

Nintendo 64 • PlayStation • Saturn • Super NES • Genesis • Arcade

# ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

## Diddy Kong Racing

**Better Than Mario Kart 64!**

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Metal Gear Solid  
Bomberman 64 • Sonic R  
Castlevania 64 • Quake 64  
Enemy Zero • Alundra  
X-Men Vs. SF • Reel Fishing  
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101



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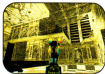
# Gamer First Aid

Stop the  
game.

Call for  
help.

Act quickly.  
The victim  
may faint.

Get to the  
nearest  
hospital.



In most Eidos-related emergencies, your first response will be to finish the victim's game, potentially resulting in the loss of a lot more than a friendship. So before playing games like Tomb Raider 2 or Deathtrap Dungeon, study the enclosed first aid instructions. Then mount them in an easily accessible location near your PlayStation™. And rest assured that once you've assisted the injured, you can finish what their lame ass couldn't.

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# PICK A

(HEY, IT'S CHRISTMAS.)

"Tekken 2 is the best...no contest."

-Game Players August '96

"Tekken 2 is THE can't-miss PlayStation game of the year!" - Game Players September '96

"This game is a must buy for anyone who owns a PlayStation (novices and fanatics alike)." - PS Extreme September '96



鉄拳  
TEKKEN 2

# FIGHT.

## PICK TWO.)

"Soul Blade heads the early list for best fighting game of the year." - GameFan February '97

"...no gamer should be without this: the most spectacular fighting game ever to grace a console." - GameFan March '97

"...it's simply the best 3D fighter on the PlayStation." - Video Game Advisor February '97



# SOULBLADE



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# Editorial

By Joe Funk • joe\_funk@zgd.com

In last month's editorial, we made some predictions about the future of gaming. Already, one of them has come true. Apparently, we jumped the gun a little bit—a golden gun if you will.

Vegas bookies will tell you hope doesn't mix well with prognostication. Emotion gets in the way. In this case, however, our dreams have become reality.

We predicted, OK hoped, that someone, somewhere, was finally going to tap a great license, make a killer movie and then make a killer game. It's amazing when you consider this has never happened before in our industry. Up until now, the characters in blockbuster video games have all been born there. With all of the great characters and settings and plots provided by Hollywood, not a single movie or movie character has ever enjoyed mega-star status in video games. Not Superman. Not Batman. Not Star Trek. Not Alien. Not Indiana Jones. Not Terminator. Not Jurassic Park. Not Spawn. Not even Mickey Mouse.

There are some tepid exceptions: Star Wars has consistently been the best so far with many excellent games based on Lucas' universe, but except for the first level on Shadows of the Empire (see *EGM* #96 editorial), we have not seen a true milestone of a video game based on Star Wars. Alien Trilogy and Die Hard for the PlayStation were actually pretty good games and came close to mimicking the look and feel of their cinematic namesakes, but in both cases the games were just not integrated deeply enough into the film's story line, and neither ever really achieved epik status.

While countless attempts have been made over the last decade to tap this deepest of veins, usually, unfortunately, something gets lost in the translation. Our industry simply



has a poor track record of producing quality movie-to-game translations. Companies seem to spend more time and money chasing down and then marketing a big movie license than they do in producing the game. Well, history has taught us repeatedly that simply procuring a license and slapping it on a bad game does not translate into strong sales.

That's where things have dumsly stood, but now we're pleased, no ecstatic, to report that a new standard of excellence has been established in movie-to-game adaptations.

His name is Bond, James Bond, and the game is GoldenEye. Nintendo (who published) and Rare (who developed) deserve a 21-gun salute for their fabulous work on this landmark title for the N64. It is the translation we've been longing for at the *EGM* offices: a great property (James Bond), a great movie (GoldenEye), and a game that truly captures the essence of its namesake.

What makes this game so good? The answer can be summed up in one word: gameplay. If GoldenEye was a generic spy game in white packaging with an olive stripe and stenciled letters and titled "Jerry's Shootin' Spy Game," it would still be a great game, and Jerry would probably become a character icon like Duke Dukem or Lara Croft. It's infinitely more important that Rare took the time to do this game right than it was to hit the release window of the film. The game is good enough to stand on its own, so the lag between the release of the game and the movie (about 18 months) is insignificant.

Yes, GoldenEye is a Doom-type game. Most of what you see in the game has been in other games. But it is the rock-solid feel, depth of gameplay and integration of so many quality programming components that elevate GoldenEye to elite status. Weave in the GoldenEye story line, steeped with more than three decades of rich Bond tradition; an unmistakable theme song; familiar supporting characters like Q and MoneyPenny; innovative gadgets and exotic settings; and you have a game that is an instant classic—not to mention a milestone for the industry.

Where do we go from here? Hopefully, programmers and developers will learn the lessons Mr. Bond has taught us. We just want to see more, better, movie-to-game translations. Perhaps the next step is an integrated DVD that will include the typical director's cut of a movie, production notes, behind-the-scenes footage—and also include the game. In the meantime, thumbs up to Rare and Nintendo for setting a new standard in movie-to-game translations.

With that said, we want to know who's going to step up and come out with the full Metal Jacket and it's Pat games?



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UNIMAGINABLY GRUESOME CREATURES, TO KILL  
YOUR FATHER, DRACULA, ENDING YOUR CURSED  
BLOODLINE ONCE AND FOR  
ALL. BUT JUST WHEN YOU  
THINK IT'S OVER, THE  
MULTIPLE ENDINGS WILL  
HAVE YOU BELIEVING IN  
LIFE AFTER DEATH.  
SO COME, PAY A VISIT  
TO CASTLEVANIA. YOU'LL FIND THE ADDRESS  
IN YOUR NIGHTMARES.





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# All You Want For X-mas

With all the games and game systems screaming, "Buy me," trying to buy something for the game lover in your life this holiday season can be confusing. However, EGM's mischievous elves can help you pick the ones to buy and the ones NOT to buy!!



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enemy zero

To boldly die where no one has died before. This is Enemy Zero, and you are Lara Lewis. You're on a space station and your crew members are being picked off one by one by an alien beast. No sweat, it's a shooting game and you can handle a gun. But you can't see the alien, only hear it. Scared? Thanks to the eerie soundtrack and intensely graphic cinematic effects you will be. Just be careful. In space no one can hear you wet your pants.



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noodles and make Mario 64 your choice for best game ever in your top 100 list. I can live with the inevitability that the REAL best game ever, COMBAT for the 2600, will not even be on your list, but if Mario sits atop it, I will personally ensure that you never have children. I'm a superhero, I can do that. Also, I wanted to tell you that if, for some reason, the Mortal Kombat games get in there, I will be forced to fly down to Lombard and noice around your offices wearing nothing but a small sanitary napkin and a knowing grin. I think you have been warned.

Captain Cabone—[captcal@msnline.ru.com](mailto:captcal@msnline.ru.com)



Sorry fans, no Mortal Kombat game showed up in our 100 Best Games of All Time list.

All we have to say is, thank God our list came out the way it did.

### And Now...Your Comments on the Top 100 List

The list brought back pretty cool memories, and thanks to you, I think I'm gonna go buy me a Sega CDX to play Lunar, Sonic CD and other Sega Genie games I've been missing!

Name and address withheld

Why is Myst not in the Best 100?

Michael Chapman—[barthandjanet@juno.com](mailto:barthandjanet@juno.com)

Because Myst sucks.

In your 300th issue, you said that the coolest part of Zelda 2 was finding Bogs's hidden cabin in the forest. You said the same thing about Chrono Trigger. I don't get it, was this just a mistake or does this hidden cabin exist in both games?

Steve Miles—[CL8935@aol.com](mailto:CL8935@aol.com)

Oops! Looks like we goofed on that one. Here's the correct "coolest part" for Chrono Trigger:

**Coolest Part:** Playing Chrono Trigger and thinking back to the time you found Bogs's hidden cabin in the forest in Zelda II!



The colorful cart of Squares and Chrono Trigger spent hours looking for that damn cabin before they realized that they were in the wrong game.

I got into an argument with my friend because I said that Zelda for Super NES was probably one of the best games ever made, and he said that Chrono Trigger was better. We argued, and I ended up killing him, getting kicked out of college and joining the Canadian roller

derby. It's very sad. Well, after reading your #3 best game ever, I now know I was right. I've been let back into college and am now majoring in nuclear engineering with a minor in art history.

Marc Dworin—[bdw0532@binghamton.edu](mailto:bdw0532@binghamton.edu)

Congrats and good luck in your studies...psycho.

The top 100 list was great. I have practically no disagreements. The greatest part was that despite Sony's current dominance in the marketplace, the Saturn had more entries than either the PlayStation (or Nintendo 64).

Mike Tobin—[michaelt@ccsl.com](mailto:michaelt@ccsl.com)

Wait a minute, that top 100 list must be all wrong. Aren't we supposed to be biased against Sega and the Saturn? Weird...

I loved your top 100 best games list. I was very surprised that Tetris being #1, but I couldn't agree more. Also, I would just like to say how pleased I was that you guys were fair in your distribution of titles by not having mediocre titles on other systems just to please the masses. My only gripe is a little game called "Donkey Kong Country" is missing.

sompresad@juno.com

Sorry. We considered all the DKCs, but these installments in DK's gaming heritage didn't quite hack it.

Let me be the first, and maybe only one, to say that I liked your top 100. I find it very hard to rate games. I always end up with a paradox, like A should be better than B, B is better than C, but C is better than A. I think that there are too many factors that go into making a game fun to come up with a flawless list, and I am sure that you will spend the next month being chewed out by "Resident Evil" fans. I really enjoyed the list, even though I don't fully agree with it. I especially liked the way you covered your tails at the end. Now, maybe by issue 200, you will realize that Mario Kart 64 is better than the original.

Sei Smith—[billbones@juno.com](mailto:billbones@juno.com)

Oh man, you described our selection process perfectly. That's why it took us so long to finish the top 100. Naturally, no one here at EGM agrees 100 percent with every pick in our list either, but it is definitely the best representation of our collective opinion.

The top 100 feature was excellent! Of course there are some games that didn't make it that I felt should (Legacy of Kain, Castlevania II, but that's to be expected. Keep up the good work!

Patrick McIntosh—[p.mcintosh@popmail.csuohio.edu](mailto:p.mcintosh@popmail.csuohio.edu)

What have you guys been smoking? In case you don't remember, there is a kick-but game called Resident Evil that you forgot to include in your little list! Please don't be offended, it's just honest criticism!

hellbringer666@juno.com

Oh man, we ticked off someone named "hellbringer666." This is trouble. Seriously though, we didn't forget Resident Evil at all (even Capcom called to see why RE was excluded). Frankly, a lot of people here at EGM thought the game was overrated. It just didn't get enough votes to make the top 100. We know it'll shock a lot of our readers (at least those who picked Resident Evil as their #1 favorite game of all time), but we weren't going to throw the game in our top 100 list just to appease people. Sorry, that's our honest opinion, and we stand by it.

### Next month's Question of the Moment:

Do you think Nintendo should be bringing out the 64DD add-on? Send in your comments via e-mail to: [EGM.Mail@red.com](mailto:EGM.Mail@red.com) with the subject heading: Q of the Moment: 64DD. Please use that subject heading!!

# "Winner! Best PlayStation Game at E3."

-GAMEPEN

"...unique gameplay and killer graphics that will rocket it straight into the PlayStation hall of fame."

-GAMEPRO

"...positively oozes high production values... This one's going to be big!"

-GAMEFAM

"...a rarity in today's sequel-studded market: a completely fresh idea."

-P.S.X.

"...one of the coolest games I've ever seen..."

-GAME INFORMER

"...one truly entertaining title."

-OFFICIAL U.S. PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE

"...my pick for game of the year."

-PSX NATION



## ODDWORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE

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It is quite obvious that your picking of Tetris as the number-one game of all time is politically motivated. The only reason you picked Tetris is because nearly every system has that game, so in essence, you wouldn't give any company any special treatment. I'm quite disappointed with your list.

Twisted2X@aol.com

Yeah, you're right. We really didn't stay up late for days working on this monstrous list. And we really didn't give much thought to what EGM would award the #1 game of all time to. In fact, we threw together the whole thing in five minutes. Damn! How did you see through our little ruse? There must be a spy inside our office!

You guys hit the nail on the head...Tetris is by far the most addicting game ever! I would like to see any other magazine do a top 100 list with such intelligence. I didn't think you could pull it off.

Andrew Theodorakis—krakoo7@aol.com

I hope you noticed that you made an error in your 100th issue. You had Zelda 64 and Maca; The Dark Age pages switched around on your table of contents. I can't believe you made an error in your 100th issue.

gansjeans@juno.com

Um...you may just want to skip the rest of this letters section.

#### OOPS

It doesn't happen very often (yeah, right), but we made a few boo-boos in last month's (majorly redesigned, mind you) issue. On page 28, Japanese readers may have been wondering what "International Keniosusomonensku" was. The Japanese text was supposed to say "International News," but we messed up. Also, we forgot to recognize both Saturn Bomberman and Castlevania: Symphony of the Night as Games of the Month (it was a lie). Finally, we messed up the supplemental review scores for two games. Marvel Super Heroes (PS, pg. 197) should've had the scores: Visuals 6, Sound 7, Intensity 6 and Replay 8. NASCAR 98 (PS, pg. 197) should've had the scores: Visuals 7, Sound 4, Intensity 6 and Replay 8. Sorry about that. We'll try not to screw up again. Try.



Nope, it wasn't a momentary lapse of reason. Most of us just weren't that crazy about Resident Evil. There must be some of you who agree with us, right?...right?...anybody?...hello?

Personally, I agree with all the games up on your list (and nice going, you're the first mag I will ever read that Super Mario 64 is great but not the best). I also like your insight into Tetris; I never would have thought of it. You seemed to have forgotten Mario Tennis, Super Mario RPG and Pac-Man, but I realize that this must be due to typos or vote miscounts.

Morgan Stern—Mtg91@aol.com

Mario RPG was #26. And no, those omissions were not mistakes.

tetris number 1 i dont believe it ,you suck you put it over final fantasy 3? i hate you mag i will never buy another copy i work in electronics boutique as assistant manager and from now on i will tell every customer that even looks at your mag that i would wipe my butt with it before i give it away, how dare you make a list like that ,you guys are so sold out to Nintendo. i will make sure every customer that comes in my store will now how bad you are. [sk] jeel\_75@hotmail.com

Ah, written like a true poet. Your words flow, how can we put it, like a backed-up septic system. With your superior writing skills, jeel\_75, shouldn't you be a journalist or an author rather than a retail manager?

I thought your all-time list was great, but wouldn't you rather play Twisted Metal 2 or GoldenEye 007 instead of Tetris?

Steven Scott—deborahr@flash.net

Maybe for the moment, but years from now, when we're sick and tired of Twisted Metal 2 or GoldenEye 007, we'll probably still be playing Tetris.

Tetris never crossed my mind as the number-one game of all time, but once I thought about it, it makes sense (even if I do think that Super Mario Bros. 3 should be #1).

Keith Houn—Address withheld

## Letter Art

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

### WINNER

Aaron Picklesimer  
Wheelersburg, OH

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.



← Ed Semradicz? Is that you?

### Close, but no controller



Ricki Montoya  
Riverside, NM



Kevin Kelly  
Sesebo, Japan



Justin Reed  
Cherokee, NC

#### The ASCII Control Pad

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CORE**

# Video Game News

The hottest gaming news on the planet

## Big Buzz for an X-mas BOOM

Sega, Sony, Nintendo  
lower game prices

**T**he time when the video game industry is at its most competitive is during the holidays. This year is no different, with the big three console manufacturers placing their bids for the hard-earned cash of gamers and their parents.

This year marks another boom time for the industry, with next-generation console systems gaining more and more momentum. Each system has now established a healthy library of quality games with the Saturn and PlayStation both having been around for more than two years. While it is the new kid on the next-generation system block, the Nintendo 64 has gotten a majority of the attention with a great library of first party titles and a strong showing from third-party publishers.

Instead of a price war on hardware, the three companies are lowering the prices on their games—a complete reversal of what the video game industry historically does to move hardware during the holidays. The industry has also gone more mainstream, with games that appeal not only to the hardcore gamers, but to the general public as well.

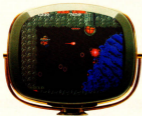
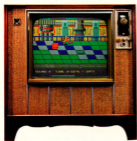
Sony announced a "Power Price" structure where five of their big-name holiday titles will dock in at an MSRP of or under \$39.95. Crash Bandicoot 2, Pallapa the Rapper, NFL GameDay 95, Bushido Blade and Intelligent Qube will all benefit from their low-price points. Several older titles have been given "Greatest Hits" status, ranging from the original Crash to third-party games like WipeOut and Rayman.

Sega also entered the software pricing battle, with new titles priced at an MSRP of between \$39.95 and \$49.95. Plus, Sega recently lowered prices on some of their older titles to \$19.95.

Days after Sony introduced the Power Price, Nintendo entered the battle announcing a new software pricing structure of their own. All new Nintendo 64 titles will have an MSRP of between \$49.95-59.95, making the 64 more







Kinda like reruns. Even more fun the second time around.



[www.namco.com](http://www.namco.com)

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# Tidbits...

## Sony Ships 20 Million

Sony Computer Entertainment announced that worldwide shipments of their PlayStation game console have exceeded 20 million units as of Aug. 20.

The breakdown is as follows: in Japan, Sony has sold 8.5 million units; in North America, 6.4 million units and in Europe 5.1 million.

Additionally, SCEA announced that they are increasing monthly production output to 2 million systems a month, from the 1.5 that they produce a month currently.

## Acclaim says YEEEESS!

Acclaim's N64 title NFL Quarterback Club '98 is shipping with the play-by-play voice-over of Marv Albert. Should the game prove to be a popular success and merit an additional manufacturing run, the company will re-evaluate its position regarding the use of Albert's voice on the game.

"In order to meet our commitments, NFL Quarterback Club '98 went into production prior to the start of the trial and does include play-by-play by Mr. Albert."

According to Acclaim, the cartridge was in the final stage of manufacturing in Japan while Albert entered a guilty plea to the charges against him and there was absolutely no alternative to seeing that process through.

Acclaim says that a morals clause in Albert's multi-game contract with it would trigger an option to dissolve the Albert-Acclaim relationship if he were ever convicted of a crime.



## EA Bids For Virgin

According to U.K. trade publication CFW, Electronic Arts has put in a bid to buy Virgin Interactive. Virgin has been on the selling block for some time, and according to the paper, EA's bid came during the second day of ECTS in September. The official bid from EA, which is lower than Vlocron's \$250 million asking price, is joined by speculation that Spectrum Holobyte and Hasbro may have also entered the bidding.

The European Monopoles and Mergers Commission could try to block the bid. Because of Virgin and EA's combined control of the U.K./European games market, an EA buyout of Virgin would only strengthen an EA hold on the marketplace.

Continued from page 24

competitive with the prices of PS and Saturn software.

Price wars aren't the only front the holiday gaming wars will be fought on.

Sony has paired up with Pepsi for a big holiday promotion featuring Final Fantasy VII, NCAA Game Breaker '98 and Jet Moto 2 on Pepsi and Mountain Dew products. Crash Bandicoot will also appear on Post cereals promoting its sequel, with a \$5-off coupon for the original Crash. A majority of the company's 1997 \$500 million marketing budget will be spent in the fourth quarter, showing off their varied game library.

Nintendo's holiday promotions have been thrown into disarray because of the scheduling changes with most of their planned '98 holiday lineup being pushed into early 1998. A majority of their \$200 million advertising budget this year (announced at June's E3) will be spent promoting Diddy Kong Racing, their main N64 release for the rest of 1997.

The N64 has garnered attention from industry analysts as well. James L. Lin of Wedbush Morgan says that while 1997 is dominated by Sony's PlayStation, 1998 could be the N64's year.



While Sony and Nintendo grapple with the first and second position, Sega sits in the wings. Their newly announced "Hard Stuff" advertising campaign focuses on existing Saturn owners, showing that there's still life in the system's software. Sega has supported their system longer than any other company would have under the same circumstances (Atari or 3DO, anyone?).

Spending \$35 million to promote Saturn and their PC line, Sega hopes to target gamers who will buy "A" quality software no matter what console it is on. Sega is continuing to offer rebates on software inside its games. Third-party Saturn support has also been strong from Capcom, Fox Interactive and Working Designs this year.

Whether you've just entered the console gaming market this year or been a long-time supporter of the industry, this year will be one where software is the proving ground. With the industry growing at a fast pace, it's getting harder to make a bad system decision.

When the final day of '97 comes, you can bet that it's going to be a strong finish for everyone. Stay tuned to EGM and GameSpot News ([headline.gamespot.com](http://headline.gamespot.com)) for developing news.

## A Cut Above The Rest

Scenes from Resident Evil: Director's Cut get left on the cutting room floor

Usually, when a "Director's Cut" of a movie is released, it includes scenes not in the original edit of the film. That concept was the main idea of Resident Evil: Director's Cut, Capcom's remix of their macabre twiga-hit PlayStation title.

However, instead of releasing an uncensored and unedited version of the game, Capcom ended up releasing one that was missing the gory scenes that were absent from the original U.S. release of Resident Evil, even though it was intended to have them. This has infuriated Resident Evil fans and Capcom supporters alike, who were instantly up in arms over the edit.

Capcom Japan did the game's translation and submitted it to SCEA themselves, instead of Capcom USA. The game was intended along to have the extra gory scenes from the intro and other cinematics. Sony at first rejected the game, because of one line of copyright text for the Japanese version of the game, and it was sent back to Capcom Japan to be fixed. Instead of merely removing the copyright line, Capcom Japan decided to just swap the cinematics from the original U.S. release of Resident Evil into the Director's Cut and resubmit the game to Sony

Computer Entertainment America for approval. As one could imagine, the game was approved, and sent off to be manufactured without Capcom USA realizing that anything had gone wrong. By the time the company realized the game had been cut, CDs had been made and the game was ready to go. The game's packaging lists the game as having "the complete uncensored and uncut Resident Evil cinematic."

Unfortunately, the intro wasn't the only thing to get hacked. In the uncut version, you run into a zombie, part of the scene shows the victim's head being bitten off and rolling to the floor. Since all of the game's cinematics files were replaced with the originals, this part was also removed.

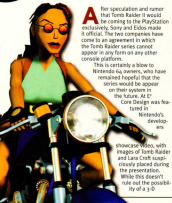
Three days after the game's release, Capcom USA posted the complete, uncut intro to their Web site for people to download and view, but hundreds of fans have been left unsatisfied. Reaction on the Internet to the cuts has been that of disbelief that such a mistake could happen, and are hoping Capcom will remedy it.

At press time, Capcom said they have no plans to recall the game or offer a replacement disc to disgruntled buyers for 30 seconds of missing full-motion video. [www.capcom.com](http://www.capcom.com)



# Sony Kidnaps Lara Croft

Eidos' star adventurer signs up for PlayStation exclusivity



**A**fter speculation and rumor that Tomb Raider II would be coming to the PlayStation exclusively, Sony and Eidos made it official. The two companies have come to an agreement in which the Tomb Raider series cannot appear in any form on any other console platform.

This is certainly a blow to Nintendo 64 owners, who have remained hopeful that the series would be appearing on their system in the future. At 17

Core Design was featured in Nintendo's developers

showcase video, with images of Tomb Raider and Lara Croft superimposed during the presentation. While this doesn't rule out the possibility of a 3-D



adventure game from Core for the N64, it won't have anything to do with the current Tomb Raider series or star Lara Croft.

Since its introduction in November 1996, Tomb Raider has sold more than 1.5 million units.

"We want our best-selling franchise to reach the greatest number of consumers and the PlayStation and its powerful CD-ROM software format satisfies this demand," Eidos Interactive COO Mike McGarvey said in a statement. "The fact that the PlayStation will be the only game console on which you can enjoy the Tomb Raider franchise is a great statement for the platform."

[www.eidosinteractive.com](http://www.eidosinteractive.com)

# Tidbits...

## Sega Gets Visual

Sega of America has purchased a minority share of San Rafael, Calif.-based Visual Concepts, the company will begin creating Sega brand titles for the Saturn and PC exclusively beginning in 1998. Founded in 1988, Visual Concepts has developed games for Electronic Arts, Konami, Interplay, Namco and Sunsoft for all major console systems. The company recently completed NBA Action '98 for Sega.

## Game Boy Beasts N64

Nintendo Co. Ltd. said that sales for the first six months of the year would be higher than its earlier estimate of \$10 billion yen. The company attributed this to solid sales of the Game Boy, which continues to be strong in Japan. The popularity of the Pocket Monster game in Japan



has buoyed Nintendo's black-and-white portable when, in terms of the historical lifespan of game systems, it should be all but dead.

## Sega Responds to 3dfx

Remaining silent on any moves with their new systems, Sega has responded to 3dfx's allegations that they intentionally deceived 3dfx into thinking their technology would be used in Sega's next system, instead going with NEC's.

Sega reaffirmed that being an investor in 3dfx, it wouldn't be involved in disclosing 3dfx's proprietary information. Stating their defense against the allegations, Sega says they have "strategic partnerships with numerous entities and, in the course of the relationships, receives proprietary information. Sega has always respected the proprietary rights of its partners, and expects the same treatment in return."

Sega plans to aggressively defend itself against the complaints and refused further comment.

## Sony Goes to Hong Kong

In September, Sony formed a Hong Kong subsidiary that will handle the official launch of the PlayStation into Asia. Backed by HK \$4 million, they'll be test marketing the system officially by the end of the year.

# Nintendo Gets Beaned

Nintendo characters jump on the beanie bandwagon

**I**f you shop for or collect toys, you know the kind of demand that surround bean bag character collectibles. From Beanie Babies and Beanie Boppers to licensed characters like Bugs Bunny, the craze has continued and doesn't show any signs of slowing. Now, Seattle-based Bensusan Deutsch and Associates has created bean bag characters that Nintendo and video game fans can enjoy. The characters also mark the company's first venture into retail outlets.

The first series of Nintendo bean bag characters includes four of Nintendo's beloved characters from the Mario series: Mario, Bowser, Donkey Kong and Yoshi. Available at retailers like 7-11, Toys R Us, Best Buy, Babbage's, and the JC Penney catalog, the bean bag characters retail for under \$6.00.

Already sold out at 7-11 stores, it's expected that these characters will be hard to find as the holiday season approaches. A second edition is already planned for release in the first quarter of next year, which includes four more Nintendo characters (also from the Mario series): Luigi, Toad, Mario and possibly the Princess and Diddy Kong. The company also has plans for merchandise starring Link when Zelda 64 hits store shelves in 1998.

Bensusan Deutsch and Associates has created merchandise for



Nintendo in the past, such as the Star Fox 64 sound track CD, GoldenEye 007 Hologram watch, Mario Kart trading cards and products featured in Nintendo's "Power Supplies Catalog." They got their start creating giveaway merchandise for sporting events...

Mario, Bowser, Yoshi and Donkey Kong become bean bag collectibles for video game fans and toy addicts everywhere to enjoy and love.



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# Half a Million Clouds

Final Fantasy VII becomes the fastest-selling PlayStation game ever



**F**inal Fantasy VII marked Sony's biggest PlayStation software launch in the system's two year history. It also turned the once niche market for role-playing games into a mainstream title. No other console RPG has been promoted as much as Final Fantasy VII. In its first week of sale, Sony reported they had sold 330,000 copies of the game, selling 30,000 more than Nintendo's Star Fox 64 did in its first week of sales.

The game sold so well that Sony likened its sales to Labor Day weekend's top-grossing film, *G.I. Jane*. In its first weekend, Final Fantasy VII grossed \$26.5 million, more than that of Demi Moore's latest film, which grossed 12.1 million. The fact that most stores began selling the game about five days before its real street date of Sept. 7, the game had a little more time to gain an edge, but performed very well.

Less than three weeks after its launch, Sony reported the game had broken sales of more than 500,000—obliterating Sony's own sales records as the fastest-selling PlayStation game ever, and the fastest-selling console RPG ever.

To boot, FFVII broke into the VSDA's Top 5 Video Game Rental chart at number three, breaking a chart that Nintendo 64 games have dominated for at least six months. Within its second week of rental availability, it had edged out Star Fox for the number-two slot and was closing the gap between it and Nintendo's hit *GoldenEye 007*.

Sony is continuing to promote the game throughout the holiday season, with radio promotions and as a featured game in their Pepsi promotion. Final Fantasy VII will appear on Pepsi and Diet Pepsi through the holiday season. Backed by a \$10 million ad campaign, Sony has created three different TV spots, four print ads and numerous point-of-purchase displays



for the game. Pre-sells on FFVII totalled over 200,000, breaking most software chain records for number of pre-sells.

Compared to the Japanese debut, the game's sales in the U.S. during the first weekend pales in comparison. Japanese gamers clamored for the game, making it sell 2.5 million copies in its first three days of availability. On Oct. 2, Square released a new version of Final Fantasy VII into the Japanese market, called Final Fantasy VII International. The International version includes all the improvements made to the U.S. release and includes a fourth disc full of extra goodies, including a complete map of every area in the game, monster guide and more.

[www.playstation.com](http://www.playstation.com)

## Patent Pending

Sega patents the third dimension

**A**rt proved in the late '80s, there's money to be made in patenting the technology that goes into video game graphics. Sega Enterprises has now moved into a lucrative position, receiving a patent on the 3-D technology that allows players to change camera angles in racing games or for fighting games to use a dynamically moving camera during gameplay.

A Sega spokesman told Reuters that the company would soon begin talks with other game developers like Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. and Namco (among others) over fees the company will charge to use their newly gained patents, which they

applied for in 1992. The Japanese business daily *Nikkei Keizai Shinbun* reported that Sega's fee to other game developers would equal "several percent" of the price of coin-up machines. Presumably, home conversions of games that infringe the patent will also be affected.

Since Sega received the patent in Japan, the U.S. market will remain unaffected, at least for now. Companies who may find themselves infringing on Sega's patent can always develop different, unifying techniques to produce the same kind of graphical effects.

[www.sega.com](http://www.sega.com)



## 'Toon In

MDK comes to life as an animated series

**M**ainframe Entertainment, creators of the popular computer-animated series *AniBor* are turning their talent for high-quality rendered animation to Shiny's MDK.

Playmates Interactive Entertainment signed the deal with Mainframe to create the series, although production work on the show has not yet begun. The series will follow the exploits of Kurt, the game's main character and his adventures through the game's plot.

This is not the first time that one of Shiny Entertainment's

games has been turned into an animated form. Earthworm Jim, the company's first Genesis title, was also given an animated series. Voiced by Dan Castellaneta, who is also the voice of Homer Simpson, the show based on Jim enjoyed widespread exposure as part of the Kids WB lineup on Saturday mornings. Meanwhile, Mainframe's main attraction, *AniBor* is being turned into a game by Electronic Arts for release early in 1998. The company is currently trying to get the show back on U.S. TV; it is currently airing on YTV in Canada and is also popular in Europe. Mainframe is also behind the new *Beast Wars Transformers* series. [www.mainframe.bc.ca](http://www.mainframe.bc.ca)



# SHEAR TERROR



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# "TOASTERS LIKE THIS DON'T COME WITH NEW CHECKING ACCOUNTS."

MAGE DANIELS

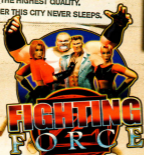


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# What Ever Happened to:

EGM takes a look back at a renegade Nintendo 8-Bit publisher



Color Dreams created several Christian game titles for the NES, many of which were the company's previous NES games with reworked graphics. Wisdom Tree game soon took over the company's video game business, and in 1991, StarDot Technologies, a division of Color Dreams, started selling their first digital cameras. They're still at it today, and you can even take a look at the offices of Color Dreams through nine different live cameras through their Web site ([www.wiscam.com/](http://www.wiscam.com/)). Wisdom Tree ([www.christianlink.com/media/wisdom/](http://www.christianlink.com/media/wisdom/)) exists as a separate entity now, and still sells their Christian game titles for the PC and NES, which can be found through specialty Christian bookstores. The company is actually looking for programmers to create games for newer systems and computers. For more information on classic and strange NES titles, visit Tor's NES Archive ([www.konkon.org/~tr/](http://www.konkon.org/~tr/)).

**D**uring the late '80s, going up against Nintendo was completely unheard of, and not adhering to their strict exclusivity policies meant certain death for a software publisher. There's one company that landed in video game history for not only defying Nintendo's licensing structure, but creating some of the worst 8-bit games ever.

That company is Brea, Calif.-based Color Dreams.

Started around the peak of the 8-bit era by Daniel Lawton, a self-educated computer wizard and a vocal opponent of Nintendo's practices. The 20 or so games that Color Dreams (and their Bunch Games label) created were not only unlicensed, but you had to trick the NES into playing many of them. The robin-egg blue cartridges would fit into the NES, but had to be pressed down a certain way, and later models of the NES wouldn't always work with the games. "Technical support was always a problem," says Vance Koziik, who programmed Menace Beach for Color Dreams and still works there today. "We would have people read off the serial numbers of their NES and then send them a cartridge that would work."

Not stopping with the NES, Color Dreams also went on to do one Atari Lynx game—Crystal Mines II, a sequel to the company's better—and now,

ness—NES title. The company's pamphlets touted the company's Genesis titles (all of which were ports of Amiga games), but those never got off the ground.

The reverse engineering that made Color Dreams' NES games possible was very limited, which in turn showed in the quality of the titles they released. Programmers were limited as to how many sprites could be displayed on-screen. Their pinnacle game, Hellraiser, was supposed to use a special graphics chipset which would allegedly result in a game that looked as good as 16-bit.

"There was a very crude version [of Hellraiser] for the Nintendo, but it was just a play-up-and-running demo. There was a more complete version for the PC, which was a conversion of Wollenstein 3-D. The company had bought the engine from id Software and by the time they had gotten graphics in and did some coding changes to update it, Doom was released. So it was foolish to release it."

Poor sales of their games made them turn to a higher power. "Someone came up with the idea of doing a Bible-based game and people didn't really take it seriously," Koziik says. "About six months later, work actually started on one. No one knew it was going to take off, but it took off like crazy."

There were also a few NES games that went unreleased. Koziik recalled one of them called Maggots. "You were trapped in someone's body. I think it started in the intestines, and you had to make your way out of there and avoid the maggots."

Under the Wisdom Tree label,



Some Wisdom Tree games are reworked Color Dreams titles. Menace Beach, which turned into the ultratame Sunday Fun Day, has a decidedly tamer theme (getting to Sunday School).

## Of Noah and Hitler...

**T**he only unlicensed Super NES game ever made was made by Wisdom Tree in 1995. Super 3D Noah's Ark is actually a revamped, and much tamer version of Wollenstein 3-D, licensed from id Software. It was rumored that id licensed the Wollenstein engine to Wisdom Tree as retaliation against Nintendo for the shoddy Super NES port of the game. id told EGM while researching this article that they had no problems with Nintendo in the past.

The odd thing about the Noah's Ark cartridge is that it's shaped like a

game enhancer, needing to have a licensed Super NES cart attached to it to defeat the system's lock out.

The animals on the Ark are getting rowdy. As Noah, put them to sleep so they don't do any damage. To do this, you "launch" feed at them, which puts them to sleep. At the end of each level there are "sinclax" animals. They act as Bosses and are bigger than the other animals.



The tamer first-person action game ever created: Super 3D Noah's Ark.

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- *GamePro Magazine*

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- *IGN*

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## Konami Shows Off Key Titles

Exclusive Press Tour In Japan Highlights Company's Upcoming PS And N64 Games

**F**ollowing the recent Tokyo Game Show in September, Konami of America invited select members of the U.S. gaming press to visit three of their major development offices in Japan—Konami Computer Entertainment Japan, Konami Computer Entertainment Tokyo and Konami Computer Entertainment Osaka. The tour consisted of in-depth interviews with key developers and hands-on demonstrations of many of Konami's big PlayStation and Nintendo 64 games for 1998, including the highly anticipated Metal Gear Solid.

Besides getting a glimpse at the first-ever playable version of Metal Gear Solid for the PlayStation, editors took home plenty of new information on Castlevania 3D (N64), Hybrid Heaven (N64), G.A.S. P3 Fighters' NEXTeam (N64), Nagano Winter Olympics '98 (PS/N64) and NBA in the Zone '98 (PS/N64). While there were no surprise titles unveiled during the tour, at least some of EGM's most burning questions were addressed. For example, when questioned on the possibility of a new Contra game for the Nintendo 64, KCE Osaka's president, Kunkai Kinoshita replied that

it was indeed a possibility, due to the game's strong identity amongst gamers in Japan and in the U.S. Kinoshita-san has played a major part in many of Konami's most significant titles, including the Contra games on the NES and Super NES, and is one of the most influential people in video gaming today.

For more information on the games showcased on the tour, be sure to keep an eye on EGM's Previews section, kicking off this month with detailed previews of Metal Gear Solid and Dracula (Castlevania) 3D.



Producer Hideo Kojima (right) explains his vision for Metal Gear Solid while Art Designer Toji Shinkawa (left) looks on.

## Nintendo's Saving Grace?

"Pokemon" Phenomenon Set To Revitalize Slumping 64 Sales

**I**t's no secret that the N64 isn't selling very well in Japan right now. Despite the machine's overwhelming success in the U.S., sales in Japan are practically non-existent, due largely in part to the absence of any decent RPGs and fighting games. However, Nintendo recently announced part one of their plan to revitalize the N64 market in Japan: Pikachu Genki Dechu. Pikachu is one of the most popular monsters in Nintendo's alarmingly successful Game Boy RPG, Pocket Monsters (or "Pokemon" for short), and the company now has him set to star in his very own N64 game set for release in early 1998. The Pokemon games (there are three different versions of the same game, each with different monsters that gamers collect, trade and do battle with) have sold over 3 million copies in

Japan and are still appearing on weekly best-seller lists, despite being available for well over a year now. Pikachu Genki Dechu is more of a Tamagotchi-style simulation than an RPG, but the likeness alone should be enough to set things moving once again in the dry, desperate N64 market in Japan. In addition, Nintendo announced three other Pokemon-related games for the N64 in the future, which should further help the system get back into the race.



Takeo Yukubiji, director of Castlevania 3D, shows off initial concept designs and artwork for the game.

## Tekken Anime

Namco's Fighting Game Hits The Small Screen

**I**f you're a hardcore video game fanatic, then you've probably seen the animated versions of Fatal Fury, Toshinden, Street Fighter II, Art of Fighting and DarkStalkers. Of course, all of those were released first in Japan, as OAVs (Original Animation Videos). Now, Namco's Tekken series joins the list of games previously animated in Japan. The first Tekken OAV will be released in Japan on Jan. 21, with a second part on Feb. 21. The almost 30-minute long OAVs will follow the game's characters through the battles and story that has made up the game's plot. There are no plans for a U.S. release thus far, but as is the case with most game-related animates, the chances are good.

## Top 10 in Japan

The Ten Best-Selling Games As of Sept. 14

- 1 Breath of Fire III (Capcom)-PS
- 2 Desire (Imadio)-SS
- 3 Fighting Illusion: K-1 Revenge (Xing)-PS
- 4 Powerful Pro Baseball '97 (Konami)-PS
- 5 Pocket Monsters (Nintendo)-GB
- 6 Everybody's Golf (Sony CE)-PS
- 7 Derby Stallion (ASCII)-PS
- 8 Monster Farm (Tecmo)-PS
- 9 Cool Boarders 2: Killing Session (Uep)-PS
- 10 Silhouette Mirage (Treasure)-SS

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MINE, MOUNTAIN AND  
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CHOOSE FROM 9 RIPPIN' POLYGON  
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been volunteers.

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EIDOS

INTERACTIVE



You've been warned.

# Quartermann

- NEC to enter hardware forum? • Model 4 on the way
- Final Fight on the N64? • Madden, QBC '98 saga continues
- Time Crisis 2 almost here! • PlayStation 64 delayed?

**H**ello Quartermann, it's I, the great Q-mixer. The Q-crew and I dug really, really deep this month to bring you all the juicy gaming gossip and sleazy industry news you demand. With the holiday season in full swing, it's only natural that most game firms have an info embargo on their 1998 titles as they still have games to sell during Christmas/Hanukkah. Thanks to the Q-crew and I, secret game info is now in reach. Read on...

## • NEC to re-enter the video game console biz?

**(Shinwoo City, Calif.)** This news is pretty off-the-wall stuff, but our source claims that this is true. Supposedly, NEC is going to re-enter the video game hardware business with the Dual. NEC will market the Dual as their own video game system and Sega will develop software for the 64-bit console (as well as PCs and PlayStation). The Dual is still on schedule for a fourth quarter 1998 release. Now, although this information seems stretchy, it comes from a source that has proven to be reliable in the past. We'll just have to wait and see...

## • New coin-op games from SNK and Namco

**(Tokyo, Japan)** As usual, Terry-Aki, JST agent (Japanese Super-Ty), has uncovered news on some of the more relevant Japanese games. Slowly details concerning SNK's new racing game are surfacing. Road's Edge (as the game is called) is nearing completion for the "Hyper NeoGeo 64." Billied as SNK's answer to Sega Rally (Daytona, RC is the first Neo Geo coin-op game that runs on a dedicated driving cabinet (unlike Samurai 64, which was housed in a standard S&B cabinet). What makes this information so interesting is that if SNK develops a home version of the Neo 64, (which they have been considering), a standard steering wheel peripheral may become necessary. In other coin-op news, Namco is busy finishing up Time Crisis 3. Running on Namco's Super System 22, Time Crisis 2 is due to hit Japanese arcades this Christmas and February in the U.S. We haven't heard if Namco has plans to introduce a home version of TC3, but as soon as we find out, we'll let you know. Namco is also working on a new System 22 Soccer Game. Right now, the game is called "Libro Grand" but that name is subject to change. There's also a chance that Libro Grand will make it to the PS in 1998.

## • Capcom developments

**(Osaka, Japan)** As usual, there are a few interesting developments over at Capcom. Beyond the announcement of the sequel to Street Fighter EX plus Alpha, the big "C" has some interesting games for us. Capcom coin-op is looking to introduce Star Gladiator 2 in December. Although there is no mention of a home version of SGT, Terry-Aki says the game will be an easy port to the PlayStation (this makes sense considering both SFGX and the original Star Gladiator ran on PlayStation hardware in the arcade). In other Capcom news, Street Fighter Alpha 3 is due to hit arcades in November, and although the game hasn't been sighted yet, we hear that three or more SFA characters will show up in Alpha 3. Although nothing is set in stone as of yet, the names "Baile," "Honda" and "Blinks" (yes! keep getting mentioned as candidates...bring 'em on...)Capcom is working on a new revision of Street Fighter II. At this time, it's not known if the revision will be incorporated in the final version of SFII: Second Impact or if it will be a separate game (SFII: Third Impact?), but one of the revisions include a new character: Chan-LI...

