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→HARVEST MOON: FRIENDS OF MINERAL TOWN

ADVANCE ★ ISSUE 07 ★ MAY 2004 ★ TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU ★ MARIO & LUIGI SUPERSTAR SAGA ★ CRASH AND SPYRO FUSION ★ METROID: ZERO MISSION ★ HARVEST MOON

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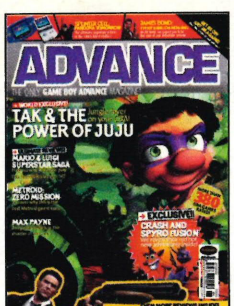

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HELLO THERE!
Welcome to the seventh issue of the world's greatest Game Boy magazine. Yes, we're back and we're filled with all the news, views and reviews that will make your gaming life a whole lot more interesting.

We're bursting to tell you about our cover game and on page 28 you'll be able to read our very first and exclusive look at *Tak and The Power of Juju*, a new platform game that sees gaming magic transforming the life of humble jungle dweller Tak, the Shaman's apprentice. Perhaps just as exciting, for us at least, is that absolutely brilliant *Mario and Luigi: Superstar Saga*. This is one of the finest games that the world has ever seen and you'll see why we're playing little else on page 36.

And there's so much else for the discerning GBA owner to get excited about. Ageing gamers will likely be pricking their ears up at the sounds of *Sabre Wulf* on GBA and younger types who don't remember the classic it's based upon would do well to read our review on page 32 and find out what all the fuss is about. Then there's *Harvest Moon*, which brings us more delicately designed farming adventures, while *Hamtaro* puts us in a world of cuteness for the adventures of some talkative hamsters.

For more serious action we've got the violent and rather bloody *Max Payne*, as well as a visit to the land of spies with both *Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow* and the latest James Bond title, *Everything or Nothing*. We're really excited about these games, not least because they provide the GBA with the varied and complex exoeriences that we've all been waiting for.

But if you're looking for some GBA titles that are just plain cool, well we've got those too: *Metroid: Zero Mission* and the ultra-hip *Jet Set Radio* waltz trendily onto our pages this month. Oh yeah, it doesn't get much better than this. We particularly hope that you enjoy reading our finely crafted pages this month, because we've had even more fun than normal making it happen for you. And for all those people who've been asking after the next issue, I hope this has been worth waiting for.

Enjoy the issue.

Jim Rossignol
Editor

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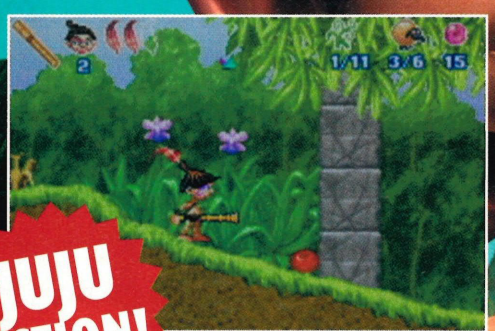
THE RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE!
TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU

The magic little scamp of the jungle heads out on the adventure of his life, in our massive feature starting on p26.



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Sonic asks you to step outside in this battler.

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MAX PAYNE
Take it to the Max in this gun-fight spectacular.

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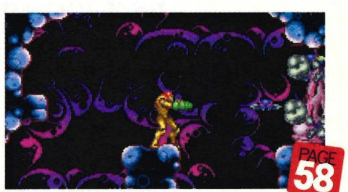
SABRE WULF
Classic brilliance returns to haunt us on GBA.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METROID: ZERO MISSION
Samus explores the outer regions of gaming.

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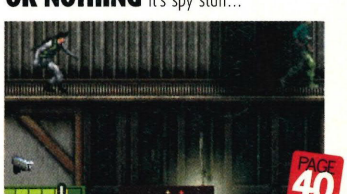
JAMES BOND: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING It's spy stuff...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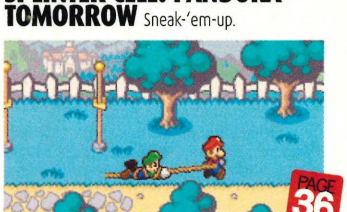
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SHINING SOUL 2
Purple dragons whack goblins with a hammer.

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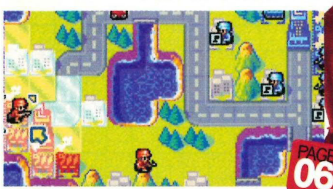

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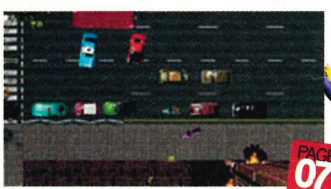

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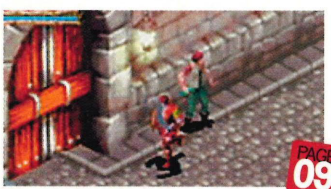
We ask the experts and wildly speculate.

DONKEY KONG 2
More Monkey madness makes millions.



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JET SET RADIO
We know everything, and then we know some more. Find out what we know right here, right now.

LIGHT FANTASTIC
FINAL FANTASY TACTICS ADVANCE
Defeat the tricky opening missions of Final Fantasy Tactics with our precision battle guide!

ADVANCE WARNING

Nintendo is the greatest!

NEWS FROM THE WIDER WORLD OF GAMES...

NINTENDO WIN THE BAFTAS!

This big scary gold face is in fact the award won by various Nintendo games as they faced off against the best in the industry.

The world's greatest games company receives accolades from the UK's greatest awards ceremony.

The booze was flowing and the smiles were frequent at the Games' BAFTAs this year, and especially so on the Nintendo table. It's been one of the best ever years for Nintendo games and the ceremony, at which 350 members of the UK gaming industry were gathered, recognised that fact by awarding *Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising* on the Game Boy Advance the BAFTA award for Best Strategy Game and also for Best Game Boy Advance Game.

The BAFTAs seem to confirm what we here at *Advance Magazine* have been saying all along: *Advance Wars 2* is genius in design and execution. If there's a Game Boy game that no one can afford to be without, then this is it. *Advance Wars 2* has shattered our expectations by being even better than the original. But it wasn't just the brilliance of the Game Boy format that was recognised at the event, there was also an award for Gamecube's Miyamoto classic *The Legend Of Zelda: The Wind Waker*, which received a BAFTA for Best Adventure Game. Perhaps even more exciting still was that the multi-award-winning and critically acclaimed *Metroid Prime* received a BAFTA for Best Gamecube Game.

It's safe to say that 2003 was a brilliant year for Nintendo, who's managed to launch some unbelievably fantastic software for both the Game Boy Advance and its bigger static console brother, the Gamecube. In total Nintendo scooped an impressive 14 awards for its 2003 year of gaming and added a further four BAFTAs to its collection.

Needless to say we think that the biggest accolades have been awarded by *Advance Magazine*'s massive scores for some brilliant Nintendo games. But we're not on the TV, so no one cares. Except you, that is! Read on and find out what could be winning awards in 2004...

ADVANCING! FOUR TO WATCH... Some explosive titles coming to your GBA this year.

ZERO TOLERANCE
Taking the 'running around, driving and getting up to no good' craze to its portable conclusion, *Zero Tolerance* is one of the most ambitious 3D titles on the GBA.

CT SPECIAL FORCES 3: BIOTERROR
The latest CT Special Forces game is looking like the most exciting version of this side-scrolling puzzle shooter so far! Look out for the review soon!

CUSTOM ROBO GX
Build your own robots and then fight them. This is out dream. And now there's a game of it, already released in the US. We can expect to see a European version real soon.

BOKTAI 2
The second instalment of the radical sunshine game is imminent. Our contact assures us that the vampire slaying sequel is going to be an absolute corker.

INCOMING

Some more games that are threatening to eat our spare time this year...

MARIO GOLF ADVANCE TOUR
■ Nintendo ■ April
There's hardly a game in the world that we're excited about than *Mario Gold* on the GBA. This is likely to be a smash hit, a hole in one, and any other golf jokes we can think of.
ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

JAMES BOND 007: GOLDENEYE 2
■ Electronic Arts ■ Summer
The best James Bond game of all time was *GoldenEye* on the Nintendo 64. So there's every reason for us to be excited about the confirmation of *GoldenEye 2* for GBA, amongst others
ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

THE RUMOUR MILL

THE GAME WE'D LIKE TO SEE ON GBA...

GRAND THEFT AUTO ON GBA?

Will the classic criminal funfest ever arrive on GBA turf? We investigate.

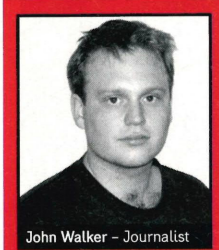
Way back when the Game Boy Colour came out there was a version of *GTA*, the long running and enormously popular game of criminal activity, based on the top-down version of the game that originally made *GTA* so famous. Given the massive popularity of the newer games on the static consoles many of our readers have asked whether we'll see a version of *GTA* on the Game Boy Advance. After investigations and asking contacts whether the awesome title would be recreated on GBA we can only say 'Maybe'.

Ultra-famous developer Rockstar has declined to comment so far, playing its cards close to its collective chest. But we learned this month that *GTA* has been in development for GBA, whether it will ever make it to completion and onto your GBA at home is unclear. Some rumours have it that the game will never see the light of day, having been cancelled before its completion.

We talked to John Walker, writer and veteran games journalist about how *GTA* would make an ideal game for the GBA: "The GBA has proven itself as a serious gaming platform with superb titles such as *Advance Wars*, *Mario & Luigi* and *Final Fantasy Tactics*," said Walker. "Now it's time for the GBA to prove itself as a serious gaming platform for grown ups. With the proven capabilities of dozens of games, the machine is more than capable of presenting a living city in which to recreate the *GTA* atmosphere."

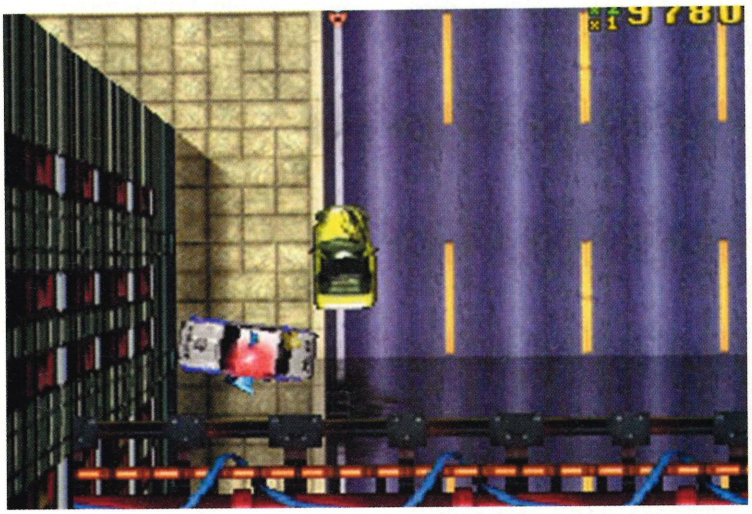
With the 3D capabilities of various games would it be possible for Rockstar to develop a version of *GTA* that harked to the recent versions of games such as *Vice City*? If so, we'd like to see it and not just a game made by someone wanting to cash-in on *GTA*'s enormous success. Watch this space.

EXPERT OPINION



John Walker – Journalist

"I'd like to see Grand Theft Auto on the GBA because it stands up as one of the classic game ideas."



The top-down classic looks like a fine candidate for GBA conversion.

The *GTA* set in London was one of the best games of all time.

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ADVANCE WARNING

THE INFOSPACE TRANSMISSION

Hello there, in this tiny corner of our magazine we look at some of the news and rumours that are flying about regarding Nintendo games, hardware and events.

First up is the news that Nintendo is investing in wireless technology for Pokémon titles. What does this mean? Well it seems that in forthcoming Pokémon games, the carts will have a little gizmo that allows you to connect to nearby fellow cart owners and play as if you were linked up. The potential for this is very interesting, as pointed out on the Pokémon website pokemon.com.jp, where people have already declared that certain carriages on trains should be 'Pokémon zones' where, equipped with wireless adaptors, GBA owners would simply be able to sit down and play their fellow Pokémon fans. This seems to be a nod towards the wireless technology that might well appear on the DS console (see page14 for more on that incredible story).

The second interesting tidbit this month is that the BBC's Fightbox game is coming out on GBA. Can it be better than the other Fightbox games that have appeared on other formats? We hope so, since the TV to game crossover really doesn't seem to have worked that well. We will certainly have more on this the rest of the latest developments in future GBA technology next month.

★ **But will this fellow ever go wireless?**

FROM: TAKE 2 **OUT:** SUMMER 2004 **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★★

SAM GETS SERIOUS ON GBA

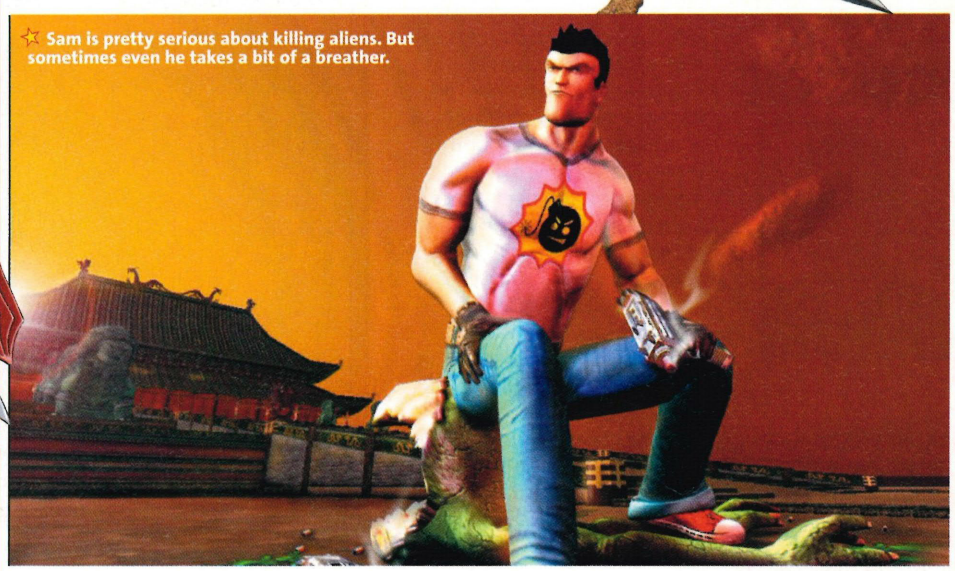
Muscle-bound hero all set for GBA adventure.

Enormous games publisher Take 2 has announced that its developing a version of *Serious Sam* for GBA. Serious Sam has to be one of our favourite gaming action heroes from previous years. Created by the seriously loony Croatian software development house Croteam, Serious Sam is a square-jawed, muscle-bound hero who's only true love is for guns bigger than himself.

The previous *Serious Sam* games on formats such as the PC have seen some of the most original and inventive monsters of all time, and Sam has battled wave after wave of freaks with a preposterous array of weaponry. Like its PC counterpart the GBA version will be a *Doom*-style first person shooter, in which you can expect to battle hordes of nasties.

Within the confines of the game, Sam will be visiting numerous places in a battle to rid the world of alien scum. Ancient Egypt and Rome are just two locations which have been confirmed so far. Needless to say there will also be ceaseless frenetic action, new monsters galore, and a load of never-before-seen bosses to keep the action on a knife edge.

Best of all Take 2 has told us that the game will feature deathmatch that can accommodate up four-players, where gamers can battle each other with huge weapons, all linked via the use of the Game Boy Advance Game Link Cable. We don't often get this excited about a game, but this time it's Serious.



★ **Sam is pretty serious about killing aliens. But sometimes even he takes a bit of a breather.**

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FROM: ATARI **OUT:** SUMMER 2004 **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★★

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE

The fantasy adventure of a lifetime arrives on the GBA.

The world of the Forgotten Realms, the place where the city of Baldur's Gate is to be found, has been home to countless fantasy adventures. Originally created for the pen and paper role-playing games of the Dungeons & Dragons series, Baldur's Gate is at the heart of a land of incredible adventure and, in *Dark Alliance*, you'll get to visit these dark and mystical locations on your GBA.

You can expect to play as one half of a pair of adventurers, after creating your own character. Then head out to bash some slimy things with hammers and set them on fire with powerful magic. If other *Baldur's Gate* games are anything to go by, you can expect *Dark Alliance* to have a superb storyline, filled with subquests and the nuances of complex story-telling. The game will be heavily focused on action though, so you can expect to be doing lots of hacking and slashing as you and your sidekick explore haunted graveyards and enter spooky crypts. With loads of spells, treasure, weapons and monsters what more could you possibly want?

No other details have been confirmed as yet, but since all the other versions of the game, which have appeared on static consoles, have been focused around multi-player games, there is sure to be some kind of link up option. Expect to see more on this eagerly anticipated game, next issue.

FROM: NINTENDO **OUT:** SUMMER 2004 **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★☆

DONKEY KONG 2

The Kong is back and this time it's the great big monkey himself who needs rescuing!

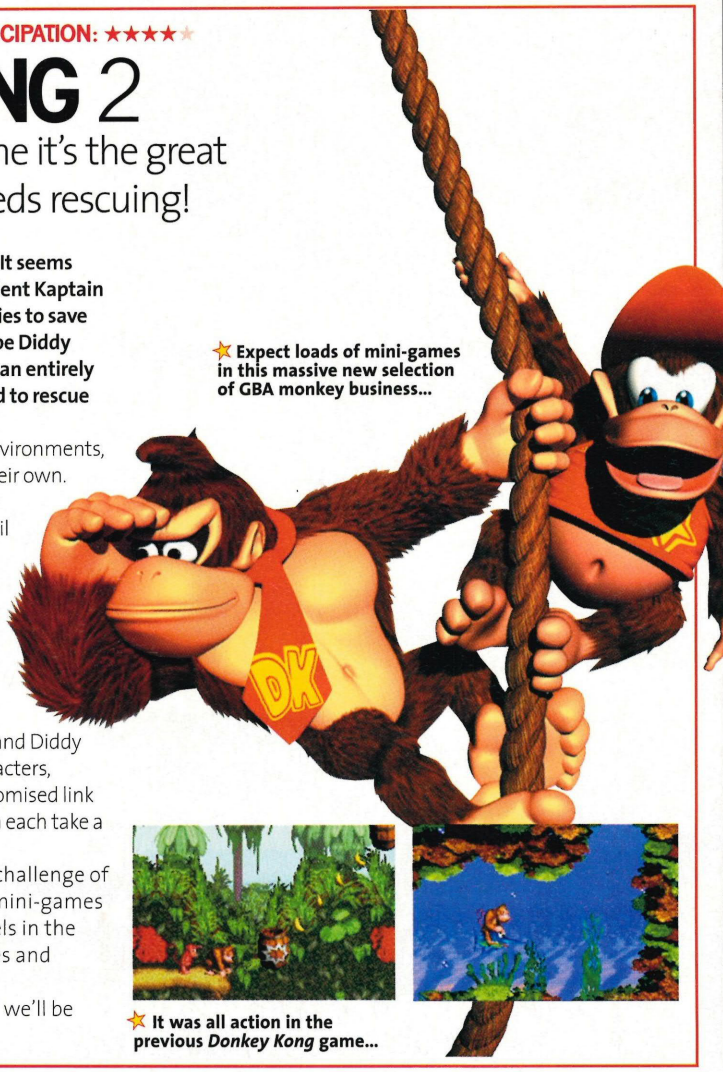
Donkey Kong has got himself in trouble. It seems that he's been captured by the malevolent Kaptain K. Kool and it's down to Donkey's buddies to save him. Star of the action will once again be Diddy Kong and the game will also introduce an entirely new character, Dixie Kong. Together this pair intend to rescue Kong and vanquish the evil-doing Kool.

Dixie and Diddy will be facing a world of new environments, all of which will contain unique new locations of their own. Pirate galleons and muddy swaps will be throwing everything they have at the pair, in an attempt to foil their heroic quest.

According to our sources, this sequel will boast at least forty levels to play through and, needless to say, there will also be whole heap of secrets and bonus levels for intrepid gamers to explore. As is usual in platformers, beating the bosses are the secret to opening up new areas, and each one of these promises to present a tricky challenge. Dixie and Diddy will also have some help from two new minor characters, Rambi the Rhino and Enguarde the Swordfish. A promised link up option will also mean that up to four players can each take a different character and play together.

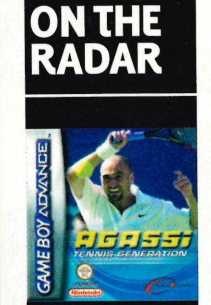
And just so that you don't get bored with the challenge of Diddy Kong's platform game antics, numerous mini-games will be included on the cart Completing the levels in the minimum time will also secure you new bonuses and unlock secrets.

Donkey Kong 2 is due on the shelves in June and we'll be bringing you the full review next issue.



Expect loads of mini-games in this massive new selection of GBA monkey business...

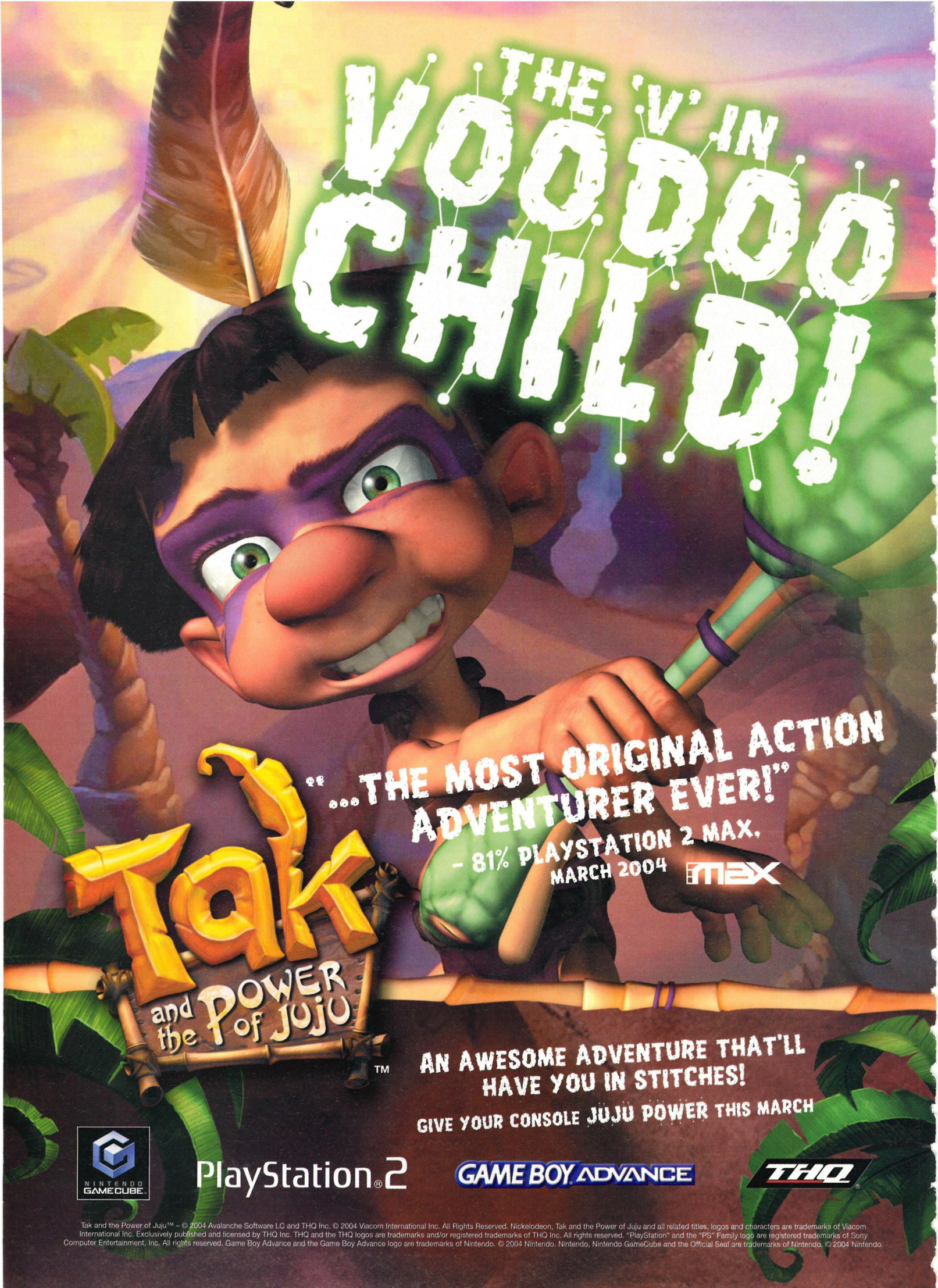
It was all action in the previous *Donkey Kong* game...



BLIPS ON THE RADAR

The first piece of news to come through the tube this month is the announcement that hairless tennis ace Andre Agassi is releasing his own tennis game, named *Agassi: Tennis Generation*. The game is coming out on all formats, including our own Game Boy Advance. *Tennis Generation* promises to allow you to develop the career of your own tennis star, as well as playing as Mr Agassi himself. As avid fans of Wimbledon, we're looking forward to see this beast running. Expect more next month.

The second news snippet we've tracked on the radar is a clever piece of cheating kit that's now available for the GBA. If you need help with your games, then you need Action Replay's GBX. Automatically opening up cheats and passwords, this is a lazy gamer's dream. But do cheaters prosper?



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COMPETITION TIME!

WIN! A GBA SP AND AWESOME JOYTECH SET-UP!

Everything you could possibly want for handheld gaming – including a Gameboy Advance SP! Enter our competition, you know you want to.

Hardware boffins at JOYTECH are the experts in creating perfect peripherals for GBA gaming. They make everything you could ever need to compliment your GBA setup, as you can see from the comprehensive range of toys that adorn this page. These are perfect gifts for the GBA enthusiast, or just the right thing to spoil yourself if you're feeling a bit flushed.

Our two favourite JOYTECH peripherals are the USB Charger (6), that allows you to use your computer port to charge up the SP battery, and the hard carry case (7) – a handy little container that will hold everything you need for your SP, as well as keeping it totally safe. Interested? Then look for JOYTECH products in MVC or Woolworths, or shop online at play.com.

Better still a lucky few Advance readers will get to find out just how tasty their gaming kit is first hand, since Joytech are giving away loads of goodies for you to win, right here, right now.

You can win a Gameboy Advance SP and these amazing peripherals:

1. **Carry Pouch**
2. **Multi-player Link Cable**
3. **Stereo Earphones**
4. **Stereo Earphone Adaptor**
5. **In-Car Adaptor**
6. **USB Charger Cable**
7. **Hard Carry Case**

And, just so you don't get bored, a copy of *Serious Sam*.

But that's not all! Five runners-up will receive JOYTECH Gameboy Advance SP Essential Packs, containing a carry pouch, a multi-player link cable, a stereo earphone adaptor, stereo earphones and an in-car adaptor.

So you must be wondering what you have to do to win all these stuff? Well, we want you to tell us how you'd change *Advance Magazine* if you were in charge. The best suggestion wins the big prize and the next five best will receive the runner up prizes.

Send you answer on a postcard to:

The *'I've Got The Smartest Ideas'* Competition
Advance Magazine
Future Publishing
29 Monmouth Street
Bath, BA1 2DL

Rules

1. Employees of Future Publishing, JOYTECH, related companies and their friends and families cannot enter.
2. The closing date of the competition is Friday May 28th, 2004.
3. There is no cash alternative. Prizes may differ from those shown. *Advance* reserves the right to supply prizes of similar value.
4. The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.

ADVANCE WARNING

★ There are so many Sonic titles in the Top 20 that it might as well be the Sonic chart...

↘ WHAT'S SELLING WHAT?

CHARTS

High-selling handheld heroes ahoy.

ChartTrack

CHART POSITION THIS CHART		LAST CHART	GAME NAME
1	→	1	**FINDING NEMO** There's something fishy going on in pole position.
2	→	3	**SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 4** The plumber makes his name known.
3	↑	4	**SONIC ADVANCE 2** Mario's spiky blue rival remains popular.
4	↑	6	**POKÉMON RUBY** The latest Pokémon craze keeps on collecting.
5	↓	3	**YU-GI-OH! THE SACRED CARDS** Will the hunger for Yu-Gi-Oh! never end?
6	↓	5	**SONIC BATTLE** Fisticuffs aplenty in this cartoon beat-'em-up.
7	↑	8	**POKÉMON SAPPHIRE** These creatures are selling like hotcakes.
8	★	-	**SWORD OF MANA** Enormo-RPG hits the charts.
9	↑	14	**SONIC ADVANCE** Can Sonic really still be selling as well?
10	↓	7	**LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING** Shame it wasn't that great as a game.
11	↓	9	**SCOOBY DOO: MYSTERY MAYHEM** Dogs and ghosts are the new pirates.
12	↑	13	**DISNEY'S THE LION KING** Will it make you swell with pride?
13	↓	11	**SPYRO: ADVENTURE** That little purple dragon keeps on snorting.
14	↓	10	**SPYRO – SEASON OF ICE** It's getting chilly round these parts.
15	↓	12	**CRASH NITRO KART** Fab racing title keeps us entertained.
16	↑	18	**CRASH BANDICOOT XS** Not bad at all, and selling okay, too.
17	↓	16	**MONSTERS, INC** An utter stinker. Avoid at all costs.
18	↓	15	**BEYBLADE: VFORCE** Popular on TV and on your GBA.
19	★	-	**MARIO & LUIGI: SUPERSTAR SAGA** Awesome game, so why isn't it selling more?
20	→	20	**YU-GI-OH! DUNGEONDICE MONSTERS** Average card game shenanigans.

KEY: ↑ Moving up ↓ Slipping down → Non-mover ★ New entry R Re-entry

→ 1

↑ 9

↓ 11

★ 8

↓ 13

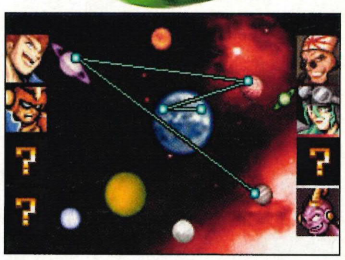
FROM: NINTENDO OUT: JUNE ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

F-ZERO 2

The ultimate futuristic racer returns to our (tiny) screens.

The last *F-Zero* game wasn't greeted with as much favour as we'd expected by GBA gamers, so we're hoping that Nintendo is intending to make amends with its latest game in the series: *F-Zero 2*.

F-Zero is a classic space racing title that first hit the arcades a massive 14 years ago. (And that fact makes some members of the *Advance* team feel very old indeed.)



★ Where will you go to race? Each planet is a world of high-speed competition and dangerous speed contests.

The new game will once again be racing across the territories of high-speed, science-fiction race courses, where pod-like speed machines battle it out for the title of the fastest racer in the universe. We can expect to see more 3D tracks, filled with dangerous corners and unbelievably fast booster straights, not to mention new cars, and new places to go flying off the track and explode in a ball of flames.

Of course while the single-player game is likely to be enormously invigorating and super-fast, it's the link-up game that we're excited about. Getting together and taking on pals at super high-speed head-to-head racing is one thing we can't wait to do this summer. Excited? You should be! For more on this and loads of other forthcoming games, why not check out www.nintendo-europe.com.

FROM: NINTENDO OUT: SPRING 2004 ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

DIGIMON RACING

Gotta catch 'em all up, overtake 'em and leave 'em for dust.

Yes, you read it right: a Digimon kart-racing game *is* coming to GBA. In this massive new title from Atari we can expect to see 15 rival Digimon taking each other on in the trip of their lives. This is the first ever Digimon racing title and it's pretty ambitious – there will be loads of courses from around the monsters' world in which the little guys will pit their speed-skills against one another in a duel of nerves and wheels.

★ More kart racing to keep you on your toes. But can you catch the Digimon?

★ Loads of tracks, loads of karts, and loads of Digimon. Could it be genius?

There's to be a huge range of modes, including a cup season, single races, time trials and even boss challenges. We're not quite sure what form these will take, but we reckon that you'll be racing the baddest Digimon in a contest that will stretch your skills to the extreme. As you'd expect there will be loads of new powers and power-ups, including a 'Digivolve' power to leave your opponents eating dust.

Needless to say, we're excited about anything Pokémon-like and a new GBA racing game could be just the tonic we need to consume our wasted hours of boredom. In the meantime we'll be checking out www.atari.com for all the latest information on new Pokémon games. Perhaps you should, too.

FROM: NINTENDO **OUT:** SPRING 2004 **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★★

SWORD OF MANA

The Mana series get its prequel with this swish of the sword.

The GBA gets a vast new fantasy adventure this month with the arrival of *Sword Of Mana*. The game didn't make it into the giant chomping mouth of our review machine, so we've got an in-depth look at the game right here for your reading pleasure.

Sword Of Mana tells the story that precedes all the previous *Mana* games. It explains all about the goddess Mana whose name the series bears. She, it seems, didn't much like be exploited by some evil types and turned herself into a tree. Pretty extreme you might think, but hey, it stopped the bad guys stealing the Mana power. Anyway, the story is based around a young gladiator and a girl from the Mana tribe. A shadow knight sets out to persecute the tribe and the pair embark on an epic quest to defend it.

As with other Mana games, the direction of the quest will depend heavily on what character type you choose on starting the game. Many of the characters of the previous games have been carried over to this one and they'll all be getting busy with the new combat system which the developers have dubbed 'The Ring System'. Of course, the greatest asset of the game is that you will be able to link up with a mate and have a two-player game with both of you fighting against the shadow knight evils.

Look forward to loads more on this massive adventure in our next issue.

★ Bashing ugly monsters is going to eat up your time and get you some tasty treasure.

★ We don't know what she's so happy about.

FROM: ATARI **OUT:** SPRING 2004 **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★

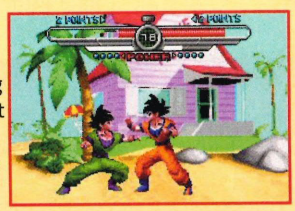
DRAGON BALL Z: TAIKETSU

The Dragon Ball posse put on the gloves and get ready to rum-

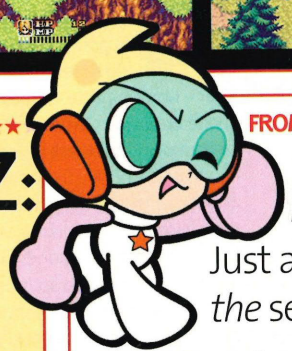
Veteran gamesmith Atari is making sure that *Dragon Ball Z* is a growing name. It's already been hugely successful with *Dragon Ball Z: The Legacy Of Goku* and now Taiketsu has been confirmed as the latest addition to the series.

Taiketsu brings the character and design style of *Dragon Ball Z* to a fighting game, the first *Dragon Ball* fighting game to appear on GBA. This news will no doubt please the armies of Dragon Ball fans who are slavering for more. Taiketsu sees players thrown into familiar environments to fight for their lives. There's Master Roshi's Island, Orange Star City and many more. Players will also be able to choose characters from their favourite DBZ games, and up to four fighters can battle on-screen at any one time.

All this sounds very exciting, but we're reserving judgement until we get that cart. We'll find out for sure next issue. In the meantime check out www.dbz-videogames.com for all the latest news.



★ Beat the brains out of some *Dragon Ball Z* characters.



FROM: NAMCO **OUT:** SPRING 2004 **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★★

MR DRILLER 2

Just another sequel you say? No, this is, *the* sequel. We can't wait for this one.

Mr Driller is one of our favourite games of all time. The little fellow who digs for victory is the star of one of the greatest arcade titles ever. This unsung master of fun drills his way through some of the cleverest puzzles we've ever seen.

Mr Driller 2 is no different; the blocks are threatening to take over the city, and you must once again drill down to a depth where you can cut them off at the source. Fast, frenetic and unbelievably polished, this is going to be a game that you simply can't get enough off. Drill down without getting crushed by falling blocks and keep enough air to stay alive, this is one of those gaming challenges that just never gets dull.

So polished, so cute, it's the kind of game that keeps us coming back for more. The GBA's 3D capabilities mean that there will be some awesome new game modes, including a power-up that will flip the screen round, rearranging the blocks completely. No sign yet of whether the game will have any kind of link up mode, we'll just have to wait and see. And we can't wait: *Mr Driller* is the quirky kind of perfection that just sends the fans crazy. We're obsessed and we think you will be, too.

A recent trip to Japan saw one of Advance's colleagues meet the lady who invented *Mr Driller* at the Namco offices. She was carrying a soft toy drill. That says it all really, doesn't it?

★ This is one of the most exciting and relentless arcade experiences of all time.

ADVANCE SPECIAL REPORT

NEWS FROM THE NINTENDO LABS...

DS HANDHELD FALL 2004

Nintendo is developing a new handheld console. We bring you all the latest news and rumours.

News and mixed views are currently flying around the world of gaming: Nintendo is going to release a brand new handheld console this year – working title Game Boy DS – and the leaked specs on the internet reveal it to be a peculiar beast indeed.

As you'll notice from the mock-ups that litter this page, it's been revealed that Nintendo is working on a machine with two screens. Sounds weird? Well yes, we think it is, and so do many developers in the games industry, who really want there to be one really good screen to work with, rather than the bizarre challenge of having to cope with two. Word on the web also indicates that there will be two processors, one for each screen, which will make creating the games even more complicated, then again, Nintendo is notorious for being one step ahead of the rest of the gaming world, so could this be a revolution waiting to happen? It could be that in a few year's time all games will be made this way. We just can't tell.

Another rumour that has filtered through to our office about the console is that it will have a wireless networking capability. This means that you won't need a link cable to play against your friends, you'll just need to be in the same room. We'd like to see this kind of innovation, since it would fit with the recent tradition of making GBA titles brilliant to play with friends.

And finally there's a whisper that it might incorporate a digital camera. There's no concrete evidence to suggest this, but we wouldn't be surprised.

