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OVER
200
Games Inside

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Turok 2 • South Park • FIFA 99 • Virtua Fighter 3tb

February 1999
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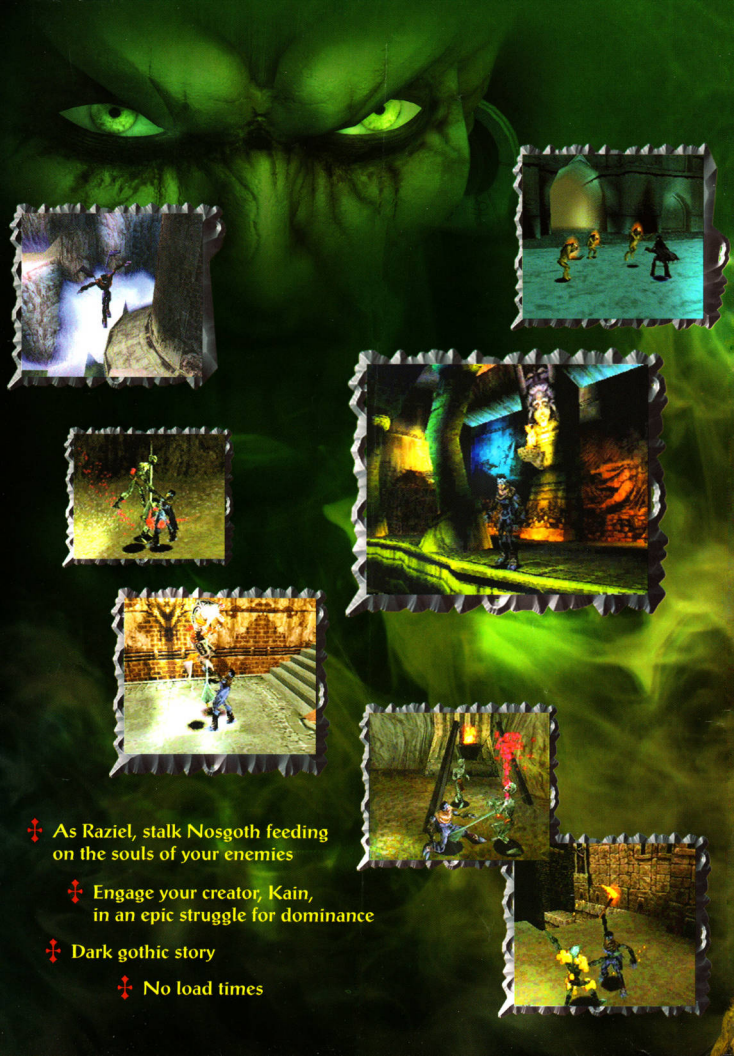


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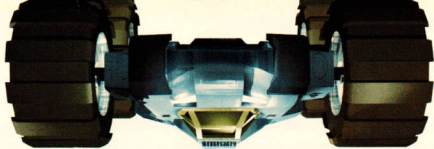
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Let us know what you think

By John Davison • john_davison@zd.com



There are some important things for you to do this month...but the one we need you to do first is check out page 161 and sort yourself out with voting for the best games of 1998. We've even built a handy voting form on www.vidgames.com (for those of you averse to writing with a pen and using envelopes and stamps and stuff)—so there's no excuse for not taking a few minutes out to express yourself. We reckon the results are mostly foregone conclusions, but we're extremely keen to see what everyone thinks. If Deadly Arts or Eggs of Steel turn out to be "game of the year"—so be it. We'll have tangible proof that there are around half a million lunatics out there...but we'll accept that. And probably give up this games magazine stuff to grow organic vegetables in Canada or something.

Right...off you go. Go and do it now. The rest of my monthly waffle can wait for a moment—it'll still be here when you get back...

See? Still here. Secondly, our reader review section is blossoming in popularity—and we want to hear your views on the big games from this Christmas. There have been one hell of a lot of high profile games in stores for the past month or so...and we've noticed that a few of them have failed to quite meet the expectations we all had. Let us know what you think.

"Remember: We're on your side. If we think you're getting stiffed, we'll say so. At the end of the day, the only concern of anyone when it comes to video games is whether or not you are going to be entertained."

On a related note, you'll have noticed that a few of our reviews are a little later than you'd expect. John Ricciardi, our esteemed and off-stressed Reviews Editor, touched on the reasons last month in his Final Word editorial, but this month we feel somewhat vindicated.

A number of the big Christmas games were clearly rushed...and it's clear that we, as a community of games players, are the ones who are going to suffer because of this. Both *Turok 2* and *Tomb Raider 3* have been released with problems that really should have been ironed out. They're both excellent games, make no mistake, but both suffer from stupid quirks that can have a discernible effect on your enjoyment of them. I wish we could warn you of these kinds of problems sooner, and we will continue to try to do so...but I think you'll agree that our policy of only reviewing final game code is the sensible route to take. *Turok 2* suffers from slow-down, and also crashes in multiplayer...the *Review Crew* can tell you this. Hell, we can even tell you about the multiplayer modes—that's more than you'll read in some places. Remember: We're on your side. If we think you're getting stiffed, we'll say so. At the end of the day, the only concern of anyone when it comes to video games is whether or not you are going to be entertained. What more could it possibly be about? Are the games fun? Is there anything that might stop you from having the very best possible experience? We'll always answer these questions...and will continue to do so.

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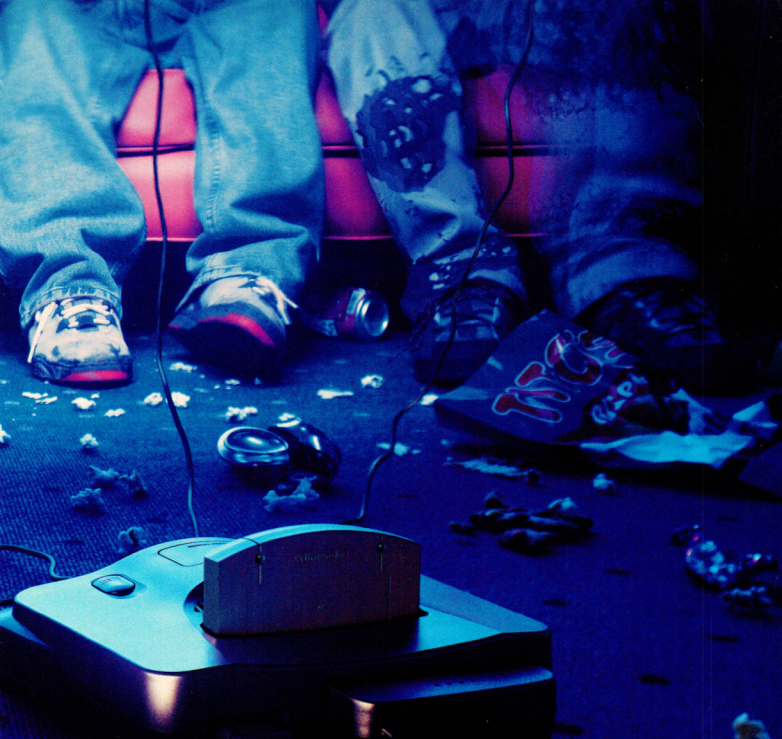
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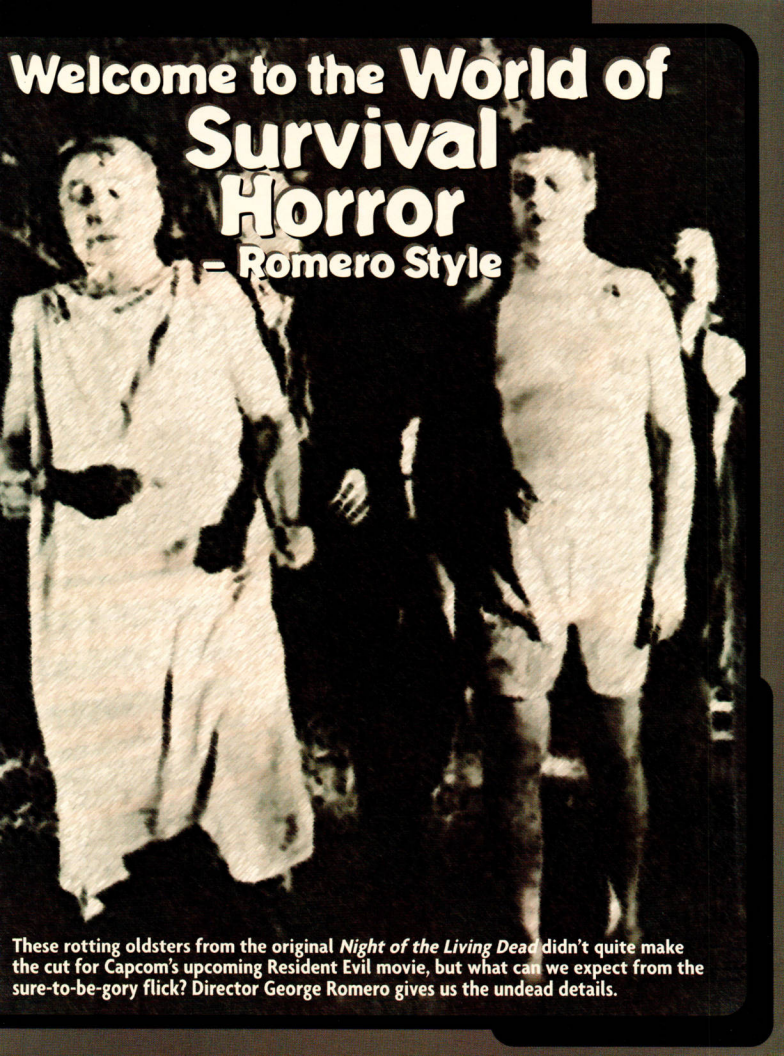
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Welcome to the World of Survival Horror

— Romero Style

These rotting oldsters from the original *Night of the Living Dead* didn't quite make the cut for Capcom's upcoming *Resident Evil* movie, but what can we expect from the sure-to-be-gory flick? Director George Romero gives us the undead details.

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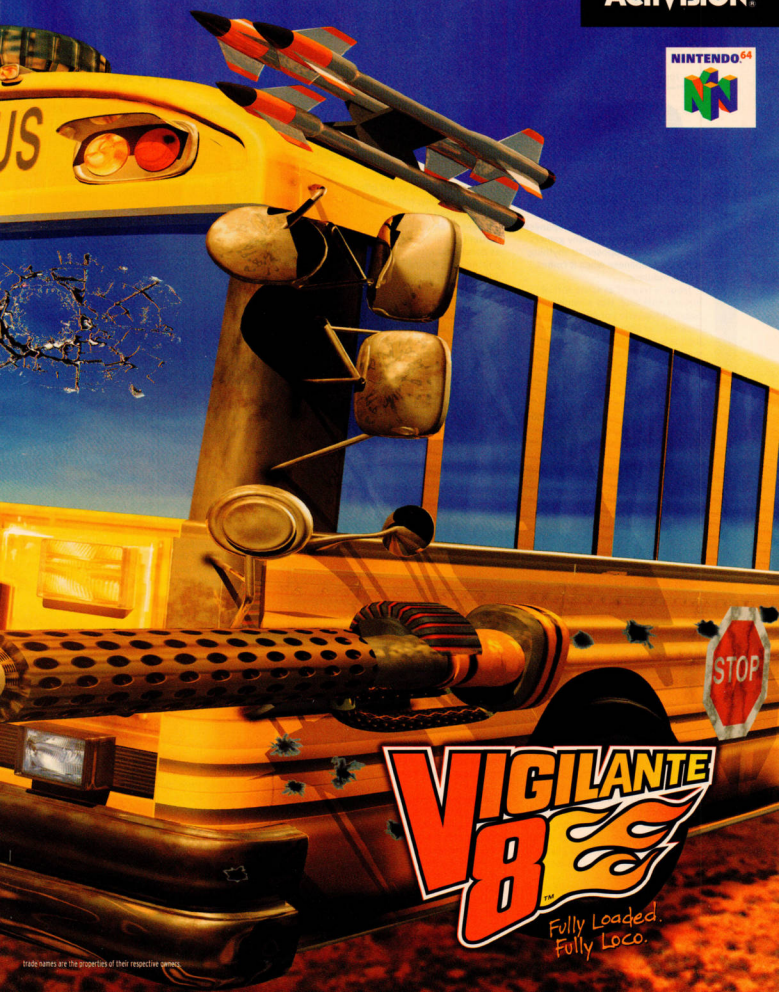


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egm letters

Compiled by Shoo

Letter of the Month

Japan: The Holy Land?

After reading the EGM Letters section of issue #113, I worry about the popular belief regarding Japanese video games. It seems many gamers are vehemently opposed to anything that is not Japanese when it comes to this industry.

Japan is treated as some sort of nirvana holy land. Has anyone played Sabre Marionette) or any of the hundreds of poor (read: God-awful) Japanese titles? I had the honor of speaking with a Japanese developer, and it's ironic to hear his opinions about gaming. He hates the way Japanese RPGs force the player to fight nonsensical battles over and over. He even strives to create a game with "...the quality of Alone in the Dark..." He also would never wish to

create a game that would offend someone. Nudity, violence and all this supposed "sacrifice of morality for the sake of creativity" is really non-existent. Japanese developers are just as concerned with "proper" content as anyone else. It's merely a cultural difference. What we see as offensive, a Japanese gamer does not.

So maybe next time when we all complain about the evil American companies ruining Japanese ports with changes that are usually made for the sake of cultural boundaries rather than sheer censorship, we could all be happy with the extra secrets, option, characters and gameplay that usually come with our exclusive version.

**Christopher Goodman
EVAUNITI@aol.com**

Yes, my Goodman, you are right. Japan does put out a lot of crap, just like anywhere else. But the reason we hold the country and so many of its games in such high reverence is because that's the country where Zelda, Mario, Sonic, Ken/Ryu (and co.) and other legends were born (We're talking real legends here, not some bandicoot or English babe). Japan may have some bad, but its good is really good.

We should be thankful, however,

for the cultural boundaries you speak of. Have you ever played Choaniki: Great Brother? Good God! Let's just say there's no way this horribly bad, very homosexual shooter would've been allowed in the U.S.! That's right, we said a homosexual shooter. Nothing wrong with being a homosexual shooter, mind you, but if you've seen this game, you'd understand why we say we're glad "cultural boundaries" have kept this game in Japan.



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The Visitor

You know, I always thought you guys kicked ass, and Jay Silvey's visit [see Review Crew in EGM #113 and Press Start in EGM #114] only confirms that. Letting this guy hang with you and even write a review shows that you guys can't be a bunch of fat guys with kegs of beer because fat guys with beer are, well, to be put mildly, jackasses. I wish Jay [the] best of luck.

Dart52@aol.com

It wasn't all charitable on our parts, you know. We did manage to scam a free

review out of Jay. All the less work for us, you know what I mean?

While reading issue #114, I saw the article and accompanying picture about Jay Silvey and his guest review. Along with him in the photograph, there were seven other people, which corresponds to the regular seven Review Crew members. Then I got to thinking: If these seven men comprise the Review Crew, then one of them must be Sushi-X! Now all one has to do is match up the faces here with Review Crew pictures (using old issues with different pictures for

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help) in order to easily determine what Sushi-X's real appearance is.

Sorry, Sushi—the cat's outta the bag!

Andy Kutas
Huntington Beach, CA

Nice try, Andy, but Sushi was in Japan preparing for the Tokyo Game Show the week Jay was here. The extra man you see behind Jay in the group shot (the third guy from the left) is Jay's brother. Sushi's face remains a mystery to our readers (trust us, you're better off this way...).

By the way, if you'd like to drop Jay a line, you can e-mail him at Vidiot9975@aol.com.

And The Award Goes To...

Here are some stats on your reviews over the last seven months (issues #107-114). Overall you reviewed 177 games. Of those games, one in five got a silver award, one in 22 got a gold and one in 177 got a platinum. For the Nintendo 64 you've reviewed 48 games. Of those N64 games, one in six got a silver award, one in 12 got a gold and none got a platinum. For the PlayStation you reviewed 125 games. Of those PS games, one in five got a silver award, one in 31 got a gold and one got a platinum. For the Saturn, you reviewed three games and one got a silver. Finally you reviewed one Game Boy game, and it got a silver award. Overall, it was very even.

No, I don't have a lot of time on my hands, and I'm not a freak who thinks about numbers all day long. But you people just don't realize how boring study halls are.

Matt Sprague
Soxmls35@aol.com

Thanks Rainman.

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The Seriousness Of It All

I just picked up your 1999 *Video Game Buyer's Guide*. Now, I know every so often you get the occasional letter of complaint from a rogue female gamer, and you reply with the same generic "target audiences blah blah" bullshit. Well, I think there's nothing wrong with voting for the "Hottest video game babe." You COULD, however, at least give equal attention to both sides, but you obviously aren't secure enough in your own masculinity to do that, are you? "Huh huh Mokujin, huh huh huh wood." Is that all you can do for the "Hottest video game hunk" award? [Editor's note: we gave Tekken 3's Mokujin the Hottest Hunk award and made some joking references to his "wood," and we gave Rival School's Tiffany the Hottest Babe award.] Ooooo, that was soooo funny. I mean, you don't even have the balls to say something like, "Well seriously guys, I have to give points for male coolness to Snake from Metal Gear Solid and Leon from Resident Evil 2" or anything like that, can you? You're just reinforcing the male gamer stereotype: a pathetic geek with no social abilities who drools over cyber-tits and isn't even comfortable enough in his own sexuality to acknowledge an attractive guy.

And about "target audiences"...I'm a 23-year-old female gamer who's been around in the genre a hell of a lot longer than a lot of male players these days, and my best friend is a gay male who is as offended as I am by your sophomoric antics.

mistress_simon@hotmail.com

And from that gay friend...

I need to say a few things. I would hope that you guys (being editors who should be concerned about your readers' opinions) would want to hear what I have to say.

My opinion of your staff is pretty low after seeing what you guys had to say in your "Hottest video game babe/hunk" section in your 1999 *Video Game Buyer's Guide*. I don't care if you want to drool over the busty jiggy woman that dominate the video game

market these days, but why even have a "Hottest video game hunk" award if it's just there for a laugh?

I'm a 22-year-old gay male gamer, and many of my gaming friends are female. I purchase quite a few games and game magazines, and I feel like my interests and my friends' interests are being ignored. Your writing not only alienates a growing section of your market, it also makes you guys look immature and pig-headed. It's magazines like yours that perpetuate the "I'm going to go fight in heels and a thong" or "Hey, watch my boobs bounce" double standard.

If I could produce a game, I'd dress all the women comfortably and tastefully and make the men fight in thong underwear with wiggly, jiggy penises. Maybe then I'd feel like the score was a bit even. In the meantime, the least you could do is either drop the juvenile comments or at least have the guts to give everyone equal time.

In the EXTREMELY slim possibility that you decide to print my e-mail, I would appreciate it if you would leave my address off. I'm sure my letter would spur a lot of anti-gay, anti-female, pro-neanderthal-thinking replies.

Thanks for taking the time to listen.

Jeremy Clark
Address withheld

Listen, don't get your panties in a wad. Our Good, Bad and Silly Awards in the *Buyer's Guide* are goofy awards that aren't meant to be taken seriously. We're not talking about women's suffrage or getting equal pay for equal work here. Mokujin winning the hottest hunk award will not bring the women's rights movement to a screaming halt.

Our video game magazines are not here for the betterment of society. They're not here to make things right in the world. They're not here to make sure fictional male video game characters get the same treatment as fictional female video game characters. These magazines are here for enjoyment, and the editors get a bit silly, even retarded, once in a while. We saw an opening with the whole Mokujin being made out of wood thing, and we ran with it.

You know why we didn't consider Mokujin beating out Solid Snake in a "Hot Hunk" contest a serious social matter? Because

it's not. Sexual insecurity? Perpetuating double standards? Puh-leez. These are video game characters, for crying out loud.

The Lost Zeld

First of all, your magazine kicks ass. Second, in issue #113, the Zeld feature lists some games made for the CD-i. There is a third game not listed. It was Link: The Faces of Evil. I'm sure you know about it. It's got the same gameplay as the other side-scrolling Zeld for the CD-i.

RokCrusher@aol.com

Whoops! Thanks for catching that for us.

Too Short

I've noticed that one of the biggest complaints about Metal Gear Solid is that it is too short. What I want to know is, why hasn't this been an issue with other games? Games like Resident Evil 2 are just as short, but still receive acclaim. I've never heard anyone complaining about RE2's length.

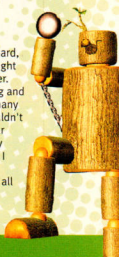
It seems to me that a lot of people hold a double standard on this issue. I'm not saying that Resident Evil 2 is a bad game, but neither is Metal Gear Solid. D****it!

WungusNoir@aol.com

Damn right! But to be fair, Resident Evil 2 has the slightly different Claire and Leon games, giving people more reason to play through RE2 again than Metal Gear Solid's little extras.

No Brucin' With This Bitch

Dear Bressy and Dickie, er Richard, My code name (wink, wink) right now will be Francis Maryweaver. I'm a regular reader of your mag and *Expert Gamer*, along with the many other mags out there. I just couldn't help getting flaccid [sic] to your "Fashion Police" article over my cup o' French vanilla cough-fay. I couldn't help laughing so hard that I spewed my special blend all over my new Kmart Martha Stewart draperies. Oh, the tragedy!!! But anyhow, in all



Question of the Moment

What is your favorite video game of all time?

Street Fighter II. I spent more quarters on that game than I did at the laundromat. I wore smelly clothes for days. Just kidding, of course...
inept4u@webtv.net

The Secret of Mana, a three-player role-playing game!
Wingchun79@aol.com

GoldenEye 007, but only because I haven't played Zelda or Turok 2 yet.
Handyman9@aol.com

The original Legend of Zelda for the NES...the voices in my head do not acknowledge any other Zelda.
schavejt@brookings.net

Toejam and Earl (Genesis).
Coolstud@aol.com

After all these years of being such a loyal PS fan, my favorite game of all time is a Sega game... Phantasy Star II. It even beats FFVII.
Breer@aol.com

Zelda: Ocarina of Time.
lucifersam_77@hotmail.com

Metal Gear Solid, baby!
RPMag@aol.com

Super Mario All-Stars. Why settle for one of the best when you can have four?
Wes1701E@email.msn.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment: What PC game would you most like to see ported over to the consoles?

Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@zd.com with the subject heading: PORT

"So I throw this 2 o'clock hitter¹ a nudist² 
 and he fists a  cripple³ right over my
 leather man's pancake.⁴ Damn! I'd snapped
 that cousin's⁵ morning  journal⁶ off at
 the handle with a Peggy Lee!⁷ Well Captain
 Hook⁸ decides he's going with the ugly
 head⁹ rook' with the  deuce¹⁰ - even
 though I'd collared¹¹ the banjo¹² on deck! Of
 course,  Mr. Guess¹³ don't give  him
 any black,¹⁴ so the rook' issues the Annie
 Oakley¹⁵ and we lose  the ballgame."

(Sure you can talk the talk, but can you walk the walk?)



3DO™



"If you love baseball...this is the only game in town." - *GamerzEdge*
 Coming this spring

(1) a player that hits well in batting practice, but poorly during games. (2) a pitch with nothing on it. (3) an extremely weak hit. (4) a hit eluding the best infielder's tiny glove.
 (5) a pushover hitter. (6) a bat made with poor wood. (7) a reference to the sultry pop singer's signature 60's song "Is That All There Is?" i.e. is that all there is to the pitch? (see nudist).
 (8) a manager with a tendency to pull a pitcher at the first sign of trouble. (9) the most physically unattractive player on any ball club. (10) a first year player with a good curveball.
 (11) kept him from reaching base safely. (12) a player who rarely makes solid contact. (13) the umpire. (14) corners of home plate. (15) a base-on-balls or a walk.



reality... I am what you call a closet case or a not "out" gay individual who is really into games. I found that article hilarious. Thank God in real life I don't act like that, but like the writers' article, I too like to relive the old-school *In Living Color* skits Men on Film, Art, etc. series. You guys rock. Keep reviewing! the truth, and don't get caught by the police (ahem, Crispin...).

Also, if any other queens who can't take a joke and give you sh** about that article...tell them Francis Maryweather, great reader of *EGM*, will pull off her earrings and hand them to Sushi-X sayin', "Here, Sushi, hold my shiet [sic]" and tell 'em to bend over and grab their ankles and blow it out their ass. It's called take a joke, and how much does Howard Stern make a year? :)

Terry Campbell
campbell.463@osu.edu

What the hell are you talking about? You, Francis Maryweather, are a freak, but Richard and Bruce (*The Hyrule Tattler*, *EGM* issue #133) thank you for the kind support.

A Reader Review

Yes, MK4 is officially better than Tekken 3. I rented them both the day before tomorrow and found that *Mortal Kombat* is of higher quality. Now before I let out my evidence of this, I would like to say that I am a totally unbiased, 100 percent neutral, right down the middle N64er. Now, on to my review.

Tekken 3. I figured, why buy a PlayStation, which is a CD system? I already have a CD player! So I took out my brand-new Symphonic portable CD set (with four-second skip protection!) and jammed the N64 RF switch into the headphone port. "That oughta do it!" As I turned on the TV, I found that it didn't work! This is why cartridges are better, because they don't break as easily. I took out the PS CD and saw that it was burnt. The bottom was all black. So I washed it with detergent and put it in the dryer, "cause I know what to do in situations like this. The darn thing melted! Quickly, I flattened it out with my algebra textbook and threw it in the freezer to cool. Finally I put it back in my PS. STILL did not work! This game is terrible.

Tekken 3 grade: F.

AnemicFOOL@aol.com

We think you would make an excellent video game reviewer. Definitely not with *EGM*, mind you. But we're sure you'll do fine somewhere in the industry.



OOPS

Dragon Quest Monsters for Game Boy is published by Enix, not Sega as we accidentally listed in last month's Top 10-selling Japanese games list. Sheesh. Sega making Game Boy games...we ARE retarded.

Hey, you...WANNA PLAY GAMES?

Here's the opportunity you've been waiting for. The Ziff-Davis Video Game Group is looking for a few good people to join *EGM* and *XG* in our offices in Oak Brook, IL. Want to play games for a living? Here's your chance. The positions are...

- Associate Editor, *Electronic Gaming Monthly*—Responsibilities include working as a member of the Review Crew and working alongside the team on previews and features. Applicants must have a passion for games and an ability to write insightful and witty text. Quark and Photoshop experience preferred, but a solid understanding of what video game players love is essential.

- Staff Writer, *Electronic Gaming Monthly*—Responsibilities include miscellaneous writing duties, including video game previews. Again, you must have a strong passion for games and an ability to write with intelligence and humor. Quark and Photoshop experience preferred, but not necessary.

- Managing Editor, *Expert Gamer*—Responsibilities include coordinating editorial, art and production departments to produce this

video game strategy magazine within monthly deadline constraints. Duties will involve supervising editors, organizing and maintaining work flow. All applicants must be serious gaming enthusiasts with a passion for playing and beating games. Quark and Photoshop experience is required. A degree in journalism, business management or previous production experience is a definite plus.

Interested? Of course you are. Send a resumé, cover letter and relevant writing samples to:

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Medford, MA 02155

or fax: (981) 393-3038.

or e-mail: careers@zd.com (ASCII text only—attachments will not be accepted).

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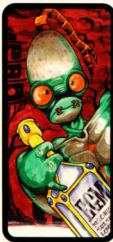
Letter Art

Where creativity, your favorite video game and a stamp can make you immortal!

WINNER

Adam Martin
Minneapolis, MN

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.



Close, but no controller



David Leskie
Harrisburg, PA



Patricio Soler
Cheney, WA



Shelley Kahn—Dublin, CA



Chris Ferrer—Muntinlupa City, Manila, Philippines

The ASCII Control Pad

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
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338



(All entries become the property of ZD Inc. and will not be returned)



The Fighting Red Demons

Brian Jackson
209 Redwood Shores Parkway
Redwood City, CA 94065



Dear Mr. Jackson:

Thank you for your interest in our Men's Basketball Program. We appreciate your enthusiasm, especially the part about "giving your left kidney" for a national championship. Unfortunately, we've just recruited 4 All-Americans. So we don't need the services of a 5'8", 132 lb. power forward with "mad game." Even if you can "take your little brother to the rack at will."

If you still want to experience all the emotion and excitement of big-time college basketball, we suggest you buy March Madness 99, the new video game that puts you on the floor with over 100 Division 1-A teams. (See attached.)

Sincerely,

Dave DeMartini
Head Coach

PS: If you can't handle the competition, you're welcome to try out for our pep band.

E.A.U. 1000 Sansome St. San Francisco, CA 94111 "Welcome to Demon Country!"



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ASK sushi-



EGM **egm** letters

Who's the most hardcore gamer of them all? Why it's our very own Sushi-X, *Electronic Gaming Monthly's* top video game expert. If you have a game-specific question for our mysterious ninja freak, er, friend, write him! He'll pick out a few and answer them as only he knows how. Send your questions to:

Sushi-X
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338
e-mail: sushi_x@zd.com

Street Fighter Questions

Until recently, all I owned was an N64, but I just got a Saturn for a cool \$40. Now, I really want Mega Man X4, but I heard from some guy on the Internet that the PS version is better because it has transparencies. Do you think the latter version is that much better, enough to warrant the wait for me to buy a PS?

Also, I want Street Fighter Alpha 2. Should I get it or the first Street Fighter Collection? I really don't care that much about Super SF2, and I heard the Alpha 2 Gold in that compilation is inferior to the original. Being the fighting game pimp that you are, could you please tell me which version of this game is the one to get?

Scott Winston
address withheld

I don't think there are enough differences between the two versions of Mega Man X4 to make you wait for a PlayStation purchase. I recommend you feed your Saturn with some Mega Man goodness. As for SF Alpha 2, the version to get is indeed the one contained in the Street Fighter Collection Vol. 1.

I have a question about the release of Street Fighter 3: 2nd (or 3rd) Impact for the Saturn—will it ever come out? Street Fighter Alpha 3 was rumored in your mag to be released for the Saturn, but it came out after SFIII! And any word on a Punch-Out!! 64 from Nintendo yet? That's my most anticipated game next to Zelda and Castlevania 64.

Mony Sivhour Prom
Providence, RI

Great questions, Mony. I've been in constant contact with Capcom and the mystery of SFIII is one they are holding close to their chest. Their first fighter for the Dreamcast will be Power Stone, which is full 3D, but I suspect SFIII will make an appearance soon after. Punch Out!! may happen, but my instincts say don't hold your breath. Does anyone ever tell you you're sooo money, Mony? You don't even know, you're soooo money, baby.

Hey, I was just wondering what happened to Hybrid Heaven for the Nintendo 64? You guys were showing previews of it in earlier issues but seemed to have...stopped. Is the game cancelled? Is it an RPG still? Please help me!

odlies54@hotmail.com

First off, it was never really an RPG, but a hybrid that has many adventure elements. It's easy to get confused because the game has gone through many changes, especially in the story department. No, Hybrid Heaven has not been cancelled and is very much on track for an eventual release. Yours truly got a personal look at the game just a few days ago and it's still got a ways to go, but there's a lot of potential there. We'll be sure to have more soon.

Just wondering about something. I know Pokémon is a huge hit in Japan and has already made its way to the United States for Game Boy but do you think it'll ever come to PlayStation? Does Nintendo own the sole rights to it?

They could be missing out on an already huge audience here. Please reply. I'm a helpless addict who needs his fill!

Terence
address withheld

Nintendo does own Pokémon, so the chances of it happening on the PlayStation are nil. The only alternatives I can suggest are Monster Rancher and Dragon Seeds. There'll be a sequel to Monster Rancher out for the PlayStation later this year.



Sorry Pocket Monster fans, Nintendo owns Pokémon, so no Pikachu for PlayStation (Pokémon Stadium for the Japanese N64 shown above).

Will Soul Calibur be making its way to the PlayStation or any other home system? And do you know if there will be a soundtrack available for Tenchu or Metal Gear Solid?

Wingchun79@aol.com

My sources say there is a good chance Soul Calibur will come out for the PlayStation, and the Dreamcast is also in the running for a possible port. Either way, there WILL be a home version.

Both Tenchu and MGS have soundtracks in Japan (as a matter of fact, the Tenchu one is in my car right now) with neither one planned for U.S. release. You may get lucky and track down a short MGS soundtrack sampler, which was a promotional giveaway for preordering the game.

What the heck happened to Tomorrow Never Dies for the PS?

kalabog316@yahoo.com

It was delayed till the 1st/2nd quarter of 1999, so it's still coming. All indications are that it will be worth the wait.

We all know Sushi-X is the king of traditional 2D fighting games...but how does he feel about wrestling games? Does he lose his edge in the ring? I bet he doesn't like funnel cake either!

Jeremy White
address withheld

No one knows their way around the squared circle like the dark ninja himself. I've been following wrestling for a long, long time and have all the WWF record albums on steady rotation every second Saturday of the month. I wanted to make this clear so my loyal followers can feel at ease when directing their hardcore wrestling questions at me. You're right about the cake thing though.

I was hoping you might know the best place to find the expansion pack for the N64 and how much they cost?

Mark Butti
Gardnerville, NV

I picked mine up at the local Target, but they should be readily available everywhere. They will run you about \$29.99.

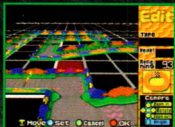
IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM
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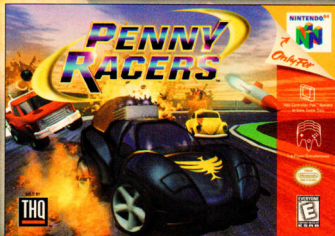
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Press Start

The hottest gaming news on the planet

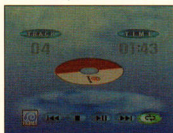
Hands On: Dreamcast



Here is the Dreamcast's audio menu, when you first insert an audio CD.



While an audio CD is playing, this is the interface you see.



After 10 minutes with no controller movement, the screen dims.



After 20 minutes (hum *The X-Files* theme song here...).

It's here...sort of. Dreamcast was released in Japan on Nov. 27, 1998, and sold 150,000 units during its first weekend on sale. When it arrived in our offices, we couldn't wait to tear open the boxes from Japan and get into some of the first games. After the smoke cleared, we dissected the system (see next page), and thought we'd pass along our findings.

Let's lead off with a particularly interesting tidbit of info. At the bottom of this page, you'll see a close-up picture of the system's motherboard, with the word "Katana" written on it. Other components inside the machine are also marked with it. If you remember back that far, before Dreamcast, there was Katana. Another interesting factoid is that the circuitboard inside the Visual Memory Unit (VMU) says "Potato."

The Japanese version of the hardware comes with the Dream Passport (Internet) software, but you cannot use it in the U.S. It requires a toll-free call from inside Japan to register, but since you can't dial a Japanese toll-free number, there's no way to use it—and believe us, we've tried. We should stress, however, that the modem itself is compatible with telephone lines in the U.S. and elsewhere.

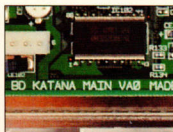
When you first hook up the system, you can select the language used in its menus, but this doesn't

"translate" any game text.

So what does the Dreamcast do when you insert a PC CD? It will tell you to insert a game disc. Remember, just because it's Windows CE does not mean it runs PC software. You can insert a GD-ROM into a PC, and there is some data—but nothing of substance. There's also an audio track on a few titles which tell you that it's a Dreamcast game disc only to be used in that system (and putting data discs in your audio CD players can ruin your speakers...don't try that at home).

There's no reset button on the system, but to perform a "soft reset," press A, B, X, Y and start at the same time. Excited about the Dreamcast? Thinking about importing one for yourself? Think about this: Japanese systems won't play U.S. games when the system does make the stateside leap. Prices for the Japanese systems are still astronomically high, so if you're dead-set on one, shop around. There have been systems plus games for sale on the Internet for double what they cost in Japan. You won't find a system for its 29,800 yen (about \$242) price tag in the U.S., but reasonable prices can be found. Still, our suggestion is to wait for the U.S. system. Not only will it be cheaper, but it'll play all the U.S. games.

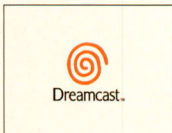
www.sega.com



Some of the DC's components are labeled with "Katana."



Each controller can have two VMUs inserted. You select them from here.



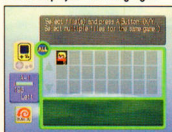
Hook it up, turn it on, and this is what you're greeted with.



The Settings menu is where you configure your Dreamcast's options.



The Dreamcast's main menu, which can be displayed in six languages.



This screen lets you edit save files on the VMU—save, delete, copy.

Dreamcast Specs

- Model name:**
HKT-3000 (game unit)
- Voltage:**
AC100V +/- 10%, 50/60 Hz
- Power consumption:**
Approx. 22W
- Measurements:**
Approx. (W) 190mm X (D) 195.8mm X (H) 75.5mm
- Weight:**
1.5kg
- CPU:**
Hitachi SH-4-RISC CPU with 128-Bit graphic engine built-in (operating frequency: 200 MHz 360 MIPS/1.4 GFLOPS)
- Graphic engine:**
PowerVR2 DC (capable of drawing more than 3 million polygons per second)
- Sound engine:**
Super Intelligent Sound Processor with 32-Bit RISC CPU built-in (64 channel PCM/ADPCM)
- OS:**
Customized version of Microsoft Windows CE
- Memory:**
Main - 16 MB
Texture - 8 MB
Sound - 2 MB
- Modem:**
33.6 kbps (removable) bundled with system
- Media:**
GD-ROM - New specification high density memory medium (capacity approx. 1GB)
- GD-ROM drive:**
12x maximum speed (when running in Constant Angular Velocity mode - CAV)
- Maximum simultaneous color output:**
Approx. 16.77 million colors.
- Screen display functions:**
- Bump mapping (creates bumps)
 - Fog (fog effects)
 - Alpha-blending (transparency effects)
 - Mip Mapping (automatically switches texture to correspond to distance from polygon)
 - Tri-Linear Filtering (weights the mean of the bi-linear filtering parallel effect so that it can be used as a texture)
 - Anti-aliasing (a filter that smoothes rough outlines)
 - Environment Mapping (pastes textures from surrounding environment onto objects)
 - Specular Effects (adds luster and shine to objects)

Dreamcast Roadmap

1. Motherboard

The main "guts" of the Dreamcast are all located on the system's motherboard.

2. PowerVR2 DC

This is NEC/Videologic's specialized PowerVR2 DC graphics chip. This chip handles all of the calculations needed to produce on-screen graphics.

3. Hitachi SH-4

Hitachi's SH-4 is the Dreamcast's Central Processing Unit (CPU). It operates at a speed of 200 MHz.

4. Heatsink

Above both the SH-4 and PowerVR2 DC are two metal plates, connected by metal tubing to this heat sink, which expels heat through the Dreamcast's internal cooling fan.

5. RAM

The Dreamcast's main memory chips are located here.

6. Multi-out

What you see on your TV is all coming from here, the Dreamcast's Multi-out, which supports Composite Video (cable included with the system) and S-Video (\$30 cable, sold separately).

The planned VGA Box will hook to this and allow you to play Dreamcast games on your PC monitor.

7. Serial Port

An expansion port, usually used for peripherals. Exact uses for this have yet to be announced, but it's entirely possible Sega will market devices such as printers or cameras to hook to this input.

8. Power Unit

This board is where the Dreamcast receives the AC power and converts it into the proper voltage the CPU needs.

9. AC In

The power cord goes here.

10. Controller Ports

You hook the Dreamcast controllers, joysticks, flight sticks, steering wheels and the keyboard into this front panel.

11. Battery

All of the settings for your Dreamcast are saved and kept in memory due to the use of this battery. So far, it is not known if this will be able to be replaced.

12. GD-ROM Drive

Designed by Yamaha, this GD-ROM drive reads specialized discs that can hold about a gigabyte of data (1,000 MB).

13. GD Drive Motor

Spins in two



speeds,

CAV and

CLV. At its highest

speed, more data can be

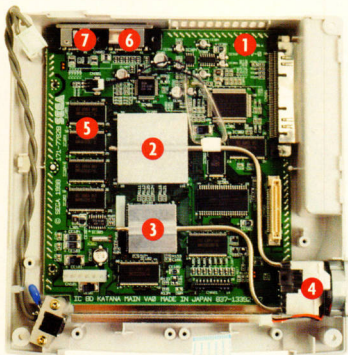
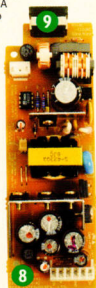
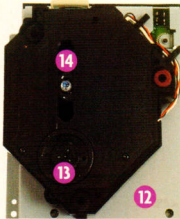
accessed at any one time.

14. GD Optical Lens

Reads data from GD-ROM discs, just as a record player needle reads "grooves" from a record. It then passes that data to the CPU.

15. Modem

A 33.6 kbps modem, based on standard Rockwell hardware, insuring a high level of compatibility with most ISPs/phone lines. The modem is detachable for future upgrades.





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It's the year 2001. The world has endured a nuclear holocaust. 99% of Earth's females are dead. The surviving few have risen to the status of QueenLords, holy entities, and the only means to mankind's survival. BattleTanx™ thrusts you into the role of BattleLord, master of armored tank warfare. You rumble across post-apocalypse America, leveling cities and destroying roving gangs of desperate Tribesmen - all in an effort to save the QueenLords, and civilization itself.

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- **4 types of furious 3D gameplay -** BattleLord, Death Match, Annihilation & Campaign.
- **3 camera views -** First person, third person and the fortress raigun.



It's Not Over For Saturn

While Sega of America turns its attention to Dreamcast, another company is looking to reopen some of Sega's previous markets. Majesco Sales, a New Jersey-based company, introduced the Genesis 3 last summer, and licenses and releases older Genesis and Super Nintendo titles. They have also published three titles for the Game Boy Color—Frogger, Super Breakout and Centipede, all available now.

The big story, however, is that the company is bringing back both the Game Gear and Saturn next year. Game Gear will arrive on store shelves at the beginning of February for an MSRP of \$29.95, with games for \$9.95. The Saturn will arrive in the spring for an MSRP of \$49.95, with games at \$14.99. Majesco will be re-releasing top Sega titles and publishing new games, which will probably include Frogger. In addition to those, Majesco will be bringing out a new, lower-priced version of the Sega Pico for \$49.95, with games running in the \$14.99-19.99 range. New titles from Japan will be brought out along with this system.



Cast of characters: (left to right)

Mike Maxwell, Wayne Leung, Dave Eaton, Tim Midkiff, Susan Egashira, John Garvin, Jeff Ross, Gabe Logan, Rob Kraft, Jay Sharpe, Richard Ham, Chris Reese, Marc Blank, Norman Chang and Tom Plunket.

Sony Pushes PocketStation Past X-Mas

While the PocketStation is still a few months away in the U.S.—Sony has yet to announce its formal plans for the mid-'99 introduction—it was only a matter of two weeks away when the company decided to delay the Japanese release. Originally scheduled for release on Dec. 23, it will now hit Japan on Jan. 23. It is compatible with games like Ridge Racer Type 4, Street Fighter Zero 3, Theme Aquarium and Crash Bandicoot 3 (Japanese version).

The reason for the delay was that Sony didn't feel it could produce enough inventory of the device to meet opening-day demand. A Sony representative said, "Rather than inconvenience our customers with shortages, we decided to put off the release."



Eidetic Inc.

Location: Bend, OR
Web site: www.eidetic.com

Gameography: Bubsy 3D, Live Action Football, All-Star Baseball

Other games staff members have worked on previously: Zork, Red Baron, A-10 v1.5, Aces of the Pacific, Aces WWI: 1946, Aces over Europe, Live Action Football, Front Page Sports Football, Stellar Fire, Bouncers, Betrayal at Krondor, Heart of China, Willy Beamish, Earthsiege 2, Sid and Al's Toons, MissionForce: Cyberstorm, Cybergladiators, Rise of the Dragon

of employees: 12
During breaks from late-night (programming) sessions, we: sleep (of course, this isn't very often). [Note: most of our people are NOT programmers; they are designers and artists.]

The most overlooked thing about Bubsy 3D was: the good stuff after the first few rotten levels (also, high-resolution graphics).

If we could teach this industry one lesson, it would be: Don't give up! **Our favorite game to play in the office (not by us) is:** Micro-Machines (PSX) **Story behind our name:** We tried to pick a vivid, unforgettable name. How'd we do? [From Webster's Online Dictionary: Eidetic - adj. marked by or involving extraordinarily accurate and vivid recall especially of visual images Ex. an eidetic memory.]

