of options and it's got a good two-player mode, but it lacks that extra punch to make it a really good game.

Chris

JEOPARDY!



Publisher: Gametek
Developer: Gametek
Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1-3

Not only does Jeopardy! suffer from the same problems as the 16-bit versions, this time they're even worse. For starters, when it comes to spelling out your answers (er, questions), this is the least forgiving console Jeopardy! yet. If you don't type in the exact phrase the game's looking for, you're screwed (even with the Loose Spelling Option turned on). But even more annoying is Jeopardy!'s tendency to repeat the same categories and questions in successive games. Although Gametek claims Jeopardy! packs more than 4,000 questions in 650 categories, time and again we saw the same questions pop up, game after game. According to Gametek, the cartridge loses track of which questions have been asked when you switch off your N64. If only the developers had utilized the Controller Pak to keep track of questions you've already answered. That way, the game wouldn't recycle old questions until after you played through all 650 categories. Even the graphics are lousy. Contestants aren't animated in the slightest, making them about as lifelike as cardboard cutouts (you do get a few FMV clips of Alex Trebek, though). Not that visuals are important, but if the game's gonna be spent, at least the developers could have used extra time perfecting the game play, which they obviously did not.

Crispin

Best Feature: Jeopardy! Theme Remix

Worst Feature: Categories Keep Repeating

This version of my favorite game show may have the nice visuals (like the pointless FMV), but I found the older 16-bit versions to be far superior. My biggest gripe is that this cart is very unforgiving. Even if you get the Options to "loose spelling accepted," you have to type in exactly what the game wants. For the most part, you can't deviate from the spelling or exact phrasing Jeopardy! always fun, but this version is lacking.

Dan

The TV version of Jeopardy! can be fun, but those questions take time to master. This is why I thought a home translation might be fun. Unfortunately, I was wrong. The graphics in this N64 cart are really lame, the contestants look like paper statues and the same questions are often repeated making me feel like I'm in the movie Groundhog Day. You could rent it, but why bother? This is, this game probably could've been cool.

Shawn

At first, I was all set to give Jeopardy! the standard "this is fun for all ages" review that you'd expect from a game that mimics a game show title. After playing several games though, I stumbled upon a variety of annoying problems that forced me to lower my score (like repeat categories almost every time and extremely lame CPU judgment on many answers that would've definitely been OK on the actual show). Disappointing, to say the least.

John

www.gametek.com

www.infogrames.com

www.ascii.com

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
7 5 5 6

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
6 5 8 7

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
5 6 4 4

NAGANO OLYMPICS '98



OLYMPIC HOCKEY '98



SNOWBOARD KIDS



Publisher: Konami

Developer: Konami

Featured In: EGM #102

I figured if anyone could create a great Winter Olympics game, it'd be Konami—who, after all, brought us the 8-Bit classic Track & Field and its fun PlayStation update. I was wrong. Most of NWO '98's 12 difficult events are neither fun nor exciting, and much of the blame falls on the uninspired control setups. Only a few events—namely bobsledding and speed skating—demand any timing, while controls for the rest are oversimplified. I suppose part of the problem is that Konami tried to make this game more realistic, since it carries the official Nagano Winter Olympics license. Sure, the venues may mirror their real-world counterparts in Nagano, Japan, but that means we're denied the thrill of, say, an insanely steep alpine slalom down a super-steep mountain. Don't expect any multiplayer innovations, either. Up to four players can compete, but not simultaneously, forcing everyone to take turns (imagine how cool it would have been to play a four-player bobsled event, in which everyone tries to lean into the turns at the same time). On the plus side, the game has decent graphics and plenty of events. But when it comes to the really want to compete in curling (sort of an Olympic version of shuffleboard?) I would have preferred fewer events, as long as they were done right.

Crispin

The improved 3-D graphics and shorter load times in the N64 version of Nagano make it a little more palatable than the PS one. It also helps that analog control is standard on the N64. Don't overestimate these improvements, however—the game still lacks in key areas. The worst offender is the slow gameplay that makes the excitement out of most of the events. The few fun ones aren't good enough to save Nagano from mediocrity.

Kraig

First things first: Konami can do much better. When I think of games like Nagano, I think of real, technical Olympic events that are translated into fun, playable gaming versions. Well, the events may be based on the Olympics, but they sure aren't fun. The main thing that makes them that way is the control—it just doesn't feel right. On top of this, the animation of the characters is poor, and the graphics need more refining.

Shawn

In the areas of diversity and uniqueness, Nagano scores well with plenty of events to keep you busy. The only problem here is that Nagano is only moderately fun to play and gets boring fast. The graphics are below average for the N64, with serious clipping problems and generic textures everywhere. If you love winter games, then maybe Nagano would be your cup of tea. For me, Nagano should have been so much more.

Kelly

VISUALS 7 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY 6



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Trey Arch

Featured In: EGM #102

Now that the Olympics are reaching the corner again, we're seeing the first batch of hastily packaged theme titles. Olympic Hockey '98 is a classic example of a game that does nothing for the genre other than borrow from every other hockey game available. Besides being a near replica of Wayne Gretzky Hockey '98—but with different teams—Olympic Hockey doesn't even make slight improvements to graphics or gameplay in the transition. The hockey players are very blocky for such a high-profile game, with very low polygonal counts. The action is fast though, and you'll be hard-pressed to keep up with the puck at times. Typical options like penalty toggles, player swapping and so forth are becoming standard fare in all sports titles, so I wasn't very impressed. Perhaps the worst blasphemy of Olympic Hockey is the incredibly stupid goalie AI. Don't worry about losing this game too much. Money plays everywhere, and it won't take much game time to find that. I know that high scores are supposed to be a tie in hockey, but apparently not in the universe this one hails from. As it is, the best feature of all is the multiplayer ability and party game factor. The Arcade Mode is fun for all players, from novice to expert. I wouldn't recommend this one for hardcore hockey fans though.

Sushi

I don't know if it's me, but it seems like this game is Wayne Gretzky Hockey with an Olympic facelift. Whatever the case, I'll stick with Gretzky. I'm not a huge fan of real hockey, but I do enjoy playing a game of two with a controller. I guess that's why I'm rather use players I've actually heard of. No offense to other countries, but I don't really care about Nimsky Vokolsky and how he's a national hero in the Soviet States.

Shawn

Well whoopee, if it isn't the second time in six months that Midway has used and repackaged their year-old Wayne Gretzky Hockey game engine. Just about everything here is identical to every other Midway hockey game, except the rosters and team names are changed. Ideally, these teams and rosters would have been integrated in Wayne Gretzky '98 instead of trying to force gamers to buy a whole new game just for the Olympic teams.

Kraig

Oh, come on now. This kind of shameful reshuffling of the same game over and over gives me sick. Did you buy Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey or its incredibly unusual sequel with the '98 slapped on the box? If so, stay away from this baby, 'cause (I once again) the same game. The ONLY way I could possibly recommend this is if you've never owned either Gretzky game. Enough is enough, let's try something new already.

John

VISUALS 7 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 1 REPLAY 7



Publisher: Atlus

Developer: Atlus

Featured In: N/A

Although this cutsey race appears tailored to the kindergarten crowd (like half the other N64 games), Snowboard Kids actually packs plenty of depth and replay value. You get excellent control and six well-designed courses (as well as a hidden track). Yet it's the pay-as-you-play power-up system that makes this game such a standout. To collect the offensive and defensive power-ups that litter each course, you have to do more than just race over the top of them—you have to buy them (each costs some coins). And the best way to build up your bank account is by performing tricks, which are pulled off using the same intuitive system as Cool Boarders 2. Money raised in each race can be used to buy better snowboards. It's a cool concept that keeps you playing early courses and perfecting your tricks until you can buy the boards needed to win later races (which have you boarding on grass and sand). You also get three mini-games—3 downhill shooting spree, a trick-intensive half-pipe and a Time Attack Mode to help raise additional cash. A Training Mode and snowboard paint shop add extra polish to the game. But best of all is the Multiplayer Mode. Four-player racing is a blast, and since—like in Mario Kart 64—the best powerups go to the player in last place, you can always be sure of a close race.

Crispin

Snowboard Kids is a surprisingly fun snowboarding game that has a lot of appeal and immense replayability. If you're looking for real fast downhill action, you're not gonna find it here. On the other hand, if you want a snowboarding game with great control, very nice course design, several very fun modes of play and great Mario Kart-esque gameplay, this is your game. Multiplayer is a lot of fun too, and the power-ups are very cool.

John

Besides the overly cute characters, SK is a joy to play. I haven't had this much fun since I played Mario Kart for the first time. In fact, Snowboard Kids has better graphics in most instances. I really enjoy the Multiplayer Mode (although it's kinda hard to see certain things), and the One-Player Mode offers plenty of gameplay. For example, I love the way you can save up money to get yourself a better board—very cool.

