ZIFF DAVIS

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GIANT FALL PREVIEW
SEE WHAT SONY, SEGA, MICROSOFT AND NINTENDO HAVE IN STORE FOR YOU

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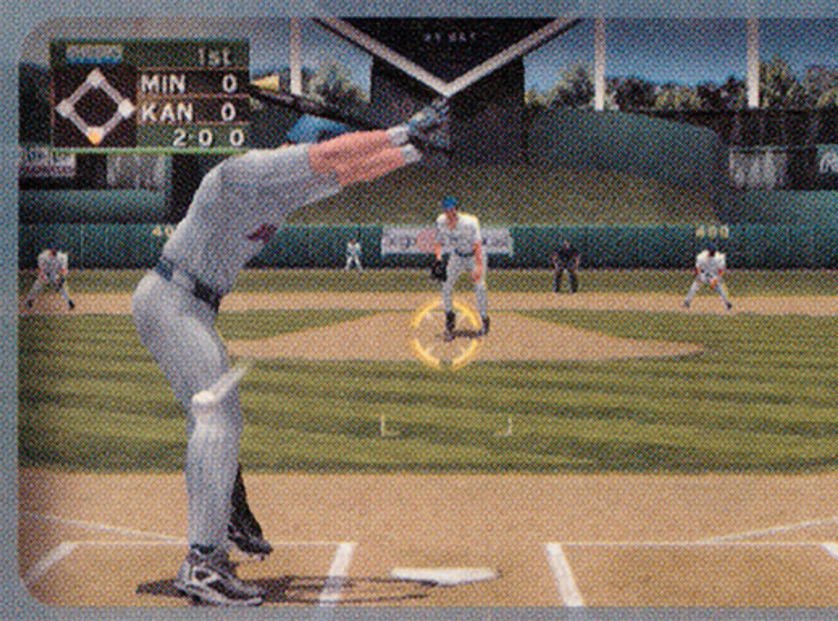

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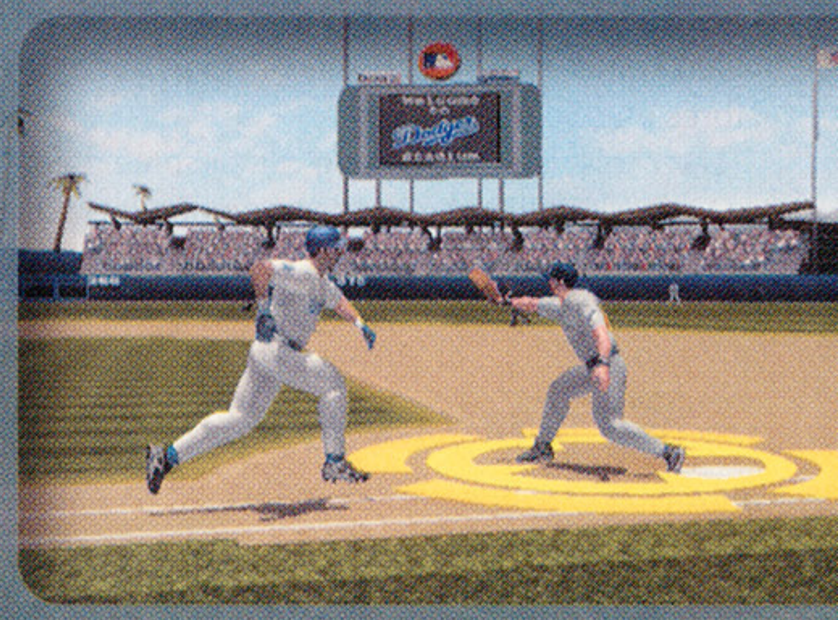

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EDITORIAL

By Dan "Shoe" Hsu • shoe@ziffdavis.com



Bright Times Are Ahead

Starting this fall, we're going to witness a system war unlike any we've seen before. Remember the big ones from the past? Sony PlayStation vs. Sega Saturn vs. Nintendo 64...Super Nintendo vs. Sega Genesis...Atari 2600 vs. Coleco Vision vs. Intellivision.... Those times were great. Everyone had several consoles from which to choose, and video games were practically gushing out of toy stores and Sears catalogs.

Later this year, everything will become great again. It's not like the past couple of years have been disappointing, mind you. But we haven't had the raw excitement of a full-on system war in quite some time. I'm talking about the excitement of walking down the aisles of Toys 'R' Us and seeing rows and rows of games from competing consoles. I'm talking about the excitement of flipping through a gaming mag (it better be *EGM*, by the way, or you're going to get a swift punch to the neck from me) and seeing how similarly powerful systems compare to each other. I'm talking about the excitement of trying to figure out which machine to buy, or bug mom and pop for.

"It's going to be a system war unlike any we've seen before."

You see, over the past couple of years, we haven't had that same energy or enthusiasm because of staggered system launches or uneven competition. The Dreamcast was way more powerful than the PS or N64 (yet Sega had a major enemy: its own reputation in the hardware business). Later, we got the PlayStation 2, which, while having significant advantages over the DC, has had a freshman year full of yawns.

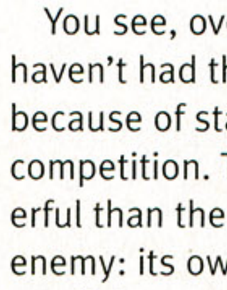
Later this year, we're going to see a strong PlayStation 2, with killer apps upon killer apps, from Metal Gear Solid 2 to Tony Hawk 3. We're going to see a strong Xbox, with over a dozen launch titles and the marketing bucks of Micro$oft backing it up. And best of all, we're going to see a strong GameCube, from a Nintendo who's learned from its past mistakes and is ready to reclaim the glory it once had in the 8- and 16-bit days (was it that long ago?).

On Wednesday, May 16, the three major powers threw down their gauntlets. At the press conferences for the 2001 Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), the world's largest trade convention for all things video and computer gaming, each company got a chance to show off their future plans for video game market domination. Then at the show itself, they backed up their words by letting us put our dirty paws on their games. Read on inside to see what Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo are going to bring to the big, upcoming rumble. Like I said, it's going to be a system war unlike any we've seen before, and in this issue, we're giving you a sneak peek of what's to come. By the way, we gutted out the Previews section this month and put all that coverage in our special feature. Check it out, starting on page 46.

Next month, be sure to keep an eye out for *EGM*. The cover story is going to be Final Fantasy X, Square's first RPG for the PS2. We're going to have two covers: a normal one with rendered art from Square, and a limited release special edition with hand-painted art, made specifically for us by none other than the world famous Final Fantasy artist, Yoshitaka Amano. His beautiful creations have adorned the packaging of several FF games, and he has even published books and ran galleries with his work. Our Amano cover will have a very limited run, so look for it.

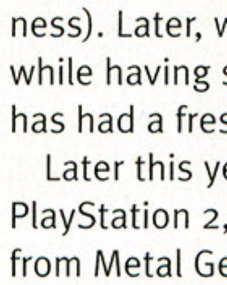
Shoe

Contributing Writers



John Ricciardi

EGM veteran Ricciardi flew in to help us with our GameCube special feature. You won't find a bigger Nintendo nut than him.



David Hodgson

David's excellent "Where Are They Now?" series wraps up this issue. Want to see more? Let us know.

Eat My Shorts!

Look around the issue for quotes or references from *The Simpsons* or some famous movie. Find one, email it to us at EGM@ziffdavis.com (subject: Eat My Shorts—August Issue), and you may be one of five lucky winners (choosen at random) who will win copies of this issue's two Review Crew Games of the Month.

Some of the quotes/references from last issue:
"Some of you...may remember me from such..." (*Simpsons*, pg. 6). "Smile you son of a bitch!" (*Jaws*, pg. 34). "Hugh Jass..." (*Simpsons*, pg. 87). "The first rule of...the second rule of..." (*Fight Club*, pg. 93). "...they do nothing!" (*Simpsons*, pg. 93)

No purchase necessary. For full contest rules and legal crap, go to www.egmmag.com.

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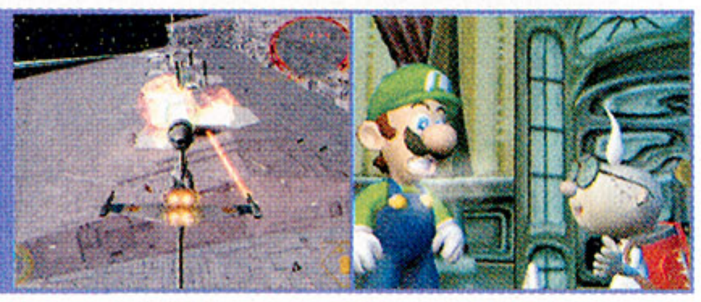
Features



You Are HERE3 In case you weren't lucky or rich enough to make it to video gaming's biggest event, the Electronic Entertainment Expo, we did the dirty work for you. Inside this 41-page feature is a meticulous and exhaustive compilation of everything you could have possibly seen if you walked the show floor to death like our editors did.
Turn to **page 46** to experience the show.

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Rogue Leader and Luigi's Mansion blew our mullets away. Find out why on **page 48**.



MICROSOFT XBOX

Find out if Halo and Tony Hawk 2x made Xbox a contendah or a pretendah on **page 74**.



SONY PLAYSTATION 2

With games like Silent Hill 2 and Jak and Daxter, Sony will be hard to beat. See their wad on **page 88**.



SEGA DREAMCAST

Can Shenmue II and Alien Front Online make Sega's system age gracefully? Find out on **page 100**.



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Find out when you can buy an Xbox or a GameCube and whether you'll need to take out a loan to afford them. Also: a spooge-inducing update on Tekken 4, Metal Gear Solid 2, and how the video-game term "Easter Egg" was invented.

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Head on over to our E3 spectacular and you'll see more game previews than you can swing a stick at. And we're talking one of dem big 'ol Texas-sized sticks.

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It's an *EGM* road-rage feature! Twisted Metal: Black, Crazy Taxi 2, World's Scariest Police Chases and CART Fury take our driver's test. And if throwing around tons of metal at high speeds isn't for you, then maybe a dual review of Zelda: Oracle of Ages and Oracle of Seasons might catch your eye.

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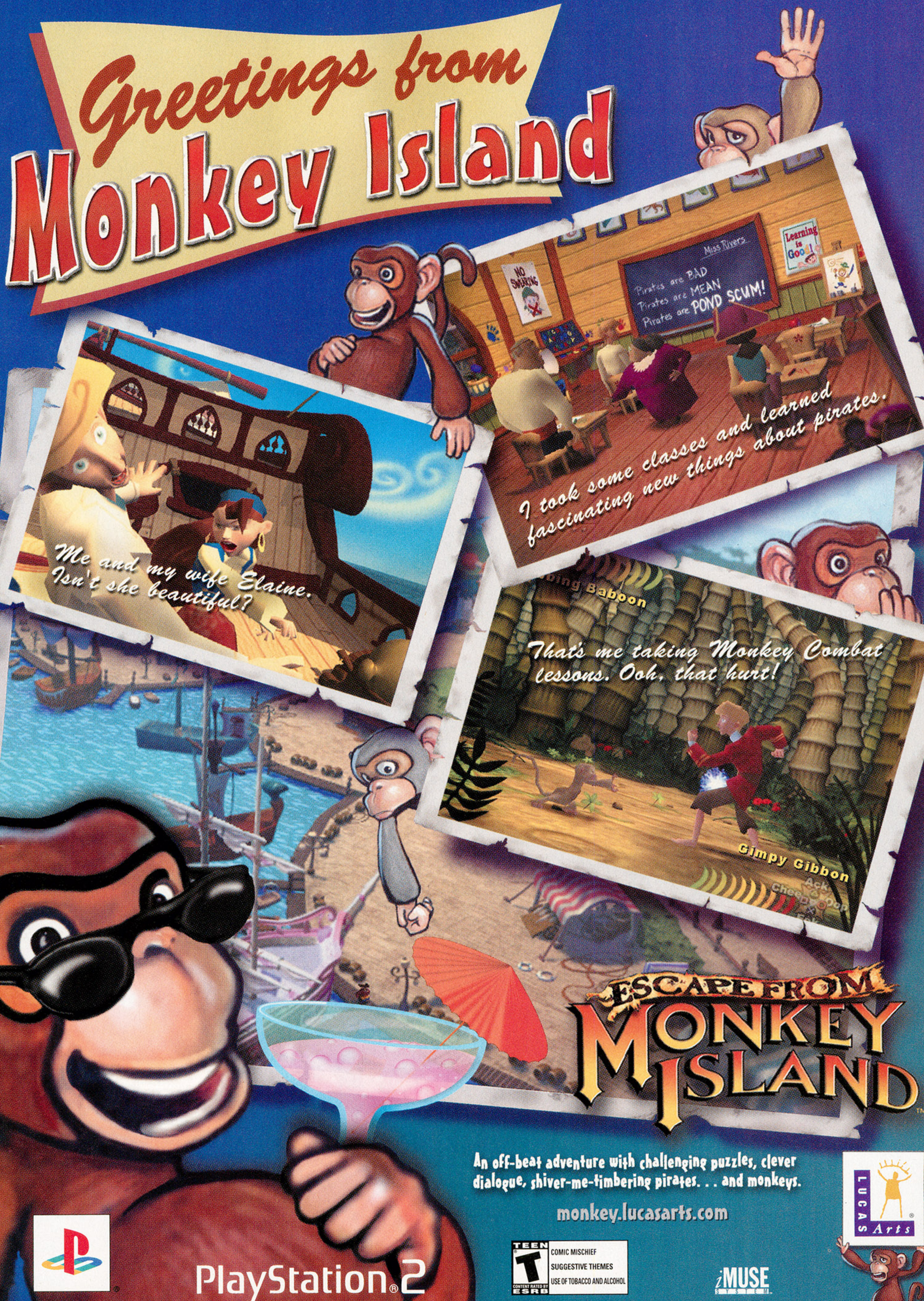
The *EGM* Review Crew shares a huge bowl of mac n' cheese while they discuss who won and lost big at E3. And we're not talking about the cart full o' cash that Previews Editor Greg Sewart won, either.

SYSTEM KEY

- Dreamcast
- Nintendo 64
- PlayStation 2
- PlayStation
- Game Boy Color
- Game Boy Advance
- Xbox
- Arcade

Greetings from Monkey Island



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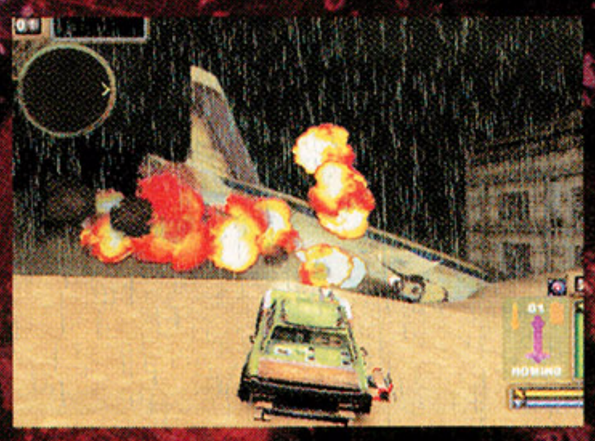





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Letters to the Editors

LETTER FACTS

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- Letters welcoming Shoe back: 87
- Letters listing every system and game ever owned by the writer: 63
- Letters asking which system to buy: 99
- Rants about PSO V.2 pay to play: 15

LETTER OF THE MONTH

A Gamer Dad Who Takes Responsibility

Hi *EGM* crew. I represent the "non-audience" in most gaming magazines, the 30-something dad. I am now a teacher, but grew up plunking down numerous quarters on Pac-Man, Asteroids and Space Invaders. I continue to feed my gaming hobby/habit by purchasing two games per month, minimum. I wonder why so many gaming mags and their ads are almost always aimed at the teens when gamer-parents like me are the ones spending money to purchase the games for their families. We are also the ones scouring the game mags to see what's new, and we have the final say on what is (or is not) bought for our families.

I purchase and play only games that are appropriate for my two young sons; so when a game is rated "E" for everyone, I'm checking it out! Games like Conker's Bad Fur Day for the N64 shouldn't exist, as it is in the same league as Joe Camel's "We aren't trying to appeal to America's youth" ad campaign. Joe died, and so should ex-Diddy Kong racing stars with inappropriate mouths. And what's up with some games that are rated "E" but contain profanity? Like SSX for the PS2! To me, "Everyone" means the same as a G-rating for a movie, and I don't expect to hear "sh*t" in a Disney flick.

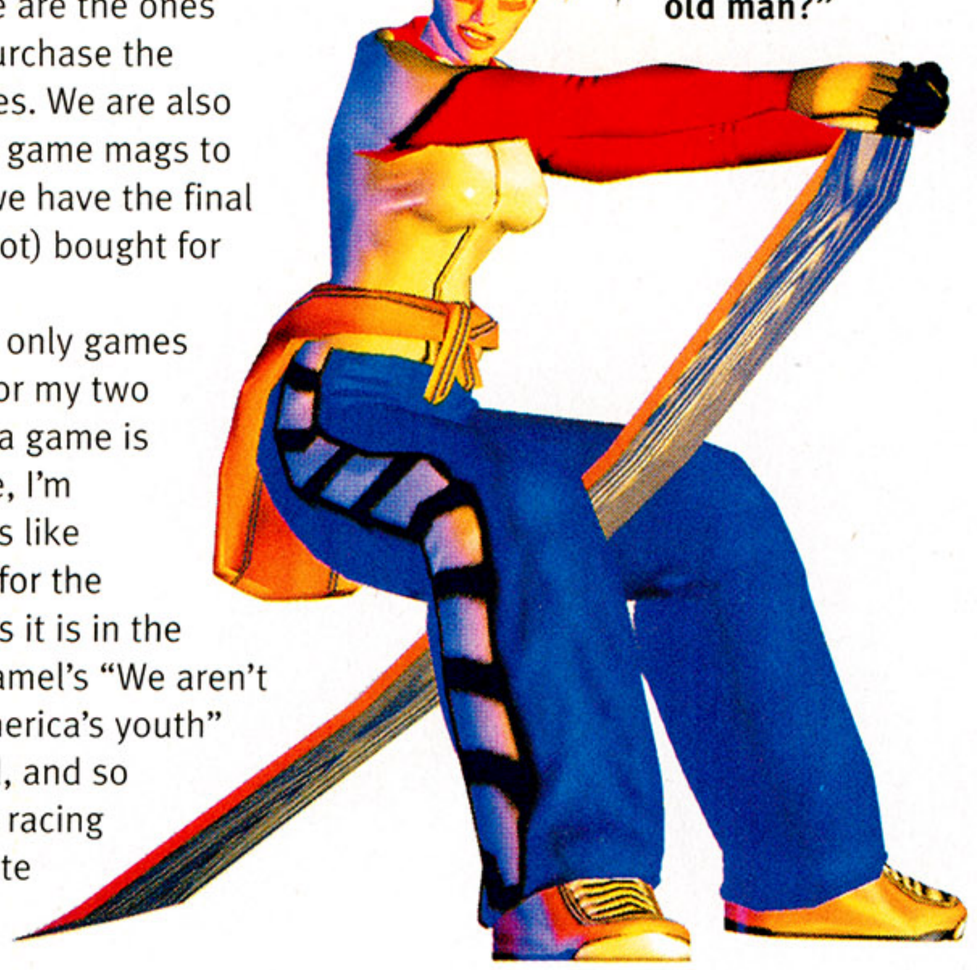
Thanks for hearing me out, peace to gamers everywhere of all ages!

Paul F.
Eudora, KS

"To me, 'Everyone' means the same as a G-rating for a movie, and I don't expect to hear 'sh*t' in a Disney flick."



"You got a f*ing problem with my language old man?"**



Congratulations. You win an InterAct controller. You will be receiving a Barracuda (PS), an Alloy Arcade Stick (DC) or a SharkPad Pro 64² (N64).

See page 121 for official rules.



While we may not agree with all of your opinions, we respect your right to express them. And we definitely salute you for taking such an active role in selecting the entertainment your children are exposed to. If more parents had this same level of participation in their kids' lives, there would be much less finger pointing at games and entertainment as the source of society's ills. Plus, how cool is it for your kids that you're into games as much as they are!

X-Mascot

I was wondering (which is rare for me) who is going to be Microsoft's mascot? Sony has Crash, Nintendo has Mario and Luigi, and Sega has Sonic (OK, so you knew that already), but Microsoft hasn't breathed a word about it. Most companies develop a game about their mascot first; why should Microsoft be any different? Unless theirs is going to be a car from Project Gotham, Microsoft needs to get with it. I'm not saying Microsoft is bad, but it would be kinda cool to see a mascot on Xbox sometime soon. Oh, and please don't tell me it's going to be a little MS Office icon with eyes (that would be...uh...different...). That's all for now, you diaper-donning people!

Nik A.
Bermuda
banjoeverything@hotmail.com

Things are changing, Nik; Crash is no longer PlayStation-only (with his Xbox adventure in the works), and now that Sega is developing for all the major systems, you'll be seeing Sonic go multi-platform as well. Microsoft does have Abe from Munch's Oddysee, although he hasn't quite become the icon for Xbox in the same way Mario has for Nintendo. But other than that, Microsoft doesn't have set plans for any rodent, tradesman or marsupial of their own. They seem to think that will take care of itself in time. Their focus right now is on the games, so we'll all just have to wait and see who or what emerges as their spokesmodel. Come to think of it, no one has used a monkey yet. Kids love monkeys. And they wear diapers. We say use a monkey.

Young Teacher Vows to Crush 6th Graders

I am a 24-year-old junior-high and high-school teacher and a complete video game freak. It is to the point that I drag my wife (who is not a video gaming enthusiast in the least bit) to

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LETTERS

EGM@ziffdavis.com

Send us your thoughts, your wishes, your innermost weirdness...or your pictures, crazy screenshots or photos of bizarre game-related moments.

every pawn shop and video game store, just to look! (i.e., 30 minutes to an hour of my wife sitting in the car, waiting for me.) Well, I know that there are many other video game freaks out there my age, but I will say that this up-and-coming generation just doesn't have the passion.

I polled my 6th grade class (see, video games can be useful in schools—math, polling, it's all good). Ninety percent of them *say* that they prefer console gaming to PC gaming, but do they go to stores and stand and sweat over which game to get today? No, they wait...they wait until something like a birthday, or dare I say it, all the way 'til Christmas to get a game. My question to you, *EGM*, is: Do you find that gamers from the NES and Genesis generation tend to be more adamant about gaming than the 12-year-olds of today? And to any of my 6th graders, I will crush you at any console game! You have been challenged!

Dwayne Sheridan
White House, TN
switchfootx6@yahoo.com

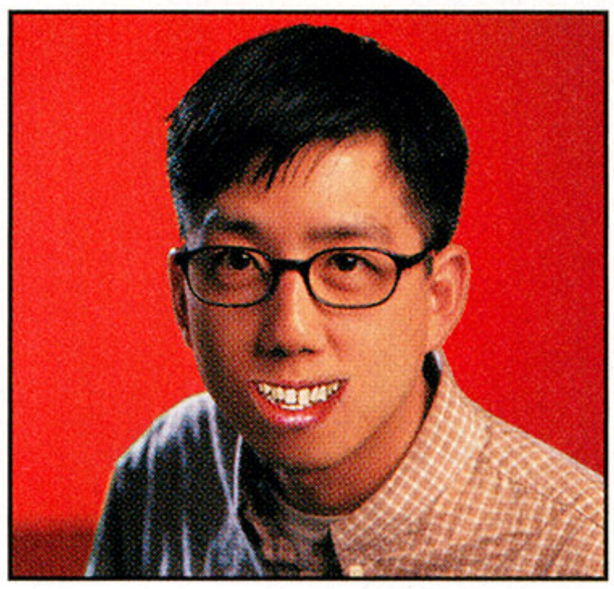
Really Dwayne, *crush* them? We appreciate your passion, but they're just kids. Sheesh. You might want to back off the faculty lounge coffee a bit.

We're pretty sure the current crop of young gamers has the same level of mania as yourself, just not the disposable income, drivers license, car or wife to make wait in the car. Other than that, you're on a level playing field, prof. Once your class gets a load of this letter, I think you'll have a glimpse of their passion. Strap in for some challengers looking to do some crushing of their own.

Reader Ponders The Emotionless Che

I see all of the Review Crew's pictures and Che Chou is the only one who doesn't have a smile on his face. What's wrong Che? You hate working at *EGM*?

Jason Cho
Choman10@hotmail.com



Try as we might, we can't get our young West Coast Editor to flash his choppers. He's what they call "street," or "down for his." Let's just say it takes *a lot* to get even a smirk to well up on his jaded mug. In light of this, we worked a little Photoshop magic and transplanted Previews Editor Greg Sewart's smile onto Che's sour puss, with staggering results. It ain't pretty, but it's all you're gonna get. Enjoy.

Cries Go Up For More Werewolf Action

For as long as I can remember, there have been more vampire games than werewolf games. In my opinion, being a werewolf would be more gratifying than being a filthy vampire. What we need is a game like Soul Reaver with a dead werewolf hunting down whatever. Just don't use Castlevania 64's engine!

Tim
tim942@home.com

You know, we never thought about this, but you're right. Why the bias against Wolfmans? Nobody seems to have any problem with Draculas, or Frankensteins, or even Creature from the Black Lagoons—what gives? After some exhaustive research (one interoffice phone call) the only examples we could come up with of our furry friends in gaming are some Castlevania appearances, Altered Beast and Features Editor Crispin Boyer's Monster Parties. Hmm. Chalk it up to yet another conspiracy concocted by the CIA, or the FBI or the Free Masons.

SHORTS

Direct, to the point, here they are. This month's shorts:

Just wanted you people to know the picture on page 43 of *EGM* #144 really freaked me out. Please, never do that again.

hopkins66@hotmail.com

Why so hostile? The man enjoys his pizza, what's wrong with that?



In last month's Final Word section I noticed that Shoe grew himself a nice little caterpillar on his upper lip. The mustache makes him look like a porn star. He's not into that "stuff" is he?

Poopzilla@aol.com

Hey, get off our editor in chief's tip. We think he looks rad with a 'tache, he's all Sabotage and stuff. As for his involvement in porn—no comment.

Why can't you say pork on the PSO server? Is it some kind of bad word in another country? If so, then PORK YOU PSO, YOU PORKING PORKITY PORK.

ape@evilarcade.com

Ouch. We're sure the top brass at Sega are going to sit up and take notice to that kind of scathing indictment, ape.

Question of the Moment

Game Boy Advance: Portable Bliss or Resounding Miss?

The first wave of dominators from the Nintendo Empire has come to take over. All hail Nintendo, for they are supreme.

aaronxb@earthlink.net

The power of the Super Nintendo but 1/10 the size. Perfect.

Fruityfruitgcn@aol.com

I don't really care about the Game Boy Advance. I got the PS2 and that is all I need.

myear1@hotmail.com

It's Nintendo and it's a handheld system; what do you think?

matt_e@saber.net

Two words: Virtua Hamster.

jamminsthebest@hotmail.com

The F-Zero'n Game Boy Advance has F-zero'd so many F-Zeros that it will F-Zero all those F-Zeros that are left to F-Zero.

valorum152@yahoo.com

I'm not really impressed by the GBA. It's just like the GBC as far as I'm concerned, only 30 bucks more. I'm happy with my GBC!

perfectdark121@hotmail.com

Game Boy Advance is gonna be awesome. I'm getting Tony Hawk 2 for sure, and I hope Crazy Taxi comes to GBA. That would be awesome.

Rocky32189@aol.com

I think that the Game Boy Color was a good thing because going from boring grey/black/white or yellow is a big step. As for me, more durability and a little better graphics are not enough—I'll wait for back lighting.

mad_hatter_1234@yahoo.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

After reading our E3 feature (page 46), what are your thoughts on the upcoming system wars?

Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading: **S-Wars**

endorphins

missing eyeball

tombstone

splinters

pedal bite

shoegoo

temper tantrum

no-footed ninja kick

flesh wing

dirt

hesh-dog mute-to-fakie

bro

blue ice

tweaked

champagne powder

X Games
ESPN ESPN2
begins August 18 on ABC

sick

tightie brownies

ramp pizza

acid drop

Crippler 720

wad

chaffing

scrambled eggs

sacrificial offering

nerves

bomb hole

stinky

fear

loser

butt-munch

manky

chalk

mud-ectomy

blisters

speed bump

gonzo

big air

brain bucket

berries

corn dog

whipper

death wobbles

choke

aspirin

calluses

fun box

gromms

*!#!

munge

entrails

base

reconstructive surgery

attitude

Kick flip

cone monster

corn

three nuts

adrenaline

bolt-on

Ty pac

creepers

gold

LUNCH TRAY

tats

chicken head

vertigo

winner

eggplant

belay bob

front side 540

bugs

guardian angel

scab

nosepickium

black ice

bacon

potato chip

EXPN.com

bruise

obstacle

death cookies

trail mix

kentucky waterfall

Goofy-foot

testosterone

hot dog

dirt

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vultures

pirelliology

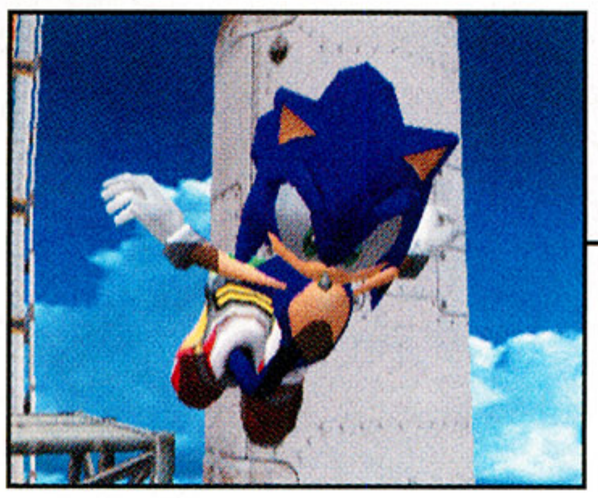
cloon

road rash

Switch frontside noseslide

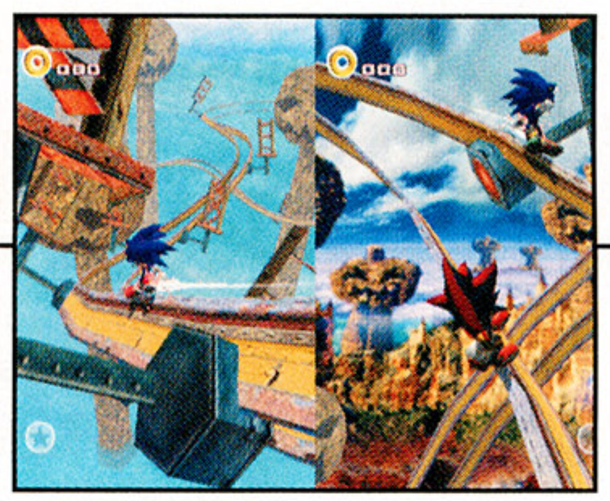


GOOD HEDGEHOG.









SEGA.COM/SONICADV2

Play as Sonic and board, swing and grind to save the world.

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Please note: We reserve the right to edit any correspondence for space purposes. If you don't want your name, city/state or e-mail address printed, tell us so (but please include your phone number and mailing address for Letter of the Month consideration).
Also note: although we can only respond to a few letters each month, we read and appreciate (most) all of them. So keep 'em coming, eventually you might see your handy work turn up here!



LETTERS

Girl Gamer Swoons For Snake

Dearest *Electronic Gaming Monthly*... uh...people, I'm 19 years old, I'm a girl, and I'm a gamer. Over the weekend, I purchased the excellent Metal Gear Solid, and have successfully beaten it (thanks to my best friend, Mr. GameShark).



I won't beat around the bush any longer—I AM IN LOVE WITH SOLID SNAKE. Head-over-heals, can't eat, can't sleep, in love with him. I don't know what it is. His gruff voice, his stylish clothes, his barely noticeable five o' clock shadow, his less-than-subtle similarities to Wolverine (who I am also in love with), his rugged good looks, his go-get-'em attitude (with a great body to boot)...who can decide?

Help me, *EGM*. You guys have connections. Maybe you can hook us up? Convince Snake that Meryl is actually a man? Perhaps you could start being a little nicer to Konami, if ya know what I mean. Hmm? HMM?!

Susan Kidman
roguemcallister@hotmail.com

Ya, he's pretty cool. You forgot to mention his flowing mullet though. Still, it's a nice change of pace to hear a female gushing over an animated character. But see, that's just it. Hate to break it to you, but he's animated—he's not real. So we can't "hook you up." Closest we can come is introducing you to the guy who restocks our vending machine. He's a little older than Snake, a little paunchier, but he has a huge set of keys on one of those retractable wheel things and a gruff voice. Is that close enough? Get back to us.

"I won't beat around the bush any longer—I AM IN LOVE WITH SOLID SNAKE. Head-over-heals, can't eat, can't sleep, in love with him. I don't know what it is."

Want A Metal Gear Anthology Disk?

Do you guys know if Konami has expressed any interest in releasing a Metal Gear Anthology Disk, complete with old-school and revamped graphics? (I may be asking too much for the revamped versions.) I would pay $60-80 for it, and I'm sure the legion of Metal Gear fans would as well.

TonePro@aol.com

We haven't heard anything, but it would definitely sell more than Gradius III and IV did, that's for sure. They could even include the sequel for the (Japan-only) MSX system that never made it to America. Quick, everyone, start mailing, e-mailing, calling, and generally bugging the crap out of Konami for it, *right now*!

What's Up With Sega Sports?

Is Sega developing a golf game (maybe something like Virtua Tennis but with golf)? Are they going to make a non-arcade soccer game? I mean a realistic soccer sim like their 2K sports franchises with the FIFA and MLS licenses. Lastly, is Sega developing an NCAA basketball game? I know they are doing an NCAA football game.

loco2042@yahoo.com

Our sources say there is no golf game in the works and no "non-arcade" soccer games—just another arcadey Virtua Striker for GameCube. No NCAA Basketball game either, although we're told it'll be considered if college football does well.

Oops.

It's *still* hard for us to believe, but we do occasionally make a mistake. Here's one from last month: We incorrectly listed the developer of Rayman Advance as Jester—it should have read Digital Eclipse.

LETTER ART

WINNER Chris Kau
Canadensis, PA



Congratulations! Your prize is on the way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation. It features rapid-fire controls for all buttons and slow motion for those intense moments.



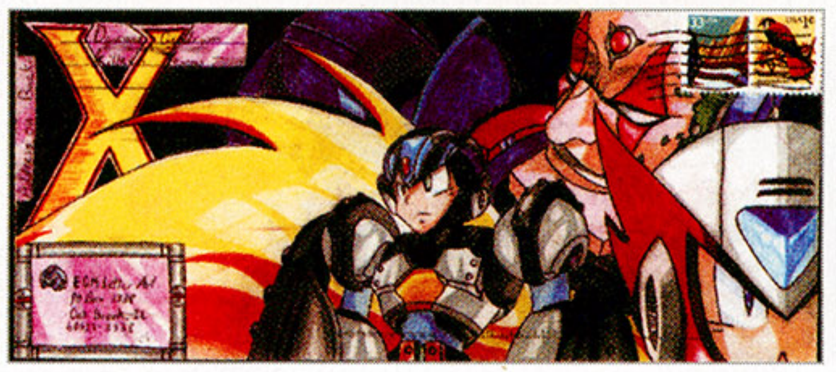
Put your creative skills to the test by decking out a #10 envelope (the long business type) with your own unique touch. Send your letter art to:

EGM Letter Art
PO Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL
60522-3338

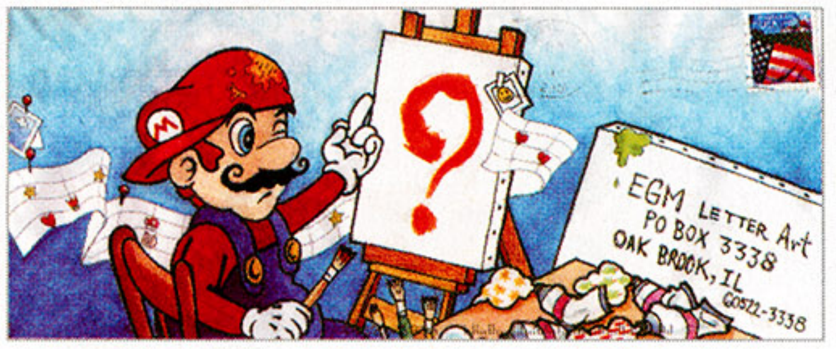
(All entries become the property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be returned!)

Close, but no controller

Bad luck to these guys... better luck next time. Feel free to e-mail us artwork as well.



Dwayne Goodrum
Killeen , TX



Nathaniel Avery
Holmen, WI

bubbly



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obey your thirst

By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@ziffdavis.com
& Jonathan Dudlak jonathan_dudlak@ziffdavis.com

Let the Games Begin

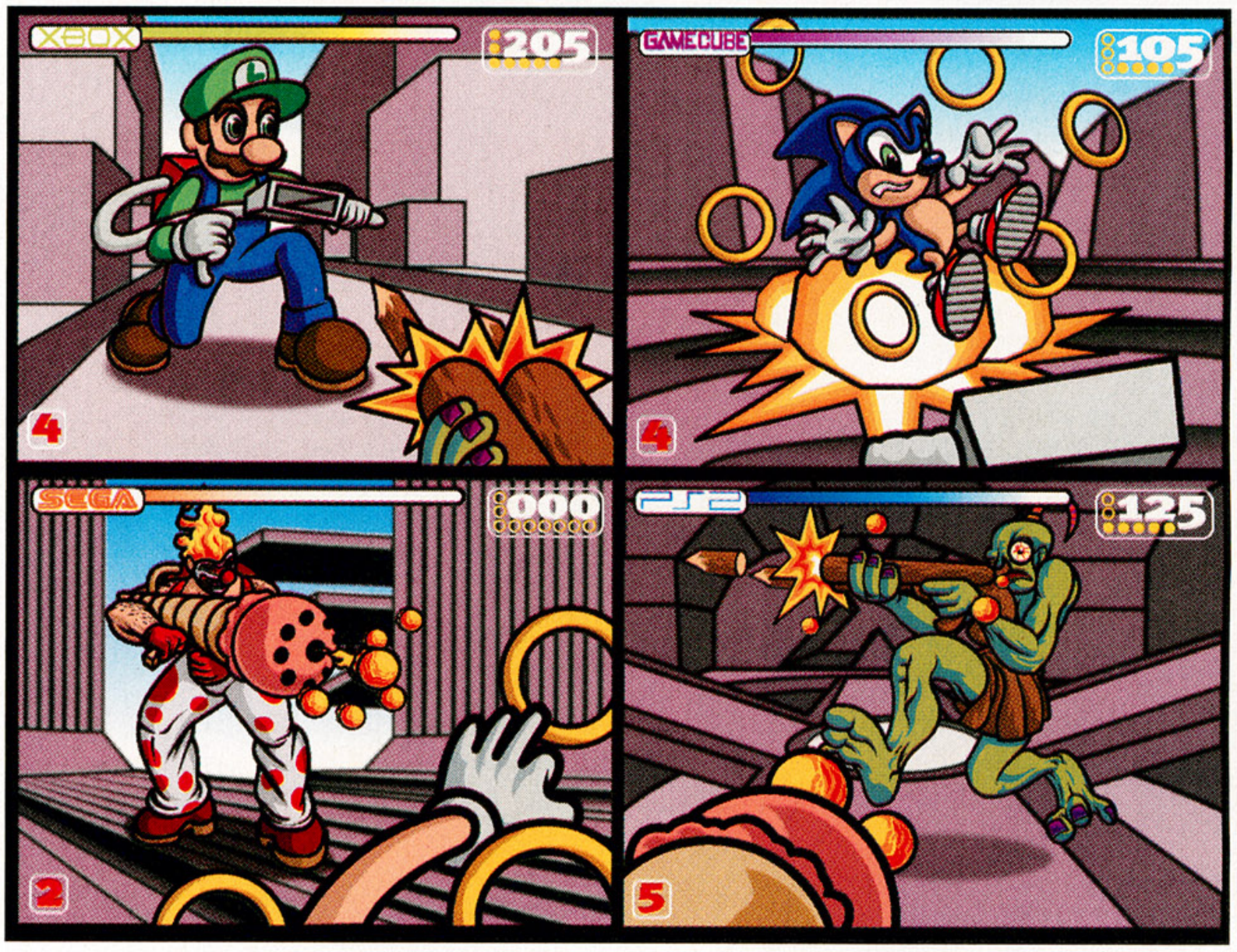
Competition heats up as Xbox and GameCube plan to hit retail three days apart from each other

If you're planning on getting both a GameCube and Xbox at launch, here's your warning: Start saving those pennies now. Microsoft and Nintendo made their launch plans official the day before the doors opened for the 2001 Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles (see our feature this issue).

Microsoft took the first shot. At an early morning press conference, Microsoft's Chief Xbox Officer Robbie Bach told the crowd of barely awake journalists that Xbox would be a reality on Nov. 8 at a suggested retail price of $299.99.

At Nintendo's press conference later in the morning (when everyone was a little more coherent), the company threw a live grenade at their Redmond neighbors. The Big N announced that GameCube would be released in the U.S. on Nov. 5. The price was announced a week later in Japan—$199.99 for the U.S. market, and 25,000 yen for Japan (about $204).

This is the first time that two video game systems have launched in the U.S. this close to each other. Then there's PlayStation 2, which will be replenishing its ammo stock with second-generation games and online gaming (see story on the next page) just as developers are getting to the meat of the new systems. And don't forget Dreamcast, a system that will take its last gasps this year, with a few great titles still on the slate before Sega turns into just a third party publisher. One thing is certain: this is going to be an exciting year.



The Players	XBOX	GAMECUBE	PS2	Dreamcast
Launch Date:	Nov. 8, 2001	Nov. 5, 2001	Oct. 26, 2000	Sept. 9, 1999
Launch Price:	$299.99	$199.99	$299.99	$199.99
# of Launch Games:	15-20	6	29	18
Online Capable:	Built-in Ethernet port; No online gaming 'til 2002	Not built-in; modem and broadband peripherals TBA	With optional Network Adapter (Nov. 2001)	Yes, at launch; Online gaming with SegaNet in Aug. 2000
Turn-Ons:	Computer-savvy guys with big hands, deep pockets, and the understanding that a console needs its space.	Guys who aren't intimidated by a taller console, enjoy visiting with old friends, and will participate in four-ways.	Gamers who appreciate a well-bred console and are ready to jump right into a commitment.	Gamers with a sense of humor, who communicate well—even over long distances, and gamers who appreciate a cheap date.
Turn-Offs:	Cheapskates, Mac users, and prejudiced gamers who can't look past a name.	Gamers who watch a lot of DVD movies or value good looks over personality.	Impatient "players" who are always looking for a new and better relationship.	Gamers who are afraid to get involved with an older console for fear it has nothing to offer.

Sony Takes PS2 Online

Network Adapter, Hard Drive Announced at E3

Sony's E3 press conference was so long, it felt like the company was filibustering to keep the attendees' minds from wandering off to thoughts of Nintendo or Microsoft. Buried within the two plus hours of PR speak from software publishers and developers, at least, was a little nugget of information about Sony's online strategy (finally!).

SCEA President and COO Kaz Hirai unveiled a prototype of the PS2 network adapter, which will allow both broadband and 56k narrowband (phone line, for you laypersons) users to go online to play games, download levels or trade information. The unit plugs into the back of your PS2, you know, where that huge gaping hole was left for the...40 gigabyte hard drive!? Remember that? Well, it's on the way alongside the network adapter in November—hey, you have to store your downloaded data somewhere! The adapter will debut at $39.95, but Sony has yet to announce a price for the hard drive.

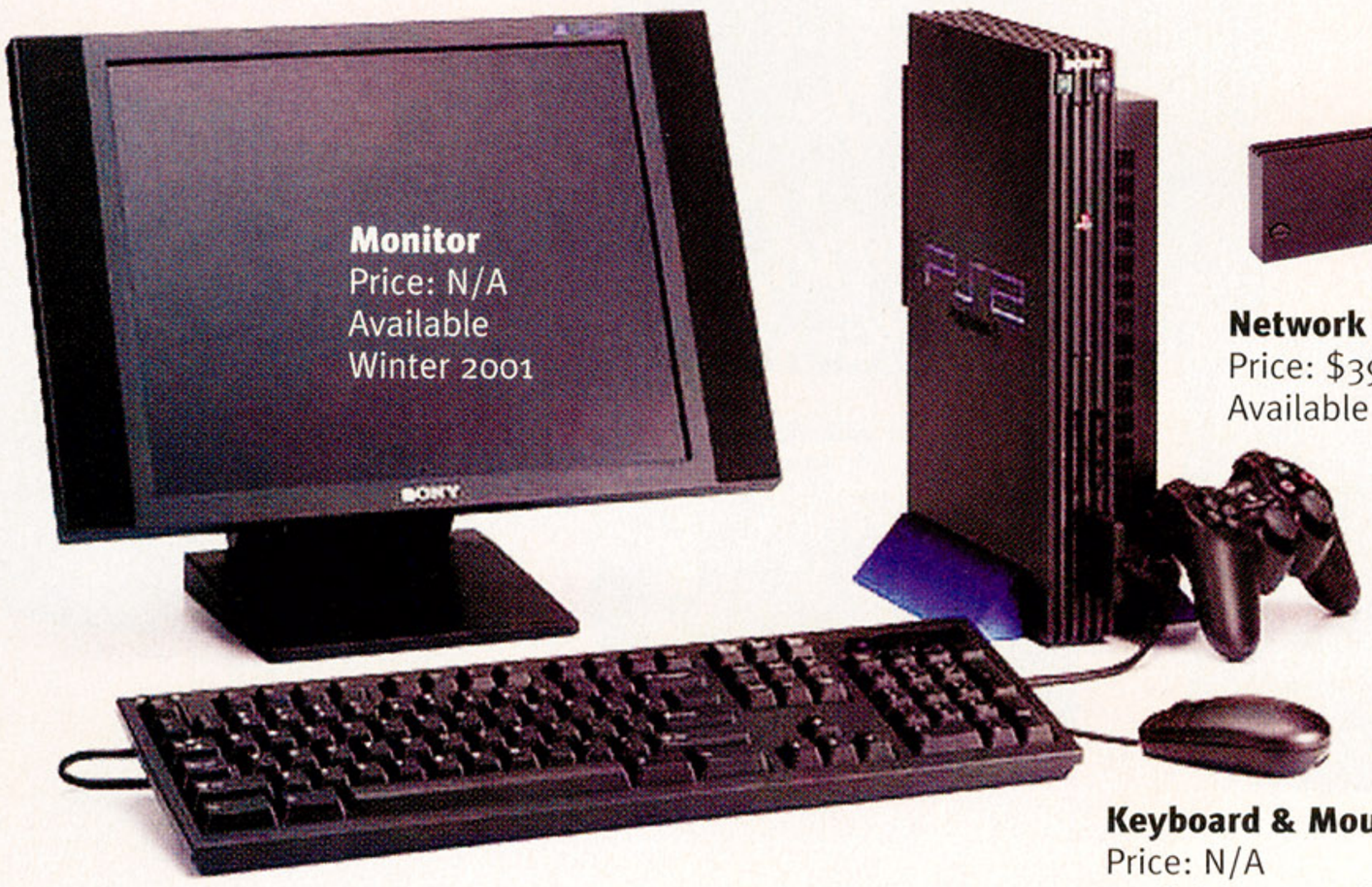
To help the new hardware get off on the right foot, Sony has made some new friends in the online realm. The company announced alliances, with AOL (imagine Web browsing, e-mailing, and chatting with friends on your PS2), RealNetworks (makers of RealPlayer—why not have the PS2 download A/V clips from the Web?), Cisco Systems (IP software...you know, tech stuff), and Macromedia (makers of Flash, which enhances Web sites with animation and sound). Now some of you may be envisioning persistent busy signals and low-quality compressed video chugging through your pipeline, but let's wait and see before we make snap judgments, shall we? To complete the transformation from game console to computer, Sony will market a VGA/NTSC/PAL LCD monitor, keyboard and mouse. What's next, word processing software? The Sony computer kit includes everything you see here, each sold separately by late 2001/early 2002.

Anatomy of a Computer Entertainment System

Go go gadget PlayStation! Later this year, Sony will introduce a host of peripherals for your PS2 that will transform the machine into a lean, mean, Internet-surfing machine. Here's the rundown:



Hard Drive
Price: TBD
Available November



Monitor
Price: N/A
Available Winter 2001

Network Adapter
Price: $39.99
Available November

Keyboard & Mouse
Price: N/A
Available November



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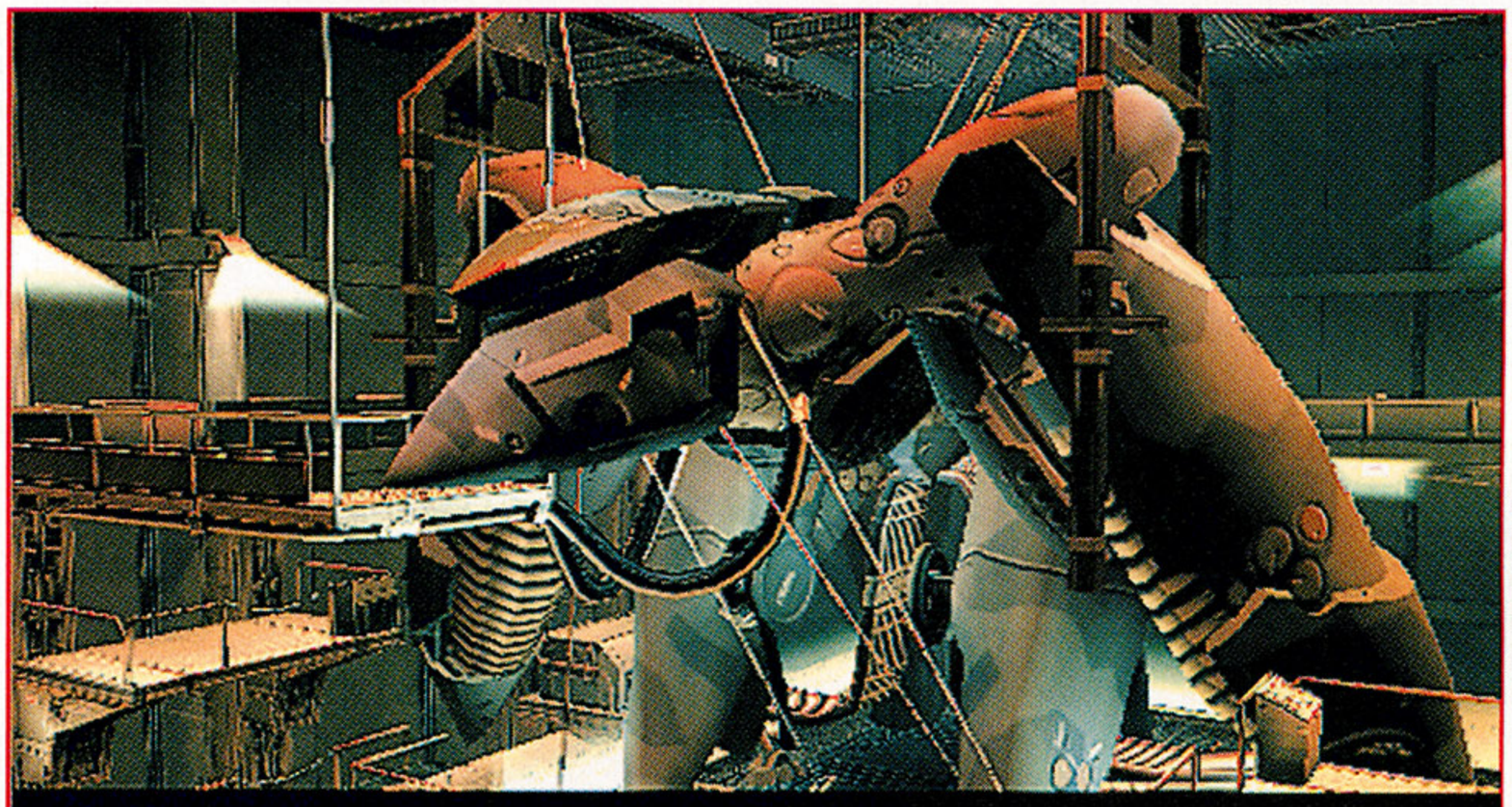
PRESS START

METAL GEAR SOLID 2 WATCH ?

Our main feature this month may give you the experience of being at this year's E3, but the one thing it can't do is give you the feeling of seeing the new Metal Gear Solid 2 trailer Konami unveiled at the show. Despite the already deafening year-long MGS2 hype, the almost 10 minutes of new footage had people talking. If you have a computer, go watch it—now—at the MGS2 page on www.konami.com. But come back, because whether you've seen the trailer or not, over the next four pages we've got a full breakdown, including quotes from our interview with MGS2 creator and director Hideo Kojima, plus new info we learned about the game and details you might have missed. Oh, and we finally have a solid release date for the U.S. MGS2: Nov. 13. Mark your calendars (man, that's gonna be one hell of a month!) and join our attempt to give meaning to our lives until then.



Here's the big box of bolts at the center of this whole mess, Metal Gear Ray, getting its tires rotated and wiper fluid topped off before heading out to threaten world peace.

THE CHARACTERS:

(in case you don't already know)

Solid Snake:

The stealthy, chain-smoking, gravelly-voiced special agent hero you play as.



Metal Gear Rex:

Super weapon you stopped from destroying the world in the first Metal Gear Solid.



Metal Gear Ray:

New and improved super-weapon on test in MGS2, it might just make all the older Rex models obsolete.



Ocelot:

Boss from the last game, he survived (minus his right hand) and sold plans for Metal Gear Rex on the black market to any country with enough money. Bastard.



Gurlukovich:

Russian who was part of the plot to steal Rex, he's back with Ocelot to nab Ray.



Liquid Snake:

Your genetically engineered brother who led the mission to steal Metal Gear Rex in the last game. You stopped him and left him for dead. Or so you thought.



Commander:

Our name for the U.S. military leader trying to protect Metal Gear Ray. Key word: *trying*.



Fortune:

New boss lady with a really big gun.



Count Chopula:

All we can say is see scene 3. And yes, we made that name up.



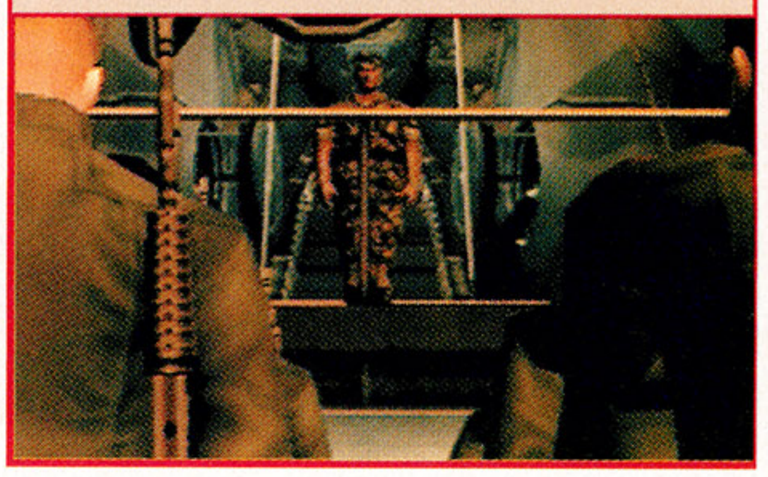
Ninja:

Former friend of Snake's, then enemy, then friend again. Who knows which he is now. He's part man, part machine, but all psychotic ninja rage.



SCENE 1: THE SETUP

The trailer begins, like any trailer ought to really, by filling us in on the backstory. Since it's a big long speech from the **Commander**, and most of the information is contained in the first MGS2 trailer and playable demo, allow us to summarize: There are some bad men in the U.S. government "seeking to control national affairs for [their] own purposes." Since everybody and their next-door neighbor has a **Metal Gear Rex** now thanks to **Ocelot**, **Metal Gear Ray** becomes the new hope. The commander tells his troops the future of the country rests with them. With Ray's help, they will flush out and rid the country of these corrupting forces. That is, unless a group of terrorists can trick them and steal the giant weapon using an old high-school football ruse that wouldn't fool a dog with short-attention span disorder. But the odds of that happening are...well...read on.



