100% INDEPENDENT PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE

PSM2

WORLD'S BEST-SELLING PS2 MAG!

HANDS-ON!

RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK

FINALLY! We spill every gory detail inside!

2003 GAME OF THE YEAR

NO WAY you'll guess what it is!

FIRST REVIEW!!

SONIC HEROES

NEW PS SECRET

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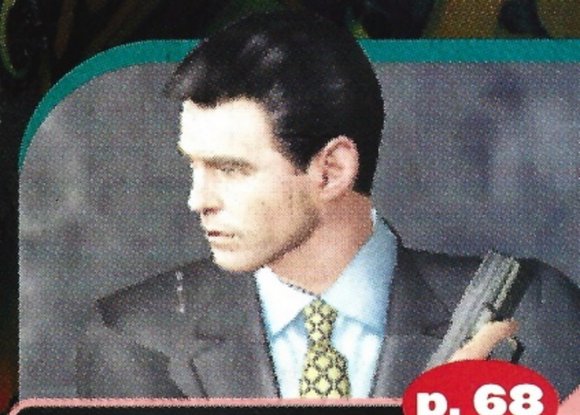
STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT p. 64

SOCOM II gameplay in a Star Wars game?! YES!

MAXIMO ARMY OF ZIN p. 26

REVIEWED: One of PS2's best-ever action games!



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future games
The first choice for gamers

ISSUE 81 ▸ FEBRUARY 2004 ▸ VOL.8

FINALLY: VIRTUA FIGHTER RPG REVEALED!

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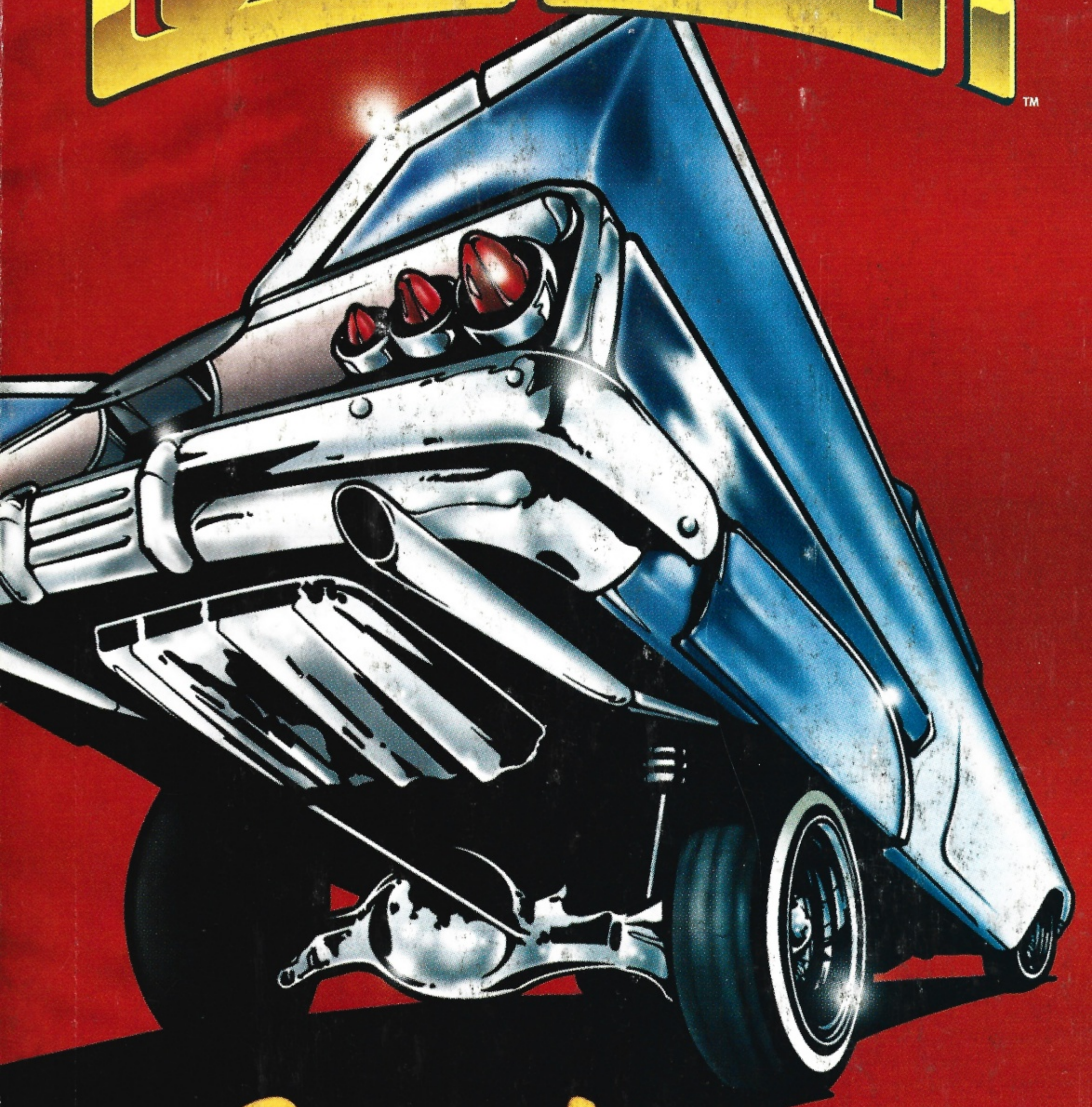

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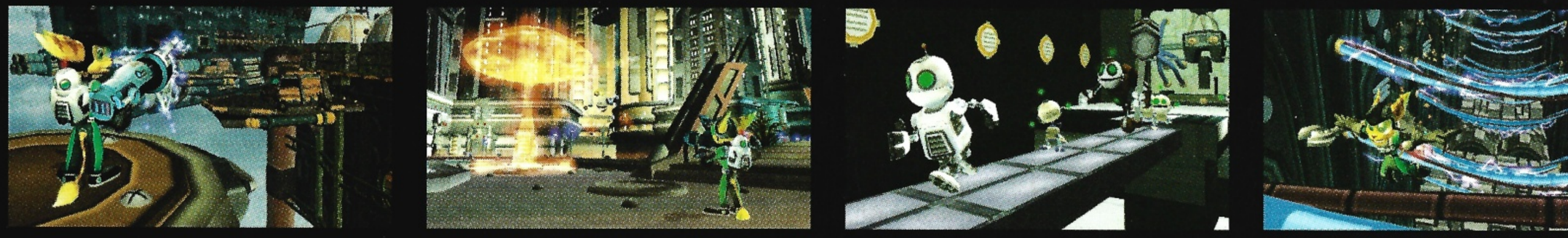

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They're back. And they're itching for action. With tons of planets to conquer in a whole new gigantic galaxy, you better believe Ratchet & Clank are gonna sink their teeth into some destruction. Ummm, destruction. With weapon upgrades, mods, armor and the ability for Ratchet to get stronger and smarter as the game goes on, this could get uglier than The Grandmas In Bikinis Calendar after-party. Speaking of parties, there's also hoverbike racing, space combat and gladiator arenas. As far as weapons and gadgets go, Ratchet & Clank are stacked with over 50 new ones, along with unlockable upgrades, so by the end of the journey, you'll go through more weapons and gadgets than a hungry fat man will go through chicken wings at lunch. Lock and load, baby, lock and load. **www.us.playstation.com**

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TEEN
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Violence

PlayStation.2

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PSM START no. 81
UNOFFICIAL. UNBIASED. UNRIVALED.
WELCOME TO THE WORLD'S BEST PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE ▶ FEBRUARY 2004

<< 2003's **PSM TEN** CAN STAND AGAINST THE **BEST LINEUP** FROM **ANY** YEAR >>

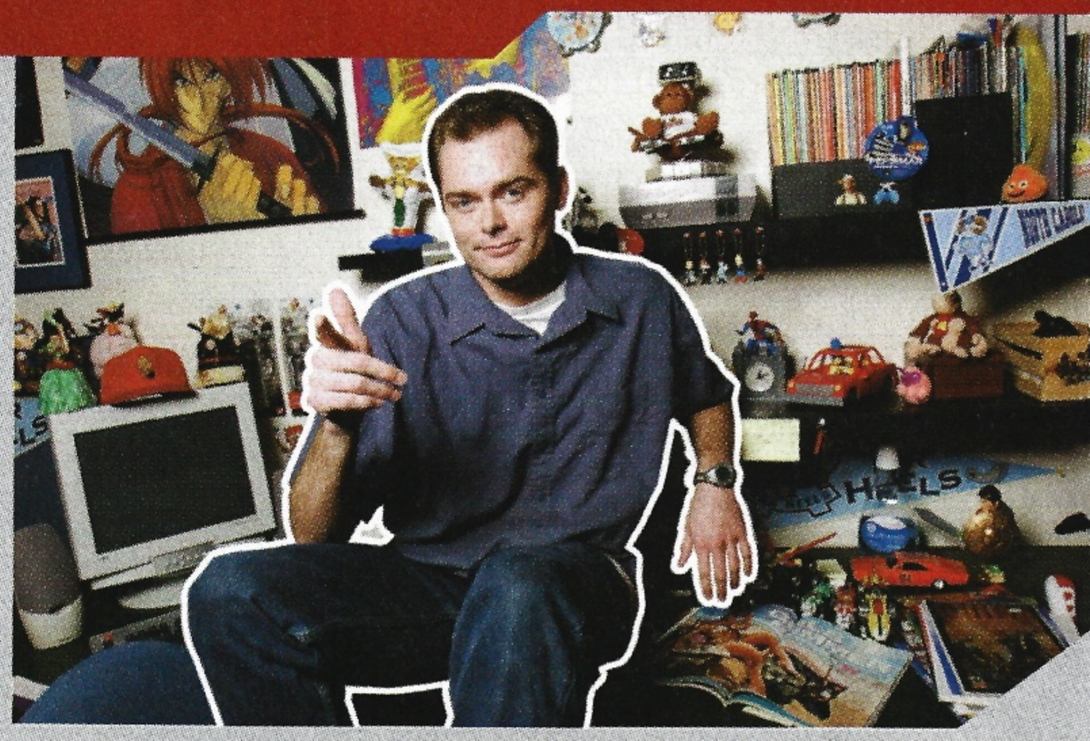
EDITOR'S LETTER

I've never been so glad to see a zombie horde

Welcome back, *Resident Evil!* With *Outbreak,* the series that started "survival horror" is back where it belongs, on a PlayStation console. And although this game isn't *Resident Evil 4,* it's no *Gun Survivor,* either — *Outbreak* has already received rave reviews in Japan, and based on our own hands-on experience, *RE* fans have something *very* special to look forward to.

Speaking of special games, it's time once again to present our annual PSM Top-Ten awards! 2003 was an amazing year for games — the ten we picked can stand against the best lineup from *any* year. Our Game of the Year was a personal all-time favorite of mine; I have no idea just how many late-night hours I've sunk into that game.

So, congratulations to all of our winners, and welcome back, zombies! **CHRIS SLATE**



CHRIS SLATE Editor-In-Chief

LIKES: Adventure games, platformers, arcade racers

HOBBIES: Comics, hoops, DVDs, movies, anime, drawing, iPod

What do you hate most about zombies?
They're really bad about returning things after they've borrowed them. I'll probably *never* get my brain back...

MEET the TEAM

Ever wonder what a crack team of videogame journalists looks like? ...Aw, c'mon folks, just work with us a little, here...

STEPHEN FROST
SENIOR EDITOR

LIKES: Fighters, Lovers
HOBBIES: Holy Matrimony

What do you hate most about zombies?
They constantly interrupt you. You're talking and suddenly they go "Uuurnhh!"

RANDY NELSON
REVIEWS EDITOR

LIKES: Platformers, racers
HOBBIES: Comics & Anime

What do you hate most about zombies?
They moan, lurch around, and smell really funky... kinda like me when I'm sick.

ERIC BRATCHER
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

LIKES: RPGs, Weird Imports
HOBBIES: Real estate, Baby!

What do you hate most about zombies?
I think it's their insistence on hugging me all the time. Respect a fella's space, ok?

BILL DONOHUE
MANAGING EDITOR

LIKES: polish-pope.com
HOBBIES: Selling CDs!

What do you hate most about zombies?
You put some shotgun rounds into 'em and they fall apart. There's just no replay value...

DAN FITZPATRICK
ART DIRECTOR

LIKES: Old records
HOBBIES: Singing along

What do you hate most about zombies?
I hated it when they broke up after releasing "She's Not There." I loved that song...

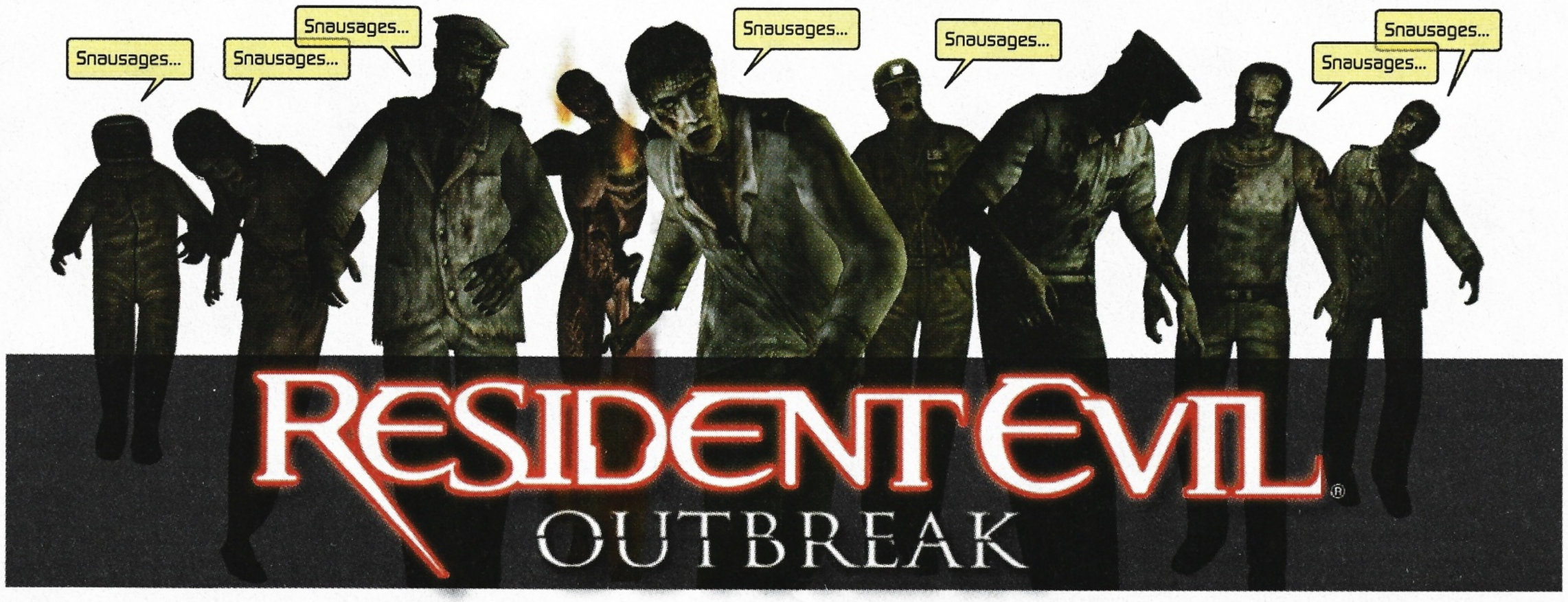
GARY LIEW
ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR

LIKES: Cold drinks
HOBBIES: Wearing a bib

What do you hate most about zombies?
I'm hating the way they dribble down my chin after I drink the fifth or sixth one.

ON THE COVER

Can't wait to play the latest and greatest *Resident Evil?* Well, neither could we! We stormed Capcom's offices — pitchforks and torches in hand — and demanded to go hands-on with the biggest game of the new year. Catch our full report on page 56!



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MATURE 17+
M
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Strong Language
Blood and Gore
Intense Violence

PlayStation.2

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PSM MAIN MENU no. 81

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RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK

The best horror series *ever* has finally returned to PS2! EXCLUSIVE hands-on report! EXCLUSIVE new game info and screens! Page 56, NOW!

<< BELIEVE THE **HYPE**— WE'VE **NEVER** HAD THIS MUCH FUN **ONLINE** >>

SONIC HEROES FIRST REVIEW!

EXCLUSIVE: Is the hedgehog's first PS2 adventure up to speed?

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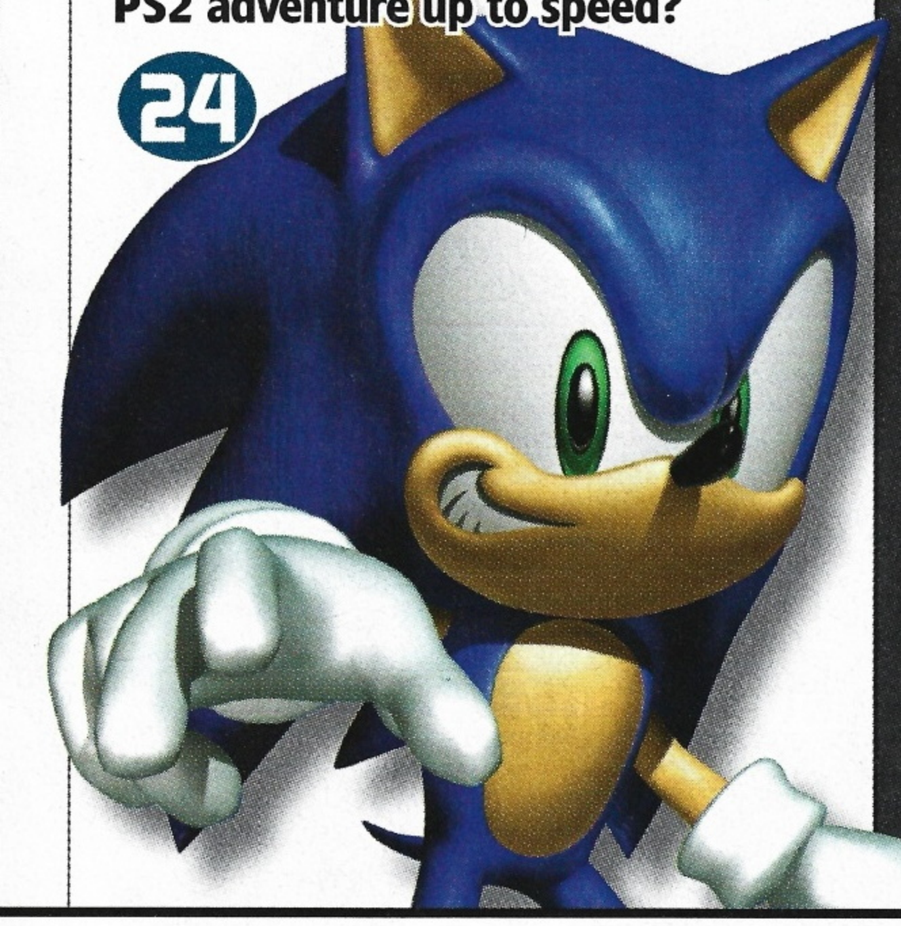

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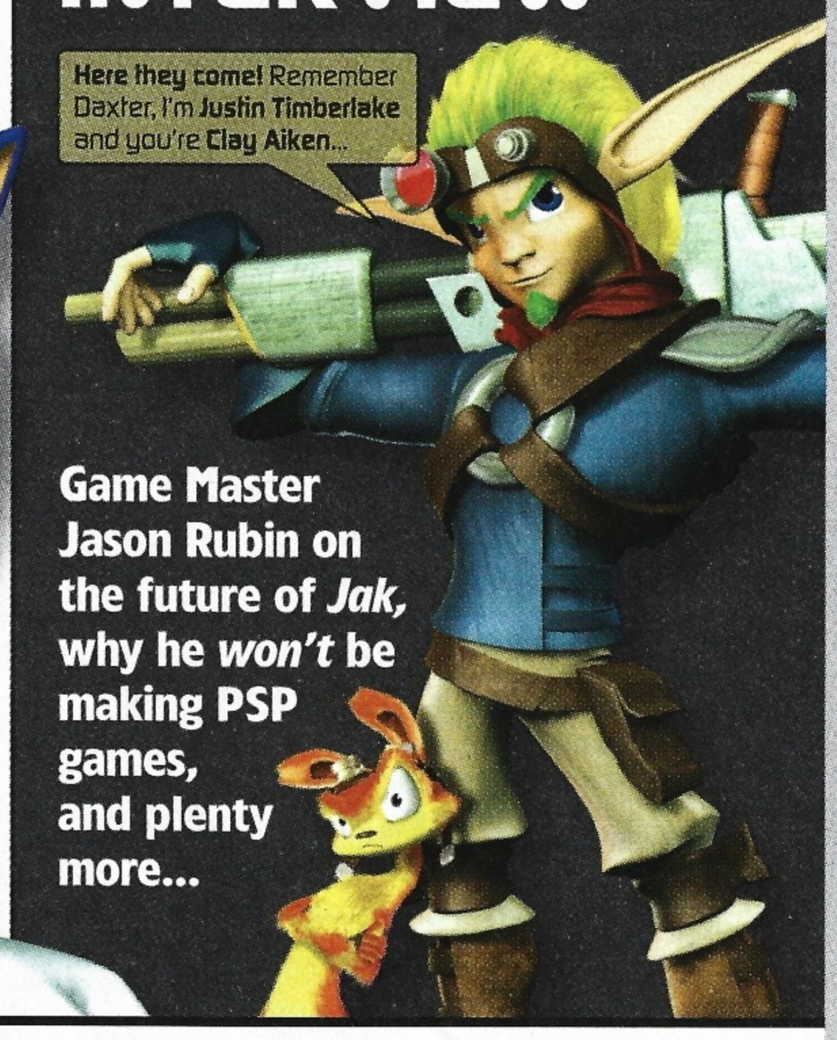

Game Master Jason Rubin on the future of *Jak*, why he *won't* be making PSP games, and plenty more...

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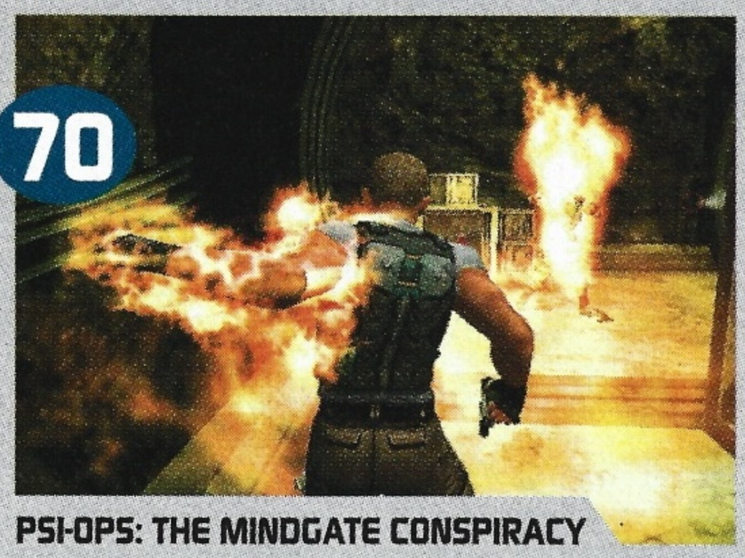
007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING
"Here's to another day of killing folks and sleeping with supermodels. I love being me."



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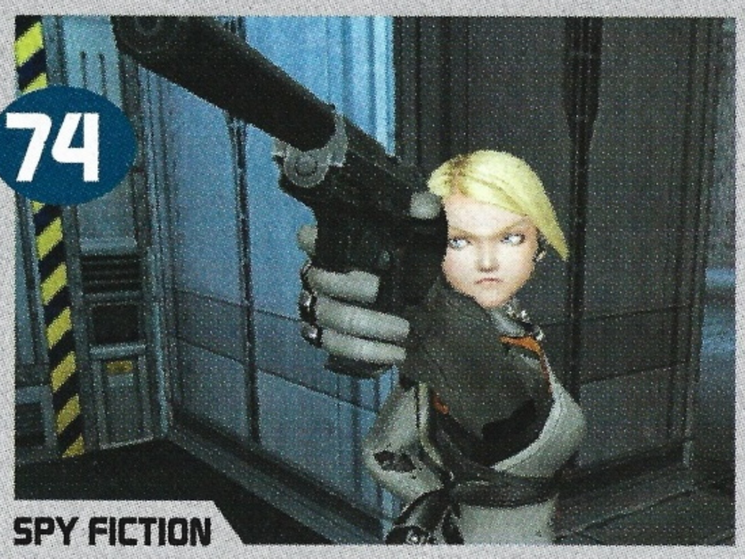
PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY
"That's *it*, Larry — no more hugs for you until you put yourself out!"



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"That's right, Mr. Pigeon... I've been the double agent all along."

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100 BULLETS
"Stay back or I'll —[BLAM!] ...*Crap!* Uh... come any closer and I'll kill him again!"

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FINAL FANTASY X-2

Part *Final Fantasy,* part *Charlie's Angels,* SquareEnix's latest epic RPG is as wonderfully cheesy as it gets. Girl power for the gals, lots of skin for the guys, and more costume changes than a Britney Spears concert — what's not to like?

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Your inside look at this month's hot topics, gear, and games

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Virtua Fighter? Er, not quite...

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The world's most accurate, in-depth game reviews

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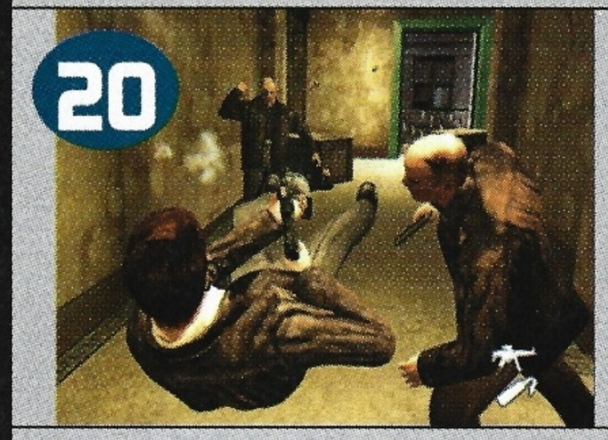

▲ MAX PAYNE 2 "Ha, I was only *faking* sleep on my invisible bed!"

▲ MAXIMO II "Man, I *knew* I shouldn't have poked that thing."

▲ BALDUR'S GATE: DAII *"I said finish... your... dinner... first!"*

▲ FATAL FRAME 2: CB "'C'mon Emily, would it kill you to *smile?*"

THE PSM MISSION STATEMENT

PSM is the magazine for the gaming elite — the hardcore gamers that support and drive this industry. This is *not* a "mass-market" magazine. We don't focus on "fun for the whole family," or waste space interviewing movie stars that have nothing to do with games. That's just not what we're into.

PSM is also proudly independent. We have no official corporate sponsor, so you can trust that our reviews and opinions will always be 100% our own. Our readers always come first, and we would never, *ever* betray your trust. This is our promise to you, the hardcore PlayStation 2 gamer, who deserves nothing less. Now let's get this issue going!

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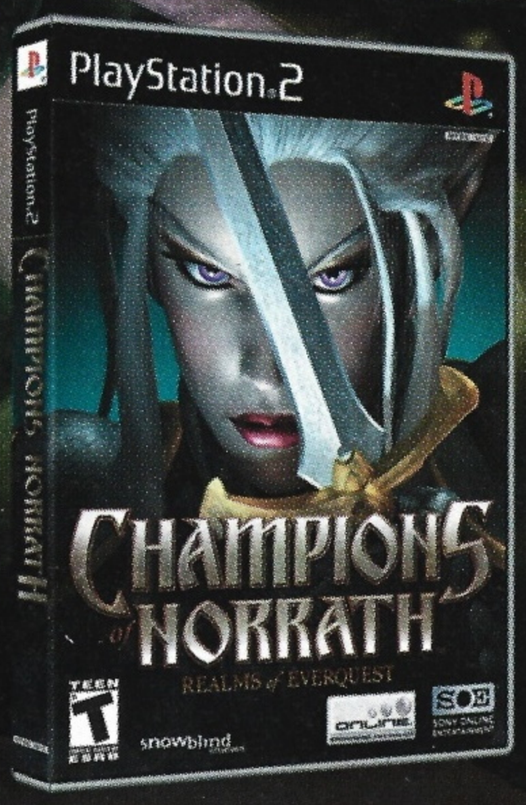

"With a feature set this deep, this may indeed be the new champion of action RPGs." — PSM

"Four-player co-op from the creators of Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance? Where do we sign up?" — IGN.com

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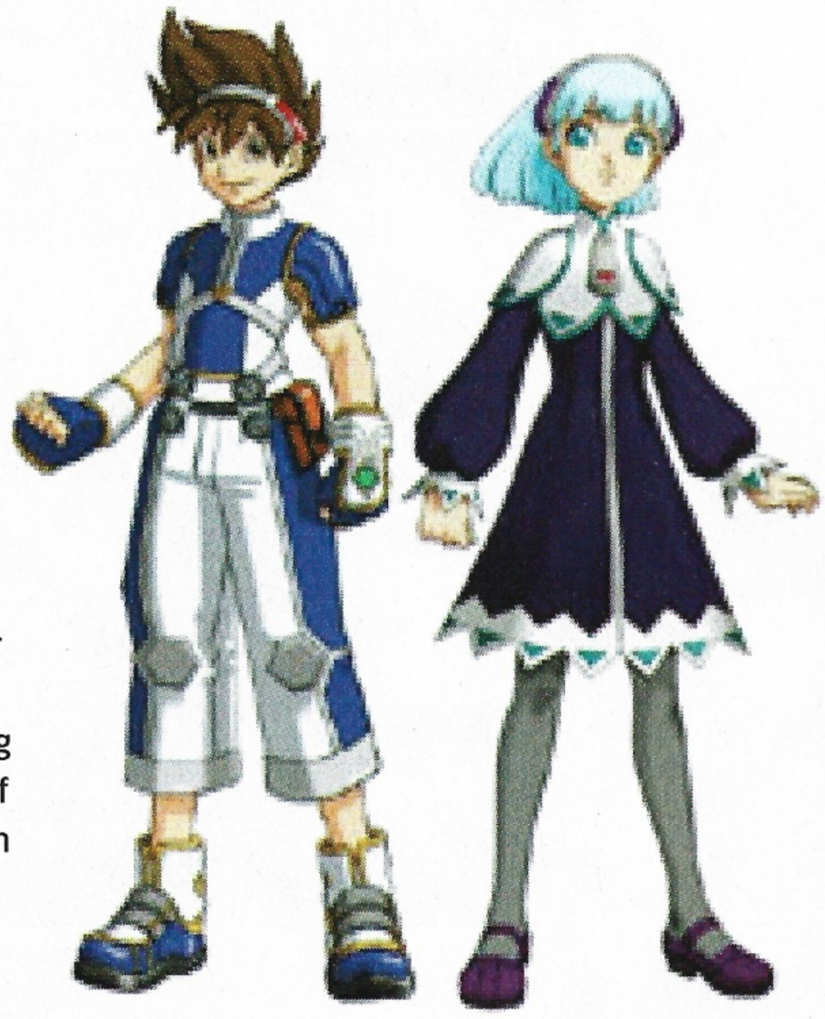
YOUR INSIDE LOOK AT THIS MONTH'S HOT TOPICS, GEAR, AND GAMES ▸ FEBRUARY 2004

SPECIAL REPORT

Virtua Fighter Questionable

Sega's "RPG" based on the series comes to PS2 — and takes a turn for the weird...

The concept of a game that let *Virtua Fighter* fans take control of their favorite combatants not in a fighting area, but on an epic RPG-like adventure exploring their back-stories has been the stuff of dreams and legend for years now. Then Sega finally dropped the bomb: a Virtua Fighter RPG (then called *Virtua Fighter Quest*) was being developed for Nintendo's GameCube. Now the game has been formally unveiled, is officially headed to PlayStation 2, and is, to say the least, not a thing like what anyone expected.



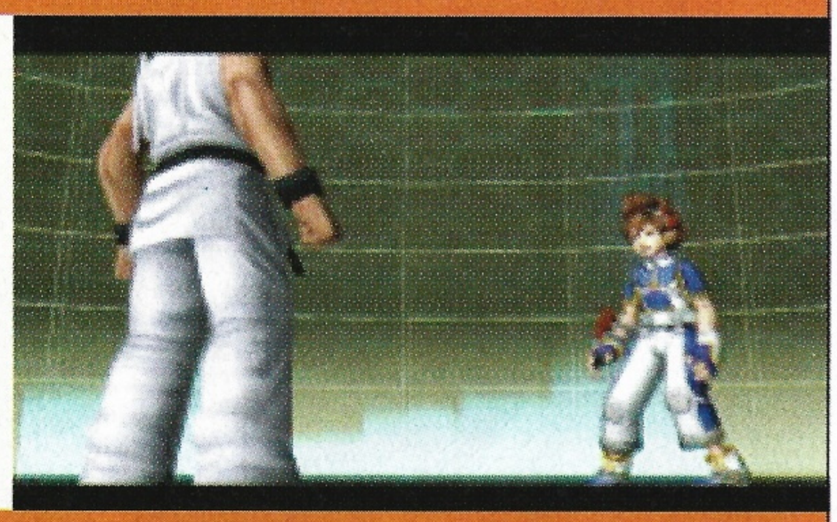
▲ We dreamed of playing as the *VF* cast; here's our wake-up call.

Titled *Virtua Fighter: Cyber Generation,* the game looks like anything but your typical vision of an action-RPG, although that's the genre Sega claims it falls under. That's not what has many of the *Virtua Fighter* faithful up in arms, though. No, that would be the fact that you don't actually play as any of the *Virtua Fighter* characters. Umm... right.

Instead, players are cast as two young children "jacked in" to a virtual world where they... meet the *Virtua Fighter* cast. To its credit, the game will have the *VF* regulars teaching players signature moves to use in combat, but early reports are that the fighting won't be anything like the *VF* fare we've become accustomed to — instead, it will be greatly simplified. At least from early videos of the game, there appears to be a lot of platform-game style action involved.

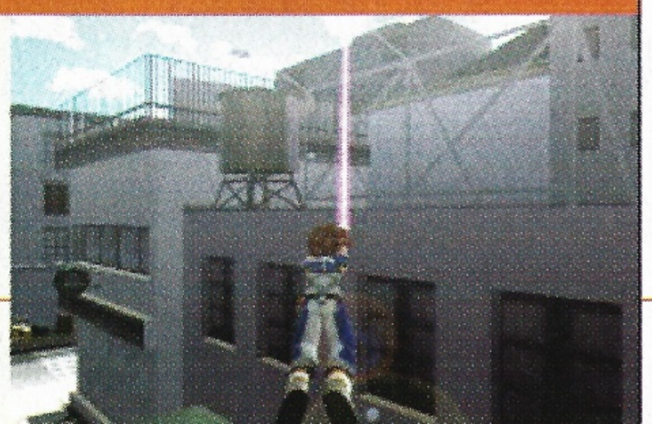
It's obviously much too early to write the game off as "kids-only," but it definitely doesn't seem designed with the *Virtua Fighter* aficionado in mind. Sega's take on the situation is this: *Virtua Fighter's* fans are all growing older, and they want to bring new blood into the fold with a younger, more broadly appealing game. It should be noted, as well, that the game's design has changed significantly since former AM2 head Yu Suzuki first designed it. Sega of America, when contacted, confirmed with PSM that there are currently no plans to bring this game to the United States. We'll keep you posted if that situation changes.

◀ With its young cast of characters and cartoon-like combat, the game looks more like *Kingdom Hearts* than *Virtua Fighter*.



▶ The original *Virtua Fighter* cast will make an appearance, but for now it looks like they'll just be used to train your pre-teen character.

◀ The combat system features *Virtua Fighter* moves, but has been heavily simplfied — not to mention tricked out with crazy effects that accompany attacks.



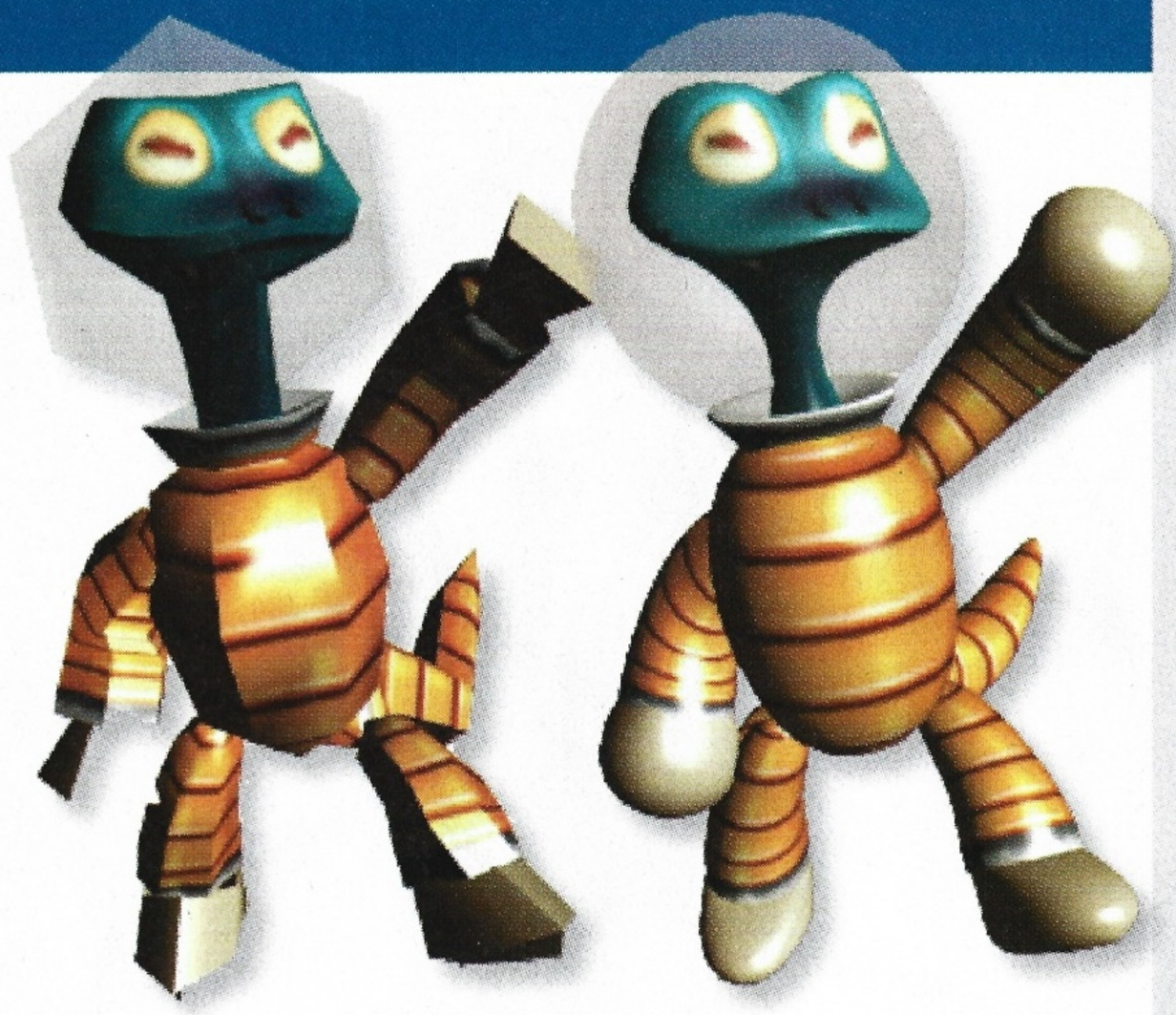
▶ Moving around the game world appears to feature a lot of platforming elements, including an "energy grappling hook" of sorts.

<< THE **POWER** OF THE **PSP** JUST CONTINUES TO **AMAZE** >>

HOT TOPIC

POWERFUL PSP

First look at the tiny system's mighty 3D effects



▲ **Here's our little lizard guy... looks pretty blocky of the left, doesn't he? But after applying hardware tessellation, he's nice and smooth (right).**

Little by little, more behind-the-scenes info on Sony's upcoming portable PlayStation is starting to emerge. Last issue, we brought you the first concept design for the system itself, and this month, we've got a first look at some of the visual magic it will be capable of.

The accompanying images show off a feature of the PSP known as "hardware tessellation." Essentially, this is a powerful trick that enables the PSP to turn very simple 3D models into more complex looking ones without using up a lot of processing muscle. In this case, a blocky-looking lizard-man is turned into a very curvy (and better looking) model without using any more polygons. The effect is quite stunning, to say the least. Factor in the PSP's small screen, and models like this are going to look fantastic — with less effort required on the part of game artists.

In other PSP news, developers have officially received PSP "emulators" — PCs with software and hardware capable of mimicking the system for testing purposes. More on PSP as it breaks — in fact, be sure to check out this issue's rumors column for more juicy, yet unconfirmed tidbits on the wonder-handheld!

HOT TOPIC

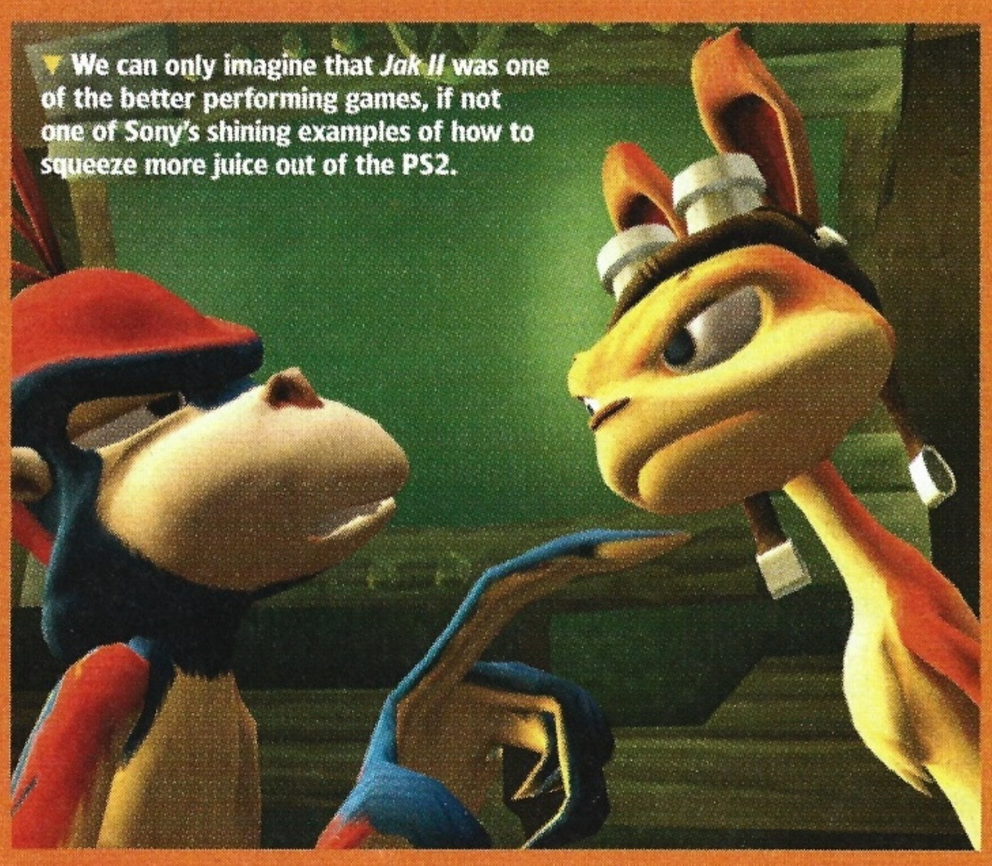
Sony: PS2 Capabilities Under-used

1/2 of games barely push the system, developers told

As part of a recent PlayStation developers meeting, Sony decided to let their game makers in on some very interesting research they'd been conducting. Using what it calls a "performance analyzer," Sony Europe picked through a variety of the best-looking PS2 games and the resulting facts and figures all pointed to one thing: the power of the PS2 is being grossly under-utilized.

Sony stresses that the keys to unlocking PS2's "hidden potential" are its vector units — co-processors design to help the big daddy Emotion Engine with things like enemy AI and car handling physics. Not surprisingly, games that made more use of the VUs performed much better. Those that didn't — and there a lot of them — didn't. In fact, 60% of the games Sony tested only ran at 30 frames per second. Its best performing game, the title of which wasn't disclosed, used the VUs the most, and, as a result, displayed nearly twice the amount of polygons and ran twice as fast as the slow-poke 60%. It's noteworthy that a lot of the games that don't really use vector units are ports from other systems. Kinda makes sense, because VUs are only found on PS2.

Hopefully, the result of this rallying cry to "use the PS2 more efficiently" will result in faster, better-looking games. Maybe Sony will even show developers how to achieve this, rather than just telling them they should?



▼ **We can only imagine that *Jak II* was one of the better performing games, if not one of Sony's shining examples of how to squeeze more juice out of the PS2.**

NEWSFEED

>> SEGA'S ROAD RAGE

Sega has filed a lawsuit against EA, Fox, and developer Radical Games alleging that the companies ripped off *Crazy Taxi* when creating *The Simpsons Road Rage*. Sega holds a patent on the gameplay concept for *Crazy Taxi*, and, as anyone who's played the game knows, *Road Rage* bears more than a slight resemblance to Sega's title. Sega wants sales of the game to cease, and is seeking unspecified damages.

>> SAMMY & SEGA REKINDLE RELATIONSHIP

In other Sega news, the strange saga of its on again / off again merger with Sammy continues. This time, Sammy has purchased 25% of Sega's stock, making it the majority shareholder in the company. Long-term effects of this move haven't been disclosed, but Sammy executives have been quoted in the Japanese press as saying that Sega should focus more on arcade game development. Sammy's U.S. reps have also indicated that changes may be in store for Sega of America.

>> SAMURAI SHOWDOWN HITS PS2

SNK will port its latest 2D arcade fighting game to PS2, with some improvements. *Samurai Showdown Zero*, the latest game to utilize SNK's more than a decade-old Neo-Geo hardware, will sport sprite filtering intended to make its characters look less "low-res" on TV screens. The title has appeared in U.S. retailers' pre-order lists for the summer.

>> CLIMAX "FAR ALONG" ON PS3 RACER

UK-based Climax has announced that its Brighton studio is in the advanced stages of development of a secret racing game for PlayStation 3. Code-named *Avalon*, the game makes use of the company's humorously-named Blimey 2 engine to put it, as the developer states, "way ahead of the curve" in the next-generation arena.

>> HE'LL BE BACK

You just can't keep a good robot down. Famed action star and California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger will reprise his role as The Terminator for a second game from Atari based on *Terminator 3: Rise of The Machines*. In development at Paradigm Entertainment, *Terminator 3: Redemption* will be a third-person action game feature vehicular and on-foot combat. The game is currently slated to hit shelves this summer.

HITS & MISSES

What's hot and what's not in the gaming world today

[+]

SONY'S DEVELOPER BOOT CAMP

It's no secret that programming games for PS2 isn't a cakewalk, and Sony's recent analysis of top games proves it. It can't change the PS2, but at least Sony is making an effort to help developers squeeze more out of the system by example.