Shawn

This Mario Kart on the snowy slopes sleeper hit has just about everything going for it: solid controls, great graphics and semiracal action. This is more than just a Mario Kart wanna-be—a few new features make it stand out over its competition. Also, having to line up for the SK lift can make for interesting (and hilarious) situations in multiplayer games. SK needs more courses, but it's still a lot of fun, especially for four.

Dan

VISUALS 8 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 8

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Lots Of Events

Worst Feature: Most Events Just Aren't Fun

www.konami.com

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Fun Arcade-Style Action

Worst Feature: Been There, Done That, Twice.

www.midway.com

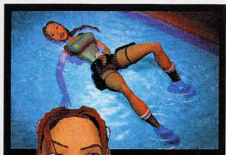
Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Four-Player Mode

Worst Feature: Overly Cutesy Character Design

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- This special publication takes you deeper into the world of the digital heroine more than anything else before it. We offer huge and easy-to-use strategy sections to *Tomb Raider* and *Tomb Raider II*, in addition to a revealing look at the woman who personifies video games this year, Lara Croft!
- We went to England to visit Lara's creators at Core Design to get the inside and final word on her creation and meteoric rise to the top!
- Find out what the future has in store for Lara and ponder as we did who could play her IF Hollywood decides the world needs a *Tomb Raider* movie starring Lara Croft.
- Get the inside word from the witch doctors at 3DFX about the upcoming *Voodoo2* PC accelerator card. Read what they have to say about Lara and her rise to fame on the PC.

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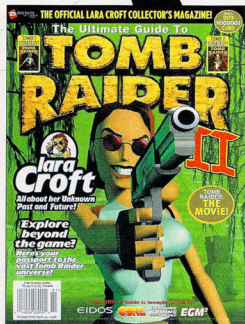


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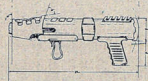
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FIFA RTWC 98



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Climax Ent. Ltd.
Featured In: N/A

I was looking forward to FIFA 98 after the disappointing Worldwide Soccer '98. I was hungry for a great Saturn soccer game...unfortunately, FIFA 98 really didn't deliver. The biggest problem is that **the game is an eyesore**. The stadium and fields look flat and lifeless. The players look broken and move at a painstakingly slow frame rate. The shadows even look out of place, especially when we're used to the graphically superior Worldwide '98. Now, normally graphics are a secondary concern for me (gameplay, replay and all the other good stuff is way more important), but when the market has so many great soccer games, you need to make them look good. Gameplay-wise, FIFA is above par. The passing game is OK, but it could've been more realistic with accurate leading passes. The goalie AI, as it is with the other FIFAs, leaves a bit to be desired (though it's rather fun to watch the keeper make an exaggerated dive for that off-rolling ball). Everything else about the game is right-on: I don't find many complaints with the gameplay. But what it all comes down to is how the lackluster graphics and frame rate get in the way of what could've been a really solid game. Too bad this is the last FIFA the Saturn is going to see. It's a disappointing way to end the soccer genre on the system.

Dan

FIFA 98 is a dramatic improvement over last year's FIFA, with much-improved gameplay, many more teams and options and a nicely revamped interface. The game plays well, but not without some minor flaws (indisparably poor AI at times, very choppy frame rate, etc.). Still, overall FIFA 98 is a much more solid, convincing soccer game than Worldwide Soccer '98, and without much else to choose from that's about all that matters.

John

FIFA Road to World Cup 98 is a good soccer game for the Saturn. Although the players' models do seem to have weird, B/B/T Bartley proportions, the gameplay is solid and precise, albeit a little slow for my tastes. As a single-player game, FIFA is pretty fun. In fact, I would go as far as to say that **this is one of the most fun single-player soccer games for the Saturn** I've played in a while. Soccer fans should give this one a try.

Kelly

It's too bad that this will be the last version of FIFA soccer for the Saturn, because the series is showing promise. The strength of the game is clearly the wide range of options and the excellent game presentation, which is close to perfect. The gameplay is good but not great. FIFA 98 could have benefited from better player animations and improved graphics. This isn't as good as the best WW's games, but soccer fans should give FIFA 98 a try.

Kraig

VISUALS 6 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 7

NBA LIVE 98



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports/Realtime Associates
Featured In: N/A

Although I'm not known to be a big sports fan around the offices of EGM, I must admit sports titles are starting to grow on me. One of the games that has encouraged my newly found sports game open-mindedness is NBA Live. Live 98 is, for me, one of the most enjoyable b-ball games on the Saturn so far. Within five minutes of playing Live 98, I got a firm handle of the gameplay and control layout, even though I never read the instructions (if that isn't a sign of an intuitive and playable game then I don't know what is). If anything, the computer AI is a little bit on the easy side in Live 98 (I mean, if a rookie like me can play competitively against the Sonics using Golden State, then something is a little out of whack), and it's also real easy to perform high-flying slam dunks. Don't get me wrong, it's really entertaining and all, but don't think you'll see this much action in the NBA. As I said before, **Live 98 is a fun and fast-paced basketball game**, but the one thing that does get in the way are the slightly muddy polygonal graphics. The textures seem real low-res and are so blotchy that it's hard to see what's going on at times. Most of the time it's OK, but there are some instances (high traffic) where it's difficult to see who's doing what. If you're looking for a fun b-ball game, Live 98 is it. Just be sure to wear your glasses.

Kelly

It's unfortunate that this game isn't as good as the PlayStation version. Obviously, this was a quick and easy port that was paid very little attention. The 3-D graphics are fuzzy and the frame rate is sporadic, making the on-court action sometimes difficult to control. The sound is static and uninspiring, and the TNT broadcasting crew that calls the PS version didn't even bother to show up. EA could and should have done a better job.

Kraig

I have yet to find a basketball game I can immerse myself into, but this comes very close. **I'd like to see much more work done to the defensive portion of the game**, since the offense is so in sync and natural that your defense isn't worth playing manually. The custom plays are a cool option, and overall, the game's animation is good. Be careful how high you set penalties though, or you might spend the entire game at the line.

Sushi

NBA Live 98 for the Saturn is definitely an above average b-ball title, but aside from multiplayer play (which I still say is the only way to play NBA Live), the game doesn't do much for me. I don't like to make these kinds of comparisons, but in all honesty **the PS version is a lot better**, and graphical limitations aside, this just shouldn't be the case. Why the flawed gameplay? Why no play by play? Not bad, but not up to EA standards.

John

VISUALS 6 SOUND 5 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 8

NHL 98



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: MBL Research/EA Canada
Featured In: N/A

My plate is full of hockey games this time of year, and the NHL-brand series has always been a hot ticket item for me...at least since the 16-bit era. Since then, I've seen powerful systems unable to capture the same enveloping atmosphere and gameplay of the earlier games. NHL 98 provides a glimpse into the future of the series while not living up to the high standards I've placed on hockey games. For starters, the polygons are horrible. I understand the advantages of polygonal animation over bitmap animation, but I spent more time trying to locate the puck than enjoying myself. The gameplay is pretty stable once you look past the chunky hockey players and into the heart of the game engine. I feel the buttons weren't used very efficiently, as if the engine were really meant for three buttons—like the Genesis' C, Z, and Start. I had a good time playing NHL 98, but a bad time focusing on the action. No matter what camera angle I chose, I couldn't get a bead on what was going on. Still, NHL 98 is a solid hockey game with little new to offer other than updated statistics for your favorite players. If you're jonesing for the greatest EA Hockey game, this isn't it. I prefer NHL 93 or 95 myself. If you've already turned in your old 16-bit systems though, NHL 98 for the Saturn won't let you down.

Sushi

Finally, EA has delivered the definitive hockey game that the Saturn so badly needed. By far, **NHL 98 has the best combination of realism and gameplay** that I've ever seen in a hockey game. The action happens at breakneck speeds, the control is precise and the 3-D graphics are excellent. And as is true with all EA games, there are tons of options and features. If you're a hockey fan and have a Saturn, it's a no-brainer—buy NHL 98.

Kraig

NHL 98 may be the last hockey game for Saturn owners, but it's certainly the best. It's obviously not as polished as the PS and PC versions, but EA made just enough cuts (you can't see the refs, the scoreboard is gone, etc.) to keep the game as exciting and fun as the aforementioned versions are, without sacrificing much of the gameplay. The frame rate is choppy, and the animation isn't perfect, but otherwise **this is still a great game**.

John

This game just screams, "No effort—port of the PlayStation version." The shortcuts the programmers took are painfully obvious (like the invisible referee). The frame rate is also horrendous. But on the bright side, the game is light years superior to All-Star '98. NHL 98 moves faster, plays better and sounds terrific. **It's just too bad EA didn't take the time to perfect this game for the Saturn**—it could've been much better.