PlayStation developer Sony is also making a handheld this year, which will be the first significant challenge to the Game Boy in many years. It will be very interesting to see how the two new devices fare against one another. We'll have all the latest news as it happens.

TECH SPECS

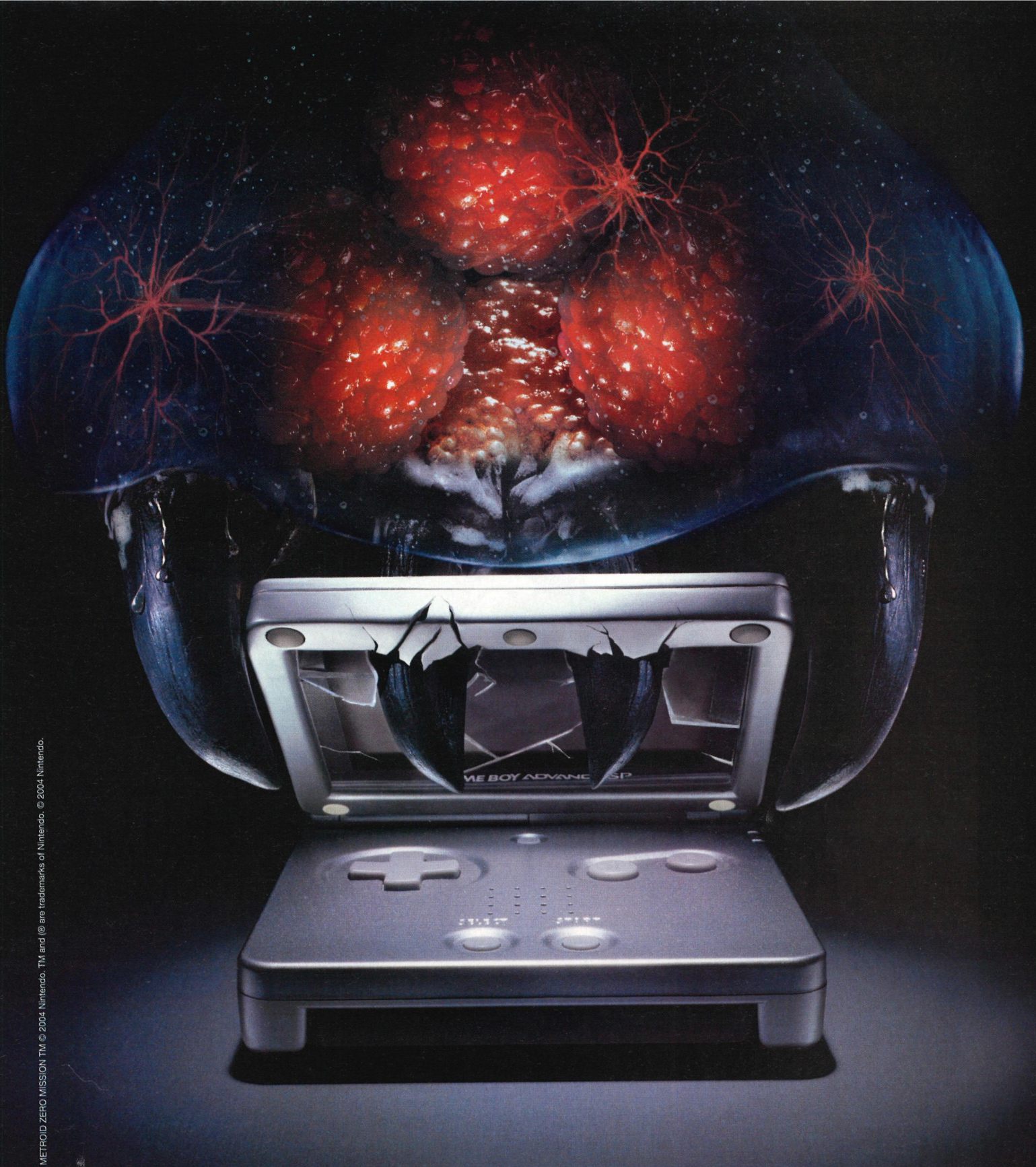
The rest of the news and views on your favourite handheld hardware...

MORE DS MOCKUPS

The internet is buzzing with speculation about what the new handheld will be like. We've joined the fray with the mock-ups you can see on this page, but there are loads more online, including reader-ideas on the super-cool gadgets weblog www.gizmodo.com. If you're interested then why not check it out?

AND IN THE MEANTIME...

We've received word from Nintendo that they intend to release a special edition Game Boy SP to celebrate the upcoming one year anniversary of the release of the SP, the fifth incarnation of the Game Boy. By the time this new SP comes out, there will be over 400 games for Advance handhelds. More news soon.



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MISSION: SURVIVAL.

The full story of Samus Aran's first mission finally unfolds. Blast your way through the maze-like caverns of planet Zebes and rid the universe of the Metroid menace. Will you be a hero, or zero?

OUT 9th APRIL

METROID ZERO MISSION
Only on Game Boy Advance.

GAME BOY ADVANCE SP

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Previews

■ **PUBLISHER** THQ/Sega ■ **PHONE** 01483 767656 ■ **WEB** www.thq.co. uk ■ **PRICE** TBA ■ **SAVE** To cart ■ **LINK-UP** No ■ **OUT** April

SONIC ADVANCE 3

The speediest hero in the world is bouncing back into action. But is this really gearing up to be the best Sonic game ever?

Fast, faster, fastest! Sonic is the only character who can move like this.

Team up with Tails to defeat tough enemies, or simply play multi-player.

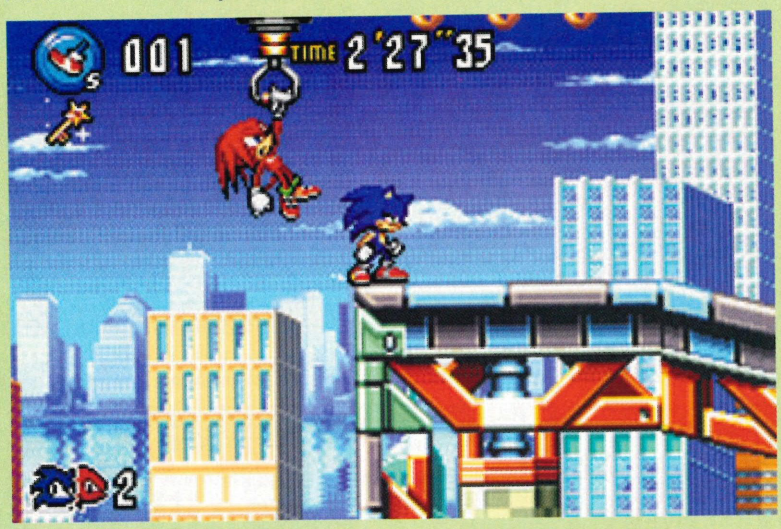
One day, in the far distant future, our descendants will run out of animals to turn into videogame characters. When this nightmarish day comes, they will be forced to look way back through the mists of time and the centuries of games in order to decide just what the best animal-character was.

It is our humble opinion that they will eventually reach one classic character, a blue hedgehog. They will nod to one another and agree that if there's one

Help out knuckles by giving him a headrub. Well, possibly. We're sure that the echidna really doesn't need much help himself...

The boys shake hands, agreeing that the best man should win this one. Or something.

This is the fastest game we've seen this year. And we've seen a lot of games.



Knuckles struggles to keep up with the speedy blue hog of the hedge. He's nippy.

Yes, it's time to jump for victory once again. The more you jump, the more you're likely to give your enemies the hump, we say.

Sonic is fast, but he doesn't have a helicopter tail. This is where Tails wins through...

Dodgy looking robot monkeys cause a mishap in the way that only monkeys can. Damn those monkeys! DAMN THEM! AIIIEEEEE!

videogame character who deserves another come-back, it's Sonic.

Luckily for us we don't have to wait for some far-future scenario for this situation to arise, since Sonic is back once again to blow our minds and dazzle our senses with the fastest platform game of all time. We've had an exclusive play-test of the game this month and we can report that not only is this shaping up to be one of the best Sonic games of all time, it's also set to be one of the best games we've played on the GBA. Super fast and filled with superb challenges to tax both brains and skill, this is a multi-faceted and hugely entertaining game.

TRUE BLUE BABY, WE LOVE YOU!

So what's it all about? Well, in case you're a caveman who's recently been transported through time and taught to read English in a speed-learning machine, the Sonic games are a long standing favourite of gamers across the world and charts the adventures of a blue hedgehog who can run faster than a bullet train.

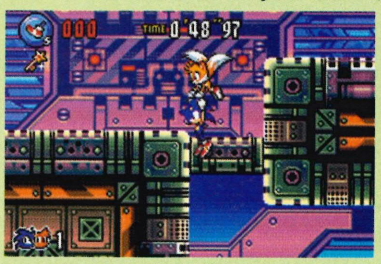
Generally the games are based on Sonic's running and jumping abilities across expansive platform worlds. And this new Sonic game follows the familiar routine of previous titles, but this time you are able to play as any one of five Sonic characters: Sonic, Tails, Knuckles, Cream or Amy.

But you never play alone; you're able to choose a teammate to play with. This enables you to employ certain special moves in order to reach those vital secret areas. The combinations of playing with

He's dancing now, but later things begin to get quite serious. In fact, they might just get deadly if you fail to pick up enough coins.

The gang sure do get the sneakers on. Why don't advertisers use Sonic to sell their trainers? They do? Oh. Well, then good.

A machine world brings fresh challenges to the spiky one. Watch out Sonic!



Tails helps out with a bit of hovering action. But will they get out alive?

Spikes will stop Sonic dead if he runs into them, and make him dead if he lands on them.

What's happened to the level? Is Sonic chasing Spider-Man through the skyscrapers? We just don't know. More news soon.

Actually Sonic was demonstrating just how high and far he can fly. Which is very high and extremely far, actually.

partners will enable you to unlock entirely different secret routes. This means you'll be able to go back through the game with different characters, trying out the different possibilities. The 20 possible team combinations mean that there are up to 20 unique routes through the seven huge zones that make up the game. You'll be able to choose your own route to the end of the game, making your choices vital to how the fun will pan out. You will be able to select which Acts you want to play and what order you want to play them in. This kind of variation could make a game like this a truly great experience. From what we've already played of *Sonic Advance 3*, we can confirm that it's blisteringly fast, but also heavy on the puzzles. This is no frustrating jump-puzzle platformer though, as the levels are all designed exquisitely for both speed and challenge. Making it through with maximum coins is as tricky a prospect as ever before, and we can look forward to many hours of sending Sonic hurtling into spikes and monsters before our gaming is complete.

YOU WANT MORE?

Then have more! A brand new multi-player co-operative play mode now means that you'll be able to race your way through the whole game with a friend, hooking up your characters and their unique skills as part of a team that's designed to defeat the challenges that await you. And in four-player link-up battle mode, up to four players can race to the finish of various levels. This kind of play will be enormous fun and we can't wait to get our hands on the final link-up version. As we've seen in previous games like this, having a buddy to play with extends the life of these games enormously.

So, *Sonic 3* looks set to offer everything that a GBA gamer could want. There's even a selection of mini-games that can be unlocked to uncover a secret bonus stage. With superb graphics and brilliantly designed levels, we can expect this game to knock the socks off any GBA owner, and we can expect to see it hit the shops later this month. We couldn't fit a review in this issue, but watch out for the next issue of Advance where we'll fill you in on all the spiky details of the hedgehog's latest and greatest.

ANTICIPATION

• FROM THE CREATORS OF FINAL FANTASY •

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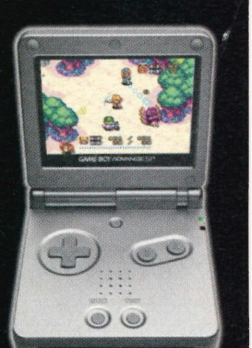
EVERY LEGEND HAS ITS ROOTS.

Long ago, the Mana Goddess transformed herself into a sacred tree, to protect the land and its people. But now, evil forces are attempting to seize its mystic power. Only a gladiator and a mysterious girl hold the key to the Mana Tree's destiny. Branch out on the ultimate quest.

OUT 19th MARCH

SWORD OF MANA
Only on Game Boy Advance.



GAME BOY ADVANCE SP

www.nintendo.co.uk

■ **PUBLISHER** THQ ■ **PHONE** 01483 767656 ■ **WEB** www.thq.co.uk ■ **PRICE** £30 ■ **SAVE** To cart ■ **LINK-UP** No ■ **OUT** April

SHINING FORCE: RESURRECTION OF THE DARK DRAGON

Classic 16-bit fantasy strategy lives again on GBA! But will it capture our hearts, or prove to be a drag(on)? Sorry...

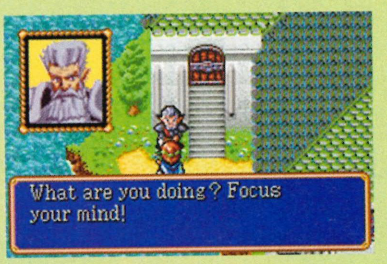
Prolific publisher THQ has confirmed that it will be publishing *Shining Force: Resurrection Of The Dark Dragon* for the GBA. As those of us who encountered this superb series during the heady days of the Sega Saturn already know, this is a reason for GBA owners to be very pleased indeed.

It was a quality game all those years ago and, if re-imagined classics like *Sabre Wulf* are anything to go by then this should be a phenomenally entertaining title. A top-down RPG of epic scale and cute cartoon illustration, *Shining Force* is set to be a fun-packed experience.

Resurrection Of The Dark Dragon is the latest incarnation of the popular franchise that dates all the back to the early nineties, with the first game coming out in 1992. This new *Shining Force* takes the tried and tested formula of a strategic RPG battle game, but also boasts several improved features to distinguish it from previous versions. Not least the graphics, which have been mightily buffed up (as much as that's possible on a GBA game with cartoon graphics, anyway).

The characters – three of which are totally new to the series – will support loads of new animations. And we can tell you that all the original characters will be included and players can expect to see the same selection of fantasy fellows out of an armoury of over thirty different fighting types. Not only that but working

Kids the size of mountains! Actually, it's the tactical map, you fool. Ain't it pretty?



There's no shortage of bearded men to tell you where to go and what to do.

Would it help if I said no? This flap-faced fellow looks a bit scary.

When were those white manga-cut hairstyles ever in fashion, anyway?

Men with moustaches should never be allowed a throne of their own. It's bad mojo.

We don't know where Mawlock is, but I bet he'd having a pint of lager at the pub.

Fighting takes places face-to-face, move-by-move. Great stuff.

Can you defeat this goblin with a bone? We'd wager you can.

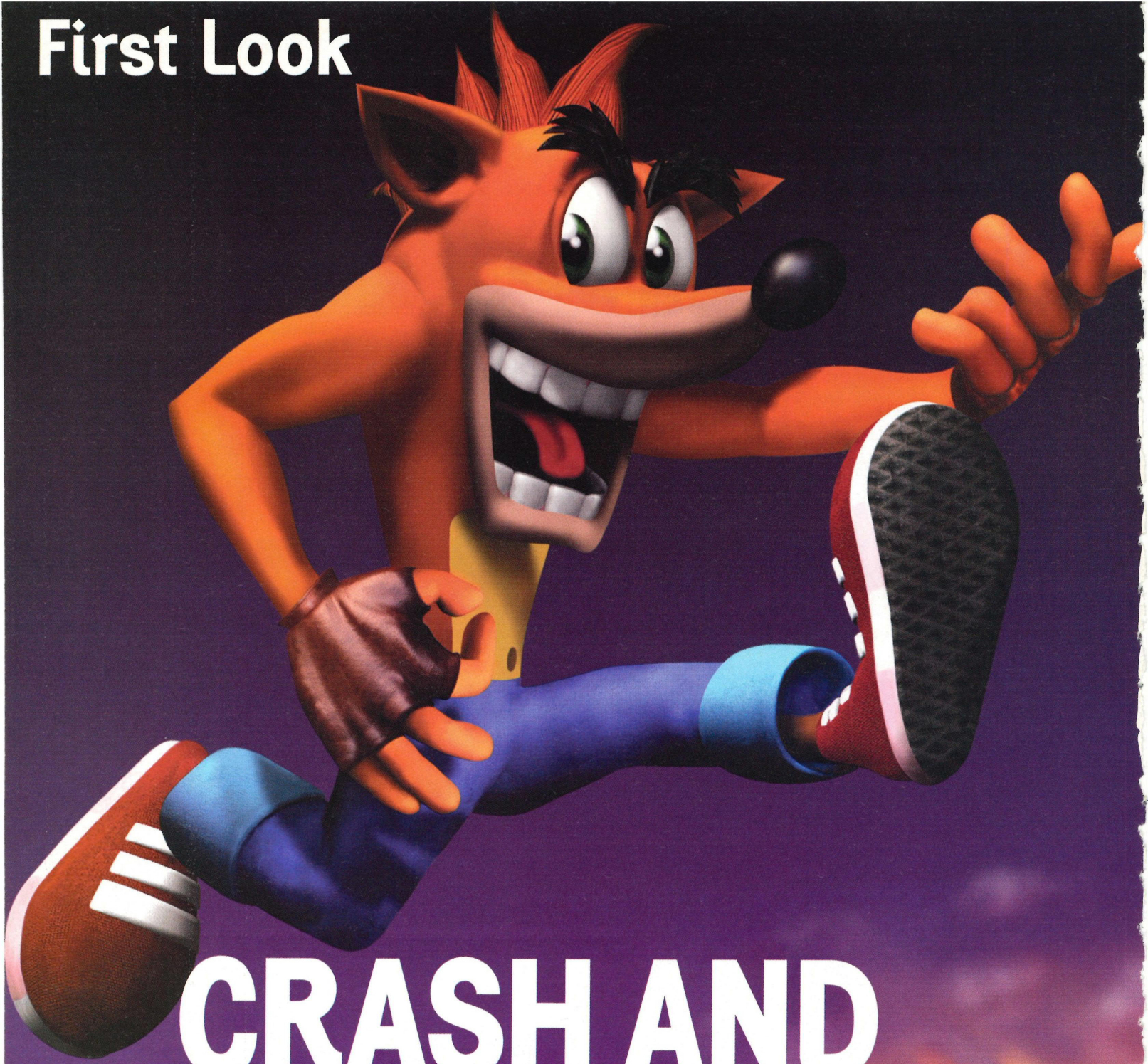
on this title is the same development company that made the original games, which means that we can expect a good level of quality. We're hoping that it'll be a healthy return to the good old days, when *Shining Force* was a game that stood out from a mediocre crowd.

The combat system in *Resurrection Of The Dark Dragon* is going to be only slightly modified from the original, to refine and hone what the original game achieved. But it's also using the same characters and themes in an attempt to recapture the original charm, while still giving the turn-based game a new tactical edge. We've been told that the game will employ a 'Unique Card System' that should give the game a new improved dynamic, finely balanced for maximum satisfaction. Not too hard, not too easy.

This is a vast quest in which your lead character must regain his lost memories and defeat the armies of enemies that await him and his selection of buddies.

Having played an unfinished early version of the game we can report that it really does look promising, and might well fill the gap left in our gaming diets by recent, rather lightweight adventure RPGs. We're hoping it all comes together for next month's release.

ANTICIPATION



CRASH AND SPYRO FUSION

Crash Bandicoot and Spyro the Dragon are to meet up in two new GBA games, but what do these guest appearances mean for the videogame superstars?

Two of the world's favourite platform game characters are teaming up to entertain us in their combined worlds of videogame goodness. Yes, Crash Bandicoot and Spyro the Dragon will get together to create one of the best meeting of talents since Ant and Dec. And it will be the Game Boy Advance that hosts the meeting of the two item-collecting, boss-fighting platform minds.

Gamers will also be happy to learn that there won't be just one game, Vivendi is planning to release two carts: *Crash Bandicoot: Fusion* and *Spyro Fusion*. The first will star the wompa fruit-loving Australian marsupial, with a guest appearance from the purple fire breather, while the other game features Spyro, with the little Bandicoot crashing the party.

These two new games are action-platform beasts with loads of sub-games, a formula which is almost certain to prove massively successful when combined with the GBA and the previous success of these two massively popular gaming heroes.

"So why have Crash and Spyro come together?" you may ask. Well as is often the case, sinister goings on are behind things. The story goes that Crash and Spyro's arch-enemies, the evil Neo Cortex and the abominable Ripto respectively, somehow accidentally met up in the underground portals of the gaming world and subsequently plotted to trick our heroes into destroying each another, while they go forth and take over the universe together. Of course Crash and Spyro don't fall for this dastardly trap, and once their misunderstanding has been ironed out, they're soon using their combined powers to defeat their enemies.

Of course, given the enormous, nefarious talents of the two evil-doers, Crash and Spyro are going to have to overcome a huge array of new tricks and traps that the evil duo has devised for them. There are hoards of new enemies, loads of new game types and an array of new places to visit, meaning that these new *Fusion* games might well be some of the most exciting new releases on the GBA. And if you were wondering what the worlds will look like, New York-based developer, Vicarious Visions has said they will be a merger of both stars' previous game worlds, and familiar characters from Spyro an d Crash games will mingle and interweave their stories in these new games.

All this means that there's bags of entertainment lying in wait for you and your GBA owning friends, especially since there is also going to be the additional challenge of a unique multi-player mode, which we'll come to in a bit.

WHO IS SPYRO THE DRAGON?

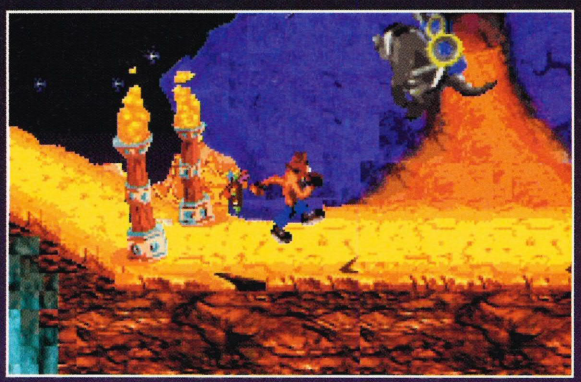
The little purple dragon named Spyro is the star of a number of big games, such as *The Cortex Conspiracy* and *Attack Of The Rhynocs*. Stubborn, feisty and possessing a fiery breath, Spyro is a formidable hero and battles for righteousness in the Dragon Realm. Bad-dudes will be suitably punished and defeated by the winged chap. His main enemy is Ripto, but there are many more, including the Gnasty Gnorc and Grendor. Find out more at www.spyrothedragon.com

WHO IS CRASH BANDICOOT?

Crash is a hero who's been fighting evil for many years now. An Australian beast who's often inadvertently drawn into all kinds of adventures, he's full of character and has relentless energy from running, jumping and spinning his way through the challenges his enemies present him with. This marsupial is one of the most awesome contenders for the title of the greatest platform characters of all time. Find out more at www.wrathofcortex.com.

★ Crash will be using his spinning and leaping skills to great effect.

★ As in previous Crash games, the Bandicoot will have access to some crazy gadgets. And who doesn't just love a jetpack?



> "There will be scores of new mini-games."

Both the *Fusion* titles are 2D side-scrolling action games that still have to maintain the standard of quality set by their 3D predecessors on the static consoles. Spyro has moved to an isometric view on the GBA and in *Fusion* he'll be seen from many angles in the various mini-games, and the same goes for Crash. Because the main story modes are side-scrolling, so the moves and abilities of both Crash and Spyro have been somewhat simplified, the selection of extra mini games, should, however, keep players busy.

We're pretty confident that it should be very polished game too, since its developer, Vicarious Visions, has also worked on the GBA versions of the *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* series, *Spongebob Squarepants*, *Finding Nemo*, and *Spider-Man* to name just a few. (Check out www.vvisions.com for more info on this prolific GBA development team.)

The Fur and The Fire

As we said before, there are going to be scores of new mini-games to entertain you, with lots of different puzzles to decipher and action sequences to play your way through. There will be button-bashing tests, where speedy fingers are the most important asset, top-down scrolling games will be included to test your reactions, while timed bonus levels and lots of tricky boss battles will challenge and amuse. This 'many games in one' approach is reminiscent of the superb *Warioware* as well as other 'party' style games – experiences that focus on super fast gameplay with lots of quick challenges. Obviously the Spyro and Crash games are also based on the characters from the previous games, and have the benefit of all the work that's been done on their art and animation – not to mention the storyline that sets the scene for all the gaming shenanigans.

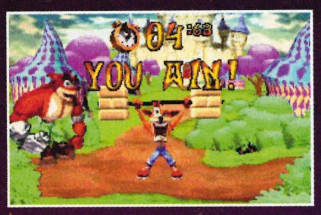
Players will also be able to enjoy collecting 'trading cards' by doing well through out the game. Get full marks in various sections and you'll open up hidden games, levels and even secret trading cards. For those gamers whose friends buy the *Fusion* games and who own a link cable, there's a selection of multi-player games to indulge in, making both Crash and Spyro titles party games for those GBA owners who love to game with friends. The trading cards earned in the single-player game are integral to how this multi-player game is played.

The Big Link

So how does this link game work? Well, it's important to remember that in Crash's game Spyro is a character you can meet and who makes up an important part of the story and in Spyro's game Crash and his friends are characters he goes up against, before realising that they have to become friends to save the world once again. But both characters are also available to play in the multi-player section of both games.

There will be 13 different link games between the two new titles, most work with one cartridge and some with multiple cartridges. The games are divided into three general categories, the first of which is 'Ballistix', which was first seen in the *Crash Bash* game on the major consoles. These and the pong-type games, with many different variations in play and power-ups for the characters. Then there's 'Ship Shuffle' which sees two to four players piloting hoverships across many different maps. Each ship shuffle game-type has a very different game goal, and you can expect to play games such as Tag, Hot Potato and Capture the Flag. Finally

★ Worlds vary as the characters travel, and the enemies get more dangerous.

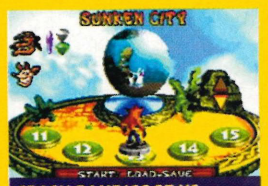


★ Expect amusing mini-games to dominate your playing time.

★ Four Spyros? We just don't know what's going on here. Have you any ideas?

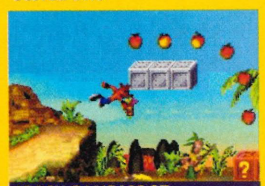
★ The little dragon is going to be facing some all-new challenges.

CRASH PREVIOUSLY STARRED IN...



CRASH BANDICOOT XS

The GBA debut for our spinning beast.
Scored 81%



CRASH BANDICOOT 2: N-TRANCED

A superb platform title that starred the marsupial.
Scored 81%

CRASH NITRO KART

Crash's last game, a insane racing title.
Scored a whopping 86%

SPYRO PREVIOUSLY STARRED IN...

SPYRO: SEASONS OF ICE

A work of platforming genius and one of our favourites.
Scored 89%

SPYRO 2: SEASON OF FLAME

The little dragon has one masterpiece after another.
Scored a huge 91%

there's the 'Bridge' game in which players try to knock each other off a bridge structure using various projectile weapons.

More exciting still is the possibility that players will also be able to swap the 'trading card' bonuses that they are able to pick up during single-player gameplay, so both players will benefit from their independent efforts in gaming. The trading cards will vary in rarity depending on the difficulty of the challenge undertaken to acquire them. Some cards tie into player abilities and characteristics, while others are components in the multi-player games. The developers of the new Crash and Spyro games suggest that players might like to play some competitive trading cards games, in which players wager their cards on a multi-player game, and the winner takes both cards.

The twin release of the *Fusion* games looks to be one of the biggest Game Boy Advance events of the year, and with the standards of GBA games getting better and better, there's going to be fierce competition for your attention. As a GBA owner there's never been a better time, so much choice of quality titles meaning that you'll be entertained for months. With so many brilliant Spyro and Crash games already making their mark on The GBA, we can't see how the *Fusion* games could fail. It's time to get excited.

PUBLISHER THQ ■ **PHONE** 01483 767656 ■ **WEB** www.thq.com ■ **PRICE** £30 ■ **SAVE** On Cart ■ **LINK-UP** No

TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU

Enter the magical world of a young tribesman, his spirit guide, some lost sheep and an angry rhino. Do you have the power of Juju?

There's never been a more exciting time for GBA platform games than right here, right now. In this very issue alone we see the announcement of some of the biggest titles in the last couple of years. Not least of these is *Tak And The Power Of Juju*, a huge new adventure from one of the GBA's staunchest supporters, the massive and prolific gaming gurus, THQ. So what is it all about, who is Tak and what's his game? We get a sharp stick and head into the jungle.

Zap! Magical goings on from the spirit world give Tak new powers.

Tak's blowpipe is a valuable tool as he fights evil.

BLOWPIPES? NO, IT'S JUST THE WAY I WALK

Tak's greatest powers are running, jumping, crawling and leaping, but sometimes he has to resort to dangerous tools to complete the level. These are some of the first items you'll encounter.

1. The blowpipe allows Tak to stun enemies, and to aggravate bee hives, releasing angry insects to kill nearby baddies.

2. This large fruit has been enchanted with Juju powers. Once picked it is a ticking time bomb and must be thrown before it goes bang.

3. Is that a Rhino in your pocket, or are you just please to see me? Tak can jump on the back of these rhinos for a speedy journey past dangerous obstacles.

4. This green amulet is one of Tak's first weapons. This makes short work of enemies at close range. Tak seems remarkably pleased to have found it, too.

In a world where magic is a reality, Tak is a young lad who lives in the jungle and communes with the spirit world. A shaman's apprentice, he normally lives a peaceful life amongst the tribal village folk, studying with his shaman teacher, frolicking in the tree-house habitat and the dense flora that makes up his rainforest home. But all that is about to change: a nefarious baddy has been using his Juju magic to transform the village folk into sheep! Needless to say, this is not what Tak wants to see and, with the help of his spirit guide and aging village shaman, Tak sets out to restore order and to collect the invaluable moonstone fragments, while saving the unfortunate villagers who might otherwise spend the rest of their lives being mown by the sheep shearers. We're not sure why there are sheep in the jungle, but hey, it's all part of the game.

Juju Voodoo

So, that's the scene setting out of the way, but what is *Tak And The Power Of Juju* all about, and what can you expect from Tak and friends as you play your way through the adventure of their lives?

Well, it's a hugely colourful 2D platform game that sees you running, jumping and fighting your way across an enormously varied gaming world, from jungles to lava-filled pools, through to an underwater level where Tak must swim for his life. There's a huge amount here to see and explore. And it's as action-packed as any game we've encountered on the GBA, with every single level throwing masses of monsters and traps at you as the game progresses.

Luckily, young Tak is enormously versatile, as we'll see. Our plucky hero relies on various skills and weapons to get past a devilish selection of obstacles. Fear is not an option here – the little tyke is filled with

First Look

Flora's your spirit guide. She will help you through the hard bits.

The sheep don't seem particularly worried, but they must be saved from Juju evil!

ceaseless energy and he has plenty of tricks up his jungle sleeves.

But Tak's path to defeat his enemies is littered with troubles: there are evil monkeys, killer birds, and the afore-mentioned pits of spikes, lava or thorns. There are exploding plants and falling blocks. There are spike traps, magic-using voodoo creatures and other nefarious uglies. The evil fella who's making a mess of Tak's world isn't going to make the little chap's task any easier, and the jungle was a pretty dangerous place in the first place. But he won't be here forever – there are scores of levels for Tak to traverse, and it's not long before he leaves the familiar sights and sounds of his home behind and enters a whole new world.

However, overcoming the enemy isn't always straightforward. For example, Tak might have to use enchanted fruit to blast a hole in a wall and then use his blowpipe to stun a patrolling creature, so that he can crawl safely through a narrow gap. Or he might use his blowpipe to shoot a beehive so that the angered bugs will sting the otherwise invulnerable baddy to death. Working out how to defeat the challenges that confront Tak is part of the fun.

Animal Magic

Tak will be able to invoke all kinds of Juju magic along his adventure, finding the right combinations of animals and charms to defeat his enemies and receiving bonuses when he appeases the Juju gods that rule his fate.

Tak is just as much about taxing your brain as it is testing the dexterity of your fingers. This can only be a good thing for gamers who want a little bit more from their games. You can expect to be battling through this game for days at a time. Addictive and filled with humour – that's how we like our games.

Yes, there are some moments of great hilarity to be had too – Tak can make use of various bizarre creatures, such as the Rhino, which help him get through the levels a little easier by charging through the obstacles that face Tak, stomping evil monkeys and smashing their way through the jungle to get Tak to his objective. Our hero, of course, just hangs on for dear life, hoping that he won't get squished along the way.

Tak also has loads of help from his spirit guide, who'll tell you what is going on and help you make the most of the magical tools at your disposal. The game becomes increasingly challenging as the game travels through the many strange environments. As the story unravels so you'll learn loads about the Juju magic

THE WORLD OF JUJU!

★ Watch out for those beehives! A swarm of bees will sting you to death in a jiffy.

and the story behind the mysterious moonstone, and just why it is that baddies are out to get it

Not Just For Kids

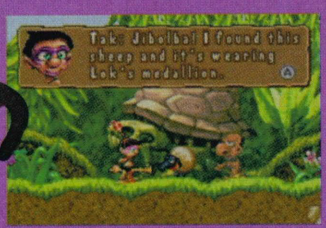
Created in conjunction with popular kids TV channel Nickelodeon, *Tak And The Power Of Juju* is an adventure that's ideal for the younger gamer. Tak should certainly appeal to anyone with that GBA mindset of just loving colourful running and jumping. There's so much to do and see here that it could keep you busy for weeks. Tak looks certain to exhibit the same magic that brought to life the likes of Mario, Crash and Spyro. But can it live up to their incredible heights? The GBA is a tough place to begin life as a platformer, but with as much energy and character as *Tak* has, we can see it doing very well. It'll soon be available on all consoles too, so we're interested in seeing how this pans out. We've little doubt that Tak will become one of the major GBA characters and be a big hit in further games in years to come.

So, will you do Juju? We reckon that at least you'll want to find out what Tak uses his chicken suit for, won't you?

WHAT CAN A BOY DO?

★ **1. CLIMBING** Tak spends a fair amount of time leaping between ropes and ladders. He's an agile little chap, but one wrong move could spell disaster.

★ **2. RESCUING** There are loads of sheep about the place and Tak must rescue them. Leave it to to the shaman to turn them back into people.

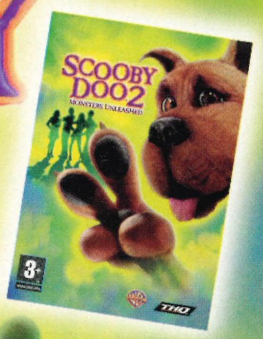


★ **3. CHATTING** There's plenty of advice for Tak along is journey and the story unfolds with chats with various pals.

★ **4. COLLECTING** There are loads of different things to collect, including these moonstone fragments, extra lives and health feathers.

Competition

WIN! A COPY OF SCOOBY DOO 2™ MONSTERS UNLEASHED



Five lucky winners are going to win themselves a brand new GBA title, the game of the forthcoming Scooby Doo film!

If there's ever one of those Top 100 TV programmes that document cartoons, then *Scooby Doo* is likely to be in the Top 10. The adventures of the mismatched gang of friends and their bizarrely humanoid giant dog have gone down in history as a classic series. Silly and filled with suspicious old men with funny alien suits, this was a cartoon that stamped itself on the minds of a generation of TV viewers.

These days though, it's not all down to TV to perpetuate the legend – there are movies and games, too. And, more importantly, games of the movies! (One day perhaps: movies of the games? Who can tell...)

BARKING UP THE RIGHT TREE

Anyway, to celebrate the latest film, *Scooby Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed*, THQ is releasing a new Scooby game and you can win that game for your own personal gaming enjoyment. We know that you'll enjoy wiling away the hours rumbling the antics of fake ghouls, and generally saving small American towns from their terrible fates at the claws of MONSTERS!

So what do you have to do to get your paws on these fantastic games? Well, we want you to send us your idea for a new Scooby Doo monster. Will it be the Roswell Alien, or the Fried Chicken of Death? The five best ideas will win themselves copies of the game, and perhaps a secret something from the *Advance* cupboard of mystery goodies.

Send your ideas to us at:
Advance Magazine
Future Publishing
29 Monmouth Street
Bath
BA1 2RW

See page 11 for closing date and rules.

The Simpsons™ Drive You CRAZY

The Simpsons™ ROAD RAGE™

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Staying alive when Sabre Wulf is after you can be a tricky challenge.

SABRE WULF

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** THQ
- **PHONE** 01483 767656
- **WEB** www.thq.com
- **PRICE** £35
- **SAVE** On Cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

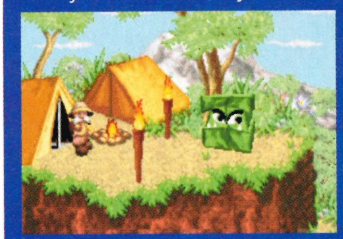
For the older gamers in our office *Sabre Wulf* is a name that's remembered with great fondness. Back in they days when computers were powered by steam-engines, this was a game character that won the hearts and minds of many budding gamers. Rare, the developer who invented the blue Wulf (as well as dozens of awesome games over the years) is back once again to resurrect its ancient character and bring us one of the most addictive and well constructed puzzle-adventure hybrids on the GBA.

The scene is set with the return of Sabre Wulf to the lands that surround the village of Blackwyche. The amulet that imprisoned the magical Wulf has been smashed by some evil villain, and as is common in the land of puzzlers, the pieces have been scattered throughout the land. Now released, the Wulf is running amok, stealing valuable items across the land, and generally terrorising the population.

On each of the 'lairs' you start out at this camp before head off to meet the many tricky challenges that await you.