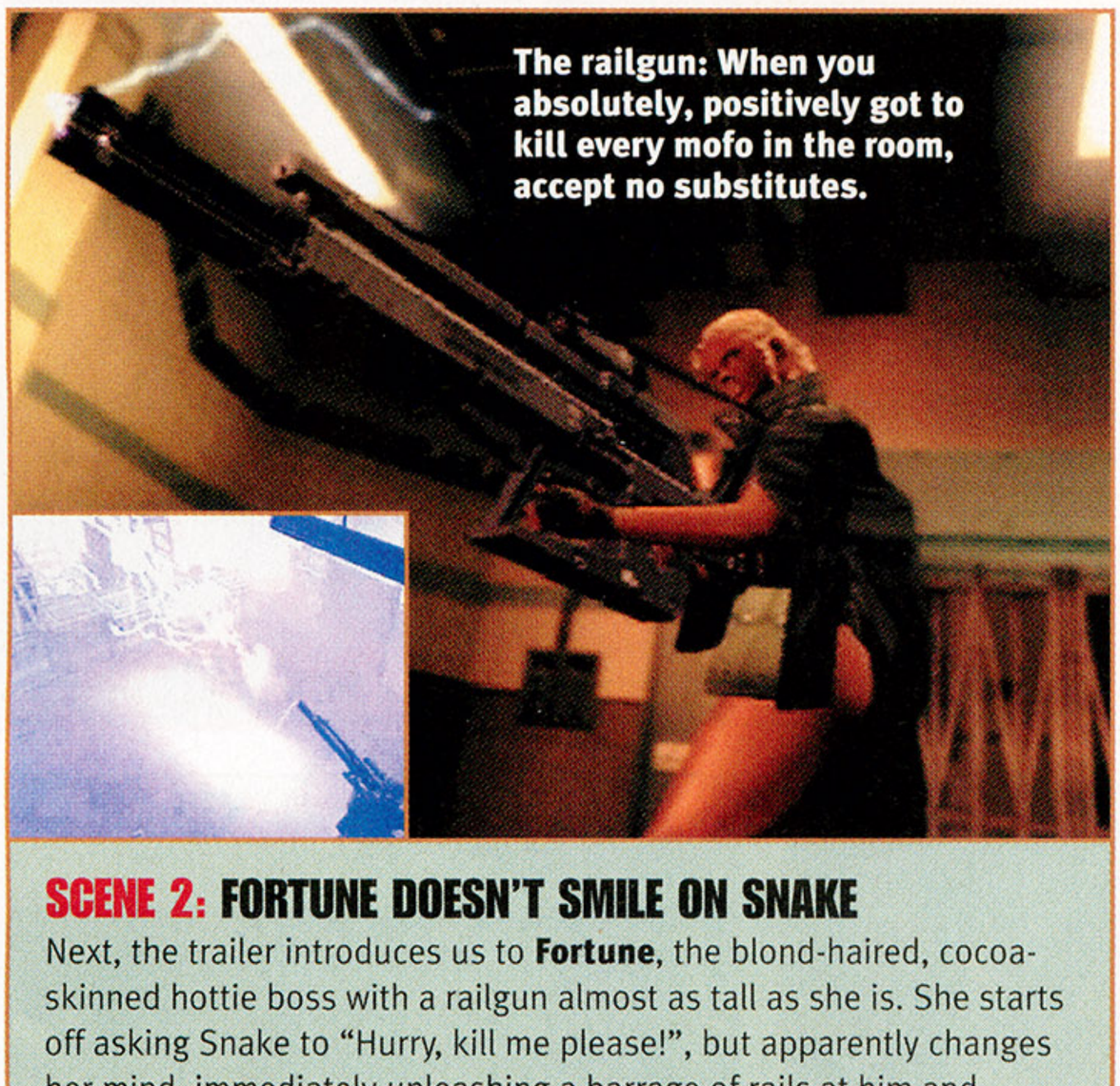
What about Metal Gear Solid X?

"Let us just say this before we start: Metal Gear Solid 2 on the Xbox—no comment."

-Scott Dolph, translator for Mr. Kojima, setting some ground rules before our interview



METAL GEAR SOLID 2 WATCH

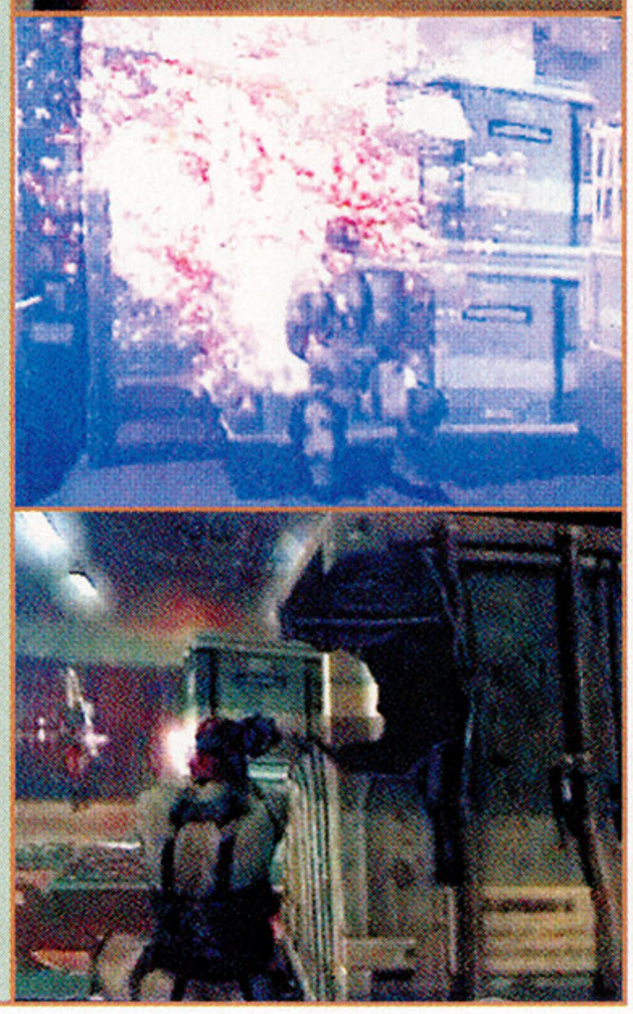


The railgun: When you absolutely, positively got to kill every mofo in the room, accept no substitutes.

SCENE 2: FORTUNE DOESN'T SMILE ON SNAKE

Next, the trailer introduces us to **Fortune**, the blond-haired, cocoa-skinned hottie boss with a railgun almost as tall as she is. She starts off asking Snake to "Hurry, kill me please!", but apparently changes her mind, immediately unleashing a barrage of rails at him and utilizing a very non-suicide-friendly shield that causes all of Snake's bullets to curve away. Melting, deforming or exploding anything in its path in real time (including crates, barrels, the ceiling and even a forklift), Fortune's railgun inevitably brings the phrase "hot knife through butter" to mind. After she shows off the incredible graphical and programming wizardry of Kojima and company by blasting just about everything in the entire room, the scene fades out with crates still burning, dirt and debris falling from the ceiling, and the swinging overhead lights blinking on and off. Kick freaking ass. Kojima told us this scene was handled by the same programmer responsible for the playable MGS2 demo's wet bar and cargo storage room (with all the fruit and bottles you could blow apart). "This guy is like Mr. destructible environments," says Kojima. He also told us that you will face Fortune and her railgun again elsewhere in the game, but Snake won't ever be able to use the super hole-puncher himself. Damn.





SCENE 3: CUE COUNT CHOPULA

A group of soldiers sprays bullets throughout this hallway in a panic, frantically trying to hit an invisible enemy who is slicing them to pieces one by one. Finally, the lonely last soldier standing gets a good look at his assailant—the nameless goth-type fellow you see here (who we'll call **Count Chopula** for hopefully obvious reasons). The soldier tries one last time to shoot him as he approaches, but the Count pulls a tornado-like spin move that deflects all the bullets and puts him behind the soldier, where he proceeds to custom tailor the waist, shoulder and neck-lines of the soldier's uniform while he's still wearing it. Count Chopula bathes in a fountainous spray of blood as the scene fades. Yikes. Kojima has said the final version won't be so graphic (in fact, the trailer on Konami's Web site has hardly any blood at all), and as much as we are against any kind of censorship, we fully understand why. In any case, this is where you realize—bloodless or not (a blood-free option is planned for the final game)—MGS2 is likely getting a "Mature" ESRB rating.



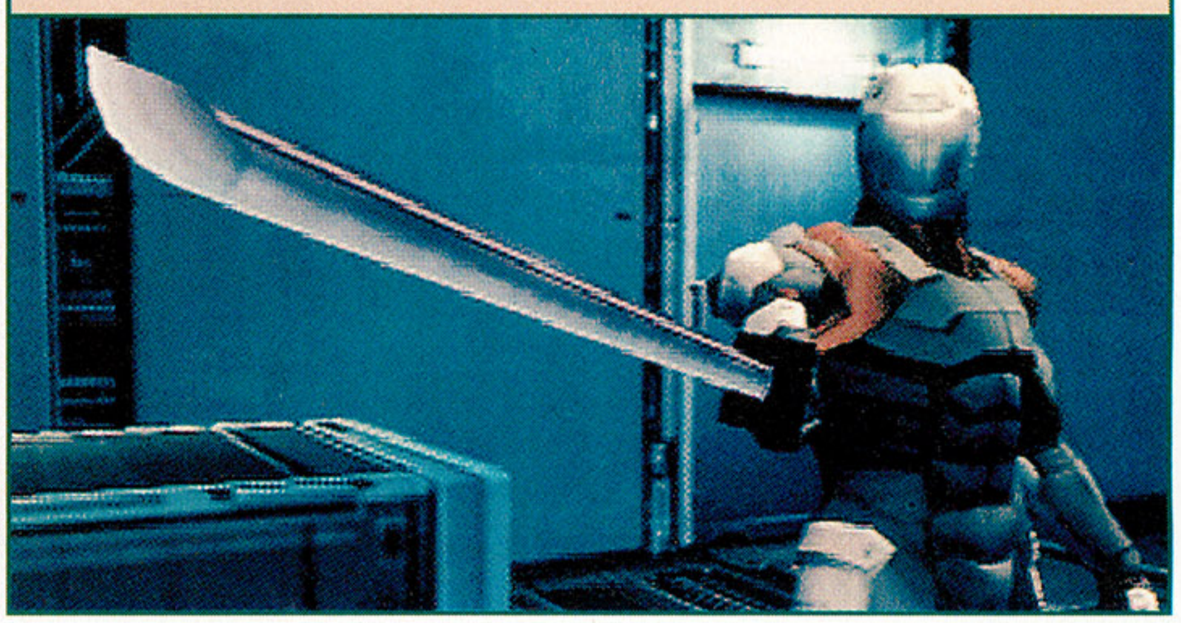
"I vant to suck your blud."



SCENE 3.5: ENTER THE NINJA



Meet the only guards with worse luck than those the **Count** just took care of (note to guards: Stay the hell out of hallways). This gruesome footage is spliced in with the Count's in the trailer, but the two scenes are actually of different hallways and aren't related to each other at all. We've seen *this* kind of blood-smeared Manson family interior decorating before, in the last MGS, and it looks too much like the **Ninja**'s handiwork to ignore. But wasn't he crushed by **Metal Gear Rex** in MGS1? The katana-wielding wonder himself pops up toward the end of the trailer, but answers Snake's very fair question about who the hell he is by coyly replying, "I'm like you—I have no name."



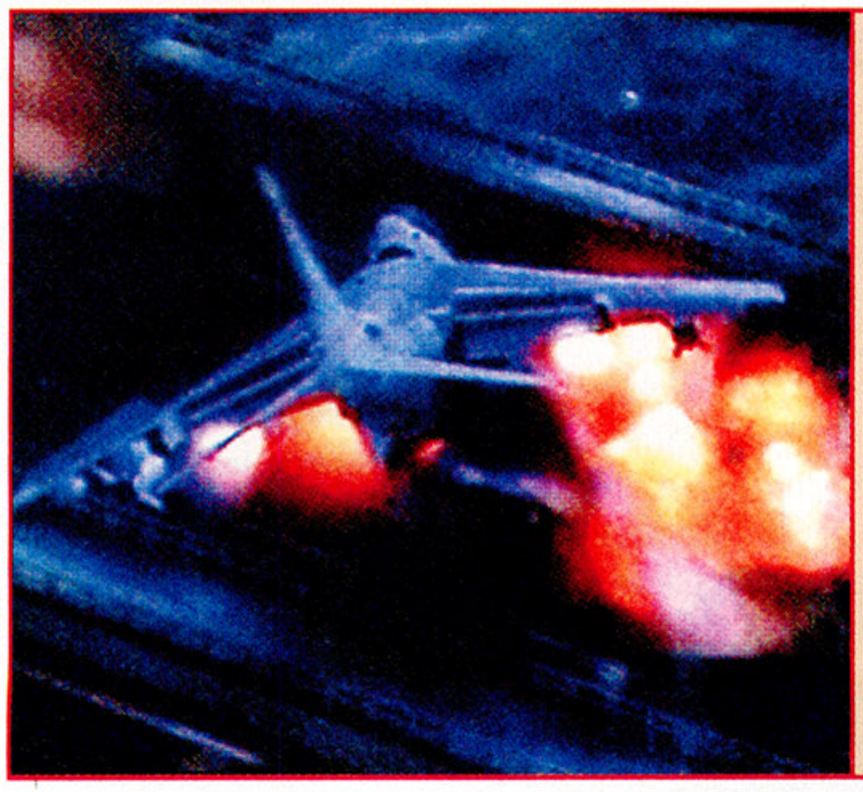
PRESS START

Man, we'd hate to see what 50 percent looks like.

[Metal Gear Solid 2] is definitely going in the right direction, but when we started planning the game, way before we got the tools for the PS2, we had all these ideas we wanted to implement. What we were able to realize in this game is only about 20 percent of what we initially came up with.

–Hideo Kojima

METAL GEAR SOLID 2 WATCH



SCENE 4: THINGS GET HARRIER

Unlike other bosses, the harrier doesn't waste time with small talk about its childhood or its current problems in life; instead it launches about five dozen missiles at the bridge Solid Snake happens to be standing on. He understandably tries his best to run, roll, weave and generally dodge them, bringing to mind the rooftop battle with **Liquid Snake**'s helicopter in the last game. The big question is who is piloting the flying deathmobile this time? Everything from the air pumping through the Harrier's jets, to the missile trails, to the blossoming explosions just looks fantastic.





1: Whaszup!



2: Ha! We have you!

SCENE 5: THE SHOWDOWN

With spurs a'chingin', **Ocelot** struts into the same cargo hold housing **Metal Gear Ray** where we saw the **Commander** talking to his troops before. Defenseless and alone, yet sarcastically clapping his hands (yes, he has a right hand again, more on that later) at the Commander's speech, Ocelot calls him a liar, and tells him what a nice machine Metal Gear Ray is. The Commander asks Ocelot if he's planning on stealing it. "Steal? No, no, I'm taking it *back*," he says. Enraged by the size of Ocelot's balls, the Marines all crowd around the commander and aim their weapons at the gutsy Russian. Big mistake. **Gurlukovich** suddenly appears behind the Commander and takes him hostage, holding a gun to his head while terrorist soldiers repel down ropes around them. The Commander and his troops just fell for the oldest trick in the book. Next, when Snake suddenly appears and yells Ocelot's name, the Ruskie cowboy's right hand (which Kojima later explained is actually **Liquid Snake**'s hand grafted on) goes haywire, causing poor Ocelot to double over in pain. He regains himself and removes his glove to reveal a normal-looking forearm and hand (although it does have a barcode on it), then it's almost as if Ocelot has been possessed by Liquid—he calls Solid Snake "brother."



3: Heh ha no! It is *we* who have *you*!

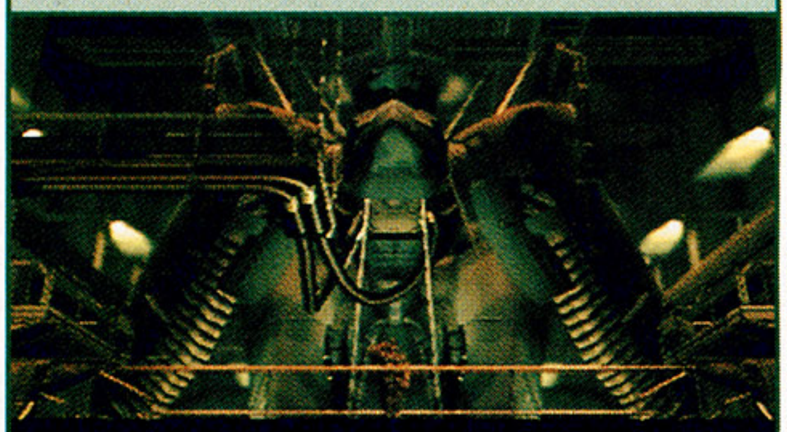


4: Wait, who's got who now?



5: Ow! Arm...tingling...Solid Snake?

SCENE 6: WE'RE GONNA NEED A BIGGER BOAT



Enough talk, now Ray smash!

Tired of sitting around watching the cinema scenes unfold, **Metal Gear Ray** finally wakes up (we're given no idea who's behind the wheel). After breaking loose of its moorings, Ray crushes a few Marine soldiers the way most people casually step on ants. Then it goes all-out berserk, Godzilla-style: thrashing its giant tail around, spewing deadly lasers out of its "mouth," even emitting a very un-mechanical weapon-like roar of glee. After Ray's temper tantrum in the ship's cargo hold, it's no surprise Snake is wading through neck-high water later.

Cont. on page 30



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PRESS START

GameCube Metal Gear?

When I pick hardware to do a game, I don't look at the specs of the machine. I don't really care about that stuff. I don't care about how good the system is, because all consoles right now are at about the same level of power. I look at the audience that it has. Releasing a Metal Gear game on a Nintendo console would be ridiculous. I don't know about GameCube, but [their] machines [until now] have been for younger kids.

—Hideo Kojima

METAL GEAR SOLID 2 WATCH

Cont. from page 28

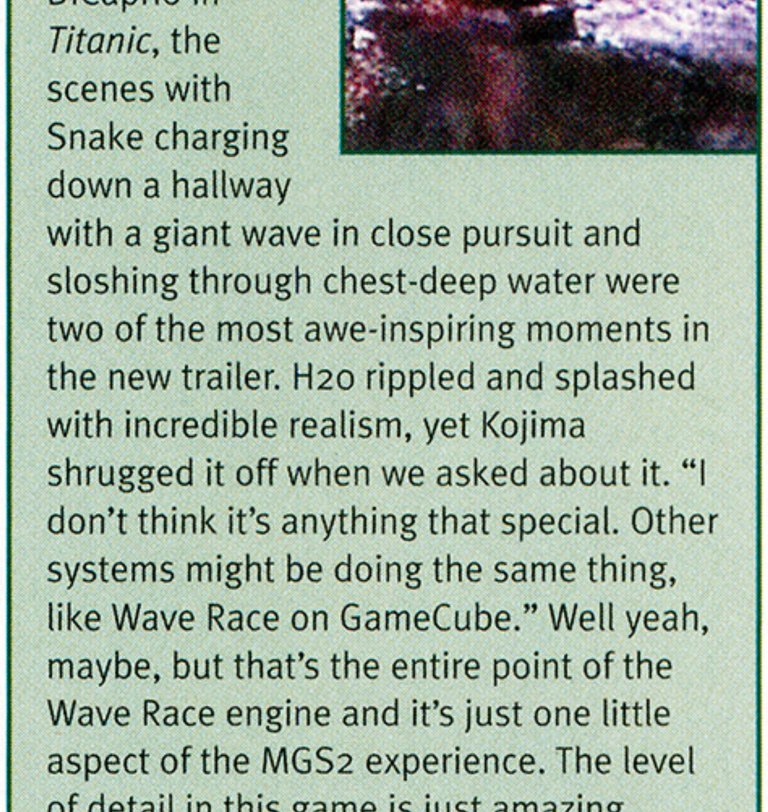
ODDS & ENDS



WATER SNAKE



Even though they reminded us a bit too much of DiCaprio in *Titanic*, the scenes with Snake charging down a hallway with a giant wave in close pursuit and sloshing through chest-deep water were two of the most awe-inspiring moments in the new trailer. H2O rippled and splashed with incredible realism, yet Kojima shrugged it off when we asked about it. "I don't think it's anything that special. Other systems might be doing the same thing, like Wave Race on GameCube." Well yeah, maybe, but that's the entire point of the Wave Race engine and it's just one little aspect of the MGS2 experience. The level of detail in this game is just amazing.



ONLY THE SHADOW KNOWS

That shadow Snake sneaks up on during a quick throwaway scene near the start of the trailer—is it... could it be...Vulcan Raven? It certainly looks like the profile the giant machine gun- toting, bird-loving bigman boss would cast. But you left him for dead after shooting 20 missiles up his rear, to be pecked apart by his raven brethren in the last MGS. Is it really him? Or perhaps a clone? Or maybe we are just reading entirely too much into this? Kojima chuckled when we asked him. "That's a secret," he told us. "We'll leave it up to your imagination. We don't want to spoil anything."





A FEW GOOD MEN

From their brief appearance in the new trailer, these guys don't seem like your typical "radio for help, arms up in the air, peeing in their pants anytime you point a gun at them" terrorists. Someone spent a little more on their uniforms, and it looks like they're worth it (the sword-wielding one below even deflects Snake's bullets with his blade). The background where you fight them looks like it may be a location off the ship...





Where is this tunnel? Has Snake finally gotten off the tanker transporting Ray?

NEW YORK CITY? (GET A ROPE.)

When we asked Kojima how much of the game will take place off the tanker, he replied, "It's a secret." But we've seen the harrier fight on a bridge, and another quick clip shows Snake walking down this tunnel, which doesn't look like it belongs in a boat. Kojima did mention that, as part of their research, his team visited a nuclear power facility...hmm...

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

Nothing for awhile. As of E3, Mr. Kojima and his team are "submerging," refusing to grant any interviews or new screenshots so they can concentrate on getting MGS2 finished. The next time we might see anything significant is the fall Tokyo Game Show in early October, but even that is still up in the air. When we asked Mr. Kojima for a few final words for his fans, he had this to say, "As of E3, we're going to submerge. But submerging is not sinking. We're going to keep moving forward underwater. So until we resurface and the game comes out, I hope you keep imagining your own MGS2 in your minds with what we've provided, and talk to your friends about it." Check back for the MGS2 Watch next month, and every month until the game's Nov. 13 release date, where we will do just that. As always, send us all of your questions and comments at egm@ziffdavis.com, subject "MGS2WATCH."

–Mark MacDonald

SIZE REALLY DOES MATTER.

ROB DYRDEK DOING A FRONTSIDE 50-50 DOWN A HUGE 20 STAIR HANDRAIL.

PHOTO CARL HYNDMAN.

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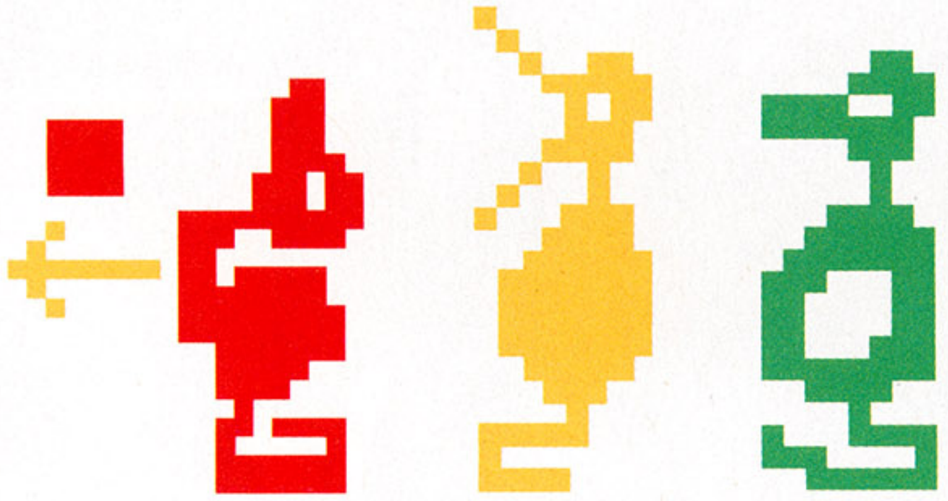


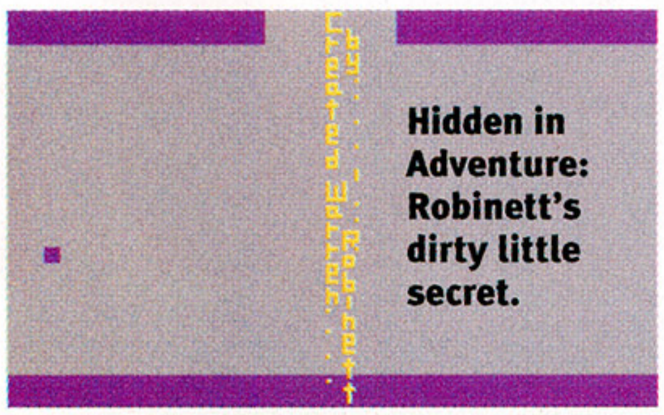
Where Are They Now?

Warren "Adventure" Robinett

Gamefather of the Easter Egg

Single-handedly creating one of the first action-adventure games *and* the first hidden surprise was a real Adventure for one ex-Atari programmer. We ask the man about Easter Eggs, miniscule amounts of ROM and a very special Atari club.

Inspired by coin-op pioneer Ed Logg's first love—a text adventure with the public-domain name Adventure—programmer Warren Robinett spent the majority of 1978 and '79 crafting an Atari 2600 action-adventure title (an early Zelda, if you will) that took the same name, left the plot, and added graphics to the mix. His boss at Atari thought he was crazy, but that was only one of the hurdles Robinett faced. "We only had 4 kilobytes of ROM available in the video game," he tells us, "whereas the text adventure ran on a mainframe with hundreds of kilobytes available." Robinett served as the sole designer, programmer, artist, sound designer and tester. "It may be hard to believe nowadays, but that's the way things were back then. And yes, I wasn't that great of an artist—my dragons looked like ducks."



Hidden in Adventure: Robinett's dirty little secret.

Against all odds, Robinett finished the game, and you readers with Adventure experience know full well that the quest itself was epic—"to retrieve the Holy Grail and bring it back to the castle," Robinett says, "but Atari's marketing department sanitized 'Holy Grail' into 'Enchanted Chalice.'" More importantly, this was the first game where the player could pick up objects and interact with them. "For this, I used collision between [your character] and an object to mean 'pick up,'" he explains, adding that the joystick's single fire button was used to drop the object. "There needed to be some way that objects could interact. I again used 'overlap' to trigger actions—touching the sword to the dragon killed it." Add a quartet of mazes, relentless dragons and a bat "as a confusion factor to spice things up," and you have the first stab at the action RPG.



But that's not the full story. Miffed at Atari's less-than-star treatment of its programmers, Robinett also managed to squeeze in what he calls a "devious, insubordinate and self-promoting" secret, in honor of "the secret messages hidden in Beatles records in the late '60s." But instead of playing the game backward to hear the message, this surprise was hidden in the gameplay. "There was a one-pixel object—the smallest possible dot—that was the same color gray as the background," Robinett says. "It was hidden in a little chamber surrounded by walls. You couldn't see it until you ran into it. If you took this object around throughout the game world, you might eventually discover that it let you go through one of the side walls near the Yellow Castle into the secret room that contained my signature." Thus, he invented the first game secret.



But would Atari approve of a hidden room with Robinett's John Hancock? He circumvented that problem by not revealing his secret to anyone. Consider it payback for the company's domineering attitude of the time. "Atari had a monopoly and did not choose to give the game designers credit on the published games," Robinett explains. "We were anonymous. We also got no royalties, just a salary—mine was $22,000 a year.



So creating the secret room with my signature in it was a way for me to sign my work. And hey, if I was going to do it, why not fill in the screen with my name in flashing colors?" His hidden addition went unnoticed for over a year. "Atari manufactured several hundred thousand Adventure cartridges, sent them to stores all over the world, and sure enough, some kids here and there did discover the secret room."

By mid-1980, when Atari caught wind of Robinett's stunt, he had already left the company. "I figured they would expunge the secret when they found out," he says, "but the manager of the Atari game designers...said he thought it was kind of cool to have hidden surprises in video games, like searching for Easter Eggs on Easter Sunday." And so the video game term Easter Egg was born. With Atari's new relaxed and groovy attitude, the Egg stayed—possibly out of respect to Robinett, but probably because "it would have cost $10,000 to make a new mask for the ROM chip used in the cartridge," he says. "They did assign a programmer to track down where [my name was] in the code. He later told me that if he'd been asked to remove it, he would have replaced 'Created by Warren Robinett' with 'Fixed by Brad Stewart.'"

Where is he now?

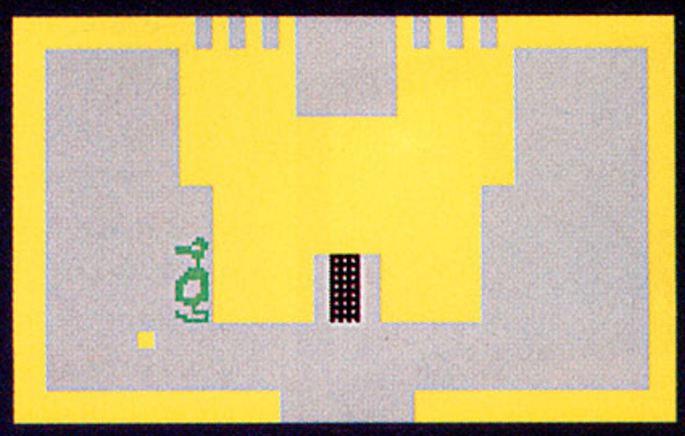
After co-designing a microscope virtual-reality interface called the nanoManipulator (which allows a scientist to be virtually present on the surface of a microscopic sample), Robinett created software for NASA's Virtual Reality Workstation—a pioneering VR project. He also co-founded The Learning Company, a big publisher of edutainment software, and designed a game called Rocky's Boots. It taught logic design to schoolkids in the early '80s. Currently, he is a research associate professor at the University of North Carolina. You can find out more about Robinett and Adventure on his Web site: www. warrenrobinett.com.

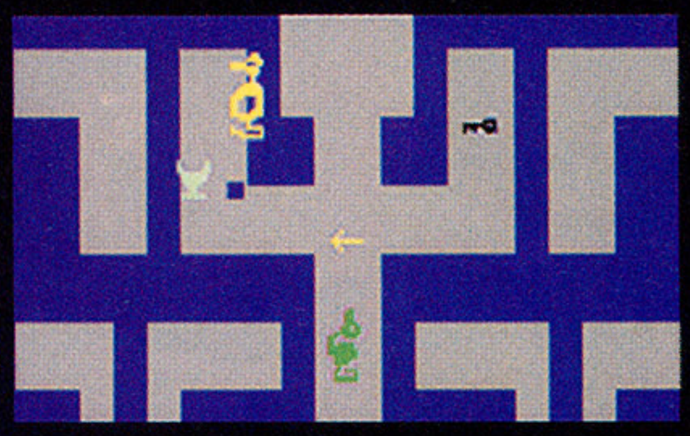
–David S.J. Hodgson

The No-Joy-Luck Club

When good Atari programmers without royalty checks go bad...

Warren Robinett shared with us another secret: the tale of a small clandestine group of ex-Atari staffers who never got royalty checks from Atari. These are the members of the Dumb Sh*ts Club. "In 1979, there were about 12 programmers designing for the Atari 2600," Robinett says. "Four left to start Activision, and another three started Imagic—both of which sold $50 million worth of video games in their first year of business. All those guys were multi-millionaires, and what did that say about those of us left at Atari? We were out drinking one night, and after about six pitchers of beer, we decided to form the Dumb Sh*ts Club. The requirements for membership were you had to have designed games for Atari and never made any money from them [other than salary]. We later elected Jim Huether, my office mate at Atari, president of the Dumb Sh*ts Club because he stayed there the longest of the original dozen." No word on whether they had a secret handshake.





"I wasn't that great an artist– my dragons looked like ducks."

—Warren Robinett

Photography by Bob Rives

PRESS START



SONIC BIRTHDAY PACK

For two days in Japan, June 23 and 24, and while supplies last in the U.S., Sega will sell a special edition of Sonic Adventure 2 for the Dreamcast called the Sonic Adventure 2 Birthday Pack. It includes the game, a special music CD, a 10th anniversary gold medal and a Sonic the Hedgehog series history booklet. Since you're probably reading this story after it's already gone on sale, we figured we'd tell you about it now so you can try to get one on eBay for inflated prices.

Deus Ex Jumps From PC to PS2

The cat's out of the bag. Eidos is bringing the acclaimed PC first-person shooter (FPS) Deus Ex to the PS2 for holiday 2001. Often dubbed "the thinking man's FPS" in PC circles, Deus Ex combines RPG elements with pre-scripted events (like those found in Half-Life) to draw the player into its cyberpunk-inspired story. How does one bring Deus Ex to the PS2 without watering it down? The challenge for game creator Warren Spector and his team at Ion Storm was to rethink their design from a console perspective. Spector tells us that they've reworked the interface so that all the menus you need are accessible from the shoulder buttons. In fact, they found this arrangement to be even more efficient than using a mouse and keyboard.



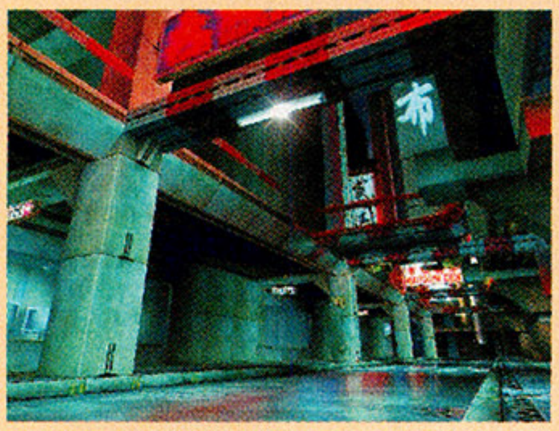


After seeing the game in motion behind closed doors at E3, we can see, even at this early stage, Deus Ex is shedding its PC roots to blossom into an authentic console experience.

TimeSplitters 2: Getting it right this time

Anybody who's played Eidos' PS2 game TimeSplitters knows it was more a technology demo than a cohesive single-player experience. Heck, it didn't even have a stellar multiplayer mode, and this was the same group who left Rare after GoldenEye and Perfect Dark to form Free Radical Design? Nobody laments this fact more than the guys at Free Radical, who blame the original's shortcomings on the critical timing of the PS2 launch. TS2 promises to be a smoother experience, complete with story cutscenes, mission goals and a co-op story mode. They're shooting for a release sometime in the winter.







Say What?

A noble quote embiggens the smallest man, so we here at *EGM* assembled these musings from some of the industry's best and brightest for you to ponder. Some of them may surprise you—they sure caught our ears.

"I want to be able to kill an innocent. That's the sort of thing that turns me on."
Lionhead Studios founder Peter Molyneux (Populous, Theme Park) on the type of open-ended gameplay he'd like to see in a console RPG. He's currently working on Project-Ego, an RPG for Xbox.

EGM: When you think of a hard drive, you think of personal computer...
Tomonobu Itagaki: No.
EGM: No?
TI: No!
Tomonobu Itagaki, head of Tecmo's Team Ninja and director of the Xbox hard-drive-usin' Dead or Alive 3, stopping our interviewer dead in his logical tracks.

EGM: What do you guys like to do with your free time?
Takayoshi Sato: What, at the hotel?
Silent Hill 2 team member Takayoshi Sato, illustrating just how little free time they've had between development and E3.



EGM: Are you happy to see that Sonic is still around after all these years?
Yuji Naka: Yes.
A concise response by Yuji Naka (left), head of Sonic Team, followed quickly by crickets chirping.

"If it's that particular aspect [game innovation over technology] of it, then Sega and Nintendo are very close, at the highest level. If it's a business level, a drive to get units out there, then we're closer with Sony, with Kaz and his entire team. And if it's sharing in the belief that the future of the industry is online, sharing and networking games, then we're close to Microsoft."
Peter Moore, president of Sega of America, when asked which of the console makers Sega relates to the most.

"Microsoft was finished before it even got started. They have no games.... Retailers in the U.S. are already disappointed.... All the games were just extensions of PC games. Nobody needs to buy an Xbox."
Ken Kutaragi, president of Sony CEI, tells the *Financial Times* what he thinks of the Xbox.

"Internet games available today are for hardcore gamers. I don't believe the general public is going to be very interested in them. And I doubt that Net games will turn out to be profitable."
Hiroshi Yamauchi, president of Nintendo Co. Ltd., speaking as candidly as ever about using the Internet for games. *Source: The Nihon Keizai Shimbun.*

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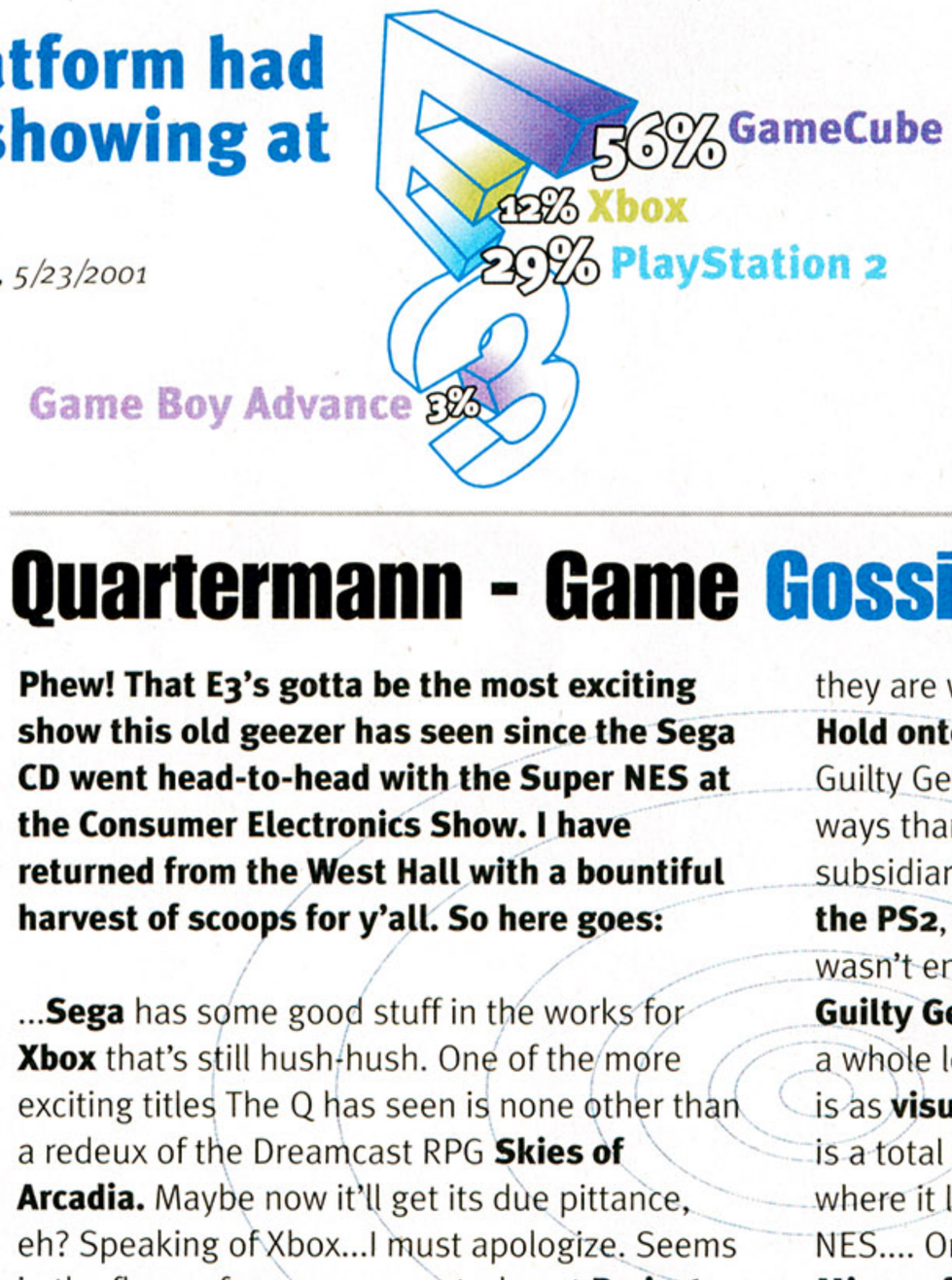
PRESS START

Which platform had the best showing at E3 2001?

Source: GameSpot poll, 5/23/2001



AFTERTHOUGHTS

Red Faction



THQ/Volition's PS2 title Red Faction just hit store shelves a while back. So what does James Tsai, the game's assistant producer think, post-release?

What did you guys hope people would really notice or enjoy in Red Faction?
"A lot of obvious features, like the different weapons and their alternate fire capabilities, the infrared sensor that allows you to detect your foes through walls, stealth missions, the AI reacting to explosive charges."

What are some of the limitations of the Geo-Mod engine?
"We had to anticipate problems like players digging their way out of levels, destroying critical areas that need to stay intact to progress through the game, etc., which therefore influenced things like our level design and our physics models."

Any suggestions for gamers on how to tackle the later levels in the game?
"Don't go using up all your ammo for a gun that none of the enemies may be carrying anymore while passing up all of the magazines they drop for a weapon that you've got fully loaded."

Have you started planning for a sequel?
"For the time being, we're putting all our efforts into the PC version of the game."

How's it been developing in the Midwest? (Way to represent Illinois!)
"You're faced with the constant challenge of finding innovative new activities here. 'Backward Tractor Ride' and 'The Grain Elevator Drop of Doom' resulted in only a few injuries and arrests..."

Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

Phew! That E3's gotta be the most exciting show this old geezer has seen since the Sega CD went head-to-head with the Super NES at the Consumer Electronics Show. I have returned from the West Hall with a bountiful harvest of scoops for y'all. So here goes:

...**Sega** has some good stuff in the works for **Xbox** that's still hush-hush. One of the more exciting titles The Q has seen is none other than a redeux of the Dreamcast RPG **Skies of Arcadia.** Maybe now it'll get its due pittance, eh? Speaking of Xbox...I must apologize. Seems in the flurry of rumors, yours truly got **Project K-X** mixed up with Microsoft's Bruce Lee fighting game, called **Quest of the Dragon.** They are separate games! Chalk that one up to insect politics, kiddies.

...Word has it that **Namco**, purveyors of all that is Pac-Man, fighting and driving, is warming up to a new system—**GameCube**. My main man Teri Aki hasn't been able to get the info on exactly which titles are coming, but we do know they are working on something for the big N.... **Hold onto your panty hose,** fighting game fans. Guilty Gear X is coming to the U.S. (in more ways than one) from Sammy's new American subsidiary. This year we'll get **Guilty Gear X on the PS2**, followed by a **GBA version.** And if that wasn't enough, an upgraded edition called **Guilty Gear X Plus** will show up in 2002. That's a whole lotta GGX!... **Team Ninja**'s **Ninja Gaiden** is as **visually stunning as Dead or Alive 3**, but is a total action game, continuing the story where it left off all those years ago on the NES.... One thing was made perfectly clear to **Microsoft** at E3: People don't like the hulking mass of plastic and silicon they're calling a controller. But wait—on the last day of the show, the rumor began circulating that they may **redesign it entirely**. Power to the people....

...and that's this month's installment of Quartermann. Now I gotta go put the Icy Hot on my sore legs (damn you E3!). If ya feel like talkin' to The Q, drop me an e-mail at quartermann@ziffdavis.com. -The Q

Tidbits

PSO Ver. 2 Pay-to-Play



Just before we went to press, Sega announced that the U.S. release of Phantasy Star Online Ver. 2 (which hits DC in July) will be pay-to-play via a presumably monthly access fee. The original PSO will remain free.

Dragon Ball Z Game Coming!

You wanted it, and Infogrames will soon be giving it to you. A Dragon Ball Z game, that is. The platform it'll show up on remains to be seen, but the company did show a teaser video at E3 featuring rendered landscapes from the planet Namek. More info as soon as we get it.

Sony Readies PS one Screen

At E3, Sony announced it will release its own LCD screen for the PS one in two versions—one for $129.99 that will include a 5" screen, AC adapter, headphone jack and A/V multi-out. Another one will include headphones and high-end video output for $149.99. Both are expected out in November. In other Sony news, the DVD Remote for PS2 will be out in August for $19.99.

Acclaim Digs Up Wrestling Legends

Do the names George "The Animal" Steele, Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka, and Jake "The Snake" Roberts ring a bell? If they do, you'll probably be happy to know you'll soon be able to control them in the ring. Since they've kinda lost the licenses to the major wrestling federations, Acclaim is doing Legends of Wrestling for PS2 and GameCube starring these and other classic names from the sport.

Next Bleemcast Release is...

Reportedly bleem! is putting the finishing touches on their next release for Dreamcast, which will make Konami's PS1 classic Metal Gear Solid playable on Sega's system. No word on a release date, but expect it soon.

TDK Does Robotech

Robotech, the popular mid-'80s Japanese animated TV show, is finally coming to (as yet unspecified) consoles, courtesy of TDK Mediactive. Developer Vicious Cycles will do the honors on the first game, due out in 2002.



YOUR VERY OWN JOANNA

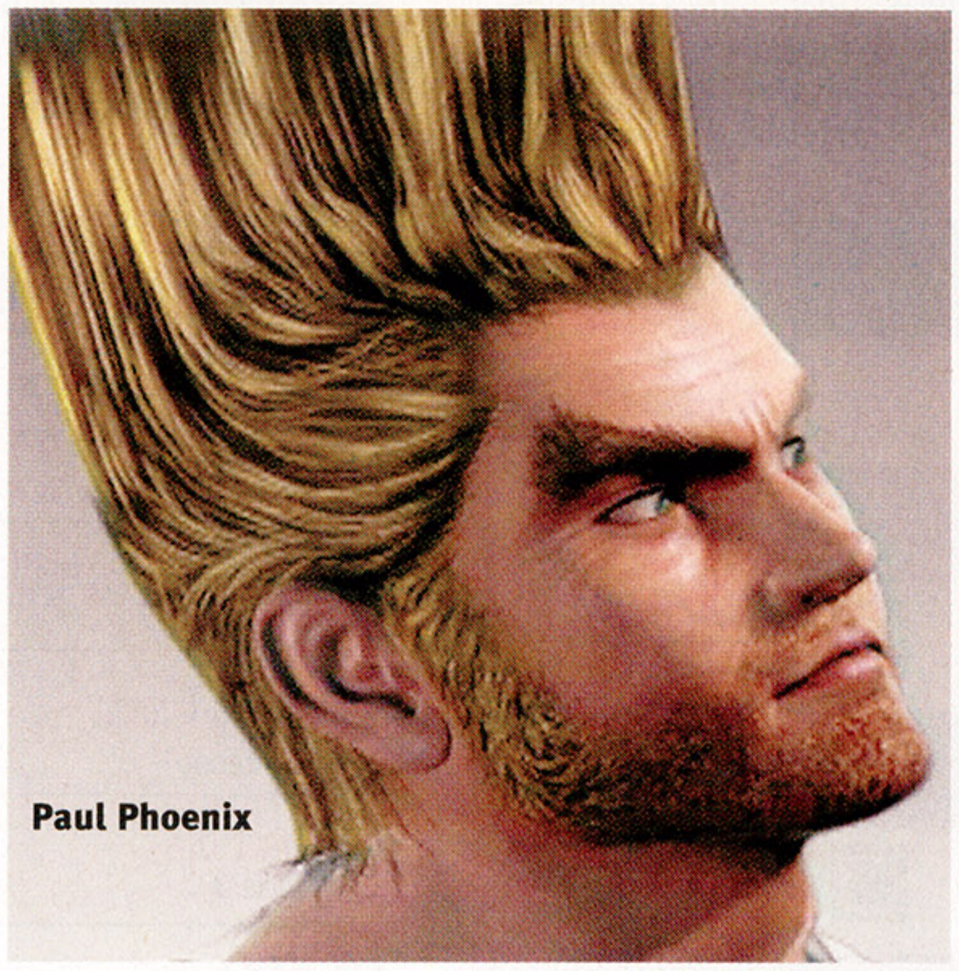
Always wished you could get Joanna Dark alone, in your room? Blue Box Toys has answered your prayers! But probably not in the way you're thinking, you sick puppies. Coming to stores in July is a 12" collectible figure of Joanna, star of Rare's Nintendo 64 game Perfect Dark.



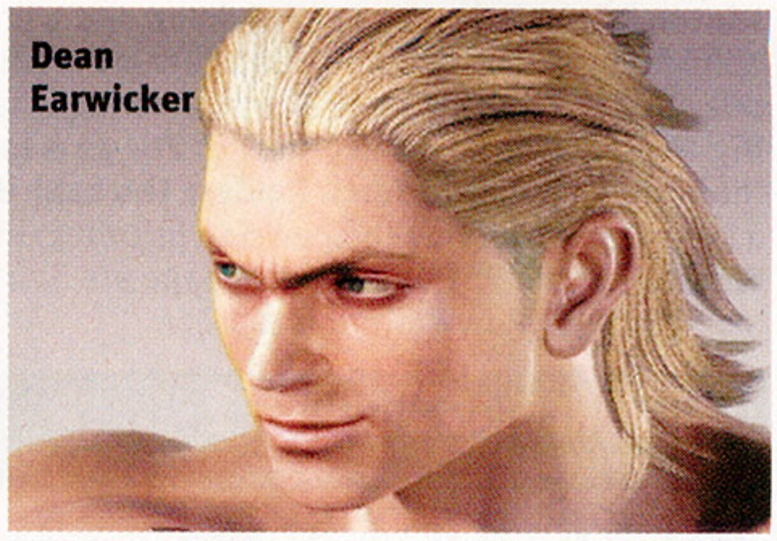
PRESS START

Namco Unveils Tekken 4

We know what you're probably wondering. Wasn't Tekken Tag Tournament Tekken 4? Yes, but technically, Tag was more of a side game. This winter, the latest installment of Namco's Tekken fighting series will hit arcades, utilizing Namco's PS2-based System 246 hardware. As you can see, Namco has spent a lot of time tweaking the little details of the characters, with Paul Phoenix's hair just as gravity-defying as ever. It'll be 2002 before Tekken 4 hits home consoles. Since it uses the PS2-based System 246 kit, our guess is it'll be on Sony's machine faster than you can say Dean Earwicker (the new character at the top right). Soul Calibur 2, by the way, will be right behind it.



Paul Phoenix



Dean Earwicker



Hwoarang



PRESS START

The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of April 2001

Nintendo's unholy union of **Pokémon** and a little pink blob is back in dominating form this month, once again holding a phalanx of **PlayStation 2** titles at bay. **Capcom's** gotta be wondering what they have to do to beat the **Big N**. Meanwhile a motley crew of **PS1 games** charted this month, including the surprise return of **Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation**. Well, it ain't much of a surprise considering the new $10 price tag. In fact, other than **Digimon World 2**, all the PS1 titles on this page are $20 or less. Who'd have thought the market would slow down this fast?

1 Pokémon Stadium 2
Nintendo

5.0 Chris | 6.0 Jeanne | 6.5 Ethan

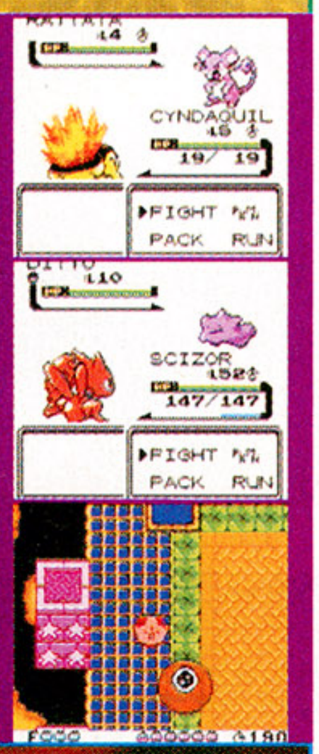


2 Pokémon Silver
Nintendo

9.0 Chris | 8.5 Crispin | 8.5 Mark | EGM SILVER

3 Pokémon Gold
Nintendo

9.0 Chris | 8.5 Crispin | 8.5 Mark | EGM SILVER

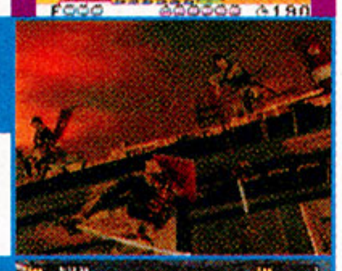


4 Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble
Nintendo

NEW! | 6.5 Chris | 5.0 Jeanne | 7.0 Mark

5 Onimusha: Warlords
Capcom

7.5 Mark | 9.0 Milkman | 9.0 Ryan | EGM SILVER



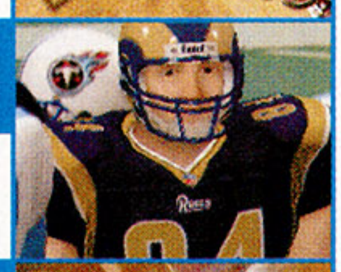
6 ATV Offroad Fury
Sony Computer Entertainment

8.5 Dan L. | 9.0 Dean | 8.5 Greg | EGM SILVER



7 Madden NFL 2001
Electronic Arts

9.0 Dean | 9.0 Kraig | 9.0 Joe | EGM GOLD



8 Zone of the Enders
Konami

7.5 Che | 7.5 Greg | 8.0 Milkman



9 Dr. Mario 64
Nintendo

NEW! | 7.5 Chris | 7.0 Jonathan | 6.0 Shoe



10 Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation
Eidos

4.0 Che | 4.0 Chris | 5.5 Crispin



11	Paper Mario Nintendo	EGM GOLD
12	Triple Play Baseball Electronic Arts	PS2
13	Gran Turismo 2 Sony Computer Entertainment	EGM PLATINUM
14	Super Mario Bros. DX Nintendo	EGM SILVER
15	Digimon World 2 Bandai	NEW!
16	Rocket Power: Gettin' Air THQ	NEW!
17	Mario Tennis Nintendo	EGM SILVER
18	Spec Ops Take 2	
19	SSX Electronic Arts	EGM GOLD
20	Tiger Woods PGA 2001 Electronic Arts	

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

JAPAN TOP 10

1	Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec Sony CEI	PS2
2	World Stadium 5 Namco	PS
3	Final Fantasy II Square	WS
4	Hamtarou 2 Nintendo	GAME BOY COLOR
5	Super Mario Advance Nintendo	GAME BOY ADVANCE
6	Dragon Quest Monsters 2: Iru's Adventure Enix	GAME BOY COLOR
7	Dragon Quest Monsters 2: Ruka's Journey Enix	GAME BOY COLOR
8	SD Gundam G Generation-F.I.F. Bandai	PS
9	Mobile Golf Nintendo	GAME BOY COLOR
10	One Piece Grand Battle! Bandai	PS

No, that "WS" next to Final Fantasy II isn't a typo. Square's FFII remix for Bandai's WonderSwan portable has given the system some choice chart real estate. How long will it be before Square starts making GBA games? Hopefully soon, but they'll have to atone for ditching Nintendo during the N64 days by doing some major sucking up.



Final Fantasy II (WS)

Source: Weekly Famitsu, week ending 5/13/2001

ACTUAL...

TRUTH

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Compiled By Jonathan Dudlak jonathan_dudlak@ziffdavis.com

PRESS START

Coming Soon

July

Game Boy Advance

F-14 Tomcat—Majesco	Simulation
Final Fight—Capcom	Action
Fortress—Majesco	Puzzle/Strategy
Klonoa—Namco	Action
Mega Man Battle Net—Capcom	Adventure
Pac-Man Collection—Namco	Action

Game Boy Color

Alone in the Dark 4—Infogrames	Adventure
Dragon Warrior III—Enix	RPG
High Heat Baseball 2002—3DO	Sports
Pokémon Crystal—Nintendo	RPG
Toki Tori—Capcom	Puzzle
Trouballs—Capcom	Puzzle
VIP—Ubi Soft	Action

PlayStation

Digimon Card Battle—Bandai	Misc.
Final Fantasy Chronicles—Square EA	RPG

PlayStation 2

Ephemeral Fantasia—Konami	RPG
Extermination—Sony CEA	Action
Gran Turismo 3 A-Spec—Sony CEA	Racing
Gundam Journey—Bandai	Adventure
Klonoa 2—Namco	Action
NCAA Football 2002—Electronic Arts	Sports
Rune: Viking Warlord—Rockstar	Action
Supercar St. Challenge—Activision	Racing

Dreamcast

Dragon Riders—Ubi Soft	Adventure
Outtrigger—Sega	Action
Phantasy Star Online Ver. 2—Sega	RPG

August

Game Boy Advance

Lady Sia—TDK	RPG
Mario Kart Advance—Nintendo	Racing

PlayStation

Hoshigami—Atlus	Strategy/RPG

PlayStation 2

18-Wheeler—Acclaim	Racing
Alon D'ar—Ubi Soft	Adventure
Commandos 2—Eidos	Strategy
Conflict Zone—Ubi Soft	Action
Giants: Citizen Kabuto—Interplay	Adventure
Half-Life—Sierra	Action
Herdy Gerdy—Eidos	Misc.
Ico—Sony CEA	Adventure
Jekyll Hyde—Dreamcatcher	Adventure
LeMans 24 Hour—Infogrames	Racing
Okage: Shadow King—Sony CEA	RPG
Portal Runner—3DO	Adventure
Project Eden—Eidos	Action/Strategy
Soul Reaver 2—Eidos	Adventure
Test Drive Offroad—Infogrames	Racing

Dreamcast

Alien Front Online—Sega	Action
Conflict Zone—Ubi Soft	Action
Evil Twin—Ubi Soft	Adventure
Floigan Brothers—Sega	Adventure
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX—Activision	Sports
NCAA College Football 2K2—Sega	Sports
Ooga Booga—Sega	Misc.
Propeller Arena—Sega	Action
World Series Basebell 2K2—Sega	Sports

September

Game Boy Advance

Breath of Fire—Capcom	RPG
CUBE—Ubi Soft	Misc.
Dark Arena—Majesco	Action
ESPN Skateboarding—Konami	Sports
Harry Potter—Electronic Arts	Adventure
Jedi Power Battles—THQ	Action
Jurassic Park Builder—Konami	Misc.
Mat Hoffman Pro BMX—Activision	Sports
Spider-Man—Activision	Action
X-Men—Activision	Action

PlayStation

Digimon Grand Prix—Bandai	Racing
Sheep Raider—Infogrames	Misc.
Spider-Man 2—Activision	Adventure
X-Men Mutant Acad. 2—Activision	Fighting

PlayStation 2

Baldur's Gate—Interplay	Action/RPG
Batman Vengeance—Ubi Soft	Action
Duke Nukem—Rockstar	Action
ESPN Skateboarding—Konami	Sports
Evil Twin—Ubi Soft	Adventure
Run Like Hell—Interplay	Action
Silent Hill 2—Konami	Adventure
Spy Hunter—Midway	Action
Time Crisis 2—Namco	Action

October

Game Boy Advance

Batman Vengeance—Ubi Soft	Action
Shaun Palmer Snowboard—Activision	Sports
Tarzan—Ubi Soft	Action

Playstation

Arc the Lad Coll.—Working Designs	RPG
DDR Disney Mix—Konami	Misc.
Doom—Activision	Action
Dragon Warrior VII—Enix	RPG
Monsters, Inc.—Sony CEA	Misc.
Syphon Filter 3—Sony CEA	Action
Tales of Destiny 2—Namco	RPG

PlayStation 2

Shaun Palmer Snowboard—Activision	Sports
SOCOM: US Navy Seals—Sony CEA	Action

IMPORT CALENDAR

Final Fantasy X



Import Pick of the Month: Final Fantasy X, Square (RPG). Square's latest FF game hits the PS2 this summer in Japan. And it's expensive—8,800 yen (about $74)—so expect to pay a heavy price for it from import shops in the States. You'll also notice this month that a few systems (PS1, N64, GBC) have dropped off the radar. That's because there really isn't anything cool coming for any of them—they're dead.