Dan

VISUALS 7 SOUND 8 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 8

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Solid Gameplay Mechanics

Worst Feature: Graphics And Frame-Rate

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Fast Gameplay

Worst Feature: Muddy Graphics

Number Of Players: 1-12

Best Feature: Fast Fluid Gameplay

Worst Feature: Poor Frame Rate

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BEAST WARS



Publisher: Hasbro Interactive

Developer: Takara

Featured In: EGM #101

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Lots Of Characters

Seeing as how this game's a spin-off of a toy line, which in turn is a spin-off of a cool CG television series, developer Takara had plenty of opportunities. They could have based *Beast Wars*' polygonal models off the toys, thus ensuring that the transformation animations look smooth and realistic. They didn't. They could have used voices from the TV show, thus sparing us cheesy voice acting. They didn't. Above all, they could have made a fun game that packs as much action as the series. They didn't. Instead, we have a mission-based adventure that mixes exploration and shooting elements but ends up being dull and repetitive. The lackluster terrain is one problem. Much of each stage looks the same, making it easy to get lost. Controls? No picnic either. I died more than a few times after missing what should have been a simple jump over an instant-death chasm. **Beast Wars** even takes the fun out of being a **Transformer**. You can't attack while in **Beast Mode** (which you must change into occasionally to avoid damage from radioactive environments). And while the game promises 24 missions—12 for the Maximals, 12 for the Predacons—the level layouts and enemies are nearly identical for both sides. Unless you're a fan of the series and want to take 10 of its stars into action, avoid this game.

Crispin

Worst Feature: Repetitive Missions

As a long-time *Transformer* junkie, I really wanted this game to bring the series to life. For the most part, it's not too bad, but I had a hard time getting into it. It doesn't scream **Transformers**; it whimpers. *MechWarrior*, I expected flashy explosions and smooth animation rivaling the animated series, but got none of these things. The graphics animate poorly—a tough task for a polygonal game. Still, it's a good ride, just not great.

Sushi

The subtitle for this one should've been: "Less Than Meets the Eye." Not to sound like an old fogey, but back in the day the **Transformers** meant something! Now the bots are all goofy, and this game is a good example of that. The graphics in *Beast Wars* are average, with a couple of neat effects, and the gameplay is below average at best. I just walk around, shoot some things and basically get bored. A letdown.

Shawn

Beast Wars is the perfect example of how not to do an action game. The action is similar to other action games, but the controls are sloppy and aiming at enemies is more difficult than it should be. The game's graphics are nothing to shout about either, although the transformation animations are kinda cool. With a little more attention to the gameplay, *Beast Wars* could have been a decent game. As it stands now, it's best to avoid it.

Chris

VISUALS 6 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 5

COURIER CRISIS



Publisher: GT Interactive

Developer: New Level

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: The Level That Requires Skill

I was close to giving *Courier Crisis* a score from the depths of hell. In the beginning, I really hated this game—the first half is utterly boring, completely redundant and way too easy. I rubbed my hands together gleefully and thought to myself, "Boy, I can't wait to rip into this piece of @\$\$ in *Review Crew*!" The early rounds consist of nothing more than running through similar-looking levels, picking up packages in one area and taking them to another. No real pressure, no real challenge. But just when I was about ready to give up any kind of hope for the game, I ran into a Level 5 stage, a stage that I couldn't beat with the same lackluster effort the earlier stages required. From this point on, the game becomes a tad bit more fun. These later levels actually require you to perform bike tricks in order to finish them successfully. You simply won't have enough time to finish the tougher areas in a straightforward fashion. Too hard it takes so long to reach this point—I'm sure many people will get turned off too early to give the game a chance. *Courier Crisis* could've scored a bit higher if the programmers would have toned down the frequency of annoying voices (and they definitely should've left out the **Green Day** wanna-be **Generation X** hip-hop-to-be grunge music). Overall, *CC* is average.

Dan

Worst Feature: All The Other Levels

I want to like *CC*, but it has some problems I just can't overlook. First, the graphics are rough and the frame rate is choppy. Is this a first-generation PS title? Next, the levels are laid out in an interesting and challenging way, but they can be really repetitive too. Lastly, the original music is pretty damned good, but those sound effects make it seem like you're in a funhouse or something. It's average, but I still say *cc* is first.

Shawn

It's been a while since I'd gotten the chance to create mass carnage in the wild streets of a virtual city. *Courier Crisis* is much like what I picture a one-player, mission-oriented, **Twisted Metal** rip-off. The earlier missions are cakewalks; once you learn the **day** (ah, **Toussaint**!), that's those sound effects make it seem like you're in a funhouse or something. It's average, but I still say *cc* is first.

Sushi

This shoddy cross between *Road Rash* and *ESPN Extreme Games* is one of the most annoying games I've played in a while. Its difficulty curves way out of whack, with the gameplay going from extremely easy to extremely hard in an instant. Control can be a nightmare when it comes to performing tricks. And the graphics look straight out of a first-generation PlayStation title. Its copy sound effects get old quick, too.

Crispin

VISUALS 5 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 6

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS



Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment

Developer: Square

Featured In: EGM #102

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: The Job/Ability System Rules

Final Fantasy Tactics is easily one of the best games I've ever played. It alone has made me a slave to the strategy/RPG genre (*Tactics Ogre* is my next victim), and it has sucked away many, many hours of my time over the past few weeks. The game requires a lot of thought and planning (the game's Tutorial, as well as the manual, as well as a generous amount of patience, are a must), but the payoff and reward of tactically outwitting your opponents on the battlefield—with characters whose classes and abilities are straight from the *Final Fantasy* universe—is a feeling I simply can't explain. The story is fantastic (written by the same man who did *Tactics Ogre*) and the soundtrack that goes along with it is just phenomenal. I do have some complaints, but they are admittedly very minor. For one, the battles seem limited due to the 3-D aspect of them (had they been less visually splendid, they could've taken place on larger battlefields with more troops, etc.). Not a big deal—that's what sequels are for. Also, some of the NPCs that you come across during play seem unbalanced—the **Knights** kick butt, but they're total flakes. Otherwise, as long as you've got some patience and a lot of free time (you'll be well over 40 hours to beat), you're going to love *Final Fantasy Tactics*. Just be warned—it ain't easy.

John

Worst Feature: Battlefield Could've Been Bigger

Just when I thought I escaped from the *Final Fantasy* universe, this game came along and sucked me back in. *FF Tactics* is long, addictive and packs all the richness you'd expect from a **Square** game. Its combat and character-building systems are complex—at a level between *Final Fantasy* and *Final Fantasy Tactics*—but the game is still supremely easy to slip into and play. *FF Tactics* does start slow, and don't expect much **FFVII**-quality FMV.

Crispin

Square presents their games in a beautiful fashion: lush graphics, rich music and a deep story. You almost can't help but enjoy playing them. *FFT* is no exception. This very detailed strategy game had me hooked from the start. The best part of the game is gathering experience and customizing your troops. Going into battle after battle gets a little tiresome at times, but overall this is an experience strategy fans shouldn't miss.

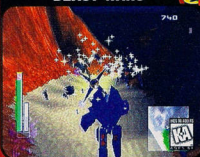
Dan

OK, I'll say up front that strategy games aren't my thing. I enjoyed playing *Tactics*, but I found it was hard to come back after taking a long break. This is the kind of game that can consume you for hours on end, but when you stop playing for the day, you haven't really gotten that far. Graphics and music are just as stunning as *Square*'s other recent efforts. While it carries the *Final Fantasy* name, it's a lot more involved than *FFVII*.

Chris

VISUALS 9 SOUND 9 INGENUITY 8 REPLAY 6

BEAST WARS



Publisher: Hasbro Interactive

Developer: Takara

Featured in: EGM #101

Seeing as how this game's a spin-off of a toy line, which in turn is a spin-off of a cool G.T. television series, developer Takara had plenty of opportunities. They could have based Beast Wars' polygonal models off the toys, thus ensuring that the transformation animations look smooth and realistic. They didn't. They could have used voices from the TV show, thus sparing us cheesy voice acting. They didn't. Above all, they could have made a fun game that packs as much action as the series. They didn't. Instead, we have a mission-based adventure that mixes exploration and shooting elements but ends up being dull and repetitive. The lackluster terrain is one problem. Much of each stage looks the same, making it easy to get lost. Control's no picnic either. I died more than a few times after missing what should have been a simple jump over an instant-death chasm. **Beast Wars** even takes the fun out of being a Transformer. You can't attack while in Beast Mode (which you must change to occasionally to avoid damage from radioactive environmentalists). And while the game promises 24 missions—12 for the Maximals, 12 for the Predacons—the level layouts and enemies are nearly identical for both sides. Unless you're a fan of the series and want to take 10 of its stars into action, avoid this game.