Favorite snack food(s): Anything with sugar and caffeine.

Music that inspires us: Hard to tell—everyone is wearing headphones.

Team motto: WHEN did you say Beta was?

Zelda Gives Nintendo Boost

After completing *Zelda*, designer Shigeru Miyamoto busied himself doing interviews with various magazines and newspapers from around the world. In an interview with Japanese *N64* magazine *The 64 Dream*, Mr. Miyamoto did mention something very interesting. When asked about his next project, he answered, "There was a plan to develop 1080° II, but it was tabled. Actually the team responsible for 1080° has started researching new hardware." In this context, "new hardware" doesn't mean 64DD, but Nintendo's next console.

Nintendo's position in Japan has been boosted by *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*. The game sold out in its first weekend of sale in Tokyo's famed Akihabara electronics district. *Zelda 64* is also the first game that Nintendo has allowed a Japanese rental chain (in this case, Tsutaya) to rent out along with the system.

Nintendo Co. Ltd. president Hiroshi Yamauchi recently told the *Nikkei* Shimbum that he will retire from his position by 2001. By that time, Nintendo will have moved into its new Kyoto offices and its strategy will be clear. A successor will be chosen before the company moves.



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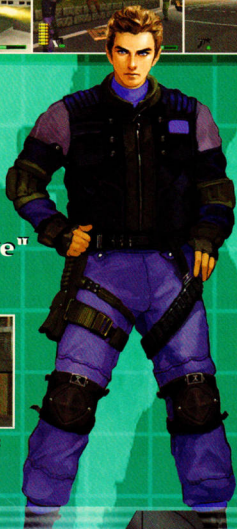
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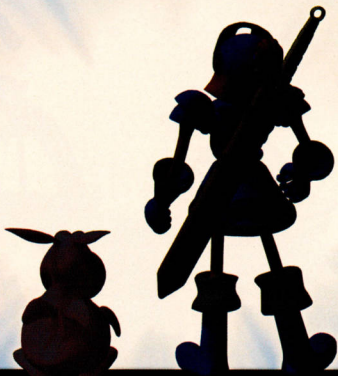


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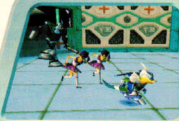
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Arcade News

Capcom revives Strider and Final Fight

Capcom recently announced that it is planning to bring new life to at least two of its older titles. Strider, long dormant with the exception of a sequel from another company, will rise from the ashes for a new arcade title. It will have both 2D and 3D elements, with improved graphics from the latest CPS board (who didn't enjoy seeing Strider in Marvel Vs. Capcom?). Word has it that it won't be too much of a departure from the old style of the game, but exactly how it'll look remains a mystery...for now. Strider will be going on test very soon.



The other title making a comeback is Final Fight, with Final Fight EX. The game is on test right now, and is for the System 11 board, which is basically PlayStation hardware. Instead of being a Final Fight-type game (funny how a new game in the series is not faithful to the genre it helped to start), Final Fighter Revenge is a 3D fighter like Rival Schools or Street Fighter EX.

In other Capcom arcade news, the company is developing another Vs. title, this time starring characters from Todd McFarlane's Spawn series. It's not known exactly which "team" will be pitted against Spawn, be it Capcom or Street Fighter, but many of the Spawn characters will be included.

Gamest Picks Winners

Good fighting games never die, they just get sequels. In Japan, while fighting games remain at the top of the heap for the most part, there are new names entering the mix alongside the Street Fighters and Tekkens. *Gamest* (the Japanese arcade journal) announced its 12th annual arcade awards recently, and among the winners were Namco's Soul Calibur for Best Graphics/Animation, Konami's Beat Mania 2 and Mix for Best Concept and Capcom's Tech Romancer for Best Presentation. Of the main awards, Taito's *Psychic Force 2012* took first-place honors, SNK's *King of Fighters '98* second and Capcom's *Street Fighter Zero 3* took third place.

ZDVGG Blitz Tournament

EGM Reigns Supreme in Pigskin Classic

Staff from each of the Ziff-Davis Video Game Group's magazines recently participated in an office-wide Blitz '99 tournament. The winners were EGM's own Dan Hsu and John Ricciardi, who beat Joe Rybicki and Kraig Kujawa of *Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine* in the semi-finals, and shut out Ben Durbin and Scott Augustyn of *Expert Gamer* by winning the first three in a best of five series.



Tetris 2000

The classic puzzle game returns

It catapulted the Game Boy into the leading handheld game system, has captivated millions of people who otherwise never would've picked up a controller, and topped our 100 Best Games of All Time list (*EGM* #100). The game is Tetris, and this old standby of a game is getting dusted off and given some new limbs with which to climb to the top of the next generation of puzzle games.

Since Alexey Pajitnov created the game in 1985, Tetris has been ported to just about every console and PC platform available. It's sold more than 50 million copies worldwide—30 million on Game Boy alone. But how can Henk Rogers, director of The Tetris Company and founder of Blue Planet Software (which is the worldwide agent for overseeing the creation of Tetris titles), keep the game fresh? "It's like keeping people interested in playing golf. You keep on making better courses, better clubs—that's what we do with Tetris," he told us.

A new Tetris title is headed to every current and future gaming platform in the coming months. Tetris DX for Game Boy Color and Magical Tetris Challenge for the N64 have already been released, but will soon be followed in mid-1999 in the U.S. by Blue Planet's next-generation Tetris title, *The Next Tetris* (dubbed TNT) for the PlayStation and eventually, *Dreamcast*. But with this next round of Tetris titles, competition will be the name of the game. "We have created a very good handicap system which allows two people of very different ranks to play a very exciting game," he explains. "The objective of *The Next Tetris* is to achieve the goal of your skill level in a set amount of time. For example, if you're Level 12, you'd dig through 12 lines of garbage in two minutes. If I was Level 6, I'd dig through six lines of garbage in two minutes. If one of us is playing above our skill level, all we have to do is win three games in a row and we move to the next skill level and vice versa."

With the network capabilities of the *Dreamcast*, it's very likely that you will soon be able to compete against pros across the country. This kind of Tetris competition is already being formed on the Internet, but will make the jump to console once net play comes standard on tomorrow's consoles. "In history, Tetris has been a solitary game—you play it by yourself and nobody knows how anybody else plays. That's going to change in the future. We're going to have national competitions and publish the results and broadcast the actual games that are played over the Internet, so everyone can see how the top players play."

Other innovations have been made to the game throughout its history as well. Arika, developer of *Street Fighter EX* and *Fighting Layer*, created an arcade game called *Tetris The Grand Master*. That features two new features, the Initial Rotation System, letting you rotate a block above the pit right away, and the Temporary Landing System, showing you where your piece will land by use of a "ghost" image. This game features power-up blocks and new modes of play not seen in any previous Tetris title. *Magical Tetris Challenge* has some of these features.

"Tetris is like 'Happy Birthday.' You don't sing it all the time, but when the time comes, everybody sings it," Rogers says. "It's been around as long as anyone can remember. So Tetris has become that kind of a title on the console. First of all, on handheld machines, there is no game that comes close to Tetris, because Tetris is so geometrically simple and compelling."



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International News

Square Diversifies Lineup

Long known for RPGs, Square does something new

Square is synonymous with Final Fantasy, but that may change in the future as the company forges ahead into other genres. Recently, the company announced two original titles — IS Internal Section and Cyberberg. IS is a space shooter, which Square describes as a "Digital Art shooter." It looks like a combination of a 3D shooter and impressionistic art video (trippy, eh?). During the game you can put in your favorite music CD to listen to while playing. Those weird-looking "characters" will probably be displayed according to the music you choose. IS will be released on Jan. 28.

In Cyberberg, a sci-fi 3D action game, you can play as three different characters: T.J., Gigante or Phosis. These three characters have been assigned to search for a missing space ship. Each character has its own weapon and ability. For instance, T.J.

can use a gun and martial arts attacks, while Gigante can attach different kinds of equipment to his arm and Phosis uses remote bombs. You explore various 3D "dungeon-like" areas and



Square's Digital Art shooter, IS—Internal Section, plays with your favorite CDs.



Cyberberg (top and bottom right) is a dungeon-based sci-fi adventure game.

complete different missions to progress through the game. Cyberberg for the PlayStation is slated for release next spring in Japan.

www.square.co.jp

International Bytes

Capcom Spins Off Mega Man

Capcom's Mega Man series has had very little deviation from the core series, until now. Tron ni Kobun (tentative Japanese title) stars Tron, the villain from Mega Man Legends, aka Rockman Dash in Japan. So far, there's no sign of the blue hero anywhere in this title.

Tron ni Kobun uses the same engine as Mega Man Legends, with subtle differences in the game's interface. It's not known if the story line will intersect with that of Legends. It will be released sometime in '99.



In Dreamcast News...

Konami has announced its first Dreamcast title—Flight Shooting. The game will feature planes like the B-2 Stealth, F/A-18 Hornet, Mig-21 and AH-64 Apache. The game is slated for release next spring. The other is called Pop'n Music, an arcade port of Konami's Beatmania-ish music game. The game's concept is similar to Beatmania—pushing the buttons with the proper timing. The game will be released next February. It will be compatible with a new controller specially designed for the game.

Atlus announced their first Dreamcast title called Maken X. It's an adventure title with action elements, for release next year.

From Software (King's Field, Armored Core) announced its first Dreamcast game, Frame Grid. This is a Virtual On-style mech shooter and this is the "untitled" game we saw playable at the last TGS without any name or company attached to it. While Armored Core is a sci-fi style game, Frame Grid is a fantasy-based mech game. The development team is trying to implement finishing moves that include summoning dragons, etc. The game is slated for release next spring.

Import Calendar



Import Pick of the Month

Sonic Adventure - Sega's mascot has finally returned after a long absence in this new adventure for the Dreamcast. This is definitely the Dreamcast's killer app (at least until Sega Rally 2 comes along). This is the first Sonic game Yuji Naka and Sonic Team have designed since the Genesis days. Barring any unforeseen delays, it will have hit shelves in Japan on 12/23/98.

PlayStation:

- 12/23 Street Fighter Zero 3, Capcom (Fighting)
- 12/23 Beatmania Append 3rd Mix, Konami (DJ Simulation)
- 12/23 Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon 2, Square (RPG)
- 12/23 IQ Final, Square (Puzzle)
- 12/23 Tales of Phantasia, Namco (RPG)
- 1/7 The Next Tetris, Blue Planet Software (Puzzle)
- 1/23 PocketStation, SCEI (Handheld)
- 1/28 Bloody Roar 2: Bringer of the New Age, Hudson (Fighting)
- 2/11 Final Fantasy VIII, Square (RPG)
- 2/25 Monster Farm 2, Tecmo (Monster Breeding)
- Feb. Tetris the Grand Master, Arika (Puzzle)
- Feb. Pocket MuMu, SCEI (Misc.)
- Feb. Pop'n Music, Konami (Music)
- Feb. Tricky Sliders, Capcom (Snowboarding)

Nintendo 64:

- Jan. Dairantou Smash Brothers, Nintendo (Fighting)

Dreamcast:

- 12/23 Sonic Adventure, Sega (Adventure)
- 12/23 Tetris 4D, Blue Planet Software (Puzzle)
- 12/23 Seventh Cross, NEC (RPG)
- 1/14 Sengoku Turb, NEC (RPG)
- 1/14 Sega Rally 2, Sega (Racing)
- 1/21 Evolution, STING/ESP (RPG)
- Jan. Speed Busters, Ubi Soft (Driving)
- 2/18 Monaco Grand Prix Racing Simulation 2, Ubi Soft (Racing)
- 2/25 Climax Landers, Climax (RPG)
- 2/25 Real Sound: Kaze no Regret, Warp (Misc.)
- Feb. Aero Dancing, CRI (Acrobatic Flight Sim)
- Feb. Get Bass, Sega (Fishing)
- Feb. Pop'n Music, Konami (Music)
- Feb. Kitahe: White Illumination, Hudson (Life Sim)

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Quartermann

- Gran Turismo 2
- Final Fantasy IX release date
- Sega Rally 2 delays
- Mortal Kombat for Dreamcast
- Chrono Trigger sequel
- Blitz 2000

News for next year is already starting to creep into the Q's headquarters, with plenty of information starting to emerge concerning Dreamcast games for 1999. It's normally a pretty quiet time of year right now, but thanks to Sega's new system, there seems to be something fairly exciting appearing nearly every week. Watch this kind of stuff go absolutely crazy as we careen toward the Spring Tokyo Game Show in March and E3 in L.A. in May.

The Rumor

Gran Turismo 2 is in development, set for release in 1999.

The Truth

At a recent press event (coincidentally for an N64 game...so what was he doing there?), SCEA R&D guru Phil Harrison was commenting on how the GT2 development team was keeping a close eye on developments with Sega Rally 2 on Dreamcast. It seems the team were looking for clever tricks to implement—but ended up being disappointed because they think what they're doing is cooler. Still no word on a date yet though. Or a system for that matter.

The Rumor

In a related story, there seems to be some doubt as to whether Sega Rally 2 will in fact support online play.

The Truth

News of the game's delay in Japan has caused much concern, and many believe that the online play is the root of the problem. Although clearly having a poke at the competition, SCEA's Phil Harrison is so confident the game won't support on-line gaming he was recently overheard stating, "I will eat my underwear if Sega Rally 2 supports online play." We're sure that Sega's Bernie Stolar would be happy to help Phil out, should the opportunity present itself.

The Rumor

Square is currently working on a sequel to its much-loved Chrono Trigger SNES RPG.

The Truth

The Q's contacts in Japan have learned from a source close to Square that this is, in fact, the case. Interestingly, the only other comments made concerning the project were that there was some debate as to whether it would be for PlayStation or PlayStation 2. This would have a knock-on effect of being bad news for Sega. Square acknowledging support for PlayStation 2 this early in the game could have detrimental effects on Dreamcast. Square is acknowledged as being one of the teams to have in "your corner," and Sega's failure to woo the RPG producing giant will have massive impact in Japan.

The Rumor

Final Fantasy IX will be released in Japan 9/9/99.

The Truth

The same sources with the Chrono Trigger info claim that FFXIX is already well into production, so the date with all the nines is increasingly likely. No news on system...probably PlayStation though.

The Rumor

Nintendo is acknowledging the importance of online play by

releasing some kind of modem-based system or add-on in the near future.

The Truth

Japan's *Nikkei Sangyo Shinbun* (industry newspaper) interviewed Hiroshi Yamauchi (president of Nintendo) recently, and he stated "Well, in the 64DD, which will be released next June, new data can be added to the game. I can't go into great detail, but we will release a new product which utilizes a phone line and will make a bigger splash than the 64DD." A Nintendo publicist later told the Q's spies, "We can't announce details yet. But the product will be created by Nintendo. So it's for sure it will be a game console." Currently we have no clue as to whether Nintendo is hinting at an entirely new system, or the more likely prospect of an add-on for the N64. We'll keep you posted.

The Rumor

There is a Mortal Kombat game in development for Dreamcast.

The Truth

Yep. There is no title for the game yet, but it won't be MK Dreamcast and it probably won't even have a "4" anywhere in the title. We are assured by our sources though that it will be based loosely on the MK4 engine. The characters will all have the same polygon count as in the arcade game—which is around 3,000 (the home versions of MK4 had to be cut to around 750) and the Q-spy network has learned that much of the model work is being pulled straight from the meshes used for the CG FMV sequences...such is the power of the Dreamcast. Tons of new moves are being implemented as well as numerous new characters including Baraka, Kitana, Mileena and the Cyber Ninjas. In short, it seems to be shaping up to be almost a "Trilogy"-sized version of MK4.

The Rumor

More Midway/Dreamcast news...there's to be an all-new Blitz on Dreamcast called Blitz 2000.

The Truth

The name may not be true, because there may be an arcade game using that—but the information is sound. Apparently set to be previewed at E3 in May 99, the game is well into development and sounds to be more impressive than the Blitz 99 arcade machine itself. Four-player modes are assured, as well as a vastly improved graphics engine with far more impressive-looking player builds (and we're talking about in comparison to the arcade machine here—not the N64 version) and full support for the VMU. So far, play calling is confirmed for VMU, but the team is looking into using the portable system as much as possible. Player and play editors look extremely likely too.

The Rumor

Acclaim's Quarterback Club 2000 is likely to lead as a Dreamcast product, not an N64 game.

The Truth

This is still unconfirmed (although we know QBC 2000 is in development...just not on which system)—but it would seem logical. Sega wants high-profile sports titles on Dreamcast, and Acclaim is already signed up as a publisher for Dreamcast games. It would be very surprising if a game showing obvious leanings toward high-res graphics and massive graphical detail wasn't being produced for DC. The spies are still hunting down this one, so watch for more details next month.

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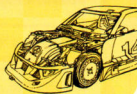
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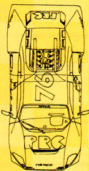
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








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Top 20

The Top-20 Best-Selling Games of November, 1998

1	The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time Nintendo		Last Month NEW
2	WCW/nWo Revenge THQ		Last Month 2
3	Crash Bandicoot: WARPED Sony Computer Entertainment		Last Month NEW
4	Metal Gear Solid Konami		Last Month 1
5	GoldenEye 007 Nintendo		Last Month 3
6	Tomb Raider III Eidos		Last Month NEW
7	NBA Live 99 Electronic Arts		Last Month NEW
8	NASCAR 99 Electronic Arts		Last Month 9
9	Twisted Metal III 989 Studios		Last Month NEW
10	Madden NFL 99 Electronic Arts		Last Month 4
11	NFL GameDay 99 989 Studios		Last Month 7
12	Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back Sony Computer Entertainment		Last Month 14
13	WWF War Zone Acclaim		Last Month 10
14	NFL Blitz Midway		Last Month 8
15	PS Underground JamPack Winter '98 Sony Computer Entertainment		Last Month NEW
16	NFL Blitz Midway		Last Month 5
17	Cool Boarders 3 989 Studios		Last Month NEW
18	Banjo-Kazooie Nintendo		Last Month 15
19	NASCAR 99 Electronic Arts		Last Month ---
20	Mario Kart 64 Nintendo		Last Month ---

Zelda: Ocarina of Time

1

Miyamoto's masterpiece has sold over 2 million units in the U.S. already, and it's only been out for a month! (As of this writing, that is.) It's even topping the charts in Japan, where the N64 is more or less a total failure. Amazing? You bet. Surprising? Not at all.

10 | 10 | 10 | 10
John R | Crispin | Dan | John D



2



WCW/nWo Revenge

Had it not been for Metal Gear (last month) and Zelda (this month), THQ's awesome update to World Tour would've been at the very top two months in a row.

7.5 | 8.5
Dan | John R

8.5 | 8.0
Shawn | Dean

3



Crash Bandicoot: WARPED

Are you noticing a trend? For the first month in ages, all of the Top 5 games are games that received EGM Editors' Choice awards! It's nice to see great games do well.

9.5 | 9.0
Shawn | Crispin

9.0 | 9.0
John D | John R

4



Metal Gear Solid

The first game ever to receive EGM's coveted Platinum Award drops three spots to number 4. Thanks to Zelda, it'll likely never to see the number 1 spot again.

10 | 10
Crispin | John R

10 | 10
Dan | John D

5



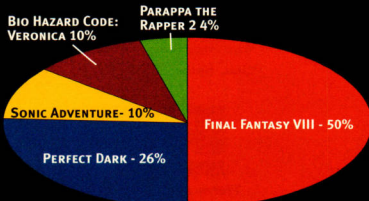
GoldenEye 007

For the third month in a row, GoldenEye has maintained a spot in the top 5. It's over a year old! No other game in recent memory has had this much lasting appeal.

9.5 | 9.5
Crispin | Dan

9.5 | 9.0
Shawn | Sushi

What game scheduled for U.S. release in 1999 are you MOST looking forward to?



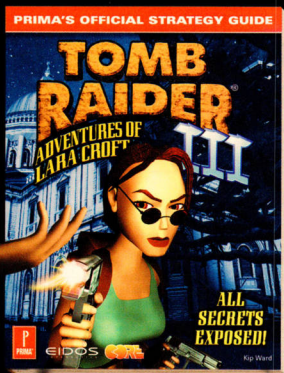
Source: Videogames.com poll results for Dec. 14, 1998.

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games, November, 1998. Call them at (516) 625-2345 for questions regarding this list. Top 5 game descriptions written by the EGM staff.

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
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Top 10 Editors' Picks

1	Zelda: Ocarina of Time Nintendo	
2	Metal Gear Solid Konami	
3	FIFA 99 Electronic Arts	
4	Turok 2: Seeds of Evil Acclaim	
5	Tetris DX Nintendo	
6	Rogue Squadron Nintendo/LucasArts	
7	Crash Bandicoot: WARPED SCEA	
8	F-Zero X Nintendo	
9	NCAA GameBreaker 99 989 Sports	
10	Xenogears Square EA	

Top 10 Japan Courtesy of Famitsu Magazine as of Nov. 29, 1998

1	The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time Nintendo	
2	Dragon Quest Monsters Enix	
3	PopoRogue Sony Computer Entertainment	
4	Virtua Fighter 3tb Sega	
5	Libero Grande Namco	
6	Exodus Guilty Imadio	
7	Fighting Illusion K-1 Grand Prix '98 King Entertainment	
8	Pocket Monsters (Pikachu Version) Nintendo	
9	Murder on the Eurasia Express Enix	
10	Yukiwari No Hana Sony Computer Entertainment	

Top 10 Arcade Picks

1	Soul Calibur Namco	
2	Hydro Thunder Midway	
3	Ocean Hunter Sega	
4	NFL Blitz '99 Midway	
5	Gauntlet Legends Midway	
6	Site 4 Atari Games	
7	Daytona 2: Battle on the Edge Sega	
8	Gradius IV Konami	
9	Carnevil Midway	
10	Street Fighter Alpha 3 Capcom	

That Movie Would Make a Killer Game!

Nikki Douglas, the GRRL Gamer, takes on the issues of making games from movies

Here's an equation for ya (don't worry no higher math here)—how many times have you come out of the theater after seeing a movie thinking, "You know, that would make a groovy video game?" Now think of all the companies that have attempted to make great video games out of those great movies, spending blood, sweat and disposable profit, yet failing miserably (excluding GoldenEye 007 and Mission: Impossible—we're grading on a curve).

Why can't a game company make a decent game to tie into a video game? LucasArts even had their disaster with Star Wars: Masters of Teras Kasi, one of the lamest fighters out there, and they almost never do anything that sucks (and thankfully have redeemed themselves with Rogue Squadron). I'm mostly thinking of games that had such potential and material to work with and could have turned out good like: The Fifth Element, Small Soldiers and Batman & Robin. If ever there was a quirky film that just begged to be made into a video game, it was this all-out lunatic fringe cult fave, and boy was the game a stinker.

I have begun to fear video game movie tie-ins, to such a point that often they will sit in my "To Play" pile unwrapped from their protective cellophane, because I know what a disappointment and waste of my time it will be to even unwrap them. To whiz: Judge Dredd is still in its cellophane wrapper! I figure why torture myself with these lousy games when I can play Final Fantasy VII for the zillionth time and still be amazed.

Some games, like Mission: Impossible and GoldenEye 007 are what

movie tie-in games should be about, making the game as exciting and fun to play as the films were to watch. While I would agree that some films aren't good enough in the first place (hello, Batman & Robin) to bother making a video game out of, the games that are released with films or shortly after films are mediocre, rushed, and for the most part, utterly worthless. When you see cinematic adventures like Metal Gear Solid and virtually anything by Square, the potential that exists within the genre is already there for the taking, it just needs to be expanded upon. After all, these are games without the highly developed images and backstory from a film that provides a similar cinematic experience. So what do they know that the developers of movie tie-ins, don't?

Obviously, how to make a decent video game and that it takes more than just in-your-face marketing and overblown hype to make a game fly. I feel sorry for anyone who enjoyed the movie *The Fifth Element* and bought the game thinking it might be fun. It's hours of their life they will never get back.

So to the next movie tie-in video games, already in their rushed, haphazard production, I say, there may be one born every minute but in the time that it takes to build up false hype surrounding your piece of crap game, you could actually be producing something better than average, and maybe in some cases a product that even surpasses the movie itself. Go the extra distance. We'll wait. If it's a good game we'll buy it, even if we never saw the movie—which could make your movie game a true blockbuster.



The Fifth Element—great movie, horrible game.



Ok Pops,

kiss off the 5-Ball, bounce off the pacemaker, around the dentures,

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• 5 Carom games including: 4Balls, 3Balls, Free, 1 Cushion, 3 Cushion

• Grand Total of 14 different games

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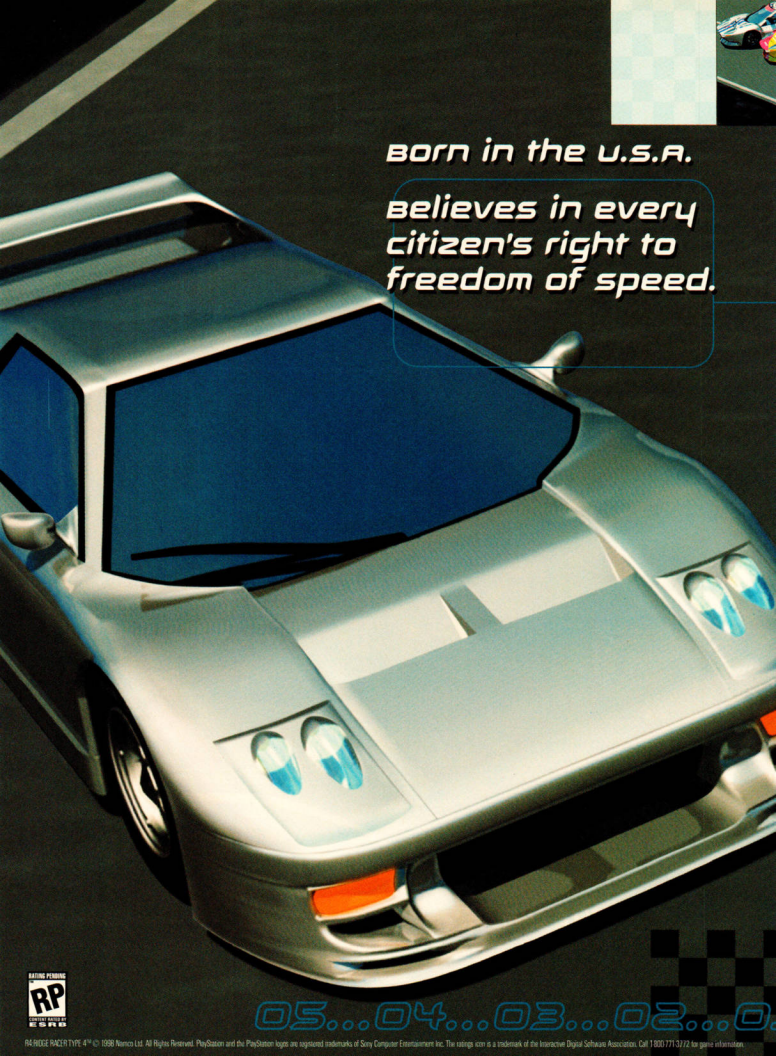
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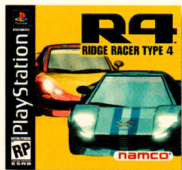
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- Official PlayStation Magazine, December 1998



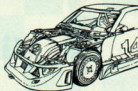
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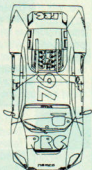
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Dreamcast

Previews

Game Directory

- Virtua Fighter 3tb
- PenPen Trilcelon
- July
- Godzilla Generations

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.



Virtua Fighter 3tb

Perfect
In All
The
Right
Places

With all eyes on the Dreamcast launch, the title held up to the most scrutiny is without a doubt Virtua Fighter 3tb. Will the Dreamcast be able to handle Model 3 arcade conversions as flawlessly as promised, or will it be another case of flawed technology rushed to the market? Sega fans can breathe a little sigh of relief because the game looks incredible and is virtually perfect. There are some flaws, like the shadows which are reflecting the base polygon shapes instead of all the connecting virtual skin, resulting in gaps where joints should be. The overall polygon count in the characters is a little less than the arcade as well. There are a few other very minor differences, but do they REALLY matter? No.

These differences are not a result of under-powered hardware, but most likely due to the short time frame in which the game was converted. This is clearly evident in the lack of substantial extras like a Versus Mode or a deeper Training Mode. But the bottom line is that the Dreamcast can deliver on the graphics, audio and gameplay goods.

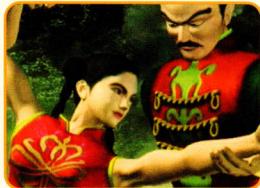
Aside from being a showcase title, Virtua Fighter 3 is one heck of a game. True to its name,



One of the coolest camera options is the first-person view. Look at the detail in the facial features. It's incredible.

there is no other fighting game that's as realistic as VF. The detail in the way the fighters attack is amazing, and the reaction it causes is even more spectacular. Each time a character blocks, you can see him/her reacting exactly where the attack hit, and the velocity of that attack not only affects the defender, but also the attacker. If someone were to execute a Roundhouse Kick and it was blocked, his or her leg would fall awkwardly back and he or she would lose balance for a tiny bit before recovering. All fighting games have delay times that leave a fighter vulnerable after a missed attack, but few have new animations for them, and none have as many as VF3.

So with all this detail, why hasn't VF caught on more? Let's face it, Tekken rocks and its blend of high action and deep gameplay have stolen a lot of thunder from Sega's brawler. The problem is that the VF series has a deceivingly high learning curve compared to Tekken's. It's very easy to pick up, but very hard to learn its intricacies which take almost a Zen dedication to master. Trust us when we say the level of Virtua Fighter play that is possible is far beyond what you can imagine...unless you've been to Japan and had a chance to witness it yourself. ☺



EGM
54

This cool CG (computer-generated) movie awaits those who can beat the game. No individual endings (as usual) though.

Virtua Karaoke

Do you love Virtua Fighter 3? Well, Japanese people do, and they also dig karaoke...so the two naturally came together. Each of the characters has a CD that displays CG-rendered stills accompanied by his or her song (collected in the album *Dancing Shadows*, sans the CG) which you could sing along with or view like a video. These were released for the Saturn in Japan. Before you get your hopes up, there is no Karaoke Mode in the DC VF3!



A tale of two launches

Although the Japanese Dreamcast launch has been less than perfect, it's a world of difference from the Japanese Saturn launch. The original Virtua Fighter was the marquee title and it suffered from severe polygon dropouts, smaller character builds and other graphical glitches. The worst part being, it was a Model 1 arcade game which had already been succeeded by Model 2, making for a bad conversion of an outdated game.

On the other hand, the DC Virtua Fighter 3 is a 98 percent perfect version of (still) cutting-edge arcade hardware. Plus, people who wait for the U.S. Dreamcast can also look forward to a better version of VF3 (similar in the way the original VF was improved for the U.S. market). Sega has plenty of time to make Virtua Fighter 3tb cooler than it already is.



Last seen in the 32X port of the original Virtua Fighter, the bird's-eye cam gives you a great look at the various battle stages.

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. **Import at your own risk.**



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Sega
General Ent./Land Ho! 1-4
Racing 100 Now
Japan

Web Address: www.sega.co.jp

インターアクションゲームス

PenPen Trilcelon

Check Your Sanity At The Door

When thinking about racing games, it's not often that penguins, hats and really enthusiastic announcers come to mind. But if you're talking PenPen Trilcelon, that's exactly what you get.

As a launch title, PenPen is one of the strangest, yet horribly addictive Japanese titles. The premise is this: You race as one of eight (seven normal, one secret) penguin-type creatures called PenPens through four different courses. The

PenPens in the game have personalities which are described during loading scenes with somewhat broken English—favorite phrase: "Sneak is easily elated." Each of the game's courses has an owner, from Mrs. Cream (an ice-cream cone woman) to Horrorman (the embodiment of all that is scary—a vampire, a mummy, a ghost and a).

Courses have three different parts: running, swimming and sliding, and can be made up of any combination of these. Running is the slowest and most tedious, while sliding and swimming are much faster and a lot more fun. For a boost of speed, steer into the rainbow-colored boosts which will jet your PenPen forward. When each course is completed, you are awarded a hat, which you can put on your character to make him/her look more comical (no real effect on performance). There are three modes, including a standard Trilcelon, Time Attack and Versus Modes.

Graphically, PenPen is beautiful. It moves at 60 frames per second through most of the one-player game (but does sometimes slow to around 30) but stays at a steady 30 in four-player split-screen games. Music in PenPen is energetic, game show-type themes that change when you pass into new parts of the stage or past a particularly dangerous area. Aside from the overly enthusiastic announcer, the sound is not bad. While PenPen won't win any awards for gameplay, the control is tight.

The game was developed by Land Ho!, a team of people whose previous credits include Sonic, Panzer Dragoon and other top-tier titles. PenPen, however, bares no resemblance to any of those games. If you like kitschy, wacky, Japanese games, PenPen is for you. But without some major improvements/more tracks, this game will probably not come to the U.S. ☹️



The tracks in PenPen contain some great eye candy in the background, like this sleeping dragon.

Gamer's Edge

Secret PenPen

He's Hanamizu, the secret PenPen of PenPen Trilcelon. The last challenge for each of the tracks is to beat this speedy guy, who gets twice the push from boosters, is faster on water, and uses skis instead of sliding on his stomach. Maybe his speed can be attributed to the large glob of snot dripping from his nose.



Some areas have special traps that suddenly make it anybody's race.



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DREAMCAST

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Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Sega
Forty-Five 1
Adventure 100 Now
Japan

Web Address: www.sega.co.jp

インターナショナル

July

We're Gonna Party Like It's 1999...NOT!!

Thank God the Dreamcast's U.S. release isn't until the fall of '99, because if the system had titles like this to spring on the unsuspecting public, Sega would be in trouble indeed. Fortunately, we all know about the great games coming for the system, so we can let little blips like this slide.

One of those games that will never come out in the U.S., July is a text-based adventure centering on two main characters. Makoto is a 19-year-old student and Joshua is an asexual 29-year-old "male" who has a unique skin disorder resulting from a mysterious operation. At the heart of the "mystery" is a huge corporation called NAX, whose boss suffers from the same mysterious skin disorder as Joshua.

Story line aside, July does nothing to take advantage of the DC's powers. If you're looking for a great 2D example of the DC's powers, you'd better wait for the rumored Castlevania, or possibly even Marvel vs. Capcom, because July isn't it. Basically a text-driven "adventure," July's interface consists mainly of cycling through text as the story unfolds. Occasionally, while your character interacts with another, you're allowed to make a choice in what your reply will be. Ex: "I will have an ice coffee," or "I will have hot coffee." Boy, the tension never lets up. As each chapter concludes, you'll then switch to an overhead map where you can choose from a number of locations to go to. During this time you



This is about as graphically intense as the game gets. Whoopee!

will also be able to switch between characters.

On the positive side, the game has practically no load times, as it shifts from in-game screens to overhead maps, etc. At certain points, you'll also be treated to the occasional FMV that, surprisingly, leaves you no wiser as to what's going on.

If you're thinking about importing July, do yourself a favor: don't. Unless you can read Japanese and really like this style of game, there's almost no reason to buy it. Whereas other text-based sims like Sakura Wars at least have strategy-based battles to recommend it, July offers nothing for the casual, or even hardcore, gamer. ☹️



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Sega
Sega of Japan 1-4
Action 100 Now
Japan

Web Address: www.sega.co.jp

Godzilla Generations

There should be a law somewhere that says it's illegal to foist two horrible Godzilla products on the masses within the space of one year. Godzilla Generations, like the Godzilla flick, is nothing but a big waste of time.

The main purpose of the game is to ride into town and destroy the whole works. The problem (or should we say, problems) is that 1.) Godzilla never stomped into Tokyo with the simple intention of destroying every single piece of the city, something he does here with a mind-numbing single-mindedness. It's like a very unfun 3D version of Rampage, without the sense of humor. 2.) The control is possibly the worst yet seen in a video game. What contributes to this title's horrible control are the constantly fluctuating camera angles. One minute you're looking at Godzilla from a three-fourths overhead perspective, the next you're facing him head-on from the waist up. Next, you're

looking at him from the ground up, worm's-eye-view-style. The entire time, your controls remain constant, so while you think you're walking forward, after a convenient (insert heavy sarcasm here) camera-angle



switch, you'll suddenly be walking backward. Throw in response time fit for senior citizens and you've got a really expensive coaster on your hands.

For added replay value, Godzilla Generations is compatible with the Godzilla-specific VMS memory card, that you can use in a Tamagotchi-style arena mode. Additionally, small theatrical trailers from the original movies are unlocked as you progress through the game, which will please hardcore Godzilla fans.



You can also use Godzilla's mechanical nemesis, MechaGodzilla. Wheeeee!



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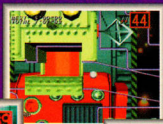
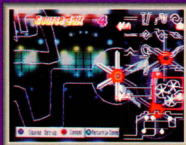


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DREAMCAST

インターナショナル

Shenmue

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Psychic Force 2012

Psychic Force is a free-floating, free-roaming 3D arcade fighter that plays a bit like the Dragon Ball games, where characters hover in mid-air and shoot an awful lot of projectiles. It never really made it big in the U.S. (Acclaim's home port never made it huge either). The sequel Psychic Force 2012, currently out in arcades, is coming to the Dreamcast in Japan sometime next spring. Right now, we don't know if anything special's being planned for the home version.



Carrier

While you're waiting for the Dreamcast Resident Evil, you can enjoy Jaleco's Carrier. This survival-horror game (as the Japanese like to call it) lets you control one of two characters (hmm...a male AND a female main character...a little too similar to Capcom's survival-horror games, wouldn't you say?) trying to survive in a futuristic aircraft carrier full of...guess what? zombies. Carrier is due out this winter in Japan.



Elemental Gimmick Gear

Don't worry about a lack of RPGs for the Japanese DC. Elemental Gimmick Gear (E.G.G.) is a 2D action/RPG with 3D boss battles. It's being developed by Hudson Soft and Birthday (whose RPG credits include Kaijū Monogatari for the Famicom and Daikajū Monogatari for the Super Fami) and is slated for a spring '99 release in Japan.



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- Confront your own mortality with endless fighting combinations, including hand-to-hand, weapon or spell combat.

Nintendo 64

Previews

Game Directory

- WinBack
- Vigilante 8
- Snowboard Kids 2
- NBA In the Zone '99
- O.D.T.
- Monaco Grand Prix: Racing Simulation 2
- Smash Brothers
- Mario Party

WinBack

Metal Gear-Inspired Mayhem For N64

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Koei Omega	1-2 Action	80	Summer 1999

Web Address: www.koeligames.com

From the makers of such PlayStation fighters as Dynasty Warriors and Destrega comes WinBack, an explosive new action/adventure title for the N64. Best described as a cross between Metal Gear Solid and Time Crisis, WinBack opens as a group of terrorists called the

Crying Lions seize control of a top-secret weapons satellite. As a show of their might, Crying Lion leader Kenneth Coleman vaporizes the Center for Space Development and demands the immediate emancipation of the Lion's homeland, Zarozcia. Knowing it will take three hours for the satellite's lasers to recharge, the Secretary of Defense dispatches S.C.A.T. (Strategic Covert Actions Team) to the scene. As S.C.A.T. races to the satellite control facility, their chopper is shot down, scattering the 10 team members and throwing the mission into total disarray. Playing as S.C.A.T. member Jean-Luc Cougar (the love child of Jean-Luc Picard and John Cougar?), you must locate all surviving team members and defeat Coleman and the rest of the Crying Lions.

As mentioned, WinBack plays much like Metal Gear, only with less of an emphasis on stealth. Armed with an automatic pistol and an infinite supply of ammo, you must mow down a legion of grunts and 10 colorful bosses before taking on the big man himself. As he makes his way across a number of interior and exterior environments, Jean-Luc will come across fellow team members, who supply him

with information and the occasional special item, such as a C-4 explosive and a bomb detector.



Cut from the same cloth as Metal Gear's Solid Snake, WinBack's Jean-Luc is a master of stealth.

(Meeting team members also triggers a brief real-time cinema, such as the "tear-jerking" encounter with Matthew Brown, who, much to Jean-Luc's horror, receives a sniper bullet through the head after promising to attend church more regularly, should he survive the mission. So cheesy, you just gotta love it...)

As in MGS, you must use items in your environment—such as crates, barrels, walls and trucks—to provide cover during firefights. If you draw your weapon near a wall, Jean-Luc will instinctively hug it, allowing you to pop out from behind it with a touch of the Aim button to surprise any unwary soldiers on the other side.

Unusual for a game of this type, WinBack also has four different Versus Modes: Death Match, Lethal Tag, Cube Hunt and Quick Draw, which should pump up the game's replay value considerably. Another welcome turn of events, WinBack will be launched simultaneously in Japan and the U.S. sometime mid-March. Kudos, Koei!

Gamer's Edge

Combat Training

Similar to the Action button in Time Crisis, Aim can be used in WinBack to pop out from behind objects. A laser site helps your bullets find their mark.



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Activision Luxoflux	1-4 Action	80	March 1999
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Web Address: www.activision.com

Vigilante 8

Total Car-nage
Finally Comes
To The N64

Nintendo 64 owners have long requested, "I want to blow up lots of cars on my N64!" Now, thanks to Vigilante 8 from Luxoflux and Activision, they'll be able to—to the fullest extent. Some of you may remember Vigilante 8 on the PlayStation and the way it pushed the PlayStation to its graphical limits. Well, V8 is essentially the same game on the N64 except for N64-style graphics, a speedier frame-rate and some other exclusive features.

In case you're not familiar with Vigilante 8, the game has a *Mad Max* feel—that is, if the actors in the movie were played by the members of the P-funk group Parliament—who drive '70s muscle cars—with levels that take place in the American Southwest. Basically, think of a fancy Twisted Metal or Rogue Trip where you try to kill all of the other guys and gals in a level, with a variety of strange vehicles, loads of weapons and, yes, an Area 51 level. But since it's the

first of its kind on the system, there isn't anything really to compare V8 to...well, except to V8 on the PlayStation.

Here's what's new to the N64: First, the N64 version of V8 features a slew of new multiplayer modes including Brawl, Smear and Survival modes. Brawl Mode is two vs. two team play, Smear Mode is three players against one



The same levels found in the PlayStation version of Vigilante 8, are in this Nintendo 64 version.

poor sap, and Survival Mode is an all-out Deathmatch Mode where every gamer is for him/herself. In addition to these multiplayer modes, V8 on the N64 gives you a Quest Mode for the popular alien character from the PlayStation version, and a two-player co-operative Quest Mode. Of course, the music has been N64-ized with a MIDI soundtrack instead of one that streams off of a CD. V8 also supports the RAM Expansion Pak for an impressive hi-res mode with a decent frame-rate.

So how did Luxoflux and Activision come up with all of these additions to an already solid title? By checking on Usenet, reading through e-mails and listening to focus groups concerning the PlayStation V8, they found people wanted more from the two-player mode, a quest for the alien and the other features listed above. Luxoflux and Activision are putting them in, and we're getting a better game because of it—not just some reshaped piece of crap.

Like the PlayStation version, V8 on the N64 still has fully destructible 3D arenas, secrets within levels and a story for each character in the Quest Mode. Although the one-player can be a lot of fun, the real thrill of playing car combat games comes from the multiplayer mode(s), and Vigilante 8 is no different in this respect. The four-player modes are easy to get into thanks to the four controller ports already available on the N64, and from what we've seen so far, the frame-rate doesn't suffer much from the intense graphics.



The co-op Quest Mode makes blowing up enemy cars all the more fun. The frame-rate stays high to boot.



V8 vs. V8

Who's got the juice to get loose?



100% Vegetable Juice

100% Funk Juice

Advantage: Vigilante 8

An 8-oz. serving of regular V8® juice provides a full serving of vegetables

Eight hours of action in one sitting will turn you into a human-sized vegetable

Advantage: V8 Vegetable Juice

It's an excellent source of vitamins A and C

Uses buttons A, C, B, R, L and the D-pad

Advantage: Vigilante 8

Has the delicious taste you've loved for so many years

It's the first time you'll ever play Vigilante 8 on the N64

Advantage: V8 Vegetable Juice

Allows you to "live life on all 8 cylinders"

Allows you to drive a bunch of tricked-out hooties...some that have 8-cylinder engines

Advantage: Vigilante 8

Made with delicious, antioxidant rich tomatoes and other nutritious vegetables

Made with silicon, plastic, and the blood, sweat and tears of the Luxoflux team

Advantage: Draw

Winner: Vigilante 8

NINTENDO 64

Snowboard Kids 2

The Freaks With
The Big Noses
Are Back!



