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GameWEEK

PRE-E3 SPECIAL

E3 2000: Let the Madness Begin

By Jim Loftus

This year's sixth annual Electronic Entertainment Expo, once again held in the city of Los Angeles, will open the floodgates and throw the spotlight on more platforms than ever seen in the history of this industry. Companies will be asking show-goers for their attentions in more ways than believed to be sane. Not only will talk of PC, X-Box, PlayStation, PlayStation2, Dreamcast, Nintendo 64 and Game Boy Color products fill the halls of the L.A. Convention Center, there will also be plenty of new technologies to sift through—all of it in a span of three days. Further proof as to why Doctor Scholls is a very wealthy man.

Obviously, the show will mean different things to different people. To buyers and retailers, it will mean the chance to surmise potential revenue. To members of the media, it will mean attempts at securing exclusive, behind-the-scenes info. And naturally, game companies will attempt to prove their supremacy by laying it all on the table for everyone to see. With competition increasing to unimaginable heights this year, it will be time to put up or shut up.

Many questions will at last be answered, but every answer will be met with at least one more question. A lot of people will finally get the chance to see Sony's PlayStation2 in action for the first time, but how many pieces of software will actually be playable? There are multiple reports circulating as of press time that Sony's machine may be delayed from its implied September ship date by as little as a day and as much as six months. And what about the company's top-secret 32-bit handheld? Will Sony unveil its portable PlayStation ("GoStation," perhaps)? All signs point to the unit's existence, so if it's somewhere at the show, you can be sure *GameWEEK* will track it down and get on top of it. Microsoft will be showing off a string of new PC titles as well as teasing us with X-Box demos, but will any of it be playable? Will the company provide a sneak peek at an actual X-Box prototype? Not likely. Other questions: Nintendo will offer up plenty of distractions to the crowd in the form of games like *Pokémon Gold* and *Silver* and *Dinosaur Planet*, but will it finally break from its iron-clad shell of secrecy to deliver some long overdue Project Dolphin tech demos? Nope, not a chance. No Game Boy Advance either. And how will Sega hold up during all of this? Can it possibly withstand Sony's PS2 assault? The company will need to pull out every possible weapon it can lay its hands on if it intends to move ahead, much less survive. With Sega, from all indications, one of two things is likely to happen: it's either going to get smoked or it's going to convert non-believers once and for all that it's got what it takes to take Dreamcast into the future. Before the madness begins, think of the following pre-show coverage as an opening act before the main event. Be sure to join us next week for our full-tilt, in-depth E3 extravaganza!

Acclaim

Acclaim is planning for a solid show with some new titles. With *Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX* for the PlayStation, the company is hoping for the same success as Activision's *Tony Hawk Pro Skater*. Featuring tons of wild tricks and intense racing competition, *Mirra* should be hot.

Of course, an E3 show would not be complete without the latest Turok title for the N64. *Turok 3: Shadow of Oblivion* features two new playable characters and a much stronger multiplayer option with 48 battle arenas.

On the Dreamcast and PC fronts, the company is banking on *Fur Fighters*. The game contains six playable characters that all have their own unique abilities.

The company will also have a strong selection of PS2 titles, such as *Ferrari Fl Racing*, *Ferrari 360 Challenge*, *Shadow Man 2*, *All-Star Baseball 2002* and a surfing title.

Other Acclaim games to watch: *NFL Quarterback Club 2001* (DC, N64); *Vanishing Point* (DC, PS); *HBO Boxing* (PS); *ECW Anarchy Rulz* (PS, DC); *Mary-Kate & Ashley* (GB, GBC); *Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000* (DC); and *Re-Volt 2* (PS).

Turok 3: Shadow of Oblivion *(N64)*

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Atlus

First, Atlus will have on display *Ogre Battle 64* for the Nintendo 64. This game contains over 50 hours of gameplay and multiple endings that increase its replay value significantly.

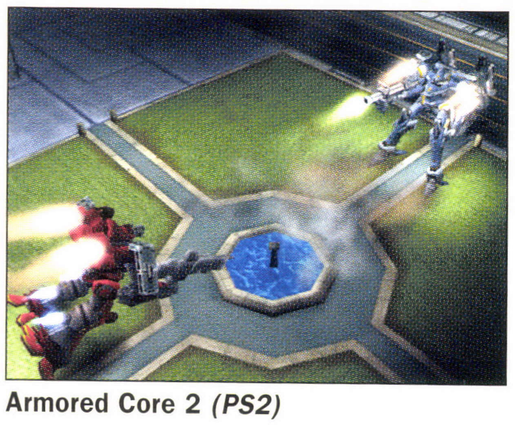
With a battle system similar to SquareSoft's *Final Fantasy Tactics*, old-school RPG fans should enjoy *Rhapsody: A Musical Adventure* (PS).

Word has it that the long-awaited *Persona 2* for the PlayStation will make an appearance at the Atlus booth as well. Here's hoping....

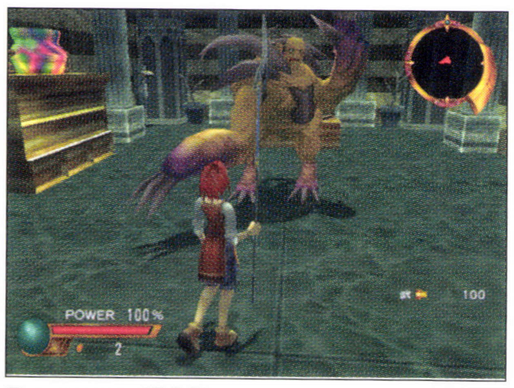
Rhapsody: A Musical Adventure *(PS)*

Agetec

The American division of Ascii will place a big focus on three PlayStation2 titles, all of which are being headed up by Japanese developer From Software. First up is *Eternal Ring*, a 3D action RPG that takes place on a dragon infested island. In search of the elusive "Eternal Ring," the main character must do battle using magic in a world that makes use of realistic geographical and weather changes. Next is *Armored Core 2*, the true follow-up to Agetec's very successful mech combat simulator. The idea is for players to custom assemble huge mechs to necessitate combat with each other, and the graphics look stunning. The game was not playable during spring TGS, but hopefully E3 attendees will get the chance they've been looking for. Last but certainly not least is *Evergrace*, a highly detailed action RPG. Originally in development for the original PlayStation, From Software decided to dump the goods and start over from scratch on PS2 and things are looking nice. *Evergrace* is comprised of two scenarios for two different characters. While spells and weapons are the order of the day, a big draw of this game is that the player can obtain items dropped by enemies during battle.



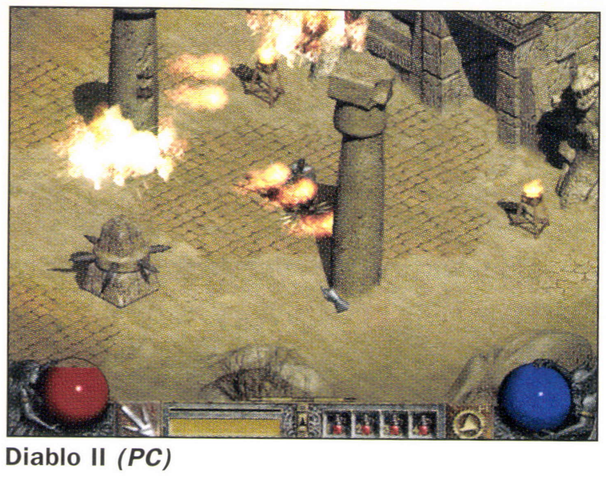
Armored Core 2 *(PS2)*



Evergrace *(PS2)*

Blizzard

Blizzard is only showing two titles this year, but those two titles are HUGE. The first is, of course, *Diablo II*, which looks as if it's finally going to be released this June. Not only will it be fully playable at the show, the much-anticipated CG movies that are slated to be included in the limited edition DVD will also be showcased.