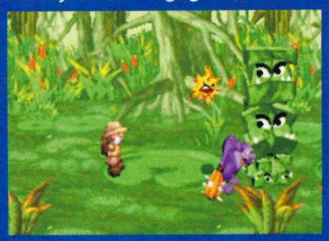
A TYPICAL LAIR

Okay, okay – there's really no such thing as a *typical Sabre Wulf* lair, but we can show you some of the things that will impede your progress as you guide Sabreman on his way. These come in many forms, some are just an inconvenience, but others can be deadly. You're racing against the clock, so things can get tough.



★ 1. Walls like this can easily be smashed down or jumped over, but they'll still slow you down and all the while that treasure is decaying... Get there fast to avoid losing out on cash.

★ 2. Various jumping and falling monsters inhabit these lairs and you'll always bump into a few before you get the level just right. Watch out for things above by moving the screen up, too.



★ 3. You'll need to use various creatures as you progress, they all have a different purpose, although you might be able to figure out new and unusual uses for them.

★ 4. Finally you need to snatch the treasure and leg it back to the start of the lair. Try to grab as many of the coins as you can. Once you reach the Wulf you can replay from that point.

★ For an old codger, Sabreman can jump pretty high. He has to avoid those spiky things or he'll end up face down, stone dead.

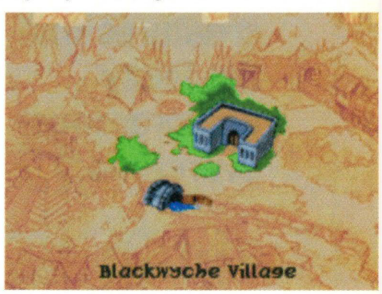
★ The lair of the Sabre Wulf. But is the blue wolf some kind of magical myth? His powers are quite mysterious indeed, as you will discover when you unravel the mystery that this game holds.

It falls to the venerable explorer, Sabreman, to find all the fragments of the amulet and to take on the combined dangers of Sabre Wulf and the evil (needless to say, also mad) scientist who has released him and who is also travelling around in a hot air balloon conquering the world. Business as usually in the world of *Sabre Wulf* then, but just how does this game fit together?

Top Tip
Make sure to thoroughly explore the world map areas as you may find secret trapdoors, and hidden treasure.

The basic story mode consists of a number of areas which Sabreman can explore, all presented in an intricately detailed top-down scrolling view. Sabreman chats with people he meets and discovers new areas to travel to. The hub of this part of the game is Blackwyche village itself, which hosts all kinds of useful shops and stores for Sabreman to make use of. There's a library where he can look up the characteristics of the various beasts he encounters, there's a photographer where he can develop photos and there's an inn where Sabreman can hang out, chat to the locals and indulge in some mini-game challenges. If Sabreman finds that he needs to return to the village for whatever reason, he can find a Mr Atlas about the maps, in order to be transported back to the village, for a fee. Otherwise Sabreman has to walk home.

The most important reason for wanting to return to the village is the shop, where Sabreman can turn his treasure into raw cash. Cash is important to Sabreman so that he can



★ The map slowly opens up and gives you more places to travel to. The village is the hub around which all the action revolves.

★ The bar offers you another place to visit and to pick up new challenges. Listen to these chaps for tips on what to do.

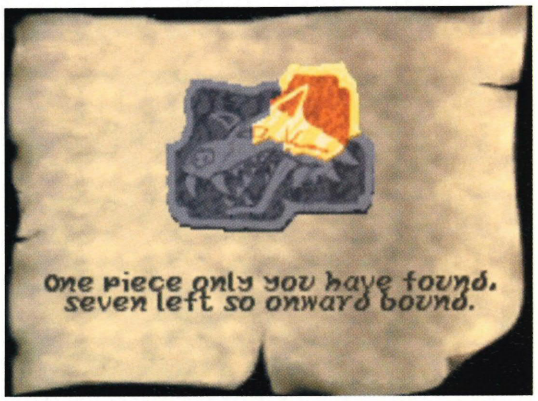
★ The woodcutter is full of useful information and helps you to get further in your quest. His hat, however, is rubbish.

> "Cash is important for Sabreman for paying for services and for animals..."

This purple fellow bashes everything in front of it with a huge spiked club.

Some enemies can simply be dodged, others must be eliminated before you can continue.

Weird snake things are amongst the least of your worries as you run and leap through various caverns and lair-holes.



Only by uniting all pieces of the shattered magical amulet will you be able to cast Sabre Wulf back to whence he came.

> "The levels are filled with obstacles and creatures that the feisty explorer must overcome."

pay for services, and more importantly, for buying the animals that will help him puzzle his way through the many lairs of *Sabre Wulf* to grab the treasure.

It's the lairs of the blue Wulf that make up the greatest number of the challenges in *Sabre Wulf*, although there are many different mini-challenges and sub-games along the way, too. As Sabreman makes his way around the maps he'll discover portals that descend into the earth which are topped by a statue of the Wulf himself. On going down into each of these, Sabreman is presented with a side-scrolling series of platform puzzles. These levels are filled with obstacles and weird creatures which the feisty explorer must overcome. To do this, he must use the animals in his inventory. For example he might use a Clubber to clear the path of 'blocker' creatures, or a Boomer (a kind of exploding monkey) to clear a path of bombs. There are loads of different creatures for Sabreman to use, from the Blubber, which allows him to leap high, to the Sucker which, well, sucks. As Sabreman completes the puzzles, he gets closer to Wulf at the end of the lair, where he must finally grab the treasure and run back to his tent (the exit of the level) while the Wulf chases him. As he does this all the animals on the level are destroyed by Sabre Wulf's howl and they turn into coins, which Sabreman must collect as he travels through the level.

Uniquely, this treasure decays with time, from gold to silver and then to bronze. The faster Sabreman completes the level, the more likely he is to get the gold treasure. Not only is this worth more when traded in at the shop, it's also 'completes' the lair, allowing Sabreman to return to favourite lairs which can be tried in a challenge mode. Here he can try and get in and out in the fastest time, without being blocked in by the various monsters that were there on the initial run.

These 'lair' challenges are brilliantly judged. They start out enormously simplified, and follow a genuinely inspirational difficulty curve that means you're always feeling satisfied with that little bit extra you've achieved without it being too easy. The level design constantly produces new tricks and innovations, both in the beasts that are in your way and in how you're able to overcome the obstacles with your own

The first mission is to rescue the Mayor of Blackwyche village, who has been kidnapped.

OUT AND ABOUT

The lairs are only one part of *Sabre Wulf* and lots of action takes place in the adventure mode, where Sabreman tracks the evildoers, discovers the lairs and chats to the locals.

★ 1. The village of Blackwyche must be saved! Once that's done though you open up a whole new world of places to go to and explore. People are happy to help you along the way.

★ 2. Visit spooky woods and Aztec jungles, all mysteriously within walking distance of the village... Wherever you go though, you'll find Sabre Wulf's lairs waiting for you.

★ 3. Some sub-games require you to defeat the weird laboratories set down by your enemy. These Tardis-like structures are filled with tricks and traps to frustrate you.

★ 4. Make sure to explore the village thoroughly and buy stuff from the shop. There are even some photography sub-quests for you to undertake along the way.

★ The baddies you must defeat are in the balloon.

★ The flags indicate how well you've done.

★ Sabreman, the explorer, is just out camping.

ever-expanding inventory of weirdo beasties. There are also power-ups to be had – like a protective vest, magic bags containing new friendly animals and chests filled with those all-important coins.

Sabre Wulf is a really strong game. Simple to pick up and easy to get your head round, it also offers a huge array of challenges and constantly throws up new things. Some people might find the world and the presentation a little too cute and fluffy for their liking, but if you allow yourself to be fooled by that then you're missing out on a game that is perfectly balanced, open enough to keep you engrossed for hours, and well judged enough to mean you're always discovering something new, while always having your gaming skills taxed by its many-faceted game dynamic.

Sabre Wulf is full of character and the silly story drives things along with a delightful buoyancy. While it doesn't have the shine and polish of the recent *Spyro* games, and lacks the sheer genius and innovation of more ambitious games from Nintendo, this is a game that will keep everyone amused, particularly those of us who remember the original *Sabre Wulf* games from way back when. This is classic gaming made new, and on your GBA. A rare treat indeed.

JIM ROSSIGNOL

★ The village has lots of lovely scenic locations for you to explore before you head off to battle the big blue Wulf.

★ Sabreman's moustache is one of the finest in all the kingdom, but there's no barber's shop in Blackwyche village...

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Full of character, if fairly simple. It's a classic look that works perfectly.

GAMEPLAY
Superbly balanced gameplay with a well-judged difficulty curve.

LIFESPAN
A couple of weeks of play in here could balloon to a month or so.

DIFFICULTY
Easy to get into but eventually tough to beat. This makes it very addictive.

ADVANCE OPINION
A classic theme reinvented with panache and vision. One of the best GBA games we've encountered. Take a look.

85%

Mario and Luigi get along really well. And sometimes that means that Luigi has to be tied up with a rope. Don't worry, it's for his own good. Well, that's how Mario explains things...

MARIO & LUIGI: SUPERSTAR SAGA

To what shall we compare *Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga*? It's like going to the supermarket and finding out that Champagne is on 'buy one, get one free'. For on this cart, you get two games for the price of one: not only can you sample the delights of the Mario sibling's earliest outing, *Mario Bros*, but you're also able to dive into another absorbing mushroom-filled adventure, *Mario & Luigi*. It's this, the main course of the gamepak, that's the most mouth-watering. So, put your red and white checked napkin into your collar and get your knife and fork at the ready, as we chew on, and savour, Nintendo's latest Italian plumber-based recipe for success.

Superstar Saga's plot is as thick as mixed vegetable soup. But you never feel you're going to choke at the difficulty. Like many RPGs, you wade through the story slowly but methodically, gradually getting the lay of the land – in this case, a land that's been thrown into turmoil. An evil witch, Cackletta, has stolen Princess Peach's voice, replacing her regal enunciation with explosives. As such, Bowser's plan to kidnap Peach (yet again) is foiled. Mario and Luigi meet up with Bowser at the castle, find out what's happened and join forces. But they are soon split up when an aerial ambush downs their ship, bound for the neighbouring Beanbean Kingdom. The Mario brothers then set about their task of restoring order.

What makes this game such a refreshing addition to the *Mario Bros* series is its varied gameplay. The story brings together classic role-playing, fastest-finger-first battling, puzzle-solving, and platform-derived exploration into one piece of plastic. Because of this, the overall gameplay has an

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Nintendo
- **PHONE** 020 7307 3103
- **WEB** www.nintendo-europe.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** Yes
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Mini-games are the life and soul of Mario's adventures these days. There's always something new to challenge your skills.

THE SUPERSTAR SAGA BEGINS?

Mario & Luigi: Superstar Saga is replete with side challenges. Your parents probably told you not to pick fights when you were younger; here though, putting up your dukes has to be second nature. So call those wusses, throw down the gauntlet and administer the smackdown to all comers in the Superstar battle modes!

★ 1. Dual player battles: be careful to hold down 'A' briefly, then release for a hammer defence move with enough reach to pulverise the enemy. Otherwise, in this instance, you'll get slimed. Nasty business.

★ 2. Single player battles: make every hit count and whack away for all you are worth. Novices getting hit regularly should either practice on ordinary foes or save power-ups until last the round.

★ 3. You'll keep coming back to this scene. Make the Mario brothers hop, skip and jump the velvet rope. You've got three lives (hits) to do it in. Yes, it's very tricky. We advise having a good night's sleep beforehand.

★ 4. Bros moves: the lower digits on the red and green bands show your 'Bros Points'. Collect food, accumulate Bros points and unleash the Bros (super destructive leap-frogging) moves in battles.

easily digestible structure. Since plot and gameplay are so interwoven, learning new moves (bludgeoning enemies with a hammer, corkscrewing and double-jumping) is simple: just follow the regular on-screen tutorials. Once equipped with new skills, you are primed to meet more challenges and defeat your enemies – some new, some old.

In the main adventure, Mario and Luigi move around like Siamese twins tied by an invisible fraternal force. You can switch to have either brother leading. As you learn more skills, each bro becomes more dependent on the other. While standing on Luigi's shoulders, Mario can corkscrew the pair across divides; reverse that setup, and Luigi can super-bounce off Mario's shoulders.

Top Tip
Keep spurting water into the early wind fan thingy and you will be rewarded with numerous goodies.

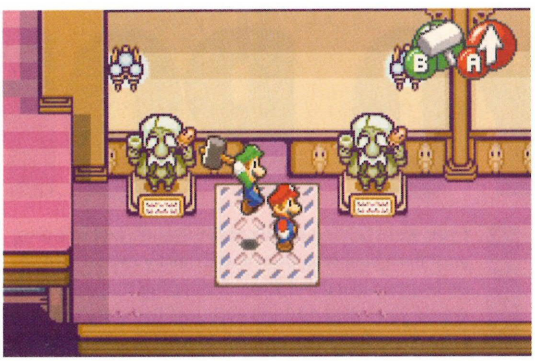
The difficulty is fairly and logically set throughout, so in battles the right timing and plenty of practice is needed to bash the bosses beyond consciousness. You'll need your strategy cap on, too; if your strength starts to plummet, you must use power-ups wisely. It's also possible to go shopping for nuts, herbs, new trousers and so on, and by collecting coins, you can purchase more energy if you're running low in the run-up to a boss battle.

The game's tactical side is balanced with oodles of nice touches. The dialogue is witty, while the body language, facial expressions and totally unintelligible Mario brothers dialect are hilarious. There's even an in-joke about Luigi's minor celebrity status. You'll also find that the three-file save option comes in at regular times throughout the game, so bite-sized gaming between meals will assure the return of your appetite. This means that you could also share your GBA with your brother or sister while you take a breather with your game – but why would you want to do that?

Rest assured, players of any age will be gorging themselves to bursting with this elegant suffusion of sun-ripened Nintendo goodness.

If you have a taste for adventure and role-playing games, but your palette is also party to the ingredients of a platformer, you won't be turning your nose up at this tasty cart. Even better, it's still fresh a month after removal from its packaging. Anyone for leftovers?

CHAS ROWE

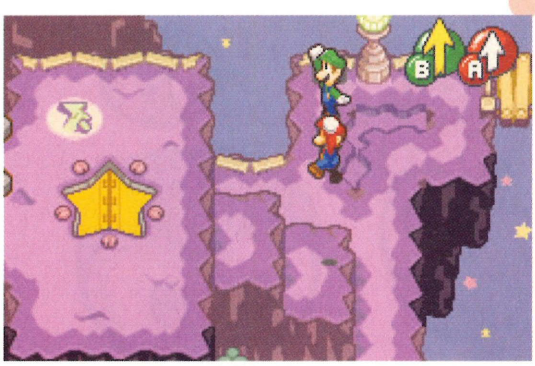


★ The dual control of our heroes is as easy as could be. Like all Mario games, it's the kind of thing we just can't get enough of.

★ As ever, the primary form of transport in Marioworld is the giant green drainpipe. Nice.

★ Hamster-frog mutants are always trouble, so Mario and Luigi do some extermination.

★ Mushrooms, as we all know, speak a strain of Japanese called 'fungese'. Here we see that lovely language in action.



★ Working together, Mario and Luigi can achieve things that they couldn't even begin to imagine if they were all alone.

> "Gorging themselves on an elegant suffusion of sun-ripened goodness..."

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Pixel-perfect with detailed animation, sound and great playability.

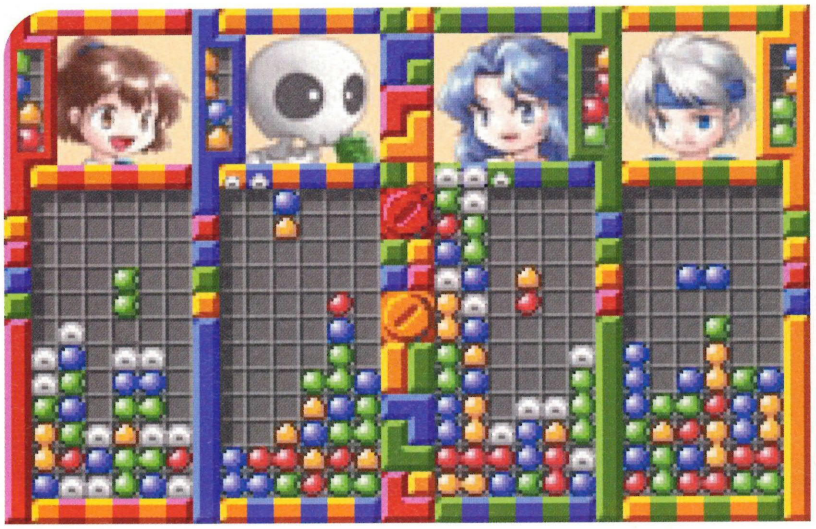
LIFESPAN
Nibble or chew your way through – there's plenty to explore.

GAMEPLAY
Intelligently organised roam-athon that is diverse, challenging and fun.

DIFFICULTY
Right up there with the other Mario games. Firm but fair. We like it.

ADVANCE OPINION
This is nutritious, delicious GBA fare. With this genre of game, Nintendo clearly has the bragging rights.

90%



★ A little girl and her weird pet thing were skipping in the forest...

★ ...and have a cup of tea with a friendly skeleton? Okay then.

PUYO POP

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** THQ/Sega
- **PHONE** 01483 767656
- **WEB** www.thq.co.uk
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

"You'd hardly expect to end up in a world of magic popping beans..."

If you were talking a walk in the woods, just minding your own business, then you'd hardly expect to end up trapped in a dimension of popping magic beans, would you? Well no, but this is just the story that introduces *Puyo Pop* on GBA. Weird? Yes, but that's part of the charm of this peculiar brand of highly developed puzzlers.

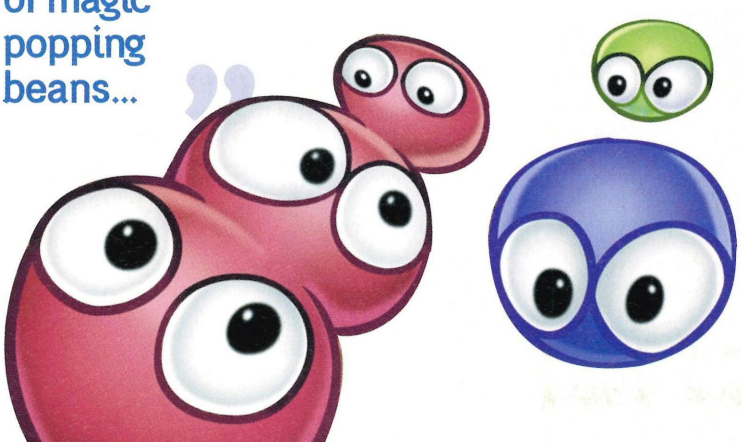
Top Tip
Never look away from the screen, never think about anything else. Puyo popping is about meditation.

Of course the story never matters a jot when it comes to these puzzle titles, they're all about the addictive, relentless, puzzling. Almost everyone has played this type of game before at some time in their life: it's all about linking up your coloured beans in the right combination to get them to explode. Magic beans will do that. But it's not about simply getting them to go pop, it's about getting them to go with most beans connected as is humanly possible. You'll need to use all your clever thinking and puzzling cunning to get past this blighter and get to the genuinely high scores. Get really large strings of beans together and you'll not only clear yourself a huge space for more to rain down, you'll get a vast points bonus and leave a smile on your face. Not only that, but you're always popping against a rival, who will try to outscore you as you play. This is a consistently challenging game.

Yes, this is a puzzler that's just not going to let you go. Its perfect timing and delicate difficulty curve will just string you along, wanting to beat your hi-score time after time. But then again, if you already own a number of titles like this then you're probably not going to want to invest in *Puyo Pop*. There is simply nothing new or original enough in this update to warrant your purchase unless you've got more money than God.

However, if you don't own one of these games on your GBA then we suspect that you are mad in the head or sadly missing out on the kind of games that have mutated the minds of millions of our fellow gamers. We love these games and we're sure that you will love them too. You know what they say: once you pop...

NATHAN JONES



★ Head to head popping! The grid in the centre gives you an idea of what's to come as well as showing who's winning.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Classic puzzle look, cutely presented and with all the charm we expect.

GAMEPLAY
Addictive. Terminally addictive. There's nothing new here, but it's just great.

LIFESPAN
Like previous games of the same ilk you'll be able to play this for years.

DIFFICULTY
Starts out easy and, well, you'll never defeat it. Not in this lifetime anyway.

ADVANCE OPINION
If you've bought other *Puyo Pop* games then you're unlikely to want to look here, but it's still great fun all the way.

80%

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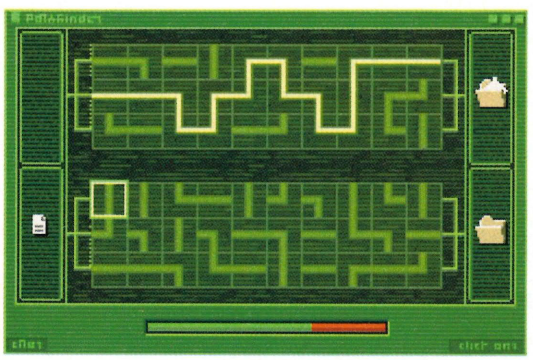
SPLINTER CELL PANDORA TOMORROW



What's all this green? Why it's a hacking sub-game! Can you connect the circuits without melting your brain? We think so.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Ubisoft
- **PHONE** 01932 838230
- **WEB** www.pandoratomorrow.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

***Splinter Cell* is regarded by many as the ultimate stealth game, and for its GBA incarnation, that's certainly the truth. It has a rival for stealth this month in form of *James Bond: Everything Or Nothing*, but the classic English spy has nothing on America's most incredible secret agent, who visits the GBA for a second time with ultimate in covert action.**

Each of *Splinter Cell*'s levels is a series of challenges for Agent Sam Fisher to overcome. These all involve infiltration in some way. Some are based on his ability to leap and crawl and climb better than any man alive, and various sections of the game will see you clambering over obstacles and guiding Sam as he dangles and clambers into buildings and over dangerous situations. Sam can pull himself up to climb with arms and legs to secrete himself through the smallest gaps. You can expect to see him undertaking most of the task that are expected of him in the static console version,

THE LIFE OF A CUNNING SNEAKER

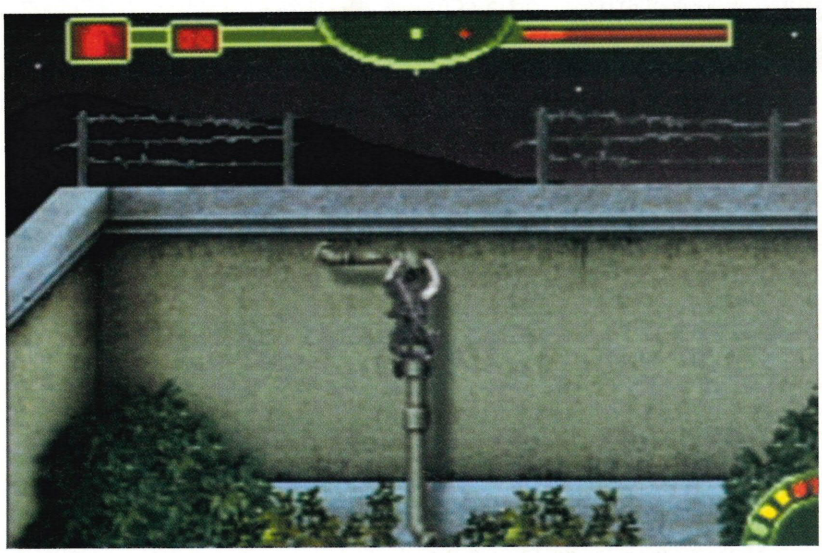
Sam Fisher doesn't officially exist, you know. He's an agent for a super-double-secret agency of military snoopers based in the United States. Here's his day at the office.

1. Keeping out of sight is something of an artform. Here we see a move called 'the box squat'.

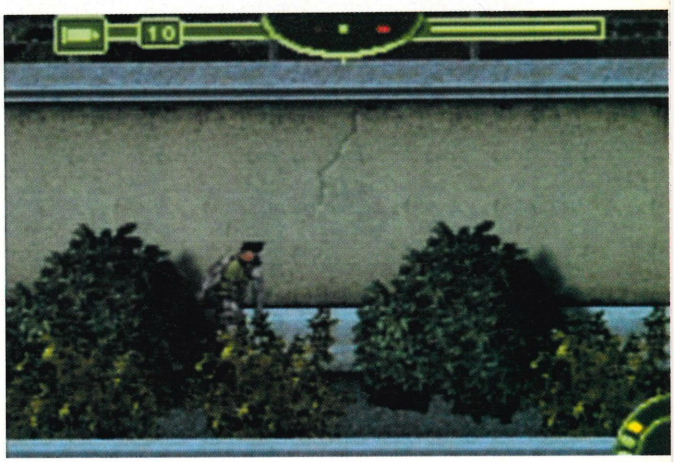
2. Tread carefully and you'll be able to grab baddies from behind and throttle them to the grave. Bwhaha.

3. Sometimes shooting people in the face is necessary, but most of the time hiding in shadows is fine.

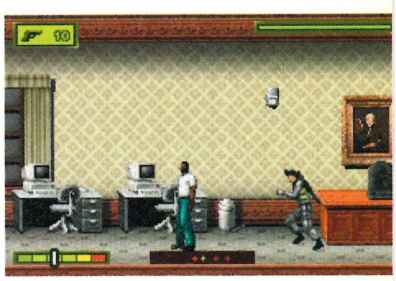
4. Don't let baddies get to the alarm switches, or they'll cause game over for you, Mr American Sneakist.



Wasn't there an episode of *Buffy* with a haunted drainpipe? No? Well how about an episode where Buffy visited the planet of the bubble wrap people? No? Bah, Dr Who was better.



Alan Titchmarsh would regret the day he called Sam Fisher a big-nosed smell-face.



Offices are always good for a bit of espionage. Don't kill anyone though, they only work there, you know.

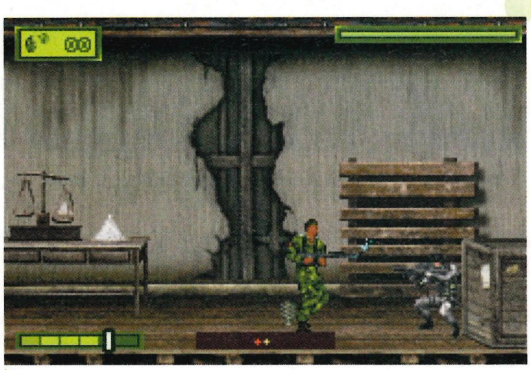
with him getting past guards by ducking behind cover, or crouching and crawling under various bits of the scenery. Almost everything you see on-screen can be used to conceal Sam to some extent and while he's behind a bush or a curtain, enemies will have no idea he's there.

Top Tip
When you spot a security camera, stop moving and watch for the field-of-view triangle to see where to move.

This is a game that relies on you keeping Sam out of sight. So whenever possible you'll resort to sneakiness. But Sam isn't all about hide and seek – he can also deliver some damage. Ideally you'll avoid killing, and sneaking up on your enemies to grab them from behind and knock them out. Even if you're spotted, there's also a chance that you'll be able to knock out your opponent in a brief fistfight, but Sam will take damage like this, so you'll want to limit the number of times when surprise isn't on your side. Many levels will insist that you allow there to be no casualties – it's either politically bad for your bosses, or the people on the level are essentially innocent people, so you'll have to get good at knocking out the miscreants who get in your way.

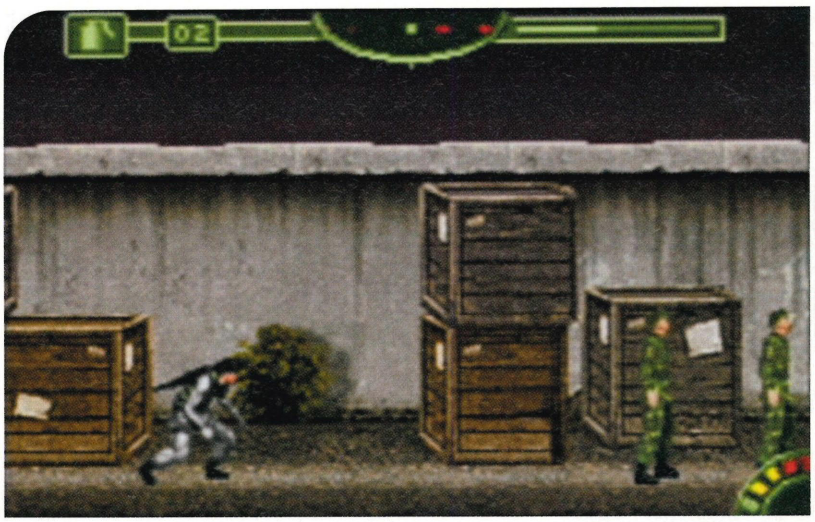
But occasionally the gloves come off and you'll then able bring out your rifle: this means you'll be able to kill enemies from some distance, but you'll want to be careful about who can see the body when they fall. In all situations you're able to grab bodies and drag them, helping you to move them in case they are discovered by patrolling guards. As you progress through the game you'll come up against all kinds of tricky challenges to tax your brain. Getting past numerous solitary guards might be easy enough, but what will you do when you're faced with a patrolling guard and a security camera? The solution is tricky indeed. However, there are lots of tools at your disposal, including a flash-bang grenade which will stun guards for long enough for you to get past and also the 'zoom' function which allows you to move the

Sam Fisher drags his victims away into the dark. Is he a blood sucking vampire? No, he's just an American. Anyway, excuse us...



Sam shoots an enemy in the bladder. Always a terrible fate for any hired goon to befall. So be kind to the goons.

"Occasionally the gloves come off and you are allowed to get out the rifle..."



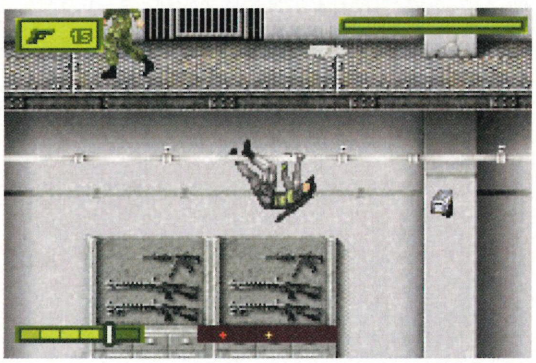
But what's inside the giant box? It seems that we will never know. Numbers, probably.

Armed with a poison peashooter, Sam finishes off the terrorists who've contrived to take over the world in pyjamas.

camera away from Sam himself and check out what else lies ahead of you . He's even equipped with night vision and infrared goggles for those tricky night time missions.

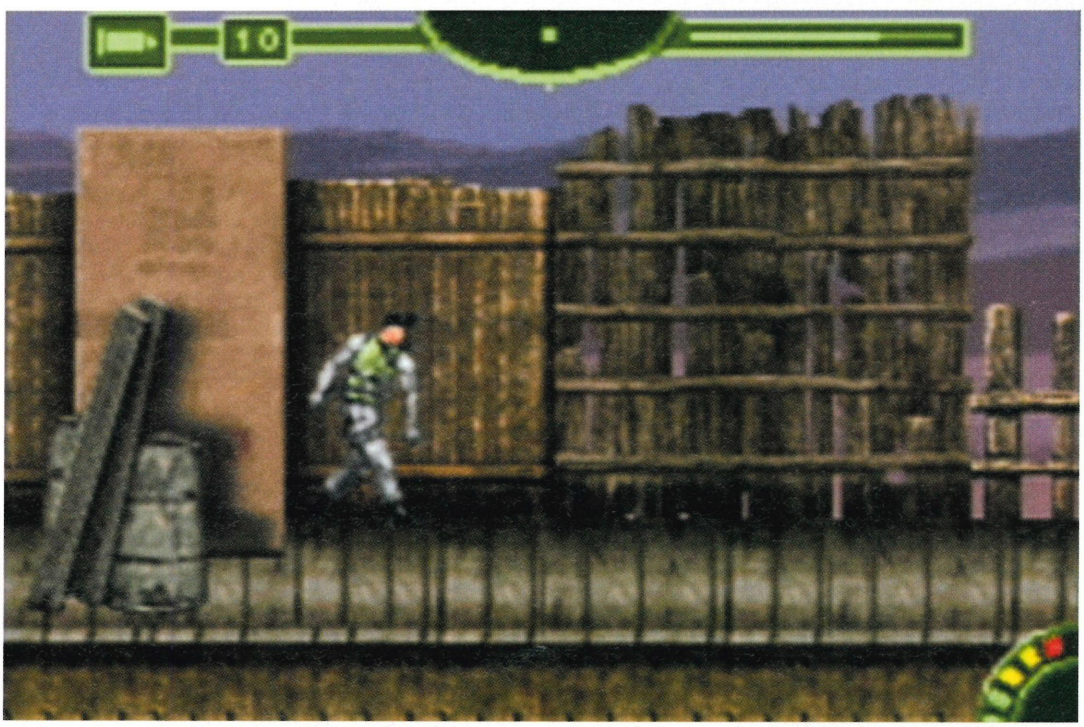
Splinter Cell has made the conversion to GBA look easy, and anyone who's played the 3D version on a static console will be amazed at how well the game's made the transition to a 2D handheld title. This is the kind of game that takes the essence of the idea and takes it back to raw essentials. Meaning that this is a near-essential GBA game, although it's just as tricky as the more complex console versions and many people will find their patience taxed by having to struggle through the same levels again and again. This is the only gripe we have with an otherwise brilliant game.

JIM ROSSIGNOL



Having been forced to live in the Zoo, Sam became a lemur.

"All this means that *Pandora Tomorrow* is a near must-have GBA game..."



Sam doesn't sit on the fence, he instead utilises it as a hiding place and a weapon in the fight against international corruption.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
The 2D artwork captures the feel of the *Splinter Cell* world brilliantly.

GAMEPLAY
Sneak, sneak and sneak for your life. It's tricky though, so concentrate.

LIFESPAN
It's a tough one, so you can expect to be playing for weeks at a time.

DIFFICULTY
Harder than Bruce Lee and twice as tricky to outwit. It's a toughie.

ADVANCE OPINION
Fantastically solid sneak 'em up, perfectly realised for the GBA. Addictive and challenging, like all good games should be.

89%

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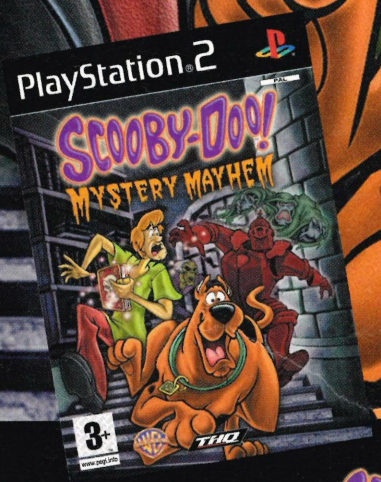

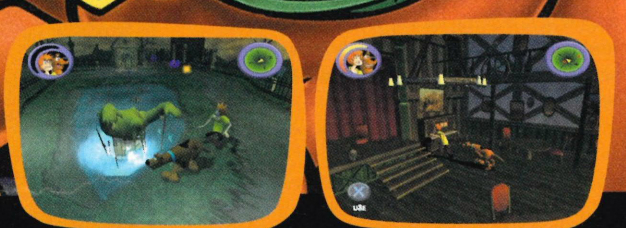

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(s04)

THQ

SONIC BATTLE

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** THQ/Sega
- **PHONE** 01483 767656
- **WEB** www.thq.co.uk
- **PRICE** £20
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Sonic isn't all about zooming around collecting coins, not these days anyway. The famous blue hedgehog is moving into newer territories this month, with the arrival of a whole new career for the speedy hog and his collection of colourful acquaintances: that of a martial arts expert.

Sonic Battle is a story-based adventure, packed with fighting action. The game features all the major Sonic characters in an array of different environments where they must select their fighting moves and duke it out for victory.

In the challenge mode of the game you can choose to pitch all the various characters, from Knuckles the Echidna, to Shadow the (evil) Hedgehog to Sonic and Tails, the ever-popular heroes of the high-speed Sonic adventures. The game is fairly simplistic, placing the combatants in a small arena where they can leap and flip and generally make use of their tight combination of special powers. What isn't simplistic is just how you go about utilising those powers and, indeed, how you collect them in the first instance.

Sonic stands tall as he readies himself to administer the smackdown to some baddies. Emerl won't be much help here.

MAKING THE MOVES

It's all about using the right powers to take down the enemy you face. There's some time to experiment as you get to reselect your range of powers each time you get knocked out. As you get further into the game you'll encounter loads new new and far more powerful moves that change the way that you fight quite radically.

★ 1. Before each battle you need to select the powers you want to use. Each button on the pad corresponds to a different move type.

★ 2. Watch out for force attacks, these can be avoided if you're quick on your feet. Use them yourself for maximum impact.

★ 3. Explosions are always a good thing, except when you're on the receiving end! Leap away from attacks to stay safe.

★ 4. Get your selection right, and hit all the right buttons on the field of battle and you'll rack up the KO's required to beat your enemies.

★ The moves are fast and explosive. Using a good combination of special moves and normal attacks is vital to getting that winning knockout and taking the game. Use your brains!

★ Sonic does a bit of a jig to celebrate another excellent smackdown. He's a cheeky chap, and not well liked in his town.

In the story mode you take control of Sonic and, in the opening moments of the game, you fulfil the dreams of all the members of the *Advance* team and find a robot of your own on the beach. (Your very own robot!) Of course such a discovery means that something strange is afoot, something involving Chaos Emeralds...

Top Tip
Experiment with your air attacks, these provide you with powerful combos to use on your airborne enemies.

To begin with your cool little Japanese robot is malfunctioning and Sonic must get him repaired, fighting some interlopers along the way. Before long it's revealed that Dr Eggman is once again up to no good and, of course, the mystery of the robot has something to do with the Chaos Emeralds. Before long you're playing as the robot, Emerl. And this is where the game starts to get a little more interesting.