Quick to capitalize on their success with last year's N64 sleeper hit, Snowboard Kids, Atlus is already putting the finishing touches on the upcoming sequel, Snowboard Kids 2. If you've played the original game, then you know what to expect here. Snowboard Kids 2 isn't all that different from the first game, though the programmers spent a lot of time making several minor enhancements and improvements to an already very solid game. This time around, there are more characters to choose from, more courses and power-ups, and a central town where you can go to buy new boards, participate in cool mini event stages and customize your equipment. The main core of the game hasn't changed, though—you still need to collect coins to purchase power-ups on each course, which in turn can be used to pound the crap out of your competition. Of course, our favorite aspect of Snowboard Kids is its four-player Battle Mode (which is similar to Mario Kart 64's), and that's back as well, with new courses and power-ups.

The Battle Mode is back. It is easily one of the best aspects of the game. It's like Mario Kart with snowboards.



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Atlus
Racdym 1-4
Racing 95 February
1999

Web Address: www.atlus.com



Even though it uses the same engine as the first game, Snowboard Kids 2's graphics show much improvement.

Snowboard Kids 2 supports the Rumble Pak, and saves right to the cart, so there's no need for a Controller Pak. It should be on store shelves this February, so if you were a fan of the original or are just itching for a fun, Mario Kart-style multiplayer experience, watch for it.

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Konami
Konami 1-4
Sports 70 February
1999

Web Address: www.konami.com

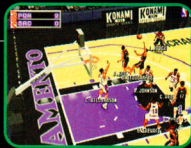
NBA In the Zone '99

Konami may not be known for their sports titles, but that won't stop them from releasing *In the Zone '99* later this year. The newest entry to the slim N64 basketball lineup will attempt to impress with solid fundamentals and gameplay rather than gimmicky features. In fact, aside from a three-point shootout option, everything else is firmly straightforward.

Looking like a chunkier version of NBA Live 99 (N64), you'll have the chance to icon pass, call plays on the fly and perform fancy offensive and defensive maneuvers. All-new motion-capture work has given players a decent, realistic look—not spectacular but not bad. Cross-over and behind-the-back dribbling are available and quite useful when driving the lane. Trying to press without them results in a collision nearly every time—not much cheap stuff to speak of. Oddly enough, the create-a-player option allows you to create a 5-foot, 300-lb. player... always a plus for any team.

Stats and licenses are plentiful. In addition to all the NBA teams, logos and stadiums, you can track your own stats as well as individual players and teams.

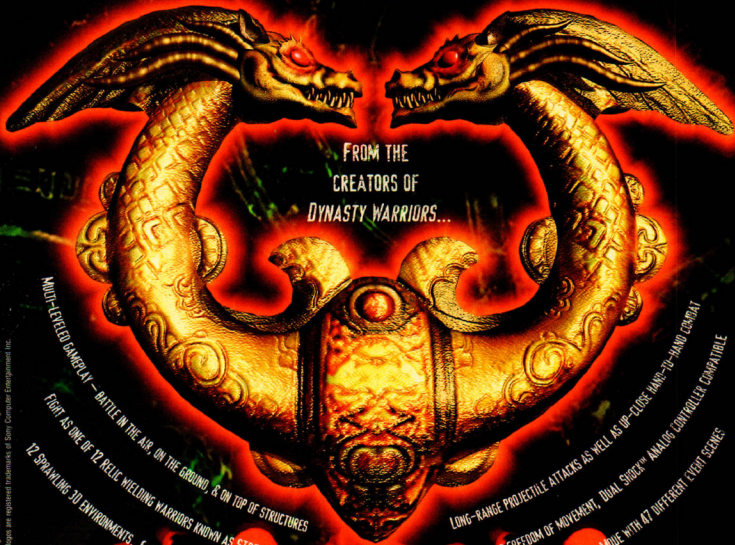
While NBA in the Zone '99 probably won't dazzle us with incredible new features, it does look fairly solid at its current stage of development.



The three-point shootout meter is a bit tricky to use at first.

Nothing too extreme here, except for Karl's smilin' mug. Players look a tad chunky but they're not bad.

LONG AGO, A SMALL COUNTRY WAS BESTOWED MYSTICAL OBJECTS POSSESSING MYSTICAL POWERS. BUT THESE OBJECTS, RELICS, WERE MUCH TOO POWERFUL. EVENTUALLY, THE EMPIRE DESTROYED ITSELF, SEALING ITS SECRET FOR ETERNITY. 1000 YEARS LATER, ONE MAN HAS UNLEASHED THE POWER AND ONCE AGAIN, THE CONTINENT FACES TOTAL DESTRUCTION. PIT RELIC AGAINST RELIC AS 12 INDIVIDUALS FIGHT FOR PEACE, POWER, GREED AND PROSPERITY. OBJECTS OF POWER FAIL, BUT THE SCARS REMAIN...



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O.D.T.

Escape...Or Die Trying

You know the N64 is starved for software when such marginal titles as Psygnosis' O.D.T. begin appearing for it. Panned by critics and fans alike, O.D.T. was plagued by unresponsive controls, a choppy frame-rate and an unwieldy camera when it was released for the PlayStation late in 1998, which seriously detracted from this otherwise ambitious title.

The story goes like this: After your airship crashes deep in the Forbidden Zone, it's up to you to retrieve its missing captain and cargo—a legendary green pearl with the power to cure a deadly epidemic ravaging your people. As was the case in the PlayStation original, players may choose one of four main characters: a military-trained weapons expert, a lethal female fighter, a hulking strong man or a mystical cleric. Each character has his/her own attributes, special moves and magical abilities, and is free to access certain areas of the game inaccessible to the others. They also possess more than 250 motion-captured moves, including hand-to-hand combat.

An action game at heart, O.D.T. also includes some interesting role-playing elements; as you progress throughout the game, you are free to develop your character's physical and magical abilities as you see fit. There are also plenty of puzzles and a vast, Jules Verne-inspired world to



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Psygnosis 1 65 March
Psygnosis-Paris Studios Action 1999

Web Address: www.psygnosis.com



Developed by the makers of Power Soccer, O.D.T. has fluid, motion-captured character animation.

explore; O.D.T. contains eight intricately designed levels spanning over 70 treacherous sectors.

Hopefully, Psygnosis is making a serious attempt to remedy the problems that originally plagued O.D.T. for this N64 port. Its recent N64 port of the PlayStation classic WipeOut, which boasted a number of improvements including an all-new four-player mode, certainly is cause for hope.

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Ubi Soft 1-2 65 February
Ubi Soft Racing 1999

Web Address: www.ubisoft.com

Monaco Grand Prix: Racing Simulation 2

It's been a really long time since Ubi's first F1 game—F1 Pole Position—came out. Consider it prehistoric in nature when compared to this ultra-detailed racing animal.

OK, here it is straight from Ubi themselves—"the hardest racing simulation ever released for a console system." That's a bold statement, but after playing the game on expert, we can believe it. Talk about accuracy! Racing the Monaco track is a humbling experience, especially if you consider yourself adept at racing in the least. Learning the tracks through

practice sessions is mandatory—it's a bit tougher when 22 other vehicles are crowding the road during a real race.

While it doesn't feature any real drivers or tracks (besides Monaco), 16 other international courses are included. Naturally these tracks look much like the real F1 tracks already in existence. There is a lot of detail including 3D cars and tracks sporting the highest polygon count ever achieved in an N64 racing game. They do look mighty good. We'll see how the upcoming Dreamcast version measures up.

Obviously Monaco Grand Prix is aimed at the hardcore F1 fan. Loads of adjustments, racing modes, weather effects, etc., etc., all add up to a racing sim that could rival many PC racers on the market. We'll see how the finished version stacks up against its closest rival—F1 World Grand Prix.

While F1 World Grand Prix allows powersliding, Monaco GP is more true to real Formula One physics.



The similarities to F1 World Grand Prix are obvious. It's the battle of the super sims.

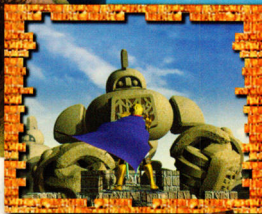


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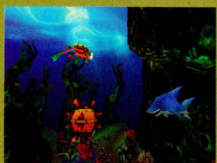


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OH YEAH... HE'S READY.

www.playstation.com

インターナショナル
Smash Brothers
 レビューズ

It's Mario
 Brother Against
 Mario Brother

Weird things happen to those who wait apparently, and with decent fighting games a rarity on the N64, Nintendo has surprised everyone by publishing a 3D fighter that pits the most familiar faces in the Nintendo universe against each other. Given the tentative title *Smash Brothers*, this game's blockbuster roster includes Mario, Donkey Kong, Link, Samus, Yoshi, Kirby, Fox, McCloud and Pikachu, and each character has his/her own 3D arena (such as Kong's jungle).

The fighters unleash the classic attacks you'd expect, such as Yoshi's tongue-lashing swallow attack and Link's broad swipes of his trusty Master Sword. Power-ups, including Fire Flowers and Bob-ombs, litter the arenas too, and we're sure to see some spectacularly weird finishing moves, as well.

The gameplay here is a bit askew from



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo HAL Laboratories	1-4 Fighting	N/A	1999 Japan
Web Address: www.nintendo.com			



Yep, you haven't lost your marbles. That really is Link busting out some flashy moves on Metroid's Samus.

most fighters. You win by knocking down opponents as many times as you can in each round. As soon as four players can battle each other simultaneously, or you can engage in a standard one-player story mode or two-player bouts. Nintendo has yet to announce whether it will bring *Smash Brothers* to the U.S., but we feel it's a safe bet we'll see the game here sometime next year. ●

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo Hudson Soft	1-4 Miscellaneous	N/A	December 1998
Web Address: www.nintendo.com			

インターナショナル
Mario Party
 レビューズ



It's always good to see when something pokes fun at itself, and with Hudson Soft's upcoming *Mario Party*, Nintendo seems to have sanctioned the ultimate no-no...making fun of characters from the Mario universe. Apparently six of the franchise's big stars (Mario, Luigi, Peach, Donkey Kong, Yoshi and Wario) have got into an argument over who is the biggest star and have decided to resolve the issue through use of a board game.

Clearly designed as a party game, the "overworld" is very much in the mold of a board game—players roll dice to figure out how many spaces to move, and upon landing on a square, they jump into one of 50 different minigames. Once in the minigames, everyone competes for traditional Mario-esque fare—coins and stars, and whoever has the largest number at the end of the game is the biggest star. Simple.

The minigames are extremely varied and offer numerous different gameplay styles ranging from simple racing games, to team-based tasks to more vindictive "three-on-one" efforts that involve individuals trying to complete a simple task while all the other players try to stop them.

As you can see from the screenshots, the style of the game is exactly what you'd both expect and want from a Mario game, and while the game can be played by someone on his/her own...this really isn't designed for this. Best enjoyed by large groups, *Mario Party* should prove to be popular with the more social adept of you who enjoy super-competitive and exceptionally vindictive games like *Bomberman* or *Diddy Kong Racing*.

More on the American release next month.



Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.



Rampage 2: Universal Tour

With new characters who can dish out special moves, over 125 levels to bash your way through and the classic arcade feel this series is known for, Rampage 2: Universal Tour is sure to please Rampage fanatics. This monster mash is coming to us from Avalanche and Midway in March of '99.



California Speed

Although Midway's California Speed shares many similarities with the Cruis'n series, it has some original twists. For one, it has a wackier sense of humor, which is evident in the hidden cars. Among the usual array of muscle cars, you can access such bizarre road vehicles as a golf cart. California Speed does not support the Expansion Pak, but it manages to keep a steady and smooth frame-rate. Look for this title to hit shelves this March.



WCW Nitro

We just got a sneak peek at THQ's upcoming WCW Nitro for the N64 right before we went to press. This, in case you haven't heard, will be THQ's last WCW game before Electronic Arts takes over the lucrative license. The N64 Nitro uses a faster version of the PS WCW Nitro game engine (so it will play nothing like WCW/nWo Revenge). The game will also feature 60 real wrestlers (no made-up ones this time), a four-player Battle Royal Mode (with up to 30 participants) and an up-to-date roster.



NINTENDO 64

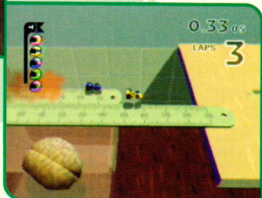
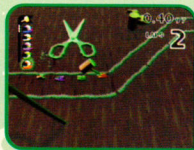
Carmageddon

The N64 version of Carmageddon is actually a conversion of the recently released (and extremely controversial) PC game, Carmageddon II: Carpocalypse Now. Although looking like a harmless racing game, Carmageddon has attracted a lot of attention around the world for some of its gameplay mechanics. Power-ups and bonus points are awarded for running over pedestrians...in fact, one part even has you moving down players on a football field. All in the name of fun.



Looney Tunes Space Race

Next in the current wave of Looney Tunes games from Infogrames, Space Race is a "zany" racing game that sees Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Tweety and Wile E. Coyote racing space-age scooters around tracks of Marvin the Martian's design. Expect some Diddy Kong Racing-inspired ideas.



Micro Machines

It's been a long time coming, but the N64 version of Micro Machines V3 is ready for release in April. Developed by Codemasters and published in the U.S. by Midway, the latest incarnation of the classic top-down racing game differs from predecessors in one dramatic way—it offers eight-player support. How? Two players on every joy pad...one on the D-pad, the other on the camera buttons. Watch for news soon on how effective this actually is.

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Rugrats Boardgame

This one- to four-player kid's game from THQ and Real Time Associates stars the ever-popular Rugrats. Rugrats Boardgame (working title) has three different games that revolve around a giant, randomly generated boardgame. Players can either play cooperatively (playing against the notorious Angelica) or competitively while running around the various stages collecting puzzle pieces, toys or other cutesy crap. Due date: this April.

Boss Rally

You'd expect a racer from Midway to be an all-out arcade-style game in the tradition of Cruis'n USA and San Francisco Rush. Boss Rally (formerly called GT World Tour) breaks from this mold to deliver a more realistic driver with plenty of cars to choose from. This one- to two-player racing game is being developed by Boss Studios (hence the name, Boss Rally) and is still really early in the development cycle.



Neon Genesis Evangelion

Bandai brings Gainax's anime hit (available on VHS in the U.S. from AD Vision) to the N64 in style. You take on the role of Shinji Mikami, a boy destined to pilot an Evangelion—a big, towering mech—against Angels, demons whose goal is to destroy the Earth. It follows the events of the show as you re-create epic battles against the Angels.

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.



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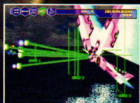
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Game Boy Color

Game
Directory
• The Legend of Zelda:
Link's Awakening DX

The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening DX

Link Re-
Awakens
On The
Game
Boy
Color

Five years ago, Nintendo released what is probably still to this day the best Game Boy game ever made, *The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening*. The little 4-Meg wonder's popularity nearly exceeded that of its Super NES predecessor, *A Link to the Past*, despite the fact that it was on the small screen and devoid of any color.

Now that *Zelda: Ocarina of Time* is out for the N64, the Game Boy classic is re-entering the market after a long slumber, with one major enhancement—it's finally in full color.

The GB Color version of *Link's Awakening* (*Link's Awakening DX*, which stands for "Deluxe") is out now, and we're pleased to report that the switch to color isn't the only improvement Nintendo made to the game. Besides some minor tweaks to the subscene (like the addition of a Heart Container grid), there are two new items and an entirely new dungeon that weren't in the original. The new items are a Blue Tunic and a Red Tunic, which, similar to the Blue and Red Rings in the first *Zelda*, cut down the amount of damage Link takes. As for the new dungeon, all we know is that it's hidden deep within the island of Koholint, and it has color-based puzzles. We haven't seen this dungeon yet, since the game just arrived about a day before our deadline for this issue, but you can check out some pics of it right here on this page, courtesy of Nintendo.

In addition to all of this, *Link's Awakening DX* also has a new photo album feature. Throughout the game, there are 12 special locations where you can collect pictures that can be taken to the new Camera Shop to be viewed. Even better, if you have a Game Boy Printer, you can print out your pictures! Sure, it's not exactly mind-blowing, but it's a nice enhancement to an already fantastic game.

Even though *Link's Awakening DX* is optimized for Game Boy Color, it'll still work on old Game Boys. But to be honest,

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Nintendo	1		
Nintendo	Action/RPG	95	Available Now

Web Address: www.nintendo.com



Link's Awakening DX features an all-new well-hidden dungeon (called the "Clothes Dungeon") that involves mostly color-oriented puzzles. Can you find it?

you'd be missing out. If you don't have a Game Boy Color, this is certainly the best reason yet to go out and get one. We'll be back with the Review Crew's thoughts on Link's latest adventure next month. ☺



3,750,000

The number of copies of *Zelda: Link's Awakening* that have been sold worldwide as of November 1998. Expect this number to increase significantly now that *Link's Awakening DX* has arrived.

As you can see, *Link's Awakening* looks great in color. Hey Nintendo, how about some GBC versions of *Zelda I* and *II* now?



New to the DX version of *Link's Awakening* is a Camera Shop where you can check out special pictures you can find and collect throughout the world. If you have a Game Boy Printer, you can even print out your pics! Pretty cool, eh?

CAN YOUR DROID CUT IT?



www.droidworks.com

The official Star Wars Web site
www.starwars.com



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> Can you design a droid with the mettle—and metal—to outsmart the Empire? Can your droid tread triumphantly through 29 torso-twisting missions to save the Rebel Alliance from deadly assassin droids? Open the two-ton door that's threatening to crush its beryllium-bronzed bones? Or use an Automaton High-Energy Power Welder to cut through 150-gauge steel?

Build wisely and your droid should be able to cut it.

So perhaps the real question is: Can you?



GAME BOY COLOR

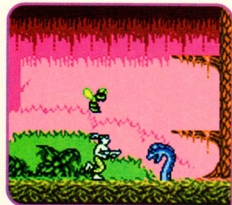
Mortal Kombat 4

Midway seems to be hitting the Game Boy Color fast and hard with a bunch of standard titles, and MK4 is one of the worst. But then, you get what you expect here. The animation for the eight fighters is choppy (especially their "FMV" fatality sequences), and the few moves you can do are hard to pull off. You do get exclusive GBC Kombat Kodes. Whoopie.



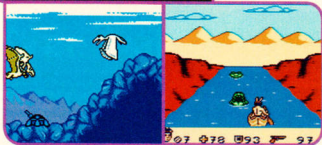
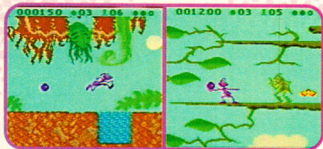
Turok 2

Uh, this is Turok 2? Sure, we weren't expecting a 3D blastathon, but we also weren't expecting a side-scrolling Double Dragon clone! Although bearing the same name as the N64 title, the story here is somewhat different, and even begins with Joshua Fireseed as himself (i.e., not Turok).



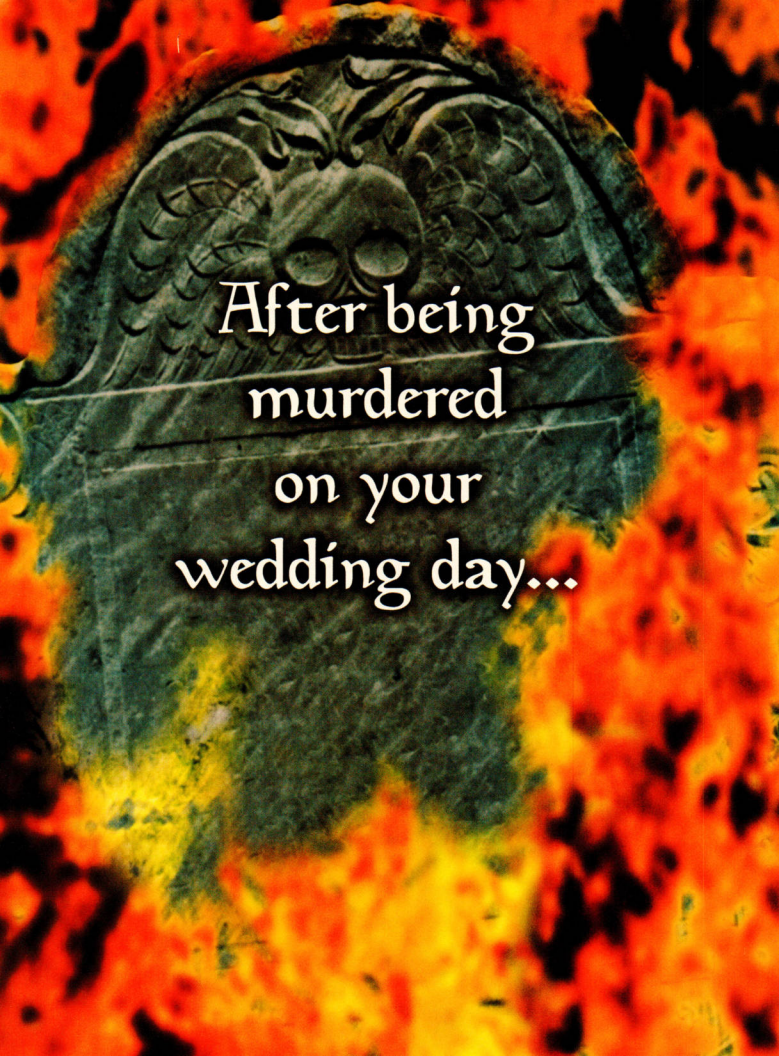
NFL Blitz

With 32 teams (two secret) and 270 players, Midway's miniBlitz seems like it's loaded. Gameplay is comprised of simple passing with the ability to jump and turbo. A small window runs a brief tackle cinematic after a hard hit. While the game has a simple charm, half the players are often off the screen, which makes defense quite tough.



A Bug's Life

Never one to miss out on a hot movie license, THQ brings us A Bug's Life for the Game Boy Color. This is a side-scrolling game where you control Flik as he travels through nine levels, looking for a way to solve the colony's food problems. Good, clean, wholesome fun for the family, unlike the other games on this page.



After being
murdered
on your
wedding day...

Not even the gates of hell can contain your fury..

It's a grim world where your razor sharp claws slaughter the weak.

Where your voodoo spells incinerate your enemies.

Where your mind masters devious puzzles.

"...fast-paced, bloodthirsty, 3-D action."

-PSM

"...a step up technologically from
similar titles in the past."

-EGM



Call 1.800.771.3772
for Game Rating Information

PlayStation

Game Directory

- Silent Hill
- WCW/nWo Thunder
- GeX 3: Deep Cover Gecko
- Civilization II
- Syphon Filter
- Guardian's Crusade
- NCAA March Madness '99
- Rampage 2: Universal Tour
- NCAA Final Four '99
- Freestyle Boardin' '99
- Contender
- R-Types
- Bomberman Fantasy Race
- Warzone 2100
- Eliminator
- Pro 18: World Tour Golf
- R-Type Delta
- MUSIC
- Libero Grande

Previews

Silent Hill

Death Takes A Vacation

The off-season's always dead in the lakeside resort town of Silent Hill but not *this* dead. It seems the entire town is deserted except for Harry Mason, a distraught motorist in search of his missing daughter, and Cybil Bennett, a beautiful police officer from a neighboring community dispatched to Silent Hill to discover why all communication from the sleepy resort town has ceased. Where has everyone gone? Is the small, shadowy figure that constantly eludes Harry his daughter, Cheryl? If so, why does she run from him? Bracing himself against the winter chill, Harry sets off into the unnaturally thick fog to investigate.

When E3 attendees flocked to Konami's booth last summer for a first-hand look at the highly anticipated Metal Gear Solid, many were surprised to discover a game of equal promise tucked away in a corner of Konami's sprawling, fortress-like display. That game was Silent Hill, which was instantaneously proclaimed a "Resident Evil killer" by some and was mentioned in nearly every major video game magazine's "Best of Show" list.

Six months later, EGM has received a 75 percent complete version of the game, and, while we feel it's a bit premature to proclaim Silent Hill the

new king of survival horror, it definitely looks like it's going to be something special.

Building upon the

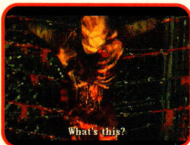
Silent Hill uses many of the clichés established in Resident Evil, such as shattering glass, to equal effect.

cinematic look and feel of the Resident Evil series, Konami has taken the genre a step further with Silent Hill by including real-time, 3D environments, which allow impressive camera movements while dramatically reducing disc access, one of Resident Evil's few but glaring shortcomings. The real-time environments also allow some extremely atmospheric (not to mention creepy) directional lighting effects, such as those seen in Tomb Raider II & III; most interior environments are lit solely by Harry's trusty flashlight, which creates plenty of shadows for all manner of creatures to spring from. While a bit overused, the effect is perfect for a horror game and really heightens the tension.

Aside from the 3D backgrounds, Silent Hill is a thinly disguised knock-off of Capcom's famed spine-tingler; you begin your quest armed with



Silent Hill's omnipresent fog makes it difficult to trust your eyes.



What's this?

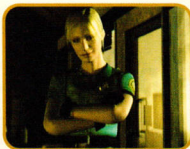




(bet you can't guess...) a gun and a knife. To save, you must find a guest ledger to record your progress. (Resident Evil used typewriters as an equally contrived save mechanism.) Silent Hill's controls are extremely similar, too; while the camera angles may change dramatically, pressing Up on the control pad always makes Harry walk forward, while Right and Left make him turn clockwise and counter-clockwise, respectively.

Silent Hill's story and nightmarish imagery have been compared to such movies as *Jacob's Ladder*, *Helraiser* and the more recent *Dark City*. Without divulging too much, there actually are two Silent Hills—one is the "real" Silent Hill Harry first entered after his car accident, while the other is a surreal shadow of the lakeside resort town, in which wood and peeling paint are replaced by corroded steel and dried blood. Populating this surreal dreamscape are small creatures resembling either skinless children or inside-out dwarfs (you decide which is more disturbing), flying demons, giant cockroaches and skinless dogs. As in Resident Evil, Silent Hill also is home to a handful of human survivors, including an elderly antique store proprietor and fortune teller, a hot-tempered physician, an attractive nurse and a mysterious young girl. Many of these characters provide you with useful information, while others are decidedly less helpful.

Like Resident Evil, Silent Hill requires the player to solve a number of puzzles in addition to disposing of



Silent Hill's prerendered cinemas are detailed enough to capture even the most subtle character expressions.



Statue of an old man's hand.

Silent Hill's puzzles are similar in complexity to those found in Resident Evil.

enemies. As Harry wanders the treacherous streets of Silent Hill, he occasionally comes across pages from his daughter's sketch book. Written in a child's scrawl on these pages are such clues as "to school." Armed with such a clue, all you have to do is check your town map to find the location of the school and head in that direction. (Of course, there are a number of canyon-sized potholes blocking your path, but you wouldn't want them to make it too easy, would you?) Other puzzles involve playing a piano to retrieve a special item and unlocking the clock tower that serves as a doorway between the two parallel universes.

Advancing Silent Hill's movie-calibre story are some truly gorgeous prerendered cutscenes, which give you a whole new level of insight into the lives of the game's characters. While not quite on par with Metal Gear Solid's, Silent Hill's voice acting remains above average, preventing the game from descending into unintentional self-parody.

Given the continuing popularity of the survival horror genre and the tremendous success of Konami's most recent effort, Metal Gear Solid, Silent Hill could become a hit of "monstrous" proportions. **B**

Gamer's Edge

Hear the Evil...

Although useless for communication purposes, this radio emits white noise as enemies approach. The sound actually changes depending on the direction and number of creatures, so listen carefully.



No.

There is *Pookyi* nearby. TAKE IT!



Although slow-moving, these creatures can be quite dangerous in groups.



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

THQ
Inland Productions 1-2
Action 100 January
1999

Web Address: www.thq.com

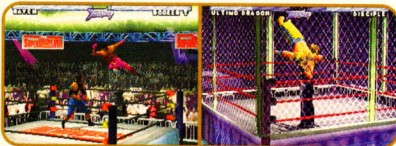
WCW/nWo Thunder

WCW Vs.
Wolfpack Vs.
nWo White
Vs. The Four
Horsemen vs...

WCW wrestling has become popular enough to spawn a second weeknight television show, *Thunder*. Now that show has become popular enough to spawn its own video game. WCW/nWo Thunder is THQ's follow-up to its wildly successful WCW Nitro for the PlayStation and offers a host of updates.

As far as the roster goes, *Thunder* has more than 60 wrestlers, all real this time. They are updated with regard to their current allegiances. But since WCW/nWo wrestlers aren't the type to settle down, the game will allow you to change a character's alliance anytime you want. Did Giant join nWo Red on last week's *Monday Night Nitro*, only a week after you bought the game? No problem. Just change his team symbol on the select screen and save. Now you can play as the new Giant, complete with costume change.

Inland Productions did more than just update the roster. They took feedback from Nitro fans and improved other areas as well. *Thunder* now has weapons (excuse us, offensive-oriented ringside furniture) and Steel Cage matches. Each character is also more defined, reflecting the "real-life" strengths and weaknesses of the actual wrestlers. You can see this on the select screen—the wrestlers now have individualized Might icons that are colored differently for separate areas of the body. Bright green arms, for example, indicate a strong attacker, while bright green legs mean you have one of those quick and nimble types. So in the



game, you'll see Buff Bagwell's Might icon has green arms and Ultimo Dragon has green legs. Goldberg, to no one's surprise, is green from head to toe.

This is THQ's last PlayStation WCW game (with WCW Nitro being its last N64 WCW title) before the company switches to the WWF license. Electronic Arts will be taking over the WCW license in 1999.

32 million

The number of viewers who watch WCW Monday Nitro and Thunder on television every week.

13

The number of hours WCW is on TV each week

85

The number of countries that get WCW broadcasted to them in...

10

different languages

300

The number of WCW live events that take place each year in the U.S.

13 million

The number of hits WCW's Web site (www.wrestling.com) receives each month

4

The number of monster trucks WCW sponsors in USHRA (United States Hot Rod Association)

8

Our estimate of nWo White's average IQ



Hogan wearing nWo Red colors? Goldberg now with Raven's Flock? Yup, you can change the alliances and corresponding costumes of any of the 60 wrestlers.



You can be a master cheater, too...just hit the Select button to call in a member of your faction for a little extra help.

KILL YOUR FRIENDS™ GUILTY free

"If you consider yourself a fighting connoisseur, Guilty Gear comes highly recommended. No true fan of the genre should be without a copy."

- PSM Online

Key Features

Insane combo systems require split-second reactions to stay alive.

Dual Shock™ Analog Controller compatible.

10 Playable Characters plus hidden characters.

Intense Heavy Metal soundtrack.



GUILTY GEAR™



www.atlusc.com

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Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Edos 1 75 February
Crystal Dynamics Action 1999

Web Address: www.crystald.com

Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko

Gex Returns With A Sidekick...And Some Banjo-Kazooie-Inspired Gameplay

Much like the "difficult third album" syndrome that we see with bands, there is always the worry that the third game in a series is just going to be more of the same with no new ideas. As the PlayStation reaches a point of "maturity" we're seeing a number of established series reaching this point, notably Crash Bandicoot and Tomb Raider, which have had their work cut out to stay credible.

Gex: Enter the Gecko certainly benefitted from some spectacular timing. When it was released last year it benefitted significantly from the fact that there really weren't that many games in the genre kicking around at the time. But now, with Crash: WARPED and Spyro out there...can Gex still hold his head up?

The team at Crystal is adamant that Deep Cover Gecko is a totally new game, and not just Gex 2.5. They've stripped the concept back to its barest essentials and have gone through and implemented lots of new ideas "borrowed" from similar games. Banjo-Kazooie has obviously been plundered for creative ideas as we now see a more intricate and complex overworld which acts as the familiar 'hub' to all of the levels, as well as a more structured system of collectables. Gex now has a number of objects to find within the environments, with the 'bugs' being back from the first (2D) game alongside the 'Paw Coins' that allow you to build up your hit points. Supplemental to these are bonus tokens, which can be used to open up any of the 15 different sub games that appear throughout the levels. Ride on a variety of vehicles and creatures, play pool by jumping on to the table and pushing the balls around, shoot at mobsters with a machine gun or even cruise around in a tank...there's plenty to keep things interesting.

If we had to sum Gex 3 up in one word, it would have to be "variety." New addition to the Gex team, Lead Designer Chris Tremmel, has clearly made a considerable impact, bringing with him experience from stints with both Interplay and Virgin working on innovative games such as The Lost Vikings and the ill-fated Freakboy project. There seem to be considerably more outfits for Gex to don than in Enter the Gecko...with themes ranging from

Fairy Tales, where he dresses up like Little Red Riding Hood, to Anime Gex (big robots with



The Gex engine (also used in Akuji and Soul Reaver) has been tweaked yet again to provide even more detail.

guns), War (soldier outfit), the Mob, Mexican, Dracula (which speak for themselves), Sherlock Holmes (where the level is arranged like a game of Clue) and even Hercules where Gex gets all pumped and buff. Different outfits alter the gameplay mechanics subtly and make the game much more refined when it comes to working through the puzzle elements.

On top of all the gameplay stuff...there's obviously the "buxom chic" element thrown in there too. Hey, you can't go wrong with a Baywatch babe can you? ☹

My 2 Cents

The new gameplay mechanics definitely make Gex 3 feel a lot more like a "fully rounded" game than Gex 2. The new hub and collectible system gives a definite B-K air to the proceedings. Like Crash, the third incarnation seems to be the most refined.

-John Davison

Marliece Andrada

Um...What? How? Why? Buh?

Playing the part of Agent Xtra in Baywatch's very own Marliece Andrada (she plays Skylar Berqman on that particular piece of quality programming). Featured in 16 different FMV sequences that come through to Gex's video-watch-phone thingy, she plays the Ms. Moneypeny to Gex's Bond.



The new vehicle system adds some extra fun...cruising in the tank lets you blow up pretty much anything.

Yo quiero Taco Bell? Gex dons some quality gear in the Mexican environment.

The anime zone is full of some stereotypically Japanese influences, like robot suits and crazy weaponry.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Activision Mitsui & Co. Ltd.	1 Strategy	75	January 1999

Web Address: www.activision.com

Civilization II

The PC's Finest Hits The PlayStation

My 2 Cents

Civilization II is easily my favorite PC game (with Dark Reign a close second). I'm ecstatic to see it for a home console. The PlayStation version is pretty much perfect, with very few changes (mostly to the presentation and interface). If you've played the PC game, you'll be able to get into this one right away. If not, be warned: This is a deep game. I doubt many casual gamers will have the patience for this one.

—Dan "Shoe" Hsu

It's slow-paced. It's devoid of any action. It's plain as far as graphics go. What is it? Only the finest turn-based strategy game ever to hit the PC (in this writer's humble opinion). Civilization II has won countless awards from the PC press and is generally considered one of the best computer games period, strategy or otherwise. Now, PlayStation owners will be treated to a console version that thankfully, isn't dummed down in the least bit.

Civ II is an empire-building game of epic proportions. You start in the year 4000 B.C. with a single group of settlers who are responsible for building your first city. Once this capital city is in place, you can choose what resources its inhabitants will work on, based on the surrounding environments (mountains are good for mining, oceans are good for fishing, grasslands are good for growing food, etc.). While keeping your populace happy and fed, you'll also have to worry about expanding your empire beyond that initial city, while keeping a strong military presence and making sure you're keeping up with the rest of the world in terms of scientific know-how.

This scientific know-how will prevent your empire from falling by the wayside in the game's ultimate goal: to either conquer all of civilized Earth or to be the first nation to colonize another planet. In the beginning, you will start with some basic knowledge to keep your primitive society alive, such as irrigation (to help grow food) or pottery (to help build granaries to store food). In the end, you will have to take your civilization through more than 6,000 years of scientific advances, ranging from discovery of the wheel to bronze and iron working to reading and writing to gunpowder to steam power to gasoline combustion to solar and nuclear power. These discoveries will allow you to build special

structures, including certain "Wonders of the World" like the Great Wall (of China) or something less grand, like a simple temple for people to worship at or a sewer system to help keep your cities clean or a SAM missile battery to keep the skies friendly. You will also learn to create military units ranging from the chain-mailed pikemen to musketeers to modern-day stealth bombers. Overall, you will be working with a knowledge tree of close to 90 branches of science,



Lost? Need a little empire-building guidance? You can get advice from one of your five FMV-ed advisors.



Civ II improves upon the original Civilization (available on the PC and SNES) by adding new graphics, more discoveries and more units. The PS Civ II is essentially the same as the PC Civ II, which is a good thing.

each allowing you access to a multitude of different structures and units. Like we said: epic.

You can play Civilization II any number of ways. You can expand quietly, making peace with the other CPU-controlled civilizations, or you can overrun them with brute force. Just make sure you don't fall too far behind in the scientific race. After all, archers don't fare too well nowadays against AEGIS Cruisers.

Civilization II will not sell as well in the action-oriented console market as it did on the PC side, but that doesn't mean it's not a game worth checking out. If you're the patient, thinking type and you're into strategy games, you owe it to yourself to check out this masterpiece.



You can check on the status of any of your cities, from population happiness to productiveness to military strength.

TIME TO REMODEL.



PC
CD



In the year 2085 the Collapse came hard and fast. Only a select few had the strength and intelligence to rebuild the world from the embers of a nuclear holocaust. You were one of them.

REVOLUTIONARY UNIT DESIGN

Warzone 2100 showcases a depth of play never seen before in a strategy game. 400 different types of technologies allow you to design and build more than 2000 battle units. That's right. Unit designs aren't predetermined for you. Use your own wits to create an unbeatable battle arsenal.

SUPERIOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The AI engine is so sophisticated that it allows you to recycle the experience of your field units into bigger, better and even more fierce war machines. Over time, combat units become more accurate, command units command larger groups of troops and repair units repair faster and more efficiently.

FULL 3D BATTLEFIELDS

Warzone 2100 slams the door on other top-down 2D strategy games. It showcases a lightning fast, fully functional 3D game engine with a rotatable and zoomable camera for fast and furious gaming action. Not just eye candy, you'll experience true line-of-sight and fog-of-war effects. Strategically placed radar units warn you of hidden enemy units and allow you to lob mortar shells over mountain obstructions.

IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR FATE INTO YOUR OWN HANDS. THEN USE THEM TO BUILD A NEW WORLD.

WARZONE 2100

STRATEGY BY DESIGN



DOWNLOAD THE PC DEMO AT:
www.eidosinteractive.com



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

989 Studios Eidetic 1 Action 85 February 1999

Web Address: www.989studios.com

Syphon Filter

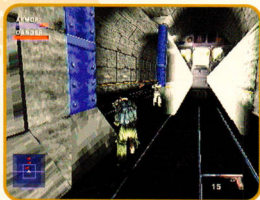
See...It's A
Syphon And
A Filter

With one of the stranger names in gaming as of late (rivaled only by Eggs of Steel and Irritating Stick), Syphon Filter comes to us from Eidetic and 989 Studios. In this 3D action/adventure reminiscent of Metal Gear Solid, Mission:

Impossible and GoldenEye in some aspects, you control Special Operations agent Gabriel Logan as he tries to unravel the mystery behind a terrorist organization and a deadly biological weapon they possess which is capable of destroying mankind altogether. Obviously, this is a bad thing.

So, as Gabe, your job is to make your way through a variety of levels, each with its own real-life look (e.g., subways, city streets, parks, etc.), and a number of enemies, obstacles and objectives to save everybody in the world. So far, the story is quite interesting and is weaved into the levels rather well, thanks to CG cinematics, above-average voice work and large, well thought-out stages. Some levels have you chasing an enemy down subway tunnels, with trains going both ways right next to you. One wrong step, or a misjudged roll and you're dead. Another level has you following a major player in the game's plot through a museum. But if you get too close, or pull out your weapon, his guards will be alerted and your mission will be a failure. Weapon-wise, Syphon Filter isn't lacking, but it's obvious the game's emphasis is on strategy and not carnage. Nonetheless, you'll find a variety of weapons, ranging from your standard 9mm with silencer to a deadly Assault Rifle, among many others.

You may remember the developer of this one and their work on another game from the past. If not, let us refresh your memory. Eidetic is best known for the 3D update to Bubsy, with Bubsy 3D for the PlayStation. But don't worry—even this beta version of Syphon Filter is leaps and bounds better than the *finished* Bubsy 3D, and might even end up being a keeper when it's completed (the Review Crew will let you know soon). Please note: This preview is more of an



Yes, that is a subway train coming right at Syphon Filter's main dude Gabriel Logan—but don't worry, he's a special agent.

update, showing you new pictures and such. For another preview of Syphon Filter (with more detailed info concerning the game, its story line and how it plays), check in the December issue of *EGM* (#113).



Nicely animated cutscenes break up the levels. Don't be fooled—they're done with CG graphics, and not the game's engine.

Syphon Filter

What in the hell does it mean?

Confused about what this game's name means? Well, we are too. So we checked on the Web at www.dictionary.com and here's what we came up with: Apparently, this game has something to do with a tube with liquid in it that passes from one vessel to another, and in the process, runs through a filter of some sort—possibly for purification purposes. Whatever. At least the game is good so far.

syphon-

(a) n : a tube running from the liquid in a vessel to a lower level outside the vessel so that atmospheric pressure forces the liquid through the tube [syn: siphon]

(b) n : The sucking proboscis of certain parasitic insects and crustaceans.

v : Convey, draw off, or empty by or as if by a siphon [syn: siphon, siphon off]

filter-

(a) n : removes something from whatever passes through it

(b) n : alters the frequency spectrum of signals passing through it

v : remove by passing through a filter; "filter out the impurities" [syn: filtrate, strain, separate out, filter out]

Source: WordNet (r) 1.6 [wn] & Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary (1913) [web1913]

**THE FUTURE
HAS ONE TINY
HOPE FOR
SURVIVAL**

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Activision
Tamssoft 1 RPG 70 March 1999

Web Address: www.activision.com

Guardian's Crusade

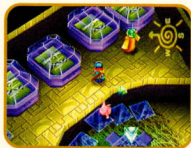
Your Party's In Your Pocket



It's more than just the cartoony polygonal graphics that make Activision's *Guardian's Crusade* an attention-grabbing RPG. For starters, the game—called *Knight & Baby* in Japan—is the first RPG developed by Tamssoft, who's best known for creating the Toshinden fighters. And then there's its blatant borrowing of several flavor-of-the-moment game concepts, including all the things that *Pokémon* and *Monster Rancher* did first (see the sidebar for more on the game's hybrid flair).

Right near the quest's outset, your armor-clad hero stumbles on a baby critter—named, appropriately enough, *Baby*—who clutches to your side like a doe-eyed puppy. Your goal for the rest of this 35- to 40-hour adventure is to return *Baby* to its momma, along the way discovering a few secrets about the little guy. Lucky for you, *Baby's* got teeth. He'll fight alongside you in battle and gain strength and skills, such as the ability to fly, throughout the game. And while you don't run across any other characters who join your party, you will uncover a vast army of tiny helpers, called *Living Toys*, who you summon from your pocket to join the fray.

Guardian's Crusade is a traditional RPG, with turn-based battles, a massive overworld and lots of miniquests. It also features about 15 minutes of rendered, appropriately cartoony cutscenes. But don't let the cutesy visuals lead you to think the game's pure kid's stuff. With its huge variety of *Living Toy* helpers, the game packs a surprising amount of strategy.



Combat isn't random in the massive overworld. Enemy parties are represented by two types of roaming ghost icons. Pink ones—which chase you—represent stronger enemies, while white ones are weaker and will flee.



Guardian's Crusade is a traditional RPG. You visit towns, talk to yokels, go on mini-quests, etc., etc.



Baby Killer

Granting the game its *Tamagotchi* twist is *Baby*, your pink, sickeningly cute, vaguely hippo-like sidekick and ward. Like any digital pet, *Baby* requires nurturing throughout the adventure. You can feed him to make him happy and healthy, as well as send him off to fetch things on the overworld map. If you like what he finds—which can be anything from money to armor—you can praise him. If *Baby* fetches a worthless item or weapon, you should scold him instead, or else he'll always bring you crap items. Scold him too often, however, and the little guy just might bite you. *Baby* is also your compadre in battle. As he gains experience, he'll learn to morph into 14 different characters, each with unique attacks.



WHO THE !*#% YOU CALLIN' TINY?



Tiny Tank's effects are some of the most impressive seen on a PlayStation... the game itself is a technical wonder.

