

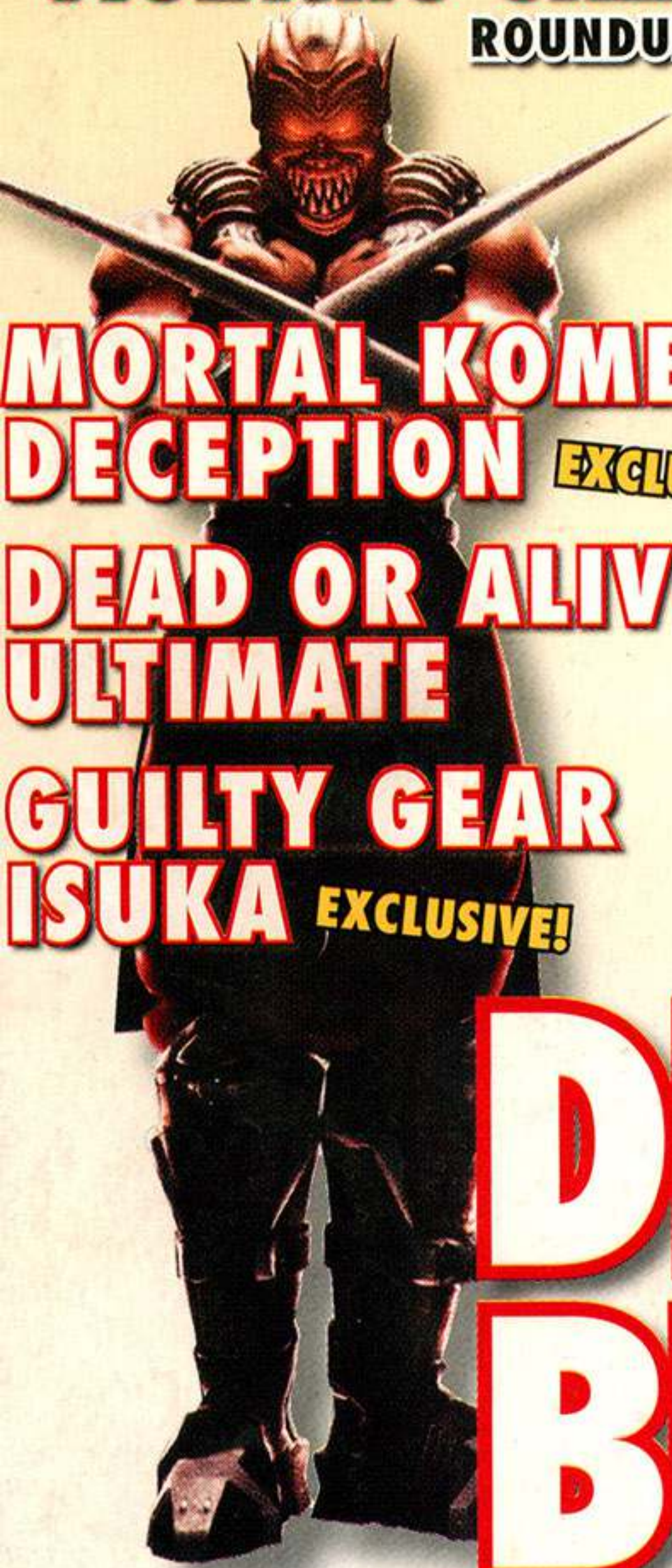
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COVER 1 of 2

DISPLAY UNTIL  
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ISSUE 193 / OCTOBER 2004



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SILENT HILL 4 / DONKEY KONGA / BLOOD WILL TELL / THE SIMS 2 / PIKMIN 2

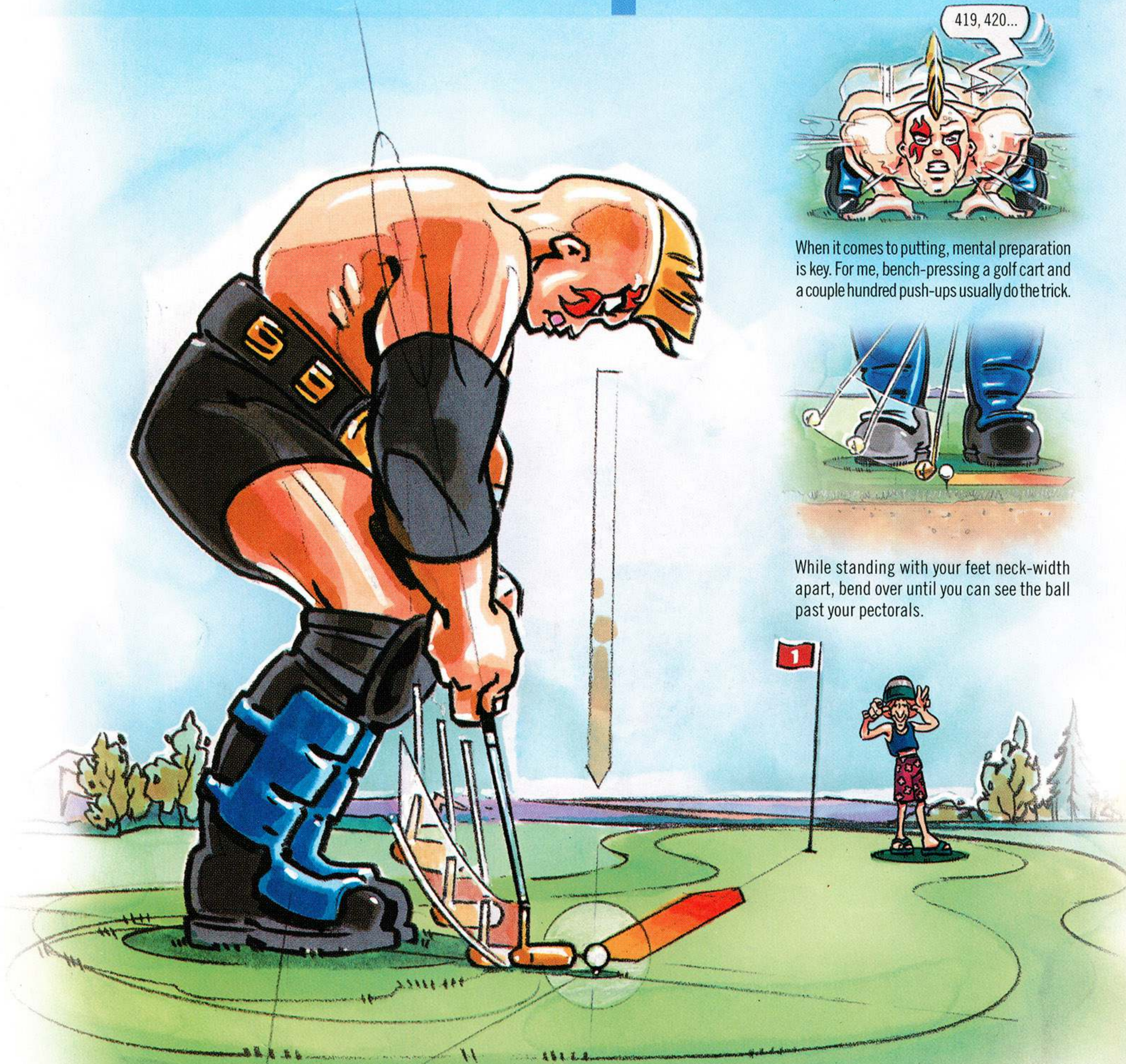


# HOT SHOTS TIPS

# 1

## PuttCrusher04 on the Short Game

There are two places I like to blow off steam. One is the wrestling ring, where I see how high I can throw other wrestlers. The other is the putting green. A good putt depends on a proper grip. I grip the putter firmly, but just loose enough so I don't shatter it with my bare hands.



419, 420...



When it comes to putting, mental preparation is key. For me, bench-pressing a golf cart and a couple hundred push-ups usually do the trick.



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# 2

## BunkerBreaker007 on Getting Out of the Sand

People always ask how I learned to conquer these mighty sand traps. I don't know. That's like asking how gale-force winds learn to blow just as a dude's ready to tee off. All I do know is that ever since I was a kid, I liked surfing near sand, sitting on sand, even eating sand. But that was on a dare.



Before attempting to get that ball out, thoroughly wax your wedge. Better too much than not enough.

Swing under the ball and lift it out of the sand. Then do a thorough toe check for any signs of sand jam.



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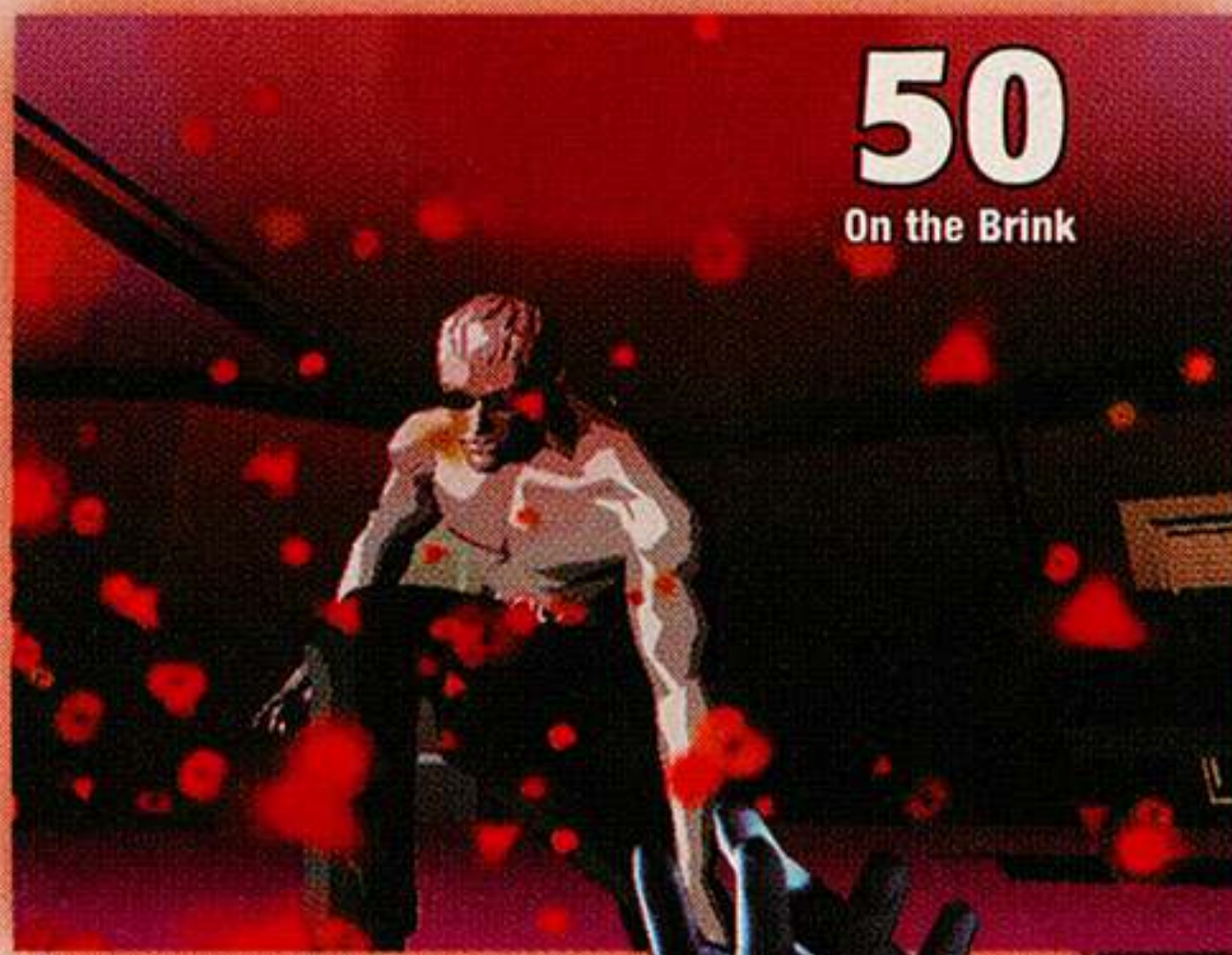
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On the Brink



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Mortal Kombat: Deception



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Guilty Gear Isuka



42  
Dead or Alive Ultimate

**FEATURES**

**30 Band of Brawlers**

**30 Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 3 [Exclusive]**

Which Dragon Ball Z challenge is greater: the struggle between galactic super warriors for control of the universe or the quest to make the perfect Budokai fighting game? Game developer Dimps decided to heed the wishes of DBZ fans and include characters missing in action in its first two games, such as heroes and villains from DBZ GT. Find out who made the cut and why.

**36 Mortal Kombat: Deception [Exclusive]**

Do not be deceived—this is the best Mortal Kombat game ever, and it could be one of the best fighting games of all time. Join us undercover at Midway as we peek under the hood of MK: Deception.

**42 Dead or Alive Ultimate**

At face value, the latest installment in the Dead or Alive series sounds like a compilation of the original DOA and an enhanced version of DOA2, but online gameplay via Xbox Live, more visual flair, faster gameplay, and (of course) some crazy costume changes could transform it into something so much more.

**46 Guilty Gear Isuka [Exclusive]**

As a 2D fighting game, some would say Guilty Gear was ahead of its time. Here's how developer Arc System Work and publisher Sammy Studios plan to take Guilty Gear Isuka to the next level.

**50 On the Brink**

Just because a new game is the next installment in a series or it brandishes a mind-blowing concept doesn't mean it's going to be any good. The jury might still be out on these six much-hyped titles, but here's GamePro's take on where they might end up.

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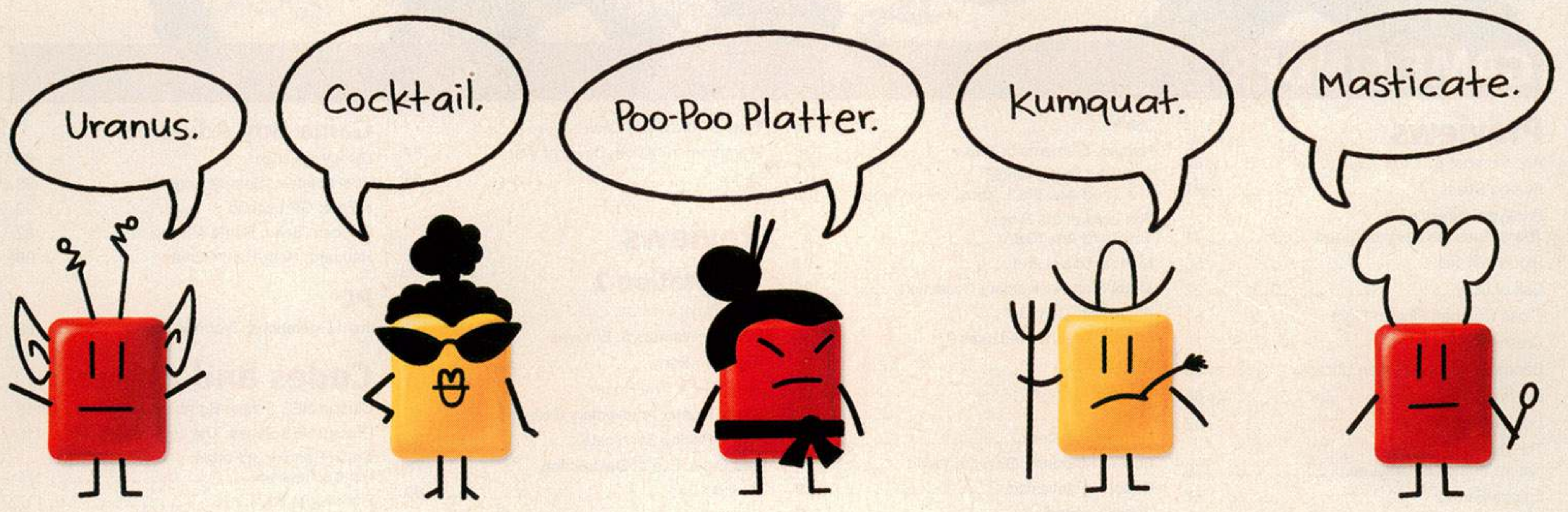


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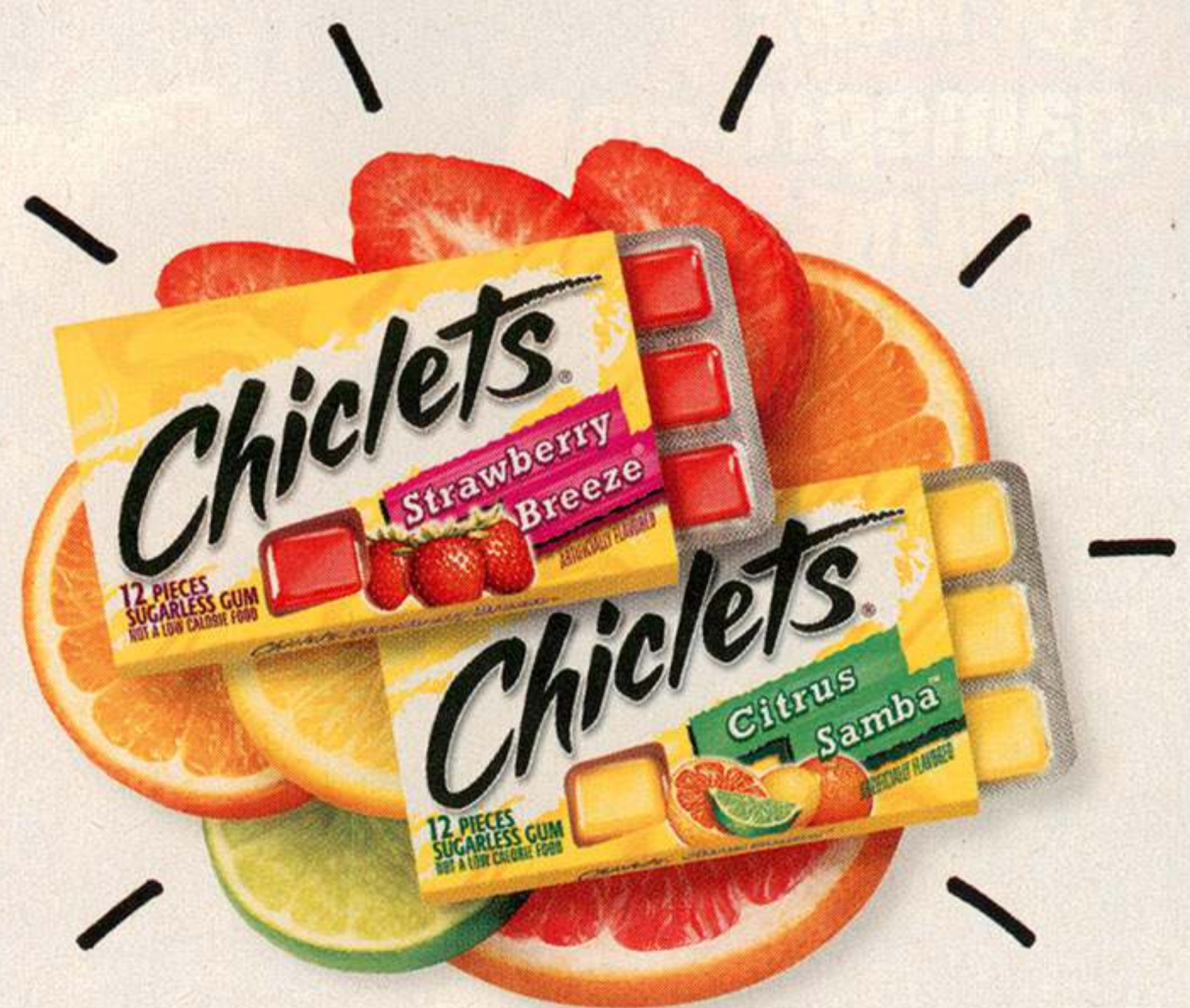
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114 Code Vault

With these cool codes, you're in for more than you bargained for with *Shadow Ops: Red Mercury* (Xbox), *Psi-Ops: The Mindgate Conspiracy* (PS2, Xbox), *Shrek 2* (PS2), *Fight Night 2004* (PS2), *Rise to Honor* (PS2), and more.



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Sony European Tour

We pack our bags and head for Europe to take an intimate look at *Killzone*, *The Getaway: Black Monday*, and *ATV Offroad Fury 3*. Is *Killzone* a *Halo* killer or a *Halo* casualty? Find out!



Atari's Second Annual Gamer Day

Atari brings together a bevy of developers and gives us a sneak peek at things to come over the next year. Go online to find out if there were any surprises.

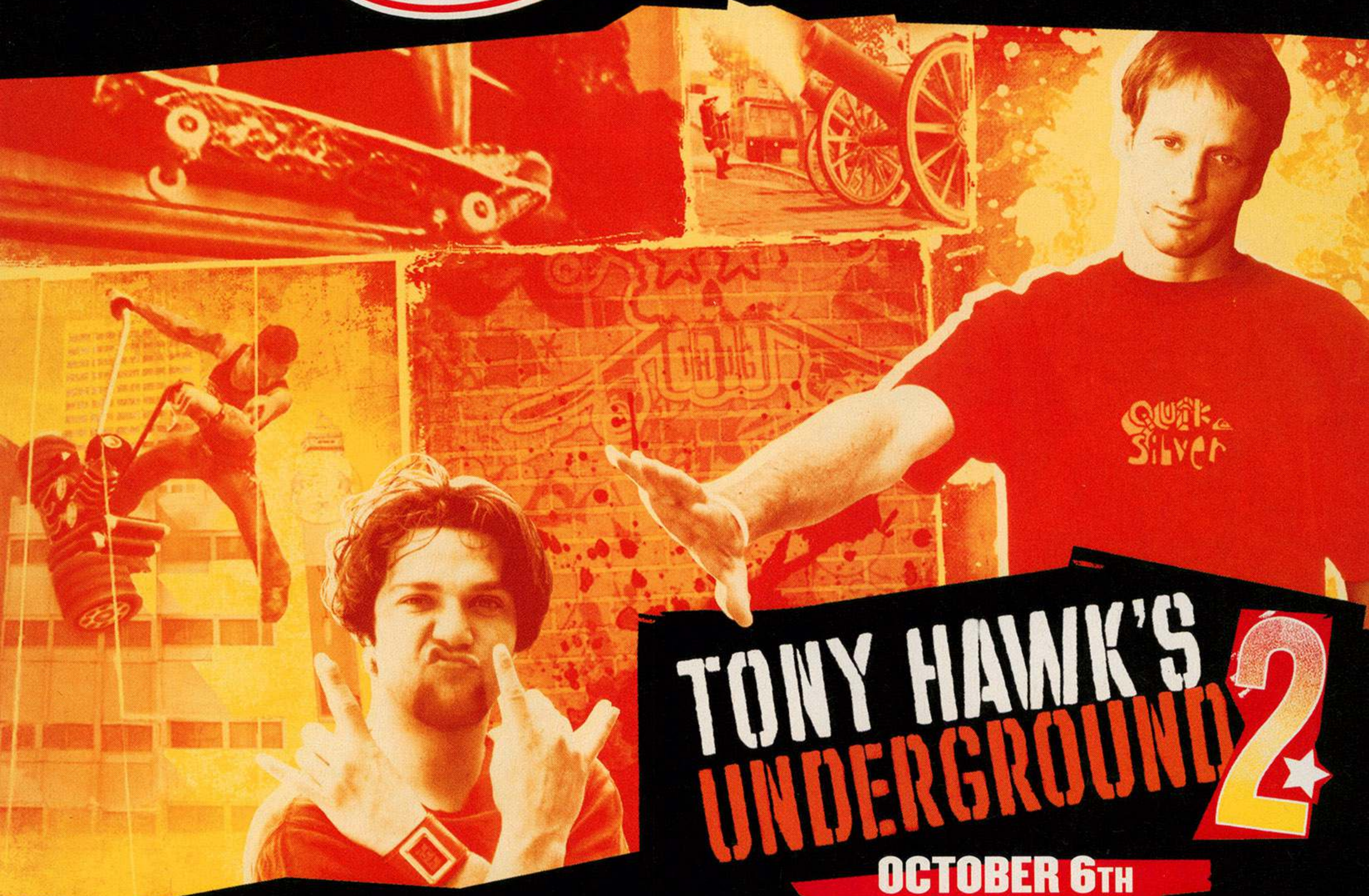
Guilty Gear Isuka

Does four-player fighting really add to the fun or just add to the confusion? We battle it out to get the answer so you don't have to.

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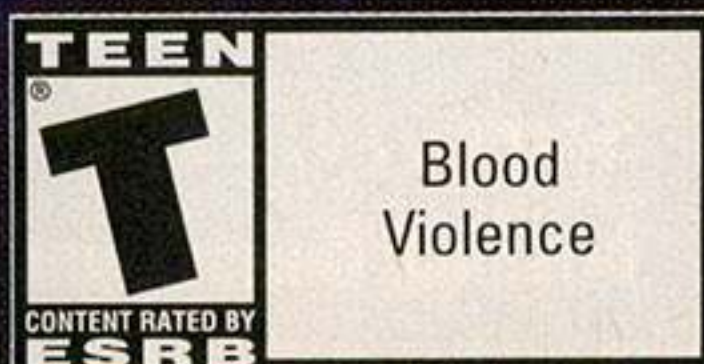


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## The Hype Factor

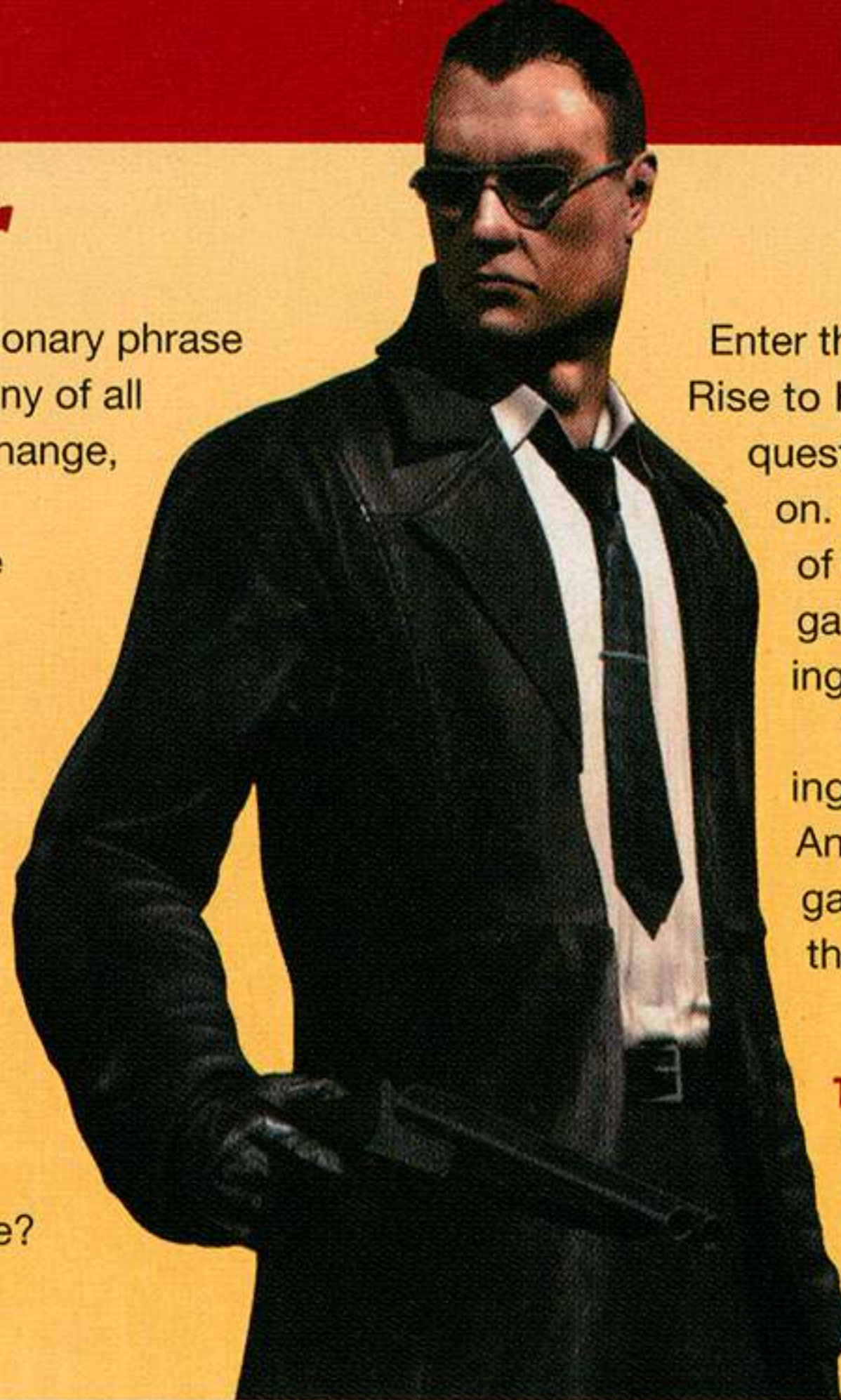
**D**on't believe the hype! You've heard that cautionary phrase used time and again, urging your close scrutiny of all sorts of products vying for your precious pocket change, including video games.

It makes perfect sense...but damn if the hype doesn't get you every time.

Driv3r: We rest our case. Here's a game being panned in reviews left and right, but it's still on track to end up among the best sellers of 2004. Not only did this game get hype, but it also got controversy when claims went out that some European game reviewers got paid off to provide positive reviews about a somewhat questionable product.

Who's correct? Game reviewers who make a living passing judgement on games? Consumers who vote with their dollars? Game publishers who claim they spare no expense to make a great game?

And who cares as long as we're all having fun?

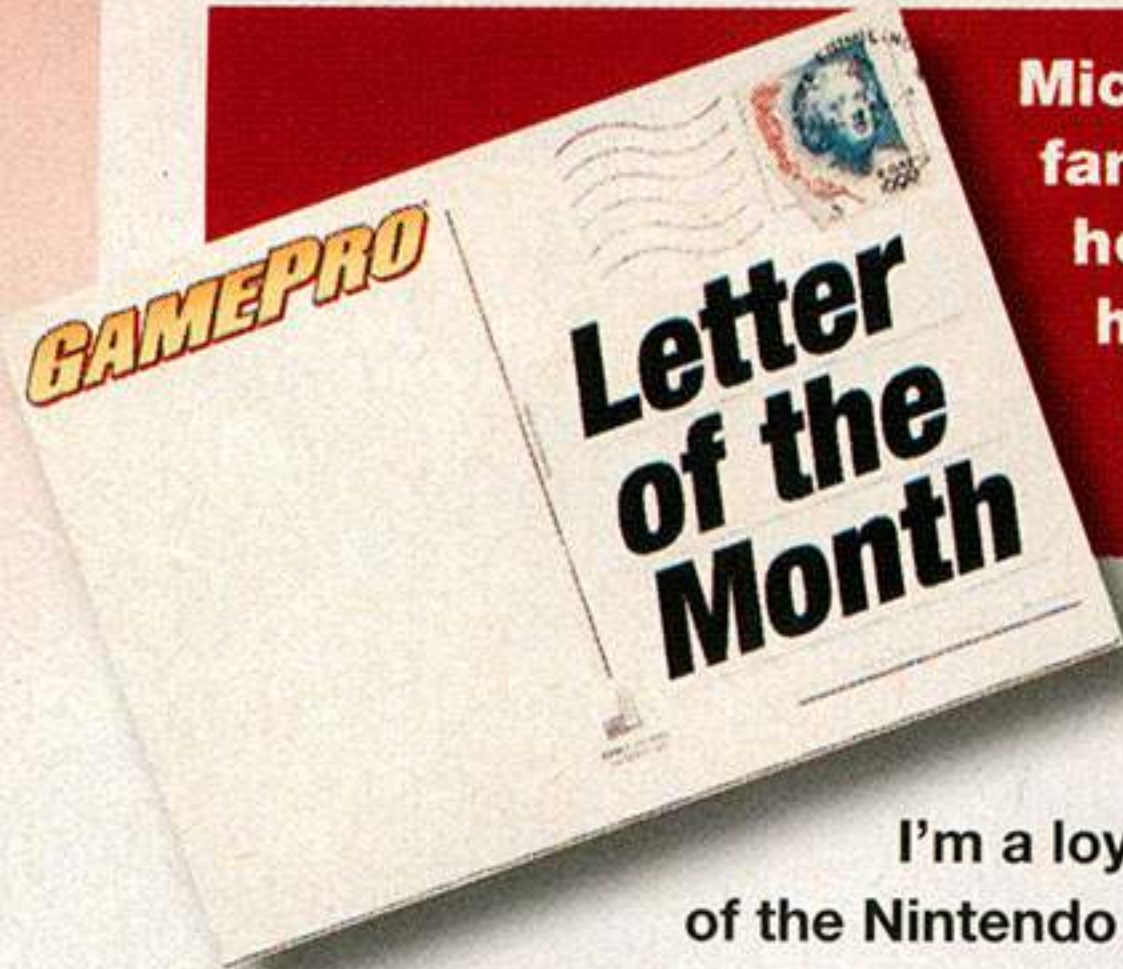


Enter the Matrix, The Getaway, True Crime: Streets of L.A., Rise to Honor, the list of games of dubious and downright questionable quality that you all paid for and played goes on. Even the Dragon Ball Z series featured on the cover of this issue, and others, has, well, issues about overall game quality...at least it does amongst everyone excluding several million DBZ fans.

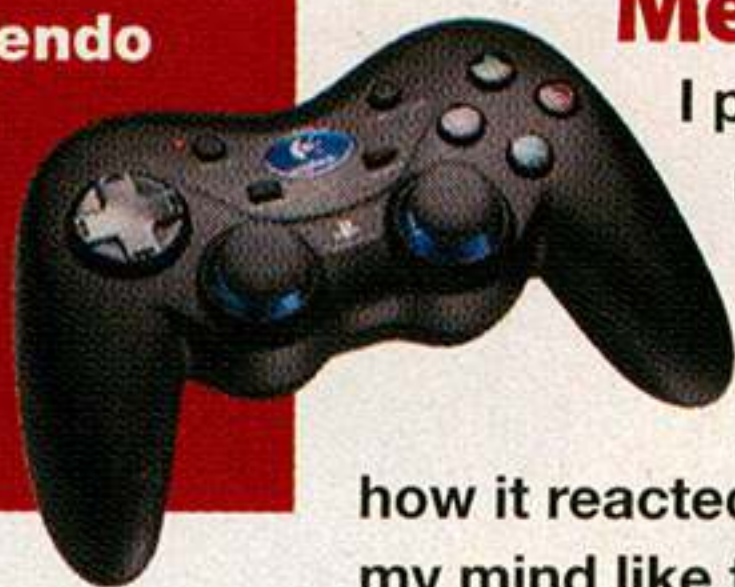
The fact of the matter is "hype" is fun. "Hype" is exciting—no matter what side of the fence you're standing. And if you're interested in our take on some overly hyped games coming this holiday season, turn a few pages to the special feature, "On the Brink."

Don't believe the hype...just enjoy it.

**The GamePros,  
Oakland, CA  
letters@gamepro.com**



**Micky speaks out for Nintendo fans everywhere. For his heartfelt challenge, he will receive a Logitech Cordless Action Controller.**



### An Open Letter to Nintendo

I'm a loyal Nintendo player, and I own most of the Nintendo consoles and many, many games.

Lately, I have had to defend Nintendo concerning its future and how grim it looks.

I cannot believe that Nintendo would sit idly by while the ship is sinking. Wake up! There are many things the company can do to right the ship. Lowering the price of the GameCube was a great step, but if it's thinking about the future (and it should), Nintendo's next console must have backward compatibility. Otherwise, it is looking at a Sega-sized disaster and a future making games for that inferior console made by Sony.

There are other things Nintendo should do to improve its tarnished image. As you may or may not know, Nintendo is viewed as a stubborn company still clinging to its old ways. Nintendo should be more open with the press and share information about new projects. All game magazines complain about Nintendo's lack of information about upcoming games, while the PS2 and Xbox games get plenty of coverage. Why Nintendo? Why? Why? This kills me because it is pushing away free publicity.

Nintendo also has so many great classic characters and games that it should remake them to recruit new players. Also, other games should have Nintendo extras just like Soul Calibur II featured Link. As you know, this alone drove sales of the game and GameCube consoles.

Nintendo should use this slogan: I cannot imagine a world without Nintendo. It's true. I beg Nintendo to change its ways for a better future.

► **Micky—Via Internet**

We hear yah, Mick. Let's hope Nintendo hears you, too.

### Metal Gear on the Mind

I played Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes, and when I reached a boss named Psycho Mantis, he actually read my mind! As I played, the game reacted to my moves more and more. I've beaten this game about five times, and I can't help but wonder

how it reacted to me so much. How did Mantis read my mind like that?

► **Jesse Huerta—Porterville, CA**

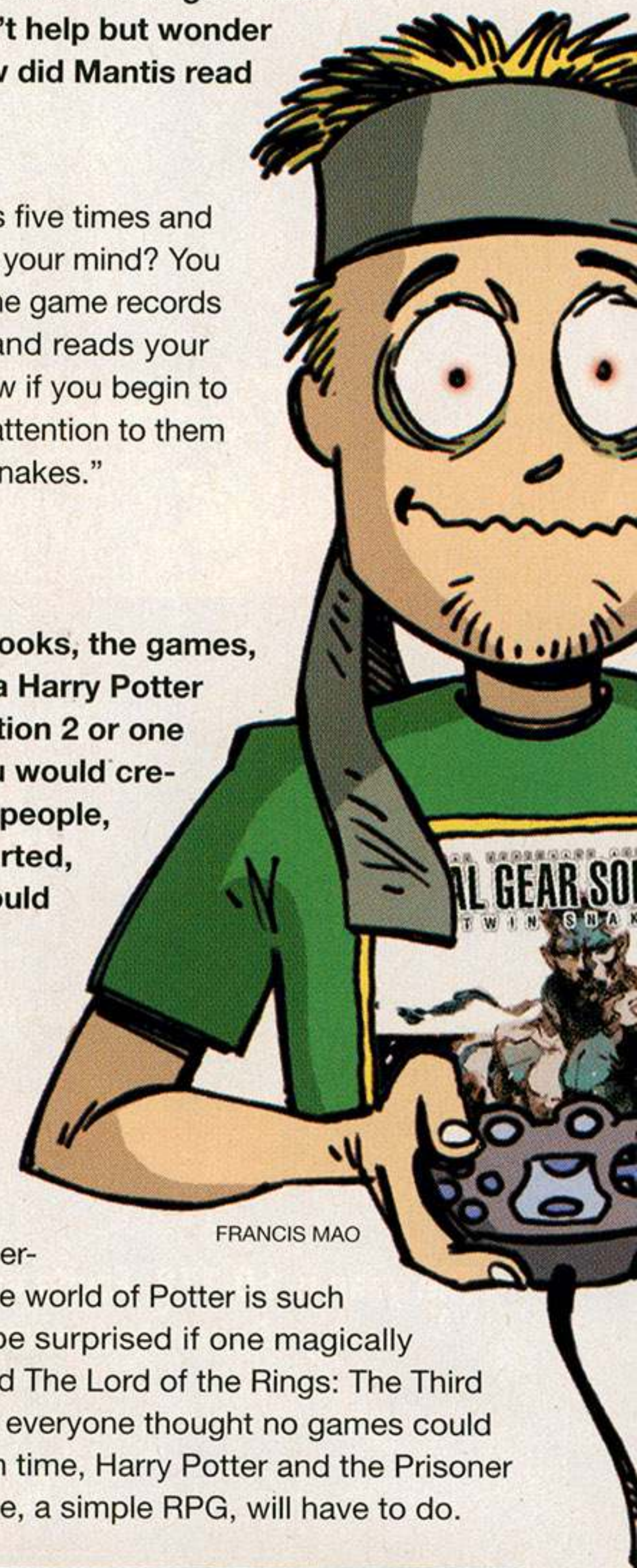
Wait a minute...you beat Twin Snakes five times and yet you believe the game was reading your mind? You obviously rule MGS, but in actuality, the game records and reacts to your button presses, and reads your memory card just for the fun of it. Now if you begin to hear tiny voices in your head, pay no attention to them unless they say, "Stop playing Twin Snakes."

### Harry Potter And the Missing RPG

I'm a big fan of Harry Potter—the books, the games, and the movies. Is EA considering a Harry Potter RPG (not online but for the PlayStation 2 or one of the other platforms) in which you would create a character, interact with other people, take the train to Hogwarts, get Sorted, attend classes, etc.? I think that would be a neat idea.

► **Crystal Rainbow—Via Internet**

The esteemed faculty at Hogwarts, U.S.A. (otherwise known as Electronic Arts) are suspiciously silent on the issue of a Harry Potter RPG, and gazing into the *GamePro* crystal ball reveals nothing but smudges and fingerprints. However, RPG treatment for the world of Potter is such a keen concept that no one should be surprised if one magically appears at E3 2005. After all, EA pulled *The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age* out of its RPG hat this year when everyone thought no games could possibly follow the trilogy. In the mean time, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban for the Game Boy Advance, a simple RPG, will have to do.



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THE BUN





## Enigma—Gone but Not Forgotten

I was so excited when I saw the Enigma puzzler in *GamePro* (see the March 2004 issue). I'm a huge fan of games that have puzzles like that in them, so I decided to try to solve it. I knew I was never going to do be able to, but I tried anyway. I actually found three of the clues, and I loved it! I think it would be cool if you did it again, just don't make it as hard...just kidding.

► Sean Brown—Via Internet

Alas, your letter makes us want to laugh and cry. We regret to inform you that Dan Elektro, champion of the Enigma, has left *GamePro* to pursue fortune and glory elsewhere. However, maybe the Elek-tric one will make a guest appearance to engineer future *GamePro* Enigmas. Never say never.

## The Sports Payoffs

I have two questions for you. One: Do pro athletes and coaches get money from sports games using their names and likenesses? I was just wondering if I am contributing to their already-exorbitant salaries when I purchase a sports title. And question two: What is the advantage if any of Xbox Live? I have a PS2, and I can play online without fees. Why would anyone want to pay to play football on Xbox Live when they can play Madden on the PS2 for free? Do all Xbox Live games require a subscription to play? I guess that's three questions!

► Randy Stegner—Via Internet

Actually, that's four questions. As your penalty for incorrect math, here are three answers. Answer number one: Yes, the rich get richer when you purchase a sports game. Tiger Woods, Terrell Owens, Tony Hawk, John Madden, and other sports guys all get their piece of the action when you purchase a game featuring their names and likenesses. Answer number two: For sports games, Xbox Live has features that enable you to manage your own league, post best scores, download updated rosters, and a bunch of other stuff. Answer number three: Yes, all Xbox Live games require a subscription to play.

## Yearning for Yoshi

Hey, people at *GamePro*, I've been a great fan of your magazine—keep up the good work, guys! I have a question, though, and I'm hoping you can help me out. One of my favorite games for the Game Boy is Yoshi's Island. I played it back when it was for the SNES, but I'm wondering if there's any news about another one or something similar to it for maybe the DS or something. I'm curious!

► Jason—Coplay, PA

Nintendo has a standard answer for questions such as these: We're not telling! However, after twisting arms, paying off snitches, and threatening to turn up the volume on Jessica Simpson's Greatest Hits, it appears that Yoshi's Island is not on the radar for the DS or GBA this year. The lovable lizard's fans are legion, so your request for information will be registered on the official Yoshi Watch List. When we know, you'll know.

## The Tigon King

I noticed that Vin Diesel's video-game company is called Tigon Studios. For those who do not know, a tigon is an animal whose father is a tiger and mother is a lion. A liger is vice versa. My question is: Did he name it that because he is half African-American and half Italian? I am also wondering if he can have kids because ligers and tignons can't.

► Jared Thorbahn—Newark, OH

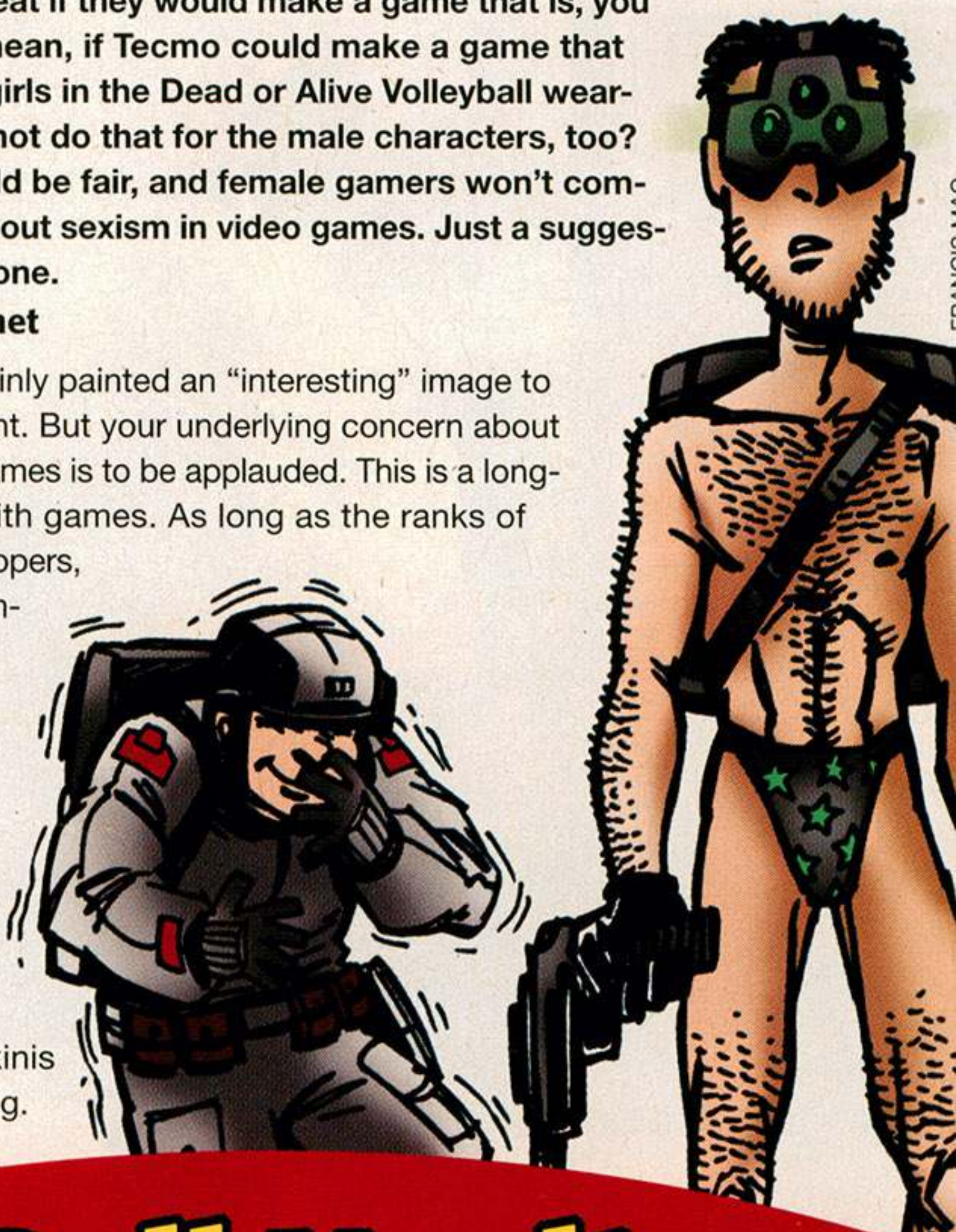
Gee, aren't Internet search engines a kick in the pants? It's true that tough-guy Diesel is of African-American and Italian decent. It's also true that tignons and ligers are the progeny of tigers and lions (or is that vice versa?). Because Diesel's video-game company, Tigon, released one kick-ass game this year—*The Chronicles of Riddick: Escape from Butcher Bay* (see *ProReviews*, page 60, August)—we decided to seek an answer to your outrageous query. We sent ace reporter Undercover Lover out to ask Mr. Diesel personally about the connection between his ancestries, the name of his company, and his ability to have children. Unfortunately, we haven't heard from U.L. since then, and we fear the worse.

## Equality Now

Wouldn't it be great if they would make a game that is, you know, "fair?" I mean, if Tecmo could make a game that featured all the girls in the *Dead or Alive* Volleyball wearing bikinis, why not do that for the male characters, too? That way, it would be fair, and female gamers won't complain as much about sexism in video games. Just a suggestion—no harm done.

► Czx—Via Internet

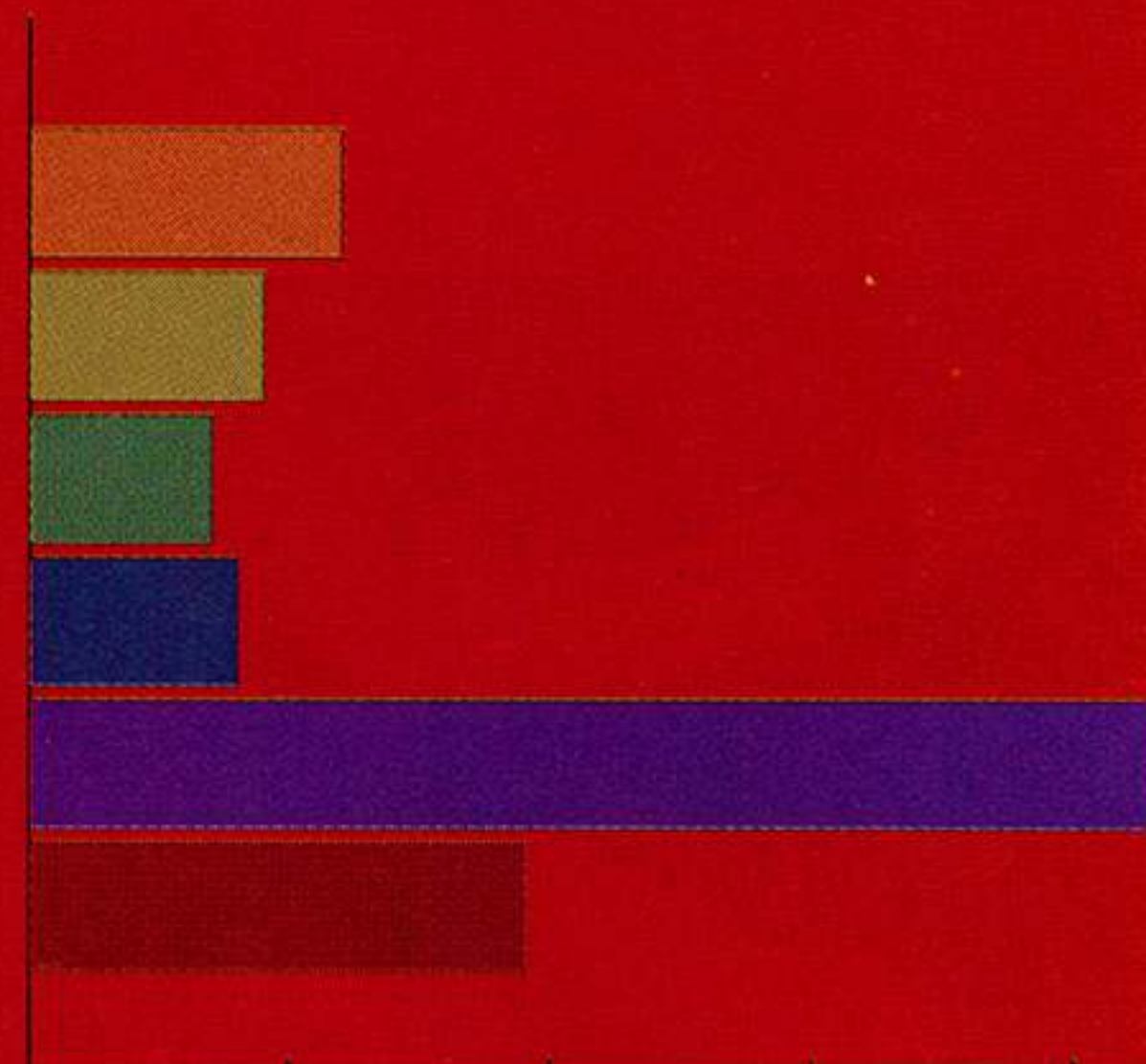
Well, you've certainly painted an "interesting" image to illustrate your point. But your underlying concern about sexism in video games is to be applauded. This is a long-standing issue with games. As long as the ranks of video-game developers, designers, and consumers remain primarily male, sexism in content and design will be an ongoing controversy. Still, the thought of a bunch of video-game guys running around in bikinis is...well, disturbing.