[+/–]

PS3 DEVELOPMENT REVS UP

On the plus side, it's good to know that work is already underway on PS3 launch games, so they'll hopefully be of higher quality that initial PSone and PS2 titles were. On the downside, this also means that publishers will be shifting efforts and resources away from making really killer PS2 titles.

[–]

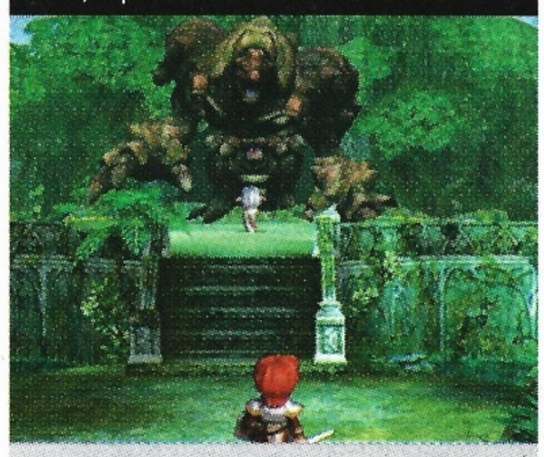
GTA: VC GETS CENSORED

Due to an outcry from Haitian-American groups and prominent politicians, Rockstar has agreed to remove any reference to Haitian gangs from future copies of *Vice City*. There was concern that instructing players to kill Haitian crime lords in the game would lead to real-life hatred or violence toward America's Haitians.

SAMMY BIG ON ARCADES

Now that it controls a majority stake in Sega, Sammy has indicated that the company should focus less on home games and more on "profitable" arcade games. We don't know about you, but when was the last time you went to, or even saw, an arcade?

▼ Adol, hero of the *Ys* (pronounced "eees") series, explores a brand new 3D world.



FIRST LOOK

KONAMI SETS ITS EYES ON *YS*

Classic role-playing series gets a new lease on life

Sony may have said no to the sprite-based *Ys Books I & II* that NEC was hoping to bring stateside, but it looks like U.S. RPG fans will be getting a taste of the classic series compliments of Konami.

The company has acquired global distribution rights to a PS2 version of *Ys VI: The Ark of Napishtim* — Japan's best-selling PC role-playing game. Unlike the game NEC attempted to localize, this one is fully 3D, with sprite characters. Konami plans to release the game globally before the end of the year.

RUMORS

OUTRUN 2 ON PS2

Here's a quickie, but an interesting tidbit nonetheless. A rumor making the rounds in Japan suggests that Sega will release a home version of its upcoming arcade racer (and sequel to one of the genre's most classic games) *OutRun 2* for PS2 — but not for Microsoft's Xbox, despite the fact that the game runs on Xbox-based hardware in arcades. Ouch.

Our take: PS2 owners would be in for what's shaping up to be a classic arcade racer — and Sega might actually stand a chance of selling a couple hundred thousand copies of the game. ***Probability: Medium***

PS3: BUILT-IN EYETOY

Here's a dilly concerning the capabilities of Sony's next-generation PlayStation. Phil Harrison, Sony Europe tech wizard, has commented that the company is looking at adding an advanced version of the EyeToy camera as standard equipment on PS3. PSM has learned through other sources that this is indeed the case, but there is currently an internal debate over whether the camera should be built into the system, or attached externally to accommodate different entertainment center setups. Furthermore — and here's the real kicker — the new EyeToy is said to be able to distinguish a player's distance from the PS3, and may be used to load saved games based on face recognition.

Our take: This would be a bold move for Sony that would certainly give the PS3 a unique selling point among its rivals. The big question is, however, how this technology can be incorporated while keeping the launch price of the system within a reasonable range. ***Probability: High***

PSP RUMOR ROUNDUP

We've got a double serving of PSP gossip this month. The first rumor concerns how save games will work on the system. According to recent statements made by an EA rep out of the UK, the PSP will allegedly have a dedicated save button, that will save exactly where you're at in your game when you push it — that way, if you need to stop playing abruptly while traveling, or need to take a call on PSP's cell phone attachment, you won't lose your progress. In less interesting, but still promising scuttlebutt, Sony is said to be readying a huge announcement, possibly before E3, concerning developer support for PSP. According to our sources, the list of developers and games confirmed is staggering, with larger third-parties committing more than a dozen games to the handheld's first three months of release.

Our take: Great news on multiple levels if true. First off, the instant save idea, common in PC games, is brilliant. Second, we're expecting strong PSP support, but anything that indicates a healthy flow of games for the system from the get-go gets us excited. ***Probability: Medium/High***

▲ He looks like The Punisher. Now let's hope the gameplay does him justice.

NEW INFO

THE PUNISHER CROSS-OVER

THQ has revealed some key new details surrounding its upcoming videogame based on Marvel's famous vigilante, *The Punisher.*

The game will be developed by Volition, the same team that created the *Red Faction* series of first-person shooters; *The Punisher,* however, will be a third-person game.

For comic fans wondering which version of the skull-donning Frank Castle they'll play as — comic or movie — the answer is a bit of both. While you can see that this Punisher looks a lot like he appears in the comic, the game's plot will borrow from both the Garth Ennis penned monthly and the upcoming Artisan film starring Thomas Jane.

Look for first screens and gameplay details soon!

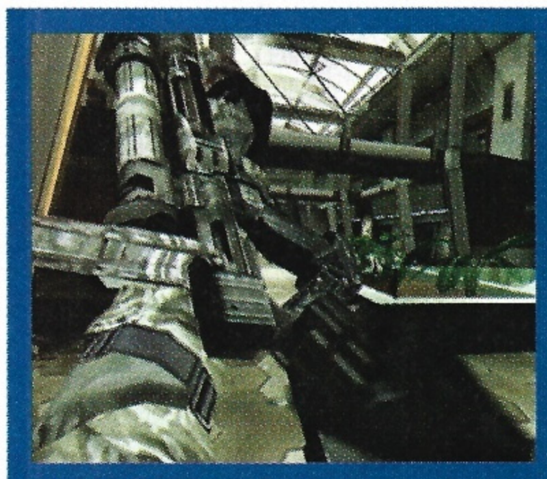
GAME UPDATE

VIEW TO A KILLZONE

Latest shots of Sony Europe's breathtaking FPS

The game isn't even due out in Europe until the end of the year, but that isn't stopping images of SCEE's amazing-looking, action game, *Killzone,* from slowly leaking out of developer Guerilla Games. These latest shots of the near-future wargame show off the intricate reloading animations and ultra high-resolution textures Guerilla is able to pull off using its proprietary 3D engine, which may be used in the upcoming Vietnam-era action title from Eidos currently known as *Tour of Duty.*

▲ **Game hunting? Don't you wish!**



▲ Reloading looks extremely realistic, as do the jungle environment's texture maps.

VERSUS MODE

REZ VS PEZ

ROUND ONE: BACKGROUND

Rez: Tasty shooter that looks like you're on pills	Pez: Tasty candy that looks like pills

Advantage: **Draw**

Rez: Includes a wristband that buzzes to the beat	Pez: Includes character-head dispensers that puke out treats

Advantage: **Rez**

ROUND TWO: FEATURES

Rez: Shooting enemies changes the game's music	Pez: Dispensers don't actually shoot the candy

Advantage: **Rez**

Rez: Main character is a non-descript wire-frame guy	Pez: Dispensers are based on recognizable characters

Advantage: **Pez**

ROUND THREE: BONUS ROUND

Rez: Shooter fans will pay inflated prices to buy a copy	Pez: Collectors will mortgage their houses for a rare dispenser

Advantage: **Rez**

Rez: Will leave you seeing funky trails for days	Pez: Will rot your teeth

Advantage: **Rez**

WINNER: REZ

UNCOMMENTARY

SAME OLD STORY...

By Randy Nelson

It's no secret that game companies are now spending Hollywood amounts of money to make their games look and sound like high-budget blockbusters — and, if you look at PS2's best games, they do. But even the best looking, best sounding, best playing games are still lacking in one major area: story, and, to an almost equal degree, quality dialog.

I can't count the number of times I've seen otherwise triple-A games come to a grinding halt when a story sequence cuts in, and the characters start speaking (no matter how good the voice acting is). Case in point: one of my favorite games of last year, *ZOE 2.* Great game, but man, was that dialog horrible. It's certainly not the only game to suffer from bad dialog or poor translation, but it's one of the most high-profile examples.

My point is this: Hollywood has proven that even the most stunning, effects-laden movies can still disappoint if the story and dialog suck. Look at the *Matrix* sequels, for example. Hopefully, something will click with one of the big developers at some point soon, and game makers will be turned on to the fact that dialog is every bit as important as how your game looks or sounds. Some, such as Naughty Dog, get it. *Jak II* had a good story and great dialog. Now, if only all games could meet its standards, I'd be a very happy man. Oh, and one more thing: just please, please let *MGS3* make sense! One mention of the La Li Lu Le Lo, and I'm going to cry. For real.

▲ ***ZOE 2:*** **Great game, but horrible dialog.**

"DEAL OF

BUY THIS GAME.

GAMESPOT EDITORS' CHOICE

IGN.COM EDITORS' CHOICE award

OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE GAME OF THE MONTH

actual screenshot

2 Breakthrough Games.

5.0 out of 5.0 - GamePro
5 out of 5 - Official PlayStation Magazine
9.5 out of 10 - Official Xbox Magazine

www.princeofpersiagame.com

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

XBOX

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

PlayStation.2

THE YEAR!”

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XBOX Official Xbox Magazine EDITOR'S CHOICE

EGM GOLD EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

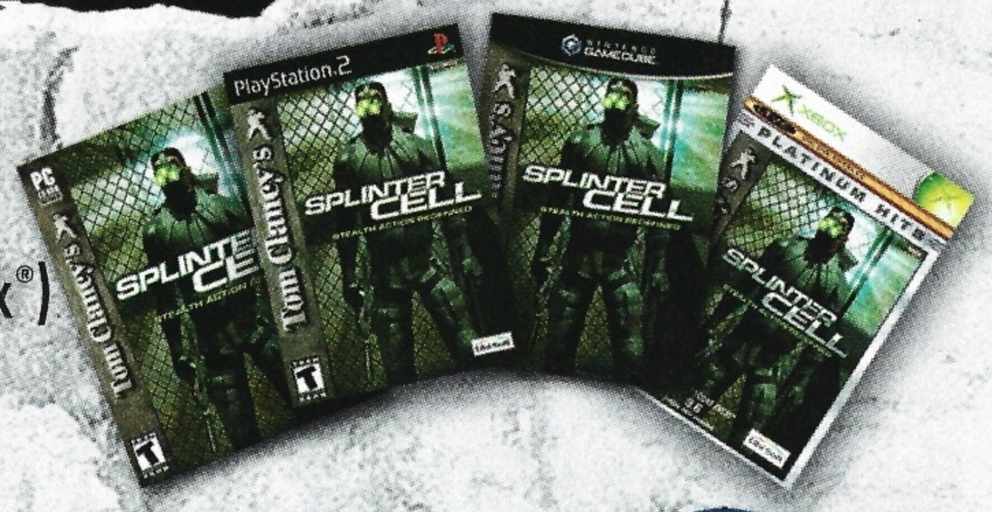
gamespy 2002 GAME OF THE YEAR XBOX

Tom Clancy's
SPLINTER CELL®

actual screenshot

1 Breakthrough Deal.

5.0 out of 5.0 - GamePro (PlayStation®2 & Xbox®)
4.5 out of 5 - Official PlayStation Magazine
9.6 out of 10 - Official Xbox Magazine



www.splintercell.com

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UBISOFT™

CHECKPOINT

You've found it: your one-stop spot for all the best stuff headed your way
(Please keep in mind that release dates do change—don't blame us if they do!)

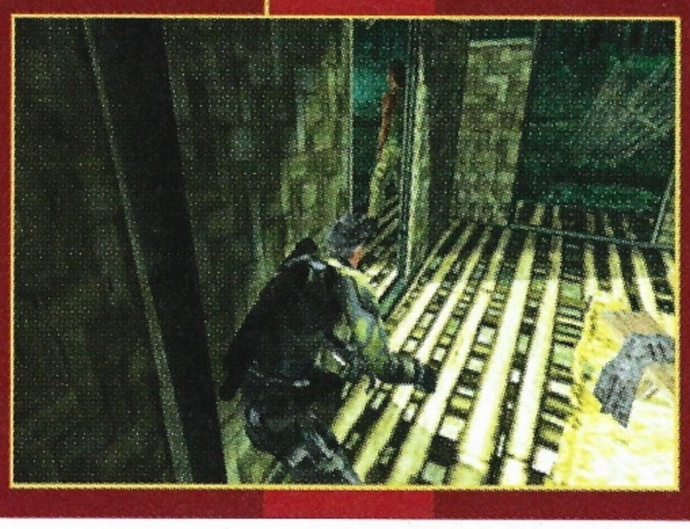
Current Releases

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Air Force Delta Strike	Action	Konami
All Star Baseball 2005	Sports	Acclaim
Champions of Norrath	RPG	SOE
Extreme Force	Action	Namco
Ice Nine	Action	BAM!
Lifeline	Action	Konami
Lupin the Third	Action	Bandai
MX Unleashed	Sports	THQ
NBA Ballers	Sports	Midway
Nightshade	Action	Sega
Pitfall Harry	Action	Activision
Rise To Honor	Action	SCEA
The Suffering	Action	Midway
Trivial Pursuit Unhinged	Action	Atari
Wrath Unleashed	Strategy	LucasArts

▶ Hopefully, with its refined gameplay and better levels, *Nightshade* will succeed where *Shinobi* stumbled.

March's Releases

TITLE	GENRE	PUBLISHER
Alias	Action	Acclaim
Cy Girls	Action	Konami
Driver 3	Action	Atari
Final Fantasy XI	RPG	Sony CEA
Firefighter F.D. 18	Action	Konami
Gradius V	Action	Konami
Headhunter: Redemption	Action	Sega
James Bond: Everything or Nothing	Action	EA
King of Fighters 2003	Fighting	SNK
Lobo	Action	Kemco
Mafia	Adventure	Gathering
Micro Mayhem (tentative)	Racing	Jaleco
MLB 2005	Sports	989 Sports
MTX Mototrax	Racing	Activision
Seven Samurai 20XX	Action	Sammy Studios
SNK vs. Capcom SVC Chaos	Fighting	SNK
Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow	Action	Ubisoft
StarCraft: Ghost	Action	Blizzard
Star Ocean III: Till the End of Time	RPG	Square Enix



▶ Despite its cryptic title, *Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow* is one of 2004's most hotly anticipdated games.

PSM Games to Watch

Spy Fiction
Publisher: Sammy Studios Type: Action Release Date: Fall

Don't let the somewhat generic title and eerily *MGS*-like graphics fool you — this game is not only looking really great, but the new gameplay ideas behind it could result in a spy game like no other. The ability to snap photos of enemies and assume their appearance, cling to any surface, and "cloak" while still all sound great.

Siren
Publisher: TBA Type: Horror Release Date: TBA

While it hasn't been picked up for U.S. release yet, based on the Japanese version, it should be. This is Sony's first big push into the horror genre, and it's one hell of a creep-fest. In fact, even the ads for the game are scary — so scary, in fact, that they had to be pulled from Japanese television! We really dig the zombie-eye-view that's used when you're spotted.

Star Wars: Battlefront
Publisher: LucasArts Type: Action Release Date: Fall

Could this finally be the epic game that the *Star Wars* universe deserves? The idea of teaming up with 15 other players online to participate in famous battles from all six *SW* films has us jazzed, but the fact that you'll be able to do a lot more than just shoot — there are snowspeeders, tauntauns, and more — is just too much!

Cy Girls
Publisher: Konami Type: Action Release Date: March

We haven't seen a flat-out action game from Konami in a while, and this one's got a unique hook. You play as two female super-agents, one a ninja, one a gun-slinger, each with their own very unique moves and abilities. So far, the game is pretty, fast, and the action's very stylish. There's some goofy presentation going on, but hopefully this will be ironed out.

Transformers Armada
Publisher: Atari Type: Action Release Date: Summer

The robots in disguise are finally coming to the console world, and their debut adventure is looking hot. PS2 wizards Melbourne House are squeezing some amazing effects out of the machine, resulting in some very faithful looking on-screen machines. Now they just need to play off the 'bots' abilities, and they'll be set.

WHAT YOU SHOULD BE PLAYING

1. SOCOM II: U.S. Navy SEALs
Pub: Sony CEA Dev: Zipper Interactive Type: Action

If ever there was a reason to get a Network Adapter, this is it. Once you finish the offline game, you *really* owe it to yourself to try the awesome online mode.

2. SSX 3
Publisher: EA Sports BIG Dev: EA Canada Type: Sports

This is a game that can take weeks or even months to squeeze every last bit of fun out of. Then you factor in the online competition, and your life is *owned*.

3. Maximo vs. Army of Zin
Publisher: Capcom Developer: Capcom Type: Action

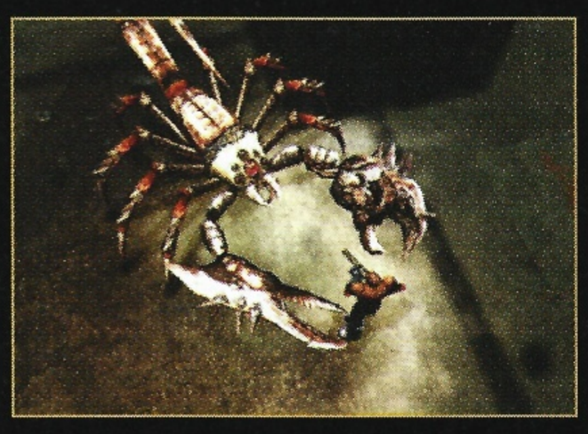
Ah, another great old-school challenge from Capcom — if your thumbs are in need of a *real* workout, this is the game that will provide it, plus a lot of fun.

HAMMER.
DYNAMITE.
ROCKET LAUNCHER.

Just a few tools to help rebuild society.

Fallout™
BROTHERHOOD OF STEEL

WELCOME TO THE WASTELAND.



Humanity struggles to pick up the pieces after a devastating nuclear war. As a courageous member of the Brotherhood of Steel, your mission is to bring peace to this post-apocalyptic world filled with relentless chaos and radioactive nightmares.

MATURE 17+
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Mature Sexual Themes
Strong Language
Violence

PlayStation.2

XBOX

Interplay™

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Cool Stuff

Here's a look at some of the hottest new gear and goodies you should keep an eye out for

SONY 61" XBR PLASMA MONITOR

From: Sony
Price: $19,999
Available: Now

Say you've won the lottery, inherited a media dynasty, or been crowned the king of an uncharted, oil-rich island. You would, of course, be able to afford the best TV money can buy — and for 20 grand, you can have it, in the form of Sony's mammoth KDE-61XBR950 plasma flatscreen. It's nearly 70 inches wide of the sharpest gaming canvas you could ask for, yet is only a little over four inches thick. While this dream TV is definitely out of most gamers' budgets (including ours), advances in flatscreen technology could see sets like this one selling for much more wallet-friendly prices in 2004/2005. Until then, we can only stare and drool...

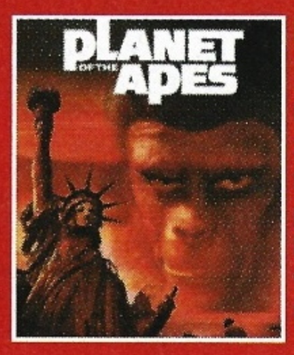
▼ This is what 61" of sheer gaming bliss looks like. It's also as expensive as a really good car.

Hot In February

OUR TOP DVD PICKS

KILL BILL: VOLUME 1

RELEASE DATE: FEBRUARY 3
Just in time for the release of *Volume 2* in theaters, the first half of *Kill Bill* hits DVD in all its action-packed glory. As of this writing, there's no word on deleted scenes or if we'll see the House of Blue Leaves battle in color, but we can hope...



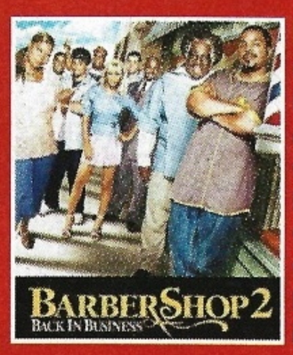
PLANET OF THE APES 35TH ANNIVERSARY

RELEASE DATE: FEBRUARY 3
Sci-fi fans will definitely want to get their hands on this DVD packed with damned dirty apes. Besides a remastering of the video, *Apes* fans will be awed by the bonus material on disc two.

OUR TOP MOVIE PICKS

KILL BILL: VOLUME 2

OPENS ON: FEBRUARY 20
The Bride (Uma Thurman) continues her campaign of vengeance against Bill and his Deadly Vipers Assassination Squad. With two "DIVAS" down and three to go, expect this one to be fast and furious, with a thrilling final battle.



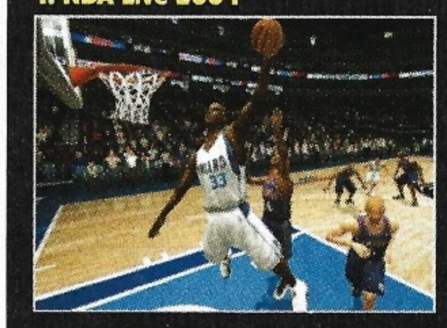
BARBERSHOP 2

OPENS ON: FEBRUARY 6
Ice Cube and crew scored a lot of laughs in the original, and we don't expect the sequel to be any less funny. Hopefully it will do what the fans have been wanting: focus more on the hillarious antics that take place inside the titular barbershop.

NPD Funworld TRSTS SALES CHARTS

TOP 10 PS2 GAMES FOR OCTOBER

1. NBA Live 2004



2. Jak II
3. Madden NFL 2004
4. WWE SmackDown! HCTP
5. Tony Hawk's Underground
6. Tiger Woods PGA 2004
7. Castlevania: Lament of Innocence
8. SSX 3
9. Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
10. Backyard Wrestling

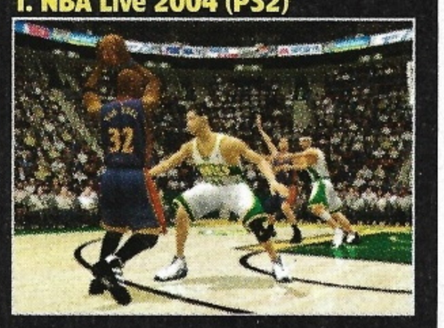
TOP 10 PS1 GAMES FOR OCTOBER

1. Beyblade

2. Bratz
3. Shrek: Treasure Hunt
4. DBZ: Ultimate Battle 22
5. Namco Museum Vol. 3
6. Atari Anniversary Edition
7. Spongebob Supersponge
8. Madden NFL 2004
9. Pac-Man World
10. Crash Team Racing

OVERALL TOP 10 FOR OCTOBER

1. NBA Live 2004 (PS2)



2. Jak II (PS2)
3. Madden NFL 2004 (PS2)
4. Super Mario Advance 4 (GBA)
5. WWE SmackDown! HCTP (PS2)
6. Tony Hawk's Underground (PS2)
7. Rogue Squadron III (GCN)
8. Tiger Woods PGA 2004 (PS2)
9. NBA Live 2004 (Xbox)
10. Viewtiful Joe (GCN)

Readers' Most Wanted

1 METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER

Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Release Date: TBA

#1 Last Month

Let's be honest — do you think *MGS3* will *ever* be toppled from first place?

2 KINGDOM HEARTS II

Publisher: Square Enix
Developer: Square Enix
Release Date: TBA

#3 Last Month

Square Enix's next collaboration with Disney moves up the chart.

3 GRAND TURISMO 4

Publisher: Sony CEA
Dev: Polyphony Digital
Release Date: Summer

#2 Last Month

Its release keeps slipping, and now its ranking is, too. Luckily, not by much.

4 FINAL FANTASY XI

Publisher: Sony CEA **Developer:** Square Enix
Release Date: March

#4 Last Month

It's almost here — hard disk drive and all!

5 RESIDENT EVIL: OUTBREAK

Publisher: Capcom **Developer:** Capcom
Release Date: March

#5 Last Month

This *RE* has met with rave reviews in Japan.

6 DRIVER 3

Publisher: Atari **Developer:** Reflections
Release Date: Summer

#7 Last Month

No new *GTA* on the horizon = opportunity.

7 XENOSAGA II

Publisher: Namco **Developer:** Monolith
Release Date: TBA

#8 Last Month

Don't expect a U.S. release for a long while.

8 STAR OCEAN III

Publisher: Square Enix **Dev:** Square Enix
Release Date: TBA

#9 Last Month

Will we be waiting until the end of time?

NEW 9 NFL STREET

Publisher: EA Sports BIG **Dev:** Tiburon
Release Date: March

New This Month!

Off the field and onto gamers' radars.

10 MAFIA

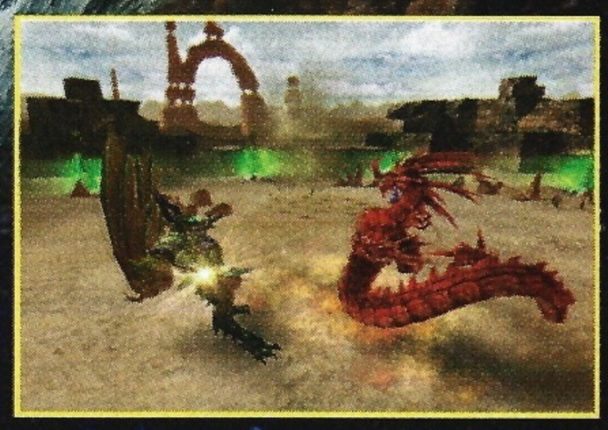
Pub: Gathering **Dev:** Illusion Softworks
Release Date: March

#10 Last Month

It's *GTA* goes gangster, and you can't wait.

CAST YOUR VOTE!
Visit www.psmonline.com and pick your most wanted game from our list of the hottest upcoming releases. We'll tally the results, and print 'em here each issue!

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF A CAREFULLY CALCULATED ASS-KICKING



WRATH UNLEASHED™

Be warned - this is not a mere battle of brawn. In this world, war must be waged with a wary hand. Journey from land to land, battle to battle as you deftly command your army of demons, centaurs and dragons. Exploit their strengths. Mind their weaknesses. Slash, claw and slay your way to power - and if you must, unleash your wrath. Cast magic spells. Pit darkness against light. Bend fire, wind and water to your will. And ultimately dominate the world.

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ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

THE COLLECTIVE

XBOX

PlayStation®2

LUCAS Arts®

wrathunleashed.com

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PSM REVIEWS no. 81
THE WORLD'S MOST ACCURATE, IN-DEPTH GAME REVIEWS ▶ FEBRUARY 2004

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SCORING

10 **CLASSIC** — A rare gem; Our highest recommendation
9 **OUTSTANDING** — One of the better games this year
8 **VERY GOOD** — You can't go wrong
7 **GOOD** — A solid game
6 **OKAY** — Kind of fun, but no big deal
5 **SO-SO** — You've got to love the subject matter
4 **LACKING** — Big flaws really hurt this game
3 **BAD** — Not fun at all
2 **AWFUL** — This game is an insult
1 **WHY?** — Why would anyone do this to us?

We take our reviews very seriously. We spend hours upon hours playtesting each title so that we can give you the absolute best information to help you buy.

Games that score an 8, 9 or 10 earn a Bronze, Silver or Gold **PSM Must-Buy Award.** We don't hand these beauties out easily, so if you see one on a review, a game box or advertising, you'll want to be sure to check that game out.

Finally, when looking up past scores, keep in mind that older games usually wouldn't fare as well if they were reviewed today.

PSM GAME OF THE MONTH

GAME INFO | PUB SQUARE ENIX | DEV SQUARESOFT | TYPE RPG | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB RATING TEEN

◀ The insane number of side missions will truly work even the most diehard *FF* series fanatic.

PSM MUST-BUY SILVER

FINAL FANTASY X-2

It's different for girls

As the first and only direct sequel in the long running *Final Fantasy* series, *Final Fantasy X-2* is already a little different from its chocobo-ridden peers, but that's just the beginning. It has only three playable characters, all of whom are decidedly female, it replaces the traditional story-boarded, linear adventure with an open-ended, mission-based structure, and relies upon class-changing "Dresspheres" during combat instead of summons. That's definitely quite a departure from the *Final Fantasy* norm. But do all the differences make it better?

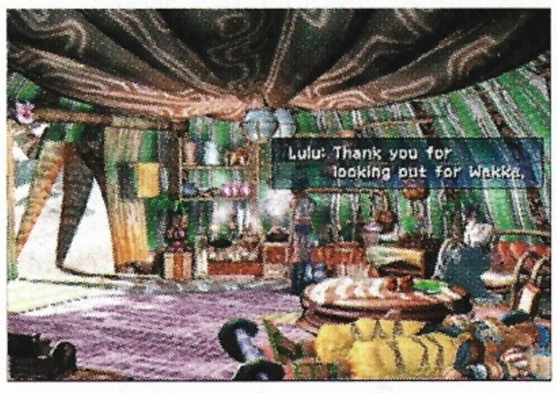
Two years after the events of *FFX,* Yuna has discarded her High Summoner mantle and set out to explore the now-peaceful Spira as a Spherehunter, a sort of scavenger for profit. Joining her are returning thief, Rikku, and a new goth-type girl, Paine. Together they become the super perky, Hello-Kitty-style, adorable Gullwings, and loads of fan-service-style hijinks ensue.

The choose-your-own-order, mission-based structure of *FFX-2* is either more open-ended or aimless, depending upon your attitude. From the bridge of the Celsius airship, you'll be free to visit any of over a dozen familiar locations right off the bat, including many locations from *FFX*. In fact, catching up on the current happenings in the world of Spira provides a nice sense of quasi-closure to *FFX*. When you want to progress the story, you need only to complete missions in designated "Hot Spots".

The combat system has also been greatly overhauled. First off, the speedy, Active Time Battle system is back with a vengeance. Unless you're some sort of ADD-afflicted savant, you'll most likely opt for "Wait" in the ATB options. Not only is combat fast, it's also deceptively strategic, thanks to Garment

▼ Yuna's climbing and jumping abilities don't really add a whole to gameplay, but give environments a semblance of some depth.

<< THIS IS A GAME CREATED FOR FANS OF THE SERIES, SPECIFICALLY FFX >>



▲ **Ever wondered what's up with some of Yuna's old guardians from *FFX?* Now you can find out.**

▲ **For those who miss the Summons from *FF* games, the "Dress Up" transformations should sate that appetite in no time.**

Grids and Dresspheres. Each Dresshpere's ability to bestow a specific set of abilities and stats to the wearer — effectively changing their class on the fly — adds depth, fan service, and cheesecake-y, *Sailor Moon*-esque transformation sequences that replace the usual summon animations. Thanks to this reworked combat system, the usual, nearly-constant RPG battles are made incredibly enjoyable and wonderfully intuitive.

FFX-2 is definitely not a game that will be enjoyed by any Joe Schmoe. This is a game created for fans of the series, specifically *FFX*. The non-sequential mission structure sometimes gives the game an uneven pace, and the goofy, girl-power tone and light-hearted storyline keep things on the frothy, inconsequential, less-than-epic side. It also doesn't help that this is a "completist's" worst nightmare. Aside from the main Hot Spot activities, the rest of the game is totally optional — meaning that you'll be missing out on approximately 85% of the game if you don't really dig in and find EVERYTHING. And some of that EVERYTHING is really mind-bending, mini-game-laden, "why is Sphere Break harder than Calculus?" madness.

But when all is said and done, it's *FFX-2's* incredibly wacky, fruity charm that makes all the madness even more irresistible for fans who always secretly wanted to see what was really going on in the depths of Bevelle.

Or, more importantly for the *FF* voyeurs — what Yuna looks like in a Moogle suit. **FRANCESCA REYES**

▲ ***FFX-2* is crammed to bursting with mini-games like Sphere Break and lightning tower calibration – though not all are what we'd call "fun."**

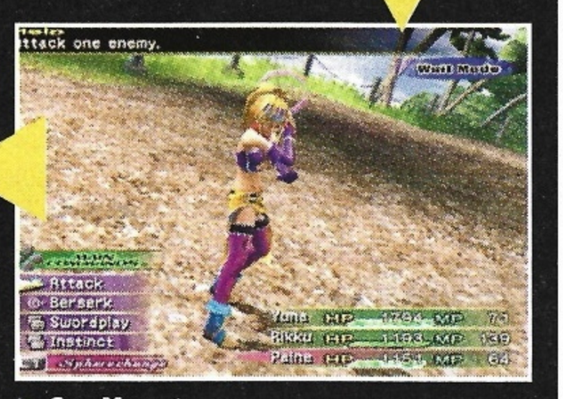
On Your Mark, Get Set, Get Dressed!

Dressphere class changes run the *FF* series nostalgic gamut from...

▲ **Berserker to...**

▲ **White Mage to...**

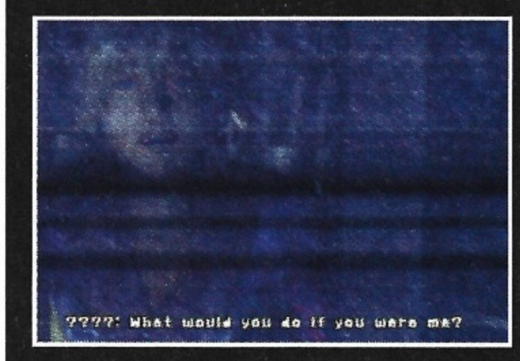
▲ **Trainer and more!**



▲ **Gun Mage to...**

Who's That Boy?

This is the reason Yuna is a Spherehunter, even though she claims she just wants to have a good time and let her hair down (or cut it in this case). Is that Tidus? Is he alive?



▲ **It could be Tidus, right?**

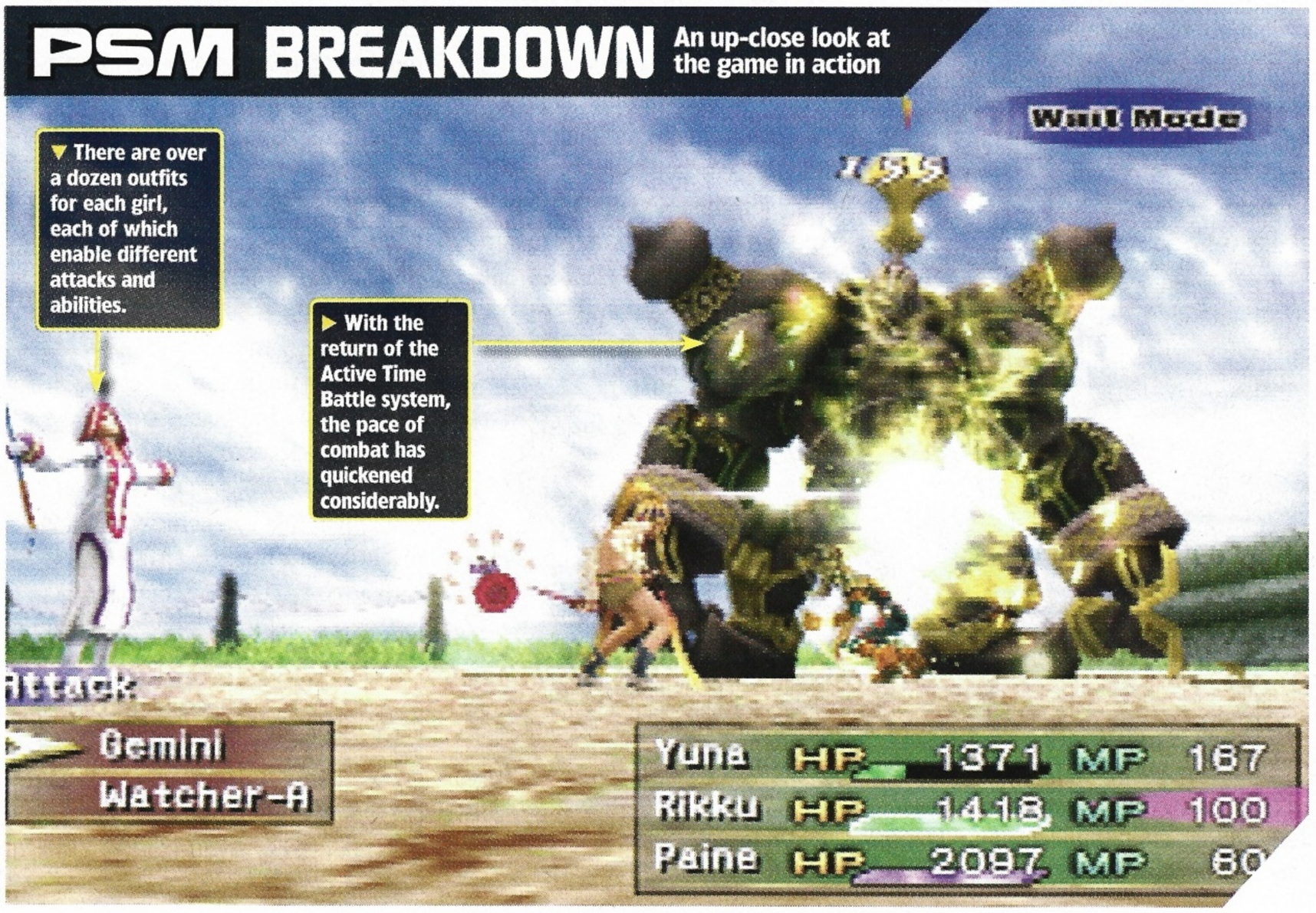
HOW IT STACKS UP

Final Fantasy X	10
Final Fantasy X-2	9
RPG MAKER	8
.hack//QUARANTINE	7
Arc The Lad: TOWS	7

PSM FINAL SCORE 9 — OUTSTANDING

Different... very different, but strangely satisfying all the same. Not for everyone, but good for *FF* fans and Yuna fetishists — and we know you're out there.

PSM BREAKDOWN — An up-close look at the game in action



GAME INFO | PUB ROCKSTAR/TAKE TWO | DEV REMEDY | TYPE ACTION/ADVENTURE | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB MATURE

▲ Not all of the interiors are cruddy, rundown warehouses.

▲ Max hates cocktail parties, but he just loves serving cocktails... especially Molotovs.

▶ He's not clumsy, he's crafty! Max can dive around during battle like nobody's business.

PSM MUST-BUY BRONZE

MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE

Painfully ugly, but Payne-fully beautiful

Mix together two parts gritty action shooter, one part psychodrama, one part *Matrix* emulator and one part ham-fisted noir graphic novel, and you've got *Max Payne 2: The Fall of Max Payne*. It might not sound like it, but these are words of praise. *MP2* continues the dark tale of Max Payne, a New York City cop and two-time loser — he lost his wife and kid in the first game, and now he's mixed up with the consummate I-knew-she-was-trouble-when-she-walked-in *femme fatale*.

The grim story is presented via washed-out graphic novel storyboarding and real-time dream sequences. It starts out a little disjointedly, but the player is usually kept fully aware of what Max has to do... mostly killing people who more or less have it coming. Gameplay still features an excellent "bullet time" mechanic, served in two flavors: a quick, John Woo-style, horizontal lunge that can be done forward or sideways with guns blazing, and a more versatile version that simply slows time. Both versions vividly illustrate what a scum-killing badass Max Payne is. This time around, Payne's slow-mo advantage over his enemies is quite a bit more pronounced. Not only can the player slow reality to a crawl, but Max actually slows down slightly less than his foes, so clearing out an arguably unfair number of foes becomes a really satisfying experience.

The bad news is that *Max Payne 2* simply isn't very long, and without any doubt, this PS2 version is the most technologically hobbled of the platform versions available. The physics are quite good, but even with relatively low numbers of characters and moveable objects onscreen, the framerate can drop and wobble as though it's crunching more painkillers than Max himself. And the overall visuals? Let's just say that the bland textures and simple models are best thought of as added immersion into Max's gritty, nasty, very ugly world.

The weird thing is, the game still succeeds. In spite of its technological limitations, *Max Payne 2* still a very good, even excellent, action game with some great and often creepy little dramatic touches, including some truly grim cinematics, and those playable dream/fugue sequences where reality warps and pulses around the characters. Some of the level design is brilliantly done, and there's even a new playable character — nothing revolutionary, but good, solid action with a liberal sprinkling of the dark side. **CHRIS HUDAK**

▲ There's a new physics system in the game, so bodies flop realistically when filled full of hot lead.

▲ Bullet time slows everything down, but still gives Max a speed advantage, so he can mow down groups of enemies with ease.

▲ The graphic novel-style cut scenes are back. It looks like Max is over the whole "my wife is dead" thing.

HOW IT STACKS UP

Max Payne 2	8
Metal Arms: GITS	8
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter	7
Enter the Matrix	6
kill.switch	6

PSM FINAL SCORE 8

VERY GOOD

It ain't pretty, but if a great, film noir story, tense action, and excellent presentation bring a smile to your face, *Max Payne* will hurt you but *good*.

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MATURE 17+
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GAME INFO | PUB SEGA | DEV SEGA (TEAM SONIC) | TYPE PLATFORM | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB EVERYONE

▲ With such crazy level designs and a frantic pace of action, *Sonic Heroes* is really like no other game currently available.

SONIC HEROES

The road to success is often filled with several speed bumps

What's great about Sonic the Hedgehog's first game on PS2 is that it heads more towards the series' original gameplay roots. Dropping a lot of the filler storylines and other less-important aspects, *Sonic Heroes* focuses a lot more on all-out action and speed, with a decent amount of exploration thrown in for good measure. Instead of the traditional one-character situation, though, players take charge of three-member teams, with each member geared towards speed, power or flight.

◀ Big the Cat actually has the ability to hit his teammates into nearby enemies in order to destroy them.

It may sound like a simple change, but the depth and challenge it adds to the experience is nothing sort of major. Not only does it affect how you make your way through the levels, many of which can take as much as 15 minutes to run through (at Supersonic Speed), but it also influences the ways in which you can vanquish enemies. And, when you throw in the fact that each team is generally tasked with entirely different missions, the sheer scope of the adventure considerably increases. Make no doubts about it; you'll be playing this game for a long time to come.

Too Fast, Too Soon

While it seems that our hedgehog friend has picked up speed and a fair amount of popularity, his journey into 3D has not been without its speed bumps. Both *Sonic Adventure* titles, while never appearing on the PS2, definitely suffered their fair share of camera, collision and quality control problems. With *Sonic Heroes,* the franchise does take a turn for the better, but nonetheless still falters in some very key areas.

Once again, the camera system falls short of where it should be, generally acting against the player instead of for them. The simple task of looking around the environment is generally problematic and you'll often find yourself fighting against the camera just to get a clear view of certain

PSM BREAKDOWN An up-close look at the game in action

Two Times The Fun

Along with a myriad of hidden areas and unlockable bonuses, also includes a rather fun two-player, where two gamers can race against each other to see who can make it through the level first.

▲ Choosing the right team and knowing the levels well are the keys to winning these competitive races.

areas. The other bothersome aspect of the camera is that it isn't always able to fully keep up with the on-screen action, leading to situations where you can't always clearly see your character or what's coming up ahead.

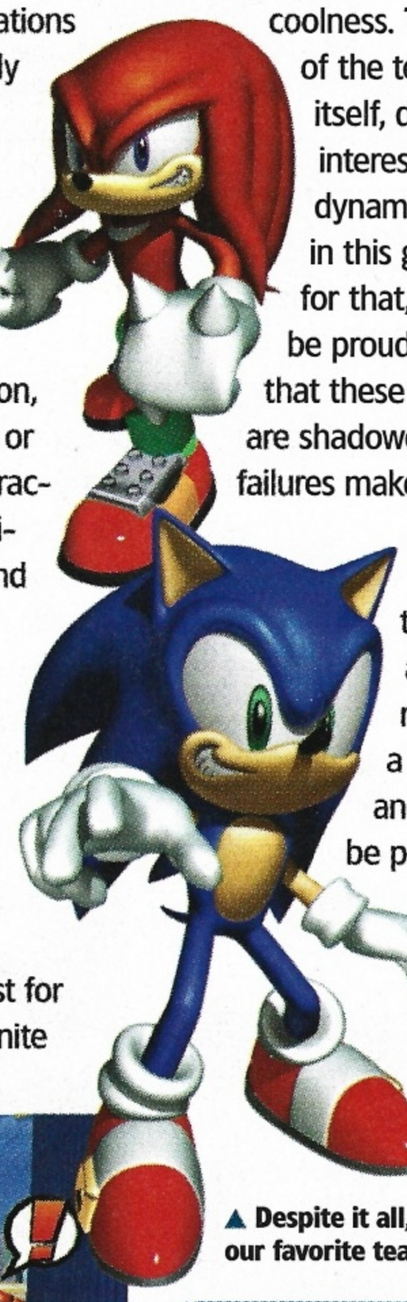
Compounding that problem is the often-touchy targeting and collision detection systems. On occasion, for no real reason, you'll just fall through a floor or a wall. Other times, your character will simply fail to appropriately target a given enemy and you'll shoot off the edge and fall to your death.

Considerable Potential

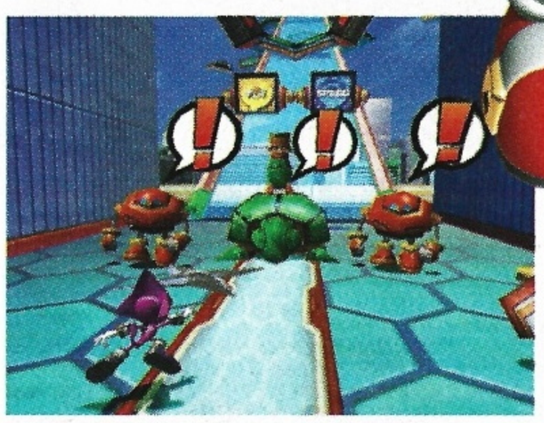
The strange thing is that, despite these considerable problems, I found myself still enjoying the overall experience of *Sonic Heroes*... at least for the most part. There are definite moments where you just have to applaud the game for its clever level designs or sheer moments of plain coolness. The innovative feature of the team-based gamplay, itself, does provide for some interesting challenges and dynamics never really seen in this genre before. And, for that, Team Sonic should be proud. Yet, the sheer fact that these great achievements are shadowed by almost as many failures makes *Sonic Heroes* a bittersweet creation.

Those of you willing to take the chance and give the game a run will certainly find a lot to imagination and originality here. Just be prepared for some annoyances and a minor bit of disappointment.

STEPHEN FROST



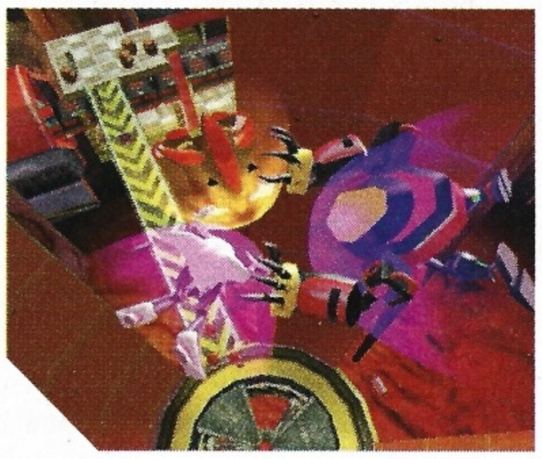
▲ Despite it all, Team Sonic still remains our favorite team in the game.



