MIDNIGHT CLUB 2
RACES TO PS2 & XBOX

CELL-PHONE GAMING GUIDE
THE BEST DEALS & THE BEST GAMES

The #1 Videogame Mag for PS2 • Xbox • GameCube • PS One • GBA...

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY™

World Exclusive!
DRIVER 3

EGM sucks!

The SIMS™

- REVIEWED!
  BETTER THAN THE PC GAME
- REVEALED!
  SIMS FOR XBOX, GAMECUBE

SPECIAL REPORT
THE NEXT BIG THING
SEE PAGE 120

EXCLUSIVE
LORD OF THE RINGS
THE OTHER TWO TOWERS GAME

REVIEWED:
- War of the Mons
- Minority Repor
- BMX
- Panzer Drag

PREVIEWED:
- Tenchu 3
- Def Jam: Vendetta
- Devil May Cry 2
- Xenosaga

DISPLAY UNTIL FEBRUARY 4
ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA
Issue 163
February 2003 $4.99/$6.50 Canada
02
0 14024 06960 8
WWW.EGMMAG.COM

PlayStation 2

IGN.COM BEST OF E3 AWARD

Best Fighting Gar
Best Simulation

MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Strong Lyrics
Violence

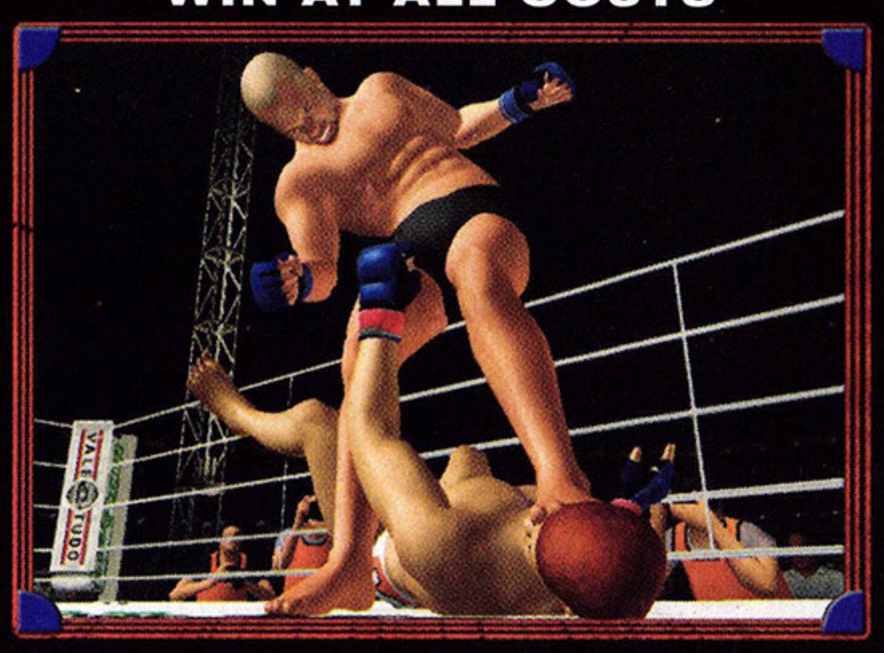
BREAK FACES

DRAW BLOOD

FOR ALL THE PAIN HE'S IN, QUITTING WOULD FEEL MUCH WORSE.

PRIDE FC FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIPS™

WIN AT ALL COSTS



DISLOCATE LIMBS

DREAM STAGE entertainment

THQ®

www.thq.com

© 2001, 2002 Dream Stage Entertainment, Inc. Exclusively licensed to THQ Inc. worldwide, except in Japan. THQ and its logo are registered trademarks of THQ Inc. All Rights Reserved.
"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Middle-earth stands on the brink of destruction.

You will unite. Or you will fall.

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Violence

© 2002 New Line Productions, Inc. The Lord of The Rings and the characters, names, and places therein, TM The Saul Zaentz Company d/b/a Tolkien Enterprises under license to New Line Productions, Inc. All RightsReserved. Electronic Arts, EA GAMES, the EA GAMES logo and "Challenge Everything" are trademarks or registered trademarks of Electronic Arts Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S.and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. TM, ®, Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. EA GAMES™ is an Electronic Arts™ brand.

Join THE LORD OF THE RINGS OFFICIAL FAN CLUB
1-800-451-6381
www.lotrfanclub.com

NEW LINE CINEMA

America Online Keyword: Lord of the Rings

www.lordoftherings.net

"This is how a movie-to-game adaption should be done."

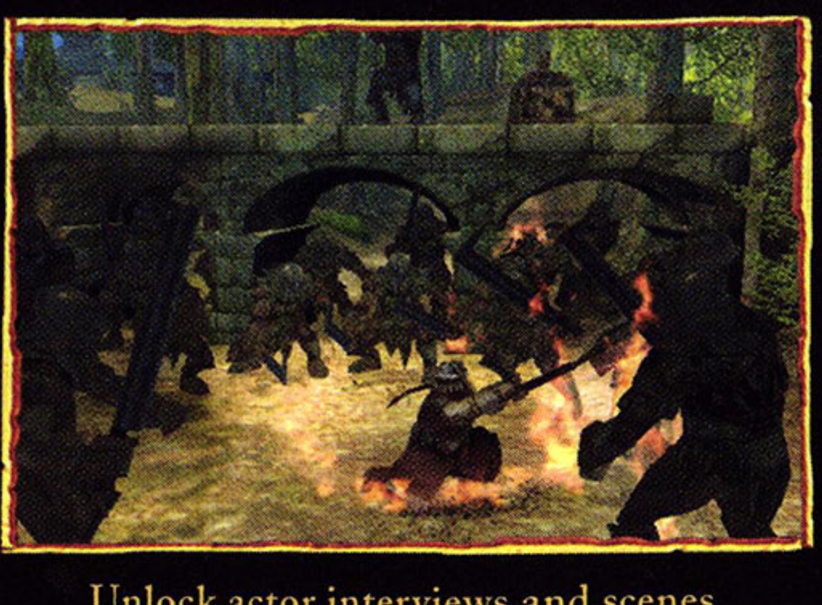
- Electronic Gaming Monthly

"It's absolutely jaw-droppingly gorgeous."

- Official PlayStation Magazine

Play as Aragorn, Legolas or Gimli.

Battle against Sauron's evil minions.



Unlock actor interviews and scenes from the *The Two Towers*.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS™

AVAILABLE ON

PlayStation®2 XBOX NINTENDO GAMECUBE GAME BOY ADVANCE

JOIN THE ADVENTURE AT lordoftherings.ea.com

EA GAMES

Challenge Everything™

SO REALISTIC, YOU'LL SWEAR YOU WERE THERE. The Rocky Mountains? Merely a speed bump. The Mojave Desert? A sandbox. The Black Forest? A flower garden. Welcome to an insanely realistic new world of offroad racing. 40 massive environments, more than 20 real-world ATVs, minigames, a hard-core soundtrack, plus intensely competitive online gameplay. So find yourself a comfortable chair, sit back and get ready, because it's gonna get dirty. **BLAZE YOUR OWN TRAIL.™**

EVERYONE E — CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Mild Lyrics

www.playstation.com ATV Offroad Fury is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Developed by Rainbow Studios. Online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). ©2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours.", "Blaze Your Own Trail" and the Online icon are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

ONLINE BROADBAND AND DIAL-UP

rainbow STUDIOS

ATV Offroad Fury 2

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.™

PlayStation.2

MORE BANDICOOT THAN YOU EVER HOPED TO SEE IN A LIFETIME.

EVERYONE

E

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Violence

UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE

GAME BOY ADVANCE

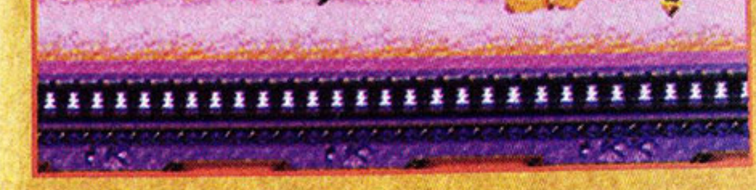
GBA LINK CABLE

Vicarious Visions Inc.

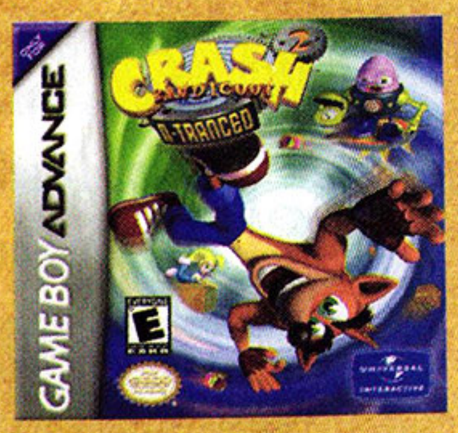
VIVENDI UNIVERSAL games

"Crash Bandicoot 2: N-Tranced" interactive game © 2002 Universal Interactive, Inc. Crash Bandicoot and related characters TM & © Universal Interactive, Inc. All rights reserved. Vivendi Universal Games and the Vivendi Universal Games logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. TM, ® and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo.

CRASH BANDICOOT 2 N-TRANCED™



Crash is strutting his stuff in the deepest, most graphically advanced adventure to ever hit Game Boy Advance. With over 30 levels, multiplayer action, three playable characters, new moves and the most diabolical villain yet, it's more Crash than bandicootly possible.



www.crashbandicoot.com

I ALONE HAVE THE FIFTH FREEDOM.

THE RIGHT TO SPY, STEAL, DESTROY AND ASSASSINATE,
TO ENSURE THAT AMERICAN FREEDOMS ARE PROTECTED.
IF CAPTURED, MY GOVERNMENT WILL DISAVOW
ANY KNOWLEDGE OF MY EXISTENCE.
I AM SAM FISHER.

I AM A SPLINTER CELL.

STEALTH ACTION REDEFINED

You make the rules in the high stakes game of covert espionage. Work alone, outside the boundaries of the law, to thwart cyberterrorist attacks against the United States. With thermal goggles, fiber optic cameras, prototype guns and other dirty tricks, you redefine justice and punishment. Rappel, split jump, glide along ziplines, force information from your enemies, even use them as human shields. And remember - a dead witness is not really a witness.

TEEN
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Violence

Ubi Soft ENTERTAINMENT
www.ubi.com

PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE

XBOX

The way it's meant to be played
NVIDIA

© 2002 Ubi Soft Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. Splinter Cell, Ubi Soft, and the Ubi Soft logo are trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment in the U.S. and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

"The best game on Xbox, period."
GameSpy.com ~ 95%
"9.6 Highest score ever."
Official Xbox Magazine ~ Editor's Choice Award
"Truly the next generation in Stealth Combat."
GamePro ~ 5/5
"Don't hesitate to buy this amazing game."
Electronic Gaming Monthly ~ Editor's Choice Gold Award
"The best Xbox game of 2002."
Entertainment Weekly ~ A-score
DOWNLOAD NEW CONTENT ON LIVE
Tom Clancy's
SPLINTER CELL™
www.splintercell.com

CONTENTS February 2003 Issue 163

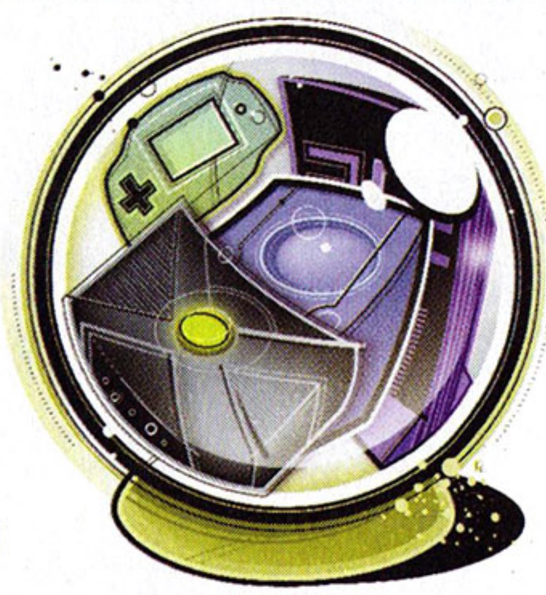
Game Directory

138	.hack
99	1080° Avalanche
158	Altered Beast: Guardian of the Realms
103	Apex
159	Army Men: Turf Wars
135	ATV Offroad Fury 2
147	Battle Engine Aquila
144	Blood Omen 2
152	BMX XXX
152	Capcom VS. SNK 2 EO
152	Crimson Sea
147	Dark Angel
94	Dark Cloud 2
135	Dead to Rights
84, 86	Def Jam: Vendetta
96	Devil May Cry 2
136	Dragon Ball Z Budokai
135	Dynasty Warriors 3 Xtreme Legends
144	Evolution Worlds
147	Fatal Frame
98	F-Zero
144	Hunter: the Reckoning
104	Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb
154	Kakuto Chojin
146	Legends of Wrestling II
88, 90 147, 154	Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers
80-82	Midnight Club II
138	Minority Report
156-157	Panzer Dragoon Orta
158	Phantasy Star Collection
135	Pro Race Driver
159	Revenge of the Smurfs, The
154	Seablade
159	Secret Agent Barbie - Royal Jewels Mission
158	Shrek Super Party
140	Sims, The
150-151	Skies of Arcadia Legends
138	Star Wars Bounty Hunter
100-102	Star Wars Knights of the Old Republic
158	Super Monkey Ball Jr.
154	Superman: The Man of Steel
144	Swingerz Golf
103	Tao Feng
76-78	Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven
158	Tomb Raider Prophecy
142-143	War of the Monsters
92	Xenosaga: Episode I

THE GAME OF LIFE

One of the top-selling PC games ever, ***The Sims***, is coming to your console. Let the hot-tub parties, competitive home improvement, and **cheating on spouses** begin! Get yourself to **page 110** for our behind-the-scenes look–it redefines the term "extravaganza." OK, maybe not.

THE NEXT BIG...



The *EGM* crystal ball is in effect as we spot the biggest new trends in gaming. The title that'll make the network adapter **a must-buy**, the biggest Xbox game you've never heard of...read this article and become **instantly insufferable** to all your friends. The future starts on **page 120**.

We steal the first peek at ***Driver 3***, gun it, and get the hell outta there. **Page 122** has the scoop.

Be the **annoying guy** playing games on his cell phone! Learn how on **page 42**.

Departments

Editorial 14

Letters 22

Press Start 34

Details of ***Resident Evil 4*** have started shambling our way, and the **Game Boy** makes it to the big screen. Plus, the latest news for online gamers and a rousing ***Metroid Prime*** Afterthoughts.

Gossip 58

PS2 GC Xbox PS GBA

Previews 73

PS2 gamers get their sneak on with ***Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven***, then shift gears with ***Midnight Club II***, and a little game called ***Xenosaga***. The GameCubers get a speed-fix from ***F-Zero GC*** and ***1080° Avalanche***. You Xboxers have ***Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb*** and a new ***Star Wars*** game to get hot and bothered about.

Review Crew 134

The Crew judges ***The Sims***, ***War of the Monsters***, ***Panzer Dragoon Orta***, and ***BMX XXX***, to name a few.

Tricks 160

You thought we had good ***Vice City*** tips *last* month? Well, prepare your mind for blowing. Plus secrets for ***Metroid Prime***, ***MechAssault***, tips of an altogether different sort for ***BMX XXX***, and way more.

The Final Word 168

SYSTEM COLOR KEY

PS2 GC Xbox PS GBA GBC

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY (ISSN #1058-918X) is published monthly by Ziff Davis Media Inc., 28 East 28th Street, New York, NY 10016. Periodicals Class Postage Paid at New York, NY 10016 and additional mailing offices. Single issue rates: $4.99. The one year (12 issue) subscription rate is $24.97 in the U.S. and $40.97 outside the U.S. Checks must be made payable in U.S. currency only to Electronic Gaming Monthly magazine. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Electronic Gaming Monthly, P.O. Box 55721, Boulder, CO 80322-5721. For subscription service questions, address changes, or to order, please contact us at: Web: http://service.egmmag.com (for customer service) or http://subscribe.egmmag.com (to order); Phone: U.S. and Canada (800) 779-1174 or (850) 682-7624, elsewhere (303) 604-7445; Mail: Electronic Gaming Monthly, P.O. Box 55721, Boulder, CO 80322-5721 (please include your mailing label with any correspondence as it contains information that will expedite processing); Fax: U.S. and Canada (850) 683-4094, elsewhere (303) 604-0518; E-mail (please type your full name and the address at which you subscribe; do not send attachments): subhelp@egmmag.com. The editors and the publisher are not responsible for unsolicited materials.

Without limiting the rights under copyrights reserved herein, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in, or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise), without the the prior written notice of Ziff Davis Media Inc. To reuse any material in this publication, obtain a permission request form at www.icopyright.com/ziffdavis/, or have a form faxed or mailed to you by calling (425)430-1663. Copyright © 2002 Ziff Davis Media . All Rights Reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. For permission to reuse material in this publication (or on this Web site) or to use our logo, contact Ziff Davis Media's Rights and Permissions Manager. For reprints, contact Reprint Services at 800-217-7874. Olga Gonopolsky, Ziff Davis Media Inc. 28 E. 28th St., New York, NY 10016. Tel: 212-503-5438. Fax: 212-503-5420. olga_gonopolsky@ziffdavis.com. Electronic Gaming Monthly and EGM are trademarks of Ziff Davis Media Inc. TM and © for all other products and the characters contained therein are owned by the respective trademark and copyright owners. All materials listed in this magazine are subject to manufacturers' change and the publisher assumes no responsibility for such changes. The Canadian GST Registration number is 140496720 RT. "My eyes! The goggles do nothing!"

Printed in the U.S.A. Audit Bureau of Circulations

Play big.

Milk has 9 essential nutrients active bodies need, no matter what your size.

got milk?®

JASON KIDD ©2002 AMERICA'S DAIRY FARMERS AND MILK PROCESSORS

EDITORIAL

By Dan "Shoe" Hsu

One Man's Trash

Filth. That's what one parent called last issue's "9 Naughtiest Games" feature, which showcased the...ahem, seedier side of videogaming throughout history. She didn't want her preteen daughter reading another copy of *Electronic Gaming Monthly* ever again.

Garbage. That's where another parent said *Electronic Gaming Monthly* belonged, not in the hands of his 12-year-old son. That father didn't appreciate our kick-ass language.

Morality-corrupting. That's how another parent described *EGM*. She didn't want her 10-year-old exposed to it.

I'd like to say something to these parents: Thank you. If more people in the United States paid attention to what their kids were doing, reading, playing, seeing, or sticking up their nose, we'd all be better off—and we'd have a lot less controversy over adult content in videogames (or videogame magazines).

You see, what a lot of concerned Americans don't understand is, videogames have grown up. When I explain to parents that the average-age *EGM* reader is 21, the response is usually disbelief ("My god! Videogames are for *kids*! How can this be? Will someone *please* think of the children?") or denial (after all, how can you trust the editor-in-chief of a magazine out to eradicate American values?). You should see what happens when I tell these people that 21 is actually really young—that the average-age gamer in the United States is now 28 years old. I think some heads have exploded.

Believe it or not, adults are reading *EGM*. Our readers are college students, professionals, military personnel, business owners, prisoners (I probably could've done without mentioning that last one here).... It's no longer a kid's hobby, folks. Just because it's a videogame doesn't mean it's OK for children to play it, and just because we're a videogame magazine doesn't mean it's necessarily appropriate for kids to read. Be sure to check those ESRB ratings on the front of the game packaging (it's very similar to a movie rating). And if *EGM* is a bit "old" for your children, you may want to check out our sister publication, *GameNow*, or our friends at *GamePro*.

—Shoe, Editor-in-Chief

Contributors

Patrick Klepek

We haven't actually confirmed that Patrick, also known as "The Hair," draws his immense physical strength from the 'fro, but it's the front-running theory.

John Brandon

John tells us he's writing a book about IT management, which has us more than a little scared. We like to think that writing for *EGM* helps keep him off the streets.

Jeanne Kim

Jeanne ambushes game-store customers and interviews them for our Man on the Street section. Most of them are just surprised there's a girl talking to them.

David Kushner

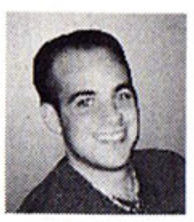
We sent David to an *Everquest* Fan Faire dressed up as a bard. But his banded mail wasn't historically accurate and his lyre was totally out of tune, so he was ridiculed.

Dan Leahy

Mr. Mom used to be *GameNOW*'s Editor in Chief. Now he stays at home and changes diapers all day. Whatta guy! He still works his sports-reviewin' magic for us, though.

Seanbaby

America's most tormented superhero (personal demons, general ennui) fights crime with his mohawk of Truth. You will know him by the Rascal-brand scooter he rides.



Scott Steinberg

Our man Steinberg interviewed *GTA: Vice City* tough guy Ray Liotta in this issue, barely escaping with his life. He's now enrolled in our contributor protection program.

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

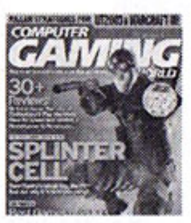
John Davison leads. Chris Baker does machines. Joe Rybicki's a wiseacre party dude. Together, they battle ninjas (and create one fine PS2 mag).

GameNOW

We're out of ways to make fun of our sister mag's name. They like to play games how? *GameNOW*! See? Big ups to Ethan Einhorn, Phil Theobold, and Miguel Lopez.

Xbox Nation

Che Chou worked for us until—citing "inappropriate physical contact"—he left for sister mag *XBN*. At least he and Greg Orlando still chip in from a safe distance.



Computer Gaming World

When they're not helping us, *CGW*'s Thierry Nguyen and Darren Gladstone write about exciting floppy-disk games for IBM- and Tandy-combatible home computers.

Marc Saltzman

With his old haircut, Marc had a sorta shoulder-length thing happening that was uncannily similar to this mint-in-box AllPro Wrestling figure we picked up on eBay.

Josh Fruhling

Josh studies Goju-Ryu Karate, which saved his life more than once when he delved into the secret, dark world of fanboys this month. Check his stance!

Joe Fielder

Like some sort of prodigal son who isn't actually related to us, Joe is back in our pages once again. Where was he? Who was he with? He's not sayin', we're not askin'.

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

Number 16.2
February 2003
www.egmmag.com

Editor-in-Chief
Dan "Shoe" Hsu • shoe@ziffdavis.com
Executive Editor
Mark MacDonald • mark_macdonald@ziffdavis.com
Managing Editor
Jennifer Tsao • jennifer_tsao@ziffdavis.com
Features Editor
Crispin Boyer • crispin_boyer@ziffdavis.com
News Editor
Chris "CJ" Johnston • chris_johnston@ziffdavis.com
Previews Editor
Greg Sewart • greg_sewart@ziffdavis.com
Reviews Editor
Shane Bettenhausen • shane_bettenhausen@ziffdavis.com
Editor-at-Large
Demian Linn • demian_linn@ziffdavis.com
Tricks Editor
David Hodgson • tricks@ziffdavis.com

Art Director
Monique Martinez • monique_martinez@ziffdavis.com
Associate Art Director
Stefan Belavy • stefan_belavy@ziffdavis.com

Copy Chief
Kristen Salvatore • kristen_salvatore@ziffdavis.com
Copy Editors
Greg Ford • greg_ford@ziffdavis.com
Tom "T-bone" Edwards • tom_edwards@ziffdavis.com

Contributors
Nick Walkland, David Kushner, Joshua Fruhlinger, Marc Saltzman, John Brandon, Patrick Klepek, Joe Fielder, Scott Steinberg, Darren Gladstone, Thierry Nguyen, Dave Kentley, Jeanne Kim, Scott Steinberg, Seanbaby, Patrick Klepek, Jonathan Dudlak, Dan Leahy, James Mielke, John Davison, Joe Rybicki, Chris Baker, Ethan Einhorn, Phil Theobold, Miguel Lopez, Che Chou, Greg Orlando

International Editor
John Ricciardi
Japanese Correspondent
Yutaka Ohbuchi

Manufacturing Director
Carlos Lugo
Senior Production Manager
Anne Marie Miguel
Art Production Manager
Michele Kellogg-Manousos
Assistant Production Manager
Teresa Newson

Vice President/Game Group
Dale Strang
Editorial Director
John Davison
Creative Director
Simon Cox
Business Director
Cathy Bendoff
Senior Newsstand Sales Manager
Don Galen
Advertising Inquiries Contact:
Game Group
101 2nd Street, 8th floor, San Francisco, CA 94105
Telephone: 415-547-8783

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE NUMBER:
800-779-1174 (U.S. and Canada)
WEBSITE: http://service.egmmag.com
PLEASE SEND ALL SUBSCRIPTION QUESTIONS TO:
P.O. Box 55722, Boulder, CO 80322-5722
DO NOT CONTACT THE EDITORS RE: SUB. PROBLEMS

Group Publisher
Lee Uniacke
415-357-4910 • lee_uniacke@ziffdavis.com
Group Associate Publisher
Stan Taigen
415-357-4915 • stan_taigen@ziffdavis.com

NORTHWEST
Regional Sales Manager
Marci Yamaguchi
415-357-4944 • marci_yamaguchi@ziffdavis.com
Account Executive
Meighan O'Rourke
415-357-4920 • meighan_orourke@ziffdavis.com
BAY AREA
District Sales Representative
Mary Gray
415-547-8782 • mary_gray@ziffdavis.com
Account Executive
Mary Letson
415-357-4925 • mary_letson@ziffdavis.com

MIDWEST/EAST
Regional Sales Manager
Marc Callison
630-810-4095 • marc_callison@ziffdavis.com
Regional Sales Manager
Ian Sinclair
203-255-5795 • ian_sinclair@ziffdavis.com
Account Executive
Emily Olman
415-357-5226 • emily_olman@ziffdavis.com

SOUTHWEST
Regional Sales Manager
Karen Landon
760-942-6277 • karen_landon@ziffdavis.com
Senior Account Executive
Linda Philapil
415-357-8781 • linda_philapil@ziffdavis.com
East Coast Online Sales
Jonathan Nagy • 212-503-4685
West Coast Online Sales
Allison Rotcop • 415-547-8564
Marketing Director
Rey Ledda
415-547-8775 • rey_ledda@ziffdavis.com
Marketing Coordinator
Wayne Shiu
415-547-8248 • wayne_shiu@ziffdavis.com
Senior Advertising Coordinator
Tipler Ubbelohde
415-357-4930 • tipler_ubbelohde@ziffdavis.com
Senior Sales Assistant
Kristeen Laut
415-547-8778 • kristeen_laut@ziffdavis.com
Sales Assistant
Amanda Nelson
415-547-8783 • amanda_nelson@ziffdavis.com

Founder Steve Harris

SONIC TEAM™

Missed one.

All the jumps, thrills and loop-de-loops you'd expect from Sonic now in one speedy little package.
Seven separate adventures to explore, one ring at a time.

™, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Sega and Sonic Mega Collection are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. © SONIC TEAM / SEGA, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2001, 2002. www.sega.com. All Rights Reserved. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE™

SEGA®

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

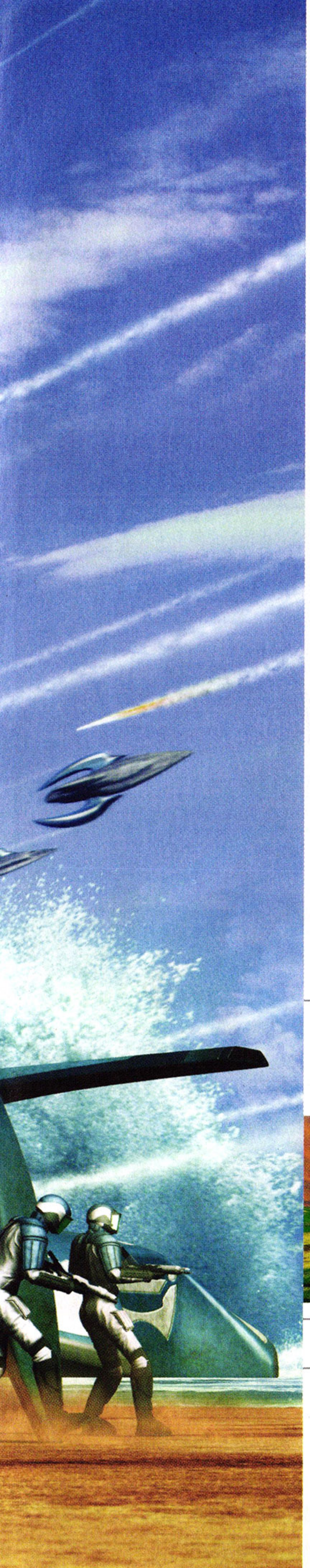
Rule everything.

Battle Engine Aquila © 2002 Infogrames Europe. All Rights Reserved. Developed by Lost Toys. The Atari trademark and logo are the property of Infogrames. "PlayStation" and the Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Infogrames, Inc. 417 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016 USA.

XBOX

PlayStation 2

lost toys

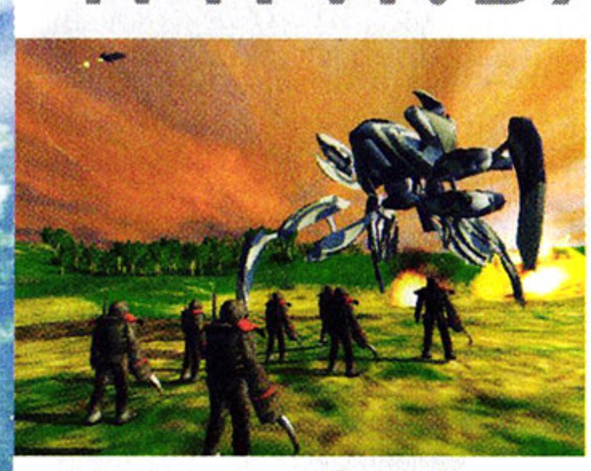


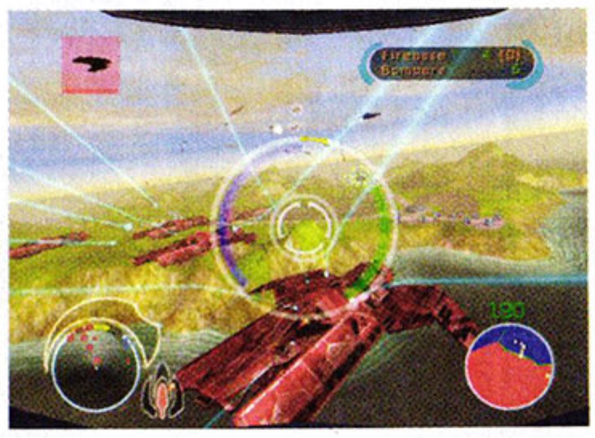
"Fast...stunning...impressive, most impressive"
IGN

"Frenetic land assaults, overwhelming numbers, smooth, bright graphics, a ton of multiplayer options...quite simply, the greatest amount of "stuff" you've ever seen in a shooter... you may need a reminder to close your gaping jaw"
OXM

"Large and detailed, graphically impressive..."
PSM

TO CHECK OUT THIS BADASS GAME GO TO
WWW.BATTLEENGINE.COM





Available 1/28/03

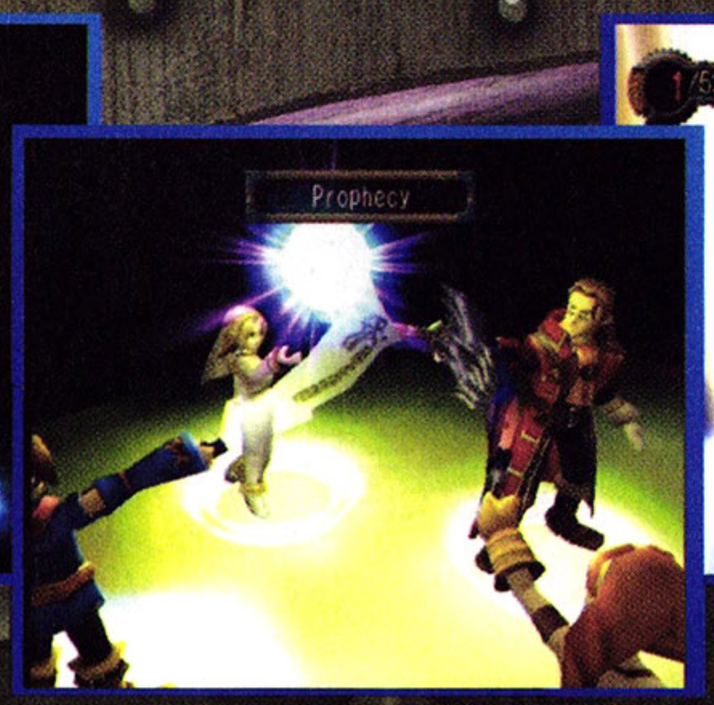
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence

Battle Engine aquila

ATARI

SKIES of ARCADIA LEGENDS™

Experience the Director's Cut with hours of new gameplay!



An improved battle engine featuring spectacular special attacks

Employ devastating weapons and magic

New "Wanted" Battles, characters, weapons, and more!

Battle to Save Arcadia!

You are Vyse, a pirate on a quest to defeat the evil Valuan Empire. As you swing into combat, remember that the fate of the world is at stake. Fail, and Arcadia will suffer. Succeed, and your name shall be honored forever. Will you become a Legend?

SEGA®

OVERWORKS™

NINTENDO GAMECUBE™

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

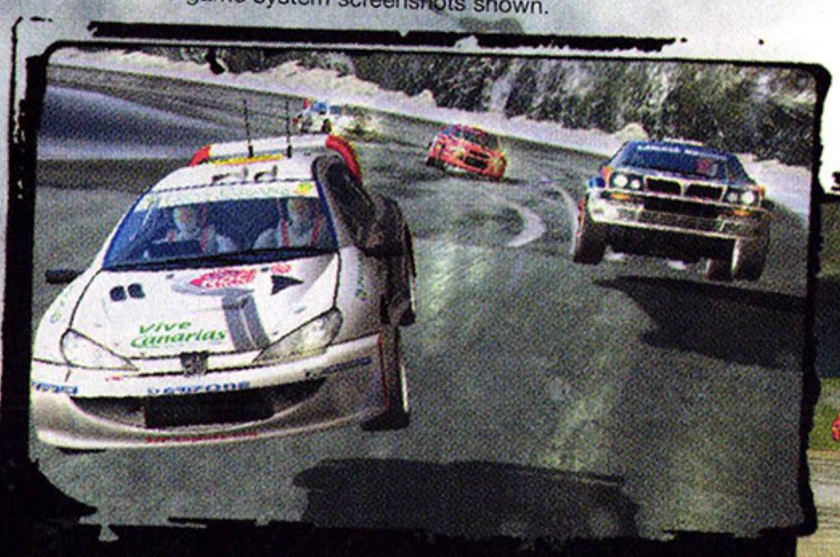
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for Rating Information.

Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. SEGA, the SEGA logo, and Skies of Arcadia are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. ©OverWorks / SEGA, 2000, 2002. ™, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo.The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. www.sega.com

SCREAMING BRAKES.
GROANING ENGINES.
GRINDING GEARS.
AH, THE SOUNDS OF THE GREAT OUTDOORS

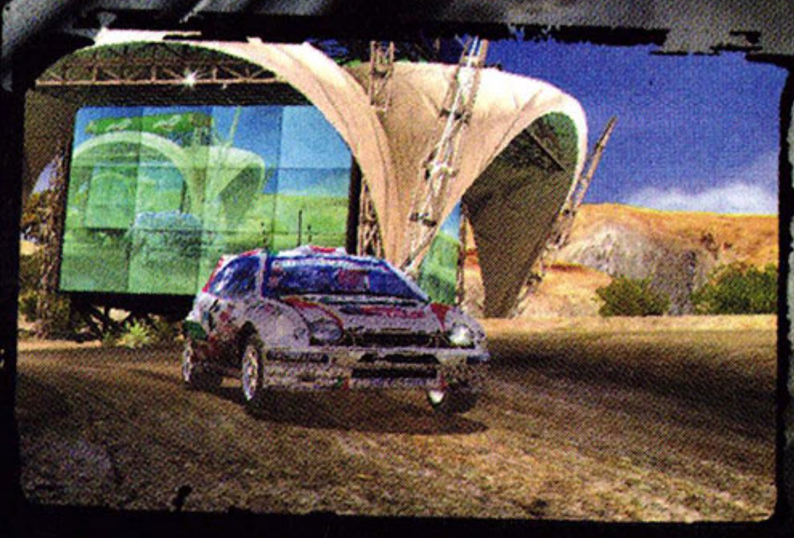
"MORE MODES THAN YOU CAN THROW A STICKSHIFT AT."
– PSM, OCTOBER '02

Xbox™ video game system screenshots shown.



Tear up the terrain in a multitude of modes, including Follow the Leader, Elimination, Relay and Rallycross.

Jockey for position–and even collide–with ruthless competitors in chaotic packs of cars.



Tackle hazardous weather and real-time damage that accurately affect performance.

ACTIVISION®

activision.com

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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

IMP

XBOX

PlayStation.2

RACE OF CHAMPIONS and RACE OF CHAMPIONS EVENT TM © 2000 International Media Productions S.A.M. © International Motorsport Promotions S.A. Licensed by International Media Productions S.A.M. and Licensing Management International Ltd. RALLY FUSION: RACE OF CHAMPIONS GAME © 2002 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. under license. Activision is a registered trademark and Rally Fusion is a trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the NTSC U/C designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

GRAN CANARIA
Vive Canarias
GRIFONE
MICHELIN
RALLY
FUSION
MICHELIN
RACE OF CHAMPIONS
GRAN CANARIA

Letters to the Editors

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Games For The Gals

Shame, shame, shame on all of you. Thanks for marginalizing female gamers with your excessively patronizing list of "relationship-bolstering games." Ohhh, girls love Disney characters, so they'll love *Kingdom Hearts*! And how about *Animal Crossing*? It's insanely cute, so the girls will go nuts for it! Why didn't you just go ahead and recommend some Barbie games?

My husband and I have spent the last two days pummeling the crap out of each other in *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*. We haven't had this much fun since *Mario Party 4* came out. At our house, it's not, "Honey, can you put the game down and spend some time with me?" it's, "You cheap son-of-a-*%&#^!!" [furious button-mashing] "I'm gonna beat the living #$*& out of you!!"

If your girl isn't into gaming, don't assume she wants to mess with all that cutesy crap. My sister and a bunch of her girlfriends had an absolute blast playing *Super Smash Bros. Melee* with us. I doubt I could say the same if I had put them in front of *Monkey Ball 2* or *Animal Crossing*. My former roommate played *Counter-Strike* and *Diablo 2* [both PC games] for hours on end—and she kicked some serious ass.

Maybe the real reason more girls aren't into gaming is because all the games geared toward them aren't half as fun as the real games. Put a girl in front of a decent fighting game and see what happens (go easy at first—no one likes getting the crap beat out of them when they're starting out). You might end up getting more than you bargained for.

And one last piece of advice: If you're a hardcore gamer and your girl (or guy) isn't, you might want to rethink the relationship. Do you really want to have an argument every time the latest greatest-game-ever comes out and your significant other doesn't understand why you have to spend so much time playing those silly games? Or would you rather have someone who understands why you need to stay up until 2 a.m. playing *Metroid Prime*? Sorry, guys, I'm already (happily) taken, but I know there are plenty more like me out there.

Now, if you'll excuse me, Princess Kitana is calling my name.

Megan Benoit
starla79@hotmail.com

So...what are your sister and her friends up to next Saturday?

Congratulations, **Megan Benoit!** You win an InterAct GameShark for PlayStation 2, PlayStation, Dreamcast, Game Boy Advance, or Game Boy Color. Hopefully, you'll put your GameShark to good use. Try entering the "fun" code!

I Saved Latin

Being the fantastic genius that I am, I noticed in your Holiday Buyer's Guide that you said the star of *Splinter Cell* was Max Fischer. Max Fischer is the protagonist from the film *Rushmore* (a movie that everyone should see and love). Now, what am I supposed to believe, that *Splinter Cell* is actually the unofficial sequel to *Rushmore*? You have caused great confusion in my life.

Reed
Strigiformez@aol.com

Uh, yeah. Sam Fisher, that's the guy. Chalk it up as an unconscious homage to *Rushmore*.

One-Gun Salute

We here at the 30th Adjutant General Reception Battalion's Rehab Unit have enjoyed your magazine for some time now. It's about the only fun we have since they took away our PS2 after someone stayed up after lights-out playing *Kingdom Hearts*. Well, my concern is about pg. 129 of *EGM* #161. I haven't played *StarCraft* in a while, but I'm pretty sure the picture of Nova "taking down a hydralisk, one on one..." is actually Nova taking down a zergling. Keep up the good work though—a buncha Joes down here are rooting for ya.

PFC D. Levy

TID BITZ

Have you ever considered raising your rating system to 15, or even 20?
Drew Foreman

No.

How about 11?
Mike Grigg

No.

But–
Andy Crosby

No.

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA INC.

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer
Robert F. Callahan

Chief Operating Officer & Chief Financial Officer
Bart W. Catalane

Senior Executive Vice President
(Publishing Operations)
Tom McGrade

Executive Vice President
Stephen D. Moylan

Executive Vice President and Editorial Director
Michael J. Miller

Executive Vice President,
General Counsel & Secretary
Gregory Barton

Senior Vice President
(Technology and Sales Operations)
Jasmine Alexander

Senior Vice President (Finance)
Derek Irwin

Senior Vice President (Circulation)
Charles Mast

Senior Vice President
(Publishing Director, *Baseline*)
Sloan Seymour

Senior Vice President (Game Group)
Dale Strang

Senior Vice President (Internet)
Jason Young

Vice President (Corporate Sales)
Ken Beach

Vice President (Publisher, *PC Magazine*)
Tim Castelli

Vice President (Integrated Media)
Charles Lee

Vice President (Corporate Communications)
Aimee D. Levine

Vice President (Editor-in-Chief, Internet)
Jim Louderback

Vice President (Editor-in-Chief, *eWEEK*)
Eric Lundquist

Vice President (Editorial Development)
Bill Machrone

Vice President (Controller)
David Mullen

Vice President (Human Resources)
Beth Repeta

Vice President (Editor-in-Chief, *Baseline*)
Tom Steinert-Threlkeld

Vice President (Internet Audience Development)
Stephen Sutton

Vice President (Publisher, *CIO Insight*)
Stephen Veith

Senior Director, Manufacturing
Carlos Lugo

Director, International
Christin Lawson

ONLY FOR

NINTENDO GAMECUBE™

go back to your evil ways

Own the Entire Resident Evil® Saga on the Nintendo GameCube.

Drown in the terror as hideous mutants and flesh-eating zombies numb your senses with the next two Resdent Evil sequels. **RE2 and RE3** on the **Nintendo GameCube.**

The original nightmare is back.

RESIDENTEVIL.COM

CAPCOM®

capcom.com

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore

Violence

©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 1997, 1998, 1999, 2002 ©CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 1997, 1998, 1999, 2002. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM, the CAPCOM LOGO, RESIDENT EVIL are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. Nintendo and Nintendo GameCube are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

LANs Fueled By

BAWLS®

GUARANA

01/03/03
[caffeine] (TX)
caffeinedeath.com
Frag Addicts (NC)
fragaddicts.com
Brainerd Area PC Gamers (MN)
brainerdareapcgamers.org
OrComConnect (CA)
orcomconnect.com
The Green LAN (NY)
thegreenlan.no-ip.com
Stronger Than All (*online*)
stronger.org
01/04/03
Pcklan (TX)
pcklan.com
Bit Bucket Computers (NY)
bitbucketcomputers.com/lan
Kentucky LAN Gamers (KY)
kylangamers.com
01/05/03
Cogsquad (MN)
cogsquad.org
Toledo Frag Fest (OH)
toledofragfest.com
01/10/03
Daryl's Dungeon (CO)
future2k.com/LanParty
MPGN (MN)
mpgn.net
01/11/032
Cobaltnova (AZ)
cobaltnova.com/halo.htm
Carnagge (NC)
carnagge.com
PanzerLAN (OR)
panzerlan.com
WPD LAN Party (IL)
wpdlanparty.home.attbi.com
01/25/03
Zero Content (NJ)
zerocontent.com
01/31/03
Hopeless Valley LAN (NJ)
gamerlan.freeservers.com

*Dates are subject to change

For more info on LANs and to find out how you can get a free 12-pack, go to bawlsgaming.com

Now available at COMPUSA

©2002 Hobarama LLC All Rights Resereved.

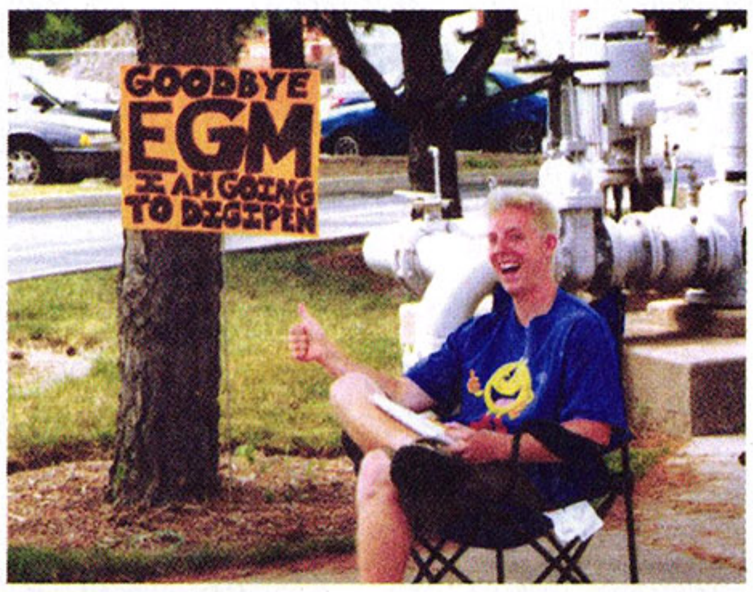
LETTERS

You can write EGM at

EGM Letters
101 2nd Street, 8th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
E-mail: EGM@ziffdavis.com

Please note: We reserve the right to edit any correspondence for clarity or space purposes. If you don't want your name, city/state, or e-mail address printed, tell us so (but please include your mailing address and system preference for Letter of the Month prize consideration).

Also note: We just can't write back to everyone, but make your comments constructive—or at least humorous—and you might get sumpin' back!



Everything's comin' up DigiPen. Shortly after we moved westward, this guy (not Ben Mauro, see below) erected his sign and lawn chair outside our old office, seriously freaking out our skittish subscription people. But then they're easily spooked. When cautiously approached and engaged in conversation, he turned out to be all right. Sorry for not getting your name, guy-who's-going-to-DigiPen! Via con Mario.

Gamer Designer I

I just wanted to tell you guys that I really liked your article about game developing (*EGM* #162). I found *Adventure Maker* both fun and easy to learn. But you left out one other free and really easy game-developing software engine called *Game Maker*. You can find it at www.cs.uu.nl/people/markov/gmaker. This site has a helpful and supportive community, tutorials, and games made with the program.

Braden Moore

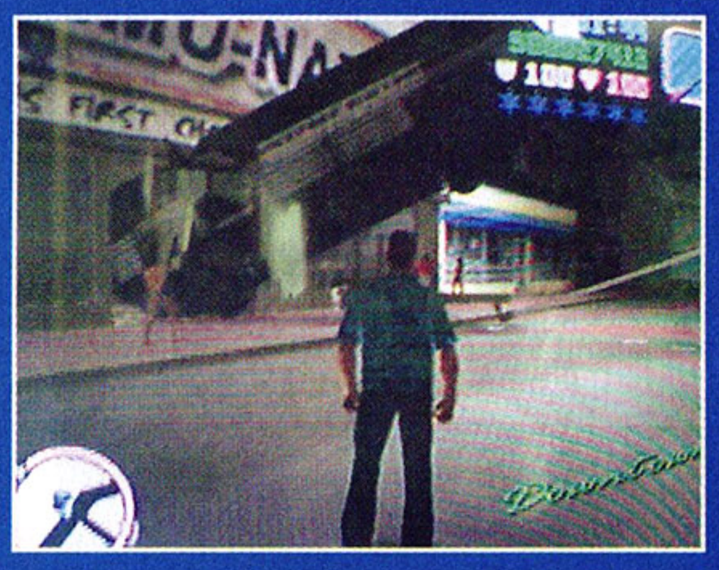
Gamer Designer II

I was recently accepted to DigiPen Institute of Technology. I've always known that I wanted to make videogames; I just never knew how. I would like to thank you for the articles on how to get into the industry and what schools are best for game development [*EGM* #162 and #152] they've helped me find my way to where I am now. I hope you will continue to publish articles like this and inspire others to reach their goals.

Ben Mauro
ImDpapee117@aol.com

Sure thing. Now all you have to do is hook us up with an exclusive scoop when you're out of school and working on your first game, and we'll call it even!

Vice City Post Office



Short Bus

I've been playing *GTA: Vice City* a lot lately. So, one time I got the idea to launch a coach bus off those stairs down the street heading east as you're coming out of the hospital near the Hyman Condo. Well, check out what happened [above]. Instead of getting the insane stunt bonus, I go straight down into the Ammu-Nation. Just thought I'd share.

Sean
blinkkornfreak@aol.com

Gaming Degenerate

I recently found a website where you can play *Vice City*'s Degenatron. You know, the arcade game you see in the pizza parlor? It's actually entertaining (if you're bored out of your mind). Go to www.degenatron.com/.

Jayd Saucedo

Hunter Helicopter Hijinks

After you complete the main story missions in *Vice City*, fly over to the *Vice City* Police Department and put a cop uniform on. Then fly to Fort Baxter Air Base, where you'll be able to take the Hunter helicopter without getting shot.

Mark Snyder

Actually, you can pull this off before you finish the story missions. It's possible to get the Hunter without the cop uniform, too, but it's risky, what with everybody shooting at you and all.

"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours." is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ©2003 Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. The trademark is used with the permission of Alpha Omega Publications.

"Sex! Drugs! Murder! Just what the Doctor ordered!"

– The Source

The Getaway

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

MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Drug Reference
Strong Language
Strong Sexual Content
Violence

PlayStation.2

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.™

Kingdom Hearts OST (2CD set)
TOCT24768

Final Fantasy X OST (4CD set)
SSCX10054

Final Fantasy VII OST (4CD set)
SSCX10004

Final Fantasy VIII OST (4CD set)
SSCX10028

GameMusic.com
World's BIGGEST
Game Music Store!

visit us online at:
www.gamemusic.com

Dracula X Nocturne in the
Moonlight OST (KICA7760)

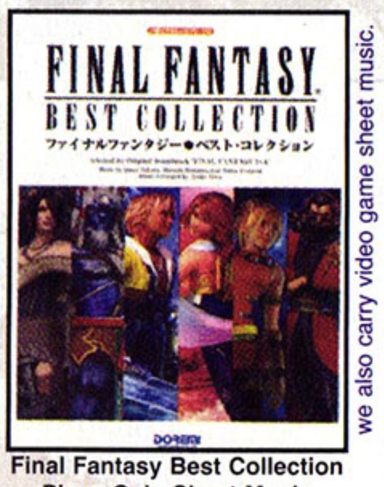
Chrono Cross OST (3CD set)
SSCX10040

we got alot of cool collectibles!

Huge Selection of
Game/Anime Collectibles

Metal Gear Solid 2 OST
KMCA127

Yu-Gi-Oh!
Music CDs, Toys, Trading
Cards!



Final Fantasy Best Collection
Piano Solo Sheet Music
(DORE2037)

we also carry video game sheet music.

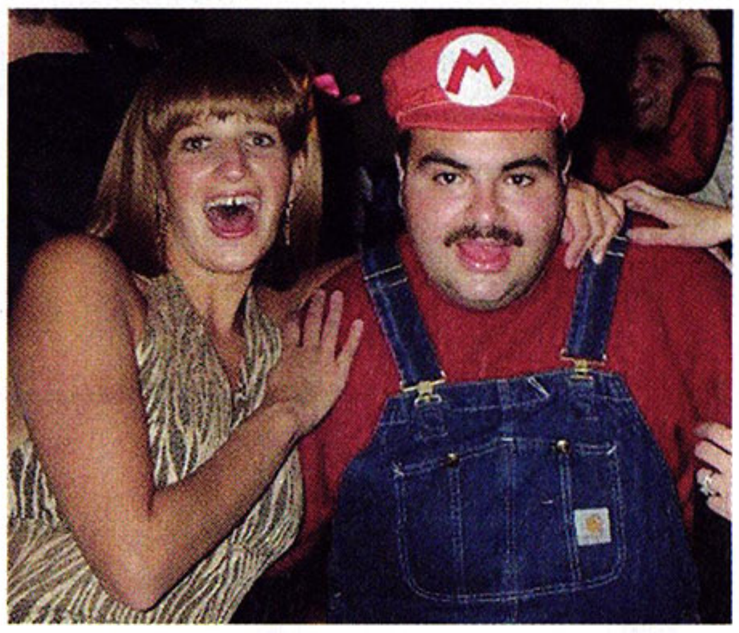
FREE Shipping available online!

More than 800 game & anime music CDs in stock! Ready to be shipped.

www.gamemusic.com
1-800-979-9889

If you don't have Internet access, please call our toll-free number at 1-800-979-9889. Outside of US, please call 1-626-575-0873. Phone hours are Monday - Friday, 9 - 5 Pacific Time. We accept Visa/MasterCard/AMEX. All trademarks are the properties of their respective owners. Game Music Online - 3798 Rockwell Ave. El Monte, CA 91731. E-Mail: gmo@gamemusic.com Fax: 1-626-575-0879 Sorry, our warehouse is not opened to public.

LETTERS



You want the realistic Mario and Peach? You can't handle the realistic Mario and Peach!

Sartorial Slander

I think it's time Mario gave up his old, stupid cartoony look and got a more realistic look. I really think his hair is a big issue. Whenever you see him take off his hat, there's that stupid solid brown lump on his head, and his nose looks like a giant muffin. I think someone should tell Nintendo this before the next *Mario* game comes out. Hey, did you ever notice that Peach has sideburns? If the *Mario* people do start to look real, the side burns should be taken off.

JAD
Eyeballflump@aol.com

You've got big problems. Nevertheless, our Give Mario A Makeover Contest is officially a go. Prize? How about a *Kakuto Chojin*-themed medical kit, complete with antibiotic ointment? 'Cause we've got one to offer.

Impossible Dream

Hey, I've got an Xbox, and it's great. I love everything about it, except that the clock keeps resetting when I unplug it to store it in my room. Any way I could fix this?

Elliot Sharifi

Aside from rigging up some sort of portable battery pack, possibly connected to a stationary bike that you have to pedal furiously? No.

Clamdring Won't Die

I just got the January 2003 issue and was reading the letters when I came across one pointing out that you said Gandalf's sword was called Clamdring. I am a Tolkien fanboy and have searched and searched, but still

QUESTION of the Moment

Has *BMX XXX* gone too far, or will games get even more explicit?

They put a ratings system on videogames for a reason. Parents shouldn't just go out and buy their kids a game just because the kids say they want it. How many R-rated movies show nudity and have foul language? Parents, DO YOUR JOB!

falcons_fan@hotmail.com

Wait...those are supposed to be boobs? So, she's...oooh....

Peter Dovak

If you need a woman made of polygons to turn you on, then more power to you, but personally, I think it's sick and pathetic, all the while giving videogames a bad name.

Rob Preteau

The Japanese are way ahead of us in offensive gaming. We must catch up with some sort of poo-eating simulator or something. Time is of the essence! AWAY!

Steve Baird

As long as the words "Madden" and "XXX" stay the hell away from each other, I'm fine.

Tony C.

Gone too far? I'm still waiting for *The Devil in Princess Toadstool* and *Lara Does Dallas*.

Bob Frapples

I think that *BMX XXX* is just as guilty as *Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball*, and if you buy it, you must be pretty darn desperate.

Ssjtrunks48237@aol.com

You kidding me?! I'm 21 years old, and I think this game is great. You can do bike tricks and see naked girls at the same time! Some people are just overreacting. Someone think of the adult gamers!

junichips2@yahoo.com

BMX XXX is trash that uses cheap, sick thrills to make up for lacking anything remotely original. Unfortunately, if it's easy money, they'll keep doing it.

Jon Ross

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

Is online console gaming living up to the hype?

Send your brief, coherent responses to: EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading:

To online or not to online?

© 2003 PriceGrabber.com

Find all your favorite products under one roof—yours. Welcome to PriceGrabber.com—the fastest, most convenient way to locate and compare the best products and prices online. Just pick a category, click, and within moments you're searching products by brand, popularity, features or price. While you're at it, get the lowdown on products and merchants from buyers just like you. Bottom line? Whether you're shopping for computers, software, electronics, movies, games or dozens of other products, PriceGrabber.com provides all the information you need to make the best buying decisions. Let the power shopping begin.

> Computers > Software > Electronics > Video Games > Movies > Music > Books > Toys > Office Products

PriceGrabber.com
Comparison Shopping Beyond Compare.

LETTERS

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

MISSING AN ISSUE? SUBSCRIPTION DELAYED?
Then don't bug us! We're all huddled together in an igloo on the North Pole making this mag every month. Talk to the subscription folks who get paid to deal with people like you!

Phone toll-free: (800) 779-1174
Website: http://service.egmmag.com
Snail mail: P.O. Box 55722; Boulder, CO 80322-5722

have not been able to find *any* reference to Gandalf's sword as "Clamdring" rather than Glamdring. I really hope that you were kidding when you said that it was supposed to be "Clamdring." I hope that you will clear this information up, and if you were serious about contacting the heirs, then please share with us their exact response.

Flinn Gillan

You're over-thinking this one, Flinn. Let it go.

Ants In Pants

I've been reading all I can about the new *Zelda* for GameCube, ever since hearing about the game in *EGM* #157. I thought the game was due in February, but ebgames.com shows the release date as March! I can't wait for that game to come so can you please tell me the correct date?

Dragonfist789@aol.com

Gird your loins—or something similar. Word is, the release date has been delayed to March 24th.

Delightfully Devilish

While gaming technology has made remarkable strides within the past decade, one thing has remained the same: the plot of RPGs. Few deviate from the time-honored "get the girl, save the world" scenario. Who wouldn't want to be the nefarious Kefka in *Final Fantasy VI* or the infamous, cold-hearted Sephiroth in *FFVII*? Instead, Square and other gaming companies hand us this "prevent imminent doom" crap and give us main characters that almost always look way dorkier than the main boss in the game (*FFIX* is a prime example). Just once, I would love to be the purveyor of plight, the master of mayhem, the apex of evil, the...OK, I'll stop. Anyway, it's high time for RPG fanatics to unite and demand more! Perhaps together, we can bring about the change to this genre that it so rightfully deserves.

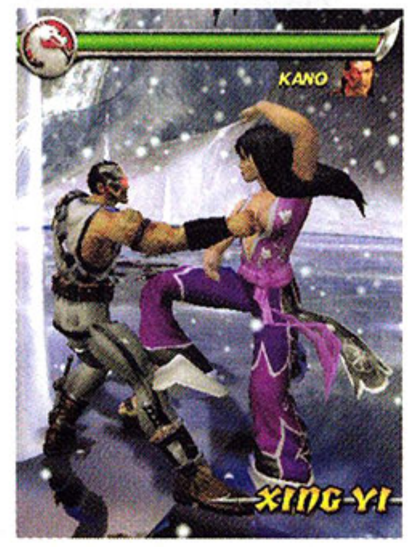
Tyler Anderson

Nice idea, but it won't work. If your nefarious plot to destroy the world succeeds and you win the game, what's left to do in the next five sequels?

Reviews Editor Bettenhausen claims he chose this shot because it was a good "action scene."

Hands Off!

So I'm flipping through *EGM* #162 reading the poignant, thought-provoking review of *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance* on pg. 178 when I notice not one, but TWO questionable screenshots involving Li Mei. The first is the top-left shot of Raiden going right for the, well, gold. Then there's the bottom-left one of Kano going for, and getting, the silver (in keeping with my clever little "theme" here). Don't tell me I'm seeing what I want to see (even if it kinda is) because I know how you Yuna-Lara-*Xtreme Beach Volleyball-BMX XXX* types think. Give your photo editor either a raise or a stern talking-to.



Mandy Fraker

Uh...we didn't do it! Nobody saw us do it.

Democracy at Work

Vote for our 2002 Readers' Choice Awards and put the "U" in democraucy! Seriously, do it like right now, because the polls close on January 10th. Visit www.egmmag.com and let your heart be your guide.

MACE GRIFFIN™
BOUNTY HUNTER

HUNT THEM DOWN THIS MARCH.

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — BLOOD and GORE VIOLENCE

PlayStation.2 · XBOX · NINTENDO GAMECUBE · WARTHOG · PC CD-ROM SOFTWARE · BLACK LABEL GAMES™ · VIVENDI UNIVERSAL games

www.huntthemdown.com

"Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter" interactive game © 2002 Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. All rights reserved. Mace Griffin, Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter, Vivendi Universal Games, the Vivendi Universal Games logo, Black Label Games, and the Black Label Games logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

Unlimited adventures.

Thousands of players.

One phenomenon.

EVERQUEST® ONLINE ADVENTURES™

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

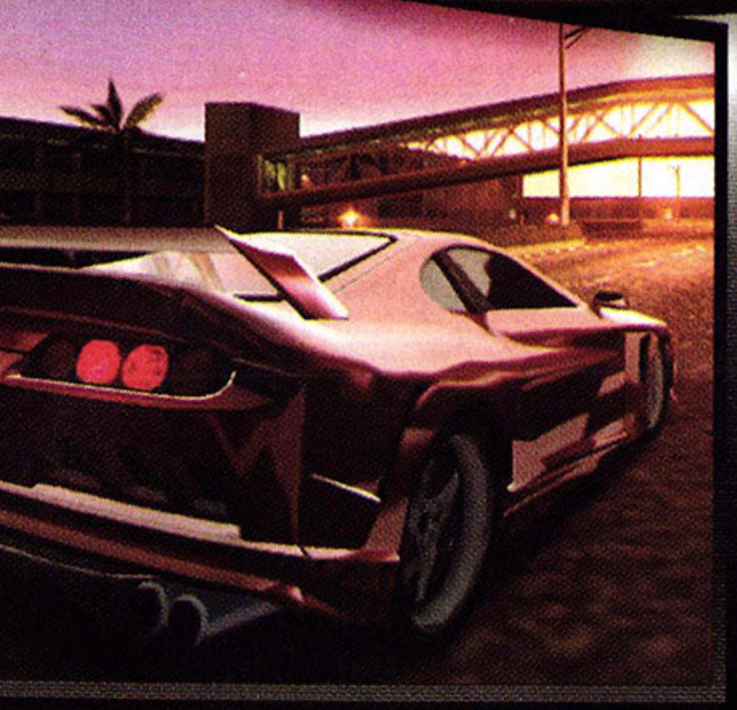
Blood
Suggestive Themes
Violence

Game experience may change during online play.

EverQuest is a registered trademark and Online Adventures is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. SOE and the SOE logo are registered trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. © 2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. All Rights Reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks are properties of their respective owners.

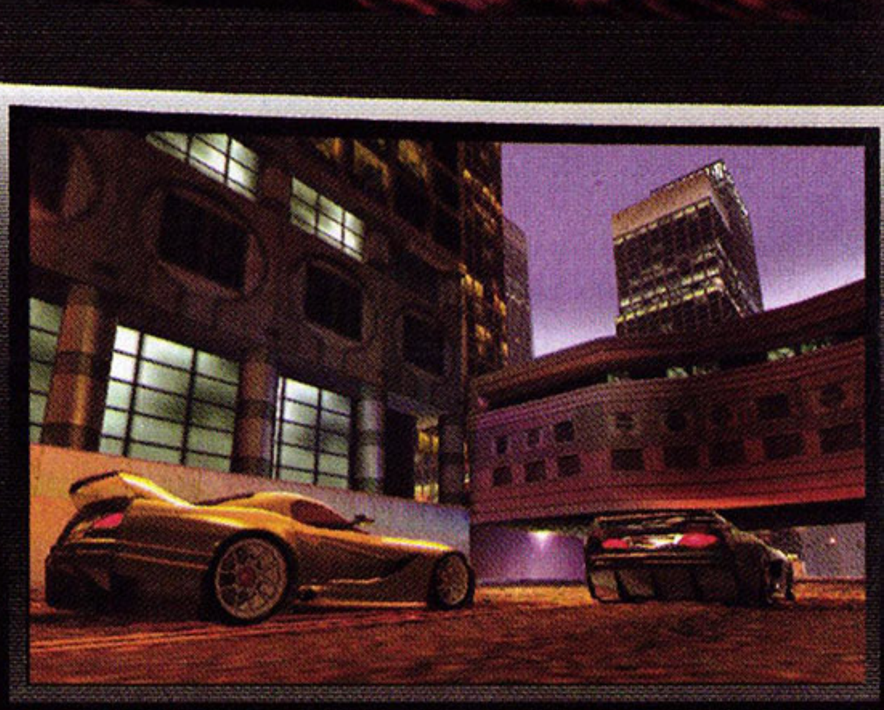
PlayStation 2

SOE
SONY ONLINE
ENTERTAINMENT



Meet the world's most notorious drivers on the streets of LA, Paris, and Tokyo.

Choose from the latest performance enhanced vehicles and compete to make a name for yourself.



There are no rules - drive anywhere in the city. Find the fastest route to win.

"(An) insane urban racing experience... it's ultra-illegal stuff that you've dreamed of doing."

- PSM DECEMBER 2002

TEEN

T

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation®2 (sold separately). The Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. Rockstar Games, Rockstar San Diego and the R* logo are registered trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Copyright 2002. All rights reserved.

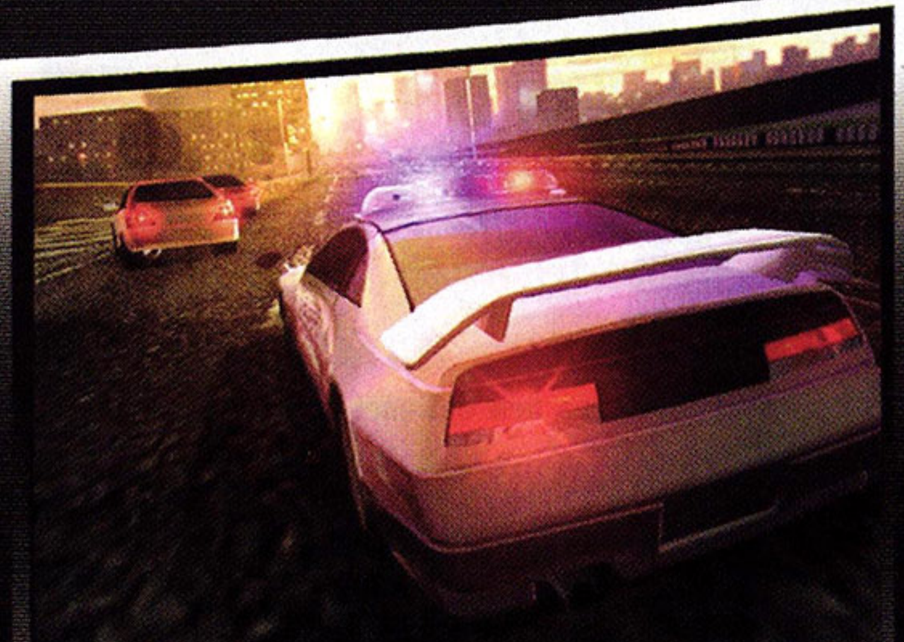
湾岸

The Future Of Illegal Street Racing

MIDNIGHT CLUB II

LOS ANGELES / PARIS / TOKYO

The Midnight Club is now open to motorbikes. Take advantage of the speed and control - but watch out, a wrong move will send you flying.



The cops know you are out there - don't get caught.

Use tricks to gain an edge or just to show off. Style is almost as important as winning.

COMING SOON

WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/MIDNIGHTCLUB2

XBOX LIVE

PlayStation.2

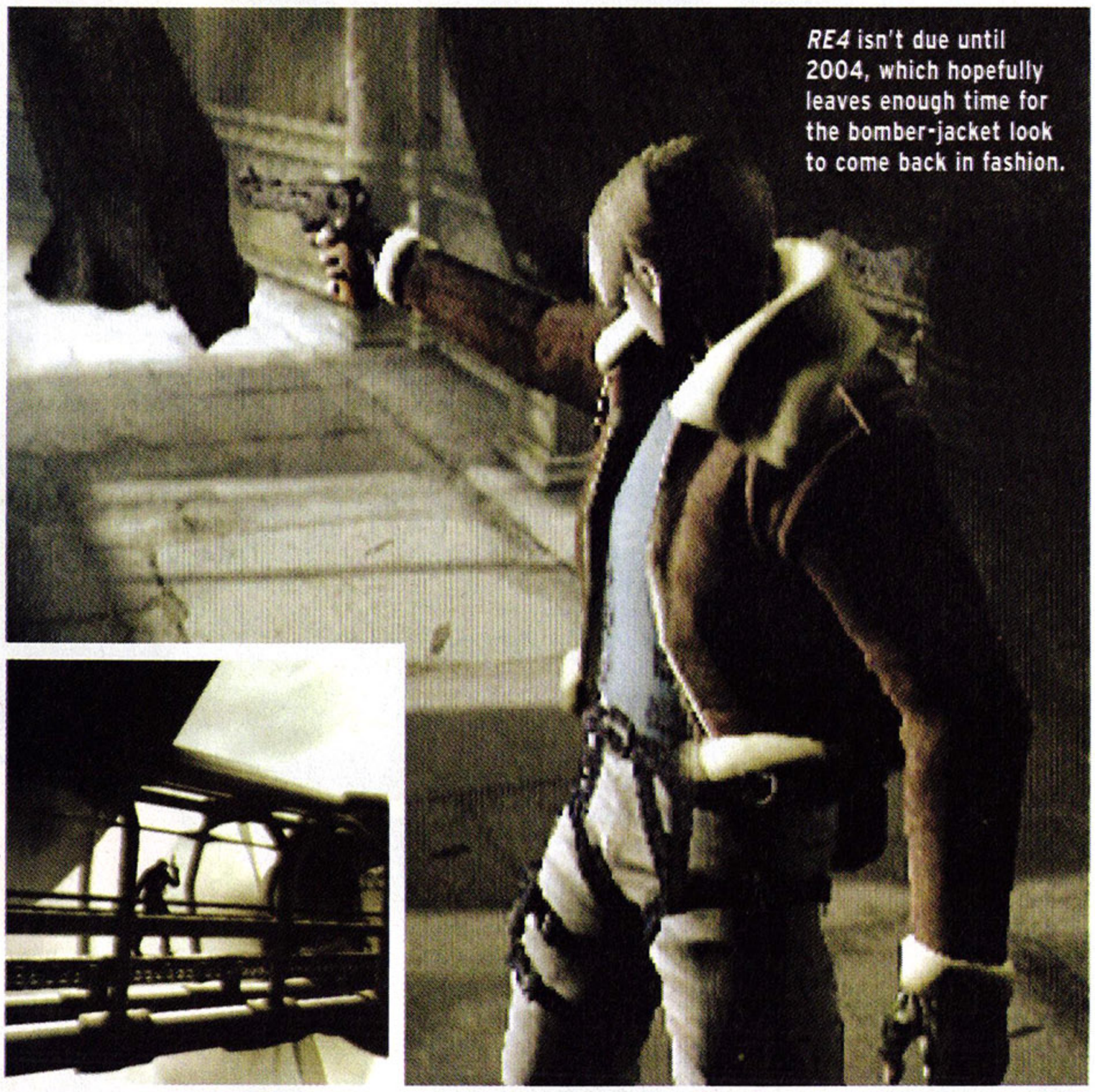
ONLINE BROADBAND ONLY

PC CD ROM

R*

The Future of Evil

Capcom unveils Resident Evil 4 amid a host of new GameCube titles



RE4 isn't due until 2004, which hopefully leaves enough time for the bomber-jacket look to come back in fashion.

Like *Code: Veronica*, *RE4* will include fully 3D backgrounds, plus a new optional first-person view.

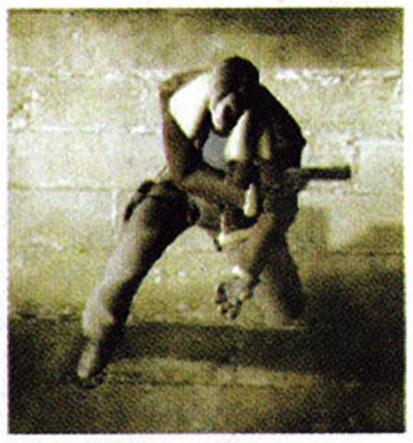
While most major game publishers are shying away from GameCube, releasing only ports of titles created for other systems, Capcom recently demonstrated that it's betting big on Cube. Last November, in the dark confines of a steamy Tokyo nightclub, Capcom unveiled five—that's right, *five*—new GameCube titles, including the next big installment to the *Resident Evil* series and four all-new franchises.

Resident Evil 4 U.S. Release: 2004

It's been talked about for what seems like an eternity, but *Resident Evil 4*—originally planned for PlayStation 2—is finally on its way to GameCube. Capcom showed off a brief snippet of footage from the game, which producer Hiroyuki Kobayashi promises will reveal "the true origin of the *RE* series."

The story stars Leon S. Kennedy, the rookie cop from *Resident Evil 2*, and takes place deep inside the heart of the evil Umbrella corporation. At this point, Capcom is being stingy with the details, but we do know that Umbrella is up to its old mutant-making tricks again, this time with something called the Progenitor virus (for some reason, every new *RE* needs its own new virus). We also hear that our old pal Leon is fighting for his life after contracting a mysterious illness (something to do with the virus? hmm...). Unlike the last two *RE*s, which had prerendered backgrounds, the graphics will be entirely 3D, complete with an optional first-person viewpoint.

What we've seen of *RE4*, even in its early state, looks fantastic. But with an expected release sometime in 2004, don't look for it anytime soon.



According to *RE3*, the U.S. government offered Leon a mission—could that be what he's doing in *RE4*?

WILL THESE GAMES COME TO XBOX AND PS2?

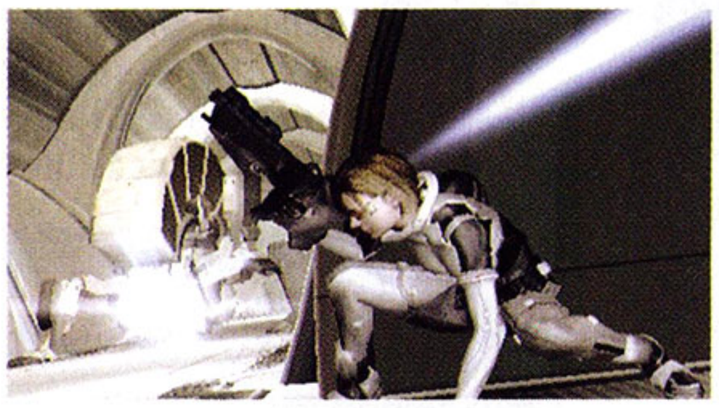
No and yes...er, well, maybe. *RE4* will remain a GameCube exclusive, but *RE* director Shinji Mikami told us the other titles may come to other systems in the future. Cross your fingers!

Viewtiful Joe

Expected U.S. release: Summer 2003

This oddly named (it might change for America) side-scrolling beat-'em-up comes courtesy of Hideki Kamiya, creator of the PlayStation 2 hit *Devil May Cry*. It stars a munchkin-sized superhero named Joe, whose goal is not only to rid the streets of evil, but also to look good while doing it (guess that's where the *Viewtiful* part comes in). The game features a mixture of cartoony 2D and 3D cel-shaded graphics, complete with gorgeous comic-book-style backgrounds and intense special effects. In addition to the usual repertoire of kicks, punches, and combos, Joe has the ability to slow down or speed up time to make his attacks more dramatic and stylish.

Formerly known as *Red Hot Man, Joe* has a unique look and premise unlike anything we've seen before.

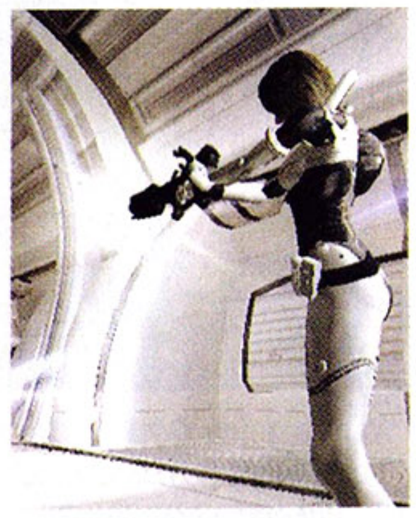


P.N. 03

Expected U.S. release: Summer 2003

P.N. 03 (*Product Number 03*) is the next project from *Resident Evil* director Shinji Mikami. Unlike his usually slow-paced adventure games, this sci-fi title looks like it's pure action. The protagonist is a woman named Vanessa Z. Schneider, a freelance mercenary with a dark past, an ultradestructive laser gun, and a silly name. Her parents were killed by a computer system known as CAMS, and she's out for revenge.

The footage shown for *P.N. 03* was brief but fast and stylish. Vanessa looks like a futuristic Lara Croft, guns blazing as she flips and rolls from wall to wall, blowing away giant, transforming robots and generally wreaking havoc.



Footage of *P.N. 03*'s gameplay looks similar to other action/shooters like *Tomb Raider* and *Devil May Cry*.

Dead Phoenix

Expected U.S. release: Summer 2003

Take the in-flight shooting elements of *Panzer Dragoon* and combine them with the action-packed, enemies-everywhere mayhem of *Dynasty Warriors*, and the result would be something like *Dead Phoenix*. You play a winged warrior named Phoenix who must fight to save an ancient floating city that exists beyond time and space. The developers are hoping to re-create the feeling of freedom that comes with flying, while offering tons of action and excitement for trigger-happy gamers. With the masses of enemies on the ground and in the air that we saw in the demo—not to mention truly epic bosses—Capcom seems well on its way to fulfilling that goal.

This phoenix looks a whole lot better than the lame animatronic one at the end of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*.

Killer 7

Expected U.S. release: Winter 2003

***Killer 7* is easily the darkest of Capcom's new GameCube lineup. The main character, Harman Smith, is an old man in a wheelchair. Oh, and he's an evil assassin with seven different personalities. His opponent, also evil (but not in a wheelchair), is a crime lord named Kun Lan who goes by the nickname God's Hand. Your goal is to make use of all seven of Smith's personalities to hunt down and kill Lan. Think about that the next time you want to park in the handicapped spot.**

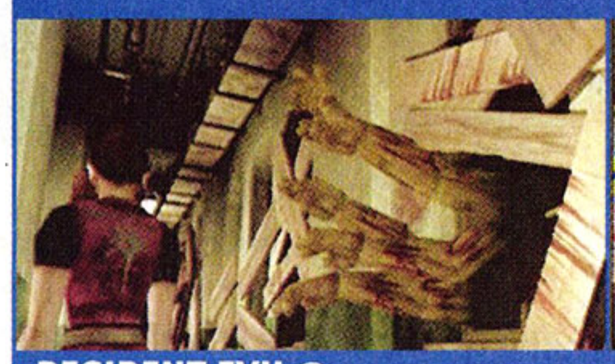
Screenshots of *7*'s visuals just don't do it justice, so head to www.capcom.co.jp/gamecube/english.html to check out videos of it and the rest of Capcom's GC lineup for yourself. *—John Ricciardi*

***Killer 7*'s super-stylized graphics are intriguing, but exactly what type of game this is remains a mystery.**

"You're going *DOWN* little girl!" "Yeah, whatever. So, which way to the *Pokémon* coverage?"

Resident Evil 2 Vs. 3

Anyone who's already survived the horror of *RE2* or *RE3* has little reason to pick up the GameCube re-releases due out in early January. These aren't rebuilt remakes like *RE1*; they're straight carbon copies of the original PlayStation titles (only slightly sharper, due to the increased resolution) intended for those new to the series. But what if you *haven't* played them and you've only got the time and/or money for one—which should you choose? Like that fat dude with the beard in *Gladiator*, we pit the two games against one another for your amusement, O mighty Caesar. —*Mark MacDonald*



?

	RESIDENT EVIL 2	RESIDENT EVIL 3	WINNER
YOU PLAY AS:	**Claire Redfield**, sister of *RE1* hero Chris Redfield and star of *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*. **Leon S. Kennedy**, idealistic rookie cop; he also starred in *RE: Gaiden* for Game Boy Color and will appear in the upcoming *RE4*.	**Jill Valentine**, main character of *RE1*, master of unlocking, and all-around hot tomato. **Carlos Oliveira**, Umbrella gun-for-hire, almost love-interest of Jill, and owner of one horribly fake-y accent. iAy Carumba!	**RE3** – Carlos is a pretty lame character (no wonder he hasn't appeared in any *RE* games since then), but Leon had a part in the atrocious *Resident Evil: Gaiden*, **and for that he must be punished.**
GAMEPLAY FEATURES:	"Zapping" system lets you **start as one of two main characters**, each with two different games, then play as the other character, for a total of four different games.	Spotty dodge move, mix gunpowder to make your own ammo, **slightly different story branches** at certain points in the game, depending on your choices.	**RE2** – Play as Claire, then Leon. Or start as Leon, then go to Claire. Each is different, and fills in parts of the other's story. OK, **it's confusing, but it's cool**. Trust us.
COOLEST ENEMY:	**Mr. X**, a nine-foot-tall bald mutant freak in a trench coat sent by Umbrella to hunt you down, who chases you from room to room in the police station.	**The Nemesis**, a nine-foot-tall bald mutant freak in a trench coat sent by Umbrella to hunt you down, who chases you from room to room in the police station.	**RE3** – A close one (both were spawned from the same experiment, after all), but the Nemesis has tentacles. Plus, *his* trench coat is shiny black leather. **Kinky.**
MINIGAMES:	**The 4th Survivor:** Escape the police station before time runs out. **The Tofu Survivor:** Same as above, except you play as a hunk of Tofu named Hunk. Seriously. **Extreme Battle Game:** Find four bombs before time runs out.	**The Mercenaries:** You play as one of three Umbrella mercs trying to make their way out of Raccoon City alive. Killing enemies and saving hostages adds time to the clock. Do well and you can **earn money to buy special weapons**.	**RE2** – The Mercenaries has a cool subtitle (Operation Mad Jackal) and a fun combo system, but **how can you compete with a game that lets you play as a giant hunk of tofu?** We're not making this up. He has little arms and everything.
S.T.A.R.S. MEMBER BRAD VICKERS:	Found **wandering outside the police station as a zombie**, carrying a key to a costume-changing room.	Found by the Nemesis, **punctured through the face** by a bloody tentacle and tossed aside like so much garbage.	**RE2** – Since he abandoned Jill and Chris in *RE1*, we never cared much for Brad. And **RE2 lets you finish him off**—personally.
SUPPORTING CAST:	You play a short stint as helpless, whiny **Sherry Birkin**, daughter of evil Umbrella scientist William Birkin. She can't even attack anything—she just runs.	Cameo appearance by bearded fan favorite, gun nut, and family man, **"Hairy" Barry Burton** (Jill's partner in *RE1*, and Leon's in *RE Gaiden*...but we'll overlook that).	**RE3** – This one was no contest. **We got a sickness, and more Barry is the only cure**...in a purely heterosexual sense, mind you.

OVERALL WINNER:

DRAW **Well, who woulda guessed that? Just so happens it worked out to be a tie, and we won't get a flood of e-mail from either camp saying "I can't believe you chose *RE(X)* over *RE(Y)*!!!" Wow, that was lucky.**

Play Game Boy Advance Games on Your Television

Nintendo's Game Boy Player gives your Cube "Advance" capabilities

Nintendo surprised everyone by announcing a new peripheral for GameCube that will allow players to play portable Game Boy games on their not-so-portable televisions. Dubbed Game Boy Player, the inch-thick peripheral attaches to the underside of GameCube via the system's hi-speed port and accepts not only Game Boy Advance games, but also old-school Game Boy and Game Boy Color cartridges. Best of all, you won't need a GBA (or GB or GBC) to play—the hardware's built-in.

No more squinting to play *Metroid*.

GB Player has a link port to allow for multiplayer Game Boy Advance games (one player plays on the television while the others play on their GBAs). Games can be played with either a GameCube controller or an actual GBA unit, although in the latter case, a GC/GBA cable is required. Players will be able to choose from an assortment of borders and screen resolutions when playing on their television, just like they could with Super Game Boy (a similar peripheral released for Super Nintendo back in the day).

GB Player will be released in Japan in March, followed by a North American rollout in May. Although a U.S. price is still TBD, the Japanese version will cost about $40.

If you suck, at least no one will know who you are.

ONLINE™
BROADBAND ONLY

Look for this icon on SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs and other PlayStation®2 games with online capability.

www.playstation.com. Online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. SOCOM ©2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours." and the "Online" logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.™

PRESS START

Network News Flash

What's next for PS2, GameCube, and Xbox online

If you like online gaming, you're probably too busy to tool around looking for details about what's on the horizon for your favorite games—so we went to work for you! Read on for answers to your most burning online-gaming questions for the console of your choice.

GameCube Gossip

Are any Nintendo first-party games ever going to be online?
We've heard rumors that ***Super Mario Kart*** will be the first, but Nintendo won't utter a peep on the subject except to mysteriously say that "Nintendo has not announced when it will introduce its first online game." In our opinion, it would be a cosmic injustice not to make an online sequel to *Animal Crossing*.

Will any other games be online?
Yes, but don't expect to play anything other than ***Phantasy Star Online Episodes I&II*** in the near future. "There are other publishers and developers currently working on additional online games," says Nintendo spokesperson Chris Olmstead. "However, they have not announced titles at this point."

What about downloadable content for *PSO*?
Plenty of downloadable quests are indeed planned...for the future. But right now, content is only available online. "Our goal," says *PSO* Producer Richard Briggs, "is to make sure that there is a very regular stream of new online content, and we currently have several months worth of new content planned."

What if I can't find a GC broadband or modem adapter?
Olmstead says, "Nintendo will have additional adapters shipping to stores shortly"—so keep an eye on your local retailer. By the time you read this, they may already be sold out.

The PS2 Scoop

When is the hard drive coming to the U.S.?
The PS2 hard drive (HDD) is out in Japan, and it's tentatively slated for a stateside release this year—but Sony won't make any promises. "We want to ensure that the consumer will have a need...before we make it available," says Sony rep Patrick Seybold. So, the hard drive won't come out until there are games to support it. A likely first candidate to do this is ***Final Fantasy XI*** (released only in Japan), which requires the drive. When that game is released here, we can only assume the HDD will come out, too.