-Next Generation



My name may be Tiny, but I'm also the only hope to save humanity from a bunch of brainless robots. I'm equipped with the most advanced weapons-big guns and rocket launchers-so I'm not going to take

any B.S. from anyone or anything. So call me what you want, because in the end, all that matters is the size of your guns. Just ask the sorry-ass robot with a Texas-sized hole in his gut. www.tinytank.com www.rmginteractive.com

THE ADORABLE KILLING MACHINE



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Electronic Arts
EA Sports Canada 1-8 Sports 85 January 1999

Web Address: www.easports.com

NCAA March Madness 99

Take Your Team To The Final Four

Think you're good enough to make it to the big dance? Find out with EA Sports' March Madness 99.

While last year's March Madness earned high marks for realism and gameplay, it was a bit lacking in one key area—attitude. Hoping to remedy this, EA Sports has added a hip-hop soundtrack featuring DJ Q-Bert of Invisibl Skratch Picklz and player-controlled dunks that let you take it to the hole in style. A brand-new Momentum Meter lets you ignite the crowd like never before, giving your team that fabled "sixth player," found only in college basketball. Interactive crowd chants and more than 60 licensed fight songs further add to March Madness 99's collegiate atmosphere.

March Madness 99 doesn't skimp on statistical depth, either; the game tracks all 107 of its Division-I teams on the road to the Final Four, allowing you to follow your favorite team (or its most bitter rival) on the CBS Sportsline Poll or Electronic Arts' very own EA Sports Poll. The game even awards the Naismith and Wooden Awards to two deserving athletes.

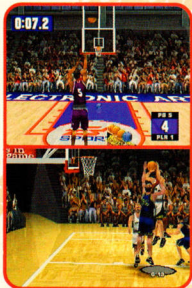
March Madness 99 looks better than ever thanks to new player animations, such as leaners, fade-away jumpers and cross-over dribbles, and an impressive



Rock the rim with NCAA March Madness 99's user-controlled dunks.

TV-style presentation that captures the action from every conceivable angle.

March Madness 99 also gives the ladies their "props" by including 16 of the finest Division-I women's teams. You also get 20 historical men's teams, an ultra-deep Dynasty Mode and a three-point Shootout, making March Madness 99 one of the premier PlayStation hoops titles available. 🏀



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Midway
Avalanche 1-3 Action 70 March 1999

Web Address: www.midway.com

Rampage 2: Universal Tour



Adding to the tank of the sequel-fueled machine known as the gaming industry, Rampage 2: Universal Tour brings us more rampaging monster mayhem from Avalanche and Midway. Unlike some sequels however, Universal Tour actually gives you a broader building-bashing experience—instead of the same old, same old (ahem).

There will be 125 levels in the finished version of Rampage 2: Universal Tour, and five new bonus levels. These levels take you to a variety of locations like Rampage: World Tour, except this time there are different times of day, and different types of weather to contend with. Consequently, bad weather makes taking down buildings or making your way around a level



more difficult—say, if it's raining or snowing.

With several new characters, going through all 125 levels will be a bit more interesting, and with the three-player mode, replay should be high. Each of the characters (including the original three: Lizzie, Ralph and George) have their own unique special moves that are quite powerful. By eating people and other food items, your power meter for this special move increases. Once it is at a respectable level, you can unleash it and do quite a bit of damage to a building, your enemies, etc. In addition to the characters available at start, look for hidden ones.



Publisher/Developer Players/Games % Done Release

989 Sports
Killer Game 1-8
Sports 80 January
1999

Web Address: www.989sports.com

NCAA Final Four '99

College
Hoops Gets
Funky

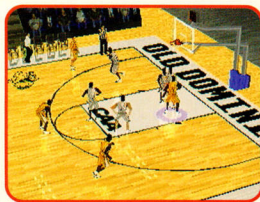
As 989 Sports' first foray into college basketball, Final Four '99 will emphasize realistic player models, "nuance animation," TV-style presentation and 305 NCAA 1-A teams. With Killer Game behind it (creators of Face Off '99), locking in these features and many more shouldn't be a problem.

TV-style presentation has been quite a trend in hoops games this year. Don't expect Final Four to stop the fad. Innovative things such as black-and-white replays, multiple camera angles, authentic announcing and commentary by Quinn Buckner, all contribute to the broadcast feel. In addition, nuance animation such as boozing crowds (they wave too), nervous coaches and animated referees contribute as well. As for player mo-cap, University of Kansas' Paul Pierce provides all the moves including subtle stuff—from free-throw line stretching to Rodman-like horizontal dives.

While most collegiate basketball sims have traditionally been tamer than their pro counterpart, Final Four is a bit wilder. Aggressive jam animation along with cool releases—the fade-away jumper and the forward lunge look and feel authentic.

At this point in the game's development it's evident the gameplay won't be a problem. Cruising around the court guarding, shooting, stealing, etc., is a breeze. Another innovative feature can be found when defending players. Hold down the triangle button and you'll automatically guard and follow the AI player of your choice. It takes some of the guessing out of defense but it's still nice. Another cool feature is the shot meter. This small, red to green meter appears as you wind up for a shot. Hold it down for just the right amount of time and your shots are more likely to go in.

With all the bells and whistles in place: a 64-team tournament, tons of stats and a solid 3D game engine, Final Four will most likely be a successful game. It looks like the battle between EA Sports and 989 Sports rages. ☹



The AI is pretty darn good so far. Opponent teams will often set up complicated plays and execute them well.

Using the sideline, low-cam reveals the competent motion-capture work.

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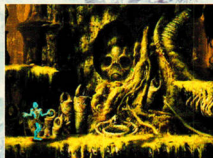
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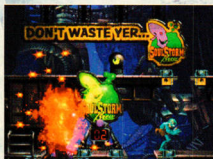
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Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Capcom
TV Tokyo/Pony Canyon 1-2 Sports 95 February 1999

Web Address: www.capcom.com

Freestyle Boardin' '99

Capcom
Shreds The
Slopes

With the success of Sony's Cool Boarders series, the appearance of a few imitators was inevitable. Few, however, were prepared for the avalanche of snowboarding titles that have appeared for all major systems in recent months.

Riding the crest of this avalanche is Freestyle Boardin' '99, Capcom's first foray into this hot genre.

Following the trail blazed by Cool Boarders 2, Freestyle Boardin' '99 combines a number of real-world snowboarding events into a single extreme tournament. In addition to the traditional slalom and downhill events, would-be X-Games competitors can hone their skills in trick, halfpipe and big air competitions.

Rather than improving your performance by purchasing better equipment, Freestyle Boardin' departs from most of its predecessors by allowing you to edit your rider's skills as you progress through a tournament. Up to 10 credits, which can be used to bolster your performance in five different categories: max speed, cornering, technique, power and recovery, are awarded after each event based on player performance.

Aside from the game's innovative skills editor, Freestyle Boardin' '99 looks and plays suspiciously like Cool Boarders; in

Look familiar? Freestyle Boardin' '99 bears more than a few similarities to the popular Cool Boarders series.



Individual stunts are assigned to specific buttons, allowing them to be performed with ease.

addition to the graffiti-inspired logos and alternative soundtrack, the game also has an annoying, disembodied voice that critiques your performance. ("Baby, go home to mama!") While you're free to perform tricks anywhere on the course, Freestyle Boardin' rewards you with trick points only at well-marked ramps, as was the case in Cool Boarders. You're also restricted to the same Death Star trench-like courses, which don't even branch to allow exploration. (Can I hear a "Bogus," mister cool-guy announcer?)



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

SEGA
Victor Interactive Soft. 1-2 Sports 80 January 1999

Web Address: www.playstation.com

Contender

In this corner, weighing in at 180 lbs., is Contender from Sony and Victor Interactive Software—an arcade-style boxing experience reminiscent of Mike Tyson's PunchOut on the NES with make-believe fighters and fast action. Sure, Knockout Kings from EA may give you a technically correct boxing experience, but when it comes down to it punching your opponent in the gut or in the mug is what this sport is all about. And that's what Contender gives you—a "punch your opponent in the gut and/or mug" arcade-style boxing experience.

Graphically, this preview version of Contender looks like a poor-man's version of Street Fighter EX. The game plays like a scaled-down fighting game, since all you do is punch and block. But then you'll remember you're not playing a fighting game—you're playing a boxing game. As mentioned, the 40 opponents in Contender aren't based on any real fighters (although one boxer looks suspiciously similar to Mike Tyson, and another to Dennis Rodman). With that said, each character's personality comes through via his/her looks, and consequently brings out some interesting stereotypes similar to those in PunchOut.

At the game's start, you have a finite number of character "types" to choose from (around 20 eventually), each being from a different weight class, and having various power, speed and stamina attributes, among others. As you work your way through the ranks, these attributes increase—thus readying you for the top contender in each circuit. You can save your character after each fight, and then use this character to whoop up on your friends in the two-player mode.



Among Contender's six camera views is a first-person perspective. It looks cool, but it's annoying to play in.

You are "awarded" Power Punches after being knocked down. These punches do three times the normal damage.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Ascii Entertainment Irem/Racdyn	1-2 Shooting	95	February 1999

Web Address: www.ascient.com

R-Types

Blast Off And
Destroy The Evil
Bydo Empire

Those of you who've been gaming since before the 16-Bit days will surely remember the classic arcade shooter, R-Type. It came home for the Sega Master System, the TurboGrafx-16 and the Game Boy, and spawned sequels on the Super NES (Super R-Type and the awesome R-Type III) and in the arcade (R-Type Leo). Now, after an extended absence, the classic series is back in the form of R-Types, for the PlayStation.

Before you get too excited, be aware—R-Types is not a new game. Instead, it's a compilation containing arcade-perfect ports of the original R-Type and its little-seen sequel, R-Type II. Still, this is in no way a bad thing. We're talking about two of the greatest shooters of all time here. It's also got a special library full of interesting information about the back story of the R-Type series and its many ships and enemies.

R-Type isn't about glitz and glamour or "twitch-style" play—it's all about learning the patterns of the enemies on each stage and developing strategies to overcome them. The challenge level is



Make no mistake—R-Type is easily one of the best shooters of all time. R-Type II is no slouch, either.

extremely high, and the gameplay is as tight as they come. Oh yeah—the bosses kick ass, too. If you're a shooter fan who admires a challenge, R-Type is your paradise (and R-Type II is even more difficult than the original, though it's only got six stages, compared to R-Type's eight).

R-Types is due for release this February, courtesy of Ascii. Shooter fans, you owe it to yourselves to check this out. It's a true piece of gaming history, and it'll only cost you around \$40. 🎮



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Atlus Hudson	1-2 Racing	90	February 1999

Web Address: www.atluis.com

Bomberman Fantasy Race



Following on the heels of Mario, Mega Man and Sonic the Hedgehog, Hudson's Bomberman is the latest mascot character to receive his own racing game.

In Bomberman Fantasy Race, players race atop 12 wacky animals, thwarting opponents with bombs and other unique power-ups in the attempt to grab the checkered flag. Winnings can be used to purchase faster animals and additional power-ups as well as to enter more advanced leagues. You can even clean out a friend's piggy bank with the game's unique wagering system.

Each of Bomberman Fantasy Race's seven whimsical courses is filled with hidden shortcuts, pits, minefields and other hazards. Advanced riders can use the game's unique "Triangle Jump" technique to vault ahead of the competition. Come in first, and you'll be

Get the jump on the competition with Bomberman Fantasy Race's Triangle Jump technique.

transported to a coin-grabbing bonus race, the perfect opportunity to stuff your piggy bank to the max.

Bomberman Fantasy Race also includes a Two-player Split-screen Mode and is Dual Shock compatible, so you can feel da bombs.



What would Bomberman be without bombs? Collide with one, and you'll find yourself on your keister.

Warzone 2100

Strategy By Design

The year is 2100. The earth is beginning to thaw from a 20-year-long nuclear winter. On a good day, the rag-tag band of survivors who recently emerged from their subterranean sanctuary can see the sun. In *Warzone 2100*, the new real-time strategy game from Eidos

Interactive, you must help this unlikely band of survivors prosper and reclaim technologies lost during the decades spent underground, technologies essential to defeating the bands of cut-throat mercenaries who roam North America as well as punishing whoever (or whatever) was responsible for the nuclear holocaust that pushed mankind to the brink of destruction.

The most immediately noticeable difference between *Warzone 2100* and the horde of Command and Conquer clones currently on the market is the game's rotatable 3D landscapes, which add a brand-new level of realism and strategy to the tried-and-true RTS (real-time strategy) genre. Dig a little deeper, however, and you'll find even more innovation: in *Warzone 2100*, you don't simply choose from premade weapons of mass destruction—you create them. According to Eidos, more than 2,000 unique vehicles can be assembled from the game's basic building blocks, far more than the dozen or so found in your typical RTS.

Mercenaries frequently use tanker trucks to block key roads.



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Eidos 1 60 March
Pumpkin Studios Strategy 1999

Web Address: www.eidosinteractive.com



Once built, units can be given more than two dozen different commands, such as defend, patrol or pursue. Your forces can also be instructed to retreat after sustaining light, medium or heavy damage or, when the you-know-what really hits the fan, simply to "do or die."

Although jaded RTS fans may think they've seen and played it all, *Warzone 2100*'s numerous innovations and sharp 3D graphics may change a few minds.



Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Psygnosis 1-2 75 January
Magenta Action/Racer 1999

Web Address: www.psygnosis.com

Eliminator



From the company responsible for such PlayStation classics as *WipeOut*, *Colony Wars* and *G-Police* comes *Eliminator*, a genre-bending action/racer that harkens back to arcade hits of the past.

Best described as *WipeOut* meets *Doom*, *Eliminator* puts gamers behind the controls of a sleek anti-gravity racer outfitted with the usual assortment of lasers, cannons and rocket launchers plus one interesting addition—a ticking time bomb! To survive, players must continually add time to the clock, accomplished by destroying enemies and by collecting pick-ups. Destroy all the enemies in one arena, and you'll be granted access to a new arena, filled with bigger, badder enemies and a plethora of new pick-ups. Arenas are linked by hazard-filled track sections, which must be successfully navigated as quickly as possible.

Each of the game's eight levels constitutes a different interplanetary location, from the bubbling Lava World to

the underwater environment of the Tropical Atoll. Powerful bosses and eight bonus stages add even more variety.

Most of *Eliminator*'s enemies are heavily armed bipedal mechs, which, if video games have taught us anything, will be as common as Volkswagens in the not-too-distant future. Some enemies are so big, they literally must be cut down to size by successively destroying their legs, torso and finally their heads. Fortunately, your arsenal of 12 devastating weapons evens the odds a bit. Collecting credits also allows you to upgrade your current vessel or to buy an entirely new one.

Fans of rapid-fire, arcade-style action definitely should check out *Eliminator* when it hits store shelves later this month, but hurry—time's a wastin'.

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Psygnosis Intelligent Games	1-8 Sports	65	February 1999

Web Address: www.psygnosis.com

Pro 18: World Tour Golf

Hit The Links
With The
World's
Greatest

PlayStation's crowded golf simulation field is about to get even cozier with the addition of Psygnosis' Pro 18: World Tour Golf. Developed by London-based Intelligent Games, maker of PGA European Tour as well as numerous golf expansion discs for EA Sports, Pro 18 reflects the level of detail that can only be achieved after years of experience in a given genre.

Leaving the traditional "three-click" interface (or "two-click," in the case of Sony's ultra-accessible Hot Shots Golf) behind, Pro 18: World Tour Golf employs an advanced "Professional Swing" interface that adds a release control for greater accuracy and realism. All-new aiming and putting engines further differentiate Pro 18 from the rest of the pack.

If you're looking for top names, Pro 18: World Tour Golf has those, too; the picture-perfect swings of Tom Lehman, Colin Montgomerie, Ian Woosman, Dottie Pepper, Vijay Singh, Jasper Parnaviak, Laura Davies and Masters champion Mark O'Meara were all filmed at top television production facilities and incorporated into the game, as was the voice of announcer Peter Arliss, adding to Pro 18's television-style look and sound. Additionally, three top courses from around the globe—Northern Ireland's Royal County Down, South Africa's The Lost City Golf Course



The green bar below the familiar strength/accuracy meter is the all-new release control.

and Idaho's Coeur d'Alene Resort Golf Course (funny how the course from Idaho has the most exotic-sounding name, isn't it?)—were modeled with amazing accuracy thanks to new surveying techniques. A plethora of play modes—Strokeplay, Four Ball, Shoot Out, Skins and Tournament—should have golf fans duffing into the wee hours.

PlayStation newcomers who enjoyed the unadorned fun of Hot Shots Golf and are looking to experience the next level of realism definitely should check out Pro 18: World Tour Golf.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Irem Soft. Engineering Irem Soft. Engineering	1 Shooter	100	Now Japan

Web Address: www.irem.co.jp

R-Type Delta

While anxious shooter fans in the U.S. are eagerly awaiting the upcoming release of R-Types, Japanese gamers are already indulging in R-Type Delta, the series' first console-exclusive sequel since the masterful R-Type III was released years ago for the Super NES.

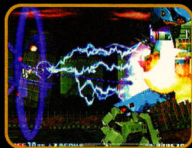
Because we're short on space here, we're going to get right into the game's features. We'll be back with a more in-depth preview if and when the game is announced for U.S. release (it better be!).



First of all, there are three ships you can choose from: the R9a Delta (a modified version of the classic ship), the R13 (with its cool Anchor Force unit), and the RX (which sports a kick-ass Tentacle Force unit that practically has a mind of its own). Each ship has its own set of weapons, in addition to powerful Beam attacks (which you can charge up twice, like in R-Type III) and an all-new Delta Attack that charges up by absorbing energy from your enemies through physical contact with your Force Unit. You can now increase or decrease your speed at will, too (there are four levels in all).

R-Type Delta features Dual Shock support, the ability to save your play stats (higher scores and longer play times can open up hidden features and extra credits), and has seven beautiful stages to conquer. Hopefully someone will pick it up for U.S. release soon, because the game totally rocks. If you're an R-Type fan, you should seriously consider importing this baby. You won't be disappointed.

The classic gameplay of R-Type is back with gorgeous 3D graphics. It doesn't get much better than this.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Codemasters Jester Interactive	1 Miscellaneous	100	Now U.K.

Web Address: www.codemasters.com

MUSIC

Mix Dance Tunes
And Make
Videos On Your
PlayStation. Cool
Or What?



MUSIC (yep, all capital letters for some reason) is certainly something very different for a piece of PlayStation software—for a start, it's not a game, it's a "music composition, editing and mixing" application that allows you to create dance music. Those of you who have tried the "Acid..." programs on the PC will be familiar with the style of application—but for those of you in the dark, this is basically a 16-track music editor that lets you sequence four-bar riffs, beats, percussion effects and samples from a library of techno, house, trip-hop, ambient and drum-and-bass sounds.

Building a music track is very simple; all of the samples are represented graphically so you simply arrange them on the grid before playing back how the different elements sound together. The initial library of sounds that comes with the product includes 3,000 different elements that range from simple bass lines to vocal lines.

As if all this weren't enough (and it's surprisingly effective) MUSIC also comes with a simple graphics editing tool that lets you synchronize graphics with your tunes. 3D objects can be manipulated and lit and textured to produce simple club-style videos.

As we go to press, MUSIC is yet to be signed by a U.S. publisher, but it's another



perfect example of how the PlayStation is capable of attracting a broad audience by providing ideas that are somewhat more "out of the box" than standard games. Expect an announcement soon.



The sounds are all easily arranged using a simple graphical interface.

Warning: This is a preview of a European title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a PAL system. Import at your own risk.



Libero Grande

Released in Japanese arcades last year, Libero Grande is Namco's attempt at giving the soccer game a swift kick in the butt. Unlike other soccer games where you control the entire team, in Libero Grande you only control one member of the team. Basically, it's like playing "real" soccer. Based on Namco's System 12 hardware, Libero Grande has made a successful leap to Sony's home system. When choosing from one of the various modes (Arcade, International Cup, Exhibition and World League) you'll take the field along with the other members of your team. Viewed from a distinctly different view than the

usual overhead perspective, in Libero Grande you actually feel like you're on the field. The stadiums are well-constructed, and the whole game gives you an amazing feeling of depth, meaning that the stadium feels like a stadium.

Of course, this wouldn't be a Namco game unless they were to add features exclusive to the home version. In addition to the normal one-player game, an additional player may join in for cooperative play via a vertical split screen. This actually works very well as you wait for your teammates to pass the ball to you, since the perspective gives you an effective view of the field. For soccer-game aficionados who wish to sharpen their skills, there is a mode called Challenge 9. Through various drills you are able to hone your penalty-kick shots, goal-scoring accuracy, ball-dribbling drills involving cones, etc. The only thing this game lacks is a FIFA license, but anyone with a hankering for a more "realistic" soccer game will be hard-pressed to do better than this.

Although Namco hasn't announced any plans to bring this one to the States, it would certainly be a refreshing change from the usual yearly updates to the more familiar franchises. At the very least, Libero Grande remains a compelling import purchase.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Namco Namco of Japan	1-2 Sports	100	Now Japan

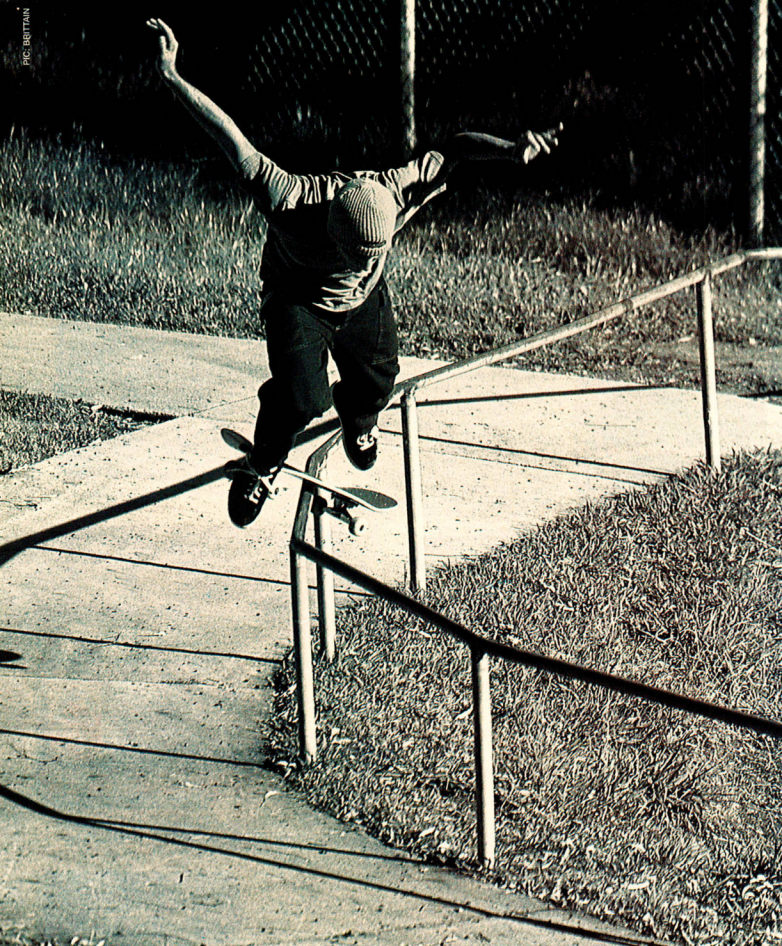
Web Address: www.namco.co.jp

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not be released in the U.S. It is designed to run on a Japanese system. Import at your own risk.



From the start, you can choose from 20 players. Could there be hidden Tekken characters as well?

EGM
107



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Epitaph



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PLAYSTATION

MLB 2000

This highly anticipated baseball game by 989 Sports could be the one to watch for. Detailed player modeling will make the players' faces and bodies more accurate. Stadiums have been tweaked to a higher degree as well. Vin Scully is back for play-by-play along with Dave Campbell for the one-two punch. Perhaps the most radical change will be the Total Control Pitching. This crazy feature will apparently bring pitch control to a new level. By the way, these screens are extremely early, and in some cases are mock-ups, not real shots.



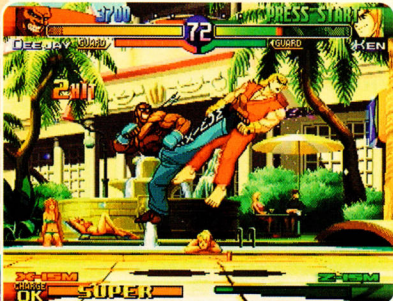
NBA Shoot Out '99

This year's Shoot Out looks remarkably improved. High-resolution player models along with several other graphic tricks have made the boys look really good. Along those same lines, a boat-load of new animations including signature moves (Shaq attack, Garnett's off-the-glass dunk, etc.) will hopefully increase realism. Like Final Four, a new shot meter will facilitate more accurate shooting. But for the personal touch, Total Control Dunking, Passing and Shooting will be available. This 989 Sports title is due out January '99. Look for a full-length preview in the next EGM. (These screens may be doctored as well—check out Shaq's head in the screenshot to the right!)



Street Fighter Alpha 3

We previewed SFA3 last month but have some updates for you. The PS version has three hidden characters the arcade version doesn't have...the male trio from Super Street Fighter: Fei-Long, T. Hawk and Dee Jay. Also, the home version will have a single-player World Tour Mode where your character can earn new skills (air blocking, heavier-hitting isms, etc.) by defeating CPU opponents. You can also take your fighter on the road with the soon-to-be-released PocketStation. All in all, the home version of Alpha 3 is shaping up to be a pretty ambitious project.



Carmageddon

Confusingly, the PS game called Carmageddon is actually a part of the PC title Carmageddon II: Carpalypse Now (recently released in the U.S. through Interplay and developed by the same team who did the original, Stainless), which expanded upon the much-publicized controversial themes of the original. Although it looks like a racing game, it received a lot of attention for the extremely violent gameplay. Ever wanted to run people over? Well now you can. And get rewarded.



3Xtreme

3Xtreme is the third in a very successful line of Gen-X sports titles by 989 Sports. The game features a total rebuild including a new 3D game engine, motion capture from Andy MacDonald and Dave Mirras, plus a load of rad new tricks. Biking, skateboarding and inline skating are the highlighted sports. 3Xtreme has 22 courses plus 12 characters.



RC Stunt Copter

Midway and Shiny Entertainment's RC Stunt Copter has veered away from its more realistic sim origins, hence the long delays. Now, this stunt copter game is more action-oriented, with mission-based objectives that are more fun and lighthearted in nature. On one stage for example, your goal is to stop a child from floating away by popping (running into) the bunch of balloons he's holding. RC Stunt Copter should ship in the summer of 1999.



Looney Tunes Lost in Time

Looney Tunes Lost in Time is an upcoming 3D action/mascot/platform game which uses the cartoony but effective Jersey Devil engine (this game is being developed by Behaviour Interactive as well, but is being published by Infogrames). Bugs Bunny must use a time machine to travel through five different eras in order to get home, but villains like Yosemite Sam and Marvin the Martian are out to stop him. Lost in Time is due out in April.



Broken Sword II: The Smoking Mirror

On its way from THQ and Revolution Software, Broken Sword II: The Smoking Mirror takes you on a point-and-click adventure with topnotch animated cutscenes and some of the best voice work in gaming. Due out in May, this title features loads of puzzles, 50+ characters to interact with and more.



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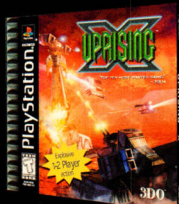
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ArCADE

Game Directory

• NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC

• War

PREVIEWS

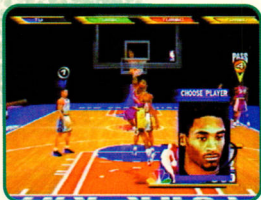
NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC

It's Time
To Jam
Again

Basketball fans are going to be in for a huge treat this spring. The team that brought you NFL Blitz has come up with the arcade hoops game we've all been waiting for. NBA Showtime is a three-on-three b-ball contest in the same vein as NBA Jam. That's not surprising since most of the developers of Showtime worked on the original arcade versions of Jam (before the franchise name was bought by Acclaim). They were among the first to use real photos of the players and paste them on the bodies to make it look more realistic and they've taken that to the furthest extreme with Showtime. The problem with current "realistic" portrayals is that the face looks real, but they're plastered onto flat heads with maybe an extra polygon for a nose. The players in Showtime have cheeks, eyebrow ridges, ears and chins resulting in a shockingly realistic presentation. Of course the other body parts are equally detailed so you can see every cut of every muscle and ripple in uniforms.

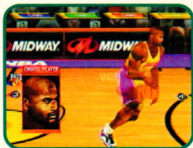
The game is still early and we've only seen tape so far, but it looks like it will live up to the frantic and

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Midway	1-4 Sports	N/A	1st Qtr. 1999
Web Address: www.midway.com			



All of the players in NBA on NBC look extremely realistic, and have signature dunks, victory poses and current team affiliations.

fun gameplay of Jam and Hangtime. All the NBA teams and a large majority of the real NBA players will be available, as well as the obligatory extras like Big Heads and secret characters. This could make its way to the arcades sooner if the NBA lockout is resolved, but will see release regardless this spring. It's showtime! 🏀



All of the NBA players in the game have been modeled after the actual players. The faces are the most realistic ever.

NBA on NBC will have all of the features you've grown to love in Jam and Blitz, including a Create Player Mode.

Publisher/Developer Players/Genre % Done Release

Midway
Atari Games 1-4
Action N/A 1st Qtr.
1999

Web Address: www.midway.com

War

Doom In
The Arcades

First-person shooters have tried to make inroads into the arcades with the most recent example being Quake. The problem is that the graphics are dark and don't stand out well compared to other traditional arcade games that have more vibrant color palettes.

Recently, Doom-esque games on the PC have enjoyed a bit of a resurgence thanks to the excellent graphics provided by 3Dfx cards. Since Voodoo revolutionized the PC market, more bright and innovative first-person shooters have been released and made way for the genre's entrance in the arcade market.

Enter War from Midway/Atari games. This shooter is not a PC port, but an original game built from the ground up using no existing engines (such as the Unreal engine for example). The design philosophy is different as well, and it definitely shows because War doesn't look like anything we've seen on the PC. It looks like it belongs in the arcades which is quite a feat for a game of its type. The colors are noticeably brighter and the levels are less like labyrinths and more like battlefields. The overall graphics are great with smooth scrolling and little slowdown.

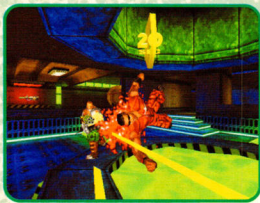
The game is built for multiplayer and it can support up to four machines. Players can choose to play co-op or Death Match which is where War really shines. You can choose to be one of four different characters who each have a different default weapon and different characteristics like speed and defense, etc. The default weapon is very important, seeing as you can only carry one weapon at a time (to pick up another weapon, you must discard the one you have), so you will rely on old faithful fairly regularly.

War is currently on test, so check it out if you can. ☺

After you defeat every boss in the game, War gives you stats on how well you did in the level.



There are a ton of weapons in the game including rocket launchers, grenade launchers, lasers and flamethrowers.



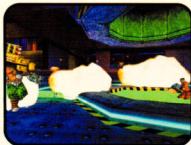
All of the weapons in War are explosive in nature, including the weapon you start with, which is actually a bazooka.



It is very easy to aim at enemies thanks to War's intuitive control and easy-to-reach buttons.



Each weapon makes a very evident change both to the look of the character and the style of combat.



ARCADE

Star Wars Trilogy

Plenty of new screenshots of Sega's sure-to-be-hit arcade game just keep pouring into our offices. As stated in our original preview, the game takes you through many of the well-known sites of the movies including Hoth, Yavin and Endor. SWT has space battles, speeder bike fights and Doom-style action scenes. We told you that the finale of the game would be a lightsaber battle with Darth Vader, but you can also re-enact the sail barge scene from *Return of the Jedi* where you'll have to deflect Boba Fett's laser shots. This game just keeps looking better, and should make fans of the series very happy.



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Zombie Zone

One of Sega's first Naomi titles finally has an American name. *Zombie Zone* is a Resident Evil-style action game where you control one of three different people trying to stop a zombie invasion. The graphics in these new scenes are simply incredible—they definitely surpass anything seen on a Model 3 board.



Power Stone

Capcom's first fighter for the Naomi arcade board (basically a Dreamcast) is here. *Power Stone* has an "anyone can play" philosophy—the controls were designed with both novices and experts in mind. There are three buttons (Jump, Kick and Punch) along with the trusty joystick. With eight selectable characters and a play style reminiscent of *Ehrgeiz* (you can throw objects and run around in 3D arenas), *Power Stone* should be a hit in arcades.



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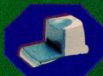
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By John Davison
Photography By Michael Sexton

Legacy of Kain

Soul Reaver



When the original Kain game was released a couple of years ago, it's arguable that no one really noticed its significance. Despite being impaired by some nasty little problems, it was the closest thing the system had to an RPG for some considerable time. The sequel has been hot news now since it was previewed at E3 in May '98. Taking a dramatic change in style, it has been cited as revolutionary both in terms of the way it's presented and designed. Many believe the game was instrumental in Eidos' decision to invest in Crystal Dynamics back in September as the rapidly growing software giant is keen to increase its number of influential and important franchises. If Soul Reaver is as successful as everyone seems to believe it can be, don't be surprised if it gets the full-on

Tomb Raider treatment in the future.

Ironically, one of the major changes between the original game and Soul Reaver is the adoption of somewhat more Tomb Raider-esque gameplay and presentation style. The new game uses a vastly enhanced revision of the Gex 3D engine and offers some of the most impressive visuals on the PlayStation so far. Imagine a cross between Tomb Raider and Metal Gear Solid, and throw in some more supernatural imagery and you'll have a rough idea of the visual direction the game is taking. Moody lighting and beautiful texture maps are the order of the day here...just scan through some of the screenshots in

this feature and you'll see what we mean.

To get a more detailed look at the first big game of 1999, we visited Crystal Dynamics' studios in Mento Park, Calif., to speak with the team. Headed up by Amy Hennig, the lead designer on the previous game, the team is nearing completion on the project in time for its release early in the year.

Loading the latest version of the game on a test station, it's immediately obvious that it has come a long way in recent months. Numerous preview screenshots have been released since May, but the project is finally coming together.

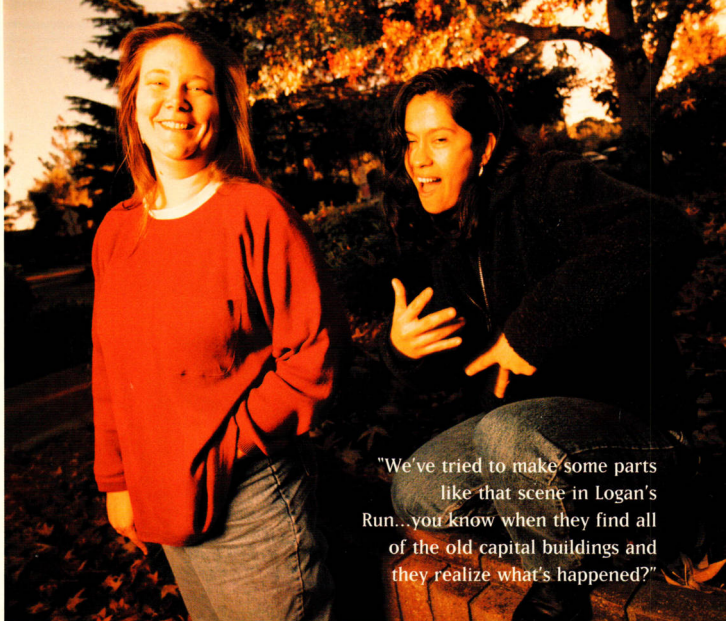
Hennig picks up the story from the beginning. "The FMV at the beginning of the game takes place centuries after the



Goth's Will Love This...
The Story of Raziel

(As Told Through the Developer's
Storyboard Sketches)

A full millennium has passed since the end of the first game (Blood Omen) and Lord Kain has set his capital in the ruins of the Pillars of Nosgoth (for those of you not "in the



"We've tried to make some parts like that scene in Logan's Run...you know when they find all of the old capital buildings and they realize what's happened?"

events of the first game and you see that Kain has taken over like some kind of god. When the game starts though, even more time has passed and Raziel emerges in his mutated form. Now Kain's empire has pretty much crumbled and all of the vampires have degenerated into more monstrous forms.

"Raziel falls from being cast out by Kain and when he hits the bottom of the pit he just

thinks that, like, five minutes have passed or something. The basic idea is pretty much like Spawn when he's cast into hell...a number of years pass in what seems to be a short space of time. He thinks he's just tumbled through the vortex and woken up, so when he re-emerges in the real world he sees places he thinks he only recently saw in all their glory now reduced to rubble. Part of the exposition of the story is

Raziel discovering what has happened in the intervening centuries. We've tried to make some parts like that scene in Logan's Run...you know when they find all of the old capital buildings and they realize what's happened?"

Early portions of the game have been around for some considerable time. *EGM's* sister magazine, *Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine*, even ran a demo of the first section

Amy Hennig, producer/director (above, left): lead designer on the original Kain. Interviewed in main text.

Rosaura Sandoval, producer (above, right): a Crystal veteran of over four years. As an associate producer, Rose's previous projects include *Blazing Dragons*, *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain PC*, and *Slam 'N' Jam PC*.



know," this was a key location in the original game). After recruiting six lieutenants from the Underworld, of which Raziel was one, he set about destroying all of the major human kingdoms so that he could re-arrange the world to be

Continued on page 130

Heart-stomping, hair-



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Altered Reality

Shifting between the material world and the spectral world is an extremely important gameplay mechanic. Very often, the shift to the spectral plane distorts objects so that Raziel can use them to reach otherwise hard-to-reach areas of the levels. The morphing from one state to the other is one of the many impressive effects in the game.



"Because of Raziel's undead status, he effectively exists within two different planes of reality...the 'spectral' world and the 'material' world."

Raziel=Grouchy Smurf

As is becoming the norm for games these days, the quality of the voice work throughout *Soul Reaver* is topnotch. Just before EGM went to press, Hennig and the team informed us of how the voice recordings had gone, saying, "Gordon Hunt and Kris Zimmerman are our directors—I noticed that you had featured Kris in your *Slick 50* last issue, for her work on MGS. Gordon is a veteran, and an amazing director. He's done a lot of TV directing including *Mad About You* (he's Helen Hunt's dad) and *Frasier*. We had a lot of the same actors back, including Simon Templeman doing Kain and Tony Jay as the voice of the "Elder God," as well as Anna Gunn and Neil Ross. The actor we're using for Raziel, Michael Bell, has been doing

voice work for years, and he did a wonderful job with the script. He's got a long resumé. (You can check it out on the Internet Movie Database: <http://us.imdb.com/Name?Bell,+Mich+ael>). He's done all kinds of stuff over the years, from the *Smurfs* (he's the voice of Grouchy, Handy and Lazy Smurf, but you'd never know it to hear him read Raziel) to the *Transformers*, *Voltron*, *Aladdin*, *Rugrats*, etc. He's got an incredibly versatile voice. We got some hilarious stuff of him reading our script in all his different characters' voices. It doesn't sound quite as dramatic when he reads it as Lazy Smurf! I think people are going to really like the voice he's given Raziel—it's got a wounded quality to it, but it's hard-edged at the same time."



more suitable for vampires. You know the deal, all terribly Goth...black paint, Sisters of Mercy and Siouxsie and the Banshees music on every radio station, jewelry with skulls, black hair dye and lipstick. Using human slaves he set about

a few months ago (where a location from the first game was clearly visible...a large skull that acts as a doorway). But one of the big questions that many people want answered concerns whether the new game is in fact an RPG, or whether it's been simplified to accommodate the 3D engine.

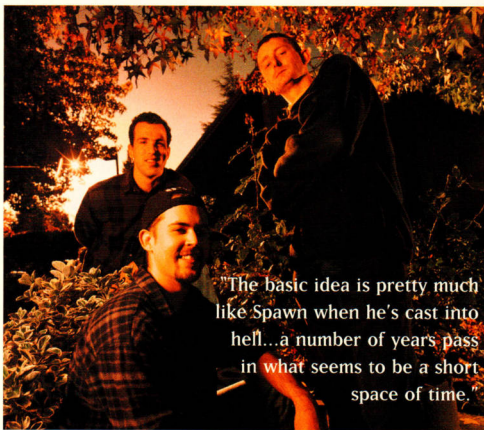
From sitting down with the team, and from playing a series of versions of the game, it's clear things are very different this time. Gameplay is obviously geared around the opportunities presented by a 3D environment. There's plenty of action, and in fact one of the most important elements of the game is Raziel's ability to kill creatures and then absorb their souls. This is a fundamen-

tal building block of the entire game, and it ensures there's always lots of fisticuffs amidst the more cerebral areas.

Because of Raziel's undead status, he effectively exists within two different planes of reality: the "spectral" world and the "material" world. In order to keep himself in the material plane, he has to ingest souls to sustain his energy. Failure to do so shifts him back into the spectral plane which is a dark and twisted version of the real world, infested with the dead. Shifting between the two dimensions is yet another gameplay mechanic though, and becomes increasingly important as Raziel's quest continues. Early in the game he shifts planes only when he



is weak, or when he finds a portal. However, as he defeats more adversaries and absorbs their abilities through their souls, he eventually reaches



"The basic idea is pretty much like Spawn when he's cast into hell...a number of years pass in what seems to be a short space of time."

Riley Cooper, designer (left): When he's not being abused on the lacrosse field, Riley can be found designing levels for *Soul Reaver*. Riley has been with Crystal for four years, taking some time off to finish his college education. A former tester, he rose to the designer position on the action shooter *Solar Eclipse*.

John Dumala, designer (middle): John has been with Crystal for a year now as a designer on the *Soul Reaver* team. John also lent his design expertise to the *Unholy War* and *Bandai* projects.

Richard LeMarchand, designer (right): Richard is a Crystal veteran with gaming experience dating back to his designing duties on the original *GEX* for the 3DO. Richard has also lent his design talents to *Pandemonium!*, *GEX: Enter the Gecko* and *Pandemonium 2*. Richard came to Crystal from *Microprose* where he worked on such games as *F-15 Strike Eagle*.



the construction of huge furnaces to belch out smoke that would block out the dangerous effects of the sun so that the vampires could hang out all day and all night. Then, as he kills everyone off, he steals their souls and turns them into



James Gullford, lead animator (left): James has been with the Soul Reaver team for the last year. Previously, James was an animator for Sega of America and Disney.

Marc David, programmer (right): Marc has been with Crystal for a year. Before joining Crystal, he was a programmer at Konami in their arcade division. Interestingly enough, Marc spent time at the Naval Research Laboratory in the Electronic Warfare Division programming radar defense systems...you know, spy satellites and all that fun stuff.



"Although his abilities change, Razeel stays the same physically throughout. Character morphing is something we'll probably do in the next incarnation of the engine."



vampires. As time passed, Kain and the lieutenants began to evolve into "Dark Gods." Kain—being a big show-off—would always evolve first, with the others following a decade or so later. Unfortunately for Razeel though, he turned up

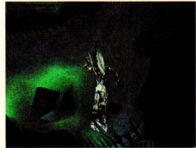
a point where he can hop between realities at will. This has a number of benefits. First, and most apparent as far as gameplay is concerned, the architecture mutates between the two planes and very often presents him with opportunities to reach areas in the spectral world he can't reach in the material world. Second, time has no meaning in the spectral plane...so Raziel can perceive the world in "freeze frame" by shifting planes. Machinery appears to stop, objects stop moving—Raziel can even throw things and switch planes so they appear to hang in midair. Finally, there are completely different characters in the two different planes—and very often Raziel will have to perform differently in order to defeat certain adversaries.

Hennig provides us with an example. "One of the bosses actually starts off dead," she says, "so he resides in the spectral plane. The story tells you that the humans rose against him, killed him and then wiped out everyone in the town. As a result, spectral is completely infested with vam-

pires. The boss himself is impaled with lots of spears and stakes in the material world so he's dead—but in spectral he's incredibly powerful. Raziel actually has to force him back into the material world by pulling all of the stakes out of him."

Each boss Raziel must face poses a different set of problems, but by defeating them Raziel becomes more and more powerful. Hennig explains, "To use just one example, Raziel can climb walls in a lot of sections of the game, but like a lot else, this is an ability he can only acquire by ingesting a soul—in this case, that of one of the bosses. The different boss characters are the mutations of the vampire clan leaders seen in the intro of the game, and each one has taken on certain characteristics. By ingesting the souls, Raziel eventually learns to climb, swim and even phase through barriers."