Although Capcom is known to be working on several Nintendo 64 titles (which will be officially announced at the Nintendo World exhibition in November), one of Terry-Aki's Japanese sources has learned that Capcom is working on a Final Fight game for the N64. It's not known whether or not the game is 2-D or 3-D or even when they are going to release it, but the game is supposedly well along in its development. Terry-Aki is digging into his famous bag of tricks and he's convinced he'll get the full scoop...we'll just have to wait and see on this one...

## • More new Shiny games!

**(Japan Beach, Calif.)** Shiny Entertainment has a slew of new titles in development. Wild g's is about to become available for the PlayStation; Messiah is due for a simultaneous release for the PC and PlayStation next Christmas. Now we have word of two new Shiny games due out in 1998. First on the list is FlyBy Wire—a flying game where the player can control a waste-control helicopter in a full 3-D environment. FlyBy Wire will be compatible with Sony's Dual Analog Pad and is rumored to be published by Playmates. The other title is a top-secret game called "Sacrifice." Due out for the PC, and possibly the Dual in early 1999, Sacrifice is a 3-D action game using an enhanced version of the WROK engine. According to sources close to Shiny, Sacrifice's engine can render polygons extending far in the distance (reportedly, objects can be seen over a mile in the distance). Sacrifice will also incorporate highly detailed animated textures. For example, when an enemy gets shot, you can see subtle detail on their face as they grimace in pain.

## • EA happenings

**(San Jose, Calif.)** More news concerning Electronic Arts' recent bid to purchase Virgin Interactive have surfaced. From what we hear, EA out in a bid of \$150 million to acquire Virgin from Spelling Entertainment. Apparently, a bid of \$50 million was a bit on the low side, so the chairman of Virgin Interactive, Martin Alper, is trying to buy the thing himself. Believe it or not, several lenders and banks are lining up to help Mr. Alper do just that. The Q feels that a better choice might be for Alper's group to trade the TV rights of this whole soap opera to Spelling Entertainment (who just happens to speculate in nighttime soaps) for the shares of Virgin which Spelling is trying to get rid of...hey, it could happen... In other EA related news, rumors are spreading like wildfire that Madden 64 is facing a slight delay. Here's the deal: According to high-placed sources, the N64 game is fully complete but EA's programmers may have to go back into the game and make a few detail changes. It seems the NFL isn't very pleased with the fact that Madden 64 has all the NFL's official team colors. Since EA Sports understandably values their relationship with the NFL, they are implementing changes in the game to accommodate them... On a similar note, QB Club 98 (Madden 64's main rival) may ship before EA's game because of this delay. AJ Acclaim has to worry about getting the game to pass Nintendo's approval process which is one of the most stringent in the industry...all this soap opera ever atop.

## • Quiltes

The latest news concerning the 64-bit PlayStation is beginning to circulate again. Rumor has it that Sony is still planning to use the DVD format (Digital Versatile Disc) for the PlayStation 64. The console is said to incorporate at least 1 Megabyte of main RAM. As far as a release date is concerned, we now hear the PS64 may be pushed back to X-mas of 2000. News is circulating that the season Namco's Pac-Man: Ghost Zone has been delayed to the fourth quarter of 1998 is that two of their main programmers have left the company. Our sources state that the game is in danger of being cancelled all together.

Rare is keep deep in the development of Killer Instinct 3. There's no word whether IO3 will be an arcade game or N64 game (or perhaps both), but it is due to make an appearance next year.

Igama is working on a top-secret four-player game for the N64. It's not known what kind of game it is, but keep your eyes peeled for some more details in next month's EGM.

Sega is starting work on Model 4. According to Yu Suzuki, he is planning to develop for the system. Although Virtua Fighter 4 is the first title planned for Model 4, Yu Suzuki is not working on the game for some reason. We also hear that this coin-op board will use a Microsoft Operating System.

Well kiddies, that's it for this month's issue of Quartermann. Until next month, ad'widewishes...

# • The "Q"



2,000 years ago,  
the Great Wall  
divided those who had it  
from those who didn't.



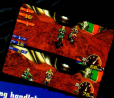
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# Nintendo 64

PREVIEWS

## Game Directory

- Bomberman 64
- Quake 64
- Dracula 3D
- FamiFa 64
- Fighting Cup

## Can Bomberman Fare Well in 3-D?

Publisher/Developer	Players/Game	% Done	Release
Nintendo of America Hudson Soft	1 to 4 Action	85	December 1997
Web Address: <a href="http://www.nintendo.com">www.nintendo.com</a>			

## Bomberman 64

In this age of advanced technology, it's inevitable that all classic games get a 3-D treatment for their sequels and updates. Bomberman is no exception.

Bomberman 64 takes bold steps in new directions. First, everything is in full 3-D with full freedom of movement. You view everything from an overhead perspective. The one-player game takes advantage of this new, open feel by creating a big adventure game out of it. The worlds aren't huge, but you'll get to explore several landscapes as you progress toward the formidable Bosses. Along the way, you'll learn all the new moves available to a Bomberman in a new and strange 3-D world.

Anyone can tell you, Bomberman isn't famous for its one-player games. It's the Multiplayer Mode that puts every version of Bomberman (from the NES to the Saturn) on the map of success. The gameplay of B64, however, deviates from the past 2-D Bombermans. Battles take place in more open arenas. You won't find any rigid stages laid out in a grid pattern any more. Since everything isn't 2-D and in squares, the explosions are now round (instead of plus-sign shaped).

If that wasn't enough, Hudson has introduced a few new moves that add a new level of strategy to the series. For example, you can

**You're going to need skills to beat the tough and intimidating Bomberman 64 Bosses.**

pick up dizzy enemies and toss them into precarious situations (if you've ever played Konami's Pop Pop for the PlayStation, you'd have a good idea how Bomberman 64 plays). When you die, B64 resurrects you as a ghost, to annoy and retaliate. Ghosts can knock bombs around and jump on other living players, messing up their controls for a short period of time.

Perhaps it's long overdue that Hudson changed the look and gameplay of a series that has basically stayed the same for years. But as the saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Was it wise for Hudson to change such a traditional and successful formula? Watch for the full review in an upcoming issue of EGM.



## In Nintendo News...

Despite recent delays to many of their big-name games (Benjo-Kazooie, Conker's Quest and MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr. to name a few), Nintendo is still gearing up for a strong holiday season. First-party support is rather weak, with only three Nintendo-released games, two of which are licensed from other companies (Bomberman 64 and Mischief Makers), but third-party support is going strong, with many big-name titles on the way.



The first 64DD games will be shown this November in Japan.

In late November, all eyes will be focused on the "Nintendo World" show in Japan, where Nintendo is expected to show off three huge titles in playable form for the first time—Zelda 64, F-Zero 64 and Yoshi's Story. In addition, the 64DD is expected to be unveiled in a major way, showing off the first batch of titles (Mario Artist, Mother 3 and SlimCity 2000 among others). We expect to see some surprises as well—like the rumored announcement of Capcom's N64 development.



The Overlayer Adventure Mode looks more Super Mario 64 than Bomberman.

# HOW DID CROC FIND HIS COMPETITION?



## NINTENDO 64

インターナショナル  
ブリーチーズ

## Famista 64

Namco  
Makes Their  
N64 Debut

**N**amco's first Nintendo 64 game is just about done and will be making its way to Japanese store shelves soon. The game? More other than the latest version of their popular Family Stadium series (which has been around since the early days of the Famicom), Famista 64.

As is the case with most Japanese baseball games, Famista 64 features short, stout, super-deformed characters and colorful graphics. Behind the cutesy visuals, however, lies as deep a baseball game as any, and one that will likely take the crown as Japan's best N64 baseball game yet.

The main advantage of having smaller characters is better animation, and Famista 64 was looking smooth as silk last we saw it at the Tokyo Game Show in September. The players are motion-captured and feature lifelike 60 fps animation (yes, for 5D guys that is), and the polygonal stadiums look great. Unfortunately, the view still switches to a zoomed-out overhead view when the ball is hit, but to its credit, it moves quickly and retains the fun. For the hardcore fans, Famista 64 features loads of options, including player creation, full and

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Namco of Japan Namco of Japan	1 to 4 Sports	95	November 1997 (JAP)
Web Address: <a href="http://www.namco.co.jp">www.namco.co.jp</a>			

Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not come to the U.S. It will only run on certified U.S. consoles. Import at your own risk.



Famista 64's exciting Home Run animations begin the minute a well-hit pitch flies.



Despite the "cute" graphics, Famista is well-known for excellent gameplay.



After a hit, the view changes to a zoomed-out overhead view of the field.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Midway Midway	1 or 2 Fighting	N/A	March 1998
Web Address: <a href="http://www.midway.com">www.midway.com</a>			

## Quake 64

Like Doom, Quake is now finding its way onto every gaming console (it's going to arrive on the Saturn, too), and any system is going to do it justice, the N64 certainly is the best suited.

Quake was originally slated to come out sometime this year, but to Midway's credit, they've decided to delay the game until 1998 in order to implement its "Quakematch" Multiplayer Modes. As any person who has PC Quake knows, the strength of this title is in its multiplayer combat. As far as its Single-player Mode, you can expect the normal N64 hardware enhancements such as smoothed textures and new weapon effects. The end product will probably look very much like GL Quake on the PC (but not hi-res).

Look for more on N64 Quake as we get closer to next year.



Here, you can see a flying Scrag up close and personal.



As you can see in this hall filled with zombies, Quake is a very dark game.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Imagineer of Japan Imagineer of Japan	1 or 2 Fighting	N/A	Its On! 1997 (JAP)
Web Address: <a href="http://www.imagineer.co.jp">www.imagineer.co.jp</a>			

## Fighting Cup

インターナショナル  
ブリーチーズ

Imagineer unveiled a new polygonal fighting game at the Tokyo Game Show called Fighting Cup (formerly known as Struggle Hard). The game uses a unique point system that determines who wins (certain types of moves give point rewards—the better the move the more points earned), and there are a variety of customization features to spice up play. The graphics are quite nice and the animation isn't bad at all. With all of the weak N64 fighters out there, Fighting Cup is going to be one to watch.



Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not come to the U.S. It will only run on certified U.S. consoles. Import at your own risk.



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LEGEND OF THE GOBBOS

# NINTENDO 64

## インターナショナル

# Dracula 3D

Vampire  
Hunting  
Enters The  
3-D Realm

**H**ot off the heels of the successful PlayStation Castlevania (Symphony of the Night), Konami is already hard at work on the next installment of the series—tentatively titled *Dracula 3D* (*Castlevania 3D* here)—for the N64. Until recently, not much was known about the game other than it takes place in an entirely 3-D environment, but in September, the game's director, Takeshi Yukushiji, revealed lots of new info at Konami's press tour in Japan.

Not much is known yet about the story, but it takes place around the time of the Genesis *Castlevania* (early 1980s)—purposely set around that period so that more modern technology could be implemented (like traps, for example). Once again *Dracula* has risen after a 100-year rest, and this time there will be four selectable characters that want to put the blood-thirsty vampire away for good—Schneider Belmont

entirely new to the *Castlevania* universe. There will be day and night play (during the day there will be less of a threat, obviously, but at night the real exploration will begin), and there will be a lot of puzzle solving in addition to the action. Vampires play a heavy influence this time as well, and if your character gets bit, they'll turn into one and require a healing of some sort to revert back to normal. Gene are the candles and hearts, replaced by more realistic means of acquiring items (from fallen foes, by bartering, etc.), and the game will not take place entirely indoors—the starting point is in a nearby forest outside the castle.

*Dracula 3D* is still very early (these screens are from N64 development units), but already it's looking extremely promising. Stay tuned to *EGM* for more info on the game as it develops.



Familiar weapons like the cross (boomerang) will be back.



Each character has his/her own unique abilities—Cornell can transform into a wolf, for one.



Apparently players will be able to leap off of walls, à la *Super Metroid*.

(whip-totin' vampire hunter), Cornell Reinhart (agile warrior with ability to transform into a werewolf), Carrie Eastfield (a 12-year old girl with magic powers) and a fourth, as-of-yet unnamed character who hasn't been revealed. By playing each character according to HIS/HER personality (not yours), you'll get a more appropriate—and possibly better ending. So for instance, if you play as Schneider, you'd want to do things only a hero would do, while playing as one of the others might mean making different decisions at key points in the game.

Besides the obvious 3-D play, *C3D* will feature a lot of elements that are

There'll be many familiar faces from past *Castlevania* games in *C3D*.



The game will take place in and around the castle—beginning outside in the forest.



Warning: This is a preview of a Japanese title that may or may not come to the U.S. It's only out on makeshift U.S. consoles. Import at your own risk.





"This could be THE driving game of the year."

Q64



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6 tortuous, high-resolution tracks. 4 modes of turbocharged racing perfection.  
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# Saturn

## PREVIEWS

### Game Directory

- Sonic R
- NBA Action '98
- NHL All-Star Hockey '98
- Enemy Zero
- World Wide Soccer '98
- Magic Knight RayEarth
- Bust A Move 3
- X-Men vs. Street Fighter
- Silhouette Mirage
- Saturn Bomberman Fight!!
- Shining Force III

### In Sega News...

It's no secret that the Saturn is experiencing some tough times here in the States right now, with dwindling third-party support and poor sales all-around. Still, with their upcoming mega-system on the horizon (Dural), the company's new approach to Saturn games seems to be one of "quality over quantity" (novel idea, huh?), and their fourth quarter lineup is pretty impressive.



Warp's *Enemy Zero* is one of Sega's biggest games this holiday season.

Some of their big-name games this Christmas include *Touring Car Championship*, *Sonic R*, *Quake*, *Duke Nukem*, their sports titles (*NHL All-Star Hockey '98* and *NBA Action '98*) and of course *Enemy Zero*. Again, third-party support is weak, but what's left is still impressive—Capcom has *Resident Evil*, *Mega Man X4*, *Marvel Super Heroes* and *Street Fighter Collection*; EA Sports has *Madden NFL 98* and *NHL 98*; Fox has *Croc* and *Working Designs* has *Magic Knight Ray Earth*.

Will this be the Saturn's last big Christmas? Probably. But still, it should be a strong one and hardcore gamers who are sticking with the system to the very end will not be disappointed.

## The "Blue Dude" Races into 3-D

# Sonic R

**S**onic the Hedgehog has finally decided to jump on the bandwagon with Sega's upcoming *Sonic R*, but Saturn owners shouldn't mind too much. He's on the bandwagon because Sonic is not only starring in his first full-fledged racing game, a popular genre for mascots—he's also made it to a 3-D world—another "in" mascot pastime.

Traveler's Tales, a European-based development team and the makers of *Sonic 3D Blast*, are developing *Sonic R* for Sega. Originally the title was being done in the States when it was called *Sonic Xtreme* (remember this one?). But then it went to Sega of Japan before finally making it to Traveler's Tales, where they are now finishing the project with input from Sega of Japan.

Sonic may have dabbled in 3-D before with *Sonic Jam*, the olden day carts or with the Sega-CD, but were those really full-on 3-D games? Whatever past games Sonic has been in, *Sonic R* is quite a departure from anything before. The game features Sonic and around eight of his friends and enemies (normal and hidden characters included), racing against one another on several different tracks.

The five courses (that's including the bonus areas) are set up and have the look of levels in the old Sonic games. Look for the tracks wrapping around themselves, taking you on a different pathway every time you play (or at least the first few times anyway).

The graphics in *Sonic R* are really nice, complete with a cool effect that eliminates pop-up—or at least lessens the ugliness of it. When you're coming around a turn and in the distance there's a large hill, instead of just popping out

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega of America Travelers Tales	1 or 2 Racing	65	November 1997
Web Address: <a href="http://www.sega.com">www.sega.com</a>			



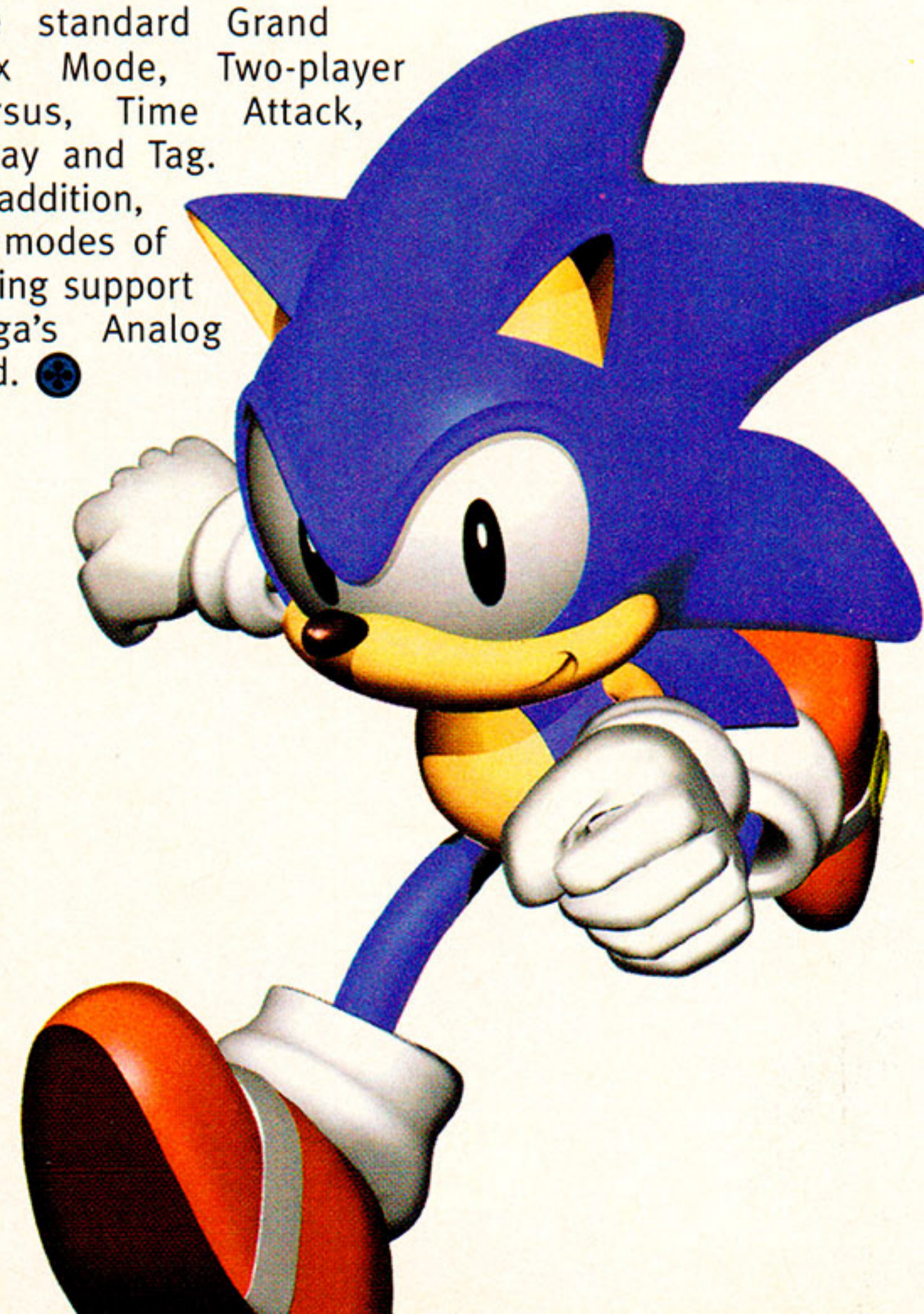
Taking shortcuts can reduce your lap time and may even reveal secrets, like this power-up.

of nowhere, it slowly fades with software-generated transparency effects.

Players have at least three different modes of play to choose from in *Sonic R*. Sega says there will be the standard Grand Prix Mode, Two-player Versus, Time Attack, Relay and Tag. In addition, all modes of racing support Sega's Analog Pad.



The levels have the look of the old Sonic games, but now in 3-D.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega Visual Concepts	1-10 Sports	70	Now

## NBA Action '98

### Sega Juices Up Their Roundball Lineup

**W**hile the Saturn may not have the brightest future ahead, there are still a fair amount of sports games coming out for it this holiday season. The die-hard Saturn sports gamer will be pleased to know NBA Action '98 aspires to please with solid gameplay, and decent polygon graphics.

It should be noted that NBA Action '98 for the Saturn and NBA Fastbreak '98 for the PlayStation are essentially one and the same game. It seems that Visual Concepts (the creators/developers) scored a double hit by developing the PlayStation version of the game for Midway and the Saturn one for Sega. It's something to be aware of if you happen to own both systems and buy a lot of basketball games.

NBA Action '98 has some flash to it—there are some pretty cool dunk animations including behind-the-head and tomahawk jabs. Also look for signature moves consisting of Malone's fade-away jump shot and Rodman's fierce rebound cover-up.

For the strategy-minded player an in-game playbook provides tons of offensive and defensive plays specific to individual teams. Once the plays have been selected, they can be assigned to specific buttons and called up during gameplay. This technique may be awkward at first, but switching up defenses while playing can give you an edge over your opponents. If you aren't in the mood for all those strategic options, NBA Action has an Arcade Mode that will let you play some mind-free twitch basketball.

Twenty-nine teams and 340 NBA players are rated by 20 different categories and statistics that cover the '96-'97 season. User records are also tabulated by the same methods. The Create-a-Player feature also lets you build the perfect basketball monster: in this option lots of variables including aggressiveness and dunking ability can be set as well as about 20 different appearances. There's even one fellow that kind of resembles Lemmy from Motocross (crazy).

To complete the NBA Action '98 package, that lovable L.A. Laker big shot Chick Hearn handles all the commentary duties in that special way that only a guy named Chick can do.

Attention to each player's true abilities was evident when Rodman missed an easy two.



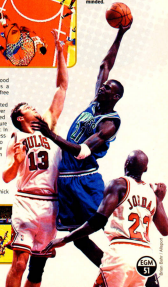
While not as clean looking as its PlayStation counterpart, the gameplay is almost identical.



As a sim committed to all the intricacies of basketball has to offer, NBA Action '98 caters to the strategy minded.



Wow, a view from the bleachers! Not quite but about as useful for actual gameplay.



## NHL All-Star Hockey '98

Sega Hits  
The Ice And  
Starts  
Their Own  
Powerplay

**W**hen Virgin's Powerplay hockey came out for the Saturn over a year ago, it quickly established itself as arguably the best hockey game on a 32-bit system by having competent AI and entertaining gameplay. This year, however, to the dismay of Saturn owners everywhere, Virgin released Powerplay '98 exclusively for the PlayStation, while bypassing the Saturn altogether. Yet, as all hope seemed lost for downtrodden Saturn hockey fans, Radical announced the release of NHL All-Star Hockey '98. This, of course, is basically the unofficial sequel to Powerplay, only under Sega's name.

Taking the successful game engine and AI used in Powerplay and making it even better has allowed several new options and variables in All-Star. For example, forwards are now able to execute 2-on-1 and 3-on-2's as needed throughout a game, creating a whole lot of new scoring opportunities. Further instances include defense men who aggressively body-check greedy forwards that attempt to camp out in front of the net. And finally, a little thing that seems to mean a lot: the addition of left-handed players. Surprisingly, the inclusion of "lefties" change a lot of strategies by opening up different angles of attack and defense.

Goalies have also undergone a transformation. In addition to skating around the back of the net to chase pucks, they can now break away and challenge shooters well in front of the goal. Doing the splits to catch a shot is new and one of the better examples of the motion-capture animation used in the game.

Twenty-six NHL teams and 650 players including

Radical paid special attention to player AI. Here an exhausted player takes a nap on the ice.



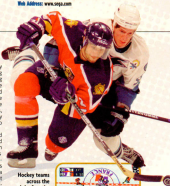
Celebrations after the goal are as entertaining as the game.



Close camera angles reveal the nicely detailed players.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Teams	% Done	Release
Sega Radical Cat.	1-6 Hockey	70	November 1997
Web Address: <a href="http://www.sega.com">www.sega.com</a>			



Hockey teams across the globe fear the vicious French team, mostly due to their curious fighting style.



As far as polygonal sports games go, Radical has done a very good job of creating realistic-looking players.

their '96-'97 stats are used in the game as well as all the official logos, stadiums and the like. International teams are in there as well: Japan, Austria, Australia, France and Finland to name a few.

With so few hockey games slated for the Saturn in the upcoming NHL season, it would be great if NHL All-Star Hockey '98 becomes a worthy successor to the great hockey game whose footsteps it follows. ●

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THE GALAXY IS FAR, FAR AWAY.  
THE FIGHTING IS  
UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL.

# STAR WARS MASTERS OF TERÄS KÄSI



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega Maya	1 Action/Idol	65	November 1997
Web Address: <a href="http://www.sega.com">www.sega.com</a>			

## Enemy Zero

In Space, All You Can Do Is Listen...

**T**hink of the horror of being stalked by an invisible alien on a ship trapped in the middle of space. All you can do is listen for the alien moving around the ship and hope it isn't right behind you. Someone screams—you know the alien has torn him/her apart. You could be next...

Sound fun? Fans of FMV adventure games should get ready for a story line like this in *Enemy Zero*. The game stars Laura Lewis (the same girl from the game "D") as she comes to realize that the crew and herself are not alone on their vessel. Unfortunately for them, there isn't much you can do when you're smack-dab in the middle of nowhere.



### My 2 Cents

I'm not a big fan of FMV games, but *Enemy Zero* is pretty damn cool. It has enough variety to make it different from others I've seen. I'm really impressed by the video, and the story had me a little scared...well, actually a lot scared, but don't tell anyone. I'm surprised the game is this neat especially considering games in this FMV genre aren't usually that good, no matter what system they're on. Right now, my gripe is that it gets kind of lonely walking around all by yourself...but I guess that's the nature of the game.

—Shawn Smith



A revealing Laura reads herself for a long nap. Yummy.



The least this guy could've done was clean up after himself. I mean come on...



Laura isn't alone on the ship—at least before the alien starts getting funky.

The game mostly consists mostly of FMV sequences, but there's also areas where the game is from a first-person perspective where you actually control Laura (kind of like *Doom* in a sense, except you don't have a BFG, only a small gun). While you wander around the ship finding clues on what or who's killing your crewmates one by one, you'll have to rely on your ears instead of your eyes.

The intro on the first disc is awesome and filled with action, but then the story slowly develops. Laura wakes up in her room from a long, cryogenic sleep. As you search around for necessary items and info, you may begin to wonder where the action is. Although the game does have some thrilling moments, you shouldn't expect anything too action-packed with *Enemy Zero*—it's not the nature of this game. Look at it as more of an adventure title, but with the edge-of-your-

seat treatment—like a good alien fic.

A device that will hopefully help take away some of those tense moments is the VPS. This item allows her to detect living organisms without seeing them by emitting a series of beeps. As an organism gets closer, the beep's frequency increases.

Don't be worried that there won't be enough visuals to keep your attention. Even though you may not be able to see the enemies all the time, it's easy to see what the enemies leave behind. No, we're not talking about alien doo-doo—we're talking about exploded heads and gutted torsos. On top of this, there's the great-looking FMV.

Laura Lewis' future is so bright, she's gotta wear shades. You go, girl!



The crew of the ship isn't unarmed, but that doesn't make that much difference for them.





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of our evil.



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**MIDWAY**



Sega	14	70	November
Sega	Sports		1997

Web Address: [www.sega.com](http://www.sega.com)

## World Wide Soccer '98

The Saturn's Best Soccer Game Returns

Sega's World Wide Soccer franchise has always been one of the best and most underrated series in console sports gaming. In fact, this was the best soccer series for a couple of years until Konami's ISS 64, arrived only a few months ago.

Like most companies that have a successful sports franchise, Sega is more or less adding a few, new features and improvements to the last game in the series (WWS '97). The already impressive 3-D polygonal player graphics are being improved by adding more detail, smoother animations and a few, new motion-captured moves. The repertoire at your player's disposal includes name-brand moves such as headers, back-heel passes and banana kicks. Color co-commentary will also be provided by the broadcast team of Gary



As you can see in this shot, the 3-D player models are very detailed.

Bloom and Jackie Charlton.

Even with only a few new improvements and features, it is very likely that WWS '98 will still be one of the top next-generation soccer games. The only big question that remains is why it took so long for Sega to bring this game over from Japan.



Pleaty of different player animations make WWS '98 a believable and realistic soccer match.



This goalie is about to be burned for a goal. As a goalie, that's not good for your career.

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Games	% Done	Release
Working Designs Working Designs	1 Action/RPG	60	November 1997
Web Address: <a href="http://www.workingdesigns.com">www.workingdesigns.com</a>			

# Magic Knight Rayearth

High School  
Babes In  
Their Own  
Action-RPG

**A**fter being delayed for what seems like an eternity, Magic Knight Rayearth is finally nearing completion, and we've just received a mostly-English version of the long-awaited action/RPG from Working Designs.

Magic Knight Rayearth is based on the anime and manga series of the same name that has gained quite a bit of popularity since it first hit Japan back in 1994. Written by CLAMP, the game tells the story of three teenage girls who bump into each other in Japan's famous Tokyo Tower and get sucked into a magical, mystical world by an unseen force who begs them to become "Magic Knights" and free their imprisoned princess from the clutches of an ex-aidé gone wretched.

The three girls—Hikaru, Umi and Fuu (for the few of



Despite being released over two years ago in Japan, MKR has some of the nicest Saturn graphics yet.

you who expressed concern about possible name changes—bear not, all of the original Japanese names will remain intact in the U.S. release)—are the main characters of the game, and each has her own weapons and eventually can wield a variety of powerful (and helpful) magic spells to aid her in their quest. Similar to Secret of Mana or even Zelda, MKR features realtime action (nothing is turn-based—your attacks depend only on how quick you can smack that attack button), and there are several towns and dungeons that you'll have to visit on your journey.

Along the way, you'll acquire items and information, and you'll need to make use of the spells you've learned to overcome physical obstacles that stand in your way. One of the most appealing aspects of Magic Knight Rayearth, and one that makes it stand out against so many other action-RPGs of this type, is the fact that throughout the game there are several full-screen animated cut scenes that unfold the story in dramatic fashion. The animation is gorgeous, and contains full voice, as do many of the game's important NPCs in the various towns and villages. And yes, the trademark Working Designs humor that has graced so many of their past games is once again present in Magic Knight Rayearth—although not nearly as brash a degree as was found in their last release, Albert Odyssey (which is a good thing, since Rayearth is a rather well-known licensed property).

Magic Knight Rayearth is due for release in November (barring anymore unforeseen delays), and will be the second-to-last Saturn release for Working Designs (the last one is LUNAR: Silver Star Story, due out in the first quarter of '98). It may have been a long time in coming, but as one of the few big third-party games still on the way for Saturn, and one of the most charming action-RPGs ever created, RPG-starved Saturn owners won't want to miss it. ●



You can switch between any of the three girls at anytime during play.

Along the way, you'll acquire items and information, and you'll need to make use of the spells you've learned to overcome physical obstacles that stand in your way.

One of the most appealing aspects of Magic Knight Rayearth, and one that makes it stand out against so many other action-RPGs of this type, is the fact that throughout the game there are several full-screen animated cut scenes that unfold the story in dramatic fashion. The animation is gorgeous, and contains full voice, as do many of the game's important NPCs in the various towns and villages. And yes, the trademark Working Designs humor that has

Rayearth features a ton of full-screen animated cut scenes.



Many of the characters in Rayearth come straight from the popular anime in Japan.



The game begins on a school trip in Japan's popular Tokyo Tower, before any of the girls have met.



**Publisher/Developer** Players/Verses % Date Release  
 Capcom Co., Ltd. 1 or 2 November 1997 (JP)  
 Capcom Co., Ltd. Fighting 80  
 Web Address: [www.capcom.co.jp](http://www.capcom.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.



**SATURN**

**Previews**

# X-Men Vs. Street Fighter

Capcom's  
Two Worlds  
Prepare To  
Collide

**S**everal months after announcing that X-Men Vs. Street Fighter would be coming home to the Saturn, Capcom finally unveiled a playable version of the game (at TGS in September). The game, which will come bundled with a special 4 Megabyte RAM cartridge, is nearly finished and looks spectacular. The animation is smooth and fast, and there's hardly any load times during play (thank the RAM cart for that).

In case you've never played XMenSF, it's basically an upgraded X-Men: CoA with both X-Men and Street Fighter characters and a new system where each player picks two fighters and can freely switch between the two during play (they each have their own life bars). Gameplay, like in X-Men, is fast and furious, and super moves are greatly exaggerated (more so than in Marvel Super Heroes), making for some cool visual effects.

Unfortunately, unlike Marvel Super Heroes, which doesn't require the older 2 Megabyte RAM cart to play (it's a nice option, but not necessary), XMenSF requires the new 4 Meg cart, which means it's unlikely that the game will be released anywhere outside of Japan (bundling it in would mean raising the price to about \$75—something Capcom U.S.A. is probably not too



All characters stem from either the X-Men or Street Fighter universes.



Thanks to the 4 Megabyte RAM cartridge, XMenSF runs smooth as silk on the Saturn. But will it reach the U.S.?

excited about). Still, Capcom says the game will reach the U.S., so we'll just have to wait and see if they can keep the price down or release it without the cart. ●



Each player now chooses two characters before each fight.

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## Bust-A-Move 3

The Bubble Popping Legacy Lives On

**B**ust-A-Move (known as Puzzle Bobble overseas) has always been a very simple, yet enjoyable action puzzle game. Fans of the series will be pleased to know that Natsume has decided to bring over the Saturn version of the latest sequel, Bust-A-Move 3, from overseas.

The basic premise of the game is very simple—match three colored bubbles of the same shape in order to pop all of them. Each level is cleared when every bubble has been popped. This is done by launching your own bubbles from the bottom of the screen. Every bubble attached below the popping bubbles will also pop and drop, allowing for large groups of them to be disposed of in one shot.

There is a lot of strategy and precision in Bust-A-Move, especially when the puzzles become more complex, and the time limit grows shorter. Adding to the stress is knowing that shooting the wrong color bubble into the wrong place could ruin the entire level. Special types of bubbles that do different things must be used efficiently in order to finish some levels, and sometimes unbreakable obstacles will make your job much tougher.

Casual players probably won't notice many of the new additions to this sequel, but fans of the series will. The ceilings can now be used to ricochet shots, instead

of your misguided bubbles accumulating on the top of the screen—this makes for wider shots. Bust-A-Move 3 has more types of "special" bubbles and objects that add even more variety to the game. For example, a new bowling ball can be launched that crushes every bubble in its path, regardless of color (an equal opportunity crusher). There are also

seven new characters, in addition to the requisite dragon that animates differently depending on the situation (there's also one really annoying

You can choose different routes after completing a set of levels.

Special bubbles such as the ones shown here live up to the gameplay.

Publisher/Developer	Players/Gears	% Done	Release
Natsume	1 or 2	100	November 1997
Web Address: none			



Busting bubbles and making more fall is still the name of the game.

Bust-A-Move 3 has seven new characters, in addition to the dragon that has been featured throughout the series.



girl that cries whenever bad things happen.)

Plenty of different game modes were designed to make Bust-A-Move 3 high in replay value. Arcade, Challenge and an incredibly huge "Collection" Mode (which allows you to browse a directory of thousands of levels) are offered, in addition to the two-player versus mode. The Challenge Mode will even go so far as to rate your speed, accuracy and strategy.

The Bust-A-Move franchise has consistently provided a solid series of action puzzle games. The biggest question concerning Bust-A-Move 3 is whether or not the new additions justify a purchase from those who already have the previous games.

### My 2 Cents

I've always liked the Bust-A-Move series, and the latest edition of the game is basically more of the same with a few, new twists—and an incredible amount of levels. Fans of Bust-A-Move (such as my mom, who lives and breathes it) will still undoubtedly love the game, but I have the feeling that this may be the last of the series. That is, unless they find a way to live it up before it becomes stale.

—Craig Kujawa



Bust-A-Move 3's Two-player Competitive Mode is most entertaining.







# Silhouette Mirage

Treasure's  
 Latest 2-D  
 Masterpiece

**T**reasure, the masters of 2-D side-scrolling action, are back with their sophomore Saturn title, *Silhouette Mirage* (the first was the highly successful beat-'em-up, *Guardian Heroes*).

The main character is a girl with two sides—one is blue, and the other red; her enemies are (for the most part) either blue (*Silhouette*) or red (*Mirage*), and can only be hurt by the opposite colored-side of the main character. Confused yet? Well, don't worry—there's a tutorial at the beginning of the game that explains everything you need to know about your character, and once you get going you won't want to stop. The gameplay is loaded with technique (typical Treasure-style), and the graphics are gorgeous. Each Boss has its own innovative attack styles, and some of them are just HUGE (more classic Treasure).

By defeating enemies you earn coins that you can use to buy several different types of weapons (of varying strengths) that are available



The intro scene is a visual treat, with classic Treasure-style art.

at stands throughout the stages. These weapons can make your job a whole lot easier when things begin to get rough (boomerangs, lasers, bombs and gas are just a few of the tools of your trade), and you can also buy back health if your HP becomes dangerously low.

There are no plans to bring *Silhouette Mirage* to the U.S. just yet, but hopefully someone will take notice of it and port it—it looks like Treasure's done it again.

*Silhouette Mirage* has some of the nicest 2-D Saturn graphics yet seen on the system.



インターナショナル プリビューズ

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# SATURN

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
Hudson Soft Hudson Soft	1-4 Action	70	December 1997 (J.P.)
Web Address: <a href="http://www.hudson.co.jp">www.hudson.co.jp</a>			

## Saturn Bomberman Fight!!

The B-Man Prepares To Invade Saturn Once Again

**H**udson has announced a sequel to their recently released (in the U.S., anyway) Saturn Bomberman game called Saturn Bomberman Fight!! Due out in Japan in December, SD Fight!! is now completely polygonal and puts a heavy emphasis on battle (thus the name "Fight!!").

Not much information is available on the game yet, but we do know that there are 14 playable characters, each with differing characteristics that affect play. The game takes place from an overhead quarter-view, and there are some new gameplay aspects that haven't been in previous Bomberman games. For example, each player now has a life bar that will slowly deplete as he or she gets hit (instead of the old-school one-hit kills). There's also a Bomb Gauge that slowly builds up, and when it's full the player can unleash a giant bomb that does massive damage. In addition, bombs can now explode in midair (when thrown), and the flames that pour down will cause damage to anyone they hit. There are new items and power-ups as well, but the old-school play mechanics are still around (like the Bomb Throw and the Bomb Kick). Currently it doesn't look like there are any dino or kangaroo like in previous Bombermans, but the game isn't done yet.

Hopefully we'll see a U.S. release sometime in 1998, but don't bet your bombs on it.

If your Bomb Gauge fills up, you can let loose a super bomb that really rocks!



Since battle stages are multilevel, the threat of fire from above is now present. Bombs explode in the air, too!



SD Fight!! is fully polygonal. It may look blocky, but you can bet that it'll be fun!

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Sega of Japan Sonic Software	1 Simulation/RPG	65	December 1997 (J.P.)
Web Address: <a href="http://www.sega.co.jp">www.sega.co.jp</a>			

インターナショナル プリビューズ

## Shining Force III

As reported last month in EGM, Sega of Japan is putting the finishing touches on the latest installment of the popular Shining Force series—Shining Force III for the Saturn.

Shining Force III, like its predecessors, is a simulation-RPG. This time, however, the entire game takes place in a gorgeous 3-D world with incredibly animated polygonal battles. The basic style of play remains the same though—battles play out on gridded battlefields (similar to Vandal Hearts or Tactics Ogre), while an epic story unfolds as you journey from area to area. The most exciting part of Shining Force III however, is that the game is split up into three scenarios that will be separately released in Japan.

Scenario 1 (shown here) is due out in December, while Scenarios 2 and 3 are slated for release sometime next year. Each scenario is expected to have gameplay that lasts up to 30 hours or more, and will provide three separate

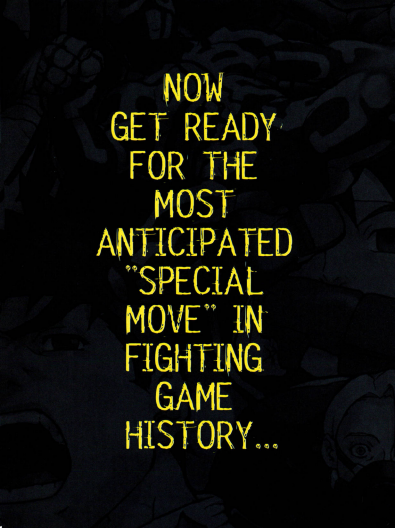


Shining Force III features a fully polygonal 3-D world with a rotating camera and gorgeous textured graphics.

perspectives on one huge story, allowing the gamer to see things from every side before ultimately reaching the conclusion.

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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# PlayStation

## Previews

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### In Sony News...

Despite Nintendo's amazing onslaught in the U.S., Sony is going to have their most successful holiday season yet, with numerous high-quality titles on store shelves and great low prices on new titles. Final Fantasy VII should sell well through the holidays, and retailers will be having a hard time keeping games like Crash 2, PaRappa the Rapper, Intelligent Qube, Cart World Series, Cool Beanders 2 and all of Sony's major sports titles in stock. Third-party support is at an all-time high, and while there are still a lot of low-quality games being released from third parties, a lot of the big-name games that were so popular in the days of the Super NES are finding sequels on the PlayStation—a sure sign of a system that's going to be around for quite a while. What about the PlayStation 2, you ask? Ask us again sometime in 1999. The PlayStation is doing too well right now, and it would be ridiculous to out that success short prematurely.

## Another Epic WD RPG

Publisher/Developer	Players/Users	% Done	Release
Working Designs Sony CE/Matrix	1 Action/RPG	75	December 1997

Web Address: [www.workingdesigner.com](http://www.workingdesigner.com)

## Alundra

**A**fter a long standoff, Working Designs is finally bringing their translation talents to the PlayStation with their first PS game, Sony's deep action-RPG, Alundra.

Developed by some of the folks who brought us the classic Genesis action-RPG Lanestalker, Alundra stars a young boy (named Alundra) who has the ability to enter into people's dreams and explore their minds. This ability comes in quite handy, as Alundra will have to solve numerous puzzles and defeat many enemies that dwell in the minds of the people of his troubled land.

Gameplay in Alundra is similar to that of Zelda, but with much more of an emphasis on puzzle solving. There are numerous items and other pieces of equipment that will help you on your way, and magic is crucial as well. Like Zelda, you can slash at shrubs with your sword to try to find hidden items, you can pick up and destroy crates and jars to search for things, and like Lanestalker—if it's got mass, chances—are good you can stand on it.

The graphics in Alundra are reminiscent of Konami's Suikoden (overhead view, realistic-looking characters and environments, etc.), but there's a lot more animation and the game is a lot larger. Dungeons are huge (the first main dungeon alone is larger than most games' end dungeons), and the amount of puzzles that need to be solved will surely delight any fan of the more difficult, old-school action-RPGs of the 16-bit days.

Despite our preview version being way early, we're already impressed and looking forward to reviewing the final version.



Alundra's deep gameplay is a welcome change of pace and should delight fans of good, solid RPGs.



In order to get from Point A to B, you'll have to accomplish certain tasks during the game.



As is usual from WD, the writing in Alundra is of the highest quality around.