You travel between areas through the map screen, where you can go and find new objectives to complete, while also learning how the story that is unfolding and finding out how it involves all the different characters that Sonic and his robo-buddy will end up fighting.

The robot must learn the ways of fighting from scratch, and it's up to you to guide him through the game, reward him with power-ups and enable him to gather special moves that will allow him to defeat the multitude of enemies that he will face. Emerl must 'capture' moves from enemies, and is limited in the number of moves he can choose for a battle by the number of skill points he holds.

> "Before long it's revealed that the evil Dr Eggman is once again up to no good."

★ The battle mode means that you can select very different characters to fight each other. Shadow versus Rouge is top fun.

★ The naughty bat girl wants to get her hands on the chaos emeralds and Emerl, the robot, is the key to doing so.

Sonic and Rouge slug it out on the beach. Sonic gets a black eye for his troubles.

Once an opponent is downed, they are able to appear almost anywhere on the map, so watch out for incoming trouble!

Sonic has some powerful moves available to him. This spinning attack can only be avoided by jumping out of the way.

Sonic and Knuckles are evenly matched and they eye each other up. Who will make the first move in this bout of combat?

> "Raising your own robot as a fighting machine at first sounds like an ideal past-time..."

More skill points are obtained by uncovering new chaos emeralds. Emerl has very few skills to start with, but goes on to learn and to catch up with the incredibly tough Sonic character that you begin the game with.

Raising your own robot as a fighting machine sounds like an ideal past-time as far as we're concerned, but the problem lies in the fact that the game's combat is so random and fiddly that you're never likely to really feel satisfied by what you've achieved. Had the 3D section of the game, where the combat takes place, been a little better delivered then we'd no doubt have been slapping *Sonic Battle* on the back and praising it as one of the great GBA games of all time.

We have to admit that this is a good-looking, highly unusual addition to Sonic's range, and we won't be unhappy to see more titles like this in the future. It'll be a solid addition to any gamer's range, too, especially if you're going to buy it to play with friends via a link cable. There are a large number of mini-games to unlock and special moves can be traded in a 'card' system between your linked GBAs.

The most entertaining part of the game for us is the battle mode. If you can't be bothered with the far more involved action of the story mode you can simply leap in, choosing pairings of characters to fight in a quick session. This is really entertaining, with you able to leap straight into the action in various interesting maps, without having to slog your way through the story map and the dialogue screens that accompany it. If you have a link cable you'll be able to play each other, picking either a pair of characters if there are two of you, or taking a character each if you're playing with four people. This makes things a little more fun as real people are always a little bit more cunning and inventive than the in-game AI. In the single-player mode the characters are pretty good at using their moves, but they'll

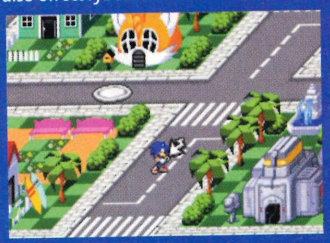
Don't be bored, have a fight! Sonic soon dispels his depression with an energetic couple of rounds with his buddies. There won't be time for boredom for you, either, once you play this.

Your moves enter an armory of cards, as you can see here. Emerl the robot must soon learn moves from scratch.

ROBOTS, HEDGEHOGS AND A WHOLE LOT OF EMERALDS

Emerl's story is told on the battlefield, but also on storyboard screens and the town map interface where he must find his way about.

1. Sonic instigates the first few fights, allowing you to learn the ropes while you still have a few powers to play with.



2. Guide your character around the map with the map screen. Pads on the ground indicate events that you'll want to see.

3. Depending on who you fight, and where, the backdrops will be radically different. Pink carpet makes for cute boxing.

4. If you're successful then you'll begin to find out why all the other Sonic characters are acting a bit strange around you...

A team battle means that characters are able to help each other out.

If one character is knocked out then a pair can focus their attacks.

Powerful attacks will send the fighters flying. Jump away to avoid getting caught by these dangerous energy attacks.

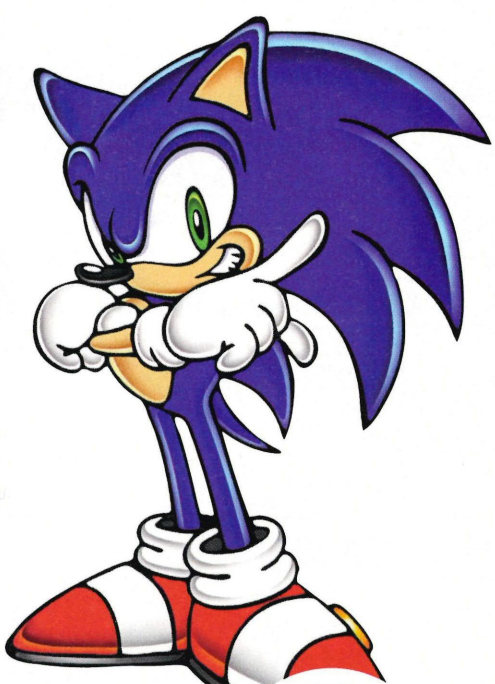
With a full energy bar Sonic looks like winning this fight, but one wrong move...

All the characters will open with a blaze of special moves, making the opening seconds of a fight crucial to victory.

never come up with interesting combinations or ever really surprise you with what they do. It's all too easy to predict what they're going to do and, of course, come up with some combat tactics to counter it. This game might be fast and furious, but it also demands a certain level of thought.

We can't however, genuinely recommend this as a must-have game. The robot is a fun character, but there are better 'raising and managing' games out there, and if it's the fighting you're interested in then *Sonic Battle* is likely to disappoint too: it just doesn't have enough clout to keep you interested. Nice try, Sega, but we need something a little better than this.

STEPHEN PIERCE



LOOK 'N' FEEL
Great cartoon visuals, but lacking the polish of the other Sonic games.

GAMEPLAY
Reasonably rewarding, but fiddly to perform all the necessary moves.

LIFESPAN
If you persist then this will keep you busy for months at a go.

DIFFICULTY
Not too tricky to get into, but enormously challenging to beat.

ADVANCE OPINION
A great idea that never quite realises the full potential of what it could achieve. Worth investigating though.

72%

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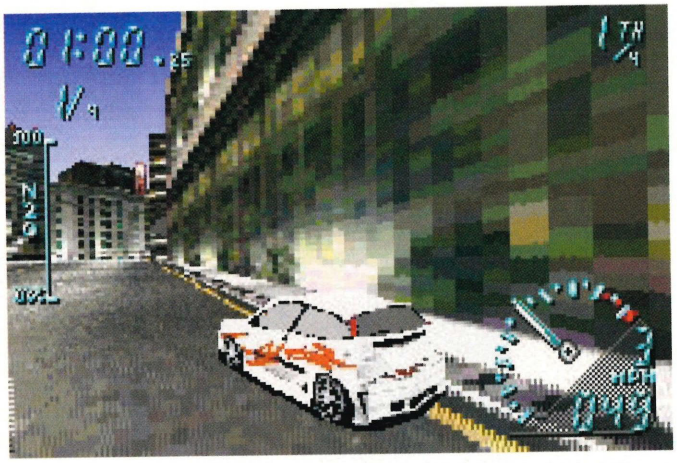
Cars, like road cattle, are loud, fast and unruly. But unlike moles they can't live underground. Or can they? No, they can't. That would be silly.



Expect to find yourself bouncing off walls like this on a regular basis. *NFS* takes some getting used to before you'll glide around the courses with ease...

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** EA
- **PHONE** 01932 450000
- **WEB** www.uk.ea.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Already a massive hit on the main consoles, *Need For Speed Underground* revs its way onto the handheld grid with this superb conversion. This is all about fast and furious street racing, and here you've got loads of cars and miles of tracks to play with. You're racing through a city, so this is dirty and dangerous stuff, and there's simply loads to do with a heap of goodies to unlock – making *NFSU* one of the best racing games on the GBA.

The 3D graphics can be a little blocky at times, even for the GBA, but there's such a huge wealth of options here that you're nevertheless won over. Once the racing begins, the cash starts flowing and you begin to modify your machine and unlock new cars along the way. This is what the game is all about – giving you a sense of progression and a taste of achievement as you accelerate your way through half a dozen game modes and the ten or so tracks that each one boasts. Get your car kitted out and blow away the opposition for maximum satisfaction. The engines don't quite have that cool bass growl on the GBA, but then that's only to be expected.

> "Once the cash starts flowing you can modify your machine and unlock new cars..."

Top Tip

While driving as fast as possible and then learning to slow down is standard, do try using the brakes...

It's the racing that makes all the difference though, and we can report that it's solid fun, and feels responsive and fast. It's a challenging racing title that's refreshing for those of us who've just been playing *Crash Nitro* for the past few weeks. Whether playing on your own or with a pal on the link-up cable, you're assured a great laugh and a decent race. Perhaps it won't be for everyone, but for race fans this one's definitely a keeper.

JIM ROSSIGNOL

Holy colours! Spray painting your enormously expensive racing machine has never been quite so easy. We like pink.

Hmm, this fellow could do with a fancy paint-job. Grey really isn't the sexiest of colours, especially if you're a criminal racer.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Burn rubber in this blocky 3D city. It's okay really, but we like to moan.

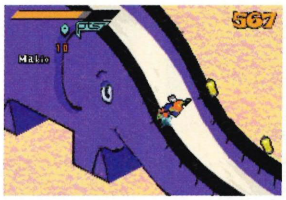
GAMEPLAY
More racing than you could eat at a single sitting. Solid too. Like a brick.

LIFESPAN
If you're on your own: weeks. Racing versus a squad mates: months.

DIFFICULTY
The streets can get rough, and the racing is always tricky.

ADVANCE OPINION
With a little more work on the graphics this could have been one of the greatest GBA racing games.

78%



Wheeee! Of course, this being an extreme sports game, you can grind up the elephant as well as down.

Don't look down – look up, because a ghostly bonus-awarding 'Graffiti Spirit' is waiting for collection. Watch out for these bonuses on every level.

JET SET RADIO

Things have been a bit quiet on the rollerskating front since some bright spark nailed a set of trolley castors to a baby's surfboard and set Tony Hawk off on the half-pipe to millionairesdom. But *Jet Set Radio* predicts a future of rebellious roller-kids smothering neo-Tokyo in graffiti – and a whole heap of fun it is, too.

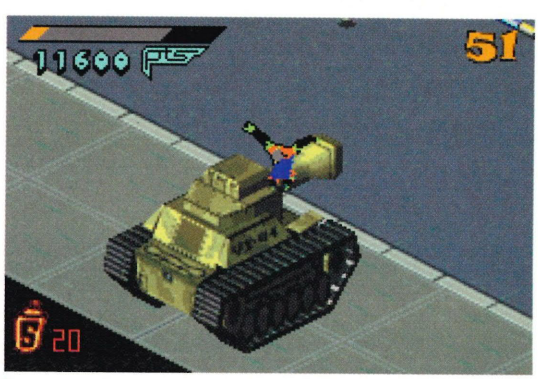
Coded by the team behind Tony Hawk's own GBA adventures, *Jet Set Radio* is a fiercely loyal pocket spin on the Dreamcast game of the same name. The aim is to spraypaint the buildings, bridges and buses of an alternative Tokyo, with 'the man' forever on your tail. And when this little cart gets into its stride, it confidently recreates its DC daddy's furiously cool combos of wheel-screeching grinds, flip-spinning stunts and panicked spraycan-bursts.

The majority of missions are about the 'tag' points that litter each level. Some can be splattered with paint with the A Button while grinding past at speed; others need fast

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Atari
- **PHONE** 0208 2229700
- **WEB** www.uk.atari.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Railway tracks are a grinding goldmine for rollerskaters. So it's lucky the trains never move, or you'd be paté by lunchtime.



They might look menacing, but these tanks rarely deal out any damage. See how we fearlessly skate upon them!

JET SET GO

After your digits have warmed to the initially perplexing controls, *Jet Set Radio*'s pace really picks up – and before long, your mastery of the rollerskate is offering up some memorable moments as you grind your way through the large and beautifully designed environments. If only it was as easy to skate in real life!

★ 1. Speed-grinding past one-button tags, flagrantly spraying as the poor policemen look on in confused awe. The poor chaps can't keep up...

★ 2. Tumbling down the crazy helter-skelter, climaxing with a big leap into a cosy cubbyhole that's ripe for spraying. Keep that can squirting!

★ 3. Frantically hammer on the D-pad to complete your masterpiece before the pistol-wielding Chief appears to blow your bits off.

★ 4. A brilliant addition – designing your very own graffiti tag in the comprehensive Tag Editor. No swear words, now, this is a family game–

D-pad spins while the comically inept future police try to rugby-tackle you to the ground. It's cool, it's fast, and it's fun. And as most of the graffiti-able areas are tucked away on high platforms or in out-of-reach cubbyholes, it's a satisfying challenge stringing together your best jumps, grinds, leg-splits and somersaults to reach them.

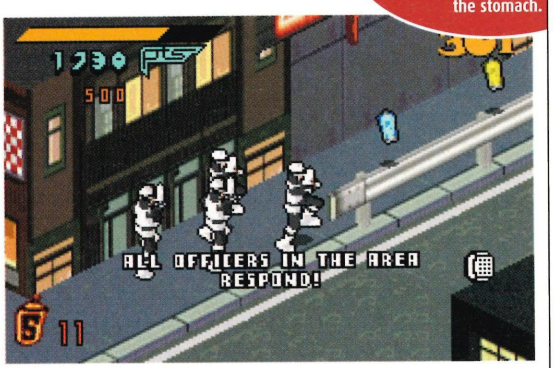
Jet Set Radio looks smart, too. The rollerskaters themselves are built from pint-sized polygons, *Tony Hawk's* style, lending them a pleasing fluidity (especially when they're dancing for neo-Tokyo to celebrate the end of a mission). And the isometric overhead perspective gives you attractive, sizeable cities to roll around, which grow to reveal new areas, hidden short cuts and fresh obstacles to 'ollie' and 'abstract' off.

But with that perspective comes a problem. The three-quarters view is akin to those 'vase-becomes-two-faces' optical illusions, as your poor confused eyes try to figure out that a flat diagonal pathway is actually a 45-degree ramp, or that the rail you're trying to leap up to is about 50 metres above you. Add in a tricky rotational control scheme, and you can go through torture just trying to climb a staircase then turn right at the top. Give the truck-climb in level one a go – the phrase 'fell off the back of a lorry' could have been invented for it.

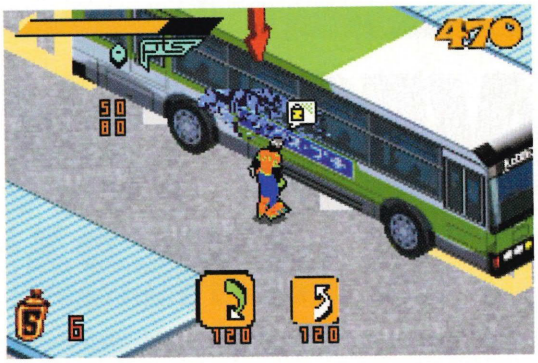
Variety, too, is limited in this game. To be fair, *Jet Set Radio* does start mixing things up a bit after the first few levels of graffiti 'n' grinding. You get races against jive-talkin' challengers, tag games with rival gangs, and the pleasure of watching the Tokyo-To police throwing their entire yearly budget at you in the form of helicopters, tanks and snipers. But the central theme of spitting paint onto walls can't keep you buzzing forever.

Top Tip

Tap the A button as you turn *JSR* on, and a man yelps 'Sega' as though he's been punched in the stomach.



★ Having finished their coffee and donuts, the cops usually show up only after you've been tagging for some time.

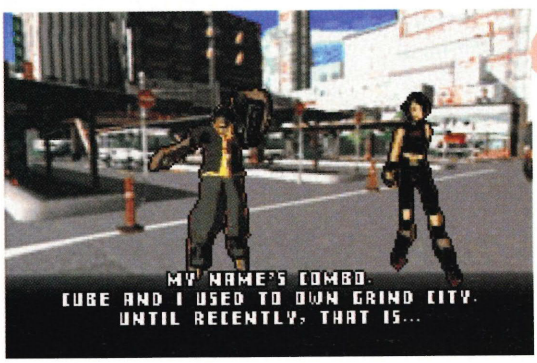


★ The bigger tags require a fair amount of D-pad spinning. Get it wrong and you'll waste spraycans as well as feeling silly.

It's also a shame there are so few tricks to wrap your fingers around, as you'll ache to show off with more than just the odd jump and spin. Even with the later addition of the odd half-pipe, the lack of stuntery limits longevity.

Still, it's clear throughout *Jet Set Radio* that a lot of love's gone into its creation – just look at the addition of a fantastic design-your-own-graffiti mode. And once your overheated brain has stored enough of the map to compensate for that mind-meddling perspective, there's plenty to enjoy. With a good number of levels, fluid play, and a 'real phat attitude' as we're sure the kids say, *Jet Set Radio* is a welcome change from all that jackassing around on skateboards.

MARK GREEN



★ You'll be challenged by other wheel-footed individuals throughout *JSR*. Succeed, and they join your team.

★ Up on the flying trapeze, you're protected from wandering footsoldiers below. And you're dead fast to boot.

★ Tokyo-To's basic police force look like stormtroopers, and act like Jar Jar Binks.

> "*Jet Set Radio* is a welcome change from all that jackassing around on skateboards..."

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Fantastic cartoon visuals and loads to do and see, this is a really great romp.

LIFESPAN
Fun for a while, but we can't see you sticking with this one long-term.

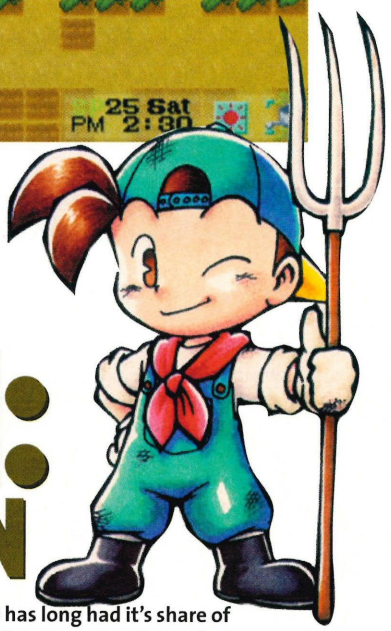
GAMEPLAY
Not enough in the way of moves and tricks, but pretty good fun to play.

DIFFICULTY
Challenging, but dead easy with our guide that begins on page 83.

ADVANCE OPINION
Little wheels equals big fun, with sizeable cities and fast tricks. The endless graffitiing will grate, but it's a blast while it lasts.

70%

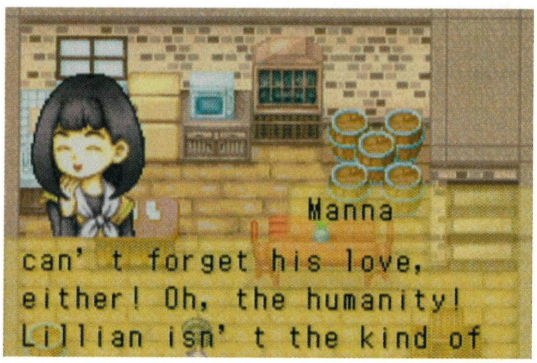
★ Different crops are better at different times of the year, so rotate your vegetable output.



HARVEST MOON: FRIENDS OF MINERAL TOWN

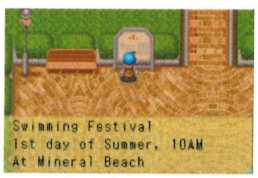
GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Ubi Soft
- **PHONE** 01932 838 230
- **WEB** www.ubisoft.co.uk
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** GC-GBA Link
- **OUT** Now



★ Head into town to chat up the ladies. Bring them special gifts and they'll grow to love you.

★ Special events take place at different times of the year – they're a great way to take a break.



★ Get the right metal from the mine, and you can upgrade your tools – making your life much easier.

"One of the most charming games you're ever likely to play..."

Harvest Moon has long had it's share of dedicated followers and with good reason. Natsume's long-running farming sim is one of the most charming game series you're ever likely to play.

The premise itself is simple enough. You inherit a run-down old farm and must restore it to its former glory. It's tough going mind. You start of with naff-all in the way of cash. On arriving, the only way you can generate an income is to mine rocks, and harvest pitiful amounts of honey – but soon you'll be able to scrape together enough money to buy some seeds.

Top Tip

If you turn blue, you need rest. Visit the spa to the south - a long soak will sort you out.

Initially, *Harvest Moon* feels a little laborious. You repeat the same patterns of activity day in day out – weed the veggie patch, water your seedlings, plough the soil and harvest any vegetables of fruit that you've cultivated – but the more hard work you put, the more money you get and ultimately the more you get out of the game itself.

There's a bewildering array of tasks to occupy you. You can upgrade your farmhouse and your tools, allowing you to farm more efficiently and freeing up more time for extra activities. You can buy animals to milk, race, breed or enter into any special events that take place in the town. You can even court the single ladies from the town and, if you're charming enough, win their hand in marriage.

It sounds strange and, well, it *is*. Yes, it all revolves around intense time and item management, but there's such a lovely quaint atmosphere to it, and you can't help but feel genuine pride as you watch your little agricultural empire develop and blossom. If you've never fancied the *Harvest Moon* series before you're doing yourself a real disservice, so rectify that and buy this.

GERAINT EVANS

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Cute, basic visuals with plenty of charm. It's utterly delightful.

LIFESPAN
Theoretically, you can play for as long as you want. This is near genius.

GAMEPLAY
Intense time and item management – but extremely rewarding. Superb.

DIFFICULTY
It's as hard or as easy as you want to make it for yourself. We like that.

ADVANCE OPINION
It's a slow-burner and you really have to put the effort in if you want to reap the rewards. One of the best games on GBA.

90%

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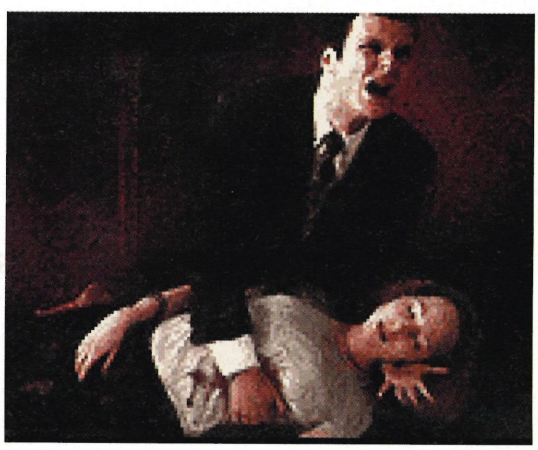
MAX PAYNE

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Take 2
- **PHONE** 01753 496600
- **WEB** www.maxpayne.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

If there's one thing about GBA games that'd we'd hold up as being the most significant, it has to be their capacity to surprise and delight by totally dashing our expectations. For those of us who've played the visually incredible versions of *Splinter Cell* and *Max Payne* on their respective parent systems, we have quite often failed to have high hopes for versions of the game that have been shrunken down to hand-held size, but how wrong we were...

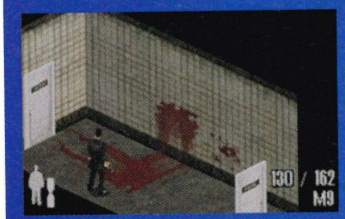
Max Payne on GBA is a revelation. It's violent (with a rating of 16+) and dark, just like the original – but it still delivers its action-packed punch with a tinge of black humour. This is the first game, a thriller that tells the story of a desperate fugitive cop who is dragged into a criminal nightmare in the depths of New York City. Finding a corpse in the locker room at the station is just the start of a story that leads Max into a world of drugs and violent naughtiness that leaves a trail of bodies across the whole city. The story then unfolds over a



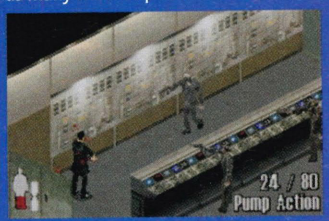
The story of Max is not a happy one. With his family slain by evil gangsters he's out for revenge. He's mad and he's bad.

ALWAYS TIME FOR BULLETS

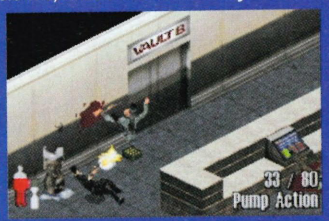
The slow-motion 'bullet-time' effects don't just make Max look cool, they also make him more accurate and harder to hit in a gun fight. Knowing how and when to use this skill is vital to win. You need to get off as many shots as possible while Max is in slo-mo, since the baddies find you much harder to hit in this mode.



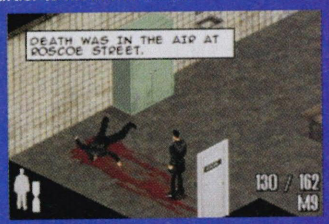
★ 1. Max collects some pills and bullets from the fallen, but around the next corner is another battle...



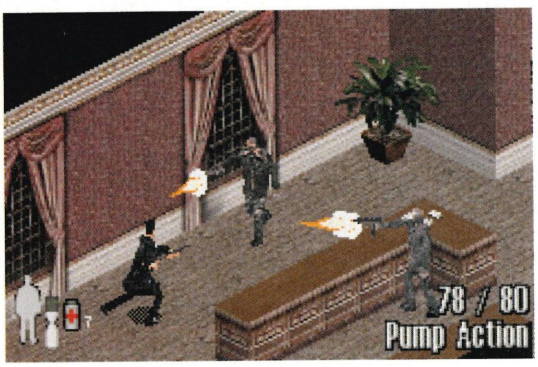
★ 2. Baddies! Bullets come zipping at you from nearby enemies and it's time to go in, all guns blazing.



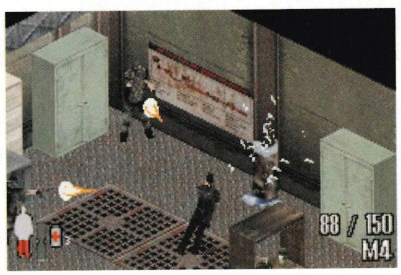
★ 3. Hit the bullet time while Max is running at full tilt and you'll fly forward in slow motion.



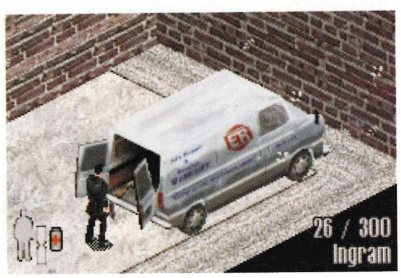
★ 4. Guns boom, bullets fly, men scream 'Noooo' and blood is splattered. This is what gun-fighting is all about.



★ This is not an easy game. With loads of enemies firing at you at close range, you're likely to die fairly easily. Fight back!



★ Scenery will explode as it is hit will bullets. Here we see what happens to a watercooler.



★ Search everywhere for weapons and pills, but just be sure to watch your back.

series of comic-style storyboards, and in-game 'speech-bubble' captions from the various people that Max encounters as he battles the bad guys across the Big Apple's subways, office blocks and slums.

Top Tip
Check all lockers, cupboards and shelves for pills, they'll help ease the pain that makes Max so mad.

Max isn't a very subtle cop and doesn't actually arrest anyone in the course of his adventure, but that's not a big issue since his gun-toting antics make for some of the best action on the GBA. The great-looking levels are filled with enemies who're looking to see Max dead, and it's only by speedy gun-slinging that he's going to solve the mystery of his family's murder and crack the crime-ring that dominates the city.

Max has one outstanding ability on his side – the trademark 'bullet time'. In this mode time slows down and Max can dive across the scenery, placing bullets where they'll put a bad-guy on the floor and dodging the lead that's flying in his direction. By using this skill to increase his fighting prowess, Max can struggle through the levels, munching pain killers as he goes, to ease the pain of his multiple injuries. Max collects loads of new weapons from his fallen enemies, so as the game progresses you're going to be increasingly heavily armed. Weapons range from a shiny glock, through to John Woo-styled twin pistols, sawn-off shotguns, double-barrelled shotguns, Uzis and assault rifles. All this action takes place in a warren of moody environments, mafia pads, debauchery-filled villas and crumbling tower-blocks and there's even some destructible scenery, so that gunfights will smash windows and water coolers, smash doors and crates, and leave bullet scars across walls and pillars.

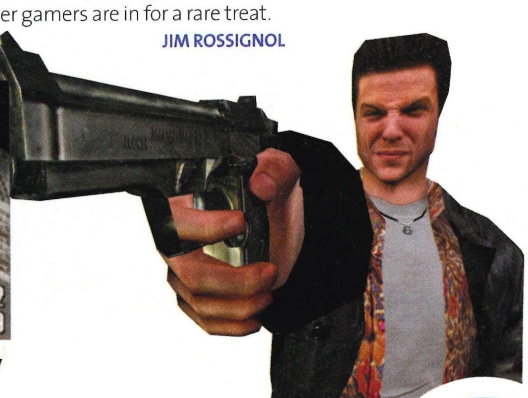
> "Sawn-off shotguns, double-barrelled shotguns, Uzis and assault rifles."

The one drawback to all this frenzied combat is that *Max Payne* is really tough to complete – even the opening levels are enormously challenging, and it'll take a stern and determined gamer to blast their way through the 12 levels with any rapidity. Aside from this we don't have any other complaints. Mature themes all the way through mean this isn't one for the kids, but older gamers are in for a rare treat.

JIM ROSSIGNOL

★ One of the levels is based on explosions – you have to leg it out before the flames catch Max.

★ The close-range gun-fights are astonishingly deadly. Be prepared to use scenery as cover.



LOOK 'N' FEEL
The grimy, violent world of Mr Payne is brilliantly, smoothly recreated.

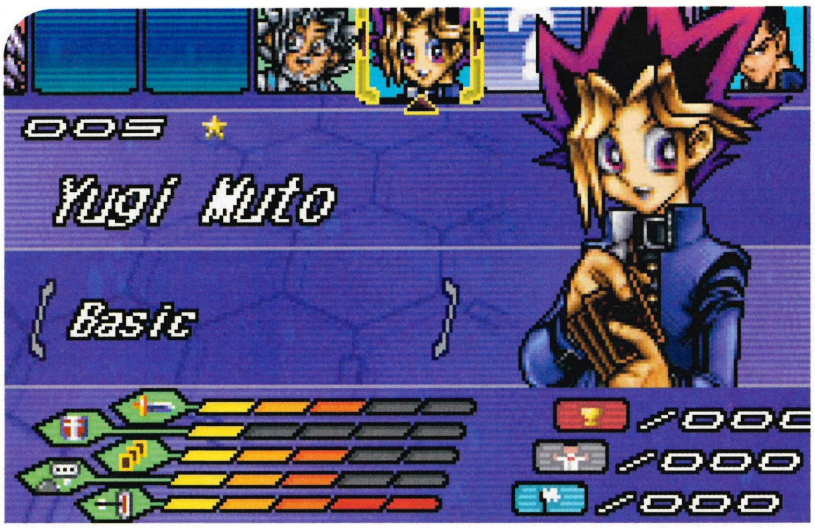
GAMEPLAY
Things can get a little repetitive – this is all about the gunfights. But fun.

LIFESPAN
Not the biggest game in the world, and once finished there's nothing else.

DIFFICULTY
Very difficult indeed, especially as the game progresses to later levels.

ADVANCE OPINION
Slow motion gun-foolery has never rocked quite so hard. Cool, clever and brutal. Is this the best shooter on the GBA? Almost...

88%



YU-GI-OH! WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT 2004

There's no excuse to enter a duel unprepared, as icon-driven menus make shuffling your cards as easy as pie.

Those unfamiliar with *Yu-Gi-Oh!* will now be scratching their chins; whereas *Yu-Gi-Oh!* maniacs will have dribble on them.

When cards collide, it's over in milliseconds – which sometimes makes it a tricky business to keep a level head.

For every spiky-haired cartoon foe you beat, there's a fresh deck of cards in it for you. The excitement!

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Konami Europe
- **PHONE** 0208 582 5573
- **WEB** www.konami-europe.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** On-cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Today's biggest parent-befuddling playground craze, *Yu-Gi-Oh!* is ostensibly a trading card game, that was born in Japan and is now a world-conquering monster. It's all about a good Monster Card Tribute Summon here, a decent Germ Infection Spell Card Activate there, and it all ends with one player's Life Points being whittled away to zero.

Confused already? Then get your coat now, because with no tutorial mode or help button in sight, *World Championship Tournament* is strictly for those who nod sagely upon hearing the words "Right Leg of the Forbidden One." Like previou 'pure' *Yu-Gi-Oh!* games, this is just a tower of cards (over a thousand this time, including 100 new ones) and the latest rules crammed onto a cart. Sounds perfect for fans... So what went wrong?

Top Tip
Hold down L while pressing A to select opponent, and - praise be! - the speed of the game will be doubled.

The good bit: every *Yu-Gi-Oh!* card has been painstakingly recreated, right down to the fancy artwork.

> "A bewildering step back from last year's *Worldwide Edition*."

Not in the play itself – this is, after all, the most battery-drainingly compulsive card-battler since *Pokémon*. The cards are impressively picture-perfect, your 25 animé adversaries have decks and tactics to match their TV show antics, and earning new booster packs is a regular thrill. Plus everything's that little bit more entertaining when your GBA's brain is taking care of all that tedious fiddling around with Life Points, ATK values and – shudder! – chains.

The big problem is that this title is in many areas a bewildering step back from last year's *Worldwide Edition*. All hint of presentation has been completely removed – no introduction, no rival banter, no map. Opponents often cheat. And, inexplicably, the ability to mirror your own real-life deck by tapping in passwords is gone. As consolation there is the opportunity to have three different decks on the go. Woo. With some single booster packs going on ebay for £40, GBA *Yu-Gi-Oh!* is undoubtedly a satisfyingly cheap way of mastering your skills and glimpsing all the cards. But this lazy update is for obsessives only.

MARK GREEN

LOOK'N' FEEL
Clear and crisp presentation of all those lovely illustrated game cards.

GAMEPLAY
Still that perfect card game that keeps us interested, but lacking features.

LIFESPAN
Compulsive-obsessive fans will just keep on playing, while others will tire.

DIFFICULTY
No tutorial, so you're going to have to know what you're doing to play this.

ADVANCE OPINION
Only those in intensive training for *Yu-Gi-Oh!* world glory need bother, and even then this frills-free cart may disappoint.

63%

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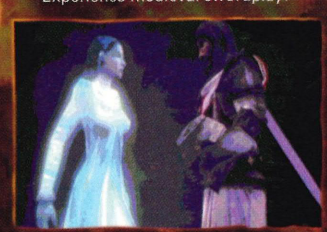

Countless cutscenes and animated events!

PC ZONE, 14/01/2004
"Not since 2001's Severance have we enjoyed a truly outstanding dose of crunching sword on bone action."

XBOX GAMER, 01/01/2004
"... plays well and is surprisingly addictive."

P2 MAGAZINE, 10/01/2004
"Graphically Knights of the Temple impresses..."

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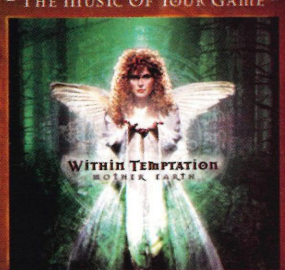

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*Sony PlayStation®2 only **Microsoft Xbox Live only

OUT IN APRIL

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★ Something horrible has got its eye on Samus...

METROID: ZERO MISSION

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Nintendo
- **PHONE** 0207 307 3103
- **WEB** www.nintendo-europe.com
- **PRICE** £35
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes (Multi-pak and single pak)
- **OUT** Now

There are Nintendo fans and there are *Nintendo* fans. The former think Mario is pretty cool and get quite excited about *Zelda* games. The latter on the other hand are absolutely obsessed with less famous series, such as *F-Zero* (which, tragically, hasn't been treated very kindly on GBA so far) and *Metroid*, both of which have been around almost as long as the big M and Z.

And that's why *Zero Mission* is big, big news for Nintendo devotees. Not only is it the second brand new *Metroid* game for GBA (a privilege *Zelda* hasn't received, and Mario only got with the RPG *Superstar Saga*) but it's also a remake of the very first *Metroid* game, originally released for NES. When we say remake, we don't mean the "Hey, dig up some ten-year-old rubbish and stick the word 'Advance' on the end of it," treatment that so many GBA games have suffered, but instead a whole new, gorgeously modern look, tons of new areas and enemies, and even a surprise twist that takes *Zero Mission* way past the point where the original game finished.

The easiest way to class this title is as a platform game, but that's not entirely doing it justice – there's puzzle, role-playing and survival horror in there too, making it a genuinely unique type of game, even if from afar it looks like almost any other side-scrolling Game Boy shooter. One of the staple features of any *Metroid* game has been that Samus can roll up into an armoured ball – this is as important as ever in *Zero Mission*, as squeezing into small

FROM ZERO TO HERO

We take a quick look at some of Samus's amazing powers. She'll have to utilise them all if she's going to get out of the sticky space-mess she's got herself in...

★ 1. The first power you'll receive is the Morph Ball – the ability to transform into a fast-moving woodlouse-like sphere. You can roll through small tunnels and dodge some enemies by curling up into the ball, but you need a couple more power-ups before you can reach all areas.

★ 2. Equally essential is Samus's missile – as well as being a powerful weapon, it can open special doors and blow up parts of the landscape to open new and important areas on the planet Zebes. Look out for hidden missile tanks throughout the game – these increase the amount of ammunition you can carry.

★ 3. The charge beam doesn't grant you access to hidden passages or help solve puzzles – it's just a Really Big Gun. If there's a tough enemy in the next room, keep the fire button held down until you start flashing red, then let go and let 'em have it. Also pictured here is an energy tank, which increases your maximum health.

