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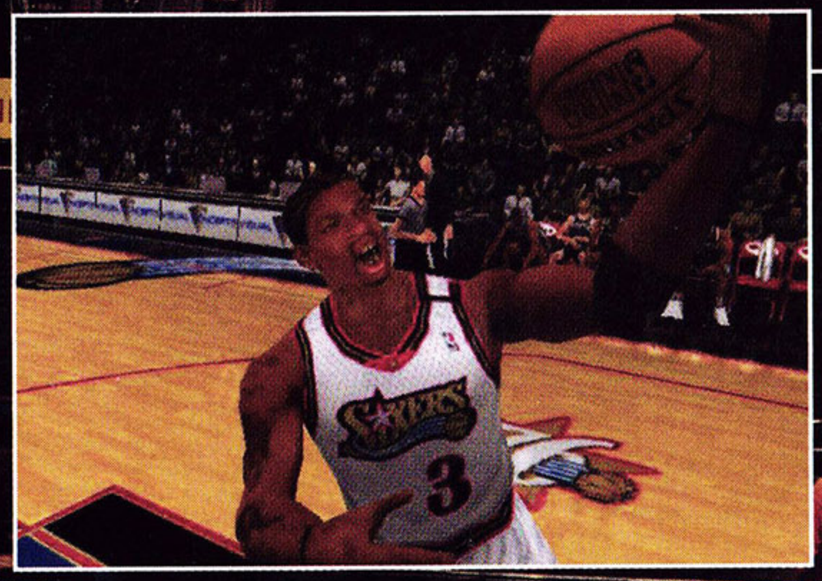

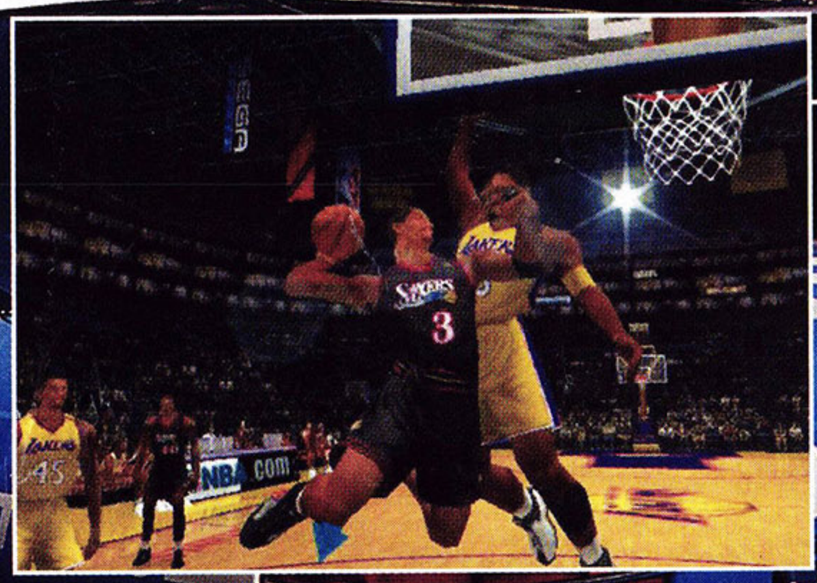

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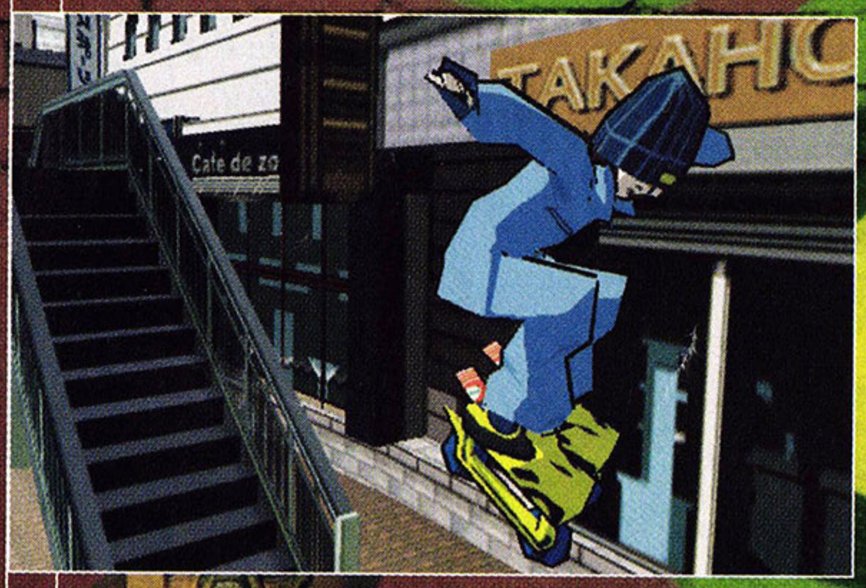

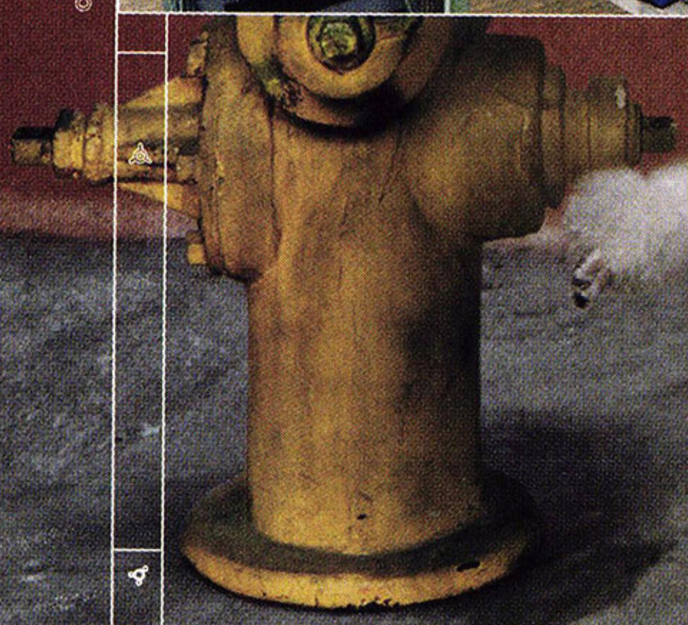

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Featuring music by Rob Zombie, Jurassic 5 and Mix Master Mike.

GAME INFORMER®

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36 NINTENDO'S NEXT

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44 THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GAMERS

Completely reworking a magazine is no small task. It requires superhuman stamina, mind-boggling creativity, Sir Mix-A-Lot, nuclear destruction, and a time-distorting ferret fart. The boys are back in town!

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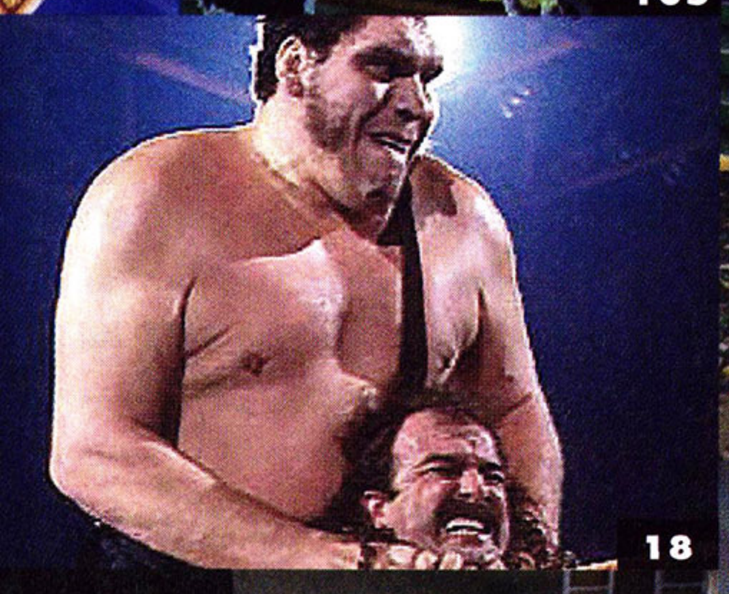
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144 CHARTS
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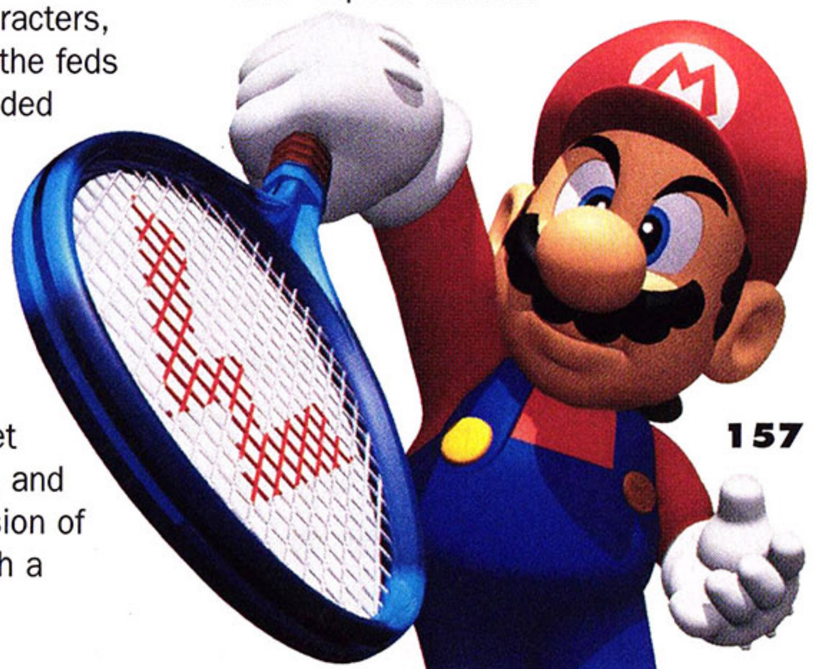
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GI's legendary codebreakers unleash a fierce torrent of codes and tips, peeking under Spider-Man's pajamas and showing you his underwear.

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Our star attractions this month are two things that will knock your teeth out – Caramel Apple Pops and the Skuda. Let the sticky fingered scooter rides of death begin.

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As a member of a ruthless gang of smugglers, it's your job to evade the U.S. Border Patrol, CIA, and cutthroat rivals to deliver illegal cargo. It'll take complete mastery of your off-road vehicle to make it across unforgiving terrain and stay one step ahead of the forces out to destroy you.

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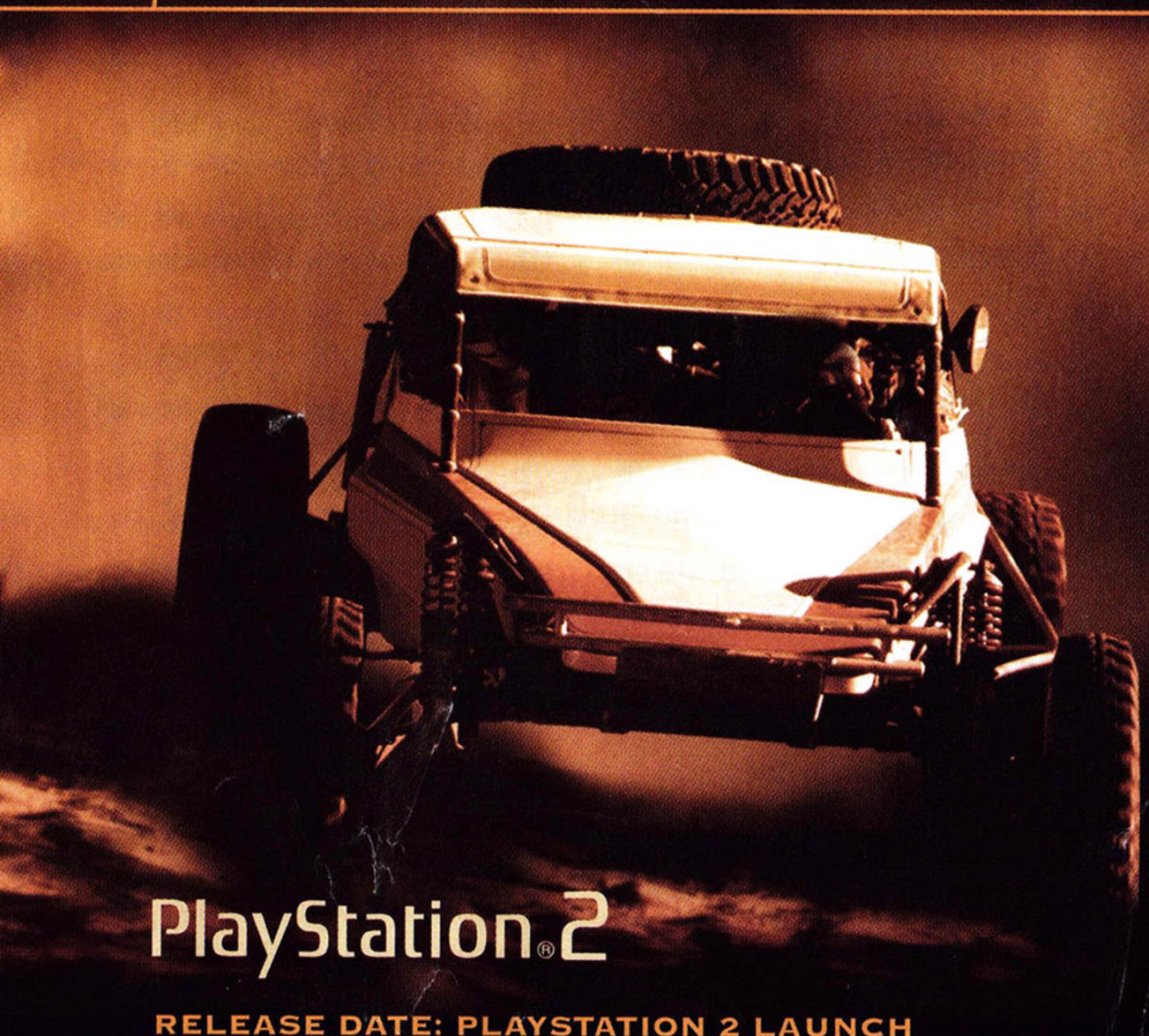
SMUGGLER'S RUN



PlayStation.2

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SUNRISE PUBLICATIONS, INC

President
John Woodson

Publisher
Cathy Preston

EDITORIAL

Editor
Andrew McNamara

Senior Associate Editors
Paul Anderson
Andrew Reiner

Associate Editors
Jay Fitzloff
Erik Reppen
Matt Helgeson
Kristian Brogger

Copy Editors
Gabrielle Dane
Sarah Anderson

Web Editors
Justin Leeper
Matthew Kato

Mascot
Arthur

PRODUCTION

Art Director
Thomas Blustin

Production Director
Curtis Fung

Production Assistant
Rachel Gilles

ADVERTISING

Vice President Advertising
Richard A. Cihak
(952) 946-7256

National Advertising Sales Director
Kimberley Thompson-Benike
(952) 946-8159
Fax (952) 946-8155
10120 W. 76th Street
Eden Prairie, MN 55344-3728

CIRCULATION

Circulation/Marketing Manager
Vicky Valley
Customer Service Manager
(952) 946-7274

Customer Service Department
For change of address
or subscription inquiry only:
(952) 946-7266 Fax (952) 946-8155
or send correspondance to:
10120 W. 76th Street
Eden Prairie, MN 55344-3728
Attn: CIS Dept

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INFOGRAMES

EDITORS' FORUM

THE MAGAZINE THAT READS LIKE A MEAL

Welcome to the new and improved Game Informer. I hope you are as pleased with our redesign as we are (I never thought we could improve on perfection, but I guess miracles do happen). I realize that sometimes change is a little tough, especially when it's on as large a scale as this, but I think you'd have to agree that the end result is quite stunning.

Luckily, despite the rumors that were flying in last month's reviewer blurbs, the entire staff is still here, and we've even added a new PC player to help us keep up with the massive world of PC gaming that we will now be covering in full force. Many of the departments that you know and love are still here, just as we left them, but updated to fit our new style. And just to spice things up, we also added a couple of new departments, like GI Spy and Charts, that I'm sure you will enjoy.

The biggest change to the magazine, however, is our new approach to previews and reviews. Previews are now game-centric. In other words, we feel the days of which system you own, be it PC or console, are coming to an end. The game is about the game, not the system. So peruse the Previews section, find games you like, and I'm sure you'll find the means to play them.

Changes to the Reviews section are more radical, as we have removed the much-loved three reviewer system. In its place is a two reviewer system where you get in-depth thoughts from one reviewer, and then a second opinion to help you make a more informed buying decision. It may take a couple of reviews to get used to this, but I can assure you this new format will make it easier for you to find the games you want to play, and the stories much more entertaining.

There will be other improvements to the magazine in the coming months as we work out the kinks and implement new departments, so rest assured we are far from done. But remember this day. A new standard has been set. Game Informer is now the final word in computer and video games, and I think after you finish this issue, you will never look at video game magazines the same way again. Enjoy the new issue, and let me know what you think.*

Andy McNamara
Editor
andy@gameinformer.com

BEHIND THE SCENES AT GAME INFORMER

*For the regular readers of this column, I am sure you are aware that I have run two "normal" editor's letters in a row. Fear not, I will be back to my same old crabby-about-something form next month.

PAUL, THE GAME PROFESSOR

paul@gameinformer.com

So what do you think? Is this rebirth of Game Informer the bizomb or what? Even though I haven't seen my family in what seems like a year, I must say that all the hard work on this new issue was well worth it. Sure, it probably doesn't seem like playing a load of new video games is too hard, but the staff came together like a bunch of Boy Scouts going after their merit badge for fire building. For all the staff's labors, I promised them all a trip to Sam's Club for a bulk meat product of their choice – my treat. Hope you enjoy this new reading, and also be on the lookout for the new gameinformer.com.

REINER, THE RAGING GAMER

reiner@gameinformer.com

Before you turn the page, a warning. If you do not thoroughly enjoy every inch of the new Game Informer, I'm going to jump on a plane, take a taxi to your house, and destroy every precious object you hold sacred. If you try to stop me, I will toss your family pet into a blender, and mark my territory in every corner of the house. We poured our hearts out into this monstrous publication, and some of us even sustained injuries of the mental and physical nature. Jay can't stop drooling, Andy has a severe case of pink eye, and Matt is in diapers...again. Remember, we made this mag for you!

MATT, THE ORIGINAL GAMER

matt@gameinformer.com

DWM, 26, enjoys picnics, Bob Newhart albums, attending professional lumberjack competitions, and cough syrup. D/D Free, Xbox-curious, NS, LD, NHSWA, TODBISTG, knows way around a Dual Shock. ISO possible LTR with games that explore the "wildside" of computer entertainment. Beautiful graphics a plus, awesome gameplay a must. No Army Men, motocross games need apply. Let's get together and boot up a good time!

ERIK, THE PC JEDI

erik@gameinformer.com

Ah... it's a classic Game Informer month. For a while there, we had started to get used to that shiny yellow thing in the sky to the point where it almost didn't hurt our eyes anymore. The butt imprint in my chair was starting to go away. I even had time to go out and make a really stupid car purchase. I was beginning to worry that we might be losing our edge, but now that I've seen the way this issue has turned out, there is nothing like sleep dep and being in a hurry to make a mag with a lot of flavor. Welcome to the new GI. It hurt.

JAY, THE GONZO GAMER

jay@gameinformer.com

Many of you out there think all it takes to work around here is the ability to play games and jot down your thoughts. Well, after being in two near-fatal Skuda accidents, going on a liver damaging soda binge, having to read so much text one of my eyes swelled shut, and being isolated from human contact for so long I nearly suffered a mental breakdown – all in the quest to get this issue done in time – I'm here to say, you're right! That is all it takes! How foolish of me to forget. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going home to cry to mommy.

KRISTIAN, THE GAME DAWG

kristian@gameinformer.com

Hello, all. Kristian here. Yes, I am the new associate editor. Since I've started, everyone here's been really nice. Hazing hasn't gotten too bad. So far it's just been the shaving of the eyebrows, public humiliation, daily paddling...You know, the usual. After I'm done scrubbing all of the toilets in the building with a toothbrush at the end of the day, I take the 'Finder (my '88 Pathfinder) home for some R&R. Andy's pretty strict about how he likes his laundry done, so that usually takes me a couple of hours to do in the evening before bed.

PlayStation 2

湾岸 MIDNIGHT CLUB
STREET RACING

You know the rules, there are no rules.

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CUTTING EDGE SOUNDTRACK FROM SOME OF THE WORLD'S LEADING TECHNO/DRUM AND BASS ARTISTS - DOM AND ROLAND, DERRICK MAY AND SURGEON

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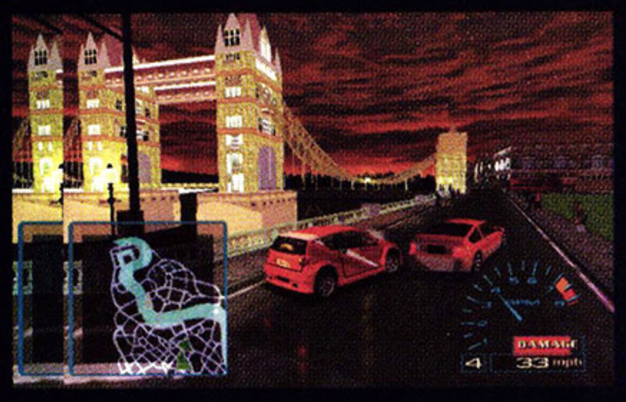

Win the pink slips of opposing players! Rise up through the ranks in the illicit world of the Midnight Club.

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Angel STUDIOS

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counterbalance

Manic Shadow

DEAR GI

THE VENOMOUS SNAKE

I just wanted to express my disgust with the outcome of the Video Game Deathmatch between Snake and Logan in the September issue. Are you people smokin' crack? Anyone with half a brain knows Snake would grind Logan into dust. What moron dreamed up this bogus battle? Get with it, guys. Snake rules!

C. Chesser
La Porte, TX

Most of you disagreed with the outcome of this match, and you've been very vocal in saying so. The author of this piece, Reiner, held a press conference to answer all your questions. Here's a snippet:

(The Raging One enters)
Crowd: Reiner! Boo! Reiner! Hiss!
Reiner: Uh hem...Before I answer any questions, I'd just like to give a shout out to my good friend X-Pac. Yo, whaz up, dog?!
Saint Paul Pioneer Press: Reiner, why didn't Solid Snake win the battle? The odds were in his favor.
Reiner: Cuz I say so.
Time Chronicles: Reiner, Solid Snake would never go down that quickly. A shot to the ass...really now?!
Reiner: I'm God. Poof! You dead.
World News: Reiner, what were you thinking?!
Reiner: YO, X-PAC!!!! Check dis out! Scratchy scratch da squeeky squeeze! Sausage and mushroom with extra cheese!

Uh...These were the highlights from the six hour conference, which ended with a stark naked Reiner being hauled away by the local police. Well, you heard him. Snake lost because he said so.

FINAL FANTASY MOVIE NOT FINAL FANTASY???

After reading your spot about the Final Fantasy movie trailer in the September '00 edition, I thought it might be worth a look. After downloading it, my first impression was, "Wow, this is going to be great." Everything I saw impressed me, especially the photo-realistic close up of Dr. Ross. Then I thought to myself, what does this have to do with Final Fantasy; any of them? Although the movie looks fantastic (I have been looking forward to its release ever since you guys first mentioned it) and I plan to go see it, I have to wonder, is Sony Pictures only using the Final Fantasy name to sell a movie? I love Final Fantasy and would be very disappointed if Square Soft sold the Final Fantasy name just to pull in some cash. I would be interested in hearing what you guys down there at GI think about it.

P.S.: Keep the pictures of Lucy Clarkson coming!

Blake Michener
Golden Valley, MN

A good majority of the GI staff said the same thing you did. The CG quality is very impressive, but right now it doesn't appear as though it ties into the existing Final Fantasy universe. Sony Pictures may have its name all over this project, but Square Soft is keeping it close to its heart. It is being produced by Square, and the script is penned by Square. Hopefully, the movie does justice to the long-running series. On the other hand, can the essence of Final Fantasy be captured within two hours?

SO HAPPY!!!

I just wanted to tell you, that from the bottom, bottom, bottom, bottom of my heart, I really, truly believe you are the best reviewers on the planet!!!! You have never let me down! When everyone else was making it seem like MGS was the "greatest game ever" you gave it the score that it rightfully deserved. When everyone else was praising the overrated Rayman 2, you guys gave it the exact review it deserved. When everyone else was giving Grandia all these wonderful reviews, you saw through its weak story and horrible characters. And last but definitely not least, when everyone else was praising Mario Party for its "great" multiplayer gameplay, you saw through its shallow, boring, you-only-win-by-luck gameplay. You guys are, hands down, the best damned video game magazine in the world. I'm so happy I'm a GI reader. On top of this, you have also published two of my letters in your Dear GI section. You guys rule! Can't wait 'till Spaceworld!

William Koscielniak
Chicago, IL (Vikings Suck!)

You know what, William? You're the best reader in the world! Everyone else reading this (yes, we mean you) can't hold a candle to you. We salute you, William! From the bottom, bottom, bottom, bottom, bottom, bottom of our hearts, we praise you! There will never be a greater reader than you! Really, your nose is so brown we should make a movie about you called William the Brown-Nosed Reader. Hey, William! Check out this bum! Want to kiss it?!

BREAKING UP IS HARD TO DO

What happened between Square and Nintendo? I know they "broke up", but why? Your magazine is the best, too. Thanks for making it for all helpless gamers like me!

David Broyles
Dallas, TX

After the Super Nintendo passed, it took Nintendo a great while to get the Nintendo 64 up and running. Square was on board and ready to make games. In our May 2000 issue we show pictures of a Final Fantasy test for N64. Seeing that this game would be way too big for a cartridge format, and that FMV wasn't possible at the time, Square turned tail and ran for the CD frontier of the PlayStation. Who knows? If the Nintendo 64 used a CD format, would Square still be on Mario's team? Sounds like a great episode of Quantum Leap!

VOLVO BURGERS

Here's a situation to ponder. It's a nice sunny day outside the GI offices, and Arthur, the GI mascot, is taking a stroll, hunting for a place to do his business. Finding Reiner's car is gone, he locates another spot. Before he can make his way over to Jay's car, a used Volvo comes hurtling at him. Erik's brakes have gone out again and he has come speeding out of control near Arthur. Unable to avoid hitting the poor pooch, Erik's car smashes into the defenseless doggie, sending pieces of Arthur flying everywhere around the immediate area. Realizing that your mascot is dead and that Erik has killed him...what would you guys do? I'm thinking shock therapy to the testicles.

Rob "Danger" Weber
Grosse Point, MI

You sick son of a...Arthur is good. You are bad. Never before has there been a pet quite like Arthur. He's well behaved. He doesn't stink. He sleeps a lot. And he doesn't eat that much. The only trouble we've had with our fuzzy friend was an incident where he crawled under Jay's desk and tried to eat a PlayStation power cable. Of course, Jay provoked him to do it. Other than this, Arthur

is a saint. He does what he wants and goes where he pleases. Speaking of which...where is Arthur? We haven't seen him in weeks. Erik????

DONTCHA KNOW?

Ok, here we go. I know you love numbered questions. So here are a few.

1. When is the Resident Evil movie coming out? I was really excited to hear they were making one when I bought RE 2 for PS-X. I haven't heard about it since. What's going on?

2. Will THQ make any more WWF games for DC? I was hyped when I heard about Royal Rumble having nine people in the ring at once...but two match options?! I thought that was horrible. When and if they do make another game will it have more gameplay options?

3. Will any of the great NES (yes, the first one) games be ported over to the DC for optimal graphics and unbelievable gameplay? Or are there any in production right now?

4. How old do you have to be to work at GI? I live pretty close to your headquarters in Minnesota. I'm just a couple cities over (Blaine) and I need a job.

5. How many times do I have to email you guys before you publish any of my letters? This has to be the fifteenth I've sent, and not one has made it into your awesome mag. What's going on? I've only seen one letter from Minnesota in a year.

Dustin
Blaine, MN

1. From what we understand, this film is more or less dead. The script was never finalized, and on George Romero's website (www.georgearomero.com) you can read about how close this movie was to shooting. Romero says, "We busted balls writing drafts of that screenplay. I'm talkin' marathons, seventy-two hours straight. I really wanted this project. I had directed a TV commercial for Res Evil II, and being on the set again with zombies (by Screamin' Mad George), I was hooked. Deep in my heart, I felt that Res Evil was a rip-off of Night of the Living Dead. I had no legal case, but I was resentful. And torn...because I liked the video game. I wanted to do the film partly because I wanted to say, 'Look here! This is how you do this s—t!'"

2. Do chickens lay eggs?

3. You may see sequels to great NES games, but other than classic collections like Midway's Greatest Arcade Hits, don't expect to see an old NES game with a few enhancements anytime soon. Your best bet is buying used product.

4. You weren't that kid with the Super Soaker were you? Hmm...Needless to say, we only accept applications from people over 18.

5. We open every email and/or letter sent. Your previous 14 letters were stupid.

Send your comments to
Game Informer.

Snail Mail:
Game Informer Magazine
Attn: Dear GI
10120 W. 76th Street
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

Email:
deargi@gameinformer.com

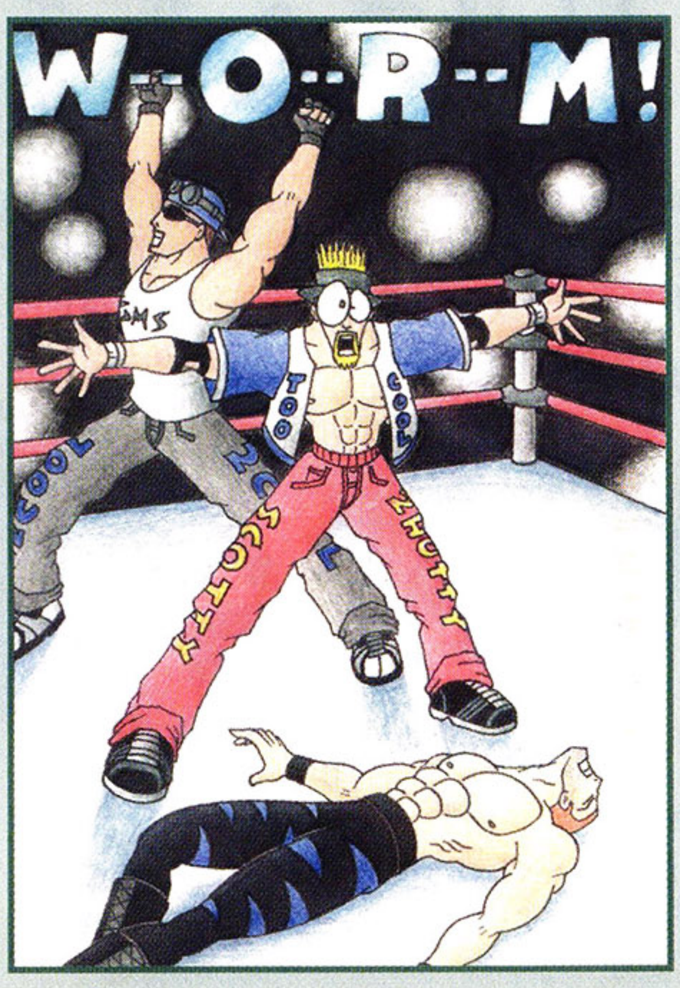
WWW
www.gameinformer.com

ENVELOPE ART

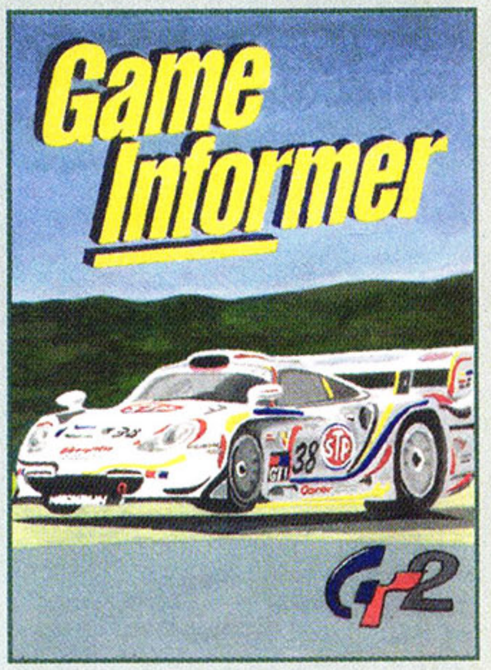
NOVEMBER WINNER!

Jason Rodriguez
Sith happens.

Enter the Game Informer Envelope Art Contest. All you need to do is draw, paint, scratch, spit, or carve the best darn envelope art you can think of and send it to us. Please include your name, phone number, and return address on the back of the envelope. If you're the monthly winner, we'll feature your work in GI and you'll receive a video game prize from the Game Informer vault.

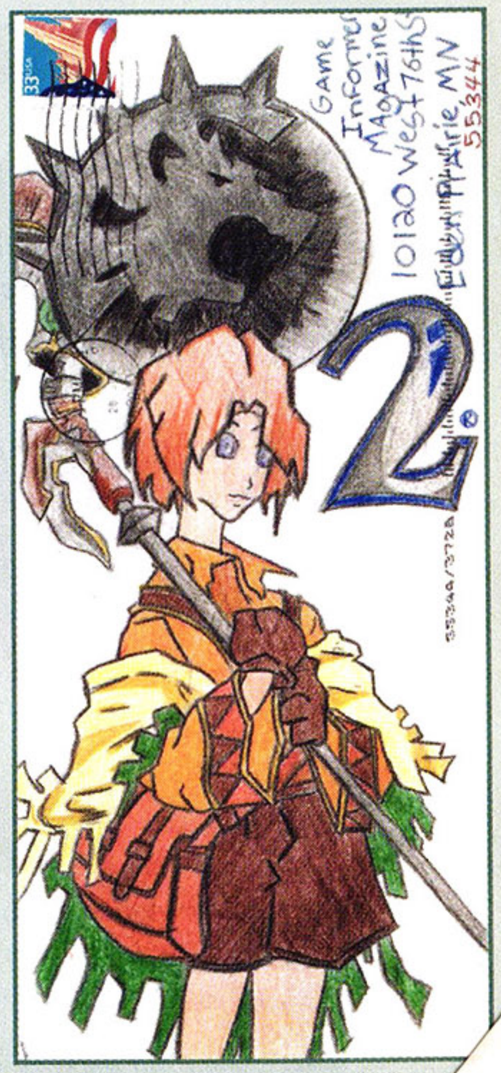


Josh Gilbert
The innovators...the originators...the master... percolators of cool!!!!



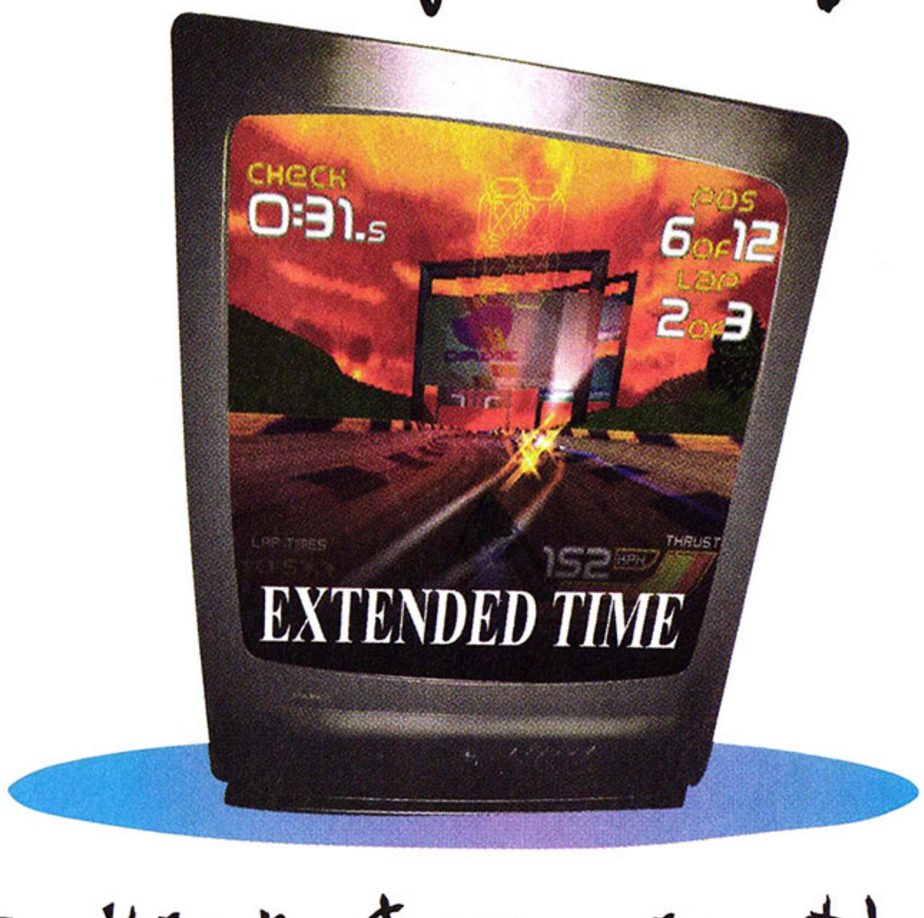
Grahm & Paul Lopinsky
We have the cover, now all we need is the game. Sony? Are you reading this?

Demetrius Clark
You'll never guess where this has been.

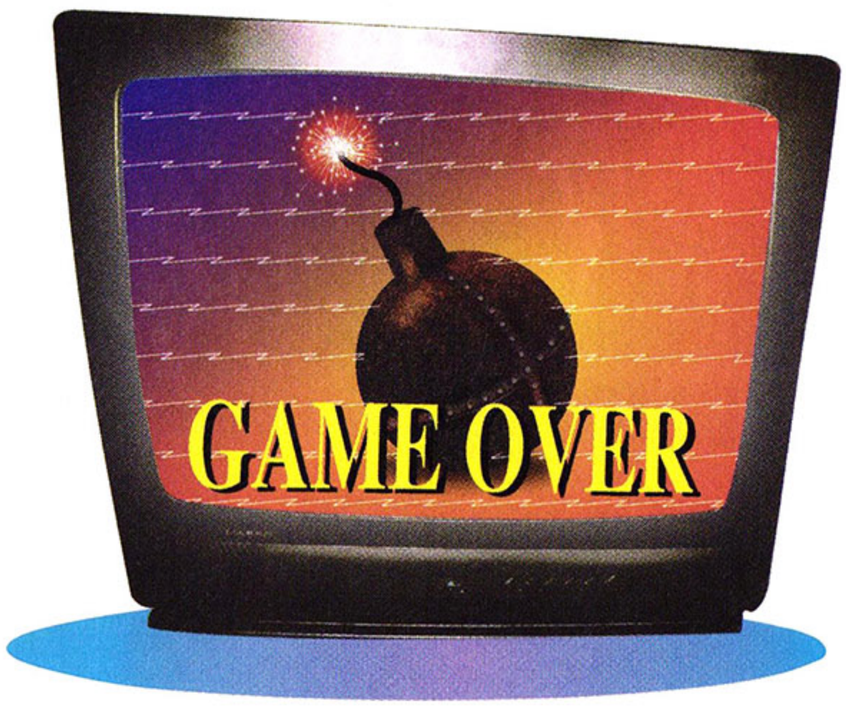


Ryan Delaboz
The biggest problem with being an adventurer is you can never get good hair products.

This is your game.



This is your game on the blink.



ANY QUESTIONS?

Dust and dirt can damage your game system. The result? Poor picture quality, fuzzy sound and slow or "buggy" game play. Cleaning your system and games regularly will maintain high quality gaming and ensure a longer product life. Player's Edge cleaning kits will keep you and your system in the game.

Game maintenance products available from Player's Edge:

Cleaning Kits for: NINTENDO® 64 • SUPER NINTENDO® • NINTENDO® • SEGA™ GENESIS™ • GAME BOY® • GAME GEAR™ • MULTIMEDIA & GAME CDs

Available at FuncoLand

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GI SPY

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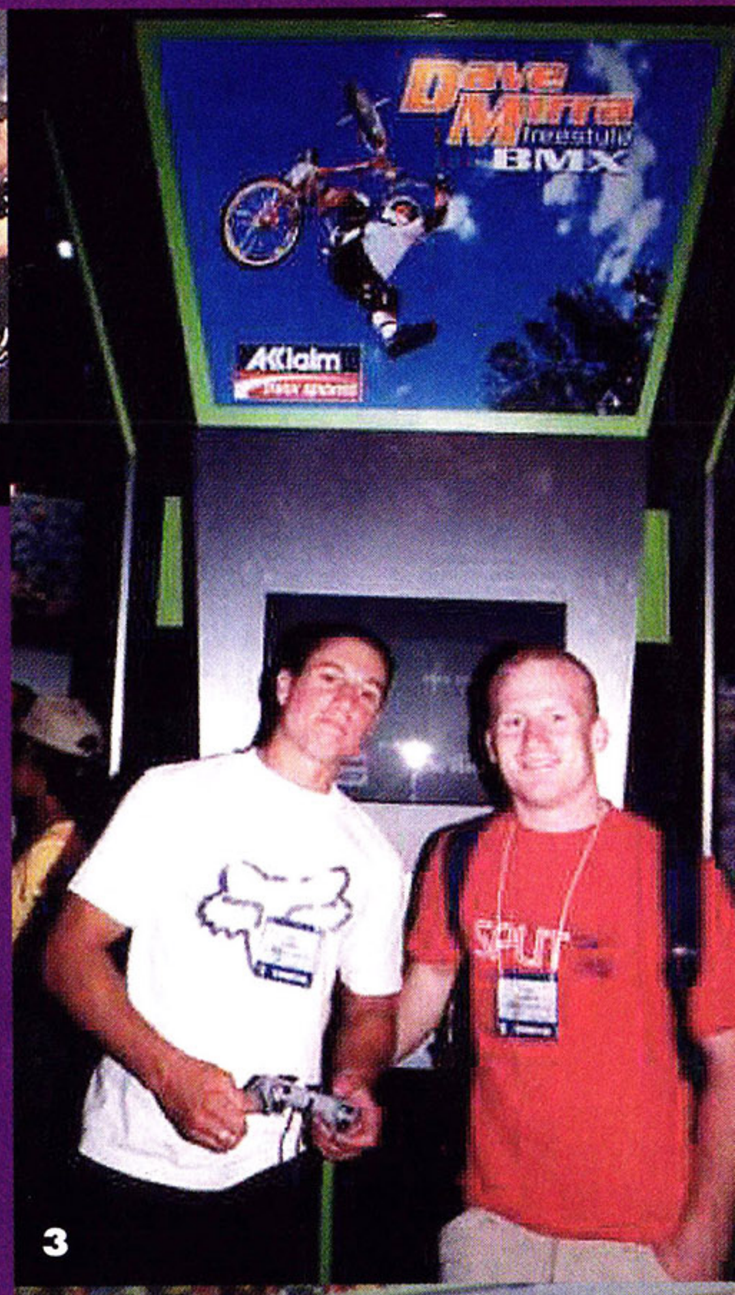

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CANDID PHOTOS FROM THE SEAMY UNDERBELLY OF THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY

(1) Pat Wilson from Weezer knows where the party is when he comes through town. Here he is (second from right) with the GI staff and former GI editor Jon Storm (middle) **(2)** Hopefully, every Gamecube will come complete with one of these vinyl clad hotties. **(3)** After severely beating a gaggle of junior high skateboarders in the parking lot, sexy BMX jockies Dave Mirra and Ryan Nyquist enjoy a game of Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX. **(4)** GI Web Editor Matthew Kato is ready for the checkered flag at Infogrames recent Gamer's Day. **(5)** Reiner and Jay help train Rena Mero (aka ex-WWF superstar Sable) for her new job as a Funcoland salesperson. Apparently, Mero is suffering from a rare disease that has turned her head a different color from the rest of her body.**(6)** "Smell my pits, you naughty boys!" exclaims Capcom PR honcho Matt Atwood as he gets some cuddle-time with Andy and Reiner on the GI couch. **(7)** Jay tries to settle some of his casino debts by squaring off against UFC legend Andre "The Chief" Roberts. **(8)** With a 2-7 record, wrestler Helmut Van Strauss (Game Informer Web Editor Justin Leeper) is getting used to this position. Here, Helmut takes a beating at the hands of Robbie Thunder. Jawohl!

7

8

GI NEWS

DIABLO II EXPANSION ANNOUNCED

Blizzard Entertainment recently unveiled an expansion for its blockbuster action/RPG, ***Diablo II***. Slated for release in the first half of next year, this expansion, – tentatively entitled, ***The Lord of Destruction*** – will feature two new character classes and a new, final act, as well as new monsters and a multitude of items.

As far as the character classes go, the expansion will deliver the Assassin and the Druid. The Assassin specializes in martial arts and she doesn't use magic directly, but through enchanted items that mimic elemental powers. On the other hand, the Druid is capable of cool elemental powers and also has the ability to shapeshift into a number of different animals. The Druid and Assassin will also have a number of new class-specific items.

The Lord of Destruction will pick up directly where the previous game left off. More specifically, you will follow Baal, Diablo's brother, as he attempts to corrupt the Worldstone and unleashed the forces of hell upon the mortal plane. This new act introduces the Barbarian Highlands, as well as a reported ten new monsters.

No specific release date has been set for *The Lord of Destruction*, but players should expect this expansion sometime next spring.

WWF HALL OF FAMERS RETURN TO THE RING?

The highly anticipated **Nintendo 64** wrestling game, ***WWF No Mercy***, may include some of the World Wrestling Federation's past grappling greats.

Game Informer has learned that **THQ** is considering the addition of a number of old-timers to the game's huge wrestler roster. Rumor has it that Andre The Giant is a definite inclusion, but THQ would provide no comment on this subject.

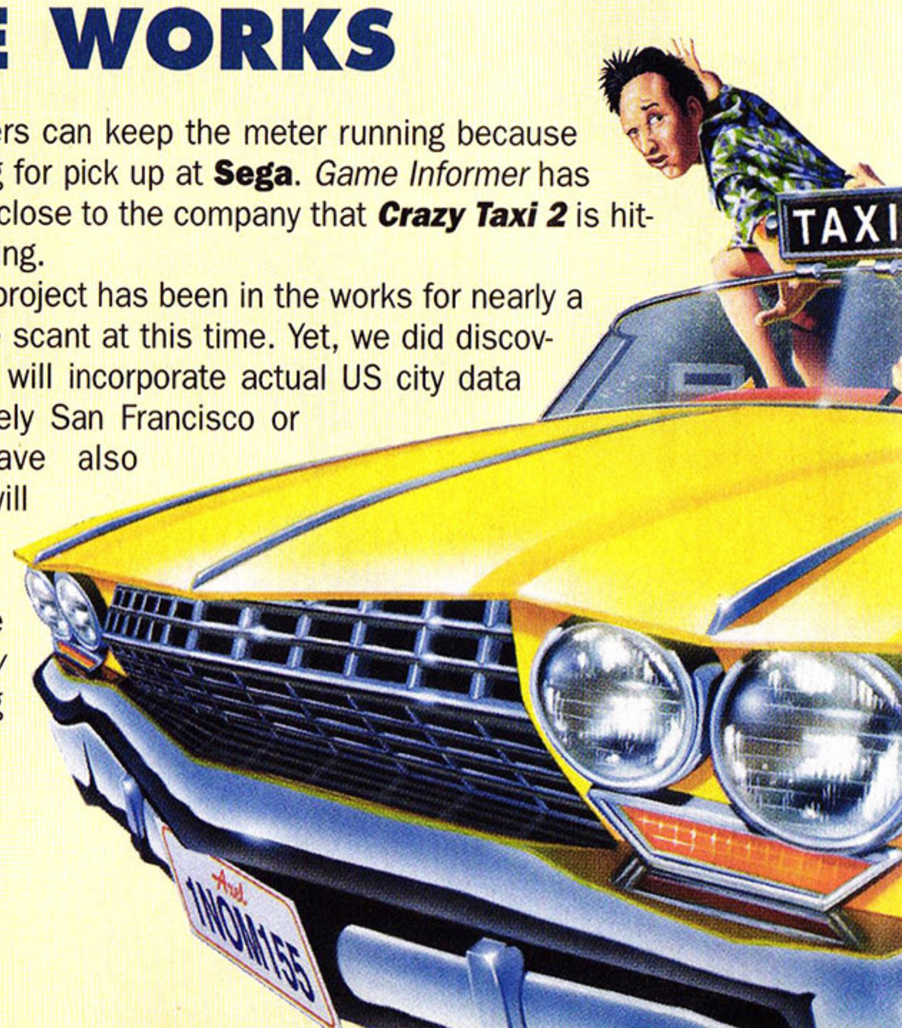
Game Informer says, "Bring on Classy Freddy Blassie and Jimmy Superfly Snuka!"

CRAZY TAXI 2 IN THE WORKS

Dreamcast owners can keep the meter running because a new fare is waiting for pick up at **Sega**. *Game Informer* has heard from sources close to the company that ***Crazy Taxi 2*** is hitting the DC next spring.

This semi-secret project has been in the works for nearly a year, and details are scant at this time. Yet, we did discover that *Crazy Taxi 2* will incorporate actual US city data into the game – likely San Francisco or New York. We have also learned the game will not support any online capabilities.

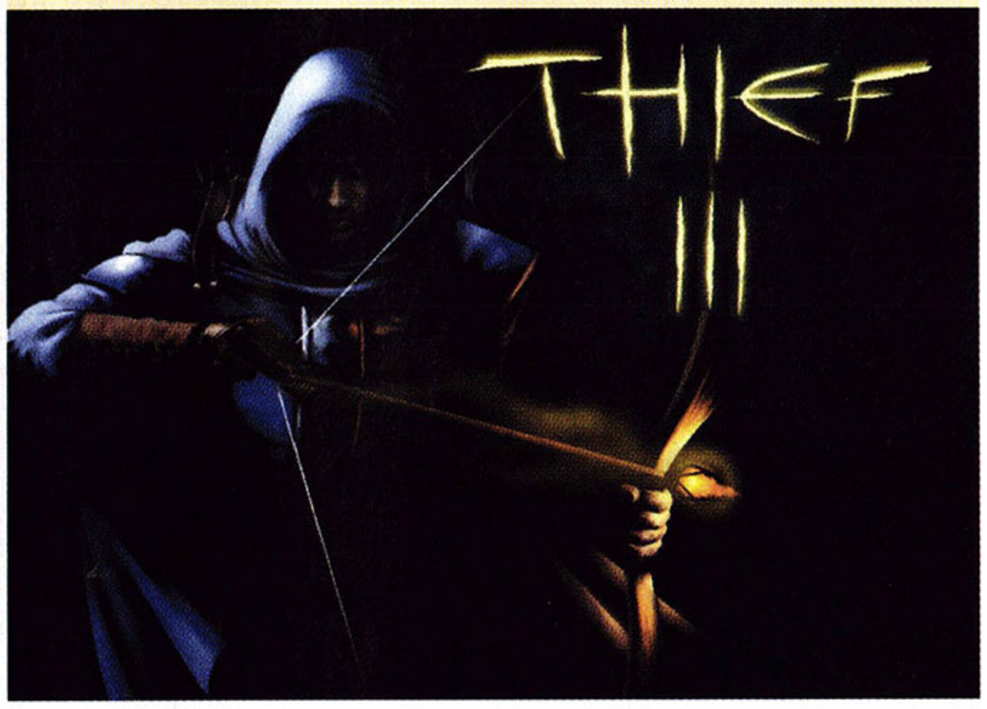
Look for more information on *Crazy Taxi 2* in the coming months.



THIEF 3 IN DEVELOPMENT FOR PC & PS2

Not to worry, ***Thief*** fans, **Eidos** has revealed that ***Thief III*** is in development for **PC** and **PlayStation 2**. With the recent demise of **Looking Glass Studios**, the developers of the previous two Thief titles, the continuation of this popular series was in question. However, project leader **Warren Spector** revealed the existence of *Thief III*. Although *Thief III* is in the very early development stages, Spector said that the team of developers behind the title would attempt to maintain the integrity of the previous *Thief* games.

No official release date for *Thief III* has been announced, although we speculate that it won't appear until next fall.



RESIDENT EVIL ZERO MOVES TO GAMECUBE, N64 VERSION CANCELLED

After some debate, we now know ***Resident Evil Zero's*** **Nintendo 64** development has been cancelled. The good news is, that *RE Zero* has been confirmed for the **Nintendo Gamecube**.

When we last heard from *RE Zero*, its previous console master, N64, left the game completely high and dry. However, news of *RE Zero's* Gamecube development was brought to light by a number of Japanese sources.

No release date or price has been given, but with plenty of time behind the project already, and plenty still to go, we should be seeing this game for the platform's launch next fall.

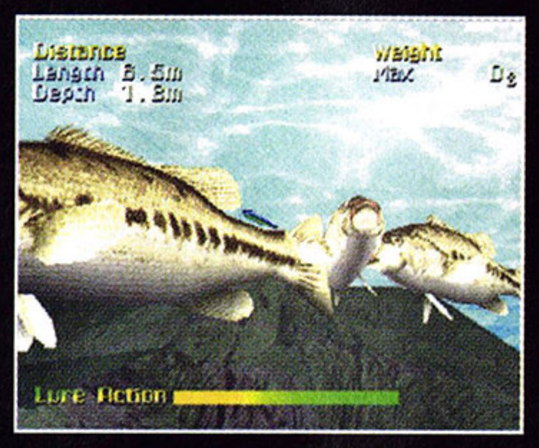
HALF-LIFE TO GO TO DREAMCAST IN TWO FORMS

Havas Interactive will release two **Dreamcast** versions of the highly acclaimed first-person shooter ***Half-Life***. One will support **SegaNet** online play via the Dreamcast, one will not.

The first version, due out on November 1, will feature an exclusive Dreamcast mission, as well as new, highly-detailed character models. Titled ***Half-Life: Blue Shift***, this version will not have any online multiplayer capabilities.

The second rendition, which will have full online capabilities, is not due until January of next year. It will also include the Half-Life mods, as well as ***Counter-Strike*** and ***Team Fortress Classic*** – two of the most popular and addictive online shooters ever to hit the gaming world.

ACTION BASS



After a hard day of fishing under the sun or competing in a tournament, you look with awe at the trophies your angling skills have awarded you. In this action-packed arcade style fishing game, the player can either spend time leisurely casting across lake waters waiting for a bite on the line or they can enter an intense fishing competition where the only fish that matters is the biggest catch of the day. Along the way players will face all sorts of challenges including shifting water conditions, unstable weather and even more skilled opponents as he continually attempts to outwit the wily bass during each season of the year. Amazingly realistic fish behavior ensures that no fish is caught without a fight and that reeling in a winner delivers optimum angling action excitement.

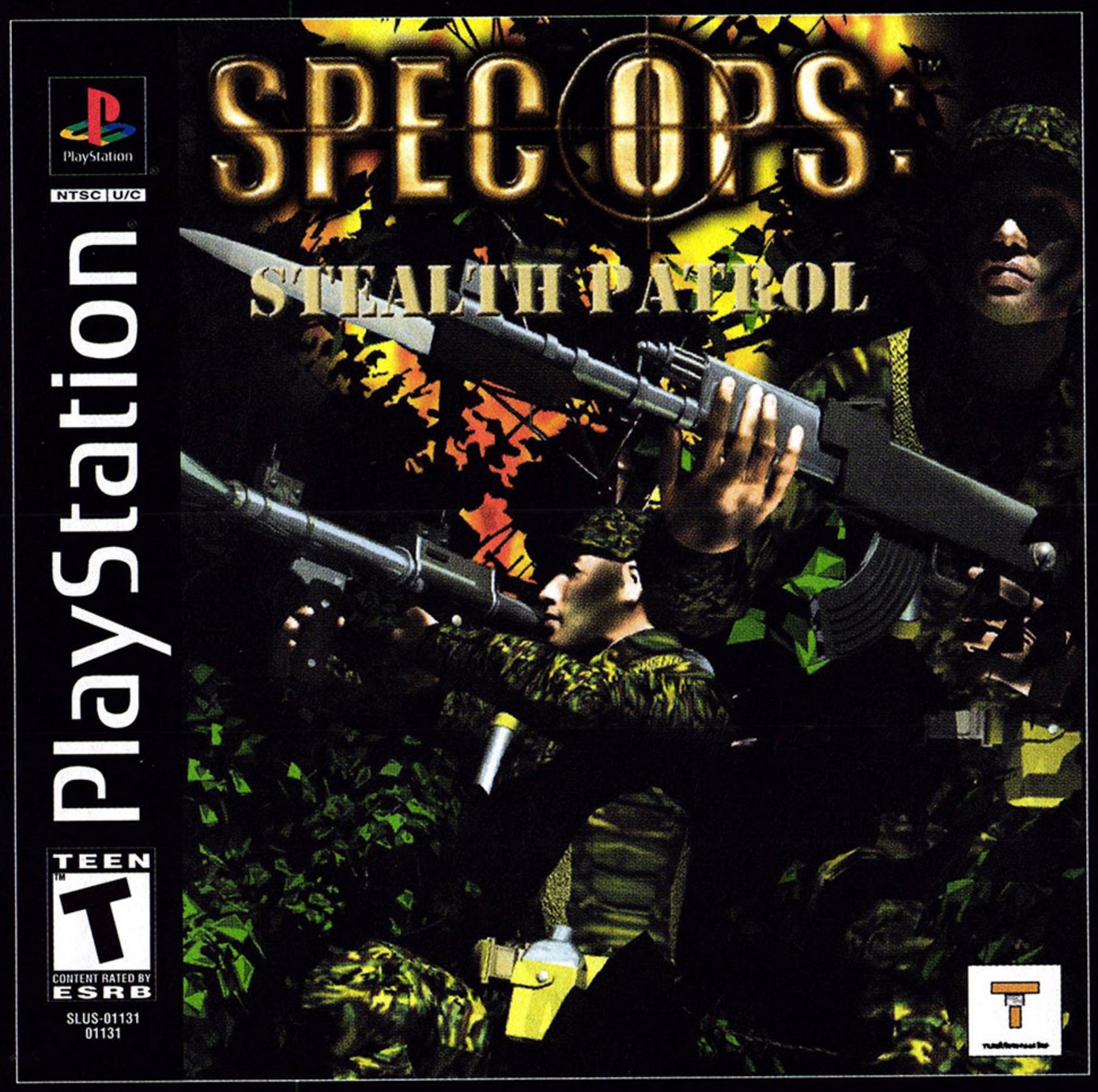
- Tournament-style Challenge Mode, free-wheeling Free Mode, and an Extra Bonus Mode.
- Lure Action Gauge allows the player to monitor lure movement easily.
- Enjoy watching fish (up to five heaviest) you brought back in the Aquarium Mode.
- Five diverse lures are available at the beginning, covering a wide range of water conditions and lure movements. More lures will be available as the player gains experience.
- Wide variety of "lure action" possible to attract bass, some requiring retrieving or rod movements only, others requiring skillful combination of the two.

$9.99* GOT GAME? $9.99*

*Suggested Retail Price

WWW.TAKE2GAMES.COM

SPEC OPS:
STEALTH PATROL



Welcome to the US Army Rangers, one of the toughest and most elite of the world's military task forces. Your main objective is to control your team of Rangers and eliminate opponent targets while completing mission sub-tasks in the time allotted. Choose between stealth or all out frontal assault- it's up to you. 3D action, time pressure and realistic combat will keep you begging for more.
Immersed in huge, outdoor 3D environments you and your team members must successfully execute your tasks which revolve around several different mission objectives including reprisal attacks, seize and destroy missions, counter-terrorist attacks and raid and destroy missions. Each environment is unique, not only in look and feel, but in game play as well. With the emphasis on action and realism, navigate your team with guns blazing or silently under the cover of darkness across landscapes of thick jungle, barren desert, arctic tundra and dense forest.

Do you have what it takes? Will you be able to complete your mission, though you may be the lone survivor?

- :: 5 intense mission campaigns each with numerous sub-missions based on real activities carried out by the US Army Rangers
- :: An arsenal to choose from including shotguns, grenades, machine guns, sniper rifles and more
- :: 3 difficulty levels - Private (Easy), Corporal (Medium), Sergeant (Difficult) offers massive replay value
- :: In the 2 Ranger option the player has simultaneous control of 2 Rangers
- :: Create an inventory filled with hi-tech equipment to aid the Rangers in their tasks - GPS navigation for moving through dense landscape, tripwire mines to booby trap enemies, nightvision goggles for stealth accuracy, med kits for injury repair and more

$9.99* GOT GAME? $9.99*
*Suggested Retail Price
WWW.TAKE2GAMES.COM

BALL BREAKERS

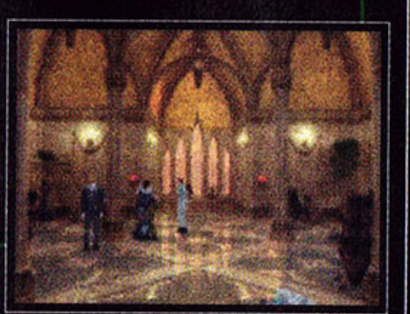
Evil is spreading like a vine and only you can stop it.

SPIN JAM

Ultra-addictive arcade action puzzler!!!!!!!!!!

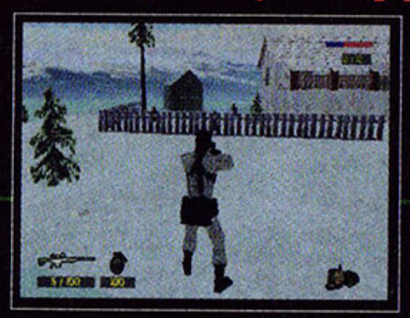
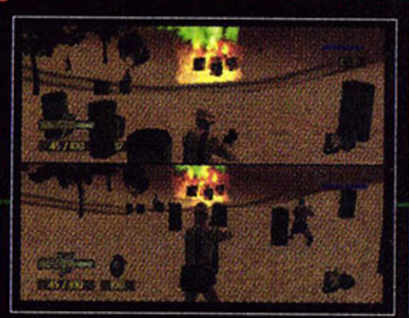
MARTIAN GOTHIC

Horror on an intergalactic scale!!



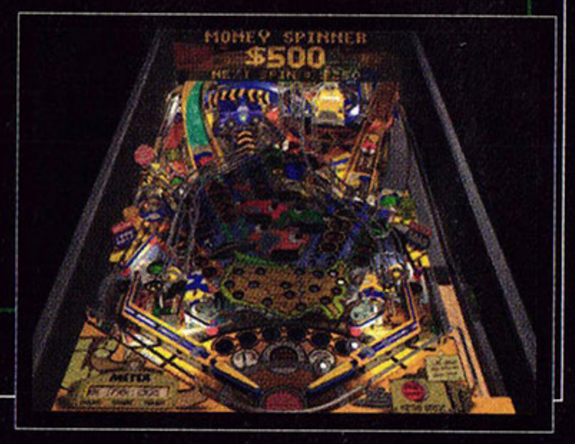
SPEC OPS: STEALTH PATROL

The enemy is expecting you tomorrow. You're already there!

PRO-PINBALL
BIG RACE USA

Pro Pinball: Big Race USA delivers more adrenaline-pumping action than your brain can handle!



$9.99* GOT GAME? $9.99*

*Suggested Retail Price

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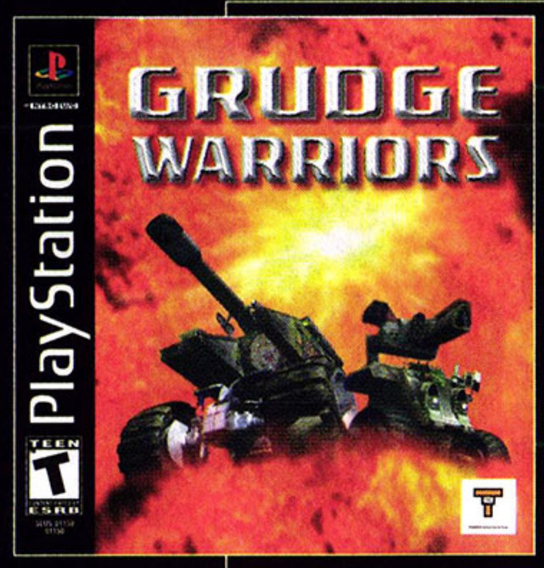
SPEEDBALL 2100

Extreme sports have been taken to the next Level!



GRUDGE WARRIORS

There is no such thing as friendly fire.

FORD RACING

Pulse pounding white knuckle action of ford racing is here!!

PRO-PINBALL
FANTASTIC JOURNEY

Steam powered time travel will whisk you away into the world of pinball.

* Suggested Retail Price=$9.99.

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PRODUCTS RANGE FROM EVERYONE TO TEEN
E-T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

TAKE2 interactive

PlayStation

$9.99* GOT GAME? $9.99*

*Suggested Retail Price

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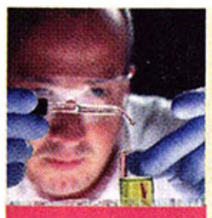


R&D

Game Informer's research and development operatives search the globe, seeking out the untapped licenses that will become tomorrow's killer games. If you have any great ideas for games of the future, be sure to drop us a line. Maybe we'll use our godlike power over the video game industry to turn you into a millionaire – or just steal your idea.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Square might be the reigning kings of role-playing games, but we must admit that this lengthy retelling of the life of the Prince of Peace would make for the best RPG ever. Think about it – The New Testament has it all. A troubled loner (Jesus) blessed with magical powers and flowing hair seeks to save his persecuted people (the Hebrews) from an evil empire. Although his temper sometimes lands him in hot water (throwing the money-changers from the temple), his kind-hearted nature means he's always ready to help those in need (anyone hungry for fish and bread?). He meets up with a disparate band of followers (the 12 Apostles), who are ready to follow him until the end. Along the way he battles his inner demons, an evil King (Pontius Pilate), and even finds a love interest (Mary Magdalene). Despite being betrayed by someone close to him (Judas), our hero is triumphant in the end, saving humanity from certain doom. Have the Pope's people call our people, because this license is a sure-fire hit!

NAME THAT GAME

This early point-and-click PlayStation title (you know, the kind that came in those great big boxes) was based on a popular series of fantasy novels by Terry Pratchett. Features voice-overs by Monty Python alum Eric Idle.

Answer on page 27.

TOP 10 DVDS TO GET FOR YOUR PLAYSTATION 2

10 How Stella Got Her Groove Back

9 Killer Condom: Special Edition

8 Love and Basketball

7 Addams Family Values

6 Cool Runnings

5 Tango and Cash

4 Bon Jovi: Live From London

3 Blues Brothers 2000: Collector's Edition

2 Candyman 3: Day of the Dead

1 Cannonball Run II

Game Informer is looking for your Top Five favorite games. Please send your Top Fives to:

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

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

DEVELOPER TOP 5

MATT WHITING
Los Angeles, CA

1 Gran Turismo – PS-X

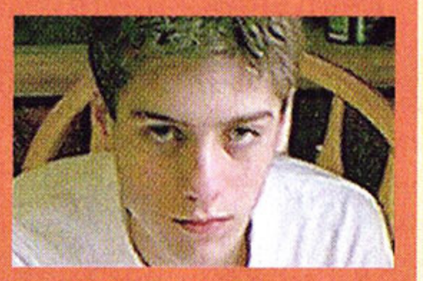
2 Mario Kart 64 – N64

3 Super Puzzle Fighter 2 Turbo – PS-X

4 Dance Dance Revolution – PS-X

5 Power Stone – DC

Matt is Insomniac Games' Rocket Scientist and just completed work on Spyro 3



READER TOP 5

NICK MALIK
Marblehead, MA

1 Chrono Cross – PS-X

2 The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past – SNES

3 Chrono Trigger – SNES

4 Final Fantasy III – SNES

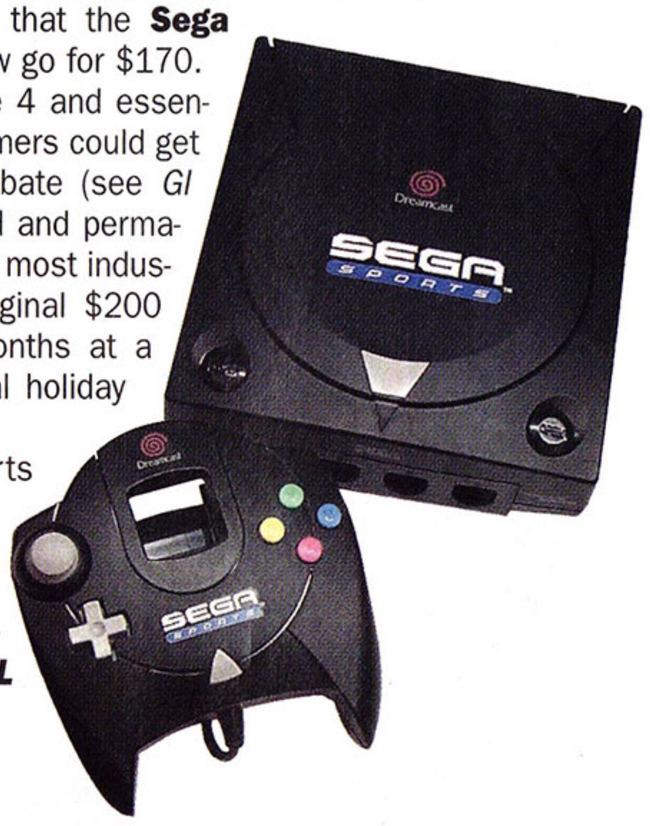
5 GoldenEye – N64

DREAMCAST DROPS $50 – PERMANENTLY

Sega has made it official. The **Dreamcast** is now priced at $150. This pricing was made effective on August 31 – the day Sega's previous $50 rebate offer expired. Sega also announced that the **Sega Sports Dreamcast Bundle** would now go for $170.

The rebate program began on June 4 and essentially marked the price drop, as consumers could get the Dreamcast for $150 with the rebate (see *GI News*, July '00). The newly announced and permanent price drop came as no surprise to most industry observers as returning to the original $200 price seemed illogical after three months at a lower price – especially as the crucial holiday retail season approaches.

On the other hand, the Sega Sports Dreamcast Bundle was originally announced with a $220 price tag (see *GI News*, September '00), and its price reduction was a pleasant surprise since it comes bundled with both ***NFL 2K*** and ***NBA 2K***.



GOVERNMENT REPORT FINDS VIOLENT GAMES MARKETED AT KIDS

A report released in September from the **Federal Trade Commission** and the **Department of Justice** found that the motion picture, music recording, and computer and video game industries market and advertise violent entertainment material to children and teenagers. The report set off angry congressional hearings in Washington on the subject and spawned numerous reports from major media.

Looking specifically into the video game industry, the 115-page report introduced some interesting data from the FTC's investigation of game publishers and the way violent games are advertised and marketed:

> *"Of the 118 electronic games with a Mature rating for violence the Commission selected for its study, 83, or 70 percent, targeted children under 17. The marketing plans for 60 of these, or 51 percent, expressly included children under 17 in the target audience. Documents for the remaining 23 games showed plans to advertise in magazines or on television shows with a majority or substantial under-17 audience."*

Based on its findings, the FTC recommended the gaming industry establish and further extend appropriate measures to prohibit the marketing of Mature-rated software to children, as well as continue to educate consumers and retailers regarding the games' rating system.

Of course, the report also stirred the legislature in this important election year, and politicians clamored for congressional action to institute stiff penalties for companies and retailers who sell and market violent games to children.

While the debate continues, *Game Informer* must point out that no judgement, ban, or law has been enacted to eliminate violent video games. Even though this report and subsequent Washington hoopla excites our emotions as gamers, we believe that the ultimate outcome will have little effect on the games we play, but rather on the way games are advertised and sold.

Still, **Gamers' National Party** leader, **Paul Anderson**, summed it up best by saying, "Frag the Fat Cats! Just think of all the money that went into this study, that'd buy us all a mess of PlayStation games."

For a look at the full report, go to – http://www.ftc.gov/reports/violence/vioreport.pdf

PS2 RED FACTION SHOWING ITS STUFF

Newly acquired **THQ** development house **Volition** is busy these days. Not only is it completing work on its **PlayStation 2** and **PC** RPG, ***Summoner***, the company is also working on a promising first-person shooter known as ***Red Faction***.

Red Faction is not scheduled for release until next spring, but we just had to give you a look at these newly released screens.

THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UGLY

GOOD – When it comes to the World Wide Web, the motto of *Game Informer* magazine is, "Self Promotion!" Not really, but with a couple of wrestling fanatics on the staff and the most imitated – and percolated – video game wrestling coverage on the Internet, we must direct you to our website – **www.gameinformer.com**. Not only will you find extensive coverage of ***WWF SmackDown 2: Know Your Role*** and ***WWF No Mercy***; there are daily news updates, codes, and a bunch of other stuff for the typical jabroni.

WWF SmackDown 2 – www.gameinformer.com/previews/preview_detail.cfm?ITEM_ID=5522

WWF No Mercy – www.gameinformer.com/previews/preview_detail.cfm?ITEM_ID=5456

BAD, UGLY – **Midway Games**' chairman and CEO **Neil Nicastro** put the current state of Midway very bluntly when the company announced its quarterly financial statement.

"Most of the games Midway has released over the last several months have been mediocre," Nicastro told industry analysts. "We sometimes make bad decisions when we choose quantity over quality, and we recognize that has been a problem in the past."

Game Informer has also recognized the same trends that Nicastro described – maybe we saw it a little earlier than he did.

UGLY – **Intel** was forced to recall the **1.13GHz Pentium III** chips the company shipped on July 31 because of a problem that could cause certain applications to freeze.

GOOD – **Electronic Arts** continues to heavily support the **PlayStation 2**, and reportedly is working on a conversion of ***Quake 3***. EA licensed the engine from **id Software** and is using it for the PS2 *Bond* shooter, ***The World Is Not Enough***.

UGLY – Hard to believe, but many of our readers actually believed that members of the staff had been fired and/or quit to pursue careers in ferret farming, curd hocking, politics, and following weight watchers. Kids, we can't emphasize this enough; don't do drugs.

LOOSE TALK

Wherever there's a juicy rumor in the industry, Game Informer experts are on it like a fly on stink. If loose lips are spraying hot gossip, we're sucking up the secret saliva and drooling it all over this section. Loose Talk exposes inside rumors for all to see. These leads may turn out to be 100% untrue, but then again, they could also be dead honest, and you've just learned about them months before anyone else!

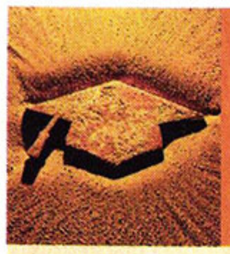
Sources at LucasFilm have hinted at several game ideas loosely based around several key scenes in 2002's highly anticipated film, Star Wars: Episode II. The words "Dark Jedi" have come up on several occasions, including an interesting tidbits about a character named "Darth Tyranus". Thus far, it sounds like Episode II games will release on Gamecube, PC, PlayStation 2, and Xbox.

Industry insiders close to Eidos Interactive report Fear Effect: Retro Helix will feature the first lesbian scene in a video game. Who are the love struck vixens? Hana, the star of the original, is rumored to fall head over heels with newcomer Rain. Next up, Mario and Wario.

According to an Eidos Interactive spokesman, video games, favorite female spelunker will make her PlayStation 2 debut in a way you've never seen her before. Edgier and cloaked in darkness, Lara Croft won't be so sweet and petite. Apparently, events taking place in Tomb Raider Chronicles will forever change the personality of this hard-working gal.

In 2001 expect to see Ready 2 Rumble: Round 3, WWF SmackDown 3, Syphon Filter 3, Dino Crisis 3, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 3, Rayman 3, Grand Theft Auto 3, Bust-A-Groove 3, Monster Rancher 3, Tenchu 3, D3, Grandia III, Driver 3, and Dead Or Alive 3.

Tickled to death by the success of Spider-Man, Activision has reportedly given Neversoft the go ahead to begin work on a PlayStation 2 and Xbox sequel.



VIDEO GAME TRIVIA

Judging by that shirt you've got on, you're obviously a geek. Whoa!!! Settle down! If you think you can prove us wrong, then take this quiz and show the world you're not a geeky little gaming troll. Just answer every question wrong...if you can, and we're sure the second you walk out that door (and change that shirt), you'll blend in with all the cool cats in the litterbox. If you want your geekdom to permeate through your pores, answer all ten questions correctly, and you'll be just as worthless and dorky as us. Either way, good luck!!!

Question 1: Funky and fresh, Dee Jay has walloped the video game industry from San Diego to the Brooklyn Zoo. What game is he from?
A. Bust A Groove 2
B. Street Fighter Alpha 3
C. King of Fighters 98
D. Wu Tang II: Da 39th Chamber

Question 2: Which of these scenarios never took place in a Final Fantasy game?
A. Some white-haired dude stabs your gal with a really long sword.
B. Everybody jumps aboard a flying boat.
C. A party member is forced to sing an opera concert.
D. A gigantic sperm whale leaps from the sea, shooting lasers out of its eyes, destroying your home town, then spits plankton in your main character's eye.

Question 3: Which sassy development studio is developing Crash Bash?
A. Eurocom
B. Naughty Dog
C. Insomniac Games
D. Acclaim Entertainment

Question 4: In Legend of Dragoon, what does Dart call the evil beast that ruined his childhood?
A. The Shadow Beast
B. One of God's Fallen Angels
C. The Black Monster
D. A Depressed Low Life With A Cartoon Series Worse Than Louie Anderson's

Question 5: Michael Jackson is not in:
A. Michael Jackson's Moonwalker
B. Space Channel 5
C. Altered Beast
D. Ready 2 Rumble: Round 2

Question 6: Other than the name, which of these titles is nothing like the original Tetris?
A. Tetris Attack
B. Tetris DX
C. Tengen Tetris
D. Tetris Plus

Question 7: Tenchu 2's main man, Rikimaru, talks with a slight lisp. "I will avwenge my fwamily." He developed this alteration when:
A. Assassin Shin Hi rammed his head into a metal pole.
B. He stepped in front of a swinging blade to save Ayame.
C. A panda bear jumped him and bit his lip.
D. Game Informer editors were dared to sniff glue.

Question 8: In Super Return of the Jedi, several well recognized faces were available as playable characters. Which one of these star hoppers could you control?
A. Wicket C. Boba Fett
B. Yoda D. Aunt Beru

Question 9: In Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, how do the humans protect themselves from the vampire menace?
A. They have imprisoned the blood god and threaten to take his life if they are harmed again.
B. They cover their skin in deer scent, then hide in trees.
C. They build their cities on islands surrounded by vast pools of water.
D. They wear plastic fangs and blend into the vampire surroundings.

Question 10: The two playable characters in Nights: Into Dreams are?
A. Elis and Claire
B. Gill and Reala
C. Elliot and Claris
D. Gen and Roa

SCORE	RANK
0	Capable of getting a date
1 - 3	In-the-closet gamer
4 - 6	Will inflict bodily harm to stay home and play games
7 - 9	In favor of cerebral game implants
10	Full on Nerdosaurus Rex

Video Game Trivia Answers:

1. B	2. D	3. A	4. C	5. C
6. A	7. D	8. A	9. C	10. C

EARTHBOUND 64 GOES 6 FEET UNDER

Nintendo has announced the indefinite suspension in the production of ***Earthbound 64*** – known as ***Mother 3*** in Japan. Apparently, Nintendo has too much on its plate to commit fully to the production of the game.

No word on when or if Nintendo will resume production. It seems Earthbounders will just have to wait a while longer. There is still the possibility Nintendo will shift *Earthbound* to the **Gamecube**.

UNIVERSAL AND HAVAS STRIKE DEAL FOR SPYRO

Havas has made a three-year deal with **Universal** for the fourth installment of the ***Spyro the Dragon*** series. The game will be developed for multiple platforms, including the **PlayStation 2**, **Xbox**, **PC**, and **Game Boy Advance**.

Spyro has been a staple of the PlayStation repertoire for a long time, and has been a heavy hitter for the system. The *Spyro* PlayStation trilogy will wrap up this year with ***Spyro 3: Year of the Dragon***. **Insomniac Games**, the developers of the *Spyro* series, will no longer be involved with the continuation of the franchise.

Spyro the Dragon IV is due out in spring 2002 if all goes according to plan.

DATA FILE

➤ In a move responding to parents', senators', and general know-nothings' fear of an epidemic of "video game violence," **Kmart** and **Wal-Mart** have announced a new check out policy designed to prevent kids from buying Mature-rated games.

➤ **Nintendo** plans to dig **Pokémon's** hooks even deeper into the consumer landscape with the announcement of ten worldwide Pokémon stores next year. Already holding down the fort in Tokyo and Osaka since 1998, New York and London look to be the first locales for this new batch of **Pokémon Centers**, with a gradual spreading out from there.

➤ **Namco** is building new arcade hardware inspired by **PlayStation 2**. Called **System 246**, ***Soul Calibur 2*** will be one of the first titles for it. Much like Namco's older **System 11** board that made for easy porting of arcade games onto **PlayStation**, System 246 will likely make the PlayStation 2 version of SC2 a snap.

➤ **Rockstar** and **Take-Two** have now added Japan's ***Surfroid*** game to its mix of **PlayStation 2** games that include ***Smuggler's Run*** and ***Midnight Club***. *Surfroid* will be retitled ***Surfing H30*** when it comes to these shores in mid-November. It will also include the fingerboard peripheral that fits over your analog sticks, allowing for fluid play.

➤ **Sony** is working its factory force to the bone for future North American and European **PlayStation 2** owners. Sony is cracking the whip to hit a target of 1 million PS2s per month, starting in September. Will it be enough?

➤ **Sony** has just acquired **RTIME, Inc.**, a privately held Internet and broadband company. **RTIME** will aid **Sony Computer Entertainment America** in developing a backend to its proposed **PlayStation 2** broadband network.

➤ **Activision** is working to secure the rights to a Japanese **PlayStation 2** game known as ***Sky Odyssey***. This flight game that appears to be a combination of stunts and racing should appear in the US sometime next year.

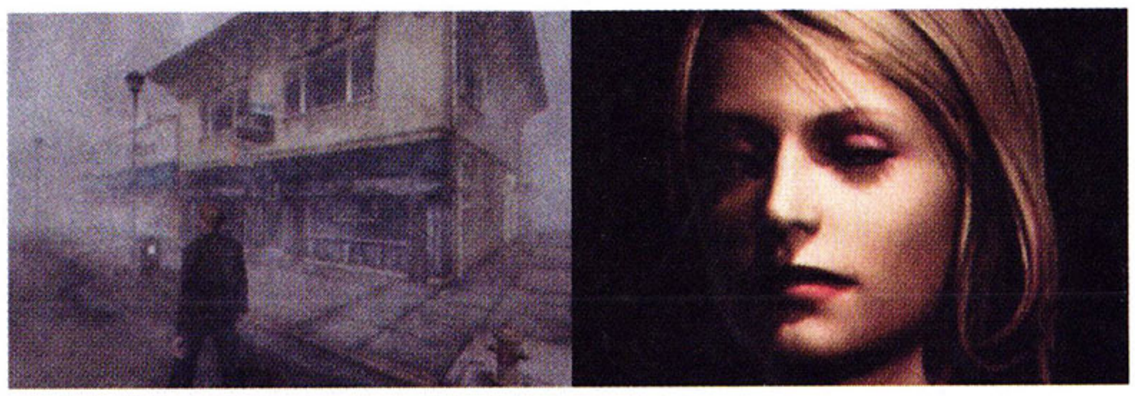
➤ **Sega** will release ***Sega WorldWide Soccer 2K1*** in Europe sometime in November. Sega has yet to announce whether this sports tile will make it to the States.

Name That Game Answer:

Terry Pratchett's Discworld

SILENT HILL 2 FOR PS2

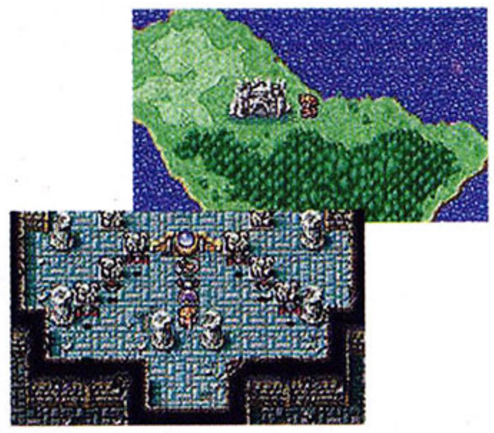
Konami revealed its plans to return to the horror that is ***Silent Hill***. Initial screenshots have surfaced of a title that should hit the **PlayStation 2** sometime next year. From what we've seen it looks to be another gruesome and entertaining adventure. Look for more on ***Silent Hill 2*** in upcoming issues.



NEW COLOR HANDHELD COMING FROM BANDAI

Bandai introduced a new, color handheld gaming system that is to be released in the US next year. Called the **WonderSwan Color**, the system is a follow-up to the original black and white screened system that Bandai has already released in Japan.

The WonderSwan already has some powerful software in the pipelines as **Square** has committed to bringing ***Final Fantasy I***, ***II***, and ***III*** to the system. Rumors also indicate that the handheld may link up to the **PlayStation 2**.



BREAK DOWN

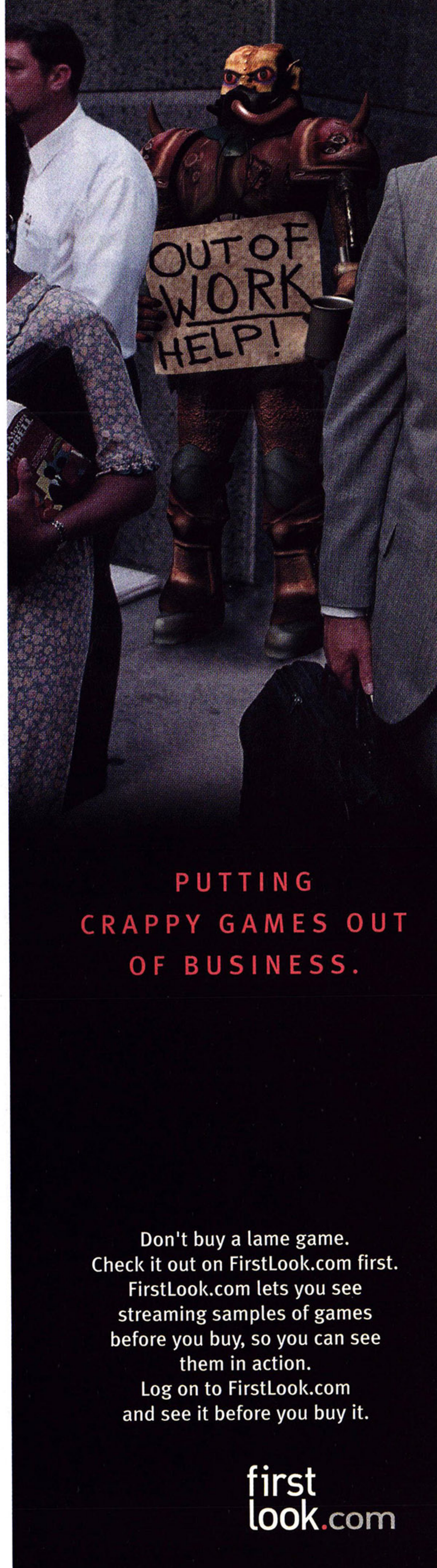
23% of Matt's remaining hair was lost due to the long hours and high stress involved with this month's redesign of the magazine

43% of Paul's work hours were spent downloading MP3s on Macster

17% of our reader letters this month were written in rap form

80% of those raps were based on Eminem songs

78% of Erik's woodies this month were caused by computer-animated robots



Sony's PlayStation 2

Defending the Dynasty

DEFENDING THE DYNASTY

Kengo: Master of Bushido

Street Fighter EX3

"History is a relentless master. It has no present, only the past rushing into the future. To try to hold fast is to be swept aside." **– John F. Kennedy**

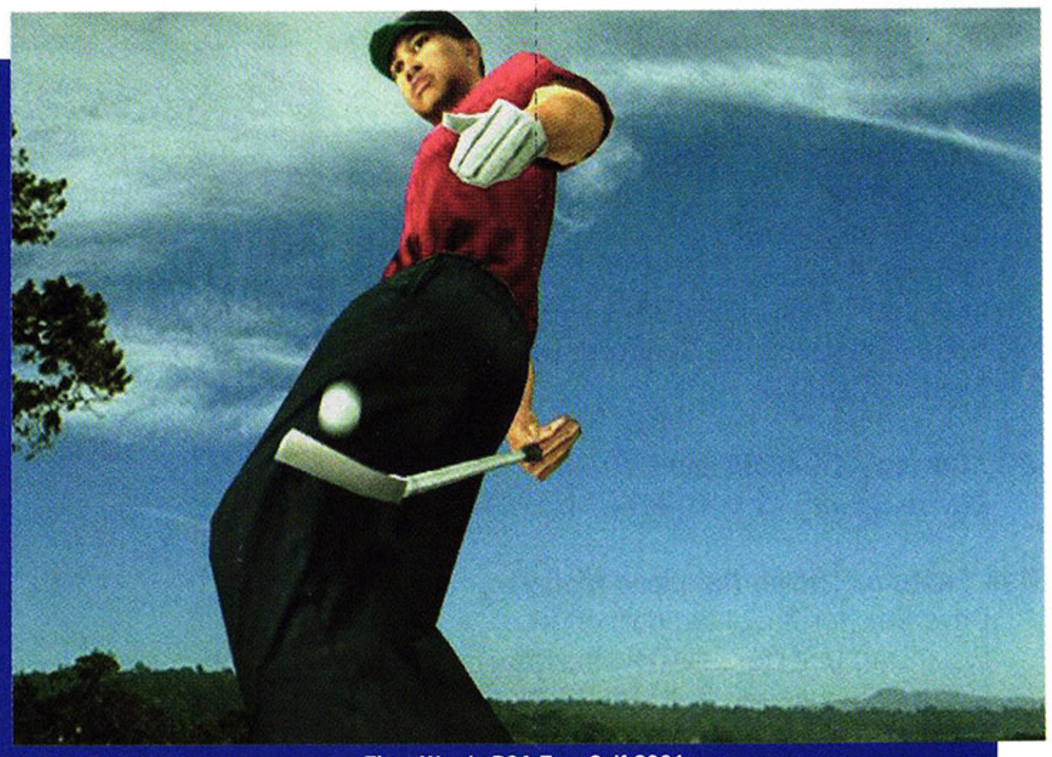
"There is no room for second place." **– Vince Lombardi**

As the five-year reign of the PlayStation draws to a close, Sony finds itself a company in transition. With the launch of the PlayStation 2, it is attempting to stay on top of the industry through a generation changeover – something no company in gaming history has been able to do. Atari, the company that essentially created the console market, sank into bankruptcy as the bottom fell out of video games in the mid-'80s. Following the massive success of the NES, Nintendo lost its leading edge as games moved into the 16-bit era. Sega, riding high from the Genesis, almost went under when its ill-fated Saturn system failed miserably. Despite a tremendous buzz in the gaming community, reams of glowing coverage in the mainstream press, and some undeniably impressive launch titles, history shows that Sony might have a harder time winning the next-gen console war than anyone had anticipated.

Just a year ago, it would have been unthinkable to many that Sony's iron grip on the game industry could be loosened, but that was before Microsoft shocked the world with the announcement that it was creating its own console gaming system, the Xbox. To be promoted by a $500 million marketing campaign, and powered by an advanced processor that purportedly will out-gun even the mighty PS2; the Xbox will be a formidable opponent for Sony's highly anticipated console.

Sony will also face challenges from two long-standing console manufacturers. Nintendo, whose Nintendo 64 failed to seriously challenge the PlayStation, recently debuted the Gamecube (see page 36). Sega is ready to send the Dreamcast, released in America over a year ago, online with its groundbreaking SegaNet ISP. Does the PlayStation 2 have the horsepower to win this high stakes console race? Only time will tell.

Red Faction



Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf 2001

The Machine

The PlayStation 2's high-powered processor and graphical prowess should make it a formidable force in gaming for years to come. The central CPU runs at around 300 MHz, which puts it on par with a lower-end personal computer. Of course, this is slightly misleading as the PS2's hardware has been expressly designed to push enormous numbers of polygons around. As developers begin to learn the hardware, expect to see a level of detail that would have been unthinkable just a year ago. The PS2's Achilles heel might be its lack of texture memory, something that many programmers have been grumbling about since the development kits were released.

Although we have few details regarding the network capabilities of the PS2, it is equipped with a port in back for a promised broadband network expansion unit. There is also (new to the American PS2) a slot which allows a hard drive to be plugged directly into the back of the console.

In design, the PlayStation 2 takes a step away from consoles of the past. Its basic black look and sliding disc tray seem to be consciously emulating the look of home stereo components. This goes hand in hand with Sony's plans to position the PS2 as a central home entertainment platform, as opposed to a console strictly for gaming.

PlayStation 2 Tech Specs

CPU – 128-bit Emotion Engine

System Clock Frequency – 294.912 MHz
Cache Memory — Instruction: 16KB, Data: 8KB + 16 KB (ScrP)
Main Memory – Direct Rambus (Direct RDRAM)
Memory Size: 32 MB
Memory Bus Bandwidth – 3.2GB per Second
Co-Processor – FPU (Floating Point Unit)
Vector Units – VU0 & VU1
Floating Point Performance – 6.2 Gigaflops
3D CG Geometric Transformation – 66 Million Polygons per second
Compressed Image Decoder – MPEG2

Graphics – Graphics Synthesizer

Clock Frequency – 147.456 MHz
Embedded DRAM – 4MB
DRAM Bus Bandwidth – 4GB per Second
DRAM Bus Width – 2560 Bits
Pixel Configuration – RGB: Alpha: Z Buffer (24:8:32)
Polygon Drawing Rate – 75 Million Polygons per Second
Screen Resolution – Variable from 256 x 224 to 1280 x 1024

Sound – SPU2 + CPU

Number of Voices – ADPCM: 48ch on SPU2 plus definable, software programmable voices
Sound Memory – 2MB
Output Frequency – Variable up to 48 KHz (DAT quality)

IOP – I/O Processor

CPU Core – PlayStation (current) CPU
Clock Frequency – 33.87MHz or 36.86MHz (Selectable)
IOP Memory – 2MB
Sub Bus – 32-bit
Interface Types – IEEE1394 i.Link, Universal Serial Bus (USB) x 2, Controller Port x 2, Memory Card x 2

Disc Device – CD-ROM and DVD-ROM

Device Speed – 24x CD-ROM, 4x DVD-ROM

New Features (North American Model)

Drive Bay (for 3.5" hard disc drive)
Expansion Unit (for network interface)
DVD-Video playback built into the hardware, no Memory Card required

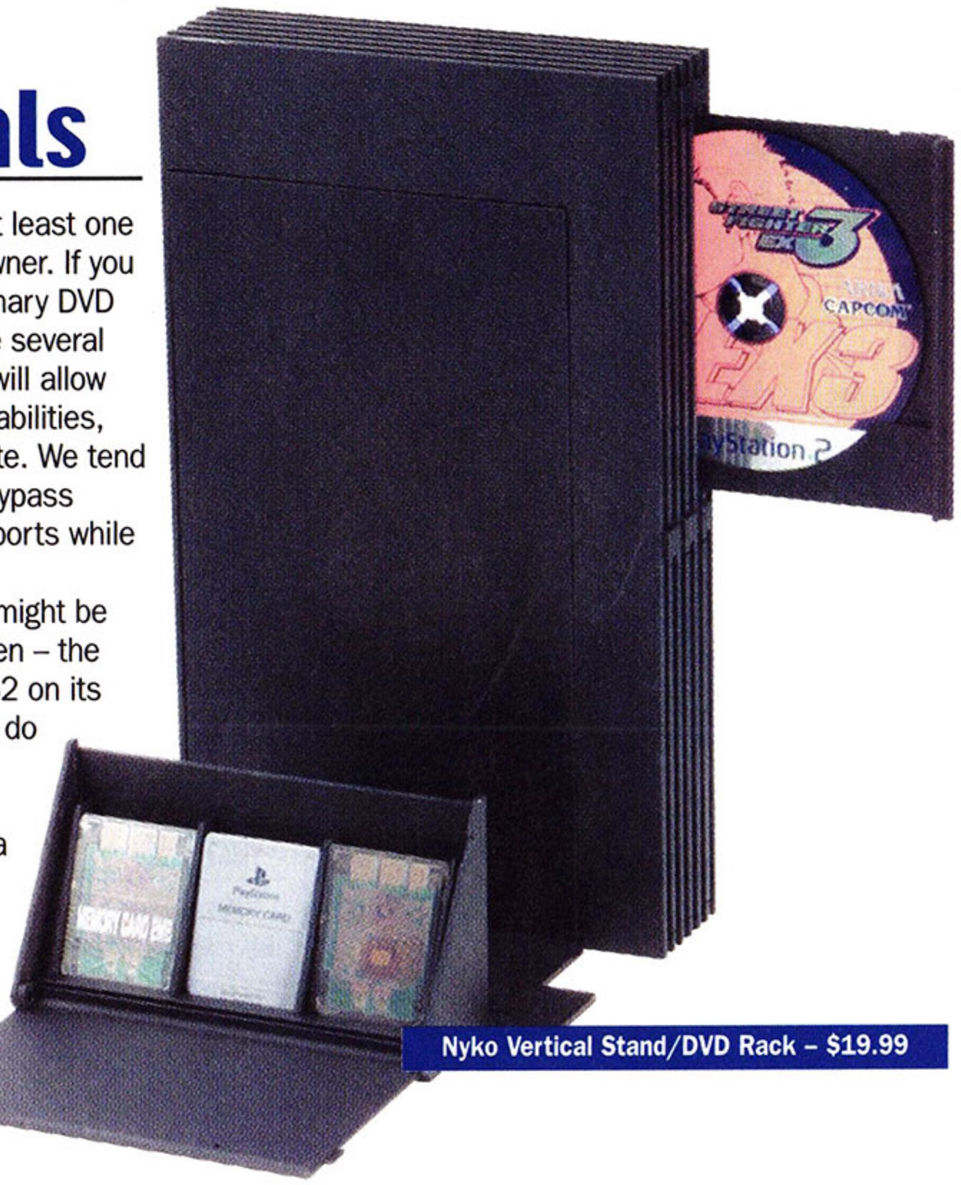
Legion: Legend of Excalibur

Knockout Kings 2001

The Peripherals

In the case of the PlayStation 2, there is at least one peripheral that will be a must-have for any owner. If you are serious about using the PS2 as your primary DVD player, we recommend purchasing one of the several after-market DVD remote controllers. These will allow you to make the most of the PS2's DVD capabilities, and function like any home DVD player remote. We tend to favor Saitek's remote, as it has a clever bypass which allows you access to both controllers ports while you have the infrared sensor plugged in.

The PlayStation 2 has also spawned what might be the most questionable add-on we've ever seen – the vertical stand. This allows you to set your PS2 on its side, like a PC tower. Why would you want to do this? Um..uh...because it looks cool? Sure, that's worth twenty bucks. Of course, you could also stand your PS2 on its side using a super high tech peripheral you already own. It's called a floor.



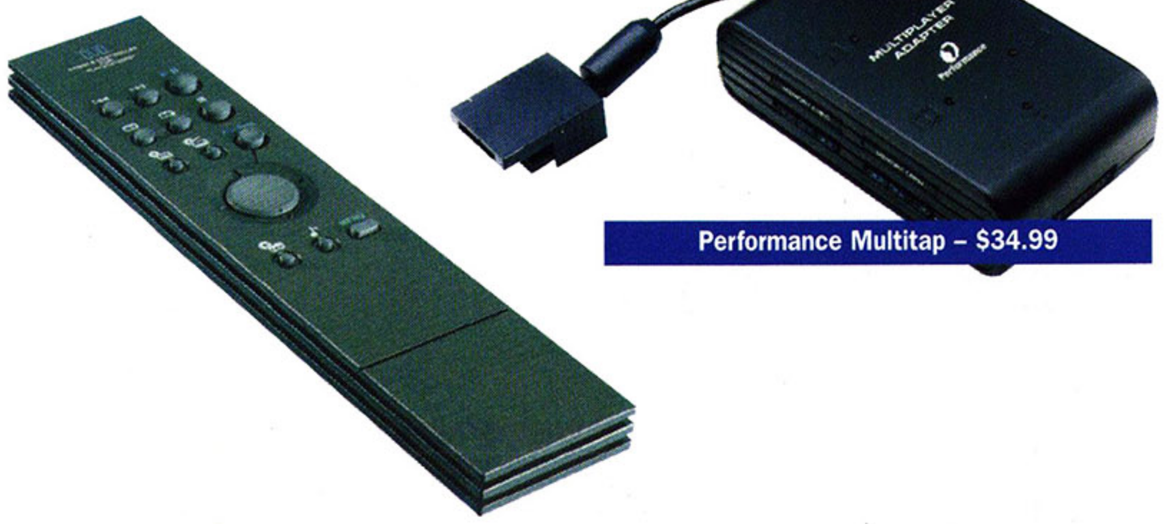
Nyko Vertical Stand/DVD Rack – $19.99

8MB Memory Card – $34.99

Interact ShadowBlade Arcade Stick – $59.99

Interact ThunderStrike Light Blaster – $29.99

Saitek DVD Remote – $19.99



Performance Multitap – $34.99

The Competition

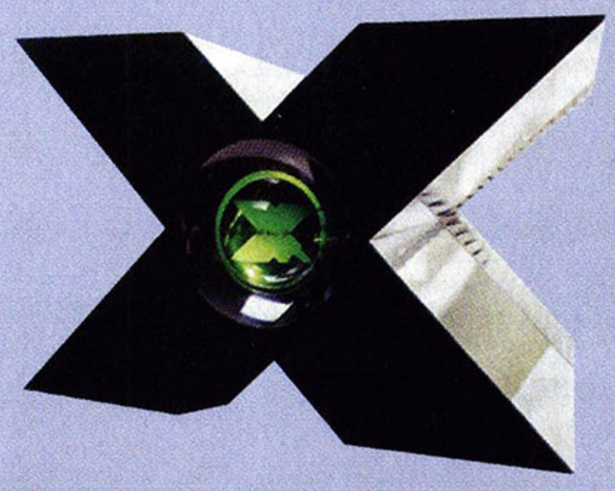
As Sony launches its full-out assault on America's wallets, the opposition is formulating its own strategies for global domination. Now that the PS2 has finally hit the market, Sony's competitors have begun to weigh in with their spin on the next-gen wars.