Where can I find a network adapter?
Our sources say Sony is on target to have upwards of 500,000 network adapters shipped to stores by spring of 2003, so the best we can tell you is just keep checking your local Best Buy (and hope you get lucky).

Are any other games going to use the *SOCOM* headset?
"Content is really the driver here," says Seybold, "and if a title warrants it, I am sure that other developers and publishers will take advantage of the technology." We do know this: Peripheral manufacturer Logitech is releasing a higher-quality (i.e., neither flimsy nor easily breakable) version of the ***SOCOM*** headset in February. Surely they wouldn't release a fancy-schmancy headset if they thought *SOCOM* was gonna be the only game to use it, would they?

What downloadable content is coming out?
Activision gets an avalanche of user-created skateparks every week for ***Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4***, so fans can look forward to hundreds of new parks for download. (Neversoft will post their own developer-created parks as well.) EA also promises downloadable rosters for ***Madden NFL 2003***.

Xbox of Secrets

I want my *PSO*! When's it coming to Xbox?
You're in luck: The Xbox version of ***PSO*** will be arriving in the U.S. in March.

When am I going to have to pay for content?
Microsoft would only say, "We have not announced any information on premium content at this time." But we did find out that lots of new content (both free and possibly for pay) is planned for specific games.

New playable levels are planned for ***Splinter Cell*** in March—but they may not all be free. A producer for the game revealed that at least the *first* new level will be free. Does that imply that later levels will not? Hmmm...

MechAssault will soon have eight new maps, four new mechs, and two new modes—Capture the Flag and Objective Raid—available for free download during the first three months of the new year. Some of these are online now.

NFL 2K3, ***NBA 2K3***, ***Toe Jam & Earl*** and ***MX Superfly*** will have free downloadable rosters and characters.

Four new ***Unreal Championship*** maps should be available by the time you read this. "Offering free content to gamers has been a tradition with the *Unreal* franchise," says Digital Extremes' Meridith Braun, "so we're thrilled to have the opportunity to continue this tradition on a console system." Braun also said new game types and Mutators might become available, should the technology allow it.

What other Xbox games are going to be online?
"More than 60 game publishers are currently working on Xbox Live-enabled games," says Microsoft rep Jen Martin, including ***Halo 2***, ***Midtown Madness 3***, ***Star Wars Galaxies***, ***True Fantasy Live Online***, ***Return to Castle Wolfenstein***, ***Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six***, ***Counter-Strike***, to name just a very few.

J-LO KICKS SOME ASS-O

Fifty dollars is a lot of money, so when you wanna buy a friend a videogame gift, you're probably looking in the lame-budget-title section. But if you're director Kevin Smith, and your friends are Jennifer Lopez and Ben Affleck, you get them a game they can really get into...literally. Smith recently gave the couple *Jen Saves Ben*, a one-of-a-kind beat-em-up, as thanks for appearing in his new movie, *Jersey Girl*. To see more, go to www.powerhouseanimation.com.

Nintendo 64 Zeldas Are GameCube-bound

Ocarina of Time and its previously unreleased sequel head to GC in Japan

Japanese gamers awaiting the release of the new GameCube *Zelda* got an early Christmas present from Nintendo last November—the company announced that people who preordered the game would get an extra disc. Contained on the bonus disc are Cube versions of the Nintendo 64 hit *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* and its previously unreleased expansion, *Ura Zelda*. The two new games have slightly cleaner and smoother graphics than the original N64 title.

Never heard of *Ura Zelda*? You're not alone. *Ura* (pronounced "Oo-ra") means "other" in Japanese, and it's the name of the remixed version of *Ocarina of Time* created for Nintendo's ill-fated 64DD add-on. Ultimately, the DD *Ura* was left unreleased. The game is a lot like the original 8-bit *Zelda*'s famous second quest. It features the same basic overworld and game structure as *Ocarina*, but with one important change: The dungeons are all reworked, with different puzzles, enemy locations, etc. We expect other tweaks and changes, too, though specific details are still unclear.

A few new enemies await Link in *Ura Zelda*.

As of press time, Nintendo hadn't announced a release of this special disc in the United States, but you can bet your Deku Nuts it will arrive here before the new *Zelda*'s March debut.

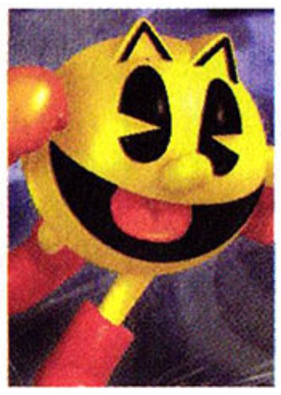
Now you can honestly say the whole world is against you.

ONLINE™
BROADBAND AND DIAL-UP

Look for this icon on Tribes™ Aerial Assault and other PlayStation®2 games with online capability.

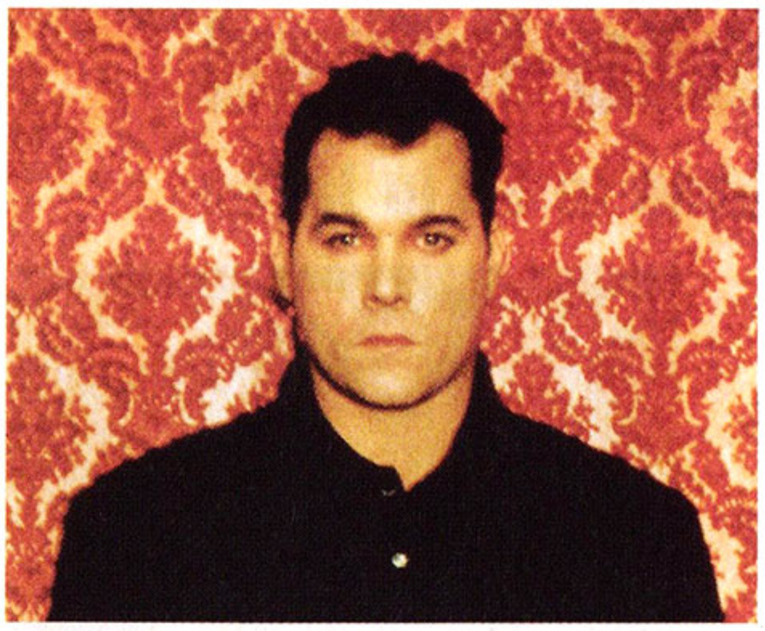
www.playstation.com. Online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). ©2002 Sierra Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Sierra, the Sierra logo and Tribes are trademarks of Sierra Entertainment, Inc. Any other company names and/or products are the property of their respective owners. Developed by Inevitable Entertainment. ©2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live in Your World. Play in Ours." and the "Online" logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.™



A LIVE-ACTION PAC-MAN

Bad idea #97: According to movie-buzz rag *The Hollywood Reporter*, one of the next videogames to be made into a movie is *Pac-Man*. By itself, that's not bad news—*Pac* has been a gaming staple since the early '80s. But here's where it goes awry: It's planned as a live-action feature. As if it weren't bad enough seeing Mike Myers or Jim Carrey in silly Seuss makeup....



Liotta on Liotta

Actor Ray Liotta tells us about his role in GTA: Vice City

Celebrities are people, too—just incredibly rich ones. You like games; they like games. Each issue, we talk to a different celebrity who plays games, is involved in their creation, or is lucky enough to be in one. In addition to being the star of such controversial movies as *Goodfellas* and *Operation Dumbo Drop*, this month's gaming celeb, Ray Liotta, voices Tommy Vercetti, the main character in *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*. As you'll see in our interview, he's not such a tough guy after all. Note: No interviewer was *actually* harmed during the interview, and we embellished the questions a bit.

EGM: *Vice City*...how'd it happen?
Ray Liotta: It was a great opportunity to do something outside of Hollywood. I'd originally turned it down, though. But things turned out well in the end, eh?

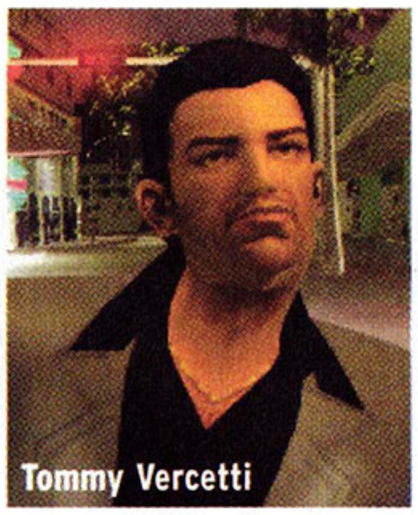
EGM: We think so, yeah. You're such a tough guy—why so wary at first?
RL: I was hesitant because of the violence. Eventually, I figured, hey—there's worse s*** out there, so why not?

EGM: Yeah, you could've been in an *Army Men* game. So, who approached who first about the role, tough guy?
RL: My agent got a call. They asked if I wanted to be the voice and threw out this monetary figure that was like, "Holy smokes, that's a lot of friggin' money." Now I see why. Next time, I'm going to hit 'em up for even more.

EGM: Did you have to prep for the part by beating up defenseless old ladies?
RL: Nah, I just read the words. When I was doing the lines, I couldn't believe some of the s*** that was coming outta my mouth.

EGM: Are you pleased with the title's success, tough guy?
RL: Yeah. I've never seen anything like it. I can't believe the reviews we're getting. It's amazing. Rockstar tells me they can get like 10 million copies sold out of this one. They think they can make $400 million off it. Do you think I'm good in it? [*Liotta removes crowbar from jacket, brandishes it in front of us.*]

EGM: Oh, uh, yeah...you're the best, baby!
RL: No way! Get outta here! You really think the s*** I'm saying is cool?


Tommy Vercetti

EGM: Yes! We told you already that we think you're great in it! Isn't that enough? Please...don't break our legs with that crowbar Mr. Liotta...no!
RL: Man, that's great. I can't believe all the names attached to this project, too. I'm glad I took the deal now. [*WHACK! Our intrepid interviewer gets his shins bashed with a crowbar.*]

EGM: Ouch! That hurt! Bones...broken...but we must...continue...interview. So, you're pleased with fan reaction?
RL: You bet. We're getting reviews in *Time* magazine and other places saying *Vice City* has elevated gaming to an art form. I thought it was going to go under the radar. Guess it helps to have a goodfella on board. [*Liotta takes out brass knuckles.*]

EGM: We can see you want to end the interview a little early. Sorry we called you a tough guy all those times. That was uncalled for. We'll end it with this: Ever play a game like this before?
RL: Never seen anything like it. You play me. It's my voice. Play for hours, and I'm with you for hours. It's like when I was on a soap opera, people were comfortable seeing me. And now you can be comfortable with me kicking someone's ass. [*Cue Liotta giving our interviewer a well-deserved ass-kicking.*]

MAN ON THE STREET

Welcome to the Jungle

We love going to our local game store and freaking people out by asking them random questions about gaming. This month, we asked folks, "What's your favorite thing to do to just mess around in *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*?" Although folks freely admitted their crimes, none showed signs of remorse:

"Take the helicopters that don't have guns and fly down the street and hit people with the blades. And, of course, go on crazy rampages."
—Douglas Dinwoodie, Evanston, IL

"Running over people who are in the scooters. [laughs] Yeah, that's funny."
—Edwin Najarro, Chicago, IL

"Going on motorcycle rampages through the mall and taking jumps on the racing bikes is lots of fun."
—Josh Hinman, Chicago, IL

"I love to drive the taxi. I like driving so fast that I deliver the passenger at about the same time the car's so damaged it's ready to explode."
—Lisa Garland, Chicago, IL

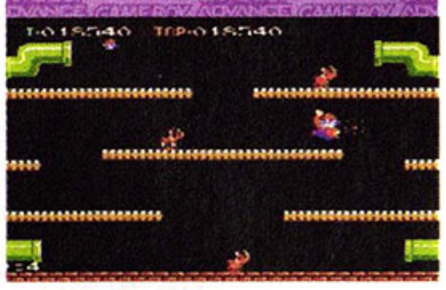
GET READY FOR MARIO PART-E

Nintendo's next card series puts the wild-party hijinks of *Mario Party* in your pocket. You'll play a deck of these like a traditional trading-card game, but when someone plays an Event card, you break out the e-Reader, scan in the card, and engage your opponents in a game of skill on your GBA screens. Also, be on the lookout for a series of *Kirby* e-Cards in the near future.

e-Card e-Valuation

Nintendo's released a new batch of games for their GBA e-Reader. Here's what we thought:

Mario Bros.-e

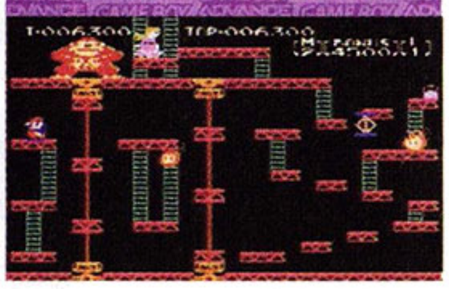


It's one of the beloved plumber's first appearances, but odds are you've already played this to death, since a superior version of this oldie has been crammed into all three *Super Mario Advance* games. This version still offers simple enemy-trouncing fun, but it's merely average for an e-Card game.

Baseball-e

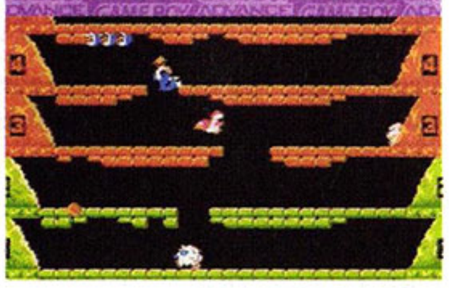
Like its similarly awful cousin *Tennis-e*, this rudimentary hardball sim proves that in 1985, it was scientifically impossible to make a decent sports game. The graphics are utter crap, the gameplay is laughable, and the fun factor is nil. Not worth the three minutes it'll take to swipe it in.

Donkey Kong-e



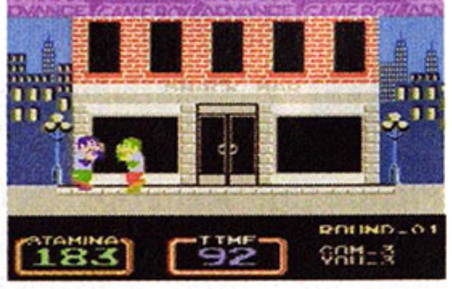
While this isn't arcade-perfect (it is the NES version, after all), it's still an excellent game of *Donkey Kong*. This is time-tested stuff, packed with good gameplay that's fun to return to again and again. The sound and visuals can't compare to modern games, but it doesn't matter. Pick this one up.

Ice Climber-e



Another real e-winner, *Ice Climber* offers tons of levels, addictive gameplay, and quite possibly the best graphics of any e-Reader game. The unforgiving jump physics will take some getting used to, but once you've mastered the slick controls, you'll be hard-pressed to put this game down.

Urban Champion-e



Try as we might, we can't actually name a Nintendo-published game that's worse than *Urban Champion*. *Donkey Kong Jr. Math*? It's educational. *Dance Aerobics*? At least it's healthy. Yep—*Champion* is the worst. It's unbelievably bad. You'll punch, you'll kick, you'll weep openly over the $5 you lost.

—Shane Bettenhausen

"Best on the block" doesn't mean much anymore.

ONLINE™

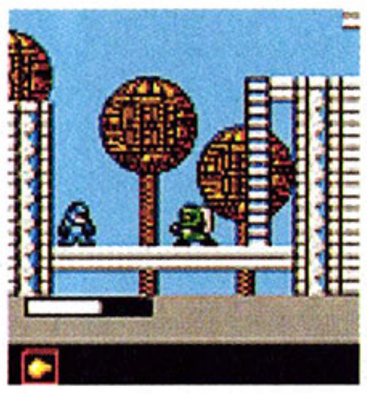
BROADBAND AND DIAL-UP

Look for this icon on My Street™ and other PlayStation®2 games with online capability.

www.playstation.com. Online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). My Street is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. ©2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Designed and developed by Idol Minds. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The "Online" logo and "Live In Your World. Play In Ours." are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.™

PRESS START



BIG IN JAPAN

Gaming on cell phones may be new in the United States, but it's old hat in Japan, where the industry generates more than $800 million a year. That's enough dough to attract companies like Sega, Capcom, Konami, Enix, and Namco, who are producing applications for mobile devices. And if the format takes off in the United States, we'll likely see Japanese releases like *Mega Man* (left) on our phones.

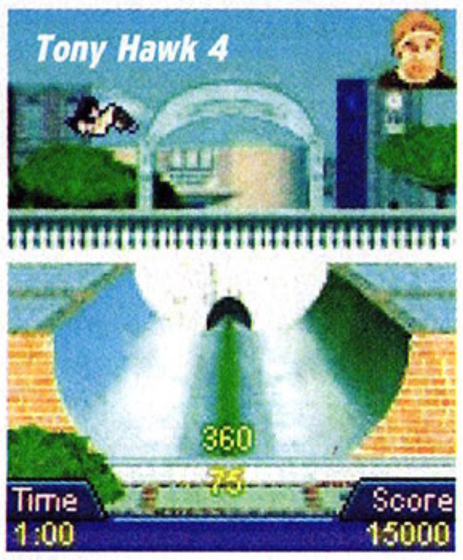
Call of the Wireless

We show you how to get started with the new generation of cell-phone games

Picture this scenario: It's this upcoming summer, and you're standing outside your local googolplex, waiting in line to see *The Hulk*. Your friends took off to grab a bite to eat and left you standing there as the designated place-holder. Since you're stuck between a tongue-wrestling couple and a shirtless, green-painted comic nerd who's repeatedly shouting "Hulk smash!", your entertainment options are severely limited.

But you could be playing *Pac-Man, Monkey Ball, Tony Hawk 4*, or a whole host of other games—all on something you'd probably have in your pocket anyway: a cell phone. But what do you really need to make this wonderful future come true? Let us show you....

Getting Started



The first step involves buying a new cell phone, because more than likely, your current one lacks the power to run these "high-tech" games. Maybe you're still sporting one of those "bag phones" from the '80s. Today's cell phones are sleek 'n' sexy. And if you really want to play decent stuff on one, prepare to spend a couple hundred dollars.

Before you enter the wild world of wireless, however, ask yourself these important questions. How often do you plan on using it, both for calls and gaming? That'll be important to determine what calling plan you're gonna pick. Second, what kind of screen do you want—bright, vibrant, and colorful or dull and dim? And lastly, how much are you willing to pay? If you ain't got the green, you'll be stuck playing *Snake* in black and white (and if you've played *Snake*, you know its long-term entertainment value is next to nil). Three major cell providers offer dedicated, downloadable games. To the right is a rundown of what you'll find in each:

Sprint PCS Vision

What you need: A PCS Vision-enabled phone (ranging in price from $150-$400) and Sprint PCS Vision service (starting at $30/month). May we suggest you check out the Samsung A500 with its backlit screen—perfect for gaming.

Price to game: Ranges from freebies (which, as though we had to tell you this, aren't worth the download) to a couple bucks (most expensive is $4.99).

Advantage: Offers classic games like *Pac-Man*, *Defender*, and a few Intellivision hits from the '80s that other cell-phone providers don't have. And if you wanna play mobile *Monkey Ball*, Sprint's one of the carriers that's got it (AT&T's the other).

Extras: Browse the Web and download other stuff to your phone, like extra ring tones (no man should be without "Baby Got Back"), screen savers, and more.

Verizon Get It Now

What you need: A Get It Now-compatible phone (ranging in price from $50-$300) and a Verizon Wireless service plan (starting at $30/month).

Price to game: Varies. Get It Now offers several tiers of downloads—demo, subscription, and purchase (often with a timed expiration).

Advantage: Verizon offers mostly board and puzzle games, but if you dig EA Sports titles, Verizon has you covered. *FIFA Soccer* and *Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf* are among the titles currently available for download.

Extras: Offers loads of other applications for your phone, like a Magic 8-Ball program, horoscopes, and a guide to mixing drinks (in case you're trying to impress the ladies and don't have time to reference a book on how to concoct a sex on the beach).

AT&T mMode

What you need: At press time, AT&T supports one phone with a color screen suitable for these new-style games. So to get your game on, you'll need the Motorola T720 ($299) and an AT&T service plan (starting at $20/month).

Price to game: New games cost a couple bucks per download.

Advantage: The library of available games is similar to Sprint's, although exact compatibility varies by phone model. And AT&T offers an exclusive (for now, anyway) cell version of *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4* that the other services don't.

Extras: Check e-mail, get music and concert news, find your friends, and browse the Web. Pretty standard stuff here—but the extended applications focus mostly on Web browsing and productivity.

The Pros & Cons of Cell Games

Are phones that also game right for you? Well, you have a lot of options to weigh. They are undoubtedly very cool, but consider these pros and cons.

Pros:

- **The available games are simple, fun time-wasters.**
- **More convenient than carrying a Game Boy Advance everywhere.**
- **Ladies love *Monkey Ball*.**

Cons:

- **Cell phones don't make good game controllers.**
- **The storage memory on most phones limits you to holding a couple games at a time.**
- **Cell-phone Web browsing is slow and tedious, so getting new games and applications can be painful.**

THE FUTURE OF CELLULAR GAMING

No, the image to the left is not a next-generation Game Boy Advance. It's Nokia's N-Gage mobile game deck planned for a 2003 release (more announcements scheduled for February). The new phone/game system is the first of the company's game-device lineup, sporting a color screen and GBA-style layout. Sega and other game publishers are reportedly at work on games that will take advantage of the device's game-friendly features. That leaves us with one question—which end do you talk into?

The Games You Can Play

OK, so you've bought a phone, and you're ready to game. But which titles should you buy with the money you have left (which we estimate to be exactly $4.99)? We've logged hours on the following mobile titles, and we're ready to give you our opinions and a score on our 0-10 scale. The good news: Once you've bought and downloaded them, the programs reside on your phone, so you don't have to use your minutes to play. Prices listed below are based on Sprint's offerings.

Sega Monkey Ball

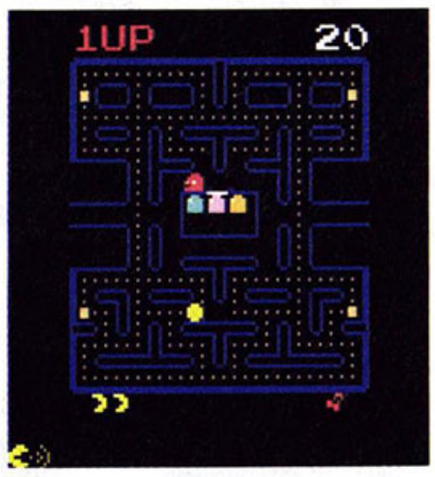
$3.99, 30 days
Score: 8
This mini version of *Monkey Ball* is almost as addictive as its console brethren. The only thing that hurts it is the shoddy control thanks to the phone's keypad.

Kick Champion

$3.00, 60 days
Score: 5
If soccer were more like *Pong*, it'd be *Kick Champion*. Pass and shoot as many balls as you can past two goalies before time runs out.

Pac-Man

$4.99, no expiration
Score: 7
Namco's classic dot-gobbler returns, and he's feeling a bit sluggish on the cramped cell-phone screen. It features decent sound effects, though.

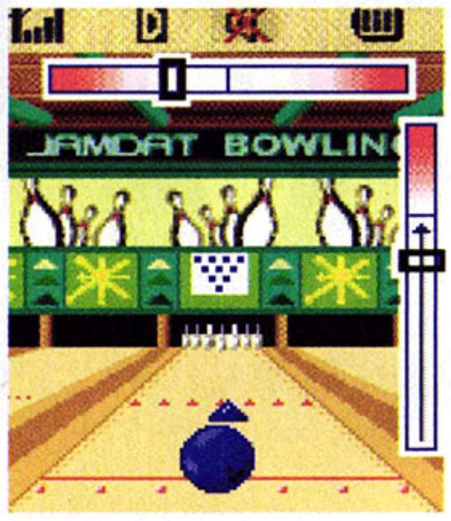


Moto GP

$3.99, no expiration
Score: 7
It's hard to believe a motorcycle racer that looks this good and moves this fast can be played on a phone. Just be sure to turn the sound down before playing.

JAMDAT Bowling

$3.99, 60 days
Score: 9
An amazingly fast-paced and easy-to-play bowling game. It's devoid of sound effects, but maybe that's a good thing, eh?



Tetris

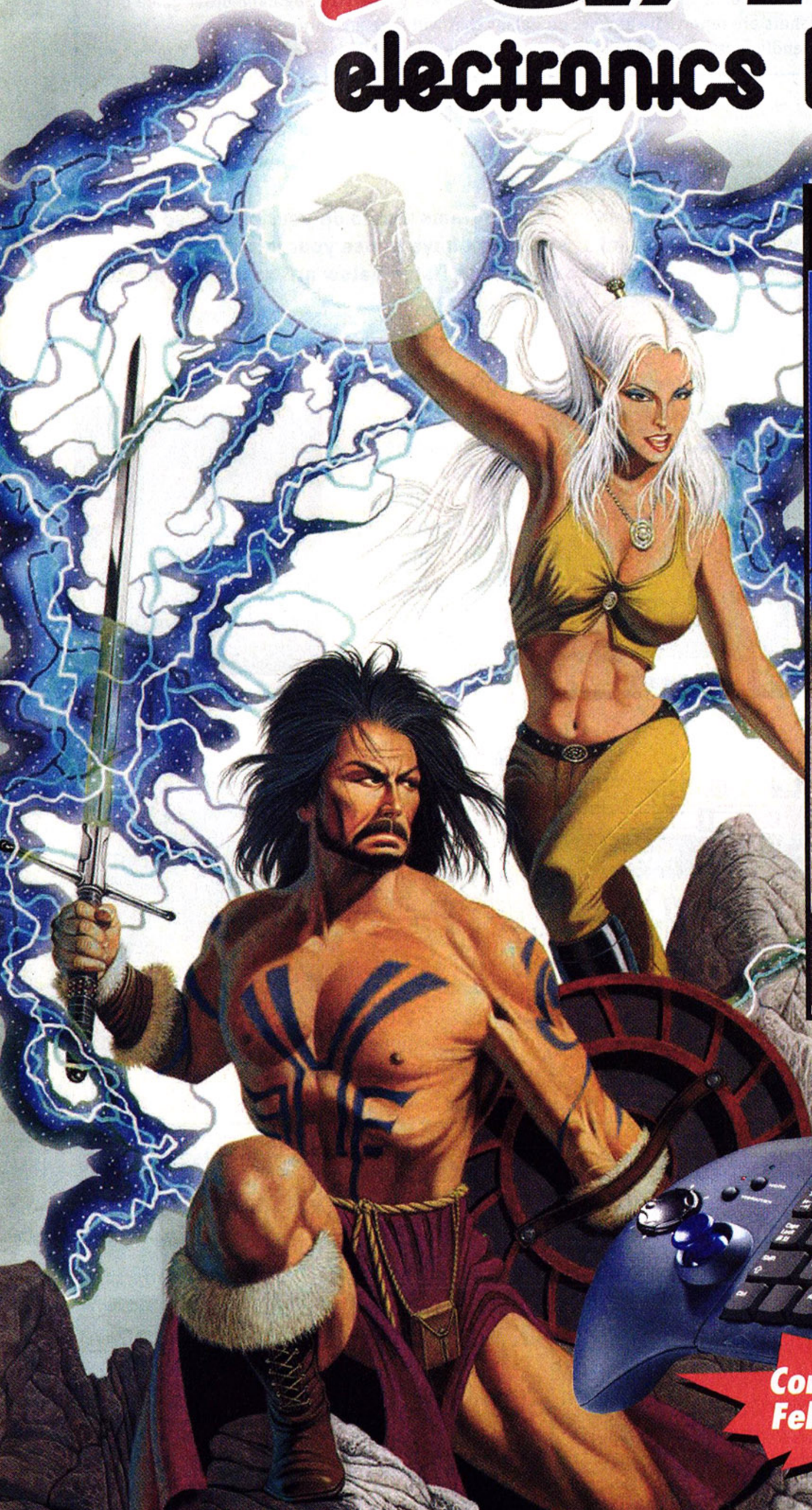
$3.00, 60 days
Score: 9
When you get a good version of *Tetris*, it's easy to sit there playing, letting the time melt away. And this mobile version is just that. A must-have.

Sega Remakes, VF4 Evo Head to PS2

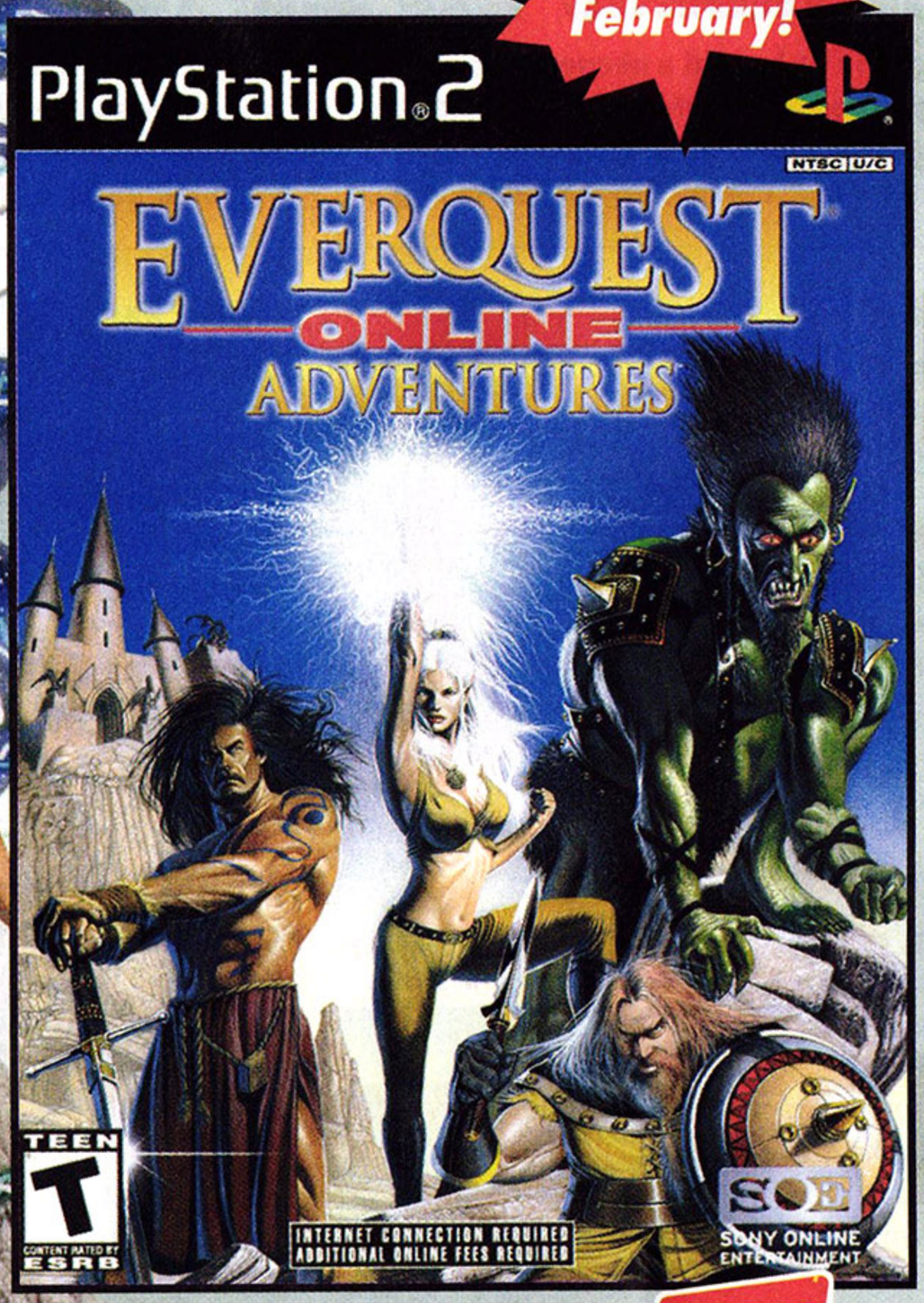
It was inevitable that Sega would rummage through its back catalog of games and choose a few gems for the full-remake treatment. And now, it's happening (at least in Japan). Remakes of the original *Phantasy Star, Space Harrier, Golden Axe,* and *Fantasy Zone* are headed to PlayStation 2 in summer 2003, thanks to a deal struck between Sega and Japanese value-game publisher D3. Each game will be sold separately at the low, low price of 2500 yen ($20). More releases—including classics like *Alex Kidd in Miracle World, Streets of Rage,* and *Phantasy Stars II* and *IV*—will happen if the line is successful. All the games have been remixed to take advantage of the PS2, with improved graphics and sound. In a separate announcement, Sega revealed that Dreamcast "hits" like *Illbleed, Dynamite Cop, Blue Stinger,* and the Japan-only *Rent-A-Hero No. 1* will be rereleased for Xbox under the CoolCool brand.

Showing even more PS2 love, Sega announced a Japanese release of *Virtua Fighter 4 Evolution* on the system, scheduled for March 2003. It features two new characters, reduced load times, improved graphics, and a new Quest mode, pitting you against the created fighter data from 500 opponents across Japan (some nationally ranked *VF* players among them). Sega of America would not comment on U.S. releases for any of these games.

EB GAMES™
electronics boutique®



Coming in February!



EVERQUEST: ONLINE ADVENTURES
#231252-8 • PLAYSTATION 2
SONY ONLINE

$49.99
when sold separately

Coming in February!

NETPLAY CONTROLLER
#231954-9 • PLAYSTATION 2
LOGITECH

$69.99
when sold separately

EB GAMES™ electronics boutique®

SAVE $20 INSTANTLY

when game and controller are pre-purchased together with this coupon.

May not be combined with any other offer or promotion. Limit one per family. Pre-owned games are excluded. See store associate for complete details. Expires 2/15/03.

Coming Soon!

Yu-Gi-Oh!™

YU-GI-OH!
THE DUELISTS OF THE ROSES
#224797-1 • PLAYSTATION 2
KONAMI
$39.99

YU-GI-OH!
THE ETERNAL DUELIST SOUL
#222479-8 • GAMEBOY ADVANCE
KONAMI
$29.99

Also Available!

YU-GI-OH! FORBIDDEN MEMORIES $29.99
#216245-1 • PLAYSTATION
KONAMI

YU-GI-OH! DUNGEON DICE MONSTERS $29.99
#222283-4 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
KONAMI

EB GAMES™
electronics boutique®

To place your order now, call 1-800-800-0032 or visit www.ebgames.com. To find a store near you, call 1-800-800-5166.

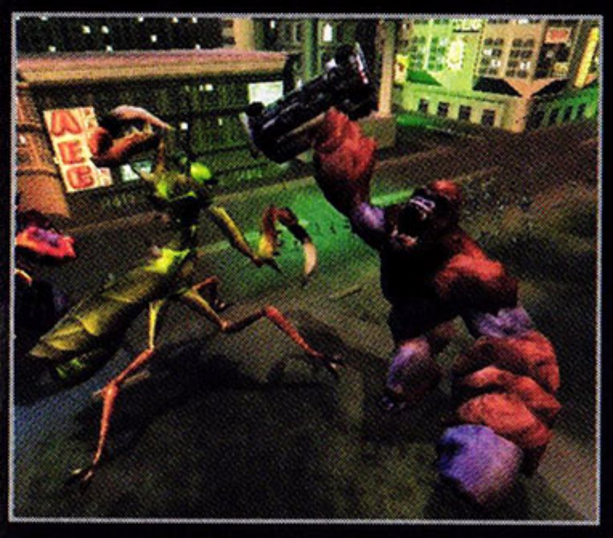
WAR OF THE MONSTERS™

REALLY BIG MONSTERS. REALLY BRUTAL FIGHTS. Imagine a classic 1950s monster movie with a modern twist, no guys in rubber suits, no bad actors, no subtitles. You're a 100-foot monster and you're looking for a fight. Roam through striking cityscapes, toss cars, swing girders and launch debris. Everything around you is a weapon. Trigger tidal waves and earthquakes; destroy everything in your path. Hope you have the will to win. And a good dental plan. **ONLY THE MEANEST MONSTER SURVIVES.**

www.playstation.com War of the Monsters is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Developed by Incog Inc. Entertainment. ©2003 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "Live In Your World. Play In Ours." is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence



PlayStation.2

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.™

PRESS START

Afterthoughts: Metroid Prime

The sheer quality of GameCube's *Metroid Prime* knocked us squarely on our asses, and we must admit that we weren't quite expecting it. Did these guys work directly with Miyamoto on every aspect? Was it tough to get the controls just right? Did they sign a contract with Satan? The guys behind the game have never come forward to speak about the magic, mystery, and Metroidity of their game...until now.

Via the magic of video teleconferencing, we spoke with the notoriously tight-lipped guys at developer Retro Studios (Executive Producer Steve Barcia, Lead Designer Mark Pacini, Senior Designer Karl Deckard, and Producer Michael Mann), along with Shigeru Miyamoto and Kensuke Tanabe of Nintendo, about the groundbreaking project.

Meta-Ridley provides an impressive nod to the *Metroid* games of yesteryear, and he's also Executive Producer Steve Barcia's favorite *Prime* enemy.

EGM: Could you describe how development was split between Retro and Nintendo?

Steve Barcia: Actually, a lot of the overall design and direction was very much a cooperative effort on both sides. The implementation, engineering, and art were all done here at Retro, but the direction and a lot of choices in the game were decided together.

Kensuke Tanabe: The only thing that we handled ourselves was the music, which was done by a composer from Nintendo's R&D 1 team (and composer of all the music in the *Metroid* series), Mr. Kenji Yamamoto. Other than that, everything was handled by Retro.

EGM: We know that *Prime* started its life as an unnamed third-person action game. How far along was it when the decision was made to turn it into a *Metroid*?

SB: We had started our first project shortly after the company was founded, and then Mr. Miyamoto became involved and gave us some recommendations on how to change the game. But we really hadn't been working on the other game for that long. It was a matter of months. The *Metroid Prime* project began officially in August of 1999.

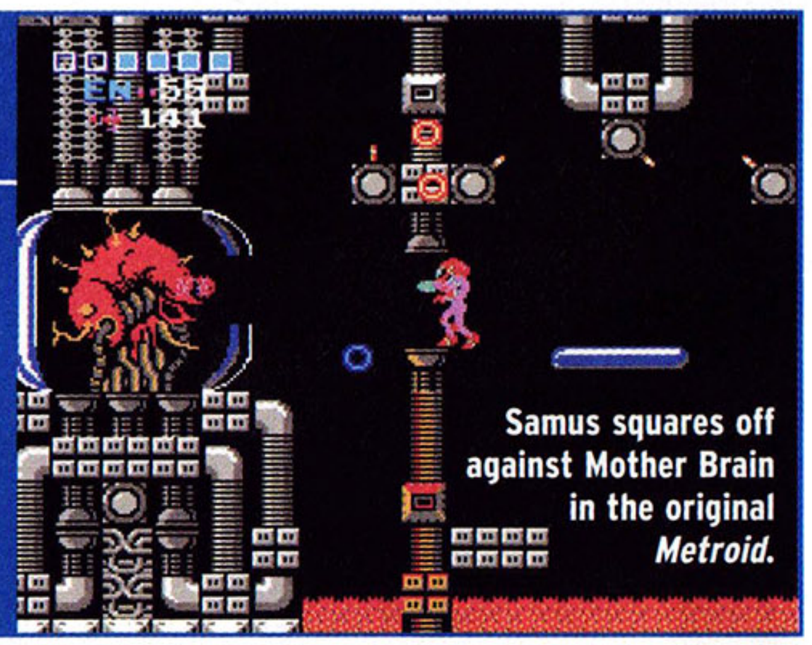
Shigeru Miyamoto: I'd been seeing test builds of different projects from Retro as long as four years ago, and at that time, I had the impression that these guys could really do a good *Metroid* game in the future. I know that American gamers have been waiting for a new *Metroid* for a long time, and the U.S. press asked about it *many* times. Even during the Nintendo 64 days, we were thinking of ways to do it and what type of game to make, but we just really couldn't come up with any concrete ideas.

EGM: At first, the announcement that an American team was developing *Metroid* was met with a lot of criticism. Were you fazed by the unfavorable public opinion when *Prime* was first unveiled?

SM: Well, maybe we should have listened. I don't know! (laughs) Really, we made it the way we wanted to make it; we really weren't concerned with what other people thought

Samus, Hit Me One More Time

"There are a lot of people who will want to find everything," says Executive Producer Steve Barcia, "and *Prime* offers them plenty of opportunity to play the game for a long time." Collecting every item and scanning every possible object will unlock three different endings and four art galleries, and after you've beaten the game once, you can challenge a harder difficulty level. Oh, and don't forget the link-up options with *Metroid Fusion*—beating *Prime* and linking up with the Game Boy Advance cart via the GC-GBA link cable lets you use Samus' new *Fusion* suit in *Prime*, and beating *Fusion* allows you to play the original *Metroid* on your GameCube.



Samus squares off against Mother Brain in the original *Metroid*.

MIYAMOTO SAYS PRIME GOES TO 12!

It's obvious from the Platinum Award we gave *Prime* last issue that we're really happy with the final product, but how does *Mario* and *Zelda* creator Shigeru Miyamoto feel about it? We asked him to assign a score (out of 10) that represents his overall take on the game's accomplishments in bringing the series to 3D, and he happily exclaimed, "12!" To which Retro's Steve Barcia responded, "I like his assessment."

A Lovable Rogues Gallery

***Metroid Prime* is crawling with innumerable alien beasties and bizarre monstrosities, but each guy on the design team has a soft spot for just one. Here's a look at their personal favorites.**

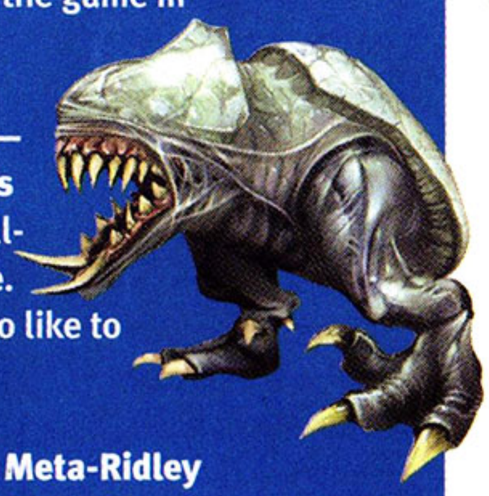
Karl Deckard — Triclops

"He kind of makes me angry, because at first you don't know how to beat him, and he always wins. And then when you *do* know how to beat him—you still can't always do it. I like that in gameplay—when you're constantly pushed to do better."

Mark Pacini — Chozo Ghost

"I just think it's a simple, effective enemy, with the added bonus that you have to use one of your visors to battle it, which kind of sums up a lot of very good elements about the game in one creature."

Michael Mann — Baby Sheegoths



"They're the bulldog of the game. Little grunts who like to attack you."

Steve Barcia — Meta-Ridley

"It's an extremely cool battle and a character from the past that players can really appreciate. I don't think there have been a lot of battles like that in any first-person games, so I think it really sets things apart."

Shigeru Miyamoto — Alpha Beetle

"It was the first enemy we saw up and running. I was like, 'We can build off this!' and it was a really good start."

Kensuke Tanabe — Auto-turrets

"I like the auto-turrets!"

at the time.

SB: I agree with Miyamoto, because at the time, the game was already coming together and was fun, so we knew we were going in the right direction. So, even if there were some opinions that it wasn't the right direction, we could see it was going to be fun.

EGM: Some people have complained about the nonstandard control setup. Did you ever consider allowing the game to be played like a standard first-person shooter?

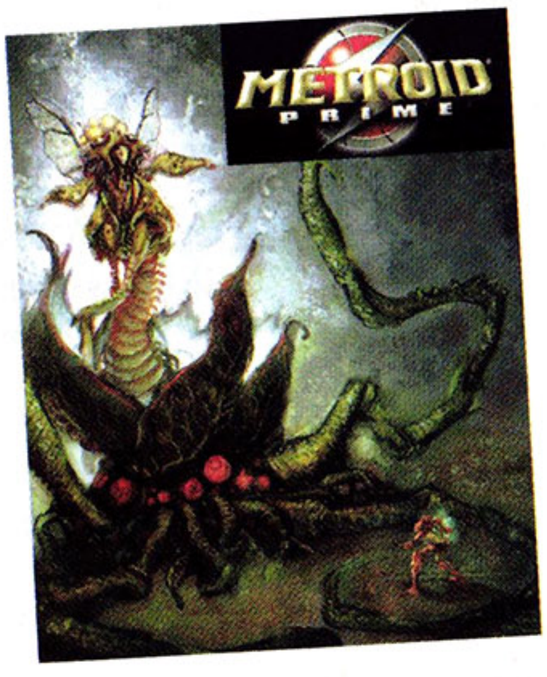
SB: We really set out to make something that stands on its own, and above all else, the first-person view was an aspect of the game but not the main focus. Instead, we just wanted to make it really cool and take what we could from the original *Metroid*.

Karl Deckard: Originality and innovation are more important than fitting yourself into a certain genre just because you think that's what people want.

SM: That's right. Even amongst people making the game, sometimes we had the opinion: "Well, this is what it is in an FPS," and we really had to break down those stereotypes and toss them out the window to come up with things that are good for *Metroid*.

EGM: What was the hardest part of the game to get right?

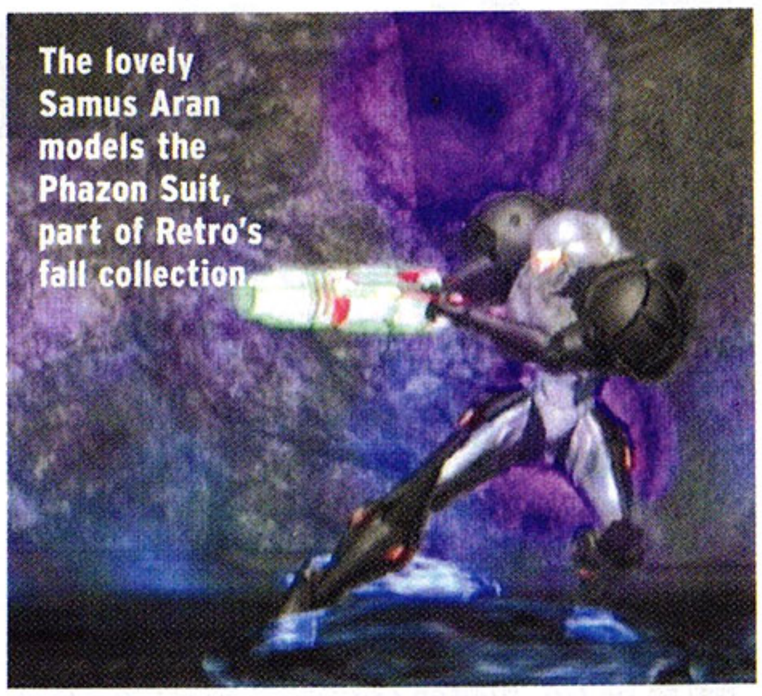
SB: Probably the first-person jumping. From the outset, we realized that we'd have to pay a lot of attention to it, since we were creating a platformer. There aren't many games you can look at where first-person jumping is very fun at all. We wanted that to be an important part of the game, and from day one, it was one of the big parts that we continually had to spend a lot of effort and focus on.



EGM: At the end of *Prime* there's no timed escape, like there is in *Metroid* and *Super Metroid*. Did you consider adding that?

SB: There was a limited amount of things that we wanted to cross over. The intro level for one—it's very similar to *Super Metroid*. It was agreed on by both Nintendo and Retro that having a timed escape would be too similar, and that the way we have it now was the best way to end the game.

KT: I will say that when we first talked about it with Retro, they had a slightly stronger feeling about wanting to put in a timed evacuation at the end, but I just had to say, "No." And if we'd have put something like that in, I don't think we would have been done with the game in time!



The lovely Samus Aran models the Phazon Suit, part of Retro's fall collection.

EGM: Speaking of being late...will we have to wait another eight years for another *Metroid*?

SM: Let's direct that to Retro!

SB: We were going to direct it your way! We'll enjoy the current one for now.

SM: No, we've been discussing future projects while this one was going on, so I think it'll be a little quicker than in the past.

EGM: In the credits, many Retro employees thank their friends and families for their understanding. Obviously, it was a ton of work, but do you feel that you'll reap the rewards when the public loves your game?

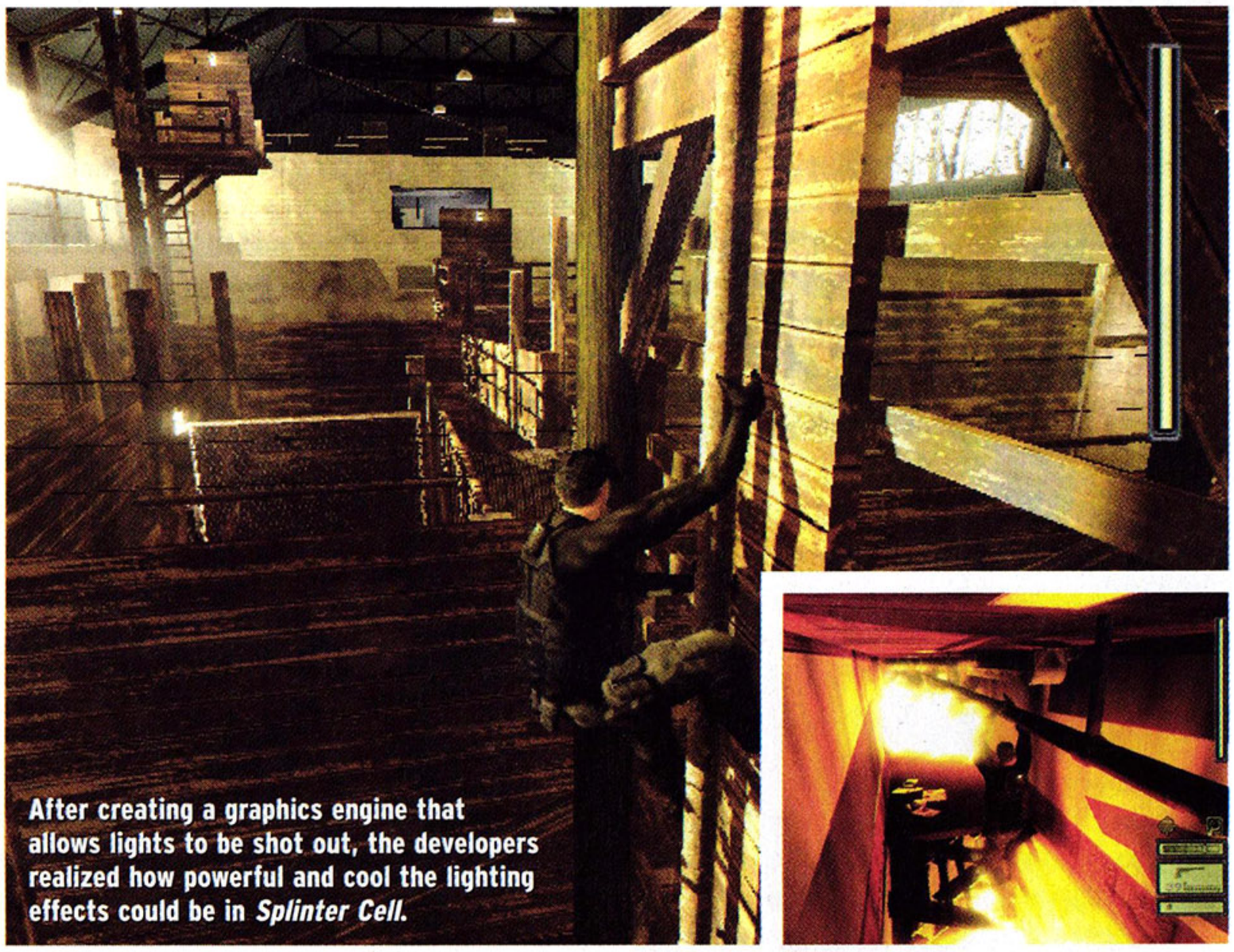
KD: We're reaping some sleep right now! (laughs) Yeah, we're all really happy with how it turned out, and we think that gamers will be, too. You guys have all played it—you said you liked it. We're just happy that all of our hard work paid off.

Mark Pacini: I completely agree. Everyone worked so hard because we saw the potential of the game, and we knew that we were part of something really special. It was really hard work, and we put a tremendous amount of effort into it, and we're really proud and hope that everyone likes it.

KT: I'll always remember that while working on this game, in the middle of one of our *Metroid* conferences, my wife had her second baby. (laughs) But we did not name her Samus. (laughs)

Afterthoughts: Splinter Cell

If you're like us, you spent your holidays sneaking through embassies and clubbing guards with *Splinter Cell* superspy Sam Fisher. Or maybe you don't own an Xbox, and you're waiting for Ubi Soft's awesome stealth-action game to come to one of the other consoles, as we expect will happen early in 2003. Either way, you'll want to check out what Senior Producer Mathieu Ferland has to say about how to aim, what had to be cut, hidden secrets, and more, all in our Afterthoughts interview.



After creating a graphics engine that allows lights to be shot out, the developers realized how powerful and cool the lighting effects could be in *Splinter Cell*.

EGM: With all the cool weapons and items in *Splinter Cell*, why do you start the game with so little equipment?

Mathieu Ferland: We wanted this to be played as a stealth game, and if you provide people with all the equipment at the beginning, they will try all of it immediately. We also limited the amount of ammo. In the first level, [most] people run out of bullets. And during our playtest sessions, we learned that once you're out of bullets, you try to play more stealthily and you enjoy the game even more because you've tried different things.

EGM: Do all the weapons and gadgets in the game really exist?

MF: Most of them have been taken from reality, like the shocker. The shocker is an adaptation of what S.W.A.T. teams use. The difference is that what the police use has a wire linked to their weapon, so they can knock someone down with an electric shock. We've adapted that and removed the wire so you have more freedom of movement and accuracy when firing at enemies.

Splinter Cell takes place in 2004, and Tom Clancy's all about the day after tomorrow—what's coming next. Another example: the [night-vision and thermal] goggles. Those goggles exist in real life. The only difference is that there's no prototype with both thermal and night vision [in one]—they're separate. And we started out with that, but later in development, we had animation problems with Sam trying to switch visors. So, for gameplay purposes, we said, "OK, that might be believable [for 2004], and it'd be cool to make it all in one."

***Splinter Cell* Fun Fact No. 256: Mr. Chinh of Chinh Cola is an actual member of the development team.**

EGM: What's up with the aiming system? Sometimes we'd be standing right next to a guy and still wouldn't hit him.

MF: There are two things about the reticle—one that is known by the player and one that is unknown.

The thing that is known is when you move, your reticle expands, and you need to wait until it recovers for better precision. So, if you wait for two seconds or so, depending on how fast you were moving, your reticle will recover, and then you'll have much better precision. Depending on how far you are from the enemy, your shot should be quite precise, just like in real life. If the reticle's not recovered, you will randomly shoot within the boundaries of the reticle—your shot could go anywhere within that area.

The thing that players don't know is that you

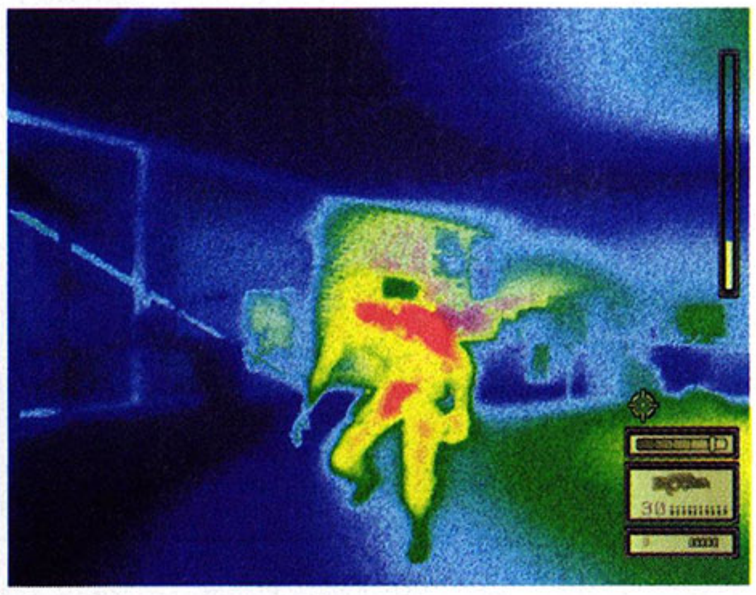
Ol' Ironside

"See you at the party, Richter!"

***Splinter Cell*'s main man Sam Fisher is voiced by accomplished character actor Michael Ironside. He's probably best known as the boat-owning jerk who gives George Clooney so much grief in *A Perfect Storm*, but we'll always remember him as Richter, the gun for hire who loses his arms in *Total Recall*. "We wanted Sam's voice to be deep and to use those low frequencies that make a character sound like he's speaking and whispering at the same time," Ferland tells us about the casting choice. "So when you're in the action and you hear the voice, it's still quiet and realistic. This was his first experience with game voicework, and it turned out really well."**

ENIX, SQUARE START LOVE TRAIN

The two companies synonymous with hit console RPGs, Square (*Final Fantasy*) and Enix (*Dragon Warrior*...well it's huge in Japan anyway), announced this past November that they will merge to form one powerhouse company come April 1, 2003 (and no, it's not an early April Fool's joke). The new company will be known as Square Enix.



get more accuracy when you're shooting objects [as opposed to people]. For instance, you can shoot a light from much farther away than you can shoot an enemy. We did that because we wanted to encourage players to adapt the environment to their way of playing, instead of just shooting all the enemies.

Another thing is that sometimes enemies are wearing helmets. So, it may happen that, even if you shoot them in the head, they won't die instantly—you might need an additional shot.

EGM: Why did you do away with the radar screen that other stealth games like *Metal Gear Solid* rely on?

MF: Two reasons. The first is that we wanted the game to be realistic and immersive. A radar screen gives you too much information and reduces the tension. You don't need to peek around the corner—you already know there's a guard there.

The second reason is that we've noticed by playing *MGS* that at a certain point, you're playing the game in 2D if you're looking only at the radar in that little corner of the screen. We didn't even want to give players that option because we wanted people to be in the environment, feeling the tension, and using the gadgets to figure things out. The game gives you plenty of hints to make your way through—you can hear voices, footsteps, etc.

EGM: Aside from a sequel, do you think we'll see Sam make a cameo in other Tom Clancy games? Maybe having a meeting with Rainbow Six?

MF: Yeah, that could be nice as long as it fits with the *Rainbow Six* series. A lot of fans spend time putting together the timelines from all the games. [laughs] So it forces us to be smart and make sure everything fits.

I don't know that it would be a good thing to mix these two series. But why not have little nods to them, eh?

EGM: Any moves or features that didn't make it into the game?

MF: Yes. When your guidelines are to focus on realism, the amount of things you'd like to do in a game are limited. There are many moves that were removed for different reasons. For example, at one point, Sam was able to run with his weapon drawn. This was removed because the aiming wasn't accurate at all and because it's not very stealthy to shoot while you're running. [Plus] the pace of the game would've been too fast compared to what we wanted.

Sam was also able to pick up enemies' weapons. We removed that for different reasons. First, it's not realistic, since no special agent of this kind would do that in real life—it would be too dangerous, since they wouldn't know how a weapon had been set up. Second, a new weapon means new ammo and more shooting, which is also not very stealthy. Finally, more ammo anytime [you take out an enemy] makes it a much bigger deal to balance the gameplay properly, and we did not want it to become a shooter type of game.

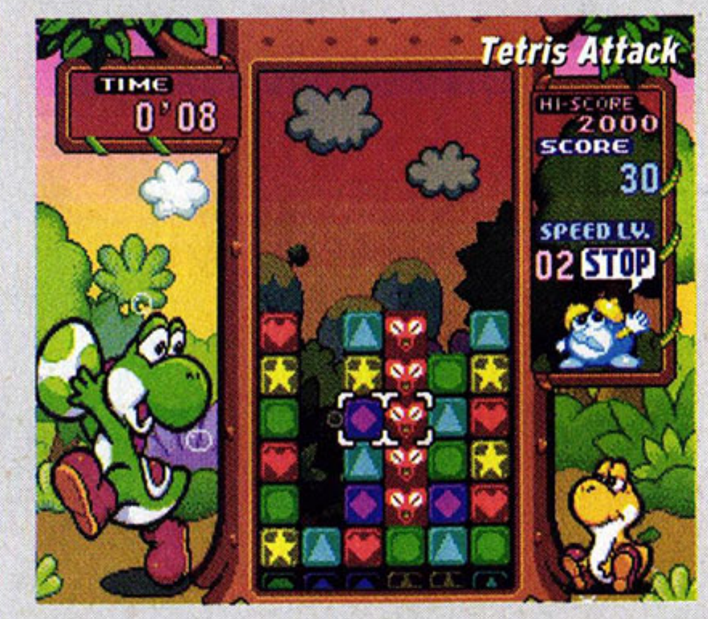
In terms of gadgets, we wanted to have another [screen] that would've shown Lambert and his team live while they're providing new orders. But it was too annoying on the screen; it needed to be big to provide enough detail, and since the game doesn't freeze during these conversations, we also had some sound issues.

Even More Splinter Cell Secrets

After he thought the interview was over, we sneaked behind Ferland, grabbed him by the neck, and, with our gun to his head, forced him to divulge more *Splinter Cell* secrets. Here's what he had to say before we knocked him out: "Another hidden trick is when you come out of the first training level, you see a door on your left as you face the hall at the very beginning. There's a way of picking the lock during the training, opening this door, and getting a keypad number. Then, go back to the beginning and go up on the left side. Know when you have the lights on the walls when you're first training with the camera? There is a small area where you can wall jump to access a higher level there. So, you can try that, and at the end, you can speak to Grimsdottir there...."

TIDBITS

Nintendo Packs Puzzle Punch



One area Nintendo's neglected on GameCube is the once-mighty puzzle genre. But not anymore! The company revealed a special delivery to puzzle geeks everywhere in the form of *Nintendo Puzzle Collection*, coming to GC in Japan in January 2003. (Unfortunately, Nintendo hasn't confirmed a stateside release as of this writing.) The compilation includes *Panel de Pon* (aka *Pokémon Puzzle League* and *Tetris Attack* in the United States), *Dr. Mario*, and *Yoshi's Cookie*. All the games include four-player modes and can be downloaded to Game Boy Advance (or you can use a GBA as a controller) using the GC-GBA link cable.

Game Music...In Concert

Previously, live performances of game music by a full 90-piece symphony orchestra were limited to a few shows in Japan for big titles like *Final Fantasy*. U.S. gamers—unless they wanted to front the money for a plane ticket across the Pacific—were left out of the fun...until now. On May 16, America gets its first live performance of game music in "Videogames Live at the Hollywood Bowl," a two-and-a-half-hour show featuring "the finest composed music found in the greatest videogames of all time," according to the show's producers. If you're unable to make it to Los Angeles for the show (which coincides with the Electronic Entertainment Expo), you can see the event on pay-per-view, and it will be available later on DVD and CD.

臨兵闘者皆陣烈在前臨兵闘者皆陣烈在

You can't fight
what you can't see.

OVERWORKS™

臨兵闘者皆陣烈在前臨兵闘者皆陣烈在

SEGA is a registered trademark of SEGA CORPORATION. SEGA and Shinobi are registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation and its affiliates. ©2002 SEGA CORPORATION. Original Game ©OVERWORKS/SEGA, 2002. All Rights Reserved. www.sega.com

Shinobi™

sega.com/shinobi

PlayStation®2

SEGA®

MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Violence

"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved.

PRESS START

ファンボーラ

Attack of the Fanboys

Where do they come from, and just who the hell do they think they are? EGM celebrates the most annoying breed of gamer, the fanboy

Sticks vs. stones. Monarchy vs. democracy. *Star Wars* vs. *Star Trek*. Us vs. them. People pick sides. With videogames, it's no different. And on the front line of the console war—the raging battle of PlayStation 2 vs. Xbox vs. GameCube—you'll find the fanboy. He's stubborn. He's angry. He's redoubtable to his foes, frighteningly loyal to his system of choice. And he offers no apologies. "[A fanboy] is someone who has taken his passion for something to the level of obsession and has access to a database of information on the subject tucked away in his brain for easy and frequent reference," says Sonia Im. As a PR rep for *Final Fantasy* publisher Square EA, Im faces fanboys on a regular basis. "[The obsession] doesn't just have to be videogames. It could be comics, toys, or even fishing. The important thing is that they worship 'it.'"

Chances are, a few thousand fanboys are reading this article right now. And if you're one of them, well, you know who you are. You and your PlayStation 2 are an inseparable fighting team, battling the evils of Microsoft and Nintendo. Or, clutching your GameCube by its handle, you loiter counterside at the local game store and fire verbal missiles at would-be PS2 purchasers. Or, hunched before your computer monitor, you lurk on gaming message boards and wage a one-man information war to prove that Xbox is the *only* console for hardcore gamers, right?

Right?

Fanboys argue over which console is most powerful, which has the best games, which is cooler for some abstract reason only they comprehend. They unleash callous comments that ignite Internet message-board flame wars: those long threads of hateful posts where everyone has an answer and nobody agrees. Fanboys are willing to go down with their console, and will claim victory before the war is even over. Just ask a Dreamcast fanboy.

This special breed of gamer is not new. It's just that nowadays, he can create a bigger ruckus thanks to the Internet, where anything goes and anyone's message can be heard. Since the creation of the very first consoles, fanboys have argued the relative merits of one system over another. "The biggest rivalry, naturally, was between the Atari 2600 camp and the Intellivision camp," says gaming historian Leonard Herman, author of *Phoenix: The Fall & Rise of Videogames*. Without the Net to vent their opinions, early fanboys battled each other on school playgrounds, around the office watercooler, or in the letters section of classic gaming mags. "Just because there are nearly 400 games for the [Atari VCS] doesn't mean they are any good," reads a letter from the March 1983 issue of *Electronic Fun With Computers & Games*.

Wars raged with each successive hardware generation: ColecoVision vs. Atari 5200, Nintendo Entertainment System vs. Sega Master System, Super NES vs. Genesis, PlayStation vs. Saturn. It all leads to the unprecedented scenario we have today: three strong hardware manufacturers fighting for market dominance. None appears ready to pack it in just yet. This is a fanboy's dream, and a nightmare for anyone caught in the crossfire. Our advice: Don't fan a fanboy's flame war. You'll only encourage him.

—Joshua Fruhlinger

The Biology of the Fanboy

Thought processes

The fanboy thinks he knows everything and has no problem letting you know that he knows more than you. In fact, he knows so much more than you that, should you disagree with him, you will only prove yourself to be the little newbie that you really are.

Personality traits

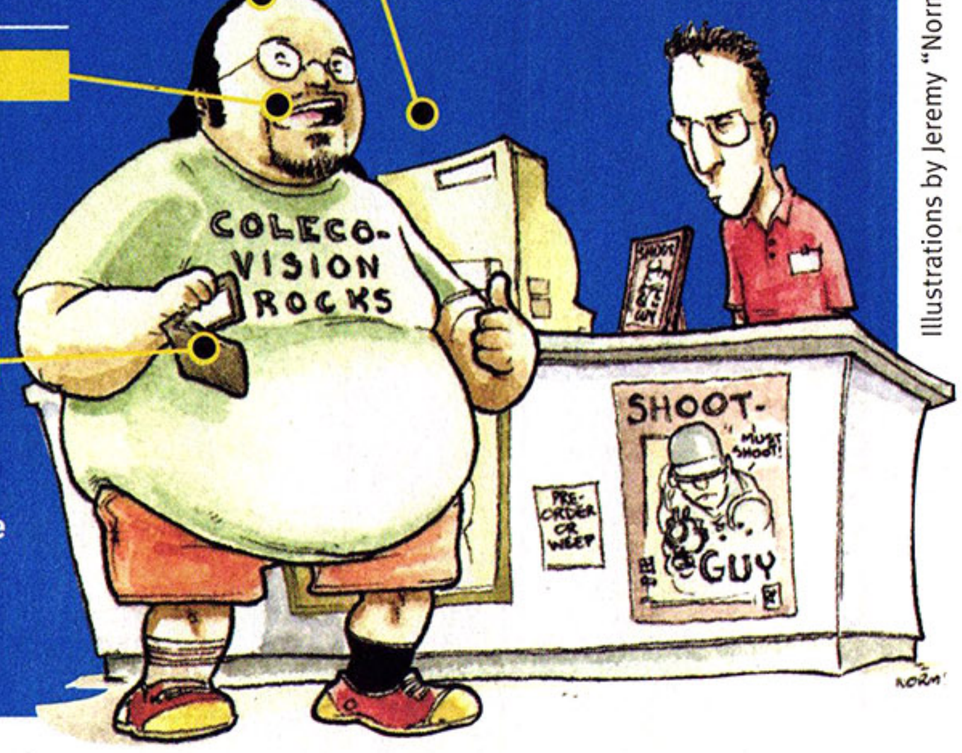
The fanboy loves to argue. He'll argue about which system is better, which developer rOOlz, and which controller feels best in his hands. He would rather argue than agree with you, even if he secretly agrees.

Spending habits

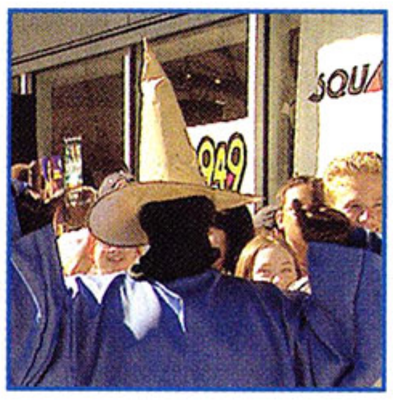
The fanboy has an unhealthy allegiance to a particular console brand. He will not buy another company's system, no matter how tempting it is. Were his enemies to know he was harboring a foreign console, a fanboy's legitimacy would be undermined. His followers would turn their heads in disgust, and his enemies would laugh maniacally.

Habitat

The fanboy blabs with game-store clerks until he's asked if he's going to buy something. The fanboy then leaves and logs on to Internet discussion forums in an attempt to find an audience who will put up with his ranting.



Illustrations by Jeremy "Norm" Scott



DRESS FOR THE OBSESSED

Videogame fanboyism isn't rooted only in the console war. Many fanboys specialize their expertise, focusing on particular genres or developers. Some play only Squaresoft RPGs—and even dress as Square characters in ritualistic "cosplay," seen here. Others idolize industry personalities. If, say, Hideo Kojima, the master behind *Metal Gear Solid*, touches a particular game, his fanboys will be the first in line to sing its praises, whether it stinks or not.

What kind of fanboy are you?

Test your gaming geektitude

Y = YES N = NO

START HERE

Do you own just one game system?

Y → Do you make loud fart noises with your mouth when a commercial for an "enemy" console comes on TV?

N → Do you love all your systems equally?

N → When people ask you why you love your favorite system, can you give them any reason other than "'Cause it rulez!"?

N → Do you feel giddy inside when you find out that a really cool game has been designated an exclusive for your console?

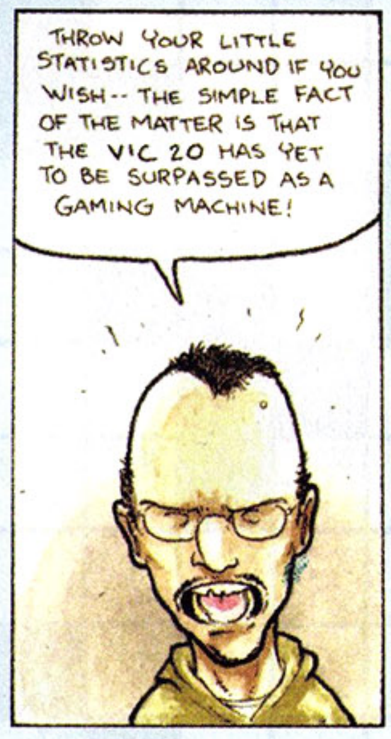
N → Have you ever convinced someone to buy a particular console that he or she was previously dead set against?

Y → Do you memorize every little detail about a most-wanted game months before it hits the stores?

Y → Do you spend more than 10 hours a week posting to gaming message boards online?

N → Do you visit Net message boards devoted to a system you don't own, just so you can declare that system is "teh suck!!1!!1"?

Y → **YOU'RE AN IRRATIONAL FANBOY**



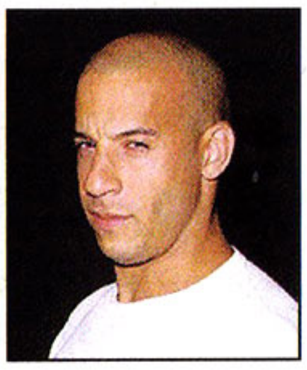
N → Do you go to videogame stores even when you don't have money?

N → Do the clerks know your name?

Y → **YOU'RE A FANBOY MASTER**

N → **YOU'RE AN APPRENTICE FANBOY**

N → **YOU'RE A MERE CIVILIAN**

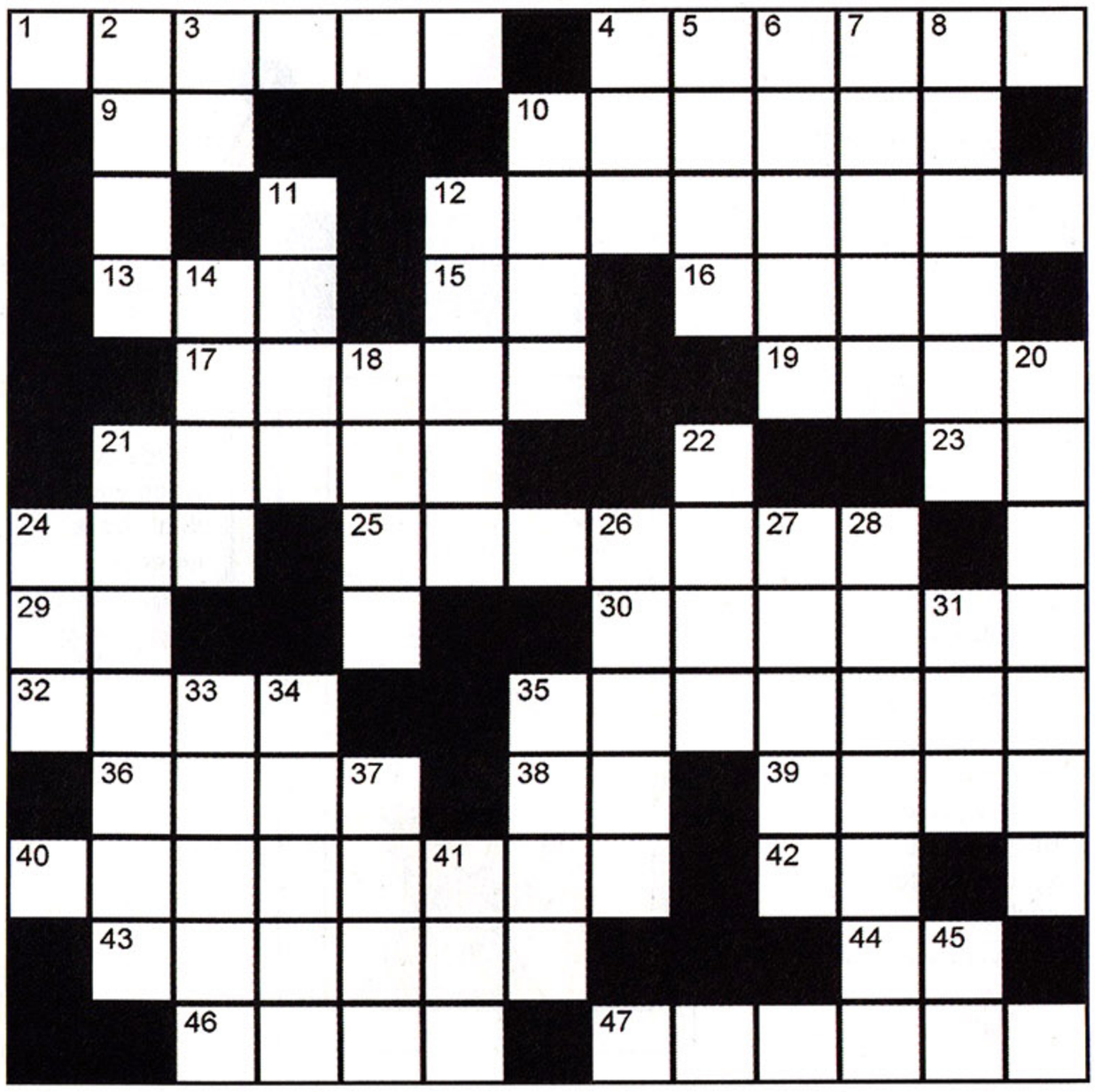


DIESEL GOES GAME DEVELOPER

XXX **star Vin Diesel has (oh no, not...) announced plans to (please, don't let it be true...) start his own game-development house, Tigon Games (noooooo!). The company will release its first title, *Perrone*, sometime in 2003 for an unspecified platform. The project is based on the life of a '70s-era police officer whose extraordinarily volatile dealings with both law enforcement and the Mafia won him media acclaim. According to Diesel, "When you seen the Tigon label on the box, you'll know it's off tha hook!"**

Sim-Sation

(Solution on page 167)



ACROSS

1. Precocious *Super Mario Bros. 2* baddie
4. *The Sims* Motive/vital stat
9. GameCube's *Capcom vs. SNK*
10. *Burgertime* ('80s arcade) beefy baddie
12. *The Sims:* ___ (PC expansion)
13. Acclaim's *XXX* X-treme sport
15. Super Nintendo's *Castlevania*
16. Sister to a *Crazy Taxi 3* knock-off Nevada city
17. The "O" in the PS1's *N2O*
19. *Vice City*'s Tommy doesn't need to do this to get into parties
21. *Dragon Warrior* perennial foe
23. *GTA: Vice City* property, __ Swanko Casa
24. Drink of choice in most RPG taverns
25. One of Kain's *Blood Omen II* dark gifts
29. *San Francisco Rush* setting (abbrv.)
30. *SSX* sequel
32. Gives mature games an M
35. Inventor of the spinning pile-driver
36. PC-to-PS2 port _*-Life*
38. Refers to *The Thing*?
39. Lets you access game options
40. Name of PS2 *The Sims'* finite main game
42. __*ticipation* (NES)
43. Potential *Gauntlet* persona
44. PS1 media format
46. Pokémon #86
47. If you're an *EGM* reader, you're one of this group

DOWN

2. Heals RPG wounds
3. Half of your weapon in *Goonies II* (NES)
4. Shoe's *EGM* title (abbrv.)
5. Like the ocean to Vice City
6. Confirmation key on a keyboard
7. *Circus Maximus* (Xbox) horse controls
8. Ps1 dancing game has you bust one
10. Nintendo's *-race* or -bird
11. 1,021, in numbers *Eternal Darkness'* Pious Augustus could understand
12. Yellow-cable signal from a composite A/V cable
14. Monty of *Super Mario World* (SNES, GBA)
18. *Final Fantasy* (NES) introductory enemies
20. *The Sims* character trait opposite of shy
21. Partner of a hacker in action games
22. Decorative plant seen at the end of *Double Dragon* (NES)
24. *Dragon's Lair* follow-up *Space* _
26. 29 Across, for one
27. *Mega Man X* nemesis
28. *Dr. Muto*'s (PS2) field of study
31. *Street Fighter*'s Masters
33. What 32 Across does to games
34. PS1 vampire-killer
37. Run, in a turn-based RPG
41. Like Kid, for part of *Chrono Cross* (PS1)
45. *Mega Man*'s Wily or Light (abbrv.)

13 Gaming Resolutions for 2K3

Illustration: Jermey "Norm" Scott

Last year, your New Year's resolution was, "Spend more time outside." And here it is, the dawn of 2003, and looking back, you spent more time slaughtering the virtual citizens of Liberty/Vice City than dancing with wolves. So, instead of that "good for you" resolution, here are a few you might consider that'll be more beneficial to your gaming life. You'll also feel much less guilty if you let 'em slip.

- **Stop playing Time-Life operator with *SOCOM*/Xbox Live headsets**
- **Convince Acclaim to make *Mary Kate & Ashley's XXX***
- **Move out of *Jurassic Park* arcade cabinet at the mall**
- **Save precious health potions for later use**
- **Write more nasty letters to my *Animal Crossing* friends**
- **Stop running over innocent beachgoers in Vice City**
- **Beat old *Adventures of Lolo 2* NES game tape, so you can finally move on to *Adventures of Lolo 3***
- **Finish doctoral thesis on *Metal Gear Solid 2*'s ending**
- **Lose some weight playing *Dance Dance Revolution: DDR Max***
- **Gain it back by playing nothing but *The Legend of Zelda* (GC) for a few weeks**
- **Stop snickering whenever somebody says "Kok-toe Chojin"**
- **Start metal band called *Steel Battalion***
- **Invent a new drinking game that revolves around *NFL Blitz***

Overheard

"Nintendo is in the software business—to stay. Nintendo is in the handheld business—to stay. And Nintendo is most certainly in the home console business—to stay. Work is well under way on the successor technology to both Game Boy Advance and Nintendo GameCube."

—Nintendo Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing Peter MacDougall squashes rumors of Nintendo leaving the hardware business in a speech to investment analysts

---

"I also decided not to include any of the [e-mails] trying to make a serious comparison between Rare's acquisition and the September 11th terrorist attack...."

—An employee at Rare, in a response on the company's website (www.rareware.com) to angry fans' letters about the developer leaving Nintendo and being acquired by Microsoft

ENTER THE MATRIX™

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY LARRY AND ANDY WACHOWSKI

5/15/03

Enter The Matrix © 2002 Infogrames, Inc. under license from Warner Bros. All rights reserved. The Atari trademark and logo are the property of Infogrames. Windows is either a registered trademark or trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Manufactured and marketed by Infogrames, Inc. New York, NY. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Nintendo, Nintendo GameCube and the Official Seal are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. All Rights Reserved.

MATRIX, ENTER THE MATRIX, characters, names and all related indicia are trademarks of and © Warner Bros.
WBIE LOGO: TM & © Warner Bros.
(s02)

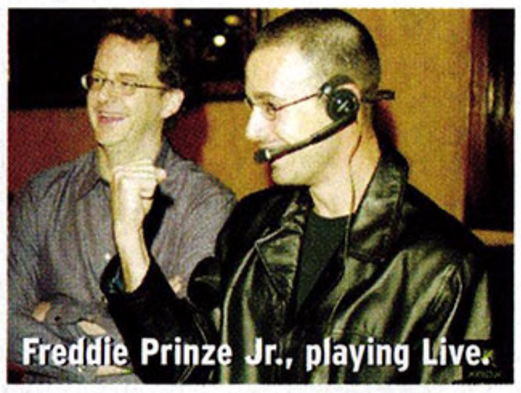
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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

PlayStation.2

ATARI

PRESS START


Freddie Prinze Jr., playing Live.

MS THROWS LIVE PARTY

Microsoft recently threw a party to celebrate the launch of Xbox Live and made sure celebrities were on hand at the Hollywood gala: Samuel L. Jackson, Shannon Elizabeth, and virtually the entire cast of *That '70s Show* were among those representing their love for (free) videogames. Rumors that an inebriated Fred Savage broke his wrist trying to woo Ms. Elizabeth with his *MechAssault* strafing proficiency are intriguing but, thus far, wholly unsubstantiated.

Quartermann — Game Gossip & Speculation

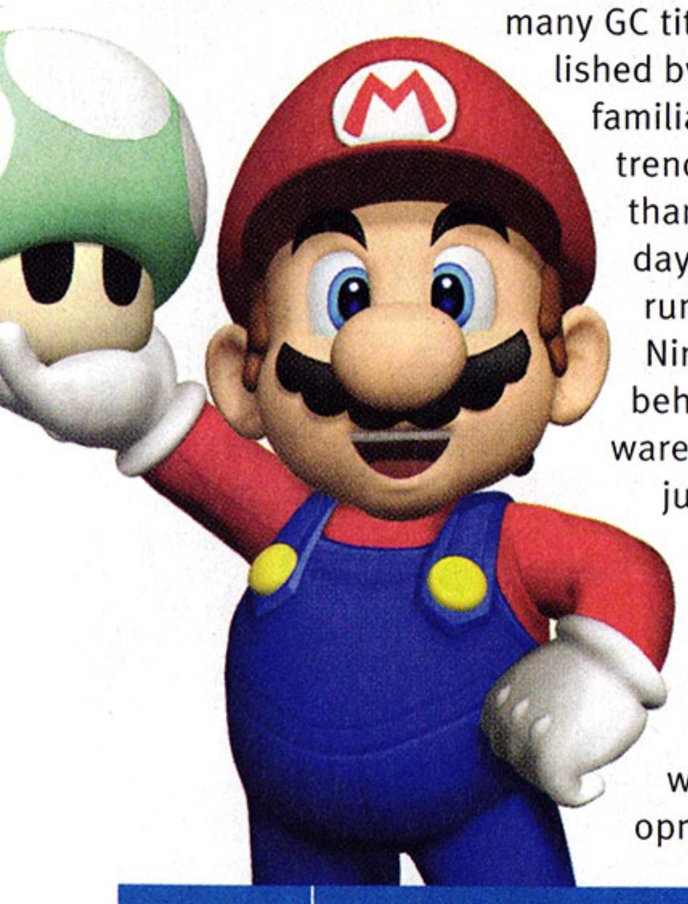
Hi-diddle-dee, Q-fans. Welcome to the first official Quartermann page o' gossip of the New Year. Gamers like you and me already have lots to look forward to this year, and it's only just begun.

Visual Concepts to Go 989

Rumor has it that **Visual Concepts**, purveyors of all sports Sega and *2Kwhatever*, is headed to the **House of PlayStation**—possibly for good. Yours truly has caught wind that Sony is looking to recruit the developer to take over its ailing 989 Sports brand, which has earned a bad reputation among the biggest sports faction: pigskin players. Couple that with Sega's recent announcement that its sports games didn't perform as well this past year as predicted and Sega of Japan's alleged desire to dump the dev house off at the next stop, and you've got a volatile li'l piece of gossip. Whatever the case, let's hope that VC's sports games start getting the street cred The Q believes they rightfully deserve....