Although his abilities change, Raziel stays the same physically throughout. "Character morphing is something that we'll probably do in



Carl Stika, lead programmer (above): An avid Green Bay Packers fan, Carl has been with Crystal Dynamics for the last two years as the lead programmer for Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver. Prior to joining Crystal, Carl spent four years at Raven as a lead programmer/programmer on Necradome, Shadocaster and Cy-Clones.



at a lieutenants' meeting sporting a rather fashionable set of new wings. Understandably Kain, being the egomaniac that he has become, is somewhat pissed and rips them off. Not satisfied just with that, he also sentences Raziel to being

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the next incarnation of the engine," Hennig says, "but at the moment it's just too much for the PlayStation to handle." *EGM* has already reported in the past that the design documents for *Kain 3* are under way deep within the creative bowels of Crystal, but this would indicate that it won't be a PlayStation project.

Obviously, as you'd expect at some point, Raziel must face Kain, and he in fact does so twice. The first encounter provides an explanation for the name of the game. "The first time Raziel meets Kain he earns the Soul Reaver," explains Hennig, "which in its basic form is a sword that is his constant weapon in the spectral plane. In the material world, we tried to make the sword work like it does in *Zelda* where you can use it when you have full health. The health meter is always draining throughout the game (much like the blood meter in the original game), because Raziel is exerting energy simply to

sustain his physical form. However, once he draws the Soul Reaver it sustains him, so then the only way it drains is if he takes damage from an enemy." Hennig shows us an early version of the sword within the game environment, and it's a nasty-looking thing that adds yet another dynamic to the gameplay. But will it oversimplify combat too early in the game?

"The default Soul Reaver is simply a really tough weapon...if you attack the bad



He Looks a Bit Like Dracula, Don't He?

When *Legacy of Kain: Blood Omen* was released way back at the beginning of the PlayStation's life, no one was really expecting it to become the huge franchise it now has the potential to be. At the time it was the closest thing to an RPG on Sony's system, and despite some crip-

pling load times, massive slowdown and awkward gameplay, it established itself as a quiet classic. Boasting 100,000 screens, 170 different enemies and multiple weapon and armor power-ups, it was

pub who is offered the chance to exact vengeance on his attackers by returning as a vampire. Foolishly accepting this he returns, kills everyone and then wanders the land (ironically, like Kain...in a bit of

a gag from *Kung Fu*), realizing he has made a terrible mistake. The game then deals with his ongoing quest that is linked with an arrangement of mystical pillars.

At the end of the quest, Kain was faced with the final task, that of the "Pillar of Balance," where he was faced with one of two options—either

returning balance to the world and relinquishing his, um, "vampiriness" or taking his position as a Dark God and ruling the world. The sequel, *Soul Reaver*, obviously assumes the latter choice was made.



quite the tour-de-force.

For those of you who never got the chance to check it out, the game was a top-down scrolling RPG in the "traditional" mold that told a very Dracula-esque story of Kain—a chap murdered outside a



cast into the "bottomless vortex"—a big swirling watery vortex, which, as its name implies, apparently has no bottom. Those of you who are either Goths, interested in vampires, or someone who's seen the *Lost Boys* will know that vamps

guys with it, it makes a big impact on them so you can dispatch them quickly. However, it's not just that simple, as later in the game you find a number of forges that allow you to imbue or baptize the sword with different abilities. These forges each tie in with the different elements that you also acquire as spells in the game. Once the sword is baptized in an element, Raziel can re-imbue the Reaver simply by passing the blade through something of the same element. For example, once imbued with sunlight, simply passing the blade through a ray of sunlight allows you to turn it into the Sun Reaver. The elements for the sword and the spells are the same, but the effects are different. The sword is either hand-to-hand or projectile-based, so it's always focused on individual characters. The spells are environment-based though and only affect enemies if they are standing in the

area that you have cast the spell. Obviously different characters are susceptible to different characteristics of the sword. For example, vampires are going to take a lot more damage from the Sound Reaver than humans are because they have far more sensitive hearing. Water-based creatures won't take damage from the Water Reaver, etc., etc."

Thankfully, the game isn't just all about confrontation though. The vast majority of the gameplay is puzzle-based, often requiring some serious spatial reasoning skills. The best way to illustrate this is to simply give an example, so Hennig takes us through a typical puzzle. "One of the more complex puzzles deals with a derelict lighthouse. If you look in through the translucent windows you can see that there's like a wick, or a gas jet in there. You need to get that lit to solve the first part of the puzzle. The

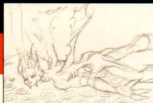


Jason Bell, programmer (left): Jason is Crystal's very own Aussie import courtesy of Beam Software, making the trek to the U.S. over a year ago. Prior to joining Crystal, Jason helped Beam Software bring the original GEX and Total Eclipse to the PlayStation. As a member of the Beam Software team, he also worked on games such as Norse by Norsewest and Super International Cricket.

Scott Krotz, programmer (middle): Scott is a huge

Chicago Bears fan, poor guy. He is a newcomer to the Crystal family arriving just six months ago. Previously, Scott was a programmer at CES and Konami, contributing to such titles as Enemy and Broken Helix.

Hong Park, programmer (right): Another newbie to Crystal Dynamics, Hong has been there six months. Before joining the Soul Reaver team, he was a programmer for two years at 3DO where he worked on Uprising.



have a bit of a problem with water. As Raziel tumbles into the vortex, the water burns away at his body like acid and strips away his spookily androgynous looks to reveal a horrible demon creature...without a bottom jaw. Eventually

Soul Sucking

The ingestion of souls is what keeps Raziel fit and healthy. Having killed an opponent, he removes his cowl to reveal a soul-sucking orifice where his jaw and throat should be.



whole area is geared around a broader objective though...as you explore the surroundings you see through the iconography on the walls that there is a connection between the lighthouse and another room. Basically what you'll need to do is introduce light into the room by making the lighthouse work properly and shine in through a hole in the wall."

Hennig then takes Raziel to another key room in the puzzle. "You've got this big wheel in a large chamber which is just sitting there when you walk in," she begins. "When you flick a switch though, the wheel starts cranking up and you see lots of gas jets around the chamber and in the corridors lighting up. As it continues to crank, more of the gas jets light...but then eventually the wheel slows down and they all go out. Obviously at this point the player should realize there's a connection between the two and you'll have to stop the wheel cranking down somehow. Our hope then is the player will be tempted to explore and figure



out that you can jam the wheel by moving a block in the way—so the lights should stay on. Now, if you run back outside of the room, you realize the lighthouse light is on...but it's not facing the right way—so you need to move to the next section of the puzzle which is where you work out how



"The FMV at the beginning of the game takes place centuries after the events of the first game and you see that Kain has taken over like some kind of god..."



Raziel actually hits the bottom of the vortex, exploding the myth that it was in fact bottomless. Once there he encounters The Elder who tells him of "creation, death, souls and hunger" and how he used to feed on the souls of Nosgoth



to rotate the lighthouse light to shine into the room."

Moving down through some very realistic-looking environments, Raziel is faced with another complex piece of architecture. "If you move to

the bottom of the lighthouse, "Hennig continues, "you realize the whole thing is driven by water. There are a series of pistons and pipes following the route through all of the machinery. There are bellows and pistons and obviously some kind of water trough... drain holes in the floor and stuff and as you explore further you realize how the whole thing is supposed to work. You need to get the water through the pipes, and as you look around you see there are push blocks lying

around with pipework cut through them. If you look at all the blocks and how the holes through them fit, you can then push them and rotate them so they connect." So...not only is it an RPG hybrid with Tomb Raider-esque leanings—it's also a 3D version of PipeDream (remember that?).

As we go to press, Soul Reaver is still a few months from completion, but a number of things are assured. You'll hear a lot about this game in '99. It has the collective might of both Eidos and Sony—who's pushing it as a showcase for the PS—behind it, and the cool characters have assured a multitude of merchandise. Keep an eye out for a toy line, possibly by summer, and other developments, too. ☺

The Kain Team:

Back row (left to right): Marc David, John Dumala, Daniel Cabuco, Richard LeMarchand, Stephen Trusty, Jeff Morgan, Jason Bell, Mike Gonzales, Steve Papoutsis, Cory Stockton, Caroline Trujillo, Fred Lee, Paul Vernon, David Reyes.

Front row (left to right):

Hong Park, Troi Depts, Fred Mack, Carl Stika, James Guilford, Scott Krotz, Rosaura Sandoval, Mark Meier, Jurjen Katsman, Eric Elliott, Casto Vocal, John Hood, Jonah Stich, Tim Linn, Riley Cooper, Amy Hennig, Charles Martin, Adi Taylor, John Guilford.



before Kain claimed them for himself. The Elder offers Raziel the opportunity to return to the material world as long as he is prepared to collect souls for him. So now Raziel has a big, ugly, soul-sucking hole where his throat used to be.

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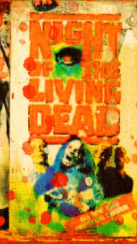
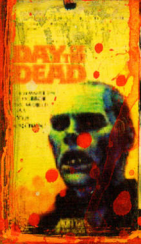
Rating: ★★★★★

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(Un)-Dead Main Talking

Interview by
Chris Johnston

Director George Romero Unearths the Dirt on the Resident Evil Movie

a writer and director of *Night of the Living Dead* and its sequels, George Romero is the undisputed master of all things zombie-riffic. So it only makes sense that Capcom would seek him out to direct the upcoming *Resident Evil* movie. We asked Romero about the flick, his career and what exactly makes zombies so darn scary.

EGM: How did you get started in film?

George Romero: I grew up in New York loving movies. An uncle of mine had an old 8-mm camera that I used to horse around with and actually while I was in high school [I] tried to make a couple of films. My dad got a mag attachment for an old 8-mm projector, so I was able to put music on it and record over microphone. It was just garbage stuff, but I had fun and also sort of developed an understanding of how you glue a movie together. I came to Pittsburgh to go to Carnegie-Mellon, did three years in the painting and design department, but always wanted to be involved with theater or movies. So I got into a little theater group and made some friends and gradually we saved money and borrowed money from relatives and bought ourselves a couple of cameras. Basically on our own we started a little commercial production company. At the time, commercials were done on film because there wasn't such a thing as tape, so there were film labs in all major cities and there were two in Pittsburgh. I used to hang out at both of them and I learned from editors there how to use the stuff. Our company was successful; we were the only game in town that was doing sort of creative production of commercials. At the time, the newscasters would do them live, there was very little actual production that went into commercials, and we were sort of the first guys around town to do it. So after four to five years of that, I guess I'd learned the craft enough and again, we raised money and set up this company Image 10 and made *Night of the Living Dead*. It was all sort of self-taught for all of us who were involved. We were all just tenacious and got it going.

EGM: Why are all your movies filmed in Pennsylvania?

GR: At first, it was because that's where we lived, so we saw no reason to go anywhere else. Over the years, Pittsburgh became the place to shoot movies, there were all sorts of Hollywood companies coming in here for a while. The year we did *Dark Half* I think was a \$400 million year in Pittsburgh—*Silence of the Lambs*, *Innocent Blood* and *Hoffa*, movies like that. So Pittsburgh was used a lot

for feature production. Still is, but not as much. Tim Burton's planning on doing *Superman* [here] if he ever gets it going.

EGM: When is filming going to begin on the *Resident Evil* movie?

GR: Beats me. We've just begun the process. I've only been officially working on it for about three weeks and had meetings with the production company which is Constantine Films and meetings with the Japanese group from Capcom. They've always sort of been interested in me—they asked me to do the commercial for *Resident Evil 2* and I guess they thought it made sense that I should do the feature.

They had commissioned a couple of scripts which they didn't like, so I'm now in the process of writing a script. Once we get that together and budgeted, we'll be able to shoot—but we haven't decided where or when. We're probably about three months from doing anything.

EGM: Is there any information on who's starring in it or a projected release date?

GR: No. I know Capcom would like to have it released sometime around when the third game breaks. So that's really all I know, [but] I don't know when that is.

EGM: What's your vision for the *Resident Evil* movie as a zombie expert?

GR: Well, just that. I'm hoping that it can just be dark and chilling like the game, good zombies, good make-up, good effects. I think I have had the advantage doing my zombie films of not having to have them

rated. This, I think for U.S. release anyway, is going to have to fall within an "R" because it's going to be an expensive film and nobody's going to want to take the chance on letting it go unrated. But our plan is to shoot it balls out, so



Romero on the set of the Japanese RE2 commercial.



somewhere in the world there will be a harder version of the thing. Maybe we can put it out on a Director's Cut or release it in certain countries where the restrictions aren't as tight.

EGM: Will Tom Savini be doing the special effects?

GR: I haven't spoken to him. I certainly would be happy to work with him on it, just for old time's sake. It would be hard to imagine being in a room with a bunch of zombies and not having him there.

EGM: Movies based on video games have largely been made for a younger audience and for kids, and they haven't been good movies overall—like the *Super Mario Brothers* movie and *Mortal Kombat*. What will separate *Resident Evil* from these other movies that are made for kids?

GR: Well, I don't think we're going to go just for kids. It's very often that those decisions are made after the fact, after you go into previews and see who likes it and all that. But I think our intention is to make it an R-rated film and just make it scary as hell and go more for the *Scream* audience rather than the young kids. I don't think the game appeals to bubblegummers as much as it does to teens 14 and up. I think that's the way we're going to go—just go for hard horror. We're going to use basically the story of the first game with the alpha team and the mansion rather than the *Resident Evil 2* setup.

EGM: Will you be working much with the creators of the game during the production of the movie?

GR: I think they're going to want to be around and involved to [give their input] on it. I don't know what sort of legal rights they have. I don't think they have any creative control, I think the studio will pretty much dictate, but nobody wants to be working against those guys either 'cuz we'd like them to endorse it. I think that kind of stuff will take care of itself. They've already made some suggestions in the story conferences we've had. They're smart and they know (or they think they know) what makes their games sell. That's the way they want it. The biggest piece of input they had was that they don't want any of the human characters to show any remorse, just blam blam blam. That's fine with me.

EGM: Do you play video games yourself?

GR: Uh, no. I mean I'm not avid, I do [play]. My son has one and my assistant here is an avid player. I've played them with the kids, but I'm not hooked. I went through a phase where I was, back in the early Nintendo days. As far as I ever got was sitting there right after I made *Monkey Shines* with Drew Mattson, I beat the *Legend of Zelda*, and I thought I was hot stuff. So I quit while I was ahead.

EGM: What do you think of video games now having so much gore and being able to be as graphic as *Resident Evil* has been?

GR: I never mind that stuff, obviously if you look at my films. I don't have an opinion. I don't know. My philosophy about movies is that I don't blame that stuff for why people go out and do actual acts of violence—I think that comes from other kinds of frustration and disgust with the world or the job or whatever. So I'm certainly not on the bandwagon of blaming media for violence in the streets. I don't think it even necessarily has an enduring effect. I think it might be a fuse or it might defuse some violence. I notice in my son who's only seven that he'll play a shoot-'em-up video game that will chill him out rather than make him want to step away from the game and beat up dad. So I don't think it's as damaging as people are blaming it for being. Also, the gore is very cartoony. To me, some of the old black-and-white movies,

"...our plan is to shoot it balls out, so somewhere in the world there will be a harder version of the thing. Maybe...a Director's Cut or release it in certain countries where the restrictions aren't as tight."



FILMOGRAPHY

- *Night of the Living Dead* (1968)
writer/director
- *Season of the Witch* (1972)
writer/director
- *Code Name: Trixie* (1973)
writer/director
- *Dawn of the Dead* (1978)
writer/director
- *Martin* (1978)
writer/director
- *KnightRiders* (1981)
writer/director
- *Creepshow* (1982)
director
- *Tales from the Darkside* (1984 TV series)
director/producer
- *Day of the Dead* (1985)
writer/director
- *Creepshow 2* (1987)
writer
- *Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear* (1988)
writer/director
- *Tales from the Darkside: The Movie* (1990)
writer
- *Night of the Living Dead* (1990 remake)
writer/producer
- *Two Evil Eyes* (1990)
writer/director
- *The Dark Half* (1993)
writer/director/producer

[like] *On the Waterfront* where Brando gets beat up, [seeing] blood in black-and-white is worse. Gore in color seems very comic booky to me and certainly in a video game where it's just graphics and not images of real actors. I think it's very comic booky and doesn't have any kind of tempting quality. It doesn't make you want more blood. I think you can either take it or you don't. Some people just don't like it, like some people don't like roller coasters. I've never found any gore scene in any film to revulse me. I giggle.

EGM: What are the laws of zombies? Why do zombies eat people, why are they so slow? You've kind of pioneered the zombie film genre; what are zombies to you?

GR: Well, to me they're sort of the blue-collar monsters. I had them be flesh eaters almost as an allegory—the revolution of a new society as it comes in and devours the old, and that's what it was for me. They're slow because they're us. I like the idea that they don't have any particular powers. I'm not one for glowing eyes and stuff like that. The rules in Resident Evil I guess will be somewhat different, but pretty much the same. The one thing that's very hard to translate is the stuff about the game, you have to shoot them so many times. It's not explicit in the game that you have to shoot them in the head—you can get the guy in the head eight times and he still comes at you. It's very hard to translate that into a movie. So we're going to probably go back to my old rule which is get them in the head and they're dead.

EGM: Why are people so afraid of the living dead?

GR: I don't know, man, you can philosophize about that. Dead things, they're like ghosts or mummies. There's something creepy about that idea. To me it's much more frightening than any monster I've ever seen—it's the neighbors, they're pretty frightening.

EGM: Do you think the zombie movie genre has gotten a fair shake in Hollywood?

GR: No. There's never been one—what has there been? *Omega Man*? Those are vampires I guess, but...there really hasn't been one except in the old old days, the Lugosi days, and all that stuff was well-crafted. Since the '50s I guess there haven't been any Hollywood-made zombie flicks.

EGM: What do you think is the most important element of scaring the audience and making sure they're terrified in their seats?

GR: That's also hard to say. I don't think of *Dawn of the Dead* for example as a scary movie; I think of it as a comedy. I think if you're going to really scare someone, night works best for me on that level. It's mostly craft, setting up a familiar environment and warping it out a little bit. Beyond that it's timing—scars are like jokes in that regard. It's all in how you tell it, how you spin it, how much time you take and how you spring the punch. *The Exorcist* and the original *Alien*, those make you very nervous, which is a whole other thing; it just keeps you primed so when the shocks hit they hit that much harder. It's like having a sensitive nerve. I've never had a subject, a topic, a story that I've gotten to actually make into a film that has had those same kinds of elements with a believable enough situation and budget to craft something finely. So I've just sorta relied on my skills as a commercial and documentary guy and done things on instinct.

EGM: What do you think of the fact that Resident Evil was sort of inspired by your movies? Do you see a lot of your films and the things you did in Resident Evil and RE2?

GR: Yeah, no question. Those guys, the designers of the game are willing to admit and they've said in press releases and on the Internet that they ripped the idea from my zombies. Not just mine but all of those Italian ones that came after, the *Return of the Living Dead* movies. They didn't rip off any characters or ideas or anything like that, but they're doing the same kind of thing with the game.

EGM: Do you think the game works as a sort of interactive movie?

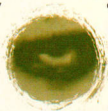
GR: I think it works. I don't play enough of them to know what pushes my buttons, but for me it works. I've never played the whole thing, but my assistant actually played the whole game to its conclusion and taped it so I've been able to sit through the whole game, and I think it works great. As I say, some of the rules aren't very distinct, but that's all right for me too.

EGM: What's your next project after Resident Evil?

GR: I don't know, I'm working on a couple of other things right now. You never know which one's going to pop first. I'm working with Richard Matheson (who I ripped off when I did *Night*), and we're working on a project called *Something Outside*. I delivered the first treatment on that and am waiting to hear. I'm working with the guys at Miramax and Joel Silver's company on another *Tales From the Crypt* idea. They own that franchise and Miramax has the distribution rights now and they're looking to switch it over from the kinds of films like *Demon Knight* and *Bordello of Blood*, and they'd like to elevate it and use the franchise for more straight-ahead, cross-over horror films.

EGM: I've heard of *Twilight of the Dead*, is that something you're working on?

GR: I don't even know where that title came from. I might've said it jokingly at a press conference or something. There's no script, there's no title. I'd actually love to do one—I wanted to do one while it was still the '90s. I don't know if I'll get to with *Resident Evil*. It could be that *Resident Evil* takes us into '99. I don't know if I'll have time to do another *Dead* flick for the '90s.



“to me...(seeing)
blood in black-and-white is worse.
Gore in color seems very comic booky to me and certainly in a video game where it's just graphics and not...actors....(it) doesn't have any kind of tempting quality. It doesn't make you want more blood.”



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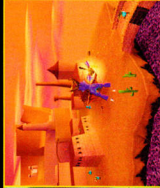
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GRUDGE MATCH



F-Zero X

Review Crew Scores: 9.0 9.0 9.0 9.0

F-Zero X's superior visuals manage to capture the look of the Super NES original while boosting the speed tremendously. The game's use of simple, flat-shaded textures means it can cram up to 29 other craft on screen without sacrificing speed. Oh, and your craft blows up real good.

The reviewers were torn on the music. While we all dug the remixes of the original tunes, some thought the heavy-metal tracks were cheesy. Still, the music gets your blood pumpin'.

Here's the great thing about this game's control: It's spot-on perfect and allows for plenty of finesse and technique—yet at the same time it seems to keep you on the verge of losing control. It's that subtle balance that makes the game so darn exciting when you're riding near the track's edge at blazing speed.

The advantage here has to go to F-Zero X. Not only does it deliver a lot of tracks (six per cup for the first three cups, then a fourth cup of randomly generated courses), what's here is amazing. The tracks pack loops, snaking tubes, tunnels, jumps and sudden drops. Put simply: This game will churn your stomach.

Graphics

Sound

Control

Tracks

WipeOut 64

Review Crew Scores: 7.5 8.0 7.5 7.5

WipeOut 64 looks good, with lots of track details, but it's still no prettier than the PlayStation versions. Track pop-up is a major problem, particularly in multiplayer.

Arguably the best music you'll hear in an N64 game, WipeOut 64's assortment of tunes includes bona-fide techno tracks from the Propellerheads and Flake that are of CD quality. And of course you get all the excellent engine and weapon sound effects.

Finally being able to use analog control is a big plus here. Minor impacts with course walls still sap major speed, which can be an annoyance until you learn the tracks.

The courses are nicely designed—we just wish there were more of them. You just don't get the variety you find in F-Zero X.



150
150

F-Zero X's fluid graphics, tighter control and better tracks make it the clear winner, although WipeOut may be more your thing if you crave combat from your racers.

They're both ultra-fast hovercraft racing games with fine pedigrees, but which delivers the most stomach-churning thrills for the buck—F-Zero X or WipeOut 64? We put 'em both to the Grudge Match test.



F-Zero has 30 vehicles, each with its own characteristics that go beyond just weight and speed. And they come in a greater variety of styles, too. You get fat ones, skinny ones, long ones, and each handles in its own unique way.



The randomly generated tracks in the X Cup alone make this the clear winner in the multiplayer category, since you and your pals will never race the same courses twice. But beyond that, the frame-rate stays fast and fluid with four players, while detail remains appreciably high.

Combat's not a big part of the gameplay, although ramming gets crucial in later levels, when you need to kill rivals. The Death Race Mode is pretty decent.



Even with 29 other cars on screen, this thing screams along at 60 frames per second. Although WipeOut's a bit faster in later tracks, you just get a better sense of sheer speed here.

Vehicles

Multiplayer

Combat

Speed

WipeOut 64's ships are simple variations of each other, with speed and weight as their defining characteristics.

Let's face it—four-player WipeOut is a very cool thing. If only it didn't wreck the frame-rate, cut out the backgrounds and shorten the track draw-in distance even more. Yuck.

Combat is an integral part of the basic gameplay, and fortunately you get loads of weapons and they launch with the visual pizzazz we expect from the series. As an N64 bonus, each team has its own exclusive weapon, too. Definitely get WipeOut 64 if battlin' is your thing.

This game gets really fast, but the faster it gets the more graphical glitches you'll see. Track draw-in problems ruin the effect.



F-Zero X



WipeOut 64

The Winner Is... F-Zero X



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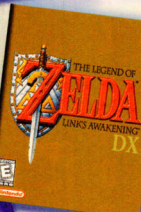
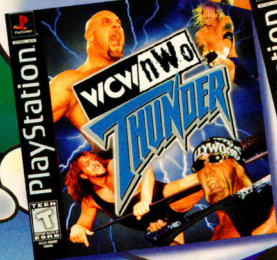
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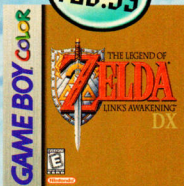
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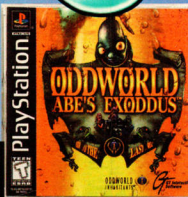
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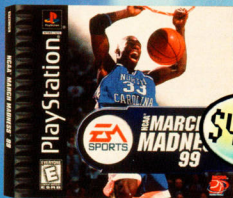


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1998 Readers' Choice Awards

Yep, it's that time of year again—time to put down your joypads and vote for the best of the best of 1998. But you gotta act quick. Complete your ballot and zip it back to us by Feb. 15 (sorry, photocopies not accepted). Or screw the post office and vote online at www.videogames.com.

Don't like our nominees? No problem. Write in your own picks in the space provided; just make sure to choose games released in the United States between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 1998. Check the April issue of *EGM* for the winners, as well as the editors' picks for the best of 1998.

Send ballots to:

EGM Reader's Choice Awards
Ziff-Davis Video Game Group
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Game of the Year: All Systems

- Banjo-Kazooie
- Crash Bandicoot: WARPED
- Gran Turismo
- The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time
- Metal Gear Solid
- NLF Blitz
- Panzer Dragoon Saga
- Resident Evil 2
- Spyro the Dragon
- Tekken 3

Write In: _____

Game of the Year: Nintendo 64

- Banjo-Kazooie
- F-Zero X
- The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time
- NLF Blitz
- Turok 2

Write In: _____

Game of the Year: PlayStation

- Gran Turismo
- Metal Gear Solid
- Resident Evil 2
- Tekken 3
- Xenogears

Write In: _____

Game of the Year: Saturn

- Burning Rangers
- House of the Dead
- Magic Knight Rayearth
- Panzer Dragoon Saga
- Shining Force III

Write In: _____

Action Game of the Year

- Banjo-Kazooie
- Crash Bandicoot: WARPED
- Spyro the Dragon
- Tomba!
- Turok 2

Write In: _____

Shooter of the Year

- Asteroids
- Einhänder
- G.Darius
- Star Soldier: Vanishing Earth
- Thunder Force V

Write In: _____

Adventure Game of the Year

- Heart of Darkness
- Metal Gear Solid
- Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus
- Resident Evil 2
- Tomb Raider III

Write In: _____

Strategy Game of the Year

- Bringandine
- C&C Red Alert: Retaliation
- FF Tactics
- Kartia
- Tactics Ogre

Write In: _____

Sports Game of the Year

- Hot Shots Golf
- Madden NFL 99 (N64/PS)
- NBA Live 99 (PS)
- NFL Blitz (N64)
- NFL GameDay 99

Write In: _____

Fighting Game of the Year

- Dead or Alive
- Destrega
- Rival Schools
- Street Fighter II Col.
- Tekken 3

Write In: _____

Racing Game of the Year

- F-Zero X
- Gran Turismo
- Moto Racer 2
- Need For Speed III
- Rally Cross 2

Write In: _____

RPG of the Year

- Breath of Fire III
- Panzer Dragoon Saga
- Parasite Eve
- Tales of Destiny
- Xenogears

Write In: _____

Action RPG of the Year

- Alundra
- Brave Fencer Musashi
- Granstream Saga
- Magic Knight Rayearth
- The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time

Write In: _____

Puzzle Game of the Year

- B-A-M 4
- Devil Dice
- Lemmings & Oh No, More Lemmings!
- Roll Away
- Tetris DX

Write In: _____

Best Graphics

- Banjo-Kazooie
- Crash Bandicoot: WARPED
- Gran Turismo
- The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time
- Metal Gear Solid

Write In: _____

Best Music


- FF Tactics
- The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time
- Metal Gear Solid
- Rogue Squadron
- Tekken 3

Write In: _____

Best Sound Effects

- Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus
- Gran Turismo
- The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time
- Metal Gear Solid
- NFL Blitz

Write In: _____

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Review Crew

EXCELLENT
10

AVERAGE
5

CRAP
1



Platinum Awards go to games that get four 10's, the best possible 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.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 1.0. This is the kind of pure crap, as our scale (above) explains.

In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ain't it?

Current Favorites

Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Turk 2: Seeds of Evil
Nectaris: Military Madness
Rogue Squadron

Favorite Genres:
RPGs, Action

Crispin Boyer



This month was the busiest of the year for Cris—and everyone else on the Crew—thanks to the mile-high pile of review games that avalanched on the office before Christmas. But rather than burning out, Cris has actually been walking around with a smile on his mug. Very few of the games he reviewed turned out to be crap. And even the few stinkers couldn't ruin his mood after beating Zelda 64.



John Davison

With the surprising number of games with bugs in them this holiday season, John's capacity for imaginative and uniquely English swear words has become more apparent. EGM's brand-new headquarters is a Pac-Man-like maze of cubes and offices through which his abusive bellowing echoes late at night. At least it adds a homey air to the new digs. Thank heavens we can give him Tetris DX to keep him quiet.

Current Favorites

Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Turk 2: Seeds of Evil
Tetris DX
Bust-A-Move 99

Favorite Genres:
Action, Adventure



Dean Hager

After enduring the recent relocation of EGM HQ, Dean realized that he hates moving! To him it's right up there with root canals, operations and parking tickets. Other things he doesn't like: rats, car repairs, Meatloaf (both kinds), Rush Limbaugh, tattoos and crappy games that waste his time. Things he does like: football, vitamins, guitars, absurd humor, liquor, re-runs of *Good Times* and great games.

Current Favorites

Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Zelda: Link's Awakening
R-Type Delta (Japan)
Street Fighter Alpha 3

Favorite Genres:
Strategy, Puzzle



Dan Hsu

Shoe is mad—both crazy mad and angry mad. Crazy mad because of *Jungle Madness* (from deadlines, of course) and *Tetris Fever* (you know, where you start daydreaming Tetris pieces falling over and over...). Angry mad because some fool is impersonating him on the AOL message boards (thanks for catching that, MadHader). Shoe only makes an occasional post on Usenet, as Shoe_EGM, just so you know...

Current Favorites

Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Zelda: Link's Awakening
Rogue Squadron
R-Type Delta (Japan)

Favorite Genres:
RPGs, Action

John Ricciardi



These past few months have made John very happy. First it was *Metal Gear Solid*. Then, *Game Boy Color*. Then came *Zelda 64*. And then, *R-Type Delta*. Then, *Dreamcast*. Then, *R4: Ridge Racer Type 4* arrived. And then *Rogue Squadron* and *Turk 2* hit. Soon after, *Link's Awakening DX* showed up. And finally, *Sonic Adventure* is expected in any day now. Was this an amazing year or what? Here's to a great '99!



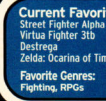
Shawn Smith

Shawn doesn't like the cold. It reminds him of his childhood, locked down in that basement so far away from the other children. But that's way too much information. Luckily, the arrival of a FINISHED *Zelda*: *Ocarina of Time* in the office has warmed Shawn's heart beyond belief. Consequently, he has been using our treasured gold *Zelda* cartridges as heating pads for "other" parts of his chilly body.

Current Favorites

Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Destrega
Turk 2: Seeds of Evil
Metal Gear Solid

Favorite Genres:
Action, Adventure



Current Favorites

Street Fighter Alpha 3
Virtua Fighter 3tb
Destrega
Zelda: Ocarina of Time

Favorite Genres:
Fighting, RPGs

Sushi-X

Sushi gets spoiled so easily. After weeks of playing VF3tb on the Dreamcast, he's been having a hard time looking at anything else. His favorite fighting game companies such as Capcom and Namco are signed on for Sega's new console, so it gets kind of annoying having to listen to his wishing out loud that they'll continue their franchise titles like *Tekken* and *Street Fighter* on DC. Hang on, Sushi!

BATTLETANX



Publisher: 3DO
Developer: 3DO
Featured In: EGM #113

3DO has achieved something truly unique—they've produced the world's most average game. So average is BattleTanx, it will be held up as an example for years to come as a shining hope for all people striving for mediocrity. A moderately enjoyable but simple tank game with average graphics, adequate sound, average controls and a **story line akin to something John Carpenter would have produced when going through the crap phase he had that spawned Escape From L.A.** It's not at all bad. It's just that if you ever wanted a perfect definition of a game that was destined for rental, this is it. As a single-player game it's OK. I wouldn't want to go overboard about it or anything, but it's an adequate way of killing a few hours if you've got nothing better to do. As a multiplayer game, though, it is actually pretty enjoyable. Those of you keen on Namco's Tokyo Wars will appreciate it's "big tanks, big bangs" theme. However, just like Tokyo Wars, you soon learn that although all your average guy needs to amuse himself for five minutes is the opportunity to blow the crap out of some of these, this amusement doesn't really last longer than five minutes. Rent it. Really...you may even end up renting it a few times if you dig the whole apocalyptic vibe. Just don't buy it. It's not worth the investment.

John D

As a one-player game, BattleTanx is a decidedly ho-hum experience. And the story line itself—which involves saving female queens from the ravages of post-apocalypse America—is so ridiculous it's nearly funny. **But it's the two- to four-player modes that kept me playing this game.** You get quite a few modes here, as well as the option for team play. Multiplayer lends the game a very much-appreciated Tokyo Wars feel.

Crispin

I kind of like this one for the same reason I like Chopper Attack—mindless destruction. After that it's pretty mediocre. **In thrifling is in blowing stuff up, rather than the thrill to win the game.** I'm not sure if that's good or bad, but even mindless destruction gets old after a while. Multiplayer is really the best way to play the game, although it's tough to read the radar screen. Overall I could see buying this for its decent multiplayer action.

Dean

BattleTanx may seem like a below-average, play-it-once-and-forget-about-it type of action game, but once you make it into some of the middle levels, game design is granted, blowing up tanks and placements becomes repetitive at times. But the varied objectives and scenarios in each level helps spice things up. The graphics and sounds are decent; what this game relies on is solid gameplay and an addictive multiplayer mode.

Shawn

VISUALS 6 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 7

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Big Guns, Big Bangs

Worst Feature: Average In Every Department

www.3do.com

BUST-A-MOVE 99



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Taito/Distinctive Developments
Featured In: N/A

Two Bust-A-Moves turned up for review this month, and although at first look they're pretty similar, **it's ironic that number three (99) seems to offer a bit more than number four.** There's a fairly justifiable argument that there wasn't actually anything wrong with Bust-A-Move 2, and that messing with any of it is just a waste of time. I was actually a pretty stoic supporter of this line of thought until about 2 a.m. the other morning when for us sat down and played BAM 99 for hours on multiplayer. Many of you surely have played four-player games in the past...and it's pretty damn fun. The only problem is that it squeezes all four play windows into a horizontal line along the middle of the screen, which is a bit strange. It bumps the resolution up to this too...and while it looks impressive, I think the "traditional" four corners approach might have been friendlier. On a small TV (even a 20") it's a bit flickery and it can be difficult to see the difference between orange and yellow bubbles. It's not just multiplayer that's improved, though. The single-player "puzzle" games are pretty complex. It doesn't have the combo system of BAM 4, but it has new bubbles that can trigger chain reactions, and it also requires you to do some fancy bouncing to complete puzzles. Definitely better than BAM 2: AE.

John D

The Bust-A-Move games haven't improved much through the years and have offered nothing but minor upgrades. That is, until this one. **Bust-A-Move 99 is really BAM 3 in disguise,** but with one very nice exclusive feature: four-player simultaneous play. While it's not the most exciting four-player mode in the world (once you're out, it may be a long time before the other players finish), **it's definitely a nice addition to this aging series.**

Dan

Don't just stand there—bust a move...again...with the same cute characters and bubbly Japanese feel, along with a few new game-play changes and modes. The new character-unique garbage blocks make things tricky and the four-player multiplayer mode is a **blast**—although you'll need to play it on a TV bigger than a 20" to avoid ruining your eyeballs. At first I thought this one was more of the same, but it's pretty decent.

Shawn

It's really impossible to dislike a Bust-A-Move game, and this one does pack enough cool new stuff to warrant its purchase if you already own BAM 2. The characters and their garbage blocks live up to the multiplayer aspect—as does the exclusive four-player mode. Of course, if you're still happy with BAM 2, you may want to pass on this installment, and hope Acclaim eventually releases BAM 4; and brings it to the N64.

Crispin

VISUALS 6 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 8

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Four-Player Mode

Worst Feature: Windows Too Small During Four-Player

www.acclaim.net

DUAL HEROES



Publisher: Electro Brain
Developer: Hudson Soft
Featured In: EGM #114

Go, go power heroes! I was expecting a pretty poor fighting game in Dual Heroes and for the most part, **I was right.** Dual Heroes has a small amount of attacks and the fighting engine is very generic with collision problems and unbalanced combos. The funny thing is, some attacks seem to just have a couple of frames of animation, but special moves, throws and winning animations have about 20. It tends to make the flow of the game uneven, with most of the match being choppy with some odd moments of fluidity. If you watch the ending credits, you'll see the amount of motion-captured actors they used to achieve the many fighting (and dancing) moves that make up the fighters' arsenal. What saves Dual Heroes from the abyss of dismal fighters like Deadly Arts is the funky Power Rangers-like characters complete with their own theme music. Dual Heroes is also good fun with two players (as all fighting games should be) because the characters have exaggerated moves just like super-heroes. I wish there were more characters and that more happened in the Story Mode. If you're not into the weird Japanese-style super-hero action motif, you should pass on this altogether. Without the campy music and characters, you're left with a very average fighter with limited play value.

Sushi

Man, I can't believe how many poor games are coming out for the N64 lately. Dual Heroes is just about the blandest fighting game I've ever played. The characters look like Power Rangers. The graphics are well below par for an N64 game and the **gameplay is unresponsive and clunky.** That about covers it. Oh yeah, the fighting modes are weird—Robots, Virtual Gamers—I can't think of any reason to recommend this one.

Dean

Like most of the recent, distinctly Japanese N64 fighters (i.e., Flying Dragon and Deadly Arts), Dual Heroes tries to bring something quirky to the fighting game genre but **manages to disappoint on nearly every level.** In this case, you get a weird robot-training mode that has you teaching an android the basics of brawling, but the fighting engine is so dull and uninspired that I quickly lost interest in the whole thing.

Crispin

How many N64 fighting games are so incredibly crappy that the CPU-controlled players can actually fall out of the ring after they've beaten you? One. Dual Heroes. It's up there with Deadly Arts competing for the title of "worst game ever." The graphics are terrible, the sound is appalling and the controls are unbearable—why use the analog stick if it's not taken advantage of? Pathetic. Rubbish. Dreadful. Avoid...like cooties.

John D

VISUALS 4 SOUND 4 INGENUITY 3 REPLAY 3

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Motion-Captured Moves

Worst Feature: Weak Gameplay

www.hudson.co.jp

FIFA 99



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Canada
Featured In: EGM #112

Another year, another FIFA. In 1998, EA tried to pull a fast one on us with World Cup 98, a nearly identical game to Road to World Cup 98. I lost faith in the FIFA series because of WC 98, so I wasn't really looking forward to FIFA 99. I'm happy to say, 99 brings to the table a significant number of improvements, enough for me to give this game a healthy recommendation. Overall, **FIFA 99 is a lot tougher and more realistic than its predecessors.** It's now easier to avoid slide tackles, a traditionally guaranteed turnover-creator in FIFA. The defensive AI is much smarter, forcing you to take longer shots—you can't drive right up to the goal as often as the older FIFA games let you. (While this takes away a little of the arcade-level excitement of soccer video games, this definitely creates a more realistic soccer experience.) The goalies' behavior is also more lifelike. They don't make as many ludicrous dives for easy saves, and they come out of the goal more often for those one-on-one situations. Overall, I'd have to say I'm very pleased with this year's FIFA. It's the most realistic one yet. Non-soccer enthusiasts, however, may want to pass. The tough AI can make for some pretty frustrating, pretty low-scoring and uneventful games (again...just like in real life). Now, if EA could only smooth out the damn frame-rate...**Dan**

FIFA finally makes that tiny step forward that places it in alongside ISS98. In fact, it's now **very much like Konami's classic, only with proper license stuff.** The new features bring some much-needed AI tweaks to the game, and the new system of volleys, headers and chest trapping makes for a more natural feel. The semi-auto goalies seem to be just about there now, and the fakes and jukes are a welcome addition. Also, it looks great. **John D**

This FIFA series continues to take big strides with every new edition. This year's standouts include the juke, chest trap and header abilities. The movements look fluid and realistic, and add a load of defensive and offensive abilities for your player. Smarter AI puts your teammates in better positions to make through passes, and using them for fast breaks is great fun. **This is by far the deepest and most entertaining FIFA yet.** **Dean**

FIFA 99 is easily the best FIFA game yet, with obvious improvements not only in the game's AI and controls but in its aesthetics too. The frame-rate is finally solid (unless you've got a RAM Pak, in which case I recommend you steer clear of the choppy "Super High" resolution mode), and the many new moves you can execute are not only useful, but fun. The more sim-oriented IGM and IGT features are surprisingly user-friendly, too. **John R**

VISUALS 8 SOUND 8 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 8

GOLDEN NUGGET 64



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Westwood Studios
Featured In: N/A

Remember how lame the original Golden Nugget for the PlayStation was? After you got through the sluggish interface and the multitude of options, you were then forced to interact with...Adam West!? Uhh...OK. Well, apparently someone at Westwood Studios got the message. Golden Nugget 64 is a lean, mean gambling machine. No FMV, no inane story mode and no Adam West (no offense, Batman). It's stripped down to the bare essence of gambling, and it's simple to play. Check in, select your purse and shoot off to the tables. **The menu interface is amazingly functional, as are all the games.** The crisp 3D graphics lay out the detail of the tables nicely, although occasionally it's hard to discern clubs from spades. Still, no big deal. And while you need to think of gambling games in a different way, this one does more than simply teach you the games—it's actually fun on its own merits. I found the Poker and Blackjack games to be most enjoyable. The dealers distribute the cards quickly and keep the overall pace of the game speedy. The voice work is spot-on as well. The two-player mode is tricky; some of the games (Poker, Texas Hold 'Em) can't support multiplayer due to card exposure problems. Still, this is the best gambling game I've played. It got me so pumped, I wanna go to Vegas! **Dean**

Golden Nugget 64 gets kudos for packing in so many games. Texas Hold 'Em is especially nice, since you don't see it too often. The four-player mode is great as well, especially for games like Roulette, where players have their own window in which to examine the table and bet. **The presentation is a yawn-fest** though—all you do is methodically pick a game and play it. No story mode, no virtual casino (which would've been ideal). **Dan**

What can you say? **It really is everything you'd want from a casino with the exception of free drinks and old ladies playing the slots at 4 a.m.** There are more than enough different games, and they're all presented in a clear and easy-to-understand way. Add the excellent presentation, great speech and the mellow music and you have a fine gambling experience. It won't tickle everyone's fancy, but it's fun...especially multiplayer. **John D**

For a casino video game to be long-lasting and worthwhile, it has to have some sort of angle—some sort of hook. If it doesn't, all you do is play a bunch of rather boring casino games. Unfortunately, Golden Nugget 64 doesn't have any of these so-called hooks. At times this is nice because you can jump right into a game without having to worry about extraneous options and such, but then a little something extra would've been nice. **Shawn**

VISUALS 7 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 8

ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME



Game of the Month

Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Featured In: EGM #113

I can't say I'm surprised in the least at how incredible Zelda: Ocarina of Time turned out to be. I've always had extremely high expectations for the Zelda games, and I've never been let down once. Why should things be any different this time? **Once again Shigeru Miyamoto and the wizards at Nintendo have delivered a truly epic gaming experience that no one should be allowed to miss.** The game's creators have managed to take everything that was great about the 2D Zelda games—the exploration, the puzzles, the dungeons, the loads of hidden secrets, etc.—and translate it all into 3D flawlessly. The game's beautifully detailed world is so vast and immersive that you'll find yourself constantly losing track of the real world. The controls are excellent, too. The auto-jump feature helps add to the immersiveness (it's far better than I expected it to be), and Z-targeting makes combat a snap. You'll have no problems with the game's length; either, it'll take an average gamer about 30 hours to beat, and trust me—there'll always be something to do, even after you've finished the game. I do have a couple of minor fannyish gripes, but I'll get into them some other time when I have more space. Oh, one last thing—this game has the coolest final battle/ending sequence of any game ever. **John R**

This game packs amazing visuals, beautiful music, a superbly crafted story and rock-solid gameplay, but what amazes me most about Zelda is just how satisfied I felt after beating it. I mean, it delivers on so many levels. Aside from the epic quest, you get so very little side jobs and puzzles that you'll never get bored. And the dungeons are masterpiece level design. Heck, even watching the sun rise over Hyrule fills me with awe. **Crispin**

This is a legendary game. Everything Zelda offers—the engaging story, the vast areas to explore, the beautiful music—you wouldn't believe could fit on a cart. There's not one game to whom I wouldn't recommend Ocarina of Time. While it isn't perfect (controls take a little getting used to, graphics aren't up to Banjo's standards), Zelda has worlds of gameplay going for it. This is one of gaming's best. Do not...repeat...**DO NOT miss it.** **Dan**

Graphics: wonderful. Sound: glorious. Controls: perfect. Atmosphere: incredible. Is it the finest game ever made? Quite possibly. **Only Miyamoto seems to be able to bring out the kid that lives deep down inside everyone,** allowing you to enjoy his games exactly as he intended. It's an incredibly enjoyable experience, impossible to play for short periods of time...you'll get sucked in so much you'll always play for hours. **John D**

VISUALS 10 SOUND 10 INGENUITY 10 REPLAY 9

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Realistic Gameplay

Worst Feature: Frame-Rate...Again

www.easports.com

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Realistic AI

Worst Feature: No Multiplayer Poker

www.eas.com

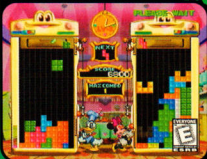
Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Absolutely Incredible Dungeons

Worst Feature: Where's The Classic Zelda Music?!

www.nintendo.com

MAGICAL TETRIS CHALLENGE



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: EGM #114

Tetris has been around for a while. It's been cloned, refined, rereleased, pirated...you name it. For those reasons, any new Tetris should have nothing but improvements. Magical Tetris Challenge is a great game that offers an interesting twist, but a few shortcomings prevent this version from being the best one out there. Let's start with the good. Magical Tetris is a lot of fun, especially head-to-head against a friend. The new Obstacle and Counter Blocks add some competitive spice to the original formula. Players can't help but go for huge clears, just to screw opponents with big and clumsy garbage pieces. If this new stuff isn't your thing, you can always fall back on regular Tetris, an already flawless game. The bad? I don't like having to race for the one shared "next piece." I also don't like any words like "Tetris" or "Pentris" obscuring the playing field, even if it's only for a brief moment. Also, the game should let you turn off Quick Drop like you can do with the Temporary Landing System (both are cool features that should be optional). Finally, why doesn't the game let you save data (most lines cleared, high scores, etc.)? That's an obvious feature that needs to be in every Tetris game. Oh well. These minor negatives don't change the fact that overall, this is a fun cart.