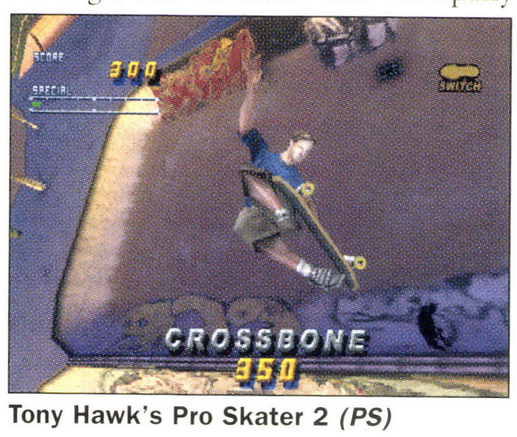
Diablo II *(PC)*

In addition to *Diablo II*, Blizzard is going to be throwing the spotlight on *Warcraft III*. The game will showcase six different races, including Orcs, Humans and Demons, each possessing unique units, magical abilities and weapons of war. Advanced world design tools allow players to customize every aspect of the game, including tile sets, character art, quests, mission objectives and unit types.

Activision

Following the "hey, what's behind curtain number three?" trend among game publishers, Activision remains tight-lipped about its PlayStation2 plans for E3. All we can tell you is what we've learned through our sources. The company will be revealing at least two PS2 titles: a racing game and a wild western-style shooting/action/adventure title. Other games rumored to make an appearance at the L.A. Convention Center include follow-ups to *Tenchu*, a game starring Marvel Comics' vampire hunter, Blade and at least one other Marvel-based character. Activision's PlayStation roster will consist of *Tenchu 2*, *Spider-Man*, *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2*, *Star Trek Invasion*, *Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn* and *X-Men Mutant Academy*, among others. For Dreamcast, Activision will be pushing at least two titles, including *Virtual On: Oratorio Tangram* and *Buzz Lightyear of Star Command*.

Finally, for the PC, the Big A has more than a few surprises in store.



Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 *(PS)*

Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn *(PS)*

Star Trek Voyager Elite Force *(PC)*

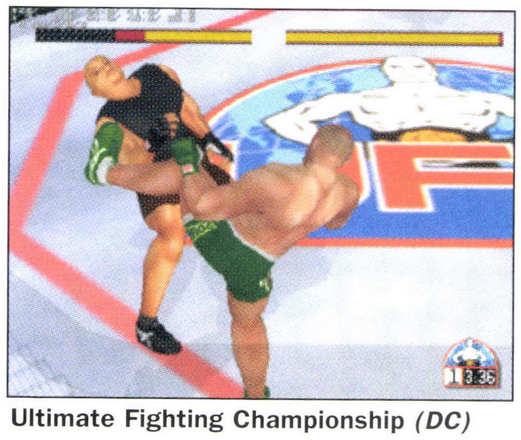
Spider-Man *(PS)*

With only a month to go before their respective releases, Activision will be showing off two new Star Trek licensed games. *Star Trek Voyager Elite Force* and *Star Trek ConQuest Online* will both be up and running.

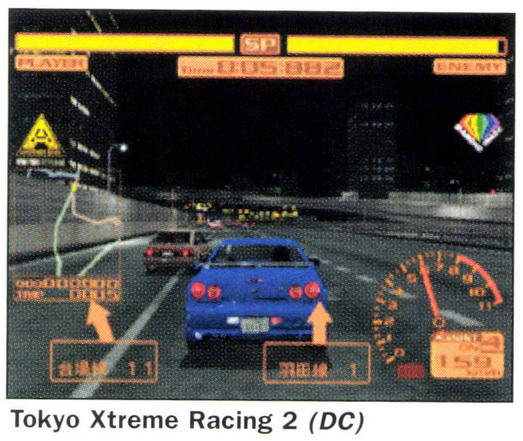
Crave

Yet another company with its PS2 wares sealed off behind closed doors will be Crave; however, as of the time of this writing (4.25.00) it was uncertain just what those "wares" would be. In any event, the company will continue its Dreamcast lineup with a slew of new titles: *Ultimate Fighting Championship* (also planned for PlayStation), *Sno Cross* (again, also for PlayStation), *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*, *Tokyo Xtreme Racing 2* and *MagForce Racing* will all be there.

On the PlayStation side of the fence, Crave will highlight several games: *Kengo: Master of Bushido* is an action fighting game loaded with innovative features, such as customizable attack options, dynamic audio, training grounds and a "turn around" move which gives dying characters one final shot at attacking their opponents. Looks like a strong showing for Crave.



Ultimate Fighting Championship *(DC)*



Tokyo Xtreme Racing 2 *(DC)*

Capcom

Capcom's lineup never fails to impress at E3, and this year will be no exception. PlayStation2 games expected to be on display include the already released (in Japan) *Street Fighter EX3* and the highly anticipated *Onimusha: Warlords*. The U.S. version of *SFEX3* will contain added frames of character animation, which should help ease complaints leveled at its overseas counterpart. *Onimusha*, a cross between *Resident Evil* and *Bushido Blade*, will be in the spotlight; however, it is not expected to be in playable form at the show.

Capcom will continue its strong support of Dreamcast with at least four new titles, all fully playable. Confirmed DC games will include *Power Stone 2*, *Marvel vs. Capcom 2*, *Street Fighter III: Third Strike* and a conversion of its very own coin-op

Onimusha: Warlords *(PS2)*

Power Stone 2 *(DC)*

Spawn: In the Demon's Hand *(DC)*

game, Spawn: In the *Demon's Hand. Word* has it that not only is this a pixel-perfect arcade port, it also contains exclusive features such as extra characters. *GameWEEK* uncovered a bit of additional Spawn-related info, however. It seems that any chances of online multiplayer functionality for the game are slim to none, since Sega had failed to provide the company with final protocol prior to the initial stages of development. One other title which could make a surprise appearance at the show is an early playable of Capcom's brand new game, *Gunspike*, a strange, *Contra*-style fighting/shooting game starring Cammy, Nash and several other characters from the Street Fighter series.

Although it has switched over the majority of its development attention to PS2 and Dreamcast, the company is preparing to release what looks to be its last batch of PlayStation titles. *Strider 2*, *Mega Man Legends 2* and *Breath of Fire 4* are all shoe-ins for an appearance and will represent a great cross-section of action, adventure and role-playing genres.

But things could get even better. As of this writing, all signs point to an E3 appearance of the sequel to a certain survival horror-style dinosaur game. That's right: *Dino Crisis 2*!

Disney Interactive

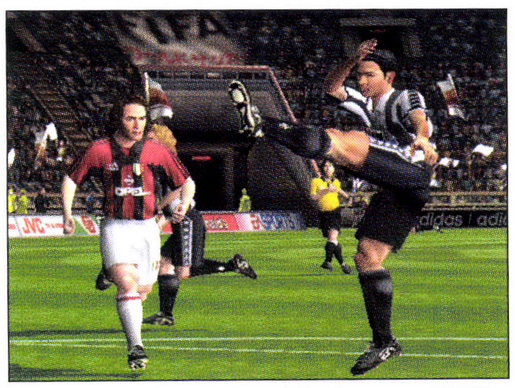
While most of Disney's titles are edutainment and kids games (see *GameWEEK Kids* in the 4/24 issue for full coverage), one game deserves particular attention. Hot on the heels of its best-selling predecessor, *Who Wants to be a Millionaire CD-ROM 2nd Edition* goes even further to capture the atmosphere and excitement of the TV show. The game contains all new content, including three times as many questions (600 to be precise). Even virtual Regis Philbin has been updated with new video clips.

Once again, Regis will be asking "Is that yo-ah final an-sa?"