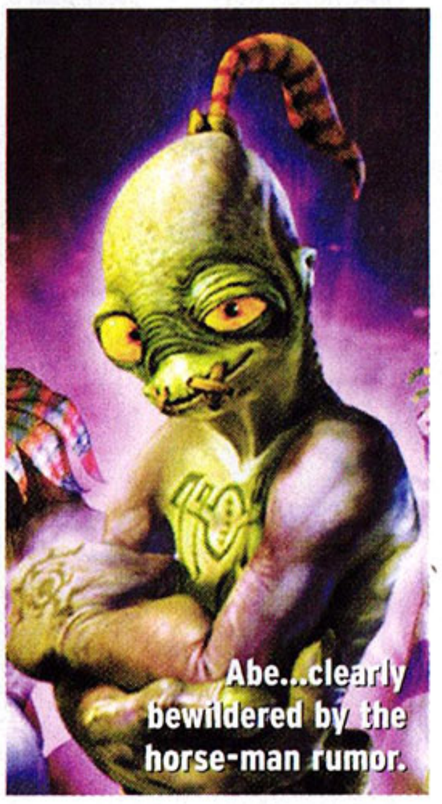
GameCube to End Up Like Nintendo 64

If you're a Nintendo fan, take heart: GameCube will still be the place to get your N-fix, at least for a bit longer. But the buzz around the industry indicates that many publishers with planned GameCube support into 2003 have begun **systematically canceling titles** on the square system, in favor of Xbox and PS2 versions. Why, you ask? Because Cube owners are only buying the biggest titles, leaving the rest to languish on shelves. (Before you complain, ask yourself how many GC titles you've bought that *aren't* published by Nintendo.) All this should sound familiar to most N-loyalists: A similar trend happened (although much faster than with GC) back in the Nintendo 64 days.... This comes on the heels of rumors (and that's all they are) that Nintendo will leave the hardware behind and reap the profits on its software for other platforms. Either way, just enjoy GC games while you can....



Details on Next Oddworld

The third part of the **Oddworld quintology** (*Abe's Exoddus* on PS1 was merely a side story) is in development for **Xbox**. Details are scant, but The Q-meister has dug up some startling facts about this next installment, which occurs after the events in *Munch's Oddysee*. Brace yourself, because it's a little...well, weird. Apparently, it involves a half-monkey, half-horse, centaurish main character who's got a psychic connection to (get ready for it...) his boat. Yes, I said boat. Your job is to transport some "things" down a river in said boat. The **monkey-horse man and his talking-thinking sentient boat** have a gameplay relationship similar to Ico's (from Sony's *Ico*) relationship with the mute princess Yorda. (Or is it more of a Kitt/Michael Knight relationship? Hmmm....) In fact, The Q hears that *Oddworld*'s brainchild, Lorne Lanning, found the inspiration for this new direction from *Ico*.


Abe...clearly bewildered by the horse-man rumor.

New 3D Splatterhouse?

The Q's spies indicate that **Namco** is considering bringing back its ***Splatterhouse*** series of side-scrolling hack-em-ups for a 3D installment. Seems that Jason Vorhees-lookalike and main character Rick just can't move into a house without zombies knockin' at the door....

The Hot Q: Square and MMORPGs

Square's first online RPG, *Final Fantasy XI*, isn't burning up the charts in Japan, but it is getting closer to Square's magic break-even number. And now that its first experiment is almost a success (with a U.S. release of *FFXI* finally in the cards, too, which might show up later in 2003), the company has its sights set on doing a second massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG). But it's not a sequel to *FFXI*—it's a completely new, non-*FF* game. The first details should begin arriving in a few months.

And that's all for our visit this month, friends. Now, it's back to kicking innocent gamers' asses on Xbox Live (damn, I love online games!). If you feel like dropping me a line, send e-mail to quartermann@ziffdavis.com. Later, folks!

—The Q

Bits of Q

Dragon Warrior VIII

Inu Yasha

■ **Hardcore RPG freaks, start gettin' excited. Enix's *Dragon Warrior VIII* is coming to PS2. But don't get *too* excited just yet. Japan may not even see it in 2003, considering the rate at which *DW* games get delayed there.**

■ **And, speaking of news for the hardest of core, you can go ahead and buy the import now if you were waiting: Treasure's arcade-style, vertical-scrolling shooter *Ikaruga* is not coming to the United States (blame the unpopularity of third-party GC games and the shooter genre for that one).**

■ **U.S. anime fans will want to keep an eye out for an *Inu Yasha* PS1 fighting game, coming to the states in March from Bandai.**

PlayStation®

Space. The final boarding park.

Disney's TREASURE PLANET

Ride through portals into other universes and catch air a million miles up as you shred your way through an intergalactic treasure hunt in Disney's Treasure Planet for PlayStation. Based on the Walt Disney Pictures film *Treasure Planet*, in theatres now.

Disney INTERACTIVE

EVERYONE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Violence

PlayStation®

www.playstation.com

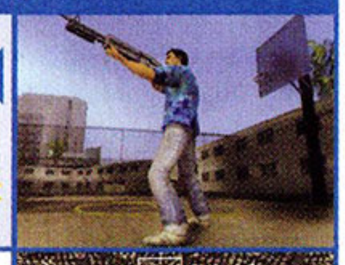
©Disney. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

PRESS START

Charts - October 2002

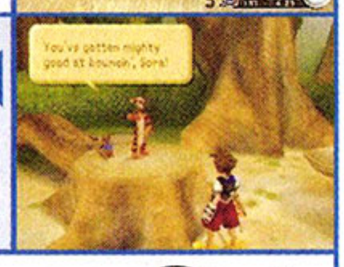
TOP 20 BEST-SELLING GAMES

1 Grand Theft Auto: Vice City — NEW!
Rockstar
10 Che | 10 Greg S | 10 Milkman
PS2 | EGM Platinum



2 NBA Live 2003 — NEW!
EA Sports
8.0 Dan L | 7.5 Todd | 9.0 Milkman
PS2 | EGM Silver

3 Kingdom Hearts
Square Electronic Arts
8.5 Greg S | 8.5 Milkman | 8.5 Shane
PS2 | EGM Silver



4 Madden NFL 2003
EA Sports
PS2 | EGM Gold

5 Hitman 2: Silent Assassin — NEW!
Eidos
PS2 | EGM Gold

6 Yu-Gi-Oh! The Eternal Duelist Soul — NEW!
Konami
Game Boy Advance

7 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4 — NEW!
Activision 02
PS2 | EGM Gold

8 Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers — NEW!
EA Games
PS2 | EGM Silver

9 Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2 — NEW!
EA Games
PS2 | EGM Gold

10 Tekken 4
Namco
PS2

11 Super Mario Advance 3
Nintendo
Game Boy Advance | EGM Gold

12 Hitman 2: Silent Assassin — NEW!
Eidos
Xbox | EGM Gold

13 NBA 2K3 — NEW!
Sega Sports
PS2 | EGM Gold

14 Mario Party 4 — NEW!
Nintendo
GameCube | EGM Silver

15 Yu-Gi-Oh! Forbidden Memories
Konami
PS1

16 Yu-Gi-Oh! Dark Duel Stories
Konami
Game Boy Color

17 NHL 2003 — NEW!
EA Sports
PS2

18 Star Fox Adventures
Nintendo
GameCube

19 Red Faction II — NEW!
THQ
PS2

20 TimeSplitters 2 — NEW!
Eidos
PS2 | EGM Silver

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service. Call Kristin Barnett-von Korff at (516) 625-2481 for questions regarding this list.

TOP 10 RENTALS

BLOCKBUSTER

1 Need for Speed: Hot Pursuit 2
EA Games
PS2

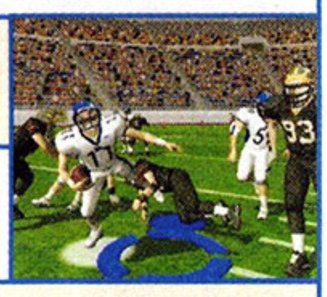
2 Madden NFL 2003
EA Sports
PS2

3 Conflict: Desert Storm
Gotham Games
PS2

4 SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs
Sony CEA
PS2

5 Star Fox Adventures
Nintendo
GameCube

6 NBA Live 2003
EA Sports
PS2



7 NCAA Football 2003
EA Sports
PS2

8 Kingdom Hearts
Square Electronic Arts
PS2

9 Medal of Honor: Frontline
EA Games
PS2

10 Conflict: Desert Storm
Gotham Games
Xbox

Source: Blockbuster Video, October 2002

TOP 10 BEST-SELLING GAMES IN JAPAN

1 Torneko's Great Adv. 3
Enix
PS2

2 One Piece: Treasure Battle
Bandai
GameCube

3 Kirby
Nintendo
Game Boy Advance

4 Final Fantasy II
Square
PS1

5 Final Fantasy
Square
PS1

6 Ultraman Fighting Evolution 2
Bandai
PS2

7 FF I/II Premium Pack
Square
PS1

8 Tales: Narikiri Dungeon 2
Namco
Game Boy Advance

9 Medal of Honor: Frontline
Electronic Arts Square
PS2

10 Gundam Wing
Bandai
PS1

Source: Weekly Famitsu, *week ending 11/3/02*

A couple of shockers on the Japanese chart this issue. First, *four* PS1 games are in the Top 10. Granted, three are *Final Fantasy* remakes, but it's still an amazing number considering the system's all but dead. Second, *Medal of Honor: Frontline*, a U.S.-developed game, has appeared on the *Japanese* Top 10. How often does that happen? Uh, let's see...never.

Final Fantasy

LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.™

Solar surfing. Beware of the locals.

Disney's TREASURE PLANET

Space pirates. Alien robots. Not the kind of guys you want to drop in on while solar surfing the new frontier. Set sail on an intergalactic treasure hunt on Treasure Planet. Also available on PlayStation. Based on the Walt Disney Pictures film *Treasure Planet*, in theatres now.

Disney INTERACTIVE

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Violence

PlayStation.2

www.playstation.com

© Disney. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.
"Live In Your World. Play In Ours." is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

PRESS START

Coming Soon

January

Armada 2: Star Command (Shooting)	PS2, Xbox
Battle Engine Aquila (Shooting)	PS2, Xbox
Black & Bruised (Boxing)	PS2, GC
Dark Cloud 2 (RPG)	PS2
DOA Xtreme Beach Volleyball (Sports)	Xbox
Devil May Cry 2 (Action)	PS2
Digimon: Battle Spirit (RPG)	GBA
Disney Sports: Basketball (Sports)	GC
Dynasty Warriors 3: Xtreme Legends (Action)	PS2
Everblue 2 (Action/Adventure)	PS2
Galerians: Ash (Adventure)	PS2
The Getaway (Action)	PS2
GT Advance 3: Pro Concept Racing (Racing)	GBA
Guilty Gear X2: The Midnight Carnival (Fighting)	PS2
.hack Vol. 1 (RPG)	PS2
Haven: Call of the King (Action)	GC, Xbox
HSX: Hypersonic Xtreme (Racing)	PS2
Indiana Jones: Emp. Tomb (Adventure)	PS2, Xbox
Kung-Fu Chaos (Action)	Xbox
Malice (Action)	PS2, Xbox
Panzer Dragoon Orta (Shooting)	Xbox
Primal (Adventure)	PS2
Resident Evil 2 (Adventure)	GC
Resident Evil 3 (Adventure)	GC
The Sims (Sim, duh)	PS2
Skies of Arcadia Legends (RPG)	GC
Summoner: The Prophecy (RPG)	GC
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon (Action)	GC
War of the Monsters (Fighting)	PS2
Worms Blast (Strategy)	PS2, GBA

February

1080 Avalanche (Sports)	GC
BattleBots (Action)	PS2, GC
Colin McRae Rally 3 (Racing)	PS2, Xbox
Conflict: Desert Storm (Action)	GC
Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge (Flight)	Xbox
Disaster Report (Action)	PS2
Disney Sports: Snowboarding (Sports)	GBA
Dungeons and Dragons: Heroes (Action)	PS2
EverQuest Online Adventures (RPG)	PS2
Evolution Snowboarding (Sports)	GC
Lufia: The Ruins of Lore (RPG)	GBA
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter (Action)	PS2, GC, Xbox
Marvel vs. Capcom 2 (Fighting)	Xbox
Mega Man & Bass (Action)	GBA

Midnight Club II (Racing)	PS2, Xbox
Midtown Madness 3 (Racing)	Xbox
Murakumo: Mech Hunter (Action)	Xbox
Pride FC: Fighting Championships (Fighting)	PS2
Pro Race Driver (Racing)	Xbox
State of Emergency (Action)	Xbox
Super Puzzle Fighter 2 Turbo (Puzzle)	GBA
Vexx (Action)	PS2, GC, Xbox
Yu-Gi-Oh! Dungeon Dice Monsters (RPG)	GBA

March

Aero Elite: Combat Academy (Flight)	PS2
Apex (Racing)	PS2, Xbox
Auto Modellista (Racing)	PS2
Batman: Dark Tomorrow (Action)	PS2, GC, Xbox
Breath of Fire: Dragon Quarter (RPG)	PS2
Clock Tower 3 (Adventure)	PS2
Enclave (Action)	GC
Jet Grind Radio (Action)	GBA
Legend of Zelda, The (Action/RPG)	GC
Pokémon Ruby (RPG)	GBA
Pokémon Sapphire (RPG)	GBA
Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc (Action)	PS2, GC, Xbox
Red Faction II (Action)	GC
Return to Castle Wolfenstein (Action)	PS2, Xbox
RPG Maker 2 (RPG...maker)	PS2
Space Channel 5: Ulala's Cosmic Attack (Action)	GBA
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic (RPG)	Xbox
Tao Feng (Fighting)	Xbox
Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven (Action)	PS2
Tomb Raider: The Angel of Darkness (Adventure)	PS2
Wheel of Fortune 2003 (Misc.)	PS2
World Series Baseball 2K3 (Sports)	PS2, GC, Xbox
WWE Crush Hour (Action)	GC
WWE Raw 2 (Wrestling)	Xbox
Xenosaga: Episode I (RPG)	PS2

IMPORT CALENDAR

Mr. Driller Drill Land

Import Pick of the Month: Mr. Driller makes his GameCube debut in Namco's latest take on their ever-popular series of puzzlers: *Mr. Driller Drill Land*. This time, the action takes place in a giant theme park with a host of special attractions. Each one offers up a variation on the main *Driller* theme, and you can use the points you earn to purchase special items and power-ups at the park's shopping mall. Best of all, *Drill Land* features a four-player Battle mode as well as connectivity features when linked with the import-only *Mr. Driller Ace* for GBA.

PlayStation 2

12/26 ***Kingdom Hearts Final Mix,*** Square (Action-RPG)
1/30 ***Devil May Cry 2,*** Capcom (Action)
Jan. ***Armored Core 3: Silent Line,*** From Software (Action)
2/13 ***Anubis: Zone of the Enders,*** Konami (Action)
Feb. ***Highway Battle,*** Genki (Racing)
Feb. ***Sakura Taisen,*** Sega (Simulation)
Feb. ***Venus & Braves,*** Namco (RPG)

Game Boy Advance

12/20 ***Elevator Action Old & New,*** MediaKite (Action)
Dec. ***Darius R,*** PCCW (Shooting)
1/1 ***The King of Fighters EX 2,*** Marvelous (Fighting)
2/14 ***Final Fantasy Tactics Advance,*** Square (RPG)

GameCube

12/20 ***Mr. Driller Drill Land,*** Namco (Puzzle)
12/26 ***Eternal Arcadia Legends,*** Sega (RPG)
1/16 ***Ikaruga,*** Infogrames (Shooting)
1/30 ***Winning Eleven 6 Final Evolution,*** Konami (Sports)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import-game store for the latest release info. It's a secret to everyone.

WNW POLL: WHY CLONE WHEN YOU CAN MORPH?

WORLD NEWS WATCH

WWW.MIDWAY.COM NOVEMBER 2002

Dr. Muto Revealed!

Meet The Man Behind The Morph

www.drmuto.midway.com

Burnitall Enterprises

Stock Soars On New World-Domination Franchise

War Over The Worlds

Evil Genuises Who Want To Rule It All

$1.79/CANADA $2.15

51

0 86441 18256 7

MAD SCIENCE WATCH

The Doctor Is In

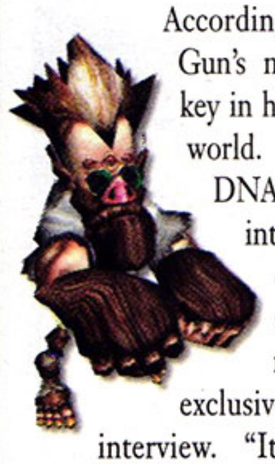
screenshots from PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system

Are You A Man Or A Mouse?

Morph into six strange creatures from a gorilla to a spider using Dr. Muto's amazing Splizz Gun

Use a wide variety of gadgets only a mad scientist could invent such as Rocket Boots and the Super Baller

Dr. Muto, the genius mad scientist whose latest experiment accidentally destroyed his home planet, has been the center of a media frenzy with the unveiling of his amazing new "Splizz Gun" technology. Muto's Splizz Gun enables him to mutate and morph with any living organism in order to accomplish tasks no human could achieve alone.

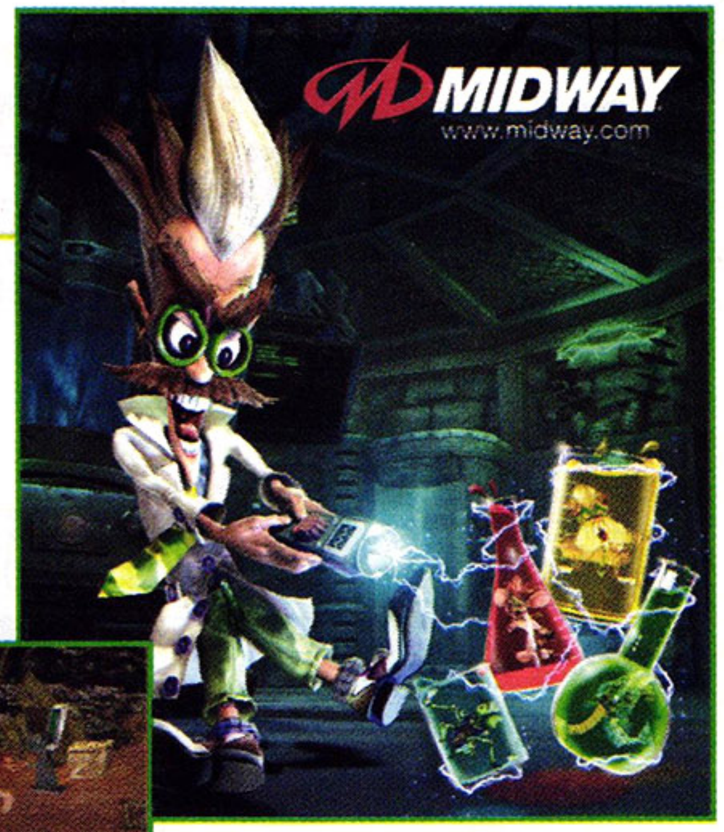


According to Muto, the Splizz Gun's morphing ability will be key in his attempts to rebuild his world. "I simply sample some DNA and 'BANG,' I morph into a mouse, spider, gorilla or any other creature I see fit to become," Muto madly muttered in an exclusive World News Watch interview. "It's not that I am a megalomaniac, I just want to play God."

Muto's technology is receiving so much attention and interest that he will begin selling the Splizz Gun through TV infomercials next month. Also, leading videogame publisher Midway has entered into an exclusive deal with the doctor for the release of an action/adventure videogame based on his bizarre and intriguing life and his Splizz Gun technology. Information about Muto's videogame, simply titled, "Dr. Muto," is revealed on www.drmuto.midway.com, which is a website devoted to Muto's universe of baffling puzzles, mind-bending devices, freakish monstrosities and twisted humor.

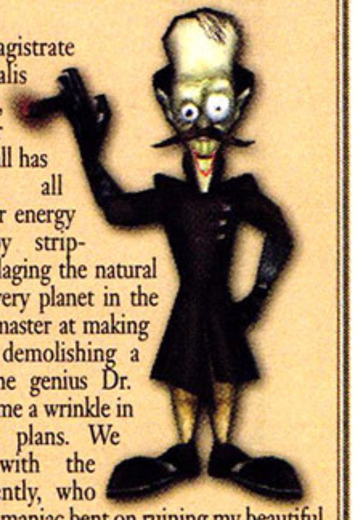
Defend yourself against burly Rent-a-Cops, vicious "Charks," and other henchmen of your rival, Professor Burnitall

Is Dr. Muto the 21st Century's Einstein, or just another madman? Judge for yourself this fall when "Dr. Muto" the videogame releases for next generation videogame platforms.



PROFILE ON...

Professor Burnitall



As energy magistrate of the Centralis solar system, Professor Gunter Burnitall has outperformed all expectations for energy production by strip-mining and pillaging the natural resources of every planet in the system; he's a master at making energy while demolishing a society. But the genius Dr. Muto has become a wrinkle in his expansion plans. We caught up with the professor recently, who told us, "He's a maniac bent on ruining my beautiful energy empire. That ridiculous Dr. Muto believes he can build a planet from scraps of DNA and terra, then steal my energy reserves as the catalysts! PAH!" Burnitall went on to say that Muto is a renegade terrorist and, "My forces will stop at nothing to destroy the horrible little man, no matter WHAT creature he shapes himself into!"

DR. MUTO™

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Comic Mischief
Mild Language
Mild Violence
Suggestive Themes

Fall 2002
PlayStation®2

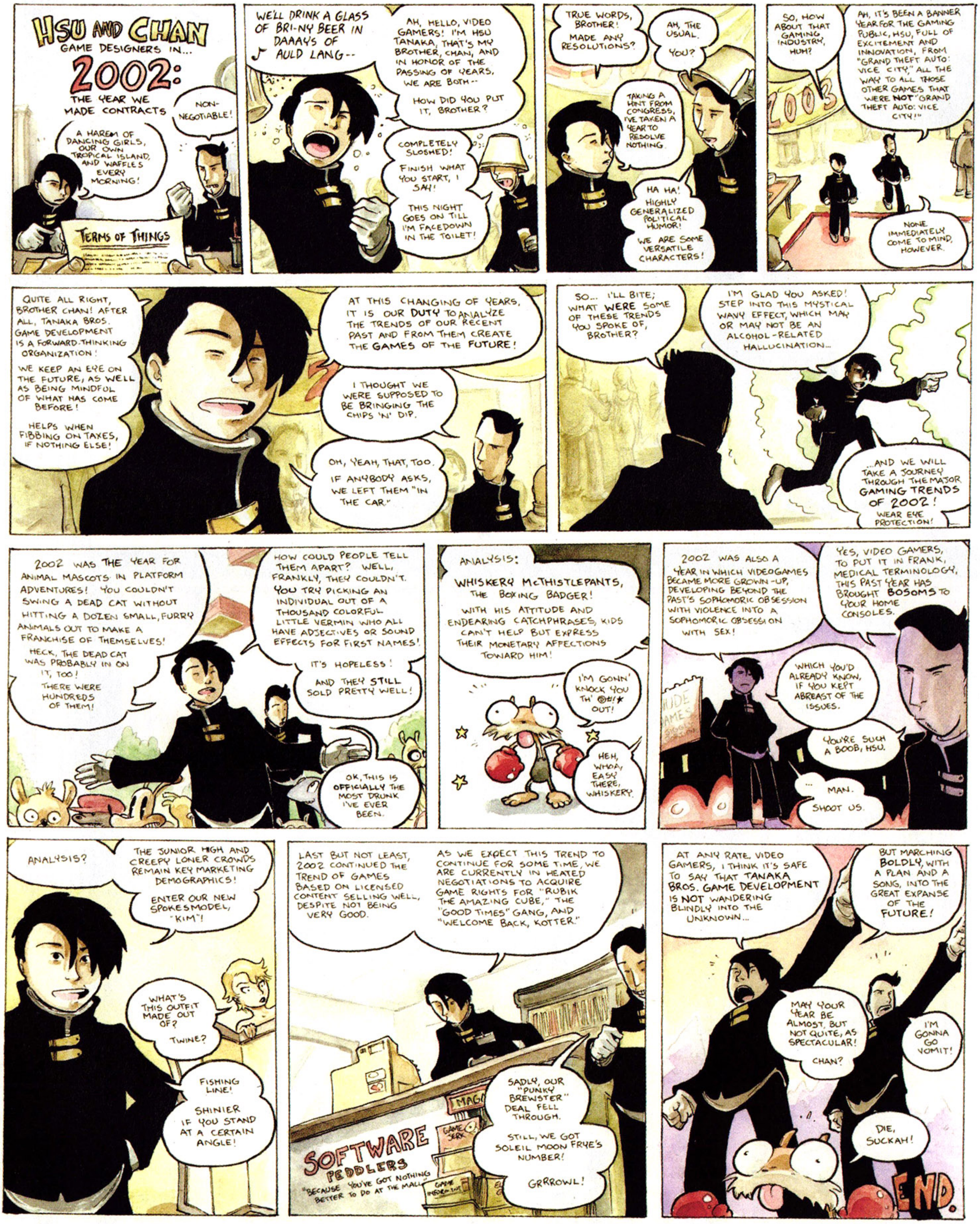
XBOX

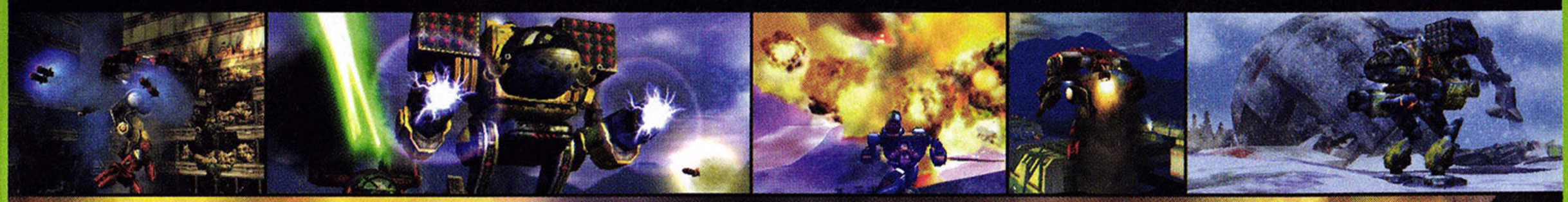
Coming Soon
NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Coming Soon
GAME BOY ADVANCE

Dr. Muto © 2002 Midway Games West Inc. All rights reserved. MIDWAY and the Midway Logo are registered trademarks of Midway Amusement Games, LLC. Used by permission. DR. MUTO is a trademark of Midway Games West Inc. Distributed under license by Midway Home Entertainment Inc. TM, ® Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

HSU AND CHAN'S OFFICIAL WEBSITE — www.ape-law.com/evilmonkey
BUY HSU AND CHAN JUNK! — www.cafeshops.com/hsuandchan
Comics! Comic Books! Merchandise!





GAVE PEACE A CHANCE.

All else has failed. The lines between good and evil have been drawn: There's you and there's everybody else. Your weapon is a 40-foot-tall walking death machine. Your mission is destruction. Tanks, helicopters, buildings, the planet itself. Welcome to war in the 31st century, where peace is one of those things you read about.

MECHASSAULT™

For added destruction play online with **Xbox *Live***. Engage others on a massive scale. Download new 'Mechs, new missions, even enemies. This is epic devastation taken to a whole new level and it's only available on Xbox *Live*.

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violence
Blood

DAY:1:STUDIOS

www.xbox.com
www.mechassault.com

fasa studio

ONLY ON XBOX

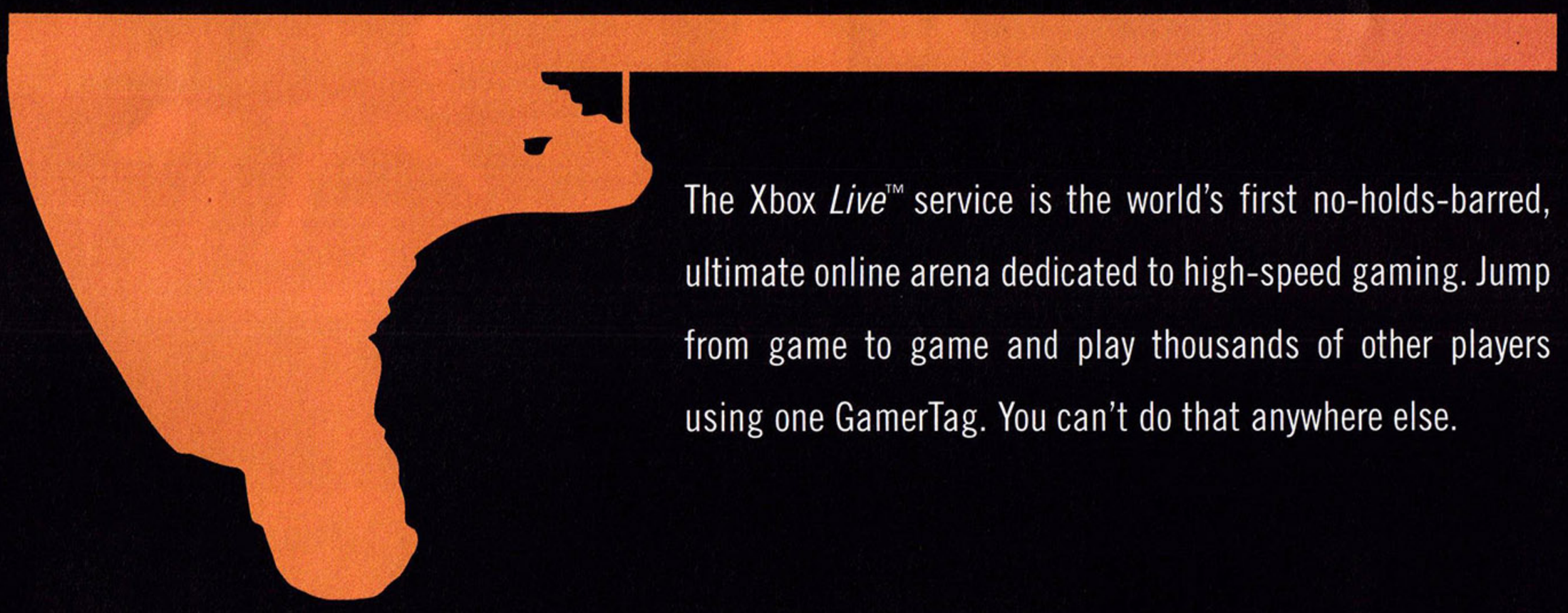
XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED

XBOX™

©2002 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox *Live*, Fasa logo, MechAssault, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Xbox Live subscription sold separately. Portions ©Day 1 Studios. All rights reserved

IN THIS ARENA, WARRIORS ARE CREATED,

BATTLES ARE FORGED, SMACK IS TALKED.



The Xbox *Live*™ service is the world's first no-holds-barred, ultimate online arena dedicated to high-speed gaming. Jump from game to game and play thousands of other players using one GamerTag. You can't do that anywhere else.

XBOX™

† Whacked!™ includes three arenas. MotoGP includes three tracks. Online game play and/or downloadable content not available for all games. Specific game features are called out on the game packaging. Visit your local retailer for more information. ©2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Whacked!™, Xbox, the Xbox logos, and Xbox *Live* are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners. Xbox *Live* subscription sold separately.

YOU AIN'T GONNA RULE THE ULTIMATE ARENA WITH A NAME LIKE BUNNY23

Use your unique GamerTag to build your rep across all games. After all, you'll need it to grow your legend in this arena.

THOSE VOICES IN YOUR HEAD ARE VOICES IN YOUR HEADSET

With the hands-free Xbox Communicator, you can talk trash, call plays, disguise your voice, and even mute the sucker that won't shut up.

IT'S LIKE 50,000 OF YOUR CLOSEST FRIENDS. ONLY THEY ALL WANT TO SCHOOL YOU

Play your old friends and make some new ones.
Just remember to show them who's boss.

USE THE OPTIMATCH™ SYSTEM AND QUICKMATCH TO FIND THE PERFECT OPPONENT

Quickly find the perfect game, with the arena and rules you choose, so you won't waste your time with rookies or get destroyed by grizzled veterans.

DOWNLOAD NEW CONTENT, SO THE GAME NEVER ENDS

Get different weapons, new characters, additional levels, and more with downloadable content that will extend your game like never before.

GET YOUR STARTER KIT FOR JUST $49.99* AND ARM YOURSELF FOR ENTRY.

$49.99*

$49.99* INCLUDES:

1 YEAR OF XBOX *LIVE* SERVICE

XBOX COMMUNICATOR HEADSET

WHACKED!™ AND MotoGP ONLINE DEMO GAMES†

FOR THE ULTIMATE ONLINE ARENA, THERE'S NO POWER GREATER THAN X.

PRODUCTS RANGE FROM EVERYONE TO MATURE
E-M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

XBOX LIVE

www.xbox.com/live

*Estimated retail price. Actual retail prices may vary.

remember anti-malarial next time

DENGUE BAD!

River Good. Den

MAY 2002

Went this route because it's with Sven's website (BRAZIL) Call after 8 Rio +55-12-662-6

They call this → "DEVIL'S THORN" The devils caught me a few times.

INSANE entire city destroyed & flooded, So I pulled a Tsunami off the Last jump. Finished 3rd W/PR 3:55:42

Stay LEFT OF FINAL FORK

HUGE AIR OFF SLICSTREAM HYDRO DAM

Thank you

Hit the first Jump - and was UNSTOPPABLE FROM THERE (WATCH OUT FOR CAR)

TRYING TO DO A BAR HOP

Thank them @ Sula@niogate.co.br

Sulaimani Family

(Sara) 011-254-3-444-3344

Will pick up from airport between 9am & NOON (Lives North of dd pier At South end (Blue House with porch)

LAUNCHED SPINE - Splitter OFF GLACIER

Put ON A CLINIC - 1st AGAIN

www.playstation.com Jet X2O is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Designed and developed by Killer Game. ©2002 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are

MISSING PAGE

MISSING PAGE

MISSING PAGE

MISSING PAGE

Previews

This Month in Previews

PlayStation 2

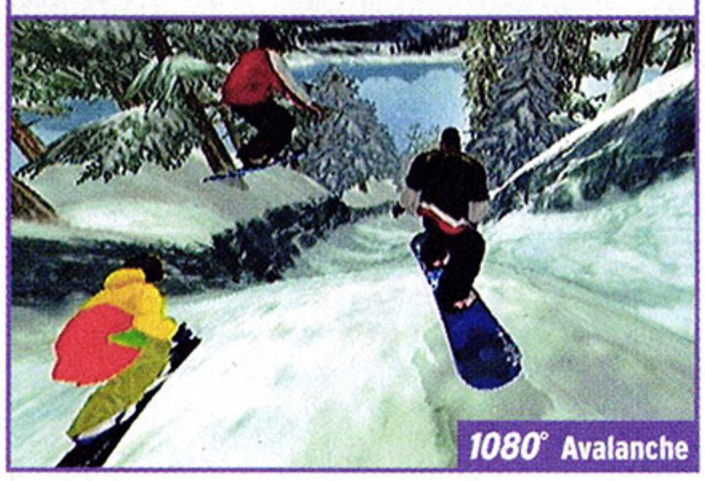
76-78 Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven
80-82 Midnight Club II
84, 86 Def Jam: Vendetta

Def Jam: Vendetta

88, 90 The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers
92 Xenosaga: Episode I
94 Dark Cloud 2
96 Devil May Cry 2

GameCube

98 F-Zero GC
99 1080° Avalanche



1080° Avalanche

Xbox

102 Star Wars Knights of the Old Republic

Star Wars Knights of the Old Republic

103 Apex, Tao Feng
104 Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb

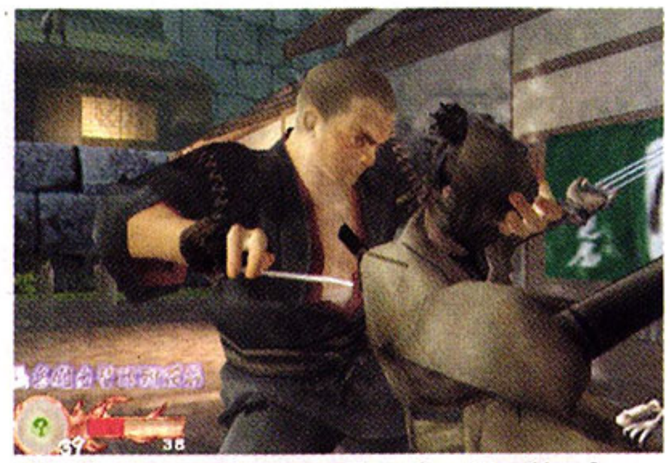
WARNING: Previews marked with international symbols may or may not be released in the United States. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

I hate it when people say, "the real winners are the gamers," or "this is the best time to be a gamer," or any other overused cliché about what a great time it is to be into videogames.

But I have to admit that lately, it's true. These past few months have been incredible. It's kind of ironic, actually. Just over a year ago, we were reveling in the release of GameCube and Xbox, not to mention games like *Metal Gear Solid 2*, *Grand Theft Auto III*, and *Halo*. We actually couldn't imagine a holiday season that would top 2001. Yet, here we are, fondly remembering the end of 2002 as the best time to be a gamer.

Just think about it. Have you been able to keep up with the sheer number of titles you want to play lately? Even Game Boy Advance is enjoying a quality-game overload with titles like *Zelda*, *Metroid Fusion*, and *Kirby*. *EGM* staffers are the type of people who spend way too much money on this stuff, and even *we* can't possibly afford—or have time to play—all the incredible products released in the final quarter of last year.

So, it's almost a blessing in disguise that the flow of awesome games is finally slowing as we head into 2003. You'll still find the odd hit on all three systems (*Panzer Dragoon Orta* on Xbox, *The Legend of Zelda* on GameCube, and *Devil May Cry 2* on PlayStation 2), but as you can see from the games in this month's previews section, the really heavy hitters remain a few months away.



We slice open the new *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven* (PS2) for the first time on page 76.

Why's it a blessing? Well, if you're anything like me, you've got a stack of games sitting by your television that have yet to be played (heck, some have yet to be opened). I'm looking forward to having some time to get through them.

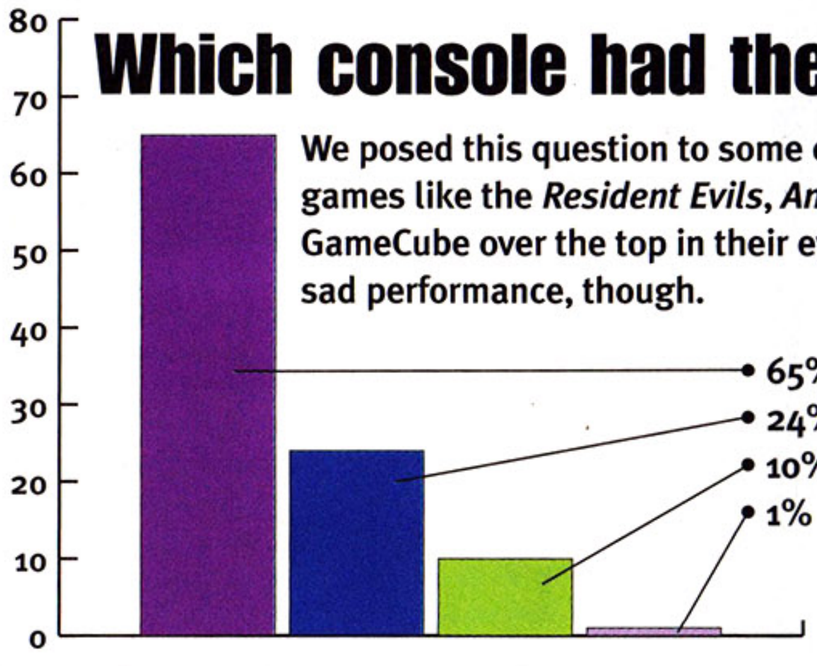
Oh, and I'm sure you've all got opinions about the best and brightest titles of 2002. Don't forget to hit *Gamers.com* sometime before January 10 to vote for your favorite games of the year. The ballots will be counted and winners revealed in *EGM*'s April issue, along with our editors' picks. Now, if you'll excuse me, there's a stack of games here with my name on it.

—Previews Editor Greg Sewart

TOP 5 Preview Picks

1.	Def Jam: Vendetta	PS2, March 2003
2.	F-Zero GC	GC, 2003
3.	Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven	PS2, March 2003
4.	Devil May Cry 2	PS2, January 2003
5.	Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic	Xbox, Spring 2003

Which console had the best games in 2002?



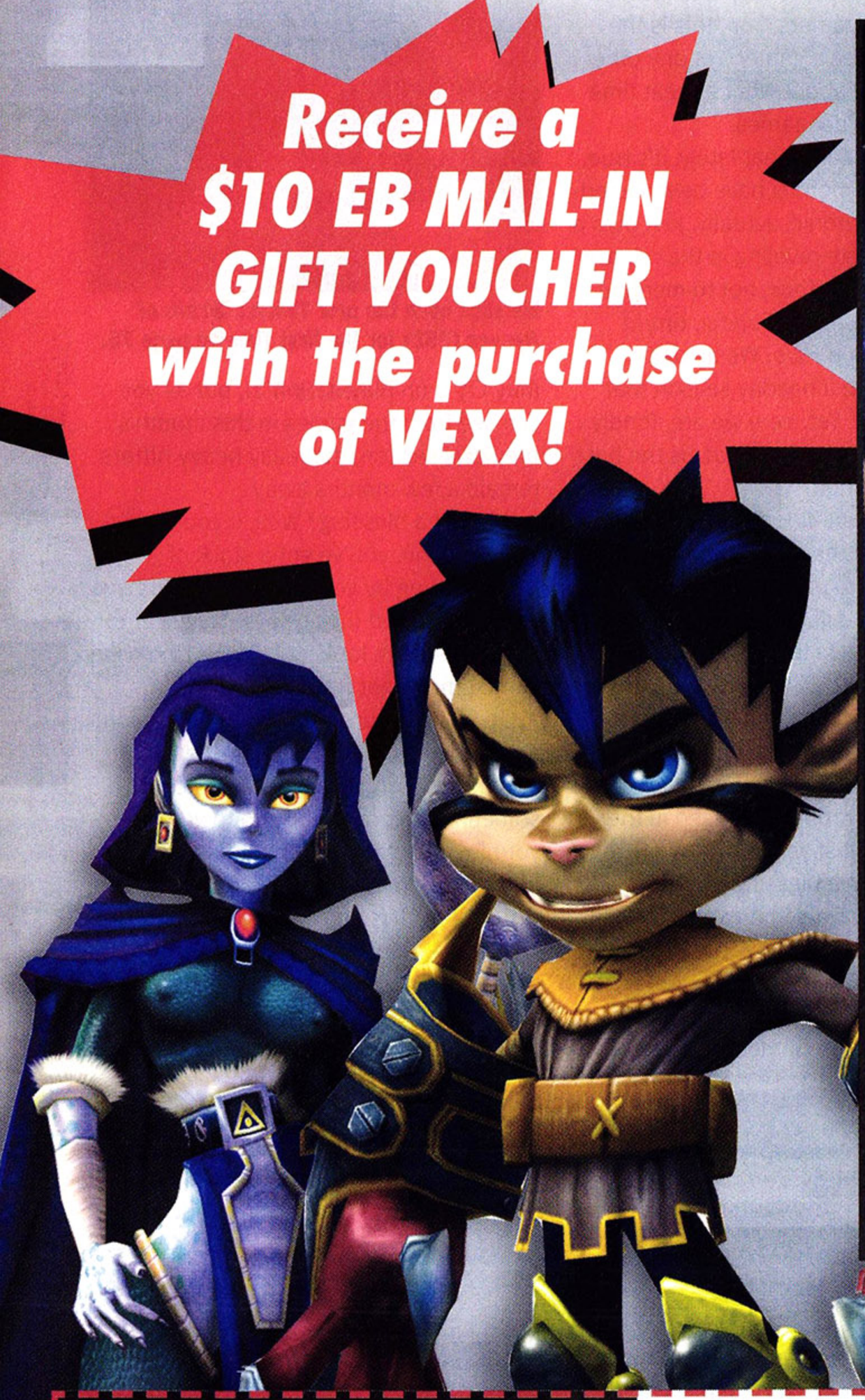
We posed this question to some of our favorite web surfers and found out that games like the *Resident Evils*, *Animal Crossing* and *Metroid Prime* put the GameCube over the top in their eyes. We were a bit surprised about the GBA's sad performance, though.

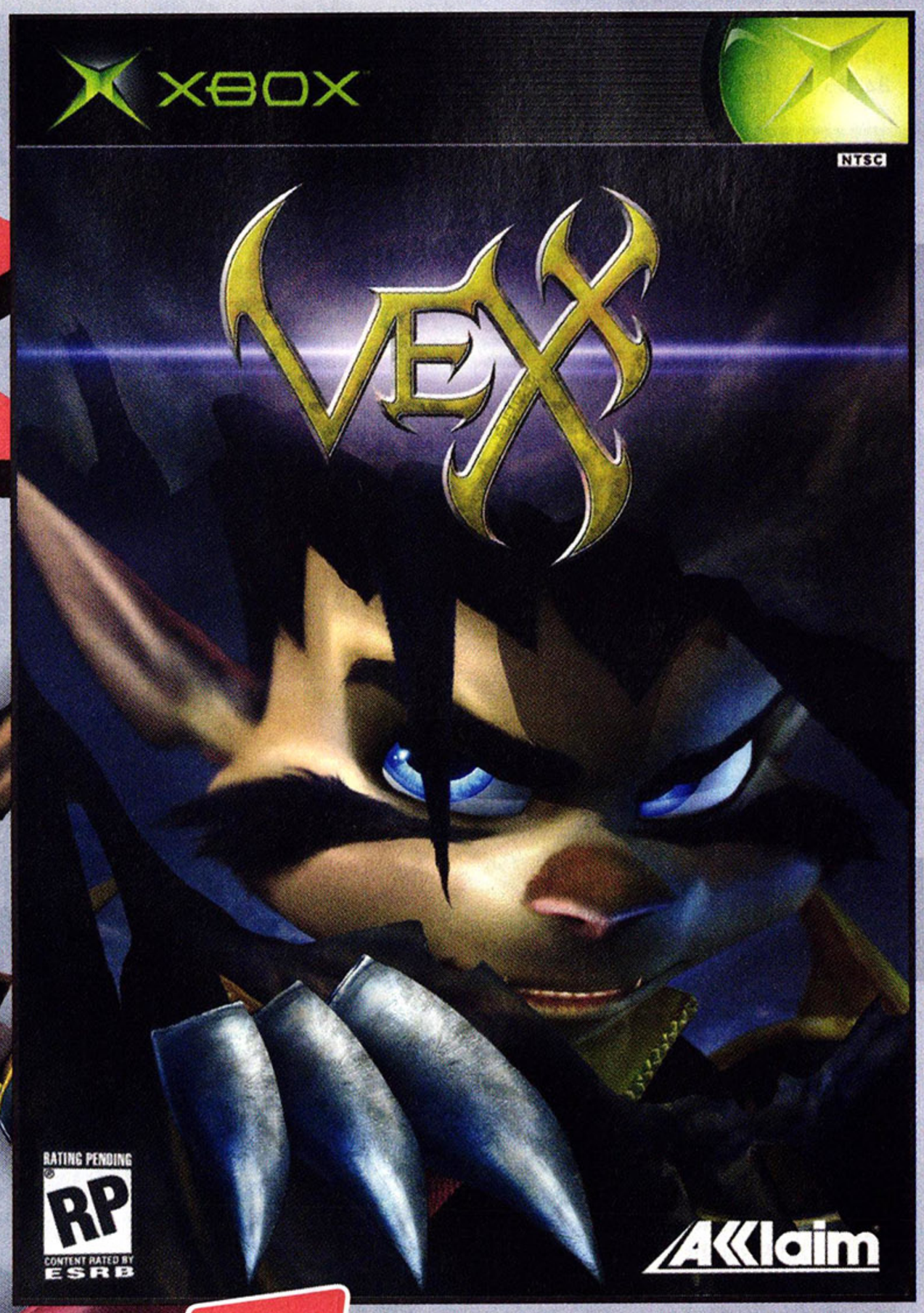
- 65% - GameCube
- 24% - PlayStation 2
- 10% - Xbox
- 1% - Game Boy Advance

(Source: Gamers.com poll, 11/02)

EB GAMES™
electronics boutique®

Receive a $10 EB MAIL-IN GIFT VOUCHER with the purchase of VEXX!





$49.99

VEXX
#224347-5 • XBOX
ACCLAIM

ALSO AVAILABLE:

PLAYSTATION 2	#216816-9	**$49.99**
NINTENDO GAMECUBE	#216485-3	**$49.99**

$10 EB Mail-in Gift Voucher with purchase of Vexx. Fill out and mail this completed coupon plus your original sales receipt to:

REBATE / EB CATALOG CO., INC.
770 PILOT ROAD, SUITE F
LAS VEGAS, NV 89119.

Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. Limit one voucher per product and household. Not to be combined with any other offer. Gift vouchers are good toward future purchases. No cash will be issued. Offer expires 1/15/03.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

CITY: _____

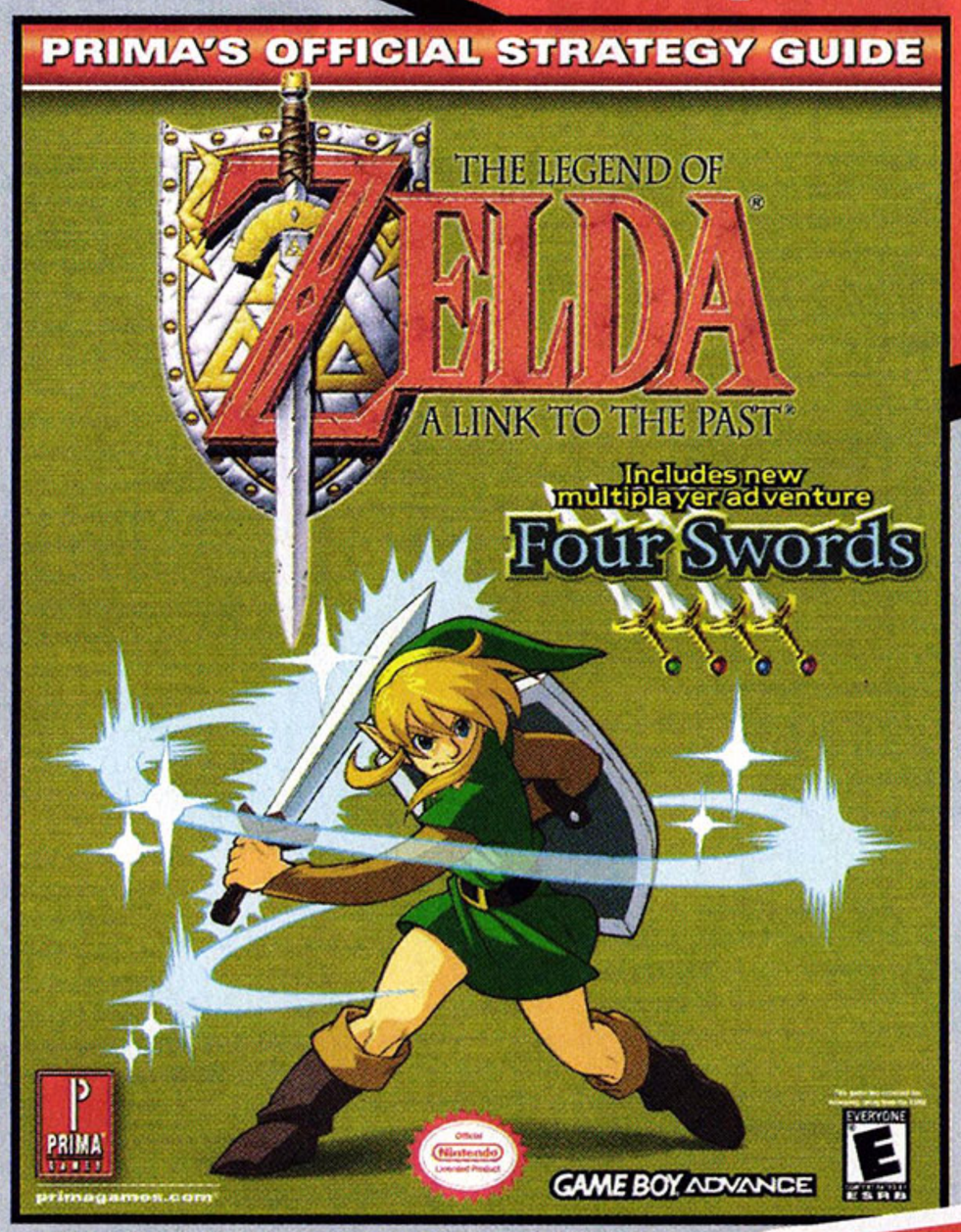
STATE: _____ **ZIP CODE:** _____

HOME PHONE NUMBER: _____

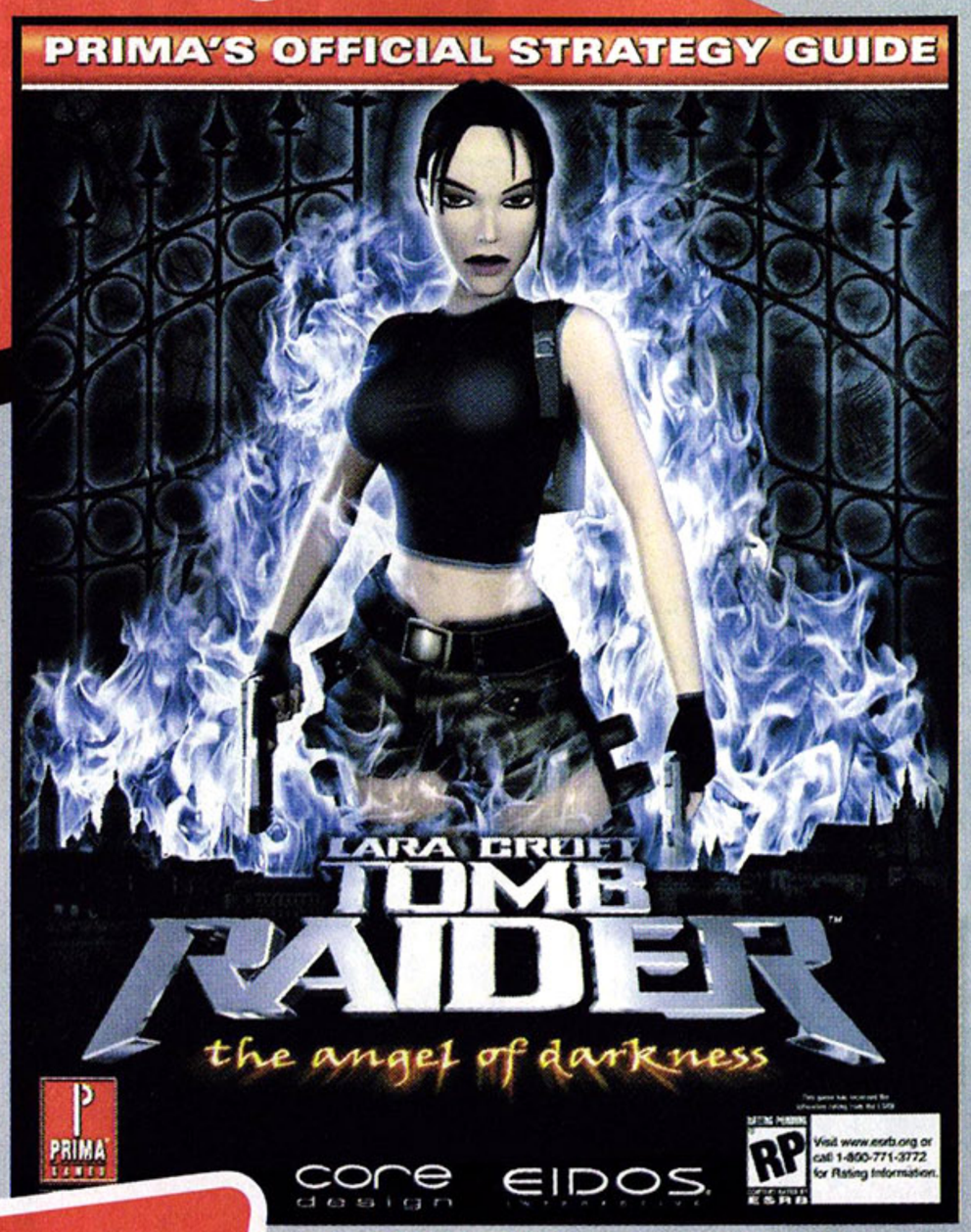
electronics boutique® EB GAMES™

PRIMA® GAMES

Receive 20% off hintbook with purchase of game!



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST
#220602-7 • OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE
PRIMA PUBLISHING



TOMB RAIDER: ANGEL OF DARKNESS
#225265-8 • OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE
PRIMA PUBLISHING

$14.99 EACH

THE SIMS
#226999-1 • OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE
PRIMA PUBLISHING

CRASH BANDICOOT 2: N-TRANCED
#231881-4 • OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE
PRIMA PUBLISHING

EBGAMES™
electronics boutique®

To place your order now, call 1-800-800-0032 or visit www.ebgames.com. To find a store near you, call 1-800-800-5166.

PS2

PREVIEW

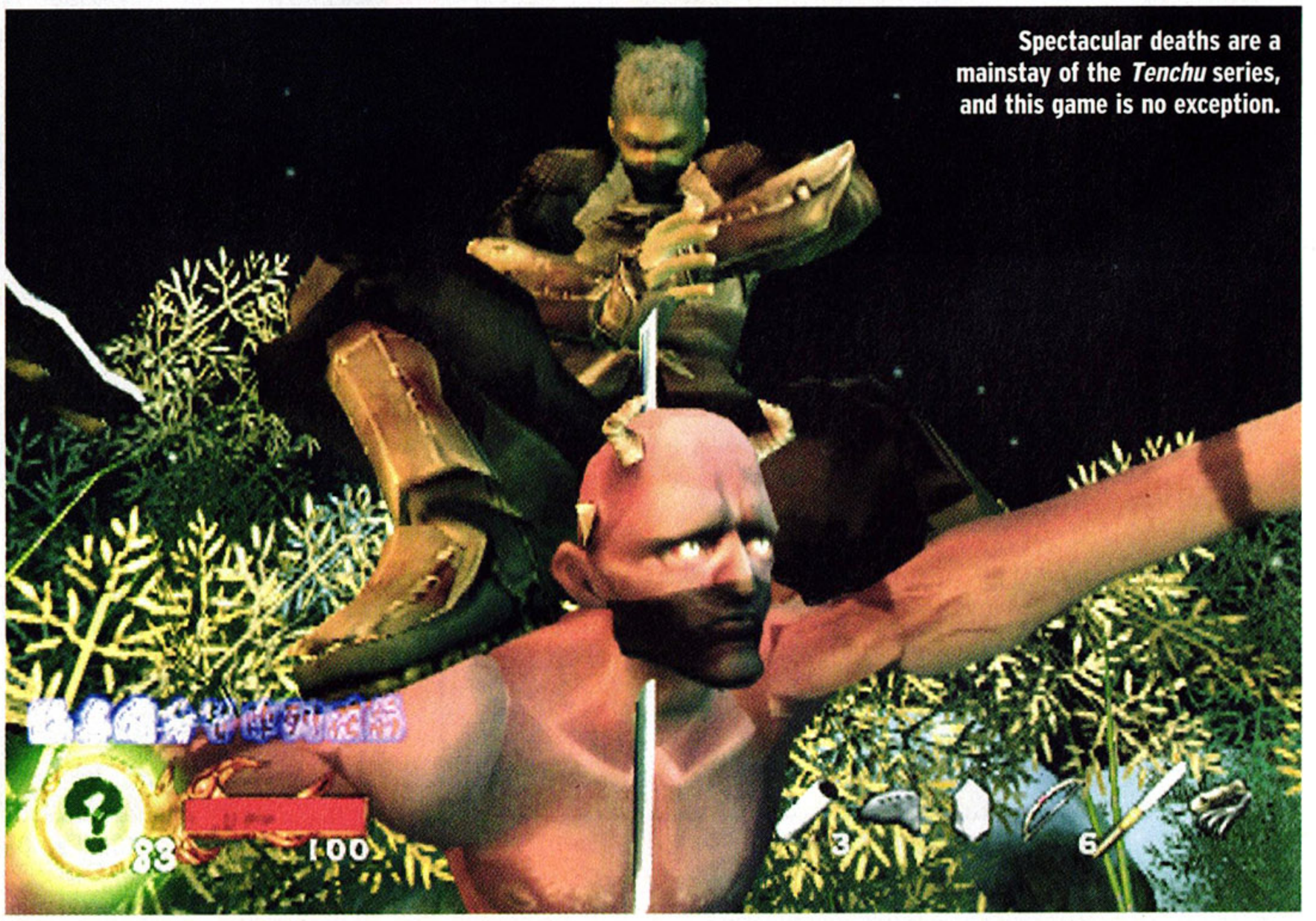
Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	K2
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Action
% Done:	85%
Release:	March 2003
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.activision.com

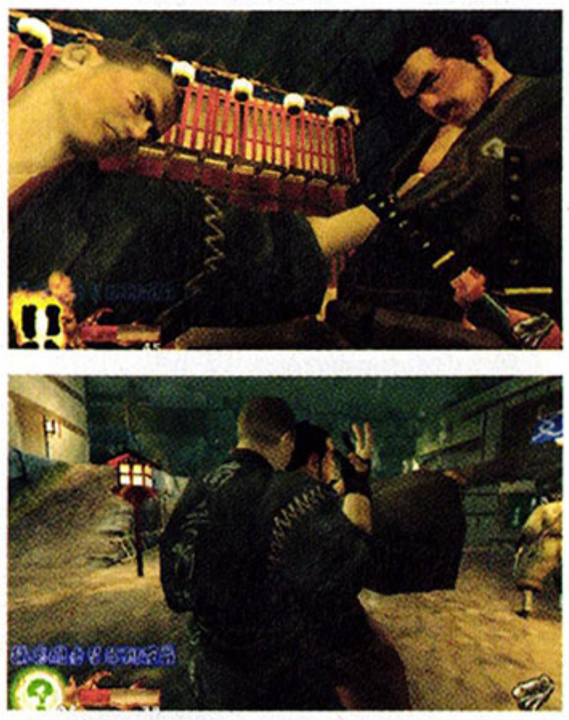
The Good: The *Tenchu* series has *finally* arrived on PlayStation 2.

The Bad: You can perform stealth kills on guard dogs, but those damn cats are still invulnerable!

And The Ugly: Those creepy, dancing undead children from the original *Tenchu* are back....



Spectacular deaths are a mainstay of the *Tenchu* series, and this game is no exception.



Stealth games are all the rage these days, but recent games such as Ubi Soft's *Splinter Cell* and Sony's *Sly Cooper* owe more than a simple tip of the hat to *Tenchu*. It originally arrived on PlayStation back in the fall of '98, slightly predating even Konami's classic stealth-hit, *Metal Gear Solid*.

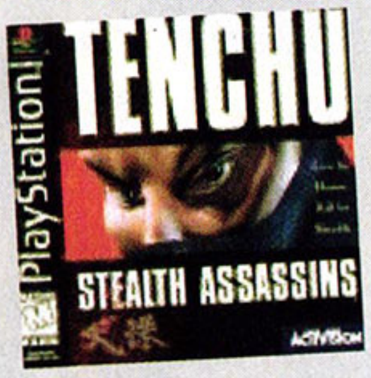
The first game in the series, *Tenchu: Stealth Assassins*, put you in the role of one of two ninjas: the ice-cold, prematurely gray-haired Rikimaru, or the La Femme Nikita-like tomboy Ayame. In service to the honorable Lord Gohda, you peeked around corners, used your trusty grappling hook to scale walls, and padded along silently on rooftops with only one goal in mind: sneaking up behind enemies so you could snuff them out like a candle. A ninja-sense meter indicated your proximity to an enemy, as well as his state of awareness to your presence, and items such as throwing stars, poison rice cakes, foot spikes, and smoke

TENCHU TIMELINE

TENCHU

Platform: PlayStation
Release: 02/98 (Japan)
Although originally conceived as a game set in the future starring a policeman who used ninja-like methods, *Tenchu* ended up taking place in feudal Japan.

TENCHU: STEALTH ASSASSINS



Platform: PlayStation
Release: 08/98 (U.S.)
When *Tenchu* arrived in the United States, it featured two extra levels, new CG sequences, cleaner graphics, and improved enemy A.I. Oh, and it was in English.

TENCHU: SHINOBI GAISEN

Platform: PlayStation
Release: 02/99 (Japan)
The enhanced U.S. version of *Tenchu* was later re-released in Japan with the added extras of a Time Attack mode and a level editor on top of all the original goodies.

TENCHU: SHINOBI HYAKUSEN

Platform: PlayStation
Release: 11/99 (Japan)
Tenchu: Shinobi Hyakusen was a compilation of 100 levels created for a contest, by Japanese gamers who used the level editor found in *Tenchu: Shinobi Gaisen*.

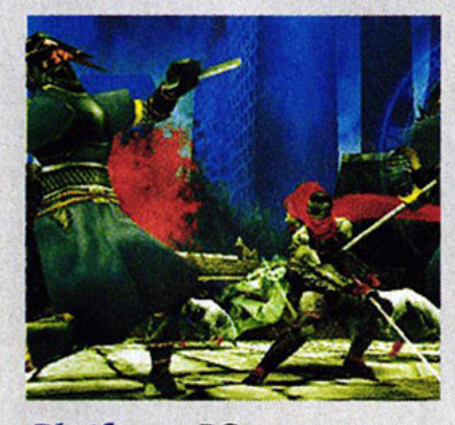
TENCHU 2: BIRTH OF THE STEALTH ASSASSINS

Platform: PlayStation
Release: 08/00 (U.S.)
10/00 (Japan)
This prequel featured sharper graphics, an additional playable character (Tatsumaru), and the ability to swim underwater.

NINJA RENAISSANCE

A number of ninja-themed games are popping up, now and in the near future. Here's a look at some of them.

SHINOBI



Platform: PS2
Release: 11/02
Sega's hero recently returned on PS2 in full 3D...and it's as eye-bleedingly tough as many of the old games!

REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Platform: GBA
Release: 11/02
Developer 3D6 updated Sega's classic Genesis game for the GBA. It's pretty old-school, but still loads of fun.

NINJA ASSAULT

Platform: PS2
Release: 11/02
Ninjas use guns, right? The history books are a bit fuzzy on it, but they do in Namco's latest Guncon game for PS2.

NINJA GAIDEN

Platform: Xbox
Release: 03/03
The next game in Tecmo's *Ninja Gaiden* series (originally on the old Nintendo) is headed exclusively to Xbox.

THE LAST NINJA

Platform: Xbox
Release: 03/03
Simon & Schuster Interactive is producing an Xbox game based on the classic *Last Ninja* trilogy for Commodore 64.

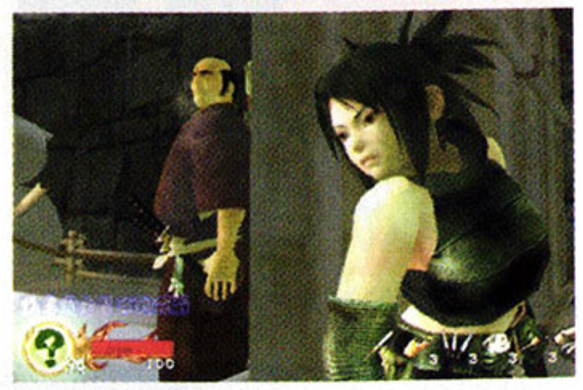
bombs aided you in your quest. One of the most satisfying aspects of the game was its signature stealth kills; if you attacked a guard before he noticed you, you were treated to one of several short, gruesome animations of your character executing the foe.

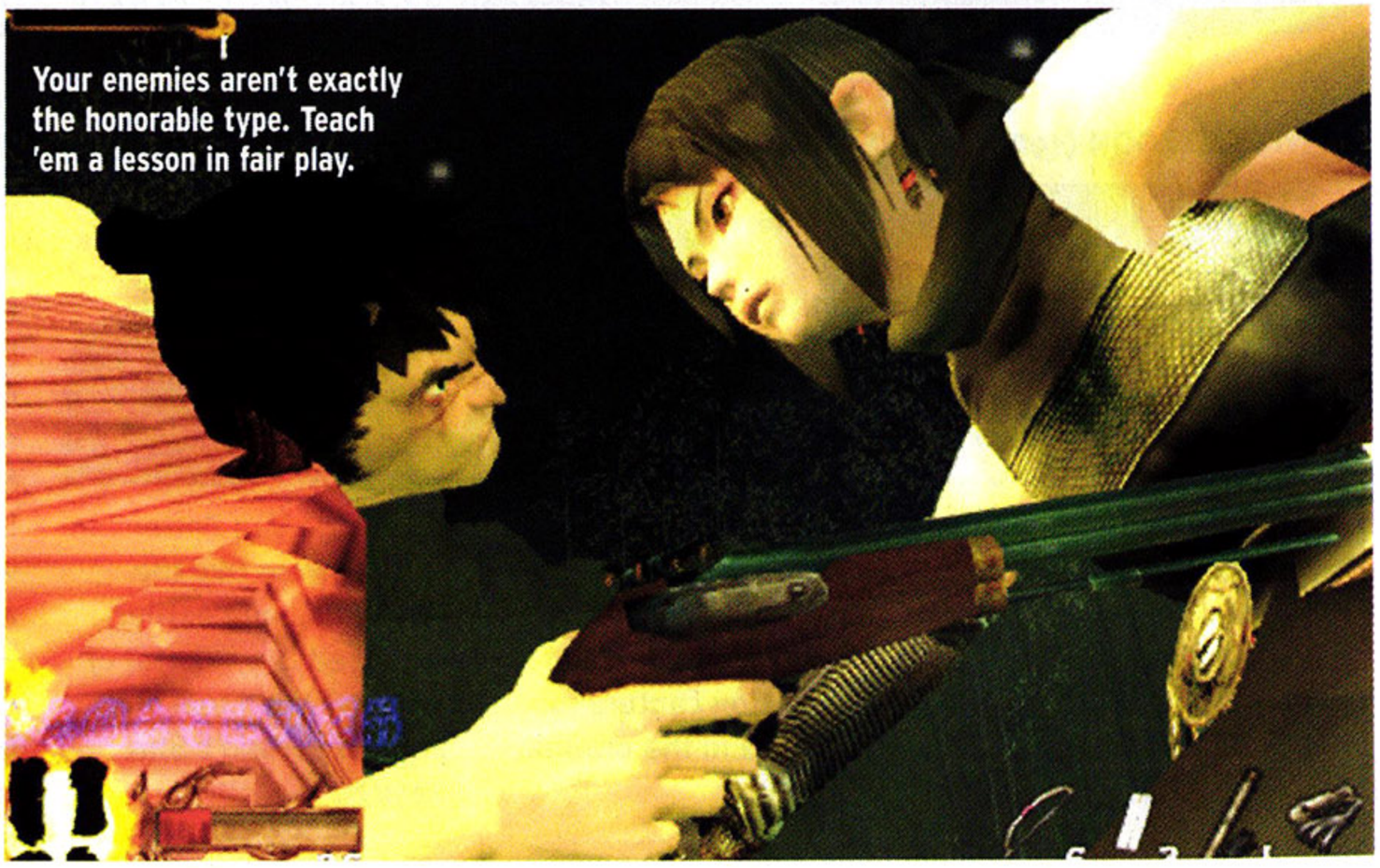
The upcoming *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven* retains all of these elements and is set a year after the events in the original *Tenchu*. Rikimaru (who appeared to be crushed under a large boulder at the end of the first game) and Ayame return and discover a plot by the mysterious Tenrai to conquer the country. On Lord Gohda's orders, the two set out to stop Tenrai's plans before they come to fruition, but they must first deal with his undead followers, an army of evil ninjas, and the formidable-sounding Six Lords of Darkness.

Besides the graphical enhancements you'd expect from the series' move to a next-generation platform, a number of improvements and new elements mark *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven*. The most important changes are the game's control upgrades, which answer many previous complaints against the series. The camera now moves in whatever direction you push the analog stick. There's a Lock-On button that targets your closest enemy, and you can move diagonally. Fans of the series probably won't be able to pin down the exact changes at first, except to note that the game's controls somehow seem remarkably less frustrating.

Although the game's camera was at least partially to blame for it, one of the main criticisms of *Tenchu 2* was that its boss fights were far too hard to be fun. The developers of *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven*—the newly formed K2—promise to redress that problem with boss fights that are more strategic in nature, making them less difficult, and not featuring a boss on every single level. But, though the bosses might be easier, the A.I. for the game's guards will be more advanced. "During fights," says Masanori Kuwasashi, K2's main game designer, "guards will step in range of the weapon they are holding, but will try to stay out of range of your weapon. For instance, spear guards will hold their distance to stay out of range of your sword, but will try to stay within range of the spear that they are holding." Enemies will now climb up on rooftops to chase after you much more often, as well.

But all these additions come with a few subtractions. The level editor (seen in *Tenchu 2* and unlocked by a code in the original U.S. version of *Tenchu*) doesn't appear in *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven*. It's been replaced, however, by two-player Co-op and Competitive modes. In Cooperative mode, you and your friend must coordinate attacks so that neither one of you is seen—or else the level ends. In Competitive mode, players choose





Sneaking up on your enemies and slitting their throats might be overdone, but it's the most effective way to get through any *Tenchu* game.

from 16 *Tenchu* characters and try to rack up the most stealth kills before time runs out. Others elements missing in *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven* include the swimming sections from *Tenchu 2*, and the ability to move bodies to keep them from being discovered, although it should be said that neither aspect felt conspicuously absent in the early version of the game we played.

The *Tenchu* series has always featured unlockable extras, and *Wrath of Heaven* offers even more. Every time you execute a difficult stealth kill, a kanji (a Chinese symbol) is added to the kanji meter above the health bar, and if you pull off a difficult one (such as a frontal attack), you'll get even more. Every time you're spotted, however, you lose kanji off the meter. If you gain all nine characters, you'll unlock a new special skill, such as shoulder-thrusting guards into pits, clinging to ceilings, using mind control to make enemies attack each other, or faking your own death in order to surprise a foe. As before, you will also win special items at the end of each level if you earn an Exceptional rating. New items include fireworks to distract opponents, a grappling hook to pull enemies closer to you, and a binding spell to paralyze nearby foes.

As in *Tenchu 2*, there's a third playable character unlocked by beating the game as both Rikimaru and Ayame. This time, it's Tesshu, a doctor by day and hitman by night who fights with his hands. *Tenchu* aficionados will be pleased to hear that they can also open up a bonus stage that shows the mysterious time-travelling adventure Rikimaru went on between the end of the original *Tenchu* and now (thus explaining his reappearance, despite being "killed" at the end of the first game). Characters Onikage and Tatsumaru—two more who were presumed dead—will also make appearances in *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven*.

While the game is due out exclusively for PlayStation 2 next spring, when asked if there was any chance that *Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven* might go multiplatform, K2's Kuwasashi says, "Definitely maybe, but that's up to the publisher."

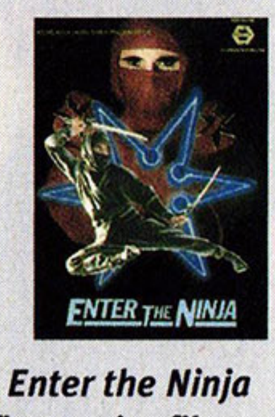
—Joe Fielder

NINJAS ON FILM

THE OCTAGON (1980)

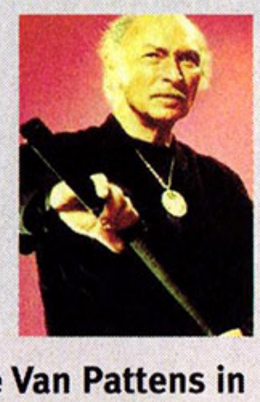
One of the first big ninja movies, *The Octagon* starred Chuck Norris as a martial artist out to stop a group of ninjas from creating terrorist training camps.

ENTER THE NINJA (1981)



Besides being credited for starting the ninja craze of the '80s, *Enter the Ninja* was the first major film for action star Sho Kosugi (who provided the motion capture for Rikimaru in the original *Tenchu*).

THE MASTER (1984)



This TV series from the 1980s was so cheesy, it even had one of the Van Pattens in it (they were like the Baldwins, only earlier). It starred Lee "*Fistful of Dollars*" Van Cleef and *Enter the Ninja*'s Sho Kosugi.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES (1990)

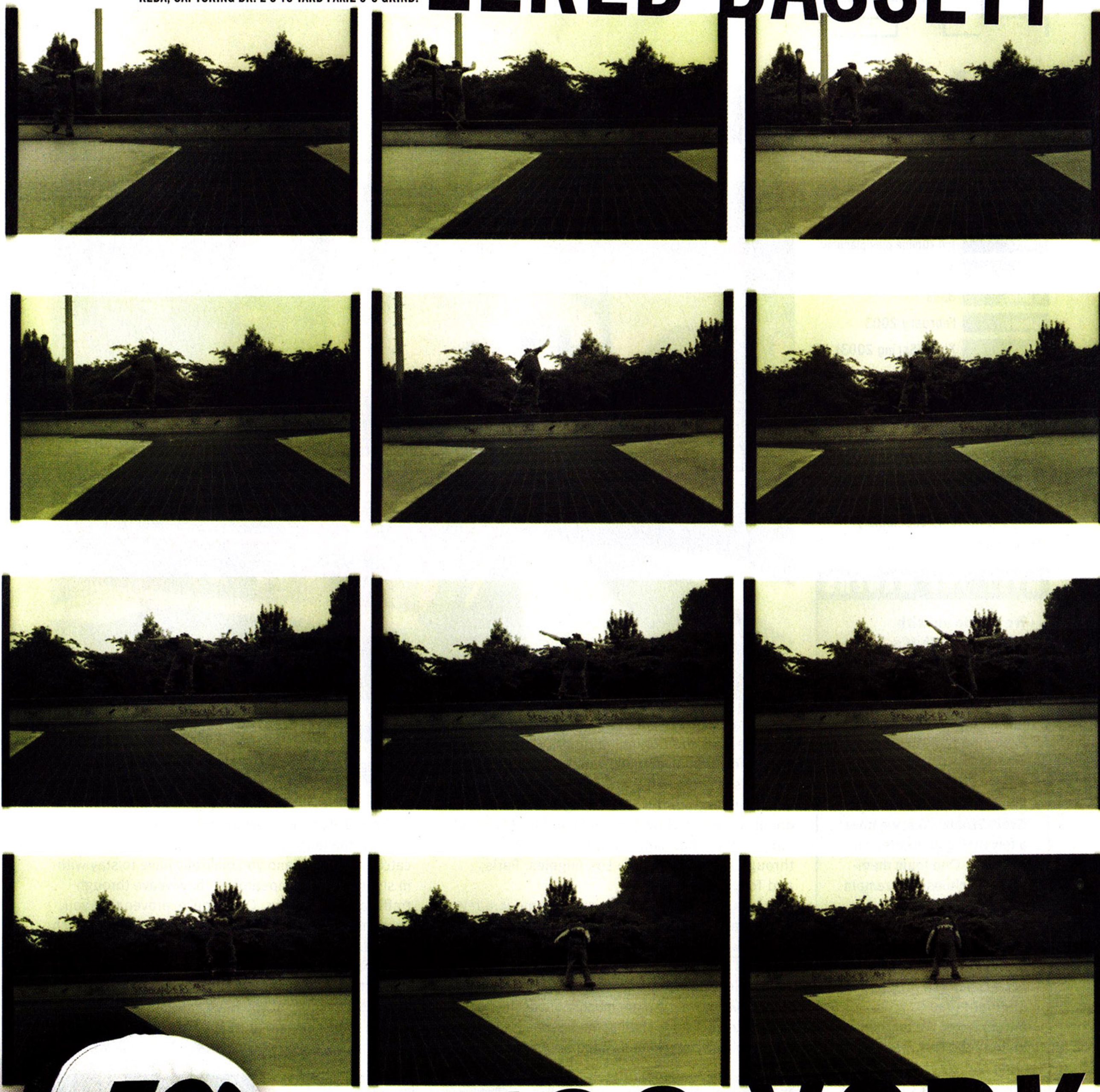
The live-action film based on the popular comic-book series was a huge hit that inspired two sequels, as well as some great arcade games. Corey Feldman (*The Goonies*) did the voice of Donatello, then got arrested for heroin possession.

NINJA SCROLL (1995)

Just about any fan of Japanese animation will tell you that *Ninja Scroll* simply shouldn't be missed—and that it's definitely, *definitely* not for kids.

ZERED BASSETT

REDA, CAPTURING DR. Z'S 10 YARD FAKIE 5-0 GRIND.



ZOO YORK

THE OFFICIAL 'DR. Z' ZOO YORK TRUCKER HAT OUT NOW!

ZOOYORK.COM

PS2

PREVIEW

Midnight Club II

Publisher:	Rockstar
Developer:	Rockstar San Diego
Players:	1-4 (Online play planned)
Genre:	Racing
% Done:	85%
Release:	February 2003
Also On:	Xbox (Spring 2003)
Web Address:	midnightclub2.com

The Good: Superfast racing through three real cities

The Bad: No car customization options

And The Ugly: Moses—the first character you meet—is one homely lookin' dude

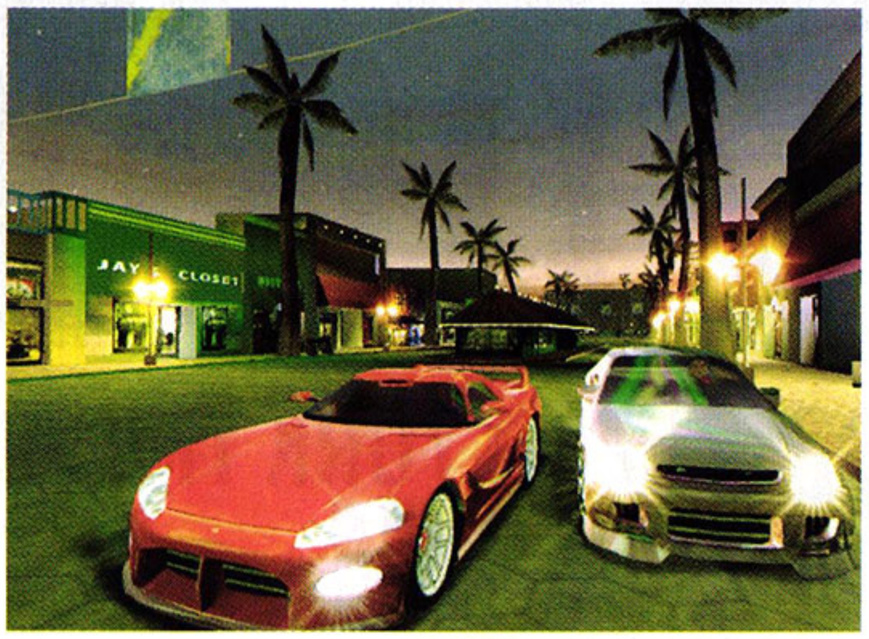
This bad boy makes Vin Diesel's *Fast and Furious* RX-7 look like a child's toy.

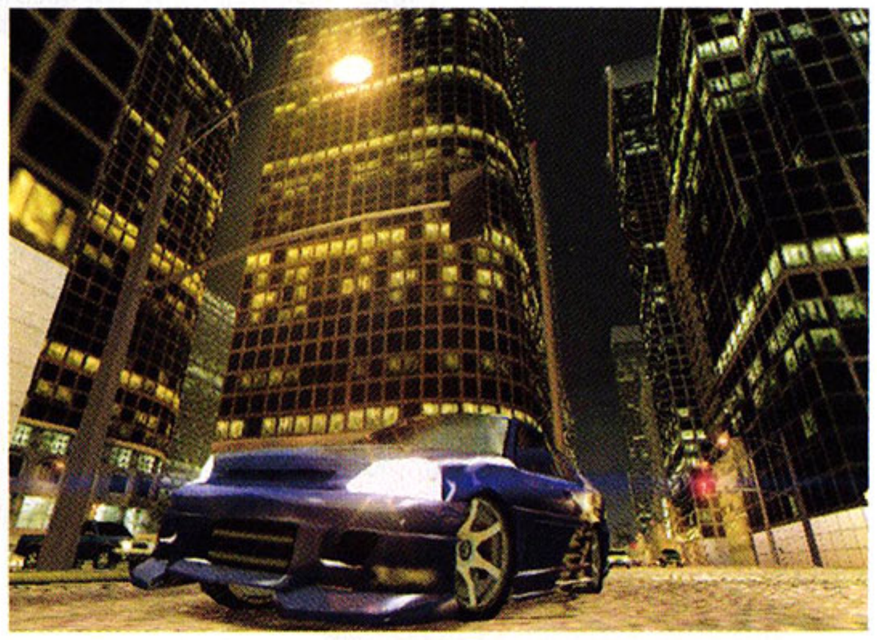
Early adopters of the PlayStation 2 might remember the original *Midnight Club* as one of the few games actually worth playing during the system's launch. In it, you rose through the ranks of the underground street-racing circuit by taking on all comers in New York and London. *Midnight Club II* takes that same premise and runs with it through three new cities: Los Angeles, Paris, and Tokyo.

This is more than just the same game in a few new cities; *Midnight Club*'s undergone a complete overhaul. Everything—the graphics, the gameplay, the story—is new and improved. You still roam the streets and challenge other drivers to a race, but the characters in *Midnight Club II* are much more fleshed out. Looks like Rockstar's sharing the lessons it's learned about cohesive story lines on the *Grand Theft Auto* series with its other development teams.

"The game is faster, more alive, and more fun."
—Game Designer Mauro Fiore

If you challenge other drivers, a quick game of catch-up follows, and you basically have to stay within sight of your competitor as they weave through traffic and back alleys. Once you've proven that you can hang, you take part in various street races, which range from simply following a set path to checkpoint races where you can hit the marks in any order. The latter event makes for some pretty spectacular crashes, especially if you have multiple drivers going for the same checkpoint from different directions. In other missions, you play as a cop chasing down





Racing venues range from suburbia to bustling downtown areas. Learn the lay of the land quickly, or you're toast.

MEET THE MAKERS

We sat down with *Midnight Club II*'s Designer Mauro Fiore and Lead Artist Scott Stoabs to discuss the game, the genre, and *The Fast and The Furious*.