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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Ubisoft Smart Dog	1 or 2 Tennis	85	November 1997
Web Address: <a href="http://www.ubisoft.com">www.ubisoft.com</a>			

## Tennis Arena

It's Time For  
Tennis To  
Take Center  
Court

It's being billed as "tennis with an attitude." Tennis Arena hopes to break down the vanilla flavor of the sport and push it into the extreme genre with its combination of unique players, locations and exaggerated moves.

Before Tennis Arena can lay out all the extreme stuff, it has to prove itself as a solid playing tennis sim with functional graphics and adequate challenge, especially since tennis on the 32-bit platform hasn't been done all that well (or often) in the past. To accomplish this, 3-D polygonal players and backgrounds are in full effect. Surprisingly fluid, the players also received the motion-capture treatment so that they could mimic the moves of real tennis players quite nicely. The overhead smash, backhand, lob and top-spin forehand are some of the standard returns with lots of special returns hidden within the game.

Like a fighting game, the players in Arena Tennis have their own special hits and maneuvers. For



Despite the game's attempt to be "extreme," it really looks good.



Complete with ball-girl and enthusiastic crowd, the bases are covered.



The wilder venues include this clay court in an ancient Greek coliseum.

example, Zoe Taylor from England does a spinning smash in which she lets go of the racket in its horizontal position, does a spin, grabs the racket as it floats in midair and delivers a hearty blast to the ball. Not quite realistic but we're talkin' about extreme tennis here. Another character, Chan from China, lets his freak flag fly, not to mention his saggin' belly and gold chains. He's basically a sumo-looking guy that plays tennis well.



Chan moves very well for a heavyset guy wearing five pounds of gold.

### My 2 Cents

It occurred to me as I played this game that it was basically a pumped-up, deluxe version of Pong. It has all the same principles, hit the ball back and forth, etc. Of course, you can control the ball in Tennis Arena and actually use applied strategy by way of the special hits and returns that each character has to offer. The only question yet to be answered is if this tennis game can take the simple gameplay of Pong and heighten it to a new 32-bit level without messing it up. We'll see.

—Dean Hager

To go along with the not-so-average players the venues they play in are also "exotic." Our favorite was the suspended court in the gut of an ancient Greek coliseum. Grass, clay, astro-turf and even wooden courts are among the surfaces available for play. The game offers tournament as well as doubles play, two-player and four-player mode for multiplayer competition.

With the right combination of good gameplay and interesting characters, Tennis Arena could fill a need in the sports gaming genre.



Courts come in many colors and flavors. Blueberry is delicious!



Four-player multiply shows promise as the game's main draw.





# MASS DESTRUCTION

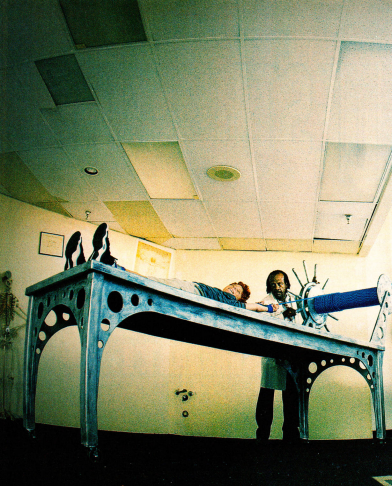


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last bronx





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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
EA EA-U.S.	1 Action/Racing	60	December 1997
Web Address: <a href="http://WWW.EA.COM">WWW.EA.COM</a>			

## Auto Destruct

A Racing Game With Something For Everyone

**A** champion motor racing driver witnesses the brutal deaths of his family at the hands of a fanatical cult called the "Disciples of Lazarus." Really sicked off, the player is driven to join a mysterious organization with the hopes of exacting a measure of revenge on the cult. It sounds like the plot to a cheesy '70s movie, but instead is the story line behind *Auto Destruct*, a futuristic racing game by Electronic Arts.

*Auto Destruct* implements elements from many of the popular 3-D racing action games on the PlayStation—intense vehicular combat, conservation of resources, exploration and racing—and combines them in one package. Through its mission-based gameplay, a variety of different tasks must be completed within the confines of your heavily armed futuristic cars. These assignments include seek-and-destroy missions, escorting targets, picking up people and dropping them off somewhere within a time limit (in a taxi cab, no less) and racing enemies in different courses. As each mission progresses, a messenger discloses the next objective, in addition to a city map that shows its location (in addition to an arrow pointing to it on your Heads-Up Display). For example, a mission may begin with you following a helicopter to a target. After killing that target, the next task could be to dislodge a roadblock of tanks in a shower of missiles and lasers. Sometimes more noble missions

will require you to foil a kidnapping. As you can see, it's safe to say that there are lots of things to do in the game.

*Destruct*'s gameplay exists within vast cities that include London, San Francisco and New York. The 3-D environments in *Auto Destruct* are huge to say the least, and they come complete with many things to interact with and (more importantly) destroy. People walk along the detailed city blocks, and there's plenty of traffic (enemy and friendly) to contend with on the streets. There usually isn't any problem that a few rockets don't take care of, and the pedestrians make a nice splat when run over.

Suffice to say, *Auto Destruct* is a very interesting action game. If the game accomplishes putting more depth and variety behind some of the games it borrows from, it could be a very solid title. **B+**



Targeting your enemies is accomplished through locking on to them.



Many useful camera views are available in *Auto Destruct*.



An intense missile firefight lights up the dirty streets of New York.

It's fun to run over pedestrians, then make art of their remains.



### My 2 Cents

There's a lot to like in *Auto Destruct*, especially the huge city environments and variety of missions. This game reminds me of *Auto Duel* from years past, except in an action environment. With so much to do, and really good 3-D graphics, I think that *Auto Destruct* will inevitably be a good game when it is finally completed. Besides, how can you not like a game that lets you drive around in a futuristic cab to pick up and drop off passengers? That's good game designin', wouldn't you agree?

—Kraig Kujawa



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(Video Game Advisor—April, 1997)



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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Natsume Pelage Soft	1 or 2 Action	30	December 1997
Web Address: none			

## Lode Runner

Dig A Little,  
Dodge A Little  
And Collect  
Some Gold

**G**oing deep beneath the Earth to find piles and piles of gold may sound exciting (and even profitable), but when you throw in a bunch of crazy monks chasing after you trying to protect those same riches, the scenario changes.

Lode Runner, brought to us by Natsume, dates way back to the '80s and has graced plenty of computer and console systems since. Interestingly enough, this new PlayStation version resembles a fairly recent remake called "Lode Runner: The Legend Returns," a game that appeared on the PC a few years back.

The game puts players in control of an adventurous chap named Jake Pent who tries his damndest to take back the gold that the keepers of the underground stole from above. But to do so, he must avoid dozens of traps, deadly gaping holes and, of course, those wacky monks. But Jake is able to set some traps of his own and use various items like the jackhammer to get away from the hooded evil-doers.

The graphics look totally old-school, but that's alright—this game kind of has that feel. Jake is really tiny on screen (about the same size as the little army men from Command & Conquer), but it's no problem. The thing to remember is that Lode Runner is a puzzle game at its core.

Like many puzzle games, Lode Runner has well over 50 levels to make your way through (set up like Mario with sets of levels inside "worlds"). And as you may have guessed, the farther along you get, the harder the levels become. The first level is nothing more than a quick gathering of some coin, but the next introduces monks, and then more monks, and then herds of monks, etc. Toward the end of the game, most mental gamers want to pull their hair out from how hectic it is. But for puzzle games, this is a good thing.

Lode Runner also features a level editor that waxes some of that pent-up anger from not being able to get past a certain level. You can fill your levels with whatever you want and make them as easy or as impossible (or as shameless) as you like. When you're done



When your laser-digging tool doesn't work, lay a bomb down and destroy some earth—it'll rebuild soon after.

with a level, a quick save to a memory card immortalizes your creation.

It may look dated, but Lode Runner should give gamers plenty of good times with its classic 2-D feel. Hopefully, this old-school game will fair well against all of the 3-D games out there. **B**



After getting all of the gold in a level, the portal opens to the next one for more riches.

The levels may vary in look, but the idea stays the same.



Lode Runner features items as well as gold. Some allow you to dig, while others trap monks.

Although one would think falling over 30 feet would kill you, Lode Runner defies gravity.



### Factoid

Just in case you didn't know or were curious, here's Funk & Wagnalls' definition of a person who is called a Lode Runner: "One who or that which runs [with] metallic ore embedded in associated rock."

### My 2 Cents

I remember playing an older version of Lode Runner and enjoying it. I also remember playing the more recent PC version that I mentioned in the main text, and this one sticks true to all of these. Although the monks don't get faster as you progress through the game (I kind of remember that from the old ones), Lode Runner on the PlayStation still keeps you on your toes. It's still in its beta form, but I think it's pretty cut-and-dry.

—Shawn Smith



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# Control: Controller.

Publisher/Developer    Players/Users    % Done    Release

Radical Ent.    1-4    N/A    3rd Oct. 1998

Web Address: [www.radical.co](http://www.radical.co)

## Manhattan Project

An Interesting  
Twist On An  
Old Game

**R**adical Entertainment is putting together a unique new action game featuring one to four players in a futuristic hybrid combat similar to capture the flag or even your basic game of tag.

With a working title of Manhattan Project (still very tentative) players are set loose in multi-level 3-D environments where light sources illuminate from various sights. The object is to pass through more of these light sources than your opponents, essentially changing the color of the beams and claiming them as your own. Sounds easy right? The problem is you must also stop your opponents from passing through the lights. In fact, only one player at a time can gather while the others pursue like a pack of hungry wolves fighting for their turn. Each character has special ways of immobilizing one another. Some shoot while others use hand-to-hand combat.

Thirty levels based in 30 worlds provide



Examples of the fighting along with a tile blast.



Upon reaching the final light source, victorious players do a little victory dance.



This particular player shoots a seeking energy pulse in addition to knowing some snaky fighting moves. Each level will open up new characters to use if needed.

the atmosphere with each world possessing a cultural theme including Japanese, Polynesian and even Aztec. Within the levels special tools help players in their quest. Blast Sites provide a sudden thrust like a cannon when walked over while Conveyor belts carry players horizontally to their targets.

We'll post more on this interesting title as information becomes available.

Publisher/Developer    Players/Users    % Done    Release

EA    1 or 2    80    November 1997

Web Address: [www.ea.com](http://www.ea.com)

## Need For Speed V-Rally



For better or worse, only four cars can race on a track at a time.

sim? For starters it offers a ton of tracks, 42 in all, spread over eight international locales. Additionally, 31 official cars including the Toyota Corolla WRC, Ford Escort Cosworth, Subaru Impreza SS and Nissan Almera are ready for action in this simple but extensive racing sim.

Gameplay is similar to Sega Rally only much more unforgiving as far as driving accuracy is concerned. Spectacular high speed roll-overs result from sloppy driving and over contact with other cars. Vehicles can be adjusted to suit the needs of each track through lighter suspensions, quicker gear ratios and a choice of automatic or manual transmission.

Several of the worlds will feature varying weather conditions along with night and day racing options. At this point it looks as though V-Rally could be the saving grace for the Need For Speed name.

Hold onto your hats cuz EA has yet another racing game ready for launch. But don't be fooled by the name, this speedster doesn't resemble EA's disappointing NFS II in any way. In fact if you wanted to compare V-Rally to anything look to Sega's Rally along with Sony's Rally Cross as a couple of the primary influencers on V-Rally. What's unique about this



At 30 frames per second the game speed on this early version was pretty decent. Two-player Mode was just as fast.



What would a Rally Cross game be without at least one snow course.

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fax: (818)252-0723

Publisher/Developer: Players/Score: % Done: Release

Psygnosis 1 or 2 Soccer 80 1st Qtr. 1998

Web Address: www.psygnosis.com

## Power Soccer 2

Life After Adidas Exists

Last year Adidas Power Soccer made its debut as one of the PlayStation's first soccer games. Eclipsed by more popular games such as EA's FIFA, it may not have received as much attention as Psygnosis would have liked. But then again maybe it didn't deserve as much due to its mediocre gameplay. This year, however, Power Soccer has left the Adidas endorsement behind as they prepare to launch Power Soccer 2 as a new-and-improved entity fueled by faster gameplay, sleeker-looking characters and more teams to choose from.

First of all, the game engine has been improved, as the frame rate is up to a silky-smooth 30 per second. This allows the polygonal players to speed across the field briskly. The exaggerated speed may not be as realistic as other soccer sims, but does



Gameplay has gotten rough this year with a lot of unnecessary tackles. Brutes they all are!

should be noted larger sprites had been implemented, making the players a little larger as well. But perhaps the most innovative new feature is the ability to link special moves together, kind of like a combo in a fighting game. Of the 40 special moves, 12 have the ability to be linked to create some interesting maneuvers. For example, you can stutter-step into a rainbow kick to really throw off your opponent.

Also new-and-improved are the new Menu Screens which lay things out in a unique and efficient manner. This is rather nice considering how many options and teams (18!) a soccer sim can have.

We'll keep an eye on this one and hope the feared lame sequel syndrome doesn't claim another victim.

### My 2 Cents

Obviously there have been some really good soccer games released in the last year or so. Konami alone has cornered the market with two of the best in ISS Soccer 64 and Goal Storm 97. These soccer sims are as realistic as they are fun to play and present a formidable challenge to any other soccer sim on the market. Having said that, it's clear after playing early versions of Power Soccer 2 the game will have its work cut out for it amongst such quality competition.

-Dean Nager

add arcade elements to the game. To make the play more believable motion-capture technology has established more natural-looking movements when characters cut, dive and slide to the ball. Instead of last year's choppy animations, this year's Power Soccer will have more animation frames to make the players move better. And except for the goalie's hunched back, they did a pretty good job cleaning up the boys overall. It

Here's what the stadium would look like if you were, say, a bird flying overhead.



The arm muscles on those goalies must get huge from throwin' all them balls around.



Cinematics display this curious scene of a tense pre-game prayer session.



Arcade Mode speeds up the action on the field almost too much.



Publisher/Developer    Players/Crews    % Done    Release

EA  
Climax Enterprises    1 or 2    Action/Advs.    N/A    March 1998Web Address: [www.ea.com](http://www.ea.com)

## Diablo



Buy and sell goods and learn of different quests in the towns.

**D**iablo has sold over 750,000 copies on the PC worldwide. And that's a number from a few months ago. With incredible numbers like that, it was only a matter of time until Blizzard's action RPG found its way onto the PlayStation.

Diablo became popular partly because of its single gameplay and excellent multiplayer capabilities. Obviously, Diablo's Multiplayer Mode was accomplished over the Internet on the PC, but on the PlayStation, only two will be able to play simultaneously.

Exploring dungeons, and hacking thousands of creatures to death describes Diablo perfectly. Three different classes of characters are available (Wizard, Warrior, Archer), and each builds up his powers by accumulating hit points, objects and new weapons. The game could loosely be called an RPG, but the emphasis here is action, not role playing.

It will be interesting to see if Diablo on the PS can capture the magic that made the PC one so popular. ●

### My 2 Cents

Diablo's One-player Mode on the PC was lacking, but its awesome multiplayer features (up to four people could play) more than made up for it. The PlayStation multiplayer capabilities will be substantially less than the PC Diablo, and I'm skeptical as to whether Diablo on a console system can be nearly as fun. —Kraig Kajawa

Exploring dungeons and killing waves of enemies is the bulk of the gameplay.



As you upgrade your armor and weapons, the look of your character changes to fit his new duds.

## The upside: WENCHES. The downside: THE PLANK.

The salt spray hits your lips as you look into the deep blue. The frigate creaks and the plank bobs. Will this be the end?

Welcome to Shipwrecked! Life on the high seas at its swashbuckling best. Wild flame throwers and hail lightning bolts as you man cannons and command great vessels under the jolly Roger. Battle one to five other players. The rewards are great, the puzzles daunting and the excitement high—just watch your step. The plank is a cruel mistress.



Visit [www.playstation.com](http://www.playstation.com) and enter the Shipwrecked's Treasure Chest Sweepstakes.

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Cores	% Done	Release
Pygnosis Hammerhead	1 Action	75	January 1996
Hot Address: <a href="http://www.pygnosis.com">www.pygnosis.com</a>			

## Shadow Master

Pygnosis  
Brings Us More  
Intense Action



The boxes in Shadow Master are monstrous and deadly.



Take good aim, and take enemies out from a distance.

It's probably safe to say that most gamers are fed up with powerful overlords that come into power, strip the land of its natural resources, and turn all creatures into mechanized beasts. Yes, we've all seen it before—now it's time to put a stop to it! That's exactly what you have to do in Shadow Master, a game published by Pygnosis (developed by Hammerhead). The main "bad dude" in this one, the Shadow Master, plans on taking the entire solar system and doing whatever evil things he wants to do to it. Thanks to you and your armored vehicle, that task won't be so easy.

Shadow Master features over 15 levels of play in seven different worlds. The mission in each is easy: Destroy all creatures without dying in the process. Like Doom and other first-person shooters, Shadow Master features a starting point, an ending point and lots of enemies in between.

The graphics are fully 3-D—even the enemies. With



Every time you blow up a bad guy, they shatter into a bunch of tiny pieces.

graphics like this, you might think they'd get real blocky up close. Surprisingly enough, they don't. They may not be anti-aliased or anything real fancy like that, but we've easily seen much worse.

The enemies in Shadow Master vary from little insect-looking things to hulking bots with giant cannons mounted on their shoulders. All of the baddies in the game are steel-plated—in other words, mechanized. But their armor isn't strong enough to stop a couple missiles from blowing them to smithereens.

As might be expected from a game published by Pygnosis, the lighting effects are way-cool. Explosions fill the screen with yellow light, whereas plasma blasts fly by your head while emitting a

### My 2 Cents

I'm a big fan of Pygnosis games mostly because of the attention to detail and incredible graphics (i.e., those awesome lighting effects in almost every game Pygnosis publishes). Shadow Master didn't impress me the very first time I saw it, but this updated rev is looking really nice. It's fun to play, and the graphics are nice. Hopefully Hammerhead will keep up the good work on this one as it comes closer to completion.

—Shawn Smith

blue tint. Not only do the explosions create neat-o effects, the environments feature colored light sourcing. All of the effects in Shadow Master make for a great visual joyride.

The graphics in the game are only part of the fun. Shadow Master presents challenge after challenge, and does it with style. The level layouts have you going up or down elevators and finding door switches while avoiding enemy fire. While you make your way through the level, though, you'll have plenty of weapons to return fire with.



Even up close, the graphics in Shadow Master continue to stay sharp. Pretty cool for the PS.



It'd be best in this situation to either use your mortar and blow these guys away, or run like hell.

### Factoid

The art style used in Shadow Master is inspired by artist Rodney Matthews. Most of his work is out-of-this-world...literally. He's best known for his book covers and album sleeves—specifically albums by Thin Lizzy, Scorpions and Liza, among others. Book-wise, he's done work for Michael Moorcock and his Elixir series. There's no mistaking Matthews' style when you see it. On a side note, the game Elixir (inspired by Michael Moorcock) is done by Pygnosis and is previewed in this issue...weird.

### Did You Know?

Hammerhead, the developer for Shadow Master, is an independent offshoot of Traveller's Tales. This is Hammerhead's first PlayStation title, and so far it looks like they've done their homework. Traveller's Tales is famous for their platform titles—most recently Sonic 3D Blast and Sonic R.

Publisher/Developer    Players/Gems    % Done    Release

Midway    1    75    January 1998  
Digital Eclipse    Completion    1998

Web Address: [WWW.midway.com](http://WWW.midway.com)

## Arcade's Greatest Hits: The Midway Collection 2

**C**ompilation packs are all the rage, and Arcade's Greatest Hits: The Midway Collection 2 packs one of the best varieties of those old and clunky classic games that many of us remember so dearly.

Seven games are on this CD, with the most popular being *Spy Hunter*, the racing game whose Peter Gunn theme punctuated its attitude. Other well-known titles include *BurgerTime*, which involves a chef trampling burgers to get them to fall into catchers while evading



One lucky customer will have this crushed egg in their burger.



Tapper was a little tame, since it used Root Beer instead of Beer.

deadly eggs and hotdogs; *Moon Patrol*, a side-scrolling shooter; *Tapper*, a game where you must frantically serve Root Beer to your rowdy customers; and *Joust 2*, the sequel to everyone's favorite ostrich battle. The last two titles are less known, and they include *Splat*, a weird game akin to *Foam Fight*, and *Blaster*, a first-person space shooter that takes place after *Robotron*.

Accompanying these games are



It's surprising that *Moon Patrol* was so popular when you see its ugly fluorescent graphics.



*Splat* is one of the strangest, least enjoyable games.



*Joust 2* is much more complex than the simple original.



*Spy Hunter*, the most popular game in this arcade compilation, is back in all of its rubber-burnin' glory.

a variety of features. Each game has its own set of options that allow you to adjust the difficulty, number of lives, in addition to even seeing the arcade game's "Test Mode." There will also be a trivia game, and some sort of historical information on the games provided (our preview version did not have these implemented yet).

Suffice to say that with this wide variety of popular classic games and accompanying goodies, this compilation CD could be one of the best.

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MIDWAY    Digital Eclipse    CD-ROM    Midway    1998

www.midway.com

www.digital-eclipse.com

Publisher/Developer: **Playsi/Gears** % Done: **100** Release:

Release: **Now**  
 Name: **1**  
 Pack-In Video: **Fishing**

Web Address: [www](http://www)

## Reel Fishing

All The Fun  
Of Fishing  
Without The  
Nasty Smell

**N**ature's Reel Fishing takes a new approach to the fishing game by emphasizing the whole experience, rather than competition elements of tournaments and contests.

Streams, ponds, waterfalls and rivers comprised of FMV provide a cool, relaxing atmosphere to master your craft. While you fish, slow mood music falls you into a sedate state, thus dropping your blood pressure to an all-time low, just as you're nodding off, your bobber dips and the underwater FMV sequences kick in. As your baited hook sinks to the bottom, a large river trout eyes it and goes for the strike. The fun begins as you fight to land the fish by carefully combining the right amount of line tension while reeling to tire the fighter fish enough to pull it to shore.

That's the main draw of the game, but other elements spice it up such as the Aqua Room and all it has to offer.

In this room you can release your two best catches into a large tank, but not before you name them (mine was Sparky) and check on their mental well-being. It's a weird element thrown into the game, but it seems to work as it's fun to view your fish, feed them and watch them grow. Also in the room are records of all your catches listing size, amount and success rate.

When you haul in fish that reach a certain size and number, you then progress to fish at different sites until you reach the newly set quotas. At the end of the whole process, the Master Fisherman (a Grizzly Adams lookalike) relinquishes his crown to you as he offers some pearls of wisdom. One such includes a plea to love with your heart and live in harmony with nature, among other things. Thank you oh wise one—now shove it, fish boy.



Underwater scenes are very realistic, emulating currents quite well and fish fighting for their lives.



No it's not Charlie the Tuna, just one of the nicely rendered fish in the game.



Upon successfully landing your fish, you may save it in the livewell or throw it back.



One of the looping FMV scenes of a fully stocked, pounding mountain stream.



## My 2 Cents

Once again, we are faced with a fishing sim and all the questions that go along with playing such a game. What kind of person enjoys sitting around hauling in fish after fish from the comfortable confines of the living room couch? It seemed strange to me at first, then I realized that a fishing video game is no different than a football, baseball or golf sim. It's just harder to get into the spirit of the whole thing. What's unique about Reel Fishing is its disregard toward the usual element of competition present in almost all video games and its celebration of the simple joy of catching a mess-o'-fish by a stream.

—Dean Mager



The Aqua Room provides a place to deposit your fish and view your day's tallies.

Publisher/Developer    Players/Genre    % Done    Release

Pygmoths    1    N/A    February 1998  
Pygmoths-France    Action

Web Address: [www.pygmoths.com](http://www.pygmoths.com)

## Elric

Looking for some intense action in a fantasy setting? Look no further than Pygmoths' upcoming game, *Elric*. Including a plot inspired by Michael Moorcock's book series by the same name, the game tells the story of Elric, the Emperor of Melniboné as he tries to save his love, Cyrenil. The game features over 40 different monsters, lots of spells and a Two-player Mode. So far, the graphics look incredible and the story seems pretty cool.



Although the characters in *Elric* are made of polygons, they maintain a cool, cartoony look.



As might be expected, the game has fancy effects and lighting.



Publisher/Developer    Players/Genre    % Done    Release

Midway    1-4    75    November 1997  
Visual Concepts    Basketball

Web Address: [www.midway.com](http://www.midway.com)

## NBA Fastbreak '98



Looking a bit like a "two-two" basketball sim, *Fastbreak '98* has some tricks to offer.



Midway is very close to releasing *NBA Fastbreak '98* (the game formerly known as *Hardwood Heroes*).

The game, developed by Visual Concepts, will feature big-time NBA basketball and all the licenses and players that go along with it in a fully polygonal 3-D basketball shootout.

While the game seems very straightforward, there will be some interesting moves making their debut in this title. Namely the side-step maneuver which gives players a new move to cut into the lane with. Also noteworthy is the ability to call up defensive and offensive formations as the ball is in play. The extensive playbook will layout the plays beforehand, while certain favorites are assigned to buttons.

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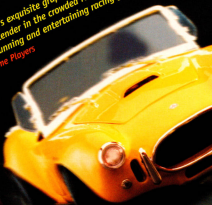
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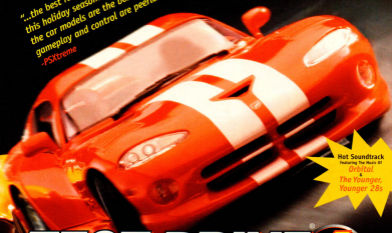


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ACCOLADE



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Publisher/Developer	Pages/Genre	% Done	Release
Playpods Playpods	1-5 Action Strategy	90	November 1997
Web Address: <a href="http://www.playpods.com">www.playpods.com</a>			

## Shipwreckers

It's Time For  
Pirates To Get  
The Respect  
They Deserve

In the family of micro-machine-type action games dominated by cars, tanks and helicopters, Shipwreckers' pirate clipper ships are an original twist on the micros genre and a cool change of pace for the PlayStation.

This lighthearted game gives you command of a pirate vessel to explore several water covered regions in search of treasure, new weapons and message bottles. A variety of enemies threaten your boat including land-based gun turrets, airborne balloons, airships and dragons. There are also underwater enemies such as clams, exploding fish and submarines that glide about in the shallow clear water. Minor threats aside, the main enemy is comprised of clipper ships that carry flame throwers, cannons and (perhaps the coolest weapon of all) a directed flow of ship-chasing lightning.


Five areas containing three levels each take you to the Arctic, Caribbean and an industrial zone. Each one is quite long and has an interesting level Boss to be defeated such as a lobster, a Golem or an ice statue, to name a few.

Gameplay is similar to Return Fire, only on water. The overhead perspective combined with the pitch-and-roll physics seek to create the effect of a ship at sea (although it looks and feels more like a toy boat in a sink). Light progression—down to dusk along with fog and cloud effects also add to the sea-faring atmosphere.

Shipwreckers also has an entertaining Multiplayer Mode. It consists of an auto-zooming overhead view of the action, in which players battle it out in a maze-like territory. Up to four heavily armed ships can engage in a contest of cat-and-mouse similar to Bomberman but with more weapons. As you master the art of land mining, blow torching and cannon blasting your human enemies, you'll probably want to play multiplayer more



Multiplayer is a lot of fun with so many different unique weapons at your disposal.

often than Normal Mode. Suffice to say, it's highly addictive and fun. As the onslaught of 3-D polygonal games continue to populate the PlayStation, it's nice to see an original sprite-based game like this come along. 



Balloon power-ups provide a few seconds of lift from the water.



Some mainstay weapons in the game are these flame-throwing towers.



## My 2 Cents

I'm really getting tired of all the mediocre 3-D polygonal games coming out for the PlayStation as of late. While I wouldn't want to see everything go back to sprite-based side-scrollers, it's nice to see games like Shipwreckers come out for the PlayStation. They serve to remind us that some old-school styles are still very cool to play and are just as valid as any 3-D polygonal game. Let's hope more innovative games like Shipwreckers will be developed in the new future for the PlayStation.

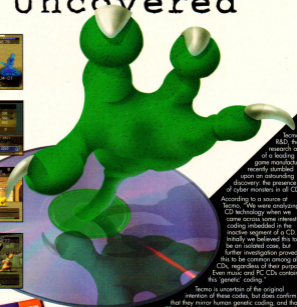
—Dean Hager

The "bolt" is the best weapon to use due to its ability to seek out and connect to its target.





# CAUTION: Cyber-Monster Conspiracy Uncovered



Tecno R&D, the research arm of a leading game manufacturer, recently stumbled upon an astounding discovery: the presence of cyber monsters in all CDs.

According to a source at Tecno, "We were analyzing CD technology when we came across some interesting coding imbedded in the inactive segment of a CD. Initially we believed this to be an isolated case, but further investigation proved this to be common among all CDs, regardless of their purpose. Even music and PC CDs contain this 'genetic' coding."

Tecno is uncertain of the original intention of these codes, but does confirm that they mirror human genetic coding, and that every CD produced contains a unique set. It is rumored that CD manufacturers have conspired to imbed these hidden codes. An investigation is currently underway.

In order to facilitate further testing of the cyber creatures, Tecno has developed a safe environment that can be reconstructed with the PlayStation™ console. The virtual environment allows the user to release these dormant 'cyber-monsters' into a controlled environment for testing. Insiders at Tecno jokingly refer to the environment as the 'Monster Ranch', and to themselves as 'Monster Ranchers'. The virtual environment has recently passed federal safety guidelines, and will be available over-the-counter this fall.

"We don't want to alarm the public, but we do recommend caution when using any CD," a Tecno spokesperson warned.



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Publisher/Developer Players/Gears % Done Release

EA  
Dreamworks Int'l. 1 Action 70 January 1998

Web Address: [www.ea.com](http://www.ea.com)

## Skullmonkeys

Back For More  
Claymation  
Action

**S**kullmonkeys doesn't stray too far from its Earthworm Jim roots. In fact, Clayman (or here) looks quite similar to Jim. It's also worth mentioning that the Clayman character comes directly from the PC game *The Neverhood*. His adventures are entirely different on the PlayStation, however.

Klayman's primary mission in *Skullmonkeys* is to prevent a dirty, bad man named Klogg from destroying Clayman's world. It seems Klayman kicked Klogg's ass in the past, leaving Klogg to regroup and enlist the Skullmonkeys of the planet Idmak for a revenge attack. These curious-looking skull-headed monkeys prance around aimlessly waiting to be knocked out or shot by Klayman.

This old-school, tongue-in-cheek platform scroller brings the *Neverhood* to the PlayStation along with 20 worlds and more than 120 levels of gameplay. The standard gameplay control of running, jumping and shooting are accompanied by some wacky weapons which include the Universe Bomb, Hammer Shield and the Fart-head!!

What more could you ask for? How about eight different claymation movies that total 15 minutes of stop-frame animation. The short clips feature Klayman and Klogg in several different situations. They all usually end with Klayman narrowly escaping Klogg's gurn, scissors or other butchering tools. For those unfamiliar, the scenes have that *Nightmare Before Christmas* look and feel to them.

On the whole, the levels we were able to preview displayed cool "dream-like" atmospheres featuring oozing waterfalls, giant skulls and snow-capped mountains. Creative use of light sourcing and shadows contribute a lot to the unusual surroundings. *Skullmonkeys*, giant flies or psychotic, lederhosen-wearing "alpsmen" are just a few examples of the creative mix of enemies,

These shots are from one of the short movies chronicling the rise of bad boy Klogg.



Belching boilers provide the obstacle. Luckily Clayman can really jump.



This fly-invested level shows off the intricate lighting effects.

## Behind The Screens

A mountain of clay

The guys down at the *Neverhood* studios (including Doug TenNapel, producer of *Skullmonkeys*) had their collective hands full of clay, ball-and-socket armatures and even wood while creating the game's intense cinema clips. Over a ton of modeled clay had to be painstakingly shot frame by frame to achieve the 3500 frames needed for a 3.5-minute clip



The *Neverhood* crew: front row left to right: Joseph Sanabria, Brian Befford, Tim Larsson, Douglas TenNapel, Mike Diets, Vanessa Jones, Edward Schaefer, Mark Lorenson and Lou Giglietti. 2nd row: left to right: Kanton Leach, Steve Crow, Ellis Goodson, Eric Osborne.

(about a week's worth of work). On a good day Doug can animate about 200 frames, but says the backgrounds can take several weeks to create due to the size and complexity.

When asked if clay is as tasty as it is fun to model Doug TenNapel replied: "Clay doesn't taste good. I've tried it. Some of our sculpting material has a resin base and will kill you if you ingest it. Clay is nutritious for the soul, however. When I sculpt, I feel very relaxed and comfortable, compared to doing art on the computer where you'll find me sculpting and sculpting a lot."

If you're a fan of claymation or the classic side-scrolling platform game, keep an eye out for this twisted tale of a brave clay hero and his mutant enemies.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Interplay Pixelogic Ltd.	1 or 2 Driving/Action	15	February 1998

Web Address: www.interplay.com

## Crime Killers

Takin' Out the  
Bad Guys At  
60 fps

A cop's main task is to protect and serve, and if you believe what most movies, games and books have told us, in the future that'll be done by any means necessary. One of the aforementioned vehicles of entertainment gives us that portrayal all over again: *Crime Killers* from Interplay (developed by U.K.-based Pixelogic) for the PlayStation.

In *Crime Killers* you're the police going up against a band of criminals' helibot on making the city their own turf. But that'll be easier said than done for one reason: You. That may be making it a bit dramatic, but there's no doubt that the action will end up being intense. Mind you, the preview version we've played here is far from completion (around 20 percent or 30 percent), but it still looks very promising.

Right now, the game is running at an incredibly fast 60 frames per second; Interplay hopes the same rate will be intact come production time. The rate does drop to 30 fps during the "two-player" mode, but that'll be expected since there's twice the polygons on screen at once.

The One-player Mode will have at least 20 levels, which vary from racing against (and destroying) some odd bad guys while on your futuristic motorcycle, to protecting a van with an important executive inside—the trick here is not to blow up the van while destroying the circling hoodlums.

So far, the game reminds us somewhat of a cross between *Tunnel B-1* and *G.Police*, but since it's so early there's plenty of time for that to change. Already, you're able to control a souped-up police car, a bike that looks like something out of *Akira* and a flying wing (which wasn't available in this version of the game). Each of the vehicles is mission specific, but are fully selectable in the Deathmatch Mode.

On top of the different vehicles, each level may change depending on what part of the futuristic city it takes place in. The weatherier areas are safer, whereas the slums are more or less a fit-throwing heliade (i.e., less enemies in the rich areas opposed to tons of enemies in the bad parts of town).



A quick turn-around could mean the difference between life and death.



Being a cop has never been so fun...except in *G.Police* maybe.

### My 2 Cents

*Crime Killers* is really early, but even with that said, I'm impressed with this one. The frame rate is super fast (so much so that when I switched to the "in the car" view, my vision went a little screwy), I'm sure there'll be a lot changed in the end version once more levels are implemented, but if it continues in the direction it's going, the game should be something to look twice at.

—Shawn Smith

*Crime Killers* has some aptly named "killer" lighting effects in tunnels.

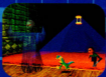


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# GEX

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Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Hasbro Interactive Hasbro	1 or 2 Fighting	80	December 1997
Web Address: <a href="http://www.hasbro.co.jp">www.hasbro.co.jp</a>			

# Beast Wars

Transform  
Your  
PlayStation

**B**east Wars comes to the video game arena already heavily fortified with cross-market tie-ins. If you haven't seen the television show or the comic book, you certainly must have noticed the action figures at your local toy store. If you haven't seen those or the commercials for them, then you must be living in a grass hut somewhere in South America.

Morphing a robot into some other entity, be it a dinosaur, insect or other like creature is what a Transformer is all about. *Beast Wars* brings the transformin' to the PlayStation with animated 3-D polygonal robots and their animal alter-images. Of course, to make things interesting, they are engaged in a fight for control of the universe (ah, that old struggle again...).

Whether playing as one of the evil Predacons or the more peace-loving Maximals, you will need to pilot your robot/beast through six eerie environments



Robot selection is vital to winning certain levels. Speed is sometimes better than power.



From the opening cinematic, the robots as their beast counterparts are ready for nuffin'.



While in *Beast Mode* the only option is to run and look for power-ups.

and 32 missions.

The rugged 3-D terrain (which has become commonplace on the PlayStation) features your standard jungle, desert, forest and suburban environments. All the areas have clear cut paths to traverse where enemies ranging from snakes to UFOs threaten you constantly. To help guide you through the territory, an omnipotent voice will inform you of the status of your robot and warn you of approaching enemies. The voice will also suggest when it's time to change into a beast as well. Also along the way are energy, armor and ammo power-ups that are suspended in various



*Ambush* in the valley of death, a furious firefight greets your bot around every corner.

locations on the path. The robots' weapons consist of lasers, pulse blasts and wild electric bolts that vary from beast to beast (but usually end up being fired constantly due to their seemingly minimal effect on many of the bad dudes).

Fans of the show and the action figures will recognize some of the more popular characters including: Inferno, Terrorstar and Tantarulas. Even if you haven't seen the show, *Beast Wars* is intuitive enough to be played.



Terrorstar runs like a little girlyman when the snakes come out to play.

## My 2 Cents

Games born out of Saturday-morning cartoons, movies or toys for that matter usually end up being pretty bad and really only exist to capitalize off the established name and concept. On the other hand, shows and toys that come out after a game (*Earthworm Jim*, *Ms. Pac-Man*, *Sonic*, etc.) usually indicate that the game was, and is, pretty good. It's a simple formula, but seems to hold true. With that in mind, *Beast Wars* will have to prove itself as a stand-alone game if it's to gain any respect from the gaming public. Not having watched the show more than once or bought any of the action figures, I can say with confidence that this game is not an original game by any means, but does hold some promise as a challenging mech-type shooter for those who enjoy that genre.

-Dean Harper

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Publisher/Developer    Players/Genre    % Done    Release

Taito Corp.    1 or 2    100    New  
Taito Corp.    Action    Japan

Web Address: [www.taito.co.jp](http://www.taito.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.



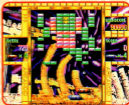
## Arkanoid Returns

Brick-Breaking Action Is Back

It's been over 10 years since U.S. gamers have gotten a new home version of Arkanoid, but in Japan the series has lived on, and the latest incarnation, Arkanoid Returns, is now available for the PlayStation in Japan.

Aside from a new two-player Cooperative Mode and some really flashy 3-D graphics, there's nothing mind-bombingly groundbreaking about Arkanoid Returns. But does there need to be? Not at all. As anyone who's played Breakout, Alleyway or any of the other brick-breaking franchises will tell you, this type of game is HIGHLY addictive and will keep you occupied for hours on end. Arkanoid Returns features 100 stages of play in the Arcade Mode and another 100 in the Extra Mode (which is harder and has some new obstacles not found in the original mode). There's also an Edit Mode (to make your own stages), and a game called Squash which is a modified version of the Two-Player Mode where each time the ball is hit, one of the two players' dresses will disappear, forcing the other guy to make the move. It may sound simple, but it really is a lot of fun. The game supports the PS Mouse for more accurate control, and if you've got it—Namco's Volume Controller will work too (it's a small knob controller like the one released with Arkanoid for the NES many years ago, and it's only available in Japan).

Currently there are no plans to bring this one to the U.S., but with any luck that'll change soon.



Like the upcoming Super NES version [Arkanoid: Do It Again], Arkanoid Returns features a Two-player co-op Mode.



There are quite a few power-ups, both old and new, in Arkanoid Returns.



With the Edit Mode, you can make your own stages. This one seemed fitting.

Publisher/Developer    Players/Genre    % Done    Release

Square Co., Ltd.    1    95    November  
Square Co., Ltd.    Shooting    1997 (JP)

Web Address: [www.square.co.jp](http://www.square.co.jp)

インターナショナル・プリヒューズ

## Einhänder



One of the biggest surprises at the Tokyo Game Show in September was a near-finished version of Square's graphically intense new polygonal shooter for the PlayStation, Einhänder. Had it not been sitting in the same booth as the incredible videos of Parasite Eve, Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon, Soukaigi and more, it may have easily been given recognition as game of the show from otherwise distracted shoppers.

In Einhänder, you can choose from one of three ships, each with different features and abilities. From there, the main aspect of gameplay (and the one that makes it so unique) involves you destroying enemies and picking up their weaponry for your own use. Background graphics are simply gorgeous (similar to Philosoma), and the gameplay is just super tight, with action-packed shooting and intense enemy animation. The viewpoint changes during play many times, and the transition is so smooth, you'll be amazed to realize you're not watching a movie. Einhänder looks hot, and we'll be sure to keep you updated on its status in the U.S.



Gameplay will sometimes change to an angled viewpoint during major scenes and Boss battles. Nice!

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.



Did someone say intense? Einhänder is packed with loads of non-stop action.

インターナショナル・プリヒューズ



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Publisher/Developer	Players/Gears	% Done	Release
Square Co., Ltd. Square Co., Ltd.	1 Action-RPG	N/A	4th Qtr. 1997 (JP)
Web Address: <a href="http://www.square.co.jp">www.square.co.jp</a>			

## Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon

インターナショナル ブリコンス

Square's Feathered Friend Takes Center Stage

It had to happen sooner or later. After successful roles in several of Square's world-famous Final Fantasy games, the series mascot, Chocobo, is about to star in his very own dungeon RPG.

Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon is actually the third game in the "Mysterious Dungeon" series that was, ironically, originally a spin-off of Enix's mega-popular Dragon Quest games. While the first two games starred different main characters and story lines, the basic premise was the same—you explore deep dungeons in search of treasure and whatever else lies within, while building up your character and fighting enemies. This time, the game will have more of a Final Fantasy feel to it (with call spells, characters and magic spells from the series, etc.), but the core gameplay will remain the same. In addition, Chocobo will be joined by his loyal sidekick Aps—*a moogles*.

One unique aspect of previous Mysterious Dungeon games is that each time you entered a dungeon, the layout would be completely different from the previous entry. Whether or not this trait (which adds to replay value tremendously) will remain in Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon or not remains to be seen, but you can be sure that the quest will be huge and the gameplay deep nonetheless.

There are no plans for a U.S. release just yet, but you can bet that Sony won't let us hot a property as this one slip through their grasp.

The adorable character models in CMD were done by Bandai.



Our hero doesn't have any arms, so he has to do the attacking with his feet. Magic is essential, too.



Magic spells from the FF series will be commonly found in CMD.