PlayStation 2

6/21	Ka (Mosquito), Sony CEI (Action)
June	Gitaroo Man, Koei (Music)
7/5	Gundam 0079 Zeonic Front, Bandai (Action)
7/5	Harvest Moon 3, Victor Interactive (RPG)
7/19	Final Fantasy X, Square (RPG)
8/23	Devil May Cry, Capcom (Action)

Dreamcast

6/28	Gundam Battle Online, Bandai (Action)
7/5	U.S. Shenmue, Sega (FREE)
7/26	Outtrigger, Sega (Action)

Game Boy Advance

6/21	Tactics Ogre Gaiden: The Knight of Lodis, Nintendo (RPG)
6/29	Choro Q Advance, Takara (Racing)
7/6	Breath of Fire, Capcom (RPG)
7/13	Super Street Fighter II X Revival, Capcom (Fighting)
7/14	Mario Kart Advance, Nintendo (Racing)
7/19	Klonoa: Empire of Dreams, Namco (Action)
July	Golden Sun, Nintendo (RPG)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Even though game release dates are taken more seriously in Japan than in the U.S., they can change! Consult your local import game store for the latest release information purple monkey dishwasher.

the

legend

lives

on

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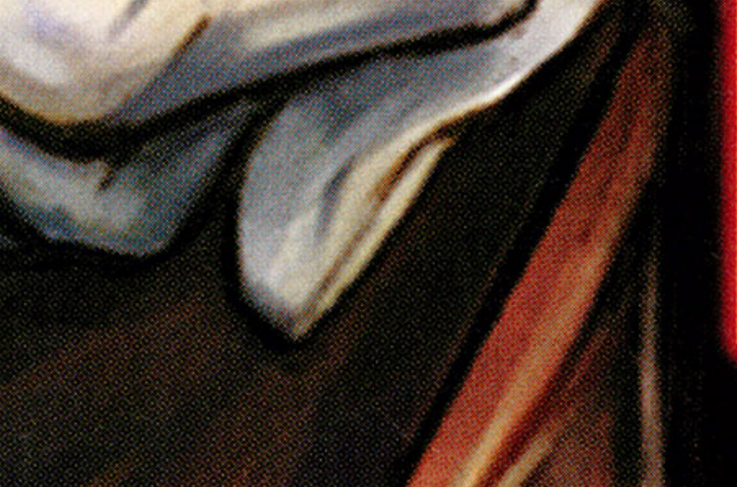
Circle of the Moon™

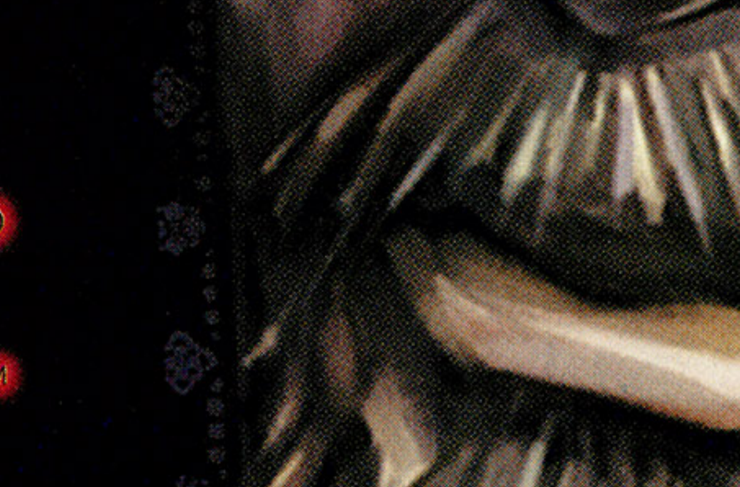
all new for the Game Boy® Advance



Use over 80 spell effects



Destroy Dracula's minions



Choose from 5 sub-weapons



Animated Blood
Mild Violence

GAME BOY® ADVANCE

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HSU AND CHAN

GAME DESIGNERS IN...

THE TRADE SHOW DIARIES

YOU HEARD ME, GATES!

YOU AND ME!

MANO A MANO!

SEIZE HIM!

OOH! T-SHIRTS!

HELLO, VIDEO GAMERS!

I'M HSU TANAKA, THIS IS MY BROTHER CHAN, AND TODAY WE'RE GOING TO SHOW YOU SOME BITS AND PIECES OF OUR RECENT TRIP TO THE E3 TRADE SHOW IN LOS ANGELES, BECAUSE WE WEREN'T PLANNING ON GETTING ANY REAL WORK DONE TODAY, ANYWAY.

FOR THOSE AMONG YOU WHO ARE EXCEPTIONALLY IGNORANT, "E3" IS AMERICA'S LARGEST VIDEO AND COMPUTER GAMING EXPOSITION, WHERE SCORES OF INDUSTRY PROS COME TO SHOW OFF THEIR WARES!

THERE IS ALL KINDS OF NEAT STUFF TO SEE AND COOL GAMES TO PLAY, MAKING IT A VERITABLE GAMERS' PARADISE, EXCEPT THAT IT'S A TRADE SHOW AND THUS NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, AND NO AMOUNT OF STANDING BY THE ENTRANCE DRESSED AS YOUR FAVORITE GAME MASCOT IS GONNA GET YOU IN!

JOKE'S ON YOU, VIDEO GAMERS!

CURSES!

ALL RIGHT, ENOUGH BACKSTORY!

WE NOW PRESENT TO YOU OUR E3 MEMORIES, AS FILMED BY OUR INTREPID PART-TIME ASSISTANT, ARNIE.

ROLL THE FILTH!

HERE WE ARE IN L.A., FRESH FROM THE AIRPORT!

CALIFORNIA, IN GENERAL, IS LESS A "STATE" THAN IT IS A HOLDING TANK FOR OUR NATION'S PSYCHOTIC DEVIANTS, HENCE THE SAFETY MEASURES.

BACK! BACK! WE HAVE WEAPONS!

ON OUR FIRST DAY, WE SNUCK INTO THE PRE-E3 PRESS CONFERENCES, HOPING TO GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR COMPETITORS!

HERE WE ARE GATHERING INTELLIGENCE ON THE SONY CORPORATION!

... A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF OUR CORE COMPETENCIES, AND A FOCUS ON OUR GOALS ALL THROUGHOUT...

SNAP!

YOW!

SNOOORRE

DROOL

DAY TWO! VALUABLE INFORMATION OBTAINED, IT WAS TIME FOR ACTION! HERE IS SOME FOOTAGE OF THE GRAND UNVEILING OF THE TANAKA BROTHERS' GAME DEVELOPMENT BOOTH!

WE DESIGNED IT TO CONVEY OUR STRONG BUSINESS SENSE AND SERIOUS DEDICATION TO THE GAMING CRAFT.

NOTE THE MONKEYS!

BOW! KNEEL!

GRUNT! I CAN'T MOVE!

EEK! OOP!

HERE'S A SHOT OF SOME GAMERS EAGER TO BE AMONGST THE FIRST TO TRY OUT A FEW OF OUR LATE-FALL RELEASES, SUCH AS "FIGHTING FIGHTERS THREE" AND THE PREMIERE TITLE OF OUR NEW SPORTS LINE, "TOTALLY UNBELIEVABLY EXTREME SHUFFLEBOARD."

OUR SECURITY STAFF IS DEPLOYED TO ENSURE NO LINE-CUTTING.

FIGH

SECURITY

VIOLATORS ARE DEALT WITH.

AAAIGH!

DAY THREE! DESPITE A LACK OF SLEEP, HSU AND I TAKE TO THE BOOTHS TO SEE SOME OF WHAT THIS YEAR'S E3 HAS TO OFFER, SUCH AS GIRLS IN MINISKIRTS AND PEOPLE WEARING GIGANTIC ANIMAL COSTUMES!

SO... HOT... CANNOT... BREATHE...

OOH! AHH!

CLICK!

WHEN EVENING FELL, WE RETURNED TO OUR HOTEL TO CATCH UP ON SOME MUCH-NEEDED REST...

...WE BECAME SIDETRACKED, HOWEVER, AND INSTEAD SPENT THE NIGHT POURING SHAMPOO ON THE DOORKNOBS OF RIVAL GAME DEVELOPERS. AN EVEN TRADE, I THINK.

DAY FOUR -- THE LACK OF SLEEP BEGINS TO TAKE ITS TOLL AS I GIVE A GAMING WEB SITE AN INTERVIEW WHEREIN I MISIDENTIFY "TWISTED METAL: BLACK" AS "A KIND OF TURNIP," AND HSU SNEAKS OFF TO STALK THE HEAD OF MICROSOFT, WHOM HE CLAIMS TO BE A HOSTILE ALIEN FROM THE NETHER DIMENSIONS.

DEMON! SHOW YOURSELF! BEGORRAH!

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE STATE OF THE GAMING INDUSTRY TODAY?

UM... PASS!

THE REST OF THE SHOW IS SOMETHING OF A BLUR, ALTHOUGH WE DO HAVE APPROXIMATELY SIX HOURS OF FOOTAGE OF HSU AND MYSELF DODGING SECURITY GUARDS AND SHOUTING RANDOM SENTENCES IN AN INDECIPHERABLE SORT OF PIG-LATIN.

ARKTOO SPACKLE YARBA!

DROP THE MONKEY!

EEK! EEK!

AND FINALLY, HERE WE ARE BIDDING A FOND FAREWELL TO THE CONVENTION CENTER, OUR MINDS FULL OF HAPPY MEMORIES, OUR SUITCASES FULL OF BUSINESS CARDS AND HOTEL TOWELS.

TUNE IN NEXT TIME, WHEN WE'LL SHOW YOU SLIDES OF OUR TRIP TO AMISH COUNTRY!

THE END!

SNORRRRE

EDITOR'S NOTE: THERE IS CURRENTLY NO EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT THE HEAD OF MICROSOFT IS A HOSTILE ALIEN FROM THE NETHER DIMENSIONS. SO **NO STALKING.** YOU NUTS. THANK YOU.

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PlayStation®

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Violence
Suggestive Themes

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AVAILABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME ON THE PLAYSTATION® GAME CONSOLE.

CHRONO TRIGGER®



Chrono Trigger is the unique time-traveling adventure and prequel to Chrono Cross™.
This new PlayStation® game console version includes animated scenes
created by Akira Toriyama which expand on the original story.

SQUARESOFT®

PICK A WORLD
WE'LL TAKE YOU THERE

YOU ARE HERE E3

By Crispin Boyer, John Ricciardi and the EGM staff

Photography by Shuji Kobayashi, Joe Torino and the EGM staff





Pack your bags and lace up your walkin' shoes. We're taking you to gaming's greatest show on Earth: The Electronic Entertainment Expo



Hollywood has its Cannes Film Festival. Tech-heads trek to their Consumer Electronics Shows to ogle the latest gadgets—and maybe a little porn while they're at it. Heck, even plumbers have their yearly Pipe Line Contractors Association Convention. But in the game biz, we get our game on at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), an annual three-day bombardment of mega announcements, hardware introductions, to-the-hilt parties, outrageous displays of Technicolor gaudiness and, of course, new video games and lots of them.

We're fresh back from the seventh annual E3 in Los Angeles, and you know what? Our industry's expo easily licks those other guys' shows (yep, even the tech-heads and their porno). Especially this year. But that's not because this E3 was any bigger than the past few. In fact, although more than 60,000 folks crammed into the L.A. Convention Center, the show was a wee smaller than usual, with many game companies running keyed-down booths after a year of battered bottom lines.

And if you think it was all the launch-announcement hubbub that made this E3 so special, you're only half right. Yes, Nintendo and Microsoft drew their lines in the sand, announcing system launch dates that are mere days apart. Combine that with a pile of killer—not to mention a few online—PS2 games on the way, and this holiday season is shaping up to be a drool fest for us gamers.

It's really this happy-days-are-here-again spirit that made E3 2K1 so rockin'. Everyone we talked to, from the dev guys up to the top execs, left us with the same impression: Buck up, kiddo—the lean times are nearly over. "I think that we're back on the uptick," Sega Prez and CEO Peter Moore tells us. "The transition that we all bitch and moan about is almost over, and we're going to have a hell of a November." Even the companies with the most to lose if things go sour are optimistic. "This isn't going to be a console war," says J Allard, general manager of the Xbox platform. "It's going to be a console renaissance. Everyone is going to win this year."

It's just a darn shame most of you readers weren't at E3 to feel its energy, bask in the glow of its optimism, play its games—or even





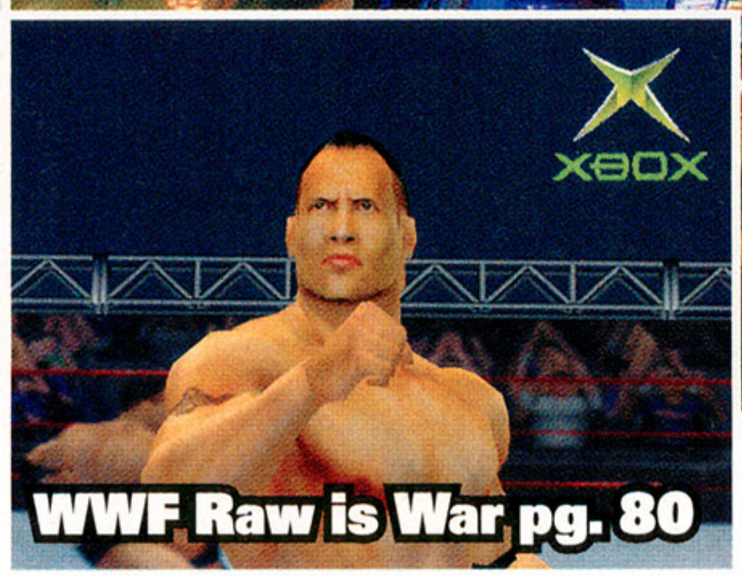














watch the new, supremely cool Metal Gear Solid 2 video. So here's our promise: Over the next 40 pages, we're going to bring the show to you. Now that you've read about all the big announcements in our Press Start section, we want to give you more in-depth analysis of E3 on a system-by-system basis, kicking off with our coverbox, Nintendo's GameCube. More importantly, you'll notice we don't have a previews section this month. That's 'cause we've packed this feature with hands-on previews of all the biggest games from the show floor, not to mention tales of the tape from any titles shown only on video. And as if that wasn't enough work to do in the week between the show's end and our deadline, the editors locked themselves in a janitor's closet and hammered out our Best-in-Show awards, which you'll find scattered throughout this massive E3 featurama, starting to the right.

So we hope you appreciate our efforts. Hey, do you think *Heating and Plumbing Monthly* gives its readers this much coverage of the Pipe Line Contractors Association Convention?

Not bloody likely. On with the show...

Best of Show: GAMECUBE

Seeing all our fave Nintendo franchises resurrected on the big N's new box got us giddy inside, even though the company didn't have anything of Mario 64 caliber at E3. The GameCube was all we could talk about—besides the new MGS2 trailer and stealing Previews Editor Greg Sewart's money (see pg. 105).

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

THE E3 TOY EVERYONE WANTED TO PLAY WITH



pg. 70



pg. 51

While Microsoft seems intent on cramming as much as they can inside their portly black box (hard drive, broadband, DVD, etc.), and Sony is determined to become the all-encompassing "center for creativity" in your home, Nintendo is taking an entirely different route. With Nintendo, it's not about DVD movies, or e-mail, or instant messaging. The big N's focus is, as it has been for nearly 20 years, on one thing only: games. And judging from the response Nintendo received at this year's show, we think it's safe to say that they're on the right track. We'll know for sure on Nov. 5, when GameCube launches—a mere three days before Microsoft's Xbox—at the critical mass-market price of $199 alongside six launch games (more on them later).

The Cube hoopla kicked in a day before E3 opened its doors, at Nintendo's annual pre-show press conference. After Nintendo of America (NOA) VP of Sales and Marketing Peter Main gave his opening speech, a minute-long video of Super Smash Bros. Melee hit the big screens, which sent the crowd into a frenzy, setting the precedent for the rest of the conference, and the show. Heck, even the GameCube boot-up sequence drew cheers and whistles. The wild applause continued when game god Shigeru Miyamoto walked onto the stage, GameCube in one hand, wireless Wavebird controller in the other. "This is our baby," started Miyamoto. "Like all babies, it is small. But it will make lots of noise!" He then proceeded to demo his first two GC projects, Luigi's Mansion and Pikmin, both of which captivated attendees.



The actual show floor was no different. Crowds gathered around all nine playable

NOT NINTENDO'S GAME PLAN...

In stark contrast to the upbeat tone of the Microsoft and Sony press conferences, the Nintendo presentation warned against what the company sees as disturbing trends: too much emphasis on graphics, too many sequels, and almost every game appearing for multiple platforms. They even had some charts to illustrate the point (below right). First, a company makes a hit game. That success compels them to release the same game across different platforms. Then come the sequels, which are basically the same game over again. The sequels get ported to all systems, other copy-cat games appear, a movie comes out based on Mega Game staring Angelina Jolie, etc. People think all games look alike and there's nothing new out there. Nintendo, however, feels an obligation to fight these trends and give "fresh surprise and joy," as President Hiroshi Yamauchi likes to say—that's The Nintendo Difference™











games in Nintendo's booth for the duration of the show, making it difficult to move, let alone get some play time with each game. Nintendo had glass displays set up to showcase the system's peripherals, as well as the unit itself and the slightly redesigned controller. Also on display was the company's new wireless Wavebird controller, which can transmit signals of up to 33 feet, and the sleek hybrid GameCube/DVD player from Panasonic, which is slated to hit the U.S. sometime in 2002.

Despite showing both the Modem Adapter and the Broadband Adapter, Nintendo was mostly silent about their current online plans for GameCube. They confirmed that the modem would not be included with the system but did not go into detail as to how the unit would eventually be distributed. As for the eventual network strategy, Satoru Iwata, Nintendo Corporate Limited's director and general manager of corporate planning, tells us, "If we can find a way to come up with a network system that's going to support a worldwide audience, and be sustainably profitable, then we'll definitely go in at that point. But right now we feel that we're a profitable company offline, and there's no need for us to run to the online market to try to boost our profits at this point." Fair enough, we suppose.

Still, one of the biggest challenges Nintendo faces is finding a way to regain the support of third parties that flew the coop during the "dark" years of the cartridge-based N64. Nintendo insists that the lessons learned from the N64 will bring big dividends on GameCube—the system was designed to be extremely developer friendly, and the 1.5 GB proprietary disc-based media means that developers will no longer have to deal with expensive cartridges and three month-long production times. In fact, Nintendo feels that it's this developer friendliness that will help put them back on top. "It's ironic," says George Harrison, VP of marketing and corporate communications at NOA. "We've learned from our (past) challenges, and fixed things

NEW AND IMPROVED...

The final GameCube controller (right, top) has been slightly modified since its debut last August at Spaceworld (bottom). The handles are slightly larger, the Start/Pause button is now grey, and the B button has been changed to a small red circle. The long-awaited "secret function" was revealed, as well, though it's nothing mind-blowing: In addition to having built-in rumble capabilities, the GC controller features analog L and R buttons that have a secondary "click" feature. By pressing either button all the way in, you can actually register a button press.

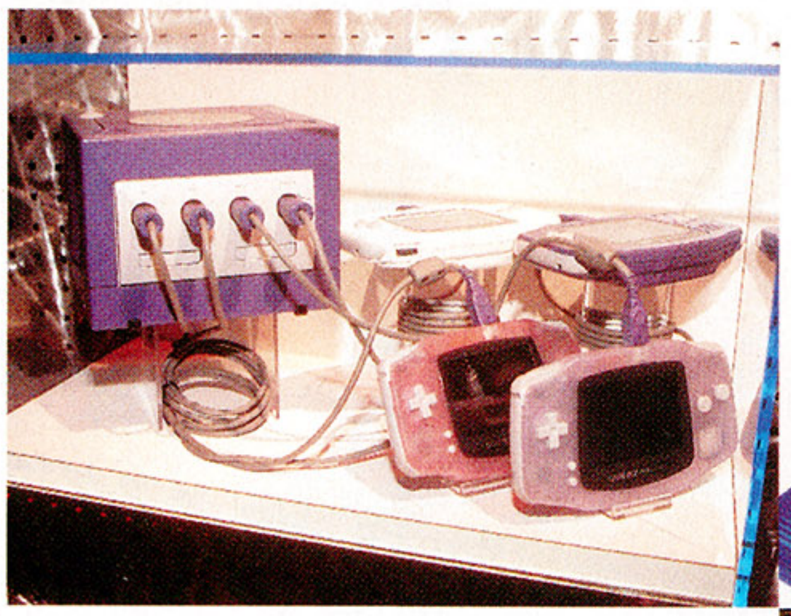
So how does it feel? Now that we've had extensive hands-on playtime with the controller, we're pleased to report that it's super comfortable. Both of the analog sticks and the D-pad are extremely accessible, and the buttons all feel great, with the possible exception of the Z button, which is a bit stiff and awkward. Of course, some of us would've preferred having the B button the same size as the A button—mainly for games like Smash Bros. Melee.

Don't forget, Game Boy Advance will serve as a GameCube controller, though it wasn't demonstrated at E3. According to Nintendo, we can expect to see the first usage of this feature at the upcoming Spaceworld show in August.





For about the price of a PS2, Panasonic's slick-looking DVD/GameCube combo (left) will let you play GC games, DVD movies and audio CDs. A U.S. release is likely, but don't expect this deluxe model to hit until next year.









The Pokémon Card-e-Reader plugs (left) into the GBA cart slot and can read Nintendo's upcoming "Card-e" cards, which use a special technology to store monster stats, secret information or even GBA mini-games.



with GameCube, and it appears that Sony has done almost the exact opposite with PlayStation 2, making it more complex and less developer-friendly." This may be true, but the fact remains, the one most-desired third party of them all, Square, is still hanging out in Sony's camp. If Nintendo can woo Square back with GameCube, the tides would turn heavily in their favor.

The next stop in Nintendo's road to domination is their annual Spaceworld show in Tokyo, which takes place Aug. 24, a mere three weeks before the Sept. 14 launch of GameCube in Japan. At Spaceworld, according to Miyamoto, we'll get our first taste of the next-generation Mario and Zelda games, along with whatever other surprises the big N has in store. But for now, take a gander at the GameCube games unveiled at E3. Nintendo says the first-party titles that were playable at the expo—namely, Luigi's Mansion, Pikmin, Super Smash Bros. Melee, Wave Race: Blue Storm, Star Fox Adventures and NBA Courtside—are scheduled to hit the Cube at launch or within its first 30 days, but a final day-one lineup hasn't been hammered out yet. Perhaps some of the Spaceworld titles will hit in that launch window, too.

Clearly, the excitement has only just begun—and this latest battle in the console wars is gonna be a doozy.

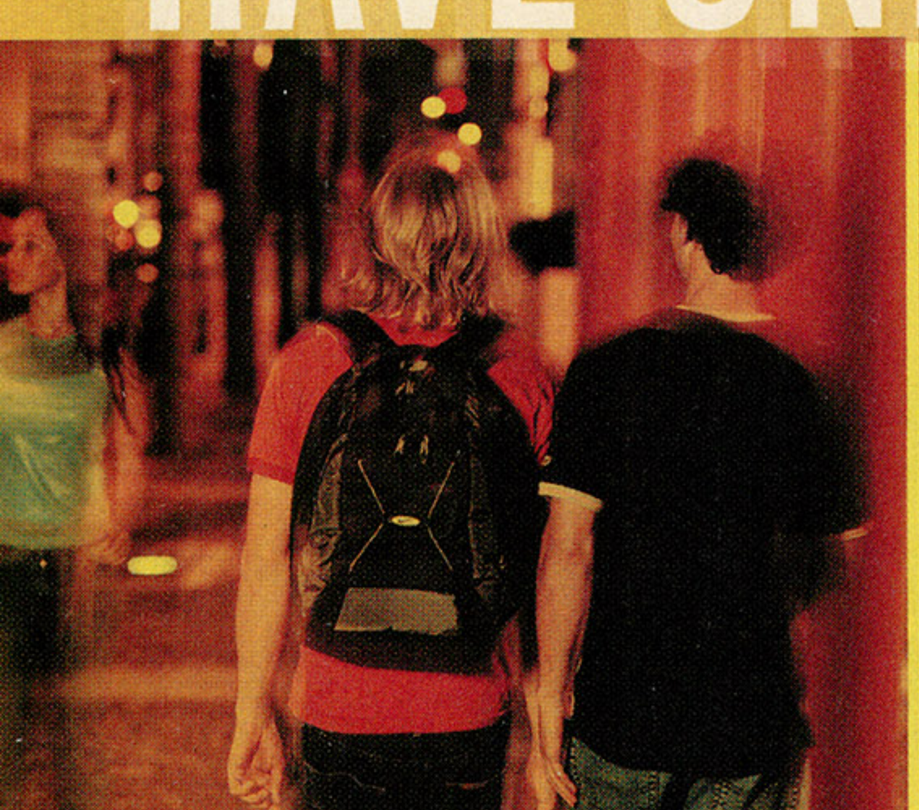
GAMECUBE NO-SHOWS

Despite the strong GameCube presence at the show, a few big-name games never showed up, such as **Capcom's Resident Evil Zero** and **Namco's Ridge Racer** and **Tekken** titles. But thanks to a slip-up on Nintendo's Web site, we managed to uncover another batch of games that were planned for the show but never quite made it. Notorious no-shows include...

100 MARIO'S
1080 SNOWBOARDING 2
DOSHIN THE GIANT
PERFECT DARK ZERO
POKÉMON
MARIONETTE
MARIO PARTY 4
MARIO SUNSHINE
THUNDER RALLY
TOO HUMAN

Most of the these came as a surprise. What the heck is **100 Mario's**? We'll find out at August's Spaceworld.

IF YOUR PARENTS KNEW
IT FELT THIS GOOD,
THEY WOULDN'T LET YOU
HAVE ONE.





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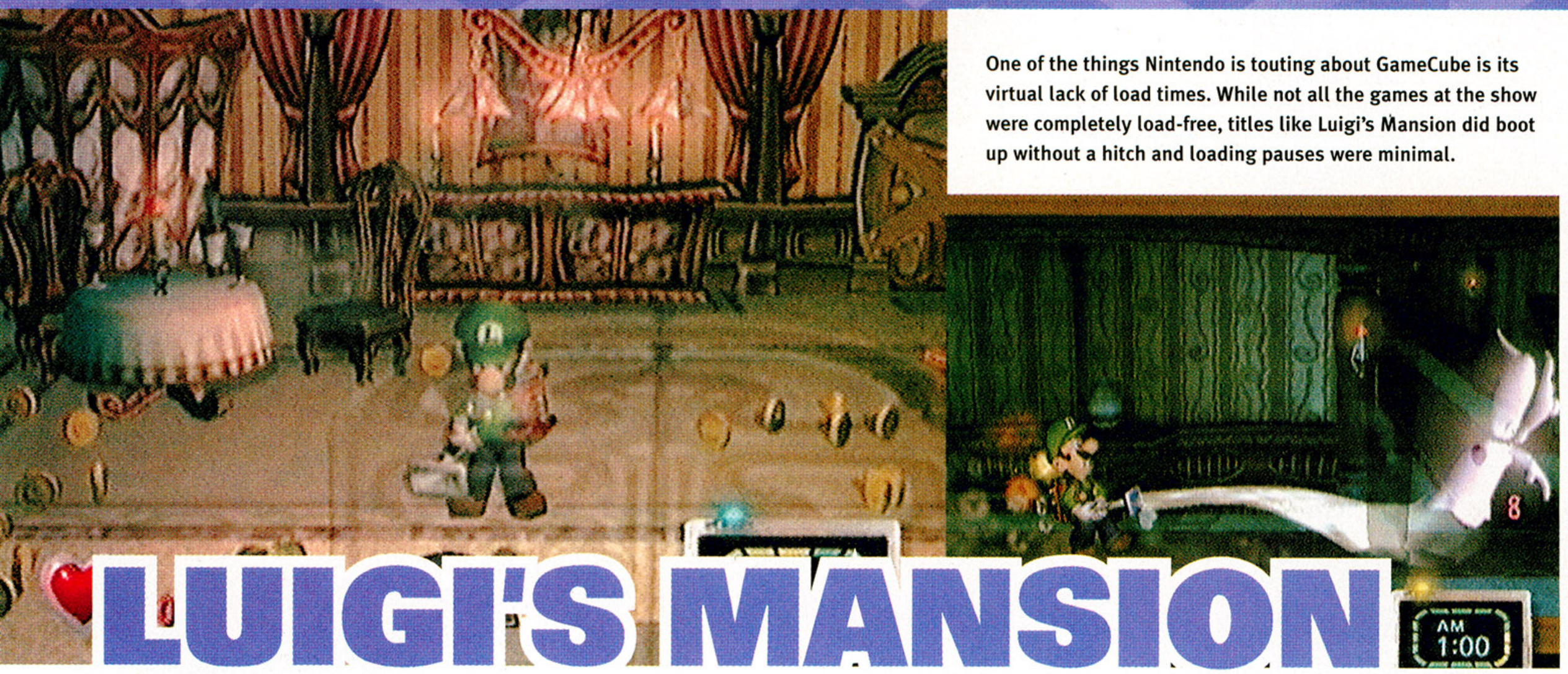
One of the things Nintendo is touting about GameCube is its virtual lack of load times. While not all the games at the show were completely load-free, titles like Luigi's Mansion did boot up without a hitch and loading pauses were minimal.



LUIGI'S MANSION

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Release: November 2001

What's it all about? Originally shown as a "tech demo" at last year's Spaceworld show in Japan, Luigi's Mansion turned out to be, well...nothing at all like we expected. It's not a 3D platformer, nor is it a smaller part of a gigantic Mario game. What it is is a genre-breaking ghost-busting romp through a haunted mansion, and a unique one at that. In order to free the huge house, Luigi must traverse it room by room, armed with only a Game Boy Color and a trusty combination flashlight/vacuum. The GBC helps determine if any ghosts are nearby (they're invisible, ya know), and the flashlight is used to startle them, making them visible just long enough for you to switch to the vacuum and suck 'em up, *Ghostbusters*-style. Smaller ghosts go down easy, while larger ones put up a bit of a fight before submitting to the powers of your Hoover. There are plenty of puzzles in the mansion's many rooms, too.

Control-wise, Luigi stands out as well. The entire game takes place in a full 3D environment, but the camera is stationary, making for a mostly 2D-style experience. The C Stick moves Luigi, while the Analog Stick controls the direction of his flashlight-vacuum. R is used to operate the vacuum, and Z can be used to spray water out of its hose. The controls take a bit of getting used to, but they're hardly unintuitive.

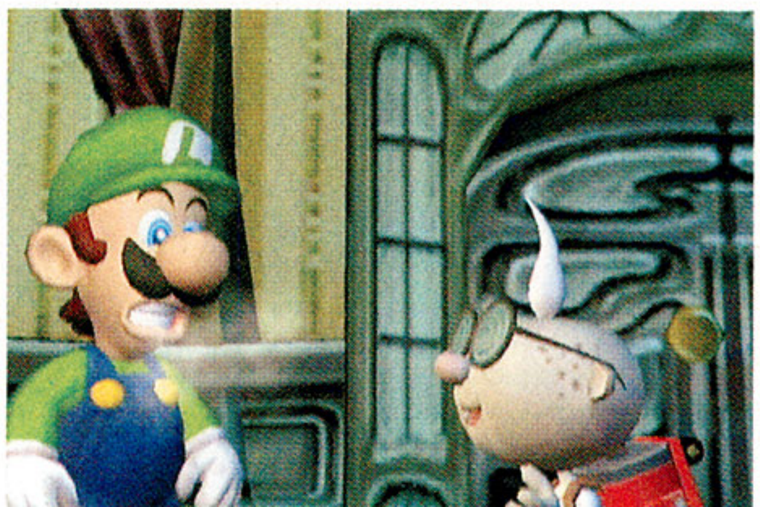
What do we think of it? The Luigi demo was brief and didn't offer much variety, but what was there was undeniably fun, and the game looks stunning. The controls aren't as immediately intuitive as most Miyamoto games, but after a couple of minutes we felt as comfy as we did the first time we picked up and played Mario 64. Almost. Some gameplay elements (like the hose) weren't playable at the show, which leads us to believe we've only had a taste of what Luigi will offer. We'll find out in November.

OK, but why Luigi? "A lot of my staff members have been saying for a long time, 'Can't we do something with Luigi?'" says legendary Mario creator Shigeru Miyamoto. "So we decided that maybe between the time that we showed the last Mario and the time that we do the next one, we could squeeze Luigi in there somewhere."









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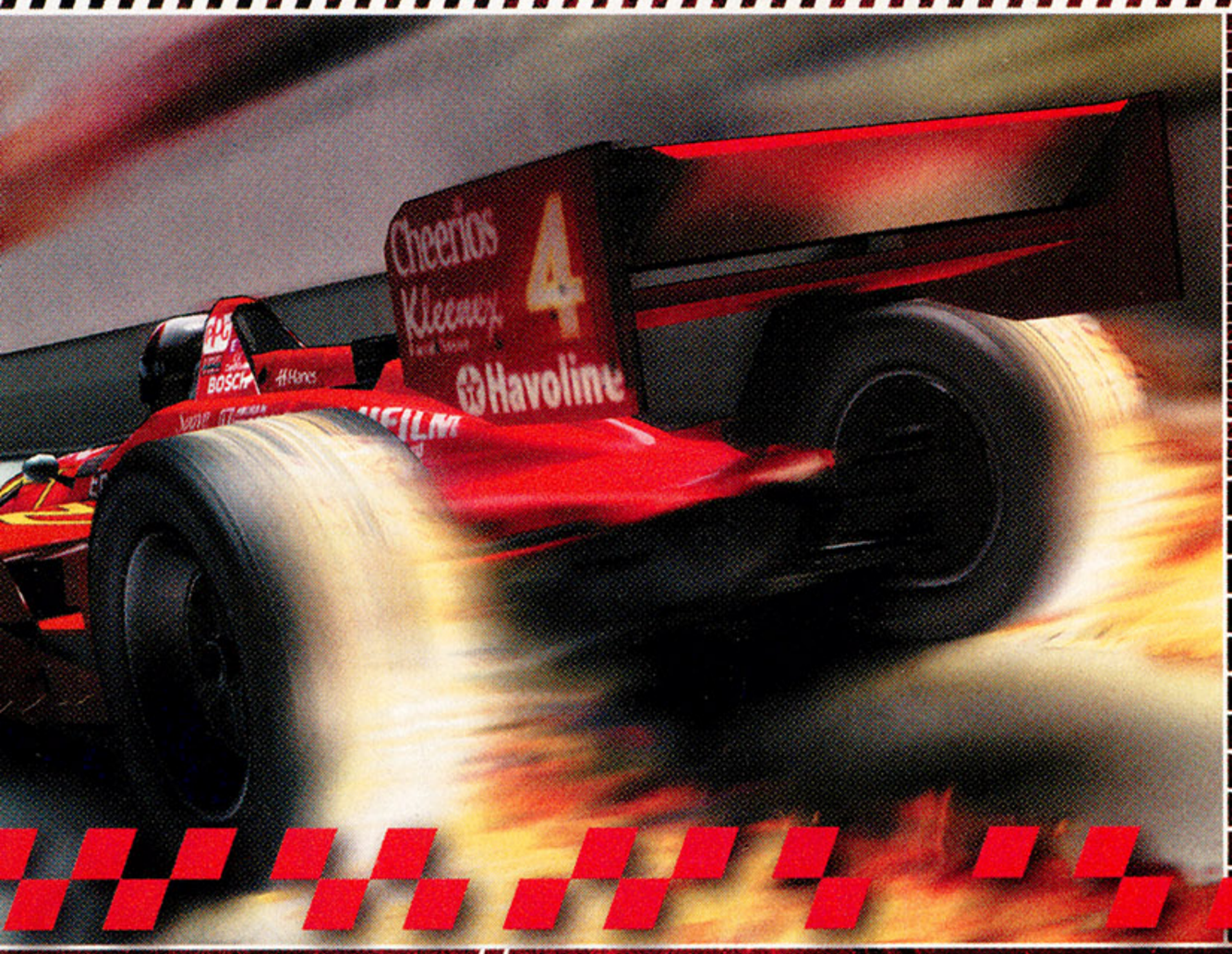













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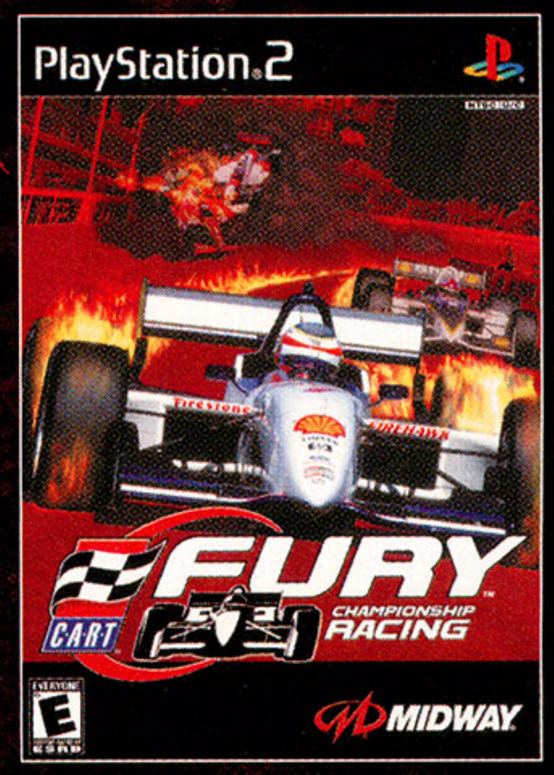

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SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: HAL Laboratory
Release: November 2001

What's it all about? Super Smash Bros. Melee is the long-awaited sequel to 1999's hit N64 brawler Super Smash Bros., which proved to be a, well, smash both here and in Japan because of its fast and furious four-player action, simple controls and most importantly, its all-star cast of classic Nintendo characters. Super Smash Bros. Melee looks to up the ante by introducing more of everything: more characters, more modes, more items, more interaction with the stages and even a brand-new one-player mode.

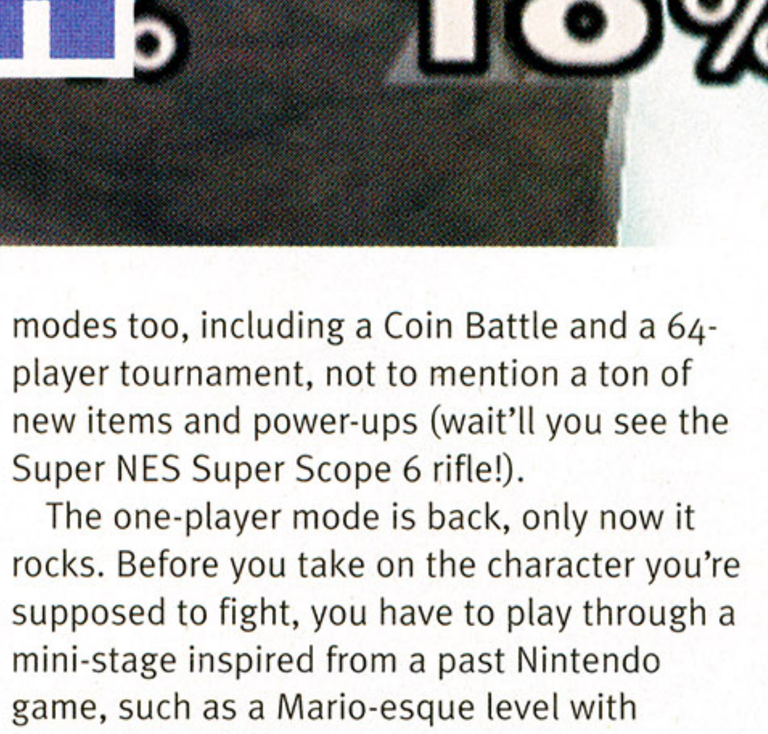
The demo on the show floor featured 10 playable characters: Yoshi, Donkey Kong, Pikachu, Ness, Mario, Samus, Link, Bowser, Fox McCloud and Captain Falcon. Of these, only Bowser is new (the rest were in the original Smash Bros.), but we spied other characters in the demo footage, including Kirby, Ice Climber, Sheik from Ocarina of Time and princesses Zelda and Peach. There were plenty of empty slots in the character-select screen, too, so expect even more guest stars.

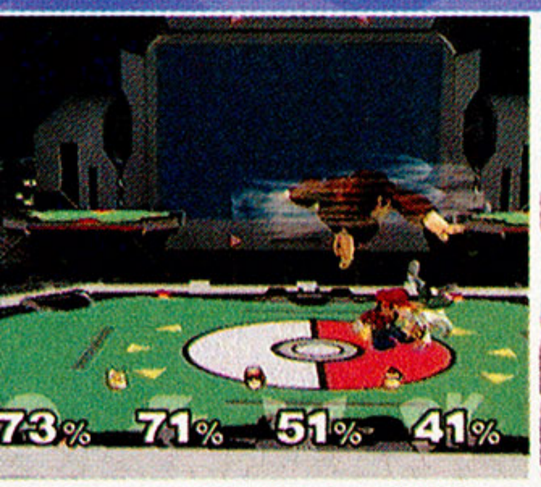
Once again, the four-player battle mode is the heart of the game. The fighting engine isn't all that different from the N64 version, although it seems you'll be able to pull off more in-depth juggles and combos. What's different—and better—is how improved the stages are. Aside from new arenas, many of the N64 levels are back in enhanced form, with larger, more interactive playfields. In one stage—Mute City from F-Zero X—the battle takes place on the actual racetrack, and every minute or so a pack of 30 F-Zero X cars comes screaming around the turn, forcing you to get out of the way or get flattened. You'll find new modes too, including a Coin Battle and a 64-player tournament, not to mention a ton of new items and power-ups (wait'll you see the Super NES Super Scope 6 rifle!).

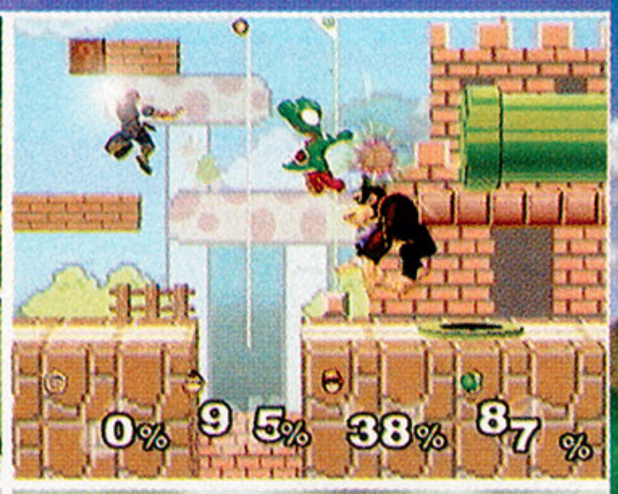
The one-player mode is back, only now it rocks. Before you take on the character you're supposed to fight, you have to play through a mini-stage inspired from a past Nintendo game, such as a Mario-esque level with Goombas and Koopas, or the escape sequence from Super Metroid. Once you clear the level, then you can fight the enemy. It's like a Nintendo fan's dream.

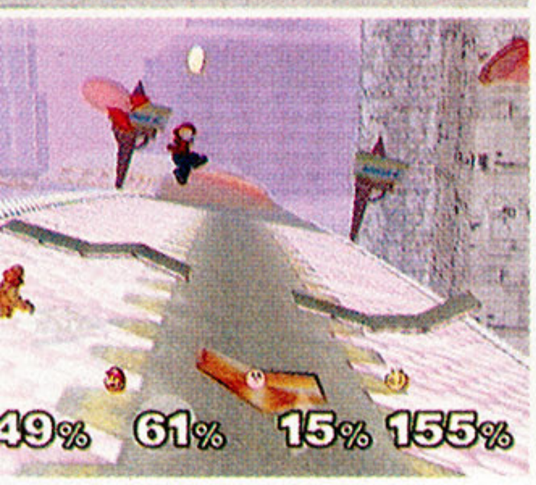
Nintendo mentioned some other features,

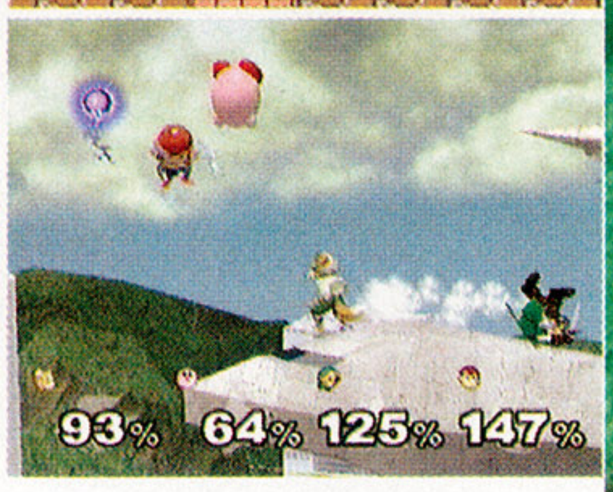


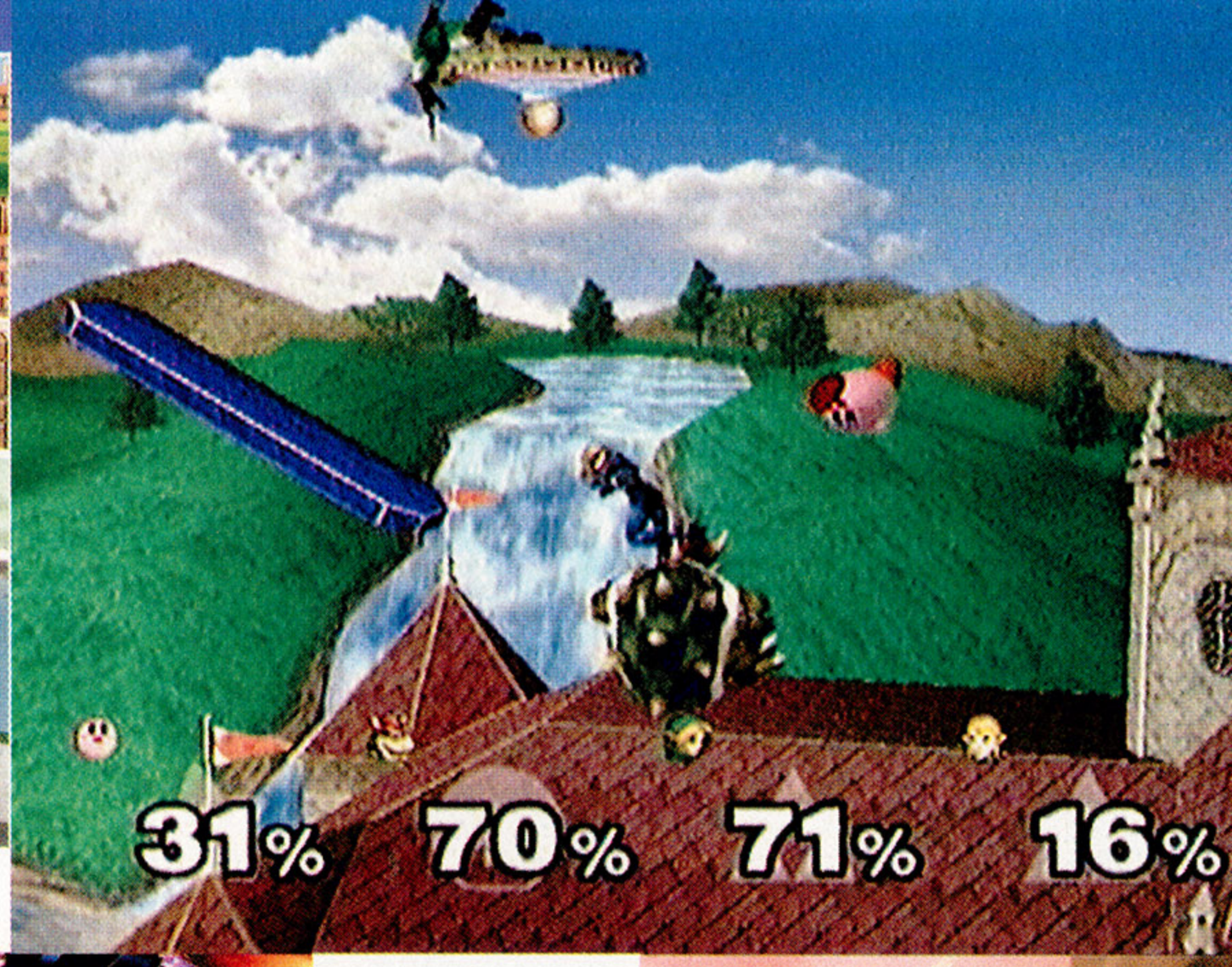


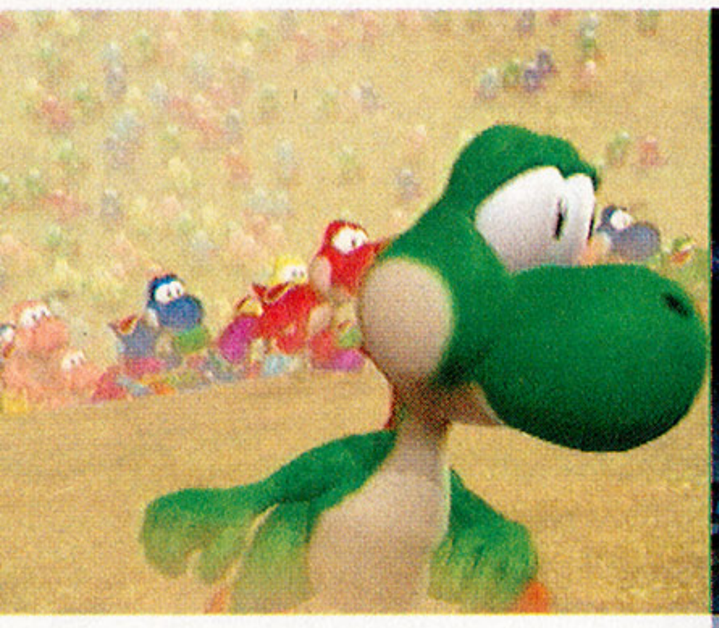


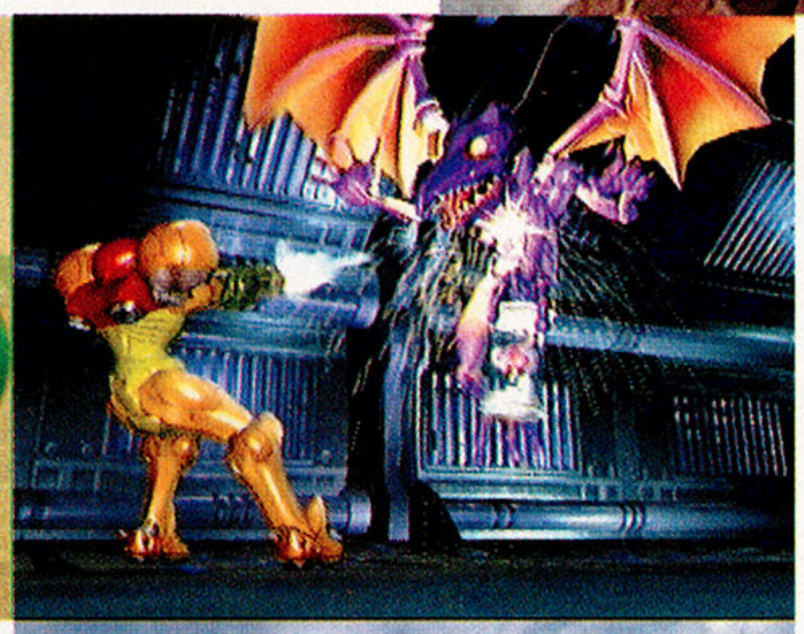








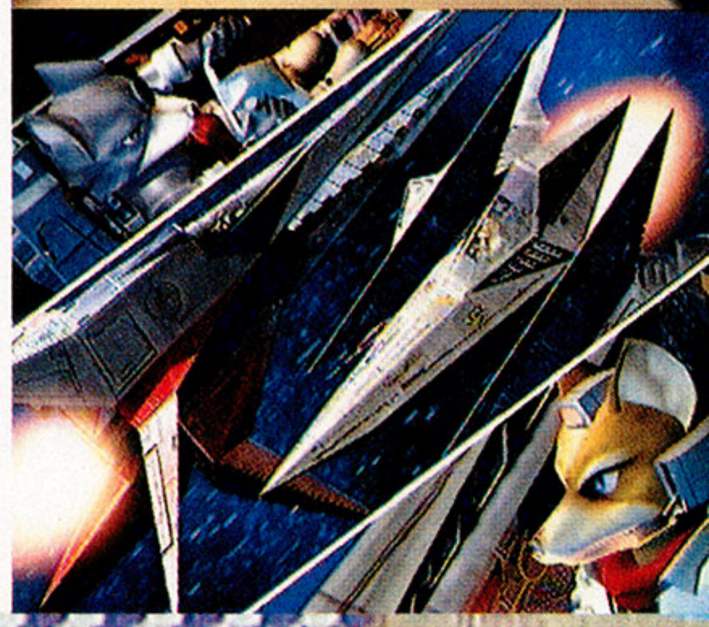






Yoshi, Samus, Fox—the Nintendo boys and gals are back in town in Smash Bros. Melee, not to mention strutting their stuff in the game's sweet intro, seen here. New brawlers such as Sheik and Zelda have joined the brawl now, too. But what about that rumor that we might see Sonic? "It isn't true yet," Sonic Team leader Yuji Naka tells us, "but as for in the future, I don't know. I have a really good relationship with Nintendo, so we could do that kind of thing—but it is not realized yet."

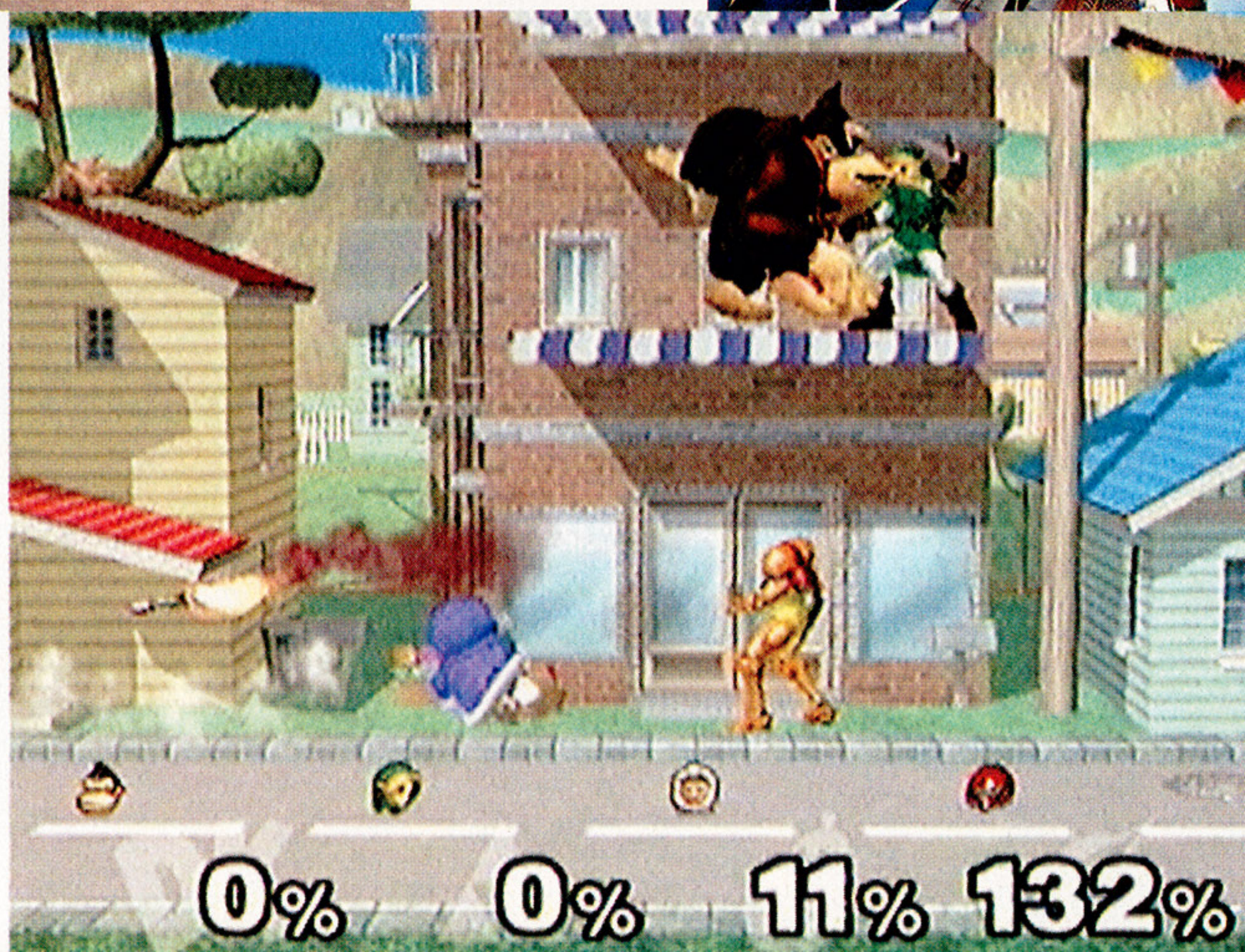




such as hidden mini-games, new camera controls, a snapshot feature where you can take pictures, and a bit where you can trade in points for figures of Nintendo characters. We're sure there's plenty more, and we'll be back with more hands-on as the GameCube launch approaches.