EGM: Any of the staff involved in street racing?
Scott Stoabs: Yes, we have a few racing advocates on the team. One team member, who chooses to remain nameless, wrecked a brand-new Honda S2000.

EGM: What makes this better than the original *Midnight Club*?
Mauro Fiore: We learned a lot from the first *Midnight Club*, and we've improved every aspect for the sequel. The cities are denser, and our new lighting technology really makes everything lifelike. The driving mechanics have been overhauled. This time around, the player can perform all kinds of driving stunts that were impossible in *MC1*. The game is faster, more alive, and more fun.

(continued on page 81)

those rowdy kids in their rice rockets.

The first *Midnight Club* was impressive, but it was also pretty flat. You couldn't get a lot of air because there weren't many jumps. To fix that, developer Rockstar San Diego (formerly Angel Studios, the creators of the first game) made the cities in *Midnight Club II* very vertical. The jumps in this game are absolutely insane—we once clocked a hang time of 10 seconds. You'll find lots of uphill and downhill racing here.

Another problem with the original *Midnight Club* was that you could simply follow the leader in order to learn the best route, so all the racers were taking the same path on each course. Success depended only on running each race two or three times before you memorized the path from start to finish. In *MC2*, the driver A.I. has been tuned so that the leader never takes the same route twice, meaning it's up to you to find the fastest way around each track. It makes for a much more challenging experience.

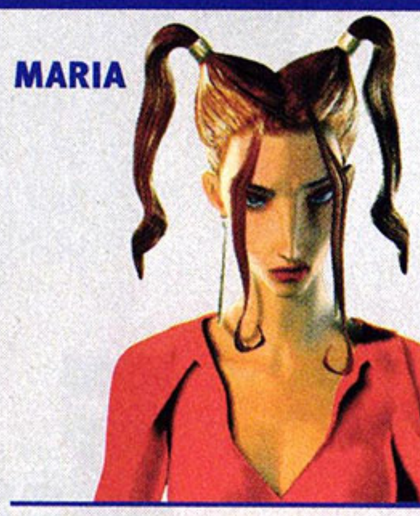
Poppin' wheelies doesn't earn you anything, but it looks damn cool to streak down the main drag on one wheel.

RACING ANGELS

GINA

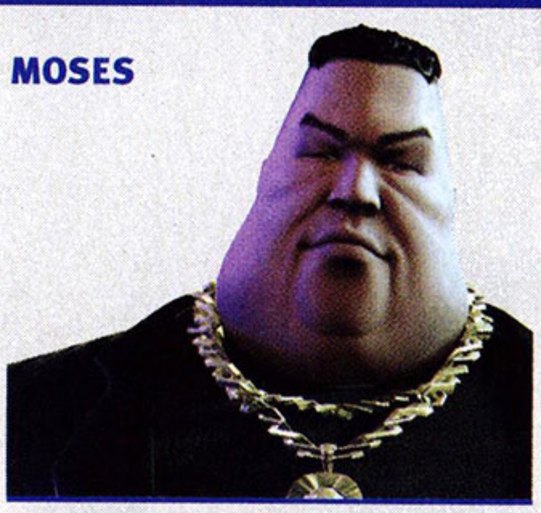
This sexy DJ moonlights as a street racer. You'll find her around the L.A. club scene. She's always ready for a race and has no qualms about using her female charms to distract opponents while she streaks by for the win.

MARIA



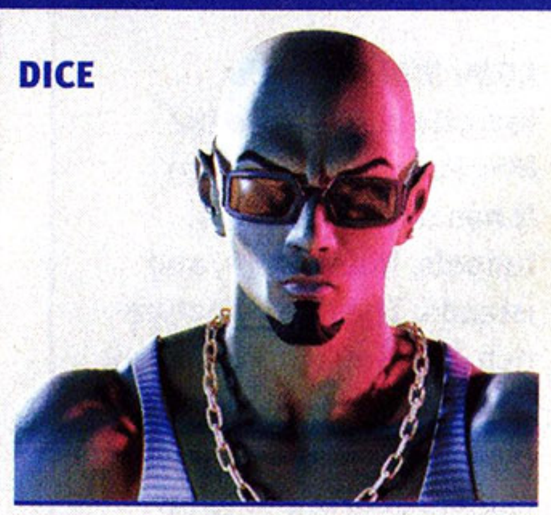
Maria's been racing cars since junior high. This sultry speedster might look like a pushover, but Maria backs down from no man (or woman). She grew up in L.A., so naturally, she's a formidable opponent when racing in the City of the Angels.

MOSES



Moses introduces you to street-racing in L.A. He looks tough, but he's surprisingly good natured. At least that's what he wants you to think. If you let your guard down, his true nature will show itself, and he'll leave you in the dust.

DICE



The man everyone's looking to beat in L.A. He's a sore loser, but since he wins all the time, it's not an issue. The only chance of beating him is with lightning-quick reflexes, loads of skill, and an intimate knowledge of the L.A. streets.

MAKERS (CONT.)

EGM: What are the best racing games out now?
SS: ***Gran Turismo 3*** **is the king for now.** ***Burnout 2*** **and** ***Need for Speed*** **are also very good.** ***RalliSport Challenge*** **is a slightly different genre than us but nonetheless a very solid racer—we are keeping a close eye on what the guys from [*RalliSport* developer] Digital Illusions churn out.**

EGM: Would you say that ***GTA3*** **has had an impact on the** ***Midnight Club*** **series?**
MF: *GTA3* was great because it showed many people that open-ended, open-city gameplay is fresh and fun. Our game has the same philosophy [though the two are] very different. *GTA3* is more about crime and minimissions, while *MC2* is all about speed. Our cities are designed for racing, and we make all sorts of design decisions to reinforce that.

(continued on page 82)

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD

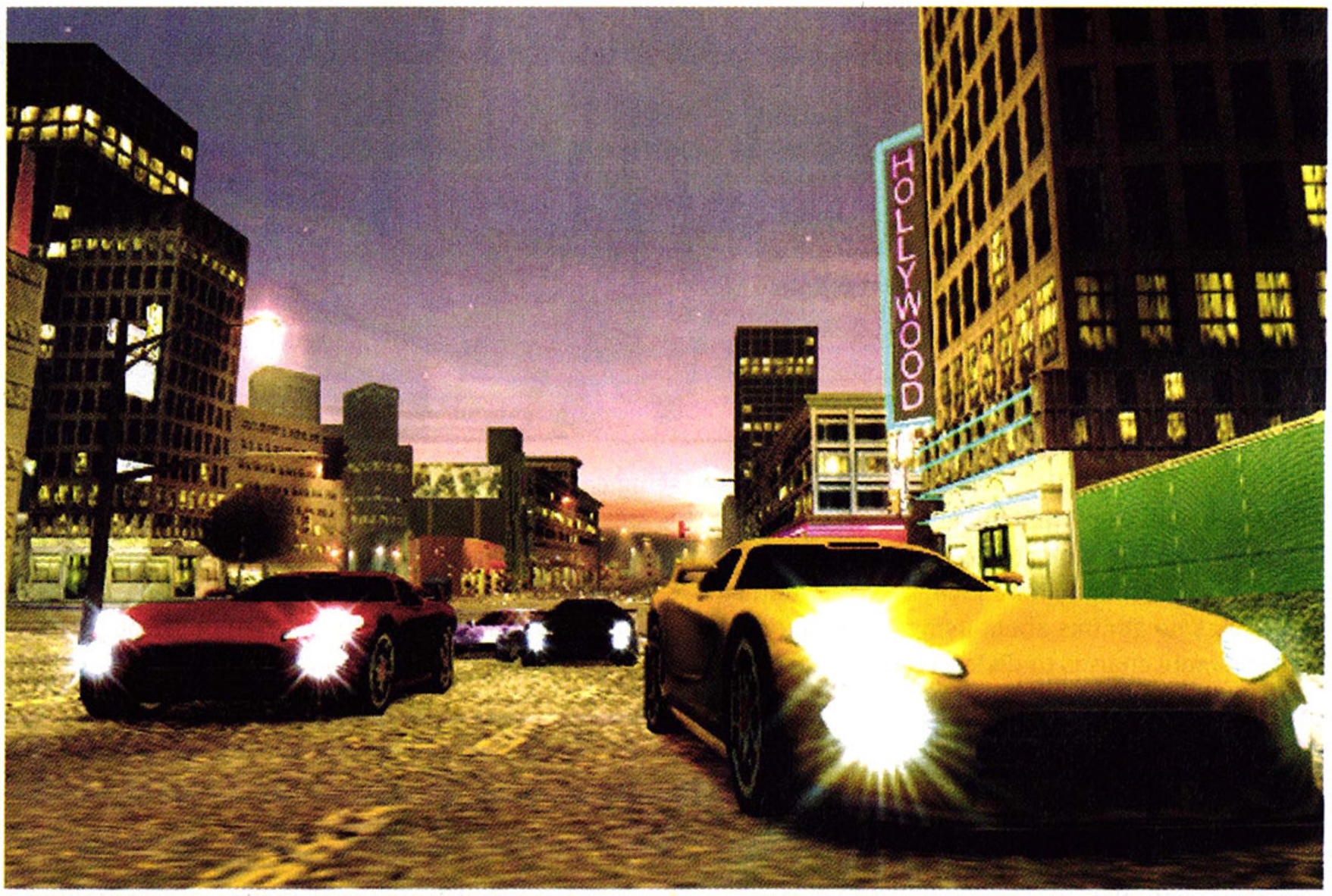
If *The Fast and The Furious* just doesn't satiate your need for speed, check out this compilation of real street-race footage (and lots of girls in bikinis). You can order it for $60 at www.streetracing.com.

MAKERS (CONT.)

EGM: Which is your favorite city to race in?
MF: Paris is my favorite. It has the most jumps, tunnels, hills, rivers, and islands. The city is feature-rich, and you'll consistently be surprised by new places. It has elements for exploration, but they all appear at a lightning pace, so it's never stale.

EGM: Favorite vehicle?
SS: The bikes are insanely fun and provide completely new driving mechanics for the player. We've achieved the best motorcycle driving experience to date.
MF: I have a blast playing the motorcycles. We put a lot of effort into making these vehicles really fun. We devised a control scheme that allows people to weave through traffic and take sharp 90-degree turns. That's something that has never been done before. All motorcycles up until now have been raced on tracks. We don't have tracks. We are an open city. That means you can go anywhere, so the vehicles need control. There's nothing like throwing the camera into Point of View and diving into the apex of a turn. It's thrilling.

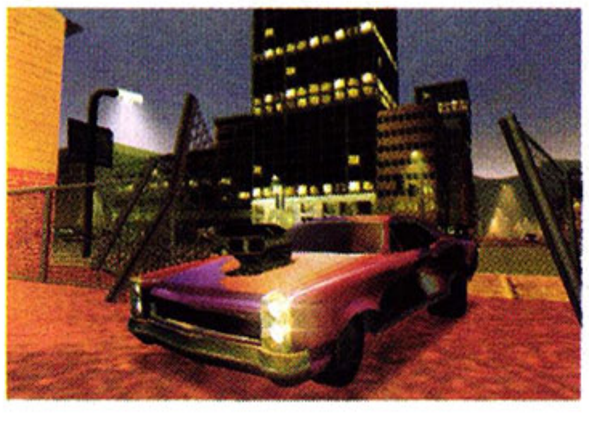
EGM: Did you like *The Fast and The Furious*?
MF: It was a fun movie.
SS: Yes. The whole team went out to see it, and we were pleasantly surprised by it. It was inspirational because parts of the movie were very much what our game is about, and the popularity of street racing soared right after the movie came out.

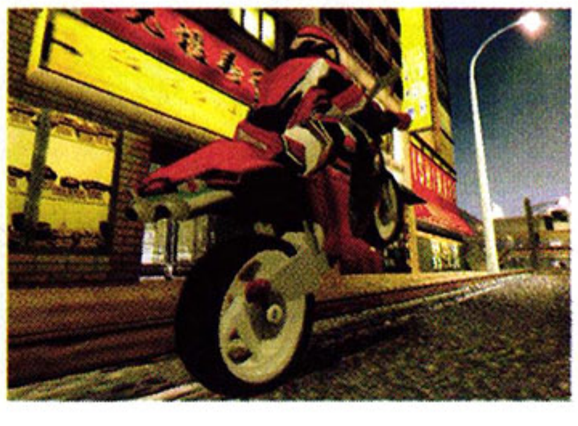


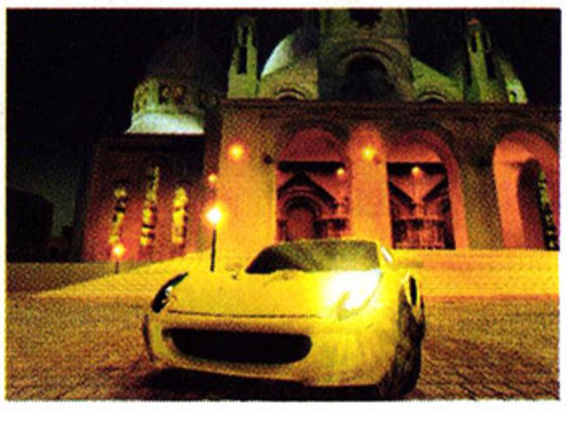
Above: Some missions in *Midnight Club II* will have you runnin' from the cops. Some will put you in the cop car.

As with *Vice City* before it, one of the biggest improvements in this Rockstar sequel is the addition of motorcycles. The catch is that once you get on one of these two-wheeled crotch rockets, the control scheme of *Midnight Club II* completely changes. Now, you have to worry about things like balancing (especially when pulling wheelies) and leaning into turns. Plus, since you're not surrounded by a bunch of sheet metal, any major collisions will knock you off the bike—quite a wake-up call if you're used to driving in a car. Riding the bikes does take a bit of practice, but once you master the controls, it opens up a whole new style of game that's very addictive.

Rockstar had two big launch titles on the PS2. While *Smuggler's Run*'s sequel didn't really measure up, you can bet *MC2* will meet expectations. This fast, pretty racing game will definitely appeal to fans of the genre when it releases next month. —*Greg Sewart*



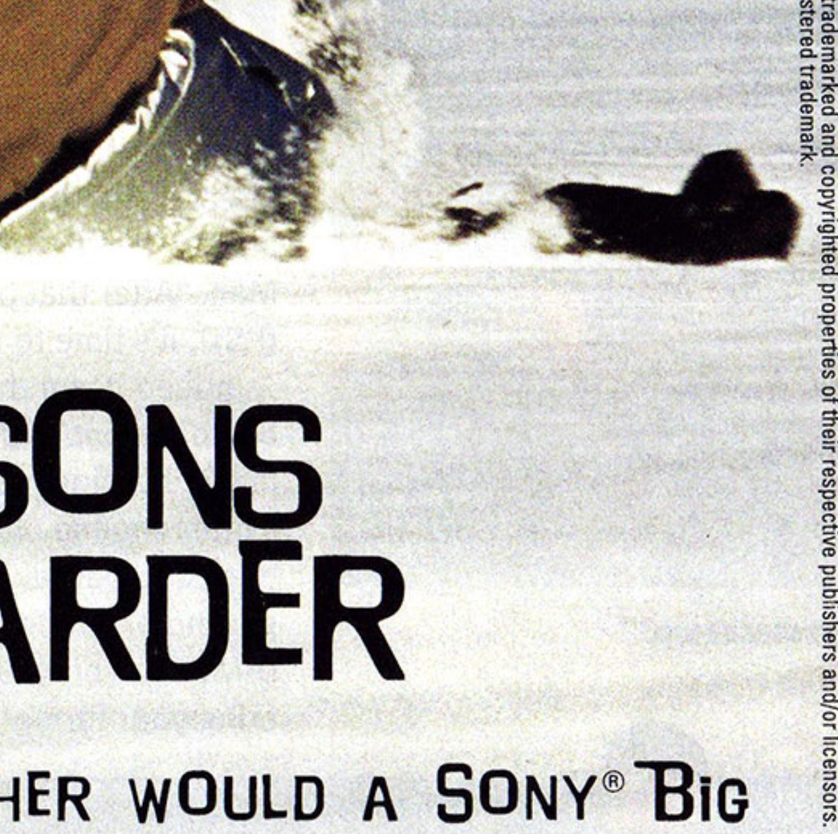




LOOKS LIKE LESSONS FROM A PRO BOARDER WOULDN'T HURT.

NEITHER WOULD A SONY® BIG SCREEN TV OR A PLAYSTATION®2 WITH THE HOTTEST GAMES. IT'S BAGEL BITES®' EXTREME REDEEM™ ONLINE AUCTION. CHECK OUT SPECIALLY MARKED BOXES OF BAGEL BITES. THE MORE YOU SCARF, THE BETTER YOUR CHANCES.

EXTREME REDEEM
Get the code! • • • •
Collect the points!
Bid to win!



PlayStation®2

www.bagelbites.com

INTERNET ACCESS NECESSARY TO PARTICIPATE. Must be U.S. legal resident at least 9 years old at time of participation. Minors under 13 must register off-line and have a parent/legal guardian provide written permission to participate. Find Auction Points Code inside specially marked packages of Bagel Bites. Items for auction will be of varying values and subject to varying minimum Point bids. The sale, trading, transfer, assignment, combining, or barter of any Bagel Bites Auction Points Code package materials, points or codes is prohibited and they cannot be purchased or redeemed for cash or credit. Subject to Official Rules found at www.bagelbites.com on about 12/01/02. Void where prohibited. Auction ends 4/30/03 9:00 p.m. ET. Sponsor: HJ Heinz Company, 357 Sixth Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All games featured herein are trademarked and copyrighted properties of their respective publishers and/or licensors. Sony is a registered trademark of Sony Corporation. Look on the box for number of points. MANY WILL BID. FEW WILL WIN. ©2002 H.J. Heinz Company, L.P. Bagel Bites is a registered trademark.

PS2

PREVIEW

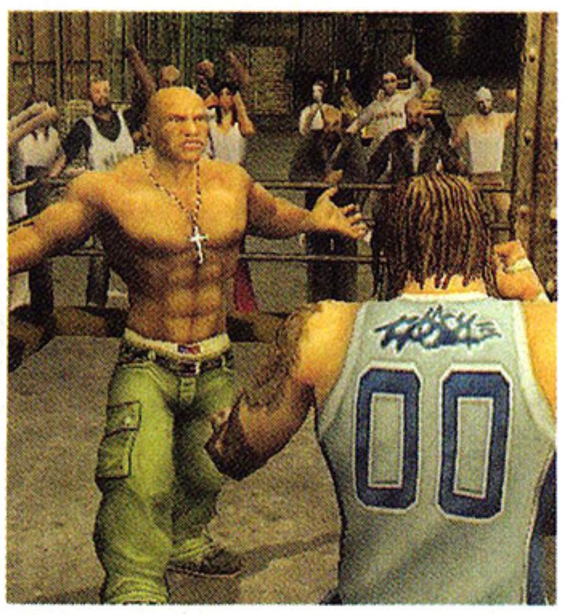
Def Jam: Vendetta

Publisher: EA Sports Big
Developer: EA Canada/Aki
Players: 1-4
Genre: Wrestling
% Done: 85%
Release: March 2003
Also On: PS2
Web Address: defjamvendetta.com

The Good: Laying the smack down with rap's most notorious thugs.

The Bad: Trying to figure out what the hell they're doing in a wrestling game.

And The Ugly: The amount of air-time this sucker's going to clock in dorm rooms across America when it ships.



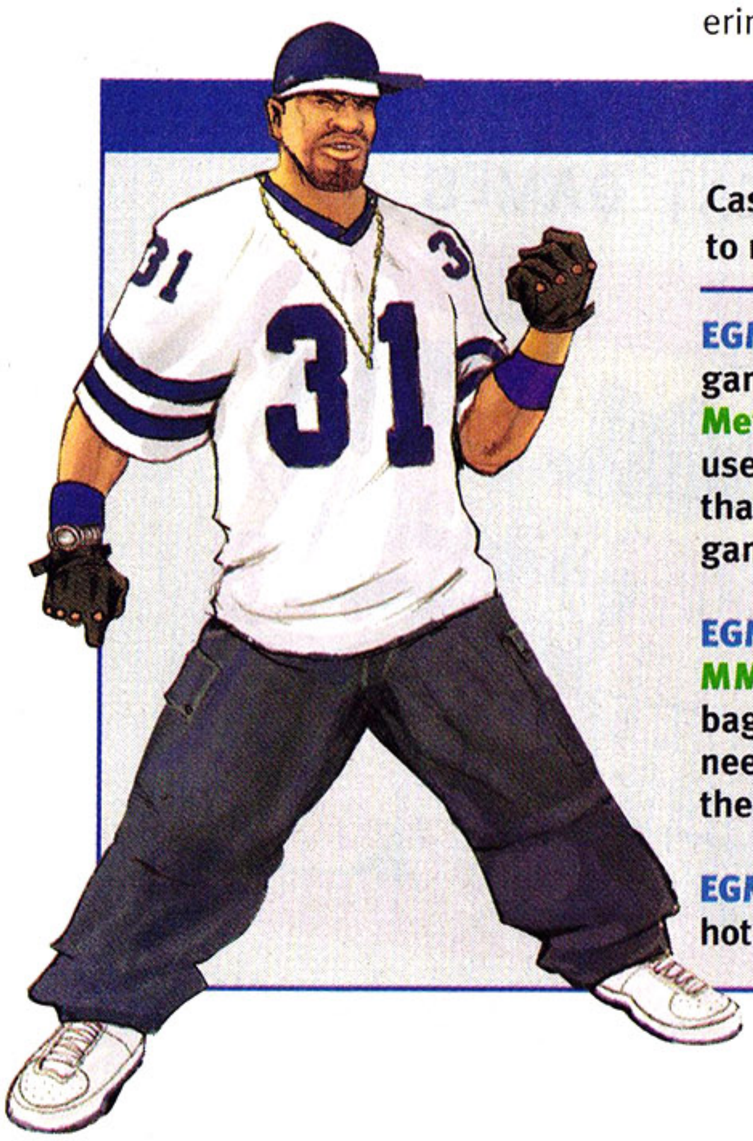
"Wassaaaaaaap?"

Hip-hop and videogames go together like groupies and gangsta rap. No surprise, then, that both are featured in EA's upcoming *Def Jam: Vendetta*, the first street-fighting simulation-cum-wrestler with urban-culture undertones. It's already eliciting rave reviews from the featured artists. "I'm ecstatic to be in this game," says Method Man. "After that piece of s*** *Wu-Tang: Shaolin Style* (PS1), it's time to set the record straight."

Indeed. Even this early in its development, it's obvious *Vendetta* will do that. For one, EA's attempting something never tried before: grafting a significant story line onto no-holds-barred wrestling gameplay. Combat takes place on the New York underground brawling circuit years after local kingpin D-Mob forced you into early retirement. Upon discovering your former fling Angel has hooked up with the hoodlum and your friend Manny is deep in debt to the man, you're left with no options; you've got to drag your ass back into the ring.

"The basic premise is *Fight Club* meets hip-hop," explains Producer Josh Holmes. "We've married [developer] Aki's grappling system [seen in *WCW vs. nWo* on N64] with an open-ended fighting setup, then partnered this concept with the urban lifestyle."

Thus, you'll be privy to a world of seedy venues, shady characters, and shifty deals while exploring everything the Story mode offers. It's here that you'll gain all the unlockables (new characters, backdrops, costumes, etc.) or attempt sidequests while battling over 45 brawlers, including 12 Def Jam artists who serve as D-Mob's boss characters. The colorful roster includes such notables as DMX, Ludacris, Redman, Method Man, Scarface, Keith Murray, and more.



RAPPER'S DELIGHT

Cash rules everything around rap megastar Method Man. But so does a monstrous addiction to role-playing games. Presenting the world of videogaming according to the Wu-Tang alum:

EGM: What did you think of your PS1 fighting game, *Wu-Tang: Shaolin Style?*
Method Man: It was total crap. The game used to be about overkills–Activision scrapped that. They went with a gimmick and tried to rush a game and put our names on it, and it was whack.

EGM: What titles do you prefer playing?
MM: Role-playing games. I've got some in my bag, in fact. *Final Fantasy*, that's my joint. They need to come out with one about hip-hoppers or the music industry.

EGM: Genius. Your resources could be hookers and hot merchandise! Any other features you'd suggest?
MM: You'd have to have yes-men involved in it. Dudes bitin' your s*** and stuff. Independent labels blowing up overnight. It'd be M-rated, for real.

EGM: What consoles are you messin' with these days?
MM: All of the systems. PlayStation 2's my favorite, though. It has the most games.

EGM: If you had to go with one cheat code—big heads, invincibility, whatever—what would it have to be?
MM: Unlimited groupies. Duh.

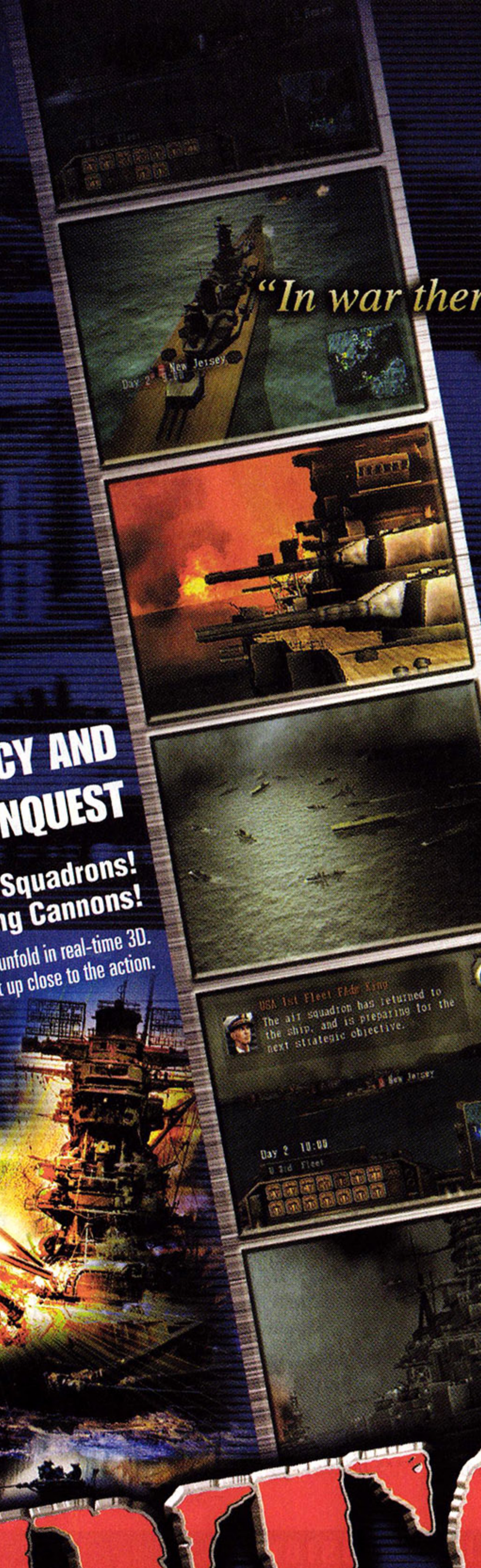
KOEI™

www.koeigames.com

PlayStation®2

"In war there is no substitute for victory."

- General MacArthur



NAVAL SUPREMACY AND GLOBAL CONQUEST

Swarming Fighter Squadrons! Blazing Cannons!

Watch the war unfold in real-time 3D.
Control camera movement and get up close to the action.

Over 50 Theaters of Operation!

From Midway to the Mediterranean,
every conquest is one step closer to victory!
Assemble U.S., Japanese, German, or British forces.
Deploy your fleets and storm enemy garrisons.

15 Regional and 2 Global Campaigns Based on World War II!

Strike Leyte Gulf and establish supply lines.
Order German Wolfpack Ops in the North Sea.
Launch Royal Navy cruisers to intercept Japanese dive-bombers.

Change the Course of History!

Command the USS Iowa, Battleship Yamato, and over 300 ships.
Dispatch spies, disrupt trade, realign nations.
Develop new technology and build mighty war machines.

P.T.O.IV™

Pacific Theater of Operations

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

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

CATFIGHT!

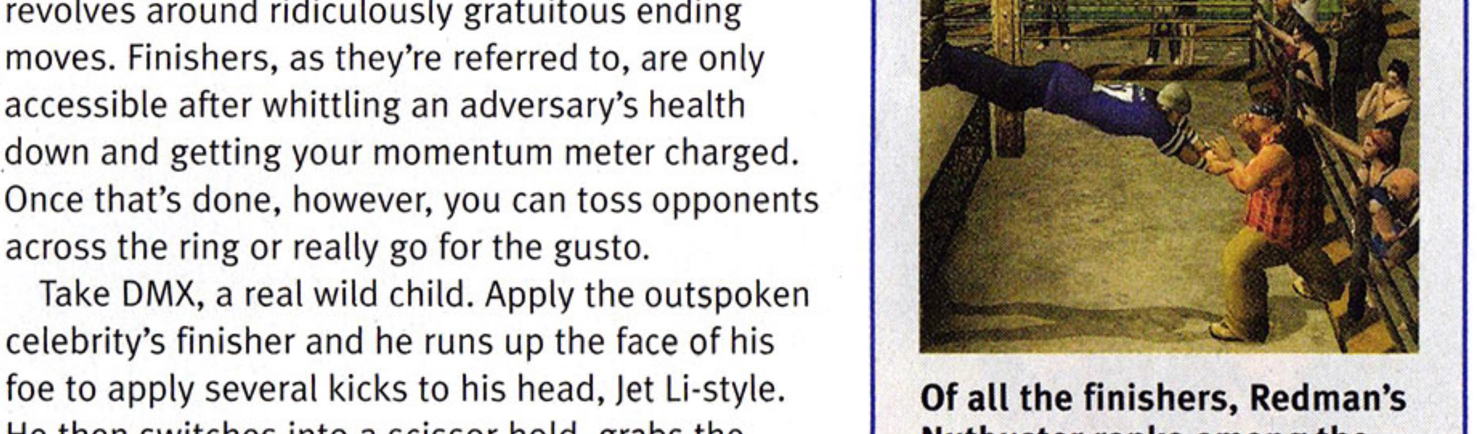
While working the circuit, you'll also get to meet lovely ladies who'll serve as your girlfriends. If another female approaches your woman, catfights may ensue. The best part? Afterward, you get to decide who walks off on your arm, and thus, which girl's image galleries you unlock.

"These guys are huge gamers," says Holmes. "The artists have partnered with us closely to explicitly define each of their own identities."

And there's more fun to be had in Battle and Survival modes. Under the former option, up to four players can play in match types like free-for-all, two-on-two tag-team, and handicap. The latter choice plays much like any endurance mode, with you fighting a string of goons one at a time until you drop, although discovering new characters–who are then added to the gauntlet–extends its replay value.

So, how does it play? In a word, *fiercely*. "We've tried to make *Vendetta* a much faster experience than players are used to by infusing as many martial-art styles as possible into the game," says Holmes. "It also boasts EA Sports Big sensibilities for the finishers–they're incredibly over-the-top. That really sets it apart from the competition."

While *Vendetta* handles like any wrestling game, the move set is spastic. Alongside grapple-based wrestling moves such as clotheslines and piledrivers come kung-fu techniques, jeet kune do maneuvers, and the odd illegal chokehold. With more than 1,500 moves available, how you work an opponent over is simply a matter of preference.



Method Man gives the turnbuckles a workout for all the laydeez in da house.

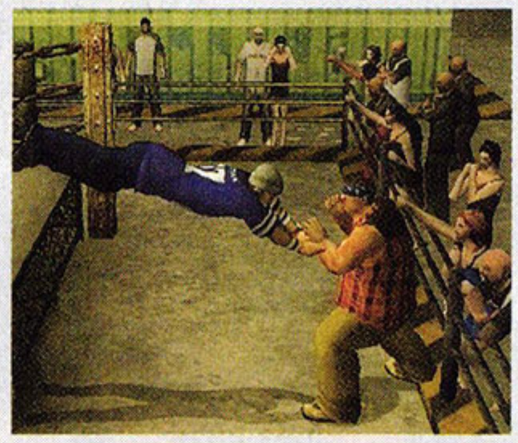
Likewise, there are numerous ways to win a fight: 1) pin your opponent, 2) work a specific body part until you can slap on a submission hold, or 3) explore the wonders of a special KO system that revolves around ridiculously gratuitous ending moves. Finishers, as they're referred to, are only accessible after whittling an adversary's health down and getting your momentum meter charged. Once that's done, however, you can toss opponents across the ring or really go for the gusto.

Take DMX, a real wild child. Apply the outspoken celebrity's finisher and he runs up the face of his foe to apply several kicks to his head, Jet Li-style. He then switches into a scissor hold, grabs the offender, and flips him into oblivion. It's not your average fatality, but this isn't your average game.

"*Vendetta* is a title that has the potential to bring hip-hop culture into the mainstream in an authentic way," says Holmes. That it should, since it exemplifies two things audiences love: violence and verbal abuse. And take Method Man's advice before jumping in: "Choose me. And work the finishers. With all due respect to the other artists involved, I'm gonna break some f***** heads."

—Scott Steinberg

FINISH HIM!

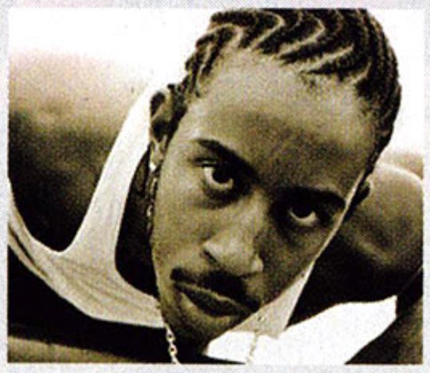


Of all the finishers, Redman's Nutbuster ranks among the most unique:

First, he holds you by the throat. The rowdy rapper then swiftly applies 5 to 10 shots to the family jewels. After that, he throws you down, takes a quick glance to see if anyone's looking, and delivers one last boot to your beloved body parts. Painful, yes, but also morbidly amusing.

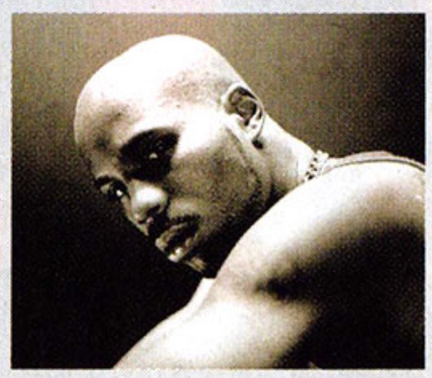
JAM SESSION

LUDACRIS



Chances are, he wasn't speaking to hordes of unwashed gamers when he sang, "I want to lick you from your head to your toes." But the former Atlanta radio-station personality and Pepsi pitchman is one of the wildest characters in the rap game today, and Def Jam South's premier artist. Word.

DMX



Y'all gon' make him lose his mind, up in heah. *Def Jam: Vendetta* fans will find the self-proclaimed dog isn't just bark, but bite. We'd like to show him what's up, but after he sold more than 3 million copies of his last album, *The Great Depression*, it's hardly our place to playa hate.

SCARFACE

Founding member of pioneering gangsta rap act The Geto Boys. The portly poet, whose hits range from "Mind Playing Tricks on Me" to "My Block," has survived over 10 years in hip-hop's top echelon. Now a Def Jam executive, he went from flipping verses to record deals. That's what we call upward mobility.

STAR WARS® JEDI KNIGHT® II: JEDI OUTCAST™

Jedi. Outcast. Rebel. Mercenary. You have one lightsaber and eight Jedi Force powers, including Jedi Mind Tricks, Force Lightening and Force Grip. With a devastating arsenal of weapons like disruptor rifles, thermal detonators, trip mines and a Wookiee bowcaster you must battle a hoard of new enemies. Fight in single mode or go lightsaber against lightsaber in split-screen multiplayer Jedi arena — or die trying. Learn more at jedioutcast.com

Official *Star Wars* Web Site www.starwars.com

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Violence

NINTENDO GAMECUBE™ XBOX™ ACTIVISION® RAVEN LUCAS Arts

© 2002 LucasArts Entertainment Company LLC. © 2002 Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM or ® as indicated. All rights reserved. Used under authorization. LucasArts and the LucasArts logo are registered trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. This product contains software technology licensed from id Software, Inc. id Technology © 1999-2002 id Software Inc. All rights reserved.

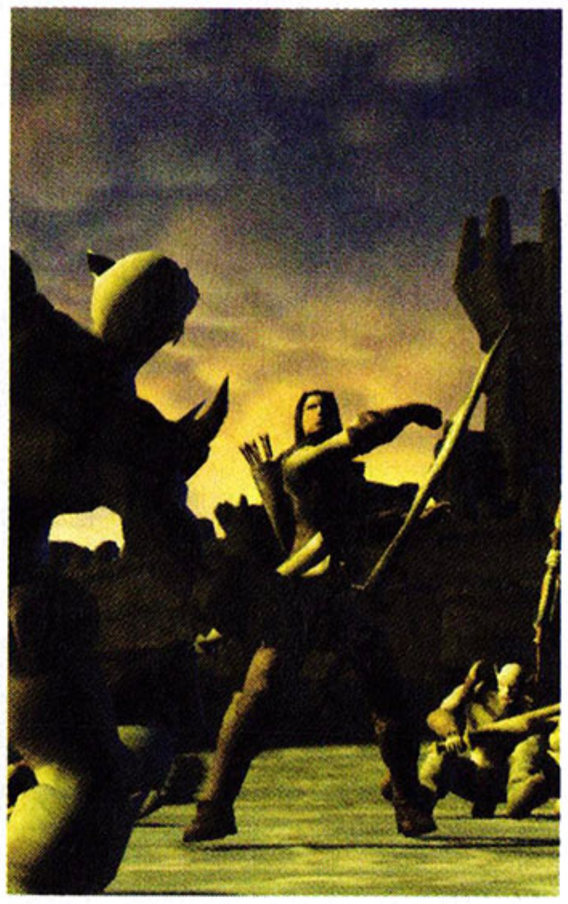
PS2

PREVIEW

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

Publisher: Black Label Games
Developer: Surreal Software
Players: 1
Genre: Adventure
% Done: 80%
Release: Fall 2003
Also On: Xbox (and maybe GC)
Web Address: www.lotr.com
The Good: Surreal has big plans for the game—and the time to execute them.
The Bad: You can't play as Gandalf.
And The Ugly: One of the playable characters on the way to Mordor (wink, wink).

Missions with Aragorn (seen here), Gimli, and Legolas will be very combat heavy, while missions with Sam and Frodo will be very stealth oriented.



Given only seven months last year to port *The Fellowship of the Ring* to PS2 (it was formerly an Xbox exclusive), Surreal Software had one simple goal at the time: "To ship on time!" jokes company president Alan Patmore. Though developer WXP had laid the groundwork in its Xbox version, the short time-period just didn't allow Surreal to do everything it would have liked to improve the game, resulting in a title that failed to wow most *Lord of the Rings* fanatics. If all goes according to Surreal's plan, that won't happen again.

For *The Two Towers* (no, not the game EA released a few months back—this one's based on the book, not the movie), Surreal fully controls development across all platforms. So forget everything you experienced in *Fellowship*. "We're designing *Towers* from scratch," says Patmore. "We started in March, so we've had a nice, long ramp-up of preproduction. The number-one goal is to make a game that, regardless of its Tolkien license, is able to stand on its own."

And given the source material (the second book has a much heavier emphasis on action), a quality game certainly seems doable. "[The *Fellowship* book] was basically about getting from point A to point B," says Patmore, who sees the first *LOTR* book as more of a travelogue. "But *Towers* totally changes the structure.

FAMILIAR RING

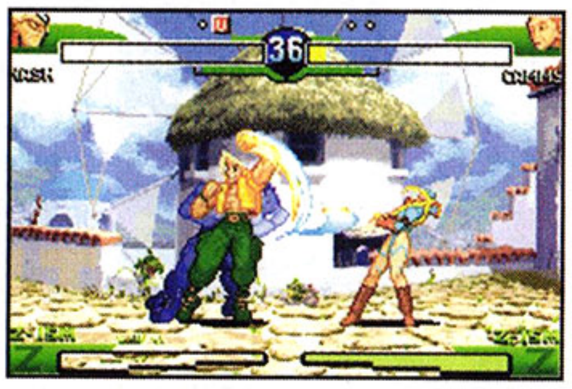
If *The Two Towers'* gameplay seems familiar, there's a reason: Surreal's president, Alan Patmore, cites several recent games as influences.

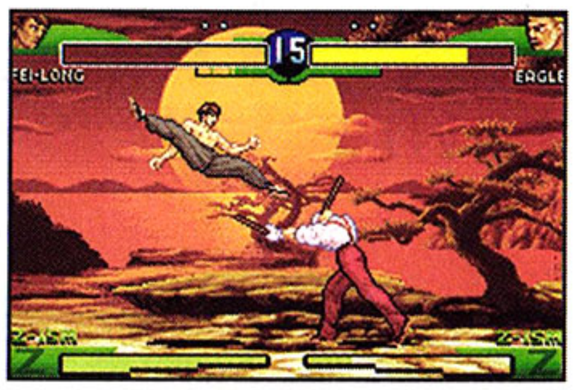
Medal of Honor: "It really inspired us in terms of epic battle—and that's one of the things we really wanted to accomplish, at least for the Helm's Deep sequence. [EA] did a terrific job of showing that sense of frantic battle."

Ico: "There's a lot of, say, Sam having to lead Frodo through the Dead Marshes. But instead of holding hands, it's more of a gamespeak thing—'stay here' or 'follow me.' This opens up a lot of opportunity for cool game design with some really cool 3D environmental puzzles."

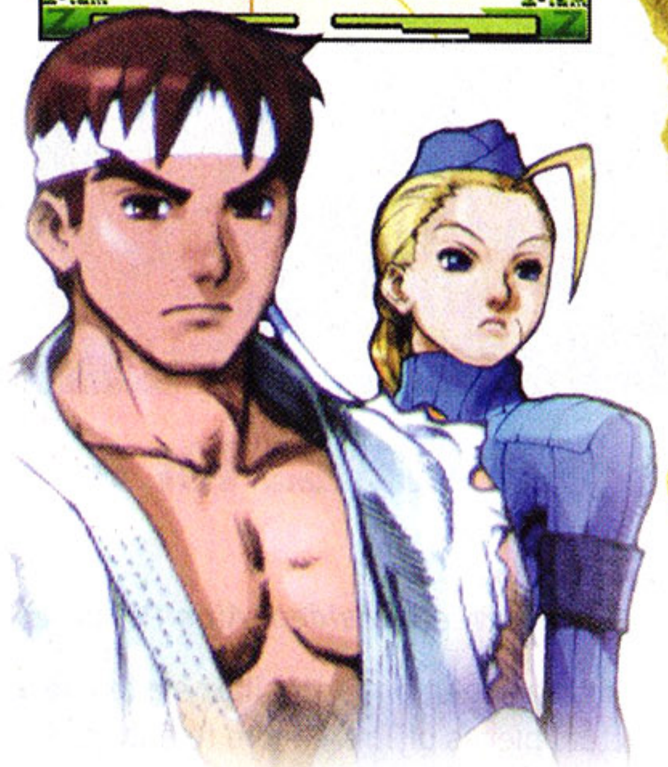
Devil May Cry: "You build up to a certain level, then you can release this special attack, which means you're kicking serious butt at that point in time."

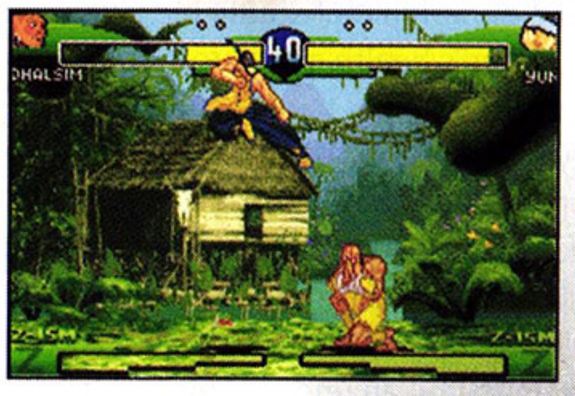
The Mark of Kri: "Orcs don't mob you [like in *Fellowship*]. They stand, kind of in circles, and then several come in to attack at once. It makes it so you're trying to think about what you want to do. I like the *Mark of Kri* concept where you're targeting them up and really thinking about what you're going to do."

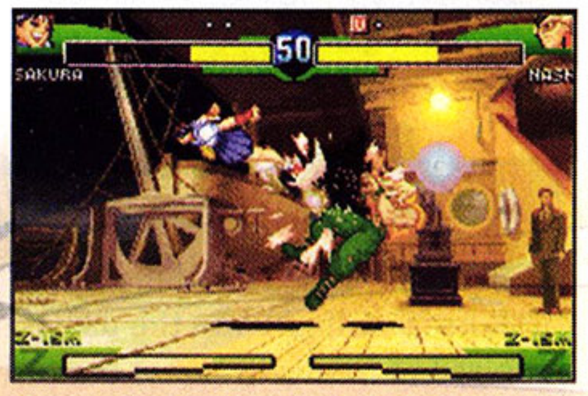


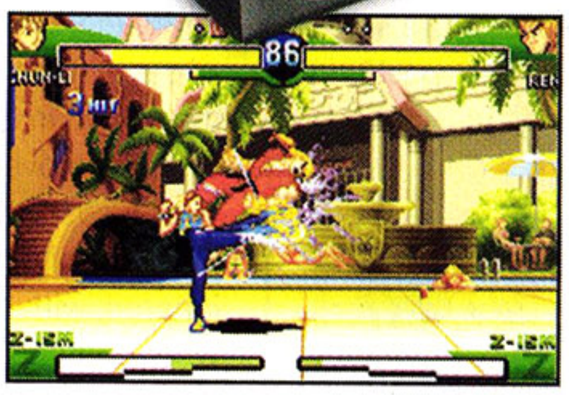


STREET FIGHTER PERFECTION









Street Fighter® Alpha 3 scores a triple K.O.! It's the most accurate translation of an arcade game to grace the circuits of the Game Boy® Advance video game system... featuring all new enhanced modes of play – including 3 fighting styles for every character. Maybe nobody's perfect. But as of today, at least one fighting game is.

CAPCOM®
capcom.com

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence

© CAPCOM CO., LTD. 1998, 2002 © CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 1998, 2002. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM LOGO are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. STREET FIGHTER is a registered trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3 is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. Nintendo, Game Boy, and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

PS2

PREVIEW

ARACHNOPHOBIA

If your only experience with *The Two Towers* is the movie or EA's game, the name Shelob probably means nothing to you. But for Surreal's *Towers*, Sam and Frodo's confrontation with this huge Hobbit-eating spider marks the climax of the game—because that's what happens at the end of the book. Director Peter Jackson opted to save Shelob for the third movie, *The Return of the King*, because otherwise, as he told *Entertainment Weekly*, "there'd be very little for Frodo and Sam to do."

All of the environments have been built strictly to the measurements Tolkien gives in the books. Some of them aren't as big as you'd expect.

It's no longer 'get to...'—it's much more mission based. We're painstakingly going through the book in terms of mission structure."

Surreal is determined to incorporate as much of the action described in the book as possible. The company is at least doubling—maybe even tripling—the number of playable characters (a final number is still pending). So far, only Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli, Frodo, and Sam have been confirmed, but we're promised even more—one or two of which may surprise you.

The sheer number of characters involved, however, presents Surreal with a potential quest-buster: How can they create the RPG element they feel the game needs? "If you play as Aragorn for just two hours throughout the entire game, how can you really build a character with stats or anything?" Patmore says. "And upgrading is another concern. I mean, Aragorn starts with [his legendary sword] Anduril—it's not like you can get a better sword!" The solution: An Artifact system in which you find actual pieces of Tolkien lore to enhance a character's abilities or permanent status (an Elven brooch increases Aragorn's health meter, for example).

"Towers just makes for a better game."

—Surreal President Alan Patmore

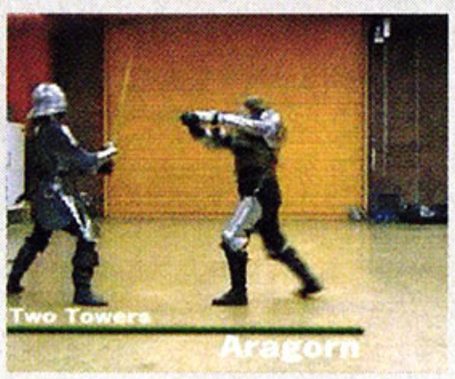
The Two Towers even promises to convey the book's emotional intensity. "You've got this cool contrast in gameplay," Patmore says. "You've got the Helm's Deep section, which is very macro with massive battles, and you've got a very personal level when you're with Frodo going through the Dead Marshes."

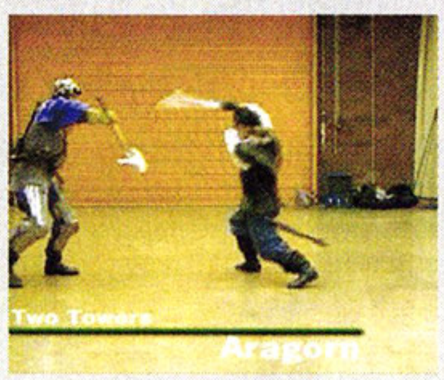
Actually, "macro" might be an understatement if Patmore's description of the Battle of Helm's Deep is any indication. Unlike EA, Surreal is rendering the entire fortress so that it's open for your exploration. "We built the walls according to the measurements described by Tolkien," says Patmore. "We found out he was smokin' crack when he designed it, though, because there's no way you can fit that many people into the area he described! As you're running up, towers are exploding, walls are blowing up, guys are falling off the wall—all sorts of stuff is happening in your peripheral vision." At times, you'll even see what appears to be as many as 4,000 warriors battling on the screen in the distance, Surreal claims. Throw in a vastly improved, combo-based combat system, and you've got battles that'll make your Middle-earth move.

Meanwhile, the Hobbit half of the story is not ignored, with stealth once again playing a major role whenever you don virtual furry feet—only it's more in-depth this time. Not only does Surreal promise technical improvements over *Fellowship*'s stealth-oriented parts, but the story also lends itself to more suspenseful gameplay. "There's a big difference between sneaking into [the entrance to Mordor at] Cirith Ungol versus hanging out in Hobbiton," laughs Patmore. "*The Two Towers* just makes for a better game."—*Chris Baker*

KNIGHTS OF THE KITCHEN TABLE

In order to capture the realistic movements of medieval melee combat for *Towers*, Surreal called upon the assistance of a group of local experts. More than just a band of freaks in armor that attends Renaissance fairs, this band of freaks in armor actually knows what it's doing. "They really do whack each other with real weapons!" says Patmore, whose team is using the knights for motion-capture sessions. "They actually study and perform real combat moves." And the best part? You can hire this group of ruffians for your very own party or gathering. Just don't forget the mead! Visit seattleknights.com for details...or a good laugh.





When you can't hire the dudes who teach Hollywood actors how to fight in the movies, you go with the next best thing: guys who teach themselves how to fight in their parents' basements.

Live the dream with one of over 300 D-1 schools.

Send Cinderella home early.

Take it to the net, then cut it down.

NCAA 2K3 COLLEGE BASKETBALL

SEGA SPORTS

segasports.com

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

POWERED BY ESPN

COLLEGIATE LICENSED PRODUCT

USE SCHOOL AS A VERB ON THESE PLATFORMS

NINTENDO GAMECUBE. XBOX PlayStation.2

Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Sega, the Sega logo, and Sega Sports are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. © SEGA CORPORATION, 2002. All Rights Reserved. www.segasports.com. The "Officially Licensed Collegiate Products" label is the exclusive property of The Collegiate Licensing Company. The "Collegiate Licensed Product" label is the property of the Independent Labeling Group. All names, logos, team icons, and mascots associated with the NCAA, universities, and conferences are the exclusive property of the respective institutions. NCAA, the NCAA logo, and NCAA Basketball are trademarks or registered trademarks of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. All rights reserved. Made and printed in the USA. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. ™, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. ESPN is a trademark of ESPN, Inc. ESPN branded elements © Disney. Screenshots taken from Xbox.

PS2

PREVIEW

Xenosaga: Episode I

Publisher:	Namco
Developer:	MonolithSoft
Players:	1
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	75%
Release:	Feb. 25, 2003
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.namco.com

The Good: It's a PS2 RPG that can hang with *Final Fantasy X.*

The Bad: Too many cinemas might bore some players.

And The Ugly: The innuendo-filled lesbian relationship between Shion and KOS-MOS. No wait, that's not ugly...that's rad!

Role-playing fans tired of bawdy barmaids and me-too fantasy clichés will dig the serious sci-fi settings.

Shortly after the rebirth of the RPG (in 1997, when *Final Fantasy VII* made it cool to talk about hit points), Squaresoft brought another epic role-playing bonanza to the U.S. PlayStation—a bizarre title called *Xenogears*. It didn't sell the truckloads of copies *FFVII* did, but it was a moderate hit that resonated with RPG fanatics. Well, at least with those who had 80 hours to kill and a deep understanding of comparative religion. It was truly heavy stuff, packed with philosophical undertones that made it more than just your average adventure. The guys behind *Xenogears* left Square and managed to take their concepts with them when they set up shop at Namco under the name MonolithSoft. Not unlike *Star Wars* guru George Lucas, *Xeno*-creator Tetsuya Takahashi envisioned a colossal tale told in six parts. *Xenogears* actually represents chapter five of the overall tale; this game, *Xenosaga Episode I*, is where it all begins.

Don't worry if you're new to the *Xeno* series, 'cause *Episode I* takes place roughly 10,000 years before the events of its PS1 predecessor. In the world of *Saga*, space travel, synthetic humans, and technology-derived magic are all commonplace. You take control of Shion Uzuki, a perky young engineer working for Vector Corporation, and develop defenses against deadly aliens known as the Gnosis. You're joined by KOS-MOS, Shion's latest (and sexiest) defender—a superpowered android that does wonders with rail-guns. Of course, you'll amass a ragtag team of crazy characters over the course of the 60-hour quest. Battling the Gnosis constitutes much of the game's initial plot, but later, a conflict between the Vector Corp. and the Galactic Federation grabs the spotlight.

The gameplay borrows some of the best elements of *Final Fantasy*, *Chrono Cross* (PS1), and, of course, *Xenogears*. You'll traverse complex 3D dungeons á la *FFX*, but here you can use Shion's weapons to interact with the environment. For example, if you shoot an explosive canister near a wandering enemy, it'll significantly weaken your foe prior to battle. Since you can see enemies walking around the dungeons, you can avoid battles with some crafty sneaking or flat-out running. The actual battles play out a lot like those in *Chrono Cross*: turn-based combat where different buttons correspond to different attacks. Expect some impressive, flashy special effects for the heavy-duty attacks and blistering spells, as in any worthy RPG.

A heavy sci-fi mood and weighty religious references set *Xenosaga* apart from the RPG pack, but the surprising number of cinemas puts it firmly in a class unto itself. Yeah, lots of games have cut-scenes, but this one ups the ante with hours of noninteractive movies, many lasting over 30 minutes. Creator Tetsuya Takahashi proudly explains, "*Xenosaga* could be turned into a drama if you extracted all the story portions and put them on video." Sounds a little scary, right? Well, at least these cinemas feature quality voice acting and impressive visuals. Still, prepare to break out the popcorn between dungeons.

—Shane Bettenhausen

ADDING UP TO AN A.G.W.S.

Just like in *Xenogears*, the characters in *Saga* sometimes say to hell with hand-to-hand combat, and instead jump inside the comfy confines of skyscraper-sized robots. Meet the Anti-Gnosis Weapon Systems (A.G.W.S.), towering metal monstrosities that look like a cross between Evangelions and Gundams (two 'bots from popular anime shows). Battling inside these metallic monstrosities plays much like the normal fights, except bigger, and with lots of pretty explosions.

SHE PRESSED AGAINST HIM
HE COULD NOT RESIST HER NEEDS
HE WOULD DIE FOR HER

XBOX

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

PC CD

PlayStation 2

"I COULDN'T PUT IT DOWN."
-ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

"...ONE OF GAMING'S MOST SENSUAL BABES..."
-PLAY

"...A FAST AND FURIOUS ACTION/ ADVENTURE THAT OOZES STYLE."
-GAMEPRO

BLOODRAYNE.COM

BLOODRAYNE™

IN STORES NOW

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Strong Language
Violence

TERMINAL REALITY

MAJESCO

www.majescogames.com

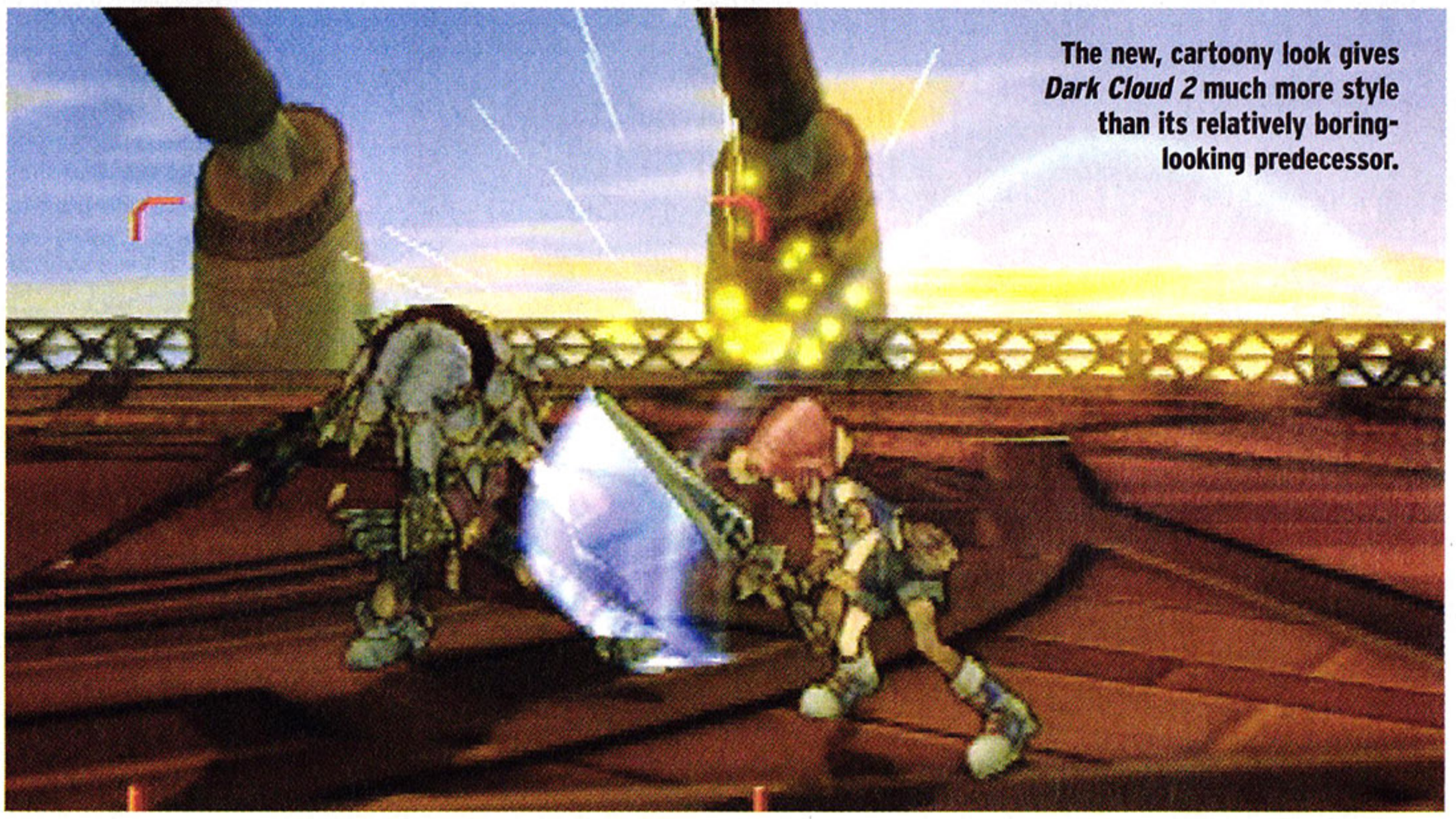
Screenshots taken from Xbox version of the game. ©2002 Terminal Reality. Developed by Terminal Reality. Licensed to and published by Majesco Sales, Inc. ©2002 Majesco Sales, Inc. All Rights Reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. ©2001 Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

PS2

PREVIEW

Dark Cloud 2

Publisher:	Sony CEA
Developer:	Level 5
Players:	1
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	90%
Release:	Feb. 18, 2003
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.playstation.com
The Good:	Beautiful graphics and art style.
The Bad:	Battles are still a little repetitive.
And The Ugly:	Monica, after transforming into a giant rat.



The new, cartoony look gives *Dark Cloud 2* much more style than its relatively boring-looking predecessor.

Chocobo my ass. These guys know how to ride in style.

Monica can transform into monsters and use their abilities in battle.

The original *Dark Cloud* managed to successfully meld several types of gameplay together to make a unique and engaging RPG that, while a bit rough around the edges, was unlike anything that had come before it. This sequel can hardly be called revolutionary, but *DC2* does improve upon many of the things that made the first game great, while adding a host of new features and a completely new, cartoony look that gives the series some much-needed style.

Dark Cloud 2 brings back the first game's innovative Georama system, which allows you to build a town in real time by plopping down trees, roads, houses, and other objects, and then jump right in to explore your new surroundings. In *DC2*, the town-building process is more robust, thanks to a grid-free interface and a much wider range of customization features and town parts. Since an important part of the game involves traveling forward through time to see how your handiwork affects the future, you'll need to build carefully.

Dungeon exploration once again plays a key role in *Dark Cloud 2*. Combat in the original *DC* grew repetitive quickly, so this time, the two main characters have a wider variety of unique skills and abilities. For example, Max can utilize mechanical vehicles, while Monica can use magic and transform into monsters. Objects on the field can be picked up and thrown, and each character has more moves at their disposal (jumping attacks, back flips, etc.). As a result, the pacing is better, and fighting your way through level after level of randomly generated dungeons no longer feels like a chore.

We've barely touched upon everything *Dark Cloud 2* has to offer, but needless to say, if you were a fan of the original, you'll find plenty to like here. With its deep gameplay, multiple minigames and diversions, and truly beautiful graphics and sound (the jury's still out on the English voice acting, mind you), it should make for a great holdover until *Final Fantasy X-2* finally strolls along.

—John Ricciardi

DARK DIVERSIONS

FISHING

A favorite in the original, the fishing minigame is back. This time, not only can you catch fish, but you can also have them race against each other in the aquarium. It's like *Gran Turismo*, only with fish. (OK, it's nothing like that at all.)

GOLF

Who would've thought that playing golf in an RPG could be so much fun? The two go together like chocolate and peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, Simon and Garfunkel! Next thing you know, they'll be summoning dragons in *Tiger Woods 2004*.

TAKING PICTURES

You won't find any posters of half-naked chicks in *Dark Cloud 2* (for that, you need *Metal Gear Solid 2*), but you will find that practically every character in the game will dish up a unique pose if you try to snap their photo. Say cheese!

NO TV?
NO PROBLEM!

*Presenting the Hip ScreenPad™, a personal screen controller with a high resolution, tilt adjusting TFT display screen. The Hip ScreenPad™ features rubberized grips, a headphone jack, stereo sound and backlighting for low light applications. Perfect for gaming and watching DVD movies!**

available for:

Playstation® 2

GameCube™

Xbox™

Hip ScreenPad™

The newest innovation in gaming hardware

www.hipgearproducts.com

*When used in conjunction with a console that supports DVD playback feature.

Playstation®2, GameCube™ and Xbox™ trademarks are the property of their owners: Sony Entertainment Inc., Nintendo and Microsoft Corporation respectively. Hip Gear™, Hip ScreenPad™ logos are trademarks of Hip Interactive Inc.

PS2

PREVIEW
GALLERY

Devil May Cry 2

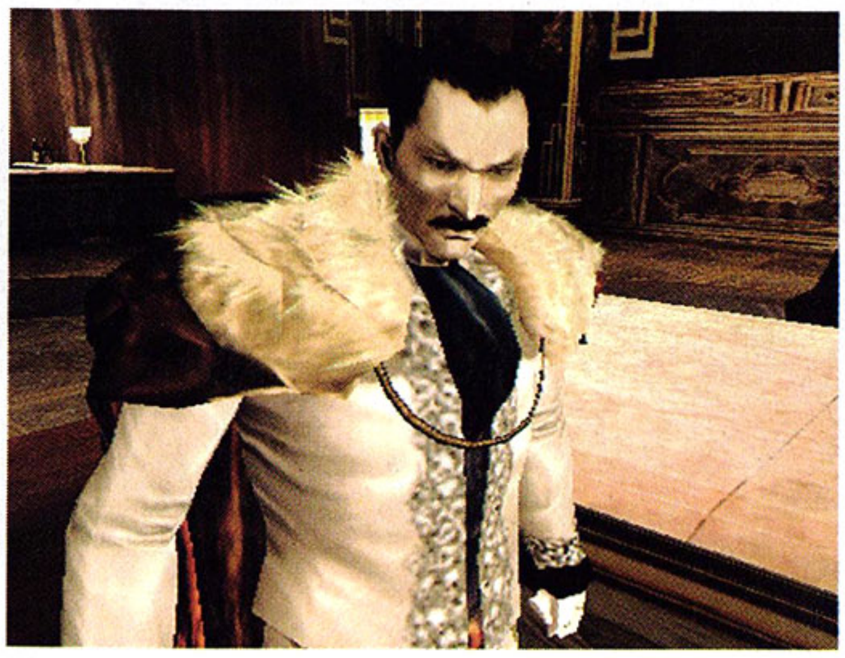
Capcom • Jan. 28, 2003 • Also On: None

If the screens for this sequel to Capcom's best-selling action/adventure look familiar, it's not surprising: The basic *Devil May Cry* formula hasn't been tampered with in part 2. As half-man, half-demon, gun-for-hire Dante, you still run, jump, and fly through levels, cleaving evil demons up close with your giant sword or blasting them from a distance with a gun in each hand. And you still gather colored orbs from defeated foes in order to unlock new areas or acquire healing items and special moves.

As for what's new, if you played the original *Devil May Cry*, you can probably guess; most of the changes derive from fan feedback, both good and bad, about the original game.

For example, we all loved the over-the-top, Hong-Kong-action-film style of Dante's attacks in *DMC1*. *DMC2* adds more outrageous moves, including a wall climb (Dante can run up and leap off any vertical surface, flipping around mid-flight to land behind enemies), independent targeting for his two guns (check out his behind-the-head, no-look blasting in the bottom-right pic), a roll maneuver when he gets knocked down, and a longer hang-time for aerial maneuvers. In the first game, we wanted to control Trish, Dante's non-playable, leather-clad sidekick and love interest. *DMC2* introduces Lucia, a knife-wielding bad mama-jamma, complete with her own weapons and moves, whom you can control. And finally, we all hoped for larger battlefields to fight in, without the camera troubles and combo-stifling walls that came with the close quarters of the first game. *DMC2* features more open and outdoor areas where the camera smoothly follows the action instead of cutting back and forth, as well as different paths to reach parts of levels.

Dante's demon form returns; transform at any time (as long as you've combo-killed enough bad guys to fill up the juice on your meter) and unleash more powerful attacks from the air.



We know three things* about this mystery man: 1) He is an evil boss character; 2) he is voiced by *Smokey and the Bandit* and *Cannonball Run* star, Burt Reynolds; and 3) he's got a sweet 'stache.

Since Lucia isn't packing heat like Dante is, she uses throwing knives to attack long-range enemies.

OK, OK, now he's just showing off.

*To be honest, No. 1 is an assumption based on how he looks and No. 2 is just our own wishful thinking. But we're 100-percent certain about No. 3.

MORE MISSIONS.
MORE MAYHEM.
MORE WRECKLESS.

ALL-NEW FOR THE
PLAYSTATION®2
COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT
SYSTEM AND
NINTENDO GAMECUBE™

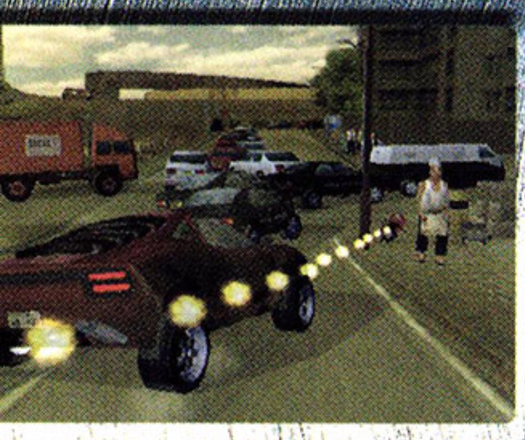
Enter to win cool prizes at
GOWRECKLESS.COM

ORIGINAL HIT AVAILABLE FOR XBOX™ VIDEO GAME SYSTEM

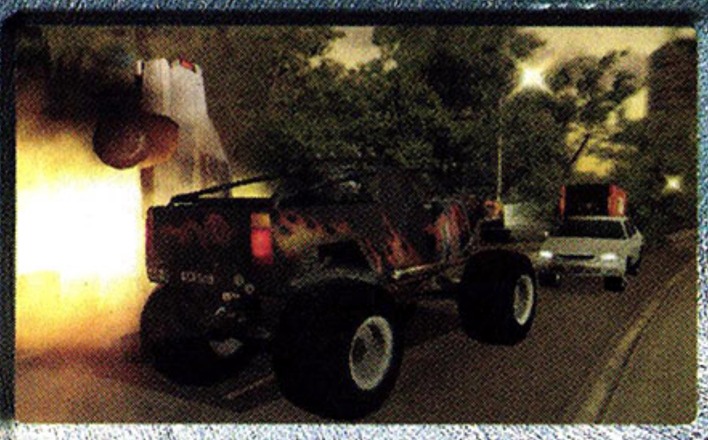
WRECKLESS
The Yakuza Missions™

"...smash into pretty much anything you see...get that euphoric feeling that comes rarely in life."
— PSM, October '02

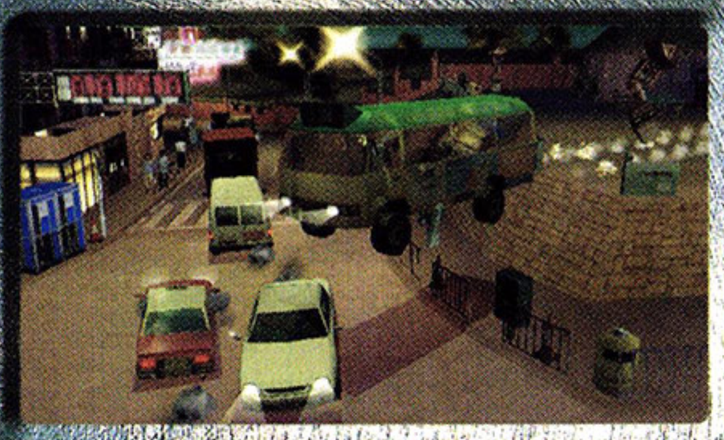
Screenshots taken from PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system gameplay.



Blast away enemies with new CAR-MOUNTED ROCKET LAUNCHERS and blast away friends in MULTIPLAYER showdowns.



Drive down the mob in high-speed pursuits, then explore the city at your pace in EXCLUSIVE FREE ROAM CHALLENGES.



Take on the cut-throat Yakuza mafia as a top-level cop or spy in 40 INSANE MISSIONS —double the number of the original hit.

For even more high-impact action, DON'T BRAKE FOR PEDESTRIANS. Now if they get in your way, they're gonna pay.

TEEN
T
Violence
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

BUNKASHA GAMES

PlayStation.2

XBOX

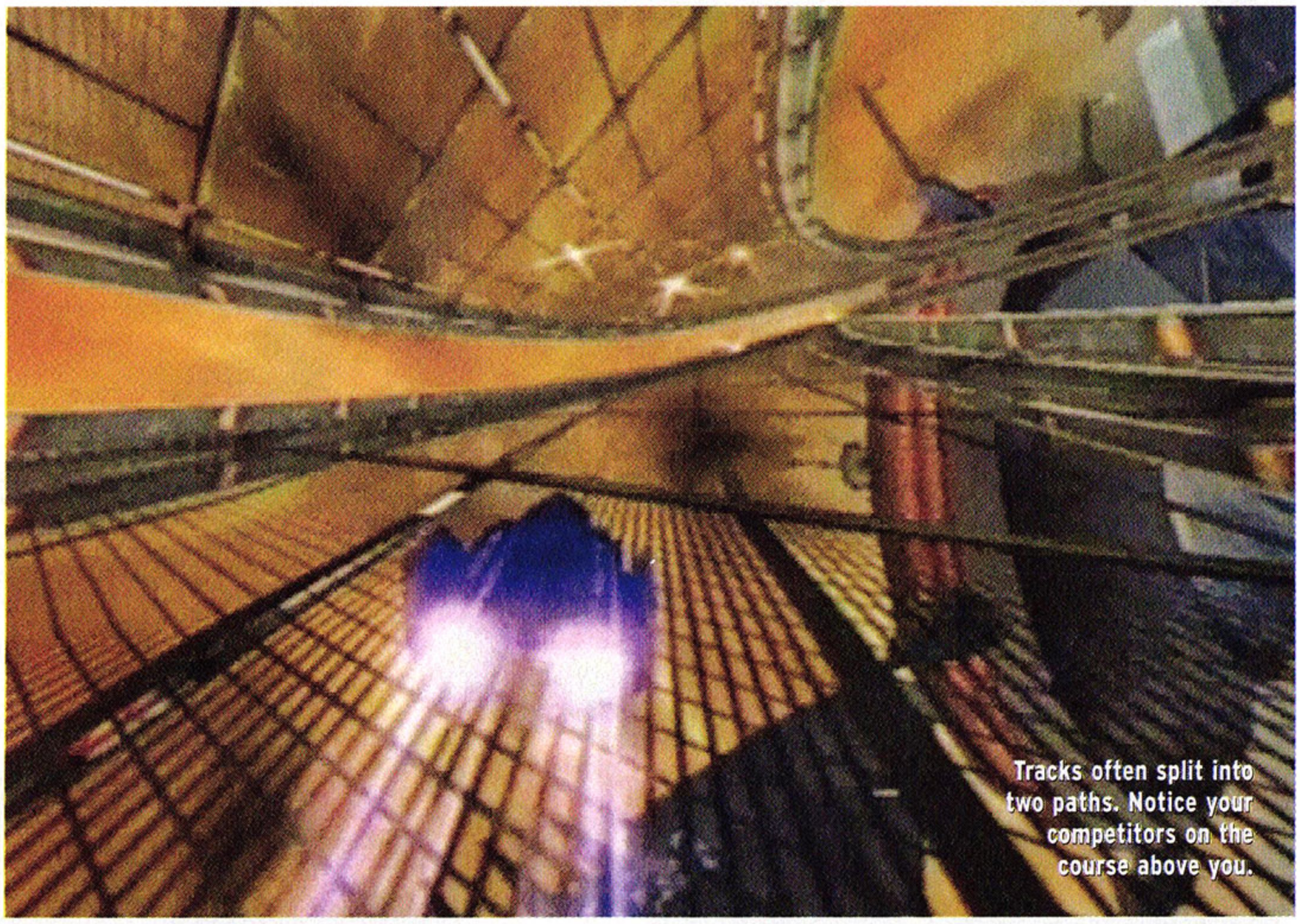
ACTIVISION.

© 2001-2002 Bunkasha Publishing Co., Ltd. Portions © 2002 Activision Publishing, Inc. PlayStation 2 game engine © 2002 Traveller's Tales. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Wreckless and Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions are trademarks of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment systems with the NTSC U/C designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2001 Nintendo. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners.

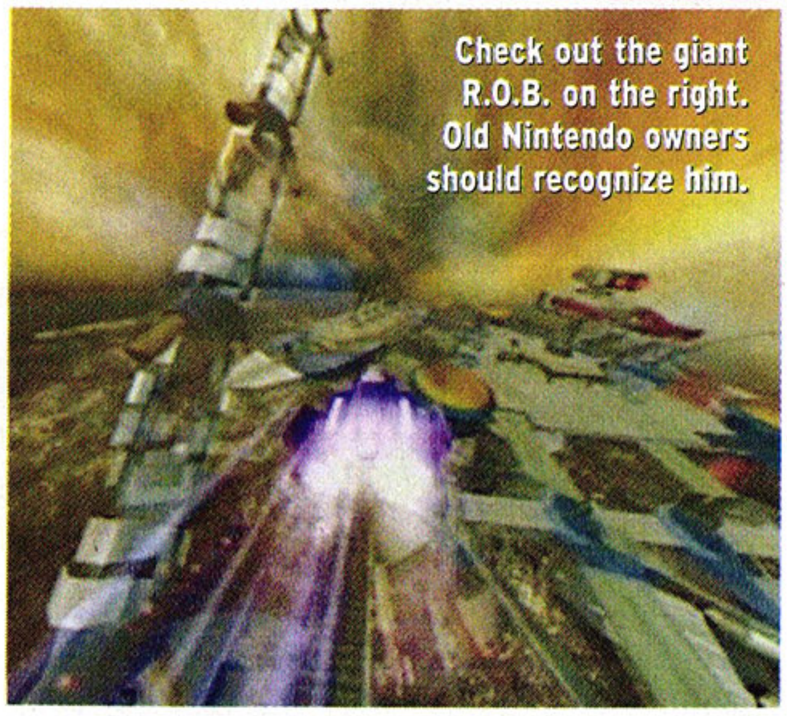
activision.com

F-Zero GC

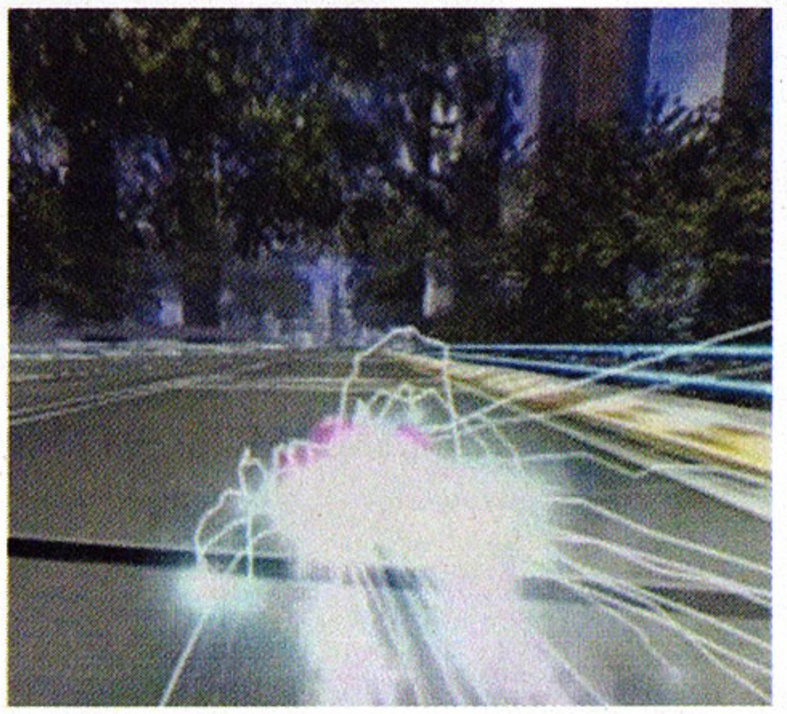
Nintendo • 2003 • Also On: None—*Wipeout* may have popularized futuristic hover racing, but *F-Zero* started the genre back on Super Nintendo. Sega's Amusement Vision team (known for the excellent *Daytona USA* on Dreamcast and *Super Monkey Ball* on GC) is developing this newest incarnation of the game simultaneously for GameCube and Nintendo's arcade board, Triforce. It's working hard to do the series justice by including massive, twisting tracks with plenty of speed boosters and huge (and we mean *huge*) jumps. *F-Zero* should be an intense racing experience as you trade paint with over 28 competitors at several hundred miles per hour. It also boasts detailed backgrounds and special effects that complement the graphics.

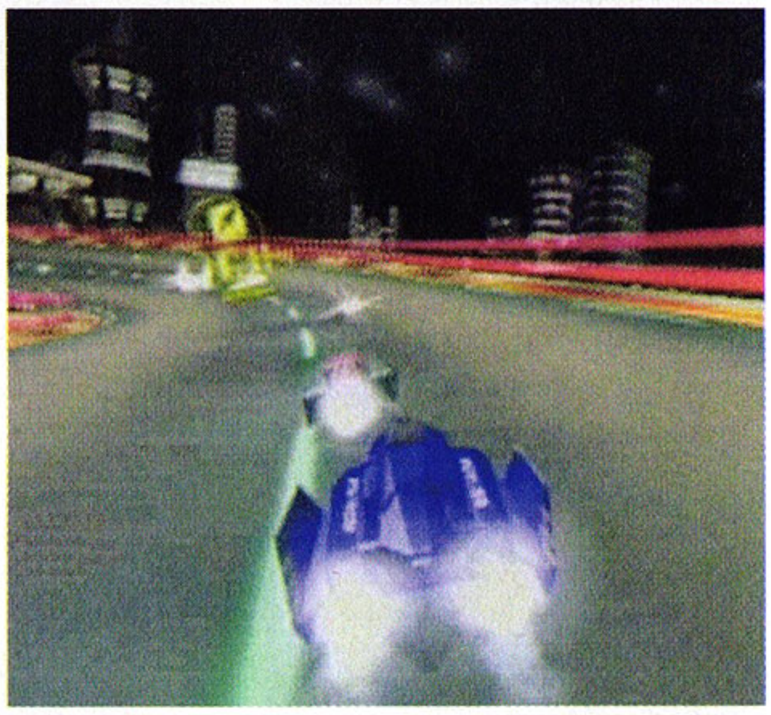


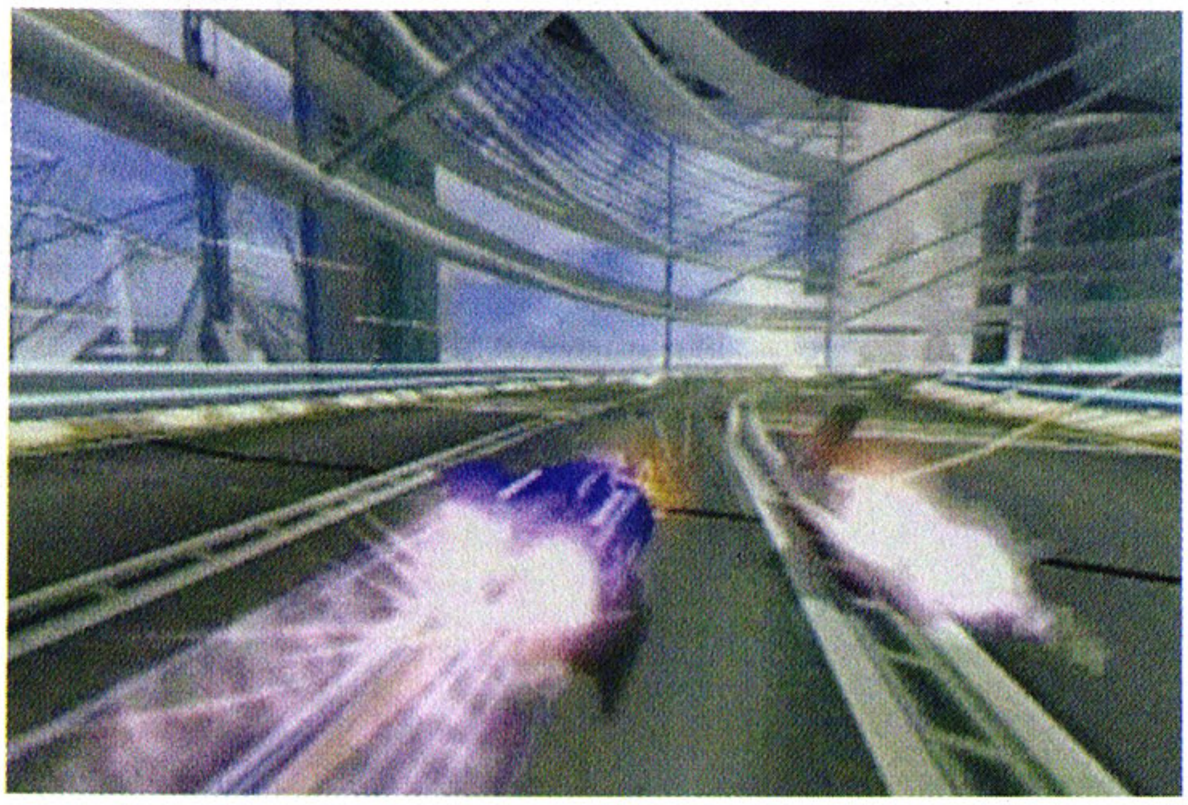
Tracks often split into two paths. Notice your competitors on the course above you.

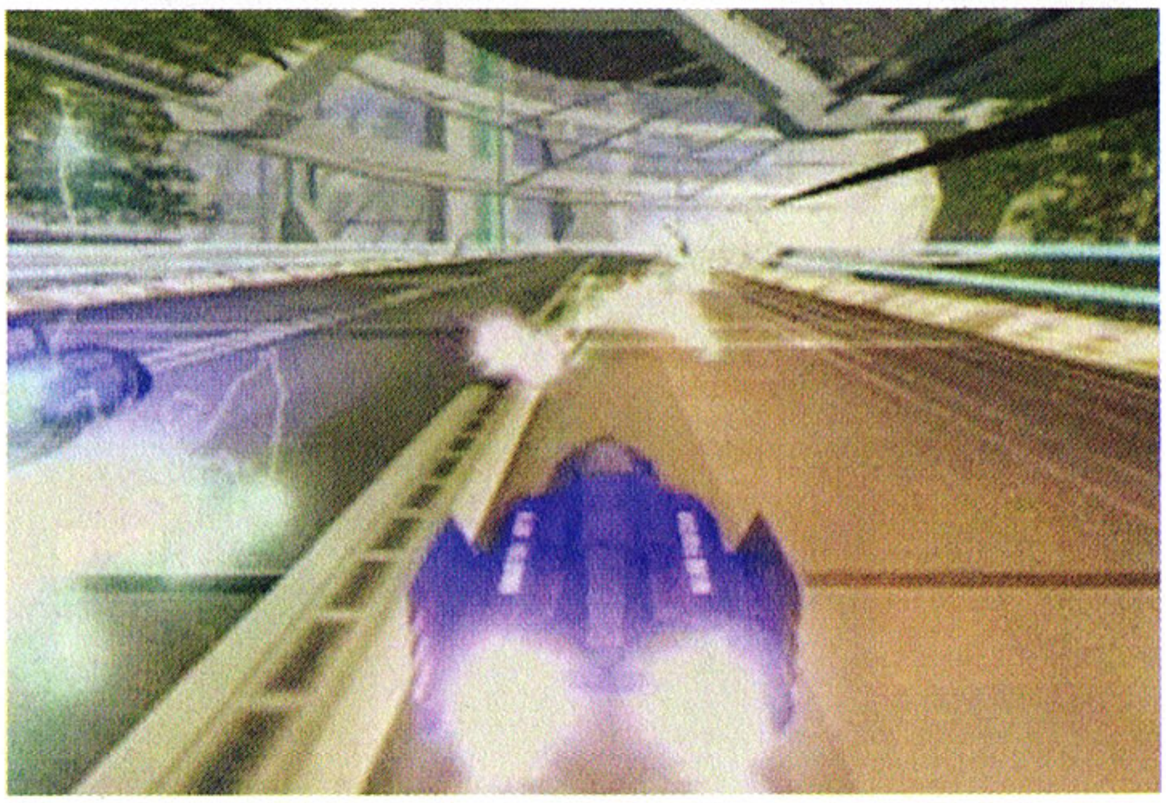


Check out the giant R.O.B. on the right. Old Nintendo owners should recognize him.