EA Sports

EA Sports is going to be in full-effect with new titles for all of its major sports franchises, including *Madden NFL 2001*, *NHL 2001*, *Knockout Kings 2001*, *NASCAR 2001* and *FIFA World Championship Soccer*. In addition to PlayStation and PC offerings, the PlayStation2 is going to be part of the mix this year with playable versions of much anticipated titles like *Madden 2001* and *FIFA World Championship Soccer* which gets players out of the stands and onto the field taking full advantage of the PlayStation2's white-hot processing power.

FIFA World Championship Soccer delivers real emotion and heart racing soccer excitement. Stunning new



FIFA World Championship Soccer *(PS2)*

graphics, a revolutionary new audio style and finely tuned Artificial Intelligence puts players on the field and into the game.

For *NHL 2001*, EA Sports' new message for the game is "Real Hockey, Real Hits, Live the Experience." Building on what is

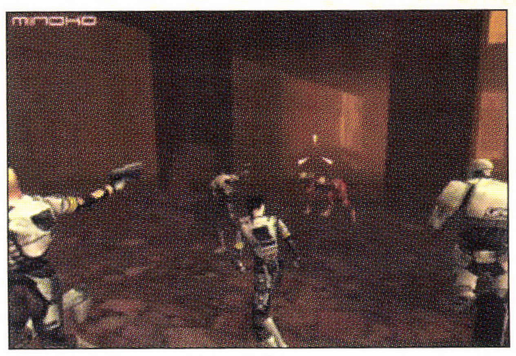
NASCAR 2001 *(PS2)*

probably the industry's top NHL hockey game franchise, EA Sports makes history as it launches onto the PlayStation2. Continuing to develop new PC technologies as well, both games will have unparalleled depth, graphics and controlled gameplay for a real interactive NHL experience. Key PlayStation2 features include state of the art graphics that deliver real attitude and emotions; customized gameplay with Quick matches; season play (ten year Career Mode); playoffs and tournament options; new camera angles for in your face action where game players can see the sweat of the NHL players or zoom in for a notable replay and all 30 NHL teams, including expansion Columbus and Minnesota, plus 20 International teams.

Brand new from the ground up, *NASCAR 2001* for the PlayStation2 is designed for next generation technology with stunning graphics and visual effects, thundering sound and ultra-competitive AI. This is the way NASCAR racing is supposed to be.

Eidos

In addition to being bathed in the beauty of a bevy of booth babes, those who visit Eidos during the show will also find themselves surrounded by an avalanche of top-shelf software titles. In fact, according to Eidos' very own Brian Kemp, "The games are so hot this year, we don't need to throw a party!" Yes, indeedy! The company's PC lineup in particular should be very strong. Games such as *Hitman*, *Gangsters 2*, *Deus Ex*, *Fate of the Dragon*, *Spacetopia*, *Project IGI* (as in "I'm Going In"), *Anachronox*, and *Commandos 2* will all be sharing the spotlight. And guess what else will be featured in the Eidos booth... *Daikatana*! That's right; John Romero's baby will be on display, just begging to be played by passersby (or those who have yet to read the review on Dailyradar.com). In the Dreamcast realm, expect several games, including *Soul Reaver II*, *102 Dalmations*,



Project Eden *(PC, DC)*

Magical Racing Tour and *Sydney 2000 Summer Olympics*. Also on deck will be *Project Eden*, Core's latest PC/Dreamcast action title. With regard to software for the original PlayStation, Eidos will be throwing the spotlight on at least two new games: *Soul Reaver 2* and *Fear Effect: Retro Helix*. Although the pickins look to be slim for seekers of PlayStation2 titles, the company will be making heads spin with plenty of top-secret, behind closed doors demonstrations.

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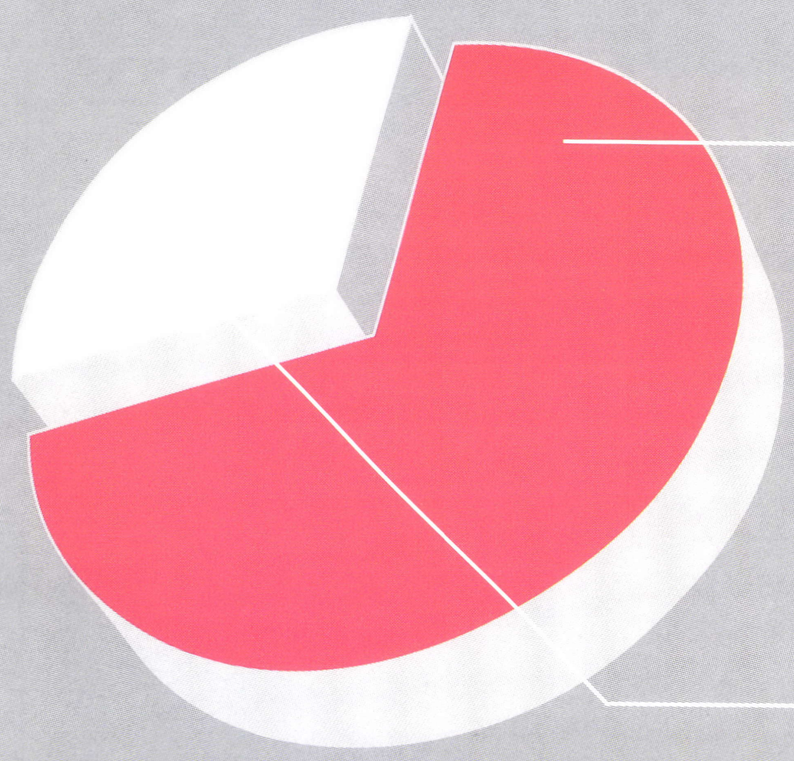

- **pc** 31% - 91 million
- **psx/ps2** 13% - 40 million
- **dreamcast** 11% - 31.2 million
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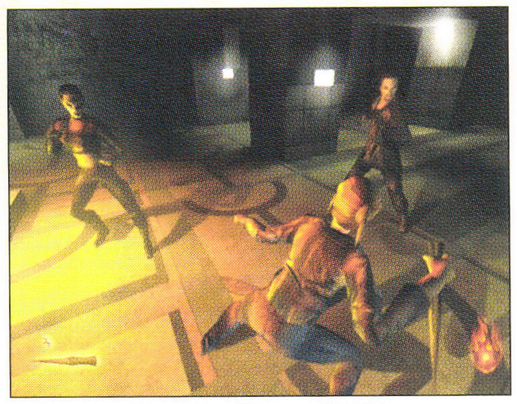
Fox Interactive

We know one thing that Fox Interactive will not be showing at this year's E3: sports games. The company recently announced plans to drop development of sports titles for the foreseeable future. This maneuver gives Fox more time to concentrate on pure entertainment titles, according to Fox President Steve Bersch. "In the future—E3 and beyond—we plan to announce a significant amount of new entertainment titles," Bersch said.

What those titles may be has not yet been disclosed, but a few names have surfaced, including *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (DC, PSX and PC) and *World's Scariest Police Chases* (DC). One game that's been confirmed that just about everyone is looking forward to play-testing is *Planet of the Apes* for PlayStation, PC and Dreamcast.