▲ You can tell when an enemy notices you by looking at the symbol above their heads. If you see an exclamation point, prepare to fight.

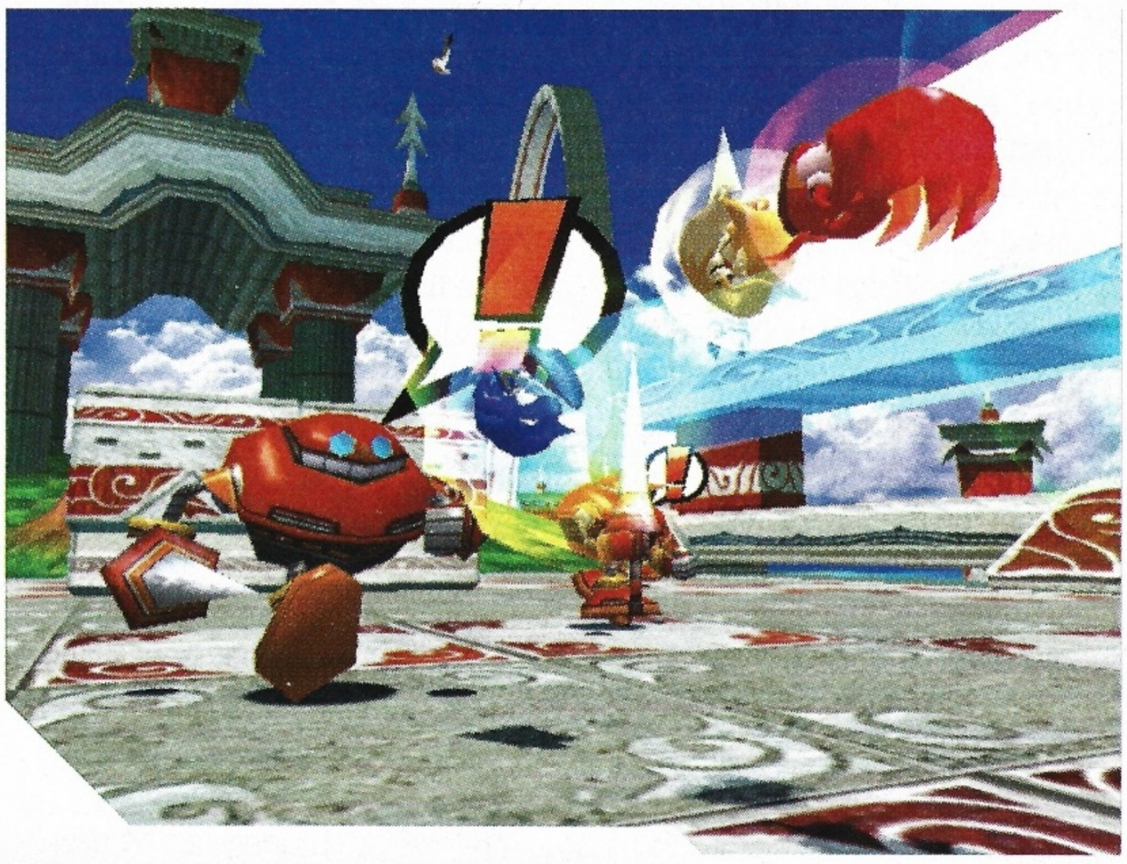
HOW IT STACKS UP	
R & C: Going Commando	10
Kya: Dark Lineage	10
Sonic Heroes	9
I-Ninja	7
Bionical	6

▼ You can make your team members get into formation, which allows them to glide higher than normal.



▼ With so many twisty and upside-down paths, you really have to learn to keep your orientation straight.

▼ Sonic's homing feature is very useful, but only when it works. There are times where he'll just shoot off in an entirely wrong direction and wind up going over a ledge.

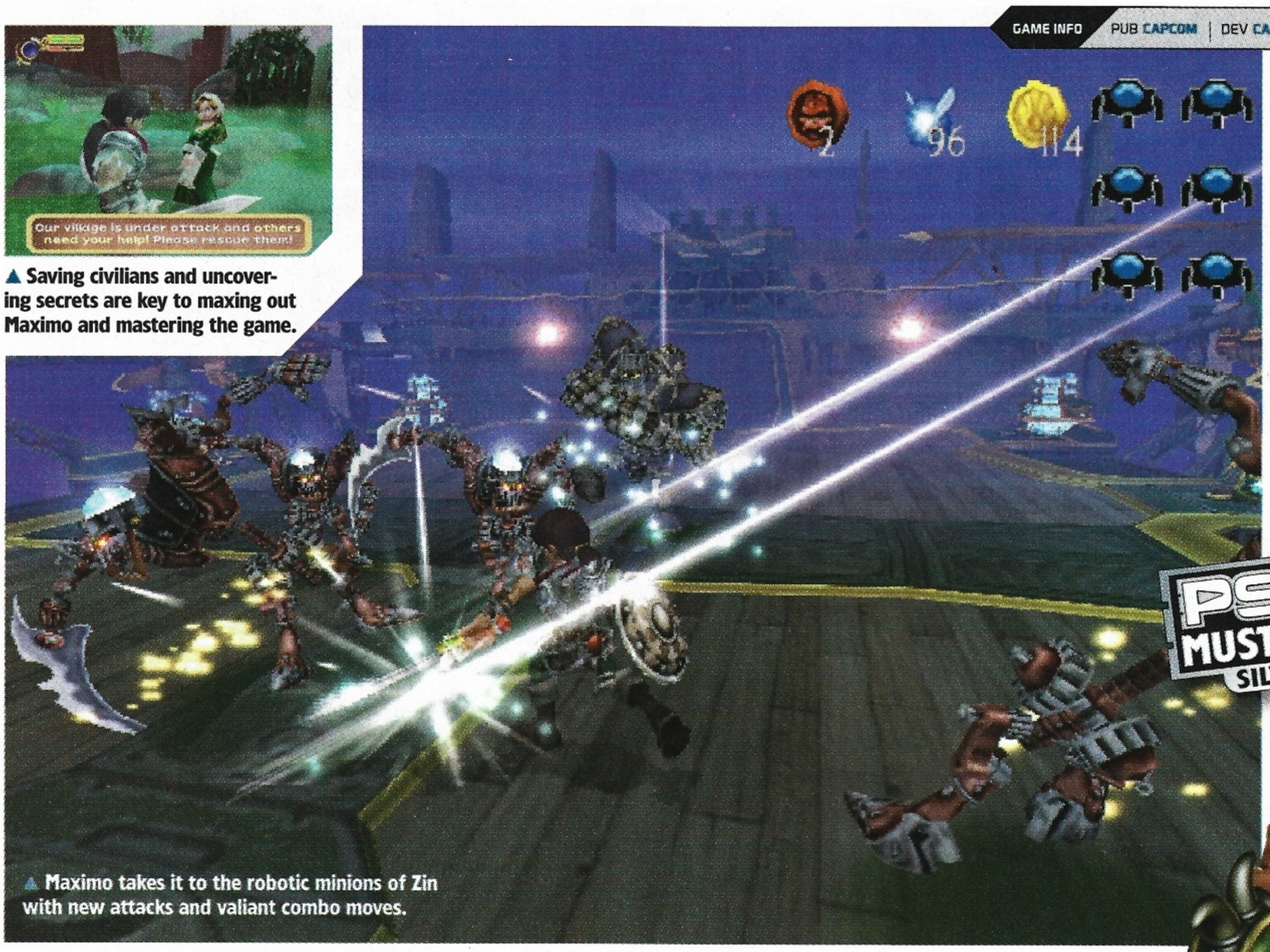


PSM FINAL SCORE 7

GOOD
A fast and challenging experience that is hurt by camera, collision and polish issues. The levels designs and teamplay are definitely unique, though.

GAME INFO | PUB CAPCOM | DEV CAPCOM | TYPE ACTION | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB TEEN

▲ Saving civilians and uncovering secrets are key to maxing out Maximo and mastering the game.



▲ Maximo takes it to the robotic minions of Zin with new attacks and valiant combo moves.

▲ Few games nail the concept of atmosphere the way this one does.

▶ Maximo's back, and more heroic than ever.

MAXIMO VS. ARMY OF ZIN

A mighty action sequel of heroic proportions

Playing *Maximo vs. Army of Zin,* you can't help but have the feeling that this is what the developers wanted to make the first time around, had they had the time and money to do so. And isn't that one of the hallmarks of a good sequel? Nearly every area of the game has been reworked for the better. Gone are the hub worlds and annoying coins=save system, replaced by a more traditional linear level path and between-level saves. New are, well, a handful of seemingly minor things that actually add up to a big difference when put together.

Here's the rundown. First off, Maximo gets to be a real hero. He rescues villagers, and, in return, they reward him, sometimes with items, more often with money. This element of the game not only adds additional challenge and more personality, but also make *you* feel like a hero in the process. Next, Maximo has an additional weapon — a mighty hammer — and new special moves, which, unlike the first game, are yours to keep once you've bought them. Even the boxer shorts-swapping concept of the first game has been extended to actually mean something; they all have a specific advantage. The ability to control Grim (as in Reaper) is nice, but I didn't find myself taking advantage of it as much as I thought I would.

While the overall game has been made less difficult for most players, that's not to say it isn't deep or challenging. The new combo-based fighting system makes clobbering the game's more varied enemies a joy, and the level design, with its mix of mazes, secrets, ambushes, and good old fashioned platforming never seems to feel repetitive. Plus, the boss fights are definitely more elaborate and satisfying.

◀ The bosses aren't only more inventive — they're also much more satisfying to fight.

Visually, Maximo's sequel retains a cartoon-like look, but a lot of work was obviously put into making each level come alive with creepy atmosphere — something that can also be said for the perfectly fitting music. That, and the cinematics are great (but not overused) and nicely voice acted.

The end result: *Maximo vs. Army of Zin* is a wonderful reworking of the first game. It doesn't try to rewrite the concept, but it definitely refines it. It's not as epic as *Jak II* or *Ratchet & Clank: Going Commando*, but it's nevertheless a first-class action game that every PS2 fan should play, and will get a lot of enjoyment from.

RANDY NELSON

HOW IT STACKS UP	
Jak II	10
Ratchet & Clank: going Commando	10
Maximo Vs. Army Of Zin	9
Maximo: Ghosts To Glory	9
Castlevania LOI	9

▲ If you found the first game too hard, you're in luck, but that's not to say this title isn't challenging.

PSM FINAL SCORE 9

OUTSTANDING

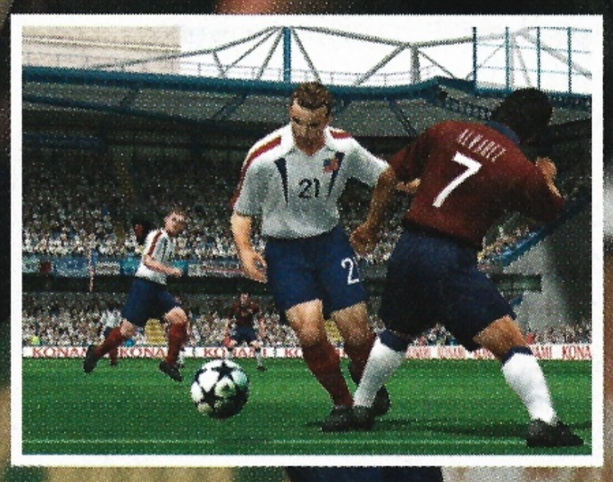
Blending the best of old-school action gameplay and new-school presentation, *Maximo vs. Army of Zin* is an excellent refinement and worthy sequel to the original.

"THE BEST SOCCER GAME EVER MADE."

Official PlayStation Magazine

"The best soccer game on PS2 hands-down." - *IGN*

"Konami is back with the best boot on the virtual pitch." - *Game Informer*



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▲ It's easy to get surrounded by enemies if you aren't careful, but Vhaidra has a special sweep attack that will knock these guys back a bit.

▲ The models aren't terribly poly-dense, but the lighting and framerate are both excellent, so it's a good trade off.

GAME INFO | PUB INTERPLAY | DEV BLACK ISLE | TYPE ACTION/RPG | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB TEEN

◀ Each of the five characters brings a unique personality to the storyline. The barbarian Dorn loves the ladies and the liquor, but not the lizard men.

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE II

The original PS2 action/RPG returns at last!

PSM MUST-BUY BRONZE

When the first *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance* hacked and slashed its way onto store shelves back in 2001, it wasn't just successful; it was influential. Despite being an obvious *Diablo* clone, it basically established the console Action RPG genre as we know it today. Recent and upcoming releases like *Hunter the Reckoning: Wayward, Champions of Norrath, Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel, The Bard's Tale,* and *Combat Elite: WWII Paratroopers* all owe their existence, in whole or in part, to the original *Dark Alliance.*

But the most hotly anticipated title of all may well be this one, *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance II,* which keeps the formula the same, but upgrades nearly everything about the first game. From the opening screen, presentation is top notch. The graphics, especially the lighting and framerate, are awesome, thanks to an enhanced version of Snowblind Studios' awesome game engine. Sound is equally impressive, though we wish there was more of the atmospheric music.

There are now five playable, highly varied combatants from which to choose, each of whom has their own back-story, motives, special abilities, and at least one exclusive side quest. For example, the dark elf monk, Vhaidra, is a displaced noblewoman who fights best with no weapons at all and plans to return home and inflict vengeance on her family's enemies, while Ysuran is a moon elf and necromancer who is seeking a cure for his amnesia. The other three fighters: a dwarven treasure hunter, a human female cleric, and a human male barbarian, have their own stories as well. It's a nice touch, and we wish there had been more of it, because the main plotline, which finds evil forces seeking to rebuild the Onyx tower destroyed in the first game, isn't as good as before. It's slightly basic, spread too thinly, and sort of just ends, rather than climaxing.

What isn't spread thinly is the combat. Each of the roughly 80 levels is simply bursting with goblins, zombies, ettins, and other creatures too gruesome to describe. We would have preferred fewer cases of off-screen archers pelting us and more thoughtful enemy placement, but overall, battle is fairly well tuned.

Unfortunately, *Dark Alliance 2* lacks a couple of features that would have put it over the top. There's two-player co-operative play, but it's same-system only, not online. The dungeon layouts look simple enough to be randomized, but they aren't. Plus, as with most games of this type, the single-player experience can get redundant. Still, the sheer quality of gameplay and the varied playable characters will ensure you get your money's worth. **ERIC BRATCHER**

▲ As pretty and big as the game is, the solo experience can get tiresome. The real fun is in multiplayer.

HOW IT STACKS UP

Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance II	8
Lord Of The Rings: ROTK	8
Hunter: The Reckoning Wayward	8
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance	8
.hack//OUTBREAK	7

▲ It's not as flashy, but the distant camera view often provides the best view of the ongoing action.

▲ The moon elf wizard, Ysuran, isn't the best melee fighter, but he can cook enemies from long range with no problem.

PSM FINAL SCORE **8**

VERY GOOD

It's big, it's beautiful, and there are few games available that are more fun for two players. Don't look for an epic story or any kind of online support, though.

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SOULCALIBUR II

TEEN
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

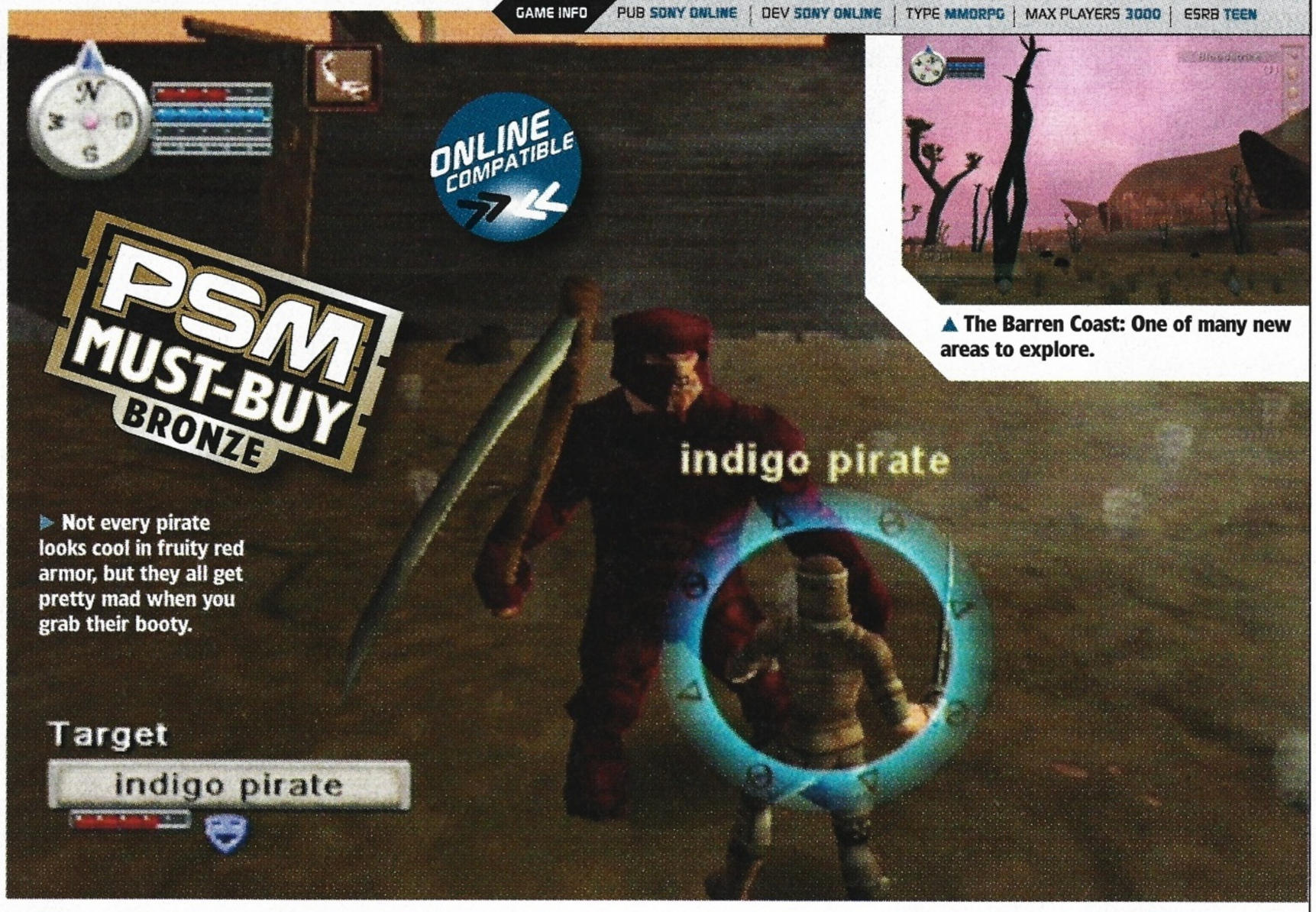
Violence
Suggestive Themes

PlayStation®2

REFLECTIONS OF TRADITION. Exclusively on the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system, Tekken legend Heihachi jumps into the Soulcalibur®II arena. The battle will be hard fought with old Soulcalibur favorites and new masters ready to battle anyone with the guts. And the fighting continues with over 10 modes of play, including the new Weapon Master Mode, giving you the chance to unlock hundreds of weapons, costumes, arenas and hidden characters.

▲ An acrid mist on the ground, a full moon on the rise... this isn't Daytona Beach.

GAME INFO | PUB SONY ONLINE | DEV SONY ONLINE | TYPE MMORPG | MAX PLAYERS 3000 | ESRB TEEN



▶ Not every pirate looks cool in fruity red armor, but they all get pretty mad when you grab their booty.

▲ The Barren Coast: One of many new areas to explore.

EVERQUEST'S ONLINE ADVENTURES: FRONTIERS

Sony gives Norrath a swift kick to the pants with EQOA: Frontiers

Sony's fantasy-based MMORPG, *EverQuest Online Adventures,* has undergone a few changes since its inception last February. With thousands of subscribers to date, what was once a quiet game with a niche audience has grown into a bustling online community of dedicated adventurers. With the release of *EQOA's* stand alone expansion pack, *Frontiers,* Sony has given fans a handful of new features, 162 square miles of new area to explore, and a slight graphic overhaul.

Those new to *Frontiers* can select from 10 different races, including the new Ogre. Similar to the already popular Troll race, Ogres are hefty warmongers that excel at "tank" classes like the Warrior or Shadow Knight. Speaking of classes, there are 15 in all, the newest addition being the Alchemist This literally bombastic class combines spell casting, trade skills, and exploding potions to become a sort of magical grenadier.

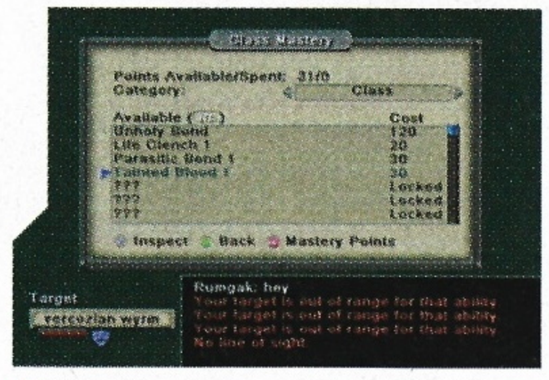
Mid- to high-level *EQOA* veterans will get the most mileage out of *Frontiers'* new geographical zones, which were previously off limits. Only uber-experienced parties can hope to survive the dragon-infested Lava Storm Mountain or the steel gauntlet in the Plane of Sky. However, it's not all strictly for the veterans: areas like The Great Unknown can be pillaged by all. Well, all who dare, anyway.

Frontiers also implements a Mastery System that allows players to siphon experience earned in the field into "Mastery Points" for the purchase of special attributes. But since the first "Mastery Point" costs 250,000 XP (and gets more expensive from there), new players won't fully enjoy this system until they've clocked in some serious hours.

The cosmetic changes that *Frontiers* brings to the table are more redux than groundbreaking. Character models have been revamped and the environments are now denser with shrubbery, falling leaves, and weather effects like creeping fog.

Frontiers is still an online-only adventure with a high commitment to the "level and revel" school of gaming. Casual adventurers interested in a story driven RPG need not apply. When you do find a core pack of adventurers to run with, this can be a fun and rewarding experience. *Frontiers* is a key purchase for veterans and the perfect opportunity for the uninitiated to delve into the world of *EQOA* for the first time. True, it's mining the same vein as the upcoming *Final Fantasy XI,* so it has some tough competition on the way, but *Frontiers* — which does not require the PS2 hard drive — is good enough to give *FFXI* a run for its money.

SCOTT HUMPHRIES



▲ Okay, it's a boring screenshot, but it's important. The Mastery System enables you to specialize in specific spells and feats.

HOW IT STACKS UP

EQOA: Frontiers	**8**
.hack//INFECTION	8
EverQuest Online adventures	7
.hack//OUTBREAK	7
.hack//QUARANTINE	7

Prettier And Uglier

The graphics in *EQOA: Frontiers* aren't quite breathtaking, but they have been notably improved. For example, just compare the old Troll model with the new one. He's uglier looking than ever.

▲ Old-school *EQOA* Troll.

▲ New & Improved *Frontiers* Troll.

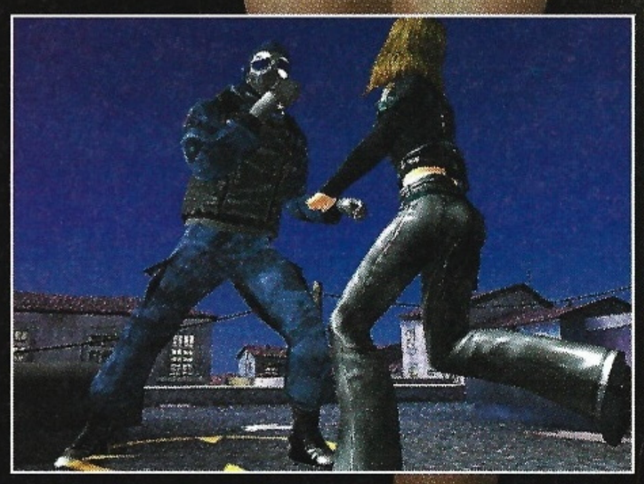
PSM FINAL SCORE 8

VERY GOOD

Frontiers **pulls out some great new tricks, and the world of *EverQuest* has never been more accessible.**

STEALTH BOMBSHELL

PRE-ORDER NOW & RECEIVE A LIMITED EDITION SYDNEY BRISTOW POSTER



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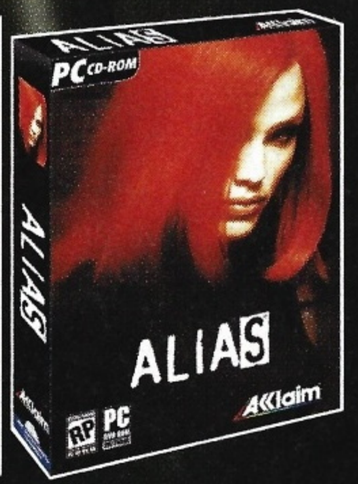

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TEEN T Violence — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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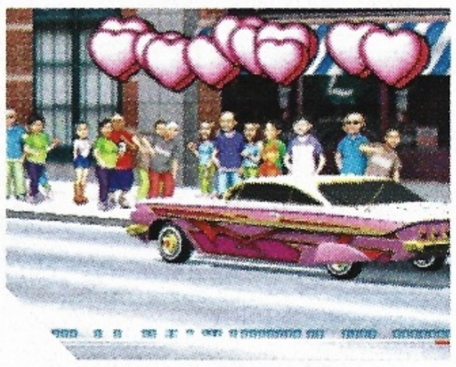


▲ The usual throng of adoring readers looks on as Bill Donohue arrives for work.

▲ For those who don't want to bother with a career, arcade mode lets you borrow a lowrider.

▲ Your car is a total rustbucket at the game's outset.

LOWRIDER

Get a car that goes "Boom!"

GAME INFO | PUB JALECO | DEV PCCW | TYPE RHYTHM/ACTION | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB TEEN

▲ This kind of bouncing would kill any ordinary auto, but PSM's super car, The Pale Blue Shadow, laughs at danger.

***Lowrider* is best thought of as a novelty niche title as opposed to a hardcore experience, but we still had some fun with it.**

The concept is simple: you start with an old, rusted out jalopy that you must turn into a serious cruiser that will make the fellows jealous and the ladies swoon. In practice, this means competing in four mostly rhythm-based mini-games in order to get prize money. First is Street, in which you cruise slowly down the street and use your car's hydraulics to perform stunts called out by onlookers. In Hop, you compete with another car to execute the highest front hop, and Dance finds you and another car participating in a sort of Simon Says stunt competition. The last mini-game is Event, a slightly more sophisticated dance against a succession of opponents that unlocks a new city to cruise. More wins equals more money to upgrade your ride, and so on.

The trouble with *Lowrider* is that the graphics are only okay and the gameplay is so basic that it gets old quickly. The tweaking is fun, and fans of the *Lowrider* culture and magazine should absolutely love it. But serious players will tire of the game after the novelty of hopping cars wears off. There's just not enough to do.

ERIC BRATCHER

PSM FINAL SCORE 6

OKAY

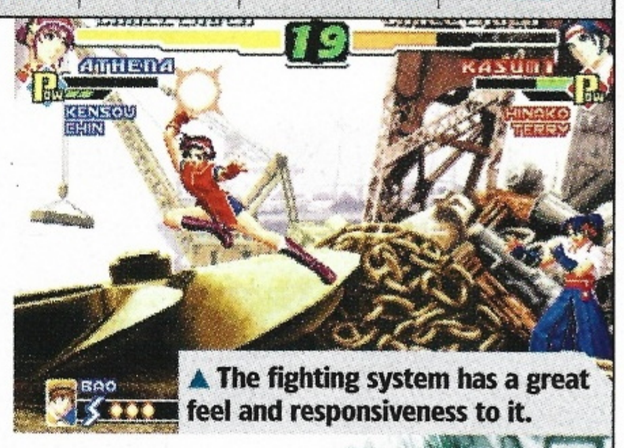
It's an original take on rhythm action games, and a niche that deserves to be served, but it's a little too homely and a lot too shallow.

▼ The 2001 sequel has the benefit of enhanced 3D backgrounds, but the characters are still very low-res.

▲ Despite the larger number of characters, they still remain relatively well balanced.

GAME INFO | PUB SNK | DEV SNK PLAYMORE | TYPE FIGHTING | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB TEEN

▲ Strikers were a great addition to the series, adding greatly to the depth and strategy.



▲ The fighting system has a great feel and responsiveness to it.

THE KING OF FIGHTERS: 2000 & 2001

A punch from the past!

Along with *Street Fighter*, the *King of Fighter* series has always had a special place in my heart. I've loved virtually every significant character and enjoyed watching the fighting system slowly evolve into what it is today. It's an incredibly deep and rich series, so it definitely made me happy when SNK announced that two of the most current titles would be released for the PS2 and that they would be bundled together for only $40.

Unfortunately, in comparison to the current king of 2D fighters, *Guilty Gear X2*, this SNK compilation does come up short in a few ways. First off, the low-res sprites are just an eyesore now, especially against some of the newly enhanced, 3D backgrounds. Secondly, the number of characters has spiraled a bit out of control, with several of them sharing similar moves and lacking of true originality.

However, if you do have a nostalgic place in your heart, specifically for 2D fighting games, then there's no doubt you should pick up this collection. It may not push the boundaries of the genre in any real way, but it does provide a wealth of characters, depth and generally well-balanced gameplay. I do wish that a little more thought would have been placed into the overall presentation, but the inclusion of additional strikers, unlockable movie demos (from the past games) and a few new modes certainly help to make up for that. **STEPHEN FROST**

PSM FINAL SCORE 7

GOOD

These are great 2D fighting games that are only hindered by their graphics and limited single-player experience.

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SOCOM II
U.S. NAVY SEALS

ONLY TO ENTER ANOTHER ONE.

SOCOM II
U.S. NAVY SEALS

PSM MUST-BUY BRONZE

GAME INFO | PUB TECMO | DEV PROJECT ZERO/TECMO | TYPE HORROR | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB TEEN

▶ Note to self: if tailing a freakin' *ghost* sounds like a good idea, you need to live less dangerously.

▲ This cute little ghost died a horrid death. Better hope she doesn't want to take it out on you...

FATAL FRAME 2: CRIMSON BUTTERFLY

A Kodak moment... from Hell

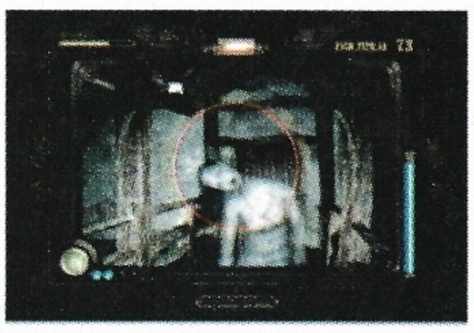
Tecmo's original *Fatal Frame* is rightfully considered by many to be the scariest game yet created. Casting the player as a young girl facing vengeful ghosts while armed with only a camera, it featured chilling imagery and an imposing sense of dread. Now, the sequel is here, with two new main characters and the same nerve-frazzling, nightmare-inducing gameplay.

The new leads are twin sisters Mio and Mayu, who come across an abandoned village and, out of teenage curiosity, go exploring. They quickly get separated, and Very Bad Things (yep — intentional capitals there) start to happen. A compelling story ensues, sucking the player into the world and endearing you to the characters, making the dastardly deeds that befall them more moving. Unfortunately, the nearly five-minute demo trailer gives away most of the plot's crucial twists and turns, so avoid watching it if possible.

As in the first title, there is only one weapon in *Crimson Butterfly:* the famous Camera Obscura, a magical lens that exorcises demons, ghosts, and other creatures that go bump in the night. The better the shot, the more damage inflicted. The camera can be upgraded as the player progresses to include a light indicating when an enemy is at its weakest, thus allowing the player to snap a devastating "fatal frame". Pictures can also be taken in combination for maximum damage. Health is restored through healing potions, and extra film for the camera is abundant.

Playing *Fatal Frame 2* is like a midnight walk through a cemetery. Your pulse will race, your imagination will run wild, and you'll jump out of your chair. When it's over, you'll realize it wasn't as bad as you feared, but there's no denying that Tecmo has created a title with such a sense of dread that it's both physically and emotionally draining to play. Which is exactly what we expect from a horror game.

DOUG TRUEMAN



▲ The ghosts come in all sorts of twisted shapes and sizes...

▲ ...just look at this one!

HOW IT STACKS UP

RE: Code Veronica X	9
Fatal Frame 2	8
Silent Hill 3	7
Clock Tower 3	7
Fatal Frame	6

PSM FINAL SCORE 8

VERY GOOD

***Crimson Butterfly* proves that skilful camera work, music and sound effects can creep the hell out of us more than a gore fest.**

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MATURE 17+ M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Violence

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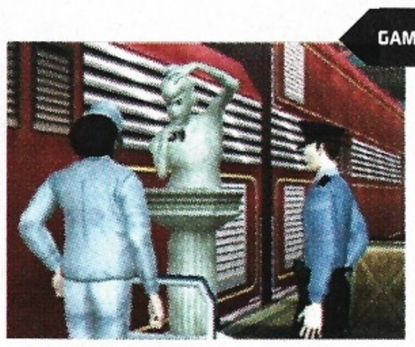
▲ Not even lasers are a match for a master thief like Lupin.

▲ Lupin wields a few non-lethal weapons, from gas to frying pan.

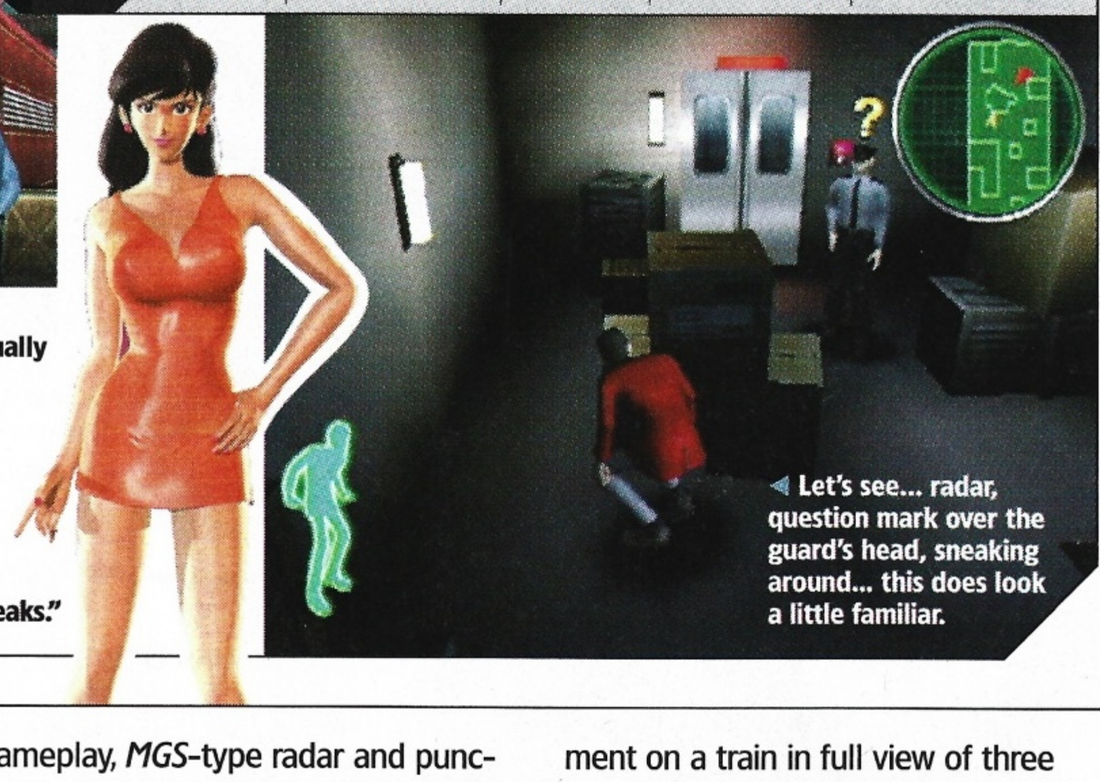


▲ Lupin is a true master of disguise. In this pic, he's actually the statue.

GAME INFO | PUB BANDAI | DEV BANPRESTO EIA | TYPE ACTION | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB RATING TEEN

LUPIN THE 3RD: TREASURE OF THE SORCERER KING

True fans might like it...



▶ Fujiko's name means "twin peaks."

◀ Let's see... radar, question mark over the guard's head, sneaking around... this does look a little familiar.

Based upon a classic anime, *Lupin the 3rd: Treasure of the Sorcerer King* stars the one and only Lupin, a globetrotting master-of-disguise and master thief who's forever chased by Inspector Zenigata as he pulls off daring heists. His comrades come along for the ride, but it's Lupin who gets the glory and notoriety.

It's clear that the developers were trying for a *Metal Gear Solid* clone, as shown by the title's stealth gameplay, *MGS*-type radar and punctuation marks that indicate levels of enemy awareness. Like *Metal Gear, Lupin* has a killer soundtrack, though it features jazz saxophones instead of synthetic keyboards. Unfortunately, that's just about all the titles have in common.

The problem with *Lupin* is that the game is incredibly rudimentary: the control is slippery, the camera is frustrating and the AI leaves a great deal to be desired. For example, it's possible to be chased into a compartment on a train in full view of three sentries, only to have them wonder where you've gone. Likewise, merely zipping around a corner is also enough to make them scratch their heads. The sense of logic the game employs for its puzzles is also highly dubious: locked doors open magically if Lupin merely switches disguises, and one particular keycode is the expiration date on a bag of Ichiban. Fans only, we're afraid. **DOUG TRUEMAN**

PSM FINAL SCORE 5

SO-SO

Devotees of the anime might enjoy the title, but others should buy the *Lupin* DVD or save up for *Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater.*

▲ The Governator and the T-X debate the hated California car tax.

GAME INFO | PUB ATARI | DEV BLACK OPS | TYPE FPS/ACTION | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB TEEN

TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES

Sometimes he shouldn't come back

Man, the *Terminator* license rocks. The first time you hear Arnold say "lock and load" when he grabs a gun in this game, you'll get shivers.

Unfortunately, the rest of the game, 80% of which takes place in a future, post-apocalyptic Los Angeles, is a mess. The basic concept is straightforward enough: kill tons of enemies on your way to the Time Displacement Chamber, return to 2003, kill some more to protect John Conner.

The problem is, the novelty of the license wears off and the gameplay really has trouble holding up. Yes, forcing the player to fight wave after wave of identical terminators, hunter-killers, drones, and modern-day policemen technically remains in theme with the franchise, but it's also too repetitive. Controls need tightening, graphics and sound are shrug-worthy, reload times are long, and switching between certain weapons can leave players defenseless for well over two seconds — an eternity during a firefight.

Continuing on, the post-apocalyptic maps are exceedingly gray and bland, making it difficult to spot the opposition, and hand-to-hand combat is unbalanced: Arnie's shoulder ram takes priority over almost every other move and can be used exclusively to smash the T-X to bits. To top it all off, the game's too short. On the plus side, the included demo for next year's *Terminator 3: Redemption* shows true promise.

DOUG TRUEMAN

▲ It's a gray, dark world – unless you use your infrared to help find enemies.

▲ An enemy goes boom on the way to the Time Displacement Chamber.

▲ Arnie's not allowed to kill the police in 2003, but their cars are freakin' doomed.

PSM FINAL SCORE 5

SO-SO

It's a short action shooter with more than a few missteps, but enough action to keep fans of the films happy.

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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Use of Alcohol
Violence

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XBOX

PlayStation 2

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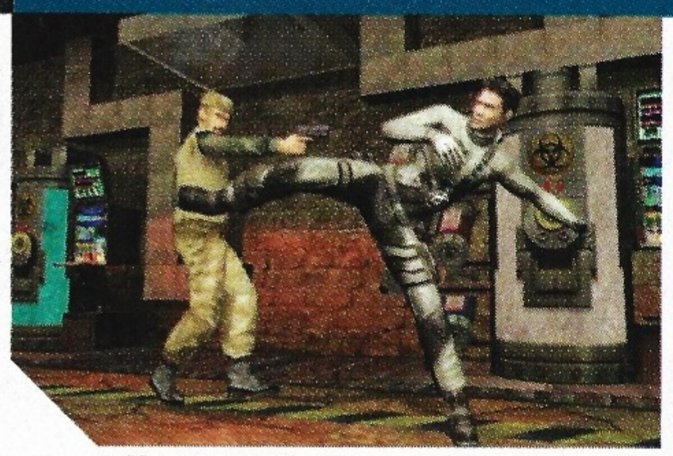


▲ Meet Ethan Hunt. He's no Tom Cruise, but he can kick some serious terrorist ass.

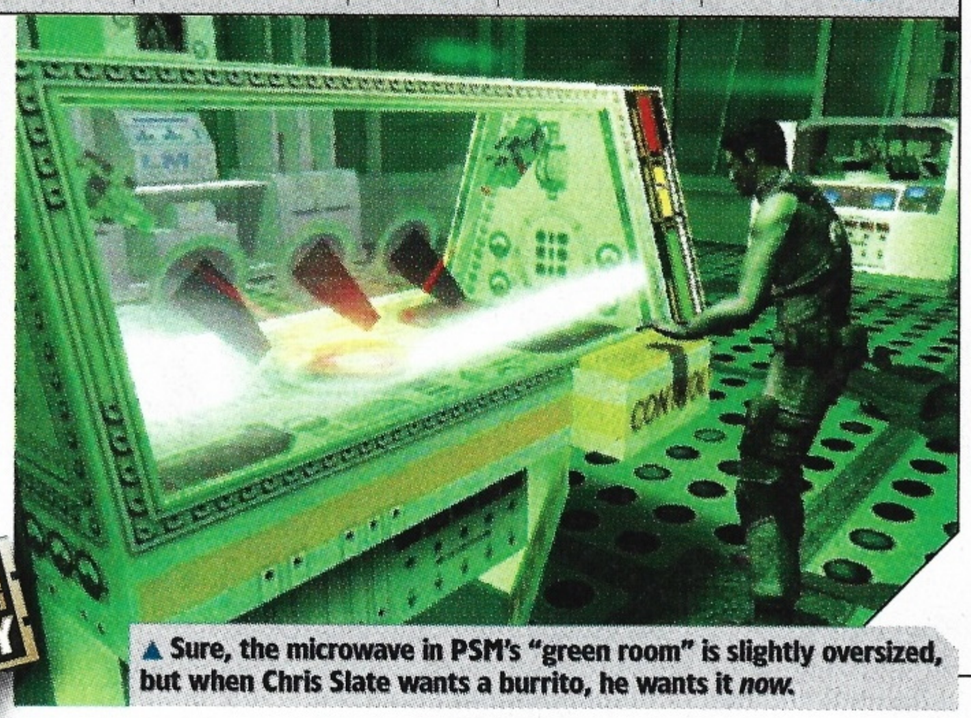
▶ Ethan fights well hand to hand, but like Solid Snake, he prefers a stealthy approach.

◀ Ethan's selection of gadgets is on full display.

GAME INFO | PUB ATARI | DEV PARADIGM ENT. | TYPE ACTION | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB RATING TEEN

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: OPERATION SURMA

Go, go Gadget Ethan Hunt!



▲ Sure, the microwave in PSM's "green room" is slightly oversized, but when Chris Slate wants a burrito, he wants it *now*.

PSM MUST-BUY BRONZE

Master spy and all-around suave dude, Ethan Hunt, returns for more intense third-person action and puzzle-solving in the latest *Mission Impossible* game. While *Operation Surma* isn't based on any specific episode of the original TV show or more recent films — and Hunt here doesn't look or sound like Tom Cruise — the concept is fully realized, with numerous objectives to complete and loads of gadgets with which to carry them out.

The missions are somewhat linear, but there's variety in how the objectives are met: you can slink around in the shadows for maximum stealth, sneak up behind foes and punch their lights out, hit them with a tranquilizer dart, or a number of other options. You also have the help of your skilled IMF team, including your remote assistant Luther, voiced by *MI* actor Ving Rhames. The story about a corporation set on world domination fleshes out through between-objective cut-scenes that substantially enhance the cinematic atmosphere.

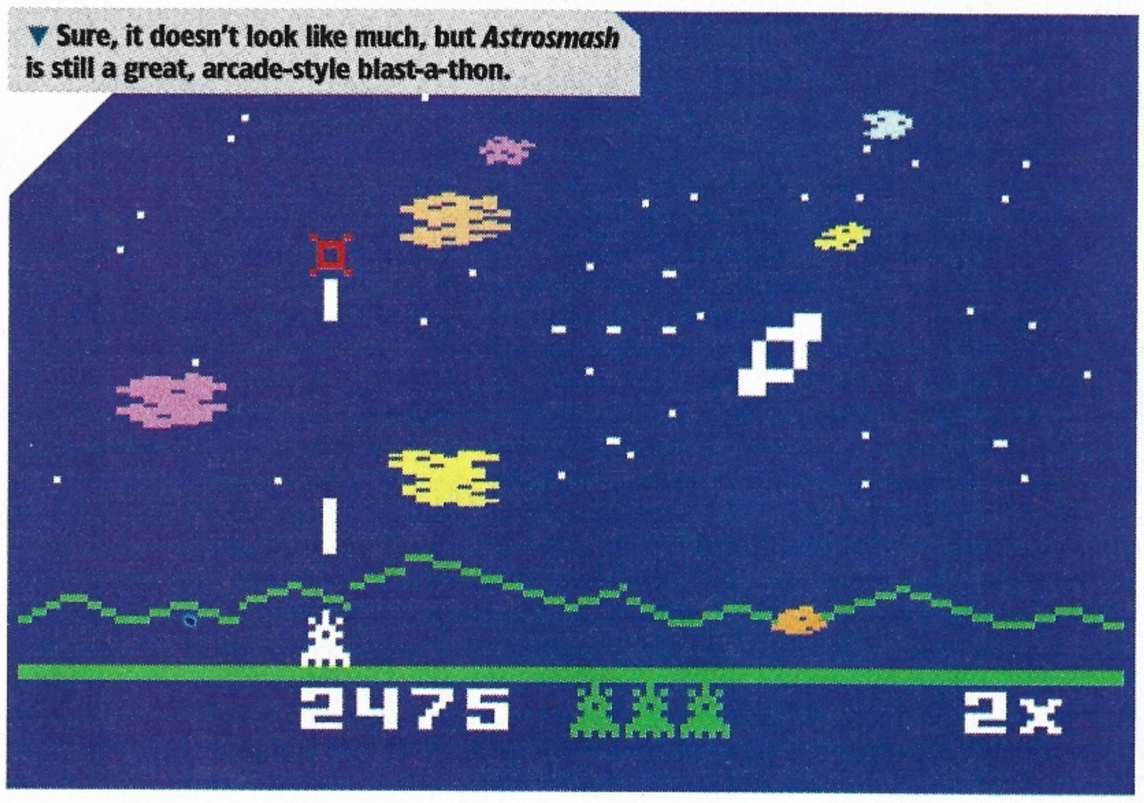
It's not all perfect, unfortunately. At times, the graphics get a bit glitchy, the camera perspective doesn't always offer the best view to what's going on around Hunt, and replay value is not very high. However, the key to *Operation Surma* is in the challenge and entertainment value that's provided, and that should give you your money's worth.