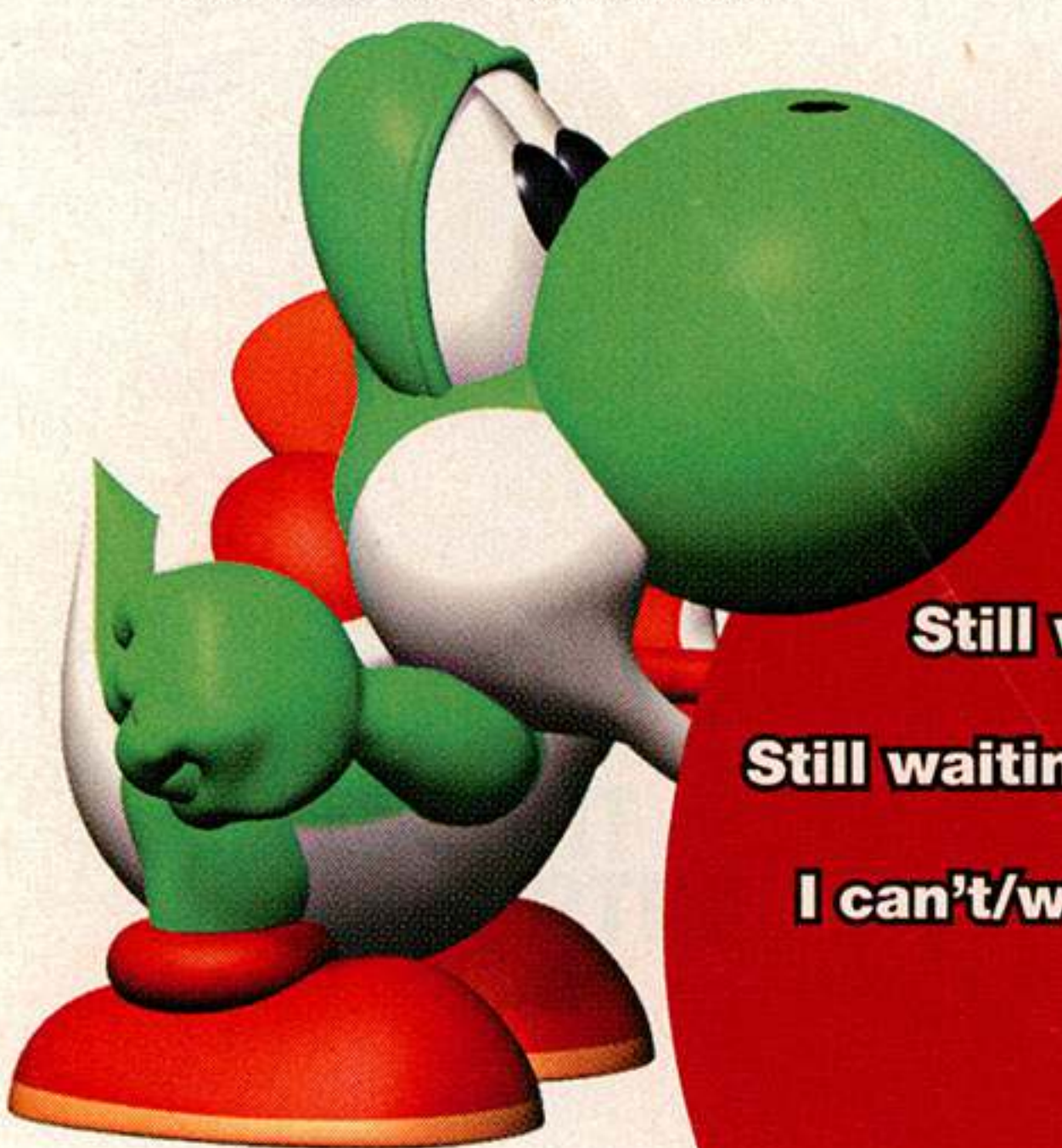
# Poll Vault

## Massively multiplayer online games—what's your take?

That's almost all I play now	12%
Been there, done that, logged off	9%
Still waiting for one in my favorite genre	7%
Still waiting for broadband at home to try one	8%
I can't/won't pay a monthly subscription fee	43%
Just don't care	19%



Results courtesy of GamePro.com—log on and be heard!





# YOU CAN CLICK BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE

**I**

**ILLEGAL DOWNLOADING**

Inappropriate for All Ages



If you think you can get away with illegally swapping movies, you're wrong. Illegally trafficking in movies is not just a dirty little secret between you and your computer. **You leave a trail.** The message is simple: if you are downloading copyrighted movies without proper authorization, you are breaking the law. You face serious consequences if you illegally swap movies. The only way not to get caught is to stop.

Pursuant to the Copyright Act (17 U.S.C. Section 504(c)), statutory damages can be as much as \$30,000 per motion picture, and up to \$150,000 per motion picture if the infringement is willful.





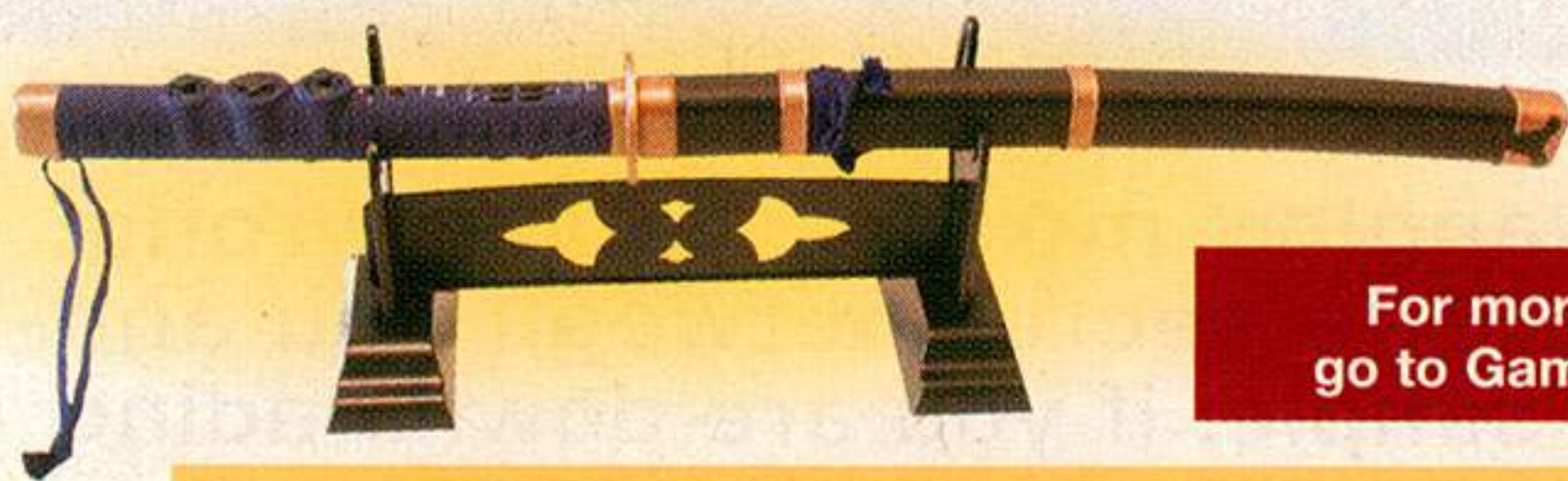
## Art Attack Special Event

Some Art Attack submissions go above and beyond the norm, and this collection of 12 *GamePro* editors re-created in WWE SmackDown: Here Comes the Pain definitely ain't normal. The work of Jamie Walden (better known as Maestro in the *GamePro.com* Hub forums) is an example of thinking outside the Art Attack box—and we like it. Thanks for the flattering hard work!



## Show us your artistic chops and win a collectible sword!

Next month's Art Attack winners will receive a special collectible Katana: Soul Controller (see ProNews, page 23, May) for use with Onimusha 3 courtesy of Hori, so get your entries in now!



For more letters, go to [GamePro.com!](http://GamePro.com!)

Got a strange urge to communicate with the *GamePro* editors? E-mail them at "editor's name"@gamepro.com!

air\_hendrix  
brobuzz  
dr.zombie  
four-eyed\_dragon

funkyzealot  
jen\_x  
major\_mike  
pongsifu

star\_dingo  
tokyo\_drifter  
the\_vixen

## READER REVIEW

### Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2

**RE** I love *Dragon Ball Z*. I've watched every episode about five times, and now I've begun to watch the *Dragon Ball GT* series. I've played both *Dragon Ball Z* games so far (1 and 2), and I think they are really great. But the thing with all fighting games is that there's not much to do except fight. Sure, people could get wrapped up in the awesome, cel-shaded graphics that *DBZ: Budokai 2* has to offer, but after that there's not much more to the game.

The world tournament mode and the Dueling options are fun to play with friends, but the one-player mode isn't so hot. I don't know why Atari made such a crappy single-player mode. All it is is an uninspiring kind of board game, where your characters chase other characters around the board. I mean, come on! If I wanted to play a board game, I would have just spent \$30 less on a Monopoly board.

But besides that, the story line of *Budokai 2* has nothing to do with the series. How many times do I have to kill Frieza and Cell before they go down to HFIL (the *DBZ* netherworld)? You have to beat them five times. Anyway, I give this game a 3.5 because beyond all my complaints, it's still pretty good. But seriously, I think those Atari guys had too much "Glug, Glug" when they made up that one-player mode.

**FUN FACTOR**  
**3.5**

—Vejitto



Agree? Disagree? Or just think you can do better? Write your own user reviews at [GamePro.com](http://GamePro.com), and you might see your opinions here next.

### Send us your art!

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**KONAMI**

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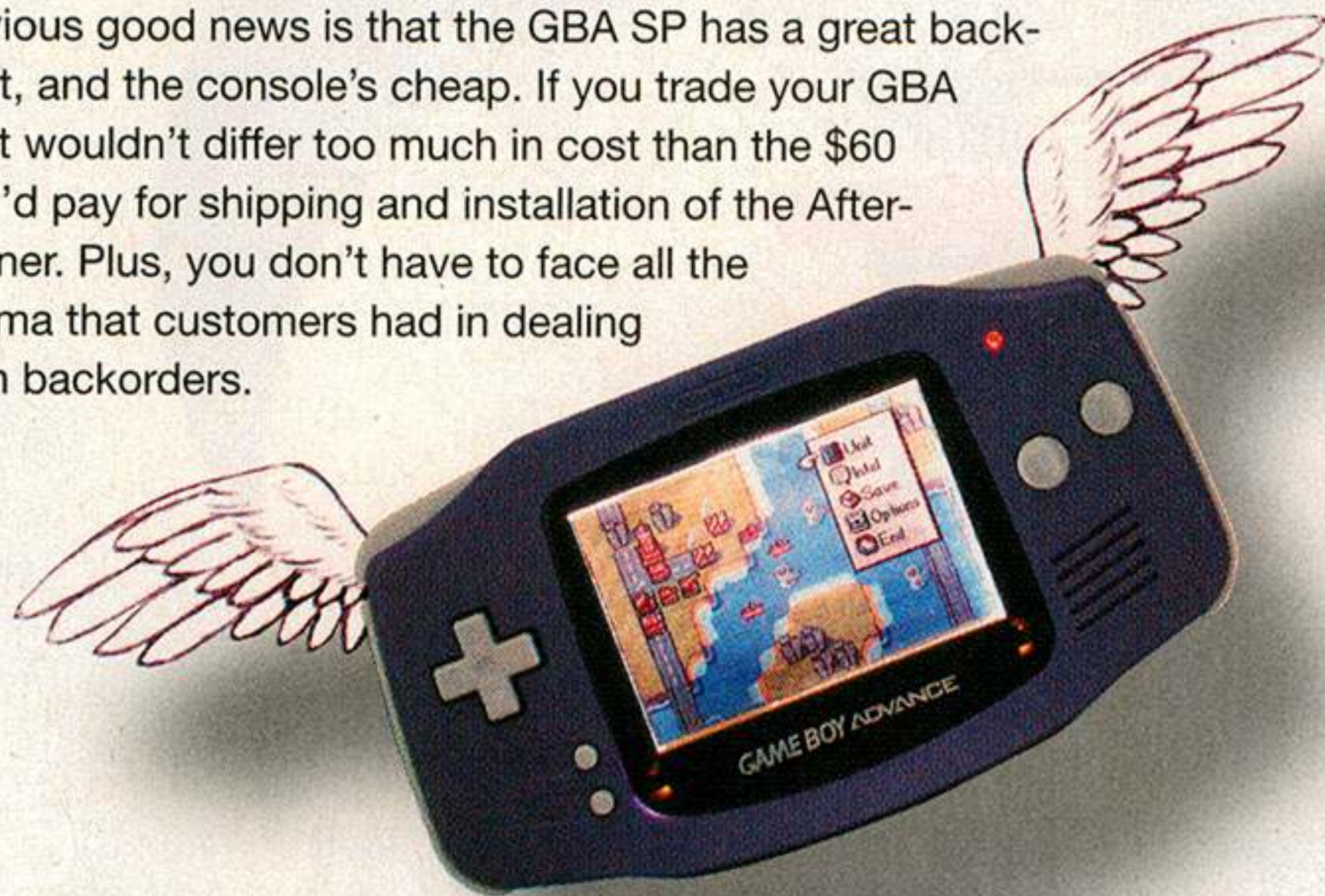
**W**hile everyone else sits back and plays their favorite games over the weekend, The Watch Dog sits in front of the computer slaving through a pile of angry letters—and wondering when the tumultuous days of bugs and defects will come to an end. Meanwhile, we take one last look at the Afterburner and check out reports of headset issues with the PS2.

## More Afterburner Folly?

After much research, I have learned a sad story. The GBA Afterburner is no longer sold or installed unless you want to get ripped on eBay. I noticed in two of your issues, April 2003 page 24, and August 2003 page 18, that both articles state the website to find Afterburner kits as portablemonopoly.net. After trying to find this website, I learned that this is false. The real website was portablemonopoly.com! Either way, they don't sell them anymore. Does anyone at GamePro know how or where to get at least one Afterburner bought or installed? I think it is worth a look because my research uncovered a GamePro goof!

### ► Michelle Dosky—Via Internet

While we applaud your investigative gumshoe prowess in checking out past GamePro issues, we regret to say it was no goof. Although going to portablemonopoly.net now sends you to a largely defunct site, such was not the case in the pre-GBA SP days. If you go to archive.org and type portablemonopoly.net in the WayBackMachine (a great tool to see websites from long ago—you can see GamePro.com in its prehistoric ages), you'll see that the website was alive and kicking last year. Unsurprisingly, after the GBA SP was released, demand for the Afterburner plummeted, and the site announced that it stopped offering the kit on April 7, 2003, saying, "the need for the Afterburner GBA frontlight is over." The obvious good news is that the GBA SP has a great backlight, and the console's cheap. If you trade your GBA in, it wouldn't differ too much in cost than the \$60 you'd pay for shipping and installation of the Afterburner. Plus, you don't have to face all the drama that customers had in dealing with backorders.



## Headset Silence

I am addicted to SOCOM II and love playing and communicating with other players. However, I haven't been able to hear out of my Logitech USB Headset for the past few months. I got it in October for my birthday and was able to put the cord connecting to the earpiece in a certain position and hear out of it, but that worked for only about two months; now I can't hear anything no matter what I do. If there is a way to fix it, please let me know. Playing the game isn't as fun now.

### ► Gabriel Noble—Kannapolis, NC

If you had to do some twisting and cajoling with the cords to get it to work from the beginning, it sounds like the headset wiring was defective. Whenever you have problems with hardware right out of the box, it's best to act immediately and return it to the place you bought it, or call the manufacturer to get an RMA (return merchandise authorization) to send it back. In this case, however, it could also be a problem with your network connection.

To see if the problem is with the network or with the headset, check to see if the headset works in the offline mode. First, connect the headset to the PlayStation 2. Power on the PS2 and start SOCOM II. Start a single-player game and choose the first mission, "Seeding Chaos." If the headset is working, you should hear the briefing through the headset, starting with, "Team, it is vital..." If you hear nothing, then the issue is likely a hardware issue. To be sure, connect the USB headset to a PC and see if it works—if not, contact Logitech's customer support hotline at 702/269-3457 (416/207-2782 for Canadian customers) to see if they can replace it.

If the headset worked offline, the issue could be with either your firewall or the network address translation, which is used by the PS2 if you connect through a router or a PC that uses ICS. As it sounds, resolving network issues can be complicated with no quick and simple solution—contact Sony's customer support at 800/345-7699 to have them isolate the specific nature of your network problem and walk you through the solution.

## Submissions

At GamePro, listening is what we do best. When you have a problem with a product or feel you've been ripped off, we want to know. Write to:

**GamePro's Buyers Beware**  
P.O. Box 22210  
Oakland, CA 94623-2210

Or e-mail us at:  
[buyers\\_beware.gamepro@gamepro.com](mailto:buyers_beware.gamepro@gamepro.com)

## You Make the Call

Having problems with hardware or software from Sony, Nintendo, or Microsoft? Here are the customer service numbers to call:

**Sony: 800/345-7669**

**Nintendo: 800/255-3700**

**Microsoft: 800/469-9269**



# BUG ALERT

## MEMORY CARD 1019

GAMECUBE

PRODUCED BY NINTENDO

Nintendo has reported that the newest GameCube memory card has problems with some older games, most of which have a work-around. NHL Hitz 20-03 and Backyard Football cannot format the new card and need another game to format it. Sonic Adventure 2 cannot display the amount of free blocks if there are more than 999 (works fine otherwise) and can hold a maximum of 99 game files. Darkened Skye occasionally won't allow new files to be created even if there are free blocks—removing and inserting the Memory Card 1019 should solve the problem. And hold your breath,

graphics will sometimes not be displayed properly for Mary-Kate and Ashley Sweet 16 when a file is restarted and loaded after saving a game.

## THIEF: DEADLY SHADOWS

XBOX . PC

DEVELOPED BY ION STORM

PUBLISHED BY EIDOS INTERACTIVE

To the ire of many hardcore fans, a bug reverts games to Normal difficulty whenever the player reloads a save game, or returns to a previously explored area. The bug is caused by a flub in the default.ini file (for the PC), which resets the A.I. character's combat ability and awareness. The PC version already has a patch, but the Xbox version doesn't—and bugs aren't usually fixed over downloads on Xbox Live, meaning that it may not be fixed unless Eidos issues a recall.





TWISTED  
GOTTA HAVE ^ SWEET?



# Sweating Halo 2's Small Stuff

By now, you know the banner headlines about Halo 2, but Bungie's crafting lots of little gems that sparkle just as brightly.



**Brute**

Patience may be a virtue, but it's a hard one to muster as the November 9 release of Halo 2 draws ever nearer... ever so slowly. Bungie's kept a tight lid on the game, which is hard to complain about since few things in life suck more than spoilers. Most of the Halo 2 buzz has swirled around blockbuster developments like online play, hijacking Ghosts, Warthogs with homing missiles, and two-fisted weaponry. But that hype maelstrom has drowned out lots of other fascinating tidbits about the Master Chief's return, so let's get you up to speed on all the dirt.

Combat can't evolve without new weaponry, and Bungie's started by tuning the standard assault rifle, pairing better accuracy and a slower rate of fire with a scope. This new beast, dubbed the battle rifle, sounds like a more reliable workhorse, and the new submachine gun rounds out your arsenal with withering, high-speed fire but less accuracy. On the Covenant side, an energy carbine provides the enemy with sniper capabilities, but the Master Chief can of course snap up carbines and—in one seriously cool touch—those devastating Covenant energy swords. When slicing skulls with the sword, you can deliver an uppercut with the R trigger or, better yet, lock in, wait for your targeting cursor to turn red, and deal an instant one-hit kill. Other sharp tuning: The needler has been cranked up to do more than just tickle, the rocket launcher sports a homing-missile function, and the Ghost now has a turbo boost.

While a slew of new Covenant will need thrashing, Bungie's unveiled only two so far. Prophets are strategic leaders that lead the Covenant masses, calling the shots from the safety of their hovering chairs, while Brutes are large warriors, smaller and lighter than Hunters but deadlier than Elites. Even Jackals and Elites have a refined, more sinister look.

Destructible objects in the landscape provide more than just extra carnage. Enemies shoot through them to get to you, and the Master Chief can kill the lights and skulk in the shadows when stealth is the wiser option. Human troops flip over objects for cover, work as a unit, and call in supporting sniper and Warthog fire. But the Covenant also coordinate as a team, using the terrain to their advantage and even clicking on flashlights to search for you in the dark.

On the multiplayer side, it's Spartans (the Master Chief's class of supersoldier) versus Elites, and both sides can tweak their armor and color scheme. You'll be able to form clans on Xbox Live or at Bungie.net, LAN games support 16 players, and the online play should be fluid since games shuffle to another host when the original host leaves. On the combat side, you can target fusion cores, which are sprinkled around the maps, using their explosions to take out nearby players. Vehicles and stationary turrets can also now be destroyed.

While the single-player story and missions are being kept under a tight veil of secrecy, Bungie has hinted that the Master Chief will be taking the fight to the Covenant. Pure speculation here: That sounds like a visit to the Covenant homeworld might be in the cards once the Master Chief mops up the mess on Earth. After all, something has to rival the surprise of encountering the Flood that first time!—*Air Hendrix*



**Prophet**

## Called Back to Duty

World War II FPS fans are being called back to duty with the first expansion of last year's superstar, Call of Duty: United Offensive. The Grey Matter development team is packing together 13 new single-player levels, including the invasion of Sicily, the Battle of the Bulge, and the Russian Battle of Kursk. In addition, United Offensive will include an enhanced multiplayer experience with 10 new maps and three new modes of play, which introduce a new ranking system and vehicle warfare.



GamePro got its hands on a playable demo to check out the new features and upgraded graphics. Using the new deployable machine gun or cook'n off grenades was a bit challenging when distracted by the gorgeous smoke and fire effects. At this point, the expansion could seriously interrupt social lives. By the time you read this, United Offensive should be on the shelves ready for you to get your frag on!—*Beefcake*

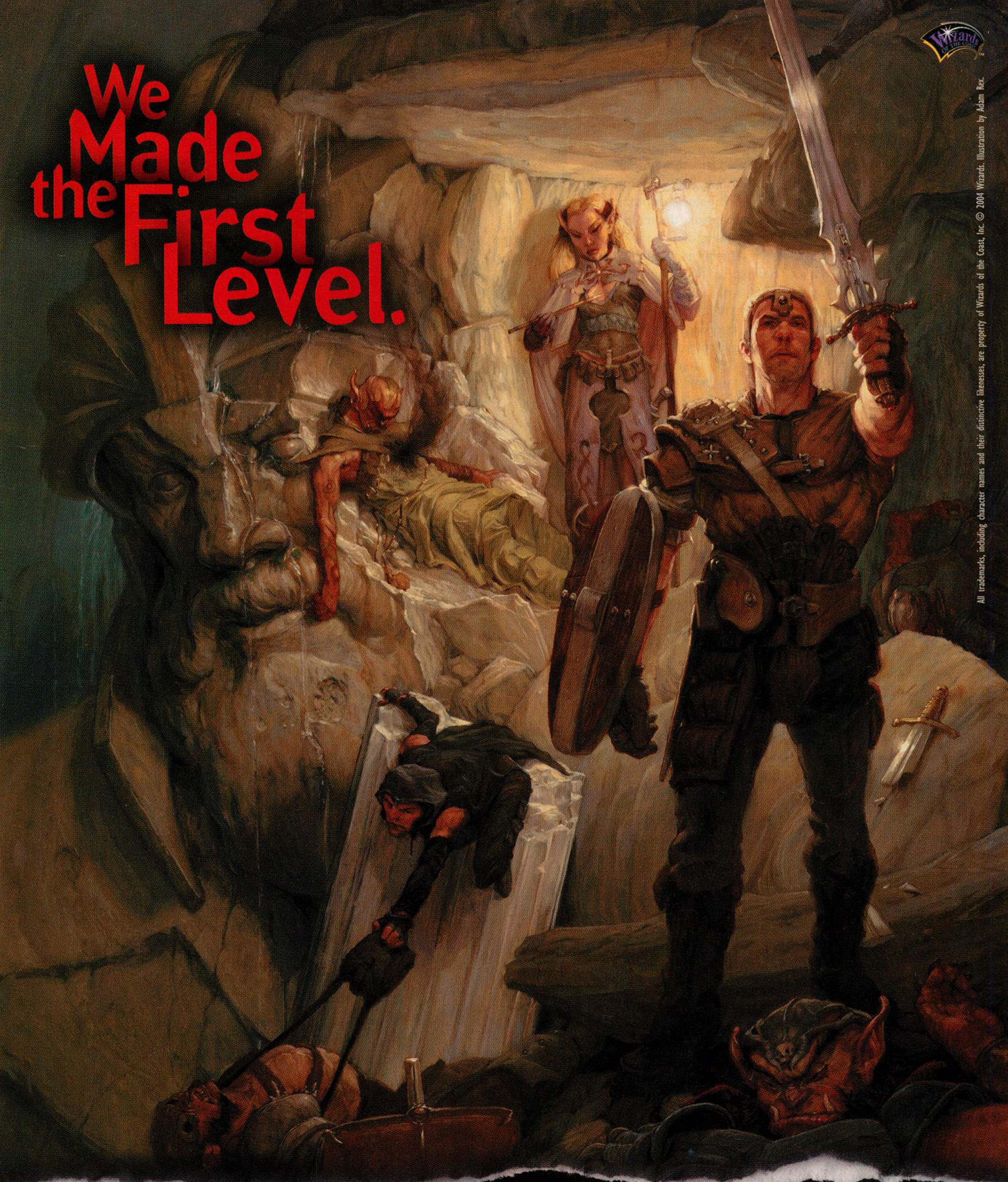




# We Made the First Level.



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EXPERIENCE COUNTS



# Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas

Rockstar unveils a new area for its upcoming crime adventure—the open range.

Rockstar revealed more of its upcoming sure-to-be-a-monster-hit Grand Theft Auto entry, San Andreas, with a demo of three missions that take place in a countryside environment located between cities. In the first mission, the main character, C.J., acts as a decoy so his friend can escape a hit squad. As C.J. flees his pursuers, a meter appears onscreen that depletes as bullets are fired into the door of his vehicle; if the meter runs dry, the door falls off, C.J. is discovered, and the mission ends. In the second mission, C.J. has to kill a witness guarded by FBI agents, photograph the corpse, and return with the photo. The last mission reunites C.J. with a female character from a previous GTA game (her identity is a secret for now) in order to hijack a fuel tanker and take it to a specified location before it explodes.

According to Rockstar, just one of the three cities in San Andreas is the size of Vice City, so that should give some perspective as to how huge the game will be. Using a dual-layer DVD, Andreas will have nary a load time. The voice cast and music score hasn't been revealed yet, but one can probably expect an all-star lineup. And although Andreas will not support multiplayer online play, Rockstar didn't say there wouldn't be any online aspects. The game is still slated for an October release, and Rockstar will reveal more features soon.

—Major Mike



## Developer Chat

Can **GoldenEye: Rogue Agent** really live up to the legacy of that revered N64 classic? We talked with the game's executive producer at EA LA to find out.

**GamePro:** Why use the GoldenEye name when Rogue Agent isn't a sequel to the N64 game?

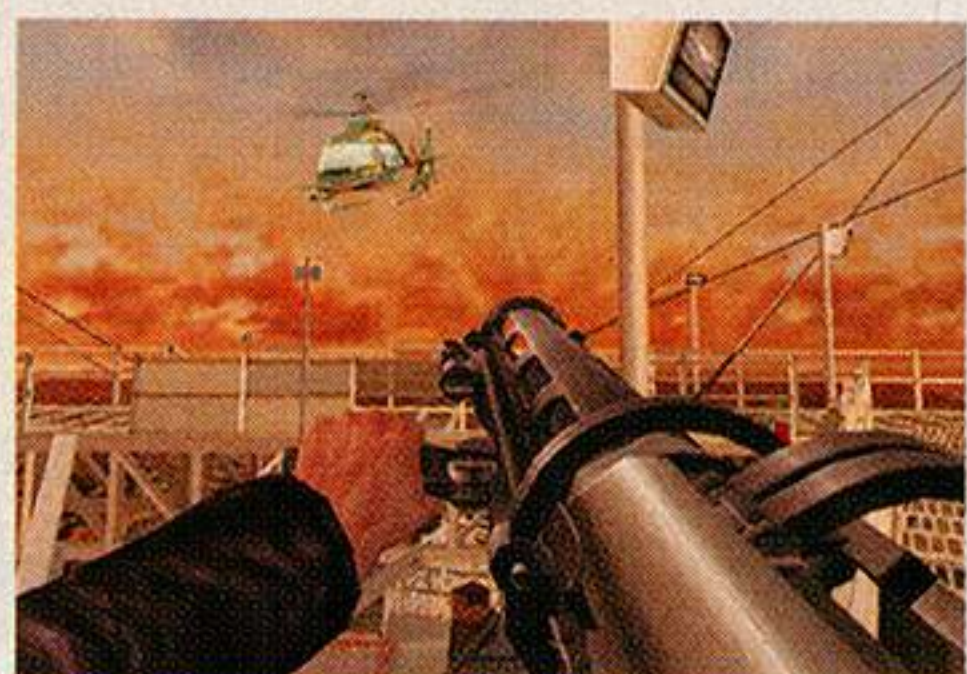
**Patrick Gilmore:** It is a spiritual sequel, at least in terms of the gameplay that we all fell in love with. Since then, the 007 games have drifted away into stealth or third-person. We want to get back to that bold, audacious, run-n-gun style of gameplay, but that wasn't the kind of game where it was appropriate to have James Bond as the player character, so we latched on to the villain from GoldenEye. It was a fundamental choice between doing a sequel to the character or to the gameplay.

**GP:** Will Rogue Agent live up to the multiplayer legacy of the first GoldenEye?

**PG:** That's such a huge part of this product! GoldenEye was that "popularity in a box" concept—all your buddies would come over and have fun. We want to deliver that and more contemporary features, including eight-player online, team-based modes, and lots to mod and customize.

**GP:** Why compile 007's historical villains into one universe?

**PG:** Once we hit on the idea of playing the villain, the next step was finding the right high-concept story. That was a gang war between Dr. No and Goldfinger with their paramilitary armies going at it. The other characters fell out of that—Pussy Galore lining up with Dr. No, Oddjob with Goldfinger, and so on.



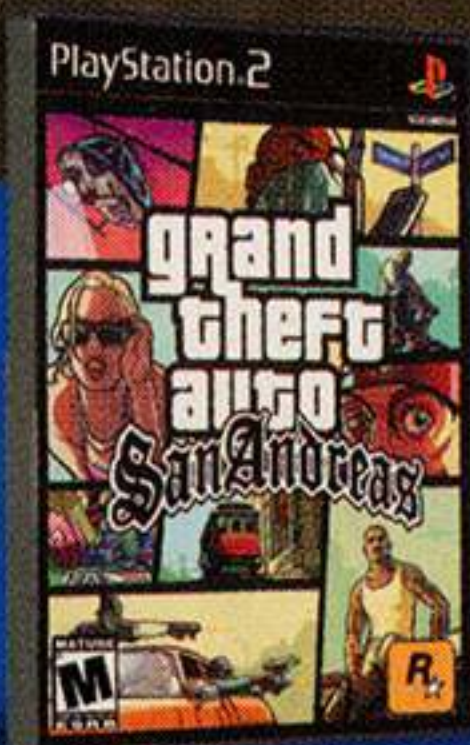
## Crowded House

Perhaps more than any other gaming year, 2004 has several high-profile heavy-hitting titles. Here's a look at the landscape for the holiday season, which should be one of the biggest ever.

<b>AUGUST</b> <b>Early</b> Doom 3 Activision PC	<b>OCTOBER</b> <b>5</b> Doom 3 Activision Xbox	<b>OCTOBER</b> <b>20</b> Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas Rockstar Games PS2	<b>OCTOBER</b> <b>TBD</b> Half-Life 2 Vivendi Universal PC
<b>NOVEMBER</b> <b>3</b> Metroid Prime 2: Echoes Nintendo GameCube	<b>NOVEMBER</b> <b>9</b> Halo 2 Microsoft Xbox	<b>NOVEMBER</b> <b>9</b> Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater Konami PS2	<b>DECEMBER</b> <b>Early</b> Gran Turismo 4 Sony PS2

All release dates are subject to change.





**Better dress up. The game's on.** *Grand Theft Auto*, to be precise. Pick it up at Best Buy™ beginning October 19! You can get a jump on it and other new releases in our video game pre-order section in store and on [www.bestbuy.com/VGpreorder](http://www.bestbuy.com/VGpreorder). At Best Buy, gamers rule.





# GamePro Labs

**Logitech Cordless Action Controller PS2**

**Logitech Cordless Precision Controller Xbox**

Rating: 5.0

If you've been looking at those wire-  
less Logitech controllers in the  
store and saying, "Too big, too  
much money, too bad," here's  
good news: The company has  
redesigned both its Xbox and  
PlayStation 2 controllers to  
be more comfortable, more  
energy efficient, and most  
importantly, cheaper.

The **Cordless Action  
Controller** is darn close to  
the same size as Sony's Dual Shock 2 with the benefits of a more  
rounded feel, a full disc for its digital directional pad, and, you guessed  
it, no wires (2.4 GHz technology keeps things clean and reliable). Ergonomically,  
the controller is nowhere near as wide as the earlier model, and it's one of the most  
comfortable, natural-feeling PS2 controllers you could hope to hold.

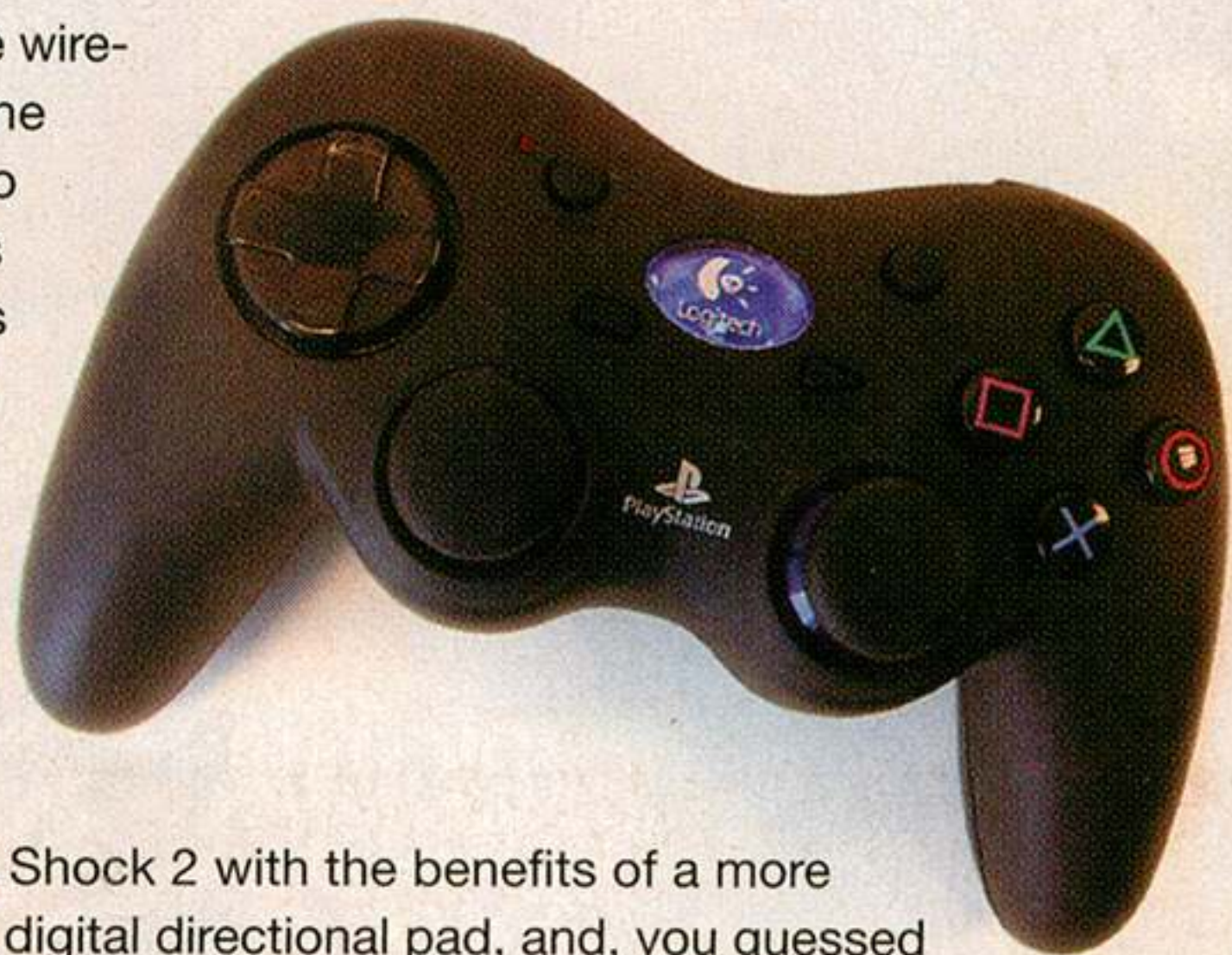
The **Cordless Precision**, meanwhile, looks and feels like a Controller S in  
all the ways that matter; again, it's far less wide than its forebear. The cavity for  
the white and black buttons is recessed, but the buttons themselves are tall—easy  
to reach but not in the way, and hard  
to hit accidentally.

Both controllers use two AA  
batteries (included—and they're  
Duracells) instead of four, which  
reduces the weight and bulk  
significantly. Due to some new  
power management technol-  
ogy, those batteries should  
last a good 30 hours before  
expiring. Button response  
is excellent, and the rubber-  
coated analog sticks feel

quite comfortable. Nifty translucent details on both units give  
them a little color and class.

The quality and performance of both the Cordless Action and the  
Cordless Precision are excellent. For the money—a very reasonable \$40 each, as  
opposed to their earlier revisions' \$59 and \$69 price tags—you won't find better  
wireless controllers.—*Dan Elektro*

**Price: \$39.99 each. Contact: Logitech, 800/231-7717, logitech.com**



# Delay of Game

**"Good things come to those who wait...."**

**Resident Evil 4 (GameCube):** One of the most anticipated titles of 2004 could possibly slip to 2005 (at least according to the release date from several retailers). Capcom's response: "Capcom has officially stated 'Winter' as the release time frame for Resident Evil 4. No specific release date has ever been announced. This has not changed." Why the anticipated 2004 release then? Several trailers for the game stated a "Winter 2004" date at the finale....

**Knights of the Old Republic II: Sith Lords (Xbox):** LucasArts' critically acclaimed Star Wars RPG has been moved up to a December release, while **Republic Commando (Xbox)** has slipped from Fall 2004 to early 2005.

**Advent Rising (Xbox):** Part one of the Orson Scott Card-penned sci-fi trilogy has been pushed to the first quarter of 2005 in order to "fully realize all aspects of its franchise potential," according to Majesco CEO Jesse Sutton.

**StarCraft: Ghost (PS2, Xbox, GameCube):** In the wake of Ghosts' delay announcement, the project has gained a new developer. Swingin' Ape will take over development from departing developer Nihilistic. Most of Ape's staff worked on Hydro Thunder for Midway, and their most recent title was Metal Arms: A Glitch in the System for Vivendi Universal Games. Ghost is now on track for a 2005 release.

# Static

**Mortal Kombat: Deception...Mortal Kombat: Deception...** In an official release, Nova-Logic claimed to set a new world record

for the largest online first-person-shooter game. In June, a whopping 160 people played Joint Operations: Typhoon Rising at once. There was just one problem. A week after the statement, Sony Online Entertainment claimed that PlanetSide holds the world record for simultaneous players in an online FPS server. Saying that 160 people is small potatoes in PlanetSide, SOE boasted that an average of 2000 players simultaneously play its FPS daily. As Tokyo Drifter likes to yell out, "You've been served, NovaLogic!" • Sony gave our own Bones a tour of an Olympic training facility to promote Athens 2004. Strangely, the top athletes he met and played the game with were not only not in the game, but their team sports weren't included either. What was Sony thinking? • Nintendo President Satoru Iwata was quoted as saying that gamers don't want online games. Does this mean the next Nintendo platform, um, won't support online play? • A humongous heartfelt goodbye to Dan Elektro and Miss Spell. They both left to pursue bigger and greater things in their lives. During their seven-plus years here, they exhibited a genuine passion for our industry and have been truly a role model to all of us. We'll miss you both! • Just in case you still haven't figured it out: Dan Elektro and Bad Hare were the same person. That's okay, we didn't know, either. • Tap into the Force and check out our new sister publication, *Star Wars Insider*. You'll be impressed by its new look. • Donkey Konga...Donkey Konga.

# Internal Combustion



Babble: Li'l Graz & Sim-a-dime Doodles: Mao



A close-up of Darth Vader's head and right hand. He is wearing his iconic black hood and mask, with a gold chain around his neck. His right hand, in a black glove, is pointing towards the word "JOIN". The background is a dark red with a subtle pattern of small white dots.

# JOIN

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A landscape scene featuring a large, flat-topped rock formation in the center. In the foreground, three warriors on horseback are visible, moving across a grassy field. The sky is blue with some clouds, and a small bird is flying in the distance. The overall tone is dramatic and epic.

**THE GREATEST FIGHTERS**  
KNOW THAT STRENGTH COMES IN NUMBERS

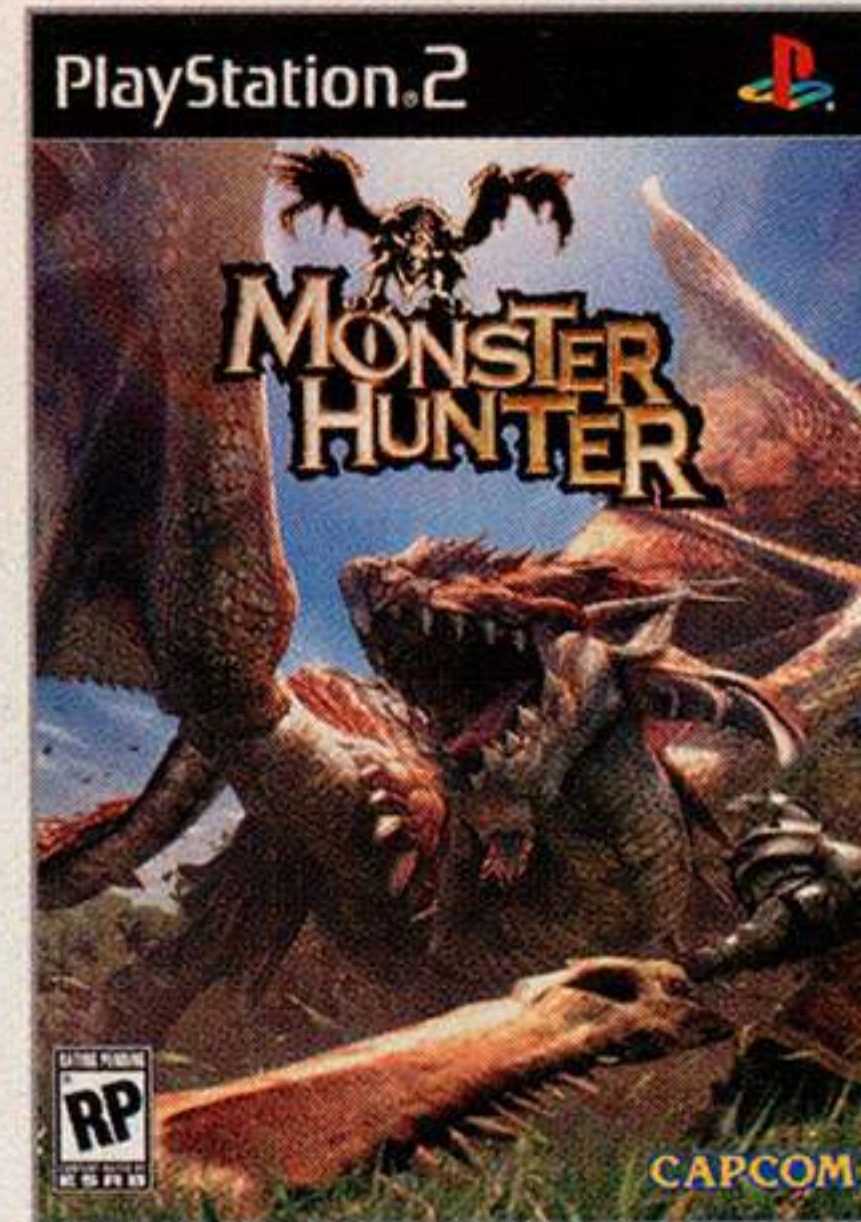
WHEN WARRIORS LEARN TO WORK AS A UNIT  
THEY ARE NOT SEPARATE AND STRONG  
BUT UNITED AND UNSTOPPABLE.





# MONSTER HUNTER

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## COVER FEATURE

Are we on the verge of a fighting game renaissance? Take a ringside seat as **Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 3**, **Mortal Kombat: Deception**, **Dead or Alive Ultimate**, and the next generation of knuckle-dusters enter the arena.

**Exclusive! First Preview!**

# DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI 3

Although Budokai 2 was more of a cosmetic makeover, Budokai 3 powers up the franchise, fusing various fighting elements from the animated series. *By Funky Zealot*

“There are two types of people,” says Matt Collins, senior brand manager at Atari. “Those who like Dragon Ball Z and those who don’t.” Two decades have passed since the birth of Dragon Ball, and there are still quite a few people who do—Budokai 2 received mixed reviews and was released late in 2003, but nevertheless was the number-three fighting game for 2003. Its predecessor, Budokai 1, was number one, selling more than Soul Calibur II (however, Soul Calibur II did sell more when totaling sales of all the different console versions). Although the jump from Budokai 1 to Budokai 2 was primarily an aesthetic one, fans will be happy to know that its developer Dimps has focused on revising gameplay for Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 3—offering a fighting experience with more depth and even more characters, including those from Dragon Ball GT.

### CAN YOU FLY, BOBBY?

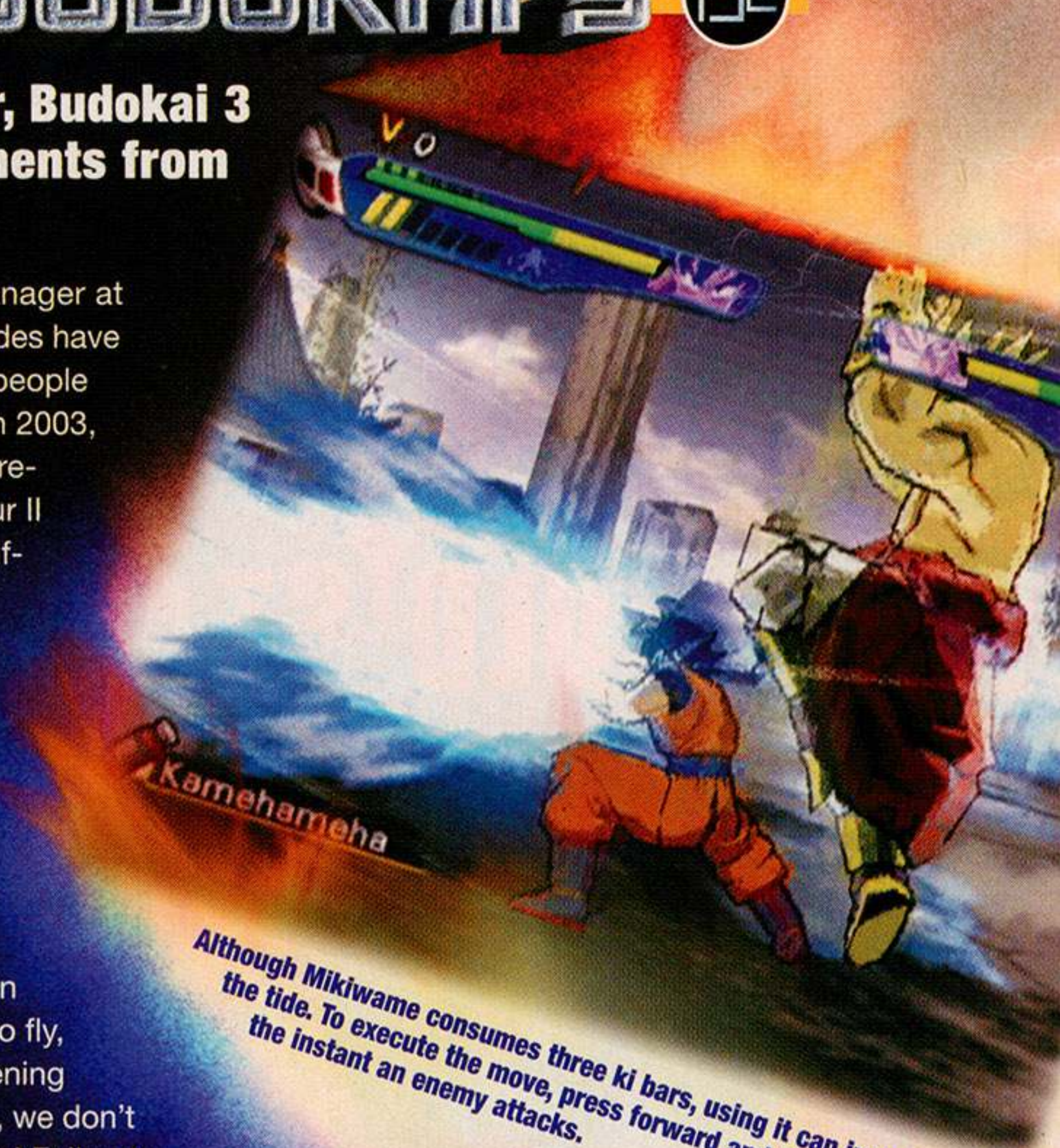
Those hardcore fans who played Dragon Ball games on the Super Famicom (see sidebar, “Old-School Dragon Ball Action Games”) back in the day have long desired to have the ability to fly, duck, and jump in the Budokai series. That still won’t be happening this time around. “Since the core audience isn’t fighting gamers, we don’t believe that it’s something that must be in,” says ‘Master Fu’ Fujimoto, planner at Dimps. “Also, since the differences in character sizes are huge for this game—compare Goku and Broly, for example—we feel that crouching would not be useful for the game.”

As in the previous Budokai games, players will not be able to freely fly and will have to perform “lift” moves to take the battles to the air. True to the series, the emphasis is more on action than hardcore fighting. “Instead of catering to those who are fighting gamers,

Budokai 3 appeals to those who want to enjoy battles like those seen in the Dragon Ball animated series,” says Fujimoto.

### WATCH YOUR BACK

Dragon Ball-esque fighting is what Budokai 3’s all about. “Fans will most appreciate what it’s like to pick up and play it because of the robust fighting system,” says Collins. “Especially Dragon Ball fans who know about warping and instantly appearing behind an enemy’s back.” Warping behind opponents is a significant part of gameplay in Budokai 3 for both defense and offense. With pursuit attacks, players can warp behind enemies after blowing them away and whack them back and forth like a one-man Ping-Pong game. The warp defense called Mikiwame (which translates



Although Mikiwame consumes three ki bars, using it can instantly turn the tide. To execute the move, press forward and the guard button the instant an enemy attacks.





In addition to movie characters like Cooler and Broly, Budokai 3 features Dragon Ball GT characters, including Super Saiyan 4 Goku and Vegeta.

Kidan Burst allows players to fire their own Kamehameha against an opponent's. "With the addition of Kidan Burst, versus battles will become even more intense," says Fujimoto.

The good news is that's a jumping attack. The bad news is you can't jump in the game.

The higher the transformation, the higher the baseline ki. With a baseline ki of five bars, Super Saiyan 3 Goku is a force to be reckoned with.

as observe and judge) instantly warps you behind an attacking opponent, freeing yourself up to counterattack. Mikiwame can be used when an opponent is performing a Kamehameha, a pursuit attack, or a regular attack—but at a huge cost to ki.

Ki and transformations have been slightly altered for Budokai 3. Although being a Super Saiyan 3 meant a rapid draining of ki in Budokai 2, in Budokai 3 each character and form has a baseline ki—when the ki goes below the baseline, the ki automatically increases; if it rises higher than the baseline, it gradually decreases. Hence, Super Saiyan 3 Goku with a baseline ki of five bars has an easier time amassing ki than regular Goku, who has only three. But how fusions are handled exactly remains under wraps; Fujimoto says only that "they will be even easier to execute and even stronger."

For the offensively minded players, a Hyper mode allows players to make attacks without reeling from normal attacks (while still taking damage). Although your character rapidly loses ki in this mode, it also enables you to activate your ultimate attack. Initiating the pursuit attack in this mode launches a special Dragon Lash attack, treating fans to a cinematically elaborate array of scripted battle sequences. The move is similar to surprise defense in Budokai 2 (where defenders have a chance to negate the attack by pressing the same button) but is a three-turn sequence in Budokai 3.

To deter defensive (read: boring) fighters who just guard all day, Budokai 3 has a system of fatigue that accumulates when you're getting attacked. Fatigue levels also rise when a player performs a Mikiwame, uses the Hyper mode, or receives a Dragon Lash. When fatigue reaches max, you are essentially "dizzy" and are vulnerable to attacks until you recover. "Damage from ultimate moves is impacted by fatigue," says Fujimoto. "When fatigue levels are high, characters receive more damage. Also, when Hyper mode wears off without you doing any effective damage, you will reach maximum fatigue."

CONTINUED ►



## THE UNTOLD SAGA

"We wanted to focus a bit more on the narrative," says Collins. "That was one area where players felt a little detached from the story line in the way it was presented." After the immersive story mode that stayed true to the cartoon series in Budokai 1, fans didn't appreciate the switch to the cinematically challenged Dragon World mode in Budokai 2—and for the hardcore fans, it didn't help that the mode only loosely followed the plot. That's changing for Budokai 3 with the new Dragon Universe mode promising to bring a stronger connection between the character and the player. "Players can freely fly about the world as any character and experience the scenarios they found in the original story," says Fujimoto. "Because everything progresses in the gameplay, there won't be any cut-scenes."

Although character customization still involves capsules, a new "Z Point" system will be introduced. "We have implemented a 'Z Point' growth system that allows characters to increase in power and defense," says Fujimoto. "Also, there will be an 'item skill' that players can use only once during battles."

Survival modes also make a return. "Dragon Arena mode will be like 'Babidi's Spaceship' in Budokai 2 with a set of challenges like a survival mode," said Collins. In addition, the mode also enables players to fight against other customized characters worldwide. "Dragon Arena mode will allow players from around the world to fight against each other's own customized character using a password system on a dedicated site," says Fujimoto. Budokai 3 remains strictly offline, however; Dimps reports that the game won't have any online functionality.

Now characters besides Saiyans can transform. Cooler is pictured here in his fourth and final form.



Pursuit attacks consume one ki bar and can be continued until your ki runs out.



Multiple energy blasts can now be fired at once. Energy blasts are automatically deflected when you dash, so no more cheap shots from opponents.

## THE FINISHING TOUCHES

The main draw of Budokai 2 was its beautiful cel-shaded graphics, and this sequel's visuals will continue to draw upon that anime quality. "I don't think Dragon Ball Z could be presented any better, at least with respect to its character modeling," says Collins. And while the character models do retain that same feel, everything else has been touched up. Particle effects like ki auras, dust clouds, and explosions have been given a noticeably satisfying shine, and stages are visually more exciting than the rather scenically drab settings of the past titles. Stage traps will also be in—Fujimoto promises "powered-up traps that will startle and surprise you."

With the added gameplay complexity and depth, Budokai 3 brings the series closer than ever in authenticity to the animated series. "It wouldn't even be too much to say that Budokai 3 is the final, definitive Dragon Ball Z game for the PlayStation 2," says Fujimoto. Whether or not the game fully lives up to its expectations, fans will undoubtedly be clamoring for more.

CONTINUED ►



Souther Blade

In response to concerns that characters played too similarly, Atari's Matt Collins says, "We are making every attempt to offer unique aspects to the characters so that there would be differentiation."



Attacks can be dodged by the new evade feature, which costs half a ki bar.



Prolonged blocking can cause your character to become fatigued, leaving him vulnerable.





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## OLD-SCHOOL DRAGON BALL ACTION GAMES

Before men in business suits realized the potential of the Dragon Ball, few if any Dragon Ball games hit our shores. Here are the 8-bit and 16-bit games you've missed out on over the last two decades.