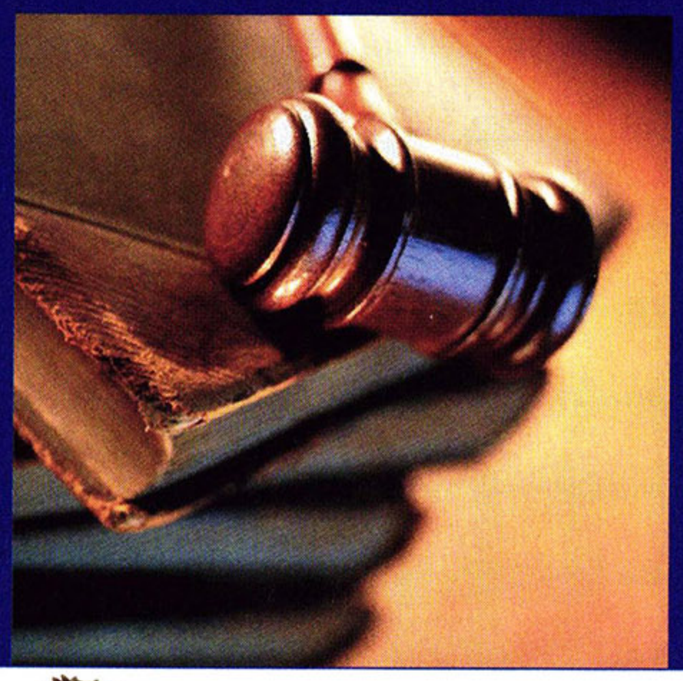
Sega, despite lagging Dreamcast sales, seems confident that the launch of SegaNet and a new $150 price point can put its console over the top. Sega feels that Sony has ignored the future of gaming – online entertainment. Charlie Bellfield, Sega Director of Corporate Communications, comments, "[Sony] lacked the foresight to see that the future of video gaming is going online. Without the modem built-in, it will be very challenging to get people to go online and compete against real people and not just a machine, not to mention the fact that they have yet to unveil an online strategy."

On the other hand, Nintendo seems confident that it will carve out a unique niche, and will continue to provide gamers with its traditional mix of finely tuned gameplay and familiar characters.

George Harrison, Nintendo Vice President of Marketing, adds, "We looked at the [PS2 games] that were released in Japan, and we didn't see anything that was the killer application that we had with Mario 64. Certainly some of the graphics were improved, but we didn't see any unique gameplay elements. We believe that to justify the new technology, you need a game element that is unique and different. The Gamecube is well designed for its primary function, and that is to be a great game machine, now we just need to make great games that you will only be able to play on the Gamecube."

Microsoft, Sony's newest nemesis, could not be reached for comment at press time.





The Verdict

One would have to be extremely jaded not to be impressed by the PlayStation 2. Sony has created what is undeniably the most powerful game console ever made. Despite a very short development timetable, almost every launch game matches or exceeds what has been accomplished on the Dreamcast thus far, and the next few generations of games should show an almost exponential improvement. We would go so far as to call the PS2 launch lineup the best in video games' history.

The PS2 should have long legs, as most developers haven't even begun to tap into its power. With games like Munch's Oddysee, The Bouncer, Star Wars: Starfighter, Metal Gear Solid 2, and the next two chapters of Square's Final Fantasy on the horizon, there will be no shortage of amazing games to keep us up into the wee hours of the morning. Better yet, we still have our library of great PlayStation games and DVD movies to take our few remaining moments of free time.

Sony has a great machine, great games, and one of the most recognizable brand names in the world. Is its PS2 mission accomplished? Has Sony guaranteed itself a place atop the mountain for another five years? Well, if it had just promised an amazing game console, we'd have to answer a resounding yes. However, Sony predicted much more than that. In its own words, the PlayStation 2 was to "bring together games, music,

Andy

"The Japanese launch of PlayStation 2 was less than spectacular, but the US release is surprisingly solid. Madden is easily the most impressive launch game, and perhaps the best example of what the future holds for PS2. There are some other excellent titles in the lineup, but nothing that really defines PlayStation 2 as the next big platform. All the rumblings in the industry say we will get to see some of that next year, but I'm saddened that Sony didn't go the extra mile to deliver a premiere title for its system at launch. Since I'm a home electronics addict, I already have a home theater – so I don't really need the PS2 for the DVD player. But plain and simple you can never have enough DVD players in your house, and the added sound perks (like DTS and Dolby 5.1) makes the decision to go with PS2 even easier."

Reiner

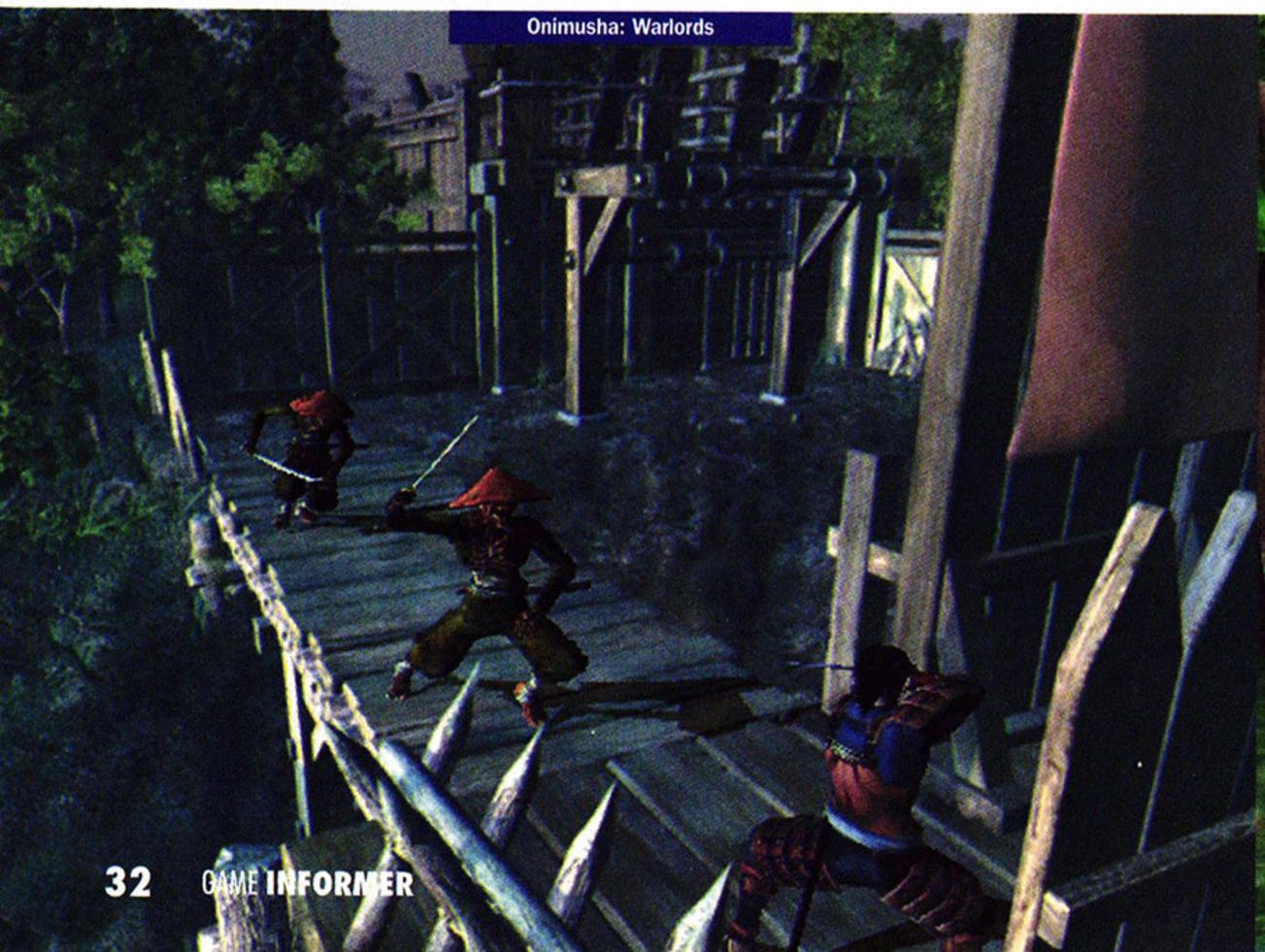
"Kiss your social lives good-bye, fanboys! If you're anything like me, someone who struggles in holding a two-minute conversation, the PlayStation 2 is your ticket out of the lousy real world and into the titillating world of multimedia. It's a CD player. It's a DVD player. It's a PlayStation. It's a PlayStation 2. It's your best friend. New system launches are usually unfulfilling in the software department, and while this launch won't blow your mind, there are a number of stellar releases spanning across almost every fathomable genre. Armored Core 2, TimeSplitters, SSX, and Madden NFL 2001 are all must-have games. Even though Microsoft and Nintendo proclaim to have superior machines, the PlayStation 2 is here to stay. With EA and Square on board, I have a feeling it'll have a long and prosperous life."

Jay

"PlayStation 2's release is pretty well timed. Just as the DVD market is booming, here comes a console that can play them as well as games. For the first time, early adopters don't have to worry about there not being enough titles at launch since the PS2 can serve in other entertainment capacities in the interim – not that a shortage of games is going to be a problem. The only thing that could defeat Sony in its first year with PlayStation 2 is itself, either through mismanagement of third-party relations or failure to produce successful first-party titles. I don't see this happening, though, so my only advice to Sony is to use this first year to get ready for Microsoft's attack on the video game industry."

Matt

"After the very disappointing Japanese launch of the PlayStation 2, I was ready to write Sony off as washed up. Now I'm forced to swallow my pride and admit that Sony has unleashed a juggernaut. The epiphany came to me when I was organizing the reader focus group that you see in this feature. Andy felt we should have at least one stinker thrown in the mix to get some negative reactions from the group. Looking at the launch lineup, we both struggled to find one game that was absolutely worthless. That's a pretty great accomplishment in itself, but I'm sure that the titles coming down the pike will be even more amazing. Congrats Sony, it looks like as if you've done it again."



Onimusha: Warlords

Super Bombad Racing

movies, and will redefine the entertainment lifestyle, eventually serving as a network platform in the broadband era." In other words, the PlayStation 2 is supposed to be much more than just a game console. Sony is positioning the PS2 as an all-in-one home entertainment unit. One that will allow you to play online games, surf the Internet, and act as your home DVD/CD player.

With the American PS2 hard drive unit still under wraps, and Sony staying mum regarding the details of its planned broadband network, it is difficult to fully evaluate the PlayStation 2. If Sony follows through with its ambitious goals for the system, it would be difficult to imagine its failure. On the other hand, we could just as easily envision a scenario in which Sony, faced with difficulties in bringing the PS2 online, is overtaken by Microsoft's powerful Xbox. The console market is undergoing a fundamental change; what was once thought of as a mere toy is now seen as the future of network-based, digital home entertainment. Sony must adapt to this new climate, or face losing its massive share of the video game market. If it doesn't take the lead, one of its competitors surely will. Let's see what the posse has to say...

Erik

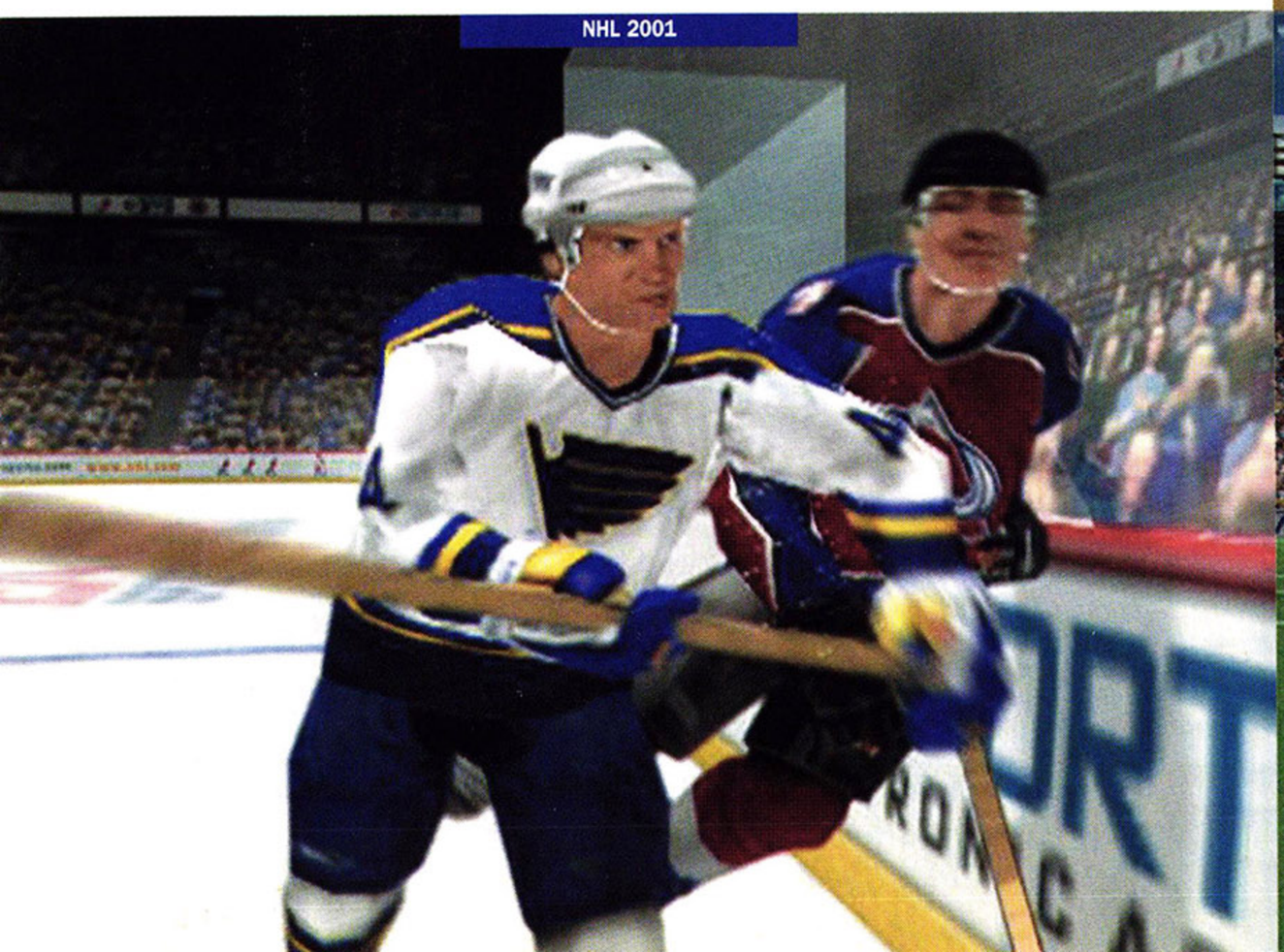
"Personal irritation with Sony aside, I'm afraid I have to jump on the PS2 bandwagon. I have yet to get a DVD player, Armored Core 2 rocks, and the PS2's backwards compatibility guarantees that I'll have a much more reliable machine to play my old favorites on. Despite recent speculation, it does appear as though the PS2's launch will be a solid one despite the lack of quality first-party games. There has been plenty of talk about the differences between the expectations placed upon the PS2 and the actual level of improvement in graphics, but I would remind the skeptics of how different PlayStation games of today compare to its first year titles. I predict that two years from now, the PS2 will be every bit as strong as the PlayStation is now."

Paul

"Man, this launch is turning out to be almost identical to the Dreamcast launch. The Japanese PS2 games have been pretty weak so far, but an influx of sports titles has changed the tune of this machine for me. Madden? Bam! NHL? Boom! A solid selection of sports makes the PS2 a lock. Besides, with companies like EA, Square, and Konami on the wagon, how can you go wrong? The pipeline of games is thick with potential winners such as The Bouncer, Metal Gear Solid 2, and Gran Turismo. If you throw the solid lineup together with the backward compatibility and DVD functions, how can you go wrong? The only problem I see with the PS2 is that it will likely be hard to find and the shortages may last through the rest of the year. Happy hunting."

Ferrari 360 Challenge

RC Revenge Pro



NHL 2001

FIFA 2001

Readers Reactions

Wondering what the average gamer on the street's take on the PS2 would be, we decided to let three lucky Game Informer readers into our lair for an afternoon of pizza and PlayStation 2. These brave gamers got a special sneak peek into the future of gaming, and gave us their opinions on Sony's new console. For a sample of the PS2 launch lineup, we let the gang test drive Madden 2001, SSX, TimeSplitters, Smuggler's Run, and DOA 2: Hardcore.

The Reader Review Crew:

Elise Heinisch

"The DVD player is a really important feature for me. I purposely held off buying a DVD player because I knew I was going to get the PlayStation 2. Of the games today, I thought that Smuggler's Run and Dead or Alive 2 were really good. I'm not really that into football, but Madden looks great. I plan on buying a PlayStation 2 when it comes out, depending on my financial situation [laughs], because I've been waiting a long time."

Terry Davis

"I'm totally excited. I'm waiting just like everybody else, but I'm going to go put my order in right now. Now that I've seen it, it's cool. I'm shook on Madden, I liked that an awful lot, but TimeSplitters was tight, too. I'm also going to use the DVD player. For the price, you can't beat it. As far as Microsoft and Nintendo goes, I'm not really with that. I'm definitely going for PlayStation 2."

Ryan Kaldahl

"I think it looked great. Even though NHL Hockey is my game, Madden has amazing graphics. It definitely looked the best out of the games we saw today. The best feature for me is that you can still play the old games. You don't have to dump everything and buy all new stuff. Of course, it's going to be hard to play the old games after you see the PlayStation 2 games."

Thumbs Up

The Dual Shock 2

The original Dual Shock is widely regarded as the best video game controller ever made. Wisely, Sony chose not to mess with perfection, keeping the same layout while improving overall responsiveness with analog pressure-sensitive buttons.

DVD Movie Capability

Sony is positioning the PS2 as an all-in-one home entertainment system, and DVD capability is the cornerstone of this strategy. As DVD quickly begins to replace VHS as the standard format for home movie viewing, the success of the PS2 should help DVD achieve a new level of market penetration. When you consider that it can serve as a CD player, DVD player, and a game console in your living room, the PS2's $300 sticker price begins to seem like a bargain.

Backwards Compatibility

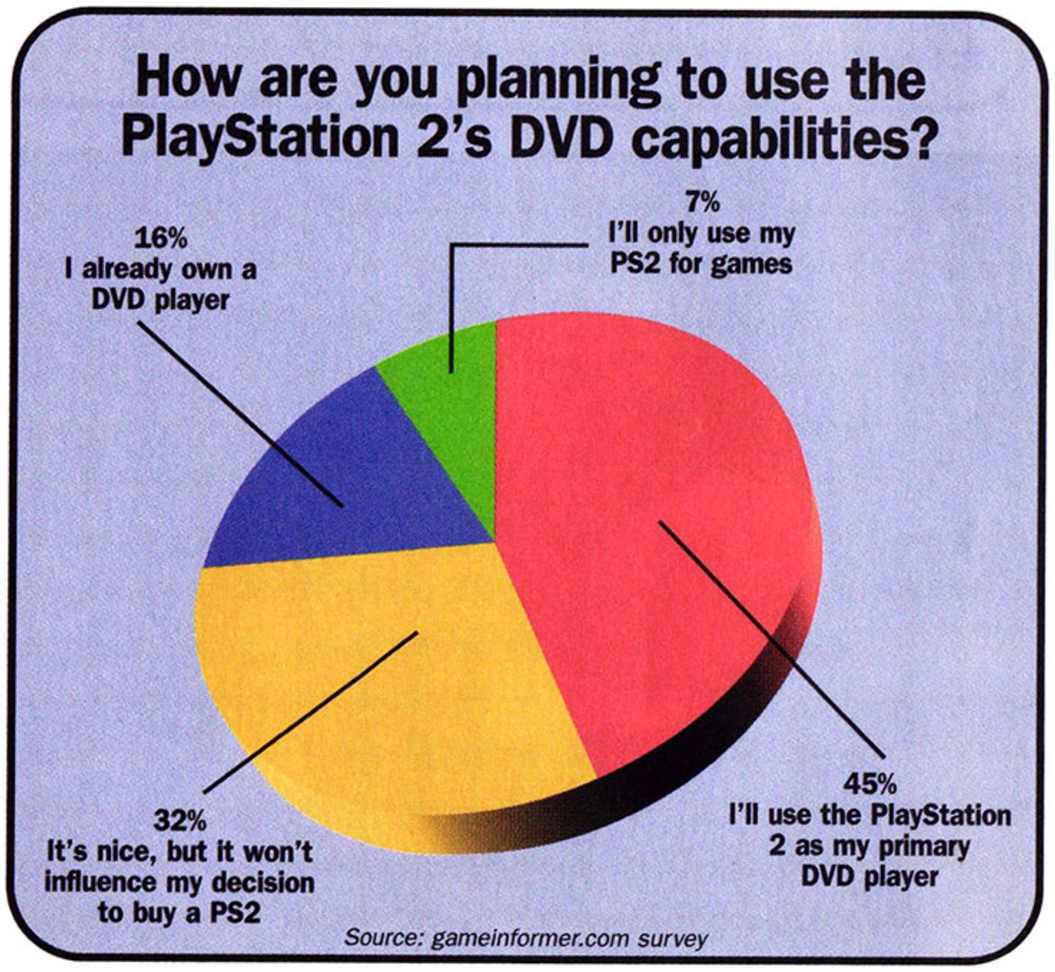
This is Sony's ace in the hole. While Xbox and Gamecube will offer graphics, gameplay, and DVD compatibility, the one feature that sets the PS2 apart from the pack is backwards compatibility with existing PlayStation games. With over 800 PS-X titles on the market, consumers who want to step into the new era of gaming while still being able to play a vast array of old games should embrace the PS2. Also, this allows PS2 owners to continue to buy high-profile PS-X games like Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 and Final Fantasy IX.

Strong Third-Party Support

At this point almost every third-party developer has signed on to the PlayStation 2. Most importantly, Sony has wooed the two companies that are invaluable to any system's success – Square Soft and Electronic Arts. EA's sports lineup, particularly Madden NFL 2001, will spur PlayStation 2 sales early in the system's life. After that, expect Square's reinvention of the Final Fantasy series, Final Fantasy X and XI (planned as an online multiplayer adventure that will utilize Sony's PS2 broadband network), to move massive units. With other high-profile titles on the horizon, the software outlook for PS2 is promising indeed.

Hardware Improvements in the American PS2

The Japanese gamers who bought a PS2 at launch seem to have received the metaphorical shaft in terms of hardware quality and versatility. After many of the defective memory cards sold at launch left owners unable to play DVDs, Sony revamped the American machine to allow it to play DVDs without a memory card. The American PS2 also features a port in the back that can accommodate a hard drive, instead of the awkward piggyback hard drive unit to be released in Japan.



Thumbs Down

Only Two Controller Ports

This is an outrage. After Nintendo raised the bar with the Nintendo 64, and Sega followed suit with the Dreamcast, it seemed a given that no new console should have less than four controller ports. Of course, Sony is probably hoping you'll plunk down $35 extra bucks for a PS2 multitap.

No Built-In Modem

Sony promises a broadband modem unit sometime in 2001, but Sega's Dreamcast offers a built-in modem in a console that cost $150 dollars less than the PlayStation 2. Although it could be argued that this is a wise move in the long run, as it will allow PS2 owners to keep pace with technology by upgrading to newer, faster modems as technology improves.

No Network Capabilities

Sony recently purchased RTime, an online network support firm, to help it begin construction of a PlayStation 2 broadband network that it promises will deliver games, music, and digital movies to PS2 owners. A broadband network engine will support online multiplayer games, most notably Unreal Tournament and Square Soft's Final Fantasy XI. While this all sounds great, Sega is offering online play right now through SegaNet.

Disc Tray

The original PlayStation was notoriously brittle, as those of you who suffered through breakdowns well know. Unfortunately, in its zest to emulate the look of home DVD players, Sony has outfitted the PS2 with a rather flimsy looking disc tray. Sure it's attractive, but it's just an accident waiting to happen. Any bets on how long it takes your little brother to break it off?

Development Woes

While the PS2 is indeed a powerful machine, many developers have complained that it is extremely difficult to program for. Porting PC titles to the PS2 has proven to be especially treacherous, causing many teams to scrap their PC ports entirely and begin programming from the ground up. The danger for Sony is that high development costs could cause a wave of defections to the Xbox. Microsoft promises that its console will be very developer-friendly, especially when porting PC titles to the system.

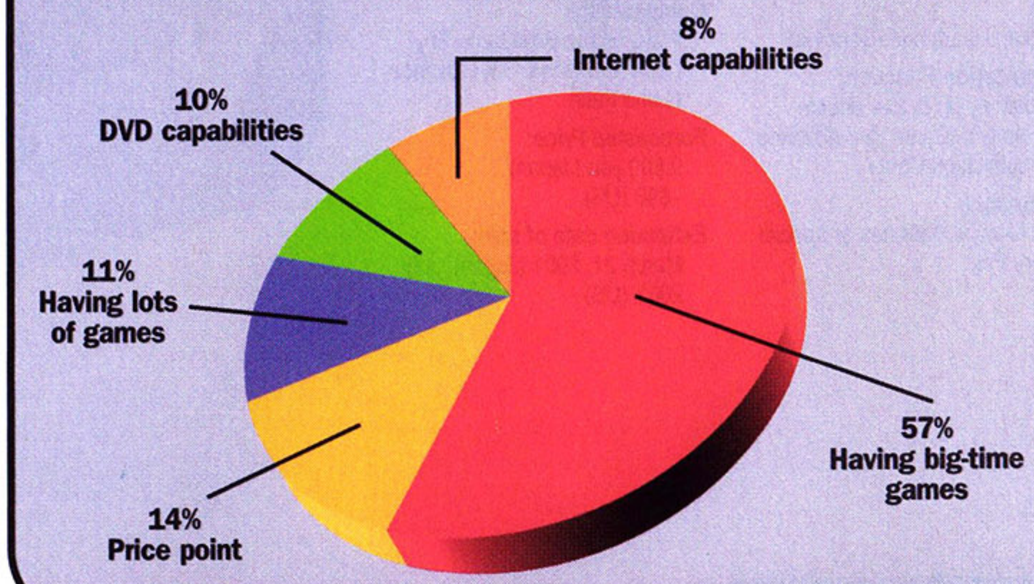
PlayStation 2 Report Card

TITLE	BOTTOM LINE	PAGE
Madden NFL 2001	9.75	84
SSX	9.25	92
Dead of Alive 2: Hardcore	9	89
Armored Core 2	9	98
Smuggler's Run	8.5	90
Tekken Tag Tournament	8.5	88
NHL 2001	8.5	94
Kessen	8	96
Dynasty Warriors 2	8	95
Silent Scope	7.75	96
Swing Away Golf	7.75	85
Eternal Ring	7.5	98
Wild Wild Racing	7.5	91
X-Squad	7.5	93
Ridge Racer V	7.25	99
Evergrace	7	97
Gun Griffon Blaze	7	99
Super Bust-A-Move	7	98
Street Fighter EX3	6	97
Silpheed	6	99

Release List

Game	Publisher	Release Date
F1 Championship	Ubi Soft	Nov-00
Real Pool	Infogrames	Nov-00
Gradius III&IV	Konami	Nov-00
Cool Pool: Billiards Master	Take 2	Nov-00
FIFA 2001	EA	Nov-00
RC Revenge Pro	Acclaim	Nov-00
Theme Park Roller Coaster	EA	Nov-00
Warriors of Might & Magic	3DO	Nov-00
World Destruction League: Thunder Tanks	3DO	Nov-00
Dark Angel 2	Metro 3D	Nov-00
Rayman 2: The Great Escape	Ubi Soft	Nov-00
Star Wars Episode I: Starfighter	LucasArts	Nov-00
Army Men: Air Attack 2	3DO	Nov-00
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	3DO	Nov-00
ESPN NBA Tonight	Konami	Nov-00
Top Gear Daredevil	Crave	Nov-00
Unreal Tournament	Infogrames	Nov-00
The Bouncer	Square	Dec-00
The Jungle Book	Ubi Soft	Dec-00
NASCAR 2001	EA	Dec-00
ESPN NFL Primetime	Konami	Dec-00
Carrier	Jaleco	Dec-00
Dinosaur	Ubi Soft	Dec-00
MDK 2: Armageddon	Interplay	Dec-00
Galleon	Interplay	Dec-00
Stunt GP	Titus	Jan-01
Armada 2: Exodus	Metro 3D	Jan-01
NBA Live 2001	EA	Jan-01
Oni	Rockstar	Jan-01
Onimusha: Warlords	Capcom	Jan-01
F1 Championship Season 2001	EA	Jan-01
Offroad Outlaws	Interplay	Jan-01
Project Eden	Eidos	Feb-01
Motor Mayhem	Interplay	Mar-01
Force of One	Interplay	Apr-01
Galaxy Pest Control	Metro 3D	Apr-01
Run Like Hell	Interplay	Apr-01
Super Runabout: New York Edition	Interplay	Apr-01
Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee	Infogrames	May-01
Supreme Riders	Infogrames	Jun-01
Test Drive Off Road	Infogrames	Jun-01
Baldur's Gate Legends	Interplay	Sep-01
V'room	Interplay	Sep-01
Munukuru	Interplay	Sep-01

What is the most important ingredient needed for a next-gen console to succeed?



Source: gameinformer.com survey

NINTENDO'S next

Tokyo, August 24, 2000 – The day prior to the Spaceworld 2000 game show, Nintendo unveiled the Gamecube home console (previously codenamed Dolphin or Starcube) and the portable Game Boy Advance.

Both units will hit the streets in 2001. What makes them unique is their ability to work together. Game Boy Advance works as a controller for Gamecube, giving players the ability to use its full color LCD screen to call plays for football or change attributes on a character (much like Dreamcast's VMU). The Game Boy Advance can also communicate with the Gamecube, enabling the player to transfer data from the console titles to the hand held or vice versa, allowing the gamer to take any experience from home to the road in a heartbeat.

Given the unique abilities of both machines and their ability to work in tandem, Game Informer will take a look at each, examining its abilities and software individually, then see what the future may hold for Nintendo's Next when they work together.

Game Boy Advance Tech-Specs

LCD:
Reflective TFT Color LCD

Screen Size:
40.8mm x 61.2mm

Resolution:
240 x 160 dots

Display Capability:
32,000 colors

CPU:
32-bit RISC-CPU + 8-bit CISC-CPU

Memory:
32 Kbyte WRAM + 96 Kbyte VRAM (in CPU), 256 Kbyte WRAM (external of CPU)

Sound:
Speaker, Headphone Terminal

Communication Function:
Multiplay by up to four people possible with Game Boy Advance Communication Cable

Power Supply:
2 AA Alkaline Batteries or special Battery Pak

Battery Life:
2 AA Alkaline Batteries: Approx. 15 hours

Battery Pak Life:
Approx. 10 hours

Power Consumption:
Approx. 0.6W

Dimensions:
82mm(L) x 144.5(W) x 24.5mm(D)

Main Unit Weight:
Approx. 140g

Game Pak:
Max. of 256Mbits (Game Boy Advance Only)

Compatibility:
Plays Game Boy/Game Boy Color and Game Boy Advance Game Paks

Forecasted Price:
9,800 yen (Japan)
~$90 (US)

Estimated date of sale:
March 21, 2001 (Japan), July 2001 (US)

(Actual Size Shown)

The 32-bit Game Boy Advance is backwards compatible with both Game Boy and Game Boy Color games

Don't let Gamecube's small size fool you (6"x6"x4.3"), this compact unit packs a wallop

(Actual Size Shown)

Gamecube Tech-Specs

MPU ("Microprocessor Unit"):
IBM Power PC "Gekko"

Manufacturing Process:
0.18 microns Copper Wire Technology

Clock Frequency:
405 MHz

CPU Capacity:
925 Dmips (Dhrystone 2.1)

Internal Data Precision:
32-bit Integer & 64-bit Floating-Point

External Bus Bandwidth:
1.6GB/second(Peak) (32-bit address, 64-bit data bus 202.5MHz)

Internal Cache:
L1: Instruction 32KB, Data 32KB (8 way)
L2: 256KB (2 way)

System LSI:
"Flipper"

Manufacturing Process:
0.18 microns NEC Embedded DRAM Process

Clock Frequency:
202.5MHz

Embedded Frame Buffer:
Approx. 2MB

Sustainable Latency:
5ns (1T-SRAM)

Embedded Texture Cache:
Approx. 1MB

Sustainable Latency:
5ns (1T-SRAM)

Texture Read Bandwidth:
12.8GB/second (Peak)

Main Memory Bandwidth:
3.2GB/second (Peak)

Effects:
Color, Z Buffer, Each is 24-bits Mage Processing Function, Fog, Subpixel Anti-Aliasing, HW Light x8, Alpha Blending, Virtual Texture Design, Multi-Texture Mapping/Bump/Environment Mapping, MIPMAP, Bilinear Filtering, Real-Time Texture Decompression (S3TC), etc.

Other:
Real-Time Decompression of Display List, HW Motion Compensation Capability

Sound Processor:
Special 16-bit DSP

Instruction Memory:
RAM + 8KB ROM

Data Memory:
8KB RAM + 4KB ROM

Clock Frequency:
101.25 MHz

Maximum Number of Simultaneously-Produced Sounds:
ADPCM: 64ch

Sampling Frequency:
48KHz

System Floating-Point Arithmetic Capability:
13.0 GFLOPS (Peak) (MPU, Geometry Engine, HW Lighting Total)

Actual Display Capability:
6 million to 12 million polygons/second (Display capability assuming actual game with complexity model, texture, etc.)

System Main Memory 24MB Sustainable Latency:
10ns or lower (1T-SRAM)

A-Memory:
16MB (100MHz DRAM)

Disc Drive:
CAV (Constant Angular Velocity) System

Average Access Time:
128ms

Data Transfer Speed:
16Mbps to 25Mbps

Media:
8cm Nintendo Gamecube Disc Based on Matsushita's Optical Disc Technology (Approx. 1.5GB Capacity)

Input/Output:
Controller Port: x4
Digicard Slot x2
Analog AV Output x1
Digital AV Output x1
High-Speed Serial Port x2
High-Speed Parallel Port x1

Power Supply:
AC Adapter DC12V x 3.5A

Main Unit Dimensions:
6" (W) x6" (H) x4.3" (D)

Release:
July 2001 (Japan), October 2001 (US)

GLEAMING THE CUBE

Nintendo's Next home console unit, the Gamecube, is built around an IBM 405Mhz copper wire central processor that works in conjunction with an ATI graphics co-processor with 40 MB of Mosys 1-T SRAM memory embedded directly on the chip.

So what does all that mumbo jumbo mean to the gamer? Admittedly, Nintendo's General Manager of product development, Shigeru Miyamoto, states that, "[Gamecube] is not the best graphics rendering machine. But from the viewpoint of making video games and...the software creators who are making sounds, or using the collision detection, or making the animation effects, in total, it is the most well-balanced game machine."

Nintendo was obviously concerned about the perception that Nintendo 64 was a game machine that was hard to develop for, so it purposely tried to make a machine that not only delivered solid graphics, but also a good development environment so creators could concentrate on making innovative games.

Scheduled for launch in Japan in July 2001 and the US in October 2001, Nintendo is keeping many aspects, mainly the games, an industry secret. The first chance the world will have to play Gamecube will be at the May 2001 E3 show in Los Angeles. Then the final pieces of the Gamecube puzzle will be unveiled. Miyamoto hinted at what one of those surprises may be as he said, "Gamecube is going to be the best and strongest machine, especially in terms of its price; even though we haven't revealed the price yet!"

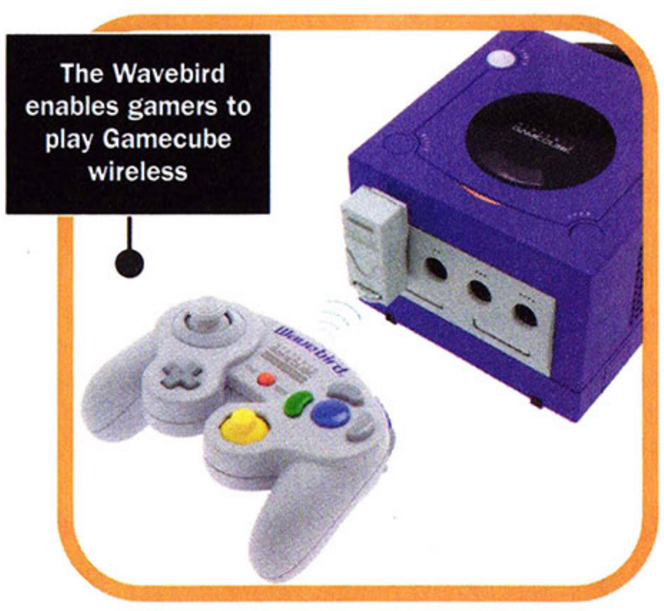
Nintendo showed five differently colored Gamecubes at the conference, but some color changes may occur for the US version

THE CONTROLLER

Gamecube's controller looks suspiciously like the Dual Shock from Sony, but with some slight changes. Notice that the right analog stick is labeled C (replacing the C buttons that were found on the N64), the top L and R buttons are analog, the rumble motor is built in, and the Z button is now placed on the right shoulder. A wireless version, known as the Wavebird, that has a transmission distance of 10 meters is also in the works. Not wanting to give away the farm, Miyamoto added that, "[Nintendo] didn't show everything about the controller, there are other ideas that we haven't told you yet." Oh, the drama!

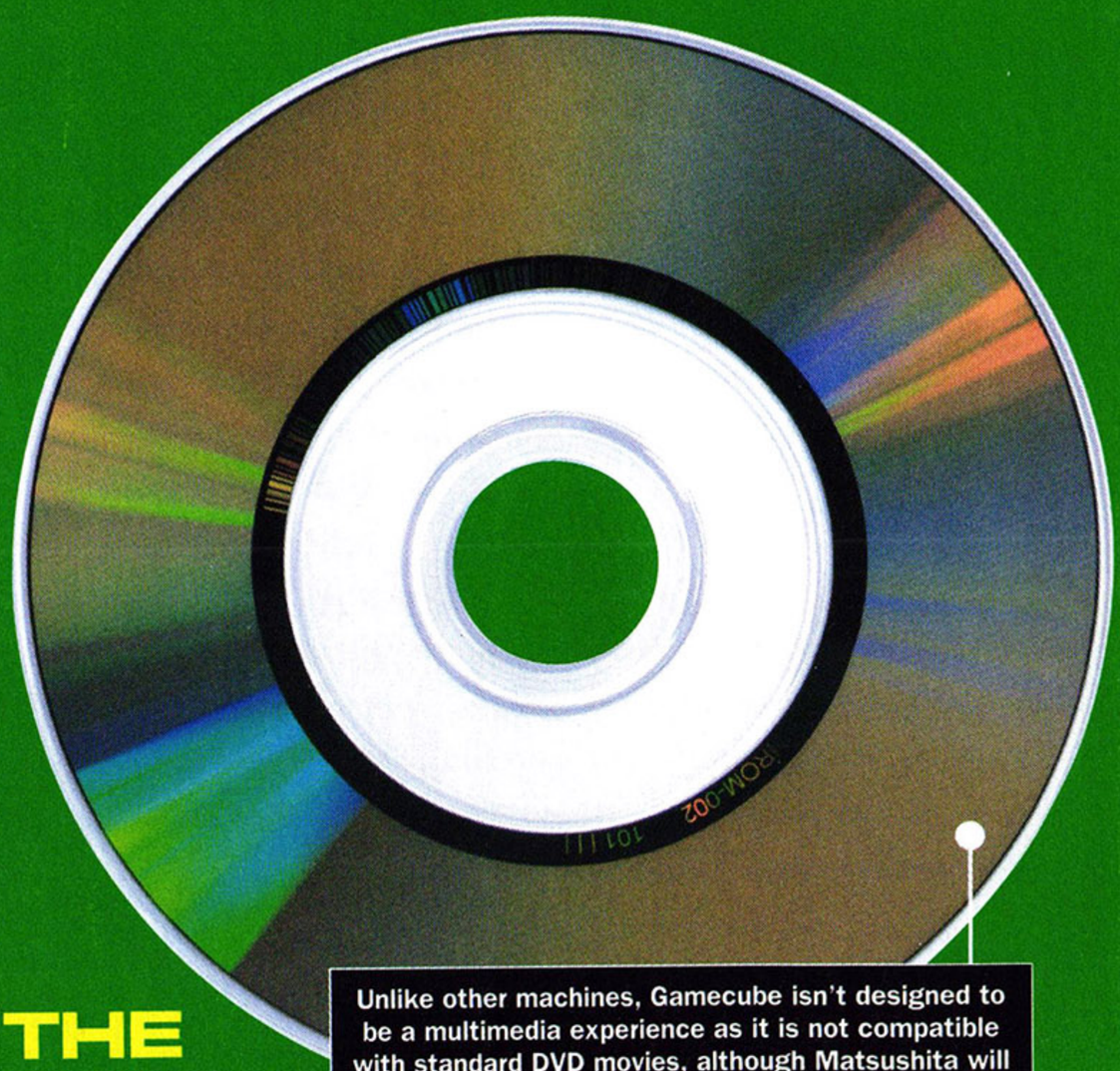
(Actual Size Shown)

Five colored controllers let gamers taste the rainbow



The Wavebird enables gamers to play Gamecube wireless

Compact size is not all the Gamecube is about, it also features four controller ports, a handle for easy transportation, and multiple serial ports for future expansions if needed



THE GAME CUBE DISC

Unlike other machines, Gamecube isn't designed to be a multimedia experience as it is not compatible with standard DVD movies, although Matsushita will offer a DVD movie player that also plays Gamecube titles. Nintendo has taken an interesting step to slow down piracy by using a small (only 8CM across) 1.5 Gigabyte disc. Compared to an N64 cart like Mario which was eight Megabytes, a Gamecube disc holds 190 times more data.

ONLINE

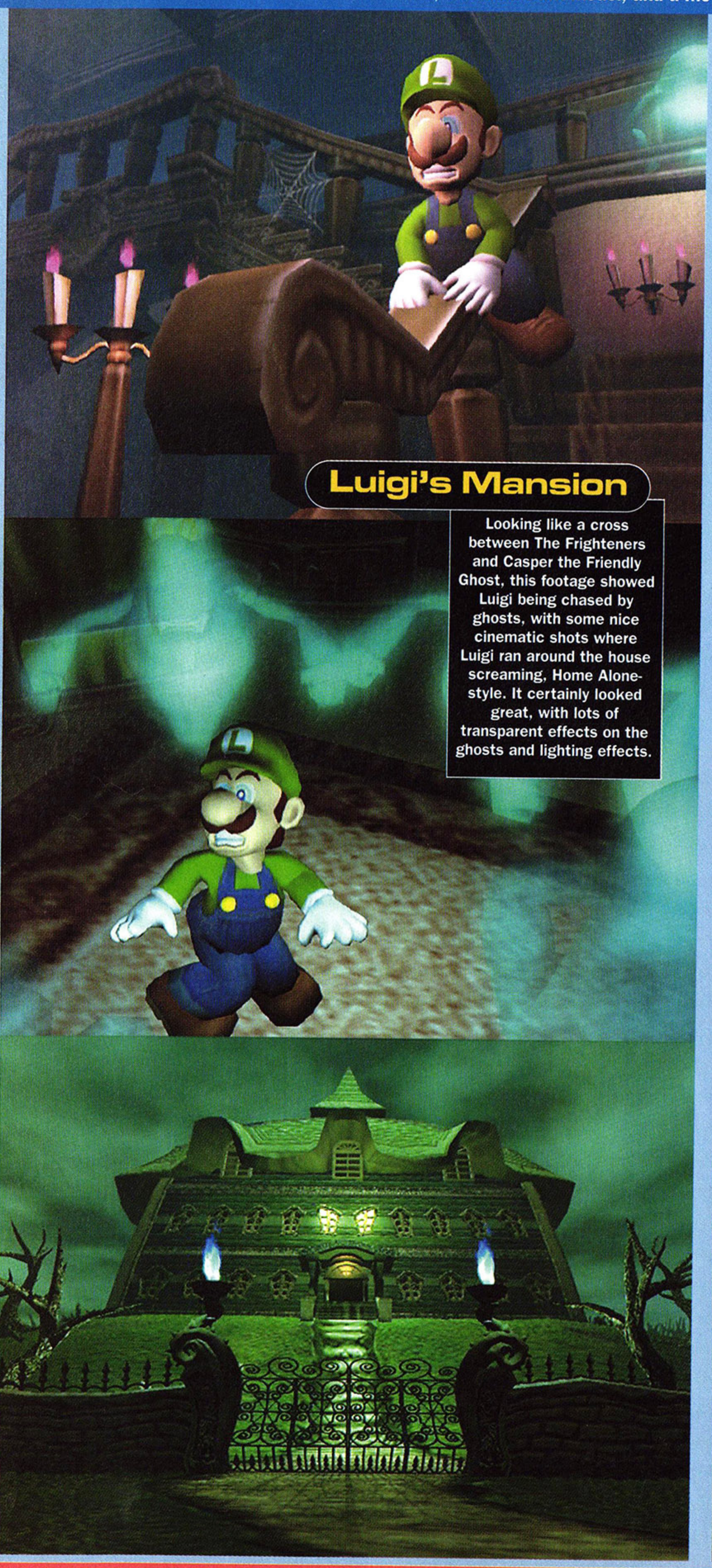
Nintendo's online strategy is still unknown, but the capacity is there. At launch, a 56K modem will be available (sold separately), with a broadband version coming at a later date. The modules plug easily into the bottom of Gamecube.

DIGICARD

There are only two digicard slots on the front of the Gamecube, but Nintendo assures us that multiple players will be able to load data; it will just involve some swapping of cards. The Digicard can hold four megabits of game data, while the SD-Digicard Adapter allows gamers to use Matsushita's stamp-sized SD Memory Card for storage that is capable of holding 64 Megabytes of data.

THE DEMOS

It is uncertain how much of these movie demos were actually gameplay, but Super Mario 128 was definitely a software application. All the demos were done in hi-res mode, and looked impressive. It is important to note, however, that tech demos are just that...demos. These games may or may not be coming to the Gamecube, and actual Gamecube software may not look quite this spectacular (obviously, we hope it does). Shown, but not pictured here, were movies of car renders, a version of Wave Race, a Star Wars scene, a Joanna Dark model, and a movie called Rebirth that showed the MPEG abilities of the Gamecube.

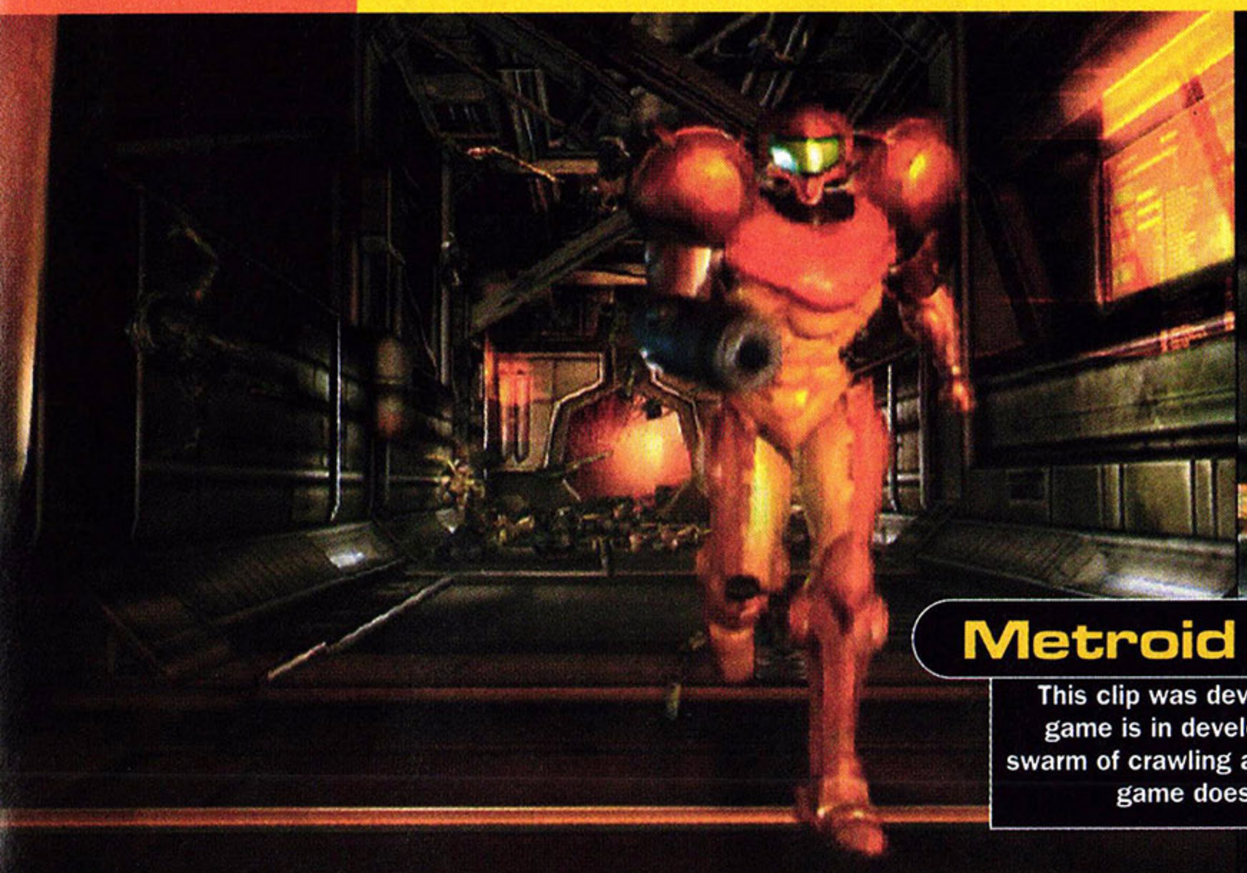


Luigi's Mansion

Looking like a cross between The Frighteners and Casper the Friendly Ghost, this footage showed Luigi being chased by ghosts, with some nice cinematic shots where Luigi ran around the house screaming, Home Alone-style. It certainly looked great, with lots of transparent effects on the ghosts and lighting effects.

Zelda

This sequence put Link and Ganon in a sword fight and let you get a good look at some of the models. Each character had individual fingers and lots of ornate designs on their outfits. The high point of the fight is when Link tosses his shield aside to get down and dirty with the Big G.



Metroid

This clip was developed by Retro Studios in Austin, Texas, so the industry is buzzing that the game is in development there. The clip itself just shows Samus enter a tunnel followed by a swarm of crawling alien creatures, then a quick cut of her aiming at the screen. (Ed. note – if this game doesn't come out Game Informer will be...how should we put it?...pissed.)

Super Mario 128

This demo was software based and the camera was human controlled, as were the various changes that took place. The demo started with a block version of the original 8-bit Mario falling onto a huge Gamecube board, then the camera went in and showed Mario pop up from one of the blocks. Marios continued to appear under a box until 128 Marios, at 700 polygons each, were onscreen. A bar at the bottom of the screen showed the load the program supposedly put on the Gamecube as they added more blocks, terraforming, motion blur, transparency, wacky lighting, and even a nice effect where the 3D models looked 2D – apparently, the strain on the system never exceeded 33%. Neat demo.

Pokémon

Imagine rendered Pokémon dancing, prancing, and singing...need we say more?

ADVANCE AND BE RECOGNIZED

The other half of Nintendo's Next is the new 32-Bit Game Boy Advance. Developed by ARM, Ltd. in the United Kingdom, the Game Boy Advance boasts a 50 percent screen size increase, screen resolution that is up 60 percent, and a new reflective TFT color LCD that uses a high contrast white panel to deliver outstanding handheld graphics.

Nintendo is recognized as the undisputed king of handheld gaming, and Game Boy Advance should pretty much assure it many long years with that title. Hitting Japan on March 21, 2001 at a price of 9800 Yen (about 90 dollars), and the States and Europe in July, Nintendo should get this powerful unit to market fairly fast, especially since the unit is backwards compatible with all Game Boy and Game Boy Color games.

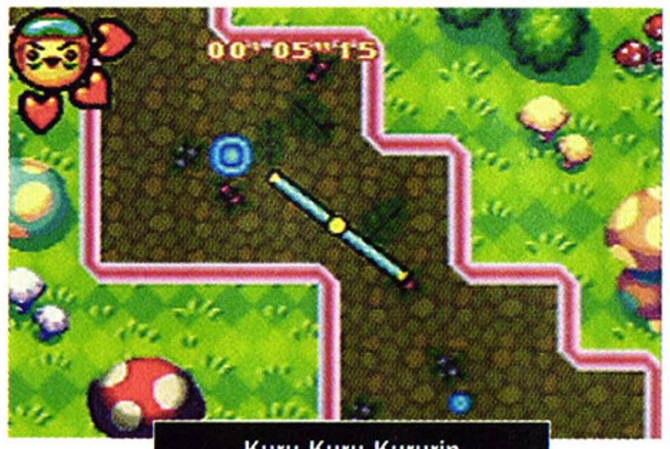
Ten pieces of software were available for play at the show, and 30 more were announced in the press kit. The easiest comparison we can give is that the Game Boy Advance is like a Super Nintendo that fits in your pocket. Created more as a 2D than a 3D machine, it gives most of the games that classic SNES look (Mario Kart Advance even uses Mode 7 effects).

The unit itself features two buttons on the face and two shoulder buttons, and feels great in the palm of your hand with its sleek and lightweight design. If you played the Neo Geo Pocket Color, you've had a taste of the future already, but for everyone else, Game Boy Advance will be a monumental advance in handheld gaming – a very welcomed step forward as Game Boy, despite its greatness, is dated.

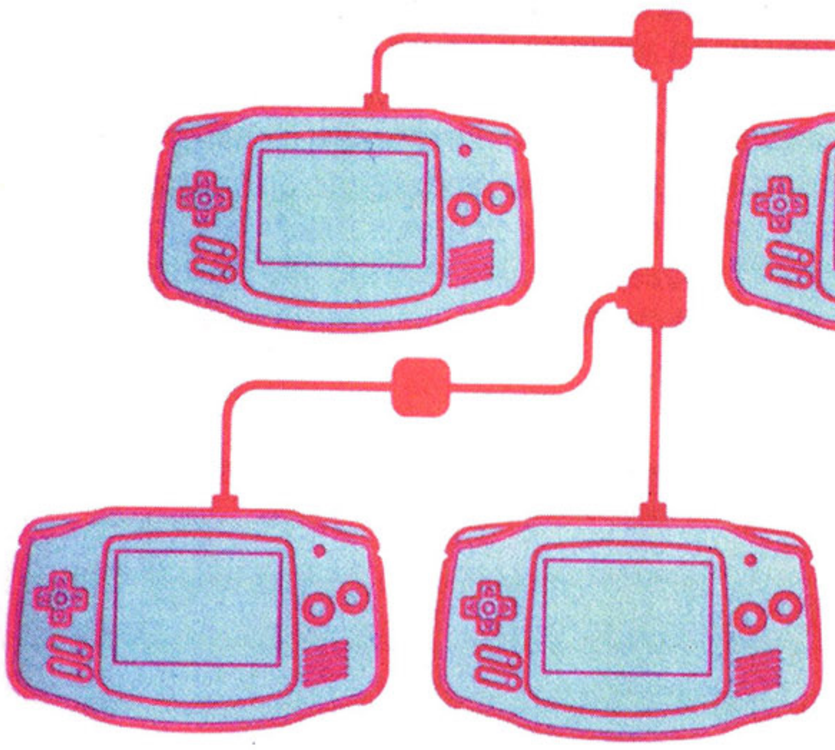
Game List

Mario Kart Advance (Nintendo)
F-Zero (Nintendo)
Kuru Kuru Kururin (Nintendo)
Game Boy Wars Advance (Nintendo)
Tactics Ogre Gaiden (Nintendo)
Fire Emblem: Goddess of Darkness (Nintendo)
The Baketsu Plan (Nintendo)
Golden Sun (Nintendo)
Napoleon (Nintendo)
Flower Blossom Battle (Nintendo)
Magical Vacation (Nintendo)
Wario Land 4 (Nintendo)
Konami Wai Wai Racing Advance (Konami)
Golf Master AGB (Konami)
Silent Hill (Konami)
Star Communicator (Konami)
Mail de Cute (Konami)
Monster Breed (Konami)
Castlevania: Circle of the Moon (Konami)
Hatena Satena (Hudson)
Pinopee: Quest of Heart (Hudson)
Morita Shogi Advanced (Hudson)
Momotarou Matsuri (Hudson)
Bomberman Story (Hudson)
Tweety and the Magic Jewel (Kotobuki System)
Top Gear: All Nippon GT Driver Qualification (Kotubuki System)
Pocket GT Advance (MTO)
Along With Everyone (MTO)
Advanced Fire Pro Wrestling (Spike)
Sansaara Naaga (Victor Interactive Software)
Super Black Bass 4 Advance (Starfish)
Digi Communication (Mediaworks)
Dokapon (Asmik Ace Entertainment)
Doraemon (Epoch)
Hello Kitty Miracle Collection (Imagineer)
Matsumoto Reeshi No Space Excite X (Jordan)
Rockman EXE (Capcom)
Airport Controller (Tam)
Mugen Kikou Zero Tours (Media Ring)
Winning Post (Koei)

Golden Sun



Kuru Kuru Kururin



With the Game Boy Advance Communication Cable, up to four units can be linked together for multiplayer gaming (it even has a connection for older cables)

Napoleon

Mario Kart Advance

WORKING TOGETHER

In our July 2000 issue we interviewed Miyamoto and asked him if there was room in the video game industry for four players. His response was intriguing as he felt that there wasn't room for four, but that the battle would be fought by others as Nintendo would be doing something else.

We don't have the whole picture yet, but it's obvious that Nintendo is creating a new generation of wireless gamers. By connecting the Game Boy Advance and the Gamecube together it has made it possible to create games that can be played on either device and can use shared data. Peter Main of Nintendo of America went as far as to say, "...the combined impact of the Nintendo Gamecube and the Nintendo Game Boy Advance will ultimately alter the definition of the term 'video game.'"

This new wireless generation may indeed find Nintendo's Next tandem of Gamecube and Game Boy Advance to be the answer to all their gaming needs, but even Nintendo acknowledges the fact that PlayStation 2 may still hold the top spot.

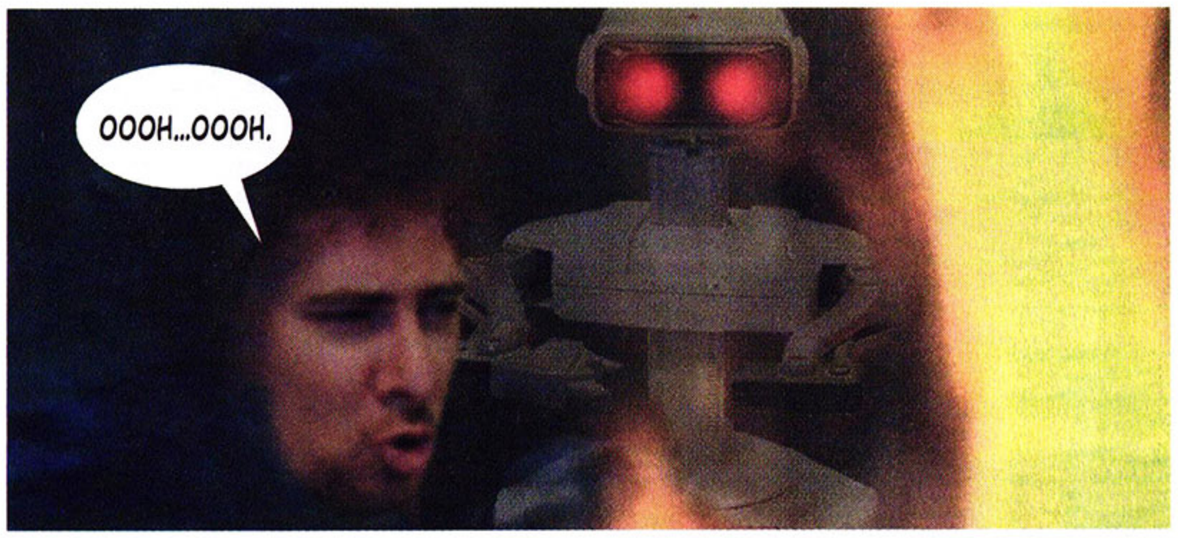
"[Nintendo has] created the Gamecube hardware and will create the software that will become the requisite for everyone even though they already have the PS2," game genius Miyamoto acknowledged. We'd have to agree as older gamers will definitely be attracted to Nintendo's classic lineup which will certainly come to life on Gamecube.

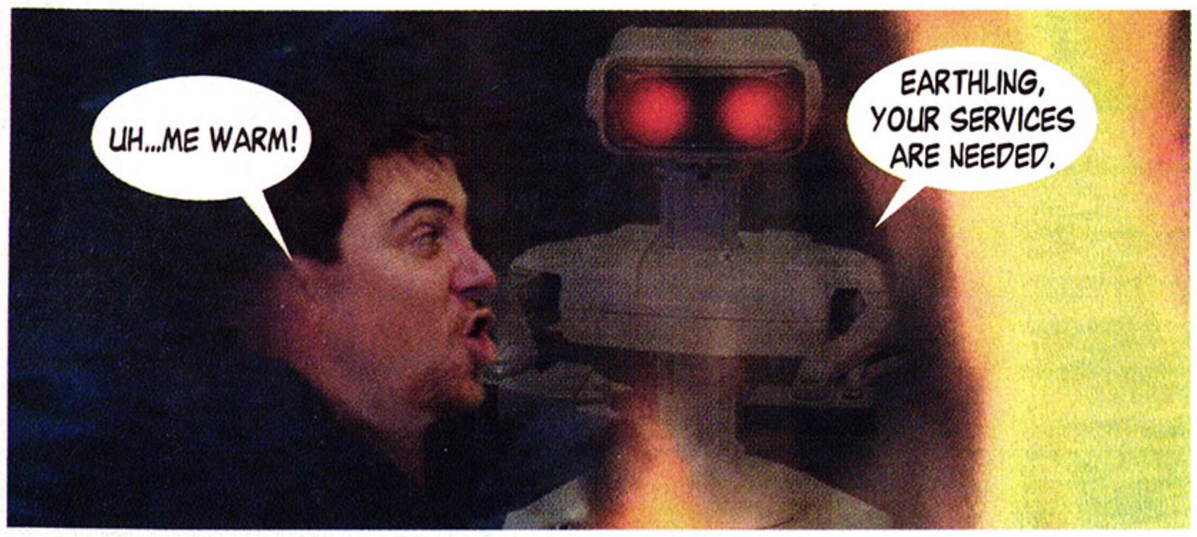
Will Nintendo's Next create a new definition of gaming? Time will tell, but one thing is for sure: Nintendo is here to stay and will always be a contender in the video game market with its amazing stable of games. The only question that really needs to be answered is if Nintendo can get third-party support to catapult it back to the top.

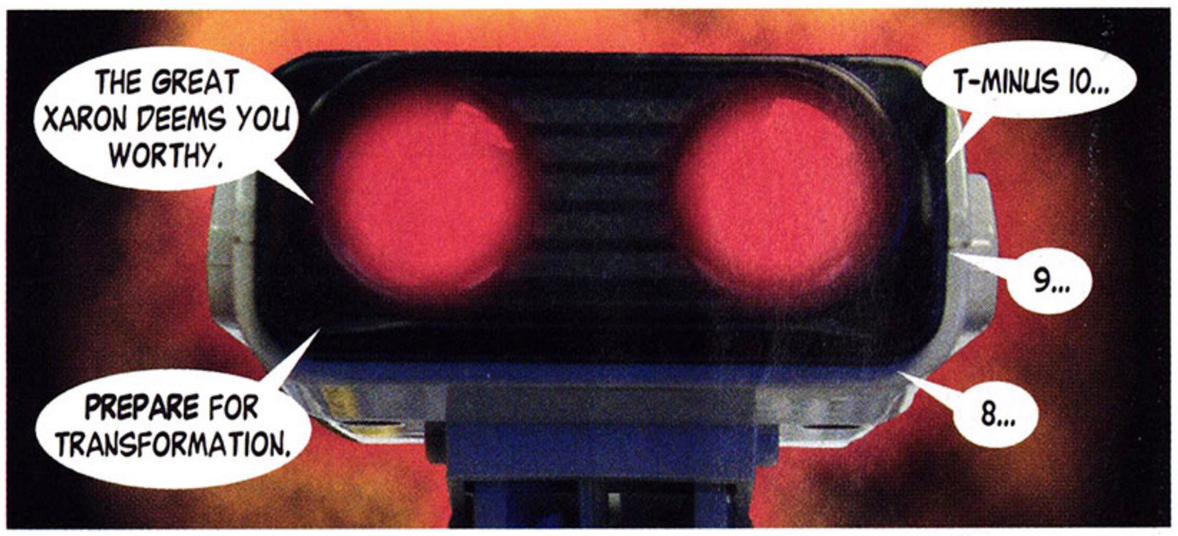
Game Boy Advance can be used as a controller for Gamecube, allowing the player to utilize its screen to call plays in football or a pitch in baseball

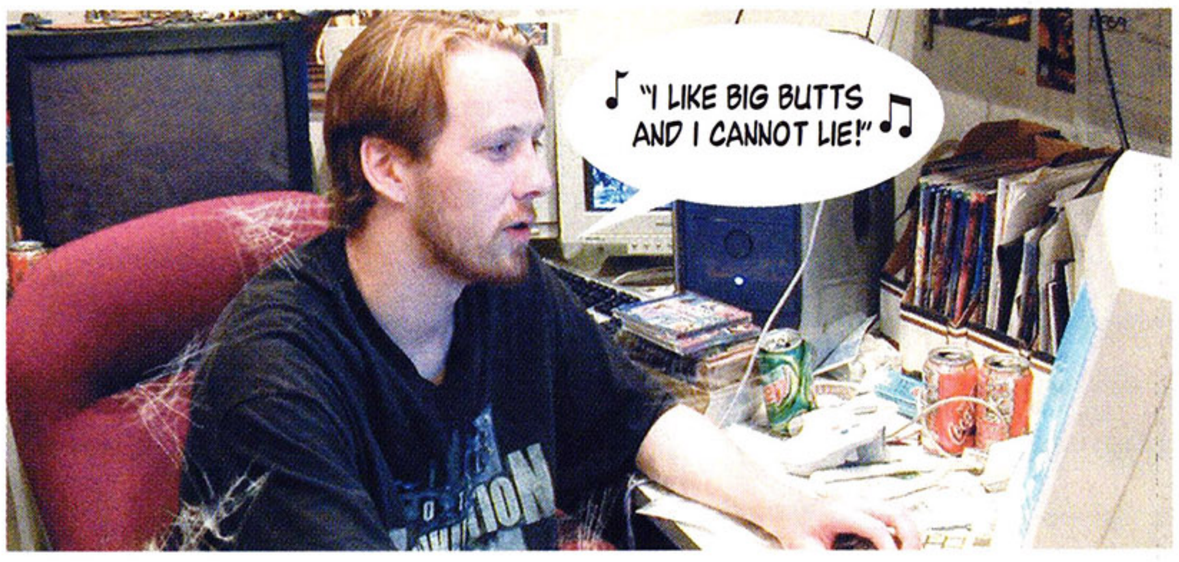
THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GAMERS

SLIGHTLY MORE POWERFUL THAN MERE MORTALS, AND TEN TIMES MORE SEXY THAN MOST GODS, THE SIX BRAVE HEROES OF TEAM GAME INFORMER HAVE PUT THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE TO MAINTAIN BALANCE WITHIN THE VIDEO GAME WORLD. FOR DECADES, VIDEO GAMES PROSPERED UNDER THEIR WATCHFUL EYES. BEFORE GAMING COULD EVOLVE TO THE NEXT STAGE, DISASTER STRUCK. A CORPORATE BUY-OUT FORCED TEAM GAME INFORMER TO DISBAND AND ITS MEMBERS DISAPPEARED. NOT KNOWING WHICH GAMES TO BUY AND NOT GETTING THEIR MONTHLY FIX OF CODES, THE GAMING NATION HAS TRANSFORMED INTO AN UGLY BEAST FOR WHOM CHAOS REIGNS SUPREME. IF SOMETHING ISN'T DONE QUICKLY, ALL ARE DOOMED...









EGADS!!!
ZIZZ!
PTOW!!

BLAMO!!!

DID I SAVE MY GAME?

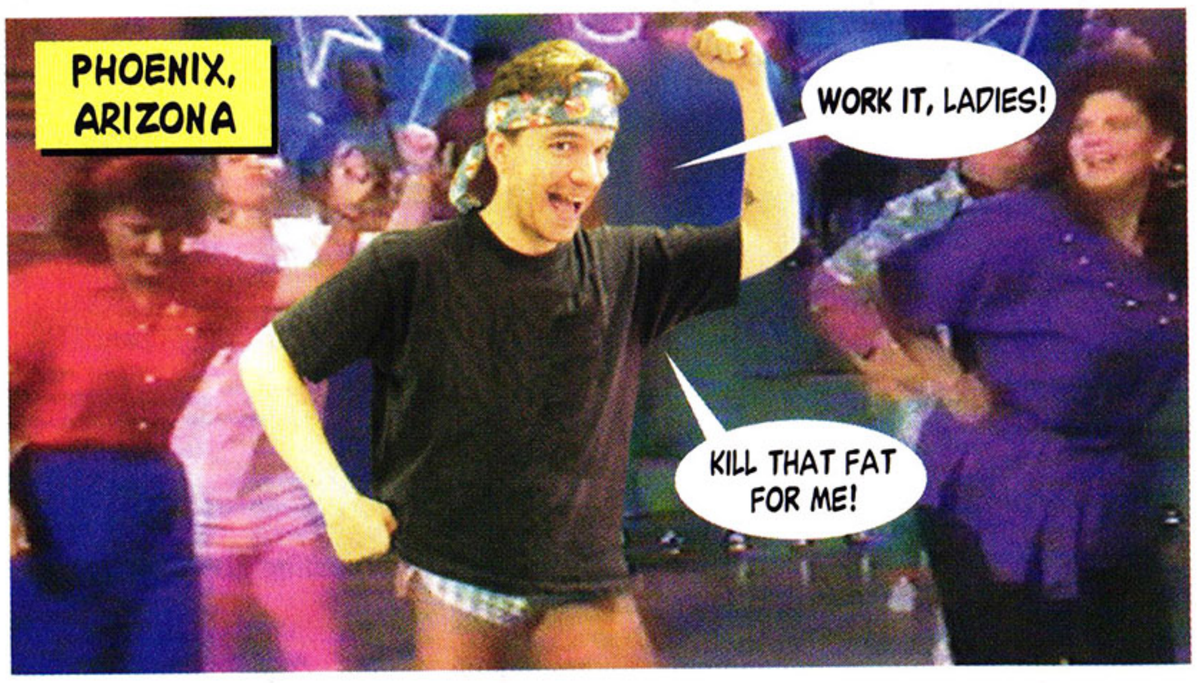
GOOD DAY TO YOU, SIR ERIK.
EH...?

ANDY, WHEN IS DEADLINE?
YOU MORTAL IMBECILE. THE MAGAZINE HAS BEEN DEAD FOR A MONTH, AND YOU WERE LAID OFF WEEKS BEFORE THE FATAL DAY.

KER-THWACK!

I'VE RETURNED FOR THE REFORMATION OF TEAM GAME INFORMER.

NOW CALL THE REST OF THE TEAM, SLAVE!
YES, MASTER.


PHOENIX, ARIZONA
WORK IT, LADIES!
KILL THAT FAT FOR ME!

BRRING! BRRRING!

THANKS FOR CALLING FLAB BE GONE! THIS IS JAY!
UH HUH...

I'M ON MY WAY!

THE WHITE HOUSE

I'LL SHOW YOU AMERICAN SUCKAS A THING OR TWO ABOUT RESPECT!

I'M REINSTATING THE DRAFT. EVERYONE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 10 AND 20 MUST JOIN MY ARMY! MUHAHA HAHA!

THAT BETTER NOT BE SADDAM AGAIN!

RING! RING!

REALLY?!

AMERICA CAN WAIT!

HERE I COME!

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Ferrets for sale

EEEP!!!

IF ONLY YOU GUYS COULD UNDERSTAND MY PAIN.

EEEP!!!*

*TRANSLATION: BITE ME!

MATTY, YOU HAVE A PHONE CALL!

I'M COMING, MOM!

I'LL BE RIGHT THERE, GUYS!

YOU'RE THE BEST!

SO LENNY, WHAT DIDJA THINK OF THOSE THERE CHEESE CURDS?

MY REAR IS STILL ON FIRE. THANK YA KINDLY.

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

HEY! SEEN ANY GOOD MOVIES LATELY?

HA HA! SILLY AMISH!

WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, LAD?

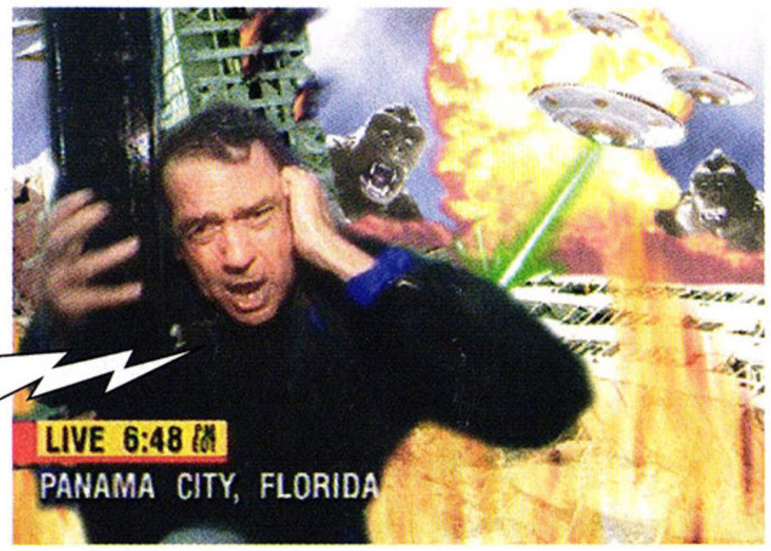
WE NEED YOU.

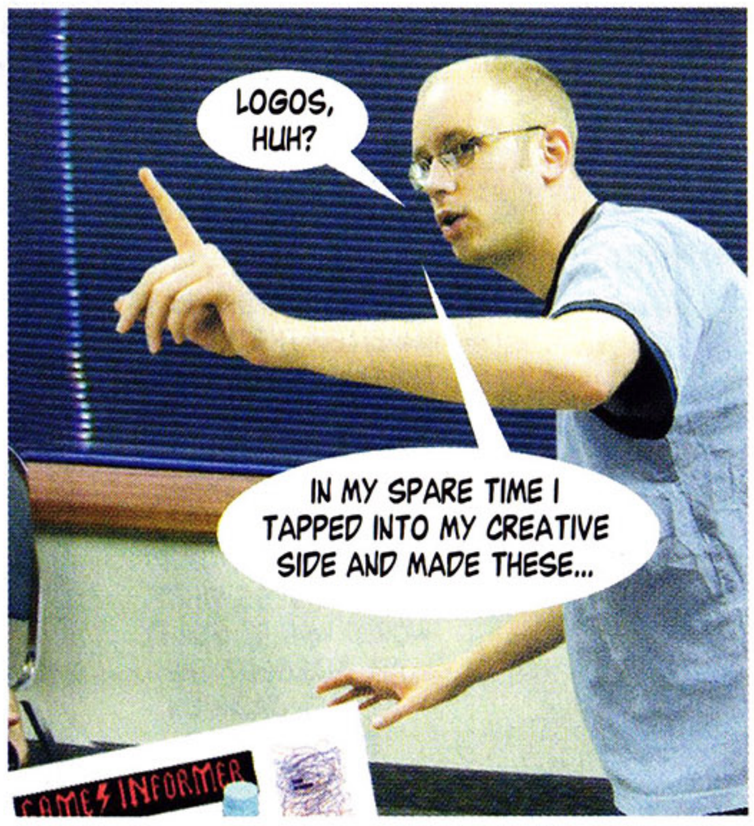
PACK YOUR STUFF.

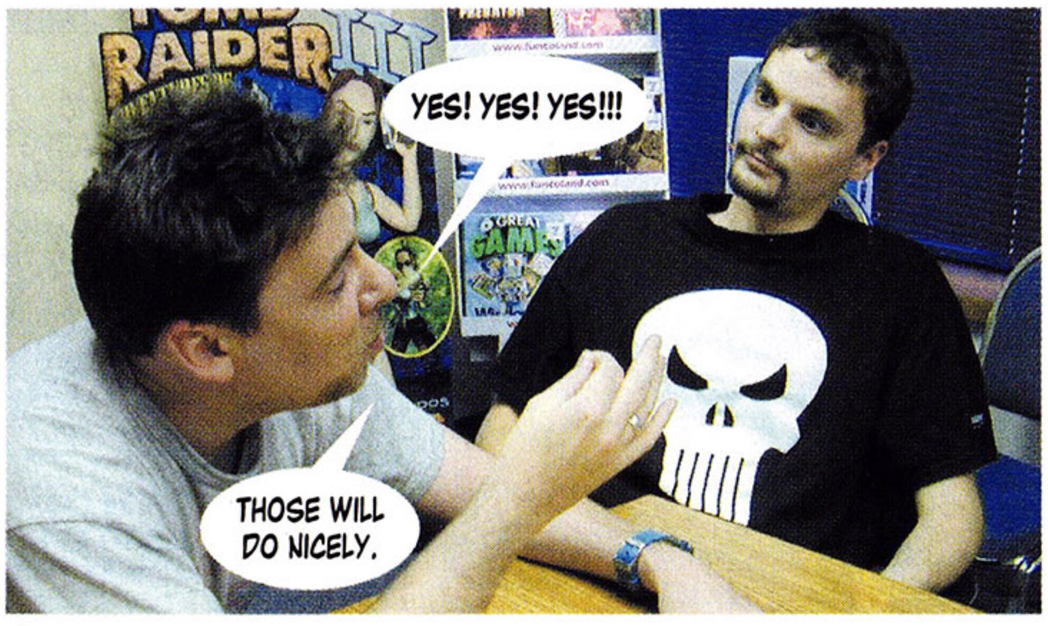
AYE. GIVE ME A MINUTE.

CHAPTER 2: THE QUEST FOR PEACE

THE VIOLENCE WITHIN THE GAMING COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO GROW WORSE WITH EACH PASSING DAY. NEVER BEFORE HAS THE WORLD EXPERIENCED A SITUATION QUITE LIKE THIS...







HOURS LATER...
OXFORD PRINTING PLANT

I CAN'T BELIEVE WE FINISHED THE REDESIGN IN TIME!

ME NEITHER. I HOPE IT TURNED OUT!

THERE IT IS! THE NEW MAGAZINE!

We gotta stiff upper lip

GAME INFORMER

DAVID LEE ROTH'S TOP TEN GAMES INSIDE!

STUPID FEATURES Just Like the Comic You're Reading Now!!

101 FART JOKES

EXCLUSIVE REPORT: Live at the Sesame Street Expo

WE NEED TO DELIVER THESE TO STORE FRONTS WITHIN THE HOUR! GODSPEED TO ALL OF YOU!

WE ARE ON THE BRINK OF ANOTHER WAR. A WAR THAT WILL SURELY DESTROY US ALL. WHO DO WE HAVE TO BLAME FOR THIS? GAME INFORMER....

THIS IS AWFUL! WE DID OUR BEST!

AWFUL...ON THE CONTRARY! THIS IS MARVELOUS!

MUHHHAHAHA!!!

I SMELL AN IMPOSTOR!

OH WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? YOU'RE ALL DEAD ANYWAY.

YOU ARE CORRECT, GAME PROFESSOR. I AM NOT THE ONE YOU KNOW AS ANDY. I AM XARON FROM THE PLANET FILIOUS IV. MY GOAL IS TO DESTROY YOU ALL, THEN BRING MY PEOPLE TO YOUR COMPATIBLE PLANET.

SINCE MY RACE IS PURELY SYMBIOTIC, I INHABITED THE BODY OF THE ONE YOU REFER TO AS ANDY MANY MOONS AGO. EVERY SENSELESS ACT OF VIOLENCE CAUSED IN THE WORLD IS MY DOING. WORLD WAR I? GUESS WHO? WORLD WAR II? GUILTY AS CHARGED? THE MICHAEL JACKSON SCANDAL? YOU KNOW IT!

YOUR PEOPLE WOULD HAVE LIVED HAPPILY...BUT I POLLUTED YOUR RACE, AND IN THE NEXT HOUR, IT WILL BE EXTINCT! MUHAHAHHA!

WHY DID I CHOOSE YOU GUYS AS MY ACCOMPLICES? COME ON...LOOK AROUND THE ROOM! HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A MORE PATHETIC GROUP OF PEOPLE WITH A DIRECT LINK TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE WORLD? IT'S PERFECT!!! YOU'D NEVER CATCH ON! MUHAHHAHA!!!

CRACK!!!!

BAM!!! CRADLE ROCK STYLE!

THERE'S NO TIME TO REDESIGN THE MAGAZINE AGAIN...BUT I HAVE AN IDEA!

WE'RE ONLY GOING TO GET ONE SHOT AT THIS!

READING FERRET MONTHLY MAGAZINE, I LEARNED THAT WHEN FERRET'S EAT GRAPE JELL-O, THEY COME DOWN WITH INCREDIBLE FLATULENCE. THE GAS THEY CREATE IS ACTUALLY A TIME PORTAL. IF YOU INHALE ENOUGH OF THIS GAS, YOU SIMPLY MUST THINK OF THE TIME AND PLACE YOU WANT TO GO TO, AND BLAMO! YOU'RE THERE IN SECONDS!

OKAY GUYS, (SOB!) I'M HEADING BACK TO TRY AND STOP XARON. SINCE I CAN'T PINPOINT THE EXACT TIME HE ENTERED ANDY'S BODY, I'M JUST GOING TO HAVE TO FIND ANDY AND KILL HIM. ANY OBJECTIONS? I DIDN'T THINK SO.

(SNIFF) JAY, DID YOU FIND THAT NUCLEAR WARHEAD?

YES, AND GOOD LUCK, OLD FRIEND.

BRRIP!

I LOVE YOU ALL! YOU'RE THE GREATEST BUNCH OF GUYS IN THE WORLD!

EEEP!!!*

*TRANSLATION: GOOD RIDDANCE!

SO HOW WILL WE KNOW IF MATT SUCCEEDS OR NOT?

YES, IF HE'S DESTROYED XARON IN THE PAST, SHOULDN'T THIS TIME BE DIFFERENT?

WAIT A SEC...DO YOU THINK MATT SHOULD HAVE PICKED A DIFFERENT WEAPON, LIKE A GUN OF KNIFE PERHAPS? THE RADIATION FROM A NUCLEAR BLAST WILL SURELY DO MORE DAMAGE THAN JUST STOP XARON. OH MY GOD!!! IT COULD CHANGE EVERY...

AND THEN THE STRANGEST THING HAPPENED...

KA-BLAM!

ANDY'S BODY AND THE OLD MAGAZINE DISAPPEARED...

YEAH! WAY TO GO, MATTY!

POOF!

AND IN THEIR PLACE A NEW MAGAZINE APPEARED!

BUT AT WHAT COST?!

SO YOU SEE, MATT'S TIME TRAVELING HEROICS CHANGED HISTORY, SAVED THE WORLD, AND CREATED A BETTER GAME INFORMER FOR YOU TO READ AND LOVE. SURE, BOTH ANDY AND MATT DIED IN THE MAKING OF THIS AMAZING NEW PUBLICATION...BUT NEVER FEAR! WE HAVE DOZENS OF CLONES TO REPLACE THEM WITH. HECK, WE CAN CONTINUE KILLING STAFF MEMBERS UNTIL THE END OF TIME IF WE REALLY WANTED TO! SO IF WE HAVE TO PASTE A MORAL OF THE STORY ON THIS OBSCURE PIECE, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE "HARD WORK IS DUMB. ADVENTURES ARE FUN. NEVER SNIFF GASOLINE. AND NEVER LET A MONKEY WRITE FOR YOUR MAGAZINE!"

THE END
(THANK GOODNESS!!!)

PREVIEWS

PLAYSTATION 2

ONIMUSHA: WARLORDS

SWORD SLASHING SURVIVAL

Since we last previewed Onimusha in our June issue and played a short demo at E3, we have been treated to a new look at the game, learning some fresh details about gameplay.

If we were under the assumption that Onimusha was essentially Resident Evil with swords, this new look at the game confirmed it. Not only do you battle a strange form of mutant soldier, but items and puzzles present themselves in a nearly identical fashion. For example, there is a large stone door that you must get through. Right next to this door is a small opening where it appears there is a switch that just may open it, but to get at that switch you need an item. Thus, you search the rooms, backtrack a little, and then find an iron hook to open this door. Likewise, we witnessed both the typical RE-styled puzzle where you pick up a key and unlock a door, as well as the now infamous – and healthy – green herb.

Takeshi Kaneshiro is clearly not a household name in the US, but he is a huge recording and film star in Asia. Capcom captured his likeness, essentially making Kaneshiro the hero of Onimusha

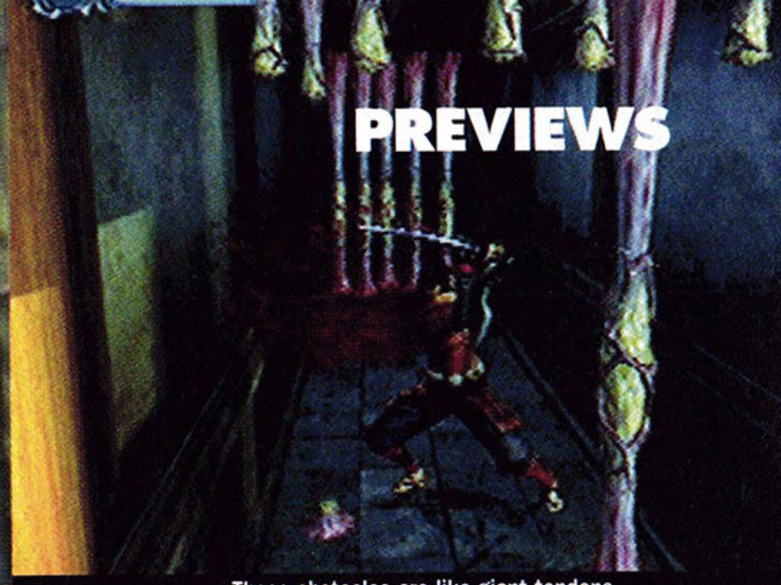
Capcom also showed us how the special powers will come into play with the battle system. As we mentioned in our earlier preview, the main character will come across a gauntlet – or armored glove. When equipped on your character's sword hand, this device looks pretty bad ass, but will do little unless it is further equipped with gemstones. These gems are another collectable you must locate, which will give your weapon elemental powers such as fire. Unfortunately, this power was the only one we witnessed, but it has a devastating effect on your enemies.

Speaking of enemies, this version had a wider variety of foes than we had previously seen. The first playable demo we saw only had one kind of sword-wielding foot soldier, but now there are larger, ominous foes which struck us as feudal versions of Resident Evil 3's Nemesis, as these guys could grab you by the throat and toss you like a rag doll as well. Also shown was a beast that can best be described as a bigger and fiercer rendition of the Gamorreans from Star Wars.

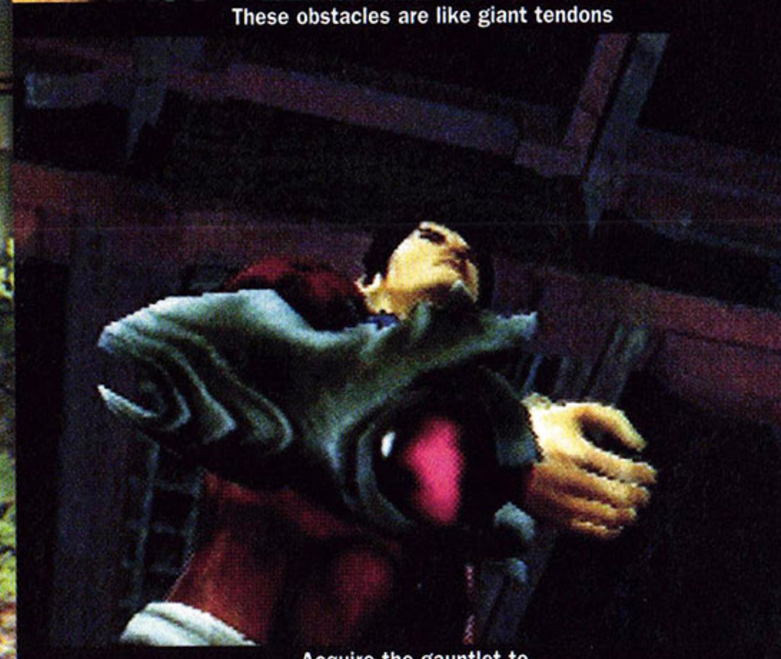
Indeed, there are plenty of similarities between Onimusha and survival horror games of the past, and at this stage of the game's development we are disappointed that the game is so derivative. Yet, this may be one of the key factors in the development delay. Back in March, we were told that the game would be ready in time for the fall release of the PlayStation 2. Capcom will now take more time with Onimusha's development, and the company has slotted its release in February of next year. Although the game's graphics are quite stunning, we'd have to say that the current state of design was pretty boring, and we welcome Capcom's decision to delay the game.

If appropriate changes are made, Onimusha may be one of the must-have titles for PlayStation 2. We will keep tabs on the game's progress in future issue of Game Informer.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM ■ **DEVELOPER** FLAGSHIP/CAPCOM ■ **RELEASE** FEBRUARY 2001



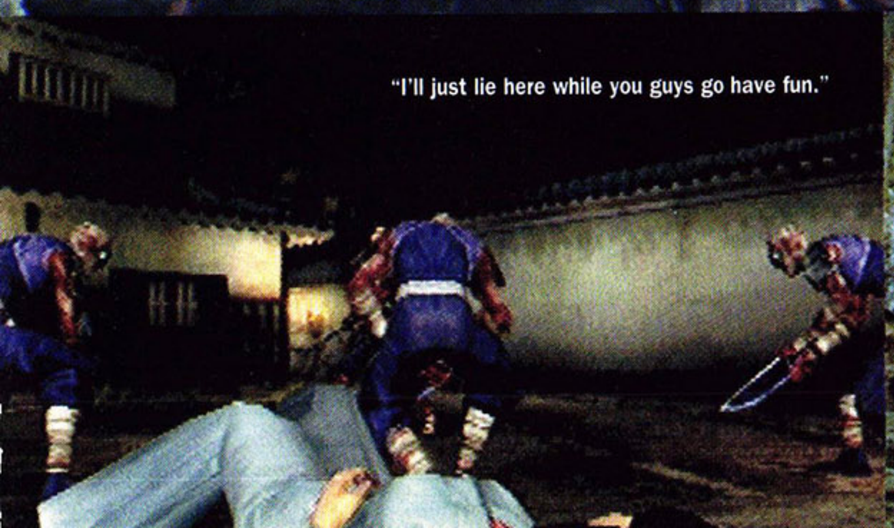
These obstacles are like giant tendons



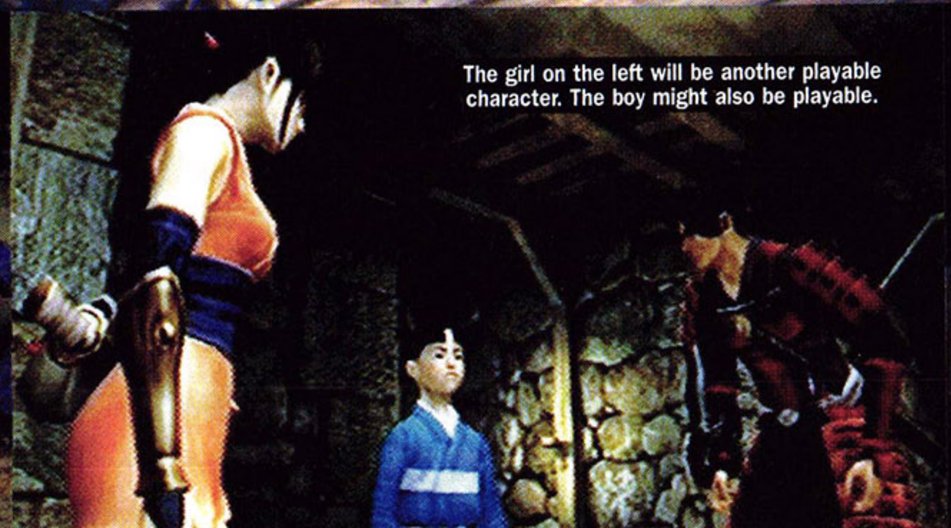
Acquire the gauntlet to...

...unleash a fiery slash attack

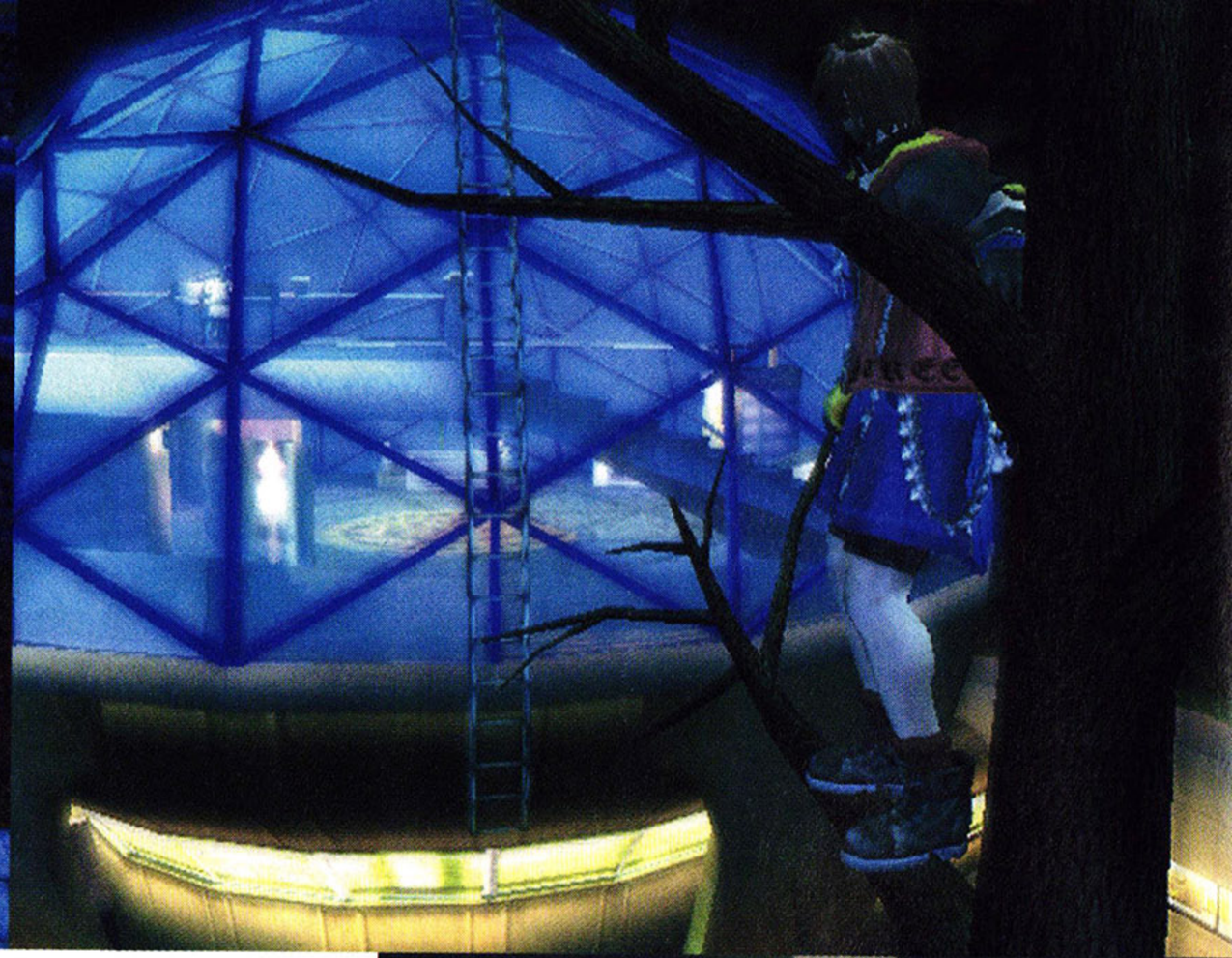
Take a look at this boss!



"I'll just lie here while you guys go have fun."



The girl on the left will be another playable character. The boy might also be playable.



PLAYSTATION 2

THE BOUNCER

BATTLE BEHIND THE BOOZE

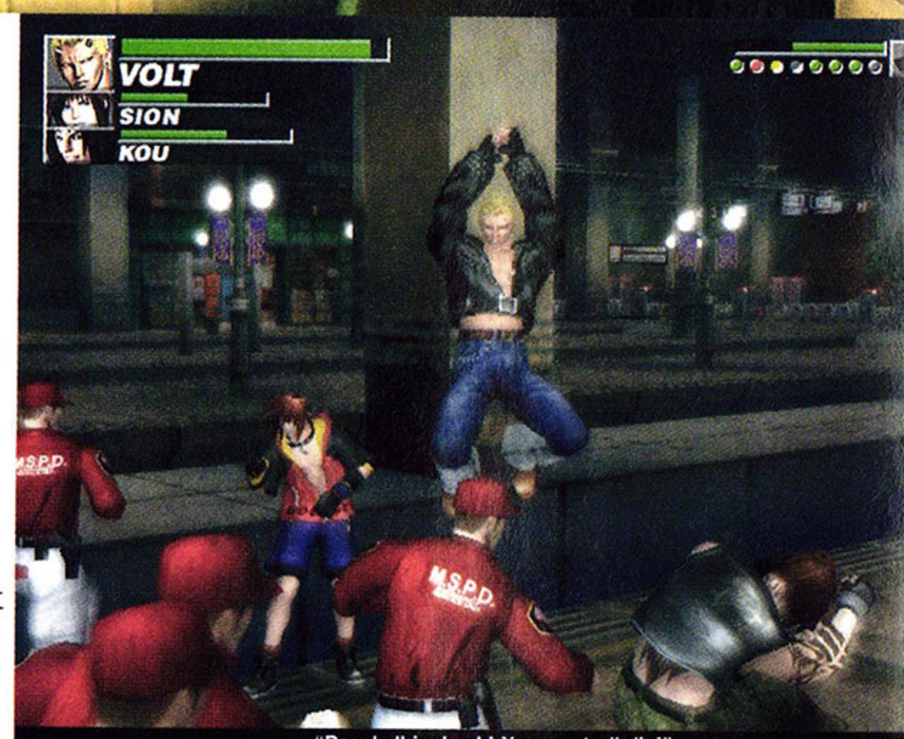
Mail by the truckloads, email by the thousands, and phones ringing off the hook was the response we were faced with after blowing the doors open on The Bouncer in our massive four-page preview in the September issue. You, the loyal reader, want to know everything about this fascinating PlayStation 2 property. How does it play? Is it better than Metal Gear Solid 2? When is it coming out? We've heard it all numerous times. To be dead honest, we know just about as little as you do. Square Soft is keeping this game under lock and key, and we're lucky to have the information we've printed.

Just when we thought we'd hit pay dirt with the material we debuted in September, Square Soft sent us a gold mine of information, game images, and artwork. We nearly had a seizure when we viewed some of the new images, which we so humbly share with you. In September we didn't know if there were multiple characters or not. Thanks to the new screenshots, this has been confirmed. Along with Sion Barzahd, players will assume control of Volt Krueger, and Kou0 Leifoh.

Through a system called Active Character Select (ACS), different characters can be chosen on the fly. From what we've been led to believe, choosing characters at specific times will alter a certain aspect of the game. Picture if you will a scenario where you're pursuing two thugs. They split up and go separate ways – one heads to the right, the other to the left. At this point, you'll need to choose who to follow. Chase the thug to the right, and the thug on the left may catch up with your girlfriend and slit her throat. The decisions may not be as brutal as this, but we're sure they'll be important. Also noteworthy, it appears as though the three characters can communicate via cell phone. This may be one of the many ways the player switches characters – by simply calling them. When the signal connects, you begin controlling the character on the other end of the line – wherever he may be.

It's been a while since we'd seen any combat images, but Square has come through and supplied us with a ton of awesome new sequences. As you can see, the CPU will control two of your characters when all three are joined together in combat. The character selection screen displays a listing of techniques for each character. Looking into this, we have a firm belief that new moves and combos will be rewarded to the player as the game progresses. This will more than likely be based on experience and level gaining, but always the innovator, Square may incorporate this aspect in an entirely new way.

As hard as it is to believe, the graphical quality in the game continues to get better and better. All the new backdrops are absolutely stunning, and the cutscenes look fantastic. Even more mind-boggling, Square is confident that The Bouncer will release before the end of the year. Hopefully, next issue we'll have some solid details and not just speculation. However, it is fun to piece together the puzzle and see how close our guesses are. Stay tuned...



"Baseball is dumb! You must all die!"

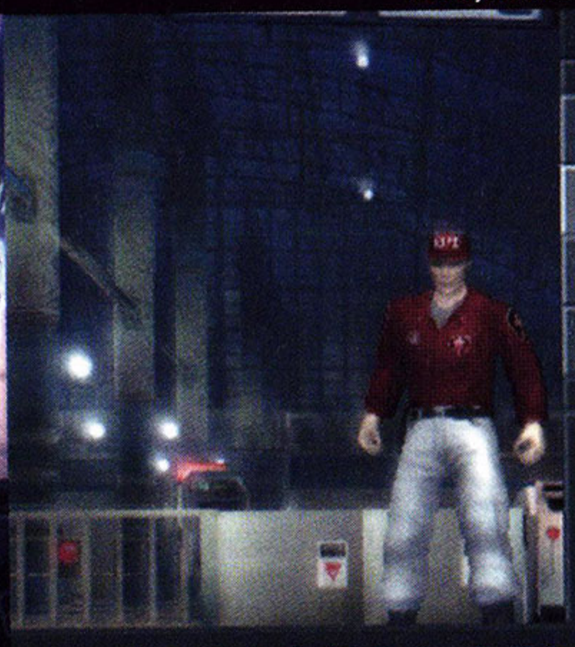
"Oh my! Where did that hand come from!"

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** SQUARE SOFT
■ **DEVELOPER** DREAMFACTORY ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER

"Lookie what I found!"