Crispin

As a long-time Transformer junkie, I really wanted this game to bring the series to life. For the most part, it's not too bad, but I had a hard time getting into it. It doesn't scream Transformers; it whimpers. Mediocre Warriors: I expected flashy explosions and smooth animation (reading the animated series, but got none of these things). The graphics animate poorly—a tough task for a polygon game. Still, it's a good ride, just not great.

Sushi

The subtitle for this one should've been: "Less Than Meets the Eye." Not to sound like an old fogey, but back in the day the Transformers name meant something! Now the toys are all goofy, and this game is a good example of that. The graphics in Beast Wars are average, with a couple of neat effects, and the gameplay is below average at best. I just walk around, shoot some things and basically get bored. A letdown.

Shawn

Beast Wars is the perfect example of how not to do an action game. The action is similar to other action games, but the control is sloppy and aiming at enemies is more difficult than it should be. The game's graphics are nothing to shout about either, although the transformation animations are kinda cool. With a little more attention to the gameplay, Beast Wars could have been a decent game. As it stands now, it's best to avoid it.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	5	5

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Lots Of Characters

Worst Feature: Repetitive Missions

www.beastwarz.com

COURIER CRISIS



Publisher: GT Interactive

Developer: New Level

Featured in: N/A

I was close to giving Courier Crisis a score from the depths of hell. In the beginning, I really hated this game—the first half is utterly boring, completely redundant and way too easy. I rubbed my hands together gleefully and thought to myself, "Boy, I can't wait to rip into this piece of @\$\$ in Review Crew!" The early rounds consist of nothing more than running through similar-looking levels, picking up packages in one area and taking them to another. No real pressure, no real challenge. But just when I was about ready to give up any kind of hope for the game, I ran into a Level 5 stage, a stage that I couldn't beat with the same lackluster effort the earlier stages required. From this point on, the game becomes a tad bit more fun. These later levels actually require you to perform bike tricks in order to finish them successfully. You simply won't have enough time to finish the tougher areas in a straightforward fashion. Too bad it takes so long to reach this point—I'm sure many people will get turned off before they can give the game a chance. Courier Crisis couldn't score a bit higher if the programmers would have toned down the frequency of annoying voices (and they definitely should've left out the Green Day wanna-be Generation Xish hoping-to-be-grunge music). Overall, CC is average.

Dan

I want to like CC, but it has some problems I just can't overlook. First, the graphics are rough and the frame rate is choppy. Is this a first-generation PS title? Next, the levels are laid out in an interesting and challenging way, but they can be really repetitive too. Lastly, the original music is pretty damned cool, but those sound effects make it seem like you're in a funhouse or something. It's average, but I still say rent it first.

Shawn

It's been a while since I'd gotten the chance to create mass carnage in the wild streets of a virtual city. Courier Crisis is much like what I picture a one-player, mission-oriented, Twisted Metal rip-off. The earlier missions are cakewalks once you learn the city roads—at least up until Level 5. Then you'll be required to not just learn, but master the stunt tricks you haven't needed at all up until this point. Each mission afterward is insane!

Sushi

This shoddy cross between Road Rash and ESPN Xtreme Games is one of the most annoying games I've played in a while. It's actually super easy to get out of trouble, with the graphics going from extremely easy to extremely hard in an instant. Control can be a nightmare when it comes to performing tricks. And the graphics look straight out of a first-generation PlayStation title. Its corny sound effects get old quick, too.

Crispin

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	6	6	6

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: The Levels That Require Skill

Worst Feature: All The Other Levels

www.gtgames.com

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS



Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment

Developer: Square

Featured in: EGM #102

Final Fantasy Tactics is easily one of the best games I've ever played. It alone has made me a slave to the strategy/RPG game (Tactics Ogre is my next victim), and it has sucked away many, many hours of my time over the past few weeks. The game requires a lot of thought and planning (the game's Tutorial, as well as the manual, as well as a generous amount of patience, are a must), but the payoff and reward of tactically outwitting your opponents on the battlefield—with characters whose classes and abilities are straight from the Final Fantasy universe—is a feeling I simply can't explain. The story is fantastic (written by the same man who did Tactics Ogre) and the soundtrack that goes along with it is just phenomenal. I do have some complaints, but they are admittedly very minor. For one, the battles seem limited due to the 3-D aspect of them (had they been less visually splendid, they could've taken place on larger battlefields with more troops, etc.). Not a big deal, that's what I said. Also, some of the NPCs that you come across during play seem unbalanced (they either kick butt or they're total flakes). Otherwise, as long as you've got some patience and a lot of free time (took me well over 40 hours to beat), you're going to love Final Fantasy Tactics. Just be warned—it ain't easy.

John

Just when I thought I escaped from the Final Fantasy universe, this game came along and sucked me back in. FF Tactics is long, addictive and packs all the richness you'd expect from a Square game. Its combat and character-building systems are complex—at a level between Xanadu Hearts and Tactics Ogre—but the game is still supremely easy to slip into and play. FF Tactics does start slow, and don't expect much FFVII-quality FMV.

Crispin

Square always presents their games in a beautiful fashion: lush graphics, rich music and a deep story. You almost can't help but enjoy playing them. FF is no exception. This very detailed strategy game had me hooked from the start. The best part of the game is gathering experience and customizing your troops. Going into battle after battle gets a little tiresome at times, but overall this is an experience strategy fans shouldn't miss.

Dan

OK, I'll say up front that strategy games aren't my thing. I enjoyed playing Tactics, but found it was hard to come back to after taking a long break. This is the kind of game that can consume you for hours on end, but when you stop playing for the day, you haven't really gotten that far. Graphics and music are just as stunning as Square's other recent efforts. While it carries the Final Fantasy name, it's a lot more involved than FFVII.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	8	6

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: The Job/Ability System Rules

Worst Feature: Battlefields Could've Been Bigger

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NBA IN THE ZONE '98



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Featured In: EGM #100

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Improved Realism

The third installment in the NBA in the Zone series shows definite signs that **this basketball franchise is maturing**. For the first time, ITZ feels like a realistic basketball game in addition to being an entertaining one. Players move around court without the ball, set screens, picks and double team. It is as if brains have finally been transplanted into the ITZ players. Real plays, on-court play calling and more elaborate strategic options (double team, pressure) have also been added, complementing ITZ's newfound intelligence. Also, the presentation of the game lends itself to be taken more seriously. All of the cheesy music and music (save the still annoying pastel FMV) have been revamped, giving the game a better look. The presentation isn't great, but it's a step in the right direction. The only things that have been relatively unchanged are the graphics and game control. ITZ '98 features excellently detailed polygonal players that control pretty well. Not everything was improved that needed to be, however. Some of the moves, particularly lay-ups and shots off the glass look a little funny and the game really needs icon-passing. Also, we found errors with the game's rules, such as it not letting you inbound the ball backcourt from the sidelines. Even though these problems give it a few rough edges, ITZ '98 is a quality game.

Kraig

I wasn't into the previous two In The Zone games for the PS, but ITZ '98 has made me a fan. The game is vastly improved over last year's version in many ways. The graphics are spectacular (though the net animation is weak—a very minor personal gripe), and the gameplay and overall AI are very good. My only problem lies in the difficult, often imprecise passing game. **Two words, Konami: Icon Passing.** Otherwise, very nice job.

John

I've never played the previous versions of In the Zone but after hearing news that this game was more arcade action than simulation, I got excited. Sadly, the game is only slightly above-average for a b-ball game. **It's way too easy to steal balls and block shots** in ITZ '98, plus the Instant Replay Option doesn't always choose the right play to highlight. The gameplay is fast and fairly precise but there's just not enough meat.

Kelly

My biggest pet peeve with most sports games is also my biggest problem with ITZ '98: **It's way too easy to steal the ball.** It's unrealistic and a bit frustrating when the ball is being turned over every other possession. ITZ '98 also likes blocked shots...a little too much. This turns this otherwise excellent title into a bit of an arcade shootout hoops game rather than a sim. If that's what you're looking for, then check out ITZ '98.

Dan

VISUALS 8 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 7

POINT BLANK



Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Featured In: EGM #102

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Variety

This is it: **the best light gun game I have ever played in my entire life.** This is not a light statement to make, especially when we have great games like Virtua Cop 2 or Time Crisis. What sets Point Blank apart from the rest is its wide variety and sheer simplicity. It's like having Duck Hunt, Lethal Enforcers, Wild Gunman and every other classic shooting game in one disc. Every mini-game is very different from the next. For example, one stage gives you one bullet to shoot an apple off a person's head while another might give you unlimited ammo to type out words by shooting keys on an on-screen keyboard. This arcade-perfect translation is more than enough for my full recommendation. Namco, however, is never happy with a straight arcade-to-home port. In a typical Namco move, the programmers have added much more to the PS version. We get an awesome eight-player Party Mode. We get a novel Quest Mode. We get extra home-exclusive stages. For the PB fan like me, it's almost too much. I can talk your ears off telling you how much fun this game is, but you won't truly appreciate it until you sit down and play it with a few friends. It's one of those types of games that will suck in gamers and non-gamers alike. If you don't get the idea by now, check out Point Blank!