Dan

If you're an N64 owner who's been itching for a good version of Tetris to come along, MTC is definitely for you. The differences between Magical Tetris and classic ("Updown") Tetris are subtle, but they make for an interesting (and fun) twist on the classic theme. The combo system adds a new level of strategy to the game, while the Instant Drop and T.L.S. features make for even tighter control. Watch out for the cheesy story, though.

John R

With several interesting innovations, a load of new and extremely tricky blocks and good old-fashioned Tetris gameplay, Magical Tetris Challenge is a sure buy. In fact, the only reason I can see to not make this one a permanent part of your N64 game library is if you have something REALLY against the goofy (no pun intended) and somewhat childish Disney characters in the game. Aside from that, this one's as solid as a rock.

Shawn

I'm not this crazy about the Disney characters, but hey—it is still Tetris, and it still packs limitless replay value. The Magical Mode adds Capcom's trademark twist to the standard Tetris formula, not to mention some truly bizarre garbage blocks and the ability to clear more than four rows at a time. Multiplayer's fun but perhaps not frantic enough for those used to the more hectic gameplay of Puzzle Fighter or Tetris Attack.

Crispin

VISUALS 6 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 10

MILO'S ASTRO LANES



Publisher: Crave Entertainment
Developer: Player 1
Featured In: EGM #113

Ahh, and I thought Glover was a weird concept for a game. If anything, this one takes the prize for best follow-through on a weak premise. At first I thought the bowling bit could be just one small piece of a large and involved game. Nope, it's really just bowling. Not ordinary bowling either; it's bowling with aliens! What went wrong here? When you think about how deep an N64 game can be, like GoldenEye for example, and then you see this, you just have to wonder. What makes it even sadder is the fact that the bowling isn't good either. There aren't any traditional bowling physics involved. It's all "wacky" stuff: ramps, voids, hills and valleys. Special power-ups make it even loonier by allowing your ball to shrink, expand and even explode. That's about the extent of the flavor in this game. Otherwise it's a series of matches against a slew of mildly amusing aliens. You're Milo, an aspiring galactic bowler. It's your dream to defeat every interplanetary species you can. It's a quest for glory, indeed. (That was sarcasm, by the way.) The story line seems simple and thrown together, but I still can't justify this as a kid's title. I think they'd get just as bored as any other person. In fact, I'm not sure who this game is geared toward. If you have a bowling Jones, you'd be better off doing the real thing.

Dean

If you are a child—a very young child who is amused by colorful graphics and snappy quips, and who also happens to be into bowling—then Milo's Astro Lanes may interest you. If you're not one of these strange children described above, then don't bother with this one. In fact, MAL isn't even worth renting—it is just isn't fun. The only thing I enjoy about this game are the offensive and defensive power-ups you can pick up.

Shawn

Hey! Wouldn't it be great if you could have, like, bowling...only in space with aliens and stuff—and with power-ups and crazy lanes? Err...no. I did try. Honest I did, but no matter which way I looked at it, I don't recall ever actually enjoying myself with Milo's. I like being able to interfere with opponents' throws, but ultimately it just didn't do for me. Rent it with friends if you don't like "real" lanes—in any sense of the word.

John D

Bowling? With power-ups? On miniature golf-type lanes? Sounds like fun, doesn't it? Unfortunately, the concept scores higher than the execution. The graphics aren't sharp enough, the controls aren't precise enough, and the physics aren't real enough. Those three factors turn Milo's into a game that uses more luck and chance than any type of skill. This game is better suited for children who don't know any better.

Dan

VISUALS 4 SOUND 3 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 5

NBA JAM 99



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Iguana
Featured In: EGM #113

This is quite a surprise. As much as I liked Kobe's NBA CourtSide, I knew there had to be another N64 game that would satisfy my roundball needs. NBA Jam 99 is not perfect, but it's certainly the best simulation available on the N64 in my opinion. The AI of the computer is pretty good, maybe even better than Kobe's. Jam 99 has good player rotations and nice animations overall. Of course being that this is a Jam game, the dunks look and feel great. You can unleash the trademark monster jams in the "no rules" arcade mode, which is great when you just want to quit. The only downside is that you can't go nuts as nuts as you'd like and the arcade mode retains too much of the game's sim aspects. If you wanted a direct follow-up in the tradition of the Jam series, you'll be disappointed. The sim modes are where the main action is, which is fine by me. If you've watched countless NBC basketball telecasts like myself, you'll either love or hate the commentary by Bill Walton (one of the two commentators available). He says some of the most idiotic comments ever heard in a telecast, but I love it. Jam 99 has a tendency to repeat phrases quite a bit, but so does Bill Walton in real life. Perfect! The season mode is great, and the CPU will give you a pretty good run in the harder difficulties.

Sushi

NBA Jam 99 has a totally different vibe than CourtSide or NBA Live 99 (the system's current best). To be fair it doesn't look that bad. The detail is nice and sharp, much better than most N64 games. The animation is pretty good as well. But, it certainly doesn't have the same level of gameplay as Live or CourtSide: Single-player is OK, but not nearly as fun as the two-player Jam Mode. Bottom line—Jam 99 is a rent-a-player title.

Dean

I don't know what Sushi's smokin', but there's no way Jam 99 comes even close to topping CourtSide or Live 99. (Then again, how many ninjas do you know who've got any skills on the court? Yeah, me neither...) Jam 99 isn't bad by any means, but aside from its pretty hip-hop graphics, it's a decidedly average ball game that's a bit too slow for its own good. The Jam Mode feels nothing like the old Jam games, either. Disappointing.

John R

NBA Jam 99 isn't very NBA Jam-like, is it? Acclaim and Iguana have toned down the arcade style of play, making it nowhere near as intense as it used to be. It basically plays like a regular game with all penalties turned off. There's a simulation mode also, but it's not very solid either—fans of ball games probably won't like it. Overall, NBA Jam 99 has a nice-looking exterior but that's about it. I'm afraid. Look elsewhere.

Shawn

VISUALS 8 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 7

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: New Garbage Blocks

Worst Feature: Getting Hit by Those New Garbage Blocks

www.cravegames.com

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: The Sound Of The Falling Pins

Worst Feature: Wacky Space Physics

www.acclaim.net

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Bill Walton

Worst Feature: Bill Walton's Repetitive Commentary

www.acclaim.net

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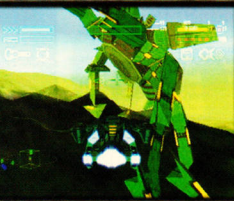


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NHL BREAKAWAY 99



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Iguana West
Featured In: EGM #112

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: You Don't Have To Buy It

Worst Feature: Some Poor Fools Will

www.acclaim.net

Uh-oh. Did someone from Midway get a job over at Acclaim? Breakaway 99 suffers from the same problem that Midway's '98 and Olympic Hockey '98 did: It's EXACTLY the same as its predecessor. A year ago, Breakaway was definitely solid, and since EA's NHL series hadn't arrived on the N64 yet, it was actually the best choice for hockey fans. Well, this simply isn't the case anymore. Breakaway 99 is still plagued with the same amateurish problems it had last year (floaty puck physics, questionable control, shoddy goalie AI, etc.), and it doesn't even come close to competing with EA's far superior NHL 99. **It's literally the exact same game as last year, except for the slightly revised menu screens, the adjusting of the crease and the addition of the Nashville Predators (they also updated the All-Star teams so they're no longer Eastern and Western, but rather North America and the World). Heck, even the manual is exactly the same; save for a few font changes and some new screenshots. Talk about a rip-off. My window for recommendation on this game is extremely small: If you've never played Breakaway 98, AND you have no interest in the much better NHL 99 from EA, then, well, give this one a try. Otherwise go yourself a favor and stay far away from this.**

John R

It's deja vu all over again. I thought this game was pretty good last year but not enough to go a whole year unchanged! It's not entirely the same, though. Stats are updated and the expansion Nashville team is present. After that **it looks and plays just like Breakaway 98**. Midway pulled this same stunt with the Gretzky games. Definitely lame. There's no reason to buy this edition if you have Breakaway 98. Buy NHL 99 instead.

Dean

I didn't review last year's Breakaway 98, so when I pulled it out of the closet to compare it with this year's game, I was shocked to find that the two games are virtually identical. You call this a sequel? **Aside from some really minor changes, there's absolutely nothing new here**, and to top it off, EA's NHL 99 is a much better game anyway. Breakaway 99 isn't terrible, but I can't think of a single good reason why I'd recommend it.

Dave

It's amazing how a game can be average one year and the follow-up can be just as average a whole year later. **Breakaway 99 suffers from sluggish play controls and a choppy frame-rate**. The AI is pretty poor with the goalies being especially easy to walk all over. The graphics aren't bad, but pale in comparison with EA's NHL 99. What you have left is a game that needs a lot more fixed. It's not all bad, but there's so much better.

Sushi

VISUALS 5 SOUND 5 INGENUITY 2 REPLAY 5

PENNY RACERS



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Takara
Featured In: EGM #111

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Trading Car Accessories

Worst Feature: Not Enough Tracks In Circuit Mode

www.thq.com

Mario Kart 64 has the multiplayer kart racing game locked down. Diddy Kong Racing brought the one-player game up to speed. Now Penny Racers attempts to move into Nintendo's and Rare's territory with a new racer that, amazingly enough, isn't a blatant rip-off. The best feature Penny Racers has that the other two games don't is the accessories system, where you can take valuable car parts from last-place opponents. Without this, I would have little to no reason to play Penny Racers. It's rather fun trying to beat someone on a street level, just so you can steal his/her snow tires for use on the ice levels. And it's extremely gratifying playing the same easy levels over and over against the tough and cheap CPU AI just so you can steal all of its cool items. Obviously, this game has potential. **To bad the single-player game gets old real quick** (because the Circuit Mode only has nine tracks). How's the multiplayer (the real reason to play kart racers)? Frustratingly lacking. With four players, you can only race on custom courses (while it's cool to be able to create tracks, they all share the same environmental graphics, making them all look alike). Besides, four-player games are only fun and fair if you have plenty of Penny Racin' friends who have the same level/amount of car parts.

Dan

You have to like Mario Kart to really appreciate Penny Racers. They're similar both in gameplay characteristics and graphics. **The kiddie element is a little too strong for me**, even though I know the game is quite deep with strategy. The huge amount of car mods and the cannibalizing thing are testimony to that. I do like the track editor—it's a great option to have. Overall it's not my type of racer but I'm sure Kart fans will like it.

Dean

Although the control and tracks here aren't nearly as good as those in Mario Kart 64, Penny Racers makes up for its gameplay shortcomings in other ways. **Your ability to customize your car adds an incredible amount of replay value**. And it really adds to the multiplayer aspect, too, since winners can swipe parts from their loser pals. A few more tracks would be nice, but at least you get an easy-to-use track editor.

Crispin

Does Penny Racers have the Mario Kart-killer formula every third party wishes it had? In two words: no way. Penny Racers has a lot of cool stuff going for it, like the track editor and weapon upgrades, but it lacks the brilliant track design and magical qualities that make Mario Kart 64 so kick-ass. **And what's up with the tiny number of tracks?** Sure I can create more, but those can't be used in the standard circuits against the CPU.

Sushi

VISUALS 7 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 8

SOUTH PARK



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Iguana
Featured In: EGM #114

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: South Park Sense Of Humor

Worst Feature: South Park Sense Of Humor (If You Hate It)

www.acclaim.net

Although derived from the Turuk 2 engine and very obviously a third-person game, don't be mistaken into thinking South Park is your typical 3D blaster. It really is much simpler than that. At its heart it's a really, really old-school shooter that happens to be presented within a 3D environment. It's so old school in concept that the bad guys come in "waves." Wander around the well-presented cartoon looking environments for a bit and then BOOM all of a sudden you're faced with a horde of bad guys. Wander a bit closer to your goal and you're faced with another, and another, until you reach the bigger bad guys who are converging on the town of South Park. It's like Galaxian and Missile Command mixed with Doom, but with some sick humor thrown in. The presentation really is superb, the graphics—although suffering from some overly zealous fogging—are great throughout, especially in hi-res with the 4 MB Pak, and the speech is incredible. **The real laughs come in the multiplayer games**, though. It may just be a simple "every kid for himself" affair, but the abuse that the characters heap onto each other, coupled with some of the seriously bizarre weapons, makes it a great laugh. Definitely something for fans of the show. **Nothing revolutionary, but extremely entertaining.**

John D

It's a good thing this game has the South Park license. It's a good thing it captures the look of the show. And it's a good thing it's so damn funny, because otherwise **there's a somewhat dull game under all the fart jokes and high links**. You get no puzzles to solve here; you only blast wave after wave of enemies. Even multiplayer is a bit limited. Still, the characters, weapons and loads of voice make it all worthwhile.

Crispin

If you're a South Park fan you're probably going to buy this game regardless of what I say. Still, be warned—South Park is a mildly entertaining game, but **don't expect anywhere near the amount of depth you'd find in Turuk 2 or GoldenEye**. The gameplay is extremely simplistic (almost to the point of mindless idocity), but the humor makes it all worthwhile—at least once or twice. Fans of the show will no doubt be satisfied.

John R

As a one-player game, I have to say that apart from the amusing South Park samples, this sucks. It's a dull, repetitive and monotonous shooter that's dressed up in its best 3D action game finery. **Multiplayer is where you'll get your kicks**, though. Again, the gameplay is simple—it's just a big blastfest—the humor and silly weapons make it a great party game. I'll take anyone on...I'll beat you all with my pissballs of death!

Sushi

VISUALS 7 SOUND 9 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 7

STAR SOLDIER: V.E.



Publisher: Electro Brain
Developer: Hudson Soft
Featured In: N/A

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Great Combo/Scoring System

Worst Feature: No Two-Player, And It's Kind Of Short

www.hudson.co.jp

Star Soldier is a tough game for me to rate. On one hand, I can see people loving it for its extremely well-balanced gameplay and in-depth combo/scoring system. On the other hand, I can see people hating it because you can run through it on the Beginner difficulty in about 45 minutes. Unfortunately, I have a feeling most people will end up going with the latter, which is too bad because at its core, **Star Soldier: Vanishing Earth is an excellent shooter that provides some serious challenge on the harder difficulty levels** (specifically the Master level). Yes, I agree—it could've been longer. There are actually three hidden special missions, but chances are most people will never even see them. But on the other hand, if you're into playing for high scores (which has always been a staple of the Star Soldier series, especially in Japan), I can't see how anyone could dismiss this game in only one rental period.

There's just too much depth to the scoring system. And on top of that, there are two very cool time-trial modes that give you either two or five minutes to rack up as many points as possible before time runs out. The bottom line is this: If you're into shooters that require more than just quick reflexes to master, you should check this out. The lack of a two-player mode does kinda stink, though.

John R

Normally I'm prepared to tolerate some bad presentation, especially for a shooter, but Star Soldier's graphics work against the gameplay. Sometimes it looks so bad, you can't see what's going on. It pretends to be all clever and 3D, but ends up just being a confusing mess of similarly colored backgrounds and splines. Not the greatest example ever...it's real old school and doesn't compare well with other recent efforts.

John D

I don't think I've ever played such an average shooter in my life. Sure, Star Soldier has a few secret paths, some flashy graphics and a combo system for points, but it just doesn't have enough oomph to be long-lasting. It actually reminds me of some no-name arcade shooter. For \$30-35 I'd consider picking up SS so I could have a shooter on my N64, but it's probably better off as a rental—you should be able to beat it in a day or two.

Shawn

I never thought I'd see an old-school shooter on the N64, so I'm especially pleased to say this first entry for the system is pretty darn good. You get classic top-down gameplay here with a cool twist that's unique to the Star Soldier series. Achieving a high score is the ultimate goal, and—as in Einhänder—you earn major points by stringing together kills for massive combo bonuses. It all makes for a surprising amount of strategy.

Crispin

VISUALS 6 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY 6

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON



Publisher: Nintendo/LucasArts
Developer: LucasArts/Factor 5
Featured In: EGM #111

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Detailed Graphics

Worst Feature: Extreme Difficulty Of Final Stages

www.nintendo.com

While I would have preferred a dogfight game set in space rather than based on the first level of Shadows of the Empire, Rogue Squadron still captures the feel of the

Star Wars flicks—and that alone is enough to pump up the game's score. The music, radio chatter (featuring a Mark Hamill sound-alike) and sound effects are all phenomenal, but it's the graphics that really shine. Vehicle models are amazingly detailed, while the rolling terrain (which you can scorch with your blasters) is littered with sprawling cities, Imperial bases, even scurrying stormtroopers you can strafе. And while Rogue Squadron looks fine in standard resolution, you'll definitely want the RAM Pak to play the game in hi-res—although the frame-rate suffers a bit and the virtual-cockpit view is too choppy. The 16 missions—all of which are interspersed with slick in-game cinemas—offer a decent variety, often mixing multiple objectives such as escort and search-and-destroy. While most of the first 14 missions offer a decent challenge, the last few are insanely difficult. You'll need to destroy every structure in previous missions to gather weapon upgrades, but you'll want to refly them anyway to earn Gold Medals (no easy feat) and access the three kick-ass bonus missions. I only wish it had multiplayer.

Crispin

It makes sense—take the best part of Shadows of the Empire and make an entire game out of that style of gameplay. Ah, but in addition to this, **Rogue Squadron has incredible hi-res graphics, tons of voice and an overall solid feel.** On the downside, some of the missions get a bit repetitious but luckily others have more interesting objectives that help to get things moving again. Still, I think Rogue Squadron is worth a buy.

Shawn

It really is just like the first level of Shadows of the Empire blown out into a full game. The attention to detail is stunning throughout, with some brilliant subtle touches that suck you in to the Star Wars ambience. It's tough, but it's extremely rewarding if you go out of your way to get perfect results on each level. If there was ever a way of rewarding diligent gameplay, giving bonus Star Wars stuff has to rank up there with the best.

John D

Rogue Squadron is easily my favorite console Star Wars game yet. I wasn't expecting too much from it, but to my surprise the game is actually a lot of fun to play, and the graphics and sounds are awesome. The missions are diverse and challenging (the bonus one rock), and the whole presentation is sweet. I wish there was a multiplayer mode, but aside from this minor oversight, I'm quite satisfied. Be sure to play w/ the Expansion Pak!

John R

VISUALS 10 SOUND 9 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 7

TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Iguana
Featured In: EGM #112

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Hi-Res Graphics (w/ RAM Pak)

Worst Feature: Too Few Save Points

www.acclaim.net

Easily one of the most visually impressive games on the N64 (especially with the 4MB Pak), Turok 2 is a significant improvement over the original. Obviously taking some cues from the likes of GoldenEye (especially for the multiplayer stuff, which is a good laugh—especially Frag Tag), it's certainly one of the most ambitious console games of this style. I don't want to spoil this and sound too negative, but there are some problems that detract from the fun of it all. As any honest guy will tell you, size really does matter—and T2 doesn't suffer in any way in that department. It's huge! But to keep with the analogy for a moment, it's not just about the size, it's what you do with it that's important—and in places T2 is downright clumsy. Mostly it's just too damn big, and it can be pretty unforgiving. I must say, I object to the way some of the "adventure" elements are spaced out—and there are really aren't enough save points.

Be prepared to leave your N64 on for days. There are also some frame-rate issues when there's a lot of action. Not usually that much of a problem, but when it drops too low it becomes impossible to aim your weapons. Also, in multiplayer mode, we saw the game crash twice...which we can't forgive. Despite the flaws though, it's a great game—just not as good as it could've been. Shame.

John D

This may seem like an odd complaint, but I'm actually annoyed that Turok 2's levels are so damn big. If you could save anywhere, I'd be happy, but the limited amount of save points coupled with the fact that it's really easy to get lost in the game's huge levels really irks me. Still, the game's atmosphere and graphics kick ass (despite some slowdown), and the four-player mode are fantastic. I'd buy it for the multiplayer stuff alone.

John R

Despite all its little flaws—namely, choppy frame-rates, a few bugs, some tedious bits and a lack of save points—Turok 2 is still just the epic, spectacular-looking game N64 owners need to fill the void after Zelda. And as with GoldenEye, you'll be playing Turok's multiplayer modes a year from now (in the insanely fun four-player Frag-Tag monkey Mode nearly made me miss deadline). Not quite as good as GoldenEye, but close.

Crispin

Turok 2 is an excellent example of how to make a proper sequel. Everything about the game is bigger—MUCH bigger. Bigger graphics (thanks to the RAM Pak), bigger levels (that'll really piss you off, quite frankly) and achieving emies both in size and intelligence. My main two gripes are the distance between save points and the somewhat touchy analog control when moving and aiming. Still, it's a VERY impressive title.

Shawn

VISUALS 10 SOUND 9 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 8

VIRTUAL POOL 64



Publisher: Crave Entertainment
Developer: Celeris/Interplay
Featured In: EGM #113

Once you get used to the general inaccuracy of the aiming and physics systems in Virtual Pool 64, the game actually gets pretty good. But that's the problem. If this title is truly a simulation of pool—one that creates a "virtual" environment—then nothing should be compromised...you shouldn't have to get used to anything. **When I line up a shot that would do the job in real-life pool, I expect the ball I'm aiming at in the game to do the same thing**—not almost make it into the pocket and then bounce off of the cushion. And I've played a lot of pool—enough to know when a ball should go in. Now don't get me wrong...I didn't miss every shot I took because of the game's aiming system and ball physics—there's just a certain amount of error that occurs. But I think you get my point. Now, the game's overall feel is pretty good other than the physics/aiming problem. There are plenty of game types and play modes to choose from as well, so it'll definitely last you a long time. Another good point is the impressive graphics in the game. Of course, it's obvious more time was spent on them than the music, because I've heard better sound and variety in the demo on my Casio keyboard. Overall, I recommend renting this one first to see if you can get used to the problems I've mentioned.

Shawn

From a features standpoint, Virtual Pool 64 is impressive. It gives you plenty of pool games (you can even make up your own rule variations). The control is awesome—it uses the analog stick in a way that feels perfect for pool. Everything seems to indicate that the ideal pool sim, but the lack of any type of story mode makes this a dry gaming experience. The poor camera zooming also hurts; you'll miss some table action because of it.

Dan

For the most part I like this title. The selection of games plus the overall physics are both well done. **I'm not crazy about the analog control though.** Trying to manipulate the stick for a soft shot can be tricky while full-power is not always automatic. To me the generic shot meter used in most other pool games is more comfortable. Considering the N64 has no other pool titles, VR Pool 64 can provide enough action for pool freaks.

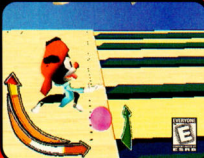
Dean

VR Pool 64 is definitely the most in-depth, feature-heavy pool sim I've ever played. It's got everything a serious pool fan could ask for, and it's actually comprehensive enough that newbies could easily improve their real game just by playing and practicing with it. The only thing the game lacks is a bit of personality (the presentation is rather bland) and a better camera. Minor gripes aside, I really think pool fans will dig this.

John R

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	7	8

ANIMANIACS TEN PIN ALLEY



Publisher: ASC Games
Developer: Saffire
Featured In: EGM #112

Before you dismiss this one as just another wacky game—think again. Remember, it uses the same game engine as the original Ten Pin Alley, which in my opinion, has the **most accurate bowling physics of any game on the market.** Spin control as well as power and release point provide a simple, yet effective interface. In essence, you can develop your own style, be it heavy spin, arc or just straight-down-the-line. That control element alone makes the game really good. On the other hand, the cartoon theme is a bit over-the-top. Everything from the sound effects to the silly Animaniacs lineup screams cartoony goodness. Top it off with several wacky venues and this lighthearted package is complete. If you haven't guessed, the game is heavily geared toward the young folks. If you already own Ten Pin Alley, don't think of this as a sequel. Basically it's been heavily modified to incorporate the Animaniacs characters and cartoony environments and that's about all. While it's out of the ordinary for a game to go "kiddie," it's done rather well here. The play mechanics are solid, the characters are nicely amusing, and it's easy to learn. Why wouldn't kids like it? I'd even take it over Brunswick Bowling (I don't care what Sushi says). Kids should like it quite a bit, but otherwise stick with the original TPA.

Dean

There's really no reason to buy this game if you already own Ten Pin Alley—unless you're a big-time Animaniacs freak. But even these characters aren't a big draw; they're crudely modeled and spout lame one-liners. Still, underneath this lies Ten Pin Alley's ultra-fun gameplay and party-game appeal. If you don't own the original, well, get it. Otherwise buy this update for your kids or if you can't get enough of the Animaniacs.

Crispin

I think if you're gonna make bowling into a video game, then it's best to make it as kicky as possible. And that's why I really get a kick out of this game's easy-to-learn interface and light feel. **It may be simple to play, but it allows for a lot of finesse, too—not to mention it's a great multiplayer game.** Trouble is, I liked the original Ten Pin Alley just as much. I'm not an Animaniacs fan, so I see no reason to buy this update.

Dan

As some of you know, I'm a big bowling fan. And, while I really like Brunswick Bowling, I believe Ten Pin has a lot to offer as well. Animaniacs TPA is just like the original Ten Pin Alley with different characters (obviously). They've also taken liberties with the alleys, making a few of them look like attractions at a fun house. **The gameplay is solid which is the most important thing but it's too juvenile for me.** Kids will love it.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	5	7

BUST A GROOVE



Publisher: 989 Studios
Developer: Enix/Metro
Featured In: EGM #113

It was only a matter of time before we saw another title that capitalized off of the rhythm game PaRappa pioneered. Lucky for us it happens to be a good one. Bust A Groove has excellent dancing animation and some great music. One of the things I have to say right off the bat is that the translation of Japanese lyrics into English is pretty sad. The words just don't seem to fit the music too well. Fortunately, the majority of the music was already in English or had no words at all, so the tunes are still infectious. The nice thing about Bust A Groove is that **it has lots of replay value both as a one-player game and a two-player game.** Each character has an ending and there are several hidden characters to unlock. Advanced players have the option of playing without the buttons displayed on the screen which is really the way to go. Each character has a set routine that has its own separate branches and possible combo combinations which require some timing and a good memory. It's pretty cool when you have two good players going at it without the on-screen buttons, because you're not sure what kind of move one guy (or gal) will mix up the other. The one thing I recommend is that you make sure you like the songs because you'll be hearing them a lot. Overall, a fun, fun game.

Sushi

For a PaRappa (a personal favorite) clone, Bust A Groove sure falls short. This dancing game doesn't have anywhere near the personality, fun or quirksiness of SCEA's rappin' game. The best thing Groove's got going for it is the dancing animation—the moves are incredible. The music, for the most part, isn't bad either. But outside of that, nothing is crying out, "Keep playing me!" or "Come back for more!" Boring and repetitive.

Dan

I think it's pretty safe to say that if you liked PaRappa the Rapper, you're gonna like Bust A Groove. While it doesn't quite have the same overall charm as PaRappa does, it's more fun to play, particularly because of the surprisingly enjoyable two-player mode. The music is very good (some stupid lyrics though), and the animation is great. This is one of those games that even non-gamers will easily get into. You just better have rhythm!

John R

It really frickin' frustrates me that I find some of the stages in this so damn hard. I've got a pretty good sense of rhythm. I'm no John Travolta, but I can tap my foot in time and I can count to four (very important here). Catching the "groove" in some of the songs is B.A.G. seems impossible though. Shrecking, in places it made me feel like my dad trying to appreciate "modern music" (a horrible revelation). Great party game though.

John D

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	9	8	7

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Plenty Of Play Modes

Worst Feature: Some Questionable Physics

www.cravegames.com

Number Of Players: 1-6

Best Feature: Good Bowling Physics

Worst Feature: May Be Too Cartoonish For Some

www.ascgames.com

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Great Music (Mostly)

Worst Feature: Stupid Lyrics On Some Songs

www.989studios.com

BUST-A-MOVE 4



Publisher: Natsume
Developer: Taito
Featured In: EGM #113

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Series Should Be Hearing Retirement

Worst Feature: Missing That Easy Shot

www.natsume.com

Does the world really need another Bust-A-Move? Maybe. I mean, I can't deny that this is the best Bust-A-Move yet. The pulleys add a little variety to the seemingly endless amount of one-player levels, and the Chain Reaction System forces you to play the game a little differently than you have been playing it for the past several years. So? These two features are relatively minor. That's understandable from the game designers' point of view—why mess with a good thing? Well, you should mess with a good thing because people are tired of the same of old thing. The marginal improvements won't give many BAM fans reason to rush out to buy part four, if they already own BAM 3. Sure the optional Chain Reactions are cool to execute and watch, but these easy-to-come-by combos will happen so often by accident, you won't really appreciate the thought and strategy that goes into setting one up. Picture poor Shoe (that's me) carefully preparing a large Chain Reaction Combo to drop on a fellow Review Crew component. All of a sudden, the son of a bitch hits Shoe with a huge chain, totally by accident and blind luck (skill-less perk). But if you're new to the series, or you haven't played BAM since parts 1 or 2, then BAM 4 may be the ball-buster you're looking for. And I mean that in a good way.

Dan

At the risk of getting repetitive, I have to say that when all is said and done, Bust-A-Move 4 never really needed a sequel. It had pretty much got the whole concept sorted, and I for one was quite happy with it. The new combo system adds an extra bit of strategy to the proceedings, and all of the new features are nice—but, I dunno, why mess with something perfect? At its heart, it's still the same really enjoyable game, though.

John D

I don't know how necessary it is for this game to come out. I mean, it's a Bust-A-Move game—and as such, it's a lot of fun—but it doesn't really bring much to the table as far as ingenuity goes. So, if you're a big fan of the Bust-A-Move series and its sickeningly cute characters and crazy Japanese sounds, then look into this sequel. But if you happened to pick up the last one, there are only a couple of new features in this one.

Shawn

The Bust-A-Move games are fun, but is this new installment really different enough to be worth the cash? Yep. The developers have added plenty of perks to appeal to every puzzle-game fan. The Chain Reaction combos in Versus Mode give the game a Puzzle Fighter feel, while the pulleys add a cool twist to the gameplay. You even get a puzzle editor. And none of this gets in the way of the classic reflexes-before-brains gameplay.

Crispin

VISUALS 6 SOUND 4 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY 8

DEAD IN THE WATER



Publisher: ASC Games
Developer: Player 1
Featured In: EGM #114

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Like Twisted Metal, But In Water

Worst Feature: Lot Of Graphical Glitches

www.ascgames.com

It's hard to believe that with all the Twisted Metal clones out there, it didn't occur to more people to take the genre to new environments. Dead in the Water does a decent job of capturing the frantic action of the vehicle combat genre with some original twists that could only be done in water. The races are interesting and add play value, but the Battle Mode is where the game shines. There are a wide variety of characters to choose from and each has special attacks as well as weapons that can either be bought or picked up during battle. Sadly, the game falls short in some key areas. The graphics are fraught with glitches making it hard to follow the action at times. My other big gripe is the long load times which break up the action for what seems like an eternity. Aside from these complaints, I like Dead in the Water, and find it to be above-average, though a far cry from greatness. If ASC could have tightened up the graphics and improved the load time, this could have easily gotten a higher score. It's possible the PS just couldn't handle all of the stuff that was being thrown at it (the wave physics attempt to be quite realistic), but then you think of technological marvels like Crash 3 and that they got out the window. DiTW had some nice ideas, but overall it doesn't quite cut it. Maybe next time.

Sushi

It's Power Boat Racing with guns! Seriously, I don't like the way this game feels. The 3D environments are OK, but not very inspired, and certainly nothing new. The speed and agility of the boats are hindered by the wacky physics of the water, or more aptly the water effects. More importantly, the combat just isn't fun. Chasing down the elusive boats gets boring too quickly—lost interest. For boat combat I'll play Ship Wreckers.

Dean

This game earns style points for letting you launch weapons into the arena grandstands and blast screaming spectators from their seats; but otherwise Dead in the Water is a shoddy clone of the Twisted Metal games. The rolling water looks nice (well, at least up close—we've got some major draw-in problems here), but the waves really throw off your control. The Racing Mode is a bit more fun than Battle, but not much.

Crispin

DiTW is a bit like Twisted Metal, only with boats instead of cars. My, my. How spectacularly original. Gameplay is what you'd expect; racing and shooting on a wobbly surface with plenty of power-ups. It's nice to see the arena races AND battles here, so in that respect it's arguably more fun than TMIII—but it's nothing special. Graphically it's a bit weak, but more importantly it lacks any original ideas. Another "me too" game.

John D

VISUALS 4 SOUND 4 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY 5

DESTREGA



Publisher: Koei
Developer: Omega Force
Featured In: EGM #112

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Intense 3D Fights

Worst Feature: Cheap Voice Acting

www.omegaforce.com

Even from its early stages I knew Destrega was something special...or at least something different from most 3D fighters that come out and get lost on store shelves and in discount bins. What strikes me as the most interesting and winning feature is being able to fight at every point in a battle, no matter where you are in relation to your opponent—even with the arenas being as big as they are. Consequently, this allows for some real strategy if you're willing to take the time to learn Destrega's unique fighting/magic system. And if you do take the time, chances are you'll appreciate the game that much more, and get more out of it. Destrega isn't without flaws, mind you, but it's very solid. But since we're on the subject of flaws, I should point out a couple. First, the voices plain suck. Talk about overacting and poor casting...even when the characters grunt! Luckily, the story is strong and holds up through the lame acting. I also thought the fighting in the Story Mode was a bit repetitious and dragged on at times—in part because of the acting. Be aware of a few graphical glitches that pop up every now and again, too. Overall, Destrega will end up being a sleeper hit even with its minor flaws. On a final note, be sure to listen closely to Rohzen in the Story Mode—he sounds like Tom Brokaw.

Shawn

Destrega seems rather simplistic at first, but once you get accustomed to the game's controls, you'll find that there's actually a lot of depth to the fighting system. There are plenty of single-player modes to keep you busy (Story Mode is a must at least once, just to hear the cheesy dialogue), and two-player fights are surprisingly fun. The up-close fighting could've used some more polish, but it's hardly worth complaining about.

John R

Koei surprised me once with Dynasty Warriors, and now they've surprised me again with another decent fighting game with a totally different style of play. Destrega plays like a solid combination of Ehrgeiz, Unholy War and Psychic Force. The fighting engine is fairly simple and straightforward...perhaps too much so (you won't see the deep gameplay and strategy found in most other fighters, including Dynasty Warriors).

Dan

Koei is becoming a force in fighting games! Destrega borrows many elements from other fighters and even other genres and combines them into a highly enjoyable experience. The Story Mode is long and challenging although the story and dialogue are only so-so. Each character has a nice selection of attacks and has a lot of detail for a game with such rich environments. I'd love to see this series refined and expanded. A Keeper.

Sushi

VISUALS 7 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 8 REPLAY 8

FIFA 99



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Canada

Featured In: EGM #114 (EA Sports Supplement)

OK, we all know that FIFA has improved dramatically in recent releases, but a number of things spring to mind when looking at this. First, this is the third FIFA game this year so how can EA Sports possibly have done anything different? Second, ISS 98 was about as good as soccer games can get, so is EA focusing on the wrong stuff? And finally, what's new? The answers are surprisingly as follows; yes, and no... a big long list that I won't go into fully, but here's the important stuff: New defense and attack AI that makes the teams react as a whole more effectively. Enhanced semi-auto goals. Over 240 teams from 12 territories (including the United States). A European "Dream League" with all the best "real" soccer teams (let's face it, U.S. teams are crap). Fakes and jukes, ISS 98-style. A new chest trapping feature that is cool, but the animation for which pops up FAR too often. Greater control in the air; bicycle kicks, volleys, better headers (although it's so subtle you only notice it if you've played a lot of console soccer). Also, the graphics are a bit better, with nice lightning, etc., though again—you hardly notice it. Oh yeah, and the players aren't all the same height any more. Subtle, but sort of important. I guess... **So it is better than ISS98? Um, well, you know—it might be.**

John D

FIFA 99, like just about every other EA Sports series, keeps getting better and better. I particularly enjoyed this year's edition because it plays much more realistic than the older FIFAs. The biggest thorn in EA's side, however, is the same thing that bugged me about the last few FIFAs: the choppy frame rate. The game moves and plays just fine, but I'd sacrifice a few of the stadium and player details for more frames of animation.

Dan

FIFA 99 is easily my favorite soccer game on the PlayStation, so far. I'm finally happy with the graphics (the frame-rate in World Cup 98 was a little questionable, but not here), and the control is better than it's ever been. The new moves (like the jukes) are actually quite useful, and the AI (on Professional level and above) is excellent. I just hope we don't get a repeat of last year, with another "secure" three months from now. We'll see...

John R

To me FIFA 99 is about as good as a soccer game can get for the PlayStation. With the huge amount of licensed teams, options, players, etc. it's hard to imagine wanting more. Of course it IS the solid gameplay that holds it all together. It's still easy to get away with slide-tackles but strangely, it makes the game more intense. New juke moves are useful as well for faking out opponents. I'll take this one over ISS Pro 98 anytime.

Dean

VISUALS 8 SOUND 8 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 8

THE GAME OF LIFE



Publisher: Hasbro Interactive
Developer: The Collective

Featured In: N/A

The idea of making a classic board game into a video game is not necessarily a bad one. But making The Game of LIFE into one should be. I bring The Game of LIFE up on several charges, including: A) Failure of producing significant excitement. B) Lack of interesting options or features to bring the game up to the '90s era, and C) Forcing players to hand off a single controller while playing multiplayer. Furthermore, the defendant is guilty of disturbing the peace with repetitive bubble-gum music and mundane cinematic clips. And finally, a slap on the wrist to the folks at Hasbro Interactive. They actually thought this inherently social game would make a good single-player experience (thanks to John Davison for pointing this out). Seriously, I'm a big fan of board games so I'm definitely not biased against these games. In fact, I really like Monopoly for the PS. The difference is Monopoly can still be interactive and cerebral as a video game. **Playing LIFE as a video game is more like watching a cartoon.** It doesn't feel like you have significant control over what's happening in the contest. Several of us played multiplayer with hardly a mumble about who was winning or losing. No excitement whatsoever. Strange, especially for us. Unfortunately, I can't recommend this sterile version of LIFE to anyone.

Dean

OK, now we're venturing into a realm of video gaming that really doesn't interest me—or, I imagine, most hardcore gamers. If I want to play LIFE, I'll open my copy of the board game. **I don't feel any need to play it on the PS,** particularly because the cheesy animations, annoying music and other "enhancements" are a turn-off. I suppose it makes a decent party game, but I'd just as soon have a "teken" 3 tournament instead.

Crispin

Sometimes these things manage to capture the spirit of the board game pretty well, but The Game of LIFE doesn't quite make it. Sure, all the recognizable stuff is there, but the presentation is way too cluttered, it's a bit slow, and it's all accompanied by the most annoying music imaginable. By its nature this is a social game—so there's no argument for "playing alone." **Buy the board game. It's more fun...and it's cheaper.**

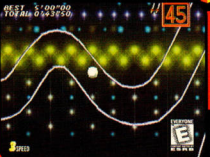
John D

To be honest, I've never really been a big fan of LIFE (the game, that is), so obviously I'm not all that excited about the PS version. It plays just like the board game, it's got some mildly humorous animations and for the most part, it's a good port. But so what? If I'm going to play it at all, I'll play the board game anyway. **There's no reason to play it alone** (unless say, leopardly), so unless you've got a ton of bored friends, I'd say pass.

John R

VISUALS 5 SOUND 4 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY 4

IRRITATING STICK



Publisher: Jaleco
Developer: Saurus/Takara

Featured In: EGM #114

You know, I couldn't come up with a more apt name for this game. Who would have thought moving a metal stick through an electrified maze would be so damn irritating. But I think our news editor, Chris Johnston, best summed up this game when he said, "**For a game that sucks, Irritating Stick sure is addicting.**" It's not just the huge variety of obstacle courses that kept me playing; I found myself wanting to master the tricky controls. You can adjust the speed of your stick, but you never really get used to just how touchy this thing is (and you definitely want to use analog to achieve maximum control). I can't count the number of times I'd be cruising through a maze, trying to reach the next checkpoint before the time expired, only to careen into a wall at the last second because control seemed to just slip away from me. You get more than enough courses, including a group that adjusts their difficulty to match your skill. And you can build your own courses, too. Above all, Irritating Stick is just plain weird game that I'll no doubt appeal to kids and make a great diversion at parties. The two-player and tournament modes are really the best way to play (if for nothing else than to make fun of the golfball announcer), but Irritating Stick is just too frustrating to really enjoy solo.

Crispin

Fondly referred to as "Irritating S****" by most people that spend longer than 30 seconds with the thing, I can honestly say I can't think of any reason to own this game, apart from to show people how bad it is. I can't remember what the buzzy-very thing it's based on is called, but at least it's more fun. And the "forfeits" it wants you to do? Forget it. **At some point in development this underwent some kind of funectomy.**

John D

This is a really tough call. At first, Irritating Stick seems totally inane. Guiding a dot through several different electrified mazes trying to avoid touching the sides seems like a weak premise. Not to mention incredibly frustrating at first. But low and behold, it draws you in like so many simple games do. It's that conquest thing in action. Bottom line, it's mildly fun but not \$50 fun. If it's priced under \$20, maybe—otherwise no.

Dean

This is a prime example of a game that should never have come out on either side of the Pacific. The game tries to capture the wacky nature of the offbeat Japanese TV show, but it loses a lot when you don't see an actual guy getting SHOCKED. Sure it's challenging, but so is trying to collect a ball of lint in my mouth. I can't even remember renting this just to satisfy your curiosity. **Stay away from the Irritating Stick.**

Sushi

VISUALS 3 SOUND 4 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY 4

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Best Soccer AI Around

Worst Feature: Some Animations Repeat Too Often

www.easports.com

Number Of Players: 1-6

Best Feature: Colorful Graphics

Worst Feature: Kinda Boring

www.hasbro-interactive.com

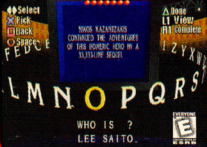
Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Strangely Addicting...