What do we think of it? While this was one of the most popular GC games at E3, opinion among the *EGM* staff was divided. Most of us loved the game, though a few felt that SSB Melee was little more than a high-res version of the N64 hit, with an identical fighting engine. We all can't wait to get our hands on the game, though, so we can unlock all the secrets and master the new juggles and combos. That is, as long as we can get used to playing with the GameCube controller. Since the B button is smaller than the A button (and you really need to use both quite a bit), the button pressin' didn't feel quite right for us veterans of the N64 game.

The EGM Smash Bros. Melee Wish List: Hey, Nintendo—if it's not too late, we'd like to see the following classic Nintendo characters in SSB Melee: Wario, Toad, Ganon, Pit (Kid Icarus), R.O.B. the Robot, anyone from Punch-Out!!, anyone from Pro Wrestling (Kin Corn Karn?), Mike (StarTropics), one of the ducks from Duck Hunt, and the fat guy with the great slapshot from Ice Hockey. Oh, and last but not least, Nintendo Corporate Limited Prez Hiroshi Yamauchi.





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PIKMIN



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Release: December 2001

What's it all about? Pikmin (no relation to Pokémon, thank goodness) is a brand-new title from Nintendo game god Shigeru Miyamoto, and it's certainly unlike anything we've seen before from the father of Mario. Inspired by Miyamoto's recent preoccupation with gardening and the natural world, Pikmin tells the tale of a spaceman whose ship has crashed on an alien planet with a toxic atmosphere. To escape the planet, the spaceman enlists the help of the native "Pikmin," a race of small, plant-like creatures, to find the missing parts to his spaceship and get on home.

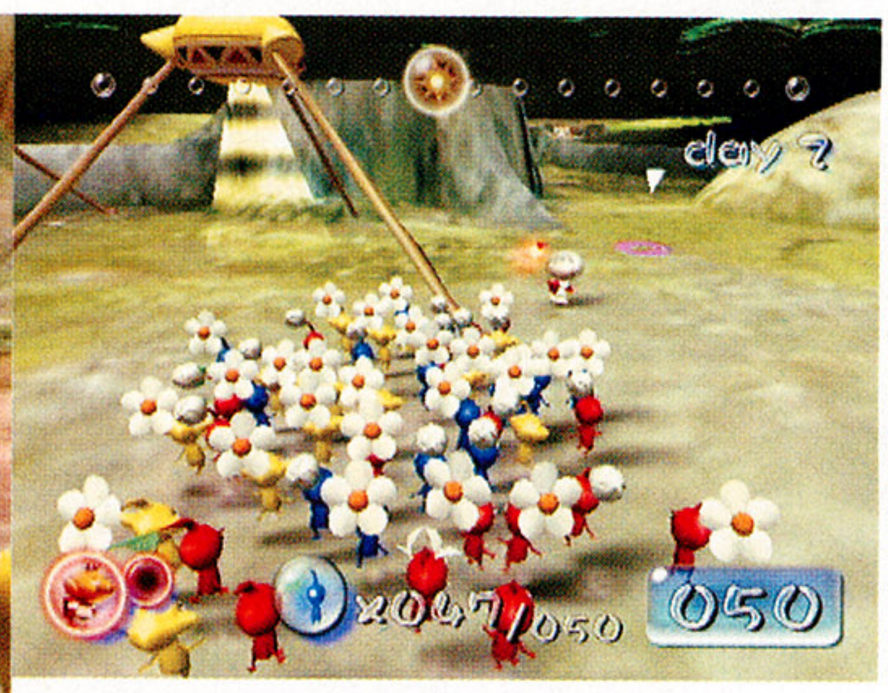
Pikmin plays out like a real-time strategy game, but with simpler, more accessible gameplay. The idea is that you pluck Pikmin from the ground at various stages of growth and then guide them around to perform various tasks for you, such as carrying objects back to the camp, building bridges and roads, knocking down walls, and of course fighting enemies. Pikmin come in three colors, each with different attributes, and you can have more than 100 of them with you at any one time, working simultaneously on different tasks. Time progresses in the game, and if you don't round up all of your Pikmin each night, they'll be gone by the time morning rolls around.

What do we think of it? The Pikmin demo at E3 was all too brief (only three areas), but once we got the hang of the controls, we simply could not stop playing. The game is remarkably easy to get into, and the charming atmosphere and addictive gameplay provide for an oddly relaxing experience. While the slower pace and micro-managing style of the game may not be for everyone, most gamers won't be able to resist Pikmin's cutesy grip and innovative design. Hey, it is Miyamoto, after all.

It's like being in Shigeru Miyamoto's backyard... No, really. According to Miyamoto, many of the objects and textures in the game's environments were taken directly from photographs of the surrounding areas near his home. Hope there's nothing illegal growing back there. Although we wouldn't be surprised to stumble on some mushrooms and warp tunnels.







Best GameCube Game:
ROGUE LEADER: ROGUE SQUADRON II

Funny thing...the GC game that impressed us most packed spaceships and John Williams tunes, not coins and gay Mario music. Since Nintendo didn't have that Mario 64-quality killer app, we were more wowed by LucasArts' showing (see page 66) than Luigi, Smash Bros. Melee or anything else first-party.

Graphics of this calibur have never before been seen on a handheld system, and the first time you see Rayman, you will be stunned.
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WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM





Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo Software Technology
Release: November 2001

What's it all about? Wave Race: Blue Storm is the sequel to the critically acclaimed first-generation Nintendo 64 JetSki racer, Wave Race 64. The style of the game remains pretty much the same, but developer NST—the same crew that ported Ridge Racer to the N64—has improved the gameplay on all fronts. They've added realistic weather effects that can change in a moment's notice; a turbo meter that you can use for added boosts; a four-player split-screen mode (the original only allowed for two); and, of course, more riders and tracks. The already amazing wave physics have been enhanced (the JetSki's wake now factors into play), and the graphics are astounding.

What do we think of it? Blue Storm is basically Wave Race 64, but with more of everything. More graphics, more stunts, more variation in the courses, etc. The controls are super tight and the game looks fantastic.

Al Roker's Wave Race? One of the features of Blue Storm is the ability to customize weather patterns before entering a race. You can decide how cloudy or clear it'll be, when a storm will roll in, and so on. Nice!





STAR FOX ADVENTURES: DINOSAUR PLANET



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Rare
Release: November 2001

What's it all about? Formerly in development for Nintendo 64, Dinosaur Planet has now become Star Fox Adventures: Dinosaur Planet, and is scheduled to launch alongside the GameCube system this November. It's a 3D action/adventure, similar in style to the N64 Zelda games (even the Z-targeting is the same), but starring Fox McCloud and his fruity-looking dinosaur sidekick, Prince Tricky. You'll find several massive worlds to explore, new Star Fox-esque flying sequences (yes!), and plenty of hand-to-hand combat involving Fox's mystical new staff, which can transform into more powerful configurations as you progress through the game.

What do we think of it? Star Fox was a bit unpolished at the show, but the potential is clearly there. After all, with Zelda-inspired gameplay and GameCube-quality graphics, how can you go wrong? That dinosaur sidekick seemed kinda whiny, though.

The Krystal Method: In the unreleased N64 version of Dinosaur Planet, there was a second playable character named Krystal. She wasn't playable in the E3 version of the game, but she was mentioned. Could she be playable on GameCube as well?



Fun for Babyhead means plenty of new music to drool over.

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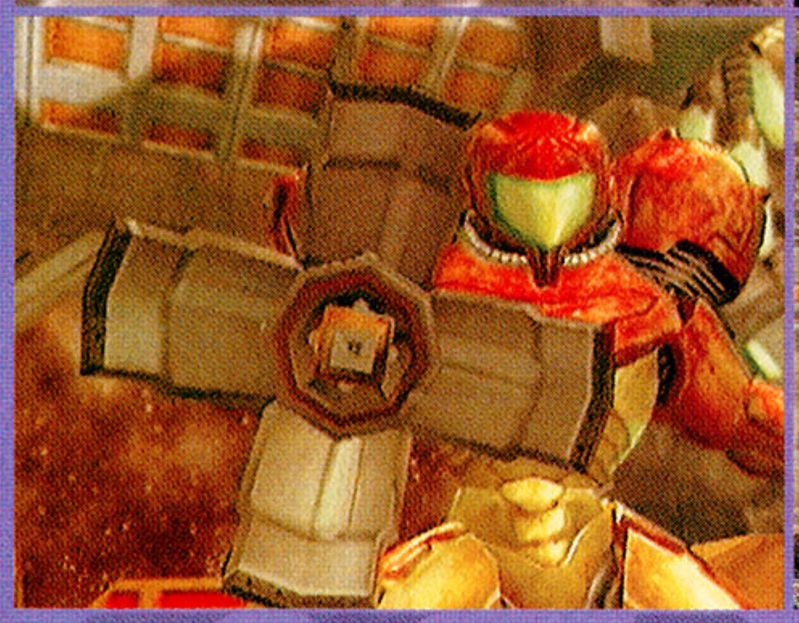
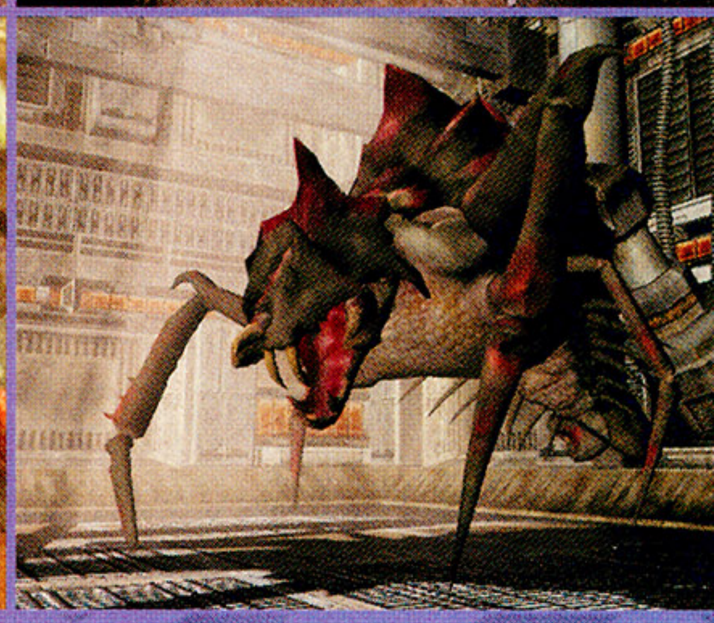
METROID PRIME

Publisher: Nintendo **Developer:** Retro Studios
Release: 2002
What's it all about? The long-awaited return of Metroid comes to us from Texas-based Retro Studios in the form of a first-person-shooter prequel to Samus Aran's previous adventures. Unfortunately, Metroid Prime was not only unplayable on the E3 show floor—the video segments that were featured didn't show any gameplay whatsoever. We only saw some snappy cinema scenes of Samus, her ship, and some huge, nasty enemies. Of course, the videos were nice, and we're certainly interested in what Retro has to offer. But the question is: When can we see the actual game?! C'mon, we're starving here!
Miyamoto on Metroid Prime: "I am overseeing it and I am working with a lot of the developers from previous versions, and you don't need to worry about anything. The game is going well."





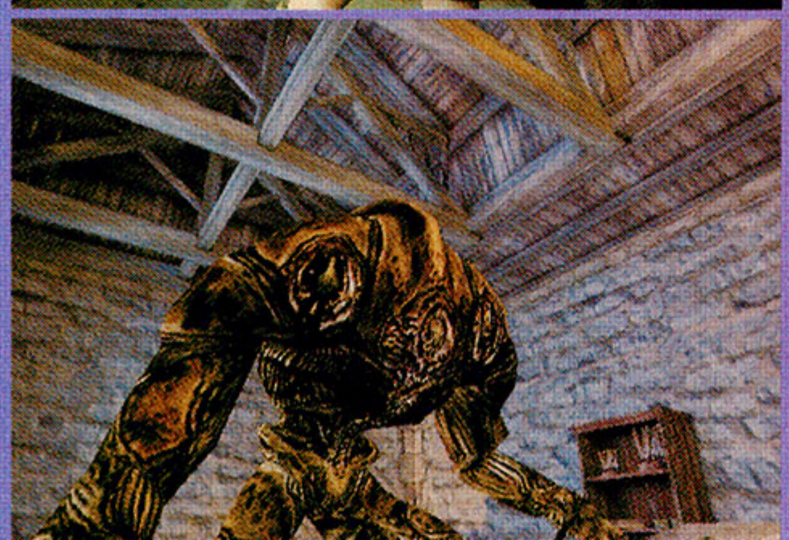
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

Publisher: Nintendo **Developer:** Nintendo
Release: TBA
What's it all about? Despite the pre-show rumors, there was no playable Zelda for GameCube at E3. The only footage shown was the same video we saw at Spaceworld last August (just a few seconds of Link fighting Ganon). However, Shigeru Miyamoto did confirm to us that the next chapter in the Zelda series will indeed make its worldwide debut this coming August at Spaceworld 2001 in Tokyo. We've got our plane tickets already.
The real legend of "Zelda" One interesting bit we learned at E3 was the origin of the name "Zelda." According to Miyamoto, the name came from none other than Zelda Fitzgerald, wife of the famous American author F. Scott Fitzgerald. "We wanted a good name...a kind of eternal female name, a name that's going to last and have appeal," says Miyamoto. "(She) was a rather famous woman who was kinda strong and so we decided to go with her name."

ETERNAL DARKNESS

Publisher: Nintendo **Developer:** Silicon Knights
Release: December 2001
What's it all about? Eternal Darkness is another former N64 title that wound up switching tracks to GameCube. Unlike most GC fare, this game is a Mature-rated "psychological thriller" in the style of Resident Evil (but in full 3D) that features a dozen or so playable characters. The plot spans thousands of years and has several gameplay quirks, the most interesting of which is the sanity meter. Your player can go insane and start hallucinating if you can't keep it together during play.
What do we think of it? Any game in which you can attack enemies limb by limb and go insane sounds like fun to us.
Asinus Asinum Fricat: Eternal Darkness features loads of voice acting, some of which includes other languages and dialects. One scene in particular had characters speaking in Latin with English subtitles. Exquisitus!



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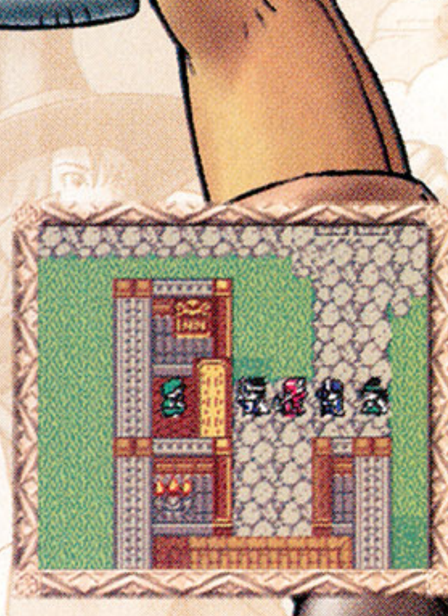

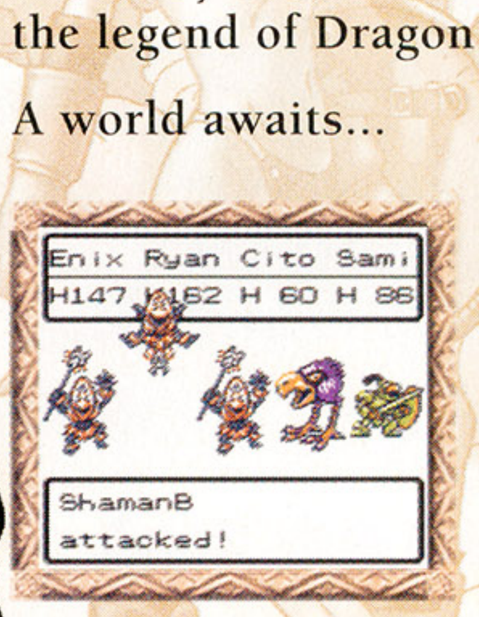



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KAMEO: ELEMENTS OF POWER









Publisher: Nintendo **Developer:** Rare
Release: 2002

Tucked away in the back corner of Nintendo's booth was Kameo, an original 3D title that draws obvious inspiration from Pokémon. The game stars a young girl who possesses the ability to capture small monsters and then raise them for use in battle. They even evolve, just like Pokémon. The catch here is that you can actually get inside the monsters and control them yourself, switching between them freely to make use of their special abilities. The Kameo demo at the show was very early, but the ideas expressed have potential. There wasn't enough there to get a decent feel for the game—chances are good we'll be seeing it again next year at E3.





NBA COURTSIDE 2002

Publisher: Nintendo **Developer:** Left Field
Release: November 2001

Courtside 2002 is the latest edition of Nintendo's Kobe Bryant-endorsed basketball series. The game's biggest innovation is its unique passing system, which allows players to control their passes independently with the C stick. For the most part, however, if you've played the N64 versions, you should know what to expect here. Courtside was probably the least exciting GC game at Nintendo's booth. It didn't look particularly amazing, but the gameplay is still solid and the control is tight.



DISNEY'S MICKEY FOR NINTENDO GAMECUBE



DONKEY KONG RACING



RAVEN BLADE



ANIMAL FOREST

And the rest...

A few other Nintendo games were revealed on video or mentioned in press materials, but nothing substantial was shown. The most exciting of these is undoubtedly **Mario Kart for Nintendo GameCube** (tentative name), which we hope to see more of at Spaceworld in August. A brief video was shown of **Disney's Mickey for Nintendo GameCube** (also tentative), a 3D Mickey Mouse platformer being worked on jointly by Nintendo and Capcom. Rare showed FMV of **Donkey Kong Racing,** a new racer where DK characters take to the sky and the ground on their animal friends. And Retro showed video of **Raven Blade,** an action-RPG with realistic sword fighting and martial-arts techniques. Nintendo also announced a GameCube version of **Animal Forest,** the N64 import that we previewed last issue. More new games are scheduled to be announced at Spaceworld.

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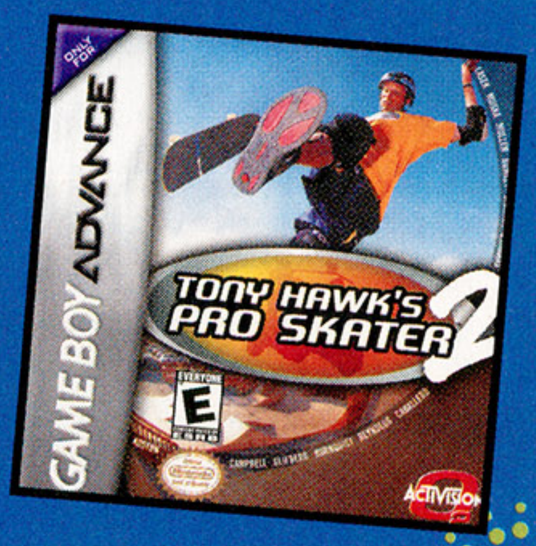





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GAMECUBE: THE THIRD-PARTY SCENE

Third-party support was abysmal on the N64, but that's expected to change on GameCube. Several third parties pledged GC allegiance prior to or during E3, including EA, LucasArts, THQ, Namco, Activision, UbiSoft and Tecmo. The biggest news came from Sega, who announced plans for 10 titles (only three were at the show—see below). Still, the number of third-party games shown at E3 was kinda small. Here's what we saw...



Biggest Surprise:
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE FOR GAMECUBE

We were pleasantly surprised to see a working PSO for GameCube. What a way for Sega to start off on Nintendo's new console! And since it has split-screen play (and, Sega of America is telling us, online play), you can now physically beat up anyone who tries to gank the goods from your fallen character.

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** Sonic Team
Release: Winter 2001
What's it all about? Sonic Team's online RPG is headed for the GC. And even though Nintendo hasn't said a word about their network plans, both Sega of America President Peter Moore and VP of Corporate Communications Charles Bellfield told us the game will be online—although PSO creator Yuji Naka has been cagey on the subject in the Japanese press. It also packs a new four-player split-screen mode, as well as additional enhancements beyond what's in Version 2.
What did we think if it? The version of PSO at the show was thrown together in less than a month, and it looked great even in four-player split screen (pictured below), with no slowdown or loss of detail.
The mystery: Can gamers on the GameCube version play online with Dreamcast PSO players? Sega says they're looking into it. The outlook ain't good, since the GC version has features the DC game doesn't. Let's hope it works—it'd be a shame to fragment the PSO community.



Let's talk with...



Yuji Naka
President of Sonic Team

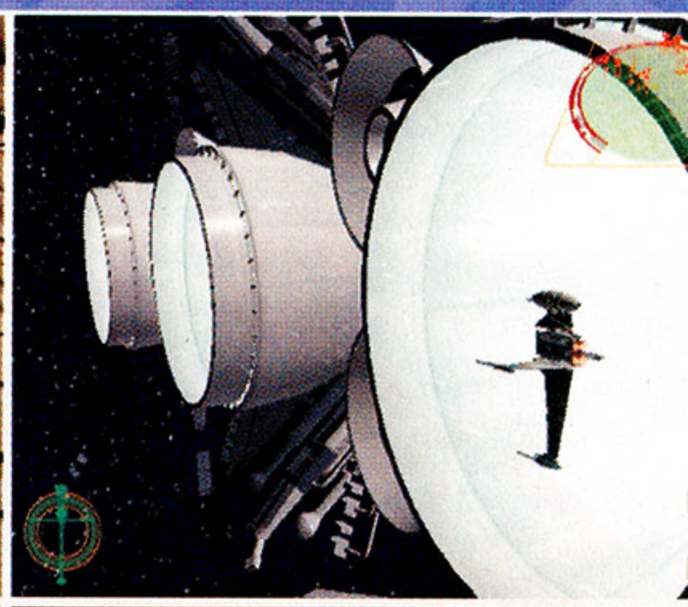
EGM: Why did you choose GameCube for PSO over another system like PS2?
Yuji Naka: I think that the architecture on GameCube is similar to the Dreamcast. Sega and Nintendo have the same experience—Sega Saturn was really difficult to develop for, so Sega had to make Dreamcast easier to develop for. Also, Nintendo 64 was a limited platform too, so they have also gone and made GameCube easier to develop for.

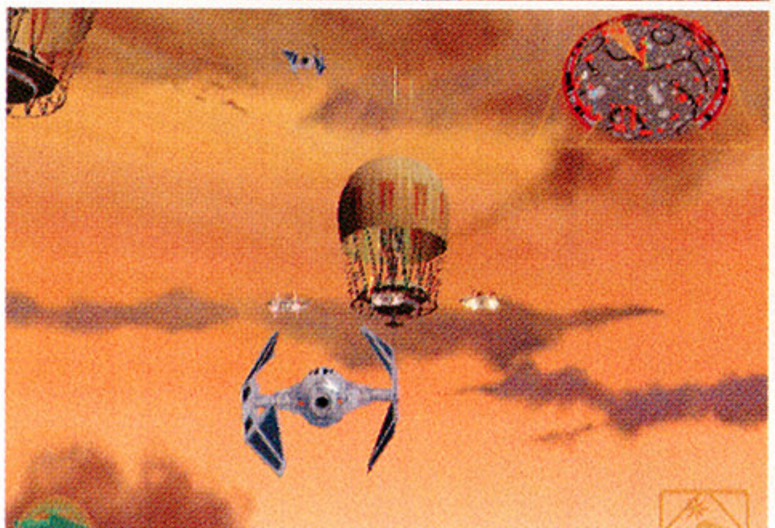
EGM: Have you thought at all about using the GBA to interact with the GameCube version of PSO?
YN: I'm not sure at the moment, but it's possible—I'd like to try. I'm very interested in this kind of interaction, but right now, I'm not sure.

EGM: Will you ever team up and design a game with Miyamoto?
YN: I talk to Nintendo, like joking about doing something or whatever. But not at the moment—it's just talk for now. Even if it's going to happen, it's a very tough kind of thing to develop a game together.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER: ROGUE SQUADRON II









Publisher: LucasArts **Developer:** LucasArts
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? Launch title Rogue Leader is like an 11-level tour through everything cool in classic *Star Wars*.
What do we think of it? Three levels of the game were available at the show, and we shot through them several times. Put simply, this game *is* the movie. Infamous ripped-from-the-flick lines like Obi-Wan's "Use the force, Luke," ring out at the right times. The virtual cockpits look fantastic (you can peer around them with the C stick). And the game plays great with the GameCube controller.
What's in it for the geek in us? Remember the targeting computer that flipped over Luke's eye in the trench run? You can activate it anytime you like and see your targets in weird infrared vision. Just remember to switch it off before you lob torpedoes into the Death Star.

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MADDEN NFL 2002

Publisher: Electronic Arts **Developer:** EA Tiburon
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? The latest edition of the most popular football franchise in gaming history will hit GC as a launch title. The show-floor demo was obviously early, but the final game is expected to be on par with the PS2 and Xbox versions. No major new features are planned over last year's PS2 game, but expect astounding graphics and trademark Madden gameplay.
What do we think of it? Madden was pretty much how we expected it to be—a lot like 2001 on PS2. We preferred Sega's NFL 2K1 last year, but with no 2K games coming to GC until next year, Madden will more than suffice for pigskin fans.
So which console version looked best? The PS2 game looked best by a hair. But don't despair—EA told us the PS2 version was the furthest along, and the game will look the same on all three systems.









SUPER MONKEY BALL









Publisher: Sega
Developer: Amusement Vision
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? Sega's debut GameCube title is an enhanced port of Amusement Vision's wacky arcade/action puzzle title, Monkey Ball. The idea is simple: Using the analog stick, you wiggle the floor in order to roll your monkey-in-a-ball toward the goal. Along the way you collect bananas, avoid traps and obstacles, and race against the clock. A four-player split-screen mode has been designed for the home version, as well.
What do we think of it? It's got a monkey encased in a ball, for crying out loud! We love it! Seriously though, the simple yet addictive play had us glued to the controller. This could easily become one of the GameCube's sleeper hits this fall.
But where's the banana? The arcade version of this game had you wielding a banana-shaped controller to wiggle the playfield. No such luck at home, unless you slap a real banana on your GameCube pad. But hey, how you slap your banana at home is your business.







DAVE MIRRA 2

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS: THEME PARK CREATION

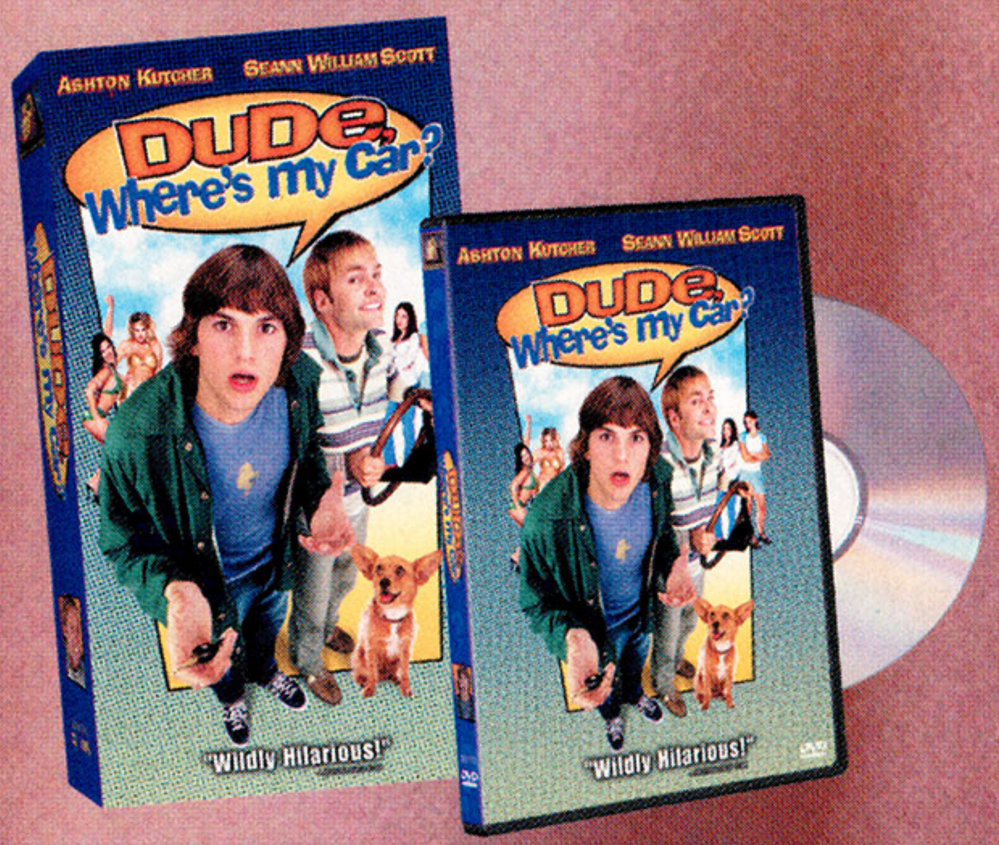
And the rest...

Elsewhere on the show floor, Kemco had video running of two GC titles, **Batman: Dark Tomorrow** and **Universal Studios: Theme Park Creation**. Sega had video of **Virtua Striker 3 Ver. 2002**, their popular arcade soccer game. Acclaim showed brief snippets of the next Turok, called **Turok Evolution**, scheduled for both GameCube and PlayStation 2. And a ton of other upcoming titles were announced, including: **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Spider-Man: The Movie, Crazy Taxi, 18 Wheeler: American Pro Trucker, All-Star Baseball 2002, QB Club 2002, Dave Mirra 2, Legends of Wrestling, Jeremy McGrath, Extreme G3, SSX Tricky, Hot Wheels, Rayman Tribes, Rogue Spear, Donald Duck, NFL Blitz 2002, NHL Hitz 2002, Rugrats, Scooby-Doo** and more than a dozen others. As you can see, GameCube is already faring much better than the hard-to-develop-for N64 did in terms of early third-party support, and chances are good things will only get better.

Laugh Till It Hurts!

DUDE, Where's my Car?





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NINTENDO GAME BOY ADVANCE

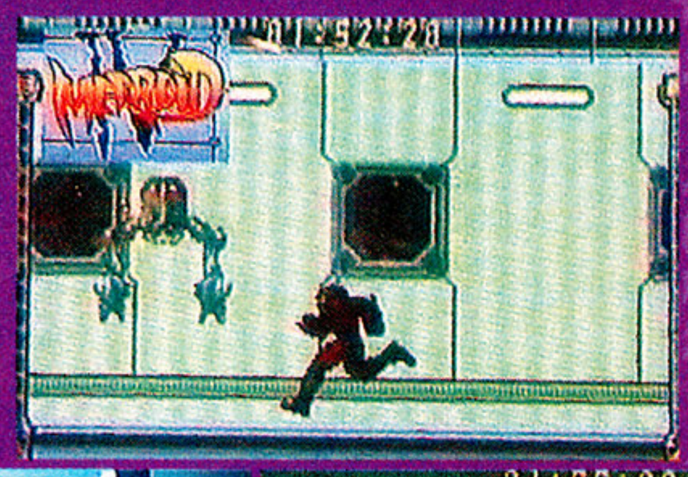


With all the big console buzz at E3, Game Boy Advance was widely overlooked—which is a shame because we saw many solid games on display. Nintendo had a strong showing, with several titles both playable and on video. Rare has some interesting stuff in the works, too. You can see their four GBA titles at the bottom of the page—and note that Diddy Kong Pilot uses the "tilt" technology made famous in Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble. Third-party games included Sonic's GBA debut, as well as a Harry Potter title.

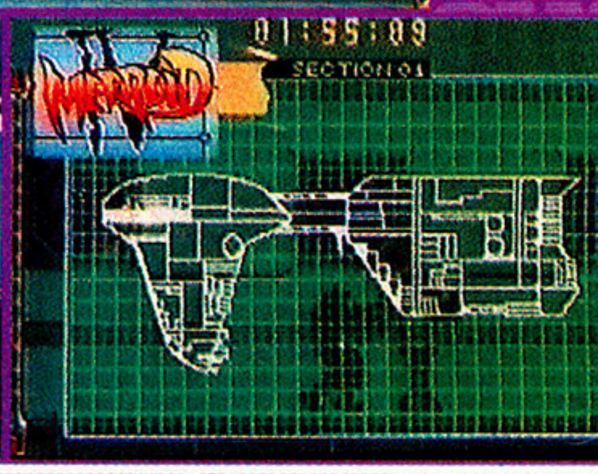
METROID IV

Publisher: Nintendo **Developer:** Nintendo
Release: TBA

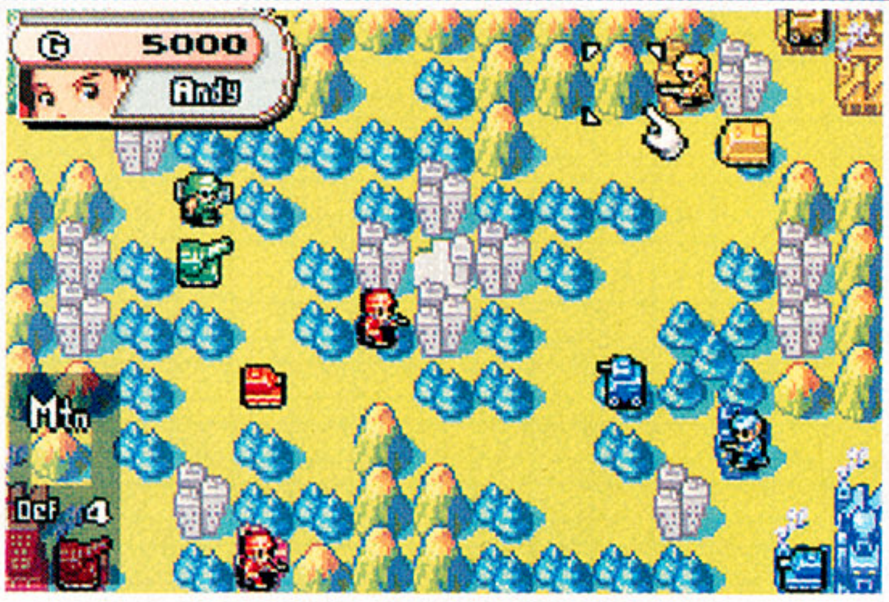
In-game Metroid footage was on display at Nintendo's booth, just not for the system everyone was hoping for. But, hey, we'll gladly take a new 2D Metroid, thank you. The start of the demo held the biggest surprise, showing Samus merging with a Metroid, her armor becoming more organic as we watched. We have to wonder if this is just a plot device or if it will mean new powers and abilities. It also looks like this new adventure takes place on a giant spaceship, and the ever-present ticking counter at the top of the screen made us wonder if the entire operation has a time limit. Perhaps the ship is set to self-destruct or crash? Otherwise Samus looked very much like her Super NES self, spinning, shooting different beams from her arm, and running straight up walls with exploding death following close behind. The backgrounds were dull at this point, but that's hopefully for the same reason the game wasn't playable: It's still too early. And since the GBA version is being handled in-house at Nintendo, by many of the series' veterans, we're not worried.

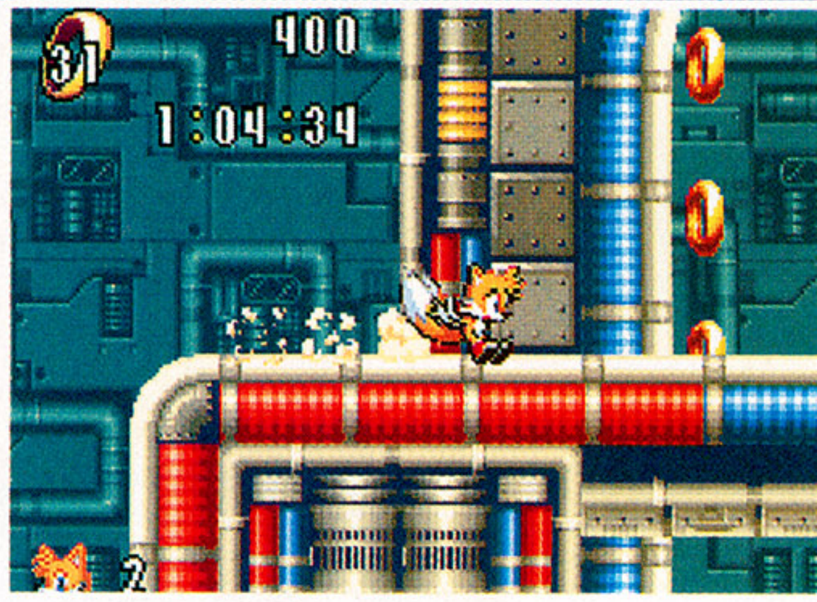












WARIO LAND 4

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Release: November 2001

Wario 4 features side-scrolling gameplay similar to the past games but with much-improved graphics and one major tweak: Wario is no longer invincible. Now, you must collect heart pieces to increase health, and the treasure you find can be used to purchase items to use against your enemies. It looks and plays great.

ADVANCE WARS

Publisher: Nintendo **Developer:** Intelligent Systems
Release: September 2001

Part of a long-running, popular series in Japan, Advance Wars is a finely crafted military strategy game that can be played by up to four players using the GBA Link Cable. Even though you'll have to worry about traditional strategy elements such as unit deployment, terrain, climate, weapons, funds and so on, the game is still very easy to get into, and a lot of fun to play.

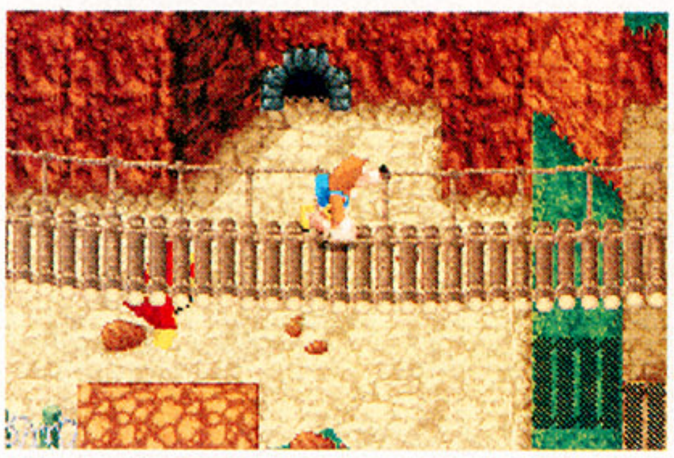
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG ADVANCE

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** Dimps
Release: November 2001

Yuji Naka claims the newest portable Sonic is true to the series' roots. But the little blue guy won't just be challenged by obstacles and robots—he'll also have to solve some puzzles. He can even grind rails like in Sonic Adventure 2.









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Best Xbox Game:
ODDWORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSEE

Jet Grind Radio Future, Dead or Alive 3 and Halo were all impressive, but our favorite Xbox game is still Munch's Oddysee. While we're not sure this 3D Oddworld game will be better than the previous 2D editions, we are sure this will be one of the finest Xbox titles in this fall's lineup. See page 78 for more on Munch.

MICROSOFT XBOX

BILL'S MEAN MACHINE COMES OUT STUMBLING





Nintendo fans might like to imagine that all holy heck broke loose in Microsoft's HQ the day before E3, when Nintendo announced that GameCube would launch in the U.S. on Nov. 5—three days before Xbox. Truth is, no red-alert sirens or mad cries for battle stations rang out through Microsoft's camp, not even a few days later when Nintendo set the GameCube's price at $199, a full $100 less than Xbox. "We knew Nintendo was going to be out there," says Ed Fries, Microsoft's VP of games publishing. "That's not a surprise. But I think there's going to be so much excitement built up this Christmas, from all the stuff that's happening, that we're going to sell every Xbox unit, regardless of the competitors' launch or pricing strategies."

Yep, Microsoft is confident. When we point out that PlayStation 2 is hitting its stride this year, Fries sticks by his games, pointing to the nine first-party titles playable in Microsoft's booth. "Sony doesn't even have that many first-party titles in its year two," he says. "I'm going to launch with at least half a dozen first-party games, and I mean big ones. Sony launched with what? Fantavision?" When we wonder aloud about the stuttering framerates seen on a few Xbox games on the floor, we're assured they'll run smoothly on the final dev kits, which finally reached developers the same week as the show. And when we bring up Nintendo's booth and its big-name franchises, Fries says, "Nintendo's going to do some great games. They always have, and they have Miyamoto, who is great. But it takes more than a few great games to win the console war. It takes a steady stream of great first-party and third-party games. Nintendo, they didn't show a single third-party game at their press conference. What does that say about their support from third parties?"

When Xbox hits on Nov. 8, it will launch with 15 to 20 first- and third-party games (you'll find them on the next few pages), all aimed at the same demographic as PS2 titles—as opposed to Nintendo games, which Microsoft claims are more of a "Fisher Price" experience. Fries says he can think of at least 80 games in the works exclusively for the system now. And if the big guns in Xbox's launch arse-

nal—games such as Halo and Project Gotham—don't pack the same big-name firepower of competing megaton franchises like Gran Turismo or Mario, that's what Microsoft's $500 million marketing budget is for. "Everyone is going to know about Halo by the time we get to launch," Fries says. "Everyone is going to know about Munch. Virtually all our TV advertising will focus on games, and TV ads will almost be all in-game footage."

Meanwhile, PS2 will go online this fall. And Xbox...won't. Although you'll be able to link two systems together—or several systems via a network—for multiplay in games like Halo, you won't play anything over the Internet on your Xbox until the middle of next year. Still, after eyeing Sony's network plans, Microsoft isn't concerned that the PS2 will get a leg-up. "We asked gamers what they want when they go online," says Seamus Blackley, manager of the Advanced Technology Group and the man who kicked off the Xbox project. "Ninety percent say they want to play games. We asked, 'Would you be interested in browsing the Web?' 'No,' they said. 'Would you be interested in instant messaging?' 'What's that?' Maybe Sony talks to different people."

When Xbox does go online next summer—first with straightforward multiplayer stuff, then with massively multiplayer games six months to a year after that—Microsoft is promising an easy, slap-in-your-game-and-go experience, with one network providing all the online goods. "You're going to have one user name and one password for all Xbox online games," says J Allard, general manager of the Xbox platform. "You're going to have one place to save your games online. You're going to have one way to move a memory card over to your friend's house and have it identify it. It's going to work. It's going to be safe. You're going to get one bill, no matter whose content you're purchasing or subscribing to." But that's all Allard will tell us right now. He won't say a word about price, other than it will be affordable, and that the Xbox network will work with existing broadband online services.

But we do know one thing for sure: Microsoft has its work cut out for it when it ships between 600,000 and 800,000 Xbox units at launch. Aside from having to lure gamers from the competition, Microsoft still has to worry about that other thorn in its side—lack of Japanese support. Right now, the company's first-party Japanese development offices are cruising along just fine, with a staff of 100 developers and 12 projects in the works (none for the system's U.S. launch). But what about the big Japanese third parties like Square, who at one time seemed on the verge of hopping aboard. Well, don't expect them to join the party just yet—for starters, it appears Square's monthly billing plans for online subscriptions to Final Fantasy XI don't jive with Microsoft's one-bill-for-everything scheme. Still, the boys from Redmond have made progress on the Japanese front. Of the roughly 2,500 dev kits sent out to developers, about a third are in Japan. And let's not forget that Tecmo is on board with the Xbox-exclusive Dead or Alive 3. Sega announced 11 Xbox games, including Jet Grind Radio Future, Sega GT 2002, Panzer Dragoon, Gun Valkyrie, Crazy Taxi Next and House of the Dead 3. "People think Japan is this mysterious place," Blackley says, "and it's not. It's like a country with some guys in it. Game developers are game developers. You just have to convince these guys that you're not a big gaijin devil who will take over their business and make them slaves of this western technology and give them a raw deal."

Blackley says Microsoft has made a lot more progress with developers in Japan than is immediately clear. "We're a lot closer than anyone knows," he says. "It's just that a lot of the Japanese publishers are super-secret. Many don't like to make announcements until they can show games to go along with them."

Capcom is one of those companies. It just announced three Xbox games at the show: Genma Onimusha, Dino Crisis 3 and a "robot simulation" codenamed Brain Box from Resident Evil producer Shinji Mikami. "We see the Xbox as the system for hardcore gamers," says Yoshiki Okamoto, president of Capcom-offshoot Flagship. "That's why we're releasing Dino Crisis 3 for it. If we port the game for GameCube, which we don't think of as a machine for hardcore gamers, then it won't do well. I can say the same thing about PS2. I think Xbox is in a similar position to where Dreamcast was. Now Dreamcast is fading from the market, so we can say we'll make games for Xbox instead of Dreamcast."

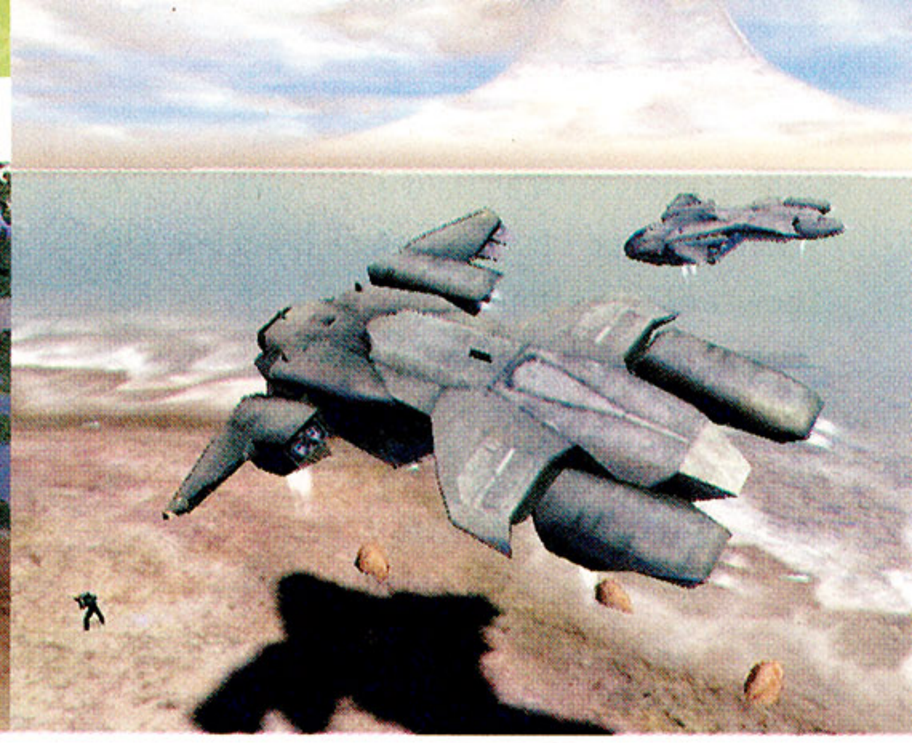





Munch's Oddysee pg. 78

HALO

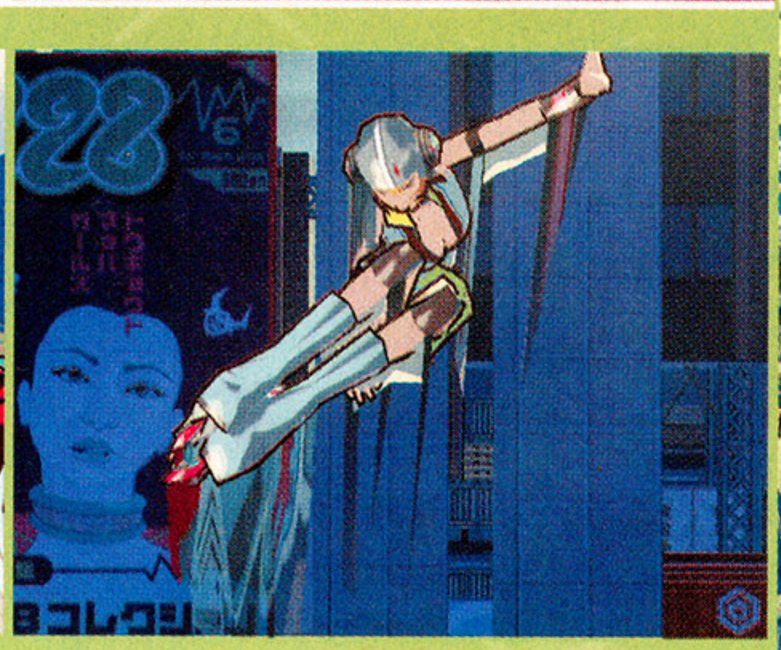


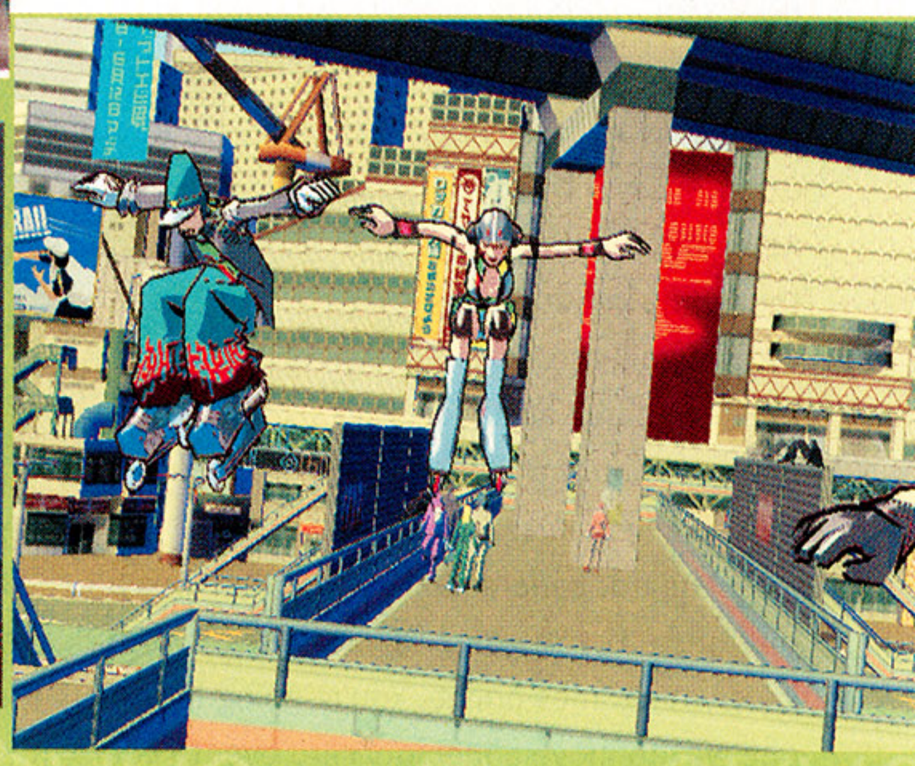


Publisher: Microsoft **Developer:** Bungie
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? Anyone who's seen this xenophobic first-person shooter before E3 knows that Halo is all about massive outdoor environments, squad-based tactics, and tearing up the back roads in a military jeep. This launch game definitely skews toward adrenaline rather than long drawn-out adventures; there's you, an assault rifle in your hands, a platoon of friendly AI, and plenty of purple-blooded aliens to mow down. As a single-player experience, surprisingly little emphasis has been placed on Halo's back-story. To compensate for its online inadequacies, Microsoft had Halo on four linked-up Xboxes running in tandem for a 16-player capture-the-flag skirmish at E3. The game also supports Microsoft's headset mike for trash talking during network play.
What do we think of it? Halo was obviously enjoying its 15 minutes of fame at E3. We had to shove our way through the crowd and wrestle the Xbox controller out of some pimply dotcommer's hands just to see what all the fuss was about. What we like about Halo is its epic sense of scale. From the intro sequence, where you're flying in a dropship overlooking lush alien landscapes, to the breach and descent into the bowels of an alien outpost, Halo backs its elegant visuals with tight, responsive gameplay.
What's this about a slideshow mode? You'd have to be blind—or in denial—not to see Halo's framerate dipping into the teens in both single and multiplayer. But keep in mind that the show version was still running on the early alpha Xbox dev system, which only approximates the final beta kit's power. In fact, all Xbox games at the show ran on the alpha hardware. Microsoft reps said they sent out the final kits to developers just before the show. They also assured us that Halo would run at 60 frames per second, even in split-screen multiplayer, when it's released at launch. "Bungie's approach is to get the whole world right, put in everything they wanted from a gameplay point of view, and then optimize," Microsoft's Seamus Blackley tells us.









JET GRIND RADIO FUTURE

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** Smilebit
Release: Winter 2001
What's it all about? Sega and Smilebit aren't about to let the poor sales of the first Jet Grind Radio keep them from taking another crack at the series on Xbox. Featuring the same cel-shaded graphics that made the first game famous, JGRF will also pack a new four-player split-screen mode that was sorely lacking from the original Dreamcast title and a much-improved tricks system.
What do we think about it? JGR blazed the cel-shaded graphics trail a year ago, and it looks like Smilebit has all but perfected it in the sequel. With a horizon that extends as far as you can see, this was easily the most impressive-looking Xbox game at the show—and it was still very early in development.
Jet Grind PS2? When asked about the possibility of JGR coming to other systems, Smilebit Vice President Takayuki Kawagoe wouldn't confirm or deny it. He just smiled and said he couldn't tell a lie, so he wouldn't say anything at all.



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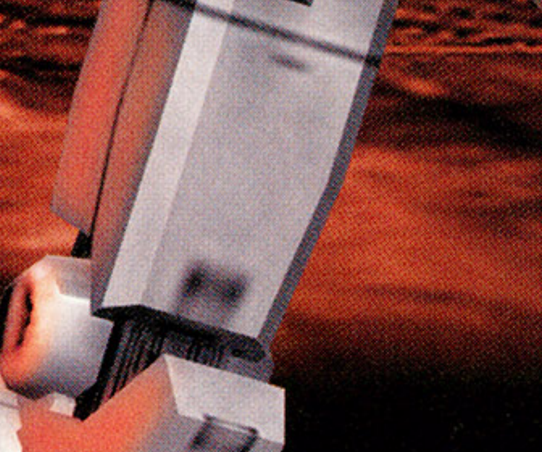

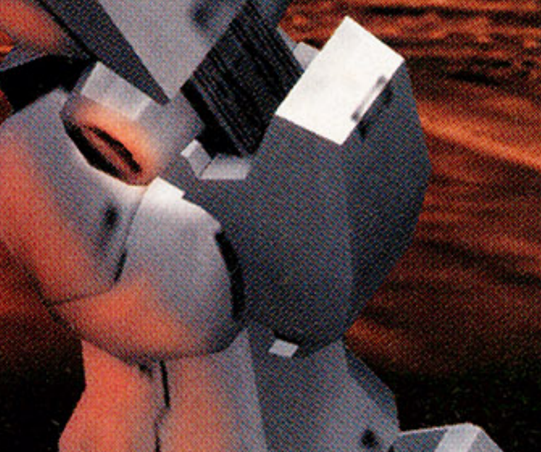

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MEDAL OF HONOR: ALLIED ASSAULT



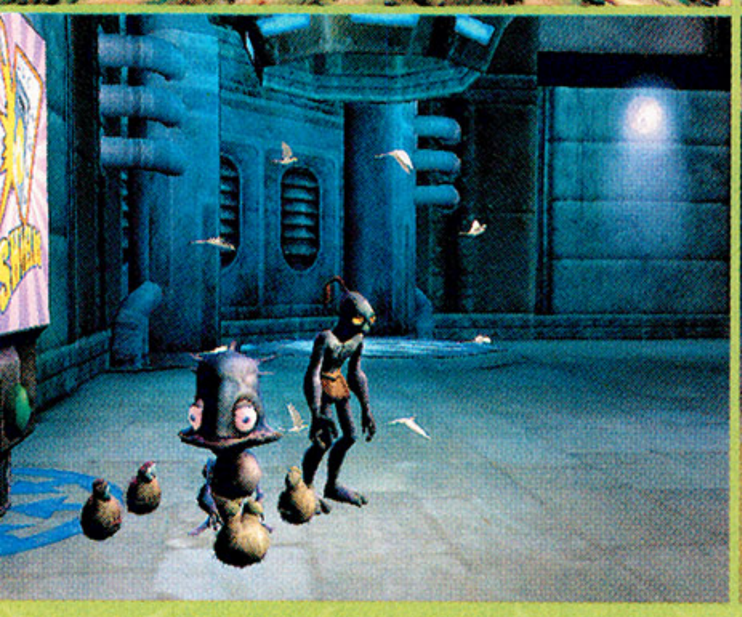
Publisher: Electronic Arts **Developer:** Electronic Arts
Release: Winter 2001

One of the most stunning games of the show, Allied Assault was actually only on display in movie form in a tricked-out EA theater. But that only seems appropriate, since the first level of this game looks straight out of *Saving Private Ryan*. Allied Assault immediately hits you over the head with a sledgehammer by dumping you from a seafaring transport that's being pounded by machine gunfire. As you storm Omaha beach, your comrades get chopped to bits while artillery fire reigns down on you from every side. But as impressive as Omaha Beach was, the game's attention to detail is more evident than in a mission (one of 20) called "Snipertown," which is set in a battered French town enveloped in gloomy thunderstorms. Every building is accessible, and finding the best perch to pick off Nazis is essential to survival. The screen here is from the PC version, but we're told it will look the same on Xbox.

ODDWORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSEE









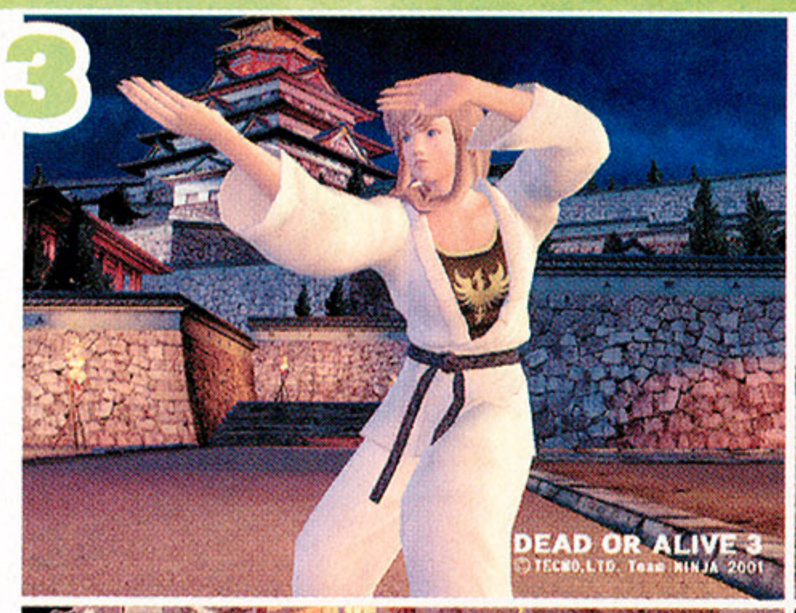
Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: Oddworld Inhabitants
Release: November 2001

What's it all about? It's the game Microsoft is going to show off time and again since the developers publicly proclaimed the Xbox is the only console powerful enough to realize their creative vision. In this third installment in the Oddworld series, you control Abe and newcomer Munch in an adventure to rescue Abe's mum. You can switch between the two characters at will, using their skills to help solve puzzles and get past obstacles.

What do we think of it? The controls still need some work, but Munch's Oddysee is the frontrunner in the Xbox launch lineup to deliver the most fun for the buck. Plus, it was one of a handful of Xbox E3 titles that looked like a console game and not a PC title.

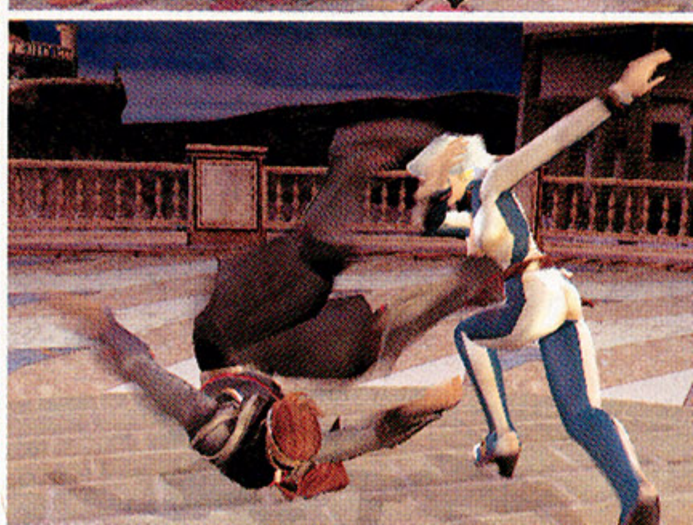
Microsoft's lil' buddy: Oddworld Inhabitants' Lorne Lanning has become as much a spokesdude for the Xbox as a developer for it. When he announced Munch would leave PS2 for Microsoft's machine, he called the Xbox the "future" and the PS2 the "past." Ouch.

DEAD OR ALIVE 3









Publisher: Tecmo **Developer:** Tecmo/Team Ninja
Release: November 2001

See the screenshot of Ryu Hayabusa (that's the ninja guy) in the forest with all those leaves (approximately 5,000 in the entire scene) fluttering around him? That's all being done in real time thanks in part to the Xbox's hard drive and its ability to swap data out at a fast rate. Tecmo/Team Ninja brought a batch of hot-off-the-dev-kit real-time trailers of their next-gen fighter Dead or Alive 3 to E3, with new sequences in the forest and of one of the new characters—a young European girl sporting a karate gi. Gameplay will once again feature the one- to four-player tag-battle system, but the environments have grown in size immensely. That means more pounding your opponents through walls and throwing them off cliffs to new areas. The soundtrack will reportedly feature big-name artists, though Tecmo hasn't announced specifics yet.

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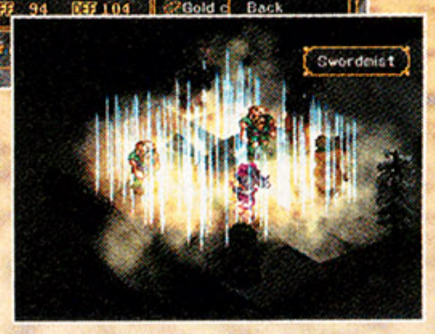

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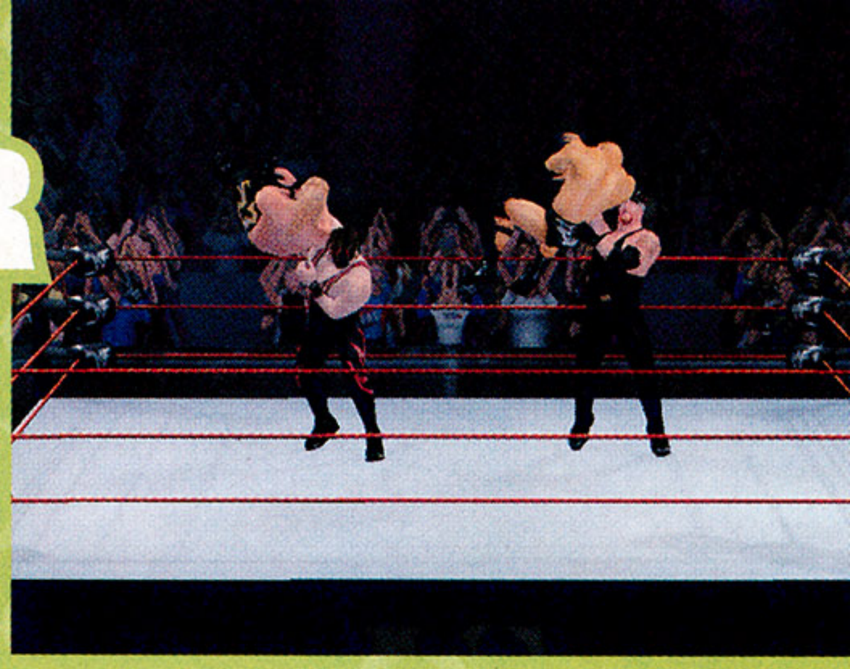
WWF RAW IS WAR

Publisher: THQ **Developer:** Anchor
Release: November 2001



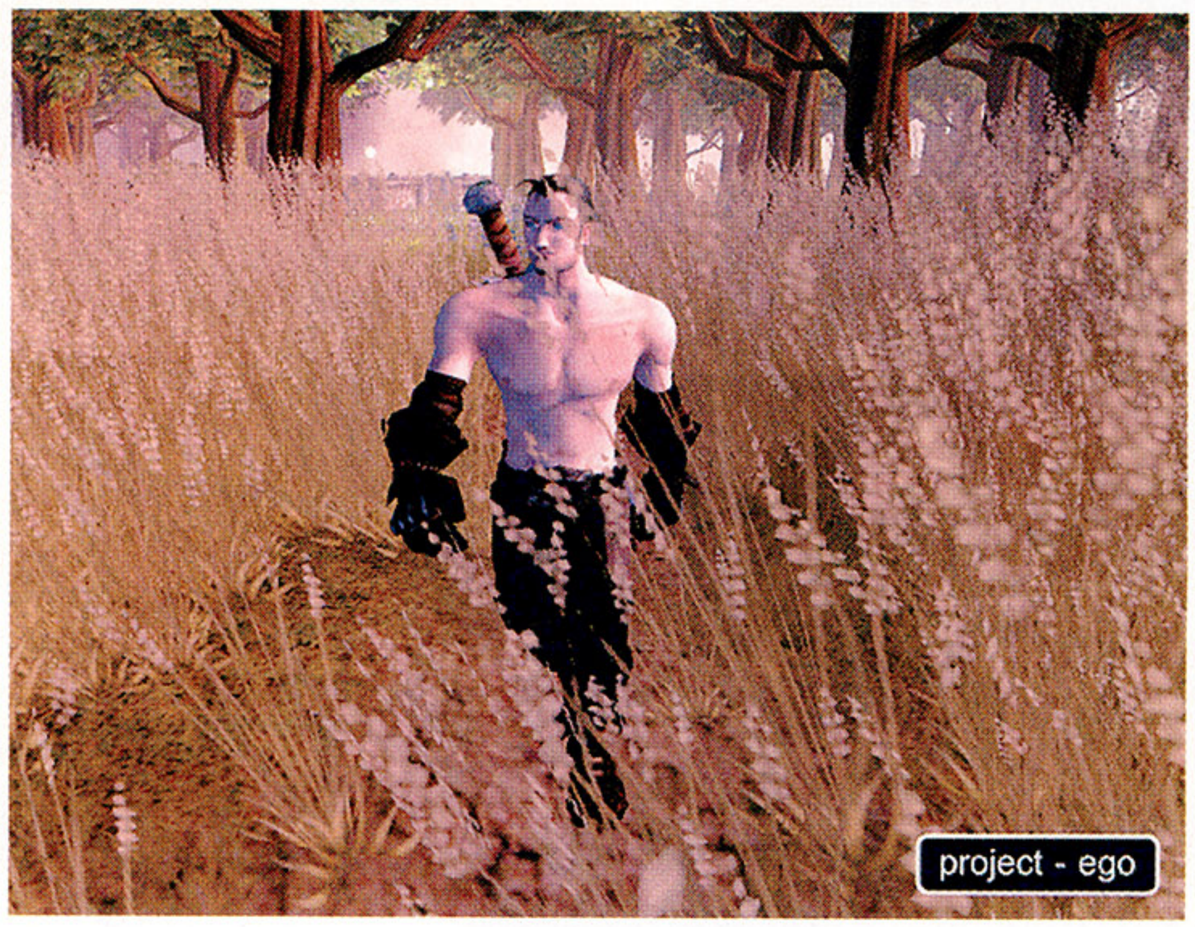


What's it all about? The WWF demo at E3, while hampered by a choppy framerate and sparse backgrounds, displayed the most realistic character models we've seen yet. The Rock, Chyna and 35 other WWF stars never looked so lifelike. So it's pretty, but how does it distinguish itself from the usual? For starters, the action in the ring frequently spills out into the audience itself. Rowdy fans will scatter as the wrestlers migrate freely. Backstage high jinks are equally fresh as environments randomly change depending on the venue. In other words, you won't be stuck fighting in the same locker room all the time.

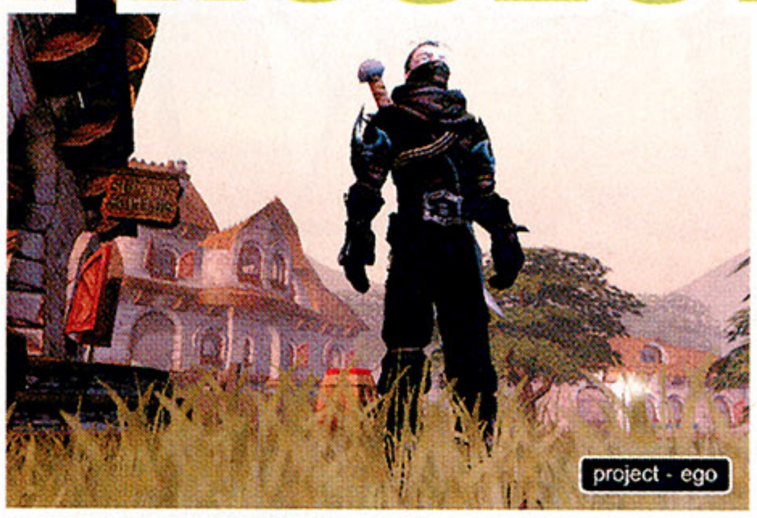
What do we think of it? While the E3 demo gave us a good idea of how the final product will appear, it didn't reveal a lot about gameplay. The game still has a way to go in that department. The pace, however, stays true to the realistic themes—instead of jerky robotic movements, for instance, the wrestlers really "sell" their moves. We're not sure how that will affect gameplay, but it sure looks impressive. As far as control, don't expect anything groundbreaking. Your standard chops, kicks and slaps are handled by one button while grappling and power moves are performed using the Xbox controller's selection of other over-sized buttons.

What about the ladies? With Women of Wrestling (WOW) beginning to take off, it's only a matter of time before a savvy publisher picks up the property. Those gals would sure look purdy on the Xbox. How about it, THQ?





PROJECT-EGO



Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: Big Blue Box/Lionhead Studios
Release: 2002

What's it all about? PC game god Peter Molyneux (Populous, Theme Park, Black & White) is working on one of the most ambitious projects we've seen: a console RPG that takes character evolution to new and amazing levels. "You start out as a 15-year-old boy or girl whose family was murdered, and you grow to about 80 in game years," explains Molyneux. "As you evolve, you can get tan lines and wrinkles if you choose to adventure outdoors a lot. If you don't participate in a lot of physical activities, your character will grow up to be skinnier than one who does. You can also cut a village kid and return years later, only to find him grown up with a scar where you injured him."

What do we think of it? We're terribly excited about Project-Ego, even though it's still at least a year away from completion. Molyneux and his teams have revolutionized gaming time and time again, and we just can't wait to see what they can do here.

Who does this guy think he is? We had to ask Molyneux—who after all comes from a PC background—why he thinks he can get away with making a console RPG. "My first thought is that I know very little about making console games, and that what I'm attempting is a very big challenge. But it's challenge that I thrive on," he replies, adding that classics such as the N64 Zeldas, the Final Fantasy games and Legend of Mana inspired him to try his hand at a console RPG. "I feel that the key to this is the realization that I'm going to be making accessible entertainment that will be played while sitting on a sofa, perhaps after a night's drinking...and that a lot of techniques that I find safe on a PC in design terms will have to be revised."



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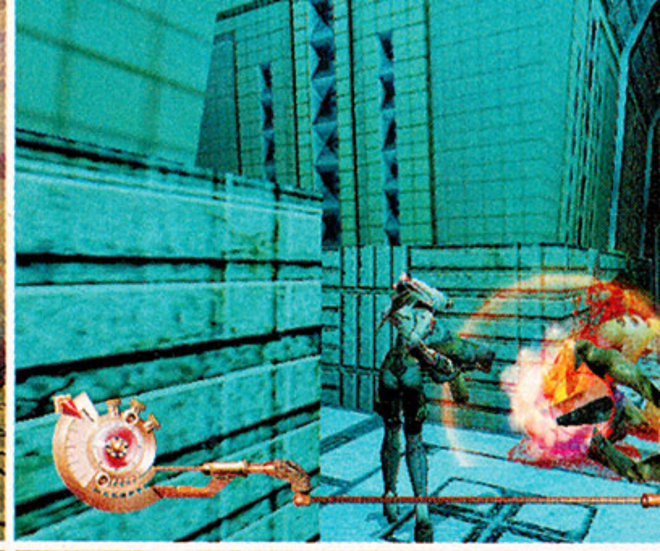
GUN VALKYRIE

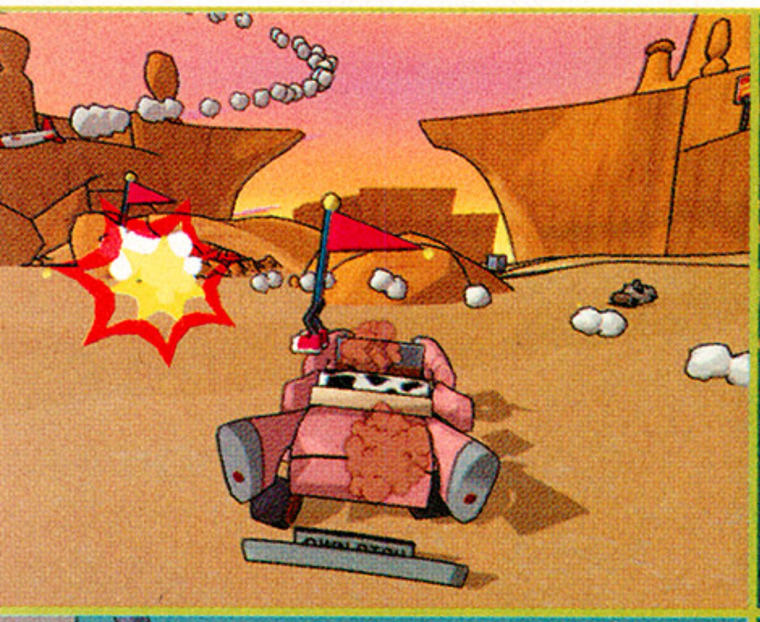
Publisher: Sega **Developer:** Smilebit
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? It's too bad Gun Valkyrie was tucked away behind the great wall of Sega. As one of the more impressive-looking Xbox titles we've seen, it could have given Microsoft a much-needed boost of confidence from E3 attendees. This game puts you behind the shoulders of a Gun Valkyrie taskforce member on a mission to rescue some do-gooder doctor from alien clutches.
What do we think of it? Gun Valkyrie has great potential. You use the left analog stick to move and strafe, while the right analog stick controls your aim, like in most console first-person shooters. The music and gameplay reminded us a bit of Panzer Dragoon, sans the dragon.
Why is Smilebit making so many Xbox games anyway? "I think what [the teams] looked at was where they could really feel comfortable quickly, and Smilebit liked Xbox," Sega of America Prez Peter Moore tells us.

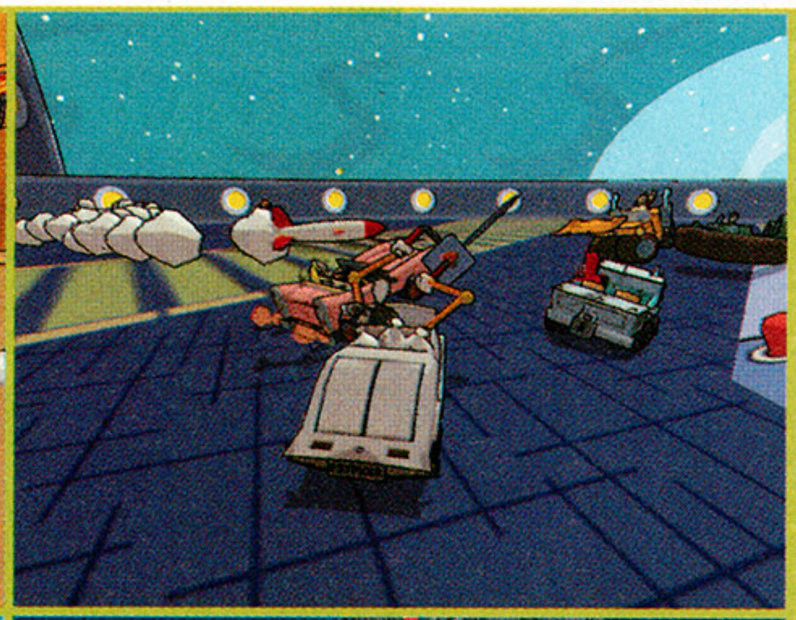


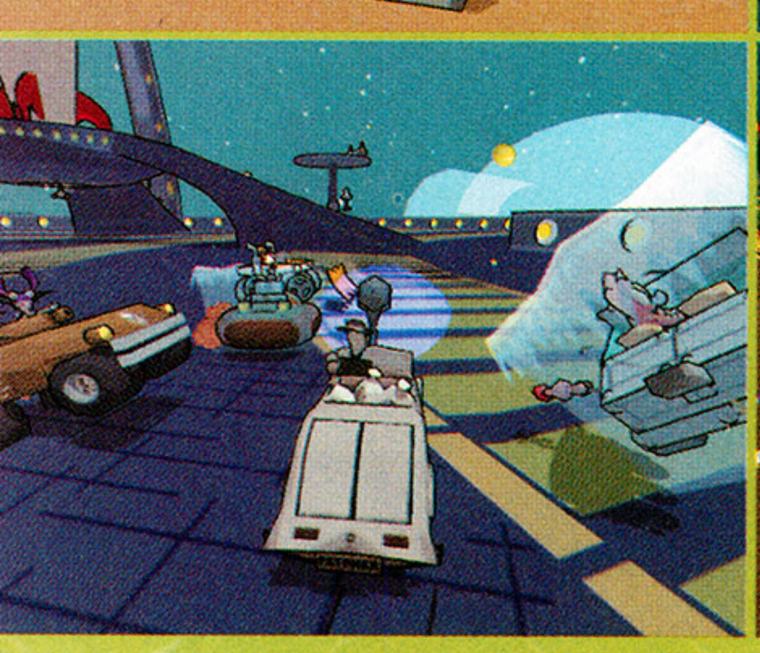














CEL DAMAGE

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Pseudo Interactive
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? Think Twisted Metal meets the cel-shaded cartoon world of the Dreamcast's Wacky Races. Cel Damage has your typical free-for-all deathmatch, as well as a battle race and a capture-the-flag mode (with "living" flags that flee). The weapons, stages and characters are all as Acme-cartoony as they can get...enough to make Sweet Tooth puke in disgust.
What do we think of it? This game is plenty fun, with a graphics and physics engine that would make Warner Bros. proud. Still, the novelty of the weapons (such as portable holes or shrink rays) and stereotypical cartoon characters can quickly grow old.
Alert–jab at PlayStation 2 ahead: Microsoft's Seamus Blackley used Cel Damage as an example of why the Xbox hardware is so cool: "Since developers don't have to waste time worrying how to make the hardware do what they want, they can spend all their time and energy working on refining the controls and gameplay."

UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Publisher: Infogrames **Developer:** Digital Extremes
Release: 2002
What's it all about? Take a gander at one of the first Xbox games that will support online play over the Internet (it won't launch until Microsoft's broadband network goes live next year). Unreal Championship will offer online deathmatch for up to 32 players simultaneously, as well as a four-player split-screen mode for the unwired. And how does it look? Let's put it this way: At least 1,000 polygons were used to build a single weapon and 2,500 to 3,000 for each character, not including a separate count for faces.
What do we think of it? UC really was one of the stand-out Xbox games at the show—at least in terms of visuals. We can't wait to test drive this bloodsport online.
How will you control it? Get used to that unwieldy Xbox joypad. According to DE, Microsoft will not allow mouse and keyboard support because the game is solely going to be marketed as a console title.



not too sweet



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MAD DASH RACING



Publisher: Eidos **Developer:** Crystal Dynamics
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? It's like a typical mascot kart-racing game, only without the karts. Race across expansive, themed stages, each with numerous paths and shortcuts. And we mean numerous. "The volcano level in Mad Dash is bigger than the entire game of Gex 3," says Microsoft's Seamus Blackley.
What do we think of it? Mad Dash sounds good on paper, but the early version we played at E3 needed a lot of design work. We found some areas that looked like they should take us somewhere...but didn't.
Been there, done that? You're going to hear lots of comparisons between this game and Running Wild (Universal Interactive) and Pen Pen Trilcelon (Infogrames). The first has animals racing around, and the second features very long tracks that you race through only once. Both kinda sucked.

SHREK



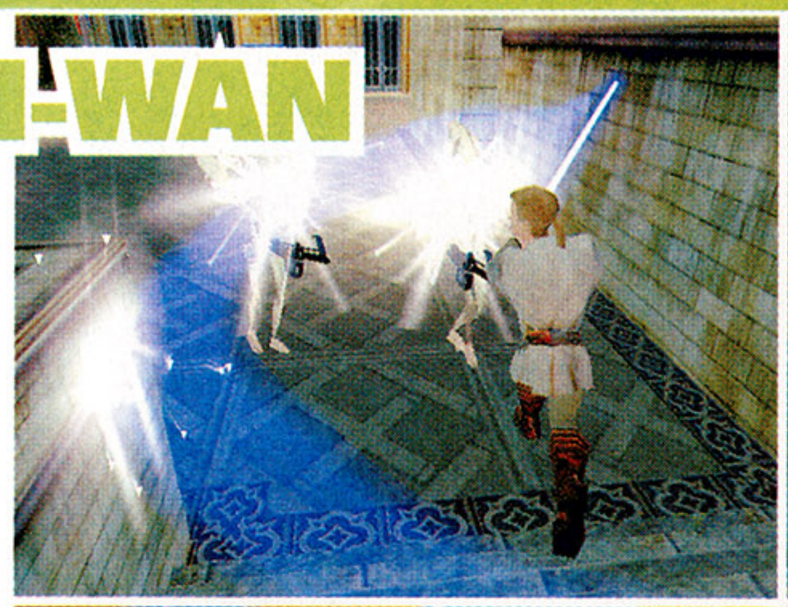






Publisher: TDK Interactive **Developer:** Sandbox Studios
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? More than just a vid-game redo of the flick, Shrek puts a lot of emphasis on puzzle solving and character interaction. In the level we played, Shrek had to wander around a village and help various fairytale regulars with their day-to-day gripes. For instance, he had to help Bo Beep find one of her favorite sheep, as well as turn day into night so the cow could jump over the moon.
What do we think of it? Shrek's character model looked great—especially his facial expressions. And the bump-mapped levels were richly detailed, although they sure were jaggy. The puzzle-rich gameplay itself was intriguing. We had a hard time figuring out a couple of the puzzles, but then the E3 atmosphere isn't exactly conducive to deep thinkin'. Shrek is one of those rare movie-based games that just might be good.
Farting plus fire equals fun... Our favorite part of the E3 demo: We killed two guards in the castle level by farting in their direction, then lighting the gas on fire with Shrek's flame breath.

STAR WARS: OBI-WAN









Publisher: LucasArts **Developer:** LucasArts
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? The title says it all for this Xbox exclusive. You play as an Episode I-era Obi-Wan, tearing your way through Federation droids with only a lightsaber and a rather acute mastery of The Force. The game uses the Xbox's twin analog sticks—one for moving, one for saber swingin'—and allows young Obi-Wan some cool Force-related abilities (mostly throws and acrobatics).
What do we think of it? The dual-stick control took a little getting used to, but then who said being a Jedi was easy? In terms of visuals, it looked a lot like a PC game.
So we're stuck playing the Episode I movie? Don't worry—although much of Obi-Wan follows the plot of the film, you'll go on some other missions that chronicle his early training. You get a combat arena to sharpen your saber skills, too.

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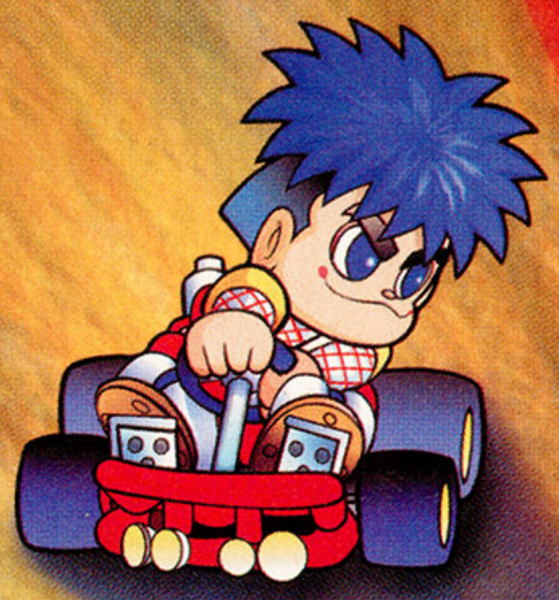



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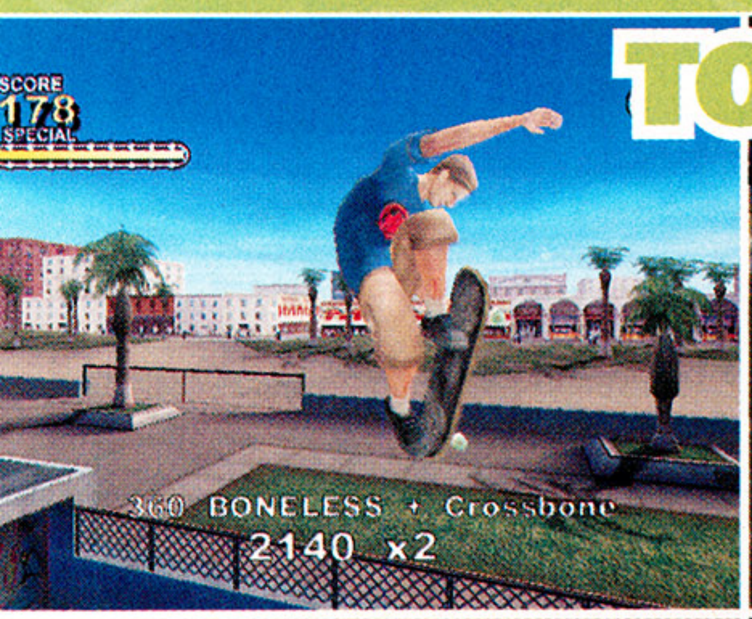
PROJECT GOTHAM RACING

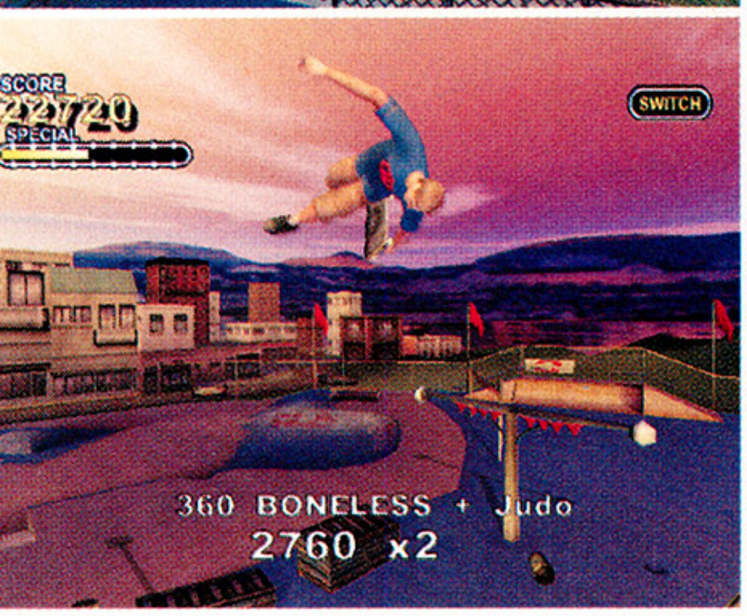


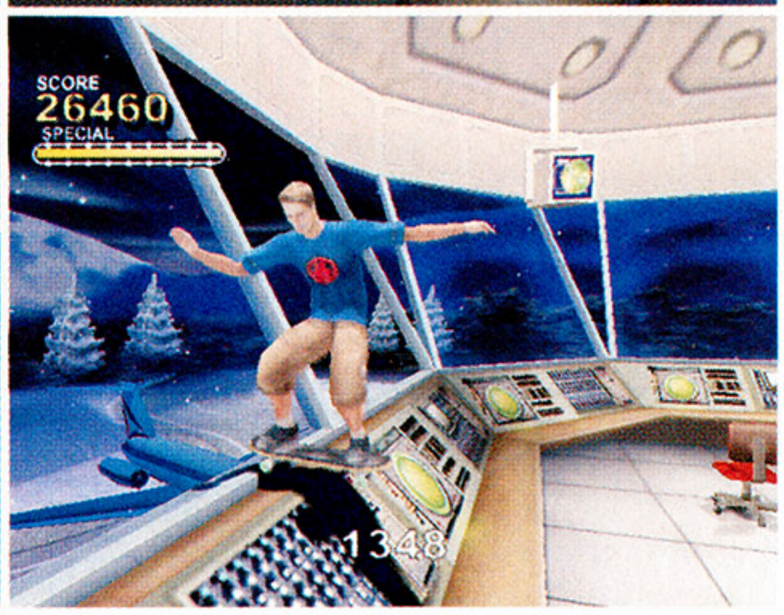
Publisher: Microsoft **Developer:** Bizarre Creations
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? Work began on Project Gotham Racing shortly after developer Bizarre Creations shipped their innovative racer MSR for the Dreamcast. And from the looks of things, PGR is more an extension of MSR rather than a proper sequel. Aside from accurately rendering cities like Tokyo, London and San Francisco, PGR gives drivers the added thrill of drifting across Manhattan asphalt. The power of the Xbox allows PGR to juggle some impressive graphics too. Real-time reflections on cars and wet rainy surfaces, realistic headlight splashes, tons more incidental detail and actual car damage modeling—it's all there.
What do we think of it? It took a couple of laps for us to settle in with the Xbox controller, but after the break-in period, we felt right at home with its MSR-style handling.
Does PGR have a crappy soundtrack like MSR? Not if you rip the songs you want to the Xbox drive.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2X









Publisher: Activision **Developer:** Treyarch
Release: November 2001
What's it all about? Imagine a cleaner-looking, slightly updated version of Dreamcast's Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2, complete with all the levels from the first game and three new skate parks. Developer Treyarch—the gang behind the Dreamcast versions of Tony Hawk—has added a few new areas to the old parks, too, as well as heavily tweaked the visuals.
What do we think of it? Control takes getting used to, but the game sure looks nice, with lots of lens flare and subtle details like mowed grass and 3D daisies.
So is it gonna be online or what? Nope. Microsoft's online gaming network won't be up and running until next summer, so the best you can hope for from this Xbox launch title is four-player split-screen and local-area network play. If you have access to a network in your office or dorm room, you're all good to plug in and play with your pals—as long as they're jacked in, too. You'll have to wait until Neversoft brings Tony Hawk 3 to the Xbox next year to experience full online play.

AIRFORCE DELTA STORM





Publisher: Konami **Developer:** Konami
Release: November 2001
The big deal with this Xbox sequel to the Dreamcast flight-combat game is, of course, the hyper-realistic visuals and detailed plane models (although Ace Combat 4 on PS2 looks a bit better). The framerate in the E3 version was smooth, but the control...ehh. We kept having to look at the controller to find the right button.



Biggest E3 Disappointment: XBOX
It's not that the Xbox sucked at E3. After all, we got to see some cool gaming in Munch's, Halo, DOA3 and Jet Grind Future. But the games didn't wow us like Microsoft wanted them to. Launch is only a few months away...better get some killer apps in the lineup! How about some broadband Phantasy Star Online? Everyone else is doing it... Oh, and fix your controller, too—those face buttons are too close together.



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SONY PLAYSTATION 2

ONLINE AND WITH MORE GAMES THAN ANYBODY



You can feel the confidence radiating from the folks at Sony Computer Entertainment America. You'd almost think the PlayStation 2 is going to be the only gaming system out this fall—the GameCube and Xbox launch announcements didn't seem to phase anyone at Sony one bit. "We don't react to what other people are doing," says Kazuo Hirai, president and COO of SCEA. "We know what we need to do. We know what our vision is and what the steps are to get there, and we execute on that."

While Microsoft and Nintendo are coming out with their guns drawn, Sony relaxes, comforted in the fact that they will have the strongest software lineup with sure-fire hits like Metal Gear Solid 2, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Final Fantasy X and new first-party titles such as Naughty Dog's Jak and Daxter and the online Rainbow Six wanna-be, SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs. Oh, Sony can also sleep easier at night, knowing they have a huge head start with a deeply entrenched installed base of 10 million PS2s worldwide today and if all goes as planned, an estimated 20 million worldwide by March 2002.





Sony also knows it has the ammo ready to combat any online plans the other guys have. SCEA announced at E3 that they will be bringing out a network adapter that will provide both broadband and narrowband connections to the Internet. This winter, they'll also be bringing out a desktop LCD screen, a 40 GB external hard drive, a keyboard and a mouse. Then they have their strategic alliances with AOL, RealNetworks, Macromedia and Cisco Systems (see page 23 for details). Put all of these things together and what do you get? A PlayStation 2 that looks and acts suspiciously like a PC. "A lot of people say [that]," says Hirai, "but what it's becoming is more of a computer-entertainment system. We've always said the PS2 is a computer-entertainment system. It's a natural progression and evolution of the PlayStation 2 experience. Our alliance with AOL, for example, will allow content developers to incorporate instant messag-











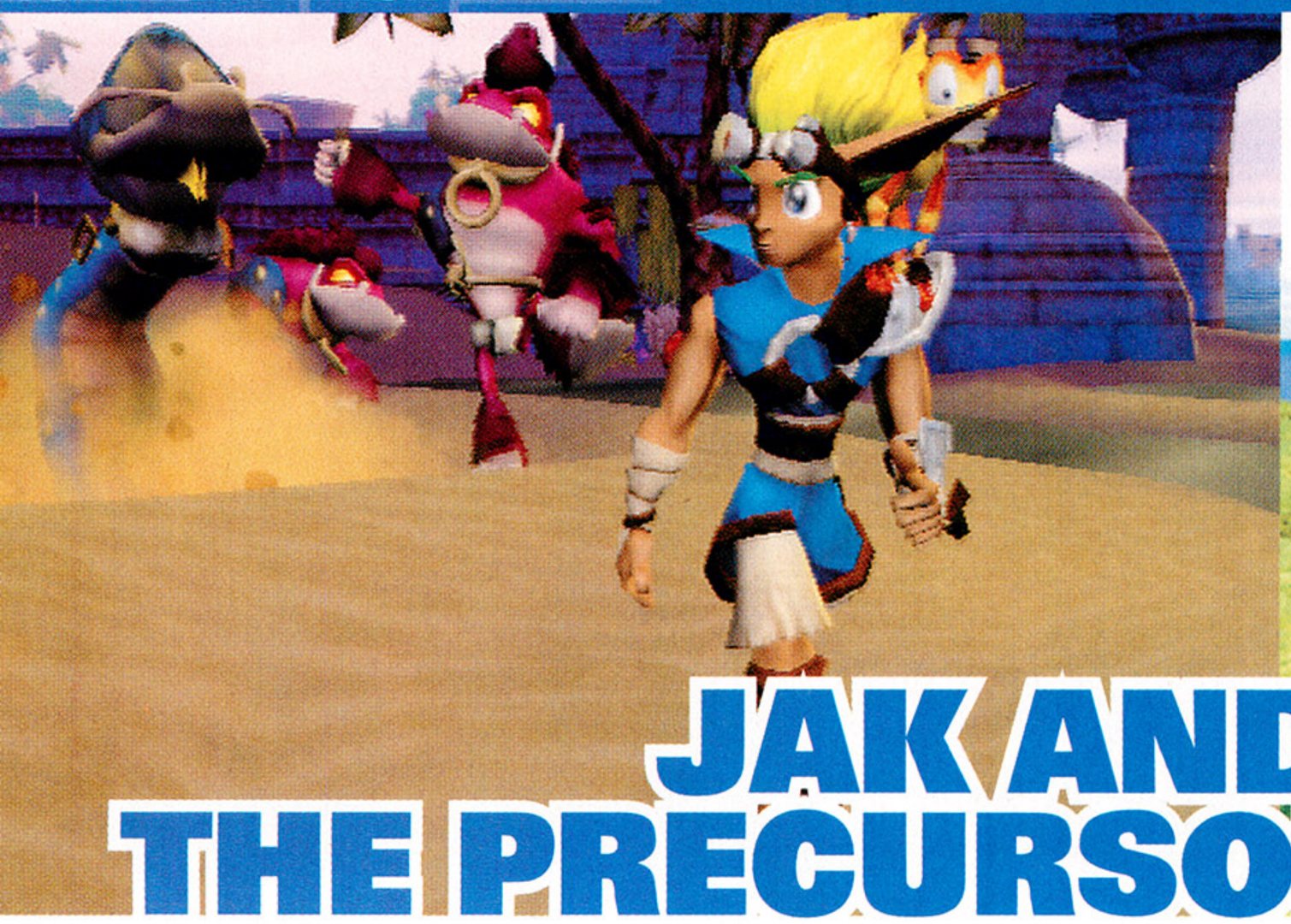


ing and e-mail into their games."

But do gamers want all of this arguably extraneous Internet business in their consoles, "computer-entertainment system" or not? Microsoft, armed with plenty of market studies, is absolutely convinced that we gamers want to play games online right out of the box, and we don't need or want stuff like instant messaging or Web browsers in video-game systems. MS has even said outright that they don't think Sony's going about this the right way. To that Hirai says, "Sony has been in the hardware business for 50 years, and we've also been in the software business for a very long time. We'd like to think we know what the consumers want and what the consumers love."

And what's Sony's response to the industry adage that gamers just don't like buying add-ons for their gaming machines (think Sega CD, 32-X, NetLink...well, just about every other thing Sega has tried pushing on us)? "If you choose to go online, we will make the tools to let you do so, but it's up to the consumer whether he or she would like to try that," explains Hirai. "We're not saying right out of the box you gotta go online, therefore you're paying for some things that you really may not need. What are you going to do with a hard drive? What are you going to do with an ethernet connection? You may not even have an ethernet connection in your home. We're empowering the consumer to make the choice [whether to go online or not], as opposed to saying, 'Here's something you paid for...oh, by the way...it's something you might not use.'"

That's sure a nice way of putting it. We'll just have to wait and see how consumer support for Sony's more-than-just-playing-games-online Internet strategy goes, and whether people are willing to spend the extra dough to participate in the new PlayStation 2 experience. Does it really matter though? With the games you're about to see over the next several pages, the "PlayStation 2 experience" may finally show its face. After all, it's been a rather dry run thus far...



All the right moves: Jak can pull off a lot of the same tricks as Crash, including belly flops onto bad guys and double jumps. We're not entirely sure about how his ferret friend figures into the gameplay, however. Expect comedy relief, at least.



JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY

Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Naughty Dog
Release: Winter 2001

What's it all about? The brochure Naughty Dog handed out at the show describes their latest epic as a mix of genres, including action, platforming, puzzles, adventuring, strategy and racing. While that may be true, we have a simpler way of explaining Jak and Daxter: It's like Mario 64. Imagine that Nintendo classic with all the levels connected into one sprawling world (i.e., no central hub castle) and you have a good idea of the gameplay—lots of running, jumping, fighting, racing contests and exploring.

What do we think of it? Sony is going to be pushing this game hard, and with good reason—it looks great and it's from the team behind the smasheroo Crash Bandicoot series. Running at a steady 60 frames a second, the animation is so smooth it could pass for a cartoon. And you can forget about the fog; Jak and Daxter allows you to see almost to the horizon in any direction you choose. One distinct landmark, a temple on a high hilltop with spinning rings above it, was visible from anywhere we traveled, even from an entirely separate island far, far away. Along with a day/night cycle and the fact that there aren't "levels" per se (the game just loads new sections with a brief pause as you run along), it makes J&D feel like one big, cohesive world.

Controls are as comfortable and solid as you'd expect from the makers of Crash. Break crates open with Jak's spin attack and it sometimes feels like you are back in another Bandicoot adventure. In terms of gameplay, you'll still find particular items—power cells—to hunt (like the crystals from Crash or the stars in Mario), but there are also villagers to interact with and plenty of puzzles built into the levels. In one part you can punch up some stalactites to create a set of stony steps to reach a higher plateau and a special item.

What's up with the ferret? That's Daxter. He's actually a human just like Jak (or a Keebler Elf just like Jak, or whatever the hell Jak is), but when he fell into a vat of Black Eco energy he got turned into the little creature you see here. We are also told the Black Eco energy (not to be confused with that other Sony game ICO, which is pronounced the same way) threatens the entire world of Jak and Daxter, perhaps because of its tendency to transform people into marketable, wisecracking sidekicks.









MAXIMO: GHOSTS TO GLORY

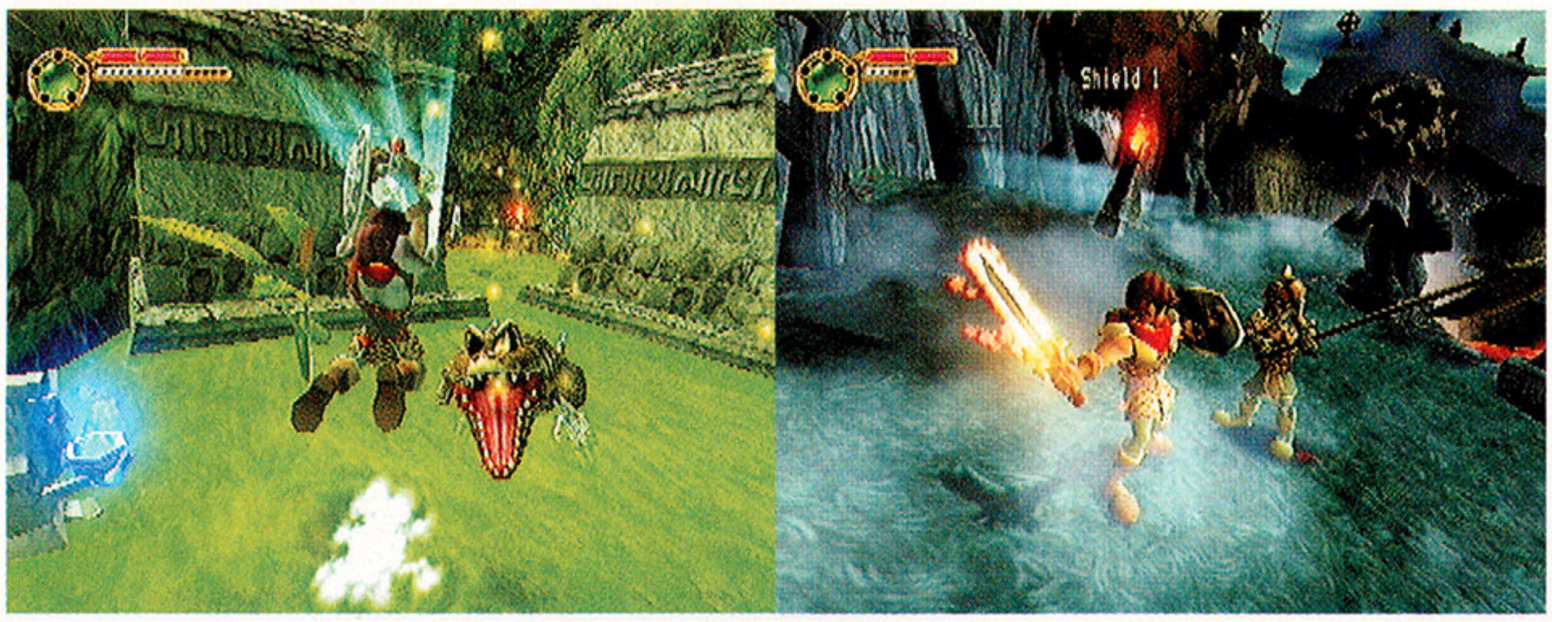


Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom Digital Studios
Release: Winter 2001

What's it all about? Ghosts to Glory is not a sequel but an "homage" to Capcom's other zombie-infested franchise, the Ghosts 'n' Goblins series. It's mainly an action game: You wander levels, jumping and slicing your way through enemies, opening chests, and gathering items.

What do we think of it? Wow. We didn't know what to expect from this game since it's from Capcom's largely untested U.S. division, so we were shocked at how fantastic it looked and played. The graphics are crisp and 60-frames-per-second smooth, the characters look great, and the controls feel spot-on. In many ways it's pure arcade action—double jumps, different sword swipes, etc.—but Maximo also seems to promise some greater depth. You'll collect coins to buy items like potions, spells and weapon upgrades, as well as uncover ability power-ups by destroying parts of the environment around you. Some enemies even require block and attack strategies reminiscent of N64 Zelda. Maximo may not pack Legacy of Kain-caliber complexity, but it's much more than simple hack-'n'-slash. This game looked great even right next to Devil May Cry at Capcom's booth, and that is saying a lot.

But is it really Ghosts 'n' Goblins? Actually, yeah. Although the new character designs—by Japanese game mag *Famitsu Weekly* cover artist Susumu Matsushita—won't remind anyone of the classic series at first glance, the more time we spent with the game the more we noticed all the connections to the old 2D titles. Zombies pop out of the ground in caskets, towering devil totems spit skulls, and earthquakes move giant chunks of the levels around as you run through. Maximo even dresses like old Sir Arthur: He's clad in standard silver armor that's upgradable to gold, and when he gets injured it's down to the patented Ghost 'n' Goblins heart-patterned boxers.









SSX TRICKY

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Big (EA Canada)
Release: Fall 2001

What's it all about? "We like to believe that the world in SSX still exists, but it had a little seismic activity since you saw it last year," said the EA spokesman who demoed SSX Tricky for us at E3. Of course, that seismic activity had a purpose: It rattled all of the game's original courses into snowboarding meccas—now players have plenty of new surfaces and launch pads from which to kick off spastic "Uber-tricks," as EA Big is labeling them. And as if things couldn't get any zanier, David Arquette (*Scream 3*), Billy Zane (*Titanic*) and Lucy Liu (*Charlie's Angels*) are providing the snowboarders' voices.

What do we think of it? It's bigger, badder and different. And we're a little surprised that EA is tweaking the sequel this much—especially since it's a company known for never taking any big chances with its follow-ups.

Your system or mine? SSX Tricky is hitting all platforms. So getting to play it will be easy; picking the right system to play it on is the hard part.







FINAL FANTASY X

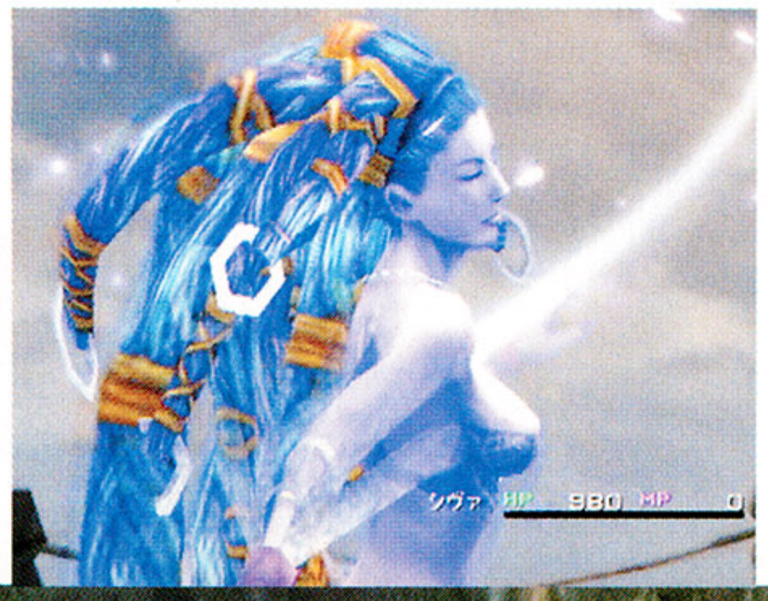
Publisher: Square Electronic Arts
Developer: Square
Release: Spring 2002

What's it all about? The first PS2 chapter in the seemingly eternal Final Fantasy legacy, FFX centers on Tidus, a pro player of Blitzball, the most popular full-contact sport in Spira. Tidus and Yuna, the main female lead, must journey across the world of Spira to confront "Sin" and defeat its evil ways. The story line might be a bit clichéd, but there's no denying the beauty of the game. Featuring a redesigned battle system (Square brought Toshiro Tsuchida, director of the Front Mission games, in to revamp FFX's battle engine) and a new spin on the summons system, Final Fantasy X should benefit from both an increase in flashy eye-candy and more strategic, focused battles. The supporting cast looks like a combination of FFVIII's realistically proportioned characters combined with the fantastically designed party members from FFVII (i.e., Red XIII). This is also the first Final Fantasy to feature full-on voice acting.



What do we think of it? FFX's fully 3D visuals look really freaking nice, but they lack the immediate visual impact of, say, Devil May Cry, since everything is viewed from static camera angles. On the other hand, the summons and spell effects are nothing short of breathtaking, and transitions to cutscenes are seamless, since a great deal of them use the game engine. When Square throws CG cutscenes into the mix, they are absolutely mindblowing, partly because the video is now running at a full 30 frames per second at DVD quality, and partly because Square gets better at this CG stuff with every game.

Whazzat? Can't get enough FFX? Check next month for our massive cover story, and you might be lucky enough to nab one of our issues with exclusive Yoshitaka Amano cover art—only one out of eight issues has it!









Guilty Pleasure Award:
STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR PS2

We admit it. We're not even sure there's a real game in Rockstar's State of Emergency, but we sure enjoyed having to beat up, smash, shoot, and destroy everything in sight in a rioting city. It appeals to the little anarchist in all of us. Finally...a game for that kid who sat in the back of shop class and mumbled to himself.

KINGDOM HEARTS

Publisher: Square Electronic Arts
Developer: Square
Release: Fall 2002

What's it all about? No one would have expected Disney to approach Square to do an RPG, but it happened. No one would have expected a Disney-based RPG to be any good either, but that's happening too. Featuring four new characters designed by Final Fantasy legend Tetsuya Nomura, Kingdom Hearts takes Sora (the main character) and Goofy and Donald Duck on an adventure to save their two friends Riku and Kairi. Kingdom Hearts will not only introduce Disney characters to a whole new genre in gaming, it will tie together what was previously a separate collection of character-specific worlds. In Kingdom Hearts, the Little Mermaid's underwater kingdom will rest alongside Tarzan's jungle, Pinocchio's village and Aladdin's Arabian environs, among others. Virtually every Disney character you know will make an appearance during the game, with Dumbo having already been sighted.

What do we think of it? We don't know much about the gameplay, but from what we saw on video, Kingdom Hearts seems to be a combination of real-time exploration and turn-based battle scenes, with Sora launching fireballs from a sword-sized key at approaching enemies. And surprisingly, the game seems to contain a dark story line—hardly the sort of thing we'd expect from a game with Disney's name on it. **M-i-c-k-e-y M-o-u-s-e** might make an appearance from what we've heard, and you can bet your Britney Spears we'll have our mouse-ears on when he does.











TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

Publisher: Activision **Developer:** Neversoft
Release: November 2001

If you read our THPS3 cover story a few months ago, you know it packs more interactive parks filled with people and traffic, ultra-smooth gameplay, and an improved create-a-skater mode with female models. But it was the online play that won the most attention at E3, where folks lined up behind networked PS2s to get some lag-free skate time with each other in the virtual parks.



GRAN TURISMO 3 A-SPEC

Publisher: Sony CEA
Developer: Polyphony Digital
Release: July 2001

Although the English version of GT3 was nowhere to be found on the show floor, the line to play the recent Japanese release—complete with Logitech's sweet force-feedback wheel—never seemed to diminish. With all its licensed cars, new courses and graphics that push the PlayStation 2 to new limits, it's easy to see why Gran Turismo 3 will be the game all other racing titles are measured against in years to come. Look for our extensive review of this killer title next month.





DEVIL MAY CRY



Publisher: Capcom **Developer:** Capcom
Release: November 2001

Here's a game with a buzz so strong everyone from the Xbox honchos to the Nintendo bigwigs were talking about it: Survival-horror guru Shinji Mikami's latest evil action-adventure, Devil May Cry. With its fully real-time and insanely detailed levels, smooth animation, plus gigantic bosses and tons of enemies on screen at once, this is one of the very few games that looks like it's working the PS2 hardware as hard as Metal Gear Solid 2. And they finally threw out those clunky RE controls—swing your sword or shoot your gun (or both), all while running and double jumping in every direction. Mikami has said he wants Devil May Cry to be "cool," as opposed to "scary" like the Resident Evil games, and so far it looks like he'll get his wish.



Let's talk with...

Shinji Mikami
Producer of the Resident Evil series



EGM: Where did the idea of Devil May Cry originally come from?

Shinji Mikami: The director of the game was working on what was originally supposed to be Resident Evil 4, but the game became so different from Resident Evil we changed the name to Devil May Cry. The control of the game is very unlike RE.

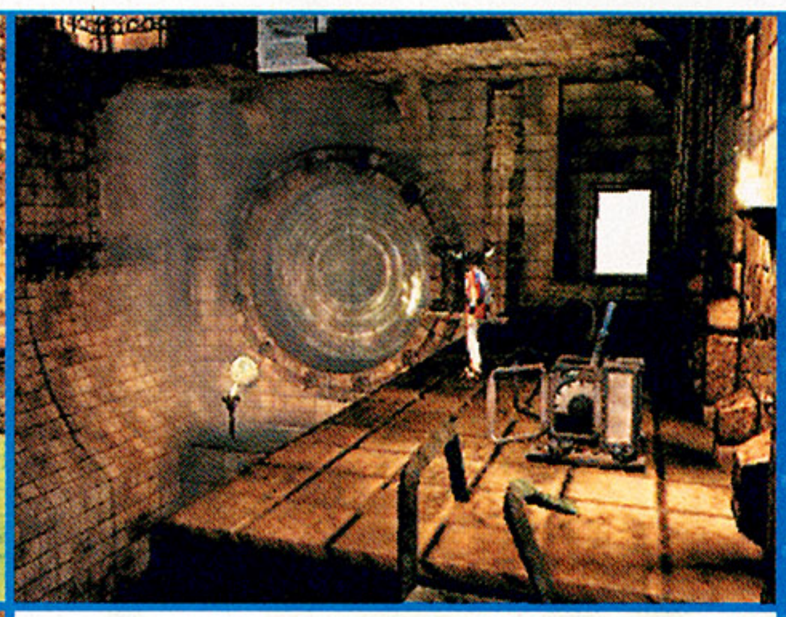
EGM: Why is that?