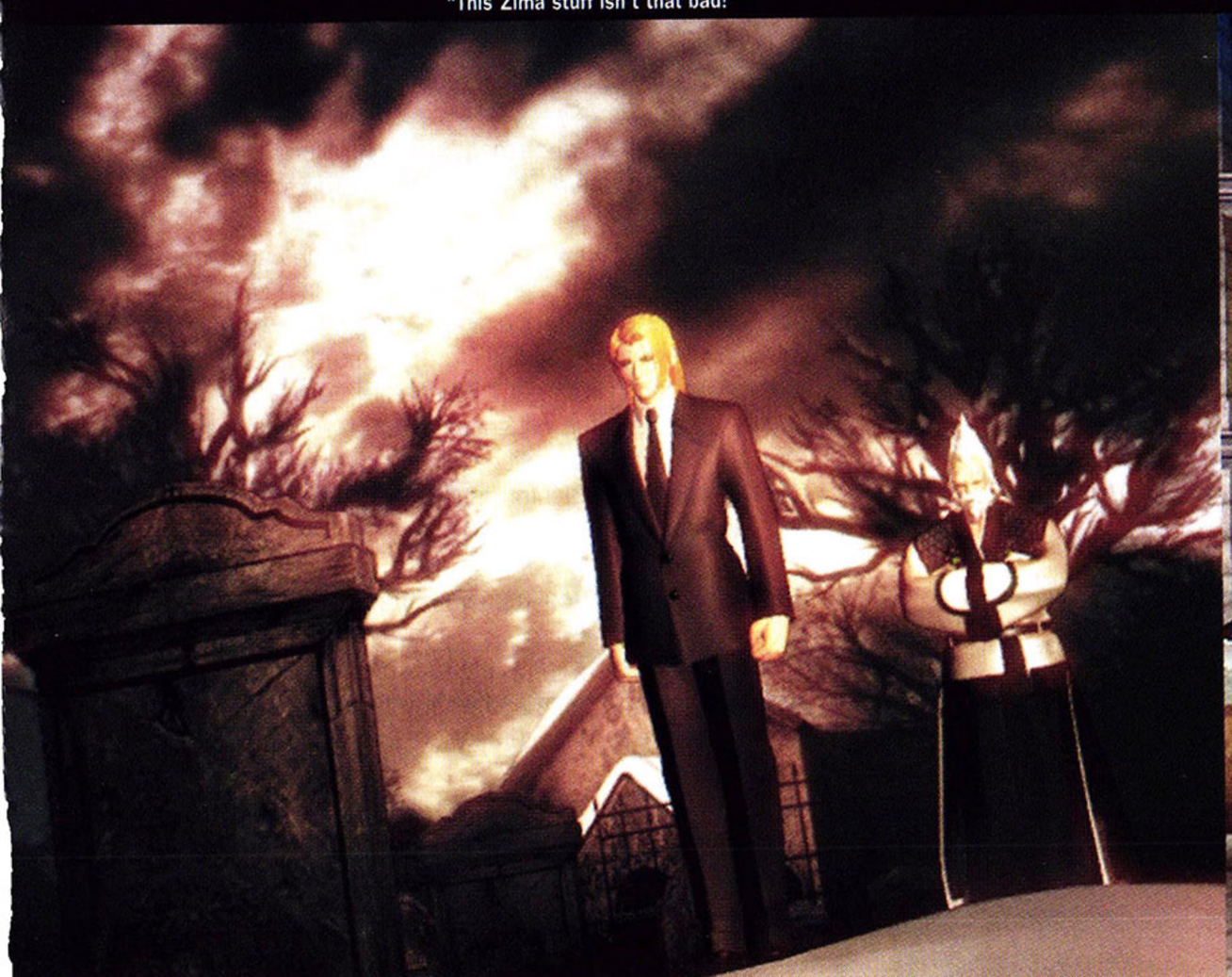
The PlayStation 2 can do amazing things with real-time

"Lookie what I found!"

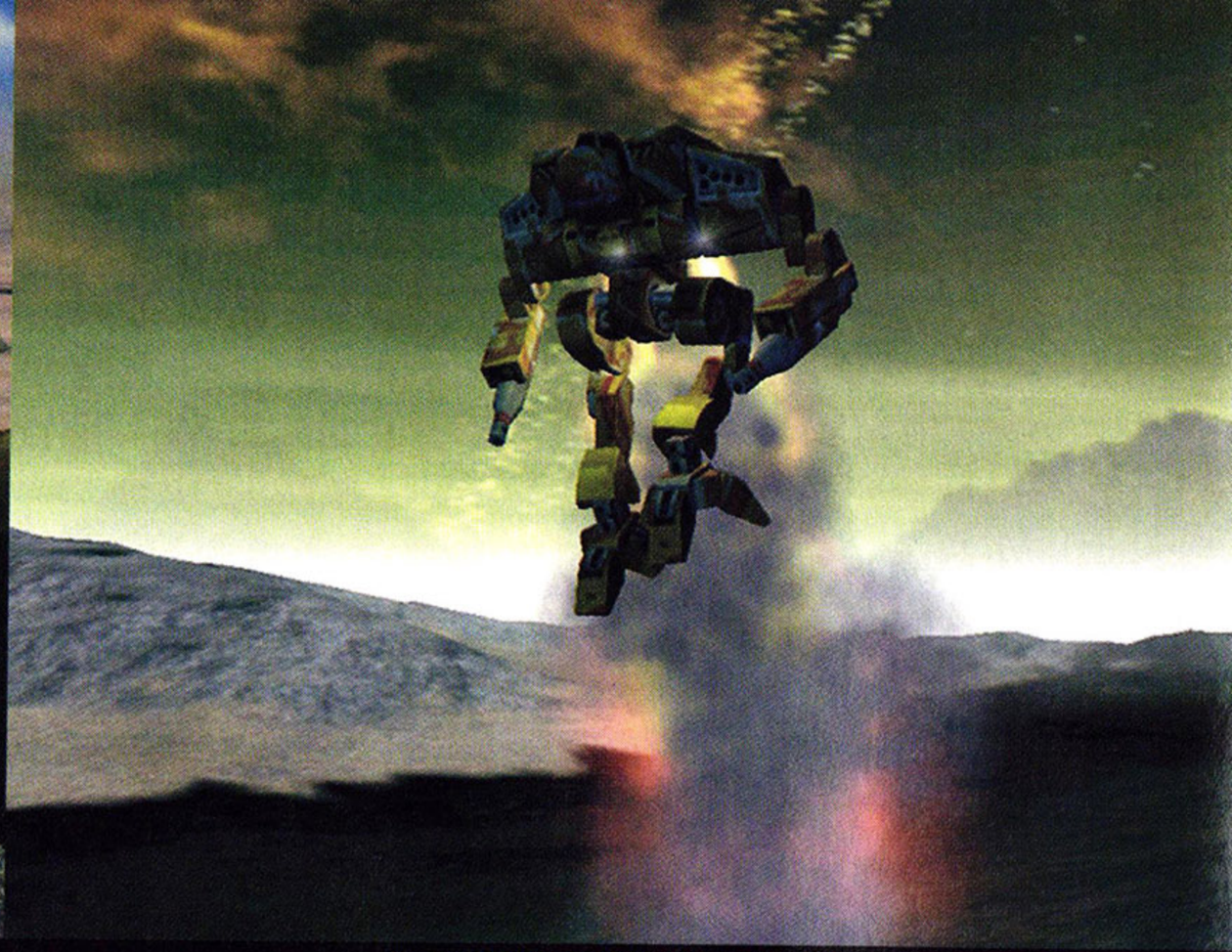


"This Zima stuff isn't that bad!"

Each character is equipped with signature combat moves



Everyone's favorite, the Madcat, will get a serious upgrade

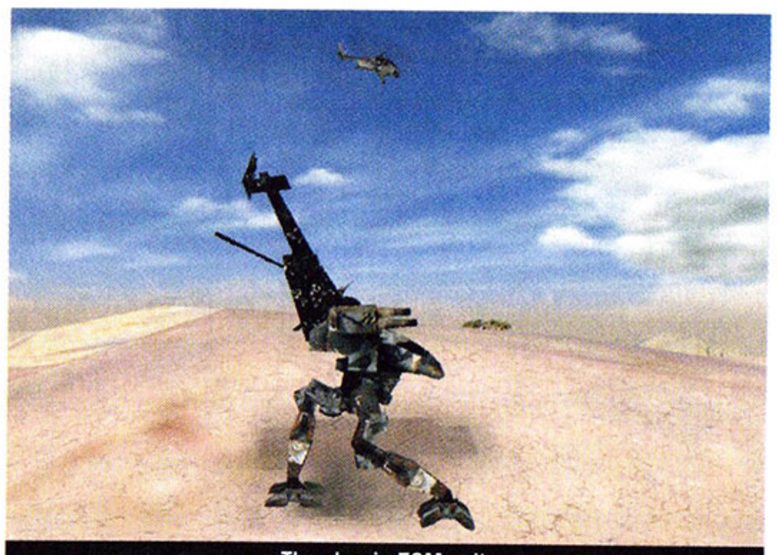


The first MechWarrior didn't even have jump jets

PC

MECHWARRIOR 4: VENGEANCE

STEP LOUDLY AND CARRY A BIG GAUSS RIFLE



The classic ECM unit

MechWarrior 4 was one of the star PC attractions at E3 with its gorgeous lighting effects, incredibly fluid and complex joint animation, and remarkable attention to environmental detail. The game truly stresses the scale of your 'Mechs like no other MechWarrior before it. Trees, cars, buildings, tanks, and infantry all wait to be crushed underfoot by gigantic 'Mech feet.

The game's plot is easy enough to understand. After the closing events of the Clan wars, House Steiner gets usurped by a power-mongering tart. Steiner begins an aggressive campaign of expansion, conquers your homeworld, and kills your dad. Thus, the "Vengeance" in the game's title. Despite the avenging son plotline, it sounds like the development team at Microsoft plans to put on a good cinematic showing with hundreds of video and audio clips featuring your Lancemates and other central characters.

MechWarrior 4 features 21 'Mechs, seven of which are brand new creations, and will even include some new weapon technologies. There are also plans for including a level-design tool kit so amateur designers can create their very own environments. For the grittier details we asked producer, TJ "PAINGOD" Wagner for some more information.

Interview with TJ "PAINGOD" Wagner, Producer

GI: What projects have you guys worked on in the past?

TJ: A good chunk of the team has been working on the Virtual World pods for years, and some of us worked on MechCommander as well. We also worked on some contract projects for other location-based entertainment centers.

GI: There are six brand new 'Mechs in your game. Can you tell us about them?

TJ: Seven actually. For example, the Chimera is a brand new 40-ton 'Mech, and Thanatos, a new heavy class 75-ton 'Mech. In addition to these new 'Mechs, there is the Argus, Hellspawn, Madcat Mk.II, Osiris, and the Uziel. It was fun to spec out the size and specialty that we needed to fill a few holes and then see what the artists, Eddie Smith and Mark Duncan, came up with. The Uziel has so far been the favorite of the new designs because of his rounded torso and tri-section legs.

GI: You've got everyone excited about this Long Tom artillery piece. What are the details on that and how many other new weapon types can we expect to see?

TJ: Who told you about the Long Tom?! We have really been trying to keep the details of the new weapons under wraps. The Long Tom does not follow the conventional targeting system, but it packs a huge punch. Wait 'til you see it in action! I think in the end that this will become a special-use weapon that only veteran pilots will dare to use.

GI: How extensive will the level-design tools be? Will players be able to emulate all the environments, objects, and weather conditions from the game?

Once you light up the field with Beam weapons, camouflage is moot

TJ: We will be releasing versions of the tools we used to make the levels so they will be pretty powerful. Currently all objects, lights, weather conditions, and objectives are placed or set in our game editor, so the end user will easily be able to affect these.

GI: Will there be continued support for the level-design tools like new objects and environments to work with?

TJ: Definitely. There are plans in the works for web-released material to support the game after its release. We recognize the importance of continued support for the community.

GI: How are fellow Lance members controlled? Is it through a map/waypoint system, or do you issue orders from a menu?

TJ: In missions, you will be able to control and give your Lancemates orders using mapped keys (à la a key combination system). For example, using the Function keys you can give commands like "form on me," "attack my target," "defend my target," "cease fire," and more. In addition, Lancemates will speak to you over radios and through your communications window. They will offer you help and relay background information on the area and situations you find yourself in.

GI: Do your teammates improve with experience?

TJ: Yes, Lancemates' skills improve over time depending on how often you use them and what you use them for. Gunnery, Piloting, and Heat Management are just a few examples.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** MICROSOFT ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 15

Multi-'Mech battles can get pretty intense

GI: In simulation games of the past, skilled players have often found themselves in a weird plot gap when they destroyed an entire enemy strike force that was only supposed to be scouted, or destroyed the "Invincible" seven times over without affecting the plot. It's been said that MechWarrior 4 scenarios will be a lot more flexible than this, allowing players to win missions in their own way. To what degree is this true?

Jump jets won't save this 'Mech's target

TJ: One of my biggest pet peeves as a gamer is when I encounter a situation such as you described. You shouldn't lose or break the mission just because you didn't do what the level designer wanted or expected you to do. In MechWarrior 4, players choose how they want to play the mission, what path they will take, who they take with them, and so on. The end result of the game will be determined by the choices the player makes along the way.

GI: What's the geekiest conversation any of you have ever had as a result of sleep deprivation and working on a game about giant robots?

TJ: The most common one is two people arguing how something concerning a 'Mech would work in the real world. This happens all the time and it's hard not to get sucked into it. You suddenly hear yourself say something akin to, "In reality, jump jets would lift the Vulture just enough for it to fall on its face," and then think, "Man, I gotta get some sleep."

The Atlas' evil grin only adds to the terror of its potent attacks

Beautiful lighting effects and detail dress the game nicely

PC/PLAYSTATION 2

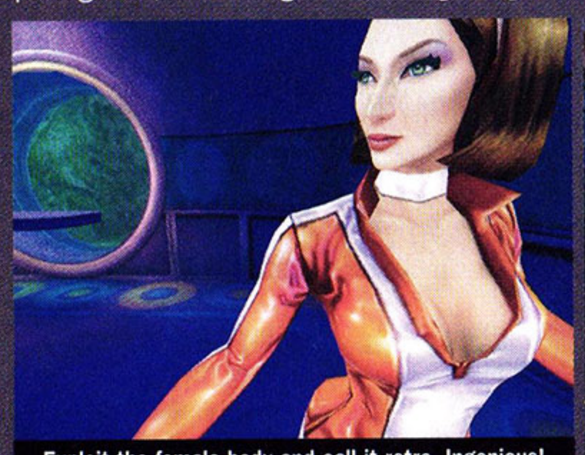
NO ONE LIVES FOREVER

AWAY VILE TEMPTR...OH SCREW IT

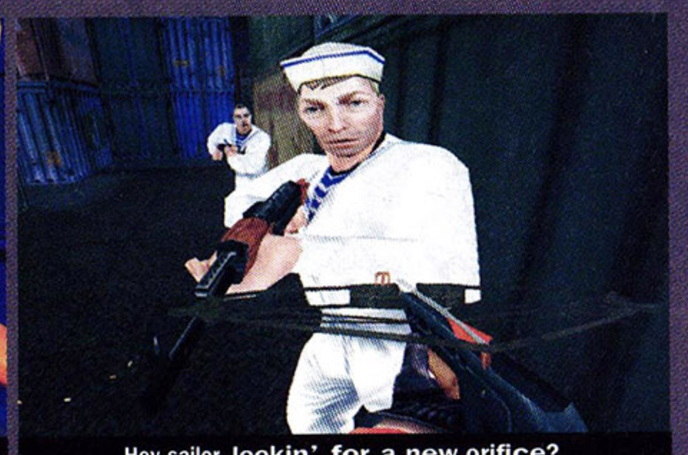
Now that the megaboobed, pencil-waisted image of Lara Croft has actually managed to kick a dead horse through several surprisingly lucrative sequels, the video game industry is being invaded by countless video vixens. Aside from the fact that Cate Archer, the central character in Mythos' stunning new game, is sexy and actually has hips, No One Lives Forever has the look of an outstanding shooter.

There are 30 weapons and gadgets that cross the spectrum from crossbows and assault rifles to a razor-toothed robotic poodle and cosmetic products that knockout, explode, and kill. Players will also be able to commandeer vehicles like a snowmobile and motorcycle for some intense action sequences.

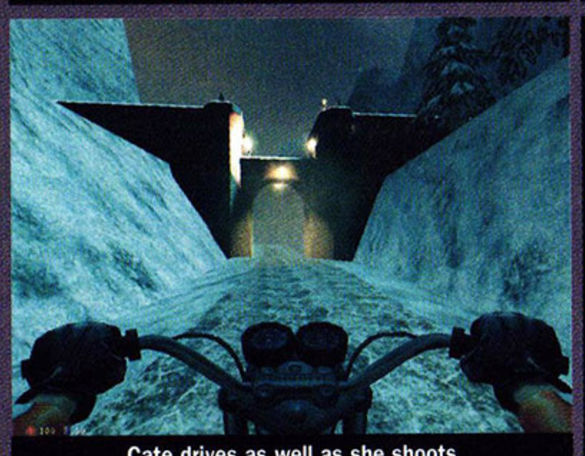
Looking like sort of a cross between a serious '60s espionage flick and Austin Powers, the game features a host of humorous and classic villains. Mythos has promised a sophisticated AI for the enemies, who will actually work together as teams in combat, providing suppressive fire while others go for help and fan out to search for Cate when she's been spotted. Graphically, NOLF looks every bit as fantastic as its protagonist, and is a game worth getting excited about.



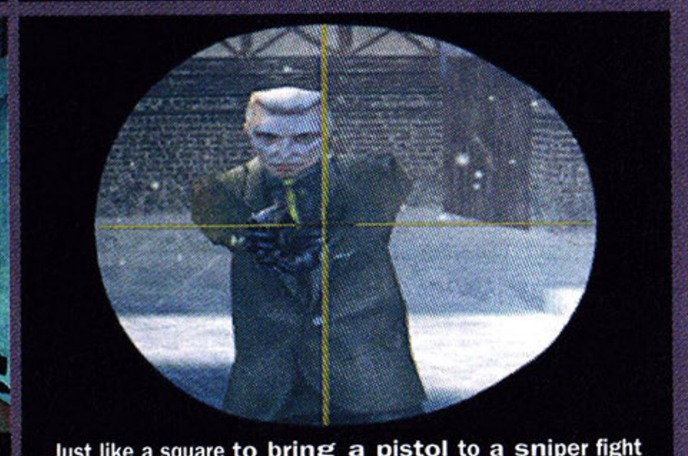
Exploit the female body and call it retro. Ingenious!



Hey sailor, lookin' for a new orifice?



Cate drives as well as she shoots



Just like a square to bring a pistol to a sniper fight

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 16-PLAYER ACTION/SHOOTER (PLUS ONLINE MULTIPLAYER) ■ **PUBLISHER** FOX INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** MYTHOS ■ **RELEASE** 4TH QUARTER

When he's not on the case, Ryo can collect toys...

...hit on ladies...

...gamble away his allowance...

...darts...

...Space Harrier...

...visit the arcade to play...

DREAMCAST

SHENMUE

FIRST REALITY TELEVISION, NOW THIS

...and Hang On...

Known for its multi-million dollar budget, huge real-time environments, and varied gameplay, the ambitious series known as Shenmue (recently downsized to only three parts) has a goal that's actually quite simple. Playing as Ryo Hazuki, you must find the man that killed Ryo's father just days earlier and kick the culprit's ass.

The act of locating this mysterious villain will present a bit of a challenge, however. Starting with just a minor clue, a notebook, and a 500 yen per day allowance, Ryo must scour the city in search of the assassin. Much of the game involves talking to people, who will usually help you with the question foremost in Ryo's mind or refer you to someone who knows more. Some people and places can only be visited at certain hours of the day, though, so players must use the watch in the corner of the screen to show up for appointments on time.

Considering that Ryo is tracking down a killer, it comes as no surprise that a few of the people he runs into aren't looking for a good conversation, but a fight. The action in Shenmue goes down in two ways – Quick Time Events (QTEs) or real-time. QTEs require players to rapidly press the buttons or follow directions that are flashed across the screen. Succeeding reveals the extent of Ryo's martial arts training through fluidly animated cutscenes, while failing shows Ryo getting a just as beautifully rendered beating. The more exciting real-time fights occur less often than QTE fights, and are similar in play to Virtua Fighter, with Ryo taking on multiple combatants at once.

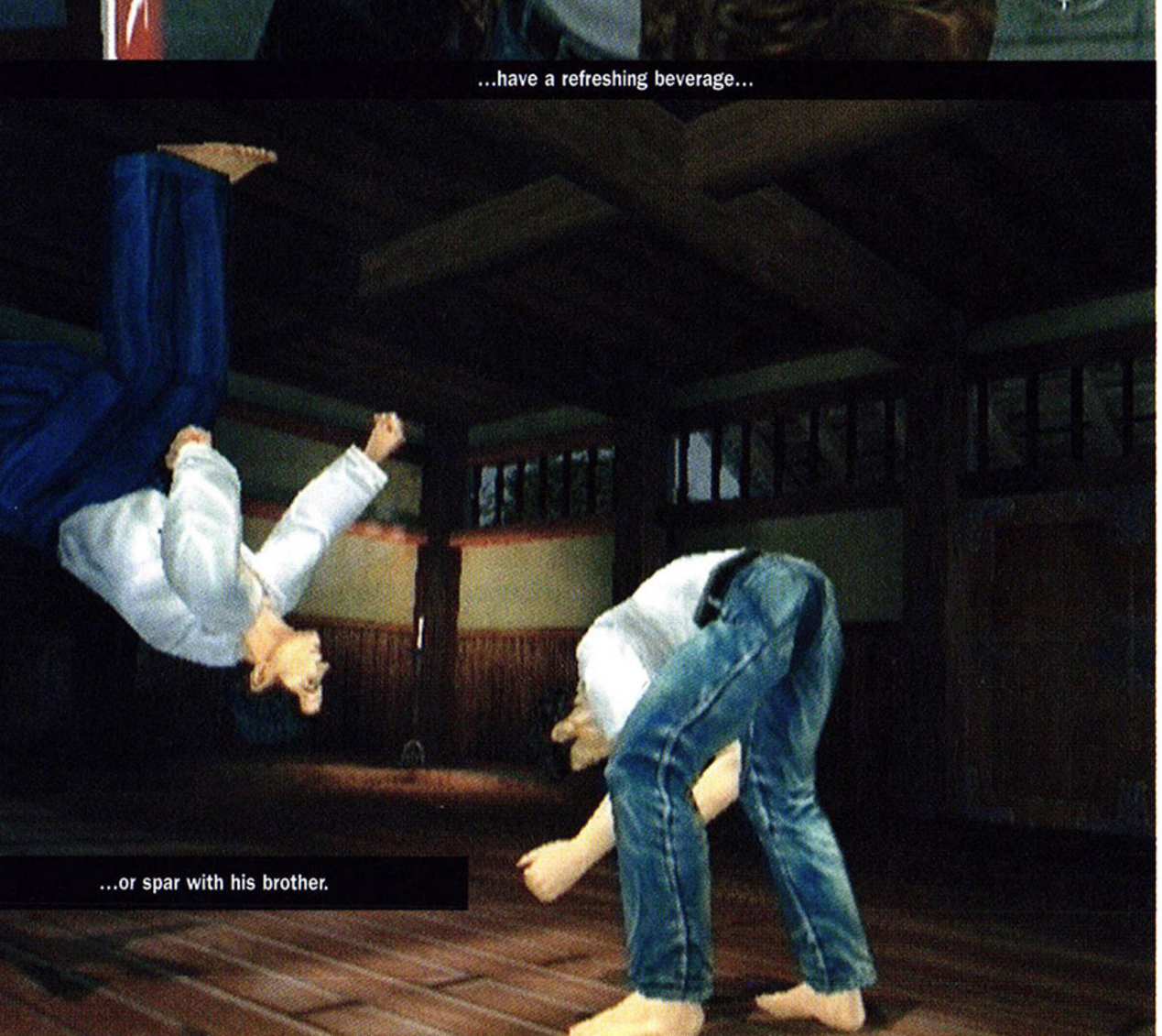
If one were to single-mindedly concentrate on solving the murder mystery, this three-disc game could probably be completed in a single day. As in life, however, there are many distractions to keep you from the task at hand. The city is filled with places to visit and things to check out. Between leads, Ryo can play games at the arcade, enjoy a refreshing beverage, visit a stray kitten, gamble at a slot house, spar with his brother, and collect small toys, among other things. A fourth disc known as the Shenmue Passport adds even more time-killing alternatives, offering game movies to watch, music to listen to, and the option to go online and read up on all the people and places in the game.

Shenmue is a fascinating glance toward what could become an entire genre unto itself – the type of game where there's much more to do than getting from point A to point B as quickly as possible. Some may wonder why they would want to play something where most of the entertainment comes from wasting time, but isn't that what playing video games is all about?

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA ■ **DEVELOPER** SEGA ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 11

...get his fortune read...

...have a refreshing beverage...



...or spar with his brother.

The environments in Pod II are beautiful

DREAMCAST

POD II

KEEP ON PODDIN'

The original Pod received high praise for remarkable graphics, but only a lukewarm response for actual entertainment value. The game was a futuristic racer, but only in the cosmetic sense. There were no real special moves you could pull off, and the only thing you got for winning was the satisfaction thereof. Pod was pretty to look at, easy to learn, and drop-dead boring after you'd won a few races. Its arcade control took all the appeal from more serious racing fans while its total lack of anything interesting to do made it a dull experience for the general gamer.

Ubi Soft has taken all criticisms and praise to heart while creating Pod II, a game that looks much like the original, but attempts to redeem itself in terms of gameplay. The game features ten new tracks with plenty of jumps, shortcuts, and hazards; and eight new cars that can pick up weapons and other power-ups. Like its PC predecessor, the game will also offer online multiplayer options via SegaNet.

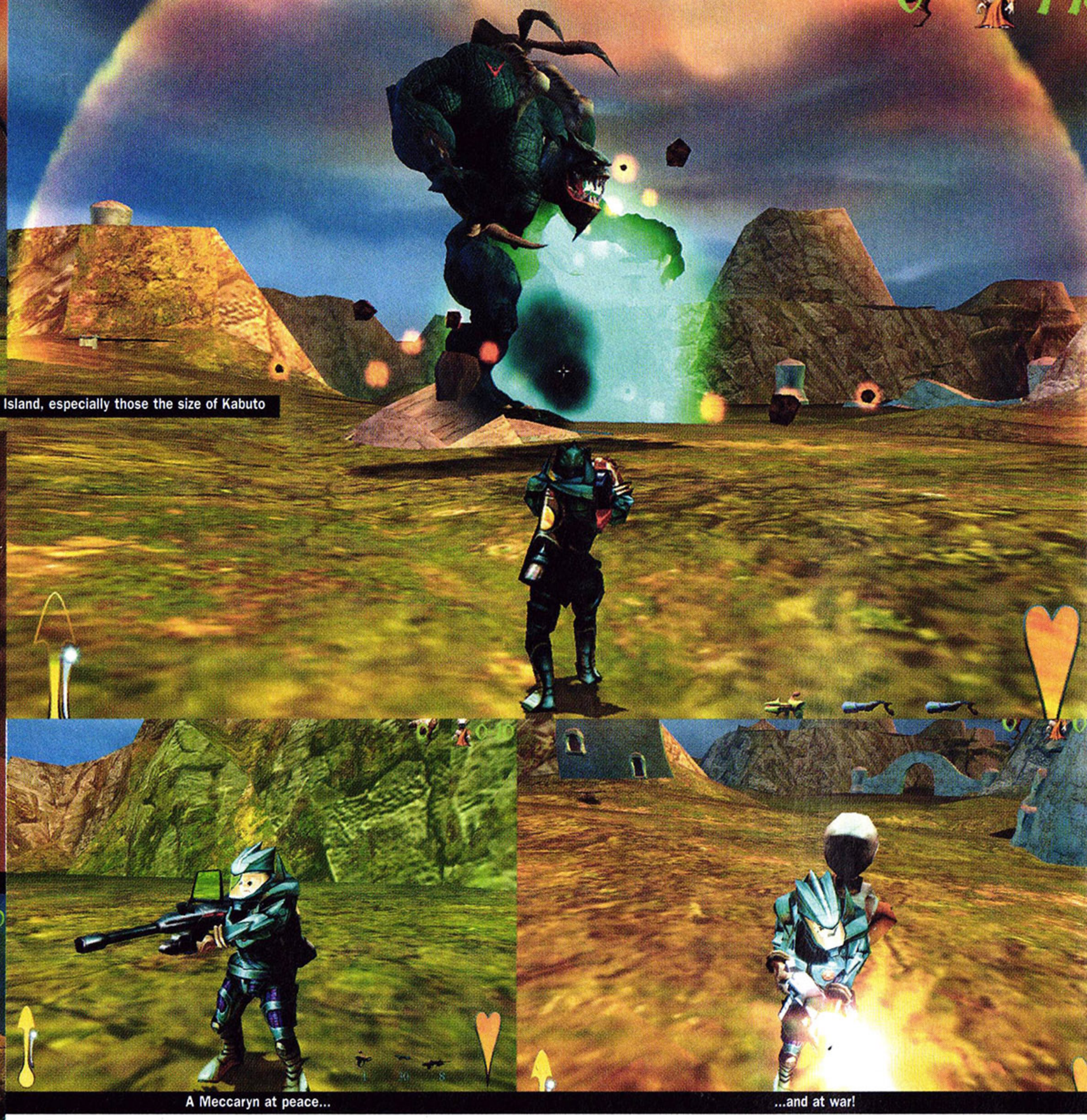
Land your Pod wrong and your tires will let you know

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** UBI SOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** UBI SOFT
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 17

Alone, a Meccaryn is no match for the beasts on Island, especially those the size of Kabuto

Being military minded, the Meccaryns perform best when they team up

"Uh...requesting backup..."



A Meccaryn at peace...

...and at war!

PC

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

FORTY FEET OF FUN

After sitting through a Godzilla film, have you ever acted out a scene from the movie? And during this reenactment did you play a panic-stricken citizen of Tokyo? Of course not! Only a masochistic freak would do that. You wanted to be one of the giant monsters that walked through buildings like they were miniature styrofoam models. Interplay's Giants: Citizen Kabuto gives everyone a chance to step into the shoes of a forty-foot-tall insurance nightmare, and even appeases the nihilistic weirdoes out there by putting in two other playable species of more petite proportions.

The game takes place on a life-supporting sliver of a shattered planet hurtling through space. Known simply as Island, this hunk of rock is the only home the blue giant named Kabuto has ever known. His only goal is to guard his home, squashing or eating anyone who violates his space. Unbeknownst to Kabuto, the underwater race of Sea Reapers are responsible for his existence. These elementally empowered ladies created him to defend against alien invaders, but his loneliness soon drove him to turn on them. Kabuto may get to do what he was made to, however, thanks to the arrival of the Meccaryns. This technologically advanced military race meant to go on vacation, but ended up stranded on Island. Their plan is to clear Island of other life to make the most of their lost free time.

These are the three unique species that up to nine players (five playing the Meccaryns, three playing the Sea Reapers, and one as Kabuto) take control of, trying to cleanse Island of all competition. Each race obviously has unique abilities, but each also has its own interface and camera perspectives – including the Kabuto-Cam, a view from the inside of Kabuto's mouth looking out.

The focus of Giants is definitely action, but real-time strategy elements get mixed in as well. A defenseless fourth race known as the Smarties is stuck in the middle of the war. Though they can't fight, these indigenous creatures show appreciation to players that protect and care for them by building bases that make new weapons, spells, traps, vehicles, and abilities available.

If all this sounds like a bizarre deviation from the standard games of this ilk, it is! Giants was dreamt up and created by Planet Moon, a group formed from those that worked on MDK and Earthworm Jim. Like this group's previous efforts, Giants combines bizarre humor with innovative gameplay to create a package that's undeniably entertaining. If all of Planet Moon's clever ideas come together, and at this point there is no reason to believe that they won't, expect Giants to be one of the year's more popular PC titles.

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 9-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** INTERPLAY ■ **DEVELOPER** PLANET MOON ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 16

Since troops can now garrison any building, they are difficult to kill

Soviet mind control units can rapidly even the odds

PC

COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT 2

LET FREEDOM RAIN FIRE

Red Alert takes an even steeper turn into the bizarre and wacky world of an alternate history where a time-traveling Einstein preemptively ended Hitler's kampf, and Soviet and Allied forces inevitably had a very hot war. The new game's star attractions are its drastically overpowered units that can turn the tide of a game with one well-placed attack or misguided screw-up.

Imagine a battle in which teleporting Chrono Legionnaires appear out of nowhere and begin wiping structures and units from the face of history; cows rigged with explosives are mind-controlled into unsuspecting enemy bases; and the very trees and rocks begin shooting at your units. Then suddenly, storm clouds appear over a Soviet base and begin blasting away at its structures with lightning as the Soviet commander scrambles to set his mind-controlled squid upon that advancing fleet of aircraft carriers.

The sheer chaotic nature of Red Alert 2 and how well Westwood manages to balance all of these whacked-out units against each other will be the true test of its formidable RTS experience. Not only will there be a wide and wild variety of units and base structures, but all units will gain the ability to upgrade with experience, granting them new powers, weapons, enhanced speed, and a new cosmetic look.

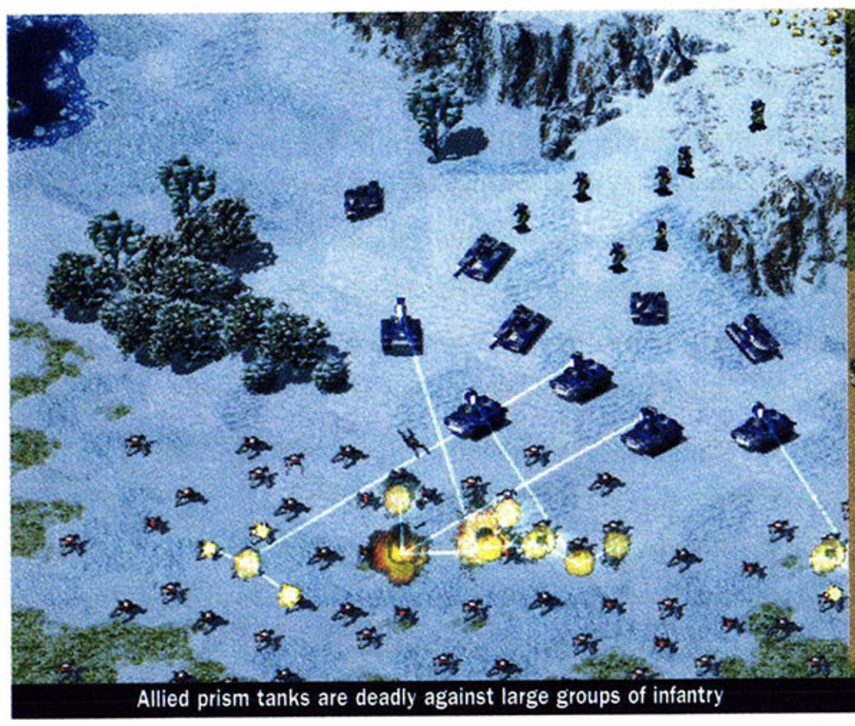
Certain units can even be upgraded. Whenever an Allied spy sneaks into a laboratory and discovers the proper technology, or a Soviet mind-control unit captures proper infantry types and returns them to the cloning lab, certain units develop the combined abilities of both. For instance, if the Allies recover the proper tech, they can turn their Chrono Legionnaires into Chrono Commandos, teleporting units capable of destroying enemy buildings with bombs.

As one might expect, base defenses are a crucial part of the game, but even they can't protect you from everything. Even if your bases are armed to the teeth with light-focusing Prism Towers, the shocking Tesla Coils, and plenty of heavy-duty air defense, you still have to contend with teleporting units, weather-controlled storms, nukes that literally wipe everything out, and exploding cows. If you haven't figured it out yet, we like everything we've seen and heard about this game. Red Alert 2 is shaping up to be one of the most hectic, humorous, and downright cool RTS's we've ever seen.

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** WESTWOOD STUDIOS
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 24

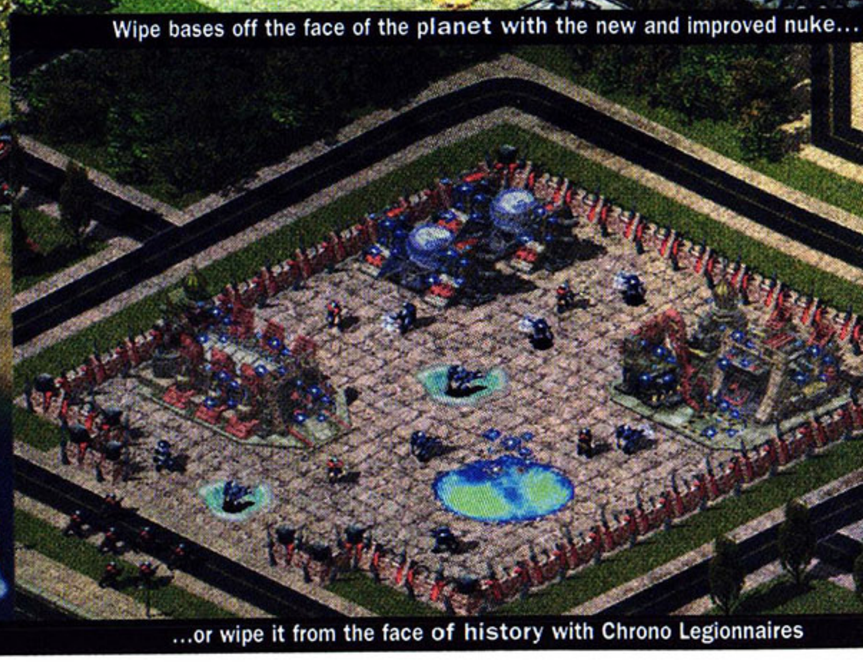
There is nothing random about this thunderstorm

Wipe bases off the face of the planet with the new and improved nuke...



Allied prism tanks are deadly against large groups of infantry

The only hope this Allied player had was to wipe out that nuclear plant



...or wipe it from the face of history with Chrono Legionnaires

Blizzard is trying to cut down on town size

Are those humans carrying muskets?

Who the heck are these guys?

The Orcs are looking sharp

PC

WARCRAFT III

RTS + RPG = ~~RPS~~ RTS

THE RPG EXPERIMENT

Blizzard has a lot of big games under its belt, but the Warcraft series in particular is its first and biggest claim to fame. Warcraft is often considered one of the grandpappies of real-time strategy games, along with Westwood's Command & Conquer (although technically, Dune II was the first modern RTS). Since Warcraft II's immense popularity, Blizzard has been caught between a rock and a hard place on whether to innovate or stick with the standard goods for their next Warcraft game.

First we heard about an adventure game that was based on the Warcraft universe which was scuttled months after it was announced. Next, news finally arrived on the development of Warcraft III, but it was said that a great deal of focus would be put on intertwining an RTS game with a fantasy RPG, leading to much trepidation among the horde of Warcraft fans.

STRATEGIC COMPROMISE

Finally, Blizzard lessened the emphasis on RPG to create a more standard RTS, but compromised by continuing to implement RPG concepts into the game. Hoping to leave fledgling gamers with yet another three-letter acronym to stumble over, they call their concept RPS or Role-Playing Strategy. The big RPG element of the game is the inclusion of NPCs who can be hired on as mercenaries or engaged in dialogue for valuable information and new mission objectives. They also put more emphasis on heroes as a primary fixture in the game by granting bonuses to nearby units and resource collectors. Heroes will even be able to purchase gear from NPCs for use in battle.

FINE-TUNING A CLASSIC

Despite the return to the more classic formula, Blizzard will be doing much more than giving a facelift to the previous Warcraft offering. One of the biggest things it wants to change is the emphasis on resource management over actual fighting. By making larger, tougher, more expensive units, and simplifying base construction and resource collection, the game's developers hope to make the game a clash of tactics rather than brute force and sheer numbers brought on by players who spend more time micromanaging their peons and gold mines than they do the actual battles.

THE HORDE

Blizzard has confirmed that there will be at least five races in the game, but only four have been revealed. Humans and Orcs are once again at each other's throats, but their war quickly becomes a fight for survival when the Blazing Legion, a host of demons and fiends, arrive on the scene. The conflict becomes further complicated when a horde of Undead show up. A fifth and maybe even a sixth race remain undisclosed.

EXPECTATIONS

It appears as though Warcraft will simply be another RTS with some interesting tweaks, and the classic fantasy trappings and voice-overs that made the first two so popular. The graphics are getting a three-dimensional upgrade, the number of races has been almost tripled, and the emphasis shift to tactical rather than resource strategy will no doubt be more than enough to keep the legions of Warcraft fans happy.

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 6-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** BLIZZARD ENTERTAINMENT ■ **DEVELOPER** BLIZZARD ENTERTAINMENT ■ **RELEASE** SUMMER 2001

DREAMCAST

CAPCOM VS. SNK: MILLENNIUM FIGHT 2000

BATTLE OF THE ARCADE TITANS

Having the utmost respect for one another (at least that's what they'd like you to believe), Capcom and SNK have lowered their guards, thrown down their gloves, and united in a loving embrace. For years, Capcom's Street Fighter series has fought valiantly against SNK's King of Fighters franchise for the quarters of arcade bums around the world. Seeing these two titans put their differences aside and create a game together makes us think that world peace is more than a myth – it's a possibility. In Capcom Vs. SNK: Millennium Fight 2000, King of Fighters melds perfectly with the Street Fighter legacy, creating a work of art that Dreamcast gamers won't want to miss.

Those of you who followed the rise and fall of the Neo Geo Pocket Color, the best handheld around, will know that this Capcom vs. SNK release is actually the third in the series. SNK developed two separate games for the handheld, and Capcom controlled all the development for the coin-op release and the Dreamcast port. If you haven't had a chance to get your sweaty mitts on this frenzied fighter in the arcades, all we can say is – how unfortunate. With art drawn and stylized by SNK's crew, the Capcom characters look more realistic than they ever have. The fighting clings more closely to the traditional Street Fighter formula, even though Capcom has inserted several King of Fighters tactics and techniques. Beginning the game poses a tough question. Should you play it under the Capcom Groove, which is based on the Super Combo Level Gauge from the Alpha series; or should you shake to the SNK Groove, based on the Super Special Move from the King of Fighters series? While somewhat similar in design, both options create unique gameplay variations.

As expected, the roster is massive, offering 28 different faces. Pumping the game up for console longevity, Capcom has inserted tons of secrets, as well as Game Replay and Color Edit modes. Another interesting addition is the Variable Team System. Each character has a strength level of one to four. The final team must have a strength of four; so essentially, you can select four level one players, two level twos, a three and a one, or just one bad mother at level four.

Just like the comic amalgamation that rocked the world, combining Marvel and DC, this video game combo is something that everyone needs to see. Two rivals joined together in vigorous combat – what more could you ask for?

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM ■ **DEVELOPER** CAPCOM ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER

Check out the realistic shadows projected onto the brick wall.

Matches conclude with stunning visuals

You can play the game in the Alpha or King of Fighters style

Raiden marks his territory with a blast of green mist

We Don't Garrison Soldiers In Your Toilet, So Please Don't Pee On Our Castle

"Think we should get outta here?"

"Roll out the barrel!"

First-person battles spice things up

"Weeeeeee!"

Match wits against DW VII's many puzzles

PLAYSTATION

DRAGON WARRIOR VII

OLD WARRIOR, NEW QUEST

Enix's latest in the Dragon Warrior series was feasted on by rabid Japanese gamers upon its release in August. Considered Final Fantasy's equal on the other side of the Pacific, Dragon Warrior (known as Dragon Quest in Japan) has had only moderate success here in the States. Enix hopes to change all that with Dragon Warrior VII, which many are calling the best yet.

Despite the heights you'll attain by the end of the adventure, your character starts out on a small island inhabited by only a handful of sights to see. Dreaming of greater things puts you in the same mindset as a swashbuckling prince and the daughter of the town's bigwig. Together this trio makes the beginning of your party, whose members will come and go at times. Despite the wealth of things to do on this enchanted isle, before you're allowed off (and the game really starts), you must collect puzzle pieces that unlock access to new continents.

Unfortunately, the first portion of this game is pretty slow, and you won't uncover the thrill of battle until you are well into the game. This fact may turn off those with incessant bloodlust (who apparently never watched Karate Kid and learned the importance of patience), but DW VII eventually turns around and sticks to tradition with the return of its first-person vantage point during fights. Like Dragon Quest V and VI (released only in Japan) before it, felled monsters can be captured and absorbed into your roster of abilities.

You can also choose between no less than 20 different job hats or classes (plus many combo ones) to assign to your character as you work your way through the 100 hours of gameplay. Be the young fisherboy who dreams of giving it all up and becoming a dancer, or trade in your dancin' shoes for priest robes or a battle tunic. Go whichever way you choose, but as you increase your abilities in one class, other powers may become unusable. Players can go full tilt in one direction, or try to create a balanced multiclass adventurer.

Between combat, puzzles and dialogue will comprise a good amount of the game; something that was absent from the more linear designs of the first four games. Oftentimes these trials will demand that you utilize the game's camera system, which breathes 3D into the flat, simple look of DW VII (one of the few graphical concessions to the times by the age-old franchise). The shoulder buttons allow you rotate the camera and uncover surprises and plenty of necessary clues.

In Japan, the Dragon Warrior series is synonymous with the RPG genre, even impacting the country's culture itself. To them, the game's one major drawback – its very plain graphics – is easily overlooked. Here in the States, however, players expect a lot of their games...maybe too much. If US gamers are willing to look past its ugly duckling appearance, they may find that Dragon Warrior VII is a swan of a game.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME ■ **PUBLISHER** ENIX ■ **DEVELOPER** ENIX ■ **RELEASE** TBA

There's no more of that "cast magic missile and hide" crap in 3rd Edition

roll: 3, bonus: 22, target AC: 18, concealed: 1
roll: 6, bonus: 4, spell level: 6, caster mod: 0

Is this a confusion spell? Everyone has their backs turned to each other

There are over 100 spells in the game

What? Nobody in the party has a crossbow?

roll: 11, bonus: 0, spell level: 5, caster mod: 2

Characters can get up to level 16 and cast eighth level spells

PC

POOL OF RADIANCE: RUINS OF MYTH DRANNOR

1ST EDITION FACELIFT

Stormfront Studios is perhaps best known in the PC gaming industry for the hordes of Gold Box Advanced Dungeons & Dragons games it put out, starting in the late '80s. The first of these games was called Pool of Radiance, and proved so popular it kicked off numerous sequels and spin-offs.

The new Pool of Radiance returns in brilliant motion-captured 3D graphics, and is the first Dungeons & Dragons PC game to use the new 3rd Edition rules. The game's setting takes place in one of the most infamous (and dangerous) dungeon locales in D&D history. Myth Drannor has more treasure than you can fit in a Bag of Holding, but you'll have to earn every copper piece of it by making your way through deadly traps and beastly horrors waiting to snack on adventurers.

For those who have been out of the D&D loop for a while, the 3rd Edition rules, which debuted in August, have taken the best of the original AD&D and 2nd Edition AD&D rules, and spun in some interesting new concepts to put out an all new, totally revamped game. They have brought back the Barbarian and Monk classes, and the Half-Orc race; reinvented the Rogue; and created a new spellcaster class, the Sorcerer. Priests now choose two focuses that represent their deity's ways, and gain extra spells and powers from these.

Low-level spells have returned in the form of Orisons and Cantrips. These minor magics allow players to do things like add one temporary hit point to a character's maximum or briefly stun an enemy with a blinding flash. All magic users start off with two or three of these spells at their disposal at the beginning of the game, making the days of the first-level mage casting magic missile and then hiding behind the rest of the party for the remainder of the adventure a thing of the past.

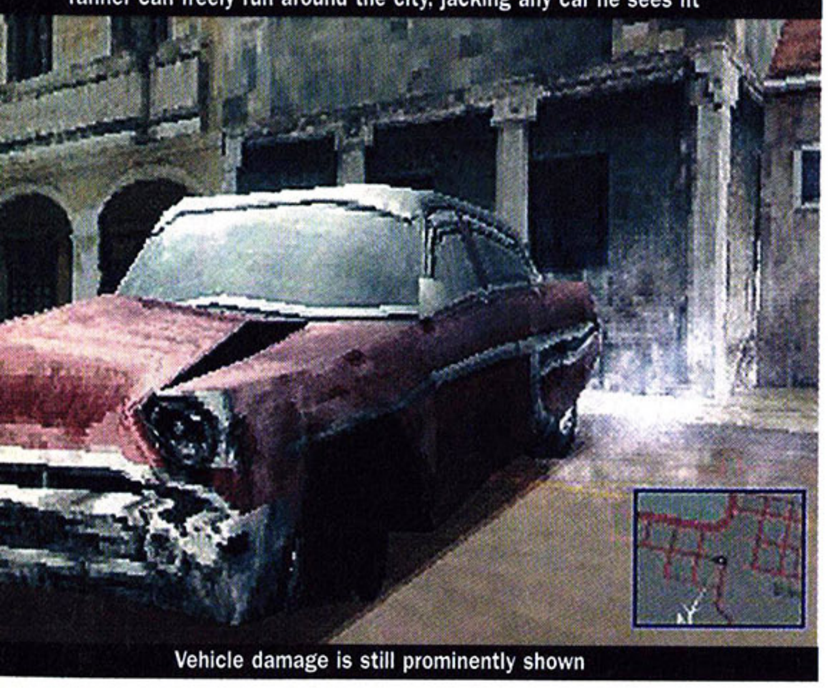
Like its classic AD&D precursors, Pool of Radiance emulates the turn-based style of play of the pencil-and-paper game. You move around the environments in real-time, but when the bad guys appear, the game switches over to a turn-based mode allowing Stormfront Studios to fully integrate some of the finer intricacies of combat like attacks of opportunity, the use of special skills, and third edition's new feat system that seems suspiciously similar to Fallout's perk system, but remains incredibly cool regardless.

Furthermore, Stormfront has gone to great lengths to make the environments as destructible and interactive as possible. Tables, chairs, and other objects can be moved around or simply knocked over to provide cover, unveil secrets, or impede your opponents' movement. Our only remaining question is whether you get to take full advantage of the return of the ten foot pole.

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 6-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME ■ **PUBLISHER** MATTEL INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** STORMFRONT STUDIOS & SSI/MINDSCAPE ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER

Need a bigger ride? Then saddle up behind the wheel of a bus!

Tanner can freely run around the city, jacking any car he sees fit



Vehicle damage is still prominently shown

PLAYSTATION/PC

DRIVER 2

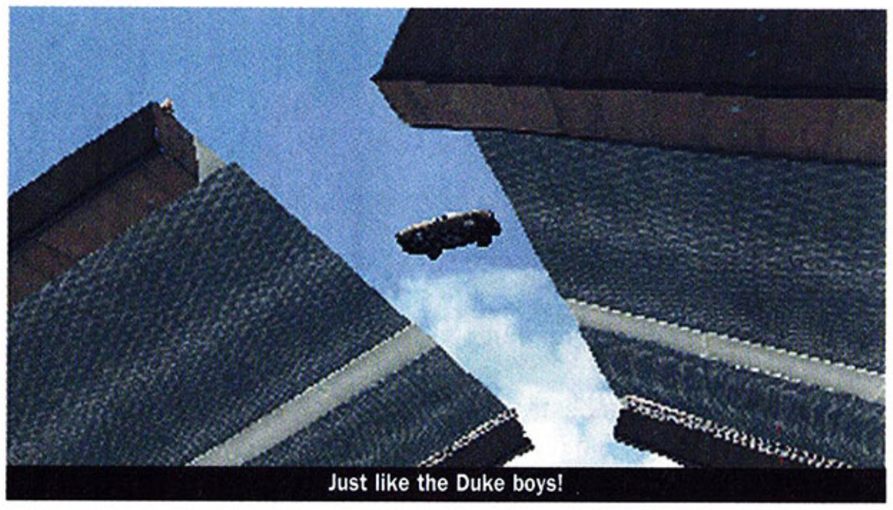
PLEASE TANNER, DON'T HURT 'EM!

If you missed out on the car-jacking follies from last year's destructive release, the restless crew at Reflections has constructed a comprehensive sequel, detailing the further adventures of the PlayStation's notorious undercover wheelman, Tanner. This exciting follow-up delivers four brand-spanking new cities filled with crazy new missions. If you thought Nicholas Cage's flick Gone in 60 Seconds was a non-stop thrill ride, wait until you see this game in action.

Crimelord Pink Lenny, has brought violence to the streets of Chicago, and it's up to Tanner and his partner, Jones, to infiltrate the Windy City undercover. Once again, Reflections has gone the extra mile to model the video game version of Chicago exactly after its real-life counterpart. You'll also run across exact replicas of Las Vegas, Rio, and Havana. All of the cities stretch across 20 miles of road with at least 150,000 buildings and objects in each.

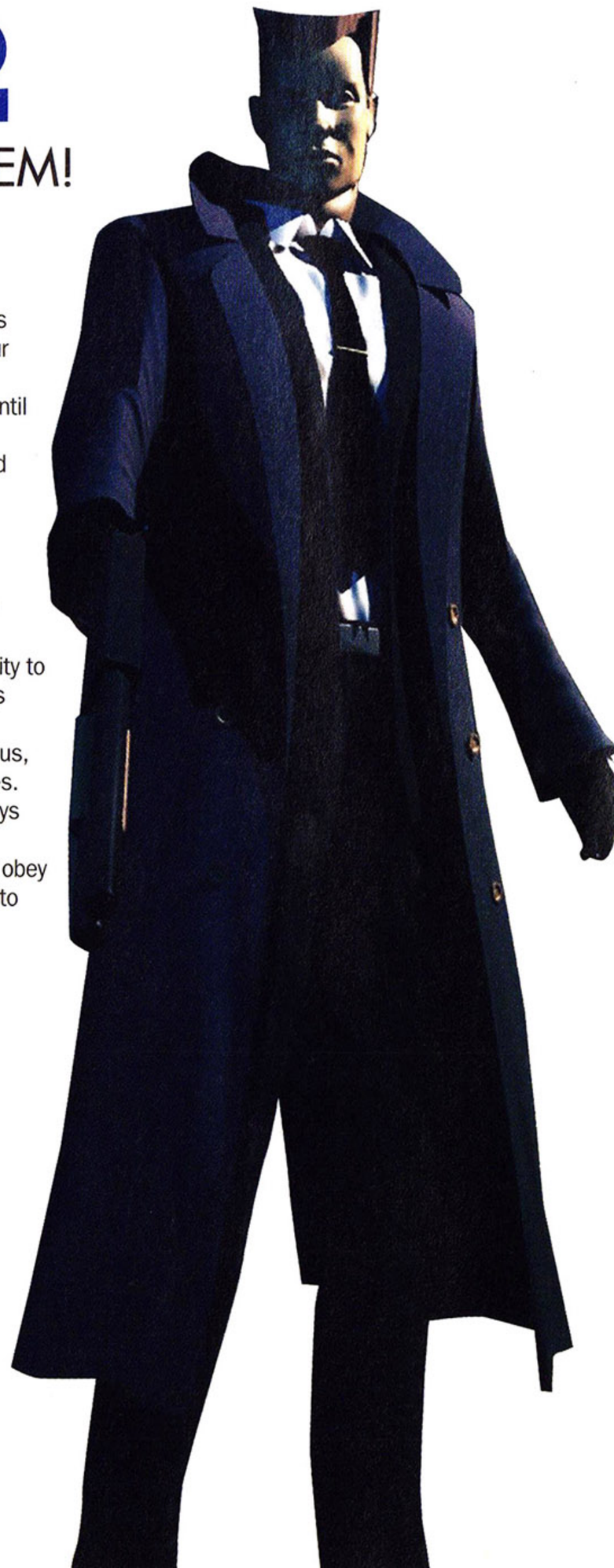
Destroying the limitation boundary, Reflections has implemented the ability to unbuckle and freely roam the city on foot. As it did in Grand Theft Auto, this feature allows for the jacking of different cars. If it has wheels, you can commandeer it. This includes buses, fire trucks, and ambulances. Believe us, nothing lays down a trail of destruction quite like a school bus full of kiddies.

Along with this amazing addition, players can also look forward to freeways and motorways with proper sliproad/exit ramps and more animated pedestrians. Sadly, we don't think you can run down inhabitants who don't obey crosswalk signals. They deserve to eat asphalt, but it looks like they'll live to see another day.



Just like the Duke boys!

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMES
■ **DEVELOPER** REFLECTIONS ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 14



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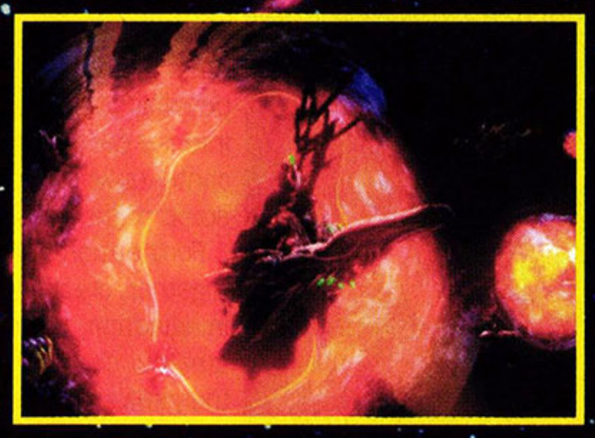

PlayStation®2

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Animated Violence, Mild Language

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"An elephant stepped on my feet."

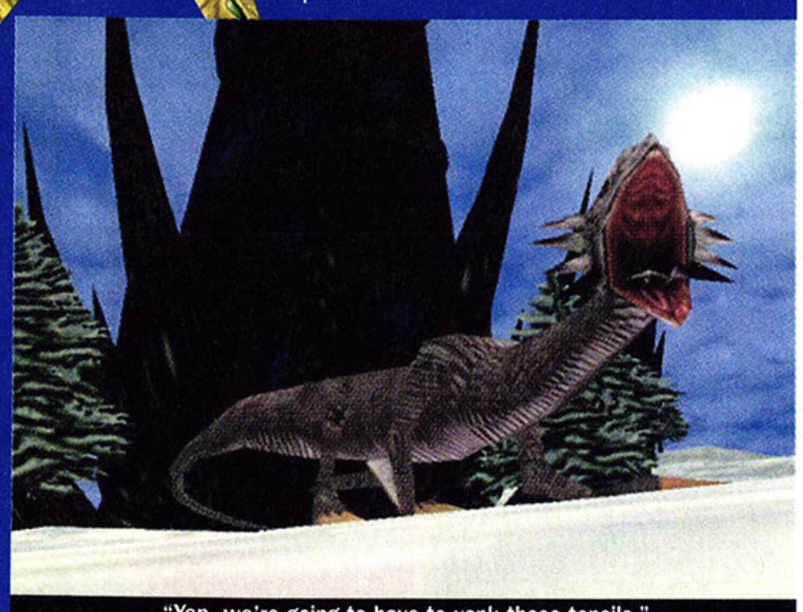
PC

EVERQUEST: THE SCARS OF VELIOUS

KISS ANOTHER YEAR OF YOUR LIFE GOOD-BYE!

Just when you thought EverQuest had already completely ruined your life, Verant announces another expansion that will feature at least 10 new zones. That means a minimum of another 145 days of hardcore exploration. Or if you're a tweaker, a measly 92 days. Just like Karnak, Velious is a new continent. If you plan on vacationing in this land, be sure to bring a parka because Velious is a glacial continent, and you wouldn't want to freeze your little elf feet off would you?

A handful of additional enhancements are expected including weapons crafted from eternal ice called Velium, new spells and disciplines, as well as at least two new sets of armor for each race/class. Various EQ websites are posting hard-hitting rumors. The most widely circulated gossip claims improved character appearance and movement. Verant has been talking about this for quite some time, but we won't believe it until we see it, even though you can see improved detail on the wood elf to the left. The world of EverQuest is about to get bigger and better, and with its December release Scars should arrive just as players defeat Veeshan's Peak and are ready to move on to something new. Verant's timing is impeccable.



"Yep, we're going to have to yank those tonsils."

■ **STYLE** MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER ONLINE RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA ■ **DEVELOPER** VERANT INTERACTIVE ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 5

"Argh!!! Curse you dungeon master!!"

PC

NEVERWINTER NIGHTS

WHEN KITCHEN TABLES AND COMPUTERS COLLIDE

In pencil-and-paper role-playing games, when a player decides to attempt a hapless act of tomfoolery (a.k.a. "clever ploy" when the action succeeds), the person acting as the game referee can decide how to handle the rules on the spot, giving the player a minute chance of success. This improvisational flexibility has always set traditional role-playing apart from code-bound PC RPGs.

Interplay's in-house RPG developer, Bioware, the creators of the critically acclaimed Baldur's Gate and numerous other AD&D PC games, is now using its formidable experience to attempt to bridge the gap between the old school sessions at the kitchen table and having a role-playing experience in a world full of people who all go on the same quests and spend most of their time waiting for new monsters to appear.

Taking the name of an early online multiplayer game published by SSI, Bioware's Neverwinter Nights brings player-planned role-playing sessions to online gaming by allowing people to create and referee their own games or simply play a pre-prepared module. The benefits of having a live referee are many. Refs can choose when and where to sic monsters on you, place treasure, make changes to the adventure on the fly, and even take on the role of NPCs and monsters to fight, hint, haggle, or just mess with the party's head.

Neverwinter Nights will have all the tools players need to create their own adventures. Featuring tiles from a stunning variety of different environments, 200 monsters, 200 spells, tons of items, and all of the character classes and races from D&D 3rd Edition, the game will have plenty of toys to play with, but Bioware will be updating with new toolsets to increase the variety of environments people can create.

There appears to be no shortage of Umber Hulks in this game

The agility of the engine will allow for players to create adventures in the traditional sense, as well as for all kinds of other possibilities, as players will be able to have up to and possibly over 64 players at a time. AD&D deathmatches, intense castle battles, multiple party competitions, and even contests where multiple referees are directly involved are some of the possibilities.

Furthermore, designers will be able to link their servers together, creating portals between realms. With enough imagination, ingenuity, and new tile sets, ambitious teams of amateur designers could construct a simulacrum of the planes themselves. Considering some of the incredible designs put together by people who were given the freedom to create their own levels in the past, it's a likely prospect. The 60 to 100 hour single-player campaign that will be included in the game seems to pale in comparison.

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 64-PLAYER ONLINE ROLE-PLAYING GAME ■ **PUBLISHER** INTERPLAY ■ **DEVELOPER** BIOWARE ■ **RELEASE** SUMMER 2001

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PlayStation

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"Go away Hare Krishnas! I already got accosted at the airport."

PC

STAR WARS: EPISODE I OBI-WAN

OBI-WANNA PLAY THAT

LucasArts' spiritual sequel to the Dark Forces series, Episode I Obi-Wan, features Ben himself as the star of the show. While most of the levels are tied to the movie, LucasArts has put in plenty of new scenes in which the young padawan faces trials that weren't depicted in the film.

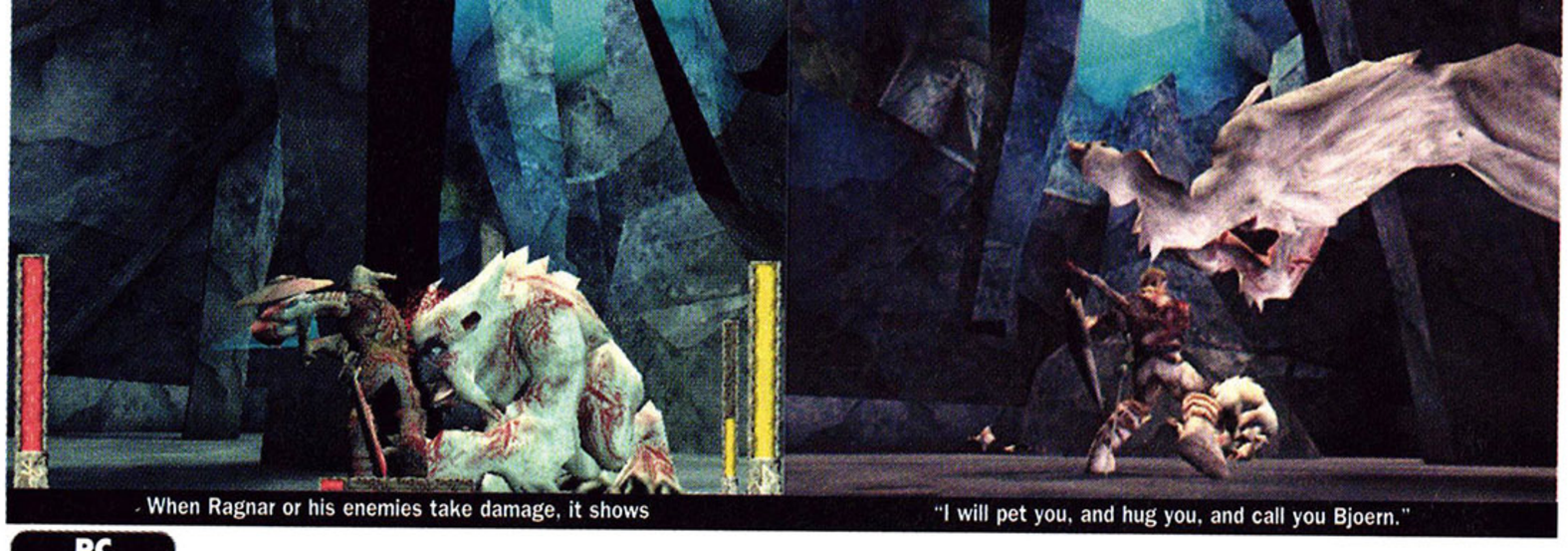
While Obi-Wan can still pick up guns as in the earlier Dark Forces titles, the game's central focus is on the saber. Utilizing a glyph system, players make different sweeping motions with the mouse while holding down the attack button to make the saber swing in whatever direction they desire, and even do a full 360 degree arc motion by whipping the mouse around in circles.

Force powers like the classic push/pull, item snatch, saber throw, jump, and rapid run are all handled by holding down the Force key and performing specific actions. Unlike previous games, Obi-Wan starts with all the powers at the beginning, but improves them by using points gained with experience.

It appears as though Obi-Wan has taken a step further away from the classic shooter that Dark Forces was by placing a great deal more emphasis on the lightsaber than in previous incarnations. With all of the Force powers at your disposal and the wicked blade itself, guns will most likely be confined to sniping duty and replacements for a missing or malfunctioning saber.

Droids are an excellent outlet for bloodless limb hacking

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** LUCASARTS
■ **DEVELOPER** LUCASARTS ■ **RELEASE** 1ST QUARTER



When Ragnar or his enemies take damage, it shows

"I will pet you, and hug you, and call you Bjoern."

PC

RUNE

I VILL MAKE LUTEFISK OWT OF YU

As our soon-to-be-replaced office PC steadily declines into obscurity, more and more games crash, seize up, or simply won't fit on the hard drive. That's why it was such a pleasure getting a pre-alpha version of Rune. Not only is this game one of the most attractive titles we've ever seen, but it actually runs as smooth as silk, even on our outdated machine.

"Now Lars, my mother's marsipan cake wasn't that bad."

A basic third-person hack n' slasher, this game allows players to guide Ragnar the Viking through different levels, solving the occasional puzzle while picking up a wide variety of weapons from fallen opponents. Each weapon in the game features its own special rune power, like vampiric life-stealing attacks or increasing your shield size for better defense.

What's truly stunning about Rune are the gorgeous environments and gory detail. As Ragnar progresses through a level and takes inevitable hits from the hordes of enemies he has to fight, he shows considerably more battle scars. Rips, cuts, bruises, and armor damage all appear in stunning detail on Ragnar as well as on his enemies. In fact, the more you hit an enemy in a certain location, the more likely he or she is to lose a head or an arm, which can then be picked up and used as a thrown or melee weapon.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** GATHERING OF DEVELOPERS ■ **DEVELOPER** HUMAN HEAD STUDIOS
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 31

"Have any of you guys seen Klaus Kraus?"

Stretching is important before slaying aliens

PC

X-COM ALLIANCE

RESEARCH AND DESTROY

This game has been in development for as long as the first Daikatana jokes started being made, but unlike its ill-fated shooter brethren, Alliance has dramatically improved over the years. Using the Unreal Engine, X-Com Alliance is technically a shooter, but borrows a great deal from the strategy games of the same name.

In this latest X-Com game, a space ship of humans has been hurled across space by a mysterious phenomenon and dropped into the middle of a war between their old alien enemies and a new alien race, the Ascidians. The crew of the UGS Patton ally themselves with this new species in order to defend themselves against their old foes and find a way home. The player takes on the role of a squad leader who is responsible for equipping four men and then directing them via a map-waypoint system, and taking direct control of any one of the team members.

As with the games of old, in each mission of the game a squad is sent to board an alien vessel or complex and raid it for goodies under the pretense of defending humanity. These weapons and special devices can then be researched and used in upcoming missions, making the real purpose of the game to get new toys, try them out on new aliens with more new toys, and repeat the process until the game is finished.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** HASBRO INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** MICROPROSE ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 31

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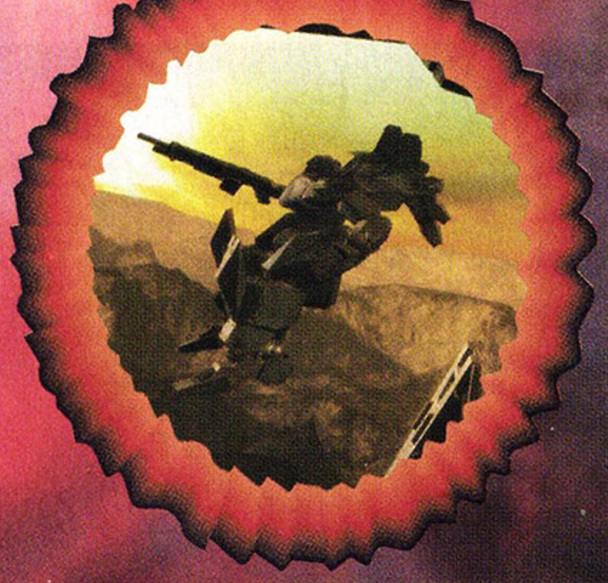

"*Easily* one of the best PS2 launch titles."
– Gamers' Republic

PlayStation.2

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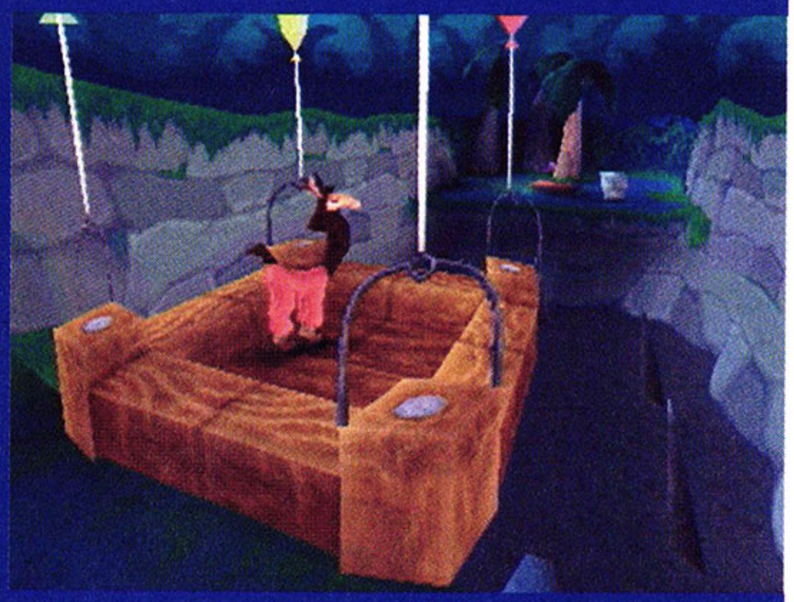


PLAYSTATION

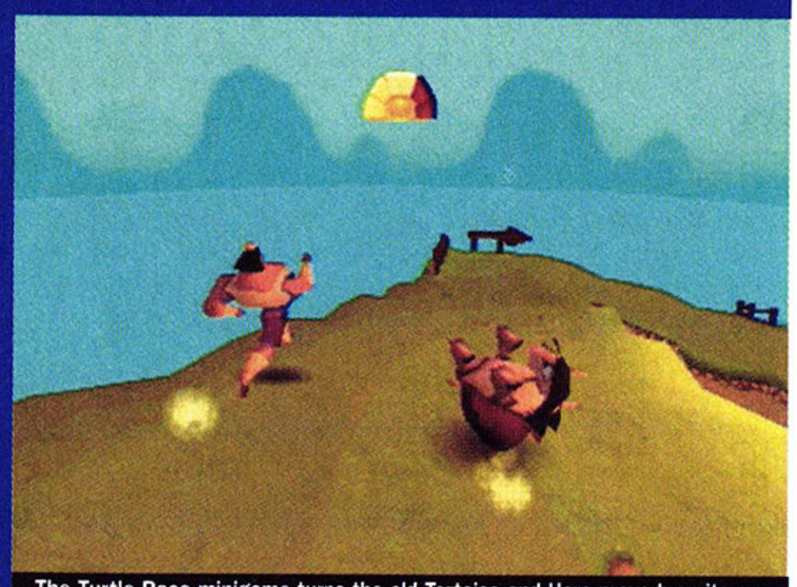
DISNEY'S THE EMPEROR'S NEW GROOVE

MICHAEL JACKSON'S FAVORITE GAME EVER

Notwithstanding the mildly decent Tarzan, publishers have tended to treat games based on Disney films as little more than financial cash cows. Given our hatred for such recent Disney games as Mulan and Hercules, suffice it to say that we weren't exactly excited about The Emperor's New Groove. However, after a recent hands-on preview session with the game, our jaded staff was forced to sit down for a tasty meal of crow.

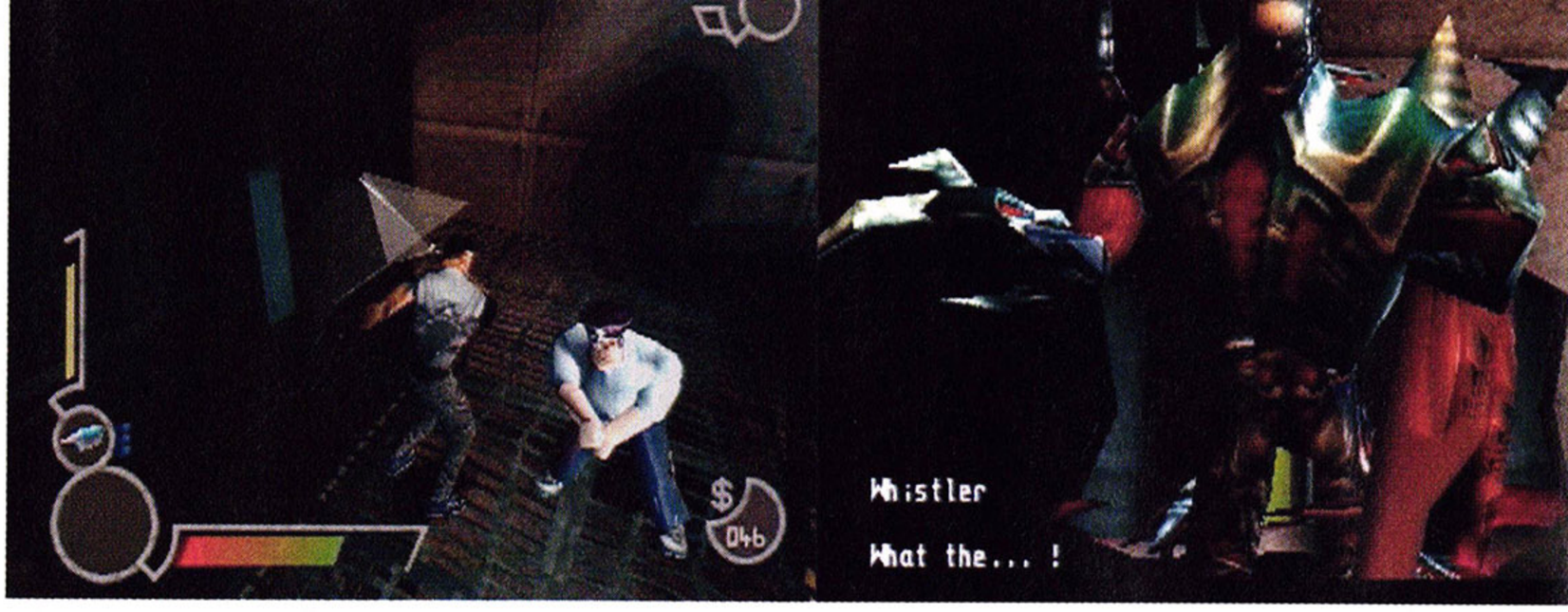
The game features settings and characters from the upcoming film, which traces the adventures of Kuzco, an imperious Incan emperor who is magically turned into a llama. Many voice actors from the movie, including John Goodman and Eartha Kitt, will be recording soundbites for the game. Smarmy pipsqueak David Spade, who is the voice of Kuzco, was not able to participate in the game due to scheduling problems.

While ENG appears to be running on an optimized version of Argonaut's Croc engine, the game draws much of its inspiration from Insomniac's legendary Spyro series. A smooth framerate and steady camera transport players into an expansive 3D world filled with puzzles, hidden areas, and a wide variety of minigames. The Emperor's New Groove should be a welcome surprise to those who have written off Disney games as low-grade pabulum.



The Turtle Race minigame turns the old Tortoise and Hare proverb on its ear

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA ■ **DEVELOPER** ARGONAUT ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 28



PLAYSTATION

BLADE

AT LEAST IT'S NOT BASED ON TO WONG FOO

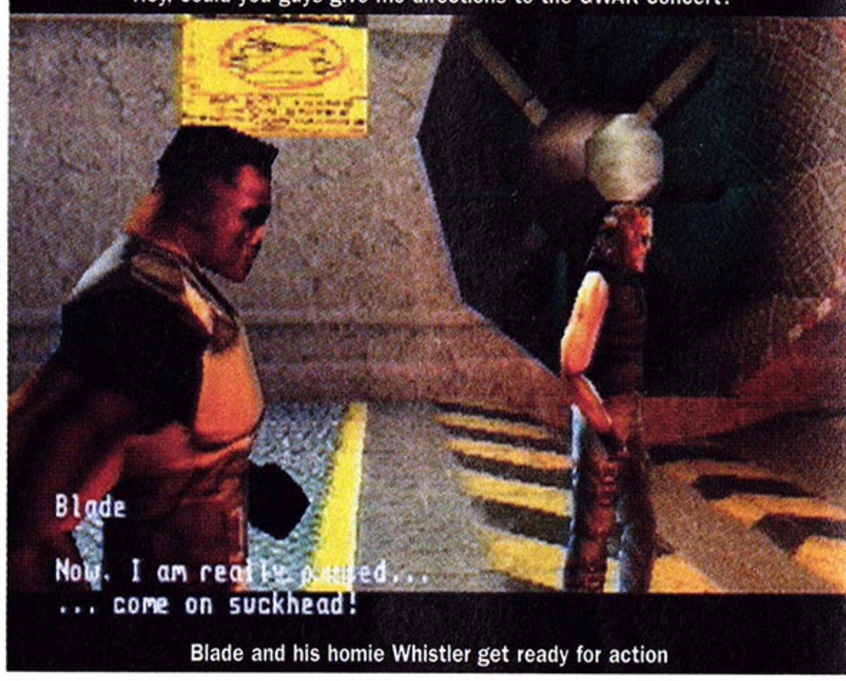
Overcoming an anachronistic box cut that made him look like he just got kicked out of Bell Biv DeVoe, Wesley Snipes, in his starring turn as Blade, single-handedly rescued the beleaguered Marvel character from the dungheap of comic book history. The Man in Black is set to return to the big screen in 2001, but he'll be making a quick stop by the PlayStation for his first video game adventure this fall.

Examining this game's blood type reveals it to be a dark 3D action game, one with action levels very similar to those in last year's Die Hard Trilogy. Many characters from the film make appearances, including Whistler. Numerous real-time cutscenes flesh out the otherworldly plotline. Could it be possible that the game will reveal clues to the plot of the next Blade film?

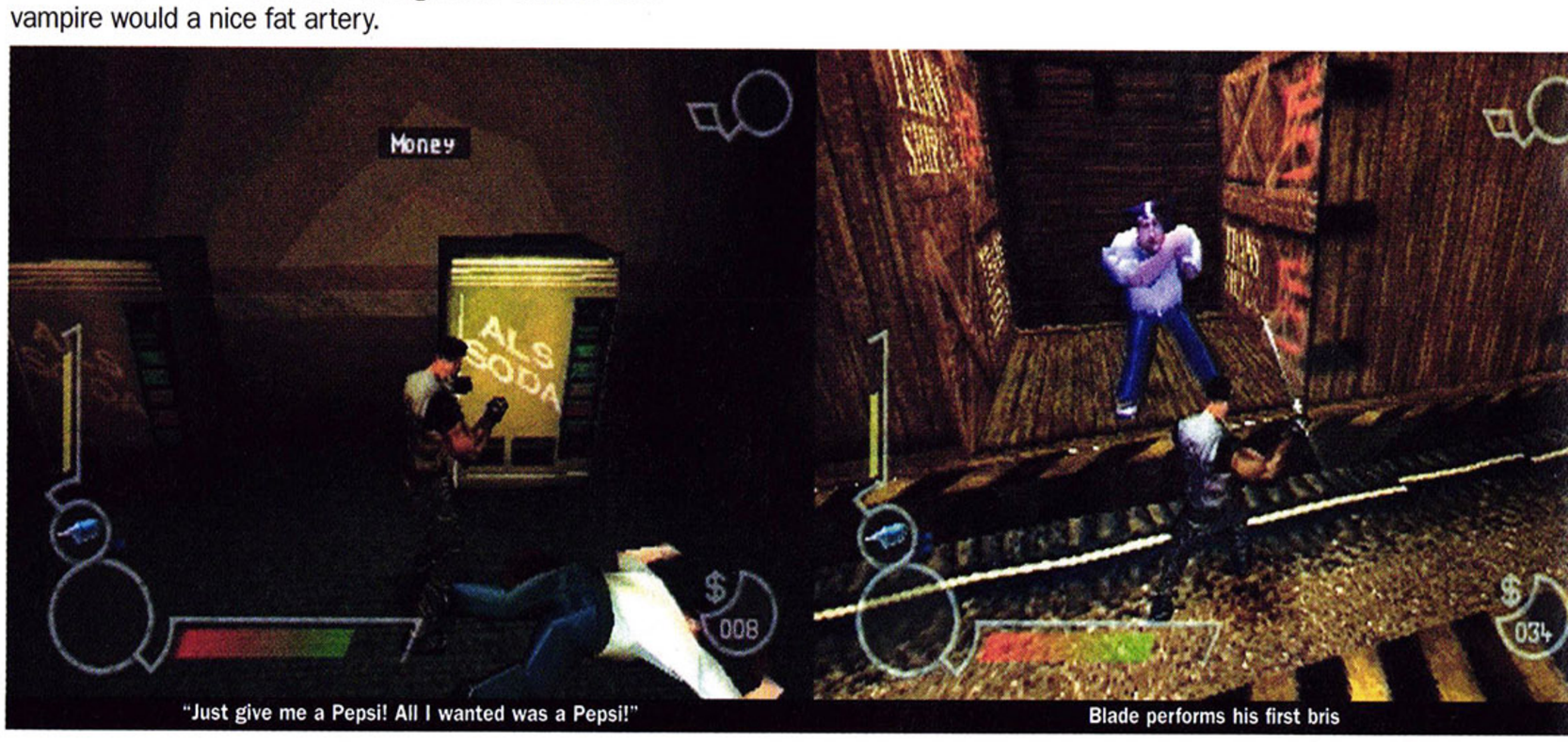
In his quest to rid the world of vampires, Blade stomps out suckers like he's at the Source Awards, swings his trusty sword, and packs a handgun that uses both normal bullets (for human baddies) and silver ones (for the undead bloodsuckers). Unlike the movie, the game takes it easy on the blood and gore, and should easily avoid the dreaded M rating.

While we still have high hopes for this title, there appear to be some acute problems at this point. Although this could be attributed to Hammerhead's desire to keep with the morbid ambience of the film, the environments are extremely dark and drab. Also, the camera and control will definitely need some tweaking to make Blade a success. Still, this license lends itself well to a video game translation, and If these issues are addressed, Blade should bite into gamers' wallets as a vampire would a nice fat artery.

"Hey, could you guys give me directions to the GWAR concert?"



Blade and his homie Whistler get ready for action



"Just give me a Pepsi! All I wanted was a Pepsi!"

Blade performs his first bris

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION ■ **DEVELOPER** HAMMERHEAD ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER

TWO WORDS

Shenmue

11.11.00

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Violence
Mild Language
Use of Tobacco and Alcohol

www.sega.com/shenmue

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Dreamcast™

PLAYSTATION/PC/DREAMCAST

TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES

NO BILLY BOB CAMEOS, THANKFULLY

No joke, folks. This is Lara's LAST PlayStation adventure. Really. We mean it this time. This game was originally intended to be based on the upcoming Tomb Raider motion picture. Then, following a string of delays in the film's production, Eidos opted to release the game as a stand-alone title. TR: Chronicles takes a look back at Lara's career, in all-new levels set throughout her life. Some missions star young Lara, who was used only for training in the game's last chapter. Lara has learned some new moves as well, including a tightrope walk and several stealth moves. All screenshots are from the PC version.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE
■ **PUBLISHER** EIDOS ■ **DEVELOPER** CORE DESIGN
■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 14

DREAMCAST

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

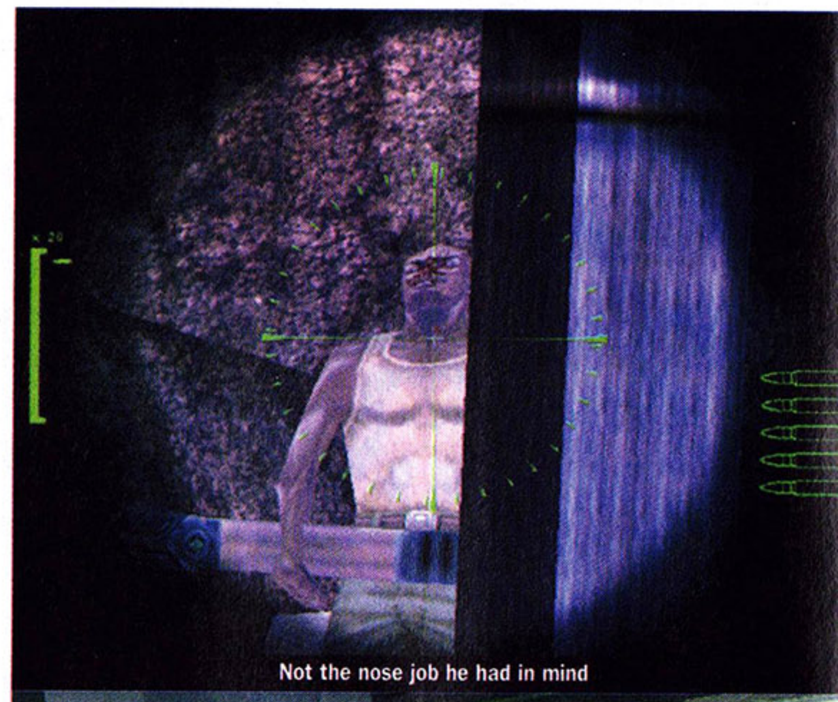
MAKES RAMBO LOOK LIKE RUGRATS

Upon its release on the PC, Soldier of Fortune sparked a firestorm of controversy. Even seasoned game journalists were taken aback, wondering if the grim death animations contained in the first-person shooter were too graphic even for the oft-violent world of computer games. Recently, the PC version of Soldier of Fortune was banned in Canada over concerns about its amazingly bloody visuals.

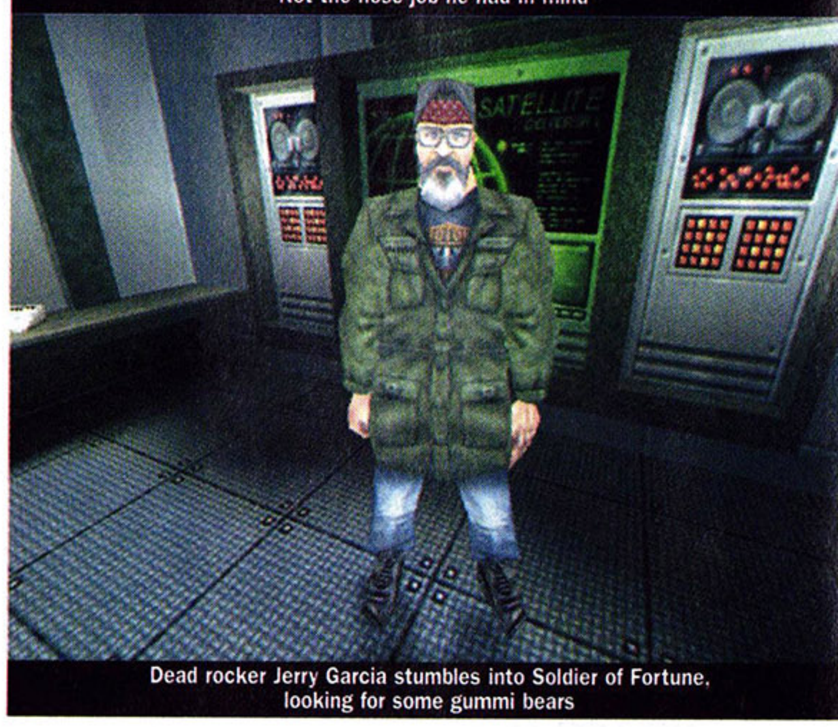
Even more disturbing are charges that Soldier of Fortune exhibits some not-so-subtle racism. Apparently, in early levels of the PC version, innocent New York pedestrians are counted as civilian kills, and are indicated as such by a green light over their heads. When the game moves to the Middle East, murdering innocents does not count against you.

So...is Soldier of Fortune really beyond the pale or just a victim of puritanical media watchdogs? Well, if it's not beyond the pale, it's pretty darn close. No game even comes close to SoF in terms of realistic gore; some of the death animations are almost sickening to watch. Using a hit-zone system cleverly codenamed GHOUL, all enemies can be put to death in a variety of sadistic ways. Shoot someone in the neck and watch him clutch his tattered throat as the blood pours out. Cap someone in the knee and watch him writhe in pain while crawling on the floor.

When you wash away the blood, Soldier of Fortune reveals itself to be a pretty standard first-person shooter, and runs smoothly on the venerable Quake II engine. Crave promises SegaNet online play. If all goes according to plan, Dreamcast owners will even be able to frag their PC friends.

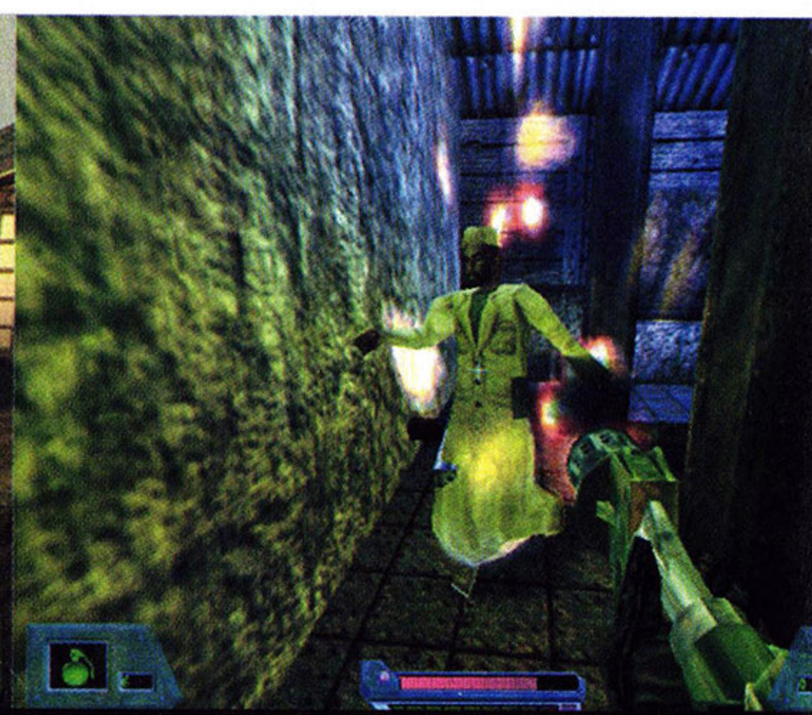


Not the nose job he had in mind



Dead rocker Jerry Garcia stumbles into Soldier of Fortune, looking for some gummi bears

"I said make it a BUD LIGHT, you @#$#@$#@$!"



Good gawd, y'all! Hot pants, do the freak dance!

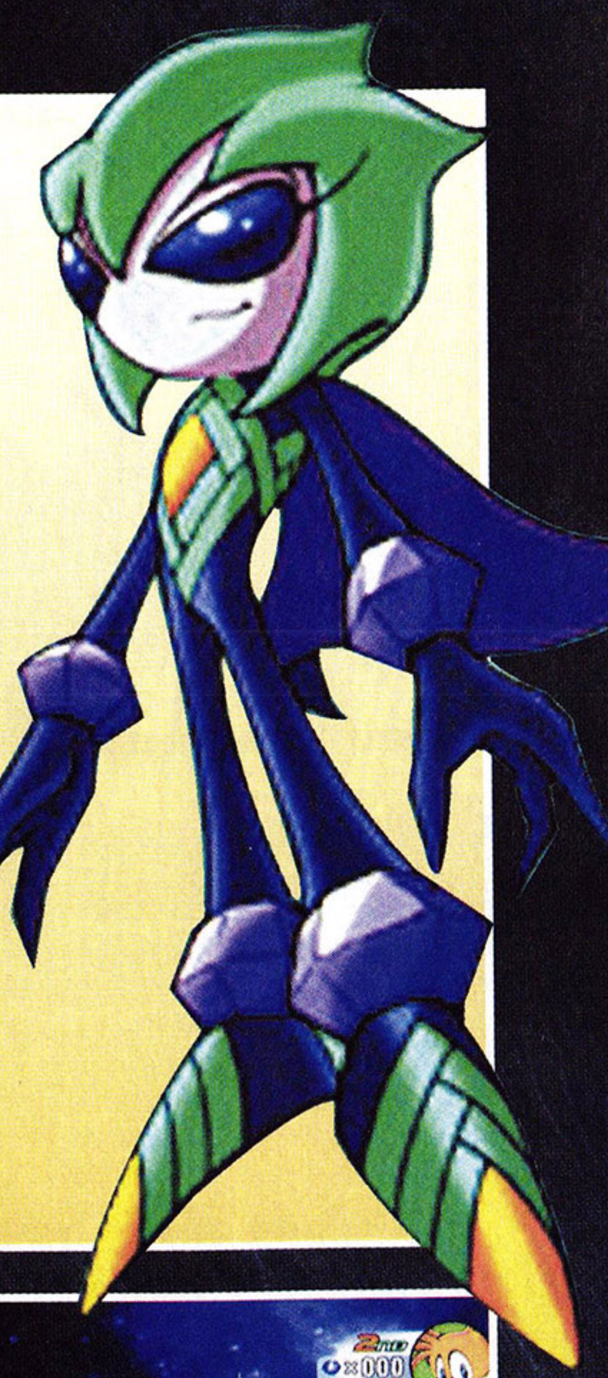
■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** CRAVE ■ **DEVELOPER** RUNEHEART/RAVEN ■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER

SONIC SHUFFLE™

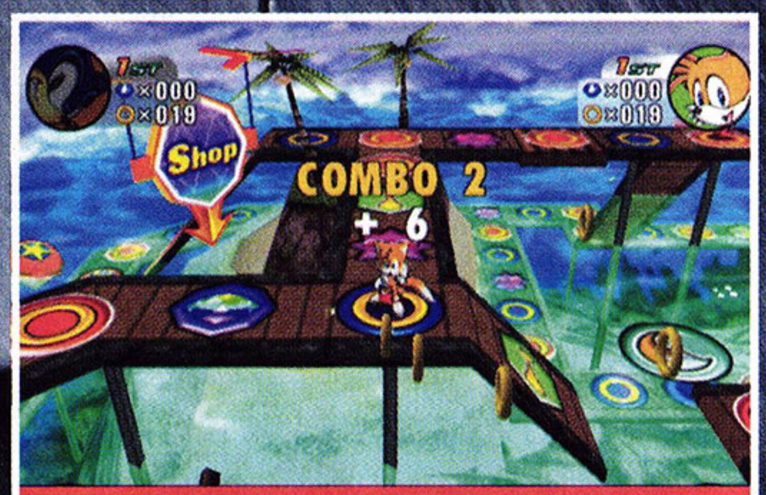
$49.99

Machine: Dreamcast **Genre:** Party Game
Publisher: Sega **Available:** Fall, 2000

Gaming On The Cutting Hedge.



"Making a foray into another genre of gaming, everybody's favorite amphetamine-addled hedgehog has returned in his very own Mario Party-style digital board game. **Sonic Shuffle** promises to feature a slew of minigames, each with different modes of play and objectives. Land on a colored space and, depending on their placement on the board, all four players will enter a minigame. The object of each minigame will vary from the last and will keep the gameplay from becoming boring as characters trudge around the board. **Sonic Shuffle** promises to be a favorite for the kiddies and those of use with childlike tendencies!" — **DailyRadar.com**



Eye-catching graphics will make this board game anything but boring.

Up to four players will compete to see who can retrieve the precioustones first.

Each board is unique and follows a different theme.

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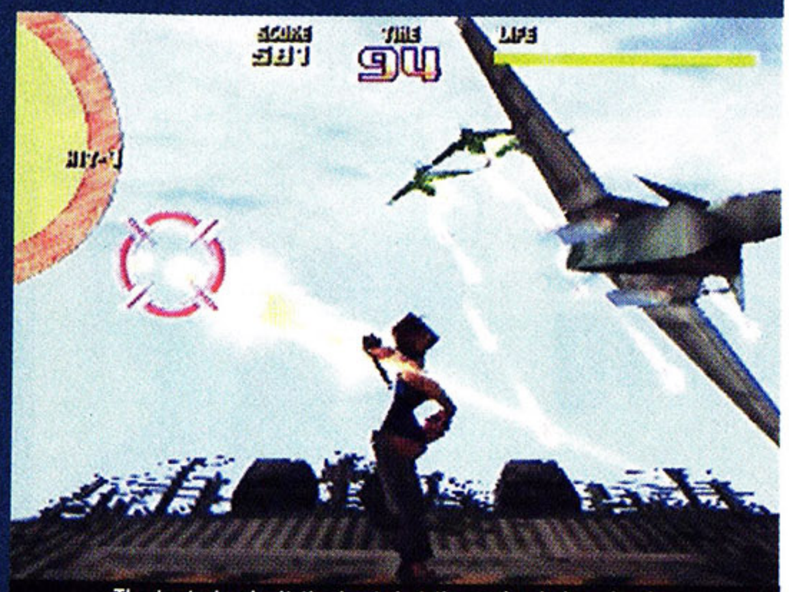


The texturing isn't the best, but the action is intoxicating

NINTENDO 64

SIN AND PUNISHMENT

WHEN TWO CLASSICS COLLIDE

Ever elusive, Nintendo wouldn't confirm whether or not Sin and Punishment had been added to its list of upcoming Nintendo 64 software. On the other hand, our Nintendo contact did drop a hint by saying Sin and Punishment would be a cinch to port, mainly because most of the game is in English. This may not mean much, but when you think about it, what other games does Nintendo have slated for 2000 other than delayed product from this and last year?

Though it needs new software to satisfy the cravings of the 64-bit crowd, Sin and Punishment's unique gameplay blend is something that needs to be seen by the US crowd. Obviously inspired by Shigeru Miyamoto's Star Fox 64, Sin and Punishment is a scrolling shooter set on a track. The interesting thing is, the characters in the game don't man vehicles. Rather they're all on foot, running their little hearts out – a concept similar to the classic arcade game, Space Harrier.

As the story so illustriously paints, mankind has gone too far. In the distant future, human beings begin to develop new life forms in order to conserve food resources. For years, this system worked, but then, disaster struck. The life forms began to mutate into carnivorous beasts known as Lufians. Before long, the Lufians seized control of Japan, and now it's up to you and Rescue Team to save the day.

This concept "wowed" all who were in attendance at this year's Spaceworld gala in Japan. The crowd was so entranced by this product, we had to wait in line for an entire hour to play it for a measly five minutes.

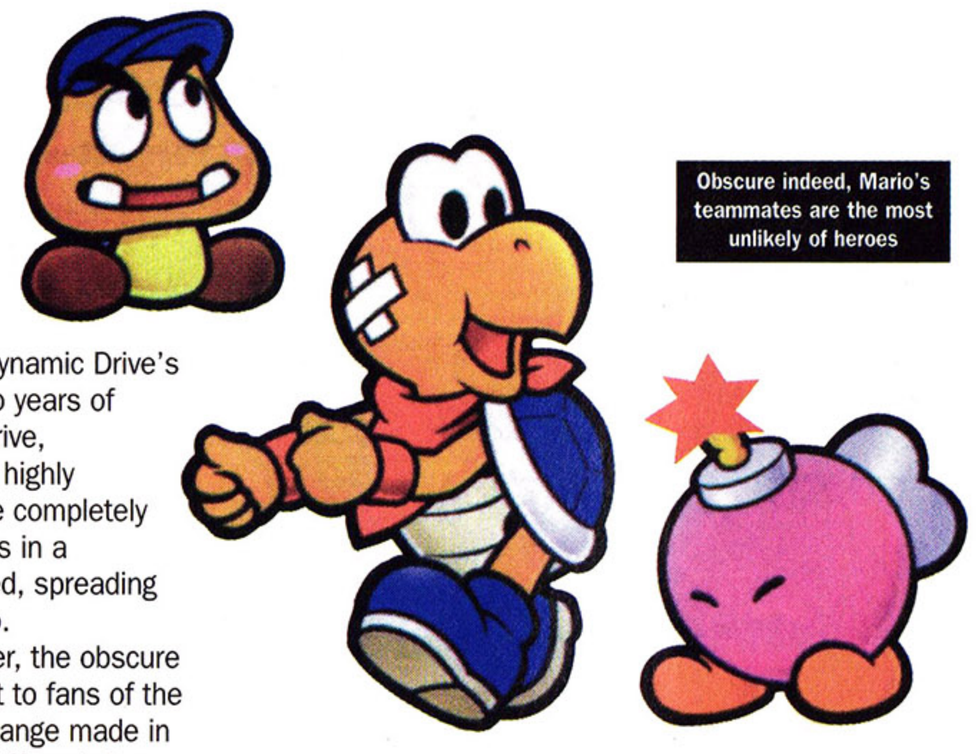
"Akkk!!! I should've listened to mom when she said not to run with food in my mouth!"

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO
■ **DEVELOPER** TREASURE ■ **RELEASE** TBA

NINTENDO 64

PAPER MARIO

THE THINNER THE BETTER?


Obscure indeed, Mario's teammates are the most unlikely of heroes

Originally proposed as one of the Dynamic Drive's headline games, Super Mario RPG 2 tumbled into years of delays. Unable to successfully launch this bulk drive, Nintendo made the wise decision to transfer this highly anticipated sequel to the Nintendo 64. This move completely metamorphosed the product. After spending years in a development cocoon, Mario RPG 2 finally surfaced, spreading its colorful wings under a new guise, Paper Mario.