Now, you'd better get going... this review will self-destruct in five seconds. **ANDY EDDY**

PSM FINAL SCORE 8

VERY GOOD

If you like stealth-action games, *Operation Surma* won't let you down. It's not the hardest game ever made, but it's entertaining throughout.



▼ Sure, it doesn't look like much, but *Astrosmash* is still a great, arcade-style blast-a-thon.

GAME INFO | PUB INTELLIVISION/CRAVE | DEV REALTIME | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB EVERYONE

INTELLIVISION LIVES!

The classics make a comeback!

There are a number of classic game collections circulating lately, but few have the depth of this one, which collects a whopping 60 games originally released for the Atari 2600's arch-enemy, the Mattel Intellivision. The Blue Sky Rangers, the games' original programmers, have also helped out by providing tons of "remember when" stories, interesting tidbits, artwork, and so on. So this is a classic game collector's dream.

But what about the gameplay? Well, these are far from the graphical showcases they were 20 years ago and games were simpler back then, but it's pretty much right on the mark. The emulation is spot-on, so classics like *Space Hawk, Astrosmash, Football,* and *Night Stalker* play perfectly. One-player options have been added to the sports titles, which were originally two-player only. Plus, while initially starting a game isn't the most intuitive procedure at first, the majority of the Intellivision's odd controller mappings port over to the Dual Shock with a minimum of craziness. Even the original controller's number pad has been remapped onto the right analog stick.

Despite the vast number of games here, there are a few notable titles missing from this group: *Burgertime, Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, Donkey Kong*, etc. These are mostly absent due to licensing reasons, but perhaps some of these titles can be added in a future volume.

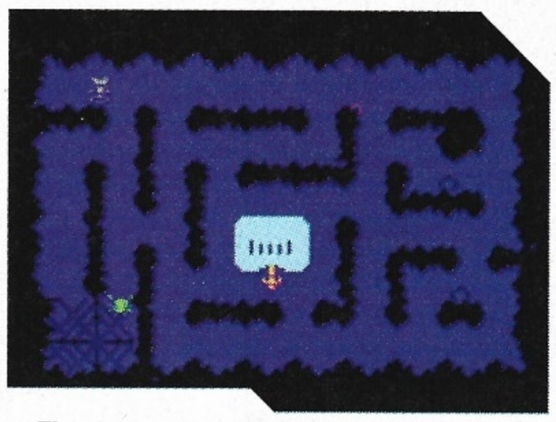
ERIC BRATCHER

PSM MUST-BUY BRONZE

PSM FINAL SCORE 8

VERY GOOD

The appeal of *Intellivision Lives!* is greater for those who were there the first time around, but with an '80s-style price tag of only $20, this is an absolute must-buy.



▲ There are some unusual bonus game modes: here, *Nightstalker* is upside down.

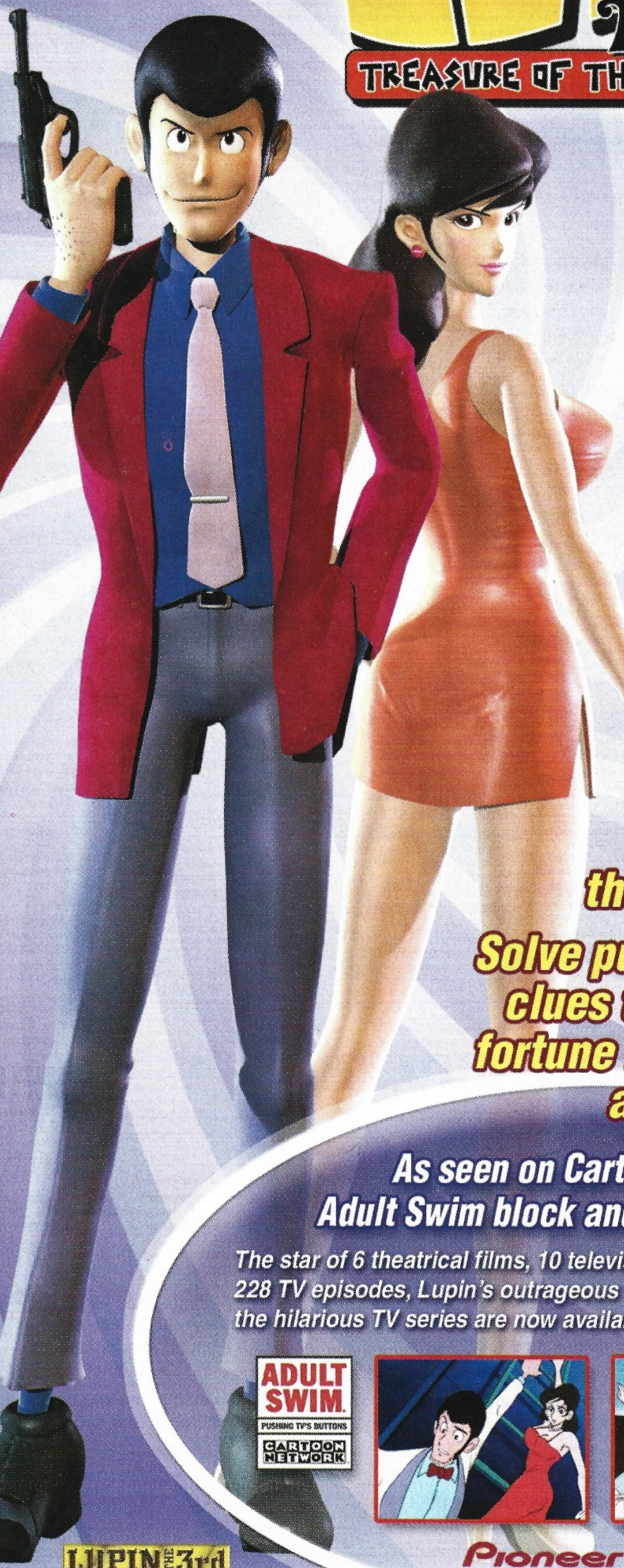
▲ The front end interface is a pizza place filled with various arcade cabinets.

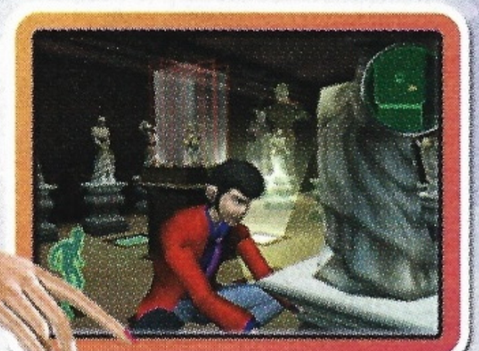
▲ The sports games can now be played solo as well as head to head.

Fantastic heists, impossible escapes, and busty brunettes — all in a day's work for anime's favorite thief.

LUPIN THE 3RD
TREASURE OF THE SORCERER KING

Use disguises and stealth to evade your enemies, especially Interpol Inspector Zenigata.





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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Mild Language and Violence

BANDAI®

LUPIN THE 3rd

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(s03)

PlayStation®2

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M.S.R.P.: $39.99

Like Logitech's NetPlay controller, this device seeks to remedy the trouble inherent in trying to use both keyboard and controller simultaneously by combining the two into one unit. However, the keyboard here is much smaller than the NetPlay's full sized offering.

This is both good and bad. As a controller, the iType2 is definitely the more preferable of the two, being only slightly bigger and clunkier than the standard Dual Shock 2. However, the keyboard's small size makes actual typing impossible. If you're a fast "hunt and peck" thumb typist, you may be okay, but we found it easier to use either the NetPlay or a standard USB keyboard/Dual Shock 2 combo. However, it is arguably faster than cycling through an onscreen virtual keyboard, and if you only type occasionally, this could be a good choice. Plus, it has four programmable macros for those frequently uttered sayings.

◀ **The iType2 seems like a good idea, but it's just not very practical.**

PSM FINAL SCORE 5

A product without a niche, the iType2's keyboard is too big for it to be an ideal controller, but too small to actually use to type.

Nyko Net Extender

M.S.R.P.: $99.99

▲ **The Wireless Net Extender is guaranteed to work with any internet arrangement that you can plug a network cable into — sweet.**

Sometimes, the best answers are the simplest. While most companies are busy coming up with wireless network adaptors that can integrate well with the PS2 and a wireless internet hub, Nyko has created an infinitely more versatile wireless network cable. Thus, you keep your existing hub and network adaptor, and connect the two wirelessly instead of tethering them together with a traditional network cable. No mess, no fuss, and no compatibility or hookup issues.

Granted, this seems like an expensive way to go, but considering that the Net Extender works with old-fashioned, non-wireless network hubs, which often cost a good $40 less than their wireless counterparts, it's not that bad. Plus, if you have Pelican's awesome System Selector Pro (see last issue), one of these will hook up all your systems at once.

PSM FINAL SCORE 9

It's the perfect non-nonsense, almost low-tech approach to going wireless. Too bad it's not cheaper.

Gamefly and Gamerang

M.S.R.P.: variable

So, you want to play something different, but you're too lazy to go to the store and rent it? No problem. With these two services, you can just log on to either www.gamefly.com or www.gamerang.com, make a list of your most wanted games, and then sit back and wait for them to arrive in the mail, complete with postage-paid return envelopes. You keep the games as long as you like, and when you send one back, the companies just send you the next game on your list. You can rent as many games as you like in a month, but you can only have one or two out at any given time, depending upon your subscription plan.

Of course, there are a few concessions. Neither company's games come with DVD cases or instructions, so you're out of luck if you actually read them. Also, the prices are steep: at press time, GameFly's two-games-at-time plan is $22 per month, and Gamerang is similar, if more versatile. A one game at-a-time plan is $15/month, a two-games-at-a-time quota is $20, and adding additional games to your quota costs $8 each (so a four-games-at-once quota would be $36/month).

This is fair, but remember that you still pay the same whether you rent ten games or two, and every time you return a title, it'll take about 5-10 days — regardless of the websites' promises — for a new one to arrive, so actually renting 10 games in a month is nearly impossible.

Incidentally, these two services aren't affiliated. In fact, they're direct competitors. However, in our field tests, their performance and features were so similar as to be functionally identical. Gamerang is a wee bit cheaper and has more pricing options, but GameFly has been around a tad longer and, at least for the moment, has a slightly larger selection of older games like *EverGrace* and *Shadow Hearts*. Take your pick.

PSM FINAL SCORE 6

Are you lazy enough for this to be worthwhile? It's definitely convenient, but you have to really burn through the games to get your money's worth, and if the post office loses a game, you just bought it — which stinks.

I'm not a soccer star, but I play one on TV.

SCOREBOARD

Don't buy a game until you check here first!

SCORE ARCHIVE

Iss.	Month	Game Name	Score	Genre	Publisher
80	Jan-04	Battlestar Galactica	5	Action	Vivendi
80	Jan-04	Cabela's Dangerous Hunts	6	FPS	Activision
80	Jan-04	The Fairly Oddparents	6	Platform	THQ
80	Jan-04	Fugitive Hunter: War On Terror	3	Action	Encore
80	Jan-04	.hack//QUARANTINE	7	RPG	Bandai
80	Jan-04	Harry Potter And Sorcerer's Stone	7	Adventure	EA
80	Jan-04	The Hobbit	5	Adventure	Vivendi
80	Jan-04	Looney Tunes: Back In Action	7	Action	EA
80	Jan-04	Manhunt	8	Action	Rockstar
80	Jan-04	Mobile Suit Gundam: EIS	7	Action	Bandai
80	Jan-04	R: Racing Evolution	7	Racing	Namco
80	Jan-04	The Sim's Bustin' Out	8	Sim	EA
80	Jan-04	Spawn: Armageddon	7	Adventure	Namco
80	Jan-04	SpongeBob SquarePants	7	Action	THQ
80	Jan-04	Spy Hunter 2	6	Driving	Midway
80	Jan-04	Tokyo Extreme Racer 3	5	Racing	Crave
80	Jan-04	Tony Hawk's Underground	9	Sports	Activision
80	Jan-04	True Crime: Streets of L.A.	8	Action	Activision
80	Jan-04	Virtual On: MARZ	5	Action	Sega
80	Jan-04	Whiplash	6	Action	Eidos
79	Hol-03	Backyard Wrestling	4	Fighting	Eidos
79	Hol-03	Beyond Good & Evil	9	Adventure	UbiSoft
79	Hol-03	Bionical	6	Action	EA/Lego
79	Hol-03	Bloody Roar 4	6	Fighting	Konami/Hudson
79	Hol-03	Conflict: Desert Storm II	7	Action	Gotham
79	Hol-03	Crash Nitro Kart	8	Racing	Vivendi
79	Hol-03	Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2	7	Fighting	Atari
79	Hol-03	Dynasty Warriors 4 XL	8	Fghting	Koei
79	Hol-03	ESPN College Hoops	8	Sports	Sega
79	Hol-03	Gladiator: Sword Of Vengeance	8	Fighting	Acclaim
79	Hol-03	Goblin Commander	6	Action	Jaleco
79	Hol-03	Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup	7	Sports	EA Games
79	Hol-03	The Haunted Mansion	8	Adventure	TDK Interactive
79	Hol-03	I-Ninja	7	Action	Namco
79	Hol-03	Kya: Dark Lineage	9	Action	Atari
79	Hol-03	Lord Of The Rings: ROTK	8	Action	EA
79	Hol-03	March Madness 2004	9	Sports	EA Sports
79	Hol-03	Medal Of Honor: Rising Sun	9	FPS	EA Games
79	Hol-03	Midway Arcade Treasures	7	Arcade	Midway
79	Hol-03	Monster Rancher 4	8	Fighting	Tecmo
79	Hol-03	NBA Shootout 2004	6	Sports	Sony
79	Hol-03	NCAA Final Four 2004	6	Sports	Sony
79	Hol-03	Need For Speed Underground	8	Racing	EA
79	Hol-03	Prince Of Persia: The Sands Of Time	8	Adventure	UbiSoft
79	Hol-03	RPG Maker 2	8	RPG	Agetec
79	Hol-03	Secret Weapons Over Normandy	8	Air Combat	LucasArts
79	Hol-03	Sphinx And The Cursed Mummy	8	Action	THQ
79	Hol-03	Tak And The Power Of Juju	7	Action	THQ

Iss.	Month	Game Name	Score	Genre	Publisher
79	Hol-03	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	5	Action	Konami
79	Hol-03	XIII	7	Action	UbiSoft
78	Dec-03	Batman: Rise Of Sin Tzu	6	Action	UbiSoft
78	Dec-03	Castlevania: Lament Of Innocence	9	Action	Konami
78	Dec-03	Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon	7	Fighting	UbiSoft
78	Dec-03	ESPN NBA Basketball	9	Sports	Sega
78	Dec-03	FIFA Soccer 2004	8	Sports	EA
78	Dec-03	Gladius	8	Action/RPG	LucasArts
78	Dec-03	Karaoke Revolution	8	Music	Konami
78	Dec-03	kill.switch	6	Shooter	Namco
78	Dec-03	Metal Arms: GITS	8	Action	Vivendi
78	Dec-03	NBA Jam 2004	6	Sports	Acclaim
78	Dec-03	NBA Live 2004	8	Sports	EA Sports
78	Dec-03	Ratchet & Clank: Going Commando	10	Action	Sony CEA
78	Dec-03	Roadkill	7	Car Combat	Midway
78	Dec-03	Rogue Ops	6	Action	Kemco
78	Dec-03	SSX 3	10	Racing	EA Sports Big
78	Dec-03	Swat: Global Stike Force	8	Action	Vivendi
78	Dec-03	Time Crisis 3	9	Shooter	Namco
78	Dec-03	WWE SmackDown! HCTP	9	Wrestling	THQ
78	Dec-03	Warhammer 40,000: FW	9	FPS	THQ
78	Dec-03	XGRA	6	Racing	Acclaim
77	Nov-03	Cabela's Deer Hunt 2004 Season	6	Shooter	Activision
77	Nov-03	DDRMax 2	9	Dancing	Konami
77	Nov-03	Disney's Extreme Skate Adventure	8	Action	Activision
77	Nov-03	Dynasty Tactics 2	7	Fighting	Koei.
77	Nov-03	ESPN NHL Hockey	9	Sports	Sega
77	Nov-03	EyeToy: Play	7	Party	Sony CEA
77	Nov-03	Freedom Fighters	8	Action	EA
77	Nov-03	Jak II	10	Action	Sony CEA
77	Nov-03	Lethal Skies II	8	Air Combat	Sammy
77	Nov-03	Mega Man X7	7	Platform	Capcom
77	Nov-03	NASCAR Thunder 2004	8	Racing	EA
77	Nov-03	NHL Hitz Pro	8	Sports	Midway
77	Nov-03	Robin Hood: DOTC	6	Strategy/Action	Capcom
77	Nov-03	Rugby 2004	7	Sports	EA Sports
77	Nov-03	The Simpsons: Hit And Run	8	Action	Vivendi
77	Nov-03	Space Channel 5: Special Edition	8	Music	Agetec
77	Nov-03	Starsky & Hutch	7	Action	Gotham
77	Nov-03	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004	9	Sports	EA
77	Nov-03	Wallace & Gromit	8	Action	Bam!
76	Oct-03	Alter Echo	7	Action	THQ
76	Oct-03	Bombastic	8	Puzzle	Capcom
76	Oct-03	Buffy The Vampire Slayer	9	Action	Vivendi Unv.
76	Oct-03	Disgaea: Hour Of Darkness	7	RPG	Atlus
76	Oct-03	Futurama	6	Action/Adventure	Vivendi Unv.
76	Oct-03	The Great Escape	5	Action	Take Two Int.
76	Oct-03	.hack//OUTBREAK	7	RPG	Bandai

HIGH SCORES

These are the games that you've GOT to get your hands on!

Iss.	Month	Game name	Score	Genre	Publisher
78	Dec-03	Ratchet & Clank GC	10	Action	Sony CEA
78	Dec-03	SSX 3	10	Racing	EA Sports Big
77	Nov-03	Jak II	10	Action	Sony CEA
75	Sep-03	Madden NFL 2004	10	Sports	EA
75	Sep-03	NCAA 2004	10	Sports	EA Sports
75	Sep-03	VF4: Evolution	10	Fighting	Sega
72	June-03	Midnight Club II	10	Racing	Rockstar
54	Jan-01	Final Fantasy X	10	RPG	Square
52	Dec-01	MGS 2: Sons Of Liberty	10	Action	Konami
52	Dec-01	Tony Hawk's pro Skater 3 (PS2)	10	Sports	Activision
51	Nov-01	Devil May Cry	10	Action	Capcom
50	Oct-01	Madden NFL 2002 (PS2)	10	Sports	EA Sports
47	July-01	Gran Turismo 3	10	Racing	Sony CEA
39	Nov-00	SSX (PS2)	10	Racing	Sony CEA
80	Jan-04	Tony Hawk's Underground	9	Sports	Activision

Iss.	Month	Game name	Score	Genre	Publisher
79	Hol-03	Beyond Good & Evil	9	Adventure	UbiSoft
79	Hol-03	Kya: dark Lineage	9	Action	Atari
79	Hol-03	March Madness 2004	9	Sports	EA Sports
79	Hol-03	Medal Of Honor: Rising Sun	9	FPS	EA Games
78	Dec-03	Castlevania: LOI	9	Action	Konami
78	Dec-03	ESPN NBA Basketball	9	Sports	Sega
78	Dec-03	Time Crisis 3	9	Shooter	Namco
78	Dec-03	WWE SmackDown! HCTP	9	Wrestling	THO
78	Dec-03	Warhammer 40,000: FW	9	FPS	THQ
77	Nov-03	DDRMax 2	9	Dancing	Konami
77	Nov-03	ESPN NHL Hockey	9	Sports	Sega
77	Nov-03	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004	9	Sports	EA
76	Oct-03	Buffy The Vampire Slayer	9	Action	Vivendi Unv.
76	Oct-03	Soul Calibur II	9	Fighting	Namco
75	Sep-03	ESPN NFL Football	9	Sports	Sega

PlayStation.2

180

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Includes EYE TOY Play game disc + EyeToy USB camera

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

Soccer Craze. One of 12 EyeToy: Play games that makes you the star. EyeToy puts you on-screen and its motion-tracking technology puts you in charge, letting your body control the action. Everyone can watch. Anyone can play. And you can **be on the TV**.

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD. PLAY IN OURS.™

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PSM's 7TH ANNU

Jason Martin
Heather Martin

AL AWARDS SPECIAL

WE REVIEWED HUNDREDS OF games in 2003, but now it's time to crown the best of the best: the PSM 10. No true PS2 gamer should be caught without these games in their collection.

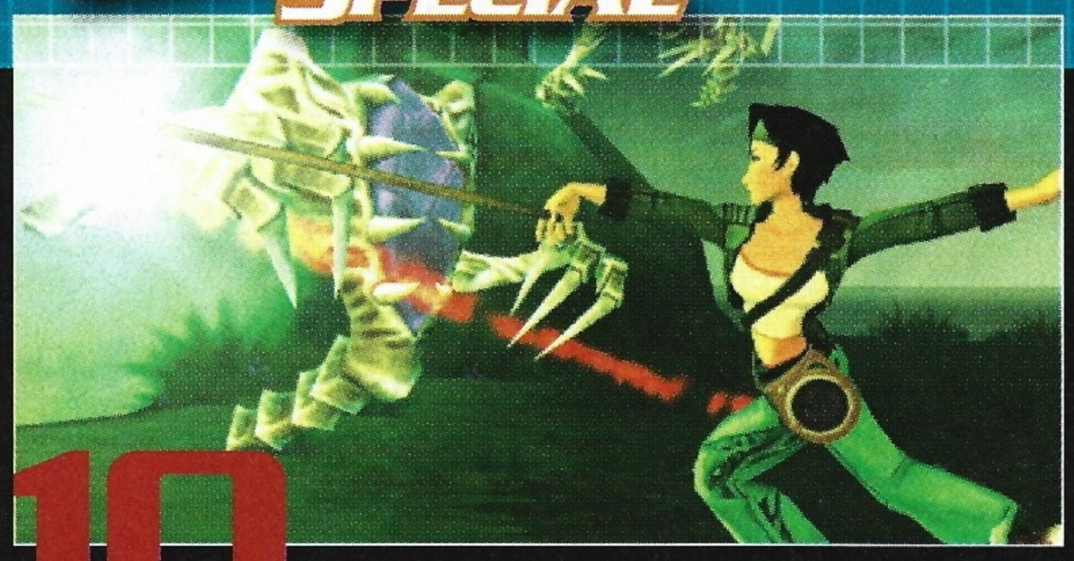
There's been a lot of talk about PS2 lacking in the "big name game" department in 2004, with titles such as *Grand Theft Auto, Gran Turismo, Metal Gear,* and *Devil May Cry* missing from store shelves. What? No, that whole *Devil May Cry 2* thing was just a bad dream... a bad dream. Once you look past the absence of some of the system's marquee franchises, and the poor delivery of others — *cough* *Tomb Raider* *cough* — though, 2004 was undoubtedly the best year yet for really good games on PS2.

In fact, we awarded more 9s and 10s this year than any in our 81 issue history, and it wasn't due to any relaxing of review criteria — the games were just that damned good. The sheer volume of great games also made it extra tough on the judging panel (a.k.a. the PSM staff) and resulted in many heated hours of debate over which 10 games stood above the rest. Even worse, we had to rank them. The details of that process will be withheld so as not to terrify our more squeamish readers. Trust us — it wasn't pretty. Throw in voting for our Special Achievement awards, and the PSM office looked and sounded like the British Parliament, only without the funny wigs.

In short: as you read the following pages, please keep in mind that we thought (and fought) long and hard over the order of the PSM 10. Just as the developers of these great games, who you'll be hearing from in their acceptance speeches, worked long and hard to bring them to you. You might not personally agree with some of our choices, or the exact order they appear in, but no one can doubt that these are simply the best gaming experiences you could have on PS2 in 2004.

Annual Awards Special

PSM's 7th



10 Beyond Good & Evil

EDITORS' COMMENTS

CHRIS: "There's just so much about this game that makes you go 'oh, cool!' As if kicking bad guy butt in super-sexy slo-mo wasn't cool enough, playing photographer is also fun. And if we had an award for best sidekick, that crazy pig would be a shoe-in."

STEVE: "While I would have preferred that they stuck with the original main character designs, *BG&E* still left me impressed. The mix of camera elements with the action/combat scenarios was pretty well executed and the story kept me riveted. You just can't beat those methane-powered rocket boots."

ERIC: "*BG&E* is all about the triumph of form over function. The wide-ranging gameplay is definitely solid, but the real strengths of the game are its gorgeous presentation and whimsical, artistic soul, which conspire to create a uniquely memorable, meaningful experience."

RANDY: "Poor Jade — she looked so much better before she went all '80s rocker chick on us. Ah, well. Anyway, Jade's character design aside, this is one of the most engrossing and downright beautiful original games I've played in years. If only every developer were as ambitious as this game's dev team."

FROM THE CREATORS

"First of foremost, I would like to thank the very talented Ubi Pictures development team in Montpellier. After many late nights (and early mornings), I believe that we successfully achieved our goal of creating a game that will challenge players on many different levels. We put a lot of attention to detail in this game — we hope that you will take your time playing and exploring all aspects of the virtual world we created. There are many underlining themes in *Beyond Good & Evil,* many of which are based on real issues that we face in the world today. I believe that videogames are the next generation's way to express an idea or tell a story. I hope you enjoy the story that we tell, and I hope that *Beyond Good & Evil* provides you with a new and exciting videogame experience."

— Michel Ancel, Game Creator, Ubisoft

9 Def Jam VENDETTA

EDITORS' COMMENTS

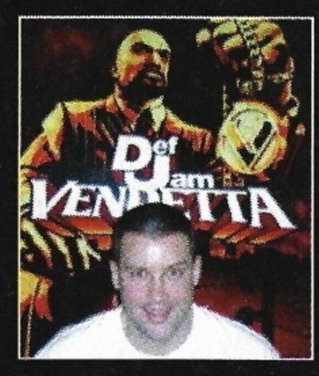
CHRIS: "I love the developer, Aki - their N64 *WWF* games rocked. To be honest, at first I didn't know what to think of the whole 'rap-merging-with-wrestling' idea, but *VENDETTA* ended up amazing. I can't get enough of beating D-Mob's ass."

STEVE: "Talk about an unexpected use of a license. *VENDETTA* is a perfect example of a game that was inspired by a great idea. Taking Def Jam artists and combining it with a fighting/wrestling system may not have seemed like a good mix, but it certainly made for one hell of a fun experience."

ERIC: "When I first heard about this game, I thought the idea was ludicrous. But when I finally played it, I was blown away. With fantastic animation, a next-level fighting engine both deep and intuitive, and a little sex appeal, this is my favorite wrestling game ever."

RANDY: "Okay, so it's not technically a wrestling game. So what? It's still my favorite game in the genre. Everything about this "urban brawler" knocked me off my feet, but I give special recognition to its flawless combat system."

FROM THE CREATORS



"When we set out to make *Def Jam VENDETTA,* we really weren't sure how it would be received. Would the world embrace an urban fighting experience? Happily, the answer turned out to be yes. Partnering with Def Jam, we sought to create a world of characters and fiction that felt authentic and true to the culture. Most importantly, we wanted a gameplay experience that would appeal to fighting and wrestling game fans alike. We're pleased with the success of *DJV,* and especially honored to be in PSM's top 10 for 2003. The team behind Vendetta is a diverse and multitalented group representing a collaboration of three companies, working across many thousands of miles. Together we overcame incredible challenges. We look forward to sharing our next creation with PSM and its readers."

— Josh Holmes, Producer, EA Canada

Special Achievement Awards

Just because a game didn't make it into our top 10 for the year doesn't mean it didn't excel in one area or another. Last year, PSM created individual category awards to recognize these special achievements, and due to overwhelmingly positive response from readers, they're back. There are 11 award categories in all this year, and every single one was given just as much thought and debate as the PSM 10.

BEST GRAPHICS

THE LORD OF THE RINGS, THE RETURN OF THE KING
RUNNERS UP: JAK II, LEGACY OF KAIN DEFIANCE, PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME

BEST SOUND/MUSIC

CASTLEVANIA: LAMENT OF INNOCENCE
RUNNERS UP: THE LORD OF THE RINGS, TROTK, ZONE OF THE ENDERS: T2R, MEDAL OF HONOR RISING SUN

8 Final Fantasy X-2

EDITORS' COMMENTS

CHRIS: "*Final Fantasy* games are always great, but *X-2* was especially cool because it mixed up Square's traditional formula a little."

STEVE: "With its less linear gameplay, luscious visuals and improved combat system, *FFX-2* definitely impressed me. I highly enjoyed every minute of playing it and especially liked the mission-based challenges."

ERIC: "The stripped down storyline doesn't work for some, but everything else rocks. You can explore to your heart's content and graphics are gorgeous."

RANDY: "This is Square's presentation skills at their finest, and it has me super-excited to see what they do with *Final Fantasy XII!*"

7 NBA Street Vol. 2

EDITORS' COMMENTS

CHRIS: "Best hoops game ever? I think so. I really liked the balance in *Street Vol. 2*. It's just plain old-fashioned fun, which is what basketball is supposed to be."

STEVE: "While an arcade-style experience, *Vol. 2* still has an impressive amount of depth. There's so much to unlock in this game. It's one of the best b-ball titles, period."

ERIC: "Deeply compelling, this game is intuitive enough to hook you within 40 seconds and deep enough to keep you hooked 40 hours later."

RANDY: "This game is a great example of a developer working to out-do their previous efforts. The result was an incredible competitive experience."

FROM THE CREATORS

"The year 2003 will go down as a great one for games, so we're honored to be part of PSM's Top 10 list. From the beginning, we wanted to create a game that combined lifestyle and culture with a mainstream sport. That's not an easy thing to do, but the team stuck to its vision and we were thrilled to deliver that experience. I think the industry can continue to expect great things from the creative team that put their soul into *Vol. 2,* and we'll be shooting for the Top 10 in every game. Here's a shout out to Nelly, Just Blaze, Bobbito Garcia, Jimmy Smith and, of course, Dr. J. Peace." — *Wil Mozzell, Senior Producer, EA Canada*

6 Midnight Club II

EDITORS' COMMENTS

CHRIS: "I still can't put my finger on why this game kicks so much booty. The racing and control seem straightforward enough, but there's gotta be some magic in there somewhere because *MCII* is on a whole 'nother level."

STEVE: "I can't think of another racing game that even comes close to providing the sense of speed that *MCII* does. It's downright impressive. The game's online mode is certainly top-notch and provided a nice balance between car and motorcycle competitions. Most of the courses were also well designed."

ERIC: "A near-perfect marriage of style and speed, *MCII* was also one of the best, earliest reasons for PS2 players to spring for a network adaptor. The open-ended "track" design was something special, and I still love playing random-order checkpoint races."

RANDY: "This is one of my personal all-time favorite PS2 games, and my pick for best arcade-style racer on the system. It's just so big, so fast, and so well presented that everything just clicks."

FROM THE CREATORS

"We are very happy with the response to *Midnight Club II.* Our goal was to take the racing game in a new direction, and challenge a genre we felt was becoming dominated by very staid and boring linear games, with poor car handling and very little that felt alive or challenging. We really wanted to offer players the ultimate illegal street racing experience, with an incredible sense of speed, fully open cities, and the ability to connect with other real racers via online play, while filling the game with cars and bikes that are actually fun and responsive to control. Being huge racing fans ourselves, the game has been a pleasure to work on and we are glad the fans have responded to it so positively. The entire team in San Diego did an amazing job, and we are very proud of them. We feel we have really paved the way for the future of racing games — and just scratched the surface of what we want to do in this genre."

— *Dan Houser, Creative Director, Rockstar Games*

BEST CHARACTER DESIGN

JAK II

RUNNERS UP: FINAL FANTASY X-2, ZONE OF THE ENDERS: THE 2ND RUNNER, SOUL CALIBUR II

BEST ART DESIGN

BEYOND GOOD & EVIL

RUNNERS UP: FINAL FANTASY X-2, PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME, JAK II

MOST INNOVATIVE GAME

EYETOY: PLAY

RUNNER UP: KARAOKE REVOLUTION

5 SOCOM II: U.S. Navy SEALs

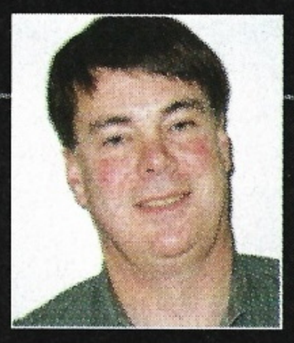
EDITORS' COMMENTS

CHRIS: "As it stands right now, this is the ultimate online game for PS2, with depth and realism that few games ever come close to. With the great online modes, you could only own this game and still stay entertained for months."

STEVE: "This is a sequel that went far beyond what was expected. The visuals, the AI, the weapon selection and countless other aspects were significantly improved upon, creating one of the most compelling squad-based games out there. *SOCOM II* also does a great job of preventing online cheaters."

ERIC: "For years, online military shooters have been confined to the PC. How huge is it then, when *SOCOM II* turns out well enough to make even seasoned PC players take notice? With taut action, gritty realism, great voice chat, and strong anti-cheating protocols, this game's a winner."

RANDY: "Zipper really went all-out with this sequel. They fulfilled nearly every gamer's wish for the online mode, but didn't let that take attention away from making the single-player aspect of the game a whole lot better, too. Bravo!"



FROM THE CREATORS

"The *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs* game community has many passionate, committed players with strong opinions about what direction they wanted to see single player and online modes take in the future. It has been exciting to reflect many of these great ideas in *SOCOM II.* Zipper and Sony have a deep respect for our players and we are pleased that by listening to the constructive feedback, we have been able to continue the success of this franchise. The greatest compliment is that so many members of actual SEAL Teams love the game and are active online."

— Jim Bosler, President and CEO, Zipper Interactive

4 Ratchet & Clank: Going Commando

EDITORS' COMMENTS

CHRIS: "Old-fashioned action/platform gameplay brought into the modern era – Insomniac makes it look easy. *Going Commando* took everything that was great about the first game and doubled it. This will stand as one of PS2's all-time great action games."

STEVE: "How many different weapons can you include in a game and still keep it fun? Well, *Going Commando* took that thought and ran with it. It's amazing that Insomniac was able to create this game in less than a year. Actually, it's mind-boggling. There's simply so much to see and blow-up in this game."

ERIC: "Granted, *Jak II* got the bigger makeover between the two, but this sequel to *Ratchet & Clank* really impressed me with its numerous refinements. I love the way the weapons compliment one another, and the game is just masterfully constructed. It rocks."

RANDY: "How did Insomniac get a game this good turned around so quickly? The world may never know. However they did it, the game's an action fan's dream come true, but earns extra kudos for integrating RPG-like leveling up into the mix."

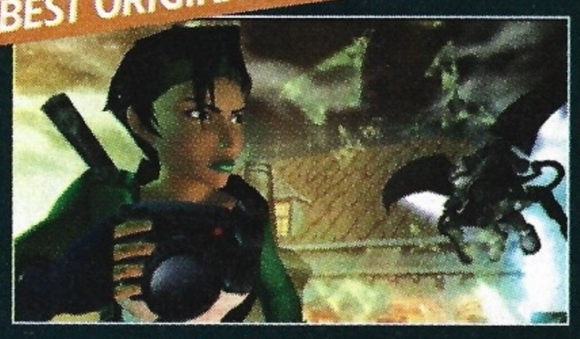
FROM THE CREATORS

"Yes. Erm. I've been asked to perambulate on behalf of the boys and girls at Insomniac. We, well, they are honored and flatulated to have received this garnishment from such a prestidigious publication. Your superlatory commentations made all of us, well them, feel as if the long hours and herniated social lives were well worth it. We, uh, they aspirate to provide you and your readers with even more terrifulous fare in the near future. Of course, I can't reveal any secretions or I would lose my job as spokesperson for Insomniac Games. Ahem. Well, yes, thank you once again very much for providing us with this wonderable distillation! " *— Abercrombie Fizzwidget, CEA, Megacorp*

"Hey really, we're stoked! Thanks for the great support you gave Ratchet, Clank (and Fizzwidget) this year and for including us on this list!"

— Ted Price, President, Insomniac Games

BEST ORIGINAL GAME

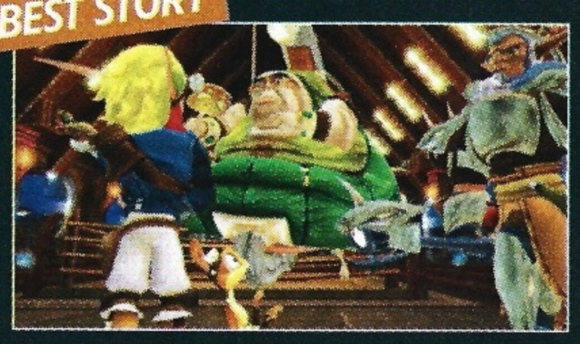


BEYOND GOOD & EVIL
RUNNERS UP: SPLINTER CELL, KYA: DARK LINEAGE, WAR OF THE MONSTERS

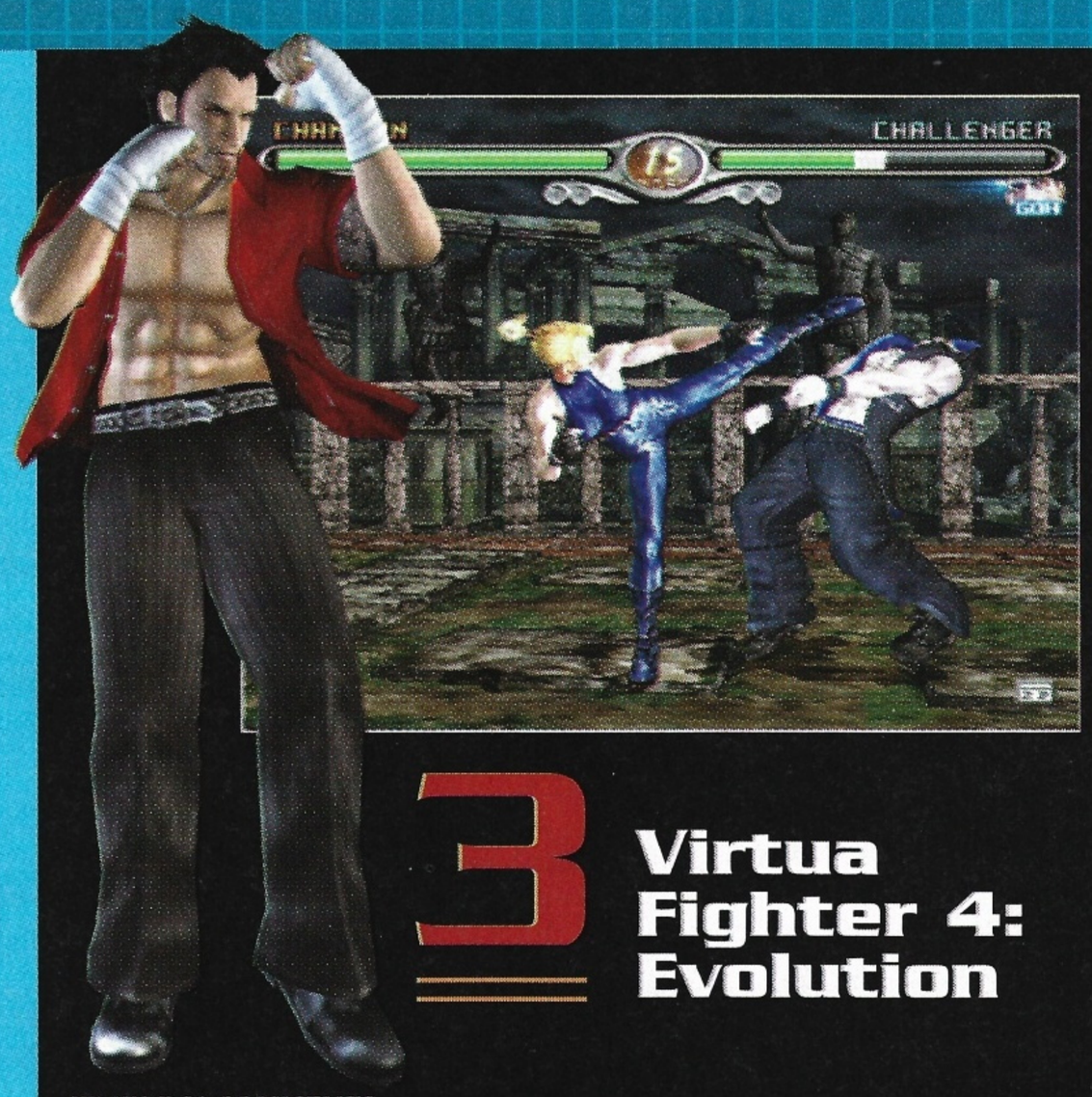
MOST IMPROVED SEQUEL

DARK CLOUD 2
RUNNERS UP: JAK II, MIDNIGHT CLUB II, ZONE OF THE ENDERS: THE 2ND RUNNER

BEST STORY



JAK II
RUNNER UP: SPLINTER CELL, BEYOND GOOD & EVIL, PRIMAL



3 Virtua Fighter 4: Evolution

EDITORS' COMMENTS

CHRIS: "*VF4* was arguably the best PS2 fighting game even before *EVO*'s enhancements were added. I love how you get to fight against AI taken from Japan's best players. This game is the pinnacle of one of gaming's most treasured and respected series."

STEVE: "This is the perfect example of what makes a great fighting game. The *Virtua Fighter* series has aged brilliantly, just like fine wine, and the result is a perfect collection of characters and an extremely deep fighting system. And, when you consider *Evolution* goes for only $20, there is no reason not to own it."

ERIC: "At $20, there's no reason whatsoever for you not to own this game. The fighting's fantastic, and this new mode, in which you can face off against arcade aces all over Japan, may be the best single-player game mode ever in a fighting game."

RANDY: "This is the king of console fighting games, period. Incredible depth, loads of extras, and gorgeous to boot. I'm still amazed that Sega released this at $20 — it's easily worth paying full price."

FROM THE CREATORS

"The *Virtua Fighter* series has been extremely popular among Japanese and Asian gamers for its realistic fighting mechanic. We wondered whether or not it would be welcomed in the United States without any flashy special attacks, inflated effects, or superhuman maneuvers. We are proud that it has become wildly popular in North America and the team is greatly honored to receive a top 10 award from PSM."

— Hiroshi Kataoka, President, SEGA-AM2

2 SSX 3

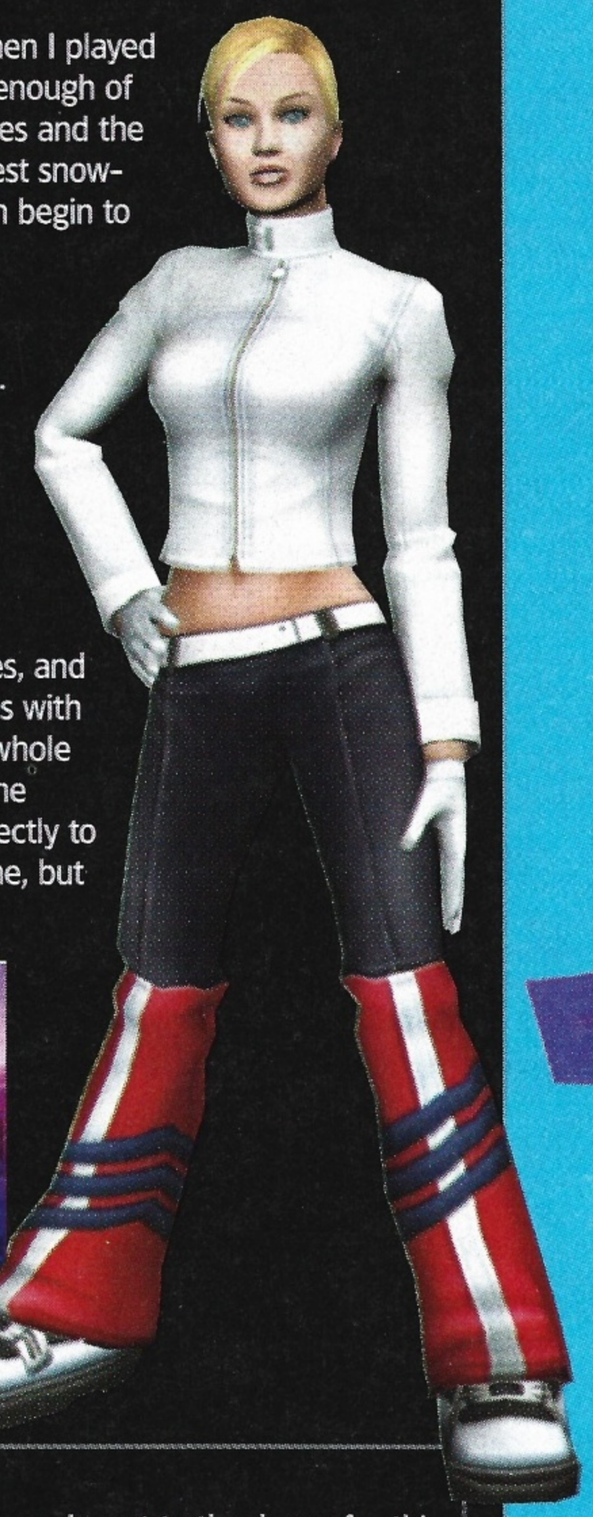
EDITORS' COMMENTS

CHRIS: "I can't think of another game that has presented such a complete 'world.' From the way that everything is a part of one big mountain, to little details like BIG Radio, this game really made me feel like I was a part of something cool."

STEVE: "There was a long period there when I played *SSX 3* every single day. I just couldn't get enough of it. The vast courses, the endless unlockables and the over-the-top tricks easily make this the best snowboarding game on any system. I can't even begin to image what the series will bring next."

ERIC: "There's something zen-like about this latest, greatest entry in the *SSX* series. Maybe it's the huge, organic mountain with its multiple trick lines, maybe it's the gorgeous graphics, and maybe it's the deeper-than-ever trick system. Whatever the cause, the game's a landmark."