★ 4. Fortunately, bombs are infinite. You can only create them when you're in Morph Ball mode – press B to drop one. The most versatile weapon in the game, these can blow up walls, harm enemies or even propel you into the air to access hard-to-reach locations. Use them wisely to find your way.

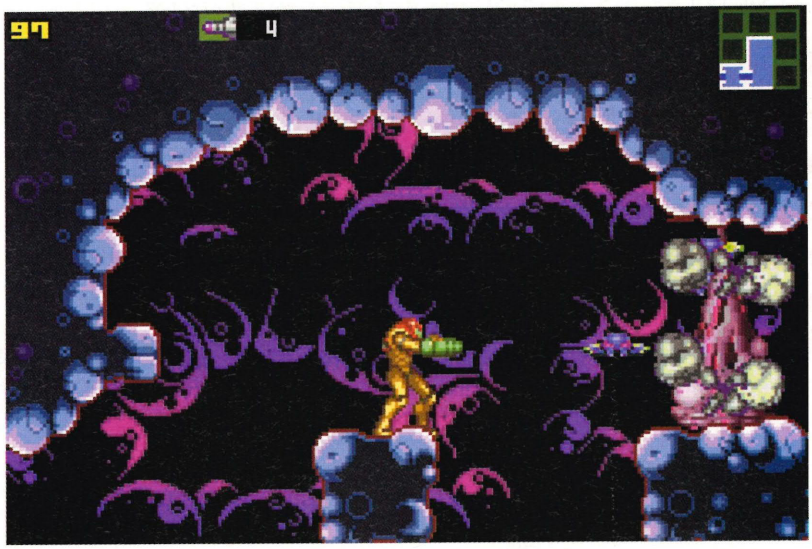
★ Aaagh, giant worm! That'll be a boss, then. Slay him, pronto! The boss sections make for some challenging obstacles.

spaces and bombing your way through walls and floors is often essential to make it to the next area. Working out exactly how to manoeuvre past the various obstacles that impede your progress is where the puzzle element lies – you can't complete the game by blasting everything in sight, although that doesn't mean random violence is forbidden. There are plenty of beasties to gun down, and once you've picked up the ice beam you can even freeze them and then use them as stepping stones to access hard-to-reach areas.

Of course, *Metroid Fusion* was released on GBA only last year – so why should you be interested in this? Well, if you didn't play *Fusion*, this is probably a better place to start off in the *Metroid* world, as it documents the first adventure of Samus Aran, the lady bounty hunter who's the star of the series (although it must be said that there isn't really much of a story going on here, but it's not the kind of game that needs one). On top of that, it's much easier than the sometimes overly tough *Fusion*, which all too often had you miserably searching every last inch of ground, trying to find the secret patch that would let you progress. Here, you're given more space to get used to Samus's many powers and more complicated manoeuvres, while passages are mainly reserved for secret items.

Top Tip

Although the game fails to say you can do it, Samus can use her somersault to reach hidden areas on the map.



★ Enemies always respawn when you return to an area, so always be ready for a fight. Luckily Samus is armed with plenty of hardware, so if you keep your wits about you, then you'll be fine.

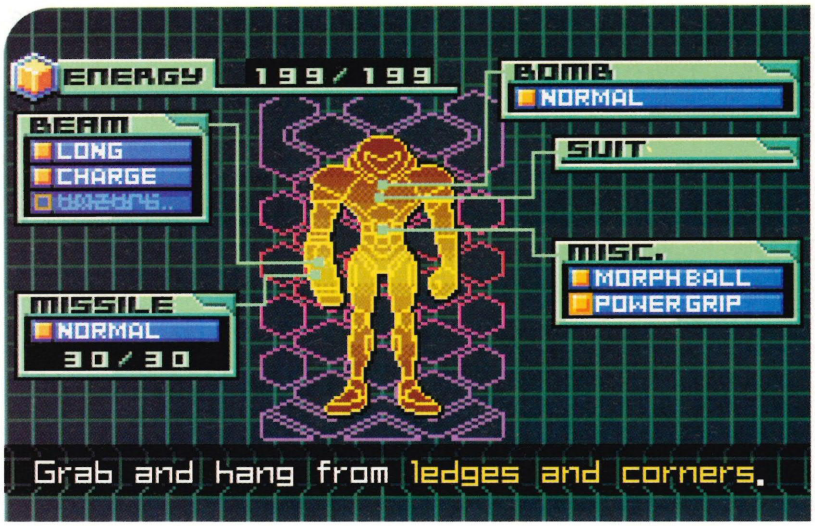
Unfortunately, it is a little too easy at times, especially the boss matches. The half dozen or so gigantic foes look absolutely awesome – anything up to ten times Samus's height, incredibly detailed and fearsome to behold. The trouble is that they can all be swiftly killed by waiting for the right moment and barraging them with missiles, one of the first power-ups you receive. Even the game's final boss can be dispatched with five or so well-placed shots. At least you'll never feel frustrated, something *Fusion* was often guilty of doing, but a little more challenge would have made a lot of difference – especially as *Zero Mission* only takes about four hours to complete.

> "You can't complete the game by just blasting everything in sight..."

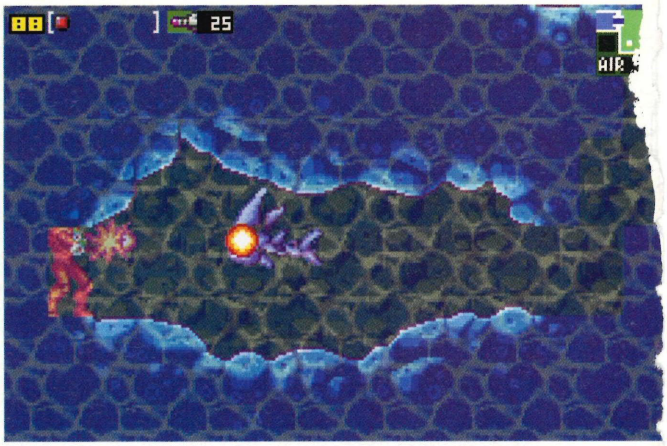
★ Enemies come in all shapes and sizes. This is a large... thing. Probably best to not think about it and fry the blighter!

★ Occasional cut-scenes explain the story; which, basically, is shoot most things, beat the puzzles and get out alive.

★ Lovely Samus is the world's leading gun-chick. Her techno-skills have made her the star of dozens of brilliant games over the years.



Check out new goodies on the status screen. The 'Misc' ones are pretty exciting.



Fortunately, that big suit of her's means Samus doesn't drown. She can still be killed by big spiky fish, though.

"A heavily armed bounty-hunter spewing missiles, laser beams and bombs all over the place..."

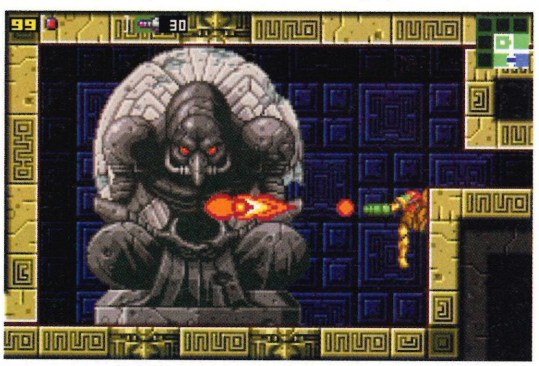
None of this stops *Zero Mission* from being great fun though – as you progress through the game, you'll spot areas you can't access, and it's the joy of realising that whatever new power-up you've just picked up will enable you to reach these parts of the game that keeps you going. And, of course, being a heavily armoured bounty hunter firing missiles, laser beams and bombs all over the place is always good for a giggle.

In many ways, we're tempted to call this the best Metroid game ever (apart from *Metroid Prime* on Gamecube) its levels are very well-designed, it looks and sounds gorgeous, and it's insanely addictive. On top of that, the twist is incredible – the last section of *Zero Mission* is a completely different game from what's gone before; it's also the only genuinely difficult part, but in a very rewarding way. Annoyingly, we can't tell you how this is done, or we'd spoil the surprise, but trust us on this one. Although it is a shame that *Zero Mission* is so short and, for the most part, so easy. Despite that, it's a must-have GBA game, especially if you don't own *Metroid Fusion* already.

ALEC MEER

Ooh, a power-up. Either that or a nuclear grapefruit.

Most of Samus's enemies on the planet Zebes are weirdly insectoid. Kill them for pure enjoyment.



Another great power-up is the wall cling, which enables you to hang off the scenery and generally look cool.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Visually superb and designed with a real eye for detail. This is solid stuff.

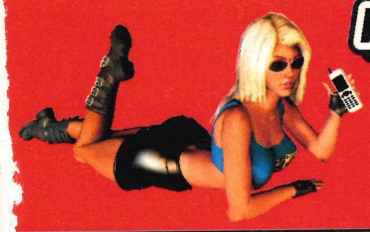
GAMEPLAY
All about the shooting, with a light smattering of puzzles. But great fun.

LIFESPAN
Too short and not much to make you want to come back. Short but sweet.

DIFFICULTY
Far too easy for the hardcore gamers, but for the rest of us it's just right.

ADVANCE OPINION
A piece of Nintendo history made thoroughly modern – shame it's not that tough, though. We'll look forward to the next one.

84%



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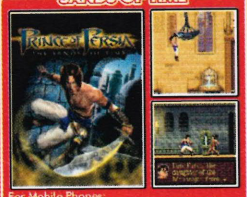
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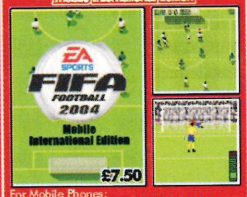
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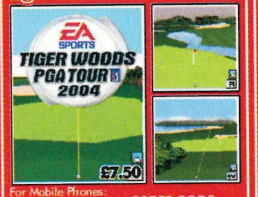
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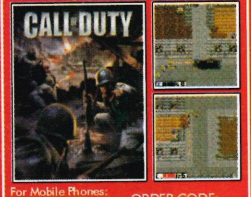
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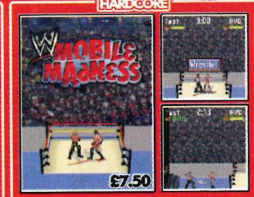
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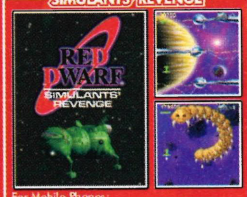
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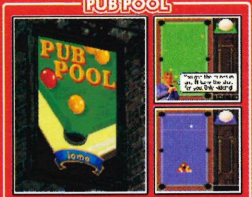
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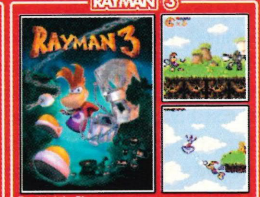
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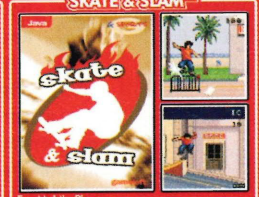
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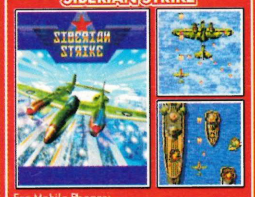
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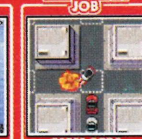
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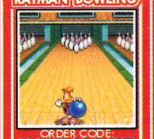
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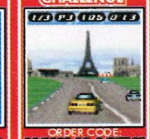
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The umbrella is also the Cat's key, with this he can float, catch a lift on bubble streams or poke baddies to stun them.

CAT IN THE HAT

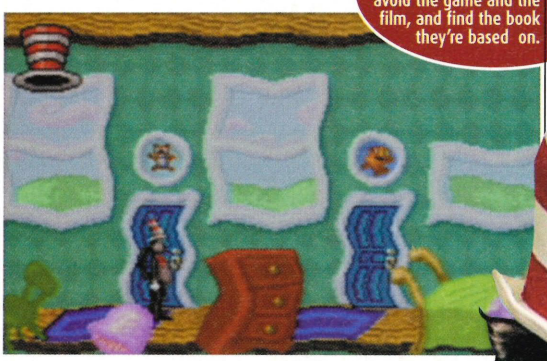
GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Vivendi
- **PHONE** 01189 209100
- **WEB** www.vugames.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** Password
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

The cat's world is littered with the toys that always got left at the bottom of the toy barrel. You know – the weird ones with the teethmarks in...

Top Tip

Duck and cover into the nearest book shop to avoid the game and the film, and find the book they're based on.



It's even less fun than it looks, you know. We'd recommend a cold shower and a cup of tea.

The Cat In The Hat is a classic and surreal children's book by the bizarre Dr Seuss. Its strange rhymes and unlikely images have amused children and adults for decades, and yet it's quite the most obscure possible licence for a Hollywood film, let alone a poorly conceived platform game. It takes balance and the most creative of designers to create a really worthy platform game and that kind of talent was clearly not available to work on *Cat In The Hat*. It's a painfully weak experience indeed, and one that we could all quite happily miss out on.

Basically you run around as the Cat, and enter a lurid world of weird creatures, bubbles and air currents that the Cat can ride with his famous umbrella. His mission is to get the end of each sequence of platforms, collecting unicycles all the way. It sounds entertaining when you put it like that, so let us put it like this: the experience is crude and frustrating. Monsters can only be temporarily paralysed by the Cat's attacks and you'll often mess up, die and send yourself back to the beginning of the level in to the most unhelpful of ways. The poor design of the puzzles and the tricky jumps you must perform mean you quickly exhaust the hope that this game might be fun. Repetition like this is just depressing. The GBA is capable of superb platform action, as the Mario titles demonstrate with extreme talent. *Cat In The Hat* is a genuine disappointment that should not lure you in with promises of weird fun. It's simply weird frustration. We don't like it one little bit, less than we like green eggs and ham, in fact.

JIM ROSSIGNOL

"Its strange rhymes and unlikely images have amused children..."

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Cute design but frustrating play. This isn't one of the GBA's high spots.

GAMEPLAY
Lots of jumping and umbrella-floating. Not much variation and little fun.

LIFESPAN
It might take you ages to complete, but would you want to? Unlikely.

DIFFICULTY
Not easy, but in a bad way. You'd be better off getting real cats into hats.

ADVANCE OPINION
A disappointing effort that really could have been weirdly amusing. Perhaps the terrible film doomed it...

40%

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Artist's impression

SHINING SOUL 2

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** THQ
- **PHONE** 01483 767656
- **WEB** www.thq.co.uk
- **PRICE** £25
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

These drinking fellows have some words of advice. But if you see a purple walrus drinking in *your* local pub we'd suggest you seek help...

Top Tip

Retreat and use your herbs to heal when ever possible. Don't forget that these items can be purchased in the castle.

Operating on the evidence of *Spyro* games, we have concluded that any game in which you can play a cute purple dragon must have something good going for it. *Shining Soul 2* is one such game, although there are plenty of other characters to choose from too, all cute, and few of them are actually shining, or purple. *Shining Soul 2* is a game of the Japanese-styled family of top-down, cartoon-styled fantasy adventures. The original game was something of a role-playing-lite, and the same seems to be true here.

Once you've chosen your character (be it wizard, archer, warrior or dragon chap) you set out on the road into a kingdom that has found itself in trouble because it's too good. There's so much 'light' in this kingdom that certain magical forces have decided it's time to redress the balance. Sounds fair enough to us, but what this means is that the forces of darkness have seen fit to kidnap the king's daughter and, spoiling the fighting tournament that you find yourself in, the king is forced to ask you to go off on a rescue mission and sort out the whole problem yourself. Why he doesn't ask the dozens of knights and other warriors who are idly standing around in his castle to help out is never quite clear.

Anyway, you set out on your quest and immediately begin to encounter what is quite a familiar formula for role-playing

A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

Death is never a major problem for *Shining Soul* characters, since you can always rely on the angel you swoop down and cart you back to base. The angel is a really important tool that can be used to whisk other characters away in times when they have to be rescued. Why you wear armour in bed is a mystery though...

★ 1. First up is combat. You'll bash and crash until the enemies go down. Or you do. Take too many pokes to the belly with a sword and you'll hurt bad. Going to the inventory screen to use healing herbs does not pause the game, so you'll need to retreat.

★ 2. Aiie! Baddies get the upper hand. You've been beaten by the goblin hordes, and you fall to the ground with a thump. Luckily for you the angels are watching over you, and a blond, winged girl comes to lift you from the melee and return you home.

★ 3. You awake in a bed. It's a bed in the tavern and waiting there next to you is a strange creature that seems very friendly indeed. What's she been up to while you've been asleep, eh? Time for you to get on your way and find your way back to the fighting.

★ 4. Never fear, plucky adventurer, you're soon on the road again and, in fact, you can get the angel to drop you on the same spot. You can even by an amulet that will give you angel transport while you're still alive, if you get the applicable magic ring.

games, in which you hit a button to bash your enemies and take some magic herbs to heal your wounds. Smash open chests for treasure and gain experience in your slaying antics, and you begin to progress. Experience points turn into levels which provide you with points to spend buffing up your character. Treasure turns into gold, once traded at one of the castle shops, and this can be used to purchase potions, herbs, arms and armour from those same booths. You can wander round the main castle talking to lots of different people and collating loads of tips and hints from the various random people. You'll also uncover lots of loot that you need to get properly identified, before you can sell it for a decent price. If it turns out to be magical, you might want to keep it and equip it to your character.

Fighting in *Shining Soul 2* can be very tricky indeed, and some of the early levels will see you heading back to base with your tail between your legs. You don't die, since you are always rescued by an 'angel', but you will have to go back and fight full-strength bosses again and again before you get it right. They're tough blighters so you'll require gritty determination and some genuine gaming skill to beat them.

Simple and relatively lightweight, this is a fun RPG but it's unlikely to satisfy gamers brought up on the likes of the excellent *Zelda* games.

MATT PIERCE

★ It's hack 'n' slash for breakfast, lunch and tea in this relentless goblin-bashing exercise.

★ The audience watch you have a bash at the champions in the fine colleseum.

★ Blobs of blueness are amongst the weakest of the basic baddies. Splat them!

★ The guards at the castle aren't very friendly. Best just ignore them and go about your mystical questing business.

★ The story is told in a series of stills where a purple-haired lass reads from a series of dusty old tomes. Dragons feature heavily.

> "This is an RPG unlikely to satisfy gamers brought up on the likes of *Zelda*..."

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Cartoony presentation and simple maps make for a crisp world.

GAMEPLAY
Role-playing for people who don't like statistics. Easy stuff, but fairly shallow.

LIFESPAN
Fairly large, even as RPGs go. Persist and you'll be at it for weeks.

DIFFICULTY
Easy since you can't die, but nevertheless rather tricky in places.

ADVANCE OPINION
Not an essential purchase by any means, but still entertaining for a few hours hack 'n' slash, skull-cracking exploration.

75%

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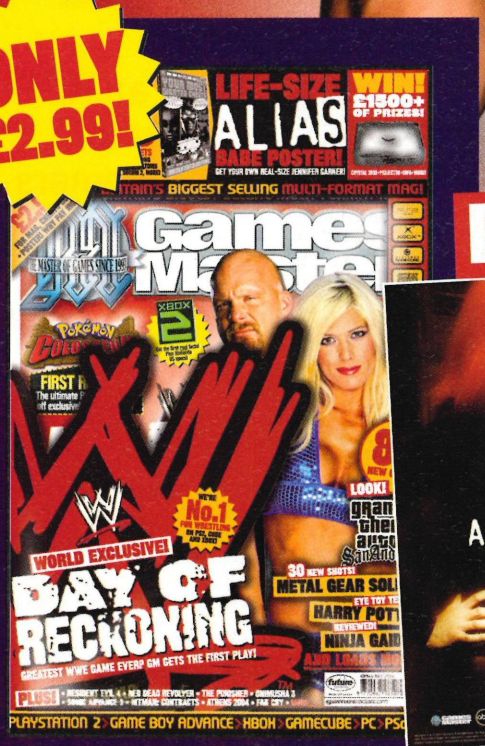

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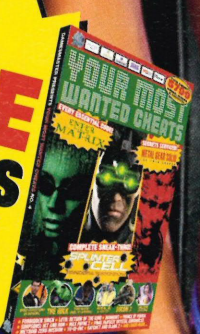

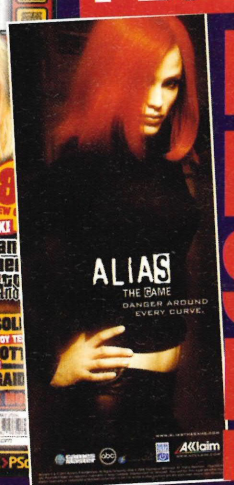

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Sunflower seeds make up the currency in Hamtaro's world and they can often be dug up from holes, or taken from flowers.

HAMTARO: HAM-HAM HEARTBREAK

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Nintendo
- **PHONE** 020 7307 3103
- **WEB** www.nintendo-europe.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

"Help him discover a selection of Ham-Speak, the secret language..."

Hamtaro is a Japanese hamster. Apparently this hamster stars in a Japanese cartoon that is enormously popular, in Japan at least. Anyway, this particular hamster is incredibly cute and lives in a cute world with cute friends. Nintendo has seen fit to make an extremely cute game based on the adventures of Hamtaro and his incredibly cute compatriots. It's cute.

Top Tip
Watch out for rustling undergrowth, there could be something in there for you to investigate...

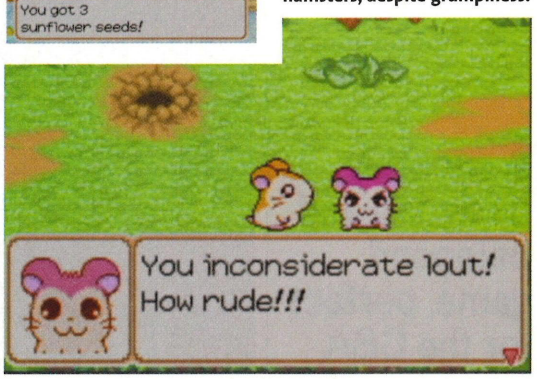
The core game is a top-down exploration-based mode, where you guide Hamtaro around various maps and help him to discover a selection of Ham-Speak, the secret code-word language of the hamsters. By learning the correct usage of all these words you increase the range of Hamtaro's abilities. He can do more and he can work more effectively with fellow hamsters with diverse Ham-Speak. As hamsters teach Hamtaro various words, he records them in his dictionary and is able to use them in the world.

But there's a bigger problem facing the little fluffy one: many of the Ham-Hams (as hamsters are known in his world) are really unhappy; heartbroken, in fact. The reason: a mischievous fellow named Spat has somehow caused a ruckus between the Ham-Hams and Hamtaro needs to sort it out as his quest progresses. Getting miserable couples back together will always yield some bonus and a way on to the next area of the game.

All this is tougher than it sounds though, as it is often fairly obscure as to what Ham-Speak to use in what situation, or what is needed to solve a problem in a certain area. Lots of exploration and a great deal of trial-and-error experimentation will be required before Hamtaro will get anywhere. The words Hamtaro learns don't often make much sense, so it's easy for you to become confused, and therefore upset hamsters that are in the near vicinity. Then again, it's so cute that you just have to forgive it... Don't you?

JIM ROSSIGNOL

Hamtaro needs to make friends with the other hamsters, despite grumpiness.



Use the wrong words and hamsters will be a little less helpful. Use the right words and you'll be on your way to victory.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Cuter than cute but also enormously simplistic to boot. Hamster filled.

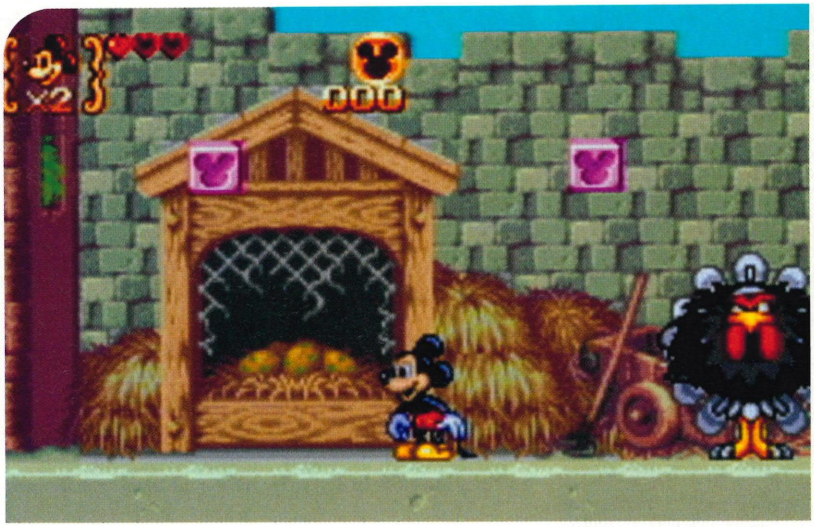
LIFESPAN
It's no mean adventure, and for younger players it will last for ages.

GAMEPLAY
This is really aimed at younger children, but it's got broad appeal.

DIFFICULTY
It can get trickily obscure in places, but it's a simplistic puzzle-adventure.

ADVANCE OPINION
We're not usually big fans of hamsters, but this game is worthy in an endearingly sweet kind of way.

79%



Mickey is able to gain new powers by changing his outfit. A suit of armour, for example, allows him to smash some blocks.

DISNEY'S MAGICAL QUEST 3

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Capcom
- **PHONE** 0208 8462550
- **WEB** www.capcom-europe.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Mickey can jump on the boat to speed things up as he travels along the canal.

Attacks come from all angles, so be very wary.

Top Tip

Watch the movement on those monsters moving back and forth, getting the timing right will keep you alive.

Mickey and Donald's normal array of enemies try desperately to get in the way and stop them from saving the little ducks.

"A superbly designed and balanced game, perfect for the GBA format..."

If we're completely honest, the genuine Disney titles (not including the Pixar related stuff like *Finding Nemo*) haven't been up to much recently. They've been pretty much the average to poor platformers that we're not particularly amused by. Previous games like the *Magical Quest* titles have been on a downhill run for the past few years. When we think back to the long lost days of *Castle of Illusion* it hits us that there really is something missing there. Disney should be able to produce great games based on their near endless catalogue of characters and settings. Perhaps it has something to do with the lack of decent Disney films in the last few years?

Either way we've no reasons to smile. So it is with some surprise that we must admit that, despite our dislike of the recent antics of Mickey and chums, this latest game is actually very good.

It's a straightforward platform game, where Donald or Mickey, depending on who you choose, will traverse the levels, collect the power ups and jump on the heads of the monsters that get in the way as the duo go about trying to save Huey, Duey and Louie. The duck cousins have been up to mischief again and have got themselves sucked into a magic book. Business as usual in Disneyland then.

This is a superbly balanced and designed game, ideal for the handheld format of the GBA. The challenges gradually ramp up in a perfectly judged difficulty curve. The levels are short and sweet, but always throw something new into the mix, whether it's a peculiar enemy, a moving platform, or a new boss. There are new skills to be unlocked and plenty of secrets to discover as the game unfolds. It is a very satisfying game to bash your way through, and while there's not much here that we haven't seen before, or even seen done better in previous GBA platform games, there is enough polish and Disney charm in here to make it a worthy purchase.

It's not the biggest game in the world and there's no link up option, but it's almost worth buying for posterity - it's not often that a really good Disney game arrives on GBA.

JIM ROSSIGNOL

LOOK 'N' FEEL
It's not quite a trip to Disneyland, but it certainly looks clean and clear.

GAMEPLAY
Starts simple but progressively expands to a wide and varied game.

LIFESPAN
Not the biggest game in the world, skilled gamers will finish it quickly.

DIFFICULTY
Always a challenge, but never unfair. A jolly decent romp and no mistake.

ADVANCE OPINION
Mickey's squeaky voice is joined by Donald's squawking in a decent Disney platform adventure title. Y'know, for kids!

83%

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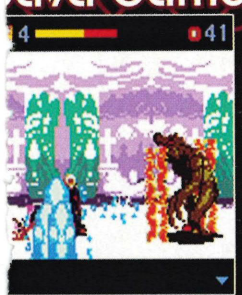

PHONE MODEL	GAME CODE
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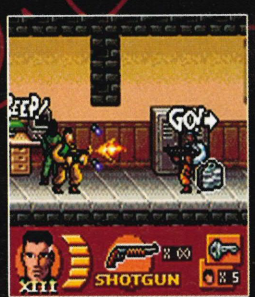

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XIII

Will you penetrate the mystery?
Category: Action / Shooter

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Planet Zero™

A handful of chaos!
Category: Shoot

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Cent	21 Questions	NGP 79236	NGM 45221
inem	Without Me	NGP 75782	NGM 45222
IX	X Gonna Give it to Ya	NGP 79012	NGM 45223

ck

Darkness	I Believe In A Thing Called Love	NGP 79744	NGM 45224
DC	For Those About To Rock	NGP 77763	NGM 45225
otorhead	Ace of Spades	NGP 77103	NGM 45226
esmith	Walk This Way	NGP 79066	NGM 45227
ope	Final Countdown	NGP 75655	NGM 45228
ne Roses	Fools Gold	NGP 70917	NGM 45229
ns N Roses	Sweet Child o Mine	NGP 72161	NGM 45230
d Zeppelin	Kashmir	NGP 79267	NGM 45231
t Loaf	Bat Out of Hell	NGP 70630	NGM 45232
n Halen	Jump	NGP 75137	NGM 45233
n Maiden	Rain Maker	NGP 76948	NGM 45234
ples	Hey Jude	NGP 70022	NGM 45235
k Sabbath	Paranoid	NGP 77099	NGM 45236

nce

M	Fly on the Wings of Love	NGP 79164	NGM 45237
ngra Knights	Husan	NGP 79039	NGM 45238
Project	Summer Jam	NGP 72358	NGM 45239
nni Bennassi	SatisFaction	NGP 79255	NGM 45240
ve Inc	You're A Superstar	NGP 77432	NGM 45241
nga Kru	Super Sharp Shooter	NGP 72859	NGM 45242
rneson	Complete	NGP 79746	NGM 45243
mcraft	Loneliness	NGP 78802	NGM 45244
rabeat	Pretty Green Eyes	NGP 79790	NGM 45245
ie	Can't Get You Out of my Head	NGP 74005	NGM 45246

Classic Game Tones Classic Games

	Poly
Batman Returns	NGP 77129
Castlevania 4	NGP 77509
Desert Strike	NGP 77740
Donkey Kong Country	NGP 77751
Final Fantasy 7	NGP 77887
Killer Instincts	NGP 78368
Mega Man X	NGP 77936
Ridge Racer	NGP 77972
Sim City	NGP 78298
Sonic The Hedgehog	NGP 78233
Streets Fighter	NGP 78317
Super Mario Cart	NGP 77913
Super Mario World	NGP 78293
Tekken 2	NGP 78373
Zelda - A Link To The Past	NGP 77910
Worms 3D	NGP 71691
Total Club Manager 2004 version 2	NGP 71689
Total Club Manager 2004 version 1	NGP 71688
Tiger woods PGA Tour 2004 Version 1	NGP 71687
Pro Evolution Soccer 2 Version 1	NGP 71686
Pro Evolution Soccer 2	NGP 71685
Grand TheFt Auto	NGP 71683
Getaway	NGP 71682
FiFa Football 2004 Version 3	NGP 71680
FiFa Football 2004 Version 2	NGP 71643
FiFa Football 2004 Version 1	NGP 71641

REAL SOUND TONES

	Poly
Pig Snort	NGP 79184
Monkey	NGP 79181
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Heavy Machine Gun	NGP 78675
Fart	NGP 72718
Long Fart	NGP 79880
Bruce Lee Fighting	NGP 79205
Gangle	NGP 72982
Punch	NGP 79359
Burp	NGP 79879

TONE MADNESS TV

	Poly	Mono
Only Fools + Horses	NGP 70117	NGM 45247
Muppets Mahna Mahna	NGP 78378	NGM 45248
Miami Vice	NGP 76079	NGM 45249
ProFessionals	NGP 70119	NGM 45250
Starsky+Hutch	NGP 76868	NGM 45251
Minder	NGP 70752	NGM 45252
Danger Mouse	NGP 76368	NGM 45253
Steptoe+Son	NGP 70582	NGM 45254
Scooby Doo	NGP 70123	NGM 45255
Top Cat	NGP 70380	NGM 45256
Simpsons	NGP 70441	NGM 45257
A-Team	NGP 76230	NGM 45258
Muppet Show	NGP 70114	NGM 45259
Match Of The Day	NGP 70255	NGM 45260
Banana Splits	NGP 76355	NGM 45261

Movies

	Poly	Mono
Great Escape	NGP 70092	NGM 45262
James Bond	NGP 70340	NGM 45263
Rocky	NGP 70561	NGM 45264
GodFather	NGP 70291	NGM 45265
Exorcist	NGP 70284	NGM 45266
Halloween	NGP 75961	NGM 45267
Bev Hills Cop	NGP 77032	NGM 45268
Ghostbusters	NGP 70089	NGM 45269
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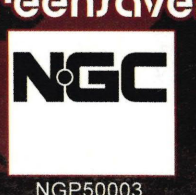

NGP50003

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All downloads are provided by Inspired Broadcast Networks, 1-7 Livonia Street, London. W1F 8AD. Helpline telephone number: 08718724788

JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Electronic Arts
- **PHONE** 01932 450000
- **WEB** www.uk.ea.com
- **PRICE** £35
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Q pops up to whinge about you making a mess of the car. Ignore him and floor it, there are baddies to kill.

Top Tip

When racing, keep to the middle of the road! If enemies drop oil slicks you'll slide into walls and take damage.

Bond. Games, Bond. The big 007 has now starred in almost as many hit videogames as he has superb spy-films. While the Game Boy Advance can't quite manage to bring us the likes of the Nintendo 64's mind-blowing *GoldenEye* in its gaming treatment, the mixture of game-types in *Everything Or Nothing* still shows off all the famous archetypes that make James Bond our all-time favourite secret agent. There's racing, there's fighting, there are guns, ladies and martinis. There's Q and M, not to mention the Aston Martin with built-in rocket launchers.

The game opens with a classic action sequence, executed from an isometric viewpoint. Escaping from an exploding laboratory, Bond abseils his way down sheer drops, dodging explosions until he reaches safety. This is sterling stuff.

More action comes as Bond infiltrates various locations: a casino, a mysterious base and other places where villainy takes place. He's extremely versatile in these situations, creeping up behind various bad guys and giving them a

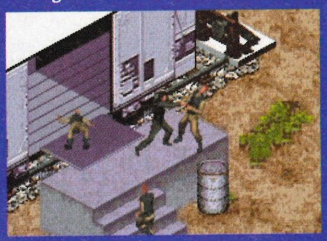
SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED, SHOT OR BLASTED WITH EXPLODO-GADGETS

Once again the world is under threat from the strangeness and unhelpfulness of the enemies of Her Majesty's Secret Service. Donning his suit and combing his hair, James Bond goes out clubbing. Clubbing guards to death, that is. He's actually at a casino. But where will the trail of international naughtiness lead him?

1. Having forgotten his party invite, Bond strangles the doorman and proceeds to head for the bar. Will he get there in time for free peanuts?

2. No time for sofas, Bond must track down his contact and infiltrate the party. Sadly, you don't get a chance to gamble away a fortune.

3. Things don't go well at the casino and Bond is forced to blast the hell out of someone with the rockets that shoot out of his car bumpers.



4. Men decide that Bond is up to no good and he is forced to pummel them around the face with his fists. They soon learn their lesson...

Bad guys close in from all sides! What will Bond do? How can he escape this perilous situation he finds himself in? Aiiie!

Well, Bond is never short of an escape route. With the loose thread on his pants he abseils down the side of the building.

Explosions come as standard on the Mk3 Bond building. All exits are to be accompanied by sirens and heavy shooting.

smack round the back of the head for getting in the way. Gun fights are obligatory, of course, and hitting one of the shoulder buttons enables you to lock on to a target and therefore aim your bullets at a specific bad-dude. This is useful for rapid accuracy when under fire, and under fire you will be when there are multiple enemies attacking you at any one time. You're also able to crouch using the right shoulder button so that Bond can use the scenery for cover.

Of course guns aren't always an option and Bond will often have to resort to hand combat. In these situations he's very effective indeed, even when the enemy has guns. M, the mission controller, will often demand an element of stealth, and breaking that command means it's mission over.

Compared to more polished action games on the GBA, *Everything Or Nothing* doesn't really come off that well. The levels are all reasonably entertaining, but the wit and character of the films is missing entirely and the controls often feel awkward and clumsy. You're seldom allowed to feel much like a secret agent, and compared to *Splinter Cell* a vast majority of the puzzle elements within this title seem pretty weak indeed. Probably the area which has come of worst though, are the racing sequences, which seem clunky and wobbly and are little better than the most simplistic arcade games of yesteryear. And yet despite our grumpy criticisms *Everything Or Nothing* is a playable, if not essential game for your collection.

JIM ROSSIGNOL

"It is not an essential game for your collection..."

Ah, lovely ladies. Mr Bond likes ladies. And he likes martinis. Martinis mixed by ladies are even more interesting...

Bond happily throttles a man and heads off for a game of poker.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
The quality varies throughout the game, with some poor driving scenes.

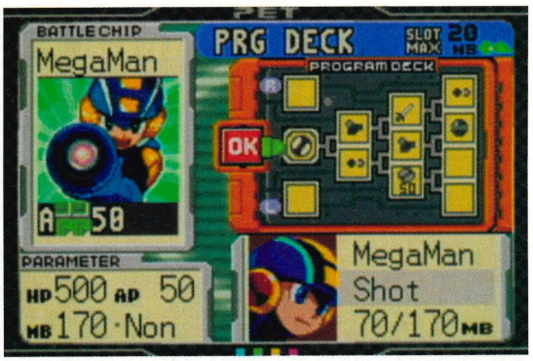
LIFESPAN
It's tough, and there's lots to it. You can expect to be kept busy for days.