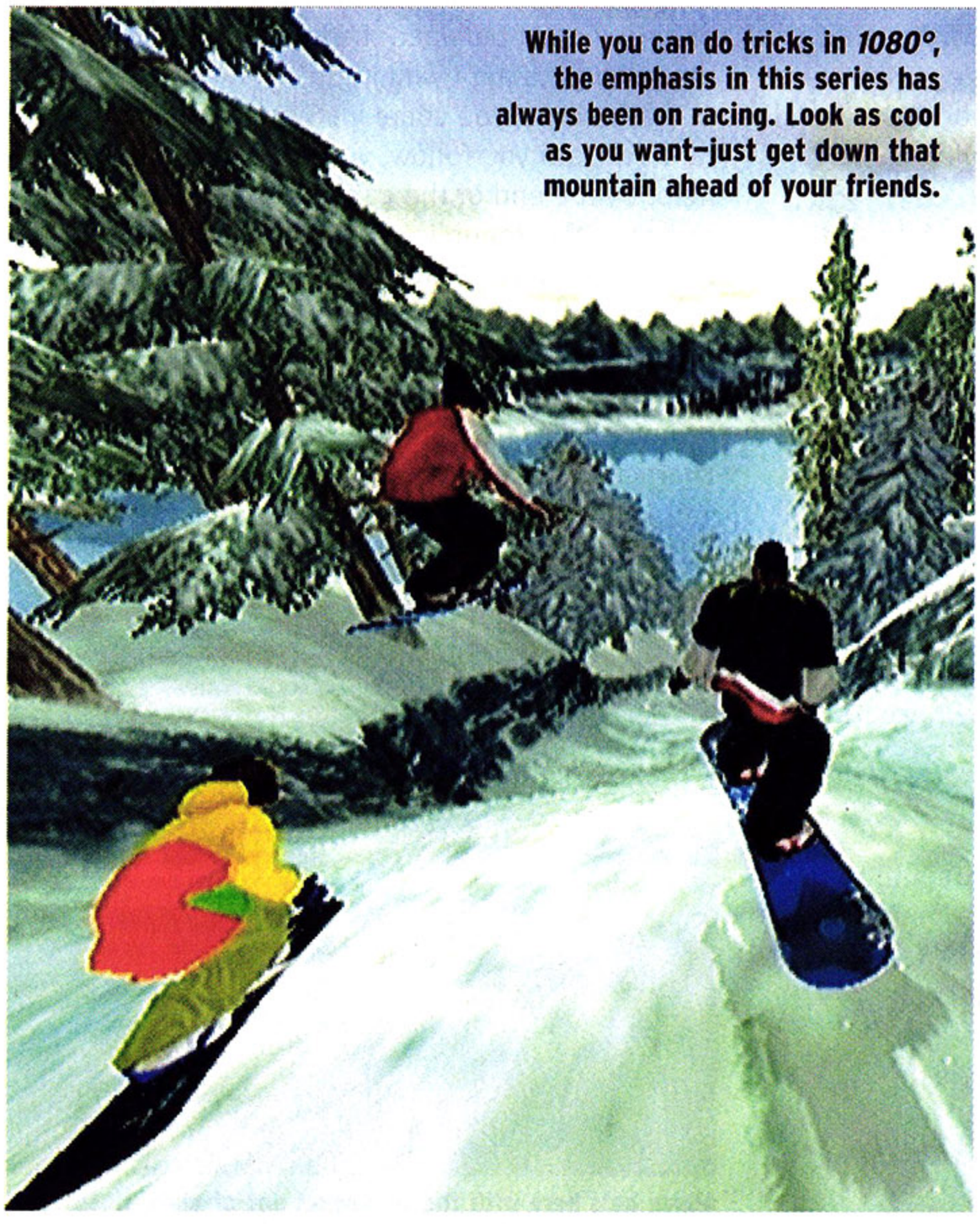


1080° Avalanche

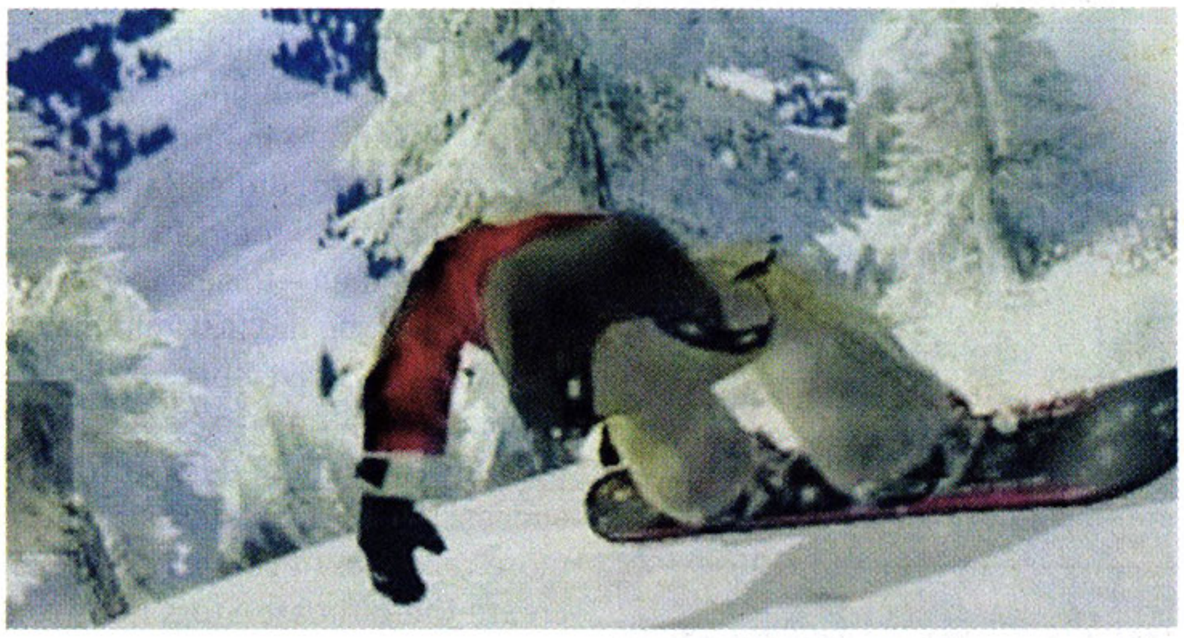
Nintendo • February 2003 • Also On: None—Although skateboarding rules extreme sports, snowboarding has always been a close second when it comes to videogames. And since *1080°* on N64 was one of the last great snowboarding games, fans are pumped about this new GC version. As the title suggests, the game promises pounding hearts as avalanches bear down on boarders attempting sick tricks at top speeds. To avoid a face full of snow, players need to leap over giant chasms, duck and weave through mazes of falling trees and tumbling boulders, and smash through the windows of occasional houses and lodges.

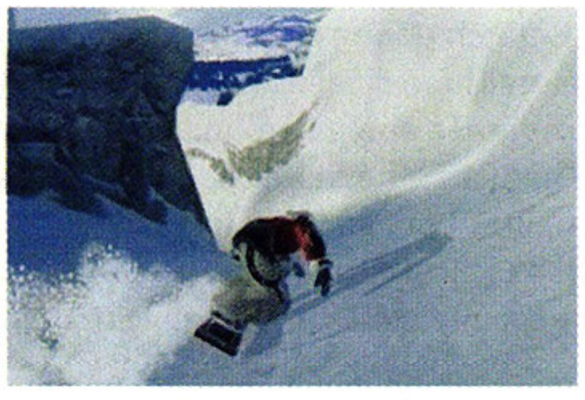
The unique part, though, is the control scheme. Just jumping and jamming on the Trick buttons isn't enough. Players will need to use a Land button as they touch down on the powder after a big jump. If they screw up, a balance meter will appear (like when you grind in *Tony Hawk* games), giving the player a chance to right themselves before doing a header into the snow. This neat play mechanic helps *1080°* stand out from other games.

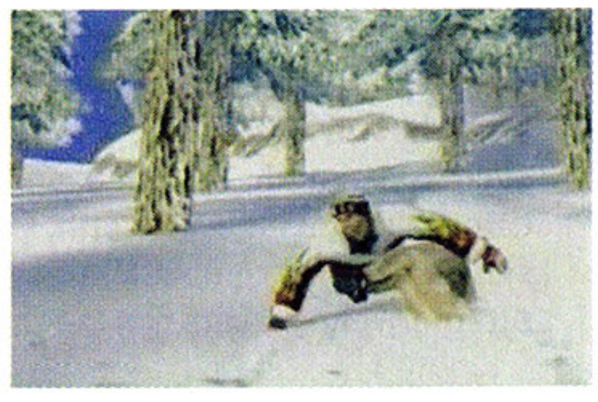
A note to *Extreme Ops* fans; there are no terrorists to kill while snowboarding in *1080°*.



While you can do tricks in *1080°*, the emphasis in this series has always been on racing. Look as cool as you want–just get down that mountain ahead of your friends.



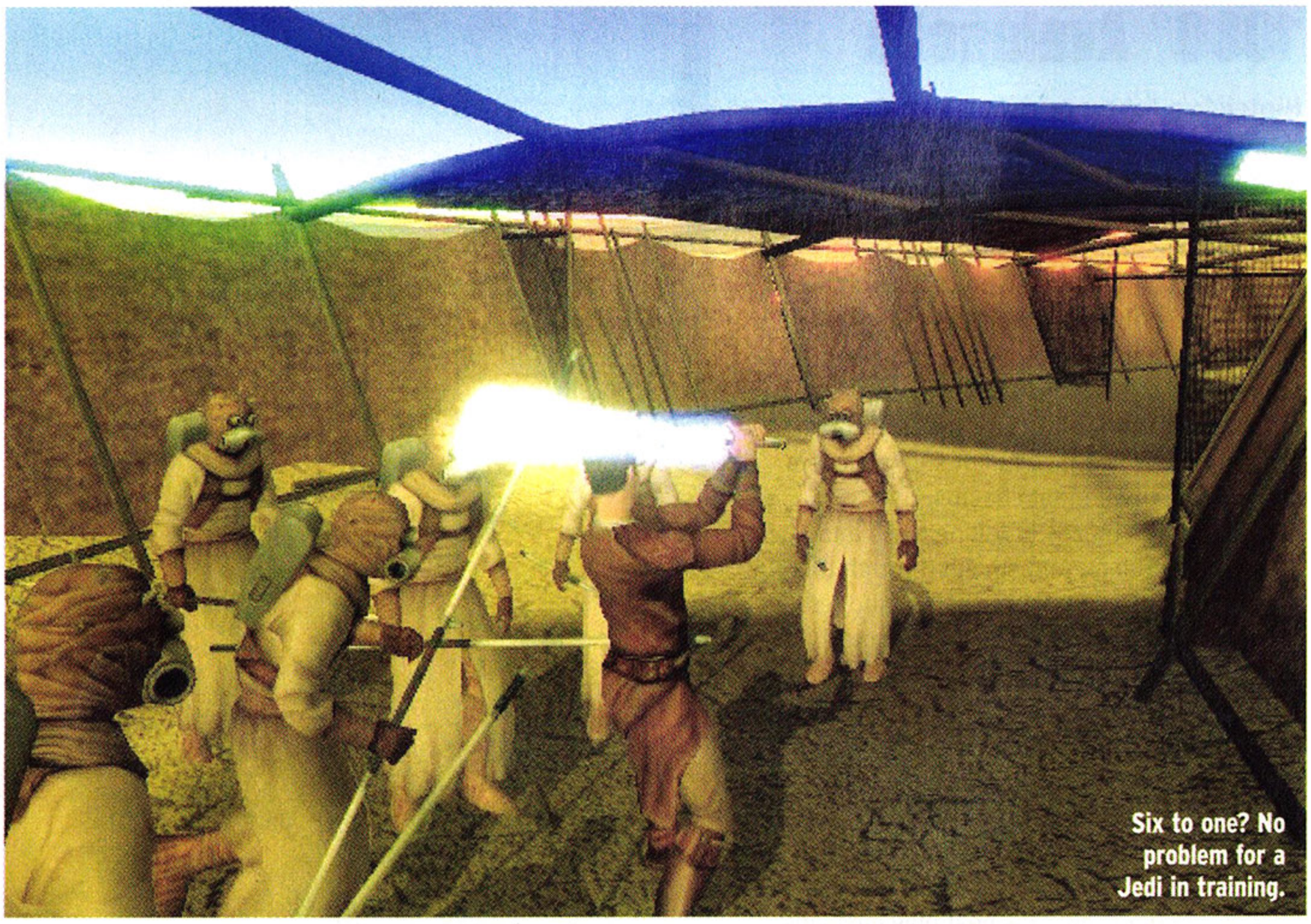




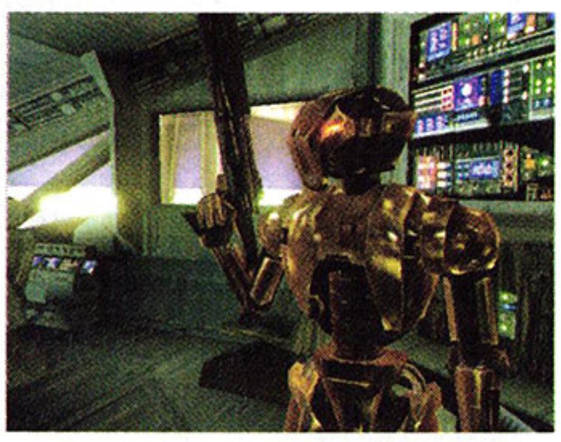
PREVIEW

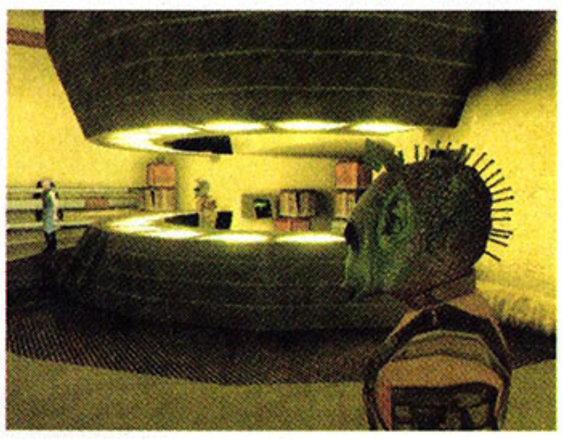
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic

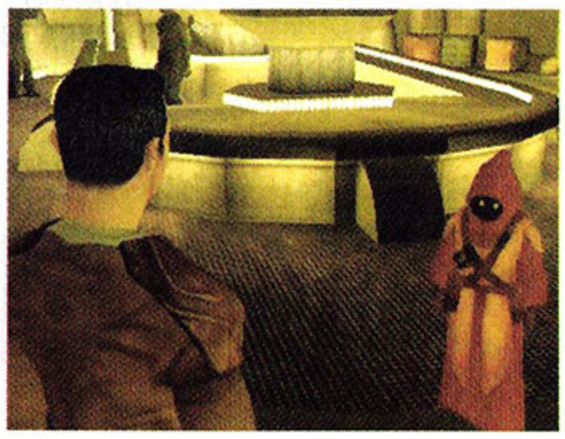
Publisher:	LucasArts
Developer:	BioWare
Players:	1
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	85%
Release:	Spring 2003
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.lucasarts.com
The Good:	The total lack of Gungan characters
The Bad:	The total lack of *any* characters from the movies
And The Ugly:	The total lack of good dialogue in *Episode II*



Six to one? No problem for a Jedi in training.







A long time ago, in a galaxy not so far away, LucasArts began creating *Star Wars* videogames to suit all kinds of players. Fans of racing games and simulations, of strategy titles and action/adventure hybrids and 3D shooters have all been catered to. But so far, role-playing gamers have been left in the cold.

That was then—this is now. *Knights of the Old Republic* will be the first role-playing game set in the *Star Wars* universe.

LucasArts turned to Edmonton, Canada-based BioWare–makers of such critically acclaimed and successful RPGs as the *Baldur's Gate* series and, more recently, *Neverwinter Nights* on the PC—to create the ultimate *Stars Wars* role-playing experience. *EGM* made the trek to the Great White North to spend some serious hands-on time with this ambitious *Star Wars* game, due out on Xbox sometime this spring.

Knights of the Old Republic (*KOTOR*) occurs roughly 200 generations, or about 4,000 years, before the events of the *Star Wars* films. It's a time of epic conflict between the Jedi and the Sith, and the good guys ain't winning.

That's where you come in. Since your actions dictate the path you follow, you pick which side to help. By the end of the game, you may be heroic and save the Republic, or become an evil force within the galaxy. Before you start your journey, though, you can spend time creating your custom character (see sidebar below), or you can simply jump into the game with a few button taps.

Since *KOTOR* is a party-based game, other allied characters—such as humans, aliens, or droids—will join your traveling troupe throughout this 50-plus hour adventure. In fact, the many subquests

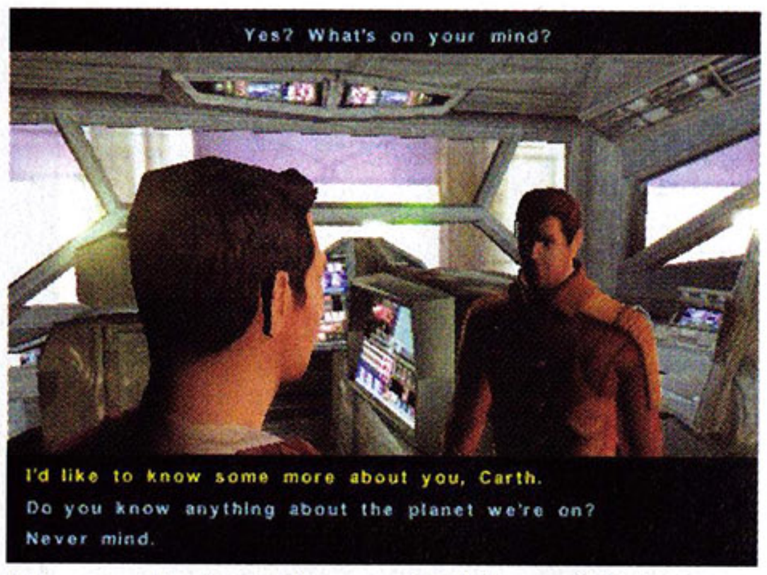
Place bets here with the somewhat out-of-place Hutt.

CHARACTER CREATION

Hardcore RPG enthusiasts will be pleased to know it's possible to create and customize a *KOTOR* protagonist from scratch. Along with the ability to change a character's physical appearance, there are three screens devoted to his or her abilities. The Attributes page allows players to spread around points in six categories, such as Strength, Dexterity, and Charisma; the Skills screen features eight categories, including Stealth, Computer Use, and Persuasion; and the Feats screen handles combat abilities like Critical Strike and Flurry Attacks. Alternatively, players can tap the Recommend button to go with default choices.

MINIGAMES GALORE

As if the lengthy single-player adventure wasn't enough, BioWare has thrown in some minigames for good measure. One allows players to man the turrets in a first-person-perspective dogfight in space. A second is the old pod race on Tatooine (like in the Episode I movie and *Star Wars Racer*). Although we didn't see them, there's also Gladiator arena-style fights (*Episode II*, anyone?) and a gambling game in which players can use cards they've collected throughout the adventure to play against other characters.



The game features thousands of lines of dialogue, all voice-acted by professional talent.

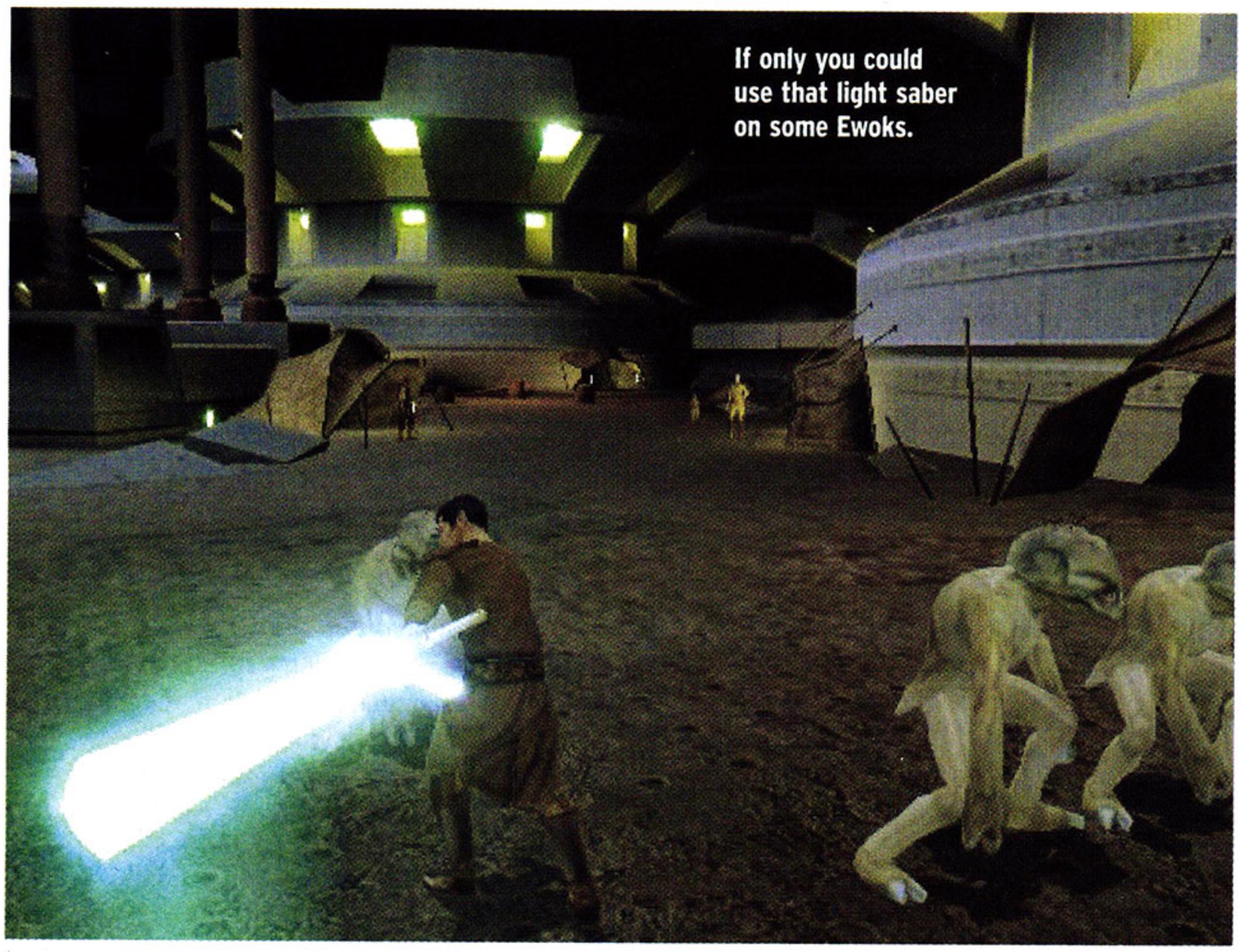
will vary depending on your party members, as will the dialogue, story twists, and cut-scenes, adding up to a highly replayable RPG.

LucasArts says this is the biggest project it's ever been involved with in terms of size and scope. And from what we've seen, we believe it: There are 10 worlds to explore, more than 100 prerendered and in-game cut-scenes, over 12,000 lines of spoken dialogue (yes, spoken dialogue, with lip-syncing characters), and multiple minigames (see sidebar above). There's even a significant love interest, but BioWare is mum on the details.

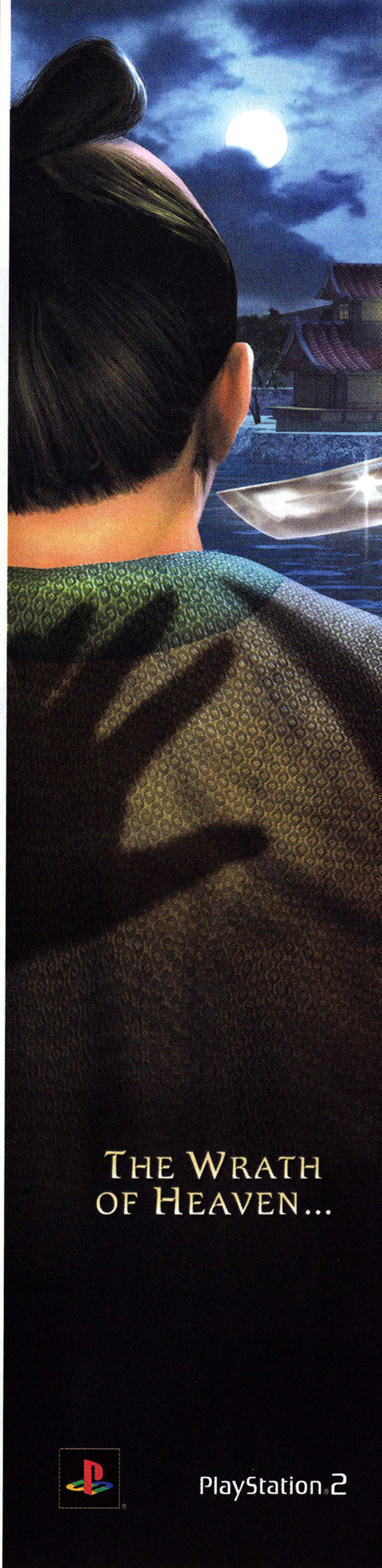
The central hub in *KOTOR* is Ebon Hawk, a huge spaceship where you meet other NPCs (non-player characters), swap party members, receive assignments, and begin traveling to the various planets. Some worlds will be familiar to *Star Wars* fans (such as sandy Tatooine), while others have been alluded to but never before seen (e.g., Chewbacca's home world, Kashyyyk).

While exploration and puzzle solving are integral to the gameplay, the combat will keep most players glued to the tube until the

You may be heroic and save the Republic, or become an evil force within the galaxy.

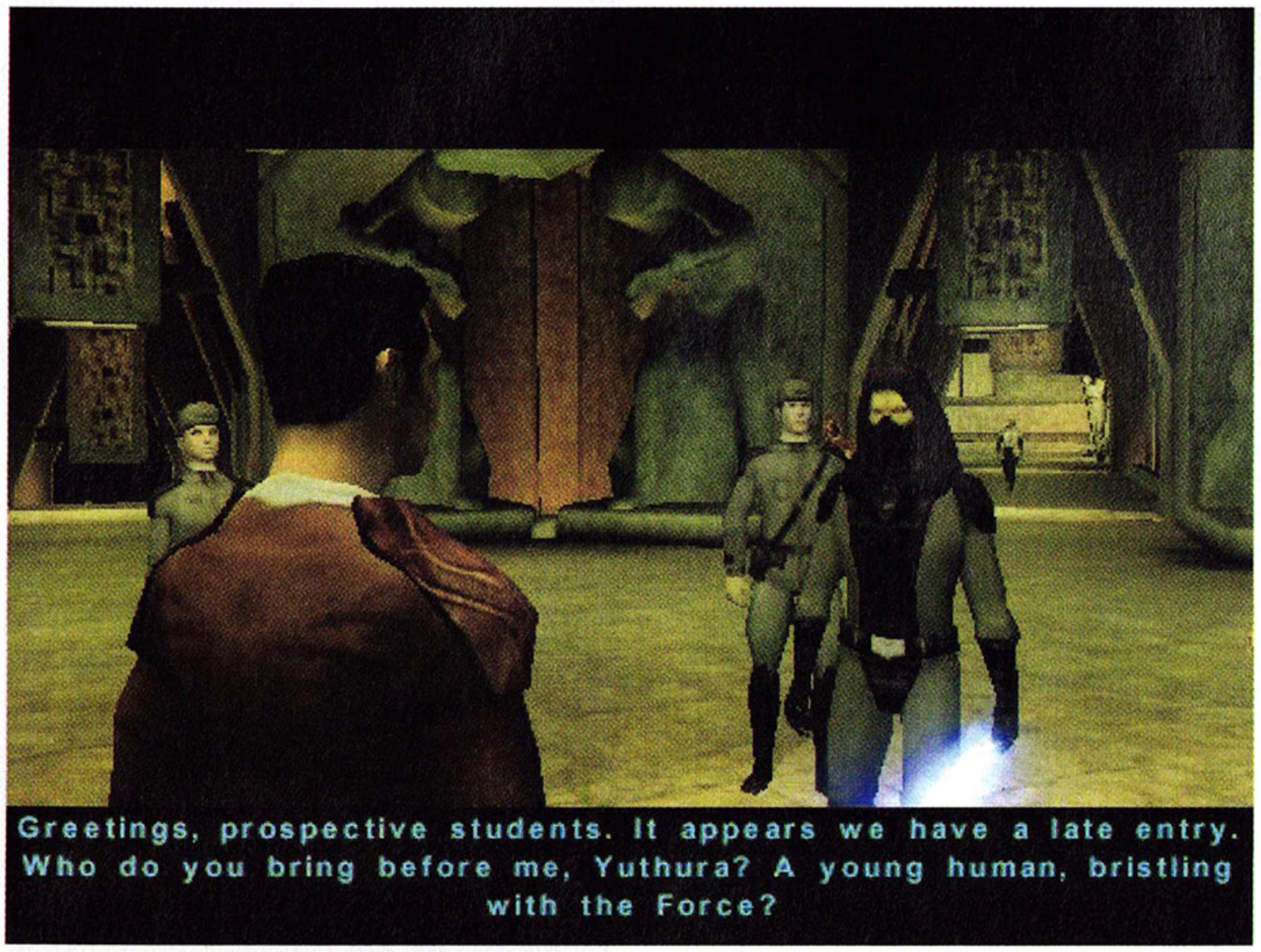


If only you could use that light saber on some Ewoks.

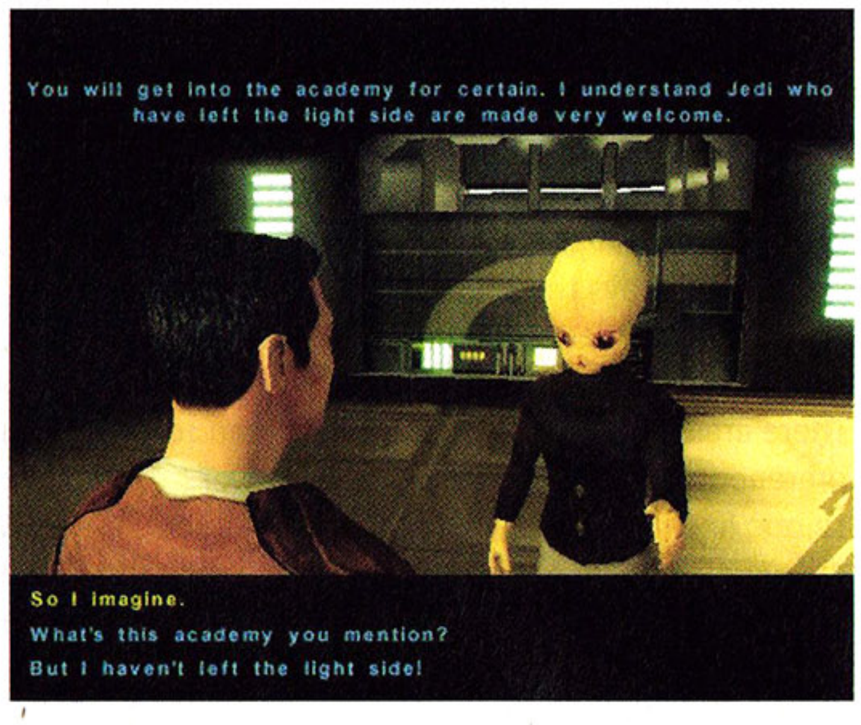


THEY'RE NOT DOLLS!

In 2002, Hasbro started a new toy series called Star Wars Unleashed. These deluxe action figures are super-detailed and depict each character in one of their defining moments from the movies. New for 2003 are Darth Vader (with Anakin's face revealed) and Princess Leia in the oh-so-sexy gold bikini. Unfortunately, she won't be fully poseable.



Choices you make in conversation directly affect the way the game's story plays out. Let the Force be your guide.



BioWare hopes KOTOR has what it takes to be Final Fantasy for Xbox.

wee hours of the morn. The battle system is turn-based, but the player has options for fighting enemies (see sidebar below for details).

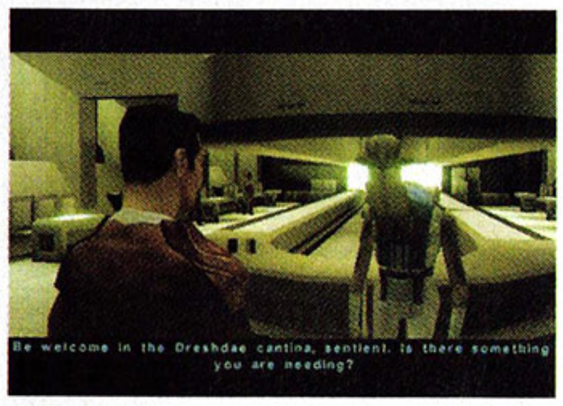
If a party member dies during combat, he or she will be resurrected at the end of the round. An exception occurs when all party members are annihilated—then, it's game over. Thankfully, *KOTOR* players can save the game wherever and whenever they like.

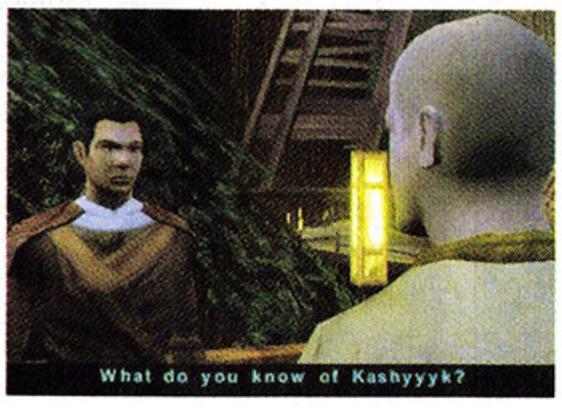
Graphically, the game's coming along nicely. *KOTOR* uses a third-person perspective—ideal for a party-based game. Visual touches such as swooping camera angles and plenty of cut-scenes help reinforce the cinematic experience.

Both indoor and outdoor areas are highly detailed, with an effort to make the player feel he or she is walking around a living, breathing world. Pedestrians go about their business, spacecraft come and go, and every character has something to say. Outdoors, the wind and lighting effects impress, as tarps, sand, and grass blow in the wind, and sunlight glares off objects.

BioWare has been quiet regarding Xbox Live support. We won't see any multiplayer, but the company strongly hinted at possible downloadable content at some point. In particular, players may be able to log online and download new episodes, weapons, and other data.

BioWare says it hopes *KOTOR* has what it takes to be *Final Fantasy* for Xbox. Time will tell, but from what we've seen, *Knights of the Old Republic* has a fighting chance to be one of the finest Xbox-only titles of '03. —*Marc Saltzman*



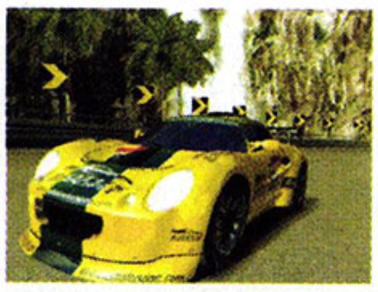


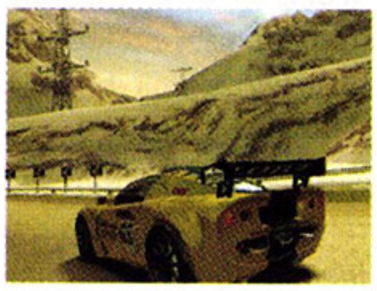
FIGHTING IN KOTOR

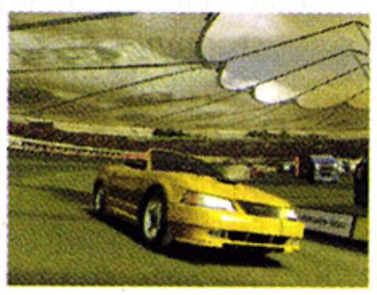
The turn-based combat in *Knights of the Old Republic* looks similar to that in past BioWare role-playing games, but players can attack enemies without pausing the action, if desired. That is, once characters equip their weapons and Force powers (from 50 total), they can fight without stopping to assign orders (which is also an option). As a neat twist, combat goes in slow-motion when the player brings up the Action menu to swap weapons, heal characters, and so on.

PREVIEW GALLERY

Apex



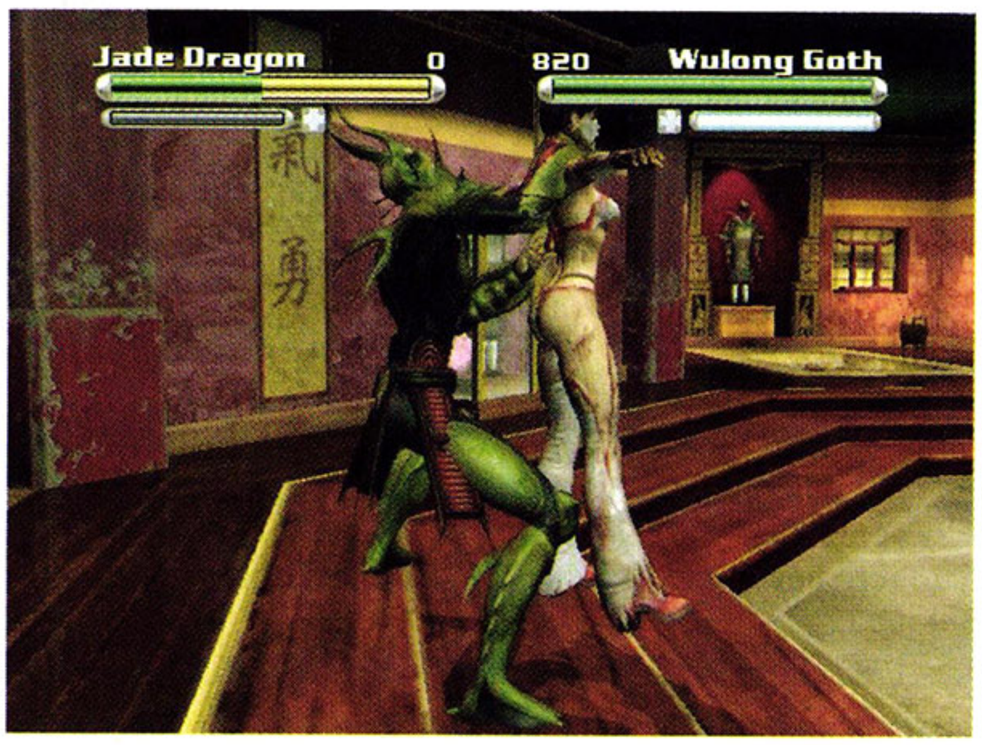


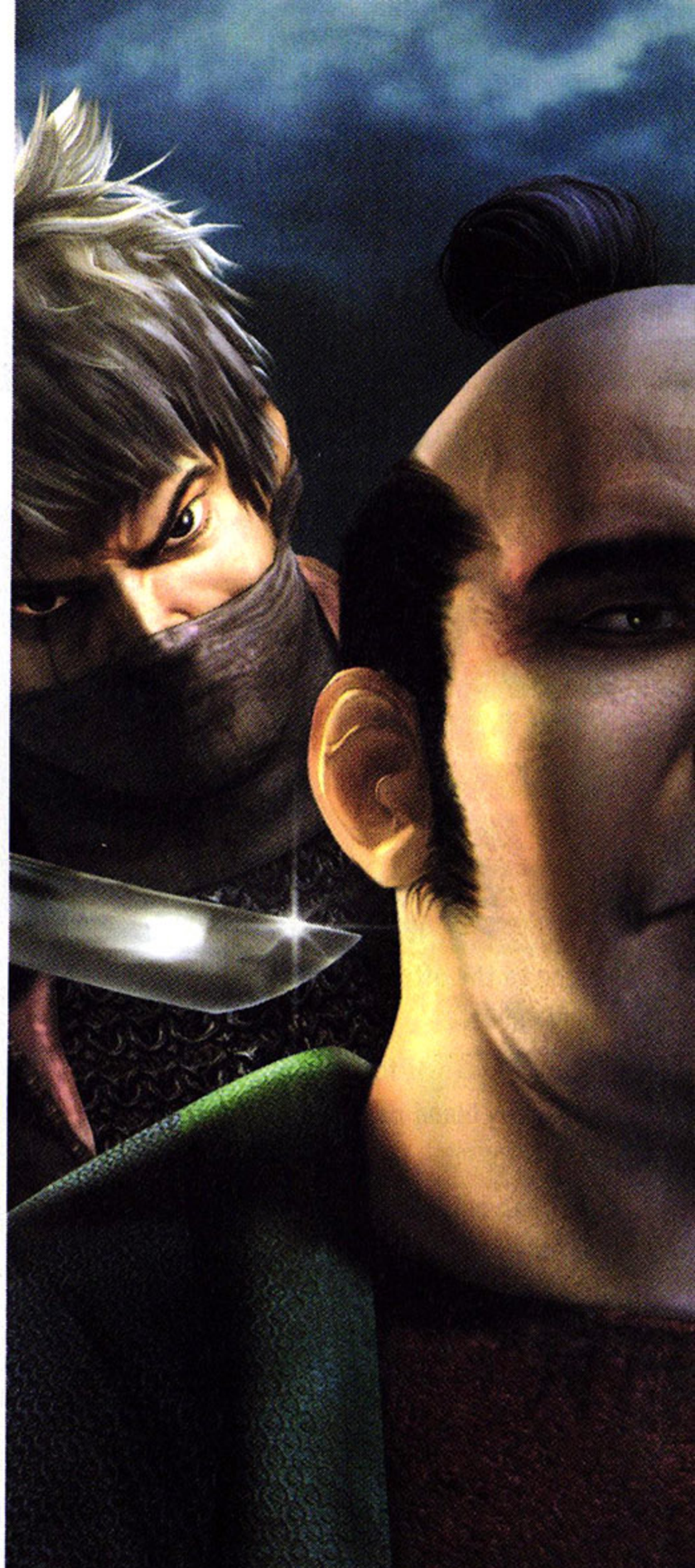


Atari • March 2003 • Also On: PS2—The racing genre is so crowded these days, if you don't have some sort of gimmick that makes your game stand out, you might as well load up the trailer and go home. In *Apex*, rather than buying a stable of cars to race, you actually help design vehicles from a collection of preexisting parts. Then, you play the role of test driver as you compete against rival companies in manufacturer races. It's the most unique idea we've seen in a racing game in a long time.

Tao Feng: Fist of the Lotus

Microsoft • March 2003 • Also On: None—Once upon a time, two pals (Ed Boon and John Tobias) shook up the world of fighting games by creating *Mortal Kombat*. Its digitized decapitation and murderous mayhem set the template for a decade of brawling. The two masterminds have since parted ways, but the fight lives on: Boon recently helmed *MK: Deadly Alliance*, and Tobias is finishing up *Tao Feng*. Not surprisingly, *Tao Feng* bears a passing resemblance to Midway's fatality-packed fighter. You'll find similar fantasy-meets-martial-arts characters, precise combos, and grisly special moves, but some all-important gameplay tweaks could propel it past its progenitor. For example, individual limbs can sustain damage, so if your opponent keeps blocking with his arm, it'll get bruised, bloody, and, eventually, broken. Also, the fighting arenas offer tons of space for combat and interactive elements. You can swing around poles and slam your foe against a wall—truly brutal stuff.





...IS CLOSER THAN IT APPEARS.

TENCHU®
WRATH OF HEAVEN™

Live by honor. Kill by stealth.

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for Rating Information.

ACTIVISION®
activision.com

© 2002-2003 Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Activision and Tenchu are registered trademarks and Wrath of Heaven is a trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Licensed for play on the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system with the NTSC U/C designation only. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are properties of their respective owners.

PREVIEW

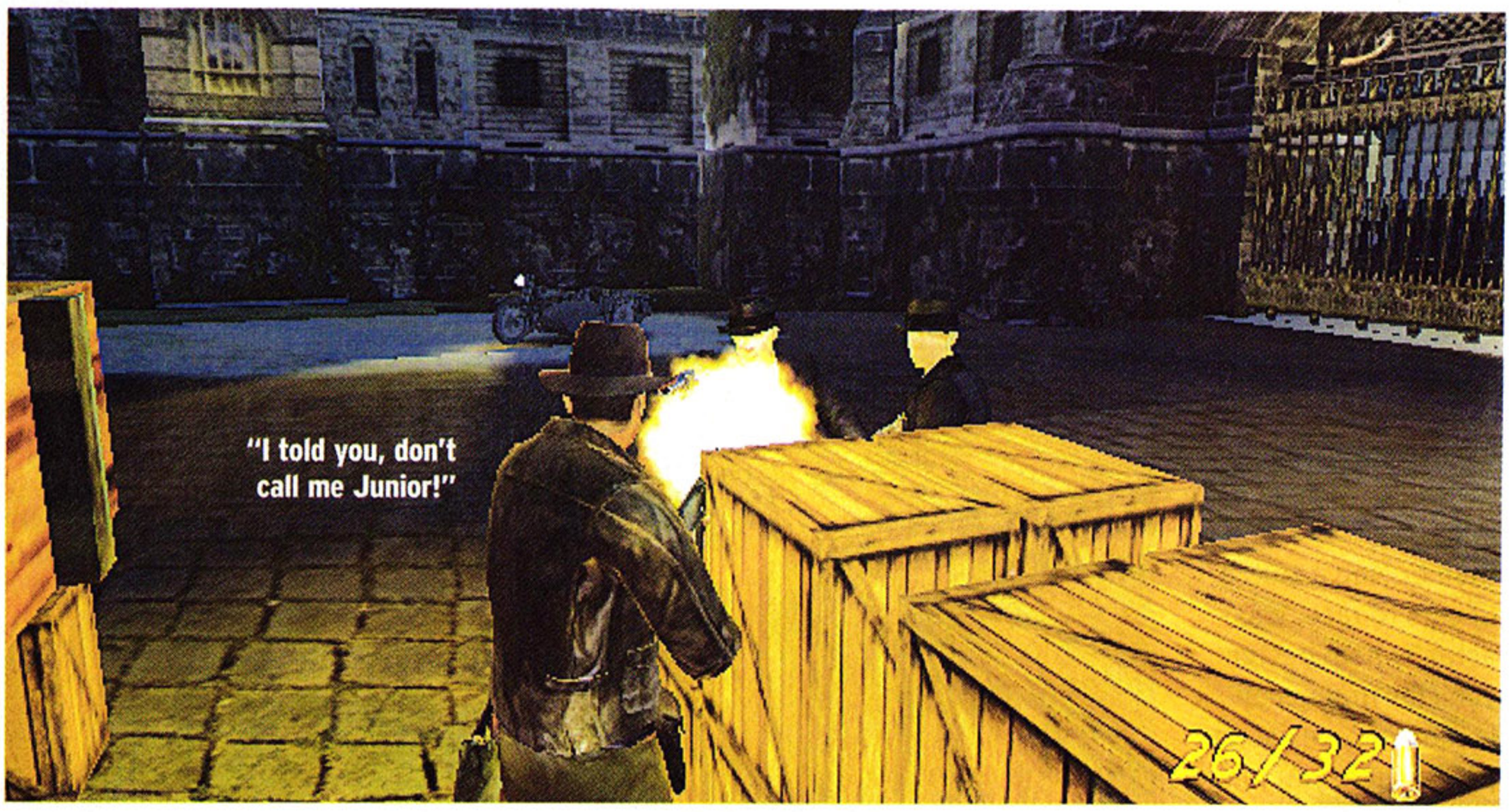
Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb

Publisher:	LucasArts
Developer:	The Collective
Players:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	90%
Release:	February 2003
Also On:	PS2
Web Address:	www.lucasarts.com

The Good: It's the next-best thing to the oft-rumored fourth Indy movie.

The Bad: It forces you to solve too many bland puzzles.

And The Ugly: The thought of a 60-year-old Harrison Ford doing all of Indy's stunts



Above: Prague at night. Indy will have to use his powers of observation–or at least his powers of cracking a whip and shooting Nazis with a German luger.

Harrison Ford looks like a dried peach these days, but that's not stopping Lucas and Spielberg from considering a fourth movie starring the original Indiana Jones and his onscreen father, Sean Connery. It might actually come together for a 2005 release, but until then, the fedora-wearing hero will be whip-cracking his way onto Xbox and PS2 in an action game worthy of the license.

Indy's goals are to find the mysterious Heart of the Dragon artifact, stop the Nazis from interfering like they always do, and win the love of a gorgeous babe–not necessarily in that order. You'll visit places like Sri Lanka, China, Prague, and various Asian countries as you dispatch evil Germans by whippin', shootin', and smashin' beer bottles over their heads. And, just like in the movies, not all the violence takes place in caves and old temples. On one mission, ponytailed mobsters ambush a tuxedo-wearing Indy at the home of a local dignitary, then chase him through the streets of Hong Kong, guns blazing.

The scenery throughout the game looks wonderful. Colorful buildings adorned with neon signs, waterfalls roaring into stony caverns, dark and foreboding statues—it's as varied and exotic as anything you've ever seen in the films. And Indy's versatile, too. He can go toe-to-toe with comic-book Nazis, fighting them off with a shotgun and German lugers, or avoid confrontation by diving into a nearby well. During combat, he can grab just about any weapon, from machine guns to chair legs. Or, he can detonate explosives, man stationary guns, and, of course, mix it up with his trusty whip. It all adds up to some intense action.

The developers change up the action every now and then, too. Dr. Jones will take a break from basic combat once in a while to jump into a moving vehicle and shoot pursuing motorcycles—kind of like *007 NightFire*. In short, Indy will be the fully realized action star we all know from the flicks.

Of course, there's always a danger that tomb-raiding games will devolve into mindless puzzle-solving and nonstop combat, but this one looks different. Sarcastic Indy one-liners, jungle music that sounds vaguely like the *Raiders of the Lost Ark* soundtrack, Asian warriors screaming ferocious taunts...it's all here to give this license a decent videogame that's not just a *Tomb Raider* rip-off. *–John Brandon*

BULLWHIP BASICS

You can get through most levels by splattering the bad guys with your shotgun, but fans know this is not Dr. Jones' style. If you really want to be like Indiana Jones, try using his bullwhip—it's the handiest item in the game.

Using the whip as a weapon allows you to keep a safe distance from enemies. It doesn't deal out much damage, but it's a smart choice when you don't want to risk losing health in a fistfight.

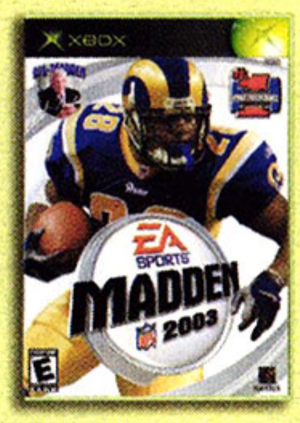
If you swing the whip left to right, you can snap weapons out of your opponents' hands (just like in the opening to *Raiders of the Lost Ark*). It's a handy tool to have when you're outgunned.

Of course, the whip is also useful when you have to cross gaps too wide to jump over. An icon will pop up on the screen to let you know when a support beam is available to latch onto for swinging.

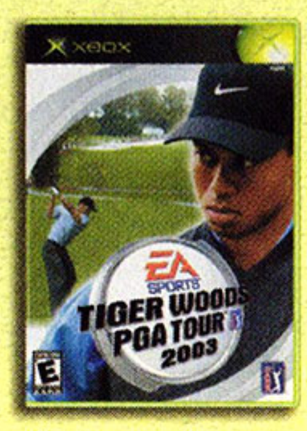
Good luck with the game.

I can beat you with my cord tied behind my back.

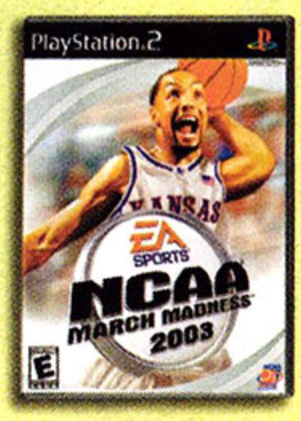
Xbox: NBA Live 2003



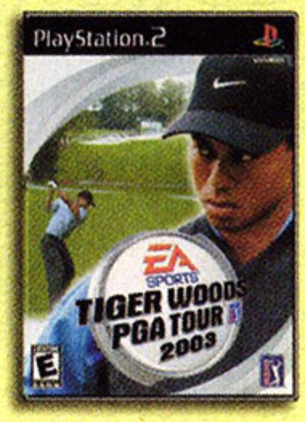
Xbox: Madden 2003



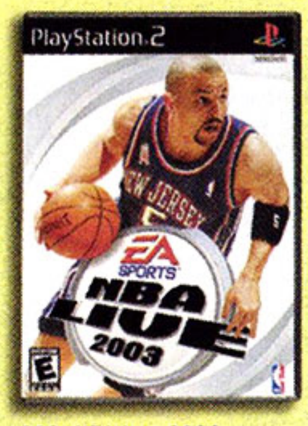
Xbox: Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003



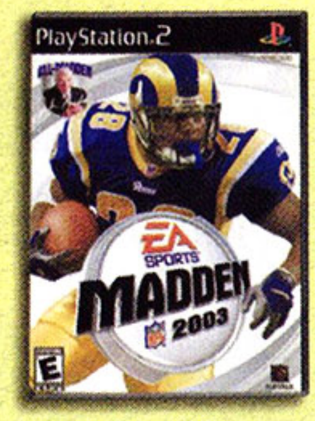
PS2: NCAA March Madness 2003



PS2: Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003



PS2: NBA Live 2003



PS2: Madden 2003

© 2003 Best Buy

RP Call 1-800-771-3772 for video game and computer software game rating information.

BEST BUY®

Whatever your sport, we have all the games you're into, and everything to play them on.

Turn On the Fun®

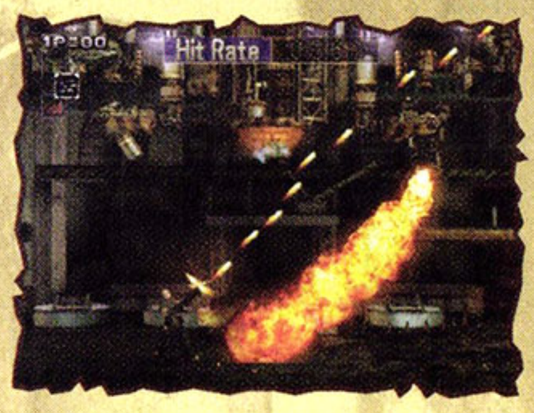
BestBuy.com™

KONAMI®

www.konami.com

"THE GREATEST ACTION SERIES OF ALL TIME MAKES ITS TRIUMPHANT RETURN" *PLAY*

"TOP 5 PS2 GAMES" *EGM*



TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Blood

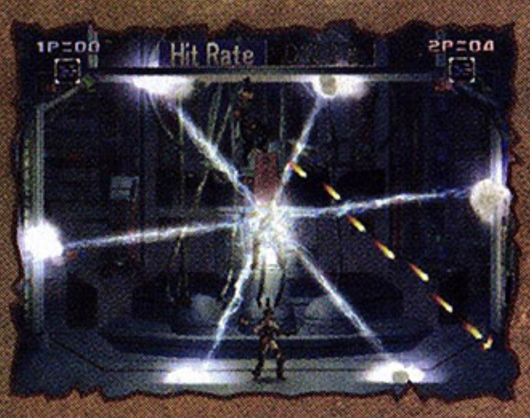
Violence

GAME BOY ADVANCE

PlayStation.2

CONTRA SHATTERED SOLDIER™ and CONTRA ADVANCE THE ALIEN WARS EX™ are trademarks of KONAMI CORPORATION. KONAMI® is a registered trademark of KONAMI CORPORATION. © 1987 2002 KONAMI & KONAMI COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT TOKYO ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. TM, ®, and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

THE ULTIMATE RUN AND GUN SHOOTER RETURNS



CONTRA
SHATTERED SOLDIER™

ACTION ON NINTENDO

DIE HARD VENDETTA

AMERICA'S UNLUCKIEST COP IS HAVING ANOTHER VERY BAD DAY.

John McClane is back ... this time in an all out battle to save his daughter. Rely on the killer instincts that made McClane a legend. Use your wits – and everything else at your disposal – to blast your way through L.A.'s seedy underbelly. Take out a multitude of bad guys and save the day as the Die Hard saga continues.

GAME FEATURES:

- New and original film characters.
- Hero Mode for heightened intensity and quickened reflexes.
- Dual weapons and an awesome arsenal including a sniper rifle, flame thrower and more.
- Take enemy hostages to save civilians and neutralize threats.

http://diehardvendetta.sierra.com

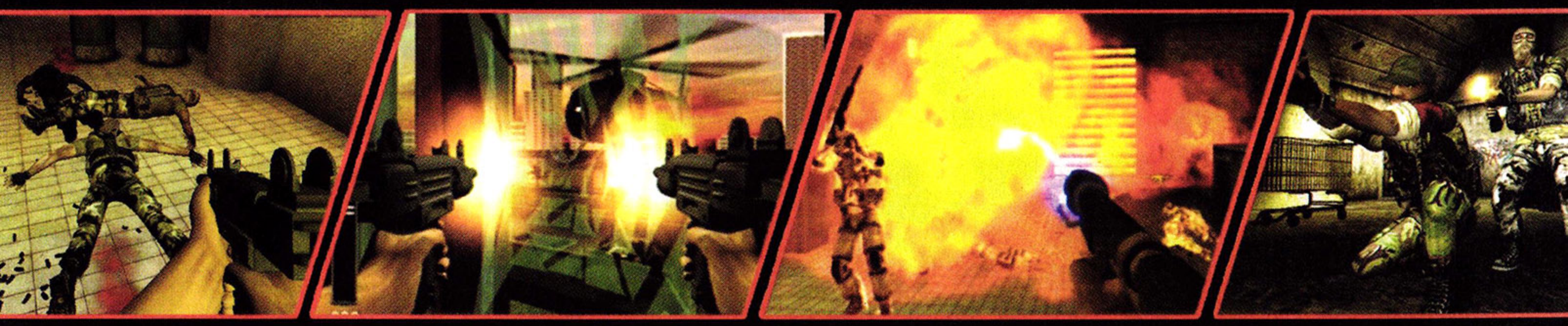
MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Strong Language
Violence

FOX INTERACTIVE™ bits studios NINTENDO GAMECUBE VIVENDI UNIVERSAL games SIERRA™

GAMECUBE™...

HAS JUST MATURED.

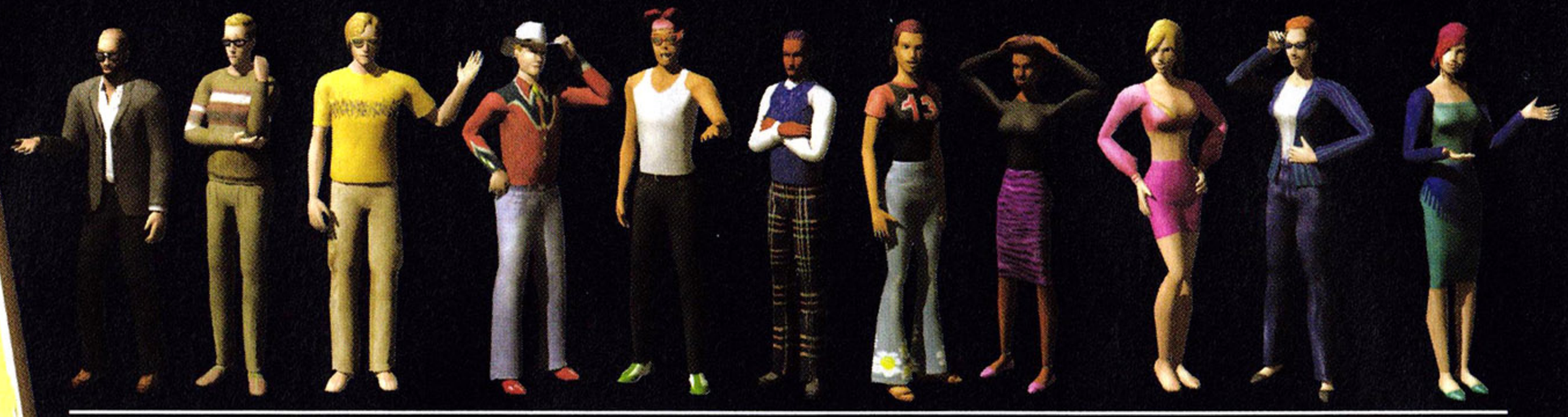


©2002 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. Fox Interactive, Die Hard and their associated logos are registered trademarks or trademarks of Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. All rights reserved. Sierra and the Sierra logo are trademarks of Sierra Entertainment, Inc. Vivendi Universal Games, and the Vivendi Universal Games logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. Game Engine © 2002 Bits Studios. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Any other trademarks, company and/or product names are the property of their respective owners.

SIMS

START
PAY DAY
GET A PROMOTION EARN §1,000
THROW A PARTY PAY §500
SELL LAWN GNOMES EARN §1,000
BLOW UP BBQ PAY §1,200
TAXES DUE
ACCIDENTALLY KILL BOSS
HOOK UP AT PARTY MOVE AHEAD 5 SPACES
WIN LOTTERY §500,000
SUFFER CRUEL SIM EXPERIMENTS
LOSE JOB
SLEEP WITH NEIGHBOR
BUY VIDEOGAMES PAY §200
FALL ASLEEP ON TOILET
PAY DAY
PEE ON FLOOR
QUIT JOB
LEARN HOW TO PAINT
BURN DOWN KITCHEN PAY §2,500
ADD A SECOND STORY PAY §5,000
GET MARRIED PAY §1,000
COOK DINNER SUCCESSFULLY
HAVE A BABY
TAKE OUT TRASH
VISIT IN-LAWS
SLEEP IN TOO LATE §100
BUY MONKEY BUTLER PAY §15,000
GET DIVORCED PAY §250,000
ELECTROCUTE YOUR CHILDREN
BURN DOWN HOUSE PAY §200,000
PAY DAY
SELL YOUR FURNITURE PAY §200
RETIRE
DONE!

Artwork by Charles Ernst



THE GAME OF LIFE

And we don't mean Milton Bradley. The Sims are coming to every console in your neighborhood. Let the twisted psychological experiments begin

By Demian Linn

They laughed at game designer Will Wright. OK, maybe they didn't actually laugh, but there were definitely some blank stares in the conference room as he explained his initial concept for a game called *The Sims*. You tell your character when to use the can? You scrimp and save for new kitchen appliances? Who's going to want to play a game based on the drudgery of everyday life?

As it turned out, nearly everybody.

GET A LIFE

The Sims and its expansion packs have sold 18 million-plus units since the game hit the PC in 2000. It's been on the cover of *Newsweek*. Bringing the game to consoles seemed obvious, at least to the dollar-signs-in-the-eyes business-types at publisher Electronic Arts. But transplanting this fairly complex life simulator into the living room took some doing—like adding a whole new control scheme, multiplayer games, and a revamped single-player mode.

For the uninitiated, the game puts you in control of a small chunk of suburbia populated by little folks called Sims. Your Sims go to work, pay bills, cook dinner, fall in love, have kids, move into nicer houses, and throw wild block parties, sometimes all in the same day. But, to keep them happy, you've got to make sure their eight basic needs—stuff like Comfort, Hygiene, and Fun—are fulfilled. Take care of them and life is good. Neglect your Sims and they'll have screaming fits,

Full house: Fans of *The Sims* on the PC will find lots of little touches from the game's expansion packs–but the two-player challenges (inset) are exclusive to the console versions.

forget to use the toilet, and get into fights with strangers.

Though the PS2 version required some significant changes, it contains just about everything the PC game has, plus a ton of extras. For the first time, the game's environments are fully 3D, so players can now view the action from just about any direction. And there are new, console-exclusive single-player and multiplayer games. "We gave it more of an obvious goal structure, while leaving in the 'Sandbox mode' from the PC version," says Wright, co-founder of game development house Maxis and godfather of all things *Sim (SimCity*, *SimAnt*, *SimGolf*—we could go on). "I think the multiplayer mode is going to have a big impact. It's really fun to be sitting there and playing alongside another player in the same house. Some play cooperatively, and some people play competitively."

The console versions incorporate the best bits and pieces of the PC game's expansion

(continued on page 114)

Serious Simoleans

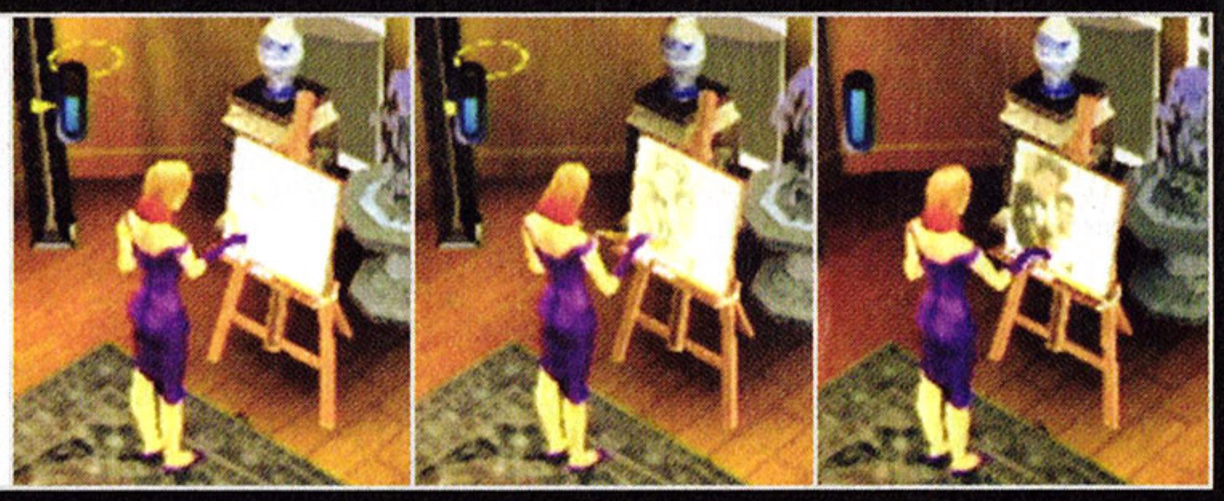
Some *Sims* players like to spend their time doing warm, fuzzy tasks, like making new friends and keeping in touch with Mom every day. Others pursue the American dream more directly, accumulating and hoarding as much stuff as possible. Nothing impresses the Joneses like the latest Sonic shower or the Fuzzy Logic dishwasher.

If you're in it for the Simoleans (essentially Simdollars, indicated by the § symbol instead of $), we've got two words for you: Screw work. Going to a job every day is a mug's game. Even if you rise to the very top of your career path, you're going to hit an earnings ceiling that's around §1,400 a day at best. To make the real money, you gotta be an entrepreneur.

PAINTING FOR PROFIT

Average Daily Earnings: §400

Max out your Creative skill, then use the Artist's Easel and get to paintin'. You should be able to sell your creations for about §170 each. Sure, this cottage industry won't quite put you on easy street, but at least you can finally try out the life of friendly, happy-tree painter Bob Ross—complete with afro and ultra-wide lapel shirt, if you so desire.



LUCRATIVE STATUARY

Average Daily Earnings: §2,500

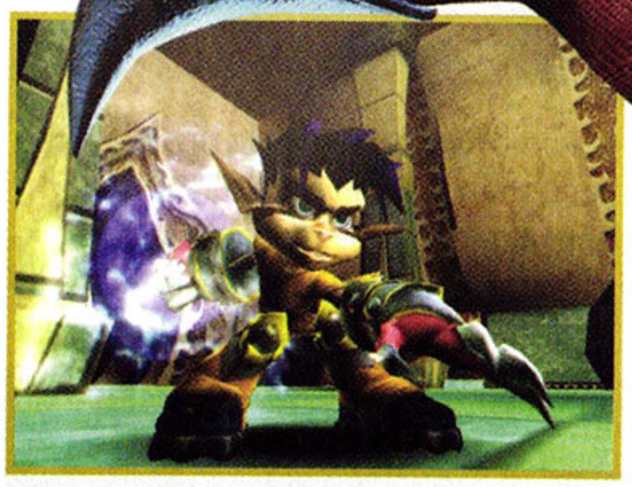
You'll also need to max your Creative skill to make the big money with this trick. Buy a carving block for §500, carve it (Michelangelo's *David*, Rodin's *The Thinker*, and a statue of the Monkey Butler are just some of the "art" you may end up with), and sell your creation for two to three times the amount of cash you paid for the block.

GNOME MANIA

Average Daily Earnings: §4,000

This is the mother lode. When your Mechanical skill is fully developed, you can crank out 40 or so garden gnomes per day, at §100 a pop, using the KraftKing woodworking table. Get five, six, or more Sims working in your gnome sweatshop and you'll rake in a sick amount of money. Just sell the gnomes before your party guests come over, or they may get stomped. Some Sims are violently opposed to garden gnomes.

TO HELL WITH A PRINCESS, SAVE THE WORLD!



VEXX™

His world overthrown, his people imprisoned, his family murdered. Vexx, Astara's slave-turned-savior, has one thing on his mind...REVENGE!

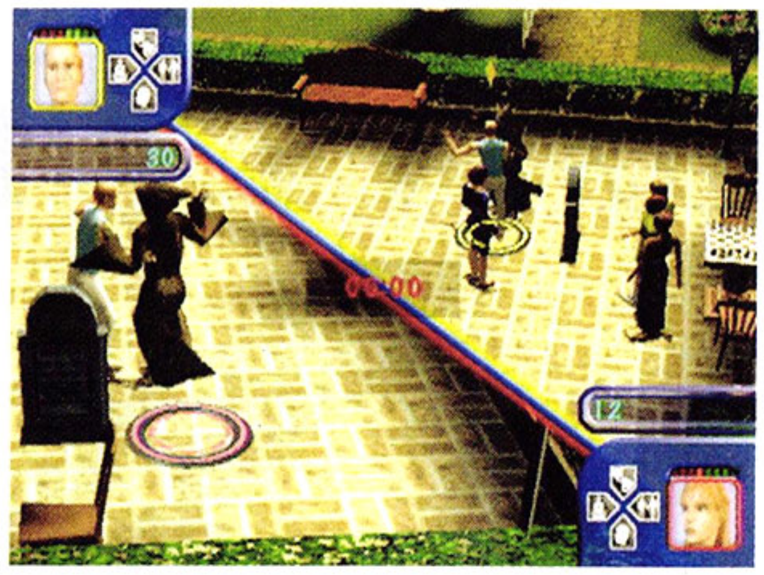
⁺Over 70 objectives across 9 extraordinary worlds. ⁺Uncover deadly attack combos and special abilities.

⁺Enemies morph into more evil forms as the light of day wanes.

VEXXTHEGAME.COM

Vexx™ and Acclaim ® & © 2002 Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Developed by Acclaim Studios Austin. All Rights Reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. Screens shown were taken from the Xbox version of the video game.

Picket fences: Your dream of owning the neighborhood's most spectacular topiary garden is within reach. Take that, Joneses.



Don't fear the reaper: Once Death does his dirty work and claims a fallen Sim's soul, he'll stick around and schmooze at your parties.

(continued from page 112)

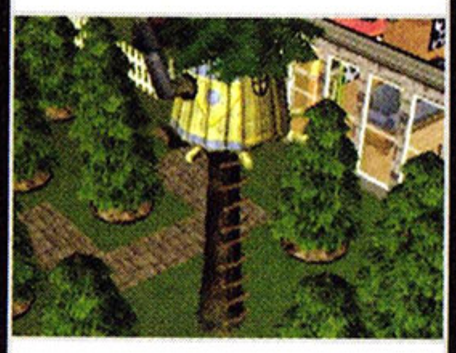
packs—which enhanced the Sims' party-throwing and babe-smoochin' skills—and add the all-new Get A Life mode. Get A Life drops you right into the action, without making you sit through a tutorial (although being unemployed and living with yer mom may not qualify as "action" to everybody). You then have to meet a series of goals to progress within the game, such as moving to a place of your own, throwing raging parties, gettin' with the hot Sims, starting a family, and climbing the career ladder. For the first time ever, you can actually "win" *The Sims*.

Depending on your performance, you'll also unlock new stuff as you travel down life's highways and byways, including the open-ended mode that is the PC game. "We have new objects made for the console version," says Sean Baity, a designer at Maxis. "It's a lit-

Consumer Lust

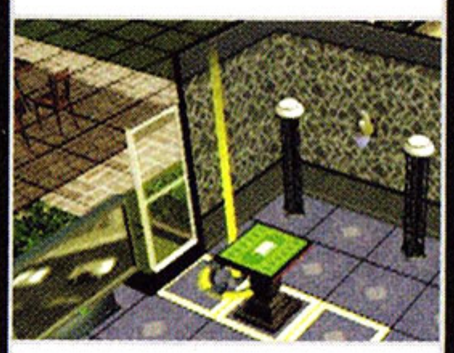
Console gamers get 14 new items to play around with. Here are five of the best.

MONKEY BUTLER



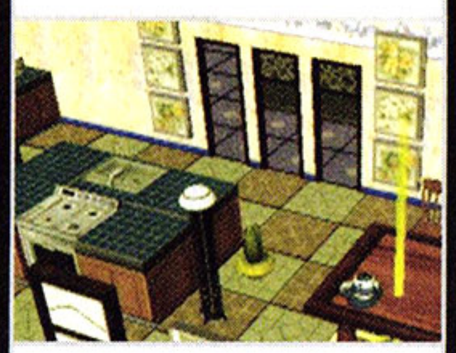
Cost: §15,000
Everyone wants a helper monkey; it's just one of those basic human needs, like food or shelter. Now you can live the dream with the Monkey Butler. This mandrill-dressed-in-a-tux is a repairman, a maid, and the life of the party—simultaneously. Bring him out at bashes, and he'll entertain the guests, then clean up the mess.

STRIP-POKER TABLE



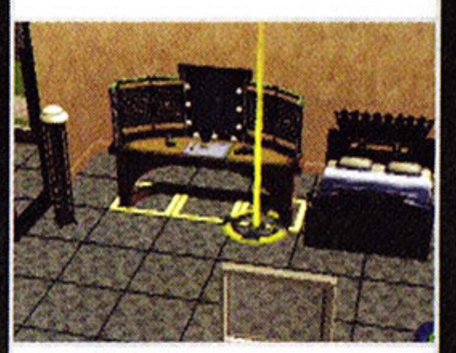
Cost: §600 (bargain!)
Nothing will kick your shindigs up to the next level like some Sim-on-Sim action, complete with pixelated nudity. That's where the strip-poker table comes in. Say, what do you suppose happens if you play strip poker with the Monkey Butler? Well, aside from creating a rift in the space-time fabric, that is....

AROMASTER WHIFFERPUFF "GOLD"



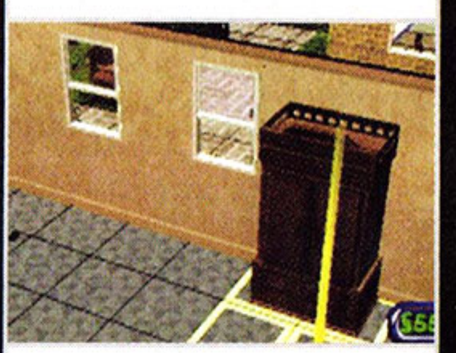
Cost: §2,500
Possibly the greatest invention in the history of Simsville, this aromatherapy machine boosts your Comfort, Fun, Energy, or Social rating for three hours. You can even buy multiple Aromasters and run them simultaneously. Suddenly, all-night parties—or all-night gnome production—are within your sweaty grasp.

CHARISMASTER VANITY TABLE

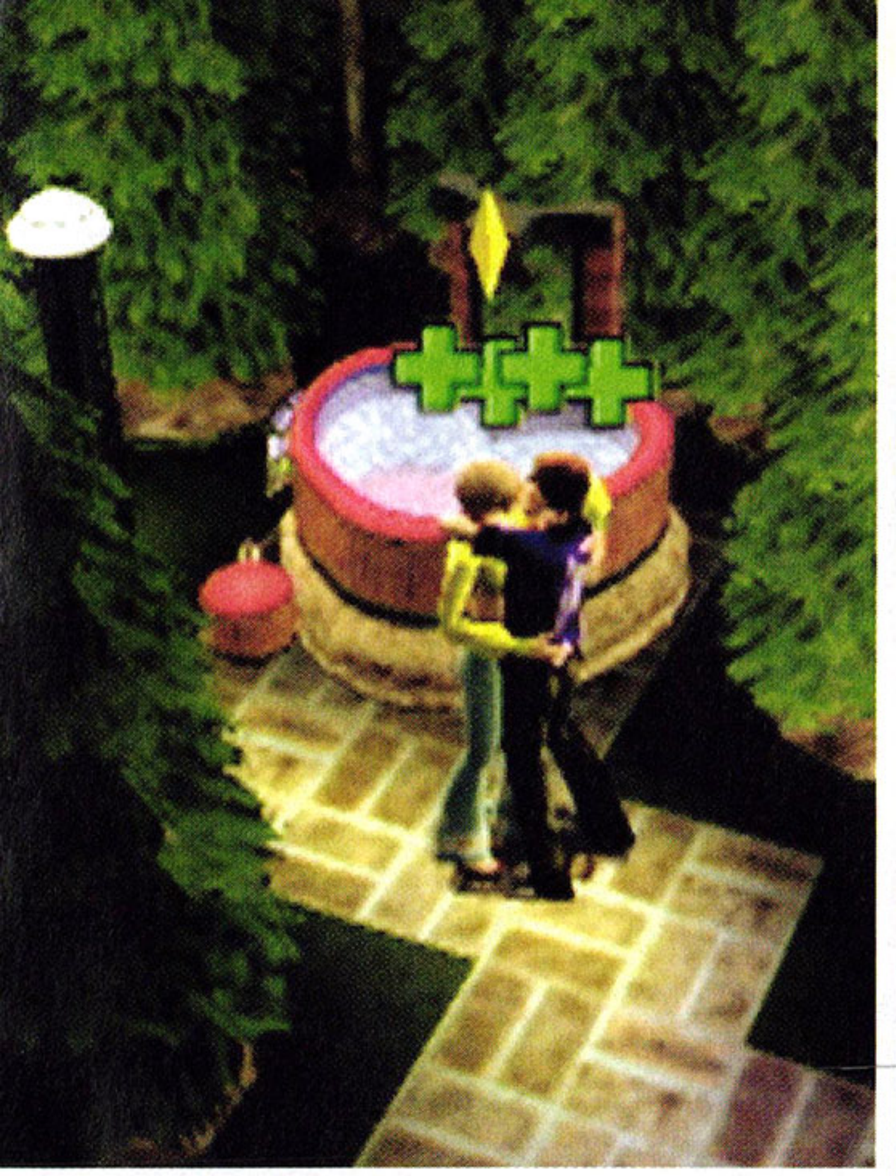


Cost: §1,000
Having second thoughts about going for that balding look combined with nerd glasses and a mustache? Perhaps a mohawk is more your style. With the PC version of the game, you were stuck with the face you gave your Sim when you made it. The vanity table, however, lets you alter your ugly mug without starting over from scratch.

ANTIQUE ARMOIRE



Cost: §1,200
The armoire allows you to change your Sim's outfits—another feature unavailable to players of the original PC version. It's like having the PC classic *Barbie Fashion Designer* bundled with your copy of *The Sims*. Plus, you can sound like a pretentious Frenchman (is that redundant?) when you say "armoire" out loud.



Sims like it hot: Your hot-and-heavy romantic entanglements in *The Sims* give new meaning to the videogame concept of "scoring."

Workout mishaps: If hot tubbin' is too boring, you can always hone your Body rating with some treadmill time. Just don't fall off.

tle kookier. We have a Monkey Butler, and a Bug Zapper that shocks you and gives you energy." Actually, the Monkey Butler caused Maxis a huge headache; when the developer submitted the game to the ESRB for rating, "they kept telling us it was a guy in a gimp mask and butt-less chaps," says Fred Dieckmann, a producer at Maxis. "We were like, 'No, it's not. It's a mandrill monkey!' They didn't believe us until I actually sent them a picture of a mandrill."

It's in the multiplayer modes that *The Sims*, a game based around social interaction, really comes into its own as a console title. You're not just huddled in front of a PC, playing in a little world of your creation. Instead, you're adding a bit of real social interaction to your simulated social interaction.

"You're constantly pulling people into bathrooms and dark areas...to make out with them."
—Maxis Associate Designer Sean Baity

The multiplayer games are unlike any head-to-head videogame experience thus far. In the Thief of Hearts game, players loiter in a nightclub, trying to hook up with as many Sims as possible. You can steal love interests from your opponent, but you've got to be careful when you bring out your mack game—if you're in the same room as other Sims that have already fallen for you, they'll get jealous and possibly slap you or your prospective conquest. We advise avoiding public displays

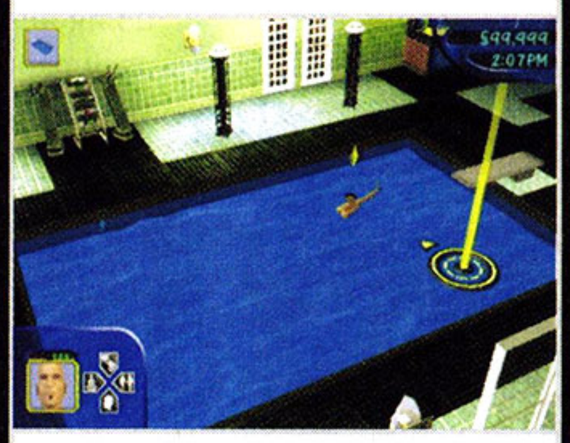
Simply Morbid

It takes some Sims players longer than others, but at some point, we all ask the question: How can I kill a Sim?

STARVATION

This one's easy. Three or so days without food will off even the heartiest Sim. Toward the end, there's quite a bit of screaming and general insanity. A particularly cruel variation on this technique involves isolating the doomed Sim in a walled- or fenced-in area, without a toilet or shower.

DROWNING

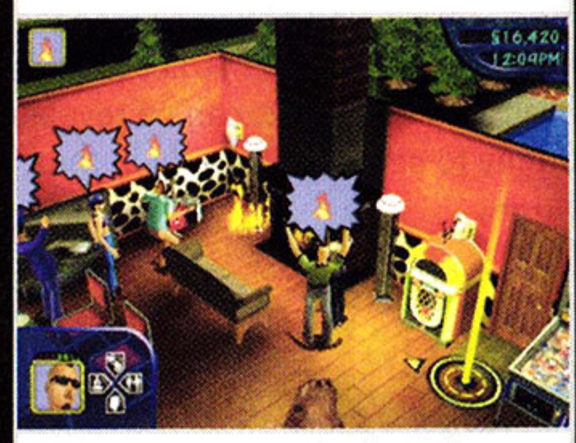


Pools are fun—until you remove the ladder. Then, any Sims taking a dip are doomed. You can even kill off the whole neighborhood by building a pool that surrounds your house, then throwing a party and removing the ladder before everyone tries to leave. You're going to Sim-hell for sure.

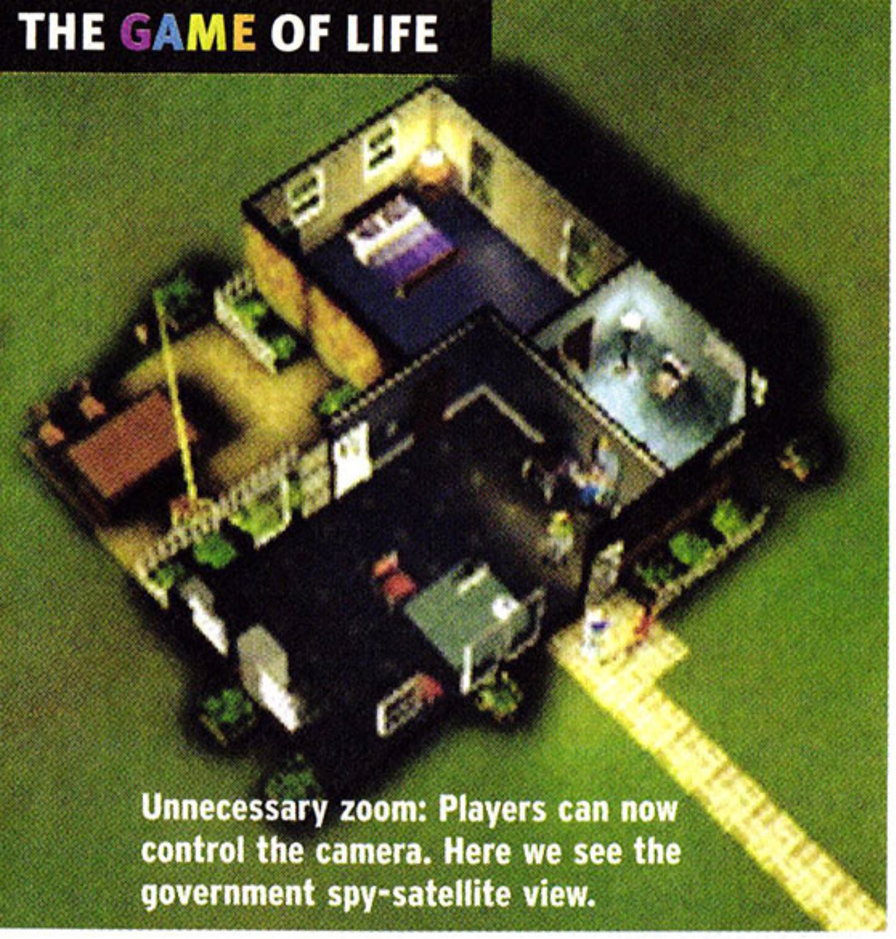
ELECTROCUTION

Sometimes, unfortunate household accidents happen. If an appliance breaks down and you direct your Sim to fix it rather than calling the repairman, there's a chance the Sim in question will get electrocuted. It's not the most efficient of killing tools, but it works in a pinch.