**Dragon Ball: Mystery of Shenron (Famicom):** After creator Akira Toriyama made the hugely popular Dr. Slump manga series, he created Dragon Ball, which quickly took off as well. The game for the manga series came out in 1986, and despite its high difficulty and rather brainless boss stages, people dug it. Retro ProTip: Get the Nioi-bo (a bo stick), and everything gets 10 times easier.

**Dragon Power (NES):** The first Dragon Ball game to hit stateside—sort of. The franchise was virtually unknown in the U.S. at the time, and not realizing the gold mine that was Dragon Ball, some shortsighted developers decided to turn Goku into a monkey. Why a simian hero? Dragon Ball was originally based on a Chinese folklore tale of a bad monkey turned good, also called Songoku (the equivalent of Bulma in the original tale is called Sanzohoshi, a priest who reforms the monkey). Although the Dragon Ball manga followed the basic plot of the folk tale until the emergence of Pirafu and Red Ribbon, Dragon Power didn't really follow anything and was a mishmash of censored Dragon Ball scenes and disastrously unbridled creative liberties.

**Dragon Ball Z: Super Butoden (Super Famicom):** After a series of card-battle games on the NES, Dragon Ball shifted back to action games. With Street Fighter II exploding in popularity, Super Butoden emerged, featuring the ability to jump, duck, and take battles to the air. Moves were more Street Fighter-esque with circular motions, and repelling huge energy attacks like Vegeta's Final Flash required precise motion and good timing, making it one of the more difficult Dragon Ball action games to master. Two more installments to the Butoden franchise followed with generally the same gameplay. Butoden 2 was the first game to feature Broly.

**Dragon Ball Z: Hyper Dimension (Super Famicom):** Compared to the simple two-frame animations of the first Butoden, Hyper Dimension was a vast improvement in the graphics department with smoother animations and pretty graphics. In an attempt to bring the concept of ki closer to the manga series, your health also doubled as your ki, enabling you to keep charging up to recover.

**Dragon Ball Z: Buyuu Retsuden (Mega Drive):** The only DBZ game to be released on the Sega Mega Drive, the game was similar to Butoden, also featuring the ability to perform air battles, duck, and jump. The main downsides were its graphics and sound, which noticeably lagged behind the crisper, cleaner Super Famicom games.



## THE NEW CHARACTERS

With characters from Dragon Ball GT and the movies, Budokai 3 offers the most diverse array of characters in any Dragon Ball game.

**Goku (child):** Goku as a kid, before the days of Dragon Ball Z

**Gohan (young child):** Gohan around the time of Raditz

**Frieza:** All of his forms will be available.

**Cell:** From his first form to his final completed form

**Bardock:** The name of his movie appearance says it all—Bardock: The Father of Goku.

**Uub:** The good-natured, reincarnated human form of Buu

**Gogeta:** Vegeta and Goku fused together—appears toward the end of Dragon Ball Z

**SS4 Goku:** Super Saiyan 4 Goku from Dragon Ball GT

**SS4 Vegeta:** Super Saiyan 4 Vegeta from Dragon Ball GT

**SS4 Gogeta:** SS4 Goku and Vegeta fused together

**Syn Shenron:** An evil Shenron created from the energy of corroded Dragon Balls





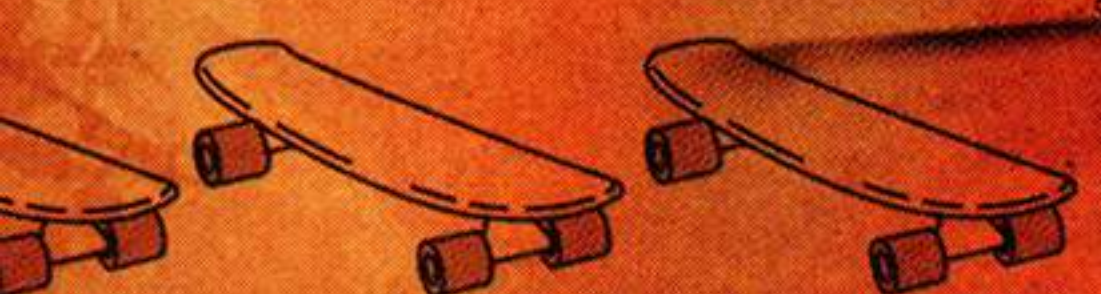
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# MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION



It's been two years since the last Mortal Kombat was released, so we traveled to the windy city to catch up with the men behind the Mortal for a look at what could be the biggest MK yet. *By Major Mike*

One of the most enduring fighting games in the history of the genre is Mortal Kombat. Born in the arcades, Mortal initially turned heads with its gruesome, graphic violence and digitized fighters (it was also responsible for an epidemic of misspellings of the word "combat"), which had parents and politicians screaming. Mortal Kombat II upped the ante with a more in-depth play engine and even more violence.

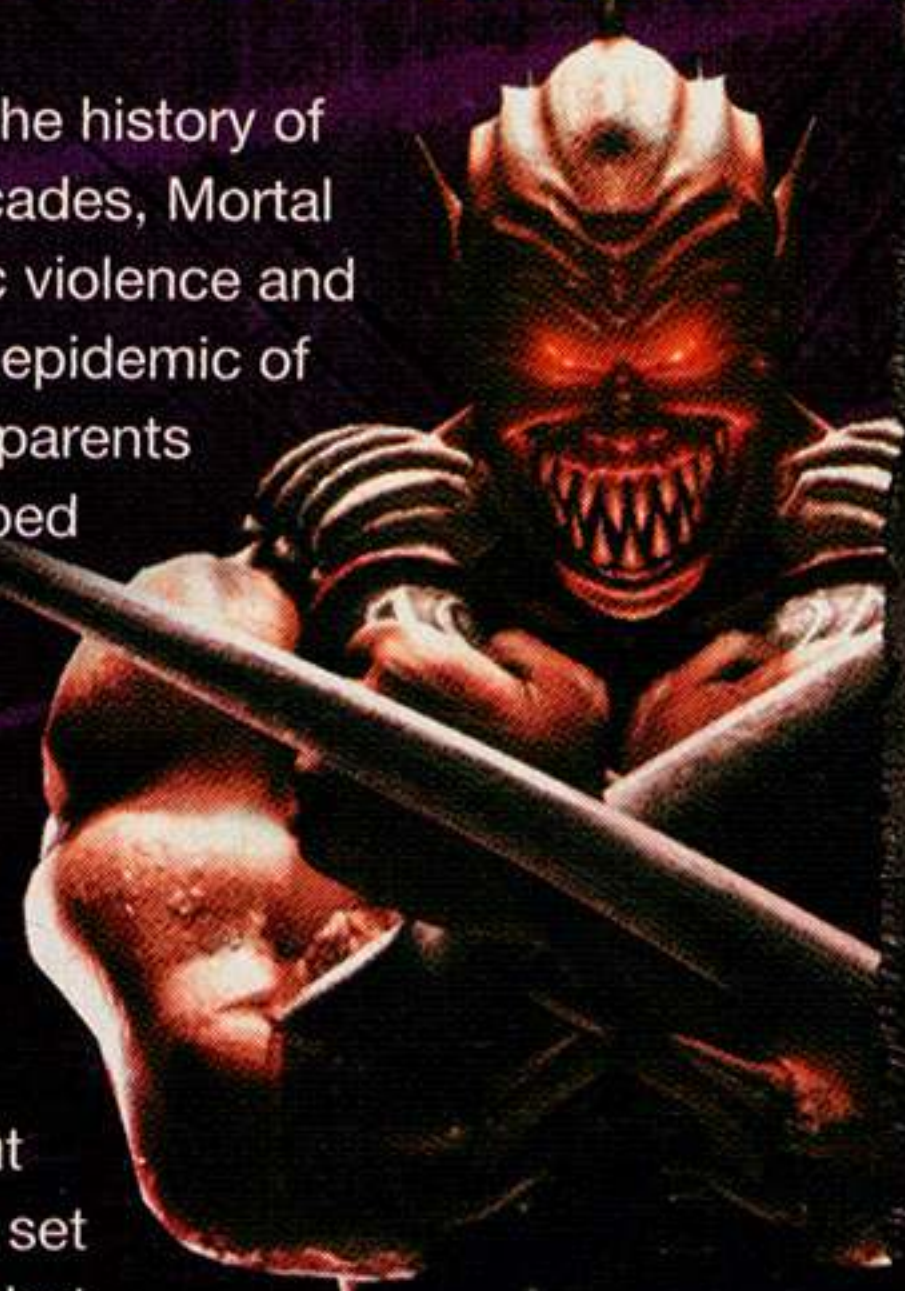
Each successive MK game was a hit in its own right, and the phenomenon spawned a couple of side games (Special Forces and Mythologies: Sub-Zero) outside of the fighting genre, two motion pictures, comic books, and a slew of other media and merchandise. But as the arcades dried up, the development team set its sight on home-console systems. Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance was the first MK fighting game designed solely for the home market from scratch, and it brought the fighting series back to its roots with more of an emphasis on fighting and fewer gimmicks like Babalities, Friendships, and Animalities.

## "FIGHT!"

The latest Mortal Kombat, Deception, strives to be the biggest one yet. Not only does it retain the one-on-one fighting style and play of Deadly Alliance, but it also features a host of additional modes—Puzzle, Chess, and Konquest—and most modes in the game will support online play.

Tucked away on a dead-end street in Chicago is Midway's Midwest development headquarters, where MK creator and Project Leader Ed Boon and his team dutifully apply the final polish to the many facets of Deception.

Deadly Alliance already featured a solid 3D fighting-game engine, and Deception retains the core elements while adding some key techniques. "One of the comments that we got from the last game was that the role of the combos is kinda high," says Boon. "So we added ways to break or get out of combos." When fighting on the ground, you can knock an attacker away in the middle of a combo by simultaneously pressing into them and pushing the Block button. The jury's out on countering air juggles, though. "We're still toying



Deception's lineup consists of 24 fighters—12 that are available at the start of the game and another 12 that can be unlocked—"and then some super-unlockable ones," says Ed Boon. "Those are the ones that you dig up in Konquest mode way after you're done with the game."

**"The final boss in Deception, Dragon King, is easily the coolest boss we've had so far in a Mortal Kombat game."**

**—Ed Boon**

with the idea of making the juggles uncounterable," says Boon, "as our air juggles are more elaborate here than they were in Deadly Alliance."

## "FINISH HIM!"

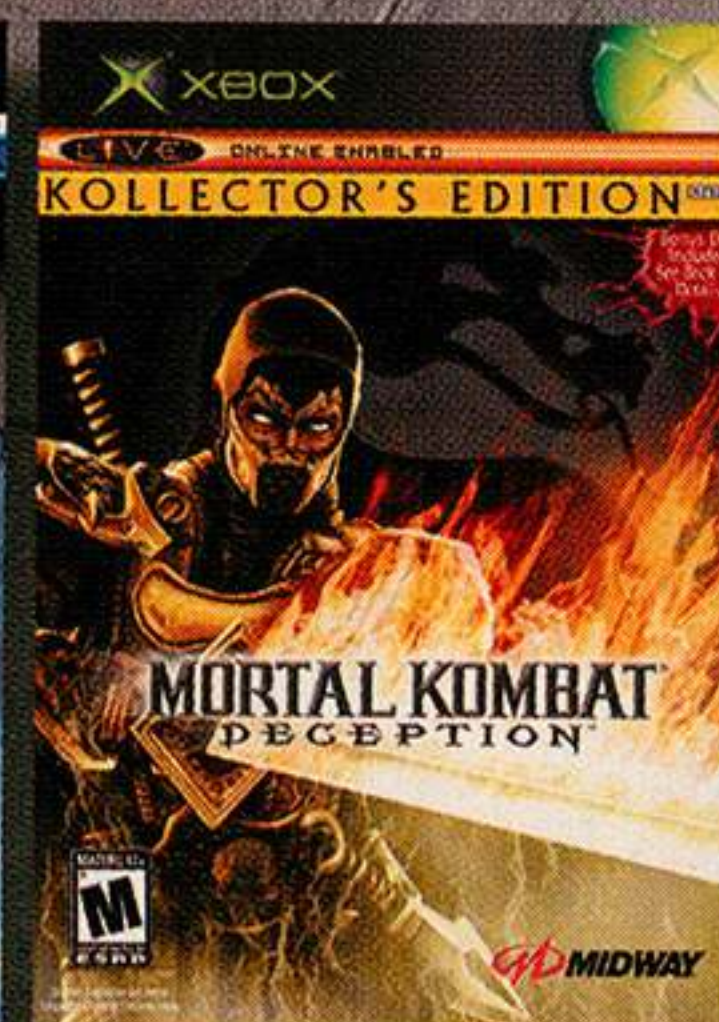
Fatalities—perhaps the most popular MK trademark—have been expanded. Whereas each character in Deadly Alliance had one fatality, Deception adds an extra finisher per fighter along with a new suicide move. At the end of a second round, when a fighter is defeated, the beaten character can execute himself in a gory way, thus depriving the winner of a fatality. "The fatality window is erased," says Boon, "so now it's a matter of who is the quickest to input the fatality or suicide command." Sub-Zero, for instance, can chill himself into a solid block of ice that falls over and thus shatters his whole body.

The fighting stages themselves also provide a way to gruesomely finish off an opponent. Players can be knocked into grinders, presses, beds of spikes, and other harmful surfaces any time during a match. One stage is set high atop a circular platform where the edges slowly erode and force the two fighters closer together. "You can turn off the death traps, and that will be an option for online play, too," says Boon. "When you

## Special Deception?

Diehard MK fans and video-game collectors should keep an eye open this October when Deception is released as a limited number of special editions will be available for the Xbox and PlayStation 2. As a two-disc set, the limited edition will feature the complete Deception game on one platter and an arcade-perfect port of the first Mortal Kombat game, developer interviews, behind-the-scenes footage, 25 character bios, the history of MK, and more on the second. An exclusive serialized character trading card will also be included. The PlayStation 2 version will be dubbed "Premium Pack," while the Xbox "Collector's Edition" will have four separate covers, each featuring a different character. Both versions will retail for \$59.99.

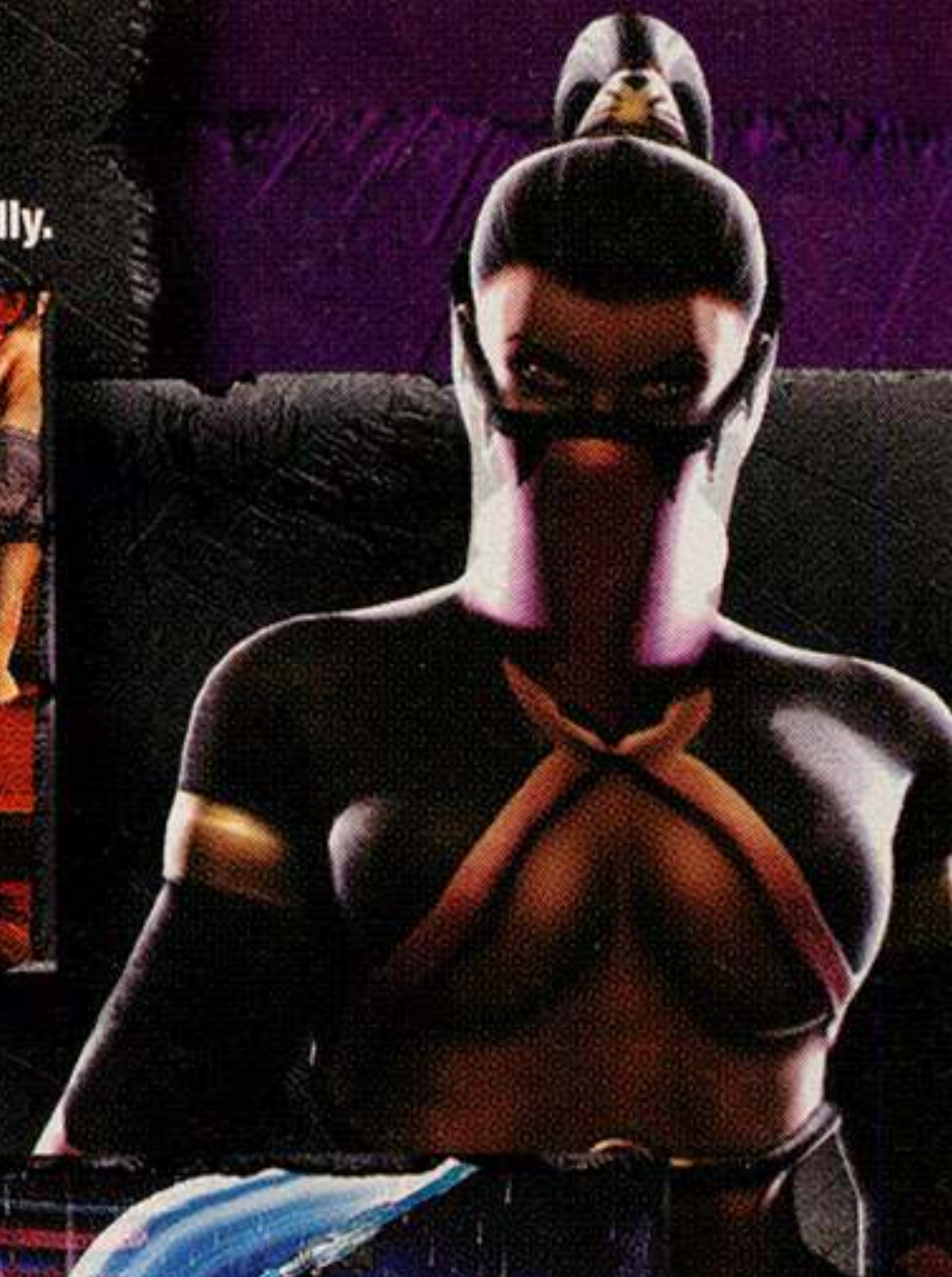
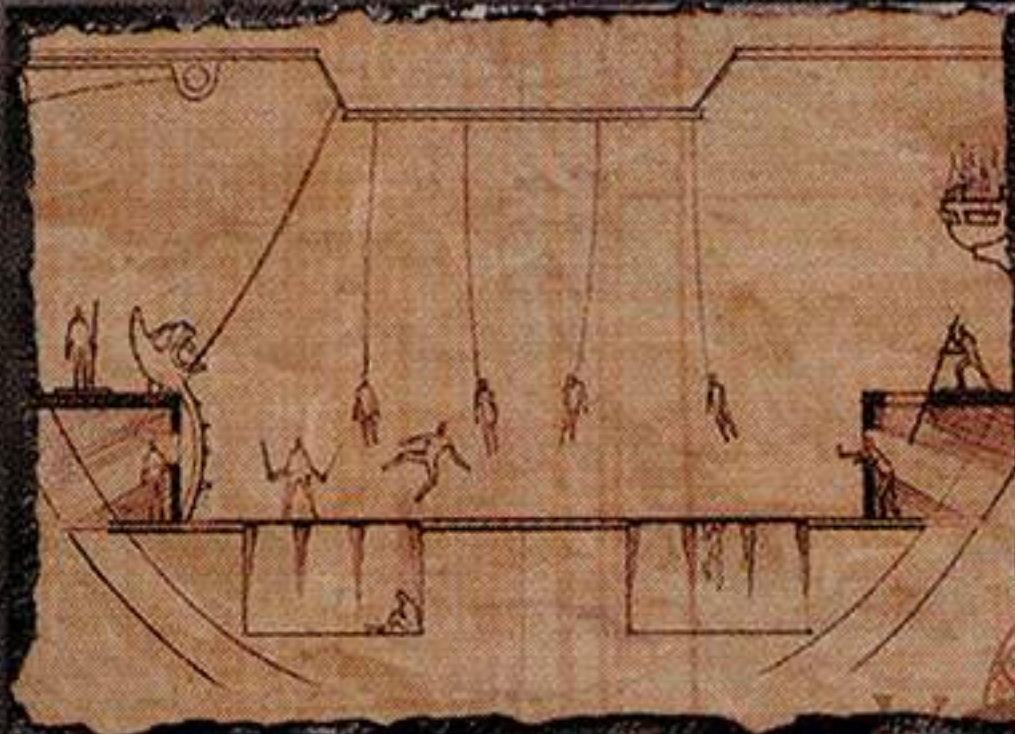
Retail packaging may be different for the final product.





## From Sketch to Screen: Netherbelly

Here's the evolution of one of Deception's multitiered stages, Netherbelly.



add something that radical to the whole mix, you don't want to force people into that if they want the more traditional fighting."

Another notable feature is the multitiered stages—something that was introduced in the 2D MK3 but has been taken to a greater degree here thanks to the 3D space and more interactive objects. Combatants can be knocked through walls, windows, and ceilings, and land in completely different rooms. One stage starts on the deck of a ship, but a well-timed blow can send an opponent through the railing and onto the deck below where several dangling corpses can bump into fighters.

## PUZZLES AND, UM, CHESS (THAT'S RIGHT, CHESS)

If "anytime" stage fatalities are considered radical, then what are players to make of Puzzle Kombat? "One of the games the guys on the development team really enjoy is Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo," says Boon. "So we took that premise but with Mortal Kombat characters." Of Deception's modes, Puzzle Kombat is the most addicting, and gamers who don't even like Mortal Kombat could find themselves engaged in this contest of block clearing for hours. You choose any midget-version combatant and start the match with a one-ton weight suspended over each player's head. The objective is simple: clear out blocks to keep your side as clean as possible. Clearing rows in rapid succession dumps debris on your opponent, but each player has a Super that gradually fills as well; once it's full, you can execute a nasty move on your opponent (for instance, jumble their pieces). When one player's area is so full of pieces that no more can fall, the one-ton weight...well, you get the idea.

Chess Kombat is loosely based on the actual board game: Pieces can move in the directions you expect, but there's a fighting element to the game, too. When two pieces move onto the same square or one piece tries to take another, the action switches to a retro MK background for a one-on-one battle (more powerful pieces have longer life meters). Each player can place one hidden bomb on the board, some pieces can cast spells that can help or hinder, and two green squares in the middle of the board restore health that's lost during a fight.

## KONQUEST

Konquest is a third-person fighting adventure and the only mode that doesn't fully support online play as it sharply focuses on the one-player aspect. You start out as a young man who can explore six realms of the MK universe. You can talk to characters, collect Koin, and find hidden treasure chests. The loot you collect ranges from extra fighting stages to instructions on how to perform fatality and suicide moves. Combat training plays a key role: As you encounter various fighting masters and train with them, your character can learn a series of special moves and techniques. When you complete Konquest, you can take your character, Shujinko, to the online arena and battle it out with other fighters in cyberspace. Although Deception seems online-heavy, downloadable content (for instance, fighters and stages) will not be available for Deception, but Boon hinted that these features might be available in the next Mortal Kombat game.

CONTINUED ►



One intriguing stage takes place on a tropical desert island with the time constantly changing from day to night. "There are two different versions of a ring-out in this stage," says Ed Boon. "During the day, it's like Virtua Fighter where you're floating in the water; at night, piranha attack you."

**"Puzzle Kombat and Chess are kind of like our hyper versions of Test Your Might and Test Your Sight."—Ed Boon**



Puzzle Kombat may be the only Mature-rated puzzler ever released.



Another of Deception's multitiered stages. Here, Scorpion is kicked through a brick wall and lands in a completely new room.



"The big reward for finishing is unlocking the old-man version of your character," says Ed Boon regarding Konquest mode. You can then take that character to online Kombat.





When asked if there is any other type of genre outside of fighting he'd like to explore with MK, Ed Boon smiles and says, "big time—we really want to expand Mortal Kombat way past fighting games."



Deadly objects surround some of the fighting stages, and a ring-out could mean instant death.



Baraka as he appears in one of the game's rendered cinema cut-scenes



Each Chess game is played against a retro MK stage. Here, it's the "Choose Your Destiny" screen from MK3.



Seeing that this is a Mortal Kombat game, you can expect plenty of carnage in Deception.



"Noob Saibot and Smoke are two characters that are kind of fused into one," says Ed Boon, "so they're going to have all these weird juggle-combos with their different fighting styles."



Some stages are littered with weapons that can be put to good use.



Each fighter retains the three "stances" (different sets of special moves and combos) from Deadly Alliance, and one of them is weapon-based.



### Mortal Through The Years

We're often asked the question, "What game has been featured on the cover of GamePro magazine the most number of times?" The answer: Mortal Kombat. MK has been the main image 12 times—that's a whole year of issues. Check out GamePro.com for the whole story.

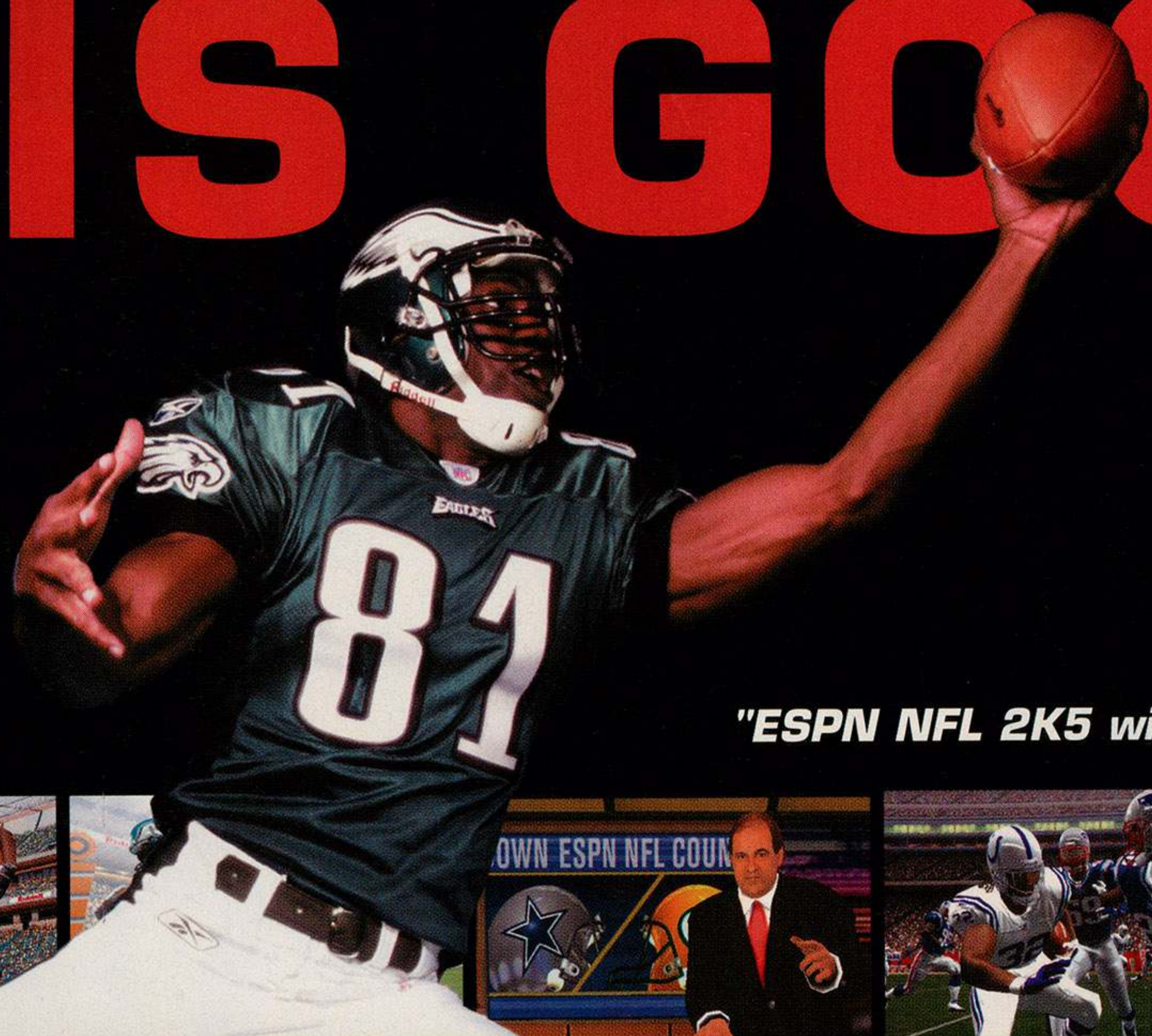
## FINAL ROUND

With all of Deception's varied games and modes, some aspects of Deadly Alliance were left on the sidelines, such as the Test Your Might and Sight intermissions during Arcade mode. "Puzzle Kombat and Chess are kind of like our hyper versions of Test Your Might and Test Your Sight," says Boon. "We had them in the game for a while, but there were so many different things that we didn't want the fighting game to become, say, one of 30 different games." The Krypt, where you can spend your hard-earned Kurrency, will return, albeit with a new graveyard setting and various MK characters running around and hiding behind things. "That's what we're most excited about—there's a ton of content that we piled into the game," says Boon. "We didn't have to spend as much time building a fighting engine—we enhanced it, but we spent a majority of our time on content this time."

All screens shown here are from the Xbox version.



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# DEAD OR ALIVE ULTIMATE



Implementing tweaked gameplay, new stages, and a variety of online modes, Team Ninja shows that the appeal of Dead or Alive Ultimate isn't just skin deep.

By Funky Zealot

Heaving mounds of...physics—undoubtedly the first thing that comes to mind for the Dead or Alive series. And though the original DOA shamelessly shook its assets to fame, the series evolved into a hardcore fighting game with Dead or Alive 2 and 3 (while of course, maintaining its exhibitionist roots). Dead or Alive 4 is being designed for a next-generation console, but in the meantime, Team Ninja is bringing the franchise online with Dead or Alive Ultimate, which offers fans the chance to play an enhanced version of DOA2 as well as the original DOA over Xbox Live.

For those hoping that the game will shed light on its enigmatic and nebulous story line, you'll have to wait a little while longer. "We basically kept the endings the same," says famed Lead Designer Tomonobu Itagaki, wearing his ubiquitous indoor sunglasses. The only new CG will be the new opening movie, which glimpses at the background story between Ayane and Kasumi, so there won't be any stunning epiphanies this time around. The good news is that the rest of the game has quite a few improvements and tweaks, bringing the feel closer to DOA3 and surpassing it in terms of visuals.



The original stages have been redone with different death-traps and multiple levels. Helena is seen here battling Ayane in the remake of the original opera stage.

## GRAPHIC AUGMENTATION

"If you compare it to Dead or Alive 3, the graphics are much more beautiful," beams Itagaki. Based on the engine used in Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball, the textures look even more detailed while retaining that CG anime-esque look. "We brought the characters straight over from DOAX, so the models are more complex," he adds. Not surprisingly, the guy characters get the shorter end of the stick with simpler polygons. As with past Team Ninja titles, such as Ninja Gaiden, animations are silky smooth, and the game will support 480p wide-screen viewing as well.

Although this all is by no means a graphical overhaul from DOA3, fans will notice the difference, especially in the stages offered. Besides the originals, there are at least four new stages: Yozakura, a night level with falling cherry blossom leaves; Beach 2004, a lush beach paradise akin to DOA3 and DOA1; Fireworks, a night level taking place outside a temple with fireworks shooting in the air; and Suspension Bridge, a forest level with a narrow, long suspension bridge. All of the stages have unique danger zones, and some stages have slopes and stairs that force you to strategize your positioning more than previous titles.

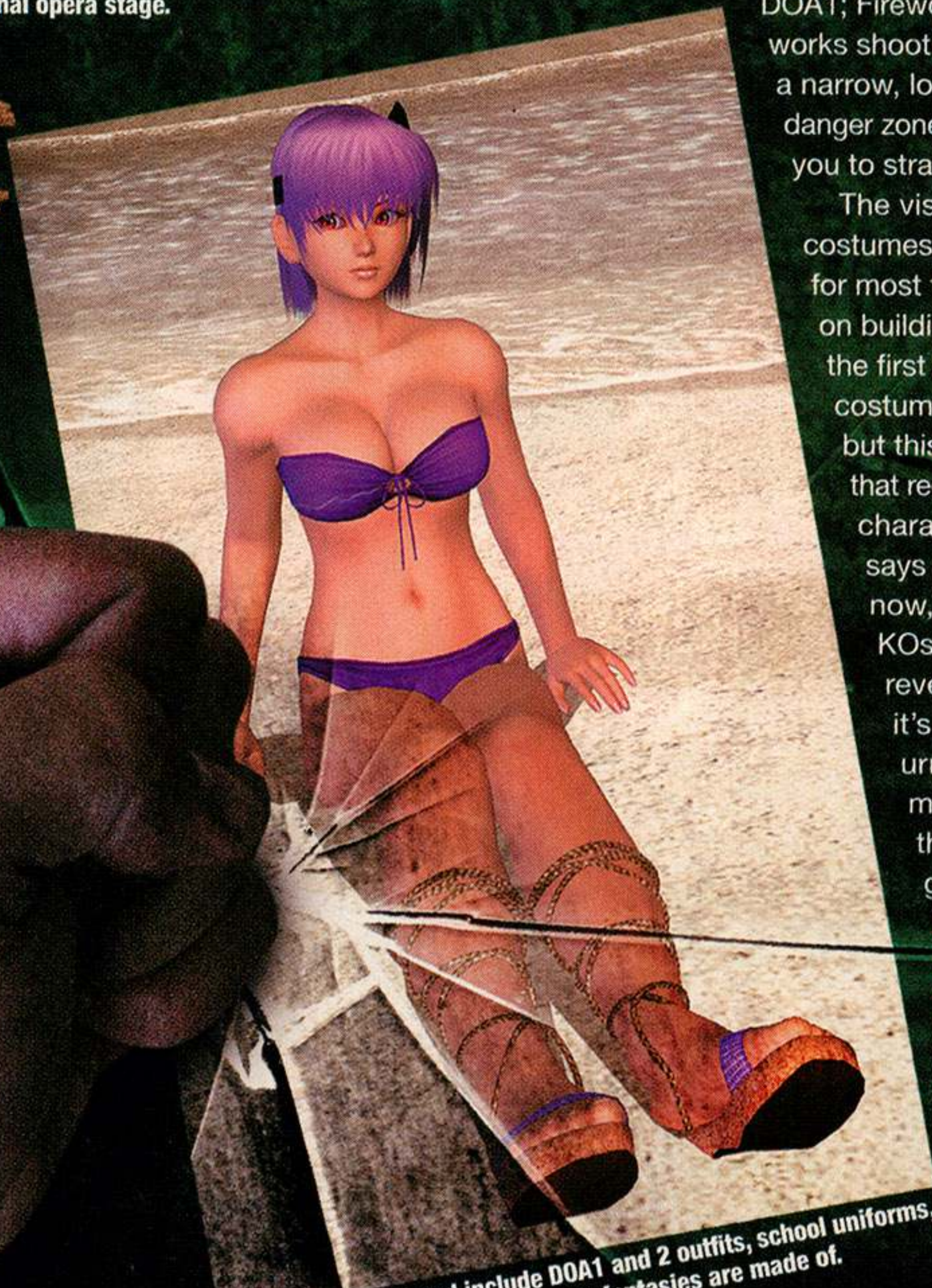
The visual bread and butter for the DOA series is the costumes. Although they're an almost negligible concern for most fighting games, DOA fans put a lot of weight on building up the wardrobes. "Since we made 14 in the first one, people are always clamoring for more costumes—we couldn't achieve that in past titles, but this time around, we've been able to stretch that record and offer 20 costumes for the major characters, such as Ayane and Kasumi," says Itagaki. Unlocking them will be easier now, too—no more slaving to get fast KOs or win consecutive matches. "We reverted back to the old games, so it's now the same as the Sega Saturn version," says Itagaki. "The more times you pass the game, the more things you unlock. We got rid of the tedious [DOA3] unlocking system."

## GETTIN' JIGGY WITH IT

The burning question is, "How does it play?" "The pacing of the game is faster," reveals Team Ninja Manager Mitsuo Osada. Sure enough,



With the Xtreme Beach Volleyball models used for DOAU, Kasumi looks better than ever.



Costume types offered include DOA1 and 2 outfits, school uniforms, bikinis, and other attire that otaku fantasies are made of.



# MATCHES & MODES

"With other online fighting games, matches ultimately were one-on-one and felt lonely," says Team Ninja Manager Mitsuo Osada. "The modes that are offered in DOAU are more engaging." Although DOAU only allows up to eight players to gather in minilobbies, the variety of modes promises quick and engrossing gameplay.

## LIVE BATTLE MODES

**Quick Match**—Enables you to join a match on the fly

**Optimatch**—Filter different settings to join the match you prefer

**Create Match**—As the name suggests, create your own match

**World Ranking**—Shows offline and online ranking

**Download Content**—Itagaki says there won't be updates to download, but Osada says this feature is "still to be decided." Hmmm.

## TYPES OF MATCHES

**Arcade**—Players keep joining to play the winner

**One-on-One**—Play against one other player

**Tournament**—Miniladder where the last one standing wins



**Team Battle**—Team up to play against each other

**Survival**—One person as the survivor plays opponents consecutively

**Loser Survival**—The opposite, where the loser keeps fighting

**Kumite**—Online equivalent of sparring

**Vote**—Vote on the type of match to play



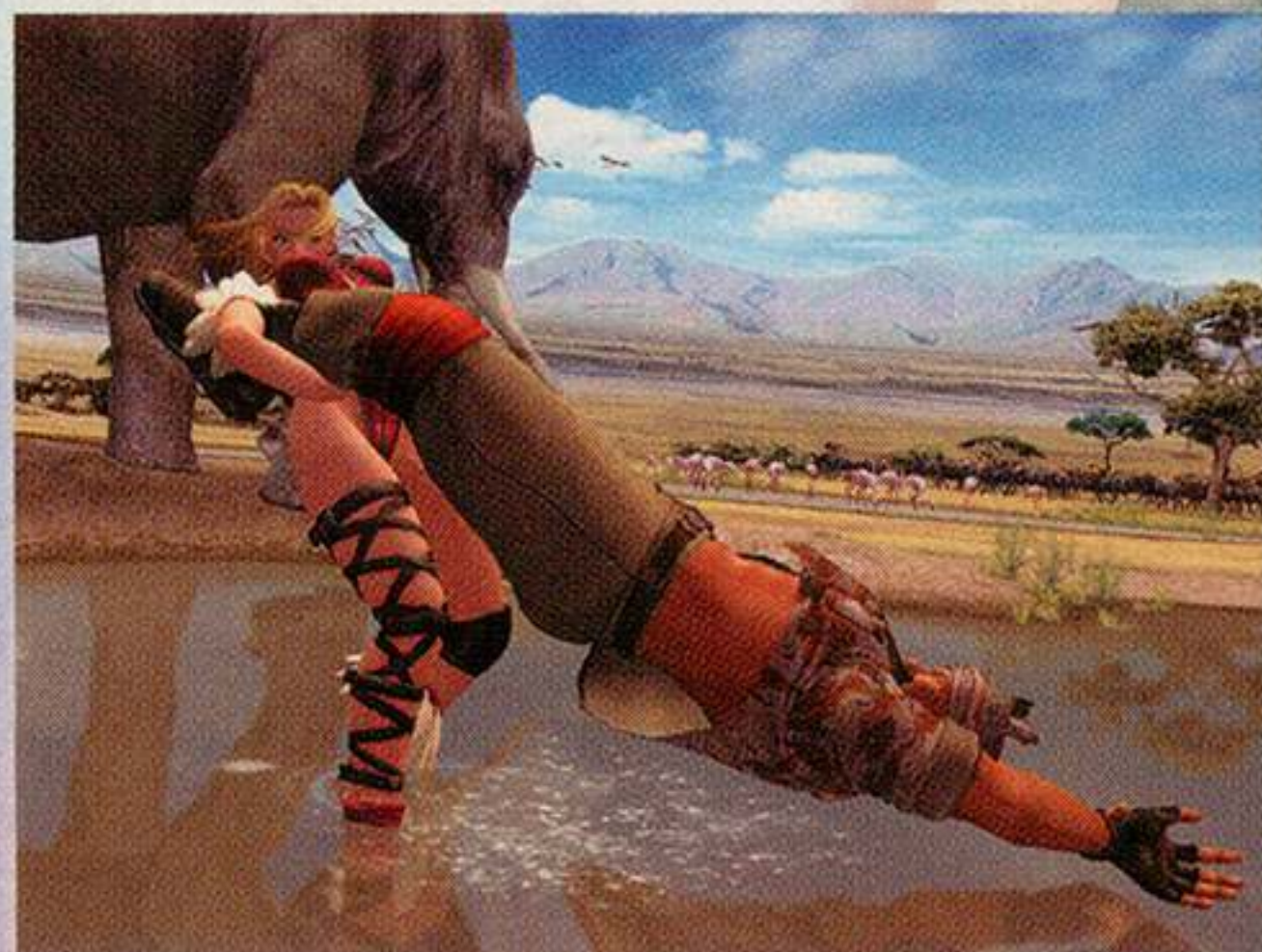
Stages now include uphill and downhill slopes that can be used to your advantage.



Why are a Tai Quan master and a ninja assassin brawling in bikinis at a beach paradise? The franchise has never been big on plot details.



While watching another match online, you can use your controller to zoom, tilt, and rotate the camera. You can also voice chat with everybody while the matches are still in play.



Swing your partner 'round and 'round. We're guessing that the elephant's a nasty deathtrap.

Dead or Alive Ultimate's gameplay speed resembles that of DOA3, providing more frantically brisk battles that are better suited for online play. Other similarities include how characters connect hits—although the combos have stayed generally the same from DOA2, characters can be hit when slammed against the wall, and reel from damage more, allowing you to connect more blows as in the third installment. "All the old moves are in, and with the addition of slopes, there will be new throws," adds Itagaki. In terms of the...uh, oscillating torsos, the game faithfully maintains the more viscously absurd motion of DOA2 rather than the more realistic (?) shimmying of DOA3.

## BOUNCE WITH ME

DOAU's all about playing online with other players who have the same passion for the franchise. "Modes you see in conventional 2D fighting games will be available as well as minilobbies where players gather together," explains Itagaki. "Unlike regular lobbies where hundreds join, they're a lot smaller. You can invite up to seven friends, or others may just come and join you." The minilobbies also can serve as mini-chat rooms, allowing players to talk with each other using the headset.

All matches are held through the minilobby, so the game won't support mammoth nationwide tournaments. The move was intentional, according to Itagaki. "Even if we were to offer that over Xbox Live, it probably wouldn't be very fun. People who lose won't have anything to do and will get bored, so the fun ends up being limited to the few who keep winning." There are overall rankings, however, with the game giving you a letter grade (lowest to highest: E, D, C, B, A, AA, S, SS) depending on how many matches you win. And international bouts are still up in the air.

CONTINUED ►



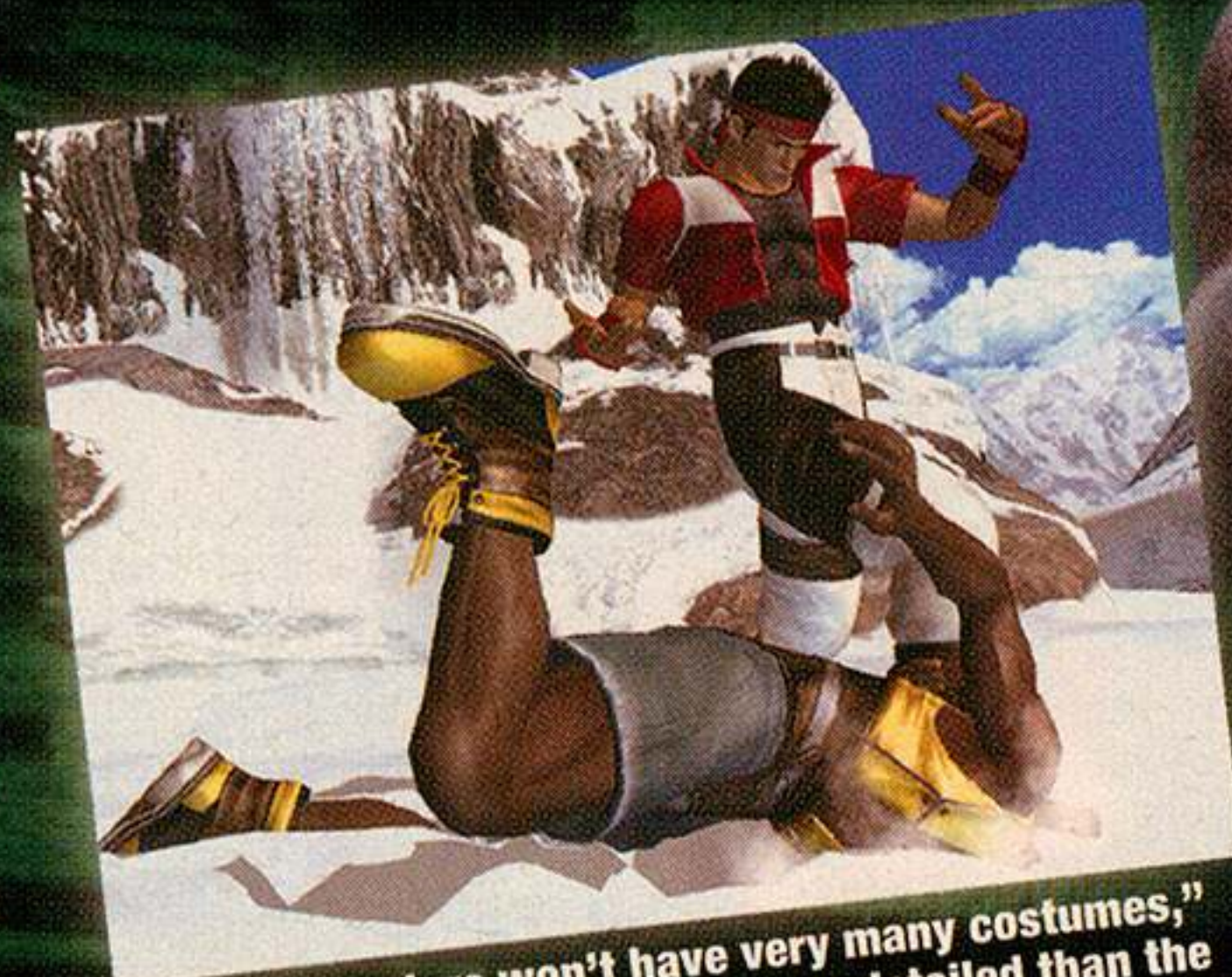


"With large distances, you start facing limitations with the technology. We have to go out there to try it out to see if it can be done. But we are working on it," explains Itagaki.

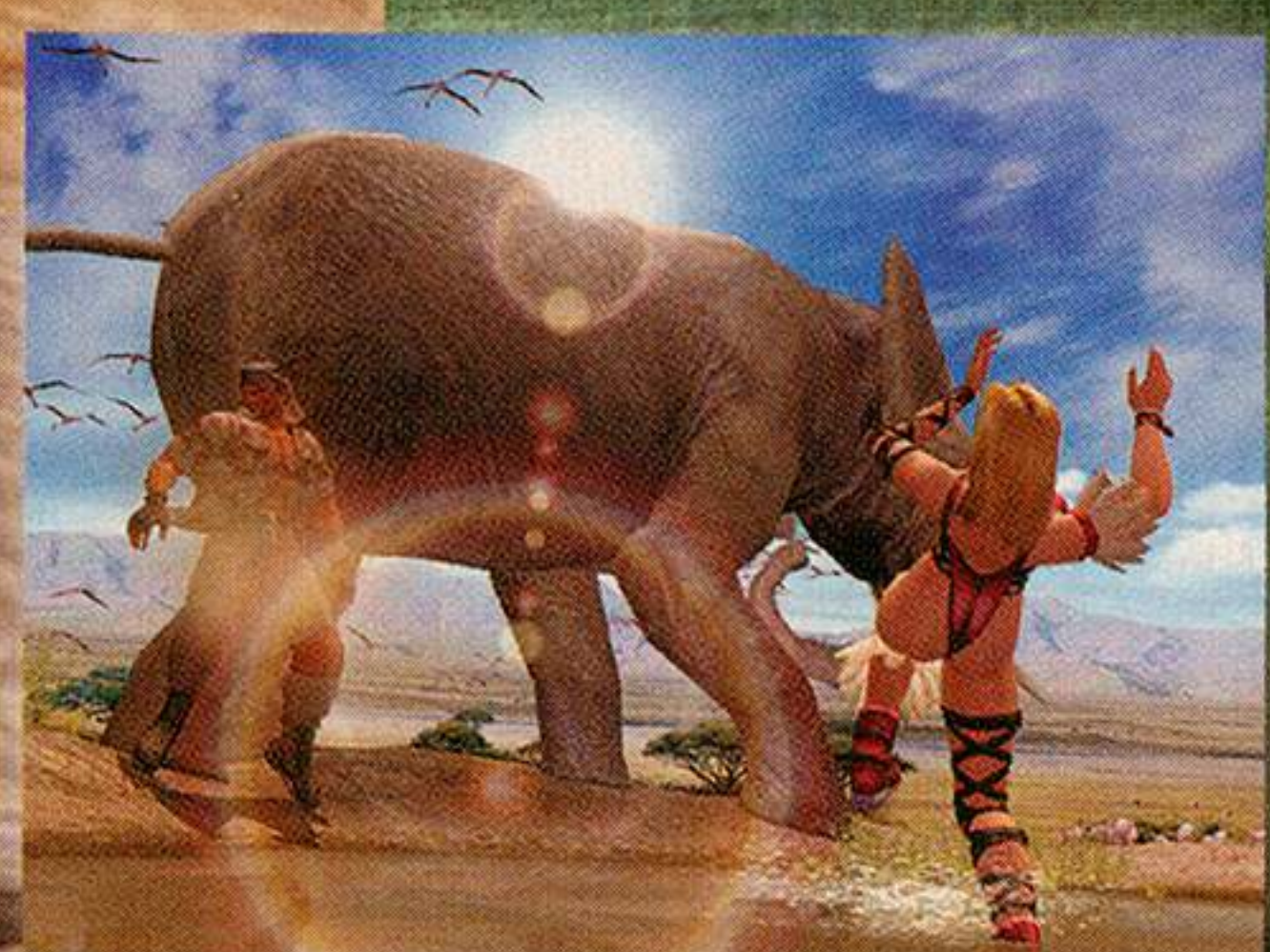
The types of matches you can create include Arcade, One-on-One, Tournament, Team Battle, Survival, Loser Survival, and Kumite (see sidebar, "Matches & Modes," for the descriptions). "Modes in DOA 1 and 2 will be slightly different," says Itagaki. "DOA1 had no tag battle modes, and DOA2 did, so where the games differ offline, they'll be different online." Other options you can set include single/tag battle, round time limit, how many matches, life gauge, and how many players and friends to invite. Unfortunately, tag battles are still between two players, Itagaki reports: "We thought of having four-player tag battles, but we also wanted to provide a seamless and fast-paced online battle experience. We were faced with network limitations of connecting four players at once and decided not to [make a four-player tag battle]."

And the battles are fast-paced. Survival mode has players trying to beat a single designated player who keeps on playing others until defeated. After one person is defeated, another almost immediately jumps into the ring, continuing the fight. To help the survivor along the way, healing items are dropped as certain special moves are executed. Special medals are also dropped if a player wins a certain number of times in a row. The player who defeats the survivor takes over that role and starts the bout over again.

With the game slated for release in the beginning of October, much of the luster and polish already seems to be in place. And according to Itagaki, there will be no additional patches and updates to the game (something Ninja Gaiden did with its Master Tournament Mode): "Everything you see now will be what's in the game when it hits stores." That won't discourage its dedicated fan base, however—with its seductive graphics, revamped gameplay, and refreshingly fun online fighting, Dead or Alive Ultimate is a game that won't likely go bust.



"Male characters won't have very many costumes," says Itagaki. "The models are less detailed than the female characters."