GAMEPLAY
Some of the set-pieces remind you of great film sequences, others do not...

DIFFICULTY
Ranges from too easy to reasonably tough. Expert gamers will fly through.

ADVANCE OPINION
No Mr Bond, we expect you to become engrossed in a series of varied challenges that make up a film-style plot. And die.

69%



Set up your cards and let fly. These screens will tell you what to expect from your deck. Not that it's particularly interesting.

MEGA MAN BATTLECHIP CHALLENGE

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Capcom
- **PHONE** 0208 8462550
- **WEB** www.capcom-europe.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Oh dear. What *have* we got here? Well, for those of you who aren't familiar with the *Battle Net* series of games, let us explain. The idea in previous games was to give you an action element, where you could move about on a grid, and combine that with the kind of strategy familiar from card games, where you set up a deck of powers and let fly. The previous games were acceptably entertaining. This is not.

Top Tip
Look under the sofa for some fluff to play with, or go for a walk, because you won't find any fun in this game at all.

The action elements of the previous games have been removed completely. There are some story sections in which you isometric character is moved automatically around locations. You don't even get to control them. This left us annoyed, even a little bit angry. But we were also completely bored. Within thirty seconds. Then we discovered a whole new world of excruciating nastiness: the Battle Chip game itself. This is so bad as to be barely a game at all. While we are used to using the rule 'if you can affect any variables it is game' to identify our subject matter, in this case we weren't sure it still applied.

As with other card games you set up a deck, but that's where your role ends. You then see a battle played out automatically, and it's not that clear what's going on. You're even given an option to press select, which then skips the battle completely. You just set stuff up and let it go. It's about as interactive as watching someone else play cards, on a tiny screen.

Yes, there is some strategy in setting up the cards, but the interface is so badly designed that there's no fun to be found in setting these things up. This is a game without a soul, and really does nothing for the reputation of the *Battle Net* series or card-based strategy as a whole. If you've read this far in this review we think you'll conclude that this beast deserves no place in your games collection. Best we leave it to be forgotten and be buried in the desert, along with all the other mountains of rubbish games.

JIM ROSSIGNOL

Set up all your stuff and hope for the best. All the weapons seem rather similar too. Looks like this month's worst game.

> "Then we discovered a whole new world of excruciating nastiness..."

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Shoddy presentation and rather bitty graphics make for general ugliness.

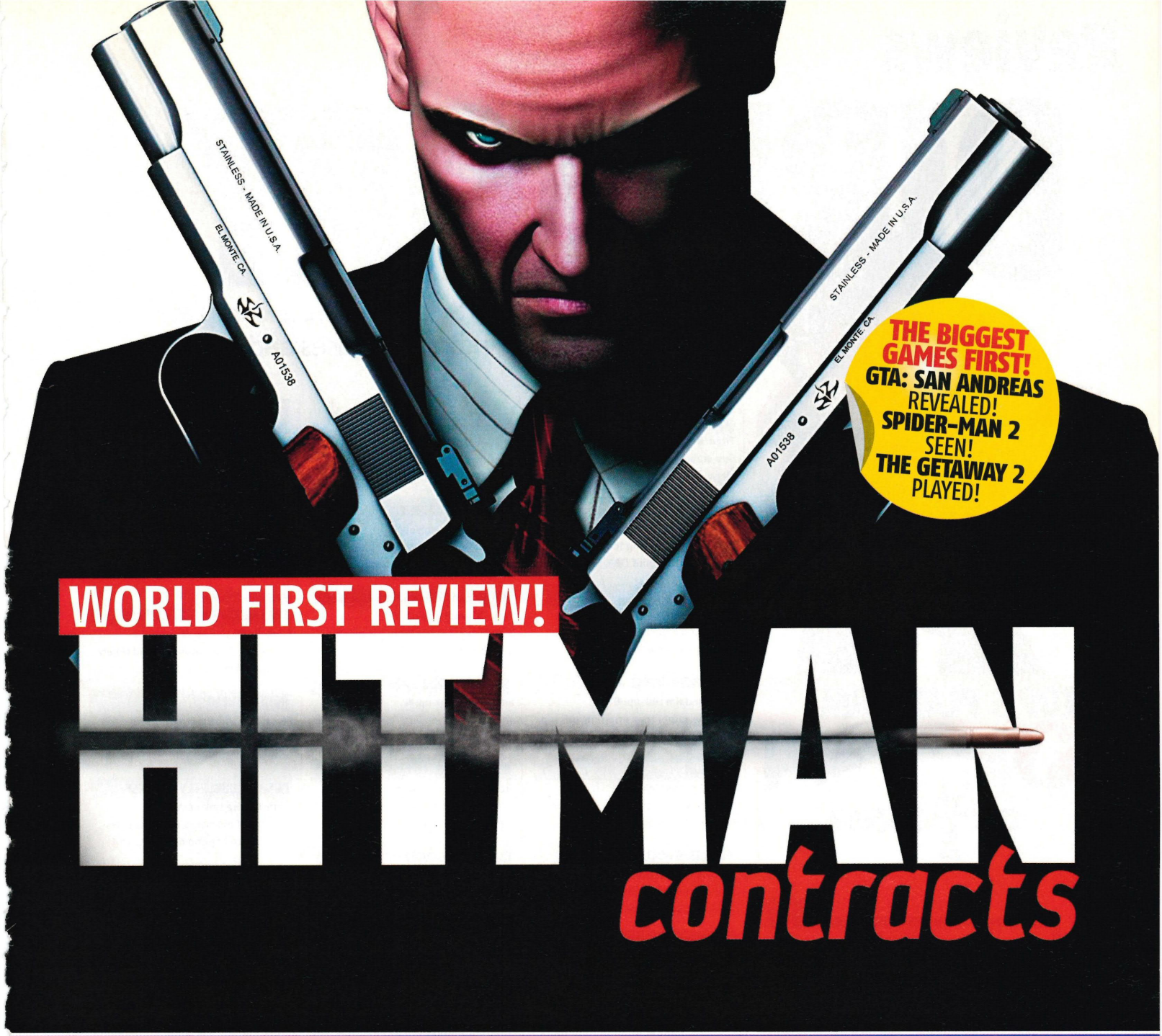
GAMEPLAY
Tedious, laborious, dull, boring, inessential, frustrating, malcontent.

LIFESPAN
Only the most determined gamers will persist for a couple of hours.

DIFFICULTY
Awkward and rubbish. It's not that hard to play, it's just utterly dull.

ADVANCE OPINION
Only insane, obsessed Mega Man collectors are going to want to get hold of this. Everyone else should run for their lives.

25%



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PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

ISSUE 46 ON SALE 22 APRIL

DIRECTORY

Alphabetical and expertly excellent, our complete round-up of reviews informs, amuses and educates.

TOP 5 PLATFORM

1

MARIO ADVANCE 2

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
All back to '92 for a serving of the 'tash miester who's aged with dignity. 94%

2

YOSHI'S ISLAND: MARIO ADVANCE 3

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
This game will make the central exhibit of the museum of handheld gaming, platforming excellence. 95%

3

SONIC ADVANCE

From: **Atari** Link-up: **Yes**
The blue hedgehog's our fave in this new GBA Adventure that's faster than anything else GBA-bound and twice as spikey. 91%

4

BANJO-KAZOOIE

From: **THQ** Link-up: **No**
As sexy a game as side-scrolling, jumping, hitting adventurery yarn about a bear and his bird friend can be. 91%

5

KIRBY: NIGHTMARE IN DREAMLAND

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
Sparkly day-goo brilliance to rival Mario's outings. Easy but ingenious. 89%

ACE LIGHTNING

From: **BBC Multimedia** Link-up: **N**
Sub-standard platform junk from the TV show of the same name. 49%

ADVANCE WARS

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Colourful strategizing that represents all that is best about GBA. 96%

ADVANCE WARS 2

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Bigger and more beautiful than its predecessor, a gaming WMD. 93%

AGGRESSIVE INLINE

From: **Acclaim** Link-up: **N**
Passable, rather than inspiring, this is a lacklustre roller-skating sim. 69%

ALADDIN

From: **Capcom** Link-up: **N**
The GBA version of an ancient console hit, *Aladdin* is young fun. 63%

ALIENATORS EVOLUTION

From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
Shallow climbing, running, key-finding melee. For Sci-Fi heads only. 63%

AN AMERICAN TAIL FIEVAL'S GOLD RUSH

From: **Swing!** Link-up: **N**
Rank controls, a pensionable concept and a mouse in a cowboy hat. 34%

ARCHER MACLEAN'S POOL

From: **Ignition** Link-up: **N**
Great looking pool game that is perhaps a little bit too complicated. 81%

ARMY MEN OPERATION GREEN

From: **3DO** Link-up: **Y**
Isometric toy-soldiering with heaps of different weapons and vehicles. 69%

ATARI ANNIVERSARY ADVANCE

From: **Atari** Link-up: **N**
These dusty OAP pastimes stand the test of time well. 81%

ATLANTIS THE LOST EMPIRE

From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Another addition to the tide of really pap platform games. 55%

ATV QUAD POWER RACING

From: **Acclaim** Link-up: **Y**
Dreadful off-road racer with bad handling and graphics. 36%

BARBIE HORSE ADVENTURES

From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
Utterly rubbish in every possible way. It's just bad. A non-game. 08%

BATMAN VENGEANCE

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Slicker than The Penguin and sexier than Catwoman; superhero heaven. 87%

BATTLE BOTS BEYOND THE BATTLEBOX

From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
A poor man's *Robot Wars*, but mostly playable offering. 60%

BLACK BELT CHALLENGE

From: **Xicat** Link-up: **N**
This tidy dwarven bust-'em-up has cult written all over it. 78%

BLACKTHORNE

From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
Adventure filled with plenty of combat. Pretty old-skool but good fun. 71%

BLENDER BROTHERS

From: **Atari** Link-up: **N**
Sweet RPG elements plus a tasty multi-player mode. 80%

BOKTAI: THE SUN IS IN YOUR HAND

From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
Hugely inventive vampire adventure with mad light-chip feature. Ace. 88%

BOMBERMAN TOURNAMENT

From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
This is one of the all-time multiplayer puzzler greats. 82%

BOULDERDASH EX

From: **Kemco** Link-up: **Y**
Gem-bagging, rock-dodging, puzzler with strong gameplay. Top hole! 79%

BOXING FEVER

From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
Good looking, but overly simplistic boxing action. Average. 54%

BREATH OF FIRE

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Showing its years a little, but a solid and magnificently long adventure. 79%

BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Britney. Dancing. In miniature. Just for you. What more could you want? 61%

BROKEN SWORD THE SHADOW OF THE TEMPLARS

From: **BAM!** Link-up: **N**
Old-skool 2D adventure fun and timely cerebral refreshment. 91%

BROTHER BEAR

From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Fairly poor romp based on the popular bear-themed animation. 54%

BUBBLE BOBBLE OLD AND NEW

From: **Empire** Link-up: **Y**
A couple of dinosaurs, lots of bubbles and a bunch of jumping. Great. 90%

CAESAR'S PALACE

From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Gambling without money. Dull and pointless. 15%

CASPER

From: **Microids** Link-up: **N**
An enjoyable ghostly romp in the Lemmings puzzler mould. 75%

CASTLEVANIA HARMONY OF DISSONANCE

From: **Konami** Link-up: **N**
Smart vampire-fest for the gamer with a gothic bent. 86%

CHESSMASTER

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Solid dependable chessmanship, which is earnest and oh so serious. 76%

CHUCHU ROCKET

From: **Sega** Link-up: **Y**
Engrossing mouse and rocket puzzler that rocks in two-player. 90%

COLIN MCRAE 2.0

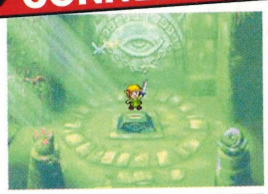
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
A fine rally title with added difficulty and extra hardness. 81%

COLUMNS CROWN

From: **Sega** Link-up: **Y**
Lord alive, more *Tetris*-alike puzzling. Seen it, done it before. 70%

CONNECT COR!

GBA meets GameCube. Gaming magic is bought into the world. Especially in these five beauties...

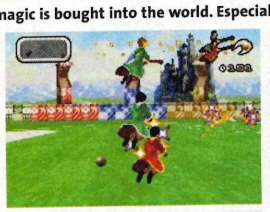


LEGEND OF ZELDA

Publisher: Nintendo
Requires: GBA, GBA/GC Link Cable
Using the GBA, a second player can join in the GC adventure as Tingle. And though the cheeky sprite looks a bit like a cursor, it adds loads to the game. Perfect link-up.

SPLINTER CELL

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Requires: GBA, GBA/GC Link Cable
As well as some uploadable GBA levels, GC owners can use the GBA to provide an overhead vector-map and, here's a boom, use the GBA to remotely detonate 'sticky' bombs.

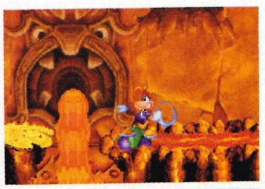


HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

Publisher: EA
Requires: GBA, GBA/GC Link Cable
Harry fans can unlock secret areas in both the GC and GBA adventures, as well as downloading an altogether thrilling slide puzzle.

METROID PRIME

Publisher: Nintendo
Requires: GBA, GBA/GC Link Cable
Finish *Metroid Prime* and you can unlock the original NES version of Metroid on the GC's *Metroid Fusion*. What more could you ask for? *Metroid* is an all-time classic.



RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC

Publisher: **Ubi Soft**
Requires: GBA, GBA/GC Link Cable
Ultra impressive collection of goodies including a handy ten extra maps, an extra battle and an all new four-player challenge (requires two GBA's).

COUNTER TERRORISM SPECIAL FORCES

From: **LSP** Link-up: **Y**
Top piece of palm-gripped actioneering. Simple blasting fun. **82%**

CRASH BANDICOOT XS

From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
Great-looking GBA debut for PS2's fox-faced bounder. **81%**

CRASH BANDICOOT 2: N-TRANCED

From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
You've seen this sort of platform thing before, but few do it better. **81%**

CRASH NITRO KART

From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
Enormously entertaining cartoon racer with the Bandicoot at the wheel. **86%**

CREATURES

From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
This artificial Intelligence sim is repetitive but fascinating. **80%**

CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Oriental adventure with lots of variety and little fun. Not good enough. **61%**

CRUIS'N VELOCITY

From: **Midway** Link-up: **N**
A fraction of the fun of *GT Advance* or *Mario Kart*. Dull central. **38%**

DAREDEVIL

From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Movie clip and Marvel art extras can't save this scrolling beat-'em-up. **54%**

DARK ARENA

From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
By-the-numbers first-person shootin', entertaining enough. **79%**

DAVE MIRRA 3 FREESTYLE BMX

From: **Acclaim** Link-up: **Y**
Eleven huge, good looking levels and a top soundtrack. Very good. **76%**

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

From: **Metro 3D** Link-up: **Y**
A knights and castles-set strategy game of some distinction. **68%**

DEXTER'S LAB

From: **Bam!** Link-up: **N**
A great little platform collect-'em-up with a neat isometric perspective. **82%**

DINOTOPA THE TIMESTONE PIRATES

From: **TDK** Link-up: **Y**
Stone-age privateering platformer that's okay for younger gamers. **68%**

DISNEY'S THE JUNGLE BOOK 2

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Family-skewed pleasurement with a distinctly non-violent bent. **50%**

DISNEY'S LILO & STITCH

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Cute as a baby-cuddling a kitten but a challenge to the hairiest gamer. **79%**

DISNEY'S MAGICAL QUEST

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **N**
Wholesome platforming fancy that'll put a short-lived smile on your face. **64%**

DISNEY'S PETER PAN RETURN TO NEVER LAND

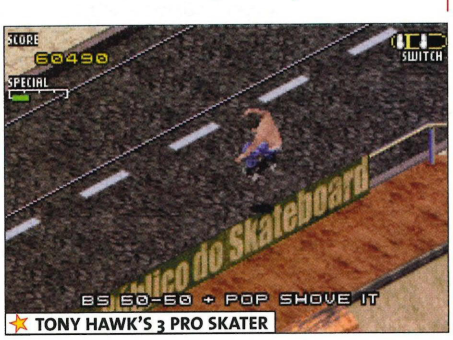
From: **Ubi soft** Link-up: **N**
The ever-youthful Master Pan's exploits are a mite on the dull side. **62%**

DISNEY PRINCESS

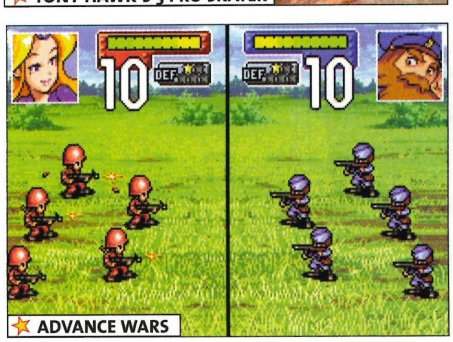
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
A collection of Princess-themed games from various Disney hits. **70%**

DISNEY SPORTS SKATEBOARDING

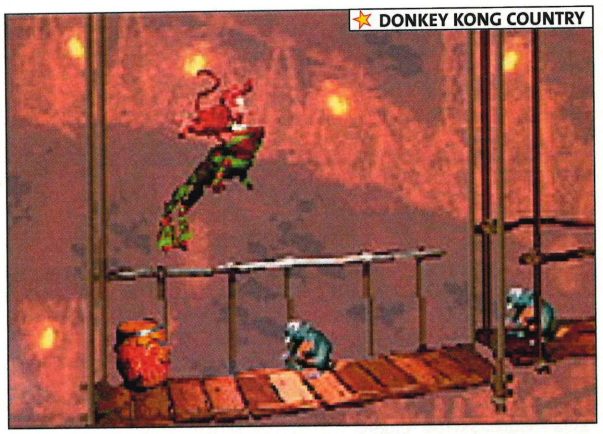
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
Mickey Mouse and mates go all Tony Hawk in an attempt to coolify. **58%**



TONY HAWK'S 3 PRO SKATER



ADVANCE WARS



DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

DONALD DUCK ADVANCE

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
A nice-looking, Duck-jumping, collecting endeavour. **69%**

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
DKC without any extras or add-ons. Recommended only to newcomers. **80%**

DOOM

From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
A faithful version of the daddy of first-person shooters. Pure brilliance. **93%**

DOOM II

From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
Tough, challenging shooter with an astonishing multiplayer option. **90%**

DOWNFORCE

From: **Titus** Link-up: **Y**
Surprisingly goodish F1-alike racer. Thumb-burningly nippy. **75%**

DRAGON BALL Z LEGACY OF GOKU

From: **Atari** Link-up: **Y**
With more work, this RPG could have been great. A shame. **55%**

DRAGON BALL Z LEGACY OF GOKU 2

From: **Atari** Link-up: **Y**
Better than its middling predecessor, but nowhere near *Golden Sun*. **60%**

DRIVEN

From: **Bam!** Link-up: **Y**
This isometric racer is a great racing alternative to *V-Rally*. **83%**

DRIVER 2

From: **Atari** Link-up: **N**
A PlayStation legend but GBA accident. A crushing disappointment. **48%**

DR MUTO

From: **Midway** Link-up: **N**
Mutating doctor action for those who like formulaic platforming. **57%**

DROOPY'S OPEN TENNIS

From: **LSP** Link-up: **Y**
A remarkably pleasing bat 'n' baller that's surprisingly sturdy to play. **82%**

DUKE NUKEM ADVANCE

From: **Take 2** Link-up: **Y**
Basic but enjoyable first-person shooter with lashings of humour **80%**

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

From: **Atari** Link-up: **N**
Fails to deliver on the promise of the licence. Miss it. **41%**

EARTHWORM JIM

From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
What was once a stylish platformer now looks rather dumb. Avoid. **60%**

ECKS VS SEVER

From: **Bam!** Link-up: **Y**
As a single-player first-person-shooter, this is great stuff. **88%**

ECKS VS SEVER 2

From: **Bam!** Link-up: **Y**
One of the GBA's essential titles. Arguably, the best fps on the GBA. **90%**

EGGO MANIA

From: **Tecmo** Link-up: **Y**
A *Tetris* variant incorporating a rotating egg man. Fairly unoriginal. **75%**

ESPN BASS TOURNAMENT
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
Nice looking um... fish and water? Leaves you waiting for a bite. 62%

ESPN FINAL ROUND GOLF 2002
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
A decent enough golfing sim, if a little too dry to be essential. 65%

ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
Numerous sub-zero sports and only one of which is a button basher. 77%

ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
A boarding game that will make you more angry than gnarly. 60%

EXTREME GHOSTBUSTERS
From: **Wanadoo** Link-up: **Y**
Not a terrible platformer by any means, but horribly unoriginal. 55%

F1 2002
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
An attempt at hyper-speed racing that proves too difficult to play. 55%

F-14 TOMCAT
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
This flight-sim is complex, clever and involving, but use a magnifier. 72%

FIFA 2003
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
The pitch is small, action fiddly. Not the beautiful game. 61%

FIFA 2004
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
A well-designed footie title, but not a classic game. Give it a punt. 78%

FILA DECATHLON
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
Old-skool button-thwacking athletics game, lacks substance. 65%

FINAL FIGHT ONE
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
A decent side-scrolling beat-'em-up on a hand-held. Huzzah! 80%

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS ADVANCE
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
One of the best games on the GBA. Tactical fun we can't get enough of. 91%

FINDING NEMO
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Gorgeous undersea romp for those of younger years. 75%

FIRE PRO WRESTLING
From: **Bam!** Link-up: **Y**
Hundreds of options make this the choice for men who like spandex. 84%

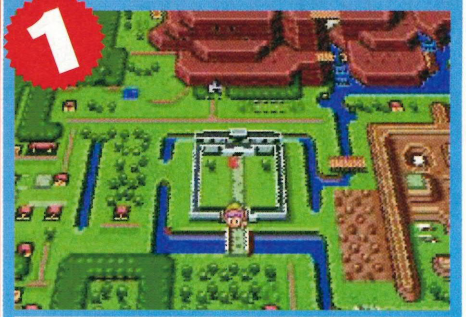
FLINTSTONES BIG TROUBLE IN BEDROCK
From: **Swing!** Link-up: **N**
Terrible, repetitive platform boredom. Leave this well alone. 23%

FORTRESS
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
An ungainly twist on the *Tetris* theme. Nice idea, dodgy execution. 64%

FROGGER ADVANCE THE GREAT QUEST
From: **Konami** Link-up: **N**
Not *Frogger* at all, but a run-of-the-mill platformer. 'Oppit! 44%

TOP 5 ADVENTURE

1

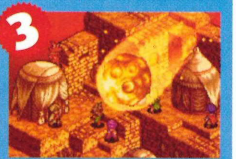


ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
Half-new, half-old, all-pointy ears, all-great addition to the Zelda family. 92%

2

POKÉMON RUBY/SAPPHIRE
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
The game of the craze is back, and better then ever. Doubters beware. 94%

3



FINAL FANTASY TACTICS
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
The first of the series to hit GBA, but already as accomplished as they com. 91%

2

GOLDEN SUN 2
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
A dense RPG that, like its predecessor would put many a home console game to shade. This is a fantastic adventure. 94%

5

BROKEN SWORD: SHADOW OF THE TEMPLARS
From: **Bam!** Link-up: **No**
Cerebral entertainment of the ye olde old school variety. If your adventure ain't broke... 91%

FROGGER'S ADVENTURES TEMPLE OF THE FROG
From: **Konami** Link-up: **N**
Frogger's good looks and simple gameplay make this easily appealing. 78%

F-ZERO MAXIMUM VELOCITY
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Takes Ninty's futuristic racer a step further. A lightning-quick beaut. 89%

GAME & WATCH GALLERY ADVANCE
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **N**
An updated old-skool classic that's still simple, but even more addictive. 70%

GEKIDO ADVANCE KINTARO'S REVENGE
From: **Zoo** Link-up: **Y**
A highly engrossing beat-'em-up/adventure hybrid. 86%

GO! GO! BECKHAM
From: **Rage** Link-up: **Y**
Deeply cute Mario-esque treatment of football. One for Beckham fans. 70%

GODZILLA DOMINATION
From: **Atari** Link-up: **N**
Uninspiring by-the-numbers beat-'em-up with a top multiplayer option. 49%

GOLDEN SUN
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Stunning RPGism that's as dense as a home console adventure. 94%

GOLDEN SUN: THE LOST AGE
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **N**
Wonderful RPG that does all you could want and a whole lot more magic. 91%

GRADIUS ADVANCE
From: **Konami** Link-up: **N**
A slick blast from the past that puts most shooters to shame. 90%

GREMLINS STRIPE VS GIZMO
From: **Wanadoo** Link-up: **N**
Don't play this after midnight... Actually don't play it at all. 54%

GROOVY GAMES
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
A Barbie-tied in collection of games that really do scream 'young'. 67%

GT ADVANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
The first and best 'realistic' racer on the GBA. Tons of tracks to unlock. 87%

GT ADVANCE 2
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
A very acceptable companion game to the original GT Advance. 84%

GUILTY GEAR X ADVANCE EDITION
From: **BBI** Link-up: **Y**
A faithful but not a good translation of the original 2D battler. 50%

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE
From: **EA** Link-up: **N**
Like the books, a gripping adventure packed with class moments. 86%

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
From: **EA** Link-up: **N**
Very, very pleasing (but easy) rendering of J K's speccy wiz. 82%

HARRY POTTER: QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
Clever and lots of weird fun, this is one EA sports game you'll want to see. 81%

HOT WHEELS BURNIN' RUBBER
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
No Mario beater but not without charm. 20 tracks and four modes. 72%

HOT WHEELS VELOCITY X
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
Fun, and tougher than you might think. You could do a lot worse. 75%

HOT WHEELS WORLD RACE
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
Futuristic racing with loads to see and race against. But not quite up to taking on its rivals. 79%

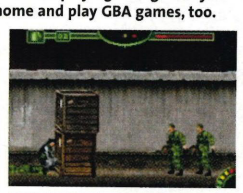
INCREDIBLE HULK
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
Pound for pound, the best Hulk game on any console. Smashing action. 81%

THIS MONTH'S MOST PLAYED

It's not all sitting around an office playing GBA games you know. Sometimes we go home and play GBA games, too.

1. HARVEST MOON
This is the number one time eating game in our office right now. We just can't put it down!

2. ADVANCE WARS 2
Did we make tipping this brain-burster look easy? Thought not. It remains the best of the best.



3. SPLINTER CELL
Sneaking has never been quite so much fun and we're playing the GBA version on our sleep.

INSPECTOR GADGET ADVANCE MISSION
From: **LSP** Link-up: **N**
And Inspector Gadget's first GBA outing is... a pedestrian platformer. **70%**

INTERNATIONAL KARATE +
From: **Ignition** Link-up: **Y**
Simplistic fighting for defiant retro-heads only, please. **54%**

INVADER
From: **Xicat** Link-up: **N**
By-numbers vertical scrolling shooter in the Xevious mould. Samey stuff. **60%**

IRIDION 3D
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
The 3D graphics are quite smart but it plays like a dog. Disappointing. **68%**

IRIDION II
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
Reasonably presented top-down scrolling blaster of the old school. **48%**

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
Flashy football with intelligent passing that plays sweetly. **80%**

TOP 5 PUZZLE

1

ADVANCE WARS 2
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
So perfect, it's like playing a strategy game from the future. One to bore the grandkids with. **91%**

2

WARIO WARE INC.
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **No**
Nonsense mini-games which need to go for a quiet lie down. We're glad they didn't, though. **90%**

3

SUPER MONKEY BALL JR
From: **THQ** Link-up: **No**
Marble Madness for monkeys. As good as it sounds, and the mini-games are bananas too. **87%**

2

MECH PLATOON
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Yes**
Under-rated (ie. no-one bought it) mech strategy title, that shouldn't be left out to rust. **91%**

5

BUBBLE BOBBLE
From: **Empire** Link-up: **Yes**
Two versions of the arcade classic plus a link cable make this lovely, bubbly. **90%**

JACKIE CHAN ADVENTURES LEGEND OF THE DARK HAND
From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
Walk right, hit blokes, make them disappear, hit new blokes. **59%**

007: NIGHTFIRE
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
By-the-numbers first-person shooter. Rather plain with dumb baddies. **68%**

JAZZ JACKRABBIT
From: **Jaleco** Link-up: **N**
This big-eared scroller languishes in the good, but not great, camp. **73%**

JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
A game sorely lacking in challenge. Only fans need be interested. **57%**

JIMMY NEUTRON JET FUSION
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Not the best platform game in the world. One of the worst, in fact. **54%**

JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX
From: **3Do** Link-up: **N**
Unimpressive skiing 'n' trix yawn-bucket. Leave it on the shelf. **59%**

JURASSIC PARK III DINO ATTACK
From: **Konami** Link-up: **N**
Gruesome controls mar this otherwise reasonable diversion. **68%**

JURASSIC PARK III DNA FACTOR
From: **Konami** Link-up: **N**
Yuck! If you enjoy playing shoddy games, this is for you. **21%**

JURASSIC PARK III PARK BUILDER
From: **Konami** Link-up: **N**
This Theme Park-inspired title is limited but tough to put down. **78%**

KAO THE KANGAROO
From: **Titus** Link-up: **N**
Another by-the-numbers platformer. As average as the GBA gets. **29%**

KARNAAJ RALLY
From: **Jaleco** Link-up: **N**
Stoopid name, rather good game. Great racing with nice visuals. **79%**

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER
From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
Essentially Tony Hawk's on a never-ending half-pipe. Not convincing. **78%**

KIEN
From: **GMX** Link-up: **N**
A completely weirdo mix of RPG and platformer which doesn't come off. **69%**

KING OF FIGHTERS EX
From: **SNK** Link-up: **Y**
Good-looking bruiser let down because because it's too damn easy. **63%**

KIRBY: NIGHTMARE IN DREAM LAND
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Sparkly looking day-glo cuteness and platform brilliance to rival *Mario*. **89%**

KLONOA EMPIRE OF DREAMS
From: **Namco** Link-up: **N**
Its kitty in trainers vibe belies the brain gnawing tricksiness. Smart. **88%**

KONAMI KRAZY RACERS
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
A decent cutesy racer, albeit one that lacks the depth of *Mario Kart*. **85%**

KURU KURU KURURIN
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Guide a rotating stick around mazes without touching the sides. Ace. **90%**

LADY SIA
From: **THK** Link-up: **N**
Beautifully presented platforming action with hand-drawn visuals. **80%**

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2
From: **Acclaim** Link-up: **N**
Shocking controls and a ring full of doddery old timers. Not gripping. **39%**

LEGO BIONICLE
From: **Lego** Link-up: **N**
LEGO is dragged into 3D, but it hardly seems worth the effort. **54%**

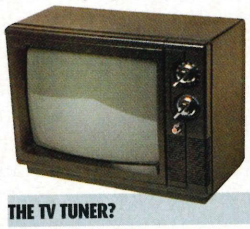
LEGO BIONICLE TALES OF THE TOHUNGA
From: **Lego** Link-up: **N**
Fun and big adventure, but it's hardly groundbreaking. **72%**

LEGO FOOTBALL MANIA
From: **Lego** Link-up: **Y**
There's football. There's quirkily amusing comedy football. And this. **16%**

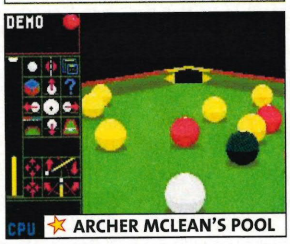
LEGO ISLAND XTREME STUNTS
From:**Lego** Link-up: **N**
Fairly rubbishy looking and rather too easy to keep an adult brain jazzed. **54%**

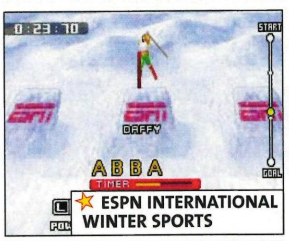
→ WHATEVER HAPPENED TO?

They should have been on our A-Z, instead they're just AWOL



THE TV TUNER?
From day one of the announcement that Nintendo was releasing the GBA there was talk of turning it into a handheld TV. Most people assume this never happened, but in fact it came out last year from a company called Blaze at a price of 70 of our English pounds. So why don't we all own one? Well because it was completely rubbish and, unless you wanted to stare at a screen filled with static, it was money wasted.