Worst Feature: "Yet Also Quite Irritating"

www.jaleco.com

JEOPARDY!



Publisher: Hasbro Interactive
Developer: Artech Studios
Featured In: N/A

None of the previous console versions of Jeopardy! has been stellar (most suffered from the nasty habit of repeating answers too frequently). Strangely enough, however, I enjoyed them all, and **this new version is easily the best yet.** Sure, the hi-res presentation is pretty slick, but—more importantly—the developers have stuffed this thing with enough categories and answers (more than 3,000) to make repeats less likely. In fact, we played this game steadily throughout the month and encountered only a few incidents of repeated answers. Jeopardy! contains pretty much all the options of its past incarnations. You can dummy down your computer opponent's skill, or switch on a new adaptive AI feature that makes opponents smarter and more apt to buzz in if you play well. You can also switch on spelling aids that save time by guessing what you're trying to type. New to Jeopardy! is Speed Mode, a one-player no-frills minigame that has you trying to achieve a high score by only tackling the questions you want. Video Daily Doubles have also been added to the standard mix. Of course, Jeopardy! is best played multiplayer, and three people can play if you have a multip. I'm a bit irritated by the need for a multip. since the second and third player could have just as easily shared a controller.

Crispin

So just how can you screw up a fun party game like Jeopardy? Easy. Make it a buggy piece of crap. One thing alone makes this the worst version of Jeopardy! I have ever played: the game's tendency to NOT recognize correct responses. "What is plasma?" No, sorry. The correct response is: What is plasma? (I've winced over and over at the game telling me I'm wrong, only to find out that I was right). Watch the TV show instead.

Dan

Come on, let's be honest here. How can anyone truly dislike Jeopardy? Unless the port totally sucks (cough, N64, cough), you're pretty much guaranteed to have a good time either alone or with your friends. Fortunately, the PS version of Jeopardy! is excellent. The graphics and sounds are clean and crisp, and most importantly, after several games, I had not one repeat category. Heck, even drawing in your name is fun!

John R

Now this is how to make a good Jeopardy! video game—tons of voice, video weaved into the gameplay, loads of questions and categories and some nice-looking graphics. Well, for a game show game anyway. The option to actually write your own name is a cool feature—although, it's more fun to draw wild and/or disturbing pictures to represent yourself. Overall, Alex Trebek and his array of questions have won me over again.

Shawn

VISUALS 7 SOUND 5 INGENUITY 9 REPLAY 9

KENSEI: SACRED FIST



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Featured In: EGM #114

Konami makes great games, but they just can't manage to get the fighting genre right. Kensei borrows heavily from both Tekken 3 and Dead or Alive with similar-looking combos and control methods. The problem is, they added all the flash and none of the depth of those two fighters. Even worse, the cool parts that Kensei imitates aren't pulled off quite right. The characters range from decent to very poor, design-wise, which doesn't make you want to play as any of them. While the animation during combos is pretty good, the controls are sacrificed, making it hard to string combos consistently or even coherently. There's also a lag between your button inputs and the movements of the characters which is inexcusable in a fighting game. In some instances, it feels like the fight is going on without your input. Another problem is the head tracking (when a character will move his/her head in the direction of his/her opponent). While the fighters in Kensei can do this, they can't control how far they look. In other words, they're turning their head to almost Exorcist degrees which looks ridiculous. Anyway...it's possible to overlook many of Kensei's shortcomings if you're just interested in the new fighter with a pretty graphics. But then again, the same could be said of any game if all you want is fluff.

Sushi

Sacred Fist looks very nice. Hi-res graphics with good lighting effects—you can't beat that. For variety, nine characters plus several bosses seems like plenty. I wish the controls were more responsive but it's not too bad. Beyond the fluid gameplay, the most impressive thing about Fist is the counter system. Turning an opponent's kick or punch against them feels so right. It's a great feature. I definitely recommend checking this out.

Dean

You can see that both Tekken and Virtua Fighter were looked at pretty closely during the development of Kensei, and it's also clear that VF (probably VF2) was the biggest influence. The bouts are abrupt and short, but the moves and especially the countering system are surprisingly impressive. There are some nasty attacks once you get to grips with the simple controls. The hi-res graphics are slick, but the action is a bit too slow.

Dan

Almost a bizarre hybrid of Tekken and VF2, Kensei is a pleasant surprise. Sure, it has the world's most boring character names (Ann, David, Steve...) but it has a grace shared by few other games. The defense and counter engine is superb and allows you to turn opponents' attacks back on them with relative ease. Along with this, there are a lot of extremely realistic-looking moves. Shame it's a bit slow though. Kinda spoils it.

John D

VISUALS 8 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 6

NECTARIS: MILITARY MADNESS



Publisher: Jaleco
Developer: Hudson Soft
Featured In: EGM #112

You don't need to be a fan of the original Military Madness to dig this PlayStation update. Heck, you don't even need to be a fan of strategy games. That's the beauty of Nectaris: It's incredibly easy to pick up and begin strategizing without worrying about loads of little details. As you progress through stage after stage of turn-based combat, you're gradually introduced to more than 20 ground and airborne combat vehicles—each with its own movement and attack parameters. The real thrill is surrounding enemies and using the terrain to your advantage to win battles in which you're vastly outnumbered. And trust me—you'll be outnumbered in most battles. That's one of the drawbacks to the 32 missions of the new campaign, which become extremely tricky by the sixth mission. Beating that campaign opens up the classic missions of the TurboGrafx-16 original, and after clearing the campaigns you can replay any of the missions with another player. You also get several single missions designed by Japanese Military Madness gurus, as well as the option to build your own. So there's definitely a lot here. The battle animations, on the other hand, are nothing special. Like those in Iron Storm, they get old quick and you'll probably disable them to save time.

Crispin

This is as basic and simple a war-strategy game as they come. That doesn't mean Nectaris is bad...or easy. The game is actually quite addicting, even for people like me who are used to more complex strategy titles like FF Tactics or even Red Alert. Nectaris' simple interface and easy-to-understand game system can draw just about anyone in. Just watch out for some of the overly and artificially difficult scenarios.

Dan

If you're a fan of strategy games, chances are you'll love this update to the classic Military Madness. But here's the great part: Even if you're not a fan of strategy games, chances are you'll enjoy this game. The way missions are almost puzzle-like in some cases, and the way the game's difficulty gradually ramps up should make this title accessible to gamers of all shapes and sizes. Plus, the cool extras for beating the game increase its replay.

Shawn

I was a huge fan of Military Madness on the TurboGrafx-16 and it goes without saying that if you loved it then, you'll love it now. Nectaris has lots of new scenarios and also features all the old missions you know. It would have been nice to have seen things get revamped a bit more, but what you have is a solid, strategy game that is easy to get into and offers hours of gameplay. Even if you've never touched Nectaris, you'll like it.

Sushi

VISUALS 6 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 8

Number Of Players: 1-3

Best Feature: Thousands Of Answers...

Worst Feature: ...but Still The Occasional Repeat

www.hasbro-interactive.com

Number Of Players: 1-3

Best Feature: Nice Combos

Worst Feature: Sluggish Controls

www.konami.com

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Easy To Learn; Hard To Master

Worst Feature: Steep Difficulty Curve

www.jaleco.com

RUGRATS: SEARCH FOR REPTAR



Publisher: THQ
Developer: n-Space
Featured In: EGM #112

Rugrats is one of those cartoons that is made for kids but appeals to people of all ages because of the jokes thrown in and its originality. Well, unfortunately the game isn't like this. Sure, it features some of the same humor and situations from the show, but I've found Rugrats to be more fun to watch than to play. I should note: THQ is aiming this game at kids—which is why many of the minigames and levels this title consists of are so easy, and why the graphics are so simple-looking. Fair enough, but a solid game is a solid game no matter who it's geared toward. So here's the question I have: If this game is geared toward 7- and 8-year-olds, what 7- and 8-year-old likes a camera that's as dumb as a horse, and control as loose and sloppy as...well, you get the idea. The answer is simple. I suppose it's fun to control Chuckie or Tommy or one of the other rats around their house and in other locations, finding puzzle pieces and doing various activities if you're a Rugrats fanatic. But then the game ends up being more of a novelty item than an actual video game—just another poster or window sticker. I suppose this would be fine if the game had a decent camera and a better feel. I label this one a rental...unless you're a BIG Rugrats fan and want some more memorabilia.

Shawn

As kid's games go, I think n-Space has pretty much nailed it with Rugrats. It's simple, easy to get into and, most importantly, there are a lot of different activities that will keep young minds occupied. The crazy golf and some of the racing sections of the game are worthy of particular note. The graphics, although a bit clunky in places, capture the TV show well, and the speech is top-notch throughout. A good kid's game.

John D

If you know a youngster (say, under the age of 8 or so) who is a Rugrats fan AND has a high tolerance for video games with poor camera angles and controls, then you've found the perfect game. Don't get me wrong, Rugrats is plenty fun with its wide variety of interesting minigames and simplistic game-play, but the subpar 3D engine rains on the parade a bit. Despite that, Rugrats is a great addition to a child's PlayStation library.

Dan

Although Rugrats is aimed at a much younger audience, I found a lot to like about the title. It could be because I'm a fan of the show and the characters have the real voices of the actors. Basically, what you have here is a collection of minigames dressed up with a nice story. I know I would dig this game as a younger kid and I dig it as a slightly older one. The graphics are sloppy in places which make for jumbled play at times.

Sushi

VISUALS 6 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 7

TIGER WOODS 99



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports
Featured In: EGM #114 (EA Sports Supplement)

Tiger Woods 99 is basically a PC-style golf sim pumped up with "hip" music, flashy arcade elements and the one and only Tiger himself. While Mr. Woods remains as stoic as ever, elements around him are "wacky" and arcade-like. For example, hit the ball with full force and he turns electric with power. Magically steer it in midair by applying directional spin. All this while listening to Tiger's own scratch-mix soundtrack (sounds like Living Color—remember them?). To the game's credit, the pace is quite a bit faster than your average golf game (excluding Hot Shots). If you choose to use the spin control you can compensate for bad shots by steering the ball toward the green. It's cheap, but effective and adds a new twist to a boring genre (in my opinion). The innovative "ball cam" is nice but shows off the game's choppy frame-rate more than anything else. It's not a hindrance though. It just looks a little herky-jerky at times. Overall the lack of "classic" golf game detail and the infusion of cool, quick-play elements is a nice change. It's fun to nail full-power shots for 300+ yard drives. Quickly line up the next shot and go again. It's like speed golf or something. Just remember to turn off Tiger's dry, monotone comments. I'd still rather play Hot Shots, but Tiger Woods 99 is not far behind.

Dean

This sim offers more play modes than you could ever want and packs an arcade feel (you can even guide the ball in midair). But when it comes down to its interface and presentation, Tiger Woods is nowhere near as slick and fun as Hot Shots Golf. The clunky graphics and choppy frame-rate certainly don't help matters, either. The standard swing meter works fine, although I never got used to the optional analog meter.

Crispin

While Tiger Woods 99 isn't quite as bad as I expected it to be (watching Dean play was about as exciting as watching weeds grow), it's still not a game I'd ever consider sinking any money into. I don't care if it has all the features in the world, if it's sluggish, boring and devoid of any fun, then what's the point? The frame-rate stinks, the ball physics are poor...do I need to go on? If you want a good golf game, go with Hot Shots Golf.

John R

It's great to see that EA has gotten back on the right track with their golf franchise, and with none other than Tiger Woods. The sim aspects of TW are top-notch and the graphics have received a major revamp. My main grip is that there's no ambient sound if you turn off the "hip" background music. It seems pretty sparse when playing through tournaments where you expect some atmosphere. A solid title, but it needs refinement.

Sushi

VISUALS 6 SOUND 5 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 6

TINY TANK: UP YOUR ARSENAL



Publisher: MGM Interactive
Developer: Apalooza Interactive
Featured In: EGM #111

Tiny Tank is a pain in my arsenal. This game is plagued with horrible enemy AI, sloppy graphics and a frame-rate that slows down to snail-speed when lots of graphical stuff is going on (which could've been avoided if particle and lighting effects weren't added to EVERY explosion). In addition, Tiny (the character) repeats the same annoying thing again and again and again, often not making much sense. He sounds like a poor man's Dana Gould (of Gex fame). Now, the radio show that's going on in the background actually is pretty good—informative to a certain extent and funny—when you can hear it over the sound effects. And the rendered cutscenes made me laugh more than once. More on the good end of the spectrum: Each of Tiny Tank's levels offers a different feel from one to the next. For example, in the first level you just ride around and find the boss—rather straightforward. But in other levels you make your way around on a conveyor belt, or in another via a Iron-like wire system, solving different puzzles. Unfortunately, after making your way through most of these interesting levels, a predictable and rather easy boss awaits. Tiny Tank wouldn't be a complete waste of money if you picked it up, but it's nothing compared to some of the other stuff headed our way soon. Rent it first.

Shawn

Although not the greatest 3D shooter, I must say that Tiny Tank breaks some new ground as far as presentation. By injecting the game with some much-needed humor, the guys at Apalooza have taken the game from being an above-average shooter to being a genuinely funny piece of entertainment. Sure, the controls are a little oversensitive and the premise is a bit silly, but the scripting for the "radio show" soundtrack is fab.

John D

OK, I'll admit some of the stuff Tiny says is kind of funny. And the radio show soundtrack is darn creative as well. I wouldn't put the game on my top-10 list but it does warrant some good praise. The gameplay is solid enough—especially Tiny's ability to elude and destroy enemies simultaneously. It's an easy romp through most of the levels, yet strangely captivating at the same time. Tiny Tank won't astound you, but it's good.

Dean

Tiny Tank has many interesting and even innovative elements to it, but they don't quite come together in an enjoyable way. Tiny Tank also suffers from some bad control as well as weak level design. This makes for some frustrating gameplay, especially in the later levels. Speaking of which, it's the second half of the game where it all falls apart. The game becomes unbearably tedious. A few more tweaks and it could've been good.

Sushi

VISUALS 6 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 7 REPLAY 5

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Lots Of Minigames

Worst Feature: Poor Controls And Camera work

www.thq.com

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Big Drives

Worst Feature: Choppy Animation, Tiger's "FROG" Voice

www.easports.com

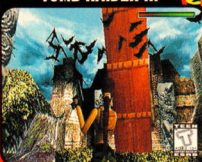
Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Interesting Level

Worst Feature: Sloppy AI

www.mgminteractive.com

TOMB RAIDER III



Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Core Design
Featured In: EGM #109

I wouldn't go so far as to call Tomb Raider III a misstep for the franchise; it just doesn't make a broad enough leap in graphics or gameplay to get me overly excited about Lara's third outing. Yes, the hi-res visuals are an improvement, but not by much, and some areas are just too dark (I hate having to rely on flashlights). Avoid the analog control at all costs, too. It feels like an awkward analog-digital hybrid, and the calibration even glitches at times. **In fact, the entire game suffers from little bugs, making me think it was rushed for the holidays (the ultra-lame ending is no more proof).** So, what TRIII really falls back on is its level design, which is mostly excellent—at least once you get past the horrible India levels. The London and Area 51 stages are extremely atmospheric and just seem more real than the environments of the previous games (you'll see what I mean when you reach the subway, although that train is pretty annoying). **The South Pacific packs some cool Lost World-style surprises, as well, and Antarctica's mine cart is a rousing Temple of Doom spinoff.** Puzzles haven't changed much from the three switches/pull blocks variety (although Area 51's MGS-style stealth antics fall flat). Above all, the 19 levels hold another marathon adventure that'll keep you busy forever.

Crispin

I was prepared to love TRIII, but it wouldn't let me. **The story is great, but the gameplay (with its silly "cheap" tricks that kill you too often) isn't quite as accommodating as TR or TR II.** Also, the camera does some ridiculous things to confuse you, and there's a nasty bug that causes invisible walls. The new analog control system is weak, and sometimes the calibration gets so screwed that it affects the view. Good—just not a classic.

John D

Tomb Raider III gets my vote for the most obviously rushed PlayStation game of the year. **The gameplay is totally unbalanced (cheap is probably a better word), the control still sucks (analog doesn't help one bit), and the frustration factor is at an all-time high.** And why'd they take out the ability to save anywhere? Hello? The vehicles are pretty cool and some of the stage layouts are nice, but overall TRIII was much better.

John R

In addition to some questionable glitches, Tomb Raider III just isn't that memorable. I think it's about time Lara retired—or at least went and got herself a makeover. Besides, this third installment has one too many examples of cheap deaths. If you're a fan of Tomb Raider you'll appreciate the size and variety of the levels, and the new additions (both to the gameplay and graphics). Overall, check it out but be on your guard.

Shawn

UPRISING X



Publisher: 3DO
Developer: Cyclone Studios
Featured In: EGM #108

Just when I thought the whole "scout across the landscape in a mech/tank" genre was going to die out, it comes Uprising X. To be fair, Uprising has lots of neat things to offer fans like a wide variety of battlefields and two-player support. One of the things Uprising promises, but fails to deliver on is the enemy AI. While the computer offers up a good challenge, it's mainly due to the sheer amount of action that is taking place rather than the enemies being smart. In fact, if you keep escaping to safe ground and observe the enemies and your own support forces, you'll see that they look ridiculous. They look like they're being piloted by blind people. Of course once you get near them, they'll swarm you, but is that really smart AI? In addition to piloting the Wrath craft, there are portions where you man a tower and shoot a turret gun. This part of the game could have been executed a whole lot better and it's just plain tough with all the fog. **The overall graphics leave a lot to be desired and the story is very corny and generic. I'd say that this would've been a neat first-gen game, but I couldn't recommend it over Krang's heat.** Most everything in Uprising has been done before and done a lot better. The two-player mode does at least salvage the game from being a complete wreck, though.

Sushi

Uprising X is quite a nice surprise. When I saw early versions, I was very unimpressed. Now that I've actually played the final version for a decent amount of time and have been able to get immersed into its story line, I feel the game is definitely above-average. Be aware: The graphics are jagged-looking in most spots, and the gameplay has some rough edges, but overall Uprising X is a title that's worth looking into.

Shawn

I could do without the camp science fiction story line and the silly names in UX. It all seems odd and cliché in the world of video games. Otherwise, for a roam-and-destroy "MechWarrior" experience you could do worse. But not by much. If you have patience for overly deep story lines and don't mind repetitive play and non-inspired graphics, then this is for you. Overall it needs more action and less story. Rent first.

Dean

If real-time strategy games on the consoles are your thing, then you may want to try out Uprising X. While it lacks the playability, depth and diversity of the 3D RTS games like WarCraft II and Red Alert, it offers something else in return: a first-person view of the action. **The interface is friendly and the gameplay is simplified,** so getting into RTS in this new 3D perspective isn't as confusing and disorienting as one would think.

Dan

WCW/NWO THUNDER



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Inland Productions
Featured In: EGM #115

For the hardcore WCW freak, **Thunder is a must-buy.** Why? It's the most feature-packed WCW game on the market (well, the only competition it has is Nitro and the N64's Revenge...). Fans will dig the huge roster of wrestlers, from the trendy Raven's Flock to the idiots at nWo White. And as big as the roster already is, the game has tons of secret characters to open up (final count: over 60 wrestlers). WCW fans will also enjoy the FMV taunts, personalized Fight Meters (so each character has his own advantages and disadvantages) and the ability to change one's group affiliation (so you can always have your roster current with what goes on in the weekly TV shows). But if you're not that big into WCW itself, where the above features mean little to you, you probably won't find this game as fun to play as WWF War Zone. The controls take getting used to, and many times, moves you try to execute just won't come out. Add to that a loose priority system (where a weak wrestler can sometimes pull off fancier moves than you can), and you have a game that has more features than even some gamaplay. At least the game has a ton of moves, ensuring a lot of replay value as you take the time to learn the various maneuvers. **Thunder is decent, but it is definitely better suited for WCW fanatics.**

Dan

I'm not thrilled about the graphics in this game. They're chunky, a bit washed out and not nearly as good as War Zone's. Also, the proportions don't look right. **The wrestlers appear too big for the smallish ring.** Another gripe: the guys move too fast. It doesn't look realistic when they're shooting around the ring so quick. Fact is, I could live with the flaws if the gameplay was good. Sadly, it's just average. I'll stick with War Zone.

Dean

If you're a hardcore fan of wrestling, WCW/nWo Thunder is the game for you. I haven't seen a wrestling game yet which captures so accurately the...um, unique culture (or sub-culture?) of wrestling like Thunder does. Of course, that doesn't mean I like wrestling. In fact, I think it's incredibly silly—but this game does a smashing job at what it is, with loads of moves, plenty of wrestlers to choose from and a solid feel.

Shawn

Wrestling games should be fun, especially for multi-player mayhem, but Thunder just isn't my cup of tea. The game engine isn't tight enough for my liking. Some moves seem easy to pull off while others don't seem to work at all. And even though this game is the fastest wrestling game on the market, the sluggish controls make it feel like the slowest. **I would recommend War Zone over Thunder any day.** It simply plays much better.

Sushi

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Enormous Environments

Worst Feature: The First Few Levels

www.eidos.com

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Lots Of Action

Worst Feature: Very Repetitive

www.3do.com

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Lots Of Moves To Learn

Worst Feature: Poor Controls

www.thq.com

VISUALS 7 SOUND 7 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 5

VISUALS 4 SOUND 5 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 5

VISUALS 6 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 6 REPLAY 7

GAME & WATCH GALLERY 2



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Featured In: N/A

Ahh, good old Game & Watch. The first Game & Watch Gallery was pretty good, but the sequel really hits the mark. There are six games in total—Parachute, Helmet, Chef Vermin and Donkey Kong, plus one hidden game (Ball—the first Game & Watch game ever made)—and each one is as challenging and addictive as the next. Personally, I'm not too keen on Donkey Kong (I guess I'd just rather play the real thing, which is also available for the Game Boy), but otherwise I really love every game on this cart. The Classic versions are decent, but they can get old rather quickly, since patterns seem to reset after you reach certain scores. The Modern versions, however, are excellent. Each one adds new twists to the gameplay, not to mention updated graphics and music. There's plenty of hidden stuff, too. Every 200 points you score on any game earns you a "Star," and as you collect more Stars, more things open up (the Gallery portion of the game has a Note Board, a Music Room, a Museum, etc.). At 15 Stars, the Classic version of Ball opens up, and later on you can open the Modern one too. And don't worry about getting too good—if you score 1,000 points on any game, it'll open up an even harder difficulty level for you to try. If you're into addictive minigames, you've gotta check out G&W 2.

John R

Game & Watch Gallery 2 is fun in the same way old 2600 games are. For the first 15 or 20 minutes, you'll think "Wow...this is great." But then you'll realize just how simplistic the games in this pack are, and how repetitive they become after a while. Still, this collection is a nice one to have on your shelf when you're bored. And for the right price it may be worth picking up. Just be careful—don't expect it to be an epic.

Shawn

Well, you'll find few games more mindless than the ones packed on this cart, but you know what? Some of them are pretty fun—and addicting. I especially like the Parachute and Chef games, both supremely challenging twitch experiences. The secrets you get by earning high scores lend this compilation some lasting power, too. Even the ultra-primative "Classic" modes have a novel—albeit short-lived—appeal.

Crispin

It's great to compare the old with the new but in this case it's not worth it. The updates are certainly prettier, but still the same incredibly simple games they were years ago. Granted they can be somewhat captivating, but when broken down, the only one worth playing long term is modern Donkey Kong. To me, such simple fair is not worth the cash. On the other hand, if you have fond memories of these, then G&W 2 should satisfy.

Dean

VISUALS 6 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 7

POCKET BOMBERMAN



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Hudson Soft
Featured In: N/A

Pocket Bomberman is a good game to have for the Game Boy Color, even though it's not the most memorable game I've ever played. Strange thing is, it doesn't bother me that this version of Bomberman doesn't have a multiplayer mode in it, which means the game has enough going for it to make it worth playing even without the ever-so-important multiplayer stuff. Still, there is one thing to note: Pocket Bomberman, like so many games on the Game Boy and Game Boy Color, is somewhat mindless. It's a game you could play while you're in the john, or while you're waiting at the doctor's office. To me, it's not a game you'd want to sit down and beat in one sitting. Another interesting observation: Pocket Bomberman is better than the one-player modes in N64 Bomberman games. Goes to show you just how good those games are! Anyway, graphically, PB is decent enough, although not nearly as impressive as other recent GB Color games (like The Smurfs' Nightmare). It basically has regular Game Boy graphics with a little bit of color added. Lastly, the Jump Mode is an interesting puzzle-type of game but I didn't like it all that much—it's more of a mingame to me. Overall, this B-man is not the best GB version around, but it's good considering that it doesn't even have a multiplayer mode.

Shawn

This variation of Bomberman is fairly fun. The classic Bomberman theme translates well to the adventure/platform game arena. As usual, bombs are used to find hidden items, kill enemies, etc. I like that kind of simplicity in a game. The usual assortment of cool power-ups can be found and used (Remote Control is still the best). I found most of the levels to be interesting, albeit a bit short; you could probably beat it in a few hours.

Dean

I guess it's kind of cool that Hudson decided to try to make a "different" kind of B-man game, but they forgot one thing: to make the game fun. Pocket Bomberman is a decidedly average borefest of a platformer that offers nothing innovative whatsoever. The only bit of challenge lies in the boss battles; everything else seems like it's there just to pass the time away. To make things worse, there's no multiplayer mode. Yawn.

John R

A pleasantly surprising mix of platform-style play and all of the gameplay ideas you'd expect from Bomberman. It's simple, fun and effective—and it's worth noting that it's all considerably more entertaining than the trashy N64 Bomberman games that we've been forced to tolerate in recent months. It doesn't take that much advantage of the GB Color's enhanced palette, but it's bright and clear. A good little bit of fun.

John D

VISUALS 5 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 5

TETRIS DX



Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Featured In: EGM #114

The Game Boy version of Tetris has always been my favorite of them all, so naturally I was very excited to get my hands on Tetris DX. As many of you probably already know by now (yes, this review's a little late—please blame Nintendo, not us), DX is an excellent upgrade to the original Tetris. First of all, and most importantly, the game now has a save feature, so you can save and attempt to beat your high scores. This is a must in a competitive game like Tetris. Next up, the control has been refined to near-perfection. Tetris DX easily has the best control of any Tetris game out there on any platform. All it's missing IMO is a quick drop button, similar to the one found in Magical Tetris Challenge. Each of the single-player modes are just as fun as they've always been (trying to top your best times in 40 Lines Mode is feverishly addictive), and as you'd expect, the Link-Up Mode is fantastic. So are there any downsides to Tetris DX?

Well, kinda. Tetris pros will notice the single-player game is easier than it was in the original. The distribution of blocks is less erratic now, meaning you're less likely to get stuck without a particular piece at any given time when you might need it. This isn't bad, but it means high scores may be higher than they used to be. Also, the new music is lame. Otherwise, this is a great update.

John R

I've always thought that, when it comes to pure gameplay and replay value, nothing beats Tetris. And the original Game Boy version has always been my favorite (I mean c'mon—you can play the most addicting game ever on the crapper). So of course I'm much pleased with this sharp color update. The new play modes are cool, sure, but I really like being able to save high scores. Some day I'll beat Ricciardi's record.

Crispin

A few colors, a sharper look, new modes and the ability to save high scores make Tetris DX a worthwhile purchase. That is, if you're still a Tetris fanatic who could still play the game for hours today. But if you own the original black-and-white version, and you really don't play the game too much, you may want to save your money. After all, Tetris is Tetris. This version doesn't play any different from the others (but that IS a good thing...)

Dan

This is a great update to Tetris, with a good selection of gameplay modes. At some points, the tiny Game Boy Color screen makes things difficult, but that's no fault of the game's. The ability to save your progress and pick up right where you leave off is simply incredible—like this game needs any more when it comes to replayability! If you have a Game Boy Color and dig Tetris, you'd be silly not to purchase this game.

Shawn

VISUALS 6 SOUND 5 INGENUITY 3 REPLAY 10

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Highly Addictive

Worst Feature: May Be Too Simplistic For Some

www.nintendo.com

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Solid Gameplay

Worst Feature: Jump Mode Is Pretty Lame

www.nintendo.com

Number Of Players: 1-2

Best Feature: Two-Player Link-Up Play

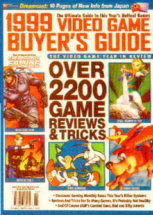
Worst Feature: New Music Kinda Sucks

www.nintendo.com

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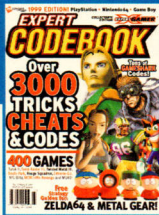
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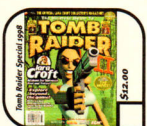


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PlayStation
Game Boy

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Game Boy

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Game Boy

Game	Publisher	Best Feature	Worst Feature	Scores	Issue #
Body Harvest	Midway	Huge Assortment Of Vehicles	Weak RPG Elements	8.0 9.0 7.0 8.0	112
Bombberman Hero	Nintendo	Star Fox-esque Flying Levels	No Multiplayer Mode!!!	5.0 5.5 7.0 6.0	112
Buck Bumble	Ubi Soft	Cool Explosions	Frustratingly Difficult Sometimes	7.5 6.0 6.5 6.5	112
Cruis'n World	Nintendo	Fast Gameplay	Weak Opponent AI	6.5 6.5 5.5 7.0	113
Extreme-G 2	Acclaim	Really, Really Fast Gameplay	Occasionally Choppy Frame-Rate	6.0 7.5 5.5 7.5	114
F-1 World Grand Prix	Nintendo	Detailed Graphics	Inconsistent Frame-Rate	8.0 7.5 8.5 7.0	111
FZero X	Nintendo	Intense Gameplay	Sparse Background Graphics	9.0 9.0 8.0 9.0	111
Fox Sports College Hoops '99	Fox Interactive	College Atmosphere	Opponent AI	5.0 3.5 2.0 4.0	114
Get 64: Enter the Gecko	Midway	Lots Of Levels	Annoying Camera	6.0 5.5 5.0 5.5	111
Glover	Hasbro Interactive	Glover (The Character)	The Stupid Camera	4.5 7.0 6.5 4.0	114
Knife Edge	Kemco	Dodging	Ho-Hum On The Excitement Meter	9.0 9.0 8.5 8.5	111
Madden NFL '99	Electronic Arts	Excellent Graphics, Great AI	Frame-Rate Is A Bit Lacking	8.5 5.0 7.0 7.0	111
MASCAR '99	Electronic Arts	Competitive Gameplay	Engine Noise	8.0 8.0 6.5 7.5	113
NBA Live '99	Electronic Arts	Nice Graphics	Way Too Easy	9.0 8.0 9.5 9.0	111
NFL Blitz	Midway	Great Arcade Translation	Strange Missed Passes	8.0 8.0 8.0 8.0	114
NFL Quarterback Club '99	Acclaim	Gorgeous Graphics	Still Some Holes In The AI	8.0 8.0 8.0 8.0	112
NHL '99	Electronic Arts	Exciting Gameplay	Annoying Commentary	5.0 3.0 4.0 7.0	114
Nightmare Creatures	Activision	Atmospheric Graphics	Camera Problems	8.0 4.5 6.5 8.5	113
Rush 2: Extreme Racing USA	Midway	Improved Control	Still A Little Too Foggy	7.0 5.0 7.0 5.0	112
S.C.A.K.S.	Ubi Soft	Sweet Graphics	Race As A Rhino? Huh?	8.5 8.5 8.5 8.0	112
Space Station Silicon Valley	Take 2 Interactive	Originality, Variety	Camera Work	7.5 7.5 8.5 6.5	113
Top Gear Overdrive	Kemco	Solid Gameplay	Cars Blow Up Too Easily	6.0 6.0 5.5 3.5	113
Twisted Edge Snowboarding	Midway	Easy To Master, Tricks	Ho-Hum Courses	7.5 8.5 8.5 8.0	112
WCW/nWo Revenge	THQ	Graphics And Animation	All The Characters Control The Same	7.5 8.0 7.5 7.5	113
WipeOut 64	Midway	Incredible Sound	Nasty Polygon Pop-Up	4.0 4.5 6.0 4.0	114
A Bug's Life	Sony Computer Entertainment	Purty Graphics	Poor Control	4.5 5.5 3.0 3.0	113
Activision Classics	Activision	30 Games for \$30	Only A Couple Are Any Good Now	5.5 7.5 6.0 7.0	114
Apocalypse	Activision	Rooftop Level	Platform Bits	5.0 5.0 5.5 5.5	112
Armored Core: Project Phantasma	Asci	Customization Of AC's	Outdated Graphics	5.0 6.0 5.5 4.0	113
Assault: Retribution	Midway	Two-Player Mode	Too Easy At Default Difficulty	8.0 7.5 6.0 8.0	114
Asteroids	Activision	Addictive Gameplay	Two-Player Mode	6.0 7.0 6.0 6.5	113
Backstreet Billiards	Asci	Two-Player Mode	Annoying Good CPU AI	6.5 7.0 4.5 6.0	113
Bombberman World	Attus	A Lot Of Cool Options	The ö#246; Isometric Perspective	8.5 8.5 8.0 8.0	114
Brave Fencer Musashi	Square EA	Variety Of Gameplay Styles	Story Targeted Toward Young Audience	8.5 7.0 6.5 6.0	114
Brigandine	Attus	Deep, Engaging Gameplay	Graphics, But Who Cares?	8.0 6.0 3.0 6.0	112
Brunswick Bowling	THQ	Parker Bohn III	Parker Bohn III	7.5 8.0 6.0 6.0	113
Bushido Blade 2	THQ	Realistic Swordplay	Lost Some Cool Features From The First BB	5.5 8.5 5.5 7.0	114
Caesar's Palace II	Interplay	Coaching Tips, Lots Of Games	Dry Presentation	8.0 8.5 9.0 9.0	112
Colony Wars: Vengeance	Psygnosis	Innovative Missions	Extreme Difficulty	6.5 5.0 7.5 6.5	113
Cool Boarders 3	989 Studios	Nice Graphics	Lack Of Structure	9.5 9.0 9.0 9.0	114
Crash Bandicoot: WARPED	Sony Computer Entertainment	Incredibly Tight Gameplay	Naughty Dog's Last Crash Game	7.0 6.5 6.0 7.0	114
Darkstalkers 3	Capcom	Graphical Style	Some Animation Loss	9.0 9.0 9.5 8.0	111
Dead Ball Zone	GT Interactive	Building Custom Teams	Bit Of A Learning Curve	2.0 6.0 6.5 6.5	113
Devil Dice	THQ	Totally Unique Gameplay	Trying To Make Time To Play More	4.5 6.0 6.5 6.5	113
Dragonseeds	Jaleco	The Dragons	Tedious Gameplay	1.0 2.0 2.5 3.0	113
Duke Nukem: Time To Kill	GT Interactive	Level Designs	Control	4.5 6.0 6.0 6.5	114
Eggs of Steel	Attus	Wacky And Funny As Hell	Might Be A Bit Too Weird	1.0 2.0 2.5 3.0	113
The Fifth Element	Activision	FMV Taken From The Movie	Annoying Control		



●	Formula 1 98	Psychosis	Slick Driver AI	Texture Warping And Polygon Tear	6.5 6.5 6.5 6.5	114
●	G.Darius	THQ	Ability To Capture Enemies	Some Slowdown	8.5 9.0 9.0 8.5	111
●	Guilty Gear	Atlus	Lots Of Action On Screen	Balance Of Characters	7.5 7.0 6.0 6.5	113
●	Hardball 99	Accolade	Training Mode	Choppy Animation	4.0 3.0 4.5 4.0	113
●	Heart Of Darkness	Tantum/Interplay	Excellent Graphics And FMV	Tedious Puzzles And Control	8.0 2.0 7.0 7.5	111
●	Kage: Deception II	Tecmo	Devilish Traps	Stupid Enemies	9.0 8.0 8.5 7.5	112
●	Knockout Kings	Electronic Arts	Great Selection Of Boxers	One-Player Play Kinds Boring	8.0 7.0 5.0 8.5	114
●	Lemmings & Oh No! More Lemmings!	Lemmings & Oh No!	TONS Of Levels	PS Pad Controls	8.0 8.0 7.5 6.0	114
●	Lucky Luke	Infogrames	Stylized Graphics	Slow, Insulting Gameplay	6.5 4.5 7.0 6.0	113
●	Madden NFL 99	Electronic Arts	Unrivaled Realism	Frame-Rate Is A Bit Slow Sometimes	9.0 8.0 8.0 8.0	111
●	MediEvil	Sony Computer Entertainment	Miniquets Aplenty	Screwy Camera	8.5 7.0 8.5 7.5	113
●	Mega Man Legends	Capcom	Incredible Story	Control	6.5 5.0 7.5 6.0	111
▲	Metal Gear Solid	Konami	Track Editor	Could Be Longer	10 10 10 10	113
●	Moto Racer 2	Electronic Arts	Game Speed	Still No CPU Racers In Two-Player Mode	8.5 8.5 8.0 7.0	112
●	Motorhead	Fox Interactive	Stage Environments	Stiff Gameplay	6.0 5.0 6.5 5.0	112
●	Mr. Domino	Accolade	Loads Of Features And Options	Strict Gameplay	7.0 8.5 7.0 7.5	114
●	NASCAR 99	Electronic Arts	Improved AI	Disappointing Gameplay	7.0 5.0 6.5 5.0	112
●	NCAA GameBreaker 99	989 Studios	Hard-Hitting Gameplay	Not Enough Cheerleader FMS!!	9.5 9.0 9.0 8.5	114
●	NFL Blitz	Midway	It's Blitz!	Formation Problems	8.5 8.0 8.5 7.5	114
●	NFL GameDay 99	989 Studios	Great Graphics, Improved AI	Sometimes Choppy Frame-Rate	8.5 8.5 9.0 8.5	111
●	NHL 99	Electronic Arts	Great Atmosphere, AI	Disappointing Multiplayer Play	9.5 8.0 8.0 8.5	111
●	NHL Face Off 99	989 Studios	Fast Gameplay	Sluggish Frame-Rate (Sigh...)	8.5 8.5 7.0 7.0	113
●	Ninja	Eidos	Some OK Special Effects	Questionable Control	7.5 7.5 7.0 7.5	113
●	ODD!	Psychosis	Ambitious Design	Cheap Gameplay	3.5 3.5 3.5 3.5	114
●	Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus	GT Interactive	Quick Save Feature	The Gameplay	3.5 3.5 4.0 3.5	113
●	Parasite Eye	Square EA	Cool Story	Too Many Commands To Remember	9.0 9.5 9.0 9.5	113
●	Pool Hustler	Activision	Realism	Too Short	7.0 8.0 8.0 8.5	111
●	Psychadek	Psychosis	Vans License	Not Enough Play Styles	7.0 5.0 7.0 6.0	113
●	Rally Cross 2	989 Studios	Racing Gameplay	Repetitive And Cheap Gameplay	2.0 3.0 2.0 2.0	114
●	Resident Evil 2: Dual Shock Version	Capcom	Extreme Battle Mode	Annoying Music	8.5 9.0 7.0 8.0	114
●	Rival Schools United By Fate	Capcom	Watching Tiffany Do Her Team-Up...	Mostly Refresh	7.0 7.5 9.0 8.5	111
●	Rogue Trip	GT Interactive	Familiar Twisted Metal Feel	No Create-A-Fighter	8.0 8.5 9.0 8.5	112
●	Running Wild	989 Studios	Speedy Frame-Rate	Graphics Are A Little Rough	9.0 8.5 9.0 8.0	112
●	S.C.A.R.S.	Ubi Soft	Nice Graphics	Childish Look And Feel	6.5 6.0 5.0 4.0	113
●	Small Soldiers	Electronic Arts	Stick Graphics	Boring Gameplay	5.5 7.5 7.0 6.0	112
●	Spyro The Dragon	Sony Computer Entertainment	Surprisingly Fast	Annoying Control	4.5 2.0 4.0 3.5	113
●	Street Fighter Collection 2	Capcom	Classic Street Fighter Action	Lame Bosses	8.5 8.0 9.0 8.0	112
●	Tales Of Destiny	Namco	Great Dialogue, Tough Dungeons	Overwhelmingly Average	5.0 7.5 7.5 8.0	113
●	Tenchu: Stealth Assassins	Activision	Stealth Action	Using The PS Controller-Buy A Stick!!	8.5 8.0 8.0 8.0	114
●	Test Drive 5	Accolade	Fast Frame-Rate	16-Bit-Looking Graphics	8.5 8.0 8.0 7.5	112
●	Test Drive Off-Road 2	Accolade	Lots Of Big Trucks	Bad Camera	7.5 7.0 8.0 7.5	113
●	Thunder Force V	Working Designs	Challenging Gameplay	A Little Difficult	7.5 7.0 7.0 6.5	113
●	Trap Gunner	Atlus	Original Gameplay	Quirky AI	6.0 5.5 6.5 6.5	114
●	Twisted Metal III	989 Studios	Smooth Visuals	No Two-Player Mode	7.5 7.0 8.0 7.5	111
●	The Unholy War	Eidos/Crystal Dynamics	Two-Player Game	Presentation Is A Bit Dubious	7.0 6.0 5.0 5.0	111
●	X-Genes: Pro Boarder	Radical Entertainment	ESPN License	Lame Arenas	6.0 5.0 5.0 5.5	114
●	Xenogears	Square EA	Great Story	Unbalanced Characters	8.0 9.0 7.5 6.5	112
●	Wild 9	Interplay	Torturing Thy Enemies	Clunky Graphics Engine	5.5 5.0 6.5 6.5	113
●	Magic Knight Rayearth	Working Designs	Beautiful 2D Graphics	Battles Get Repetitive	9.0 9.0 9.0 8.5	112
●	Pokémon	Nintendo	Incredibly Addictive Play	Too Hard To Get Continues	7.5 8.0 8.0 7.5	113
●				Lame Voice Acting	7.0 7.0 7.5 7.0	114
●				The RPG Part Is Pretty Straightforward	9.0 8.0 8.0 9.0	113

Reader Reviews

PlayStation

Nintendo 64

Game Boy

Saturn

Here's your chance to vent your views on recently released games. If you have something you think needs to be said about either one of our reviews or a game you've recently bought, e-mail us your thoughts at review_crew@zd.com or write to us at the following address: EGM Reader Reviews, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

NFL QB Club '99

What we said:

"QB Club is infinitely smarter than last year's game (which wasn't very smart)...it's not quite a Madden 99 killer, but it's close....This year's game is much better graphically, and a lot of the gameplay flaws have been fixed up as well....At this rate, by next year it should be awesome."

How we rated it:

8.0 8.0 8.0 8.0

What you said:

First of all, let me say that your review of QBC '99 were pretty much right-on (it seems like you're the only magazine that knows anything about N64 sports games). I do think you should have been a little harder on the game's realism, though. Last year's QBC stunk when it came to realistic play, and even though the new one is better, it's still pretty dumb. Acclaim's N64 games look great, but I wish they'd spend more time on the gameplay.

Darren Lehrmann
Beaumont, TX

Does the fact that just about any quarterback in QB Club '99 can run for 400 yards per game have anything to do with the QB Club license? Hmm, I wonder.

Terence Wells
(Address Withheld)

Crash Bandicoot: WARPED

What we said:

"A game with tons of character, a lot of gameplay and some of the best PlayStation visuals ever seen....it really is impossible to not like a Crash game....It's classic platform action, but it's done right."

How we rated it:

9.5 9.0 9.0 9.0

What you said:

When I saw your review I knew instantly your "worst feature" would be that this game is WAY too short. Boy was I surprised! You guys didn't even mention the game's length! Sure the game was fun and never got old, but heck I ran through it in just about two hours! I know you get a different ending for getting all 100+ crystals, but no payoff or reward for such a hard task is hardly what I call worth it!

Adam Santos
Houston, TX

I suppose that Crash Bandicoot 3 pretty much deserved the ratings you guys gave it, but I think the series is getting a little old, even though there are some very original levels in Crash 3.

Eric McAnally
ericmac33@hotmail.com

Darkstalkers 3

What we said:

"The only people who should stay away are hardcore Capcom heads who demand absolute perfection....The port is very nicely done....but the game itself isn't all that spectacular....In my opinion, the series is getting a bit old."

How we rated it:

7.0 6.5 6.0 7.0

What you said:

You guys gave Darkstalkers 3 a good review. I'm a big fan of Capcom games and I have DS3 and I strongly agree that the game doesn't meet expectations. It's not like Street Fighter, and the moves are hella lame. The only good thing this game has going for it is the characters and the graphics, but the game plays like an average fighter. It's good for a (DS) collector but don't expect to be playing it for a long time....