**"Since we switched to the Xbox, there'd need to be a specific reason to go back to the PlayStation 2 like somebody saying 'I'll kill you,'" says Team Ninja Lead Designer Tomonobu Itagaki.**



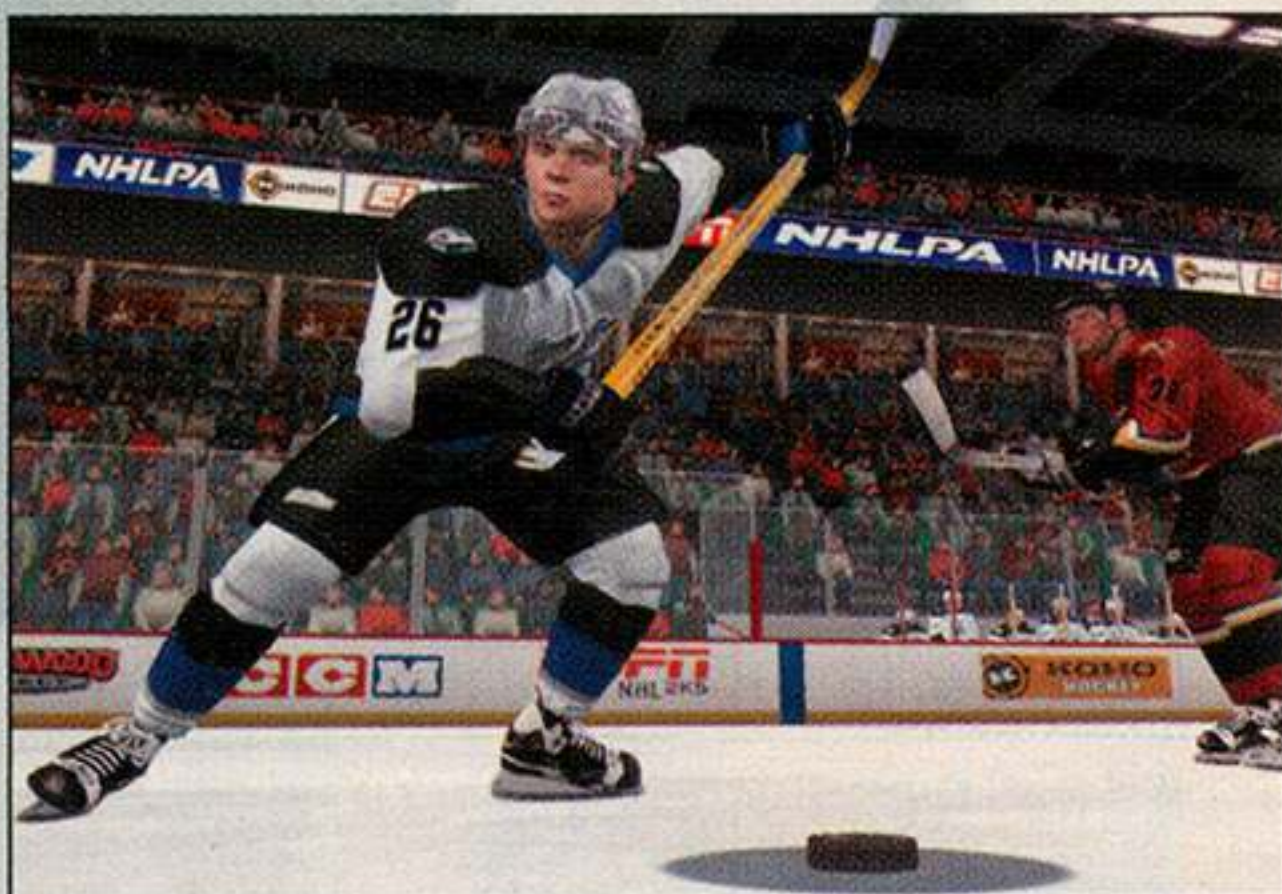
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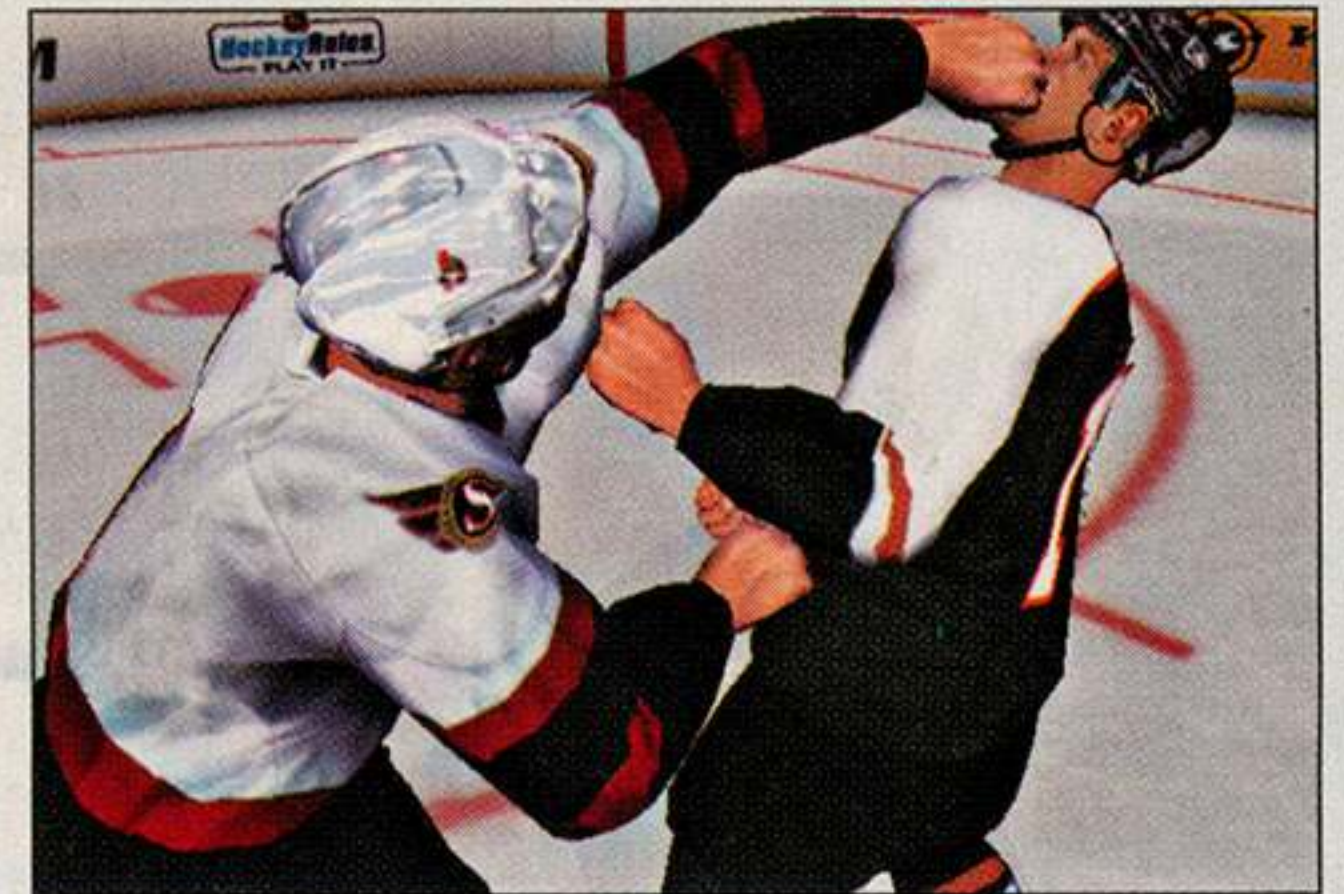
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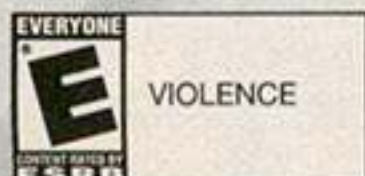
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# Exclusive! Boost Mode Revealed!

# GUILTY GEAR ISUKA PE

Super Smash Bros.-style mayhem meets gorgeous 2D animation action in Guilty Gear Isuka. *By Tokyo Drifter*



Looking for proof that 2D fighting games can still have the ability to surprise in this age of 3D brawlers? Search no further than the eye-popping Guilty Gear series with its vibrant animation-cel visuals and frenetic layers of combat. Guilty Gear Isuka for the PS2 isn't a chapter that adds more plot details to the mythos—instead, it elects to add new gameplay styles that are sure to make fans salivate.

## GIVE ME A BOOST

The first brand new to mention is the Boost mode. In Boost, you and a friend embark on a side-scrolling action game, staving off waves of thugs and eventually bosses. As you can see from these exclusive first screens

of Boost, the screen can be completely filled with characters. During hands-on time with the game, there was no discernable slowdown even with the playing field so densely packed.

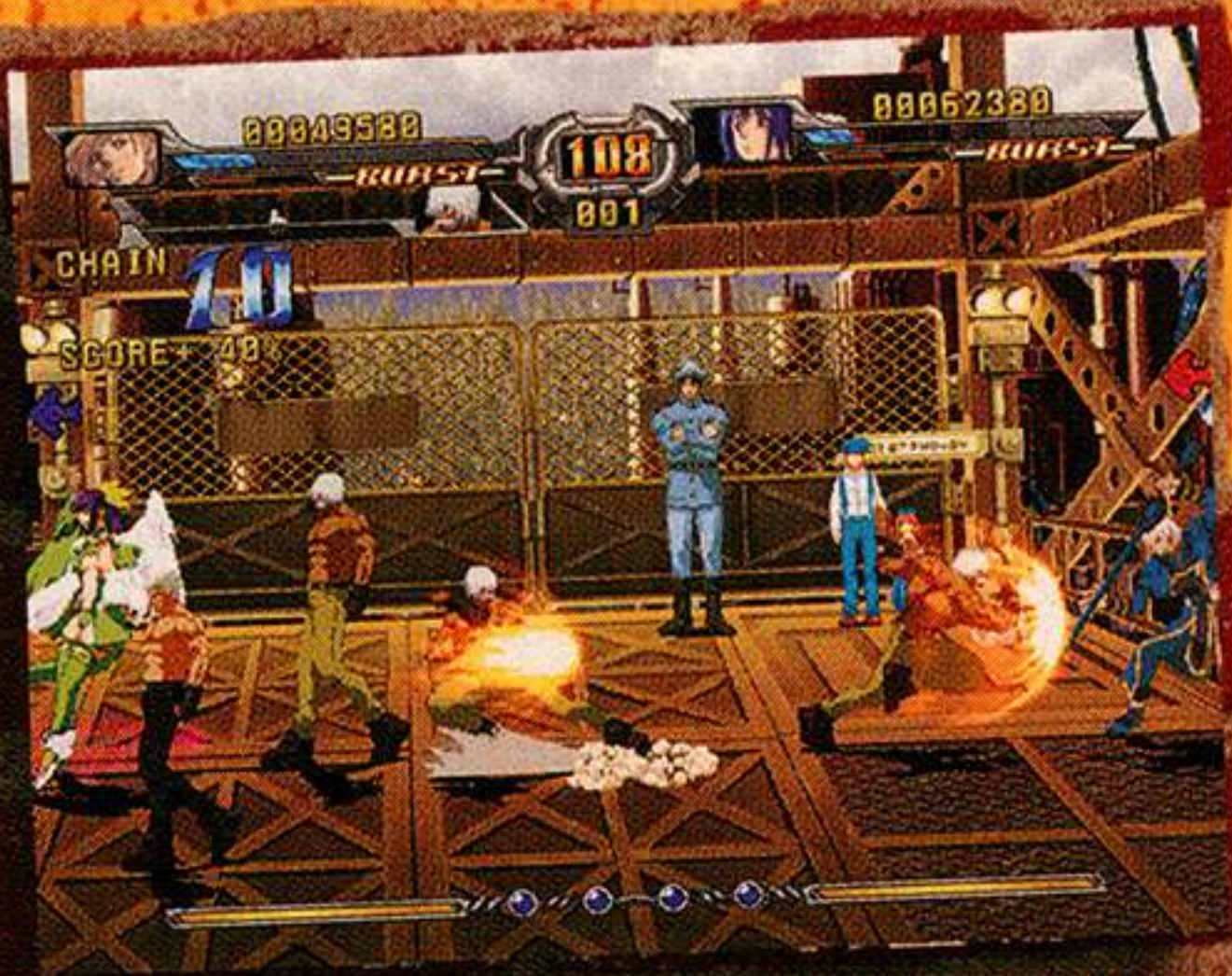
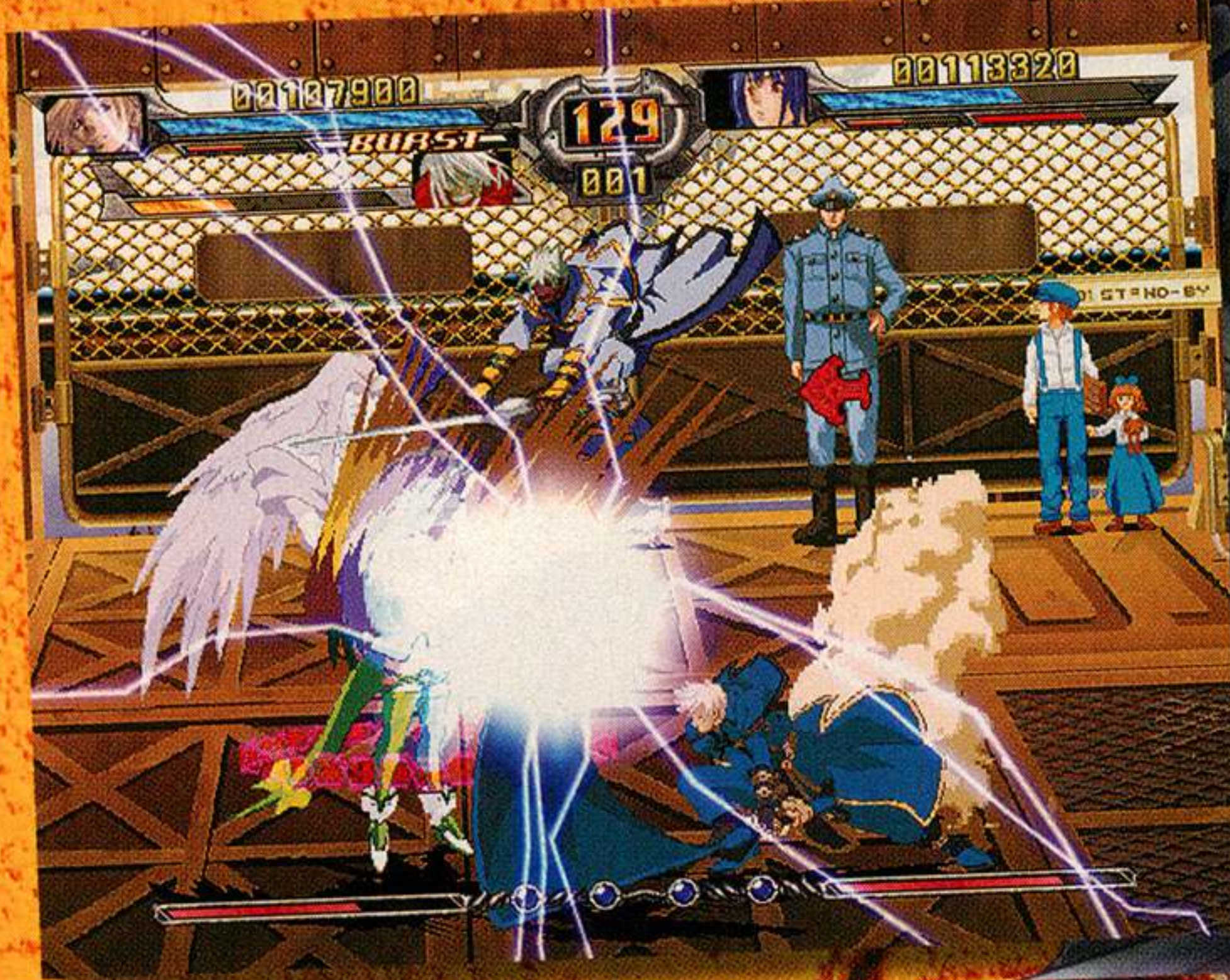
The other mode, which is familiar to fans who have played Isuka in the arcades, is the four-player simultaneous bout. Players can fight on a foreground or background plane, switching

back and forth with minimal delay. You must be on the same line of sight with another player to cause or receive damage, although there is the option to attack while changing positions. The characters in the rear appear slightly smaller with subdued colors, so it takes a while to become aware of which plane you're on.

## RAVE ON!

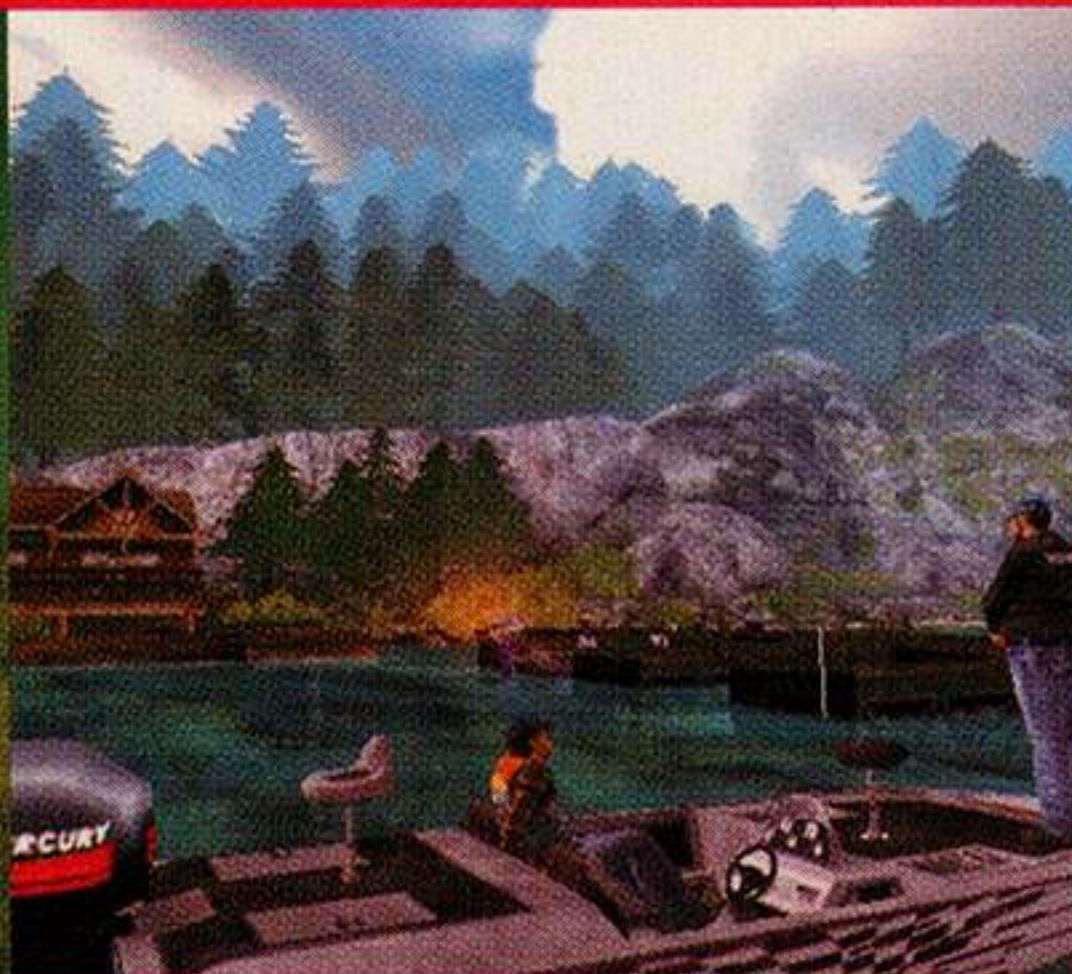
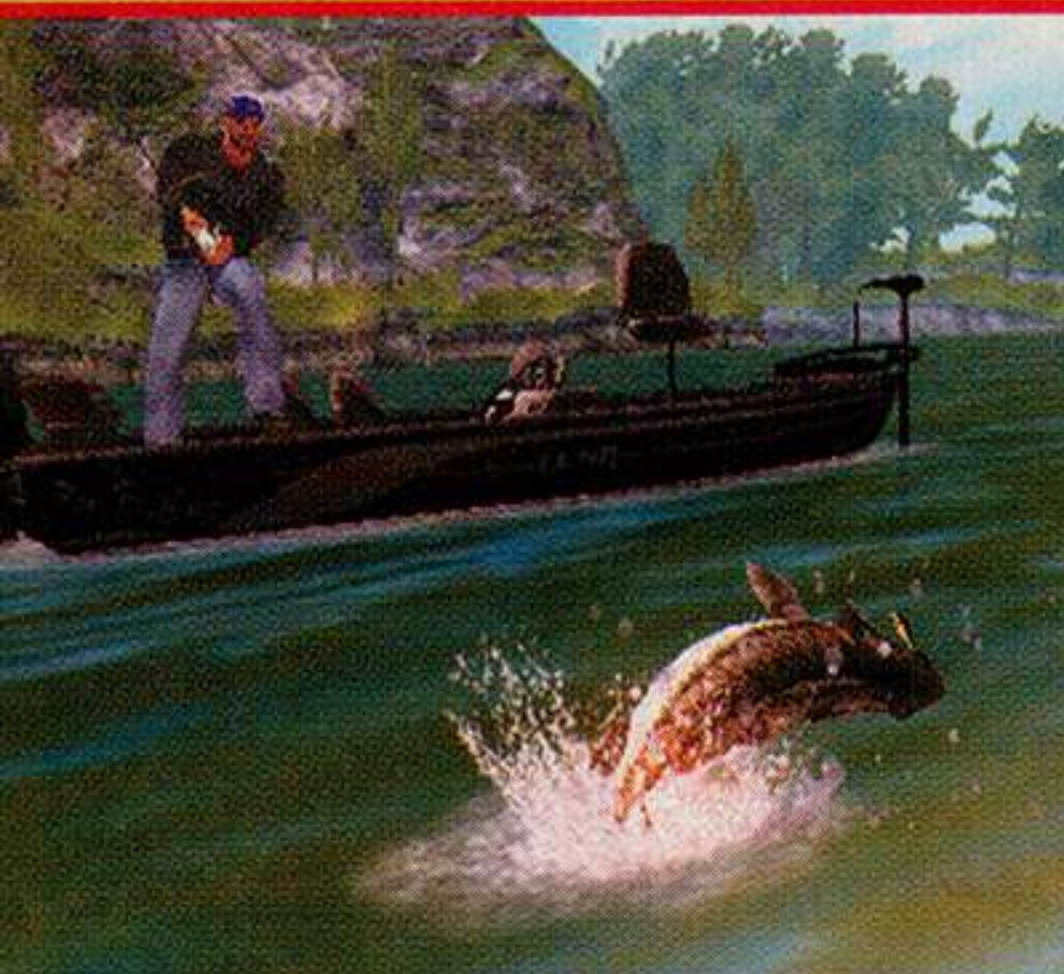
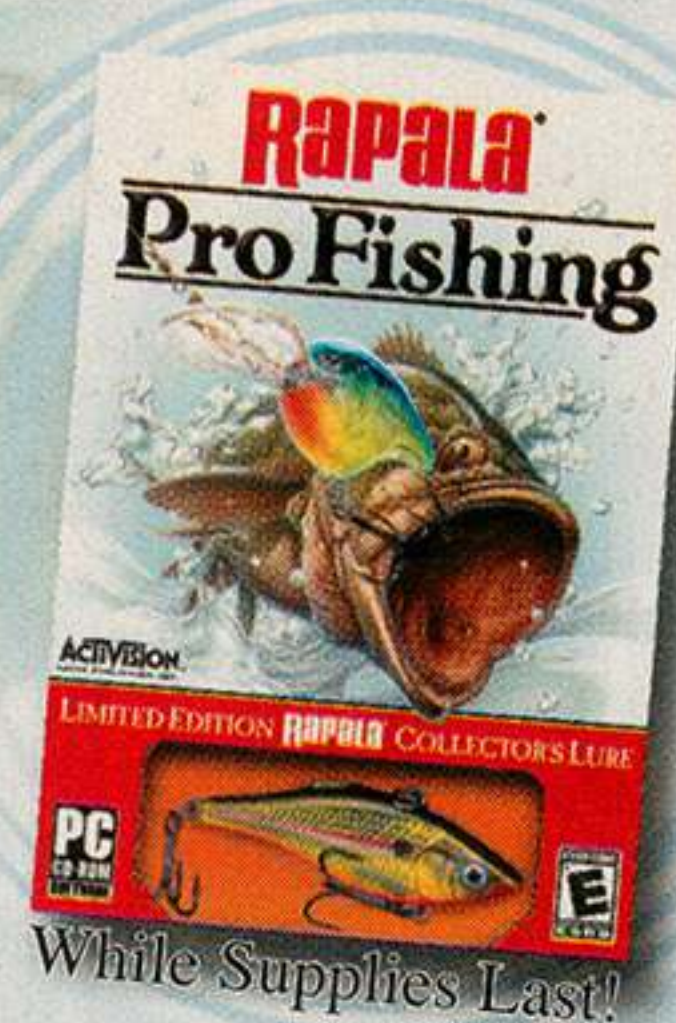
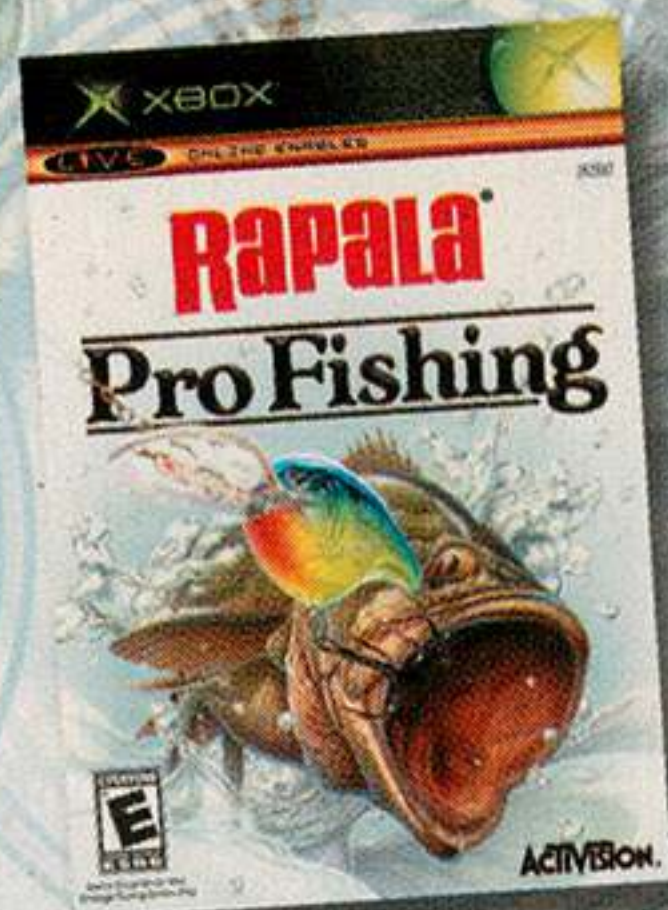
Aside from the graphics, the rocking tunes of Guilty Gear have always been a constant, and Isuka's sounds are no different. Listen for a few grooves that are a bit different from the regular blend of hard rock and heavy metal.

Joining the somewhat offbeat collection of 20 combatants are three new characters, making for a total of, you guessed it, 23. Sammy is keeping two of them a mystery for now but has revealed A.B.A., a seemingly timid girl who wields an enormous sentient key. Look for more Isuka soon.





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# FIGHTING HORIZON

Here's a quick look at some other fighting games slated for release in the upcoming months—in 2D and 3D. *By Major Mike*



## PE Tekken 5

You knew it was coming. Although the game was on display at Namco's booth at this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo via running trailer, the company almost denied its existence and provided little information. Some features of the game have been revealed in Japan: Heihachi is gone from the scene, but vets Nina, Paul, Xiaoyu, Law, King, Yoshimitsu, Julia, Hwoarang, and Kazuya return, and they're joined by newcomers Kazama Asuka, Raven, and Feng Wei. From the footage that was shown, Tekken 5 looks like more combo-heavy 3D fighting but with an enhanced graphics engine.

■ Developed and published by Namco ■ Target release date: February



## PE King of Fighters: Maximum Impact

SNK attempts a makeover with King of Fighters: Maximum Impact—that is, give the KOF engine a 3D look but retain the 2D play. Impact does take advantage of 3D space with dodge maneuvers, various jumps, and a knockback move that sends your opponent into the air for juggles and other combos. You can also continuously pummel downed opponents and even hit them with supermoves while they're on the ground. The 16-plus player lineup includes SNK faves Terry Bogard, Ryo Sakazaki, Mai Shiranui, and others.

■ Developed by SNK Playmore ■ Published by SNK Neo Geo U.S.A. ■ Target release date: September



## X SVC Chaos: SNK vs. Capcom

Chaos indeed: 36 fighters from Street Fighter, Samurai Shodown, The King of Fighters, and Fatal Fury come together in this brawlfest. All characters, however, are illustrated in the 2D SNK animation style—not Capcom's. The lineup has an eclectic mix of warriors from the nimble Choi to the gigantic Earthquake, and fighters can slug it out on Xbox Live.

■ Developed by SNK Playmore ■ Published by SNK Neo Geo U.S.A. ■ Target release date: September



## PE X Capcom Fighting Evolution

Bringing five 2D fighting franchises together, Capcom Fighting Evolution features warriors from Street Fighter II, III, and Alpha; Darkstalkers; and Red Earth—10 in all with an additional two waiting to be unlocked. The Xbox version will feature Xbox Live support.

■ Developed and published by Capcom ■ Target release date: Winter 2004



## X Iron Phoenix

A 3D online fighting game, Iron Phoenix will enable up to 16 players to battle it out in the Xbox Live arena. The combat is weapon-based, and players can select from over 10 characters—each with its own distinctive fighting style. The game also includes a one-player offline mode.

■ Developed by InterServ International ■ Published by Sammy Studios  
■ Target release date: Winter 2004



## X Fight Club

David Fincher's somber 1999 drama goes interactive with this brutal and bloody 3D brawler that pits movie characters against each other. Fighters can exchange blows, grapple, and even break bones using a variety of techniques and combo attacks.

■ Developed by Genuine Games ■ Published by Vivendi Universal Games  
■ Target release date: October



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BY THE GAMEPROS (WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO DAN ELEKTRO)



**Our Prediction:**



## GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT

**The pitch**

The follow-up to the classic Nintendo 64 game GoldenEye...only this time, you play as a villain.

**Why it might be great**

The name GoldenEye conjures up the finest, fondest of gaming memories—it was one of the best console FPS games ever, the multiplayer precursor to Halo, single-handedly justifying the four controller slots on the front of the N64. And while EA's earlier Bond efforts were nothing special, they've been steadily getting better as time goes on, and the developer's making all the right noises about great multiplayer action. Oh, and playing a bad guy in the Bond universe could be a way cool change of pace.

**Why it might be garbage**

The developer is totally different (then: Rare; now: EA LA), and the story seems to have no connection to the original GoldenEye (this one is named after the villain, who literally has a golden eye). Simply put, this game actually has very little to do with the original...cynics would justifiably call this a transparent marketing bait-and-switch, and that always makes us nervous.



**Our Prediction:**



## STAR WARS REPUBLIC COMMANDO

**The pitch**

During the brutal Clone Wars campaign, you and your team of elite Clone Troopers take on black-ops missions, such as sabotaging Separatist facilities and assassinating political opponents.

**Why it might be great**

A squad-based first-person shooter that focuses on the darker, militaristic side of the Star Wars mythos is an irresistible concept. In one mission, you get to fight alongside massive—and we mean massive—Wookiees against armies of vicious lizardmen. From the gritty environments and creepy enemies to the viscerally frenetic action and imperialistic underpinnings, it is probably the most non-Star Wars Star Wars game ever made.

**Why it might be garbage**

The gameplay will have to rule in order to hook players who may be turned off by the moody and foreboding feel. But so far, the limited squad commands provide a much shallower tactical experience than we had hoped, the hologram team members that appear when issuing commands are confusing, and the enemy A.I. needs a lot of tuning.



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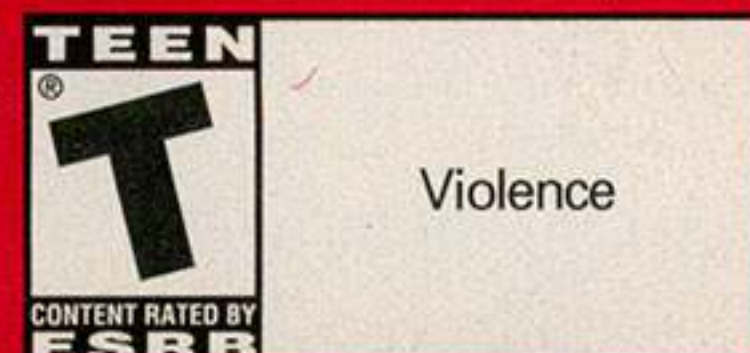
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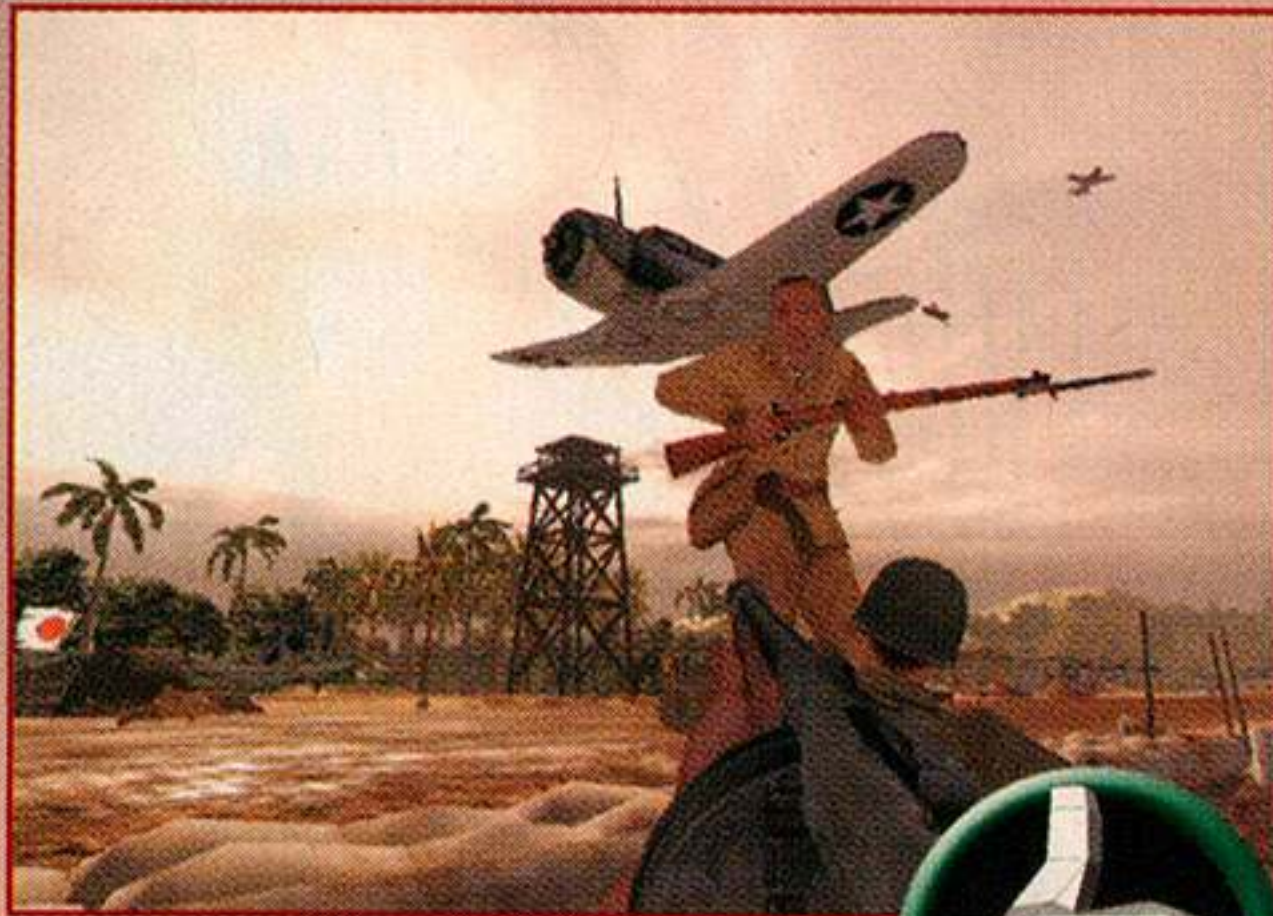


PlayStation 2



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**Our Prediction:**



## MEDAL OF HONOR: PACIFIC ASSAULT

### The pitch

The follow-up to Allied Assault, one of the all-time greats in World War II first-person shooters, shifts its focus to the Pacific theater.

### Why it might be great

Expanding the Medal of Honor gameplay into the more wide-open environs of Pacific jungles and atolls could make for amazing combat. The development team dreamed up some impressive concepts for details ranging from health management to squad control and A.I. If they're successful, it should be the spark needed to reignite this stagnant series.

### Why it might be garbage

After the well-publicized exodus of the Allied Assault and Frontline teams, which are now creating the outstanding Call of Duty series, EA LA stumbled badly with the rushed, formulaic Rising Sun. Is almost a calendar year's worth of delays enough for the mostly new development team at EA LA to establish firm footing and live up to the expectations for a sequel to the Allied Assault? The pressure cooker of delays and new blood could be a recipe for genius or disaster....



**Our Prediction:**



## DEATH BY DEGREES

### The pitch

Nina, the deadly and gorgeous assassin from Tekken, gets her own action game.

### Why it might be great

Her assassin background lends itself to an interesting story and gives the developer an excuse to make her ultraproficient with all forms of fighting and weaponry. Death by Degrees has not only third-person fighting but also sections where you use a sniper rifle in first-person mode to mix things up. Some cool effects sizzle, such as an X-ray cut-scene of bones breaking when Nina unleashes an especially lethal blow. She also sports some very sexy outfits.

### Why it might be garbage

Based on hands-on time with the game, the multidirectional fighting system feels a bit stiff, as does the way Nina controls overall. Even climbing ladders and moving from area to area is cumbersome. The CG movies are really sharp, but the graphics in the actual game look generic.



**Our Prediction:**



## KILLER 7

### The pitch

As a crippled assassin with multiple personality disorder, you take control of seven highly trained killers, each with a unique set of skills and paranormal powers, and fight against crazed, mob-controlled monsters.

### Why it might be great

Even without the talented Shinji Mikami handling production chores, Killer 7's intriguing concept promises a new animal of gameplay, and the wild character designs and surreally anime-style visuals have us foaming at the mouth to give it a whirl.

### Why it might be garbage

The game was announced two years ago, and for all the buzz Capcom's generating about how original it is, they are also tight lipped about how it's played. Even Mikami has no idea what is up Director Guoichi Suda's sleeve, which isn't a good sign.



**Our Prediction:**



## ADVANCE WARS: UNDER FIRE

### The pitch

One of the best strategy games on the GBA goes to the GameCube, only this time, you fight as units in the thick of things.

### Why it might be great

Intelligent Systems' Advance Wars is a fantastic example of a tactical RPG—heck, Advance Wars is easily one of the 10 best games on the GBA. The “fantasy version” of Advance Wars, Fire Emblem, is similarly awesome. Why wouldn't we want to be addicted all over again on a machine with 10 times the power?

### Why it might be garbage

While the game's still early, it doesn't look anything like a “tactical RPG”—instead, it's a hybrid action/RTS, sort of like what Command & Conquer: Renegade tried (and mostly failed) to do. The GBA Advance Wars wasn't great because of the setting—it was fairly generic—it was great because of the gameplay. The most disconcerting thing: Another developer (Kuju) is crafting the title.



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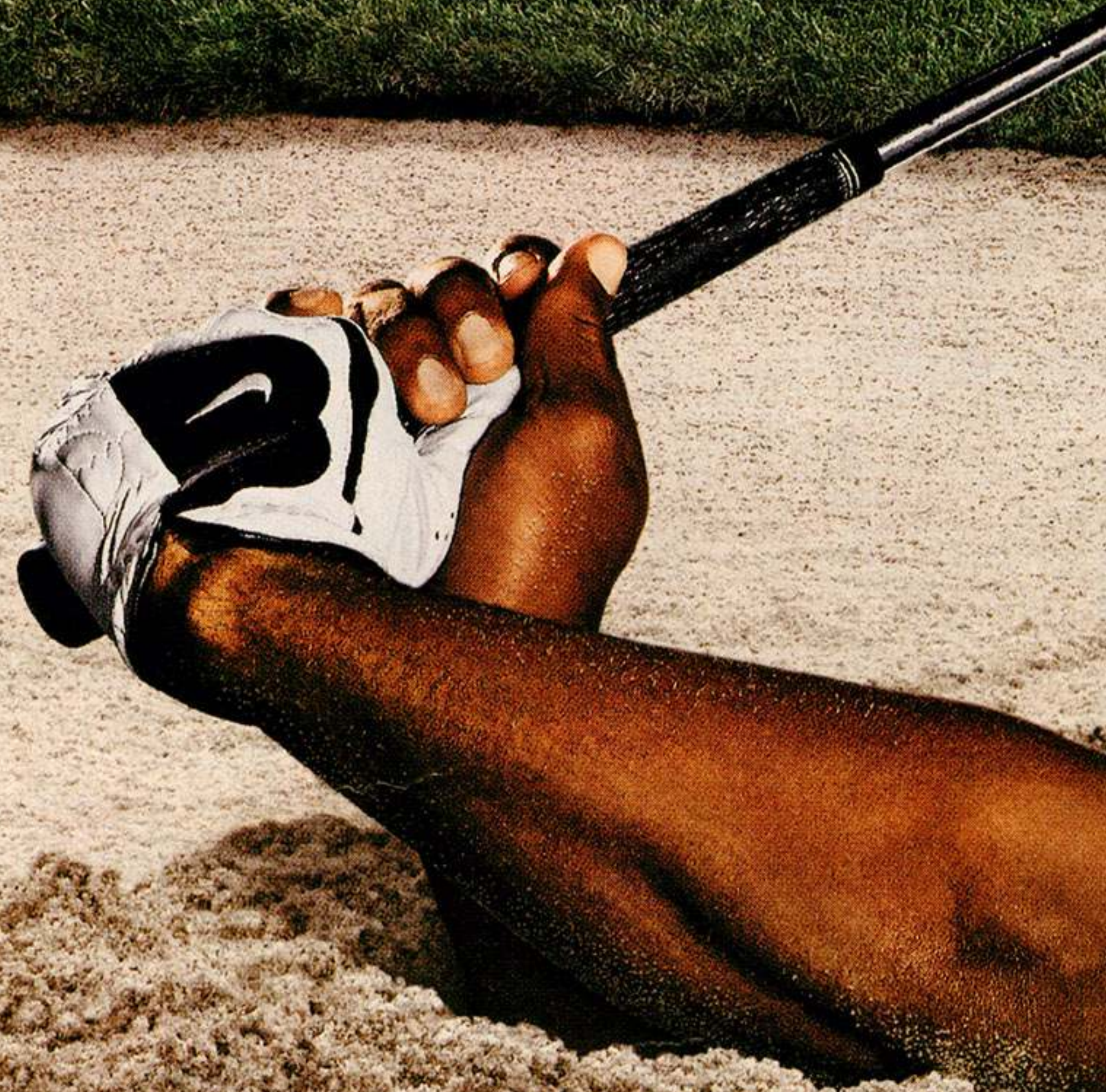


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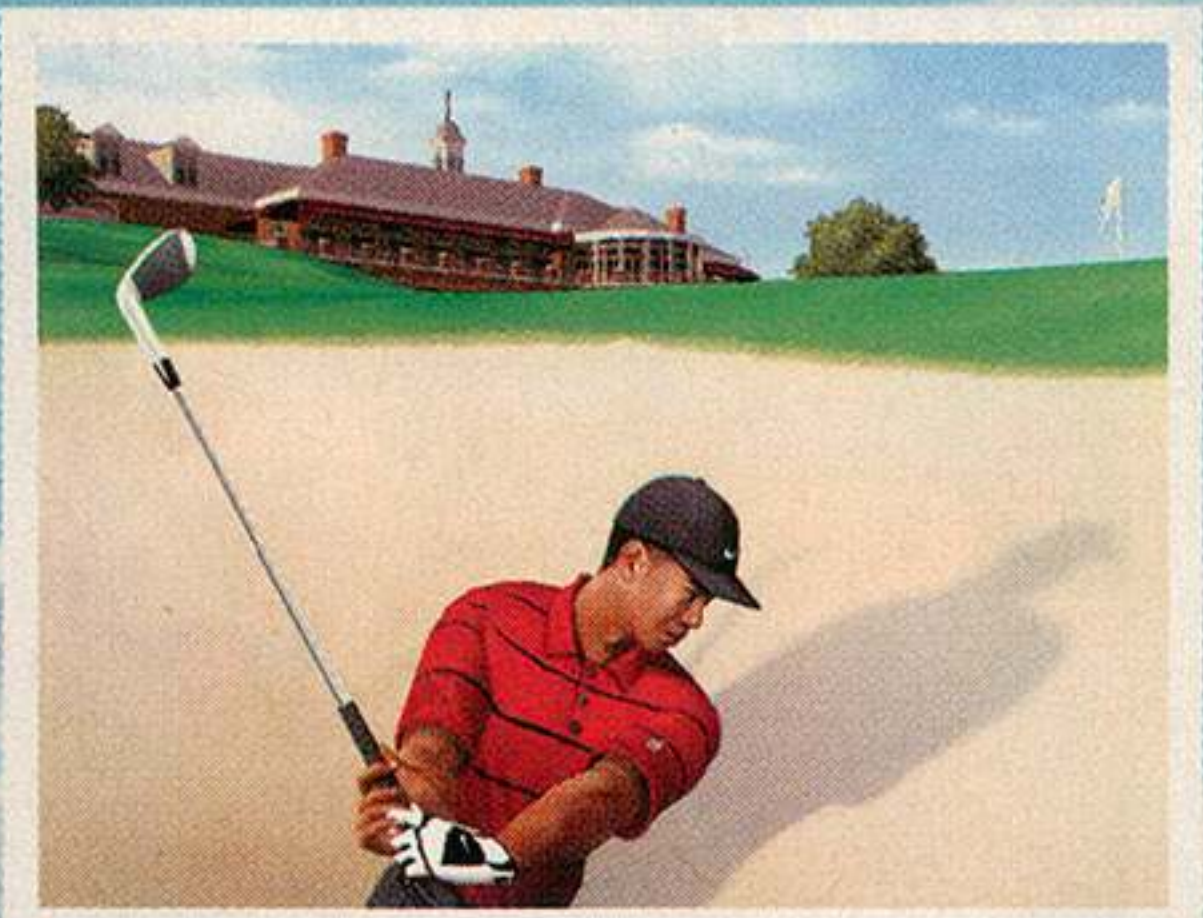


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# Blood Will Tell



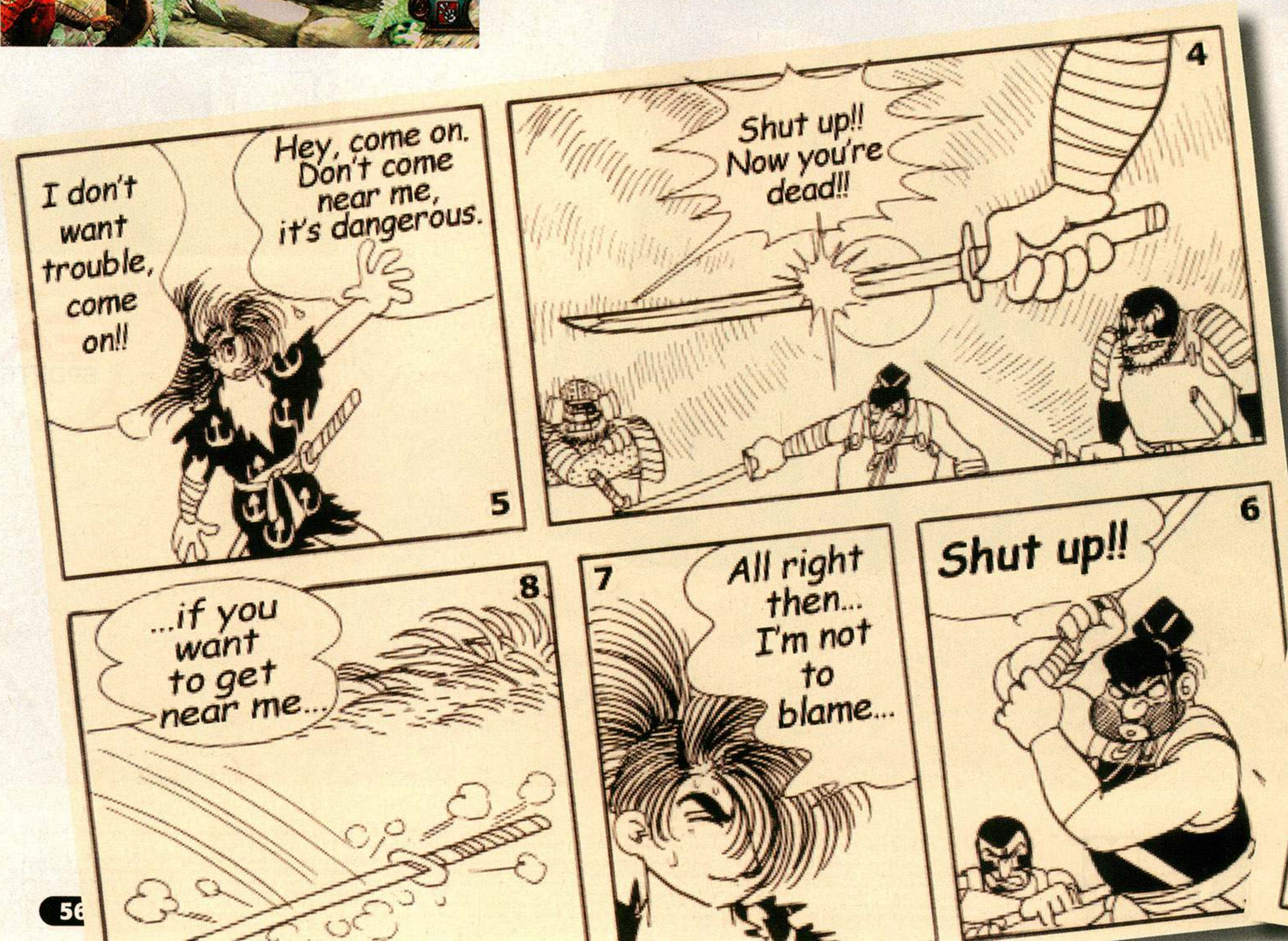
**PE** It can be said that you can train your arms and legs to become deadly weapons. It can also be said that if a sword and bazooka replaced your arms and legs, you'd be a bad mother.... Welcome to Hyakkimaru's world, where some of his 48 missing body parts have been replaced by instruments of war that fire off explosive projectiles and



swing with lethal accuracy. Based on a classic Japanese manga by writer/artist Osamu Tezuka, who also created Astro Boy, Blood Will Tell follows the adventure of Hyakkimaru in his quest to retrieve his missing limbs that were taken by demons. In this third-person hack-n-slash,



you'll guide Hyakkimaru to battle more than 100 demonic creatures using the killer weapons attached to his body. A friend can join in, too, playing as Hyakkimaru's sidekick, Dororo, a young petite girl who possesses astonishingly powerful attacks.







Some fantastic visuals were already evident in a demo of the game. Sticking with Sega's tradition of rapid slashing gameplay, the action never skipped a beat...nor did the storytelling. Once it's released, Blood Will Tell will convey the compelling adventure through hours of beautifully CG rendered cut-scenes. Until then, check out a taste of the *Blood Will Tell* comic.—Four-Eyed Dragon

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Sega Wow  
 ■ Published by Sega ■ Target release date: September



Although it's a relatively unknown manga in the U.S., *Blood Will Tell* (known as *Dororo* in Japan) can still certainly interest even the most casual manga reader. Check out the illustrated action, which has been translated and exclusively given to *GamePro* for print. For more translated pages, go to [GamePro.com](http://GamePro.com).

Created by Osamu Tezuka  
 Translated by Yuji Oniki





## Kameo: Elements of Power

**X** During a rare visit from...er, U.K. developer Rare, we got a look at the latest version of Kameo: Elements of Power, a third-person action/adventure for the Xbox. Very much in the vein of Rare's previous work for Nintendo, Kameo is chock full of stunning graphics, thoughtfully designed obstacles, and engaging characters.

### Not Merely a Guest Appearance

Kameo is a feisty little pixie who has the power to transform herself into several different "warrior" creatures as she fights to free her ancestors from a horde of trolls.



The warriors unveiled so far are Chilla, an ice gorilla; Pummel Weed, a pugilist plant; Major Ruin, a spiked armadillo; and Deep Blue, a sea monster who is the only warrior capable of going underwater. As the game progresses, Kameo will have as many as 10 warrior forms to choose from, each with its own unique powers, strengths, and vulnerabilities. Warrior abilities



must be combined in special ways to progress through levels and defeat bosses.

### Keep the Walrus Alive!

The game unfolds over five worlds, which are split into action and adventure sections. During the adventure segments, Kameo explores villages and completes subquests to collect warriors and power-ups. The adventure segments lead into the action ones, which



present Kameo with troll enemies and platform-based obstacles. During an action segment, you can switch on the fly between Kameo and three warriors. Connect with enough attacks in a row, and you enter Focus mode, which slows down your enemies and allows you to deal extra damage.

### Rare Gems

Kameo's boss battles tend to be arena brawls with a specific tricky ploy required for victory, though there can be several ways to win. To keep gameplay balanced, warriors are not available during certain boss battles. Likewise, there are multiple paths through levels, so exploration and creative application of warrior abilities have the potential to yield exciting results. Rather than rushing to get Kameo out the door for Christmas, Rare says it's more concerned with taking the time to ensure a quality product. Sounds like a great way to ring in the new year.—*Super8 Samurai*

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Rare  
 ■ Published by Microsoft ■ Target release date: January





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## Midway Arcade Treasures 2

**FE X C** For several years, Midway was an arcade powerhouse as the company released some of the greatest quarter-crunchers ever made. Arcade Treasures 2 revives 21 of those hits from yesteryear with multigenre offerings—fighting, action, sports, and driving—and gives each one arcade-perfect treatment, including support of their original four-player configurations. Xbox players can post their high scores online via Xbox Live, too.

### “Use Magic To Kill Death”

Among the action games in the collection are NARC (with a remake on the way for 2005), Wizard of Wor, Xybots, Timber, and Rampage World Tour. Then there's Total Carnage, an ultraviolent update of Smash TV in which one or two players work cooperatively to survive wave after wave of enemies bent on their demise. Co-op play also has a crucial role in the top-down-view Gauntlet II, where up to four characters can join in a quest of monster killing and treasure hunting. Xenophobe features a unique twist as its playing field is divided into three horizontal sections with a player confined to each one; the object is to clear out alien monsters that infest each area.

Driving is represented by S.T.U.N. Runner, Championship Sprint, Spy Hunter 2, and Hard Drivin'. Yet the most eyebrow-raising of the bunch is A.P.B. As Officer Bob, you cruise the highways, arrest suspects, and then beat confessions out of them using the “confess-o-meter” (if your chief walks in during interrogation, the suspect goes free).