LEGO ISLAND 2
From: **Lego** Link-up: **N**
Nothing outstanding, but everyone will enjoy this comical adventure. **80%**

LEGO RACERS 2
From: **Lego** Link-up: **N**
Very slick and enjoyable karting game, with plenty to do. **79%**

LION KING 1.5: HAKUNA MATATA
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Light and colourful , but nothing to hold the interest of experienced gamers. **62%**

LIZZIE MCGUIRE
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
Vacuous and dumb, this us a game that makes a mockery of lady gamers. **13%**

LOTR: THE RETURN OF THE KING
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
Entirely unremarkable and really not much fun at all. Avoid. **62%**

MANIC MINER
From: **Jester** Link-up: **N**
Retro platforming in the make-one-mistake-and-you-die mould. **60%**

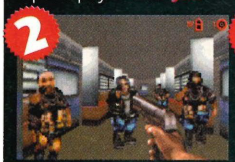
TOP 5 SHOOTERS

1

DOOM 2

From: **Activision** Link-up: **Yes**
Superb conversion of all time-classic shooter, complete with top two-player mode. **90%**

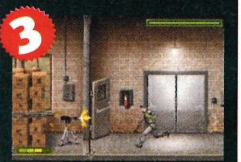
2



ECKS VS SEVER 2

From: **Bam!** Link-up: **Yes**
The 'other' great FPS series on GBA, you as Ecks and your mate as evil Sever. **90%**

3



SPLINTER CELL

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **With GC**
Great visuals and gameplay which creeps up behind you elevate this title to the GB 'A'–list. **84%**

2

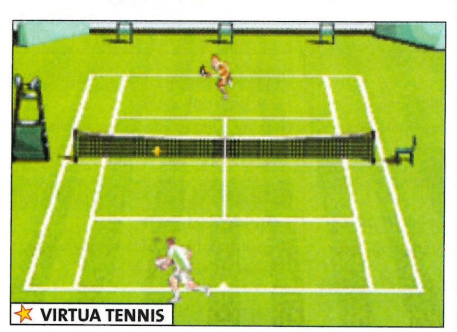
DUKE NUKEM ADVANCE

From: **Take 2** Link-up: **No**
Buxom, blonde but basic FPS which bounces along to s ome nice end-of-the-pier humour. **80%**

5

COUNTER TERRORISM: SPECIAL FORCES

From: **LSP** Link-up: **Yes**
Metal Slug-a-like that's way above your average common or garden shooter. **82%**



VIRTUA TENNIS

MANIC RACERS ADVANCE

From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
Side-on racing anyone? You'd have to be a complete maniac to buy this. **36%**

MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

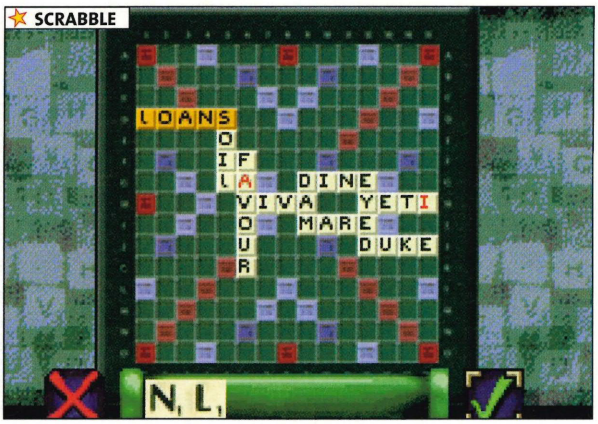
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
The most fun racer ever. *Mario Kart*'s cuteness hides a steely heart. **95%**

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX

From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
Not quite as much fun as the board-based *Tony Hawk's*, but enjoyable. **79%**

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2

From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
Two-wheeled japes aplenty, with a slightly steep learning curve. **79%**



SCRABBLE

MECH PLATOON

From: **Kemco** Link-up: **Y**
A fantastic strategy game second only to *Advance Wars*. Complicated without being too fiddly. **90%**

MEDABOTS AX ROKUSHO VERSION

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Pokémon meets *Robot Wars* meets *Megaman*... But a disappointment. **60%**

MEDAL OF HONOUR: INFILTRATOR

From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
A solid and exciting shooter with loads to offer the military GBA owner. **89%**

MEDAL OF HONOUR UNDERGROUND

From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
A big brown misery of a game. Where did it all go wrong? **44%**

MEGAMAN BATTLE NETWORK

From: **Atari** Link-up: **N**
Imagine taking all the bad bits from a sub-par RPG. To be honest, it's dull. **35%**

MEGAMAN BATTLE NETWORK 2

From: **Atari** Link-up: **N**
An RPG/Pokémon-light world that just doesn't work at all. **42%**

MEGAMAN ZERO

From: **Capcom** Link-up: **N**
Looks nice, and it's challenging to say the least. Often unfairly so. **70%**

MEGAMAN ZERO 2

From: **Capcom** Link-up: **N**
More of the same side-scrolling smashing action. Adequate. **68%**

METROID FUSION

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **N**
Arcade action fused with some corking new ideas. Fantastic fun. **85%**

MICRO MACHINES

From: **Atari** Link-up: **Y**
The dinky racers transfer superbly to the GBA. Suitably daffy tussling. **83%**

MIDNIGHT CLUB STREET RACING

From: **Rebellion** Link-up: **N**
Top down 2D racing that's too much trial-and-error to be successful. **60%**

MIDWAY'S GREATEST ARCADE HITS

From: **Midway** Link-up: **N**
Okay, they look crap, but these are ideal whip-out-'n'-play tests. **78%**

MIKE TYSON BOXING

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: Y
Half-arcade, half-management boxing title that doesn't convince **53%**

MINORITY REPORT

From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
Gun-packing platformer for fans of the flick only. And there aren't many. **68%**

MONSTER FORCE

From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
A nice enough looking, kiddy-horror with just a dollop of charm. **64%**

MONSTER TRUCK MADNESS

From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
A half-decent racer. Pity the other half is so bog-standard. **54%**

MONSTERS INC

From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
A big hairy side-scrolling misery. Platforming by numbers. **42%**

MORTAL KOMBAT ADVANCE

From: **Midway** Link-up: **N**
The tired Kombatants get another knuckle-dragging run out. Why? **23%**

MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE

From: **Midway** Link-up: **N**
Big ugly characters, rancid animation and awful gameplay. Nuff said. **17%**

MOTO GP

From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
Bi-wheeled racing with old-fashioned handling, yet worth a gander. **68%**

MOTO RACER ADVANCE

From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Simplistic gameplay, perhaps, but a fine quick-fix arcade racer. **87%**

MUNCH'S ODDYSEE

From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
There's very little to chuckle at in this slightly tedious adventure yarn. **56%**

NAMCO MUSEUM

From: **Namco** Link-up: **N**
Four games good for their time, but their time was 20 years ago. **56%**

NO RULES GET PHAT

From: **TDK** Link-up: **N**
Feeble platformer that's a million miles away from *Tony Hawk's*. **35%**

ONIMUSHA TACTICS ADVANCE

From: **Capcom** Link-up: **N**
Awesome tactical adventure that will keep you entertained for weeks. **92%**

PAC-MAN COLLECTION

From: **Namco** Link-up: **N**
Four *Pac-Man* themed games on one cart, a retro treat. **90%**

PHALANX

From: **Kemco** Link-up: **N**
An old-skool 2D shooter resurrected for the small screen. But why? **81%**

PINBALL ADVANCE

From: **ZOO** Link-up: **N**
The nonsensical fancy that is 'pin and ball' creaks its way into the GBA. **39%**

PINBALL OF THE DEAD

From: **Kemco** Link-up: **N**
Horror-themed flippering with lovely presentation. The best on GBA. **70%**

PINK PANTHER PINKADELIC PURSUIT

From: **Wanadoo** Link-up: **N**
Great fun and appeallingly cute, but just a platformer. **64%**

PITFALL THE MAYAN ADVENTURE

From:**Activision** Link-up: **N**
Another mediocre rehash of this ancient platformer. **70%**

PLANET MONSTERS

From: **Titus** Link-up: **N**
A maze-based squish-'em-up, *Planet Monsters* is a fast and competent. **78%**

POCKET MUSIC

From: **Rage** Link-up: **N**
Hardly up to studio standard, but an amusing distraction all the same. **83%**

POKÉMON PINBALL RUBY/SAPPHIRE

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **N**
There's nothing more fun than a dose of Pokémon and there's more here. **82%**

POKÉMON RUBY AND SAPPHIRE

From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Improved fights, epic story. A massive universe of a game. **94%**

POLLY POCKET

From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
Six games feature the alliteratively named heroine, girl gamers rejoice. **70%**

POP IDOL

From: **Codemasters** Link-up: **N**
Even more tragic than the worst entrants on the TV series. Avoid. **15%**

POWERPUFF GIRLS MOJO JOJO A-GO-GO

From: **Bam!** Link-up: **N**
Horizontally scrolling shooter starring the chicks. A brave attempt. **62%**

POWER RANGERS: NINJA STORM

From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Terrible fighting game that didn't make us want to go on. Leave this one be. **45%**

PREHISTORIK MAN

From: **Midway** Link-up: **N**
Platformers are two-a-penny on the GBA, but this is above ordinary **83%**

SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

PRO BEACH SOCCER
From: **Wanadoo** Link-up: **Y**
It might irk some puritanical football heads, but this simplistic kickabout definitely delivers. **75%**

PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
This should have been one of the greats, but it's just average. No originality here. **70%**

PUYO PUYO
From: **Sega** Link-up: **Y**
A competent but rather arcane puzzler. Fine-but-dull. **75%**

RAMPAGE PUZZLE ATTACK
From: **Midway** Link-up: **N**
One of those puzzler ideas that looks great on paper only. **55%**

RAYMAN ADVANCE
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Superb to look at, but it plays like any other platformer under the sun... **80%**

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Smart platforming stuff, but haven't we seen this before? **79%**

READY 2 RUMBLE ROUND 2
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Wretched. Nasty visuals and shallow gameplay make this forgettable. **32%**

REIGN OF FIRE
From: **Bam!** Link-up: **N**
Nice ideas, but a blaster that gets smothered in a sea of mediocrity. **57%**

RIPPING FRIENDS
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
The single-player challenge is rather easy, but will keep you laughing. **70%**

ROBOT WARS ADVANCED DESTRUCTION
From: **BBC** Link-up: **Y**
Fans of the BBC TV show will have a good time with this battle game. **80%**

ROBOT WARS: EXTREME DESTRUCTION
From: **BBC** Link-up: **Y**
Make your own robo, then make it do battle. Bearded men not included. **76%**

ROCK 'N' ROLL RACING
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
More *Micro Machines*-style action, but that's not a bad thing. **72%**

ROCKET POWER THE DREAM SCHEME
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
This skateboarding platformer has some ideas, but ultimately annoys. **59%**

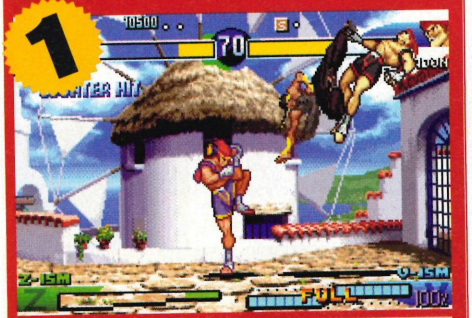
RUGRATS CASTLE CAPERS
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
If you want a good blast, look elsewhere. A real chore to play. **75%**

SCOOBY DOO MYSTERY MANSION
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
A great side-scrolling platformer starring the ever-popular hound. **75%**

SCOOBY-DOO CYBER CHASE
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Fails to capture the essence of the show, but there are cool mini-games. **54%**

SCOOBY-DOO MYSTERY MAYHEM

TOP 5 FIGHTING



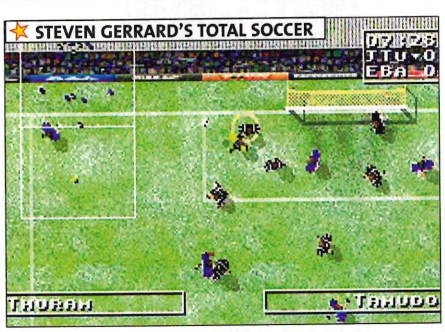
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Yes**
A near flawless conversion of one our all-time favourite fighters. And thankfully, no Kylie. **90%**

FINAL FIGHT ONE
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Yes**
Decent side-scrolling brawler from the days before Fame Academy. Oh, those were happy days. **80%**

TEKKEN
From: **Namco** Link-up: **No**
The PlayStation's finest 3D fighter gets its sprites but not its spirit flattened onto the GBA. **85%**

GEIKIDO
From: **ZOO** Link-up: **no**
Beat-'em-up adventure hybrid that looks as fancy as a lady in a nice dress. Well we love it anyway. **86%**

FIRE PRO WRESTLING
From: **Bam!** Link-up: **No**
Options galore and a four-player mode make this the choice of the man in the girdle. **84%**


STEVEN GERRARD'S TOTAL SOCCER

SCOOBY DOO! MYSTERY MAYHEM
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
A fairly average platform adventure. Lots of fun in places, but gets dull fast. **65%**

SCOOBY DOO THE MOVIE
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
You'd have to be a remarkably forgiving fan to mess with this drivel. **37%**

SCRABBLE
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
You can't use swear words, and it has a built in dictionary. **75%**

SECRET AGENT BARBIE
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
Barbie makes like 007. Are you man enough to be seen playing it, mind? **64%**

HOT WHEELS

SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER
From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
Not terrible, just not great. With Tony Hawk's doing the rounds. **60%**

SHINING SOUL
From: **Atati** Link-up: **N**
Diet role-paying game that concentrates heavily on fighting. **67%**

SHREK HASSLE AT THE CASTLE
From: **TDK** Link-up: **N**
The strongest Shrek title available on the GBA. Still pedestrian though. **61%**

SMUGGLER'S RUN
From: **Take Two** Link-up: **N**
A shallow representation of the early PS2 mini-hit. Redefines dullness. **29%**

SNOOD
From: **Digital** Link-up: **N**
Bust-a-Move with Snoods. Very middle-of-the-road. **58%**

SONIC ADVANCE
From: **Atari** Link-up: **N**
As sprightly a platformer as you could want. Classic Sonic. **91%**

SPEEDBALL 2
From: **Wanadoo** Link-up: **N**
The old Amiga classic. But this is nowhere as near as good. **60%**

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE
From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
The best Spider-Man title on the GBA yet. Great stuff. **90%**

SPIDER-MAN MYSTERIO'S MENACE
From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
This is fantastic stuff, offering tons of rock-hard levels. **90%**

SIM CITY 2000
From: **Zoo** Link-up: **N**
One of the all-time classic games, it's just as good as it ever was on GBA. **82%**

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS SUPER SPONGE
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Appalling platformer without any redeeming factors. Hate it. **20%**

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS: TBFBB
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Sponge antics from the TV now on your handheld.Only fun for a squeeze. **46%**

SPYRO ADVENTURE
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
Fabulously fulsome fire-breathing romp and the best Spyro game so far. **92%**

SPYRO SEASONS OF ICE
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
Every bit as good – no, better, dammit – than the old PSone games. 89%

SPYRO 2 SEASON OF FLAME
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **N**
How they managed to cram all this into the little GBA is anyone's guess. 91%

SSX TRICKY
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
A decent 'boarding game that is king of neither the tricking or the racing. 74%

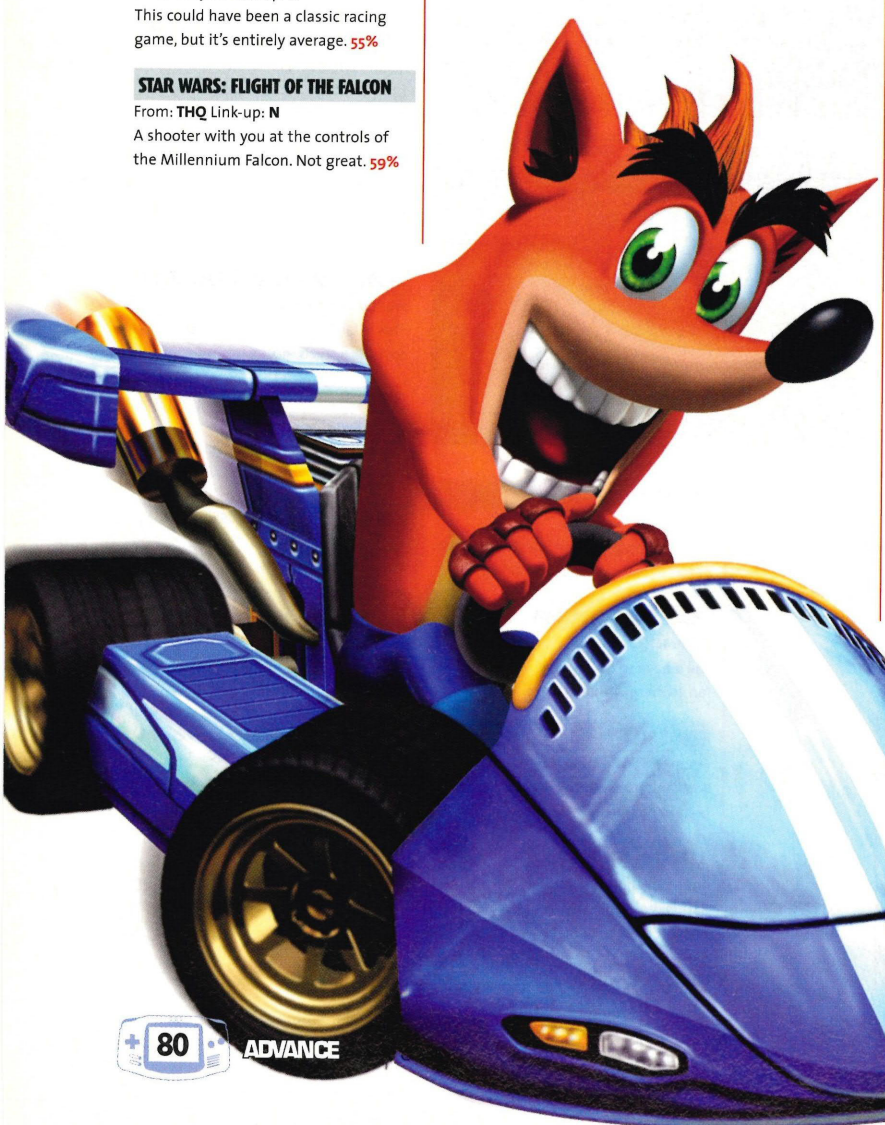
STARSKY & HUTCH
From: **Empire** Link-up: **N**
This could have been a classic racing game, but it's entirely average. 55%

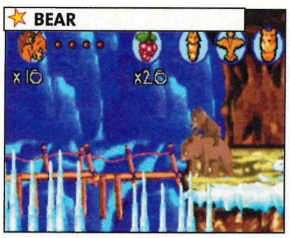
STAR WARS: FLIGHT OF THE FALCON
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
A shooter with you at the controls of the Millennium Falcon. Not great. 59%

STAR WARS 2 ATTACK OF THE CLONES
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Takes the GBA to the depths of a Sarlacc pit. Shame. 44%

STAR WARS JEDI POWER BATTLES
From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
Oh how we wanted this scrapper to be good. It's not though. 65%

STAR WARS 2 NEW DROID ARMY
From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
Great-looking Star Wars fun with some nice touches. 73%





STAR X
From: **Bam!** Link-up: **Y**
A valiant but flawed attempt to compress *Starfox* onto the GBA. 54%

STEVEN GERRARD'S TOTAL SOCCER 2002
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Not the prettiest soccer sim, but the most playable to hit the GBA. 88%

SUPER BLACK BASS
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Drab looking angler, that aspires towards realism. Fish off! 60%

SUPER BUBBLE POP
From: **Jaleco** Link-up: **N**
3D puzzler that's definitely no *Tetris* beater but playable enough. 47%

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE
From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
One of the better puzzlers available on the GBA, especially in two-player. 86%

SUPER DODGEBALL ADVANCE
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Ball game where points are scored by hurling it at the opposition. 85%

SUPER DROPZONE
From: **Ignition** Link-up: **Y**
Ancient *Defender*-clone with a jet packed chappy shooting aliens. 50%

SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
From: **Capcom** Link-up: **N**
This Capcom classic is enjoyable – but only if you're a retro head. 75%

SUPER MARIO ADVANCE
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Not the all-new Mario game that everyone was hoping for, but okay. 89%

SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
All back to '92 for the best 2D platformer ever. 94%

SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 4: SUPER MARIO BROS 3
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Fun packed brilliance made out of purest gaming gold. We love it. 96%

SUPER MONKEY BALL JR
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
A brilliant conversion of the Cube classic. So addictive, so frustrating. 87%

SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER II TURBO
From: **Capcom** Link-up: **Y**
Not better than *Bubble Bobble*, but will keep balloon fanatics gripped. 79%

SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2 X REVIVAL
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
Like having the arcade beat-'em-up in your pocket. Still great. 90%

STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
The daddy of all beat-'em-ups. And a near-flawless conversion too. 91%

TANG TANG
From: **Take 2** Link-up: **Y**
Tang Tang is a monster of a game, a host of bygone classics gone wrong. 45%

TARZAN: RETURN TO THE JUNGLE
From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
Fairly predictable platforming fare featuring Disney's vine swinger. 52%

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES
From: **Konami** Link-up: **N**
Beat 'em with the shell-carrying pizza-eaters. But why hasn't it better? 39%

TEKKEN ADVANCE
From: **Namco** Link-up: **Y**
Sprites for polygons as the PS2's benchmark battler hits GBA. Good. 85%

TETRIS WORLDS
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
It's *Tetris*, but with the Russian flavour replaced by weird 'worlds'. 56%

THE HOBBIT
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
A fun-while-it-lasts adventure, but it don't last that long. 72%

THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN
From: **Activision** Link-up: **N**
B-list Marvel hero in pedestrian scrolling platform game shocker! 45%

THE IUSTICE LEAGUE: INJUSTICE FOR ALL
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
DC comics trundles out heroes in this assured platforming title. 84%

THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT
From: **Swing!** Link-up: **Y**
Scandalously dull platformer created off the back of a tired old licence. 21%

THE LORD OF THE RINGS FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
Dull for long periods, with intermittent slow fighting mixed in. 43%

TOP 5 RACING

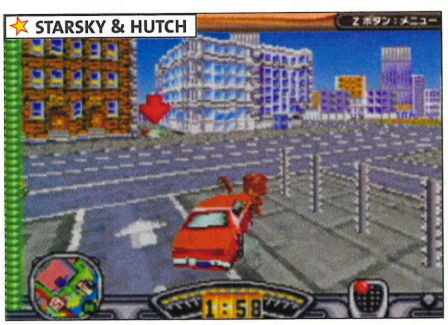
MARIO KART: SUPER CIRCUIT
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
Not only the most fun racer ever but – behind the cutesy exterior – one of the toughest. **95%**

F-ZERO: MAXIMUM VELOCITY
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Yes**
Much-loved future racer that will wear the skin from your shoulder button fingers. **89%**

V RALLY 3
From: **Atari** Link-up: **No**
Atari's wonder racer sticks two-fingers up at GBA doubters, a startlingly complete sim. **85%**

GT ADVANCE 2
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Yes**
The GBA's own *Gran Turismo*, this is a tidy rally title with a justly revvv-vered two-player game. **84%**

LEGO RACERS 2
From: **Lego** Link-up: **Yes**
A *Mario Kart* clone that bricks it away from the rest of a crowded field. **79%**



THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE TWO TOWERS
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
It does what it does rather well. But it's just repetitive bludgeoning. **60%**

THE LOST VIKINGS
From: **Vivendi** Link-up: **Y**
Above-average platformer that puts you in control of Vikings. **78%**

THE MUMMY
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Dumbed down platformer aimed at 'the kids.' Maggot-ridden. **51%**

THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
The Sims are out and about in this excellent adventure. Sit-com fun. **74%**

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
A generic *Rainbow Six* clone with a filmic badge, but not too bad for it. **70%**

THE WILD THORNBERRYS CHIMP CHASE
From: **THQ** Link-up: **N**
Dubious collision detection in this ordinary platforming fare. **54%**

THUNDERBIRDS
From: **SCi** Link-up: **Y**
All the craft are here for scrolling, shooting fun. Nostalgic joy. **67%**

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
Entirely solid and predictable golf game. Not bad for all that. **70%**

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR GOLF
From: **EA** Link-up: **Y**
Woods' a fine golfer, but this is one shoddy piece of gaming. **35%**

TINY TOON ADVENTURES BUSTER'S BAD DREAM
From: **Swing!** Link-up: **N**
Superior running, jumping and puzzle-solving fun. **68%**

TINY TOON ADVENTURES WACKY STACKERS
From: **Swing!** Link-up: **Y**
More *Tetris*'ja vu, only this time with um... a pig in dungarees. **78%**

TOCA: WORLD TOURING CARS
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Rather too hard racer if all very nicely put together. **65%**

TOM & JERRY IN INFURNAL ESCAPE
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Amusing to watch, not that great to actually play adventure. **58%**

TOM AND JERRY THE MAGIC RING
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Tiresome running-and-hitting-people-with-things trial. Make it stop... **38%**

TOMB RAIDER THE PROPHECY
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Lara's latest isn't terrible, but it's a lot of hard, tedious work. Sigh. **X65%**

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX ROGUE SPEAR
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **Y**
Sneaky, sneaky catchy terrorist. Very good stealth-'em-up. **88%**

TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Excellent visuals and a range of moves elevate this to the A-list. **84%**

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2
From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
Still one of the best extreme sports titles to hit the GBA. **90%**

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
Initially tough, but soon evolves into a nose grinding car plant of a game. **93%**

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4
From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
The bomb-diggy. The mack-daddy. The best GBA skater by a mile. **95%**

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND
From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
Smooth, funky – there's never been a skateboard gaming this cool. **89%**

TOP GEAR GT
From: **Kemco** Link-up: **Y**
Racer that plays like a GBC title, only with slightly better graphics. **34%**

TUROK EVOLUTION
From: **Acclaim** Link-up: **Y**
Limited and familiar action with the 'saurus assassin. Predictable. **66%**

TREASURE PLANET
From: **Ubi Soft** Link-up: **N**
Rather good adventure version of a very average cartoon film. **81%**

URBAN YETI
From: **Telegames** Link-up: **Y**
You're a yeti in this bizarro mix of a GTAuto and retro arcade games. **77%**

VIRTUA TENNIS
From: **Atari** Link-up: **Y**
Two-button aracde fun that's the best tennis on the GBA. **85%**

VIRTUAL KASPAROV
From: **Titus** Link-up: **Y**
Manages to infuse the dusty world of chess with some entertainment. **82%**

V-RALLY 3
From: **Infogrames** Link-up: **Y**
A stonking rally experience. This could well be the drive for you. **85%**

WARIO LAND 4
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Wario's GBA debut is a sublime platformer, but on the easy side. **90%**

WARIO WARE INC.
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
More mini-games than you'd ever want – and then some more! **90%**

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?
From: **ZOO** Link-up: **Y**
Worth a punt for knowledge-o-holics, but most will tire of the formula. **67%**

WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING 2
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
Ropy animation and fiddly controls render this a disappointment. **44%**

WOLFENSTIEN 3D
From: **Bam!** Link-up: **Y**
Virtually identical to the ageing PC duffer – it just don't cut it no more. **52%**

WORMS WORLD PARTY
From: **Atari** Link-up: **Y**
Little worms. In armies. With guns. A true gaming classic. **83%**

WWE THE ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA X8
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
You like wrestling? You like GBA? What are you waiting for? **78%**

WWF ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA
From: **THQ** Link-up: **Y**
Stylistically, RTW is impressive, but it plays like a damp squib. **64%**

XXX
From: **Activision** Link-up: **Y**
Movie licence that's nice to look at, but you'll complete it in a weekend. **64%**

YU-GI-OH: THE ETERNAL DUELIST SOUL
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
Fanboy collectable card game made game. Niche, to say the least. **60%**

YOSHI'S ISLAND SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 3
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
When there's a gaming museum, Yoshi's will take centre stage. **95%**

ZAPPER
From: **Atari** Link-up: **Y**
Like recent Frogger games only you're a grasshopper. Not fun. **30%**

ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST
From: **Nintendo** Link-up: **Y**
Half-new, half-SNES conversion, this adventure yarn remains a classic. **92%**

ZONE OF ENDERS THE FIST OF MARS
From: **Konami** Link-up: **Y**
Nothing like the PS2 game but reasonable enough. **62%**

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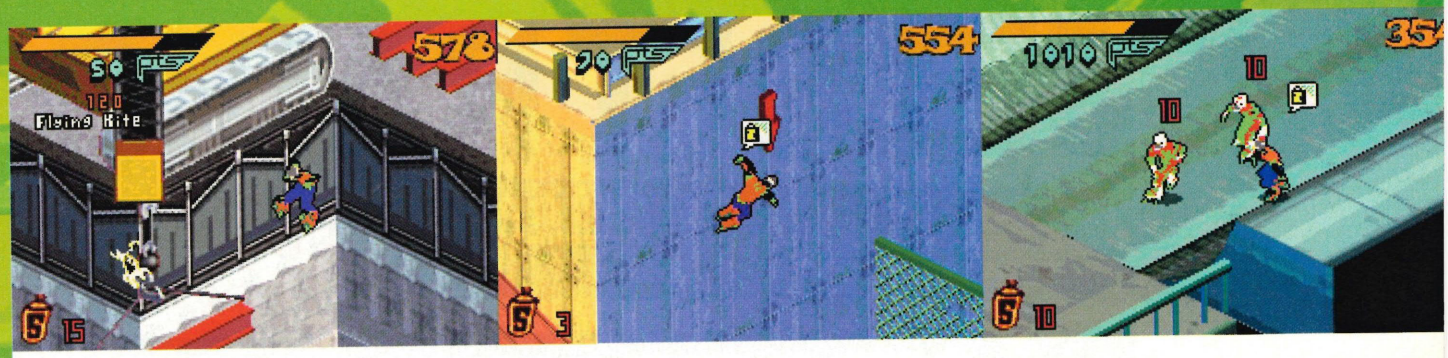


JET SET RADIO

DEFEAT JET SET RADIO WITH OUR AWESOME GUIDE

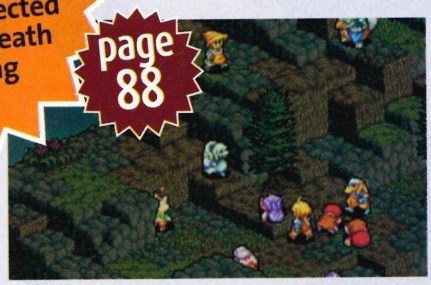
One of the coolest looking games this year meets us at the half-pipe and skates for its life as we show you everything you need to know about this law-breaking escapade, in high-speed tagging and bandit graffiti. You won't find a more concise guide anywhere else. *Advance* is the tips and cheats bible for GBA!

- LEARN WHERE TO TAG AND HOW TO DEFEAT EVERY OTHER SKATER!
- TOP TIPS THAT WILL MAKE YOU A GRAFFITI PRO! CAN YOU MAKE THE GRADE?

PLUS DON'T MISS!
Final Fantasy Tactics! Those tough opening battles are dissected and tipped to death by our gaming experts.

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS ADVANCE

page 88



- THE FIRST 20 BATTLES, FOUGHT FOR YOU!
- EXPERT ANALYSIS
- ULTIMATE GUIDE!

JET SET RADIO

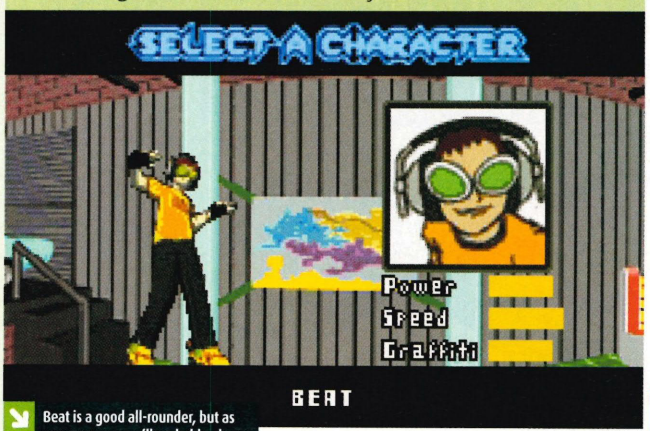
Don't say it, spray it – with our guide to painting the town red, blue and green.

GET INTO THE GROOVE

A few general pointers to keep you rollin', rollin', rollin'.

WHICH CHARACTER?

Choosing the coolest kid for the job.



Beat is a good all-rounder, but as you progress you'll probably plump for the speedier Garam or Yoyo.

Power Strong skaters aren't terribly useful early on, but when the Snipers and Flame Squads arrive in town during the later stages, power-heavy characters like Combo and Piranha are your best pick.

Speed Probably the least useful stat. Choose speed freaks like YoYo and Beat only when there's Challenge Racing or Team Tagging to be done.

Graffiti Crucial. The lower this stat, the faster and easier the tagging. So whether you're up against a tight time limit or need to work fast to avoid those pesky Assassins, choose riders like Tab or Garam.

Can capacity Not shown in-game, but Tab's the highest at 30 cans.

KEEP YOUR COOL

Five all-purpose tips to victory.

Our guide requires you check the map throughout each level – it's the easiest way to find tag spots.

1. Refill, refill, refill
Learn the locations of blue cans and strings of yellows, and return often.

2. Use the map
Not only to locate the tag points, but also to keep a beady eye on your enemy.

3. Grind
It's so much faster than walking (especially on staircases) and jumping along rails speeds you up.

4. Expert tagging
Master the smooth, slow rotate for the combos, and memorise each character's D-pad patterns.

5. Keep moving
Don't bother braking for the tag spots. If you press A as you sail past, you'll stop automatically.

Grinding and boosting is essential to keep out of The Captain's way, and brush off his bullets if he pops one.

NO PAIN, MUCH GAIN

How to stay out of hospital

1. Skate hard towards The Captain and he'll be knocked out for the count.

2. Take a wide, circular route around the edge of levels to lure cops away from important places.

3. Run from Officers and SWATs? What are you, chicken? If they attack during a tag, just keep going; the cops are too weak to make a difference.

4. Aim to break the speed limit. The faster you are, and the more time you stay off-ground, the better.

THE WALKTHROUGH

Our recommended route through the mean streets of Tokyo-To.

CHAPTER ONE

SHIBUYA GG

Tags: 11

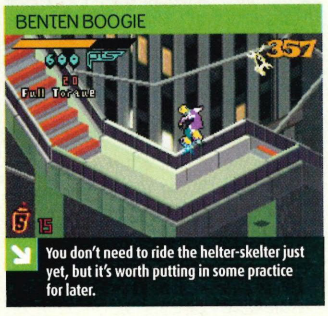
- Head over to the bus below the first tag, then grind the east rail for two quick tags.
- Splatter the other buses, then the north billboard (jump for it!) and wall.
- Take the truck to the top platforms – you're done with minimum hassle.

You can reach the high platforms in the northeast by leaping off this rail, or the parked truck up the top.

BENTEN BOOGIE

Tags: 14

- Go can-collecting, then take care of the northeast side's seven tags.
- Northwest for a wall tag, then roll south and grind a big 'U' around the building for four.
- Go southeast for the final two tags, and The Captain's frustrated again.

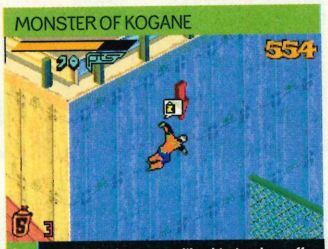


You don't need to ride the helter-skelter just yet, but it's worth putting in some practice for later.

TRICK CHALLENGE!

Unlock Mew

Real showoffs should land in *exactly* the same spot as Mew after the helter-skelter. During task three, push down to avoid skidding right off the dish thing.

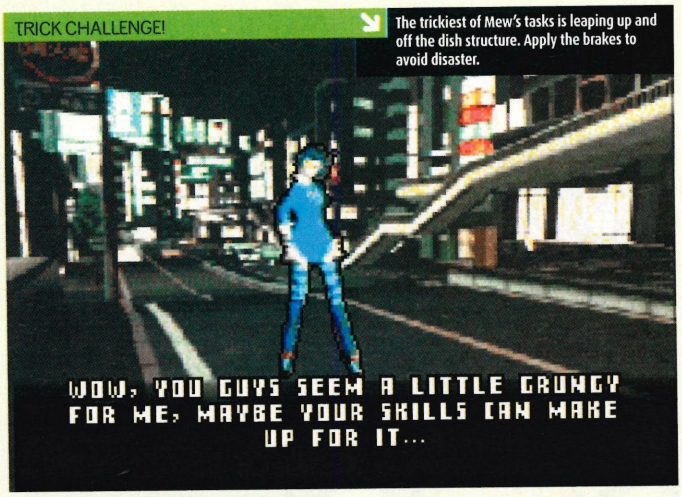


To reach high tag spots like this, just leap off a roof nearby – or simply approach at speed and leap.

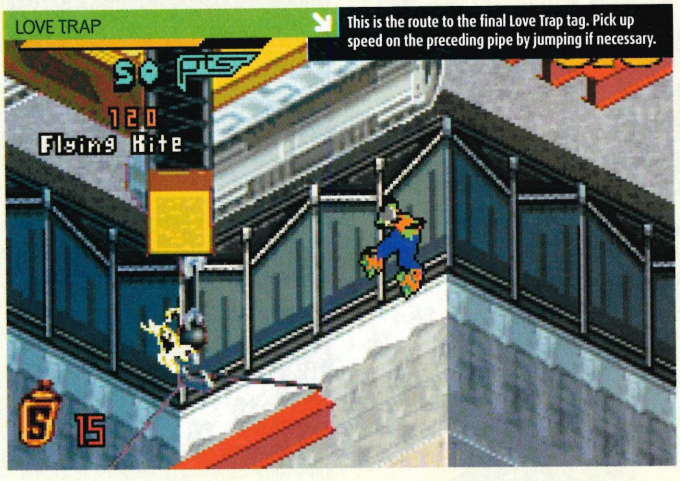
MONSTER OF KOGANE

Tags: 11

- A green-roofed hut just northeast of the staircase's top is your first job.
- Follow the roofs north for a fence tag, then make straight for the yard, that's top-left of the map for three tags.
- Roll south to the next 'row' of roofs, and reach two high tags by jumping off the northeast and southwest edges.
- Three ground level tags and the one near the start. Choppers? Ha!



The trickiest of Mew's tasks is leaping up and off the dish structure. Apply the brakes to avoid disaster.



This is the route to the final Love Trap tag. Pick up speed on the preceding pipe by jumping if necessary.

Wall-grinding is easy. Simply skate up to a wall at a slight angle, and jump. Grrrrrind.

TRICK CHALLENGE!

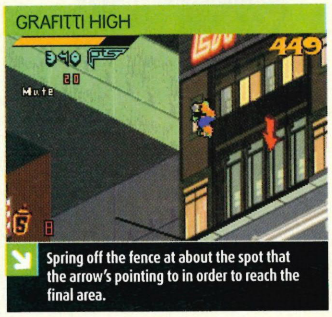
Unlock Garam

No need for flawless linkage or permanent acceleration as long as you touch everything Garam does. You'll need the brake on task two to avoid a soaking.

LOVE TRAP

Tags: 11

- Go east straight away for cans, then run the cops ragged by working clockwise around the ground level.
- Back to the playground for four tags (billboard, billboard, elephant, wall) avoiding The Captain.
- The SWATs are out of the picture – because you're grinding an elephant up onto the roof and two big tags northeast.
- Grind the southwest-leading pipe and jump the gaps for tag 11.



Spring off the fence at about the spot that the arrow's pointing to in order to reach the final area.

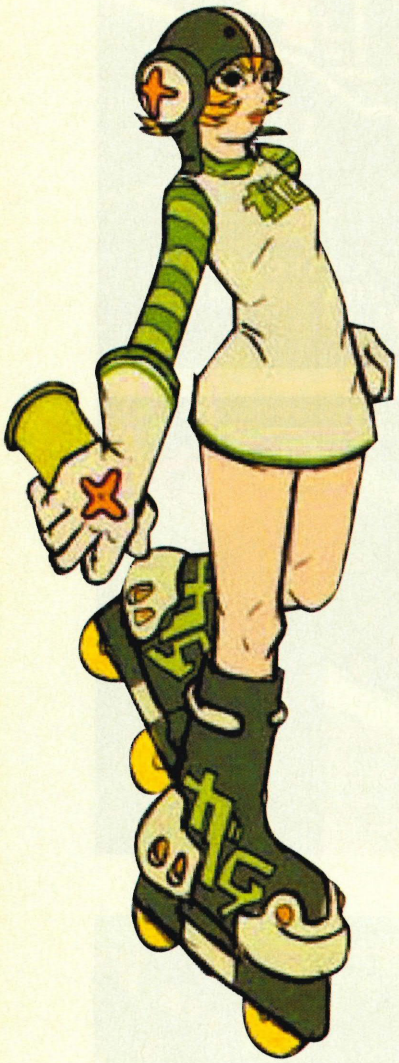
GRAFITTI HIGH

Tags: 20

- Twin tags in the start area, then into the plaza (east, south).
- A long anticlockwise grind polishes off all seven outside tags, then the north wall is a two-trip job (so as to lead The Captain and co away halfway through).
- The south ramp leads to a northbound wire – jump from there to tag 11.
- Back to the ramp and along the west wire to the old Benton Boogie map, with an added tag for following Mew's helter-skelter challenge route (stairs up are in the map's middle).

>>

Tips



NO. 540

Tags: 11

- Stock up on cans, exit topleft, and tag either side of the hut.
- The west-end ramps lead you to a crane cab – drop southwest from here to find two tags on a hut roof.
- Now use all the east-end ramps for an anti-clockwise wall-tagging route right around the level; you'll need that wall-grind you learned for the high ones.
- The highest tag is reached from that hut roof – jump west onto the red girder and wall-grind.

NOISE REDUCTION/KOGANE CIRCUS/LOVE ATTACK

Use boost to keep up with your rivals, but also a liberal sprinkling of brake so you don't overtake.

NOISE REDUCTION / KOGANE CIRCUS / LOVE ATTACK

Rival-tagging is easy.
Shadow one enemy at a time, hanging back so you can squirt repeatedly. Use rails and R-boosting to keep up, and loiter around fallen foes like a vulture, ready to nab 'em once they struggle to their feet. Take the rails on Kogane Circus's broken bridge to stay dry.

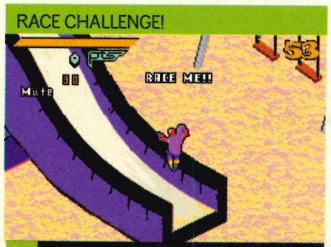
RACE CHALLENGE!

Unlock Yoyo
Railway through plaza to streets, then up a northeast passageway to a graffiti spot up the stairs in the northwest. Use Garam, and this top shortcut: in the streets, grind the first central staircase banister, and jump just as it turns left. You'll cut off half the helterskelter to grab the can in the cubbyhole early.

RACE CHALLENGE!