(Name Withheld)
F0bPnoy916@aol.com

NBA Live 99

What we said:

"NBA Live 99 incorporates all the fanciest bells and whistles in the book and somehow manages to be a great-playing simulation....EA seems to have finally gotten it right....Honestly, this thing looks and plays better than any other basketball sim on any platform....Nothing but improvements."

How we rated it:

9.5 9.0 9.0 8.5

What you said:

The graphics are just beautiful and the AI has totally improved from last year. The thought of facial expressions and emotions is brilliant. Crossovers, stutter-steps, fake passes, EVERYTHING about this game is PERFECT. Even though the rosters aren't updated because of the lockout, it's still the best game out. NBA Live 99 will definitely put Shoot Out '99 to shame.

Geraldine Mitchell
3983@bellsouth.net

Wow. I really have to take you guys to task on your NBA Live review. I know other b-ball games have been mediocre, but this game is a step down from other EA sports games. The Franchise Mode is a big letdown. Madden 99 had it right, with the player retirements, free agency, draft, etc. Unfortunately, no such thing here. Also, once again, it's too !%&% easy to score. It's good, but not no 9.5. More like a 7.5.

Billy Castillo
Houston, TX

Twisted Metal III

What we said:

"TM3 falls well short of the standards set by the previous Twisted Metal games....Level design is particularly disappointing....The cars don't handle anywhere near as nice as they did before....The multiplayer mode fails to impress....Where once the series was an innovator, imitated by many now it's just another cookie-cutter combat game....Certainly not as good as Rogue Trip or Vigilante 8."

How we rated it:

6.0 5.0 5.0 5.5

What you said:

I totally agree with your Twisted Metal III ratings. That game sucks so bad. The levels are tiny and poorly designed. And what the hell is up with the cars flipping over every three seconds? This is my main pet peeve. I mean, you spend more time on your vehicle's back than you do on its wheels. 989 should have never made this game. It's a shame they did. Long live SingleTrac.

Matt S.
stickingfag269@juno.com

Where does "real life" come into play in a game of mass destruction? After flipping over 20 times I was about to throw my controller through the TV.

Richard "Quijibo" and
Cy "Sasquatch"
first_to_die@yahoo.com

It was my birthday. I was in an EB with my girlfriend and I saw it sitting there....the game I had been waiting for for so long, Twisted Metal III. So she bought it for me. I took the game home and played it, and the first thing that crossed my mind was how badly 989 Studios BUTCHERED this awesome series. I regret ever getting this game. Please 989 Studios...

stick with the sports games.

Tom Carbaugh
xex979@hotmail.com

I am just about the biggest Twisted Metal fan there is and I was waiting for you guys to review TM3 so you could show 989 Studios what garbage they released. This was clearly a panic release before Christmas to compete with Rogue Trip. I was truly surprised it didn't get a lower combined score from the Crew.

Bruno Simone
brunos@aracnet.net

I loved the series but this game sucks!! Your scores were too high. I would have given it a 3.5.

Ryland Early
yoshimitsu007@hotmail.com

I have to agree with the scores you gave Twisted Metal III. When I first heard about the physics model being implemented into it, I thought it would be cool. But when I played it, those assumptions were shattered by the ridiculous controls of the game. Something as easy as driving up a ramp can be very hard. One thing I can say about the game is it still retains its fun factor. However, the bottom line is that the "real" physics make what would've been a good game a game that pretty much sucks.

Adam Tarter
(Address Withheld)

Magic Knight Rayearth

What we said:

"The quality of the voice acting in Rayearth is not up to par with WD's usual high standards....Everything from the characters to the terrain is amazingly crisp, colorful, detailed and just plain beautiful....The main problems are how short and easy the game is."

How we rated it:

7.0 7.0 7.5 7.0

What you said:

I can't believe dubbing this bad is considered "professional." Seishun Shitemasu's semi-porno-graphic fanclub Ranma 1/3 had better acting. The translation in this is better than in previous WD efforts, but it doesn't flow because of the hack job on the voices. We waited three years for this? I'm glad I kept the import.

Christian Nutt
kaoru@systorm.com

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Throughout the game, you will find bigger and better weapons. Resist the temptation to automatically switch to your nastiest guns. Your standard pistols never run out of ammo and are adequate for most of the enemies you will encounter. If you do shoot at your opponent without taking any damage yourself, it would be foolish to waste ammo with a bigger gun. Snipe from a safe distance whenever possible.

Weapon/Ammo Management

Standard Pistols



Damage: Average
Rate of Fire: Good

Shotgun



Damage: Good
Rate of Fire: Average
Find In: Jungle

MP-5



Damage: Good
Rate of Fire: Excellent
Find In: Crash Site

Uzis



Damage: Average
Rate of Fire: Excellent
Find In: Nevada Desert

Desert Eagle



Damage: Excellent
Rate of Fire: Good
Find In: Puna Temple

Rocket Launcher



Damage: Excellent
Rate of Fire: Poor
Find In: Lud's Gate

Grenade Launcher



Damage: Excellent
Rate of Fire: Poor
Find In: Area 51

Harpoon Gun



Damage: Poor
Rate of Fire: Poor
Find In: Coastal Village

Select an Adventure

Nevada

The Nevada levels are big, but there is not a lot to fight, and deathtraps are rare. The most distinctive feature is the fact that you will lose ALL your weapons at the end of the first level. While the *Expert Gomer* staff boldly saves this setback for later, we recommend you tackle Nevada first to ease your way through the rest of the game.

Nevada Desert: Uzis
High Sec Compound: Desert Eagle
Area 51: Shotgun, MP-5, Grenades

London

The London levels are large, dark, confusing and time-consuming, but more combat-intensive areas you will have to explore—cannibals, lizardmen, dinosaurs, to name just a few of your problems. There are also lots of deathtraps and an extremely tough final boss. Save this for last.

Thames Wharf: Shotgun
Alldaych: Uzis, MP-5, Rocket Launcher
Lud's Gate: Harpoon Gun
City: Rocket Launcher

South Pacific

The South Pacific is one of the most combat-intensive areas you will have to explore—cannibals, lizardmen, dinosaurs, to name just a few of your problems. There are also lots of deathtraps and an extremely tough final boss. Save this for last.

Coastal Village: Harpoon Gun
Crash Site: MP-5
Madiburger: none
Temple of Puna: Desert Eagle

Lud's Gate

10

- ① Just after the safe trap room, drop onto small ledge, hang, drop and climb to other side, climb up.
- ② Kill off most of the enemies in the room. You will see the ledge as you climb.
- ③ Jump from top of Sphinx over to ledges (jump from very top).
- ④ Top of stair past Sphinx exhibit, stand on ledge and turn around to see blue glowing crabspace.
- ⑤ Corner of the flooded warehouse, underwater, look for crabspaces in the walls.
- ⑥ In warehouse, hit switches around the room, then hide from guard and over and seal the mislab.

6 Secrets

The City

11

- ① Drop backward off platforms across from ramp platform, look for a second ledge just below you.

1 Secret

Nevada Desert

12

- ① By first push block and barbwire (lower down carefully on right-hand side).
- ② Down climbable wall over ravine.
- ③ Climb under cliff on beach above falls.

3 Secrets

High Security Compound

13

- ① Behind one of the pushable blocks at the start, in cell.
- ② Set guns, go back to guy with his back to you, fill him, get pass, go down a bit and use the pass.

2 Secrets

Area 51

14

- ① Behind mesh, kill guard before he presses switch.
- ② Missile room by animated crabs; shoot the mesh.
- ③ Same room as UFO, hide in wall with ladder leads to tank with Orcas.

3 Secrets

Antarctica

15

- ① Try to dry over water by the bus nearest to the start.
- ② Hide in wall after boat acquires, climb up then slide down slope, jump, and grab.
- ③ After gate, key in water underneath rock—open the little hut near the start.

3 Secrets

RX-Tech Mines

16

- ① Shifty, right from hole in cowbar room to open door by control but in main cart room.
- ② Pick up main cart room; hole in the wall behind control hut.
- ③ Down chasm near the end of the level by the bridge and hangar.

3 Secrets

Lost City of Tinnos

17

- ① Use lever in earth puzzle room to drop block in room that splits into two routes.
- ② In the platform room, push the lever to the right to open the door to the 4 rooms.
- ③ Timed door opened in big platform room underneath second bridge.

3 Secrets

tricks of the Trade



Terry and the Amazing Trick-na-Color Dream Coat!

Terry is still his crazy self and he's even dressing the part! Now the Trickman is kickin' it live with some mad beats on Bust A Groove and bustin' out the tricks for your favorite games right here! Don't worry, Trickfans. The number of pages will be back to normal next month. In the meantime, check out the new **Expert Codebook** on newsstands now, with more codes and strategies than you can handle! The Trickmeister still needs your help! Keep sending those tricks to: Tricks of the Trade, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338 or e-mail to: tricks@zd.com

TRICK OF THE MONTH

Twisted Metal III

Sweet Tricks

Infinite Specials:

Enter L1, L1, R1, R1, R1 as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now begin a game and quit. When you begin a game again, you will have an unlimited amount of your character's special weapon.

Play as Minion:

Enter Right, Right, Right, Left, Left as your password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. You can now select Minion at the Vehicle Selection Screen.

Play as Sweet Tooth:

Enter Left, Left, Left, Right, Right as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. You can now select Sweet Tooth at the Vehicle Selection Screen.

Club Kid's House Level:

Enter Left, Left, Left, Square, Square as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now select "Deathmatch," then choose any level and vehicle to begin at Club Kid's House bonus level.

Warehouse Level:

Enter Square, Square, Square, Left, Left as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now select "Deathmatch," then choose any level and vehicle to begin at the Warehouse bonus level.

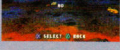
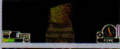
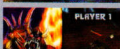
Demo Level:

Enter Up, Up, Up, Left, Left as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now select "Deathmatch," then choose any level and vehicle to begin at the Demo level shown in the background at the Main Menu.

Enable Memory Card:

Enter Start, Start, Start, Start as a password. Then you will return to the Main Menu. Now configure your settings and begin a game. Before the game begins, you will be prompted to save.

Frank Sferruzzo
Trenton, NJ

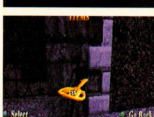


Tomb Raider III

Incredible Cheats

In the middle of the game without pausing, enter any of these cheats as shown:

All Weapons: L2, R2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2. You will hear a scream.



Fill Energy: R2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2. You will hear her grunt.

Level Skip: L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, R2, L2. Lara says "No."

All Secrets (access All Hallows): L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2. Lara will sigh.

Gives You Race Key at Lara's House: R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2, L2. Lara says "No."

Apocalypse

Cheats and Codes

To enable cheats, pause the game and hold down the L1 button and then input the code.

Invincibility: Down, Up, Left, Left, Triangle, Up, Right, Down.

All Weapons: Square, Circle, Up, Down, X, Square.



Unlock Levels: Triangle, Up, X, Down, Debug Info Cheat: Down, Down, Triangle.

Rally Cross 2

Multiple Codes

For all the codes below, begin a new season and input the codes at the Enter Name Screen. Note: The Tracks, Difficulties & Cars code doesn't unlock all the tracks; you'll also need the individual track codes.

All Tracks, Difficulties & Cars: moombmoob

Hillside Track: bsrhc
Dusty Road Track: mit
Rock Creek Track: kcin
Dry Humps Track: cire
Little Woods Track: foste
Frozen Trail Track: nivek
No Car Collision: incorporeal
Low Gravity: airfelled
High Gravity: leadshot
Restore Gravity: mooney

Win Games and Accessories for Your Tricks!



If your trick is selected as the Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by the kind people at InterAct. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this

section, you will win a free game. NOTE: If you send your trick by e-mail you must include your real name, address, city, state and zip code.

See page 188 for details.

Bust A Groove

Dance Preview:

Finish the game under the Normal difficulty setting with any character and you'll open the Dance View on the Main Menu Screen. You will be able to view dance moves, mess with camera angles, etc. with any of the characters who completed the game. Make sure you save!

Alternate Characters:

Highlight a character from the Player Select Screen and hold the Select button. With Select held, press X. You'll get that character's alternate costume.

Play as Capoeira:

Finish the game under the Normal difficulty level with any character. Now you can choose Capoeira.

Play as Robo-Z:

Finish the game under the Normal difficulty level with any character after you acquire Capoeira.



Play as Burger Dog:

Finish the game under the Normal difficulty level with Hamm after acquiring Robo-Z.

Play as Columbo (the mouse):

Finish the game under the Normal difficulty setting with Shorty after acquiring Robo-Z.

Kagero: Deception II

Begin With Money

If you would like to start out the game with extra money, just do this. When the game asks you to Name Her, go to the Name Input Screen and erase the current name that is there. Now put in Astarte for your name and then choose OK. When asked "Is this Name OK?" choose Yes. On the screen where Yocal is talking to King Eclipse, press Start. Look at your total ark and you will see that it is already at 2800!



Colony Wars: Vengeance

Password Cheats

Here are some password cheats for Colony Wars 2: (all are case-sensitive)

Invincibility: Vampire
All weapons: Tornado
Primary weapons available: Dark Angel

Infinite secondary weapons: Chimera

Infinite afterburners: Avalanche

Infinite money: Hydra

All ships: Thunderchild

FMV and Mission select: Demon

All missions, all ships, infinite secondary weapons, etc: Blizzard

Disable Cheats: Stormlord

Circuit Breakers

All Codes

Many Tracks in One-Player Mode:

If you want to have all the tracks in 1 player mode, just start a race then pause the game. While paused, choose OPTIONS/SOUND then go to FX and press L1+L2.

Better Engine in Two-Player Mode:

When you're about to select a track, press X + Square + Triangle + Circle. A picture of an engine should appear at the bottom of the screen if you are successful.

Jumping Bean Cars in Multiplayer Mode:

When you have chosen your vehicles and selected a circuit to race, you can enable this cheat. As soon as the circuit has loaded and the "3, 2, 1 GO" countdown has started, simultaneously press Circle and Left.

Race at Night:

When you're about to select a track, just push L1+L2+R1+R2 to play at night.

Reverse Tracks in Multiplayer Mode:

On the Circuit Selection Screen, choose the circuit you wish to race on and press Select. As the cars start to drive into the tunnel, quickly press and hold X and Square. While holding them down, press either Left or Right. If the cheat is successfully activated, the cars will spin around and drive into the tunnel backward.

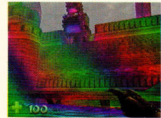
Upside-Down Tracks:

When you're about to select a track, press L2+R2+X+Down. A sweeping arrow should be drawn at the bottom of the information panel.

Turok 2: Seeds of Evil

Many Cool Codes

Enter any of these codes at the Enter



Cheat option on the Main Menu Screen, or when paused, access the Enter Cheat option and enter a code.

Game Shark codes

OK, masta cheatas, here are some funky codes to plug in yer GameSharks.

PlayStation

BRAVE FENCER MUSASHI

Infinite BP
80078eb60172
80078eb80172

CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED

99 Lives
d0058eef64c
800654c6300
d0058eef64c
80068f586300
Enable All Powers
80069178003f

TWISTED METAL 3

Ammo Never Decrease for All Players
80033ed62400
Infinite Lives P1
8004300c0002
Infinite Lives P2
8004309c0002

XENOGEARS

Infinite HP
8006d8ec03e7
8006d8ee03e7
Infinite EP
8006d8f00063
8006d8f20063
Quick Level Gain
8006d8e90001
Infinite Gold
8006f5a000

Nintendo 64

BODY HARVEST

Infinite Greece
81052b180098
81052b1a9671

F-ZERO X

Enable Code (Must Be On)
de0670000000
Infinite Lives
800e5ed90005
Unlock Everything
800cd3c80001
Infinite Shield
812c4b484326
Infinite Shield
812c4b4c4326
Have Boost From Start
d02c4dac0031
802c49250050

Game Shark codes

Access the Cheats option to turn on the cheats of your choice.

To get **Big Head Mode** enter:

UBERNOODLE

To get **Stick Mode** enter:

HOLASTICKBOY

To get **Big Hands and Feet Mode**

enter: STOMPPEM

To get **Tiny Mode** enter:

PIPSOUEAK

To get **Pen and Ink Mode** enter:

IGOTABFA

To get **Gouraud Mode** enter:

WHATSAEXTUREMAP

To get **Juan's cheat** enter:

HEERESJUAN

To access **Zach's cheat** enter:

AAHGOO

To access the **Blackout cheat** enter:

LIGHTSOUT

To make your characters wear **frothy**

stripes enter: FROTTSTRIPE

Rush 2: Extreme Racing USA



Cheat Menu and More

Cheat Menu: At the Setup Screen, hold L+R+Z. While holding these, press all four C-Buttons. A "cheat" Menu will appear.



Massive Mass Cheat: In the Cheat Menu, highlight the Cheat and hold L+R and press Up-C, Down-C, Left-C, Right-C.

Killer Rats Cheat: In the Cheat Menu, highlight the Cheat and hold L+R and press Z, Z, Z.

New York Cabs Cheat: In the Cheat Menu, highlight the Cheat and press R, L, Z, Up-C, Down-C, Up-C.

Resurrect In Place Cheat: In the Cheat Menu, highlight the Cheat and hold Z+Left-C, and press Right-C. Then hold Z+Right-C, and press Left-C.

Frame Scale Cheat: In the Cheat Menu, highlight the Cheat and hold Z+Down-C, and press Up-C. Then hold

NBA LIVE 99

Home Team Scores 150

801d34510096

Home Team Scores 0

801d34510000

Away Team Scores 150

801d401d0096

Away Team Scores 0

801d401d0000

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '99

Infinite Time Out Home

8004c0b60003

Infinite Time Out Away

8004c62e0003

No Time Outs Home

8004c0b60000

No Time Outs Away

8004c62e0000

WCW/nWo REVENGE

Infinite Time

800fa8700000

Extra Characters

8107107c3103

Maximum Spirit P1

800f9d2500ff

No Spirit P1

800f9d250000

Maximum Spirit P2

00fa0500ff

No Spirit P2

800fa0d50000

Maximum Spirit P3

800fa48500ff

No Spirit P3

800fa4850000

Maximum Spirit P4

800fa83500ff

No Spirit P4

800fa8350000

Infinite Time Out of Ring

800fa8e80014

EXTREME G: XG2

Extra Characters

801839c10001

801839d30001

801839d70001

ROGUE SQUADRON

Infinite Lives

80130a100000

Infinite Secondary Weapons

8010ca320008

99 Kills

80130a850063

99 Saves

80130a860063

All Levels/Ships

80130a4d007e

Extra Shields

81137c7c4316

Z+Up-C, and press Down-C.

Tire Scaling Cheat: In the Cheat Menu, highlight the Cheat and hold Z+Left-C, and press Right-C. Then hold Z+Right-C, and press Left-C.

Auto-Abort Cheat: In the Cheat Menu, highlight the Cheat and quickly press Up-C four times.

Game Time Cheat: In the Cheat Menu, highlight the Cheat and hold Z+Left-C, and press Up-C. Then hold Z+Up-C, and press Down-C.

Extreme-G: XG2



Many Cool Codes

To get any of these codes to work, just get to the Bike Selection Screen and press the R button to get to the Customize Screen. Now move over to the "Enter Name" Option, access it and put in the passwords for the results shown below:

SPIRAL: Causes the track to spin around.

2064: Use paper airplanes/wipeout style ships in place of cyber bikes.

LINEAR: Wire Frame Mode

XXX: Unlimited Nitros

SPYIEY: Overhead view

WCW/nWo Revenge



Cool Codes

Nitro Arena Trick:

When fighting in the entranceway throw your opponent into the black door at the very end. He will disappear for several seconds and then will come running out like he just hit the ropes.

Playable Managers:

Go to One-on-One Exhibition match and choose wrestlers that have

managers. After play begins, press Z on the third and fourth controllers and you will take control of the managers.

Play as THO Man: Highlight AKI man and press C-Down. THO is similar to Black Ninja from WCW vs. NWO.

Steal Opponent's Taunt:

To steal your opponent's main taunt, rotate the analog joystick counter-clockwise. Example: If you're playing Goldberg against Disco Inferno, and do this, Goldberg will begin to get funky and do a disco dance. Try this with everyone for different (hilarious) results.



NFL Quarterback Club '99



Cheat Codes and Hidden Character

Cheat Codes:

MRSHMLW: Fat Players

HSPTL: More Injuries

TTHPKC: Skinny Players

SPRTBRMD: Turbo Running

RLSTN: Opponents Score 0

SHTOUT: Start with 12 points

Hidden Character:

At the Main Menu push the buttons C-Up, C-Down, C-Left, C-Left, C-Right, C-Left, C-Up. Then a new player will appear under Emmitt Smith of the Cowboys and his name will be "The Good Mr."

Content Rules: 1. **No Purchase Necessary:** To enter send a letter or standard size postcard with your best trick code for any video game to "Tricks of the Trade," P.O. Box 1336, Oak Brook, IL 60122-1336 or e-mail us at: tricksoftrade.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 Jan. 16, 2000. All entries become exclusive property of Sponsor and will not be administered or returned. Sponsor assumes no responsibility for lost, misplaced, late, illegible, incomplete, postpaid, or undelivered entries. Sponsor reserves 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 will 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 three winners will be displayed in the Grand Prize Winner. One Grand Prize winner will receive in addition to the First Prize award, 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: (1) Uniqueness (25%), (2) Creativity (25%), (3) Accuracy (25%), and (4) Originality (25%). Judging will be held on or about Sept. 26, 2000. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prizes are non-transferable. No substitutions of prizes are allowed, except at the option of Sponsor using the nearest prizes become unavailable.

3. **Odds of Winning:** The number of valid entries of which winning will be determined by number of valid entries.

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 forfeiture of eligibility/release of liability/acceptance within the time frame of receipt or failure to 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 2D Inc., InterAct Accessories and their respective affiliates are not eligible. Neither 2D Inc., InterAct Accessories nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions, or related companies are responsible for any damages, loans, or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this promotion or receipt of prizes. Winner(s) accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that 2D Inc., InterAct Accessories and their agencies, 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 results for which the winners list is requested to "Tricks of the Trade/Winners List," P.O. Box 1336, Oak Brook, Illinois 60122-1336. Allow four weeks for list to be received by the 15th day of each month following the end of the date of the publication. Prizes for winners list for delivery of

6. **Restrictions:** Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All retailers, state and local regulations apply.
7. **Sponsors:** This contest is sponsored by 2D Inc. and InterAct Accessories, Inc. Copyright 2D Inc. All Rights Reserved. Printed in USA.

ARE YOU READY?

ENTER THE
WORLD OF
THE UNDEAD!

LEGACY of KAIN™
SOUL REAVER 2

In Crystal Dynamic's sequel
to Legacy of Kain.

Raziel is back in Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver – the second installment of Crystal Dynamics' dark gothic adventure. One of the most anticipated titles for the PlayStation this year, Soul Reaver features dramatically evolved gameplay. Players will experience high resolution, incredibly fluid graphics in a full freedom 3D environment, dynamic game-play mechanics such as gliding and soul-feeding to maintain life, unprecedented interactivity with objects within the game, an innovative hand-to-hand combat system, and Predator AI featuring intelligent non-player characters which remember and react to players' actions.

"This is easily one
of the most impressive
games we've seen on the
PlayStation." EGM

Watch for it
this February



Now that you've taken down the tree,
eaten the last of the holiday chocolate,
and mastered TOMB RAIDER III, take a breather
and get ready for the first hits of 1999.

GEX
DEEP COVER GECKO™

AKUJI
THE HEARTLESS™

WARZONE
2100™

The pairing up of Eidos and Crystal Dynamics has set the stage for the release of some of 1999's best titles. Starting with Akuji in January, revenge by voodoo has never been so much fun. Get ready to come back from the grave and unleash your voodoo power to destroy those who betrayed you. Hot on the heels of Akuji, Crystal follows up with sequels to two of the most successful PlayStation games of all time: **Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko** and **Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver**.

And with the ever growing popularity of strategy games on the PlayStation, Eidos will release **Warzone 2100**. Hear directly from the source about this exciting new game in the following interview with the game developers from Pumpkin Studios.

For more information on
all of these products, check
out our web site at
www.eidosinteractive.com



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

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Get reacquainted with an
All-New GEX
And his Miss Adventures.

GEX³

DEEP COVER GECKO

GEX makes a triumphant return
in GEX 3: Deep Cover Gecko.



As an international
secret agent for hire,
GEX's next mission is to
Find the beautiful Agent

Xtra who has been kidnapped by
GEX's arch nemesis, Rez. Full of even
more tongue-in-cheek
references to pop cul-
ture, television and
movies, GEX 3 artfully
combines humor, stunning 3D graphics
and all-new gameplay mechanics.



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

SMASHING SEQUEL BABY!

Baywatch vixen Marliece Andrada joins forces as Agent Xtra in the latest all-new GEX adventure.



Everyone's favorite wisecracking gecko is back with over 1,000 all-new one-liners, in-game hints, and celebrity impressions from comedian Dana Gould.

Find and unlock secret playable characters including GEX's overweight leopard gecko cousin.



All-new vehicular based Bonus Rounds that include riding crocodiles, kangaroos, tanks, camels and more.

GEX receives mission briefs in all-new full motion video starring Baywatch's Marliece Andrada as the beautiful Agent Xtra.

All-new intuitive 3D camera system.

All-new worlds based on new media and pop culture parodies including:

- Saving Private GEX through intense military missions
- Twisted North Pole with crooked Santa and his evil elves
- GEX Capone as the CLODFATHER
- Cowboy Clint GEXwood blazes saddles through The Wild West.



It's Tailtime! Tail attack your way through 30 levels and over 60 all-new enemies.

Coming to the PlayStation and the Nintendo 64.



All-new costume specific character mechanics like scuba diving, gliding, snowboarding, rocket launching, burro riding and more.

Master of Disguise

GEX sports over 25 all-new character costumes and new game mechanics.



Private GEX charges the enemy stronghold



Deep-sea explorer GEX steams



Stalk the night as DracuGEX



Clint GEXwood rides his trusty burro, Al Nino



UltraGEX: The Rocket Launcher



Navy Diver GEX: "Don't call me Frogman"

After being murdered
on your wedding day,
not even the
gates of hell
can contain your fury

AKUJI™

THE HEARTLESS

Voodoo and blood sacrifice push this action title over the edge!

Crystal Dynamics, the same people who brought you the blood soaked epic *Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain*, have another gruesome hit on their hands with *Akuji the Heartless* for the PlayStation. Crystal explores new depths of the 3D action-adventure genre by introducing voodoo into the mix.

As the story goes, Akuji is a powerful voodoo warrior about to be married to Kesho, eldest daughter of a rival voodoo clan. In a fit of jealousy, Akuji's brother Orad sends his demonic minions to disrupt the ceremony. After murdering the wedding guests, they turn their attention to the groom. Akuji's heart is ripped out of his chest and sealed with a cursed wax to assure that Akuji

will spend eternity in the underworld. With Akuji out of the picture, Orad kidnaps Kesho with the intention of sacrificing her to the gods.



Akuji awakes to find himself in the first vestibule of hell. To escape, Akuji must solicit the help of Baron Samedi - a powerful voodoo god of the underworld. Akuji's only hope to return to the land of the living and exact revenge upon his brother is by serving the Baron.



His task: To scour the underworld for the spirits of his ancestors.

Akuji the Heartless is powered by a smooth 3D engine. The worlds exude voodoo; grimy blood splattered textures, eerie skulls, abandoned temples, and dank swamps. This creepy underworld is populated with 30 dif-



ferent types of enemies ranging from disemboweled zombies that whip you with their exposed spines to mysterious cultists armed with deadly scythes.



To enter a new vestibule of hell, Akuji must defeat a warden, i.e. a boss. What can we say? There are four of 'em. All big and all



nasty. Animation is smooth! Akuji can do the typical run and crouch. But he also has the ability to climb ladders and

Jab the attack button and Akuji will execute a deadly slash!

swing hand-over-hand across chasms.

Now let's talk gameplay. Akuji is armed with razor sharp claws and he knows how to use them. Jab the attack button and



Akuji will execute a deadly slash. With a little practice you can perform rolling attacks.

Crystal hired Richard Roundtree for the voice of Akuji. Fans of 70's films will remember Roundtree as the tough private detective John Shaft. Roundtree's stone delivery really brings Akuji to life. Definitely worth a play!



We've found that the rolling attack is very effective against bosses. Hand-to-hand combat is fun, but Akuji also has the ability to cast voodoo spells. All you have to do is run over an icon and you're ready to go! Spells run the gamut from shield of blood (a protective spell) to hell blast (a fiery offensive attack). There are two options for spell casting: the standard third person view or a sniper mode. Sniper mode takes you into a first person perspective equipped with cross hairs. Perfect for eliminating hard to reach baddies. To round out the game,

THE NEW DIMENSION OF GAMING!



EIDOS AND PUMPKIN
STUDIOS TARGET THE
UNTAPPED STRATEGY
GENRE WITH THE
UPCOMING RELEASE
OF WARZONE 2100.

WE ARE TALKING WITH



Jim Bambra

JIM BAMBRA,
DIRECTOR OF
PROJECTS AT

PUMPKIN STUDIOS,
ON THE GAME THAT
PROMISES TO OPEN
THE EYES OF
PLAYSTATION GAMERS
WORLDWIDE.

TELL US ABOUT WARZONE 2100.

Warzone 2100 is a strategy game presented in full 3D with in-depth gameplay and blisteringly fast action. The graphical effects are stunning and make use of every aspect of the 3D technology. The 3D technology is used to create a very vibrant game world where artillery shells arc over mountains while Strike VTOLs

(Vertical Take-off and Landing Aircraft) roar overhead. With this feature you can order a VTOL strike and follow them through the valleys and around the mountains as they fire rockets at their target. Once you're used to rotating, zooming and tilting the map, and tracking your units with the camera, there's no going back to static 2D displays.

The special effects are also pretty cool. Rockets fire with a smoke trail, artillery and cannon shells explode gratuitously and flamers ignite enemy units and structures. When units take damage they emit smoke — the more damage, the more smoke. When they explode, shards of metal and concrete fly across the screen. You can always spot where the action is by the amount of smoke and explosions going off!

What are some of the key features?

Warzone 2100 is set after the nuclear holocaust so the main drive in the game is the recovery and research of artifacts from before the nuclear holocaust. As these are researched, new weapons, propulsions, structures, etc. become available to the player. As a result, players can decide what technologies they want to research as the game progresses. And as artifacts are researched, new

vehicle types can be designed.



The design sequence is very easy to use. It uses three components: Turret, Body and Propulsion. As research progresses, new components become available, making for thousands of different vehicle designs. Each weapon has its own characteristics. Flamers set enemies on fire, but are

vulnerable to enemy attacks. Cannons are great for damaging other tanks and have great damage resistance. But for killing infantry and cyborgs you can't beat a machine-gun. Anti-tank rockets do lots of damage, but are slow to fire — you soon learn to use hit and run tactics with them. Mortars can fire shells over hills, and howitzers can fire over large distances.

The propulsions add even more options. Wheels make for very fast vehicles, but with low damage



capacity. Put tracks on your vehicle and your tank doesn't move as fast, but it can take a lot more damage. Hovers give you increased speed and zoom across water, but are very vulnerable to enemy attacks - keep them moving and you'll survive; let the enemy guns lock on and you're dead.

Another key feature is the fully expanding campaign where your base lasts throughout the first campaign. The first mission is to



establish your base. In subsequent missions you upgrade the base and add more defenses and fortifications to it. We achieved this by using large maps that expand as the game progresses. Once the first mission is completed, the map expands to the south. We then fly in a transporter that lets the player fly units to mission sites on different maps. While on an away



mission you still have access to your factories, research facilities and units back at home base. You can produce more tanks and have them flown in to the away maps as reinforcements. So you get to select what reinforcements you need, deciding on the tactical situation and your own style of play.

I've always wanted to do a more open-ended game where units increase in experience and go from one mission to another. The open-ended campaign system makes this a reality. It's possible for the first few units that you start the game with to achieve elite status and still be alive at the end of the game. But by recycling your veteran units you can transfer their experience to bigger and better vehicles as the game progresses!

What have you done to ensure that Warzone 2100 will be a good PlayStation game?

Sweated blood and gone through many different approaches to ensure that it's fast and fun. To date too many real-time strategy games have been straight ports from PC to PlayStation. Warzone 2100 has been developed simultaneously on both formats to ensure that the best use is made of each machine. In the PlayStation

**MANY
WILL DIE
BEFORE THE
PARASITE IS
FINALLY
DEFEATED AND
THE WORLD IS
MADE SAFE.**



version, you drive units around with the directional buttons and fire at enemies using the X button. The speed of the game has been upped to emphasize its arcade feel, and units are tougher to reflect the faster pace of game.

Other than graphical eye candy, how do you utilize the 3D terrain?

The 3D terrain is vital to the game play. It gives Warzone 2100 true line-of-sight and fog-of-war effects. Until you drive around the hills and mountains you can't see what's hidden behind them. Enemy mortar batteries may be lurking there ready to fire their shells over the hill onto your base. All they need to do is get a sensor unit to see your unit and they can bomb away, safe behind the hill from your fire.

VTOL aircraft make great use of the 3D terrain - they fly down valleys, then break over the mountain to fire their missiles onto their targets. It looks very cinematic and gives you a great feeling as the tank hunter missiles take out the enemy armor. Meanwhile the enemy anti-aircraft batteries are filling the sky with flak and SAMs. It's real touch

and go whether your VTOLs will make it out of the target zone or not. In old style 2D isometric games your aircraft are just a group of sprites moving over the landscape. In Warzone 2100, aircraft really do fly!



Why is the unit design so important to the game?

The research and design sequences in Warzone 2100 really open up your options as a game player. You're never restricted to the units we give you! The 3-part design system of Turret, Body and Propulsion offers over 2,000



possible combinations. Using this, you can create fast scout vehicles, lumbering main battle tanks, strike aircraft, and amphibious hovercraft.

It gives you the opportunity to create lots of different vehicles to suit your style of play and current mission objectives. Even similar vehicles will perform very differently if you change the turret from a heavy cannon to an anti-aircraft battery. It no longer functions as a battle tank, but as a very effective aircraft killer. Units that survive one mission are available for the next mission. These units become more and more experienced as the game progresses. This makes them more accurate and increases their survival chances.

Storyline plays a big role in RTS games, what's the backstory in Warzone 2100?

Warzone 2100 starts with the nuclear holocaust that wipes out civilization. The player is part of a group of survivors who take shelter in an abandoned military base while they wait out the nuclear winter. Years later you emerge to begin the Project — a plan to rebuild a New World from the ashes of the old. You lead Team Alpha, one of three expeditionary teams sent out by the Project to recover artifacts from before the Collapse. Your first missions take you to the Western Sector where your search for artifacts quickly turns into a battle for survival. A more technologically advanced force is also present in the Western Sector and seeks your destruction. This force is being controlled by a self-aware

computer parasite that seeks to enlist your help. When you initially defeat it, the parasite reappears in the Northern Sector, this time controlling an even more advanced enemy force.

As the game progresses, its hatred for you grows, as does its armory of weapons. It gains access to nukes and fires them against you — the world again erupts in nuclear firestorms and mass destruction.



Still it plots and seeks revenge against you. Its true identity is slowly revealed, as are its motives, and its ultimate power to corrupt everything it comes into contact with.... And once it has you, it's hard to escape! Many will die before the parasite is finally defeated and the world is made safe. It's a story of nuclear strikes, titanic battles, and a struggle for

survival in a hostile world ruled by a mad computer virus. Welcome to Warzone 2100.

From what I have seen of the game, there seems to be a strong emphasis on action/battle. Was this a conscious attempt to move away from strategy games which have become bogged down in producing and researching hundreds of units?

To a large extent, yes. With Warzone 2100 we wanted to capture the fun and excitement of real-time combat and exploration, while making it really easy to carry out research, design and manufacture. The aim was to encourage you to leave your base to explore the world out there. Only by doing so can you recover the artifacts needed to further your research, and find the resources required to expand your base. You need to scout out the maps, then attack and capture key locations. In Warzone 2100 you cannot simply sit back and amass hundreds of units. Your technology will remain at a low level and your power supplies will not be up to it — get out there and fight!

What, roughly, is the split between resource management and warfare in Warzone?

Warzone 2100 emphasizes action over resource management. But there's plenty of resource management to be done. You've got resources to find and turn into power, structures to build, technologies to research, vehicles to design and manufacture, and bases to build and defend. And we make all of that very easy to do. The interface is very intuitive and has lots of fast find mechanisms and easy-to-use shortcuts. This means that you can tailor your resources and production very quickly while continuing to move and attack with your combat units.

Who is Pumpkin Studios?

Pumpkin Studios is a recent start-up company with a long track record. Nick Cook and I set up Pumpkin Studios in August 1996. We were previously at MicroProse where Nick was Head of Art and I was Head of Design. We recruited Alex McLean, our Head of Programming, in August. Other members of the team joined shortly afterwards in September — January. Other team members joined us the following summer. To be honest most 14 out of our 18 staff at one time or other previously worked at MicroProse on many different projects, so some of us have been together longer than we care to remember.



The Warzone 2100 Development Team



EIDOS



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...al stuff you could probably live without, but shouldn't



McFarlane Gear Sellin'

What more needs to be said? They're **Metal Gear Solid Figures** from McFarlane Toys. Coming in February of '99, the MGS set is made up of eight figures—those shown to the left and Liquid Snake, Meryl Silverburgh, Revolver Ocelot and Vulcan Raven, each with a variety of accessories. Also look for a contest to win a set in next month's EGM. **Price:** Around \$50 each www.spawn.com

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Smaller and thinner is almost always cooler, but the **Swatch Skin Watch** takes this to a new level. Measuring in at a ridiculously thin 3.9 millimeters...or 3/20 of an inch thick, the Skin watch is a technological marvel as well as a boss way to tell time thanks to sweet design. **Price:** Around \$80 www.swatch.com



The Skin watch shown is a limited-edition model costing \$115.

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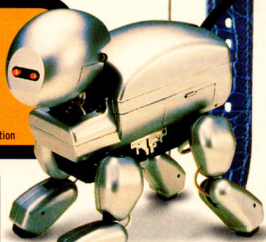
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Conquest of the Planet of the Apes
Battle for the Planet of the Apes

Shaft
Princess Bride
Tekken

February:

A Fish Called Wanda
Kingpin
Ronin
Rounders
Time Bandits: Special Edition



See Spot Be Cool

Never in the history of Get Some! have we covered such an awesome item. **The Entertainment Robot** from Sony of Japan is a robot with various plug-and-play appendages and features all kinds of sensors for light, color and motion. Although it's not for sale yet, there is a possibility that it will be in the near future. For more info and some incredible movies, check the Web site. **Price:** N/A

www.sony.co.jp

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by Dean Hager
dean_hager@zd.com

The Final Word



Not-So-Deep Thoughts About Kid's Games

What the hell is a kid's game anyway? A game designed with the mental capacity of a child in mind? Or is it just a developer's half-assed guess at what a young person might enjoy? Or worse yet, a regular game so horribly ill-conceived and screwed up it suddenly "becomes" a kid's title near the end of its development?

Some would argue that all video

games are for kids—probably the same guys who start wearing slacks and sensible shirts in their mid-20s with a mini-vest and a nagging wife soon to follow. We know better. Video games are for everyone, including really young kids (4-8 years old). The problem is, while

the PC industry has been churning out kiddyware for years, the PlayStation and N64 are relative virgins to such action. Even more problematic are developers and publishers putting out "gray area" games. Gray area meaning a title that seemingly is aimed at young kids but may very well be botched product. Some poor tot ends up getting something originally conceived for an older player. Why is this? Most likely a producer takes a hard look at an unfinished project and decides anyone but a young kid will find it to be complete crap. At that point they'll add some goofy music, take out the violence and hope for the best. It's a cheap way to get a clunker on the shelves.

In the past year, at least five different PS and N64 titles have hit the market waiving their kiddie flag high and proud. "Look, parents, a game you can buy for your little kid." It'll be fun, captivating etc., etc. Well, at best a kid's game will keep a child quietly occupied. At worst it'll send him/her into crying fits of frustration inevitably involving

innocent bystanders in the game.

I'm not an expert but one of the few games I've seen a kid really take to is *Putt Putt Goes to the Moon* (no joke). The game was available for the 3DO a few years back and featured a talking dune buggy. The premise was to explore several minilevels in search of parts needed to operate the moon-bound rocket. A simple premise but it seemed to work well.

In my opinion, *Putt Putt* is a good

example of a legitimate kid's game. At no time did the publisher try to pass it off as anything else. It was aimed at children because it was made with them in mind.

More recent titles like *Running Wild* and *Animaniacs Ten Pin Alley* have provided decent kid fare.

Simplistic gameplay, a few variables and one

objective make them natural candidates. For good ol' wholesome gaming, retro titles *Frogger* and *Activision Classics* fit the bill.

Now for a few bad examples. The recently released *Eggs of Steel* appears to be aimed at younger ages. But its strange layout, multiple paths and general weirdness are guaranteed to confuse. Also in that category is *Psybadek*. It certainly looks like a cute game (at least from the package). But again, its layout is so disjointed and hard to follow the average kid isn't gonna get it. Even if he/she could, it wouldn't matter. The game isn't good enough to hold anyone's attention.

It's a sure bet crap titles will continue to disguise themselves as kid's games while legitimate young-age titles will be few and far between. As long as the potential for a quick buck is out there it'll keep happening. Hey, developers, give kids some credit, they're smarter than you think. The only people you're actually fooling are the well-meaning but unwitting parents.



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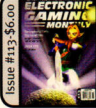
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Next Month



Could a 3D version of Castlevania possibly be any good? Let the Review Crew fill you in on this highly anticipated game.



Time to put a new crop of peripherals through the paces. Some of the new designs for '99 will surprise you. We'll even show you one that doubles as a bondage mask...don't ask. We'll have more info on 989 Studios' potential sleeper hit Syphon Filter. Also, the Review Crew reveals their plan to open a specialty sandwich shop.

Christmas is just a distant happy memory. Visions of sugar plums have turned to horrific scenes of depravity. Silent Hill has arrived! Take a peek at this promising new title from Konami. Also in the spotlight is the other half of Konami's one-two punch—Castlevania 64. Find out if 3D graphics have been kind to this class.

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

March 1999

John "Zelda" Ricciardi and the rest of the Review Crew bust The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening DX wide open.

On sale Feb. 9

This Metal Gear Solid/Resident Evil hybrid could very well be the creepiest game of all time. EGM takes you on a surreal trip into the heart of Konami's Silent Hill.



EXPERT GAMER



February 1999

On sale Jan. 26

If the Force can't help you, turn to the Rogue Squadron strategy guide in the next issue of Expert Gamer.



XG's South Park guide will be so huge that it'll be hella cool!



Did you really find all the secrets to Zelda 64?

In the February issue of Expert Gamer, we'll finish the Tomb Raider 3 strategy with more detailed maps, helpful tips and lots of secrets.

Speaking of secrets, Zelda 64 contained plenty and XG will highlight a few next month. See if you found them all or were

surprised by a few.

With numerous levels and craft to choose from, the Rogue Squadron strategy will show you how to complete each mission, details of each craft and more!

And let's not forget about our mega South Park guide. You'd have to be a damn hippie to miss it!



Konami's Silent Hill continues to give us nightmares the more we play it, but it's a small sacrifice to pay to bring you a preview of this spookily great game. The February OPM will also take a critical look at the highly addictive Bust-A-Move 4.

Now that all of 1998's games have been released, it's time for the inevitable. Don't complain, you knew it was coming. That's right, prepare yourself for OPM's annual awards for the best and worst games of 1998. Even if you're not in the mood for fancy-schmancy awards ceremonies, the February issue of OPM is just teeming with

loads of great games. We have massive coverage of the PlayStation's next, best racing game, R4: Ridge Racer Type 4 along with previews of Silent Hill, Syphon Filter, NCAA Final Four, Street Fighter Alpha 3 and Clock Tower 2. Also, look for reviews of Bust-A-Move 4, Animaniacs Ten Pin Alley II, FIFA 99 and WCW Thunder.

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

February 1999

On sale Jan. 19

We'll tell you all there is to know about Namco's awesome R4, including how it works with the JoGCon and Pocket Station.





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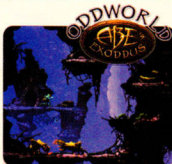
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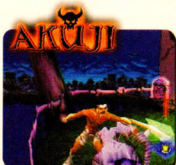
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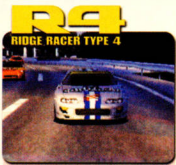
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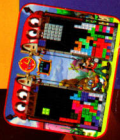
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