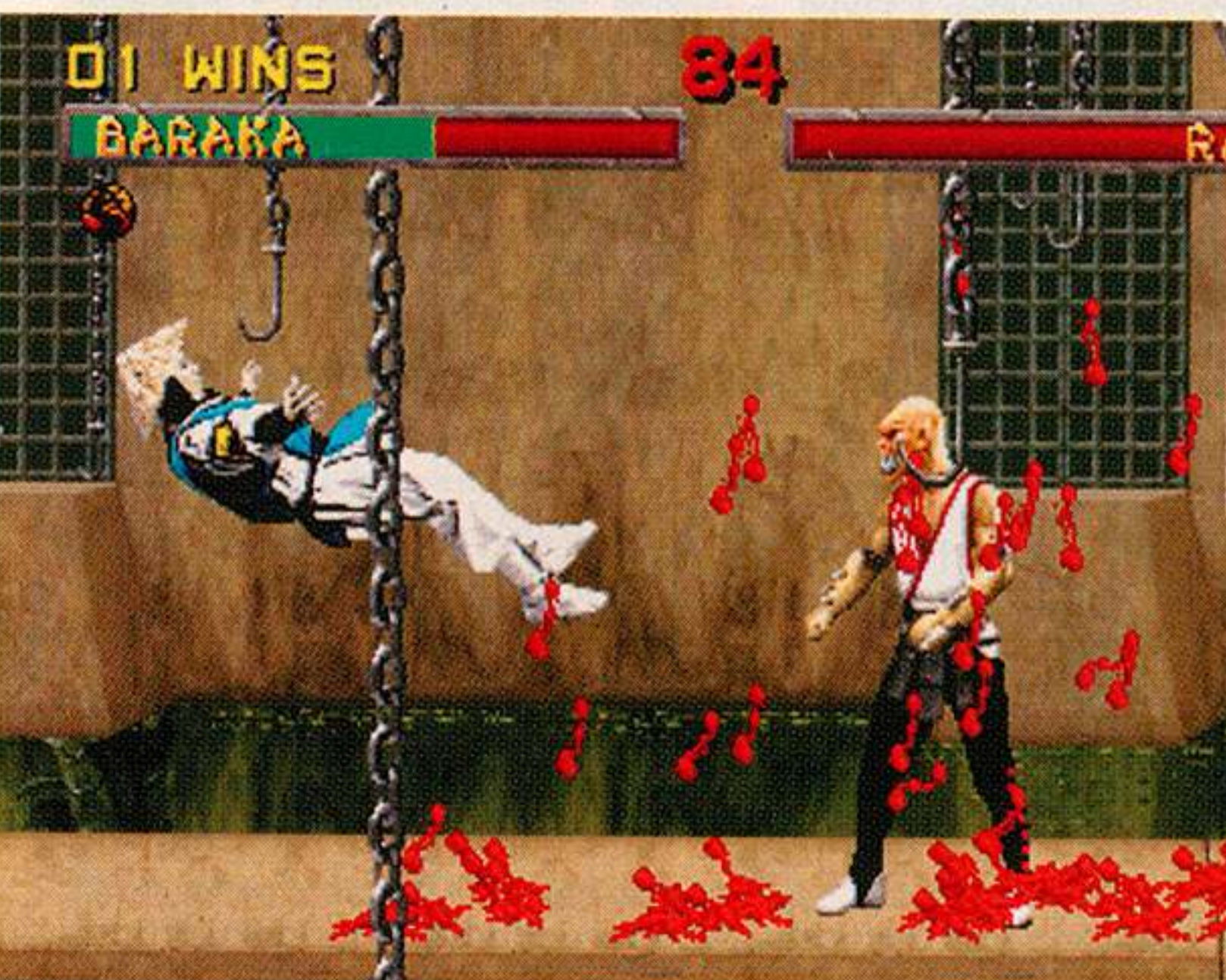
### “Finish Him!”

Perhaps the most robust of Treasures 2's offerings are in the fighting arena with Mortal Kombat II and 3, and Primal Rage. MK was a true trendsetter as it was one of the first graphically violent mainstream video games—especially with its gruesome Fatalities where a character seals an opponent's fate with a grisly finishing move (decapitation, dismemberment, heart removal, etc.). MKII built on the success of its predecessor with an additional Fatality per character, stage-specific finishers, and lighthearted Babalities and Friendships. Released by Time Warner Interactive in the mid-1990s, Primal Rage pitted prehistoric dinosaurs against each other and was also a hit with its bloody and brutal brawls.

Other games in the compilation include Pit Fighter, Steel Talons, Arch Rivals, and Cyberball 2072. Video-game historians will find the bonus DVD content of archived music videos, making-of documentaries, and television commercials of interest. But perhaps the best aspect of these Treasures is the \$20 price.—Major Mike

■ First Look ■ Developed and published by Midway  
 ■ Target release date: October

All screens shown here are from the Xbox version.





## Tak 2: The Staff of Dreams

**FE** Developer Avalanche seems to be taking its platforming rascal Tak in an unexpectedly weirder, slightly darker direction than we originally would have guessed. The game starts off with a hallucinatory dream sequence featuring all sorts of weird, globular acid monsters, while odd jungle spirits run rampant in the “real” world. The older, more suave and battle-ready Tak can execute some surprisingly cool attack moves that make combat more enjoyable, including an easy-to-pull-off backward staff thrust. He also has a mana bar right from the get-go to perform magic like mystically gliding through the air. But more importantly, the game’s cool, innovative animal-interaction puzzles make a return with all sorts of new critters—squirrels, skunks, bees, bears, and fleas—to experiment with. The idea was a bit underused in the original; here’s hoping the developers fully capitalize on it this time around.—*Star Dingo*

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Avalanche  
 ■ Published by THQ ■ Target release date: October



## Otogi 2

**X** The trouble with evil demons is that they seldom stay slain and leave the Earth in peace. Otogi 2 follows the mythical warrior from the first game, Raikoh,

who is summoned from his grave by five brave warriors. A few demons escaped extinction and have gathered again to unleash mayhem on ancient Japan. In addition to Raikoh, the five warriors are also playable and add a larger array of possible attacks as well as several different endings depending on how you play through the game.

The visuals in the preview version looked great, thanks to a completely revamped game engine. Entire stages were filled with buildings and other objects that could be destroyed, and the overall physics were more realistic. The controls were easy to manage with slight variations between

the different characters, while appropriately eerie period Japanese music complemented the action.—*Tokyo Drifter*

■ Hands-On  
 ■ Developed by From Software  
 ■ Published by Sega  
 ■ Target release date: October





# Ace Combat 5



**FE** A preliminary flight analysis gives Ace Combat 5 an enthusiastic salute into the wild blue yonder. Detailed fighter jets look spectacular not only in these screen shots but also in actual gameplay. Areas are much more organic with environmental depth both in the air and on the ground. And in keeping with tradition, Namco has kept the aerial controls to a minimum and the dogfighting to a maximum. As in past Ace Combat games, you'll need to dodge enemy flak as you lay waste to multiple bogeys at one time. The game even features an arcade mode where the sole objective is to bring down fighters as fast as you can.



The story mode has a bit more depth. Now at your command are three wingmen who can be directed in real time to attack specific targets or cover your behind. You can also talk to your teammates (by answering yes/no questions) as you fly, and before each mission, you can choose everyone's plane (from a lot of 50-plus aircraft) and weapon loadout. Your tour includes over 30 missions and flyovers in a variety of environments, including a cityscape, the ocean, mountain ranges, and tropical areas. After three years of waiting, you can now start boarding flight AC5.—*Four-Eyed Dragon*

■ Hands-On ■ Developed and published by Namco  
 ■ Target release date: October



# Donkey Konga

**G** Already a...umm...hit in Japan, Nintendo's rhythm game, Donkey Konga, is gearing up for a U.S. release. Utilizing a controller that consists of two adjoined drum pads and a microphone, you have to follow musical rhythm and onscreen cues, and hit either the left pad, right pad, both pads simultaneously, or clap when prompted. The mechanics are pretty simple, but the patterns you have to follow can get pretty complex, making the game very frantic and fun.

For the Stateside release, the list of tunes has changed dramatically. Gone are the obscure (to western players at least) J-pop songs of the Japanese release, and in their place are relatively faithful renditions of "Rock Lobster" by the B-52's, "Whip It" by Devo, and Queen's "We Will Rock You," the last of which is a perfect match for a game like this. Thrown into the mix are some classical pieces, along with the theme songs for Pokémon, Super Mario Bros., and The Legend of Zelda.

Skillful percussionists can collect currency that can be used to unlock arcade-style mini-games and alternate konga sounds from classic NES games. The game features numerous modes of play, including competitive multi-player and cooperative games in which up to four players can work together jam-session style to create ensemble pieces.—*Iron Monkey*



■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Namco  
 ■ Published by Nintendo  
 ■ Target release date: September





## Second Sight

**X** Codemasters' upcoming *Second Sight* is the latest entry in what could very well become the psychic subgenre of third-person action games that began with *Galerians*. In *Second Sight*, players assume the role of John Vattic, a spoon-bending one-man army who wakes up in a high-tech laboratory with amnesia and an arsenal of mental powers. At Vattic's disposal are astral projection, self-healing abilities, precognition, and lethal psychic blasts, but his most useful mind weapon is telekinesis, which can be used to dismantle security cameras, lob computer monitors at enemies, and grab guns from across a room. Vattic is also adept with firearms, and the game utilizes a fantastic cover system much like the one in *kill.switch*. There hasn't been much hype surrounding *Second Sight*, but presupposing the bouncy physics get tweaked a bit, it could become a cult classic.—*Iron Monkey*

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Free Radical Design  
 ■ Published by Codemasters ■ Target release date: September

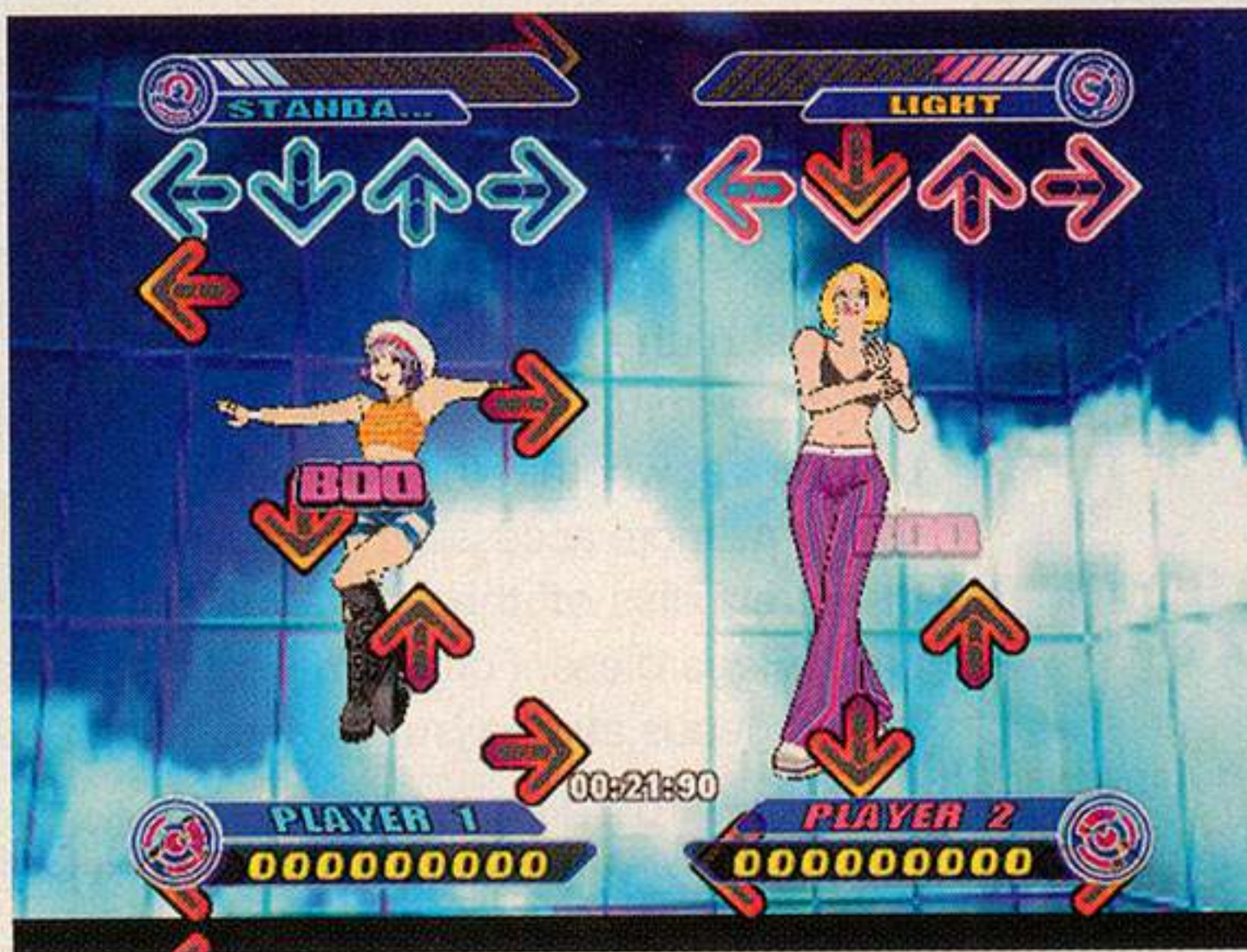
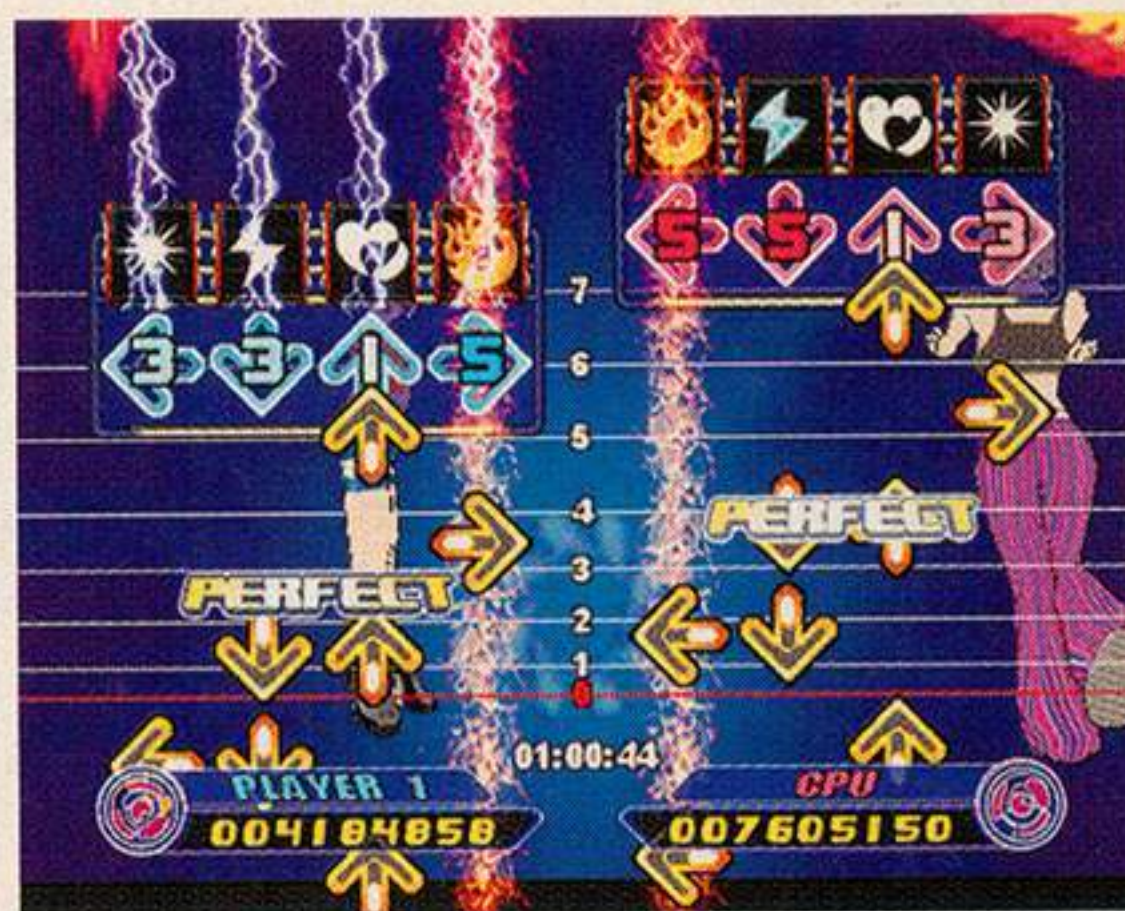
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## Dance Dance Revolution Ultramix 2

**X** As the latest home-console installment in the seemingly endless barrage of *Dance Dance* titles from Konami, *DDR Ultramix 2* takes the footloose franchise online with a host of cool Xbox Live-exclusive features. *Ultramix 2* enables you to conduct competitive online tournaments for up to 16 players and download new content like music, dance steps, and characters. Other new features include several offline game modes like the all-new cooperative *Synch* mode, where you and a buddy must match steps while mastering a song, and the *Team Battles* mode in which multiple teams of two go head-to-head in a battle of timing and precision. *Ultramix 2* also has a *Work Out* mode that lets you keep track of the number of calories you've burned while busting your fly two-step in addition to several tracks of popular licensed music exclusive to the United States release.—*Bones*

■ First Look ■ Developed by Konami Hawaii  
 ■ Published by Konami  
 ■ Target release date: November



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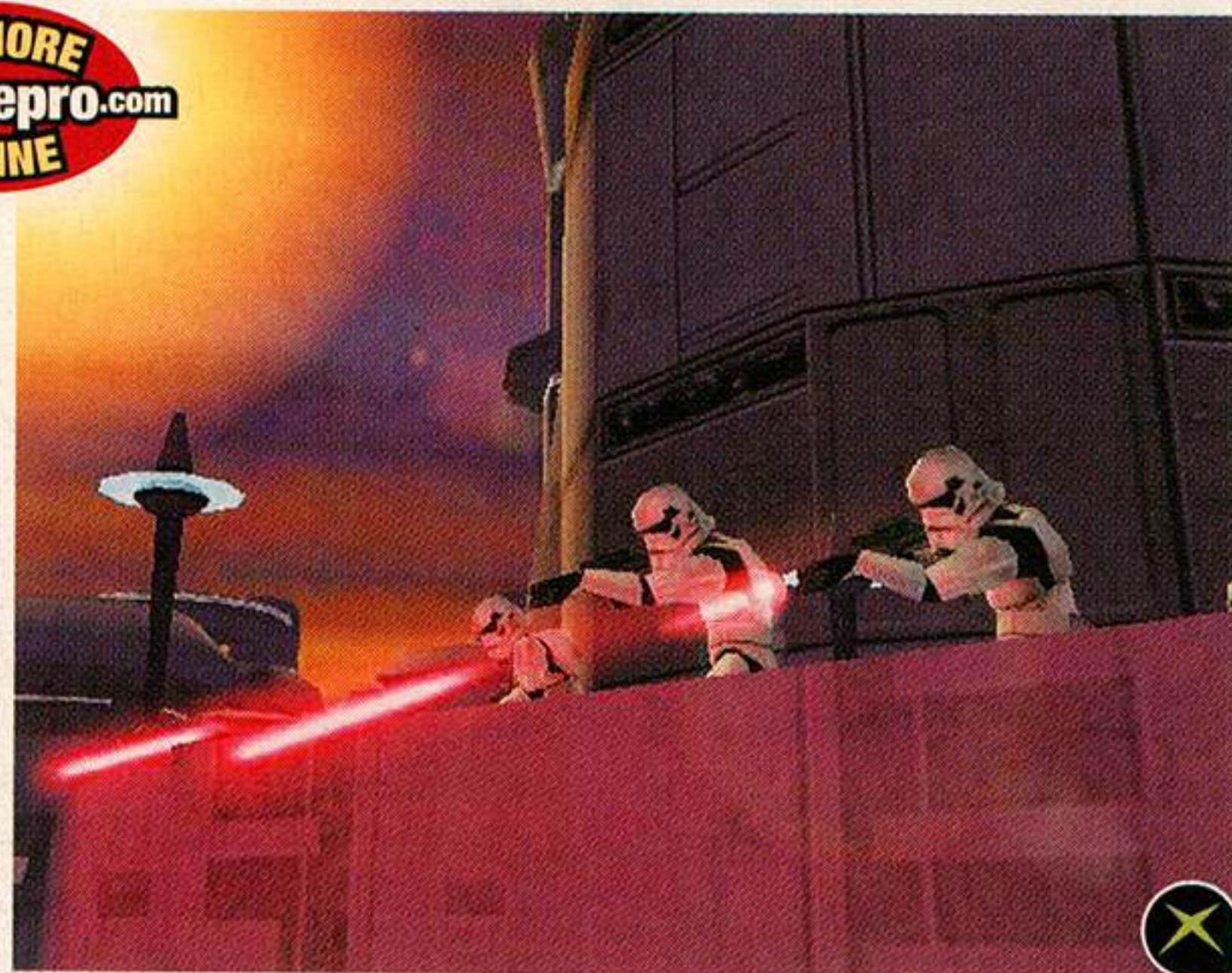
# Star Wars Battlefront

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**PE** **X** If the Jedi Knight games let you do everything a Jedi could do, then Star Wars Battlefront will let you do everything else from piloting AT-ATs and coordinating all-out assaults on Separatist forces to occupying planets and sniping Ewoks. Geared specifically toward online play (up to 16 people can play at once), the team-based shooter offers players open-ended, nonlinear gameplay and compelling "what if" scenarios spanning all six films. Choosing among four factions—Rebel, Imperial, Separatist, and Republic—you play as any of five character classes, including basic infantry, antivehicle, sniper, pilot, and a special class unique to each faction. Each team begins with an allotted amount of reinforcement points, and the



goal of the game is to keep the enemy team from spawning reinforcements by capturing designated command posts scattered throughout each map.



After spending some time with Battlefront, we're excited with the overall results, although some areas will need some fine-tuning before the game ships in September. Vehicles in particular can use more balancing as some are way too powerful while others are difficult to control, and a lack of varied mission objectives could make the constant capturing and recapturing of command posts monotonous after some time. Both the PS2 and Xbox versions are shipping to coincide with the Star Wars Trilogy DVD set, though we're most stoked about the visually superior and smooth-running Xbox build.—Iron Monkey

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Pandemic Studios  
■ Published by LucasArts ■ Target release date: September

# Forgotten Realms: Demon Stone

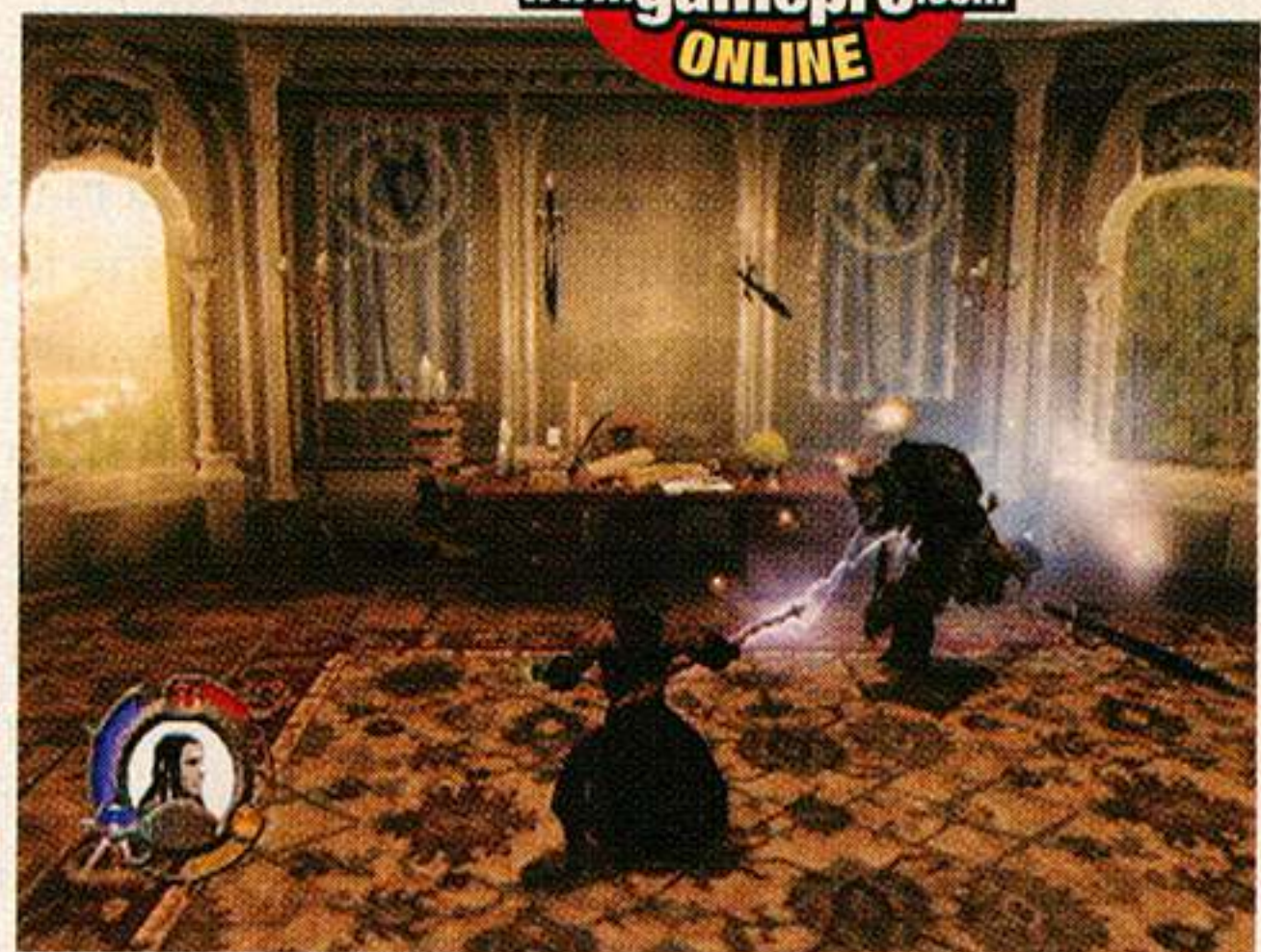
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**PE** **X** Although Forgotten Realms: Demon Stone is Stormfront Studios' first crack at producing a third-person action D&D title, the developer has more than enough talent on hand to do justice to the license. In the four-chapter preview, the graphics already looked incredibly polished, and the soundtrack was sweepingly cinematic. Tremendous attention has gone into using



creative virtual cinematography and adding immersive background details. If anything, the preview proves that Demon Stone has stellar production values.

Demon Stone's game engine traces its lineage back to The Legend of Alon Dar via The Two Towers. Several new features have been introduced to take advantage of the D&D tie-in. For example, weapons, armor, and items are upgradeable in a manner similar to the attack combo upgrades from The Two Towers. The improved engine also lets you switch quickly among the Fighter, Rouge, and Mage that make up your party, though at times you're forced to use only one character (usually for stealthy endeavors involving the Rogue). Gameplay has been polished as well with many situations requiring that you do more than merely hack a path to the boss.



Most of the technical D&D stuff is hidden from the player, but it's unclear yet whether this will make the game more accessible to noobs or merely piss off the core audience. Regardless, Forgotten Realms: Demon Stone will be worth looking at, if only for the gorgeous audio/visual presentation.—Super8 Samurai

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Stormfront Studios  
■ Published by Atari ■ Target release date: September (PS2); November (Xbox)



All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.



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## Jak 3

**PE** Even though Jak 3 will cap off the current Jak and Daxter trilogy, the guys aren't sitting around twiddling their thumbs. Among the twists that Jak 3 will introduce to the series are extensive driving and piloting a variety of unusual vehicles. The main fleet consists of Mad Max-style dune buggies and mucho motoring through the game's 60-plus levels.

Jak has the opportunity to steer six types of sand vehicles, a rocket-propelled hang glider, hovercraft, and other machines including his hover board. The preview version featured buggies in intense combat across several desert levels. The numerous bumps, jumps, and tumultuous turns were a major workout for the sensitive analog stick-based steering. Bug-

gies come armed with a variety of self-targeting weapons like the chaingun you use against the huge burrowing centipedes.

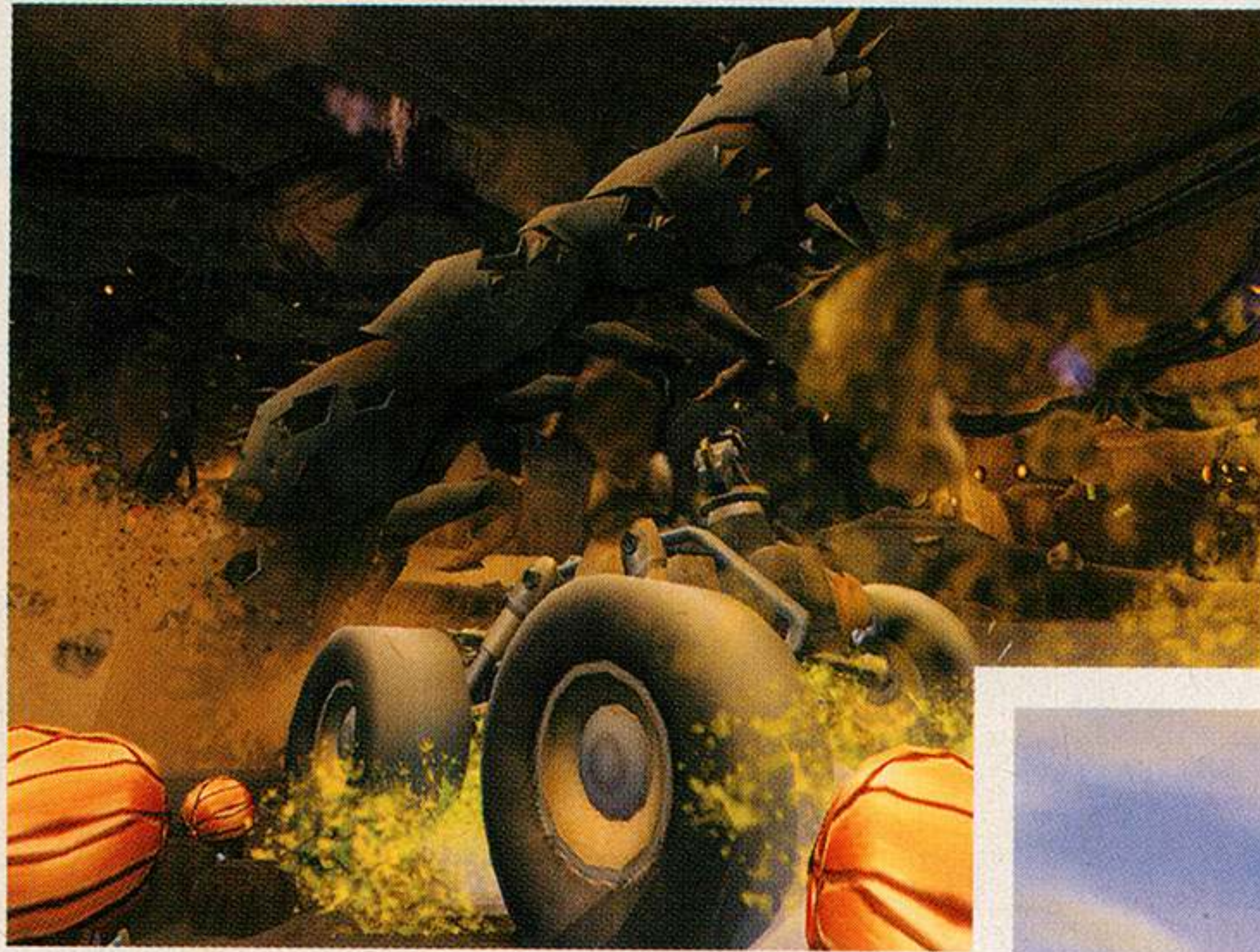
You'll also have to master two-stick machines like the lumbering Blast Bot in Haven City. The right stick guides Bot movement while the left stick aims a pulse weapon.

Daxter also gets major driving time to pad an increase in his overall playable minutes. For example, at one point he has to ride

a torpedo like a bucking bronco to blast a hole through a barrier to make an escape.

With Jak 3 promising to solve the mystery of the Precursors, finally defeat the Metalheads, and bring closure to Daxter's dilemma as a person-turned-animal, the vehicle-based carnage should make for a wild ride to the series' finale.—*Undercover Lover*

■ Update ■ Developed by Naughty Dog ■ Published by Sony ■ Target release date: November



## Destroy All Humans

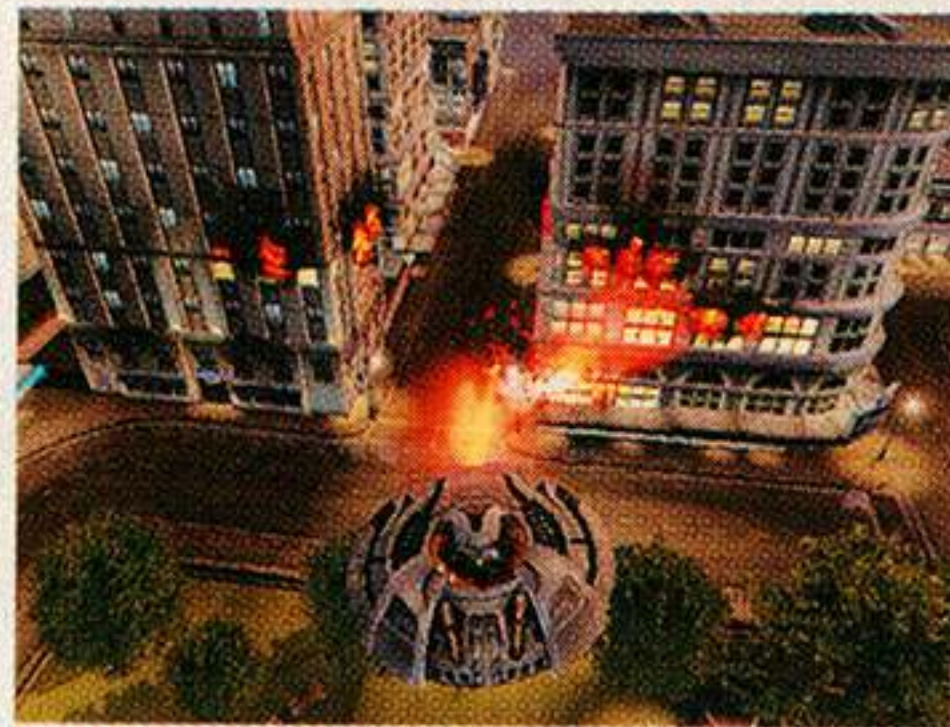
**PE X** Developed by Pandemic Studios (Full Spectrum Warrior, Star Wars Battlefront), Destroy All Humans is a pleasant tale of a little blue man, the brother he lost, and the planet he tried to enslave. Playing as a maniacal Martian, you have two goals: find your missing brother and harvest as much DNA from the local yahoos as you can. The Grand



Theft Auto-inspired, open-ended game-play enables you to run amok in a 1950s-era suburban sprawl where you're free to telepathically toss or vaporize people to your mean little heart's content. If you're taking a sneakier route, you can scan people's brains and then assume their shape to get past checkpoint guards, or just brainwash them into doing your evil bidding. Or you can hop into your flying saucer and obliterate entire city blocks until those weak-minded humans beg to serve your every twisted desire.

Between rampages, the newspapers will spin-doctor their headlines and tap into Cold War paranoia by pinning your UFO joyriding and cattle mutilations on Communist spies and weather balloons. There are no limits. The world is yours for the taking. So strap into your spaceship, grab your Zap-O-Matic and Quantum Destructor, and do your people proud. And remember: The only good human is a dead human!—*Iron Monkey*

■ First Look ■ Developed by Pandemic Studios ■ Published by THQ ■ Target release date: Spring 2005





## Close Combat: First to Fight

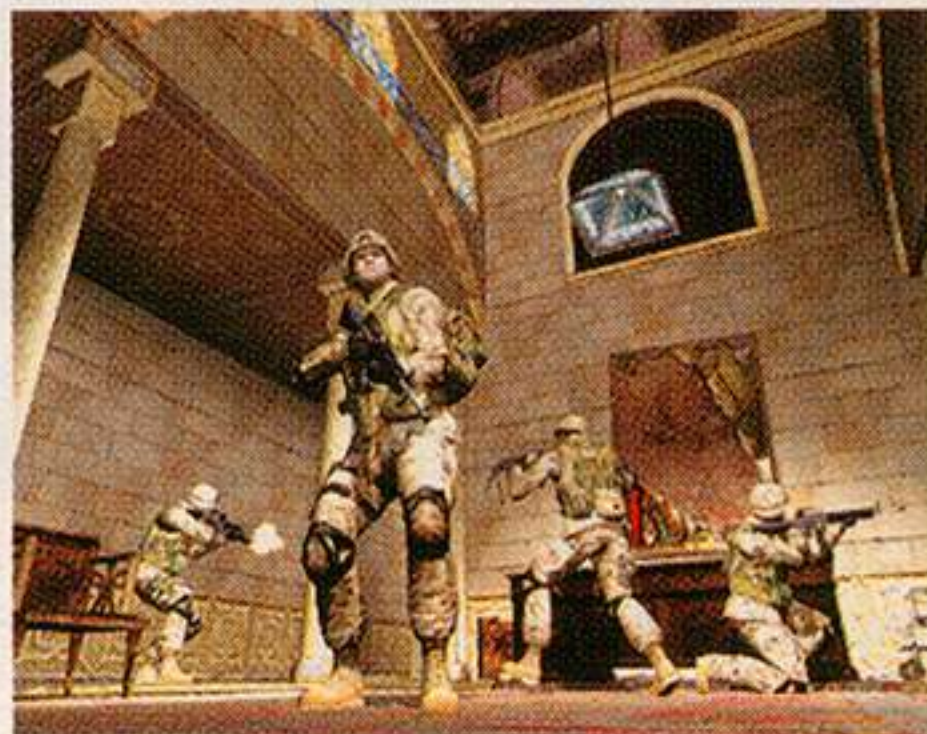
**X** The oldest branch in the U.S. military is finally enlisted in consumer interactive entertainment, but this isn't just slapping the Marines' name on an ordinary FPS squad-based game.

First to Fight closely follows the Marine Corps' urban wartime doctrine, using "Ready-Team-Fire-Assist" tactics in a modern Middle Eastern city.

In this version of military warfare, you take control of a four-man fire-team, leading patrols down narrow streets, flanking enemies, and, if need be, calling in assistance from the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) to eliminate hostiles with the use of gunships, armored forces, and mortar fire. The action is going to be so real that the Marines are not only fully supporting this game, these grunts are also going to be using it as a training simulator. Honor, courage, and commitment have been finely engraved in each Marine. Come this fall, you'll fully understand why.

—Four-Eyed Dragon

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by Destineer**  
 ■ **Published by Gathering** ■ **Target release date: September**



## Altered Beast

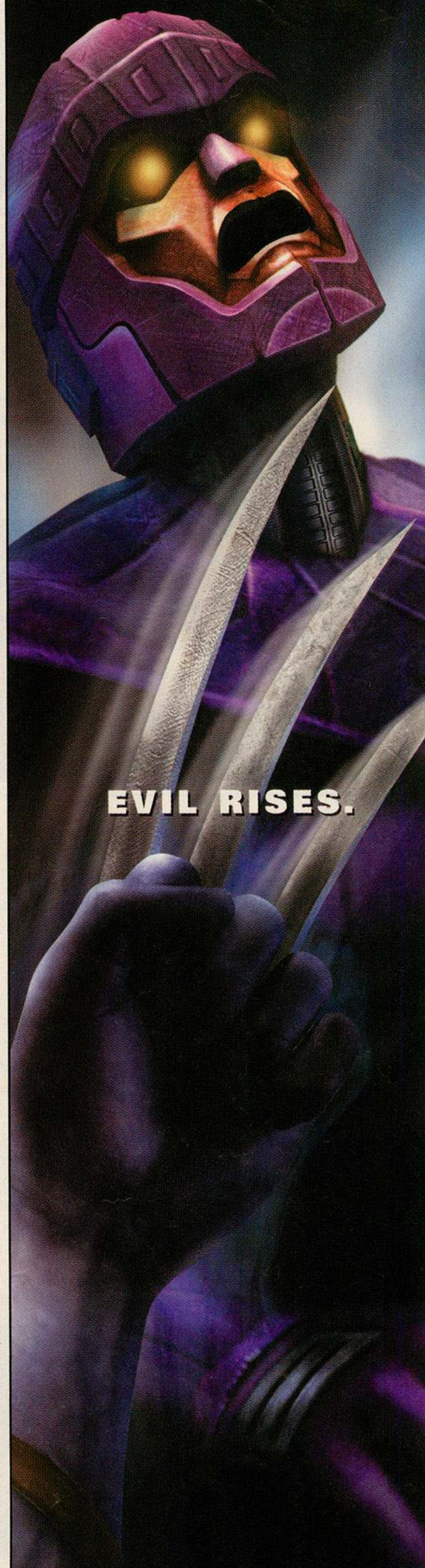


Fifteen years and 128 bits later, Altered Beast, one of the earliest and strangest games of the 1990s, is getting another installment later this year on the PlayStation 2. Gone are the 2D, side-scrolling, quasi-Greek mythological aspects of the original as the new Altered Beast is set in a modern 3D world where you play as a special military operative investigating a genetic outbreak in a small town. The game promises wave after wave of mutated enemies as you battle through a series of failed genetic experiments and use your monster-morphing ability to transform into more than eight creatures, including a dragon, werewolf, and minotaur. Each beast possesses a distinct set of moves and combat abilities that can be further enhanced by tinkering with your genetic DNA to create powerful new attributes for each creature type.—Bones

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by Sega WOW**  
 ■ **Published by Sega** ■ **Target release date: Fourth Quarter 2004**



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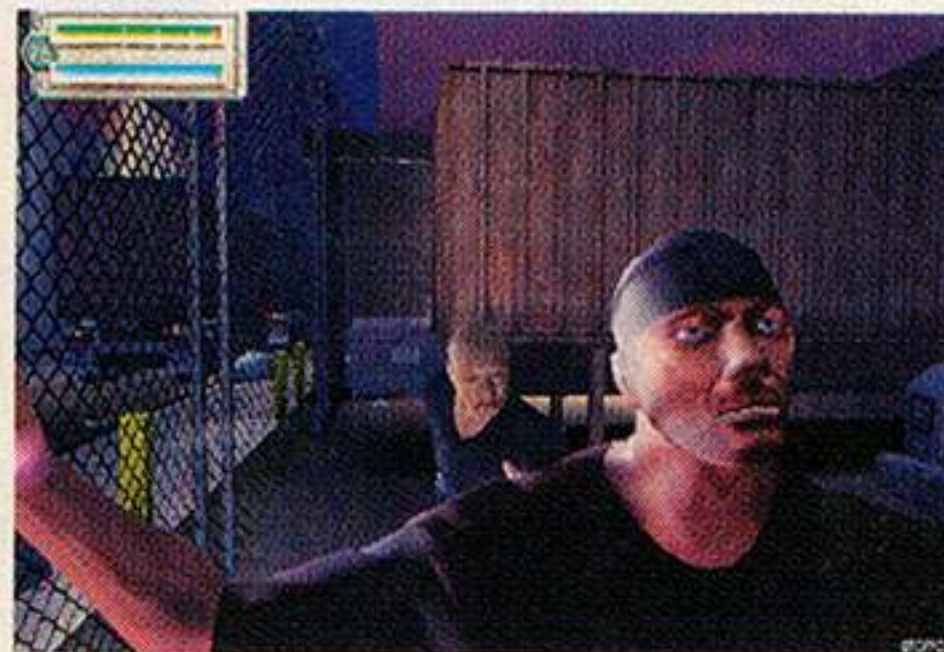


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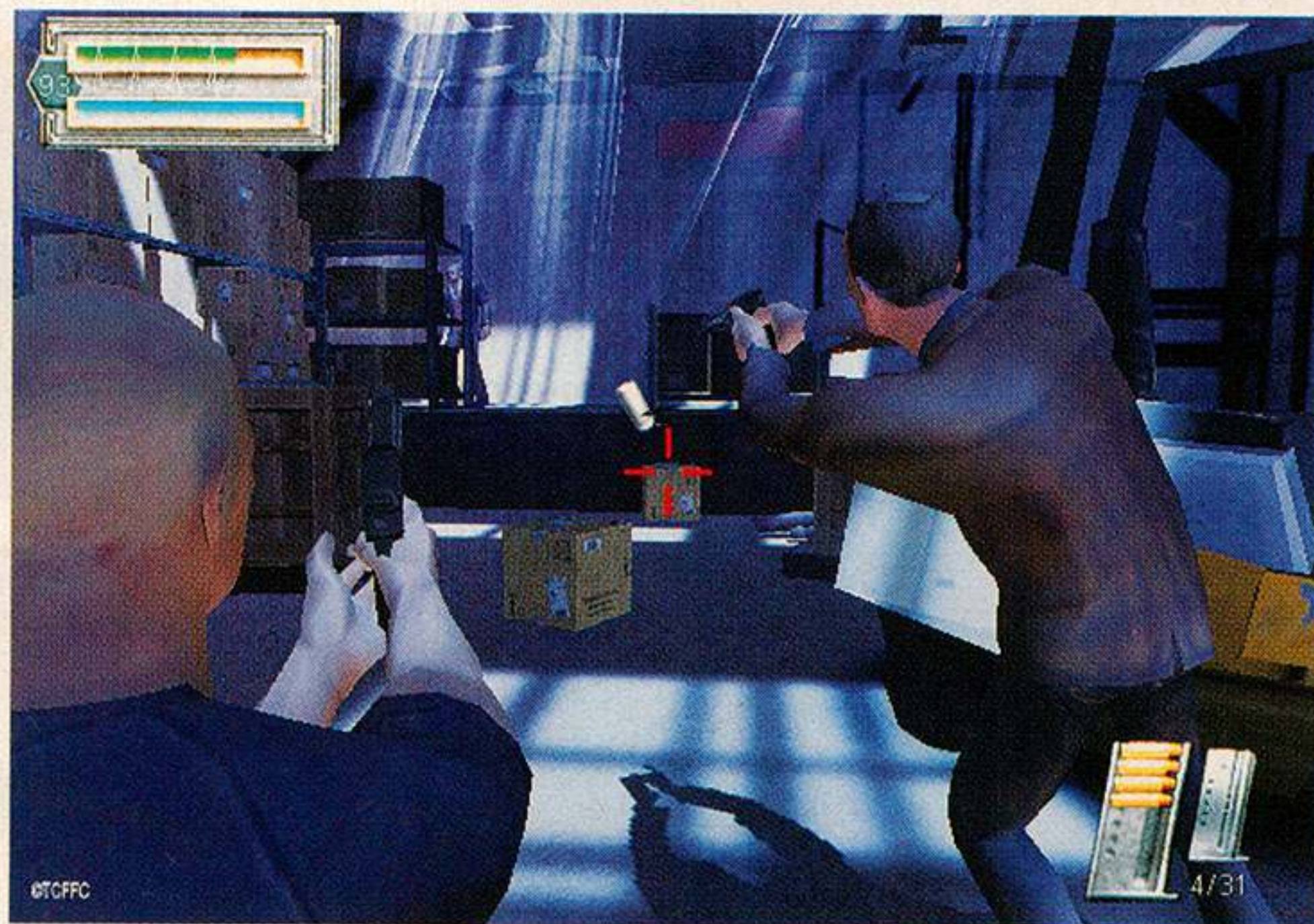
## The Shield

**PE X** The television series *The Shield* is renowned for its gritty depiction of law and disorder on the tough streets of Los Angeles (a sort of dark-side companion to *Law & Order*). The up-

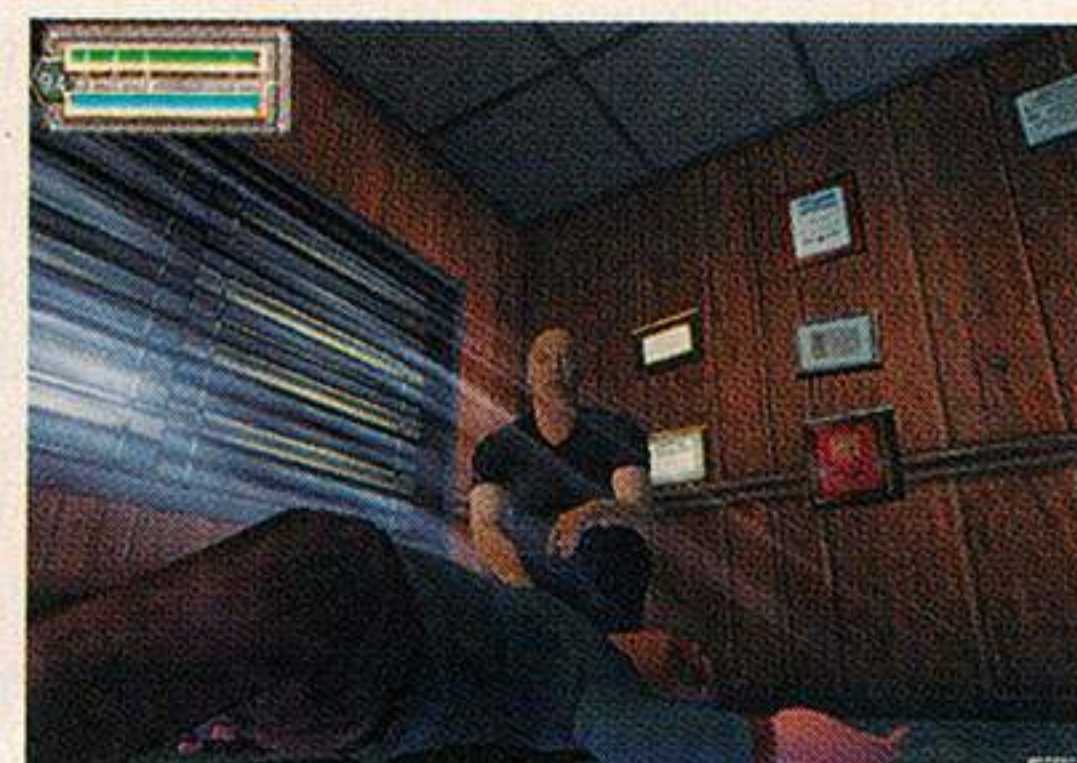
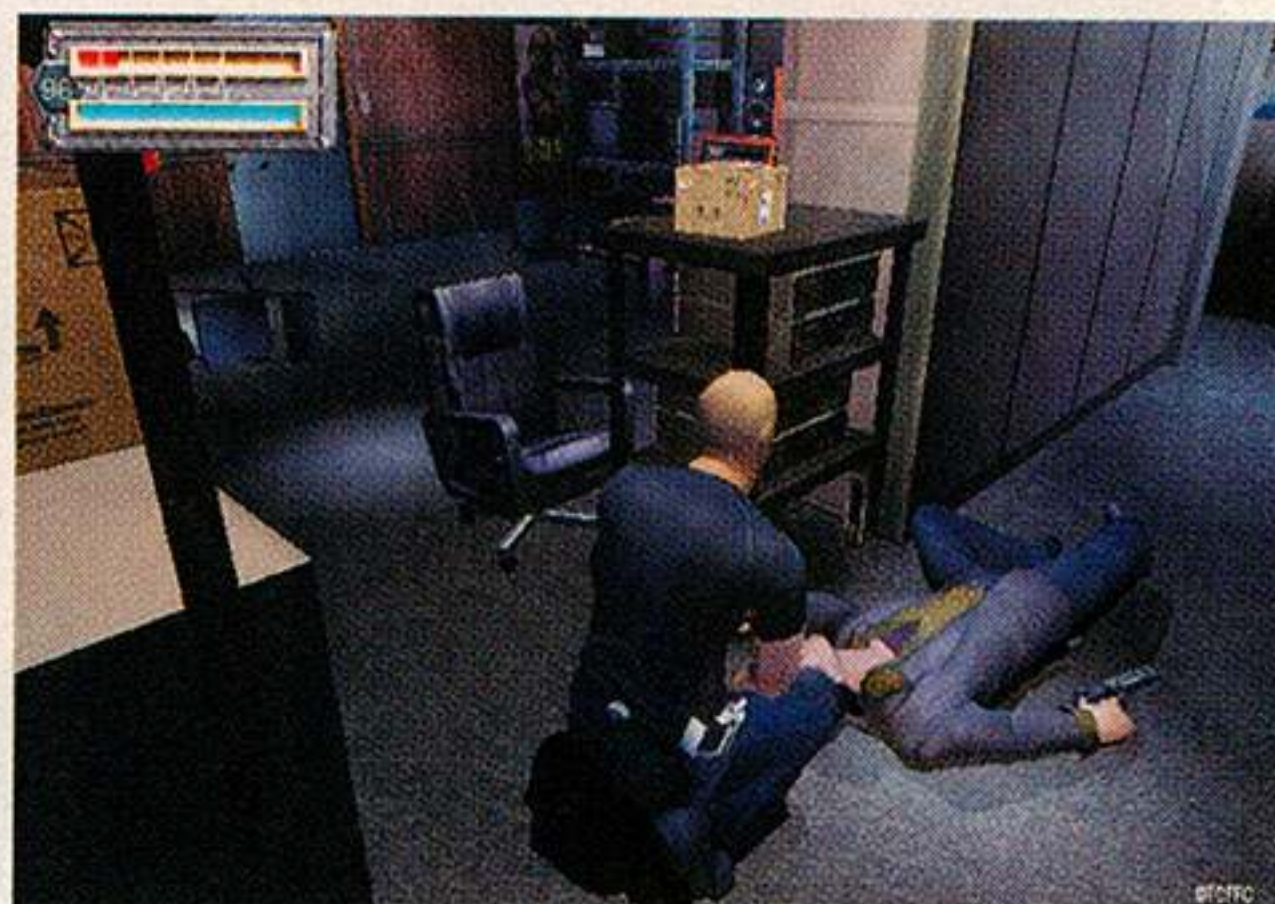


coming series-based game hopes to duplicate that experience with third-person action/adventure play mechanics that put you in the role of Vic Mackey, leader of the notorious Farmingham Strike Team. Busting crooks is only half the battle: Vic must keep Internal Affairs at bay, add to his retirement fund, and, above all, retain the loyalty of fellow Strike Team members. Vic can intimidate suspects, plant evidence, take bribes, and even use police brutality to get the job done. An early playable version of the game featured an intriguing mix of strategy and action that fit well within the universe of the television show. Fans of the franchise who fear the game to be another quickie license deal will be happy to know that the series' creator, Shawn Ryan, is one of the creative consultants for the project.—Major Mike

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by Point of View** ■ **Published by Sammy Studios** ■ **Target release date: Spring 2005**



All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.