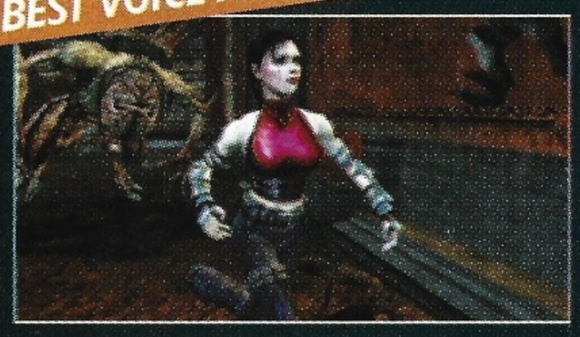
RANDY: "I've been a huge fan of this series, and EA really pulled out all the proverbial stops with this installment. I was a little leery of the whole 'only one mountain' concept at first, but the developers at EA Canada executed it perfectly to create not only a great snowboarding game, but one of the best racing games ever."



FROM THE CREATORS

"On behalf of the *SSX 3* team I want to thank you for this tremendous honor. The team strived to create a living, breathing mountain that would allow the player to play the game the way that they wanted to play. The effort involved was probably equivalent to moving an actual mountain, but accolades such as this make it worthwhile, especially considering the other great titles of 2003. To PSM and to all of our fans, thank you." *— David Elton, Co-Producer, EA Canada*

BEST VOICE ACTING



PRIMAL

RUNNERS UP: JAK II, LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE, FINAL FANTASY X-2

BEST ONLINE FEATURES

989 SPORTS TITLES

RUNNERS UP: SOCOM II, MIDNIGHT CLUB II

BEST USE OF A LICENSE

THE LORD OF THE RINGS, TROTK

RUNNER UP: THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN, BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER: CHAOS BLEEDS, DEF JAM VENDETTA

1 Jak II

EDITORS' COMMENTS

CHRIS: "*Jak II* was easily the best game I'd played all year, even though it caused me to have very red eyes every morning. Naughty Dog's masterpiece flawlessly combines about a dozen types of games, and it excels at them all. And it's hard as hell, which I loved."

STEVE: "While *Jak II* is definitely the "Jack" of all trades, with its large variety of gameplay types, it still manages to come together as a truly great title. The difficulty might be a bit high for most people, but the well-scripted storyline and the great action sequences make it THE must-have game of 2003."

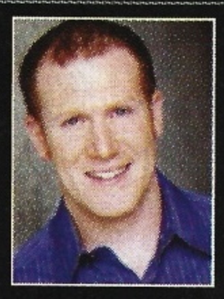
ERIC: "How gutsy do you have to be to take a million-selling game and completely rip it apart, creating a sequel that is entirely different? And how good do you have to be to make sure that something different is way better than the original? Kudos to Naughty Dog for taking the chance — it paid off, big time."

RANDY: "This game was a complete shock to me. So different from the first, but also so much better, bigger, and more polished. This isn't just a great example of how many genres can come together to form an amazing game, but also the power that strong story, dialog, and voice acting have over a game's overall entertainment value."

FROM THE CREATORS

"*Jak II* was a great labor of love for Naughty Dog. We took some big risks, broke many platform genre rules, and there were moments of doubt and times when we didn't think we could pull it off. But we persevered, and we are extremely proud of the results. Of course, we couldn't have done it without the incredible support of Sony Computer Entertainment America, Europe, Japan, and Korea, Mutato Muzika, Max Casella (Daxter), Clancy Brown (The Baron), Mike Erwin (Jak), and the other talented actors who gave life to the characters, and of course our friends and family for letting us bury ourselves in "Jakness" for two years! Naughty Dog couldn't be happier with the response we have gotten from gamers and the industry. Your support is what keeps us inspired."

— Jason Rubin, Co-Founder, Naughty Dog

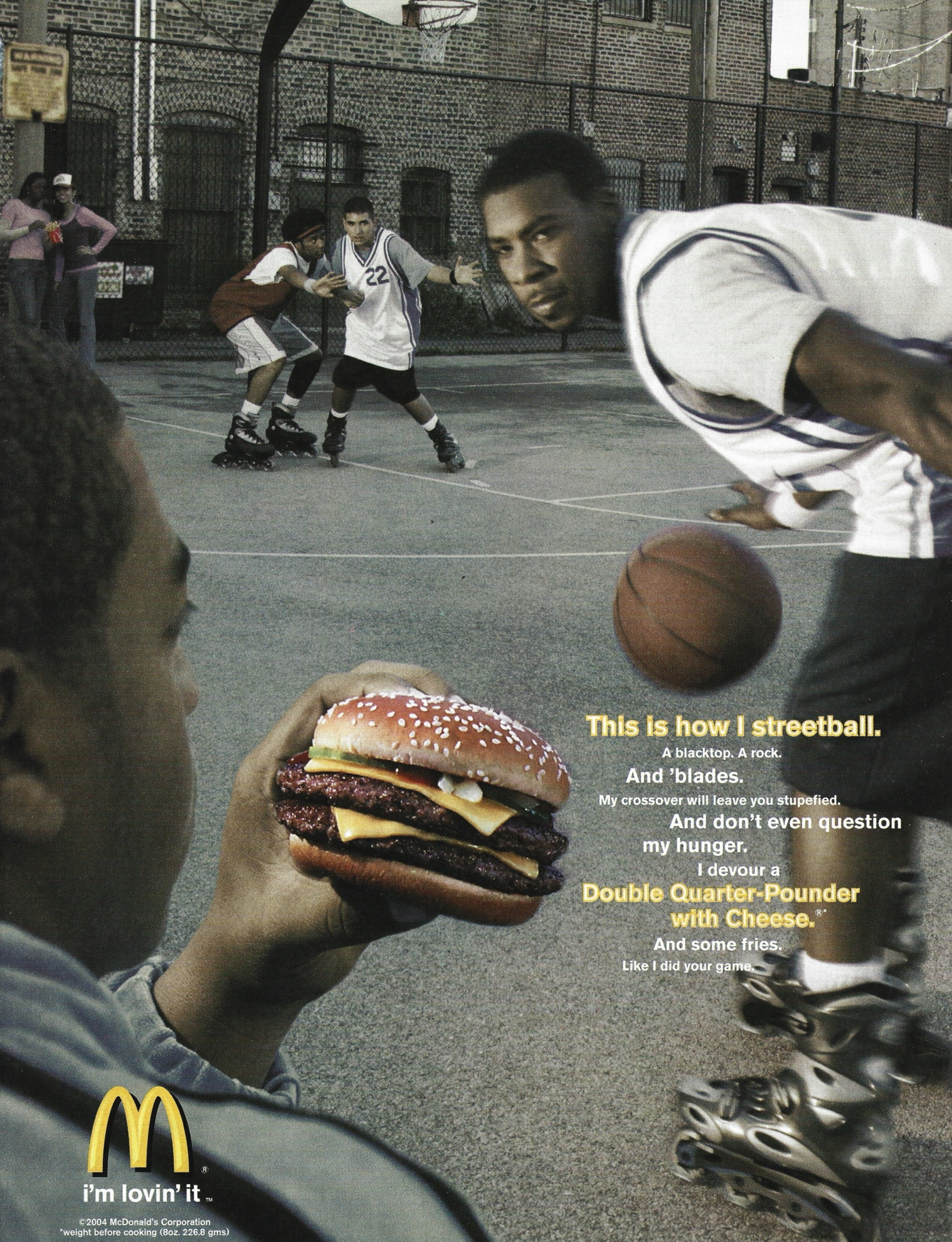


"In making *Jak II* we took a really good hard look at our games, the genre, and what we as a team thought action story gaming could become. What we tried to make was extremely ambitious, and it was at times an extremely painful process, but the game came out great. Being declared PSM's 'Game of the Year' really helps to justify all of our hard work and validate the new directions we struck out in. *Jak II* was a team effort and we would like to thank all the really talented people at Naughty Dog, Sony Computer Entertainment America, Europe, Japan, and Korea, as well as all of our great contracted talent. Many people with a great love of videogames worked insanely hard to bring *Jak II* to fruition, and this award proves that it shows!"

— Andy Gavin, Co-Founder, Naughty Dog

"It's an amazing honor to receive the "Game of the Year" award from PSM. Considering the incredible number of quality games released this year makes it even more of an honor. Everyone at Naughty Dog worked extremely long and hard on *Jak II,* and it gives us great satisfaction to have that effort recognized. On behalf of Naughty Dog, I would like to say thank you to PSM for singling Jak II out of the many other games which were also deserving of this award, all of the people as Sony Computer Entertainment America, Europe, Japan, and Korea who also worked incredibly hard at making the game a success, and to all of Naughty Dog's friends and family who put up with our crazy work hours and offered unconditional support."

— Evan Wells, Game Director, Naughty Dog


This is how I streetball.
A blacktop. A rock.
And 'blades.
My crossover will leave you stupefied.
And don't even question my hunger.
I devour a
Double Quarter-Pounder with Cheese.®*
And some fries.
Like I did your game.
i'm lovin' it™
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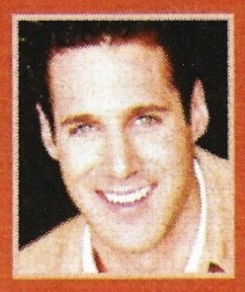
*weight before cooking (8oz. 226.8 gms)

ONLY IN PSM!

PS2's T

Creator Q&A: PS2's Top Dog talks with PSM about the future of PS2, plans for PSP, what's next for the *Jak* series, and more...

NAUGHTY DOG'S JASON RUBIN



Before there was* Jak and Daxter, *before* Crash, *Jason Rubin and Naughty Dog co-founder Andy Gavin were turning out games on pre-PlayStation systems;* Way of the Warrior *on 3DO, and* Rings of Power *on Sega Genesis, to name just two.

They've come a long way since those long days and nights feverishly programming in an apartment. Rubin is now in charge of an entire studio entrusted with squeezing every drop of potential out of PlayStation 2 — both technologically and gameplay wise.

PSM sat down with the game making veteran and outspoken PS2 proponent to get his thoughts on where the system's at now, and where it and his company are going.

THE PS2

PSM: You've been with PS2 since the very beginning. What do you think of how it's fared so far, and where do you see things heading?

Jason Rubin: I predicted the PS2 victor of this round of hardware wars before any of this generation's systems came out. Go back and check the first issue of the *Official Xbox Magazine.* They list four Xbox detractors at the bottom of the first page: "The PC Dweeb," "The Nintendo Weenie," "The PS2 Geek," and "Jason Rubin." Sure enough, the PS2 has performed better than any other hardware this generation, both in total sales, and, more importantly, in the quality and scope of the software. And it has shown that even though it came out eighteen months before its competitors, it can produce a competitive game. It's a complicated machine, but it's also deep. The software keeps improving. We got so much more out of the *Jak And Daxter: The Precursor Legacy* engine in *Jak II* than we did in the first title. We'll get more out of it next time, too.

PSM: Technology-wise, do you believe that we've yet to see what PS2 is truly capable of?

JR: Anyone who looks at the difference between *SSX* and *SSX3* has to admit that the quality of the games keeps improving. This is partly due to the slow unlocking of the potential of the hardware, and partly due to the ever-expanding talents of the game development community. All of the hardware we are working with now is powerful enough that developers are bound more by experience than technology. We didn't have the animation talent at Naughty Dog during the first *Jak and Daxter* to create the quality of animation that we have in *Jak II.* That isn't hardware capability, or better code — it is knowledge.

PSM: Do you see your technology-sharing relationship with Insomniac continuing to develop? Could we see it evolve to the point where your two companies might work very closely on a project together?

JR: I don't know that we would ever work on a single title together, but I do see the technology-sharing relationship continuing. Together, we make a pretty formidable engine-creating talent. Apart, we simultaneously generate too much identical code. In the future, I think more and more teams will share programming resources or use engines created outside of their companies. Renderware may not be the most incredible engine out there, but *GTAIII* showed that it's game design that determines success these days.

PSM: Is 2004 going to see Naughty Dog working on a new game, or do you expect to put a game out this year?

JR: If we are insane, we may try to do both.

PSM: So, are you insane?

JR: We have had year-long lapses of sanity before. 1999 was one of them. We were working on the first *Jak* game and *CTR* at the same time. It almost killed us, but we survived. *CTR* was a success, and *Jak and Daxter* turned out great.

PSM: We don't think anyone honestly expected the new direction *Jak II* went in. Should we be anticipating something just as bold for the next game?

JR: I will say that Naughty Dog has decided that it wants to always do something "newish" with each title, instead of releasing rehashes of old games. I feel that the *Crash* series suffered from a little too much repetition. Having said that, there is a lot more that can be done with the *Jak II* idea. We can refine what we did and improve the gameplay balance.

PSM: You've said ND does one game at a time, but do you see this changing?

JR: I hope this never changes. Sure, we might hack out some new technology on the side, like we did with the *CTR* engine during *Crash 3's* development, but I don't think we'll do two simultaneous full productions.

"There's more in that little black box. We'll get more out of it next time, too."

THE PSP

PSM: How does PSP change the picture for ND — can we expect to see one of your games on it at launch? Also, what are your thoughts on PSP in general?

JR: The PSP is very cool. I keep looking at the specs and drooling, but not as a developer. A one-product-at-a-time developer that prides itself on being on the cutting edge of the high-end hardware can't take the time to work on a product that isn't for the home console of the day.

PSM: So, does this mean that Naughty Dog will not develop any PSP titles?

JR: I can't look that far in the future. Who knows, the PSP could have an 8-year lifecycle, or be followed up by the PSP2 and PSP3. By then, Naughty Dog might decide to start a handheld "division." All I know is that we are eagerly awaiting our own personal PSPs, but we won't be developing for the system for the next few years.

PSM: Might we see a *Jak* title on PSP handled by another developer, then?

JR: This is certainly possible, but not a confirmation that there will be a *Jak* title on the PSP by any means. Naughty Dog would need to have strict quality and content control over the production. But if a great developer came to us with good ideas, then we would be open to seeing a *Jak* game on the PSP. We like the GBA *Crash* games, and with its incredible power (for a handheld!), the PSP should be able to deliver a better quality *Jak* handheld experience.

PS2 ONLINE

PSM: What are your thoughts on PS2 online gaming?

JR: Naughty Dog won't be experimenting with online gaming in 2004. We don't see it as the central direction of our next title. It's my personal opinion that you can't half-ass the online transition. I think you either do it right, as the primary development focus, or you don't do it at all. I don't buy into the mini-game online philosophy. Until we go fully online, we won't tease with it.

THE FUTURE

PSM: Might we see HDD, voice, or EyeToy support in ND's next game?

JR: We think all of these technologies are cool, especially used in conjunction with each other in the future, but I don't think our next product will use any of them.

PSM: Will we see some "new blood" from ND on PlayStation 3?

JR: It's way too early to talk about the next generation of hardware. The power of the PS2 drove us to abandon Crash. That could happen again. Once we know what the systems can do, we might get inspired to do something out of the *Jak and Daxter* universe. Then again, we may not.

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Through-the-leg pitches and behind-the-back passes.
Just bring whatever you got to keep the ball moving.
Cuz on the street, **the only thing more important than dominating is looking good doing it.**

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Violence

PlayStation 2

ONLINE
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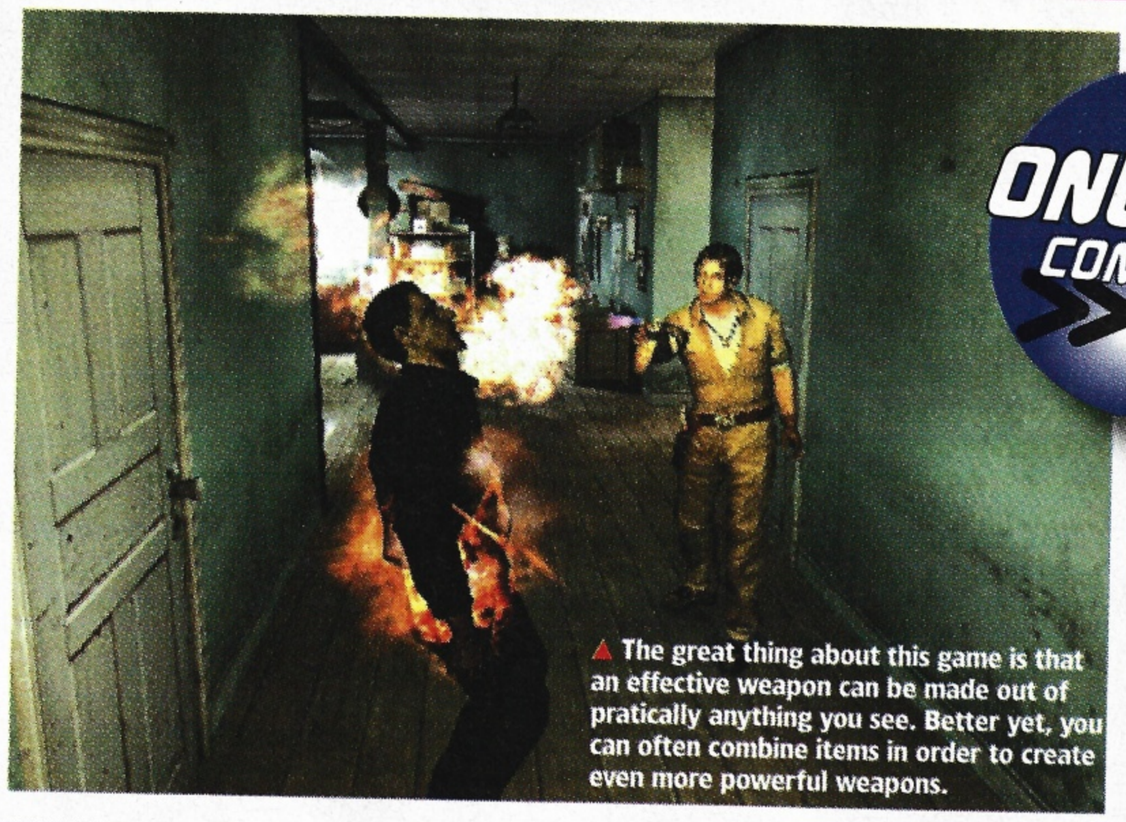
ONLY IN PSM NEW SCREENS

▲ While zombies will always be a major thorn in your side, *Outbreak* also features a cast of other gruesome, disturbing creatures.

Resident Evil Outb



▲ The great thing about this game is that an effective weapon can be made out of pratically anything you see. Better yet, you can often combine items in order to create even more powerful weapons.

ONLINE COMPATIBLE

"EVERYONE'S GONNA DIE!"

WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE DEVELOPERS OF THE *Resident Evil* series have mastered the art of horror, having frightened countless millions of gamers over the years. Yet, for all our screams and covered eyes, it seems the biggest scare is yet to come. With a bit of apprehension and a touch of trepidation, we gathered our courage and headed to Capcom's offices, where we not only witnessed the future of survival horror, but an entirely new type of fear, as well. *Resident Evil Outbreak* is definitely taking the franchise into even darker territory and completely redefining what we expect from the genre. So, if you dare, come with us as we explore the shocking new title and a few other things that go bump in the night...

RESIDENT EVIL® OUTBREAK

Publisher/
Developer: Capcom
Type: Action/Horror
ESRB: Mature
Max Players:
Four (online)
Release Date:
March

RESIDENT EVIL OUTBREAK

While a hugely successful franchise and one of the originators of the "survival horror" genre, the *Resident Evil* series hasn't really evolved or innovated that much over the years. There have been a few new features and modes introduced in the sequels, but nothing truly groundbreaking. That's especially a disappointing fact when you consider there have been a total of six main games, two of which have appeared only on the Nintendo Gamecube. Granted, the moving of the franchise over to a rival console probably didn't do much to win over fans of the series, either. Regardless, *Resident Evil* is about to make a big impact once again, and it's doing it, not surprisingly, on a Sony console.

With *Resident Evil Outbreak*, the developers have moved away from the single-player experience that previously defined the franchise and moved their focus more towards the type of fear that people feel when they're in groups. "It's all about that uneasiness you feel as your group gets smaller and smaller and the uncertainty of whether you should help your friends or just save yourself."

With that thought, the team embarked on a mission to not only make the scariest *RE* title ever, but also one that played considerably different than anything before it. And, from what we've seen, it looks like they've succeeded remarkably.

Taking it Online

Obviously, the most talked about feature of *Outbreak* would have to be its online mode. Teaming up with three other players, you're able to work together, as you make your way through the game's five main episodes. For most intents and purposes, the online game is similar to the offline one, but there are a few significant differences, the main one being that you can't save your progress at all. You and your teammates will have to make your way through the zombie-infested buildings and alleyways of Raccoon City and you'll have to do it with just one life each. Talk about challenging!

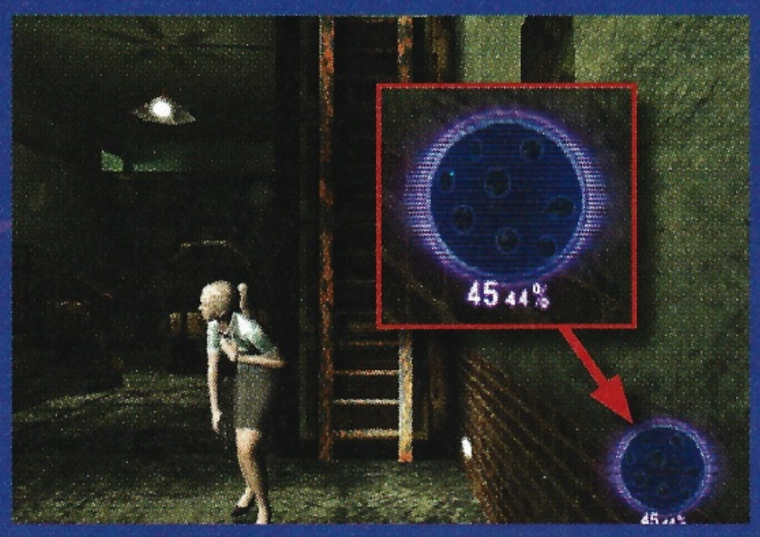
Another considerable difference is that all item and enemy locations will be random, so you'll never know where anything is until you fully search each room. Surprises can come from anywhere, which is what makes the online mode so exciting. That and the simple

THE BUZZ
With increased depth, challenge and online support, *Outbreak* could end up as our favorite *Resident Evil* title.

SAVING
You'll be able to save the game once in each scenario in the offline mode, but you won't be able to save at all during an online game.

Bring Out Your Dead

At the start of the game, your character is already infected with the virus, so everything is a race against time. The on-screen virus gauge will slowly start to increase, regardless of what you do, and speed up when an enemy attacks. When the gauge reaches 100%, you will be turned into a zombie and be able to attack other players. You can't use any weapons or items as a zombie, but you can go through doors by bashing them open. Also, when playing as a zombie, the controls become sluggish, making it difficult to move around. After 3-5 minutes, your game ends.

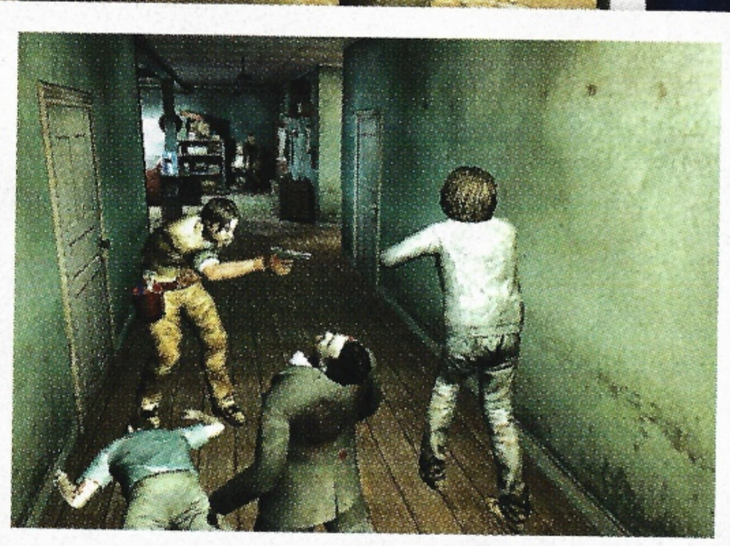


▲ Try to make sure your virus meter doesn't reach 100%...

...otherwise, you'll become a zombie, like these lab workers.

RANDOM
While playing an episode online, all the items and enemies are randomly placed. Offline, enemies are randomly placed, but the items are not.

▲ Unlike past *RE* titles, ammunition isn't so readily available. You'll really have to conserve your bullets, using them only when absolutely necessary.



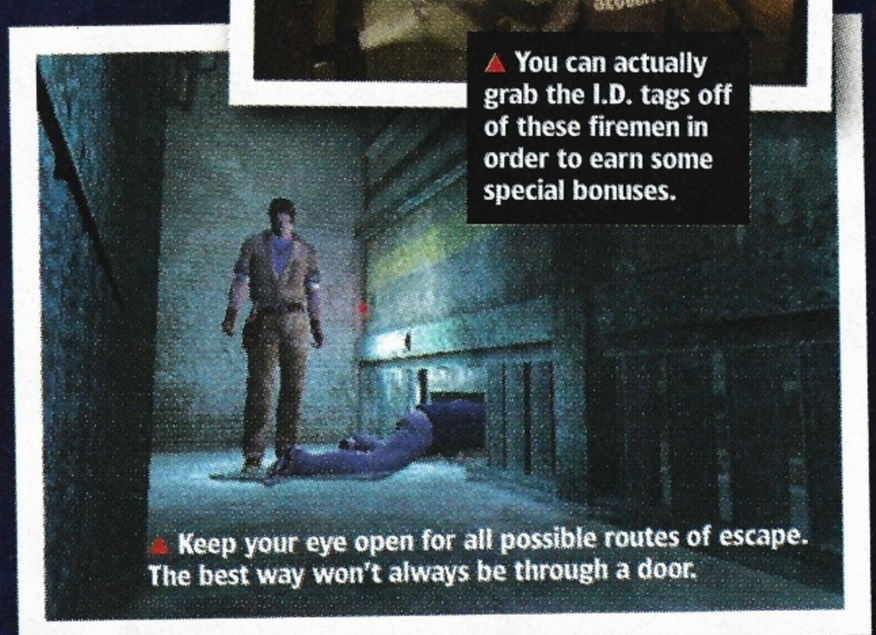
▲ This doesn't look good for our hero. He's wounded, surrounded by zombies and there doesn't appear to be any of his teammates around.

◀ Scenes like this are commonplace in *Outbreak* and tend to make you nervous.

ONLINE
When playing *Outbreak* online, you'll be able to choose in what order you'll go through the game's three middle episodes.

▲ You can help someone off of the ground by standing next to them and hitting Circle. The quicker they get off the ground, the less their virus meter will rise.

▲ You can actually grab the I.D. tags off of these firemen in order to earn some special bonuses.



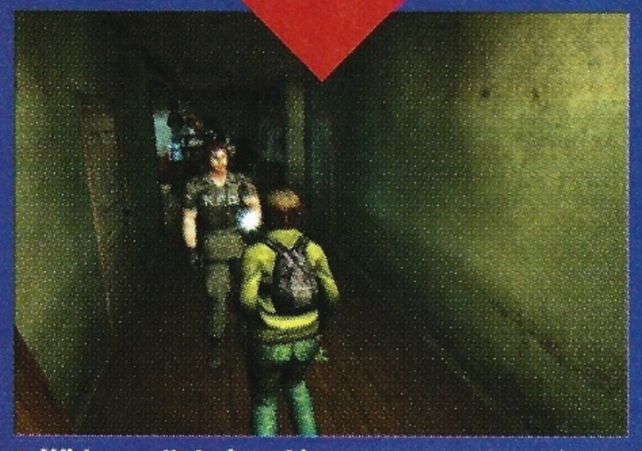
▲ Keep your eye open for all possible routes of escape. The best way won't always be through a door.

Working Together

Since the game is so "team-based", Capcom came up with an easy system for characters to share and offer items. When you bring up your inventory screen, you also can see what everyone else has. If you want something from one of the other characters, you simply select the item and a notification will appear on your teammate's screen. They can then grab the item from their inventory and hand it over to you. Through this system, you can also ask teammates to use specific items during certain instances (i.e. a key to unlock a particular door).

HDD

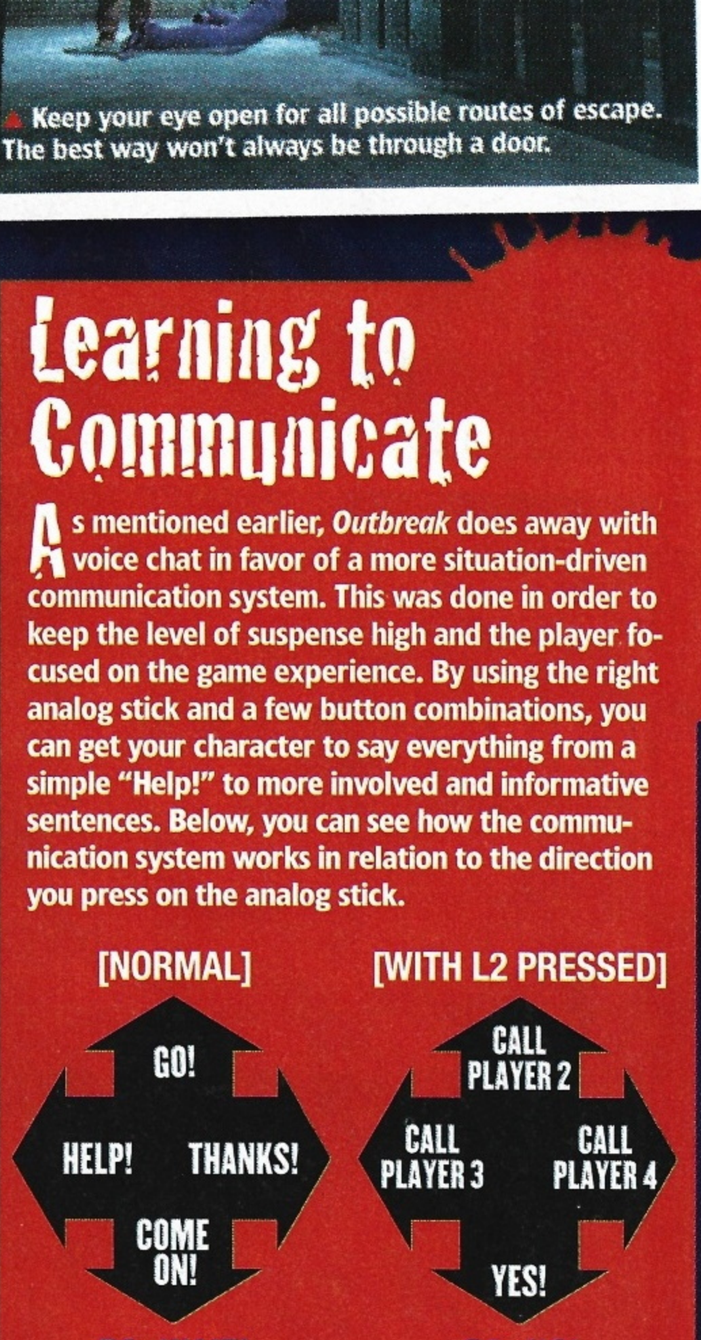
While the Japanese version of the game supports the PS2 hard drive, which allows for considerably faster load times; the U.S. version might not.



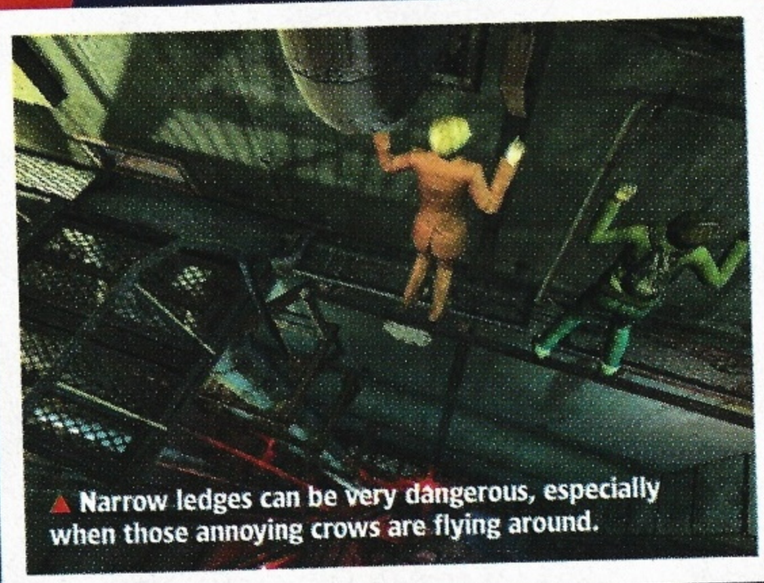
▲ With a well-designed inventory system, exchanging items is as simple as a few clicks of the button. You'll still have to get good at it, though, especially in those cases when zombies are around.

Learning to Communicate

As mentioned earlier, *Outbreak* does away with voice chat in favor of a more situation-driven communication system. This was done in order to keep the level of suspense high and the player focused on the game experience. By using the right analog stick and a few button combinations, you can get your character to say everything from a simple "Help!" to more involved and informative sentences. Below, you can see how the communication system works in relation to the direction you press on the analog stick.

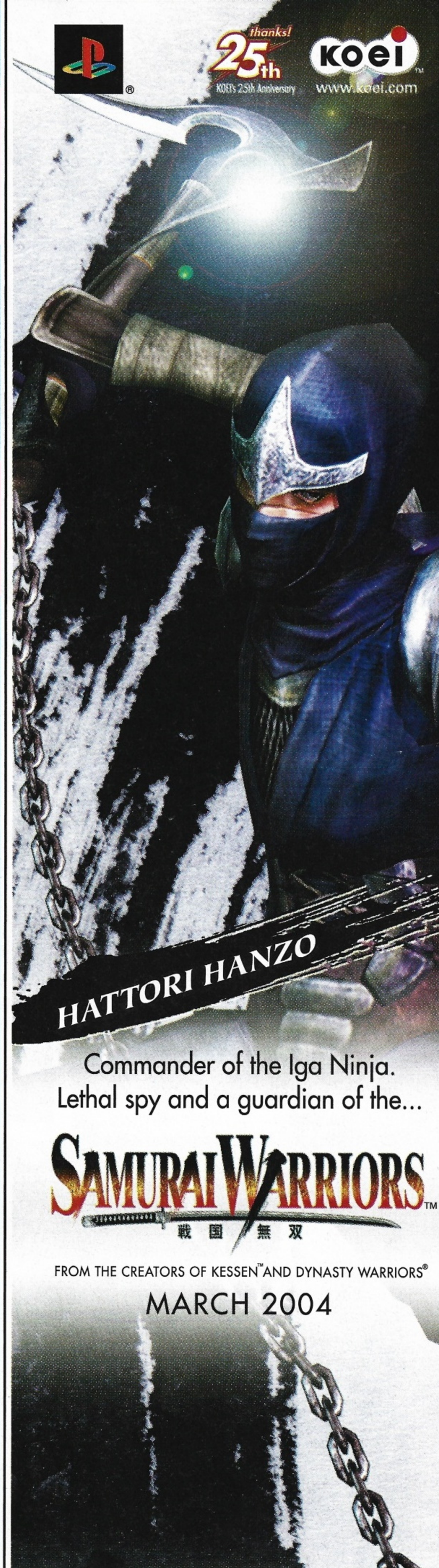


Note: You can also use the Circle button to adlib, during certain situations, and have conversations that continue for a while. Useful information can be found this way.



▲ Narrow ledges can be very dangerous, especially when those annoying crows are flying around.

▲ You'll finally get a chance to see how large Raccoon City really is. It's huge!



fact that being able to play an *RE* game with other fans all around the country is just plain cool. You'll never really know if someone is about to betray you or not.

Decide Your Fate

In many ways, *Outbreak* will be very challenging and could end up being, arguably, the most difficult *RE* title yet created. Unlike past titles in the series, no real clues or hints will ever be provided. It's up to the player to figure out what to do next. You'll truly have to explore the environments, looking for objects that can be of help or benefit you, and then decide what to do next. And, on occasion, the incorrect decision will be made or the wrong path taken, especially since there are multiple ways to do everything.

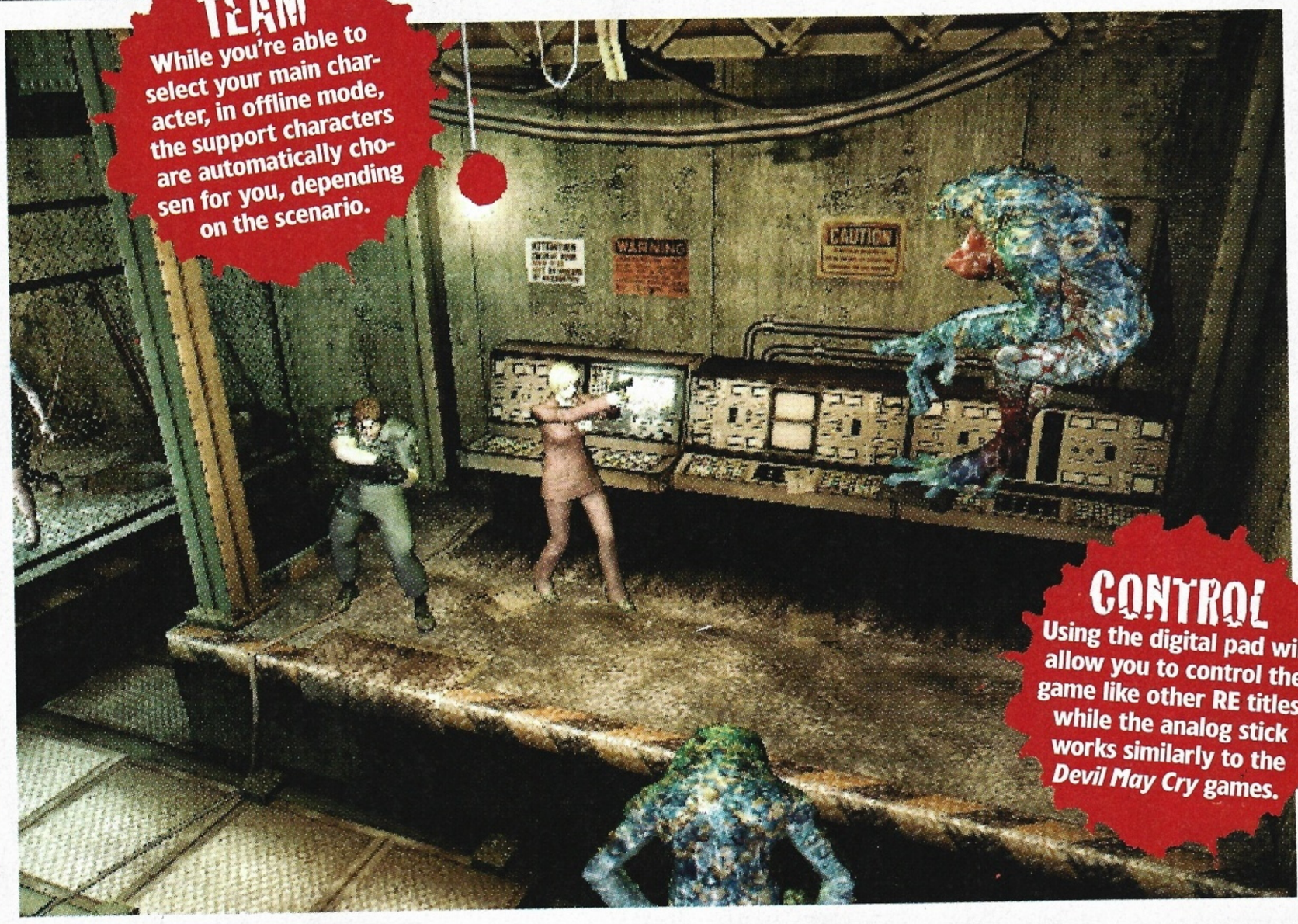
Let's take a locked door as an example. For most people, the direct thing to do is to look for a key. However, if zombies surround that key, then it's probably better to find another way. So, what do you do? Well, you can try to bash the door open, but that takes time and could be dangerous if some enemies are on your tail. However, if you have a gun, you can use some bullets and shoot it open. But, ammo is precious, so do you want to risk using those bullets when there could zombies on the other side of the door? Those are just some of the decisions you'll have to make in the game and they certainly won't be easy. Just like in real life, those choices will determine if you succeed or fail miserably.

Going Even Deeper

What makes *Outbreak* so deep, though, is the impressive number of additional bonuses and collectible items that go far beyond what we've seen in the series before. The obvious inclusions, such as additional character costumes, are here, but there are also a few other things that will take gamers by surprise. The biggest of these would have to be the special collectible items scattered around the game world. In all, there will be around 260 of these objects, hidden within the various cracks and crevices of Raccoon City. And the character you play as directly affects what items you'll be able to find. For example, Kevin will be able to find his favorite lighter, but no other characters will.

AT A GLANCE

Unlockable Characters: 20+
Bonus Items: 260+
Progressive Support: No
Widescreen Support: No
Online Rankings: Yes

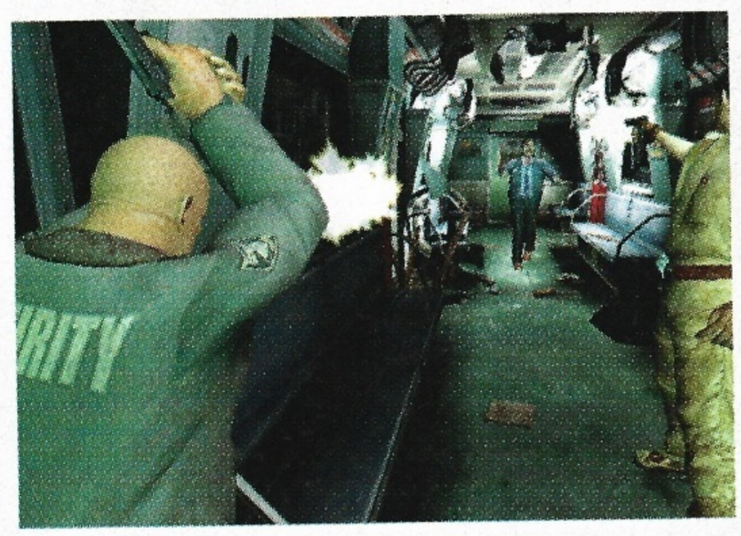


TEAM
While you're able to select your main character, in offline mode, the support characters are automatically chosen for you, depending on the scenario.

CONTROL
Using the digital pad will allow you to control the game like other RE titles, while the analog stick works similarly to the *Devil May Cry* games.

▲ We really like to use Kevin because he has a good range with his attacks, even when he doesn't have an actual weapon handy.

▲ Do your best to avoid confronting these modified Hunters. They are extremely fast and agile and can cause your team some serious damage.



▲ Unlike past *RE* titles, you really have to learn to work together with others. Try to go solo and your chances of survival drop considerably.

Something Old, Something New

The great thing about *Outbreak* is that you'll get to revisit some of the areas you went through in the second and third *RE* titles. However, there are also tons of new locations to check out, explore and fight in.

▲ Here's the moth-infested computer room that was located near the end of the second game. It's a bit worse-looking now.

▲ This warehouse area is completely new, though, and will play a crucial role in one of the game's many boss fights.

Personnel Files

KEVIN RYMAN

Occupation: Police Officer
Personal Item: .45 Automatic
Special Abilities: Kick, Tackle

▶A cop with the Raccoon City PD, Kevin is athletic and a good shot. A good fellow all around, he's also a dyed-in-the-wool optimist who doesn't dwell on small things. But his happy-go-lucky personality has worked against him: he has failed the S.T.A.R.S. selection process twice.

MARK WILKINS

Occupation: Security Guard
Personal Item: Custom Handgun
Special Abilities: Guard, Full Swing Attack

▶A Vietnam veteran, Mark works security. At 50, he's still physically strong, but war has made him mentally fragile. He just wants to put the past behind him and live in peace.

GEORGE HAMILTON

Occupation: Doctor
Personal Item: Medical Set
Special Abilities: Tackle, Making Cures

▶George works at the hospital and is a first-class surgeon. Though not a natural leader, he has a cooperative spirit, and inspires trust. He has a good knowledge of medicinal herbs and cures.

CINDY LENNOX

Occupation: Waitress
Personal Item: Herb Case
Special Abilities: Ducking, Applying Herbs

▶A waitress, Cindy is popular because of her unbreakable, bright smile. Whether by nature or profession, she's service-oriented and thinks of other people first. Even in severe situations, she's able to gather her courage and adapt.

DAVID KING

Occupation: Plumber
Personal Item: Tool Box
Special Abilities: Wrench Throw, Knife Attack

▶A quiet plumber, David doesn't speak of his past, but he's friendly; he's just a man of few words. With sharp eyesight and deft knife-work, he can get around tough situations.

ALYSSA ASHCROFT

Occupation: Journalist
Personal Item: Lock-picking Tools
Special Abilities: Back Step, Picking Locks

▶Alyssa is a journalist. Vigorously curious, she has an insatiable appetite for collecting information. Pushy and strong-willed, she is a sore loser who clashes with others.

JIM CHAPMAN

Occupation: Train Employee
Personal Item: Coin
Special Abilities: Playing Dead, Item Search

▶A subway employee, Jim is friendly, but often exposes his cowardice and narrow-mindedness. He has powers of intuition and is very good at solving even advanced puzzles.

YOKO SUZUKI

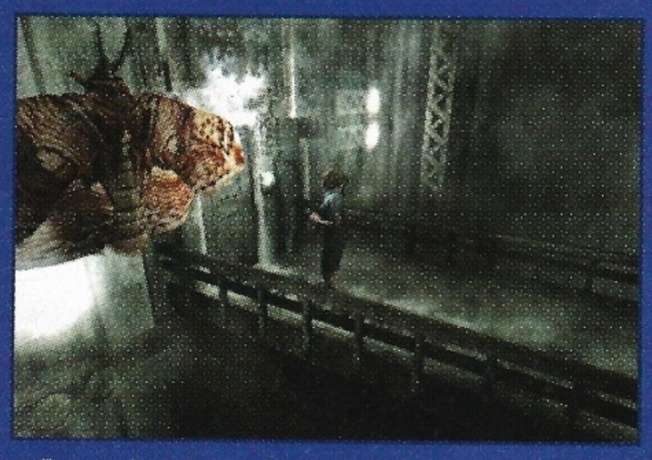
Occupation: University Student
Personal Item: Knapsack
Special Abilities: Escape, Carry More Items

▶Yoko is very knowledgeable about computers. She has a quiet personality, but her mental strength and toughness is surprising. However, once she gets hung up on something, she's a bit slow on the uptake with other things.