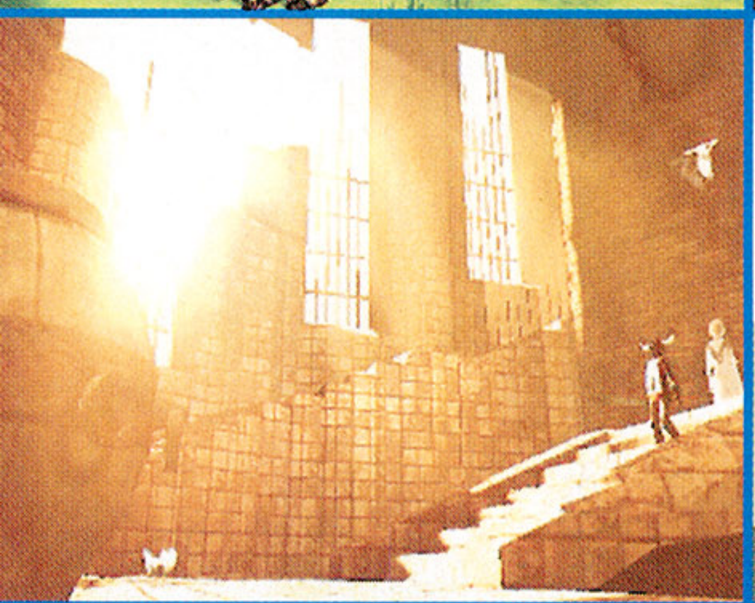
SM: For the gamers who are really into the RE games, the RE controls work just fine, although it's tricky at first. In DMC, we focused on making it easier to control for beginners. At the same time, we tried to make more room for players once they become used to it, so that they can perform more cool actions and moves.

EGM: You mentioned that the theme of DMC is "cool." So what other things do you think are cool?

SM: I think Ed Harris is cool. He can talk with his eyes as in the movie *The Rock*. And I think Ferraris are cool. But if you drive one in Japan, it's not cool. You'll be stuck in a traffic jam all the time. It's not a prancing horse at all.









ICO

Publisher: Sony CEA **Developer:** Sony CEI
Release: August 2001

Combining the best elements of Heart of Darkness, Panzer Dragoon, *Where the Wild Things Are* and the *Chronicles of Narnia*, ICO is a simple tale of a boy (ICO) and a princess (Yorda). What's not so simple is the extravagantly huge environments ICO (pronounced "ee-ko") must navigate to guide the princess to freedom. While you lead her by the hand for the majority of the game, you'll face puzzles that actually make sense—as opposed to the usual find-the-crest/gem/key quests found in other adventure games. ICO will, for example, encounter a chasm that he cannot cross, so off he goes to build a bridge. The novel gameplay and striking visuals built quite a lot of buzz on the show floor. Even Sony is shocked by all the attention this title is getting.

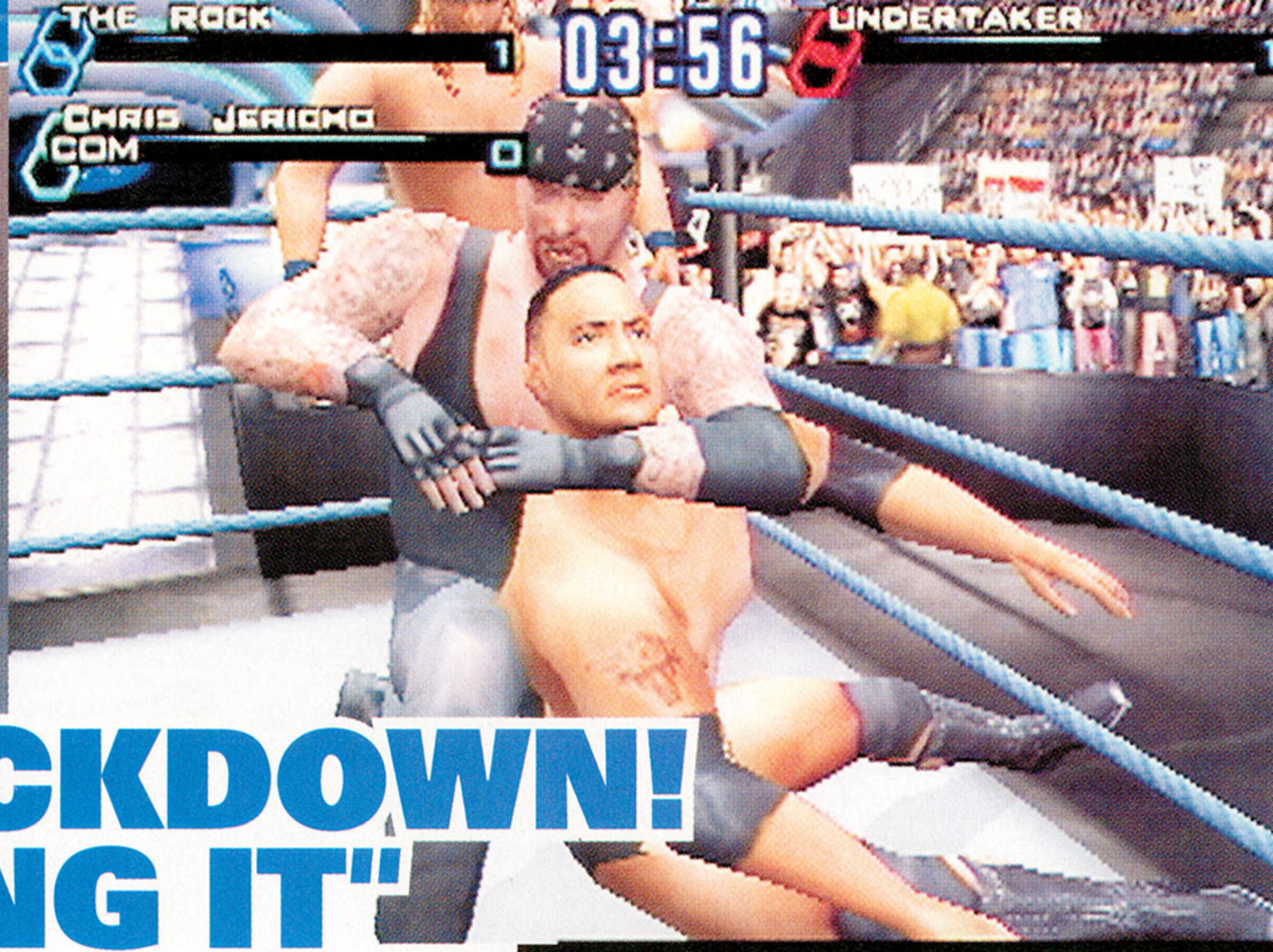
TENCHU 3

Publisher: Activision **Developer:** TBA
Release date: TBA

Solid Snake's stealthy second-cousin on his mother's side is back for more shuriken-shucking action, this time on the PS2. It seems as if the platinum-haired Rikimaru escaped death after all at the end of Tenchu: Stealth Assassins and is prepared to tackle a whole new crew of demonic baddies in hi-res style. Developed by a new team, Tenchu 3 has some nice rain and smog effects, but it still looks pretty similar to the PS1 games.







WWF SMACKDOWN! "JUST BRING IT"

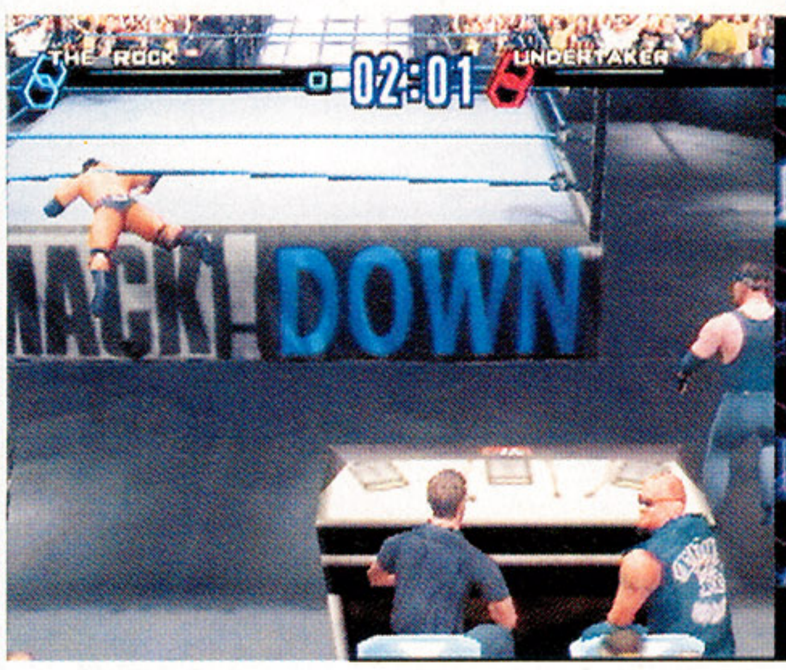
Publisher: THQ
Developer: Yuke's
Release: October 2001

What's it all about? I think we all know the answer to that, don't we? Get a bunch of large, intimidating men, add some PG-rated posturing (rife with enough cheesy catch-phrases to make Schwarzenegger blush), and proceed to let them beat the living crap out of each other in the most spectacular ways possible. Throw in some busty female wrestlers just dripping with sex appeal and this entire preview writes itself! Yuke's (developers of the first two games in the series) promises an evolution of SmackDown! thanks to the PlayStation 2's extra power, as well as a more involving Story Mode. Hopefully the story will be kept just vague enough to keep up with the ever-changing plot in the weekly WWF broadcasts. Just Bring It will include more than 30 WWF superstars in over 60 different matches. You also get plenty of new match styles, a handy picture-in-picture feature and, of course, the flashy entrances complete with music. Michael Cole and Tazz will supply the play-by-play commentary (we're not sure where Jim Ross ended up in all of this).

What do we think of it? Much like when it comes to watching the sport itself, we take a guilty pleasure in playing wrestling games—especially ones as good as the SmackDown! series. Although the game was technically playable on the show floor, THQ wouldn't let us near the controller, citing some unresolved control issues in the E3 build. Still, this PS2 version looks great so far, capturing the high-flying action and overwhelming excess of personality each wrestler brings to the ring. Besides, any excuse to write "Can you smell what The Rock is cookin'?" is reason enough to get excited in our book.

XFL mini-game we'd like to see: It works thusly: Recruit a bunch of jocks who never quite made it to the NFL, take away one down, throw in an ex-wrestler-turned-governor and some really hot cheerleaders. Now see if you can attain the lowest ratings in television history faster than Vince McMahon did.







PRIMED FOR ONLINE

We'll admit it: Sony's online plans—all their talk of the hard drive and instant messaging and playing *Flash* movies—have us confused. But the important thing to remember is you only need the $40 network adapter, due in November, to play this first batch of online games:



SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALS

SOCOM will be the first title to use Sony's dual-band adapter. Developed by Zipper Interactive, it features rescue and assault scenarios as well as real-time voice chat and command over your teammates. The squad-based online combat supports up to 16 players. The early version at the show didn't look or play too hot, though.

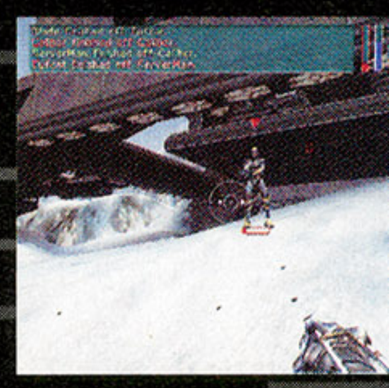


Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Why skin your knees in a real skatepark when you and seven friends can rip sick tricks together online in Neversoft's killer app for the network adapter? The game hits in November.

Twisted Metal: Online

Essentially, this looks and plays like TM: Black except with a few new fixin's that make use of its network capabilities. It hits this winter.



Tribes 2

More third-party support for PS2's online network comes this winter in the form of Tribes 2, Sierra's port of its popular PC first-person shooter. While the console version won't be compatible with PC servers, Sierra promises it will ship with community boards, a server browser and buddy lists.

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE



Publisher: Activision **Developer:** Treyarch
Release: 2002
What's it all about? Treyarch, with full cooperation from Paramount Pictures, is putting this game together. None of that using-the-Tony-Hawk-game-engine stuff here—Treyarch's building Spider-Man from scratch, paying particular attention to aerial combat this time around. Of course, the game will follow the movie almost exactly, focussing on the story of Peter Parker's journey from student to mutated superhero.
What do we think of it? This game is looking sweet so far, especially when Spidey's swinging high above the huge city. Treyarch is especially proud of the target-based camera system they're implementing, and from what we saw it works great.
Snap into a Spider-Man! One can only hope and pray that Bruce Campbell and Randy Poffo (a.k.a. Macho Man Randy Savage), who both star in the flick, will make an appearance in the PS2 game. Oh yeah!

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** AM2
Release: By spring 2002
The Sega series that put the wind beneath the wings of games like Tekken and Soul Calibur is making a rather unorthodox console debut on Sony's PS2 (although we only saw video of the arcade version at E3). Producer Yu Suzuki, who is responsible for most of Sega's arcade hits since Hang-On, has made some changes for the fourth installment. "In Virtua Fighter 3, the difficulty was so high it was hard for ordinary people to complete the game," Suzuki admits. "Virtua Fighter 4 will make it easier for less-experienced users to play." For simplicity's sake, VF4 will also return to a three-button configuration, removing the "escape" button that appeared in VF3. With two new characters, more interactive arenas, overhauled graphics, and a return to classic Virtua Fighter gameplay, VF4 has a definite shot at the title belt on PS2.





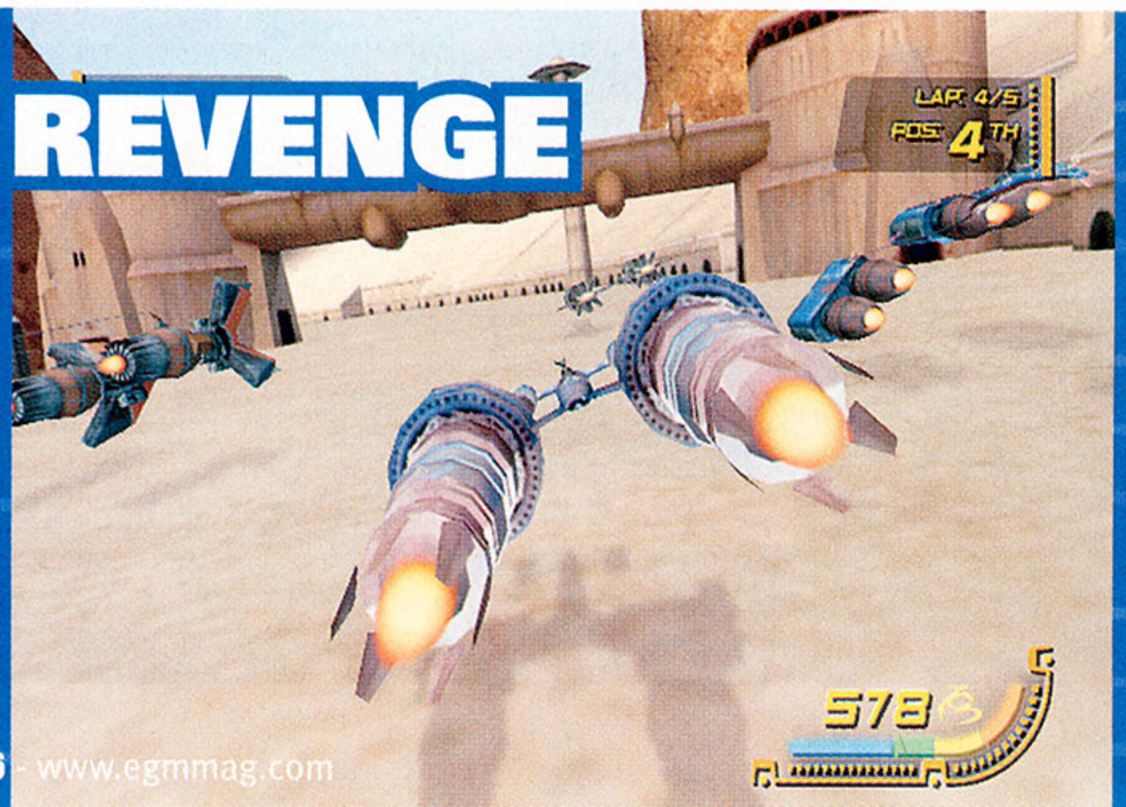
Let's talk with...

Yu Suzuki
Director of AM2



EGM: Why did you choose to port Virtua Fighter 4 to PS2 rather than to Xbox?
Yu Suzuki: Sony wanted a big title from Sega for the PS2. The launch of VF4 is around the same time that they wanted Sega's title out, so it just happened to be Virtua Fighter 4.
EGM: VF4 is running on the Naomi 2 board. Will that make it too difficult to port to the Dreamcast?
YS: Basically, the architecture of Naomi boards and the Dreamcast are such that it is not a difficult thing to convert.
EGM: What is your opinion on other fighting franchises that have popped up over the past several years (Tekken, Dead or Alive)?
YS: I've been too busy recently to play any games, but because I don't play them, I'm able to create different, original games.

STAR WARS: RACER REVENGE



Publisher: LucasArts **Developer:** Rainbow Studios
Release: Spring 2002
Set eight years after the N64/DC/PC original, in a time when Anakin is probably kicking himself for choosing that whole Jedi thing over hot queen Amidala, Racer Revenge will be a PS2 exclusive. Right now, the multiplayer is limited to just two racers, but LucasArts hasn't skimped on the tracks—you'll find 18 new ones. Racer Revenge was still early at E3 and control was far from fine-tuned, but already the game's delivering a whizzing sense of speed. Developer Rainbow is putting more emphasis on pod-to-pod bashing this time around, too, so expect more aggressive opponents.

SILENT HILL 2



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Release: August 2001

Crank up the brightness on the TV—you're going to want all the light you can get for Konami's newest foray into the surreal. Blacker, gorier, and 130 times more screwed-up than the first, SH2 plays a lot like a revamped version of its predecessor (the E3 demo consisted of a lot of hall-wandering and combat by flashlight), and that's perfectly fine by us! The team has until fall to put the finishing touches on the game, which will also feature a brand-new 3D sound system that really heightens the experience.



Let's talk with...

Akihiro Imamura
Producer of Silent Hill 2



EGM: Is it difficult to scare modern audiences that have been desensitized to violence by horror films?

Akihiro Imamura: It's true that it has become more difficult to get a reaction from the audience, but a game offers a different kind of interactive fear that a movie cannot convey, and we've been using that to our advantage in Silent Hill 2.

EGM: Has anyone on the team done any psychological research for SH2?

AI: For Silent Hill 1, we actually did some ink-blot tests, but that was just for the first game. For the second, we just created a lot of high-tension scenarios based on what we already knew.

EGM: What kind of people does it take to work on a Silent Hill game?

AI: We have a lot of very talented programmers and artists, but most of all we look for tough people, ones who will be screaming by the end of development [laughs].

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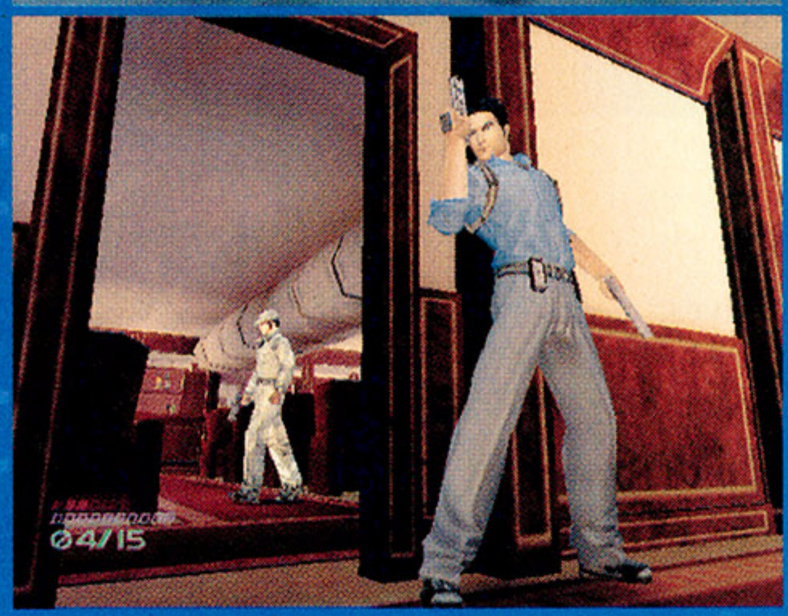




Publisher: Namco **Developer:** Namco
Release Date: Early 2002

What's it all about? If John Woo produced a Syphon Filter-esque third-person shooter, this'd be it. As an action game, DTR has all the bases covered. You can lock onto enemies for run-and-gun style exploits, slip into first-person view to fine-tune your shot, lean in and out of cover (as in Winback), and even dive in *Matrix*-like slow motion while making your enemies do the dance of death. DTR is also the first console game we've seen to take firearms violence to a higher level of intensity. Disarm your opponent and use his own gun to plaster his brains all over the walls. It's brutal, stylish and like nothing you've seen before.

What do we think of it? After E3, West Coast Editor Che Chou couldn't shut up about DTR. He swears it's the best third-person shooter he's ever played, even though the controls are unwieldy at first.

Say, isn't there a similar game heading for PS2? Yep—Rockstar's Max Payne. Now it's a race to see which John Woo-inspired game hits the PS2 first.

WIPEOUT FUSION



Publisher: SCEE **Developer:** Studio Liverpool
Release: TBA

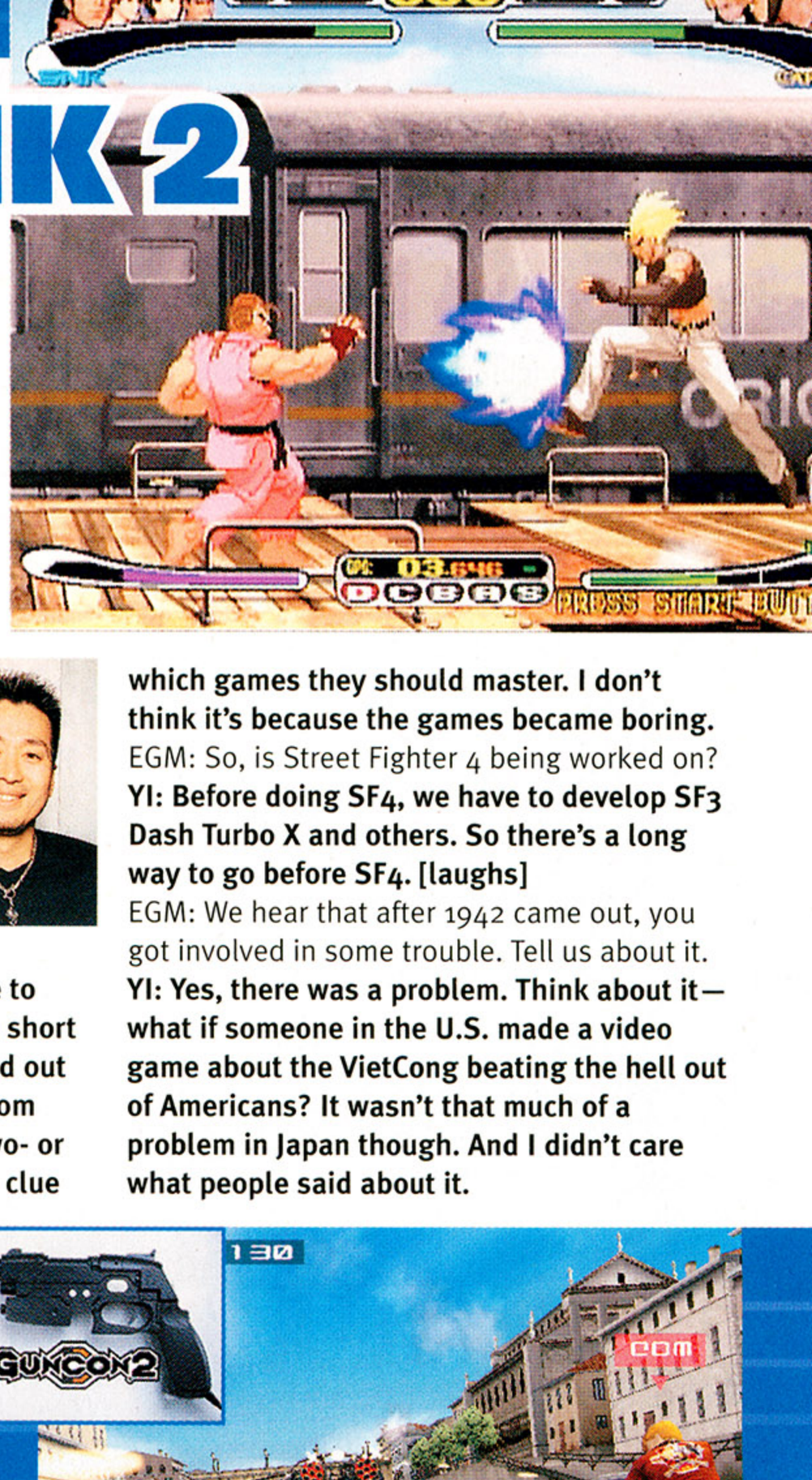
Sony Europe's on-again off-again racer made a surprise appearance at the show. Buried deep within the booth, WipeOut was on a solitary screen with zero fanfare. It's looking good, but seems to be more of the same stuff we got from the last couple of titles. As of this writing, Sony in America still hasn't picked up the game for a domestic release, though the fact it was at the show at all should be a good sign.



Best PlayStation 2 Game:
SILENT HILL 2

Since we didn't get to play anything new with Metal Gear Solid 2 (the E3 demo was the same one packed in with Z.O.E.), and since GT3 is practically out, our next favorite PS2 game at the show was Silent Hill 2 (even though we've played that demo already too). So far, it's living up to the hype. We can't wait to play this game away from the noise and geeks of trade shows.

CAPCOM VS. SNK 2



Publisher: Capcom **Developer:** Capcom
Release: September 2001

In typical Capcom fashion, a good thing is never enough. So much in the same way that Marvel vs. Capcom 2 made a stunning leap in technical prowess over the first game, so too does Capcom vs. SNK 2. This sequel adds a variety of "grooves" (or gameplay styles) to the mix, for a total of six in all. And let's not forget the big perk: You get 44 combatants split between the formidable Capcom and SNK stables of fighters. Better game balance and some striking 3D backgrounds (a la MVC2) round out this anticipated fighter.



Let's talk with...



Yoshiki Okamoto
President of Capcom-offshoot Flagship

EGM: Why do you think fighting games aren't as popular as they used to be?
Yoshiki Okamoto: There are many reasons, and Capcom and SNK are to blame. We released so many games in a short time when they should have been spaced out properly, like a year apart. But we, Capcom and SNK, released games with only a two- or three-month interval. So gamers had no clue which games they should master. I don't think it's because the games became boring.
EGM: So, is Street Fighter 4 being worked on?
YI: Before doing SF4, we have to develop SF3 Dash Turbo X and others. So there's a long way to go before SF4. [laughs]
EGM: We hear that after 1942 came out, you got involved in some trouble. Tell us about it.
YI: Yes, there was a problem. Think about it—what if someone in the U.S. made a video game about the VietCong beating the hell out of Americans? It wasn't that much of a problem in Japan though. And I didn't care what people said about it.

TIME CRISIS 2

Publisher: Namco **Developer:** Namco
Release: Fall 2001

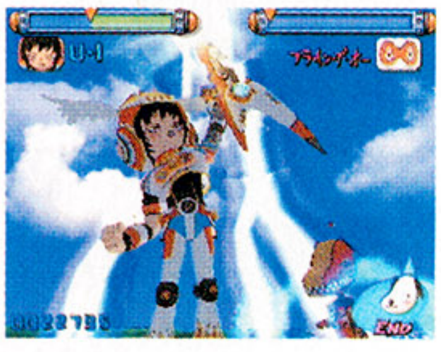
What's it all about? Namco is finally bringing home an improved Time Crisis 2 for the PS2, and it will offer the crucial two-player co-op mode via splitscreen or iLink.
What do we think of it? We know it's peculiar, but we like to play our GunCon games with...well, GunCons. Since Namco didn't have any hooked up to the kiosks, we had to imagine, with Dual Shocks in hand, what the game would actually feel like with a gun.
Will it support the GunCon? Yes. And to further entice conservative scorn, Namco also plans to release the GunCon 2 along with TC2. The GunCon 2 plugs into the PS2's USB port and features a D-pad, as well as a reload button on the butt of the handle.



PS2 SLEEPERS...

Metal Gear Solid, Silent Hill 2, Jak and Daxter—those games will sell themselves. But we found a lot of PS2 titles scattered throughout the expo that just weren't getting the cred they deserve. Behold: The games you didn't know you really wanted...

Dropship
Finally playable at E3, Dropship combines tactical strategy with arcade flight physics for some gritty near-future warfare. We took the game for a test flight at E3, blew up some stuff, and switched in and out of hover mode. And while the dynamic mission structure, photorealistic landscapes and spectrum of vehicles have us stoked, Dropship is as of yet still unconfirmed by SCEA for a stateside release. But chances are, Sony Europe's Camden studio will bring the game across the Atlantic next spring.



Guitaroo-man
The wild design style and catchy tunes of this October release from Koei reminds us of another sleeper-hit music game: Sony's own PaRappa the Rappa. Timed button presses with analog stick movements keep your thumbs busy while your eyes and ears have all the real fun.



Stuntman
From developer Reflections, the guys behind the Driver series, Stuntman will let you take the wheel in some very cool chases straight outta the 007 and Indiana Jones flicks. Each stage is set in a different film, so the settings and vehicles are always different. Look for it next summer.

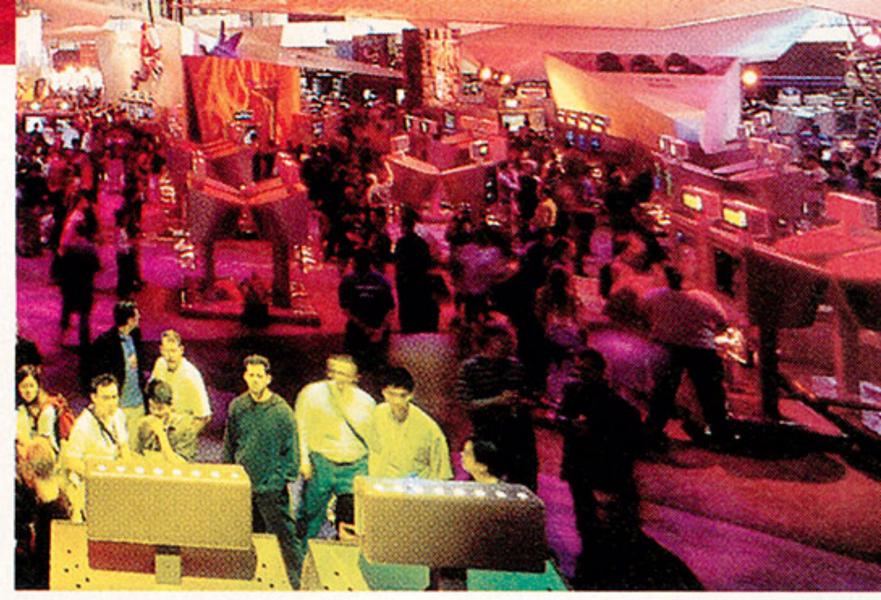


Frequency
Another E3, another new music game. But wait—Frequency, due this fall, is actually quite cool. The object is to follow along the guides a la Beatmania to lay down several tracks of music (bass, melody, etc.) and create a complex composition.



Harvest Moon: Save the Homeland
This series' PS2 debut will feature cel-shaded 3D characters. And the game actually has a *new* goal; rather than just tend to your animals and get with the local honeys, you've also got to save your farm. Natsume will ship it in October.

SONY PLAYSTATION 1



The trusty PS1 may not have held a commanding presence at E3, but with an installed base of more than 30 million, it's a hard system for developers—and us—to ignore. So we scouted out the best of the PS1 rest at the expo...

SYPHON FILTER 3

Publisher: Sony CEA **Developer:** Sony CEA
Release: September 2001

We only needed to play a bit of this game to confirm what we already knew: Controls, graphics...everything is just like what you'd expect from a Syphon Filter game (but then Syphon 3 *is* from the same team). We're still excited to see how the tweaked balance of stealth and action works out this time (expect more action), plus the new randomized "mini-game" levels, improved multiplayer mode, and of course the continuing ever-complicated story line.



HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE

Publisher: Electronic Arts **Developer:** Argonaut
Release: Fall 2001

All the upcoming Potter games tackle a different genre. For the PS1, Argonaut has conjured a Tomb Raider-style adventure. As Mr. Potter, you'll learn magic in Hogwarts—via mini-games—then trek through the book's locales.



DRAGON WARRIOR VII

Publisher: Enix **Developer:** Enix
Release: November 2001

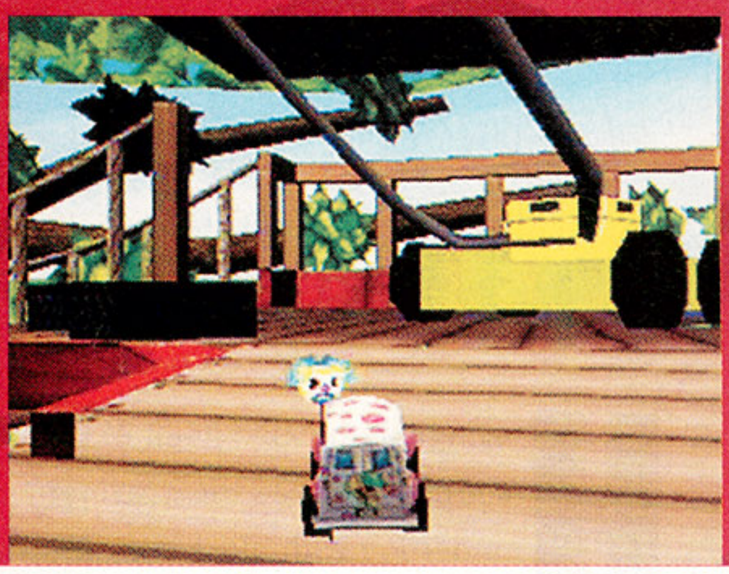
A 4-million-selling blockbuster in Japan, DWVII has you traveling back in time to lost continents, solving mysteries that will save civilizations in the future. This traditional RPG features character designs of Akira Toriyama (Dragon Ball Z), the music of Koichi Sugiyama, and the vision of the Dragon Warrior series director Yuji Horii.



TWISTED METAL: SMALL BRAWL

Publisher: Sony CEA **Developer:** Incognito
Release: Fall 2001

This surprisingly cheery installment of the Twisted Metal franchise features mini R/C versions of the most popular TM characters (think of it as Twisted Metal Babies). Sweet Tooth and others are back, but don't expect the same weapons—they've been replaced with cutesy stuff like spit wads, firecrackers and stink bombs.



X-MEN MUTANT ACADEMY 2

Publisher: Activision **Developer:** Paradox
Release: September 2001

Besides adding a few new X-Men regulars—most notably Rogue and Nightcrawler—developer Paradox has tweaked the aerial combat model in Mutant Academy 2, so the chain combos that were so hard to figure out in the original will be much more intuitive this time around.



Best PlayStation Game:
SPIDER-MAN 2 ENTER: ELECTRO

Your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man is taking one more swing at the PS1 this summer. Sure it's just a sequel and it doesn't look that much different from Activision's first game. But in the fast-cooling PlayStation market, the mutated webslinger and his sinister nemeses are the only guys who got us really excited.







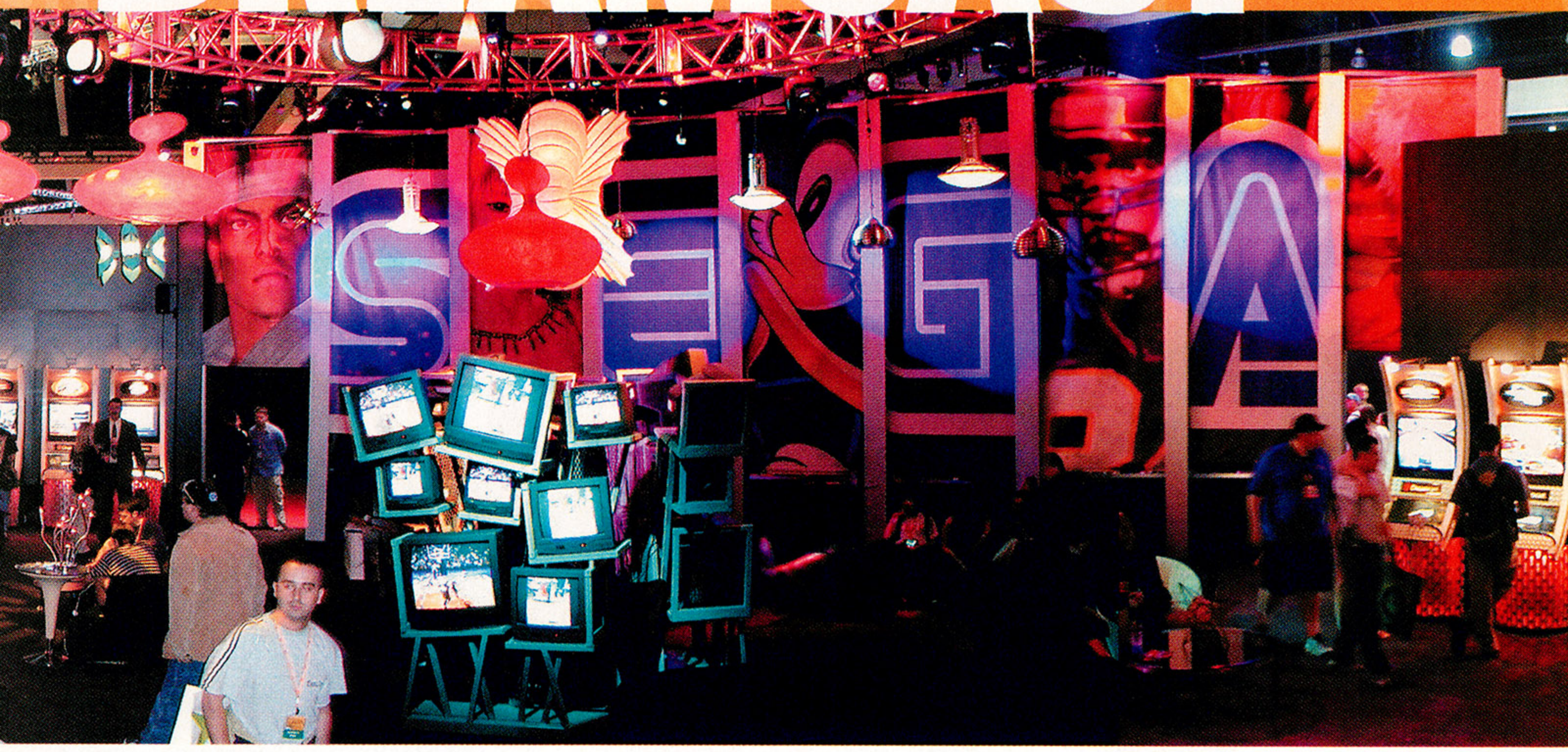
Best Dreamcast Game:
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE VERSION 2

Although not a true sequel, PSo v.2 will offer enough new bits to get all the PSO dorks (and there are a lot of us) logged on 24/7 this summer—even with its monthly fee. Honorable mentions for Best DC Game of E3 include Alien Front Online and NFL 2K2.



SEGA DREAMCAST

BEHIND THE GREAT WALL OF SONIC



Having established itself at the past couple of E3s as the irreverent underdog with block-rockin' stage shows and acres of playable kiosks, Sega was uncharacteristically subdued this year. And even while they screamed "Unleashed!" at the press until we were wiping spittle out of our eyes, it was hard for most showgoers to catch any of the excitement. The 10-foot wall and headset-wearing bouncers surrounding "Fortress Sega" probably had something to do with it. If you didn't have an appointment, you weren't going to check out the goods.

Once we were escorted into its hallowed halls, one couldn't help but feel a little disappointed—Sega's booth was more like a back-room lounge away from the bustle of E3. Aside from new stuff on the GameCube (Phantasy Star Online, Virtua Striker 3 and Super Monkey Ball) and a couple of Xbox titles (Jet Set Radio Future and Gun Valkyrie), most of the kiosks were ignored. Anticipated titles like Virtua Fighter 4 and Shenmue II made appearances only in video form. Overall, it just wasn't the Sega we've come to love for its E3 decadence.

But we weren't exactly surprised. It's been a rough year for the little white box that almost could. Sega's booth reflected the company's transition from hardware to software, and in that context, the company has had very little turnaround time from Jan. 31 to E3. Peter Moore, president and COO of Sega of America, is humble, yet confident about their future. "Well, there was certainly an emotional side on Jan. 31, when we made the announcement [to discontinue the Dreamcast and go multi-platform]," he tells us. "But that's over and it's down to the business side now. Basically, we need to make great games for all the platforms."

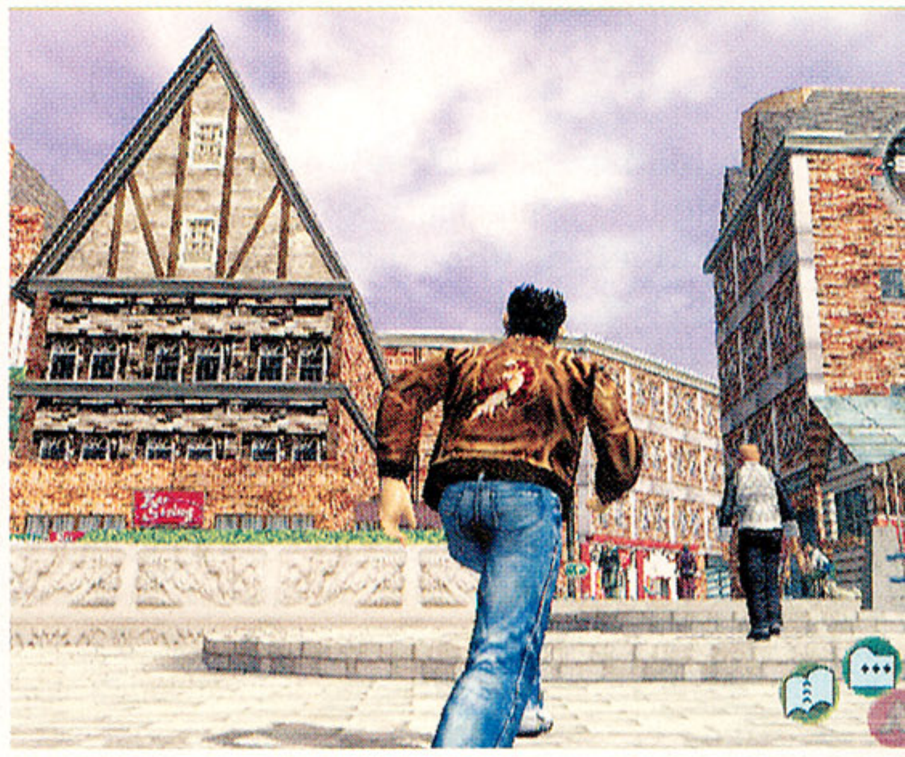
So come next E3, if all goes according to Moore's plan, we might see a return of the in-your-face Sega attitude we know so well. "Clearly we have the ingredients to take the top spot," he says. "It's not going to happen overnight, but we're smart guys. We'll catch up." Then he adds with a smirk, "We developed for Saturn, you know. It can't be that much more difficult to work with the PS2."

SHENMUE II



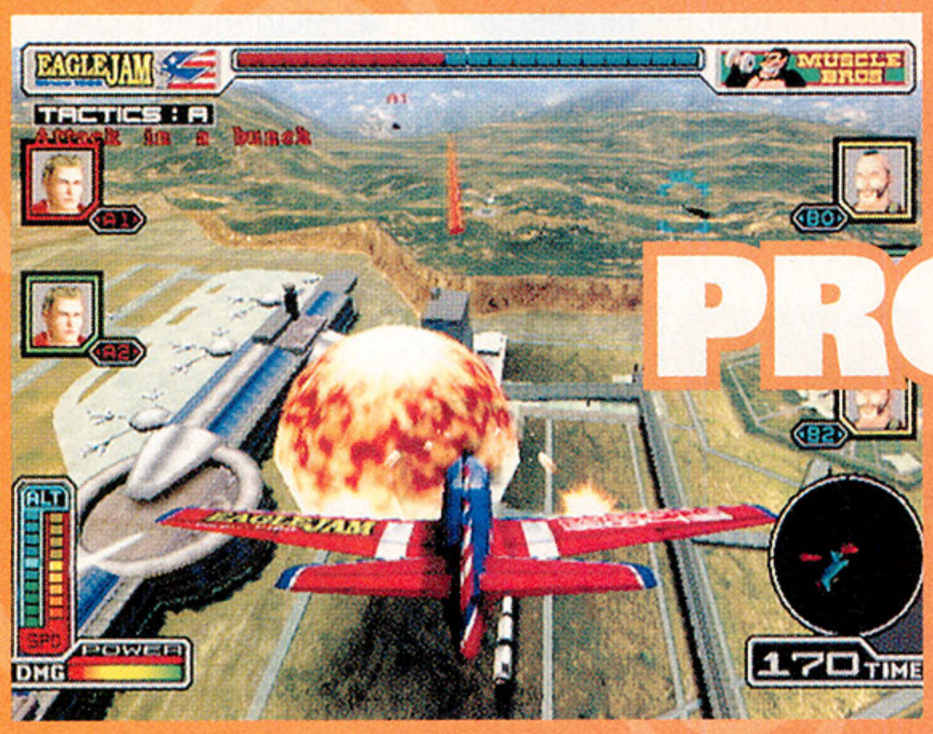
Publisher: Sega
Developer: AM2
Release: November 2001

Despite the fact that the original Shenmue didn't perform nearly as well at retail as Yu Suzuki and his AM2 team had hoped, Ryo Hazuki is making a return appearance on the Dreamcast. Our young hero has made it to China on his quest to exact revenge upon his father's murderer, Lan Di. Unlike the first game, which was only a single chapter in his planned epic, Shenmue II will encapsulate chapters 2-6. The buildings and towns in China look much more similar to the original tech demos we saw of Shenmue two years ago, and an entirely new cast will be introduced, including three important female characters. The game wasn't playable at E3, but Suzuki showed a video clip and promised more involving mini-games this time around, plus two new undisclosed classic AM2 arcade games.









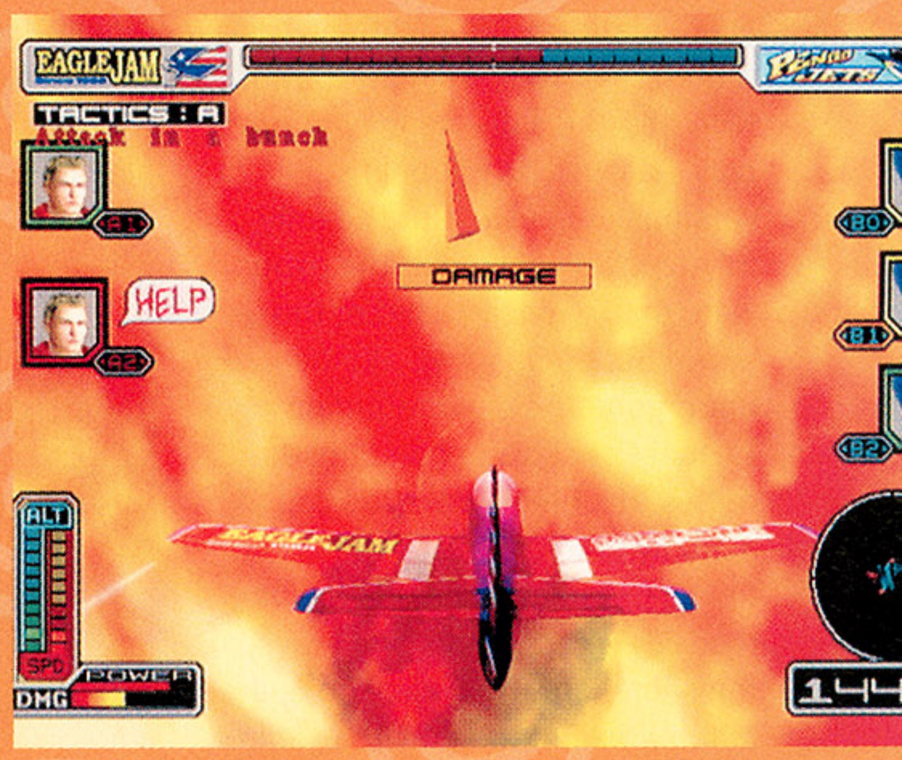
PROPELLER ARENA

Publisher: Sega
Developer: AM2
Release: August 2001

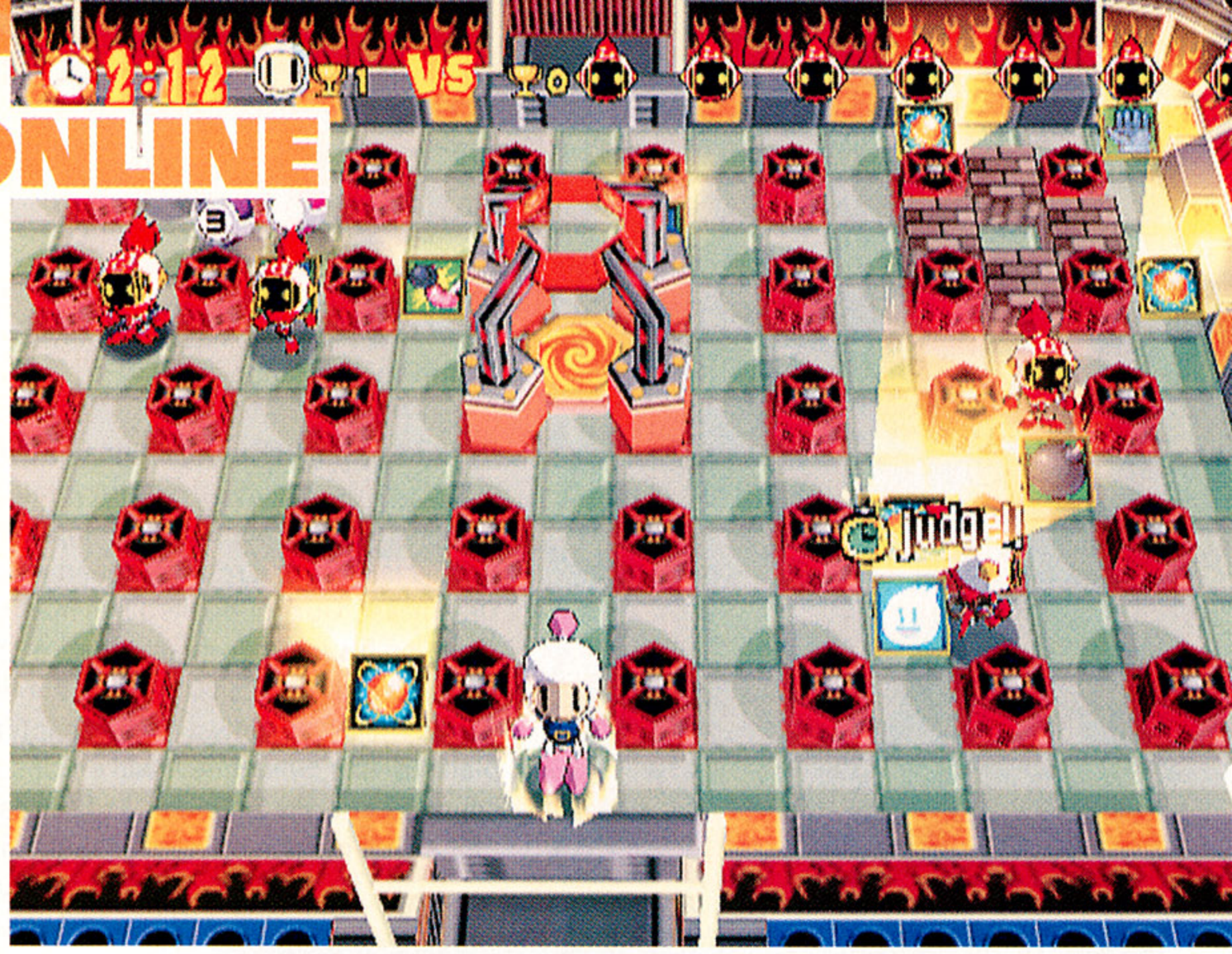
What's it all about? Sega continues its promise of bringing gamers together through online warfare with Propeller Arena: Aviation Battle Championships on the Dreamcast. In the year 2045, propeller planes are all the rage—and that's really all the excuse you need to take to the sky, .50 caliber and all. Realism is bound, gagged and stuffed in the backseat as you perform outrageous aerial moves over active volcanoes and other wild terrain. In the spirit of competition, PA allows real-time in-game voice chat between six simultaneous online players. Sega is pushing PA as a true multiplayer experience, loaded with co-op and competitive team options.

What do we think of it? What Propeller Arena lacks in depth and marketing hype, it more than makes up for with its solid multiplayer options. But, as with all SegaNet titles, we'll reserve final judgement until it's running lag free while we scream vulgarities into our Seaman microphones at home.

But I don't have a Seaman microphone! No worries—PA comes with a mike packed in.



BOMBERMAN ONLINE



Publisher: Sega **Developer:** Hudson
Release: September 2001
What's it all about? Enhancing the classic 2D action with clean, cel-shaded graphics, Bomberman Online hosts huge maps that accommodate up to 10 players over the Internet. Hudson has also tossed in five new levels and four additional gameplay modes—Submarine Attack, Panel Attack, Hyper Bomber and Battle Royal.
What do we think of it? We only got to try the four-player mode at the show. But as long as the online game runs smoothly, it's bound to give PSO v.2 a run for its server space. The gameplay did feel kinda sluggish though....Those little Bombermen should move faster.
Exactly how long can Bomberman hold out as a viable franchise? Your guess is as good as ours. With more than 40 titles on 14 platforms, one would think the little bugger would have gone the way of the Ninja Turtles by now.





OOGA BOOGA

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** Visual Concepts
Release: August 2001
It's an online strategy game that, well, doesn't look anything like an online strategy game. In Ooga Booga, you strategically place tiki heads as sentries, then charge into battle on spasmodic boars, or use voodoo magic to trigger cataclysms in your enemies' general direction. For you really old-schoolers, it's like the Commodore 64 classic Spy vs. Spy, except with four players and a Polynesian theme. You even get online rankings.





ALIEN FRONT ONLINE

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** WOW
Release: August 2001
This multiplayer online action-shooter is looking every bit as good as the coin-op original, and you'll be able to use the microphone to rap with your teammates as you play on either the human or alien team in this eight-way frag-fest. The backgrounds are fully destructible, too, so get busy blowing up...er, we mean saving the White House.

WIDE WORLD OF SEGA SPORTS

First the big news: Developer Visual Concepts confirmed they're bringing their 2K sports series to every platform. Microsoft even touted that Xbox will get NFL and NBA 2K2 this fall—sans online play—as well as full online versions next year. But the only 2K games displayed at the expo were on Dreamcast, and of those, World Series Baseball 2K2 has undergone the most retooling (Visual Concepts is handling dev duties this time). Now you can actually take control of the fielders. And oh yeah, it's online ready. NBA 2K2 looks and plays the same, only now alley oops are automatic and the lowpost game is more dynamic. Flagship title NFL 2K2 packs improved AI, nicer player models and an online rankings system. We learned that NCAA College Football 2K2 is in the works, although it wasn't playable. And what about Virtua Tennis 2K2? It looks great...but where's the online play?


NFL 2K2

Let's talk with...



Greg Thomas
President of Visual Concepts
EGM: Now that you've gone multiplatform, are you worried about spreading the crew too thin?
Greg Thomas: Everyone thinks we are and we're always spreading ourselves as thin as we can get away with. But we've had more time to develop than people realize. We've announced Xbox and PS2, and we'll be on GameCube soon but we haven't announced that.
EGM: Who do you think will have the most solid online structure first?
GT: From what I've heard, it sounds like Microsoft's going to. They seem to care the most about it. That being said, Sony is a Japanese company—they could have all sorts of stuff planned I don't know about. Nintendo, I don't know anything about.
EGM: What will broadband open up for you that modems can't?
GT: If you want 11-on-11 play, you need broadband. If you want to be the quarterback and lead your team against another across the country in a league with 10 of your buddies, you need broadband.



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ARE YOU E3 XPERIENCED?

Never been to E3? Here's what it's like...

We're being eyed by a 6-foot Pichu, and we're not sure what to do. Should we squeeze him? Kick him? Or maybe if we stand still, he'll lose interest like that T-Rex in *Jurassic Park*. No matter—a guy in a Nintendo jumpsuit sprouting Game Boy Advances from 5-foot cords is suddenly thrusting one of his handhelds at us. The Pichu crisis forgotten, we must play GBA. But then a spherical screen in Sony's booth behind us comes alive with footage of Jak and Daxter. Ahhh. Look at the pretty colors.

And that's the thing about the three-ring cybercircus that is the Electronic Entertainment Expo—if it's not the guys in fuzzy costumes vying for our attention, it's the cinema-size video walls, or the balloon-chested booth babes, or the midgets with mullets (more on them later). But in the end, it's the games that lock us in their tractor beam. Games, games, games, games, games—around us, everywhere. Video games, PC games, peripherals, stuff that won't be out until Christmas or later. It's like the world's biggest, greatest free arcade. GameWorks ain't got nothin' on this place. Did we mention the balloon-chested booth babes?