## Yager

**X** Yager is one of those games that binds the common feel of first-person shooters with the stunning visuals of aerial combat. Your name is Hagnus Tide, and while seated in the cockpit of what is called the LR 4004 Archer (a.k.a. The Sagittarius), your main job is to take down any intruders in the vicinity as you patrol the area. For variation in combat maneuvering, there are two modes of flight for you to master—jet and hover. Despite the differences in the control schemes between the two modes, everything about flying remains straightforward, allowing you to focus on the important things like your objectives and scoping out the breathtaking scenery. But while the controls stay relatively simple, acquiring new missions now depends even more greatly on your ability to rank in those currently available. And although it may not feel like you're being watched, the game may demand a bit more precision than you think. Yager is filled with all sorts of prettiness, but as this preview build lacked more playable levels, we can only hope that the action gets more intense when the full version launches. Nevertheless, be sure to find out the outcome of Yager in the review this fall.—Test Monkey

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■ **Hands-On** ■ **Developed by Yager Development**  
■ **Published by Kemco** ■ **Target release date: September**

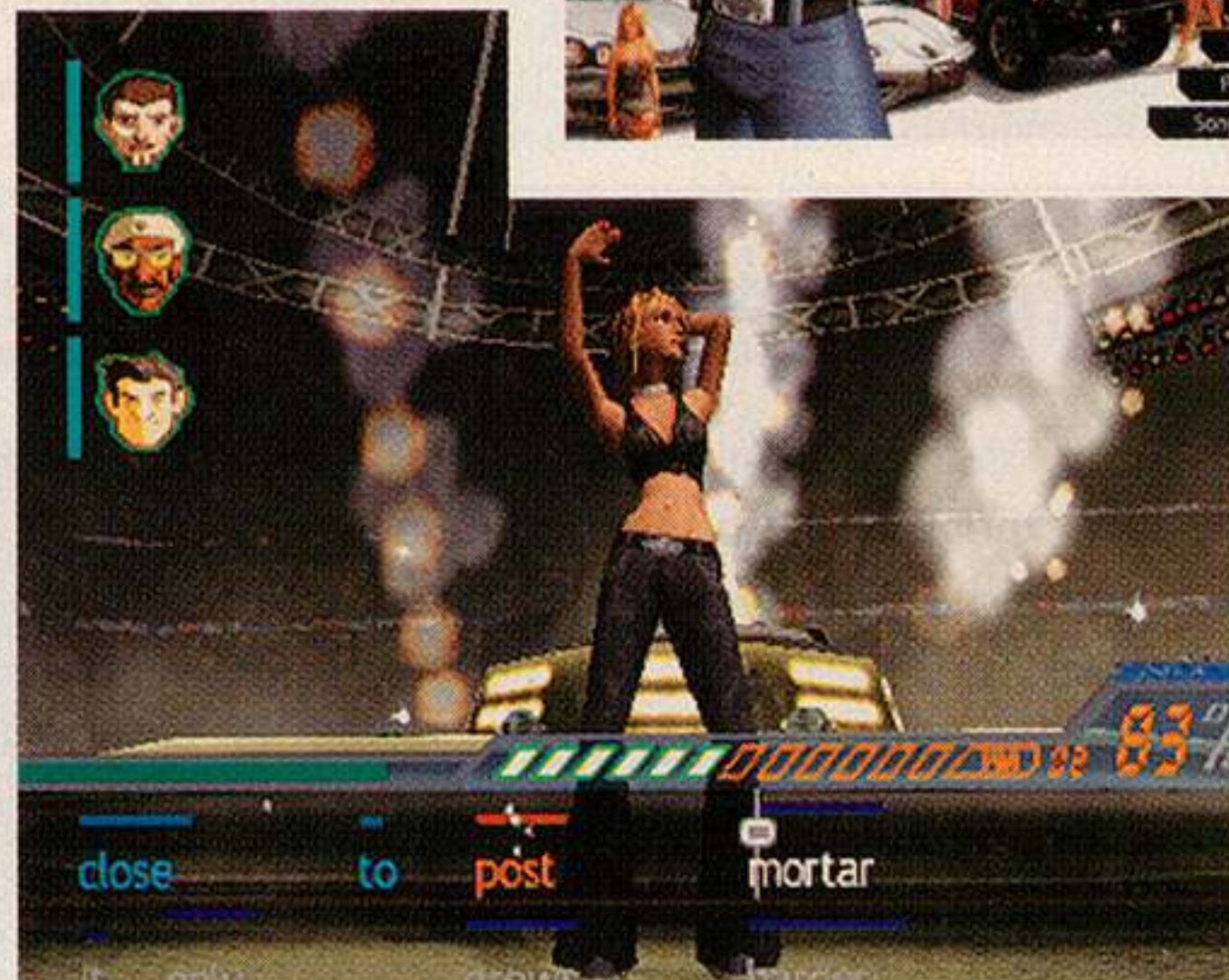




## Get on Da Mic

**FE** If you were inspired by Slim Shady's *8 Mile*, then Eidos's *Get on Da Mic* could be the training wheel you need for your rise to hip-hop stardom. Using the PS2 headset, you can attempt to rap along with the lyrics of over 40 music tracks from today's most prominent hip-hop artists, including songs from Ice Cube, Jay Z, Lil Kim, and Missy Elliot. Battle it out against a friend in the two-player competition or get discovered in the single-player mode as you rap to please onlookers, eventually making it onstage and then performing on a demo tape. A near-complete version of the game already recognized voice tones and made it easy to read the complex wording of well-known songs. The only thing missing was a complete list of featured artists and a record producer hiding in the crowd waiting to "discover" your mad talents.—*Four-Eyed Dragon*

- **Hands-On** ■ **Developed by Artificial Mind & Movement**
- **Published by Eidos Interactive**
- **Target release date: October**



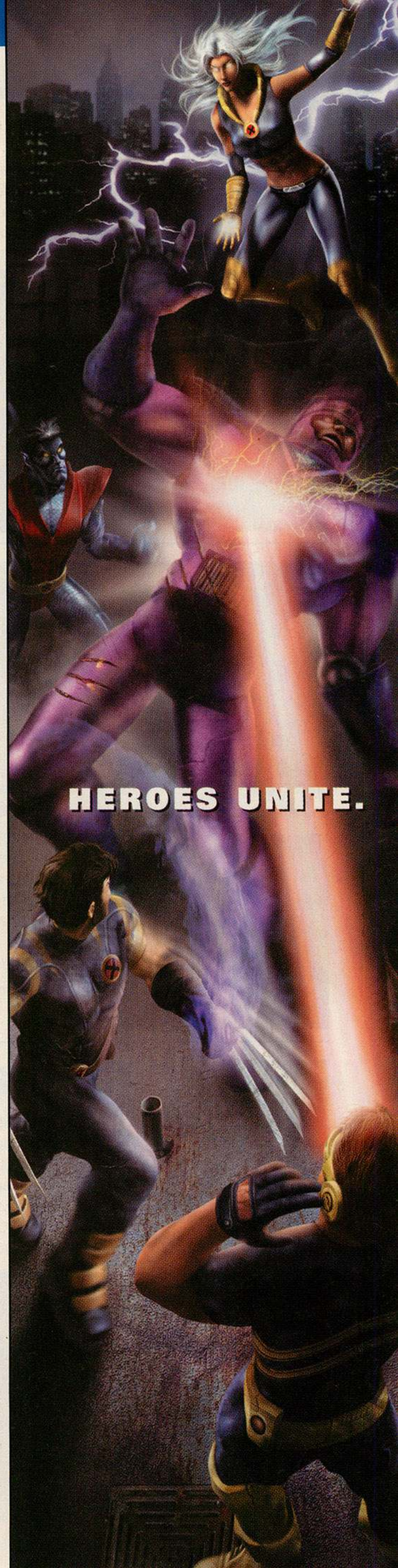
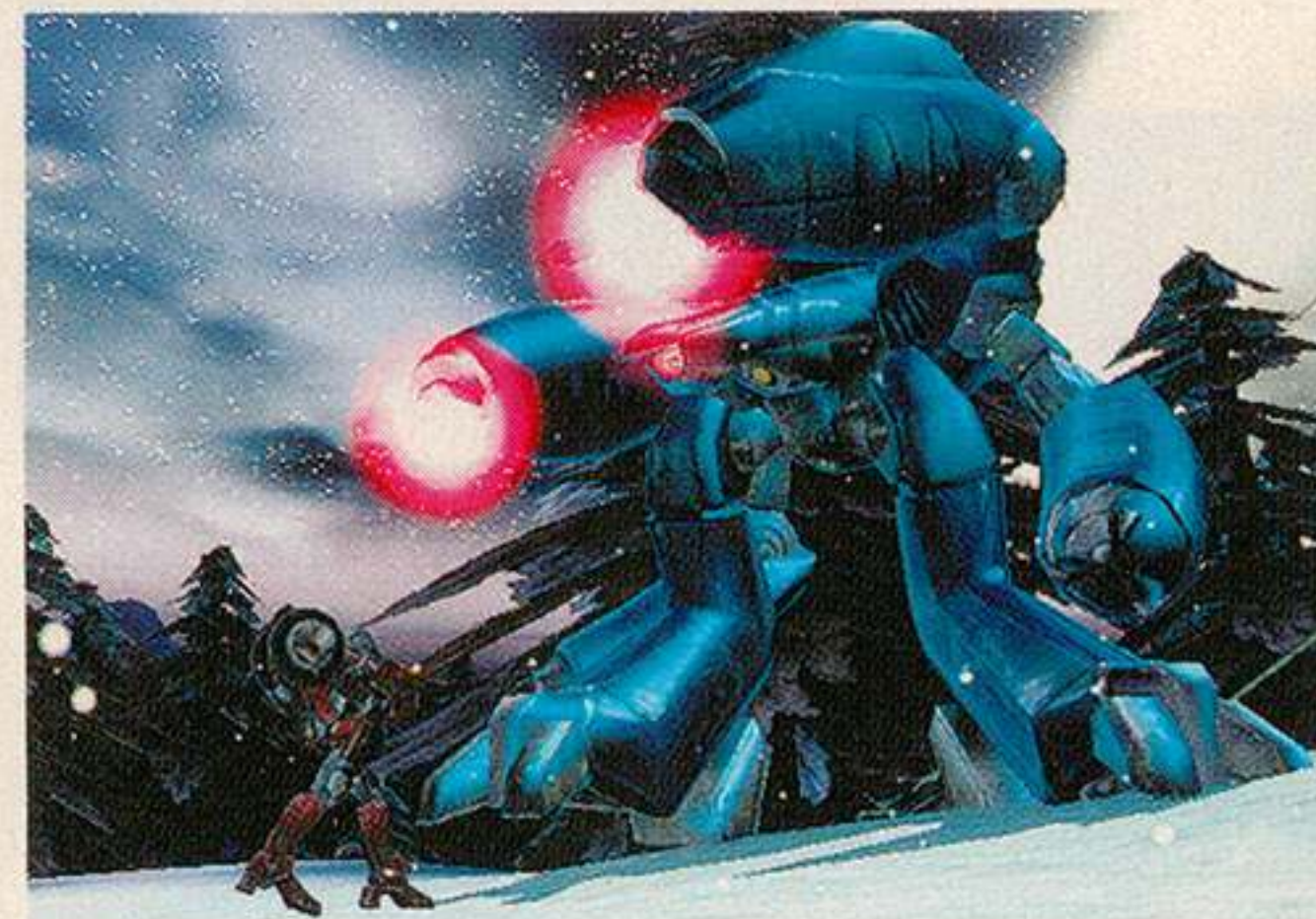
## Robotech: Invasion

**FE X** Based on the Wildstorm comic series, *Robotech: Invasion* takes place during the third story arc of the *Robotech* saga—Genesis Climber Mospeada for those die-hard Japanimation fans. Earth has been occupied by an alien race called the Invid, who have come to conduct evolutionary experiments and harvest the Cosmic Flower. Only a handful of resistance fighters remain to liberate the Earth.

*Invasion* will be a free roaming, polygonal, first-person shooter revolving around the Cyclone motorcycle mecha—a drastic departure from the previous cel-shaded, third-person *Robotech* title. With eight-player online capabilities, two playable characters with parallel story arcs, the ability to switch between first- and third-person view, and a huge archive of source material to pull from, *Invasion* will be deep in design aesthetics and highly anticipated by 1980s mecha fans.—*Rice Burner*

- **First Look** ■ **Developed by Vicious Cycle**
- **Published by Gathering** ■ **Target release date: Fall 2004**

*These concept screens are from the development system and don't represent a specific platform.*



**HEROES UNITE.**



# The Dukes of Hazzard: Return of the General Lee

**PE X** With 18 missions in the single-player story mode and an unlockable (albeit limited) multi-player mode, Return of the General Lee toes the line between being a true racing title and a mixed driving game in the vein of the original Driver. The preview build we played featured all the kitschy coolness of the television show with excellent voice acting and narration by the original cast. Abundant use of the catchy theme song is interspersed with assorted banjo tunes. At present, the



Head-to-Head and Hot Pursuit multiplayer modes weren't yet playable, but the Demolition Derby between Enos and Rosco felt promising and served to balance out the banality of most of the single-



player missions (collecting packages, racing from point A to B, stealthy trailing, etc.). While originality may not be this game's strong point, the clever and stylish exploitation of 1980s pop culture makes firing off your Dixie horn with a rebel yell an oddly entertaining and nostalgic experience.

—Bones

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Ratbag  
 ■ Published by Ubisoft Entertainment ■ Target release date: October

All screens shown here are from the Xbox version.

# Terminator 3: The Redemption



**PE X** Fortunately, this newest addition to the Terminator series actually might be well worth the wait. Not only will the Governor's voice and likeness be heard and seen in Redemption, but you'll also get to obliterate everything in your path using lots and lots of firepower while protecting the Connor clan. The game loosely follows the action-packed third Terminator story line and includes levels that precede the film's plot. Even in its early form,



Redemption still played much better than its predecessors did. The action, though very linear, consisted of frenetic battles against just about anything that moved in nicely detailed environments. Control elements could be tweaked more, especially the jerkiness of maneuvering a vehicle while blasting at multiple targets at the same time. Ah-nold's famous three words, "I'll be back," ring true once again. Let's just hope he comes back with the same ferocity he brings to the Terminator movies.—Four-Eyed Dragon

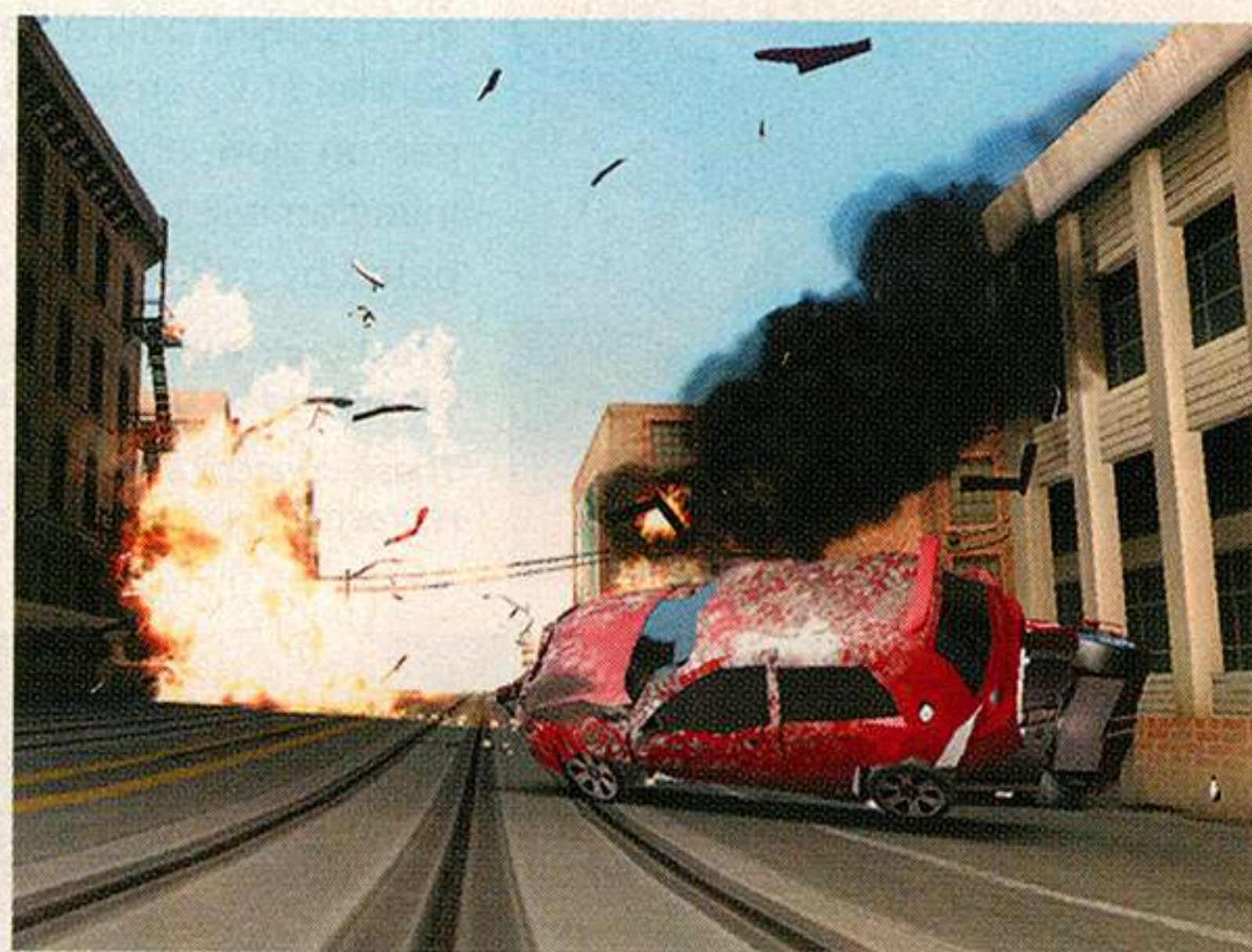
■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Paradigm ■ Published by Atari ■ Target release date: August



# Crash 'N' Burn



**PE** Ah, the sweet sounds of fenders crunching and glass breaking. It's a tried and true concept that Eidos is bringing to the PS2's online users. For the destruction derby-minded racers who get thrills out of bashing their cars into others, Crash 'N' Burn is a fast-paced car-cruncher where you can fully customize your ride with different paint jobs, shiny hoods, and sporty spoilers, and then speed into first place by bumping everyone else off the track. Lap races take place around the streets of Miami, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York, while the traditional figure-eight and arena competitions round out the challenging crash courses. An early hands-on build of the game steered like a racer should: easy controls with plenty of mayhem. The real question is if you're ready to show off your maniac road skills with 15 other crash dummies online this October.—Four-Eyed Dragon



■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Climax ■ Published by Eidos Interactive ■ Target release date: October





## Time Crisis: Crisis Zone

**PE** Fans of the Time Crisis series know that they're never the same games when they're ported from the arcade to consoles—and in fact, enthusiasts depend on it. And while Crisis Zone is no exception, there is even more incentive to bring it home now that Namco's expanding the experience with extra game modes that target specific skills within small areas of a stage. An early playable version, which included



a mode that lets you take along additional weapons, indicated that it might be a good idea to work on your accuracy, coordination, and memory. And while some graphical differences were noticeable throughout the game, the Time Crisis feel—fast-paced, arcade shooting—remained intact. The game hits shelves in October—tune into a later issue to see if it really hits the target.—*Test Monkey*

■ Hands-On ■ Developed and published by Namco  
■ Target release date: October

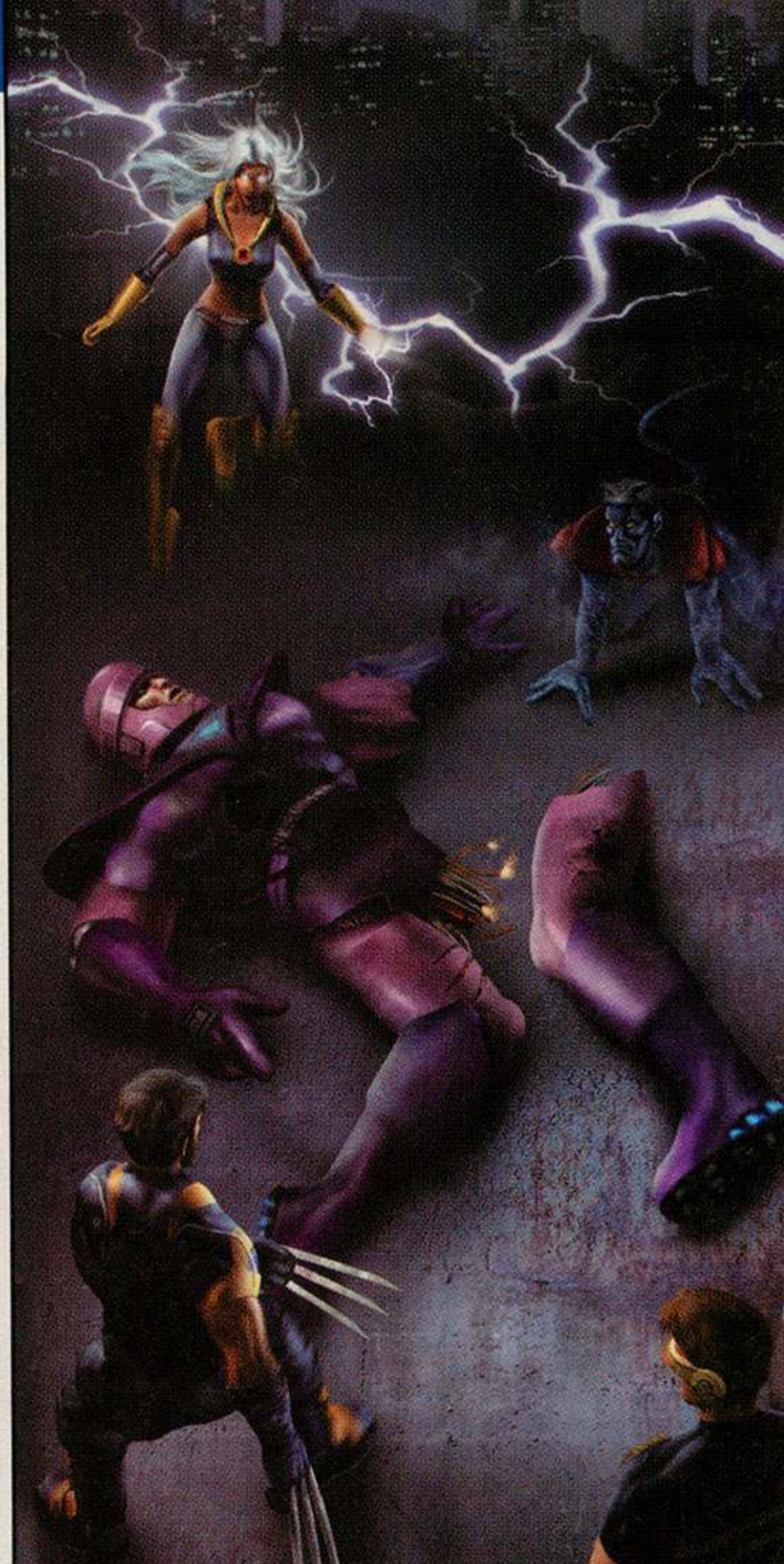


## Backyard Wrestling 2: There Goes the Neighborhood

**PE** To be completely honest, it's really hard to say where Backyard Wrestling 2 is heading after playing a very early build. Certain aspects of this sequel, such as the character selection and customization layout, have been completely redesigned from scratch, the wrestlers are more detailed, and the grappling system along with the environment interaction have been boosted up a notch.

Other features are still currently in the works, such as the option to play online and loads of media you can unlock for your enjoyment. And with a changeup in the fighter roster, the development team may still have something up their sleeves. Probably more barbed wire and hefty bricks to use against opponents, if we're lucky.—*Test Monkey*

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Paradox  
■ Published by Eidos Interactive ■ Target release date: October



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MARVEL



PlayStation 2



N-GAGE NOKIA

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“...Right Now, There Is No Other Game In The Genre That Looks Remotely As Good.”

- PSM

“...It Has Skyrocketed To The Top Of My Most-Wanted Games List.”

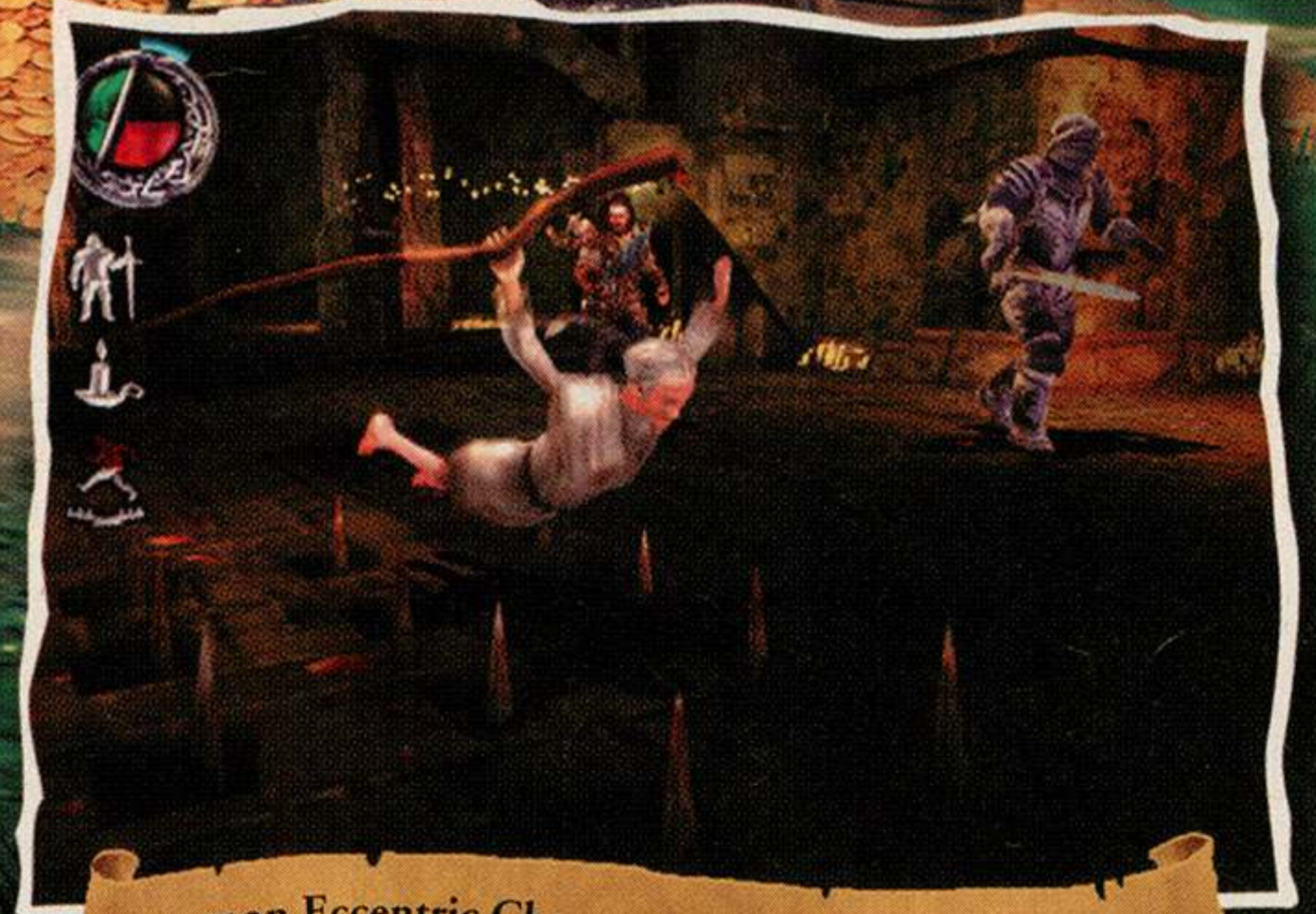
- Gamespy

“Turning RPG Clichés On Their Head.”

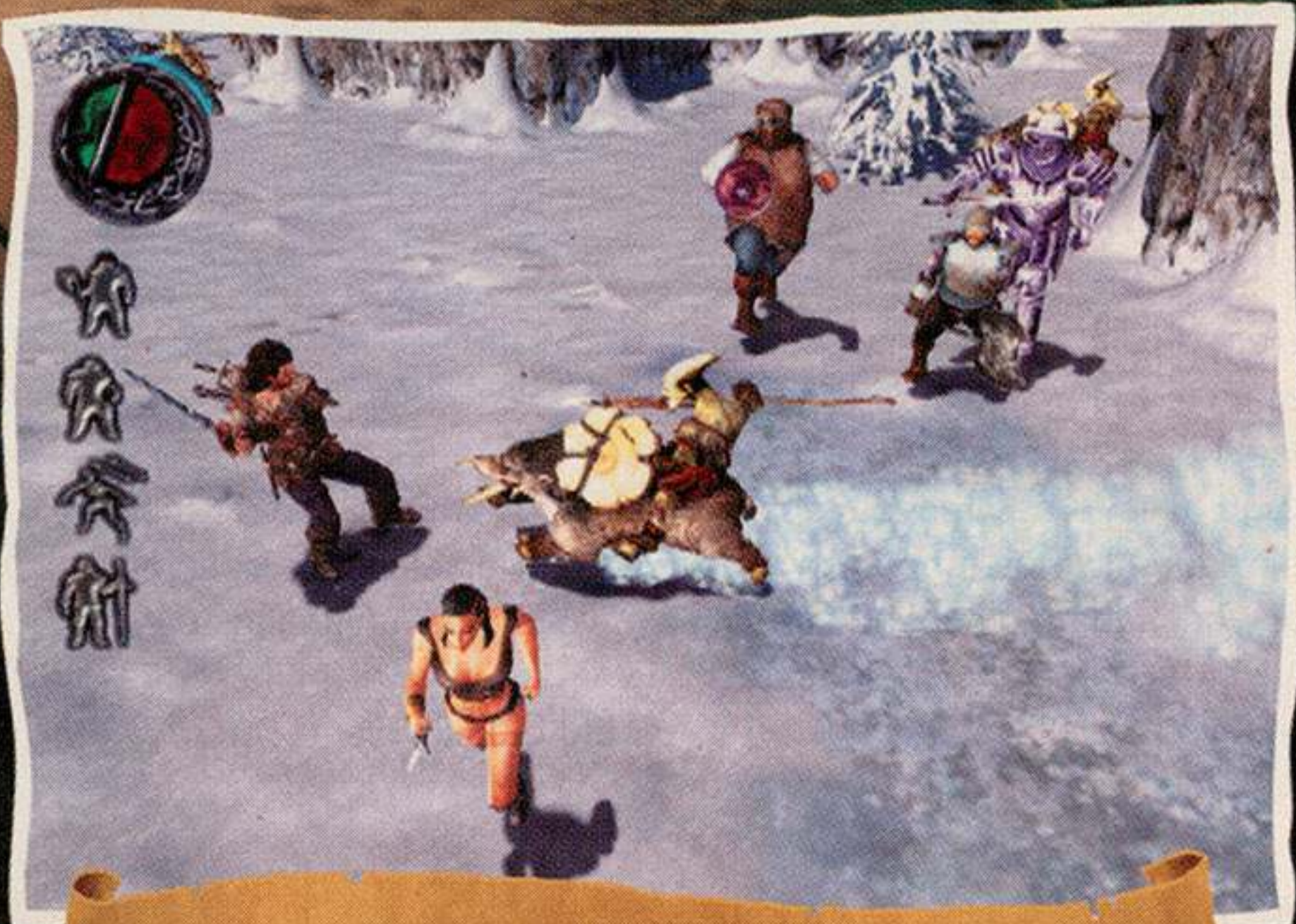
- Electronic Gaming Monthly

“...Intelligent Scriptwriting And A Well-Developed Sense Of Humor.”

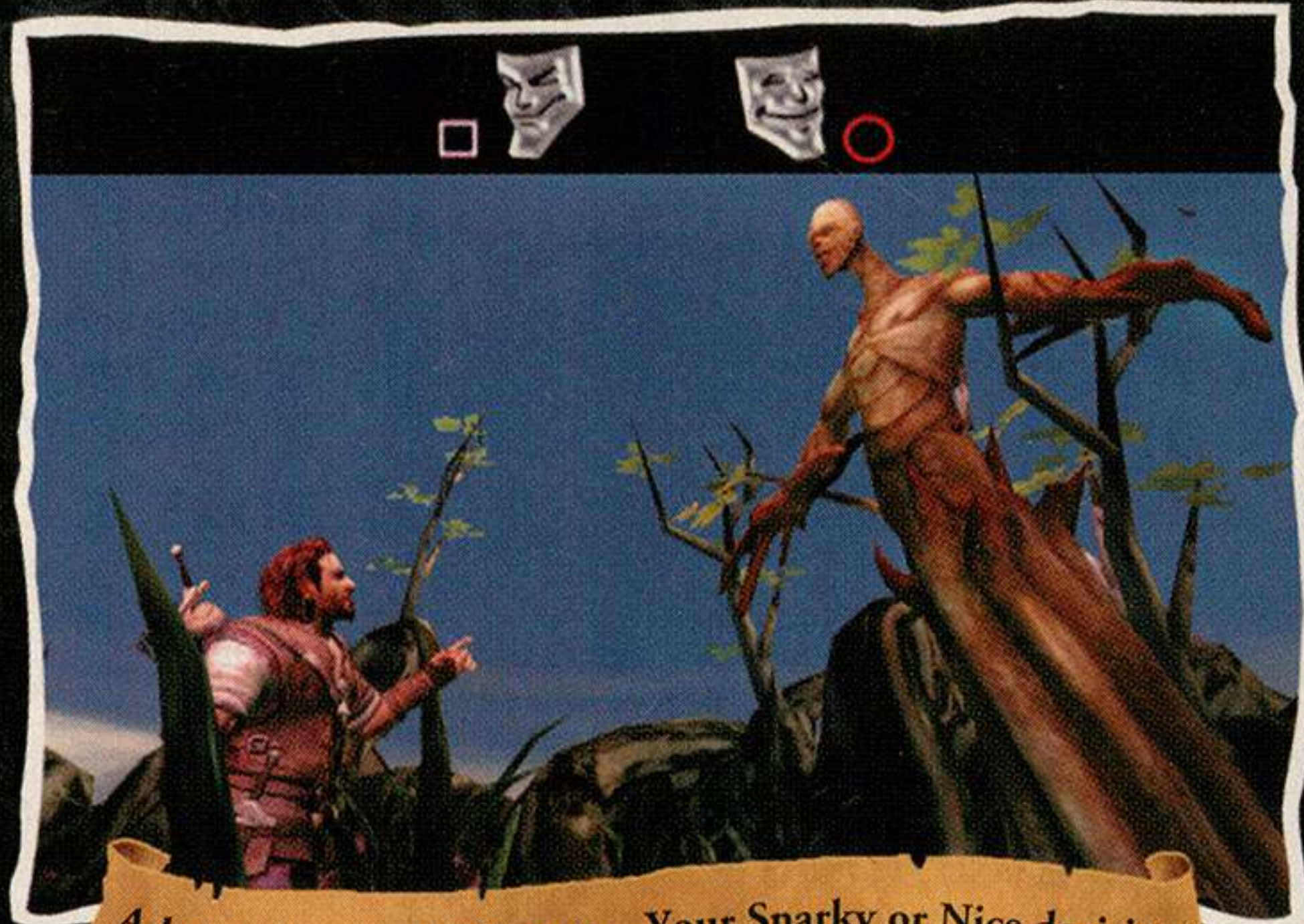
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# Silent Hill 4: The Room

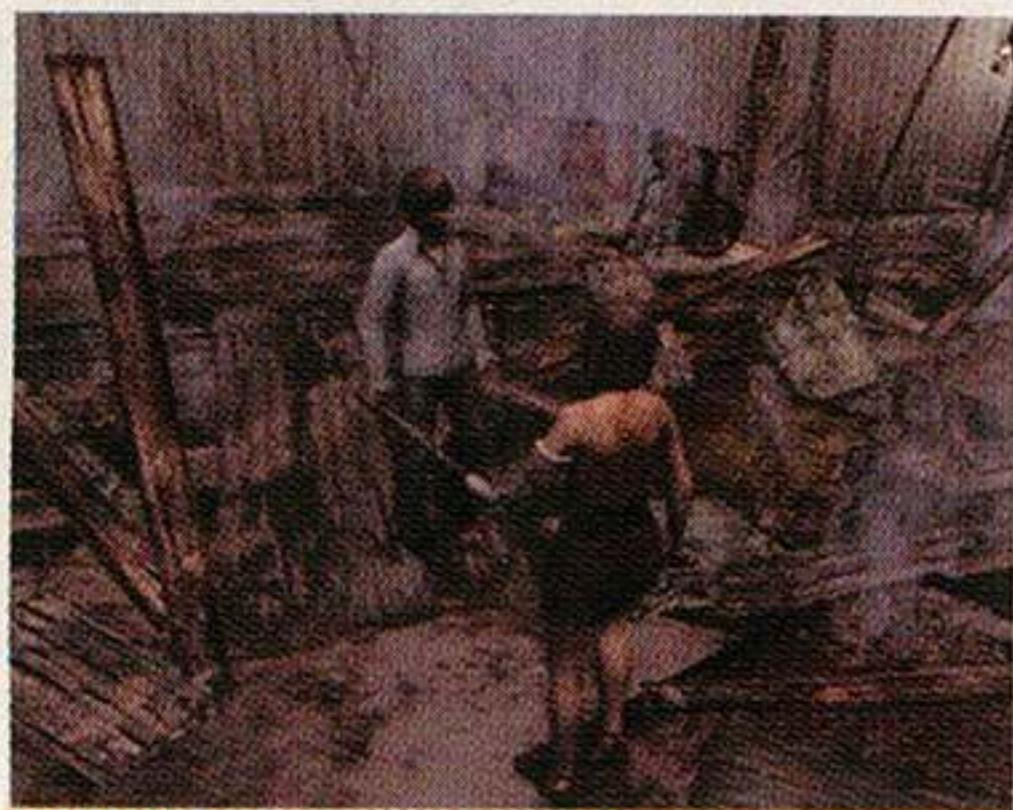


**Another masterwork of horror art—but annoying poltergeists haunt this room.**

**PE** Horror just doesn't get much better than this—at least when you're talking art direction, sound design, story line, and all the aesthetic, literary stuff that goes into stimulating the part of the brain that releases piss into pants. *Silent Hill 4: The Room* continues that fine tradition of psycho sickness, but one annoying combat issue sticks out like a throbbing, scabrous, maggot-filled tumor.

## Regarding Henry

First off, the story of *The Room* (never mind that it's actually an apartment with several rooms) is the most coherent, mature, compelling mystery the *Silent Hill* talespinners have put together yet—a claustrophobic serial-killer story stitched together from pieces of *Rear Window*, *Being John Malkovich*, and *Poltergeist*. The game features plenty of freakish, filthy nonsense for those who like their inexplicable madness served raw, but



**PRO TIP:** Whenever possible, for your own sanity, leave Eileen in a safe area. She's a good gal, but she's more trouble than she's worth when you've got a job to do.

there's also a remarkable aura of focus in this latest offering that wasn't quite present in previous *Silent Hill* games.

The focus comes from the brilliant use of the titular room, which serves not only as an anchor for the plot but also a focal point for most of the puzzles, and is one hell of an atmosphere-generator. Cool little touches flood the place—weird letters slipped under the door, creepy sights off in the distance when you peer out your window—and it's amazing how edgy you'll get as your "safe haven" slowly begins to turn against you the further you go.

## The Other Edge of the Sword

Combat is where things get a little shaky. While you could never claim that any of the other *Silent Hill* games controlled well, the fighting system has always been clunkily reliable—club things to death with a stick, smash the wriggling corpse with your foot, and then move on with your life.

While there's a good deal of that in SH4 (complete with a new switch-weapons-on-the-fly system and a welcome "power hit" meter), there's "something new" that proves problematic: creepy humanoid "ghosts" that emerge from walls coated in black ooze, float around, and stick their hand in your chest to give your heart a good squeezin'. They can't be killed—they just get right back up again, over and over—unless you have what's called the "Sword of Obedience," a mystical bladed relic that basically staples them to the

ground (they revive once the sword is removed) so you can explore. It's a potentially ingenious system, but you have to beat ghosts down way too many times before the sword works; there are frequently more ghosts in a room than available swords; and the balance is so out of whack that you spend almost all of your time running instead of fighting simply because the damaging "pain aura" that the ghosts emit while you're fighting without a protective medallion (which is often) would quickly bleed you dry. When a second character joins you, it gets even worse.

## 21121

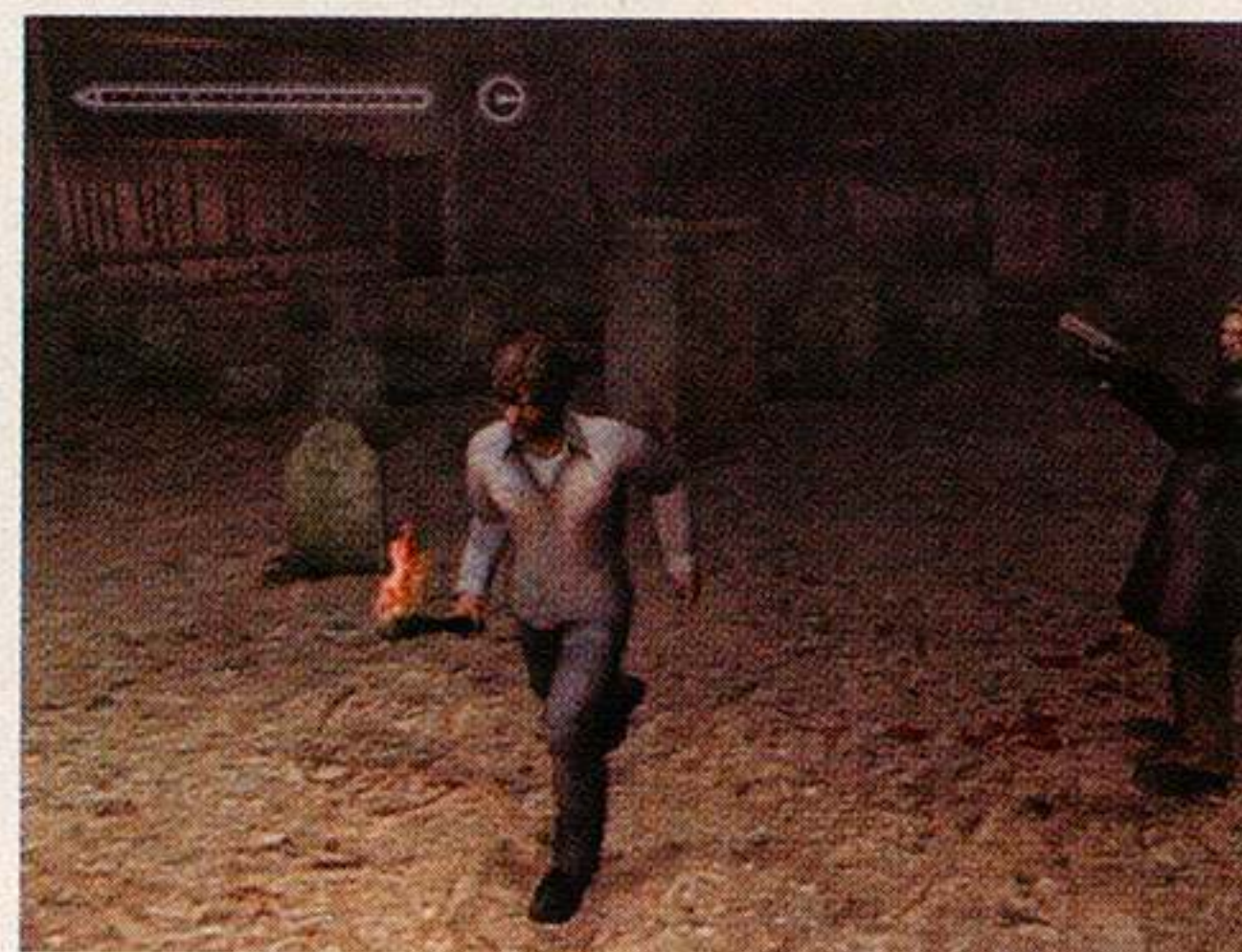
While fleeing from ghosts may seem like a small issue, it really does drag down an otherwise brilliant game. *Silent Hill* remains high art...but it still hasn't quite figured out how to be high game.—*Star Dingo*

Also on the Xbox

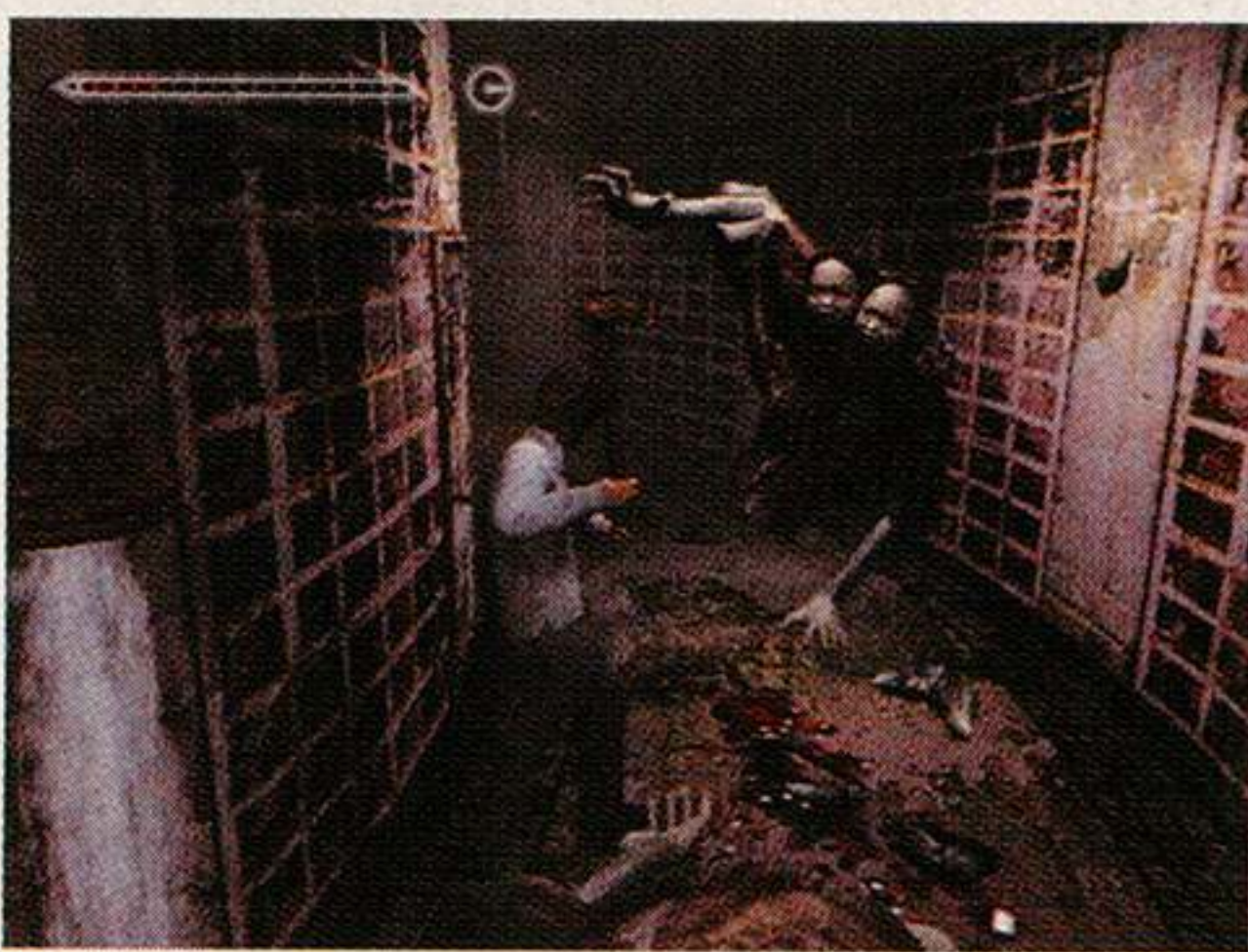
**M** ■ Developed by KCET ■ Published by Konami  
■ \$39.99 ■ Available now ■ Horror ■ 1 player



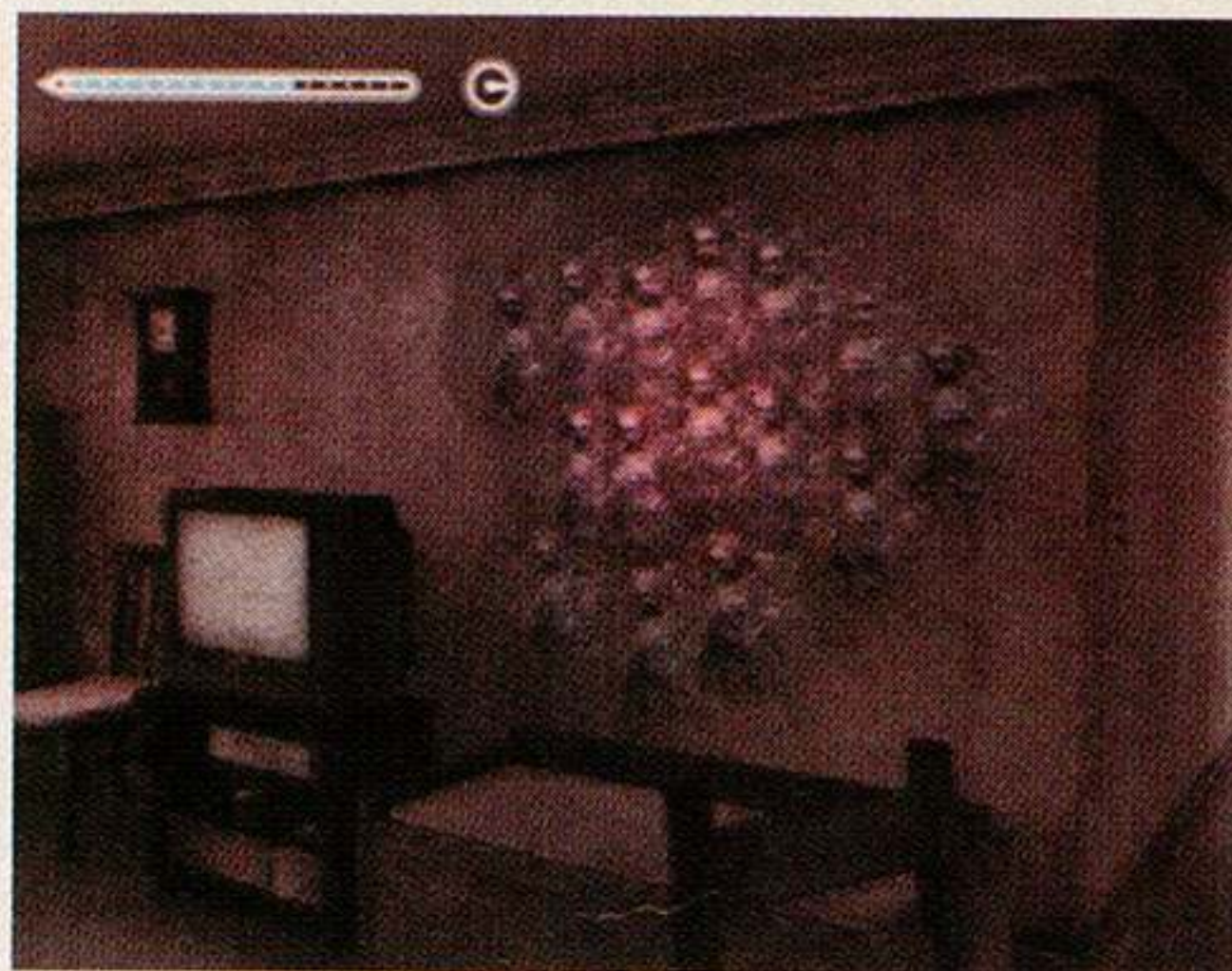
**Well, hello there, terrifying giant head of my friend! Just one of the many fun things you'll see in the brilliant but flawed *Silent Hill 4: The Room*.**



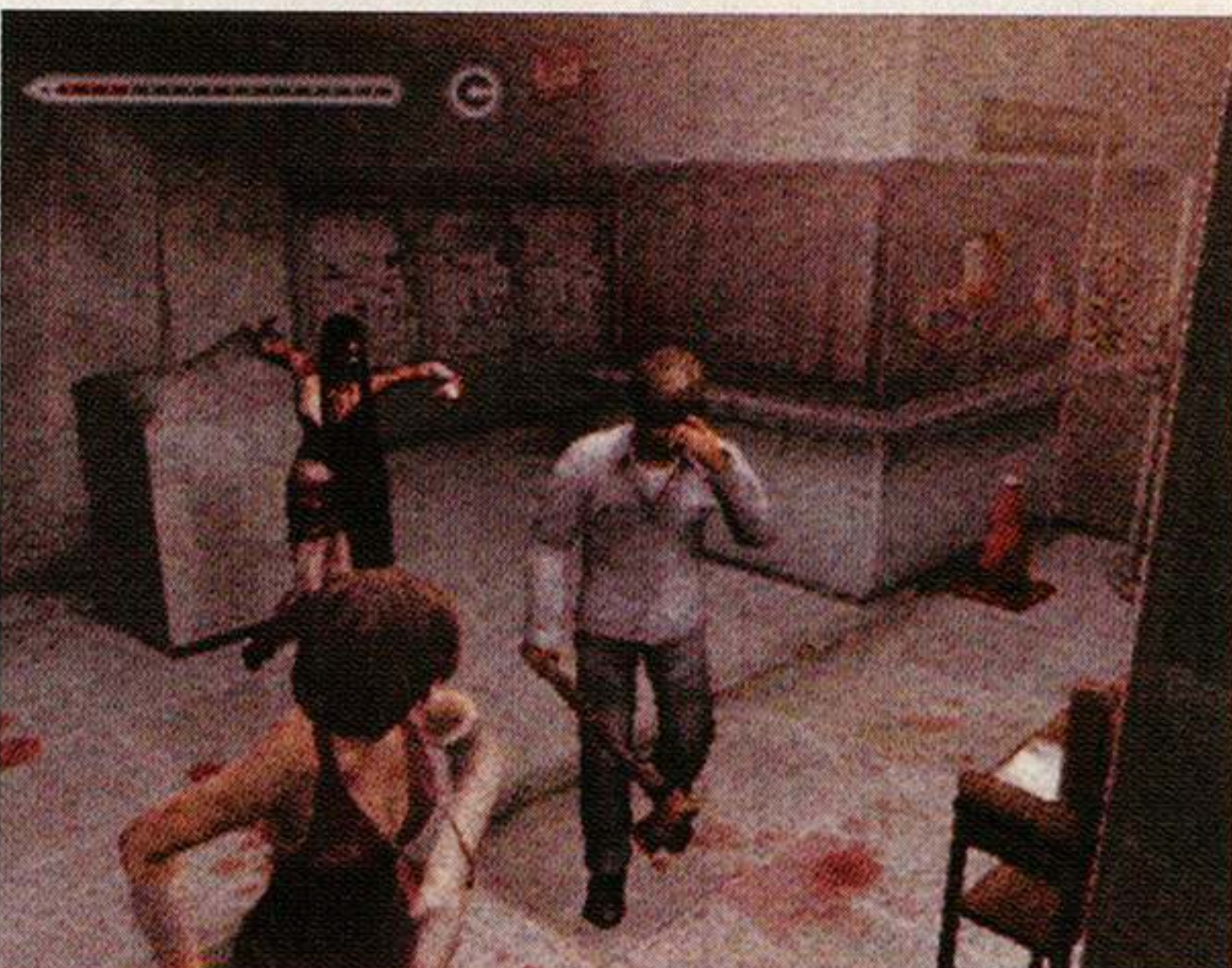
**PRO TIP:** The "collect five body parts" quest will be much easier if you use the can of oil in your laundry room.