FIRE



Ah, fire. It's a classic—fill your house with area rugs and plants, throw a party, light the fireplace, and then delete all the doors so the Sims can't escape from your firetrap. The resulting inferno and disturbing human-torch animations may curb your Sim-killing ways once and for all.



Unnecessary zoom: Players can now control the camera. Here we see the government spy-satellite view.

of affection. "You're constantly pulling people into bathrooms and dark areas of the club to make out with them," Baity says.

THE SIM REAPER

The Sims is kind of like a videogame version of those Rorschach inkblot tests; watching the way someone plays can be revealing. "It's funny to see what they do in the game that they wouldn't do in real life, like flirting with the neighbor and having an affair," says Wright. "But, at the same time, a messy person [in real life] will generally have a really messy house in *The Sims*. Where they set their priorities is pretty evident after they've been playing for a while.... You can always tell initially whether they're heading toward social goals or toward monetary goals, whether they're playing the friendship/romance game or the career/make-money-get-rich game. A lot of people put themselves in the game, and maybe their family and their house. It's almost like they're making a spreadsheet for their real life, like a voodoo family."

Inevitably, players try to push the limits—and that's when things start to get a little morbid. Sims can die in many various and twisted ways (Death himself even makes a house call; you can play him at rock/paper/scissors for a second chance at life). Play the game for a while and it's only a matter of time before you decide to find all the ways a Sim can bite it. For some of us, that point comes a lot sooner than for others.

"Before [the game] was released...the first thing [players] would all ask is, 'Can you kill them?'"

—Sims *creator Will Wright*

"Before [the game] was released, when I was talking about *The Sims* to a bunch of kids and teenagers, the first thing they would all ask is, 'Can you kill them?'" Wright says. "And I don't think it's that they wanted to go kill something; I think it's that they wanted to understand the range of possible states or behaviors—to figure out what the size of the envelope is."

With *The Sims* set to invade your living room, the size of the envelope is about to get bigger; Maxis is even exploring how to bring the next console version online. Will Wright's doing all the laughing now–maniacally we assume–rubbing his hands together in a vaguely sinister manner while we all slave away in his addicting little world.

Coming Attractions

***The Sims* debuts on the PS2 in January, followed by Xbox and GameCube variants in the spring. All three versions are identical, aside from minor control changes and graphics tweaks. We managed to get our hands on these exclusive screens of the Xbox version (note: some lighting effects haven't been added yet).**

intec

Game Screens

PLAY GAMES, HOME VIDEOS & DVD'S ANYWHERE!*

For
PlayStation® 2
Xbox™
GAMECUBE®

Attitude For Your Game!

Available at R'Zone at Toys R Us · toysrus.com · Best Buy · K·B toys.com · eToys.com · Sears.com · samgoody.com · Media Play · GameStop · fye

Please visit us at: www.inteclink.com

GameCube® is a registered trademark of Nintendo® of America Inc. PlayStation® 2 is a registered trademark of Sony® Computer Entertainment Inc. XBOX® is a registered trademark of MicroSoft Corporation. These items are produced by Intec and are not manufactured, sponsored, endorsed or distributed by Nintendo® of America Inc., Sony® Computer Entertainment Inc. or MicroSoft Corporation. * GameCube® does not play DVD's.

STEPPING OUT OF THESE PAGES AND INTO YOUR HOMES!

Join Shoe and the rest of the Game Group editors as they invade your screen with the latest game news and releases that will jumpstart your weekend!

Tune in every Thursday 7:45 pm ET/ 4:45 pm PT
to HOT**WIRED**'s Big Video Game Hunting hosted by Renay San Miguel
on CNN Headline News.

BIG VIDEO GAME HUNTING

CNN HeadlineNews

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

GAMENOW

XBN XBOX NATION INDEPENDENT XBOX MAGAZINE

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA GAME GROUP

Nostradamus smostradamus. Screw Ms. Cleo. Fire your fortune teller. EGM gazes into the misty, not-so-distant future to bring you

THE NEXT BIG...

Illustrations by Pixel Pushers Design

By the *EGM* staff, with contributions from David Kushner and Nick Walkland

Everything—that's all you *really* want to know about. Because while the holidays have (hopefully) left you with a hoard of gaming loot that'll keep you busy long after the yule log's set the curtains on fire, we figure that, sooner or later, those fresh-from-the-shrink-wrap PlayStation 2, GameCube, or Xbox games will become as stale as last year's fruitcake. You're gonna want to know what's next. So we've rounded up the games, trends, genres, characters, under-the-radar projects, and other fun stuff that four out of five game scientists agree will be big, Big, BIG in 2K3.

■ PS2

...QUIRKY GAME: COLOR QUEST

Part RPG, part *Pokémon*-style critter battler, part Pablo Picasso, Agetec's ingeniously oddball *Color Quest* has you sketch your character as a 2D shape (a circle, a star, Britney Spears' thigh, etc.). Then it zaps your doodle to life as a wiggling 3D beast you unleash in arena battles. It's better than Crayola.

Rack up victories and you can add additional body parts.

■ PS2, GC, XBOX

...RETRO TREND: CLASSIC GAMES WITHIN GAMES

The original *Panzer Dragoon* in *Panzer Dragoon Orta*. The original *Metroid* in *Metroid Prime*. More and more often, publishers are including classic games as extras in new products, and we expect the trend to continue in 2003. "It's a great way to showcase the true roots of a franchise," says *Panzer* Product Manager Rich Briggs.

■ PS2, GC, XBOX

. . . MOVIE LICENSE: THE MATRIX

There's a reason the *Matrix* movie seemed like the world's most super-sized videogame: The Wachowski brothers, the filmmaking duo behind its cyber-mystical thrills, are avid game players. And that's why we're excited about *Enter the Matrix*, developer Shiny's action game due in early summer, the same time the *Matrix* sequel hits theaters. The brothers gave the developers gameplay and story ideas, as well as full access to the movie's actors (including Keanu Reeves). It's the same Hollywood-meets-Silicon Valley partnership that made *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* such great licensed games. Although *Enter the Matrix* isn't based on the first or second flicks (you don't even play as Neo), it's still filled with everything that made the *Matrix* so techno-tastic. You'll get the supernatural chop-socky combat, the explosive gun battles, the high-concept plot, and, of course, the slow-mo "Bullet Time" effect that's already become an action-game cliché.

■ GC

. . . GAMECUBE GAME: THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER

Plucky *Legend of Zelda* hero Link may have baby-brown eyes the size of bowling balls (the character's revamped cartoony look remains a source of controversy more than a year after its unveiling). But take one look at the world around him—the living, breathing wonder of color and animation—and you'll begin to realize that *Zelda* creator Shigeru Miyamoto's vision of a younger, more simplistic-looking Link wasn't such a bad idea after all.

Of course, the same classic gameplay that defined the two previous 3D *Zeldas*—*Ocarina of Time* and *Majora's Mask*, both for the Nintendo 64—is as solid as ever, but that was a given. It's that unmatched experience, combined with the beautiful, silky-smooth, toon-shaded graphics, that has us clearing our calendar for March, when *Zelda*'s due to arrive. It's easily the first mega GameCube title of 2003.

■ PS2, GC, XBOX

. . . GENRE WE SUDDENLY CARE ABOUT: LICENSED GAMES

It was once a fact of gaming life writ in E.T.'s blood on a glowing slab of Kryptonite: Any game tied to a movie, toy, or comic-book license will suck ye olde ass. But hark, what's this? Standout titles like EA's *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* and the recent wave of superhero games (*Batman* and *Spider-Man*, to name a few) are better than bad—they're good. So now, we actually give a damn about licensed stuff such as *Enter the Matrix* above and Universal's game based on the Quentin Tarantino flick, *Kill Bill* (pictured, due this fall).

■ PS2, GC, XBOX

. . . VIDEOGAME BODY PART: BREASTS

Digitized bosoms are heating up new titles like *BMX XXX* and *The Getaway* (PS2), and why the hell not? It's like Dolly Parton says: "I do have big t**s. Why not make fun of 'em? I've made a fortune with 'em."

■ PS2, GC, XBOX

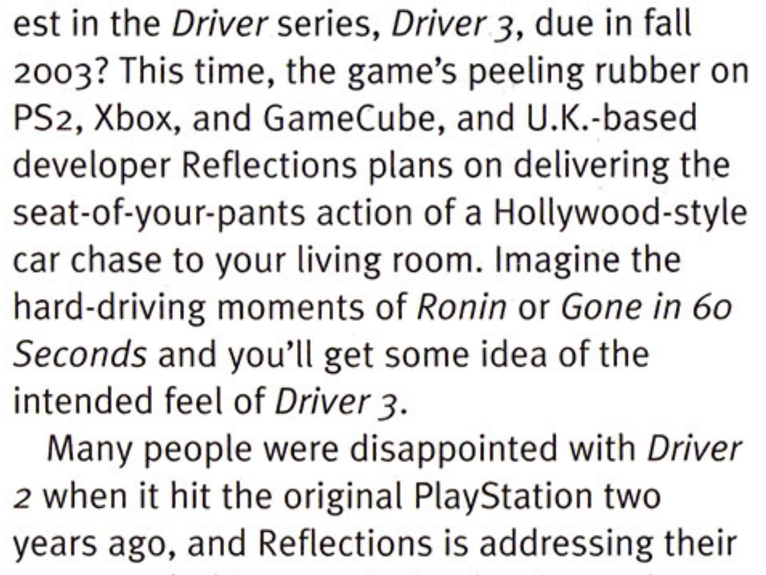
...CRIME SPREE: DRIVER 3

You fought the law—and won—in *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*. You're about to make your high-speed getaway in, uh, *The Getaway*. So what gritty game will you break into next to fill your need for misdeeds? (Not Activision's *True Crime*—that game has you playing a good-guy cop.) Why not shoot back to the roots of urban hot pursuits with the latest in the *Driver* series, *Driver 3*, due in fall 2003? This time, the game's peeling rubber on PS2, Xbox, and GameCube, and U.K.-based developer Reflections plans on delivering the seat-of-your-pants action of a Hollywood-style car chase to your living room. Imagine the hard-driving moments of *Ronin* or *Gone in 60 Seconds* and you'll get some idea of the intended feel of *Driver 3*.

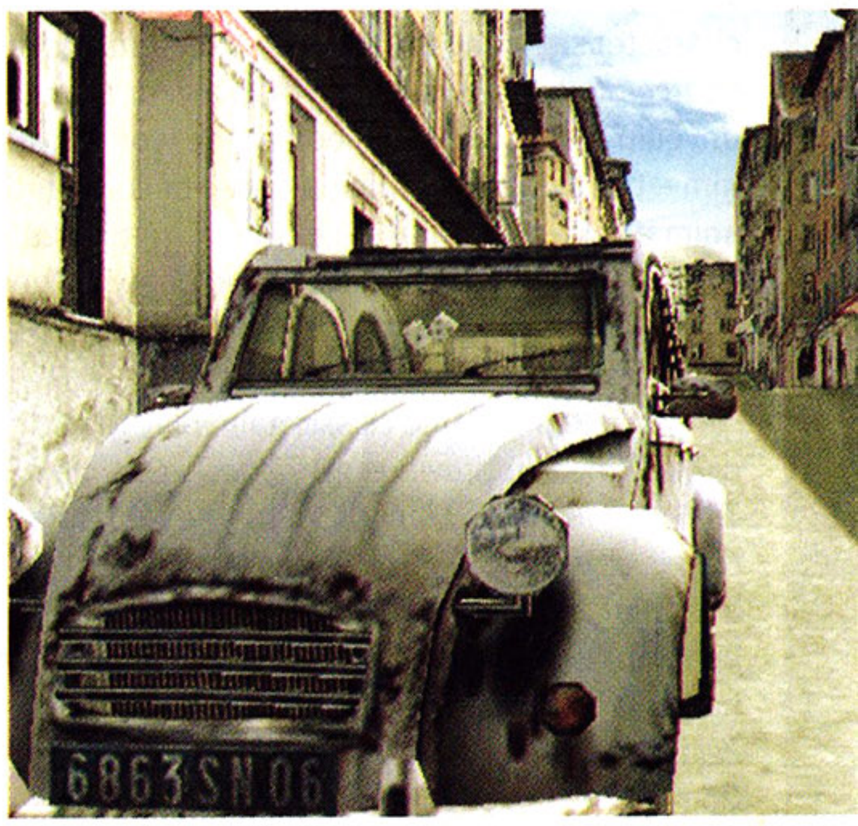
Many people were disappointed with *Driver 2* when it hit the original PlayStation two years ago, and Reflections is addressing their gripes with this sequel. The developer claims that it bit off more than it (and the PS1) could chew with *Driver 2*. It's focused on ensuring this sequel will run smoothly and stream constantly off the DVD—so there's no chance of the game stalling for a few seconds when you're in the middle of a car chase.

The sequel sees the return of Tanner, who, despite being a cop, still engages in all manner of underworld evildoings. He's going undercover to once again infiltrate a global car-theft ring, earn their confidence, and eventually bring their crime empire crashing down. (You'd think the villains would know what he looks like by now.) Tanner takes this working vacation in three cities (unlike the typical four in previous *Driver* games), but in *Driver 3*, these cities are absolutely massive—you'll find more than twice as many miles of driveable road as in *The Getaway* and several times the square mileage of *Vice City's* sprawling metropolis.

Driver 3 opens in Miami, Tanner's hometown and scene of the classic first level in the original game (and now *Vice City*, natch), before moving on to Nice, France, and Istanbul, Turkey. An unusual selection of venues, perhaps, but each offers great sightseeing with a near-photorealistic level of detail—unlike the cartoony feel of *GTA*, but also without the inch-perfect realism of *The Getaway*. *Driver 3* is still very much a driving game (cops once again cling annoyingly close to your bumper through alleyways), rather than an adventure. It breaks down to about 70 percent driving and 30 percent wandering on foot. But now, Tanner can enter buildings, from elaborate



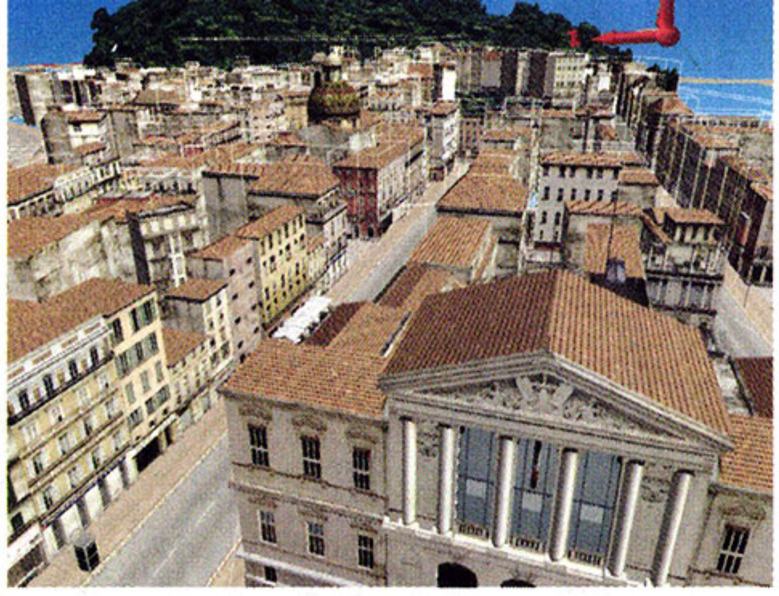
Rent-a-wreck: The vehicles themselves look familiar but aren't real licensed cars. Nor are they shiny, *Gran Turismo*-style things of beauty. Instead, you'll often tool around in dirty, ramshackle heaps of junk.



■ XBOX

...HARDCORE HIT: NINJA GAIDEN

Shinobi on PS2 did for Sega's aging ninja what *Pulp Fiction* did for Travolta: It made him hot stuff again. Next up? Ryu from Tecmo's *Ninja Gaiden*, due this spring. He's been doing bit parts in the *Dead or Alive* games, but his upcoming Xbox action title will carry on the late-'80s, Nintendo Entertainment System legacy all hardcore gamers still get weepy about. Expect familiar characters, cool cinemas, and ninja magic, just like in the good ol' days.



Better use MapQuest: *Driver 3*'s three cities will have a total of 30,000 buildings.

Sun city: *Driver 3*'s Miami is based on the real city, unlike the fictional metropolis in Rockstar's *GTA: Vice City*.

mosques in Istanbul to old-world hovels in Nice. Reflections is crafting a structured story line that you must follow—without a lot of extra bonus missions like in *GTA*—but you'll still make a lot of your own decisions. "What we're trying to do is make it so you're not limited in the way the missions can be solved," says Martin Edmonson, Reflections' creative director. "So you may need to find alternative solutions for a mission, thus making it easier to actually complete."

Tanner even packs heat this time, although gunplay takes a backseat to the realistic vehicle physics. Of course, you wouldn't expect anything less from Reflections, creators of the very true-to-life stunt sim, *Stuntman*. *Driver 3*'s autos come with accurate damage modeling—you can actually wrap a car around a post here. The hyperrealistic physics extend even to the brand-new boat chases. But alas, the cops are hot on our tail, and we fear we've already told you too much. For full disclosure of *Driver 3*'s felonious gameplay—not to mention a load of exclusive screens—return next month for our cover story. Just try to stay out of trouble in the meantime.

■ PS1, PS2, GBA

. . . KIDDIE-GAME CRAZE: YU-GI-OH!

Never heard of this monster-mashing phenomenon? Ask your kid brother. He'll tell you *Yu-Gi-Oh!*'s a comic-turned-card-game-turned-cartoon-turned-videogame (it's already a hit on the PS1 and GBA). In February, Konami is bringing the card-battling sensation to the PS2, so watch for stampeding tykes.

■ PS2, GC, XBOX

. . . GENRE-BENDER: FIRST-PERSON ADVENTURES

There was a time when any game that let you see through the hero's eyes was all about shooting, killing, and...well, more killing. Finding the blue keycard is about as cerebral as it got. But a new breed of first-person games is incorporating elements from other genres (i.e., platforming in GC's *Metroid Prime*, adventure-y puzzles in *Deus Ex* for PS2, the full-blown RPG world of *Morrowind* on Xbox) to offer deeper experiences.

Navigating this type of room would be a buzzkill in most first-person games, but *Metroid Prime* makes it feel natural.

THE NEXT BIG...

■ PS2

...PLAYSTATION 2 GAME: EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES

A young couple met inside the game and will soon be married in real life. A Navy lieutenant commander plays it via a satellite link from his battleship. Some participants barter virtual items collected in the game on eBay (a coveted sword went for $1,500). *EverQuest* is not just a game—it's a lifestyle—and PS2 owners will get their chance to embrace it soon. The PC hit is coming to the PS2 this spring as *EverQuest Online Adventures*.

Since the game was released for the PC in 1999, *EverQuest* has become a phenomenon on par with *Star Trek* or *Harry Potter*. It's the leading title in the genre of massively multiplayer online role-playing games, and it has spawned a cottage industry of sequels, merchandise, and spin-offs. Nearly 500,000 people (mostly adults) each pay $10 a month to participate. PS2 players will pay the same subscription fee to dive into *EverQuest*'s world via either the broadband or dial-up capability of the console's $40 network adapter (they'll only be able to play with other PS2 owners, not PC *EverQuest*ers). The PS2 version is a prequel of sorts. It's set in the same realm, five centuries before the PC game. But it still packs deep character customization, including multiple races and 13 characters classes.

EverQuest's phenomenal success is a testament to the game's core appeal: its community. Players work together, build friendships, and achieve goals. Some subscribers spend up to eight hours a day playing the game (which has been nicknamed *EverCrack)*. The community is so strong, in fact, that *EverQuest* has inspired its own offline social event: the *EverQuest* Fan Faire. Held several times a year in cities across the country, these gatherings lure around 1,500 diehard players from Seattle to Scotland for a weekend of revelry and real-life quests that emulate the action of the game. James Moore, a 26-year-old fast-food restaurant manager from Michigan, once donned a metal headdress and a red-and-black checkered vest in order to re-create the ensemble of his online persona, Rendail of the Wildfyre Legion. "I drove exactly 666 miles to get to the Fan Faire," Moore said.

Stranger than fiction: No matter how lame your life is, these *EverQuest* Fan Faire goers'll make you feel better.

■ XBOX

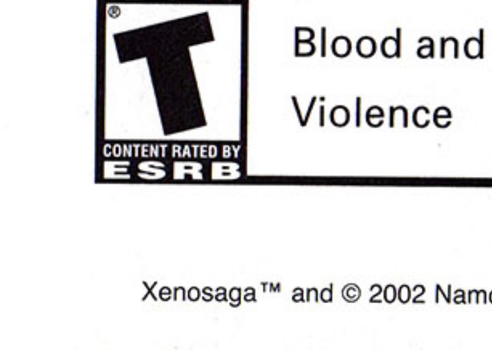
...GAME YOU NEVER HEARD OF: KINGDOM UNDER FIRE

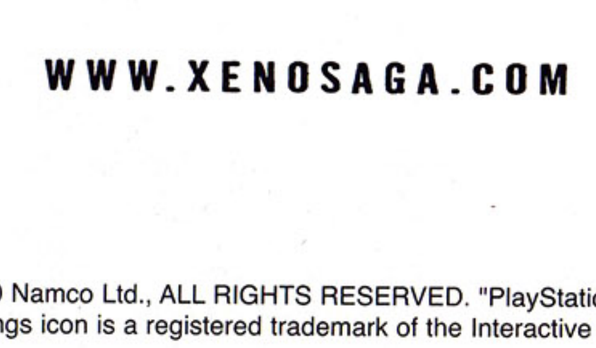
Just because war is hell doesn't mean it can't be hellishly fun, too. At least that's what we figure after watching swarms of Goblins and foot soldiers and Trolls clash on the battlefield in *Kingdom Under Fire: The Crusaders*, a barely hyped, late-summer, Xbox-only sequel to an obscure PC strategy game. "It's really a blend [of gameplay styles]," says Aaron Rigby, producer at developer Phantagram. "You have direct control of the hero characters during battle, so you can get into heavy melee combat or use spells against the enemy troops. You also have command over different types of troops, which you recruit in towns to fight for you." Unlike these raw recruits, your main hero characters can level up in stats and abilities, as well as buy better weapons and armor to either keep or give to your soldiers. "These troops include footmen, archers, horsemen, Storm Riders (big armored birds), catapults, and whatever else we have time to add," Rigby says.

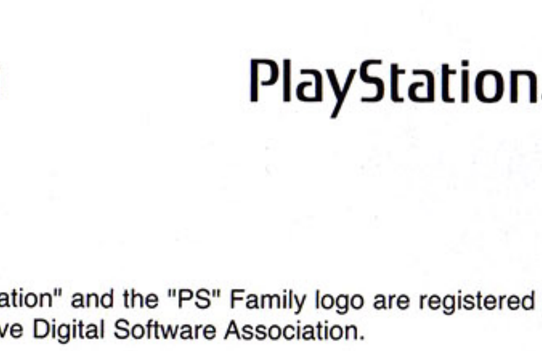
namco®

WWW.NAMCO.COM

DESTINIES SO BIG THE UNIVERSE
CAN BARELY CONTAIN THEM.







Xenosaga™

EPISODE I

Der Wille zur Macht

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood and Gore
Violence

WWW.XENOSAGA.COM

PlayStation®2

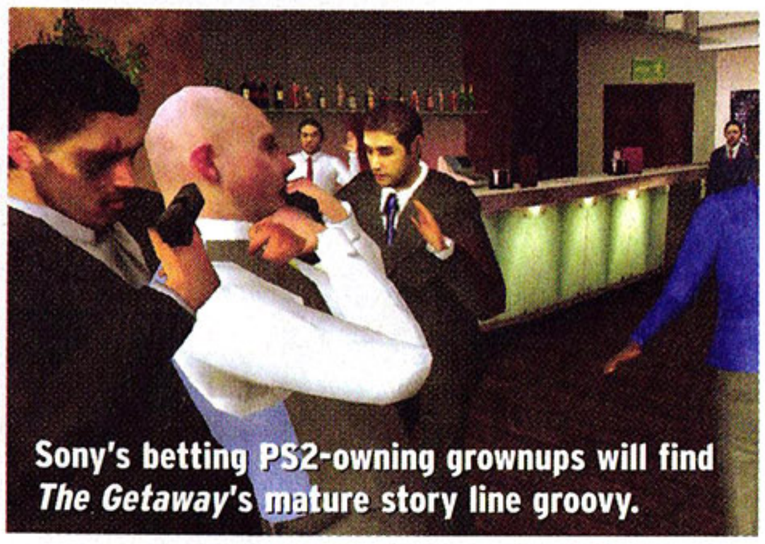
Xenosaga™ and © 2002 Namco Ltd., ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. © 2000 Namco Ltd., ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

THE NEXT BIG...

■ PS2, GC, XBOX

...TREND: ADULT GAMES

Face it: You're not getting any younger. Luckily, neither are your games—and we're not just talking *Grand Theft Auto* or *BMX XXX*. This past year, the percentage of Mature-rated titles on the market more than doubled, while gamers 18 or older made a third of all videogame software purchases. There's clearly an audience—but Sam Houser, prez of *GTA* publisher Rockstar, says there's no simple formula for success: "Now there are people saying, 'Wow, I guess we should do mature titles. Let's add in X, Y, Z; now focus test and boom—here's the game!' And I just say, no, no, no. You can't make games like that."



Sony's betting PS2-owning grownups will find *The Getaway*'s mature story line groovy.

■ XBOX

...SEQUEL: HALO 2

"Taking the war to the Covenant" is the six-word tagline that Jason Jones, head of developer Bungie Studios, slaps on the sequel to our 2001 Game of the Year. And, yep, walking-tank hero Master Chief does bring his battle with the alien Covenant to their neck of the universe in *Halo 2*, due late in 2003. But that's only part of the galaxy-spanning tale, which starts with the orbital bombardment of Earth before heading off to a low-g moon mission and a deja-vu rendezvous with another ring-shaped Halo world (or so the level concepts we've seen have led us to believe). On top of that, you'll get more vehicles, smarter enemies and allies, online play via Xbox Live, and graphics that Bungie says are 10 times better than the original's. Even Master Chief has been overhauled. "He's not like a comic-book superhero anymore," says Bungie Lead Designer Jaime Greisemer. "He's more like a real guy who can be in that suit."

■ PS2, GC, XBOX

...TOUGH HOMBRE: SPLINTER CELL'S SAM FISHER

This stealthy stud will not only have infiltrated all three major consoles by spring, "he'll be alive and well for many, many sequels," says a spokesperson for publisher Ubi Soft.

■ PS2

...TOUGH CHICA: FINAL FANTASY X2'S YUNA

Gone are the magical gowns. *Final Fantasy X*'s once demure summoner has slipped on a pair of hot pants. Now she's got the guns and run-and-jump moves every bad girl needs.

■ XBOX

...VIDEOGAME MOVIE TO DREAD: THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD

We're not sure who will groan louder: the undead stars of this zombified B flick or the folks in the audience who will pay $10 to see it this spring.

KOEI™

www.koeigames.com

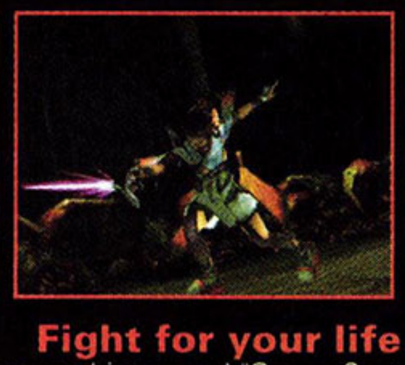
ONLY ON XBOX

XBOX

Tension, fear, excitement...

Crimson Sea™

Heart-pounding, cinematic-quality, real-time graphics.
Feel the rush as you decimate swarming enemy masses!
The visual and sound effects of these tremendous battles push Xbox™ to the limit!



Fight for your life as you are surrounded by the hoards!
A new and improved "Group Control Engine" puts more than 1,000 enemies in your sights at once!

"Liquid" aliens change shape as they attack!
Watch as these enemies of unknown origin morph before your very eyes!

Complete immersion in battle!
A special sonar enemy detection system and Dolby Digital 5.1ch surround sound bring excitement from all angles!

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Suggestive Themes
Violence

DOLBY DIGITAL

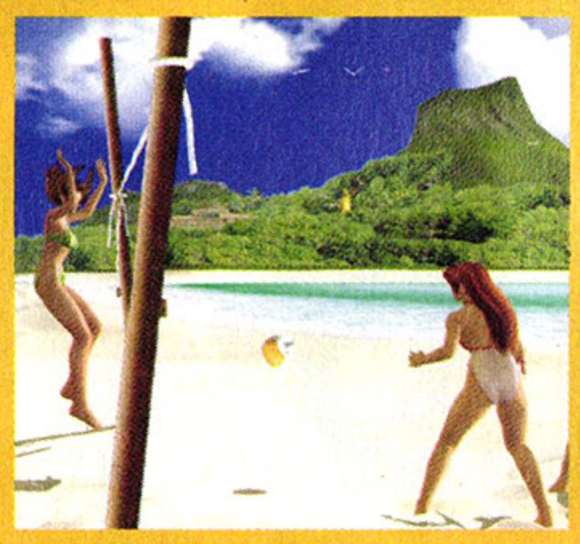
Crimson Sea is a trademark of KOEI Corporation and KOEI Co., Ltd. ©2003 KOEI Co., Ltd. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox Logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Dolby and the double-D symbol are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories. The patent applications are pending before the USPTO.

THE NEXT BIG...

■ XBOX

...XBOX GAME: DEAD OR ALIVE XTREME BEACH VOLLEYBALL

We can't put our finger on why this perfectly innocent volleyball game—due in January and starring every she-warrior from Tecmo's *Dead or Alive* fighting series—has Xbox owners convulsing with desire. Hmm. Maybe it's the hundreds of bits of girl stuff (nail polish, flowers, cute little hats) you can buy for the gals. Maybe it's the suntan lotion you can apply to turn the athletes honey brown. Maybe it's that basketbrawler Dennis Rodman provides the voice for Zach, overseer of the game's island v-ball tournament. Or maybe it's the writhing, glistening, often suggestively posed beauties whose bikinis reveal much more than just their abs of steel. We suppose we'll never know.



■ PS2

...RPG: FINAL FANTASY X-2

A new *Final Fantasy* always qualifies as big news, but this one's a truly monumental event—it's an honest-to-God, bona-fide sequel to *Final Fantasy X* (until now, Square never made interconnected *FF* games). Due this fall, the game picks up two years after the climactic defeat of Sin by Tidus and Co., and it features an all-new story and a host of gameplay changes. Without giving away too much, we'll tell you that it features Yuna and Rikku (who've both undergone super-sexy makeovers) and a few other *FFX* mainstays on an adventure to rescue Tidus.

I see London, I see France....

■ PS2, GC, XBOX

...GRAPHICS BOOSTER: PROGRESSIVE SCAN

Progressive scan is a video mode that makes games look super sharp. The trick: You must have a high-definition TV and play a progressive scan-enabled game. Nearly all Xbox titles support the mode (with sharper "720p" games due in 2K3), as do first-party GC titles. A handful of PS2 games, such as *Burnout 2* and *Star Wars: Bounty Hunter*, support it, too.

HD sets don't display horizontal scan lines like regular TVs do. Switch on progressive scan and your HD screen becomes even sharper.

■ GBA

...GAME BOY ADVANCE GAME: POKÉMON RUBY & SAPPHIRE

Four years ago, *Pokémon* was the *Thriller*-era Michael Jackson of videogames: unbeatable, often copied, and given a new face every six months. Since then, it's been a downhill slide for Pikachu and pals, but Nintendo's hoping to revive the series with two new versions, *Ruby* and *Sapphire*, due in early 2003. Besides a graphical update, we'll get 100 new beasties to catch, a four-player battle system, and a new world. Since the kiddie hype is gone (youngsters are busy with *Yu-Gi-Oh*), you can play this on the bus without fear of ridicule.

An ADVANCED Battle of Spirits!

Battle your way through spectacular stages in this Digimon "BattleSpirit" race against the clock!
Fun for all ages, Digimon BattleSpirit™ provides classic fighting fun for 1 or 2 players, as they compete as one of their favorite Digimon characters in an exhilarating digivolving battle!

Can you play through to the Millenniummon stage and beat the ultimate enemy of them all?

DIGIMON®
Digital Monsters
BATTLE SPIRIT™

Engage in Grand Battles!

Unlock Hidden Characters!

Use Special Battle Techniques!

LINKABLE!
HEAD-to-HEAD action for 1 or 2 players!

Encounter Multiple Levels, Pitfalls, and Surprising Traps!

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Comic Mischief
Mild Violence

www.bandaigames.com

GAME BOY ADVANCE

BANDAI®

© Akiyoshi Hongo • Toei Animation • TM & © 1997-2003 Bandai • Program © 2001 Bandai
DIGIMON, DIGITAL MONSTERS, BATTLE SPIRIT and all related logos, names, and distinctive likeness thereof are the property of Bandai. DIGIMON is a registered trademark of Bandai. Used under license by Bandai America Incorporated. All Rights Reserved. TM, ® and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo.

THE NEXT BIG...

■ PS2, XBOX

...GIZMO: HEADSET MICROPHONES

Now that every console under the sun is going online, you'll need a doohickey for talkin' smack during those multiplayer games. Xbox Live users have it good, with voice chat on every title. And soon, voice chat on PS2 won't just be limited to fans of the gung-ho shooter *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs*. Logitech is releasing a deluxe version of the *SOCOM* headset in early 2003, so expect more games to take advantage of voice communication. "We're working very actively with a lot of game developers to take on the issues that arise with using the headset," says Logitech Marketing Director Fred Swan. "The goal is to make voice on PS2 easier to implement, while broadening and enriching experiences it can offer."

***"Powder*'s my favorite movie, too!"**

■ PS2, XBOX

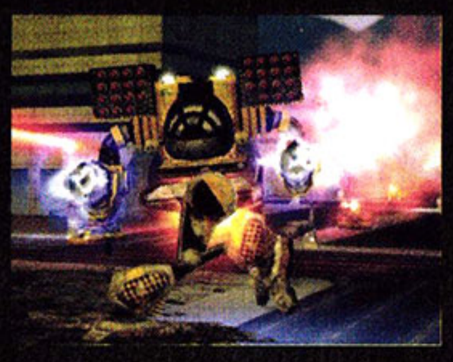
...GENRE: MASSIVELY MULTIPLAYER ONLINE RPGs

It's the talk around town—around the globe, actually. Massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs) have taken over the lives of millions of PC gamers, and will soon open up new worlds of fun for console owners by letting thousands of people adventure together in living, persistent worlds. Several PC titles are making the transition from desktop to living room, including *EverQuest Online Adventures* (PS2, February) and *Star Wars Galaxies* (PS2, Xbox, exact release date TBD but far, far away). You'll see plenty of old-fashioned console RPGs, too, massive-sized for the masses. *Final Fantasy XI* (PS2) and *True Fantasy Online* (Xbox) should appease fans of traditional Japanese-style RPGs.

***True Fantasy Online* for Xbox (left) and *Final Fantasy XI* for PS2 (right) will bring thousands of gamers together in monster-bashing harmony in late 2003.**

■ XBOX

...TECHNOLOGY: DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT



Your online console isn't just a tool to help you to frag faceless punks. It will also let you get more out of your games. "Downloadable content will provide gamers with fresh content and new experiences," says J. Allard, Xbox General Manager. "Imagine battling your friends in new *MechAssault* environments or [playing new stages] in *Splinter Cell*. Imagine that the trades and stats for every sports game are up to date."

■ PS2

...ONLINE TREND: CLAN WARS

More and more PS2 owners who enlist in the online warfare of Sony's smash shooter *SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs* are discovering that soldiers who play together, slay together. The secret to their solidarity is clan designation, a team-building feature that lets weekend warriors from Sacramento to Miami band together in small, self-named teams, then challenge other clans for national supremacy. "Most *SOCOM* players are now associated with a clan," says Seth Luisi, the game's producer, "and they definitely understand the teamwork aspect we were aiming for."

***SOCOM* clans prove there's no "i" in "frag 'em all!" Now, if only Xbox Live supported clan designations....**

IN YOU, THE WORLD'S GOT A FIGHTING CHANCE!

GUILTY GEAR X2

Guilty Gear X2, the sequel to the world's best 2D fighter - includes 6 new characters for a devastating 20 playable fighters! Each has 8 modes for you to master, with all-new Mission, Medal of Millionaires and Story Modes. Use explosive new moves like Psych Burst, Faultless Defense, Burst Gauge and more. Each fighter's jaw-dropping, eye-popping attacks are enhanced, including Guilty Gear trademarks Overdrive Attack, Gatling Combo, Roman Cancel and signature Instant Kills. Guilty Gear X2 will floor you with mind-blowing graphics, brain-numbing speed, killer Rock & Metal music, outrageous movies and hidden extras.

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Blood
Mature Sexual Themes
Violence

PlayStation 2

ARC SYSTEM WORKS
www.arcsy.co.jp

Sammy Studios

© Sammy 2002/1998-2002 ARC SYSTEM WORKS Co., Ltd. Published by Sammy Studios, Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

WARNING!!

A NEW MAGAZINE HAS BEEN DETECTED!!

GENESIS → **GMR** IS A NEW SPECIES OF MAGAZINE. IT WAS BRED TO BE THE BEST MONTHLY BUYING GUIDE FOR VIDEO GAMES.
EVOLUTION → **GMR** WILL GROW TO BECOME THE INDISPENSIBLE VOICE FOR ALL GAMERS IN NEED OF A SECOND OPINION WHEN BUYING THEIR NEXT GAME.
POWERS → **GMR'S** VAST ARSENAL OF WEAPONS ARE THE LATEST NEWS AND REVIEWS OF ALL GAMES ON-SALE NOW. IT COVERS ALL FORMATS, INCLUDING PS2, XBOX, GAMECUBE, GBA AND PC. IT IS CONSIDERED A SIGNIFICANT THREAT TO LESSER GAMES MAGAZINES.
KNOWN HABITAT → **GMR** CAN BE FOUND AT ALL STORES BEARING THIS SIGN:

EB GAMES™
electronics boutique®

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE → IF **GMR** IS SPOTTED, IT IS ADVISED THAT YOU PURCHASE A COPY OR SIGN-UP FOR A SUBSCRIPTION IMMEDIATELY.

//end transmission//

LOOK OUT...

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA GAME GROUP

POWERED BY → ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA.
THE SAME PEOPLE WHO BRING YOU ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY, COMPUTER GAMING WORLD, OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE, GAMENOW, AND XBOX NATION.

...IT'S GOING TO BE BIG.

Review Crew

Our Philosophy

EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 0.0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AVERAGE. Simple, ain't it?

Our Awards

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

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

Games that average at least an 8.0 (but lower than 9.0) receive **Silver Awards.**

Introduction

As usual, it was a month of cruel psychological experiments here at *EGM*—but at least all that pain was focused on one game: *The Sims*. We subjected our little computer people to savage trials we shan't ever speak of unless subpoenaed by a court of law. And when the *Sims* war-crimes tribunal does come calling, we'll just bribe the judges with free copies of this month's Sega games. *Panzer Dragoon Orta* (Xbox), *Skies of Arcadia Legends* (GC), and *Phantasy Star Collection* (GBA) all earned awards from our crew. Meanwhile, all the fart jokes and big-boobed strippers in the world couldn't save Acclaim's adults-only *BMX XXX*.

Game of the Month

Skies of Arcadia Legends pg. 150

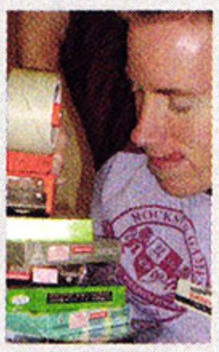
This month, Sega squeezes a lot of extra mileage out its swashbuckling RPG, *Skies of Arcadia Legends*. When this game debuted in its un-*Legend*-ary, nonenhanced form on the Dreamcast it won our prestigious Game of the Month distinction. Amazingly, it's still so damn good that it won the coveted title all over again...two years later! RPG fans will go nuts for its interesting premise, cool characters, and gargantuan quest. It's brimming with high-flying adventure, a steamy love triangle, and giant flying gunships aplenty. The fact that's it a GameCube game makes the deal all the sweeter.

The Crew

Shane Bettenhausen
Reviews Editor

Finishing cool RPGs like *Skies of Arcadia* and the old *Phantasy Star* games is fun but oh-so time consuming. At this rate, Shane won't ever get around to opening the games he got for Xmas.

Favorite Genres: RPG, Action, Fighting
Current Faves: *SoA Legends, Phantasy Star Coll.*



Crispin Boyer
Features Editor

Crispin slipped deep undercover as a game-store clerk to fact check this month's Press Start story on fanboys (page 54). At least that's what he told us. We think he was really just in it for the employee discount.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure
Current Faves: *Metroid Prime, The Sims*

Dan "Shoe" Hsu
Editor in Chief

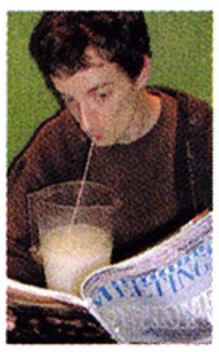
BMX XXX's adult language and frustrating gameplay have given Shoe a potty mouth that'll take five bars of Lava soap to clean out. Now the staff's got human resources on speed dial for when Shoe acts up.

Favorite Genres: &*#$@ everything!!
Current Faves: *Metroid Prime, Splinter Cell*

Chris Johnston
News Editor

After 12 straight hours of a certain *Super Party*, the expression on poor CJ's face was locked for good (artist rendering at left). Will he ever be able to experience the coolest driver's high again?

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure, Music
Current Faves: *Unreal Champ., Metroid Prime*



Demian Linn
Editor-at-Large

Hoping to be "at-large" in a more literal sense, Demian has been pounding Weight Gainer 2200 Gold and reading *Testosterone Magazine*. Or the latest issue of *Successful Meetings*, whichever's closer.

Favorite Genres: Action, Racing, Hockey
Current Faves: *Tony Hawk 4, NHL 2K3*

Mark MacDonald
Executive Editor

Uh oh ladies! Looks like the rumors that Mark is off the market are true! Our cameras caught him coming out of Justin Timberlake's trendy new L.A. club, "Timberland," with this new mystery woman on his arm.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure, RPG
Current Faves: *Metroid Prime, Splinter Cell, PDO*

James "Milkman" Mielke
Elvis has left the building

Ah, good things always come to an end. Yes, it's Mielke's final issue as a fully-fledged member of *EGM*. No, we haven't sent him to "sleep with the fishes." He's going off to start up our new sister magazine, *GMR*.

Favorite Genres: Action, Fighting, Role-playing
Current Faves: *War of the Monsters, Panzer Orta*

Greg Sewart
Previews Editor

Witness Sewart's audition photo for the upcoming *War of the Monsters* movie. Well...at least we wish it were a movie. Then he could stop trying to crush our toys and stomping around the office roaring.

Favorite Genres: Racing, Adventure, RPG
Current Faves: *Metroid Prime, Hot Pursuit 2*

Jennifer Tsao
Managing Editor

When she started *The Sims*, Jennifer intended to make a digital replica of the nice, normal girl she appears to be. She ended up as a flirty lesbian with almost no furniture in her house but a vibrating, heart-shaped bed.

Favorite Genres: Action Sports, Adventure
Current Faves: *The Sims, Animal Crossing*

ATV Offroad Fury 2

Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Rainbow Studios
Players: 1-4 (2-4 online, LAN, or i.Link)
Also On: None
Featured In: *EGM* #161
Best Feature: Great control
Worst Feature: Clunky online match setup
Website: www.playstation.com

I was a big fan of the original *ATV Offroad Fury*. And while part of me wishes this sequel had gotten a graphical overhaul (it looks exactly the same as the original), *ATV2* is still one awesome racing experience. It has more ATVs, more tracks, minigames (including a neat four-player hockey game), and enough play modes to bring back fans of the first game. The reason I really like *ATV2*, though, is the cool jump-boosting technique you use to navigate the terrain on each course. As you approach a hill, you need to pull back on the stick and then push forward at the appropriate time in order to get a real push off the ground. The catch is, you don't always want to pull one of these superjumps—it depends on your ideal landing spot. It sounds complicated, but the move adds tons of depth to the game and makes mastering the longer tracks a blast. But if that still isn't enough, *ATV2*'s online component should seal the deal. After all, the biggest problem in most racing games is opponent A.I. It's always either way too aggressive or simply asleep at the wheel. While the computer-controlled drivers in *ATV2* don't suck, **nothing beats competing against human opponents**. Online, the game runs smoothly with either broadband or 56k dialup. My only complaint is that there's no way to see who's online when you hook up, so meeting your buds for a race is nearly impossible. Still, this is a quality racer from start to finish. **Greg S.**

If you liked the first *ATV*, you're going to like the sequel—although, I wish Rainbow had fixed some of the original's minor issues in this version. What issues? How about that weird off-track sensor that penalizes you if you drift off the road, even if it's to no strategic advantage? Or the fact that you never seem to withstand significant contact with other riders? On top of that, the track design doesn't seem quite as imaginative this time, and the online-play setup is clunky as all get-out (though the racing runs smoothly). There are, however, a ton of extras to open up and a load of different modes to play, adding **a lot of replay value that the original lacked**. **Joe**

With its bouncy hills and off-the-wall physics, *ATV* won't win any realism contests, but this modern-day *Exictebike* delivers enough wild action to please most thrillseekers. It's got a lot going for it—smooth graphics, a wide variety of tracks, and some clever minigames. Plus, kickin' up dust in the online arena adds near-infinite replay value. A few issues kept me from being really enthralled, though. It's way too easy to wipe out by simply touching other racers. Cruel, **unforgiving collision detection doesn't belong in this fanciful racer**. Also, tricks seem largely pointless, as they don't help you win and often cause you to wipe out needlessly. Fun yet frustrating. **Shane**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	9

Dead to Rights

Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Players: 1
Also On: GC, XB
Best Feature: Over-the-top stylish attacks
Worst Feature: Recycles levels and bosses
Best diversion: Bomb defusing
Website: www.deadtorights.com

Of course, you can just shoot the bad guys in *Dead to Rights* or punch and kick them to death, but where's the joy in that? As you become comfortable with the solid controls and quirks of the lock-on targeting system, a larger selection of more stylish possibilities presents itself. What'll it be this time? Send your canine compadre out to maul the first thug and bring back his weapon so you can dispatch the rest of the guards? Disarm the enemy yourself using something from your arsenal of special moves (personal favorite: Sunny Side Up, where you grab the bad guy's weapon, kick him into the air, and empty a clip into him as he falls)? Or maybe dive headlong at your foes (activating a Bullet-Time slow-mo effect) and shoot them all before you land? Or use a guard as a human shield while you fight his buddies? Clearing each squad of dim-witted goons is rarely an intellectual challenge but always entertaining as an ultraviolent display of beauty and precision—**it's like a John Woo movie without the doves and opera music**. All this variety, plus different weapon types and minigames, does a fair job of helping you forget you're basically slaughtering your way through room after room of bad guys, with a switch to find now and then. *DTR* is repetitive, especially in its second half as the same environments, enemies, and even bosses are reused, but action fans will want to see the game through to the end. **Mark**

It's encouraging to know that a developer actually listens to feedback about a game. When *DTR* debuted on Xbox, a lot of players and reviewers (myself included) complained about the insane difficulty, mandatory minigames, and clunky targeting. All these gripes have been addressed—**this PS2 version is substantially easier**, some of the minievents are optional, and the aiming's been tweaked. Even with all these improvements, I still don't love the game—the hand-to-hand fighting is lame, the story is a heap of clichés, and graphic slowdowns cripple the action once in a while. Nonetheless, the shooting levels are really enjoyable. A solid rental. **Shane**

Playing *DTR* unleashed a flood of repressed memories from my grueling days with the lackluster Xbox version. The same insipid story line, terrible boss battles, and simplistic hand-to-hand combat from the Xbox version return on PS2—except this time, the whole damn thing is easier, making *DTR* more fun and infinitely less frustrating. Since the game's appeal still lies in its stylish gun battles, I wish *DTR* would stick to what it does well and ditch the extracurricular contrivances (Minigames! Come get yer silly minigames!). I commend Namco for tweaking the game balance for a better experience, but ***DTR* remains flawed**. A fine rental, but nothing more. **Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	5

Dynasty Warriors 3: Xtreme Legends

Publisher: Koei
Developer: Omega Force
Players: 1-2
Value Priced: $29.99
Doesn't Require: *Dynasty Warriors 3*
Website: www.koeigames.com
Best Feature: Good voice acting
Worst Feature: Dull battles

Basically, you could call this game *Dynasty Warriors 3: Substance*. If you got into *DW3*'s gang-rushing, hack-n-slash-through-ancient-China glory, you'll totally eat up *Xtreme Legends*. It adds a bunch of game modes (including cool ones like a footrace through a raging battlefield) and a gang of options that let you customize the look, moves, and equipment of your warriors—in other words, all the stuff that people who are already into *DW3* would want. Plus, those already into *Dynasty Warrior*'s operatic take on ancient Chinese history will appreciate the new perspectives that the added characters bring to the old story line. Personally, though, I find the *DW* games pretty repetitive after a few hours (slash, slash, eat some dim sum, recommence slashing), so if that's the case for you, know that *Xtreme Legends* won't change your perception. **It's aimed at hardcore *Dynasty* aficionados** (which apparently number in the millions worldwide). Overall, it's more of the same *Dynasty* brawling, but its discount price makes it easy on the wallet. **Miguel**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	4	6	8

Pro Race Driver

Publisher: Codemasters
Developer: Codemasters
Players: 1-2
Also Coming To: Xbox
Featured In: *EGM* #159
Website: www.proracedriver.com
Best Feature: Excellent control
Worst Feature: Race series are way too short

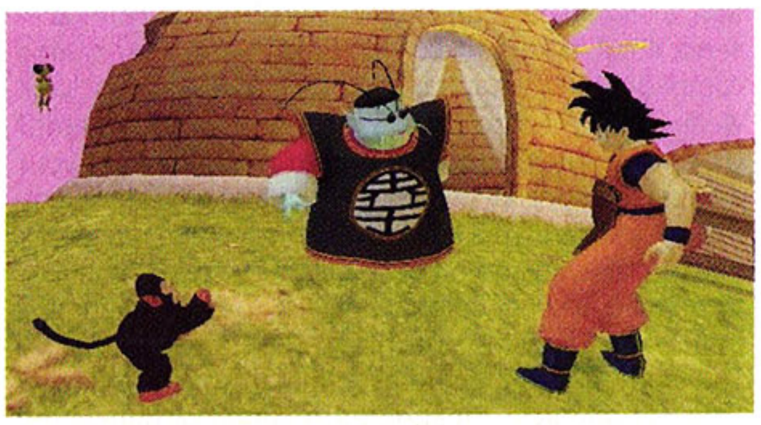
Despite yet another name change (the last one was *Jarrett & Labonte Racing*), Codemasters' classic *TOCA Touring Car* franchise continues, this time with a new emphasis on story. *Pro Race* follows a young driver whose famous father (also a driver) was killed on the track. **The detailed plot adds an interesting twist to the genre**, but honestly, all the talking gets a little old after a while, especially since the main character's usually just whining. Shut up and drive, kiddo. Still, the racing itself is excellent. Near-perfect controls, a good sense of speed and very diverse races (everything from touring cars to NASCAR-style vehicles are utilized) make *Pro Race Driver* a pleasure to play. The only problem? You move through each series so quickly (most are only six races, with less than seven laps each) that the season usually ends just as you're starting to enjoy yourself. The game offers some nice variety, since you get to drive so many different types of cars, but the extreme depth that serious racing fans desire just isn't here. It's too bad; everything else about this game makes me want to play more. **Greg S.**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	7

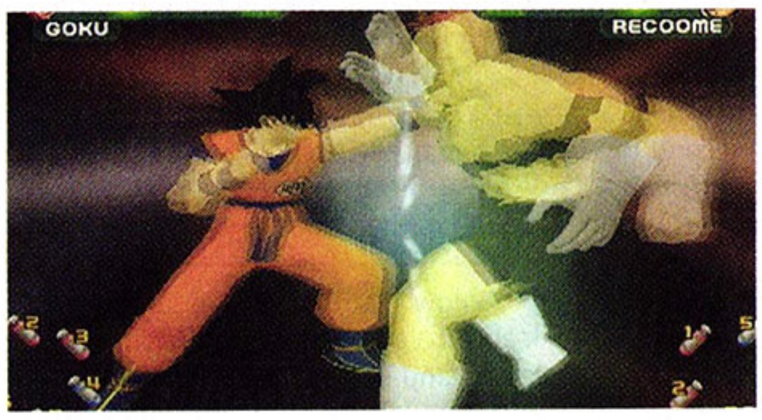
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai

Publisher:	Infogrames
Developer:	Dimps
Players:	1-2
Also On:	None
Featured In:	*EGM* #162
Best Feature:	Stays true to the show in every way
Worst Feature:	Cinema scenes are a little too long
Website:	www.dragonballz.com

If every *DBZ* fan collected all seven Dragon Balls and wished for a good *Z* fighter, *Budokai* might be the result: a good fighting game starring everyone's favorite monkey-boy, Goku, and an ever-increasing horde of powerful alien challengers. Its Story mode follows an abridged version of the Saiyan, Namekian, and Android sagas, pitting you against such memorable foes as Raditz, Frieza, Cell, and the Androids. (If you understood that last sentence, odds are this game's for you.) In *Budokai*, you'll be tossing giant fireballs through the air with ease, just like in the hit TV show.



All the stuff you like from the show, from King Kai's monkey bud (above) to lightning-quick combo attacks (below) are in *Budokai*.



One of the mainstays of the *Dragon Ball* series is the projectile energy attack. And *Budokai* has no shortage of it, as you can see in these screenshots (below and left). But while this attack is powerful, it won't kill you in one hit—you've got multiple life bars that must be depleted before you're finished.

You might think that in order to enjoy *Budokai*, you'd have to know all the characters, their powers, and the whole convoluted mess of a story known as *DBZ*. But that's not the case. Even if you don't know Kakarot from Goku (hint: they're the same person), you'll appreciate *Budokai*'s surprisingly slick, intuitive, and customizable fighting system. At the very least, you'll be able to tolerate it for a few rounds with your *DBZ*-fanatic younger brother without hoping someone would just Kamehameha your ass already. Of course, if you've legally changed your name to Goku and plan to name your firstborn Gohan, you'll be in fanboy heaven from the moment you see the show's intro via the game's incredibly cool 3D engine. You can tell that the developers themselves are *DBZ* fans. From the attention to detail in rendering Akira Toriyama's character designs (including fan-favorite, the oddball Hercule, in his own Survival mode), to the long, episodic-style Story mode and its alternate paths, ***Budokai* stands above any of the previous attempts to turn the series into a fighter**. And it's not just good when playing solo. Customizing your attack repertoire by buying, trading, and earning skills gives the multiplayer Duel mode more replay value than most fighters could hope for. You can even collect the seven Dragon Balls to earn more ultrapowerful, rare skills. As if it wasn't already obvious, *DBZ* fans, this is your game. **CJ**

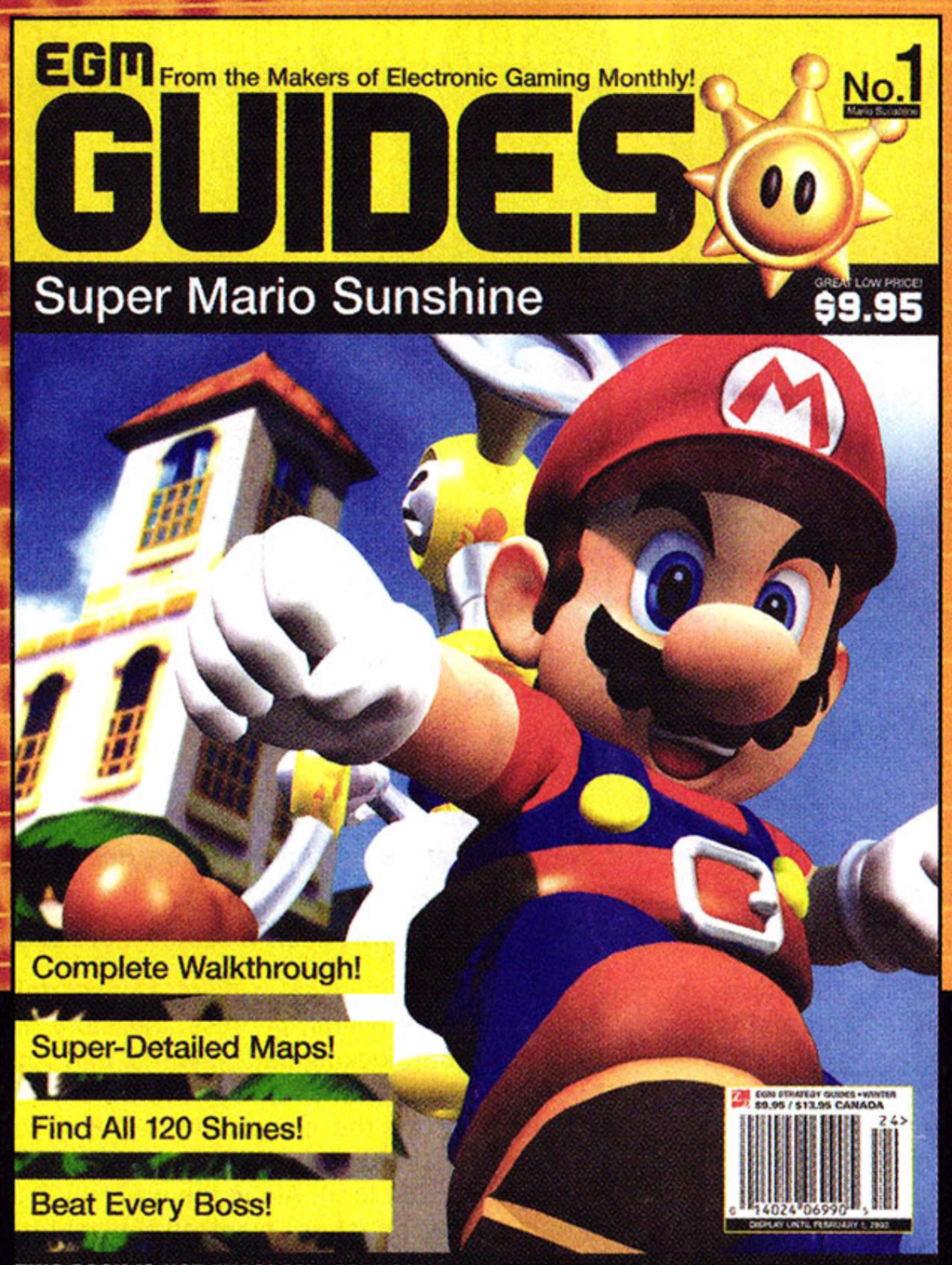
I feel bad for *Dragon Ball Z* fans. For so long, if they wanted to play a good fighting game based on their favorite manga/anime, they had to fool themselves into thinking the PS1's *Dragon Ball GT Final Bout* wasn't a steaming pile of dung. Lucky for them, *Budokai* is actually pretty good. As far as gameplay goes, it doesn't have the depth or technique of, say, Dreamcast's *Soul Calibur*, but the ability to upgrade your fighters with earned moves adds a bit of strategy to this game. Between the terrific cinemas, TV voice actors, and perfectly re-created story lines, **you'll really feel like you're playing the show**. And isn't that what you've wanted all along? **Phil**

Let the Kamehameha rejoicing commence. *DBZ* fans will devour this surprisingly solid fighting game. Personally, I'm not entranced by the insanely long cinemas of spiky-haired dudes questing to bring one another back to life, but for fans of the show, the episodic Story mode does the cartoon justice. This mode's difficulty is a bit uneven, though. The default Easy is a total cakewalk, but bumping it up to Normal makes the game surprisingly tough. Overall, *DBZ* fans will adore the game, and **even gamers who don't dig the source material will have fun**. *Budokai* offers oodles of unlockable characters and moves, and the fighting engine boasts unexpected depth. **Shane**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	8

GIMME A SENZU BEAN, QUICK!

Once you and your buddies have earned enough skills and mastered *Z*'s Story and World Tournament modes, you can customize your fave fighter to be even more powerful. Some of the best strategies? If you're better at defense, give yourself a life-giving Senzu Bean. Then, when your life's been drained, bam—you can use the bean, and you'll have more energy and time to lay the smack down on your shocked opponent. Or, if you've gained the Viral Heart Disease, you can add it to your skills, and it'll gradually drain your opponent's life. But if you're gonna do that, make sure you also equip the antidote; otherwise, your life'll drain, too.



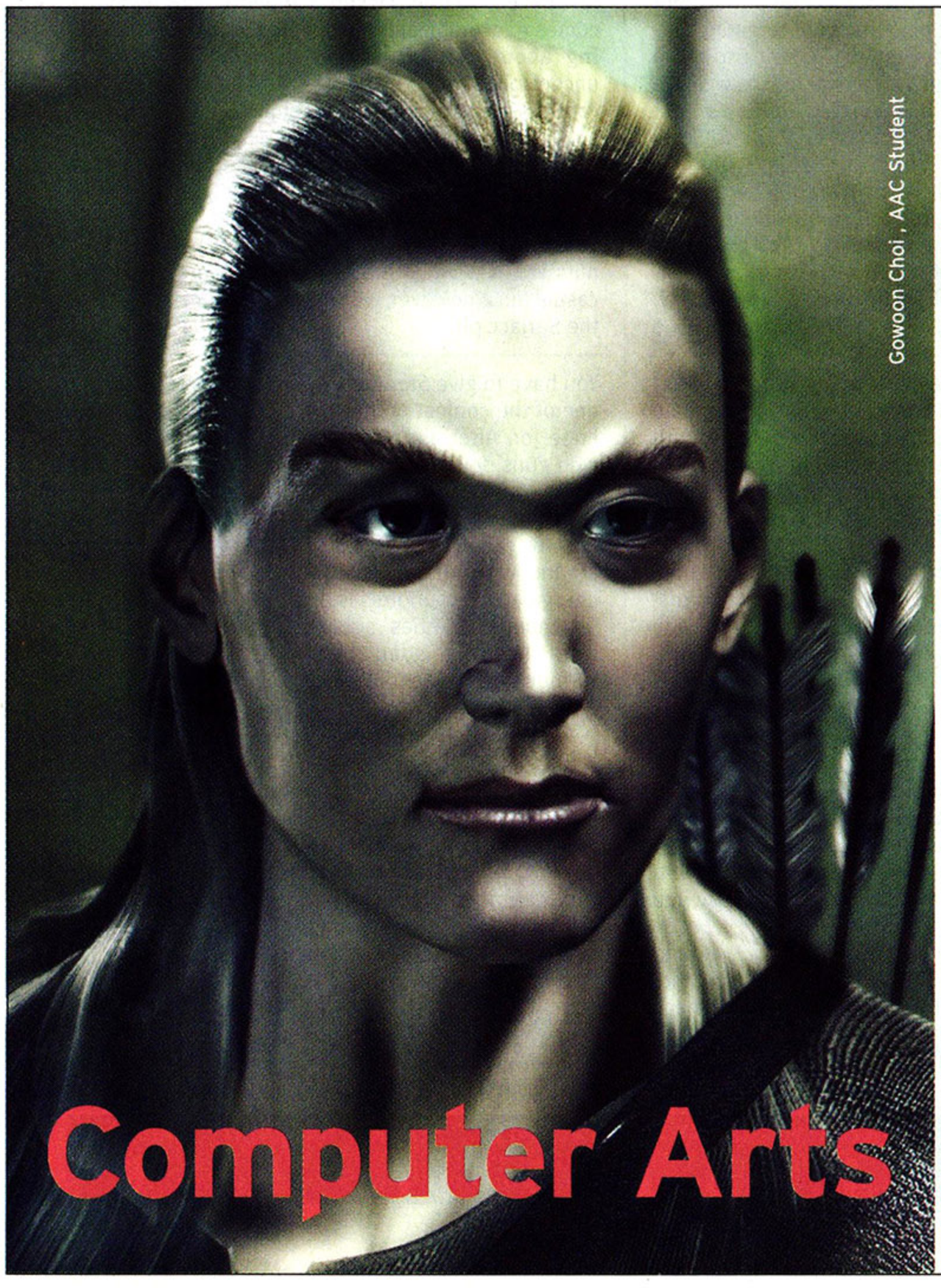
THIS BOOK IS NOT ENDORSED, SPONSORED, NOR OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED BY NINTENDO

NOT SATISFIED UNTIL YOU'VE FOUND EVERY LAST SHINE SPRITE?

LOOK TO THE EXPERTS AT ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY FOR HELP IN MARIO'S LATEST ADVENTURE.

Super Mario Sunshine is so humongous, that the editors of EGM needed to spend an entire magazine just on tips and strategies alone. For the cover price of $9.99, you'll save yourself from tearing out the rest of your hair trying to get your hands on all 120 shines. Look for this guide on your favorite newsstand today.

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA GAME GROUP



2D & 3D Animation | 3D Modeling | Character Design
Computer Graphics | Computer Illustration
Digital Imaging | Digital Media | Digital Photography
Gaming | Visual Effects | Web Design

AA | BFA | MFA Degrees
Portfolio Development | Online Classes

Apply Now for Spring, Summer & Fall Semesters

High School Scholarships
& Teacher Grants Available

AcademyOfArtCollege
1.800.544.ARTS | www.academyart.edu

79 New Montgomery St., San Francisco, CA 94105
Nationally Accredited by ACICS, NASAD & FIDER
Established in 1929

.hack Part 1: Infection

Publisher: Bandai
Developer: Cyber Connect 2
Players: 1
Also On: None
Watch for: The *.hack* animated TV series
Best Feature: Great concept and execution
Worst Feature: A little short for a $50 RPG
Website: www.dothack.com

For its concept alone, *.hack* deserves an award. In a genre full of generic, me-too *Final Fantasy* wannabes, Bandai has stormed in with a game so fresh and unique, **it just begs to be experienced despite its flaws**. Here's the gist—you're playing a role-playing game...about an online role-playing game. You "log on," play alongside other simulated questers, and try to figure out if this addictive game is trying to kill you (not *you*, but rather the "you" who's playing the game that you're, uh...playing). The game succeeds at simulating the experience of playing a massively multiplayer online RPG without having to actually get on the Net. The supplied 45-minute anime disc adds value, too; even if you don't care for the story, you should watch it to look for hidden keywords that can be used to open up secret dungeons in the game. This kind of interaction is a key part of the whole *.hack* experience, and I found it to be quite refreshing. As for the game itself, The World (the "online" RPG in *.hack*) plays a lot like Sega's *Phantasy Star Online*, which is definitely a good thing. The battle camera isn't nearly as good, and the game balance is a bit off (prepare to spend countless hours leveling-up in random dungeons), but overall, it's still fun. One thing to be aware of: For an RPG, *.hack* is pretty short. It takes only about 20 hours to beat, but with the sequel right around the corner (it's due in May), can you really complain?

John R.

The good news is, *.hack* executes its highfalutin concept—posing as a massively multiplayer online RPG—almost flawlessly. Believable dialogue, simulated players, and a fake network interface all add to the feeling that you're really online. The frantic real-time battles borrow fun elements from *Phantasy Star Online*'s action-packed brawls, but the fussy camera and uneven difficulty detract. Still, *.hack* is enjoyable and clever, albeit short—more like a prologue than a full game. The story line is about 20 percent vague foreshadowing and 80 percent outright padding, with very little meaningful plot in this 15-hour quest. Consider it a **promising start to an ambitious series**.

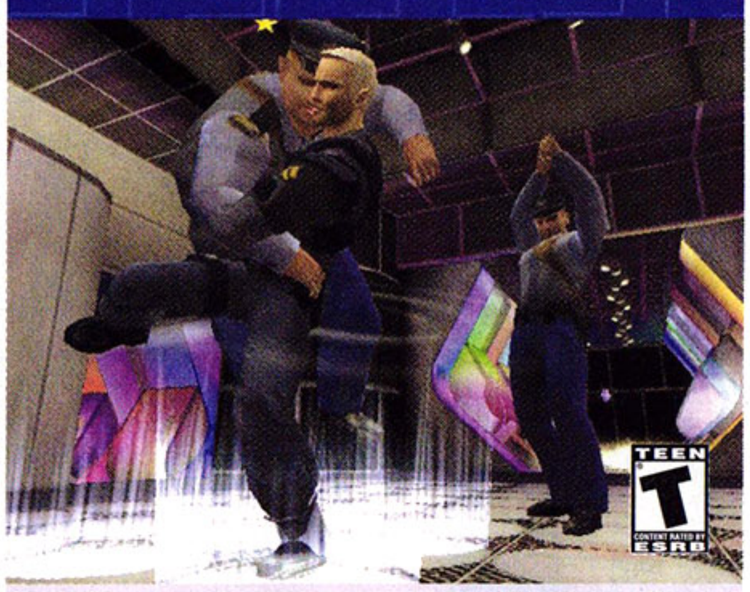
Dave

I'll agree that *.hack*'s faux online-RPG concept is cool—you'll be sending virtual e-mail, browsing made-up message boards, and even coping with bizarre server glitches, all within the context of a giant *EverQuest*-style world gone awry. Conceptually, it's awesome, but an ingenious setup doesn't make *.hack* fun. Once you look past **the novelty of the fake online community**, the game's merely average. Repetitive dungeons, simplistic combat (*PSO*'s is way better), wildly uneven difficulty, and a shortage of actual plot all tarnish the final product. Plus, you'll beat the game quickly, and the included anime DVD is awful, despite its hidden codes. A curiosity for hardcore RPG nuts only.

Shane

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	9	4

Minority Report



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Treyarch
Players: 1
Also On: GC, Xbox
Featured In: *EGM* #161
Best Feature: Solid fighting engine
Worst Feature: Frustrating camera
Website: www.activision.com

Movie-based games are finally turning the corner in terms of quality (e.g., EA's *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* games), and *Minority Report* continues this trend. Here we have a solid, straight-out action-brawler, with the hero, John Anderton, doing a lot more fighting than he ever did in the movie. With this setup comes both strengths and weaknesses. On the positive side, you get a number of combos to play with and tons of breakable environmental objects (you know, so you can feel like a real action hero). Plus, there are secrets abound, and you can open up unlockable goodies. As for the negatives, the action becomes repetitive as you spend level after level pummeling a wave of Precrime officers, finding a health pick-up, then bustin' more heads. It's a common problem in this genre that's not remedied here. It doesn't help that your targeting cursor tends to jump around when you're trying to finish someone off. And although the camera means well, it's frustrating when it faces the wrong way during a fight or as you run down a hallway. Still, there's decent level variety and some cut-scenes to mix things up. And those levels—my word, there are a lot of them. Not all of the 40 stages are long, but the game requires quite a commitment if you want to finish it. **You certainly won't feel shortchanged if you conquer this beast**. So, while *Report* has its share of flaws, it does enough right to provide an entertaining diversion.

G. Ford

For a game based on a movie, *Minority Report* doesn't have much to do with its big-screen cousin (the main character looks nothing like the film's Anderton). Instead, the game's a decent beat-em-up retelling of the movie, with somewhat different events—and long load times. As for the gameplay, two out of three Precogs agree: this game **could've used a checkpoint system**. Starting an entire level over because you die during the last bit turns much of *Report* into a frustrating mess. And the black market system for buying power-ups, instead of collecting them in the levels, feels tacked-on. *Report* may look snazzy, but this brawler doesn't have enough punch.

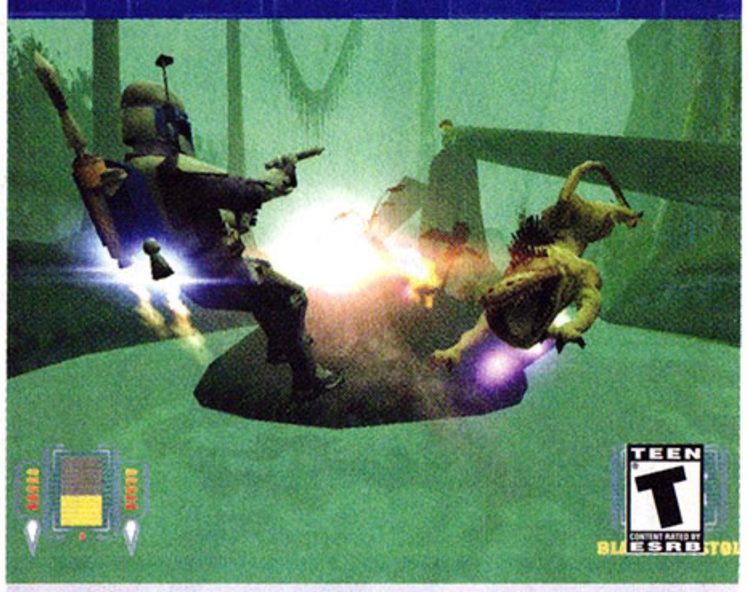
CJ

My report is in—**this game is a mildly enjoyable brawler with mission objectives that rarely extend beyond the kill-everybody-and-unlock-the-doors dynamic**. You've got a wide range of hand-to-hand combos, and you can buy even more, but plain old button-mashing seems to work well, too. Frustratingly, you can't pick up the guns of your fallen enemies, even though you're constantly short of ammo. Flying around and wrecking havoc with the jetpack is fun, but other control issues (and intrusive loading times before each level) mar the *Minority Report* experience. It doesn't take a mutant psychic with precognition to figure out this one's a renter.

Demian

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	4	6

Star Wars Bounty Hunter



Publisher: LucasArts
Developer: LucasArts
Players: 1
Also On: GC
Featured In: *EGM* #160
Best Feature: Cool *Star Wars* story line
Worst Feature: Awkward controls
Website: www.starwarsbountyhunter.com

As a fan of all things *Star Wars*, I absolutely love *Bounty Hunter*'s overall premise and story. You are Boba Fett's butt-kicking daddy, Jango, and you need to prove to Lord Tyranus that you're worthy of being the template for the clone army (even if your sly employer has led you to believe that you're merely pursuing a rogue Jedi). Along the way, you'll take in miscellaneous bounties, meet and adventure with bounty-hottie Zam Wesell, and find and name the Fett family's stylish Slave I ship. It's also cool to know that you're playing a key role in Jabba the Hutt's rise to power. The catch to the *Star Wars* bliss? You have to actually play the game. It's fun to zoom through the air in a jetpack, and the game offers some great fast-paced, action-packed moments. But when it comes to overall gameplay...well, **I've got a bad feeling about this**. A horrible camera often shakes uncontrollably like a drunken Corellian, and sloppy controls tend to make you feel just as uncoordinated. Five continues per level—one or two of which typically result from a cheap death in missions that can take as long as an hour to complete—further deplete the fun factor. *Bounty Hunter*'s annoying gameplay quirks aren't so detrimental that *Star Wars* nuts won't want to play all the way through. More casual fans, however, would likely rather join Boba in the Sarlacc pit.

Chris B.

You have to give *Star Wars Bounty Hunter* this: It has one of the coolest premises a *Star Wars* game could hope for. After all, playing as a ruthless mercenary who guns down his enemies with dual blasters sure beats controlling one of those (yawn) noble Jedi and their glorified laser pointers. Luckily, **there's a decent game to back up the cool premise**. Flying around with Jango Fett's jetpack and shooting-up intergalactic scoundrels is awesome, as are the Hunt Secondary Bounties submissions. Prepare to get lost, though, as some missions get dragged down with unclear objectives. Still, I did have a great deal of fun with *Bounty Hunter*.

Phil

I'll give 50,000 credits to anyone who brings me those responsible for *Bounty Hunter*—dead or alive. Well, actually, bring them alive, 'cause I want to ask them what went wrong with this potentially cool game. The **generic, repetitive combat and drab graphics are the very definition of mediocrity**, while the jittery movement anytime your view swings around (which is all the time, thanks to an overanxious camera) is so jarring it literally gave me a headache. The only aspects that earn *Bounty Hunter* even an average score are its involving story and the *Star Wars* touches: character references, inside jokes, excellent music and voice acting, plus fun outtakes from the cut-scenes.

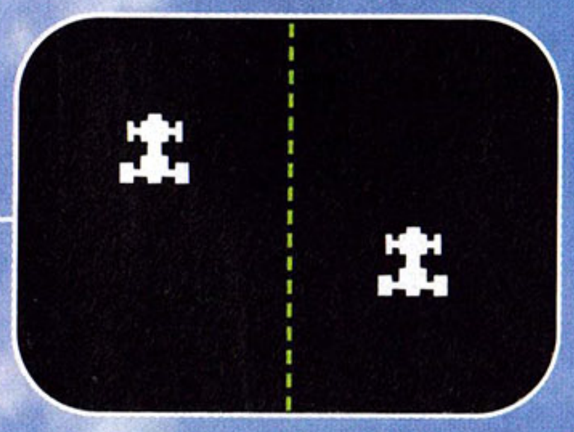
Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	7	5	6

Reviews | Previews | News | Cheats | Tricks | Strategy

This was then...

THIS IS NOW!



Bringing you the best in multi-console coverage

Available at:

- Borders
- Waldenbooks
- Barnes and Noble
- B. Dalton
- Babbages
- GameStop
- Funcoland
- Electronics Boutique
- WalMart
- Best Buy
- Kmart
- Target
- Walgreens
- CVS
- Kroger
- Safeway
- Toys R Us
- Comp USA

EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD
EGM SILVER
EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

The Sims

Publisher:	**Electronic Arts**
Developer:	**Maxis**
Players:	**1-2**
Also On:	**GC, Xbox (later)**
Featured In:	***EGM* #161**
Best Feature:	**Goal-based Get a Life mode**
Worst Feature:	**Levels sometimes take too long**
Website:	**www.thesims.com**

Sit down with your PS2 and *The Sims*, and you may learn more about yourself than you really wanted to know. Do you take care of your Sims, ensuring they live in nicely decorated houses, perform well at their jobs, and develop healthy social lives? Or are you a draconian dictator, demanding total subservience from your digital minions and punishing them on a whim just because you can? Both extremes—along with countless variants in between—are available to you in this highly innovative port of the hugely popular PC game.

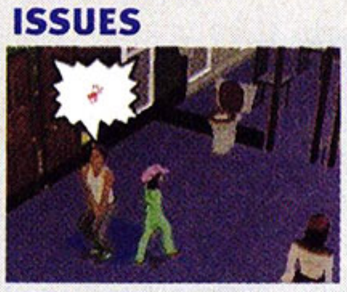
The mission-based Get a Life mode is great for anyone who missed—or hated—the game on PC. You'll learn how to take care of your Sims in small, manageable doses, taking on more challenging problems only when you know how to handle them. The Play The Sims mode is the same open-ended game that's so popular on PC, in which you start with an existing family or customize one from scratch to star in your own virtual soap opera.

All modes utilize the same basic game mechanism, which requires you to keep your Sims...if not exactly happy, then at least functioning as you want them to. And that's the genius of this game: You really can play it any way you want. Try your hand at it and you just might be surprised with what you find.

1001 WAYS TO TORTURE YOUR SIM

Even the most wholesome gamer can be driven to sadism by *The Sims*. Here are just a few of our favorite ways to make Sims suffer—but trust us, this list goes on and on....

BATHROOM ISSUES

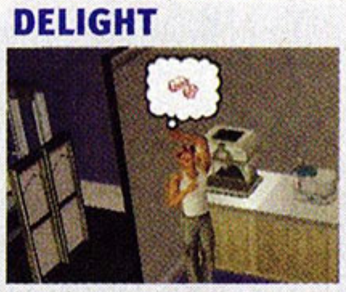


Put the toilet in the living room. Your Sim doesn't like to go in front of others, but there'll come a point when he just can't hold it any longer. Then he'll pee on the floor in front of his friends, who'll walk away in utter disgust.

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

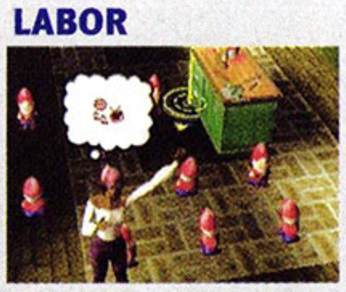
Sims get lonely easily. Deprive yours of phone calls, meals with friends, social visits of any kind...and watch as she stands alone in a corner of her miserable room and whimpers like a sad little puppy.

INSOMNIAC'S DELIGHT



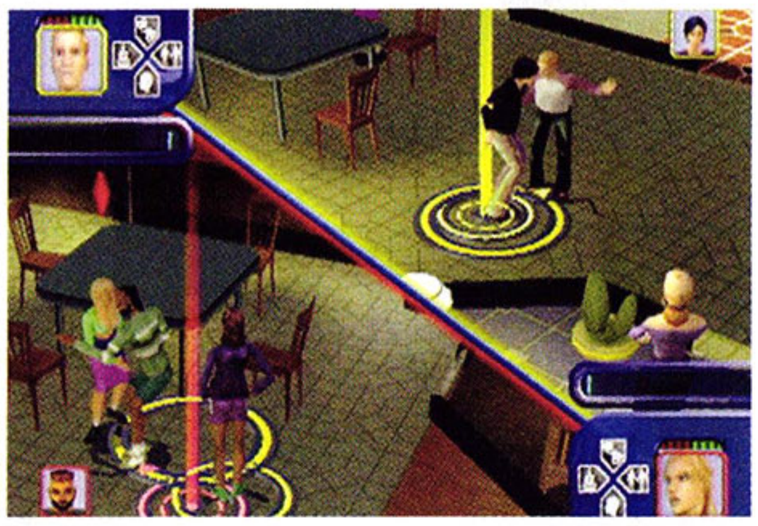
Don't let your Sim sleep—instead, keep him going with continual shots of espresso. He'll beg for mercy and eventually just pass out on the kitchen floor. (An added bonus: The coffee might make him pee his pants, too!)

SLAVE LABOR



Force your Sim to sit at the workbench all day churning out garden gnomes, then sell the gnomes for a tidy profit. Yes, she'll cry and complain that she's having no fun, but you'll laugh all the way to the bank.

The Sims **on PS2 features two-player challenges that let you go head-to-head with a friend. In "The Popularity Contest" (below), the first Sim to make three friends wins. Turn on the charm, joke, dance, and, most importantly, spread rumors about your opponent so his friends ditch him and join you.**



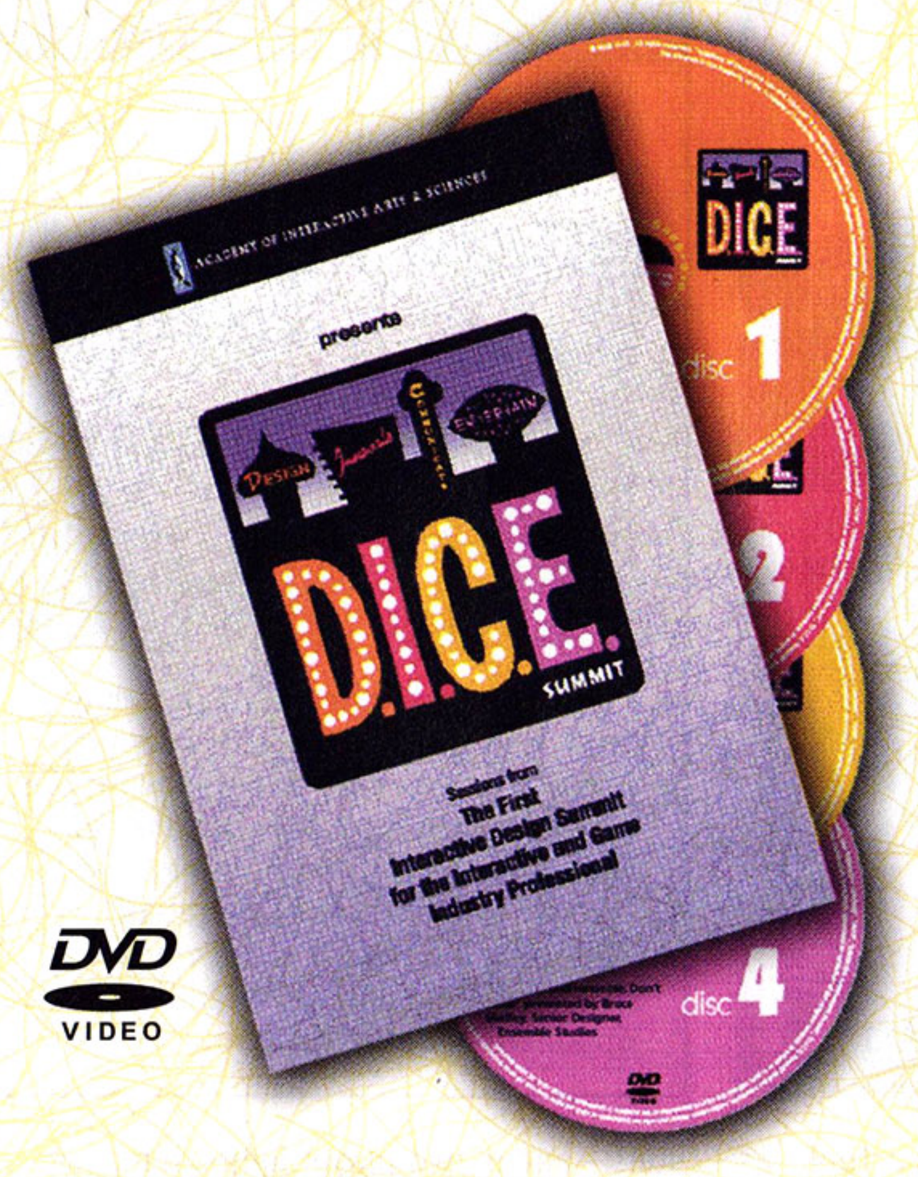
I played *The Sims* on PC—for about an hour. Then I got fed up with my Sims' incessant whining and complaining. But on PS2, well, **I couldn't put the controller down.** The goal-based Story mode effectively gave me bite-sized lessons about how to succeed in the game, and, as I discovered, successful Sims have more fun. They have nicer houses, more comfortable furniture, better parties, and, consequently, more friends to mess with—which is when things get interesting. For me, it all started when my Sim got the cool career promotion to photojournalist. Only then did she finally earn enough money to buy the heart-shaped hot tub she'd been eyeing. Up to that point, my Sim's roommate, Betty, had been cool and indifferent. But the hot tub changed everything. In one night, Betty was transformed from "just a friend" into my Sim's infatuated lesbian lover. That's when I started to understand just how addictive this game—with its ridiculous, self-induced soap-opera story lines—can be. Soon enough, my sex-crazed Sim was flirting with random visitors who rang her doorbell, inviting them into her vibrating bed, and driving her hapless paramours into jealous fits. I never imagined I'd be involved in such twisted antics, but all I can say is that *The Sims* made me do it. It's so open-ended, offering vast freedom to experiment in your virtual dollhouse. There's just nothing like it ever to hit a console, and, a few graphical glitches notwithstanding, it's one game everyone should try. **Jennifer**

There's something kind of sick about tending to a virtual character's toilet and hygiene needs while neglecting my own. The pressure of making someone get enough sleep and go to work every day feels a little too much like real life. In fact, the amount of micromanagement needed in *The Sims* can be daunting—especially when compared to the cute-tastic *Animal Crossing* (GC). On the other hand, it's **oddly compelling** to discover the fine balance of satisfying your Sim's needs and desires, and the developers did a great job creating console-esque missions, moving your character through the ups and downs of life. Now, please let me get on with my real one! **Carrie**

An hour in, I had my doubts. I have to tell my guy when to use the bathroom or he'll have an "accident"–*and* I have to tell him to flush? This is fun? But then I moved out of my mom's house and into the hot tub with the gals from across the street, and life was suddenly a lot better. **The more you play, the more you realize just how much freedom you have,** and with the Open mode, you're looking at almost limitless replay value. The game seems to have gained more than it lost in the transition from PC to console; Maxis has added multiplayer games, and you can import your Sims over to a friend's neighborhood via the magic of memory cards. **Demian**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	8	9	10

Learn From The Masters!



The Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences is pleased to present the D.I.C.E. Summit DVD Series. D.I.C.E. (Design, Innovate, Communicate and Entertain) is the Game Industries widely praised, exclusive interactive design conference held annually in Las Vegas. This 4 DVD set includes over 9 hours of the top tier creators and Legends in the Game industry explaining the in's and outs of the development process and the lessons learned while providing insight to the roadmap of the future of Interactive entertainment. This Unique "Master Class" of Game Design and Development is a crash course in the realities and issues affecting anyone interested in the Game industry.

Speakers Include:

- **Naughty Dog's Jason Rubin,** creator of the hit Crash Bandicoot series and Jak and Daxter.
- **American McGee,** Creator of American McGee's Alice" and contributor to Doom, Quake and Quake II.
- **Richard "Lord British" Garriott,** author of the best selling Ultima series.
- **Sid Meier,** Creator of "Sid Meiers Civilization," "Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon" and "Sim Golf".
- **Will Wright** Creator of the "Sim City" and "The Sims"
- **Satoru Iwata,** President of Nintendo
- **Lorne Lanning,** Founder of Oddworld Inhabitants
- **Bruce Shelley,** Ensemble Studios, Game Designer of Age of Empires
- **Louis Castle,** founder of Westwood Studios
- **Cliff Bleszinski,** Epic Games, creator of Unreal
- **Larry Probst,** CEO of Electronic Arts
- **Bruno Bonnell,** Founder and CEO of Infogrames
- **Shigeru Miyamoto,** Game legend and creator of Zelda, Mario, Pikmin.

For More information and pricing as well as secure online ordering of these DVD's go to:

WWW.DICESUMMIT.ORG

Or call 310.441.2280 ext. 109

Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences Members receive a substantial discount. For information about the Academy and membership please visit www.interactive.org

ACADEMY OF INTERACTIVE ARTS & SCIENCES

This program is the property of the Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences ("AIAS"). Duplication, broadcast, download, exhibition or any other use of the program, in whole or in part, without the express written permission of the AIAS is strictly prohibited. © 2002 AIAS. All rights reserved.

"Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences" is a registered trademark, and "Interactive Academy," "AIAS," "Interactive Achievement Award," "D.I.C.E. Summit" and the Interactive Achievement Award statuette are trademarks of AIAS. All rights reserved. Other material contained in this program may be owned by other parties and protected under copyright and/or trademark laws.

War of the Monsters

Publisher: SCEA
Developer: Incog Inc.
Players: 1-2
Reminds us of: The old *King of the Monsters* game
Featured In: *EGM* #161
Best Feature: Easy to pick up and play
Worst Feature: Bosses are frustratingly tough
Website: www.playstation.com

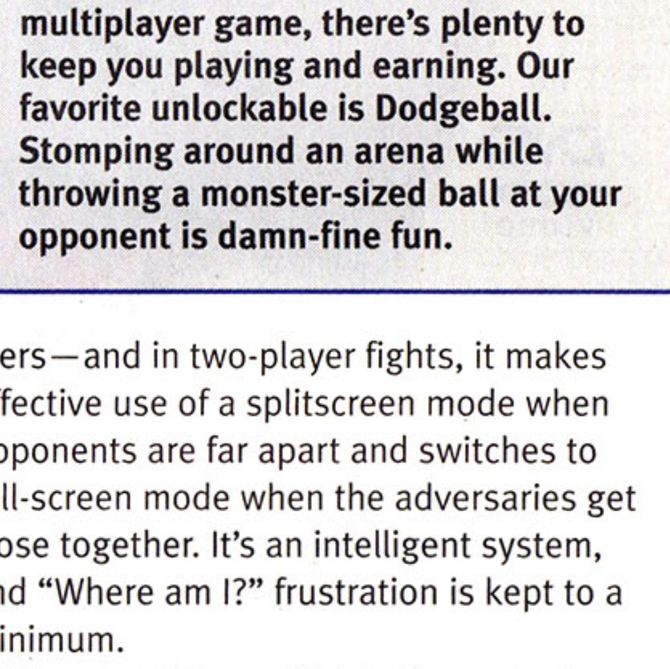
War of the Monsters is one of those games that's difficult to pigeonhole. Part *Power Stone*, part *SmackDown!*, part *King of the Monsters*, and part *Rampage*—it manages to do for the woefully underrepresented monster genre what others have failed to do: It makes it fun. A remarkably simple control scheme makes the complex process of picking up a monster, throwing it through a building, impaling it on a giant radio antenna, and then beating it over the head with a helicopter incredibly easy to pull off.

While many monster games have kept things slow, plodding, and boring, *WotM* is actually as fast as the majority of 3D brawlers. If you had to compare it to anything, it's probably most similar to a wrestling game. Instead of a ring with a few chairs and a ladder to use as weapons, you have entire cities full of interesting goodies. Just about everything in the environment is breakable, and most things can be picked up and used as weapons. Smash up a building and toss the rubble, or pick up a car from the street and hurl it like a grenade. Snap the radio tower off the top of a building and impale your enemy with it, or swipe a plane from the sky and pound your opponent into the ground with it. You'll have as much fun working out what can be done as you will actually doing it.

Two things make the gameplay experience unique for an arena-style fighter. First, the camera system is incredibly innovative. It pans in and out of the action to frame the monsters—and in two-player fights, it makes effective use of a splitscreen mode when opponents are far apart and switches to full-screen mode when the adversaries get close together. It's an intelligent system, and "Where am I?" frustration is kept to a minimum.

The second innovation is the control system. You essentially have five things to worry about aside from simply walking around: a light and a heavy attack, a block, a jump, and a grab. All these moves are context sensitive, though, and they change depending on where you are and what you're doing. Use the Grab button when you're near a building, and your monster will scale it. Use the same grab when you're standing near a highlighted object and he'll rip it out of the ground and use it as a weapon. Use it when you're near your opponent and your monster will pick him

BUY STUFF!



Play the game, win tokens, and buy stuff. Whether it's new skins for your favorite monster or new arenas for the multiplayer game, there's plenty to keep you playing and earning. Our favorite unlockable is Dodgeball. Stomping around an arena while throwing a monster-sized ball at your opponent is damn-fine fun.

MONSTER PARTY

Whatever your taste in monster media, *War of the Monsters* covers pretty much all the beastly basics, whether it's massive Japanese fighting robots or sentient lava-puking rock beasts. Surely you'll find one creature to call your own.

ULTRA V

V's an *EGM* favorite because he looks so damn cool. He has a rocket pack and a grappling hook, and he can shoot lasers from his eyes. Lasers from his eyes!!!

AGAMO

We liked Agamo the least. Just because he's a monster of rock doesn't mean he wails like Eddie Van Halen. It's just a sad fact—minerals aren't very interesting.

MAGMO

Our second favorite monster, Magmo, has four arms, moves fast, and can puke balls of lava at will. We wish we could do that. Then again, who doesn't?

TOGERA

Basically, Godzilla with a different face...but he has added nastiness in the shape of enormous spikes that poke out of his chest.

PREYTOR

The only creature that can properly fly...and the only female character in the game. Not exactly a babe, granted, but she's definitely a badass.

MONSTERS OF ROCK

Dokken

Scorpions

Back in 1988, the Monsters of Rock tour was the first traveling festival of its kind in the United States. Each show was a bladder-bursting 10 hours of rawk that kicked off with Kingdom Come, followed by Metallica, Dokken, and the Scorpions, ending with Van Halen (post David Lee Roth, so they sucked). The festival paved the way for events like Ozzfest today. If you tire of *WotM*'s soundtrack, pump this stuff up instead.

up. Each move changes depending on where you are in relation to your enemy, and all the moves fit into easy-to-develop combos that achieve startling results. When you're close to your opponent and you use a light attack, for example, you'll slap your enemy about the face and neck. Do the same combo from a distance and you'll make use of a ranged attack, like lasers or poisonous spit.

Once you learn the strategies of the complex arenas, things really get interesting. Levels are full of handy makeshift weapons and power-ups that are tactically vital if you're going to win quickly. There are two resources: health (duh...wonder what that does?) and energy. Energy is particularly important because it allows you to fire your ranged attacks and to charge up to perform special moves. These moves vary from monster to monster, but they're all fairly spectacular, both in terms of the damage they do and the visual effects they generate.

The Story mode's bosses took us by surprise, and not just because they look really cool. Tactics for the bosses are very different from the usual monster battles, and it takes awhile to learn exactly what you need to do. It's mostly about patterns of behavior, though, and as with everything else in *WotM*, it pays to be creative in how you react to a situation. With the bosses, getting in close and trying to punch and kick your way to victory isn't the smartest strategy. Instead, you need to find something to throw or something to break in order to give yourself the upper hand. Once you realize this, things aren't as frustrating as they first seem.

War of the Monsters excels at multiplayer mayhem, but not all of our reviewers agree that an awesome two-player mode warrants an award. CJ and Demian both complain about the repetitive and sometimes frustrating single-player experience, even though they both dig the neat B-movie concept. Your personal enjoyment might depend on the depth of your combined *Twisted Metal* and *Mothra* fandom, but regardless, it's still a quality title that does a lot of interesting new things for the rubber-suited-monsters-goin-crazy genre.

CONGAR

Hmmm...King Kong perhaps? Why, yes! Now with an added sonic roar for knocking monsters down from great distances. Plus, damn dirty apes always seem to get all the blonde hotties.

ROBO-47

Who wants to play as a U.S. robot? Can you say "lame"? But wait! Robo-47 has the fastest gun in the game and sports a tactical nuke as a special weapon. Too bad he looks like an appliance from Sears.

KINETICLOPS

A huge eyeball floating in a ball of lightning. He moves fast, glows in the dark, and has some kick-ass lightning attacks. He's not quite as substantial as the other monsters, but he gets points for originality.

The bosses really mean business in this game—not only do they require creative tactics to beat, but they've all been blessed with multiple forms. Just when you think you've won, they'll strike back for another round. Fair? Not really. Fun? Yep, and a good challenge to boot.

Ever had a fight in a two-player fighting game that took over an hour? Me neither—at least, not before I played *War of the Monsters*. After a few rounds spent mastering the controls, a fight between *Official PlayStation Mag*'s Gary Steinman and myself lasted just shy of 60 minutes. Crap was exploding all over the place. Crowds were screaming. The military kept sending in planes, which we proceeded to swat out of the sky and use to beat on each other. We clobbered each other with steel girders and shot each other with our laser eyes and electro-zappy cannons. It's the most fun I've had with a fighting game in a very long time, mostly thanks to the incredibly accessible design. **I defy anyone, whether they care about big monsters or not, to pick this game up** and not experience two things. First, they'll develop rudimentary skills within about a minute or two of play, and second, they'll have an enormous amount of fun. The two-player duels are a blast, but the real meat of the game is the single-player quest. Select your monster (most tastes are accounted for) and battle your way through the kitschy, 50s-style B-movie tale as you take on mutant insects, giant robots, and ultimately, a pulsating alien brain with tentacles. It can get tough, especially with the bosses, but it's always a lot of fun and very rewarding, thanks to the awesome credit system for buying bonus items.

John D.

I'm not a fan of Incog's flagship *Twisted Metal* series, but I do enjoy monster movies, especially the rubber-suited variety. That's why I'm torn on *War*. On one hand, it plays like *Metal* with the addition of hand-to-hand combat. That means the camera control is dodgy in a pinch, locked-on enemies are a pain to switch between, and the computer's attacks are relentless (excuse me, can I get a breath in, please?). But then the game's so chock-full of monster goodness that I almost forgot about these problems long enough to geek out on it. **The graphical style is awesome**, but there's so much going on at once that sometimes it's more overwhelming than enjoyable.

CJ

I'm a sucker for games featuring giant robots. Add giant monsters to the mix and I'm pretty much freaking out. *War of the Monsters* does a great job of mimicking the whole sci-fi B-movie feel, but as an action/fighting game, it's not as deep or compelling as I was hoping for. The massive, destructible environments are a strong point, but **the single-player game gets repetitive after a few hours**. The two- and three-versus-one solo missions get downright frustrating: land a flurry of hits, run away frantically to scarf power-ups, then attack again. And why no co-op mode? With a room full of friends, *WotM* can be a blast; if you're home alone, watch an old *Godzilla* movie instead.

Demian

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	6

Swingerz Golf

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Telenet
Players: 1-4
Also On: None
Featured In: *EGM* #160
Best Feature: Multiplayer goodness
Worst Feature: Moments of clunky interface design
Website: www.eidosinteractive.com

If you've never played a golf game before, *Swingerz* is an excellent place to get started. It's packed with several cool courses, ranging from tropical islands and grassy knolls to wind-swept mountains and rocky panoramas. Personality isn't lacking either—the lively players and caddies do cute dances when you hit an eagle and utter harsh critiques when you triple bogey an easy shot. These likeable trappings complement **the well-constructed golf mechanics that give you plenty of control over your game**. If you need to whack the ball a certain way to get it out of a sand trap or up a steep incline, accurate onscreen meters guide your swing. Weather conditions, like wind and rain, also affect your swing appropriately. Just don't let the game's cuteness trick you into thinking it's easy. With tough competition from other golfers, you'll need to have a virtually perfect game in order to place in the money. Average players might spend an entire game in first place, then drop down to loser territory at the 17th hole—which can be a bit irritating, especially with unpredictable weather. The multiplayer, however, more than makes up for this. When you're playing against your friends (who probably won't be a whole lot better than you are), the competition tends to be more realistic—and a lot more fun. **Jennifer**

Nothing in *Swingerz* Golf will surprise gamers who've putzed around with a virtual putter before. This game is almost **a tee-to-shining-tee rip-off of Sony's *Hot Shots Golf* series**, complete with jabbering caddies and "wacky" unlockable golfers. The swing meter is the only difference here; swiped from a few other golf games, it has you wiggling the C-stick to line up your shots—an annoyingly tricky task. The *Hot Shots* homage isn't a bad thing; it is the most pick-up-and-playable golf series around, after all. But *Swingerz* misses the hole when it comes to the putting green, where long-range shots seem more a matter of luck than skill. **Crispin**

If you're gonna copy a golf game, copying *Hot Shots Golf 3* (PS2) is about the smartest move you can make. In fact, *Swingerz* is **so similar to *HSG3*, I'm sure there must be lawsuit brewing somewhere**. The only problem is that developer Telenet futzed with the swing meter. Rather than the classic three-click bar used in most golf games, here you're required to pull the C-stick back and flick it forward. It's kind of fun, but still not nearly as precise as the classic triple-tap. For this reason alone, this round of golf can't hang with the genre's best (the *Hot Shots* and *Mario Golf* series). Still, you won't find many golf options on GameCube, and *Swingerz* is solid. **Greg S.**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	3	7

Hunter: The Reckoning

Publisher: Interplay
Developer: High Voltage Software
Players: 1-4
Also On: Xbox
Featured In: *EGM* #155
Best Feature: Creepy atmosphere and setting
Worst Feature: Annoying control scheme
Website: www.interplay.com

Taking cues from the likes of *Gauntlet* and *Smash TV*, *Hunter* is a blast-em-up action romp best played with friends. The game infuses straight-shooting with mild character-building elements (different classes, level raising), showing its pen 'n' paper role-playing roots. *Hunter* struggles a bit with this identity crisis: While the stat-building and ammo conservation would seem to push it toward strategic gameplay, the atmosphere (graveyards, sewers, etc.) and enemies (undead ghouls, werewolves, and a psychotic teddy bear) beg for a blast-a-thon. Some bad guys take a needlessly long time to defeat, not because your attack plan ever needs to change (it's always circle and shoot), but because you want to conserve your more powerful ammo for bigger enemies and bosses. This slower gameplay sometimes makes you think, but personally, I'd have liked more chances to just let loose. *Hunter*'s solid dual-analog control scheme (one stick to move, the other to aim, and a button to fire) gets tiring on the trigger finger, too. But once you adjust to the game's pace, *Hunter* grows on you, especially as you add more people to the fray. (Also, multiplayer games move much quicker.) Couple some exciting bosses with a decent story and you've got the makings of a good time. Overall, *Hunter*'s an above-average package **worth playing through with your buds**, but not necessarily a keeper. **G. Ford**

Hunter is based on a geeky pen-and-paper RPG, but it feels like anything but. Imagine a *Buffy*-ized version of *Gauntlet*, with an emphasis on viciously beating down never-ending throngs of enemies. The game offers a serious challenge, but this is due more to the sheer number of foes you face than any clever tactics from your enemies. Too bad an annoying emphasis on lock-and-key level objectives slows down the action. You'll often have to backtrack to find a key-carrying enemy—weak. Co-op play (with up to four players) saves the day, luckily, so if you have friends, there are fun (and gory) times to be had. **If you intend to play it solo, though, drop my score by two points.** **Miguel**

Great story line, great source material...the *Hunter* universe could've made a fantastic role-playing or adventure game. So why is it a slow-paced, mindless shoot-em-up? Even within this genre, we should've gotten a bullet-packed, blow-everything-to-hell experience like the arcade classic *Smash TV*. Instead, we get Nick at Nite reruns of the *Golden Girls*. Get some four-player action going, though, and you'll find a decent shooter with an **interesting premise and solid graphics** that reinforce the horrific ambience of a town taken over by evil. *Hunter*'s not the most exciting game, but it's put together well enough to deserve playing through with friends at least once. **Shoe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	6

Blood Omen 2

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Crystal Dynamics
Players: 1
Also On: PS2, Xbox
Arrives: Unfashionably late
Website: www.legacyofkain.com
Best Feature: Spook-tacular atmosphere
Worst Feature: Too many dull puzzles

Kain's flight from the dark land of Nosgoth must've hit some killer delays on its way to GameCube. Hell, the PS2 and Xbox versions came out last March, so this belated port lands on shelves alongside the other consoles' discounted copies. Is *Blood Omen 2* for GC worth picking up if you missed the previous incarnations? If you're really hungry for a solid action-adventure title, go for it; it's packed with sprawling urban landscapes, an intriguing story, and several clever magical powers that add a lot to the otherwise rote gameplay. For example, sneaking up for a stealth decapitation while you're transformed into mist, or immolating bad guys with your mind offers grisly, gothic fun. It's not all blood and roses, though. **For an undead ruler, Kain sure has to flip a lot of switches and push around oodles of crates.** These simple, dull puzzles detract from an otherwise well-paced adventure. Also, just as in the PS2 and Xbox versions, you'll notice a distracting stutter whenever the game has to load a new part of a level. Still, Cube owners will find some enjoyment in this title. **Shane**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	8	5	2

Evolution Worlds

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Sting
Players: 1
Also On: Dreamcast
Isn't Actually: A new game
Website: www.ubisoft.com
Best Feature: Good voice acting
Worst Feature: Dull battles

When the first *Evolution* game debuted for Dreamcast, it was a charming (if flawed) game that managed to fill the RPG void in the early days of Sega's system. But now it's 2003, and this GameCube port doesn't show much...uh...evolution. *Worlds* is nothing more than a repackaging of *Evolution 1* and *2*, with no real improvements worth mentioning. Expect a **stale, low-tech dungeon crawl that feels like it fell out of 1999**. The graphics received a slight facelift, but they still fall below average for the Cube. *Worlds* has the same simplistic battle system, bland dungeons, and bare-bones plot we saw three years ago. Additional voice acting adds a bit more personality, but personality was never where *Evolution* was lacking. If the originals were classics, this collection might be worth picking up, but neither game has aged well, and bundling both together doesn't sweeten the deal. If you've never touched an *Evolution* game before and you're *hurting* for a GameCube RPG, you might be able to eke some fun out of *Worlds*. Everyone else should leave this living fossil on the shelf. **Dave**

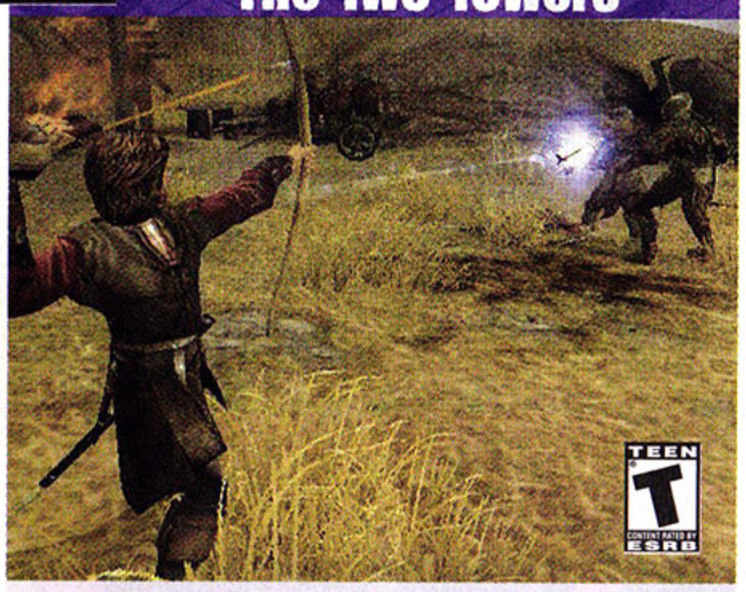
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	5	1	3

MISSING PAGE

MISSING PAGE

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

EGM SILVER



Publisher:	EA Games
Developer:	EA/Stormfront Studios
Players:	1
Also On:	PS2, Xbox
Also Try:	Vegemite sandwiches
Best Feature:	Looks just like the movie
Worst Feature:	Total lack of a multiplayer mode
Web Site:	lordoftherings.ea.com

A lot of *Rings* fans might like to see Tolkien's classic series made into an RPG rather than what appears to be a simplistic brawler. But those people need to give this movie-based game a chance. When they do, they'll find a **surprisingly deep action game that's simple to get into**, very pretty to look at, and packed with a ton of awesome, DVD-like extras (including making-of footage, interviews with the movie's actors, and production photos). And don't let the title fool you—*The Two Towers* actually covers both the first and second Pete Jackson *Rings* movies. Fight Orcs in Moria, battle Uruk'Hai on the riverbank, and keep Saruman's army at bay at Amon Hen. It's more than just mindless hacking, too. As Aragorn, Gimli, and Legolas progress through the levels (you can pick which hero to use at the outset of each stage), you can purchase increasingly intricate moves and combos for them. Some of these flashy maneuvers require major dexterity to pull off, but the visual violence reward is worth it. If there's one thing that bugs me about *The Two Towers*, though, it's the lack of a multiplayer mode. I mean, in a good chunk of the missions, you have at least one other member of the Fellowship helping you out. Why not let a second player control him? In a story where teamwork and friendship are such important themes, it's too bad you can't team up with your buddies to kick a little Orc butt. **Greg S.**

This pure-action adaptation of the first two *Rings* movies will teach you jack squat about Middle-earth mythology. But that's OK—the roaring musical score, spectacular scenery, and rapid-fire gameplay are all so engaging, **you won't mind the absence of a cohesive story or neglect of the flicks' emotional elements**. You won't even mind such minor flaws as tedious levels and battles so crowded that you end up losing your warrior in the throng. The combat is surprisingly deep, with Orc-crushing combos for players who want to go beyond random-button jack-hammering. In fact, you actually *need* to play smart—this game quickly gets tough. **Crispin**

I've never played a movie-based game that stays **so true to its source material**, yet remains so fun throughout. Granted, "throughout" lasts only five or six hours per character, but the bonuses and frenetic hack 'n' slash gameplay keep you coming back for more. While boss fights don't exactly require the wisdom of Elrond to figure out, some thought and experimentation are required. And the graphics? Amazing, with innovative production techniques that improve the aesthetics even more. *Towers* could have used a multiplayer option, more levels, and more playable characters (no Gandalf?!), but even without them, it's still rather...*preciousss*. **Chris B.**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	4	6

Battle Engine Aquila

Publisher:	Atari
Developer:	Lost Toys
Players:	1-2
Also On:	PS2
Explosions?	Several
Best Feature:	Your quick-changing ship
Worst Feature:	Objectives not always clear
Website:	www.battleengine.com

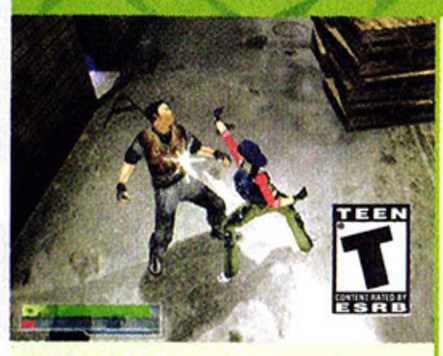
The big idea behind this unfortunately named shooter (*Battle Engine Aquila*? Sounds like an alcoholic sports drink) is that you're just a bit player in someone else's *Command & Conquer*-style real-time-strategy game. While allied tanks, fighters, and infantry clash with the enemy, you just focus on your own mission objectives, such as clearing a path for a beachhead or taking out antiaircraft defenses. Some missions get confusing, but you can never go wrong by just blasting everything that moves. The raging battles make for quite a spectacle. You'll see clouds of flak burst all around you, paratroopers drop onto enemy bases, artillery blasts lobbed from offshore destroyers, and some of the biggest kabooms on Xbox. But the star of this explosive show is your ship, a crab-legged tank that can soar like a fighter plane for brief spurts (you must touch down on terra firma to recharge your jets—a challenge during missions at sea). **Your craft's dual form makes for fun strategies**. See that enemy dropship up above? Why not zip up there as a jet, land on it, then pummel it with your tank's more potent weaponry? Missions become a blur of similar scenery (some city battles would be nice) and repeated objectives toward the end of the game. But a decent selection of nifty multiplayer modes—including cooperative play—will keep you busy after you beat the final boss. **Crispin**

Ah, how welcome is the effervescent feeling of originality. *Aquila* sneaks in outta nowhere with creative shooting action and crisp visuals. It's not just a standard flying-tank blaster—you're thrust into the middle of a much larger battle with supporting land, sea, and air-based forces. It's **knowing that you're not alone on the battlefield that makes this game stand out**. And, with a very action-oriented focus, the no-brainer controls let you focus on the thrilling combat. The single-player campaign gets a little tough, and I wish I could've given Crispin a bigger smackdown in the multiplayer Skirmish mode, but that's another story. Don't overlook this unique gem. **Darren**

Remember *Gunmetal*? If you don't, good—it was weak. *Battle Engine Aquila* successfully does what that mech game attempted to do (i.e., lets you play out large-scale battles as a giant, transforming war machine). The action is hectic, and more importantly, **every unit on the battlefield enacts its role very effectively**, from the largest artillery carrier to the lowliest ground troop. Amid the chaos, you'll do lots of scurrying around, blasting tanks in one spot and then taking to the sky to waste squadrons of aircraft. Overall, it's a blast, although sometimes you'll get some hazy, hard-to-follow orders from HQ. But that's a small complaint. *Aquila* is pretty dope. **Miguel**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	6

Dark Angel

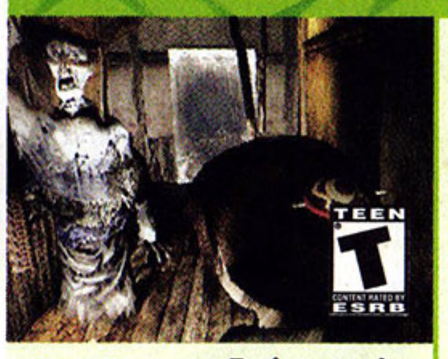


Publisher:	Vivendi Universal
Developer:	Radical Entertainment
Players:	1
Also On:	PS2
Best Feature:	Controlling Jessica Alba
Worst Feature:	Jerky, laggy camera
Website:	darkangel.sierra.com

James Cameron couldn't save his *Dark Angel* television show from cancellation, but six months after the final episode aired, this game ships as a digital eulogy to the forgettable series. *Dark Angel* isn't a terrible game; just an unremarkable one, outside a few flashes of cool fighting—much like the show itself. Max is one hellacious, fun-to-control hottie. Her fluid attacks and varied moves, including Speed Burst and Rage special attacks, make her combat style a fun pastiche of *Crouching Tiger*, *The Matrix*, and *Buffy*. While most of the game is focused on beating down government thugs and mutant man-beasts, the designers break up the monotony with the occasional stealth level or puzzle. But, as fun as it is being Max, **keeping up with the action is tricky**. The camera is erratic, especially during serious brawls, and the level design is uninspired and repetitive. And while both Alba and co-star/husband Michael Weatherly lend their voices to the game, only she feigns interest; he sounds totally bored. Fans of the show will appreciate the return of their heroine; for others, it's merely a curious rental. **Scooter**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	3

Fatal Frame



Publisher:	Tecmo
Developer:	Tecmo
Players:	1
Also On:	PS2
Best Feature:	Eerie sounds build atmosphere
Worst Feature:	Plain, drab graphics
Featured In:	*EGM* #161
Website:	www.fatalframe.com

Outside of *Silent Hill 2* and the possibility of getting *Sneakers* as a Christmas gift, there's not much out there to scare Xbox owners. Luckily, *Fatal Frame* is on the way, a solid addition to the system's fright-adventure genre and the **perfect late-night rental**. As you might expect from a PS2 port, the graphics are rather subdued, but two big aspects lessen the impact of the game's simplistic look. First, you can't really see much anyway—like *Silent Hill*, the game uses darkness (you carry a flashlight) to great effect, building tension and paranoia. Second, *Fatal Frame* relies on audio, not realistic graphics, as the foundation of its spook-house thrills. Creaking floorboards, whispering voices, and cassette-tape diary entries that would give the Blair Witch chills (if only the voice acting wasn't so robotic at times) crawl into your ears and freak your brain right out. The combat method—taking photos of ghosts—may not excite, but the different ways to power-up your camera and special abilities you can earn give combat surprising depth. Fans of the genre should give this a shot (hah!). **Mark**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	8	7	5

EB GAMES™

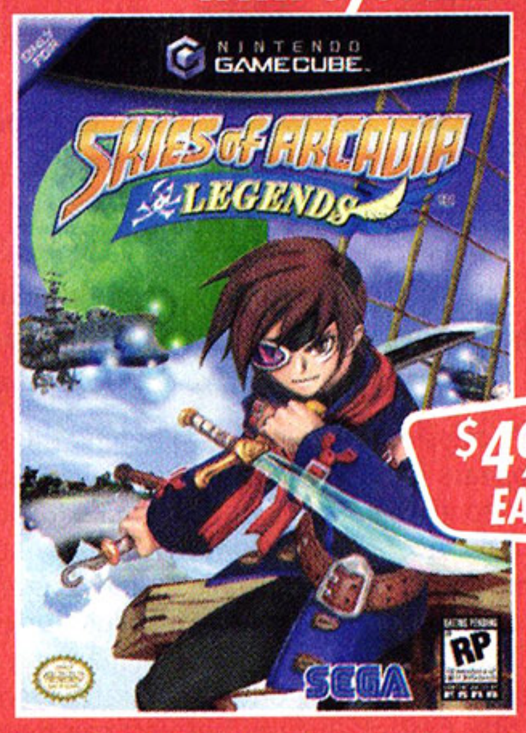
electronics boutique®

While supplies last!

NINTENDO GAMECUBE CONSOLE
NINTENDO
INDIGO # 212447-7
JET #212451-9
PLATINUM #227069-2

$149.99 EACH

SAVE $20 instantly on the pre-purchase with system! Expires 2/28/03.



SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS
#231114-0 • NINTENDO GAMECUBE
SEGA

$49.99 EACH

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST
#220147-3 • NINTENDO GAMECUBE
NINTENDO

FOR ILLUSTRATION ONLY.

METROID PRIME
#220169-7 • NINTENDO GAMECUBE
NINTENDO

$49.99 EACH

BLACK & BRUISED
#221081-3 • NINTENDO GAMECUBE
MAJESCO SALES, INC.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Purchase any version of Nintendo GameCube hardware and receive the PLATINUM Starter Kit for only $24.99!*

Must be purchased on same receipt. While supplies last. Cannot be combined with any other offer or discount. Limit one per customer. Expires 2/7/03

$29.99 EACH

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST
#224379-8 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
NINTENDO

METROID FUSION
#224374-9 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
NINTENDO

$29.99 EACH

MEGAMAN & BASS
#232054-7 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
CAPCOM

SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER II
#230039-0 • GAME BOY ADVANCE
CAPCOM

GAME BOY ADVANCE

Purchase any version of Game Boy Advance hardware and receive the PLATINUM GAME PAK for only $29.99!*

Must be purchased on same receipt. While supplies last.
Cannot be combined with any other offer or discount.
Limit one per customer. Expires 2/7/03

GAME BOY ADVANCE SYSTEM
GAME BOY ADVANCE • NINTENDO

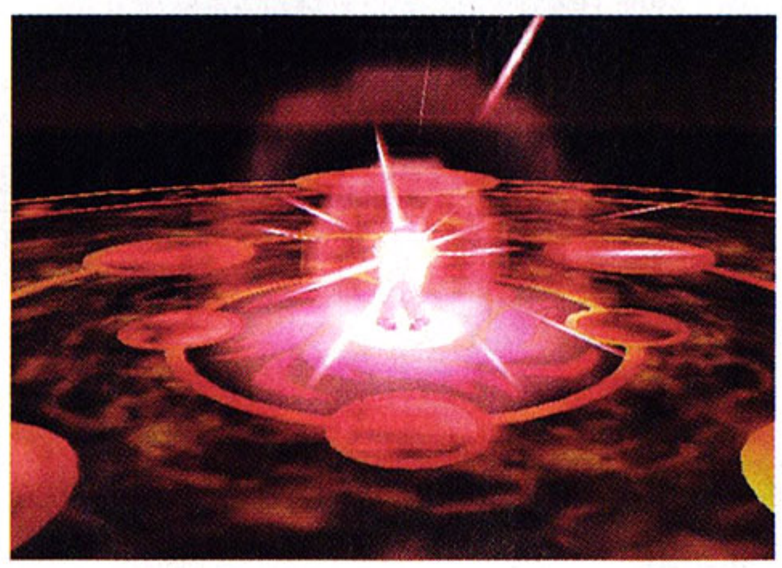
ARCTIC #201796-0
FUSCHIA #204856-9
GLACIER #201798-6
INDIGO #201794-5
PLATINUM #219385-2
POKÉMON #230230-5

$69.99 EACH

EB GAMES™
electronics boutique®

To place your order now, call 1-800-800-0032 or visit www.ebgames.com. To find a store near you, call 1-800-800-5166.

Skies of Arcadia Legends



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Overworks
Players: 1
Also On: Dreamcast
Featured In: *EGM* #161
Best Feature: Stunningly creative game world
Worst Feature: Random battles get a little tiresome
Website: www.sega.com

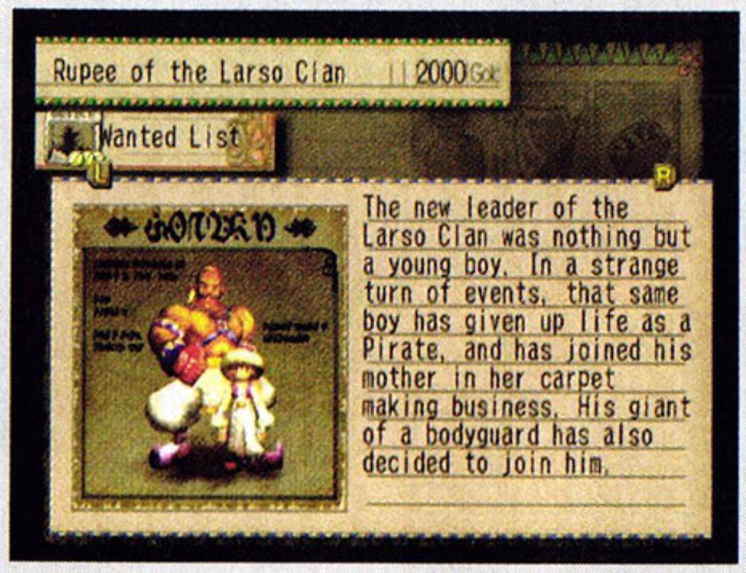
GameCube is really in need of a role-playing savior. RPG-starved Cubers exhausted by stale ports of mediocre games (see: *Evolution Worlds*) and weird trading card-strategy hybrids (read: *Lost Kingdoms*) haven't had much to celebrate. *Phantasy Star Online* offers amazing Net-enabled action, but where's an epic adventure on the scale of *Final Fantasy* or *Dragon Warrior*? For the answer, look to the skies...the *Skies of Arcadia*, that is.

First, yes, this is basically a port of a 2-year-old game for Sega's defunct Dreamcast console. But, unlike most shovelware, it's not a quick-and-dirty transfer; think of it more as a director's cut. The developer has stuffed a lot of new content into the original adventure—check out the sidebar below to find out precisely what's fresh. The gameplay and graphics also received some much-needed tweaks. The character models now sport greater detail, allowing for more believable facial expressions, and the game includes fewer random battles, with each melee worth more experience points. This balancing cut down on the monotony that plagued the DC version's combat.

Of course, most GC players will come into *Legends* without much prior knowledge of the previous version, so these changes will go unnoticed—which is fine, since rookies will be too wrapped up in the game's startlingly original world to care. *Skies* takes one of the coolest aspects of traditional RPG gaming—the airship—and runs with it; the entire world here is built upon the concept of skyfaring and swashbuckling. Majestic winged galleons and menacing ironclad

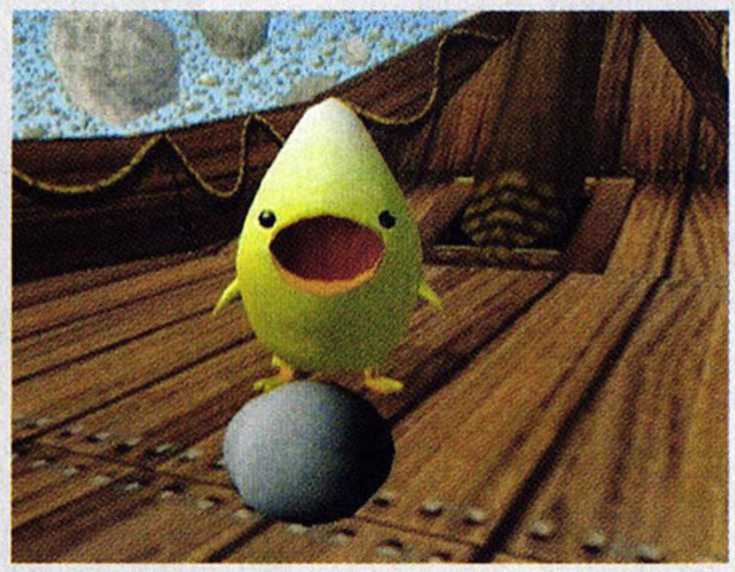
VYSE IN THE SKY WITH EXTRAS

You'll need to be observant and resourceful to find all the (entirely optional, often hidden) bonus content squirreled away in *Legends*.



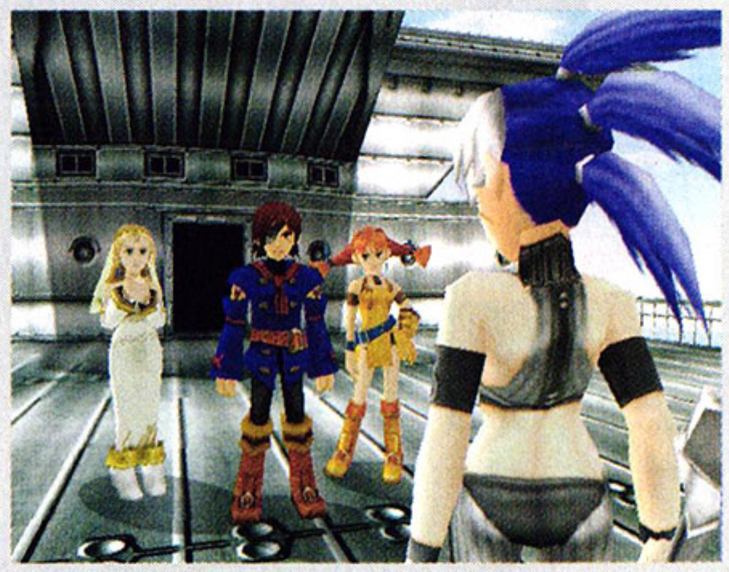
WANTED LIST

As you venture through the skies, be on the lookout for the extremely dangerous criminals on the wanted list. Bringing in one of these scoundrels nets you a huge reward—but be prepared for an insanely tough boss battle.



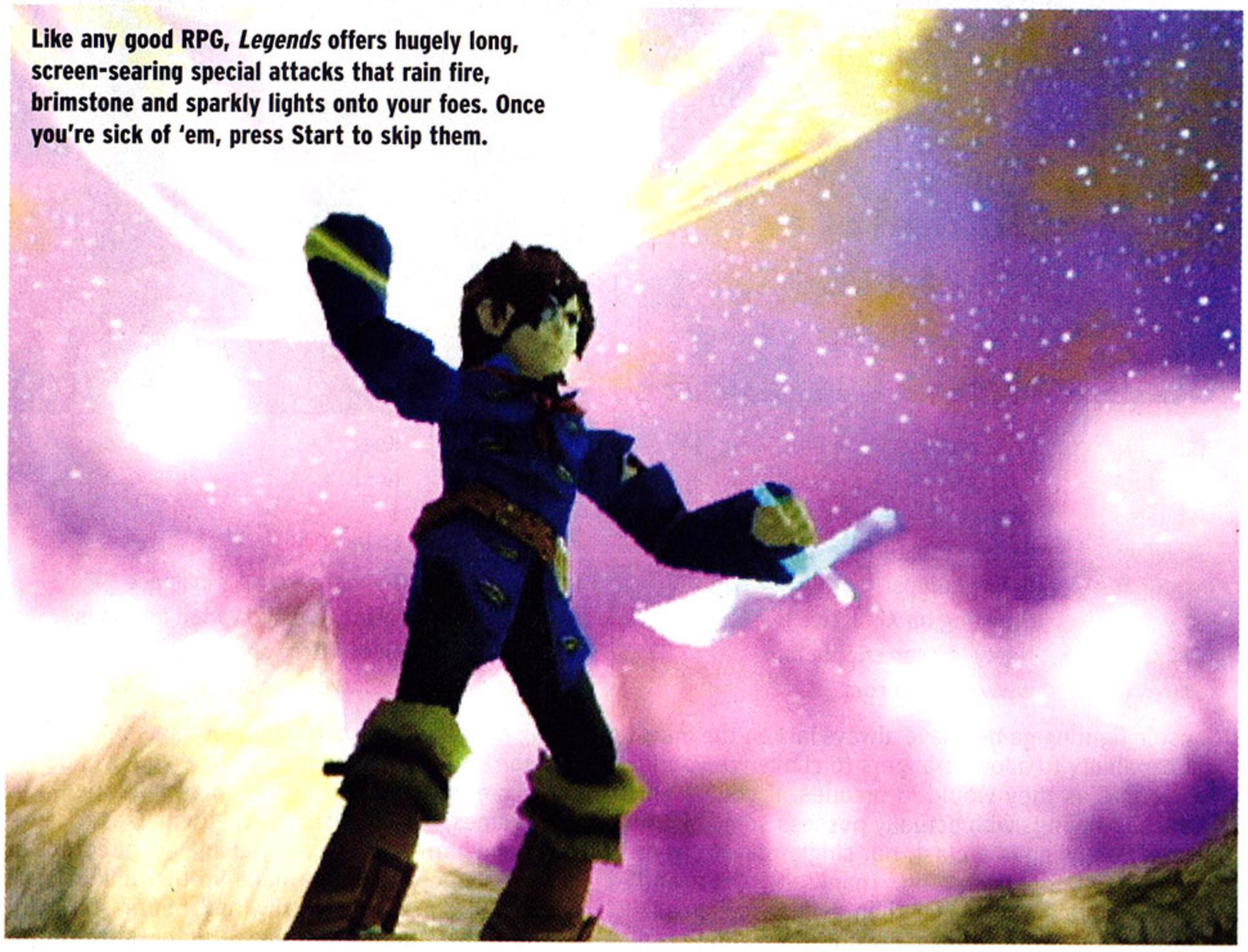
MOONFISH

Keep alert for these tasty treats buzzing around towns and dungeons. When you net some, hunt down Doc's ship and feed them to the mysterious bird there. The more Moonfish you bring him, the rarer the items he'll puke up.



PIASTOL

This vengeful (and oddly named) chick attempts to murder Vyse throughout the game, so you'll either have to steer clear of her or take her on. Be prepared for some tense fights and, eventually, some shocking revelations about her past.



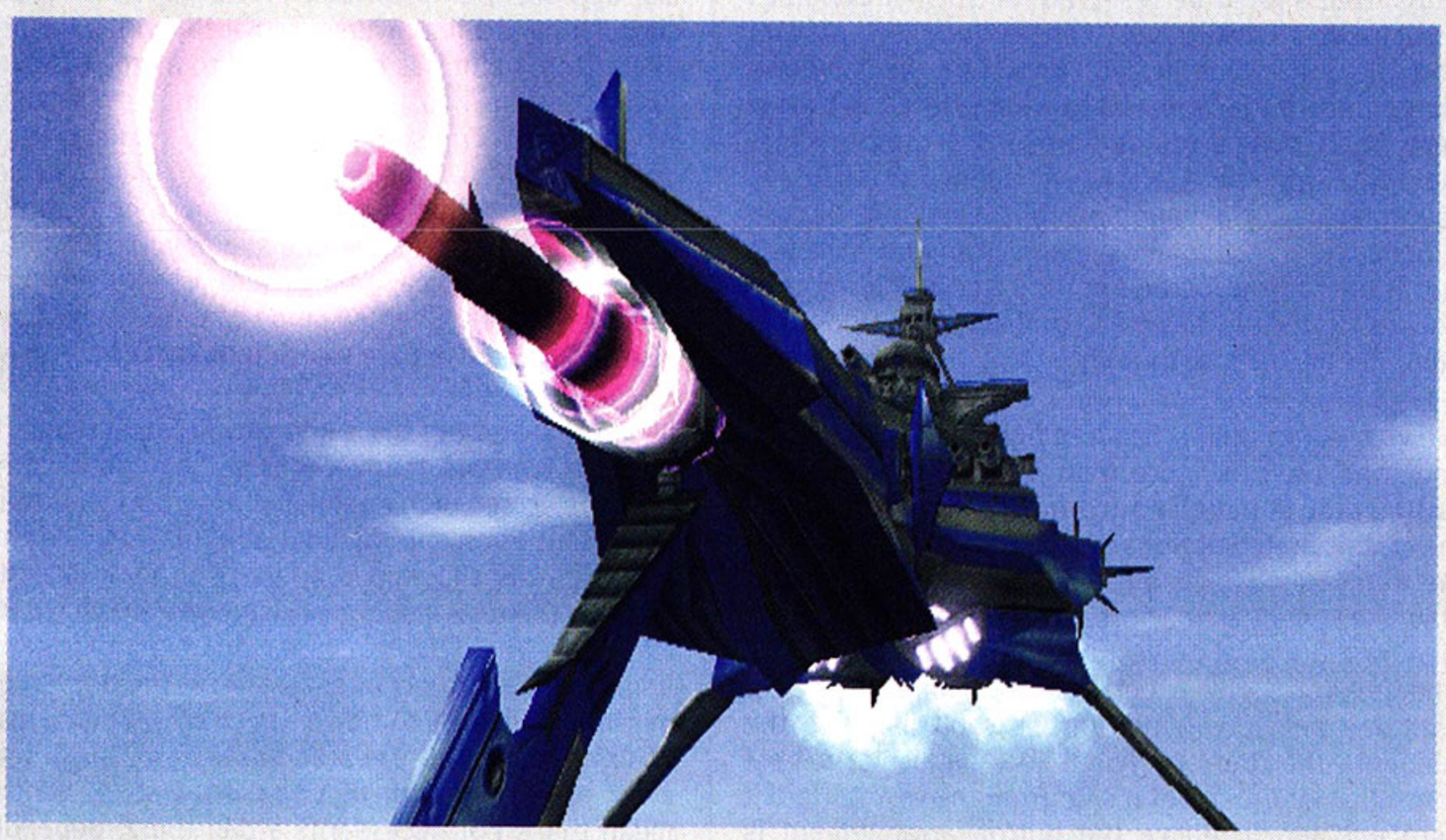
Like any good RPG, *Legends* offers hugely long, screen-searing special attacks that rain fire, brimstone and sparkly lights onto your foes. Once you're sick of 'em, press Start to skip them.

behemoths fly between floating islands in a world where terra firma has long since disappeared. Explore a richly textured, creative setting that's easy to lose yourself in for a good 40 hours. It's classic RPG stuff done incredibly well—colossal dungeons, secret-filled towns, and a villainous evil empire that must be thwarted.

Getting caught up in the world of *Skies* is made even easier by its immensely likeable cast. The core group of three heroes—Vyse, a junior pirate; Aika, his headstrong sidekick; and Fina, a mysterious girl who fell from the sky—form an unbreakable bond that's easy to relate to. Unlike the disenchanted sourpusses who star in many modern RPGs (like *FFVIII*'s moody, misanthropic Squall), this crew is filled with wonder, happiness, and the desire to explore their world. They're so damn inspirational, they even convince downtrodden people in the game to do something meaningful with their lives.

So, don't let the slightly reheated vibe of a rerelease scare you off—*Skies* fills the GameCube RPG void better than anyone could have expected. It's a great game that holds up remarkably well in 2003. If you own a GC and have even the slightest interest in role-playing, pick this up.

SHIP BATTLES



In addition to normal hand-to-hand combat, you'll oftentimes bring out the big guns for some cannonball-blasting ship-to-ship melees. These fights are 100 percent strategy—carefully balance offense, defense, and magic to succeed.

One of the cleverest new battles in *Legends* pits Vyse, Aika, and Fina against a troupe of diabolical actors who impersonate our heroes. Triumphing over Vize, Anita, and Faina is unbelievably tough, since they command all of the same awesome special attacks that you do.

Honestly, I meant to play that copy of *Skies* I bought for my Dreamcast, but, uh, something suddenly came up...yeah. Actually, I'm glad that I waited, because I had an **absolutely phenomenal experience** with *Legends* on GC. Yeah, I know it's not the prettiest game around—the graphics can't hang with a lot of recent RPGs. The visuals do have a unique style, though, and they're not ugly, just dated. It also would've been nice if the silly voice events (Vyse's "uh-huh" followed by Aika chirping "OK!" often constitutes a conversation) had been scrapped in favor of full spoken dialogue. It doesn't really matter, though, because the game is so immensely engrossing and gratifying. From the journey's outset to the spectacular conclusion 40-some hours later, everything falls into place perfectly. Wonderful pacing keeps the flow of combat, exploration, and plot flowing smoothly. Plus, the game's innovative world invites exploration like no other RPG. At any time, you're able to indulge your desire to sail into unexplored territories looking for rogue pirates and undiscovered treasure, so you don't feel as tied down to a linear narrative as you do in most RPGs. The combination of lovable characters, a thrilling story, and cool dungeons hearkens back to classic 16-bit role-playing classics like *Final Fantasy III*, and that's a very good thing. If you own a GameCube and hunger for adventure, buy this game; you won't be disappointed.

Shane

Skies is a perfect example of how far a solid plot, polished gameplay mechanics, and a beautifully imagined world can take you. Even if you're a veteran of the Dreamcast version, ***Legends* offers fresh additions that make it worth playing all over again**—extra boss encounters, a subplot featuring a mysterious new enemy, and a bunch of extra miniquests. Of course, RPG lovers who've never actually set eyes on the game before should rush out and scoop it up immediately. With skyfaring battleship encounters, an epic quest teetering on magnificence, and a small but vivid set of unforgettable characters, *Skies* is essential gaming.

Milkman

Skies of Arcadia plays out like an old-fashioned adventure novel—you get plenty of swashbuckling escapades, a wisecracking hero, a salty mentor, and a classic love triangle. There's nothing here that you haven't seen before, but rarely have these elements come together so seamlessly. *Legends* may not be as pretty as *Final Fantasy X*, but it's every bit as fun, and its story is more interesting. There's a lightness and humor here that you won't find in other RPGs, and I love it for that. As for the gameplay, the battle system, which seems average at first, opens up to be surprisingly deep and strategic. **GameCube desperately needed a title like this.**

Ethan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	8	7	6

BMX XXX

Publisher:	AKA Acclaim
Developer:	Z-Axis
Players:	1-2
Also On:	PS2, GC
Best Feature:	Easy tricks and combos
Worst Feature:	Difficult and repetitive objectives
Boobies?	Yes, unlike the PS2 version
Website:	www.bmxxxx.com

I won't go into too much detail about *BMX XXX*'s lame attempts to combine crude humor and action-sports, but let's just say that in my first six hours of play, I chuckled only once—and it was to a joke ripped off from *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. It's not that my sense of humor is so sophisticated—*Dude, Where's My Car?* is one of my favorite flicks. But the "comedy" here is just plain dumb. Instead, I'll discuss gameplay. If you strip away everything (and I mean everything) but the basic game engine, *BMX XXX* is quite good: easy-to-do combos, accommodating lip tricks for players who can't land in ramps on a straight line, etc. But **surrounding this good is nothing but pure bad.** You'll find glitches (I once scored a 2.5-million-point combo by spinning in place and mashing buttons while stuck in some girders) and the most uninspiring level designs around (too many flat areas, not enough linking rails). And the objectives... They're tedious and repetitive—you'll be doing the same things on the final levels that you did on the first. They're unintuitive—you'll have to experiment and re-experiment to figure some of them out. They're difficult—even the homeliest guy on earth could get laid before he could complete the inane tasks required to unlock all the R-rated stripper videos (which aren't worth the effort, by the way). Only the most patient, hardcore, and masochistic will be able to play through *XXX*.

Shoe

I wish this game were more about hot strippers and less about making me play a stripped-down *Dave Mirra* clone. **Simplistic controls, a complete lack of inertia, and little interaction with the environment** make the gameplay a joke. Plus, the game's mission goals are often confusing and just plain dumb. How's the raunch? Well, if poop jokes and some bare skin are up your alley, then *BMX XXX* will bowl you over. Personally, I can't endorse a game in which the highlight (for me) features peanut vendors loudly hawking their "hot salty nutsacks." If you want tricks, check out *Aggressive Inline* or *Tony Hawk 4*. If you want mature, hop over to your PS2 and play *Vice City*.

Dan L.

I admit it: I like *South Park*. I like *Jackass*. I even like poking fun at the crazy homeless guys on my bus ride to work. But this game's "humor" put me off so much, I wanted to stop playing. The potty jokes and hooker soundbites ("You suck harder than I do!") aren't funny—they're just kind of...there. Gameplay-wise, the jerky camera and problematic goal structure bog everything down. I hate that you get no guidance how or where to complete the goals, and that I had no quick way to retry a goal like in *Tony Hawk 4*. As for nudity, well, even I was disappointed. **If you're just looking for some skin, you're better off with a (free) Victoria's Secret catalogue.**

Jennifer

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	4	5	7

Capcom vs. SNK 2: EO

EGM SILVER EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

Publisher:	Capcom
Developer:	Capcom
Players:	1-2
Also On:	GC and PS2 (offline only, though)
EO Mode:	Is for chumps
Best Feature:	Brawling on Xbox Live
Worst Feature:	Nasty lag can cripple fun
Website:	www.capcom.com

Console fighting games have always lacked the magical capability to allow strangers to challenge you in your home as they would in arcades. If you've got friends or siblings who actually possess some skills, at-home brawling is a blast, but single-player street fighting isn't too rewarding. Thankfully, *CvS2* and Xbox Live bring you closer than ever to an arcade experience with online play—that is, if you don't run into too much lag. Unfortunately, **latency was an issue that just wouldn't go away.** It didn't make much sense: Sometimes, folks just a few miles away would turn up with a nasty connection, while other friends clear across the country would play smooth as butter. Still, when everything clicks and lag isn't an issue, *CvS2* is a 2D fighting fan's dream come true. Carrying over all the depth and versatility of its offline counterpart, *CvS2* takes 46 of the genre's toughest hombres and effortlessly blends their disparate fighting styles into a balanced whole. The game's online options (finding a quick match, searching for friends, or setting up special rules for your own server) are easy and straightforward. And as with nearly all Live games thus far, the addition of voice chat capability is invaluable to the psychological impact of *CVS2*. A screen-searing Super Dragon Punch packs extra "oomph" when you're talkin' trash about your opponent's mom.

Che

First off, forget about that Easy Operation crap—using the analog stick to execute special moves is a crutch that should be reserved for Special Olympics participants. Luckily, you can exclude EO players from the online matches you host. And that's a good thing, since **playing on Xbox Live is the real draw here**. Yeah, this is the same over-the-top brawlfest that PS2, GameCube, and even Dreamcast fans have been playing for a while now, but delivering Dragon Punches to friends, enemies, and strangers is vicious fun. If not for the occasional Net lag and Xbox controllers' tragically flawed D-pads, this would truly rule. Still lots of fun, though.

Shane

I've wanted an online Capcom fighter for a long time now, and *CvS2* is more than I could've hoped for. **Online play is usually surprisingly smooth**, and all the classic match options are here—you can even set the weak EO controls off, forcing your opponents to play like real-deal warriors. (The EO setup lets newbies bust out cool moves, but it's like using training wheels—you won't experience the game at its best until you get your hands dirty.) Don't listen to the whiners—the chunky original Xbox pad isn't the best controller for *CvS2*, but it's far from the worst. Hold it right and you'll realize the button arrangement is actually on point.

Miguel

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	7	9

Crimson Sea

Publisher:	Koei
Developer:	Koei
Players:	1
Also On:	None
Feels like:	*Dynasty Warriors* in space
Best Feature:	Wildly fun and varied missions
Worst Feature:	Goofy story and script
Website:	www.koeigames.com

Young hero Sho, star of the high-voltage beat-em-up *Crimson Sea*, meets many strange and wonderful alien creatures and, as so often happens in videogames, gets to disembowel them. Frenetic firefights and harried melee combat against hundreds of onscreen creepy crawlies make up the bulk of play, but it's all done very prettily, and better still, with missions that often go far beyond simply storming in, killing everything, and moving on. For example, try holding off waves of Muton space invaders while Sho's young accomplice races frantically to patch a damaged spaceship. Or embark on the world's oddest rescue/escort mission with a lazy presidential type who must be pushed from point A to point B. The varied missions—40 or so of them—are a visceral blast, and even **the simple waste-them-all-and-send-God-the-cleaning-bill slaughter sessions are wonderfully cathartic**. There's even a story to go with the mayhem; the plot's fun, but in sort of a *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* nonsensical way. Sadly, some overly dark levels, unintentionally bad dialogue, and an imperfectly tuned camera do dampen the grandeur somewhat. But the good greatly outweighs the bad here; *Sea*'s customizable weaponry, devastating psychic powers, genuinely likeable characters, and twisty-turny plot elevate this game well beyond the flotsam and jetsam.

Greg O.

If you love the hectic action and overwhelming odds of Koei's *Dynasty Warriors* series but crave a more RPG-like approach, *Crimson Sea* is the game for you. A spacefaring sci-fi universe replaces boring ancient China, and a plot has been added to all the slashing, further setting this game apart from the *DW* titles. What's more, *Crimson Sea* is highly addictive—you can't help but play the next mission, if only to discover newfound riches and purchase new weapon add-ons. Oh, and don't let the haters taint your love of bad dialogue; the voice acting here is so hilariously cheesy, it's good. Slightly jumpy controls aside, this is a **solid Xbox adventure worth looking into.**

Che

It's not hard to tell the same people responsible for *Dynasty Warriors* made *Crimson Sea*; both games pack the screen with enemies that swarm your team, giving battles an epic, against-all-odds feel. The characters in this silly space opera even look like their ancient Chinese counterparts, right down to the crazy hair. But, despite a variety of objectives (gather items in time, protect or escort, etc.), the odd unique mission, and ways to power-up your weapons, **most of *Crimson* comes down to bashing through wave after wave of a sea of enemies**. Decent controls mean that's not necessarily a bad thing, depending on what you're into.

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	6	5

LOOK FOR THESE SPECIAL ISSUES ON NEWSSTANDS EVERYWHERE!

From the same people who bring you Electronic Gaming Monthly, Computer Gaming World, GameNOW, and Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine. These special magazines can be found only on the newsstands or through back order.

Look for Pocket Games, Super Mario Sunshine Special, Holiday Buyer's Guide, Xbox Nation, and Game Cube Special at Borders, Waldenbooks, Barnes and Noble, B. Dalton, Babbages, GameStop, Funcoland, Walmart, Kmart, Target, Walgreens, CVS, Kroger and Safeway.

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA GAME GROUP

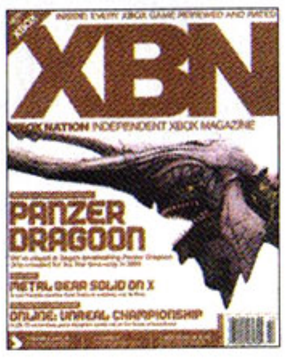
ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY | Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine | COMPUTER GAMING WORLD | GAMENOW

CUT ALONG THE DOTTED LINE

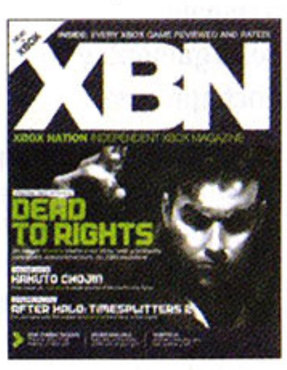
ARE YOU MISSING SOMETHING?

Order these back issues to make sure that you have a complete reference library of the most valuable tricks, cheats, and codes for all the top games on your console.

Xbox Nation #4 $12.00



Xbox Nation #3 $12.00

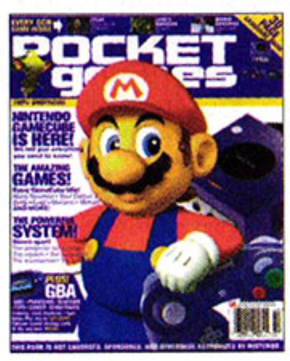


Xbox Nation #2 $12.00

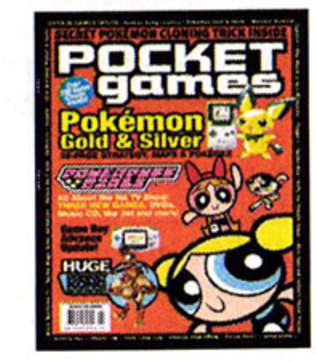
Xbox Nation Premiere Issue $12.00

Pocket Games 9 Summer 2002 $12.00

Pocket Games 8 Spring 2002 $12.00

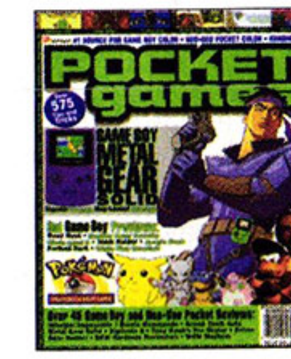


Pocket Games 7 Fall/Winter 2001 $12.00



Pocket Games Summer 2001 $12.00

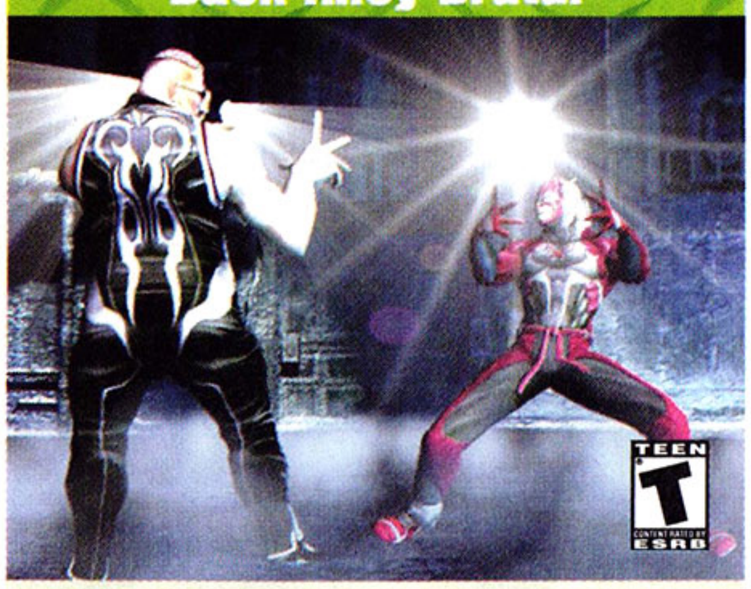
Pocket Games Fall 2000 $12.00



Pocket Games Summer 2000 $12.00

HOW TO ORDER: Simply check off which magazines you want and send in the order form (photocopies accepted) along with a check made payable to Ziff Davis Media, for the amount indicated for each magazine plus shipping and handling—add $3 for U.S., $3 for Canada and $5 for foreign orders—in U.S. funds only for each magazine! Orders should be mailed to: Back Issues, 1411 Opus Place, Ste. 340, Downers Grove, IL 60515. Price and availability subject to change without notice.

Kakuto Chojin: Back Alley Brutal



Publisher:	Microsoft
Developer:	Dream Publishing
Players:	1-2 (1-4 tag team)
Also On:	None
Featured In:	*EGM* #160
Best Feature:	Impressive visuals
Worst Feature:	Totally generic gameplay
Website:	www.kakutochojin.com

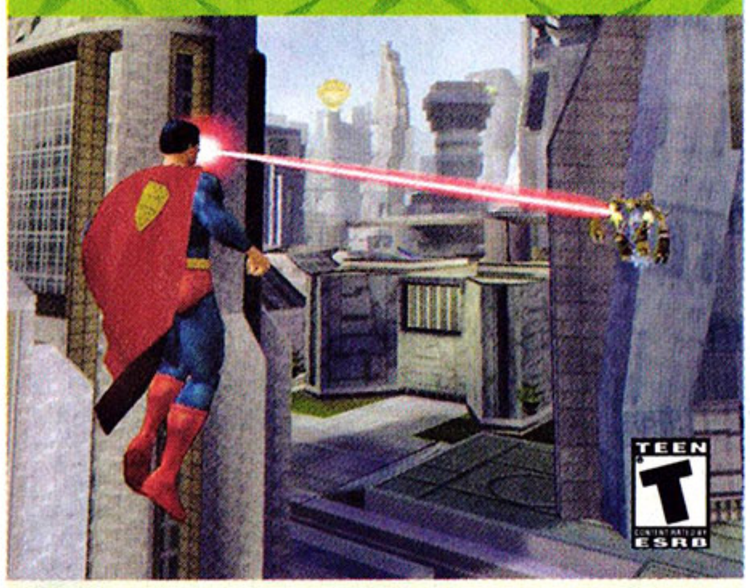
In reading the manual for *Choje* (my pet name for *Kakuto Chojin*), I discovered that I could have read the diary of a ditzy 10-year-old girl and walked away just as ready to fight. Instead of pertinent information on the fighters and modes, it's filled with woefully generic story text and weird, unfunny comments like "Cute haircut!" and "Delightfully vicious!" scrawled in the margins. Bizarre. Unfortunately, this flagrant disregard for quality extends to the severely lame-ass game itself. *Choje* is **like one of those titles that comes in a 10-in-1 game pack you get with a new computer**. It obviously borrows character and gameplay ideas directly from high-profile games (*Tekken*'s silly characters, *DOA3*'s costumes and moves), but it's really just there as a showcase for what your hardware can do. Hell yes, the game looks incredible—you can tell it started out as a jaw-dropping tech demo for the Xbox. But it's such a flop in all other regards: Dorky characters with mundane attacks won't impress anyone; fighting styles are truly unique in name only; and a few paltry, half-hearted extras choke off any potential replay value. *Choje* gets a couple points for looking pretty and a little something for the flawed but inexplicably entertaining Capture the Crown multiplayer game, but when it comes to my fighter roster, it's an easy first cut. Play *DOA3* instead. **Jonathan**

At first glance, *Chojin* appears to offer everything fighting fans look for in a game: sharp, detailed graphics; intuitive controls; and a wild assortment of characters, each with a unique style. But peel back the layers of technical competence and you discover that the core of *Chojin* is nothing but a **disappointing concoction of fighting-genre clichés**. The gameplay, while essentially sound, is so watered down and masher-friendly, there's no incentive to master the system. To make matters worse, the four-player Versus mode—*Chojin*'s most original feature—is riddled with balancing issues. If you're looking for a fun, casual fighter, you'd have a better time with *Mortal Kombat*. **Che**

When I fired up *Kakuto Chojin*, I held hopes that the developer had somehow rediscovered the skills that helped it shape the cult-classic fighter *Tobal No.1*. But what I found was something more like the group's recent efforts, such as *The Bouncer*. **This is unquestionably the worst fighting game I've played in years**. Once you get past the plastic action figures posing as pugilists in *Chojin*, you run right into a brick wall of bad gameplay. Sluggishly simplistic controls even a hamster could manage, virtually zero background animation, jack s*** for extra features, and a lame four-player mode are all this game has to offer. I'll pass. **Milkman**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	4	2	3

Superman: The Man of Steel



Publisher:	Atari
Developer:	Circus Freak Studios
Players:	1
Also On:	None
Featured In:	*EGM* #156
Best Feature:	Great use of Superman's powers
Worst Feature:	Numbing gameplay
Website:	www.infogrames.com

Up, up, and into the toilet. Once again, the legendary Superman, Man of Steel, soars directly into videogame infamy with this eponymous and unspeakably insulting game. **It's not as mind-blowingly awful as the old Nintendo 64 *Superman* stinker**, but it is outclassed by nearly every other comic-book game out there. Superman is sporting his cool superpowers: flight, superhuman strength, icy-cold breath, and telescopic-, heat-, and X-ray visions. In this, the developers succeeded magnificently. Sadly, they did not succeed in putting their version of Superman into a game that's even remotely fun to play. The challenges were, of course, to create enemies able to hurt a Man of Steel, and to present obstacles worthy of someone who could, frankly, punch God in the mouth if he wanted to. What was the developer's answer? Robots. Lots of them. Robots, and the requirement of performing Superman-unworthy feats under severe time restrictions. Long after you've begun to wonder where the hell Metropolis' fire department is, Superman will be racing around like an extraordinary idiot, extinguishing blazes in 30 seconds or less. It's OK the first time, but its appeal decreases exponentially each time a fire appears. Things pick up a bit as Superman moves into outer space, but certainly not enough to be redeeming. This bird/plane/Superman sadly turned out to be a super-turkey. **Greg O.**

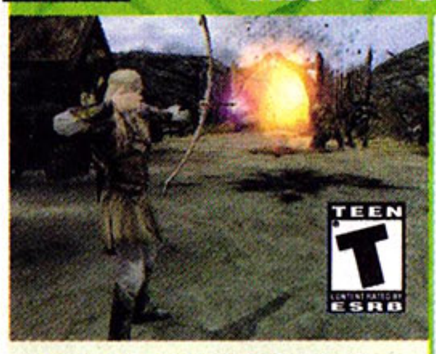
The Man of Steel is set partly in the Phantom Zone, an endless void where Krypton has eternally exiled the planet's most infamous criminals. Appropriately enough, that's exactly where every copy of this game belongs. While by no means the worst *Superman* console offering to date (see: *Superman* for N64), this Xbox debut nonetheless disappoints. Abysmal controls (should 45-degree turns really be tricky?) team with repetitive, tedious level objectives to make this **more a chore than a pleasure to play through**, even for Super-freaks like me. Hokey-looking cut-scenes and campy dialogue ("Holy Krypton!") hamper even *Steel*'s cool story. Most unfortunate. **Chris B.**

Pity Superman—the guy can't seem to get a break in the videogame realm. *Man of Steel* isn't the worst game that's ever carried his name, but it's tragically close. Imagine *Zone of the Enders* (PS2), minus the cool anime style and plus a clunky dude in a red cape, and you'll get an idea of what this game plays like. Our hero—whose voice sounds suspiciously like Phil Hartman's *Blasto* (PS1)—has to fight hordes of robots, Bizarro Superman, and other flying baddies, using his powers in increasingly ridiculous ways. His mighty fists can't take down any "green-tinted" enemies, but a blast of cold breath will do 'em in every time. **Pass on this mess**, even if you're a fan of the comics. **Ethan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	3	4

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

EGM SILVER — EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD



Publisher:	EA Games
Developer:	EA/Stormfront
Players:	1
Also On:	PS2, GC
Featured In:	*EGM* #162
Website:	lordofthe-rings.ea.com

Best Feature: **Looks and sounds like the movies**

Worst Feature: **Why no Two-player mode?**

If you've seen the two *Lord of the Rings* films so many times that you doze off during the slow parts (enough with the Human-Elf lovey-dovey stuff already!), EA's *Towers* is just the thing to make you wake up and smell the carnage. It brings the two movies' action sequences to life with soaring music and holy-moley visuals (just wait until you battle the Cave Troll or reach the rain-soaked Helm's Deep finale), along with lots of high-gloss, behind-the-scenes extras that are actually worth unlocking. **The Orc-hacking gameplay has you tapping more than just one button 90 times a minute**; you'll need to change up your combos and time your blocks if you want to storm past the fourth level (the difficulty here ramps up quickly). Play with style and you're awarded points you can spend to supercharge your character with new combos. Some levels get repetitive, and the chaotic battles would be even more rip-roarin' if you could slash through them with a pal, but the overall presentation is so slick that you really don't think about these flaws. **Crispin**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	4	6

SeaBlade

Publisher:	Simon & Schuster Interactive
Developer:	Free Radical Design
Players:	1-4
Also On:	None
Website:	www.seablade-thegame.com

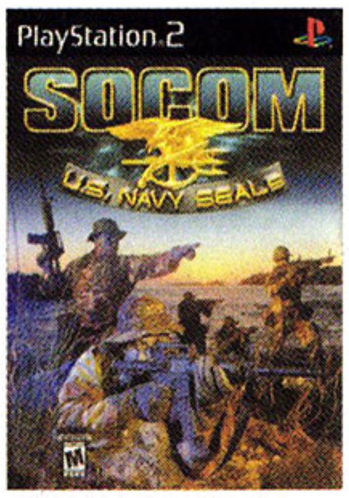
Best Feature: **Frenzied, action-filled battles**

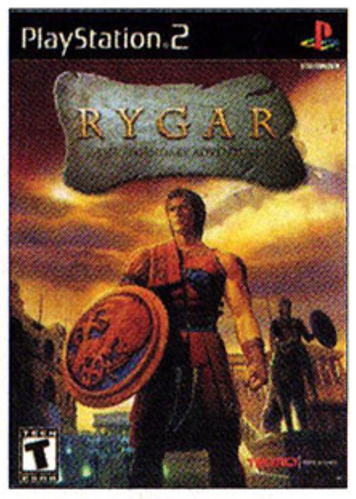
Worst Feature: **Terrible control configuration**

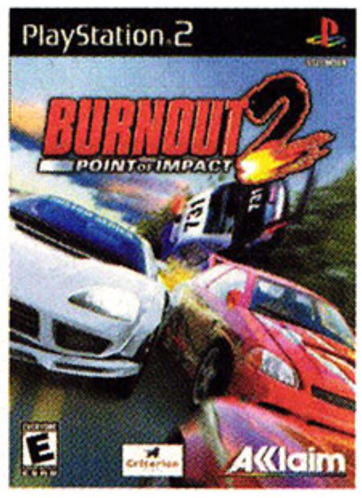
Mediocrity, thy name is *SeaBlade*. Sporting an overly generic title, gameplay devoid of any sort of creativity, a poorly designed set of controls that was most likely an afterthought, and meager production values, ***SeaBlade* is a bland dish indeed, whipped up by chefs who were asleep, or perhaps dead, when lessons on taste and flavor were being taught**. For the uninitiated, SeaBlades possess some unique characteristics—chief among them is the fact that they're a chore to control in the skies and underwater. Acceleration can be accomplished only by pushing Up on one of the Xbox controller's analog sticks (and you can't reconfigure it). It's extremely taxing on the thumbs to do this continually, and *SeaBlade*'s rather unforgiving nature ensures that a static ship is a soon-to-be-exploded one. Dull power-ups anchor this game's middle-of-the-road sensibilities; uninspired blast-em-up missions make up the bulk of the action; and the bleary, nonanimated cut-scenes speak volumes about the effort put into this bland little tomato. **Greg O.**

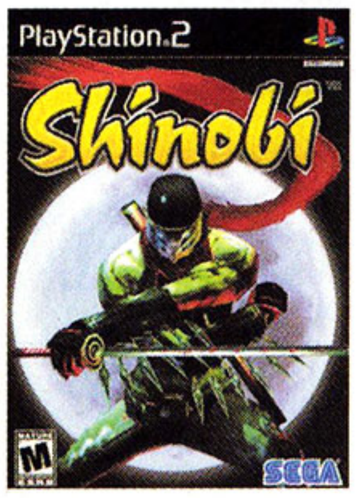
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	3	7

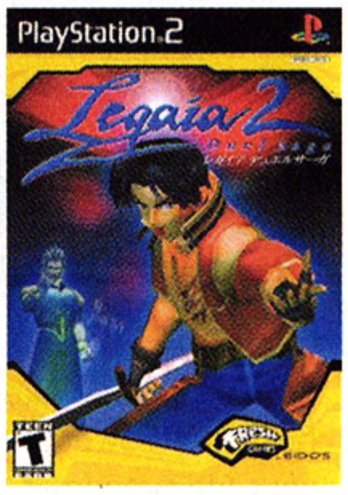
If you bought all these games, it would cost about **$500.**

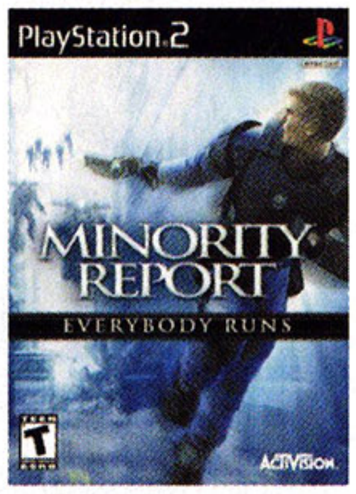


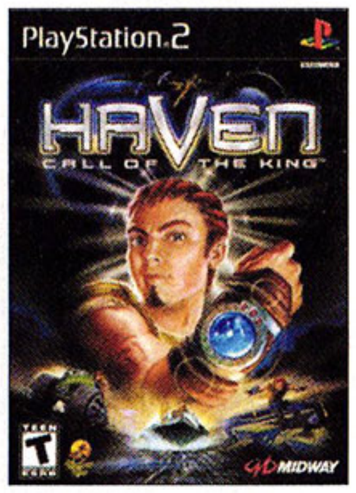


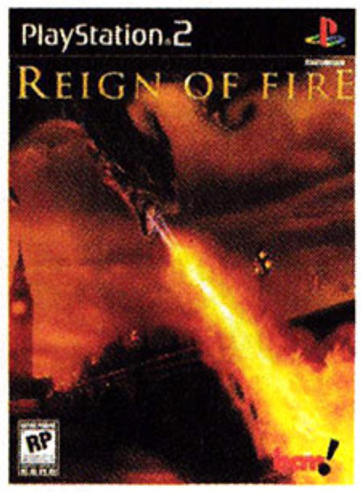


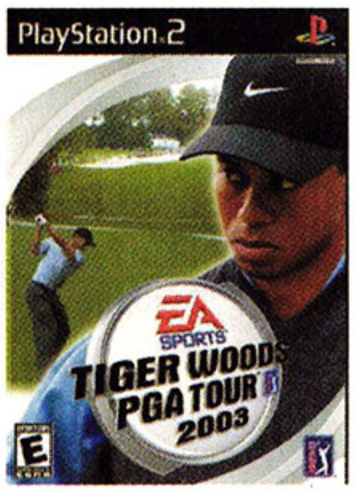












WHY NOT TRY THEM ALL FIRST IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE FOR LESS THAN $10?

PLUS:

- VIDEO: THE GETAWAY
- BEHIND THE SCENES
- COOL MOVES
- DOWNLOADS

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

JANUARY ISSUE ON SALE NOW • WAR OF THE MONSTERS • RYGAR • 007 NIGHTFIRE • MORTAL KOMBAT

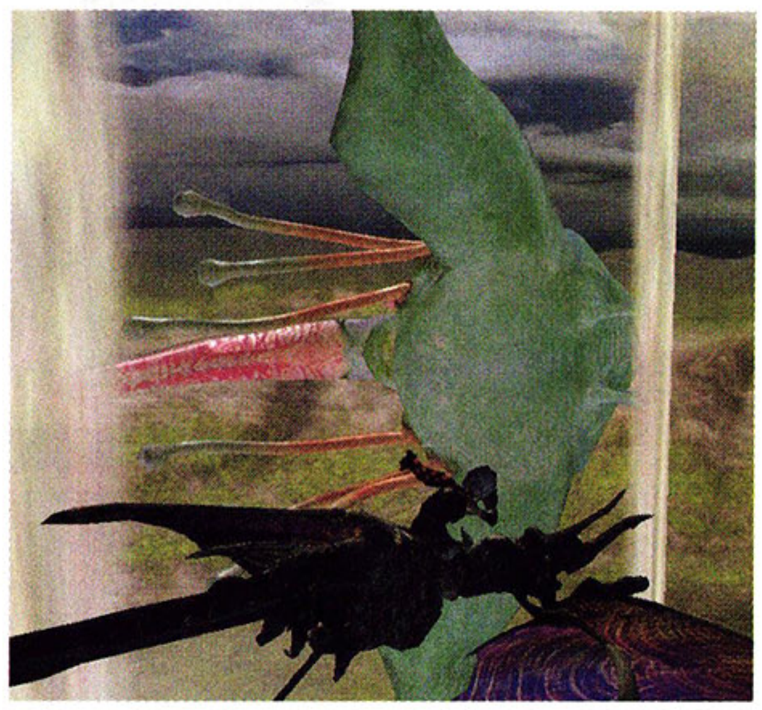
REVIEWS: STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER • CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER • NHL ROUNDUP • X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION • TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4 • HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS • ZAPPER • NCAA BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

PREVIEWS: EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES • THE SIMS • DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI • DEAD TO RIGHTS • DEF JAM VENDETTA • NBA STREET VOL. 2 • GLADIUS • BLACK & BRUISED • DEVIL MAY CRY 2 • THE GETAWAY • GALERIANS: ASH

REPLAY: GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY • LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS • SHINOBI • TIMESPLITTERS 2 • TONY HAWK 4 • MADDEN NFL 2003 • HITMAN 2 • KINGDOM HEARTS • AND MUCH MORE!

EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD
EGM SILVER
EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

Panzer Dragoon Orta



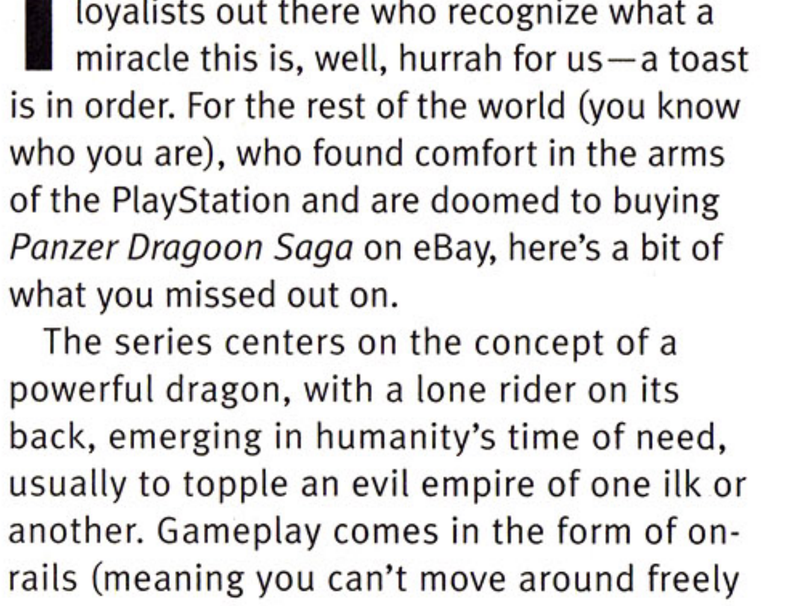
Publisher:	Sega
Developer:	Smilebit
Players:	1
Also On:	None
Featured In:	*EGM* #162
Best Feature:	Breathtaking visuals
Worst Feature:	Camera fails in the heat of battle
Website:	www.panzer-dragoon.com

The dragon is back. For the few Sega Saturn loyalists out there who recognize what a miracle this is, well, hurrah for us—a toast is in order. For the rest of the world (you know who you are), who found comfort in the arms of the PlayStation and are doomed to buying *Panzer Dragoon Saga* on eBay, here's a bit of what you missed out on.