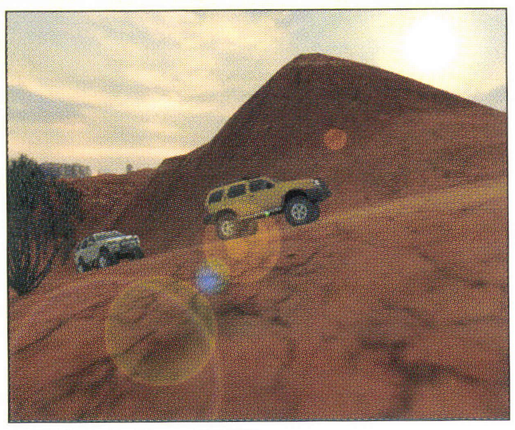
Buffy the Vampire Slayer *(DC)*

World's Scariest Police Chases *(DC)*

Gathering of Developers

From all indications, the Gathering is going to have quite a lineup this year. The company will showcase 11 PC games and three Sega Dreamcast titles. The PC lineup includes *Max Payne* (third-person shooter); *Fly! 2K* (flight sim); *4X4 Evolution* (off-road simulation); *Heavy Metal F.A.K.K.2* (3D action/adventure); *KISS Psycho Circus: The Nightmare Child* (First Person Shooter); *Rune* (3D action/adventure); *Kingdom Under Fire* (3D action and real-time strategy); *Tropico* (3D building strategy/simulation); and all three volumes of the upcoming games based on the *Blair Witch Project* property. The Dreamcast lineup includes *Railroad Tycoon II*, *KISS Psycho Circus: The Nightmare Child* and *4X4 Evolution*. *The Blair Witch Project* games each feature a unique protagonist, setting and weapons and combine the film's mythologies with Terminal Reality's *Nocturne* characters. *Blair Witch: Volume 1: The Rustin Parr Investigation*, developed by Terminal Reality, is set in 1941 immediately after Rustin Parr's conviction for murder. Parr is an old hermit that murdered seven kids, and claimed he did it for an old female ghost. Players take on the role of Doc Holiday, a *Nocturne* character, from the Spookhouse to investigate the crime. *Blair Witch: Volume 2: The Legend of Coffin Rock*, developed by Human Head Studios, takes place in Burkittsville, MD, during the fall of 1886 and involves Robin Weaver, a young girl believed to be missing in the Black Hills Forest. Players take on the role of Lazarus and try to uncover the mystery behind her disappearance. *Blair Witch: Volume 3: Elly Kedward's Tale*, developed by Ritual Entertainment, is set in 1786 and places gamers in the role of witch hunter Jonathan Pyre. Children are reported mysteriously missing, and Elly Kedward is accused of and found guilty of witchcraft and banished to the woods.

KISS Psycho Circus *(DC)*



4X4 Evolution *(PS2)*

Hasbro Interactive

With Hasbro's decision to reduce its number of offerings by half of what they were in 1999, booth visitors should find it a bit easier to zero-in on what they're looking for.

X-COM Alliance *(PC)*

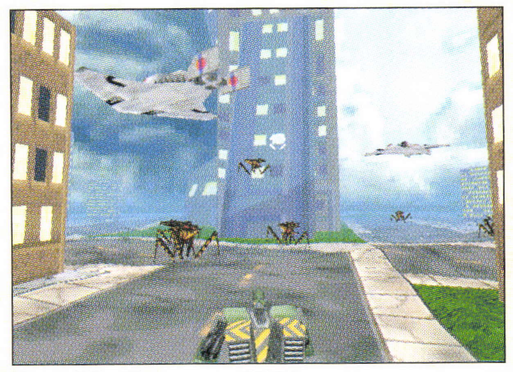
The first item up for bids is *X-COM Alliance*. The plot behind this game centers around an emergency aboard the X-COM research vessel UGS Patton has transported the ship and its crew to an uncharted region of space where an intergalactic war is taking place. The new title retains all of the elements that made the previous games so popular (e.g., troop management, alien research, training and missions). The addition of first-person perspective views and the ability to control squads of up to four troopers in real-time complement the game.

Wheel of Fortune 2nd Edition *(PC, PS)*

Hasbro's sequel to the game based on *Wheel of Fortune* has incorporated 2,500 new puzzles, and behind-the-scenes interviews with Vanna White. An interesting addition is the inclusion of fantasy prizes, such as being a presenter at the Oscars and traveling coast-to-coast in search of the best roller coaster in the U.S. (Any chance we're trying to promote *Rollercoaster Tycoon*?).

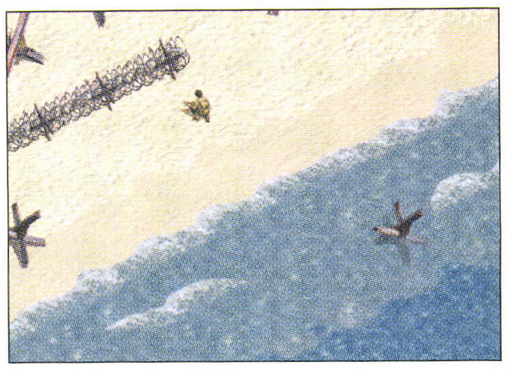
Tank Platoon is a fast-paced combat experience that lets gamers take control of heavy combat armor in the 21st century—that's the present, not the future. Players command their choice of the M1A2 Abrams (U.S.), the Challenger II (U.K.), the Leopard 2A5 (Germany) or the T-80 UM2 Black Eagle (Russian).

Tank Platoon *(PC)*



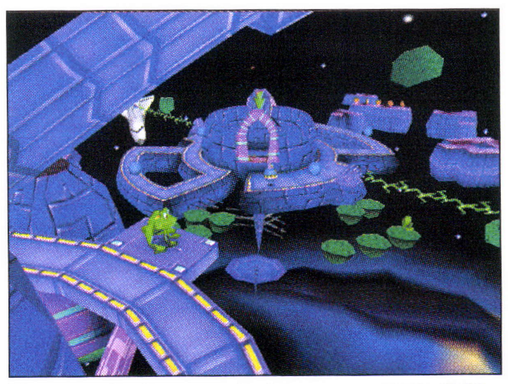
Starship Troopers *(PC)*

Based on the popular motion picture of the same name, *Starship Troopers* will offer players command units of Troopers in various missions against the Arachnids. Gameplay is real-time strategy with both single and multi-player missions available



Squad Leader *(PC)*

Squad Leader is a World War II squad-level tactical experience that throws players into the horrific battles that engulfed W.W.II. Play is turn-based combat in an isometric view. There are three different historically accurate campaigns: The Normandy Invasion, The Battle of the Bulge and Arnhem are available, as well as ten custom missions with each campaign.



Frogger 2: Swampy's Revenge *(PC, PS)*

With *Frogger 2: Swampy's Revenge*, the venerable classic returns to us with all new 3D worlds and levels. The biggest modification to the game is the addition of multiplayer levels where up to four players can compete against each other. The game also has 21 levels, seven themed environments, including garden, ancients, city, subterranean, lab, space and Halloween.

Interplay

Interplay promises a strong lineup of products at this year's show, with some familiar titles showing in polished form. Among them are the latest batch of Star Trek-related fare for PC: *Star Trek: Klingon Academy*, *Star Trek: New Worlds* and *Starfleet Command Volume II—Empires At War*. The latter title pushes you in a battle for control of the universe, with a tracking system that enables the viewing of political balance across the galaxy.

Other computer-game titles being shown include *Baldur's Gate 2*, *Evolva*, *Giants* and *Icewind Dale*. First looks at *Neverwinter Nights* (from Black Isle Studios label and developed by Bioware) and *Sacrifice* (developed by Shiny) will also be available. *Neverwinter Nights* is a third-edition Advanced Dungeons & Dragons (AD&D) role-playing game, and a 3D game with single-player components but a focus on online multiplayer action. *Sacrifice* is a blend of action and role-playing in a multiplayer, real-time strategy mold.

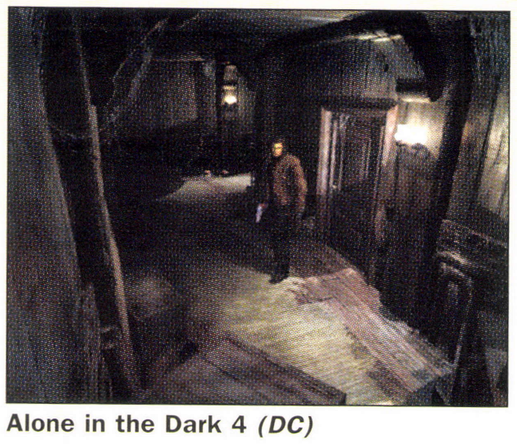
Baldur's Gate 2 *(PC)*

Star Trek: Klingon Academy *(PC)*

On the console side, Interplay is holding its cards close to the vest, but indications are that it will announce at least four new titles at the show.