Dan

Gun games just don't get any better than this. It's one of the most fun, addicting, long-lasting one- or two-player games out there. If you've never played Point Blank in the arcade, **buy it immediately.** Its variety and sheer number of stages will keep you shooting silly sprites for months. And even if you've played the arcade game to death, buy it anyway. As usual, Namco has loaded the home version with extras.

Crispin

For those of you who picked up Time Crisis with the GunCon, add another "must-buy" to your list. **Point Blank is one of those titles you'd be silly not to have in your gaming library.** (If not for the fun One-Player Modes [the regular arcade game and especially the added Quest Mode], then for the awesome Two-player and Tournament Modes. BTW, if you don't already have the GunCon, it's worth buying for Point Blank alone.)

Shawn

Thank God, I've spent WAY too much money on this game in the arcade already. Point Blank is **my favorite light gun game EVER.** It's SO much fun, and there's SO much variety that I'll keep you entertained for weeks. Add to that several fun exclusive modes (definitely check out the wacky Quest Mode), and you have the most enjoyable, well-rounded light gun game imaginable. Playing against a friend is an absolute blast. GREAT game.

John

VISUALS 5 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 9 REPLAY 10

RESIDENT EVIL 2



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: EGM #102

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: The Horror And Suspense

Worst Feature: Somewhat Awkward Control

All I can say is "WOW." Resident Evil 2 is everything I could want in a sequel. I admit that I thought the first RE was a little overrated. Sure, it was scary and presented some interesting features, but it left me wanting more. Well, Capcom has given me all I could ask for with RE2. **Everything from the awesome graphics to the layout of the game is flawless.** In addition, I absolutely love the integrated, rendered FMV. Gone are the days of cheesy actors and horrible dialogue. Now we have incredible rendered sequences with above-average voice-overs. But that's just part of the excitement. When you're walking around in the game, numbers of zombies and other downright disturbing beasts come at you from every angle, and then pop up just when you thought they were dead. On top of this, the detail of practically everything in the game is perfect. The prerendered backgrounds coupled with eerie music and sound effects make you feel like you're in a horror flick—a step up from a B-movie even! With this upgrade though, not one ounce of that "Resident Evil" feel is lost. Anything, the enhanced big-screen style graphics that make more of that feeling. The most memorable scene for me is when you're confronted by a giant reptile. Let's just say you'll need a clean pair of Undercoats on hand.

Shawn

If any software developer wants to see how a sequel should be done, they should look at this game. **I didn't like the first RE, but I absolutely adore this one.** Just about every major problem in the first game has been corrected—save the fact that it still had to see objects like ammo in rooms. The graphics and gameplay are excellent, and a wonderful job was done to create the ominous and frightful mood of the game. A must-have.

Kraig

I was not a big fan of the first Resident Evil, but RE2 is everything the first game should've been and more. The cinematics are great, the story is very interesting and suspenseful, and the **scare factor is unbelievably high** (Sho says I scream like a girl). The control is still a bit annoying, but it's improved, and the whole atmosphere more than makes up for it. Being able to play from both sides of the story (Leon and Claire) rocks. "RE demption!"

John

RE2 thoroughly surprised this reviewer, one who wasn't that wild about the original. It sucks you in with its excellent graphics and creepy atmosphere... **I played it for hours before realizing it was almost time for me to go to work...the next morning!** This game is surprisingly intense. The menu system still sucks, but everything else is just about perfect. This may just be an early contender for PlayStation Game of the Year.

Dan

VISUALS 9 SOUND 9 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 6

RIVEN



Publisher: Acclaim

Developer: Cyan

Featured In: EGM #103

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Gorgeous Graphics

Worst Feature: Massive Challenge

I've never been a big fan of graphic adventures so I really wasn't expecting much from Riven. Now although playing Riven hasn't convinced me to evangelize graphic adventures, there is a lot more to like here than in its prequel, *Myst*. The environments are very moody with excellent music. And compared to *Myst*, there is a lot more interaction in Riven. Now I know that isn't saying much, but given a chance, it's easy to see this game is miles ahead of *Myst*. Riven is a game that must be appreciated for what it is, or not be appreciated at all. Being a gamer who cut his teeth on action games, Riven had a weird effect on me. The pace and therapeutic aura of the game is quite relaxing but the sheer vastness of the game is overwhelming at times. Riven is one of the most challenging games I've played in a long time, because you only get the most subtle hints of what to do, so you are forced to explore. Yet another odd effect this game had on me is that it can be so difficult to know what to do that when you do get something right, it encourages you to go one step further. I can't help but say this, but I actually recommend Riven. A good game is a good game and Riven falls (or rather dozes) into that category. It's not for everyone, but if you're even mildly interested, give it a try.

Kelly

By far this month's longest game to complete, Riven takes a massive amount of patience (and as a result, replacement controllers) to finish. You'll be as entranced by the wonderful backdrops as you are disgusted by the poor acting. The **plotline draws heavily upon *Myst***, so it's truly meant for those players. It makes no pretense of being its own game. I'm sure you'll find yourself totally immersed or totally frustrated.

Sushi

Riven delivers what *Myst* fans want: more of the same. If you don't mind thumbing through five CDs of still shots to solve some challenging puzzles, then this game is for you. The art is well-rendered, creating a very visceral world to explore. One of Riven's biggest improvements over *Myst* is that there is more video and moving parts when you click on things on screen. This isn't my sort of game, but those who like *Myst* will definitely enjoy it.

Kraig

There's two ways to approach Riven. The first is to pawn it off as another boring *Myst*-style game and pass it by. The other is to be open-minded and see what this five-disc monster is all about. I'd go with the latter. Riven may have a mundane style of play, but there's a lot more to this sequel than you may think (in both story line and puzzles). On top of this, the overall design and graphic detail of the game is really nice. Give it a try.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	6	1

SKULLMONKEYS



Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: The Neverhood

Featured In: EGM #101

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Overall Style

Worst Feature: It's Too Easy To Die

The PS needs more games like this. Take all the weirdness and coolness of Oddworld, add lots of clay and loads of uniqueness—and what you get is *Skullmonkeys*. Not only does SM give you characters that you can't help but love, an original soundtrack that'll make you dance around and cool-looking levels, it also presents a genuinely solid game. This is easily one of the best side-scrollers to hit the PlayStation in a long time. The attention to detail and continuity of style in SM makes me wonder just how many hours the development team spent on the project—it must've been a very long process. Animation-wise, the game comes through again. And to think, they did all of this with clay! On top of the gameplay, the various cutscenes with original, claymated FMV are brilliant. It's been a long time since I've laughed this hard at a game. With all of these good things, come the bad. Really, the only gripe I have is that it's too easy for your character to die. I don't mind a challenge, but I also wouldn't've liked to allow a few extra hits instead of just one. Other than that, the game is great. *Skullmonkeys* is one of those titles I'd recommend to check out even if you're not all that curious. Being a guy who likes to draw and create, *Skullmonkeys* really gets those creative juices flowing...so to speak.

Shawn

Skullmonkeys gets the first Sushi-X Hal Sai Award for Most Bust-A-Gut Humor in a Game. You can smell the taint of Earthworm Jim throughout, but it's so much more...gross. I challenge anyone to listen to the entire bonus room music without laughing out loud. It can't be done. I'm serious. Besides the humor, the challenge is very tough for veteran gamers, so don't relax too much. Here's a hot game with few problems.

Sushi

I guess the notable thing about this game is supposed to be the characters animated through claymation. Really, it's no big deal—the characters look no better than any other genre-based, 2-D platform game. As a player, *Skullmonkeys* is above average. The gameplay is fun, and the scenery diverse, but there are no great bosses or wide variety of enemies. This is the type of game that is good enough to rent, but not buy.

Kraig

Skullmonkeys is one of the most delightfully twisted games I've played in a long time. As far as gameplay is concerned, SM is a hard-core platform game with intense jump jumps and a heart-pumping action. The best part of *Skullmonkeys*, however, is its over the top humor and grossness. I laughed aloud several times during play. As an action game, SM is great, but its style and humor take the cake. This one is a complete surprise.