With characters no thicker than a sheet of paper, the obscure name is apt. This may come as a disappointment to fans of the original, but the artistic direction isn't the only change made in the sequel. The entire package is actually quite different than its predecessor. With Square Soft off the development bill, the creative reigns have been passed to the lesser known Intelligent Systems. Square Soft's design, focused more on RPG elements than action. Intelligent Systems concentrates equally on both.

The explosive new action sequences are wonderful additions, but the combat chemistry is definitely lacking. Granted, Intelligent Systems incorporated several innovative features into the mix, and the combat is enjoyable, but it's all delivered with the basics in mind – something kids can easily pick up. To our dismay, the RPG aspect is very limited at this point, which may scare off a good portion of RPG zealots.

Regardless, the adventure should prove to be just as entertaining as the first. The storytelling is delivered in a stylish picture-book format, and the new character additions are absolutely hilarious. Come December 26 (if Nintendo can hit the release date), it'll be interesting to see if this RPG can garner the same praise as the original.

The castle from Super Mario 64 makes a triumphant return

If you surprise the enemy, you'll begin the battle with an uncontested free shot

For such a likable character, Mario sure makes a lot of enemies

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS
■ **RELEASE** DECEMBER 26

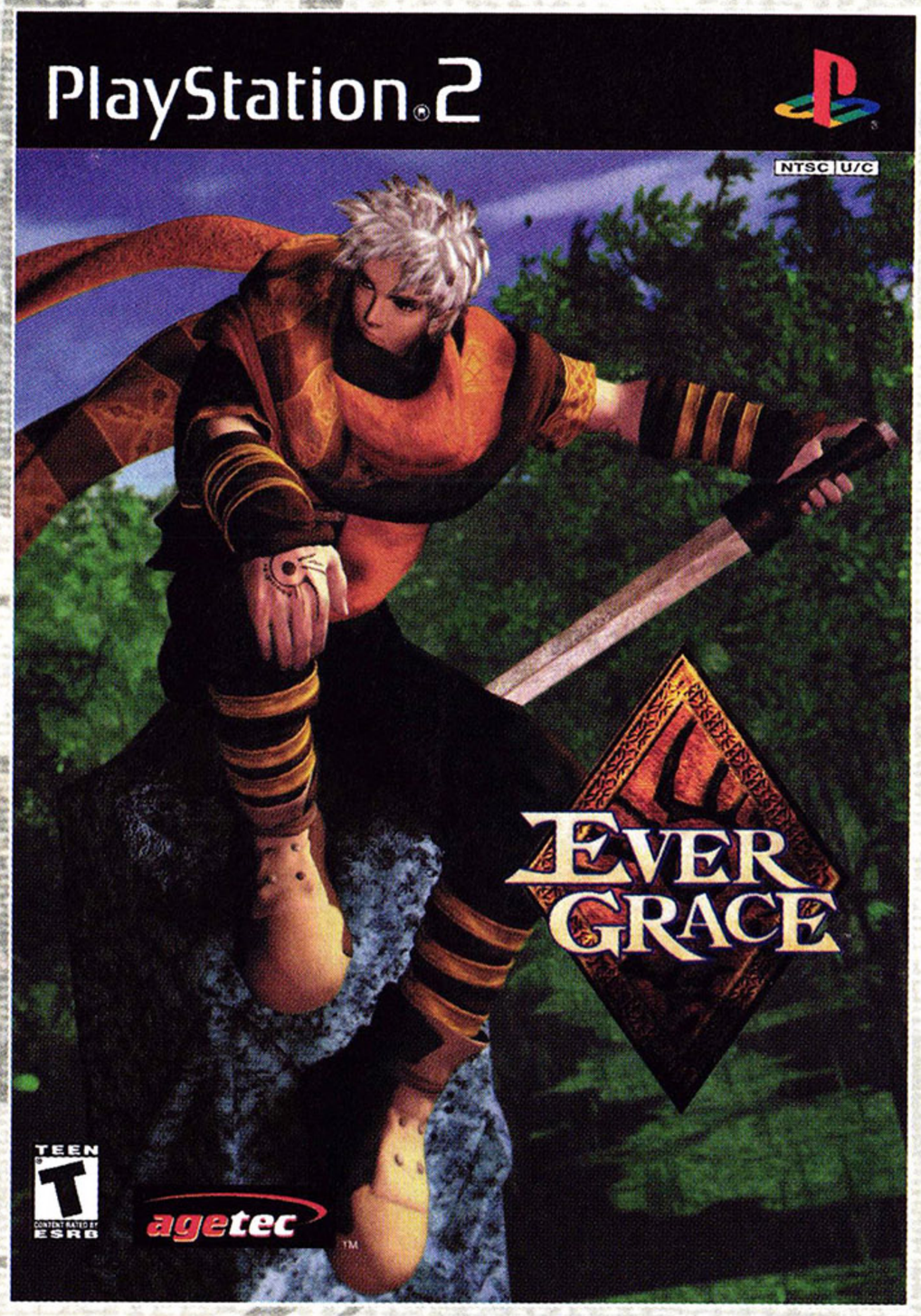
Defeat Your Fears To Achieve Grace

Players enter a world of intense magic and thunderous battles – where your survival is determined by collecting powerful artifacts and fashioning them to unique armor and weaponry. Two complete adventures await Darius and Sharline – heroes who must face an evil reborn. Journey as either hero and discover unique characters and monsters for each adventurer. They will need to master the art of arming themselves with items of incredible might and untold magical abilities to thwart the powers of darkness.

Attack with unique Palmira armaments

Utilize many bizarre weapons to wipe out enemies

Face evil in its lair



"Expect gorgeous special effects and plenty of action."
– PS Extreme

Destroy foes everywhere you journey

- Customizable elements include weaponry, armor, and clothing.
- Certain combinations of armor and clothing unlock hidden magical abilities and powers.
- Two independent characters to play – each with their own storylines, goals, and discoveries.
- Epic RPG storyline with all the action needed for a legendary quest.

Magnificent graphic and lighting effects

Challenge ultra-strange creatures to the bitter end

FROMSOFTWARE™

TEEN
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

agetec™

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With higher resolution, the parks look fantastic

PLAYSTATION 2

THEME PARK ROLLER COASTER

CUE THE CHILI PEPPERS!

If we were independently wealthy, we'd quit our jobs and build a gaming palace next to Los Angeles' Six Flags: Magic Mountain. The way this park is designed is what we expect heaven to look like – brimming with amazing coasters filled with huge drops, tons of corkscrews, and the highest G-Force known to man. Of course, after riding a coaster, you always ask yourself, what would this ride be like if it sped along the tracks at 80 mph instead of 60? Or what if all the straight-aways were replaced with 90° spins, loop-the-loops, and death drops? Come early November, EA's latest simulator, Theme Park Roller Coaster, asks that you play the role of architect and develop your very own rip-roarin' roller coasters.

In total, there are 12 different roller coaster styles to choose from. If you have the funding, which you'll need to earn by running your park, you can make your coaster hills stretch for miles. If you truly know what you're doing, no kids will die or puke...but then again, what fun is that?!

Theme Park Roller Coaster is more or less a port of the PC game. All of the park components are the same, but Bullfrog has upped the resolution and added all-new sound effects and music. A new coaster grading system has also been added to determine exactly how dangerous each of your rides is.

Stupid kiddy rides! Tear 'em down and build The Eradicator – the world's most deadly coaster

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** BULLFROG ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 14

PLAYSTATION 2/PC/MAC

SUMMONER

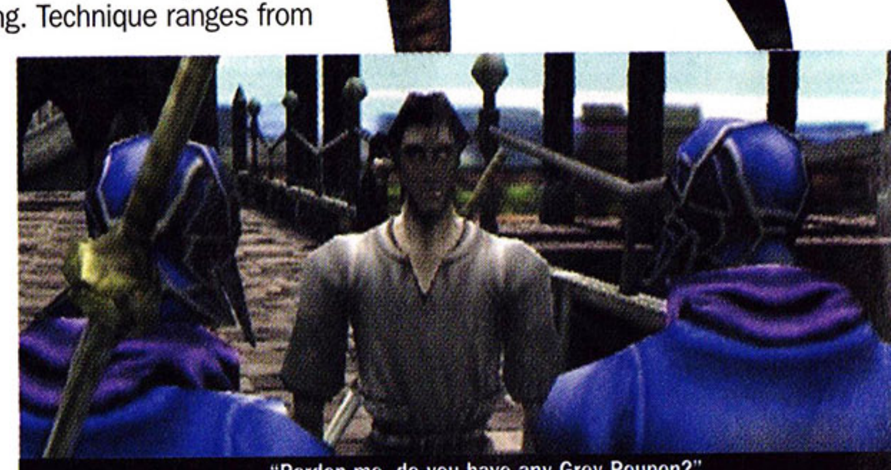
THQ'S MASTER OF MONSTERS

Set in an age similar to medieval Europe, this game has players control the actions of a mysterious youth named Joseph. As the story unfolds, you learn that Joseph's past holds many dark secrets. Secrets that have harmed those close to him. Joseph claims innocence and blames the turmoil on a single ring. Interesting premise, no?

Later in this quest, as the title implies, Joseph harnesses his summoning ability through several ancient rings. Will these rings lead to his undoing? We'll have to wait and see. Joseph can wear just one ring, or multiples, which combine their elemental properties. A different summon monster is spawned depending on which ring or combo he chooses. These hideous helpers range from Minotaurs to Black Imps. The number of summon beasts is truly astounding, but beware, not every creature is willing to join your cause. They may turn on you at any given moment. In addition to this, if Joseph faints or dies during battle, the summon will rampage, ravaging allies and enemies alike.

Right now, the real-time combat sequences don't encompass the most impressive visuals to date, but the strategic elements are very interesting. Technique ranges from disabling enemies by targeting specific limbs to determining what AI pattern your other party members will attack with. All four party members feature amazing detail, right down to cosmetic changes for newly equipped garments and weapons. The four characters are unique in class, but players are granted freedom to mold their character skills by distributing Skill Points to different proficiencies.

Scheduled to release on three platforms beginning with the PlayStation 2 launch on October 26 and ending with a PC and Mac port in early 2001, Summoner is limited to single-player on the PlayStation 2, but will open its multiplayer doors to four players for both the computer ports.



"Pardon me, do you have any Grey Poupon?"

Summoner's real-time combat is loaded with interesting strategies

For every new garment, cosmetic changes are shown

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME ■ **PUBLISHER** THQ ■ **DEVELOPER** VOLITION ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

All 251 Pokémon are compatible

Customize your own room!

NINTENDO 64

POKÉMON STADIUM: GOLD, SILVER & CRYSTAL

GOTTA CATCH 'EM ALL...AGAIN!!!

Do you like rainbows? Do you eat Lucky Charms? Would you put a rainbow sticker on your car? Do you have a video collection of Rainbow Brite? Have you gone out of your way to collect all the fruity colors of Pokémon? If you consider yourself a Poké-fanatic, be prepared for a mind-blowing, sense-altering shock. In addition to Pokémon Red, Blue, and Yellow, Nintendo is releasing Silver and Gold for the Game Boy Color later this month. Of course, you already knew this, and probably have both games reserved at your local retailer. But wait...there's more! After these new offerings are digested, Nintendo has a surprise in store for the GBC populace. What's better than Gold? Crystal!

On December 14, Japan will receive another Pokémon update. While no new monsters have been added, Crystal will include new battle animations and a new female trainer. Groovy! In this same month, Japan will also have the chance to bite into the exiting Nintendo 64 property: Pokémon Stadium: Gold, Silver & Crystal. This game is compatible with every Game Boy title on the market, and it has all 251 Pokémon programmed into it in amazing polygonal detail! Along with the same great play in the last version, a new feature called My Room has been inserted, allowing players to create a custom bedroom. When this game is ported Stateside, don't be surprised if its name changes to Pokémon Stadium 2.

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** NINTENDO/CREATURES/GAME FREAK
■ **RELEASE** TBA

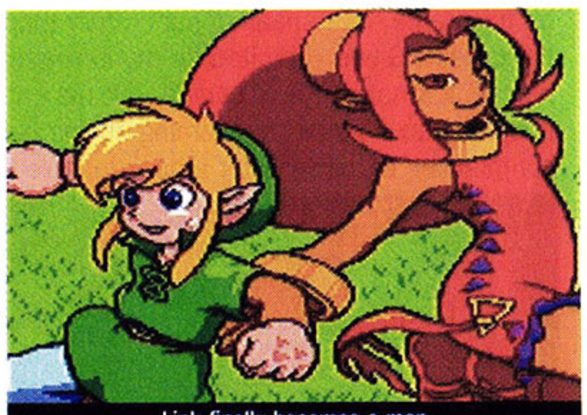
Use the Four Seasons Rod to change the climate and landscape

Familiar faces make cameos!

GAME BOY COLOR

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: MYSTICAL SEED OF POWER

THE SEASONAL LINK



Link finally becomes a man

In Japan, this zestful Game Boy Color release is currently entitled, Zelda no Densetsu Fushigi no Kino mi: Daichi no shou (roughly translating to: The Legend of Zelda: Mysterious Tree Nut). Here in the States, this title has already undergone a series of name changes – the last being, The Legend of Zelda: Mystical Seed of Power. It's not quite as catchy as Mysterious Tree Nut...but it'll do.

As strange as it may sound, Mystical Seed of Power is the first in a series of three, all slated to release one after the other – just like the Shining Force series did in Japan. The second chapter is Mystical Seed of Courage, and the last installment is Mystical Seed of Wisdom. Why would you want all three chapters, you ask? Simple. Events happening in one quest will alter events within another. So basically, you'll want to swap the three games periodically to unlock new material. More confusing yet, Link wields the Four Seasons Rod – a device allowing him to instantly change the climate in hopes of slightly altering the landscape within one of the three games.

Zelda once was so easy to understand. Now it's brain surgery. "Mommy, my head hurts!"

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** NINTENDO/CAPCOM ■ **RELEASE** TBA

"Oh no, its the guy from Scream! Aiyee!"

NINTENDO 64

MARIO PARTY 3

P-A-R-T-Y? CUZ HE GOTTA!

Forget about Kid Rock and Tommy Lee. Their pedestrian brand of puke-fest partying couldn't hold a candle to the Italiano grandmaster named Mario. Like Kid 'N Play, whose House Party trilogy was capped off by a pajama jammy-jam for the ages, Mario is readying his last N64 bash to be the party to end all parties. Hooty HOOO!

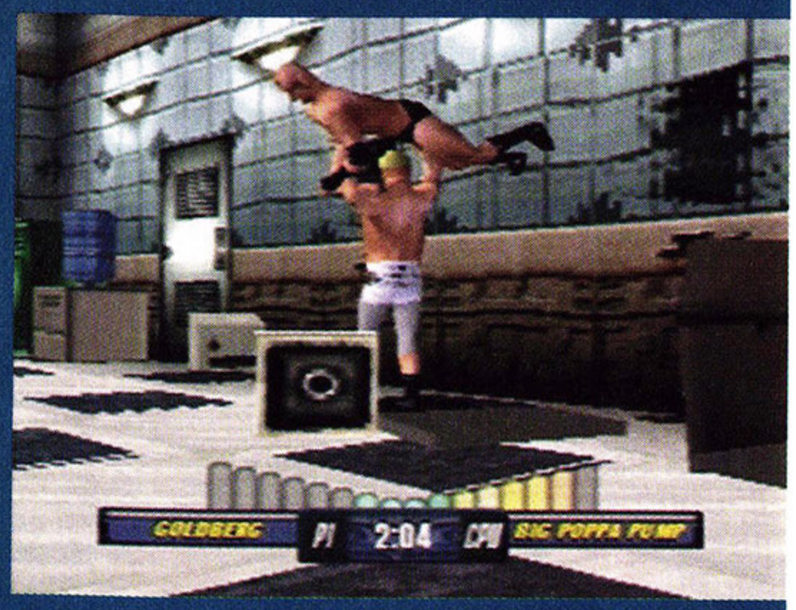
Mario rocks the party that rocks your body, and your roody pooty booty better be ready to rock steady in 70 all-new minigames. That's right, Dwight – unlike in Mario Party 2, there are no recycled games in MP3. Each of these joints is poppin' fresh and dressed to impress with gameplay that will marinade your mind. New contests include Wooden Horse Race, Heyho Roulette (which features some high-stakes betting), and Tarzan Race. Although Nintendo would not confirm the rumors, our low-down sources have it that most of the games will involve repeatedly pressing buttons.

Nintendo has improved the multiplayer Battle mode, doubling the number of items and adding an Action Event on each board map. The new Dual Map mode allows you to bring along a helper for hectic one-on-one battles. Otherwise, expect more of the same formula that has had gamers getting on their group thang for the past few years.

Sure, we've ripped on this series since its inception, but it's sold like red Yankees caps at a Limp Bizkit concert. We feel this proves our theory that no one listens to what we say. In light of this, we've decided to embrace Mario Party 3, nuzzling it in our bosom like a pixelated puppy. We wuv you Mawio, you so cute. Coochie, coochie, coo!

This is just one of over 70 new minigames featured in Mario Party 3

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO
■ **DEVELOPER** HUDSONSOFT ■ **RELEASE** TBA



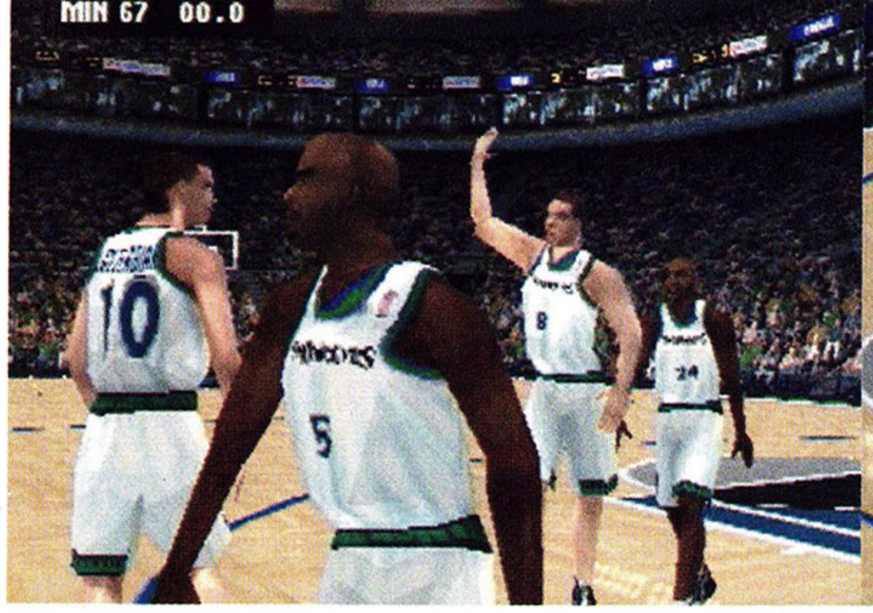
PLAYSTATION

WCW BACKSTAGE ASSAULT

THANK GOD IT'S NOT WCW WORLDWIDE

Electronic Arts is handing out backstage passes to the wildest show on the planet. Along with several women wrestlers, over 50 of WCW's finest are included in this title. As the name suggests, all of the wrestling takes place outside the ring. With 14 different rooms to brawl in, you'll stumble across 40 objects to use as weapons. Along with Human Torch and First Blood matches, players can compete to earn a spot in the coveted Hall of Champions. Backstage Assault also features 8,000 lines of play-by-play and an improved Create-A-Wrestler.

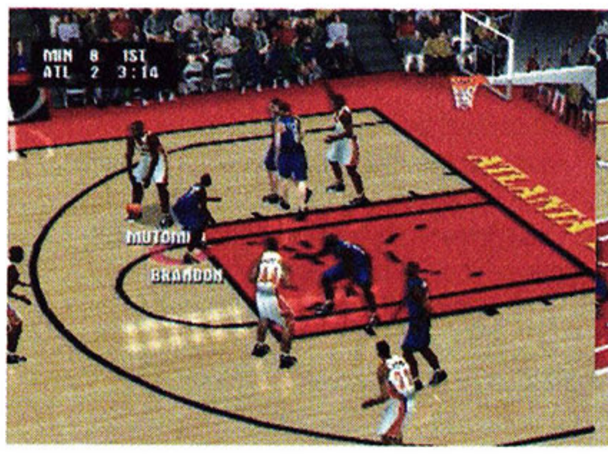
■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** KODIAK INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 17



PLAYSTATION

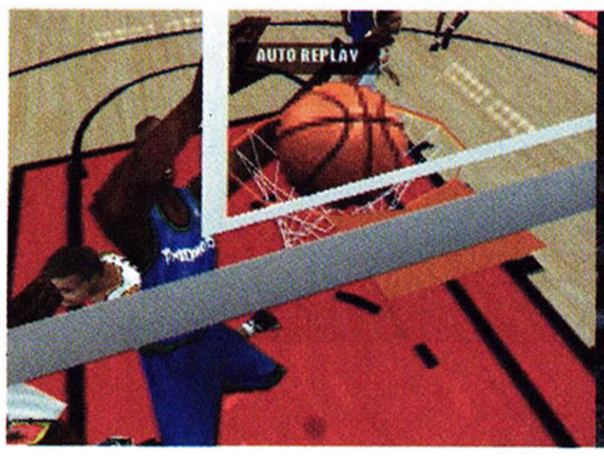
NBA LIVE 2001

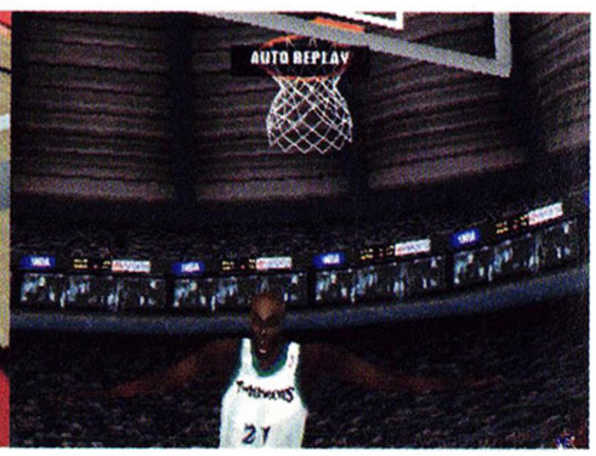
KEVIN GARNETT ON THE COVER, 'NUFF SAID



ABOVE THE RIM

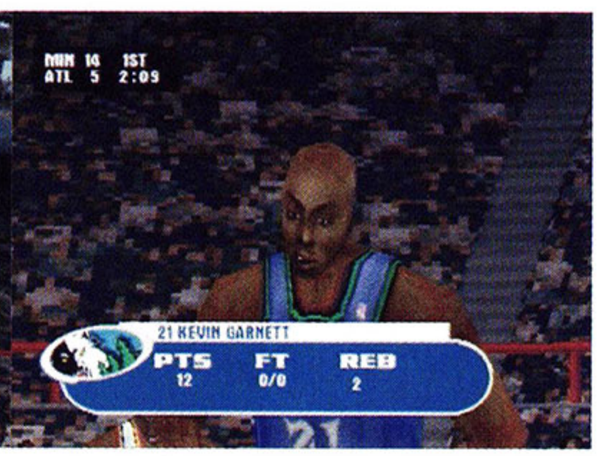
NBA Live has ruled the hoops roost for many years. While other games try to keep up with this perennial all-star, EA Sports has continually produced new features to keep us coming back for more. However, many aspects of the game's playcontrol have remained constant for numerous years. This is again the case with NBA Live 2001. The preview version of the game we ran through the paces, seemed to play identically to last year's game. Nothing has been changed to the control configuration in the least.

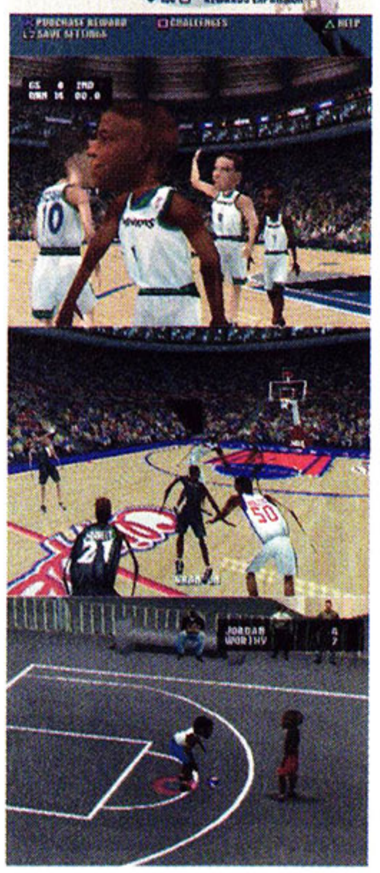




AURRA FACTOR

If you're not acquainted with "The Big Ticket," you are sure to be the moment you lay eyes on this game – we speak of none other than Mr. Kevin Garnett. Not only is he featured on the cover, KG was recruited for motion-capture work for many of the game's dunks and moves. It's not all KG of course, but the entire graphics package has seen some minor additions such as players coming off the bench, slapping hands after a made free throw, and complaining to the ref after a questionable call.





UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

Similar to the mode found in Madden, the NBA Live Challenge will present a number of milestones for the user to achieve. Some are as easy as winning a game by 10 points, while others will be far more difficult. Reaching the goals will award you points to unlock a number of cheats and power-ups.

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS ■ **DEVELOPER** EA CANADA ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 17

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-Electronic Gaming Monthly

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REVIEWS

Our crack (or crackhead, we can never decide which) review team rates games in a number of categories to help you sort out the great from the stuff you hate. Each game is reviewed by at least two staff members, and you will find both their opinions on each review. To make things a little easier we have put together some definitions of what the numbers mean, what the reviewers are like (so you can find the reviewer most like youself), what we look for in a game, and also a cheat sheet so the newbies can understand our advanced video game jargon. Read on and soon you will be talking FPS and FMV with the best of them.

THE SCORING SYSTEM

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

Game Informer's rating system ranges from 0 to 10, and is similar to school grading. 7 is average, 9 and above is exemplary work, 5 and below is a failure. Aside from concept, entertainment, graphics, playability, sound, and replay value (all explained to the right), other factors that influence a game's final score are how much game you get for your money and how all the game's elements come together.

10 - Perfection. One of the best games of all time, if not THE best game of all time. This game has no flaws, and thus this rating is rarely given out.

9 - Worth owning. Fans of the genre should definitely enjoy this game, but even those who don't normally like this type of game may find themselves getting hooked.

8 - Worth playing. Still a great game, but arguably so. It may not be the best ever, but there's enough to keep your fingers wrapped around the controller for some time.

7 - Worth renting. Unless you're a fledgling gamer, you've probably seen everything this game has to offer before. Still, just checking it out won't ruin your weekend.

6 - Limited appeal. There are always a few people that will fall in love with a game of this caliber, but for the most part, those playing it will be yearning for something more.

5 & BELOW - Garbage. From this point down, it's just a matter of how much of a failure the game is. The lower the score, the more you're hating life for playing it.

CONCEPT
What new ideas the game brings to the table and how well old ideas are presented.

GRAPHICS
How good a game looks, taking into account any flaws such as bad collision or pop-up.

SOUND
Does the game's music and sound effects get you involved or do they make you resolve to always play with the volume down?

PLAYABILITY
Basically, the controller to human interface. The less you think about the hunk of plastic in your hands, the better the playability.

ENTERTAINMENT
Flat out, just how fun the game is to play. The most important factor in rating a game.

REPLAY VALUE
The longevity of the title.
- **High** - You'll still be popping this game in five years from now.
- **Moderately High** - Good for a long while, but the thrills won't last forever.
- **Moderate** - Good for a few months or a few times through.
- **Moderately Low** - After finishing it, there's not much reason to give it a second go.
- **Low** - You'll quit playing before you complete the game.

THE CONSOLE TEAM

ANDY
■ **Handle:** The Game Hombre ■ **Expertise:** RPGs, Action/Platform, Driving, Strategy ■ **Interests:** Indie Rock, Basketball, Blind Date (TV Show), Beer, Brats, & Chicks ■ **Dislikes:** Crappy Sports Games, 'N Sync ■ **Current Favorite Games:** EverQuest, Zelda: Majora's Mask, MoH: Underground

When Andy's not yelling at a game for "cheating", he takes his aggressions out on his drums in a local rock band. A long time fan of Metroid, Andy has been reviewing video games professionally since the days of the 8-bit NES. While a big sports fan in real life, Andy isn't the first to line up for sports titles, but is always willing to put in the extra hours to play a good RPG or strategy game.

PAUL
■ **Handle:** The Game Professor ■ **Expertise:** Sports, Action/Adventure, Racing ■ **Interests:** NFL, PGA, NBA, CNBC, Shooting Par, Catching Walter ■ **Dislikes:** SUVs, Street Fighter, Diet Soda ■ **Current Favorite Games:** Madden 2001 (PS2), Tony Hawk 2, NHL 2001

Since the days of the Mattel Intellivison, Paul has consumed every type of sports video game imaginable. Not only is he the staff's resident sports gaming expert, he also has authored detailed strategy guides on all of Capcom's survival horror games. A GI Staff member since 1992, Paul has reviewed well over 500 games during his tenure.

REINER
■ **Handle:** The Raging Gamer ■ **Expertise:** RPGs, Fighting, Action/Platform, Sports ■ **Interests:** Comic Books, Star Wars, Transformers, Anime ■ **Dislikes:** Country Music, People With Guns, The Game Professor ■ **Current Favorite Games:** SSX, Chrono Cross, Tony Hawk 2, Zelda: Majora's Mask

Reiner considers himself the biggest Star Wars fan in the world. Along with his impressive collection of Star Wars action figures, he has seen the trilogy 485 times. A fan of all game types, role-playing games are his strong suit. In his six years as a professional gamer, Reiner has achieved the impossible. Penetrating the pixel boundary, he not only plays games, he's in one, and can be shot daily in the epic N64 release, Perfect Dark.

MATT
■ **Handle:** The Original Gamer ■ **Expertise:** Racing, Puzzle, Action/Adventure ■ **Interests:** Rolling Rock, Bands Nobody Likes, Judge Mathis ■ **Dislikes:** Chewing Gum, Robin Williams, The Former Czech Republics ■ **Current Favorite Games:** Virtua Tennis, Tokyo Xtreme Racer 2, Tony Hawk 2

While record collecting, watching reality television, and playing video games might sound like a state of retarded adolescence, Matt manages to scrap together an almost meaningful existence out of these activities. His encyclopedic knowledge of pop culture is either amazing or annoying, depending on how close your desk is to his. Less esoteric than his colleagues, Matt prefers traditional action and platform games.

JAY
■ **Handle:** The Gonzo Gamer ■ **Expertise:** Strategy, Puzzle, RPGs ■ **Interests:** Dungeons & Dragons, Comic Books, Wrestling, Ice Cream ■ **Dislikes:** Minivans, Minivan Manufacturers, Minivan Owners ■ **Current Favorite Games:** Front Mission 3, Tony Hawk 2, Yahtzee

Jay lives in his mom's basement just like you. Adding further fuel to his archetypal nerd fire is his love for comic books, metal miniature painting, and twice weekly pencil-and-paper RPG sessions. In fact, he's such a D&D fanatic, he hates professional football simply because it interrupts his Sunday gaming schedule. Par for course, his favorite games are often obscure ones. He is also one damn handsome man.

THE PC TEAM

ERIK
■ **Handle:** The PC Jedi ■ **Expertise:** Strategy, RPGs, Anything That Allows Upgrades ■ **Interests:** White Vermont Cheddar, Science Fiction, Bad Movies ■ **Dislikes:** Wisconsin Cheese, '87 Volvo Wagons, The Minnesota State Fair ■ **Current Favorite Games:** Diablo II, Baldur's Gate II, Chrono Cross, Parasite Eve 2

Erik is a self-professed closet nerd, otherwise known as a NUCI (Nerd Upon Closer Inspection). Although he couldn't care less for people who love everything and anything about anime, he has developed a fixation on mecha. Erik is completely clueless about sports, and will attempt to change a conversation on the topic to one about X-Com or 3rd Edition Dungeons & Dragons so he doesn't look foolish in front of the ladies.

KRISTIAN
■ **Handle:** The Game Dawg ■ **Expertise:** RPGs, Strategy, Sports ■ **Interests:** Golf, The Simpsons, Ping Pong, Tuna Salad ■ **Dislikes:** His Roommate's New Automobiling Hat, Small Dogs, Boy Bands ■ **Current Favorite Games:** The Sims: Livin' Large, Ultima Online, Mario Math

Kristian enjoys opening a can of whoop-ass on his buddies at the ping pong table, then running off to the golf course for a lesson in humility and anger management. The original text-driven Zork started Kristian on the gaming road; Ultima 6, NES Baseball, and Zelda made sure he stayed. Still an avid RPG fan, he can always find time to pound out a good sports game.

NEWBIE CHEAT SHEET

For our newer readers, here is a glossary of terms and acronyms that commonly appear in the magazine. Video game veterans should move along (these aren't the droids you are looking for).

Action – A term we use for games like Rising Zan

Adventure – A term we use for games like Myst.

AI – Artificial Intelligence. Usually used to refer to how well the computer reacts to a human opponent.

Board – A term we use for games like Jeopardy.

CG – Computer Graphics.

cutscene – A portion of the game where players simply watch as the story unfolds.

DC – Sega Dreamcast

E3 – A place where pathetic people jump for hours on end to get free shirts.

Fighting – A term we use for games like Street Fighter.

FMV – Full Motion Video. Usually refers to an animated CG cutscene.

FPS – Frames Per Second. How many animation frames happen in one second. Also used to denote First Person Shooters like Doom, GoldenEye, & Unreal Tournament

framerate – The frames of animation used to create the illusion of movement.

frontend – A game's menus and options.

GB – Game Boy

GBC – Game Boy Color

ISP – Internet Service Provider. The company that provides you with access to the Internet.

LAN – Local Area Network. Connecting computers or consoles together within a small space to allow communication between them. Provides fast, simultaneous gameplay.

minigame – A small, simple game within a larger one.

motion-capture – Using human model and infrared cameras to record movement for game animation. Also mo-cap.

N64 – Nintendo 64

NES – Nintendo Entertainment System

part time sucka - Anyone who's not a full time playa.

Platform – A term we use for games like Super Mario, and Crash Bandicoot.

pop-up – When onscreen objects, usually distant, suddenly appear.

PS2 – Sony PlayStation 2

PS-X – Sony PlayStation

Puzzle – A term we use for games like Tetris.

Racing – A term we use for games like Ridge Racer.

RPG – Role-Playing Game. A game that involves character improvement through collecting and spending points. A term we use for games like Final Fantasy.

SG – Sega Genesis

Shooter – A term we use for games like R-Type.

SNES – Super Nintendo Entertainment System

Sports – A term we use for games like, well duh, Madden Football.

SS – Sega Saturn

Strategy – A term we use for games like Command & Conquer.

third-party – Something made for a console by a company other than the console manufacturer.

GAME OF THE MONTH

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

It's no secret that a sequel was planned for Tony Hawk's Pro Skater – It said so in the end credits. Exactly one year later, Neversoft has delivered on its promise in spades. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 has more skaters, more tricks, a Create Skater, a Park Editor, and millions of other little touches that have made the best even better. It's not easy to make a game that lives up to the legend of Tony Hawk, but Pro Skater 2 succeeds in every possible way. Pg. 100

PLAYSTATION 2

MADDEN NFL 2001

GRIDIRON PERFECTION

"...no other game is going to touch Madden this football season."

If I had my way I'd take this game, play the Vikings through a multiple-season franchise, and whoop ass on all that try to knock down the purple. This plan would be all well and good if it weren't for a little thing called a deadline – and my co-workers wondering if I was ever going to stop playing this game. Okay, okay...I stopped playing, but not willingly. Madden for the PlayStation 2 is hard to put down.

When you get right down to the real nitty gritty of gameplay, anyone who has been playing the PlayStation version will find it easy to replicate his attack on this version. It's not that everything is identical, but there are similarities in timing and playbooks. Indeed this game still feels like Madden, yet this version far exceeds the playcontrol of its older brother in key areas.

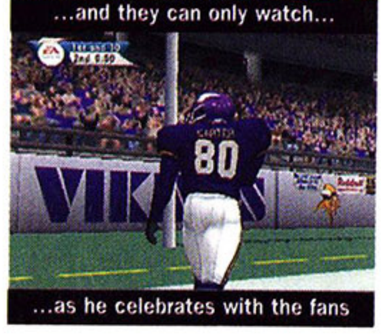
In particular, the running game is smooth and precise, and really gives me the feeling of being on the field and butting helmets with the opposition. The pressure-sensitive controls for jukes and spins, as well as for tackling are brilliant. Likewise, the passing game takes on new challenges, as the secondary is very prone to picking off a pass thrown into coverage. There is plenty to get used to with linebackers and cornerbacks in passing. In past Madden games, it was hard to notice these guys if they weren't right on your guy. In the PS2 version, you'll see 'em camp out just waiting to swat the ball out of the air and, quite frequently, pick it off. The entire offensive scheme has evolved to near perfection as I didn't feel like I had to rely on strictly passing or running.

Moreover, the control and feel of the game are greatly enhanced by the graphics engine. Not only are the player models exceptionally realistic, the detail of Madden's graphics gave me a good sense of where my player was in relation to the opponents. Thus it was fairly easy to make – or attempt to make – the play. In other words, I could see myself in the middle of the pile and react to the other players. I had a better sense of my player's location, and how my player and others might respond. Besides the fact that the graphics aid the feel of the game's playcontrol, the aspects of the graphics engine that are purely for show are exceptional. Expressions, posturing, and even the way a d-linemen shifts side to side are just a few details I noticed right away. Football eye candy at its best, indeed.

The entire Madden package presented on the field is exceptional, and I can easily say that it's the best I've seen. Then, when you toss in the off-the-field details and options such as the coaches, interactive chain gang, adjustable AI and penalties, and the addictive Madden Cards, no other game is going to touch Madden this football season. **– PAUL**

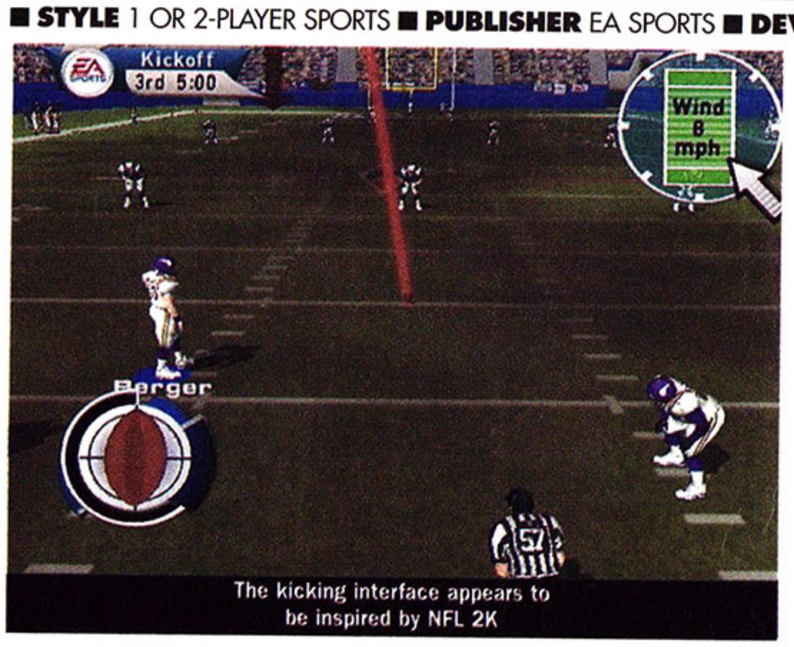
Cris Carter breaks from the Bucs secondary...

...and they can only watch...

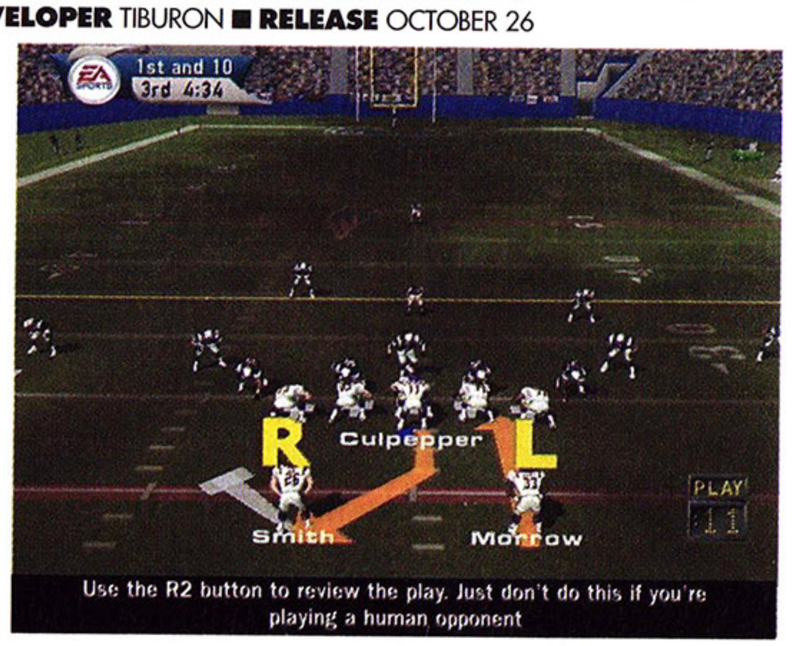


...as he celebrates with the fans

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS ■ **DEVELOPER** TIBURON ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26



The kicking interface appears to be inspired by NFL 2K



Use the R2 button to review the play. Just don't do this if you're playing a human opponent

TV STYLING

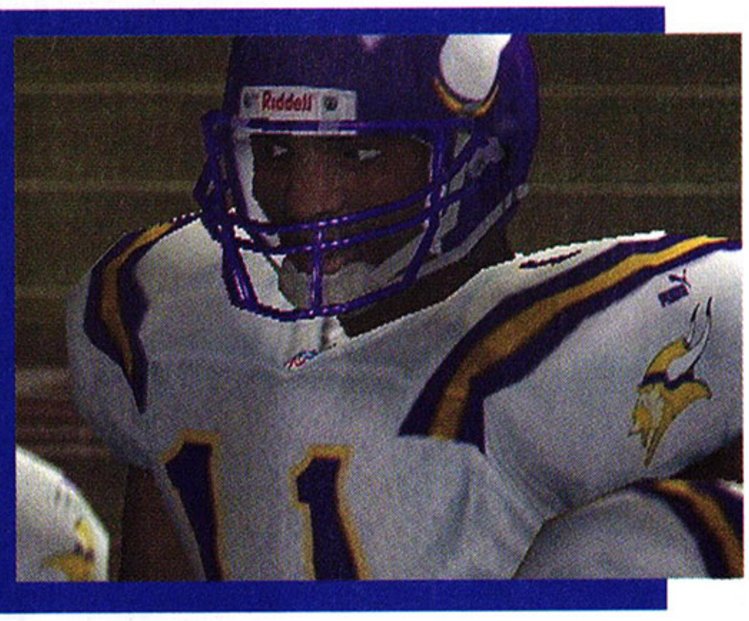
Between plays, close-ups will reveal players' eyes moving and other facial expressions. Sometimes you will see players celebrate after they have just put a lick on a ball carrier. Likewise, the guy who just got creamed will look a little dazed and take his time getting up off the field. The one drawback of this TV-style presentation is that you lose control of the players so there are no cheapshots or late hits. Even though the late hits were penalties in past games, it would have been nice to have the ability to tag someone after the whistle.

CARD COLLECTIN'

Like its PS-X counterpart, this version includes hundreds of Madden Cards. These can be bought after acquiring points in the Madden Challenge. Just like buying cards at a comic shop, Madden Cards are sold in packs of 15 and you get plenty of repeats. Luckily, you can trade cards with other users or sell them back for a few points. Some cards will pump up individual player stats, while others will unlock secret teams and classic players. The Madden Cards definitely add an addictive quality to the game.

MONSTROUS CHEATS

Take a look at the Monster Team! A throwback to EA's classic Mutant League Football, the detail in the monster models are fantastic. The Monster Team – along with a number of others – Is one of the extremely rare cards. The chances of acquiring one is slim, but you are sure to get a surprise from many of them. We aren't exactly sure what other strange teams may be hidden in this game, but if the PS-X version is any indication, you may find the Roman Team that is manned with gladiators. To be sure, the more you play, the more cards you can uncover.



THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E ESRB **9.75**

- **Concept:** The innovator in many realms of video football, this game is exceptionally produced
- **Graphics** Without a doubt, the finest looking football game to date
- **Sound:** There isn't too much to complain about, except that annoying Lesley Visser
- **Playability:** Pressure-sensitive tackles and juke moves are excellent additions to time-tested playcontrol
- **Entertainment:** The gridiron warfare is intense and battles against a human opponent are hard fought
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

Last year, the leader in sports entertainment lay dormant as Visual Concepts and Sega enchanted pigskin followers with the astonishing rookie release, NFL 2K. Ever so quietly Electronic Arts has emerged from the shadows, presenting an alternative to Sega's gridiron dynamo. An alternative that will lead the way for the future of digital sports entertainment. Madden on the PlayStation 2 is a beautiful thing. I never thought gaming would reach the graphical realism set by this stellar release. Madden's gameplay has also matured into an unstoppable powerhouse. From the statistical breakdown to the overall gameplay presentation, Madden 2001 is brilliant, addictive, and essentially perfect.

REINER – 9.5

PLAYSTATION 2

SWING AWAY GOLF

HACKING ON THE PS2

As the resident golf nut on the staff, I am always quick to snap up any and all golf games. Since Swing Away was released in Japan last spring as Golf Paradise, I had already played a few rounds of this game. Yet, with Golf Paradise the text was in Japanese, so obviously I didn't know up from down as far as options or the Story mode were concerned.

If you've played some golf games in your day, the basics of this game's engine will be extremely familiar as T&E Soft has crafted numerous golf titles including Waialae Country Club and Pebble Beach Golf Links. If you haven't tried these games – but you've played golf – the three-hit swing meter will be second nature. So much so that I was making shots at will. I carded a 57 and a 55 in succession. These scores came early in my amateur career, and I would hate to see what scores I could post when my character has his attributes pumped up even further.

Regardless of the ease of play and the ability to go low, I did find the course designs and variety of options to be more than adequate. I particularly liked the Course Generator. Here you can set different parameters such as length and fairway width, and the game will come back with a hole to your specs. The game won't let you place bunkers or design crazy stuff, but it is cool nonetheless.

Swing Away is really easy to play, yet the slow pace is a little annoying. It definitely isn't as good as Hot Shots, but is still enjoyable for a golf freak like me. – **PAUL**

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER GOLF ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS
■ **DEVELOPER** T&E SOFT ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E ESRB **7.75**

- **Concept:** The variety of courses, modes, and shot-making ability are excellent
- **Graphics:** Nice looking trees, but this isn't anything spectacular
- **Sound:** Man, the voice acting is annoying and repetitious
- **Playability:** Hmmm...four rounds with a 60 average means it's pretty easy
- **Entertainment:** The slow pace of play makes you hurry up and wait
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

How odd...Electronic Arts publishing a sports game for an outside developer? Next you'll tell me the sky is falling. Regardless, Swing Away Golf is an excellent release. Mixing complex gameplay techniques with goofy anime characters, Swing Away bears a striking resemblance to Sony's Hot Shots series. While not excruciatingly painful, the long loading times tend to be a tad annoying...But then again, this is golf – a sport created by the Sandman himself. If you don't mind brief pauses in the action, Swing Away's dynamic play and gorgeous graphics will captivate you stroke aficionados.

REINER – 8

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*Screen shots taken from PlayStation 2

RATING PENDING
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DO

Sometimes being the best
means having to spend
a whole lot on Afro Sheen.

Uh huh. That's right. The King of the Ring, Afro Thunder, returns with more style, moves, taunts and punishing soul. Plus a spectrum of new features await like 13 outrageous new boxers including 5 special characters and 10 returning contenders. It's intense, over-the-top boxing action. Come on. I know you feel it now. Let's Get Ready To Rumble®.

READY 2 RUMBLE™ BOXING ROUND 2

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New Ring-Clearing Rumble Flurries

New Taunts, Combos and Animations

23 Outrageous Boxing Personalities

Sharper Single Player Boxing

PLAYSTATION 2

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

THE IRON FIST MANICURE

"Dressed in a magnificent new suit, Tekken has never looked better, and it has never played better either."

Tekken Tag Tournament is one of the most talked about PS2 launch titles, and rightfully so. For the first time in the history of the series, Namco didn't cut corners to port this game to the console realm. Rather, Namco tapped into the power of PlayStation 2 to give this fighter a serious facelift. Impressive to begin with, all of the character models are much smoother now, and all the texture tearing and blocky polygons have been completely removed. The realism Namco has incorporated into these characters is insane. If you look closely at these highly detailed combatants, you'll see flowing strands of hair, rippling garments, and realistic lighting reflecting off their chests. The most drastic graphical change comes in the form of beefing up the environments.

All of the highly detailed, yet drab backdrops have been touched up and filled with tons of animated pieces, including swarms of people – and I'm not talking about two people giving each other high fives, either. We're talking full-on crowds of rowdy onlookers. Dressed in a magnificent new suit, Tekken has never looked better, and it has never played better either. While most of the changes are graphical, Namco tweaked out the gameplay ever so subtly. It would have been nice to see a couple new moves and grapples for each character, but then again, this game has more than enough to learn as it is.

Just like all of the version before it, Tekken Tag is fitted with several console exclusive modes. The secrets are also quite extensive. Once again though, the downfall of this release is the ease in which you can unlock everything. For the next Tekken, Namco really needs to hide the Easter eggs better. Nonetheless, the secrets are outstanding, and I think you'll agree that Tekken Bowl is one of the coolest minigames around.

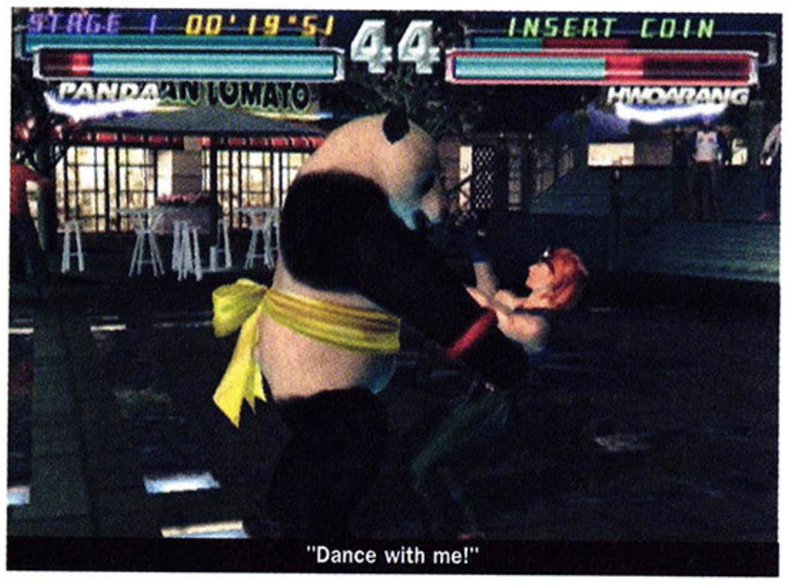
I may have played too much of the other Tekkens for my own good, but the long-running Tekken campaign is starting to get a tad monotonous. Improving the graphics and adding the tag aspect are great perks indeed, but some bigger alterations are needed to truly hold my interest. Tekken Tag is a classy looking Tekken 3 with four combatants instead of two. That's about it. – **REINER**

Tekken Bowl is one of the most impressive minigames around

Both introductory movies are action packed and highly detailed

When it comes to moves, Tekken is still the deepest fighter on the market

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING **■ PUBLISHER** NAMCO **■ DEVELOPER** NAMCO **■ RELEASE** OCTOBER 26



"Dance with me!"

The graphics are drastically enhanced over the dated arcade version

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

8.5

- **Concept:** An exhilarating and immensely deep fighter
- **Graphics:** The background detailing is loaded with interesting sights. All of the characters look phenomenal as well
- **Sound:** Very typical for a fighter like this
- **Playability:** The number of moves each fighter has is astounding
- **Entertainment:** The secrets are way too easy to unlock
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

It seems like it was just yesterday when I was playing the first installment of Tekken on the brand new PlayStation. Consequently, it only feels like it's been 15 minutes since I first played TTT on the Japanese PlayStation 2. Even though I think this is getting a little old, I can't help but get sucked back into the classic Tekken play schemes. This version is nearly arcade perfect, and I'm glad to see Namco spent a little time cleaning up the character models, which were a little jagged around the edges in the Japanese release. With all that said, I had a lot of fun learning some new character combos– there's a ton – and kicking some booty with Lei, my favorite character. Tekken is easily my top choice for PS2 fighting games on October 26.

PAUL – 9

PLAYSTATION 2

DEAD OR ALIVE 2: HARDCORE

GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS

"...the girls of DOA 2: Hardcore look almost too good to be true."

Thank you, Susan B. Anthony, for being a tireless advocate of women's rights. Thank you, Abigail Adams, for seeking equality in the voting process. Thank you, Mother Teresa, for all the love and warmth. Thank you, Joan of Arc, for being such a warrior. I'm sorry they thought you were a witch. Thank you, Amy Grant, for all of those beautiful songs. Thank you, Madonna, for well...everything! Without all of your support, this game wouldn't be possible.

Obviously a supporter of women's rights, Tecmo's latest fighting game places the female in the spotlight, and tells the man to sit down and shut up. If you complain about the lack of games for women, then open your eyes! The game you want is finally here! Reconstructing the female anatomy perfectly, and paying close attention to the movement, the girls of DOA 2: Hardcore look almost too good to be true. Tecmo has outfitted these gals in beautiful fashions that flow from chest to hip. As for the men? They look like sissies compared to the ladies! In protest, I only captured screenshots of the girls. I honestly don't know why Temco included men in the game. In my opinion, the next Dead or Alive should be all girls and nothing but!

Many of you have already lapped up the DOA 2 experience on Dreamcast. For the PlayStation 2 version, Tecmo went back to the drawing board and changed a few things. Along with new lighting effects, two secret characters, five gorgeous new environments, and a handful of risqué outfits, this fighter also features new reversals! Many of these goodies are hidden and must be unlocked through play. With a game like DOA 2, playing for hours on end really isn't a problem.

If you're new to the series, DOA 2's gameplay is a beautiful thing. For almost every move in the game, Tecmo has created counters for the defender. If the opposition makes an assault, you can block it and toss their attack right back in their face. The fighting mechanics are similar to Tekken, but not quite as extensive in the combo linking system. In retaliation, DOA 2's tag techniques are far superior, and its interactive environments cannot be topped. DOA 2 rocked on Dreamcast, and the new material makes it an even more desirable PS2 property. DOA 2 is indeed Hardcore. – **REINER**

"Yes! Yes! That's it! Now pout for me!"

"Excellent! Now pucker your lips!"

"Beautiful! Now, roll your tongue around your lips!"

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** TECMO ■ **DEVELOPER** TECMO ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

Intense grappling moves make the action hot

This kind of action is usually found on DVD's

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

9

- **Concept:** Girls and tag fighting go hand-in-hand
- **Graphics:** Perky and voluptuous
- **Sound:** The sound is irrelevant in this game, but the beats do pump you up
- **Playability:** DOA2's counter system is the best in the biz, and the fighting ranks up there as well
- **Entertainment:** With the arrival of this game, there's no longer a need to watch scrambled Spice Channel movies
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

As far as fighting games go, this one kicks some serious heinie. When I say heinie, I of course mean panties, because you see a lot of them in DOA 2. Why fight it? It's just a matter of time until we see something like Sex Boxers V: Kaila's Delight. Not that that's a bad thing. Far from it. Aside from the panty sightings and boobage, this game packs some wicked graphics and sweet moves. You won't be jonesin' for new ways to fight the computer for a while, either. Hardcore has many cool options for two-player combat, as well as tag team action and other goodies. There are also plotlines for each character to keep things interesting as you plow your way through the game. Just like any other fighter, the controls take some getting used to, but for anyone who has any gaming experience, five minutes of sparring should bring you up to speed. Trust me, this game is every bit a good as it looks.

KRISTIAN – 8.75

"Technically speaking, Smuggler's Run is the most polished Rockstar game I've ever seen and a tribute to Angel Studios' talent."

PLAYSTATION 2

SMUGGLER'S RUN

OUT HERE, TANNER IS A PROFESSION

Basically, Smuggler's Run is a simplified Driver pulled away from the city and plopped down in the rugged backcountry. Instead of slick 70's street cars, the player takes the wheel of just about every type of off-road vehicle with four wheels. The game features an SUV, dirt buggy, several pickup trucks, the zippy rally car, and the indomitable military jeep.

Vehicles vary in speed, acceleration, handling, and how many hits they can take. All the cars in the game miraculously self-repair themselves as you drive, but if your damage bar turns completely red, the car stalls for a few seconds which will lead to an automatic bust if the cops are nearby.

There is one primary goal on every mission of the single-player mode – get stuff and drop it off. The only real variety to the experience is how many friends, competitors, and cops are involved. Fortunately, the multiplayer games offer a larger variety of gameplay options and can also be played solo.

Technically speaking, Smuggler's Run is the most polished Rockstar game I've ever seen and a tribute to Angel Studios' talent. Driving the vehicles is a pleasurable experience, and the only thing that will ever surprise you is just how far down the ground is on the other side of that seemingly innocent bump you just hit.

There are three levels set in the mountains, desert, and a winter version of the mountains. Each has a variety of terrain types that affect the handling of vehicles, and each runs the full gamut of flatlands, rocks, mountains, cliffs, rivers, and lakes. Hitting the boundaries of each level is a rarity, unless you intentionally do so in the game's Joy Ride mode, simply because of the incredible size of the environments and the crafty placement of goods and drop-off points.

The real keys to the game are learning to evade opponents who often have faster and hardier vehicles than you, and how best to move across the landscape. As entertaining as it is to make a straight beeline for the next piece of contraband and rocket over every bump at over a hundred miles an hour, it's often better to choose your routes carefully and hug the terrain rather than bounce across it.

In closing, Smuggler's Run is a great game. While it lacks the variety that might keep a lone player going to that fateful hour when birds start singing, the multiplayer experience is exciting and you never really get sick of moving through the terrain. – **ERIK**

Set your course...

...let nothing get in your away...

...and you'll be free as a bird

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** ROCKSTAR GAMES ■ **DEVELOPER** ANGEL STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

The environments are gorgeous

The rally car is fast but it doesn't take hits too well

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

8.5

- **Concept:** Mission objectives could have been a lot more interesting, but the basic premise is solid
- **Graphics:** The graphics are great and the polys are rock steady
- **Sound:** Nothing too spectacular, but more than adequate
- **Playability:** Control is responsive and driving is a breeze
- **Entertainment:** The single-player campaign passes the time adequately, but the multiplayer games are a blast
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

Smuggler's Run is a game about time. As in – how much of it can a person spend before they're sick of it? The answer for me was about 15 minutes. Granted, this is a PS2 game. The environments are ornately detailed, the vehicles are cool looking, and the sound is good – for the most part. As you're tooling around delivering contraband, the voice of your contact person tells you to hurry up (most missions are timed) or that your driving sucks along with other vocal gems. For 20 seconds she's entertaining, then she's irritating, then she makes you want to shove a white hot needle in your eardrum as she repeats the same lame crap over and over again. The controls are decent, but the handling could stand to be loosened up a bit. SR is a game to take in doses. Too much of it will probably send you into controller-smashing tirades. If you're sweet on the Dukes for PS-X, you'll get a kick out of Smuggler's Run.

KRISTIAN – 7

PLAYSTATION 2

WILD WILD RACING

A ROOTIN' TOOTIN' GOOD RIDE

"Basically, the more you play WWR, the more you want to play."

Can I get a 'what what' for Wild Wild Racing? When I started playing it, I hated it instantly. This, of course, was due to a tragic event in my childhood. At the age of 10, I was in the city park playing with my beloved poodle, Melonbutter. As we frolicked across the meadow, Melonbutter and I were practicing playing catch with a frisbee. Boy, Melonbutter sure looked handsome with that cool bandana tied around his neck. Suddenly, he yelped and began to run away from me. As I whirled around, I saw a massive dune buggy hurtling towards me. I dived out of the way, escaping with only a skidmark on my rump. Poor Melonbutter wasn't as lucky, and had been reduced to a poodle pancake. Because of this, I still have seizures at the sight of off-road vehicles. Unfortunately, I have been to extensive therapy on the subject, but it still seems to happen.

Like many of you, if I'm not good at something right away, I tend to dislike it. After a swift kick to the ass by Andy, I realized that mastering a game in the first 15 minutes might not always be a good thing. After hacking away for a while, things got much easier, and the game was much more entertaining.

Rage has done what all tried and true race fans want – it developed a game that can be played for a while without being put on the shelf. The graphics are good, but from the PS2, I expect a little more. WWR basically looks like a PS-X game with enhanced backgrounds and tracks. The sounds seem to be from some racing game audio archive. There's nothing new or exciting there. Of course, what else can you do with a bunch of cars speeding around a track? It wasn't that big of a deal. The gameplay does make up for it, however. Basically, the more you play WWR, the more you want to play. The incentive is vehicle upgrades and improving your race class. After my first vehicle upgrade I got the old "I wonder what other cars there are?" feeling and I couldn't stop trying to get them.

The challenges are a real strong point for WWR. It is just a device to give a guy an upgrade, but jumping over semis is always something I've wanted to do. Actually, once I did do that, but the litigation is still going through.

So what started as a prelude to a temper tantrum happily turned into a thumbs up for yet another of PS2's titles. Remember RC Pro-Am? This is nothing like it. But it is as fun, and by gum, that counts for something. – **KRISTIAN**

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7.5

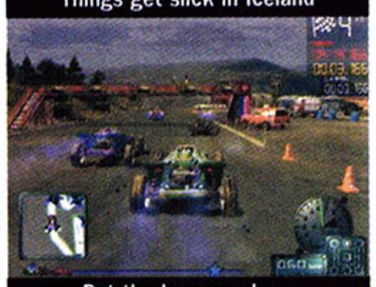
- **Concept:** Mud-flingin' race action
- **Graphics:** Graphics for the tracks are good; the cars could use some work
- **Sound:** Engines revving, tires squealing
- **Playability:** Easy to learn, hard to master
- **Entertainment:** A race fan's dream
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

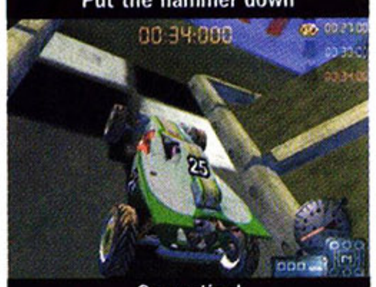
SECOND OPINION

On the PlayStation, given its outdated graphics, this game would have probably been called Wild Racing and faded into the pack of mediocre off-road racers. Fortunately, it's not. This is a PlayStation 2 game and it looms large over its PS-X predecessors. The extra "wild" in the title is not hyperbole. WWR presents gamers with a mudslinging array of white knuckle driving action. The track designs are ingenious. There are tons of hidden shortcuts, which vastly add to the replay value as you quest to find every secret route. The challenges also add another dimension to the game, forcing you to collect letters strewn throughout the track to open up hot new rides and upgrades. Graphically, it's solid, although there are some problems with fogging and pop-up. I was more impressed by Smuggler's Run and its vast open environments, but this game would make a fine purchase as well.

MATT – 8

Things get slick in Iceland


Put the hammer down



Go vertical

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** INTERPLAY ■ **DEVELOPER** RAGE ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

Grab some air

Niiice taillights

PLAYSTATION 2

SSX

"...all eight of SSX's courses are colossal works of art, chock-full of mind blowing visuals."

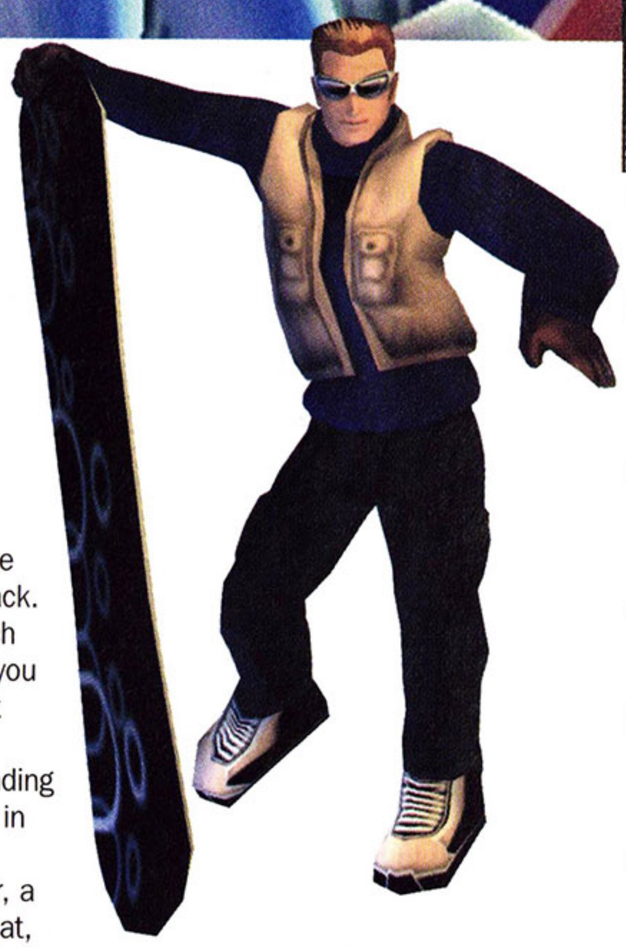
DOWNHILL DELIGHT

Shortly after popping this snowboarding venture into the PS2, my mouth dropped to the floor, and before long a good ten hours of my life was stripped away. From the visual content to the dynamic gameplay, SSX is a sensory overload that pumps adrenaline through every inch of your body. The foundation this full contact racer is built on is easy to understand. It's extreme sports on crack, speed, acid, 'shrooms, and whatever mind altering drugs you can think of.

Breaking it down, all eight of SSX's courses are colossal works of art, chock-full of mind blowing visuals. Some of the hills almost appear as though they were created by M.C. Escher. With corkscrew ramps, 200 foot drops, and twists that make your stomach queasy, each run keeps you off guard and in a state of awe. The wild character personalities blend nicely with these environments, and the animation that brings them to life adds an element of realism to the impressive graphical presentation.

Conceptually, the gameplay is actually quite simplistic. It's you and your trusty board against five foul-mouthed freaks. The first one down the hill is the victor. Navigating the courses is tricky enough to begin with. Yet like a thorn in your side, the competition will do everything in their power to keep you in the back of the pack. A brilliant touch on EA's part, you can't plummet with training wheels. By landing big tricks, you in turn fuel your Adrenaline Bar, a turbo meter that, when tapped into, grants an amazing boost in speed. The bigger the trick, the more boost you'll have at your disposal. Another interesting aspect, one that will annoy some, is the structure of advancement. Before you can unlock a new track, you must complete the current run three times – each more difficult than the last. On the other hand, if the competition is too brutal, you can hit the slopes by yourself and go for points instead.

As we've seen so illustriously in the past, EA is the quintessential piece in the console puzzle. Along with Madden, SSX is another must-have release that everyone has to see to believe. – **REINER**



THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

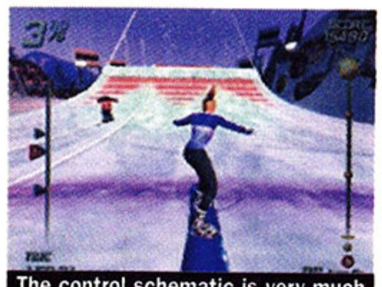
9.25

- **Concept:** Extreme sports pushed to the...uh...extreme!
- **Graphics:** If your mouth doesn't water over the environment details, see your family doctor
- **Sound:** Eat your heart out Fat Boy Slim! This interactive soundtrack is totally PHAT!
- **Playability:** Similar to Cool Boarders, yet much more responsive
- **Entertainment:** A ton of shortcuts and a wicked difficulty curve give this game legs
- **Replay Value:** High

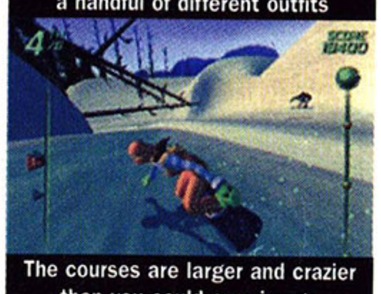
SECOND OPINION

SSX's gameplay is definitely Cool Boarders 2, but the controls are much smoother, and the graphics...oh the graphics are just simply amazing. From fireworks that explode in an array of colors in the jump zones to the little added touches like snow machines putting out a fine mist of freshly made powder, it makes it hard to believe SSX is a first-generation title. The courses themselves are absolutely insane. Not only are they incredibly long, they feature some majorly twisted designs with lots of shortcuts and massive jumps. The amazing thing is, the music might be its best feature. The interactive soundtrack mixes tunes for you on the fly, pumping you up for close competition and mellowing out during the easy rides. When all is said and done, SSX is brilliant. Definitely pick this one up.

ANDY – 9


The control schematic is very much like Cool Boarders

Each of the eight characters feature a handful of different outfits


The courses are larger and crazier than you could ever image

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** EA BIG ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

Link tricks together to land huge points and fill your Adrenaline Bar

From fireworks to realistic lighting, SSX is an effects powerhouse

PLAYSTATION 2

X-SQUAD

"I don't think that this game does anything visually that couldn't be done on the Dreamcast."

THE FEARSOME FOURSOME

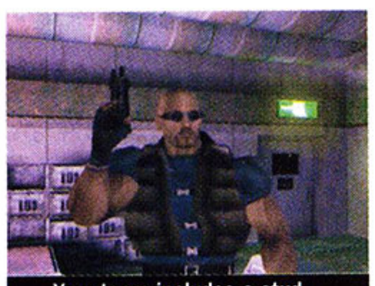
I'm a little biased against this genre, due to the deep emotional scars I sustained playing Fighting Force 2. Fortunately, X-Squad proves itself to be a worthy game; one that avoids many of the pitfalls of creating a straight action game. Trying to incorporate a dumbed-down version of the tactical combat from games like Rainbow Six and Hidden & Dangerous, EA's latest creation stands (slightly) apart from the crowd of knuckle-headed beat 'em ups. There's not an exploding chair to be found, either.

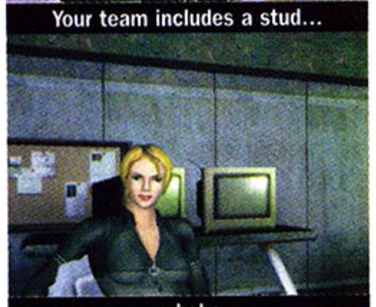
Players are cast as Ash, a pretty-boy special forces expert in command of a four-man combat unit attempting to rescue hostages from a terrorist organization. As the captain of the X-Squad, you can give your team members orders from the Tactics menu, assigning them to Follow, Assault, Stealth, Stay, or Recon. This opens up some fascinating gameplay possibilities, but the clumsy interface, coupled with the dull AI of the characters, renders the commands basically useless in combat situations. While X-Squad is billed as a tactical combat game, it reveals itself to be little more than a standard one-player action game in which three characters follow behind you.

The dual-analog control scheme handles the onscreen action nicely, and you have the ability to snipe enemies around corners as in GoldenEye. The auto-targeting was a little unreliable, especially in firefights with multiple enemies. There is a nice assortment of weapons and items, all of which can be purchased between levels with points you win during combat. The action quickly becomes dull, however, as your missions devolve into endless quests to find the switch that opens a door.

Like its gameplay, X-Squad's graphics are a bit of a mixed bag. The character models are beautifully rendered, and the cool shield effects are a sight to behold (see picture). Unfortunately, the environments, especially the unimpressive textures, are drab and dingy. The particle and water effects are nothing spectacular, and overall I don't think that this game does anything visually that couldn't be done on the Dreamcast.

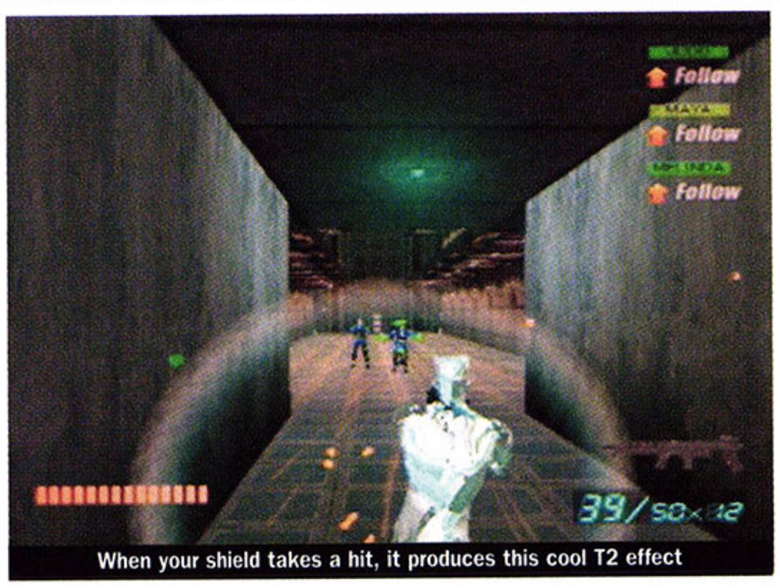
In summary, X-Squad is a solid, if unspectacular, action title. I'm sure someday there will be a tactical action game for the PlayStation 2, but this isn't it. If you're looking for a fairly enjoyable action experience, X-Squad is a sound purchase. Maybe next time around the developers will put a little effort into making it a bit more intriguing and immersive. – **MATT**


Your team includes a stud...


...a babe...

...and Scotty 2 Hotty!

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** EA JAPAN ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26



When your shield takes a hit, it produces this cool T2 effect

Auto-targeting comes in handy during the fierce boss battles

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

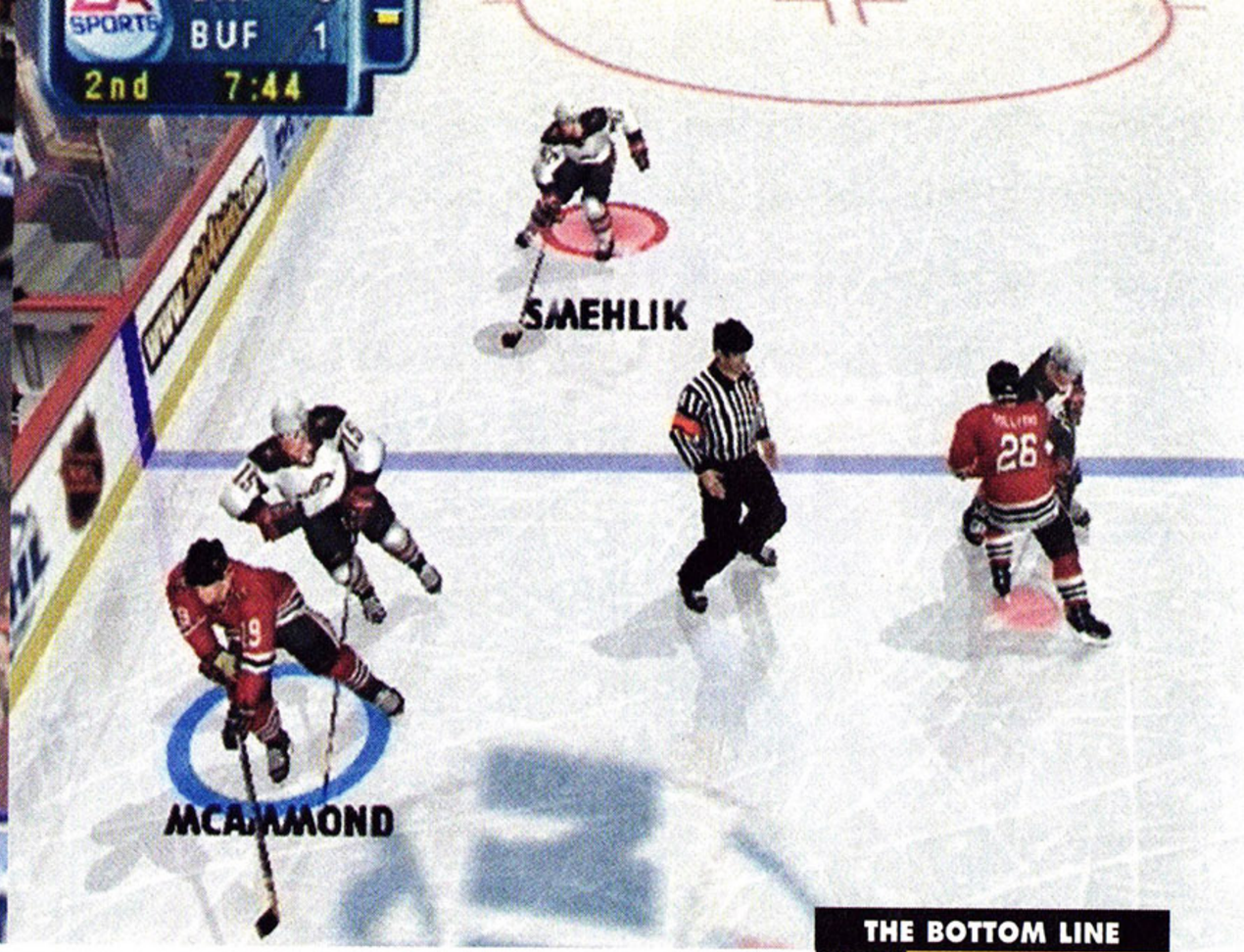
7.5

- **Concept:** The squad-based gameplay sounds more interesting in theory than it is in practice
- **Graphics:** The character models are nicely done, but I got the feeling I was playing a PS-X game in hi-res
- **Sound:** Features a nice, heart-pumping, action-flick soundtrack, but the voice-overs make Gabe Logan seem like De Niro
- **Playability:** The control is fairly solid, although the camera can be frustrating at times
- **Entertainment:** A fine action title, but short on imagination and variety
- **Replay Value:** Low

SECOND OPINION

X-Squad is interesting at first, but all the things that seem to make it special are gradually stripped away as you play the game. It's kind of like discovering that you've been following a mirage in the desert, or realizing that despite your mechanic buddy's assertions, the car really isn't that cool. The Squad members that accompany you into the fray can be equipped with weapons and given basic standing orders like Follow or Recon. They whine and moan when they get shot up, but never seem to die, making it to your advantage to use them as human shields throughout the course of the game rather than attempting to work with them as a team. At best, your companions do little else than add some humor value to the game, making it nothing more than another subpar shooter to throw on the pile. There are better launch titles for the PS2.

ERIK – 7



PLAYSTATION 2

"NHL 2001 clearly dwarfs any of the other games before it in terms of graphics."

NHL 2001

LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT CREASE!

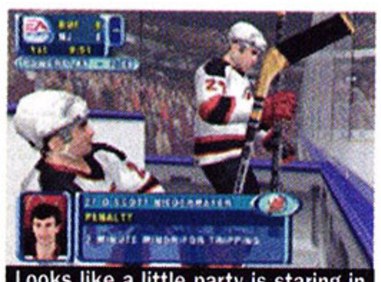
As Reggie Dunlop said to his Charleston Chiefs before the final game in the hockey film, Slap Shot, "I wanna win that championship tonight, but I wanna win it clean – old-time hockey. Jeez…Toe Blake, Dit Clapper, Eddie Shore, those guys were the greats." What this quote really has to do with my review of NHL 2001, I'm not 100 percent sure. Yet, when I think about the EA Sports' NHL series, I think old time-hockey. Yeah, those games were the greats. The series has always been the trendsetter, in both control and graphics. Sure, there were the off-seasons, but, for the most part, NHL has been solid.

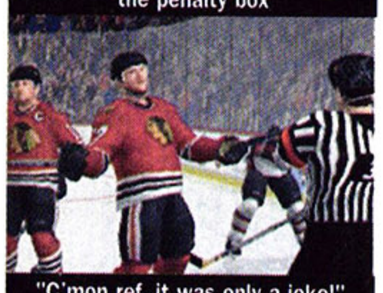
NHL 2001 clearly dwarfs any of the other games before it in terms of graphics. NHL dresses some finely detailed players and presents them with a TV flair. The jerseys, breezers, gloves – and the rest of the uniforms – are exceptional. Then you throw in the facial features and expressions, along with some typical hockey mannerisms, and you realize that the folks who made this game watched a lot of hockey. I have watched plenty of hockey in my day, and I've also watched a bunch of NHL's graphical segues that present themselves during stoppage of play. As cool as these are, I quickly started skipping them to get back to the real action.

This series has probably consumed a large portion of my gaming time over the years and this PS2 gameplay is virtually identical to any I've played. Passing is crisp, checks are booming, and finding the puck in the corners is no problem. It is also easy to see the players and action around the net. However, I have some problems with the checking. There were too many instances where I met the computer defender at the blue line, knocking him off the puck just to have him reacquire it deeper in the zone an instant later. I'm sure that someone over at EA Canada is saying, "Adjust the puck friction and elasticity. Then tune up the fall recovery." Yeah, whatever.

The gameplay gripes I have with this title are fairly minor, but do detract slightly from the playability of this game. Another area of concern I have is the options and extra modes – one of NHL's strengths in the past. It does have a superb system for editing lines during the season, and the computer will even adjust the lines for you if that's not your bag. What I really would liked to have seen is the franchise and user records.

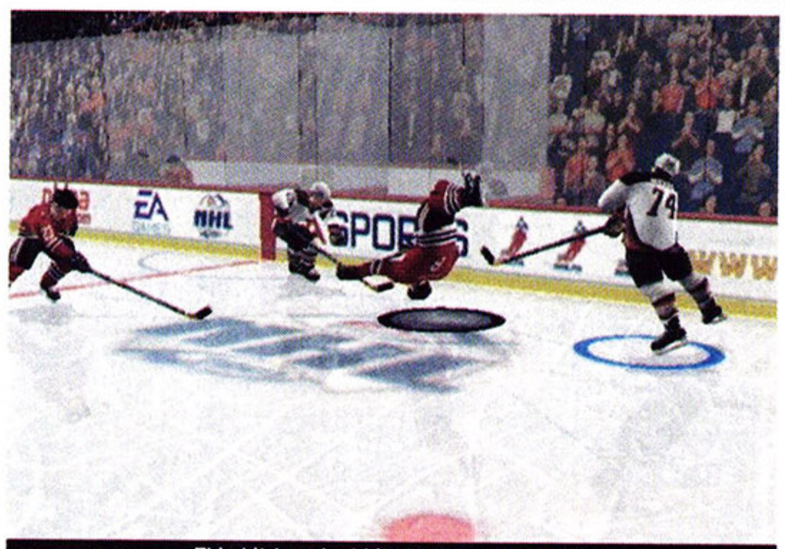
NHL 2001 is spectacular to look at and an entertaining multiplayer game, but it lacks the polish that might have made it exceptional. – **PAUL**


Looks like a little party is staring in the penalty box


"C'mon ref, it was only a joke!"

Game misconduct? Hit the showers

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS ■ **DEVELOPER** EA CANADA ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 14


This hit knocked him back to next week

"Did I tell you the one about the three refs and the monkey?"

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

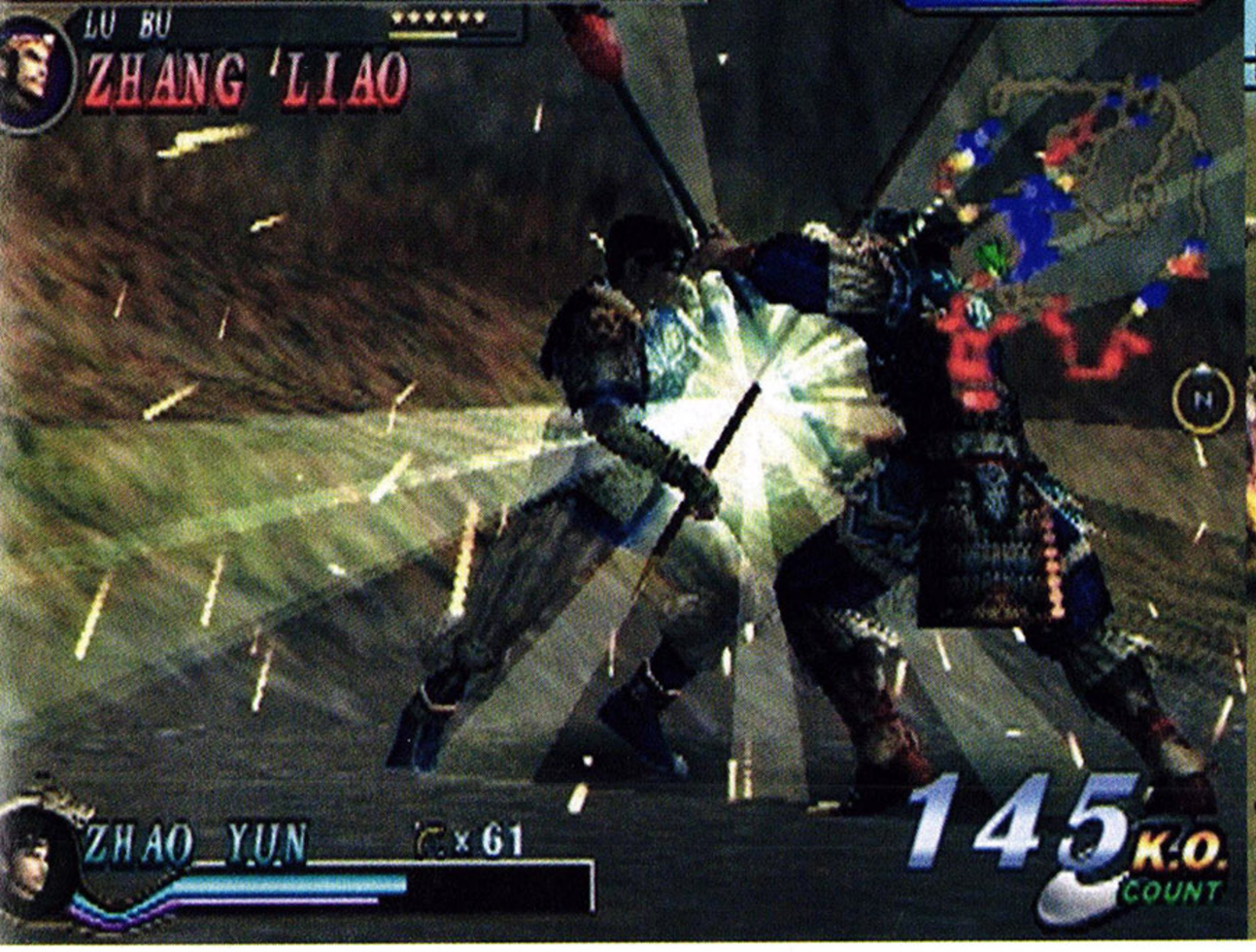
8.5

- **Concept:** The presentation is exceptional, but where's the franchise and user records?
- **Graphics:** There is plenty to gawk at with this being the best looking hockey to date, but was that slowdown?
- **Sound:** On-ice chatter, crowd chants, and two annoying guys in the booth – all well done
- **Playability:** The play is no different from the PS-X version, but the graphics make it far easier to see the action
- **Entertainment:** A must see for hockey fans, but something seems to be missing
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

Sticking to the principles, EA has kept the familiar NHL gameplay mostly intact. On the graphical side, a big change was needed, and EA didn't hold back in delivering the goods. As you'd expect from the new frontier of gaming, the character models are remarkable renders with authentic movements and wild facial expressions. The TV-style presentation also received heavy detailing. I just love it when the players talk trash, scream at the officials, and get chewed out by the coach. Tie the eye candy together with the gameplay you crave year in and year out, and you really couldn't ask for much more from a first-gen release. I don't know what The Game Professor is smokin', but he just doesn't see the big picture here. The picture being that this game is freakin' awesome!

REINER – 9



PLAYSTATION 2

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

ONE MAN WAR MACHINE

"What raises this game from the seen-it-before mire is the sheer amount of things happening off and onscreen."

There's no denying that all of the PS2 launch games look better than anything ever offered on the original PlayStation, yet few offer something that just wasn't possible until now. Koei has taken to development on this next-generation platform like a bit to a stream, creating Dynasty Warriors 2, a game that combines a decades-old premise with a mind boggling presentation.

Taking place during the civil wars of second century China, players choose one of nine officers (with over a dozen more to be unlocked), and fight in one of the more famous frays of the era. No matter your character choice, it quickly becomes evident that you're a superior force on the field. In addition to their powerful combo attacks, all the characters have a bow they can use to strike down enemies from a distance, and a charged special that can wipe out everybody around you.

There's no doubt that Dynasty Warriors 2 is a brawler through and through. If you're not jamming out on your controller's buttons, you're running to a place where you will. What raises this game from the seen-it-before mire is the sheer amount of things happening off and onscreen. At any given time, there could be 100 soldiers visibly surrounding you, with thousands more actively fighting on the battlefield.

There are only eight stages to be played, but none are quick and easy. Players must kill key people to get further into the hostile territory, secure key positions, and disrupt enemy emplacements. Pushes on the enemy must be made, but running headlong into battle without backup is suicide. Slow and steady is the key to winning, and you'll personally want to fell certain people to collect the horses and permanent power-ups they leave behind. A good officer should also never leave their personal troop of bodyguards in a compromising position, since they too can increase in skill as the campaign progresses. In general, a well-played stage will be finished in around an hour, with a personal kill count of over 500.

Overall, I like the psychology of this game. Once you learn the ins and outs of mass combat, you'll try to make tactical decisions, going where your combat skills will do the most good. Sometimes, however, berserker bloodlust overcomes you and you go too deep, getting yourself in a situation you're not prepared to handle – and believe me, you don't want to die 45 minutes into a battle. The action can get monotonous at times, but is addictive all the way to the hard-fought end. – **JAY**

An ending stat screen scores your kill count

Inclement weather can reduce your visibility, but not your style

Use your first-person bow attack to slay from a distance

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** KOEI ■ **DEVELOPER** KOEI ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

Sneaking up on a group of archers

Burn! Burn!

Quick cutscenes during the battle illustrate what's happening elsewhere

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

8

- **Concept:** Basic, but with tons of enemies onscreen at once to add flavor
- **Graphics:** Considering all the chaos going on, pretty amazing. Though there is a constant background fogging
- **Sound:** Yelling, weapons clanging, horses trampling, people dying
- **Playability:** Quick and easy to pick up, and a camera that manages to always stay with the action
- **Entertainment:** Killing 500 people in an hour never felt better
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

SECOND OPINION

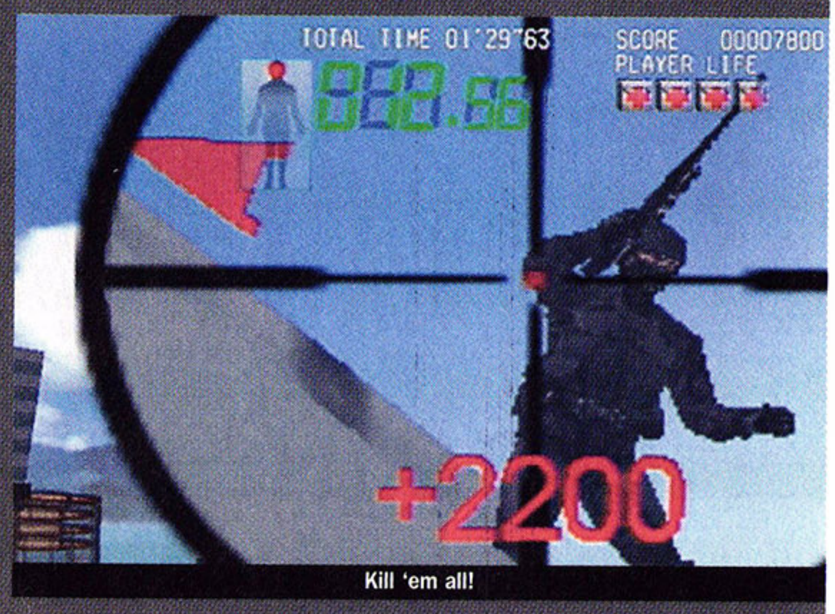
What is war good for? Games! When playing Koei's Romance series, how often have you thought to yourself, "Man, wouldn't it be cool if I could assume control of my troops and show them how things are done." Well, thanks to several technological advancements, this dream is now a reality. You actually control a general, who is more or less a super-powered enforcer capable of spilling the blood of hundreds in under an hour. Your heroics are god-like, but your combat is fairly weak, consisting of just a handful of erratic moves. Having the death of thousands on your hands is a good feeling – one that will brighten up your day. Yet even this monumental feat cannot topple the tower of repetitiveness this game is built on. How about some variety next time, Koei?

REINER – 8

PLAYSTATION 2

SILENT SCOPE

CRASH COURSE IN BRAIN SURGERY



Kill 'em all!

In porting Silent Scope to the PS2, Konami was faced with the task of formulating a control scheme that could handle the dual-scope gameplay of the arcade unit. The developers succeeded at this task, allowing you to move your sight with the left analog stick and toggle between scopes.

Graphically, Silent Scope is amazing, but little has been added. Herein is my complaint with Silent Scope – it's over too quickly. Story mode is short; most players will probably beat the game in a day. The different modes largely use the same shooting ranges over and over. A great game, but it doesn't have the legs to make it anything more than a weekend fling. – **MATT**

THE BOTTOM LINE

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB **7.75**

- **Concept:** This premise has been around since Duck Hunt, but the scope and dramatic camera shifts add some new flavor to the mix
- **Graphics:** The intricate backgrounds and death animations are disturbingly real
- **Sound:** Pretty standard fare. An in-game advisor gives mission briefings
- **Playability:** Konami does an admirable job of overcoming the lack of a gun controller
- **Entertainment:** A brief, harrowing ride that will leave you exhausted
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low

SECOND OPINION

This is nerve-racking entertainment at its best. While a tad short, its innovative split-second sniping is some of the most intense gaming you'll run across.

REINER – 8

This game promotes violence against produce

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** KONAMI
■ **DEVELOPER** KONAMI ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

Two officers have at it on the battlefield

PLAYSTATION 2

KESSEN

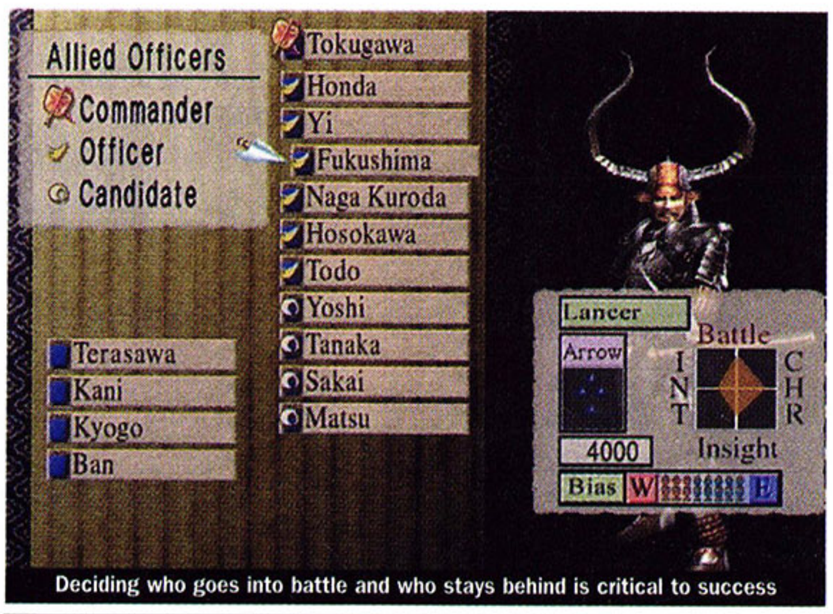
FOR THOSE WHO WOULD BE DAIMYO

Kessen opens with a message from its creator, Kou Shibusawa, which states, "I have always dreamed of creating a movie that I could control." It seems that dreams do come true. With its overabundant cutscenes, hours-long battles, and heavy-handed narration, playing Kessen is like watching a week-long miniseries on CBS.

Special tactics can decimate the enemy's forces

The drama begins before you even hit the battlefield. After the situation at hand is explained, your officers have a meeting, discussing strategy and telling tales of past encounters with the enemy. Players must then decide who should lead the armies in the upcoming battle, attempt to sway opposing officers to your side, and figure out exactly how to deploy all the troops. On the field, players make commands from a rather dull overhead view. Things quickly get spiced up, however, with numerous battle cutscenes that illustrate why war is hell (but really cool looking).

More than any console strategy game I've played, the decisions made before the fight are critical to success. That you've made incorrect preemptive decisions can be a frustrating realization an hour into the war, but it certainly adds replay value. I wouldn't recommend that everyone buy Kessen, but I do encourage all to play it. The game's presentation will truly have you believing, as the narrator attests, that this is the most important battle in history. – **JAY**



Deciding who goes into battle and who stays behind is critical to success

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** ■ ELECTRONIC ARTS **DEVELOPER** KOEI
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

THE BOTTOM LINE

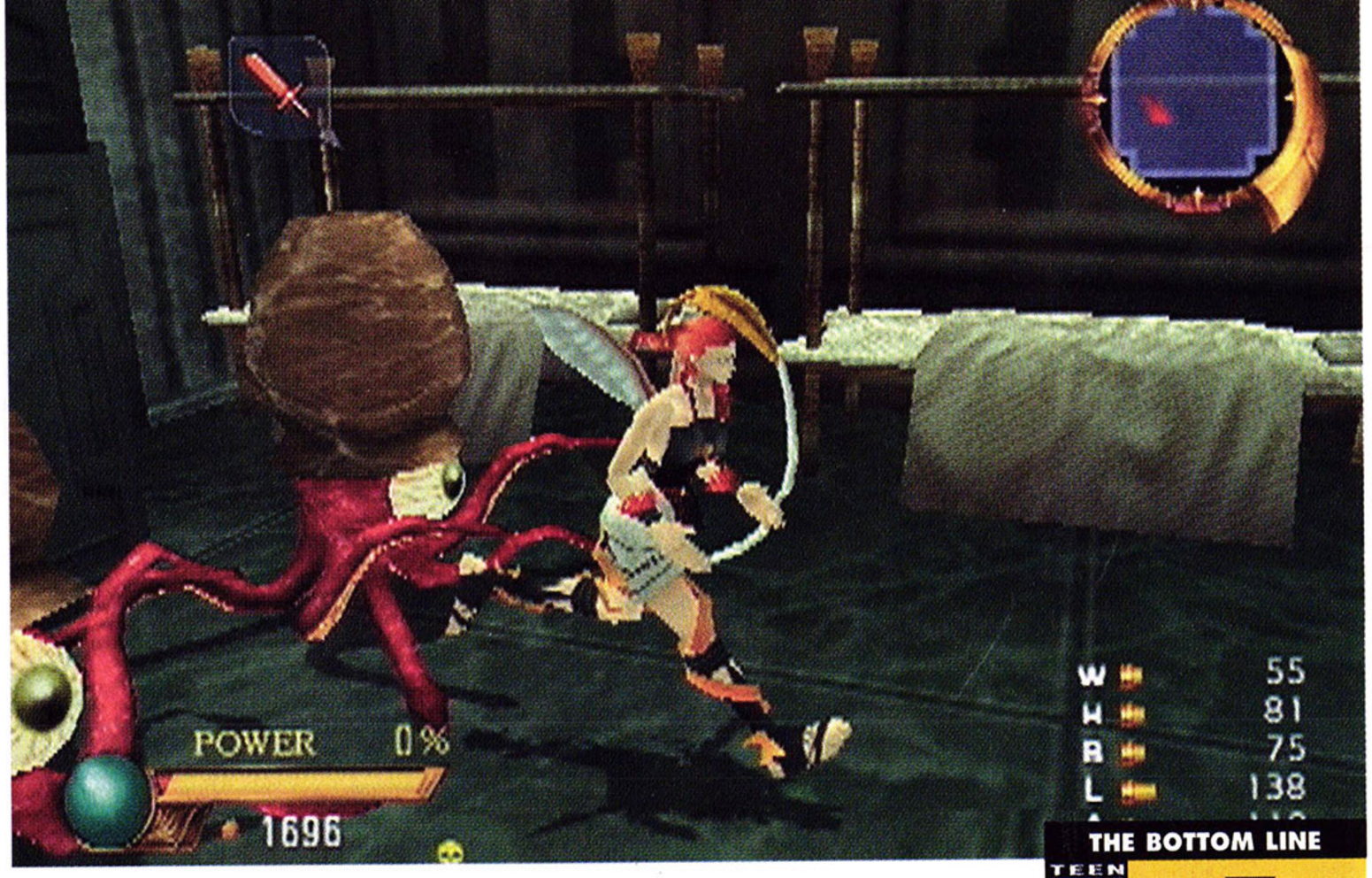
TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB **8**

- **Concept:** A war game where the decisions made before the battle are as important, if not moreso, than those made during
- **Graphics:** The constant cutscenes make what would otherwise be a boring game exciting
- **Sound:** EA has successfully translated a DVD's worth of dramatic voice-overs to English
- **Playability:** For a Koei war game, Kessen has a surprisingly simple interface
- **Entertainment:** The drama gets built up so much, every battle seems monumental
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

SECOND OPINION

It takes a different breed to enjoy a Koei strategy game, but I guess that I am of that breed in some regards. First and foremost, if it were not for this and other feudal war games, my knowledge of Japanese history would be horrible. As a friend told me, Koei games should be incorporated into school curriculums. Anyway, this game offers a fairly simple interface, excellent cutscenes, and plenty of options. I wouldn't say it is as in-depth as many strategy games of the past, but it obviously far surpasses any in looks. Again, this game appeals to a different pedigree of gamers. Just keep that in mind, as Kessen isn't exactly near the top of initial PS2 offerings.

PAUL – 8



PLAYSTATION 2

EVERGRACE

DOES THIS MAKE ME LOOK PHAT?

RPGs available on PlayStation 2's opening day are a strangely mixed bag. The exciting fact that the genre has made such a strong launch showing seems to overshadow the shortcomings of the particular titles. Evergrace practically epitomizes this situation. It looks great, but isn't...yet you don't mind because playing it gets you pumped for where things are going.

If we judged games simply on graphics, Evergrace would be a winner. It's loaded with beautiful environments and slick animation, and the action moves at a good clip. In fact, the many people looking over my shoulder while I played often commented on what a cool game it was. Too bad they were wrong.

Evergrace is an alright game that could have been much, much better. There are tons of good ideas here, but it seems none of them were taken far enough. Perfect example: Being able to switch between the two characters is cool. That neither affects the other's quest in the slightest is not.