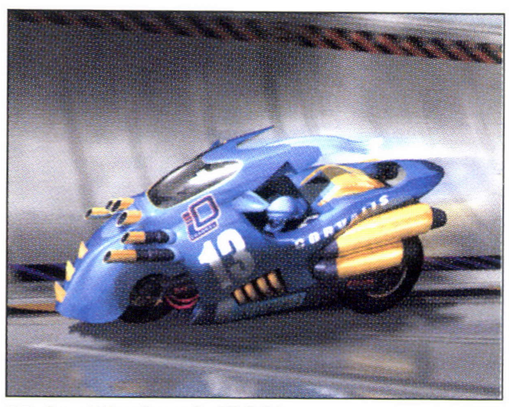
Infogrames

Building on the mammoth success of the original, *Driver 2* (PS) has 40 missions that span over four cities: Chicago, Las Vegas, Havana and Rio de Janeiro. Also, the game includes on-foot gameplay and the ability to drive a variety of vehicles like buses and fire trucks. *Alone in the Dark 4* (PS, DC, PC, GBC) is part of the survival-horror genre. Once again, players control Edward Carnby, who must find various items to help him find his way out of this mysterious and dangerous environment. The *Looney Tunes* series looks to have a forceful presence at the Infogrames booth, with no less than four titles carried across multiple platforms. They include: *LT Collector: Alert!* (GBC), *LT Racing* (PS), *LT Space Race* (DC) and *LT Taz Express* (N64). *Motor Mayhem!* will be a PS2 title on display by Infogrames. This game contains violent vehicle combat where the ultimate goal is to become the World Vehicle Combat League Champion. In addition to the aforementioned titles, Infogrames is scheduled to have the following ready for show: *Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee* (PS2), *Animorphs* (PC, PS), *Boarder Zone* (DC), *Demolition Racer-No Exit* (DC), *Indy Racing 2000* (N64) and *Duke Nukem: Planet of the Babes* (PC), *Silver* (DC), *Stunt GP* (PC, DC), *Test Drive Cycles* (DC, PS), *Test Drive Le Mans* (GBC), *Test Drive: V-Rally* (DC) and *Wacky Races* (DC, PS, PC, GBC).



Alone in the Dark 4 *(DC)*

Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee *(PS2)*



Motor Mayhem! *(PS2)*

Konami

Look for Konami to place a heavy emphasis on games for next-generation consoles during this year's E3. In particular, the company will have a full slate of ESPN-licensed sports games for Dreamcast and PlayStation2, including *Baseball Tonight* (DC); *NBA 2Night* (DC, PS2, GBC); *X-Games Snowboarding* (PS2); and *International Track & Field* (PS2, DC).

The company will also be presenting Universal-licensed games: *The Mummy* (PS, DC, PC) and *The Grinch* (PS, DC, PC)—a third-person action/adventure game based on the upcoming motion picture starring Jim Carrey.

The Grinch *(PS)*

Last but not least, it appears that Konami will also be showing off an early demo of the sequel to *Metal Gear Solid* for PlayStation2 behind closed doors.

Metro 3D

While Metro3D won't have a large number of titles at its booth, one game should stand out; *Armada 2: Exodus* is in development for both the Sega Dreamcast and Sony PlayStation2 consoles. As an extra bonus, *Armada 2* is going to include online play for both platforms.

The other two games that will be showcased this year are *Armada F/X Racers* exclusively for the Game Boy Color and *Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse* for the Sega Dreamcast.

Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse *(DC)*

Namco

Two titles will dominate Namco's show floor space: *Tekken Tag Tournament* and *Ridge Racer 5* for the PlayStation2.

For the PS2 version of *Tekken Tag*, Namco has redesigned the arcade game, much like it did for *Soul Calibur* on Dreamcast. The game contains the classic *Tekken* fighting-style with the added feature of tagging in a partner. Every character that ever found his or her way into a *Tekken* game is present in this edition. Namco has cleaned up the graphics and added more details to the environments. While it may not seem as eye-popping as the demo we saw at last fall's Tokyo Game Show, it's still the strongest *Tekken* title to arrive on a home console.

Many viewed *Ridge Racer 5* as the best piece of PS2 launch software this past March, and we're finding it pretty difficult to disagree. Namco's latest console racing title has super fast gameplay along with crisp graphics, a liquid smooth frame rate and an impressive vehicle selection. Expect *RR5* to come to the U.S. as a PS2 launch title and be a major seller for retailers.

Tekken Tag Tournament *(PS2)*

Ridge Racer 5 *(PS2)*

Other Namco games scheduled to appear include *GP500* (PS2); *Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness* and *Mr. Driller* (PSX and DC); and *Dragon Valor* (PSX). Namco will also sponsor a "*Tekken Tag Tournament Challenge*" on the first day of the show.

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Microsoft

Those seeking enlightenment on Microsoft's upcoming console of doom may be disappointed with this year's show. That wonderful Wizard of X-Box, Bill Gates, has decided to keep things rather secretive for the time being, giving only a select few individuals access to what's behind his magic curtain or should we say, magic box.

The company will have an extensive showing of PC products at this year's show, however. Among them are sequels and support products for existing franchises, including *Age of Empires II: Age of Kings* expansion pack, *Combat Flight Simulator 2: WWII Pacific Theater*, *Links 2001*, *MechCommander 2*, *MechWarrior 4*, *Microsoft Golf 2001*, *Midtown Madness 2*, *Motocross Madness 2* and *Microsoft Baseball 2001*.

New titles include *Conquest: Frontier Wars* (a 3D real-time strategy game set in space), *Crimson Skies* (a rambunctious combat flight simulator with swashbuckling pilots and a post-depression theme), *Dungeon Siege* (real-time strategy and role-playing action blended in a gorgeous 3D universe, and rendered with solid technical advances), *FreeLancer* (a 3D science-fiction space adventure with real-time character interaction that picks up where *StarLancer* leaves off), *Loose Cannon* (a futuristic action/adventure "mercenary-style combat" game with intense driving, vivid fighting and landmark cities as the battlefield) and *StarLancer* (the recently released first-person space-combat battle with a deep story line set in the future).

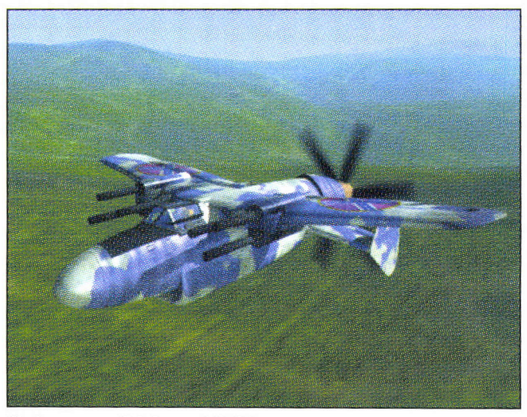
The PC version of *Metal Gear Solid* will also be on display. It's a port of the popular PlayStation game—the fruits of Microsoft's deal with Konami to bring each other's games to other platforms.

Microsoft's SideWinder group will also have a few new controller products to show. Aside from an improved SideWinder Force Feedback 2 joystick, the company will show SideWinder Game Voice, which enables real-time voice communication with other players for trash talk and cooperative strategies; and SideWinder Strategic Commander, which gives real-time strategy enthusiasts the ability to "complement" keyboard and mouse control through mapping of macros—sets of commands and actions—to single keys on the left-hand unit.