Publisher/Developer	Players/Gears	% Done	Release
Square Co., Ltd. Square Co., Ltd.	1 RPG	100	New Japan
Web Address: <a href="http://www.square.co.jp">www.square.co.jp</a>			

## Final Fantasy VII International

To celebrate sales of over 3 million units of Final Fantasy VII in Japan, Square released a new version of FF7—FF7 International. Basically, it's a Japanese version of the U.S. version of FFT (which had some added Bosses and scenes not found in the Japanese original). However, they've added a fourth CD that features a special guide to the game on CD-ROM, with complete Item, Spell and Monster listings and stats, maps to all of the key areas of the game, special FMV sequences and artwork from the making of the game, plus more. The new International version went on sale in October in Japan, but a U.S. release is not likely. Still, if you're a collector, this would make the perfect collector's item, so step wait—go import it!



Publisher/Developer	Players/Gears	% Done	Release
Square Co., Ltd. G-Craft	1 Simulation-RPG	100	New Japan
Web Address: <a href="http://www.square.co.jp">www.square.co.jp</a>			

## Front Mission 2

Square has once again teamed up with G-Craft (creators of Front Mission for the Super Famicom and Arc the Lad 1 & 2 for the PlayStation) to bring us Front Mission Second (FM2) for the PS. Like the original, the emphasis is on strategic mech battles



between your self-enhanced units and your opponents, but with a strong story line and lots of character development. We just got this one in before deadline, so we haven't had much time with it yet, but it looks promising and the graphics are nice, despite slightly sluggish animation at times. A U.S. release is questionable.



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# PLAYSTATION

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Publisher/Developer Payers/Gems % Done Release

Konami Co., Ltd. 1 of 2 Shooting 100 Nov Japan

Web Address: [www.konami.co.jp/ycvt](http://www.konami.co.jp/ycvt)

## Gradius Gaiden

The Classic Shooter Returns

Now early anyone who's owned an NES at one point or another in their life (or a Super NES, for that matter) has heard of Konami's classic shooter Gradius. Well now, six years since the last edition (Gradius III for the Super NES), the company is back with an all-new version for the PlayStation—Gradius Gaiden.

Gradius Gaiden is the first game in the series to feature two-player simultaneous play. There are four ships to choose from (Vic Viper, Lord British, Jade Knight and Falchion Beta), each with its own unique special weapons and missiles. After choosing your ship, you choose from one of four different Barrier units (Shield, Guard, Force Field or Limit), and then it's off to battle through the game's nine absolutely gorgeous stages. Each weapon can now be powered up twice, for extra power, and you can even edit your Gauge if you want to rearrange the order in which your ship's power-ups become available.

Like Castlevania: Symphony of the Night,

Gradius Gaiden sports gorgeous graphics and classic Konami gameplay.



As has always been the case with the Gradius series, the Bosses are huge and can be quite difficult to defeat.

Gradius Gaiden is a fantastic update to a classic series, and fortunately, also like Castlevania, the chances of it reaching the U.S. are very good. In fact, just before we went to press, Konami announced that both Gradius Gaiden and the recently released Salamander Deluxe Pack would be coming to the States in one package this December. Woo-hoo!

Publisher/Developer Payers/Gems % Done Release

Hudson Soft 1 of 5 Action 70 December (1997 US)

Web Address: [www.hudson.co.jp](http://www.hudson.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. Report at your own risk.



## Bomberman World

This guy sure gets around! That's right, Hudson is developing yet another new version of the classic Bomberman series, this time for the PlayStation.

Bomberman World (shown at TGS as "PlayStation Bomberman") takes the classic Bomberman style and introduces a CG-rendered look to it, as well as an angled isometric viewpoint that offers a nice change from the classic overhead view from past Bombermans. This time, four magical crystals that were being used to contain evil demons have suddenly weakened, allowing the demons to escape and wreak havoc in outer space. As usual, it's up to Bomberman to save the day.

There are five worlds with five areas in each. After defeating the demon Bosses on each of the first four worlds, you'll gain access to the fifth and final world where the Darkforce Bomber awaits. Meanwhile, you'll have to collect Crystal Pieces that are necessary to seal the demons back where they escaped from. And as is the case with all the Bomberman games, there's a Battle Mode where up to five players can go at it with each other. Like Saturn Bomberman, each of the battle stages is themed—one of them even has a UFO catcher that will try to grab you and move you to a different area of the screen! Sounds pretty cool...

Bomberman World will be out in Japan in December. With luck, a U.S. version won't be far behind.



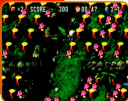
Bomberman World is more traditional than the new Saturn and N64 versions.



The Earth Bomber—one of four elemental demons out to take over the galaxy.



There are now four available ships, each with different weapons.



New to the PS version of Bomberman is a three-fourths overhead view and CG-rendered characters and backgrounds.



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PlayStation | GHOST IN THE SHELL

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インターナショナル

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Konami Co., Ltd. KOE Japan	1 Action	N/A	2nd Qtr. 1998 (JP)
Mail Address: <a href="http://www.konami.co.jp/koe">www.konami.co.jp/koe</a>			

## Metal Gear Solid

The Most-Anticipated PlayStation Game Ever?

**A**fter the six-minute video tape of new Metal Gear Solid footage was unveiled on the second day of this year's E3 show, the hysteria began. People camped out in front of Konami's TV monitors and gazed at what they saw in total awe. It's been quite a while since any one game could stir up so much commotion, but somehow Konami's managed to pull it off with the amazing Metal Gear Solid.

The game, part three in the Metal Gear Series (behind Metal Gear and Solid Snake, both released for the NES2 years ago and

subsequently ported to the NES), takes place in the early part of the 21st century in Alaska. The terrorist group Fox Hound has taken over a U.S. nuclear weapons stockhouse, and it's up to Solid Snake to infiltrate it and disarm the nuclear threat.

On our recent trip to Konami Computer Entertainment Japan, we were able to witness a playable version of the game for the first time anywhere in the world. Needless to say, it looks absolutely incredible. Like in past Metal Gear games,

the main emphasis is on strategic infiltration, and not fast action. You are rewarded more for sneaking around and not being seen than you are for walking up to and blowing away your enemies. You begin with only a pack of cigarettes and some binoculars, but along the way you'll pick up a wide variety of items and weapons, including many old favorites like Remote Control Missiles, Plastic Explosives and more.

The game takes place from a top-down perspective, but you can switch to a first-person viewpoint at any time to survey the action up close. You

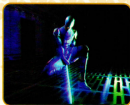


Even in its current early state, Metal Gear Solid is the most graphically intense PlayStation game to date.

can crawl on the ground, hide underwater and even use downed enemies as human shields—obviously, there's a lot of gameplay here. Still, the most amazing aspect of MGS is the attention to detail evident throughout the game. Outside in the snow, you'll actually see the cold breath coming from a guard's face as he breathes. When firing automatic weapons, you'll see shells flying all about, and characters will stop and reload with each new round. If you hide behind a wall and just observe a guard for a while, you'll see him yawn or stretch his arms—he might even crack his neck. The realism is just astonishing.

Metal Gear Solid is already being hyped as 1998's Game of the Year, and while we'll reserve that honor until we play the final version, we won't deny that right now it's looking like one of the best games ever made. Unfortunately it's not due for release in Japan until the

summer of 1998, so a U.S. release isn't likely until the third or fourth quarter of 1998. We'll be back with more on the game as development progresses.



In addition to the all-polygon 3-D gameplay, there will be CG-rendered cinemas as well.

What would any spy action thriller be without night vision?



If you thought GoldenEye's Sniper Rifle was cool, just wait until you see the gear in MGS.



The main gameplay takes place from an overhead view, but a first-person view is available too.





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# ArCADE

## Previews

### Game Directory

• Mortal Kombat 4

## An MK4 Update...Already??

Publisher/Developer	Players/Genre	% Done	Release
Midway Entertainment	1 or 2 Fighting	90	Now
Web Address: <a href="http://www.mk4.com">www.mk4.com</a>			

## Mortal Kombat 4-Ver. 2

**M**ortal Kombat 4 has an update already? Yes, the game had barely hit arcades when we learned Version 2 is already on the way. This installment features the return of two much-needed old schoolers—Johnny Cage and Jax—along with new moves, changes to old moves and new secret characters. As you know by now, Noob is no longer a selectable character. He and Ermac will probably appear in the game as special characters. As it stands, the Select Screen is the same, except in the middle you have (left to right) a strange, almost Jax-looking character (name unknown), Jax, with cybernetic arms and all, and Johnny Cage, complete with his world-famous crotch punch.

In the version we played, the moves for most of the characters are different, but it is unknown if that will change. Jax has a Dushing Punch move instead of the Dash Kick. Johnny Cage has all the same moves, but no fireball has been added yet.



Jax had hardly any moves in the version we played, except a new Dash Punch.

These have been removed for the most part. You must now rely on skill and use of juggles. Each character has his/her own "top up" move that you MUST master to acquire more than five consecutive hits. Unfortunately, not all combinations that worked in the previous MKs work on the newest installment.

Last of all, fatalities are in full force. Most of the returning combatants have revised versions of classic fatalities (Jiu Kang's dragon looks incredible in 3-D).



Johnny Cage has mostly the same moves—except they look much cooler.



This is the Select Screen for the new revision. Note that Noob has been replaced by a yet unnamed character.

Furthermore, the weapons are now all different, and some of them have special attributes (For example, Sub-Zero's weapon can freeze you). The game also lacked endings and Bosses.

The gameplay mechanics for MK4 have been fully implemented. One of the complaints of MK3 concerned the button tap combos.

### JAMMA & AMOA report

Well, it's that time again, when all arcade addicts' eyes are focused on the AMOA show. As of press time, the JAMMA show in Japan has just concluded. What was shown there is usually a good indication of what will be shown in the States. The games that looked the best were Capcom's Legion of Heroes (a new game in the style of SFEX with a higher



polygon count) and, of course, Kenam's long-awaited Cobra hardware-driven Fighting Mushu and Racing Jam. FW looks to be the best graphic game of the past shows ever since a tape surfaced a year ago, however it is unknown just how it will play. Racing Jam surpasses the graphics of even Sega's Super GT. As previous tapes showed, the blades of grass, as well as the notches in the pavement are all in striking detail and both games will raise everyone's expectations of future titles. There were no Alpha 3, Tekken 3r or Virtua updates, though they are all on the way. Expect the AMOA show to have a wide variety of game genres: driving, fighting, shooting...again with the exception of the occasional large simulation. We might even see—GASP—a shooter!

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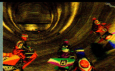
# Jet Moto 2

C h o o s e   y o u r



With ten treacherous new tracks, Jet Moto 2 isn't just a more intense, all-terrain racing game, it's a virtual graveyard. This time, you'll race through molten lava, splash down a waterfall and even maneuver your way over a broken-down roller coaster. You'll feel every bump,

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December 1997

# Coming soon

Compiled by: John Stockhausen

## PLAYSTATION

Alundra	Working Designs	Dec.	RPG
Auto Strada2	EA	Dec.	Driving/Com
Grand Theft Auto	BMG Interactive	Dec.	Shooting/Sim
Crash of	Midway	Dec.	Sports
Lode Runner	Nature	Dec.	Action
Men in Black	Design-Unique	Dec.	Action
NBA Street 2nd pt	Sony Computer Entertainment	Dec.	Sports
Superman Deluxe Pak	Comixion	Dec.	Shooter
Space	Sony Computer Entertainment	Dec.	Action
Tactics 19th Battle	Atari	Dec.	Strategy
Theme Hospital	EA - Origin	Dec.	Simulation
Agent 006	Cyber-Dynamics	Jan.	Action
Rocky Williams Collection	Midway	Jan.	Competition
Batman & Robin	Acclaim	Jan.	Action
Blade	Sony Computer Entertainment	Jan.	Action
Cardinal Sin	Sony Computer Entertainment	Jan.	Fighting
Contractor	Acclaim	Jan.	Simulation
Deathcap Dungeon	Edice	Jan.	Adventure
Reigns/Winter Sports	Konami	Jan.	Sports
NBA in the Zone pt	Konami	Jan.	Sports
Paper Blank	Nature	Jan.	Shooter
PowerBall	Strategy	Jan.	Racing
Rip Tapers	THQ	Jan.	Racing
Reborn	EA	Jan.	Action
Resident Evil 2	Capcom	Jan.	Adventure
Risk	Madras Interactive	Jan.	Strategy
Shogun Mercs	Playmates	Jan.	Action
Shogun Warriors	EA	Jan.	Action
Wreckin' Crew	SiG Back	Jan.	Racing
Cross Killer	Strategy	Feb.	Driving/Com
Dead-on-Alive	Sumo	Feb.	Fighting
Fantasia	Acclaim	Feb.	Action
Gran Turismo	Sony Computer Entertainment	Feb.	Racing
Warzone	Nature	Feb.	Action
Rip-Strike	Atari	Feb.	Action
NCAA March Madness pt	EA	Feb.	Sports
NHLN Olympic Hockey	Midway	Feb.	Sports
Real Rush 2	EA	Feb.	Art Sports
VR Hockey	Interplay	Feb.	Sports

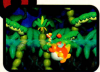
## NINTENDO 64

Bombberman 64	Nintendo	Dec.	Puzzle
Grand Prix	Comixion	Dec.	Simulation
Midway Anniversary	Comixion	Dec.	Action
Nature Adventure Sports	Konami	Jan.	Sports
NBA in the Zone pt	Konami	Jan.	Sports
Nyctical Kings	Konami	Jan.	Action
Nyctical Olympic Hockey	Midway	Feb.	Sports
Yoshi's Story	Nintendo	Feb.	Action



For those of you who haven't seen enough of the lovable Bombberman, blow away the competition with your very own Bombberman 64. Be sure to put this hot title on your N64 Christmas list.

It might not be called Yoshi's Island 64, but Yoshi's Story features the same great gameplay you'll recognize from Nintendo. Yoshi and pals will prance along in February to warm your winter blues.



Formerly lacking in the RPG department, the PlayStation is graced with a new challenge. Those of you who jumped on Final Fantasy VII may want to take this one for a spin.

From the PC to the NES and now on the PlayStation, many will recognize this hot blast from the past. LodeRunner will dazzle you with its old-school gameplay and modern graphics wizardry.



## SATURN

Bat & Mover 2	Nature	Dec.	Puzzle
Sega Young Car Championship	Sega	Dec.	Racing
Right Knight King Earth	Working Designs	Jan.	RPG
Dead or Alive	Atari	Feb.	Fighting

The amazingly popular *Bat & Mover* series starring *Bat* and *Bob* gets a new entry on the Saturn. Look for the bubblegum-chewing dino to make their encore appearance during the Christmas holidays. *Bat & Mover 3* is slated for a December release.







# YOU KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO



# GET IN OR GET OUT



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# NINTENDO 64



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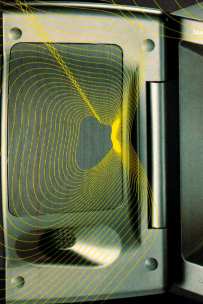
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# All You Want For Christmas

## The Ultimate Guide To The Hottest Gifts

**T**he year's most wanted games are finally hitting stores. We're being bombarded by prime-time and Saturday-morning video game commercials. And the

issues of *EGM* are once again swelling in size.

Yep, it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. And chances are you have more than a few games, gadgets—heck, even systems—in your wish list. Lucky for you, this holiday season won't be as confusing and chaotic as last year. The three big consoles have pretty much found their niches, and no new systems (well, except the Game.Cube) are booming on the horizon to steal their thunder.

At the same time, however, there are simply too many incredible games out there for the consoles. We're seeing killer third-generation software for the PlayStation and Saturn and second-generation titles for the Nintendo 64 (not to mention a back of a lot more games for the troubled console). It's like Christmas 1993—when the 16-bit systems were in their prime—all over again.

So you have a lot of decisions to make this year. Which games are the season's real stars? Which are the best of each genre? Which peripherals would make a kick-ass gift for your buddy/sibling/nerf? And which system best suits your tastes in gaming?

In what's becoming an annual tradition for *EGM*, we're answering all these questions with a special holiday gift guide. We explain each system's strengths and weaknesses. We tell you which titles are the best if you like fighting games, racing games, strategy games, etc. We highlight the ultimate peripherals—from fighting sticks to light guns to some downright bizarre gimmicks. And we look ahead to some of the most anticipated games of next year.

To top up the feature, a few of the Review Crew guys got together and acted out their own version of "Mean the Night Before Christmas"—complete with a wily '95s MS, Santa Clause, (Mac)ulls, the crew just wanted an excuse to hang out with a model and dress in elf costumes.) So grab a pen and your wish list and turn the page. It's time to see what'll make the best stocking fillers.

com Dec. 25...





'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, except Santa's hot spouse. And with her she brought three



# Nintendo<sup>64</sup>

Things Are Looking Up For Nintendo's Capable Console

**N**intendo's main machine may not have had the super year we hoped for, but that doesn't mean you should strike it from your Christmas wish list. Next year looks a bit brighter for the system. Yet another crop of way-cool first-party titles are on the way, not the least of which is *Zelda 64*. And like third-party games are going to get

a heck of a lot better (we can't wait to see what *Kanami* has in store for the *N64*).

Oh, and we can't forget about the DD. Will Nintendo's disk drive be the first pricey add-on in gaming history to succeed? Or will it go the way of the 32X? Either way, the *N64* makes a much better gift this year than last.

## The N64 at a glance

**System's Strengths:** Powerful hardware, a library that includes some of the best games available.

**System's Weaknesses:** Not enough games. Third-party titles are often mediocre and too expensive. Some games are too foggy and blurry.

**You need this system if you're into:** Action games, multiplayer titles, driving games and updated Super NES classics.

**Avoid this system if you're into:** RPGs and fighting games.

## Action: GoldenEye 007

Sure, we were a little skeptical when we saw early screen shots of *GoldenEye*. "Oh boy," we thought, "another *Doom* clone." Then we played it. We saw how original and realistic it was. We loved the mission objectives and the huge arsenal of guns and gadgets.

Then someone had the bright idea of trying out the Multiplayer Mode. We've hardly put the game down since. Only *Mario Kart 64* comes close to delivering the same level of four-player thrills.

Don't hesitate to nab this game if you get an *N64* for Christmas. And don't forget to buy three more joypads for your pals.

Another must-buy action game is *Blast Corps*, from the same developer, Rare. Part puzzle, part action, *Blast Corps* packs more than 50 levels, enough to keep you bashing buildings well into the new year. Just as innovative is *Treasure's* *Mischief Makers*, a dazzling side-scrolling platformer that's loaded with the wildest Bosses on the *N64*. Fans of *Doom* clones shouldn't pass up *Tarzik: Dinosaur Hunter*, *Duke Nukem 64*, *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* and—of course—*Doom 64*.



## Nintendo Controller

There are plenty of third-party controllers to choose from, but you're still best off buying Nintendo's own pad, which so far seems the most comfortable and durable. Extra controllers are a must, too. How else are you going to play four-player *GoldenEye 007*, *Mario Kart 64* and *Diddy Kong Racing*?



## Bulky Drive

This add-on's still a long way off, but it's definitely the next big thing for the *N64*. Due to hit Japan in March and late summer/fall in the U.S., we expect the Nintendo disk drive not to cost any more than the system itself. The first disk games include *Earthbound 64*, *Mario Artist* (a *Mario Paint-type* title) and a version of *SimCity*. Nintendo has also confirmed that the DD will have a built-in modem, which could allow players to download game updates and other goodies.



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scurfy little elves. "Terrific," she said. "They'll do all the work themselves." But the tiny helpers had ideas of their own. They wanted to haul all that



# Nintendo<sup>64</sup>



## Puzzle: Tetrisphere

The N64's only puzzle game to date is both cool and complicated. But once you invest the few hours it takes to learn its nuances, Tetrisphere is as addictive as the best puzzlers on the competing system (well, except maybe the Super NES Tetris Attack). What makes the game really stand out are its loads of play variations; you get everything from the standard puzzles to a funky Rescue Mode. And, of course, it's a blast for two players.

Another game worth getting (although, to be honest, it's not really a puzzle title) is Bomberman 64, which packs just enough puzzle elements to satisfy fans of the genre. This, the most unusual Bomberman game to date, offers a huge Exploration Mode as well as the traditional multiplayer madness.



## Fighting: Killer Instinct Gold

Although the N64 has yet to see a stand-out fighting game along the lines of Tekken 2, Fighters Megamix or Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha, there are a few half-way-decent brawlers. Despite the fancy 3-D graphics in Mac: The Dark Age and Dark Rift, the best of the bunch remains Killer Instinct Gold, which delivers a better-than-perfect port of the arcade's Kiz. Mental Kombat Trilogy is worth a look, too. We're hoping next year will bring a better batch, although the outlook so far isn't promising.



## Rumble Pak

We were a little skeptical about this humming gizmo until the first time we plugged it into Star Fox 64, and felt it buzz in tune with the afterburner. Yes, a vibrating joystick really does add something to a game. And for titles like GoldenEye—in which your pad rocks with each blast from your shotgun—the

Pak helps complete the experience. Nintendo's Rumble Pak is definitely worth picking up as a pack-in with Star Fox 64, or by itself for less than \$30.



## GameShark

Chances are you've beaten all your N64 games several times. Breathe new life into them with the InterAct's GameShark. It lets you access hidden characters and weapons as well as max out your health and ammo. In other words, the GameShark lets you cheat like crazy. It also packs a user-friendly interface with plenty of built-in codes. Just choose the one you want to play, or program your own. It can hold thousands of codes.





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# Persona



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EPIC SPACE CONFLICT



gaming gear home. Mrs. Claus wasn't about to take any crap. "Now, now boys," she said, "put the N64 back!" Eli Crispin shouted, "No way, boss."



# Nintendo<sup>64</sup>

## Sports: International Superstar Soccer 64

No matter what sport you're into—or even if you don't like sports at all—ISS 64 is an insanely fun game that offers the right mix of arcade action and realism. The graphics are incredible, especially the player animations (some post-goal celebrations are downright hilarious). It supports up to four players, as well.



If realism is more your thing, you can't go wrong with Madden 64. It may not have the NFL licenses, but it does have well-animated 3-D players and the smartest AI jocks around.

## Shooter: Star Fox 64

The pickers might be pretty slim for N64 owners who crave shooters, but what's there is phenomenal. *Star Fox 64* is the best 3-D shooter to hit the consoles (although *Ace Combat 2* for the PlayStation comes close). It does out relentless action (some levels are crammed with so many enemies they look like the climactic battle *Best of Independence Day*), and the branching mission paths and secret areas pump up the game's replay value. Best of all, *Star Fox 64* drops you into three vehicles—the standard Arwing, a jump jet-equipped tank and a submarine armed with unlimited torpedoes. Few shooters are this intense.



## Controller Pak

Sure, you can get by without a memory cartridge with most N64 games. But—as we learned with *Turok*—you're gonna need one to save games sooner or later. Although you can nab lots of dirt-cheap carts from third parties (some of which are loaded with extra memory), Nintendo's own Controller Paks are the most reliable.



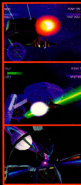
## V3 Racing Wheel

Now that the N64 is getting some racing games based in the real world (instead of in the fantasy lands of Mario and Diddy Kong characters), you might want to get a steering wheel that's more at home in the real world, too. InterAct's V3 Racing Wheel features 300 degrees of wheel rotation, adjustable tilt and analog foot pedals. It's also built with flaps that you can sit on to keep the rig from sliding off your lap.



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that sucks. An N64 costs 150 bucks!" Then El Shaz and El Shawn joined in the fight. "Hooh boy," thought Mrs. Claus. "It's gonna be a long night."



# Nintendo<sup>64</sup>

## Racing: Diddy Kong Racing

Mario Kart 64 used to be the reigning racing champ on the N64, at least until Nintendo unveiled the surprise title Diddy Kong Racing. Its mix of racing action and Super Mario 64 exploration—not to mention its air, sea and land vehicles—make it the most innovative racer ever, while its more than 20 tracks and huge assortment of race variations make it endlessly playable.

Besides Mario Kart 64, other must-buy racers include Nintendo's Wave Race 64, and Acclaim's decidedly WipeOut-like Extreme G. Top Gear Rally is definitely worth a look, too. But you already knew that if you've read this month's reviews.



## A look ahead...

It's a given that you'll grab Zelda 64 when it hits in the spring and Yoshi's Story in February, but don't forget about F-Zero 64, also due in the spring. This update to the Super NES classic lets you race on nearly 20 courses against 40 opponents, and it reportedly displays all these racers on screen without dropping below 60 frames per second!

Third-party N64 developers are kicking into high gear, too. Konami will release Mystical Ninja 64 and Castlevania 3D (working title), and rumor has

it they're also working on an N64 Metal Gear game. Expect to see a Tomb Raider title from Eidos next year, as well as Turok 2 from Acclaim and Quake from Midway.

Then there are the 3D games, among them Earthbound 64, the first RPG for the system. And it has been rumored that Super Mario 64 2 will be ready for the DD's U.S. launch in late summer, but that release date is not in stone. SM64 2 is one game Nintendo won't release until they're good and ready.

## Arcade Shark

Let's face it—for most N64 fighting games, the regular joystick sucks. The camera buttons are just too small and too close together for your fat fingers to pull off massive combos. InterAct's Arcade Shark solves these problems with its conventional button layout and removable arcade-style ball joystick.



## For the gamer who has everything... The Gold N64 Controller

OK, so it's not really made of solid gold, but this fancy joystick will still make you look like Mr. Digshot to fellow gamers. Until recently, there was only one way to get your hands on this rare peripheral—you had to win one in the Star Fox tournament at E1. But now it comes as a pack-in in specially marked N64 system boxes at Toys "R" Us.



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Now the elves had an N64, but Shawn wasn't satisfied. He wanted more. "I want a PlayStation," he cried, trying his best to look tough. "That thing



# PlayStation

It's The Perfect Gift—If Everyone Didn't Already Own One

**T**he dazzling performance the PlayStation gave us throughout the year will surely make it a hot item this Christmas. Besides the fact that most companies are taking full advantage of the system's capabilities with dozens of awesome games, the PlayStation has easily stood its ground and proven that it'll be around for through at least this year and the next. With upcoming titles like *Crash 2* and *Colony Wars*, games on the PlayStation are starting to look just a hair below the N64 graphics-wise, and have gameplay that's easily just as good. This is just the beginning for Sony's baby—the future should fare well for the PlayStation.

## Action: *Castlevania: SotM*

*Castlevania: Symphony of the Night* came to the PlayStation just a short time ago and showed gamers what the power of the PlayStation can do. No, it wasn't 3-D, but it packed plenty of awesome effects and the most solid gameplay since 16-bit's heyday. It's everything the old *Castlevania's* were, but this time with more of a *Metrodroid*-type feel.

But this isn't necessarily what the PlayStation was made for. As far as graphics go, there are plenty of other great action games out there if you want something a little more flashy and 3-D. Keep an eye out for *Crash Bandicoot 2*, which has *Crash* up against Cortex again. Leave it to *Naughty Dog* to come up with special effects never thought possible on the PlayStation—all in one game no less! Also look for *One*, featuring John Cain and his Rage Meter, from American Softworks and the futuristic-looking *G. Police* from *Pygnosis* (another one with awesome lighting effects and solid gameplay).



## The PlayStation at a glance

**System's Strengths:** A huge library of games, with recent ones that are looking and playing better than ever.

**System's Weaknesses:** The system does 3-D graphics like nobody's business, although it's not quite the champ of 2-D.

**You need this system if you're into:** A good variety of games from practically every genre.

**Avoid this system if you're into:** 2-D games...or at least a lot of 2-D games. Sony had earned a reputation for not being too keen on 2-D games, since they're not really what the system was designed for. But with the success of *Castlevania: SotM* and the *Mega Man* games, this attitude is changing.

### Guncan

At press time the Guncan was only available with *Time Crisis* (which isn't a bad deal by any means). This Namco light gun promises to have the best accuracy around, due to its special video jack that plugs right into your PlayStation. Problem is, it's supposed to only work with Namco games and vice-versa.



### PlayStick

Admittedly, this \$7 "peripheral for a peripheral" looks a little silly, but you'd be surprised at how much 2-Products' PlayStick can enhance action, driving and flying games. Wrap it around your standard PlayStation joystick, and you can choose from four D-pad extenders that make for tighter, more comfortable control.



### Arcade Stick

Although this stick from ASCIIware looks pretty standard—with no fancy audio or turbo buttons—it does offer a straight-from-the-arcade feel. As expected, this stick features sturdy construction with quality switches and buttons. And the Arcade Stick's button layout is obviously designed for gamers with a large library of fighting games.





Name:  
Mia  
Age:  
19  
Height:  
5'7"  
Measurements:  
36-24-36  
Occupation:  
Rave DJ  
Fighting  
Technique:  
Pi-Kua Kung Fu  
Home Turf:  
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3:31:58  
NITRO 7  
ARMOR  
218  
LAP 2

7:49:18  
NITRO 3  
ARMOR  
218  
LAP 2

# ASPHALT

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costs more than we elves make in a month!" He grabbed Sony's console from under the tree. "If we band together, guys," he said, "we'll get away



# PlayStation

## Fighting: Tekken 2

Tekken 2 is easily the one to get in this category. In the EGM offices Tekken 2 tournaments went on for months following the game's release. Besides the two-player mode, the one-player game offered plenty in itself. With all of the secret characters, spine-breaking combos and throws and great graphics, Tekken 2 showed us what 3-D fighting is all about. And the game's still a winner even a year after it hit the stores. Now, where's Tekken 3?

As great as Tekken 2 is, there are many other fighting games out for the PlayStation. Fans of the Street Fighter series should pick up Street Fighter Alpha 2. But if your style is more 3-D, then look for Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha and another Namco fighter, Soul Blade. This one is also incredible, but unlike Tekken 2 you're able to use weapons (and the combos are a little easier to pull off). Coming soon is Masters of Teros Kishi, a fighting game made by LucasArts starring Luke, Leia, Chewie and others (check issues #96 and #97 for special features on this unique fighter).



## Sports: Madden NFL 98/NFL GameDay '98

In the office, Madden NFL 98 is the football game to get for its incredible realism. But a close second is GameDay 98 from Sony. Both give players solid gameplay. The difference is that Madden is a little more of an armchair quarterback's football game—more true to life—whereas GameDay 98 is a little more for the arcade player. The graphics in GameDay 98 look better than Madden's though. You make the call...



## RPG: Final Fantasy VII

The king of the RPG hill, of course, is Final Fantasy VII, which has nearly everything gamers wanted in an RPG. This installment in the long-running series has some of the best graphics on the PlayStation, a killer soundtrack, and it still keeps up the classic Final Fantasy feel.

Of course, FFVII isn't the only good RPG out for the PlayStation. Both Vandal Hearts and Sulfaden (by Konami) received respectable numbers from our Review Crew, while Persona and Ogre Battle are considered sleeper hits by some. Finally, the system's library of RPGs is growing.



## ASCII Grip

Ever wanted to play an RPG with one hand free—so you're able to scoop up some Chevo-tas or scratch your rear? If so, this controller from ASCIIware— which was designed with RPGs in mind— is one for you. The ASCII Grip allows you to do everything you need in an RPG with one hand. It may take some getting used to (it's sort of like playing a game with a TV remote control), but it's worth it.



## Sony Analog Pad

Sony's analog pad has been long-awaited and the wait has been worth it. At one point, the pad was supposed to have a rumble feature, but due to patent problems, among other reasons, that feature was dropped. What's nice is that it feels just like the old PlayStation controller (looks like it, too), so you don't have to get used to anything new...well, except for the analog control that is.



# CRASH BANDICOOT

## 2

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PlayStation

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scott free." So they stood back to back and said, "We quit, Mrs. Clause. This lousy job violates elf labor laws." Their boss was flabbergasted and



# PlayStation

## Shooter: RayStorm

RayStorm—the sequel to the incredible Saturn shooter Galactic Attack—marks Working Designs' first game published on the PlayStation. So did they pick and publish a winner? We think so. Some argued that there were just too many enemies coming at you at once, but if you want the hectic feel of older-day shooters, this is the one to check out.

Other shooters include Xevious 3D, the fancy-looking update to the arcade classic, and a different style of "shooter," Colony Wars from

Pygnosis. It puts players in the cockpit of a ship in a futuristic outer-space landscape. The graphics in Colony Wars are unmatched, and the control of the ship actually makes you feel like you're floating (and thrusting) through space. And don't be fooled, this one's a lot different than any Wing Commander game.



## Racing: WipeOut XL

A rookie's good game with a rockin' good soundtrack, Pygnosis' WipeOut XL is solid in both game-play and design. Its speed and weaponry are nearly unmatched. If you're looking for a good racer with an edge, this is the one to buy. But don't expect it to be like NASCAR 98 or anything like that. It's more futuristic than realistic.

Of course, WipeOut XL isn't the only racer around. Some other more realistic greats are Ridge Racer and Ridge Racer from Namco, Test Drive 4 from Accolade, NASCAR 98 from Electronic Arts and GTR from Activision. One that's a little different from the rest is ASCI's Felons '99. Instead of just racing, the object of the game is to steal items and then beat the clock. There are plenty of secrets to make the game last a long, long time.



## Barracuda

InterAct is following Sony's footsteps with their own \$30 version of an analog joystick. This one packs features—namely, turbo-fire switches—that you won't find on Sony's gimps. Still, the Barracuda's design follows

the same dual-analog architecture. If you haven't already bought Sony's pad, this one's worth a look.



## Lunar Gun with Red Sight

Have you ever wanted to burn a hole through your TV? Actually, this laser-scope and light-gun combination isn't that powerful, but it does make for some straight shooting. At \$60 for the entire package, the combo is a bit pricey. You can buy the gun and sight separately for \$30 a piece.



## Eagle Max

The Eagle Max from ACT Labs is great for flight games, but it also doubles as a decent steering wheel for driving titles. The stick features a switch that changes it from analog to digital and then to the "wheel" function. When using the stick with flight games, the Analog Mode lets players use a nice throttle control and hat switch, among other buttons.



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VIDEO SYSTEM

PARADIGM ENTERTAINMENT

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FROM THE DEVELOPERS OF TWISTED METAL™  
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LA DRITE



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highly upset. She vowed never again to live off temps. To the elves she exclaimed, "You guys can't quit. We still have 2 million more houses to hit."



# PlayStation

## Strategy/Sim: Command & Conquer

This hit PC strategy game came to the PlayStation a little while ago, but it's still one to pick up. The graphics are decent and the soundtrack may get a little repetitious, but what it lacks in aesthetics it makes up for in gameplay.

Command & Conquer puts you in control of a futuristic anti-terrorist task force that hopes to put a stop to the terrorist organization, the Brotherhood of Nod. Of course, the game offers an option where players can turn the tables and control the Brotherhood and try to put "the man" down. This mode offers all new missions—ones completely different from the "Good Guy" Mode.

Other strategy titles include X-Com, C&C: Red Alert (the sequel to Command & Conquer). Some could argue that Vandal Hearts (also in the RPG section) is a strategy game of sorts. Look for Theme Hospital on the PS, which did well on the PC side and Risk from Hasbro Interactive.



## Puzzle: Super Puzzle Fighter

The praise Street Fighter and other Capcom fighters received as fighting games filtered over to a whole new genre—a puzzle game. The super-deformed versions of their fighter cousins still have their special attacks, but this time they use them to unleash gems on the opponent rather than broken ribs. Plus, players get little animations of their favorite character doing various things while they stand there kicking the crap out of the opponent or cringing in pain after an "attack."

Even though Sony may not have the rights to games like Tetris Attack and Kirby's Avalanche, they still have us with plenty of puzzle games to choose from. One to consider is Tetris Plus from Jaleco. This version of the classic has funny character animation and an "Adventure" Mode. Another great title is Bust-A-Move 2 from Falco. This one features the same little dino doing their best at shooting colored balls at other balls of the same color...what a weird job that would be.



## A look ahead...

If you're looking for a system that will undoubtedly be sticking around for the long haul, this is the one to put on your holiday wish list. The games are usually no more than \$50, the graphics in a lot of the titles are looking incredible (even better than some games on the N64) and the lineup for the coming months only seems to be getting better and better (as you probably know, we cannot wait for Konami's Metal Gear Solid).

Sony has showed that they mean business with the system's competitive \$149 price tag. Of course, they have little to fear from the other systems right now. None of them can match the sheer size and quality of the PlayStation's library, which will only get better since developers have been coding for the system for years.

But what about the PlayStation 2? Don't worry—Sony won't unleash a new system for a while. After all, they're making plenty of money with the PlayStation. Why throw away your meal ticket?

## For the gamer who has everything...

### The Glove

If you have lots of extra dough laying around after buying all of the best games for the PlayStation, consider buying (and eventually mastering) The Glove by Reality Quest. Sure, we didn't give it incredible scores last issue, but then if you feel you must have everything, The Glove may be something for you. Just make sure you're open to something new—this thing takes some getting used to.



Meanwhile Elf Shoe had his eye on a Saturn. "These guys got their stuff," he said. "Now it's my turn." But within two seconds he switched from happy

# Saturn



## Sega's System Isn't Quite The Cool Gift It Used To Be



It's going to be a cold winter for Sega. Many industry experts predict that 1997's Christmas shopping season will be the Saturn's last hurrah, as more developers jump ship and future software releases become more scarce. Even Bernie Stolar, Sega of America's COO, has already conceded that the Saturn is not Sega's future.

Still, you cannot deny the existence of numerous awesome titles on the system. A few upcoming grade AAA games could also keep the Saturn in the running. If Sega drops the price this winter (or packs in a killer app or two), then the Saturn could be one of the best buys for the holiday season. Let's hope Sega plays it smart.

### Action: Saturn Bomberman

The action genre is such a broad category, but picking the best Saturn action game is a breeze. Saturn Bomberman is, no doubt, one of the best, most frantic, multiplayer games ever made. Part of the fun comes from the already proven addictive Bomberman formula. The other part comes from the Saturn's capacity to handle up to 16 human competitors at once. If you have any game-playing friends, then this must top your must-have list.

NIGHTS and Guardian Heroes are two other Sega titles we'd recommend to any Saturn owner. NIGHTS is a demonstration of 32-bit power—it is one of the best-looking games ever. The fast and smooth animation combined with beautiful worlds makes playing NIGHTS a breathtaking experience. Guardian Heroes, on the other hand, is a more traditional-looking game. But what makes this side-scrolling fighter stand out is its tons (and we mean tons) of special moves, spells, juggles and combos. It's Final Fight gameplay at its finest.



### Fighting: Street Fighter Alpha 2

If you are a Capcom fan, then the Saturn is the best system for you. Every popular Capcom 2-D fighter is near perfect on this system. Our favorite is Street Fighter Alpha 2. All of the moves, combos and specials are included, as well as the elusive Evil Ryu. And the Saturn's controller is the best in the biz for these types of games.

Alpha 2 isn't the only thing Sega's machine has going for it. Other Capcom hits on (or coming to) the Saturn include Marvel Super Heroes, Street Fighter 2 Collection and X-Men vs. Street Fighter. And if you want 3-D fighting, you got it. Sega's own polygonal fighting games are top-notch, including the popular Virtua Fighter 2, Fighting Vipers and Fighters Megamix.



### The Saturn at a glance

**System's Strengths:** Reliable CD-based hardware. A great standard and analog controller. A small, but fanatical following. Sega as a first-party developer.

**System's Weaknesses:** Not much third-party support. Difficult machine to program for (thus often getting second-rate ports rather than original material). No more Working Designs games in the far future.

**You need this system if you're into:** Sega arcade hits, RPGs, 2-D fighters and Virtua Fighter-type 3-D fighters.

**Avoid this system if you're into:** A lot of games in the future.

#### Lunar Light Gun with Red Sight

The gun by itself is fairly good, but combine it with a red laser sight and you have the coolest peripheral on the planet. Imagine aiming a pinpoint laser-dot at your targets on screen for amazing accuracy. It's a fun device to play with or show off to your kids.



#### Game Shark

This baby has a little secret. Not only will it let you cheat, but it'll let you play Japanese games on your U.S. Saturn! To do so, plug it in and select "Start Game." At the next menu, select "Start Game" while holding down X, Y and Z. That's all there is to it!



#### Analog Pad

When we first saw NIGHTS, we were just as interested in the funky, UFO-shaped analog controller that came with it as we were with the actual game. This thing simply feels right. It's comfortable and works great with NIGHTS, as well as a few racing titles (and even the RPG Dark Savior). Too bad more games don't make use of it.



to say: that greedy ol' Shawn had swiped his joystick. "TI show you," said Shoe, taking Shawn for a twirl. "Stop," Shawn cried, "or I'm gonna hurt!"



# Saturn

## RPG: Albert Odyssey

RPGs are the Saturn's specialty. The best one so far is a little gem from Working Designs called *Albert Odyssey*, which packs colorful graphics and a long and involving story. The dialogue is perhaps the game's best feature. It's so witty, you may end up looking forward to talking with every character, which is often a chore in other RPGs.



Perhaps even more exciting than the system's already excellent library of RPGs (including hits like *Shining* and the Holy Ark and Legend of Oasis) is the future of Saturn RPGs. Many Japanese games are still slated for U.S. release, like *Lunar Silver Star Story* (a 32-bit update of the Sega CD classic), *Magic Knight Rayearth* and, perhaps best of all, the epic *Grandia*.

## Sports: Madden NFL 98

No contest here. *Madden 98* is the culmination of years of football game programming. Since the *Madden* series has always paved the way for other pigskin titles, it only makes sense that the latest incarnation is the best around. You just can't beat *Madden 98*'s advanced play mechanics and artificial intelligence.

For racing action, the hands-down winner is *Sega Rally Championship*, the most authentic rally racer on the consoles. It may only have four courses, but each is challenging enough to keep you powersliding for months.

Other sports greats include *Sega Sports World Series Baseball '98* or *Worldwide Soccer '98*. Hoops and hockey fans need not worry either. Sega is keeping on top of things with their '98 seasons of *All-Star Hockey* and *NBA Action* (which supports up to 10 players!).

Finally, for a sports game of a different ilk, there's *Sega's DecAthlete*. This modern-day *Track and Field* packs fun events and excellent control.



## Strategy/Sim: Dragon Force

When we first played *Dragon Force* as a Japanese beta, we didn't really know what we were doing, but we knew this game was going to be awesome. Months later, Working Designs proved us right when they sent us the U.S. version. *Dragon Force* was a cool strategy game on so many levels. It's simple to get into. It's unique. Its battles are epic. If you're at all interested in strategy games, then check out *Dragon Force*; it's simply a mind-blowing experience.

*Dragon Force*'s second favorite Saturn strategy game just happens to be published by Working Designs too. *Iron Storm* received kudos for both comprehensive and fun to play.



## Shooter: Galactic Attack

Some people call it the best Saturn shooter. Some call it the best 32-bit shooter period. *Galactic Attack* (known as *Layer Section* in Japan) is a top-down 3-D shooter that impressed us all. This game by Acclaim not only shows off great visuals, it also added new twists to a traditional genre. The stages all have two layers, giving you a chance to shoot targets in front of you, or look on to (and kill) enemies below you.

If you're looking for a more high-profile shooter, then check out Sega's own *Panzer Dragoon* and gorgeous worlds to explore. The *Panzer* games may be a different style of shooter than you're used to, but believe us, they're definitely two of the system's most incredible games.