Kelly

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	7

X-MEN: COTA



Publisher: Acclaim

Developer: Probe

Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Classic 2-D Gameplay

Worst Feature: Poor Animation

As if I needed any further proof that Capcom's 2-D fighters are not well-suited for the PlayStation, along comes *X-Men: Children of the Atom* to further solidify my theories. First, the standard PS pad takes about half the fun of *X-Men* away from me. The lack of a six-button configuration on the PS pad is not as annoying as the D-pad itself: it's harder than it should be to perform fireball motions. Considering how popular Capcom's six-button configured fighters are today, it's amazing that there aren't more Saturn-style, six-button pads for the PS, but if you can find one, I recommend it. But I digress, the control issue is just the prelude to my main gripe: animation. Although *X-Men: COTA* does control well, much of the animation frames seen in the arcade game are nowhere to be found. This gives the game a jerky look and feel that is awkward at times and downright annoying at others (at least, it is to anal Capcom fighting game fans such as myself). I know I'm not supposed to mention the "ST" word in this review but in truth, it's hard to get excited over an arcade game like *X-Men* for the PS when the aged Saturn version is so much better. For PS owners *X-Men* is OK, but if you're a Capcom fan, dual system ownership never looked so appealing. Besides, *X-Men Vs. SF EX Edition* is almost here.

Kelly

This is a bit late, don't you think? After all, we have Marvel Super Heroes, a game that is leagues better than the archaic *COTA*. To make matters worse, this is not a good port. The game has a lot of slowdown and choppy animation, especially for having such small loads. It's not bad, but it's not great (as I've noted). This is a commendable effort, but Acclaim shouldn't have bothered. This is just a sub-par port of a very old game.

Dan

After such a long time coming, it's no surprise that I'm not horribly impressed. The sad thing is that with all the delays, you'd think you'd get an arcade-perfect translation. Not exactly. The animation is haphazard, and even the sound isn't all that hot. The pure size of the game must've been too much for the game's programmers. It's hard to describe, but the game feels "compressed." Too bad quality wasn't a top priority.

Sushi

Surprise! After months of delays, look what finally showed up on our doorstep. Well, much to my dismay, I wish I never opened the door. Probe managed to force the one Capcom started, but the final product isn't even up to the standards of the PS *Darkstalkers*. Let alone the recently released (and very nice) *MSH*. Tons of slowdown, no Survival or Guard Battle Modes and...lots more slowdown. Save your pennies and wait for *X-Men Vs. SEEX*.

John

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	7	6	7

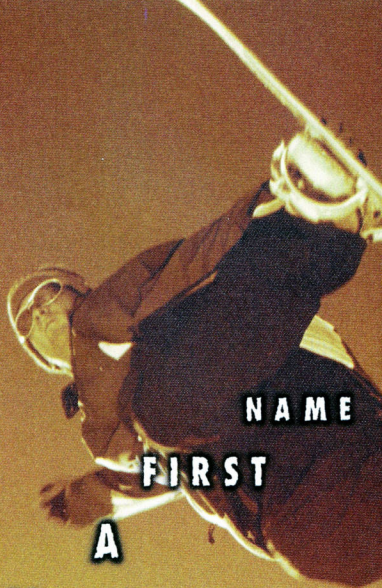
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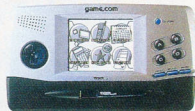
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JUMP START

Resident Evil 2

By the EGM Staff

Warning: Pages Contain Game Spoilers. Read with Caution!

Although it's a little easier than the original Resident Evil, the sequel offers more replay value and twists than the first one did. This time, the two main characters to play as (Leon and Claire) have alternative characters that the player controls at some point. Leon runs into a mysterious woman, Ada, while Claire meets Sherry, the daughter of an Umbrella scientist.

This Jump Start tackles some of the game's tougher puzzles. A final note: This strategy was done with a reviewable but not final version of the game, so there may be changes.

See EGM issues 44 & 45 for the first-ever walk-through!

EGM®



2

Can I Blow Up the Chopper?



1

1. The First Red Jewel: Find the first one above a fireplace behind the briefing room, on the northwest side of the Police Department's first floor.

Light the fireplace with the lighter to burn the picture above, (Leon can do this right away). **2. The Second Red Jewel:** Find it in the hallway in the northwest area of the Police Department's second floor. You'll need to slide two statues into the right spots on the floor. **3. Use Both Jewels:** After you put out the chopper fire, you'll be able to go into a room on the second floor—use the jewels on two small busts inside.

1

What Are Those Red Jewels For?



2



3

Claire vs. Leon

Although Claire has access to stronger weapons, she has more puzzles to solve (namely near the end). She starts off with the lockpick, which gives her easy access to desks and rooms. It seems she takes less damage per hit compared to Leon.

For Her: More Puzzles

Leon may have a cooler story line, but it's more straightforward. His weapons may not be as powerful as Claire's, but they're more than adequate—but only if he can find the weapon parts upgrades! He starts the game with the lighter.

For Him: Tougher Fight



2

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Weapon Ratings

Handgun: You'll find plenty of bullets for this weak tool. **

Leon's Shotgun: A great all-around weapon against zombies. ****

Claire's Bow Gun: Get it after killing zombies in the weapon shop. ***

Leon's Magnum: A deadlier handgun, but ammo is hard to find. ***

Claire's Grenade Launcher: By far her most effective killing tool. ****

Claire's Uzi: Use it in short bursts. It uses two spots in the inventory. **

Claire's Spark Shot: Find it on a dead zombie after the train ride. ****

Leon's Flame-thrower: Kills plants, but runs out too quick. **

Leon's Parts: Use 'em to juice up the shotgun, magnum and handgun. ****

Knife: You won't need it at all. *



2

Boss 1: Step back and use heavy firepower on him. Kill the vermin he spits out, or else they'll stop you from shooting.

Boss 2: Take one shot from afar, then run away in a circle around the train. Don't get close!



How Best to Kill Bosses?

3



1



Help Me Leave the Sewers!

4

The route to the trolley lies in the northwest corner of Sewers B-2 behind a waterfall. A machine nearby shuts the water supply, but you'll need the silver wolf medal and the gold eagle medal. Find the gold item on the Sewer B-1 level. Leon finds the silver medal in a corner on the east side of Level B-2, near the big exhaust fan tunnel, while Claire finds it in the trash where the crocodile was.



After getting the serum instructions from Annette, go to the room in the southeast corner of Level 4 Laboratory. Get the vaccine cartridge; use it on the computer to the right to make the serum canister. Head downstairs to Level 5 to the lab (where the lab key was found). Use the canister on the computer in one corner to make the serum—it'll save Sherry's life!

5

How Do I Save Sherry?

So What's Left?

CONGRATULATIONS!!			
RANKING	D		
CLEAR GAME	LEON A		
TOTAL TIME	04:12:02		
NUMBER OF SAVES	10		



Without giving away too much, the time it takes to beat the game may be a factor in the type of ending you receive—much like the first Resident Evil. It might even trigger a secret "bonus" game that stars a brand-new character! (Hint: Remember the soldiers from Umbrella?) Beating the game without using powerful weapons may have some effect on the ending as well...

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It's All You Need to Know



Cart World Series

SPECIAL PASSWORD CHEATS

These cheats will get you some special-looking tracks and strange options for your car. On the Type Screen, choose a race (Single Race or New Season) and on the Select Driver Screen, move Left until you see "Create Driver." Now enter one of the passwords as shown to get the following results:

NIGHTRID - Drive at night.
SPACERID - Tron-like tracks.
GEK - You will race two laps in Season Mode.

WHEELS - There will be no body on your car.
FLOAT - Tracks will have half the normal gravity (you will have less traction than normal races).
RADBRAD - Tracks have more gravity than normal.
BANZAI - You won't collide with any other cars.



Get to the Create Driver Screen and enter one of the passwords.



One of the codes (Spacerid) will let you drive on a future track!

Duke Nukem 64

LEVEL SELECT

The missing piece to the Cheats Menu has finally been filled in. This trick will give you a Level Select for the game. Enter the main cheat code at the Title/Menu

Screen (Left, Left, L button, L button, Right, Right, Left, Left). Now enter the Level Skip code: L button, L button, L button, Right-C, Right, Left, Left, Left-C.



On the Title/Menu Screen enter the main cheat and then the Level Skip.



In the Cheats Menu, you'll see that you can go to any level.

Street Fighter Collection



HIDDEN CHARACTERS

This awesome collection has a couple of secret characters. Follow the methods below to find each one:

Play as Akuma - On Disc 1, choose the Super Street Fighter II Turbo game and on the Player Select Screen (in either Arcade or Versus Mode), highlight Ryu, hold the L button and then press the R button. Akuma's shadow will appear and you can use him.
Play as Cammy - On Disc 2, begin a one-player Arcade Mode game on Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold and win the game with M. Bison, getting first place (above 50,000 points). Enter your high score name as CAM. Now choose Versus Mode, and if you have the Shortcut Option on, you will see a list of names. The last name on the list will be Cammy. Now you can choose her as a playable character.



Highlight Ryu on the Player Select Screen and do the code.



Get a high score and enter your name as CAM to find Cammy!