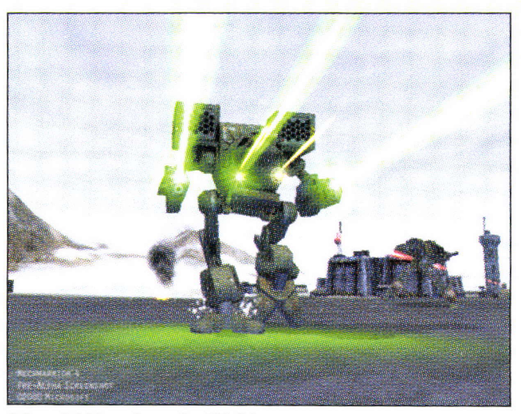
The SideWinder Strategic Commander

Conquest: Frontier Wars *(PC)*

Midtown Madness 2 *(PC)*



Crimson Skies *(PC)*



MechWarrior 4 *(PC)*

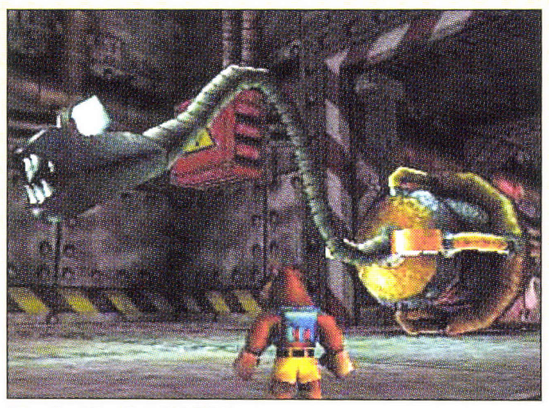
Nintendo

Despite its traditionally giant booth presence at this year's E3, Nintendo is expected to be overshadowed by its competitors, Sony and Sega. The grand unveiling of Sony's PlayStation2, not to mention Sega's Dreamcast online multiplayer games, threatens to gobble up the majority of attention from media members and general show-goers, leaving Nintendo to fight for the leftover mind-share. To make matters worse, *GameWEEK* has learned that Nintendo will not be showing anything related to its next-generation "Dolphin" console or new Game Boy Advance.

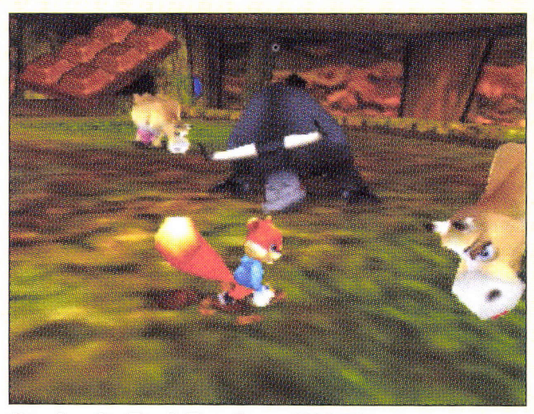
So what does that leave for the Big N? The company says it will concentrate all efforts on promoting games for its existing Game Boy Color and Nintendo 64 platforms. The N64 may be on its last legs, but the 2000 lineup looks surprisingly potent. Confirmed N64 games will include *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask*, *Mario Tennis*, *Hey You, Pikachu!*, *Mickey's Speedway U.S.A.*, *Eternal Darkness*, *Excitebike 64*, *Banjo-Tooie* (the sequel to the hit *Banjo-Kazooie*), *Conker's Bad Fur Day* and a surprise Rare-developed title called *Dinosaur Planet*—a game that is said to push the N64's processing power to the breaking point, resulting in a game that is graphically superior to anything seen on the console up until now.

On the GBC front, Pokémon titles will once again reign supreme with the big title(s) being *Pokémon Gold* and *Silver*, the true sequel(s) to the phenomenally successful *Pokémon Red* and *Blue*. It's also rumored that Nintendo will show-off a new puzzle game called *Pokémon Attack*. Other GBC titles making noise will be the portable version of *Perfect Dark*, which is said to be compatible with its N64 sibling via the Transfer Pak and *Donkey Kong Country*—an almost perfect conversion of the smash hit SNES game that was released in 1994.

Zelda: The Majora's Mask *(N64)*

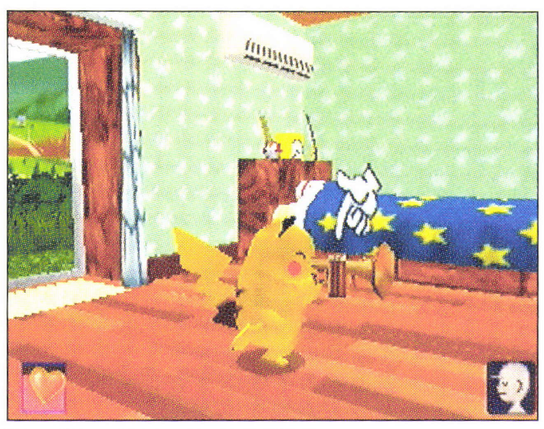


Banjo-Tooie *(N64)*

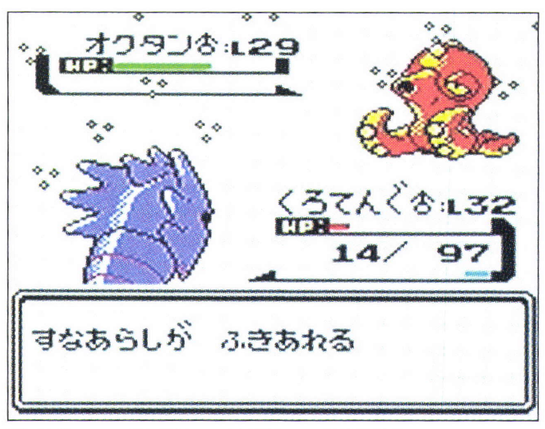


Conker's Bad Fur Day *(N64)*

Eternal Darkness *(N64)*



Hey You, Pikachu! *(N64)*



Pokémon Gold and Silver (*GBC*)

SECRET IDENTITIES REVEALED!

Arakawa worriedly complained to Yamauchi, oughly unsympathetic. He implored Yamauchi at least to change the name, but Yamauchi refused. "It is a good game," he said.

Arakawa had no choice but to attempt to sell it. Judy reluctantly agreed to try, and he convinced Stone to cooperate. There was one promising sign: when the new flame-haired kid in the warehouse, Howard Phillips, test-drove "Donkey Kong," they had to pry him off it to get him back to work.

Before NCL could begin mass-producing the game boards, the American team had to provide an English text in place of the Japanese in the introductory storyline, which flashed on the screen at the start of a game.

The NOA staff gathered in a corner of the warehouse around a couple of card tables. They came up with a simple translation of Mario story [illegible] to name the characters. Arakawa christened the princess Pauline, after James's wife, Polly. They were trying to decide what to call the rotund, red-capped carpenter, when there was a knock on the door.

Arakawa answered it. Standing there was the owner of the warehouse. In front of everyone, he blasted Arakawa because the rent was late. Flustered, Arakawa promised that the money was forthcoming, and the man left.

The landlord's name was Mario Segali. "Mario," they decided. "Super Mario!"

Tavern, near Nintendo's office, was a small, darkly lit easy hamburgers, excellent french fries, and es. In a back corner was a pinball machine.

Page 109:

Who is Mario? Where did he come from?

Learn Mario's true identity as revealed in this tell-all, no holds barred story about the rise of Nintendo—a company's coming of age story in a rapidly evolving technological industry. Find out who the intrepid little plumber is, along with the origins of a stubborn monkey, Donkey Kong, and his blond princess, Pauline.