If you don't dig sports games, I'm sure Evergrace will get a fair amount of play on your PS2. I'm just afraid the same thing won't be said a year from now. In other words, it won't stand the test of time. – **JAY**

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** AGETEC ■ **DEVELOPER** FROM SOFTWARE
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7

- **Concept:** Being able to switch between two characters on entirely separate quests is interesting
- **Graphics:** Character appearances that change due to equipment worn is a nice touch
- **Sound:** The in-game sounds are adequate while the cutscene voice-overs are in the so-bad-they're-good category
- **Playability:** The interface isn't exactly what you'd call comfortable, and the unmanageable camera doesn't help matters
- **Entertainment:** A guilty pleasure
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low

SECOND OPINION

In every system's launch window there are some titles that come out that at any other time in the system's life span would be considered too horrid to even consider publishing. Evergrace is one of those titles. This action/RPG has solid graphics, but you can tell the gameplay that is built around it was created to be as simple as possible just to make sure the game came out around launch when everyone is hungry for titles. Sure this game has some interesting points, like its use of the analog button to vary your attacks and the interaction between the two characters; but other than that, Evergrace is just an average action game. It's a shame too, as I was excited about this title from all the pre-release screens. But now that I have played it, I don't think it's worth the time.

ANDY – 6

PLAYSTATION 2

STREET FIGHTER EX3

HI RYU KEN *WAVES*

There are a lot of graphical things about 3D Street Fighter that I like, for instance the throws that fling your opponent into the screen or the panning cameras that make those devastating throws look even grander; but there are also a ton of things I hate, like the no-neck characters and slightly cheesy look. Overall, EX3 is just like any other SF game. The one-player game is rather slim, but for a couple of fanatics this game will spend plenty of time in your PS2. For me, however, I'd rather play Tekken Tag or DOA2 at launch, warming up my fingers for when Capcom delivers a more refined SF experience on PS2. – **ANDY**

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

6

- **Concept:** Fighting with new but poorly executed combat ideas
- **Graphics:** Enhanced with awesome particle effects and beautiful backdrops
- **Sound:** Annoying keyboard music and tons of "Hiyahs!!!"
- **Playability:** The classic SF formula with more bodies onscreen
- **Entertainment:** Other than a handful of characters that can be unlocked without breaking a sweat, multiplayer is the only redeeming quality
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

SECOND OPINION

Just reviewing the game, I felt ripped off. Imagine how I'd feel if I actually purchased it. Stick with DOA 2: Hardcore or Tekken Tag.

REINER – 6.5

Up to four characters can be displayed onscreen at the same time without any slowdown

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM
■ **DEVELOPER** ARIKA ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

PLAYSTATION 2

ARMORED CORE 2

WHEN MECHA ROAMED THE EARTH

The arenas are enormous

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB **9**

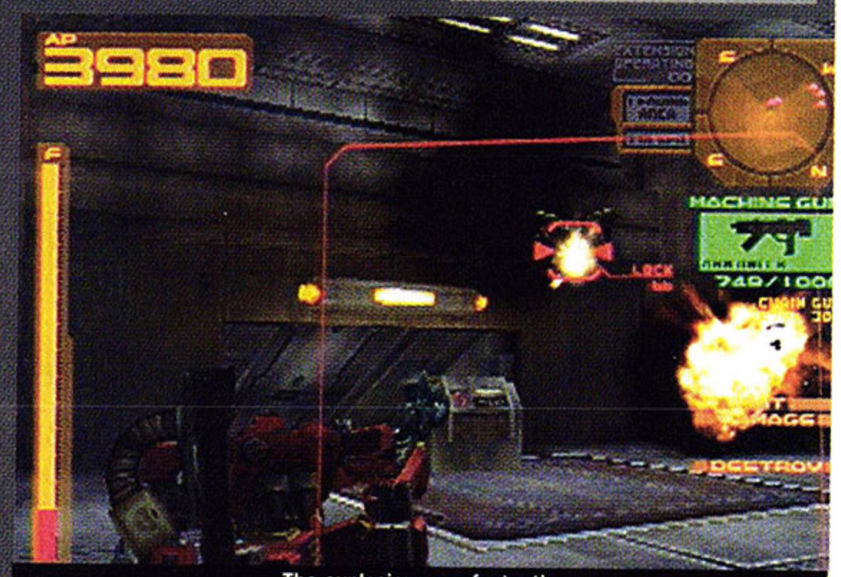
Armored Core 2 is still basically the same deal as its PS-X precursors, but From Software has added a fantastic new look and enough new part types and tweaks to take the game to a new level. For the most part, the old weapons and body parts are all in the game in similar forms. However, a new leg type specifically made for flight has been added, and there are now a host of defensive options. Laser swords can be traded for shields that reduce damage from frontal hits. Other defensive devices include anti-missile rockets, ECM jammers, and weapons that temporarily disable your opponents' targeting systems. There isn't enough space to go on about how cool AC 2 is. If you like mecha, upgrades, and explosions, this is the first game you should buy for your shiny new PS2. – **ERIK**

- **Concept:** The only thing better than a good mecha game is a good mecha game where you get to build your own
- **Graphics:** The explosions, lighting effects, and environments are absolutely incredible
- **Sound:** There are more voice-overs than before, but sound stays solid
- **Playability:** Every button gets used, but control remains comfortable
- **Entertainment:** Fast and furious, with plenty of toys
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

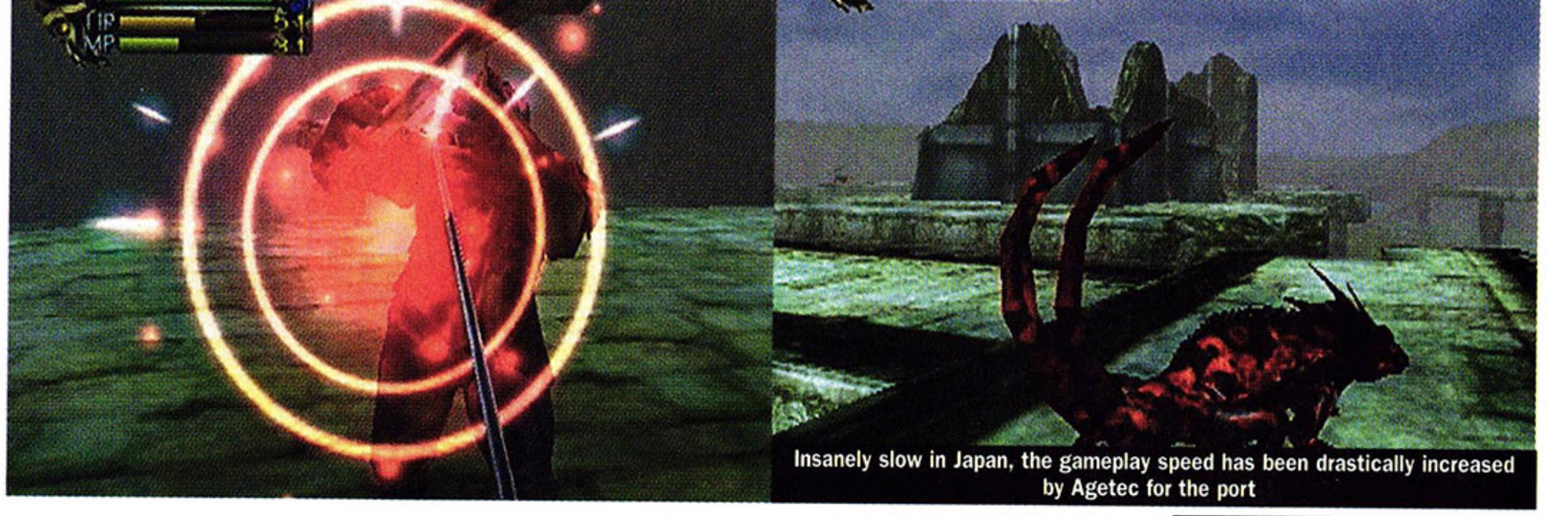
Armored Core 2 delivers furious action while tweaking your brain with an overabundance of customizable options. It's explosive and exciting, and fans of the series will love it!

REINER – 9



The explosions are fantastic

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** AGETEC ■ **DEVELOPER** FROM SOFTWARE ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26TH



Insanely slow in Japan, the gameplay speed has been drastically increased by Agetec for the port

PLAYSTATION 2

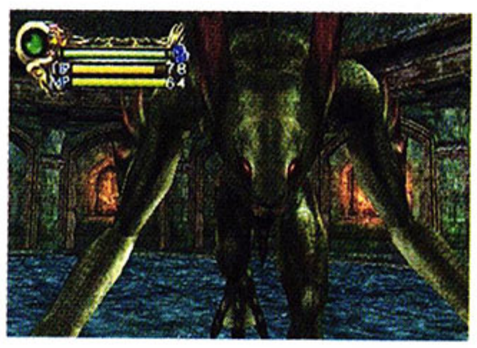
ETERNAL RING

CONSTRUCT THE INFINITY GAUNTLET

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB **7.5**

For one reason or another, almost every first-person RPG is nauseatingly slow. Even after enhancing the user movement to glide at twice the speed of the original Japanese release, Eternal Ring remains as slow as molasses. As much a turn off as this may be, From Software's gameplay design overpowers the relaxed pace and delivers an engrossing experience. The combat and general movement couldn't be more simplistic, and the graphics, while insanely crisp, don't jump off the screen. Yet the ability to combine elements to create new spells distracts you enough to overlook a good majority of the problems this game has. – **REINER**



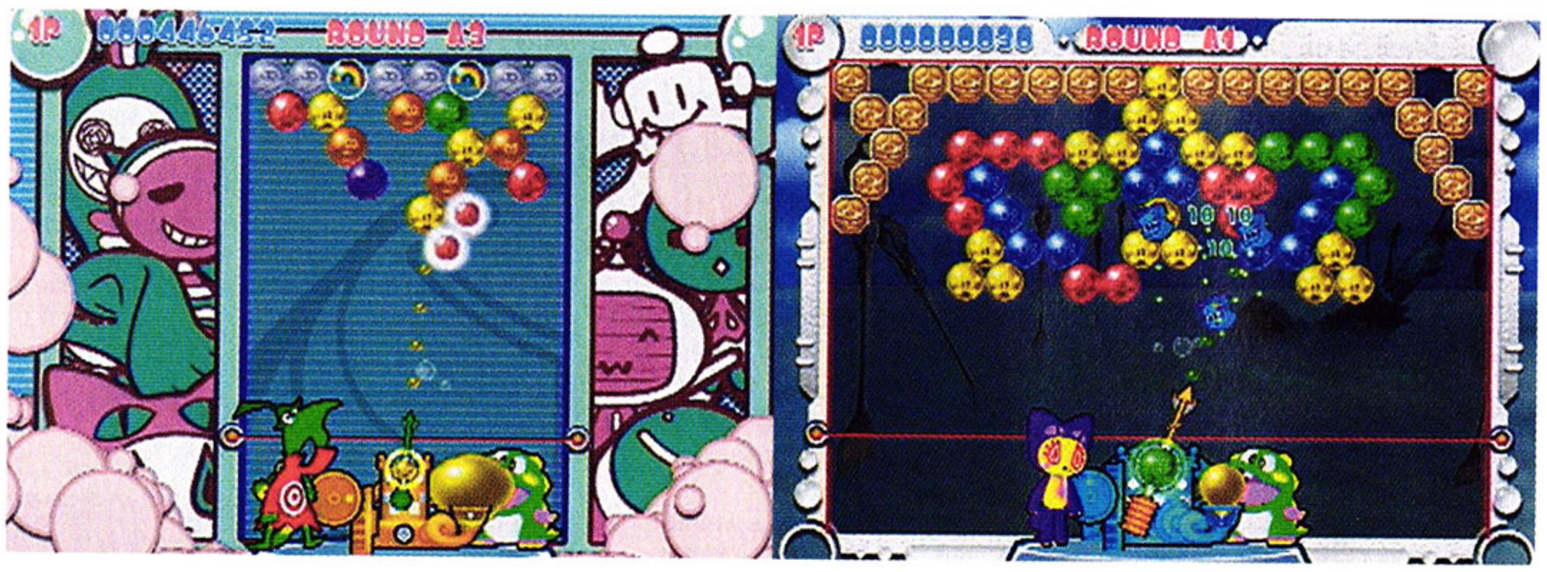
SECOND OPINION

I fell for King's Field back in the early days of PlayStation, and it's the same story all over again with Eternal Ring on PS2. A little slow-moving, but it gets you hooked.

JAY – 7.5

- **Concept:** Little more than a first-person dungeon crawler
- **Graphics:** Environment texturing is awesome and the creatures look great, but the user attacks and spells are pathetic
- **Sound:** The voice-overs are campy and the music is very monotonous
- **Playability:** Other than exploring hallways, the only interesting aspect is forging new rings
- **Entertainment:** Enjoyable for hard-hard-hard-core RPG players
- **Replay Value:** Low

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/RPG ■ **PUBLISHER** AGETEC ■ **DEVELOPER** CSE DIVISION/FROM SOFTWARE ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26



PLAYSTATION 2

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE

THE LEAST NECESSARY PS2 LAUNCH GAME

THE BOTTOM LINE

E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB **7**

Bust-A-Move is off the heezy fo' sheezy! The guitar loop is straight bangin', and Young MC spits some sick verbals on the mic! "C'mon fatso, just bust a move!" Bling Bling! Platinum plus super plush deluxe! What? We're talking about Bust-A-Move the GAME? Oh...right. This one is hard to score. On the one hand, this ageless puzzler remains fun and addictive. On the other, I can't see spending money on Bust-A-Move given the amazing PlayStation 2 titles that are out there. It would be plausible were it a discount title, but $50 is pretty steep for what is essentially an SNES game. Unless Taito intends to reinvent this series, it should let this be the last. It's a new age people, and I say it's time to move on. By no means is Bust-A-Move a bad game, but I felt like I was using a Cray Supercomputer to play solitaire. – **MATT**

SECOND OPINION

Super Bust-A-Move looked like Tetris on acid to me at first glance. Then I started playing it a little bit. Good controls, cool colors, funny sounds. Then I couldn't put the controller down.

KRISTIAN – 7.5

- **Concept:** "Hey Bust-A-Move was good on the PlayStation, so it should be, like, TWICE as good on PlayStation 2!"
- **Graphics:** Bust-A-Move gave our overworked PlayStation 2's graphics processor the opportunity to take a much-needed nap
- **Sound:** Music and bubble sounds
- **Playability:** If it ain't broke, don't fix it
- **Entertainment:** I laughed, I cried, I connected like-colored balls and made them explode
- **Replay Value:** High

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER PUZZLE ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM ■ **DEVELOPER** TAITO ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

You feel more like you're flying a plane than a robot

Zooming in on enemies makes sneak attacks possible

PLAYSTATION 2

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE

MECHA MEDIOCRITY

The old Gun Griffon games inhabited a strange place between mecha and tank sims. They were cool, but not so exciting that you would want to play through a whole game in one sitting. Unfortunately, Blaze follows in the same footsteps. There are plenty of weapons and mecha to unlock by earning points through missions, but there just aren't enough missions to keep the experience of picking up new weapons all that exciting. I was also extremely frustrated with the control configurations. Proper use of the shoulder buttons would have made the game a lot easier to play. I want to like this game more, but it only holds a passing interest at best. Fans of the old Gun Griffons should check it out, but I wouldn't recommend buying it outright. – **ERIK**

SECOND OPINION

The lack of a radar is a major oversight, but Gun Griffon Blaze still delivers some pretty intense combat scenarios. Too bad there aren't more of them.

JAY – 7.5

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7

- **Concept:** The near total lack of plot was annoying, and the new stuff wasn't all that exciting to get
- **Sound:** The sound effects are almost 16-bit era, but the music is cool
- **Graphics:** Movement is remarkably smooth, but like past Gun Griffons, the graphics are pretty basic
- **Playability:** Basic controls are okay, but the more advanced control options could have been a lot more intuitive
- **Entertainment:** For all its problems, Gun Griffon Blaze is still an okay time
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** WORKING DESIGNS ■ **DEVELOPER** GAMEARTS ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

PLAYSTATION 2

SILPHEED

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

Silpheed is an entertaining game. It's got a good challenge level, has plenty of weapons to choose from, and looks so nice you often get hit because you're so busy admiring what's happening in the environments. So why do I only give this game a 6? It's a top-scrolling shooter, for crying out loud! This gameplay formula was perfected on the NES, and all that's happened since is the graphics have gotten better and better. Topping off this rehash-fest is the fact that you're not fighting other ships, but organic space monsters. Hmm, where have I seen that before? Oh yes, everywhere! Is this the type of game you envision snapping up after dropping three bills for the PS2? If so, I question your perception of reality. – **JAY**

SECOND OPINION

I wish I could come up with an argument as to why Silpheed should get a higher score, but for once Jay is right. Silpheed looks great, plays great, but offers nothing new. Definitely a better than average shooter, but that's not enough anymore.

ANDY – 6.5

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

6

- **Concept:** Completely original...20 years ago
- **Sound:** The banter between the pilots is priceless
- **Graphics:** So amazing you'll often find yourself watching things going on around you rather than the action at hand
- **Playability:** Can the ship move? Check. Can the ship fire? Check. Yep, it's all here
- **Entertainment:** This basic formula still works
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** WORKING DESIGNS ■ **DEVELOPER** GAME ARTS ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

PLAYSTATION 2

RIDGE RACER V

IS NAMCO GOING THE DISTANCE?

Namco's flagship racing series kick starts the PlayStation 2 festivities with an impressive graphical assault and a familiar gameplay hook. Developed with the arcade gamer in mind, this high-end sequel is lacking in simulation options and really doesn't offer a wide variety of vehicles. It does however stimulate with a strenuous difficulty that features bullish opponents and harrowing courses. In the big picture, Ridge Racer is merely an ant crushed by GT's boot of brilliance. It's a decent racer, but it needs more. – **REINER**

SECOND OPINION

There's no way I would plunk down the clams for RR V when there's a little game by the name Gran Turismo 2000 on the way. As much as I like racing games, this package should stay on the shelf.

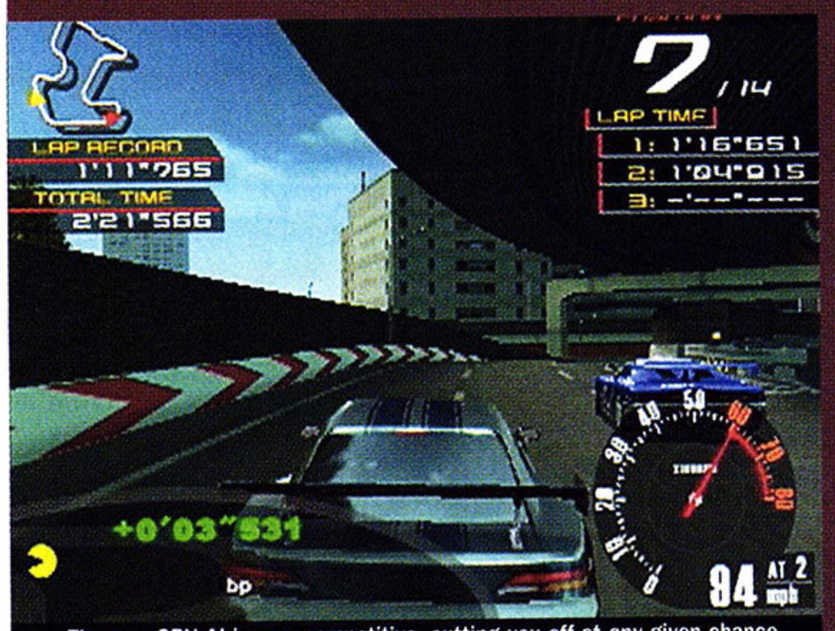
PAUL – 6.75

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7.25

- **Concept:** The same arcade racing with a new coat of paint
- **Graphics:** Most impressive. The car details include dash lights and realistic reflections
- **Sound:** The announcer and the techno beats are very annoying
- **Playability:** Powersliding has been, and always will be, one of the finer moments in gaming
- **Entertainment:** Sony raised the bar on what a racing game should be, and Namco didn't match it
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

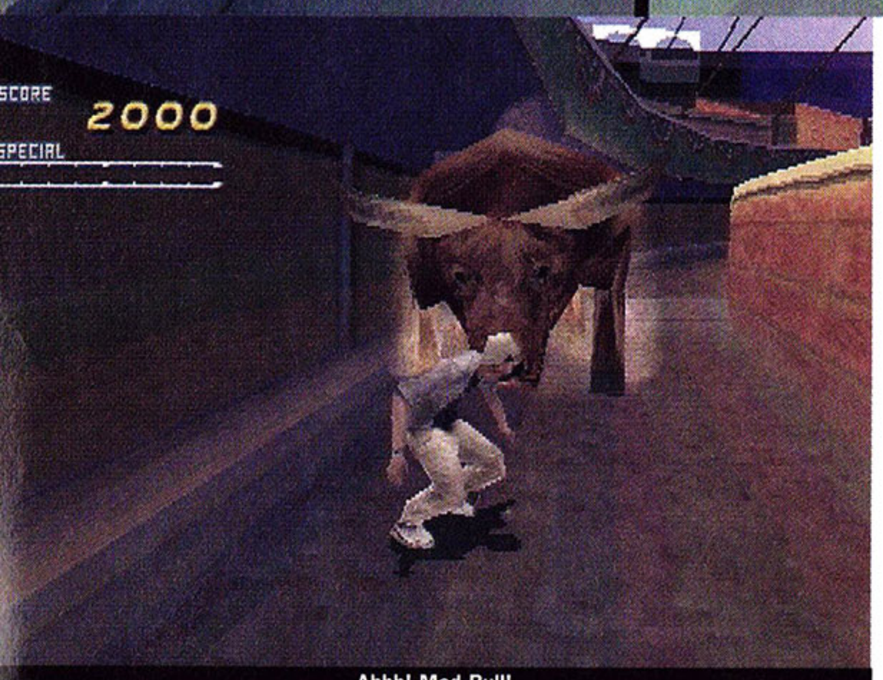


The new CPU AI is very competitive, cutting you off at any given chance

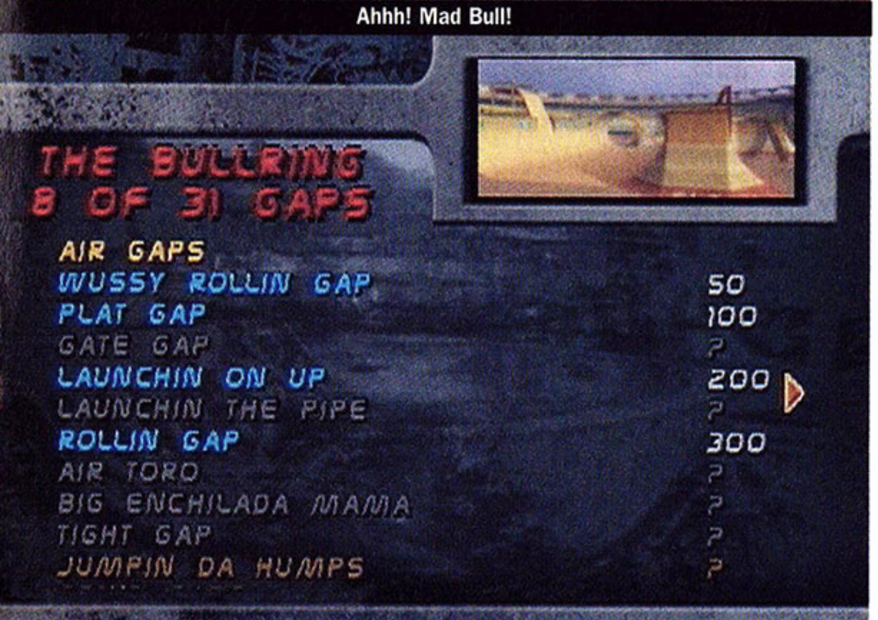
■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** NAMCO ■ **DEVELOPER** NAMCO ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 26

In multiplayer Tag, when you're it your clock counts down. If it hits zero, you lose

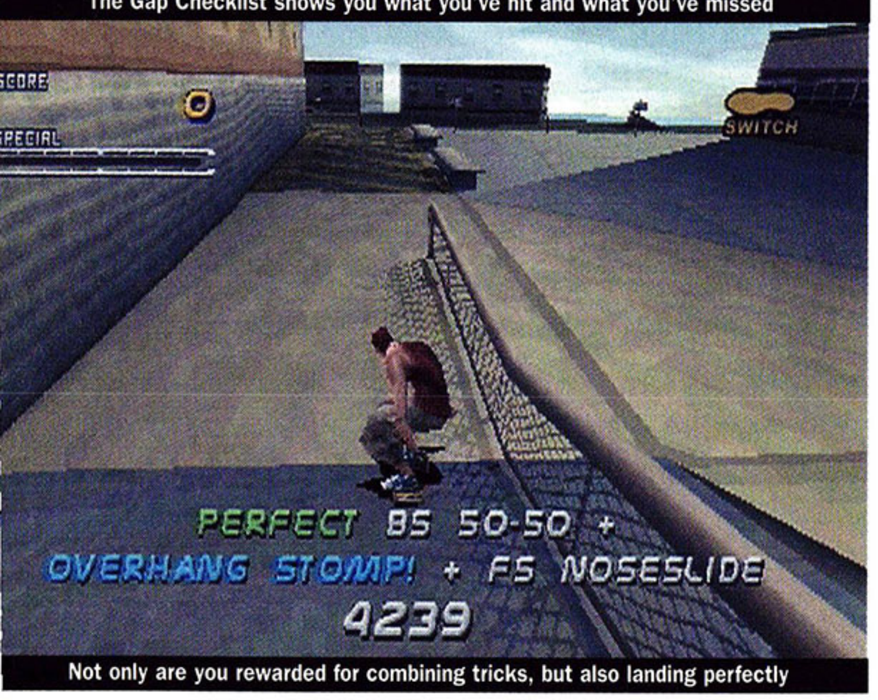
The corkscrew ramp makes an in-game appearance in Pro Skater 2



Ahhh! Mad Bull!



The Gap Checklist shows you what you've hit and what you've missed



Not only are you rewarded for combining tricks, but also landing perfectly

PLAYSTATION

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

HOW TO GET HIGH AND SCORE

When the reviewable copy of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 finally arrived in our office, I immediately started it spinning on my PlayStation, and didn't get at all what I expected. Rather than delivering the standard sequel package of the same game with a few new things stacked on, Neversoft has created a game that's so far above and beyond its predecessor (a near-perfect game in its own right), it defies comprehension. From frontend to closing credits, there is nothing that hasn't been improved in some way.

At first glance, the look and sound of THPS2 may seem to be one of the few things not given an overhaul, but this isn't the case. Though definitely grounded in the original's framework, the environments now bear more textures and objects to interact with. When coupled with the more varied, location-specific background sounds – school bells, yelling cab drivers, and baying seagulls, to name very few – each area is distinctive and immersive.

In addition to increasing the number of pro skaters (now 13) and music tracks (15), the quantity of tricks has been increased to a staggering level. There are so many maneuvers, in fact, that there isn't room for all of them on the controller. Rather than screw with its perfect gameplay formula, Neversoft has instead given players the power to program all their skater's flips, grabs, lip stalls, and specials. If you can never remember how to pull off an Indy Frontflip, changing it to something more mnemonically compatible takes about ten seconds – and if suddenly you decide that one of your chosen skater's tricks aren't worth doing anymore, you can buy new ones.

Every level in Career mode now has ten goals to accomplish rather than five, each of which earns a certain amount of money when completed. Cash is what unlocks new levels, and it is also used to improve your skater to true pro status. In addition to buying new maneuvers, collected green can be spent on your character's ten statistics and new decks, both of which will improve overall scoring performance.

If the new features of THPS2 ended here, this game would still have scored very well. Neversoft has gone beyond the call of developer duty, however, by giving THPS2 infinite replay capacity with its Create Skater and Park Editor option.

Create Skater lets players make everything from a skinny kid just getting his start, to a fat poser trying to look cool. The appearance options are quite plentiful, and just fooling around I was able to make some reasonable facsimiles of people in the office. Being able to put yourself in the game will definitely make the two-player battles more heated.

The Park Editor is simply ingenious. Players pick from four general themes, then fill the space with their choice of around 150 different rails, ramps, risers, and other classic skatepark standbys. Even hidden scoring gaps can be put anywhere and named whatever you like. If you miss the Warehouse from the first Pro Skater, feel free to recreate it here.

Very few perfect scores have ever been given out by Game Informer, and I've never scored anything a 10, but games just don't come better than this. Tony Hawk Pro Skater 2 is the most addictive, playable, and versatile game the PlayStation, or any other console for that matter, has to offer. Neversoft, I tip my hat to your respect and knowledge of skateboarding and of the video game-buying public that very evidently comes through in playing this game. – **JAY**

Every skater has two outfits

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS/ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION ■ **DEVELOPER** NEVERSOFT ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 20

GAME OF THE MONTH

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

You can grind to some pretty perilous places in Philly

"...games just don't come better than this"

THE SKATERS

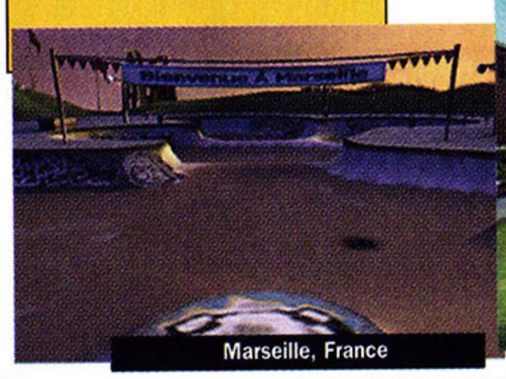
Tony Hawk
Bob Burnquist
Steve Caballero
Kareem Campbell
Rune Glifberg
Eric Koston
Bucky Lasek
Rodney Mullen
Chad Muska
Andrew Reynolds
Geoff Rowley
Elissa Steamer
Jamie Thomas

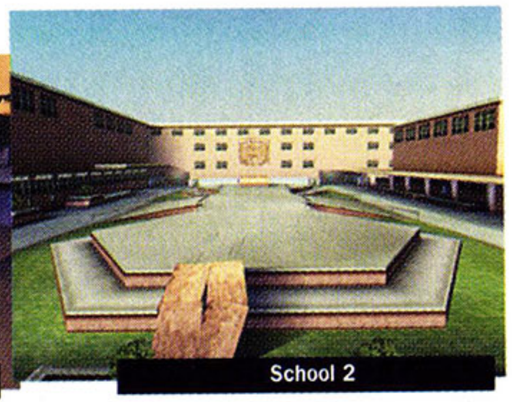
THE PLACES

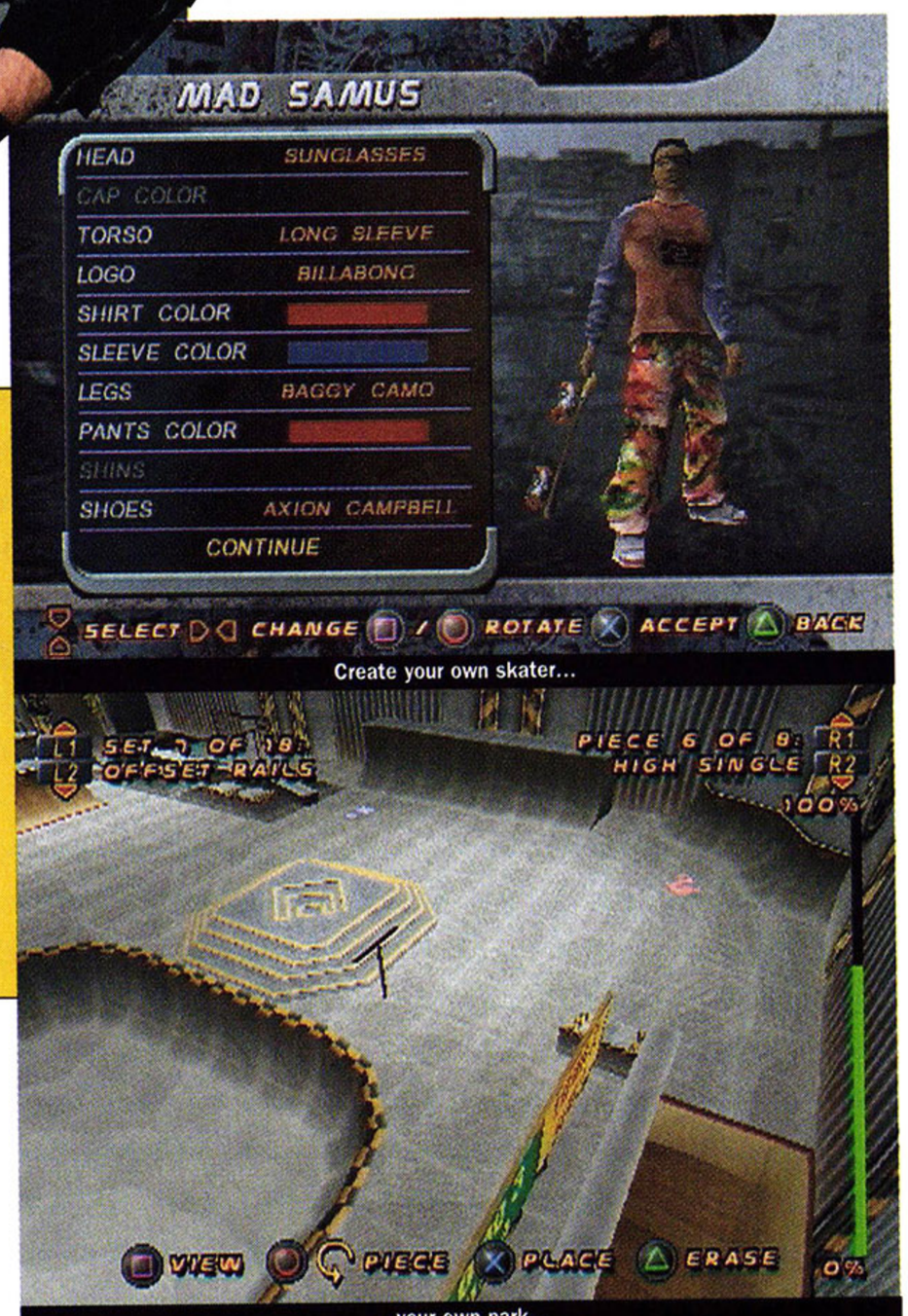
The Hanger
School 2
Marseille, France
New York City
Venice Beach, California
Ventura, California
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
The Bullring, Mexico

THE MUSIC

Rage Against the Machine – Guerilla Radio
Bad Religion – You
Anthrax/Chuck D – Bring the Noise
Powerman 5000 – When Worlds Collide
Naughty by Nature – Pin the Tail on the Donkey
Papa Roach – Blood Brothers
The High & Mighty – B-Boy Document
Consumed – Heavy Metal Winner
Dub Pistols – Cyclone
Swingin' Utters – Five Lessons Learned
Styles of Beyond – Subculture
Millencolin – No Cigar
Alley Life Featuring Black Planet – Out With the Old
Lagwagon – May 16
Fu Manchu – Evil Eye

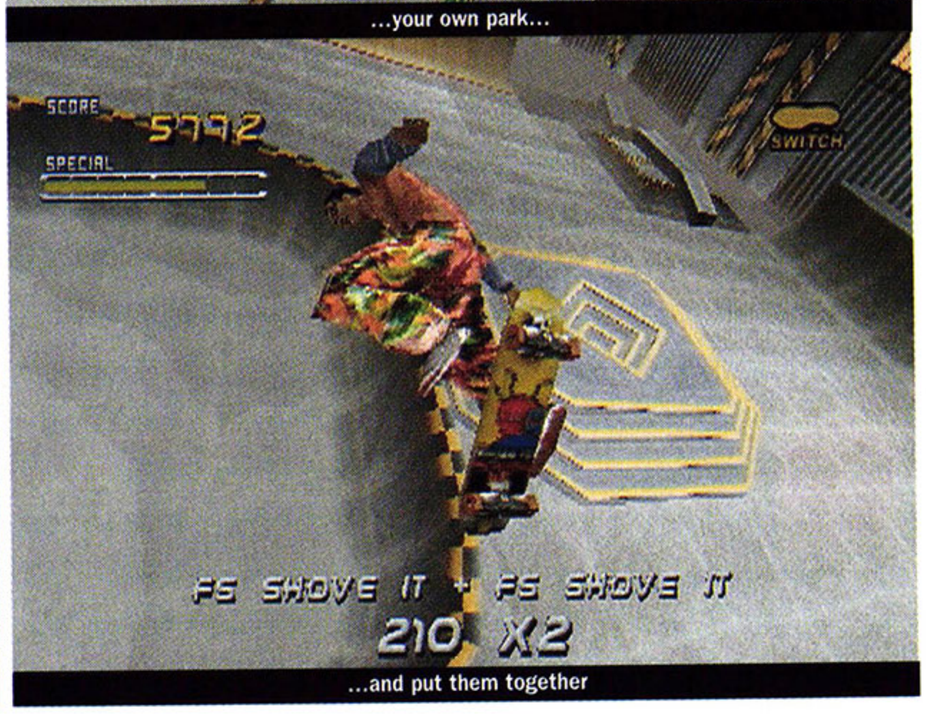

Marseille, France


School 2



Create your own skater...

...your own park...



...and put them together

There are now more goals per level. One of them in Venice Beach is to Ollie five sleeping bums

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN — ESRB

10

- **Concept:** All the brilliance of the first with more goals and player options added
- **Graphics:** The expanded environments are littered with graffiti and other skating nuances
- **Sound:** A bigger soundtrack and many more environmental background noises
- **Playability:** The fluid controls haven't lost a step, and now moves can be programmed
- **Entertainment:** More goals, more multiplayer games, more fun
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

With the first Tony Hawk release, Neversoft blew my socks off and pumped my veins with adrenaline-filled gaming ecstasy. Now, picture if you will the same experience, only 100 times grander. Tony Hawk 2 is, without a doubt, the most impressive PlayStation release of the year, and one of the best sequels ever created. The addiction is inescapable! All the new features, like the Park Editor and Create-A-Skater, offer infinite replayability set within the same dynamic gameplay atmosphere you love so dearly. Honestly, I could play this game for a lifetime and still enjoy every second of it. I would have joined The Gonzo Gamer in rewarding this game with a phat 10, but background pop-up is still an issue, and choppy framerates alter the multiplayer experience. Other than that, this sequel is perfect.

REINER – 9.75

Race with what's
under the hood.

Win with what's
strapped on top.

Hybrid Extreme RACING™

Customize your wheels
for maximum firepower.

Transform through portals
to battle by land,
sea and air.

Blast your way through
with all the hard-core
weapons you find.

PlayStation

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

MATTEL INTERACTIVE™

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Take it to the Extreme! Modify then race one of eight customizable cars through some of the toughest tracks! Transform your vehicle to handle the terrain. But to win, you need fire power. Pick up machine guns and missile launchers to knock your opponents out! Because in this game, the best way to win is to make sure the other guys don't finish at all! Available late November.

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

8.75

- **Concept:** A purple dragon to the rescue
- **Graphics:** Colorful like a bowl of Lucky Charms
- **Sound:** Stewart Copeland rocks the house, while the voice-actors stink it up
- **Playability:** The same play from the last two games, with variance delivered through minigames and new playable characters
- **Entertainment:** Secrets abound and the challenge is targeted at every grade of gamer
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

PLAYSTATION

SPYRO: YEAR OF THE DRAGON

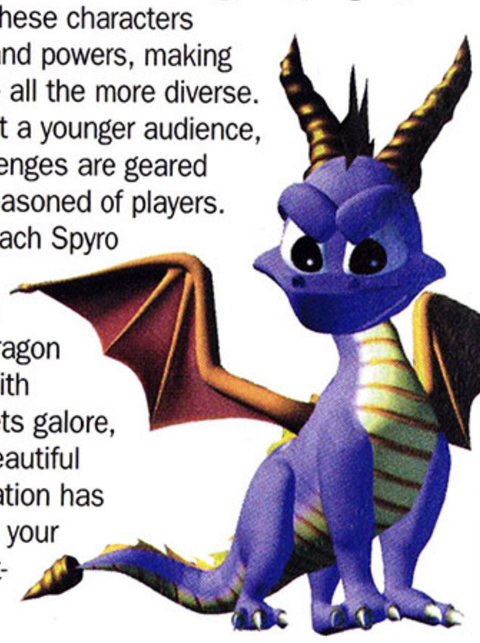
PLATFORMING NIRVANA

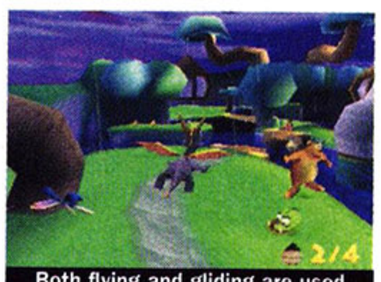
"The story is targeted at a younger audience, but the platforming challenges are geared toward even the most seasoned of players."

Before I explain why Spyro: Year of the Dragon is one of the most refreshing releases of 2000, I have several points I'd like to address. For three consecutive games now, the dragon clan has dropped an incredible amount of weight on little Spyro's shoulders, and more of less forced him to do all the dirty work. His elders are bigger, stronger, and more skilled than he is. They should be the ones saving the day! I don't know the logistics of the dragon world, but this sounds like child abuse to me. Secondly, if Spyro has been collecting all of the treasure in the land, he should be livin' like Richie Rich. Gold teeth, gold chains, the works! Where is all of his cash going? Oh wait...I know! The elders took it! If there is a Spyro 4, it better be about payback, retribution, and the downfall of the elder dragons. Spyro deserves his independence!

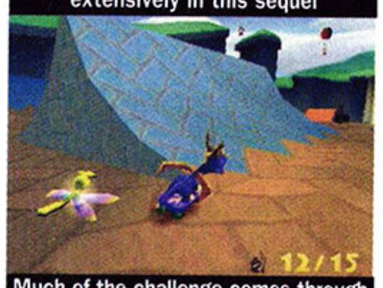
Now then, if you've entertained yourself with this series before, you'll have no problem jumping into Year of the Dragon. The gameplay is essentially identical to the last two offerings. It's all about spitting fire, jumping, gliding, hunting for treasure, and running at ramming speeds. The graphical direction is also identical, dishing out vibrant colors and incredible animation. To offset the familiarity, Insomniac has added to the award-winning mix, and instead of just controlling young Spyro, you'll have the chance to jump into the skin of several other creatures as well. For specific stages, Spyro takes the backseat to a kangaroo, penguin, monkey, and yeti. All of these characters feature unique abilities and powers, making the gameplay experience all the more diverse.

The story is targeted at a younger audience, but the platforming challenges are geared toward even the most seasoned of players. I've thoroughly enjoyed each Spyro release, and this is another great addition to the series. Year of the Dragon is a difficult platformer with complex gameplay, secrets galore, and some of the most beautiful environments the PlayStation has produced. If this genre is your cup of tea, this is a must-have release. – **REINER**





Both flying and gliding are used extensively in this sequel



Much of the challenge comes through minigames, like skateboarding

Innovative as ever, the bosses are tricky indeed

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/PLATFORM ■ **PUBLISHER** SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT AMERICA ■ **DEVELOPER** INSOMNIAC GAMES/UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 24

Spyro's journey takes an unexpected turn as he is forced to free several critters from captivity. These new friends, which range from a kangaroo to a yeti, become playable characters for several portions of the game.

SECOND OPINION

Spyro 3 is definitely a well produced game. Like the two before it, this game features very nice graphics and a gameplay engine that delivers a very nicely constructed adventure that's perfect for gamers young and old. Well gee...that's nice. (Are you sensing my overuse of the word nice yet?) I just don't know if I can take it anymore. Sure, Spyro 3 features all this new fun stuff, and all-new characters that I can play with, but the happy-go-lucky voice-overs have driven me to the point where I just can't stand Spyro's nice little world anymore. Someone please give me a gun, and/or some kind of evil version of Spyro, and let me blast this nice little happy place a new hole. Maybe this is just evil Andy talking. Maybe heading down to Disneyland and listening to It's a Small World 600 times would make me feel better, but I doubt it. Spyro: Year of the Dragon is a great game with lots to do and discover, but unless you're 12, I can't recommend it.

ANDY – 7

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7.5

- **Concept:** Classic side-scrolling action still proves to be enjoyable
- **Graphics:** With grainy textures and poly-lite character models, you'd think this was a first-gen title
- **Sound:** An RPG-esque score delivers soothing melodies, but the glam rock guitar intro is entirely unnecessary
- **Playability:** Rock solid, but a tad too simplistic and monotonous
- **Entertainment:** Obscure and addictive
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

"Dinosaurs who wine and dine on classic games may want to take a look. It has that old game smell to it."

PLAYSTATION

DRAGON VALOR

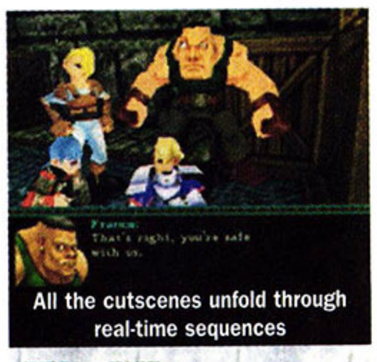
FLASHBACK TO THE CLASSIC SOVEREIGNTY

Taking a trip down memory lane, Namco's latest PlayStation release is loosely based on the 8-bit arcade game, Dragonbuster. The graphical prowess of this obscure action game appears to be a few generations behind the quality we've become accustomed to. Many of the environments are barren wastelands consisting of little more than blocky terrain and repetitive surface texturing. Stumbling upon a rock or a box is as rare as finding a lake in the Tunisian desert. With this simple design in mind, I thought for sure Namco cut back on the environments to incorporate highly detailed characters loaded with more polys than you could shake a stick at. How wrong I was. The character modeling is just as drab as the backdrops. During gameplay, the distant camera perspective toned down the ugliness a tad. On the other hand, when viewed closely in the real-time cutscenes, the characters look absolutely pathetic. Their face textures really couldn't be much worse, and the animation during these story breaks is more or less limited to an occasional head nod or simple wave.

Needless to say, the graphics will surely turn a good portion of gamers away. However, if you don't mind games lacking artistic flair, you may want to give Dragon Valor a whirl. Its gameplay is surprisingly addictive, and the way the quest breaks down will surely hold interest. Instead of commanding just one character, you actually assume control of an entire family's lifeline. When one family member's adventure comes to a close, a brief story break commences, and the game continues through the eyes of either the son or daughter. This descendant can change, depending on who you choose to marry.

As far as depth goes, Dragon Valor's gameplay is way too simplistic and limiting. You basically have one combo and a few spells. That's it. Yet replayability comes through the option to conceive different offspring. Lengthy as it is, spanning across two discs, Dragon Valor's replay value is off the chart. If you don't mind repetitive hack n'slash action, the quest to unlock new characters proves to be strangely addictive.

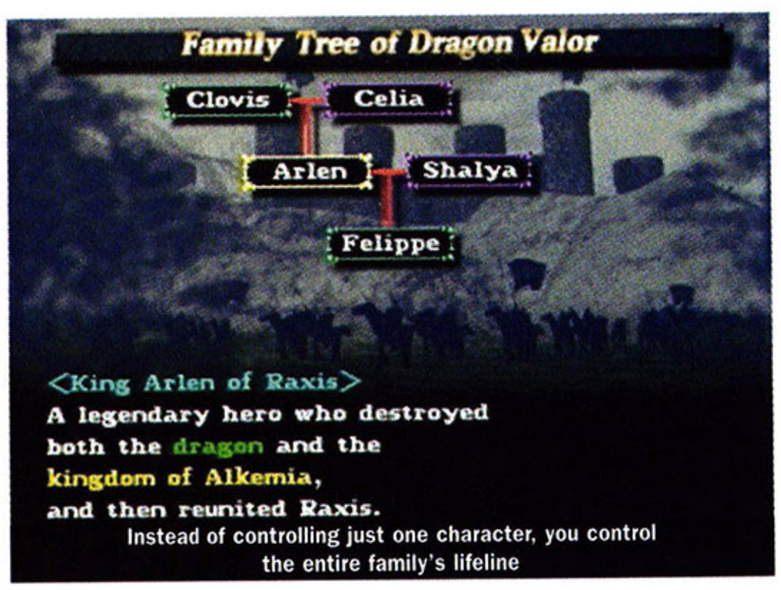
Even though it is worthy of playing, this is by no means a game I can justify as a must-have. Nonetheless, if you find yourself in-between games or have a few days of free time on your hands, this game is a great filler. Dinosaurs who wine and dine on classic games may want to take a look. It has that old game smell to it. – **REINER**


All the cutscenes unfold through real-time sequences

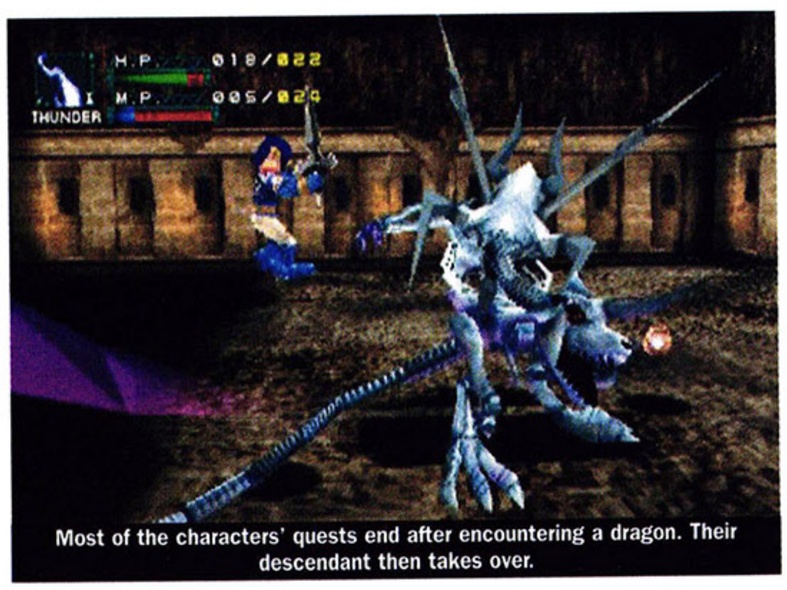
Along with side-scrolling perils...

...Dragon Valor delivers 3D hack n'slash

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** NAMCO ■ **DEVELOPER** NAMCO ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 17



Instead of controlling just one character, you control the entire family's lifeline

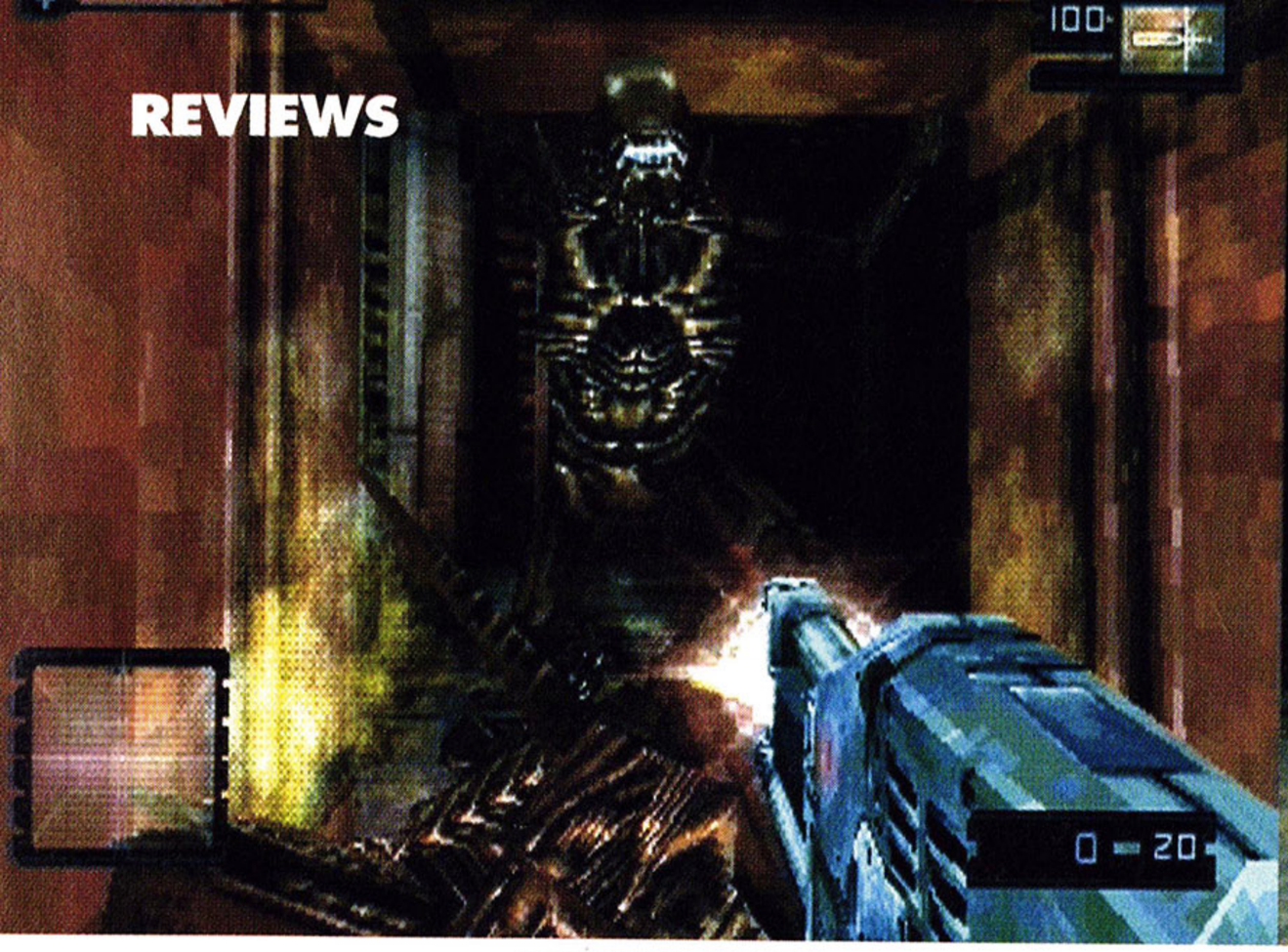


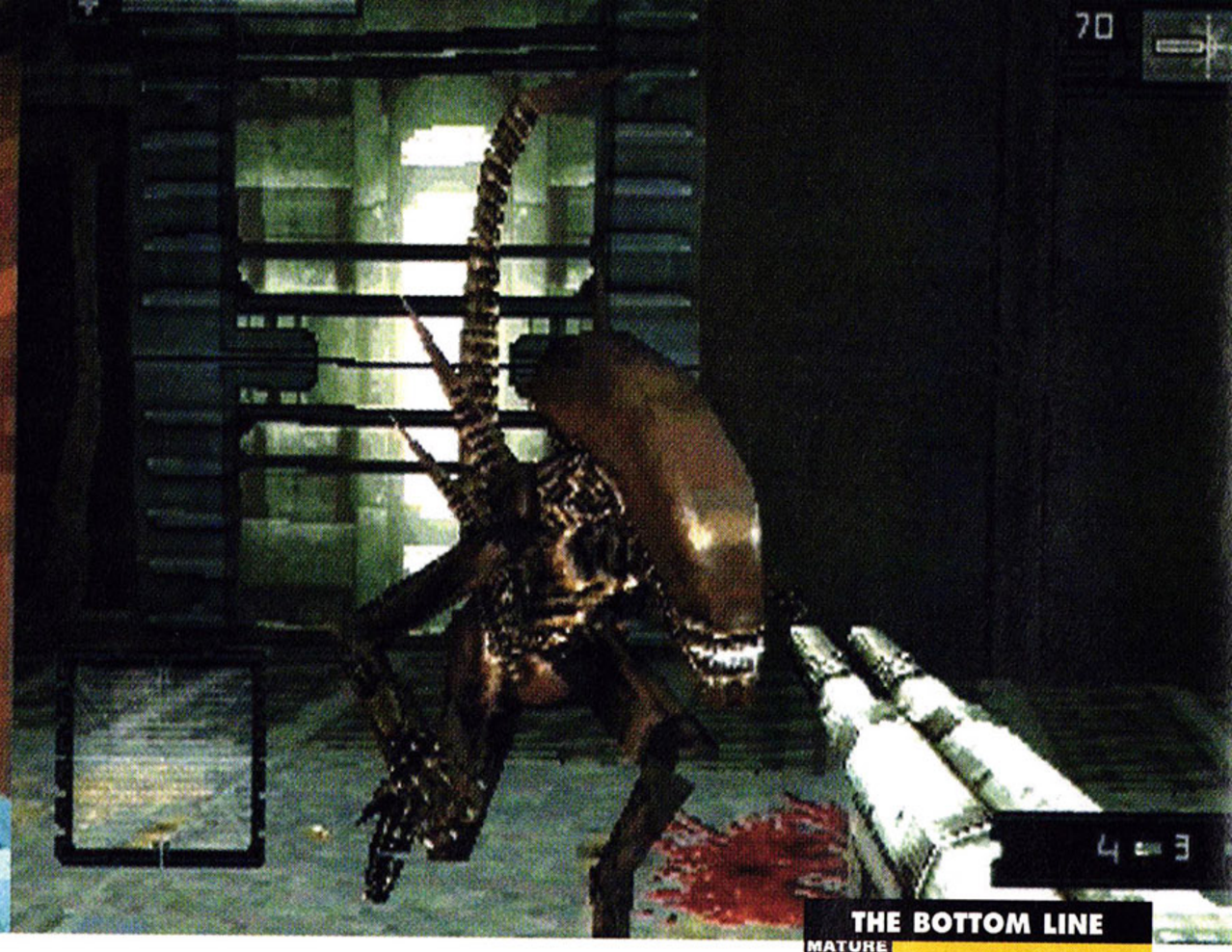
Most of the characters' quests end after encountering a dragon. Their descendant then takes over.

SECOND OPINION

There's something about Dragon Valor that is very addicting despite the heavy counts against it. The graphics are poor, the sound effects are repetitive, the combat is very basic, and most of the magic you find isn't worth using. The lineage aspect of the game is what initially drives you to continue, but it only takes a couple branchings of the family tree to realize that all characters are basically the same. After this epiphany occurs, you know there isn't really any point to playing any further, yet you want to. This is one of those games that every gamer worth their salt comes across in time. The kind that you want to finish, but don't really consider an accomplishment. I can see some liking it and some being dissatisfied with it, but none who love or hate it. A true middle of the road game if there ever was one.

JAY – 7.5





"Sharing the same fate as the film, the video game version of Alien Resurrection piques your interest, but ultimately disappoints."

PLAYSTATION

ALIEN RESURRECTION

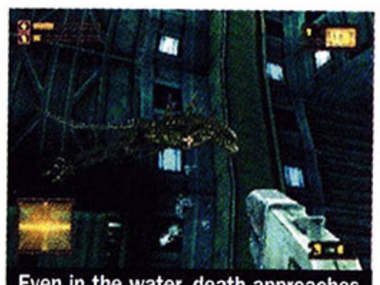
HORRIFIC IN EVERY CONCEIVABLE WAY

I always find myself in a state of bewilderment when I study the thought processes pulsating from the motion picture business. I'd even go so far as to say I suffer from a migraine when I think about the Alien movies. Just when it appeared that the Alien legacy would turn a corner to a bright new future, some moron had to yank Ripley out of the afterlife and insert her into the new film. She was dead! The trilogy was over! Will George Lucas reanimate Darth Maul? Never! Every issue was resolved! It had a fitting conclusion! Yet Fox opted to beat the dead horse...literally!

Three years later, and with the ridiculous plot locked firmly in place, Fox Interactive has finally finished the video game adaptation of the catastrophic film. Offering a first-person shooter – a style that has worked well for the Alien license thus far – developer Argonaut has spent three years on this project, hoping to deliver a frightening gaming experience. Instead of using movie clips, Argonaut created exclusive CG footage for the game. The introductory FMV summarizes the plot and tantalizes the eye with breathtaking sequences of Aliens on the hunt. A good start indeed...

When I finally gained control of Ripley, I noticed I was unarmed and trapped in a very dangerous place. Ever so slowly I crept past Alien hordes and hostile human troops, eventually stumbling upon a weapon. After firing my first shot past a soldier's head and into the distance, I noticed it wasn't fear that made me miss so horribly, it was the game not responding as I would have liked it to. The control scheme is nearly impossible to manage. If you're not struggling with the analog support, then the digital targeting gnaws at your sanity. Either way, the game is very frustrating.

The setting of the game is magnificent. The Alien animations are brilliant and their behaviors are eerily realistic. Familiar sound effects and an arsenal of powerful weapons from the movie make the premise all the more invigorating. Unfortunately, as much as I salivated, I found myself biting my lip more. Every thrill in this game is dampened by the unconventional control scheme. I tried to immerse myself into this suspenseful sci-fi world, but I couldn't, mainly because the character wouldn't respond to my actions. Sharing the same fate as the film, the video game version of Alien Resurrection piques your interest, but ultimately disappoints. – **REINER**


Even in the water, death approaches

At least the ship is equipped with heavy artillery

Mom?!

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** FOX INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** ARGONAUT GAMES ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 15

With the game's horrendous targeting and controls, combating smaller enemies proves to be extremely frustrating

Often appearing out of nowhere, each Alien encounter sends a shiver down your spine

THE BOTTOM LINE

MATURE M — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

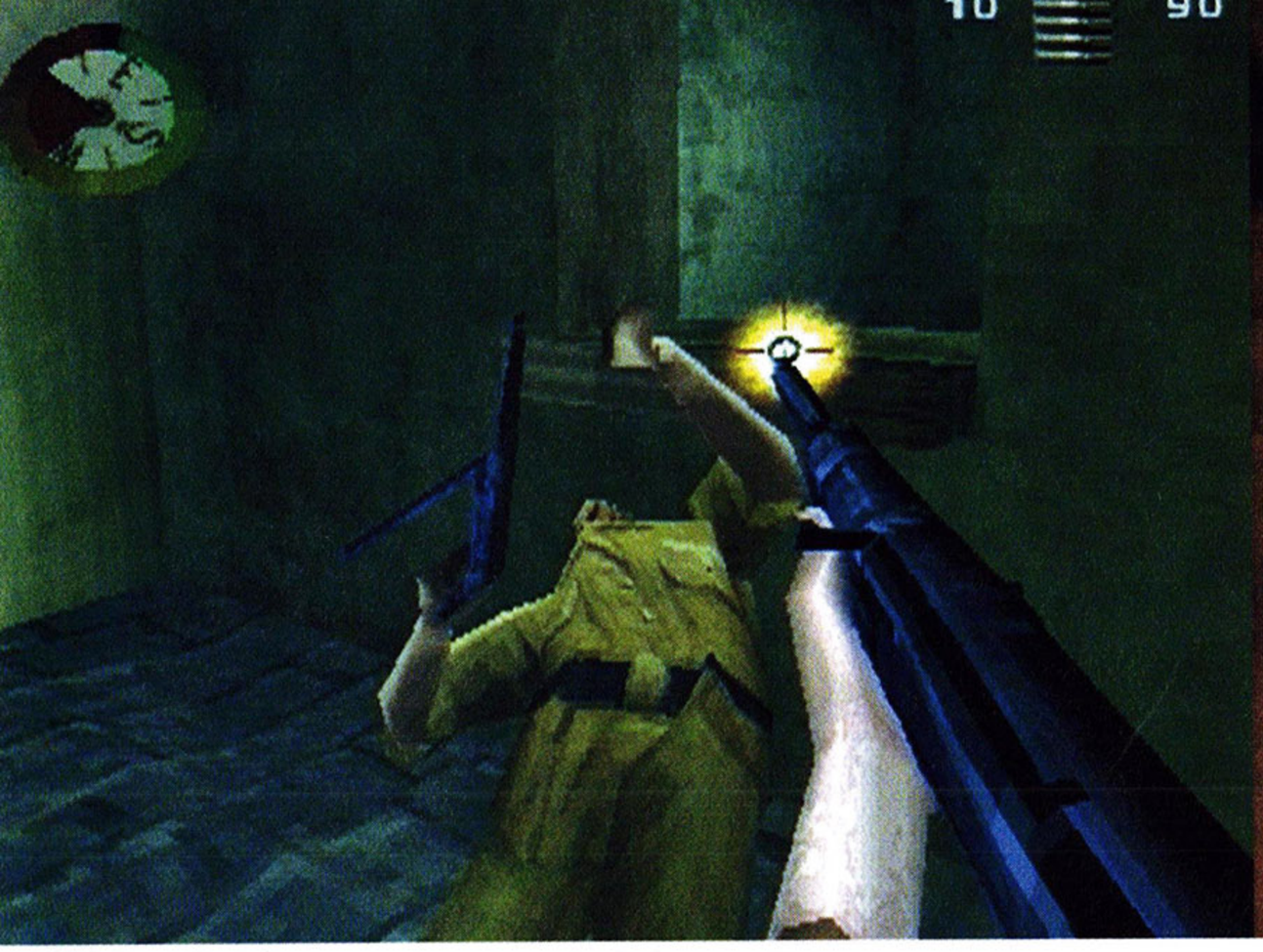
6

- **Concept:** Scary, very scary
- **Graphics:** Swift Alien actions and dark environments create the perfect first-person environment
- **Sound:** Disturbing ambient sounds and high-pitched Alien screams create a chilling atmosphere
- **Playability:** The control scheme is a mess and manual targeting is a nightmare
- **Entertainment:** Other than occasional moments of Alien-killing Zen, defective gameplay destroys the experience
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low

SECOND OPINION

The grim world of the Alien films is the stuff great video games are made of. It has everything a developer could want – relentless tension, shadowy corridors, unnaturally quick Aliens, and a goddess named Ripley for a heroine. On the PC, the Alien Vs. Predator series was a masterfully dramatic experience. So what went wrong here? Graphically, AR is a sad tale of drab, grainy textures and an excruciatingly slow pace. In fact, the framerate is so slow that Ripley cannot run. Got it? YOU CAN ONLY WALK. Even if there are swarms of guards and Aliens attacking you. It's not a brisk walk, either, just a nice leisurely stroll. The control is equally poor. After the opening credits, a message on the screen reads, "This game is best played in the dark." Indeed it is, preferably with your PlayStation and television turned off.

MATT – 5.5



"The sound team deserves heavy praise for making Medal of Honor: Underground twice the experience it would otherwise be."

PLAYSTATION

MEDAL OF HONOR: UNDERGROUND

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS

Last year, Medal of Honor was the surprise hit of the season. DreamWorks' historically accurate WWII missions and settings combined with detailed, ambient sound culminated in an intense, and sometimes nerve-wracking, first-person shooter. This year's sequel, Medal of Honor: Underground, although anticipated, is no less exciting.

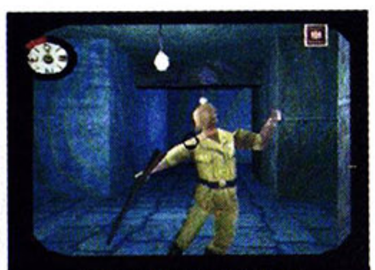
Players take the role of Manon, a French resistance member who will eventually tour through all of Europe and North Africa in her quest to free her homeland. With these new territories come different soldier types to encounter, new weapons to be found, and unique mechanized forces to face off with – including half-tracks and motorcycles with sidecars.

The original Medal of Honor involved an American GI infiltrating enemy territory, killing any and all Nazis that got in his way. With Underground, the developers created more missions with objectives involving infiltration rather than obliteration – which is a great improvement in my opinion. You'll get in a fair share of firefights, but for the most part stealth tactics, going incognito, and pondering whether someone should be shot at or snuck past come up much more often than before.

The sound team deserves heavy praise for making Medal of Honor: Underground twice the experience it would otherwise be. Incredibly, the sound effects have been improved in the sequel. Using audio alone I was able to tell how far away troops were by their panicked yelling, and where a rooftop rifleman was firing from by the volume of his gun.

This game is not without its shortcomings, however. New weapons have been added, but new enemy reactions to these have not been. As in the original, troops will freak out when you throw a grenade, yet they have no fear of being burned alive by a petrol bomb, and will bravely continue shooting you when faced with a panzerfaust (bazooka) point blank. The goals are more varied, but levels still consist mostly of a single path that's followed to all the objectives. And the two-player isn't exactly anything to write home about.

All in all, though, Medal of Honor: Underground is a worthy sequel – a game that compels you to finish it. This series is slowly but surely redefining the first-person shooter, and it's hard to believe it's exclusively on PlayStation. Check it out to see why, as I lamely stated in the review I did for its predecessor, history lessons can be fun after all. – **JAY**

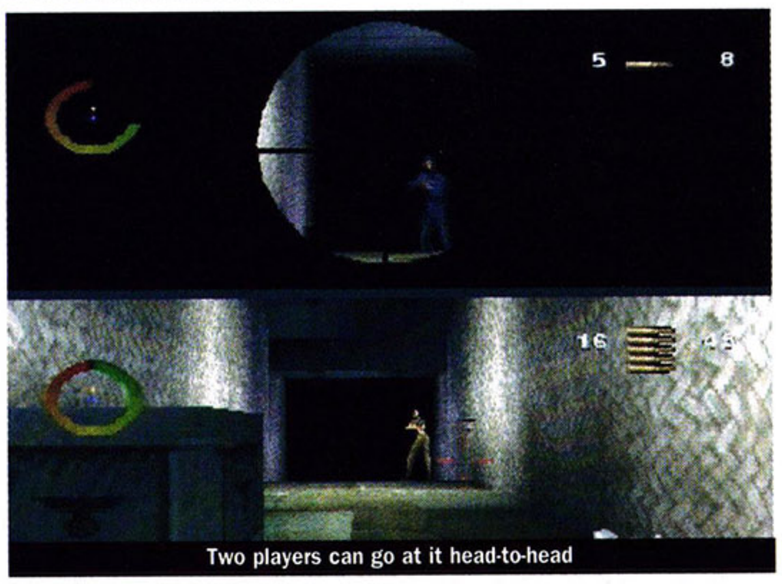


This soldier poses for a disguised Manon

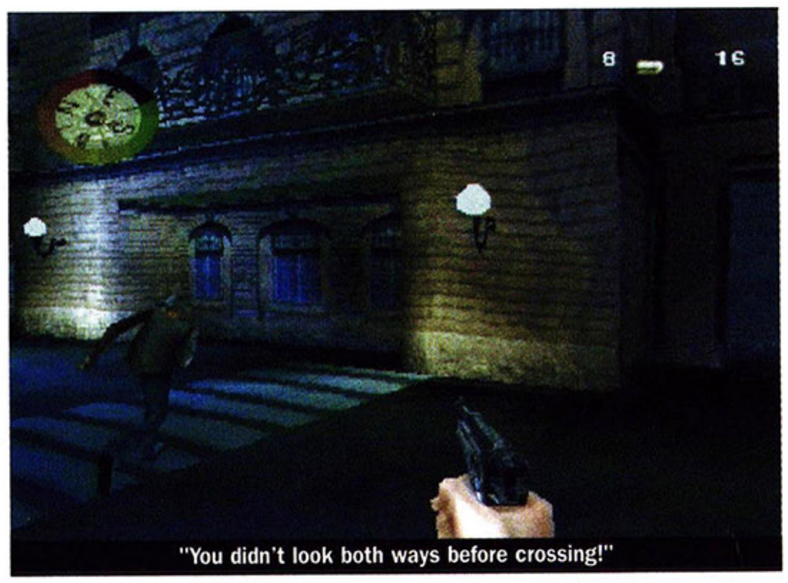
Even the panzerfaust has trouble stopping tanks

"Buddy, you're about to have one crappy day."

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** DREAMWORKS INTERACTIVE
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 17



Two players can go at it head-to-head



"You didn't look both ways before crossing!"

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

9

- **Concept:** Same as the first, but with many new missions and unique objectives
- **Graphics:** Sharp and detailed, although backgrounds are often hidden due to missions usually taking place at night or in dimly lit areas
- **Sound:** When you can accurately gauge how far away an Axis soldier is by his gun's report, you know it's good
- **Playability:** Tight and fluid, but an auto-center command would be appreciated
- **Entertainment:** So much fun you almost end up liking the French
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

SECOND OPINION

I can't believe how far this game has come since its preview last month. It was great then, and incredible now. Once again, EA has done wonders with the ambient sound and event triggered music to lend a strong cinematic quality without sacrificing gameplay. The manual aim is one of the smoothest I've seen on the PlayStation, making head shots a breeze. The guns are incredibly cool. Just about every weapon in the game has some advantage over the others. For instance, pistols are great for head shots, while machine guns are less accurate, but much more effective at mowing down multiple enemies at close range. You will rarely find yourself putting a gun away and then not using it for the rest of a mission. I did find myself occasionally getting snagged on something invisible in the environments, but for the most part, gameplay is very smooth. Get this game.

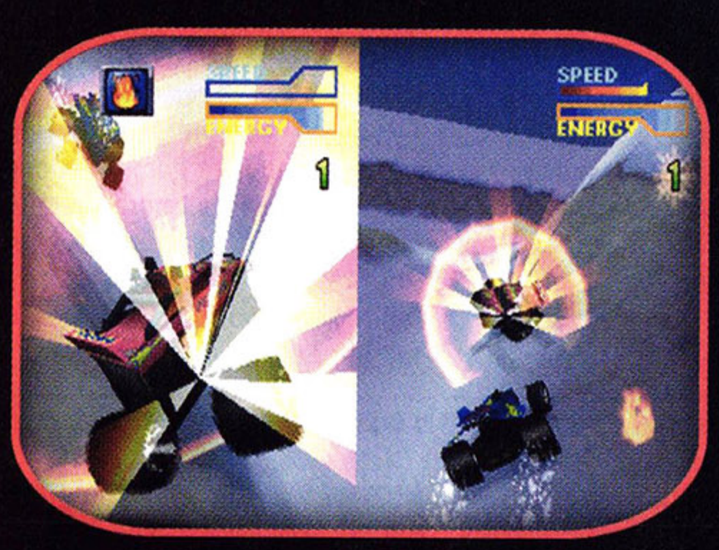
ERIK– 9.25

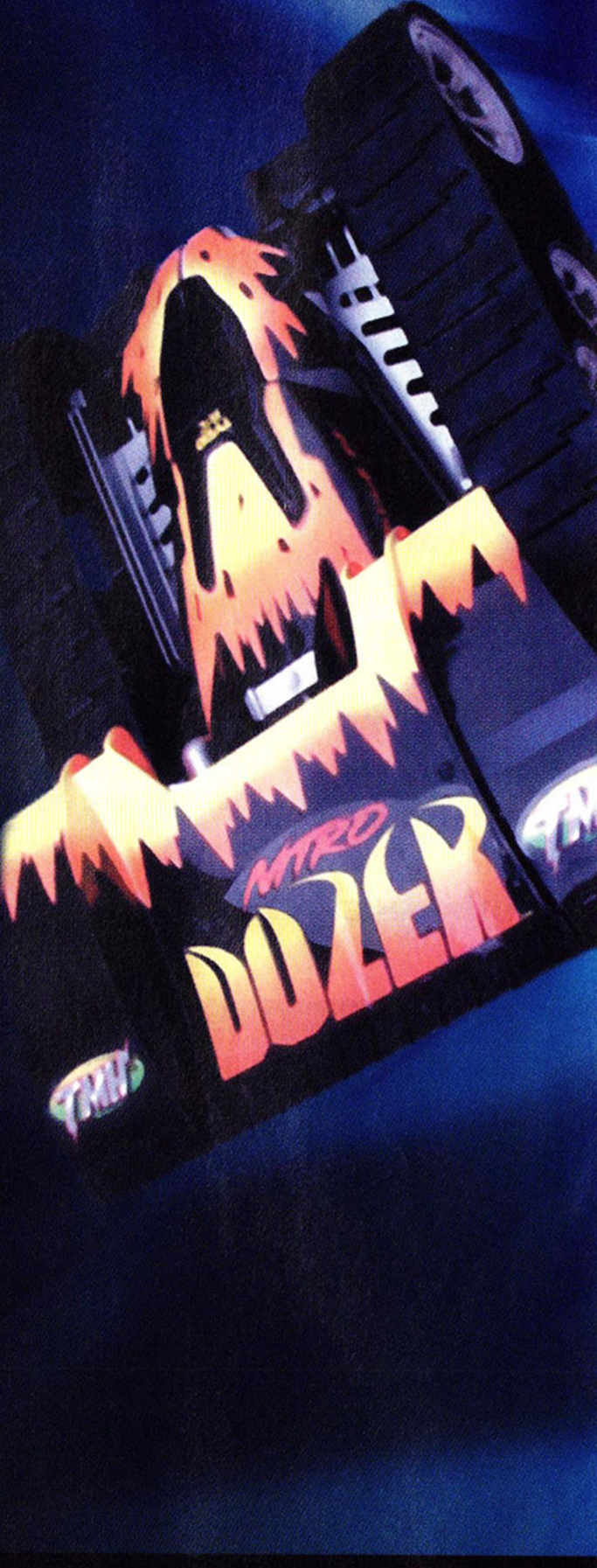
Crash & Bash
your way through
eight hazard-filled
environments

Supercharge
your vehicle
with a turbo injection
of high-speed energy

Play Off-Road
bumper cars
with split-screen
head-to-head racing

Smoke
your opponent
in Battle Mode.
One of five hair-raising
modes of play





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EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
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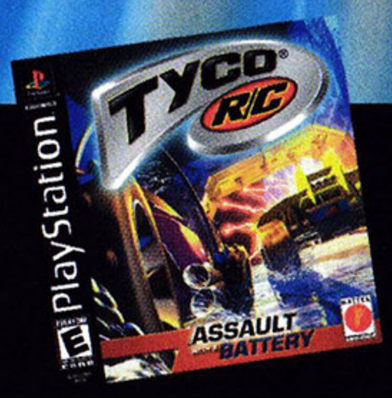
Flip off your Friends



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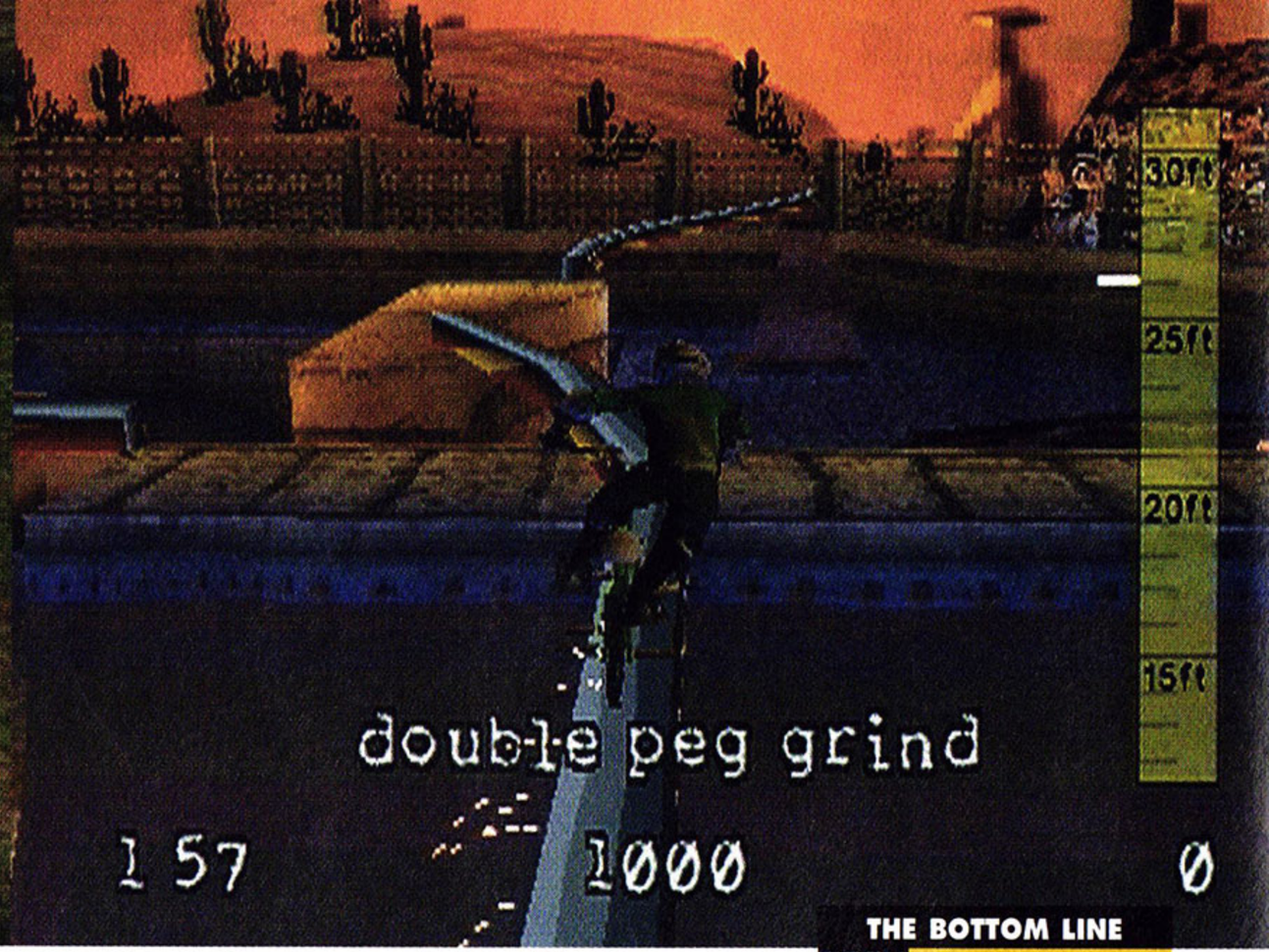


ROCKIN' MELODIES

59 Times the Pain –
"Got It All in Sight"

Cypress Hill –
"Dust"

Deftones –
"Be Quiet and Drive"

Drop Kick Murphy's –
"Never Alone"

Pennywise –
"Greed"

Primer 55 –
"Loose"

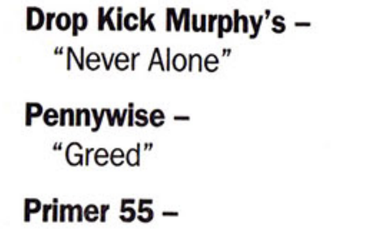
Rancid –
"Maxwell Murder"

Social Distortion –
"Don't Drag Me Down"

Sublime –
"What I Got"

Swingin' Utters –
"Stupid Lullabies"

Just like Tony Hawk, each stage comes packed with a list of "extreme" goals



Complete tasks to unlock new bikes, duds, and courses

Master the moves list to rack up the points

PLAYSTATION

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX

EXTREME SPORTS & LAXATIVES

On a personal note, I think that flipping wildly through the air with an aerodynamic metal frame hugging my thighs is not an entirely sound idea. This crazy concept falls on my list of things to do right next to plummeting off a four-story building, and running full speed into a brick wall. Freestyle BMX daredevil Dave Mirra, excels at defying death with his extreme riding measures. He is without a doubt, the biggest name in the sport.

Whether Dave Mirra would have landed his own game deal if Tony Hawk didn't shake up the video game world is anybody's guess – but no matter, we're glad he's here. In the early stages, his game didn't look very promising. The camera system was always a nuisance, zooming in at obscure angles at inopportune times, and the gameplay just wasn't coming together. After an additional few months of surgery, developer Z-Axis managed to fix the camera so it followed the user's every move; but the gameplay still has a handful of strange problems, mainly having to do with physics.

Instead of demanding precision in every movement, as in Tony Hawk, this game is overly lenient in ramp landings and collision on grinds. Being able to land tricks diagonally or even sideways removes the need to really concentrate, and on grinds, the player doesn't need to go through the painstaking rigmarole of lining up a jump and landing directly onto the desired object. If you're in the nearby vicinity, pressing the grind button will magically levitate your bike onto the object. In a nutshell, this game does most of the hard work for you.

This is a shame too, because Z-Axis has pieced together a fairly deep package. On each of the 12 courses, a number of unique challenges must be tackled before a new stage can be explored. You'll find yourself performing obscure feats like jumping over a moving train or destroying a handful of lawn chairs. Striking an innovative blow, the game actually tracks how high you fly, and get this, how long your skid marks are. These highly coveted stats are recorded for all to see. If not for the loose gameplay chemistry, this title would have all the sugar and spice. The visuals are nothing short of stunning, and the game offers plenty of interesting rewards ranging from new bikes and clothing to sponsorship deals and action-packed video clips. Overall though, an unsympathetic difficulty is greatly needed. – **REINER**

■ STYLE 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS/ACTION **■ PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM MAX SPORTS **■ DEVELOPER** Z-AXIS **■ RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 26

Performing on dirt tracks is an entirely different experience than the street courses

Measure how high you can fly

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7.75

- **Concept:** The Tony Hawk formula is the wave of the future
- **Graphics:** Other than occasional graphical flickers, this title looks fantastic
- **Sound:** The rockin' soundtrack is diverse, but the rest of the sound effects are bland
- **Playability:** Landing tricks is way too easy…but at the same time enjoyable
- **Entertainment:** This game has a ton of secrets to unlock and touch challenges to tackle
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

I knew there was going to be a BMX game using the Tony Hawk formula, I just didn't expect it to come from Acclaim. Freestyle BMX is a fun little romp with interesting level design and goals, but it doesn't come together quite right. For me, what detracts most from the entertainment value is the loose trick-landing requirements and the magically magnetic pegs that suck you toward distant ledges when you grind. There are some original and fun ideas here, though, and if Z-Axis were given a second chance to tighten up the engine and add some gameplay tweaks, this game could be a serious competitor for the Neversoft games it attempts to emulate.

JAY – 7.5

Mega Man Legends 2 features frequent (and frantic) boss battles

PLAYSTATION

MEGA MAN LEGENDS 2

RETURN OF THE SERVBOTS

Mega Man returns for his second 3D PlayStation adventure in Mega Man Legends 2, an epic tale that expands on the events of the first. Mega is reunited with his spunky sidekick, Roll, and the pair embark on a quest for the mythical treasure called the Mother Lode. Along the way, they bump into Legends cast members such as Gramps, Claymore, Tronne Bonne, and the beloved Servbots. We also learn about Roll's family tree, and other long-past events. The lengthy tale is fleshed out with real-time cutscenes, which are alternately delightful or tedious, depending on your mood.

Mega Man, meet Naked Woman

While the quest is longer and the world is larger than in Legends, the gameplay remains almost untouched. As before, Mega Man can upgrade his Buster Arm by combining items, which can be bought at Junk Shops or found throughout the world.

Mega Man has held a spot in my heart since the days of the NES, and I thoroughly enjoyed playing the first Legends. Capcom, not a company known for taking chances with its successful franchises, wisely opted to play it safe. Mega Man Legends 2 is a sequel in the sense that Lethal Weapon movies are sequels – it knows what its audience wants, and gives them exactly that. No innovation, no curveballs, no bull. I suppose you could fault them for being unimaginative, but I'll gladly take seconds. – **MATT**

"Expect highs in the low 30s today, with a slight chance of flurries. Next up, sports."

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE

8

- **Concept:** Capcom stays the course with Legends 2, carefully following the blueprint that made the original a success
- **Graphics:** Slightly touched-up textures, but few changes in this department
- **Sound:** The numerous cutscenes have voice-overs. Interior scenes play to a soothing classical soundtrack
- **Playability:** The camera still has fits during the boss battles, but generally the control is solid
- **Entertainment:** The surprisingly compelling plot keeps you guessing, and experimenting with Buster Arm upgrades adds some degree of depth
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

SECOND OPINION

With the exception of Tron Bonne and the Servbots, I couldn't give a rip what the Mega Man universe of characters do in their personal time. Moreso than the first, Mega Man Legends 2 tortures me by showing me cutscene after cutscene of characters talking, making me play out shopping trips, then following that up with more talking. When the action finally does go down, though, it's pretty sweet, with the gameplay formula used in the original taking some creative twists. Mega Man loyalists and those that like a cute story explaining every little thing they're doing will go ga-ga for this. Everyone else will probably find Legends 2 to be a nice diversion that's best played between cooler games.

JAY – 7.5

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM ■ **DEVELOPER** CAPCOM
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 18

PLAYSTATION

MTV SPORTS: SKATEBOARDING FEATURING ANDY MACDONALD

TONY HAWK THIS AIN'T

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE

3

Someone at Dark Black must eat a lot of code, because this is as pooped-out a game as there's ever been. Perhaps it's unfair of me to compare this game to Tony Hawk's Pro Skater. Then again, if the developers wanted to avoid such analogies, maybe they should have tried to do something even remotely original – or at least attempted to make a rip-off that was playable. The controls are horrible, the game modes are retarded, and the graphics, oh Lord, the graphics. I've seen ten-page flipbooks with more frames of animation. Someone should be fired, if not shot, for allowing this game's release. My condolences to Andy Macdonald, his fans, his friends, and his family. – **JAY**

- **Concept:** Mostly a rip-off of others' ideas
- **Graphics:** A single-player framerate slower than multiplayer in Tony Hawk
- **Sound:** There are some good songs
- **Playability:** Incredibly unresponsive and frustrating
- **Entertainment:** You'll laugh, but for all the wrong reasons
- **Replay Value:** Low

SECOND OPINION

I imagine Tony Hawk in its first week of development played better than this worthless monstrosity THQ is trying to pass off as a game.

REINER – 2

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION/SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** THQ
■ **DEVELOPER** DARK BLACK ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 13

PLAYSTATION

INCREDIBLE CRISIS

WHAT A LONG, STRANGE TRIP IT IS

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7.5

- **Concept:** Old-school controller jamming incorporated into an anime narrative
- **Graphics:** The CG cutscenes feature brilliant cinematography, and the animation is better than most cartoons
- **Sound:** The peppy soundtrack almost made me not hate ska music
- **Playability:** Oh the agony! This frenetic button-masher had my arm begging for mercy
- **Entertainment:** The endless variety and humor will have you dying to know what happens next
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low

Although one could hardly label Incredible Crisis groundbreaking, I'd be hard-pressed to find a game that compares to it. The only title of recent years that comes to mind is UmJammer Lammy, which had a similar mix of simplistic gameplay set within a whimsical, surrealistic storyline. The plot surrounds the plight of a Japanese family who are about to experience the worst day of their lives. From racing an ambulance stretcher through oncoming traffic to gunning down missiles to save an alien spacecraft, Incredible Crisis takes players on a journey unlike any other. Each level is a minigame involving some rudimentary button-pressing, but each episode is incorporated into the plot through numerous cutscenes. These CG interludes rank among the funniest scenes in gaming history, and could stand alone as first-rate animated features.

The problem with the button-mashing genre is that the basic action must be wedded to some sort of premise and graphical presentation, as there is little in the way of strategy or interesting gameplay. Incredible Crisis accomplishes this task with wild imagination and visual flair. If you're sick of tedious Olympic titles (I know I am), give this odd little game a shot. – **MATT**

SECOND OPINION

This is a strange game. Since it finds it's origins in Japan, its stylings and humor are similar to a goofy anime. The first impression I got from it was it was another PaRappa styled game. It turns out that there is quite a bit more to it as there is a load a variety. However, I can't say that I'd throw down the bucks for a collection of rather simple games. Tapping buttons furiously or moving a cursor around to shoot down planes gets a little old. I did find it somewhat funny and kind of entertaining, but nothing that would give you more than a couple days of fun. I give it points for being something a little out of the norm, but I will have to say that this fact doesn't take it too far.

PAUL – 6.5

And you thought you were having a bad day

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** TITUS ■ **DEVELOPER** POLYGON MAGIC
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 15

PLAYSTATION

NHL FACE OFF 2001

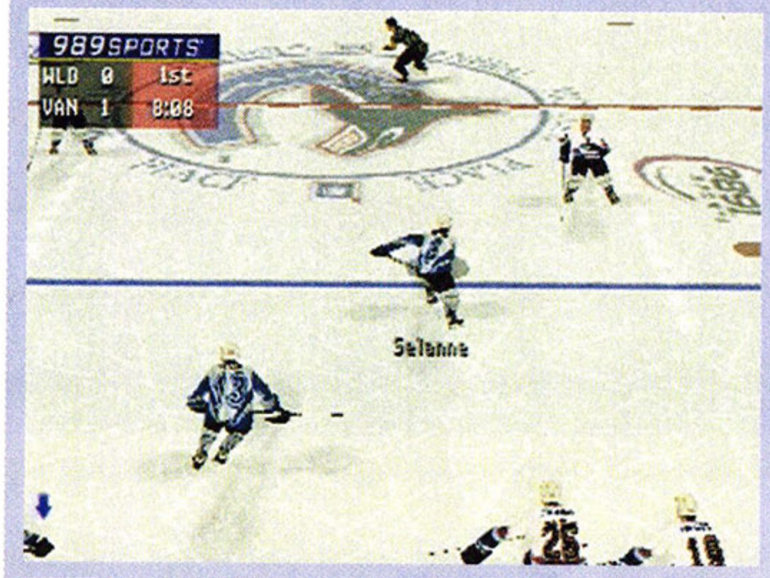
THAT FAMILIAR LOCKER ROOM STENCH

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

6.5

- **Concept:** The same game as last year with new rosters
- **Graphics:** Decent animation and smooth movement make for a realistic look
- **Sound:** The repetitive non-stop commentary gets on your nerves
- **Playability:** Fluid and very arcade-like
- **Entertainment:** Enjoyable, but limiting in options
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High



The innovator of Icon Passing has done little to impress over the last few years. After dishing out mediocrity last year, developer SolWorks has more or less given up trying to compete with EA's NHL Hockey series. Instead of focusing on new features and gameplay ideas, Face Off 2001 is a port of last year's game with updated rosters and subtle graphical changes. If you're looking for a straight-up hockey game, Face Off is a decent release. If you desire fantasy options and realism, EA's hockey is the only game you need worry about. – **REINER**

SECOND OPINION

Dumb. This one isn't even in the same league as NHL 2001. It is virtually identical to last year's game. At least they added the Wild.

PAUL – 5

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** 989 SPORTS
■ **DEVELOPER** SOLWORKS ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 5

PLAYSTATION

ECW ANARCHY RULZ

...BUT THE GAME DUZN'T!

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

4

- **Concept:** Acclaim has completely lost sight of what ECW is about
- **Graphics:** About the same as Attitude and Hardcore Revolution, but now with blood that pools on the mat
- **Sound:** Gertnerized!
- **Playability:** The controls have been simplified from previous incarnations of this engine, yet still aren't simple
- **Entertainment:** Ummm...Not really, no
- **Replay Value:** Moderately Low

When I think of ECW, I think of fast-paced matches and some wild stunts that give the league its reputation. When I think of Anarchy Rulz, I think of a weird-ass fighting game that just happens to have ECW wrestlers and a ring in it.

I'm not sure why Acclaim was in such a hurry to get Anarchy Rulz out, considering Hardcore Revolution came out a mere six months ago, but I pray it's because there's something completely new (and entertaining) in the wings. – **JAY**

SECOND OPINION

The whole f'n show this is not. Just like Terry Funk and Hulk Hogan, this engine should have retired long ago. Along with the arthritic gameplay, this game shipped full of glitches.

REINER – 5.5

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM ■ **DEVELOPER** ACCLAIM STUDIOS SALT LAKE CITY ■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 15

PlayStation

From the new Shoot Out and Practice Modes, to the expansion teams and up to the minute rosters, we've captured the speed and intensity of hockey. It'll get in your head and stay there.

989 SPORTS

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EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PLAYSTATION

NHL 2001

THE LAST RED LIGHT FOR EA

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7.75

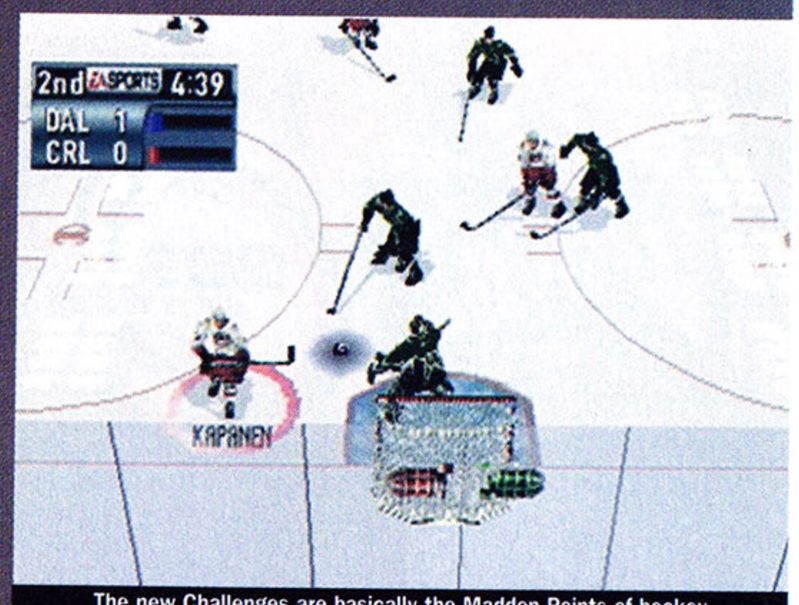
While not too flashy, EA's last hurrah on PlayStation ice is a solid venture that offers fluid gameplay and an abundance of simulation options. All the more intelligent with each passing year, the goalies are brick walls and the defensive is savvy in the ways of protecting the crease and stalling when they have the lead. Taking a break last year, the color commentary is online with the hilarious performance from NHL 99, and the new Create-A-Player Challenges keep you on your toes. It's better than last year, but not too terribly different. – **REINER**

- **Concept:** The additions this year aren't too monumental, but the new Player Challenges are cool
- **Graphics:** Nothing special, yet sufficient
- **Sound:** The color commentary is sarcastic and witty. The general sounds are also very realistic
- **Playability:** The play is quick, and the goalies are unbreakable
- **Entertainment:** EA delivers the best hockey for PlayStation
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

After playing NHL on PS2, it's really hard to look at this game and think it's cool. The return of the multiplayer season is welcome, but the NHL Challenge isn't too exciting. Overall, it's not a whole lot different.

PAUL – 8.5



The new Challenges are basically the Madden Points of hockey

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** EA SPORTS
■ **DEVELOPER** EA CANADA ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 26

PLAYSTATION

MTV SPORTS: PURE RIDE

THE LEGACY OF DAN CORTEZ

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

6.5

First, let me start by saying that this game couldn't have come into the office at a worse time. Not only were we obsessed with the near-perfect Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2, but EA gave us a copy of the staggering SSX for PS2. That's a lot to live up to. To its credit, Pure Ride does a capable job of providing solid snowboarding action, with well-designed courses, a Track Editor, and some wicked tricks. Although not very deep, Pure Ride is a fun diversion for a couple of hours.

In Stunt Mode, you get one chance to clear this massive jump

If this game had been released within the first two years of the PlayStation's life, I might even be inclined to forgive its graphical shortcoming, its somewhat limited number of combos and tricks, and maybe even recommend it. Unfortunately, after Tony Hawk, I doubt I'll ever be able to be truly impressed by another "extreme" game again. After you've seen perfection, it's hard to settle for second best.

Lastly, I'd like to address the bands on this soundtrack. Rap/metal is getting really old, really fast. It's been more than 10 years since Run-DMC got their chocolate in Aerosmith's peanut butter, and the schtick has worn pretty thin. Ever since, I've had to suffer through an endless parade of tone-deaf white rappers complaining about how no one liked them in high school over recycled Black Sabbath riffs. Take off your FUBU jeans and use them to gag yourselves. – **MATT**

- **Concept:** A good variety of events and courses; an adequate snowboarding title
- **Graphics:** Not a smooth ride. A sluggish framerate mars what could have been a sublime experience
- **Sound:** I'm surprised MTV couldn't do better than such "stars" as El Pus, Chris Vrenna, and SX-10
- **Playability:** The control scheme works well, and the mountains are cleverly designed
- **Entertainment:** Not a bad game, but a used copy of Cool Boarders 2 is only ten bucks
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

Just a gut feeling here, but it seems as though a curse looms over the MTV license. For starters, why is the soundtrack filled with so many no-name bands? Of all the people in the world, you'd think MTV, the very souls that made Rock 'N Jock a success, could piece together a killer soundtrack. Secondly, why are all of the MTV Sports games running on prehistoric engines? I've seen better looking games on the Atari Jaguar! I do have to give THQ props for the gameplay. The conceptual design of the trick system couldn't have been any better. If the framerate weren't so choppy, and if the graphics didn't look so fuzzy, this title could have been somewhat decent. The Track Editor would have given Pure Ride a powerful punch. Unfortunately, with no desire to play, all of this game's interesting features are wasted.

REINER – 5.75

Combine grinds and grabs for big points

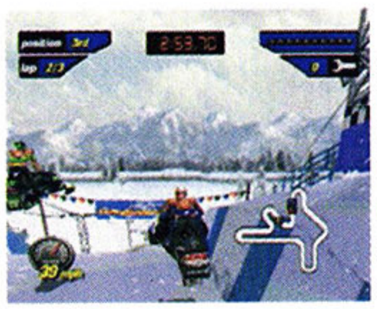
The Track Editor lets you play God, turning your mountain into a freestyle paradise

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** THQ ■ **DEVELOPER** RADICAL ENTERTAINMENT ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 30

PLAYSTATION QUICKIES

POLARIS SNOCROSS

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING
■ **PUBLISHER** VATICAL
■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 5

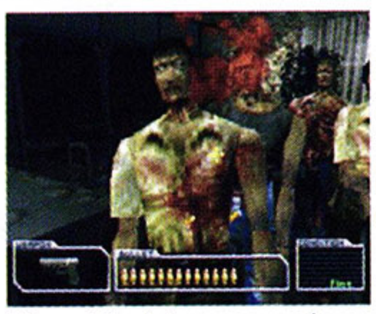


Although I've certainly seen worse racing games in my time, Polaris SnoCross is still about as lackluster as they come. It has barely average graphics and sound, standard gameplay that quickly becomes monotonous, and no feature interesting enough to merit a mention. If you're just dying for a racing game with snowmobiles in it, I recommend getting EA's Sled Storm instead of this. – **JAY**

5.5

RESIDENT EVIL SURVIVOR

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER SHOOTER
■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM
■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 30



I am a huge fan of Resident Evil so this title was of particular interest to me. The game does have a wide assortment of creatures including the lickers and the hunters, but the graphics just stink. The original Japanese release at least had compatibility for a light gun, but the US version doesn't. This is extremely lame because what you're left with is a really bad first-person shooter. Please Capcom, do not disgrace Resident Evil any further with junk like this. – **PAUL**

4

NFL BLITZ 2001

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS
■ **PUBLISHER** MIDWAY
■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 12

Blitz really was a breath of fresh air when it first debuted in the arcades a few years ago, but it has never transcended its coin-op roots. The endless turnovers and freewheeling play now seem to be little more than football for people who don't like football. The Blitz formula has grown stale. Perhaps we'll have to wait for the first XFL game to inject some life into this flagging genre. – **MATT**

5.5

SNO CROSS CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING
■ **PUBLISHER** CRAVE ENTERTAINMENT
■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 1

Sno Cross seems content to play Creed to Sled Storm's Pearl Jam, and succeeds in being an almost competent rip-off of EA's snowbound racing sensation. Unfortunately, the game fails to deliver the sense of excitement that Sled Storm gave me. The tracks lack depth and the graphics are far from dazzling. I did appreciate the track editor, but I can't honestly think of one reason why this game should exist. – **MATT**

6

MUPPET RACEMANIA

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING
■ **PUBLISHER** MIDWAY
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 3

Since the death of their creator, Jim Henson, the Muppet empire has fallen into a state of disrepair. About 10 or 12 people in the world saw Muppets From Space, and nearly twice as many might actually buy Muppet RaceMania. No self-respecting adult would plunk down hard earned money on this unimpressive kart racer. If you've played Crash Team Racing, you've seen the same concept done infinitely better. – **MATT**

5

RAYCRISIS: SERIES TERMINATION

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER SHOOTER
■ **PUBLISHER** WORKING DESIGNS
■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 12

With stunning parallax scrolling, and gorgeous transparency and lighting effects, RayCrisis has a look to kill. Unfortunately, and much unlike the first release, RayStorm, the difficulty level in the sequel has been neutered, leaving little challenge for the user. Nonetheless, the journey is still thrilling, and something that gamers can sink their teeth into. – **REINER**

7.25

ATV: QUAD BIKE CHALLENGE

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING
■ **PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM
■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 22

Acclaim Sports' newest addition to the motor sports realm is ATV Quad Bike Racing. ATVs are a blast to ride so I can see the concept behind this game, but the execution is just ho-hum in almost every possible way. There is no difference between racing an ATV and a real car except you use the shoulder buttons to lean/powerslide. I feel sorry for ATV fans as they will be the ones suckered by Acclaim into buying this mediocre product. – **ANDY**

6

PLAYSTATION

NBA SHOOTOUT 2001

REHASH, REHASH, REHASH

Why invest in PlayStation 2 when the PS-X is capable of delivering quality titles like this one? Is this a monumental joke by 989, or are we to believe this polygonal monstrosity is the future of sports entertainment? When confronted with the decision to buy NBA Live or NBA ShootOut, you're really asking yourself, what would I like better: a million dollars or a slap to the face? Just like all of 989's 2001 product, ShootOut is nothing more than a flashback to last year. Updated rosters!!! Cool, man! Fixed bugs! Awesome! What a rip. – **REINER**

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB **5.5**

■ **Concept:** Shouldn't the box say NBA ShootOut 2000?
■ **Graphics:** Shaq's butt looks better
■ **Sound:** How pathetic. The sound effects are the best part of the game
■ **Playability:** With moronic CPU opponents, you can pop a shot from anywhere
■ **Entertainment:** Wash, rinse, repeat
■ **Replay Value:** Moderately low

SECOND OPINION

I am beginning to believe 989 isn't even trying anymore, as SO 2001 only features a new logo and a couple tweaks. Unlimited player trades and the artificial un-intelligence makes this game too easy. Go Live or go home.