## Hot Wheels Per4mer Racing Wheel

At \$70, this multiplatform steering wheel isn't cheap, but it does have a heavy-duty feel that should satisfy serious fans of *Sega Rally* and *Daytona USA*. If you want to get really serious, you can spend a few bucks to upgrade the foot pedals.



## Saturn Stick

ASCIIware's Saturn Stick is the closest thing you'll get to a true arcade joystick. It's durable and sturdy. More importantly, it lets you play *Street Fighter Alpha 2* without a hitch. The button layout, however, isn't the best in the world.



## Net Link

This is perhaps Sega's best peripheral and most underrated (and underused!) weapon in the systems war. Besides offering Internet access, it lets you play certain Saturn games with anyone else you afford to call. Now, you don't need a friend next to you to head-to-head *Sega Rally*, *Virtual On*, *Duke Nukem* or *Saturn Bomberman*.





"Did you call for a delivery?"



DRIVE LIKE AN ANIMAL



New Mrs. Claus had finally had enough. "When you elves get violent," she said, "I have to get tough." So she put 'em in choke holds until they passed

# Saturn

## Puzzle: Baku Baku

When we first saw Baku Baku, we passed it off as a child's game, nothing else. But upon closer inspection, we found a very enjoyable, very addicting puzzle game that kept us busy for days. This cute title has you matching up animals with their favorite snacks—rice to cheese, dogs to bones, rabbits to carrots, etc. The more you eat, the better your score. You can also create simple combos by having disappearing pieces cause other animals to eat their respective foods. Two-player Competitive Mode is Baku Baku's best feature. There's nothing better than creating huge Chain Combos and drowning out your hapless opponent.

If cute animal puzzle games aren't your forte, then may we suggest a cute Capcom puzzle game? Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo is another addicting title that's certainly unique. And for the traditional puzzle games, you can always depend on Jaleco's Tetris Plus. It's a fun update (with new features) on the one that started it all.



## A look ahead...

The Saturn is an awesome console with awesome software, we doubt, but unfortunately, you won't find a flood of new games coming out in 1998. If you're looking for a solid, reliable system, then by all means, get one. The library is already full of great games, like those mentioned in this feature. You can't go wrong.

The few games that are coming out for the Saturn are plenty exciting. Sega's Enemy Zero is a graphical horror-adventure game that looks like it could put Resident Evil or D to shame. Sonic R is Sega's answer to Mario Kart...how could you go wrong with a racing game made up of the cast of Sonic games? Also keep an eye out for other big titles like Panzer Dragoon Saga (an RPG based in the Panzer Dragoon universe), Dead or Alive (Tecmo's 3-D arcade fighting game) and a great-looking translation of the PC mega-hit, Quake. The Saturn's future might be up in the air right now, but one thing's for certain, the quality games are still trickling in.

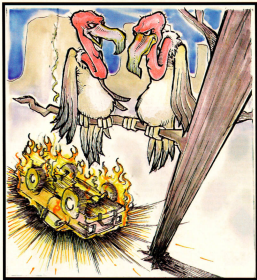
## For the gamer who has everything...

### Twin Stick Controller

Sega released a special Twin Stick controller in Japan specifically for virtual OS. It has two joysticks, so you can play Virtual On just as you would in the arcades. The stick doesn't work with much else, and you can only get it via mail order from import companies. Is it worth it?

Well, just how badly do you need to play Virtual On with true arcade controls?





"I much prefer flame broiled to fried"



DRIVE LIKE AN ANIMAL



out, then packed 'em away, saying, "Come on, don't peek. You get a year of vacation after tonight, so Merry Christmas to all, and to all...well, you know."

game.com

Nintendo

# Handhelds

Small, Cheap and Fun, They're The Ultimate Stocking Stuffers

## Game Boy Pocket—Nintendo

Thanks to a slick redesign of the system (and the best-selling Japanese game Pocket Monsters) Nintendo's ancient portable has not only clawed its way back from the dead, it's thriving.

And deservedly so. Despite its annoying technical deficiencies—namely the slight screen blur, black-and-white graphics and slow, 8-Bit CPU—the Game Boy Pocket is still the best of the portables. Its library of more than 400 games offers something for everybody, and Nintendo is still cranking out titles for the system (most recently Ken Griffey Baseball and Donkey Kong Land 3).

If you're into action games, you can hunt down the Game Boy installments in the Castlevania and Contra series, as well as the incredible Game Boy Donkey Kong. Shooter fans can play an amazingly good port of R-Type.

Classic puzzle games include the original Tetris and Tetris Attack. And you can play a surprising number of RPGs—including Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening and several in the Final Fantasy series.



## Game.Com—Tiger

If it wasn't black-and-white, this—the year's only new system—would be the most ambitious little handheld in gaming history. It features a Touch

Screen, a few functions of an organizer, and soon the ability to connect to the Net. Unfortunately, both the system and its games are disappointing. The Game.Com suffers from even worse blurring than the original Game Boy, making scrolling games unplayable. And the one channel of audio makes for simplified soundtracks (namely the music in Batman & Robin).

So why are we talking about the system in the gift guide? Well, it's still new and unproven. The forthcoming Internet modem cartridge is intriguing. Plus, the Game.Com is fairly reasonable at \$70, especially

since the tiny cartridges cost between \$20 and \$30. And Tiger is unleashing a dozen carts by the end of the year, including Duke Nukem and Jeopardy.





This lethal  
weapon just  
slipped  
through  
customs.

Just off the jet with a fighting style as dangerous as his haircut, it's Goku. And *Dragon Ball GT: The Final Bout*. The first American invasion of its kind. With an all new fighting style, this game features ten of the fiercest warriors from the animated series. Battle it out in a tournament to the death. Each player has a devastating finishing super move that can be blocked or countered. It's the most incredible power struggle you'll ever witness. Accept the challenge of *Dragon Ball GT: The Final Bout*. One question... How'd this guy get through customs, anyway?



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**What's The  
Deal With  
Toad**

By Alex Gordon

**It's the question that had to be asked, and only EGM has the guts to find the answer. Is Nintendo's mushroom-headed hero a dude or a chick?**

In these days of mega-enhanced 64-bit super-duper graphics, it's not hard to tell the guys from the girls in the world of video games. After all, is there any question that, say, Lara Croft is a woman or Duke Hudson is 100 percent man?

Yes, ironically enough, advancements in technology have only added to the mystery of gaming's most enigmatic and androgynous character, Toad.

Toad, the squat, mushroom resident of the Mushroom Kingdom, first burst onto the scene with a brief appearance in the classic Super Mario Bros. for the NES. In that game, you may recall, a hysterical Toad informed Mario at the end of each level that the

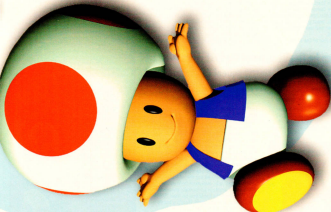


Whatever his sex, you can't deny that Toad's a bad ass. He can help buddies just as easily as blast 'em in Mario Kart 64.

Princess was in another castle. A legend was born.

Yet one question in particular weighed heavily on the collective mind of the gaming public: Was Toad a guy or a girl? Not since "Who shot J.R.?" had such a beguiling consensus perplexed the gaming populous. Weighing the evidence strictly in stereotypical video gaming terms, Toad's overwrought behavior leaned more toward the feminine, but still his appearance was strictly androgynous. (Well he referring to Toad as a "he" in this article just as a point of reference.)

That brief memorable appearance in Super Mario Bros. left us clamoring for more Toad. So, in



# Hey you, er...guys?



Toad's gender wasn't an issue in the original Super Mario Bros. And up until Mario 64, we didn't give it much thought. But it only took one girly "Yahoo!" in Mario Kart 64 to raise eyebrows everywhere.

Super Mario Bros. 2, players for the first time were able to slip into the diminutive hero's red shoes and control him as a game character (along with Mario, Luigi and Princess Toadstool). Each character had a distinct characteristic, Toad's being the ability to carry heavy objects without slowing down or losing maneuverability. So despite Toad's lack of sexual characteristics and his trademark hysteria, his extreme strength and dexterity in this game led most to conclude Toad was in fact a man. Even with Toad sporting a halo that most men—save Dennis Rodman or funky performance artist Janniquael—wouldn't be caught dead in, most gamers were satisfied with the answer and were once again able to sleep at night.

With the meteoric rise of the Mario

as a "he" in official Nintendo materials, he was voiced by John Stocker in both cartoon series (it should be noted that the actor who voices Bart Simpson is a woman). Toad was portrayed by alternative rocker Mojo Nixon in the movie. With all the empirical evidence, the question of Toad's sex faded as attention shifted to other gender enigmas like Saturday Night Live's Pat and The Crying Game's Dil. But we hadn't heard the last from Toad.

In fact, we hadn't heard the first from Toad. It wasn't until last year's Nintendo 64 version of Mario Kart that Toad spoke. And when he finally uttered his first words—a characteristically enthusiastic squeal of "Yahoo!"—it ignited anew the controversy over Toad's gender. No one expected Toad to have a burly, husky voice, but few expected him to have

**"...when he finally uttered his first words—a characteristically enthusiastic squeal of "Yahoo!"—it ignited anew the controversy over Toad's gender."**

franchise—including Saturday-morning cartoons, comic books and of course the 1993 movie classic—people gradually accepted Toad as a male. After all, Toad was referred to

such a squeaky little cry. To compound matters, in the Japanese version of the game, Toad's voice is even more girlish.

The voice of Toad was precept-shattering for the video game faithful. Whether he was squealing "Ow wo, wo, wo, wo!" as he revealed in delight when a rival racer suffers a misfortune or seeking affirmation from others with his triumphant "Yin the best!" there's no escaping that distinctly feminine voice. Suddenly, all that had been assumed about Toad had to be tossed out the window.

In the past year, everyone from esteemed scientists to amateur conspiracy theorists has examined the evidence on Toad. Several hypotheses have emerged. Here's a breakdown of the more popular Toad theories:

- **The Elvis Theory:** Word around the underground is that Toad is indeed a girl; specifically, Toad is Strawberry Shortcake in disguise. The speculation is that Strawberry—disbrought over losing her hordes of preteen fans to the likes of My Little Pony and the Care Bears—tired her own death. She then secretly moved to the Mushroom Kingdom and underwent extensive plastic surgery.

Toad does bear a striking resemblance to Strawberry. Both characters sport trademark poofy headwars, have pear-shaped, squat bodies and oversized red shoes. And most compelling of all—Toad and Strawberry have never been photographed together.

Toad isn't gaming's only androgynous curiosity. The history of video games is full of characters that defy gender identification. Heck, sometimes you can't even tell what you're controlling on screen, let alone what sex it is. Here's a look at some other oddballs who share Toad's confusing condition.

## Star Fox 64's Slippy Toad

For McCloud's energetic wingman has more in common with Toad than his name. Slippy has the same overexcited personality and, more importantly, the same squeaky, girlish voice. Plus, he (she?) does have that amphibian DNA. Hmmm. Maybe there's something to this Jurassic Park theory after all.

## Virgin's Cool Spot

Spot is a soda-pop emblem come to life, so we can certainly understand the red dot's lack of distinguishing sexual characteristics. Still, we're hating Spot's a chick. We have no evidence one way or the other. We just feel there aren't enough cool female platform-game characters. A female Spot evens things out a little.

## Tobal No. 1's Ogiens

Tobal's half-chicken, half-human warrior is enigmatic because, well, he's half-chicken, half-human. By definition, chickens are the females of their species. So, logically, the seemingly all-male Ogiens is in fact a female (despite the father-figure image he portrays in the game's intro). OK, we suppose it's plausible that he's supposed to be half monster, but where's the fun in that?

## Nintendo's Kirby

Here the question is not so much whether this pink platform-game star is male or female. It's simply, "What the heck is Kirby?" Is he a bird? A cloud? A pink relative of McDonald's equally unusual burger-muncher Grimace? We just can't figure out what it is, maybe we'll blow the doors of Kirby's secret world next.

## Adventure's Square

No other character in the history of video games is as enigmatic as the four-sided hero of the Atari 2600 proto-RPG. Like the Mowgli of the woods, Square Odyssey, the square perplexed humanity. We didn't know who it was or what it was. Of course, that would look a little phallic...



Could Toad and Strawberry Shortcake be one in the same? The truth is out there...

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• **The Thumb Theory:** Scientists still believe Toad is male because he, like all real male toads, has a specially adapted thumb. For male toads in the wild, this thumb is used to hang on to the female's back during the mating season. While Toad seems innocent of such hanky panky, he does indeed have a thumb that is primarily used to hang onto his steering wheel.

• **The Jurassic Theory:** You may remember that in *Jurassic Park*, the scientists created only female dinosaurs in order to dissuade any breeding in the wild. Yet some of the dinosaurs, because of the amphibian DNA used to fill in missing parts of the helix, were able to spontaneously change their sex to ensure the survival of their species. Many believe that the Toad from the early *Super Mario Bros.* games was indeed—no, the discernible evidence supports—male. But Toad lives in a universe where most of the characters are male and thus, just like the dinosaurs in *Jurassic Park*, he may be spontaneously changing into a female.

• **The Mushroom Theory:** A small minority believe that Toad is just an anthropomorphic mushroom, meaning Toad's not really male or female but rather a fungus. Further legitimizing this theory is the fact that Toad recently revealed to this reporter that he is indeed a mushroom come to life (see interview).

So where do we go from here? Do we take Toad's word for it that he's just a mushroom? Does it really matter what Toad is? It's more important what Toad does. Guy, girl or mushroom, maybe it's time we just stop prying into Toad's private life and appreciate all the joy and excitement he's provided as over the years.

Still, that is an awfully goofy hardo.

# Straight From The Mushroom's Mouth...

In our efforts to uncover Toad's secret, we had Nintendo set up an interview with the androgynous hero. He is Toad. Hear him roar...

Toad graciously took time out of his busy schedule of driving go-carts and jumping over turtles to sit down and have a conversation about hardos, video games and Monday night TV.

**EGM:** Toad's an unusual name. Tell us how you got that name? Were you named for the nerd in *American Graffiti*?

**Toad:** What's *American Graffiti*? Toad is actually short for Toadstool, and like everyone else, I got my name from my parents.

**EGM:** Are you indeed a mushroom come to life, or is that just a mushroom cap you're wearing?

**Toad:** No, this is my real hair. Like all of the townspeople in the *Mushroom Kingdom*, I truly am a mushroom come to life. Am you a humanoid come to life or is that an epidermis hair cap you are wearing?

**EGM:** Of all the games you've appeared in, what was your favorite and why?

**Toad:** It's a toss up between *Super Mario 64* and *Mario's Woods*. *Super Mario 64* because it was fun helping my friend Mario in the greatest video game adventure ever created. And *Mario's Woods* because I was the star even though it was named for Mario. I was the one doing all the work.

**EGM:** It's Monday night and you're settling down to a night of TV. Are you watching *Monday Night Football* or *Caroline in the City* and *Suddenly Susan*?

**Toad:** I don't watch television, but I did I think I'd watch PBS or the *Discovery Channel*. A friend of mine told me that the *Discovery Channel* did a special on fungi where they showed that someone recently discovered a huge fungus colony that is recognized as the world's largest organism. Right on!

**EGM:** What did you think of Mojo Nazz's poignant portrayal of you in the Mario movie?

**Toad:** No comment. Talk to my lawyers.

**EGM:** Who's your best friend in the Mario universe? Your biggest adversary?

**Toad:** Obviously like everyone else in the *Mushroom Kingdom*, my worst adversary is Bowser. My best friend? Well, that's a toss up between Mario and Princess Toadstool. The Princess because, well, after all she does oversee the safety of the *Mushroom Kingdom*, and Mario because he's just fun to play with.

**EGM:** How about telling us some of your

favorites? Movie? Musical group? Book? Mushroom? TV show? Video game? President?

**Toad:** We don't have movie theaters in the *Mushroom Kingdom*. My favorite musical group is the *Pinkney Five* from the *Super NES* zone *Earthbound*. They jam. My favorite book is *The Hobbit*. My favorite mushroom would be me. Like I said, I don't watch TV. My favorite video game is *Wave Race 64*. What's a president?

**EGM:** In *Mario Kart 64*, you seem very excitable, what is the secret to your happy demeanor? Does anything ever get you down?

**Toad:** I'm glad you asked. As a representative from the wonderful *Mushroom Kingdom*, where every day is like *Sunday*, I strive for constant happiness because it makes everyone around me happy. The only thing that gets me down is a frown so I turn it upside down.

**EGM:** How old are you?

**Toad:** No comment.

**EGM:** How do you stay in such good shape?

**Toad:** I'm a fungi, I'm always in shape.

**EGM:** What is something about you that no one else knows?

**Toad:** I'm a pretty open person and have nothing to hide...well, except my fetish for red jelly beans.

**EGM:** If you were a tree, what kind of tree would you be?

**Toad:** If you don't mind I'd like to answer this with a poem.

If I could be a tree  
for the whole world to see,  
I would be a tree  
that best looked like me.

**EGM:** Anything else we should know?

**Toad:** Well, it's see...in Japan he called *Kinopio*. I have the fastest time possible in *Mario Kart 64*. I have the freshest hairstyle in the video game industry. I pledge my undying allegiance to Princess Toadstool. I enjoy life everyday to the fullest. And finally I'm in for of fun to be with.

**Analysis:** Heeee. We were hoping Toad's answers would clue us in on his gender. (We didn't want to just come out and ask if he was a date. After all, that would be rude.) Alas, nothing he said cleared up the matter, and Nintendo's mushrooms remains as enigmatic as ever.



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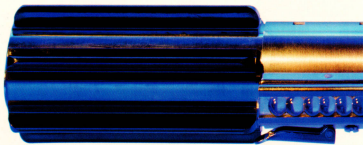
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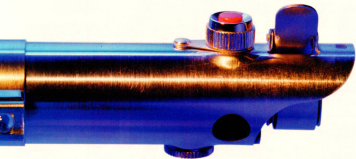
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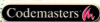
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# British Invasion

By David Rider and Ed Semrad

Just as their musician counterparts have indelibly influenced American music, British developers are revolutionizing gaming here. EGM takes a look at the U.K.'s 10 hottest development groups.



# Probe

Now part of the huge Acclaim group, Probe is still run by co-founder Fergus McGovern. With a pedigree that dates all the way back to 8-bit consoles, Probe has earned their stripes with a series of movie conversions like Terminator 2 and Aliens 3 on the Genesis. They've embraced the next-gen consoles with ease, bringing the Alien and Die Hard Trilogies to the PlayStation and Extreme G and shortly Forsaken to the PS4. Probe have always been at the cutting edge of programming and while they still tackle large licenses, their new freedom within Acclaim is allowing them to explore other coding projects.



Probe hopes that their futuristic racing game Extreme G will be one of Acclaim's flagship titles this winter.



The days of doing conversions of every Acclaim title for every system are over. Fergus McGovern now picks his titles very carefully and then makes sure that there is enough time, manpower and money available to produce only AAA-rated titles. Such is the case for Forsaken and Constructor, both of which have been in the development phase for some time. Fergus sums it up when he states: "We're a lot more flexible now and a title isn't finished until it's perfect. In the end it's how the game plays and not that it made it's deadline."



Last year in Britain, the buzz was for Britpop, which saw bands like Radiohead, Oasis, Blur, The Prodigy and the like storm up the record charts here in America and in Europe. This year, the buzz is over Britsoft—the new wave of software that's knocking the spots off games from America and even Japan.

Britain has always had a fine tradition of games programming. In fact, some of the earliest and best-loved PC games were dreamt up in the fevered minds of English kids sitting in bedrooms, bashing away on ancient Amigas—and this trend continues on a console near you.

Need an example? Just as Sega has AM2, Nintendo has a building full of top-notch coders. Sany has access not only to their own team of in-house programmers in London, they also have a direct line into Phagnosis, arguably the one company who was the first to show exactly how cool the PlayStation could be (to Destruction Derby and WipeOut ring a bell).

And the business of game development in the U.K. has gone ballistic, with people defecting from companies to set up their own, some of them backed by the big publishers (witness Eighth Wonder, the guys who jumped the Nintendo 64 ship at Rare to set up their own firm with Sony's blessing).

Want proof that the Brits know their stuff when it comes to making games? OK, think back to your 16-bit console. Right, what was your favorite game? Star Fox on the Super NES? Ah, that'll be Jer Saa and the guys at Argonaut Software in London, then. Alien 3 on the Genesis? OK, that was Probe Entertainment, located just outside London in commuter belt Croydon. Now you're getting the picture.

Of course, not all British software is for every body. It has gone from being weird and only playable in the U.K. (those soccer management games really don't translate to big sales in the U.S.) to being so far out on the cutting edge, it's able to slice itself.

But there are dozens of reasons why this should be so. Top of the list has to be that traditionally, British games players started off their hobby on rickety old BBC PCs, Spectrums and Amigas, machines that were relatively easy to code for. That meant a generation of British kids who grew up trying their hands at programming in machine code long before anyone had thought to write a book called How To Program Video Games in C++ and when a "300-of-the-range computer" was the latest piece of equipment from Commodore. And forget consoles: Remember, we're talking about a time when the Atari VCS was king. Added to that fact was that, as well as being best-sellers in the U.K. and Europe, machines like the Commodore 64 pushed programmers to their very limit, thanks to limited memory and antiquated storage devices like cassette tape drives. If you wanted to code a game on a C64 or an Amiga, you had to master every nuance of your respective machine's language, and some British coders

# Codemasters

Founded and run by Richard and David Darling, Codemasters began its life in 1986 and has constantly come up with surprises, from winning a massive lawsuit over the Game Genie in the early '90s to expanding their highly successful Micro Machines series on the PlayStation, the company has become one of the most respected in the business, thanks to its insistence that gameplay should never take a back seat to graphics.

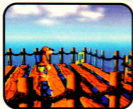


Continuing their best-known series of Micro Machines games, Codemasters' latest update moves up to the 32-bit platforms.



# Rare

Set up by another team of brothers—Tim and Chris Stamper—Rare was previously known as “Ultimate” back in the NES and Master System days. Now one of Nintendo’s most trusted and reliable developers, the company has a string of hits such as Donkey Kong Country on the N64 to their name, with titles like Diddy Kong Country and Banjo-Kazooie waiting to take the N64 by storm.



When you work for Nintendo you get to do your programming in absolute secrecy. At Nintendo unveiled both Banjo-Kazooie and Conker’s Quest for the first time to the amusement and praises from everybody who get to play the games.



Just when we thought we had seen everything Rare was working on, Nintendo unleashes scores of Diddy Kong Racing. Not just a Mario Kart remake, Diddy promises to be all that and much, much more.



thrived on the challenge, tearing everything they could about their chosen hardware so that they could squeeze every last pixel out of it.

This attitude continues even today. And if any evidence is needed, just think back to Donkey Kong Country on the Super NES. The machine was entering its twilight zone, with the games press raving about upcoming new hardware from Sony, Sega, and the Big M themselves, yet Rare—yes, a British software company—created a space at the head of Nintendo’s table by doing things on the Super NES that nobody else had thought possible. It may have taken a few years, but in the end, a British company pushed the Super NES to heights that even Nintendo hadn’t taken it. That fact wasn’t lost on the big N, and last year, they took a 25 percent stake in the U.K. coders, hoping—and rightly so—that any one who could do that to the Super NES could do even better on the 64x. Now with Blast Corps and GoldenEye already on the shelves and Diddy Kong Racing, Conker’s Quest and Banjo-Kazooie on the way, Nintendo’s faith in Rare is justified.

But Rare wasn’t the first British company to make Nintendo drop their Game Boys and take notice. That honor goes to Jer San and Argonaut, the people who not only brought you Star Fox, but also created the technology—the Super FX chip—that made it work. And once again, Nintendo hasn’t forgotten how valuable the British company is, since Argonaut has two N64 games slated for release next year.

The abundance of top-notch British developers has made more than just Nintendo scout for talent in the U.K. Based in Dundee, Scotland, DMA—the original creators of Lemmings—has just been taken over by U.K.-based publishers and developers Gremlin, Cambridge based outfit. Millennium was acquired by Sony, so it’ll be interesting to see how they fare on the 32-bit platform, given their graphics expertise. The recent Electronic Arts acquisition of Bullfrog was the brainchild of Peter Molyneux who earlier this summer left the company he created to start Lionhead.

The recent merger between British publisher

and developer Ocean and French code house Infogrames has already borne fruit for the U.K. outfit. Infogrames’ V Rally stormed to the top of the sales charts in Europe, thanks to its mix of incredible speed, minimal polygon pop-up and gripping race action. The merger hasn’t been without casualties however, with Ocean reducing the size of its in-house code team known as Tribe considerably. To counter this, they have formed an alliance with relative new boys, Red Lemnos, a codeshop based in Glasgow, Scotland. Their first title will be an air combat game for the N64, a sort of PterWings-with-attitude, and so far, it’s looking good.

So it seems as if British software is so good, that European, Japanese and U.S. firms can’t wait to buy into it. But why? There aren’t many people better placed to answer that question than Argonaut’s Jer San, so that’s exactly what we did. We wanted to know if he was surprised at the amount of interest being shown in U.K.-sourced games. “No...as Brits have always arguably believed that we do more than our fair

# DMA Designs

Originators of the Lemmings series and long-time Prognosis ally, DMA were recently bought by Gremlin. Run by David Jones and based in Dundee, Scotland, the company quickly became a member of Nintendo’s Dream Team and will shortly see Body Harvest published by Nintendo. In the U.K. and Europe, BMG will release Grand Theft Auto on the PlayStation. After that, titles will be released via Gremlin.



DMA Designers’ days with Prognosis may be over, but their knack for designing unusual games is as full-blown as ever.



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## Core

Managing Director Jeremy Smith must be amazed at the way his company has suddenly leapt to the forefront of the industry. Best known for their work on Mega-CD games, one PlayStation release changed their fortunes and put publisher Eidos (who bought them in 1996) on the map for good. The game, of course, was Tomb Raider. The sequel can't fail, and with titles like Fighting Force and Ninja backing it up, Core Design looks certain to continue their success on 32-bit systems.



Where would Eidos be without the development team at Core? Without a doubt, the megahit Tomb Raider has skyrocketed Eidos from obscurity to top 10 developer in less than one year and with Tomb 2, Ninja and more soon to come, Eidos can do no wrong.



share of the world's best games?" San said.

San agrees that there are often obvious differences in the way U.S. and British games look and play. "U.S. games are often laced with long FMV sequences," he said. "The U.S. games are quite often financed by movie or TV production companies who try to pretend that the game medium is closer to linear film and TV media than it really is. Of course, there are notable exceptions, and don't get me wrong, there are some excellent U.S. games companies. But there are also some over-hyped ones. British companies tend to be stronger on the technical elements (like 3-D graphics), and Americans tend to be stronger on the front-end visuals. Both country's developers are good at the creative elements involved in game and character design."

Pygnosis PR Manager Mark Day (one of Scotland's most successful exports who went from Pygnosis' Liverpool headquarters to their offices in California) agrees, but he has a slightly different take on the situation.

"There are cultural differences both in terms

of living in the U.K. and in terms of how the games company functions," Day explains. "U.K. companies are a little less 'corporate'; they may be willing to give developers a little more creative license, and good talent will always take advantage of that. As for living in the U.K., British people have easy access to a lot of U.S. culture—TV, movies and music—while the opposite isn't always true. So the U.K. has the best of both worlds. A game like G-Police is heavily influenced by Hollywood action movies—the explosions, the dynamics, the energy—but it's created by British developers who can also bring their British coding experience into the mix."

Perhaps one thing that has surprised a lot of publishers and developers alike in both the U.S. and Japan is the speed with which British coders have learned to maximize the new 32- and 64-bit platforms. While there are still developers out there who promise the Earth with fancy CGI screen shots and completed games that don't actually deliver the goods, there can be little doubt that British developers have been among

the first to really understand the inner workings of the next-generation consoles.

"British developers are technically very good at getting their grip on new machines," San said. "They're ambitious and hungry for new challenges and are quick off the mark at mastering the learning curve of next-generation consoles."

San believes the dominance shown by U.K. developers on the new consoles is down to certain key skills: "3-D and technology are key factors. The U.K. has always been a hotbed for those two assets, as well as a strong 'assemble' programming mentality have helped to keep success in the next-generation console space."

From the Pygnosis camp, Mark Day is particularly happy with the way his company has attacked the PlayStation. "I think the results speak for themselves," he said. "This year we're particularly proud of Colony Wars for finally nailing the space combat genre on console. It's been attempted plenty of times before, but no one's ever quite mastered the feel of dogfighting in

## Bullfrog

Originally set up in 1987 by coding legend Peter Molyneux, Bullfrog quickly earned an enormous reputation for their god games. Molyneux left the company (now under the wing of Electronic Arts), once work on his last baby, Dungeon Keeper, was completed, but his new company, LionHead Studios, will release its first game in 1999.



Bullfrog's reputation for making revolutionary games is well known in the industry and dates back to the 1980s. That is probably why Electronic Arts quickly took them under their wing to produce the sim-type games for the video game consoles. Sim Hospital and Dungeon Keeper were the latest games that EA was showing at ECTS in London.



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# Travellers Tales

Aligned to Psygnosis and currently completing work on *Pygnosis*' Mario-beater, *Rascal*, *Travellers Tales* deserves mention here since they have also coded several titles for Sega of Japan, including *Sonic Blast*, *Toy Story* and then 32-Biters like *Mickey Mania* and Sega's upcoming *Sonic title—Sonic R*. This makes them unique in coding history as this is the first outside, non-Japanese company that Sega has allowed to program a game involving their figurehead *Sonic*. Once *Rascal* is completed, expect to hear more about this small, talented team.



*Travellers Tales* is one of those developers who has remained independent and out of the video game spotlight. Having very quietly programmed well-known platform games like *Mickey Mania* and *Sonic Blast*, *Travellers Tales* is now going public with Sega's new *Sonic* racing game *Sonic R* and *Pygnosis*' *Rascal*.



deep space so well. That's a game that's as groundbreaking in its own way as the first *WipeOut* game or *Destruction Derby* was. We're pleased to say that every year we have a few games in the "benchmark achievement" category."

*Pygnosis*, of course, was the first of the big games to be picked up by a publisher/manufacturer who wanted to take advantage of their new hardware, and the logic behind the move is clear.

"As part of *Sonic*," Day said, "*Pygnosis* enjoyed early access to PlayStation development tools. Our developers have always been ambitious in terms of creating 'hot technology' titles, and PlayStation was a platform that would finally allow them to create the games they really wanted to. Additionally, being part of Sony allowed for the kind of global investment that's required to be truly competitive on a worldwide scale."

But not everything is about the economies of scale. While Probe joined Acclaim and *Pygnosis* were bought by Sony, Argonaut has been more cautious. While many would love to get their

hands on their coding experience, Argonaut has clung to their independence fiercely. "We're independent because we wanted to be," San said. "Being 'bought' wasn't high on our list of wants, so we did our best to spread our eggs (never developing too many games for any one publisher), and also turned down several offers to buy us out. We're in it for the long haul. We want to go public one day, we want to keep control of our own destiny for as long as possible. We do have outside investors, but these are largely from the financial community where they have no platform or company bias. They just want to see the company do well and they profit when we are successful."

Over the last two years, Probe Entertainment has shrugged off their reputation for arcade conversions and licenses and become one of the top development houses in the world, although the company began, like many others in Britain, in a tiny bedroom. As traditional coding platforms like the Amiga, a few in the U.K. coding industry have expressed concern that the business will shortly

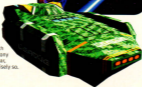
experience a lack of "new blood."

Probe Entertainment boss Fergus McGovern is more upbeat. "There was a time when you had individual programmers who, because they had been at home, they'd trained themselves," McGovern said, "and suddenly you thought, 'Where the hell has this guy come from? He knows the Spectrum like the back of his hand,' or 'He knows the Amiga like the back of his hand,' because they'd spent time in their back bedrooms learning the hardware, coding in machine code and really analyzing how the machine worked. So that at the end of the day what happened was that you'd have one or perhaps two programmers who really controlled 100 percent of the whole product, and you would be reliant on them."

"As the machines have grown in power, they've grown in chipsets, the style of programming has changed over to things like C++ and you can now break up the game into a number of segments that will allow more structured programming to occur. What I mean by that is, if

# Psygnosis

Almost too many titles to mention in their portfolio, and a similar number of smaller developers like *Blazine Creations*, *Hammerhead* and *Wheelhaus* working for them. Although the company was bought by Sony in 1993, few would disagree that without the vision of *Psygnosis* and its MD, Ian Hetherington, the PlayStation would have had a far quieter launch. So far, *Psygnosis* has been responsible for some of the most groundbreaking software seen in the home, with titles like *WipeOut* and *WipeOut II*, the two *Destruction Derby* titles and shortly, *G Police* and *Colony Wars*. In the 16-bit days, *Psygnosis* was best known for attractive titles lacking in gameplay, but that all changed with the launch of the PlayStation. Although Sony tried to sell *Psygnosis* last year, they called it off again and wisely so. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.



With the necessary backing of Sony, *Psygnosis* is the one British developer who has been able to make it on their own in the U.S. Great games like *G Police*, *Colony Wars* and *Rascal* help too.

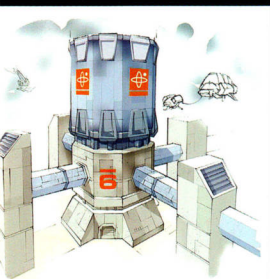






You are Jeff Slater, 21st Century cop. Member of the elite G Police. You buried your sister in a matchbox. Somebody out there killed her. Now you pilot your Havoc gun ship on 35 missions through 51 of Callisto's domed environments. Whether you call it justice or revenge, you've got the firepower and the will to do things right. Sometimes you don't think, you simply do. It's that type of job.





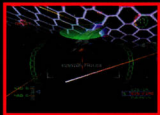
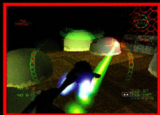
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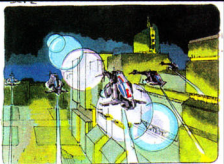
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NANOSFT FLYERS SHOOT AT FLEEING PEOPLE IN THE DISTANCE. G-POLICE HAVOCS APPROACH IN FORMATION.



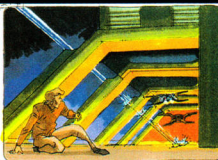
HAVOC COPTER'S FLY TOWARD CAMERA IN FORMATION.

Page 1

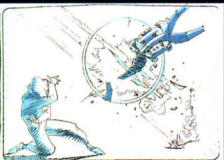


SLATER INSIDE HAVOC COCKPIT.

LATER: DIE !! (ARGH!!)



NANOSFT FLYER ATTACKS TAKEN CITIZEN. SLATER'S GUNFIRE IS BLOCKED BY INTERMITTENT COLUMNS.



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Look for hidden G Police game hints in this poster and on TV.



"...jaw-dropping explosions and destruction"

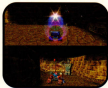
—Ultra Game Players



[www.gpolice.com](http://www.gpolice.com)

# Gremlin

Steadfast 16-Bit developers who moved over to 32-Bit with ease, launching Loaded and the Actua sports series onto the PlayStation, Gremlin's recent acquisition of DMA Design should reinforce their position as a top U.K. developer and publisher, as will forthcoming titles Nzo and Buggy.



Gremlin is a company that deserves further observation. At the last ECTS show in London they were demonstrating a few AAA games including an off-road racing game, a two-player Judge Dredd light-gun game, a filled-polygon "Impact"-type twitch game and an outstanding version of the Men in Black movie. With solid backing, Gremlin could easily be the next 'Cave' that could propel a U.S. company into instant top 10 status.



you've got a bike-racing game, you might have someone who does the bikes, someone who does the track mechanics, someone who does the special effects, and because you're not blaming someone to develop the whole game, you can train people to develop part of the game. We've found that if you're very selective when you process your crew, then you can find very clever guys who, given the opportunity, are just as good as the seasoned game programmers."

This in effect brings the U.K. and United States closer together in terms of programming skill, although McGovern still thinks that the U.K. can pull gems out of the hat. "I certainly believe that the U.K. is a fertile breeding ground of programming and game creation skill," he said, "and we have our own unique style in the way we do things, right down from the games who surprise everyone with Donkey Kong, the DMAs who suddenly create Lemmings, to someone like Peter Molyneux and even a place like Probe. We were recognized once as very much producing conversives and licensed product. And then, in

one fell swoop, because we didn't need to do that anymore, we transferred to selecting our own properties and developing original games, which are to my mind getting very good press. So I think we're a lot more flexible, and I do believe that U.K. programmers and developers are a lot faster in development."

Probe Entertainment isn't the only outfit to be swallowed up by a large corporate. Last year, Core Design in Derby joined Edios, and Core boss Jeremy Smith is in no doubt the future would have been on their own. "Tough," Smith said. "The landing of development is so expensive that I doubt we could have continued to fund ourselves as an independent company."

The trouble is that with Tomb Raider, Core Design has created a rod for their own back. "Obviously, everyone is waiting to see what we do next," Smith said, "which puts a certain amount of pressure on us. However, we know the potential of what we are working on and feel confident we will not disappoint anybody."

Like most developers we spoke to, Smith

feels that British coders have come to grips with the new technology. "U.K. companies had to write games on ridiculously under-powered machines for a long time," Smith said. "Now that we have the new platforms, we are showing how good we are as a development community."

The proof, of course, is in the games, many of which are considered the best in the industry. And the flow of hot titles from the other side of the Atlantic shows no sign of slowing. By this Christmas, there will be more than 50 new games in the stores that are the products of British development teams.

And here's one final surprise: Not all of these games were made in the U.K. British programmers, designers and artists have infiltrated virtually all of the U.S. development houses. Companies like Shiny, Iguana, Acclaim and GT have hired talented support staff from Britain for their behind-the-scenes work in the United States. Yes, the British have arrived, and their coding genius will continue to have a profound effect on gaming's future. ■

# Argonaut

Legends in the business, Argonaut doesn't only earn respect for the programming skills on titles like Star Fox, they also design hardware (like the Super FX chip for Nintendo) as well as development software like Blender. Now working closely with Fox Interactive (Croc), Jer San and his team are also putting the final touches on Alien Resurrection for the PlayStation and Saturn, while the possibility of a Nintendo Alien title has not been discounted.



Fox outstepped the other American publishing houses when they licensed Croc from Argonaut earlier this year. This fun-to-play and extremely well-designed platform game has all the makings of an instant hit this Christmas. With Alien Resurrection not far behind, Fox has found a long-term partner for success.



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# DIDDY KONG RACING

By Crispin Boyer



# Is It Really Mario Kart 64 Done Right?

**R**are's Diddy Kong Racing zoomed out of nowhere, surprising everyone in the industry but also inspiring the same comment: "hey, that game sure looks like Mario Kart 64."

And at first glance, it is mighty similar to Nintendo's race, although the two games were developed independently at roughly the same time. DKR stars franchise characters. It lets you powerslide through winding courses and collect power-ups. And it packs battle courses for four-player offensive driving.

But that's where the similarities end. This 128 Megabit cart (the N64's biggest yet) is actually a hybrid of several game engines. "DKR has racing elements, but it also has adventure elements," said Lee Schuneman, the game's director. "It's in a category all its own."

Sounds like a mix of Mario 64 and Mario Kart 64, right? And with its collection of vehicles, namely a car, a hovercraft and a plane, DKR gives new meaning to off-road racing. But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Let's start from the beginning...

## Gentlemen, start your exploring

The game opens in a massive overworld, which is linked via tunnels to four other mini-worlds and a fifth, secret world. Each of the mini-worlds contains at least four courses, giving the game almost 25 tracks in all. The key to getting anywhere is to collect balloons, which serve the same purpose as the stars in Super Mario 64. You need a certain amount of balloons to open each mini-world—and the tracks inside.

You can start collecting balloons the second you start the game. The overworld has at least five of them scattered

amongst trees, behind waterfalls and in other nooks. Fortunately, you can use any of the three vehicles to explore the great outdoors—and you'll need 'em, since some balloons are hidden in the sky or on water, places the car just can't take you.

You'll also run into a genie who lives in the center of the overworld. He'll let you switch vehicles and occasionally impart words of wisdom. He'll even challenge you to a race every now and then and present you with a balloon if you win.

## Off to the races

As nice as the overworld is, the game's main draw is its collection of tracks, which you end up racing through several times before progressing to the next series of courses. The first time you race on each track, you can't choose your vehicle and you must come in first place. Meet that challenge in all of the mini-world's courses and you race that world's enormous Boss.

But that ain't all. Beat the Boss and you gain access to the world's Silver Coin Challenge, in which you must collect the coins scattered through each track and finish in first place. Accomplish that feat and you race the Boss again, who's even more difficult this time. If you win, you're given a chunk of the Wiggly Amulet, of which you need all four pieces to race the game's Final Boss. You're also invited to race in the Trophy Challenge, which has you competing once again on all the world's tracks and accumulating points, just as in

## Four on the Floor: The Multiplayer Modes

One complaint about Mario Kart 64 was that it only offered four Battle Courses—only two of which were insanely fun. Well, here's the bad news: Diddy Kong Racing only has four battle zones, too. But unlike those in Kart 64, half of these tracks have you doing more than just blasting your pals.

Two of the courses require you to meet certain objectives. In Fire Mountain, the first battle zone, racers must use planes to gather dinosaur eggs from a volcanic pit and carry them to their nests. After 30 seconds in the nest, the eggs hatch into baby dinosaurs. The first racer with three dinosaur wins. But here's the catch: Other racers can raid your nest and steal your eggs before they hatch.

The first battle course, Smokey Castle, is similar, except this time everyone races around a castle and collects bananas. The first to take so bananas to his or her perch wins. The other two battle zones—Darkwater Beach and Ickle Pyramid—are of the more traditional collect-power-up-and-kill-your-buddies variety.

These courses aren't inordinately selectable when you first switch on the game. Rather, you must first discover the four keys hidden in each of the mini-worlds.

Of course, if multiplayer combat isn't your thing, you can race with up to three other friends on any of the tracks you've opened in the game's Adventure Mode. Even better, everyone can select his or her own vehicle in about 70 percent of the courses, letting you pit cars against hovercraft against planes in true all-terrain tournaments. Like in Mario Kart 64, you only race against each other and not with the entire pack of AI opponents.





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# F

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SO WHAT DRIVES THE OTHER 96%?**



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98**

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# Diddy Kong's Toy Box

Power-ups come in the form of five multicolored balloons, which grant different weapons according to their color. You can build up your weapon by running over the same color three times in a row. Run over a different color, however, and your new power-up starts at level one.



## Red Balloon

The most lethal of the power-ups, red balloons equip you with missiles.

which—like Mario Kart 64's shells—can be launched at opponents. Ride over a red balloon once and you get a single, unguided missile. Collect a second red balloon for a guided projectile. Hit a balloon a third time for a pack of 10 unguided missiles.



## Rainbow Balloon

You won't find anything like this in Mario Kart 64.