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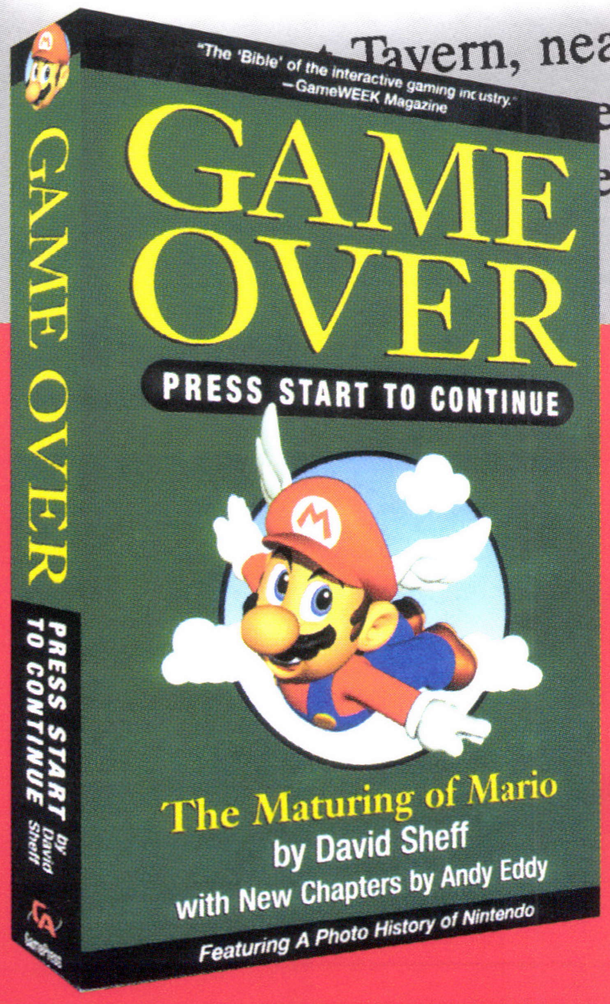

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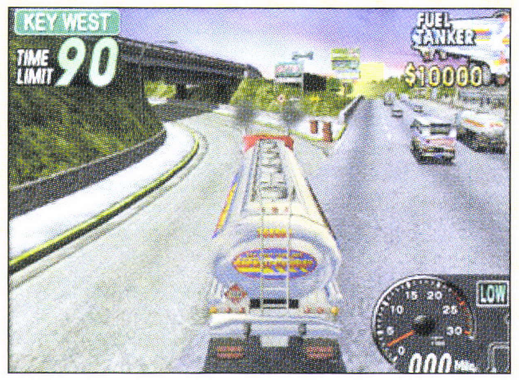
Sega

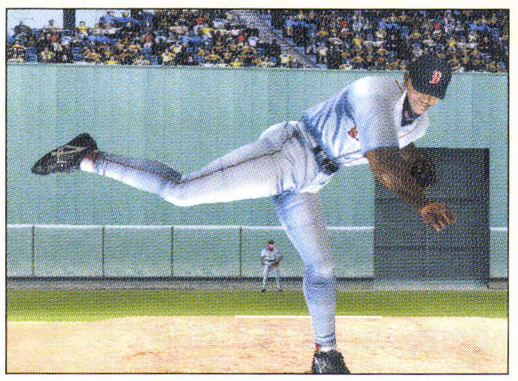
Dreamcast, year two. In addition to pushing its Sega.com/SegaNet online gaming plan via games such as *Quake III: Arena* and *Dreamcast Tetris*, Sega will be bringing at least two new Sonic the Hedgehog titles to the show. Although *Sonic Adventure 2* will not be featured on the show floor (the game is too early along), Sega reps will be showing it behind closed doors to select members of the media. *Sonic Shuffle* is another story, however. This surprise multiplayer collection of mini-games (think Sonic Team meets *Mario Party*) will make its world debut at E3 2000, possibly in playable form. Released last week in Japan, Yuji Naka's *Samba de Amigo* will also be present, arming show-goers with special maraca controllers and a chance to shake their "groove-thang" to tunes like the Macarena.

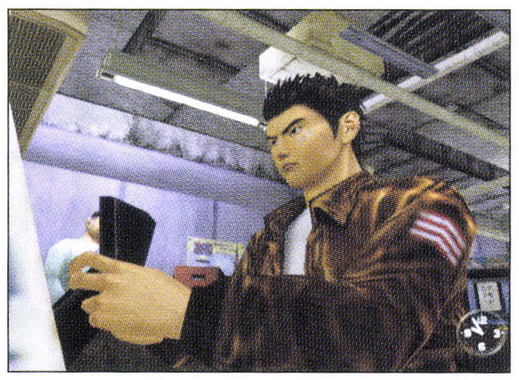
On the racing game front, there will be plenty to get excited about. In addition to a 100% complete version of *Metropolis Street Racer* and *Sega GT*, Sega will be introducing an impressive arcade-to-DC port of *18-Wheeler American Pro Trucker*. With its bright, Coloforms-style look and "Tony Hawk meets Crazy Taxi" gameplay, *Jet Grind Radio* (formerly known as *Jet Set Radio*) will be another big attention-getter at Sega's booth. There also will be plenty of other Dreamcast titles on display, most of which will be playable. *Shenmue*, *Phantasy Star Online*, *Eternal Arcadia*, *Grandia II*, *Space Channel 5*, *Ecco: Defender of the Future*, *Rent-A-Hero*, *Chakan*, *Sega Marine Fishing*, *Floigan Brothers*, *D2*, *NFL 2K1*, *NBA 2K1*, *World Series Baseball 2K1*, and *Virtua Tennis* should all be present and accounted for. The company may also pull out a few surprises, such as *NiGHTS*, *Streets of Rage*, *Outrun* and *Revenge of Shinobi* sequels, as well as coin-op-to-DC ports of *Out Triggers*, *Jambo Safari* and *Emergency Call Ambulance*.

On the hardware/peripheral front, Sega should be set to showcase its Dreameye digital camera, microphone, zip drive, mouse and MP3-compatible VMU (Visual Memory Unit). The company might also be ready to lift the curtain on its top-secret DVD player, but we're not holding our breaths. In any event, Sega will be pulling out all the stops in an effort to divert attention away from Sony's booth. The real question is, will it be enough?



18-Wheeler American Pro Trucker *(DC)*


World Series Baseball 2K1 *(DC)*


Shenmue *(DC)*

F355 Challenge *(arcade screen shown)*

Samba de Amigo *(DC)*

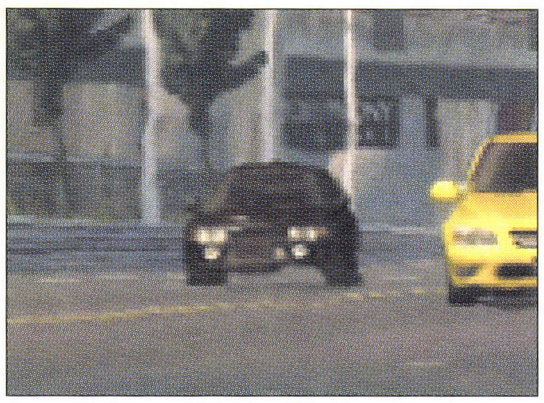
Jet Grind Radio *(DC)*

Sony

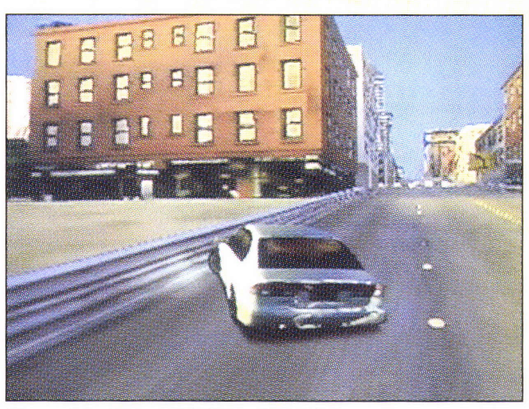
A certain black box will be Sony's main attraction for E3 2000, and with key titles like *Grand Turismo 2000* and *Dark Cloud* taking center stage to mesmerize the masses, it will undoubtedly be the hottest topic of the show.