Nuclear Strike

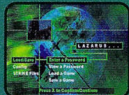
PASSWORD CHEATS

To get these cheats to work, you must go to the Main Menu and at the Load/Save option, choose "Enter a Password." Put in any of these for various results:

LAZARUS - Infinite Lives.
LIGHTNING - Secret Bonus Level.
EAGLEEYE - No one can shoot their weapons.
WARDPRIVE - Faster vehicles.
WARRIOR - You get five extra attempts.
PHOENIX - You get four extra attempts.
MPG - Reduced fuel consumption.



Michael McElroy; Santa Barbara, CA



At this screen, enter one of the passwords as shown above.



Your lives will not go down when you enter the Lazarus code.

Courier Crisis



PLAY AS AN ALIEN OR A GORILLA

Choose the Memory Card icon from the Main Menu and then access the Load/Save Options. Move over to Password and enter one of these codes under "Enter Password" to play as two strange, new couriers:

Play as the Alien - Put in the name XFIFTYONEX
Play as the Gorilla - Put in the name SAVAGEAPES



Enter the code for the Alien and do your deliveries as normal.



It's hilarious to see an ape riding around (and over) pedestrians!

Sonic R



PLAY WITH THE R

On the Title Screen of Sonic R, just start moving the D-pad in all directions and press X, Y, A or B to change the colors of the R. This doesn't give any advantage

in the game, but it's a fun waste of time.

Nicholas Nelson
San Diego, CA

Aerofighters Assault



EXTRA PILOTS AND PLANES

These codes will give you a couple of new pilots and some new planes. Some of them must be earned while others are codes.

Enable Spanky: To get him you must complete all three bonus missions.

New planes in deathmatch: For each mission you complete you will get a new plane.

Extra Pilot and plane: At the Title Screen, not the Main Menu Screen, press Left-C,

Down-C, Right-C, Up-C, Left-C, Right-C, Down-C. Then check in the Plane Select Screen on the far left.



Enter the code at the Title Screen for the new pilot and plane.

One



ALL WEAPONS AND STAGE SELECT

At the Main Menu Screen, move over and choose the "Load Game" Option. Then pick "Enter Password." Put in one or both of these codes for the results as shown:



In the Load Game Screen, enter one of the passwords as shown.

MAXPOWER - Gives you access to all the weapons. **HEVYFEET** - Opens up the Stage Select Screen where you can choose to start from any of the six levels.



The Stage Select Option will appear after entering HEVYFEET.

Last Bronx



MANY HIDDEN CODES

This game has many secrets to it. One secret is the Special Difficulty Levels. Once you have opened the door of your Saturn and started the game 15 times, you will be rewarded with three new difficulty settings: Defense, Berserk and Judo.

Portraits. There are three sets of portraits for each character. Obtaining these portraits will open up other cheats. In order to get them you must play through difficulty levels Normal, Hard and Arcade. You must play through each level without losing to a single fighter.

Joke Weapons. Once you obtain all three portraits for a character you will be able to get the weapon for that character. The column that your character is in is the direction that you must press and hold. For example, for Joe press and hold right on the D-pad.

Movies. If you enter into Saturn Mode and play through you will be rewarded with a movie of your character and his archenemy. Press the A or C buttons to watch the movie and the B button at any time to return to the Movie Viewing Screen.



At this point turn the machine off and on 15 times.



You will then be rewarded with three new difficulty levels.

Duke Nukem 3D

ALL WEAPONS, GOD MODE

To enter a kind of Debug Mode where you can enter in some cheat codes to affect play, you must press and hold X, Y and Z for about 10 seconds at the Main Menu Screen. If you held it long enough you will see "input info on" appear on the bottom of the screen. Once that code is entered press pause while in game and hit these keys for special modes.

All Weapons: Z, X, X, Z, Y, Z, Y, X, Y
God Mode: X, Z, Z, X, Y, X, Y, Z, Y



Hold X+Y+Z for 10 seconds at this screen to start the code.



Put God Mode on to easily get through any of the levels.

Monster Rancher



BUILD UP LOYALTY METER

Here is an easy way to build up your loyalty meter. Once you have your monster, take it back and forth between the ranch and the town. Each time you do this, your loyalty meter goes up five points! However, you must use this in moderation. The more you do this trick, the stricter your style will become. Your monster will have a tendency to run away and destroy its home if your style gets overbearing, so be warned!



Go back and forth between the ranch and the town for a while.



Your loyalty will be very high, but your style suffers.

Trickman's Reference Guide



This guide is a reference to all of the game codes printed within the last six months of EGM. Note: This does not include GameShark codes or any other codes that use a peripheral attachment. Look for the update in next month's Tricks of the Trade.

Issue #98			Issue #99			Issue #100					
Codename: Tenka	PS	Test Drive: Off-Road	PS	B. A. Toshinden 3	PS	NHL '97	PS	Battle Monsters	SAT	NBA Hangtime	PS
Daytona USA: CCE	SAT	Thunder Truck Rally	PS	Broken Helix	PS	Peak Performance	PS	Carnage Heart	PS	NCAA Football '98	PS
Die Hard Trilogy	PS	TNN Hardcore 4X4	PS	Cool Boarders	PS	Pitball	PS	The Crew	PS	NFL GameDay '98	PS
Hexen	N64	Tobal 2	PS	Darklight Conflict	PS	Star Wars: SotE	N64	Excalibur 2555 A.D.	PS	Ogre Battle	PS
Machine Head	PS	Twisted Metal 2	PS	Dark Rift	N64	S.F. EX-Alpha	SAT	GoldenEye 007	N64	Pandemonium!	SAT
Magic Carpet	SAT	War Gods	N64	Dynasty Warriors	PS	Three Dirty Dwarves	SAT	Herz's Adventures	PS	Street Fighter EX+Alpha	PS
PS: Underground No. 2	PS	Wild Arms	PS	Jet Moto	PS	Triple Play '98	PS	K1: The Arena Fighters	PS	Tetrisphere	N64
Robotron X	PS			K-1: The Arena Fighters	PS	Turok: DinoSaur Hunter	N64	Machine Hunter	PS	Warcraft II: The Dark Saga	PS
Star Wars: SotE	N64			Namco Museum Vol. 4	PS	Xenious 3D/G+	PS	Marvel Super Heroes	SAT		
Ten Pin Alley	PS			NBA Hangtime	SNES			Mortal Kombat Trilogy	SAT		
Issue #101			Issue #102			Issue #103					
Excalibur 2555 A.D.	PS	Triple Play '98	PS	Clay Fighter 63 1/3	N64	PlayStation Underground No. 3	PS	Colony Wars	PS	Test Drive 4	PS
Fantastic Four	PS	Warcraft II: The Dark Saga	PS	Dragon Ball GE: Final Bout	PS	Street Fighter EX + Alpha	PS	Duke Nukem 64	N64	Time Crisis	PS
Lost World: Jurassic Park 2	PS			Extreme-G	N64	Super Mario 64	N64	Fighting Force	PS	Tomb Raider 2	PS
Manx TT	SAT			Final Fantasy VII	PS	Triple Play '98	PS	Final Fantasy VII	PS		
Mortal Kombat Trilogy	SAT			Formula 1: CE	PS			Frogger	PS		
NFL GameDay '98	PS			Mace: The Dark Age	N64			G-Police	PS		
NHL '97	SAT			Marvel Super Heroes	PS			Monster Rancher	PS		
NHL Powerplay '98	PS			NFL Quarterback Club '98	N64			Moto Racer	PS		
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee	PS			Nightmare Creatures	PS			PlayStation Underground No. 4	PS		
Tetrisphere	N64			Pandemonium 2	PS			Star Wars: MoTK	PS		

NBA Live '98



EASTER EGG CODES

To enable the Easter Egg codes, begin a regular game (Exhibition, etc.), and after choosing your teams, go to the User Setup Screen. Choose "Start New" and enter the name: **Secrets**. Press **Start** to confirm the name then press the **Circle** button to activate the **Secrets** Menu. To enter the codes, go to **Secrets** Menu and highlight "Enter Secret Codes" and press the **X** button. Now, enter the following codes—they are case sensitive, so enter them exactly as shown:

Seaweed (Underwater court)
Scary (Home team in Halloween costumes)
Freaky (Away team in Halloween costumes)
Cloak home (Home team selected player is invisible)
Cloak away (Away team selected player is invisible)
Eyepatch (Create player with eyepatch)
Monocle (Create player with monocle)
Toque (Create player EA Toque)
Prisoners (Hitmen be free)
Lizard (Chameleon Home Team)
Reptile (Chameleon Away Team)

Sam Perez
Sunnyvale, CA

Wayne Gretzky '98



CHANGE THE LOOK OF YOUR PLAYERS

For any of these codes to work you must first go into the Debug Mode. To do that go to the Options Screen and hit **Down-C** button+**R** button, **Left-C** button+**R** button. A window will pop up that will allow you to change the appearance of your players. Press **Down-C** button+**R** button to change the head size. **Left-C** button+**R** button to change the body size. **Up-C** button+**R** button to change the height. Here are some examples as they would look in the window and the effect:

000000: Stocky players
 010000: Stocky players, Big heads
 100000: Stocky players, Small heads
 001000: Small players, Small announcer
 000100: Large players, Large announcer



Do the code at the Options Screen to unlock the debug.