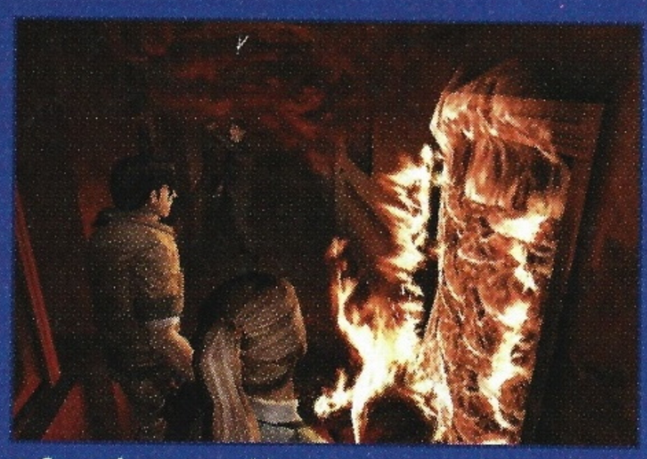
Tonight's Creature Features

While all of the past *RE* enemies have been redone for this game, the development team also created 4-5 new ones just for That means you'll catch a good glimpse of some classic creatures, but still never be sure of what's going to jump out from that next corner or window opening.

▲ To say the least, you'll come across some monsters that defy description. However, shoot first and ask questions later.



▲ Remember those giant moths from *Resident Evil 2*? Well, they are back and just as annoying. They seem to be quicker, too.



▲ Sometimes, your biggest enemy won't be a slimy boss or a mindless zombie, but something more true to life... like fire.

▲ The Hunters have had a bit of a redesign, but they are still very strong and agile. Oh, and they can smash your weapons, as well.

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MARCH 2004

PlayStation®2

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Unfortunately, Capcom is being mum about what happens about you discover all the items, but we expect it to be something pretty cool.

Further building upon the game's replay value is the fact that there will be over 20 unlockable characters, all of which are actually NPCs that you'll encounter during your journey. Most of them are modeled off of the other main characters, but they will still all have unique strengths and weaknesses, such as a little girl who's quick, but can't even really survive one zombie bite.

Another thing that players will appreciate is the fact that there are reasons to play through as all the different main characters. Along with unique story sequences and a few different endings, there will also be special events that don't occur with everyone. Throw in the fact that it will generally take most people around 10-15 hours to play through with just one character and you've got one epic game on your hands.

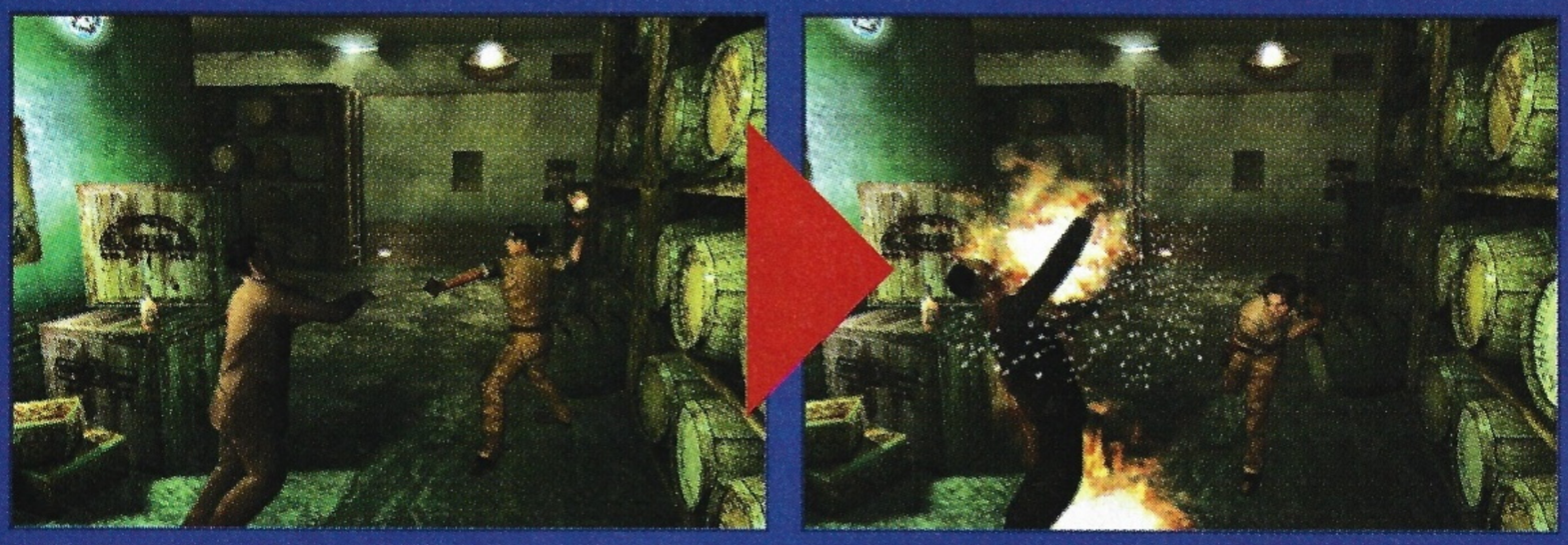
The Future is Bright

There's no doubt, at least in our minds, that *Outbreak* represents a welcome change for the *Resident Evil* franchise. It tries a lot of new things and definitely innovates in several important areas. Even the way that series' fans will have to approach the game will be radically different, as they're now required to think and play as a group. It's an interesting experiment, to say the least, and the results are certainly looking quite positive. And, come this March, you can expect that countless PS2 owners will, once again, be on the edge of their seats, constantly fearful of what's around that next corner. We don't know about you, but we certainly wouldn't have it any other way.

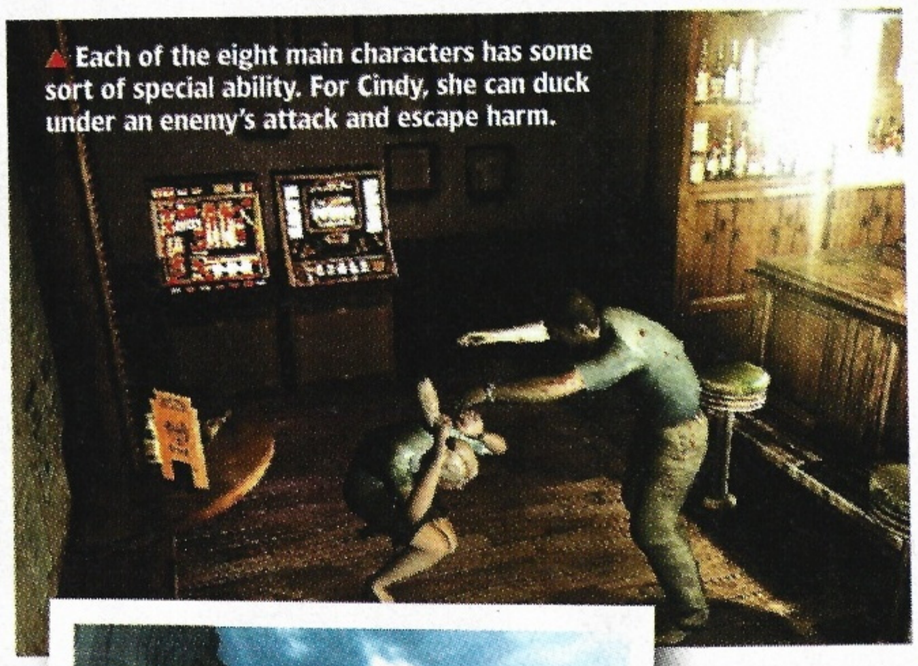
SECRETS
There are so many secrets and bonus items in this title that the actual game testers mentioned that they were highly impressed with the amount.

Explosive Arsenal

Since traditional weapons, like guns, are in scarce supply, you'll have to use regular items as weapons. Obviously, of these, the classic Molotov Cocktail is quite popular and certainly very damaging.



▲ Putting all the materials together to make a cocktail takes some time, so make sure your aim is dead-on before you throw one. You have to make each one count. If you hit your target, you'll be awarded with a nice explosion and a bit of carnage.



▲ Each of the eight main characters has some sort of special ability. For Cindy, she can duck under an enemy's attack and escape harm.

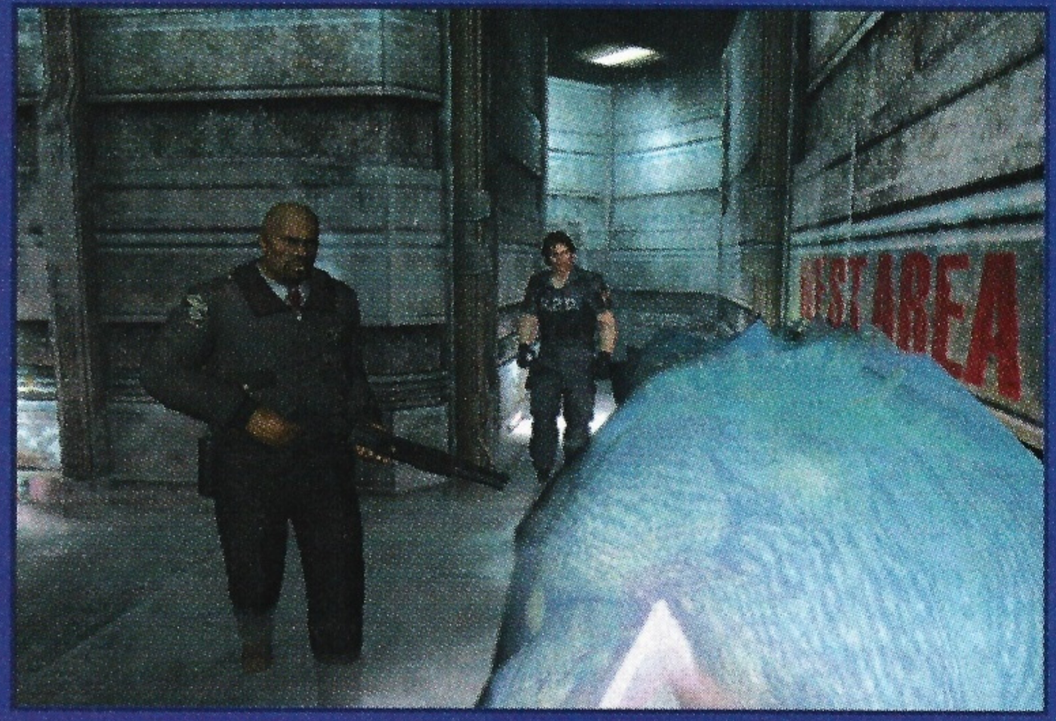
◀ Don't be afraid to run away, from time to time. There are often just way too many zombies to try to kill.

▼ Some of the boss characters can get quite large, so attack from several different angles.

▲ You can easily tell the strengths and weaknesses of each character at this selection screen.

Always be Ready ...

The developers of this game really like to throw surprises constantly your way. That includes formerly frozen enemies suddenly coming to life to attack you. The lesson here is to always be careful and have your weapon ready. You just never quite know what's going to happen next in this game.



▲ Eventually, all the frozen things in the lab will start to thaw, allowing several creatures, like these Hunters, to come back to life. Sucks, doesn't it?

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MARCH 2004

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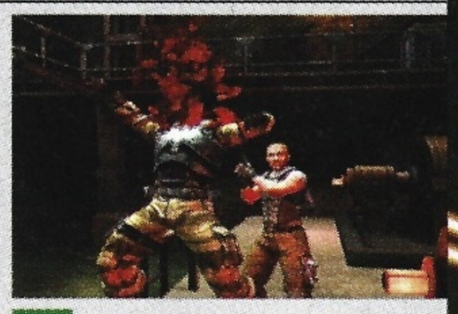

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HOT GAMES

Don't waste a second; turn on over to these big games NOW!

▲ 007: Everything Or Nothing *pg. 68*

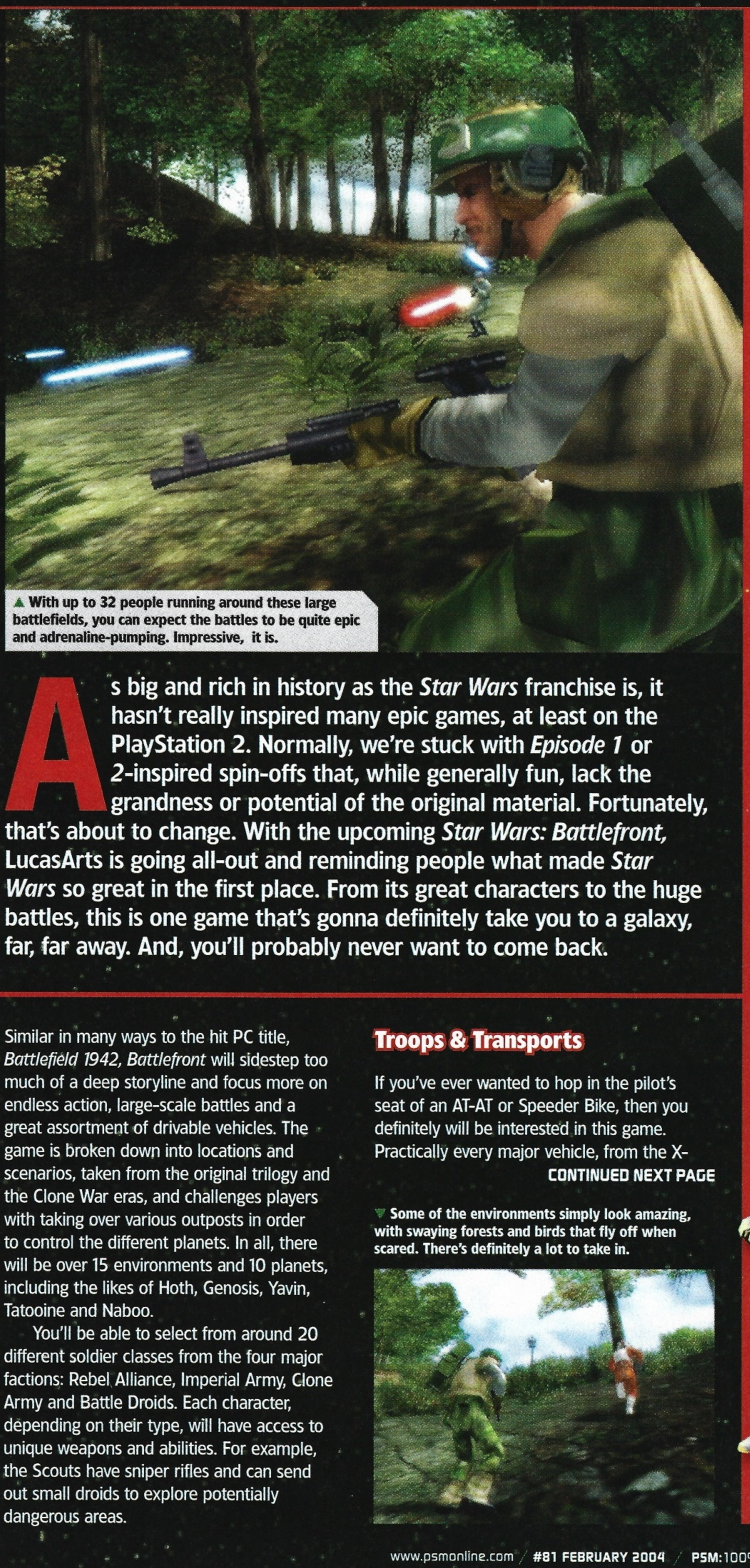
▲ Spy Fiction *pg. 74*

▲ 100 Bullets *pg. 76*

STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT

GAME INFO / PUB LUCASARTS | DEV PANDEMIC STUDIOS | REL DATE FALL | TYPE ACTION/SHOOTER | MAX PLAYERS 16 (ONLINE) 32 (LAN) | ESRB RATING PENDING

<< LUCASARTS IS GOING ALL-OUT AND REMINDING PEOPLE WHAT MADE STAR WARS SO GREAT IN THE FIRST PLACE >>



▲ With up to 32 people running around these large battlefields, you can expect the battles to be quite epic and adrenaline-pumping. Impressive, it is.

As big and rich in history as the *Star Wars* franchise is, it hasn't really inspired many epic games, at least on the PlayStation 2. Normally, we're stuck with *Episode 1* or *2*-inspired spin-offs that, while generally fun, lack the grandness or potential of the original material. Fortunately, that's about to change. With the upcoming *Star Wars: Battlefront,* LucasArts is going all-out and reminding people what made *Star Wars* so great in the first place. From its great characters to the huge battles, this is one game that's gonna definitely take you to a galaxy, far, far away. And, you'll probably never want to come back.

Similar in many ways to the hit PC title, *Battlefield 1942, Battlefront* will sidestep too much of a deep storyline and focus more on endless action, large-scale battles and a great assortment of drivable vehicles. The game is broken down into locations and scenarios, taken from the original trilogy and the Clone War eras, and challenges players with taking over various outposts in order to control the different planets. In all, there will be over 15 environments and 10 planets, including the likes of Hoth, Genosis, Yavin, Tatooine and Naboo.

You'll be able to select from around 20 different soldier classes from the four major factions: Rebel Alliance, Imperial Army, Clone Army and Battle Droids. Each character, depending on their type, will have access to unique weapons and abilities. For example, the Scouts have sniper rifles and can send out small droids to explore potentially dangerous areas.

Troops & Transports

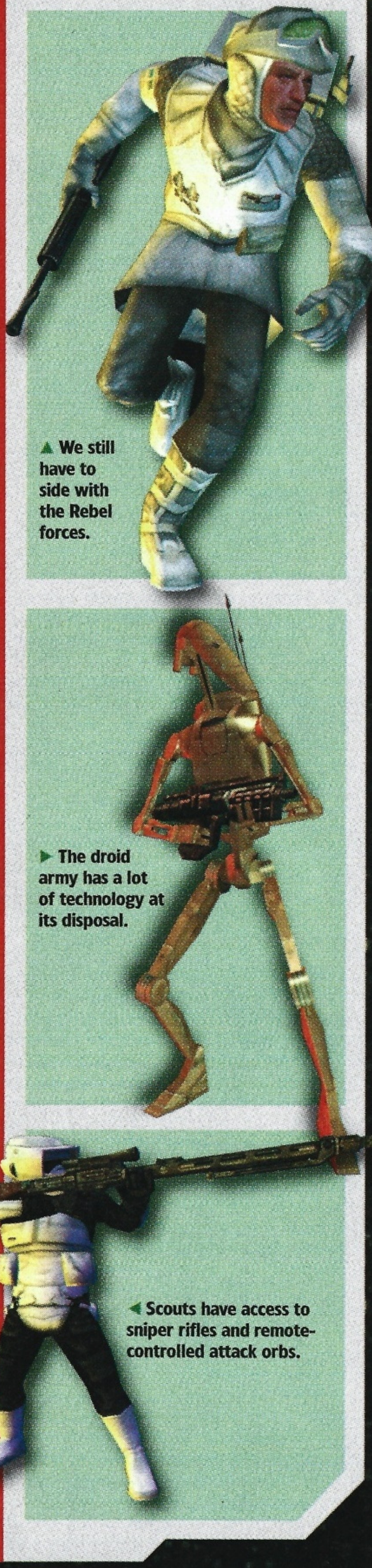
If you've ever wanted to hop in the pilot's seat of an AT-AT or Speeder Bike, then you definitely will be interested in this game. Practically every major vehicle, from the X-

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

▼ Some of the environments simply look amazing, with swaying forests and birds that fly off when scared. There's definitely a lot to take in.

Which side will you fight for?

Each of the different forces have unique troops that you can choose to play as. From Scouts to Pilots, each feature valuable skills that can be used advantageously in battle.



▲ We still have to side with the Rebel forces.

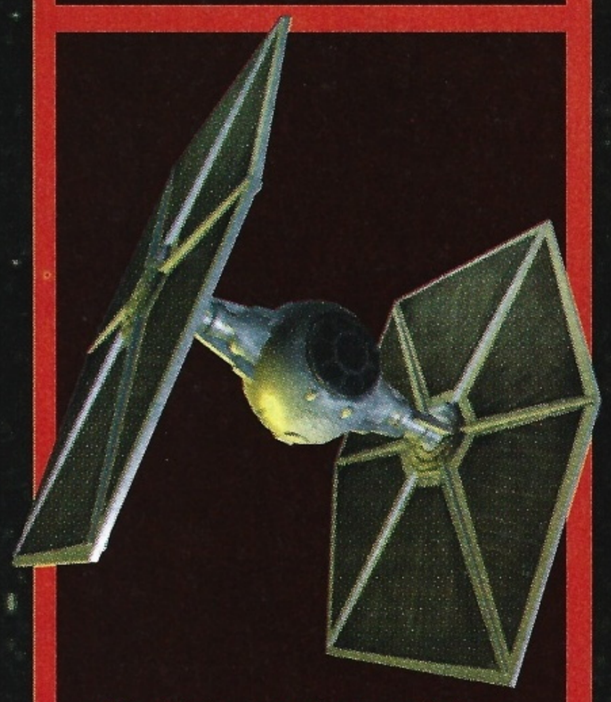
▶ The droid army has a lot of technology at its disposal.

◀ Scouts have access to sniper rifles and remote-controlled attack orbs.

EARN YOUR PILOT'S LICENSE...

Nothing beats being able to jump into the classic *Star Wars* vehicles and taking them out on test drives.

▲ The X-Wing is easily one of our favorite ships, just because it's so fast and agile.



▲ We didn't get to fly ones of these, but you can bet we will the next time we check out *Battlefront*.

CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE

Wing to the Snowspeeder has been included, and you'll be able to drive all of them. Not only that, but you'll also be able to jump back and forth between the gunner positions or let your friends man the firepower. Imagine being able to relive the classic Hoth battle, with your friends controlling various gun turrets, Taun Tauns and Snowspeeders, while your opponents slowly advance in their AT-ATs. Talk about exciting. We're already salivating at the thought.

Online Goodness

Along with support for 32 players, via a LAN, *Battlefront* will also be able to accommodate up to 16 people online, each of whom will be able to communicate via the USB headset. Needless to say, 56K users need not apply. Computer-controlled characters will also be available, in those instances when there just aren't enough living players to fill out the needed positions.

Incredibly enough, despite having so many characters running around in extremely large environments, the game ran very smoothly with no real hiccups or slowdown. This is especially impressive when you consider how well detailed everything is. However, to even further increase performance, the developers are also toying with the idea of being able to let players turn their PS2s into dedicated servers, which other gamers could host games on.

ALL YOUR BASE ARE BELONG TO US

Similar to Battlefield 1942, players will have to assualt and capture various bases in order to take control of the planet. Strong defenses will be key.

▲ You can easily tell who controls a base by the color of light broadcast from it.

Worthy of the Name

There's no denying the potential of a game like this. Not only does it look great, but also the simple idea of running around with your friends, in the *Star Wars* universe, is downright appealing. Imagine the epic encounters and back-to-the-wall situations you'll find yourself in. As a fan of *Star Wars* games, but typically those on other systems, it's good to see the PS2 getting one that people can potentially get truly excited about. In the coming months, we'll be revealing more of the vehicles and gameplay features that should hopefully catapult *Battlefront* to the, well, front of this year's must-have list. So, grab your lightsabers and start practicing. This Fall, you're definitely going to need the Force on your side. **STEPHEN FROST**

THE BUZZ

With so many vehicles to chose from, this is the *Stars Wars* game to get excited about.

▲ Despite the large number of vehicles and characters on-screen, the game still runs very smoothly and without hiccups.

▲ You'll find yourself fighting in the streets of some of the biggest cities and towns seen in the *Stars Wars* movies.

▶ The AT-STs are surprisingly quick and powerful. One of these can blast a town into debris rather quickly.

▶ We like the scouts because they can send out little orbs that can explore potentially dangerous areas. The sniper rifle comes in quite handy, as well.

PSM BREAKDOWN An up-close look at the game in action

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EVERYONE
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Fantasy Violence

XBOX

PlayStation.2

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GAME INFO | PUB EA | DEV EA | TYPE ACTION/DRIVING | REL DATE FEBRUARY | MAX PLAYERS FOUR | ESRB TEEN

If Looks Could Kill

Using cyberscan techniques, the developers were able to create in-game characters that look quite accurate. Here are the game's three main femme fatales. Pretty, aren't they?

▲ Not only do the boss characters have more personality, but they often end up quite difficult to kill.

JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

Despite his age, Bond is looking better than ever

In a lot of ways, Electronic Arts is taking some pretty major risks with its latest installment of the 007 franchise. The game has migrated from the now established first-person view to a third-person one and the generally expected deathmatch feature has been transformed into a rather unique co-op mode. Yet, despite these changes, it seems that the series has still managed to take a significant step forward for the better. *Everything or Nothing* could very well end up as the best *Bond* title to ever come out of EA.

The game is based on an original story scripted by a veteran *Bond* screenwriter, so it's definitely more dramatic and less predictable than most of you are probably used to. From there, the developers brought in some additional star talents, such as the likes of Shannon Elizabeth, Willem Dafoe and Heidi Klum, which definitely helps to increase the cinematic feel of the title.

We also loved many of the game's additional improvements, such as the hand-to-hand fighting system, which is decently deep; the "Bond Sense", which basically allows you to see all the interactive objects around you; and the "learning" AI enemies, which constantly get smarter. The unlockable arena mode is also great, as you can take on three other players in several trap-filled environments. What a blast!

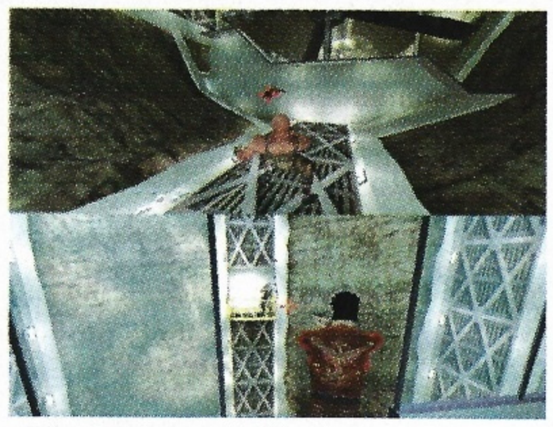
If the driving sequences can just get a little more time spent on them, over the next month or so, then the game should definitely end up as an extremely fun and well-polished experience. Perhaps, even Ian Fleming would be proud. **STEPHEN FROST**

▲ **The Porsche Cayenne Turbo makes it's first videogame appearance, and it comes loaded with some serious firepower.**

▶ **Since they are able to use Pierce Brosnan's image, it makes sense to make the game third-person.**

◀ **You can't kill him, but Jaws can definitely be slowed down by huge amounts of electricity. Remember that.**

ONLINE COMPATIBLE



▲ **It may not be what fans were quite expecting, but the co-op mode is definitely very fun and challenging.**

THE BUZZ

New enhancements and the online co-op mode could make this the best *Bond* yet.

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TEEN
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Blood
Violence

PlayStation.2

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GAME INFO | PUB MIDWAY | DEV MIDWAY | TYPE ACTION | REL DATE MAY | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB PENDING

▲ Pyrokinesis is the ability to set things on fire from a distance... smokin'!

▲ With rag-doll physics and copious blood splatters, we're guessing you'll see an M rating on this one.

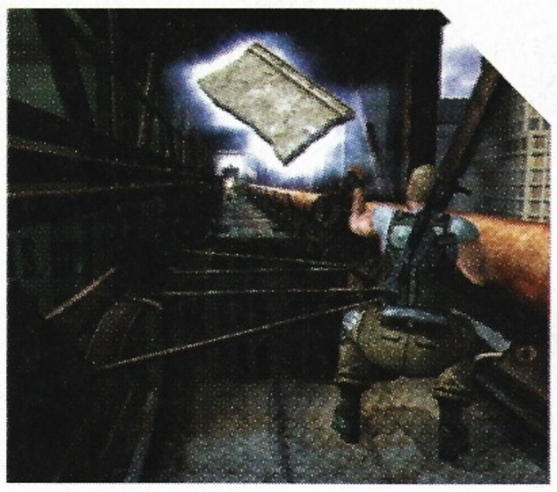
▲ Your enemies can still shoot at you while in your telekinetic grasp, but this fellow is distracted by the fact that you've already set him on fire.

PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY

You've got the looks that kill... and start fires

There are a ton of military action shooters out there lately, but Midway's latest offering, formerly titled *ESPionage,* is the only one in which your brains are just as deadly as your bullets. No, you haven't been kidnapped by a deranged rich guy and forced to participate in some kind of strange, answer correctly-or-die quiz show. Rather, you play Nick Scryer, a soldier with a twisted arsenal of formidable psionic powers, including pyrokinesis, telekinesis, and mind control. Trust us when we say that setting an enemy aflame, dropping a crate on his head, then lifting him helplessly into midair and hurling him into the wall is just the beginning. Our boy Nick is absolutely brutal.

Your powers are handy for navigating the game's environments as well. For example, during our demo, we walked out onto a bridge, only to see three enemies and a grenade coming our way. It was easy to possess one enemy, forcing him to kill his two companions and them jump off the bridge himself, but we still had to get across the broken bridge ourselves. We could have rebuilt the bridge using telekinesis and pieces of rubble, but we decided to just stand on a big chunk of cement and levitate the whole thing across the gap, taking us with it. Then, when we ran into a psi-sensitive boss who started throwing train cars and semi trucks at us, things got really hairy. There may be plenty of military action games out there, but few are as exciting and open-ended as this one. **ERIC BRATCHER**



▲ There are multiple solutions to most situations. Sure, you could waste a lot of time and rebuild this bridge...

▲ ...or you could leave the building to the union boys and just TK surf over.

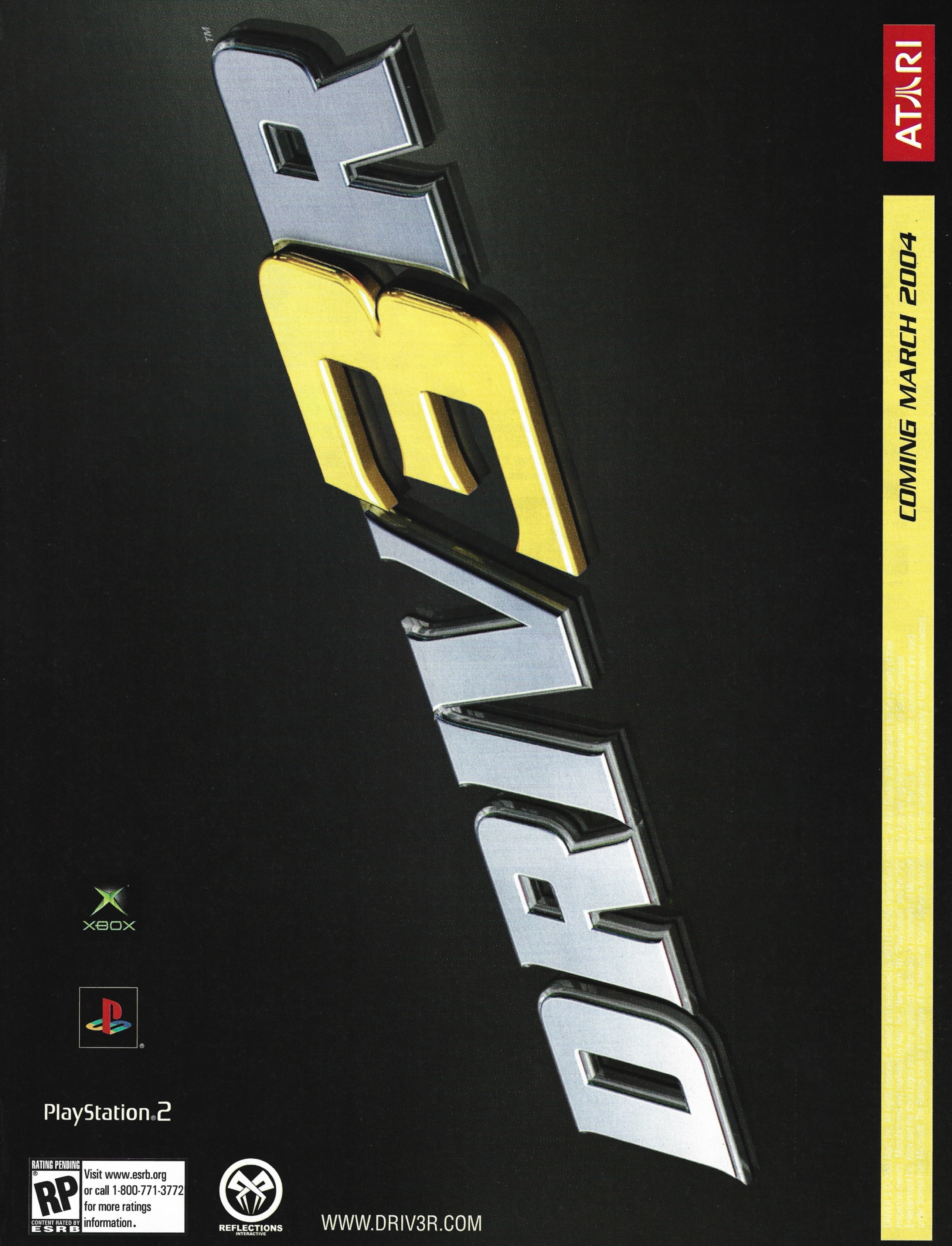
THE BUZZ

Versatile psi-powers and a robust physics system help this one levitate above the pack.

Drain That Brain!

Nick's psi-powers can only be used if you have enough psi-energy to execute them. This is replenished by using the Mind Drain ability on enemy soldiers. Sure, a properly done Mind Drain is fatal to the drainee, but it's more humane than some of your other "disposal methods".

▲ You don't exactly eat brains, but you don't exactly leave them alone either.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MX UNLEASHED

Splashdown's creators go back to their off-road roots

GAME INFO | PUB THQ | DEV RAINBOW STUDIOS | TYPE RACING | REL DATE FEBRUARY | MAX PLAYERS TBA | ESRB RATING PENDING

When you want something done right, you call in the pros. In this case, THQ wants to take its *MX* racing series to the next level, and who better to do it than Rainbow Studios, creator of the *ATV Offroad Fury* series.

Rainbow will be pulling out all the technical stops for this one to create five huge, wide-open racing environments, broken down into 40 tracks sporting realistic time of day & weather effects. Plenty of work is also being put into the rider/bike physics, which THQ promises will be the most realistic yet in the genre.

In addition to the usual career mode, *MX Unleashed* will also feature a Freeworld Mode, where you'll be able to freely explore the environments, tackling various mini-games — including a race against a helicopter.

We've been impressed by Rainbow Studios' work in the past, so hopes are high for this one. We'll see how it turns out this February. **RANDY NELSON**

▲ Not content to just show off your trick skills? You'll be able to race this helicopter, too!

▲ From fog to rain to snow, the game's races will take place in all weather conditions.

THE BUZZ

This motocross game has the potential to set a new standard in realism for the genre.

◀ Pretty standard MX fair — but check out the detail on those riders!

▲ Besides being huge, the environments also promise to have a lot of things going on in them.

▲ The game's setting is two parts sci-fi and one part survival horror.

▲ You tell your character to shoot, dodge, reload, and more — and she'll react instantly.

▲ Not only is the concept unique, but the game is actually looking really good, too.

GAME INFO | PUB KONAMI | DEV SONY CEI | REL DATE FEBRUARY | TYPE ACTION | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB PENDING

LIFELINE

Kiss your controller goodbye?

Cast aside your Dual Shock 2. That's what Konami wants you to do in this unique — to say the least — adventure game, in which the main character is controlled entirely using your voice (thanks to a USB headset and some advanced voice recognition technology).

Set on an Earth-orbiting space hotel, the game mixes action and adventure all directed by headset commands. For instance, you can tell you character to walk into a room, say "look at the desk," "take the paper," etc. But it also works in combat — you'll be shouting "shoot!," "reload!," and "dodge!" while attacking the hideous monsters roaming the station.

Though it may sound tedious, the huge amount of things to do and the equally large vocabulary recognized by the game should keep things interesting. We've been shouting "shoot, dammit!" at our game characters for years; finally, the dream of having them react will become a reality in February. **RANDY NELSON**

▲ You even tell your character which way to go, to open doors, etc.

THE BUZZ

There's never been a game like it, but will voicing every movement get too tedious?

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL 2005

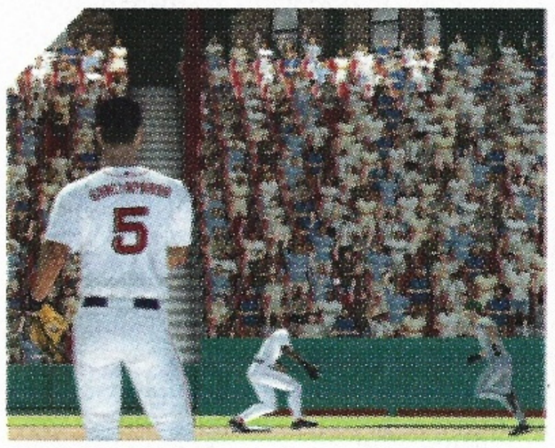
GAME INFO | PUB SONY CEA | DEV 989 SPORTS | TYPE SPORTS | REL DATE MARCH | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB RATING EVERYONE

Sony plans a stronger run to home base

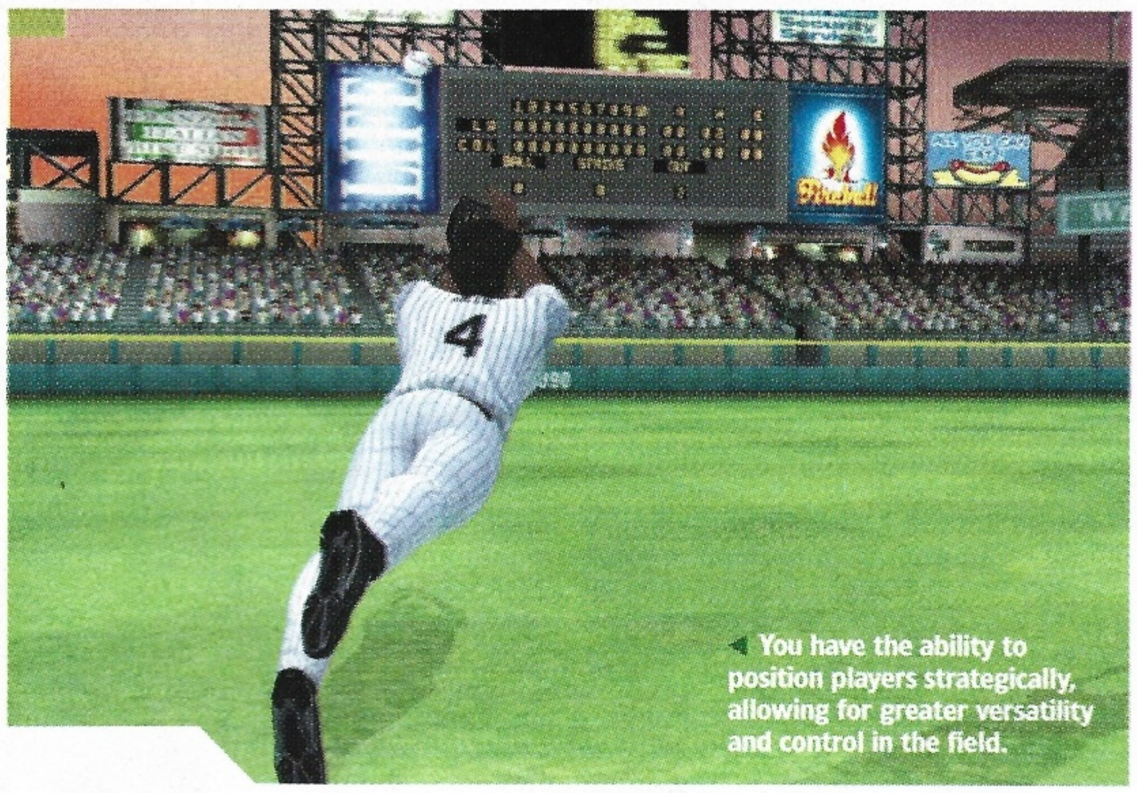
Let's not beat around the bush. *MLB 2004* was a swift kick in the jollies for fans anticipating a fresh experience. Mandatory graphical revamps notwithstanding, it lacked the key innovative elements that would attract amateur and hardcore enthusiasts alike.

Fast forward to 989 Sports' newest tobacco chewin', wood crackin' ball fest. Several attractive new additions grace *MLB 2005,* specifically in terms of gameplay. Over eleven core options meet Major League hopefuls, including a Career Mode that follows a player from a young spud in the minors to a top gun Sosa in the Bigs.

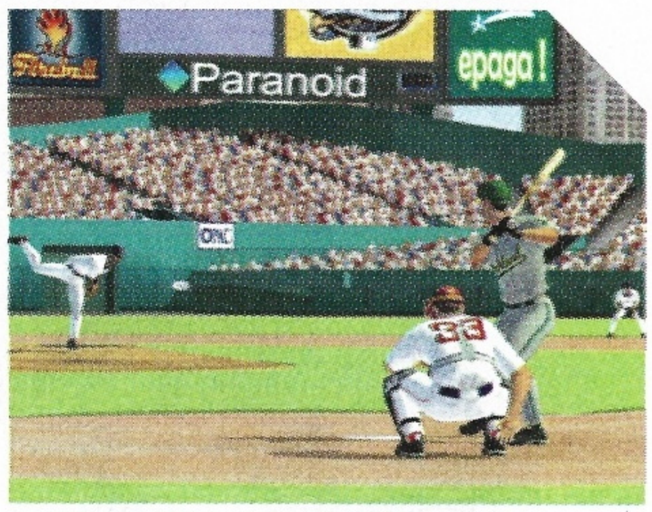
A novel addition is the Historical All-Time Greats selection, which breathes life into timeless figures such as Babe Ruth, Reggie Jackson and Catfish Hunter. To top off the list of copious expansions, a revitalized Franchise Mode positions you as the "player of the players" – if you catch my drift. Not just trades, but right down to the television deals, vendor negotiations and promo events, Wrigley Fields' profitability margin is in your capable hands. **CHRISTOPHER R. LADE**



▲ **Number 5 laughs it up: "Run sucker run." With my improved response time, you're a goner.**



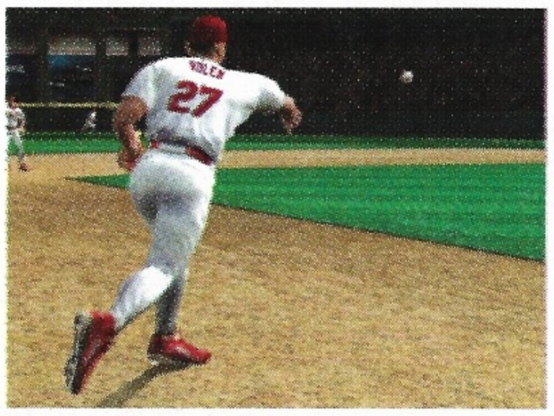
◀ **You have the ability to position players strategically, allowing for greater versatility and control in the field.**



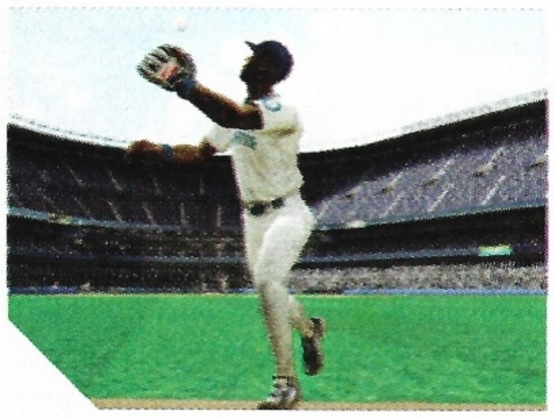
▲ **An *MLB 2005*-only feature is Total Control Pitching, allowing you to manipulate the pitch type, location and velocity.**

THE BUZZ

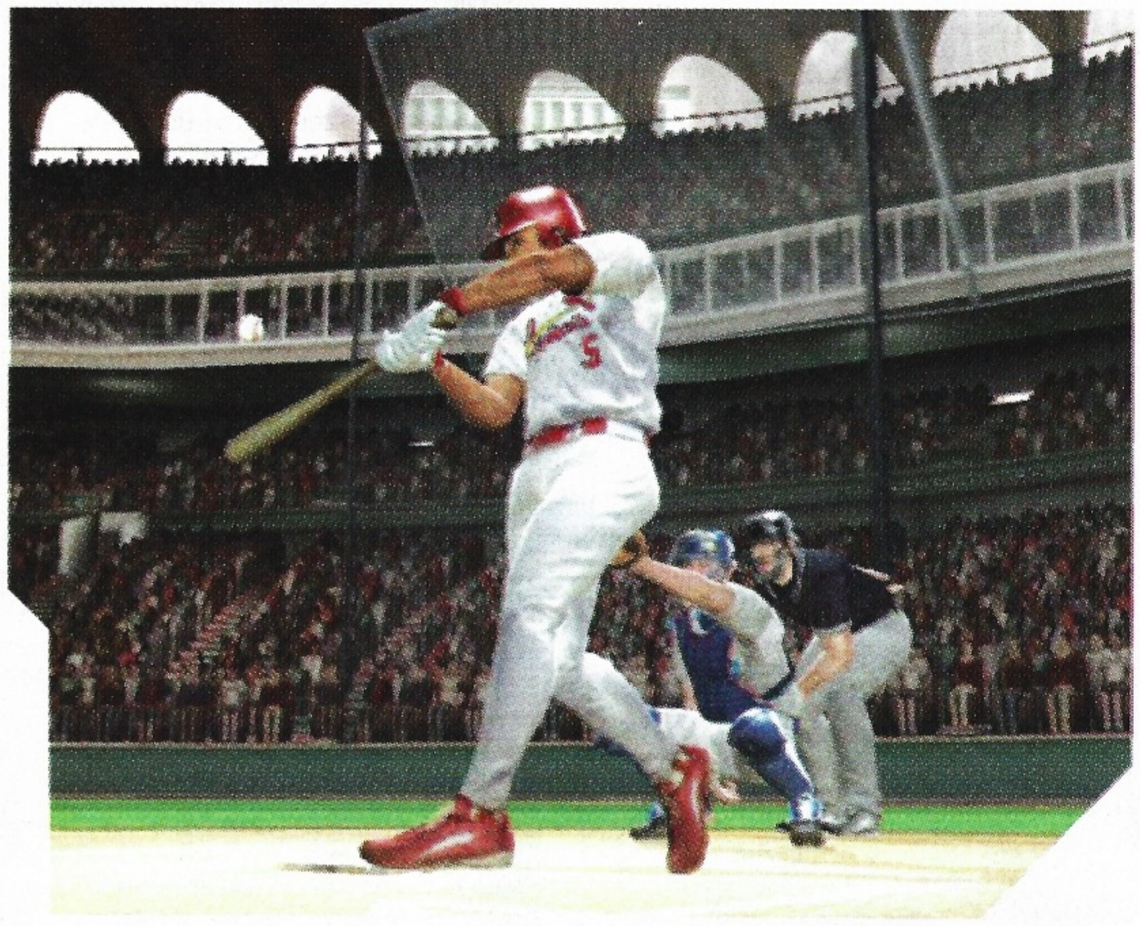
This year's *MLB* looks to be much stronger at bat than past seasons.