Rainbow Balloons give you the magnet, which when activated pulls you toward the nearest racer. Level two yanks you forward a little faster, while level three actually pulls racers backward toward you. These are best saved until the final lap for come-from-behind victories.



## Yellow Balloon

These power-ups provide the ultimate defense. Level one gives you a force

field that protects you from enemy missiles. The second level works just like the first, except it lasts a little longer. Nab a third balloon and you can go on a ramming rampage with a super-powerful force field.



## Green Balloon

These grant drop-behind weapons are best used when you're at the head of

the pack. The first level damps oil slicks, while level two drops mines that blast unlucky pursuers. Collect a third green balloon and you can drop a bubble, which not only staps opponents but holds 'em for a few seconds.



## Blue Balloon

Each gives you a brief turbo boost, with level three being the most powerful. But if you know

The speed-enhancing blue balloons are the most useful power-ups in the game.

how to use them in conjunction with the speed-boosting Zippers that are scattered throughout the courses, your vehicle can reach blurring speeds. Simply kick on your turbo just before you hit the Zipper and you'll get nearly double the extra speed. A level-three boost pushes your speedometer off the scale!



Mario Kart 64, the racer with the most points at the end of the circuit wins the gold trophy (collecting these trophies is one key to opening the fifth world).

Are you starting to get the picture? DKR is a huge game that packs more objectives than any other racer. You're actually forced to explore each track for shortcuts, silver coins and the keys that open the battle courses. Fortunately, you've given the option to select different vehicles for a particular course when you beat the Silver Cup Challenge and you team to explore otherwise inaccessible areas. Unlike in Mario Kart 64, no friendly Lakitu will come fish you from the abyss if you accidentally fly off the track. Since each course is its own self-contained environment, you have to drive yourself back to the beaten path.

Each course fits the theme of its world. You'll race through prehistoric deserts and snow-covered straightaways, bounce across the waves in the water world and zoom between skyscrapers and castles. But the secret world's courses—which are set in flashy futuristic locales—are the most visually spectacular (especially the stretch of track that mimics the Death Star trench). All the tracks are littered with bananas, which (like original Mario Kart's stars) build up your top speed.

And as if the game weren't big enough, Rare has packed it with their trademark secrets. You'll uncover hidden characters, as well as, rumor has it, the ability to explore the overworld with a second player in split screen. There's even an entire second adventure (the same tracks but with tougher opponents) if you accomplish several ultra-secret objectives.

We couldn't resist asking Rare if James Bond—who, after all, is a character from one of their games—makes a cameo in DKR as a hidden racer. "No," Schuman said, "James is busy meeting his objectives in GoldenEye."

## Rare's roster

Like in the original Mario Kart and its N64 sequel, your vehicle's stats—top speed, handling, etc.—are determined by



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which character you pick at the game's outset. Besides Diddy Kong, you get Tip Tap the Turtle, Bumper the Badger, Pipsy the Mouse, Timber the Tiger, Krunch the Alligator, Conker the Squirrel and Banjo the Bear, most of whom appear in Rare's forthcoming Banjo-Kazooie and Conker's Quest.

Just as there are advantages to picking certain characters, each vehicle packs its own pluses and minuses. The cat, for example, lets you pull powerslides to stick eight in turns. By holding the break and right shift buttons, you can even do a super powerslide that pops you up on two wheels and turns you in a much tighter arc. The hovercraft—which dashes across both sea and land—is the fastest of the three, although it has lousy acceleration and handling. But for sheer versatility, you can't beat the plane. Since it can go anywhere, it's the one vehicle that can find every shortcut and power-up.

#### Turbo graphics

Another clear edge DKR has over Mario Kart 64 is its graphics. The coders at Rare, who've been working on the game for two years, have developed a new proprietary technology, dubbed Real-Time Dynamic Animation. RDA allows for a higher number of polygonal characters who are both larger and more realistically shaded than in past N64 titles. The bottom line: Every character in DKR is a 3-D polygonal model that animates much more smoothly than the pre-rendered sprites of Mario Kart 64.

Diddy Kong's greatest technical advantage, however, is the AI of its characters. "The other racers...are smart," Schuneman said. "They want to win, too, and will take shortcuts and pick up weapons even though you may not see them on screen." In fact, your opponents will even battle each other.

And one of the biggest gripes about Mario Kart 64 does not apply to this game: The computer-controlled racers never cheat. Leave 'em in the dust, and you don't have to worry about them breathing down your neck so seconds later thanks to some seemingly magical boost in their speed. If you get edged out at the finish line by Krunch, the speediest of the bunch, you have no one to blame but yourself.



## BIDDY KONG RACING

VS.

## MARIO KART 64

- More than 20 race courses
- Four battle courses
- Three vehicles to choose from
- Eight characters, plus several hidden ones
- Six Bosses
- Rumble Pak compatible
- Five power-ups, each of which can be charged up three times

- 16 race courses
- Four battle courses
- One vehicle to choose from
- Eight characters, none of them hidden
- No Bosses
- Rumble Pak incompatible
- 10 power-ups



## Rarein' To Go

DKR is Rare's first racing game since the NES classics *KC Koi* and *Pro Am II*. The U.K.-based developer's list of Nintendo-exclusive hits has only grown since then and includes such masterpieces as the

Donkey Kong Country games and the more recent *Blast Corps* and *GoldenEye* coo. We talked to Lee Schuneman, DKR's director, about the game and its similarities to Mario's own kart fest.

**EGM:** You've been working on DKR for two years, so why all the hub-bub? Why wasn't it unveiled at E' along with the Banjo and Conker games?

Lee Schuneman: DKR is one of several titles we're working on for the Nintendo 64. We decided not to show it at E' because of the proprietary technology, Real-Time Dynamic Animation, we're using in the game.

**EGM:** DKR draws obvious comparisons to Mario Kart 64, just as Banjo-Kazooie and Conker's Quest are being labeled Mario 64 clones. What's your response to critics who say your games are looking too much like Nintendo's?

LS: Games like Super Mario 64 and Mario Kart 64 were the first of their kind on a new system that incorporated complete 3-D environments. To say DKR or Banjo are clones is like looking at the first platform or racing game and saying the thousands that have been produced since then are exactly the same. It's really not a fair comparison.

**EGM:** Were there certain things in Mario Kart 64 that worked and you felt had to be included in this game, as well as flaws you wanted to avoid?

LS: We started working on DKR two years ago—long before we saw Nintendo's

Mario Kart 64. We're not privy to Nintendo's game development process. Our development team relied on their own creative genius and programming expertise to create DKR. They had a unique concept for a game and knew what they wanted to achieve. The more time they spent programming on the N64, the more they realized what they could do. Real-Time Dynamic Animation and the dramatic use of AI are the results of this experimentation and practice.

**EGM:** We heard that Tim and Chris Stamper (the brothers who founded Rare) did some of the game's voices. If so, which characters, and will they be starring in future games?

LS: A few Stamper family members lent their voices to the game and may make appearances in future games.

**EGM:** A lot of N64 games (at least a lot of third-party titles, anyway) are filled with fog and aren't nearly as crystal clear as the environments in your titles. How do you avoid using fog as a crutch to hide the system's limitations?

LS: Developing for the Nintendo 64 is a learning process. With each game we discover new ways to capitalize on the system's power. Each developer has a certain look they want for their game. We've experimented with the system and developed proprietary tools to create the look we want. Again, Real-Time Dynamic Animation is an example of those results.

**EGM:** How do you guys master all of the N64's tricks yet? How much of the machine's potential have you tapped?

LS: I don't think anyone has tapped the N64's full potential yet—not even Nintendo. It's a very powerful hardware system. We're experimenting with tools and learning new techniques with each game we develop. The games will keep getting better as we discover just how far we can push the system.



# 1997 Readers' Choice Awards

Send Ballots To:  
Readers' Choice Awards  
1920 Highland Avenue, Suite 222  
Lombard, IL 60148

Every year (well, since last year anyway), we ask you, our coveted readers, what games you thought were the best of the year. It's that time again. If you want a say in the 1997 Readers' Choice Awards, fill out the ballot below and send it in. The rules are simple (please obey or risk having your ballot thrown out!): 1. Choose only one nominee (or write in) per category. Multiple choices disqualifies your vote. 2. If multiple systems are listed for your choice, circle which system's version you are choosing. 3. Do not send in photocopies of the ballot. Only originals are accepted. 4. We must receive your entry by Jan. 7.

Only games released during the 1997 calendar year (Jan. 1-Dec. 31) are eligible for these awards. Since you're probably reading this before 1997 is up, please feel free to hold on to this ballot until the year is over (so you can give every 1997 game a chance). Remember, we must have your ballot in our hands by Jan. 7, 1998. The results will be printed in the March 1998 issue of EGM. Please note, this ballot went to press in October. Some of the nominees may end up being delayed into 1998. If that happens, a.) Don't vote for them, and b.) Don't blame us for nominating them. They were supposed to come out during 1997...

## Game of the Year: All Systems

- Castlevania: Symphony of the Night (PS)
- Diddy Kong Racing (N64)
- Final Fantasy VII (PS)
- GoldenEye 007 (N64)
- International Superstar Soccer 64 (N64)
- Madden NFL '98/64 (PS/SAT/N64)
- Saturn Bombberman (SAT)
- Star Fox 64 (N64)
- Street Fighter II Collection (PS/SAT)
- Tomb Raider 2 (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

## Saturn Game of the Year

- Albert Odyssey
- Fighters Megamix
- Madden NFL '98
- Mega Man X4
- Saturn Bombberman
- Sega Touring Car Championship
- Shining the Holy Ark
- Sonic Jam
- Street Fighter II Collection
- Worldwide Soccer '98

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sports Game of the Year

- Goal Storm '97 (PS)
- International Superstar Soccer 64 (N64)
- Madden NFL '98/64 (PS/SAT/N64)
- MLB '98 (PS)
- NBA Live '98 (PS/SAT)
- NFL GameDay '98 (PS)
- NHL FaceOff '98 (PS)
- NHL '98 (PS/SAT)
- World Series Baseball '98 (SAT)
- Worldwide Soccer '98 (SAT)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

## Nintendo 64 Game of the Year

- Blast Corps
- Bombberman 64
- Diddy Kong Racing
- GoldenEye 007
- International Superstar Soccer 64
- Madden 64
- Mario Kart 64
- Mischief Makers
- Star Fox 64
- Tetrisphere

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

## Arcade Game of the Year

- House of the Dead
- The Lost World: Jurassic Park
- Mortal Kombat 4
- NFL Blitz
- Pocket Fighter
- Street Fighter III
- Super GT
- Tekken 3

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

## Racing Game of the Year

- Diddy Kong Racing (N64)
- Extreme G (N64)
- F-1 Championship (PS)
- NASCAR '98 (PS)
- Sega Touring Car Championship (SAT)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

## PlayStation Game of the Year

- Castlevania: Symphony of the Night
- Colony Wars
- Crash Bandicoot 2
- Final Fantasy VII
- Madden NFL '98
- NFL GameDay '98
- Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee
- PaRappa the Rapper
- Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha
- Tomb Raider 2

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

## Action Game of the Year

- Blast Corps (N64)
- Castlevania: Symphony of the Night (PS)
- Colony Wars (PS)
- Crash Bandicoot 2 (PS)
- G Police (PS)
- GoldenEye 007 (N64)
- One (PS)
- Nuclear Strike (PS)
- Saturn Bombberman (SAT)
- Treasures of the Deep (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

## Fighting Game of the Year

- Fighters Megamix (SAT)
- Last Bronx (SAT)
- Soul Blade (PS)
- Street Fighter II Collection (PS/SAT)
- Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Role-Playing Game of the Year

- Albert Odyssey (SAT)
- Final Fantasy VII (PS)
- Magic Knight Rayearth (SAT)
- Shining the Holy Ark (SAT)
- Wild Arms (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Light Gun Game of the Year

- Crypt Killer (PS/SAT)
- Lethal Enforcers I & II (PS)
- Maximum Force (PS/SAT)
- Scud (SAT)
- Time Crisis (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Best Compilation

- Arcade's Greatest Hits 2 (PS)
- Namco Museum Vol. 3 (PS)
- Sega Ages (SAT)
- Sonic Jam (SAT)
- Street Fighter II Collection (PS/SAT)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Adventure Game of the Year

- Enemy Zero (SAT)
- Resident Evil: Director's Cut (PS)
- Riven (PS)
- Silent (PS)
- Tomb Raider 2 (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### First-Person Shooter of the Year

- Duke Nukem (N64/PS/SAT)
- GoldenEye 007 (N64)
- Quake (SAT)
- Turok: Dinosaur Hunter (N64)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Best Graphics

- Colony Wars (PS)
- Final Fantasy VII (PS)
- GoldenEye 007 (N64)
- Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee (PS)
- Soul Blade (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Side-Scrolling Game of the Year

- Castlevania: Symphony of the Night (PS)
- Mega Man 8 (PS/SAT)
- Mega Man X4 (PS/SAT)
- Mischief Makers (N64)
- Pandemonium 2 (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Puzzle Game of the Year

- Bust-A-Move 3 (PS/SAT)
- Intelligent Cube (PS)
- Norse by Norsewest (PS/SAT)
- Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo (PS/SAT)
- Tetrisphere (N64)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Best Music

- Albert Odyssey (SAT)
- Castlevania: Symphony of the Night (PS)
- Final Fantasy VII (PS)
- PoRappa the Rapper (PS)
- Soul Blade (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Best Sound

- Colony Wars (PS)
- GoldenEye 007 (N64)
- NBA Live 98 (PS/SAT)
- Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee (PS)
- Star Fox 64 (N64)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Strategy Game of the Year

- Command & Conquer: Red Alert (PS)
- Ogre Battle (PS)
- Tactics Ogre Battle (PS)
- Vandal Hearts (PS)
- Warcraft II (PS/SAT)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Multiplayer Game of the Year

- Diddy Kong Racing (N64)
- GoldenEye 007 (N64)
- Mario Kart 64 (N64)
- Poy Poy (PS)
- Saturn Bomberman (SAT)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Favorite Mascot

- Crash Bandicoot
- Lara Croft
- Mario
- PoRappa
- Sonic

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Shooter Game of the Year

- Nanotek Warrior (PS)
- RayStorm (PS)
- Salamander Deluxe Pack (PS)
- Star Fox 64 (N64)
- Xevious 3D (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Most Original Game of the Year

- Blast Corps (N64)
- Enemy Zero (SAT)
- Harvest Moon (SNES)
- Monster Rancher (PS)
- PoRappa the Rapper (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

### Best Peripheral

- InterAct GameShark (N64)
- Namco Guncon Light Gun (PS)
- Naki Lunar Gun w/Red Sight (PS/SAT)
- Nintendo Rumble Pak (N64)
- Sony Dual Analog Joypad (PS)

write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Review Crew

## Our Philosophy

Welcome to the new Crew, which is packed with more reviewers, games and—for the first time—peripherals. Each reviewer gives a game an overall score, which is displayed behind the review and based on how the game compares to other titles for the same system. In addition, the reviewers rate each game's graphics, sound, ingenuity and replay value. The averages of these scores are listed at the bottom.

## Editors' Choice



Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.



Games that average at least an 8.0 receive Silver Awards.

## Rating Scale

### 10-Perfection

An absolutely flawless experience. It doesn't get any better.

### 9-Virtually Flawless

Drop what you're doing and buy this nearly perfect game.

### 8-Splendid

Delivers everything you'll want in a game, despite minor flaws.

### 7-Worthy

A solid title that you won't regret buying.

### 6-Good, Not Great

Sure, it has its problems, but it's still fun to play.

### 5-Average

Not great, not crap. A fair one title that isn't for everybody.

### 4-Rent First

We have problems here. Definitely buy before you buy.

### 3-Time Waster

Playing it for more than 10 minutes gives you a migraine.

### 2-Don't Even Rent

The only point in playing this package is to make fun of it.

### 1-Flush It

But for your life if you see it, or use it for a reader.

## Guest Reviewer

David Siller

Capcom R&D Director

David Siller is a 20-year veteran of the video game industry. He started out operating coin-op games and quickly moved into design and development. Due to his overwhelming passion for this addictive form of entertainment, he also worked as early issues of *EGM*. Having been involved in the development of over 70 video games, David has vast experience in all types and genres. He is a fanatic gamer, and credits a childlike imagination for his continuing success in this field. He is currently the director of R&D at Capcom Digital Studios where he has many exciting new titles in development.

### Current Favorites

Resident Evil 2  
Gothic Sables  
Private School Justice  
Berkin Omega Kart Duel  
Favorite Genre: Side-Scroller

### Shawn Smith



These days Shawn is anxiously awaiting the holidays. That's when he'll be able to spend time with his family and girlfriend's love, enjoy the warm glow called Christmas. Of course, the thing he likes most about this time of year is the numerous gifts he receives due to his birthday being around the same time. Oh well, he'll not so nice after all.

### Current Favorites

GoldenEye 007  
Diddy Kong Racing  
WrestleMania Soccer '98  
NFL 98

Favorite Genre: Puzzle

### Current Favorites

Diddy Kong Racing  
Crash Bandicoot 2  
Fighting Force  
NFL: Baltimore

Favorite Genre: Act./Aids

### Dan Hsu



"Shaw" didn't write as many reviews this month as he normally does. That's because he was swamped with two other projects: the awesome *RMF* (Rise of the Mages) *Guide* (yes, that was a shameless plug) and reading all of your letters and e-mails on our 100th issue. We'll let him sleep now that he's done with this issue.

### Crispin Boyer



Cris got a little carried away after reviewing all of this month's racing games. He kept challenging reviewers to drag races around the parking lot, and he seemed determined to launch his Subaru into the roof of our offices, just like in San Francisco Bay. We decided to take 10 keys before he could powerline his way to an early grave.

### Current Favorites

NBA Live '98  
 Madden NFL '98  
GoldenEye 007  
NFL 98

Favorite Genre: Sports

### Kraig Kujawa



This is a hectic time of the year for Kraig. In addition to working on this month's *EGM*, he's been hacking away at the next *EGM Guide to Sports* games, the third *EGM Nintendo Game* and this year's *Reviewer's Guide*. He says he's found the time to take an occasional shower but we hope him down with the fire hose once a week just in case.

### John Ricciardi



It's been a rough month for John, who barely managed to recover from the jet lag after last month's trip to Japan. He still hasn't gotten over the fact that his Timbers were eliminated from the playoffs in the first round, and his PC bombed just three days after he got his new cable modem. Could things get any worse? Well until Santa arrives...

### Current Favorites

GoldenEye 007  
Call of Duty: Cold War  
GoldenEye: Mark O'Malley  
SPT: Collectors

Favorite Genre: Fighting

### Current Favorites

NFL 98  
WrestleMania  
Crash Bandicoot 2  
Alundra

Favorite Genre: RPGs

### Kelly Rickards



Kelly's head is still spinning after the 100th issue and the jet lag. Sushi-X's interest in PC gaming seems to have influenced our West Coast editor as Kelly is preparing for Duke II. We wonder why these two long-time game console players have suddenly opened their minds to the PC. Perhaps it's some weird 50 brotherhood connection thing.

### Sushi-X



This is Sushi's favorite, yet most hated time of year. Not only do we get the coolest games for the holidays before anyone else, but we get to work 24/7 on the best mag in the industry. Unfortunately, this also means Sushi is unable to play as many games as he'd like. We'll so sorry working, he didn't even get in the closet for our Holiday Guide!

### Current Favorites

Street Fighter III +  
Just A Man 3  
Mega Man 34  
Diddy Kong Racing

Favorite Genre: Fighting

## DIDDY KONG RACING



## MACE: THE DARK AGE



## MISCHIEF MAKERS



### Game of The Month

Publisher: Rare

Developer: Rare

Featured by: IGN #100



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Atari

Featured by: IGN #100



Publisher: Nintendo

Developer: Treasure

Featured by: IGN #100

Number Of Players: 1-4

Rat Feature: Multiple Worlds

Worst Feature: Too Few Battle Stages

www.nintendo.com

Don't dismiss this out of the blue racer as a Mario Kart 64 clone (although that's certainly not a bad thing). Diddy Kong Racing actually delivers a different—and in some ways more rewarding—gaming experience. For starters, the game packs plenty of Mario 64-esque exploration elements. The overworld, where you travel from one course-filled miniworld to another, is filled with hidden areas, balloons that grant access to later levels and its own exciting challenges. And this emphasis on exploration carries over to the tracks themselves. The courses—of which there are more than 50—are filled with side tracks and hidden, power-up-rich paths. Plus, you get Boss levels, multiple tasks to accomplish on each track, four-player racing and Battle Modes—there's just too much cool stuff in Diddy Kong Racing. But best of all are the three vehicles: the go-kart, the hovercraft and the airplane. After you meet certain objectives on each track, you can revisit them with any of the vehicle and discover new shortcuts only those machines can reach. Diddy Kong Racing is also loaded with Rare's new trademark "Boss battles" and bonus levels, such as an extra mini-world and an entire level that's not on the map. In the end, the top 100 list is all right, the top-five graphics are the best yet on the Nintendo 64. My only gripe: Like all Rare games, this one ain't easy.

**Crispin**

If DKR would've come out a year ago, it would almost certainly be my favorite N64 game. It's only a work of art. This game beats Mario Kart 64 in every department. The gameplay is more balanced and requires more strategy. The levels are way more interesting. The Adventure Mode is a lot of fun. The only thing it's missing is more battle stages. Four is just not enough. DKR couldn't stand fighting the Mario Kart 64 net states west of N. Dakota.

**Dan**

This game is everything Mario Kart 64 should've been but wasn't. Diddy has tons of hilarious, repeatable and secret characters, loads of levels and some of the best graphics on the system to date. Leave it to Rare to take full advantage of everything under the N64's hood with not only a cast-rigged scene to select. I loved the advert on the box, but I thought the Bonus was unfair, bordering on inaccessible at times. But thank you, it has Rarest.

**Shawn**

Some may call this a sequel to Mario Kart 64, and they will be partially correct. Only a small portion of DKR is reminiscent of Mario Kart 64, while the rest remains unique and fresh. The multiple Battle Modes are nice, but the power-ups are insane. Diddy Kong is a far tougher than Mario Kart 64, because of the lack of easy items, so some levels require a perfect run to win. This is definitely a game of skill, not luck.

**Sushi**

By order of default, Mace: The Dark Age is the best fighting game on the N64. I thought the arcade game was OK and this N64 port serves up a similar experience. The cool polygonal graphics are Mace's strongest feature. Compared to N64 fighting games in the past, Mace's graphics are vibrant and complex. That said, the overall look still isn't as impressive as Soul Blade, a PlayStation game. The players can also pick up, destroy or affect objects in the ring which is sorta neat at first. I did like the way the levels were designed. The danger zones are a cool idea and they certainly look impressive. However, the graphics, being started to go downhill, fast in track. Game control is the most important piece of the puzzle with fighting games and Mace just doesn't deliver the goods the way it should. The controls, while cool to look at (like everything else in this game), don't flow smoothly and only seem to work when much fail action is being performed. The whole feel of the control interface seemed to be locked in a yester-year zone, back when the 3-D fighting game pioneers were all perfecting their art. As it stands, Mace does little to convince me that the Dark Age N64 is a contender for fighting game bragging rights. Three years ago Mace would have been a revolutionary game, but today it is merely Average. Not.

**Nelly**

The arcade version of Mace wasn't a blockbuster, so it stands to reason that the N64 version isn't exactly awe-inspiring. If it, however, is a pretty solid fighting game with excellent polygonal graphics. I love the level of difficulty, even on easy. The toughest opponents will give a hard time beating them their first few games. The Practice Mode, a welcome new feature, will let you overcome this challenge before the arcade.

**Sushi**

Don't be fooled by screen shots. This game looks good standing still but not in motion. The frame rate stinks... I know the N64 can't do better in that department; look at Duk, if you like in the gameplay department, Mace beats, but anything on the N64... so few frames technique to perfect. Mace just just behind bottom tapping. Since Mace's style is basic, if you a few fairly learned, like super combat. Total form: The N64 may too cheap.

**Dan**

When I first saw Mace I was impressed, but with further play, my impression changed. The frame rate was sluggish a lot of the time, and the moves just didn't impress me all that much, save the cool fatalities. Mace did hit some nice moves after the first few, but I haven't forgotten so it wouldn't per in the way of fighting. Other good points include the funny, but useful Practice Mode and one or two... But that's not too important.

**Shawn**

Number Of Players: 1-2

Rat Feature: 3-D Arena

Worst Feature: Fewer From Rare

www.midway.com

Some people might wonder why Mischief Makers rates only a 7.5 with me. Well, a 7.5 is still a good score, so don't worry. The graphics of Mischief Makers are impressive, but not overly interesting. I can only handle so many smiley faces scattered at once. The bosses are completely awesome, and comprise the majority of the score I received. I could play Mischief Makers with nothing but the bosses of Mischief Makers, that's how cool they are. There's nothing more exciting than studying a Boss looking for a weakness to exploit, and Mischief Makers does this in a simple reminiscent of Metal. Unfortunately, many of the levels are short and frustrating. This is the biggest problem. The main character has beautiful techniques. From grabbing weapons out of the air, to using the magic jar to make all-new items. Of course, everyone loves the "Shake-Shake" technique. It's a shame a decent player can finish the game in under three hours, if a little more thought and preparation were in the level layout, Mischief Makers would be a top-notch game. As it is, it feels incomplete—but it's pretty damn good for feeling this way. I'd love to play a sequel with better level design and hopefully more boss battles. The animated story line is OK, but it too could have been improved. I would re-watch for a couple of days.

**Sushi**

Once again, Treasure proves they not only make the greatest platform games on the planet—but also some of the best. Mischief Makers offers an amazing variety of imaginative levels. Some have you solving puzzles, others send you exploring in all directions—no one else has you competing in track-and-field events! The Battles (the arena's special) live there in Castle on Sky, a tough arena. Bosses are often disappointing.

**Crispin**

Mischief Makers is a bizarre, well done platform game that won't appeal to everyone. Its cute gameplay heavily relies on puzzle solving and mechanics. In addition to the normal reflexes needed for platform games, it took me while to get into the game, but once I learned many of its nuances there are a lot of different worlds, it grows on me the more I played it. If you're looking for a challenging, unique platformer, Mischief Makers fits the bill.

**Kraig**

Wow, Treasure really put a lot of thought into "how can we take the side-scrolling platform genre to new heights?" Mischief Makers is a very tight, snappy ride. It keeps introducing new, never-before-seen gameplay elements, which makes you an expert in the game very challenging, sometimes to the point of frustration. If you're looking for a truly original and innovative title, look no further. This is definitely a sleeper hit.

**Dan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INTEGRITY	REPLAY
9	7	6	9

VISUALS	SOUND	INTEGRITY	REPLAY
6	6	3	7

VISUALS	SOUND	INTEGRITY	REPLAY
7	7	9	5

## MULTI-RACING CHAMP.



Publisher: Ocean

Developer: Genki

Featured in: EGM #11

After a long drought, the N64 is finally the recipient of some racing games. Though it's not a bad game, Multi-Racing Championship does have a few problems. First of all, although MBC is riddled with off-road short cuts, imagineer neutered all the fun out of finding them by placing big signs pointing the way. What's worse, the announcer points out the shortcuts too (his voice can be turned off) and he does this every lap (my friends, call me picky, but what I'm trying to say is this: When I play a racing game with shortcuts, I don't want my hand held throughout what should be a discovery process. I don't like to compare, but similar to Madden 64, the graphics in MBC are almost PlayStation-ish in their appearance. Sure, there's some nice weather effects like fog and rain (fog on the N64... surely you jest) and the polygons lack jagged edges, but the whole experience reminds me of what an Nintendo 64 port of a PlayStation racing game (Ridge Racer, for example) might look like. The overall look is solid but I expect better from the N64. On the positive side, MBC has a decent amount of options (although more than three tracks would've been nice) and the control is pretty good too. If you have to own every N64 racer, Multi-Racing Championship isn't exactly a stink up your library but if you want the best, look elsewhere.

Kelly

I originally thought MBC might be something special, but I was mistaken. Granted it has a couple of good points like a cool Replay Mode and a decent frame rate, but that's not enough. The tracks are lame, the graphics really aren't that great considering what else is on the line and there aren't enough courses. On top of this, the curves on the road are really angular compared to really smooth. Oh yeah (what's my top gear baby).

Shawn

The first thing you must do when you switch on this game is turn off the horrible announcements. Once that's done, MBC's of average racing game track-over-do with more tracks, one only get three, which minor late jet and better review. No matter how much I tinkered with my car's settings, I was rarely able to pull off a perfect powerslide (instead, I had to rely on overshooting to start around most turns). The graphics are decent but very fuzzy.

Crispin

In the plethora of racing titles this month, Multi-Racing Championship can hold its own quite well. The concept is actually unique, in which you need to be concerned about conditions when customizing your vehicle and driving style. This is the only racing game I've seen with off-road mixed with on-road, and I must admit that I like it. It's only unfortunate that MBC is such a short game with not too much replay for on-line.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INNOVATION	REPLAY
6	4	5	4

## NFL QB CLUB '98



Publisher: Acclaim

Developer: Igama

Featured in: EGM #10

QB Club '98 is the first N64 game with hi-res graphics and the results are groundbreaking. You can see more of the field, and everything looks very sharp. Despite this beautiful look, QB's graphics do have problems. The player models and animation are very awkward as they seem stuck too far from their often disproportionate bodies. The front-end menus, play-call screen and information windows lack a polished look to them. QB Club's gameplay may be fun for the casual sports gamer, but its weaknesses will be very apparent to football fans. There are a lot of AI and gameplay problems, with the most annoying being that the passing is way too slow. The ball seems to hang in the air forever during a pass, even when you "drib" it by holding down the button. This sluggish passing gives defenders too much time to close on the ball, resulting in a cluster of players jumping up to catch it while standing in a stationary position. That just doesn't happen much in football. The AI atmosphere of the game is very flat. Matt Roberts' play-by-play provides the most lively commentary because of his activities outside the stadium. Otherwise, the menu and sound effects are sparse. With some gameplay and AI overhaul, next year's QB Club could be great as a solid football game has been laid. This one, however, falls short of the mark.

Krain

This is easily the best-looking console football game to date. Its hi-res graphics are incredibly crisp and detailed. You can even read the names on players' jerseys! Unlike the other titles, look a little goofy sometimes, it's not a big deal in football. For this, the QB Club game gives an newbie, it seems, more power to complete passes than Madden 64. Football punks may bristle at the lack of realism, but I think the game's still fun.

Crispin

If you want to be amazed by the best football game graphics ever, then get QB Club '98. The game itself isn't half bad either, but its best point is how it looks. Now let me point out the downs. The passing game is kinda, it's too slow, almost always giving the defense a chance to put up double or triple coverage. The play selection is also poor. You can only slide your one play at a time (it's spoken to a screen of a time). Great game with flaws.

Dan

If you're a hardcore football fan, you can take my words with a grain of salt, because quite frankly, I'm a casual player. Now, although some of Quarterback Club's flaws are point me out in my bad AI, weird player models, floppy passes, etc.), they didn't affect my enjoyment of QB Club '98 as much as they would a football enthusiast. The graphics are amazing and to me, this game is fun to play. Still, I won't recommend buying.

Kelly

VISUALS	SOUND	INNOVATION	REPLAY
9	6	6	7

## SAN FRANCISCO RUSH



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Atari

Featured in: EGM #10

Atari Games' arcade racer comes home to the Nintendo 64. Not only does this port of San Francisco Rush emulate its big brother well, it includes three additional tracks that the arcade game didn't have (for a total of six in all). My favorite part of the coin-op Rush is the flying jumps, and the N64 version uses the Dukes of Hazzard action game as help. I really enjoy how this game is full of shortcuts off the beaten track, just waiting to be found. It adds realism and gives Rush extra replay value. The graphics are clean and although some fog found its way into this game, it's pretty far away and isn't noticeable in the heat of racing. The control is similar to the coin-op and takes some getting used to but once you do, Rush is a blast. Though Rush has a lot of things going for it, not all is rosy in San Francisco. Awkward, there's no delicate way of putting it in; the music in Rush hits harder than an attacking jet ball. Some of the soundtracks in Rush are only mildly annoying but use some, particularly with whirring chimes in the background, was so loud, it had me and others around the cracking up continually. If you want to induce laughter amongst your guests, this is the music in Rush is the way to do it. Seriously though, San Francisco Rush is fun to play and a solid addition to the Nintendo 64's already large library of racers. Not bad at all.

Kelly

SF Rush is one of the more solid racers on the N64, but I honestly think it could've been a lot better. The track is practically unusable, and it's really annoying how the more advanced cars will burst into flames on the slightest impact. On the upside, graphics are excellent and the sensation of speed is nice, but the music is the absolute worst crap I've ever heard from a video game. Still, if you're a fan of the arcade game, you won't be disappointed.

John

Although it's almost arcade perfect, S.F. Rush wasn't my kind of racer. The physics in the game are kind of goofy, especially when bumping over large hills. There is no power sliding, and it is literally really hard to see when you're supposed to take the one continue turn in that it's make you find secret areas by accident. The graphics are good, but the music is probably the worst of the N64. Overall, this is a very looking racer with major problems.

Krain

This arcade port is one of the most unusual racers ever, so you'll probably either love it or hate it. In addition to exploring the enemies' tricks in Tracks Mode, which gives you a limited view. To summarize, just how many secrets and tricky jumps Midway has packed into Rush. But it's the need to get lost some race time. It's not crazy about the control, either. Forget using the brakes. You're not to kick your car into reverse to handle slow turns.

Crispin

VISUALS	SOUND	INNOVATION	REPLAY
7	3	6	7

Number Of Players: 1 or 2

Best Feature: Multiple Course Races

Worst Feature: Not Enough Tracks

www.oceanbiz.com

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Hi-Res Graphics

Worst Feature: Slow Passing Game

www.acclaim.com

Number Of Players: 1 or 2

Best Feature: Tons of Shortcuts

Worst Feature: Horrible Music

www.midway.com



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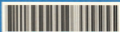
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Midway SEARS

## TOP GEAR RALLY



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Boss Game Studios

Released in: EGM #17

Now this is more like it! I've been waiting about a year to play this game, and I am not disappointed. The verdict on Top Gear Rally seems to be kinda split (some EGM editors liked it, while others feel it flows better than *Off Road* and I can accept the fact that Top Gear Rally isn't for everyone). Regardless though, **I am one of the guys who truly does enjoy Top Gear Rally.** I enjoy the crisp-rendered texture maps. I enjoy the silky-smooth scaling. I especially enjoy the tight control and the way laid-out slides can be executed at will (Portugal go-style). Top Gear Rally does have some bugs which freeze the game at times (and it's no big deal—more playtests would've been nice though). At first, the cars in Top Gear Rally are rather slow (indeed, this was what turned off the saysays' crew), but with a little patience, persistence, practice and peporation, you can race the better cars in the later tracks, soila, instead speed. Some of the weather effects like snow and rain are the best I've seen in the Nintendo 64, and while the draw in terms of the two-player game is a business, the One-player Mode has no such problems. I don't usually recommend racers if you need a game rate so high, but it might be a good idea with Top Gear Rally, since driving the police officer on a fictional copland, *Off Road*. This game is shined.

Kelly

Top Gear Rally was the top racer for me this month for several reasons, not mainly for its bonus cars and tracks. Here's another true example of a game that keeps on being interesting, even after you've beaten it. The extra cars, like the milk truck, add the fun detail that push it in front of the other racing games I've played so far. If you own one, and think racers like Mario Kart 64 are too tame for you, check this one out.

Sushi

If it weren't for Diddy Kong Racing, Toff would be the greatest of this month's racers. Yet the graphics are so demanding that you're likely to see more than three cars on screen, so some races can get a little slow. No big deal, though, cause control is perfect! Fun tracks may not seem like much, but they're super long, and the seasonal weather effects add a lot of variety. Plus, it'll take you weeks to get to the awesome thing Mine comes.

Crispin

I was pleasantly surprised with Top Gear Rally. For a slip-sliding racer (try team for Rallycube game), it's not bad at all. The numerous options, tracks, cars (normal and weird), weather (but aren't clean and lets just rain) and weather conditions all make this racer just above the others. It looks and controls great. Some of the longer stages drag on quite a bit, but the longer the track, the quicker the action, but that's a small downside.

Dan

## WCW VS. NWO: WT



Publisher: THQ

Developer: Aank

Featured in: M/4

WCW vs. NWO is a very slick wrestling game that is loaded with great wrestling moves and good 3-D graphics. There is a wealth of different wrestlers from the WCW and WWO (such as Hulk Hogan, Rick Flair, etc.), in addition to a few extra wagers, and even some boxes that you can toss into the ring. All of these potential combatants have plenty to do in the ring, as many styles of gameplay are offered. They include elimination, league, exhibition, double title and a four-player battle Royal. Complementing these modes are plenty of different customization features that can essentially change the battle. Unfortunately, even with all of these options and wrestlers, the One-player Modes of this game are all a little slow and boring. There's plenty of moves, recombos, special attacks and other things to do, but the gameplay just isn't all that fun. Interestingly enough, when you get three or four human opponents in the ring at the same time, WCW vs. NWO becomes an entirely new game. It suddenly becomes hectic, entertaining and funny, like the one-player game should have been. In conclusion, there aren't many wrestling games out there, and this isn't even lower good ones. As a multiplayer game, WCW vs. NWO shines brightly, but when it comes down to single-player mode, this wrestling game is no more than average.

Kraig

This game's a mixed bag. On the down side, it delivers sluggish action, shoddy graphics (especially the backgrounds) and less-than-exciting one-player gameplay. On the bright side, you get hundreds of moves and dozens of events (including several from the original Japanese version, as well as the WCW and WWF guys). Easily the best feature is the four-player Battle Royal and Tag Team battles, both of which can get pretty crazy.

Crispin

WCW vs. NWO has a ton of options and wrestlers to choose from, but I got tired of the One-player Mode very quickly. The control is tough (why no analog?) and it's hard to pull off the moves you want randomly pressing the same buttons over and over again will set you different results (almost every time). On the flip side, the graphics are excellent and the four-player Battle Royal Mode is a blast, but overall it's just not enough for me.

John

I've never been a fan of wrestling games, but this one was fun. I think it was the graphics that did it for me. The play was average with only a few things that impressed me. The moves were mostly standard, although a few things I liked most (originally by me) was the head throw I liked the variety of wrestlers to choose from with lots of outbursts each on top of that. The four-player battle mode is where this game is at its best.

Shawn

## DUKE NUKEM 3D



Publisher: Sega

Developer: Laboratory

Featured in: EGM #15

OK, here's the standard formula for making good first-person shooters today: make some cool 3-D levels, insert mindless enemies, and let the player go at it. The ONLY things differentiating most of these games are the levels and weapons. Duke is no exception. But the good thing is, Duke's levels and weapons are awesome. For two of the episodes, the stages are comprised of all modern-day locations (book stores, office buildings, clubs, etc.), which is very cool. It's the first game to give you a "real 3D" world you can actually visualize. The weapons are also well-designed. They are all very different from one another, which keeps the game interesting (although most of the weapons' uses are more suited for first-person play—it's way more fun setting a laser trip mine trap for a friend than an alien). Add ultra-smooth animation to the formula, and you have a perfect game, right? Wrong. Duke 3D's enemy AI is the same as it is in most other "shoot 'em ups." It's stupid and predictable. This leads to extremely repetitive gameplay because you basically fight every enemy the same way: shoot, move out of the way, shoot again, move again...yuck. The game's only saving grace is the two-player feature. Look, Duke 3D is a good game, but it's not a great one. It's not the best of the best, but it's still fun.

Dan

Besides the addition of lighting and firing effects and the new level, this is essentially the PC version of Duke Nukem 3D. And that's the way I'd like to see it. I always thought Duke's level and weapons were awesome. The Saturn version delivers it all with an ultra-smooth frame rate. It's even had local compatible for couchmatch mayhem. While Duke's reputation with the Sega Saturn version is a great one with the regular pack.

Crispin

I'm a big fan of Duke Nukem on the PC, so it's nice to see it come over to the console. After all, there's no sound card to interfere with the console version. The Saturn Duke Nukem is pretty darn good, but there are times when I wish I were on the PC. The lighting effects are cool, but are kinda of faded. Oh, the whole feel of a polygon lights up instead of a solid object. A solid light, but it's not that bright. You can't see those shadows.

Shawn

Level, weapon design and attitude is where this game excels, and apart from that, Duke Nukem is proving his age. Although a very good PC port, the blocks, sprite-based characters in the 3-D worlds are beginning to look very outdated by console standards. (and on many PCs). On the bright side, there's a lot of interesting levels that will make Duke Nukem worth it to many gamers. But to many, this will look like a game that's a year late.

Kraig

VISUALS SOUND INCREDIBILITY REPLAY  
8 6 6 8

VISUALS SOUND INCREDIBILITY REPLAY  
6 6 6 6

VISUALS SOUND INCREDIBILITY REPLAY  
7 6 7 6

Number Of Players: 1 or 2

Best Feature: Realistic Car

Worst Feature: Starts off slow

www.egm.com

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Battle Royal Mode

Worst Feature: Single-Player Game

www.egm.com

Number Of Players: 1 or 2

Best Feature: Level Design

Worst Feature: No Four-Player Mode

www.egm.com

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## MASS DESTRUCTION



**Publisher:** ASC Games  
**Developer:** NMS Software  
**Featured In:** DGM PS

The Saturn version of Mass Destruction is essentially the same game as the PlayStation one, but with a few added bonuses to make this one better. **First and foremost the graphics are way better on the Saturn.** They must be in HiRes Mode because they look outstanding. The interface and mission briefing looked better, too—overall, the Saturn Mass D. was just sharper, cleaner and more colorful.

Another big-time plus was the load times on the Saturn—there were next to none compared to the slightly annoying ones on the PlayStation. I also noticed that the Saturn one was a tad faster—even in the higher resolution mode! Other than that stuff, I really enjoyed playing through the game. The missions were simple most of the time, but hard enough to be a challenge. I like the three-step destruction on some of the buildings: A few rockets would blow it up, another few would knock it askew and the final few would topple the roof. I would definitely see this one becoming a game franchise—more sequels with new game centers. But who knows why? ASC has Nemex. One thing on the Saturn version that isn't better than the PS is walking. I find it a little odd on the PS to be walking and the Saturn version was even worse. But who cares? I only play a minute or two. Overall, I must have for Saturn fanatics.

**Shawn**

Originally designed for the Saturn, this version of Mass Destruction is better than its PlayStation counterpart. The graphics are much sharper (due to it being in a higher resolution) and some of the 3-D features in the game are better drawn. Still, there's a mess of room for improvement. **Overall, Mass Destruction is a fun, mindless shooter.** Just don't expect an in-game strategy tip in this simple, mindless tank buster.

**Kraig**

There's something rather appealing about destroying everything in sight. Mass Destruction serves that up in well-aimed missiles. The controls are very nice, although I found it a bit awkward to things straight on (and take a while, as you might have guessed, the war gets real redundant. The different hit points, after three voices, and it doesn't contact from the same unit like earlier titles.