You can change the way your players appear on the screen.



After starting a new player, enter the name, **Secrets**.



Enter the codes here. Some of them have multiple options.



Turn on many of the codes at once for a very bizarre game!

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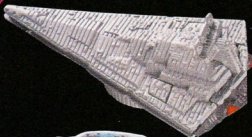
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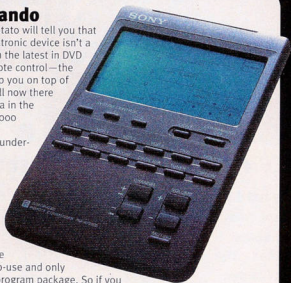
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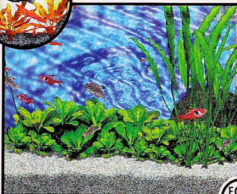
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Op:ed

by Ed Semrad
ed_semrad@zd.com



EGM's own gaming guru shoots from the hip

The hard part is not making the same mistake the next time. This is the part that Sega can't get right.

Now that the holiday season is over and game companies are starting to make plans for Christmas 1998, the big question is: What is Sega going to do?

The future of the Saturn as a long-term game platform has been in doubt for some time. With virtually no third-party software developers, only a couple of new games coming from Sega, and the word out on all the specs of their new game system, the Saturn appears to be only a few months away from the dusty bargain bins at Toys 'R' Us.

Why? What did Sega do wrong and what can Sega learn from this?

Hindsight always comes easy, but the hard part is not making the same mistake the next time. This is the part that Sega can't get right. Whether it's the Sega CD and its bad attempt at FMV games; the 32X and its incomplete development kits; or the Saturn with its quickly assembled hardware, bad development support and a rushed, poorly planned launch, Sega just can't seem to get it all together.

What should they do the next time? First, Sega needs a management team that knows something about video games and the industry. No matter how good a product is, if the execs can't guide its development, it will never succeed.

Second, Sega of America needs to convince Sega of Japan that the U.S. is a completely different market. What may work in Japan may not necessarily (and probably won't) work in the States.

Third, along with the separation of SoA and SoJ, SoA needs a "blank check" with no strings attached from Japan. Trying to launch a new system with Sony and Nintendo dominating the market will not

come easy or cheap.

Fourth, besides having software support from Japan, SoA needs to have stateside development teams. While the Japanese are masters at game development, there are genres that need the "American touch."

Sports games are one of these genres, and without a strong football, hockey and basketball game, any new game system will be severely handicapped. Another Sega Studios, properly managed, would be a necessity.

Fifth, SoA needs strong third-party support. Not just a few "one-shot backyard developers"; Sega needs commitments from the big guns like Capcom, EA, Konami, Midway and Shiny.

Sixth, also from the companies above, Sega needs exclusive, big-name games—titles you can't get on any other system. It is going to take a lot to convince players who already have a PlayStation or N64 that they have to buy yet another system. This won't come cheap, so Sega better have deep pockets.

Seventh, the new system can't be too expensive. A price greater than \$299 is going to be a hard sell with the competition getting ready to hit the \$100 price point.

Eighth, SoA needs the best marketing and advertising teams in the business. Remember the "Sega!" TV ads? Or the "squirrel-color" Game Gear vs. Game Boy TV commercials? These got people talking...and buying the product. Sega hasn't had good marketing since the Al Nilsen and Pam Kelly days.

Finally, Sega needs a proper launch of its new system. No surprise quick launch, no ridiculous price and enough great software to get players to believe in Sega again.

Can they do it? Will they do it? Or do they even want to do it again? It's up to you, Sega.



What does the future hold for Sonic the Hedgehog?

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Next Month

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY



The number of RPGs in the last year has surged. Find out which ones are worthwhile and why.



1999 Opening Day is almost here, and like clockwork, so is Sony's MLB 99.

April 1998



At long last, Tekken 3 is coming to the PlayStation. Look for our full blowout coverage on this fighter.

RPGs and baseball games. Can you think of two different types of games that go so well together? We sure can't, so look for EGM's previews of EA's Triple Play 99 and Sony's MLB 99 in addition to our comprehensive RPG Buyer's Guide. Additionally, this may shock you—there's more to gaming than

just baseball and RPGs, and by that, we mean Tekken. After a long wait, Tekken 3 is almost ready to hit the PlayStation. We'll take an in-depth look at the latest edition of Namco's franchise fighting game. N64 owners need not despair, however, as we'll preview Rampage and review Quake 64.

EGM²



March 1998

Final Fantasy Tactics fans, take heed: EGM² will offer a complete outline of the different character classes, skills, weapons and more!



The second part of the Resident Evil 2 strategy guide spills the beans on how to unlock the secret ending bonuses...



Check out the first-ever guide to Yoshi's Story, featuring exclusive level maps, tons of revealed secrets and tips.

The undisputed heavyweight champ of game strategies and tricks returns with the real skinny on two early breakout PlayStation hits of '98: Gex: Enter the Gecko and Final Fantasy Tactics.

Don't forget the Nintendo 64! We kicked Bowser's behind in Yoshi's Story—and we'll have maps to

show you how to do the same.

Proving our edge as an in-depth strategy provider, we roll out the second halves of our Alundra and Resident Evil 2 coverage.

Also, look for a guide on the PC-to-PlayStation hit Riven; the guide solves the toughest puzzles the Myst sequel has to offer.



ASC Games' One and T*HQ's WWC Nitro are just two of the playable games on this month's exclusive OPM Demo CD!

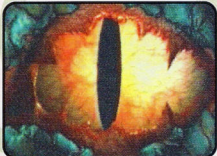
We give you the exclusive scoop on Final Fantasy VIII and Tekken 4, not to mention the complete specifications for the PlayStation 2!

April Fools! Actually, we'll be featuring an explosive Resident Evil 2 strategy guide as well as our usual collection of honest, straightforward, unbiased news, previews

and reviews. We'll be rating Midway's new arcade compilation, Arcade's Greatest Hits: The Atari Collection Vol. 2, as well as NCAA March Madness 98 and the long-awaited Gex: Enter the Gecko. Add a demo disc you'll find nowhere else, and you've got one of the greatest issues yet!

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

March 1998



Come trudge with us through the gory world of Resident Evil 2 in our excruciatingly detailed strategy guide.

NEW RELEASES & UPCOMING TITLES

Quest 64



US N64 Titles

1080 Snowboarding
Banjo-Kazooie's Great Adv.
Forsaken
GASP!
Mission Impossible
Mystical Ninja 64
NBA in the Zone
Olympic Hockey '98
Quake 64
Quest 64
Twisted Edge Snowboarding
Turok 2
WWF War Zone
Yoshi's Story
Z-Xis Basketball

Metal Gear Solid



US PlayStation Titles

C
Cardinal SYN
Crime Killer
Diablo
F.F. Tactics
Forsaken
Klonoa
March Madness '98
Megan Neo
Newman/Haas Racing
Ninja
Pitfall 3D: BTJ
Saga Frontier
Sentinel 2
Vigilante 8
Z-Axis Soccer

Panzer Dragoon Saga



U.S. Saturn Titles

Burning Rangers
Dead or Alive
Dungeons and Dragons
Magic Knight Rayearth
Ninja
Quake
Panzer Dragoon Saga
Power Boat Racing
SF Collection
Sonic R
Tactic Fighter
Thunder Force 5
Virtual Striker 2
Zap 2
Zero Divide: Final Conflict

Turok 2



Import N64 Titles

Art of Fighting Twin
F Zero 64
Hybrid Heaven
Kirby's Air Ride
Mother 3
Puyo Puyo 64
Rev Limit
Robotech 64
Sumo 64
Super Mario 2
Zelda 64



Import PlayStation Titles

Advanced V2
Brave Prove
Choro Q Jet Rainbow
Crisis City
Escapers
Graduation M
King of Fighters '97
Lost Sword
Parasite Eve
R-types
Samurai Showdown 4
Tamagotchi
TEKKEN 3 - call for details
Ultraman Fighting Evolution
X-Menager
(*Soundtrack also avail.)



Import Saturn Titles

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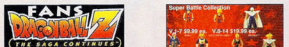
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#7 Serpewalk VF-1J
#8 Serpewalk VF-1S



DBZ ACTION FIGURES
#1 v. 27 S.S. Vegeta Gold (shown below)



FIG. 15 FIG. 16 FIG. 17 FIG. 18 FIG. 19 FIG. 20 FIG. 21 FIG. 22 FIG. 23 FIG. 24 FIG. 25 FIG. 26 FIG. 27

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