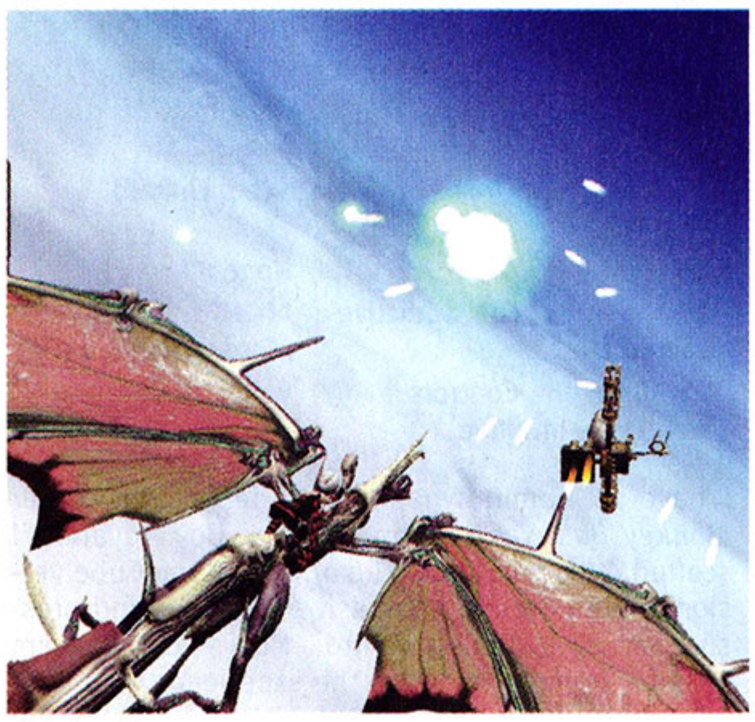
The series centers on the concept of a powerful dragon, with a lone rider on its back, emerging in humanity's time of need, usually to topple an evil empire of one ilk or another. Gameplay comes in the form of on-rails (meaning you can't move around freely except to aim) shooting action. Pressing the Fire button causes the rider's gun to burst with effective, but less accurate rapid shots. Holding the Fire button down creates a targeting reticle that, when passed over the oncoming opposition, locks on to a finite number of targets, and when let go, sends forth a lethal fusillade of dragon-powered homing-lasers. This simple formula has been tweaked and refined over the course of the series, and *Orta* is the near-perfect extension of this.

Imaginative, alien worlds and creatures have always been a crucial part of the *Panzer* experience. The games look so innately bizarre that it's hard to look away from the beautiful environments. *Orta* doesn't disappoint on the freaky-fresh artistry tip. Yes, flocks of bulbous plant-like things, flying manta rays, and a skeletal quadraped boss bring back memories of the older games, but newer delights, like the pirate ship-inspired boss, the flower-in-a-cage boss, and Abadd, your ultimate (and ultimately weird) nemesis all manage to push the envelope on this stunning-looking game. The environments are diverse and filled with life; dozens of enemies erupt from every side (á la PS2's *Sky Gunner*, minus the insane slowdown); gunfire sizzles through the air; and everything is polished to perfection. Of course Orta and her dragon don't look too shabby either. Very few games can match this game's visual splendor.

The gameplay has remained largely the same, save for a few significant additions. The dragon now boasts a speed burst to rocket forward past (or through) enemies, and can also "hit the brakes" to drop behind them—useful for targeting an enemy's weak spot. Your dragon can also switch between three different forms: Base Wing, Heavy Wing, and Glide Wing. The first is balanced, the second very powerful but slow (and



Not sure exactly what's going on here, but it kinda looks like that Shinobi dude is flying by on a giant Dreamcast controller, don't it?

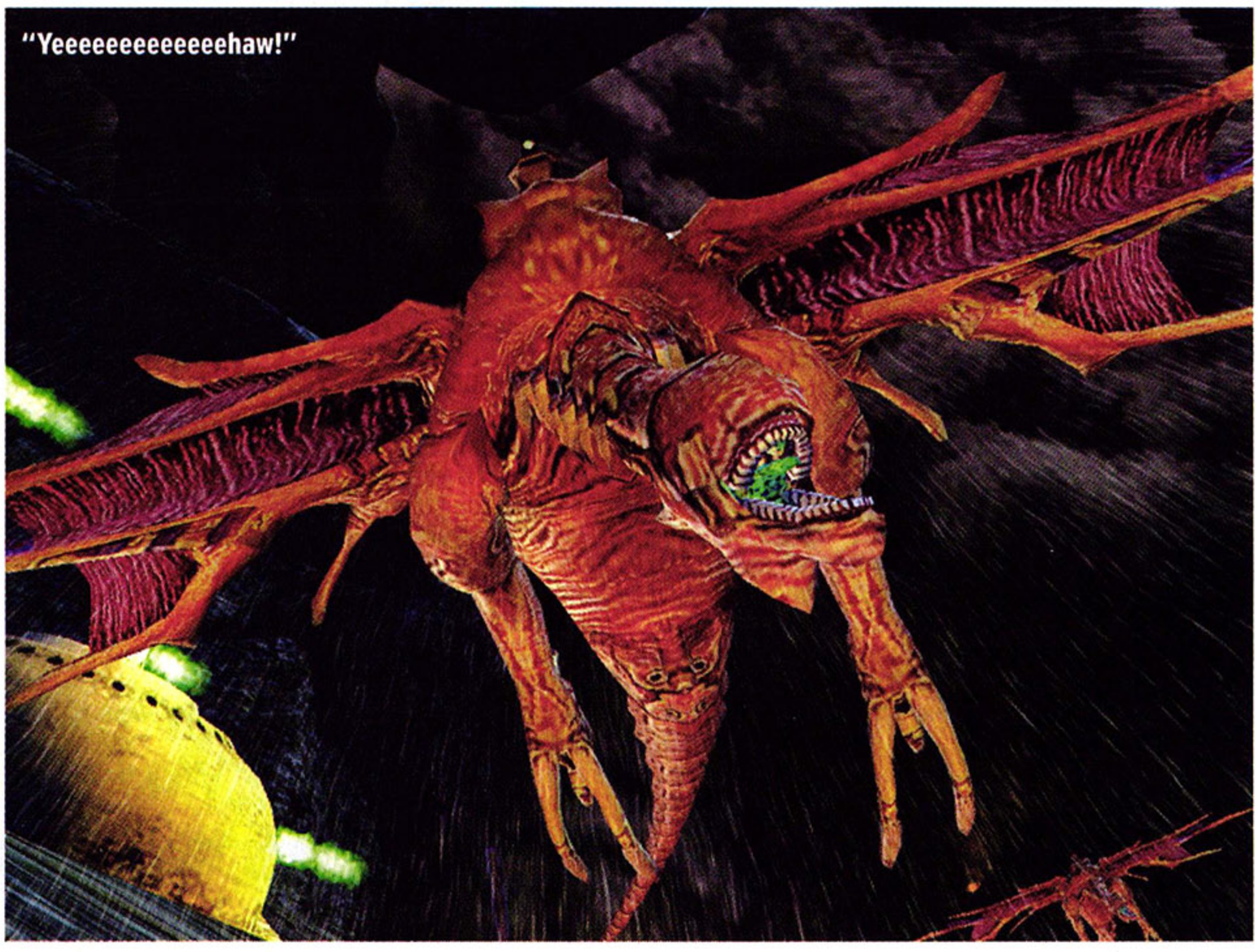


unable to use a speed burst), and the third is the most mobile, but lacks lock-on attacks. Knowing which to use at each point can make the game considerably easier on the player. Skillful elimination of the enemy earns the dragon special orbs that help it level-up, and a maxed-out dragon is a fearful thing to behold.

The game, although just 10 levels long, offers a much steeper challenge than any of the previous chapters. In fact, it may be too hard for some casual gamers to enjoy. Hardcore fans will delight in this, but even they will get their asses kicked the first few times through. You'll want to stick with it, though—significant payoff awaits the tenacious. *Orta* signals the return of Pandora's Box—a menu full of unlockable goodies instituted in *Panzer Zwei*. This time around, the Box holds myriad secrets, ranging from classic CG cinemas from previous titles to sub-scenarios that let you play as other characters in *Orta*, like a land-based tank or a young enemy solider in training, to a wealth of stat-tracking, and happily, to the original *Panzer Dragoon* (what, no *Saga*?) in its entirety.

Will the modern world warm to the charms of a series it barely acknowledged in its past life? We can only hope. As Smilebit's Takayuki Kawagoe once told us, "We have a plan for the sequel to *Panzer Dragoon Saga*, but whether it happens depends on how people respond to *Orta*." Isn't that enough reason to run out and buy *Orta* now?

Several secret mini-games allow you to play as some of *Orta*'s supporting cast.



Below: You could pound away at this shield until it cracks—but smart players will glide past this armored adversary, then do a quick 180 turn and shoot it in the back, where the armor's not so thick. Heck, if you get lucky, you may kill it with the boost attack that you do while gliding.

No one in the world is happier than me to be playing a new *Panzer Dragoon* game. Though the gameplay has always been, shall we say, streamlined, the atmosphere is what elevates this series. With *Orta*, developer Smilebit has gone back to the series' roots, resulting in the most beautiful on-rails shooter imaginable. Despite not letting you fly anywhere you want, *Orta* still offers some range of movement, creating a bit more sense of freedom. Also, the addition of the Speed Glide, which allows you to accelerate or slow down, adds an extra layer of technique to the classic *Panzer* gameplay. Zipping around to dodge attackers mixes up the standard blasting action—once you get the hang of changing dragoon gears, you'll see a noticeable increase in your skill. The visual transformations your dragon receives with each level-up also inspire better performance, since expert dismantling of your enemies is required to achieve such results. The biggest problem with *Orta* is that the camera often has a hard time keeping up with your position on the radar in relation to the creatures you're fighting; losing sight of a target while making a breakneck speed-up maneuver near a towering boss monster is a pain. Still, hardcore gamers will savor every beautiful moment of *Orta*, and they'll keep playing it religiously to unlock the **vast trove of amazing secrets**—hidden stages, riders, cinemas, and an entire separate game.

Milkman

Ah *Panzer*, how I've missed you. You left five long years ago, and never even called once. I thought you might be dead. Suddenly, you show up on my doorstep and ask if I own an Xbox. Thank God I do, because you are **one incredible shooter**. Your beautiful graphics, your gorgeous music—I must say, I'm impressed. And the gameplay...oh baby. Your new glide buttons make all the difference. They add a whole new level of depth to the action, which furthers the fun. Sure, you're kinda short, but hey, no one's perfect. And all the cool secret stuff you offer up (like a bunch of new missions and the original *Panzer Dragoon* from the Saturn) give you the staying power to satisfy any gamer.

Greg S.

Imagine a roller coaster ride so thrilling, you don't mind taking it over and over again. Now, imagine it in a fantastic new world, completely alien and yet totally believable, your senses overwhelmed by the breath-taking scenery and terrible monsters flying by. That's this game in a nutshell. *Orta* is blessed with the kind of **gameplay that'll keep you coming back** well past the six or so hours it takes to finish it your first time through. Different dragons, branching paths, experience levels, a ridiculously huge array of extras truly worth unlocking (unlike the little knickknacks some other games offer)—*Panzer*'s so packed with features, I hesitate to label it "just" a shooter.

Mark

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	8	7	8

Shrek Super Party

Publisher: TDK Interactive
Developer: Mass Media
Players: 1-4
Also On: PS2
Try Instead: *Shrek* on DVD
Website: www.shrekgame.com

Best Feature: Has some nice-looking visuals
Worst Feature: The most boring party game ever

It must be really hard to do a party game right, because no one outside Nintendo has been able to make a good one. *Super Party* might be the worst offender so far, and proves yet again that any game bearing the *Shrek* license stinks like the green Ogre's breath. Like the *Mario Party* series, it's a board game-ish romp stuffed with a bunch of minigames. But where *Mario* has fun, imaginative events, **Shrek is full of dull, poorly constructed rip-offs that get recycled several times**. You'll be utterly bored after a few minutes with these crappy diversions. Also, thanks to *Shrek*'s clunky system of interconnected paths, you'll barely see another living soul on your trek through the kingdom. It doesn't really matter where you are, though, since moving around the board is practically pointless—there's no goal-square to strive for. And, aside from rolling the die to move, not much is left to chance. If you suck at the minigames, you're going to lose—unlike *Mario Party*, which at least offers a fairly level playing field for gamers of all skill levels. Don't bother RSVPing for this party.

CJ

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	1	0	1

Phantasy Star Collection

EGM SILVER

Publisher: THQ
Developer: Digital Eclipse
Players: 1
Also On: None
Nerdy Quibble: Slightly different sound
Best Feature: So much gaming for so little money
Worst Feature: No new enhancements
Website: www.thq.com

I'll admit it—I'm something of a *Phantasy Star* phan-boy. Back in the olden days, I gladly fronted the $69.99 for each of these classic RPGs and totally got my money's worth. RPGs were on the fringe back then, so odds are, you missed the *PS* games. Luckily, this franchise is getting a second shot on GBA, at a price that everyone can afford. You won't find any reworked graphics, faster walking speed, or new play modes here, but seriously, who needs 'em? In this case, the hands-off approach is fine. These games are 99.9 percent perfect ports (the sound's a bit off) and, despite their age, still represent **the finest role-playing available on GBA**. Here's a quick rundown.

Phantasy Star—With three planets to explore, neat vehicles, cool music, and amazing 3D dungeons, this game rocked the RPG world in 1988. It's hellishly hard by modern standards, so be sure to boost the heroine up to level six before going to the second town.

Phantasy Star II—Another incredible title that broke new ground with its complex plot, dramatic cut-scenes, cool battle animations, and epic quest. It's also really difficult, but the struggle's well worth it. Stick with it.

Phantasy Star III—This tangential sequel wasn't made by the original *PS* guys; consequently, it's not quite as good. Still, the multi-generational concept is cool (your kids/grandkids carry on adventuring), and it's still worth your time and effort.

Shane

I missed out on the *Phantasy Star* series up until now, but almost everything I'd heard was true. The first two games hold up surprisingly well—great characters, interesting stories, and lively, colorful graphics highlight these soul-crushingly difficult old-school quests. *PSIII* isn't nearly as bad as I'd heard, but it's still a mediocre RPG that fails to live up to its heritage. It would have been nice to see a few changes, like a faster walking speed and easier saving, to make the games more palatable to a modern audience. But **it's hard to complain when you're getting two classics (and *PSIII*) at such a bargain price**—just be prepared for a challenge.

Dave

This is a tough game to review. On one hand, you have three of the finest old-school RPGs ever to grace a console; *Phantasy Star I* and *II* are among my favorite games of all time, easily comparable to the old *Final Fantasy* and *Dragon Warrior* games in terms of depth and playability. *Phantasy Star III* isn't bad either, despite its reputation for being the black sheep of the series. In short, this is a very worthy compilation. On the other hand, **THQ did absolutely nothing to enhance these games**: No option to walk faster, no translation improvements, no nothing. It all boils down to a lazy-ass port of a truly classic trilogy.

John R.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	1	3

Super Monkey Ball Jr.

EGM SILVER

Publisher: THQ/Sega
Developer: Realism
Players: 1 (2-4 Linked)
Also On: None
Also Try: *Super Monkey Ball 1, 2* (GC)
Website: www.thq.com

Best Feature: Fun, addictive gameplay
Worst Feature: Controls aren't very intuitive

I have to admit, when I first heard that *Super Monkey Ball* was coming to Game Boy Advance, I scoffed. Who wouldn't? The original GameCube version is built around impressive 3D levels and pressure-sensitive analog control. How could Realism possibly hope to re-create the experience on a little 2D system with digital controls? Well, the fact of the matter is, the developers did, and they did a damn good job of it, too. *Monkey Ball Jr.* is **as accurate a port as one could hope for** on GBA—the 3D engine runs smoothly, mimicking the look and feel of the GC game while maintaining its tight controls. Granted, the lack of analog hurts a bit, but not as much as you'd expect, thanks to a smart control scheme that allows you to increase or decrease pressure with the A and B buttons. Just like its GC brethren, *Monkey Ball Jr.* features an assortment of surprisingly fun minigames, not to mention a bevy of "extra" levels that'll put your skills (and your patience) to the test. If you like simple, fun gameplay, *Jr.* comes highly recommended.

John R.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	7	7	8

Altered Beast: Guardian of the Realms

Publisher: THQ
Developer: 3D6 Games
Players: 1 (2-4 Linked)
Also On: None
Rise: From Your Grave
Website: www.thq.com

Best Feature: Incredibly long quest
Worst Feature: Butt-ugly monster designs

If you're thinking to yourself, "*Altered* who?", odds are you weren't around in 1989, when Sega packed *Altered Beast* with the 16-bit Genesis console. The original *Beast* offered simplistic beat-em-up action with one crucial twist—you transform your average Joe into a different mutated beastman on every level. The game was neat but ultimately forgettable...until now. This belated sequel sticks surprisingly close to its forerunner in the gameplay arena. Your buff hero has the same arsenal of punches and kicks, and still gets all beastly by finding three power-ups. Some new items (like a shield, special punch attacks, and healing foods) help to spice up the action, but it's still basic brawling. Honestly, the gameplay's pure vanilla, but the game's extreme length makes it worthwhile—the original *Altered Beast* had five levels; this one's got 16. It also offers many new beast forms, but some of them look so unabashedly silly that **you'll be laughing during the dramatic transformation scenes**. If you can look past the ugly visuals, grab a friend and tackle this in Cooperative mode (but skip the dull four-man face-off).

Shane

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
3	5	6	6

Tomb Raider: The Prophecy

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Ubi Soft Italy
Players: 1
Also Try: Playing *Tomb Raider 2* again
Lara Croft: Switch Flipper
Website: www.ubisoft.com

Best Feature: Smooth animation
Worst Feature: Lame password save

After a side-scrolling outing on GBC, Lara Croft returns to handhelds with this top-down adventure, but the change isn't for the better. The new view leeches all the tension out of the platforming elements, making death-defying leaps a breeze. I hoped the puzzles might pick up the slack, but *Prophecy* is little more than **an endless procession of switches**. By the end of the first location, I was begging for a few crates to push around. Don't expect combat to spice things up much, either—it's a simple matter of circle 'n' shoot to dispatch the standard baddies. All this is made even easier by the awful password save, which doesn't even keep track of your items. Instead, you'll find medkits and ammo around every corner, leaving you with little incentive to play carefully or search for secrets. Lara controls well and animates wonderfully, but the adventure she's been given is so bland that it hardly matters. Croft fanatics may want to give *Prophecy* a shot (maybe borrow it from some hapless Lara-lover who foolishly bought it), but their digital vixen has certainly seen better days.

Dave

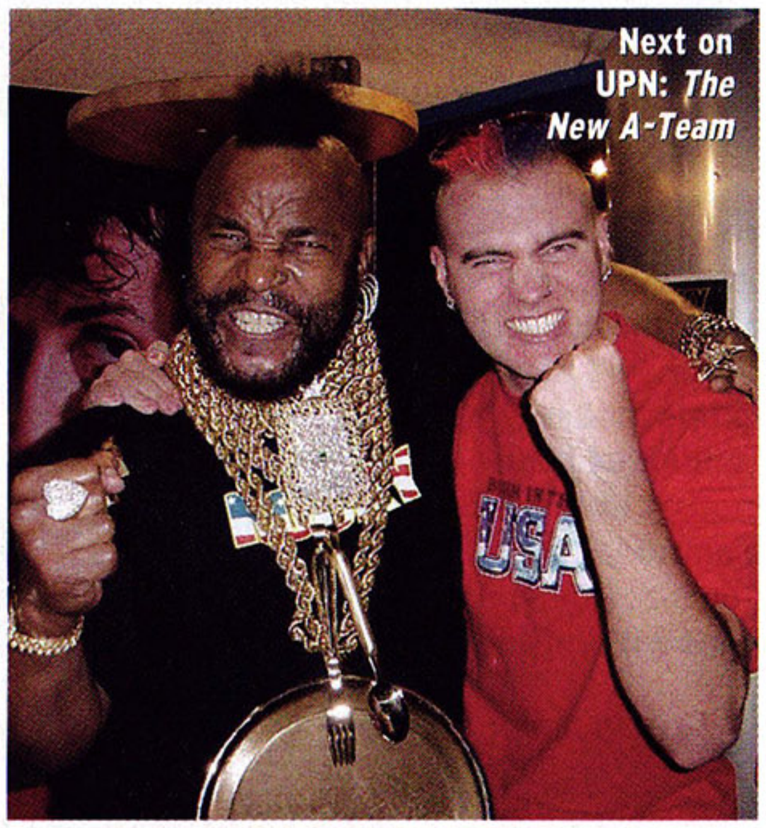
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	4	3	2

The Rest of the Crap

Reviewing the games no one else bothered to

With marketing the way it is, a lot of us can get tricked into buying bad games. It's nothing to be ashamed of—marketing technology is just smarter than we are. That's why over 12 million of you are reading this with electric devices strapped to your gut, shocking your abs into a firm, luscious six-pack. The commercials for this product promise that you can grab a box of Twinkies and sit your way to fitness, but as soon as you strap one on, you see that all it really does is cover you with electrical burns and abruptly loosen your bowels. My point is, it's rare when people selling things are honest about how much their products suck, and that's what makes the games I'm forced to review so special. The people who make these things know they're bad, and they let you know by putting the words "Smurfs" or "Army Men" right in the titles. So remember—this column is not here to help you decide how to spend your Christmas money. It's here to thank these videogame developers for being so open with us about their ineptitude.

—Seanbaby



Papa Smurf exacts his own child-eating vengeance

Secret Agent Barbie - Royal Jewels Mission

Publisher: Universal Interactive
Developer: Digital Illusions CE

▲ **"Home base, we have an intruder; she's bouncing up and down in a pretty blue and pink jumpsuit." "My God. That's Secret Agent Barbie. Proceed with extreme fashion and fun!"**

This game involves sneaking past guards by using stealth and Barbie's amazing knockout-gas-launching makeup case. I guess if I had to explain the gameplay, it's like **a cross between *Metal Gear Solid* and teaming up with a group of talking kittens to reunite your divorced parents**. The guards you have to sneak past are highly trained, and might even notice you if you bump into them with Barbie's plastic bod. If this happens, they won't try to escort you out, but they will talk excitedly about you on their walkie-talkies. This causes your Barbie stealth meter to go down, which means you only have about 20 minutes to walk several steps away from them before your cover is blown. I fully imagine it could take up to 20 minutes for a security guard to explain to his supervisor that a 6-foot blonde toy in a catsuit is jogging through the compound. Especially when you consider that sexy women make guys spurt out the names of body parts when they talk, it's likely he'd be saying, "Sir! There's an intruder in sector creamy thighs! I repeat: voluptuous, shapely breasts!"

Army Men: Turf Wars

Publisher: 3Do
Developer: Mobius Entertainment

▲ **You probably can't tell, but this is an army...you know what? We can't tell what this is supposed to be either.**

Making a videogame requires a lot of people. Programmers, artists, designers, whatever.... My point is, how do all these educated, professional people come together and decide to do this? How do you decide to take a franchise of games that was already bad and make one that's worse in every way? Is it hypnosis? Blackmail? Maybe it's some kind of practical joke or government program to integrate retarded people into society as videogame developers. Well, whatever it is, their secret is safe, because **I can't figure out how this mess happened**. You play the part of a tiny army man who needs to kill all the yellow army men. Good news for the yellow team: Getting the green guy to shoot in your direction is like trying to steer a blind man with sign language. And good news for you: Since your army man considers any buttons you press to be minor suggestions, you feel very little sense of responsibility when his body's impaled at the bottom of a spike pit.

The Revenge of the Smurfs

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Infogrames

▲ **Holy Smurf! Did you just throw a bucket of your own Smurf on me? (Note: This review covers a game that's so crappy, it's only available in Europe.)**

Oh Smurf! Gargamel is preparing a Smurfical plan to kidnap all the Smurfs, and it's up to you to Smurf the Smurfs he's already Smurfed. I really wish I could tell you more, but that's how it was explained to me. Before you can even begin your mission, though, you have to get from one end of the Smurf village to the other, and that's not as easy as it sounds. These horrible little creatures just throw their waste into the streets—sandbags, garbage, and buckets of liquid are constantly coming at you with deadly results. I might not have grown up in a mushroom, but I know that **when a Smurf is throwing a bucket of blue fluid out of its window, it's probably not something you want touching your skin**. And while you're slipping in a puddle of what most likely just came out of a Smurf's Smurfhole, gardening Smurfs are absentmindedly flinging rocks at you, and hang-gliding Smurfs are falling out of the sky onto your head. Really, though, it's Smurfing awful. Pity the European gamers.

WWE Road to Wrestlemania X8

Publisher: THQ
Developer: Natsume

▲ **"The Hulkster delivers a punishing body slam to Triple H, followed by a...a body slam! Now what's he doing? He's setting him up for the BODY SLAM!"**

As you may know, the World Wrestling Federation lost a lawsuit to the World Wildlife Fund over the rights to the WWF abbreviation. Apparently, before, endangered species would get confused and hit each other in the head with steel chairs. And there was a paperwork mix-up that shipped Stone Cold Steve Austin to a zoo in an effort to impregnate its panda. Legal issues aside, *X8* is like watching two insane puppeteers who, for reasons unknown, are staging **a fight with mannequins dressed in panties**. The wrestlers are all stiff, grainy 3D renderings that move at the speed of erosion and have approximately one move each. This is scientific fact: There are *Mary-Kate and Ashley* games about singing to the elderly that have more wrestling moves than this game. Also, *X8* is very faithful to every WWE Superstar's interminably long, zombie-like waddle into the ring. Other than catching a VD, buying this game is the most cost-effective way to inflict self-loathing.

Tricks of the Trade

By David S J Hodgson

It's the section of the mag you forget to read when you're flicking from the reviews to the back page. Make a life-affirming decision to see the error of your ways. Why? We got *GTA: VC*, porn, *REØ*, men in tights, and Samus.

Tricks in Partnership with Prima Games

Tricks, strategies, and outrageous tomfoolery from *Star Wars Bounty Hunter*, *Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly*, *007 NightFire*, *Metroid Prime*, *Metroid Fusion*, *Splinter Cell*, *BMX XXX*, and *MechAssault* are taken from their respective guides.

Turning Tricks: Grand Finale

After literally *minutes* of counting (and recounting) the *dozens* of online opinions, *EGM* and Gamers.com are proud to say that the favorite trick of all time for *every gamer in the world* involves huge, wobbling kerjackers on emaciated female game stars. Great.

63% The "female character huge breast augmentation or visible panties" code. — WINNER!!

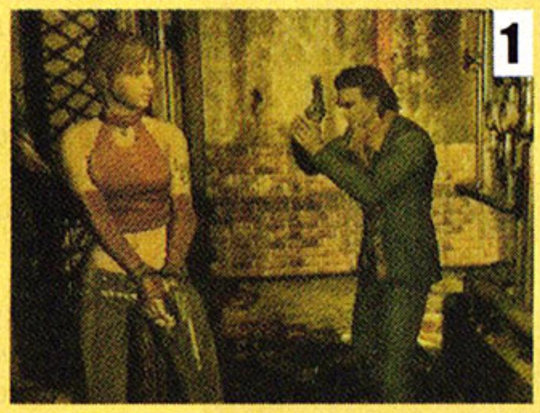
37% The "stuff hidden where you'd never think to look" out of the way item. — LOSER!!

Source: Gamers.com poll 10/02

Top 5 Tricks of the Month

1 Resident Evil Ø: Shockingly unexpected secrets!

I get to drop items all over the place, forget where they are, and lose sanity controlling **two** characters at once? While *RE* gameplay takes a turn for the demented, the game secrets are steadfastly **refusing to evolve**. You get a closet key when completing the game on **Normal or Hard** that unlocks a snazzy outfit (Billy) or leather getup (Becky) **(1)**? Next **you'll be telling me there's a rocket launcher**. Oh wait, there is **(2)**. Get an S rank (3:30 or less) for the **launcher**, **submachine gun**, **closet key**, and the **Leech Hunter** minigame **(3)**. Between 3:30 and 5 hours? That's a crappy A rank, and you don't get the launcher. Collect the leeches and there's **submachine gun bullets** for Becky (1-29 leeches), **unlimited handgun ammo** (30-59), **unlimited hunting gun ammo** (60-89), a **Magnum** in room 202 (90-99), and **all weapons with infinite ammo** (100).


1

2

3

2 Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly: Some bright Sparx...

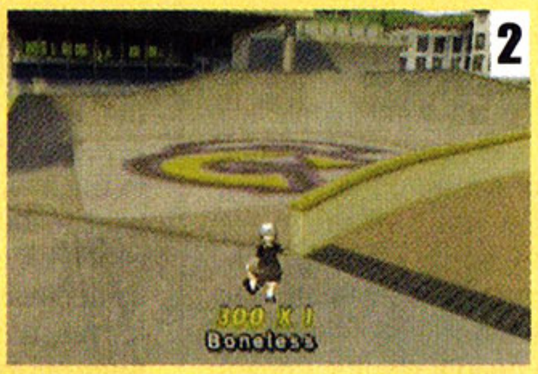
You know you love collecting coins. Or apples. Or shines. Or **pieces of smoldering chicken** hidden inside trash cans while Mike Haggar spins around with his arms outstretched. Ah, the joy of item collecting. Without items, all platform games would be like *Bubsy 3D*. Which is to say, **unmitigated disasters**. So thank your deity of choice that *Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly* is not. But it does have **far too many gems to locate**. Until now. After you beat Ripto for the last time and try to collect your remaining gems, **press on both analog sticks until they click (1)**. That's click, not break. Sparx now points you to any unclaimed gems **(2)**.

1

2

3 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4: Spoon-bendin' & skaters!

1



2

Grind on the following unlockable skaters (PS2, GC, XBox) and game tweaks (PS2 only). Matrix mode: **nospoon(1)**. **Superfly** is loony gravity. The following are **premade skaters** (enter names): Aaron Skillman, Adam Lippman, Andrew Skates, Andy Marchal, Angus, Atiba Jefferson, Ben Scott Pye, Big Tex, Brian Jennings, Captain Liberty, Chauwa Steel, Chris Peacock, ConMan, Danaconda, Dave Stohl, DDT, DeadEndRoad, Fakes the Clown, Fritz, Gary Jesdanun, grjost, Henry Ji, Jason Uyeda, Jim Jagger, Joe Favazza, John Rosser, Jow, Kenzo, Kevin Muhall, Kraken, Lindsey Hayes, Lisa G Davies, Little Man **(2)**, Marilena Rixfor, Mat Hoffman, Matt Mcpherson, Maya's Daddy, Meek West, Mike Day, Mike Lashever, Mike Ward, Mr. Brad, Nolan Nelson. More next month!

4

Bounty Hunter UnFettered Access

Gaining all 150 bounties? **A feat too freakishly difficult** to contemplate. Checking out the entire game and unlockables? A more manageable plan, **by Jango**! Tap these phases (no periods) in the Codes screen. For Chapter 1, try **SEEHOWTHEYRUN**. Chapter 2: **CITYPLANET**. Chapter 3: **LOCKDOWN**. Chapter 4: **DUGSOPLENTY**. Chapter 5: **BANTHAPOODOO**. Chapter 6: **MANDALORIANWAY**. All cards: **GO_FISH**. All art: **R_ARTISTS_ROCK**.

5

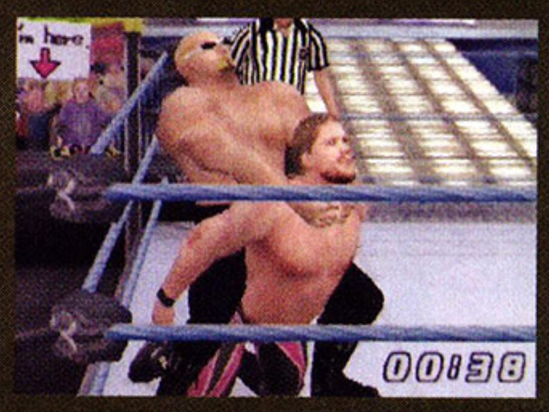
X-Men: N.D. Power Extreme!

All 8 **spandex** getups? All the characters? **Excelsior**! At the Main menu, hold down L1 and hit Ri, Ri, Le, Le, Do, Up, Cir (PS2). Hold down L and tap Ri, Ri, Le, Le, Do, Up, B (Xbox). Up, Up, Do, Do, Le, Ri, Le, Ri, A, B, Sta, Sta (GC). GC owners get even more! **One-hit kills**: Up, Up, Do, Do, X, Y, Y, X. **A.I. toggle**: Up, Up, Do, Do, A, A, B, B, X, X, Y, Y. **Super meter filled**: Up, Up, Do, Do, A, X, A, X.

One Bad Muthafu

SMACKDOWN! SHUT YOUR MOUTH

Forgotten Superstar #2 Scott Steiner

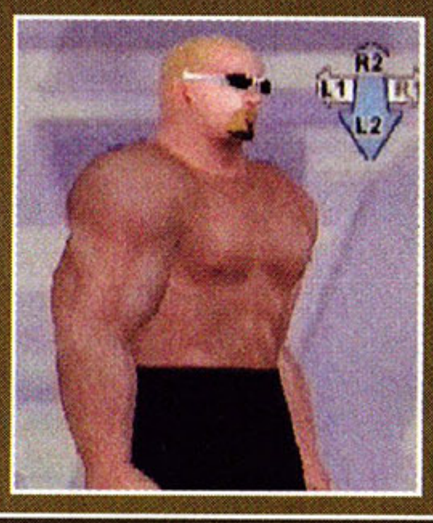


PS2 *Shut Your Mouth* lacking your **favorite man-in-tights**? Then use that handy Create a Superstar mode to put your favorite wrestlers back in the ring, where they belong.

After the **triumphant return of Tommy Dreamer**, this month's created Superstar is Big Poppa Pump himself, Scott Steiner, **a genetic freak** who's suffered so many injuries and been through so many wars that he **officially qualifies as a disabled veteran**. Follow the simple instructions to add Scott Steiner to your WWE roster (if there are no directions for a particular Create mode option, leave it at default setting):

Appearance:
HEAD: Hair: #2(bleachblond)
FACE: Mustache: #5(blblond)
FACE: Mustache: #6 (dark brown, laid over mustache #5 with the Layer List)
FACE: Glasses: #10
LEGS: Tights: Blank: #1 (blk)
FEET: Shoes: Blank: #13(blk)
BODY: Skin: #2
SKIN: Deep tan
FORM: Steiner is one of the most scarily overly muscled guys on the roster. Enlarge all of his body parts, especially the shoulders and arms. Make them thicker than they are wide.
FACE/HEEL: Neutral
CALL NAME: Big Daddy

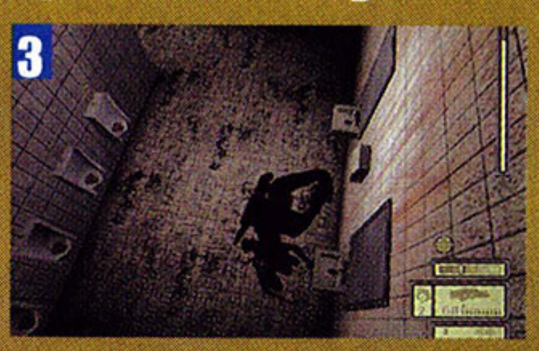
"There's only two things I care about, and that's my freaks and my peaks."



ABILITY (Attack/Defense):
Powerful: 4/4
Speedy: 2/2
Technical: 2/2
Roughneck: 2/2
MOVE SET: Powerful
LOGIC 1: Grappler
LOGIC 2: Brawler
Moves: BASES: Taunt: Use Wrestling 1, Powerful, and Taunt Fighter 2 as taunts.
SMACKDOWNS: Super Camel Clutch
READY MOVES: Grapple: Give Steiner a wide variety of powerful moves, like slams, drops, and suplexes.
READY MOVES: Attack: Make sure that the Big Bad Booty Daddy has a good assortment of chops, kicks, and punches.
GROUND: Grapple: Steiner is from an amateur wrestling background, so several sleeper holds, chin locks, and leg locks are in order.
TURNBUCKLE: Grapple: The Frankensteiner must be in there; he invented it!

Splinter Cell

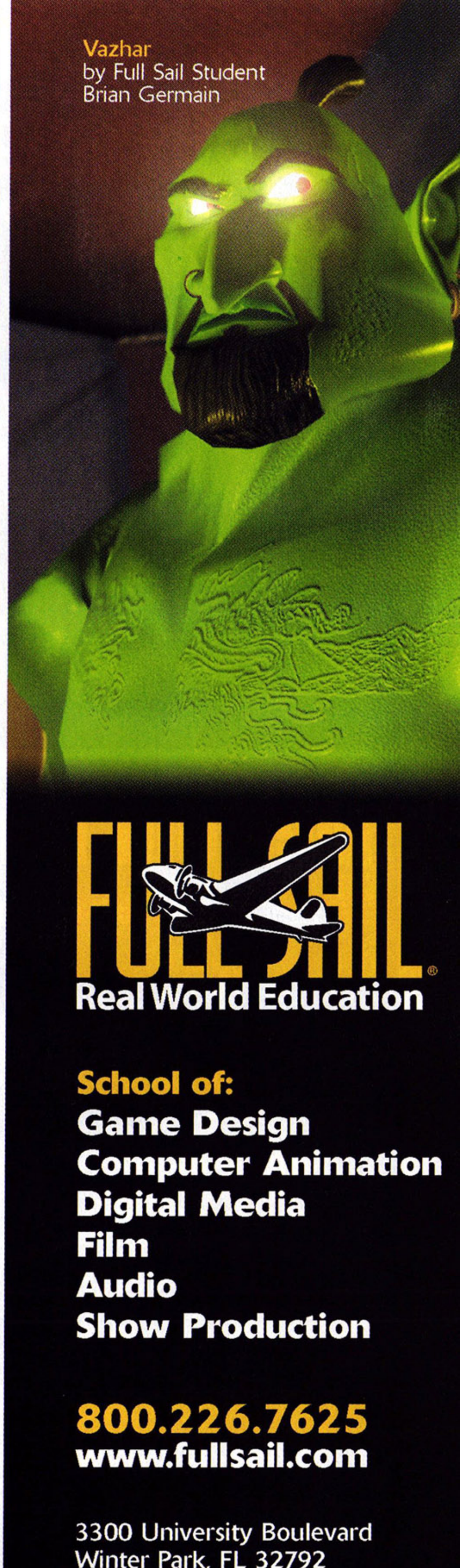
A healthy amount of stealth. How to act professionally...



Three handy hints for not getting yourself killed. Feel the need to drop down from above? Then press the Crouch button in midair to perform a quiet landing. This prevents enemies from hearing you land regardless of the surface type **(1)**.

Wall mines are good for ambushes; however, the delay in detonation sometimes allows foes to move outside its effective blast radius before it explodes. To expedite the detonation sequence, shoot it with one of your weapons. Use the F2000's sniper view for increased accuracy **(2)**.

Finally, when possible, drop on adversaries from above **(3)**. Not only does this incapacitate a foe, but it also provides a soft and silent landing. And it feels nice.



FULL SAIL®
Real World Education

School of:
Game Design
Computer Animation
Digital Media
Film
Audio
Show Production

800.226.7625
www.fullsail.com

3300 University Boulevard
Winter Park, FL 32792

- Financial aid available to those who qualify.
- Job placement assistance.
- Accredited by ACCSCT.

©2001 Full Sail, Inc. All rights reserved. The terms "Full Sail," "Full Sail Real World Education," and the Full Sail logo are either registered service marks or service marks of Full Sail, Inc.

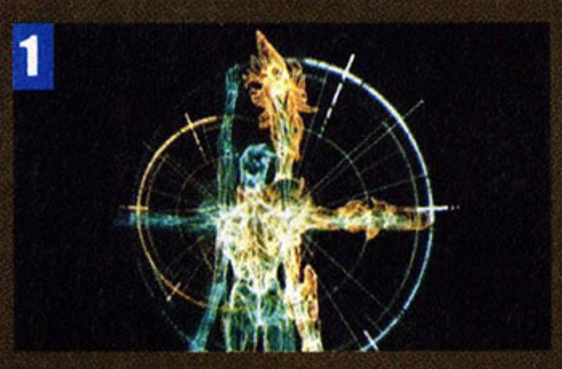
007: NightFire

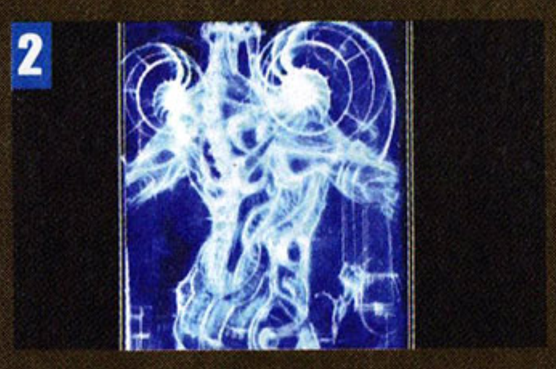
All the hidden features you can shake (but not stir) a stick at!

Replay missions four times for all the Bronze, Silver, Gold, and (yawn) Platinum 007 logos for the following goodies (cards, levels, MP skins, and weapon tweaks): LEVEL 1: Dominique (B), Jaws **(1)** (S), Racing Missile (G), Renard **(2)** (P). 2: Zoe (B), Oddjob **(3)** (S), Pistol (G), Baron Samedi **(4)** (P). 3: Military Snowmobile (B), Assassination (S), Grapple (G), Zorin **(5)** (P). 4: Vanquish (B), Scaramanga **(6)** (S), Micro Camera Scope (G), May Day **(7)** (P). 5: Mayhew Servant Girl (B), Uplink (S), Rifle (G), Xenia Onotopp **(8)** (P). 6: Kiko **(9)** (B), Team KDH (S), Pistol (G), Christmas Jones **(10)** (P). 7: Rook (B), Wai Lin **(11)** (S), Dart Gun (G), Goldfinger **(12)** (P). 8: Alura (B), Domlition (S), Pistol (G), Drake Suit **(13)** (P). 9:Vanquish Sub (B), Nik Nak **(14)** (S), Decryptor (G), Electra King **(15)** (P). 10: Ultralight Ultimate Laser (B), Protection (S), Stunner (G), Bond Tuxedo **(16)** (P). 11: Drake **(17)** (B), Explosive Scenery (S), Laser (G), Pussy Galore **(18)** (P). 12: Bond (B), Goldeneye Strike (S), Rifle (G), Bond Space (P).

Metroid Prime Meltdown!!

And we ain't talking about the game crashing. Here's the 411:





Let's reveal the endings first, shall we? There's three types: **worst, bad, and best**. You get these endings depending on the amount of items you pick up and scans. **Every item you take** (not including energy, ammo dropped by enemies or in crates) is your item percentage. Your scan percentage is **how complete your log book is**. Combine these totals into a percentage, and from 0-74% you get the worst ending. From 75-99%, you get the bad ending. 100%? Best ending. Then there's **Hard mode**. This is unlocked after you beat the game once. The foes are tougher, and you're more vulnerable. Now comes the **image galleries (1-3)**: There's four. The first opens with 50% of scans. The second opens with 100% of scans. The third opens with 100% of pickups. The fourth is revealed when you steam through Hard mode. Finally!

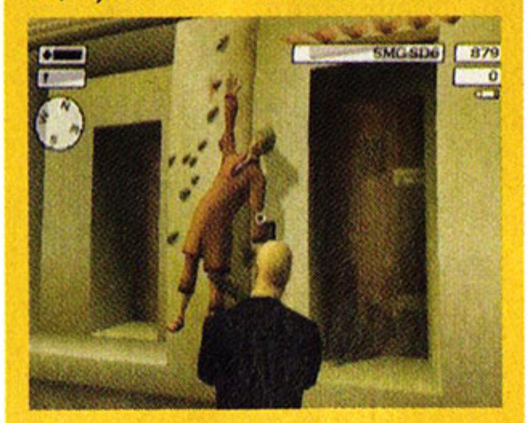
Need even more cool stuff? Then nab both *Metroid Fusion* and *Prime* and finish them both. Once you complete *Fusion*, link your GBA to your GC and go to the Load screen in *Prime*. Select Fusion Connection Bonuses and follow the instructions for *NES Metroid*. Yes, **the complete game (4)** on your GC! Once you complete *Prime* and link-up, go to the Loading screen on *Prime*, and once GBA's loaded, claim **Samus' fusion suit** in *Prime*! Rockin'! Finally, here's a couple of tips for *Fusion* **(5-6)**: In **tight quarters**, use Speed Booster to run over pit blocks without dropping. Crouch to initiate the Shine Spark. Morph to the ball, jump to the next ledge, morph back, and use the Shine Spark (crouch) to pause Speed Booster. **Do this infinitely**, as long as you resume movement. In Shine Spark, jump to resume the Speed Booster.

CODEX

Hitman 2: Silent Assassin

Carnage-causing Cheats!

Feel the need to pin your foe to walls, play in slo-mo, or muck about with the laws of physics? The correct answer is, "yes." Here's how:



In the game (no pause needed), quickly tap these inputs:

Slow Motion
PS2: R2, L2, Up, Do, X, Up, L2
XB: R, L, Up, Do, A, Up, L

Full Health
PS2: R2, L2, Up, Do, X, Up, Do
XB: R, L, Up, Do, A, Up, Do

Punch Mode
PS2: R2, L2, Up, Do, X, Up, Up
XB: R, L, Up, Do, A, Up, Up

Gravity
PS2: R2, L2, Up, Do, X, L2, L2
XB: R, L, Up, Do, A, L, L

Lethal Charge
PS2: R2, L2, Up, Do, X, R1, R1
XB: R, L, Up, Do, A, Bl, Bl

Bomb Mode
PS2: R2, L2, Up, Do, X, Up, L1
XB: R, L, Up, Do, A, Up, Wh

Megaforce (restart removes)
PS2: R2, L2, Up, Do, X, R2, R2
XB: R, L, Up, Do, A, R, R

Nailgun Mode (above)
PS2: R2, L2, Up, Do, X, L1, L1
XB: R, L, Up, Do, A, Wh, Wh

Level Select (in Main menu)
PS2: R2,L2,Up,Do, Squ,Tri,Cir
XB: R, L, Up, Do, X, Y, B

God Mode (Xbox only)
R, L, Up, Do, A, R, L, Bl, Wh

All Weapons (Xbox only)
R, L, Up, Do, A, Up, X, A

GREATEST HITS REVISITED

ATV: Offroad Fury

In pro career, CHACHING as your name gets you all ATVs. In pro career, WHATEXIT as your name unlocks all levels.

A LIVE & Kickin'!

MechAssault Mech Mayhem & the Candy Monster!

Making the most of mechs? Need an overly powerful suit or an insane online game variation? Good thing you're here.

Going online? Not until you've completed the Campaign mode. When you do, you'll unlock the Ragnarok **(1)** and Ymir **(2)** for multiplayer action. These two mechs are **insanely powerful**; the Ymir is a potent variant of the Ragnarok you never saw in the single-player experience. It's got secret technology, the **"you're having a laugh, aren't you" power of its lava gun**, and damn-fine shields. Gauss rifles and LRMs handle long-range sniping, while the lava gun is fabulous at mid to short ranges. However, the Ragnarok isn't as armored as the Atlas, and the lava gun creates nasty splash damage and must be manually aimed. Try **knocking down your foes with the gauss rifles, then switch to the lava gun**. LRMs? Tanks and turret takedown. Master the shields system, too; flick them on just before a PPC or missile barrage. Choose the Ymir over the Ragnarok, and you lose a bit of sniping ability but gain the **quad autocannons'** superior firepower. The PPCs are awesome at long range, but don't alternate them with the lava gun or you'll be **hobbling in a heat haze**. Finally, try this insane online game experience: **The Candy Monster**. Suit up everyone in team 1 as Elementals with Brat voice mask. One other guy is a mech. Then let rip **(3-5)**!

1

2

3

4

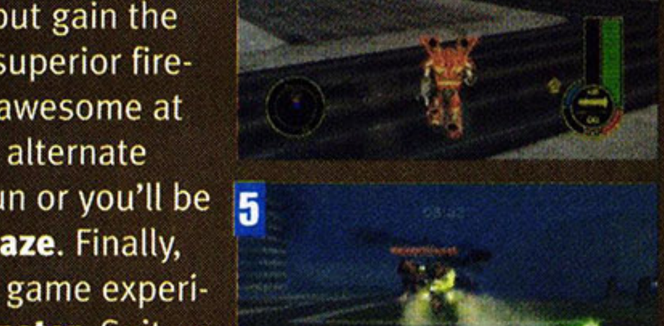
5

Animal Crossing

Golden axes and top-notch clothing designs!

This month: A crash-course in awesome game-character clothing, and how to unlock the three golden items....

Clockwise from left, a Goomba (pallette 11), Kirby (7), Mario (16), and Mega Man (16). For a **golden shovel**, plant a shovel in the ground with gold light. Keep your town in best condition for a week for the **golden axe**. The **rod of gold**? Catch all 40 fish!



THE FOLLOW UP TO THE ACTION-PACKED ZONE OF THE ENDERS: IDOLO ORIGINAL VIDEO ANIMATION MOVIE

ZONE OF THE ENDERS

Z.O.E

DOLORES, i

Based on the Best Selling Playstation®2 Game

1992-2002 ADV FILMS

SUGGESTED 15+

ANIMATION FOR A NEW GENERATIO

Zone of the Enders: Idolo © 2001 SUNRISE • VAP WWW.ADVFILMS.COM • INFO@ADVFILMS.C

AVAILABLE AT THESE AND OTHER FINE RETAILERS:

SUNCOAST The store for movie lovers. BEST BUY WHEREHOUSE MUSIC GameStop samgoo

Grand Theft Auto Advice city

Here in my car...I feel safest of all...with these cheats activated!

1

As the **state of the puns** in the tricks section sinks to an all-time low, it's time to fully ruin *GTA: VC* by slapping together a truly insane cheat code list. We've gathered **more cheats**

2

than **Gary Busey's had mental breakdowns**. All of them are inputted during gameplay. Oh, and there's difficulty reaching 100 percent complete if you activate any of these. Great,

3

huh? First up, let's gun down pedestrians with three different **weapons codes (1) 1**: R1, R2, L1, R2, Le, Do, Ri, Up, Le, Do, Ri, Up. **Weapons code (2) 2:** R1, R2, L1, R2, Le, Do, Ri, Up, Le, Do, Do, Le.

4

Weapons code (3) 3: R1, R2, L1, R2, Le, Do, Ri, Up, Le, Do, Do, Do. Want to see what beatdowns you suffer on **high wanted levels**? Increase it by one with R1, R1, Cir, R2, Le, Ri, Le, Ri, Le, Ri. Need to **shake Smokey**? Try

5

lowering your wanted level with R1, R1, Cir, R2, Up, Do, Up, Do, Up, Do. Now, how about some instant conjured jalopies? Hell, yes! Cir, L1, Up, R1, L2, X, R1, L1, Cir, X is the **Caddy (4)**. Whaddya mean, that's crap? Okay hotshot,

6

try R1, Cir, R2, Ri, L1, L2, X, X, Squ, R1. That gets you the **Hotring Racer (5)**. What's the freakin' matter? Don't like the color? Then tap R2, L1, Cir, Ri, L1, R1, Ri, Up, Cir, R2 **(6)** for **Hotring Racer 2**. But wait, there's more!

7

Here's an offer that's hard to "refuse." Ahem. Try Cir, R1, Cir, R1, Le, Le, R1, L1, Cir, Ri for the **Trash master**. Listening to too much Sisters of Mercy? Tap Do, R2, Do, R1, L2, Le, R1, L1, Le, Ri: **Romeo's**

8

Hearse. Pump the air and learn Scottish colloquialisms in the **Love Fist Limo (7)**: R2, Up, L2, Le, Le, R1, L1, Cir, Ri. Forget your small genitalia worries with the throbbing **Sabre Turbo (8)**: Ri,

9

L2, Do, L2, L2, X, R1, L1, Cir, Le. Finally, ignore 90 packages and instead cause incredible amounts of damage in the **Rhino**: Cir, Cir, L1, Cir, Cir, Cir, L1, L2, R1, Tri, Cir, Tri**(9)**. Remember the firing turret!

10

Before we're setting off completely deranged codes, why not blast around in the **Bloodring Bangers**? There's two types: Up, Ri, Ri, L1, Ri, Up, Squ, L2 **(10)**. There's also Do, R1, Cir, L2, L2, X, R1, L1, Le, Le **(11)**. Now for some

11

fun. Turn all the **traffic black** with Cir, L2, Up, R1, Le, X, R1, L1, Le, Cir. Why? Because you can. How about **pink traffic (12)**? That's Cir, L1, Do, L2, Le, X, R1, L1, Ri, Cir (or X). Need to recreate L.A.'s 405 freeway? Try the

12

Agro Cars mode: R2, Cir, R1, L2, Le, R1, L1, R2, L2. Now, get your cars **hovering** with Ri, R2, Cir, R1, L2, Squ, R1, R2. Then live out your *Street Hawk* fantasies and **get faster vehicles** (Ri, R1, Up, L2, L2, Le, R1, L1, R1, R1).

ALL-POINTS MULLET-IN

Grand Plans

Glitches and Gibbering

Sam's Hot Car Lot II
The infamous *GTA3* method of parking a car halfway in your garage to stop the door from closing, then driving in more cars than your garage normally holds, works here.

Sam's Hot Bike Lot
This glitch is new and improved; you don't need a car to rest the garage door on; ride a bike in and park it near the door. Hop back on and zoom in before it closes. Cram it!

Cop a load of this
Spent an overly long amount of time battering policemen to death? Time to turn the tables. If you see a cop getting assaulted and help out, you're rewarded! Now mug him!

Mostly 'Armless
Locate a pink mission marker armed with a katana or dusters. Hold the Attack button so Tommy raises his hand up. Enter the mission for Tommy arm-cramp hilarity.

FROM THE VAULT
PANZER BONANZA!!

Sega Saturn — Original Panzer Dragoon Cheats!

Why, I Orta...
We're prepping for mad Pandora's Box revelations next issue, but until the release of *Panzer Dragoon: Orta*, here's some oh-so amusing codes for the original Saturn *Panzer*. One of the worst-kept secrets in videogaming is the inclusion of the **entire original *Panzer* game** inside *Orta*. And yes, it does take 45 minutes to complete. Especially if you flick on the **invincibility code**. Below are tricks for the Saturn version of the game (at Main Menu screen). Want to **try them on Xbox**? Change C to Black and Z to White. Hey, some of them might even work.... **Invincibility Mode:** L, L, R, R, Up, Do, Le, Ri. **Wizard Mode (game runs twice as fast):** L, R, L, R, Up, Do, Up, Do, Le, Ri **Stage Select (all seven stages selectable, plus the ending; last level shown below):** Up, Up, Do, Do, Le, Ri, Le, Ri, X, Y, Z. **Secret Stage Zero (shooting foes adds health, you lose health constantly):** Up, Up, Up, Do, Do, Do, Le, Ri, Le, Ri, Le, Ri, L, R.

BMX XXX: X-POSED!!

The seedy underbelly of BMX and soft-porn gaming: Blown!

Take BMX bikes. Add low-grade porn. Alienate major retailers. You get *BMX XXX*. But is it as embarrassing to own as *Turok: Evolution*? No.

All codes entered at the Cheat menu.
Stage select:
MASS_HYSTERIA
Level select:
XXX_RATED_CHEAT
Amish Boy:
ELECTRICITYBAD
All FMV movies:
CHAMPAGNE_ROOM

Bonus Movie 1 FMV:
THISISBMXX
Bonus Movie 2 FMV:
KEEPITDIRTY
Dam 1 FMV:
BOING
Final Movie FMV:
DDUULRRLDRSQUARE
Las Vegas 1 FMV:
HIGHBEAMS
Las Vegas 2 FMV:
TASSLE
Launch Pad 69 1 FMV:
IFLINGPOO
Launch Pad 69 2 FMV:
PEACH
Rampage park 2 FMV:
BURLESQUE
Sheep Hills 1 FMV:
ONEDOLLAR
Sheep Hills 2 FMV:
69
Syracuse 1 FMV:
FUZZYKITTY
Syracuse 2 FMV:
MICHAELHUNT
The Bronx, NYC 1 FMV:
LAPDANCE
The Bronx, NYC 2 FMV:
STRIPTEASE
UGP Roots Jam 2 FMV:
BOOTYCALL
All bikes:
65 SWEET RIDES
Amish Boy's bikes:
AMISHBOY1699
Hellkitty's bikes:
HELLKITTY487
Itchi's bikes:
ITCHI594
Joyride's bikes:
JOYRIDE18
Karma's bikes:
KARMA311
La'tey's bikes:
LATEY411
Manuel's bikes:
MANUEL415
Mika's bikes:
MIKA362436
Nutter's bikes:
NUTTER290
Rave's bikes:
RAVE10
Skeeter's bikes:
SKEETER666
Tripledub's bikes: **TRIPLE-DUB922**
Twan's bikes:
TWAN18
Launch Pad 69:
SHOWMETHEMONKEY
Rampage Skatepark:
IOWARULES
The Dam:
THATDAMLEVEL
Las Vegas:
SHOWMETHEMONEY
Roots:
UNDERGROUND
Sheep Hills:
BAABAA
Syracuse:
BOYBANDSSUCK
Gap Location:
PARABOLIC
Night vision:
3RD SOG
Steer Ghost Bikes:
GHOSTCONTROL
Bouncing Crashes:
HEAVYPETTING
Happybunny(more air):
FLUFFYBUNNY
Green skin riders:
MAKEMEANGRY

PRE-ORDER PIPELINE

POWERED BY COMPUSA's gamefixx.com
we're your connection!

GAME	PUBLISHER	RELEASE DATE
PlayStation 2		
Malice	Sierra	1/1/03
War of the Monsters	SCEA	1/5/03
The Sims	Electronic Arts	1/15/03
Primal	SCEA	1/17/03
Vexx	Acclaim	2/1/03
Starsky and Hutch	Empire Interactive	2/2/03
.hack: Infection	Bandai America	2/15/03
Xbox		
Malice	Vivendi Universal	1/1/03
Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball	Tecmo	1/15/03
Panzer Dragoon ORTA	Sega	1/16/03
Kung Fu Chaos	Microsoft	2/1/03
Marvel vs. Capcom 2	Capcom	2/13/03
The Lost	Crave Entertainment	2/15/03
GameCube		
Resident Evil 2	Capcom	1/9/03
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis	Capcom	1/9/03
Freaky Flyers	Midway	1/15/03
Ghost Recon	Ubi Soft	2/1/03
Conflict: Desert Storm	Gotham Games	2/21/03
Wario World	Nintendo	2/27/03
Game Boy Advance		
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance	Midway	12/11/02
A Sound of Thunder	bam! entertainment	12/15/02
Grand Theft Auto 3	Destination Software	12/19/02
Downforce	Titus	2/19/03
Samurai Jack: The Amulet of Time	bam! entertainment	3/1/03
Wizardry: The Summoning	Crave Entertainment	3/7/03

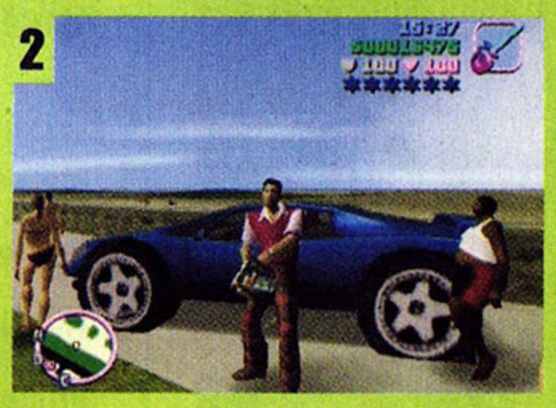
RESERVE THESE GAMES NOW AT
PREORDERPIPELINE.COM
Release dates subject to change. Visit us online for current information.
Not all titles available in all CompUSA stores.
GAMERS.COM™

Grand Theft Auto Advice city

PS2

Ooh woh, I...I just died in your arms tonight. Without these codes!

Let's get this second page of codes off to rockin' start and go all "Roger Moore in the Esprit" with cars that work on **land and water**: Ri, R2, Cir, R1, L2, Squ, R1, R2. Note the car wheels act as



flotation devices **(1)**. This next code's completely bizarre. Change the **tire size** of your vehicle (R1, X, Tri, Ri, R2, Squ, Up, Do, Squ). Some wheels get big **(2)**, while others get small. Input the code

repeatedly to increase (or decrease) the dimensions. Some cars (like the Caddy or Bobcat) get speed increases, too! Now save your game, reload it (PS2 must remain on) to keep increas-

ing the speed. Stop the code by switching your PS2 off. Another effect of this code is that your wheels keep inflating. The more insane of you can keep this up until the vehicles are too high off the ground to enter. You lunatics.

Destroy all cars (3): R2, L2, R1, L1, L2, R2, Squ, Tri, Cir, Tri, L2, L1. Jump (using L3 or R3) while driving (Tri, R1, R1, Le, R1, L1, R2, L1). Want to relive *State of Emergency* in a game that isn't crap? Try the **riot** code: Do, Le, Up, Le, X, R2,

R1, L2, L1. Take it up a notch with Do, Up, Up, Up, X, R2, R1, L2, L2; **pedestrians attack**! Now, give **bystanders weapons (4)** with R2, R1, X, Tri, X, Tri, Up, Do. These three codes can't be removed. For **undead Smokey** (police return

from the dead), try Cir, L1, Do, L2, Le, X, R1, L1, Ri, X. How about some fun with the instant **clothing change (5)** (including a police costume): Ri, Ri, Le, Up, L1, L2, Le, Up, Do, Ri. Repeat it to keep

changing. For the top-heavy **Candy Suxxx (6)**, tap Cir, R2, Do, R1, Le, Ri, R1, L1, X, L2. **Hilary King** is R1, Cir, R2, L1, Ri, R1, L1, X, R2. **Ken Rosenberg** is Ri, L1, Up, L2, L1, Ri, R1, L1, X, R1. **Lance**

Vance is Cir, L2, Le, X, R1, L1, X, L1. Two **Love Fist band members**? Do, L1, Do, L2, Le, X, R1, L1, X, X or R1, L2, R2, L1, Ri, R2, Le, X, Squ, L1. **Mercedes (7)**: R2, L1, Up, L1, Ri, R1, Ri, Up, Cir, Tri. **Phil**

Cassidy: Ri, R1, Up, R2, L1, Ri, R1, L1, Ri, Cir. **Ricardo Diaz (8)**: L1, L2, R1, R2, Do, L1, R2, L2. **Sonny Forelli (9)**: Cir, L1, Cir, L2, Le, X, R1, L1, X, X. Note the "skin" codes can cause your game to freeze. Instant **suicide**? Ri, L2, Do, R1, Le,

Le, R1, L1, L2, L1 (this gets you back your original getup). **Slo-mo** mode: Tri, Up, Ri, Do, Squ, R2, R1. **Fast-mo** mode: Tri, Up, Ri, Do, L2, L1, Squ. The final round of codes? Weather and gun-toting chicks. **Normal**: R2, X, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2,

Do. **Sunny (10)**: R2, X, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2, Tri. **Rain (11)**: R2, X, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2, Cir. **Fog (12)**: R2, X, L1, L1, L2, L2, L2, X. **Overcast**: R2, X, L1 L1, L2, L2, L2, Squ. Now, add **bikini gals and guns**: Ri, L1, Cir, L2, Le, X, R1, L1, L1, X.

ALL-POINTS MULLET-IN

Chopper Action

Flying Fun and More!

Polishing my Chopper
Really need to waste some serious time? Then try flying a helicopter into a Pay 'N' Spray emporium, landing inside. When you collect the shiny craft, it magically grows wheels.

Assault 'Copter assault
When you've spent an entire afternoon collecting Polynesian parrots, the last thing you want is a crazed gunfight with the military. Use the clothes-change cheat until you're in a police uniform. Then stroll in and grab the Hunter.

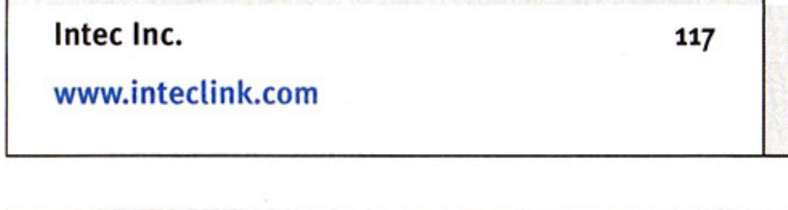
Temporal Lobe Epilepsy
Strange hallucinations. How else do you explain the "future" picture of the Liberty City guy that's hanging in your hotel room?

Tanks for the Memories
Yeah, there's a tank cheat. But what if you want one without cheating or collecting packages? Steal it during "Sir, Yes, Sir!" and take it to your garage instead of finishing the mission.

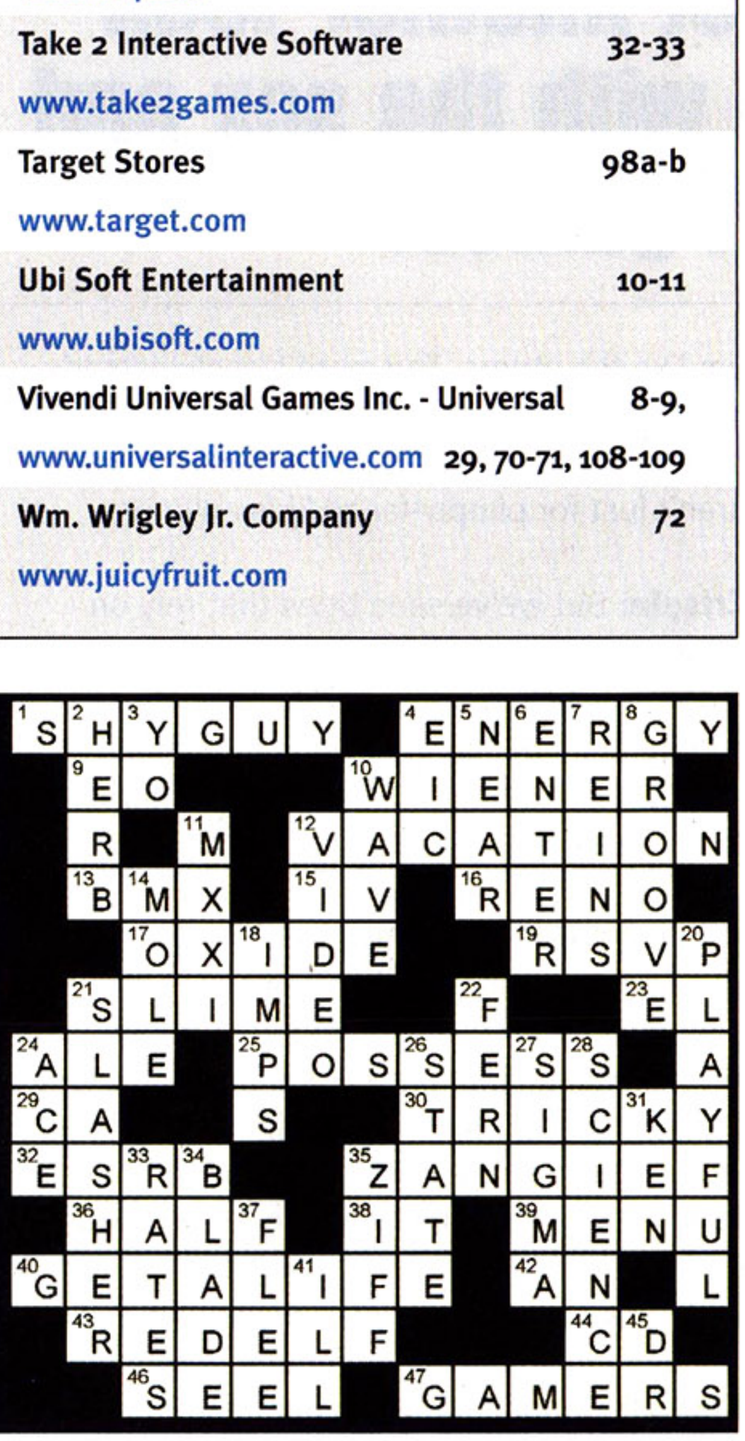
Advertiser Index

Academy of Art College www.academyart.edu	137	Koei Corporation www.koeigames.com	85, 127
Acclaim Entertainment www.acclaim.com	113	Konami America www.konami.com	106-107
Activision www.activision.com	20-21, 97, 101, 103	LucasArts Entertainment www.lucasarts.com	87
A. D. Vision www.advfilms.com	163	Majesco Sales, Inc. www.majescosales.com	93
Bandai America Inc. www.bandai.com	129	Mcvan's Video Game www.mcvans.com	28
Best Buy www.bestbuy.com	105	Microsoft www.microsoft.com	65-67
Capcom U.S.A., Inc. www.capcom.com	23, 89, 172	Midway Home Entertainment www.midway.com	62a-h, 63
Columbia House Company www.columbiahouse.com	50a-b	Milk Processors www.gotmilk.com	13
CompUSA http://gamefixx.compusa.com	165	Namco Hometek www.namco.com	125
Game Music Online www.gamemusic.com	26	Pricegrabber.com www.pricegrabber.com	27
Ecko Unlimited www.ecko.com	79	Sammy Studios, Inc. www.sammyusa.com	131
Electronic Arts www.ea.com	4-5	Sega Of America Dreamcast www.sega.com	15, 18-19, 52-53, 91, 170-171, 122a-h
Electronics Boutique www.ebgames.com	44-45, 74-75, 74a-b, 148-149	Sony Computer Entertainment www.scea.com	6-7, 25, 30-31, 37, 39, 41, 46-47, 59, 61, 68-69
Full Sail Real World www.fullsail.com	161	THQ www.thq.com	2-3
H. J. Heinz Foodservice Division www.heinz.com	83	Take 2 Interactive Software www.take2games.com	32-33
Hip Interactive Corporation www.hipgearproducts.com	95	Target Stores www.target.com	98a-b
Hobarama Corp. www.bawls.com	24	Ubi Soft Entertainment www.ubisoft.com	10-11
Infogrames, Inc. www.infogrames.net	16-17, 57	Vivendi Universal Games Inc. - Universal www.universalinteractive.com	8-9, 29, 70-71, 108-109
Intec Inc. www.inteclink.com	117	Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company www.juicyfruit.com	72

ANSWERS TO "SIM-SATION" CROSSWORD PUZZLE



on page 56

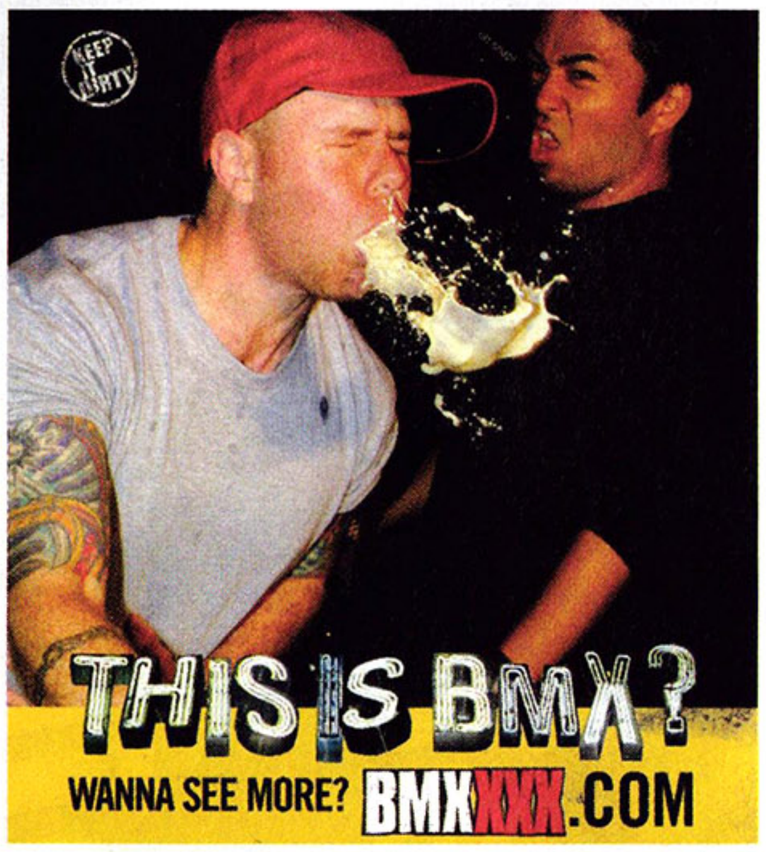


From the Editors of
Electronic Gaming Monthly
Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
Computer Gaming World
GameNOW and Xbox Nation

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA GAME GROUP

FINAL WORD

Adult Games: I Don't Wanna Grow Up!



Videogames: growing up, or just throwing up?

Jennifer: First of all, I want to go on record saying I'm a big Howard Stern fan—I have no problem with raunchy humor aimed at a mature audience as long as it's genuinely funny. But are "adult" games headed in the direction of *BMX XXX*? I'm guessing grown-up gamers are actually looking for something a bit more, well, mature.

If American Pie or Not Another Teen Movie can get away with the sex and fart jokes, why can't games?

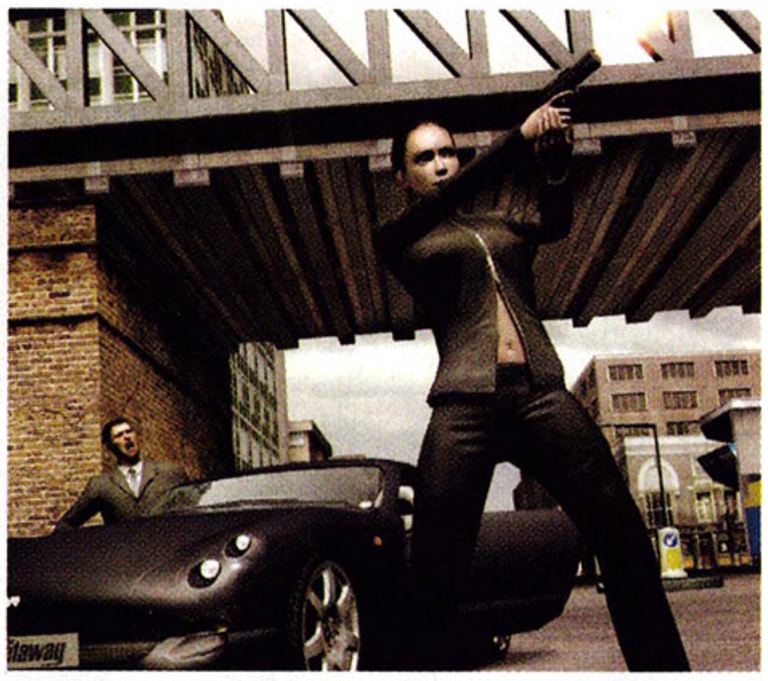
Chris: For the amount of time you waste trying to unlock the cinemas with nudity in *BMX XXX*, you could've run to an adult-video store to pick up a tape where you wouldn't have to complete frivolous goals to see some action.

Shane: I'd love to see truly sophisticated games with mature themes gain popular acceptance as a legit pastime for adults, but then you'd probably have real enforcement, by law, of ESRB ratings...and then, I suspect, publishers would be discouraged from making M-rated games.

Chris: Not if the *BMX XXX*-periment ends up working—then we're going to see more and more of that kind of game.

Shoe: I actually think the industry has room for "immature" mature titles like *BMX XXX*. Hey, if movies like *American Pie* or *Not Another Teen Movie* can get away with sex and fart jokes, why can't games? If we want games to gain mainstream acceptance like music, film, or TV—that is, if we want Mr. Average Joe American not to get any more bent out of shape over a new *Grand Theft Auto* than he would over a new Martin Scorsese gangster flick—then we have to start treating this medium like the others. The more closely games mirror "normal" forms of entertainment, good or bad, the more people will realize games aren't just for pimply-faced kids anymore.

Crispin: But we've seen titles that rely on nudity and fart jokes before—remember last month's article on naughty games? Those oddball games just featured nudity for the sake of nudity. They wound up as nothing more than funny footnotes in gaming history—they sure didn't pioneer a new adult genre. I think only intelligent M-rated games like *Vice City* and *The Getaway* will do that.


Games with mature themes, like *The Getaway*, may be the best way for the industry to grow.

Greg: I agree. Titles like *BMX XXX* simply prove that games still really are just for pimply-faced kids. They might have a place once games are a more widely accepted form of entertainment (like *American Pie* in the movie industry), but they certainly aren't trailblazing in any real way.

Mark: I'm wondering when games will appeal to an audience larger than the twentysomething male demographic we talk about as the adult market today—I'm talkin' about the 30- to 45-year-old soccer moms. Think about it: They make all the buying decisions, they have free time during the day, the systems are already in their houses for their kids...*Days of Our Lives: The Game*, *Russell Crowe's Pro Stripper*—the possibilities are endless. The industry better get on the ball 'cause you can bet your bippy somewhere, deep in the bowels of Oprah's underground labs, someone's already working on it....

Demian: I give it about five years until there are games that appeal to soccer moms. Not that I'm counting the days or anything. But as a part of the first generation of kids to grow up with games, I can safely say we're getting old. Fast. The older we get, the more games will target the soon-to-be-lucrative grumpy codger market.

***Pro Stripper:* a future hit with the ladies?**

Jennifer: Perhaps, but I think it'll take way longer than five years. I'm no soccer mom, but the games that really appeal to me the way a (gasp) romantic comedy or good novel would are as few and far between as to be nonexistent.

Demian: I think something like *The Sims Online* may appeal to soccer moms, and that's only a few years away from being on a console...but no, I don't think *Russell Crowe's Pro Stripper* will be here in five.

Jennifer: *The Sims* definitely scratches the surface, but even since its introduction almost three years ago, you haven't seen anything like it anywhere. And what about soccer dads or younger women?

Mark: Soccer dads? Oh, you mean pro soccer players? There's plenty of *FIFA* games for them....

Jennifer: Silly, silly.... I meant, what about all the different demographics? Movies and TV appeal to people from ages 2 to 200, it seems, and in every economic bracket. With videogames, you just don't get that variety of content.

Shane: Different demographics? Look at all the Barbie and Olsen twins games poor Seanbaby has to review! Those multiple demographics are takin' over!

NEXT MONTH

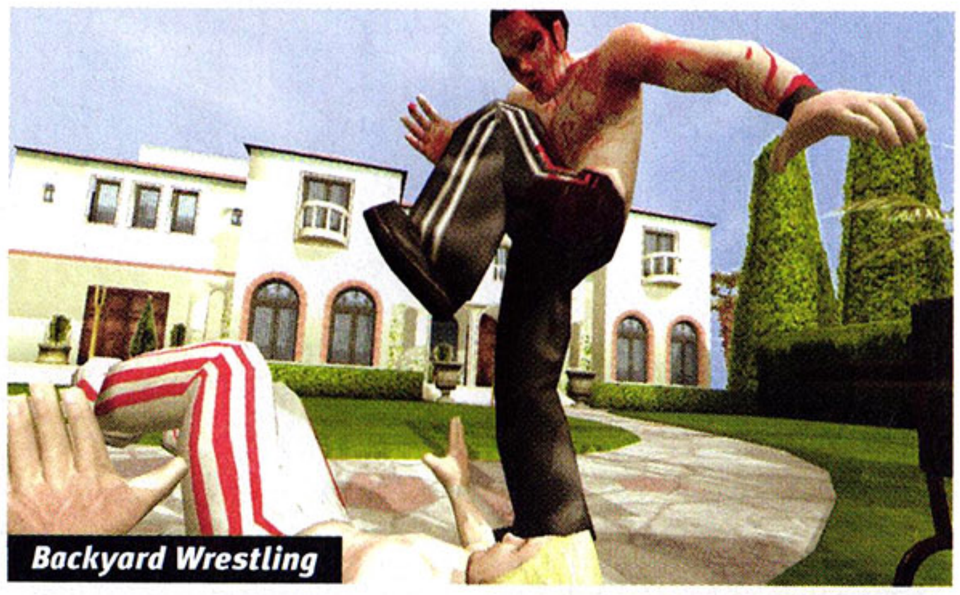
ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

March 2003

Issue #164, on sale Feb. 4

The Legend Returns

Link, Nintendo's tyke in tights, makes his doe-eyed debut on GameCube, and we dive into his Day-Glo world to see whether *The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker* is the next must-buy Cube game or just cartoony kid's stuff. But if Link's loony toon look turns you off, why not peel rubber to our world-exclusive *Driver 3* cover story to satisfy your need for misdeeds? This next installment in the megahit series is coming to all the major consoles, and we have exclusive new screens and all the road-raging info. Plus, we give non-blockbuster games their due with a look at the five niftiest titles you've never heard of.


Backyard Wrestling

The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker

Dead or Alive: XBV

Reviewed Next Month:

- The Getaway (PS2)
- Dead or Alive: Xtreme Beach Volleyball (Xbox)
- Devil May Cry 2 (PS2)
- Xenosaga: Episode I (PS2)
- Disaster Report (PS2)

Previewed Next Month:

- Backyard Wrestling (PS2)
- NBA Street Vol. 2 (PS2/Xbox)
- Midnight Club II (PS2/Xbox)
- Return to Castle Wolfenstein (PS2/Xbox)
- Hitman 2 (GC)
- Vexx (PS2, GC, Xbox)

All editorial content is subject to change.

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

Feb. 2003
On sale Jan. 14

Demo Disc
Playables

- The Getaway
- Dark Cloud 2
- NBA ShootOut 2003
- Ratchet & Clank
- ATV: Quad Power Racing 2
- Madden NFL 2003
- Black & Bruised
- Run Like Hell: Hunt or be Hunted
- Shaun Murray's Pro Wakeboarder
- Def Jam Vendetta

THE GETAWAY

It's not just a *GTA* clone—far from it. Read all about this gritty, dark, cinematic experience, then check out *OPM*'s exclusive demo.

The Getaway

Dark Cloud 2

GAMENOW

Feb. 2003
On sale Jan. 21

Reviews:

- The Sims (PS2)
- Skies of Arcadia Legends (GC)
- Asheron's Call 2 (PC)
- Panzer Dragoon Orta (Xbox)

Previews:

- Star Wars Knights of the Old Republic (Xbox)
- Command & Conquer: Generals (PC)
- The Getaway (PS2)
- Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb (Xbox)

DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI

Dragon Ball Z: Budokai is here—and we've got everything you need to know to battle your way to Super Saiyan greatness. And now that you've been playing *Vice City* for a while, make sure you've gotten through every nook and cranny of the game with our 14-page strategy special.

Dragon Ball Z

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

Feb. 2003
On sale Jan. 7

Unreal 2

Splinter Cell

Reviews

- Earth & Beyond
- Medal of Honor: Spearhead
- Civ III: Play The World
- MechWarrior 4: Mercenaries
- EverQuest: Planes of Power

Previews

- Unreal 2
- Rainbow Six: Raven Shield

SPLINTER CELL

The best stealth game since *Thief* and *Metal Gear Solid* hits the PC, and our hands-on preview shows that you don't have to get an Xbox to enjoy this great game.

From the shadows of history,
a legend reawakens.

XBOX

Smilebit

DOLBY DIGITAL

TEEN

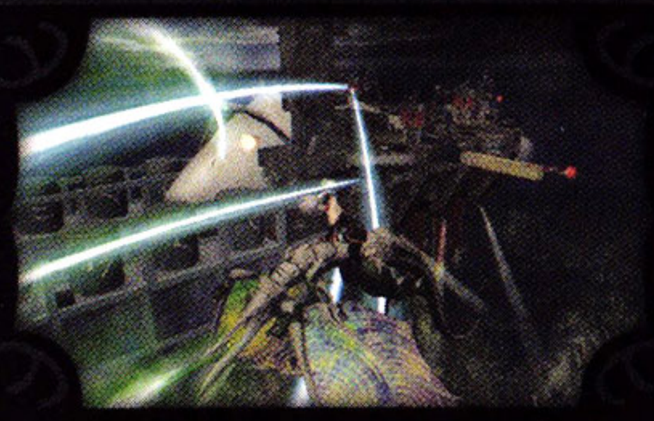
T

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Blood Violence

SEGA®

Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Sega, the Sega logo, and Panzer Dragoon ORTA are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. Original Game © SEGA. © Smilebit/SEGA. 2002. Dolby and the double-D symbol are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. All Rights Reserved.

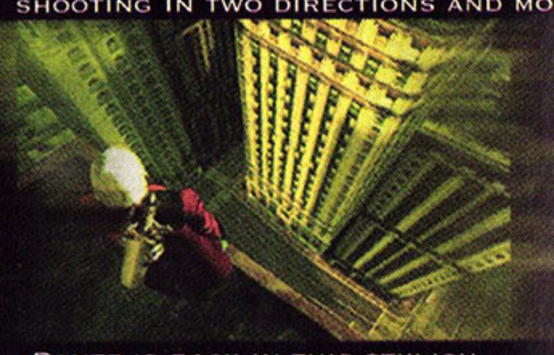


PANZER DRAGOON ORTA

sega.com/panzer

COOLER THAN HELL

•DANTE ROCKS WITH NEW ACROBATIC A
ASS-KICKING MOVES - RUN AND JUMP O
WALLS, AERIAL KICKS, SIMULTANEOUS
SHOOTING IN TWO DIRECTIONS AND MO



•DANTE IS BACK IN THIS STYLISH ACTION-THRILLER AND SEQUEL TO THE PHENOMENAL DEVIL MAY CRY!

•PLAY AS DANTE OR THE MYSTERIOUS AND SEXY LUCIA...THE NEWEST MEMBER TO THE DEVIL MAY CRY SAGA

•JAW-DROPPING GRAPHICS AND ANIMA-
TION. BATTLE IN MASSIVE ENVIRONMEN
FILLED WITH WRETCHED ENEMIES AND
ATMOSPHERIC SPECIAL EFFECTS.

DEVIL MAY CRY 3™

AVAILABLE NOW!

THE KILLER SEQUEL
TO THE BLOCKBUSTER DEVIL MAY CRY

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB — Blood Violence

CAPCOM
CAPCOM.COM

PlayStation®2

©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2003 ©CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2003. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM logo are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. DEVIL MAY CRY is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.