**Dan**

Mass Destruction is a mindless game that just doesn't live up to its potential. **With plenty of stuff to blow up and large, colorful levels, Mass Destruction could be a contender.** But the end result is a game that's so over the top, it's hard to play. The different hit points, again, but I feel that Mass Destruction's mission is to be repetitive and boring for its own good. I'm sorry, but I just recommend this game and keep a clear conscience.

**Kelly**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGREDIENTY	REPLAY
7	7	5	6

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Cool Explosions

Worst Feature: Repetitive Missions

www.ascgames.com

## MEGAMAN X4



**Publisher:** Capcom  
**Developer:** Capcom  
**Featured In:** DGM PS

Mega Man X4 is the best Mega Man game for the Saturn, hands down. A virtual duplicate of the PlayStation version, Mega Man X4 struts its stuff with Sega style. The option to follow two separate, yet merging story lines using either Mega Man X or Zero is by far the most innovative new feature of the game. Since X and Zero play completely differently, it's like two games in one! Not a bad deal in my book. Once again, the voice acting is not exactly what I'd have liked, but it'll do. Mega Man X still sounds like a wuss. Otherwise, it's perfect for adding the required personality of the Mega Man franchise. Either way, the game is great. You've got a killer story line that has worked for over 15 games, a main character who is cute and rugged at the same time, the coolest power-up interface seen since Galaxia, and HUGE levels. What more could an avid gamer want? Perhaps better level layouts. They seem overly simplified compared to previous games, with less level intricacies—but they are quite large. Luckily, the busy animations distract from much of X4's shortcomings. I'm eternally glad that the X series hasn't become a failure! As a big fan of this series, it means a lot that the standard set of this series plays me to no end, even when I see Hurricane DX. **Well, who wouldn't like someone named RTT? Don't answer that!**

**Sushi**

It's refreshing to see an old-fashioned side-scrolling game once in a while. It's almost a lot of our today's technology. X4 plays and controls well, is challenging and fun, and looks great. Mega Man games, however, is not a change of pace. X4 is the best in the series, but the series is getting old. **Perhaps MR is ready to go 3-D for better yet.** X4 is the Pendulum of Capcom. I hope the next time takes off to higher levels.

**Dan**

You can always count on a Mega Man game (well, most at all, anyway) to deliver superb gameplay and great graphics in a gold-plated package. And Mega Man X4 delivers all that, except with one variety. You get the option to play as Zero, but to mention you can't overcome and an awesome story line. **The levels may be standard stuff for a Mega Man game.** Except with the best graphics of the series, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

**Crispin**

Mega Man X4 offers a nice change of pace from past games in the X series, with the ability to play as either X or Zero being a huge factor in the game's replayability. The graphics are some of the best 2-D Saturn has to offer, and they do seem add a lot to the game's overall feel. I loved voice acting. I wish Admittedly, X4 is a bit on the way side, but it does "belong" from the game line, which X fans will not be disappointed.

**John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGREDIENTY	REPLAY
8	7	3	5

Number Of Players: 1

Best Feature: Play as X or Zero

Worst Feature: Underdeveloped Level Design

www.capcom.com

## CART WORLD SERIES



**Publisher:** SCEA  
**Developer:** Sony Interactive Studios  
**Featured In:** DGM PS

I admit, I'm not too familiar with the CART World Series, but I know a good racing game when I play one. Fully licensed, and well presented (officially named tracks, drivers and cars), Sony's new racing game made me interested in this brand of racing that I've never paid much attention to. CART strikes a careful balance between realism and fun, which is one of the hardest things to tweak. Some tracks are of standard oval fare, offering racing at breakneck speeds. Others, such as the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, are comprised of tight turns and narrow roads, classically changing the style of gameplay. If you want to make some alterations to your car to make it better handle a specific track, a car setup screen allows the alterations of your car's wings, tires, fuel and gears. Monkey wrenching around with the car isn't needed much, since CART's gameplay is easy to jump into (but a little too easy on the forgiving tracks).

Graphically, CART sports great 3-D cars and decent track detail. When in a wreck, tires and gears are to be seen your car, and often the wets is left on the ground. Suffice to say, the game looks realistic. The only really annoying thing is CART's slow-motion race—at least there's an off switch if you're looking for a realistic race. **CART World Series is one of the best new ones to take for a drive.**

**Kraig**

I like racing games a LOT, but the one kind of racer that I'm not too into is the Formula 1 only car that, that being said, I do enjoy CART World Series to be pretty good. There are a lot of options and specifics for the car, but the gameplay is very easy to get into, particularly in the Arcade Model, and that's what kept me interested. The Top Tier Mode is fun, and the game is a software racer. Friends with Sony's best of best.

**John**

I felt somewhat uninspired when racing my way through CART World Series. It's a decent game, but with so many other cool racing titles arriving at the same time, I can't find much innovative about it. Racing tactics will, of course, want to win this one, but the casual gamer with a big interest in racing can't expect much to Diddy Kong Racing or Top Gear Rally Star games. **The track could have been more impressive.**

**Sushi**

CART World Series is more of a racing-man's game, but it still has its fun points. Lucky for me, the game has an Arcade Mode feature similar. Other cool options include various 3-D modes like either a horizontal or vertical race, and the engine sound options, but the music is average. On the negative side, the lead time is REALLY annoying and the graphics aren't anything spectacular. Overall, CART still is an average racer.

**Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGREDIENTY	REPLAY
7	6	6	7

Number Of Players: 1 or 2

Best Feature: Fun 3rd Arcade and 3rd Mode

Worst Feature: Average Lead Time

www.playstation.com



## CRASH BANDICOOT 2



**Publisher:** SCEA  
**Developer:** Naughty Dog  
**Featured in:** ZGM #16

Number Of Players: 1

Key Feature: Jaw-dropping Graphics

As you might expect, *Crash 2* is incredible. The list of positives outweighs the negatives by leaps and bounds. First, you have the graphics. They're easily in the top six best on the PlayStation. They're super sharp, colorful and have no awkward break-up. The animation is flawless in both the game and the cinematics. The cinematics are probably some of the best in game cutscenes I've seen (by in-game cutscenes I mean cinematics that use regular game graphics and not FMVs). Not only do they look good, they sound good. Naughty Dog got Clancy "Kurgan" Brown from Highlander to do the voices for Neo Cortex. Needless to say, the voice booms... he's so thankful they didn't get Christopher Lambert! The graphic effects Naughty Dog put together are awesome. The reflections, lighting effects and motion blur that forms on the ground texture when Crash burrows underground are awesome. I like the Warp Room concept that they implemented—much more fun than going from level to level on an island. The challenge level has been turned up on *Crash 2*, but in no way does it get annoying. It's like an old-school action game. You just want to keep coming back to it to finish up your last. Bad puns? I wish the control could have been a bit tighter. The analog pad makes it easier though. Also, *Crash 2*'s victory dance got old after awhile.

**Shawn**

The always hearing around the office, "I didn't like the first one, but *Crash 2* is awesome! I don't get it. To me, *Crash 2* is fundamentally the same as the original. Not to say that that's bad, however. I liked the first one a lot. A few cool extras are in the sequel, namely vehicles, new bosses, great FMV and better level design (though some sections are repetitive). *Crash 2* is a great game overall, but it's not exactly a mind-blowing experience.

**Dan**

*Crash Bandicoot 2* is a huge improvement over the first *Crash* game. Some of the new animations are hilarious, the game is less linear than its predecessor and the graphics are just spectacular (the best I've ever seen on the PlayStation, despite, by all accounts, all five). The play control isn't as good as it should be with the standard PS pad, a few of the animations are repetitive and the game is too similar to *Crash 1*. Overall, it's great.

**Kelly**

*Crash Bandicoot 2* is a great sequel, because it is a much better game than the original. There are a lot of new gameplay elements, and the overall level design is excellent. I also enjoyed the quality. Some of the cinematics are really good. The 3-D software games really show off PlayStation hardware (great graphics!), while also being a challenging and fun game to play. If you like platform games, you would really not want to buy this excellent one.

**Krain**

## CROC



**Publisher:** Fox Interactive  
**Developer:** Argonaut  
**Featured in:** ZGM #19

Number Of Players: 1

Key Feature: 3-D Graphics

Argonaut has done an impressive job with *Croc*. The game is basically a 3-D action platformer in the vein of *Mario 64*, but with more action/violence elements (and less ad-hoc adventure). For a PlayStation game, it looks excellent. The graphics are completely convincing of bearded pelicans, and the game has a strikingly polished look and feel to it. I really like the music too. It's sort of surreal, and reminds me a lot of *ishi Saito's* *Kanata* (another game with excellent music). I like the level design a lot, and I really like how you have to accomplish certain goals before moving into the next area. It's like finding all of the Crystals and Gobbos in each stage. What *Croc*'s like is how most of the game (not all—there's more or less the same in terms of gameplay). Other than the swimming stages and one or two other areas, there's not much in the way of innovation, which was a little disappointing (I was hoping for more variety I guess). Also, it's sometimes tough to judge your jumps, especially with the analog controller (which sticks, considering the analog controller is far superior to the digital pad for all other affairs in the game, especially camera movement). Still, the choice for subtitled the subtitles, and the really looking forward to seeing more of *Croc*'s like in the future. It's first making it way ahead of any other PlayStation game in its class.

**John**

*Croc* is an amalgamation of elements from just about every popular platform game you can think of (especially *Mario 64*). Regardless, this cute game is good enough to stand on its own, even though it does have a few problems. My biggest gripe are *Croc*'s often difficult to judge your jumps in the 3-D environment and that the sometimes repetitive after five seconds. Despite its weaknesses, *Croc* is one of the better PS 2 3-D platformers.

**Krain**

Some guys around the ZGM office keep saying *Croc* is "just like" *Mario*. Sure, there are a lot of similarities, but remember this: It's the PlayStation here. And for *Croc* being on the PlayStation, it's a moderately fun and cute game. It has its share of problems, but I have control and jumps that are difficult to judge, but the graphics still look great. It's definitely no *Mario*, but technically speaking it's quite an achievement on the PlayStation.

**Shawn**

*CROC* has to be the most familiar game I've played. Experienced gamers will immediately notice the gameplay similarity to *MarioKart*, right down to the both zooming. So, it's not. Hedging elements are also rampant in the form of collectible items (like *Super Mario Bros*) even boxes scattered where you can compare the main characters. Still, the combination of these elements makes for a decent game with an excellent story.

**Sushi**

## DRAGON BALL GT



**Publisher:** Bandai  
**Developer:** Bandai  
**Featured in:** ZGM #18

Number Of Players: 1 or 2

Key Feature: Deep Gameplay

Once in a while, we are graced with a "guru game," a game that stretches our abilities with a game engine so complex to master, yet simple enough for a beginner, and *Dragon Ball GT* is one such game. Anyone can pick up the controller and play a few rounds into the game. It will take true fighting masters to unlock the hidden characters, discover the super techniques, and truly beat the game. Modeled after the *Dragon Ball* anime series, it's no wonder that the programmers put such great detail into the character personalities. Every character has signature moves and hilarious taunts based on how bad you frustrated your foe. Some may turn from the straightforward game, which is essentially, punch, kick, fireball for every character. *Dragon Ball GT* really gets fun when you learn the various tricks and techniques. To help you along, you can play the Build-up Mode. In this mode, you get to build your fighter's strength slowly, starting with simple fighters, and working your way up to a real *Dragon Ball* master. This approach, rather than the straightforward "fractor" Mode used by other games, seems more effective as you can easily judge your advancement by how many opponents you can defeat. This is also one of the few games available with a game engine update. This is due to the important link to the anime.

**Sushi**

Most fighting games can be put into two categories: Street fighter-types and *Virtual Fight* types. *Dragon Ball* breaks the mold; it's different, but frankly, most of you won't like it. The mid-range stages and sluggish controls don't make for many exciting moments. *Knack*'s are fun and interesting, but even they get monotonous. The best part of *Dragon Ball* is the fantastic art of the game and of the characters. *Dragon Ball* is only.

**Dan**

Being a *Dragon Ball* fan for years, it's good to see Bandai continue to make games specifically for their followers. Compared to the earlier DB games, *Dragon Ball GT* features smoother animation, more moves, better technique and my favorite, the Build-up Mode. Like the fact that *Bandai* didn't sell out and make some *Tekken* clone for the masses with the DB. It was a disappointment *Dragon Ball* is the best *Dragon Ball* game ever.

**Kelly**

*Dragon Ball GT* is...different. Like other DB fighting games on the Super Nintendo, the gameplay is very complex and takes time to get used to—it's sure isn't *Street Fighter*. Once you do get used to it though, *Dragon Ball* can be a great fighter, with how effective and easy. If you can get past the sluggish control, and you don't mind reading a manual to learn a fighting game, you'll enjoy it. Just know that it's an awesome tale.

**John**

VISUALS SOUND INGREDIENTY REPLAY  
9 8 7 6 8

VISUALS SOUND INGREDIENTY REPLAY  
9 8 7 6 8

VISUALS SOUND INGREDIENTY REPLAY  
9 9 7 7 8

www.gryzor.com

www.fantastichor.com

www.sushi.com



## FIGHTING FORCE



**Publisher:** Eidos  
**Developer:** Core  
**Featured in:** EGM #106

Early versions of Fighting Force didn't have me excited at all. I thought a lot of the camera views were awkward, the 3-D unnecessary and the idea played out. Boy, was I wrong! This is definitely one of my current favorites. I was surprised to find that you only get one life, but with power-ups, you get used to it. I liked that the special moves "look away" energy. It's not a new concept, but it certainly added to the challenge level. What's cool about Fighting Force is that it plays like the old side-scrolling games of the same nature. Then you might ask, why not just make a 2-D one. Well, when the 3-D works, why not go with it? I did notice some slowdown on certain occasions, but nothing to worry about. Another thing I noticed is that there really isn't anything in the game that made me say "Wow," but that's alright. Thinking back to Final Fight or Streets of Rage, I don't remember ever really being "wow'd" by them—I just remember having fun playing them. Fighting Force really took the game with enemy names like Slasher and Smasher—instead of "vampire" it's a two-player option, which adds to the replay, a bit. Simple music that sits in the background, but that works since the sound effects are what you want to hear. Anybody who has been looking for a solid but simple game with old school thrash, look no further than this one.

**Shawn**

Number Of Figures: 1 or 2

Best Feature: Old School Feel

Worst Feature: Repetitive Gameplay

www.eidosinteractive.com

## MTG: BATTLEMAGE



**Publisher:** Activision  
**Developer:** Real Time  
**Featured in:** EGM #89

Just to let you know, I've never played the card game, but luckily that didn't make much of a difference. They've added enough to it to make it completely separate from the card game.  
**Magic: Battlemage really impressed me.** I admit my initial reaction was a bad one due to the stereotypical idea of what I thought Magic was all about in any form (thanks to Andy Ryan of EGM fame). After playing the game awhile though, my reaction was poised wrong. The intro FMV looked great, even though the wizards look like they're dancing or doing voo or something. The interface and territory description screens are really nice-looking, but the duel screens were average—maybe even below average. Imagine Machine Hunter or Loaded on the PlayStation. Now take away any 3-D elements and any lighting effects. That's what the duel mode looks like in Magic: The Gathering. The control look me awhile to get used to, and that was after many hours of watching the manual I ended up easily picking up the spell and mana systems, but I admit I have a long way to go before I know it all in terms. Besides the Campaign Mode (which I prefer), there's the straight Duel Mode (which is a good way to start practicing and learning about the effect of various spells. I've learned this one to anyone with an open mind to a win/lose—but avoid "type of game").

**Shawn**

Number Of Figures: 1

Best Feature: Campaign Mode

Worst Feature: Complex Control

www.activision.com

## MASS DESTRUCTION



**Publisher:** KGC Games  
**Developer:** NMS Software  
**Featured in:** EGM #95

This one seems like it has been coming out forever, but it's here now and that's what counts. I would go as far as to say Mass Destruction is on the same level as Return Fire. What makes it a bit more fun than Return Fire is that there's more than capture the flag, but there again Mass Destruction doesn't have a two-player mode. I had a lot of fun playing through this one (although I think the Saturn one even better). The thing about Mass Destruction that's weird is that even though the graphics are more or less textured polygons, it's alright—it works. Other enhancements were added to the game from the earlier versions like transparency to objects obstructing view of your tank. Other effects that have been there from the beginning are the cool reflections on water and the intense flames from the flamethrower (plus you can set the enemies on fire). The game featured cool enough levels, and there are unbalanced game levels added to the replay. I don't know how many levels a time now, usually in the landscapes. A couple other small prizes are the lack of really cool-looking weapons (only the flamethrower was really cool-looking and the lack of other vehicles to choose from, but then maybe it was too much for the Return Fire. As mentioned, a two-player mode would have been king on the card.

**Shawn**

Number Of Figures: 1

Best Feature: Cool Explosives

Worst Feature: Repetitive Missions

www.nms.com

Much hype has been surrounding Fighting Force for months now, but I don't seem to be. So, it's a decent game, complete with 3-D Final Fight action. So what if there are secrets on early acts, like the bars you can rip off doors to use as a weapon. When it comes down to it, the gameplay becomes repetitive in about one minute. I was disappointed with the overall number of attacks available for each character.

**Sushi**

Fighting Force is the 3-D Streets of Rage-style game I've been waiting for. It's fun to run around, trashing the skulls of enemies to black and throwing them into incoming traffic. The period of events in FF are much more interesting than they are in other games in this genre (most things can be hit or picked up). Although FF has cool moves and combos the control is a little bulky and the 3-D camera occasionally borks the view.

**Kelly**

Fighting Force is a good 3-D take on the Final Fight series, if you're into these beat-'em-up action bops of seemingly endless enemies, come after you, then this is about as good as it gets. The amount of weapons and things you can throw at the enemies is very impressive. Having four different characters and several special moves for each gives you the gaming difficulty to put it simply, if you liked Final Fight, you'll love Fighting Force.

**Kraig**

Let's face it, Magic: The Gathering fans don't have spells, but there in terms of video games, if you're a Magic fan, you're going to want to check the game out regardless of what I say and I think you should. Battlemage is a very complicated strategy game that incorporates the card game's flavor well. But if you've never played the card game before, you probably would want to skip this one. The strategy is good, but the execution isn't short.

**Dan**

Even if you're a grg at the Magic phenomenon and I am not this video game version will take you a while to learn and master. This is a nice bit of appeal to Magic: The Gathering's wide fans. At the same time, it's probably not for other gamers, who may find the game's bulky interface and slow-paced gameplay too heavy on their patience. Save the ability to collect and add to a deck, which is a nice feature, it's just not anything.

**Crispin**

Two important facts: I'm not a big fan of card games and I've never played Magic: The Gathering, nor do I plan to in the future, and that out of the way, let me just say I had absolutely no understanding of the point of this game's main playing features at all, but the graphics leave much to be desired. As for as this game is concerned, Magic may not be it, but I don't. It's too confusing of a strategy game for my tastes.

**Kelly**

I enjoy destroying buildings and pyrotechnic action in games as much as the most fun, but something missing in MD. Fighting the game is fun. I signed out what the mission was, but it's fun. Although I was intrigued by the concept of MD, the execution was a little less glamorous in reality. The sad part is that many elements of MD's graphics, sound effects, control are actually decent but the end experience leaves me to think.

**Kelly**

This is a lot like Return Fire, with more emphasis on vehicle action. It's fun, but the action becomes a little repetitive as the same "boss" missions are needed to kill your enemy. I loved your barrel and dodge back and forth. There's a lot of weapons, and some heavy-duty effects. Unfortunately, the grab 3-D graphics and music aren't as impressive. If you loved Return Fire, this might be the game for you, but don't expect it to be a total god.

**Kraig**

The name of the game says it all. Think of Mass Destruction as a Load-Up-type shooter with less personality but more variety, better sound effects. The visuals are okay, but honestly, this game would be nothing without them (especially the excellent explosions). If you're looking for some absolutely mindless, action-mashing fun, then Mass Destruction could be right up your alley. Otherwise, it's not really above average.

**Dan**

ISSUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY  
7 6 6 7

ISSUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY  
6 7 8 6

ISSUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY  
5 7 5 6

## MOTO RACER



**Publisher:** Electronic Arts  
**Developer:** Delphine  
**Featured in:** EGM/PPI

This slick-looking racer has a lot going for it. Its got 50 mix of street racing and motocross action gives the game plenty of variety. And—despite minor drive-in problems—the graphics are killer. **New Play!** Native racing games deliver such an incredible sense of speed. Still, Moto Racer isn't perfect. Its difficulty curve is a little off, with the Medium setting seeming impossible the first time you play the game (soak your bike once and you'll be lucky to ever catch up with the pack). The Easy difficulty is a little too easy, especially on the dirt tracks. But this flaw doesn't detract much from the game. Your bike controls fairly well with the standard joystick, although I recommend the analog controller. You can choose from eight bikes before each race, even in the middle of a championship season, and each is modeled after a high-performance "cycle." You can even pull off wheelies and simple stunts off tracks by hitting one of the Shoulder Buttons. **Moto Racer** contains the eight tracks from the PC version, as well as two PlayStation-only ones (all of which mirror later on). The tracks take you through cities, deserts, the country side—even across the Great Wall of China! The Split-screen, two-player Mode is also well done (you can split it vertically or horizontally). It manages to maintain a high frame rate without losing much detail.

**Crispin**

Wow, talk about a surprise! I didn't expect Moto Racer to be nearly as good as it ended up being. The graphics are awesome, the gameplay is super smooth, and most importantly—**it's fun.** Track variety is superb (there are road tracks and motocross tracks), and control with Sony's analog pad is just perfect. Heck, even the music is really good. Having CPU opponents in **IF Mode** would've been nice, but otherwise it's a game rock.

**John**

If Moto Racer were the only motorcycle racing game in the world, I would have up my hat right now. Sony, but would rather salute the tones of a powerful real-life GP racing machine than play this game! The control is decent, but bad track design and poor planning lead me to believe that real gameplay was an afterthought. The idea was good, but the execution falls short of what it could've been. **Really impressive!**

**David**

I actually enjoyed playing Moto Racer. Many times, when a racing game tries to combine different values of motorizing, it waters down the overall experience. This is not the case in Moto Racer. Both the Motocross and Grand Prix motorcycle racing had its own, distinct look and feel and they both play great. Even better, the graphics are good with smooth textures. **Moto Racer** isn't a landmark racer, but it is a good game. Check it out.

**Kelly**

Visuals: 8 Sound: 8 Gameplay: 6 Replay: 7

## NHL 98



**Publisher:** Electronic Arts  
**Developer:** EA Canada  
**Featured in:** EGM/PPI

Just when I thought EA's NHL franchise was on the decline after last year's "average" NHL 97, they come bouncing back and unleash the **greatest hockey game ever made.** Bold statement, you say? Not really. NHL 98 easily eclipses all competitors in every way possible. The polygonal characters move fast and fluid, the interface is sleek and user-friendly (offensive and defensive strategies and camera angles can be changed on the fly with the L and R buttons), and more important than anything else—this feels like hockey. They've finally got the AI to a respectable level (it's a little easy in Rookie Mode, but true hockey fans will be in love with the Pro and especially All-Star Modes), and the amount of detail that went into making this game realistic is just amazing. Finally! I've waited a lifetime for this! The crowd reacts as if they were in real life—anyone who's been to (or played in) a hockey game knows how much the crowd can contribute to the excitement on the ice, and EA's recreated that perfectly. The play-by-play, while sometimes a bit laggy, is fantastic—the announcers will talk about specific plays (line feeds, team rushes and more). This kind of realism has never before been represented in a hockey game, and I love it. **AI!** I need next year to be a hockey-savvy player too, and I'll be in **EA's Hockey Heaven.**

**John**

How low did EA walk some magic on this hockey title. The NHL series is back with a vengeance. **This stellar game is loaded with features,** but more importantly it has the first fun and funous gameplay that made the Genesis NHL (then popular). Hockey fans will be pleased to experience the great EA has done in re-creating the sights and sounds of pro hockey. If you want to buy a 32-bit hockey game, look no further than NHL 98.

**Kraig**

This hockey game is almost perfect, so the few flaws I've noticed really drive me crazy (I hope you will fix these problems). The announcing is excellent. It's made you feel like you're watching a live broadcast. Once in a while, the victory and loss, making the play-by-play a bit out of sync. **It would be wise to consistently hear "THE SCORES!" right when "the" scores.** The referee is too loose. **GOAL!** (Mean that you'll miss a chance to be a superstar.)

**Dan**

EA's NHL is one of my favorite sports series ever, only topped by the NHL 96 game. I've had a hard time getting into an NHL game since then. But now, with NHL 98, I can finally get down into the hockey experience, with power-coaching, body-checks, fighting, and awesome camera angles that actually tailor the gameplay to your own skill set! The computer is no slacker, and my 60FPS hockey takes like real-life challenge. **Yes, yes.**

**Sushi**

Visuals: 9 Sound: 9 Gameplay: 7 Replay: 10

## NHL FACE OFF 98



**Publisher:** SCEA  
**Developer:** Sony Interactive Studios  
**Featured in:** EGM/PPI

Without a doubt, Sony's NHL Face Off 98 is the fastest 32-bit hockey game thus far. This 3-D game contains all of the speed you'd expect from a NHL game—and more. The polygonal players are very lifelike, comprised of many motion-captured moves. They are also detailed, including player numbers and names on their jerseys. All of this is accomplished while keeping the control tight and responsive (this has been a issue with many recent hockey games.) **Obviously, Sony has an awesome engine at work here.** Face Off has pretty good computer intelligence, but unfortunately a few obvious holes remain it. The biggest problem lies with the goalie, who let too many pucks into the net. Just be prepared for a few cheap and amazing goals (this was a complaint with last year's Face Off, too.) Despite its problems, the gameplay is still fun and feels like a hot-out hockey match. The biggest shortcoming of Face Off 98, however, is its subpar atmosphere. **Any hockey fan will tell you that the part of a game is very important, and here, Face Off fails.** The PR announcer is annoying, the crowd is very lukewarm and the on-ice sounds are sort of average. **There just isn't the feel of excitement on the ice that there should be.** Otherwise, NHL Face Off 98 is a great hockey game, but only a good enough to rank second best to EA's NHL 98.

**Kraig**

I had high hopes for NHL Face Off 98, but again last year, they should've just named the game "NHL AI GO!" because that's what it feels like. It's far too easy to win, especially in the earlier settings, and the game just doesn't seem anywhere near as realistic or exciting as EA's far superior NHL 98. It'd like to be a little more true to the game because it's not bad by any means, but I'm getting tired of the poor AI in many of today's hockey games.

**John**

Wow, talk about cheap AI. Who I don't pretend to be the sports game expert of the universe, but here I prove my fair share of it. **Any game. Playing against the CPU players in NHL Face Off was an exercise in frustration.** Some the graphics are great and looking action is fast and all, but the computer opponent played on me with both hands, scoring goals at will and knocking me to the ice for lightning speed. **I recommend NHL 98 instead.**

**Kelly**

NHL Face Off 98's action is fast and furious, just about every sports game gives you loads of options, but I always use the game's default settings for the spirit of competition. Since hockey games are relatively simple, the speed of Face Off's action is a little too fast for my taste. Before the start, and the camera that views the play (it's brain semi-overhead view), I continuously had the 60FPS (even along any kind of action). **Not the pack!**

**David**

Visuals: 8 Sound: 5 Gameplay: 5 Replay: 7

Number Of Players: 1-3

Best Feature: Great Sense of Speed

Worst Feature: No CPU Teams in Two-Player Mode

www.ea.com

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Amazing Realism

Worst Feature: Off-Side Play by the Ref

www.sce.com

Number Of Players: 1-8

Best Feature: Fast Gameplay

Worst Feature: Poor Artificial Intelligence

www.playstation.com

## PGA TOUR 98



**Publisher:** Electronic Arts  
**Developer:** EA GOLF  
**Featured In:** EGM PR

I'd sooner lie in bed and watch *Goddyshock* than play real golf, but—ironically—I've always been a fan of video game versions of this stoddy sport. And *PGA Tour '98*, EA's second PlayStation installment in the series, doesn't disappoint. It packs pretty much the same shiny graphics as the last game, as well as the same PGA pros (if you care about that sort of thing). But more importantly, it lets you play on more courses, a total of five is all. *PGA Tour '98* offers the same game modes as the previous game, including the PGA Tournament, regular stroke play and the Skins Game (sort of a rich man's Bowling for Dollars). New modes include four-player games and a skills challenge, which has you competing to see who can make the longest drive, etc. The main reason I like this series, though, is that it lets you make golf as simple or as complicated as you like. You can switch on a variety of aids to help you improve your swing—while still keeping the game challenging. Golf websites can simply well on the ball and have fun; you'd be surprised at how relaxing and addicting such a seemingly dull task can be, while tactics can inter with club selection and the degree of drive, fade and spin they put on their shot. My main gripe is the load time. The game stalls for a second before each swing, making this slow-paced game even slower.

Crispin

After reading the vast list of features in *PGA Tour '98*, I was psyched to give this game a swing. After all, there are few good 12-bit golf games. Unfortunately, I'll be walking a mile long. *PGA Tour '98* is a technically flawed golf. Golf is a slow enough game, without the long load times. Throughout this game, the load times between each hole, etc., are graphics are also subpar, making *PGA '98* a very disappointing golf game.

Kraig

I don't play golf. I'm a gamer, not a golfer! Nice how nice the commentary and loads of options made it easy to get into the action. Maybe too easy. It's more "management" than gameplay! Determine the direction and distance of your shot, then it's only up to timing the power required. Also annoying are the long load times between the time that you select your swing and when you actually see it. No breaks, just bleeps.

David

Again, I've been a fan of PGA Tour series since the original game, but it's taken until *PGA Tour '98* to see me here for this golf engine has progressed. The high course detail is wonderful, and the color commentary is incredibly helpful for beginners and intermediate players. The only thing that irks me damages *PGA Tour '98* is the constant load times. For one example, the PlayStation has 10 levels for two courses to calculate your swing!

Sushi

## RAMPAGE: WORLD TOUR



**Publisher:** Midway  
**Developer:** Midway  
**Featured In:** EGM PR80

When I selected this game to review, Dan Hsu said he didn't understand what the appeal of this game was. After thinking about it, I replied, "You get to be the bad guy." Now, whether or not that's a psychotic condition of mine or not isn't important, but it holds true for many of us. *Rampage* is a great deal of fun, and most of it comes from the fact that you're the monster, and you've got a bunch of innocent cities to wreck. The PlayStation port of this game is just about arcade perfect, and for those who haven't played the arcade, *World Tour* is quite an improvement over the original. Within each city there are plenty of things you can do, including feeding power-ups, bonuses and country symbols that will alter your path of destruction. There's an incredible amount of levels and secret levels, each affecting the location they re-create in one way or another (sometimes humorously). The problem with *Rampage: World Tour* is that you probably won't want to play through all of them. The game is very entertaining for a few hours, but after the novelty of being a badde has worn off, and you're sick of seeing another skyscraper blowing up its redundancy makes the game slow. Thankfully, *World Tour* does allow for up to three players simultaneously, which breathes some needed life into it. It's a good game, but too repetitive.

Kraig

I love bash and crash! Although I still don't have the default control configuration, once you get the hang of it though, it's all you can get. Why are those monsters on *World Tour*? You can't just smash buildings and keep on destroying everything in sight. The art style is already mid-'80s Wildways, and won't appeal to everyone, but the game is fun to play and easy enough to enjoy for millions of hours. Don't forget the hard hat!

David

There's nothing like sitting down and playing a good old-time game. It's even better to do it when it has been enhanced, but still has the same feel as the original. *Rampage* is a lot of fun. The graphics as sprites work, and it hits a lot of time scales like being able to go around the world and becoming other "monstrous" monsters. On a side note, I bet the mutant lady would be pretty hot if she would just get rid of those dopey glasses!

Shawn

So many good games this month, and why would *Rampage: World Tour* be any different? I loved the arcade version, and this translation does a good job of remaining faithful. In the series, I ran into a couple of gameplay issues, like the abundance of fly-over machines. I spend more time eating than destroying the buildings, and I still just walk in each level and repetitive level run. *Rampage* is not a bad game at all!

Sushi

## RED ASPHALT



**Publisher:** Interplay  
**Developer:** Interplay  
**Featured In:** EGM PR

I remember when *Red Asphalt* was called *Rock and Roll Racing 2*. However, this title has lost just about all the spirit and distinction of the SNES game. Where's the cool licensed music? Where's the over-the-top announcer (complete with an exciting voice)? I'll tell you where it all is... gone! That's where. *RA* is basically your run-of-the-mill, futuristic, 3-D, shoot-'em-before-they-shoot-you race. In truth, I've seen this game a million times before and so have you. Keep in mind, I'm not saying *Red Asphalt* is a bad game, but it is spectacularly average. First of all, the control takes a while to get used to. The steering on the cars has a slight (but noticeable) delay, plus the power-ups seem to engage a hair after each button press. The whole control setup threw off my timing. What's worse, the later tracks have smaller files and tighter lay-outs, which only exacerbates the delay problem. Although the game's graphics can compete with one or two cars in front of you (around 25-30 fps is my guess), there is some slowdown at times, plus the track design and texture mess aren't that interesting to look at. As I said before, the music and sound effects are nondescript as well. Maybe Show is right and the just a spoiled, jaded gamer, but I still think this game would be a great first experience. Dear you, realize.

Nelly

*Red Asphalt* is not a good game. I just wanted to get that into the clear from the get-go. The control is really bad, and when you try to power slide even the slightest bit, you end up spinning off the way around facing the other way. The interface screen was confusing and super-klunky. I had like the individuality you got after other cars, and the art style of the characters was awesome. It really is been a cool game, but it just wasn't for me.

Shawn

Here we go with another game that lacks great and plays awful. The game's main flaw is its control. No matter which vehicle I bought or how many upgrades I slapped onto it, the damn thing kept spinning out at all the wrong times. And when the tracks look cool (especially on the animated scenery in the background), they need more power-ups. I do like being able to upgrade my driver with experience points, but it's not enough to hold my attention.

Crispin

This reminds me of the first 3D game, *Crash 'N' Burn*. They are two big problems I have with *Red Asphalt*. The first is the vehicle control, which does annoying spins when you take a turn back. The next, is that it's very hard to see that you're being hit until you're up in flames. Together, they really hurt the gameplay, which is otherwise solid. The graphics and music are both good, but you're better off with *Crash 'N' Burn*.

Kraig

YEARS 6 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 5 REPLAY 6

YEARS 7 SOUND 6 INGENUITY 4 REPLAY 8

YEARS 6 SOUND 5 INGENUITY 3 REPLAY 4

Number Of Players: 1-4

Best Feature: Real PGA Players and Course

Worst Feature: Long Load Times

www.ea.com

Number Of Players: 1-5

Best Feature: Luring Highway Run

Worst Feature: Slush of Fuel

www.midway.com

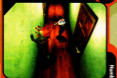
Number Of Players: 1 or 2

Best Feature: Cool Art Style

Worst Feature: Everything Else

www.interplay.com

## RESIDENT EVIL: DC



Publisher: Capcom

Developer: Capcom

Featured by: EGM #97

Number Of Players: 1

Came on now, I went out and bought this supposed "Director's Cut" of Resident Evil, and when I got home and played it, I found a few slight gameplay enhancements (three difficulty levels, different camera perspectives in certain areas and some new item locations) and a special demo of Resident Evil 2. What I didn't find, however, were any "complete visual and audio" cinematics, which were the main reason I wanted to get this new version in the first place. In other words, **I got pretty much the same game I bought last year**, but with a few demos. The scary, but that's just not gonna cut it. New games don't come cheap, and when something is advertised as one thing but then sold as another, that raises a serious problem in the eyes of the consumer. Capcom has had as that the reason the game was released in edited form is because of a screw-up that occurred in Japan, but the end result is that the game still got released this way, and many thousands of people bought it with raised expectations (only to experience certain relief when they played it. I'm sure). The bottom line? It's our job to review games as is, and in this case—RE: DC, it is completely worthless if the scores it received. Should Capcom re-release the game in the way it was intended, we will review the new version as such. Until then, we stand firm with our views.

John

Next Feature: Resident Evil 2 Demo

What Feature: This isn't a Director's Cut

Considering I feel RE is a glorified version of Alone in the Dark, this title didn't really blow me. In fact, it threw another PC action game that is slower paced and has worse load times than Resident Evil! Fortunately, the extended demo of Resident Evil 2 made it quickly apparent to me that **RE2 is gonna rock this!** All you RE fans who think I'm nuts can calm down. It's a good game, just not a great game. It was far from perfect.

Kelly

When I heard about the Director's Cut, I was pretty excited. It's not a huge fan of the series, but **extra gore is never a bad thing**. So when I loaded it up and found that the original cinematics were still intact, and not much had changed at all, there are several camera angles and other audio twists, but unless you're a hardcore fan of Resident Evil, this one may not be worth the money. Of course, there's the PC2 demo where it's included. From

Shawn

The best thing about Resident Evil: Director's Cut is the **Resident Evil 2 Demo** included in the additional CD. Otherwise, this is the same old Resident Evil with slightly enhanced graphics and a really bad movie. Director's Cut isn't contented, which makes this a waste of money. The only people who should consider buying this are those who don't own Resident Evil yet. Current owners? It's not really buying a double-disc.

Sushi

## MK MYTH. SUB-ZERO



Publisher: Midway

Developer: Midway

Featured by: EGM #90

Number Of Players: 1

When I first heard about Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub-Zero (MKM-SZ from here on), I was intrigued at the idea of playing through a side scroller that starred a character from a fighting game. I mean, what better way to develop a character's back story than to let the player live it? Well, as is fairly obvious by this score, I was more than disappointed when I finally got my hands on the final version of the game. Do you remember the old days of the NES when some games were entirely frustrating because of their horrible controls? Well, take the worst of the bunch, multiply it by 10, and you have MKM-SZ. **The control is really that bad.** Trying to make important timed jumps is a true test of one's patience, and having to press a button to turn around is just a royal pain, even though I realize it was necessary in order to preserve the Fighting-game feel of Mortal Kombat. The graphics are pretty nice, and I really like how you gain experience from fighting, which in turn lets you learn new moves, but the control is terrible and the gameplay is pathetic. You can walk up to start dark enemies and stand right in front of them for several seconds before they even attack. Hello? Are you blind? Ah, anyway, I'm really let down by this one. Hopefully if they decide to make another game in the MKM series, they'll work on the control a bit.

John

First Feature: Cool Concept!

What Feature: Using Scientific Control

When I heard about this fighting side-scroller in development, I was highly skeptical to the point of saying, "So the series, MK Mythologies, has turned out to be one of the best attempts at using fighting, side-scrolling, and adventure elements I've ever seen." The worst part is getting used to the awkward controls for playing around. **You need more fingers to hit MK Mythologies!** The MK sequel was really a nice touch.

Sushi

First let me say that I thought the idea behind this game was really cool. It's not a fan of the MK series, but I thought an MK adventure might just work. I was wrong. The graphics were subpar and the control was hard—what's up with that turn-around button? Generally, the enemies were either cheap as all hell or just plain dumb (they'd just stand there and not hit you). The game is a really good concept, but the execution failed.

Shawn

As a loyal Street Fighter fan, I franchise I feel in the aftermath of WWI, I approached MK Mythologies with curiosity and excitement (I figured, hey! This is even if the game sucked, Capcom might rise up and do a really good competitor. **Score enough, the game sucks.** True to the Mortal Kombat franchise, MK-SZ features pretty animation, game menus and fairly characters. Don't you see as Marcus, the class of this one.

Kelly

## PANDEMONIUM 2



Publisher: Crystal Dynamics

Developer: Crystal Dynamics

Featured by: EGM #99

Number Of Players: 1

First things first. Why in the hell did Crystal Dynamics change the characters so much? I mean sure, some time has passed so maybe they grew up, but I don't like the changes at all... I mean why is the main female character so "hot" all of a sudden? Anyway, let's get on to the good stuff—called Pandey 2 by some is pretty damn cool. It may be more of the same thing more or less, but it's still good. The graphics are stepped up from the old one, complete with neat lighting effects and more crazy panning camera angles. Just like the first one, the views had me seeing again and again. I will say that the sprite graphics in Pandemonium 2 aren't really that impressive. But on top of all the cool 3-D graphics effects in the game, it is a lot of fun to play. When a platform game is done well, regardless of any lowly graphics, it's a joy to play. That's how I felt about Pandemonium 2—the graphics were just "there." The control was a good sometimes when the camera changed, but slow. In games that aren't a pseudo 2-D world like Pandemonium 2, I have this problem. One minute you're pushing "right," but then the camera angle changes and "right" is now "up." Nothing a few plays can't remedy, but it's still annoying. Pandemonium 2 is a solid hit for PS owners.

Shawn

Best Feature: Great Graphics

What Feature: Using Character Changes

I loved the first Pandemonium, and to my complete surprise, the sequel surpasses the original in every way. I don't like the character design changes, but not very important. Just I don't get it all my head, but the gameplay is totally addictive and the graphics are outstanding. The stages are long and have some amazing levels. The Bosses are cool, and the difficulty is just right. The cinematics are a little cheesy, but who cares. Sit at game.

John

Pandemonium 2 improves on the original, which was a good game in its own right, though the MK cinematics had some "horror" about the game itself is as solid as a rock. If anything, the impact control of the first game had been improved for Pandemonium 2. The music was not bad, but not as good as in the previous. All times, the graphics are just looking and the gameplay camera angles in P2 impress me even further.

Kelly

Despite the obviously overly masculine nature of the video game industry, and even this being said, no game has actually made me cringe like Pandemonium 2. **The opening cinema is fairly testable**, if you know what I mean. As far as the game itself, it's basically a much larger, more colorful version of its ancestor. The graphics quality seems to have taken a turn for the worse, however, with blockier characters, and less detail.

Sushi

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	0	7

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	6	3

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	7

www.capcom.com

www.midway.com

www.crygd.com

## GAME SHARK



**Publisher:** InterAct  
**Developer:** Zaxel  
**Available For:** Nintendo 64

Considering that the Nintendo 64 is still running short on software, the GameShark could be just what you need to renew interest in games you've already beaten a dozen times. Unfortunately, InterAct's \$50 peripheral is too lean on codes right now to be much use. Out of the box, the Game Shark offers a handful of cheats and Easter egg codes—such as infinite health, level skips and special graphic glitches—for an equally small handful of games, the newest being Star Fox 64. So, no, don't expect this thing to open all the secrets in GoldenEye 007 for you. At least not yet. If the N64 Game Shark fares as well as InterAct's PlayStation and Saturn versions, you'll soon have access to hundreds of codes—which you enter and store in the unit's memory—for every game on the system. And that's why the price of the peripheral, such a decent score. This peripheral has potential. **Acquiring new codes is fairly easy.** You can find an InterAct's GameShark website ([www.gameshark.com](http://www.gameshark.com)). There without internet access can subscribe to InterAct's bi-monthly code sheet for \$12 a year or call a toll number that's updated weekly. Oh, and one more thing. Don't let Nintendo know! Tell you this, but the GameShark lets you play banned games on your American system, since it works in the GameShark code book over the console's casing.