**PRO TIP:** The hand axe is an awesome melee weapon, but don't bother with its charged attack—it has a long wind-up time and often misses the mark.



**PRO TIP:** Your apartment is a safe haven that recharges your health until...well...this starts happening.



**PRO TIP:** At the Restless Sea level, the Kesa are interested only in sinking your ship, so use heavy attacks to knock them off the deck.

PE	GRAPHICS	5.0	FUN FACTOR <b>4.0</b>
	SOUND	5.0	
	CONTROL	3.5	



# TERMINATOR® 3

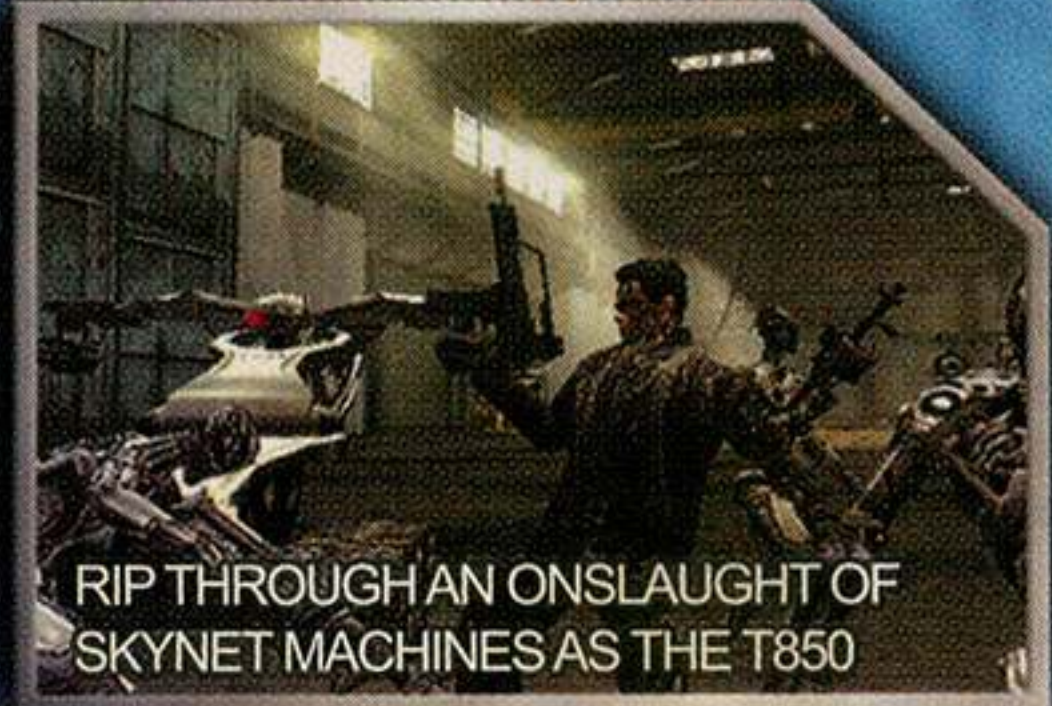
## THE REDEMPTION

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PlayStation 2





# Pikmin 2

It doesn't break as much new ground, but it's still Nintendo's secret masterpiece.

**P**ikmin 2 is an exercise in loopy game-design genius—an offbeat delight that defies classification, despite some passing resemblance to a Muppet-themed RTS. Then again, that's what the original Pikmin was, too. Theoretically, that makes Pikmin 2 an unoriginal sequel to one of the most original games of this console generation...but who cares, really, when you're having so much fun?

## Perennial

A quick conceptual recap: You control two tiny astronauts who can, in turn, control a horde of thinking, blinking color-coded carrots called Pikmin. These Pikmin collect shiny things, reproduce, and kill (and are occasionally killed by) all manner of surreal bugs in order to maintain the weird, bittersweet circle of life that exists in a backyard you'd find somewhere in your dreams.

Pikmin 2 dutifully redresses all the minor "problems" of the original—the 30-day restriction has been lifted (that this was a problem is debatable), the challenges are more varied thanks to new dungeons, the game is a whole lot longer (hooray!), and now there's even some sort of two-player mode—but it also leaves 80 percent of the original game totally intact. That means it has the same inspired control scheme (arguably the best use of the GameCube controller there is), the same Miyazaki-marshmallow graphics, and the same sound effects (when Pikmin chant, it fills the heart with glee!). That also means you'll recognize an awful lot of the same enemies; and a lot of the landscapes will look very familiar to fans of the original. That stalwart sameness is actually the game's only disappointment—the sense that you're constantly discovering something new isn't nearly as prevalent. Even the new Pikmin types (poisonous white and heavy purple) aren't as life-changing as they could have been—the original red/yellow/blue seem to be given more to do.

The best new addition is the challenging subterranean mazes, where the daytime cycle ceases to exist and you're given limited resources (once you lose your Pikmin, it's hard to get them back) on a quest to reach the goodie on the bottom floor. These caves add loads to the longevity—they're long, interesting (despite being "random"), and quite often extremely challenging.

The second-best addition is the two-player modes—one of which is a simple, split-screen sort of mini-Warcraft pitting two Pikmin armies against one another in a frantic scramble for marbles. It's nowhere near as deep or complex as a regular RTS, but it's still fun. There's also a healthy injection of personality in the form of a neurotic, pedantic onboard computer that tries to explain Earth's quirks and often falls comically short of the mark. It's worth collecting all the batteries, dice, and soda-bottle caps just to see what it deems their "purpose."

## Evergreen

While Pikmin 2 may be more of a hybrid remake/expansion pack than a sequel, it's still funny, fun, brilliant, and more daringly weird than what comes out of 95 percent of most major game studios. It's two of a kind.  
—Star Dingo

**E** ■ Developed and published by Nintendo ■ \$49.99  
■ Available now  
■ Xenobotany/strategy ■ 2 players



**PROTIP:** Once you encounter something, it appears in your Piklopedia, where you can throw carrots at it and watch what happens. It's way more fun than it should be.



**PROTIP:** Be very careful with your white and purple Pikmin—they don't get their own "spaceships," so they're much harder to replace.



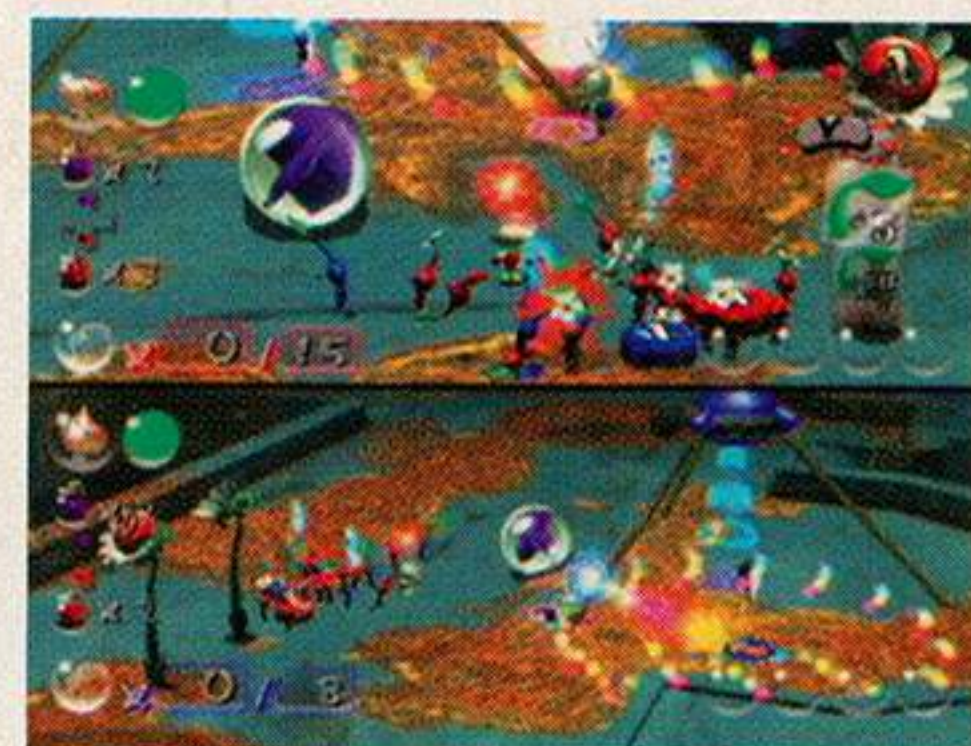
**PROTIP:** Bombs can be devastating, wiping out dozens of Pikmin in a split second. Run through a level with Louie or Olimar solo to detonate as many as you can before taking your Pikmin out into the field.



**PROTIP:** Separate Olimar and Louie in order to defeat this boss—it goes after whichever character you currently have selected, but it takes a couple seconds for it to notice you've switched.



**PROTIP:** The little leafy Bulborbs that join you in some underground areas have "wild card" powers, but they can't come to the surface with you—turn them into regular Pikmin via flowers before you resurface.



The two-player split-screen battle mode is like Capture the Flag mixed with Warcraft Jr.



**PROTIP:** Just because you've repaid your debt doesn't mean that the game is over....

**GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE**

	GRAPHICS	4.5	<b>5.0</b> <small>5</small>
	SOUND	4.5	
	CONTROL	5.0	





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# Test Drive: Eve of Destruction

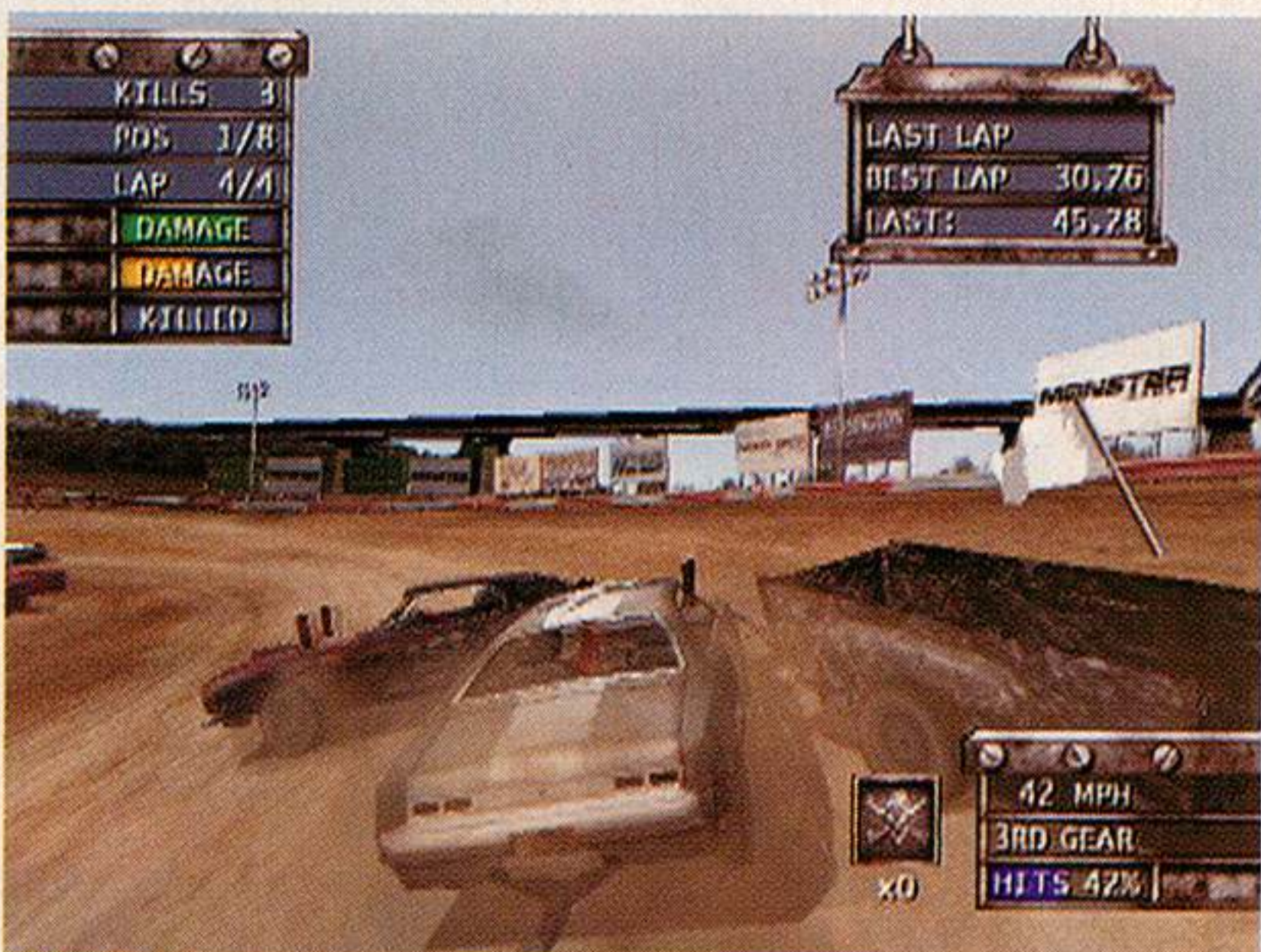
**Destruction derbies are a departure for the Test Drive series—a refreshingly inventive and hugely fun departure, that is.**

**D**estruction-derby games usually spell sheer metal-shredding carnage, and Test Drive: Eve of Destruction delivers more fender annihilation than you can imagine. But it's also an innovative, deep, and spellbinding racing game.

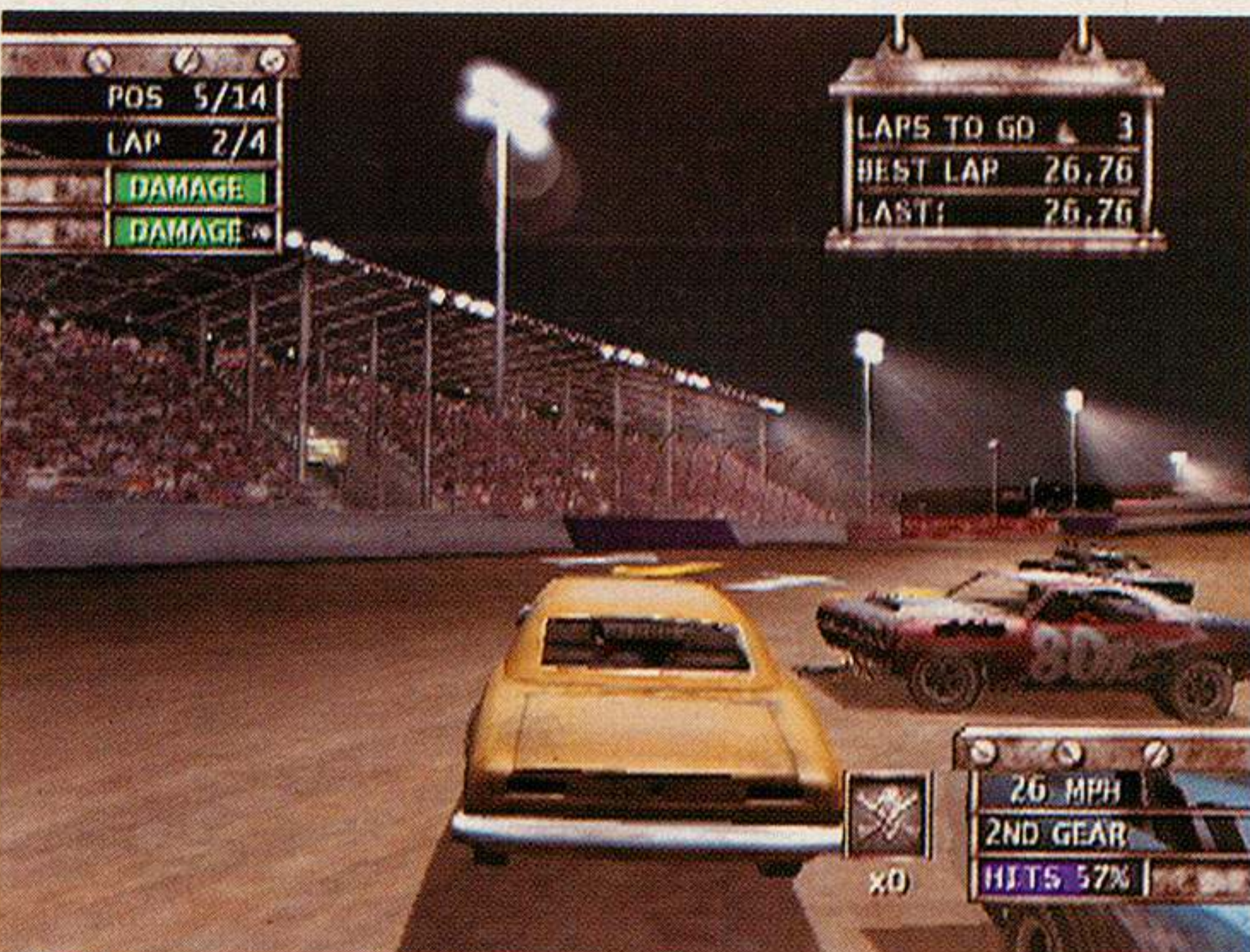
## A Wise Man Once Said...

Monster Games and Ratbag Games are two of the most underrated developers of racing games out there, and Monster's raw talent comes pouring out through the seams of Test Drive: Eve of Destruction. Instead of just slapping together a string of mayhem-filled events, Monster created an absorbing and surprisingly unique Career mode that makes the game worth playing for a good while. If your attention span doesn't linger that long in one place, Test Drive also does the string-of-mayhem thing quite well by letting you crumple metal in single- or multi-player events, along with a less-structured array of challenges that are fun to master. No online action, though.

The long list of events delivers some impressive variety, and shockingly, they're based on events that real-life insane people actually drive in—you can unlock the video footage to prove it. In Gauntlet, you drive one way around the track, while a pack of other cars goes the other way and basically tries to kill you. Or there's the awesome trailer race, where you pull a camper or boat trailer, and you're out if someone knocks your trailer off. Other derby standards like suicide races, figure-8 jump races, whip-around races, and much more pack the roster. You can unlock a slew of cars and fun special vehicles like the all-powerful school bus or the flimsy postal wagon.



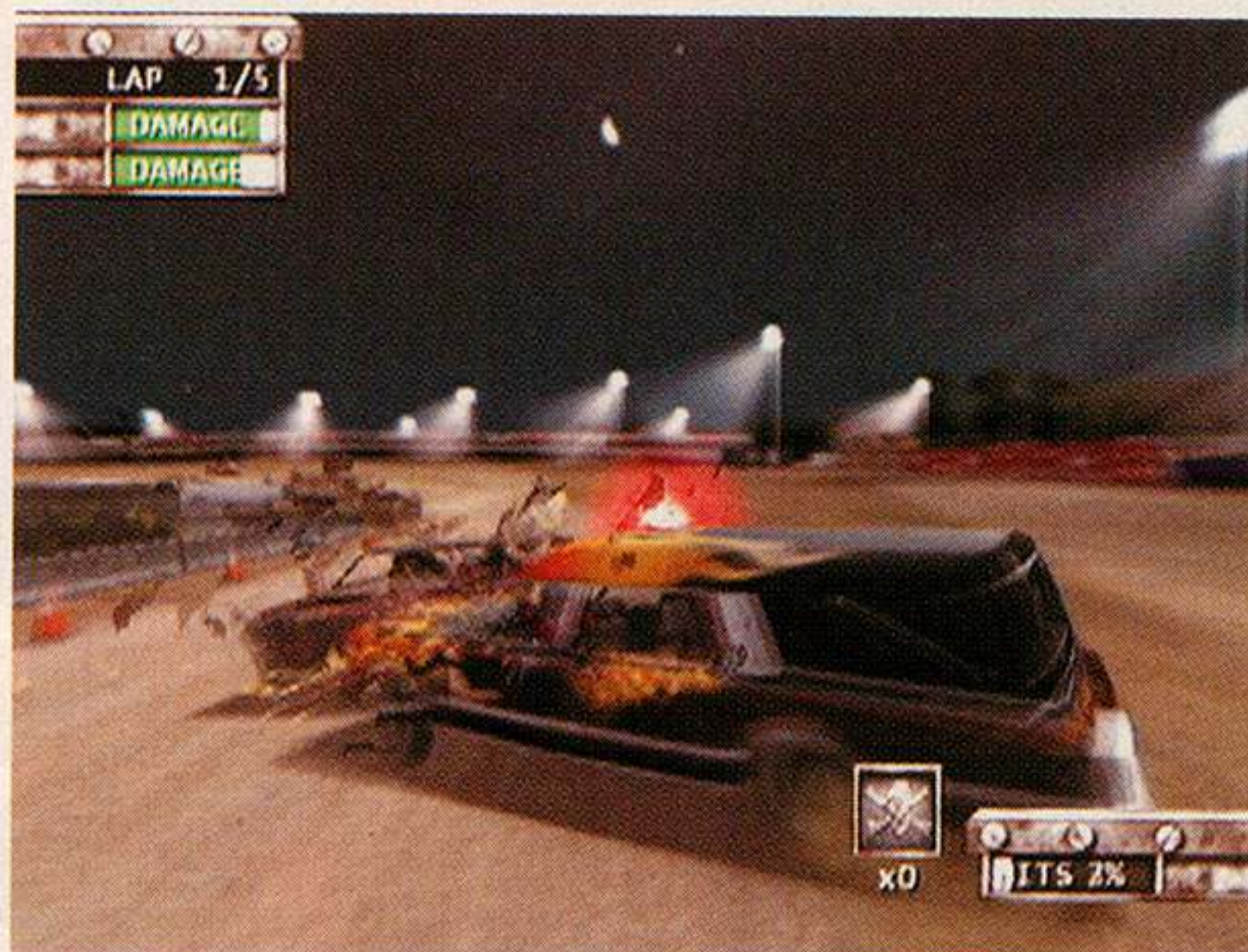
**PROTIP:** In trailer races, take out a slow but sturdy car and pick off your opponents' trailers one by one.



**PROTIP:** In Whip-Around races, use the e-brake to pull off a 180-degree spin that takes you from one side of the track to the other—it's the best way to throw off the pursuers on your tail.



**PROTIP:** In Career mode, mastering the time trials is a great way to earn serious cash.



**PROTIP:** In Gauntlet races, go for head-on collisions—if you let yourself get hit in the side or the rear, you'll never survive five laps.

Back to that Career mode—it's really the heart of the game. You start in a hublike town, where you can take your cars out for a practice spin. You can also shop for new cars or put your money on the line by racing other locals or betting you can set a record time in addictive Stuntman-like time trials. For the real action, you head out of town to enter events, but even that's not just a loading screen—along the way, you race an opponent to the track. You can spend your winnings on a variety of cars—speed demons, derby crushers, and more—and you'll need to because cars wear out over time. As your reputation grows, you unlock secret racing series and other cool challenges. It's great stuff.

...Dirt Is for Racing... The cars handle like a breeze—extreme racing prowess is not required, and hardcore racing gamers will find the going a bit easy until the latter half of the Career mode. But the cars have a great dirt-track feel that makes setting up slides and spins simply a blast, and the game is tuned to reward you for playing like a battering ram or a racing technician—your call.

## ...Dirt Is for Racing...

The audio, however, clocks in as just average. The track announcer is gratingly lame, and the game offers a pretty standard array of hard-rock tunes. The sound effects do their job just fine, but there's nothing exciting about them. Visually, though, the game fares much better. You can knock the crap out of your slickly rendered car in an impressive variety of ways, and the tracks and landscapes look sharp in that lovingly tongue-in-cheek redneck kinda way. The Xbox version, which wasn't ready for review at press time, sparkles with slightly better, crisper graphics, but it's otherwise identical to the PS2 one.

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## ...Asphalt Is for Getting There

Test Drive games are usually street-racing affairs, but this left turn into destruction derbies really pays off with a rich experience. If you're even slightly interested after reading this, go pick up a copy—you won't be able to put the controller down.—Air Hendrix

Also on the Xbox

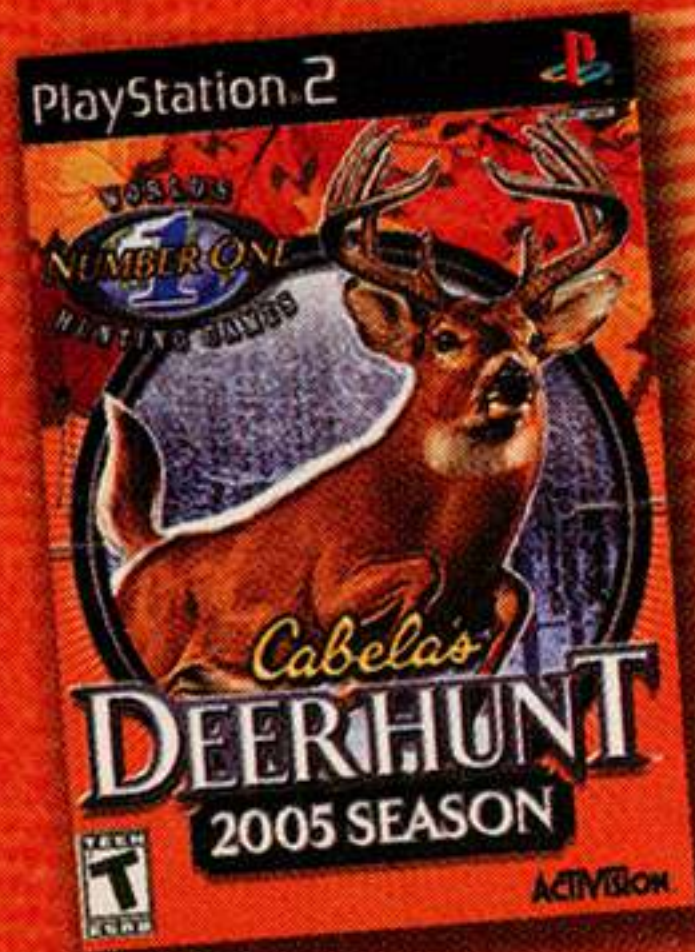
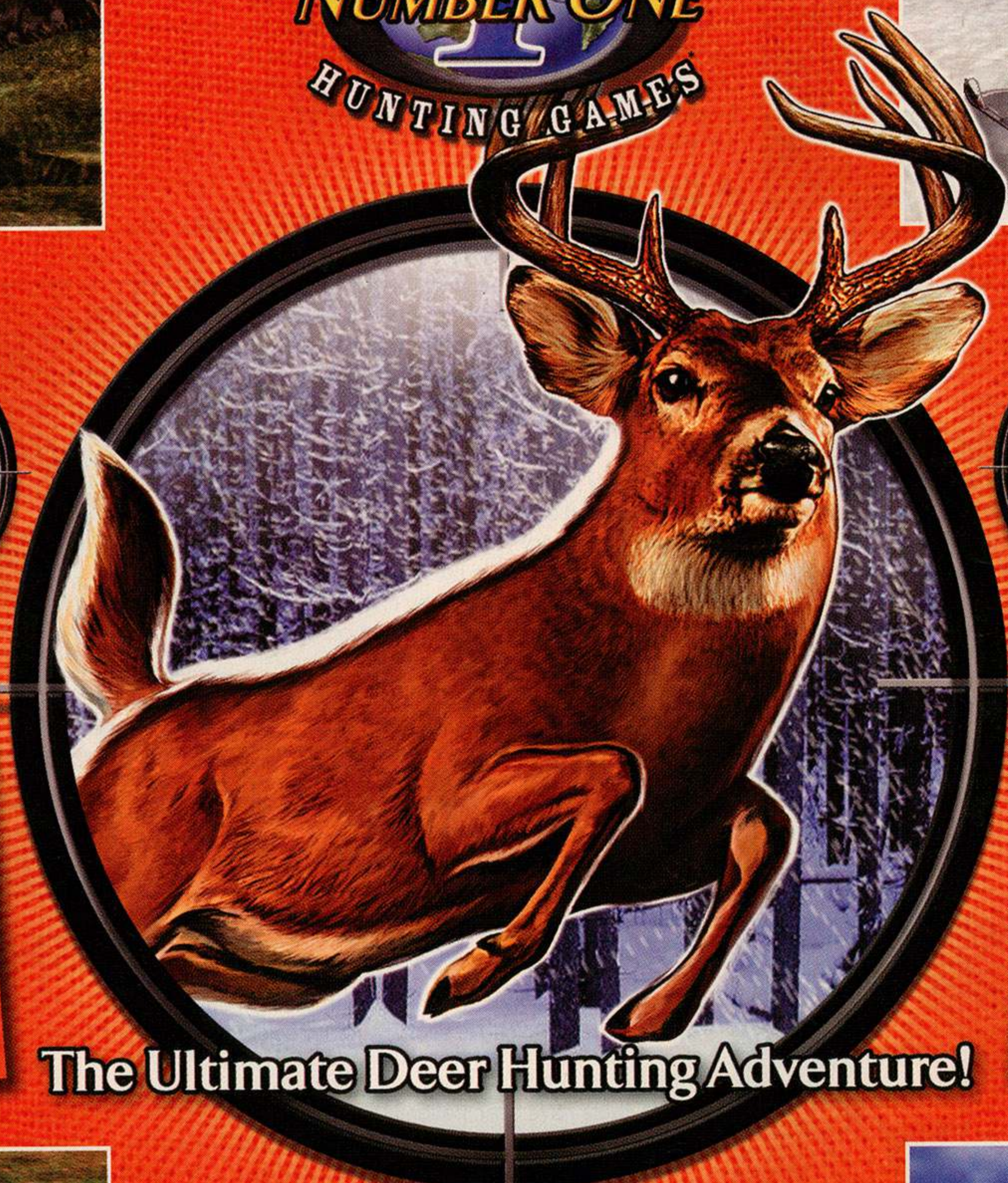
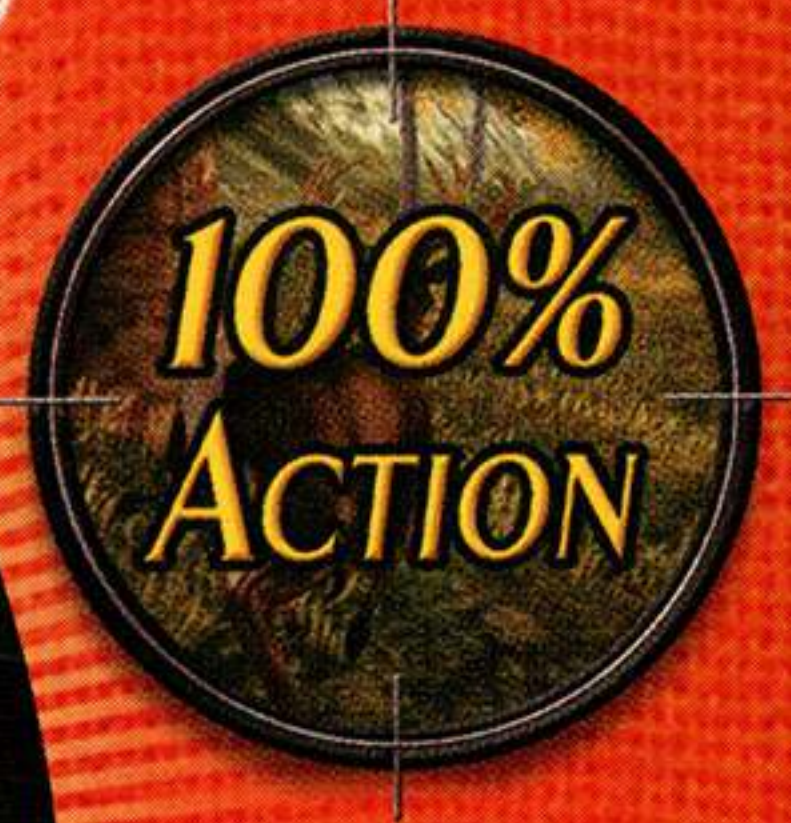
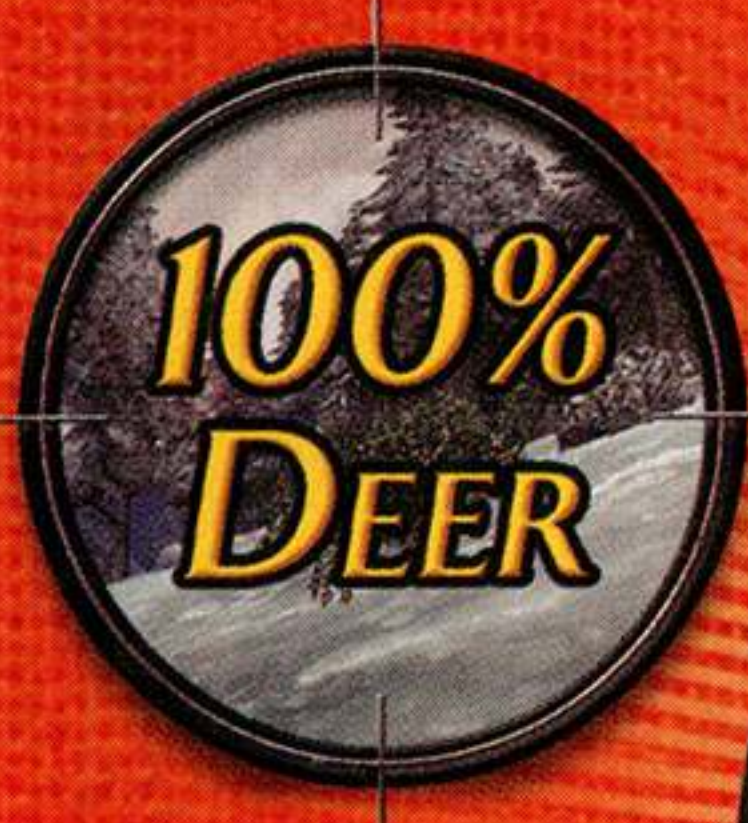
**T** ■ Developed by Monster Games  
 ■ Published by Atari ■ \$39.99  
 ■ Available now ■ Racing ■ 4 players

**GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE**

PE	GRAPHICS	4.5	FUN FACTOR	4.5
	SOUND	3.5		
	CONTROL	4.5		



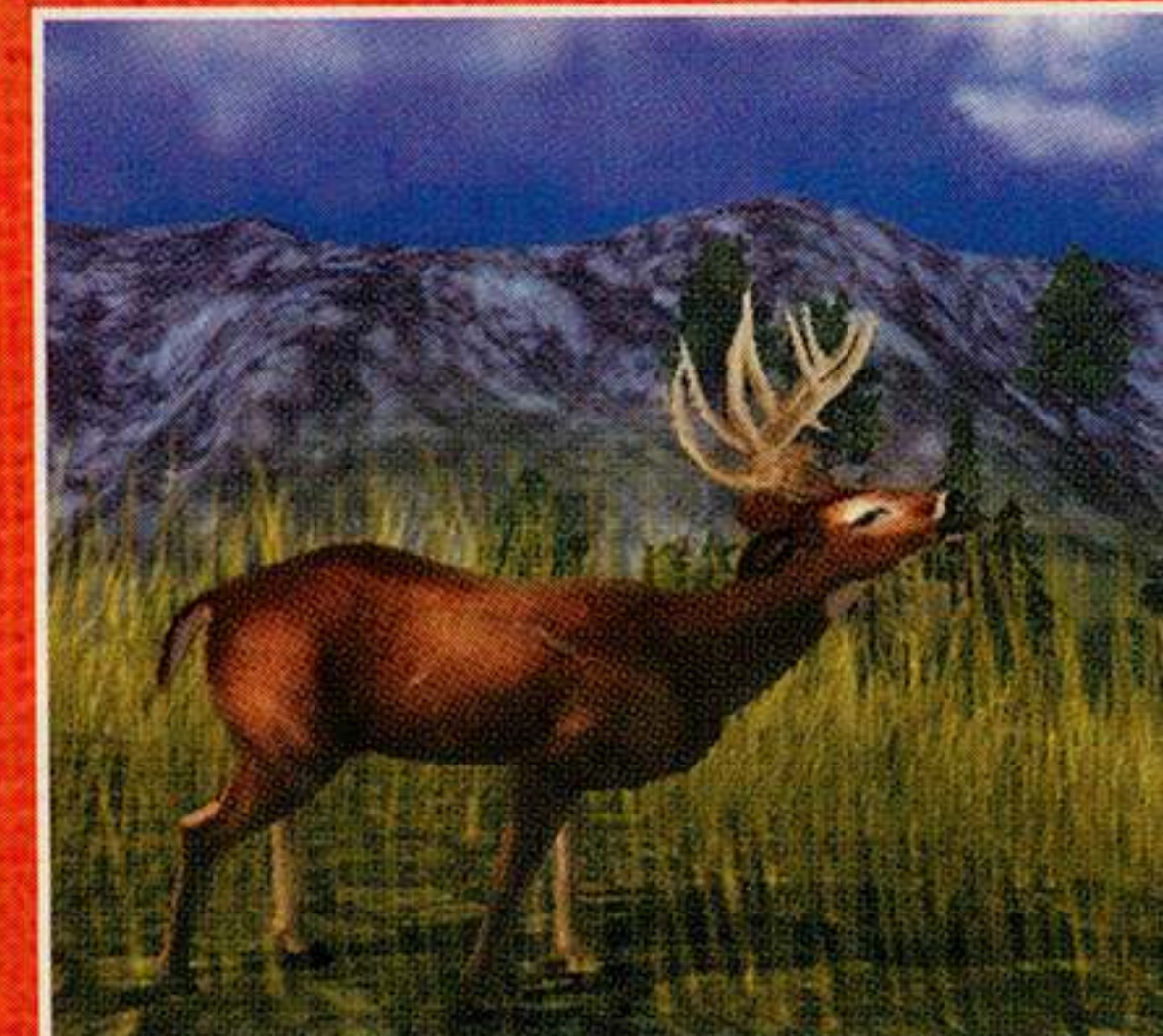
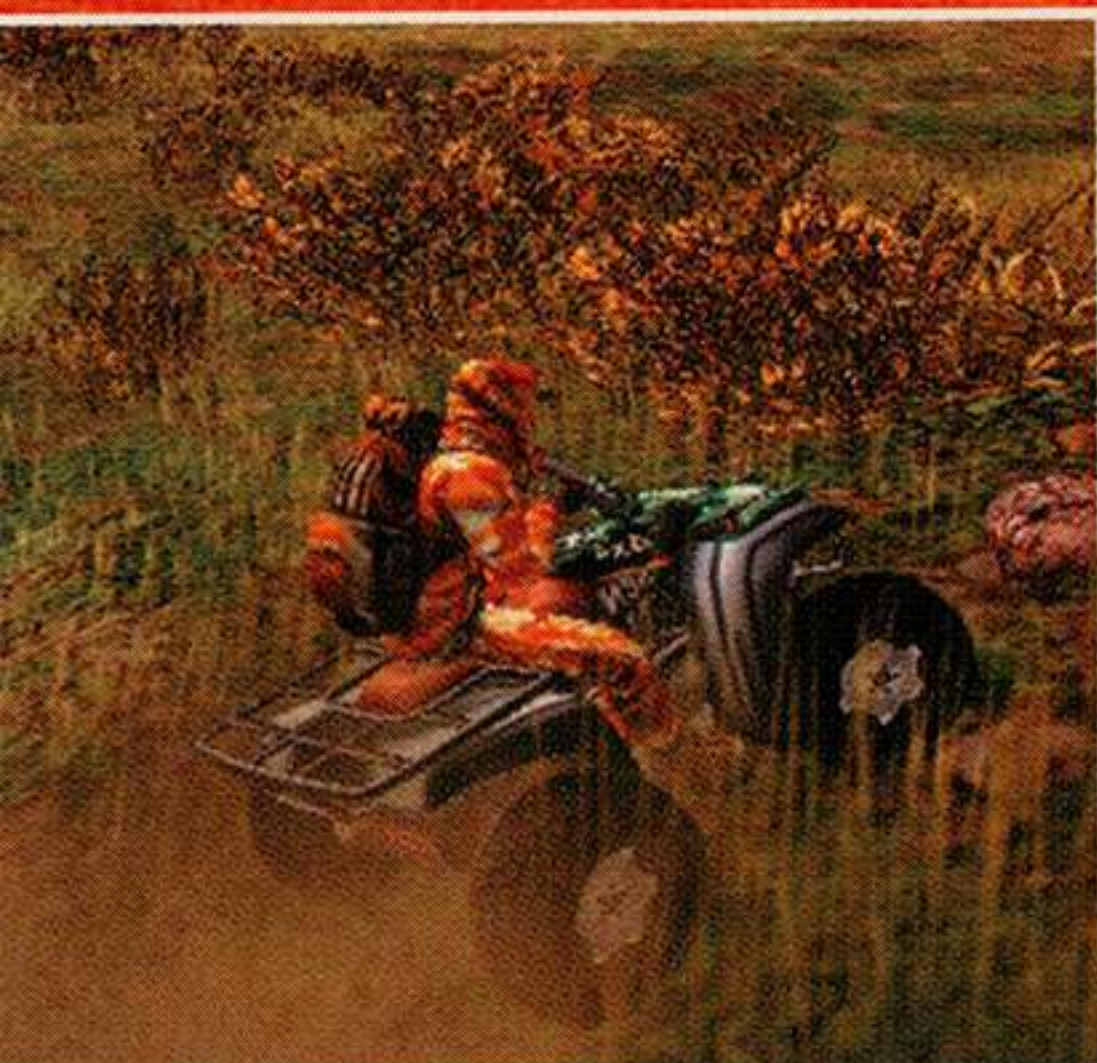
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**PRO TIP:** Knocking enemies into one another and chaining together long combos can earn you tons of Viewtiful Points, which can be used to upgrade your moves.

(save a few minor plot alterations for Dante), but the inclusion of Capcom's pretty-boy demon slayer adds to the already high replay value of this title as many of his exclusive signature stylish moves, such as the bullet barrage of his twin pistols, are included as purchasable upgrades.

## V Is for Viewtiful

From top to bottom, Viewtiful Joe is a beautifully built game. Visually, the PS2 version looks identical to its GameCube sibling with a charmingly unique graphical style and smooth animation that makes other cel-shaded adventures seem gimmicky and clichéd by comparison. The VFX skills that enable Joe and Dante to slow down and speed up time, and zoom in for flashy moves not only look amazing but also add an exciting level of depth to the quasi-2D side-scrolling action by enabling you to overcome puzzles and bad guys with a variety of special combinations. And with a tight control scheme that adapts well to the PS2 controller, you'll have no one to blame but yourself for the inevitable deaths you'll undoubtedly suffer.

Rarely are today's action games as fun to play as they are to look at, but Viewtiful Joe stands as a creative reminder of what great games used to be about (and still could be). Plus, with a Viewtiful sequel on the way this fall, there may be hope yet for one of the oldest and most beleaguered genres in gaming.—Bones

**T** ■ Developed by Clover Studio ■ Published by Capcom ■ \$49.99 ■ Available now ■ Action ■ 1 player

## Viewtiful Joe

**PE** Joe's first appearance on the GameCube last fall wowed critics and fans alike, and heralded a new age in the action-game genre with an unparalleled visual presentation, outstanding level design, and old-school fast-twitch gameplay. However, this last feature had many gamers boo-hooing about "unfair deaths" and "cheap bosses," which painfully revealed their feeble gaming skills. Luckily, novice joystick jockeys can rest easy knowing that Capcom has graciously inserted a new "Easy" difficulty setting while also adding Devil May Cry's Dante as a selectable character in this PlayStation 2 version.

### A Cel-Shaded Saga

With either character, the story is nearly indistinguishable: When a night at the movies goes horribly wrong and the heroes' hot girlfriends get abducted by movie monsters, both fearless fellas plunge into the screen to rescue them. The gameplay is almost exactly the same with either character



Dante's More Than Enough move fills his enemies full of lead and is one of many cool Devil May Cry carryovers.

**GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE**

PE	GRAPHICS	5.0	FUN FACTOR	4.5
	SOUND	4.5		
	CONTROL	4.5		



**PRO TIP:** Leaving the game on for 50-plus hours is one method of unlocking the EX-mode characters. One new character appears every two hours after the 50-hour mark.

## Guilty Gear X2 #Reload

**X** Guilty Gear X2 saw a release on the PlayStation 2 over a year ago, but the slightly updated #Reload is still a cause for celebration for Xbox-owning fighting-game fans.

### ExCELLent

Xbox owners have been patiently waiting to get their turn. Guilty Gear X2 #Reload is basically the same game, but several tweaks and additions make things interesting.

For fighting-game fans who never picked up X2, #Reload is a must buy. The 2D-animation cel-like graphics are simply gorgeous and animate smoothly. The characters don't quite move as smooth or fluidly as a real cartoon, but Guilty Gear's frenzied pace more than makes up for it. The basic gameplay is easy to grasp for any veteran of other fighters, but mastering advance skills unique to the Guilty Gear series requires a lot of patience and perseverance.

The game's background music falls in the hard rock arena with plenty of electric guitars and tunes that try to match the manic action onscreen. #Reload doesn't support playback of your own custom music, but you won't tire of the bevy of quality tracks all that soon.



**PRO TIP:** You can perfect your most devastating techniques in the game's training mode.

### Heaven or Hell

For those who already own X2 for the PS2, there are still compelling reasons to add #Reload to your library. The fighting engine has been slightly tweaked, so the balance of characters is different, and one new character has been added. The game supports Xbox Live, but the action does suffer from some lag. The delay in responding to commands is about the same as Capcom vs. SNK's under excellent network conditions but can be much worse if connections are not optimal.

Guilty Gear X2 #Reload has great visuals, lots of play modes, tons of secrets to unlock, and satisfactory Xbox Live support. For \$20, you'll probably still come out ahead.—Tokyo Drifter

**T** ■ Developed by Arc System Works ■ Published by Majesco ■ \$19.99 ■ Available now ■ Fighting ■ 2 players

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**X**

GRAPHICS	4.5	FUN FACTOR	4.0
SOUND	4.5		
CONTROL	4.5		



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**ESRB**  
 Crude Humor  
 Sexual Themes  
 Violence  
 Game experience may  
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**PC**  
**CD-ROM**  
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**PC**  
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# Street Fighter Anniversary Collection

**PE** The big bang of fighting games is celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and to pay homage to the popular 2D fighting series, Capcom bundled the game that defined a genre with the follow-up that defined it again—creating one fantastic package.

## Tiger! Tiger! Tiger Uppercut! Tiger...

Street Fighter Anniversary Collection contains a hybrid copy of Street Fighter II, entitled Hyper Street Fighter II, as well as Street Fighter III: Third Strike—the tuned and final version of the less-popular sequel. To further sweeten the deal, Capcom includes the *Street Fighter 2* anime movie, online support for the Xbox version, and a generous \$29.99 price tag. So whether you're a fanatical fighting-game fanboy or you simply wish to continue calling yourself a hardcore gamer, go pick this one up. You will not be disappointed. Honest.

Hyper Street Fighter II lets players choose not only one of 17 legendary characters but also which incarnation from Street Fighter II's past they prefer for that character. There are five versions to pick from: Original, Championship Edition, Hyper, Super, and finally, Super Turbo. While there is not much incentive to pick the older, more limited versions of your favorite characters, the nostalgia factor is undeniable.



**PRO TIP:** Throws (Light Punch + Light Kick) are some of the quickest moves in the game. Don't be afraid to dash in and throw someone before they can react.

## Let's Fight Like Gentlemen!

Sure, SFII is a great game, but let's face it: It's pretty damn old. Thankfully, Capcom included a near-perfect arcade port of Street Fighter III, a fighting game as unsung as it is flawless. SFIII's 19-player cast includes a unique new generation of fighters and only a handful of returning originals. Rather than create a clone of its own game, Capcom put less emphasis on uppercuts and more work on creative combos and a counterattack system that truly redefines how Street Fighter is played. Third Strike features the most fluid animation ever seen in a fighter, putting others to shame. This game alone justifies purchasing this collection.

Street Fighter's anniversary really is all about giving back to the fans who have supported the series through the years, and thanks to Xbox online support and an excellent port of Street Fighter III, Capcom really has shown us its love.

—Simon Limon

Also available on the Xbox in September

**T** ■ Developed and published by Capcom  
■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ Fighting ■ 2 players



**PRO TIP:** In SFIII, you can't block in the air, but you can still parry your foe's anti-air attacks (uppercuts) by tapping Forward just before getting hit—leaving him wide open for a counterattack.

**GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE**

<b>PE</b>	GRAPHICS	5.0	<b>5.0</b>
	SOUND	5.0	
	CONTROL	5.0	

# Dynasty Warriors 4: Empires

**PE** Considering that Dynasty Warriors' simplistic, button-mashing, hack-n-slash gameplay has remained essentially unchanged over its many iterations, it comes as a surprise that Dynasty Warriors 4: Empires contains the most enjoyable modifications the series has seen in some time.

## The Manchurian Candidate

Rather than listing possible missions for players to choose, Empires presents a map interface that represents the current state of the continent. As in the game Risk, the goal is to conquer all the areas to bring about an era of unity and peace. Players make policy decisions that affect the battlefield, and those decisions run the gamut from forming alliances to stimulating commerce. Every turn, your generals will suggest two policies each for you to choose from. Kingdom management adds a very welcome cerebral aspect to Empires that is lacking in previous Dynasty Warriors titles. Once policy has been set, the action begins.



**PRO TIP:** The elephant is great for stampeding all over hordes of foes, but jump off to fight individuals.

## Manifest Destiny

The battlefield is much more strategic as well. Key points on the map are "bases," represented by a ring of colored flags. Control of these bases plays a major part in the outcome of the battle. Bases provide troop and morale support, as well as health items. Victory depends on capturing the enemy's main camp, but you must control a contiguous line of bases back to your main camp or the enemy can't be defeated. If the chain is broken by a counterattack, you have to go back and reassert control. Winning the battle gives you control of the area on the map.

Item acquisition has also changed to fit the new style of play. Instead of finding booty on the battlefield, items are produced in your kingdom and can be used only once before they must be produced again. Items and technology can be traded with other kingdoms, making for interesting policy decisions.

The controls feel essentially unchanged, and the music and effects will be familiar to Dynasty Warriors fans. New officer edit options and two-player vs. modes supplement the experience as well, but the most satisfaction comes from watching your empire spread to cover the map.—Super8 Samurai

**T** ■ Developed by Omega Force ■ Published by Koei  
■ \$29.99 ■ Available September ■ Action ■ 2 players



**PRO TIP:** Meng Huo can clear space like nobody's business and has a strong starting point on the map. He's a terrific choice in Empire mode.

**PE**

GRAPHICS	3.5	<b>3.5</b>
SOUND	3.0	
CONTROL	3.5	



# Catwoman

**X** Catwoman is one of those games that gives licensed properties a bad name—this is really depressing because movie-based titles were starting to gain respectability with *The Chronicles of Riddick: Escape from Butcher Bay* and *Spider-Man 2*. Catwoman fumbles the ball—from the moment you press start, there's nothing but frustration. You play as Patience, a woman left for dead who, instead of pushing up daisies, is revived/saved/resurrected by cats. Somehow, her small, furry saviors imbue her with cat powers (or something like that), which translate into a limited repertoire of flailing punch-kick moves, expertise with a whip, and other purchasable powers that are available as the game progresses.



**PRO TIP:** If you want a cheap thrill, make Catwoman stand still for an extended period of time.

Catwoman commits every action/adventure platform-jumper crime imaginable: lousy camera angles, incomprehensible level designs, and a lame combat engine. And for an agile character, there's really nothing stealthy about her. Plus, enemies mindlessly charge, and no matter how you slice it, one really shouldn't have to spend endless hours trying to repeatedly make a near-impossible jump. The awkward controls don't help much, either. Actions are primarily limited to the triggers and analog sticks, and combat is an infuriating visual mess thanks to the camera that has a mind of its own.

Unfortunately, Catwoman will surface on store shelves before this review appears. Too bad: Unaware purchasers of this title will probably quickly relegate it to the litter box.—Major Mike

Also on the PlayStation 2 and GameCube

**T** ■ Developed by EA UK ■ Published by EA Games  
■ \$49.99 ■ Available now ■ Action/adventure ■ 1 player

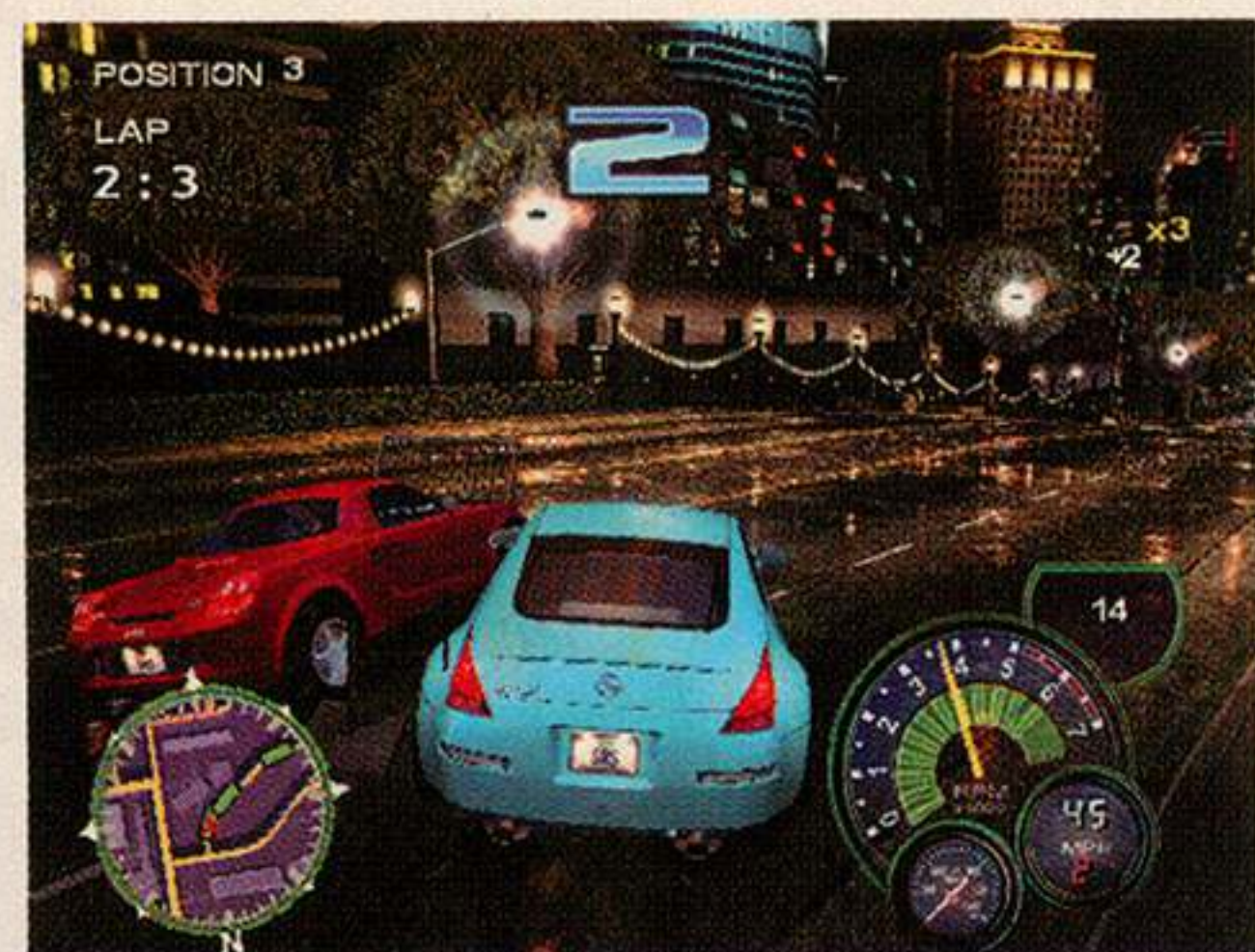


**PRO TIP:** If you ever get stuck in an area and can't find a way out, press and hold the Cat Sense button until the exit is revealed.