ANDY – 5

Partying like it's 1999, 989 essentially released the same game as last year

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** 989 STUDIOS
■ **DEVELOPER** KILLER GAME ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 21

Not all sports live up to the name Extreme...

EXTRE
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CHAMPION

REME
ESS
ONSHIPS

Are you ready for
THE REAL EXTREME?

XTREME SPORTS™

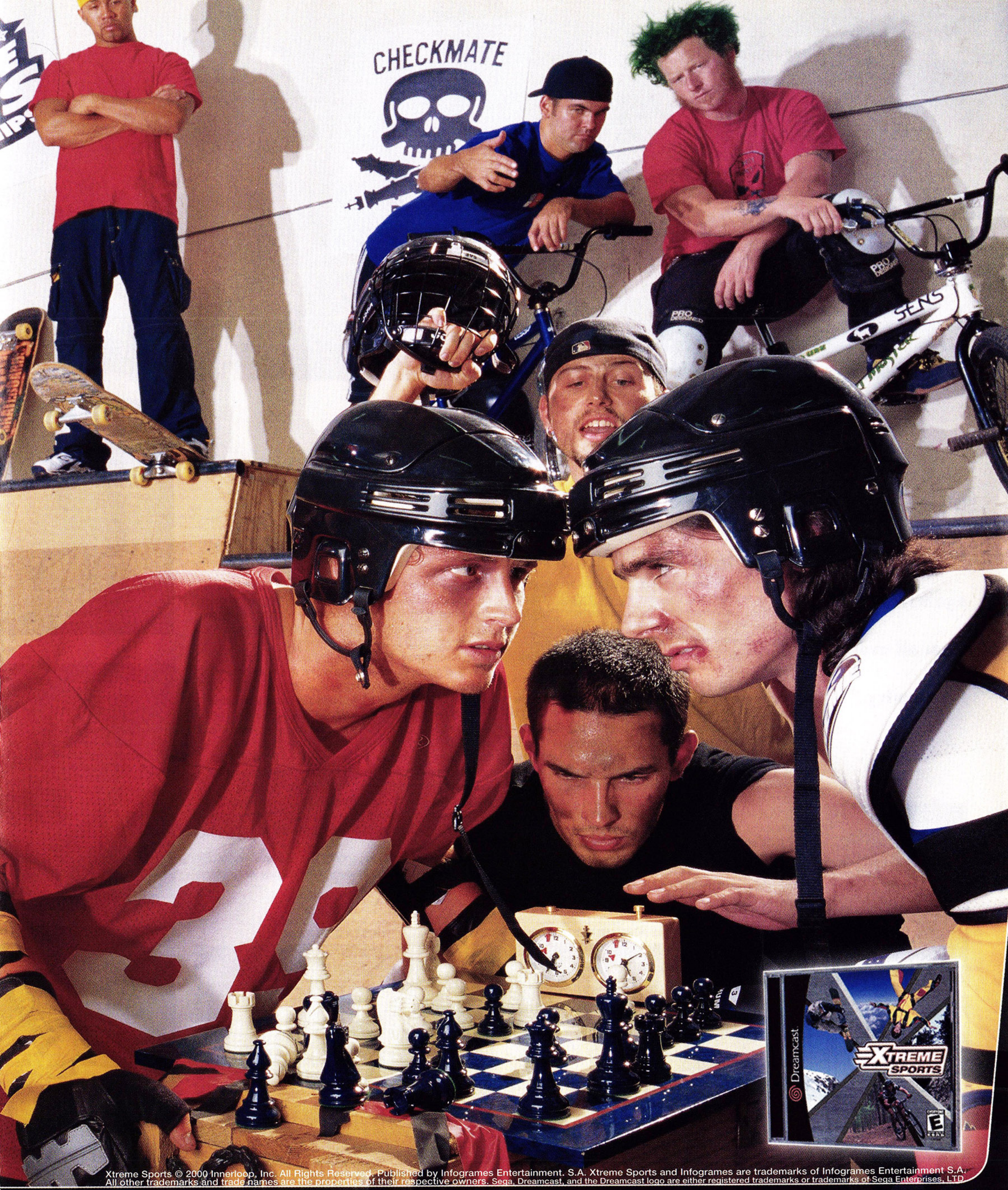
Welcome to the world of full contact, high octane, Xtreme Sports.

Choose from six different alternative sports as you battle your way through a challenging triple-event competition. It's a pulse pounding race against time... and some hardcore opponents. Master tons of intense tricks in hand-to-hand racing combat. So leave your rule book at home. Adrenaline is the only fuel you'll need!

EVERYONE E ESRB Mild Animated Violence

INFOGRAMES

Dreamcast.



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DREAMCAST

NFL 2K1

"It's a blast to compete against gamers from all over the country."

FOOTBALL IN CYBERSPACE

Hands down, last year's version was the best football game available on any system. Visual Concepts set the trend in many aspects of sports gaming with NFL 2K's player models, tackle collisions, and artificial intelligence. Simply put, it was the most amazing football game I had ever played. However, this season is a different story for NFL 2K1.

The appearance of Madden 2001 for PlayStation 2 has garnered my nod so far this season – even though there are a couple PS2 darkhorses still in the hunt. Yet if a PS2 isn't in your budget or you're just a staunch Sega fanboy, Sega and Visual Concept's newest football game is worth your time for a number of reasons. The game has some minor fixes with menus and options, a much-needed Franchise mode, and some subtle new animations. Oh, and the running game has been retooled and is much easier.

The running game turns out to be quite interesting, in fact, because the computer AI is pretty pumped up on the Pro and All-Pro difficulties – namely the defensive backs. I struggled through countless INTs and found that the ground attack – at least for the Vikes – was almost too easy. After a number of games were under my belt, I'd run about 75% of the time, eat up a lot of the clock, and usually wind up with a low-scoring game. Not much fun, but better than turnovers. The passing game did come around after at least a couple days of practice. Even so, when you compare all this to what EA Sports is offering on the PS2, there is no turning back – that is, until you factor in the online element.

Yup, even though NFL 2K1 isn't close to Madden as an individual game, when you jump online it is really something amazing. It's a blast to compete against gamers from all over the country. When there are two keyboards on either end, the text chat gets the trash-talk flowing. Sure, I try to keep my banter of the PG variety, but you never know who is on the other end and if they start it, I'm in their face. The chat makes the competition really over the top and is the only way to play. Even though you have to deal with typical Internet gaming stuff which includes some graphical hiccups, the inclusion of 50 free hours gives you the chance to play a bunch of games for flat out nothin' but the price of the game. The Dreamcast online experience is quirky, but pretty solid.

NFL 2K1 is clearly far superior to last season's rendition and the online component makes it a must-play for sports freaks like me. – **PAUL**

NET PLAY

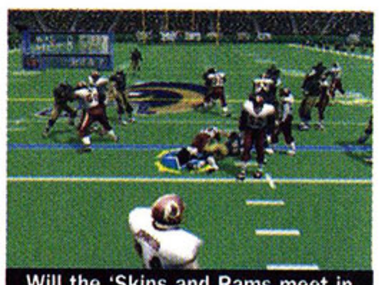
The online component of NFL 2K1 via SegaNet – or another Internet service provider – is quite impressive. Hooking up to play 2K1 online is relatively easy. After entering your ISP information or signing up for the 50 free hours of SegaNet included with the game, you hop on to find a selection of lobbies that represent locales all over the country. Then you find a victim and challenge them to a game. We did notice that, depending at what time of the day you were on, certain lobbies such as Philly or NYC were extremely populated with players.

"BRING IT"

Once you have accepted a challenge to play someone online, you have the ability to text chat at anytime using the Dreamcast's keyboard. This comes in particularly handy in the pre-game screens where you can set options and game length. Once you get on the field, the smack talk will begin to flow. Sometimes it's just a quick "Not In My House" or "Bring It", while other times you might get into more detailed discussions of football in general. Pictured here is a little jab at our opponent after we burned 'em with Randy Moss.

WITHOUT A NET

Playing games on the Internet are never without occasional problems, and SegaNet is no different. We had a few problems connecting to the game server – as did some of our readers. Likewise, once we were connected, there were times when you just couldn't get a solid connection with another player which led to some extremely poor lag that made the game crawl. With some patience, the overall experience is fantastic. However, an opponent just quitting the game when they are down by 35 points can always hinder the experience.



Will the 'Skins and Rams meet in the NFC Championship game?

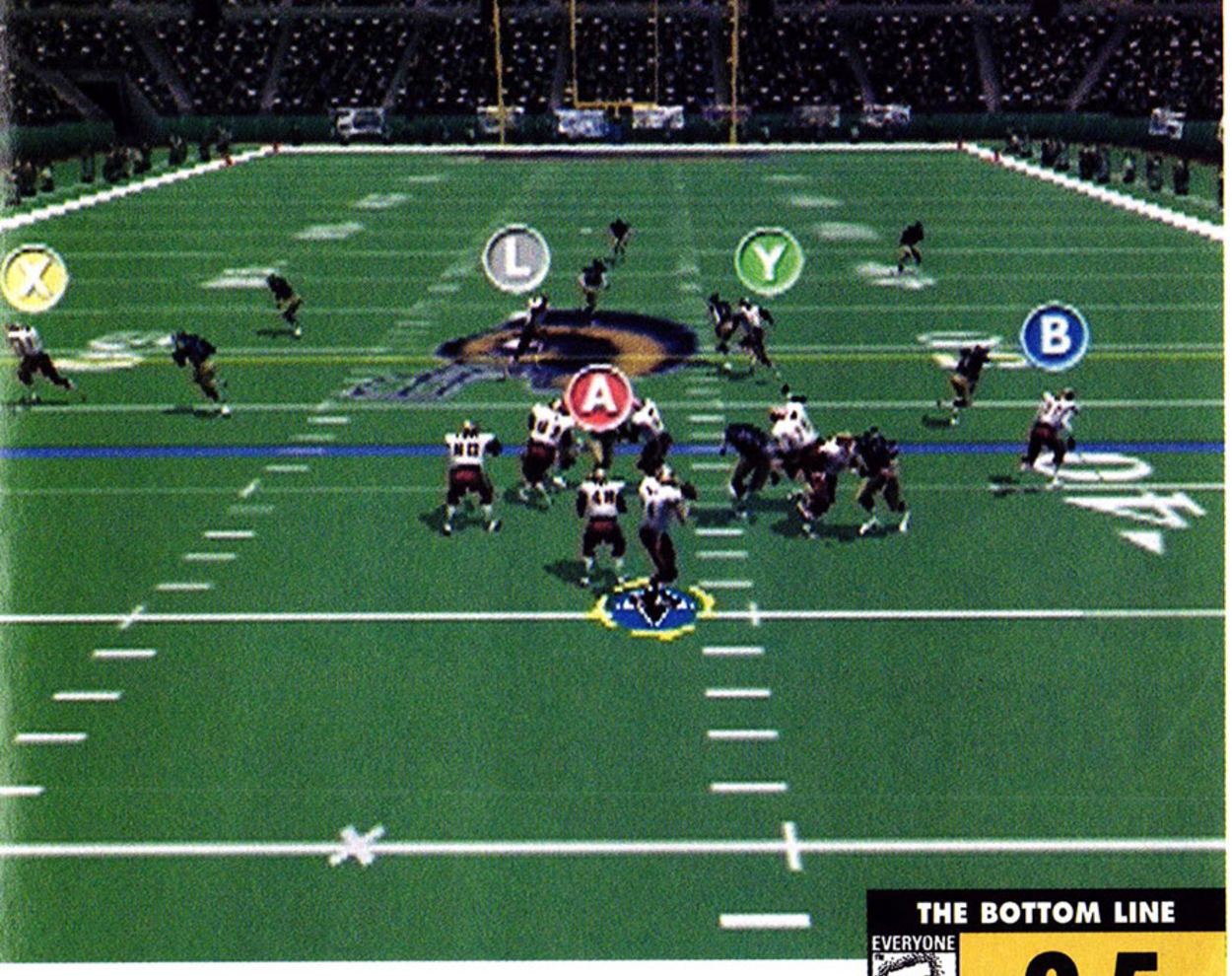
Poor little Bear gotta boo-boo

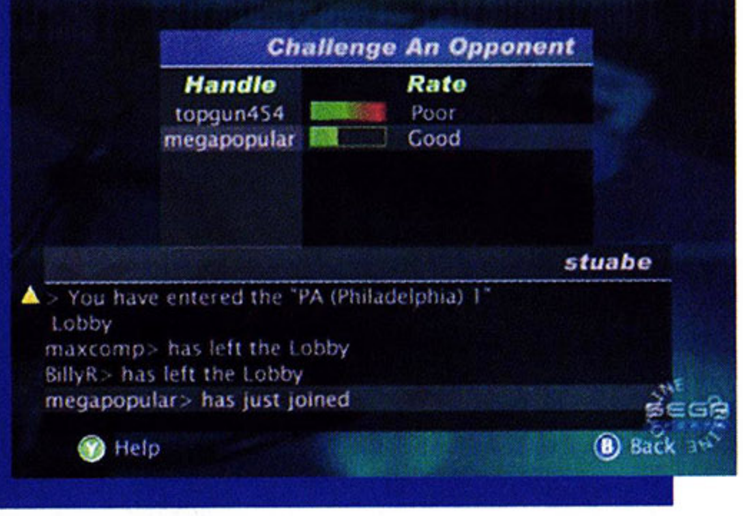
Moss is again the Sega Sports coverboy

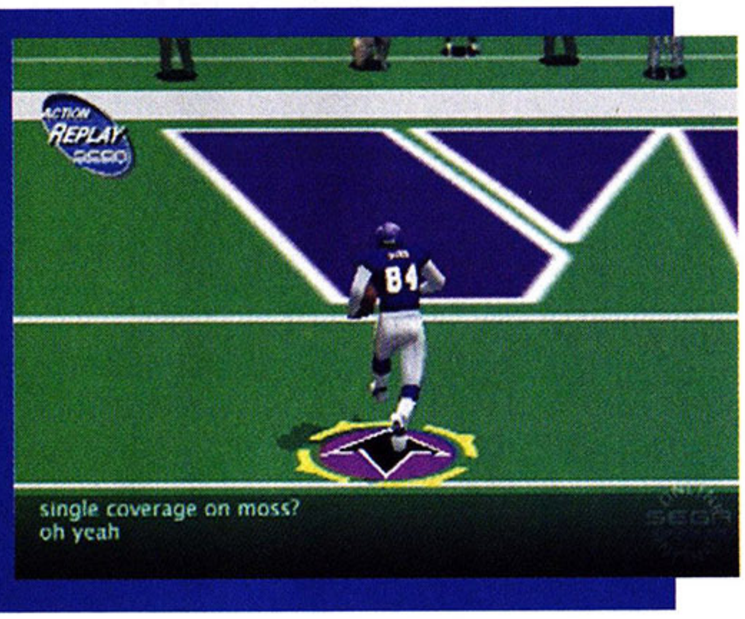
■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA ■ **DEVELOPER** VISUAL CONCEPTS ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 7

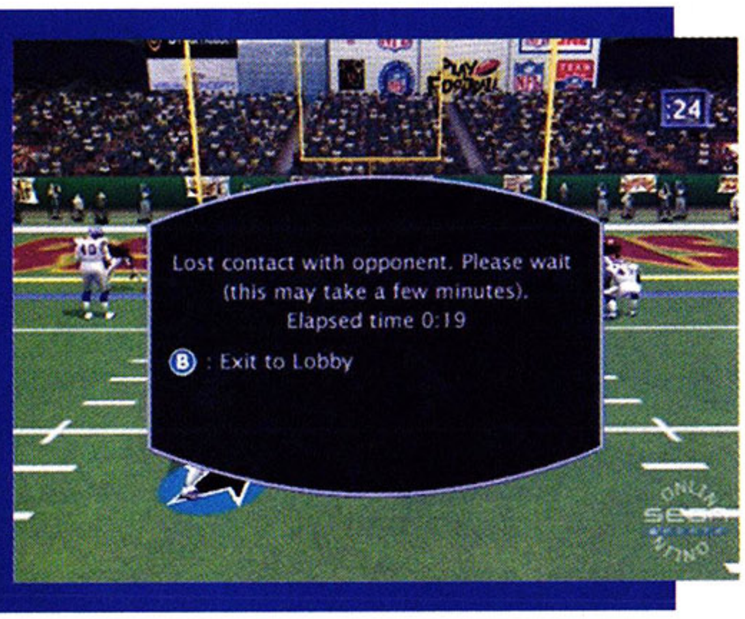
Favre surveys the field and complains about his sore arm

There's daylight up the sideline









THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

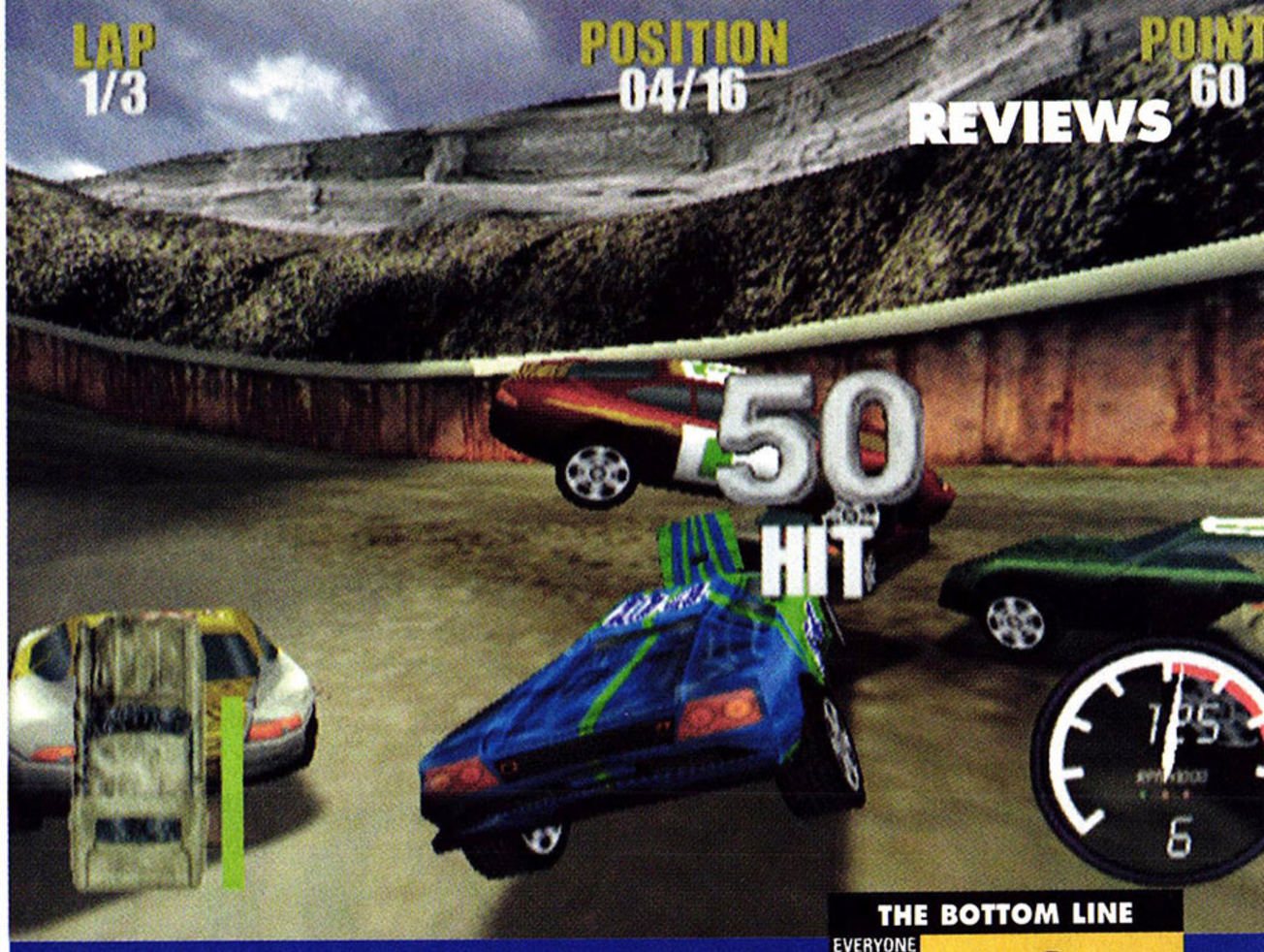
9.5

- **Concept:** The online play is truly revolutionary and the Franchise mode is a much-needed addition
- **Graphics:** On par with last year, with the addition of some small details
- **Sound:** Excellent commentary and on-field chatter sound like winners
- **Playability:** The Rookie mode is too easy and the Pro is almost too difficult. Too much emphasis has been placed on running
- **Entertainment:** If you can get connected, online play is a blast. There's no competition for this on DC
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

Countering Electronic Arts' all out blitz, Visual Concepts' sophomore release, NFL 2K1, is every bit as impressive as the PS2 Madden. While EA's white-knuckled release is graphically superior and in a league of its own in fantasy options, NFL 2K1 has the edge in gameplay, namely with its remarkable online capabilities. Challenging Dreamcast users across the country is an amazing experience that is smooth, and not hampered by extensive lag. Not too much has changed in the overall play mechanics; however, the play books have been beefed up, plus the animation and collision between players are – believe it or not – better than last year. With Madden capturing the essence of realism, NFL 2K1 coexists nicely by delivering a slightly more arcade-like angle. If there's even a hint of a football fan in you, I highly recommend both games.

REINER – 9.5



DREAMCAST

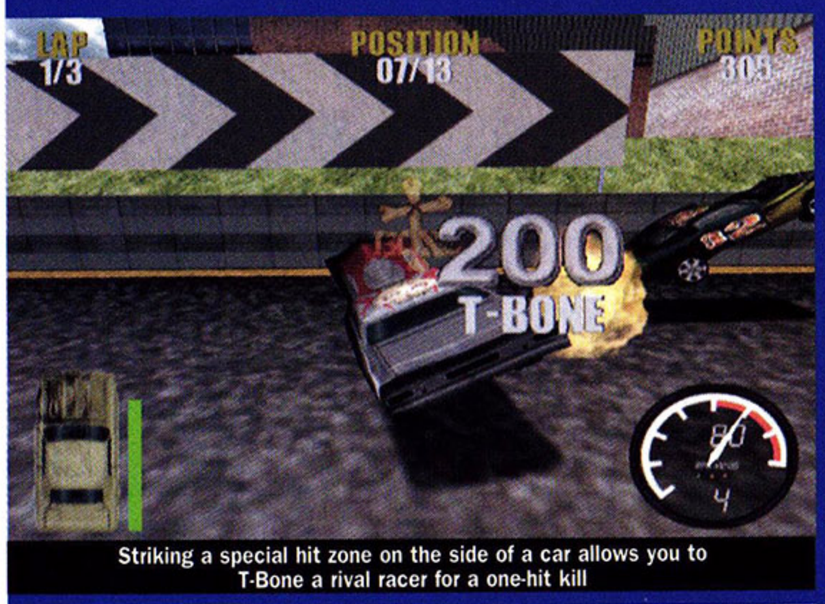
DEMOLITION RACER: NO EXIT

THE CARS THAT GO BOOM!

There have been quite a few games of this ilk in recent years, most notably the Destruction Derby series. The crash-and-burn concept is basic, but as we've seen a million times before, it's easy to take a simple idea and screw it up.

Demolition Racer succeeds by sticking to the principles that made the genre a success. Points are awarded for crashes, then multiplied based on which place you finish the race in. This requires drivers to strike a balance between crashing for points and racing for position. Avoiding contact with other cars to finish first will almost guarantee a low point total. Also, the tracks are strewn with numerous power-ups and dangerous hazards, forcing you to keep one eye on the road.

By now, most of you probably know our oft-repeated mantra, "It's not about graphics, it's about gameplay." Well, I'm here to say that sometimes it is the graphics. Demolition Racer was fairly enjoyable on the PS-X, but pumping up the framerate to a solid 60 frames per second has transformed it into an unstoppable juggernaut. The high speed vehicular mayhem got my adrenaline pumping. What more could you want from a game than that? – **MATT**



Striking a special hit zone on the side of a car allows you to T-Bone a rival racer for a one-hit kill

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

8

- **Concept:** Crashing cars is fun
- **Graphics:** On par with most DC racers, although the quick framerate somewhat separates it from the crowd
- **Sound:** Cars crash, cars bash, cars smash
- **Playability:** While it's no Sega GT, the control is responsive, and actually seems to be affected by car damage
- **Entertainment:** Anyone who ever smashed his Tonka trucks with a hammer should grasp this game's basic appeal
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

SECOND OPINION

Oh boy – an update of a game that was on the PlayStation a year ago. I'm not sure why it has the "No Exit" tag line because, other than the prerequisite graphic enhancements, this game is almost identical to the PS-X game. With that in mind, I have to say that this game is dead on arrival. I will give it something for offering a fairly decent challenge, but this game is average in every category. Everything – from the graphics to the playcontrol – drowns this title in the sea of crappy racing games that are beginning to accumulate on the DC. To top it off, there is no personality in the game. It seems to me that the world of demolition racing would at least have some beer swillin' yokel yelling at you. It does appear that Matt was way too nice to this game; it's no fun.

PAUL – 4.5

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** INFOGRAMES
■ **DEVELOPER** THE PITBULL SYNDICATE
■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 12

INVITE YOUR FRIENDS OVER FOR SOME FOUR PLAY.

Revolutionary 4 Player Battles!

Huge 3-D Multi-Level Stages!

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Violence

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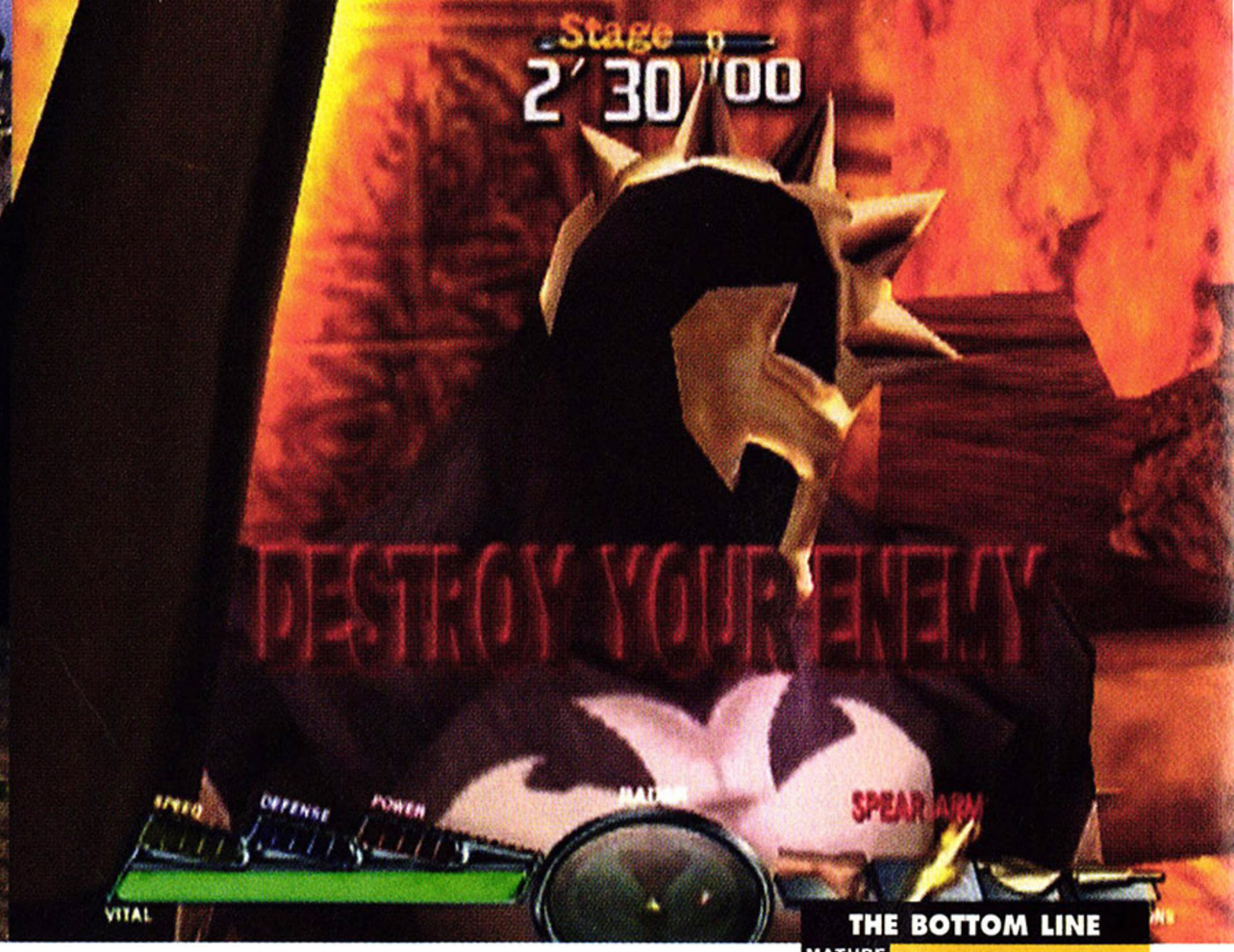


DREAMCAST

SPAWN: IN THE DEMON'S HAND

A DEVIL WITHOUT A CAUSE

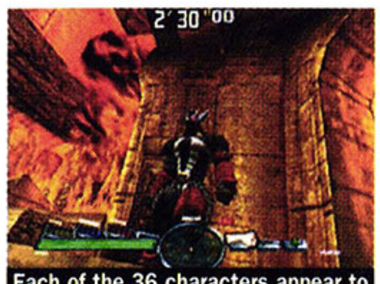
"...the relentless onslaught of cheap deaths does little more than toy with your sanity."

With Capcom holding the development reigns, Spawn's massive pallet of outlandish characters could have been incorporated into the Street Fighter universe oh so nicely, adding a darker tone and a splash of gore. Instead of sticking to the 2D formula that has worked wonders for generations on end, Capcom opted to try something a little different with this stygian property. It's not necessarily a fighter, nor is it a survival horror game.

Stylized much like an online first-person shooter, this wicked 3D venture has a basic premise – to hunt down the opposition and blow its brains out. That's it. On the graphical front, Capcom's artists worked wonders with Spawn's supernatural world. Watching this game in action is an eyeful of highly detailed visuals and explosive effects. All the character models are gigantic and complex in design. Capcom also did a commendable job matching the environments from the game with those in the comic series.

Spawn's onslaught of action is brought to life through a simplistic control schematic that offers amazing mobility. All of the stages are developed with simplicity in mind, cramming the battle into the smallest area possible. With this design, the action quickly intensifies into a non-stop frag fest where death is inevitable. The combat is so spastic that you really never know what's happening. You just run, unload ammo, and die – hoping you took someone with you. Each life only lasts for 10 to 15 seconds, then you die, and try again. Believe me, the death rate really gets on your nerves. Coupled with a troublesome camera, the overall gameplay experience can easily be summarized as frustrating. The carnage is definitely an impressive thing to see, and the gore is quite amusing, yet the relentless onslaught of cheap deaths does little more than toy with your sanity.

With a whopping 36 characters, most of which are hidden, Spawn gives plenty of reason why you should play it extensively. Yet when the game drives you nuts to begin with, I wouldn't recommend extended play as the best course of action. If you want a game that you can play for 15 minutes and put down feeling satisfied, then this dark-sider may hold some interest for you. I for one will keep my feet out of hell until the day I die. – **REINER**



Each of the 36 characters appear to be modeled after the toy line

Targeting is simplistic, yet very sloppy

No, you cannot sue Todd McFarlane if you don't like this game

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM ■ **DEVELOPER** CAPCOM ■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 6

The combat is so insane, each life ends within 15 seconds

There are a ton of interesting characters to unlock through play

THE BOTTOM LINE

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

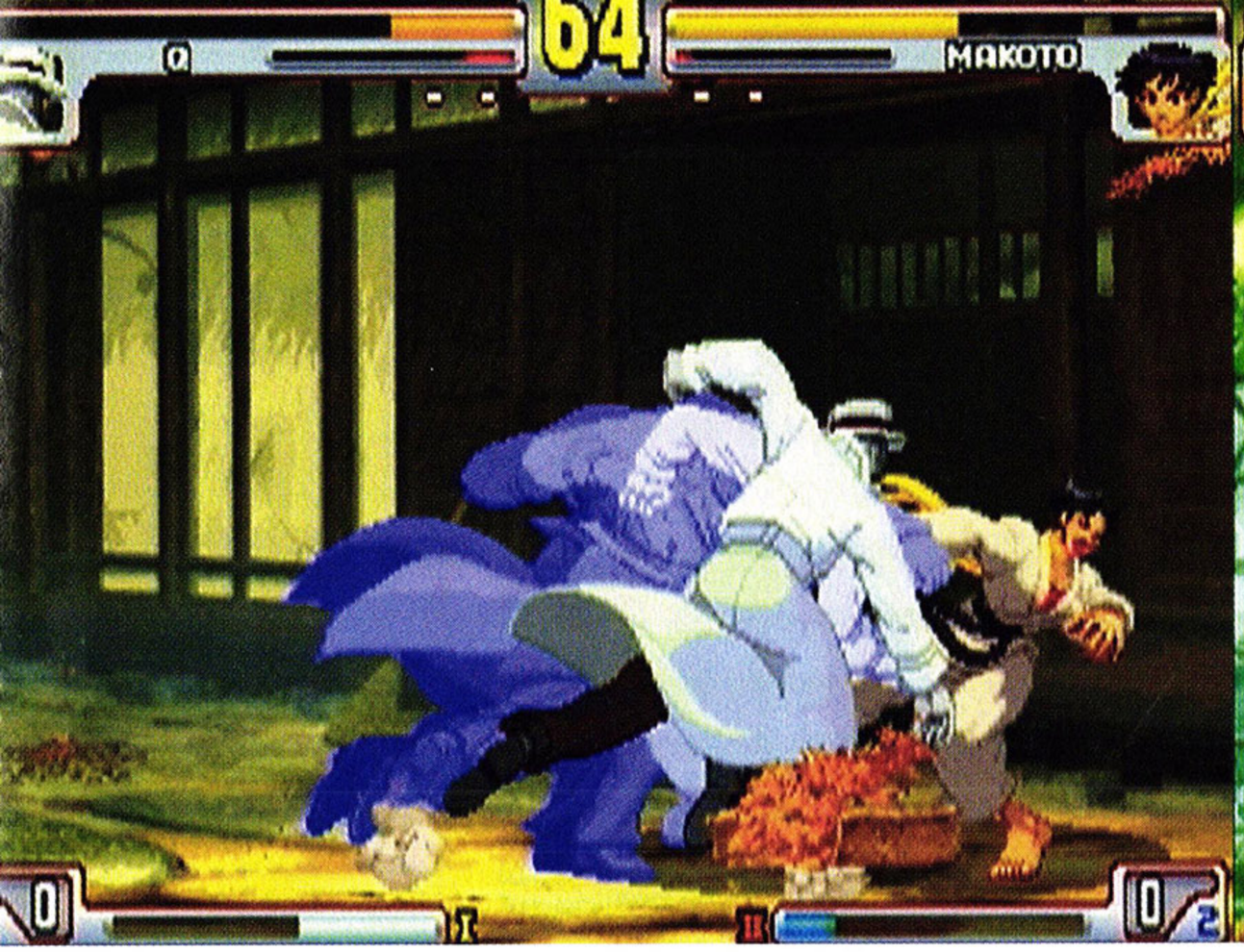
6.5

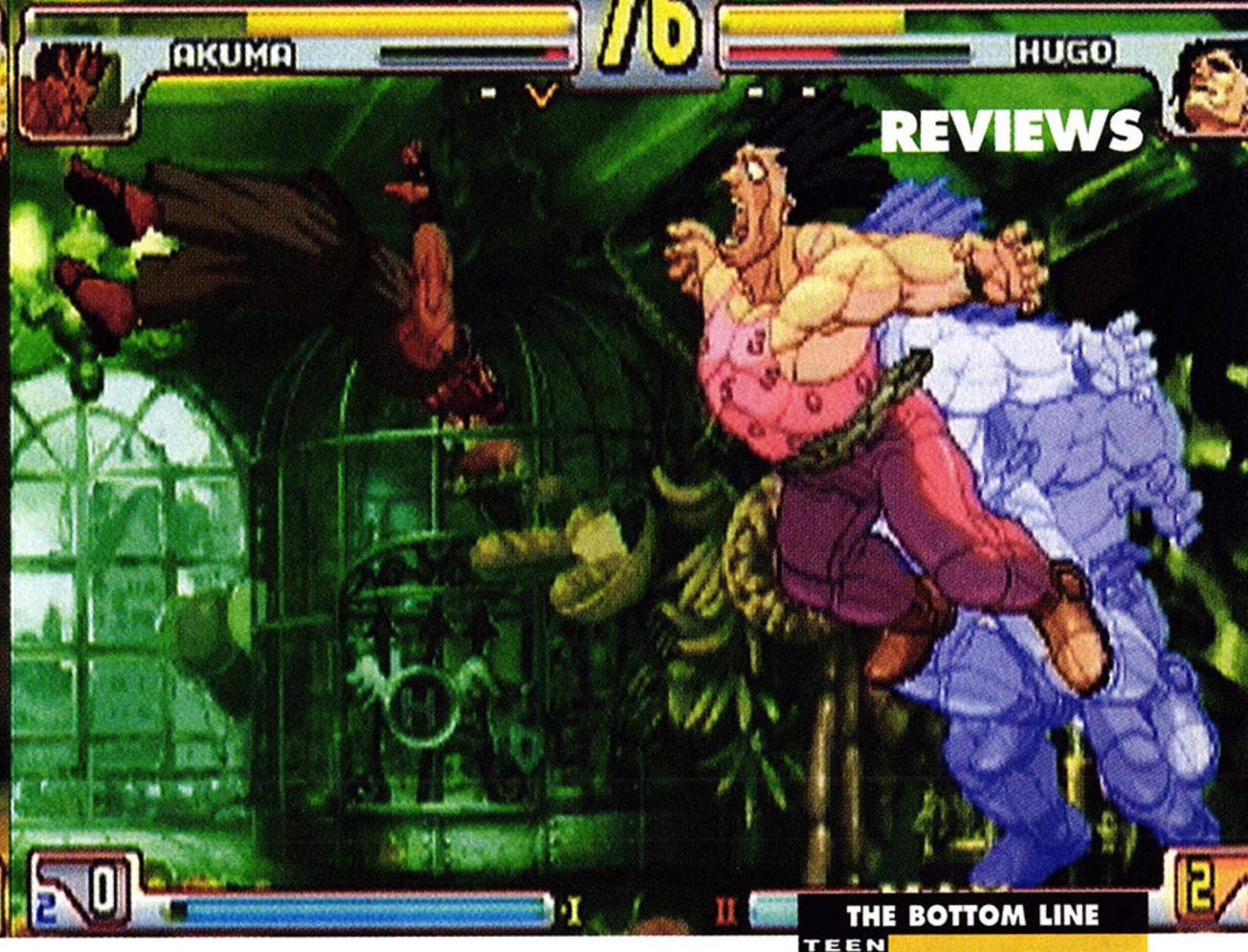
- **Concept:** Todd McFarlane's hellions take it to the streets deathmatch style
- **Graphics:** Achieving the impossible, Capcom made Lucifer's lair look beautiful
- **Sound:** Heavy metal in hell!!!
- **Playability:** Too many cheap deaths and a wandering camera come together to create a frustrating package
- **Entertainment:** Unlocking new characters sparks interest, but the dysfunctional play drives you away
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

SECOND OPINION

The mass mayhem and multitude of characters in Spawn may have made it an attractive quarter muncher in the arcades, but I personally couldn't care less for this absurd game. The camera is so out of control that you can't even see your enemies half the time whether you know they are there or not. Furthermore, if you don't kill with one rapid bout of attacks, your enemy will fall down and then become temporarily invincible for enough time to do you in for a free kill. This forces you to frequently punch and then run for your life from an opponent that you just wiped out. The level of chaos and instantaneous death is fairly entertaining for a little while, but getting nailed by opponents you couldn't see or target because the camera was weaving like a drunken sailor becomes exponentially more irritating as the game progresses. Spawn's rightful place is with his master.

ERIK – 5.25





DREAMCAST

STREET FIGHTER III: 3RD STRIKE

ENHANCED...BUT STILL THE SAME DISH

Many years from now, when the Dreamcast is but a faint memory, I hypothesize that Sega's pride and joy will be remembered as "the fighting machine." At the pace Capcom's going now, I wouldn't be surprised if the Dreamcast library eventually reaches a mark where 50% of its games are Capcom fighters. In June, Capcom added to its massive collection by releasing Street Fighter III: Double Impact. In the quickest turn around of all-time – three months – Capcom distributed the follow-up, Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike.

As expected, this Street Fighter venture is a straight-up arcade conversion, offering little in the way of bonus features. It doesn't offer a gigantic Adventure mode, or any significant console-exclusive material. On the other hand, when you compare this update to the other two titles in the SF III series, it offers plenty of changes. Along with four killer new characters and the return of Chun-Li, Capcom has tweaked the fighting chemistry by implementing the Progressive Hit Frame System (PHFS). This new combat element enables more realistic collision boxes and hit frames. Basically, each contact point has been streamlined to one frame of animation. Since the game moves so quickly, you really don't notice the change, until you learn how to parry. By stepping into your opponents at the exact second they attack, you'll block their moves and counter. The parries don't happen all too often, but when you pull one off, the feeling is sweet.

Not exactly the most stellar of additions, Capcom has also implemented a Grade Judge System that rates the player at the end of the match. This does little more than show your friends how tough you really are. Other than this, a few new animations, a couple of new backdrops, and some new effects, this is the same Street Fighter you've played for the last ten years.

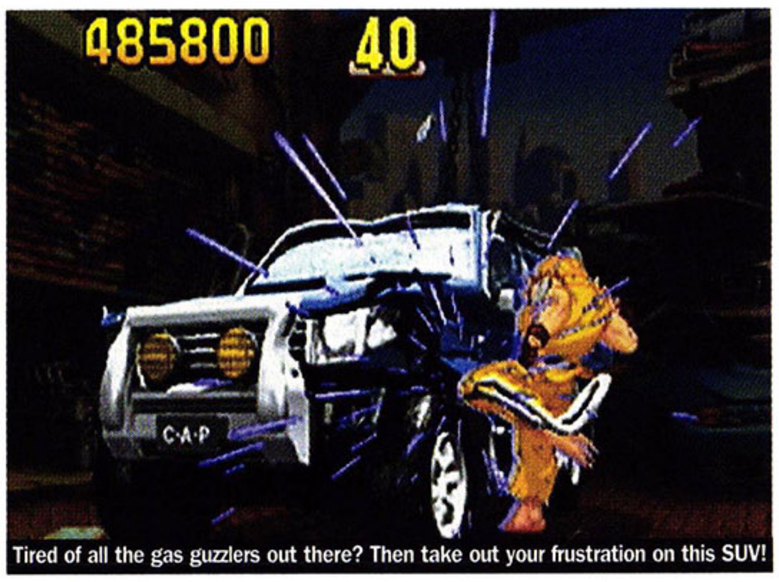
Personally, I love this series to death, and whenever I start playing a new version, I find myself completely engrossed in the fray. Many of you are probably saying, "This is SF overkill," but I beg to differ. This is an amazing fighting venture that offers a difficult challenge and a varying stable of characters. The backgrounds could come equipped with a few more animations, but other than this, the game is bloody brilliant. The gameplay rocks, the soundtrack rocks, and once again, Street Fighter rocks the Dreamcast like nobody's business! – **REINER**

Makoto will join Ken and Ryu as a fan favorite

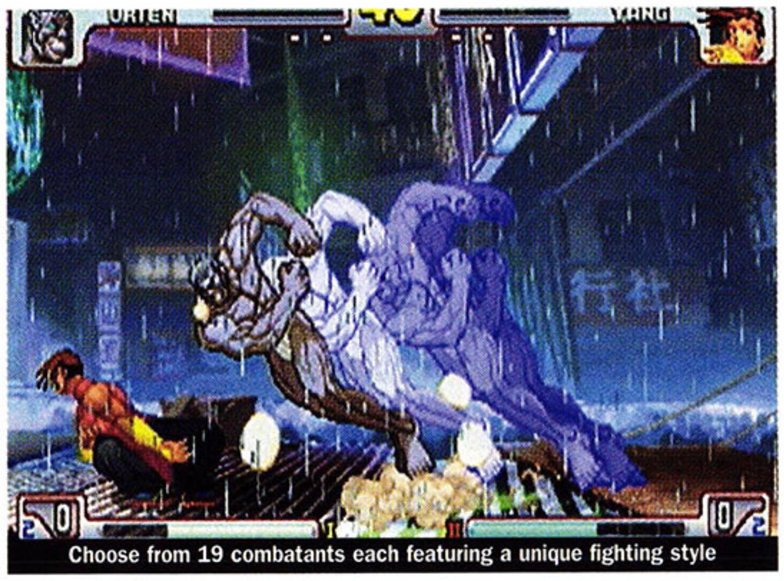
Plot your destiny

The new PHFS system makes the competition even tougher

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER FIGHTING ■ **PUBLISHER** CAPCOM ■ **DEVELOPER** CAPCOM ■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 20



Tired of all the gas guzzlers out there? Then take out your frustration on this SUV!



Choose from 19 combatants each featuring a unique fighting style

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

8.25

- **Concept:** An arcade port with little in the way of options
- **Graphics:** The fluidity of animation and background detailing vary little from the arcade version
- **Sound:** Rockin'!!!
- **Playability:** The five new characters are wonderful additions, and the PHFS makes the fighting more precise
- **Entertainment:** Yet another stellar fighter from Capcom
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike is yet another addition to the biggest and fastest growing franchise in the video game universe. Capcom has a knack for adding little touches here and there, and unleashing a "brand new" SF product on the market, and here is where the trouble begins. Like many of the Street Fighter faithful out there, I always enjoy it. It's getting kinda sad too, as I always promise myself after each SF review that I'm not gonna let Capcom sucker me into another, but every time I get wrapped up in the fighting madness again. Sure I've done it before, but there always seems to be enough new things to make it worth my time (like the incredibly dope soundtrack, improved parry system, and new characters). Love it or leave it, SF III: 3rd Strike is a solid title that fans will want to play.

ANDY – 7.75

DREAMCAST

TOKYO XTREME RACER 2

ILLEGAL LATE NIGHT ACTION

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

8.5

The original Tokyo Xtreme Racer was a mediocre title, hampered by a shortage of tracks and drab environments. Given that it followed so closely on the heels of the first, I expected TXR 2 to be little more than a quick and easy update. Soon after I turned on my Dreamcast, my preconceptions were shattered as it quickly became obvious that a lot of time and effort was spent turning this game into a racing powerhouse. The car models are gorgeous, catching brilliant reflections from the city lights speeding by. Although I suspect that the night-racing theme might be a convenient way to hide pop-up, the environments are detailed, and there is a much wider variety of tracks this time around.

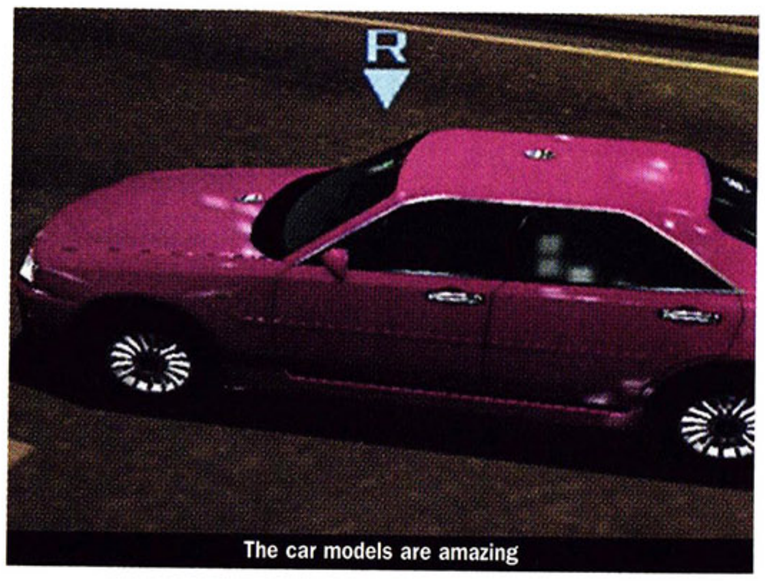
Once you warm to the rather obscure street rod culture that spawned this title, it becomes very compelling. There are loads of upgrade options, allowing amateur mechanics endless opportunities to tweak their rides. TXR 2 can stand toe-to-toe with the best of the DC racers. Hats off to Genki for turning an average game into a serious contender. – **MATT**

- **Concept:** There are more tracks than in the first, and a ton of new upgrades
- **Graphics:** Leagues better than its predecessor, TXR 2 looks as good as any home console racer on the market, with the possible exception of Ridge Racer V
- **Sound:** Will generic techno music ever go out of style in video games?
- **Playability:** Along with the graphical improvements, the control has been tightened up considerably
- **Entertainment:** If you have the patience to get through the easy preliminary races, this game will have you strung out
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

When I heard Tokyo Xtreme Racer had a sequel on the way, I wondered, why bother? After playing it, the reason is obvious. This game makes its predecessor look like a total piece of crap. The gameplay is simple enough for the casual racer, yet there are enough upgrading and modifying options to keep the gearheads happy as well. There is the occasional hiccup where the game pauses for a split-second, but other than this, Tokyo Xtreme Racer 2 is an attractive, deep, original, and, most importantly, intense racing game. It almost makes me look forward to a Tokyo Xtreme Racer 3!

JAY – 8.5



The car models are amazing

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** CRAVE ■ **DEVELOPER** GENKI
■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 26

DREAMCAST

NFL BLITZ 2001

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

5.25

Just like the late NBA Jam, the Blitz franchise has overstayed its welcome. In an attempt to make this game more realistic, Midway has eliminated the fast-paced arcade experience that put this title on the map, and substituted an obscure gameplay formula that does little more than get on your nerves. Just like a race horse with a broken leg, Midway needs to put this series out of its misery. BANG! – **REINER**

- **Concept:** High-powered, smash-mouth football meets the NFL
- **Graphics:** The same graphics we've seen for the last four years...plus new animations!!!
- **Sound:** Loud and obnoxious
- **Playability:** Adding more realism completely destroyed the arcade aspect
- **Entertainment:** Fun for first time users, deadly for everyone else
- **Replay Value:** Moderately low

SECOND OPINION

I thought last year's game was a great arcade translation, but this game is getting pretty tired. Spend your football dollars on 2K1.

PAUL – 4

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** MIDWAY HOME ENTERTAINMENT
■ **DEVELOPER** MIDWAY HOME ENTERTAINMENT ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 12

DREAMCAST

QUARTERBACK CLUB 2001

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

2.5

Anything would be better than last year's Dreamcast effort from Acclaim. Then again, maybe not. It isn't quite as crappy as last year's, but it's pretty darn close. When you compare this game to NFL 2K1, it is really laughable, as Acclaim comes nowhere close to that quality title. Why the heck would Acclaim even consider releasing this junk? I've played a lot of football games, and this has to be one of the worst I've had the displeasure of playing. – **PAUL**

- **Concept:** Are you sure this is football?
- **Graphics:** Poor animation and framerate make the look laughable
- **Sound:** Adequate, but nothing spectacular
- **Playability:** Yuck, this game is a pile of junk
- **Entertainment:** The fun lies in looking at how inferior this is to NFL 2K1
- **Replay Value:** Low

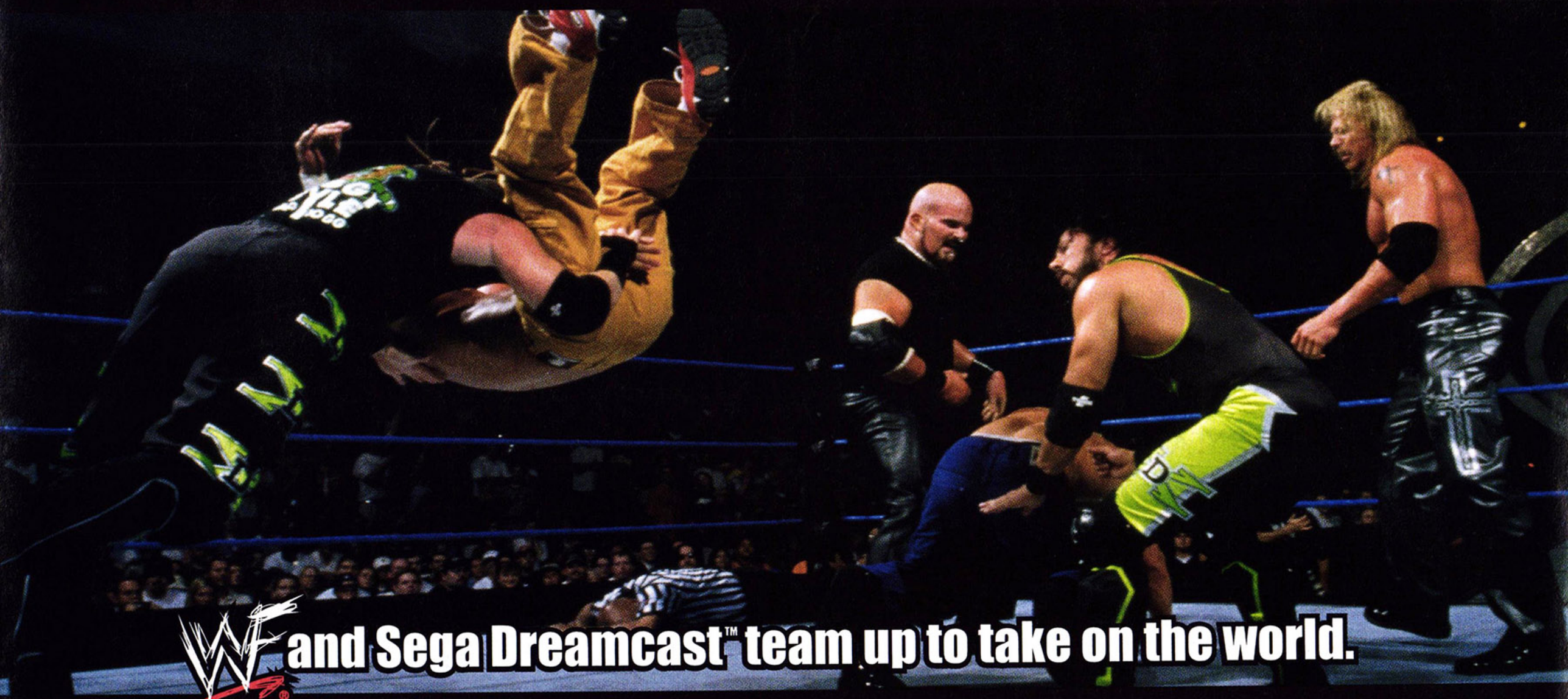
SECOND OPINION

How bad does this game look? Jay walked by my desk when I was working on this review and thought I was playing the N64 version. Rest assured – QBC 2001 plays as bad as it looks.

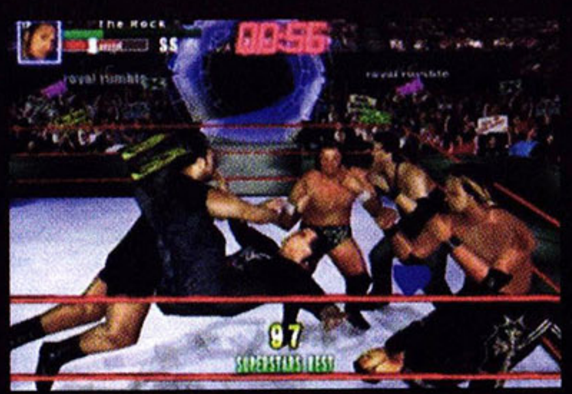
MATT – 4

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM ■ **DEVELOPER** HIGH VOLTAGE
■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 22

Do you have the grapefruits to get in the ring with these guys?



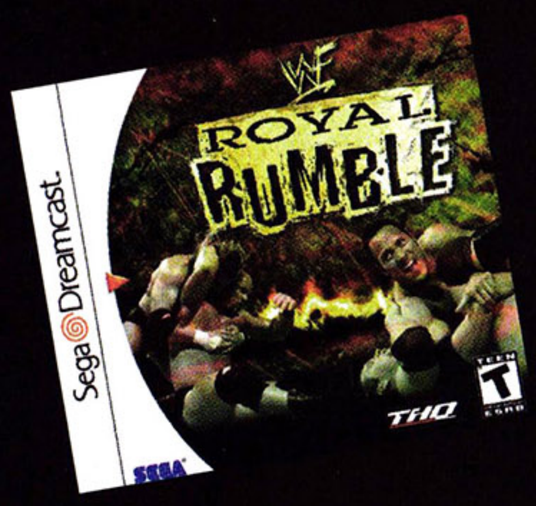
WF and Sega Dreamcast™ team up to take on the world.



Nine WF Superstars in the ring at once. This is gonna get ugly.

Can't handle the heat? Stay out of the kitchen. Or the boiler room. Or the parking Lot.

All's fair in the WF. When you're getting' whupped, call in a partner to help you out.



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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Violence
Suggestive Themes

Sega Dreamcast.

DREAMCAST

SEGA MARINE FISHING

THE BEST SEGA GAME INVOLVING FISH RELEASED THIS YEAR

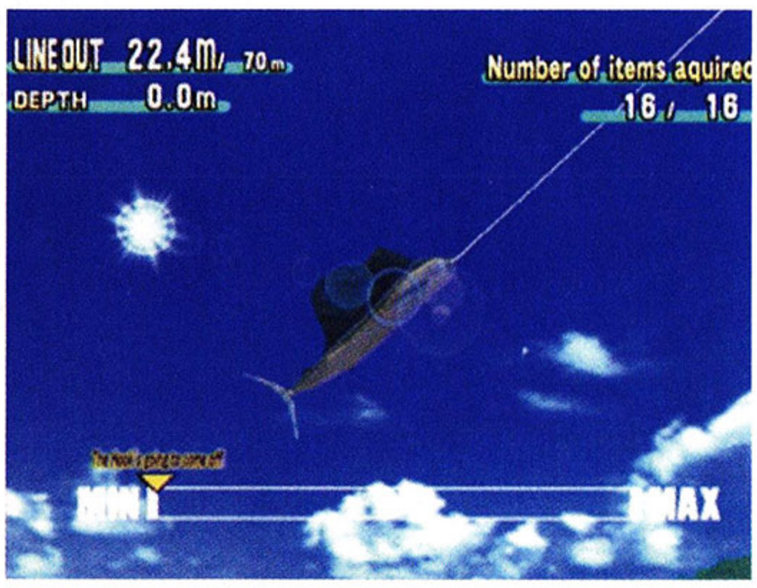
THE BOTTOM LINE
EVERYONE
8

- **Concept:** The greater variety of fishing spots and underwater wildlife puts this slightly above Sega Bass Fishing
- **Graphics:** The colorful and realistic fish models dazzle, but why is he wearing a fanny pack?
- **Sound:** I think I have a crush on the über-macho announcer
- **Playability:** The gameplay still emphasizes action over simulation, but it's a little more difficult this time around
- **Entertainment:** The diversity of species turns looking for huge lunkers into an obsession
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

After playing Ecco the Dolphin, the last thing I wanted to do was play another underwater game. Then I remembered that Sega Marine Fishing was the sequel to Sega Bass Fishing, one of my favorite games of the Dreamcast launch. First off, I should warn you that there is no point in playing this game if you don't have the Sega fishing rod controller. Go out and get one immediately. Back yet? Okay, let's continue.

I admire the way Sega has made the control such a physical experience, something few games attempt. Hook a big hog, and you'll be jumping out of your seat, wildly cranking the reel and jerking your pole like Pee Wee at an all-night theater. Sega Marine Fishing also improves over its predecessor by totally abandoning any sense of realism. Someone must have crashed an oil tanker filled with steroids in this ocean, because these suckers are huge! I swear the shark I pulled in made Jaws look like a guppie. Sega has also added some new minigames, and an aquarium where you can store and view your catches.

Sure, there isn't a lot of depth to Sega Marine Fishing; the Arcade mode is over pretty quickly. But who cares? This is a great party game, and unlike real fishing, you don't have to get sunburned and drunk to enjoy yourself. – **MATT**



SECOND OPINION

I don't believe it, but I actually got hooked by a fishing game. Normally, I couldn't care less about simulating an outdoor activity where the prime enjoyment comes from...well, being outdoors. Sega Marine Fishing, however, cuts to the chase and creates an entertaining arcade experience, where the locations are preselected and all you have to do is fish. Actually hooking the fish is pretty easy, but duking it out with some of the bigger ones had me frantically giving slack and pulling just to keep the line from snapping. I was literally cursing when they got away, and beaming with pride when I pulled in something bigger than a medium-sized dog. It's the coolest fishing game I've ever played.

ERIK – 8.5

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA ■ **DEVELOPER** SEGA
■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 26

DREAMCAST

JEREMY MCGRATH'S SUPERCROSS 2000

CAN'T...TAKE...ANOTHER... SUPERCROSS...GAME...

THE BOTTOM LINE
EVERYONE
3.75

- **Concept:** I truly believe it's possible to do a fun motocross game, but this thing is a pile of poopie
- **Graphics:** Is this the Dreamcast?
- **Sound:** "Weeeeeee Weeeeee Mrfmfrml Jermfl McGrfl Weeeee Weeeeee"
- **Playability:** Don't worry, you'll hit a lot of walls, but you can still win even if you never read the instructions
- **Entertainment:** I'd rather watch Bob Saget play with Lincoln Logs
- **Replay Value:** Low

Dear God! It's worse than the PlayStation version. The graphics, camera angles, collision, challenge, physics, and upgrade options are all dull, messed up, or somehow below that very low bar that has been set by the other mediocre motocross games that have come out so far. Somebody had to playtest this game. Day in and out, playing nothing but this twisted mockery of racing. A truer vision of hell, I have never known. – **ERIK**

SECOND OPINION

With horrific gameplay, appalling graphics, annoying sounds, and a general air of raunchitude, this is motocross at its worst.

REINER – 3.5

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER RACING ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM ■ **DEVELOPER** ACCLAIM
■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 8

DREAMCAST

RAILROAD TYCOON II

DRIVIN' THAT TRAIN...

THE BOTTOM LINE
EVERYONE
5

- **Concept:** A hardcore strategy game which is missing the promised online feature
- **Graphics:** A revamped engine pales in comparison to the detailed computer game
- **Sound:** Whoo! Whoo! There's nothing bad nor good here
- **Playability:** Talk about cumbersome, too bad there is no mouse
- **Entertainment:** If you've got a lot of time to figure it out, go for it
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

The PC crowd went gaga over this one, but this dumbed-down version is not cool at all. I think that with some time, I might be able to get into this game. There are plenty of strategies and varibles that you can tinker and toy with. However, I would rather devote my DC playing to something a little more exciting. Moving cattle and grain is not too thrilling. To top it off, this game was previously promoted as having online capabilities and there are none to be found. If you have a PC, go get that version and leave this one on the shelf – **PAUL**

SECOND OPINION

It bored me on the PS-X and the Dreamcast's sharper visuals didn't get me any more interested in lugging cargo back and forth just so I could get better trains to lug some more.

ERIK – 6

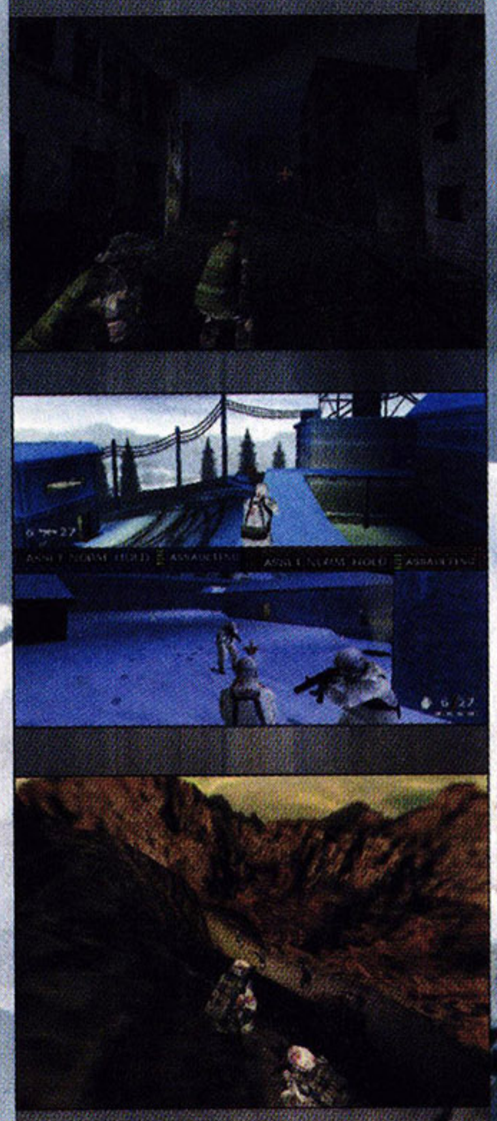
■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** GATHERING OF DEVELOPERS ■ **DEVELOPER** POPTOP/TREMOR ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 7

Tom Clancy's

RAINBOW SIX™ ROGUE SPEAR™

INCLUDING: MISSION PACK: URBAN OPERATIONS

ONE SHOT ONE KILL!



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Red Storm Entertainment

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Dreamcast™

PIPE DREAM

PC

BALDUR'S GATE II: SHADOWS OF AMN

THE MOST ANTICIPATED RPG OF THE YEAR

"After a full day of playing, I came to the realization that I had only scratched the surface of this massive game."

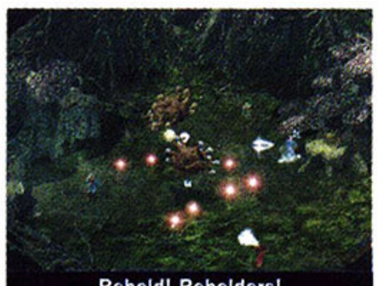
Role-playing games seemed almost dead in the face of the much more popular real-time strategy and first-person shooter games that have dominated the PC gaming scene for so long. It took Interplay's incredibly popular Fallout to get everyone to snap out of the haze they were in and realize that a computer RPG that attempted to emulate its pencil-and-paper forebears was not such a bad idea. In fact, such RPGs had been incredibly popular a few years back in SSI's long running AD&D gold box series.

Eventually Interplay struck its own gold with the immensely popular Baldur's Gate. Based on the 2nd Edition Advanced Dungeons & Dragons role-playing rules, Baldur's permanently reestablished the floundering RPG as a staple of the PC gaming experience. It was loaded with lavishly detailed environments and actually managed to capture many of the finer elements of the original pencil-and-paper RPG.

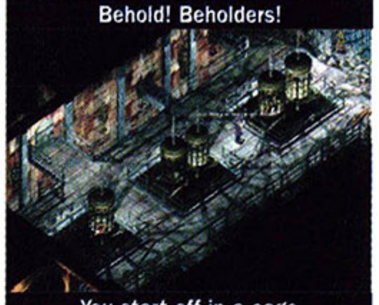
Set in the Forgotten Realms, BioWare did an excellent job of providing plenty of cameo appearances by popular characters from that world. Players got to meet up with the likes of Drizzt, the deadly dark elf converted to the cause of good, and Realms creator Jeff Grubb's alter ego, Elminster. Town and dungeon backgrounds meshed well with the art from the role-playing books and novels of Forgotten Realms, making you feel even more like you had just stepped into one of the novels or adventures.

BioWare has done it again, only this time they've thown in a whole heck of a lot more options into the game, and expanded the breadth of the adventure by leaps and bounds. Players have the option of importing their old character from Baldur's Gate, but while you keep all of your abilities, you will lose all of your magic items. Players starting a new game will have the option of selecting from a wide variety of kits that expand on the regular classes with new advantages and disadvantages, and three new classes translated back from 3rd Edition.

Graphically speaking, Baldur's II hasn't changed much. There are new 3D accelerated spell effects and a higher resolution mode that allows you to get a wider view of the action, but the overall look is the same. However, the new plot, wealth of new character options, and gigantic world are truly astounding. After a full day of playing, I came to the realization that I had only scratched the surface of this massive game. Check the lists for new features and enhancements to the game. They practically write their own review. – **ERIK**



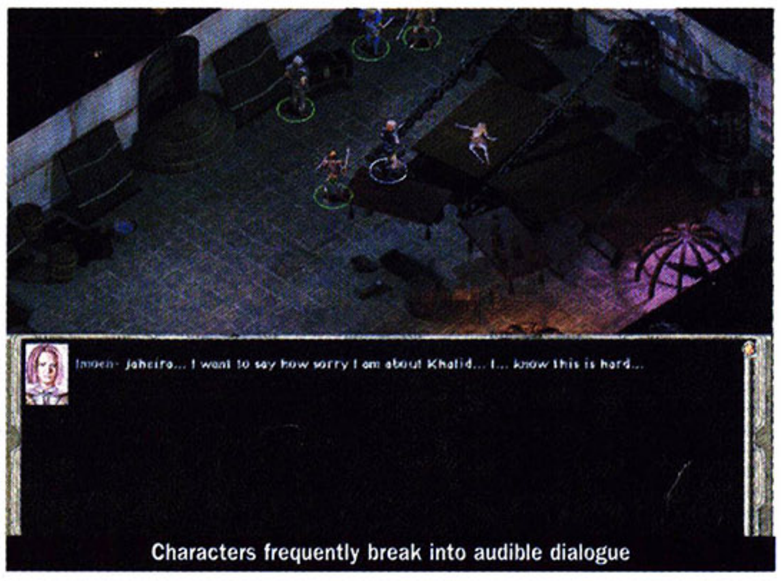
Behold! Beholders!



You start off in a cage

Curse you, Mephits!

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 6-PLAYER ROLE-PLAYING GAME ■ **PUBLISHER** INTERPLAY ■ **DEVELOPER** BIOWARE CORP/BLACK ISLE STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 15



Characters frequently break into audible dialogue

These vivacious vixens need your help

FEATURES

The Experience Cap: BioWare has raised the bar on the experience cap considerably, allowing most characters to get to the high teen levels.

Spells: There are now 300 total spells compared to the first game's 130, and 9th level magic can be cast from scrolls and items.

New classes and kits: See the sidebar for all of the character class options available to you in the game. There are also three new classes from 3rd Edition.

AI Scripting: You can now select basic AI scripts for your party like Aggressive Fighter or Defensive Thief. An AI Scripting compiler will be included in the game that allows you to design your own customized AIs.

Larger World: Approximately 50 hours if you ignore all the side quests, but over 200 hours if you see everything.

Strongholds: For each of the primary class types, there is a special quest that allows you to acquire a stronghold. For instance, fighters can earn a castle with a full complement of henchmen that they can use as a base of operations and even defend from full scale attacks. Each of these quests is 10 to 12 hours long.

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB **9.5**

- **Concept:** A really huge RPG with a ton of character creation options, magic items, and unique powers
- **Graphics:** The graphics have only improved slightly, but they are still way above par
- **Sound:** The ambient sounds and voice acting are excellent
- **Playability:** It takes a while to learn your way around everything, but this is only because there is so much to do
- **Entertainment:** It's almost overwhelming how much you can do in this game, but help is only a right-click away
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

BALDUR'S GATE II CLASSES AND KITS

Fighter Kits
Berserker
Wizard Slayer
Kensai

Ranger Kits
Archer
Stalker
Beast Master

Paladin Kits
Cavalier
Inquisitor
Undead Hunter

Cleric Kits
Priest of Talos
Priest of Helm
Priest of Lathander

Druid Kits
Totemic Druid
Shape Shifter
Avenger

Mage Kits
The 8 Schools of Specialization

Thief Kits
Assassin
Bounty Hunter
Swashbuckler

Bard Kits
Blade
Jester
Skald

NEW 3RD EDITION CHARACTER CLASSES

BioWare has converted the three new classes from 3rd Edition and translated them to 2nd Ed. rules.

Barbarian: Barbarians are powerful warriors capable of berserking for a huge bonus to their stats.

Monk: Monks fight with their fists without being at a disadvantage against armed opponents.

Sorcerer: Sorcerers do not need to prepare spells in advance, allowing them to use a spell slot to cast any spell they know. They can cast more but know less.

The towns are amazingly detailed

SECOND OPINION

Balder's Gate 2 is without a doubt the best RPG I've played since Ultima 6. For one, the amount of detail this game incorporates is second to none. The manual will be well over 200 pages, and the customization level is simply mind-boggling. The characters are chock full of stats and abilities, and the graphics are awesome. As I was trying to keep from falling off my chair with excitement while playing, I did notice a couple of gameplay hiccups, but nothing that detracts from the experience. There is no way any self-respecting RPG fan will pass this up. Simply put, Balder's Gate 2 is elevating the RPG playing field. Hundreds of hours of play time are predicted. However, I suspect the average player will not only surpass the expected time forecast, but will forgo basic hygiene and sustenance until they collapse from exhaustion. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to get back to my game.

KRISTIAN – 9.5

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB **8.25**

PC

CRIMSON SKIES

TALESPIN WITHOUT THE ANIMALS

- **Concept:** Fast action set in an unusual, but cool, alternate history
- **Graphics:** The graphics are pretty until you get close to the ground
- **Sound:** Plenty of humorous voice-overs from larger-than-life characters and a great soundtrack
- **Playability:** Jump in and start flying. It's that easy
- **Entertainment:** Not a game for sticklers of realism, but most will have a blast if their PCs are up to date
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

In Crimson Skies, you fly around in an alternate reality version of the United States and shoot things. It's your average flight sim, but it's well done and entertaining. CS is set in 1936 as prop planes and zeppelins are enjoying their heyday. Interestingly enough, zeppelins serve as the base platforms for most of the pirate groups. Anyone who has ever seen footage of the Hindenberg knows that zeppelins are less than rugged. This doesn't seem to bother the zeppelins in CS, and you'll see why as you open up your machine guns on them at close range with no result.

Aside from some of these hiccups which occur throughout the game, I found myself grinning as I was able to name my plane (Susie Q), choose my paint scheme, select upgrades, and choose my nose, tail, and wing art once I had made enough money. The missions had well organized and easy to follow mission objectives, and the sound was entertaining.

I did have a couple of high blood pressure moments due to slow framerates during missions. My system is not current, but it's definitely not outdated. If you have a kick ass machine, you probably won't notice. If it's over eight months old, you're in for a choppy experience.

If you have a nice system, and you like flight sims, pick up Crimson Skies. If you have a mediocre system (like mine), and like flight sims, get an upgrade, then get Crimson Skies. – **KRISTIAN**

The planes mix modern prop plane innovations with WWII classics

SECOND OPINION

The second Crimson Skies was up and running, I started enjoying myself immensely. All you need to know is where the trigger and throttle buttons are and you're ready to go. Missions are well put together with plenty of brief real-time cutscenes to let the player know exactly what their next objective is and what it looks like. The game's chief asset is its ambience and character. Whether you're in the middle of a mission or loading a plane up with new ordinance, the game is brimming with audio and period artwork, and all the stereotypical characters you'd expect from a '30s radio serial. The terrain texturing could have used some work, but who cares? All but the most realism-bent flight sim fanatics will love this game. People with older machines should beware, however. Despite the game's relatively low graphic detail, it demands a high-end PC.

ERIK– 8.75

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SHOOTER ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT
■ **DEVELOPER** ZIPPER INTERACTIVE ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 18

Lots of things blow up in the Klingon campaign

Formations? Nah.

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

5

- **Concept:** Star Trek tank battles?
- **Graphics:** Solid except when texture dropout leaves holes in buildings
- **Sound:** Authentic Trek sounds, but there could have been more
- **Playability:** Scrolling across the map is really slow, unit pathfinding bites, and there were so many bugs I thought I had mistakenly installed a preview copy of the game
- **Entertainment:** Neither all that appealing to Star Trek fans nor RTS monkeys
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

Attention Star Trek RTS fans – this game is for you. The intricate controls and numerous units will definitely light your fire. You'll be able to get your game on for a good chunk of time with this one. The scrolling was a bit more palatable for me, but the building polygon integrity was less than wonderful. The sights and sounds of the game were authentic, which is always nice. Now, if you're not an avid Star Trek fan, avoid this game like the plague. All the structure/resource, gathering/unit production was typical for an RTS. The plot line is standard – kill 'em til they die from it. There are some decent battle graphics, but nothing to have a stroke over. While ST gamers may be screaming, "Beam me up, Scottie!!" (yes, I know that was never actually said on the show) after the first couple of missions, the rest of us will be bored, wondering what's on TV.

KRISTIAN – 5.5

"There are a couple things to like about this game, but so many irritating details hampered the experience that I can't justify wanting to play it for more than a sitting."

PC

STAR TREK NEW WORLDS

ECHOES OF STAR TREK V

In Star Trek New Worlds, players can choose from one of three factions: Romulans, Klingons, and of course, the Feds, for another Star Trek RTS experience. It doesn't really matter though. With the exception of cosmetic and name differences, every civilization has the exact same base structures and upgrades, and the same construction and service units. Each race has an APC unit, a standard tank unit, an artillery unit, and one or two special units. While I'm certain the armor and attack values may differ from race to race (the manual wasn't helpful on this subject), the lack of variety is still a serious problem.

On the good side, base construction and resource collection are both interesting. Swarms of worker bee units zip around piecing buildings and upgrades together polygon by polygon. Service and transport units actually haul cargo pods from mines, drop them off at processing centers, and then deliver the goods to storage facilities. Watching bases go through the process of building and resource management has a vague Sim City feel to it, but it isn't sophisticated enough to make up for the game's many shortcomings.

Combat itself is full of cool Star Trek sounds and lighting effects. Unfortunately, the units are as dumb as paint. Unless you micromanage combat, your tanks will get slaughtered by artillery units when they stop in their tracks and start firing, begging to get plastered by photon torpedo shells. Base defenses consist of shield generators, and the same tired phaser/disrupter and artillery weapons technologies for turrets.

While the game does have a solid camera system and plenty of hot keys to jump between base and units, the map scrolling is hideously slow. This is less of a problem because it won't take long to catch up with your units which are even slower, particularly when you consider the game's enormous environments. If you send out an armed platoon to check out potentially hostile territory, it's a serious commitment because they won't be back for a long time.

So here we have it, an attractive RTS with immense environments, and an intriguing resource collection and mining system, but a near total lack of variety between races, slow and unintelligent units, and some seriously lengthy treks across wide terrain with nothing going on. There are a couple things to like about this game, but so many irritating details hampered the experience that I can't justify wanting to play it for more than a sitting. **– ERIK**

The phaser tank

Even Klingon shuttles are ugly

Taking buildings always makes the redshirts in front nervous

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 3-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** INTERPLAY ■ **DEVELOPER** 14° EAST ■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 30

Base management is the one thing to like about this game

You'd think Klingons would understand the concept of superior numbers

PC

AGE OF EMPIRES II: THE CONQUERORS EXPANSION

THE ROAD TO EL ADDICTO

Age of Empires has been the crowning jewel – maybe the only jewel – in Microsoft's game library for a while now. It would be easy for this company that's infamous for money-grubbing tactics to pump out update after update for this best-selling series, yet it doesn't. It's apparent with The Conquerors Expansion that great care is being taken with this franchise.

The list of new units and features are legion. There are five new civilizations, 11 new units, and some new game types; also, every civilization now has a unique technology that often supplements its special units. Ensemble has also addressed many of the bothersome management features, including my personal pet peeve of having to constantly order villagers to replant farms (which can now be queued at mills like soldiers are at barracks). Even the cheap multiplayer tactic of winning the game by building town center after town center and garrisoning villagers within them has been somewhat stymied by 100 stone being added to the town center's cost.

Multiplayer is still the best way to play Age of Empires, but a lot of work has been put into creating entertaining, single-player campaigns. Each of the added civilizations has its own historically-based campaign, all of which I found to be better than those presented in the original.

The Conquerors is such a great expansion, it's practically a sequel onto itself. Even if for some bizarre reason you've tired of Age of Empires II, buying this is sure to revitalize your interest. – **JAY**

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** MICROSOFT ■ **DEVELOPER** ENSEMBLE STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 24

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

9

- **Concept:** Adds more of everything and fixes many formerly niggling features
- **Graphics:** Small people, big buildings; but now with more varied terrain
- **Sound:** New civilization types mean new villagerisms
- **Playability:** Less micro-management required
- **Entertainment:** Addicting as ever
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

Conquerors adds new civilizations, unique units and technologies, and more multiplayer games. What really impressed me, however, was the remarkable effort that was put into tweaking the game to improve unit balancing and overall gameplay. In some cases they went as far as changing a bonus by a measly eight percent. Villagers have been made smarter; plenty of units have been slightly altered; and they even made some more drastic changes like allowing units to garrison battering rams for improved damage and speed. While many of these changes may not be evident to the casual player of the game, AOE II junkies will definitely appreciate some of the finer points that have been addressed.

ERIK – 8.5

PC

SANITY: AIKEN'S ARTIFACT

ICE-T KEEPS IT UNREAL

Ice-T does a cover of "Levitate Me"

In Sanity, players take on the role of an agent (voiced by rapper Ice-T), who is a member of a government agency that has been put in place to deal with psionic criminals. Basically, you run around the environments, knock off hostiles with your special powers and solve the occasional barrier puzzle. The game's star attraction is the 80 psionic talents that you can eventually acquire. Unfortunately, while it was nice to pick up new stuff and try it out, most talents only had one real application. My true source of frustration was that the game's automatic camera system is really slow to react to what direction you're moving in, forcing you to resort to a manual camera which can be really tricky to manage in the middle of a boss battle. Sanity has its perks, but there are far better games out there right now. – **ERIK**

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

5.25

- **Concept:** Getting new powers is cool, but the action is a little too basic
- **Graphics:** Nothing spectacular. Even the psionic effects are kind of tame
- **Sound:** Horrible voice acting. Otherwise the sound is okay
- **Playability:** Easy enough to figure out, although working the camera in the middle of a battle is difficult
- **Entertainment:** Vaguely addictive and lengthy, lacking in panache
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

Note to self: Ice-T + voice acting = Oh darn. He tries hard, he really does, but Sanity: Aiken's Artifact is just not firing on all cylinders. Some interesting fighting abilities just can't pull this one out of the toilet.

KRISTIAN – 6

There is a wide variety of powers in the game

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8 PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** FOX INTERACTIVE ■ **DEVELOPER** MONOLITH ■ **RELEASE** SEPTEMBER 25

The Torkelsons sure love their new Faux Bear Rug

PC

THE SIMS: LIVIN' LARGE

JONESIN' FOR GOOD UPKEEP

The Living Large expansion pack offers 100 new items to stock and decorate your house with, as well as a host of new body types and visits from unusual characters like the Grim Reaper. Oddly enough, there was so much crap to play with in the first game that the 100 new items are stretched pretty thin between all the different categories. The five new career types are probably the biggest thing to get excited about. A great pack for the Sims fan who's done it all and craves more, but the casual player who doesn't need to see everything may be disappointed. Check the Internet for downloads first. – **ERIK**

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7

- **Concept:** House building offers more options, but there could have been more new things happening
- **Graphics:** Fires could use an update, but the graphics are fine
- **Sound:** Vin! Grau! Afaftehasenbenwerti. Listening to them talk still rocks and the music is hilarious
- **Playability:** The learning curve is still somewhat lengthy but worth the payoff
- **Entertainment:** The Sims will never get old, but this expansion hasn't pulled me back from other games I enjoy
- **Replay Value:** High

SECOND OPINION

If you don't mind the sphincter-clenchingly irritating AOL splash screen during the installation, Livin' Large is well worth the sticker price. Word to your Sim Mother.

KRISTIAN – 8.5

Unfortunately, it's even more flammable than the real thing

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS
■ **DEVELOPER** MAXIS ■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 31

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

8

PC

HOMEWORLD: CATACLYSM

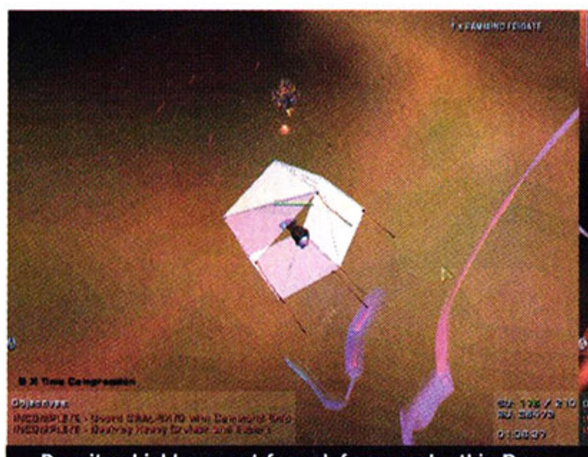
YUMMY REHASH BROWNS

If I understand the situation correctly, Barking Dog Studios took the original Homeworld, tweaked the engine slightly, and added one set of new units. There are two central sides to the conflict, but one of them (The Beast) simply takes over other people's units and only has a couple unique ships of its own.

Single-player mode remains the same short but sweet experience, but you can only fight with Kiith Somtaaw's vessels, dragging down replay value for the single player. It's irritating that Barking Dog started with a finished engine in their hands, and all Homeworld fans get out of it is a new set of ships, 17 new missions, and some slightly enhanced multiplayer features. Fortunately, the new vessels are incredibly cool.

Homeworld fans won't kick themselves for picking this game up, but I have to recommend the original over Cataclysm. I've said it before and I'll say it again – online is important, but the single-player experience remains every bit as significant for PC gamers, especially now that the Web has been overrun by the very people we play games to avoid in the first place. – **ERIK**

Mimics imitate enemy ships so they can get close enough for a deadly kamikaze run



Despite shield support from defense pods, this Ram Frigate doesn't have a chance

The Hive class Drone Frigate makes the old puppeteer look silly

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 8-PLAYER STRATEGY ■ **PUBLISHER** SIERRA STUDIOS
■ **DEVELOPER** RELIC/BARKING DOG STUDIOS ■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 29

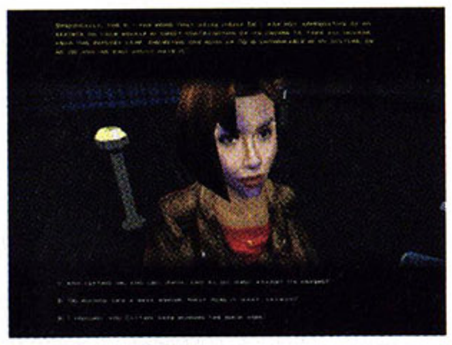
- **Concept:** Homeworld's interface is fantastic
- **Graphics:** The graphics won't blow you away, but the animated detail of the ships is very cool
- **Sound:** Anytime you can recognize a game just by a few sound effects, it's a good thing
- **Playability:** A lengthy learning curve, but once you get it down you won't forget a thing
- **Entertainment:** The experience is the same and the new units are cool
- **Replay Value:** Moderately high

SECOND OPINION

Barking Dog has done what Hollywood dreams of doing – releasing a sequel that doesn't suck. In fact, BD has done quite well here. Not only does Cataclysm not suck, it rocks. Prepare to drink a lot of caffeine and stay up much too late when you slam this baby in your drive for the first time. I found myself actally enjoying the training missions. By the time I was ready to enter the fray, I was a lean, mean Cataclysm playin' machine. The graphics may leave a bit to be desired, but the cool plot and addictive gameplay more than make up for it. Let me ask you – Do you like saying, "Booya, Grandma. Booya?" Because if you do, run to the store and get Cataclysm. All of you Homeworld purists can rest easy. Gameplay has not been sacrificed for lame additions, and the plot has kept its original integrity.

KRISTIAN – 8.5

An Avenging Angel



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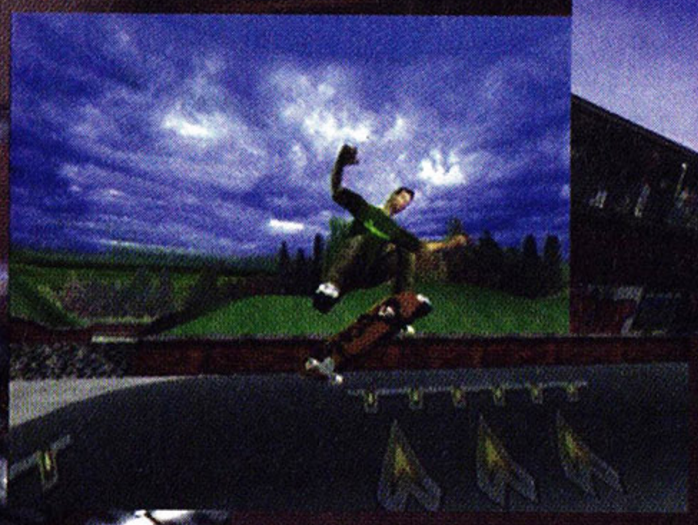
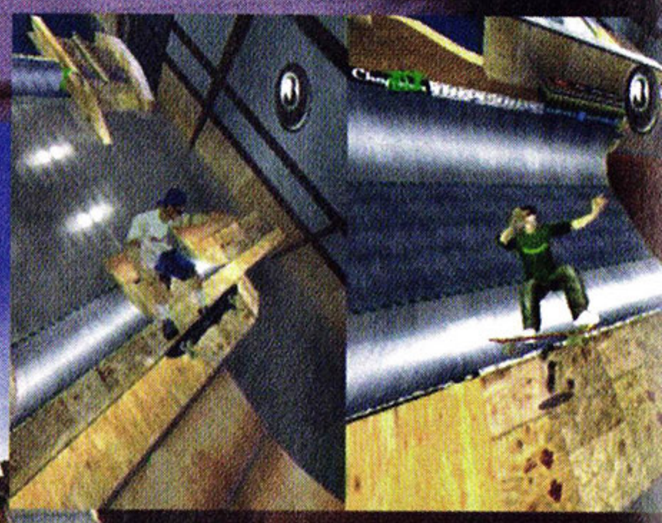
Andy Macdonald
1999 X-Games Gold Medal, Vert Doubles
1999 World Cup Vert & Overall Combined Champion
World Record for Longest Skateboard Jump - 56' 10.75"





Featured Skaters-Andy Macdonald
Danny Way
Colin Mckay
Rick Howard
Brian Howard
Rob Dyrdek
Josh Kalis
Stevie Williams
Alan Petersen
Keith Hufnagel
Jen O'Brien
Salvador Barbier
Scott Johnston
Heidi Fitzgerald

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EVERYONE
E
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Mild Animated Violence
Mild Language

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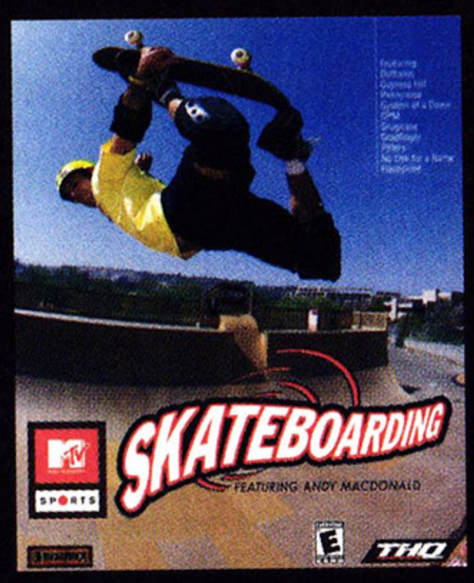
Flashpoint



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NINTENDO 64

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK

YOU HAVE THREE DAYS TO SAVE THE WORLD

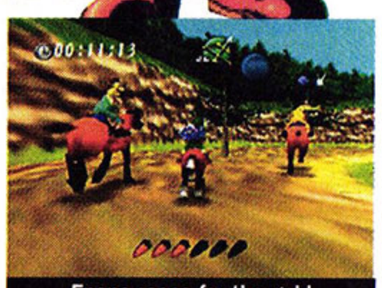
"Majora's Mask is Miyamoto's magnum opus."

As I've said many times before, Shigeru Miyamoto is the George Lucas of video games, and Zelda is his Star Wars. At this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo, an exuberant Miyamoto greeted the gaming press and openly admitted that his latest endeavor, Majora's Mask, is his best work yet. After spending a significant amount of time in Zelda's new world, I heartily agree. Majora's Mask is Miyamoto's magnum opus.

Majora's Mask achieves the highest of accolades for its excellence in gameplay, its dynamic storytelling, and for being one of the most innovative titles in recent history. Instead of rehashing the same story Link's been engrossed in for the last ten years, Majora's Mask is the first true sequel in the Zelda series. Ganon is gone, the princess is but a faint memory, and everything else is brand spanking new. A nice touch on Miyamoto's part, Link occasionally reflects to consequential scenes from Ocarina of Time. Along with these flashbacks, Link displays more emotion, making him less of a static character. A new chapter in the Zelda legacy should be more than enough to warrant a purchase, but it's just one of the small changes that makes this game so incredible.

Since this follow-up is running on the same engine as Ocarina of Time, most of the character movement and menu management is identical. The slick three button inventory system remains, and most of Link's powerful weapons make a return. Whether it was foreshadowing on Miyamoto's part or not, the masks from the first adventure play an important role in this game. By wearing different masks, Link can either transform into a different species, or simply gain new powers. Above and beyond this, and tying into the heart of the story, the entire game takes place within 72 hours. Unlike earth, time flies in Zelda's world, and each day only lasts 20 minutes. This means the game ends abruptly in under an hour. The brilliant aspect of this is that the player must finish a number of tasks as quickly as possible, then play the Ocarina to return to the beginning of day one, hoping that the events they've completed will change the next 72 hours.

Slapping a timer onto every second of the game creates intense pandemonium and requires split-second decision making. Other than being one of the most inventive premises in all of gaming, Majora's Mask electrifies in every way possible. From graphical detailing and classic sound effects to the intriguing plot and gameplay, this Zelda is a triumph. Without question, Majora's Mask is the finest adventure the Nintendo 64 has to offer. **– REINER**

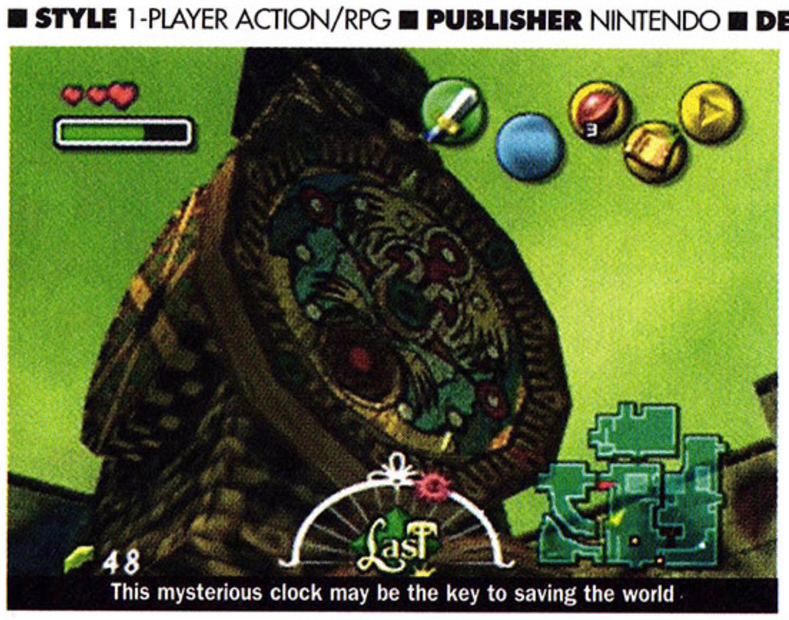


Epona races for the gold

Wearing masks allows Link to change into different races like a Goron...

...and a Deku!

■ STYLE 1-PLAYER ACTION/RPG **■ PUBLISHER** NINTENDO **■ DEVELOPER** NINTENDO **■ RELEASE** OCTOBER 26



This mysterious clock may be the key to saving the world

This strange mask collector is closely tied to the chaos at hand

GUERRILLA WARFARE

Sharing the same innovative makeover as the story and gameplay, the bosses in Majora's Mask are brilliant adversaries that usually require obscure tactics to defeat. Just like the Ganon encounters in Ocarina of Time, to topple these hostile hooligans you'll often be required to use multiple weapons, powers, and masks. As intended, these bosses are very difficult, and with the clock ticking as you try to figure out there weaknesses, extremely frustrating as well.

MARVELOUS MINUTIA

To break up the quest and lower the stress level, a handful of interesting minigames have been added. Along with a Pokémon Snap-like photo shoot, horse riding and wacky mask related capers await. Most of these events are optional, but some of the rewards cannot be missed. You may just find yourself winning a weapon, song, or mask that changes the entire way that you play the game.

THE MUSIC MAN

Just like the last game, Link relies heavily on his Ocarina. With it he can speed up time, compress time, create clone images, summon storms, heal, and call his trusty steed, Epona. In Ocarina of Time, playing music was used only to trigger key events. In Majora's Mask, you'll need to use it extensively. Your life, and the well being of everyone in the world, weighs heavily on your ability to blow soothing melodies through an awkward piece of wood.

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

9.75

- **Concept:** A new adventure brimming with innovative qualities
- **Graphics:** Equipped with amazing cinematics and out of this world spectacles
- **Sound:** Using an enhanced 8-bit soundtrack and familiar sound effects ties the series together
- **Playability:** Awesome puzzles, incredible bosses, and amazing secrets abound
- **Entertainment:** Enthralling from beginning to end
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

Miyamoto is a genius. Majora's Mask is an intense adventure that takes gamers on a wild ride through time where you restart each day with the knowledge and powers that you gained from the days before, much like Bill Murray in his sleeper hit, Groundhog's Day. Since this game runs on the same engine as the original N64 Zelda, it is obvious that the developers had more time to work on textures and environments as they are all spectacular. Behind its gorgeous graphics is gameplay that is truly a thrill. With only 72 hours to complete each portion of the quest, you feel your heart racing the entire time you play because any mistake, be it big or small, could mean the difference between success and failure. The puzzles are also some of Miyamoto's most brilliant work yet, requiring you to master the different powers of the masks and the flow of time, all while completing tricky action sequences. Dust off that N64 and make sure you play Majora's Mask. You won't regret it.

ANDY – 9.75

NINTENDO 64

QUARTER-BACK CLUB 2001

QBC HITS BOTTOM, STARTS DIGGING

After a rather solid debut on the Nintendo 64 a few years back, this franchise has consistently been trounced by the superior games from EA Sports. Again this season, there is no comparison. As much as I like football games, I could not find much to like about QBC. After Madden 2001, this game plays and looks pretty horrible. The players appear as though they are always juiced up on caffeine and jerk around the screen like wounded flies. Given that, the play is muddled with rather unresponsive control.

Furthermore, the fact that I set the controller down while playing defense and then glanced back to find that I had scored a touchdown is not a very good sign of this game's quality. That's the whole problem with Acclaim and their QBC franchise – the quality has dwindled to nothing. It's really kind of insulting to be expected to play a game that was so obviously rushed through production.

There is not a chance that you should consider spending money on this game; don't even rent it. **– PAUL**

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

4

- **Concept:** The design motive behind this game seems to be: "Hurry up and ship it!"
- **Graphics:** The look comes nowhere close to topping Madden
- **Sound:** The commentary is well done
- **Playability:** If you like to settle for second best, you'll find some pretty loose play
- **Entertainment:** This is less entertaining than watching an oil change
- **Replay Value:** Low

SECOND OPINION

At first, I thought that this game might be a practical joke. Now I suspect that Acclaim made the N64 version of QBC so ugly that the awful DC port would look good by comparison. Like its brittle coverboy, Brett Favre, QBC is washed up, a mere shadow of what it once was. At least Favre can blame his descent into mediocrity on tendonitis. Maybe Acclaim has tendonitis of the brain, because I can't see how any rational group of human beings would want to release this wretched refuse. Oh wait, maybe I can. Imagine that you were a struggling game company desperate for every last dollar you could squeeze out of the gaming public. Then this might make sense. Hypothetically speaking, of course.

MATT – 2

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** ACCLAIM
■ **DEVELOPER** HIGH VOLTAGE ■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 22

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EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Violence

THE ONLY THING WORSE THAN THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD
ON YOUR SHOULDERS IS THE WEIGHT OF THE MOON.

72 HOURS. 24 MASKS. 1 MOON. THE WORLD IS WAITING ON YOU.

NINTENDO 64

THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

CAN YOU SAY GOLDENEYE?