**Crispin**

The GameShark 64 is a pointless thing to review (but I still got a job to do). A Game Shark is a game shark. You either want to cheat or you don't, simple as that. If you want to cheat on the N64, then you have been the ultimate and most comprehensive tool to help you do so. If you don't want to cheat like that, then you have no need for this peripheral. Other than that, it's a quality product whose support won't go away anytime soon.

**Dan**

The Game Shark is a great peripheral to own if you're either A) not very good at games in general, or B) you like to use cheat codes to expand the life of your games. Personally, I use it for B, but to all honesty, there aren't many codes available for the N64 version yet. I emphasize the "yet" because a year from now, that'll be changed, in fact, in the meantime, it's especially handy if you play Inforn games, since you'll have an advantage.

**John**

Back to the day, the Game Genie was King with a capital K. Now that Nintendo wants to stop us from the Game Shark for the N64. The GameShark is the one peripheral that can save your old, boring N64 games that you've beaten a hundred times, and turn them into whole new experiences. You haven't lived until you've made Mario fly forever, jump 100 times high, or defeat Bowser in one easy hit. Remember the life?

**Sushi**

MSRP \$49.99  
DESIGN 8

## C-3D IMAGING SYSTEM



**Publisher:** Chequerate Tech  
**Developer:** Advanced Tech  
**Available For:** Multiplatform

Unless you just won the state lottery or Mom and Dad are feeling **KK&K&R** generous, this device is a waste of your gaming dollar. For \$500 think of what you could buy! A new fancy TV. A new stereo system to make your games rock. Who knows what else. With that said, the real function of the C-3D imaging system may not necessarily be for games. The setup allows you to hook up a standard video device (be it a VCR or game system) and then view it in 3-D. Of course, for optimal performance, the source should be made for the C-3D. If not, the 3-D isn't so real. The device that hook up to the gear pass-through, allowing you to still use your TV as you normally would. After you hook up your stuff to it, then plug in the accompanying glasses (that make you look like you're from the future) and you're ready to go. So what about games on this thing? There still aren't any that have been announced so it may be a fullness venture if that's what you have in mind. When playing games in the C-3D pseudo 3-D Mode, the color got screwed up. Blues were green, and when adjusted still weren't blue. Plus, the glasses made my eye strain after 30 minutes, and the glasses didn't fit quite right (and they weren't adjustable). For the price, just let the technology be advanced, or next, it's not a device for games.

**Shawn**

For a device this expensive and complex, the 3-D effect is so subtle. The C-3D Imaging System does work, but don't expect any miracles from this box (the 3-D effect is similar to what you see with cardboard glasses in Hollywood). What's worse, since the C-3D was connected to the TV, the colors were never quite right. Using the C-3D was one big, blurry, headache-inducing, and disorienting experience. Stay away from this.

**Nelly**

This \$500 unit produces the most incredible 3-D visuals I've ever seen—but only in movies and games that are designed to work normally. The demo tape that came with the system... The fake 3-D effects it produces in regular games just aren't convincingly convincing either. Some games, like Mario Kart, look really 3-D, but most others can look flat. One bonus is that this system boosts your stereo to a clear 5.1 surround.

**Crispin**

Just can't use this heavy piece of machinery as a viable peripheral for the average gamer. It's just doesn't do enough to justify its very hefty price tag (wouldn't you think of several other things you'd rather spend \$500 on, like you, wine games? Lots of them). The 3-D effect wasn't... Fun! But for most games today, it really looks like you're TVing in 3-D into the TV and 3-D is any real games directly support C-3D, or pass.

**Dan**

MSRP \$599.99  
DESIGN 5

## RUMBLE PAK



**Publisher:** Nintendo  
**Developer:** Nintendo  
**Available For:** Nintendo 64

Nintendo's Rumble Pak brings some much-needed force-feedback action to the home. Used in PC and arcade machines for quite some time, force-feedback control interfaces (at least the well designed ones) bring a more immersive feel to games and the Rumble Pak is no exception. Although Nintendo's device is very simple compared to, say, Microsoft's new force-feedback joystick for the PC (which rocks, literally) or the costly, high-end coin-op systems, the Rumble Pak is relatively cheap. Nintendo claims the Rumble Pak offers nearly an infinite variety of vibration levels. So that is it was, the palms of my hand only transferred about three levels of shaky-stakey to my stomach. The vibration effect in games like Star Fox (used for explosions, turbo boosts and the like) is subtle but noticeable. The high-frequency shaking was smooth and doesn't out like a pager. In GoldenEye, the vibrations ranged from short and precise (when firing pinballs) to long and sharp (when some enemies are killed in an explosion). While playing Diddy's Race Rivalry, I could feel the "start" button all as I drove my kart through a turn. Although I wish the unit had more power, I like the fact that the Rumble Pak is flexible enough to give each game its own feel. A short battery life and a slightly chunky look are its only complaints for this device.

**Nelly**

One of the few that isn't an atrocious thing to own. The Rumble Pak is that, that's because it isn't really being used in a great way—most it's used to cheat you when you're too... absorbed! This, however, will probably change. For example, it has been stated that **GoldenEye** will use it to help you find hidden objects (a cool idea). For \$50, you really can't complain with this impressive peripheral, but aside from the novelty, it isn't great! Get it!

**Kralq**

I think the Rumble Pak is one of the coolest peripherals to come out in a long time. If I had my way, I would've thought of it first, designed and implemented it into the N64 controller so we wouldn't have the added bulk sticking out of the back. Still it's got a lot of potential, and I can't wait to see how it's used in Delta (and other adventure-type games) where it might actually benefit the user from having one or whole pluses.

**John**

This completely required peripheral should just be given away with every Nintendo 64. Everyone should have one. The Rumble Pak gives some games like GoldenEye for PC, and transforms them into awesome, immersive experiences. It's a shame that Nintendo didn't think of this earlier, so they had to have power through the controller cable, rather than use batteries. Still, the advanced game feedback is worth the price.

**Sushi**

MSRP \$19.99  
DESIGN 6

Number Of Players: N/A

Best Feature: Lets You Play Japanese Games

Worst Feature: Not Enough Codes Yet

[www.gameshark.com](http://www.gameshark.com)

Number Of Players: N/A

Best Feature: The Demo Tape

Worst Feature: No Game Support

[www.3d.com](http://www.3d.com)

Number Of Players: N/A

Best Feature: Rumble

Worst Feature: User Starts It in Center For Pak

[www.nintendo.com](http://www.nintendo.com)

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- Jimmy Johnson



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36 Consecutive NCAA Victories



Start Taking Notes.

TOP

Dec.  
1997

## OVERALL

- 1: Diddy Kong Racing  
Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 2: GoldenEye 007  
Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 3: NHL 98  
PlayStation, Electronic Arts
- 4: Castlevania: SotN  
PlayStation, Konami
- 5: Crash Bandicoot 2  
PlayStation, UGA
- 6: Saturn Bomberman  
Saturn, Sega
- 7: Final Fantasy VII  
PlayStation, SGA
- 8: Mischief Makers  
Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 9: Madden 64  
Nintendo 64, Electronic Arts
- 10: Moto Racer  
PlayStation, Electronic Arts

## PLAYSTATION

- 1: NHL 98  
Electronic Arts
- 2: Castlevania: SotN  
Konami
- 3: Crash Bandicoot 2  
Sony Computer Entertainment
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Sony Computer Entertainment
- 5: Moto Racer  
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- 6: Madden NFL 98  
Electronic Arts
- 7: Pandemonium! 2  
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- 8: PaRappa the Rapper  
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- 9: Fighting Force  
East Interactive
- 10: Croc  
Fox Interactive



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Sega
- 2: Marvel Super Heroes  
Capcom
- 3: Madden NFL 98  
Electronic Arts
- 4: Duke Nukem 3D  
3D Realms
- 5: Mega Man X4  
Capcom
- 6: Resident Evil  
Capcom
- 7: W.S. Baseball '98  
Sega
- 8: Street Fighter Alpha 2  
Capcom
- 9: Sonic Jam  
Sega
- 10: Mass Destruction  
AGE Systems

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Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 2: GoldenEye 007  
Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 3: Mischief Makers  
Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 4: Madden 64  
Electronic Arts
- 5: Int. Superstar Soccer 64  
Konami
- 6: Tetrisphere  
Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 7: Top Gear Rally  
Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 8: Mario Kart 64  
Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 9: Star Fox 64  
Nintendo 64, Nintendo
- 10: NFL QB Club '98  
Accurate



## HOW TO READ THE TOP 10 CHART

5: Name of Game  
Publisher's Name

↑ Editor's Choice Award ↓

↑ Consecutive Months On The Chart ↓

Rank Number





# ELECTRONIC GAMING and EGM<sup>2</sup> MONTHLY

## have 3 BONUS magazines coming your way this fall!

### Hey Gamers!

This time of year there are so many cool games coming our way it's hard to find enough space to tell you about 'em all. That's why we have EGM and EGM<sup>2</sup> special issues like the 1998 Video Game Buyer's Guide, Guide to Sports Video Games and Video Games for the Nintendo 64. Although these mags are created by your favorite EGM and EGM<sup>2</sup> editors, they contain lots of information not found in the pages of EGM and EGM<sup>2</sup>. Let me tell you a little about each...

### 1998 Video Game Buyer's Guide

Put together by Dan Hsu and the rest of the Review Crew, this mag tells you our pick for this year's best system and which games you should buy! We also have our Good, Bad and Silly look back on the gaming industry, along with a massive trick index and game review chart with over 1,300 games listed and rated! Plus, go behind the scenes with Shigeru Miyamoto on the future of Nintendo, and take a top-secret look at the world of video game-controller design.

### Video Games for Nintendo 64

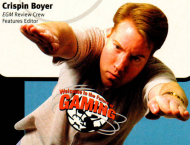
Written by board spookin' new Review Crew guy (and Nintendo-book veteran) John Ricciardi, this mag has everything you've ever wanted to know about the N64. It's packed with reviews of all the new N64 games, previews of more than 20 hot new titles, a huge tips-and-tricks section and—best of all—strategy guides for all of your favorite games. John just got back from Japan with the latest Nintendo news, and he's itching to unload it all in this special issue.

### Sports Video Games

Tired of watching the other team make all the big plays? Want to know which sports games you should even bother playing? EGM's guide will satisfy all of your sports-gaming needs with comprehensive strategies, interviews, in-depth previews and a hard-hitting review lineup of the ultimate sports titles. Watch for the huge Madden 64 behind-the-scenes blowout and an interview with legendary Q-back Brett Favre. EGM's arrchiear Jack King Kujawa is writing this sucker, which focuses mainly on football, basketball and hockey titles. Watch for it!

### Crispin Boyer

EGM Review Crew  
Features Editor



## 1998 VIDEO GAME BUYER'S GUIDE

On Sale Nov. 11, 1997

## VIDEO GAMES FOR THE NINTENDO 64

On Sale Nov. 25, 1997

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## Fighting Force

by EGM's Tim Davis



What we have here folks is a title that's original enough to breathe new life into an age-old genre, the action platform game. Although the action is definitely first

fight tonight, it's also where the similarity ends. Fighting force surrounds your character (and your friend's if you opt for the new player Model) in a 3-D environment where you're free to roam just about anywhere you want. This makes the action unique in the

respect that it's now possible to not enemies up by killing one fighter without the computer opponent and the other attack has been behind. It may not be the most critical, but it's effective nonetheless, there are simple hidden health items and weapons for you to find also, so be sure to look up whenever you're able to, because in the game to get a nice bonus.



More times than not, when you're surrounded by a circle of enemies, pick one to take your jump kick on or side so that you can beat your way out. Then work your way around the circle attacking one enemy at a time.

## General Strategy

**2**

There are certain types of attacks (i.e., the dashing variety) that for some reason enemies can't or won't

**1**



**a**



**b**

Weapons are an essential ingredient of any fighting platform formula, and Fighting Force doesn't disappoint. Everything from baseball bats (a) to knives (b) and bats (c) are in here, and although you will find some stashed away in a crate or the trunk of a car, for the most part you'll have to earn them by defeating the enemy that possesses them. Often these are weapons around you without you realizing it. Many times you can rip support rails from their posts or break open emergency glass to reveal sees inside when you're in a jam.



**c**

a



b



c



The parking lot directly in front of Zeng's H.U.D. filled to the brim with enemies, so how do you subvert this? The receipt of a hidden key in an area of the map that you can't see is your first hint. Don't worry, though, this key is not a key to a locked door, but a key to a hidden area. If you happen to be controlling Sombra, you can tip out the engine block from the

3

attire car and block access to half of your enemies. b. Also, you can use the support barriers in the map to push the enemy and hold them like a club at enemies. c. Throw your fist at an enemy, after you get out of there also inflicts damage.

## Inside the Complex

a. After or during the multiple fights in the reception area, both down both black gates in the room to gain access to some hidden health looms and hand guns. b. They're enclosed in a couple of containers in each room that must be detonated to reveal their location. c. The reception area will lead you directly to the main elevator of the complex which is, of course, infested with enemies of its own. Be cautious after taking down a wave of attackers, for some will try to attack you

from above the elevator car itself. If the action here is too much for you to handle, you can flip off various hand rails in the car and beat 'em to a pulp with your lead pipe. d. You can also break open the emergency fire glass on the wall by the door to reveal a Fireman's as to aid you. e. The elevator leads to the main corridor to the good doctor's penthouse suite of which you'll have to tackle a half dozen of his cronies donning knives for fighters while he makes his getaway.

a



b



c



d



e



B



1



4



Don't celebrate too much after defeating the worker boss as you still have some enemies near area (bosses) to go before the final slowdown with the infamous Dr.

Zeng on his secret island base. Look for a mass complete blowout to this fighting blockhouse in the upcoming EGM!



## BOSS: Construction Worker

After busting out of the office complex while pursuing Dr. Zeng, you'll come across a disgruntled construction worker that wants to recharge your face. e. A good technique to use is to hit him to knock him out his back with a cloning jump lock on ground slide. Then's, well away of his while he's down. Hey, nobody said this was the Moral Force.

5



a

b

c

d

e

# Excaliber 2555

In a cross between Zelda and King of Fields, *Excaliber 2555* takes players into a labyrinth of puzzles and monsters.

The main character Beth, has two modes. The first, Explorations, allows her to run, talk and use items, the second, is Sword Combat. The controls switch according to the mode, with the latter giving you access to a variety of sword swipes. Surprisingly, there is little fighting.

The level design is the same throughout, with the later sections merely being longer with more puzzles. The whole game is "use-til-it-goes-bust", with you having to run back and forth to fulfill various quests. The traps you find are quite interesting to run past.

There is a great host of 13 levels to explore. So even the best player will have a decent amount of time to beat this one.

Strategies To Get You Started On The Hottest Games

# JUMP START

See **EGM**

42

For A Complete BlowOut

## Level One

# 2

### Ort Underworld

1. Find Room 3 and speak to Tredor. (see pic below)
2. Go to Room 5 and retrieve the GLASS from the table.
3. In Room 6, you'll find a KEY behind the ricks.
4. In Room 8, you'll need to speak to the Ort Cent man.
5. Return to the Ort Guard and use the KEY on the door.
6. In Room 21, kill the enemy to collect the MEAT pick-up.
7. Speak with the barman found in Room 16. Give him the GLASS and he'll give you the GRID.
8. Go to Room 11 and drop the MEAT in front of the meat stand to pick up CELLS. THE MEAT when he goes to ribble on it.
9. Head back to Room 8 and give the GRID to the woman, and he'll give you a KEY.
10. Go to Room 26 and unlock the eastern door. Give CELLS to the bus, and he'll give you the WEED-KIT.
11. Head up Tredor with the WEED-KIT in Room 3. As a reward, you will receive the POWER CELL.
12. Install the POWER CELL in the robot in Room 1. Exit through the door.



### Swordsmanship Made Easy

You are given three types of sword slashes, as well as the ability to block enemy attacks. Certain enemies are weaker against particular strikes. For example, acrobats are susceptible to the overhead slash. Two hits this way will kill one, compared to four of five normally. The key is to experiment.

You have the power to charge up your sword for more damage. Most times, doing so will get you hit or the attack will be blocked. The most effective way to utilize your sword is to step back from an enemy and throw your charge so that the sword slips into it. With luck it won't be able to block in time.

Blocking is not very useful against most opponents. It's far more than to be used as a punishment on them. Instead of trying to parry everything, the best way to win is to wait until you can block when the enemy has a predictable attack.

And last but not least, enemies can be hit by the level dangers (like fireballs). This especially works well on the zombies and skeletons in Level 2. This saves you the trouble of actually fighting them.

# 1



Make sure to keep an eye on your health bar. If it gets low you need to eat an item like the apple or chicken leg. Even better, look in JEOP for a secret code that restores your life. This and other goodies in the next issue!

# Death Crypt

1. Enter Room 5 and collect the **LOG**.
2. Find Room 11 and pick up another **LOG**.
3. Talk to the Hag in Room 10 and give her the **LOGS**. She will give you the **HEALING POTION**.
4. Room 1: Give the **HEALING POTION** to the stung man. He'll give you his **LUCKY CHARM**.
5. In Room 11, you should use the **LUCKY CHARM** to unlock the door.
6. Reach Room 22 and kill the Reaper. Your reward will be the **LAB KEY**.
7. Get into Room 30 and pick up the **Mallet**.
8. Give the **Mallet** to the undertaker in Room 14, and he'll unlock the door to Room 28.
9. In Room 28, hit the eagle crest on the lamppost. Pick up the **KEY**.
10. Use the **KEY** to unlock the door to Room 31. Turn the power off with the lever.
11. In Room 30, fight the monster, then talk to the Scientist. Exit the level via Room 29.



Kill the Reaper and you'll be able to acquire the Lab Key.



Smash the eagle crest to find a secret key hidden behind it.



## The Monster

Once you enter the lab, the scientist will send his creation after you. The best way to beat this abomination is to alter his vision the left bit, then the slash over and over. Do not try to charge up your sword. Doing so will only give him time to block then attack. As long as you send a flurry of attacks at the Monster, he won't be able to do anything.

# 3

## Level Two



The Hag needs logs to make a healing potion.



# 4

## What's Ahead

### The Trappings

This level is a long one with over 37 steps to complete to beat the level. The "Trappings" introduce two new game elements that you need to use to get through.



You now can combine items to form something else entirely. For example, you'll need to do this once in the Trappings. The first is the Log the trappings for the Spell of Fragmentation. The other item you need to mix up is the Instant Key, which requires both the Key Mosaic and the Instant Iron Ore to make.

Teleporters and switches are the other new game element. These add a puzzle twist to things. Make sure to read your map.

### The Sewer

The Sewer is a huge level that is one gigantic puzzle. What makes this level so tough is the fact that there are secret sections in the wall that you must find and open. To do so, you must hack at the specific part with your sword. However, once found it will stay found.



This level also uses teleporters to get you lost. While trying to find your way through, you should check with your map often. Later on in this level, you will have to go through certain sections in a specific pattern as you will die. There is plenty of traps, and many will react right after you Teleport. Watch out for spines especially.

## Level Three



Combine different items to solve some of the puzzles.



Learn to use the teleporters and the door switches.



You must search carefully to find the secret passages.



The Sewer is loaded with a series of one-way teleporters.

# To call it a driving game is It's more like a flight



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misleading.  
simulator.



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# NFL Gameday 98

## EASTER EGG CHEATS

At the Main Menu Screen, access the Options, then choose Easter eggs. Now pick the "Add Entry" Option and enter one of these cheats:

- credits — Shows credits
- equal teams — All players equal
- quiet crowd — Crowd quieter
- busy ref — Lots of unfair penalties
- loud mouth — Loud PA announcer
- blind ref — Ref doesn't call PI or personal fouls
- crash line — Leader hit noises
- big foot — Long field goals
- goals — Great punts for receivers
- bad pass — Bad pass coverage
- leech — Great pass coverage
- hatchet — Forearm shove is juiced
- belts — Shoulder charge is juiced
- juice — Hyper speed burst
- jack hammer — Super stiff arm
- rejection — Defensive jump is higher
- fine circles — Players are tiny and quick
- watery af — Catch-up speed high; pursuit angles are wrong

- virtual polygons — Flat players
- humongous — All players are huge
- this air — Special stadium and teams
- look na — Players have stumps for arms
- horseman — Players have no heads
- show off — CPU does only High Steps
- deep challenge — Hides difficulty level
- goop gray — CPU remembers ya plays
- cpu offense — CPU offense gets a speed juice
- cpu defense — CPU defense gets a speed juice
- peppic — CPU cheats on every play call
- fire drill — Player and ball speed are very high
- rype — Swin moves are juiced



At the Main Menu, select "Start Game" and enter it.



Choose an Exhibition game and hold the main button.



After the screens load in, you will see the two new teams!

# NHL Powerplay 98

## TWO HIDDEN TEAMS

This trick will give you two hidden teams normally not available in the game. On the Main Menu Screen, choose the "Start Game" Option. On the next screen, choose "Exhibition" and then hold the X, Triangle, Square and Circle buttons until the next screen loads in. Once the Team Select Screen appears, let go

of the buttons and scroll through the teams on the first or second controller, and you'll find that you can choose two new teams: the Virgin Blisters and the Red Army. Both of these teams have a high rating, so you will be sure to do well with either one of them.

Norma Velvikis — via the Internet



In the Options Screen, go to the "Easter egg" at the bottom.



Add up to 16 codes at a time to combine the best cheat!

# Triple Play 98

## VOCAL CREDITS

While in an Exhibition game, pause and hold all of the top four buttons (L1, L2, R1, R2). While holding these, press the following buttons to access voice credits:

- Chuck Orsine: Up, Triangle, Up, Square.
- Darren Stone: Up, Triangle, Up, Circle.
- Michael J. Sokyniak: Right, Circle, Right, Square.
- Chris Johnson: Up, Triangle, Up, X.

- Frank Faugno: Right, Circle, Right, X.
- Brent Nielsen: Left, Square, Left, Circle.
- Pauline Moller: Left, Square, Left, X.
- Steve Rechtschaffen: Left, Square, Left, Triangle.
- Emie Patzel: Right, Circle, Right, Triangle.

Chris Ciancanelli  
Southbury, CT



Pick the Exhibition Mode and your teams of choice.



Hold the top four buttons here and enter the vocal code.



Enter VORTEX as your new name and hold the Reset button.



You will see a cool animated sequence of a vortex.

Benjamin  
Yavitz  
St. Louis,  
MO

# Tetrisphere VORTEX CODE

# NHL 97



All of your players will turn into nets once you enter the code!

## NET PLAYERS

Choose "Exhibition" at the Play Mode Screen and then select your teams of choice. At the Name Entry Screen, put in the password: NETHOCKEY. Now when you begin your game, all of the players on both teams will look like hockey goals!

Wiktor Jozwiak  
Philadelphia, PA



# Trickman's Reference Guide



This guide is a reference to all of the game codes printed within the last six months of EGM. Note: This does not include GameShark codes or any other codes that use a peripheral attachment. Look for the update in next month's Tricks of the Trade.

Issue #95			Issue #96			Issue #97					
U.S.R. Alien Collection	PS	Scud: The Disposable Assassin	SAI	Ball Blazer Champions	SAI	Star Trek 64	N64	Blade Corps	N64	Independence Day	SAI
UMD	SAI	Soviet Strike	PS/SAT	Command & Conquer	PS	Tigerclaw	PS	Brutus Force	PS	Mega Man II	PS/SAT
Issue 64	N64	Street Fighter Alpha 2	SAI	Table to Black	PS	Totol 2	PS	Bay Beat	SAI	Need for Speed 2	PS
Brutus Force	PS	Test Drive: BP-Road	PS	Independence Day	PS	War Gods	N64	Beater Bros. Collection	PS	Near by Honorand	PS
Independence Day	PS	TNN M.S. Hardcore	PS/SAT	MediWarrior II	PS	WCM vs. the World	PS	Doctor Maximum	PS	Peak Performance	PS
Int. Superstar Soccer	N64	Turbo Dinosaur Hunter	N64	Always Win It	PS/SAT	Die Hard Incade	SAI	Die Hard Incade	SAI	Triple Play '98	PS
Mario Kart 64	N64			Kawabak Warrior	PS	Die Hard Trilogy	SAI	Die Hard Trilogy	SAI	Turk Dinosaur Hunter	N64
MediWarrior II	PS			Need for Speed 2	PS	Dragonair	PS	War Gods	N64		
Mega Man II	SAI			Soviet Strike	PS/SAT	Doom	SAI	Wing Commander IV	PS		
PS Underground No. 1	PS			Spider	PS	FIFA Soccer 98	N64				
Issue #98			Issue #99			Issue #100					
Extreme Teeka	PS	Test Drive: BP-Road	PS	A.I. Soldiers 3	PS	N64 ST	PS	Battle Wonders	SAI	NBA Hangman	PS
Baycom USA CE	SAI	Thunder Truck Rally	PS	Andrew Hollis	PS	Peak Performance	PS	Carnage Beat	PS	NCAA Football '98	PS
Die Hard Trilogy	PS	TNN Hardcore 4M	PS	Cool Boarders	PS	Pitfall	PS	The Case	PS	MR. GameBoy III	PS
Evans	N64	Tabal 2	PS	Darklight Conflict	PS	Star Wars: Set!	N64	Excitebike 200 A.G.	SAI	Open Tennis	PS
Machine Head	PS	Tekken Metal 2	PS	Dark Rib	N64	S.T. CD-Alpha	SAI	GoldenEye 007	N64	Pendemonium	SAI
Mega Target	SAI	War Gods	N64	Dragonair Warriors	PS	Three Dirty Swears	SAI	Ren's Adventures	PS	Street Fighter CD-Alpha	PS
PS Underground No. 2	PS	Wing Aces	PS	Jet Moto	PS	Triple Play '98	PS	RT: The Area Lighters	PS	Swirlifters	N64
Roboter X	PS			K-1 The Arena Fighters	PS	Turk Dinosaur Hunter	N64	Machine Hunter	PS	Wrestle II: The Dark Sage	PS
Star Wars: Set!	N64			Nanos Muzam Vol. 4	PS	Justice 200+	PS	Marvel Super Heroes	SAI		
Top Pin Alley	PS			NBA Hangman	SAI			Mortal Kombat Trilogy	SAI		

## Lost World: Jurassic Park 2



### MANY CHEATS

Just go to the Password Screen where it says, "Teput DNA Sequence" and enter the following to enable the codes. Use this key to decipher the cheats.

S=Square, X=X, C=Circle and T=Triangle

To Activate Level Select enter: S, X, C, T, X, S, C, T, C, X, S. This must be done three times in work.

These level codes will start your game out with 99 lives and all DNA.

Compsognathus: X, X, C, T, S, X, S, X, C, S, T, S.

Human Hunter: S, S, T, C, X, S, S, S, X, C, T.

Velociraptor: X, X, C, T, S, X, S, X, S, T, C.

Human Prey: S, S, T, C, X, X, S, S, T, C, T.

Tyrannosaurus Rex: X, X, C, T, S, S, S, X, T, S, T, S.

To access the Gallery Levels enter these codes.

Compsognathus Gallery: S, S, T, C, X, C, T, C, T, X, X.

Human Hunter Gallery: X, X, C, T, S, T, T, X, C, S, C.

Velociraptor Gallery: S, S, T, C, X, C, T, C, T, X, T.

Tyrannosaurus Rex: T, T, S, X, C, S, C, X, X, S, T, S.

Human Prey Gallery: T, T, S, X, C, S, T, X, S, C, C.



Select any male ninja from the Character Select Screen.



When this screen says "Loading," do the trick.



This will give you Chameleon, the multi-ninja!

## Mortal Kombat Trilogy

### CHAMELEON CODE

To play as Chameleon in the game, choose any male ninja from the Character Select Screen. When asked to choose your destiny, pick any difficulty level and when "Loading" appears on the screen, press and hold High Punch+High Kick+Run+Block+Left (for player one) or +Right (for player two).

Once the game level loads, your ninja will turn into Chameleon. He will switch between the different male ninja characters at random, giving you a variety of moves for the entire set of matches.

Writer Jozwik Philadelphia, PA



At the Password Screen, enter the correct button combinations.



You can start the game with 99 lives and all DNA with the code.



You can also access the galleries with the codes shown.



## Warcraft II: The Dark Saga

### MANY INCREDIBLE CHEATS



Last month there were some incredible cheats for this game. Now, here are even more codes to enhance its play value. Just go to the Password Screen specified by the set of cheats and enter them at the Password Screen for the results shown below:

**Gameplay Cheats:** (Enter these while paused in the middle of play at the Password Screen)  
Game Victory - NTTCLENS  
Game Loss - YPTFLBREM  
Don't End Game - NVRWNR  
Easier Lumber - HTORTKNS

**FWWs:** (Enter these at the Main Menu Password Screen)  
New Opening - CLMEX  
TOD Opening - TDFNMG  
Human TOD Act II - HKHZMD  
Human TOD Act III - NRTHLN  
Human TOD Act IV - RTNITZK  
Human TOD Victory - HTDACT  
Orc TOD Act II - RCKNDM  
Orc TOD Act III - QJNKLS  
Orc TOD Act IV - TDFSDM  
Orc TOD Victory - RCTDNC  
DP Opening - DPNNG  
Human DP Act II - DRNRTH  
Human DP Act III - HBRNTH  
Human DP Act IV - HBSRTV  
Human DP Victory - HSPVCT  
Orc DP Act II - BRMNGF  
Orc DP Act III - RCGRTS  
Orc DP Act IV - PRLDN  
Orc DP Victory - RCDPVC

**Missions:** (Enter these on the Main Menu or Pause Screen Password Options)  
Human 700 1 - HLLBRD  
Human 700 2 - MRSHTM  
Human 700 3 - WSHSH  
Human 700 4 - TCKNZ  
Human 700 5 - HLLBRD  
Human 700 6 - DWLGG  
Human 700 7 - GRMBLL  
Human 700 8 - TYRHND  
Human 700 9 - BTTLTD  
Human 700 10 - PRSARS  
Human 700 11 - BTRYLN  
Human 700 12 - BTTLJC  
Human 700 13 - SSLTNS  
Human 700 14 - GRTPRF  
Orc 700 1 - ZLBR  
Orc 700 2 - RDTLL  
Orc 700 3 - RCLSTHS  
Orc 700 4 - SSLTNS  
Orc 700 5 - RCTLBR  
Orc 700 6 - BDLNDS  
Orc 700 7 - FLFPT  
Orc 700 8 - RNSMT  
Orc 700 9 - RZNGFT  
Orc 700 10 - DSTRCT  
Orc 700 11 - DRDSQ  
Orc 700 12 - TMBPSR  
Orc 700 13 - SGPDLK  
Orc 700 14 - FLFLK

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# Get Some!

Cool stuff you could probably live without, but shouldn't



## The Tilt is Out There

The ultimate pinball game for any fan of the X-Files, this Sega pinball machine is also part of Neiman Marcus' Christmas catalog. This limited-edition pinball machine (only 125 will be sold) commemorates the series with customized pictures and graphics of the show's characters, digital sound from the show, multiball play, hidden passages, ramp shots and more. The price includes installation of the machine at your door.

**Price** About \$3,600

### For more information

[www.neimanmarcus.com](http://www.neimanmarcus.com)

phone (800) 823-8000



## Anti-Gravity Patrol

Amaze yourself and friends for hours and hours with the Levitron anti-gravity top. Using a series of magnets in the base and one in the levitron, this puppy spins on a magnetic field about an inch and a half above its black base. Once balanced and spun properly, the levitron can fly easily for three to five minutes! Levitron creates assert flights of a half hour inside an air-free test vacuum chamber. UFO, the company responsible for this gizmo, has temporarily stopped shipment of levitrons due to some messy legal matters. Hopefully by the time you read this a better, easier to fly and redesigned levitron should be available. Check the Web site for the latest Levitron details.

**Price** Under \$50

### For more information

[www.levitron.com](http://www.levitron.com)

phone (800) 275-0877

## Gotta Hand It to Ya

In case you are sick of those "Tamagotchis" (or whatever the heck they're called) but still want a little handheld action, check this out: Tiger Electronics has re-introduced a playable Defender so small that it doubles as a key chain ornament. The games will use a 1" x 1" grayscale LCD (liquid crystal display) screen and two small watch batteries to keep it powered up. Many of the same functions as the arcade will be possible using the six micro buttons (life expectancy: 160 days) located on the front of the case. Tiger will continue to tap the retro game market with the release of Joust and Kaboom and possibly several other classics in the spring of '98.

**Price** around \$30

### For more information

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# Get Some!

## Hail to The Figure, Baby!

If controlling Duke Nukem on screen wasn't enough for you, then get ready to manipulate the gun-totin' alien killer in the palm of your hand. Resaurus Company, Inc. is about to make their first shipment of their action figure, based on the popular character from Duke Nukem 3D. Working with GT Interactive on the project (the publishers of the game on various platforms), Resaurus plans on shipping 200,000 of these puppies, complete with weapons, to retail outlets across the country sometime in early November. But for those of you who don't like to leave the house, a simple visit to the

Resaurus Web site and a credit card number will land you a limited-edition Duke figure around the same time as the stores. It's a little more expensive, but the LE version of Duke is individually numbered.

Includes the Freeze Thrower weapon (which is only included in one of every 12 retail packs) and a free Shareware version of the game.

**Price:** About \$8 Retail,  
About \$13 Limited Edition

### For More Information

[www.resaurus.com](http://www.resaurus.com)  
phone: (800) 750-9357



## Phone Home

All the phone companies, along with the IRS have the power to strike fear in the hearts of the strongest Americans. Being that the IRS is a huge multibillion-dollar powerful governmental demon, it is best to leave them alone. What we can do though is help you fight the phone companies and win the war against high rates. PhoneMiser from MediaCom is a flat little device which connects your computer to an online database of the cheapest long-distance carriers in the country. PhoneMiser attaches to your computer through the printer/parallel port, and uses your modem to access and update the long-distance database. You register PhoneMiser with MediaCom using your credit card, and all calls and a monthly service fee (under five dollars) is charged directly to your account.

Despite the goofy packaging, which features a dude who looks like he's either hard of hearing or posing as your dad's great grandpappy, PhoneMiser is a product which is easy to use and works seamlessly with your phone. An easy-to-use interface gives the ability to check out all your calls at a glance along with the cost and projected savings over your regular long-distance carrier. The only downside is the computer must be left on all the time to take advantage of the PhoneMiser.

**Price:** About \$100

### For More Information

[www.phonemiser.com](http://www.phonemiser.com)  
phone: (607) 296-8400



## Cruise in Gaming Style

Looking for that car that provides a comfortable ride and has enough entertainment options to satisfy an entire family? Then maybe this Sony Limited-Edition 1998 GMC Suburban is for you. Offered in Neiman Marcus' Christmas book this year, this Suburban is fully loaded with everything a technophile needs to ride in style. Among its features are a sunroof, seating for seven people, two cell phones—one voice activated and one portable, deluxe sound system with two tuners and 480 watts of power delivered to the vehicle's eight speakers, a 9-inch TV with VCR, rear seat-back video monitors, a PlayStation, five head-phones, 100 Sony Music CDs, 24 Columbia TriStar movies, 30 PlayStation games, plus plenty more. This one's for the guy or gal with loads of cash.

**Price:** A more \$72,075

### For more information

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phone: (800) 837-8000





# OP:ed

by Ed Semrad  
ed\_semrad@aol.com



## EGM's own gaming guru shoots from the hip

Family bonding gets redefined when you live in a video game family of the '90s.

I believe that there should be warning labels put on video games. Kind of like the ones that are on cigarettes. Not on every game, mind you, just those which are top so material. Let me tell you why. Last week I finally broke down and bought Final Fantasy VII. Yeah, I'm a little slow (I just got my Tamagotchi in July), but after watching the guys at the office play it for the last nine months, it seemed like a game I would want to spend some time with. And that is one of my problems—once I start a good game, virtually nothing else gets done. It becomes an obsession, almost an addiction.

So Friday night I buy the game and start to play it. "Wow!" I say to my boy Michael. "This is one great game." "I have been telling you that for months Dad, when do I get to play it?" he asks. "Later, when I am done," I respond. Michael watches for a while, offering tips as to what to do but soon he sees that his help isn't working for me and he lets me explore the game on my own. Growing bored, he asks, "Can I get GoldenEye? I read in your magazine that it is a great game." "Uh, just a minute, let me finish this battle. (Pause) What was that?" I ask. "Can I get GoldenEye?" he repeats in a louder tone. "Any homework to do?" "No," he says. "Do you have the money?" I ask him. "No," he replies. "Sorry, why don't you play Star Fox then?" I say. Just then The Boss (a police name we call my wife Marianne) walks in and asks me if I am going to cut the grass tonight. "Just a minute," I say. "Let me get to a safe point in the game. (Pause) What did you say?" I ask her. "Are you going to cut the grass tonight?" she asks in a louder tone. "Uh... Michael, here is the chance to earn the money for your game," I respond. An hour later he comes to the game room and says he is done and would like the money. "Uh... just a minute. Let me finish this battle," I say. (Pause) I give him the money and a bit later he comes back and

starts playing GE. (In order to avoid conflicts I learned early on to have a separate TV for each game system.) Trying to make conversation, I ask him, "How is volleyball coming at school?" He responds, "Just a minute, let me get to a safe spot. (Pause) Uh... what was that Dad?" "How is volleyball coming?" I repeat in a louder tone. "Fine, coach wants me on JV next year." (Long pause) Seeing that conversation is slow, I continue FF7. About 2 a.m. The Boss comes in and asks if we know what time it was. I look at Michael and we both know we are in trouble. "Guess



It's time for bed." The next morning I'm up at 6 a.m. and as I walk into the game room with my coffee I see Michael is already playing GE. "Morning, Dad," he says as I start up FF7. The rest of the day is solid gameplay interrupted only by soda, snacks and bathroom breaks. About 7 p.m. The Boss comes in and asks what we want for supper. "Uh... just a minute. (Pause) What did you say?" She repeats herself louder and we opt for pizza—a good food for eating and playing at the same time. About 2 a.m. we call it a night and crash. Sunday ends up like Saturday as I move on to disc 2. Now it's Monday and I have to go to work. Can't take the day off as there is too much to do but the game stays on my mind. It's an obsession.

Games this good are few and far between. With FF7 finished, our family life has returned to normal. Now if I could only get The Boss to like games—that would be real family bonding...

ED SEMRAD  
ZIFF-DAVIS

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# this month

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## VideoGameSpot

**S**urf the Web in style on VideoGameSpot, the premier source of video game information on the Web. Nowhere else will you find a complete archive of reviews for each of the top systems—PlayStation, Nintendo 64 and Saturn. At VideoGameSpot, you'll find previews of games that have yet to hit store shelves and daily news that is at the forefront of the industry. All this in one complete package, available now on the World Wide Web at <http://www.videogamespot.com/>. Here are just a few of the things going live this month:

### Features

Keep watching for continued updates to our massive *History of Street Fighter* series. From the original *Street Fighter* to the latest *Street Fighter III: 2nd Impact*, you'll find everything you need to know and more right here.

### Strategy Guides

The most complete library of strategy guides on the Web. If you're stuck in *Final Fantasy VII*, *Star Fox 64*, *GoldenEye 007* or *Castlevania Symphony of the Night*, you'll find your solutions here. New strategy guides are added regularly.

### Designer Diaries

Ever wonder how a game goes from concept to reality? VideoGameSpot takes you through the process with Designer Diaries from *Pitfall 3-D*, *Critical Depth*, *Fragger* and more!

### News

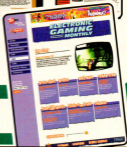
VideoGameSpot's news is updated twice daily so you're always in touch with the latest from the industry. Available directly at <http://theadline.gamespot.com>.



## EGM Online

**I**f you just can't get enough of *EGM* in print, check us out online! Our regularly updated Web site includes all the reviews, previews, gossip and cool stuff you expect from the staff of *Electronic Gaming Monthly*. Hear from your favorite editors in columns available exclusively online, send comments to *EGM*'s mailbox and participate in reader surveys! Every Monday, get your weekly dose of the best content that the number-one video game magazine in the world has to offer. It's more fun than a barrel of chimps.

The GameSpot Network features content from magazines like *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, *EGM* and *Computer Gaming World*, in addition to content created by SpinMedia Communications. Sites in the Network include VideoGameSpot, PC GameSpot, GameSpot News, EGM Online and Computer Gaming World Online.



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SONY



# Next Month

# December 1997

## Feature Story



Sony's smarty-pants hero **Crash Bandicoot** returns once again to the PlayStation with new moves—such as a *spin disc* and *slide*—and tougher 3-D levels! Find out how to get those sweet gems in our strategy guide.

## January 1998

# ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY



Will EA Sports continue their excellent basketball tradition with **NBA Live 98**? Find out in our upcoming review.

Our holiday issues are behind us, but that doesn't mean that there aren't plenty of new games for us to cover in the new year. Look for reviews of **NBA Live 98**, **Duke Nukem 64**, **MDK**, **ClayFighter 63 1/3**, **F1: Championship Edition**, the quirky game known as

**Monster Rancher** and the long-awaited **Tomb Raider 2**.

After playing some of today's most impressive games, have you ever wondered how gaming started and where its roots lie? If so, prepare to take a trip down memory lane as EGM gets nostalgic by outlining the history of video games. It reaches farther back than you might think.

You've heard the classic argument of computer versus console, but how do their games really stack up? EGM will take some of each platform's best games and compare them in an effort to make sense out of this age-old dispute.

Look forward to this and more in EGM's first issue of 1998!



Lara, Lara, Lara. Video gaming's most popular leading lady must be prepared to be judged in the long-awaited **Tomb Raider 2**! Finally open to!

# EGM<sup>2</sup>

It's the most wonderful time of the year—the holiday issue of EGM. We'll feature so many cool games this month, the jolly fat man may not have enough room to fit them all in his sleigh.

First off, check out **Cash Bandicoot 2**, which is more than just a fan-of-the-mill sequel. This awesome game has so many twists and turns it'll make your head spin.

Then in **Fighting Force**, some crazy freak hopes to feed the whole world a deadly psychedelic trip. It's your job (with EGM's help) to make the guy understand the phrase "Just say NO!" in any way possible.

Also, we will compare and contrast **Duke Nukem**, which is on all three systems, which one is the best! Check us out next month for



**is EGM's Fighting Force the final fight of the '90s?** Find out all you need to know to beat this 3-D brawler by reading EGM's in-depth walk-through.

the complete story.

Finally, EGM previews and reviews the hottest peripherals of 1997 to help you in your quest to be a better player.

The PC smash **Duke Nukem 3D** is coming to these next-generation consoles! How do the Saturn, PlayStation and Nintendo 64 levels differ? Our strategy guide reveals all.



## Feature Story



The origin of video games goes back further than you think. Learn about the history of the hobby that we all love so dearly (in our case, it also gets food on our table).

Be sure to look for the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine on newsstands near you!



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