Trouble is, E3 isn't open to just any gamer who scored a ride to Los Angeles. This is a trade show. To enter, you must be tied into the game-industry food chain. Thousands of gamers fib their way into the show each year, but we're not going to teach that trick. Sorry, E3's already too crowded. But we will do the next best thing: Slip on this phony-baloney media pass. We're sneaking you into the expo.

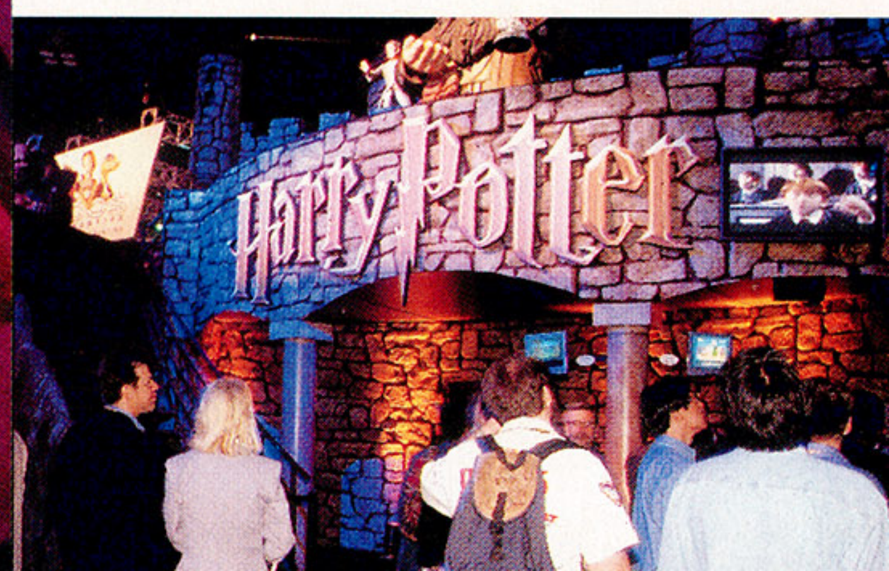
Senses overloaded...

The Los Angeles Convention Center is the size of a city block, capped at both ends by two main halls shaped like enormous steel-and-glass top hats with their brims yanked down. The E3 atmosphere here is thick even outside. One hall's tip is plastered with a massive Jak and Daxter poster. A six-story image of Final Fantasy X pretty boy Tidus peers at us from the side of a building across the street. But let's push through the throng and hit South Hall, where we'll find the booths of big-league third parties like Konami, Activision, Square and Electronic Arts (Nintendo, Sony and Sega are in West Hall, where we started this story). We're nearly at one of the glass-door entrances to the show floor. Straighten your media badge; the sullen security folks who crew these doors are looking for any excuse to liven up their day by turning people away. Earlier, we saw one guy try to Solid Snake his way in by pretending he was on his cell phone, too busy to show a badge. Trouble is, he forgot to keep up his make-believe conversation when security stopped him.

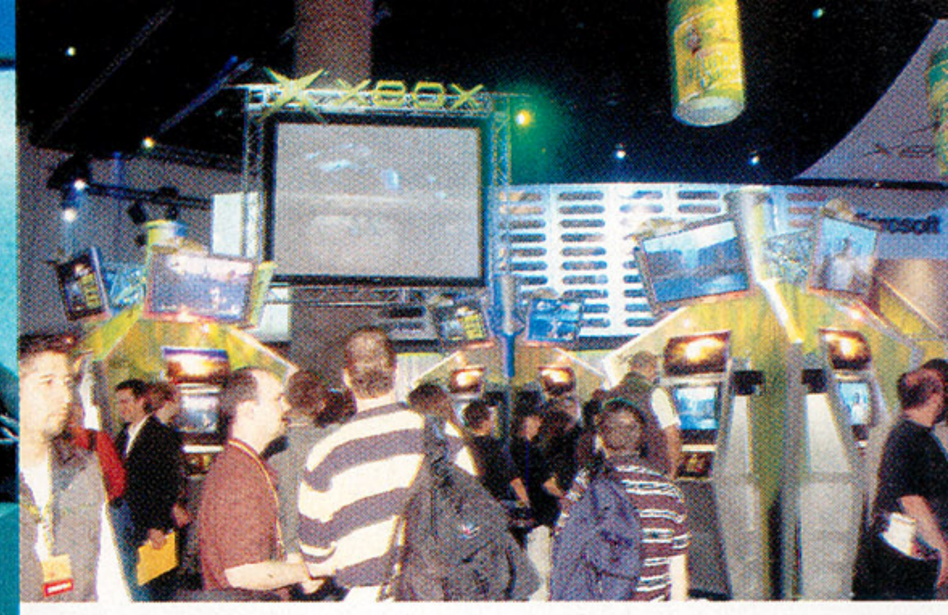
Our badges in order, we strut past the glass doors onto the South Hall floor. We've taken this trip before, so we're gonna let a newbie showgoer explain what it's like to enter the expo for the first time: "Going through the front doors was magical," says Jamie Stokely, a 20-year-old hardcore gamer from Glendale, Calif., who got in with the help of a connected pal. "I got a chill up my spine that never went away the entire time I was in the building."

We know the feeling. South Hall's stadium-size innards reach as far as we can see into a gloom colored by spotlights strobing on the big booths before us. And the sound level here would drown out a Dennis Rodman birthday bash. Although the Interactive Digital









Software Association, the organization that runs E3, imposed stricter noise restrictions this year, the booming mix of game soundtracks and techno beats is still deafening.

It's a good thing E3 is a three-day deal. When we step onto the floor, our first instinct is to take in everything at once. Impossible. The best we can do is take a wide-angle view of the spectacle. Right now, our focus is locked on EA's booth, where footage of SSX Tricky is playing on a video wall, set above a Harry Potter castle the size of a two-family house with Potter characters poised on its parapet. To the right of that, we see a WWII-era military command center, tricked out with blinking lights and zipping gauges while game footage of Medal of Honor: Allied Assault plays in a theater tucked within a life-size amphibious landing craft.

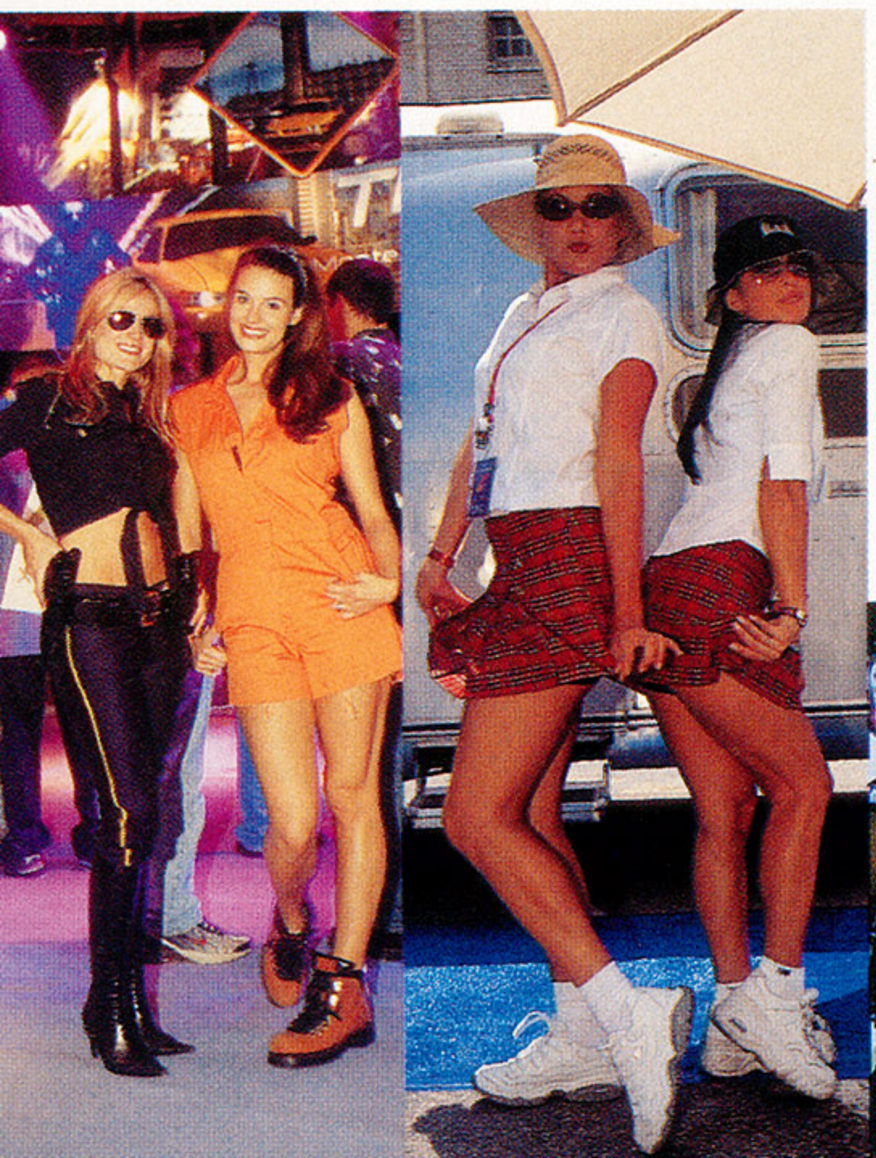
We wander into Activision's area, where Tony Hawk, Mat Hoffman and a squad of other action-sports athletes run scheduled sessions on a two-story halfpipe built right in the booth. Later in the show, Neversoft President Joel Jewett will take a crack at the pipe on his skateboard (don't worry—he survives the session. Be sure to look for that footage on Tony Hawk 3's bails video). Microsoft's booth is jammed full. We'll use our media cred to muscle our way in later, but right now we bypass it for InterAct, where our own Previews Editor, Greg Sewart, just won $6,000 after taking first place in a NASCAR 2001 racing contest.

Get some!

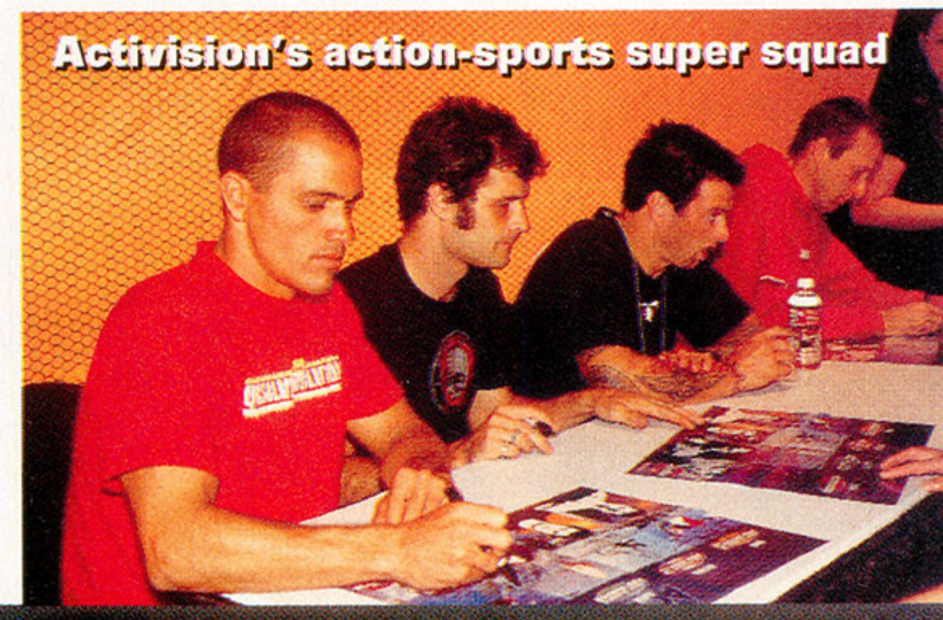
Sewart's $6K prize is an extreme example, but it's really unthinkable to come away from E3 empty-handed. T-shirts are the most common swag—heck, we just walked by a stage where babes in low-cut medieval garb tossed tees to any showgoer who jumped up and down like a doofus. But if you hit all the right booths, you'll come away with a back-breaking load of bags, keychains, soundtracks, hats, pens, temporary tattoos, action figures, cigars, shot glasses, and tiny flashing doohickeys great for...well, we're not really sure what the flashing doohickeys are for.

The bulk of this stuff is dished out by booth babes, many blond, all with about the same athletic build. It's only their clothing that comes in different shapes and sizes. For the women manning Activision's Wolfenstein (PC) display, the uniform is regulation U.S. Army, except for the camo miniskirts and exposed cleavage. Futuristic goth is the vogue in Microsoft's area. Booth babes are scarcer than usual at this year's show. Blame it on the transitional slump, we figure—especially since Eidos, which usually enlists a platoon of hot female helpers—has keyed its show way down after a lean year. A few showgoers claim they think the lack of barely dressed babes is a good thing, saying so much skin makes the industry seem juvenile and trashy. Maybe they're right, but the women working the show don't seem to mind the job. They don't even mind being labeled booth babes. "It could be worse—they could call us booth hags," says Kelli Brooke, a former Oakland Raider cheerleader who's dispensing temporary tattoos for a digital-video company called Enroute. She and her partner, another former Raiderette named Tani Kristiansen, are wearing tight white tops that expose toned tummies. "Yeah, it could be worse," Kristiansen adds. "We could be working for Sony. I hear they work their booth babes too hard."

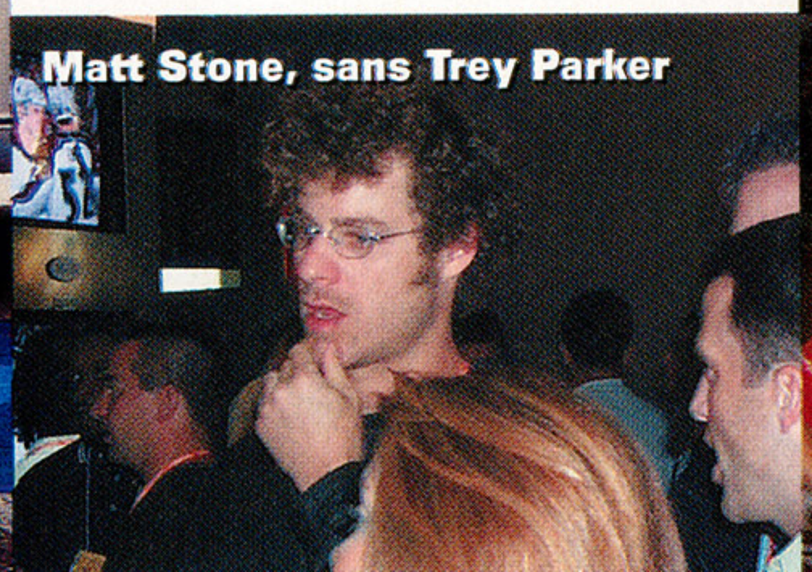
Occasionally, we catch glimpses of famous game designers walking the show floor. A while ago, we spied Konami's Metal Gear Solid director Hideo Kojima goofing with Resident Evil standees in Capcom's booth. But to really see your developer heroes en masse, you have to head to the parties. Nintendo, Microsoft and Sony hold heavy-duty bashes on consecutive nights of the expo. Each shindig has its own flavor—Nintendo's is low key and laid back; Microsoft's is the loudest, with Blink-182 headlining the stage show; and Sony's soiree, starring Everclear and set in a sprawling studio backlot, is somewhere in between. It's not a rare thing to see Shigeru Miyamoto palling with Perfect Dark producer



Activision's action-sports super squad



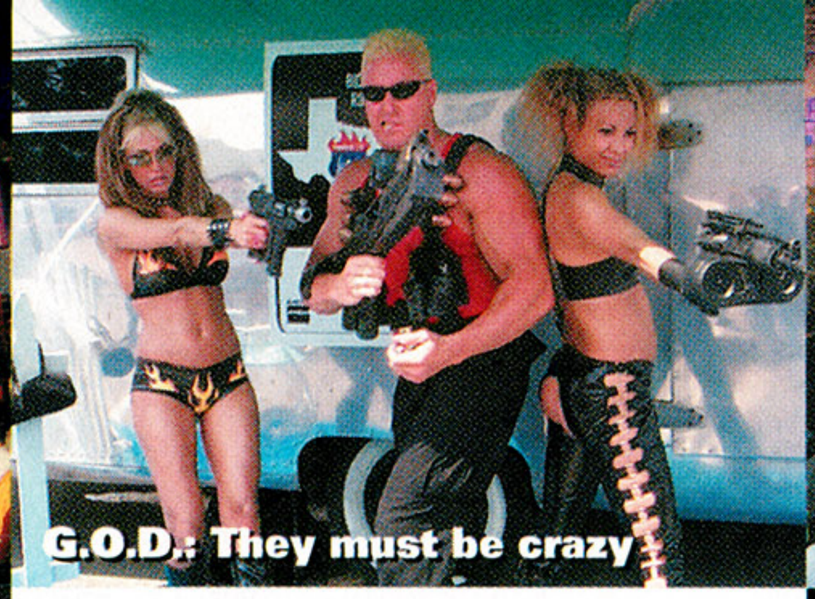
Matt Stone, sans Trey Parker



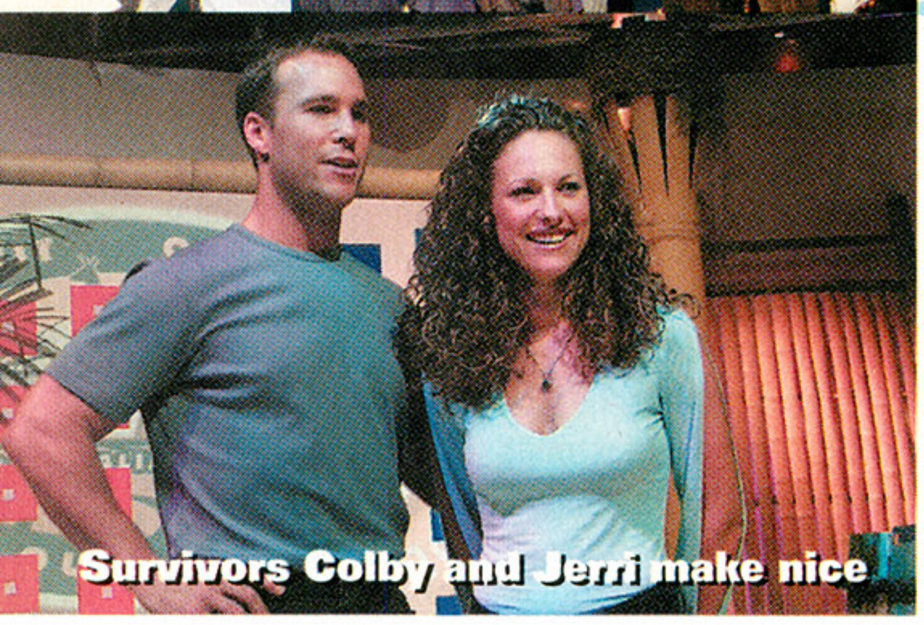
Sewart: $6K richer






G.O.D.: They must be crazy




Survivors Colby and Jerri make nice


Blink-182 rocks Microsoft's world

Mark Edmunds at Nintendo's party. Wanna meet god-game god Peter Molyneaux? We bumped into him twice, at both the Microsoft and Sony parties. We even played classic coin-ops with Naughty Dog prez Jason Rubin, his voice hoarse from a cold, at Sony's bash.

But if Rubin didn't talk much, plenty of others did. Booze at the parties is free. Most folks here drink their fill, then drink more. They start talking: "Pssst, there's a new LucasArts game on the way for PS2, but it's not Star Wars and it's in a genre Lucas has never done before." Or: "Pssst, The real reason for the PS2 launch shortage was because Sony in Japan devoted its most efficient assembly lines to manufacturing more profitable digital cameras." Uh, OK. We're not sure if the truth is out here or not, but listening to the industry rumor mill at full alcohol-fueled bore is sure a fun way to pass the time while standing in the atrociously long potty line at the Sony party.

Let there be...strippers?

You've seen the big booths. You've hobnobbed at the parties. But you still haven't fully experienced E3 until you trek to Kentia Hall in the South Hall's basement. If South and West Hall are home to the mega companies, Kentia Hall is two acres of...everything else—edutainment publishers; Russian and Chinese developers looking for Stateside sugardaddies; companies we've never heard of like Azuradisc Inc., whose Model 1600 Six-stage Lapper/Polisher will "resurface every kind of CD media so it will look and play exactly like new," the booth literature claims. But don't write off Kentia as a gamer's wasteland. Mosey among the 60 or so booths down here and you'll spy big-name developers like Baldur's Gate-creators BioWare and—better still if you've got bean to burn—a flea-market strip of tables covered with import games, manga toys and Game Boy Advances for sale.

Who knows, maybe some of the small-fry startups in Kentia will strike it big and move upstairs to the higher-traffic halls next year...or maybe they'll just head outside. Which brings us to the Gathering of Developers' cheese-a-rama trailer park across the street from the convention center. Here, for the second year in a row, G.O.D. has unleashed a spectacle of string-bikini dancers and triple-6-sporting "Satan's Cheerleaders" who cavort with jumpsuited midgets—some with mullets—on a stage surrounded by developers in Gulfstream trailers who just want you to sit down for five lousy minutes and have a gander at their game. But amidst all the free beer, flying T-shirts and models dressed as schoolgirls, we can't shake the feeling that life is cheap in the G.O.D. booth. We figure we could probably receive any manner of sexual favor or even be allowed to hunt a homeless man for sport if we just sat down to watch Duke Nukem Forever for the PC.

But who has the time. We've got the itch to play more Nintendo games. It's just too bad that, on the way back to their booth, we're distracted by the abs-of-steel models Tecmo has hired to portray Dead or Alive girls. And that's really the ultimate lesson of E3: Don't even bother bringing your attention span. Leave it at home, in that shoebox where you keep your algebra skills. Mesmerized for a split second, we ogle the DOA models and wonder if, like Pichu, they won't see us if we stand still. OK, here's the part where you jump up and down like a doofus, hoping they'll toss you a T-shirt to prove that, yes, you were here.

E3'S WILD KINGDOM

We wanted an "outsider's" perspective on the types of people you can find at E3, so we commissioned Doug Johansen, Wildlife Editor of Huntin' magazine, to work up profiles. He filed this report:



BOOTH BABE:
Behavior: Shows up, smiles.
Distinguishing marks: Heaving plumage serves to attract males; makeup hides scars.
Diet: Celery, water, laxatives.
Mating call: "Excuse me, I'm a casting agent for Paramount."

JAPANESE DEVELOPER:
Behavior: Grants interviews, signs autographs, bows. Often travel in larger herds.
Distinguishing marks: Neatly groomed, Japanese.
Diet: Rice, nicotine, fish.
Mating call: "Hey, you can smoke over here."



GAME JOURNALIST:
Behavior: Plays games, consumes alcohol, writes about games (in any order).
Distinguishing marks: Generally unkempt and malnourished, sometimes wears game-related T-shirts.
Diet: Burger, fries, Coke.
Mating call: "Who left all this free food and beer over by the booth babes?"

PR HACK:
Behavior: Corrals and pimps BOOTH BABE. Gets cigarettes for JAPANESE DEVELOPER. Placates GAME JOURNALIST. Ignores WEB SITE FAN BOY.
Distinguishing marks: Boiling pot of stress and mad rage under attractive and well-groomed surface.
Diet: Power lunch.
Mating call: "Gosh, what should I include in my list of 10 hot games for this *USA Today* article?"



WEB SITE FAN BOY:
Behavior: Plays games, collects free stuff, gawks at BOOTH BABES.
Distinguishing marks: Even thinner and scruffier than GAME JOURNALIST, wears identical uniforms or headbands. Often travel in packs to hunt JAPANESE DEVELOPERS for autographs.
Diet: Pixie sticks, Mountain Dew.
Mating call: "Isn't that Miyamoto handing out signed copies of the Famicom disc system version of Zelda?"

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Review Crew

This Month...

We may have a shorter list of games for review this issue, but there are actually a lot more quality titles than we've seen in more recent, fatter months. Crazy Taxi 2, Twisted Metal: Black, Escape From Monkey Island, Final Fantasy Chronicles, and of course the amazing pair of Zelda games are all here to help wile away the summer hours; so much for the typically lean summer months. Still no GT3 review—Sony hasn't given anyone the final U.S. version yet (and no, we won't review the import like everyone else). Expect it next issue, along with Klonoa 2, NBA Street, Floigan Bros., Sonic Adventure 2, Alone in the Dark, and another Who Wants To Be a Millionaire. See you again in about 30 days. Until then, stay frosty.

The Crew



Crispin Boyer

By the time you read this, Crispin will already be dead. No, not really—but he will have turned 30, which is close. Now he can finally review M-rated games.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure



Chris Johnston

CJ hopes neutering his kitten will calm it down a bit. If it does, he's setting his sights on neutering that uppity Sewart guy next.

Favorite Genres: Adventure, Puzzle



Che Chou

As a sign of gratitude that's long overdue, Che would like to thank The Beastie Boys for raising national mullet awareness to an all-time high.

Favorite Genres: Fighting, Driving



Jeanne Kim

Still trying to quell the dizzying adrenaline rush she experienced after her first E3 with *EGM*, Jeanne's realized she's hooked and there ain't no turnin' back.

Favorite Genres: RPG, Adventure



Jonathan Dudlak

To make room for the E3 feature, Jon had to sell his review bio space for advertising, so please enjoy this promotion: "Snap into a Slim Jim! Arrrrgh!" Thanks.

Favorite Genre: Fighting, Action



Kraig Kujawa

Kraig's post-E3 vacation to Cancun was refreshing, and now he's probably good to review another 100 or so bad games before he needs another.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure



Dean Hager

At the height of the Guns 'N' Roses controversy Dean freely admitted he liked, and still likes, the band. So what if Axl gained a few.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Racing



Mark MacDonald

Wildlife photographer John Burke spent two weeks tracking a male MacDonald to capture this rare shot of him learning *two* new Zelda GBC games were out.

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure



Dan "Shoe" Hsu

Shoe thanks y'all for the letters welcoming him back. He's happy he's reunited with his old crew, though he wishes they'd stop messing with his mug shots.

Favorite Genres: Whatever



James Mielke

Having bulked up to a bone-crunching 200 lbs. of yellow fury, Milky will defy the tides of time by turning 31, rather noisily, DJing in Paris on Bastille Day.

Favorite Genres: Action, Fighting



Greg Sewart

The money Sewart won at E3 is nice, but it's not nearly enough to bribe all the immigration officials he needs to avoid deportation.

Favorite Genres: Racing, RPG, Action

Our Awards

Platinum Awards go to games that get all 10's, 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 receive **Silver Awards.**

Additional Contributors

Dan Leahy — Despite shirking all responsibility and taking time off, Leahy is one of the few, the chosen, the "additional contributors." It's a good life.

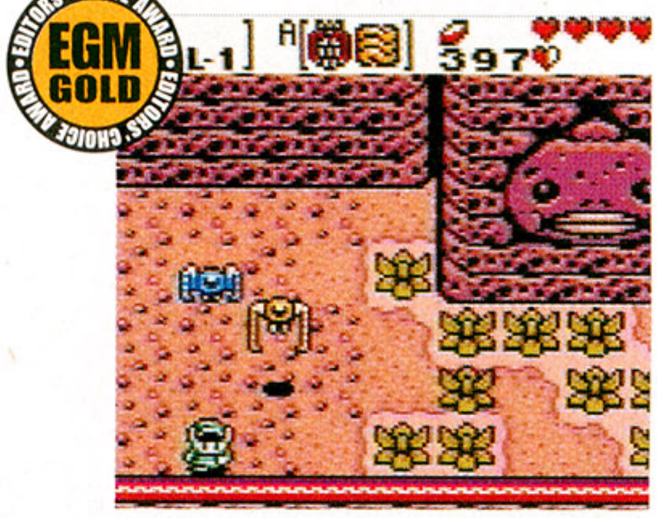
John Ricciardi — After seeing the *Star Trek Voyager* finale, John would just like to say there's no way Chakotay and Seven of Nine would ever get together. No *way*!

Our Philosophy

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

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. 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 AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ain't it?

Game of the Month



Zelda: Oracle of Ages/Seasons Pg. 113

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a tie: Despite being two entirely different games, both of the new GBC Zelda titles got exactly the same high scores from all three reviewers, so they share Game of the Month honors. Now bring on the Game Boy Advance Zeldas!

STAFF'S CURRENT FAVES

1	Legend of Zelda: Oracle Series Nintendo	GAME BOY COLOR
2	Gran Turismo 3 A-spec Sony CEA	PS2
3	Super Mario Advance Nintendo	GAME BOY ADVANCE
4	Twisted Metal: Black Sony CEA	PS2
5	Castlevania: Circle of the Moon Konami	GAME BOY ADVANCE
6	F-Zero: Maximum Velocity Nintendo	GAME BOY ADVANCE
7	Red Faction THQ	PS2
8	GT Advance Championship THQ	GAME BOY ADVANCE
9	Crazy Taxi 2 Sega	Dreamcast
10	Final Fantasy Chronicles Square EA	PlayStation

Bloody Roar 3



Publisher: Activision
Developer: Eighting
Featured In: *EGM*# 139
Players: 1-2
Also Try: DOA2: Hardcore
Best Feature: Sweet graphics, smooth framerate
Worst Feature: Spazzy gameplay, nasty AI
Web Site: www.activision.com

Lately, it seems I'm incapable of getting excited when it comes time to...perform. No, get your mind out of the gutter—I'm talking about 3D fighting games. At the risk of sounding slightly cynical, I think 3D fighters are a dying art. Take Bloody Roar 3 for instance; here's a game that looks gorgeous, moves fast and has all the surface ingredients for hours of bloody ass kicking. But somewhere between getting the game to run at a liquid-smooth 60 fps, and choreographing all the right moves for those gratuitous panty shots, Eighting forgot to actually design a fighting game. For starters, all the characters in BR3 feel generic. While the combatants (along with their cuddly animal counterparts) are all brimming with aesthetic design, they contribute very little variety to the actual gameplay. Pick anyone you like, big or small, because it won't affect the overall strategy of the game, which is basically to pressure your opponent into a corner by unleashing as many attacks as fast as you can. This brings me to my next gripe: BR3's over-emphasis on chained combos. Sure, it requires a certain amount of timing and memorization to dish out 10 hits, but it reduces the entire game to a twitchfest. **Victory goes to the guy who can jam on the buttons faster.** Yes, a winner is you. Casual fighting fans looking for a quick fix of the ol' ultra-violence might enjoy BR3, but if you're like me, Soul Calibur 2 can't get here fast enough. **Che**

BR3 is almost on par with DOA2: Hardcore graphically, and plays a lot like the second Bloody Roar. The sidestep is now part of the normal game, which is handy, and the three new fighters are all pretty fun to play. The other major new feature is the Hyper-Beast Form, which beefs up your strength, speed and Beast Meter for a short while, but I think it only contributes to the game's major weakness—**it's just too easy to reverse the tide of a battle**. You can painstakingly land a ton of combos to chip away at your opponent, but all it takes is one easily enacted super attack to even the score. Even as a fan of the BR games, I got frustrated fast with 3. **Jonathan**

Bloody Roar 3 is a lemon. It offers moves, it offers combos, it even offers technique. On paper, BR3 rivals games like Soul Calibur with an impressive list of gameplay goodies. Some hands-on time will quickly reveal, however, that this game is full of mechanical problems: Characters turn around too slowly (leaving hindsides open to attacks all the time); the evade/escape system requires such precise timing, it's practically useless in a live match; you can heal way too much while in Beast form, etc. BR3 is best saved for those who can enjoy flashy, button mashing gameplay, and who don't really need a technically adept fighting game engine. **Shoe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	6

CART Fury



Publisher: Midway
Developer: Midway
Featured In: *EGM* #132
Players: 1-2
Also Try: Rumble Racing
Best Feature: Turbo speed boosts
Worst Feature: Weak Sim Mode
Web Site: www.midway.com

Midway has taken an ultra-precise and often boring form of racing—Indy CART—and turned it inside out. Real physics are out the window: The cars powerslide, launch airborne, and in general behave like those in Daytona USA. Sounds like a blast right? Well, it is and it isn't. If you're simply looking for the home version of CART Fury, you're in luck—but beyond that simple order, things slow down a little. The additional Sim Mode gives you adjustment options (wing angle, tire pressure, etc.), and a few other real racing features, but tweak as you might, it's still an arcade racer. It seems like the absence of the speed burst is the only real difference from the standard game. The mini-games are equally so-so. Challenges like Follow the Line, Block Your Opponent and Last Man Standing are only a few degrees different than an actual race. On the other hand, Lock On lets you shoot missiles at rival cars—that's a step in the right direction at least. **In general, CART Fury is a decent game but doesn't quite turn the corner to greatness.** Maybe if the tracks were more dynamic with hills and valleys (come on, it's arcadey anyway) and featured more interesting shortcuts, or if there were more turbo boost power-ups.... One thing is for sure—despite the landslide of loading screens, two-player is the way to play. It's fast, the AI cars still race along, and most importantly it's competitive. Still, try this one before you plunk down the big bucks. **Dean**

Before you play this game, make sure you don't have GT3 on the brain because it will absolutely ruin the experience. Speed is the name of the game, and once you understand CART Fury's simple philosophy, there's a bit of fun to be had here. Sure, there's not much depth or finesse involved, but if you're looking for the beer bong equivalent of a velocity rush, CF gets the job done. While the much-hyped car crashes look good (debris goes hurling everywhere), CF takes the "oomph" out of them by making accidents commonplace to the point of comedy. Ultimately, CF **lacks the charm and final polish of finer arcade racers** like Daytona USA or NASCAR Rumble. **Che**

Midway did a great job of keeping CART Fury as fast and smooth as it is in the arcade. But the quick races, which play a lot like a lamer, more grounded version of Hydro Thunder, only draw attention to the **ghastly load times**. There are some fun mini-game challenges, and the tracks have really pretty backdrops, but you spend so much time sifting through menus and waiting for loading that it's hard to enjoy the game's few finer points. Flashing up stills of your average-looking female race crew is perhaps the game's way of trying to keep your interest, but mediocre models don't pay the pickle man when it comes to racing games. **Jonathan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	6

MX2002 Featuring Ricky Carmichael



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Pacific Coast Power & Light Co.
Also Try: ATV Offroad Fury
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Best Feature: Fun tricks and jumps
Worst Feature: Another "extreme" crap soundtrack
Web Site: www.thq.com

Despite my limited knowledge of the motocross sport in real life, I've seen a few of these titles come down the line for the PS1 and walked away fairly unimpressed. MX2002, fortunately, **leans more toward the fun and style of ATV Offroad Fury**. The game feels very realistic—using the clutch and shocks to control your rider's jumps has a huge bearing on your performance, so there's definitely some skill involved. For freestyle fans, there are several different courses that open you up to all sorts of stunts and trials (including distance jumping). I was annoyed at how much emphasis was placed on the look of the riders and bikes, though, rather than on the customization of your ride (like I care whether I'm wearing an O'Neal or a Fox helmet—screw that). Give me some new tires, shocks, exhaust options or motor mods. I reckon all the flashy outfits contribute to the game's visual appeal, however, which it has aplenty. I never saw the framerate tank, and you can always see a good chunk of the course ahead of you. The only really lame part of the races is your inability to leave the course. Skirt off just a tad and you immediately tumble off your bike. It'd be nice to see some shortcuts or exploration potential, but on the whole I was impressed. Just have some music handy to drown out the unimaginative rip-off bands on the soundtrack—Sum 41? Gimme a break. **Jonathan**

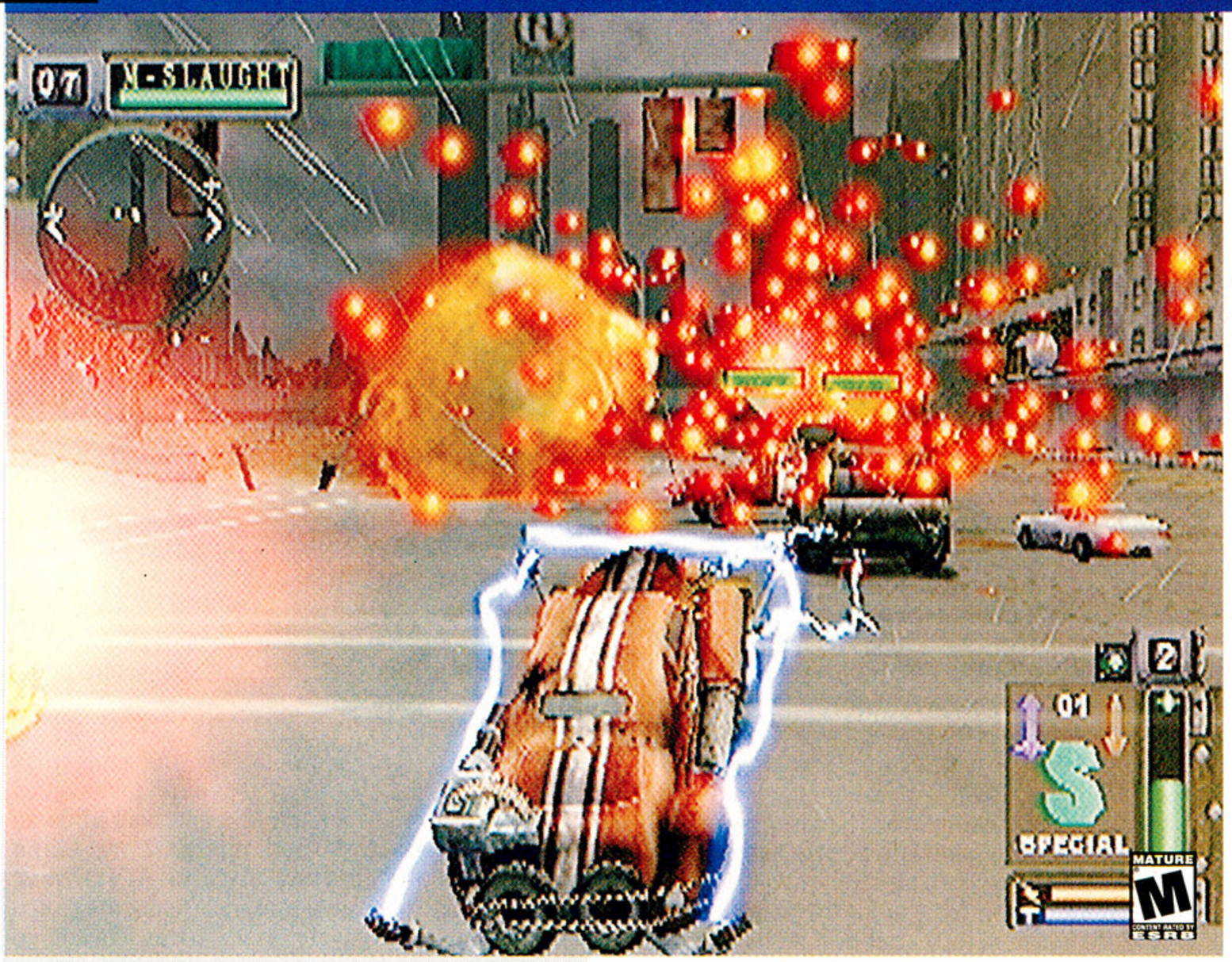
What's this? A motocross game that's actually respectable? Yeah, I'm shocked too. But that's what MX2002 is. It's not the prettiest game, the music is far too repetitive, and the bike's engine still doesn't sound like it's reacting correctly to the throttle. But on the up side we have an excellent create-a-biker mode, some wonderful tutorials, and **some surprisingly good control**. In fact, I'd hazard to say that I like the jumping physics of MX2002 just as much as ATV's—learning to load the suspension and then pop the clutch on a landing shaves seconds off your lap time. Now if only the riders didn't look as stiff as Viagra overdose victims, I'd be happy. **Greg**

MX2002 lets you maneuver like you're riding on the moon. Do a Nac-nac front flip, 360 no-hander, whatever you want...it's all possible. Unrealistic yes, but it does make the freestyle events more interesting. In general, the game is fast (a big plus), especially when using the 250 cc bikes, and the pre-load and clutch features are nicely done as well. They let you regulate how hard you launch off a jump, just like in ATV Offroad, with the clutch acting as a speed burst (if you do it correctly). Manipulating both is the key to timing jumps and establishing the fastest line. MX2002 is a solid title overall, but **if anything, I wish the physics weren't quite as liberal**. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	7	8

EGM SILVER

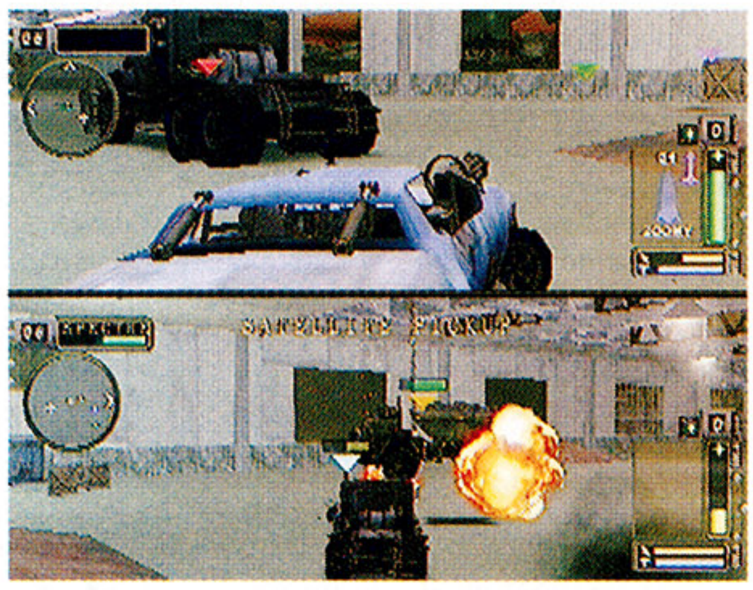
Twisted Metal: Black



Everyone loves talking about the new Transformer in town, Sweet Tooth. Hey, so do we. When you see the upright ice-cream truck robot bearing down on you, you know you're about to get an ass forking.



Publisher:	Sony CEA
Developer:	Incognito
Featured In:	*EGM* #144
Players:	1-4
Supports:	Multi-tap
Best Feature:	Solid game engine, nice graphics
Worst Feature:	Lack of variety
Web Site:	www.scea.com



Split-screen modes include Death Match, Co-op and Last Man Standing, where two players pick the same cars and go at it to see who's...well, the last man standing. The framerate is always smooth, but the game speed slows down a lot with four players.

In case you haven't already heard, Twisted Metal: Black is a welcome return to the series' roots. A long time ago, a group called SingleTrac made Twisted Metal 1 and 2. After that, they were acquired by GT Interactive (who in turn, was eventually bought by Infogrames) and together, they produced another excellent car combat game, Rogue Trip: Vacation 2012. Meanwhile, Sony (via 989 Studios) went on to produce Twisted Metal 3 and 4. The results were...well, you can read our mini "reviews" below.

Most of the original SingleTrac team went on to form Incognito, whose first game is Twisted Metal: Black for the PS2. Any moron (including all of us) can tell you that this is excellent news for fans of the series. The boys are back in town, and they've put Twisted Metal back on track.

What Were the Old Twisted Metal Games Like?

For your convenience, here's a handy reviews reference guide for the Twisted Metal games (all PS1) of yesteryear. Space is limited, so here ya go:

Twisted Metal 1: Good
Twisted Metal 2: Better
Twisted Metal 3: Sucked
Twisted Metal 4: Sucked

Oh, and Rogue Trip, the other game by SingleTrac: Cool.

The new game has a decidedly dark and disturbing look to it. It's definitely a controversial direction, as TM: Black is full of unsettling characters and images, both subliminal and not so subliminal. This chapter in the formerly harmless franchise is not for the faint of heart or for any youngsters, but since it's rated Mature, this shouldn't be too big an issue...'cept for parents who don't pay attention to ESRB ratings then go on to bitch and whine about our industry. (Twisted Metal: Small Brawl, the kid-friendly shoot-'em-up, is due out this fall for the PS1.)

Anyway, prepare for a *Se7en*-ish nightmare experience, complete with The Rolling Stone's "Paint it Black" jamming in the background during the end credits (a la *Devil's Advocate* or *Full Metal Jacket*).

And watch out for those disturbing images.

My hand really, really hurts. Don't get any funny ideas—my hand aches from playing this game for hours and hours on end, with too few breaks in between. Part of that is due to how insanely difficult Twisted Metal: Black is. On medium level, it took me an entire frustrating afternoon just to complete a few stages in Story Mode. But the other part is due to how addicting the game is. I just couldn't get enough. After completing it, I still had to play more. Single-player. Multiplayer. It didn't matter. **Even after my left hand was thoroughly wrecked, I was still a trooper and played on.** You see, Incognito really did right by everyone and finally made that long overdue *good* Twisted Metal sequel. The graphics are sharp, and the levels are clever and rather innovative (like one where you're riding on a giant oil tanker that ends up crashing into an asylum on the shore, thereby making the stage twice as big). More importantly, the game physics are practically perfect for this genre (contrast that to TM3, which had a rotten game engine). The controls feel just right, too, although you really need to use the D-pad and not the analog stick to do the special attacks (this contributed to the hand wrecking). I only wish Incognito would've given the game a sprinkle of variety. Each Story Mode chapter is basically the same as the last (except for the boss and mid-boss stages), and the number of multiplayer features are on the light side.

Shoe

As a fan of these types of games, and this series in particular, I couldn't be more happy. **TM had lost its luster years ago, but now it's truly back (in black, yeah, yeah).** It floors me that the original developers were able to step back into the saddle years later and dig this franchise up from the grave. The gameplay that made TM popular has returned, albeit a little more difficult. The biggest surprise is the *Se7en*-ish feel that gives the combat a unique edge. It goes beyond just running over briefcase-carrying pedestrians; the dark humor knows just when to give you a good kick in the balls. And isn't that what we're really looking for in a video game?

Kraig

Forget about the insipid character designs and horrible story line, TM:B is all about its relentless pacing and action. **This is Twisted Metal like you've never seen it before.** Screenshots just can't do this game justice; you've really got to see TM:B in motion to truly appreciate how much graphical detail it's juggling. Massive environments, morphing cars...you get the idea. Be warned though, TM:B will often frustrate you. In single-player, the AI has a tendency to gang up on you, giving you very little breathing room to enjoy the cacophony. With a friend, TM:B is a total blast (especially the co-op Story Mode). A solid effort and a must-buy for Twisted Metal fans.

Che

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	6	8

Escape from Monkey Island



Publisher: LucasArts
Developer: LucasArts
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Also Try: Grim Fandango (PC)
Web Site: www.lucasarts.com

Best Feature: A savior in a quality game-starved genre
Worst Feature: Pop culture jabs get old pretty quickly

Everyone knows the PC-style adventure game category's been hurtin' for some action for a while now, and many previously devout followers have strayed from the genre, looking elsewhere to slate their thirst for a good story. But take heart, my comrades in the never-ending battle for quality adventure games, all hope is not lost! A messiah has finally come to deliver the faithful from this purgatorial plateau of the banal. Classic Q&A-style storytelling, mind-joggingly scrumptious puzzles, zany wit and over-the-top silliness, plus visual candy that'll strip your saliva glands bare from all juices, await for the willing gamer. Doesn't that sound delicious? Of course it does. And yet, all good things do come with a price. Ironically, the pop culture-heavy humor that *is* Monkey Island tends to go a bit overboard at times (no pun intended), leaving you with a tummy full of sour grog. But then again, what's a piratey adventure without some seasickness, argh? Overall, **you really can't go wrong with this finale to a LucasArts legacy**, so be sure not to miss the boat. **Jeanne**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	8	7

Fur Fighters: Viggo's Revenge



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Bizarre Creations
Players: 1-4
Also Try: Fur Fighters (DC), Rayman 2 Revolution
Supports: None
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

Best Feature: New cel-shaded look
Worst Feature: No improvements, just so-so additions

There's nothing I hate more than lukewarm games, except maybe lukewarm spin-offs of lukewarm games. And lo and behold, who was given the coveted opportunity to review one of them? Ha, ha, stop laughing. So, I'm just going to tell you straight-up that **there is absolutely nothing remarkable about Fur Fighters: VR**. The tongue-in-cheek humor of cute animals shooting the stuffing out of each other, and the ability to switch characters (and their unique abilities) mid-play, may have been enough to float Fur Fighters, but Bizarre apparently believed they had themselves a winning formula for FF PS2. No additions worth mentioning (unless you're dying to know how many more levels have been added so there's more of the same to do over and over again), or improvements concerning gameplay that would make what FF:VR offers better, or heck, any different from FF, have been made. Instead, most of the work apparently went into the new cel-shaded look (ooh..aah...zzz). But hey, if everyone else is doing it, why not? Um, right? Right? **Jeanne**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	5	5

Crazy Taxi 2



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Hitmaker
Featured In: *EGM* #144
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack, SegaNet
Best Feature: More Crazy Taxi goodness...
Worst Feature: ...But only one new feature
Web Site: www.sega.com

Considering Crazy Taxi is one of my favorite Dreamcast games, I've been anticipating a sequel for a long time now, assuming whatever Hitmaker produced would be...well, a hit. And while that's pretty much true, I think I was expecting a little too much from Crazy Taxi 2. What we've got here is basically the same game with one major new feature (the jump button), four new drivers that really aren't all that different from the original four, and two new cities to play around in. I guess my biggest problem is that I'm not a huge fan of the new cities (both parts of NYC). They're too congested and enclosed to really go fast in, not to mention it's way too easy to lose your sense of direction. Some would contend that part of mastering the game is to memorize each area, and I somewhat agree, but it totally destroys the pick-up-and-play aspect that the first game did so well. Still, once you do master the new jump feature and memorize the courses, Crazy Taxi 2 is **a very solid game, easily worth the price of admission**. With a whole bunch of new mini-games and secrets to unlock, Crazy Taxi 2 gives fans of the series something to look forward to. The uninitiated should probably save some money and buy the original Crazy Taxi for $20, since the sequel really should have been called Crazy Taxi: New York Edition. But if you liked the first game, go ahead and pick up CT2. Just be sure you know what you're getting into. **Greg**

I wish my little CRX could hop around like these CT2 cabs. Vaulting over bridges, buses and other such obstacles introduces a whole new dimension to the game—but as the only major upgrade, it's a little disappointing. Maybe a few more variables such as destructible building fronts or the ability to eject fares might be cool. But then again, at least they didn't ruin it with too many crap changes. And if anything, tooling around the congested New York City streets is a tad more challenging than the hills of San Francisco. **So fans of CT need not worry, it's more of the same fun** with a few new twists, namely, multiple fares, jumpin' and new mini-games. **Dean**

The Big Apple seems like a natural fit for a Taxi sequel, but I worked up more of a sweat launching off of the hilly streets of San Francisco. New York gives you lots of traffic, tight turns and overpasses, but there aren't many places where you can put the pedal to the metal or get big air. You can jump at the touch of a button now, but that doesn't give me the adrenaline rush I got from the original. That isn't to say this isn't exciting. It makes me feel alive when I chase gaggles of mimes, and it's hard to resist crashing my cab when they're paying my fare. With moments like that, **it's hard not to love CT2, but it's harder to like it as much as the original.** **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	5	8

Sports Jam



Publisher: Agetec
Developer: Wow
Also Try: Virtua Athlete
Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Tons of events
Worst Feature: Too simple, too often
Web Site: www.agetec.com

After playing oodles of me-too Track and Field games in the past year, it was a welcome breath of fresh air to try Sports Jam's unique spin on the genre. This all-in-one American sports bonanza cuts through all of the boring crap in some of our favorite sports and distills them into easy-to-play mini-games. A handful of them are pretty fun, such as the closest-to-the-pin golf contest and pong-like hockey game. **But for every good sport, there's one that's so simple that you'd probably need to be in diapers to enjoy it.** Football has been watered down into a button masher, and I guess that's all right, since pounding your fingers into calloused oblivion seems to be a requisite in this genre. But then you've got basketball free-throwing that put me to sleep, an incredibly easy Field Goal competition that makes every kicker look like Morten Andersen, and lastly, a cycling event that managed to make the sport even more boring than usual. The good news is that if you play the Arcade Mode, you can cherry-pick four events to play, avoiding the bad ones. But in the two-player mode, you're pretty much stuck playing most of them. Which is too bad, because many of these events play worse as a two-player game than they do solo. You can get around some of the game's flaws by customizing it in the options menu, but it's not really worth the trouble unless you're looking for a sports game that your baby brother can play. **Kraig**

There aren't many games that can say they have golf, hockey, soccer and more, but you could make the argument that this really has none of them. While the graphics may show a hoops or pigskin player, **you're actually just playing a dressed-up Pong or a simple button masher**. That said, Sports Jam still could have been great if there was any technique to it. After a couple tries, you can master the short one-player mode, and many events in the two-player matches are mundane. Still, something must be said for SJ's originality. After all, where else can you pulverize tackling dummies into gold coins before catching a touchdown pass with a football player? **Dan**

Sports Jam is a little like Track & Field, only not as in-depth. **Most of the events take only a few tries to master.** Once you have the mechanics figured out, like Home Run Derby for example, it's just a race against the clock. But while some events are easy (bicycling and football), others are appropriately tough. The golf contest Closest to the Hole is great. The hockey events are a blast as well. Out of all the sports you're bound to find something you like. I could see little kids, maybe 8 to 10 years old, taking a shine to Sports Jam, due to its easy learning curve and two-player yucks. But older gamers, or fans of the T&F series will get bored fast. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	7	6

Digimon World 2



Publisher:	Bandai
Developer:	Bandai
Featured In:	*EGM* # 141
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Nifty Digimon in blocky 3D glory
Worst Feature:	Slow like molasses
Web Site:	www.bandaigames.com

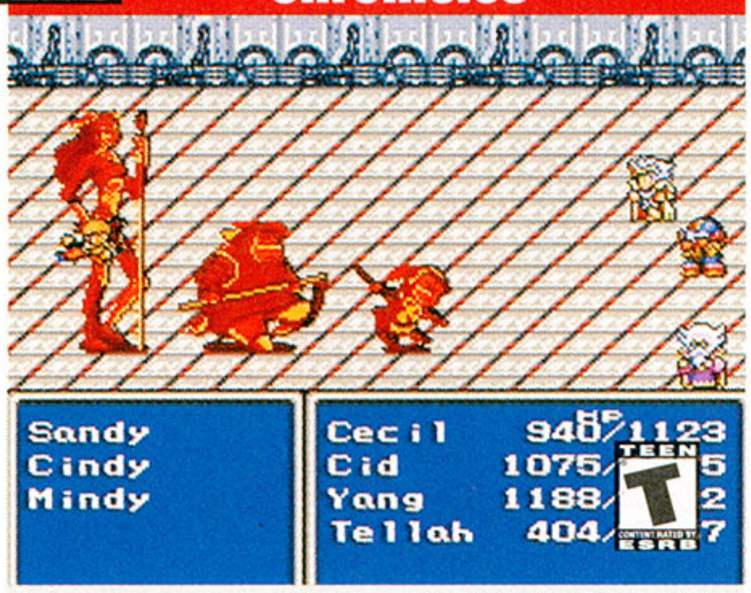
My opinion was unique among the Review Crew at this time last year—I rather enjoyed the first Digimon World for PlayStation. I thought it was a charming RPG-lite that captured the essence of Bandai's portable digital monsters in a neat, prerendered, semi-3D way. Now the Digimon are back, and after a year hiatus they are worse for the wear. While the first game may not have been technically great, it captured the pet-raising Tamagotchi-esque elements of Digimon perfectly; if you liked that sort of thing, then you were happy. Now the whimsy and exploratory feel of the first game has been replaced with a monotonous, generic, turn-based, Pokémon Stadium-wannabe RPG. Perhaps this was an attempt to bring the series up to speed, but it loses something in the transition. The three-on-three battles (set against almost solely black backdrops) are tedious enough to cure any insomniac. Zzzzz. Sure there are some nifty conventions, such as "Digivolutionizing" your Digimon (combining Digimon to create stronger beasts), moving around the game world in your highly customizable Digi-beetle (kind of like using a Chocobo to travel in Final Fantasy games), and an odd two-player button-mashing contest, but a few nifty ideas do not a great game make. In this case, they do not make a particularly good game, and **even the most die-hard Digimon fan is strongly urged to rent this one first**. **Milkman**

After this poo-poo ugly, embarrassingly sloppy, and overall just plain boring sequel, the only thing keeping this rip-off franchise alive will be overly devoted fans or moms looking for a quick fix to quiet their video game-starved kids. Although DW2 abandons the "virtual pet"-tiness of DW, its attempt at creating a Digi-world RPG is pathetic. **No work and absolutely no spice went into the regurgitated stew that spawned this game**. Recycled animations, laborious turn-based battles, extremely dull dungeon-crawls, anti-slick item/equipment managing, and amazingly bad graphics will make you want to 1) puke, 2) die laughing or 3) punch something. **Jeanne**

Even forgetting that Digimon is, at its heart, a Pokémon rip-off, it's a wonder anyone would've worked their way through the *first* Digimon World, much less this game. It looks as if the designers of part 2 were fans of Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon, because the domain areas look almost the same: black backgrounds and (mostly) plain floors. Combat is **about as exciting as watching paint dry**—single Digimon perform not-so-flashy attacks against, yep, black backgrounds. The game's interface is so slow and chunky that it feels like a first-generation PS1 game. Digimon fans may be able to overlook the shortcomings, but I'd stay away. **Chris**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
2	4	3	2

Final Fantasy Chronicles



Publisher:	Square Electronic Arts
Developer:	Square
Featured In:	*EGM* #144
Players:	1-2
Also try:	Final Fantasy Anthology
Best Feature:	Chrono Trigger and FFIV, man!
Worst Feature:	Sticky load times
Web Site:	www.squaresoft.com

FF Chronicles is, in my eye, proof positive that there is a God. Or at the very least, proof that Square is willing to pad the dead space between The Bouncer and Final Fantasy X with two classic RPGs that should have been rereleased a long, long time ago. But who's complaining? Not me. Two of the finest RPGs ever to grace the living-room screen, FFIV and Chrono Trigger (goodbye insane eBay prices!) should give role-playing fanatics plenty of reasons to smile over the summer. Between the tale of the ousted air-force commander Cecil and his quest to stop the evil Baron, and the legendary adventure (with its multiple endings) featuring Crono and his time-travelling friends, **I am finally able to pack away my weathered Super Nintendo cartridges and go digital**. The new features included for the PS version (a dash option and two-player action during battles for FFIV, added CG and hand-drawn animation for both, plus reworked translations, art galleries and other bonuses) are certainly worth the wait, but there is a rather annoying niggle in the form of pesky load times. Chronicles loses a point for having some long load times before, during and after nearly every battle, which (as you might know) makes up a large part of the game. Nothing on the Legacy of Kain scale, but compared to the SNES carts it's like a mosquito that won't leave you alone. Still, beyond that, FFC is essential playing. **Milkman**

If the term "classic, old-school RPG" conjures up fond memories of playing Final Fantasy VII, then FF Chronicles is not meant for you. This is really old stuff, with antiquated interfaces and graphics. But this "stuff" is also the stuff of legends. We're talking enthralling story lines, great character development, innovative (for the time) play mechanics, and more. If you can get past how outdated these titles look and feel, you'll find a couple of gems in Chrono Trigger and FFIV, two of the best Super Nintendo RPGs ever. Note: If you're giving true "classic, old-school RPG" gaming a shot for the first time, get FF Anthology instead. FFV and VI can't be beat. **Shoe**

I don't get why these remakes aren't perfect. Final Fantasy IV suffers some major slowdown when you use menus in combat, and the load times before battles and switching to the sub-screen in Chrono Trigger are absurd. That said, these are still very playable versions of two of the most important games in RPG history, and taken as such are worth buying. All the old-timers will get to relive their Super NES glory days while all the kids who cut their teeth on Final Fantasy VII might actually learn something about the genre's roots. Aside from some nice new FMV and a decidedly better translation on FFIV, though, don't expect a lot of improvements. **Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	7	1	5

Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX: Maximum Remix



Publisher:	Acclaim
Developer:	Z-Axis
Also try:	Mat Hoffman
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Polished version of the game
Worst Feature:	Not worth paying for twice
Web Site:	www.acclaim.com

The first Dave Mirra managed to carve a niche for itself by being of a higher quality than the rest of the x-treme wannabes (cough...Grind Session...cough... TJ Lavin) and more than just a blatant Tony Hawk ripoff. Maximum Remix gives gamers who loved the first more of the same, and, er, more! New tracks, challenges, characters, an expert mode and (finally) wall rides arrive just in time to go head to head with Mat Hoffman. Sure the default controls are less intuitive than Tony Hawk's (sorry, Z-Axis, but that's a hard act to follow), but the mighty modifier-button was always Dave Mirra's equalizer, and so it remains. Clearly the extra time has allowed Z-Axis to neaten things up. The game's graphics seem tighter and less warpy than before, all making this **a superior game to its predecessor**. For the first-time purchase, this is obviously the Dave Mirra you want, as worthwhile as Activision's own BMX effort. The problem is if you already own the first version, there isn't enough new to warrant buying it a second, slightly improved, time. **Milkman**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	3	9

World's Scariest Police Chases



Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Fox Interactive
Featured In:	*EGM* #140
Players:	1-2
Also Try:	Driver 2
Best Feature:	Variety of missions
Worst Feature:	Sheriff Bunell's spastic voiceovers
Web Site:	www.activision.com

The prospect of chasing drunk drivers, car thieves and drug smugglers like the guys on television intrigued me, but sadly, this game has been watered down into a long-winded crash and bash fest. "Apprehending" suspects boils down to ramming and shooting their car more than they do to you. Smashing cars to bits satisfies the hillbilly in all of us, but there's no technique to stopping the vehicle you're chasing. **If the developers watched the show this game is based on, they could have easily lifted a few cool things out of it**. For example, I once saw an episode that showed the technique that officers use to make a car stop by hitting it with their own. None of that stuff made it into the game. You can use firearms, but you can't aim to shoot out tires. Instead, you hit the suspect's car and lower its energy bar. There are a few bright spots, such as a renegade tank chase and a two-player co-op mode, but those can't hide the fact that this game isn't anything more than a drab Destruction Derby with added sirens and donuts. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	6

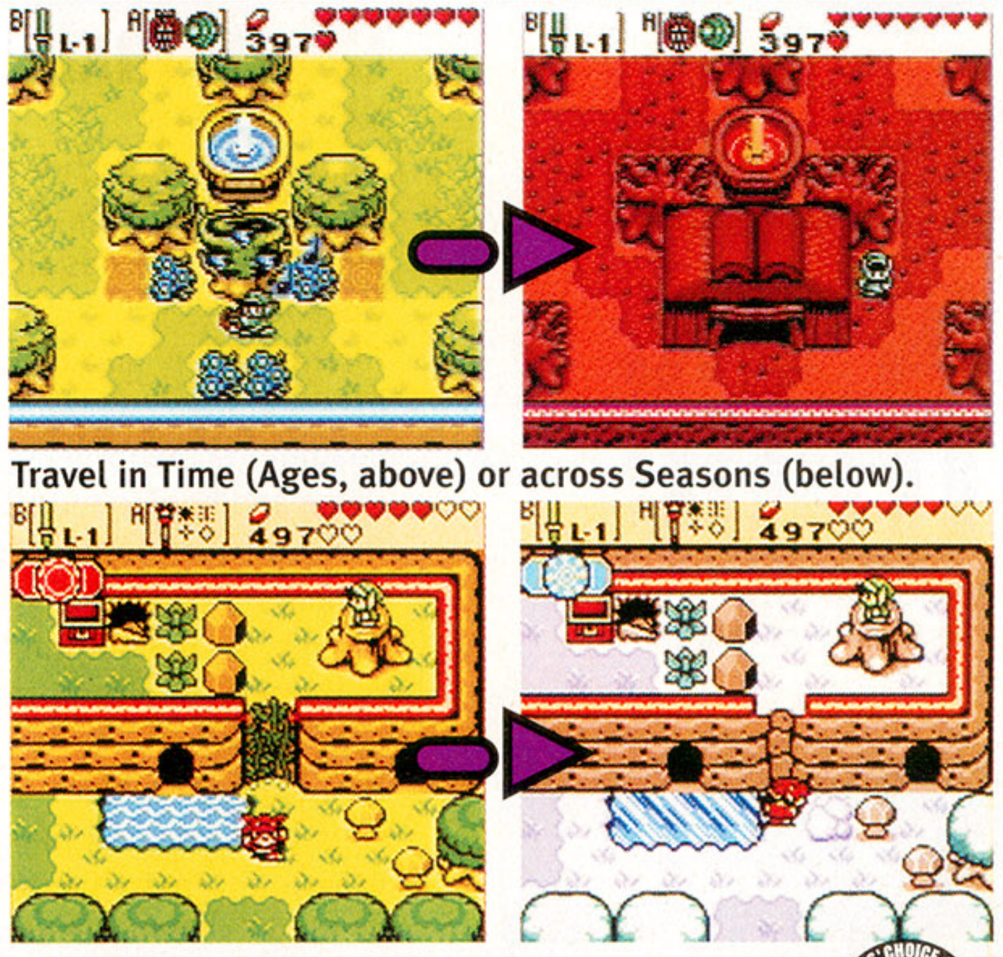
The Legend of Zelda: Oracle Series



Look familiar? The Oracle games mix old Zelda elements in two all-new carts.