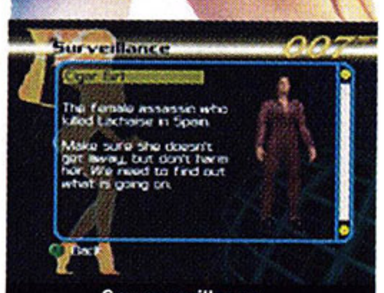
There is no doubt that GoldenEye is an N64 classic, so when Electronic Arts and Eurocom set out to make a new Bond game it did the right thing: it set out to copy GoldenEye in every way possible. As a whole, I would say that mission was accomplished. The World Is Not Enough is a very well-produced follow-up, in some areas better than GoldenEye, in others falling a little short.

TWINE excels in the single-player game, as it is a dead-on sequel to GoldenEye with lots of objectives, gadgets, and weaponry to entertain. Improved menus, pre-mission surveillance, the ability to jump, and better real-time cutscenes (complete with voice-overs) give the game more luster, but overall the game will be familiar to any seasoned GoldenEye player. There are also some nice new touches, however, like the ski chase scene that is recreated by sending you zooming down the mountain first-person to blast baddies.

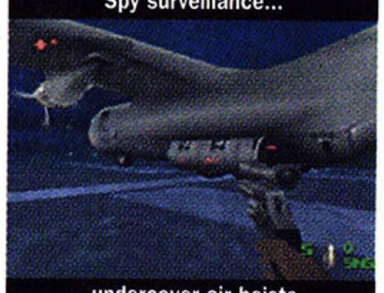
I thoroughly enjoyed the single-player game, and thought it followed the movie extremely well. Some of the levels are a little small, but they are well designed and the overall graphics package is very nice. I did notice some breakup in the levels where you are allowed to use the scoped weapons, but otherwise the environments are clean of polygon tear. The soundtrack is also outstanding, with some of the best voice-impersonators you've ever heard (you'll swear they are the real deal, I promise).

Unfortunately, TWINE's multiplayer experience doesn't quite live up to the standard set by Perfect Dark. The options aren't as deep and the arenas just don't stack up. Compared to GoldenEye, however, TWINE's graphics look lightyears ahead, and the weapons feature more secondary functions.

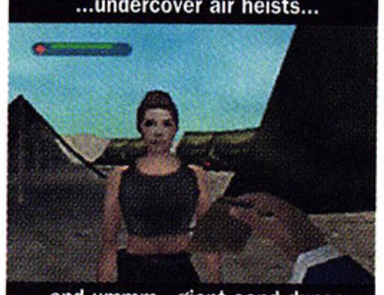
Overall, TWINE is an outstanding product that delivers a fantastic single-player experience that will give GoldenEye fans another chance to save the day and get the girl. You won't spend too much time playing this one after you beat it, but like GoldenEye's 007 Agent, TWINE can keep you entertained for months to come. – **ANDY**



Spy surveillance...



...undercover air heists...



...and ummm...giant sand dunes. What else could you want from a Bond game?

■ **STYLE** 1 TO 4-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ **DEVELOPER** EUROCOM/ELECTRONIC ARTS
■ **RELEASE** NOVEMBER 7

Bond is always outfitted with the latest and greatest toys

Under the cover of darkness, the crossbow is perfect for silent kills

THE BOTTOM LINE

9

- **Concept:** It's been done before, but I have yet to get bored with Bond
- **Graphics:** Denise Richards looks good enough to fall head over heels for
- **Sound:** The Bond soundtrack rocks and the addition of voice-overs to the real-time cutscenes adds a lot
- **Playability:** Like any FPS you have to get a little used to its variations, but in no time you will be shooting like Annie Oakley
- **Entertainment:** The multiplayer comes nowhere near Perfect Dark, but it is enough, and the one-player missions are great
- **Replay Value:** Moderately High

SECOND OPINION

The gaming gods have smiled on Eurocom and its Bond game. Loaded to the gills with detail and excellent multi-function weapons, the game actually does a good job of following the movie without sacrificing gameplay. The levels are fantastic, with plenty of innocents, allies, and enemies that run and gun as you would expect them to. You actually feel bad when someone takes out one of your anonymous allies. I was really impressed with Eurocom when two bad guys flew by in a motorboat, and actually went into the drink when I whipped around and unloaded with Bond's trusty P7K. Multiplayer lacks the depth of Perfect Dark, but it does offer up to three bots, and TWINE is a good enough game that that's more than sufficient. If you're not done with Perfect Dark, TWINE can wait, but no fan of GoldenEye will be disappointed with this impressive shooter.

ERIK – 8.75

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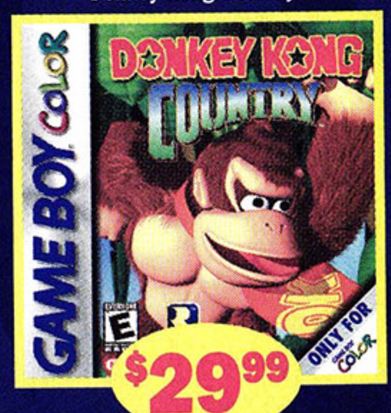

$29.99

Expected to be available 11/20/00

NINTENDO 64

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Spidey confronts his old nemesis Venom

GAME BOY COLOR

SPIDER-MAN

LOOK, IT'S A DORK WEARING RED LONG JOHNS!

Activision has a knack for turning PlayStation classics into Game Boy crap. Like Tony Hawk last year, Spider-Man is a rush-job intent on riding on the coattails of its superior PS-X predecessor. Despite the fact that he has superstrength and agility, Spidey has difficulty dealing with common street thugs. At least his web-swinging talents allow you to glide to the end of many levels, skipping the tedious combat entirely. Initially, I thought this was a design flaw; I now view it as a godsend. In fact, just save your money and skip this stinker entirely. – **MATT**

THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

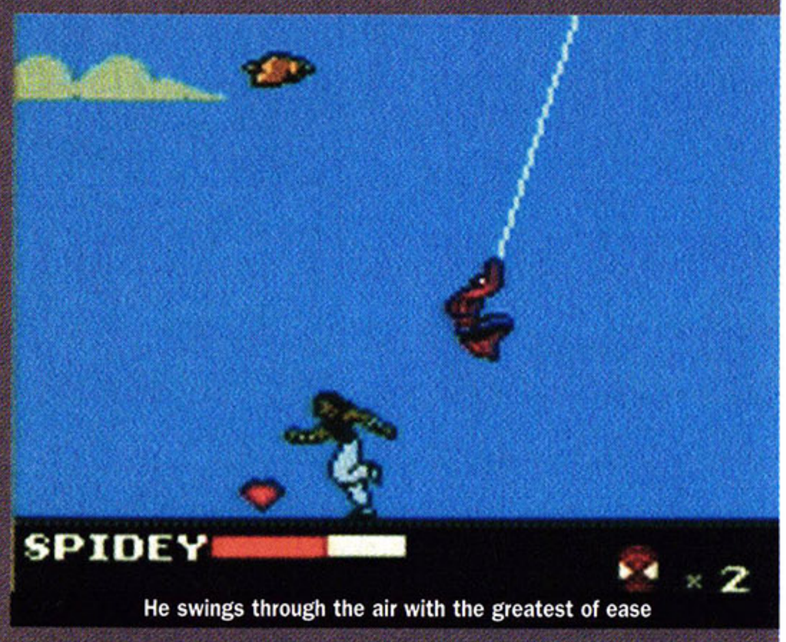
4

- **Concept:** Fails to exploit the possibilities of the Spider-Man universe and comes across as a bland side-scroller
- **Graphics:** Nothing fancy
- **Sound:** The same tinny music and staticky sound effects that have become the hallmark of the GBC
- **Playability:** Web swinging is fluid enough, but Spidey has an annoying habit of sticking to walls in the heat of combat
- **Entertainment:** Umm....not really
- **Replay Value:** Low

SECOND OPINION

With striking graphics, Spider-Man has the look of a bite-size juggernaut. Unfortunately, the gameplay is dry and monotonous.

REINER – 5.25



He swings through the air with the greatest of ease

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** ACTIVISION
■ **DEVELOPER** VICARIOUS VISIONS ■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 29

GAME BOY COLOR

MONSTER RANCHER EXPLORER

ROCK THE BOX CLASSIC STYLE

The latest contribution under the Monster Rancher moniker is a bizarre addition indeed. As it is set 35 years before the original PlayStation release, your breeding and training skills are not needed. This time, it takes brain power, reflexes, and the ability to squint. Conceptually similar to Lode Runner, the goal of this game is to organize boxes so that you successfully reach an exit without being eaten by a sinister Monster Rancher critter. With classic appeal oozing from its pores, this simplistic game is hard to put down, but at the same time, difficult to lose yourself in. Without a fascinating story or a real cause to keep you moving forward, the play suffers from invariability. Yet, the puzzle solving aspect is intriguing enough to force your hand to play again. A good travel game if there ever was one. – **REINER**

SECOND OPINION

Fun little game that has absolutely nothing to do with Monster Rancher. I like it, but mark it down for the cheap cash-in attempt.

JAY – 7

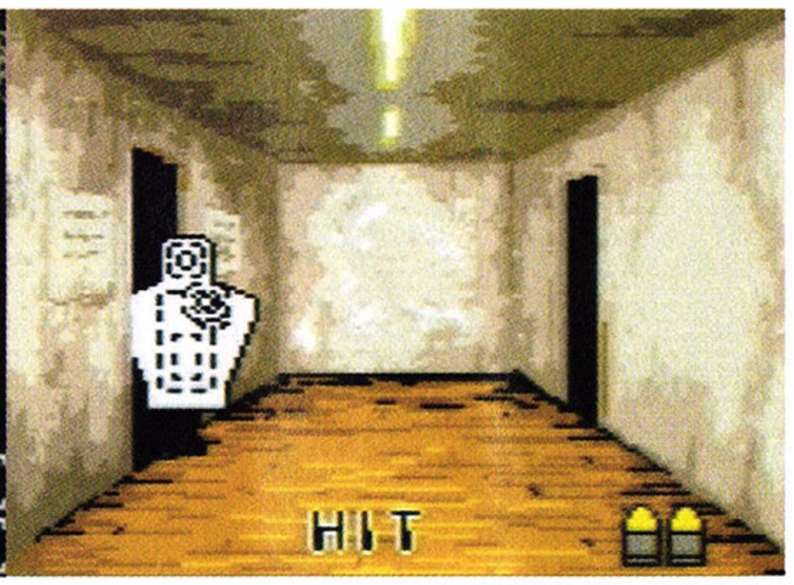
THE BOTTOM LINE

EVERYONE — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

7.5

- **Concept:** A mix between Milon's Secret Castle and Lode Runner
- **Graphics:** Lacking in definition, the environments and characters are adequate at best
- **Sound:** Beep! Ring! Beopp!
- **Playability:** The puzzles are interesting and the controls are slick
- **Entertainment:** Monotonous from level to level, but the challenge makes it addictive
- **Replay Value:** Moderate

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** TECMO ■ **DEVELOPER** TECMO
■ **RELEASE** OCTOBER 15



GAME BOY COLOR

PERFECT DARK

JOANNA ROSEANNADANA

I have played good Game Boy games, so I know for a fact they are out there. Perfect Dark is not one of them. It's a shame too, as you can tell there was a fair amount of time put into this title with all its extra little graphical touches and digitized voice-overs. Unfortunately, the gameplay doesn't back up all the other positive things this game has. As you have probably already guessed, this Perfect Dark is nothing like its N64 counterpart. In fact, about the only similarities I can think of are the inclusion of Joanna Dark, guns, and a multiplayer mode (though I doubt you could get someone to play this game with you). I have seen the holy land of Game Boy covert ops action games and it is Metal Gear Solid. Perfect Dark is just another Game Boy game trying to cash in on its successful home release. – **ANDY**

SECOND OPINION

There are some cool things you can do with this game in conjunction with the N64 Transfer Pak, but the control and general play mechanics are goofy. It's just not that fun.

PAUL – 5.75

THE BOTTOM LINE

TEEN — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

4

- **Concept:** Take out anything fun from the N64 version, and imagine it on Game Boy
- **Graphics:** Very nice
- **Sound:** Features digitized voices that don't suck, unlike the rest of the sound effects that do
- **Playability:** You can barely see her gun shots, and the perspective just stinks
- **Entertainment:** This game's only use I can see is to unlock codes for the N64 via the transfer pak
- **Replay Value:** Low

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** NINTENDO ■ **DEVELOPER** VICARIOUS VISIONS
■ **RELEASE** AUGUST 28

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Frogger® 2
Available on

GAME BOY COLOR

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Frogger® 2:
Swampy's Revenge
Available on

Dreamcast

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CHARTS

In association with the NPD TRSTS Video Games Service, Charts presents an in-depth listing of the best selling software on a month to month basis. Are the games you spend your hard earned dollars on top sellers? Take a look below to find out. We've also teamed with Gamestop to bring you a listing of the top selling used software, and, of course, we included a Top 10 list of the games the GI staff is currently enjoying.

NPD TOP 20

RANK	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE	PRICE POINT
1	N/A	**Madden NFL 2001**	PS-X	Aug-00	$42

He may not be the most gorgeous sports commentator of all-time, but his ugly mug can sure sell units. If a game has big John on it, then you can expect it to top the charts. EA's work on Madden NFL 2001 is its best effort yet, and something the gaming nation cannot get enough of. We can't think of a more deserving game to top the charts.

2	N/A	**Chrono Cross**	PS-X	Aug-00	$42

This could very well be Square Soft's first year with two RPG's selling over one million units each. Chrono Cross is flying off the shelves, and Final Fantasy IX will surely do the same thing. In the long run, it will be interesting to see which of these two games sells better. Our money is on the inventive Chrono Cross.

3	12	**Star Wars: Episode I Racer**	N64	May-99	$11

Everybody loves Star Wars, especially when it's at a bargain price! Faster than Carl Lewis, and sporting more wacky one-liners than Jar Jar Binks, Racer's crazy gameplay has kept Star Wars and racing fans alike entranced and in a state of awe.

4	3	**Tony Hawk's Pro Skater**	PS-X	Sep-99	$36

This is the greatest success story in all of video games. Well, maybe not all of games, but Tony Hawk's sales remain constant at full price. By truckloads, this game is moving off the shelves faster than you can say, "Bucky Lasek is a poser!" We expect that the sequel will more than likely join its predecessor in the Top 10.

5	2	**Pokémon Yellow**	GB	Oct-99	$25

Hangin' tough, the Pokémon craze, fetish, and addiction continues to infest the Top 20. We love these little critters as much as you, but after writing endless stories about their success, we'd much rather tie them to our bumper than squeeze and love them. Regardless, it appears that Pokémon will be here for a long time to come.

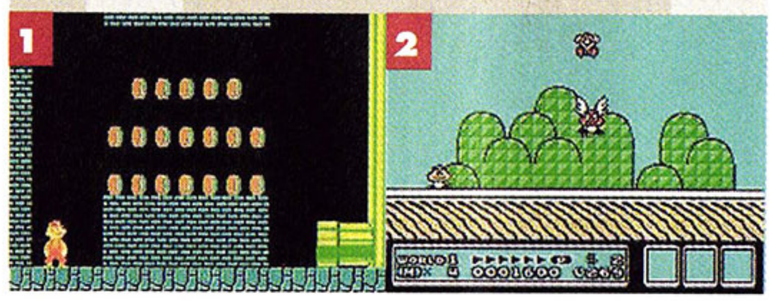
RANK	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE	PRICE POINT
6	9	**Driver**	PS-X	Jun-99	$22
7	7	**Spec Ops**	PS-X	Apr-00	$10
8	11	**Pokémon Red**	GB	Sep-98	$25
9	N/A	**NCAA Football 2001**	PS-X	Jul-00	$41
10	13	**WWF SmackDown!**	PS-X	Mar-00	$40
11	5	**Pokémon Trading Card**	GB	Apr-00	$25
12	10	**Pokémon Blue**	GB	Sep-98	$25
13	4	**World Series Baseball 2K1**	DC	Jul-00	$50
14	14	**Super Mario Bros. DX**	GBC	May-99	$28
15	N/A	**Gran Turismo 2**	PS-X	Dec-99	$35
16	N/A	**Digimon World**	PS-X	Jun-00	$40
17	17	**Tekken 3**	PS-X	Apr-98	$23
18	N/A	**Tenchu 2: Birth of the Stealth Assassins**	PS-X	Aug-00	$42
19	8	**Perfect Dark**	N64	May-00	$59
20	15	**Tony Hawk's Pro Skater**	N64	Mar-00	$50

**Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment Service Kristin Barnett-Von-Korff (516) 625-2481.*
Listings Based Upon NPD Data For August 2000. Based On Units Sold

CLASSIC TOP 10

Source: Gamestop
Based On Monthly Used Units Sold

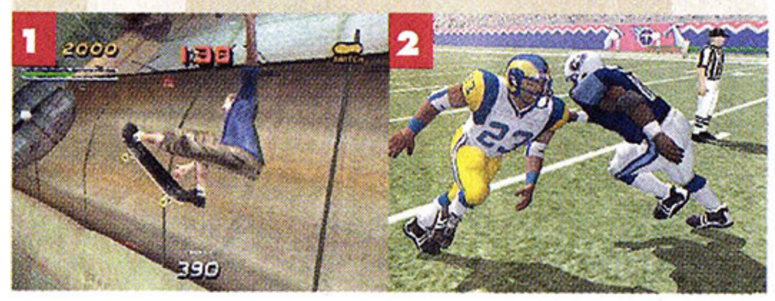
POS.	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM
1	N/A	**Super Mario/Duck Hunt**	NES
2	N/A	**Super Mario 3**	NES
3	N/A	**Super Mario World**	SNES
4	N/A	**Super Mario All-Stars**	SNES
5	N/A	**The Legend of Zelda: A Link To The Past**	SNES
6	N/A	**The Legend of Zelda**	NES
7	N/A	**Sonic The Hedgehog**	SG
8	N/A	**Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles**	NES
9	N/A	**Super Mario 2**	NES
10	N/A	**Donkey Kong Country**	SNES



GAME INFORMER TOP 10

The Staff's Favorite Picks

POS.	L. MO	GAME	SYSTEM
1	N/A	**Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2**	PS-X
2	N/A	**Madden NFL 2001**	PS2
3	N/A	**The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask**	N64
4	1	**Final Fantasy IX**	PS-X
5	N/A	**NFL 2K1**	DC
6	5	**WWF SmackDown! 2: Know Your Role**	PS-X
7	N/A	**Spider-Man**	PS-X
8	2	**Dino Crisis 2**	PS-X
9	N/A	**Age of Empires II: The Conquerers Expansion**	PC
10	4	**Tenchu 2: Birth of the Stealth Assassins**	PS-X



PC TOP 10

Based On Monthly Units Sold. Source: NPD Interactive Entertainment
Sevice Kristin Barnett-Von-Korff (516) 625-2481

POS.	L. MO	GAME	MONTH	PRICE
1	1	**Diablo 2**	06/00	$51
2	2	**The Sims**	02/00	$42
3	4	**Roller Coaster Tycoon**	03/99	$27
4	3	**Who Wants To Be A Millionaire 2**	05/00	$18
5	6	**Who Wants To Be A Millionaire**	11/99	$9
6	7	**Roller Coaster Tycoon: Corkscrew Follies**	11/99	$19
7	N/A	**Backyard Baseball 2001**	06/00	$18
8	10	**Sim City 3000 Unlimited**	05/00	$26
9	N/A	**Unreal Tournament**	11/99	$24
10	N/A	**Age of Empires II: The Conquerers Expansion**	08/00	$27

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BASIC TRAINING

Superfly Scoring Secrets

Understanding the scoring system of THPS2 is essential to success. Like the original, the first time you do a trick it is worth full value. The second time it's worth 75% of its value, 50% on the third, 25% on the fourth, and 10% every time after that. Scoring gaps (a camera shutter sounds when you find one) are worth the same amount no matter how many times they're hit.

How much you spin while doing a trick increases its value. Turning 180 degrees before landing multiplies the maneuver's point value by 1.5. Rotating 360 degrees gives a 2x multiplier, 540 3x, 720 4x, and the vaunted 900 a 5x multiplier. Pro Skater 2 also rewards another multiplier for landing perfectly, and subtracts a multiplier for landing sloppily. Using L1/R1 to spin is the preferred choice since this frees up the d-pad to continually hit tricks while in the air.

As before, combining tricks into a string is the way to score ultimate points. The value of all tricks and scoring gaps pulled off before landing successfully are added together, then multiplied by the number of tricks and gaps. For example, a Kickflip (100 points) over a Leap Of Faith gap (500) followed by a quick Tailgrab (150) would be worth 2250 points (100 + 500 + 150 x 3 = 2250). If you were able to completely rotate once during this trick, it would be worth 4500 points (x2 multiplier for turning 360 degrees).

A HUGE addition to THPS2 is the ability to pull off a Manual. Rapidly pressing Down, Up or Up, Down on the d-pad without following up with a button tap will cause your skater to balance on their front or back wheels. This little trick combined with a quick flip trick or two can do wonders for your grinding scores, and should be learned and mastered as soon as possible. Rather than just grinding a beam, for instance, Manual, Kickflip, grind, then Heelflip off and land in another Manual for five times as many points. Learning to throw in some extra grinds and 180 rotations will really boost your score.

Spending Benjamins

Having your skater's abilities maxed out by the end of Career mode is no problem, but spending your money wisely as you progress will save you a lot of problems as you come closer to becoming the ultimate pro.

Which abilities you spend cash on will naturally coincide with your skating style. Those who prefer vert skating will want to concentrate on Air, Hang Time, Spin, and Switch (to save you the trouble of having to push L2 in a halfpipe). Street skaters should work on Ollie, Rail Balance, Lip Balance, and Manual Balance. Speed and Landing are important to both skater types. Also, spending cash on new decks is a quick and easy way to get general boosts in overall performance.

Since THPS2 allows players to buy and program tricks, don't keep a maneuver you don't like. We personally don't care for the Judo grab since it's hard to tell exactly how to land, especially when you're under pressure. If our skaters have this trick, we use the money from the first competition to buy a trick that's easier to finish.

A Public Service Announcement From Game Informer

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 has been shown to be 18 times more addictive than the first. Noticeable side effects from continued use include listlessness, sore thumb cuticles, and thinking, "I should make a park like this," in otherwise boring places.

Parents hoping to get their children to attend any sort of family function should hide THPS2 in an out of reach area. Gamers wanting to complete THPS2 should use this guide. This PTP is best used when stuck. Constant and repeated use shows lack of initiative, skill, and all around radness.

Level Goals

To fully complete THPS2 (and you know you want to), you'll have to clear every level goal. This means getting a gold medal and collecting all the cash in competitions, and finishing the ten different objectives in all the other levels.

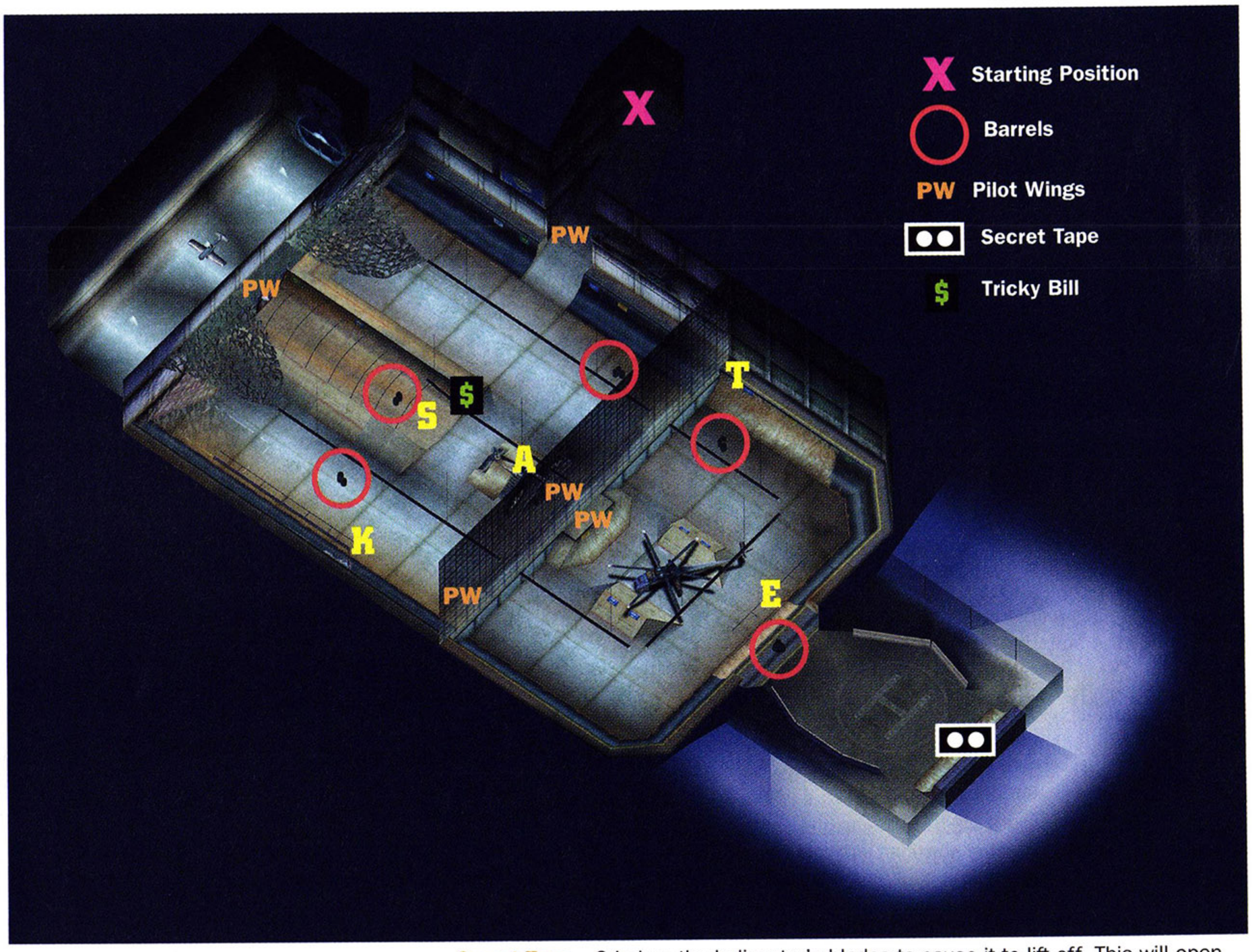
Three of the goals in non-competition levels will be to achieve certain point totals. We obviously can't instruct you on how exactly to score points, so instead we give some tips on where to get some major points and leave the rest to you. We also don't have space to list where all the cash icons are, but we do describe how to nab some of the more troublesome ones.

The Hangar: Mullet Falls, MT

Unlocking Requirement: None

Level Goals: 10,000 Points, 25,000 Points, 75,000 Points, Collect S-K-A-T-E, Barrel Hunt, Collect 5 Pilot Wings, Nosegrind Over The Pipe, Hit 3 Hangtime Gaps, Find The Secret Tape, 100% Goals and Cash

Favors: Vert Skaters



Scoring – The Hangar is filled with scoring gaps and easy ways to get big points. If you're new to Pro Skater and/or the boarder you've chosen, you should hang out if the halfpipe to practice all your moves and specials. If you can't score 75,000 here with just basic moves, keep practicing until you can. It only gets harder from here.

S-K-A-T-E – Head straight from the starting position and jump or grind over the halfpipe to get the S. After clearing the halfpipe, veer a little to the left and you'll see the K on a rail over a quarterpipe. Turn around to find the A over the prop plane with sagging wings. Leap this and head over to the wall. Hit the quarterpipe at an angle to smash through to the other end of the Hangar and nab the T. After landing, turn a bit to the left and the E can be found on a rail above the back wall's quarterpipe.

Barrel Hunt – The barrels are all out in the open and pretty easy to find. See our handy-dandy map if you're having trouble finding them.

5 Pilot Wings – The first set of wings you'll see are suspended above the end of the starting ramp. To get this set, hit the quarterpipes on either side at the proper angle with enough speed to bridge the gap. To get the set above the propeller in the halfpipe, jump at them from outside the pipe. A third set can be found spinning on the rail in front of the prop plane, and a fourth can be gotten by smashing through the glass to get to the other section of the Hangar. Once in the side with the helicopter in it, the fifth pair will be waiting for you above the ramp in front of the glass.

Nosegrind Over The Pipe – Simplicity itself. Skate straight from the starting position. When you near the outside of the halfpipe, just press up and hold s. You'll Nosegrind the curved rail that had the S and complete this goal.

3 Hangtime Gaps – Leap over the halfpipe from the outside to collect your first Hangtime Gap, then simply Ollie over the disabled prop plane to get the second. Smash through to the other side of the Hangar and use the ramps to clear the helicopter to finish this goal.

Secret Tape – Grind on the helicopter's blades to cause it to lift off. This will open the entrance to a landing pad, and spinning above the ramp there you'll find the Secret Tape.

Tricky Bills – Grinding the helicopter's blades will not only reveal a hidden room, but also a hidden bill where the helicopter once was. Grind the propeller in the halfpipe to reveal another secret room filled with cash. After collecting all these, the hardest bill of the level awaits. Make the 'copter take off ❶, building up your Special meter while it crashes through the ceiling. When your Special is yellow, push forward off the ramp against the glass wall to launch towards the ceiling ❷. Try to hit the middle suspended light, grinding it almost to the end ❸, then jumping where a $100 bill awaits.

School II: Southern California

Unlocking Requirement: $1,000

Level Goals: 15,000 Points, 40,000 Points, 100,000 Points, Collect S-K-A-T-E, Wall Ride 5 Bells, Collect 5 Hall Passes, Kickflip TC's Roof Gap, Grind 3 Roll Call Rails, Find The Secret Tape, 100% Goals and Cash

Favors: Street Skaters

Scoring – Like the Hangar, it shouldn't be too hard to achieve the required scoring goals. To the left of the starting point is a set of quarterpipes for adept vert skaters, and street skaters will find grind points galore. If getting a Sick Score is a problem for you, stay here and practice until it isn't.

S-K-A-T-E – From the starting position, head right and take the ramp on the right down. The S is on the rail. At the bottom of the ramp, go left to get up on the cement platform in the courtyard. Hit the wooden quarterpipe with the K above it. After nabbing that, go to the other end of the platform and Ollie off the left side, going through the locker corridor. A rail with the A on it should be directly ahead. Take an immediate right at the end of the rail and skate past (or grind all over, your choice) the bike racks. The T lies above a quarterpipe to the left. Turn a bit to the right and go between the two buildings before you to spot the E.

5 Bells – Knowing how to Wall Ride will be of great help when trying to accomplish this goal. To do so, head toward a wall at an angle, Ollie and then press Up and ▲. Got it? Alright, then try to get your first bell immediately to the right of the starting point – it's the little round thing above the ramp. After breaking this piece of public property, go down the ramp that held the S. Go through the courtyard, exiting through the hall to the right. The second bell sits in a dark corner straight ahead. Ride the stair rail down, take a left at the bottom, and you'll see a bell against a left wall. After nailing this one, turn around and head up past the bike racks. The fourth bell is against the wall at the other end. Hitting that bell should head you in the right direction. Keep going straight and the final bell will be found above a dumpster in a corner.

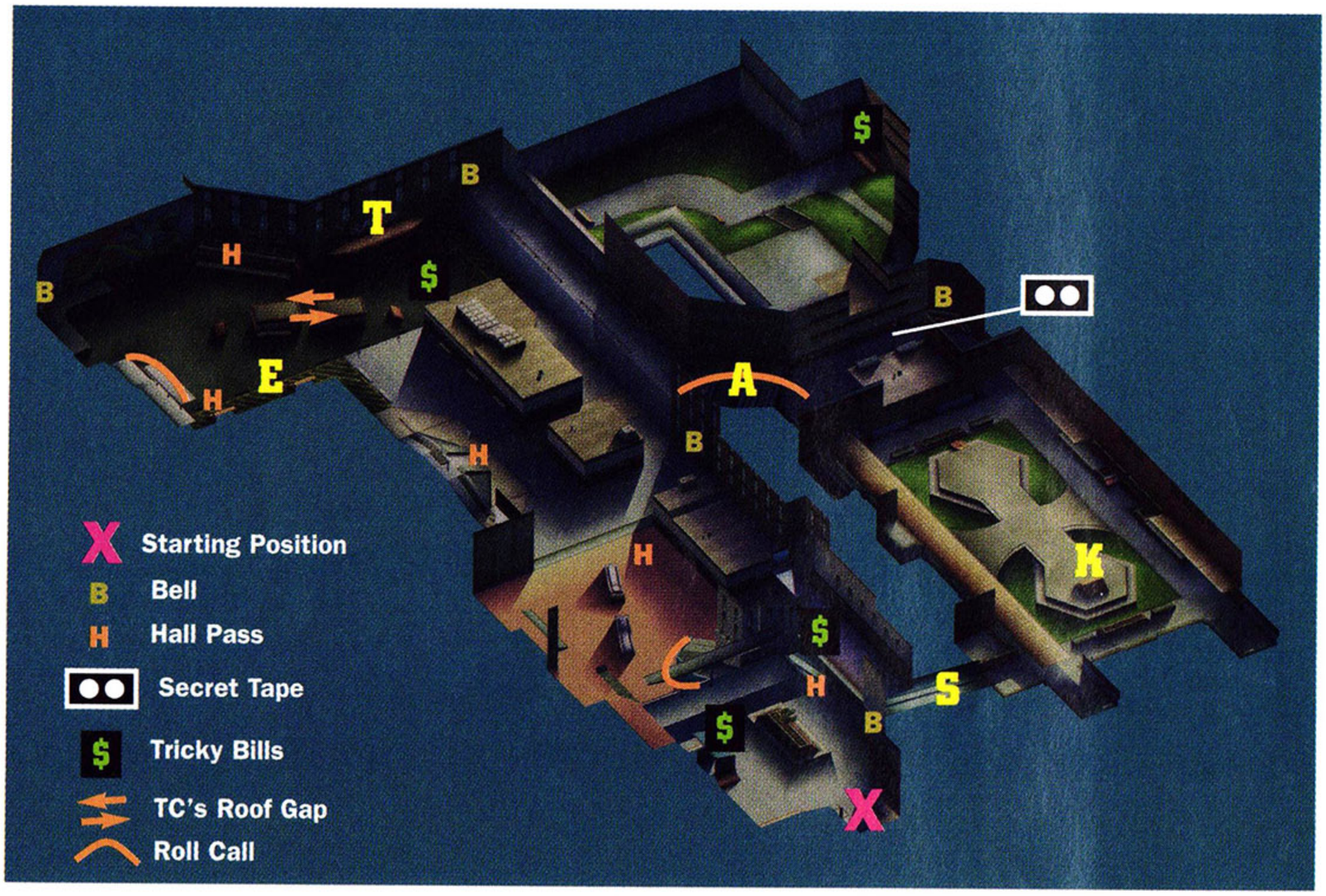
5 Hall Passes – Your first freedom key is just before the railed ramp to the right of the starting point (not the one that had the S on it). Turn a touch left at the bottom of this ramp and you'll see another Hall Pass above one of the tipped picnic tables, and a third between the two ramped rails beyond this. Corner around the building and another key will be seen dangling above the far quarterpipe. Turn a little right when you're heading away from the quarterpipe and the final Hall Pass will quickly come into view.

Kickflip TC's Roof Gap – First, make sure you know how to Kickflip (it's Left and ■ unless you've changed it). Once you know how to pull off this basic trick, use the ramps to get up on and Kickflip between the two small buildings on the opposite end of the school from where you begin.

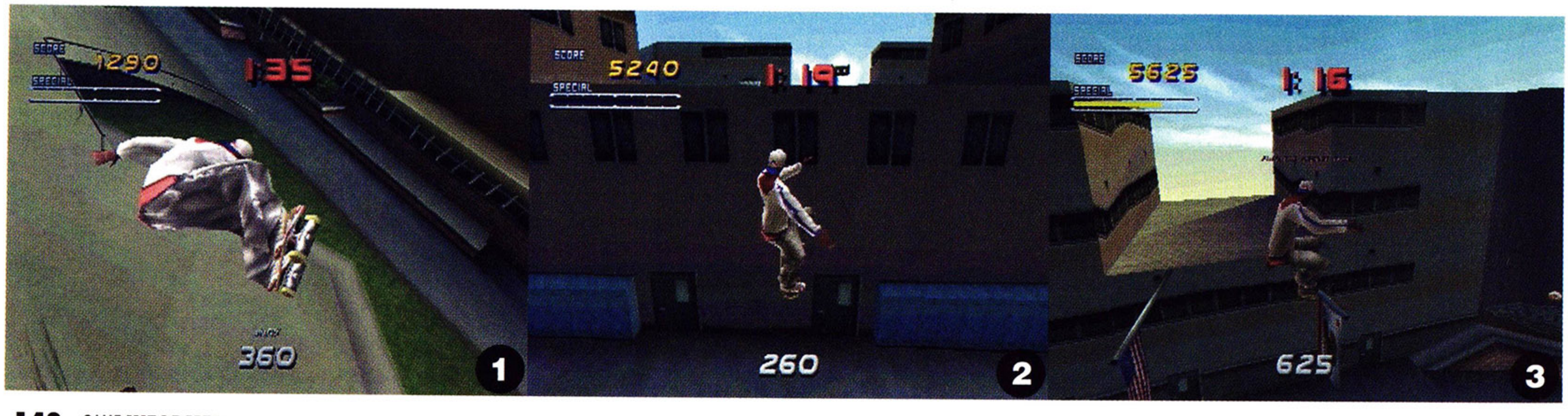
3 Roll Call Rails – These three rails are highlighted on the map. If you grind the rail and Roll Call Rail doesn't flash, you probably just didn't grind enough of it.

Secret Tape – Go out to the school courtyard and build up your Special meter using the quarterpipe that had the K above it ❶. Once your skater is at top speed, barrel over to the other side of the cement platform, trying to roll over the skid marks. If you hit the right spot, you'll roll down some boards and then go up the side of a planter. Jumping at the right time while going up the planter will launch you to a roof with two ramps ❷. The Secret Tape spins just beyond the right ramp.

Tricky Bills – The path to the Secret Tape leads to much of the elusive cash in the school. Notice those flagpoles on the building across from where the tape was? Try to leap the ramp and grind those ❸. This will lead to a hard-to-reach area filled with a couple bills. The rest of the tricky bills are located near the starting point. The 50 on the ledge above the pseudo-halfpipe can be gotten by going up the side and holding ▲ to grind the edge of the entryway. If you Ollie or wipeout correctly, you'll come to a rest on this rooftop and get the money.



From the start point, look to where the first bell is and make note of the ledge high above it. Build up your Special to yellow, then Wall Ride by that bell to hit the ledge. Grind this ledge to grab 50 bucks, then Ollie off to the right. Leap through the window to land on another ledge. Leap over the center of the box and grind the rail behind it to the rooftop of another building. Keep going straight, doing an Ollie to leap from one rooftop to another, going to the left side of building with the big air vents. You'll have to leap off the left corner just right to get the most difficult $50 of the level.



NY City, New York

Unlocking Requirement: 1 Medal

Level Goals: 20,000 Points, 50,000 Points, 150,000 Points, Collect S-K-A-T-E, Ollie the Hydrants, 5 Subway Tokens, 50-50 Joey's Sculpture, Grind the Subway Rails, Find The Secret Tape, 100% Goals and Cash

Favors: Street Skaters

Scoring – If vert skating's been your scoring method of choice, New York could be a bit of a challenge. There's plenty of quarterpipe action, but nary a halfpipe to be found. If you just can't make big points by street skating, use the high brick wall in the park with the statue as your quarterpipe. The Pouncer Was Here gap will help your trick score if you air at an angle rather than straight up, and stalling at the top of this wall will always add a Phat Lip gap. Also, an Ollie over an oncoming taxi is worth 1,000 points.

S-K-A-T-E – Go straight from the starting point and the S's position should quickly become evident. Take a left to the area with the statue and go up the center of the brick wall (the one discussed in Scoring) to collect the K. Use the ramped pedestal of the statue to get the A floating nearby. Exit out of this area through the tunnel and follow the sidewalk to the left. The T will be seen across from a long bench. Go straight on from here and you'll quickly find the E.

Ollie the Hydrants – The map shows the not-so-hidden locations of the three fire hydrants. Simply leap over each one to finish this task.

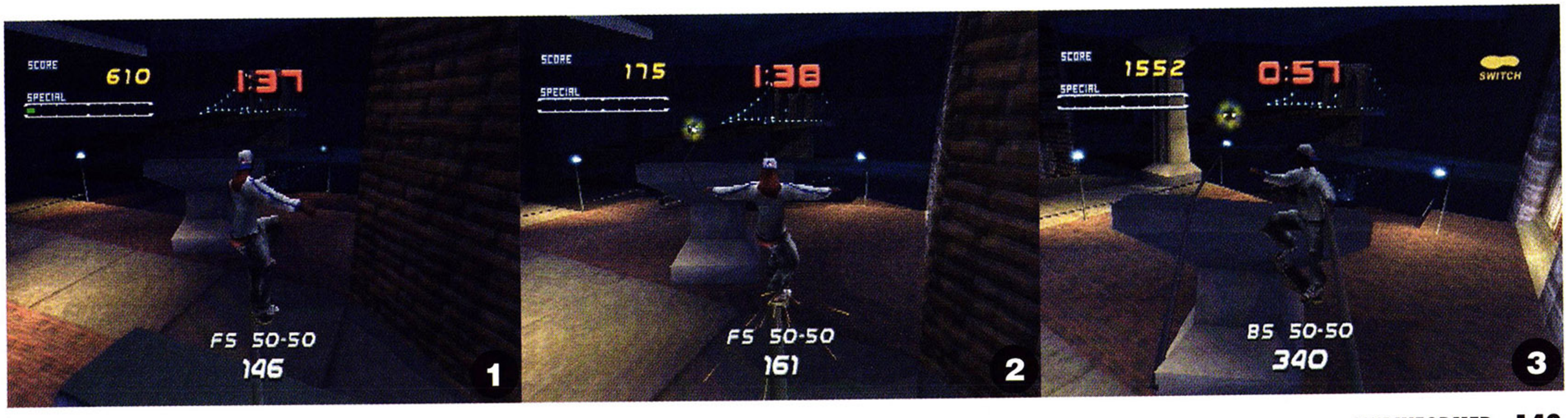
5 Subway Tokens – The five Tokens are located pretty close to one another. From the starting position, take a left through the low walls, and the first right on the sidewalk. Get the first Token on the bridge, then follow the sidewalk right. A second Token will be on the rail to the left, and a third above a quarterpipe straight ahead. After hitting the pipe, use the wooden ramp on the other side to get the fourth. Go back towards the bridge, following the sidewalk right. The fifth Token will be found floating near a big rock that happens to double as a ramp made for getting the prize. Once this goal is completed, the entryway to the subway, formerly fenced off, is opened.

50-50 Joey's Sculpture – From the start point, veer right and look for a triangular hunk of metal sticking out from behind a rail. 50-50 grind it to the ground to collect some easy money.

Grind the Subway Rails – Once 5 Subway Tokens has been completed, the gate to the subway will be open. Get on up there and grind along all four rails in one trick string to finish this mission. While you're up there, take the rails through the tunnel farthest from the entry point to get to a formerly inaccessible place. If you use the short ramp to leap out of this area and back to the streets, a rail will from then on be leaned against the wall. Just go straight from the start point and grind on up it to return whenever you like.

Secret Tape – This is one of those things that you either get on your second or third try, or it vexes you to the point of madness. Once you've gotten access to the hidden area, you will quickly notice a cement ramp that leads up, ending abruptly in a long drop. At the ledge, grind the metal rail out and attempt to Ollie off so you land on the cement support ❶❷❸. You want to hit the support at an angle that will roll you to the rail to the left. Grind this and leap off the end to get the Secret Tape.

Tricky Bills – The cash in New York, for the most part, is easy to get. You might need to build up your Special meter to reach the bills, but it's usually obvious how to get them. The one exception is the 50 sitting on the awning above the sidewalk section that's taped off due to construction. To grab this Grant, go up the subway entrance. Once up the ramp, continue to the back of the platform, and grind over or use the rails to get around the back wall and leap onto the awning, then pedal on over to this meddlesome icon.



Venice Beach, California

Unlocking Requirement: $15,000

Level Goals: 40,000 Points, 100,000 Points, 200,000 Points, Collect S-K-A-T-E, Ollie the Magic Bum 5x, Collect 5 Spray Cans, Tailslide Venice Ledge, Hit 4 VB Transfers, Find the Secret Tape, 100% Goals and Cash

Favors: Vert Skaters

Scoring – Quite the opposite of New York, Venice Beach is a place where vert masters will be titillated by pipes and pools galore. It's certainly possible to get in some good street skating – especially with the beach's long border rails and fences, and the large center section where an Ollie over any trick over a table will get a 200 point Table Pop gap as a multiplier – but the easiest way to rack up points is to hit the large pool-like area to the left of the start point and make judicious use of combos with specials and the L1/R1 buttons.

S-K-A-T-E – Your skater starts with a long fence ahead and to the right. Grind the top of this towards the building with the vent fans atop it, and leap onto the roof to find the S. Make a 90 degree turn to the left after the S and ride along the roof to an outcropping with the K just beyond. Drop down to the open area filled with tables and seek out a long quarterpipe against a wall. Push Up to go over this and once again ride on a roof. The A sits near a curved skylight. From there, turn and look for a nearby ramp that looks like it will take you to yet another roof. Once you've crossed the gap, the T is straight ahead above a makeshift quarterpipe. After coming back down from getting the T, turn a bit to the left and look for a similar quarterpipe with a small ramp behind it and a trapeze-like set of wires beyond that. Head thataway to find the E.

Ollie the Magic Bum 5x – This is one tricky vagrant. Every time you jump over the Magic Bum, he will disappear and resume his snooze in another location. Head straight from the starting point into the graffiti-laden street skating section. Follow the wall to your left, past the quarterpipe, to an opening where the first bum sleeps. Go back out and past the same quarterpipe, into another opening on the right where a railed ramp/stairway will lead you to the bum for the second time. Go back to the start point, and roll down the white sidewalk with the fence along it that once led to the S. Near the end of the sidewalk lies that crafty hobo. Hang a left around the building, and explore the eventual indent with the Bluetorch banner above it. Here you'll find the bum waiting to be Ollied for the fourth time. Return once more to the starting point and you'll catch that bum snoozing for the final time.

Collect 5 Spray Cans – Hang a left from the start point and go down to the pseudo pool to get the first Spray Can. Exit here and look for another can of paint on the other side of the fence that once led to the S. Get back up to the start point and head directly away from the pseudo pool to find a Spray Can above a quarterpipe. After landing, take a right and continue following the edge of the environment, and you'll see another Spray Can between two quarterpipes. Transfer between the two to grab it. The final Spray Can is above the quarterpipe in the same place where you jumped the bum for the second time.

Tailslide Venice Ledge – Just where is Venice Ledge? It's in a hidden area. The easiest way to access this place is to take a left from the start point and go down into the pseudo pool. Press Up and jump in the corner of the pool that has CRUZ written on the wall by it ❶❷. This should put you over the wall and onto a sidewalk that leads to the hidden area ❸. The blue and yellow "The Ledge" graffiti should clue you in as to where to Tailslide.

Hit 4 VB Transfers – By now you may have noticed that Venice Beach has an awful lot of wooden quarterpipes that are set up so one could leap of one and land on another. Of particular significance for this level goal, there are four such transfers to be found within the two minute time limit. There is no best or easiest way to hit all these, so in no particular order, here are the locations of the four VB Transfers. Taking a right from the start point and following the border rail will eventually take you to a quarterpipe that is half of probably the most difficult VB Transfer. It's not the center pipe you need to transfer to, but the far left one. Explore the alcoves of the central street skating section to find quarterpipes that are parts of two other VB Transfers. A final VB Transfer can be found between the two quarterpipes in the hidden area discussed in the Tailslide Venice Ledge goal.

Secret Tape – The Secret Tape is plainly visible floating on a wire above the cement street skating section. Although there are certainly more difficult ways to grab the tape, one can simply build up their skater's Special meter to yellow and Ollie off the cement tables to leap right up to it, or at least up to the wire and grind to it.

Tricky Bills – As long as you're willing to put your skater through some painful flying leaps off quarterpipes, collecting many of the bills in Venice Beach should be no problem. The hardest to collect is the one on the wires above where the E was. To get this, follow the T to E directions in collecting S-K-A-T-E, but grind while in the air to hit the top wire. A well-timed transfer grind will take you to the crosswire where the trickiest of this level's bills floats.

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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Unlocking Requirement: 2 Medals

Level Goals: 50,000 Points, 125,000 Points, 250,000 Points, Collect S-K-A-T-E, Drain the Fountain, Collect 5 Bells, Bluntside the Awning, Liptrick 4 Skatepark Lips, Find the Secret Tape, 100% Goals and Cash

Favors: Street Skaters

Scoring – Ah, Philly. The place where street skaters cream their jeans, and vert skaters crap them from fear. No environment favors street skaters so heavily. PA's long curbs and low walls with gaps aplenty give good grinders the opportunity to score upwards of 50,000 from one good string of tricks. For you sworn vert skaters, there is always the skatepark (see Liptrick 4 Skatepark Lips for how to open this area). Only one halfpipe will be found here, however, and it's a pretty narrow one at that. Utilizing at least a little street skatology on your way to the park will make your task that much easier.

S-K-A-T-E – From the start point go a little forward to the THPS landmark, then turn right and jump up onto the grass. Near the end of the greenery, the S will be seen. You must Ollie up onto the low left wall, riding and jumping off the corner to nab it. Take a left and the K will be seen on a blue awning. Use the makeshift curved cement ramps to get up and grind over to it. Once you're off the awning, the A will be calmly waiting for you near a tree at the bottom. Get up the stairs by the A and roll up the railed ramp that's ahead. Grind the rail and leap off to the left before it levels out to get the T. The E should immediately be visible above the road. You'll need some elevation and speed to grab it. Grind the edge of the wall that leads to the E full bore, jumping of at the end to snatch it.

Drain the Fountain – Get the Secret Tape before attempting this feat. You know that looooooong telephone wire you had to grind halfway up to get the tape? Well, to Drain the Fountain you're going to have to grind it almost to the end. Hit the wire at as high a speed as you can manage ❶, then continually Ollie and Grind over and over to maintain velocity ❷. When you get near the red brick building that's the terminus, jump off to the right, aiming for the balcony ❸. The valves to the fountain are here. Hit them to Drain the Fountain ❹❺. If you're having trouble with this and your character's Rail Balance isn't fully pumped up, get some money doing the other goals and do so.

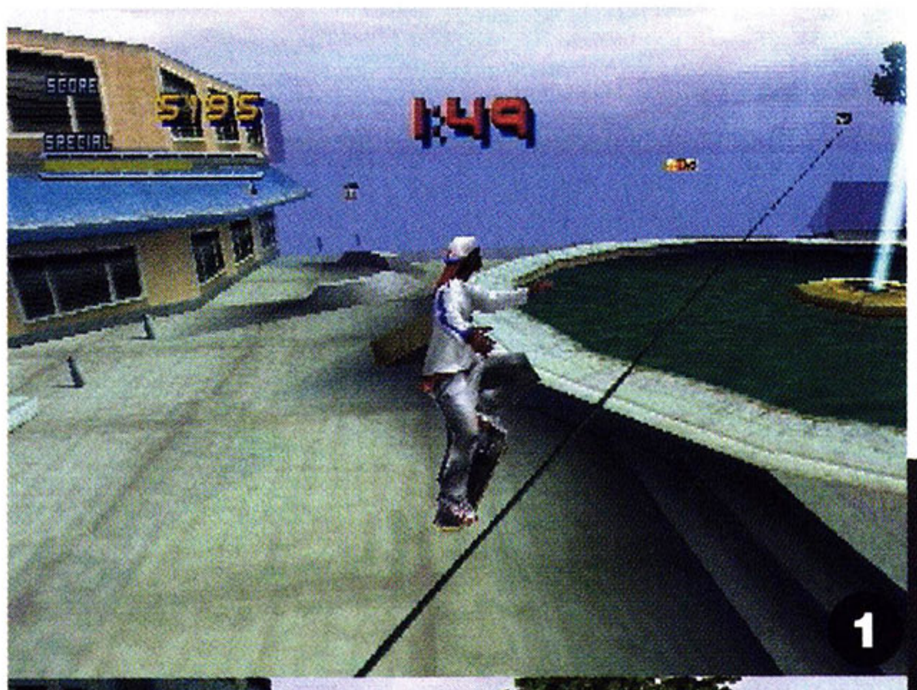
Collect 5 Bells – Take a right from the start point and the first bell will be found floating above two connecting ramps. Cruise down the stairs and go left. The second bell will quickly come into sight. Either Wall Ride up to it or drop down on it from above. The third bell is between the makeshift cement ramps used to get the K on the awning. The fourth bell will be found floating by the wire that leads to the Secret Tape. After getting this one, head away from the wire and the final bell will be in plain sight.

Bluntside the Awning – The awning in question is the blue one where the K once rested. Use the makeshift cement ramps to get up there, then press Down, Down, s to Bluntside it.

Liptrick 4 Skatepark Lips – There's one other telephone wire within grinding reach aside from the one that holds the Secret Tape. It's connected to the corner of the balcony you leaped off of to get the T. Grinding up this wire far enough will collapse an entire set of telephone poles which will crash through the fences blocking you from the skatepark. Head on in and start liptricking ledges. The four required for this goal aren't hard to find.

Secret Tape – Head a bit to the left from the start point and pass the wooden ramp. Jump up on the grass where the two trees are. See that wire connected to the back right corner? The Secret Tape is about halfway up this. Build up your Special meter to yellow, then leap onto this with as much speed as possible. Once you hit it, continually Ollie and grind to maintain velocity. If you've gotten the tape and are feeling confident, keep going to Drain the Fountain and/or to collect some Tricky Bills.

Tricky Bills – As you complete other level goals, many of the bill locations become evident. The three most difficult ones are those that require you to ride the long telephone wire you had to grind to Drain the Fountain. From the balcony with the fountain valves, you'll have to leap off towards a $100 bill, then go up again and leap for 250 bucks. Ride the wire up again, this time attempting to end up on the roof of the red brick building. Below the other side is 250 dollars that must be dropped down on.



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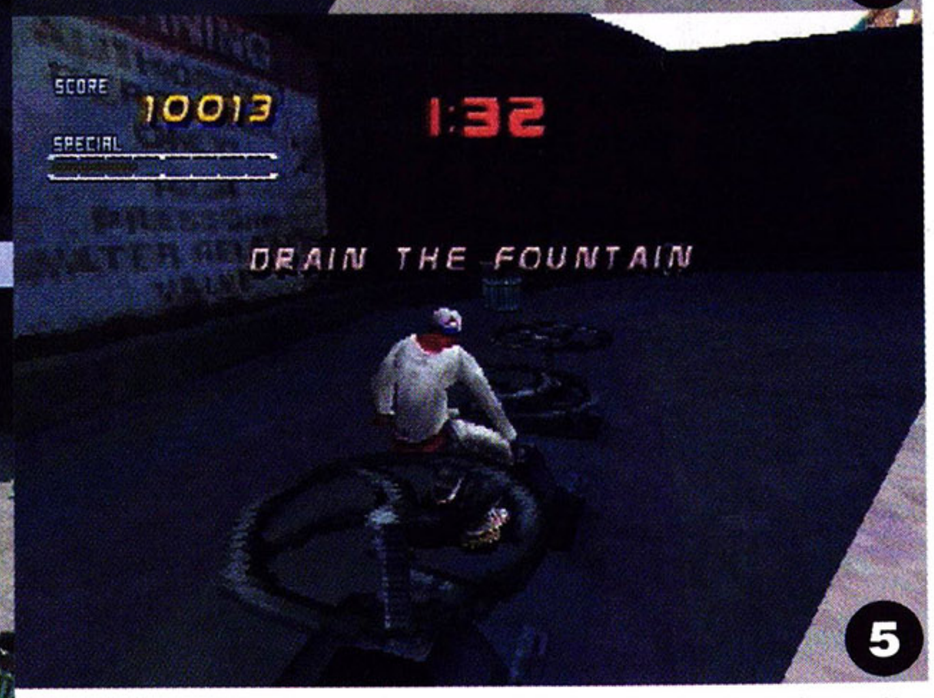

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Competitions

Marseille, France

Unlocking Requirement: $3,000
Level Goals: Get Gold Medal, Collect All Cash
Favors: Vert Skaters

Scoring – Welcome to your first competition. Every competition consists of three one-minute rounds, with your best two heat scores added together for your total. Judges score according to trick point total, subtracting for bails. Variety of routine helps in competitions, but not as much as getting hella high points. Get 100,000 in Marseille and you'll win the round regardless of how boring or sloppy your performance. France apparently doesn't agree with your competitors, so it shouldn't take too long to win the gold here. Be sure to go spend some of your prize money after winning.

Tricky Bills – To get the 50 between the two boxes to the left of the start point, build up some speed and Wall Ride up to it at a steep angle. To get the 100 hanging on the banner above the entrance to the triple pool, push Up and Ollie one of the lip outcroppings to leap up to it and grind across. The rest of the money is hidden in a well-concealed secret area. Ollie up to the grassy ledge with the trees on it and look for a support holding up a gray telephone pole ❶. Knock this out to reveal a passage to an underground area ❷❸.

Competitions

Skatestreet, Ventura

Unlocking Requirement: $25,000
Level Goals: Get Gold Medal, Collect All Cash
Favors: Vert Skaters

Scoring – The nickname of this area is Plywood Paradise, and it's well-deserved. Filled to the brim with fun boxes, pools, halfpipes, and ramps, a vert skater will find no better place to land huge tricks. There's also plenty of easy-to-achieve gaps just waiting to be used as a multiplier. The competition gets a bit stiffer here, but after a little time spent scoping the lay of the land, getting a gold should not only be easy, it should be a pleasure.

Tricky Bills – It may look like all the bills are within easy reach at first, but more cash hides within two hidden areas on this level. To unlock the first, turn almost all the way around to your left from the starting position without moving forward. You'll see a rail connecting the two ends of the halfpipe in a roundabout way ❶. Grind this to get the Van Secret Area Key gap ❷. Next, press Up to come to a rest at the top of the huge Etnies quarterpipe ❸❹ that is dead ahead from the start point. A suspended metal rail hangs beyond the edge ❺. Grind this to the end to get the Rail Secret Area Key gap. The two areas closed off by fenced gates should now be open, and all the cash can now be found.

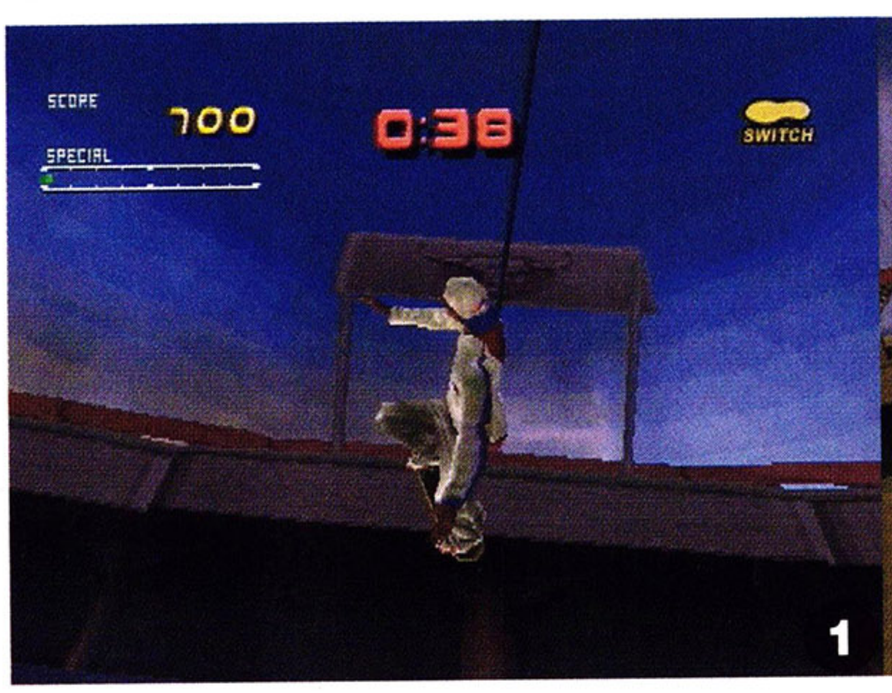
Competitions

The Bullring, Mexico

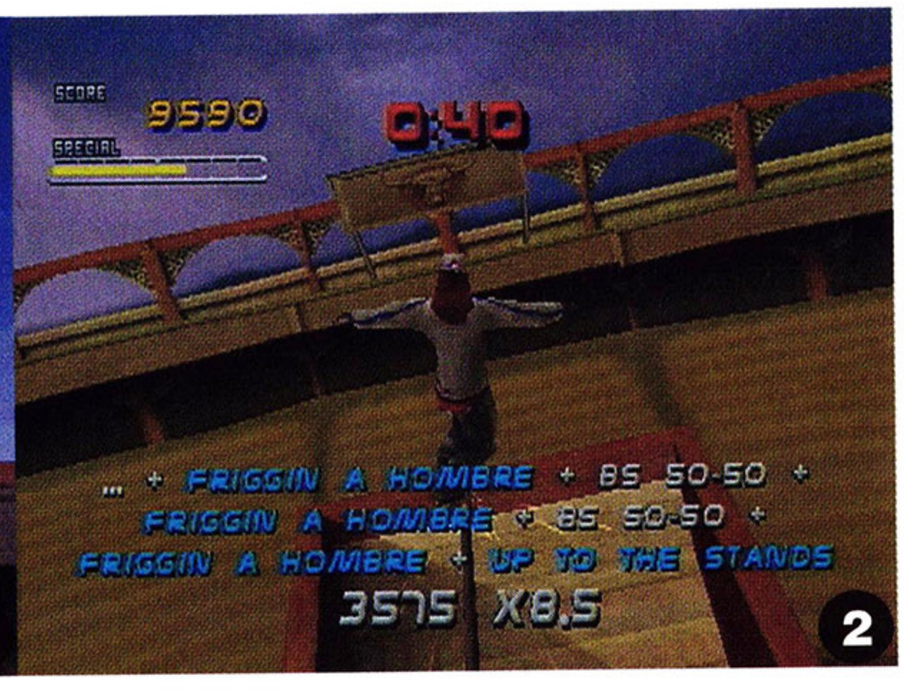
Unlocking Requirement: $60,000
Level Goals: Get Gold Medal, Collect All Cash
Favors: Vert Skaters

Scoring – With a start point that begins you rolling down a large, wide halfpipe, vert skaters should have no problem grabbing the gold in the Bullring. Even dedicated street skaters, assuming they've ended up spending some cash to increase their vert abilities, should find using this halfpipe a sweet treat. As an added bonus, if you transfer over the halfpipe entry point, it's possible to collect two gaps. Perform a few combos with specials intermixed over this gap, and winning this competition is in the bag.

Tricky Bills – There's $2,500 worth of bills to be collected in the Bullring, and many of these rest on the wires and rails high above. Two $250 bills wait on a wire that can be reached simply by using the halfpipe to reach it and holding ▲ to grind on them. You'll have to hit the wire from both sides of the halfpipe to get both. To get the bills on the crosswire that runs perpendicular to the one just discussed, go to the bottom of the halfpipe from the start point and take a right. Press Up and Ollie the ramp or ring border leap up to a quarterpipe in the stands. Go up this ❶, attempting to hit the wire and grind ❷. If successful, you'll have to continually Ollie to keep up speed to get to the bills. If you can't make it all the way across, just get up to the stands and use the quarterpipe on the opposite side of the arena.



1

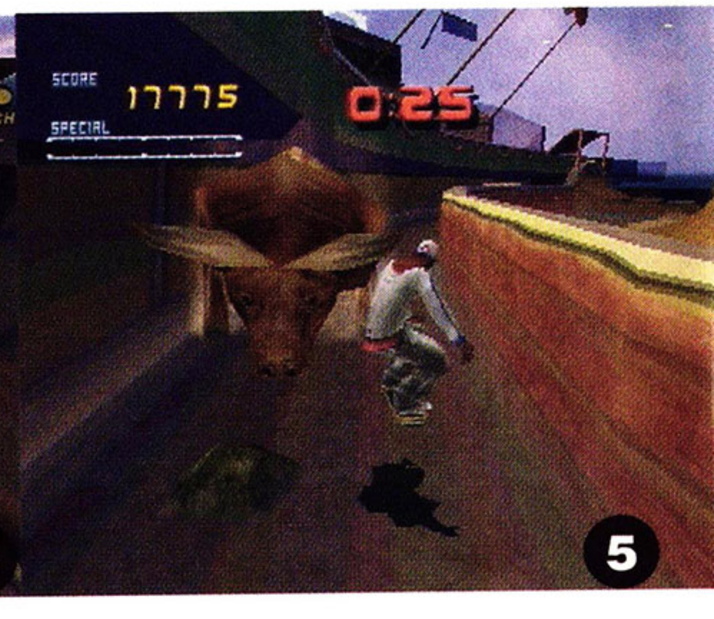


2

Most of the outside of the ring acts as a quarterpipe. Use these to reach to suspended rails with the red, green, and white banners hanging from them ❸, and grind to reach the bills up here ❹. Once you've collected all the money in sight, jump in the aisle with the bull. Inexplicably, someone has hidden money inside the bull's droppings. Keep smooshing cow pies until you find the rest of the cash ❺.

3

4



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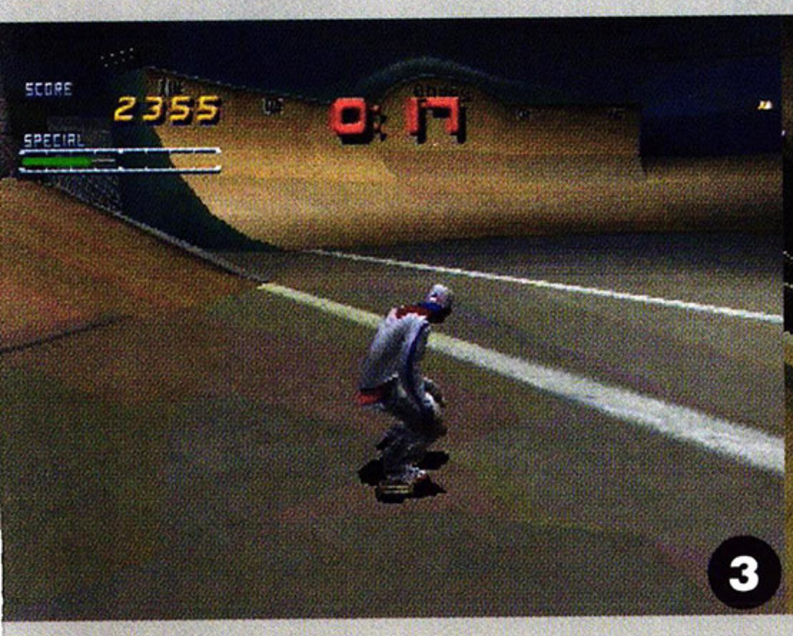

3

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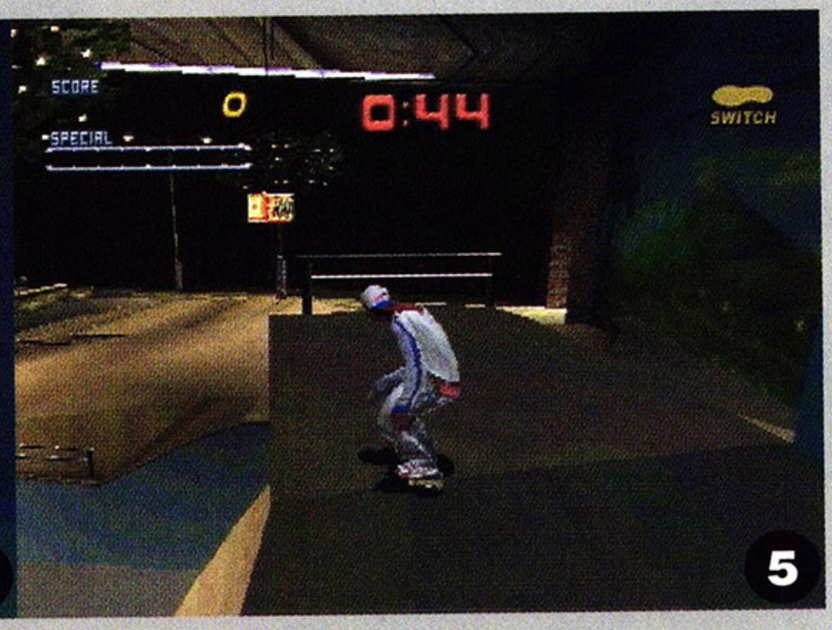


5

Finishing Up

A reward awaits those dilligent enough to finish every goal in all the levels, and for those crazy enough to complete the Gap Checklist. We finished the game completely with three characters. Officer Dick became a playable character after our first completion, a cheat that allowed us to start the level in different places was the reward for our second time through, and we had the option to play all the characters as cute little kiddies after the third. We're not sure what lies beyond this, but we have reason to believe that a certain friendly, neighborhood wall-crawler is one of the hidden characters. There's only one way to find out. Let's skate!

This guide was brought to you by Diet Mountain Dew. When you absolutely, positively need to stay up for five days straight to finish a game multiple times, drink Diet Mountain Dew.

SECRET ACCESS

PLAYSTATION

SPIDER-MAN

Enter these codes at the Cheats entry screen within the Special menu.

Level Select – XCLSIOR
Invulnerability – RUSTCRST
Infinite Webbing – STRUDL
All Character Bios – CVIEW EM
Full Health – DCSTUR
Big Head Mode – DULUX
Debug Mode – LLADNEK
Storyboard Viewer – CGOSSETT
What If Contest Mode – GBHSRSPM
All Game Comics – ALLSIXCC
All Movies – WATCH EM
Ben Reilly Costume – BNREILLY
Symbiote Spidey Costume – BLKSPIDR
Spidey 2099 Costume – TWNTYNDN
Captain Universe Costume – S COSMIC
Spidey Unlimited Costume – PARALLEL
Scarlet Spider Costume – LETTER S
Amazing Bagman Costume – AMZBGMAN
Peter Parker Costume – MJS STUD
Quick Change Spidey Costume – ALMSTPKR
J.James Jewett – RULUR
Unlock Everything – EEL NATS

Comic Locations

For those of you who want to find all the items and secrets through lengthy gameplay exercises, yet still feel the need to cheat by reading this, here is a listing of all of the comic locations.

Amazing Spider-Man #1
Stage: Bank Approach
After tackling the first portion of the game, you'll meet up with Black Cat again. Talk to her, then head to the right and swing to the Fantastic Four building. On top awaits the first comic.

Amazing Spider-Man #200
Stage: Hostage Situation
Proceed past the three door switches into the area where several guards have taken three hostages. Enter the nearest cubicle to the hostages, and lift the chair to find the second comic.

Spider-Man #1: The Death of Captain Stacy
Stage: Stop The Bomb!
After freeing all of the hostages, leave the bomb, and head through the first security door to find the paper booty.

Amazing Spider-Man #25
Stage: Race To the Bugle
Halfway through the stage, the game will cut to a real-time cutscene where two thugs talk to one another. Descend down the building to another rooftop to find the comic.

Amazing Spider-Man #20
Stage: Spidey Vs. Scorpion!
Unleash your destructive nature and destroy all of the furniture and nick-nacks in the first room. After everything is leveled, the comic will appear in the middle of the room.

Amazing Spider-Man #16
Stage: Police Chopper Chase
On the last building with a series of tiny huts on top, let the helicopter destroy the rightmost hut. Underneath the rubble awaits the comic.

Amazing Spider-Man #39
Stage: Building Top Chase
Proceed to the crane with pumpkin graffiti on it. Drop inside and you'll find the mysterious Spider Armor, as well as the desired comic.

Amazing Spider-Man #400
Stage: Scale The Girders
Instead of scaling the building, descend to the ledge just a few feet below, and maneuver to the left side of the building. The prize awaits.

Amazing Spider-Man #14
Stage: Police Evaded
Using extreme caution, approach the building with the skylights. When the heli knocks out the glass, drop inside, and take out the two perps. Shoot some webbing at the broken glass wall to reveal the comic.

Amazing Spider-Man #41
Stage: Spidey Vs. Rhino!
Either have Rhino ram all of the fuel containers, or use your webbing to snipe them from a distance. When every last one is destroyed, the comic will appear in the center of the energy field.

Peter Parker Spectacular Spider-Man #42
Stage: Catch Venom
Pursue Venom to the incomplete building. Look on the far left side to find the comic and Spider Armor!

Peter Parker Spectacular Spider-Man #76
Stage: Catch Venom
This hectic stage has two comics hidden within. After Venom and Spider-Man crash through a building, you'll find the comic on the second building shortly thereafter.

Secret Wars # 8
Stage: Spidey Vs. Venom!
Lift the car and something special awaits underneath. Woo hoo!!!

The Spectacular Spider-Man #229
Stage: Sewer Entrance
Step foot into the vast cavern with lizard men on pipes, then return toward the beginning of the stage to find the comic.

Spider-Man #1 (Silver Variant)
Stage: Sewer Cavern
Swing to the series of vertical pipes, and drop behind the waterfall to find a slew of items, including Spider Armor and the comic.

Peter Parker Spider-Man #1 (Reprint Variant B)
Stage: Sewer Plant
From the beginning of the level, proceed forward and veer to the left when you get a chance. You'll find the comic behind the generator.

Peter Parker Spider-Man #1 (Reprint Variant A)
Stage: Hidden Switches
Activate the fourth switch, then return to the third switch to claim your prize.

The Spectacular Spider-Man #158
Stage: Tunnel Crawl
After draining the water, drop to the floor and throw the switch on the box. The comic will appear behind the second box.

Amazing Spider-Man #6
Stage: The Lizard's Maze
Chase Venom through the sewers, but don't fight him until you find a fence with The Lizard behind it. After you hold a brief conversation with this reptilian freak, explore the nearby area and the comic will rear its Silver Age head.

Amazing Spider-Man #42
Stage: Symbiotes Infest Bugle
Carefully explore all of the vents. The one nearest the hostage holds the comic.

Amazing Spider-Man #100
Stage: Elevator Descent
Descend to the symbiotic goo surface with two locked elevator doors. Press the button to open the left door. At the far end, you'll find the comic.

Amazing Spider-Man #50
Stage: Stop The Presses!
Proceed to the second room of the plant. In-between presses lies a stack of papers. Pick it up to find the secret hiding place of this sensational read!

Amazing Spider-Man #13
Stage: Bugle's Basement
Use the L1 targeting to accurately shoot webbing onto all three leaky pipes after the fire jump. The comic will magically appear.

Amazing Spider-Man #311
Stage: Spidey Vs. Mysterio!
Destroy all six targets on Mysterio's body to unlock the comic. It will appear on the level next to his knees.

Amazing Spider-Man #129
Stage: Waterfront Warehouse
Take a peek into the alcove to find a wonderful treat!

Amazing Spider-Man #15
Stage: Waterfront Warehouse
Before exiting the level, take a look around. You'll find a hidden room holding the comic behind some grating.

Amazing Spider-Man #2
Stage: Underwater Trench
Pass through the second machine gun room to the cog. Maneuver behind the pipes to the right and throw the switch. Now, backtrack to the machine gun room and enter the newly opened door.

Spider-Man 2099 #1
Stage: Stopping The Fog
Run forward to the intersecting column and scale it down to the base. Here you'll find a small room with the comic.

Amazing Spider-Man #3
Stage: Spidey Vs. Doc Ock!
This comic appears shortly after Doc Ock regenerates his shield. It will disappear after a few seconds. Keep your eyes peeled!

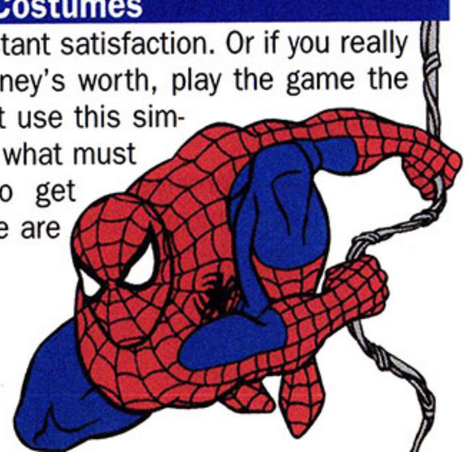
Amazing Spider-Man #33
Stage: Spidey Vs. Carnage
This rare gem will appear within the center of the bubble. Again, this one disappears very quickly. Thankfully though, it will show its face...er, cover over and over again!

Amazing Spider-Man #252
Stage: Spidey Vs. Monster-Ock!
If you can buy time, search the bend in the pipe to find this marvelous prize. Only one more to go.

Amazing Fantasy #15
Stage: Spidey Vs. Monster-Ock!
If you can stay alive long enough, this baby is located about three-forths of the way through this last battle.

How To Get The Costumes

Cheat if you want instant satisfaction. Or if you really want to get your money's worth, play the game the way it should be, but use this simple guide to find out what must be accomplished to get each costume. These are worth it!



Spider-Man 2099
Simply collect every Comic throughout the game, and this radical future Spider garb will become available. With this new guise, Spidey can deal out double damage.

Symbiote Spider-Man
The coolest costume in the game, and all of Spidey's paper adventures, is actually quite easy to unlock. All you have to do is beat the game. If you can't accomplish this, you're not worthy of the outfit to begin with, so get lost! This guise unlocks unlimited webbing. Cool!

Captain Universe
Ah yes...Cosmic Spider-Man. Who could forget this odd adventure. A little trickier, this costume can only be unlocked by beating the game on the Hard difficulty setting. The double damage, infinite webbing, and invincibility make this costume worth the effort.

Spidey Unlimited
Who designed this outfit? It looks worse than a Rob Liefeld creation! To get this ugly super hero garment, beat the game twice. Any difficulty setting will do. With this costume, if you press L2, you'll turn invisible. Stealth, baby!

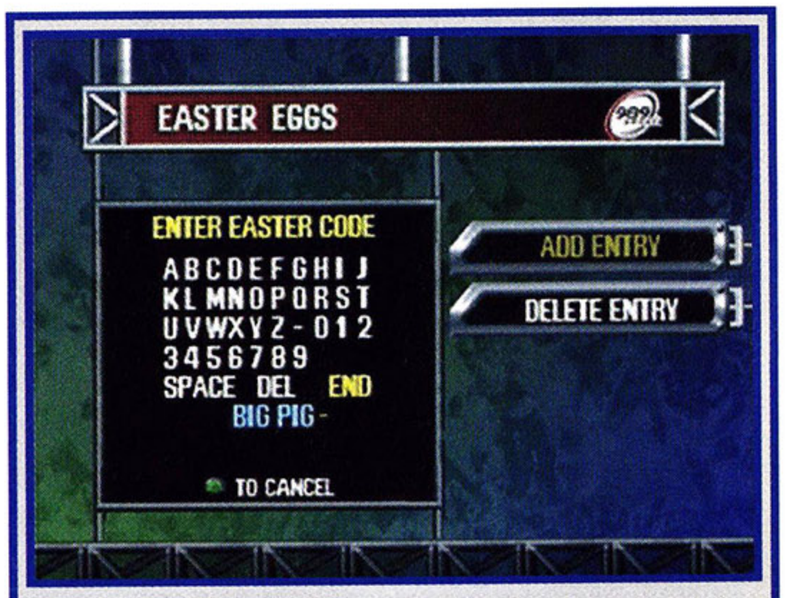
The Scarlet Spider
As worthless as the clone saga was, this costume is a cinch to get. Just conquer Rhino on Level 3: Area 1, and you can play as the Spider-imposter. As if this new uniform wasn't funny enough to begin with, the Scarlet Spider doesn't have any special powers. What a wuss!

Ben Reilly
The face behind the Scarlet Spider guise is Ben Reilly, another horrendous character who quickly disappeared. To get him, just beat Level 4: Area 2. Again, no special powers accompany this chump.

Quick Change Spidey
This cool outfit becomes available when you score over 10,000 points in the Zip-Line training. As snazzy as it may look, these new duds limit you to just two web cartridges. What do you expect, he was in a hurry! He didn't even have time to change his entire get-up!

Peter Parker
Coming out of the closet (so to speak), you can play the game as the man without the cowl. To get this, find the hidden Kraven The Hunter room within the Item Hunt. Big P will be waiting for you inside. Just like quick change, Peter can only stuff two web cartridges into his pockets.

Amazing Bag Man
This outrageous get-up, which Spidey actually wore in the comics, requires the entry of a cheat code (listed to the left). With the bag on his head, and pajamas on, Spidey can only carry two web cartridges. What a disguise!



NFL GameDay 2001

Head into the Options screen, and access the Easter Eggs menu. At this point, freely input any of the codes below.

All Bobo Teams – ALL BOBO
Strobe Effect – STROBE LIGHT
Flat Players – TWO D
Easier Catches – STICKEM
More Endurance – ENDURANCE
Large Ball – BIG PIG
All Players Equal – ALL EVEN
Tall Players – GIANTS
Faster Players – BOOSTER
Small Fast Players – POP WARNER
Super Speed Bursts – ROCKET MAN
Better Running Back – SUPER FOOT
Better Defensive Line – LINE BUSTER
Harder Tackles – CRUNCH
Players Have President Names – OVAL OFFICE
Touch CPU – UNBEATABLE
Stick Players – STICK MEN
Hot Players – SHOOTERS
GameDay Field – GD FIELD
CPU Cheats – CHEATERS
Euro League – EURO LEAGUE
Players Have Basketball Names – BASKETBALL
Programmer Team – RED ZONE
Expert Mode – SMARTER CPU

Kyle Walker
Alpena, MI

SnoCross Championship

Enter all of these codes at the Main Menu.

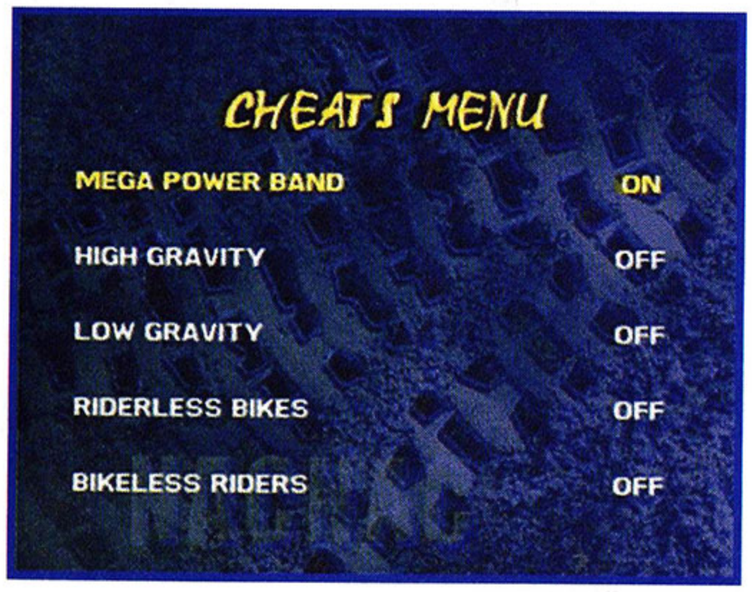
All Main Tracks – Hold R1 and press Up, △ Up, △, Up, △. Release R1.
Tropical Level – Hold R1 and press △, ✕, ○, ○, ✕, △. Release R1.
Kiruna Cartoon Level – Hold R1 and press Right, Up, Left, ○, △, □. Release R1.
Go Cart – Hold R1 and press Right, Right, Left, Left, Right, Right. Release R1. This code will replace all vehicles when gameplay begins.
ATV – Hold R1 and press Up, Right, Down, Up, Right, Down. Release R1. This code will replace all vehicles when gameplay begins.

Secret Tricks

Enter all of these button combinations while in mid-air.
In Your Face – Hold trick button, press Left, Right, then release the trick button.
Butt Wiggle – Hold the trick button, press Down, Up, release the trick button.
Superman – Hold the trick button, then press Up, Left. The longer this is held, the longer it will last.

Jamie Summers
Tucanoa, WY

PLAYSTATION



Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000

Enter all of these codes at the Main Menu.

Cheat List Access – L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, □, ○, Select
Clear Codes – R1 (x8)
Mega Power Bands – R2, L2, R1, L1, □ (x2), ○ (x2)
High Gravity – ○ (x4), L1 (x2), R2 (x2)
Low Gravity – ○ (x4), L2 (x2), R1 (x2)
Crazy Weather – R1, L2, L1, R2, ○, □ (x2), ○
No Rider – □, L1, R1, ○, L2 (x4)
No Bike – □, L1, R1, ○, R2 (x4)
Fat Rider – □, L1, R1, ○, R2 (x2), L1 (x2)
Paper Rider – □, L1, L1, ○, L2 (x2), R1 (x2)
Stunt Track 1 – R1, L1, □ (x2), R1, R2, L1, L2
Stunt Track 2 – R1, L1, □ (x2), L1, L2, R1, R2
Stunt Track 3 – R1, L1, □ (x2), L2, L1, R2, R1
Moon Stunt Track – R1, L1, □ (x2), R2, L2, R1, L1
First-Person View – R1 (x2), L1 (x2), △
Side View – R1 (x2), L1 (x2), □
No Stunt Bonus – □, ○ (x2), □, R2, L2

"GI Droid"
(location unknown – last seen making spit burgers at Mickey D's)

NCAA Football 2001

In addition to the massive list of NCAA Football cheats printed last month, Virtual Gap Boy has uncovered these interesting codes. Enter all of these codes at the Secret Codes section within the Game Settings. Hit Select to enter a code. Thanks, V-Boy!!!

Slow Players – CEMENTFEET
View CPU Plays – MINDREADER
Faster Game – SCRAMBLE

"Virtual Gap Boy 2001"
Phoenix, AZ

PLAYSTATION 2

Tekken Tag Tournament

Hidden Characters – Complete Arcade Mode on any difficulty to unlock a new character. The more times you accomplish this feat, the more characters you'll unlock. Here's who's hidden, and in what order you'll unlock them: Kunimitsu, Bruce Irvin, Jack 2, Lee Chaolan, Wang Jinrey, Roger & Alex, Kuma & Panda, Kazuya Mishima, Ogre, True Ogre, Proto Jack, Mokujin & Tetsujin, Devil, Unknown.

Tiger – Simply highlight Eddy and press Start to shake your booty as this wild character.

Angel – Highlight Devil and press Start to unlock the good side.

Gold Tetsujin – Win ten matches in Versus mode.

Heihachi – On the Normal Difficulty with two rounds, complete arcade mode without losing a round in under 5 minutes and 30 seconds.

Alternate Xiaoyu FMV – Complete Arcade Mode with Ling, then trek through this mode again, only this time wearing her alternate school girl costume. For this feat, you'll unlock two different FMV sequences.

Theater Mode – March through Arcade Mode on any difficulty one time, and movies can freely be viewed.

Gallery Mode – Simply Unlock Devil and Angel to access this interesting mode.

Tekken Bowl Mode – Unlock Ogre and this awesome bowling game will become available. This mode is incredible!

Juke Box (Tekken Bowl) – Score 200 points in Tekken Bowl to unlock this feature.

Begin Match With Tag Partner – Before the match begins, hold Tag and press Start to switch the order.

Practice Stage Select – Scroll down and highlight the Practice Mode icon. Hold L2 and press R2 the listed number of times for the desired stage. For example, if you want Hwoarang's stage, hold L2, then press R2 four times.

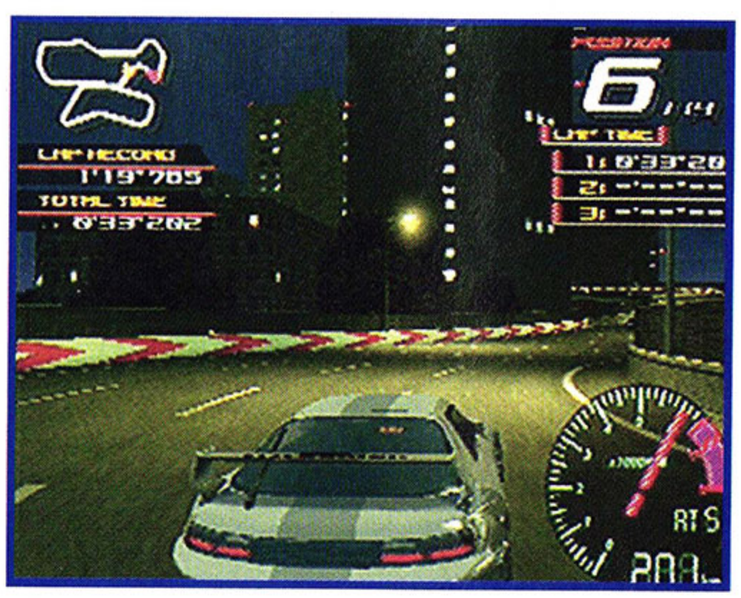
Law (New) – 1
Yoshimitsu (Subtle Snow) – 2
Xiaoyu – 3
Hwoarang – 4
Lei – 5
Ogre – 6
School (Evening) – 7
Jin (Evening) – 8
Nina (Day) – 9
Eddy (Evening) – 10
King – 11
Heihachi – 12
Eddy (Day) – 13
Unknown – 14
Law (Old) – 15
School (Day) – 16
Jin (Day) – 17
Nina (night) – 18
Yoshimitsu (Blizzard) – 19
Paul – 20

Gillian Anderson
Webville, COM

Street Fighter EX 3

Hidden Characters – Complete Original Mode with any regular character without having to use a continue. Accomplishing this feat rewards well as a new character becomes available at the Character Selection screen. A new character is unlocked each time this challenge is met. Here's the order and list of the characters you can earn: Sagat, Vega, Garuda, Shadow Geist, Kairi, Pullum, Area, Darun, and Vulcano.

Tim Anderson
Fargo, ND



Ridge Racer V

Control Intro Sequence – When the introductory sequence begins, showcasing a girl walking down the street as a race zooms by, press L1 or R1 to cycle through a series of different effects.

Bonus Cars – Complete each of the Grand Prix circuits to unlock new vehicles. Tackling the Time Attack high scores also rewards with hot new rides.

Kenneth Thompson
Orlando, FL

DREAMCAST

MagForce Racing

To input these codes you must first achieve a high score ranking. Instead of entering your name, input one of the codes.

Triple Missiles – MISSI
Turbo Rams – TURBO
Malkovich Debug – JOHNM
New Sounds – RETRO
Turbo Auto-Pilot – AUTOM
Invisible Tripods – GHOST
CPU Controlled Pods – HUND

William Perry
Oakland, CA

Power Stone 2

Play as Pride – Complete the game with seven different characters and this lad will show you just how tough he truly is.

Play as Mel – Complete the game with eight different combatants, and this feisty lady will join your ranks.

Additional Options – Each time the game is completed with a different character, an Extra Option is added to your list.

Extra Arenas – Complete the game with every character, including Mel and Pride, to unlock several new stages.

Gentry Hearst
Santa Barbara, IN

Bust-A-Move 4

Enter all of these codes at the Title Screen. If you enter the code correctly you'll hear a cheer or moan.

Another World – X, Left, Right, Left, X
Tarot Reading – Up, X, Down, X, Up
Talk Demo – X, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, X, Down, Left, Up, Right, Down + X
All Characters – Right (x2), X, Left (x2)

Brian "The Gaming Guru" Gertner
Washington, DC

Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000

Enter all of these codes at the Main Menu. Correct code entry is signified by a loud, obnoxious noise.

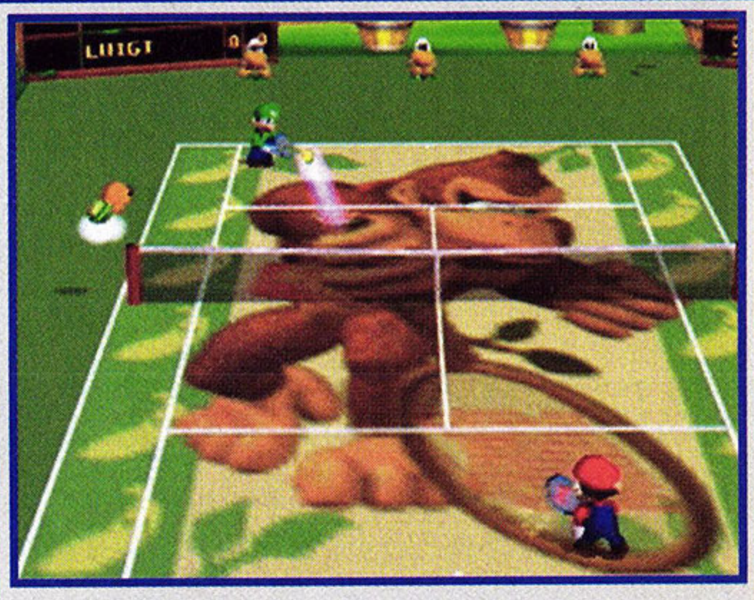
Cheat List Access – L Button, Y, L Button, Y, L Button, X, Y, X
Clear Cheats – L Button (x2), R Button (x2), L Button (x2), X (x2)
Mega Power Bands – Up, Down, Up, Down, L Button, Y, R Button, X
High Gravity – X (x3), R Button (x3), Y (x2)
Lower Gravity – R Button (x3), X (x3), Y (x2)
Crazy Weather – Up (x2), Down (x2), Left (x2), X, B
No Bike – X, Y, L Button (x2), R Button (x2), Y, X
No Rider – X, Y, L Button (x2), R Button (x2), X, Y
Exorcist – Y (x2), L Button (x2), R Button (x2), X, L Button
Stick Riders – Y (x2), L Button (x2), R Button (x2), B, X
Paper Riders – Down, Up, Left (x2), L Button, R Button, L Button, Y
Stunt Track – Up (x2), Down (x2), Left (x2), Y (x2)
Stunt Track 2 – Up (x2), Down (x2), Left, Right, Y, B
Stunt Track 3 – Up (x2), Down (x2), Right, Left, Y, B
Moon Stunt Track – Up (x2), Down (x2), Right (x2), B, X
Programmer Picture – Up, Down, Up, Down, L Button (x2), R Button (x2)
3-Wheel Bike – Y (x2), L Button, R Button, Up (x2), Left, Y
Wheelchair Bike – Y (x2), X (x2), Up (x2), Left, Y
First-Person View – X (x2), B (x2), Up (x2), Down, Left
Side Camera View – B (x2), X (x2), Up (x2), Down, Left
No Stunt Timer – B (x2), Y (x2), Left (x2), B (x2)
Season Advance – L Button, R Button, Y (x2), X (x2), Up (x2)

"The Rhino"
Toledo, OH

NINTENDO 64

CODE OF THE MONTH

Mario Tennis



Enter the Special Games menu and choose Ring Tournament as your game of choice. Now, input one of the codes below to unlock a host of new challenges!

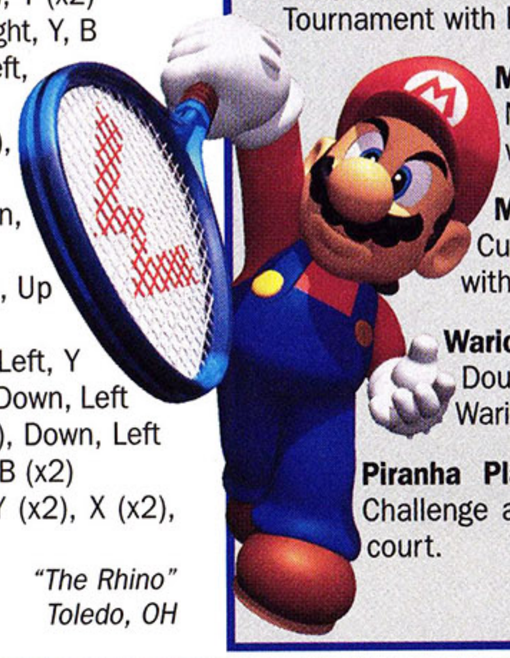
Mario Cup – A3W5KQA3C
Wario Cup – UOUFMPUOM
Luigi Cup – M1C2YQM1W
Waluigi Cup – LA98JRLAR

Shy Guy – Win the Star Cup Singles Tournament to unlock this cute little dude.

Donkey Kong Jr. – Donkey Kong's buddy is hidden within. Just win the Star Cup Doubles Tournament to add him to your roster.

Yoshi & Baby Mario Court – Win the Mushroom Cup Singles Tournament with Yoshi.

Donkey Kong Court – Win the Mushroom Cup Singles Tournament with Donkey Kong.



Mario & Luigi Court – Win the Mushroom Cup Singles Tournament with Mario.

Mario & Luigi Court 2 – Win the Star Cup Doubles and Singles Tournaments with Mario.

Wario & Waluigi Court – Win the Star Cup Doubles and Singles Tournaments with Wario.

Piranha Plant Court – Enter Piranha Plant Challenge and achieve a perfect rating on any court.

Timmy Johnson
Cleveland, OH

ALL ACCESS

Not finding the codes you need?
Trouble with a powerful boss?
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Five Chase Cameras – chasecam
Four Player Classes – cycleplayerclass
Extra Armor – nextarmor
Next Monster – nextmonster
Previous Monster – prevmonster
Restart Stage – restartlevel
List Console Commands – listcommands or set

Kevin Woodson
Springfield, ND

KISS Psycho Circus: The Nightmare Child

Press ~ to display the console window, then input any of these codes.

God Mode – invuln
All Weapons – gimmiegimmiegimmie
Debug 1 – debug1
Debug 2 – debug2
Less Armor – prevarmor
No Clipping – noclip
No Monster Targeting – notarget
Fly Mode – spectator

Heavy Metal: FAKK 2

Choose the Video/Audio option, then select Advanced. Check the Console option. Now, during gameplay, press ~ to display the window. At this point, enter any of the cheats below.

God Mode – god
All Weapons & Items – give all
Restore Health – health 100
No Clipping – noclip
Display Commands – eventlist
Disable AI – notarget
Level Select – map [level name]

[level names]

blood	landersroost
cemetary	oracle
cliff(1-2)	oracleway
creeperpens	otto
end	over
fakkhouse	shield
fog	swamp(1-3)
gruff	towncenter evil
gruff cinema	towncenter good
homes1	under
homes2evil	water
homes2good	zoo
intro	

William Foley
Pittsburgh, PA

Icewind Dale

First, download the v1.05 patch, then use a text editor to edit the "icewind.ini" file within the game directory. Add the line"Cheats=1" under the "[Game Options]" section. Now, begin a new game and press [Control] + [Tab] to display the console window. At this point, type "CHEATERSDOPROSPER:EnableCheatKeys();" to enable the cheat entry option. At this point, any of the codes below can be entered.

Heal or Resurrect – [Control] + R
Move to Pointer Position – [Control] + J
Kill Monster – [Control] + Y
Display Triggers – [Control] + 4

Jeffrey Holland,
Houston, TX

Deus Ex

Use a text editor to change the "User.ini" file within the "duesex/system" directory. Now, locate a key that is not bound to the game. Add the "talk" command to that specific key. For example, "s=talk". Repeat this process for all entries for that key file. Start a game and press T during gameplay. Now, hit [backspace] to remove the word "say". At this point, type "set DuesEx.JCDentonMale bCheatsEnabled True" to activate the cheat function. Hit T again then enter one of the codes below.

God Mode – god
Invisibility – invisible
EMP Field – iamwarren
All Skill Points – allskillpoints
All Weapons – allweapons
Max Ammo – allammo
Kill Target – tantalus
Max Health – allhealth
10,000 Credits – allcredits
Secret Menu – legend
Spawn Enemies – spawnmass

Nathan Summers
San Rafael, CA

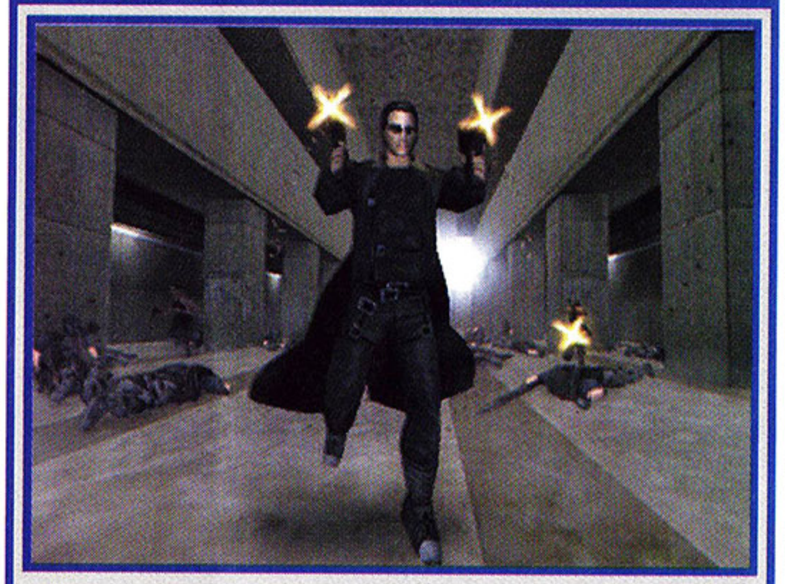
The Sims & The Sims: Livin' Large

During gameplay simultaneously press [Control], [Shift], [Alt], and C to bring up the cheat box. Now, enter any of the codes below.

Save Family History – history
Create-A-Character Mode – edit_char
Create Moats & Streams – water_tool
Set Grass Growth – grass_grow (1-150)
Set Grass Change Value – edit_grass (number)
1000 Simoleans (Unpatched Game) – klapaucius
1000 Simoleans (Patched Game) – rosebud
Set Lot Size – lot_size (number)
Enable Debug Flag (Dialog) – debug_social
Display Personality – interests
Change Free Thinking Level – autonomy (1-100)
Game Speed – sim_speed (-1000-1000)
Set Time of Day – set_hour (1-24)
Set Max Milliseconds in Sim – sim_limit (milliseconds)
Ticks Enabled – sweep on
Ticks Disabled – sweep off
Programmer Stages – tile_info
Toggle Music – music
Toggle Web Page Creation – html
Toggle Unavailable Interactions – all_menus
Toggle Calls to PeekMessage – sim_peek
Toggle Assets Report – report_assets
Say "Xyzzy" – xyzzy
Say ""Plugh" – plugh
Say "Porntipsguzzardo" – porntipsguzzardo
Map Editor Enabled – map_edit on
Map Editor Disabled – map_edit off
Draw All Frames – draw_all_frames on
Draw All Frames Off – draw_all_frames off
Trigger Sound Event – soundevent

"Masta Playa"
AOL, COM

DOWNLOAD OF THE MONTH



Game: Half-Life
Download: The Matrix Mod
Site: www.hlmatrix.com

This is without a doubt the most ambitious mod squad on the planet. Through daily updates, the development team walks you through the making of this exciting new Half-Life skin. Just take a look at the models for Morpheous and Agent Smith! They look just like their real-life movie counterparts. Even the environments are modeled after the film with the smallest of details. It looks remarkable, and because of this, we have a feeling that this site may cause a ruckus with The Matrix movie people. So get there quick and check out the artwork and shots! Since this mod is not officially licensed, and essentially fan made, we suggest you use extreme caution when downloading these files. Any sickness your computer comes down with is your own fault and not a concern for Sierra or Valve Software.