▲ **The freestyle system, used in EA's other sports titles, has finally made its way into this year's MVP.**



▲ **Can these stadiums be any more accurate? All you're missing is the smell of the hotdogs and beer.**



▲ **The hitting system has been tweaked considerably and fans are going to love the changes.**

GAME INFO | PUB EA | DEV EA CANADA | REL DATE SPRING | TYPE SPORTS | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB EVERYONE

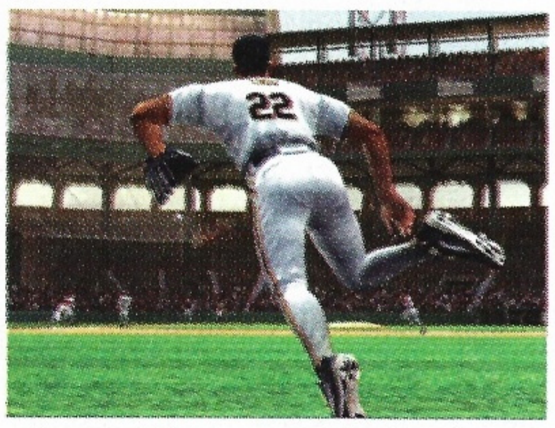
MVP BASEBALL 2004

America's pasttime gets a facelift

After dominating the hardball market following its replacement of the defunct *Triple Play* series last year, *MVP Baseball 2004* looks to be even better for this season. The game boast an even better audio/visual presentation compared to the original this time around, but it will also grace the PlayStation 2 version with an exclusive online feature; allowing its users to setup tournaments, download updated rosters, and play head-to-head competitive matches.

Of course, its list of new features doesn't end there. *MVP Baseball 2004* also sports a fresh hitting engine that makes for a much more interactive experience than last season's simplistic swats. Additionally, users can also take advantage of player-controlled slides and a more accurate fielding model as EA has introduced its popular freestyle mechanic into the baseball arena as well.

Slated for release just in time for Spring Training, *MVP Baseball 2004* looks ready to claim its spot as the number one diamond king. With the first game already established as one of the best of its kind, the thought of seeing it get even better makes us giddy. We'll keep you posted with more! **JEREMY DUNHAM/STEPHEN FROST**

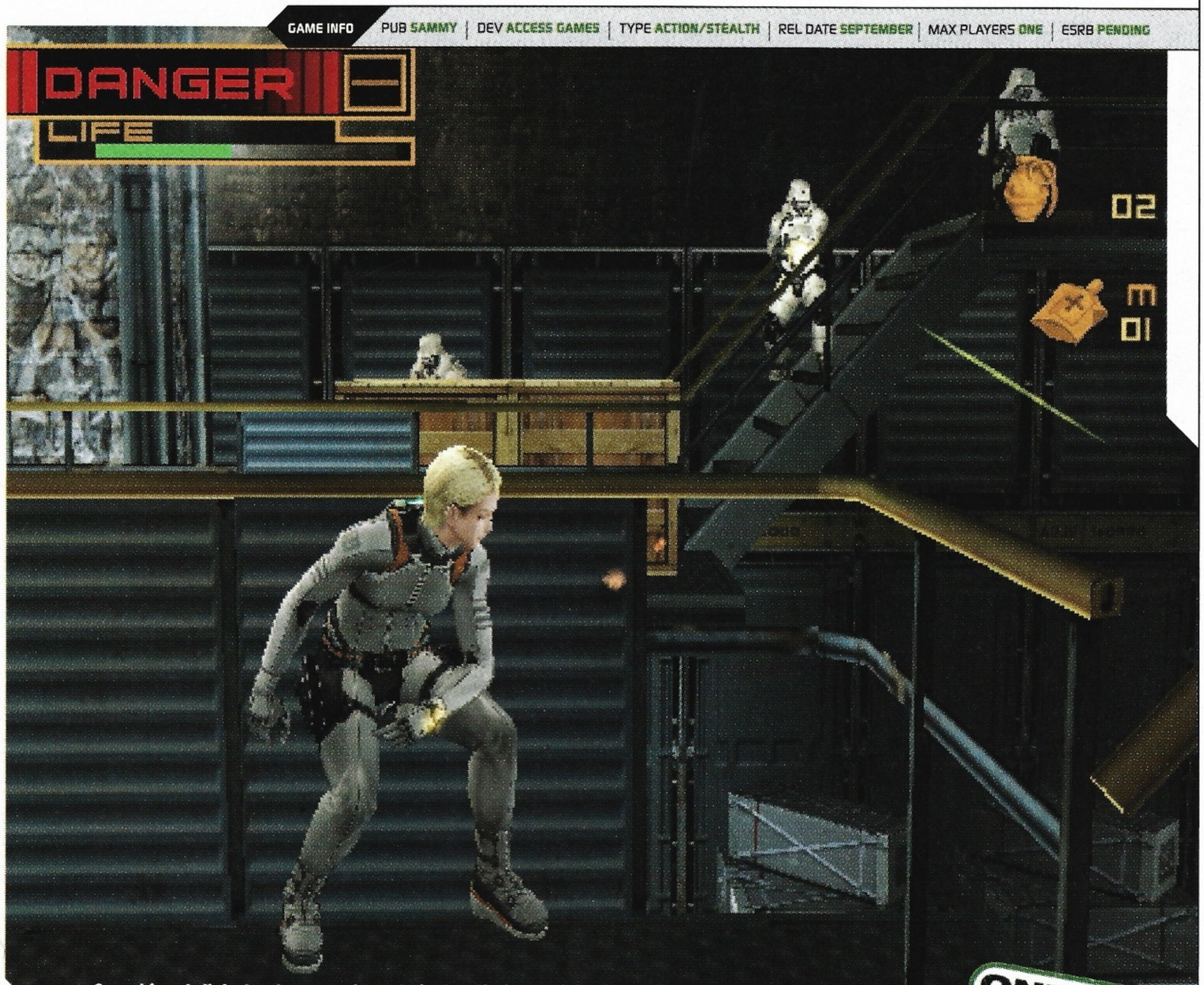


▲ **Improved character models and animations guarantee this is going to be one of the best-looking baseball games out there.**

THE BUZZ

EA makes some serious strides with even more player-controlled features.

GAME INFO | PUB SAMMY | DEV ACCESS GAMES | TYPE ACTION/STEALTH | REL DATE SEPTEMBER | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB PENDING



▲ Crouching definitely plays a major role in *Spy Fiction,* as it is the easiest way to stay out of the view of nearby enemies.

ONLY IN PSM NEW SCREENS

Skills And Stealth

Helping you along the way will be a number of cool gadgets and abilities. Some of them come from the traditional book of spying, while others are definitely state-of-the-art.

▲ Sometimes, just hiding behind some cover and listening in will reveal some useful clues.

▲ Other times, though, you'll have to utilize your chameleon suit in order to get close enough.

SPY FICTION

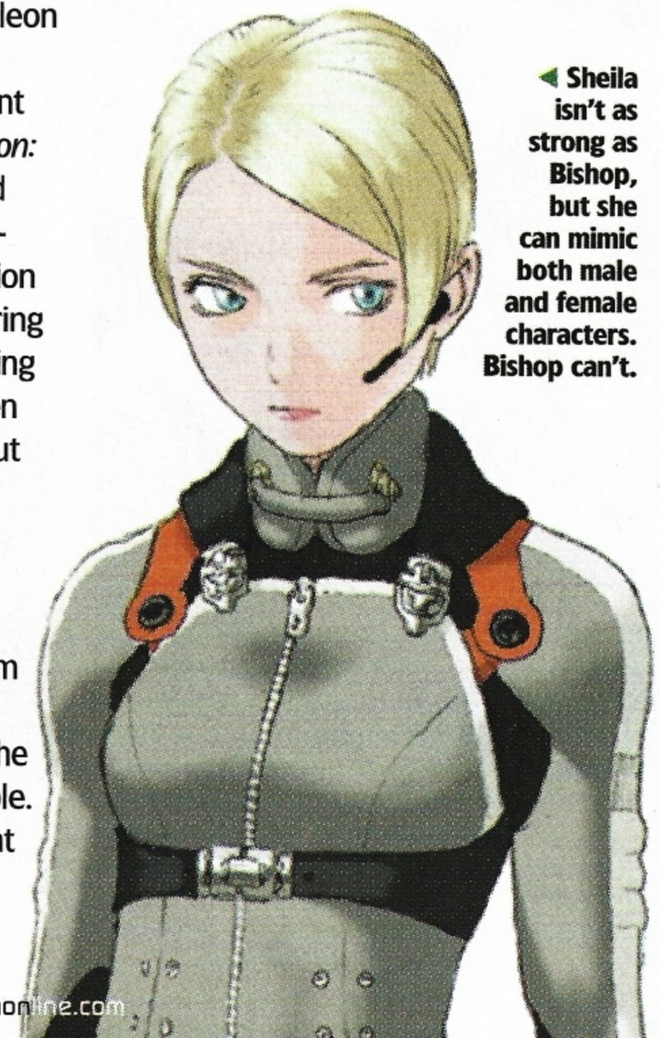
We go undercover to get a closer look at the spy game

We've touched on Sammy's upcoming spy-based, action title a few issues ago, but it hasn't been until now that we've been able to get behind the controls. Easy to pick up, the game definitely seems to have a lot going for it. Players will be able to choose from two main characters, Bishop and Sheila, and this will affect some of the game's story sequences and what ending you'll see. Bishop may be stronger, but Sheila can assume the disguise of both male and female NPCs.

We were definitely surprised at the high production values that the game has to offer, including above-average voice acting, great character designs and some rather well designed gadgets. The challenge of using the 3DA camera and Chameleon suit in order to mimic the look of other characters is definitely brilliant and far surpasses any sort of *Mission: Impossible* influence. We also loved the wall grips, which add a surprising amount to the game's exploration and strategy aspects. Often, exploring areas only accessible from the ceiling allows the player to discover hidden places or better positions to takeout nearby guards.

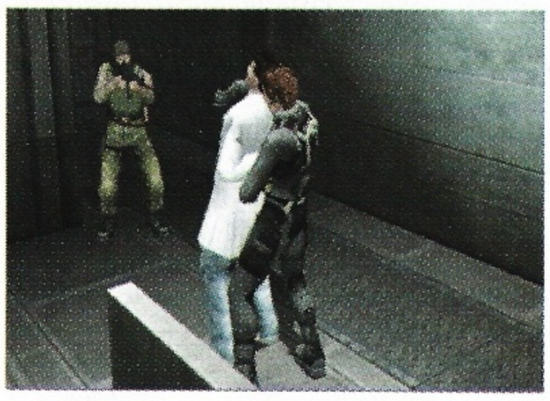
▲ The meter at the top left of the screens lets you know if you've been noticed or not. As long as it says "SAFETY", you're okay.

Released in Japan this past December, *Spy Fiction* won't see a U.S. release until much later this year. Why the delay? Well, the team would like to spend the extra time making sure that every aspect of the title is as close to perfect as possible. In fact, there's a decent chance that extra gameplay features, missions or bonuses will be added. That's probably a good idea given that *Metal Gear Solid 3* is waiting just around the corner. Despite the possible competition, though, *Spy Fiction* already looks to be a solid game with some definite innovative features. We can't wait to see more. **STEPHEN FROST**



◀ Sheila isn't as strong as Bishop, but she can mimic both male and female characters. Bishop can't.

▲ In some ways, the look of this game reminds us of *MGS2,* but the pace and overall feel is definitely different.



▲ It looks like you'll also be able to take hostages and use them as body cover. It sure sucks for that lab guy, though.

THE BUZZ

High production values and innovative features make *Spy Fiction* one to keep an eye on.

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(s03)

COMBAT ELITE: WWII PARATROOPERS

Take out history's real Dark Alliance

GAME INFO | PUB ACCLAIM | DEV BATTLEBORNE | TYPE ACTION/RPG | REL DATE JUNE | MAX PLAYERS TWO | ESRB RATING PENDING

◀ In some ways, this game reminds us of Eidos' *Commandos* series, except it has 3D backgrounds and more RPG elements.

If you've ever wondered what it would be like to play *Baldur's Gate* in World War II-era Europe, then this upcoming action/RPG from Acclaim is definitely what you've been looking for. Developed by BattleBorne Entertainment and based on Snowblind Studio's award-winning combat engine, *Behind Enemy Lines* allows two players the honor of simultaneously fighting through some of the most famous conflicts in history.

An assortment of other legendary battlegrounds highlight *Enemy Line's* allied progression through Nazi Germany. Of course, the game's weaponry and locales are being designed so that they're as historically accurate as possible and the *Baldur's Gate* engine has been modified quite heavily to support a greater array of projectiles.

Slated for a PlayStation 2 release later this summer, *Behind Enemy Lines* has certainly caught our attention. Expect us to return with more ASAP.

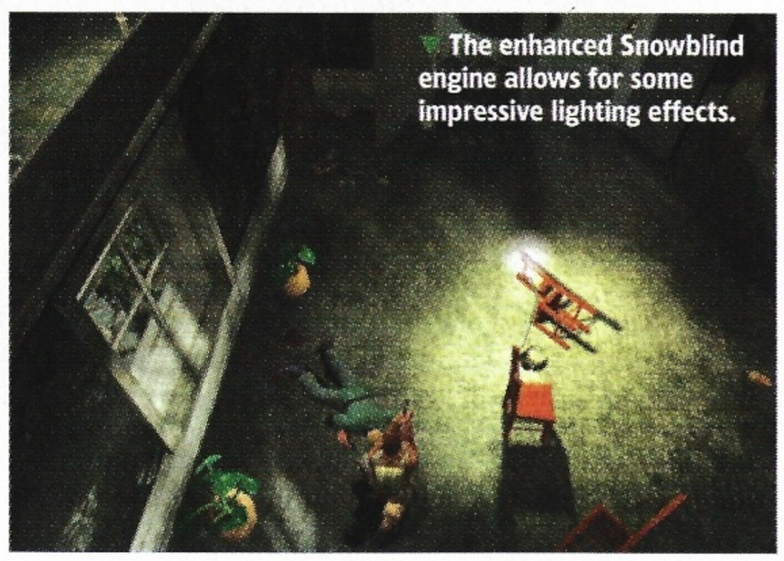
JEREMY DUNHAM/STEPHEN FROST

THE BUZZ

This graphics engine still rocks, and the setting is a fresh approach to the genre.

▲ Being able to play with another friend should definitely make this game one engaging experience.

▲ Using nearby objects as cover is going to be very crucial, if you hope to live long.

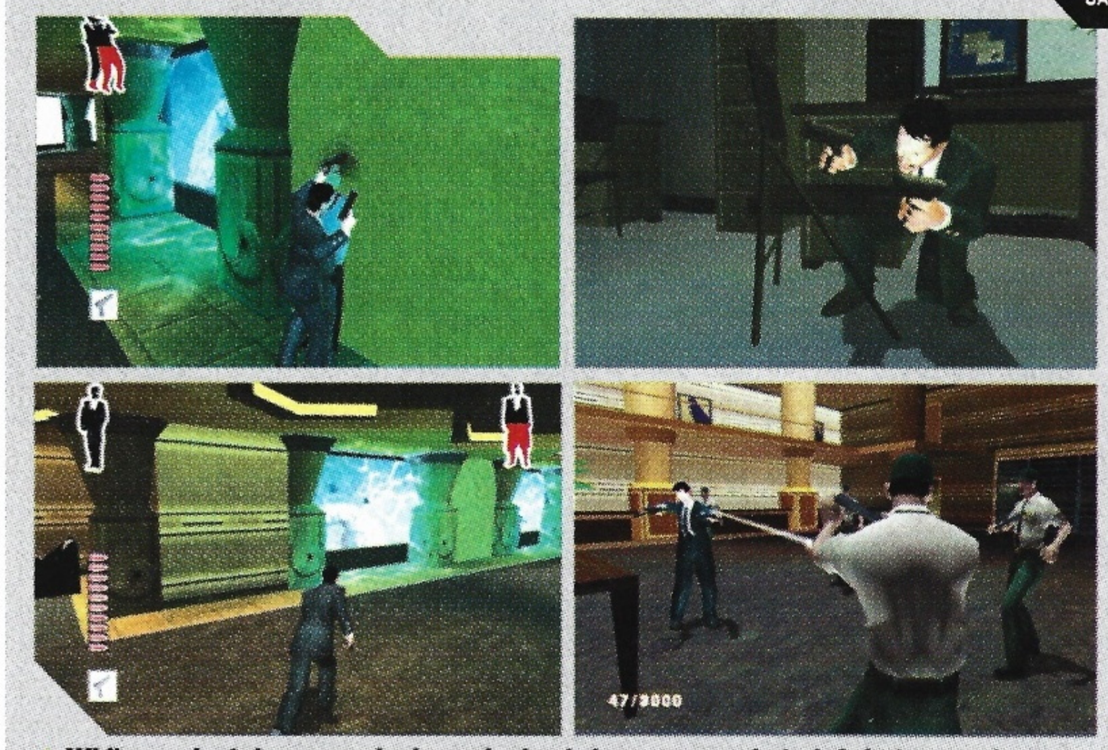


▼ The enhanced Snowblind engine allows for some impressive lighting effects.

GAME INFO | PUB ACCLAIM | DEV ACCLAIM AUSTIN | REL DATE FALL | TYPE ACTION | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB PENDING

100 BULLETS

That's a lot of lead



▲ While we don't know much about the lead character yet, he's definitely more into the "shoot first, and ask questions later" method of interpersonal interaction.

Vertigo imprint fans have been enjoying Brian Azzarello's seamy crime drama, *100 Bullets*, for years. Aware of this growing popularity, Acclaim Entertainment and its Austin-based studio has announced that it will be bringing the videogame version of *100 Bullets* to PlayStation 2 later this fall.

With a story written by Azzarello himself, *100 Bullets* is all about the mysterious "Agent Graves". Empowered with the ability to offer people consequence-free revenge on those that have wronged them, his identity and motive is an unsolved mystery. To help crack it, players will travel from Los Angeles and Atlantic City to Paris with multiple weaponry types, hostage-taking abilities, and fully interactive environments.

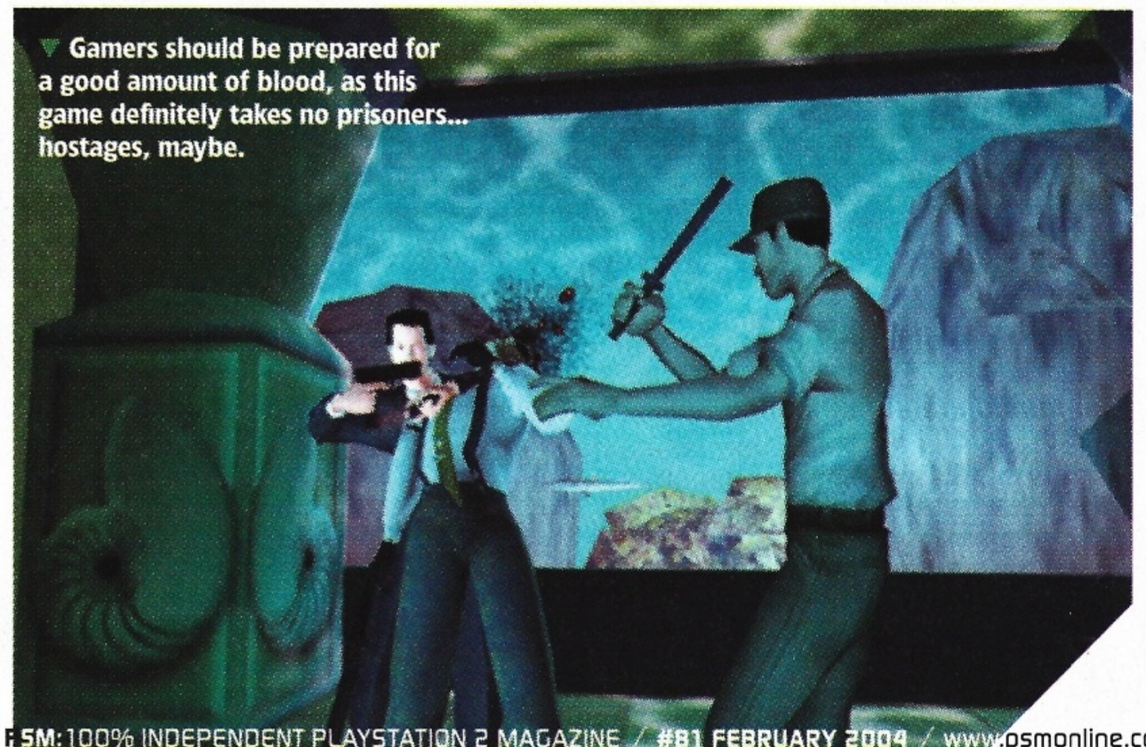
100 Bullets' most intriguing feature, though, is its supposed revolutionary gameplay that will be unveiled at E3 2004. It's definitely one to watch for later this year.

JEREMY DUNHAM/STEPHEN FROST

▶ Warning: *never* make fun of a guy in suspenders and leather gloves.

THE BUZZ

The comic has always been action-packed, so the game should be, too.



▼ Gamers should be prepared for a good amount of blood, as this game definitely takes no prisoners... hostages, maybe.

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GAME INFO | PUB ACCLAIM | DEV ACCLAIM AUSTIN | TYPE ACTION | MAX PLAYERS ONE | RELEASE DATE FALL | ESRB PENDING

THE RED STAR

Set in an alternate Russia known as the URRS, *The Red Star* is a futuristic action/battle game that tells the story of Red Fleet Sorceress-General Maya Antares and the search for her missing husband, Marcus.

Blending magic and technology together, players will be able to compete alone or with a friend as they traverse the *Red Star* universe. Though hand-to-hand combat will be an option, the three playable characters also incorporate 15 different types of sorcery and 10 upgradeable weapons apiece.

Acclaim is keeping a tight lip on the details, but we'll keep you updated with more as it develops.

JEREMY DUNHAM

THE BUZZ

The mixture of magic and technology could be interesting, but only if it's handled right.

▼▶ **The action is going to get hot and heavy, with a constant onslaught of opponents.**

GAME INFO | PUB SEGA | DEV BLUE SHIFT | MAX PLAYERS TWO | TYPE SPORTS | REL SPRING | ESRB EVERYONE

▲▶ **With an even tighter integration with ESPN, you can expect this year's game to closely resemble the actual ones broadcast on TV. Check out those player models!**

ESPN MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

With a name change and a shift of focus, Sega is hoping that its latest sports offering is going to leave a major impact on the baseball field. This year's game will feature "new television-style cut-scenes and dynamic close-ups [in order to] build the drama of the game." Also coming along for the ride are K-Zone, which is generally used by ESPN to visually represent each batter's strike zone, and GameCast, which will provide players with "in-depth, pitch-by-pitch analysis of simulated games." Developed by Blue Shift, but produced by Visual Concepts, *ESPN MLB* will showcase the commentaries of Jon Miller and Karl Ravech, both veterans of the sport, and ship this spring. **STEPHEN FROST**

THE BUZZ

With a new dynamic interface and a secret feature, *ESPN* could be a serious contender.

▲ **Improved attention on the lighting effects guarantees an even higher amount of eye candy to drool over.**

▲ **Here's one of the lead female characters. Notice the slightly improved polygon count and texture detail.**

GAME INFO | PUB KOEI | DEV OMEGA FORCE | REL DATE FALL | TYPE ACTION | MAX PLAYERS ONE | ESRB PENDING

▲ **A change to a Japanese setting may even increase the attention given to this game. We wonder which characters you'll get to play as.**

SAMURAI WARRIORS

Dynasty Warriors goes Japanese

The ever-popular *Dynasty Warrior* series is about to welcome its newest member. As Koei and its internal developer, Omega Force, have officially announced that its Japanese offshoot, *Sengoku Musou,* will be coming to the United States later this fall, but as *Samurai Warriors.*

Though its premise and gameplay are basically the same as its Chinese counterpart, *Samurai Warriors* is set to include several new features not yet seen in the *Warriors* series. Day-to-Night light cycles, hidden traps and ambushes, randomly generated environments, and upgraded production values are just a few of them — with the new 500 strong "Active Mission System" and its more dynamic structure garnering the most attention.

Naturally, there will be a long list of historic and fictional Japanese soldiers to choose from as well, and other planned features (like a top secret gaming mode never seen in the franchise before) and the classic multiplayer elements are all slated for appearances.

Given the popularity of the series and its newfound direction, *Samurai Warriors* could definitely be one of the hottest action games of the year. Expect us to return with hands-on impressions over the coming months.

JEREMY DUNHAM

THE BUZZ

The Japanese focus definitely has us even more interested in this DW "sequel."

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MATURE 17+ M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Intense Violence
Strong Language
Blood
Mature Sexual Themes

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▸ The girls will be up against some truly massive enemies!

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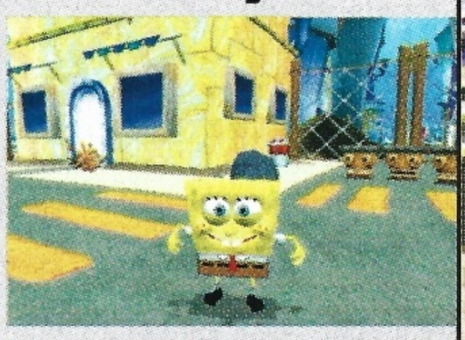
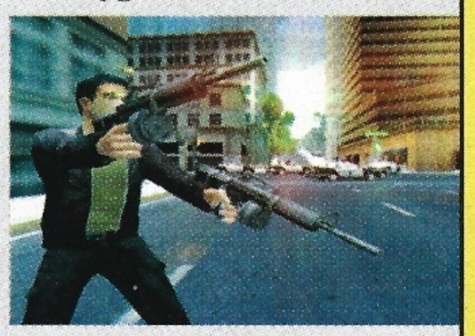
86 Manhunt
84 PSM Challenge



86 SpongeBob SquarePants
86 Spyhunter 2



86 True Crime: SOLA

EverQuest OAF, p. 84

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FINAL FANTASY X-2

PSM's bare-bones guide to Square's fashionable new adventure

We haven't quite enough space to print a full walkthrough for this massive game, but this guide will get you well on your way to 100% completion!

Touch the Moogle

At the start of the game, when you're chasing down the imposter Yuna as Rikku and Paine, make sure to take a little time to seek out the person in the Moogle suit cowering on one of the docks. When you find the Moogle, touch it to replenish your health and magic points. You'll also earn some completion percentage points while you're at it.

<< IF YOU WANT TO GET THE MOST OUT OF FFX-2, THEN YOU'LL NEED TO CHASE DOWN EVERY DRESSPHERE IN THE GAME >>

Getting Dressphere-ate

If you want to get the most out of *FFX-2,* then you'll need to chase down every Dressphere in the game. Below is a list of what spheres are out there and how to get each one.

DRESSPHERE	CONDITIONS	LOCATION	CHAPTER	SPECIAL COOLNESS
Alchemist	Complete Clasko's request to clear dungeon of fiends	Calm Lands	2	
Berserker	Rescue the Al Bhed at the lakeside Travel Agency	Macalania Woods	3	High attack
Black Mage	Beat LeBlanc to top of mountain and defeat boss	Mt. Gagazet	1	Black magic
Dark Knight	In chest near last save point to boss	Bevelle	2	High attack power
Gun Mage	Complete Shave the Hypello mission	Moonflow	1	Learn enemy skills
Gunner	Yuna's initial Dressphere	N/A	1	High attack power and Gunplay abilities
Lady Luck	Complete the Sphere Break/Luca mission	N/A	3	Gambling for higher rewards in battle
Mascot	Receive "Mission Complete" from every area of Spira, except Bevelle	Airship Celsius	5	It's just wacky
Samurai	On ground in area after defeating Daeva pair	Kilika Island	3	High attack power
Songstress	Battle with Luca		1	Status attacks
Thief	Rikku's initial Dressphere		1	Steal items from enemies, fast
Trainer	Answer two previous questions of Kimahri's in earlier chapters, then speak to him again	Mt. Gagazet	3	Animal sidekick attacks!
Warrior	Paine's initial Dressphere		1	High defense and attack power
White Mage	Defeat the boss inside the Besaid Island cave		1	White/cure magic

Special Dresspheres

There is one Special Dressphere for each character in your party. To activate the Special Dressphere, you must first use every Dressphere on your Garment Grid in battle, then press R1 to enable it.

DRESSPHERE	CONDITIONS	LOCATION	CHAPTER	WHOSE IS IT?
Floral Fallal	Chase after two Syndicate Fem-Goons who lost the sphere	Djose Temple	2	Yuna's special Dressphere
Full Throttle	Talk to Tromell four times	Macalania Woods	1+	Paine's special Dressphere
Machina Maw	Accept Nhadala's request to investigate desert Oasis	Bikanel Desert	2	Rikku's special Dressphere

Getting Every Garment Grid

Garment Grids are another way to boost your abilities. Unfortunately, they're also yet another way to drive a gamer obsessed with getting everything in *FFX-2* completely insane.

GARMENT GRID	CONDITIONS	LOCATION	CHAPTER	SPECIAL COOLNESS
Bitter Farewell	Complete the "find the musicians" mission and speak to Hypello at entrance to area	Macalania Woods		Death/Doomproof/touch
Black Tabard	Complete the mission to find Tobli	Moonflow	4	Enables Black Mage abilities
Blood of the Beast	Speak to the Kinderguardians in lower levels of dungeon (must have sided with New Yevon)	Bevelle	3	Enables learned Berserker abilities
Bum Rush	Find all three Syndicate uniforms	Celsius	2	Strength, Magic boost
Chaos Maelstrom	Find all 13 monkeys in forest and talk to woman looking for them	Kilika Island	3	Magic boost, magic wait down
Conflagration	Complete Kimahri vs. Garik mission	Mt. Gagazet	5	Enables Black magic
Covenant of Growth	Find all 10 Guardians and return them to Cactuar Nation	Bikanel Desert	5	Double EXP, AP
Covetous	Complete She-Linda interview mission	Luca	2	Drain, Osmose
Disaster in Bloom	Buy from Open Air with 200K credits and Rank 5	Calm Lands	5	Multi-status touch
Downtrodder	On balcony in security tower underground area	Bevelle	2	Gravity, Demi
Enigma Plate	Beat Beclem's Gunner's Gauntlet score	Besaid Island	2	Magic defense boost
First Steps	Initial Garment Grid	N/A	1	Not much
Flash of Steel	Buy from Argent, Inc. with 200K credits and Rank 5	Calm Lands	5	Strength/Magic boost
Font of Power	Clear secret area and defeat boss (requires Chocobo raising)	Mi'ihen Highroad	5	Lowers MP cost
Healing Light	Complete "recover the stolen sphere" mission and beat Leblanc	Guadosalam	2	Enables strong healing spells
Healing Wind	Complete Yuna as Moogle mission	Luca	1	Healing spells
Heart of Flame	Complete Youth League mission	Mushroom Rock Road	1	Enables fire spells
Heart Reborn	Answer "Is that you, Isaaru?" at end of sphere mission		1	Zanarkand Ruins
Helios Guard	Complete Shave the Hypello Mission	Moonflow	1	Auto-protect abilities
Higher Power	Clear secret dungeon (requires Chocobo raising)	Calm Lands	5	Break damage limit
Highroad Winds	Complete Clasko's request to clear dungeon of fiends	Calm Lands	2	Slow/Stop-proof, Haste
Horn of Plenty	Need Desert Key to open locked chest	Bikanel Desert	5	Gillionaire ability
Hour of Need	Complete Nhadala's Oasis request and defeat Logos	Bikanel Desert	2	Magic and Physical Defense boost
Howling Wind	Complete "Find the Musicians" for Tobli in Chapter 2, then talk to them again in Chapter 3, then examine orb in woods	Macalania Woods	3	Agility boost
Ice Queen	Let O'aka onto your airship	Macalania Woods	1	Enables ice spells
Immortal Soul	Defeat Anima boss	Farplane	5	Life/Cure spells enabled
Megiddo	Explore five paths to Farplane in specific order	Farplane	5	Enables Megiddo ability
Menace of the Deep	Answer all guards' passwords correctly	Kilika Island	2	Enable Water spells
Mercurial Strike	Defeat Angra Mainyu during 10 Guardians mission	Bikanel Desert	5	Warrior, Samurai, Berserker ability wait reduced
Mortal Coil	Get Level 5 ranking in Gunner's Gauntlet	Besaid Island	2+	Stone/Curse-proof
Mounted Assault	Send Chocobo to dig in Bikanel Desert	Bikanel Desert	5	Slow/Stop-proof, Auto Haste
Pride of the Sword	Rescue the Al Bhed at the lakeside Travel Agency	Macalania Woods	3	Enable learned Warrior abilities
Protection Halo	Find Wakka in cave	Besaid Island	1	Defense/Magic defense boost
Raging Giant	In "secret cipher" cave (must have Search Sphere)	Besaid Island	3	Confuse/Berserk-proof/touch
Ray of Hope	Speak to Ione Guado in Sphere Spring, then return to other lake area in woods (must have defeated Garik Ronso and gathered the musicians for Tobli)	Macalania Woods	5	Luck boost
Restless Sleep	Near save point on upper tier	Mushroom Rock Road	1	Multi-status proof, status damage to enemy
Sacred Beast	Complete the "Defeat Garik Ronso" mission	Mt. Gagazet	3	Enables Holy
Salvation Promised	Complete secret dungeon (requires Chocobo raising)	Thunder Plains	5	Enables White magic
Samurai'sHonor	Attempt to calibrate every lightning tower, then visit Travel Agency	Thunder Plains	2+	Use learned Samurai abilities
Scourgebane	Clear hidden dungeon	Bevelle	5	Status proof
Seething Cauldron	Selling at least 6 tickets to Tobli's show	Moonflow	2	Magic boost
Selene Guard	Catch chocobo for Calli	Mi'ihen Highroad	2	Auto-Shell
Shining Mirror	Beat Elma and Youth League to reach Youth League HQ	Mushroom Rock Road	2	Auto-Reflect
Still of Night	Complete your first dig in Western Expanse	Bikanel Desert	1	Silence/Darkproof/touch
Stonehewn	Complete the mission to find one of the Syndicate uniforms	Mt. Gagazet	2	Defense boost
Strength of One	Send Chocobo to dig in Bikanel Desert	Bikanel Desert	5	Strength boost
Supreme Light	Complete secret dungeon (must have all 10 Crimson Spheres to unlock)	Mushroom Rock Road	5	Enables White Mage abilities
Tempered Will	Speak to Tromell inside of previously locked house; must have talked to Lian and Ayde on Thunder Plains	Guadosalam	5	Double HP/MP
Tetra Master	Clear the Rescue the Tourists mission	Calm Lands	3	Nullifies elemental attacks
The End	Defeat every Oversoul monster available then talk to Shinra	Airship Celsius	5	Break damage limit
Thunder Spawn	In chests on docks	Luca	2+	Enables Thunder abilities
Treasure Hunt	Use special coins in Sphere Break competitions	Luca	3+	Enable steal ability
Tricks of the Trade	Complete commsphere mission, then return to Kilika Temple	Kilika Island	5	Black/White/Arcana wait reduced
Undying Storm	Complete the battle against rogue machina mission	Mi'ihen Highroad	3	Strength, Magic boost
Unerring Path	Speak to Tromell four times	Macalania Woods	1+	Two slots for easier Special Dressphere transform
Unwavering Guard	Complete the Rid the Temple of Fiends mission	Djose Temple	3	Defense/Magic defense boost
Valiant Lustre	Complete Terminate all Fiends mission			
Thunder Plains 5	Defense/Magic defense boost			
Vanguard	Complete the Garment Grid tutorial onboard Celsius	Any		Slight increase to Magic/Strength
White Signet	Win two Sphere Break games, then win against female with dog	Luca	3+	Enables White magic
Wishbringer	Accept Defeat Garik mission after speaking to Kimahri in Chapter 1, 2, 3	Mt. Gagazet	3	Enables Regen abilities

Catch a Cactuar!

When you visit Bikanel Desert in Chapter 3, you'll be asked to visit Cactuar Nation by Nhadala. When you do, you'll speak with Marnela, the Cactuar Nation representative about finding ten lost Guardians. She'll then ask that you speak with the different Guardians' mothers.

You'll only be able to speak to one mother at a time. When you find the specific Guardian and return it to Cactuar Nation, you'll be able to inquire about the next missing Guardian. Below is a list of where to find which Guardian – pay heed that you won't be able to access the last four Guardians until Chapter 5.

NAME	WHERE IT'S HIDING
Lobivia	Oasis section of Bikanel Desert
Toumeya	Beach area of Besaid Island
Lobeira	Inside a chest in an under ground room of Chateau Leblanc (Guadosalam)
Areq	Chocobo-lovin' at foot of Mount Gagazet
Arroja	Chocobo-lovin' at foot of Mount Gagazet
Islaya	Northern Thunder Plains
Chiapa	On high ledge in eastern section of Kilika Woods
Erio	Mountain Trail section of Mount Gagzet (Use teleporter)
Bartschella	In Dona's house on Kilika Is.
Frailea	In "forbidden" Cactuar Hollow in Cactuar Nation

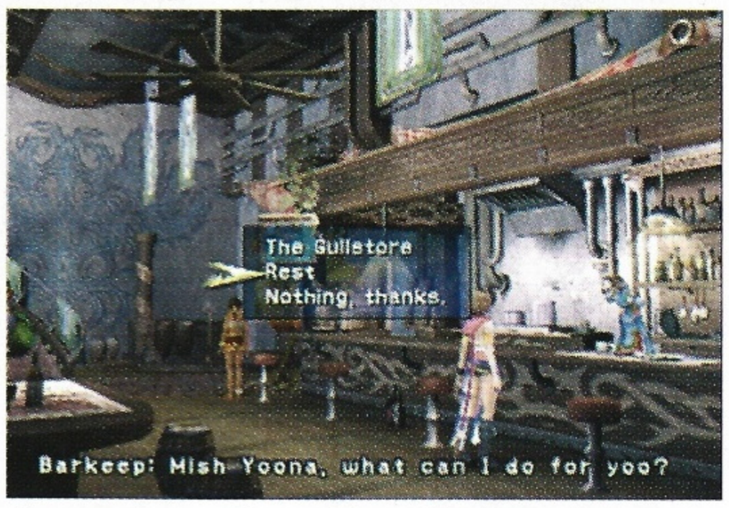
Bear in mind that once you catch a Cactuar, you'll need to have a shoot-out with it to get it to return to Cactuar Nation with you. As you move down the list, the Guardians get tougher, but no matter – they'll return with you whether or not you defeat them.

Get on Board

It's of utmost importance to getting 100% Completion in the game that you talk to Clasko, the Chocobo lover, in Chapter 1 and 2. You'll find him on Mushroom Rock Road, so make sure that you talk to him during both chapters. If you play your cards right, he'll hop onboard the Airship Celsius during either of the first two chapters. If he hasn't, then he'll automatically join up in Chapter 3. But if you don't talk to him in any of the chapters previously, you're screwed for raising Chocobos and, eventually, discovering all the secret dungeons and areas.

Spend the Night

There's a reason why you're offered the option to "Rest" in the Airship Celsius' cabin area. Make sure to rest there at least once per



chapter. If you do, you'll enable to special event in Chapter 5 that isn't available otherwise.

Monkey Love

When you reenter the deeper part of the temple in Zanarkand Ruins in Chapter 2, you probably already noticed that there's a lot of monkey business going on. Since Yuna is already a bit upset that the entire temple has been turned into a tourist attraction, you can play a part in reversing this. By encouraging the monkeys to find their soul primates, you'll also discourage tourists from clogging the hallways of the temple.

When you visit the temple in Chapter 2, make sure to examine each of the monkeys along the path. Each one has a name and a disposition. You don't need to really pay attention to their mood, only their name. When you enable the mission to start, you'll now have to pair each of the monkeys up with their perfect match. It's easy if you remember their names. Below is a list of which monkey is made for the other. Upon completion you'll earn the Soul of Thomasa accessory.

MONKEY	PAIR WITH
Birch	Sequoia
Spring	Autumn
Dusky	Dawne
Rosemary	Thyme
Terran	Skye
Minni	Maxx
Summer	Winter
Peke	Valli
Canis	Felina
Arroh	Quivrr
Golde	Sylva
Luna	Sol

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TAKE THE PSM CHALLENGE!

RULES You can't send an entry for each challenge. If you cheat or use codes, you'll be disqualified. The final letter for the contest will be accepted on March 1st. If there are multiple winners, the final winner will be decided by the best paragraph that explains why you're the winner. Send a picture or a videotape (non-returnable) and a short paragraph explaining why you're the winner. Sorry, no e-mail entries! This contest is open only to readers living in the United States, age 18 years or older. PSM reserves the right to substitute prizes of equal or greater monetary value, if necessary.

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO: PSM February Challenge # (the challenge you're entering) c/o Future Network USA, 150 North Hill Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005.

THE CHALLENGES

Challenge #1: Maxiimo Vs. Army Of Zin
Master every level — meaning that the markers on the level select screen are gold.

Challenge #2: EverQuest Online Adventures: Frontiers
Level an Ogre Warrior to 20, finish the level 20 Path Quest given by Warlord Brogar in Oggok and obtain either the Craknek Chopper or the Craknek Slicer weapons.

Challenge #3: Sonic Heroes
Complete the level Casino Park with all four main teams, obtaining an A rating each time.

THIS MONTH'S PRIZE PACKAGE

Warhammer 40K game
Warhammer figure
Champions of Norrath game

JULY WINNERS

The Simpsons: Hit And Run
Edward Zebrowski, Verona, NJ
Rugby 2004
Doug Attens, Riverside, CA
EyeToy: Play
Nichole Bettis, Phoenix, AZ

▲ "Mmm... centipede meat."

EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES: FRONTIERS

Leave the other noobs chasing rats with PSM's beginner's guide to Norrath

New Character Walkthough

Follow these general steps to get to Level 10 in a flash!

Quest Level 1 **"The Class Armor: Part One"**

Speak to your Guildmaster — the person in front of you when you first spawn. He or she will send you to secure some armor. Find the merchant (hit (u) a few times), hit (r), and purchase the armor. Return to your Guildmaster to score some XP.

Quest Level 2 **"The Spiritmaster and The Coachman"**

Spiritmasters are mystics in each town that spawn your character when you perish. Find the Spiritmaster a short distance from the Guild Hall and speak with him to mark your spawn point. Next, head to the town stables to find the Coachman, a local horse captain that can transport you between towns with ease. After signing the Coachman's ledger, return to the Guildmaster for your next quest.

▲ Spiritmasters like to hang out near Guild Halls.

Quest Level 3 **"The Monster Slayer: Part One"**

Speak with the Weaponmaster to receive a monster-mashing mission. Most of the monsters on this quest con blue and should be a slight challenge to defeat so make sure to "Prepare" the food in your inventory on your tool belt. "Memorize" any spell buffs you have and cast them on yourself before heading into battle.

Quest Level 4 **"The Magic Item"**

Speak to the guild Weaponmaster again. The Weaponmaster requires money or parts to make your item. Loot the monster's corpses (X) to get the parts you need or sell the parts to any Merchant for cash if need be. These monsters con light blue and should be a piece of cake to defeat.

Quest Level 5/6 **"The Monster Slayer: Part Two"**

Time to get some back up. Hit L2 and change your Chat Mode to "Shout." Then "LFG" for your "Level 5/6 Quest" and form a group of 2 or more. Make sure to stock up with rations from your local Grocer, and "Prepare" them for combat on your tool belt. Also, buy any spells that meet your level requirement from your local magic Merchant and "Memorize" them before you head into the fray.

Quest Level 7 **"The Class Armor: Part Two"**

Continue with your old party or form a new group to finish this task

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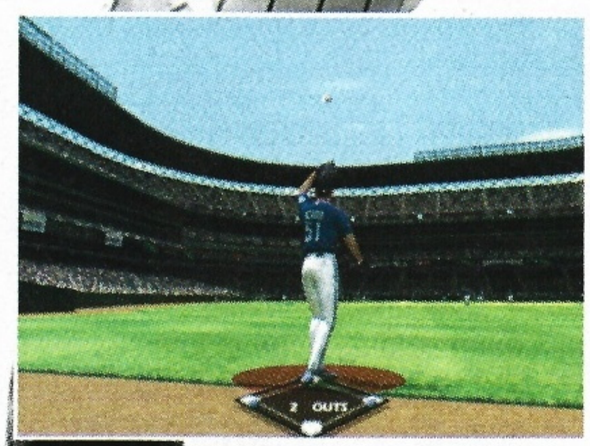

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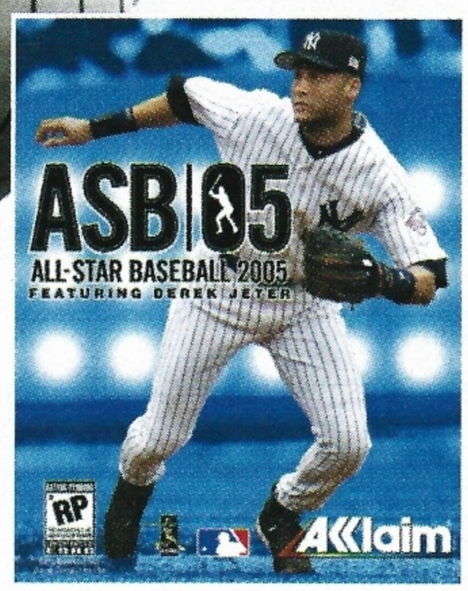

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with ease. If you absolutely must travel alone, tap R1 as you roam the countryside to avoid creatures that con red. Hunt along the way to progress a few levels and defeat the quest creature solo.

◀ Stick close to the water when you need to rest.

Quest Level 10 **"The Class Weapon"**

This is your final test until Level 13 and it involves multiple objectives. Choice armor, weapons, and spells become available at Level 10, so shop around. The creatures on this mission will con yellow to a Level 10 character and teaming up can definitely give you an edge. If you must travel far, stick to paths and coastlines to avoid encounters with aggro creatures. Good luck!

SAY WHAT?!

Don't have a USB keyboard? Not down with the *Frontiers* lingo? Take our quiz of common shortcuts to see if you have what it takes to hook up with that Dark Elf hottie.

1) AFK	5) GRATZ	9) OMW	13) TANK	17) WTD?
2) BUFF	6) KS	10) AGRO	14) TY	18) WTF
3) BTW	7) LFG	11) RL	15) WOOT!	19) WTG!
4) DING!	8) MOB	12) SoW	16) WTB	20) YW

▲ "Hey there, pretty lady. Wanna see my webcam?"

ANSWER KEY: 1) Away from keyboard 2) Spells/potions that increase a player's stats 3) By the way 4)You just leveled 5) Congratulations 6) Kill Steal 7) Looking for group 8) An attackable AI enemy 9) On My Way 10) Aggressive 11) Real life 12) Spirit of the Wolf (a popular speed buff) 13) A strong character used to take the blunt of attacks 14) Thank You 15) You're stoked 16) Want to buy 17) Want to date? 18) What the @%#$? 19) Way to go! 20) You're welcome!

CODES

THE LORD OF THE RINGS, THE RETURN OF THE KING

Codes are entered by pausing the game and holding all four shoulder buttons down while the code is entered.