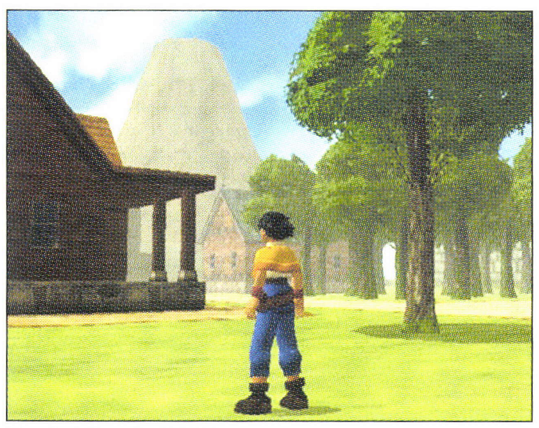
With the incredible attention to detail paid to the development of *Gran Turismo 2000* (motion blur, rippling, off-the-pavement heat effects and reflective surface techniques, to name just a few), this game will very likely set a new standard for next generation console racers.

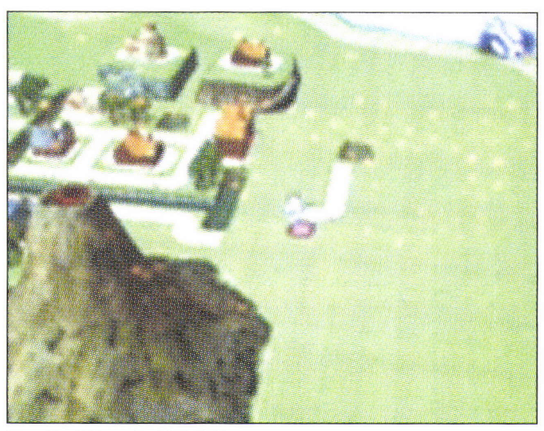
Dark Cloud is Sony's up-and-coming premiere RPG in which players are able to build worlds, then zoom in on them to live out unimaginable adventures. An extremely ambitious project, *Dark Cloud* is one game which may or may not be playable at the show, depending on its condition (it was MIA during the spring TGS). It won't all be about PS2, though; Sony will also have a strong lineup of PlayStation games as well. Key titles to keep an eye on: *Cool Boarders 2001*, a game that showcases 10 professional riders, all-new mountains and courses, new tricks and more than 20 authentic events. *Crash Bash* (working title) stars Crash and his friends, back and ready to ride, race, jump and battle it out. It's a win at all costs competition that will test gamers' skills, agility and perseverance. *Crash Bash* is an arena-based battle game consisting of nine, four-player competitive events. Players can select from eight characters and compete with up to four players at once. From what we can tell, this title is very similar to Nintendo's *Mario Party*. *Spyro: Year of the Dragon* (another working title) combines the best aspects of the highly popular *Spyro the Dragon* and *Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage* games with new gameplay elements. Spyro and Sparx are back in a whole new adventure. *The Year of the Dragon* will offer a deeper and more complex dynamic that will keep players engrossed for more than 30 completely new worlds. Players will get to drive various vehicles as well as control four new types of creatures to accomplish different goals. With regard to 989 Sports, there's been no word as of yet on whether the company will have games up and running on PlayStation2; however, at the very least, there will be several titles shown in videotape form. *NFL GameDay 2001*, *NCAA Final Four 2001*, *NBA ShootOut 2001*, *NHL Face-Off 2001* and *NCAA GameBreaker 2001* will all be featured prominently.


Gran Turismo 2000 *(PS2)*

Gran Turismo 2000 *(PS2)*


Gran Turismo 2000 *(PS2)*


Dark Cloud *(PS2)*


Dark Cloud *(PS2)*

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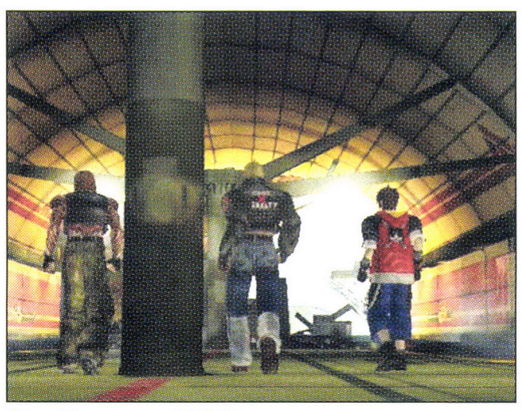
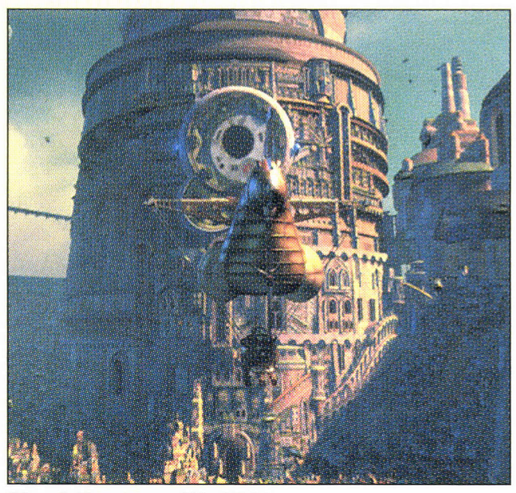
SquareSoft

We will finally get to see one of the most anticipated games for the Sony PlayStation2 at this year's E3: *The Bouncer* by SquareSoft. *The Bouncer* was probably one of the most impressive game displayed at last fall's Tokyo Game Show when the PS2 was introduced. Since Square has been quiet about *The Bouncer* since the show, not much is known about the title. This fighting game takes place in massive environments where mostly anything can be used as a weapon or a shield from incoming attacks. *The Bouncer* contains camera angles that resemble those of a movie, such as *The Matrix* with its panning camera movements. Expect this title to attract huge crowds.



The Bouncer *(PS2)*



Final Fantasy IX *(PS)*

Next on Square's plate is *Final Fantasy IX* for the Sony PlayStation. Square has returned to a more traditional setting of mystical wizards and castles, which is very different from the futuristic themes of *FFVII* and *FFVIII*. No word yet on whether Square will showcase either *FFX* or *FFXI* for the PlayStation2.

The RPG theme is highly prevalent for Square's PS lineup with the likes of *Vagrant Story*, *Legend of Mana*, *Threads of Fate*, *Chrono Cross* and *Parasite Eve 2*. Other PlayStation2 titles that Square will have at the show are *Driving Emotion Type S*, *All Star Pro Wrestling* and *Gekkukan Pro Yakyu*.

Ubi Soft

Like other game publishers, Ubi Soft will be on hand to promote many of its yet unseen PlayStation, PlayStation2 and Dreamcast projects to show-goers. Although the company has not yet said which games will be on display at E3, it is expected that *Batman: The Animated Series*, *Dinosaur*, *VIP*, *Inspector Gadget* and *Dragonriders* will all be shown off.

Additionally, Ubi will be in full support of Game Boy Color, with a slate of licensed-based games: *Toonsylvania*, *Animorphs*, *Inspector Gadget*, *Donald Duck*, *Batman* and *The Jungle Book*.

The Jungle Book

Westwood Studios

The latest installment in Westwood's premier franchise brings back the Communist threat. The storyline for *Command & Conquer Red Alert 2* has the Soviets attacking the U.S. on its own soil. Missions take place in places like Washington D.C., Chicago and New York City, to name a few. Westwood has redesigned the interface, using a tab system and making it much easier to use. Many of the units and weapons are based on the Soviet conspiracy myths of the 20th century. For example, one of the Soviet naval units is a psychically-controlled giant squid.

Command & Conquer Red Alert 2 *(PC)*

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