GAME SHARK

PLAYSTATION

BUST-A-GROOVE 2

Infinite Specials –
3005fc33 0002

Max Dance Score –
8005fbe8 ffff

Unlock Pander –
3004f667 0001

Unlock Robo-Z Gold –
3004f668 0001

Unlock Columbo –
3004f669 0001

Unlock Sushi Boy –
3004f66a 0001

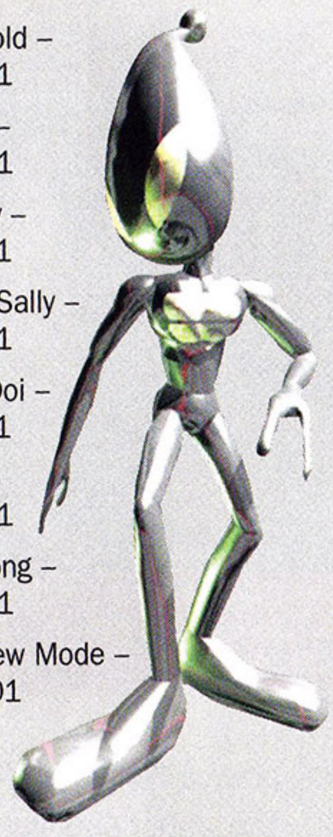
Unlock ChiChi & Sally –
3004f66b 0001

Unlock Michael Doi –
3004f66c 0001

Unlock McLoad –
3004f66d 0001

Unlock Hustle Kong –
3004f66e 0001

Unlock Dance View Mode –
30191c30 0001



Unlock Heat (Dance View) –
3004f66f 0001

Unlock Strike (Dance View) –
3004f670 0001

Unlock Comet (Dance View) –
3004f671 0001

Unlock Ysutomu (Dance View) –
3004f672 0001

Unlock Kelly (Dance View) –
3004f673 0001

Unlock Shorty (Dance View) –
3004f674 0001

Unlock Pander (Dance View) –
3004f675 0001

Unlock Kitty-N (Dance View) –
3004f676 0001

Unlock Hiro (Dance View) –
3004f677 0001

Unlock Bi-O (Dance View) –
3004f678 0001

Unlock Capoeira (Dance View) –
3004f679 0001

Unlock Robo-Z Gold (Dance View) –
3004f67a 0001

Unlock Columbo (Dance View) –
3004f67b 0001

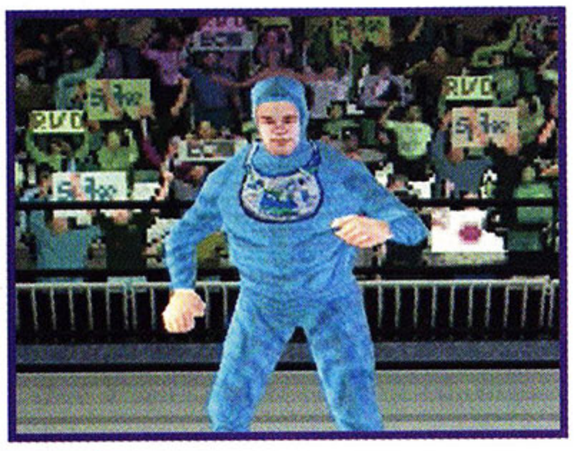
Unlock Sushi Boy (Dance View) –
3004f67c 0001

Unlock ChiChi & Sally (Dance View) –
3004f67d 0001

Unlock Michael Doi (Dance View) –
3004f67e 0001

Unlock McLoad (Dance View) –
3004f67f 0001

Unlock Hustle Kong (Dance View) –
3004f680 0001



ECW ANARCHY RULZ

Infinite Creation Points –
80080248 0001

Infinite Health –
d00e9720 0001
800e9740 0000

Unlock Everything –
800b85c0 ffff
800b85c2 f7ff
800b85c4 ffff
800b85c6 ffff

STAR TREK: INVASION

Infinite Reserve Energy –
3005bec9 00ff

Infinite Engine Energy –
3005becd 00ff

All Missions –
8005bd68 ffff
8005bd6a ffff

All Missions Beat –
8005bd6c ffff
8005bd6e ffff
8005bd70 ffff

Infinite Secondary Weapons –
8011ac38 0063
8011ac64 0063
8011ac90 0063

MADDEN NFL 2001

Home Team Scores 100 –
8006eff0 0064

Away Team Scores 100 –
800710d0 0064

DREAMCAST

POWER STONE 2

Infinite Cash –
90301d29000000f0

All Items –
c7eab038e0715041
c070d2c300000000

Infinite All Items –
a642064ee0715041
2070504d00000000

All Text –
759484c2e06d9041
c070d04300000000

All Materials/Essences –
d059d41fe06d9041
c070d04300000000

D2

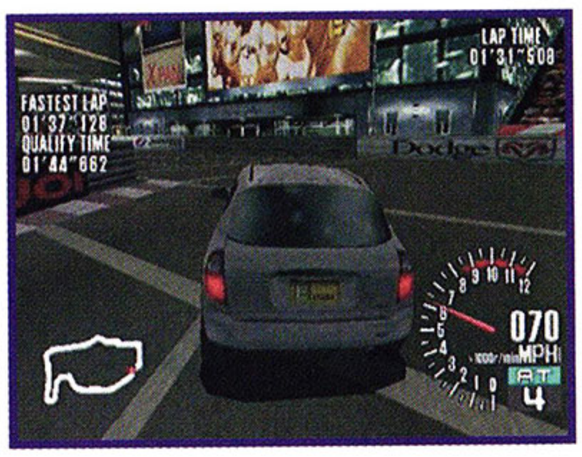
Never Reload Machine Gun –
53c77e780000000f

Never Reload Semi-Auto Rifle –
db108af00000000f

Never Reload Grenade –
3a212d680000000f

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB 2000

Infinite Creation Points –
c7bbd60300000190



SEGA GT

Plenty Of Cash –
1634d44405f5e0ff

ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP

Infinite Skill Points –
ef97183e0000270f

NINTENDO 64

MARIO TENNIS

Enable Code (Must Be On) –
f1300290 3c01
f1300292a 005
f1300298 03e0
f130029a 0008
f130029c ac20
f130029e 86a0

1 Point Win –
d0066985 0004
8015344a 0003 (Press Down C to activate)

1 Point Win (Player 2) –
d0066985 0004
8015344b 0003 (Press Down C to activate)

Instant Win (Piranha Challenge) –
8115137e 0032
81151382 0032

Easy Win Ring Shot (Game) –
d0066985 0004
8015350b0082 (Press Down C to activate)

Easy Win Ring Shot (Time, Balls, Points) – d0066985 0004
80153527 0082
d0066985 0004
80153523 0082 (Press Down C to activate)

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB 2001

Infinite Creation Points –
8107a0f2 00c8

Always First Down –
800785d2 0001

One Down –
800785d2 0004

GAME BOY COLOR

SPIDER-MAN

Invincibility –
9101e5de
97897bc3

Infinite Lives –
010a77c3

MTV SPORTS: SKATEBOARDING FEATURING ANDY MACDONALD

Infinite Continues –
010595c8

Max Score –
0199c1c7
0199c2c7
0199c3c7

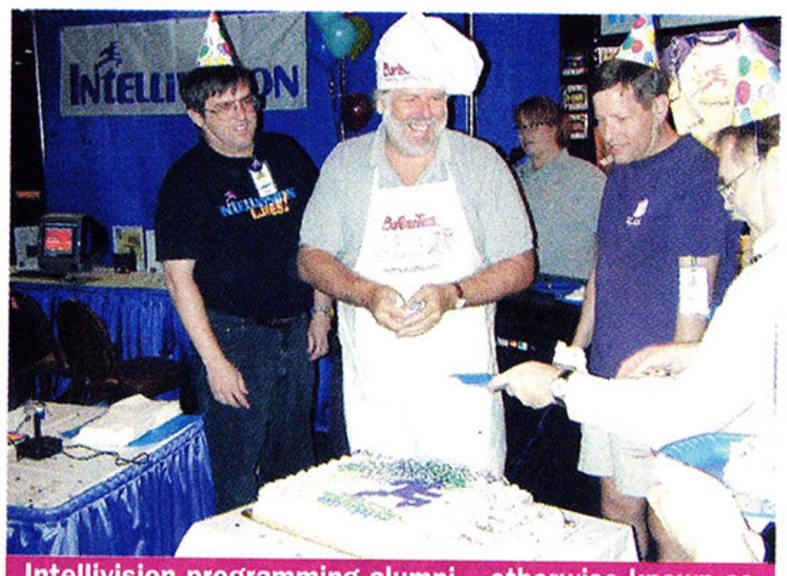
All Balloons –
010a97c7

DRAGON DANCE

All Levels Conquered –
019909c8

CLASSIC GAMING EXPO 2000

It goes against everything that Las Vegas stands for. In late July, The Plaza Hotel and Casino allowed 20,000 square feet of its convention facilities to be filled with machines that not only haven't been making their manufacturers money for years, but are notorious for propelling countless companies into bankruptcy. To top off this gargantuan paradox, everything could be played free (although there was a $25 charge to get in). This wasn't a case of a casino owner sipping a bit too much crazy juice; it was another installment of an annual event that continues to grow every year – The Classic Gaming Expo.



Intellivision programming alumni – otherwise known as the Blue Sky Rangers – celebrate the 20th anniversary of Intellivision

CGE doesn't consist of a bunch of old codgers and retro elitists constantly sneering, "any cart over 4K is crap!" Rather, it is a celebration of video games' history. A place where scholars, collectors, designers, and nostalgia addicts can rub elbows; and one of the few places in the world where the mere mention of Mystique Games prompts a half-hour discussion filled with such notable quotes as, "When you score, you score."

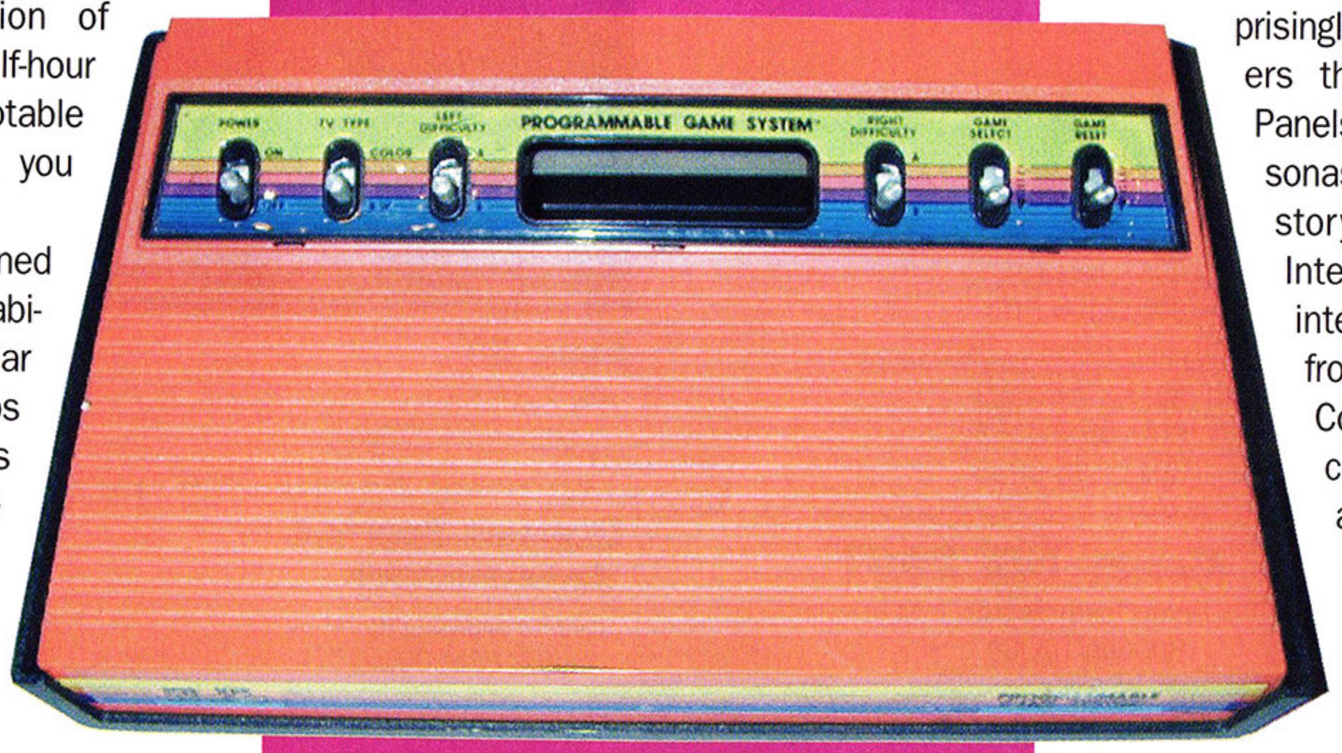
One side of the main hall was lined with a collection of laser disc cabinets which didn't prove as popular as the more traditional stand-ups on the opposite side. Much of this skewed interest could probably be attributed to the cash prizes being awarded at the end of the show for getting high scores on the non-laser disc games, but the quick realization of how frustrating and boring games such as Cobra Command and Badlands were (and still are) can't be discounted entirely.

Between the rows of coin-op classics sat the exhibitor tables. Here you could find many a dealer offering carts and consoles from days gone by, and even a few brave souls who program and sell games they've recently created for these early systems. One could even enter a raffle to have a working Battlezone or Missile Command shipped to their house free of charge. On a side note, we were surprised to see how many booths were selling Lynx, Jaguar, and Neo Geo Pocket Color units and carts. Whether this means that once a system is defunct it automatically becomes a classic or that exhibitors just figured this convention was a good target market for such wares, we were never quite sure.

Through a set of double doors to the side of the main hall lay one of the more fascinating parts of the convention – the museum. Attendees, exhibitors, and special guests loaned CGE's organizers over 100 articles of video game artwork, rarities, memorabilia, and one-of-a-kind prototypes. Strange and wondrous items ranging from the Japanese version of the Atari 2600 to a controller that supposedly read your mind were displayed with cards that explained their historical significance.

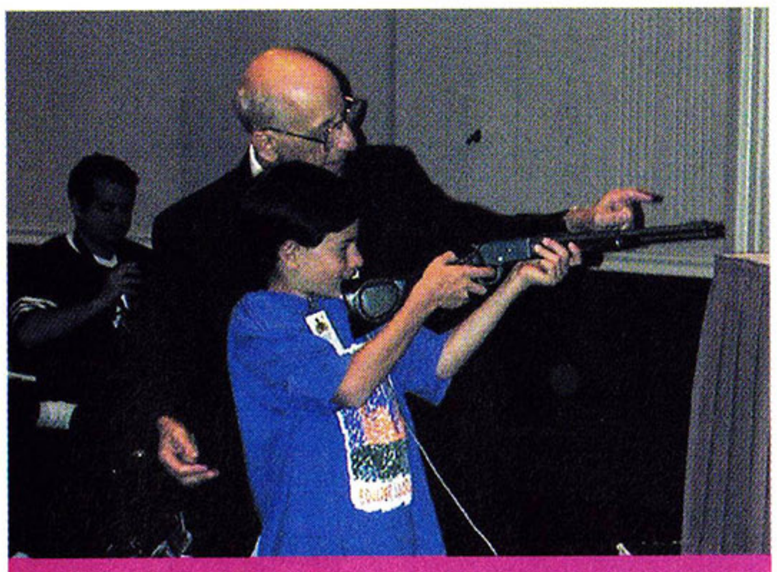
Thanks in part to the cash prizes being awarded for high scores, there was always a crowd to get on the classic arcade machines

The Kee Games 2600 – This early model of the 2600 was made before Atari was even known as Atari (it was called Kee Games at the time). Although this 2600 is certainly more stylish, duller colors were settled on to save production costs.



A nearby conference room hosted a surprisingly large number of guest speakers throughout the two-day event. Panels ran the gamut of pre-crash personas, and ranged in topic from a storytelling session with former Intellivision employees to an intensely technical presentation from the designer of Atari 2600's Combat. Not only did this cadre of classic game alumni openly answer questions during their speeches, most stayed around for the entire show to talk with attendees about their work.

The Classic Gaming Expo



Ralph Baer playing the Brown Box's shooting game with his grandson

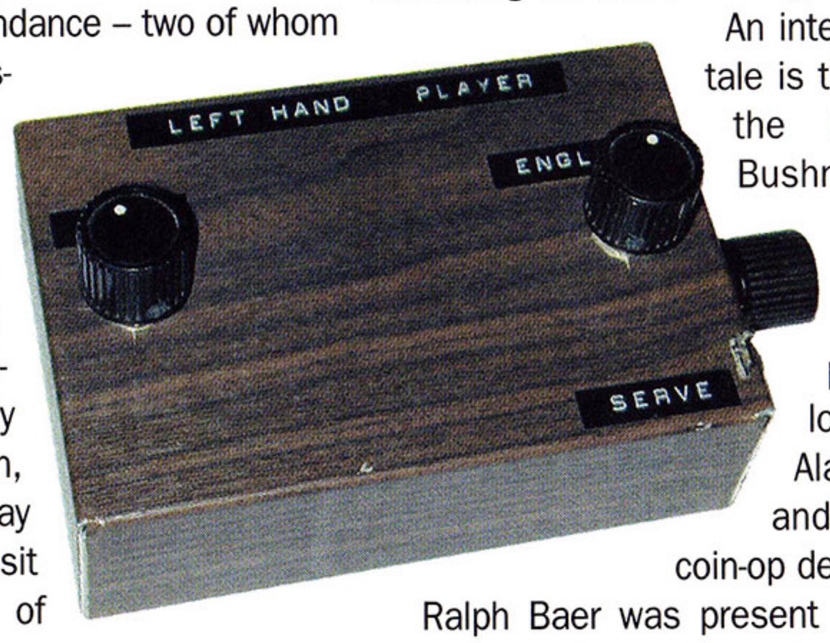
may not have the attendance, flash, budget, or booth babes of E3 (in fact, all told we witnessed around six females in attendance – two of whom were working at the concession stand), but it definitely surpassed it in enthusiasm and friendliness. Exhibitors, attendees, and guests were more than willing to discuss why the Bally Astrocade never caught on, reminisce about the heyday of the arcades, or just sit down and play a game of Snafu with you. In fact, it wasn't at all uncommon to wander the hotel halls after the Expo had closed for the day and find an open door with a dozen or so people sitting around, relaxing and playing some of the greats (or the not so greats – for laughs) from before the NES appeared on the scene. If you've got the means to get out to Las Vegas and even a shred of curiosity about video games' past, we highly recommended that you make the trip to the Classic Game Expo.

Anyone interested in attending or lending their services to the upcoming Classic Game Expo 2001 are encouraged to visit www.cgexpo.com for more information.

PANDORA'S BROWN BOX

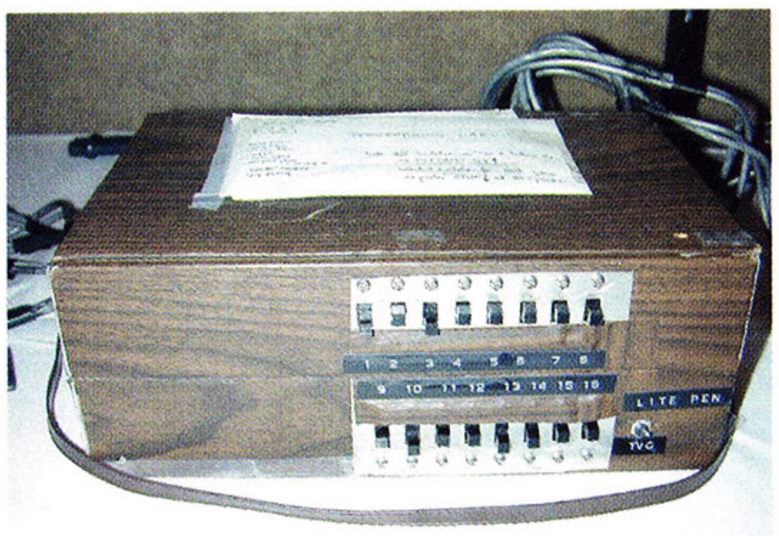
Of all the items in CGE's museum, the most significant by far was the Brown Box. For years Ralph Baer had the idea for an interactive game played on a television, but it wasn't until 1968 that he and Bill Harrison finished putting together this conglomerate of transistors and wires with two controller boxes and a light gun attached. The Brown Box is the first working prototype of a home television video game, making Ralph Baer the father of the industry.

Magnavox, an American television manufacturer, had the Brown Box demonstrated to them in 1970. Within a year the company would license the idea and mass market it as the Odyssey, launching the home video game market.



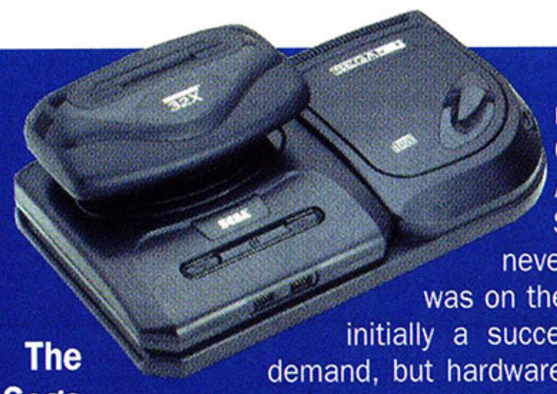
An interesting side to this tale is that a gentleman by the name of Nolan Bushnell attended an early Magnavox Odyssey demo, playing its ping-pong game. Not long after, he hired Alan Alcorn to design and build Pong, the coin-op derivative.

Ralph Baer was present at CGE 2000. Not only did he discuss his making of the Brown Box, he even fired the old girl up and invited members of the audience to play a game.



The Brown Box and one of its controllers. The third knob on the controller (which was absent in the final manufactured version) is to put English on the ball, causing it to curve in mid-air

THIS MONTH IN GAMING HISTORY



The Sega 32X

In November 11, 1994, Sega released the 32X add-on for the Genesis. Intended as a holdover for American consumers until the Sega Saturn became available, the 32X was never released in Japan since the Saturn was on the verge of release there. The 32X was initially a success, with orders exceeding expected demand, but hardware bugs, lack of software, and word of Saturn's imminent release quickly caused sales to sag. A little over a year later, Sega announced that the system was officially dead.

CLASSIC GI

GREATEST GAME OF ALL TIME

By Tim Marine

Every month one of Game Informer's readers picks his personal choice for Greatest Game Of All Time.

CONGO BONGO

■ **FORMAT** ARCADE ■ **PUBLISHER** SEGA

There is no contest when it comes to the best game of all time. It's a game I wasted a lot, and I mean A LOT, of quarters on – Congo Bongo. Yes, that's right, Congo Bongo. Who can forget the first time you died and saw your body fly up to heaven? Who can forget how pissed you were when that monkey set your ass on fire? [ed. note – You actually had your foot set on fire, but if Tim has fond memories of his ass on fire, who are we to argue?] Who can forget when that monkey threw coconuts at you, and those green monkeys that hopped on your back?

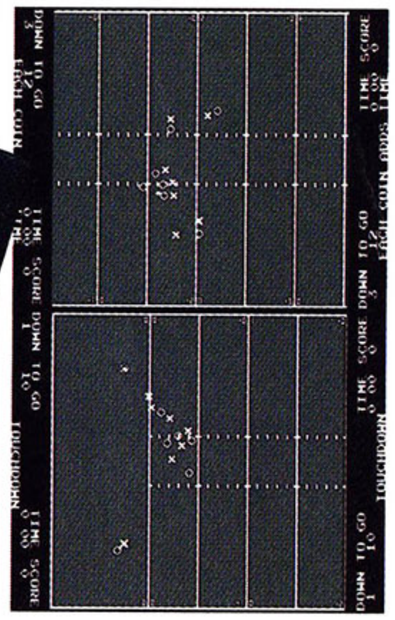
Yes, this game didn't have much of a plot. A monkey king sets your butt on fire, so you go and return the favor. And yes, some aspects of the game made no sense. (How does someone die by falling into a small puddle of water?) All I have to say is, who cares? Gamers back then weren't into realism. I mean when people wasted hundreds of quarters to help a frog cross the road and a yellow circle eat dots, it was obviously the fun factor that counted.

Never again will there be a game as addictive as catching that mean monkey.

ARCADE

ATARI FOOTBALL

RETRO RATING 8.75

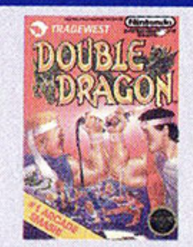


Don't let the simple look of the graphics fool you. Atari Football absolutely ruled the arcades in the late '70s. This behemoth ate more quarters than anything around and was one of the first arcade games that required you to actually exert physical force to win. You see, to play this game you used a trackball to control the action. The faster you rolled the ball, the faster your player moved. To say the least, Football not only made you sweat after a few minutes of play, it also could create some nasty blisters on your hands. Obviously the game could be played against the computer, but the quarters really started dropping when you played against a human opponent. Each player had four offensive and defensive plays to choose from. Guessing the other player's choice – or attempting to – was all part of the entertainment. Granted, there weren't too many variables to the game, but the action was undeniably one of the most memorable arcade experiences of its time.

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER** ATARI ■ **DEVELOPER** ATARI
■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1978

NES

DOUBLE DRAGON



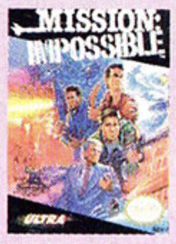
RETRO RATING 9

This bang-up video game was a fixture in virtually every arcade in the mid-1980s and consequently made the jump to numerous console systems including this version we present to you. A beat-em-up game if there ever was one, Double Dragon starred a dynamic duo named Spike and Hammer. Taking to the streets – either one at a time or simultaneously – these guys are on the search for their kidnapped girlfriend. We won't go into why they both have the same girl, but we will tell those of you who haven't experienced this game that each of the characters has an arsenal of moves. Along with the standard punch and kick maneuvers, there are an assortment of special moves that are opened throughout the game. Additionally, these bad boys can acquire various weapons such as knifes, bats, and the infamous whip. Double Dragon absolutely rocks and the NES version is great in its own right.

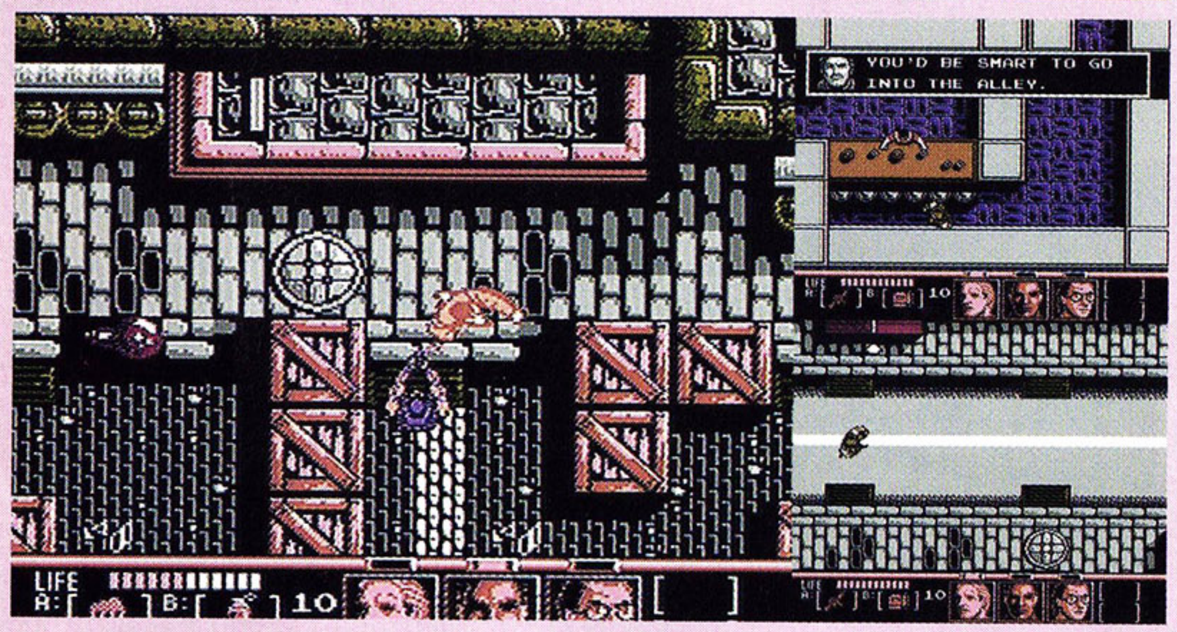
■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER ACTION ■ **PUBLISHER** TRADEWEST ■ **DEVELOPER** TECHNOS JAPAN
■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1988

NES

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE



RETRO RATING 3



Long before Tom Cruise and some other fools ruined the good name of Jim Phelps, and way before some ill-minded television executive aired a new, reinvented series, there was a phenomenal show called Mission: Impossible. Even though this game is based on the reinvented TV series, we just had to profess our love for the original series and denounce all other forms of it – including this less-than-stellar game. From an overhead perspective, players control one of three IMF agents sent to rescue a kidnapped doctor and his lovely secretary. Each of the three agents have a unique weapon and skill that you must utilize to succeed at the mission – if you choose to accept it. You travel the areas, collect clues, disable traps, and generally fight off the baddies. Unfortunately, the game is extremely difficult and this, coupled with the rather dull graphics engine, causes more frustration than fun. Maybe we're just Mission: Impossible purists, but we think this game stinks.

■ **STYLE** 1-PLAYER ACTION/ADVENTURE ■ **PUBLISHER** ULTRA/KONAMI ■ **DEVELOPER** KONAMI ■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1990

ARCADE

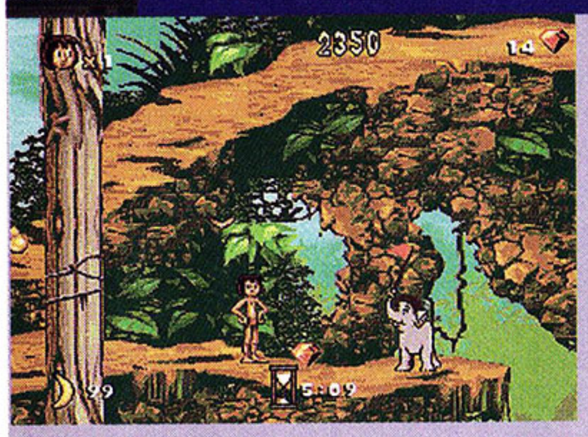
720°

RETRO RATING 9.75

Long before Tony Hawk conquered the video game world, this arcade wonder ruled the skating circuit like no other. Skate rats filled this machine with countless quarters and the game spawned a number of home console releases, but none truly captured the essence of what makes this game so great. This was primarily due to the fact that the arcade unit features a spinning joystick that controls your skater's direction, and commands some blister-inducing tricks. The game has a large overworld littered with small parks and four main skating events – ramp, slalom, jump, and downhill. Players are required to earn money to open these events and then are awarded medals based on their performance. Additionally, players have the option to purchase new equipment that pumps up the skater's performance. The skater's performance matters little, however, if you can't get yourself into the skate parks, which inevitably means the game barks out the infamous words, "Skate or Die!"

■ **STYLE** 1 OR 2-PLAYER SPORTS ■ **PUBLISHER:** ATARI ■ **DEVELOPER** ATARI ■ **YEAR RELEASED** 1986

GENESIS



JUNGLE BOOK

Change Screen Color – Pause the game and hit **A**, **B**, **B**, **A**, **C**, **A**, **B**, **B**.

Debug Mode – In the first level go to the briar patch and jump into it. Before Mowgli dies, pause the game and press **B**, **A**, **Down**, **C**, **Right**, **A**, **B**, **Left**, **A**, **Right**, **Down**, **B**, **A**, **Left**, **Left**, **C**, **Up**, **Right**, **Left**.

Level Skip – Pause the game and press **B**, **A**, **A**, **B**, **B**, **A**, **A**, **B**, **A**.

Reset Lives & Health – Pause the game and press **Up**, **Up**, **Down**, **Down**, **Left**, **Right**, **Left**, **Right**, **B**, **A**.

Skip to End – Pause the game and press **B**, **A**, **Down**, **C**, **A**, **Right**, **Left**, **A**, **Right**, **Down**. Alternatively, use the Level Skip code on any bonus round.

Flip Game – Pause the game and press **Left**, **A**, **Right**, **Down**, **B**, **A**, **Left**, **Left**, **C**, **Right**, **Up**, **Down**.

SKITCHIN'

Enter these codes at the Password screen.

Chicago – **CBSL GSLL RTHT**
Denver – **FTKK FOGO GT0I**
Detroit – **5MWZ EOTQ SIDN**
Los Angeles – **5VHT C0Y3 GT3I**
Miami – **05AB 0SFM SSZS**
New York – **4TB4 M0YC 0DMZ**
San Diego – **VDRL HFXB YYRU**
San Francisco – **SJ0E 1A54 SIJ0**
Seattle – **NA3L PSFB ADF0**
Toronto – **TB3D XRNJ 0SND**
Washington – **UAZK W0CH STVV**

Special Passwords – When the Warning screen appears, hit **B**, **A**, **Down**, **A**, **Start**, **Start**. Then enter one of the following at the Password screen.

Toronto – **JAYS**
Miami – **PALMS**
New York – **LIBERTY**
Denver – **BRONCOS**
Washington DC – **CAPITAL**
Chicago – **PIZZA**
Detroit – **CARS**
Vancouver – **TOTEM**
San Diego – **BEACH**
San Francisco – **HILLS**
Los Angeles – **STARS**
Nitro Bursts – **SPEED**
Skin Head – **BALD**
$2,000 – **MONEY**
Weapons – **THRASH**
All Equipment – **ARMOR**

3DO

FOES OF ALI

Cheat Mode – During gameplay, press **R** + **L**, **C**. When the password screen appears, enter one of the following codes:
team – shows photo of designers
prebeg – shows photo of Ivan Prebeg
crowd – removes crowd
zippy – speeds up game
aiat – boxer 1 is computer controlled
aibt – boxer 2 is computer controlled

Low Blow – **Down** + **Right** + **A** or **Down** + **Right** + **B**

WAY OF THE WARRIOR

Level Warp, Play As Bosses, Play As Hidden Character – Enter these codes on the Names screen.
Garden Stage – **TAJ MAHAL, JANUARY 1, 1901**
Turbo World – **SPEED, AUGUST 8, 1980**
Alley Fight – **TUGAWAR, APRIL 16, 1964**
Psychedelic Caves – **PARANOID MAY 5 1975**
Kull – **A GAVIN, JUN 11 1970**
High Abbott – **J RUBIN, JAN 6 1970**
Gulab Jamun – **GULAB, FEBRUARY 29, 1900**
Major Trouble – **BAD BOY, FEBRUARY 4, 1908**
Voodoo – **EVIL, JUNE 6, 1966**
Black Dragon – **WYVERN, MARCH 9, 1927**

SEGA CD

ROAD AVENGER

Debug Menu – At the Game Start screen, move **Up** to **Options** and press **Start**. With the cursor on the Players option, press **C**, **C**, **C**, **C**, **C**, **Exit** the Options screen and start the game. When the game begins, press **A** + **B** + **C** simultaneously.

Level Select – At the Game Start screen, move **up** to **Options** and press **Start**. With the cursor on the Players option, press **A**, **A**, **A**, **A**, **A**, **A**. Exit the Options screen and start the game.

GAME BOY

TMNT: FALL OF THE FOOT CLAN

Restore Life – Pause the game then hit **Up**, **Up**, **Down**, **Down**, **Left**, **Right**, **Left**, **Right**, **B**, **A**. It can only be used once.

VIRTUAL BOY

WARIO LAND

Level Select – **A**, **B**, **A**, **A**, **B**, **B** at the main menu

NES

CRYSTALIS

Easy Warp – At any time during the game, on controller 1 hold down **A** + **B**, and on controller 2 press **A**. You will warp to a different spot in the game.

POW

Extra Lives – At the Title Screen enter **A**, **B**, **B**, **Up**, **Up**, **Down**, **Left**, **Start**.

KNIGHT RIDER

Level Select – Hold **A** + **B**, hit reset, release **A** and **B** and choose either mission or drive options. When Devon appears press **up** or **down** to change levels.

SNES

FINAL FIGHT

Options Menu – To open the Options Menu, hold **L** and press **Start** at the Title screen.

Bonus Stage – To uncover an extra stage, at the game Start screen hold **L** + **R** and the hit **Up**, **Up**, **Down**, **Down**, **Left**, **Left**, **Right**, **Right**.

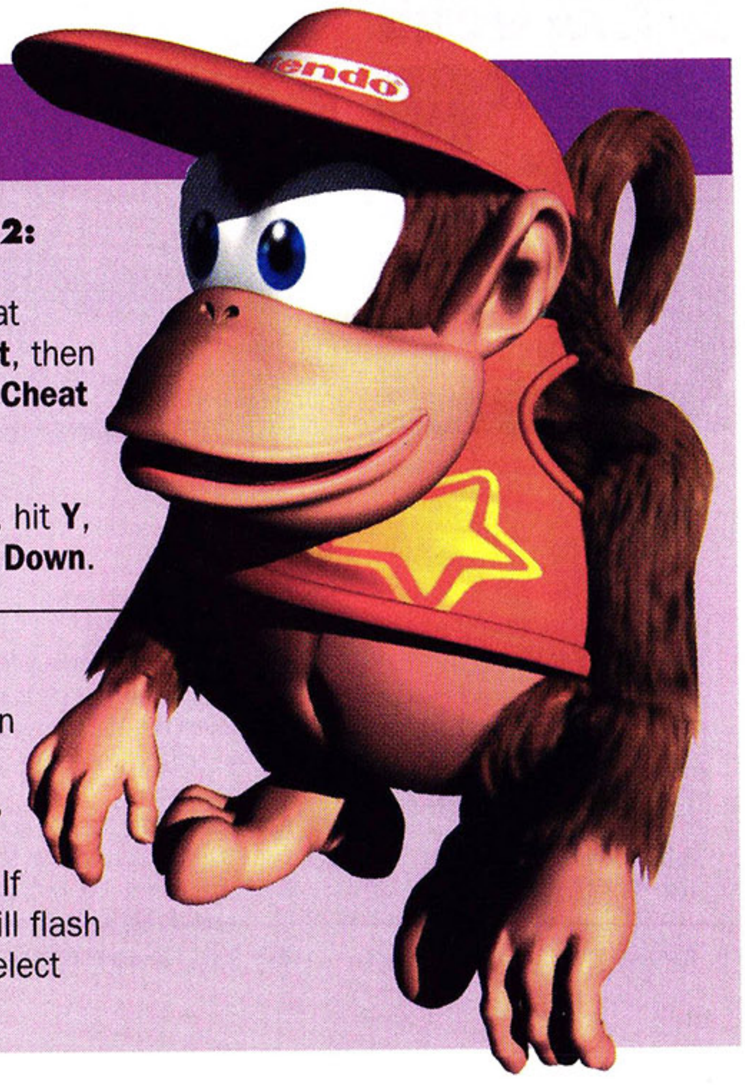
DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 2: DIDDY'S KONG QUEST

Cheat Mode – To activate cheat mode, enable the **Music Test**, then press **Down** repeatedly until **Cheat Mode** appears.

50 Lives – In the Cheat Mode, hit **Y**, **A**, **Select**, **A**, **Down**, **Left**, **A**, **Down**.

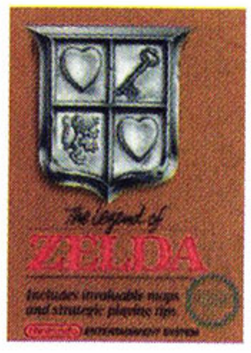
KING OF DRAGONS

Select Same Character – When the Capcom logo begins to fade, quickly press **Down**, **R**, **Up**, **L**, **Y**, **B**, **X**, **A** before the logo completely disappears. If done correctly, the screen will flash blue and both players can select the same character.



NES

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA



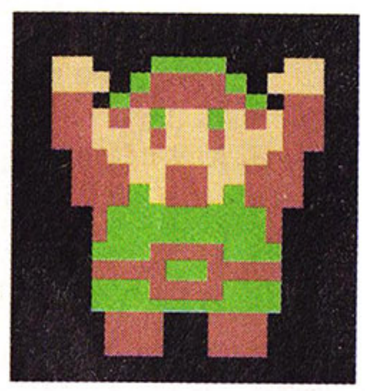
STRATEGY

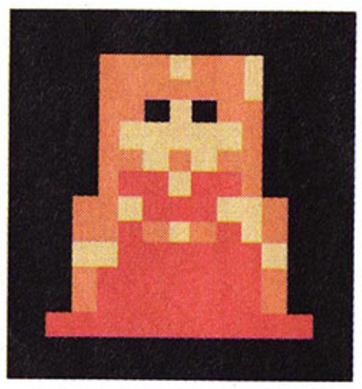
Before venturing into the heart of Hyrule, enter the cave and grab the Sword. Next, spend a few minutes powering-up. Head right eight screens, up one screen, and enter the cave. Buy the Bombs. Now, go back out and head down one screen, then to the left another four. Place a Bomb on the left wall of the northern passage to reveal a cave. Enter and grab the Heart. From here, head north for five screens, then veer to the right. Bomb the large rock and grab the second Heart. Exit to the right and up, following the water to a ladder. Ascend it and enter the cave to get the Letter. Descend to the water and proceed to the right. Don't enter the green tree, but rather, walk behind it and through the transparent wall. Grab the 100 Rupees from the cave, then return to the tree.

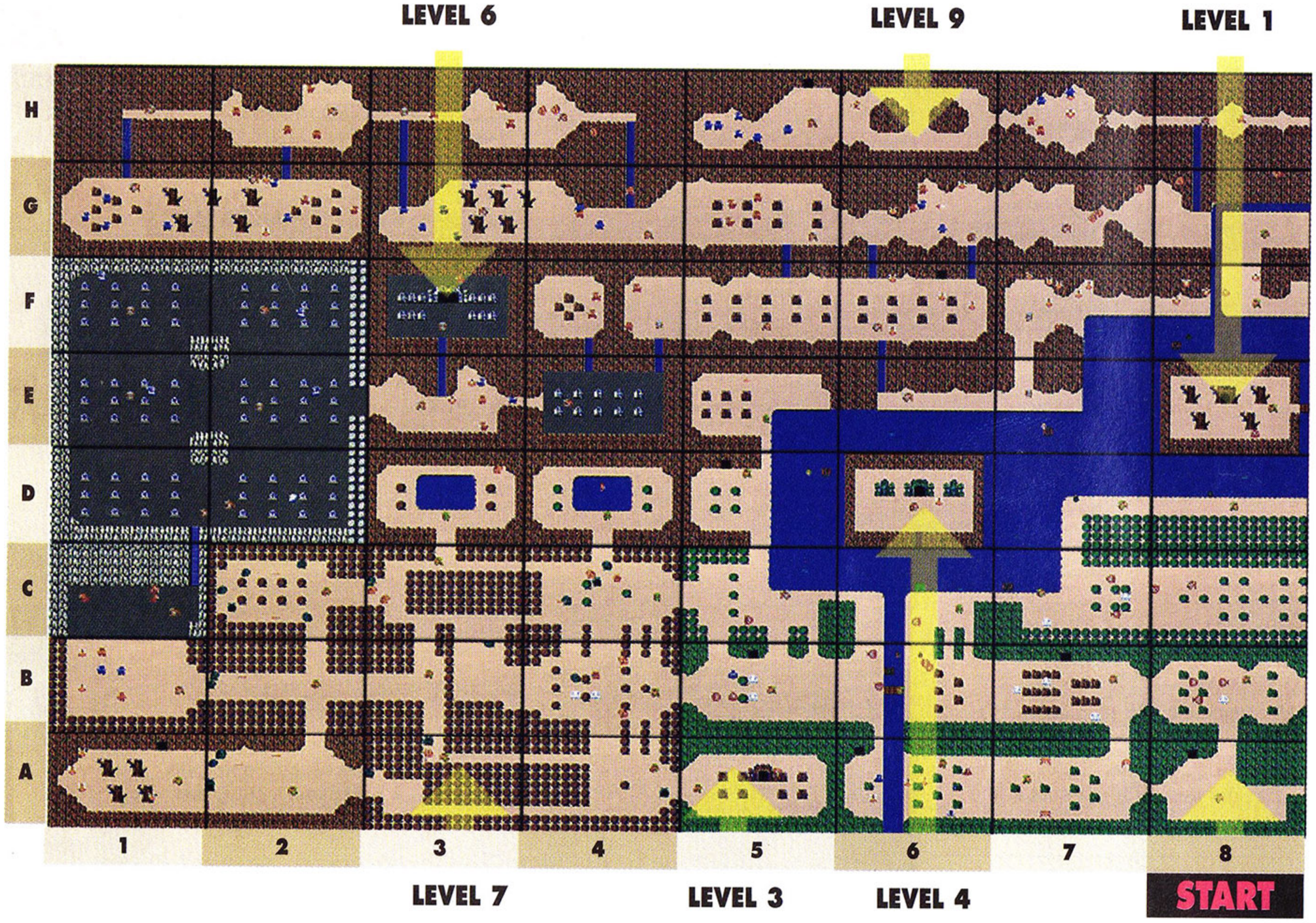
At this time, backtrack to the beginning screen. Head north, then cut to the left and enter the cave. Buy the Candle, but leave the Shield behind. If you'd like, head to the left for another two screens and give the lady the Letter, enabling the purchase of Potions. Otherwise, exit to the left and ascend to the water. Cut to the right, then follow the water northbound again. On this screen, use your Candle to ignite the corner bush, revealing a cave with a cheaper Shield. Exit to the right and burn the fifth bush from the right to unearth a cave and the third Heart. Now, head left and then up, following the curve of the water the whole time. When it breaks down to a stream, avoid the boulders and continue to the right. At the end you'll run into a ladder, ascend it to the basin and cave. Enter to find the White Sword.

Now, you'll want to secure 250 Rupees. The best way to do this is to defeat all enemies on the way back toward the beginning, or use the supplied map to find secret Rupee locations. When you arrive at the beginning again, veer up, then to the left across the water. Move left one more screen, then angle north to a set of six metal statues. Touch the topmost middle statue to reveal stairs leading to a shop holding the Blue Ring.

Now that you've powered-up, it's time to track down the Tri-Force pieces. Use the handy dandy GI map to locate the entrance to Dungeon 1. The only thing you need to know is find the Compass, Map, and Bow, and be sure to kill all of the Goriyas to secure the Boomerang. After this, use your Sword or Bombs to easily take out the Aquamentus. With the Tri-Force piece in hand, continue your conquest to Dungeon 2. Keep your eyes peeled for the Magic Boomerang, and use Bombs to take out Dodongo. On to Dungeon 3. Grab the Raft, then use your Sword to defeat







MAP LEGEND
Simply locate these coordinates on the map to find amazing booty and powerful new weapons and items.

A-1 Fortune Teller
A-2 Bomb north wall to find 30 Rupees
A-5 Dungeon 3 (Label on Map)
A-10 Push the left rock up to enter a teleport station
A-12 Bomb the wall to the north to find a cave leading to a Heart
A-14 Burn single bush to access Dungeon 8 (Label on Map)
B-2 Lost Forest (Up, Left, Down, Left) (Label on Map)
B-3 Burn the topmost bush in the single row to reveal 100 Rupees
B-5 Enter the cave and hand the lady the Letter to reveal the Potion Shop
B-7 Item Shop (Magic Shield, Blue Candle, Key)
B-8 Bomb the wall to the left of the protrusion to find 30 Rupees
B-16 Item Shop (Magic Shield, Bombs, Arrows)
C-2 Burn the lower right bush to reveal 10 Rupees
C-7 Out of the central six bushes, burn the lower left bush to find 10 Rupees
C-15 Item Shop (Magic Shield, Key, Blue Candle)
C-16 Use ladder to reach Heart
D-3 Play Flute to access Dungeon 7 (Label on Map)
D-5 Item Shop (Magic Shield, Bombs, Arrows)
D-6 Use the Raft to reach Dungeon 4 (Label on Map)
D-7 Burn the corner bush to find an Item Shop (Magic Shield, Meat, Health Heart)
D-8 Burn the fifth bush from the right to reveal stairs and a Heart
D-9 Burn the topmost bush in the vertical clump to the right to find 30 Rupees
D-10 Push the rock down to unlock a staircase leading to a teleport station
D-11 Item Shop (Magic Shield, Bomb, Arrows)

Manhandla. Piece of cake!

Before continuing to Dungeon 4, head to the right side of the map and use your Raft to sail to an island with a cave leading to the fourth Heart. When ready, use the Raft to reach Dungeon 4. When you reach the darkened rooms, use your Candle to illuminate your surroundings. Eventually, you'll find the Stepladder. This boss is a tad on the tricky side. Simply use your White Sword to take out both heads, avoiding the fireballs and flying dragon antics. With the Tri-Force secured, return to the east coast (right side of the map) and use the ladder to snag the Heart sitting in the sea. Now, backtrack all the way to the west coast. Enter the Lost Forest (located on the map), and as you'll quickly see, no matter where you exit, the screen repeats. To conquer this puzzle, exit Up, Left, Down, then Left. You should enter a vast field. Veer to the north and enter the graveyard. Maneuver to the north until you can no longer do so, then head to the right one screen. Approach the middle row of graves, and push the third grave from the left to find a secret passage leading to the Master Sword. Descend one screen, then mosey to the right for another two. Ascend the ladder on the right, then move to the right again. Touch the top right statue and it will drop the Bracelet.

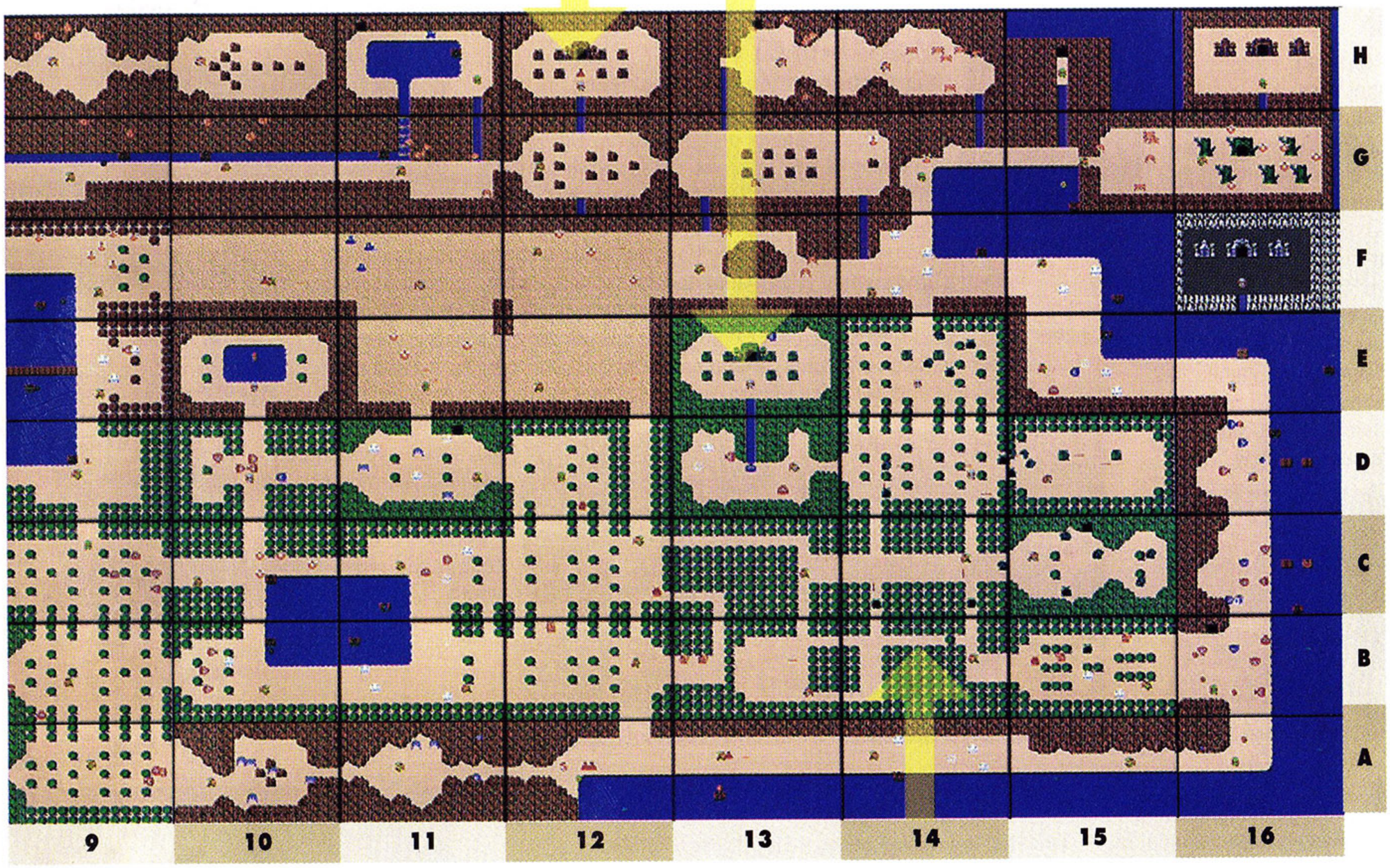
From here, continue the holy quest and make tracks for Dungeon 5. Curious? You can't reach it, can you? Just like the Lost Woods, the screen before Dungeon 5 repeats. Simply head Up five times to conquer this puzzle, then enter the Dungeon. Locate the Magic Flute, then battle Digdogger. Simply play the Flute to shrink his size, then whack him twice. Dead and dead.

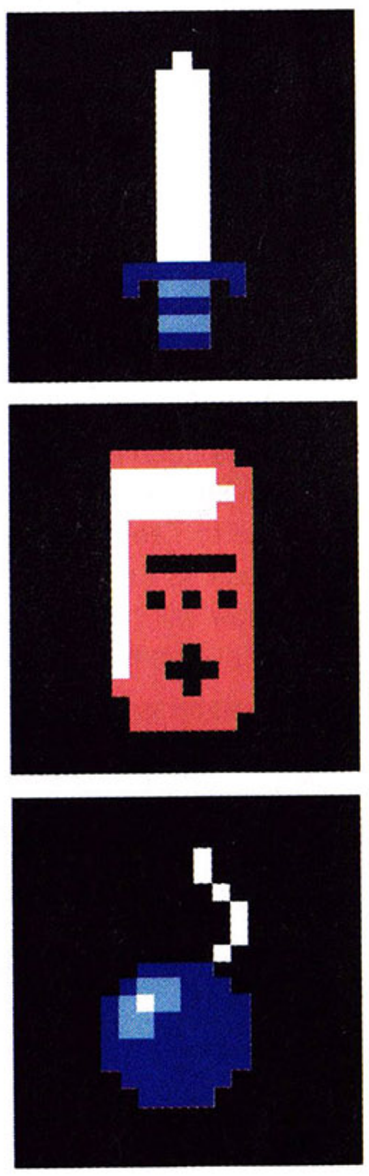
Without breaking a sweat, hit the Item Shop on the east side of the map, then move to Dungeon 6. Snag the Magic Wand, then use your Bow to shoot Gohma directly in the eye. Before heading to Dungeon 7, return to the cave where you purchased the Blue Ring and buy the Bait. Now, head to the seventh Dungeon. Where is it? Play the Flute by the water to make the stairs appear. Navigate this treacherous maze with caution, and grab the Red Candle before whacking the second Aquamentus boss. He's just as easy as before!

From here, move to the screen where Dungeon 8 resides. Use the Candle to burn the mysterious bush blocking the path and descend into this dangerous place. Hunt down the Magic Book and Magic Key, then take down the ferocious multi-headed dragon with the same technique you used on his brother hours ago. Now, it's time to enter Death Mountain and face Ganon. Before heading to this last Dungeon, stock up on Bombs, Arrows, and Rupees, and snag a Red Potion. To reveal Dungeon 9's entrance, place a Bomb on the left rock and Kaplooie!!! This stage is actually quite easy. Just find the Red Ring and Silver Arrow. When you run across the pig-thief Ganon, use your Sword to hit him, then when he turns brown, pull out the Silver Arrows and finish him off. Next, enter the newly opened room, take out the four flames, and wrap your arms around your prize.

INSTANT SECOND QUEST ACCESS

If you don't want to beat the game, you can access the second quest by naming yourself Zelda. That's right. Begin a new game and type in Zelda. You'll know this worked when the Link icon appears with a sword.





LEVEL 8

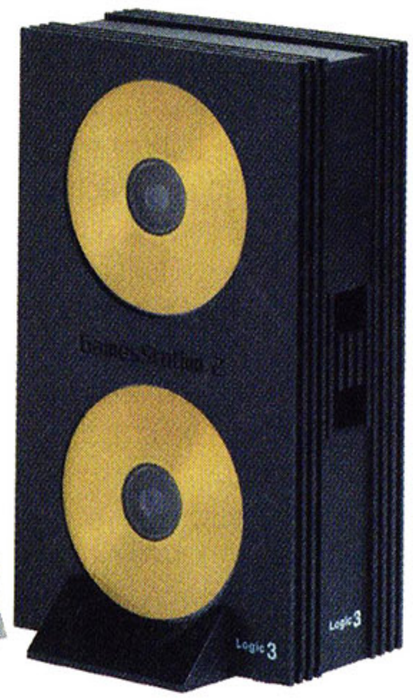
- **E-5** Touch the top statue in the middle to find an Item Shop (Key, Blue Ring, Meat)
- **E-8** Dungeon 1 (Label on Map)
- **E-13** Dungeon 2 (Label on Map)
- **E-14** Touch rightmost statue to reveal stairs leading to 30 Rupees
- **F-2** Push the third grave from the left in the middle row to find the Master Sword
- **F-3** Dungeon 6
- **F-4** Push the left rock up to enter a teleport station
- **F-6** Item Shop (Magic Shield, Bombs, Arrows)
- **F-9** Burn the lower right green bush to unearth 30 Rupees
- **F-13** Bomb the left side of the large rock to find a cave leading to a Heart
- **F-14** Bomb the wall to the north to find a cave with 30 Rupees
- **F-16** Use the Raft to reach this cave and Heart
- **G-4** Bomb left/north wall to collect 30 Rupees
- **G-7** Bomb flat north wall to reveal Money-Making Game
- **G-12** Lost Hills (Up five times) (Label on Map)
- **G-14** Bomb right wall to find a teleport station
- **G-16** Money-Making Game and transparent north wall
- **H-2** Bomb north wall to pay for door repair
- **H-5** Potion Shop
- **H-6** Bomb left rock to access Dungeon 9 (Label on Map)
- **H-12** Dungeon 5 (Label on Map)
- **H-11** Enter the cave to find the White Sword
- **H-13** Item Shop (Magic Shield, Key, Blue Candle)
- **H-14** Bomb north wall to reveal Potion Shop
- **H-15** Talk to the man to obtain the Letter
- **H-16** Enter cave to find 100 Rupees

ETC

CARAMEL APPLE POPS

Manufacturer: Tootsie • Website: www.tootsie.com
List Price: $2.99 a bag

Old fogeys will tell you that nothing can beat the taste of an actual caramel apple. To these idiots, we say, "Get with the times! In the future there will be no need for apples, and the future is now!" We're not sure who invented the Caramel Apple Pop, but we do know that the company that chucks out over 49 million Tootsie Rolls a day makes the best ones. Go get yourself a bag and you will know the taste of heaven.



GAMES STATION 2

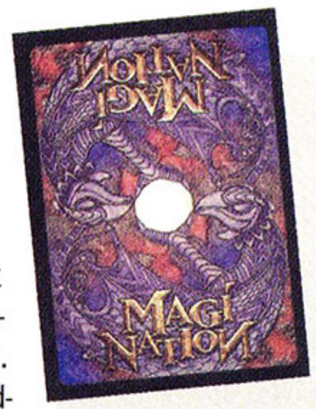
Manufacturer: Spectra Video • Website: www.spectravideo.com
List Price: US Price Unannounced

Although its UK manufacturer hasn't issued this product a green card to be sold on this side of the swamp, we hope the immigration board gives it clearance. It's quite clear from the sleek look they share that the Games Station 2 and the PlayStation 2 care deeply about one another, and their marriage is no sham. The Games Station 2 even comes with a stand so it can always sit alongside its lover. Your two favorite games or DVDs can be stuck on the side of it, while two controllers and two memory cards are made to fit inside. The whole is definitely much better than its parts. Let their love never be torn asunder.

VIDEO GAMES: JUST FOR FUN

Manufacturer: The History Channel
Website: www.historychannel.com
List Price: Pay your cable bill, fool!

Against all odds, The History Channel has put together an absorbing documentary that has nothing at all to do with World War II or the Holocaust. Although its presentation is sometimes misleading, this hour-long program on how video games came to be (an episode of its Modern Marvels series) is quite interesting. Even if you already know all the bare-bones facts covered in the show, it's still fun to see if you can name all the games that flash across the screen. By the time you read this, the show will have already aired for the first time, but many, many repeats are sure to follow.



MAGI-NATION

Manufacturer: Interactive Imagination
Website: www.magi-nation.com
List Price: Depends on What You're Buying

Taking a cue from the sales storm Nintendo and Wizards of the Coast created with the deadly one-two combo of a collectible card game coupled with an addictive Game Boy title, a new company that goes by the handle Interactive Imagination is preparing to unleash Magi-Nation upon the unsuspecting masses. The invasion begins in October with Magi-Nation Duel. Similar in concept to Magic: The Gathering, this card game will let players manage energy to cast spells and summon creatures, attempting to defeat other players. A video game that embodies the CCG will be coming to Game Boy Color (pictured) in January 2001, with a Game Boy Advance version planned for fall of that year. Will Magi-Nation be the next Pokémon? Only time, and the fickle youth market of America, will tell.

THE SKUDA

Manufacturer: Skuda, Inc. • Website: www.skuda.com • List Price: $79.95

Every news outlet has run a story about how Skudas are causing injuries all over the nation. Are they really that dangerous? Damn right! Eidos sent us one as a promo item for TimeSplitters (the parallel being that Skudas and first-person shooters both involve death?), and the thing nearly killed Jay. He was out acting all cool, hot-dogging around the parking lot and doing ollies up curbs. While he was cruising at top speed, a hole caused him to come to a sudden halt, flinging him over the handlebars and head first onto the sidewalk. His wrist and leg are still hurting a week later. Our advice to all of you is go buy a skateboard. You'll probably get just as banged up, but at least you won't look like el dorko while riding around.

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POWER Play TV

A thirty-minute magazine style **television series** that entertains, informs, and educates its audience about the **hottest video games**, the **coolest game hardware**, and the **latest peripheral** device enhancements anywhere.

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MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Blood and Gore

Animated Violence

PlayStation

CAPCOM EDGE

CAPCOM

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NEW RELEASES

ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CALL YOUR LOCAL RETAILER FOR MORE DETAILS.

Release Date	Title	Publisher/ Distributor	System
10/23/00	Armored Core 2	Agetec	PS2
10/23/00	Eternal Ring	Agetec	PS2
10/23/00	Evergrace	Agetec	PS2
10/24/00	Pro Pinball Collection	Take 2	DC
10/24/00	Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2	Midway	DC
10/24/00	Silent Scope	Konami	DC
10/24/00	Starlancer	Crave	DC
10/24/00	Bust-A-Move Millenium	Acclaim	GB
10/24/00	CyberTiger	Electronic Arts	GB
10/24/00	Test Drive 2001	Infogrames	GB
10/24/00	Polaris SnoCross	Vatical	N64
10/24/00	Backyard Football	Infogrames	PS-X
10/24/00	Cool Boarders 2001	Sony	PS-X
10/24/00	FIFA 2001	Electronic Arts	PS-X
10/24/00	Medal of Honor: Underground	Electronic Arts	PS-X
10/24/00	Mike Tyson Boxing	Activision	PS-X
10/24/00	Ultimate Fighting Championship	Crave	PS-X
10/24/00	WCW Backstage Assault	Electronic Arts	PS-X
10/24/00	Worms Pinball	Infogrames	PS-X
10/24/00	ESPN Intl Track & Field	Konami	PS2
10/24/00	John Madden 2001	Electronic Arts	PS2
10/24/00	Orphen	Activision	PS2
10/24/00	Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2	Midway	PS2
10/24/00	Silent Scope	Konami	PS2
10/24/00	TimeSplitters	Eidos	PS2
10/24/00	X-Squad	Electronic Arts	PS2
10/25/00	Summoner	THQ	PS2
10/26/00	Hoyle Card	Havas Interactive	GB
10/26/00	Hoyle Casino	Havas Interactive	GB
10/26/00	Mia Hamm Shirtless Soccer	SouthPeak	GB
10/26/00	The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask	Nintendo	N64
10/26/00	DarkStone	Take 2	PS-X
10/26/00	Ford Racing	Take 2	PS-X
10/26/00	Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore	Tecmo	PS2
10/26/00	Dynasty Warriors 2	Koei	PS2
10/26/00	Fantavision	Sony	PS2
10/26/00	Ridge Racer V	Namco	PS2
10/26/00	Roadsters Trophy	Titus	PS2
10/26/00	Smuggler's Run	Take 2	PS2
10/26/00	Street Fighter EX3	Capcom	PS2
10/26/00	Tekken Tag Tournament	Namco	PS2
10/26/00	Top Gun	Titus	PS2
10/27/00	Blues Clue's: Blue's Big Musical	Mattel	PS-X
10/27/00	Digimon World 2	Bandai	PS-X
10/29/00	Moto Racer 3 World Tour	Infogrames	PS-X
10/30/00	4X4 Evolution	GOD	DC
10/30/00	Kiss:Psycho Circus	GOD	DC
10/30/00	Virtual Pool 3	Interplay	DC
10/30/00	Chicken Run	THQ	GB
10/30/00	Dragon Wings	NewKidCo	GB
10/30/00	Formula 1 Racing	Take 2	GB
10/30/00	Grand Theft Auto 2	Take 2	GB
10/30/00	Micro Machines V3	THQ	GB
10/30/00	Sesame Street Sports-TV	NewKidCo	GB
10/30/00	Sheep	Take 2	PS-X
10/31/00	Army Men Sarge's Heroes	Midway	DC
10/31/00	Dennis the Kangaroo	Titus	DC
10/31/00	Jet Grind Radio	Sega	DC
10/31/00	LeMans 2000	Infogrames	DC
10/31/00	NBA 2K1	Sega	DC
10/31/00	AMF Bowling	Vatical	GB
10/31/00	Batman Chaos in Gotham	UbiSoft	GB
10/31/00	Cruisin Exotica	Midway	GB
10/31/00	Sabrina	Havas Interactive	GB
10/31/00	Army Men Air Attack 2	3DO	PS-X
10/31/00	Formula 1 2000	Midway	PS-X
10/31/00	Knockout Kings 2001	Electronic Arts	PS-X
10/31/00	Muppet Monster Adventure	Midway	PS-X
10/31/00	Rugrats in Paris	THQ	PS-X
10/31/00	Midnight Club	Take 2	PS2
10/31/00	Sky Odyssey	Activision	PS2
10/31/00	SSX	Electronic Arts	PS2
10/31/00	Swing Away Golf	Electronic Arts	PS2
11/1/00	Bang:Gunship Elite	Red Storm	DC
11/1/00	Half-Life	Havas Interactive	DC
11/1/00	Who Wants to Beat Up a Millionaire?	Havas Interactive	DC
11/1/00	Ed, Edd & Eddy	Bam	GB
11/1/00	Fisher Price Rescue Heroes Fire Frenzy	Mattel	GB
11/1/00	Force 21	Red Storm	GB
11/1/00	Powerpuff Girls #1	Bam	GB
11/1/00	Beast Wars	Bam	N64
11/1/00	Fisher Price Rescue Heroes Molten Menace	Mattel	PS-X
11/1/00	Lunar 2:Eternal Blue	Working Designs	PS-X
11/1/00	Persona 2:Eternal Punishment	Atlus	PS-X
11/1/00	F1 Championship	UbiSoft	PS2
11/2/00	Dragon Riders of Pern	UbiSoft	DC
11/2/00	Obi-Wan	THQ	GB
11/4/00	Jungle Book Rhythm & Groove	UbiSoft	PS-X
11/6/00	Hey You Pikachu	Nintendo	N64
11/6/00	Rugrats in Paris	THQ	N64
11/6/00	Scooby Doo Classic Creep Capers	THQ	N64
11/7/00	102 Dalmations	Eidos	DC
11/7/00	Capcom vs SNK	Capcom	DC
11/7/00	ECW: Anarchy Rulz	Acclaim	DC
11/7/00	The Grinch	Konami	DC
11/7/00	Metropolis	Sega	DC
11/7/00	Shenmue	Sega	DC
11/7/00	Stunt GP	Infogrames	DC
11/7/00	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Activision	DC
11/7/00	Buzz Lightyear of Star Command	Activision	GB
11/7/00	Dragon's Lair	Capcom	GB
11/7/00	The Grinch	Konami	GB
11/7/00	Road Rash	Electronic Arts	GB
11/7/00	SeaDoo HydroCross	Vatical	GB
11/7/00	Tony Hawk Pro Skater 2	Activision	GB
11/7/00	X Men Mutant Wars	Activision	GB
11/7/00	Greatest Arcade Hits Vol. 1	Midway	N64
11/7/00	Roswell Conspiracies	Red Storm	N64
11/7/00	The World Is Not Enough	Electronic Arts	N64
11/7/00	102 Dalmations	Eidos	PS-X
11/7/00	Championship Motocross 2001	THQ	PS-X
11/7/00	Crash Bash	Sony	PS-X
11/7/00	The Grinch	Konami	PS-X
11/7/00	HBO Boxing	Acclaim	PS-X
11/7/00	In Cold Blood	Midway	PS-X
11/7/00	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX	Activision	PS-X
11/7/00	SeaDoo HydroCross	Vatical	PS-X
11/7/00	The World is Not Enough	Electronic Arts	PS-X
11/7/00	Billiards (Real Pool)	Infogrames	PS2
11/7/00	ESPN X Games: Snowboarding	Konami	PS2
11/7/00	FIFA 2001	Electronic Arts	PS2
11/8/00	Rugrats in Paris	THQ	GB
11/10/00	Barbie Magic Genie Adventure	Mattel	GB
11/10/00	Barbie Pet Rescue	Mattel	GB
11/10/00	Sergeant Rock	Bam	GB
11/13/00	Blues Clue's Alphabet Book	Mattel	GB
11/13/00	Lego Racers	Lego Media	GB
11/13/00	Mickey Speedway USA	Nintendo	N64
11/13/00	Sesame Street Sports-TV	NewKidCo	PS-X
11/13/00	Star Wars Episode 1: Demolition	LucasArts	PS-X
11/13/00	WWF Smackdown 2: Know Your Role	THQ	PS-X
11/14/00	Alone in the Dark 4: The New Nightmare	Infogrames	DC
11/14/00	Chicken Run	Eidos	DC
11/14/00	Dave Mirra BMX	Acclaim	DC
11/14/00	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX	Activision	DC
11/14/00	Ms Pac-Man Maze Madness	Namco	DC
11/14/00	Skies of Arcadia	Sega	DC
11/14/00	Sonic Shuffle	Sega	DC
11/14/00	Tomb Raider Chronicles	Eidos	DC
11/14/00	Air Force Delta	Konami	GB
11/14/00	Alone in the Dark 4: The New Nightmare	Infogrames	GB
11/14/00	Army Men Air Combat	3DO	GB
11/14/00	Army Men Sarges Heroes 2	3DO	GB
11/14/00	Blade	Activision	GB
11/14/00	Dave Mirra BMX	Acclaim	GB
11/14/00	Dukes of Hazzard	SouthPeak	GB
11/14/00	Gauntlet Legends	Midway	GB
11/14/00	Lego Alpha Team	Lego Media	GB
11/14/00	MTV Sports:TJ Lavin's BMX	THQ	GB
11/14/00	Powerspike Volleyball	Infogrames	GB
11/14/00	Surfing	Crave	GB
11/14/00	Toca Tour Racing	SouthPeak	GB
11/14/00	Woody Woodpecker Racing	Konami	GB
11/14/00	Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2	Midway	N64
11/14/00	Spider-Man	Activision	N64
11/14/00	Alone in the Dark 4 the New Nightmare	Infogrames	PS-X
11/14/00	Army Men Sarges Heroes 2	3DO	PS-X
11/14/00	Blade	Activision	PS-X
11/14/00	Chicken Run	Eidos	PS-X
11/14/00	Driver 2	Frontline Video	PS-X
11/14/00	Dukes of Hazzard 2	SouthPeak	PS-X
11/14/00	Final Fantasy IX	Square	PS-X
11/14/00	Inspector Gadget	UbiSoft	PS-X
11/14/00	McGrath Vs Pastrana	Acclaim	PS-X
11/14/00	NCAA Final 4 2001	Sony	PS-X
11/14/00	Powerspike Volleyball	Infogrames	PS-X
11/14/00	Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2	Midway	PS-X
11/14/00	Rogue Spear	Red Storm	PS-X
11/14/00	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001	Electronic Arts	PS-X
11/14/00	Tomb Raider Chronicles	Eidos	PS-X
11/14/00	Woody Woodpecker Racing	Konami	PS-X
11/14/00	Cool Pool: Billiards Master	Take 2	PS2
11/14/00	Gradius 3 & 4	Konami	PS2
11/14/00	Kessen	Electronic Arts	PS2
11/14/00	NHL 2001	Electronic Arts	PS2
11/14/00	RC Revenge Pro	Acclaim	PS2
11/14/00	Super Bust-A-Move	Acclaim	PS2
11/14/00	Theme Park Roller Coaster	Electronic Arts	PS2
11/15/00	Arcatera	UbiSoft	DC
11/15/00	Buffy the Vampire Slayer	Fox	DC
11/15/00	Dark Angel:Vampire Apocalypse	Metro 3D	DC
11/15/00	Deer Avenger	Havas Interactive	DC
11/15/00	Gunship Elite	Red Storm	DC
11/15/00	Planet of the Apes	Fox	DC
11/15/00	POD II	UbiSoft	DC
11/15/00	Prince of Persia	Mattel	DC
11/15/00	Project Justice	Capcom	DC
11/15/00	SnoCross Champ Racing	Crave	DC
11/15/00	Tetris	Crave	DC
11/15/00	VIP	UbiSoft	DC
11/15/00	Action Man	THQ	GB
11/15/00	Aladdin	UbiSoft	GB
11/15/00	Batman Beyond	UbiSoft	GB
11/15/00	Berenstain Bears Extreme Sports	Sound Source	GB
11/15/00	Harvest Moon 2	Crave	GB
11/15/00	Inspector Gadget	UbiSoft	GB
11/15/00	Jungle Book	UbiSoft	GB
11/15/00	Mega Man Xtreme	Capcom	GB
11/15/00	Metal Walker	Capcom	GB
11/15/00	Playmobil Hype	UbiSoft	GB
11/15/00	Playmobil Laura	UbiSoft	GB
11/15/00	Return of the Ninja	Crave	GB
11/15/00	Ultimate Fighting Championship	Crave	GB
11/15/00	VIP	UbiSoft	GB
11/15/00	Batman Beyond	UbiSoft	N64
11/15/00	Mega Man 64	Capcom	N64
11/15/00	Mia Hamm N64 Soccer	SouthPeak	N64
11/15/00	Super Bowling 64	Tommo	N64
11/15/00	WWF No Mercy	THQ	N64
11/15/00	Arthur! Ready to Race	Mattel	PS-X
11/15/00	Batman Beyond	UbiSoft	PS-X
11/15/00	Breath of Fire 4	Capcom	PS-X
11/15/00	Buffy the Vampire Slayer	Fox	PS-X
11/15/00	Detective Barbie: the Mystery Cruise	Mattel	PS-X
11/15/00	Donald Duck Goin' Quackers	UbiSoft	PS-X
11/15/00	Planet of the Apes	Fox	PS-X
11/15/00	Sabrina	Havas Interactive	PS-X
11/15/00	Simpsons Wrestling	Fox	PS-X
11/15/00	Titan AE	Fox	PS-X
11/15/00	World's Scariest Police Chases	Fox	PS-X
11/15/00	Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse	Metro 3D	PS2
11/15/00	Donald Duck Goin Quackers	UbiSoft	PS2
11/16/00	Greatest Arcade Hits 2	Midway	DC
11/16/00	Lego Stunt Rally	Lego Media	GB
11/16/00	MTV Sports: Pure Ride	THQ	GB
11/16/00	Torneko: the Last Hope	Enix	PS-X
11/17/00	Army Men Arcade Blast	3DO	GB
11/17/00	Tyco RC Racin' Ratz	Mattel	GB
11/19/00	Little Nicky	UbiSoft	GB
11/19/00	Hercules	Titus	N64
11/20/00	Championship Surfer	Mattel	DC
11/20/00	Donkey Kong Country	Nintendo	GB
11/20/00	Banjo Tooie	Nintendo	N64
11/20/00	Championship Surfer	Mattel	PS-X
11/20/00	Goofy's Fun House-TV	NewKidCo	PS-X
11/20/00	Hot Wheels Extreme XTR Racing	Mattel	PS-X
11/20/00	Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots	Mattel	PS-X
11/20/00	Rayman 2	UbiSoft	PS2
11/20/00	Star Wars: Starfighter	LucasArts	PS2
11/21/00	Polaris SnoCross	Vatical	DC
11/21/00	Roadsters 2	Titus	DC
11/21/00	System Shock 2	Vatical	DC
11/21/00	Backyard Football	Infogrames	GB
11/21/00	Cannon Fodder	Activision	GB
11/21/00	Godzilla 2	Crave	GB
11/21/00	John Madden 2001	Electronic Arts	GB
11/21/00	Max Steel	Mattel	GB
11/21/00	Mummy	Konami	GB
11/21/00	VR Powerboat	Vatical	GB
11/21/00	Warriors of Might & Magic	3DO	GB
11/21/00	SeaDoo HydroCross	Vatical	N64
11/21/00	WCW Backstage Assault	Electronic Arts	N64
11/21/00	007 Racing	Electronic Arts	PS-X
11/21/00	Army Men Kids	3DO	PS-X
11/21/00	Colin McRae 2 Extreme Road Racing	Activision	PS-X
11/21/00	Mummy	Konami	PS-X
11/21/00	NASCAR Racers	Hasbro	PS-X
11/21/00	NBA Shootout 2001	Sony	PS-X
11/21/00	Nicktoons Racing	Hasbro	PS-X
11/21/00	ESPN NBA 2Night	Konami	PS2
11/21/00	Top Gear Dare Devil	Crave	PS2
11/24/00	Unreal Tournament	Infogrames	PS2
11/27/00	Evil Dead: Hail to the King	THQ	DC
11/27/00	Evil Dead: Hail to the King	THQ	PS-X
11/28/00	Star Wars 1 Demolition	LucasArts	DC
11/28/00	Unreal Tournament	Infogrames	DC
11/28/00	FIFA 2001	Electronic Arts	GB
11/28/00	Army Men Arcade Blast	3DO	PS-X
11/28/00	Emperor's New Groove	Sony	PS-X
11/28/00	F1 Grand Prix 2000	Eidos	PS-X
11/28/00	March Madness 2001	Electronic Arts	PS-X
11/28/00	Warriors of Might & Magic	3DO	PS-X
11/30/00	Road to El Dorado	UbiSoft	DC
11/30/00	Speed Devils 2	UbiSoft	DC
11/30/00	Gundam Wing	Bandai	PS-X
11/30/00	Road to El Dorado	UbiSoft	PS-X

REVIEWS ARCHIVE

BL = BOTTOM LINE

NOVEMBER 2000

PLAYSTATION

TITLE	BL	DATE
40 Winks	7	Feb-00
Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere	7.75	May-00
Action Bass	7	Sep-00
Alundra 2	6.5	May-00
Ape Escape	8.75	Jul-99
Arcade Party Pak	7.5	Dec-99
Armored Core: Master of Arena	7.5	Apr-00
Armorines	5	Jul-00
Army Men: Air Attack	6.75	Dec-99
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes	5.5	May-00
Army Men: World War	2	Aug-00
Ball Breakers	3.5	Sep-00
Ballistic	7	Jan-00
Bass Landing	7	Oct-99
Bass Rise	4	Nov-99
Battle Tanx II: Global Assault	7	Apr-00
Bedrock Bowling	3.5	Oct-00
Boombots	4.5	Jan-00
Broken Sword II	6.75	Jan-00
Bugs Bunny Lost In Time	5.25	Aug-99
Builder's Block	8.25	Aug-00
Bust A Groove 2	7.25	Sep-00
Bust-A-Move '99	8	Apr-99
Centipede	7	Jul-99
Championship Bass	8	May-00
Championship Motocross	6.75	Oct-99
Chocobo Racing	6.25	Aug-99
Chocobo's Dungeon 2	6.75	Jan-00
Chrono Cross	9.5	Aug-00
Colin McRae Rally	7	Feb-00
Colony Wars: Red Sun	8.25	Apr-00
Cool Boarders 4	7.75	Dec-99
Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn	7.75	Jul-00
Crash Team Racing	9	Nov-99
Croc 2	7.5	Jul-99
Crusaders of Might and Magic	7.25	Mar-00
Countdown Vampires	6.5	Aug-00
Cyber Tiger	7.25	Dec-99
Deception III: Dark Delusion	6.25	Apr-00
Destruction Derby Raw	7.5	Oct-00
Demolition Racer	7.5	Dec-99
Die Hard Trilogy 2	7	Mar-00
Digimon World	5.25	Jul-00
Dino Crisis	9	Sep-99
Dino Crisis 2	8.75	Oct-00
Dinosaur	2.25	Sep-00
Driver	8.25	Sep-99
Dukes of Hazzard: Racing for Home	6	Mar-00
Dune 2000	7.75	Nov-99
Echo Night	6.75	Aug-99
ECW: Hardcore Revolution	8.25	Mar-00
ESPN MLS: Game Night	8	Aug-00
Evil Zone	5	Oct-99
Expendable	3.5	Jul-00
Fatal Fury: Wild Ambition	3.75	Mar-00
Fear Effect	8.25	Mar-00
FIFA 2000	8.75	Dec-99
Fighting Force 2	5.5	Feb-00
Fisherman's Bait 2	6	Dec-99
Final Fantasy VIII	9.5	Sep-99
Final Fantasy Anthology	8.75	Oct-99
Formula One '99	7.75	Jan-00
Front Mission 3	9	Apr-00
G Police: Weapons of Justice	4.75	Oct-99
Galerians	8	Jun-00
Gallop Racer	6	Nov-99
Gauntlet Legends	6.5	May-00
Gekido: Urban Fighters	4.5	Jul-00
Gran Turismo 2	9.5	Feb-00
Grand Theft Auto: London 1969	7	Jul-99
Grand Theft Auto 2	7.75	Dec-99
Grandia	7.25	Nov-99
Grind Session	6.75	Jun-00
Grudge Warriors	5	Aug-00
Hello Kitty: Cube Frenzy	6.5	Jul-99
Hot Shots Golf 2	8	Mar-00
Hot Wheels Turbo Racing	6.25	Nov-99
Hydro Thunder	7.75	Apr-00
International Track & Field 2000	7	Dec-99
Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster	6.5	Mar-00
Jade Cocoon	8	Aug-99
Jedi Power Battles	8	May-00
Jeremy McGrath	4	Oct-00
Jet Moto 3	7	Oct-99
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure	8	Apr-00
Juggernaut	6.5	Nov-99
K-1 Grand Prix	5.5	Feb-00
Killer Loop	6	Mar-00
Knockout Kings 2000	8	Dec-99
Konami Arcade Classics	6.75	Aug-99
Koudelka	4.5	Sep-00
Kurt Warner's Arena Football Unleashed	2.5	Jun-00
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	8.5	Sep-99
Legend of Dragoon, The	9	Jun-00
Legend of Mana	8	Jul-00
Lego Rock Raiders	1.5	Oct-00
Lunar: The Silver Star Story Complete	7.75	Jul-99
Madden NFL 2000	8.75	Oct-99
Madden NFL 2001	8.75	Sep-00
March Madness 2000	8.25	Feb-00
Medal of Honor	9.25	Dec-99
MediEvil II	7.75	May-00
Metal Gear Solid: VR Missions	3.75	Nov-99
Mission: Impossible	8.25	Feb-00
Misadventures of Tronne Bonne, The	7	May-00
MLB 2001	7.75	Jun-00
Mobil 1 Rally Championship	5.75	May-00
Monkey Magic	5.25	Nov-99
Monster Rancher 2	8.5	Oct-99
Mortal Kombat: Special Forces	1.75	Sep-00
Mr. Driller	8	Jun-00
Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness	8.25	Aug-00
MTV Music Generator	7.25	Jan-00
NASCAR 2000	7	Nov-99
NASCAR Rumble	7.75	Mar-00
NBA in the Zone 2000	6.5	Jan-00
NBA Live 2000	8.5	Jan-00
NBA Showtime	6.5	Jan-00
NBA Shoot Out 2000	4.75	Mar-00
NCAA Final Four 2000	7	Jan-00
NCAA Football 2000	8	Oct-99
NCAA Gamebreaker 2000	7.5	Oct-99
Need for Speed: Porche Challenge	7.75	Jun-00
Next Tetris, The	6	Jul-99
NFL Blitz 2000	6.5	Sep-99
NFL Game Day 2000	8.25	Oct-99
NFL GameDay 2001	7	Sep-00
NFL Xtreme 2	8.25	Sept-99
NGEN Racing	7.25	Sep-00
NHL 2000	8.5	Nov-99
NHL Blades of Steel 2000	5.5	Dec-99
NHL Championship 2000	7.25	Dec-99
NHL Face Off 2000	7.25	Nov-99
Nightmare Creatures II	5.25	Jun-00
No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking	4.25	Jan-00
Omega Boost	7.75	Oct-99
Pac-Man World	8	Oct-99
Parasite Eve II	8.75	Sep-00
Quake II	7.5	Dec-99
Railroad Tycoon II	7.5	Apr-00
Rainbow 6	6.75	Feb-00
Rampage Through Time	4.75	Sep-00
Rat Attack	6.75	Nov-99
RC Revenge	5.5	Oct-00
R/C Stunt Copter	7	Oct-99
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing	6.5	Feb-00
Reel Fishing II	6.5	Jul-00
Resident Evil 3	9.25	Dec-99
Re-Volt	3.25	Nov-99
Rhapsody: A Musical Adventure	6.75	Jul-00
Rising Zan	8	Sep-99
Road Rash: Jailbreak	7	Mar-00
Rock the Rink	8	May-00
Rollcage: Stage II	7.25	Apr-00
Romance of the Three Kingdoms VI	7.25	Mar-00
RPG Maker	7.75	Aug-00
R-Type Delta	7.25	Aug-99
SaGa Frontier 2	8	Jan-00
Sammy Sosa High Heat 2001	3.75	May-00
Sammy Sosa Softball Slam	5.75	Jun-00
Shadow Man	6.75	Nov-99
Shadow Tower	7.5	Nov-99
Silent Bomber	7.75	Mar-00
Silhouette Mirage	7.5	Feb-00
Sim Theme Park	7	Jul-00
Sled Storm	8.75	Sep-99
Smurfs, The	5.5	Mar-00
Soul of the Samurai	4.25	Aug-99
South Park Chef's Luv Shack	3.25	Feb-00
South Park Rally	4.5	Mar-00
Space Invaders	8	Dec-99
Spec Ops: Stealth Patrol	6.5	Aug-00
Speed Punks	7	May-00
Spider-Man	8.25	Oct-00
Spin Jam	3.5	Oct-00
Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage	8.75	Dec-99
Star Trek Invasion	8.5	Oct-00
Star Wars: The Phantom Menace	7.25	Oct-99
Street Fighter EX2 Plus	7.75	Jun-00
Street Sk8er 2	7	Jun-00
Strider 2	6.5	Jul-00
Suikoden II	9	Oct-99
Superbike 2000	4	Jun-00
Supercross 2000	4	Oct-00
SuperCross Circuit	3.5	Dec-99
Surf Riders	6.75	Oct-00
Sydney 2000	2.75	Oct-00
Syphon Filter 2	9	Apr-00
Tail Concerto	7.75	Nov-99
Tarzan	7.75	Sep-99
Team Buddies	7.25	Oct-00
Tenchu 2	8.75	Sep-00
Test Drive 6	7.5	Dec-99
Test Drive Le Mans	3.75	Jul-00
Test Drive Off-Road 3	8	Nov-99
Thousand Arms	7.75	Nov-99
Thrasher: Skate and Destroy	8	Jan-00
Threads of Fate	8	Jul-00
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2000	7.5	Feb-00
Tiny Tank (Revised)	5.5	Nov-99
TOCA 2: Touring Car Challenge	6.5	Jan-00
Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation	8	Jan-00
Tomba! 2: The Evil Swine Return	8.75	Jan-00
Tomorrow Never Dies	7.25	Jan-00
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	9.5	Nov-99
Toy Story 2	8	Jan-00
Trick'N Snowboarders	4.25	Oct-99
Triple Play 2001	8	May-00
Twisted Metal 4	9	Jan-00
Ultimate 8 Ball	6.5	Jul-99
UmJammer Lammy	8.25	Sep-99
V-Rally 2	7.25	Jan-00
Urban Chaos	2.75	Jun-00
Vagrant Story	9	May-00
Valkyrie Profile	7.75	Sep-00
Vampire Hunter D	5.25	Sep-00
Vanark	7	May-00
Vandal Hearts II	7.75	Dec-99
Vanguard Bandits	7.75	Jun-00
Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense	7.75	Jan-00
Walt Disney World: Magical Racing Tour	6.5	May-00
Warpath: Jurassic Park	6.75	Dec-99
Warzone 2100	7.75	Jul-99
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire: 2nd Edition	6.5	Aug-00
Wild Arms 2	8.5	May-00
Wipeout 3	7.75	Nov-99
Worms Armageddon	8	Dec-99
Wu-Tang: Shaolin Style	6.25	Dec-99
WWF Attitude	9	Aug-99
WWF Smackdown	9	Apr-00
X-Files	3.75	Jan-00
X-Men Mutant Academy	7.5	Aug-00
Xena: Warrior Princess	7.75	Nov-99
You Don't Know Jack	8	Feb-00

NINTENDO 64

TITLE	BL	DATE
Airboardin' USA	5.5	Oct-99
All-Star Baseball 2001	7.75	May-00
All Star Tennis '99	5.5	Aug-99
Armorines	7.25	Jan-00
Army Men: Air Combat	7.5	Jul-00
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes	7	Dec-99
Bassmasters 2000	8	Mar-00
BattleTanx II: Global Assault	7.25	Nov-99
Battlezone: Rise of the Black Dogs	3.25	May-00
Blades of Steel 2000	3.5	Jan-00
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling	5.25	Jan-00
Bug's Life, A	5.25	Jul-99
Castlevania: Legacy of Darkness	5.25	Mar-00
Command & Conquer	8	Sep-99
CyberTiger	7.25	May-00
Destruction Derby 64	7.25	Dec-99
Donkey Kong 64	8.75	Dec-99
Duck Dogers	3.5	Oct-00
Duke Nukem: Zero Hour	8.75	Sep-99
Earthworm Jim 3D	5.75	Dec-99
ECW: Hardcore Revolution	8	Mar-00
Excitebike 64	7.25	Jun-00
Fighter's Destiny 2	2	Sep-00
Gauntlet Legends	7	Dec-99
Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko	7.75	Sep-99
Goeman's Great Adventure	7.25	Sep-99
Harvest Moon 64	7.25	Mar-00
Hot Wheels Turbo Racing	7	Oct-99
Hydro Thunder	7.5	May-00
Indy Racing 2000	8	Sep-00
In-Fisherman's Bass Hunter 64	7.75	Sep-99
International Track & Field 2000	7	Apr-00
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000	5	Apr-00
Jet Force Gemini	7.75	Oct-99
Ken Griffey Jr.'s Slugfest	8.5	Jul-99
Kirby: The Crystal Shards	7.5	Aug-00
Knockout Kings 2000	8.25	Dec-99
Lego Racers	7.75	Jan-00
Madden NFL 2001	8.75	Sep-00
Mario Golf	9	Aug-99
Mario Party 2	5.75	Feb-00
Mario Tennis	8.25	Oct-00
House of the Dead 2	8	Oct-99
Gundam Side Story 0079	7.75	Jul-00
Monster Truck Madness	5.5	Sep-99
Namco Museum 64	8	Jan-00
NBA Courtside 2	7.25	Jan-00
NBA In the Zone 2000	5.5	Jan-00
NBA Jam 2000	6	Dec-99
NBA Live 2000	8.25	Dec-99
NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC	7.25	Dec-99
New Tetris, The	7	Sep-99
NFL Blitz 2000	7.75	Sep-99
NFL QB Club 2000	5	Oct-99
Nuclear Strike	8.75	Feb-00
Ogre Battle 64	9	Oct-00
Paperboy	4.25	Dec-99
Perfect Dark	9.25	Jun-00
PilotWings 64	9.5	Aug-96
Pokémon Snap	7	Aug-99
Pokémon Stadium	8	May-00
Quake II	7.75	Jul-99
Rainbow 6	8	Feb-00
Rally Challenge	4.5	Sep-00
Rayman 2: The Great Escape	7.75	Nov-99
Resident Evil 2	8.75	Nov-99
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing	6.5	Feb-00
Re-Volt	4.75	Oct-99
Ridge Racer 64	7.25	Feb-00
Road Rash 64	8	Oct-99
Roadsters Trophy	7	Jan-00
Rocket	8	Nov-99
Shadowgate 64	4	Aug-99
Shadow Man	7.75	Sep-99
StarCraft	8	Oct-99
Starshot	4.5	Nov-99
Supercross 2000	6.75	Jan-00
Superman	1.25	Aug-99
Super Mario 64	9.75	Aug-96
South Park Rally	4.5	Apr-00
Tarzan	7.25	Mar-00
Tonic Trouble	7	Aug-99
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	9.25	Mar-00
Top Gear Hyper Bike	7.25	Feb-00
Top Gear Rally 2	6.75	Dec-99
Toy Story 2	7.5	Jan-00
Turok 3	8	Oct-00
Turok: Rage Wars	8	Dec-99
Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense	8	Jan-00
Walt Disney World Quest: Magical Racing Tour	7.25	Oct-00
WaveRace 64	9	Nov-96
Winback	7.75	Nov-99
WWF Attitude	9.25	Aug-99
WCW Mayhem	7.5	Oct-99
Wrestlemania 2000	9	Dec-99
Xena: Talisman of Fate	3.5	Jan-00

DREAMCAST

TITLE	BL	DATE
4 Wheel Thunder	7.25	Jun-00
AeroWings	7	Oct-99
AeroWings 2: Air Strike	7.5	Sep-00
Airforce Delta	7.75	Oct-99
Armada	6.5	Feb-00
Blue Stinger	5.25	Oct-99
Cannon Spike	7	Sep-00
Carrier	6.75	Apr-00
Chu Chu Rocket	8.75	Apr-00
Crazy Taxi	8.75	Feb-00
D2	4.75	Oct-00
Dead or Alive 2	9	Apr-00
Deep Fighter	6.75	Jul-00
Draconus: Cult of the Wyrm	7.75	Jul-00
Dynamite Cop	7	Nov-99
Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future	7	Oct-00
ECW: Hardcore Revolution	7.75	May-00
Elemental Gimmick Gear	7	Mar-00
Evolution	7	Dec-99
Evolution 2: Far Off Promise	6	Jul-00
Expendable: Millennium Soldier	4	Oct-99
F-1 World Grand Prix	7.75	Feb-00
Fighting Force 2	5.25	Mar-00
Flag to Flag	4.5	Oct-99
Fur Fighters	7.75	Aug-00
Gauntlet Legends	7.75	Jun-00
Giga Wing	7.5	Mar-00
Gunbird 2	5.5	Oct-00
Grand Theft Auto 2	7.5	Jul-00
Hidden & Dangerous	7	Oct-00
Hydro Thunder	8	Oct-99
Incoming	5.5	Mar-00
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure	8	Mar-00
King of Fighters Dream Match 1999	8	Oct-99
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	8	Mar-00
Maken X	7.75	Jun-00
Marvel Vs. Capcom	7.5	Oct-99
Marvel Vs. Capcom 2	8	Aug-00
MDK2	8	Jun-00
Monaco Grand Prix	7	Oct-99
Mortal Kombat Gold	7.25	Oct-99
Namco Museum	7.75	Sep-00
NBA 2K	9	Jan-00
NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC	7.25	Dec-99
NFL 2K	9.25	Oct-99
NFL Blitz 2000	9	Oct-99
NFL Quarterback Club 2000	2.25	Feb-00
NHL 2K	8.25	Apr-00
Nightmare Creatures II	5	Sep-00
Omikron: The Nomad Soul	5.5	Sep-00
Pen Pen Trilcelon	4	Oct-99
Plasma Sword: Nightmare of Blistein	7.25	May-00
Power Stone	8	Oct-99
Power Stone 2	8.5	Aug-00
Psychic Force 2012	7	Jan-00
Rayman 2: The Great Escape	8	Apr-00
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing	7.25	Oct-99
Resident Evil Code: Veronica	9.5	Apr-00
Re-Volt	5	Feb-00
Rippin' Riders	7	Dec-99
Roadsters	5.5	Jun-00
Royal Rumble	6.75	Sep-00
Rush 2049	7	Oct-00
Seaman	7	Sep-00
Sega Bass Fishing	8	Sep-99
Sega Rally Championship	7.5	Jan-00
Sega GT	9	Oct-00
Shadowman	7.75	Feb-00
Silver	8	Sep-00
Slave Zero	6.25	Jan-00
Sonic Adventure	7.75	Sep-99
Soul Calibur	9.25	Oct-99
Soul Fighter	5.5	Jan-00
South Park Chef's Luv Shack	3.5	Feb-00
Space Channel 5	7.75	Jul-00
Speed Devils	7.25	Oct-99
Star Wars Episode I Racer	8.75	Jun-00
Street Fighter III: Double Impact	7.75	Sep-00
Street Fighter Alpha 3	8.75	Aug-00
Striker Pro 2000	6.75	Aug-00
Super Magnetic Neo	8.5	Aug-00
Suzuki Alstare Extreme Racing	7	Dec-99
Sword of the Berzerk	8	Apr-00
Sydney 2000	3.5	Oct-00
Tee Off	6.25	Apr-00
Tech Romancer	8.5	Aug-00
Test Drive 6	8	Feb-00
Time Stalkers	6.5	May-00
TNN Hardcore Heat	5.75	Oct-99
Tokyo Xtreme Racer	5.75	Oct-99
Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation	7.75	Jun-00
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	9	Jun-00
Toy Commander	8.75	Nov-99
Toy Story 2	7	Sep-00
TrickStyle	7.75	Oct-99
UFC	8.5	Oct-00
Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense	8	Mar-00
Virtua Athlete 2000	7	Oct-00
Virtua Fighter 3tb	7.75	Nov-99
Virtua Striker 2	5.25	Mar-00
Virtua Tennis	9.25	Sep-00
Virtual On: Oratorio Tangram	7.25	Aug-00
Wacky Races	6	Sep-00
Wetrix+	5	Mar-00
Wild Metal	3	May-00
World Series Baseball 2K1	5.75	Sep-00
WWF Attitude	8.5	Jan-00
Zombie Revenge	6.75	Feb-00

GAME BOY

TITLE	BL	DATE
1942	5.5	Aug-00
All-Star Baseball 2000	7.25	Jul-99
All Star Tennis	6.5	Dec-99
Bass Masters Classic	7.25	Feb-00
Beauty and the Beast	4.75	Jan-00
Bust-A-Move 4	8	Aug-99
Billy Bob's Huntin' 'N Fishin'	3.75	Dec-99
Bionic Commando: Elite Forces	8.25	Mar-00
Blaster Master: Enemy Below	8.25	Apr-00
Catwoman	4.75	Dec-99
Chase HQ: Secret Police	5.5	Dec-99
Conker's Pocket Tales	4.5	Sep-99
Contra: The Alien Wars	8.75	Oct-99
Croc	5.75	Aug-00
Crystalis	8.5	Aug-00
Deja Vu I & II	7.5	Dec-99
Dinosaur	3.75	Aug-00
Dragon Warrior Monsters	8	Mar-00
Duke Nukem	6.75	Dec-99
ECW: Hardcore Revolution	2	May-00
FIFA 2000	4.5	Dec-99
Gex 3: Deep Pocket Gecko	7.5	Mar-00
Ghosts N' Goblins	7	Nov-99
Ken Griffey Jr. Slugfest	5.25	Sep-99
Klustar	5	Oct-99
Lucky Luke	7.25	Oct-99
Madden NFL 2000	7.75	Dec-99
Mario Golf	8.75	Nov-99
Metal Gear Solid	9.25	Jul-00
Mickey's Adventure Racing	8	Mar-00
Micro Machines 1 & 2	8	May-00
Millenium Winter Sports	7.25	Jan-00
Missile Command	1.75	Jan-00
Monster Rancher Battle Card	6.75	Jul-00
Moon Patrol/Spy Hunter	6.75	Jul-99
Motorcross Maniacs	8.5	Sep-99
Mr. Driller	8.25	Jul-00
Ms. Pac-Man	7.75	Nov-99
Pac-Man	7.75	Sep-99
Pokémon Pinball	8	Sep-99
Pokémon Trading Card Game	7.25	Jun-00
Pokémon Yellow	6.5	Nov-99
Prince of Persia	6	Jul-99
R-Type DX	7.5	Sep-99
Rayman	8	Jun-00
Road To El Dorado	4.5	Sep-00
Spawn	6.25	Sep-99
Spy Vs. Spy	7.5	Aug-99
Star Wars: Episode I Racer	8.25	Mar-00
Super Mario Bros. Dlx.	9.25	Aug-99
Survival Kids	7.5	Sep-99
Tarzan	6.5	Aug-99
Tomb Raider	8.25	Aug-00
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	3.5	Jun-00
Toonsylvania	7	Sep-00
Top Gear Pocket	6	April
Toy Story 2	5.25	Feb-00
Triple Play 2001	4	Aug-00
Turok 3: Shadow of Oblivion	3.5	Oct-00
V-Rally Ed. '99	5.5	Aug-99
Wario Land 3	8.75	Aug-00
Warlocked	8	Sep-00
WCW Mayhem	7.75	Jul-00
Wings of Fury	7	Mar-00
WWF Attitude	6.5	Jul-99
WWF Wrestlemania 2000	7.25	Dec-99
Yar's Revenge	6.25	Jan-00

PC

TITLE	BL	DATE
BANG! Gunship Elite	7	Oct-00
Breakneck	6.25	Oct-00
Heavy Metal: FAKK 2	6.75	Oct-00
Soulbringer	6.5	Oct-00
Warlords Battlecry	8.75	Oct-00