Invulnerable	■○■↑
Infinite Projectiles	■■↓○
Restore Health	■■○○
Endless Lives in Co-op	○■↑○
Have All Upgrades	↑↓△■
Always Devastating	△↑△↓
Perfect Mode	○↓△✕
Target Indicator Mode	↓○↑■
Aragorn +1000 XP	↑■△✕
Gandalf +1000 XP	○△↑↓
Sam +1000 XP	△✕↓✕
Frodo +1000 XP	↑△↑↓
Gimli +1000 XP	○○△✕
Legolas +1000 XP	✕△↑✕

Note: XP codes can be used multiple times.

SPYHUNTER 2

Entered in the pause menu

Invincibility
L1 L1 L1 R2 L1 R1 R1 L1 R2

Infinite Ammo
R1 L1 R2 R2 L2 R1 L1 L2 R2

Entered at main menu

Unlock Missions/Weapons
L1 R2 L2 R1 R1 L2 R2 L1

MANHUNT

Note: codes must be unlocked before they actually work. To unlock any of the codes, you have to get 5 stars on the two levels in question, using the hardcore difficulty. Then, that code will become available.

Beat Strapped for Cash and View of Innocence
Unlocks Helium Hunters
R1 R1 △○■ L2 L1↓

Beat Press Coverage and Wrong Side of the Tracks
Unlocks Monkey Skin
■■ R2↓△■○↓

Beat Fueled by Hate and Grounds for Assault
Unlocks Regeneration
R2→○ R2 L2↓○←

Beat Born Again and Doorway Into Hell
Unlocks Runner
R2 R2 L1 R2←→←→

Beat Mouth of Madness and Doing Time
Unlocks Super Punch
L1△△△○○○R1

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF L.A.

General cheats

At the City Map in a Destination Driving mission, input the following combos

Unlock all combat moves
↑↓↑↓✕

Show Nick's coordinates
✕○■△

The following code must be entered while in a vehicle. Hop in, access the map, and input the code.

Unlock extra car mass
↓↓↓✕

Unlockable characters

Create a license plate using the following, highlight OK, and hold L1 and R1 when pressing ✕

FUZZ	Play at Policeman Johnson
5WAT	Play as SWAT officer
M1K3	Play as commando
BOOZ	Play as bum
TFAN	Play as gangsta
HARA	Play as Asian worker
MNKY	Play as streetpunk

Unlock Snoop

From the city map screen, press R1 then L1, ↑→↓(L3)(R3)✕■○△. If done correctly, you should hear a chime. Go to a location and save the game, then exit to the main menu to use Snoop.

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: BATTLE FOR BIKINI BOTTOM

Pause game, hold all four shoulder buttons, and enter codes.

▲ You don't have to like Spongebob to think the Shrapnel Death cheat is funny. Morbid, but funny.

Get 1000 shiny objects
■○○■■○○■
Get 10 Spatulas
○■■○○■■○
Get Bubble Bowl power up
○■○■○○■■
Get Cruise Bubble power up
■○■○■■○○
Unlock all monsters in gallery
○■○■■○■○
Unlock Art Gallery
■○■○○■○■
Expert Mode
○○○■■○○○■⊖
○■■■○■■
Shiny Objects worth more
■○■○○■⊖
○○○■■■○○■
Restore Health
○○○○■○■○■■■
Shrapnel Death Spongebob
○○○○■■○■○○○■
No Pants Spongebob
○○○○■○○■○■■○
Modified Cruise Bubble controls
○○○○■■○○■○■■
Swap camera controls left/right
○○○○■■○○○○■■
Swap camera controls up/down
○○○○■○○○○○■
Big Plankton
■■■■○■○■○○○
Small People
■■■■■○■○■○■○
Baby Co-Stars
■■■■○■○■■■■
Villagers give dollar when hit
■■■■■○■○○■○■
Panhandlers
■■■■■○■○■■○○
Villager heal player
■■■■■○■○○○■■
Cheery Villagers
■■■■■○■○■○○■

GOBLIN COMMANDER: UNLEASH THE HORDE

Enable/disable cheats
Hold down R1 L1 △↓ for three seconds

All Level Access Profile "Bling"
△△△ L1 R1 L1 L1 R1 L1 R1 R1⊖
L1 R1 L1 L1 R1 L1 R1 L1 L1 R1 L1⊖
L1 R1 L1 R1 R1 △△△
1000 gold and souls
SELECT SELECT L1 SELECT SELECT △△△ L1 L1
Toggle Fog of War
R1 L1 R1 R1 L1 L1 △△ L1 R1
Half Speed
L1 L1 L1 L1 L1 △△△△ R1
Double Speed
R1 R1 R1 R1 R1 L1 △ R1 R1 R1
+100 gold
L1 R1 R1 R1 R1 L1 △ L1 L1 L1
+100 souls
R1 L1 L1 L1 L1 R1 △ R1 R1 R1
God Mode
R1 R1 R1 L1 L1 L1 R1 L1 △ R1
Auto Win
R1 R1 L1 L1 L1 R1 R1 △△△

CAT IN THE HAT

Open All Levels:
↓L2↑L1○↓↓↓↓↑

Open all Gallery items:
○↓L2↓L1○↑○↓↓

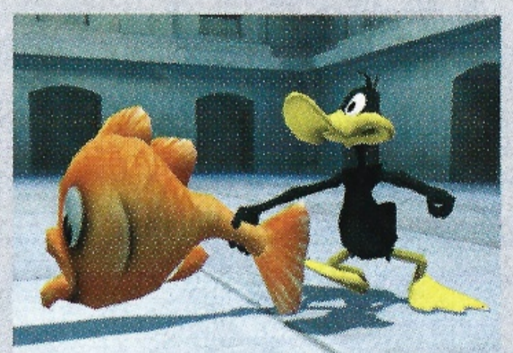
Add 4 bonus door Keys for the current level:
○L2↓L1L1↑○↓↑↓

LOONEY TUNES BACK IN ACTION

Codes are entered in the "Cheat Codes" section of the Options Menu.

Use "Hen Grenades" as default
HENSAWAY

Use Slappy Fish as default
SLAPPY



▲ Okay, kiddy title or not, this is funny.

GameShark Codes

Tony Hawk's Underground
[M] Must Be On
94D495E6 36E60266

Infinite: Special
249035E8 31B4D135
248A35EA 3896D18D
248A35EA B896D1BD

Infinite: Mission Time
24D09668 16B4C55C

PSM Exclusive Codes!
Combo's: 10* Score Multiplier
249837CA 3034C3CF

Combo's: 50* Score Multiplier
249837CC 3834C3CF

Combo's: 100* Score Multiplier
248837C8 B834C3CD

Max Payne 2 The Fall Of Max Payne
[M] Must Be On
94D019FE 1FE2CC32

Infinite: Health
24C085FE 18B6167F
24C09DEE 909757CD

Infinite: Painkillers
245190EA 14344519
24D190E8 141745B9

Infinite: Ammo
24D1B0F4 9DBC5579

Infinite: Bullet Time
248814C8 A79C8749
24C815C8 A71C85E9

Unlock: All Difficulty / Level Select
2450B7A8 3070C7ED

Have: Idiot AI
24DAF44A 363547C8
24D0B468 363447E8

Have: One Hit Kill
2451A628 1655C10A
2452A6A8 0674C128

24C0BEAE 9657C119
24D4B62A 936E8138
24D0B628 1674C188
249137E8 1036D144

Final Fantasy X2
[M] Must Be On
94C497AC B5260F5C

Max Gil
244C4D2E D8B71A57

Have All Garment Grids
44101628 103453EC
59BD493C 66250118

Have All Dresspheres
04101628 143473FC
14101629 143413FC
44111428 1034534C
3902D7E1 9FAB91E0
04101429 1434537C
04101428 143473CC

Yuna: Level 99 With Massive Experience
24DB67E8 45AC5D2D

Rikku: Level 99 With Massive Experience
249B64E8 452C5DAD

Paine: Level 99 With Massive Experience
249B64E8 45AC5D2D

Character 4: Level 99 With Massive Experience
24DB46E8 452C5DAD

Character 5: Level 99 With Massive Experience
24DB46E8 45AC5D2D

Character 6: Level 99 With Massive Experience
24DB45E8 45AC5DAD

Character 7: Level 99 With Massive Experience
249B45E8 452C5D2D

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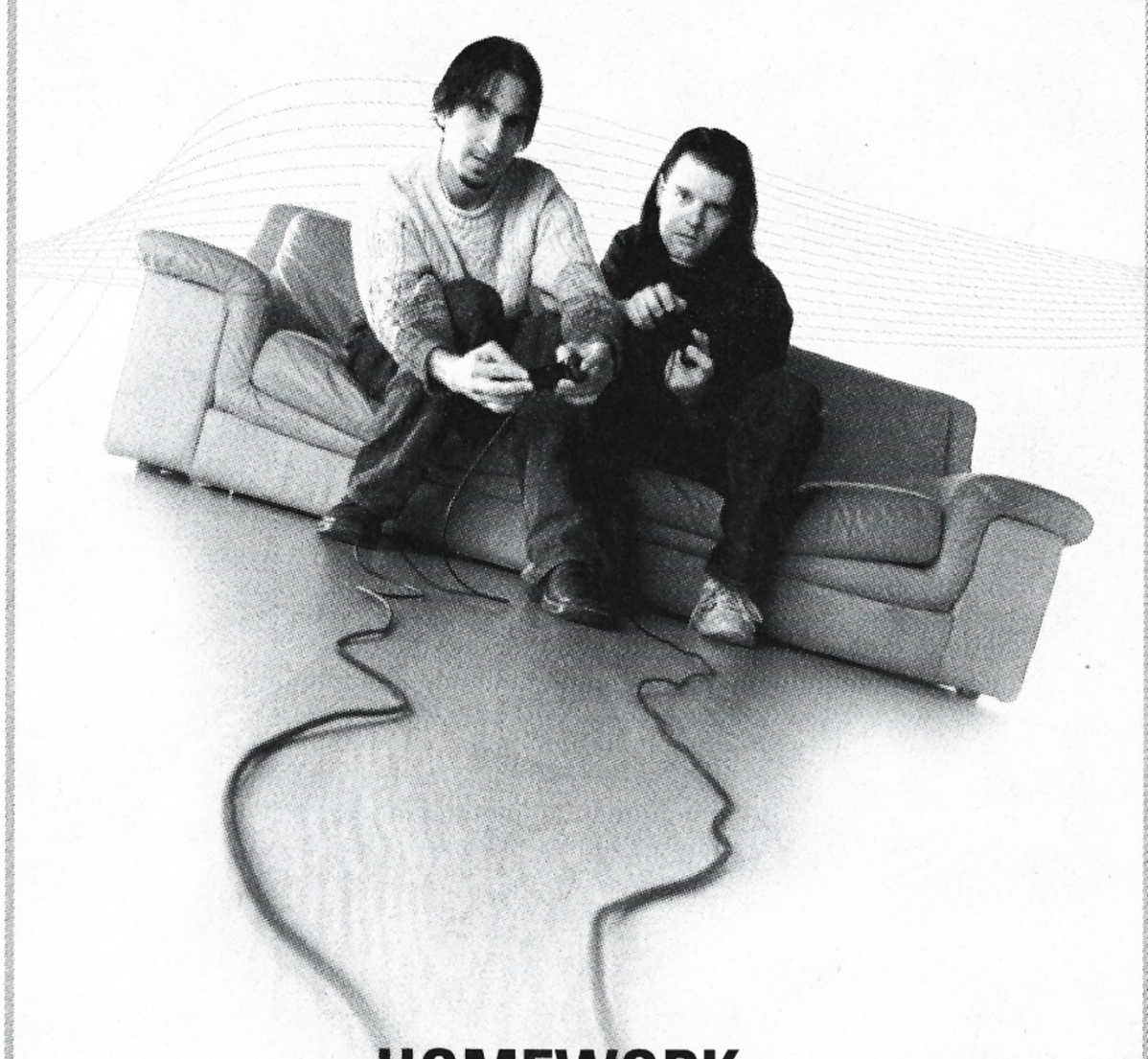

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AND SO I SHALL NAME HER AURA

WITHOUT YOU SHE WOULD NOT EXIST

THE SHINING GIRL AURA

WE WILL ENTRUST HER WITH OUR WILL

OUR FUTURE IS IN HER HANDS

SHE IS OUR

I MUST

SPEAK WITH MORGANNA

TO GO WHERE SHE IS

THE LIVING FLESH POSES A HINDRANCE

BUT I MUST

I MUST GO FOR OUR AURA

EMMA PLEASE GIVE ME A LITTLE MORE

COURAGE

NO THE PASSAGE OF TIME

IS IRREVERSIBLE

BIRTH OR DEATH

NOW ONLY THESE TWO

CHOICES REMAIN

AURA THE CHILD OF LIGHT

EMMA'S DAUGHTER

MY DAUGHTER

JUST A LITTLE MORE

TRAVELER TAKE THIS TO HEART

IT IS DARKEST BEFORE THE DAWN

REINCARNATED ELUSIVE LYRIC POET

絶対包囲 .hack Part 4

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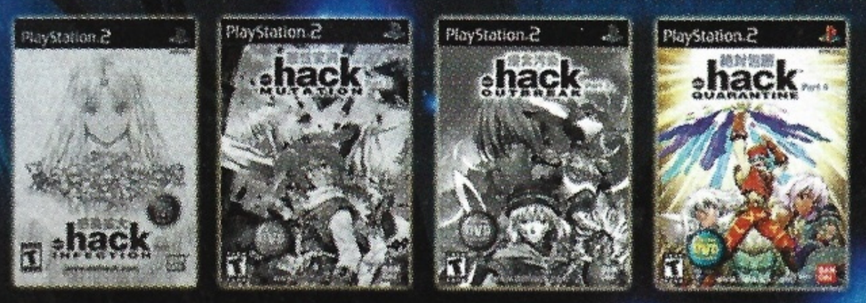

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TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mature Sexual Themes
Mild Language
Violence

.hack//SIGN

As seen on CARTOON NETWORK

PlayStation.2

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(s03)

PSM LETTERS no. 81

THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION IS JUST A LETTER OR E-MAIL AWAY ▶ FEBRUARY 2004

PSM Letters
c/o Future Network USA
150 North Hill Drive
Brisbane, CA, 94005 USA
E-mail:
psm@futurenetworkusa.com.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

▲ We just rate 'em as we play 'em. It's up to you to decide what's up your alley after that, like, say, wrestling games.

Reading through the December issue of PSM, I noticed something very disconcerting. There are no fewer than 14 games (out of 22) that received a score equal to or greater than 8. I will concede that it is possible that there are THIS many "must-buy" games coming out in the near future. The problem with this is that many gamers lack the means to play all of these games, therefore we have to pick and choose.

This is not to say I base all my game-buying decisions on your reviews. It is very possible that I am very wrong, and if I had a chance to play all these, I would find them all to be deserving of their scores, but I simply can't. I have to choose my games carefully. I just wish you'd be a little more critical in your reviews and perhaps take points off if we've all played the game before in some form or another.

Kyle, kylesnes@aol.com

CHRIS You know, Kyle, as the guys kept putting these high-scoring reviews across my desk, I reacted the same as you. I would ask them "Are you sure about that score?," and they would say, "Yep." So, that was enough for me. These guys are pros, lifelong gamers, and I totally trust their scores.

The overall quality of games has really been on the rise lately. Maybe we should raise the bar in our reviews as we head into 2004; tweak our scoring criteria to make high scores a little tougher to earn...

Rest assured that each and every game we gave an eight, nine, or ten to truly deserves your attention. Each one's a winner!

▲ Once again, Bill's attempt at Total Evil Mind Control only results in Dan sneezing on Randy.

It's All About The Benjamins

I have concerns about where the gaming industry is headed. In the beginning, games were an act of sheer will by their creators. Now it seems it has become a contest of who can produce the most at the fastest rate without any consideration of how good a game might be. Why doesn't the industry realize that this is a foolish action on their part? That was my first little complaint. Secondly, why is the shelf life of a videogame so short? For example, *Fatal Frame* (one of the scariest games I have ever played) cannot be found anywhere, even with *Fatal Frame 2: Crimson Butterfly* coming out shortly. Why do these games disappear so darn fast?

Matthew DeWitt, UnManDeNoWitt@aol.com

RANDY To answer the first part of your question, I think it's a simple matter of the direction the game industry has been/is taking — that of a more mainstream, almost Hollywood-like machine that is bent on churning out as many games as it can within a fiscal year that seem like they'll bring in "X" amount of dollars. Thankfully, we still get the occasional gem that was obviously the proud baby of a genius game designer, but more and more companies are reluctant to invest the time and money on one project like that when they can get 10 games for

RANDY'S TIP OF THE MONTH:

Didn't like how your life ended up for 2003? It's okay — you can start over and try for a better end ranking in 2004! Just return everything you bought during the year, move back to your old place if you moved, break off ties with any friends you made, and generally undo anything you did in '03. Then you'll be ready for a fresh start. Just remember, any money you earned will have to be returned, too. Give it your best — you can do it!

TalkBACK

EACH MONTH we post a new question on our website at **psmonline.com**, and print the best answers here in our Letters section. Give PSM a piece of your mind!

This Month's Question: "What was your best or worst gaming-related story of last year?"

I was at a gaming con a couple of months back. I was the first girl to show up and I had quite a few male stalkers. I am still undecided as to whether or not it was a good experience or a bad one. I mean, how was I supposed to know that being a female gamer would garner so much darn attention?

Jessica Ware, Branson, MO

My best story was I was almost done with *GTA: Vice City* and *SOMEONE* broke my PS2.

Henry Benjamin, Montclair, CA

I was playing through *Zone Of The Enders 2* and was just about to beat the Final Boss and the power flicked off and on.

Morgan Bullock, Grover, NC

When I found out that Bill is not a gorilla.

Gerro Sardido, 7 Mile, MI

My worst gaming experience from last year was when I played *Gran Turismo 2* for 7 hours straight. I didn't save my game yet and the power went out. I lost all my progress!

Kris Hang, Cawker City, KS

DOWNTIME

Hey, only 99% of our time is spent on playing games! We do other stuff, too!

▲ It's always an exciting day when the PSM staff gets a new freelance writer.

▲ No pink elephants here! Instead, Bill gives a dental hygiene lecture to his "invisible friends."

▲ All Gary wanted was to get ahead in life... and then, one black day, he got his wish...

▲ By the time Bill finally caught on, Chris was halfway to the parking lot.

<< MANY GAMERS LACK THE MEANS TO PLAY ALL OF THESE GAMES, THEREFORE WE HAVE TO PICK AND CHOOSE >>

the same resources that will sell well. The second part of your question is pretty simple to answer: there are just a lot of games coming out, and retailers only have so much shelf (or bin) space. Unless it's a huge seller, a game can get bumped off shelves before you can say *Grand Theft Auto 4*.

Lock Picks

I picked up a copy of your December issue today. While looking through the letter section, I read your reply to the letter "XXX-cellent Question". Now, I'm not a prude (Considering I have a healthy interest in porn myself), but don't you think that printing the code to disable the parental lock for DVD videos is a bad idea, considering that some kids who read PSM might have parents who actually USE that p arental lock to keep them out?

Jonathan, liquidx@adelphia.net

STEVE Well, considering the code can be found in the PS2 manual, we don't think we're sharing anything that isn't easily available. More often than not, it's to help someone who has accidentally enabled the parental lock and just can't remember how to disable it again. For those few parents out there who actually figured out how to enable the lockout in order to prevent their children from viewing R-rated movies, we apologize and commend you for your active interest.

Please Don't Suck-Oden

I just recently saw an announcement and screen shots of the upcoming *Suikoden 4*. I finished *Suikoden 3* a while back and I have to say I was really disappointed with it. What happened to the awesome and fast paced battle system that had useful combination attacks? It was really boring waiting for my guys to slowly run over to the enemy and attack him. The whole buddy system was horrible, too. I want my characters to do their own thing and not have to worry what the other guy is doing. I don't even want to remember how bad the castle system was either. I hope *Suikoden 4* can really bring back the magic that its 2D predecessors had (where are Flik and Viktor?).

Matt Borchers, Borchplazm@hotmail.com

ERIC I loved *Suikoden III*, but I do agree it wasn't as good as its predecessor, and I definitely disliked the partner system. However, try to imagine having to input six commands per round rather than just three — that's going to slow the pace of battle down even further, isn't it? My point is that there's a balance the developers were hoping to strike, and while you and I think it missed, at least they were trying something new. Which gives me hope that they'll again try something new — or maybe revert to something old — for *Suikoden IV*.

Low Calibur?

Hate to say it, but I'm getting a little disappointed with Namco. I ran out and bought *Soul Calibur 2*, and I was a bit surprised, to say the least. Sure, there was a lot of press about how there are a bunch of new characters (actually only Talim and Raphael, because the others are just more 'rehashes' of older characters), but when I first turned it on, I saw that only four characters from the original actually showed up in the default line-up. And even after unlocking all of them, Rock and Hwang were axed from the line-up, leaving us with the lazy palette-swaps that were 'Assassin' and 'Berserker'. Couldn't they have put in the little bit of extra effort and given us the actual characters?

Any hope that Namco will knock it off with nixing the originals, and stop with making so many 'new' characters nearly identical to older ones (ex: Seung Mina and Kilik; Sophitia, Lizardman & Cassandra) by the time *SC3* comes out (if that ever happens) or am I expecting too much out of them?

Kal, sullenshiva@yahoo.com

STEVE While I do agree with you that *SCII* wasn't the end-all, be-all fighting game sequel, it was still a great game and had a decently long single-player experience. I can understand the reluctance of Namco to change too much of the formula, though, as the game was kind of being catered to appeal to a lot of people who had never played the series before. Apparently that's worked, as the game has been selling quite well. For the next game, however, the

▶ Maxi isn't a "rehash" of an old *Soul Calibur* fighter — he is an old *SC* fighter.

GAMES WE WANT TO SEE

NEVERQUEST

Realizing that most of the fun of massively multiplayer online role-playing games is simply talking to other players, *NeverQuest* would have the computer do the fighting while human players can just stay in town and chat. Like *The Sims*, players would focus on running households and generally going about their daily business; some people would be innkeepers, others messengers — you could even be king, and simply sit on your thone all day, accepting marriage proposals from players like FairMaiden87, who's really Stan from Chicago.

I was killed in a car accident while playing an XBox game. PlayStation 2 rules!!!!!!

Cist Kino, Denver, CO

I went through 3 controllers because one got stepped on, my brother spilled pop on one, and the third one... let's just say a controller should never be used as a lasso.

Logan Jaynes, Hampshire, IL

I played *Devil May Cry 2*... AHHHHH!

Raven Lopez, San Fernando, CA

I was playing *Way of the Samurai*, getting my character to his very best. I was almost there, when my sister kicked the outlet, turning off the system, and making me lose everything.

David Waugh, MD

My best moment would have to be while I was playing "The job" in *GTA:VC*. In my opinion, that was the best mission in the whole game.

John Larkin, Boston, MA

My cat peed on my PS2... what ever happened to a litter box?

John Evans, Allendale, NJ

I bought *Terminator: Dawn of Fate* and I made it to the fifth level and I couldn't take it any more... thousands of robots and they wouldn't stop coming!

Miles Milburn, Berkeley Spring, WV

Worst: getting grounded from all videogame related activities for four weeks.

Cameron Boone, Suffolk, VA

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Tails Knuckles Sonic

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EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Mild Fantasy Violence

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HARDCORE

Do It Yourself

I started playing RPGs many years ago, first on paper, then on PCs, and finally consoles and even online. But now, as I look at the new RPGs for the PS2, I have started to notice that something vital is missing: the ability to create your own role.

I'm no game designer, so I'm sure that the PSone's limitations had something to do with it, but the PS2? Why is it that, in any second-rate sports game, you can create your own player, controlling the size, shape, stats and moves? The same goes for any mech warrior game or fighter game. And they could do that on the PSX! But not RPGs. Some might say that the cutscenes are one reason, but on some PS2 games now, many use the in-game models.

Am I alone in wanting to create my own character, or am I just ignorant of games like this that already exist?

Fred Rohs, frohs@asde.net

ERIC Good point, Fred. I think the big hurdle is that it's really tough to create a game that has a strong, involving narrative and still enables the player to create their own character. For example, how do designers create a great love interest if they don't know the race and gender of the main character? And how do the designers create levels if they don't know whether you're going to play as a thief, or a knight? Square in particular would have trouble making CGI cut-scenes if the animators didn't know what the main character looked like.

Not to say these games can't exist — one need only look at LucasArts' *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic* to see a game with vast depth and great character to character interaction no matter how you've constructed your character. But it isn't easy, so few true RPGs try to go that route. Hopefully, we'll see more of them in the future.

ASK THE 800-LB. GORILLA

I've got a question that's been bugging me lately. If Jimmy cracked corn and noboby cares, why is there a song about him?

Stephanie Morrow, stefkin@ncweb.com

BILL Gee, Stephanie, most everyone likes corn.

Since all 'nicey nice' characters are becoming more mature, can you visualize the bunny from the song 'Little Bunny Foo Foo' taking out a pistol and shooting the field mice instead of boppin' em on the head?

Jennifer St. Jean, flip_da_weasel@yahoo.com

BILL Yes, Jennifer, I can imagine that. In fact, I think about that all the time. Makes some people nervous. Go figure...

Who is the better drummer in your opinion? Animal of the Muppets, or Theodore of the Chipmunks? I can't decide!!!!

Marla Grimm, mmg@mtco.com

BILL Marla, Marla, Marla... the Muppets band was real. The Chipmunks was one of those "boy bands."

I am a man named Britney and I am consantly mocked for my peculiar name...

Britney Meyers, hot_cute_gurl15@hotmail.com

BILL You work for the FBI, don't you, "Britney?"

Have a question that requires a thoughtful, adult answer? Send an e-mail to bdonohue@futurenetworkusa.com, with "800-LB. Gorilla" in the Subject Line.

developers definitely need to step-up and throw in a lot more unique characters and gameplay features. Otherwise, a lot of series fans might start looking elsewhere.

Penalty Box

This letter is in response to the 9/10 "outstanding" rating you gave last month to *ESPN NHL Hockey.* What did you guys do... play one exhibition game and say "That's a wrap!"? If you'd played the franchise mode, you would have noticed the unusually high amount of injuries that occur during the regular season. You also would have noticed that in the playoffs, all those injured guys NEVER heal. And if you guys knew anything about math, you would know that, during a cut-scene, when it goes to the goalie, that it's impossible to play five games and have 8 ties! I must say that I have played EA's hockey game and I think it is a much better game.

Nick Spector, racer_boy12@hotmail.com

ERIC Well Nick, you're definitely entitled to that opinion, and EA's game is certainly very good — that's why we gave it an 8. And if you read both reviews, we specifically said that *ESPN*'s franchise mode, which is where you seem to have the most trouble with our review — isn't as good as *NHL 2004's*. However, we stand behind our review because *ESPN NHL Hockey* simply plays better, and we think that most people who try both games will agree.

By the way, when you start franchise mode, there's a toggle in the options that will enable you to turn off the injuries.

Dial-Up Doldrums

Taking little steps into the future, the gaming business has recently fallen upon the idea of making online games, which is a great way to profit from consumers. However, most really good online games support broadband only, like *SOCOM* and *Midnight Club II.* This makes me furious! Being a gamer for a proud 15 years has made me a freak in buying the latest technology for videogames that, of course, is AFFORDABLE. I'm very angry with the fact that broadband is not in my area, not to mention that it's very expensive. Not many games have a dial-up network connection and if they do, it's some crappy two-player race. What are some good dial-up games that will be released in the near future?

John Zylstra, jzcuzer93@msn.com

STEVE Unfortunately, in order for a game to support a large number of players and

THE PSM MATCH GAME!

Match the character names below with the game title they belong to and test your PS2 smarts!

CHARACTERS

A. Jersey Devil
B. Maximo
C. Jak and Daxter
D. Blasto
E. Spyro
F. Hulk
G. Crash Bandicoot

GAMES

1. Spyro
2. Hulk
3. Crash Bandicoot
4. Maximo
5. Jersey Devil
6. Blasto
7. Jak and Daxter

Answers:
A=5, B=4, C=7, D=6, E=1, F=2, G=3

My worst — when I sold all my games and systems just to pay the rent. Since I don't live there anymore, it wasn't worth it!

Frankie Burns, Toronto, ON

I had just beaten *Final Fantasy10* and as I did my victory dance, the power went out and I didn't save!

Julian Gomez, Milpitas, CA

A week ago me and my friend were playing *.hack// INFECTION* for 25 straight hours and we finally beat it. It was the greatest time I have had in a while.

Dan Baisley, Mio, MI

The worst? When my mom caught me playing *BMX XXX*...

Steve, Allentown, PA

It started out with me buying *Enter the Matrix.* To make a long story short, frozen paintballs & crotches don't mix.

Jon Sides, Charlottesville, VA

I read all about *Ico*, so I went to Wal-Mart to buy it and when I brought it home, inside there was an AOL disc... no joke!

Kyle Lipscomb, Atlanta, GA

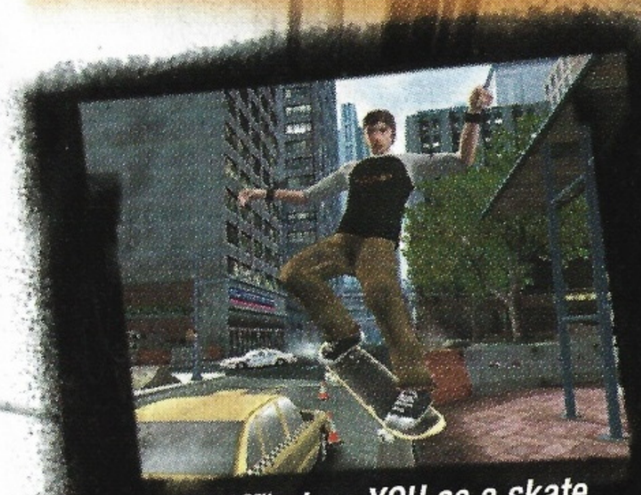
I was finally about to beat SIN *(FFX)*, when my dog jumped onto the PS2 and broke it completely... nice, eh?

Edubardus Of The Nile, Panama, AA

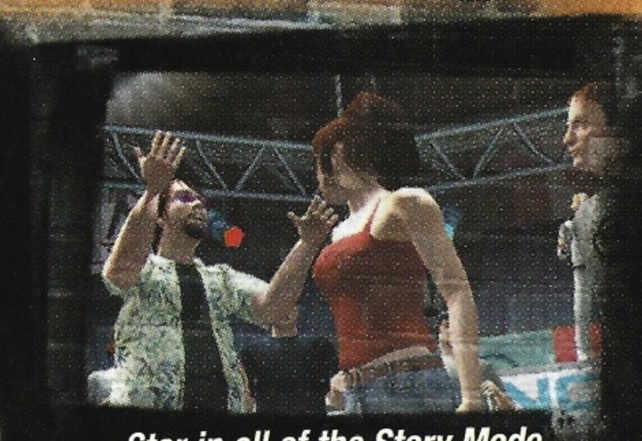
Playing non-stop *Dark Cloud 2* for a month. My days were made up of eating, *DC2,* and school... I failed so many tests that month!

Mike Ogino, Toronto, ON

''10 OUT OF 10'' -GMR



THUG™ stars YOU as a skate punk out to make it big.



Star in all of the Story Mode movies alongside the pros.

Do whatever it takes – run, climb, and of course, skate – to make it to the top.

Put your face in the game to skate as YOU.*

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– GameSpy

"Driving! Climbing! Building! Running! Skating will NEVER be the same again!"
– Official PlayStation 2 Magazine [U.K.]

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*Face mapping technology is exclusive to PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system and requires online connectivity.

TEEN
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Mild Violence
Strong Language
Suggestive Themes
Game Experience May Change During Online Play.

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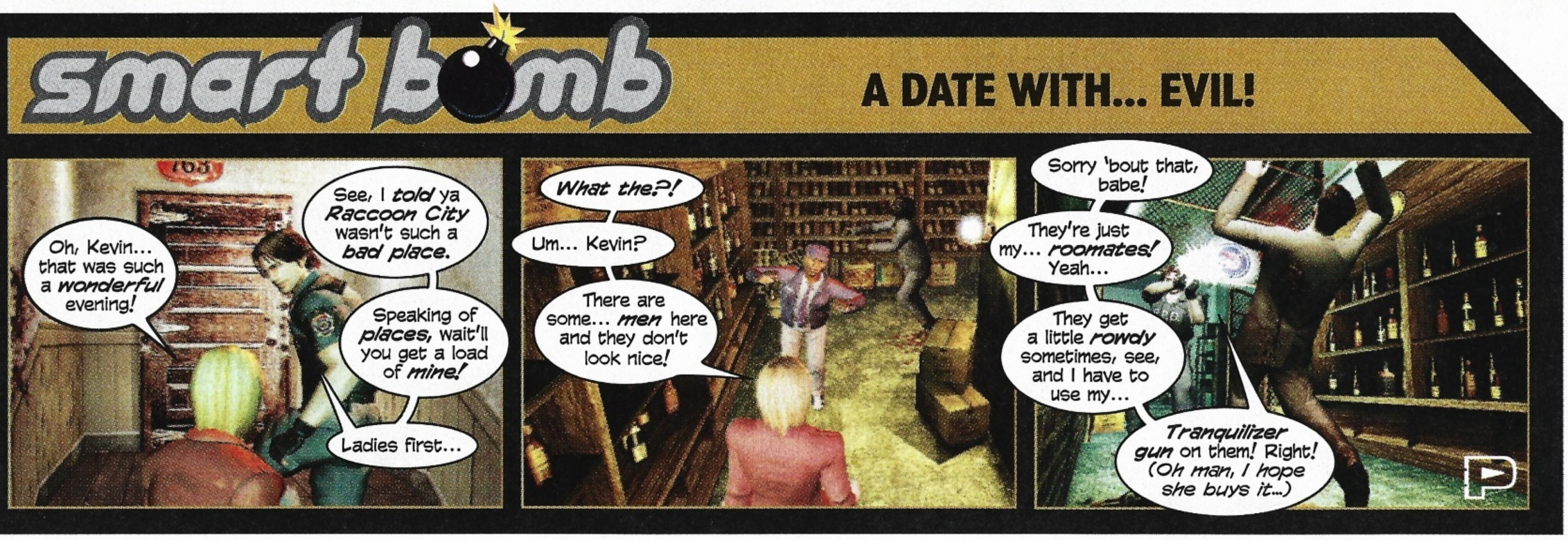

voice chat, broadband is required. There's just not enough bandwidth in a dial-up situation. So, as more and more time goes by, you're going to see a lot more games that don't support dial-up at all. It's a sad situation for general modem users, but it's a necessary thing in order to keep the gaming experience as lag-free and consistent as possible. Companies, like EA, should continue to support 56K for the foreseeable future, but that's only for one-on-one games without chat. Hopefully, broadband will hit your area shortly in the future.

PS2 On PC?

Do you think Sony would ever consider building PS2 (or PSone or PS3, for that matter) functionality into their VAIO PCs? I've seen USB adapters that allow you to connect PS controllers to a PC, and VAIOs seem to come equipped with DVD-ROMs at the very least (often also R/RW). I have a VAIO laptop and I keep thinking how awesome it would be to be able to get rid of my PS2 and my TV, and have a keyboard, modem, and mouse built right in to play my PS2 games with. Dream a little dream....

Mark Buckingham, Prime01010@aol.com

RANDY That would be cool, Mark. Maybe Sony will release an official PS2 emulator for PCs in the future, but for now I think the chances are better that we'll see a variety of Sony electronics — not necessarily computers, though — that will play PS3 games.

FFXI On Credit?

Do you guys have any idea if there will be prepay/game cards available for *Final Fantasy XI* like there is for *EverQuest?* I don't own a credit card to pay for the monthly fee, so I hope that there will be. And if there are, will they work for the PC and the PS2?

Jaime Buist, osiris0901@hotmail.com

STEVE While nothing has been confirmed, I believe that prepay cards will be available for *FFXI*. However, they might not be available right away. So, if you want to play the game on launch day, just run out and get one of those prepaid credit cards. You can practically get them just about anywhere.

Hard Cel

I am anticipating the release of the new cel-shaded shooter, *XIII*. But I am also having some reservations about how well this game is going to really turn out. I value the ratings you give all of your games and usually base my purchasing and playing choices on your reviews. So far, it seems that all of the cel-shaded releases have (at least in your opinion) been less than okay. For example, *Auto Modellista* rated a 4. *Black and Bruised,* a 3. *Futurama*, a 6. Are the cel-shaded games lacking in other areas due to the graphical enhancement? Or are these companies just not paying attention to these other key areas of their games? Are we going to see this same disappointment in *XIII?*

Keith M., lkssam@hotmail.com

ERIC I think what you're seeing with cel-shaded games is that the developers have often either taken a graphical gimmick and used it to cover up sub-par gameplay, focused too much of their resources on the graphics at the expense of gameplay, or both. It happens way too often for my taste, but as the games you've cited show, it definitely happens. As for *XIII*, it only earned a 7, but the cel-shading was flat-out awesome. The wonky controls, however, were another story.

TECH TALK

DVD Disaster?

I wish you guys would admit, once and for all, that the PS2 makes for one lousy DVD player. New movies or anime right out of the shrinkwrap come up 'disc read error'. On new systems! Yet, my trusty $60.00 DVD Player plays them all without a hitch.

I'm in retail, and I've been cleaning & adjusting the lens intensity on my customers PS2s for years, just so they can watch a new movie that won't load. I don't charge them for this service. They are my customers. Sony wants $127.00!

I've sold $35,000 worth of PS2s in my little town, trying to create a market for people to shop locally. Do you and your readers know how much a retailer makes selling a PS2 bought from a Sony Distributor? Absolutely nothing! Zero profit. What kind of business is this?

LX Skye, wotd@webtv.net

RANDY I have two PS2s: one bought on 10/28/2000 — and one of the new progressive scan models. I have never had a DVD read error — and I watch a lot of DVDs — and my place is far from dust-free. Yet we also receive a lot of letters about disc read errors. There many variables involved: what kind of environment is the PS2 being used in, how much of a beating does it take, etc. For my money, though (and no, we don't get our PS2s for free), I've found the PS2 to be a solid-performing DVD player. Oh, and as for the "zero profit" for selling PS2 thing — it's been that way since the beginning, and on systems long past, as well. The profit has been, and always will be, in the sales of software.

I spent an entire day playing *GTA: VC* without saving, then my mom turned off the power.

Omar Camacho, L.A., CA

I got in trouble at school, so my parents sold my all my consoles and I didn't get any of the money.

Nigel Rodgers, Norwalk, CA

When my PS2 cheated on me...

Gavin Smith, Toronto, ON

My best and worst video gaming experience last year happened at the same time. I remember that feeling of finally beating *FFX*... but it turns out I didn't and that was another unforgettable feeling.

Jacob Hausler, McKinney, TX

The best moment would probably be when I rented *Jak II* from Blockbuster. That is the best game ever. My worst would be when I rented *DMC2*. Talk about a waste of $6.

Noel Black, Valley Grove, WV

The worst would be when I found out my *Time Splitters 2* file was corrupted!

Brad McDonald, Grayling, MI

Lecturing my cousin on why he was stupid for buying a Game Cube instead of a PS2. I still don't think he gets it, though. Poor kid.

K. A. Munga, Holland WI

When my parents took my PS2 away because of my brother's grades! I still haven't got it back. Is that unfair or what?

John Natrdini, Chichester, NH

Buying a Video Game?

Play the game that's right for you!

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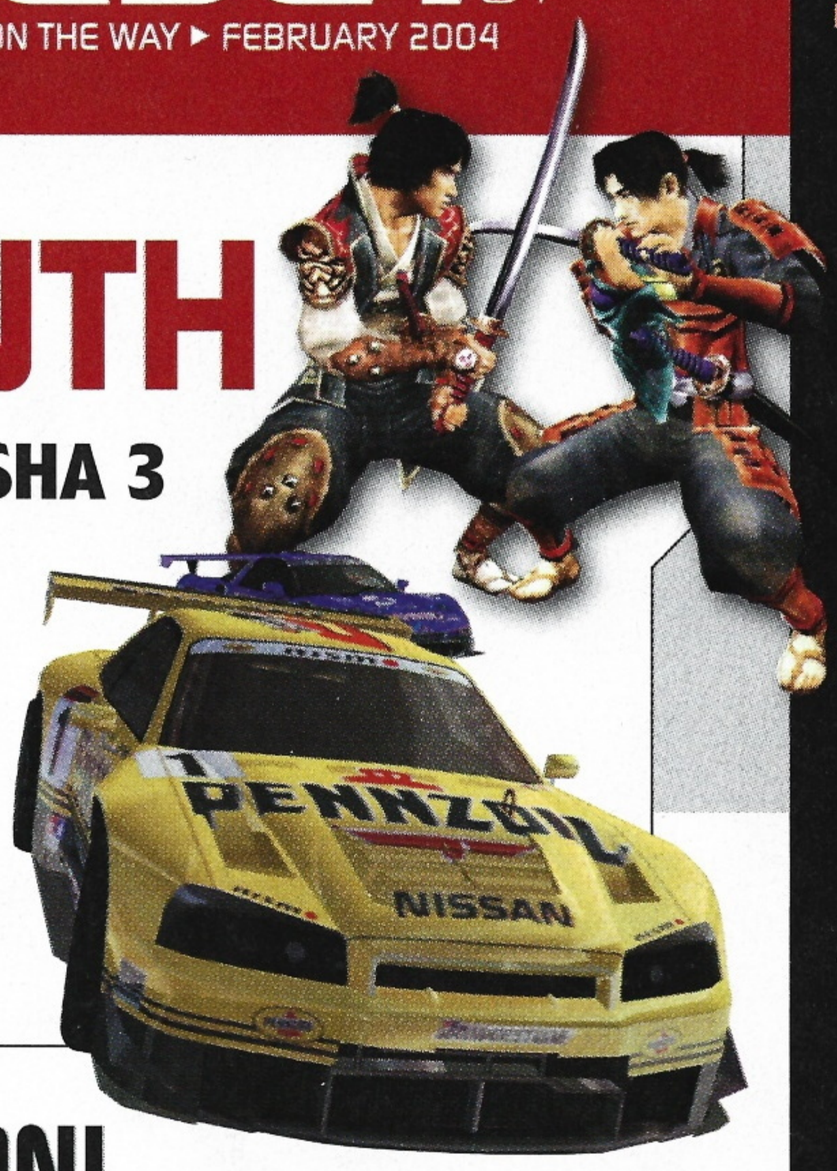
THIS ISSUE'S OVER, BUT ANOTHER ONE IS ALREADY ON THE WAY ▸ FEBRUARY 2004

NEXT MONTH



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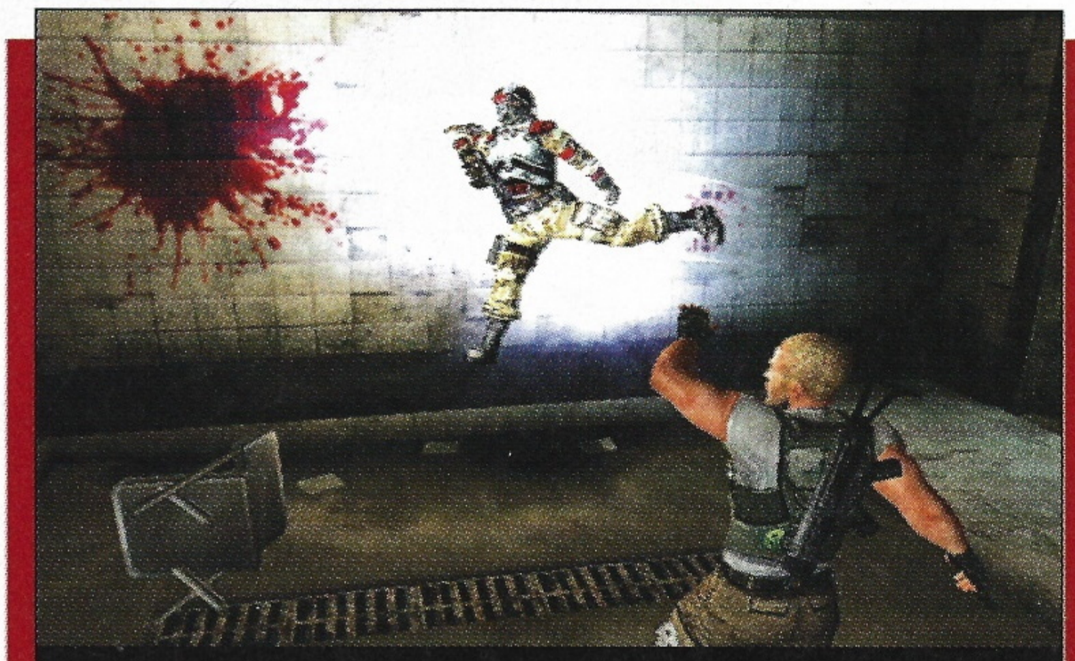


▲ **WRITE A FUNNY CAPTION FOR THIS PICTURE!**

Jot down a funny caption for the above screen, and if we like yours the best, we'll send you a PSM Prize Pack filled with cool PlayStation 2 goodies! Just send an e-mail with your entry to **psm@futurenetworkusa.com**, with the subject header "**PSM Caption #81**" (or send your entry to **PSM Caption #81, c/o Future Network USA, Brisbane, CA 94005**). Be sure to include your full name and address so we can contact you if you win!

AND THE WINNER IS...

JEREMY SEABLOOM of Omaha, NE is the winner of our November Caption Contest. Jeremy, your PSM Prize Pack is on the way!

▲ **"I checked all over the cave — sorry man, no toilet paper."**

3 YEARS AGO IN PSM...

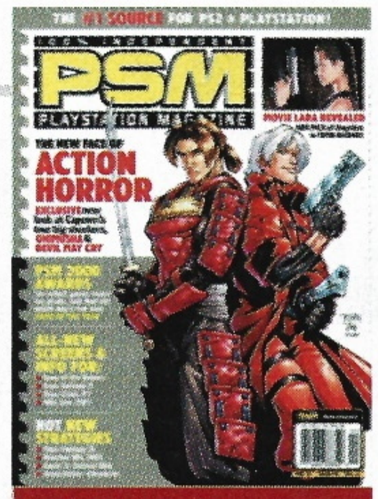
February, 2001 • Issue #42

Capcom Double-Shot

This issue Capcom came out with swords drawn and guns a-blazin', courtesy of the original *Onimusha* and *Devil May Cry*. We had first looks for both, plus early shots of *Zone of the Enders, Gran Turismo 3* and the first *Tomb Raider* movie.

We named *SSX* our 2001 PSM Game of the Year, followed by *Final Fantasy IX, Madden NFL 2001, Dead or Alive: Hardcore* and *The Legend of Dragoon*, in that order.

Here's a little PSM trivia for you diehard readers out there: this was the first year that PlayStation 2 games were included in our yearly Top 10, and coincidently, the last year that any PSone games made the list. Ah well, out with the old, in with the new!



▲ **If Dante had known how *DMC2* would turn out, he might have turned those guns on himself.**

PSM

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