Publisher:	Nintendo
Developer:	Capcom
Featured In:	*EGM* #143
Players:	1
Supports:	Link cable
Also Try:	Link's Awakening
Web site:	www.nintendo.com

We know what you're thinking: two new Zelda Game Boy games in one month? No way. They must be like the different color Pokémon titles—the same game with only teeny-tiny adjustments, right? Wrong. Oracle of Seasons and Oracle of Ages are both completely unique games, with their own plots, characters, dungeons, items, secrets, and tons of other stuff unique to each of them. The two games do have one thing in common with Pokémon, though—the ability to link up to get special items in each. In fact, the only way to open up all of the dungeons and face the true final boss is by finishing one game, transferring a file to the other, and then finishing it. Yes, it seems too good to be true, but two new and awesome 2D Zelda games are out now. Bring on the long plane trips and car rides!



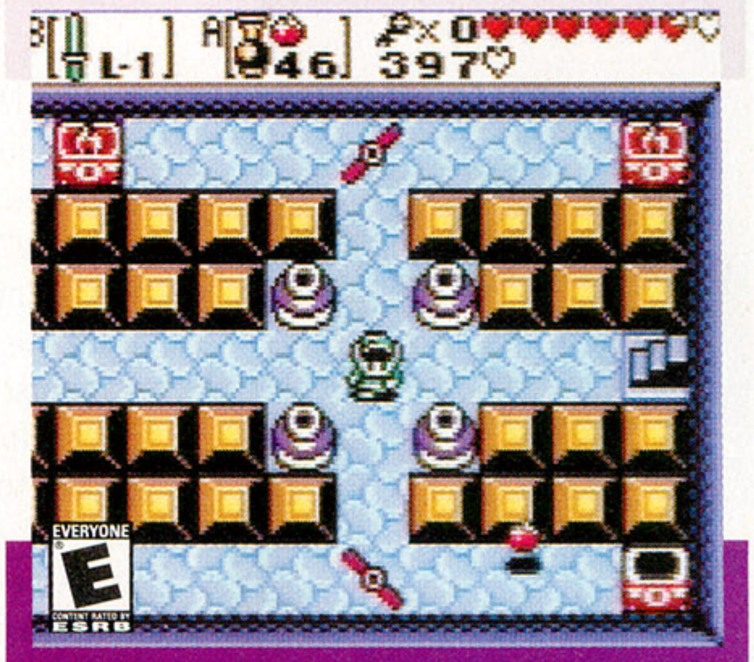
Travel in Time (Ages, above) or across Seasons (below).

The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Ages

EGM GOLD EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

Best Feature: **Puzzles**
Worst Feature: **Interface**

Take the awesome ability to switch back and forth between two slightly different worlds (like Link to the Past on the Super NES), adjust the visuals to Game Boy levels (like Link's Awakening DX for the GBC), add a ton of fiendishly clever puzzles and what do you get? Oracle of Ages, one of the best portable games ever. Yes, it may look plain, especially now that the GB Advance has hit, but once you start playing this addictive action-RPG you'll forget about all that, trust me. Ages is, at its heart, another 2D adventure in the Zelda mold: helping townspeople, grabbing hearts and rupees, exploring a huge world and dungeons all the while. But the added emphasis on puzzles here works wonders; it's all about figuring out how to use switches, blocks, or any of the over a dozen special items you can find to progress. It's not a chess match though—Ages does a great job of **forcing you to use your head without straying so far from the action that your thumbs get itchy**. Complaints are minor: Switching items (especially rings) could be a lot less annoying with a better interface. The overall story never captivated me either, but the characters (including many from the N64 Zeldas) and funny side-plots kept me happy. Great (and tough!) bosses, *tons* of secrets and more. If you must choose only one, make it Ages. **Mark**



Both new Zelda games feature puzzles in their dungeons, but Ages definitely outdoes Seasons. Here Link ricochets an Ember Seed to light the final torch and open a door to the next room.

While both Oracle games are truly superb, I have to go with Ages as my personal favorite, thanks to the more thought-provoking puzzles and SNES Zelda-esque world design (the way things are broken up between past and present reminds me a bit of the Light and Dark worlds in A Link to the Past). The dungeons are hardcore, the new items are sweet (I love the Switch Hook), and even the music is inspired, despite half of it being ripped directly from Link's Awakening. As a stand-alone game, Oracle of Ages is great, but when coupled with Oracle of Seasons it becomes **one of the most satisfying GBC experiences ever**. It makes for a great GBA game, too... **John R**

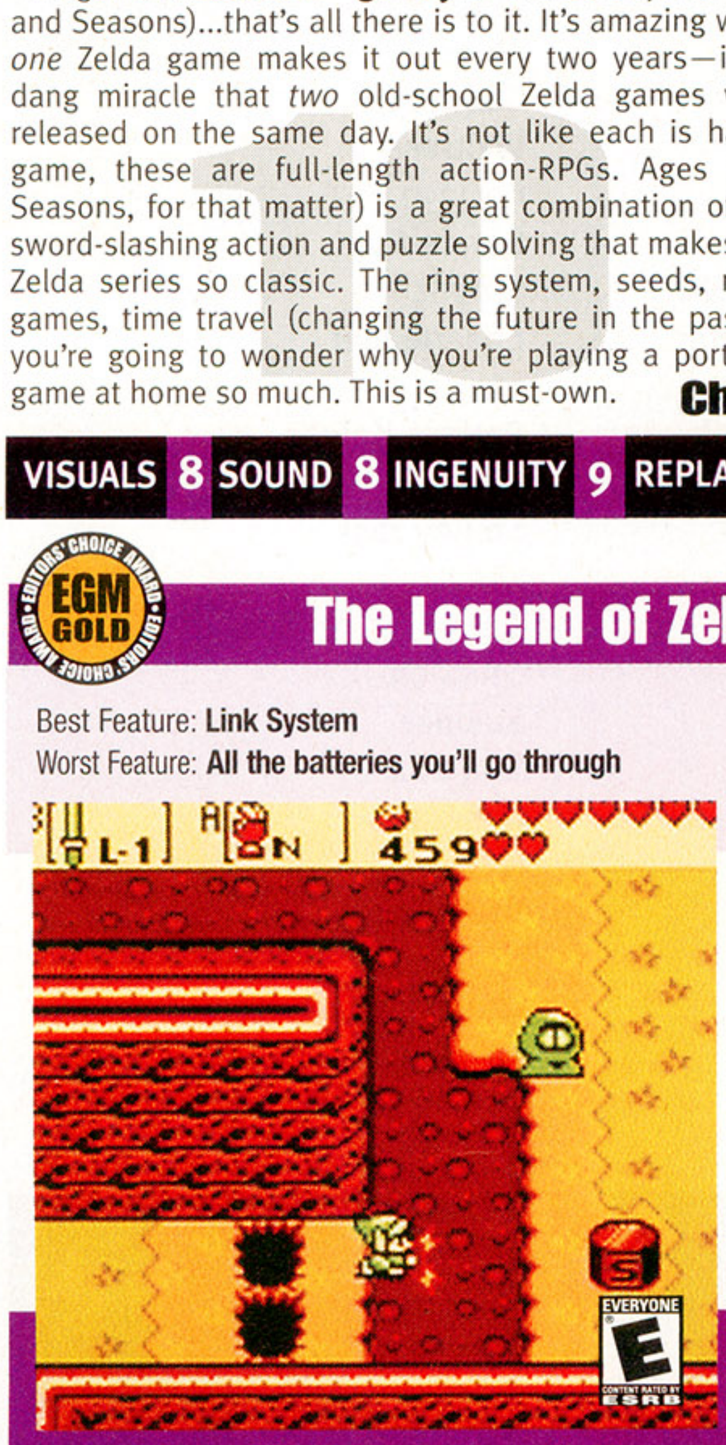
This game is **excellent—go buy it**. In fact, buy two (this and Seasons)...that's all there is to it. It's amazing when *one* Zelda game makes it out every two years—it's a dang miracle that *two* old-school Zelda games were released on the same day. It's not like each is half a game, these are full-length action-RPGs. Ages (and Seasons, for that matter) is a great combination of the sword-slashing action and puzzle solving that makes the Zelda series so classic. The ring system, seeds, mini-games, time travel (changing the future in the past)—you're going to wonder why you're playing a portable game at home so much. This is a must-own. **Chris**

VISUALS	8	SOUND	8	INGENUITY	9	REPLAY	8

The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Seasons

EGM GOLD EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

Best Feature: **Link System**
Worst Feature: **All the batteries you'll go through**



Here Link uses his Magnetic Gloves (an item not found in Ages) to pull himself across a river of lava in the underworld of Subrosia (also Seasons only). A curious Jawa watches.

If you were a fan of the previous Game Boy Zelda, or any of the 2D Zeldas for that matter, then really, don't even bother reading this. Just go out and buy one of (or even better, both of) the Oracle games. You'll thank me later. They're both fantastic games, and despite being developed by an outsider (Capcom), are very worthy of the Zelda name. If you decide to go with Seasons, you'll find that it's a more action-packed affair, with less concentration on puzzles and character development than Ages. This is hardly a bad thing, but in my case at least, I found that I preferred the more puzzle-heavy setup of Ages. The dungeons in Seasons are exquisitely designed, though they don't get incredibly challenging until around level 6 or so. The new items are very cool though (the Magnetic Gloves are my favorite), and the Rings add a nice touch of variety to the gameplay. Ultimately, **the thing that really pushes these games over the top is their interaction with one another**. The "Secrets" stuff, where you take passwords from the second game and use them in the first game (and then vice-versa) to get items is totally brilliant, and the only way to see the true last boss and get the "real" ending is to play through both games in succession. An overall fantastic game that should not be missed. **John R**

Unlike Pokémon, where there are two versions of a game but you only really need one to get the experience, everyone needs both of these games. They share some common themes and characters, but are totally separate quests. I played Seasons second, and **it's just as good as Ages**. The whole idea of linking the games and bringing items from one into the other is done so perfectly you wonder why it hasn't been done until now. In the graphics department, it's about on par with Zelda DX—not anything jaw-dropping, but still really good. I can honestly say I have no complaints about this game (or Ages). What a great way to finish off the GBC. **Chris**

Two new awesome Zelda games in one month? Hallelujah! Graphically identical to Ages, Seasons has a bit more of an action slant to it, but it's still puzzley enough (with the different seasons, alternate world and bevy of items) to earn my love. As with Ages, the overall story is ho-hum, but nothing so bad I ever lost interest. **Old-school Zelda fans will love the familiar gameplay and all the other references to the earlier games**. The difficulty also ramps up nicely, always giving you a general idea of what to do next without spelling it out. And the link-up feature? Kick ass! As if any 2D Zelda fan needed more reason to play both games. **Mark**

VISUALS	8	SOUND	8	INGENUITY	9	REPLAY	8



Tricks of the Trade

By Trickman Terry
tricks@ziffdavis.com

TRICK OF THE MONTH

Zone of the Enders

PS2

1 HEALTH, AMMUNITION AND VERSUS MODE

Health and Ammo
In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Then press L1, L1, L2, L2, L1, R1, L1, R1, R2, R1. Your health and ammunition will be refilled. Note that your level will decrease each time you enter it.

2 Versus
On the title screen (where it says, "Press Start Button"), press Circle, X, Right, Left, Right, Left, Down, Down, Up, Up. You'll hear a sound confirming that the code was entered correctly. Press START and scroll through the main menu options until you see Versus. Choose it to fight a one-on-one battle with the computer or a second player.



PS2 PLAYSTATION 2

Crazy Taxi

TAXI TRICKS

On the Mode Selection screen, choose Arcade or Original. Then enter these tricks as shown.

No Arrows
After choosing how many minutes you want to play, the "Now Loading" screen will appear. Press and hold R1+START until the Driver Selection screen appears. You will see "No Arrows" on the bottom-left side of the screen to confirm that the code worked.

No Destination Mark
After choosing how many minutes you want to play, the "Now Loading" screen will appear. Press and hold L1+START until the Driver Selection screen appears. You will see "No Destination Mark" on the bottom-left side of the screen to confirm that the code worked.

Expert Mode
After choosing how many minutes you want to play, the "Now Loading" screen will appear. Press and hold L1+R1+START until the driver selection screen appears. You will see "Expert" on the lower-left side of the screen to confirm that the code worked. Expert mode has no arrows and no destination mark.

1 Taxi Bike
On the Driver Select screen, quickly press L1+R1, L1+R1, L1+R1 and then choose your driver. You will hear a bike bell if you entered the code correctly. Now you will be picking up passengers on a bike instead of driving a taxi.

Another Day
On the Driver Select screen, press R1, and then press and hold R1 while choosing a driver. You will see "Another Day" on the bottom-left side of the screen to confirm that the code worked. The locations of the passengers will be changed.



2 View Changes
(Note: You must have a second controller plugged into port 2 of your PlayStation 2 for this trick to work.) In the middle of an Arcade or Original game, take controller 2 and hold L1+R1. While holding these buttons, press one of the following buttons to see these new views.
First Person: Circle (Press Circle again for Rear View)
MPH: Square
Third Person: Triangle
Normal View: X

Gauntlet: Dark Legacy

MANY INCREDIBLE CODES

When you are asked to enter your name on the Character Select screen, put in any of these cheat passwords for the results shown.

Invulnerability
INVULN

3 Infinite Supershot
SSHOTS

Nine Potions and Keys in Each Level
ALLFUL

Full Turbo
PURPLE

4 Pojo the Chicken
EGG911

Reflective Shot
REFLEX

Growth and Shrink Enemy
DELTA1

$10,000 Gold in Each Level
10000K

3-Way Shot
MENAGE

Extra Speed
XSPEED

Rapid Fire
QCKSHT

X-Ray Glasses
PEEKIN

Chris
CSS222

Waitress
KAO292

Karate Guy
SJB964

Cheerleader
CEL721

Ratface Knight
RAT333

Smiley Face
STX222

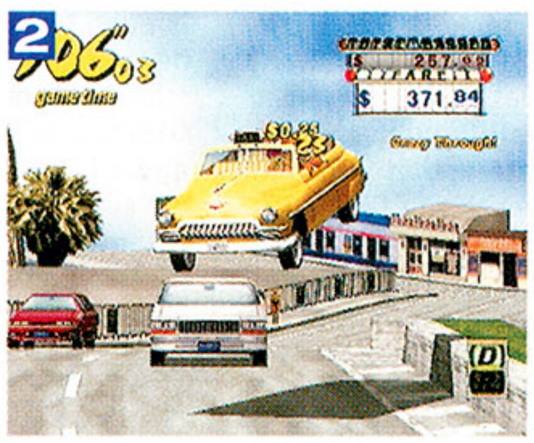
Garm
GARM99

Sumner
SUM224

General
ICE600

S&M Dwarf
NUD069

Chainsaw Guy
KJH105















Sky General
SKY100
Castle General
CAS400
Punkrocker
PNK666
Battle General
BAT900
Ninja
TAK118
Desert General
DES700
5 **Football Player**
RIZ721
Invisibility
000000
School Girl
AYA555
Mike
DIB626
Guy with Mace
ARV984
Town General
TWN300
Mountain General
MTN200
Sick Garm
GARM00
Stig
STG33

Rumble Racing

HIDDEN CUPS, TRACK, ETC.

From the main menu, go into the Game Options. Move down to the Load and Save option and press Right on the controller to bring up the Password option. On the Password screen, enter your name as one of the codes shown below to unlock these results.

Pro Cup 2
P1PROC1PU
Pro Cup 3
Q2PROC2YT
Elite Cup 1
AEPPROPUC
Elite Cup 2
ILETEC1MB
Elite Cup 3
ILCTEC2VB
Elite Cup 4
ILQTEC3PU
EA Elite Cup
LEAITEPUC
EA Stunt Cup
YEAMPLOWW
6 **Circus Minimus Track**
ZEAGTLUKE
High Roller Vehicle
HGIROLREL
7 **Vortex Vehicle**
1AREXT1AR
Sporticus Vehicle
OPSRTISUC
Van Itty Vehicle
VTYANIYTT
Thor Vehicle
THTORHROT
XXS Tomcat Vehicle
NALDSHHSD
Buckshot Vehicle
UBTCKSTOH
8 **Gamecus Vehicle**
BSUIGASUM
Stinger Vehicle
AMHBRAAMH
Revolution Vehicle
PTOATRTOI
Road Trip Vehicle
ABOGOBOGA
9 **Interceptor Vehicle**
CDAAPTNIA



Silpheed: The Lost Planet

EVERY WEAPON AVAILABLE

At the title screen, press START. Enter your code name as GLOIRE on the Name Entry screen. On the Select Weapon screen, you will see that all of the weapons will be available for each side of your ship!

DREAMCAST

Daytona USA

10 SPEED START

On a track where you don't have a rolling start, such as Dinosaur Canyon, wait for the countdown and hold the R-Trigger button halfway down so the RPM pointer is in the yellow part of the gauge. When the countdown hits 2, press and hold the L-Trigger button. As soon as you see the word "Go," release the L-Trigger and press the R-Trigger all the way down. You'll get a speedy start that'll put you ahead.



TOP 5 TRICKS

The top 5 games of the last month given the full-on *Trickman* treatment:

1. Onimusha: Warlords

PS2

Bonus Secrets
Onimusha: Warlords 2 Trailer
After you beat the game, a new option called "Special Feature" will appear on the game select screen. In the Special Feature menu, you will find a short sneak preview of Onimusha: Warlords 2.
Extra Costume
Another bonus that you earn for beating the game is Samanosuke's extra costume. If you start a new game and choose the "Extra" option, the mighty samurai Samanosuke will be wearing a lovable panda costume. The soul-stealing Orb on his arm is even changed into a happy, smiling flower.
Bonus Game
If you've managed to find all 20 of the Fluorites in the game, you'll open the pot-smashing mini-game, Oni Spirits. This 12-level game is very tough, but fairly addictive.

2. Pokémon Gold/Silver

GAME BOY COLOR

Duplicate Pokémon and Items
WARNING: THIS TRICK AFFECTS YOUR SAVED GAMES. USE WITH CAUTION! First, you must decide on the Pokémon and item you want to clone. At any time during the game, press START and access the Pokémon option. Choose the Pokémon you want to clone and make it hold an item that you also want to clone (such as a Master Ball). Next, go into a town and find a Pokémon Center. Move in front of the PC and press START. Move down the menu and access the Save option. After saving your game, press the A button to turn on the PC. Access Bill's PC and deposit the Pokémon you want to clone into one of the boxes. Then choose "Change Box" and move to an empty box. Press A and choose "Switch." When it asks if you want to save the game, choose "Yes." Now, this part is very important and requires precise timing. The game will tell you that there is already a save file, and it will ask you if it is OK to overwrite the file. Choose "Yes" and immediately turn off the Game Boy. Be sure to turn it



TRICKS

TOP 5 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

off before any words other than "Saving" appear on the screen, or the trick will not work. Turn the Game Boy back on again. Check your party status and you should see the Pokémon you wanted to clone still in your party. Access Bill's PC and look at the box in which you deposited the Pokémon. The Pokémon and the item it was holding will be cloned inside the box, and still in your party! You can clone up to five Pokémon and items at one time by doing this trick.

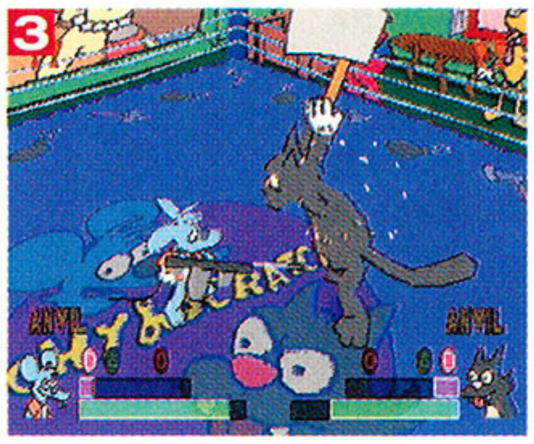
3. Triple Play Baseball

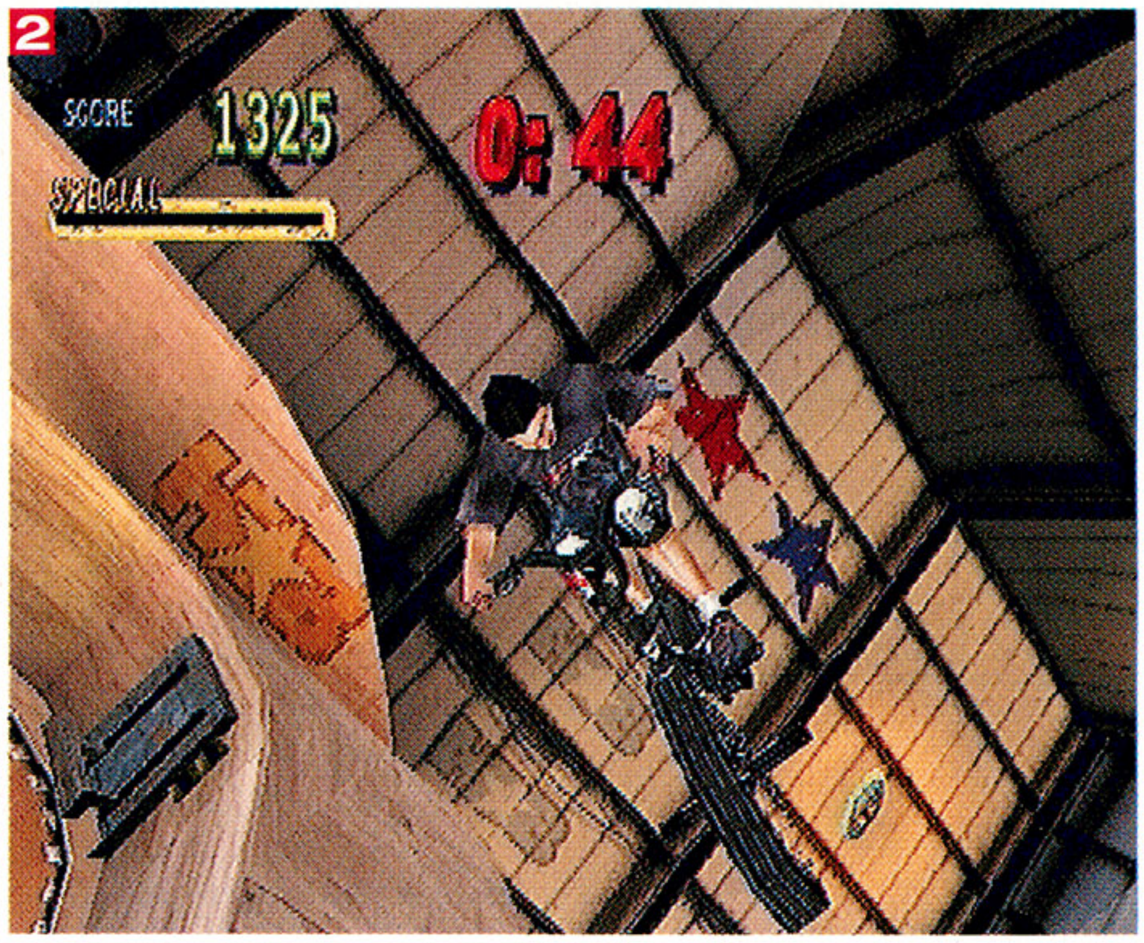
Triple Play Dream Team
On the Main Menu screen, choose Single Game. Then choose any difficulty setting, number of innings and controllers. When you reach the Team Select screen, press Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right. Now the Triple Play Dream Team will appear as a playable team.

4. Conker's Bad Fur Day

Bad Fur Codes
From the main menu (where you can choose chapters, options, etc.), access the Options screen. Move down and select "Cheats." On the "Cheats" screen, put in any of these passwords for the results as shown.
Play as Weasel Henchman in Multi Games:
CHINDITVICTORY
(Deathmatch and Race games)
Play as the Cavemen in Multi Games:
EATBOX (Deathmatch and Race games)
Play as Villager and Zombies in Multi Games:
BEEFCURTAINS (Deathmatch and Race games)
Play as Sergeant and Tedi Leader in Multi Games:
RUSTYSHERIFFSBADGE
(Deathmatch and Race games)
Play as Grim Reaper and Skeleton in Multi Games:
BILLYMILLROUNDABOUT
(Deathmatch and Race







NINTENDO 64

Mario Party 3

SUPER HARD DIFFICULTY
Complete Story Mode on Hard difficulty with any character. Once you do this, you will be able to choose the Super Hard difficulty setting in Party and Story modes.

PLAYSTATION

Dance Dance Revolution

1 HIDDEN CHARACTERS
On the Character Select screen, press Up or Down on the dance pad (or control pad). This will give you a new row of characters to choose from, such as Disco, Disk: A and Dread Snake. Press Left or Right to scroll through the new choices.

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

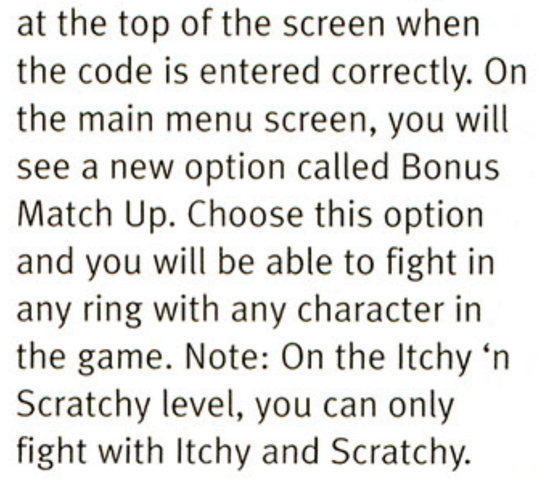
COOL CODES
First, begin a new career. In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Press and hold the L1 button. While holding it, press any of these button combinations to get the results shown.
Special Bar Always Full
Left, Down, Triangle, Circle, Up, Left, Triangle, Square.
10X Multiplier
Square, Circle, Circle, Up, Down, Down.
Extra Time
Square, Up, Circle, X.
2 Fat Tires
Down, Circle, Circle, Down.
Perfect Balance
Square, Left, Up, Right.

The Simpsons: Wrestling

3 BONUS MATCHUP
At the title screen where it says, "Press Start," press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right. You will hear a bell and see "Bonus Match On" appear at the top of the screen when the code is entered correctly. On the main menu screen, you will see a new option called Bonus Match Up. Choose this option and you will be able to fight in any ring with any character in the game. Note: On the Itchy 'n Scratchy level, you can only fight with Itchy and Scratchy.

Spec Ops: Ranger Elite

4 INVULNERABILITY
From the Main Menu screen, choose the One Player Game option. On the Sign In screen, enter ROCKSTAR. In the middle of the game, press the START buttonto pause. Turn the Invulnerable option to "On" and resume play of the game. When you are in the middle of your mission, you will be protected from all gunfire and explosions.



HEY, YOU! WANNA WIN FREE STUFF?

If your trick is selected as Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by InterAct, and a Twin Shock, or a Hyper64, or an Advanced Pad, or a DC carrying case from Blaze. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free game. See page 121 for rules.

Note: If you send your trick by e-mail, you must include your real name and address.

Send your best tricks, codes, Web sites, anything that can help make games more fun or interesting to:

Tricks of the Trade
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook IL
60522-3338

or send e-mail to:

tricks@ziffdavis.com

GAME BOY ADVANCE

Hidden Area in The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Seasons... Only on Game Boy Advance!

Using a Game Boy Advance to play this game will gain you access to a new area. In Horon Village, go to the house of the "Know-it-all birds" and the door to the right will be open. Go through the door and you will enter the 100 Rupee Advance Shop. Everything inside costs 100 rupees. The items include a Gasha Seed, Advance Ring and a Magical Ring. Also, the old chicken attack trick works with this game. Start slashing a chicken with your sword. Continue doing this and you will get a barrage of chickens attacking you!

GameShark Codes

PLAYSTATION

Gran Turismo 2 (Greatest Hits)

Start On 2nd Lap (Arcade)
D00A9A5C0001
800A9A5C0002
Quick Win (Arcade)
D00A9A5C0000
800A9A5C0002
Maximum Cash (Sim)
801D156A1525
801D1568oFFF
Gold Licenses B (Sim)
801CB9C80400
801CBA6C0400
801CBB100400
801CBBB40400
801CBC580400
801CBCFC0400
801CBDA00400
801CBE440400
801CBEE80400
801CBF8C0400
Gold Licenses A (Sim)
801CB3600400
801CB4040400
801CB4A80400
801CB54C0400
801CB5F00400
801CB6940400
801CB7380400
801CB7DC0400
801CB8800400
801CB9240400
Gold Licenses I-C (Sim)
801CC0300400
801CC0D40400
801CC1780400
801CC21C0400
801CC2C00400
801CC3640400
801CC4080400
801CC4AC0400
801CC5500400
801CC5F40400
Gold Licenses I-B (Sim)
801CCD000400
801CCDA40400
801CCE480400
801CCEEC0400
801CD2C40400
801CCF900400
801CD0340400
801CD0D80400
801CD17C0400
801CD2200400
Gold Licenses I-A (Sim)
801CC6980400
801CC7360400
801CC7E00400
801CC8840400
801CC9280400
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801CCA700400
801CCB140400
801CCBB80400
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Gold Super License (Sim)
801CACF80400
801CAD9C0400
801CAE400400
801CAEE40400
801CAF880400
801CB02C0400
801CB0D00400
801CB1740400
801CB2180400
801CB2BC0400
Quick Win (Sim)
D00A9A5C0000
800A9A5C0002
800A98A40001

DREAMCAST

Mars Matrix

Must Be First Code
9C5D88F8
Infinite Credits
E0E84D2F00000005
Infinite Lives P1
B3DFE96800000005
Quick Level Gain P1
7C12945905F5E0FF
Infinite Lives P2
87CC5F9900000005
Quick Level Gain P2
396F0AB105F5E0FF
P1 Invisible
893C6AB60000FFFF
P2 Invisible
35BEBF9A0000FFFF
Unlock Everything
3B0C3FAEE0703041
9721AE1E
Tons of Money
7391A146E070D041
E14F6F60
Max Total Score
58F775CCE070D041
E14F6F60
Must Be Last Code
245EECA9

PLAYSTATION 2

Zone of the Enders

Always Very Hard
3CDF70281456E7A8
Ultimate Jehuty
3CDF70291456E70C
0 Continues Used
4CDF706E1456E7A5
0 Saves Used
4CDF70701456E7A5
No Casualties-Town 2
4CE0576E145626D5
No Casualties-Town 3
4CE0576E14562695
No Casualties-City 2
4CE056AE14562625
9999 Defeated
4CDF706A1456089C
L2=Javelin
0CDD27661456B10C
4CDF704E1456E7A6
L2+X=Geyser
0CDD27661456710C
4CDF704E1456E7A7
L2+O=Bounder
0CDD27661456910C
4CDF704E1456E7A8
L2+Triangle=Phalanx
0CDD27661456C10C
4CDF704E1456E7A1
L2+Square=Halbered
0CDD27661456310C
4CDF704E1456E7A2
L2+L1=Comet
0CDD27661456AD0C
4CDF704E1456E7A3
L2+R1=Gauntlet
0CDD27661456B90C
4CDF704E1456E7A4
L2+R2=Sniper
0CDD27661456B30C
4CDF704E1456E79D
L2+LEFT=Decoy
0CDD27661456B18C
4CDF704E1456E79E
L2+RIGHT=Mummy
0CDD27661456B1EC
4CDF704E1456E79F

TOP 5 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

games)
Play as Conker in Multi Games:
WELLYTOP (Deathmatch and Race games)
Play as Neo Conker in Multi Games:
EASTEREGGSRUS (Deathmatch and Race games)
Decapitation Effect in Deathmatch:
SPUNKJOCKEY (In the Multi Deathmatch [skull icon] game, choose a one-player game. When you have a sword or chainsaw, hit an opponent. Some of the time you will get a cool rotation effect with the decapitation, but it is random.)
Open "Heist" Chapter:
CHOCOLATESTARFISH
Open "It's War" Chapter:
BEELZEBUBSBUM
Open "Spooky" Chapter:
SPANIELSEARS
Open "Uga Buga" Chapter:
MONKEYSCHIN
Open "Sloprano" Chapter:
ANCHOVYBAY
Open "Bats Tower" Chapter:
CLAMPIRATE
Open "Barn Boys" Chapter:
PRINCEALBERT
Open All Chapters and Scenes:
WELDERSBENCH
50 Lives:
BOVRILBULLETHOLE
Easy Game:
EASY
Very Easy Game:
VERYEASY

5. ATV Offroad Fury

Increase AI Difficulty
From the main menu, choose Pro-Career. Choose an empty slot and then put in ALLOUTAI for the name. After pressing "Done," you will be taken back to the main menu. Now when you race, your opponents will be more difficult to pass.

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FINAL WORD

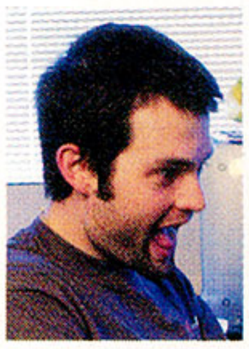
Xbox vs. GameCube vs. PlayStation 2...



James Mielke
West Coast Editor



Kraig Kujawa
Senior Associate Editor



Mark MacDonald
Executive Editor



Che Chou
West Coast Editor



Jonathan Dudlak
Associate Editor

James: Lordy, 2001 arrives and so with it yet another E3. This being my fifth, I am less awed by the spectacle, and more concerned with the games. With the Dreamcast almost out of the picture after only a year and a half, my eyes turned toward what the future would bring. I had high hopes for the GameCube, and after Nintendo's showing, I was not disappointed. After watching the opening salvo of Super Smash Bros. Melee (throwing nearly every Nintendo character I have ever loved on screen, all at once) I was practically in tears. Nintendo maintains they're all about games, and this proved it. Luigi's Mansion didn't blow me away, but I am lured by the potential of Pikmin. Sony's booth was equally impressive for all the great new games coming to the console. ICO, Maximo, Devil May Cry...I'm finally starting to warm up to the PS2. The Xbox? This is turning into a debacle. I'm still waiting to see the big games and am tired of the hype machine coming out of Redmond. Sure, Jet Set Future, Gun Valkyrie and DOA3 look swank, and Dino Crisis 3 and Panzer Dragoon are in the works, but with GameCube launching a few days earlier, at a hundred bucks less, this could be another Custer in the making.

"I certainly hope Xbox remains viable for at least as long as the Dreamcast."

Kraig: I don't think I've ever seen a company lose as much momentum as I saw Microsoft lose at this E3. That was not the history they thought they were going to make. Heading into the show, I thought they might have had a few aces up their sleeves, and when E3 was over, they were left holding all of the Jokers. Everyone I talked to had negative comments, and some company spokespeople were outright dissing Microsoft. With such little time left, I don't know if Microsoft can turn it around, but one thing is sure: They *need* to turn it around. Maybe it's time for Bill Gates to throw another 500 bazillion dollars at the problem.

Mark: That's what I kept hearing at the show: "Nintendo is rockin', and the Xbox is screwed." But personally, when I sit back and look at the games that were actually at E3, I don't agree. Nintendo had the potentially cool Luigi and Pikmin, Phantasy Star Online (an awesome surprise) and Rogue Leader. That's really it as far as games that interested me. No real Metroid footage, and no killer app along the lines of a Mario 64. Xbox had Halo (the reason I will buy an Xbox), Jet Grind, Munch and DOA3. That's four games, as many as GameCube's, and more than I really wanted from the PS1, PS2, N64 or Dreamcast launch lineups. I'm not saying anything about who's gonna beat who, or future market share, or what's going to happen at Spaceworld or any of that crap; I'm talking games the systems had at the show that I can't wait to buy. By the same token, though, I would say Sony ruled the day—which should be no surprise as they've had the most developers working on games for their system for longer than anyone else. There were easily over a dozen AAA PS2 titles at the show, and even the crappier games are at least starting to *look* good.

Che: I think Mark has a point about the Xbox. Sure, there were lots of mediocre games at the show (Azurik anyone?). But given the potential of third parties like Sega, Capcom and Konami cooking up some big franchises for Microsoft, the playing field is pretty level right now. This may change as we close in on the November meltdown, but I certainly hope Xbox remains viable for at least as long as the Dreamcast. Think about it. Why would any true gamer want to see the Xbox fail? From a developer's standpoint, the box is a total dream—and this can only be good news for gamers. But as far as E3s go, 2001 has to be among the best in terms of quality gaming. Who said the industry was ill?

Jonathan: The huge Nintendose of games we saw at E3 was impressive, but I think a lot of nostalgic gamers just got swept away by seeing their old favorites on a new console. How many new names did Nintendo show—one? We shouldn't be looking for a "winner"; the variety all the new systems bring will be incredible.

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NEXT MONTH

September 2001 (Issue #146)

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

On sale Aug. 7

FINAL FANTASY X WORLD EXCLUSIVE

You won't believe what we have in store for you in the next issue of *EGM*. We're going to have a comprehensive hands-on report of the fully playable Final Fantasy X for the PS2, straight outta Japan, well before the game's out. We're not talking about just any ol' demo either. We're talking about the prerelease final version. We'll also have interviews with the directors and designers of FFX. We'll have never-before-seen screenshots. But most exciting of all, we'll have a special, **limited-edition cover with art from Yoshitaka Amano**—famed Final Fantasy artist—made specifically for *EGM*. You won't see this art anywhere else, and it will only be on certain covers of *EGM* #146. Keep your eyes out for it...this special edition will only be available in limited quantities. (The Amano piece you see to the right isn't what's going to be on the cover, by the way.)

We will also be following up with more GameCube and Xbox coverage, in preparation for the two systems' launch this November. You won't want to miss this issue.





Amano's Final Fantasy art (like this one from FFV) is renowned around the world. Next month, we're having him draw up an exclusive FFX piece just for our cover. This special issue won't be widely distributed, so don't miss it!

Reviewed Next Month:

- Gran Turismo 3 A-spec (PS2)
- Sonic Adventure 2 (DC)
- Alone in the Dark 4 (PS)
- Klonoa 2: Lunatea's Veil (PS2)
- Floigan Brothers (DC)
- NBA Street (PS2)
- Who Wants to be a Millionaire: 3rd Edition (PS)
- Soldier of Fortune (DC)

Previewed Next Month:

- Silent Hill 2 (PS2)
- Spider-Man 2: Enter Electro (PS)
- Dave Mirra BMX 2 (GameCube)
- NCAA College Football 2K2 (DC)
- Dark Summit (Xbox)

*All editorial content is subject to change.

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

Aug. 2001
On sale July 10

Demo Disc

Video Previews
- Final Fantasy VII
- Final Fantasy IX
- Final Fantasy Tactics
- Chrono Cross
- Klonoa 2
- Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing
- Chrono Trigger
- Final Fantasy Chronicles

Playables
- Final Fantasy VIII

Movie Trailer
- Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within

Final Fantasy

This month, *OPM* goes the distance with the Final Fantasy series. Beginning with a behind-the-scenes look at *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* and culminating with the history of the Final Fantasy series, this is one issue that no Square fan can be without!



EXPERT GAMER

Aug. 2001
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- Dark Cloud (PS2)
- Crazy Taxi 2 (DC)
- Twisted Metal Black (PS2)
- Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Seasons
- Over 3,000 Codes
- More Game Boy Advance Coverage
- Gran Turismo 3 Killer Strategy
- Plus previews, and much more!



Gran Turismo 3

If you want gaming perfection, look no further than next month's *Expert Gamer*. Gran Turismo 3: A-spec takes the PS2, and console gaming, to new heights with its photo-realistic visuals and accurate sim engine. If it's portable adventure you crave, check out what may be the last of the great GBC games, The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Ages and Oracle of Seasons.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

Aug. 2001
On sale July 3



Reviews
- Evil Islands
- X-Com Enforcer
- Fly II
- Cossacks: European Wars

Previews
- Spider-Man
- Majestic

The Sims

The Sims was the biggest PC gaming phenomenon of 2000, and this year, it's going to get even bigger, with two new Sims games poised to take over the universe. Check out *CGW*'s exclusive coverage of Simsville and The Sims Online, as well as a peek behind Sid "Civilization" Meier's pet project, SimGolf. Also inside: a 14-page E3 blowout, covering the best and worst from gaming's big show.

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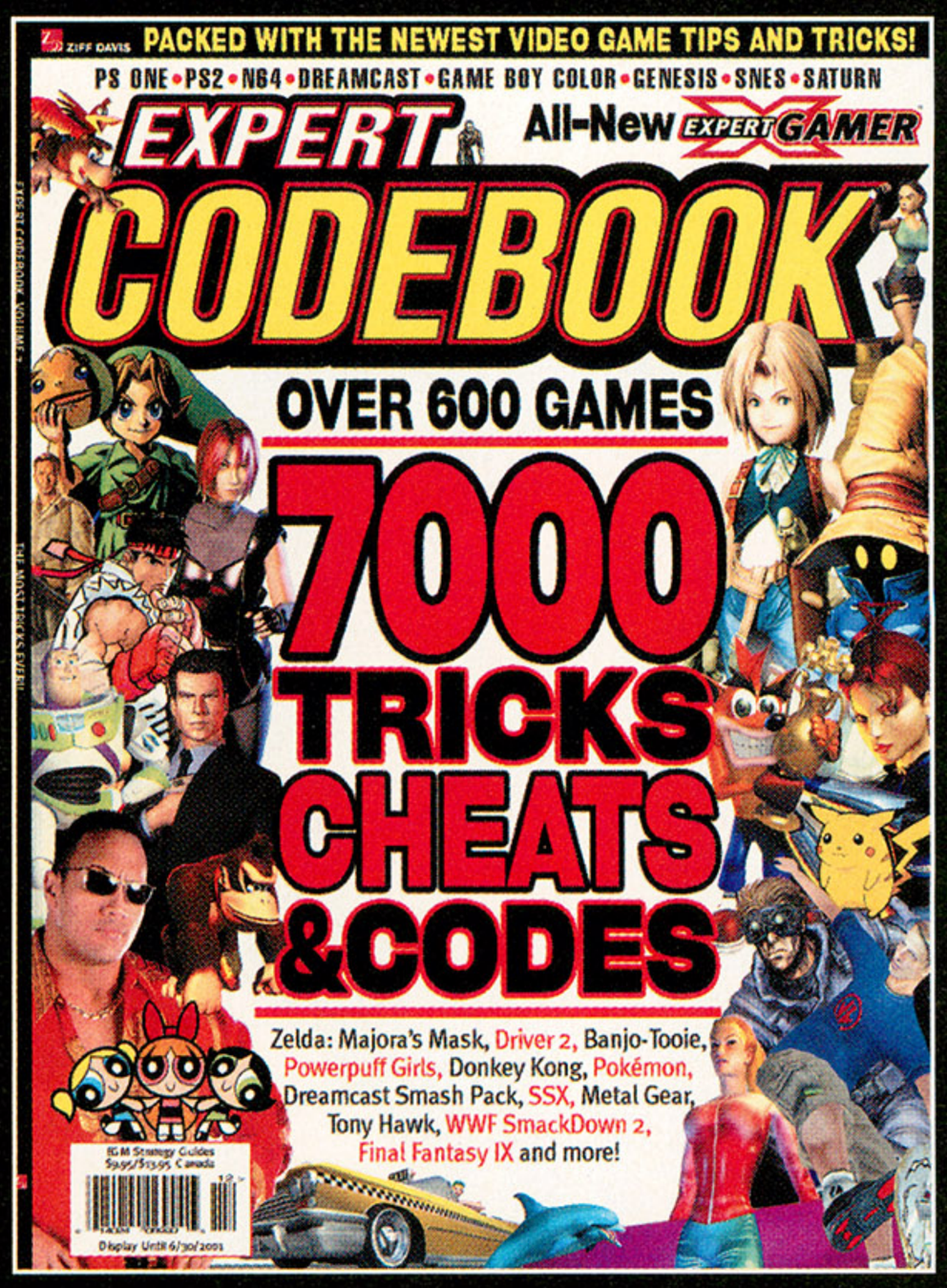

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Official Contest and Sweepstakes Rules

Trick of the Month

1. **No Purchase Necessary:** To enter, send a letter or standard size postcard with your best trick codes for any video game to "Tricks of the Trade," P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338, or e-mail us at: tricks@ziffdavis.com. Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. Entries must be received by July 13, 2001.
All entries become exclusive property of Sponsors and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due, or misdirected entries. Sponsors reserve the right to cancel this contest at any time with appropriate notice. Only one prize per family, organization, or household per issue. Winning entries may be printed in *EGM* and/or *Expert Gamer*, however, only one prize shall be awarded.
2. **Prizes:** First Prize winners will have their name and trick displayed in the magazine and will receive a video game cartridge selected by Sponsor. First Prize has an approximate retail value of $60.00. The best trick submitted by the First Prize winners will be declared the Grand Prize Winner. One Grand Prize winner will receive (in addition to the First Prize awards) one (1) Game Shark. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $99.95. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. Entries shall be judged on the following criteria: (i) Uniqueness (25%); (ii) Novelty (25%); (iii) Accuracy (25%); and (iv) Originality (25%). Judging to be held on or about July 27, 2001. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Sponsors should the featured prizes become unavailable.
3. **Odds of Winning:** The number of winners and the odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received.
4. **Eligibility:** Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within five days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade, or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of Ziff Davis Media Inc., InterAct Accessories and their respective affiliates are not eligible. Neither Ziff Davis Media Inc., InterAct Accessories nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions, or related companies are responsible for any damages, taxes, or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. Winners accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that Ziff Davis Media Inc., InterAct Accessories and their agents, representatives, and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses, or damages of any kind resulting from acceptance, possession, or use of the prizes.
5. **Winners List:** For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "Tricks of the Trade Winners List," P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3338. Requests for winners lists must be received by the 15th day of next month following the on-sale date of the publication. Allow four weeks for delivery of winners list.
6. **Restrictions:** Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.
7. **Sponsors:** This contest is sponsored by Ziff Davis Media Inc. and InterAct Accessories, Inc. ©2000 Ziff Davis Media Inc. All Rights Reserved. Printed in USA.

Letter of the Month

1. **No Purchase Necessary:** To enter, send your letter to EGM Letters, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3338, or e-mail us at EGM@ziffdavis.com. Make sure to include your name, address and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of *EGM*. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due, or misdirected entries. Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec.
2. **Prizes:** One Grand Prize winner will receive one of the following prizes at Sponsor's sole option: One (1) SharkPad Pro 64^2 for N64; One (1) Barracuda for PlayStation; or One (1) Eclipse Stick for Saturn. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $29.99 U.S.
Winners will be selected by the Letters Editor whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. Entries shall be judged on the following criteria: (i.) Originality (50%); and (ii.) Topic (50%).
Judging to be held on or about the 15th day of each month. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Sponsors should the featured prizes become unavailable. The odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply. FOR AN OFFICIAL COPY OF THE RULES, SEND A SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE TO: LETTER OF THE MONTH CONTEST RULES, P.O. Box 3338,
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338.

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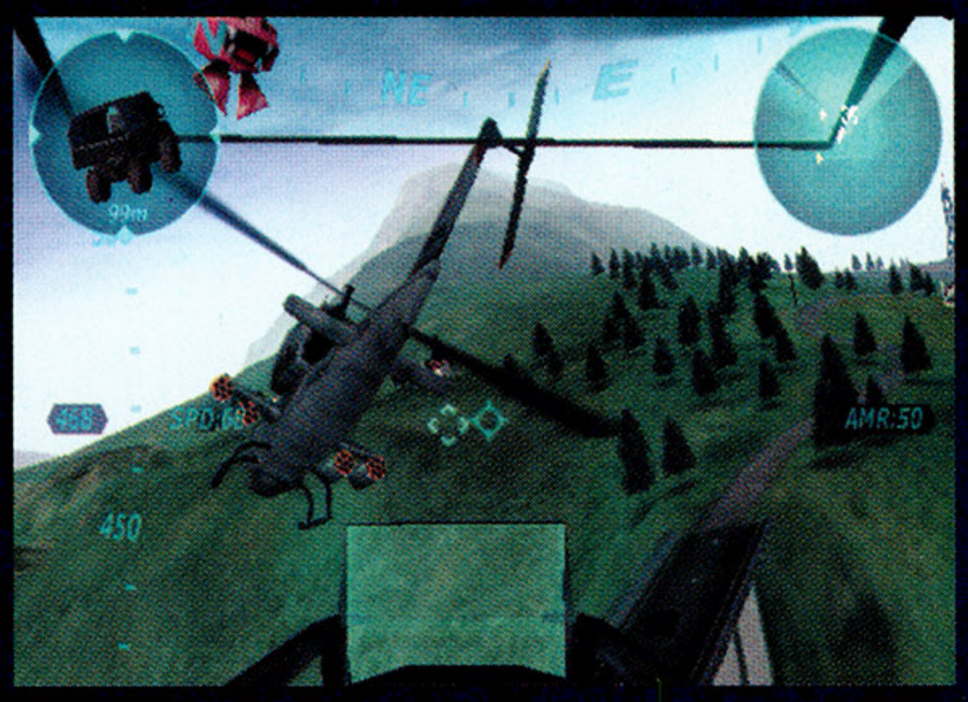

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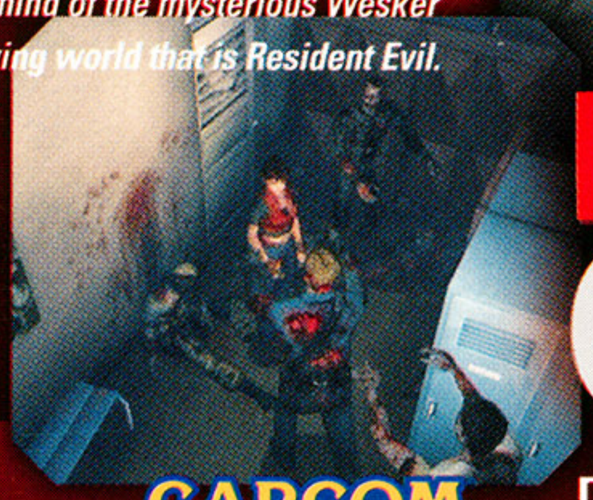

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Blood and Gore
Violence

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RESIDENT EVIL CODE: Veronica X

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