Unlock Cube and Combo
Shortcut? With pleasure. Ignore Beat's route and grind a playground elephant up to the cans in the northeast. From there, sprint along the southwest-leading rails, jumping south after the red girder to find a street to sail down, and a graffiti area at the bottom.

RACE CHALLENGE!



After leaping off the top off the elephant, turn right to the find the spraycans at the level's northeast end.

NO.540

Southwest of this crane cab is a hut roof that you'll grow very familiar with as you progress through *JSR*.

RACE CHALLENGE!

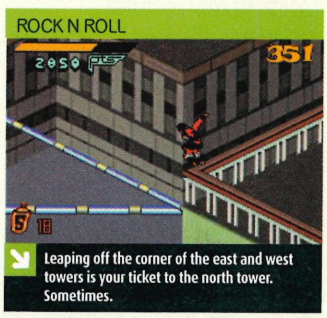
Here's the point where you should jump to take the helter-skelter shortcut. If only YoYo knew...

CHAPTER TWO

TAG OR DIE

Jump here (at full speed) to reach the green rail that connects the east and west towers.

ROCK N ROLL



Leaping off the corner of the east and west towers is your ticket to the north tower. Sometimes.

TAG OR DIE

Tags: 15

- Take the map's two southmost tags first, then the north wall pair, then the four either side of trucks parked west and east.
- Assassins arrive – so grind a fence next to those trucks, jump up to the green rail, and leave them fuming below.
- These skyrails lead you to the east and west towers, where six tags in total sit. And at the top of either tower, jump off onto the blue rail to reach the final north tower wall.

ROCK N ROLL

Tags: 12

- Use Combo. See Tag or Die – but clear the heights first because helicopters beckon. East tower first (tagging the central structure as you grind the green rail) then across the blue rail as before to the North tower.
- Take the ground tags near the trucks next, and finally the West tower and the spot near the start.

CHAPTER THREE

EXPLOSION

Tags: 24

- Time is tight. Follow page 85's Shibuya GG and Love Trap directions, to the point where Combo's downhill slalom started (with 130 left on the clock).
- Near the bottom of the southwest street is your first tag, then head up the nearby junction and off the right-hand rail for the second (billboard).
- Take the thin wire directly south and drop off north-east for another billboard, then fall east for a wall tag.
- The final spot is back up the east road – check the map.

TRICK CHALLENGE!

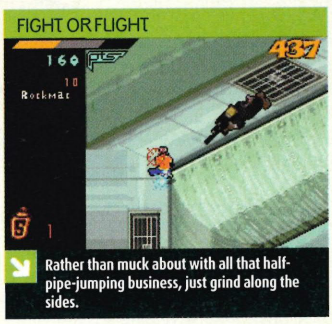
Unlock Piranha

- Task 1: Jump off the fourth red gate and turn left slightly.
- Task 2: You can pause and regroup between each jump.
- Task 3: The secret is the little semi-circular loop to gain speed and direction before the first leap.

BENTEN BURNING

Tags: 19

- Pick Combo for this. Lead the Assassins and Flame Squads away from graffiti spots, and grab red cans from the skyscraper peak.
- In the last area (from YoYo's race) the tags are all easy ground-level finds, except the last one which is just a grind up the northeast stairs.



FIGHT OR FLIGHT

Tags: 26

- Up the steps for the left bench tag, north for the high corner, then to the top-left for three in the yard. The rest should be taken while going back south.
- Into the sewers next – grind the half-pipe edges for fast tagging and sniper avoidance.
- Up the northeast passage is a room with four tags and loads of red cans – the stairs are in the east corner. Exit west.
- The rest of the tags should be familiar – finish with the two on *that* hut, and wall-grind off the red girder for no 26.

RACE CHALLENGE!

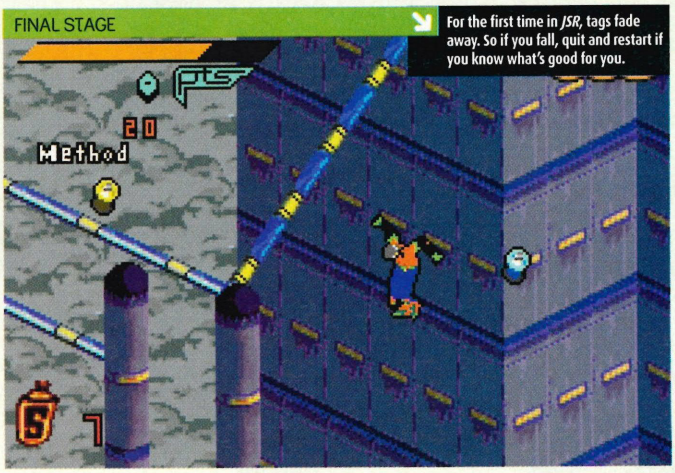
Unlock Slate

Ignore Slate's route. Grind the south rail to travel anti-clockwise around the level edge, jumping at the end of the green fence to skate for the north exit to No 540 world. Drop right to the bottom to grab a can from the inside area, then find the spray spot on the familiar hut roof back outside.

FINAL STAGE

Tags: 7

- Tags fade here, so work fast, and use Combo for strength.
- Take the top left rail first and leap across to the northwest tag. Grind back down for the southwest spot.
- Next rail: back to the centre tag. Then it's the bottom right rail (and jump) to tag four.
- Getting the idea? Next grind up to tag five, and run along to the middle tag.
- Finally, up the fire-free stairs for the climactic spray. Yessss!



Get past those pesky first twenty levels of Final Fantasy Tactics and get to the real meat with our massive in-depth guide!

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS ADVANCE

The secret to unlocking the magic of *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* is, rather obviously, to think like a tactician. It can be all too easy to get swamped and confused by the game's complex array of rules and options, so why not let us lend you a helping hand as we delve into one of the epic releases of last year. We'll kick off with some basic tips, and then we'll go on to explain the key game elements and why they're important to your game. After that, a step-by-step battle guide leads you all the way up to battle 20. That should help you find your feet! But there's much more to come in the hundreds of levels that follow – we can only point you in the right direction...

THE BASICS

To start with, take a look at the instruction manual if you're unfamiliar with the way the game works – all the jargon and basic controls are explained in great depth here. Also remember that an attack from the back of an enemy unit (clan member) has a greater likelihood of success than a frontal attack. Attacking from the side is good, but ideally, you want to creep up on your foes and really stick the knife in.

The Races and Classes

HUMAN: Extremely common, humans are multi-skilled. Statistically, a sure-fire bet if you want to win a battle.
HUMAN JOBS: Soldier, Thief, White Mage, Black Mage, Hunter, Blue Mage, Archer, Illusionist, Fighter, Paladin, Ninja.

VIERA: Rabbit-looking girl hunters who are agile and quick. They handle monsters well. No relation to the Arsenal midfielder, however.
VIERA JOBS: Archer, Fencer, White Mage, Summoner, Assasin, Sniper, Red Mage, Elementalist.

MOOGLES: Moogles are a curious fairy-hare hybrid.
MOOGLE JOBS: Thief, Black Mage, Time Mage, Animist, Gadgetter, Mog knight, Gunner, Juggler.

NU MOU: The long-eared, tailed Nu Mous are masters of magic.
NU MOU JOBS: Beastmaster, Morpher, Alchemist, Sage, White Mage, Black Mage, Illusionist, Time Mage.

BANGAA: These reptilian, lizard-like fellows are hard. The strongest race of all, they're indispensable in difficult engagements.
BANGAA JOBS: White Monk, Warrior, Gladiator, Defender, Templar, Bishop, Dragoon.

Clan Selection Process

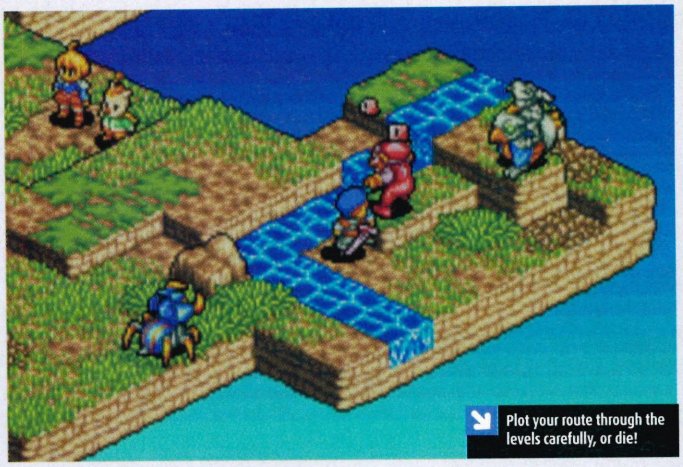
The completion of some levels will give you a new team member. Whether you welcome the new clan member is up to you. However, if you choose to wave goodbye to the offer of reinforcements, it's goodbye forever to the prospective buddy. The best strategy is to gather duplicates of units only if he/she has a good job, and otherwise forget the weaker ones. Your clan complement reaches a maximum at 24 members, so there's plenty of time to build your roster.

Laws

In short: don't flout the rules. If you get yellow or red carded, you're going to end up in the slammer, which lets the whole side down and causes you to miss opportunities to improve your clan. Keep checking the laws prior to battles.

Rumours

It pays to read the rumours when you enter pubs. Given time (remember the adventure lasts hundreds of days) new rumours will circulate, just like in real life. Pay attention to these. *FFTA* rewards patience and careful thought.


Plot your route through the levels carefully, or die!

As your characters gain experience they become even more useful.

This might be a tough game, but the hints and tips are there if you look for them! Listen to wisdom...

Selecting the right characters for your bat[tle] is going to be something to keep you very busy indeed.

You don't have to guess what your characters are good at, take a look and decide from [...]

Shops

Make sure that the clan member you are buying the item for can equip it and make use of its abilities! Don't blow a load of Gil (Ivalice's currency) on too much equipment. Keep some spare in case of emergency.

Experience Points (EXP)

Each time you strike a baddy, you'll gain a certain number of experience points. Basically, you get more experience points if you execute an action on a character on a higher level. Pick on higher level characters and you get 2 EXP for every level higher than you. You'll go up a level for every 100 EXP you earn, which leads us onto Levelling Up.

Levelling Up

Levelling up increases all of your characters' statistics. Levelling up is crucial to the progression in the game. The maximum limit for gaining player levels is 50.

There is a useful trick to levelling up. Go to the shop and buy 99 potions. This'll use up about 4,000 Gil. Then get into a clan battle. Use a potion on yourself every turn. It will prevent you from dying during the engagement, and you get 10 EXP each time. Using this method it's possible to earn a fair few levels per battle.

To easily level up a White Mage, move him next to two or more party members and use Cure. You will gain anything from 12 to 24 EXP. Your White Mages have just become stronger.

MISSION STRATEGY

Remember: After each mission, go to the pub to get the next one.

Regular saves: It's essential to save regularly, even before you've begun. Buy first, then accept the first mission, 'Herb Picking'. When you see the map again, press Start, go down to system, and save.

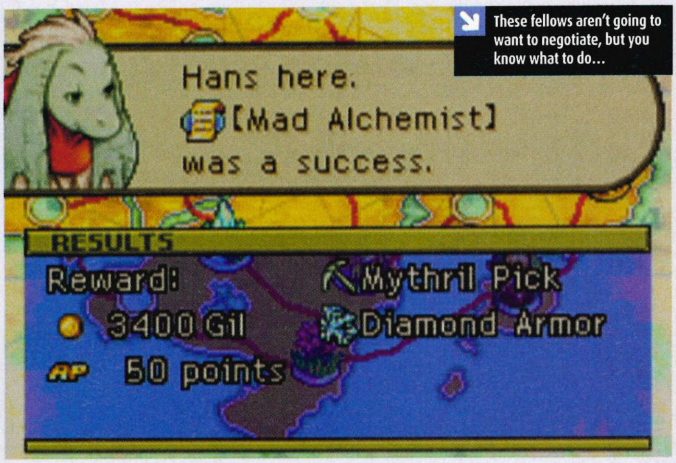
Also: Save after each battle to avoid the irritation of repeat plays.

Mission order: Below is the chronological order of the missions in *FFTA*. What you do between these missions is up to you. This guide should provide you with the welly you require to make inroads into this vast game. It's a daunting prospect for the most hardened gamer, as there are, in fact, 300 regular missions!

Rewards: In addition to those, missions there are side missions which are profitable enterprises, earning you Gil, new clan members and overall clan experience. It's a good idea to do these as it will help raise your levels. Be aware though, that high-reward missions come with high risk, especially if your clan isn't up the mission quite yet. Keep checking what new skills you've learned and buy extra equipment with your battle victory pay. Then, between battles and shopping for new kit, you should make your way back to the pub (to rest up, probably with a nice, effervescent soft drink).
Let the battles commence!

>>

Tips



These fellows aren't going to want to negotiate, but you know what to do...

Choose carefully where you tread, one wrong move might flaw your battle strategy.

Final Fantasy Tactics is one of the biggest titles on the GBA, there are literally hundreds of hours of gameplay here.

Combat can be a nerve wracking business for a beginner. But stay calm!

>> THE BATTLES

Battle 1 Herb Picking

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: The inaugural clan battle is quite straightforward, as your enemies aren't particularly tough. Leave the Red Cap for your Warrior or Marche to fight. Go for Goblins first, then Red Cap, then the Sprite.

Battle 2 Thesis Hunt

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: You're at Lutia Pass. Use Soldiers, Bangaa Warrior and White Mage. Use the first two to eliminate their Thieves and Soldiers. Employ Montblanc for their White Mage. Keep watch for the Archer's adept aim.

Battle 3 The Cheetahs

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: At Nubswood, you join forces with Ritz and Shara (Archer), both formidable. Send your top battlers to fight. Focus on Black/White Mages first, then devote manpower to the Bangaa because of his counterattack.

Battle 4 Desert Peril

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: Your team at Eluut Sands should have a Black Mage, Soldiers and a White Monk. Montblanc's fire spell wreaks havoc on the Cream. Marche can busy himself with the Antlion. Strong units should attack the wolves, while your White Mage can keep everyone healthy.

Battle 5 Twisted Flow

Objective: Defeat the boss!
Strategy: Concentrate on the Ahriman in the back using Roulette. Famfrit can then be fought with Black Mages and Archers. Exploit Soldiers at close quarters, ensuring you replenish their health regularly.

Battle 6 Antilaws

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: The engagement at Cadoan needs bulky units. If you're able, summon the Tototh Famfrit for serious damage. Defeat the Illusionist first, then move up to the high level, all the way playing protector to Ezel.

Battle 7 Diamond Rain

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: Aisenfield's soaking with monsters. Exploit Montblanc's fire on the Ice Flan for this point in the game. Marche and the fiercer fighters should take out the Wyrms and the Bomb. Heal yourself frequently when facing these.

Battle 8 Hot Awakening

Objective: Destroy all targets!
Strategy: Target Roda Volcano's eight Ultima Crystals. Space out your clan to minimise all-encompassing damage. Sturdy attackers and a White Mage are requisite. For crystals, Archers, individuals capable of Air Render, and Black Mages (Montblanc).

Battle 9 Magic Wood

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: Space, and lots of it. Marche must attack the Summoner. Afterwards, get the Black Mage. Strong fighters, Archers and Black Mages are essential. Exercise your White Mage's healing power. It takes a thief as well.

Each character will be able to perform a number of actions. Don't choose the wrong one!

It's always nice when a mad alchemist is a success, it really doesn't happen often enough. No really, it's a good thing.

Magic is a formidable weapon, so you must use it wisely, young Advancer!

Teach those bugs a lesson! The pesky blighters want to pinch your toes.

Flowers, schmowers, we say. What we want to know is where he buried the treasure. And where he put the packet of smarties.

It's always the way. Buffy seems to have set trends that baddies aren't going to like. Girls are tougher than boys these days...

Battle 10: Emerald Keep

Objective: Defeat the boss!
Strategy: Salikawood's battle needs a full clan. Bring a long-range Archer, White Monks and Soldiers, a Black or White Mage and Bash Babus with all of these guys with all your might. Boost team health at intervals.

Battle 11: Pale Company

Objective: Defeat the boss!
Strategy: From Nargai Cave, you meet the Totema, Adrammelech. He and his cohorts are fearsomely strong. Send in your Dragoons (with Wyrmkiller and Jump abilities) and give your Beastmaster an Earth Bell. Shield yourself from fire, For exmple with Blaze Robes and Fire Shields. White Magic units are vital for boosting energy. Target the boss.

Battle 12: Jagd Hunt

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: Jagd areas have no Judges/Laws. Keep your clan healthy, otherwise you'll lose a fallen member for good. Their Assassin (Viera dressed all in black) is deadly and their Blue Mage, meddlesome, sending everyone to sleep. The White Mage with Esuna will counter their Last Breath and Night abilities. Remove these first, then turn to the others.

Battle 13: The Bounty

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: Pulverise the Paladin with magic and Soldier/Archer attacks first. He has the capacity to revive fallen comrades to eliminate that possibility straight away. Go for the Time Mage next, employing similar attackers on him. Follow on with the remaining mages and the job should be done with relative ease.

Battle 14: Golden Clock

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: It's quite a good idea to strengthen your lesser clan members through experience points. Select a Thief to use to steal the rare Zeus Mace from the Alchemist. You join forces with Ritz and Shara, and good news for you, they'll stand up well to the enemy. It'll be a doddle for Marche now.

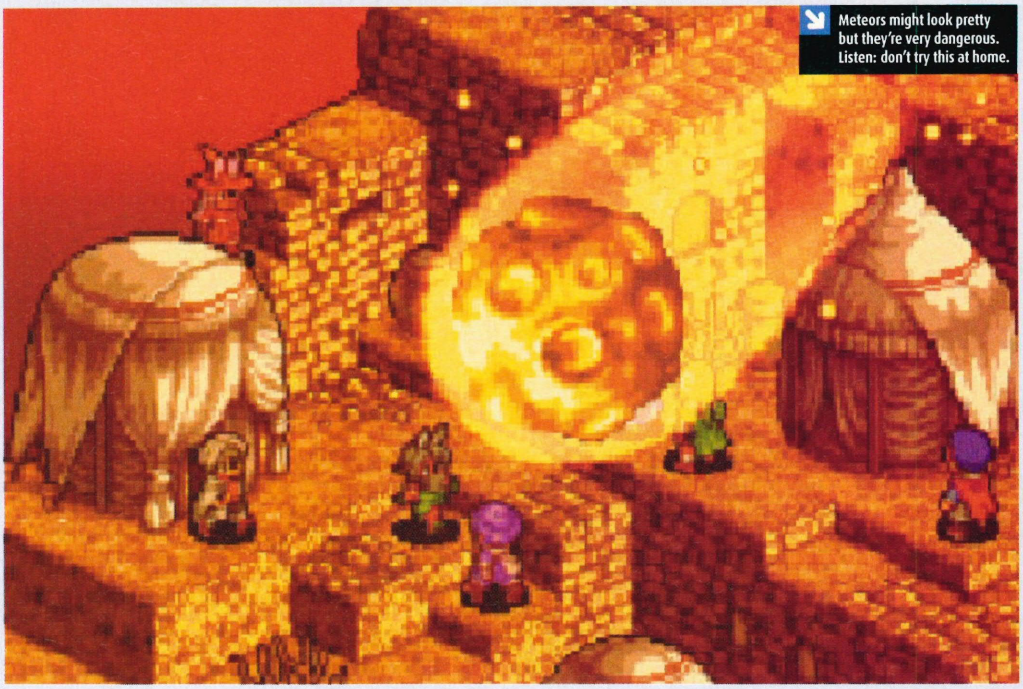
>>

Tips

Uh-oh. You always know there's going to be trouble when you see a giant spinning pillar of flames... Don't get your fingers burnt.

Final Fantasy Tactics is as much about exploring and trading as it is about tactics and fantasy. Or finals, for that matter.

Don't waste the clan money, or there'll be trouble at dinner time. Use your wallet wisely, young shopper and you'll win.



Meteors might look pretty but they're very dangerous. Listen: don't try this at home.

Battle 15: Scouring Time

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: Judgemaster Cid is scouring all clans for Marche, so be on your guard. You need to have assembled a good arsenal this time. Pick your top trio of units to fight alongside Montblanc and Marche. Destroy the Paladin first and keep watch on the Templars. Their Gunner, Sage and Mog Knights should be defeated in a short time.

Battle 16: Exodus

Objective: Break all objects!
Strategy: How simple or taxing this battle is depends on your tactics. Therefore, you must to beat Babus (and his potent Explode ability) with some chess-like moves early. Now you are free to smash each target, one by one. Cid will wander around dishing out judge points.

They might look cute, but these little blighters pack more firepower than God.

Battle 17: The Big Find

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: The Uladon Bog engagement sees a rival clan claiming that bounty for your capture. Their Far Fist and Air Render abilities must be reckoned with first to preclude distance attacks. A rule of thumb for this battle is to concern yourself with the fighters, then anyone else who gets in your way.

Battle 18: Desert Patrol

Objective: Defeat all enemies!
Strategy: Marche's brother, Doned, appears here. Magic (for distance attacks) and Soldiers are key to victory. Watch out for magic being repelled by enemies with Mirror Mail (like chain mail). Utilise an Assassin with Last Breath, or a Paladin with Holy Blade and you're onto a winner. Thieves are useful if you want to pinch neat merchandise.

Battle 19: Quiet Sands

Objective: Defeat the boss!
Strategy: Don't be filled with despair when you realise that boss hits do not damage. Instead fight off Llednar's gang members. Quite soon, Llednar will bid to attack Marche, and Judgemaster Cid will cart him off to jail with the red card, effectively winning this mission for you! You'll be singing the virtues of refereeing all the way back to the pub!

Battle 20: Mateus

Objective: Defeat the boss!
Strategy: Vampires will immediately devastate your team so keep a White Mage's Esuna to hand for anyone screaming, "Medic!" Other possessors of antidotes are useful. Annihilate the Vampires with your White Monk's Exorcise, and Archer's Burial abilities. Make sure they're dead and gone, otherwise they'll come back to life in three strokes. Finally, kill the boss with your most forceful magic and sword attacks.

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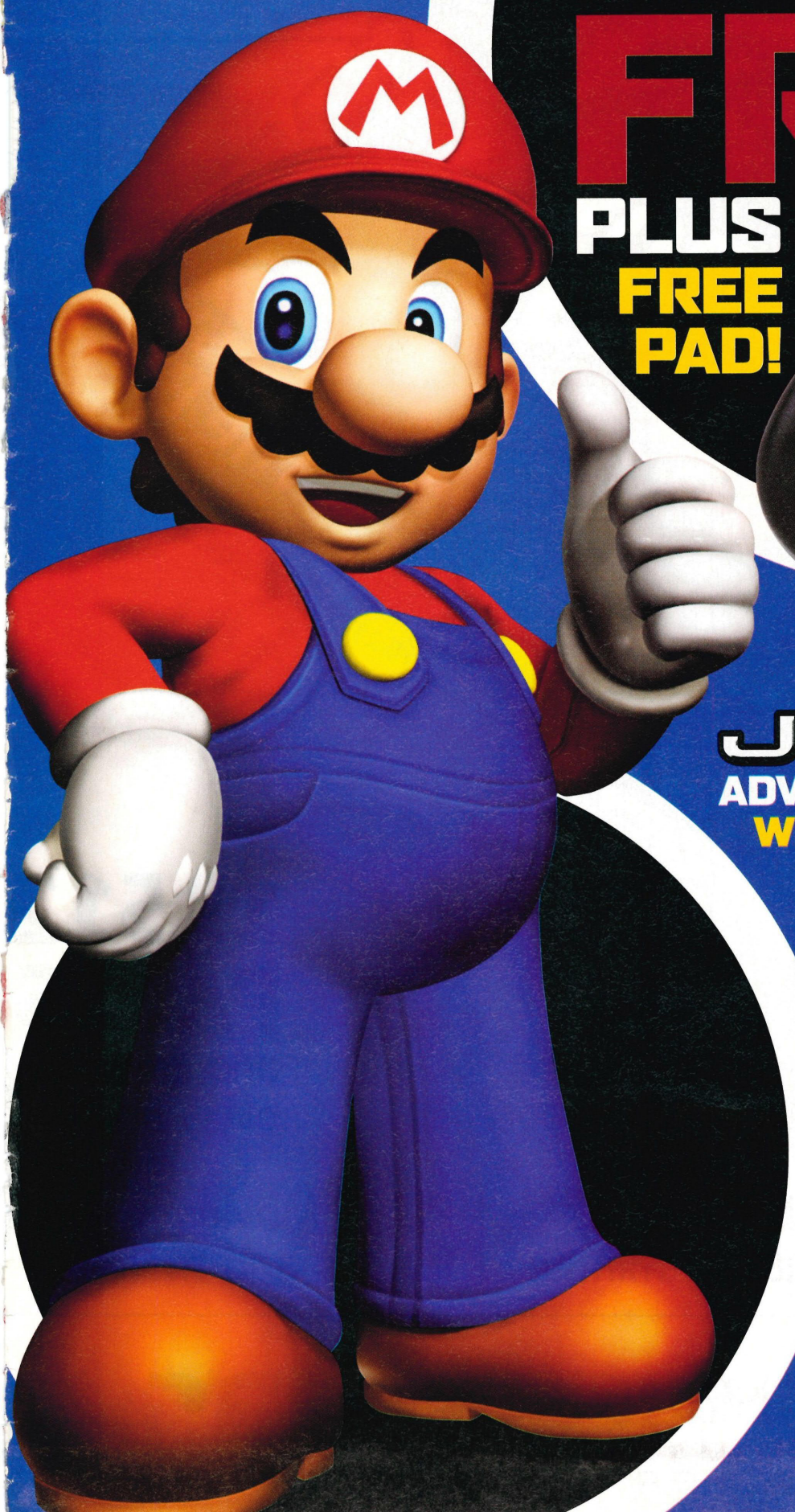

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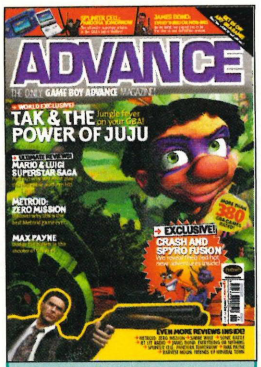


OFF CUTS

THE BEST OF THE REST FROM THE ADVANCE MAILBOX

There are two things I'd like to say about your magazine. First: it is a superb guide to the Game Boy games and I now have a small collection of games that I am proud of, you've helped me spend my cash wisely. The second is that it's totally the most unobtainable magazine out there! What happens? Does everyone buy it so quick I can't get my hands on it? Is it only stocked in London? Help me find out!
TERRY HARDING,
YORK
Hello there. Thanks for all the compliments, it certainly puts a smile of the face of the team when we're given a slap on the back from happy readers. The reason you're having trouble finding the mag is that we're not actually published every month yet, so you'll just have to keep an eye out for us in the newsagent, or check out the next month page (98). The next issue will hit the shops on 17th June.

Who would win in a fight, Bowser or Dr Eggman?
JOEL
Sadly we'll never know, but we'd put our money on Bowser.

Will Nintendo ever bring out another Game Boy version?
GARY HEWITT
Gary, we believe so. Turn to page 12 for the latest techno-gossip.

Finding Nemo is rubbish, it's nothing like the film.
TURNIPKID
Well, Mr TurnipKid, the GBA might be good, but it's not quite up to the graphics of a multi-million dollar film studio. What were you expecting?

I'm bored of *Sacred Cards*, when can we expect more Yu-Gi-Oh! on the GBA?
JEN SMITH
Why not turn to page 56 and read about the latest Yu-Gi-Oh! title. It's got a few problems, though...

We've been receiving mysterious transmissions at the *Advance* radio tower, but where are they coming from, and what do they mean? Read on and discover...

ALIEN TO ME

STAR LETTER

I read your *Archer Maclean's Pool* review with great happiness. At least, I thought, a decent, gentleman's game, a game of kings you might say. I don't like these games filled with monsters and cartoons much, it's all a bit alien to me. I'd rather have some decent sports games. When is there going to be a cricket game on the GBA? Not soon enough, I say.
MICHAEL CLOAKES,
HERTS

PS The mag is best of British!

Well you seem like a lovely chap, Mr Cloakes, and we share your love of cricket, but if we were you, we wouldn't hold our breath. The sport could be little boring for fun-loving GBA owners. Perhaps if you're looking for the real game of kings you could get a copy of *Chessmaster*?

SOMETHING FUNNY

Word, *Advance*. This magazine is the best I know. You guys have put together something that's funny and cool. I'd never have known there was so much going on with the Game Boy without you guys to help out. I just bought an SP – it's the future! I just don't get why everyone doesn't have one. Why is that?
PAULO,
BIRMINGHAM

Well we'd imagine it's either because of a sinister alien conspiracy, or because people can't afford them. The SP might be pretty cheap these days but it's not free. Perhaps if we write a really nice letter to Tony Blair he'll raise taxes and hand out SPs free in schools. That would be ace.

CLATTERING OF HIS GADGETS

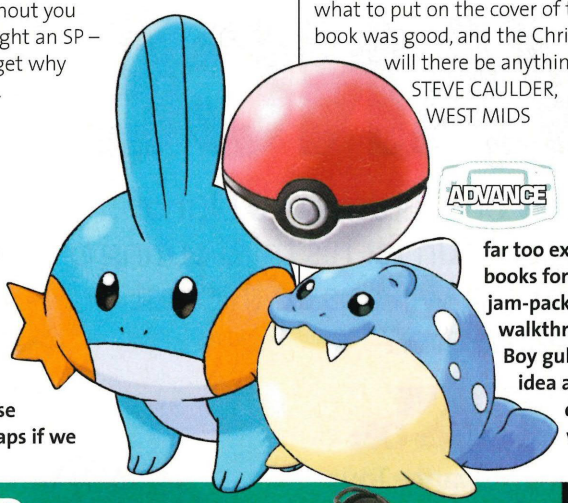
My brother is obsessed with technology and when he sits down all you can hear is the clattering of his gadgets. He has a digital camera, a PDA, a mobile phone and a Game Boy SP, and he keeps them all in his jacket pockets. I think you should send us the Joytech kit so that he can be a bit tidier.
ADRIAN GREEN,
LONDON

Nice try Adrian, but no cigar. We think your brother could simply do with a bit of what boffins call 'convergence'. This is when more and more features are put into one machine. Such as the Orange PDA phone with built in camera. We wouldn't recommend getting rid of the SP though, since everyone knows that it's the only portable gaming machine worth owning.

SOMETHING ELSE

Hello *Advance* people. I was wondering how you decide what to put on the cover of the magazine? The last tips book was good, and the Christmas guide was rad, too. But will there be anything else? A game maybe?
STEVE CAULDER,
WEST MIDS

Hi Steve! Sadly we can't put games on the cover because it would make the magazine far too expensive. We'll be sticking to books for the time being, which will be jam-packed with tips, guides, walkthroughs and other cool Game Boy gubbins. If you've got a cool idea about what could go on the cover as a bonus let us know, we'd love to hear from you.



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NEXT ISSUE

HUGE REVIEW

→ FIRST REVIEW!

SONIC ADVANCE 3

The spiky one returns in a blur of high-speed fun for his third outing on the GBA. But will this be the best Sonic game ever?

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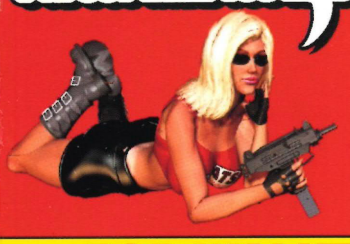

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Spyro the Dragon
Star Wars: Phantom Menace
Test Drive 4
The Italian Job
The Lost World
The World is Not Enough
Theme Park World
Tomb Raider 2
Tomb Raider 3
Tomb Raider 4: Last Revel.
Tomb Raider 5: Chronicles
Tomorrow Never Dies
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X-BOX

Alias*
Amped 2
Amped Snowboarding
Armed and Dangerous
Azurik: Rise of Perthia
Bad Boys 2
Baldur's Gate: D. Alliance 2
Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu
Blinx: The Time Sweeper
Blood Wake
BloodRayne
Broken Sword: S. Dragon
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Championship Manager '02
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Counterstrike
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Crimson Skies
Desert Storm
Deus Ex: Invisible War
Die Hard: Vendetta
Elder Scrolls: Morrowind
Enter the Matrix
Everything or Nothing: 007
FIFA 2004
Futurama
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grand Theft Auto: V. City
Halo
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Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb
Invisible War, Deus Ex
Italian Job: L.A. Heist
James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: E. or Nothing
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Jurassic Park: Op. Genesis
Knights of the Old Republic
LMA Manager 2004
Lord of the Rings: F. of Ring
Max Payne
Max Payne 2
MechAssault
Medal of Honor Frontline
Micro Machines
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Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Prince of Persia: S. of Time
Project Gotham Racing
Project Gotham Racing 2
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Raw 2, WWE
Red Faction 2
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Sega GT 2002
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Sims: Bustin' Out
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Spawn: Armageddon
Splinter Cell
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Star Wars: Knights Old Rep.
Starsky & Hutch
Tenchu: Ret. from Darkness
The Sims: Bustin Out
The Thing
Thirteen
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
Time Splitters 2
TOCA Race Driver
ToeJam & Earl 3
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B = 0 2
Back in Action
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
Batman: Dark Tomorrow
Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu
Battle, Sonic Adventure 2
Beach Spikers
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Big Air Freestyle
Big Mutha Truckers
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Blood Omen 2
BloodRayne
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Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
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Bustin' Out, The Sims

C = 0 3
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Cel Damage
Clone Wars, Star Wars
Code Veronica X
Combat Zones, Top Gun
Conflict: Desert Storm
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Crash Nitro Kart
Crystal Chronicles

D = 0 4
Dakar 2
Dark Alliance, Baldur's Gate
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2
Dead to Rights
Def Jam Vendetta
Desert Storm
Desert Storm 2
Die Hard: Vendetta
Double Dash, Mario Kart
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai

E = 0 5
Eighteen Wheeler
Enter the Matrix
Eternal Darkness
Everything or Nothing: 007

F = 0 6
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G = 0 7
Ghost Recon
Gladiator: S. of Vengeance
Gladius
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H = 0 8
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
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Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hobbit
Hulk
Hunter: The Reckoning

I = 0 9
Incredible Hulk
Inter. Superstar Soccer 2
Italian Job: L.A. Heist

J = 1 0
James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: Agent Under F.
James Bond: E. or Nothing
Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast

K = 1 1
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer
Kirby's Air Ride

L = 1 2
Leg. of Kain: Blood Omen 2
Leg. of Zelda: Master Quest
Leg. of Zelda: Ocarina of T.
Leg. of Zelda: Wind Waker
Leg.of Zelda: Majora's Mask
Legends of Wrestling
Lode Runner
Looney Tunes:Back in Action
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
Lost Kingdoms II: Rune
Luigi's Mansion

M = 1 3
Madden NFL 2002
Madden NFL 2004
Mario Kart: Double Dash
Mario Party 5
Mario Sunshine
Matrix, Enter the
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Mega Man Network Tran.
Metal Arms:Glitch in System
Metroid Prime
Minority Report
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
MX Superfly

N = 1 4
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Need for Speed: H.Pursuit 2
Nemesis, Resident Evil 3
NFL Quarterback Club '02
NFL Street
NHL 2003
Nightfire

O = 1 5
Ocarina of Time: Master
Ocarina of Time: Zelda
OO7 Agent Under Fire
OO7 Nightfire
OO7 Ev'thing or Nothing

P = 1 6
PN 03
Phantasy Star Online
Pikmin
Prince of Persia: S. of Time

R = 1 8
Rayman 3
Rebel Strike, R. Squadron 3
Reckless: Yakuza Missions
Red Faction 2
Reign Of Fire
Res. Evil Code Veronica X
Resident Evil
Resident Evil 2
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
Resident Evil Zero
Return of the King
Rev. of the Flying Dutchman
Rise of Sin Tzu
Rocky
Rogue Leader
Rogue Ops
Rune: Lost Kingdoms 2

S = 1 9
Sands of Time, P. of Persia
Sanity's Requiem
Scooby Doo: Night of 100 F.
Scorpion King
Scream Arena, Monsters Inc
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sims
Sims: Bustin' Out
Skies of Arcadia Legends
Smugglers Run 2: Warzone
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
Sonic Adventure DX
Sonic Heroes
Sonic Mega Collection
Soul Calibur 2
Sphinx & Cursed Mummy
Spiderman The Movie
Splinter Cell
Spy Hunter
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly
SSX 3
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter
Star Wars: Clone Wars
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Star Wars: Rebel Strike
Star Wars: Rogue Leader
Starfox Adventures
Starsky & Hutch
Super Mario Sunshine
Super Monkey Ball
Super Monkey Ball 2
Super Smash Bros Melee
Sword of Vengeance

T = 2 0
Tak & the Power of Juju*
Teenage Mut. Ninja Turtles
The Hobbit
The L. of Zelda: Majora's M.
The L. of Zelda: Mast. Quest
The Scorpion King
The Sims
The Sims: Bustin Out
Thirteen
Throwdown, UFC
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
Time Splitters 2
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Tony Hawk's Underground
Top Gun: Combat Zones
True Crime: Streets of LA
Turok, Evolution

U = 2 1
Underground, N. for Speed
Underground, Tony Hawk's
Universal Studios Adventure

V = 2 2
Velocity X, Hot Wheels
Vexx
Viewtiful Joe
V-Rally 3

W = 2 3
Wario World
Wind Waker
Wolverine's Revenge
Worms 3D
WWE Wrestlemania X8
WWE Wrestlemania XIX

X = 2 4
XIII (Thirteen)
X-Men 2: Wolverine's Rev.
X-Men: Next Dimension

Z = 2 6
Zelda: Majora's Mask
Zelda: Master Quest
Zelda: Oc. of Time
Zelda: Wind Waker

0-9 = 2 7
007 Ev'thing or Nothing
007 Nightfire
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