<b>X</b>	GRAPHICS	3.0	FUN FACTOR <b>2.0</b> <sub>5</sub>
	SOUND	4.0	
	CONTROL	3.0	

# Street Racing Syndicate

**PE** Street Racing Syndicate is an above-average racer that only die-hard fans of the famous ladies of import-car culture will deem a must have. Every racer these days seems to be adopting the "explore the city and find things to do" style of gameplay, and to its credit, Street Racing Syndicate does a pretty good job of it. Miles of city locales look good, and you can jump right into the action if you want. The cars all have a good feel about them and pulling off power slides is simple. Street Racing Syndicate has the obligatory blurring of everything around your car when you hit the nitro, but it doesn't satisfyingly convey the sensation of your car going insanely fast. Luckily, playing the game online is trouble free with a nice variety of play modes available. The various sound effects are decent, but the music selection is just okay.



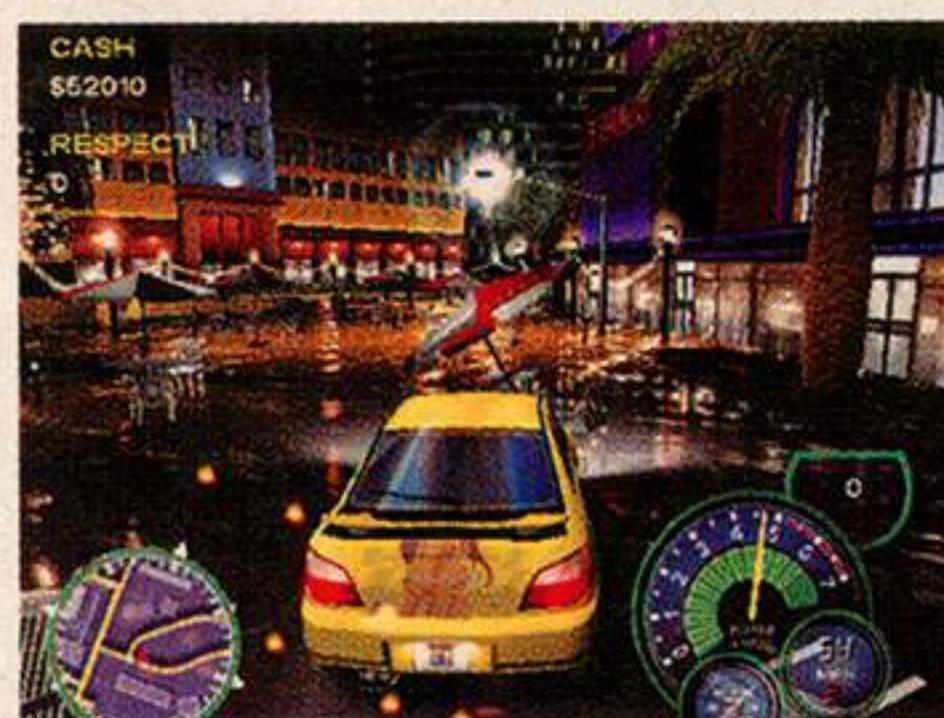
**PRO TIP:** Using boost at the start is only a good idea for drag races. Save them for closing gaps or recovering from a crash.

If there's one feature that's unique to Street Racing Syndicate, it's the "official" ladies of street racing as seen in the many import tuner magazines. If that's your main interest in the game, then you'll find plenty of incentives to keep playing.

Street Racing Syndicate is better than many racers, but there's a lot of heavy competition out there. It's recommend mostly for the ardent fan of the ladies featured.—Tokyo Drifter

Also on the Xbox and GameCube

**T** ■ Developed by Eutechnyx ■ Published by Namco  
■ \$49.99 ■ Available now ■ Racing ■ 2 players



**PRO TIP:** Shortcuts are great, but don't risk too much damage from obstacles or you'll waste money on repairs.

<b>PE</b>	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR <b>3.5</b> <sub>5</sub>
	SOUND	3.5	
	CONTROL	4.0	

# Astro Boy

**PE** Astro Boy is a classic Japanese superhero who's blasting onto American TV via the Cartoon Network. The world-famous animator Osamu Tezuka created Astro 50 years ago. Astro Boy's fans are legion. He has a bunch of cool powers, too, including an Arm Cannon, X-Ray Vision, and his famous 1,000,000-Horsepower Strength. He deserves a stronger game.

Astro Boy for the PS2 is simple fare for kids who are fans of the TV series. The graphics do their duty by faithfully re-creating characters and environments from the show, and Astro in particular is a sweet-looking robotic kid. His flying animation is especially awesome—when he uses his famous Rocket Feet, the effect is right on target. The sounds are a mixed bag, though, with lively music but spare and uninteresting voices.



**PRO TIP:** The Digibeam is most effective when you use it in a sweeping motion against multiple enemies. Press **O** and then rotate the right analog stick.

The uneven controls are a handful, especially during combat sequences. When there's no threat around, Astro cruises like a dream through the air. But once the action heats up, the wonky game cam bangs around and has a tendency to get lost in the scenery. It places poor Astro in peril by forcing you to fight enemies off-screen. Although you can lock on to individual targets, fighting multiple enemies looks and feels like major chaos.

The game's challenge is moderate in keeping with the youngsters it's aimed at. If you're an experienced gamer whose also an Astro Boy fan, this will leave you wanting more. To borrow a sentiment expressed by the numerous canines in the game, "Grrr."—The Man in Black

**E** ■ Developed by Sonic Team ■ Published by Sega  
■ \$39.99 ■ Available now ■ Action/adventure ■ 1 player



**PRO TIP:** When you're engaged in aerial combat, hold the lock-on button (**L1**) and maneuver Astro Boy around the opponent with the left analog stick.

<b>PE</b>	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR <b>3.0</b> <sub>5</sub>
	SOUND	4.0	
	CONTROL	3.0	





Blood  
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PlayStation 2



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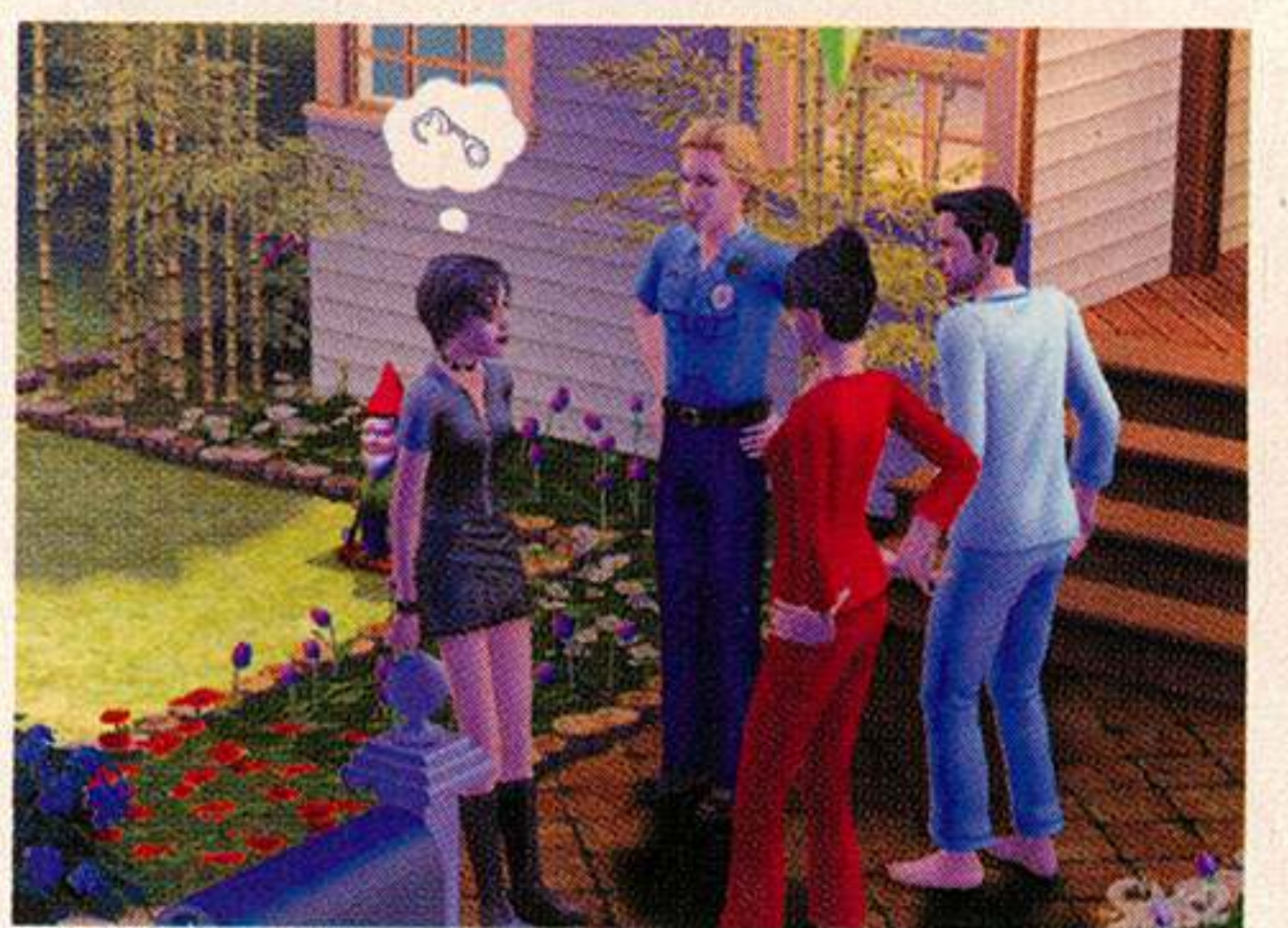
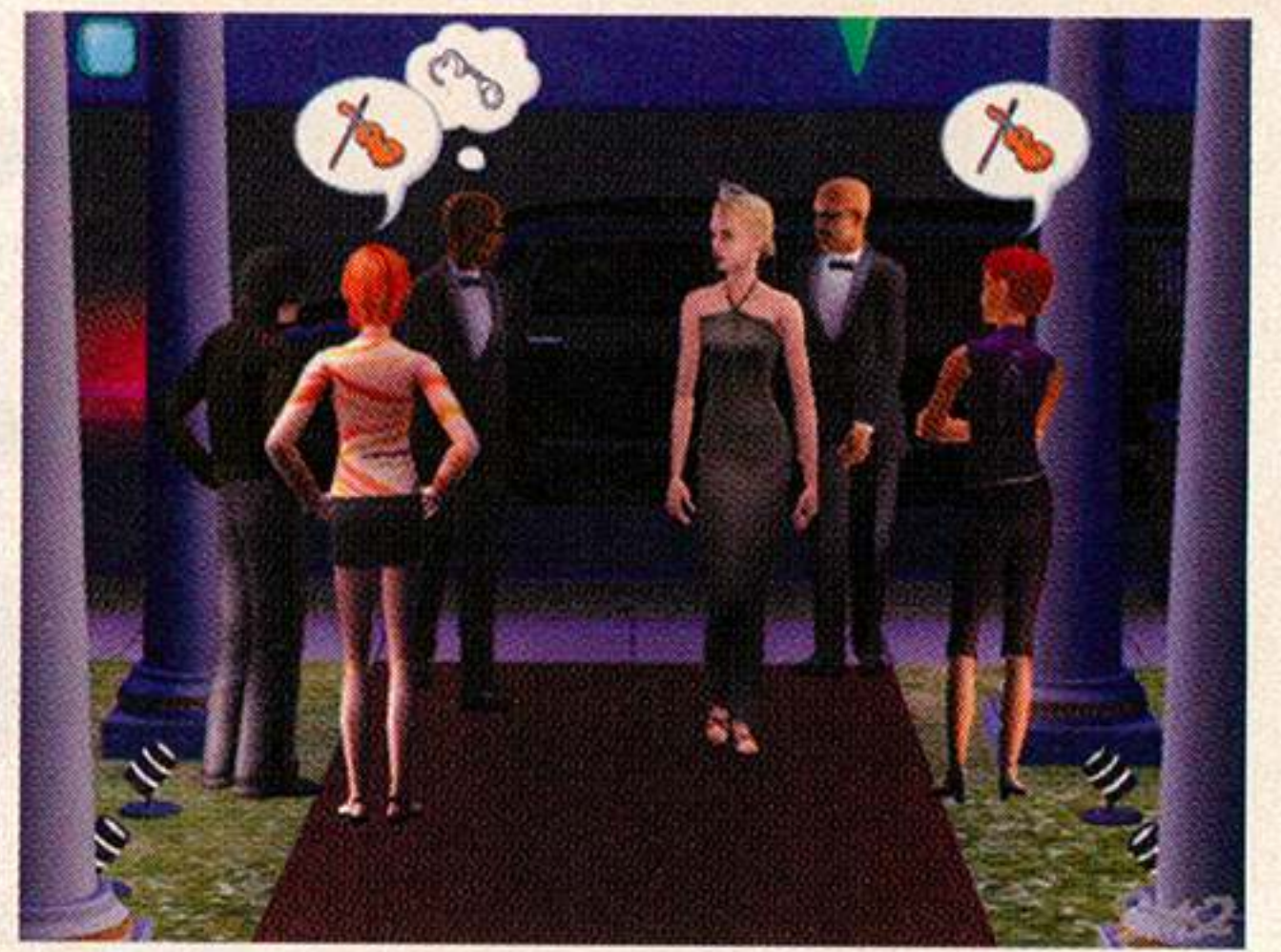


# The Sims 2

**PC** The original Sims held in its hands the Holy Grail of Gaming. Working mothers, professional bowlers, jaded critics, and regular ol' garden-variety gamers—they all owned The Sims, and The Sims owned every one of them for some period of time. Suffice it to say, the sequel is going to sell a bazillion copies—but innovation played a big role in the first game's success. Is there enough in the new one to re-create that same sort of sweet sickness? We dig our claws into a nearly finished build of the game to try to find that out.

## Genetic Engineering

The most striking change (and the one that most immediately affects how you play) is the aspiration/fear system—a slot machine of four shifting “goals” and three “things to avoid” (getting fat, seeing a rat) for each



Sim based on their personality and the “goal path” you set. Some goals are simple (improve your cooking skill by one point, kiss your child), some are more complicated (see a ghost), but these goals serve as a huge gameplay hook that the original game didn't have—something bigger to work toward after you've finished the cycle of urinating, sleeping, and watching TV that guided the first game. We were barely able to scratch the surface of stuff like genetics, genealogy, and family trees—all very promising—so we still don't know just how well they'll hyperextend the life of the game (or strengthen your sick digital bond).

The graphics are exactly what you'd expect—still very Sims-ish (elegant, iconic characters and clean, colorful areas) only now in full 3D with the welcome ability to swing and zoom the camera around freely. While you could do that in the console versions, it's much more fluid here, and the PC interface is way more suited to Sims-ing than the PlayStation 2 controller ever was.

## Bulletproof?

So far, The Sims 2 plays out like an organic amalgam of all the ideas spawned in the later expansion packs and console versions—it seems like Get A Life, Bustin' Out, Hot Date, and all the other umpteen iterations were just testing grounds for the ideas in The Sims 2. A giant machine-brain culled from that data its vision of *The Perfect Game*, and this is it. Our prediction: You'll buy it. You'll obsess over it. It will be just like 2000 all over again.—Star Dingo

- Hands-On ■ Developed by Maxis
- Published by EA Games ■ Target release date: September



# Warhammer 40,000: Dawn of War

**PC** The next game from Relic (makers of the Homeworld series) is proving to be a stunning representation of Warhammer's grim and gothic take on the 40th Century. Fans of the original table-based game have been waiting for this RTS for quite a while, and they're about to be rewarded for their patience—it's visually stunning, exacting in detail, and very cinematic.

Relic's answer to the questing RTS player is to provide a direct injection of fast-paced and brutal squad-based action. Gathering minerals, gas, ore, etc. has been eliminated. There are only two types of resources, and both are dependent on the amount of ground

you are willing to take. By capturing strategic points, you increase the amount of resources, and by constructing generators on key points, you accumulate power that is used to construct units. Both are accumulated annually, and as a result, the player can concentrate less on harvesting and more on army composition and the placement of squads. Unlike most RTSs, the terrain around your forces is pivotal to winning valuable positions. Placement, position, and composition are the keys to victory in most skirmishes.



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Dawn of War is shaping up to be one part StarCraft, one part Warcraft III, and one part Homeworld. With Relic's track record, this RTS has a major shot at magnificence.

—Dark Pariah

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Relic  
 ■ Published by THQ ■ Target release date: October

# Empire Earth 2

**PC** Once upon a time, they were all anyone was playing on their PC. But too many clones and copycats—and not enough Warcraft IIIs—turned real-time strategy games into a sort of black hole of gather-n-destroy gameplay. Too much gravity, not enough light. But the landscape's starting to change. Over at EA, they're cooking up The Battle for Middle-Earth, a game with tons of bright new ideas in presentation. Meanwhile, at Vivendi Universal Games, they're working

on Empire Earth 2, which has its own opinions on how to advance the functional aspects of RTS gaming.

Its brightest new ideas? As players advance through the epochs, they're awarded "crowns" that reflect their play style and grant special bonuses—aggressive types are likely to win the military crown, and base-builders will tend to win the imperial crown. The ability to build (and destroy) bridges should change island warfare significantly.



A picture-in-picture window in the corner lets you monitor several situations at once, and a Madden-style "play map" lets you coordinate with allies on a map using a graphical interface. Finally, the Idle Citizen manager lets you handle resource gathering without having to hunt down individual peons. Good stuff, but will it be enough to change your overRTSaturated mind?—Star Dingo

■ First Look ■ Developed by Mad Doc  
 ■ Published by Vivendi Universal Games  
 ■ Target release date: First Quarter 2005



# Joint Operations: Typhoon Rising

**NovaLogic's take on massively multiplayer first-person shooting ups the ante to a military romp that's hard to stop playing.**

**PC** Joint Operations is a totally addictive shootout. Sure, EA's Battlefield series has dominated the WWII and Vietnam eras, but NovaLogic's MMOFPS (that's massively multiplayer online first-person shooter for you recruits) absolutely tears up the modern-day war zone and even one-ups the Battlefield stranglehold in many areas.

## Military Might

Until you've heard the whisks of bullets flying past your head, downed a chopper full of enemies with your last rocket, or successfully transported friendlies through hostile water, you can't even begin to fathom the intensity that Joint Operations brings to your PC. Of course, a tricked-out computer makes the experience much better, but even at just medium settings, this game shines. Joint Ops tops out at a mind-boggling 150 people at once (75 vs. 75), so the push for solid teamwork is certainly challenging—but it's also absolutely gratifying.

Balanced gameplay is where Joint Operations commands authority. The setting is Indonesian badlands rife with large environments that include lush jungles, rolling hills, abandoned villages,



**PROTIP:** Spruce up a helo's firepower by making sure passengers are armed with Stinger and AT4 missiles.



**PROTIP:** Vehicles attract unwanted attention. Use them only as transportation. Get off 150 meters away from your objective and hoof it the rest of the way, using bushes and water as cover.



**PROTIP:** Position gun-mounted vehicles to border encampments for extra firepower in times of defense.

and microislands—the perfect place for a showdown between Indonesian rebels and an international task force. It's also a perfect place to use the many land, air, and sea vehicles available to each team. You can opt to pilot a wide array of helicopters, boats, and four-wheelers that respawn at just the right moments. Controlling these intimidating war beasts is an easy task—much simpler than in the Battlefield games. Weapon loadouts are just as diverse and easy on the hands. You can direct mortar fire as an engineer and laser-designated targets as a sniper, and of course, you can heal the wounded as a medic. Combine all of these talents, add in cover from attacking vehicles and huge, huge environments in which to frolic, and you come up with a battlefield worth fighting for.

## An Assault on All Senses

Joint Operations rocks with its visual presentation. Fighting in an area where the sun sets in real time, you're forced to whip out the night-vision goggles to move ahead midway through the game, which sets a new precedent in fighting tactics. This is compounded by expansive levels and some really cool-looking vehicles that will keep your eyes glued to the screen.

There are some minor setbacks in Joint Operations worth mentioning. Handling an auto can be trying at times—you can go through trees, and four wheelin' doesn't always work through rice paddies. And the sporadic lag, even on decently high-running machines, can be bothersome, especially when there's a lot going on in one specific area or when you're trying to aim at targets from long distances.

All of the positives, however, certainly overshadow these negatives. If you're even remotely interested in funning around with large groups of like-minded soldiers, then Joint Operations certainly tops the ranks.—*Four-Eyed Dragon*

- T** ■ Developed and published by NovaLogic
- \$39.99 ■ Available now
- Team first-person shooter ■ 150 players



**Prolific team building is at the core of this truly addicting massively multiplayer shooter.**



**PROTIP:** If you're a rifleman or engineer, stick with just a primary weapon, the rocket launcher, and frag grenades. Everything else is extra weight, which will slow you down.



**PROTIP:** An advanced stealth maneuver: Swim deep underwater and come up only to take quick breaths of air.

**GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE**

<b>PC</b>	GRAPHICS	4.5	<b>FUN FACTOR</b> <b>5.0</b>
	SOUND	4.5	
	CONTROL	4.5	

**Recommended System Specifications**

- Windows 2000/XP ■ Pentium 4 2.4 GHz
- 512 MB RAM ■ 1.5 GB on HD ■ 128 MB video card



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# F-Zero: GP Legend

Based on the Japanese TV series, F-Zero: GP Legend is not only a great progression from 2001's Maximum Velocity but also an improvement—the physics are better tuned and the action moves much faster and smoother. In fact, GP Legend is probably the fastest racer on the GBA. You don't "participate" in events so much as rapaciously consume one feverish lap at a time inside angular circuits (many of which appeared in the first F-Zero game for the SNES) packed with hairpin twists, razor-sharp curves, explosive traps, shortcuts, and sudden leaps.

## Greed for Speed

GP Legend improves on Velocity, taking cues from GX for the GameCube by incorporating a Story mode that lets you unlock and play as various racers as you progress. The serpentine, multicharacter-driven story lines keep things fresh, but you'll find yourself button-bopping through the anime-style cut-scenes to get to the next race—this is not so much a complaint about the narrative as a ringing endorsement of the addictive thrills that races provide. After unlocking characters in Story mode, you can select them in the Grand Prix mode, which is the true gem here. It features over 30 selectable racers and lets you perform some prerace balancing between your craft's top speed and acceleration, depending on whether the next track you race requires a reliance on drifts and quick recovery speed, or the maintaining of a steady pace.



**PROTIP:** Double-tap the shoulder buttons to ram enemies into barriers without suffering damage.

## Turbo Boost

In addition to augmented physics, the control scheme has also been tweaked since Velocity so that ships handle better than before. You boost by simultaneously pressing the shoulder buttons, and you can now generate a protective force field and knock opponents into barriers without taking any damage. Although graphical details have been sacrificed on behalf of blazing speeds with no faltering, everything moves so quickly you won't even notice. Damn fast, damn challenging, and thoroughly addictive, F-Zero: GP Legend dominates the handheld circuit.

—Iron Monkey

**E** ■ Developed and published by Nintendo ■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ Racing ■ 4 players



**PROTIP:** Quickly release the A button and tap the shoulder buttons to drift around tight corners.



**PROTIP:** You can revisit easier tracks to earn more money.

**GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE**

GRAPHICS	3.5	FUN FACTOR	4.5	
	SOUND			4.0
	CONTROL			4.5

# Hamtaro: Ham-Ham Games

They're so cute, you'll want to put them in your mouth! Hamtaro began in early 2000, when owning hamsters became popular among Japanese children. Capitalizing on this trend as well as parental fears that many children's anime series were half-hour commercials and way too violent, the Tottoko Hamtaro manga and anime series were conceived. They chronicle the secret life of Hamtaro, a house hamster, as he explores the world while his master Laura Haruna is at school.

## Kush, Kush!

Hamtaro: Ham-Ham Games stars the Ham-Ham gang, Hamtaro's clique of hamster friends, as they're invited to compete in the hamster track-and-field Olympics in the Rainbow Kingdom. They compete in 15 events over seven days against three other hamster teams. The events range from the classic hammer throw and pole vault to the outrageous bird-back riding (think of a hamster riding a Chocobo over hurdles) and synchronized swimming. The goal is to garner the most gold medals and earn seed currency to acquire supercute hamster costumes for your character to wear.

While the main emphasis of the game is centered on the sporting events, players can also wander around the various locations and talk to event staff and competitors for tips and clues on treasures. In addition to the events, the game features an old handheld video game to play, customizable background music and languages, and Ham TV, which showcases various adorable programs. The events vary and are simple to learn yet difficult to master, and most of the controls consist of timing button presses. Adding a social aspect, players can trade costumes, event statistics, and messages to others through Player Cards via the game link cable.

## The Eyes, It's All in the Eyes!

Hamtaro: Ham-Ham Games is an excellent twist on the tried-and-true track-and-field game. Once you've completed all seven days, Free Play mode becomes available, adding to the replay factor. If the cute characters don't hook you, the gameplay definitely will.—Rice Burner

**E** ■ Developed and published by Nintendo ■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ Sports ■ 1 player



We hope this Cappy knows that hamsters can't swim.



**PROTIP:** For the Hammer Throw event, press and hold A only when the hammer is in the yellow shaded area of its arc to gain momentum.



**PROTIP:** In the 100m Dash event, continually press A when the power meter is in the red zone for a speed boost.

**GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE**

GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR	4.5	
	SOUND			4.0
	CONTROL			3.5





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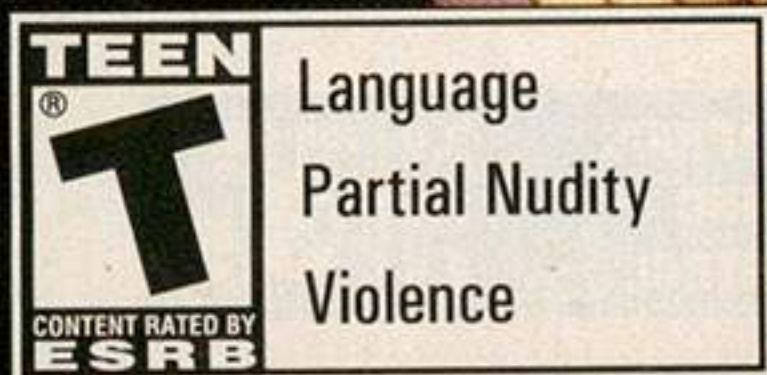


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PlayStation 2





# Disney's Aladdin

**A**s far as licensed properties go, Aladdin was smoking hot about 10 years ago—and unsurprisingly, this untimely Aladdin game for the Game Boy Advance is an unremarkable action/platformer. As an “enhanced” port of the 16-bit SNES title of the same name (Capcom has added a new level to each stage), Aladdin is a mind-numbingly simplistic, straightforward action game based on the mid-1990s animated blockbuster. The 1990s saw a flood of subpar platform/jumping games starring forgettable mascots (remember Bubsy?) and uninspired movie adaptations that nearly sank the genre forever. Sadly, Disney's Aladdin serves as a reminder of those dark days in gaming as yet another example of the unsightly marriage of mediocre game design and big-name movie licenses (albeit an ancient one).



**PRO TIP:** Throwing apples can stun distant enemies long enough for you to close in and finish them off.

Boringly basic though it may be, Aladdin isn't all bad. The welcome inclusion of a handy save feature always makes portable gaming easier. And with the ability to toss apples at his attackers and float down from heights via a homemade parachute, Aladdin does have a few cool moves that help break up the monotony of the run-right-jump-over-pit gameplay. The floaty control scheme, however, often leads to frustrating accidental deaths as Aladdin annoyingly vaults off enemy heads high atop precarious platforms. Also, the easy difficulty level combined with the ability to save anywhere will have experienced gamers breezing through this title in as little as two hours (which translates to roughly \$15 per hour of “fun”), making Aladdin a poor choice for anyone outside the kindergarten crowd.—*Bones*

**E** ■ Developed and published by Capcom  
 ■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ Action ■ 1 player



**PRO TIP:** In the Agrabah boss fight, wait for the guard to swing his sword, then pounce on his head four times to win.

	GRAPHICS	3.0	<b>FUN FACTOR</b> <b>2.0</b> <small>5</small>
	SOUND	3.0	
	CONTROL	3.0	

# Gundam Seed: Battle Assault

**G**undam Seed: Battle Assault is the latest installment in the Battle Assault series, and unlike the previous Battle Assault games, it features an entire roster exclusively devoted to Gundam Seed. For Gundam enthusiasts, this is heaven sent—no more mixing of alternate universes and time lines.

Battle Assault features 12 selectable mechs—eight are available by default and four are unlockable. The game consists of many modes, including Story, Versus, Training, Survival, Time Limit, Time Trial, and Free Battle. The Story mode has four levels of difficulty, and Versus mode can accommodate up to four players via link cable.

The game engine sports a variety of customization features like an ingenious power-distribution system. You can adjust the ratio of your mobile suit's power, which radically determines your fighting style. However, be aware that raising any category drastically higher than the other will lead to a gigantic weakness, which can be exploited by your opponents.



**PRO TIP:** Duel Gundam is the most well-balanced mobile suit.

While the controls and graphics are superior to those in every other handheld fighting game, Battle Assault has some flaws. The “story” in Story mode is nonexistent, even with a wealth of source material from 50 episodes of anime from which to choose. The power-distribution system works well in theory, but when put to use against advanced opponents, players will feel the unevenness of the game. Also, the game gives you too many handicaps and leaves an unsavory taste of an unbalanced fighter. Even with these minor faults, Battle Assault is an excellent handheld fighter and still recommended.—*Rice Burner*

**T** ■ Developed and published by Bandai  
 ■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ Fighting ■ 2 players



**PRO TIP:** Gundam Raider is one of the cheapest fighters. Simultaneously press Down on the directional pad and hold R, and then press L to execute his spiral technique.

	GRAPHICS	4.5	<b>FUN FACTOR</b> <b>4.0</b> <small>5</small>
	SOUND	3.5	
	CONTROL	4.0	



**PRO TIP:** Don't bother attacking the monsters; concentrate on your competitor's shields instead.

# Duel Masters: Sempai Legends

**T**he Darwinian process continues unabated as trading-card games vie for their survival. Teaming up with Atari, Wizards of the Coast has opened up a new assault against Yu-Gi-Oh, Pokémon, and the omnipotent Magic franchises in the form of Duel Masters: Sempai Legends.

Sempai Legends is a turned-based card/combat game with heavy role-playing elements. Players assume the role of Tom as he pursues a thief who has stolen his family heirloom—an all-powerful Duel Masters card handed down from his grandfather. Decks are divided up into five elemental civilizations—each one differs in style and strategy. Players begin with a 40-card deck, and the game includes a total of 180 cards.

The dueling system is a simplified version of the Magic: The Gathering game that requires players to sacrifice a card to the Mana Zone each turn to be able to summon monsters and cast spells. The object is to not harm the other opponent but to destroy five shields and then attack your opponent. Once you win, you'll be customarily rewarded with a booster pack. The RPG engine adds an interesting exploration aspect. Tom can wander the map, talk to villagers for clues, and challenge opponents. While Sempai Legends' system is solid, the rest of the game is mediocre—the sound is subpar and the graphics look amateurish.

Despite its aesthetic weaknesses, Duel Masters: Sempai Legends is a good trading-card game with solid RPG qualities, and it's definitely a match for its handheld competitors.—*Rice Burner*

**E** ■ Developed by Mystic ■ Published by Atari  
 ■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ Card/strategy ■ 2 players

	GRAPHICS	3.0	<b>FUN FACTOR</b> <b>3.5</b> <small>5</small>
	SOUND	2.5	
	CONTROL	3.5	



Sometimes girls are mean.





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# N-Gage Arena

**N**Remember those awful rectangular NES controllers? Talk about ergonomics from hell. But did you even notice those plastiform corners digging into your flesh while you clutched the thing in a death grip for hours on end, steering a blocky little Link ever closer to Princess Zelda? The point is, people will forgive ergonomic oversights if the software is compelling enough.



Pathway to Glory

Enter the N-Gage QD. Your complaints about the N-Gage's shape and size have been heard, and the hard taco has been remade into a soft taco. But what has Nokia done about the anemic software library? Why on Earth would anybody choose the N-Gage over the new crop of forthcoming portables?

## Wireless Web-Slinger

Nokia is finally wising up and starting to take advantage of the N-Gage's unique abilities with the N-Gage Arena. Two upcoming titles, *Pocket Kingdom: Own the World* and *Pathway to Glory*, do something that no GBA game can. These games access the Internet wirelessly via GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) at speeds of up to 64 kilobits per second, enabling multiplayer gaming for anyone within reach of a cell-phone tower. The N-Gage QD is Bluetooth-enabled as well, but it's GPRS that makes this portable unique. Bluetooth and WiFi, the wireless technologies to be featured in Sony's PSP and Nintendo's DS, create direct device-to-device connections only for people in the same room.

## MMMore MMOs

Though it has a wider reach, GPRS must contend with network latency issues that make true real-time action like you'd see in an FPS impossible. Up until now, the Arena's multiplayer focus has been on turn-based games like *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004*, which allows four players to tee off against each other. *Pocket Kingdom* is a fantasy-themed MMO while *Pathway to Glory* is a portable take on the *Battlefield 1942* concept, so it will take masterful game design to work around network latency issues. At the time of this writing, Nokia indicated that thousands of people will be able to play *Pocket Kingdom* simultaneously, but no figures had been released for *Pathway to Glory*.

Looking at these preliminary screen shots, a cynic might wonder how many of the thousands of simultaneous players will fit on the screen at once. It's still unclear whether *Pocket Kingdom* or *Pathway to Glory* will change the N-Gage QD from a detour to a destination. If the games are good enough, dedicated communities will form around them and the N-Gage may finally come into its own as the first to bring "massively mobile multiplayer online" to the masses. You know you've been dying for another "M" to keep track of. Keep an eye on *Games To Go* for the latest previews and reviews as they become available.—*Super8 Samurai*



Pocket Kingdom: Own the World

## N-Gage Arena at a Glance

- GPRS wireless web
- Mobile multiplayer online games
- Global scoreboards
- Downloadable content
- Cheats, tips, tricks, and chat

So everyone's favorite whipping boy has returned sans "side-talking." The most innovative new feature, the N-Gage Arena, leverages wireless data transfer to enhance your mobile gaming experience. Remember, you must have a wireless data plan from your service provider to utilize the Arena! You don't, however, need a wireless data plan to use the QD's Bluetooth capabilities because Bluetooth creates a direct device-to-device connection without going onto the web.





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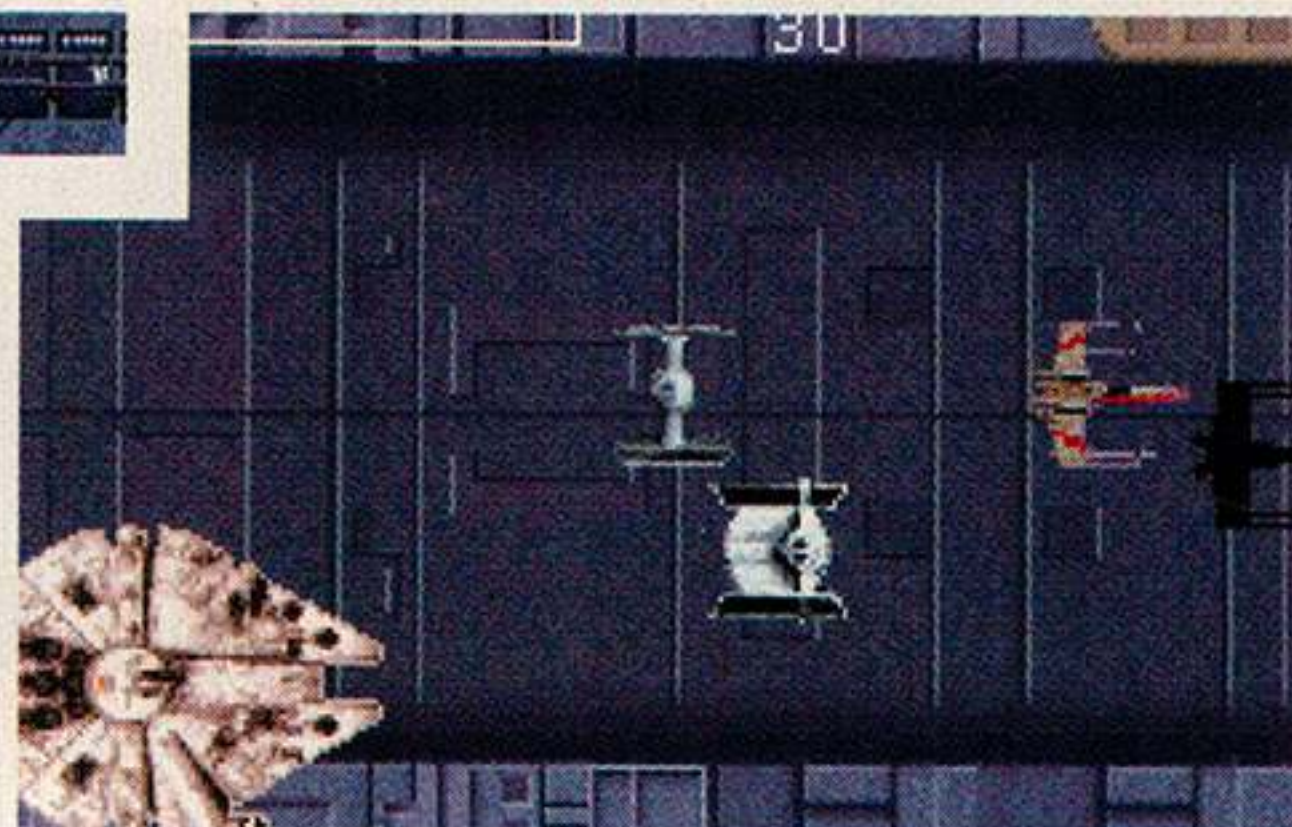


# Star Wars Trilogy: Apprentice of the Force

**S**tar Wars Trilogy: Apprentice of the Force will follow the path of Luke Skywalker from restless farm boy to Jedi mystic. Sure, you already know the story—Luke leaves the smoldering remains of his aunt and uncle behind on the desolate planet Tatooine to learn the ways of the Force, hang out in the swamp with Yoda, get his hand chopped off by Darth Vader, and have flirtatious exchanges with his twin sister—but this is the first time you'll be able to re-enact these classic cinematic moments in one game.

In addition to knocking off Imperial creeps with a blaster, a lightsaber, and an arsenal of psychic powers, you'll also take part in X-wing dogfights in space and speeder bike chases through Endor. The game's competitive multiplayer modes will keep you from being a total hermit when Apprentice of the Force releases simultaneously with the *Star Wars Trilogy* DVD set.—*Iron Monkey*

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed and published by Ubisoft Entertainment**  
 ■ **Target release date: September**



## Mega Man Zero 3

**S** The third installment of the Zero series, like its prequels, is shaping up to be one of the most challenging platform adventures out there. Taking place after the fall of Neo Arcadia, the titular reloid and his crew of resistance fighters have to combat the world-threatening power of the Dark Elf. In the previewable build of Zero 3, you started with the ability to toggle between Zero's Z Saber and Buster Shot, and acquire new weapons and techniques as you progress.

Armor parts also bestow new abilities—leg parts give the ability to double jump or be invincible while dashing, and helmet parts can restore your energy; EX Skills give you new fighting techniques and Buster Shot attacks. You can also fuse with Cyber-Elves to gain their powers, which you'll need against what are some of the most insanely difficult bosses in recent memory.—*Iron Monkey*

■ **Hands-On** ■ **Developed and published by Capcom**  
 ■ **Target release date: October**



## Mega Man Anniversary Collection



**S** Mega Man Anniversary Collection commemorates the first five Mega Man titles that appeared on the Game Boy and Game Boy Color. Even with a hidden bonus game, Capcom has managed to keep the experience pure. Capcom could have taken advantage of the extra L and R buttons on the GBA to allow for quick weapon switching, but this preview build did not feature that ability. A similar feature was integrated into the Anniversary Collection for the PS2, Xbox, and GameCube, despite the games' original mechanics, so there's still a possibility that it will be added. The same goes for auto saves as they were not available in the preview version. Nevertheless, Capcom has put its main focus on the meat of its product (which is the games themselves), and all six work equally well. Now that that's out of the way, all we can do is hope that Capcom has plans to make better use of the Game Boy Advance, one way or another.—*Test Monkey*

■ **Hands-On** ■ **Developed and published by Capcom**  
 ■ **Target release date: September**



# Mario Pinball Land

**M**ario Pinball Land could be the best translation of pinball to video games. Okay, so maybe that's not saying much, but the preview version is a challenging blast that begs for quick reflexes, precision aiming, and an intuition for ball physics. The control scheme is simple—you tap the shoulder buttons to operate two flippers that knock a sphere-shaped Mario around variously themed tables—but there is a clever depth and manic energy at play here.

Each world has multiple levels that are accessed by knocking open doors, squeezing through openings, and triggering hidden drops with the help of power-ups like growth-inducing (and reducing) mushrooms and multiballs, while the environments, which range from desert plains to arctic fantasias, affect the ball physics. After defeating man-eating plants and puffer fish bosses, you can warp to other worlds in your effort to rack up the most points while staying alive as long as possible.

—Iron Monkey

■ Hands-On ■ Developed and published by Nintendo  
 ■ Target release date: October



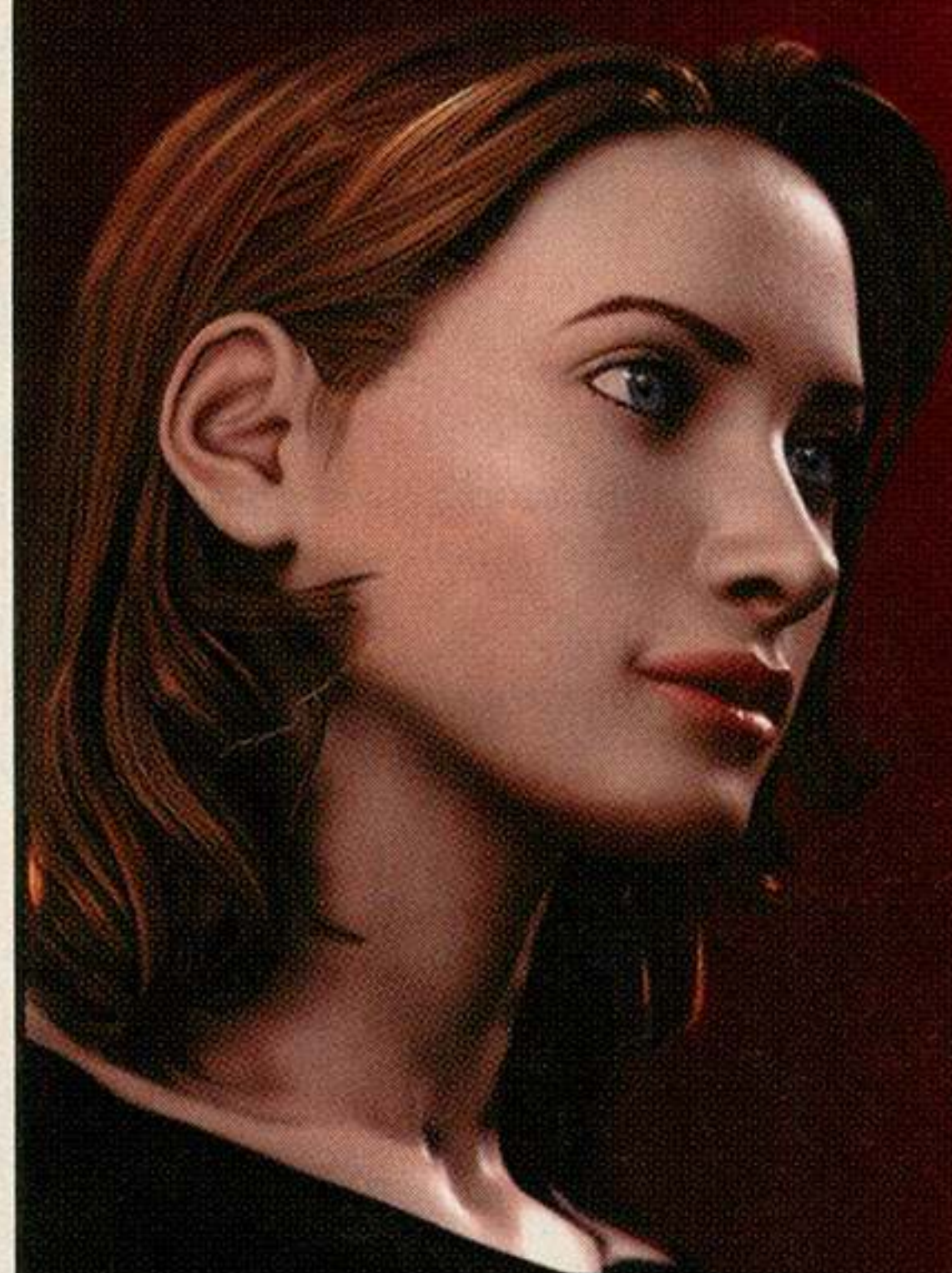
# The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age

**A**nalogy quiz time (oh boy)! Q: The Third Age for consoles is to Final Fantasy X as The Third Age for the GBA is to \_\_\_\_\_. If you answered Final Fantasy Tactics Advance, give yourself five points! We also would have accepted Fire Emblem. The handheld version of The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age is quite unlike its big console brother—it's a top-down grid-based strategy/RPG instead of a straight-up role-player. The hook here is a good and evil campaign, and large-scale battles that can involve dozens of (mostly disposable) units instead of just 10 or so on each side. The map is divided into three "flanks"—left, right, and center—each of which has its own "general" (a major character from the movie like Elrond or The Witch King) who grants his own special bonuses and determines how many moves each flank can make per round.—Star Dingo

■ First Look ■ Developed by Griptonite Games  
 ■ Published by EA Games ■ Target release date: November



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# ANY MIRACLES ON THE ICE?

**W**ith the likelihood of a strike looming—probably even a long one—video games might deliver this year's only hockey. It's preview time at the rink, and with Microsoft and Midway sitting out the season, only three contenders are carving up the ice. We grabbed some pine to study the prospects and help you start deciding which season ticket deserves your hockey dollars.

## It's the Action, Jackson

Hockey games have lacked a clear league leader for a couple of seasons now, and all three squads have made that intangible sense of excitement and authenticity a priority as they scramble to grab the top spot. Sega's ESPN NHL 2K5 (PS2, Xbox for September) has emerged as the choice for gamers who prize realism, but to avoid scaring off more casual players, this year's game is smartly tuning the goalies—last year, they were absurdly impregnable brick walls; this year, you should score at reasonable intervals in a reasonable variety of ways. The skating feels fantastic already, and good tweaks to checking and fighting ratchet up the action. The protect-puck and pinned-to-the-boards controls remain stellar. The fantastic \$20 price tag will also make the crowd go wild.

For EA Sports' NHL 2005 (PS2, Xbox, GameCube for September), the focus has been on opening up the neutral zone, which is a fancy way of saying that you can now skate end to end more readily—the D no longer punks you for skating more than 10 yards without passing. While EA reports that it's also worked on smoothing out the skating and checking (both felt way too jerky last



ESPN NHL 2K5



NHL 2005

year), NHL 2005 still needs some love in that crucial area—the last month of tuning will make it or break it. The gameplay still focuses on big hits and goals, but some excellent strategy options, including the fantastic trio of face-off plays, inject some much-needed depth.

989 Sports wisely benched itself last season, so with two years of development time and a new developer, it could be the dark-horse surprise—or the dark-horse flop. Along with the usual play-calling options and dekes on the right analog stick, NHL FaceOff 2005 (name not final, PS2 for fall, probably September) includes a new approach to shot aiming, providing a "visible tool" that lets you target the five-hole or go stickside high. Sounds cool, but 989 hasn't released a preview version yet, so who knows?

## Dynastic Depth

Each game naturally includes a dynasty-style mode—always a serious focal point for players.

ESPN's Franchise mode is reaping the benefits of a strong overhaul; the focus is on building your team and staff, so you can hire/fire coaches, move prospects between the minors and majors, and squabble over contracts. Your minor-league team is now a fully functional team instead of just a holding pool, and scouting plays a much bigger role as you assign scouts to regions around the world, then take several different looks at promising players, even running them through drills. It feels much more like a fantasy-sports approach, the kind of thing that sports nuts can really get lost in. ESPN rounds all that out with a fantastic four-player Party mode that serves up a slew of creative, addictive, and downright fun mini-games. You can even play them online, which is another strong point for ESPN as it's the only game to support online leagues.

NHL 2005's more RPG-like Dynasty mode feels more like a video-game creation than a fantasy sport, and if that's your cup of tea, you'll love purchasing upgrades to your assistant coach's ability to add +1 to your players' stamina at practice or +5 percent to your legal department's



NHL 2005



NHL 2005



ESPN NHL 2K5

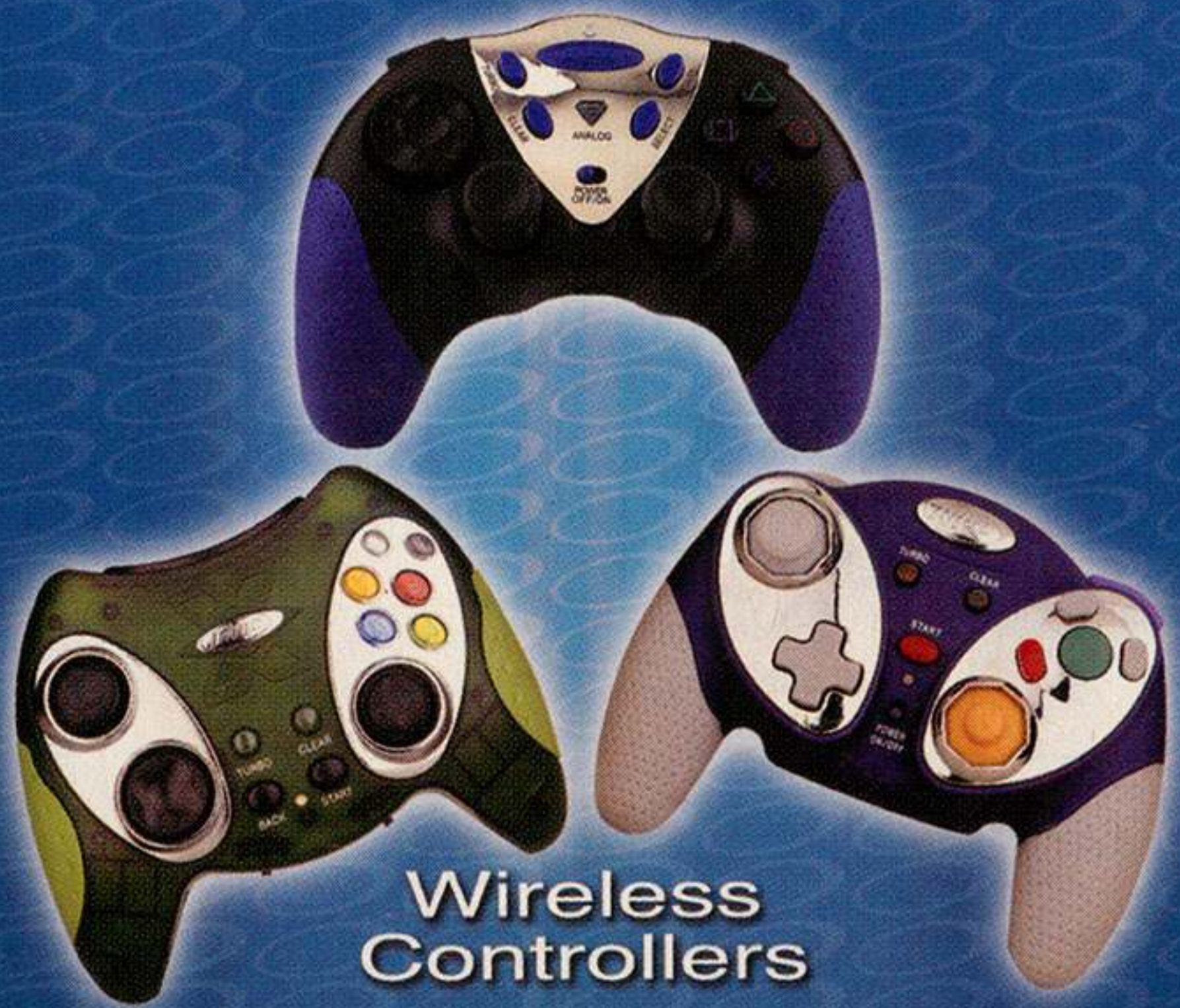


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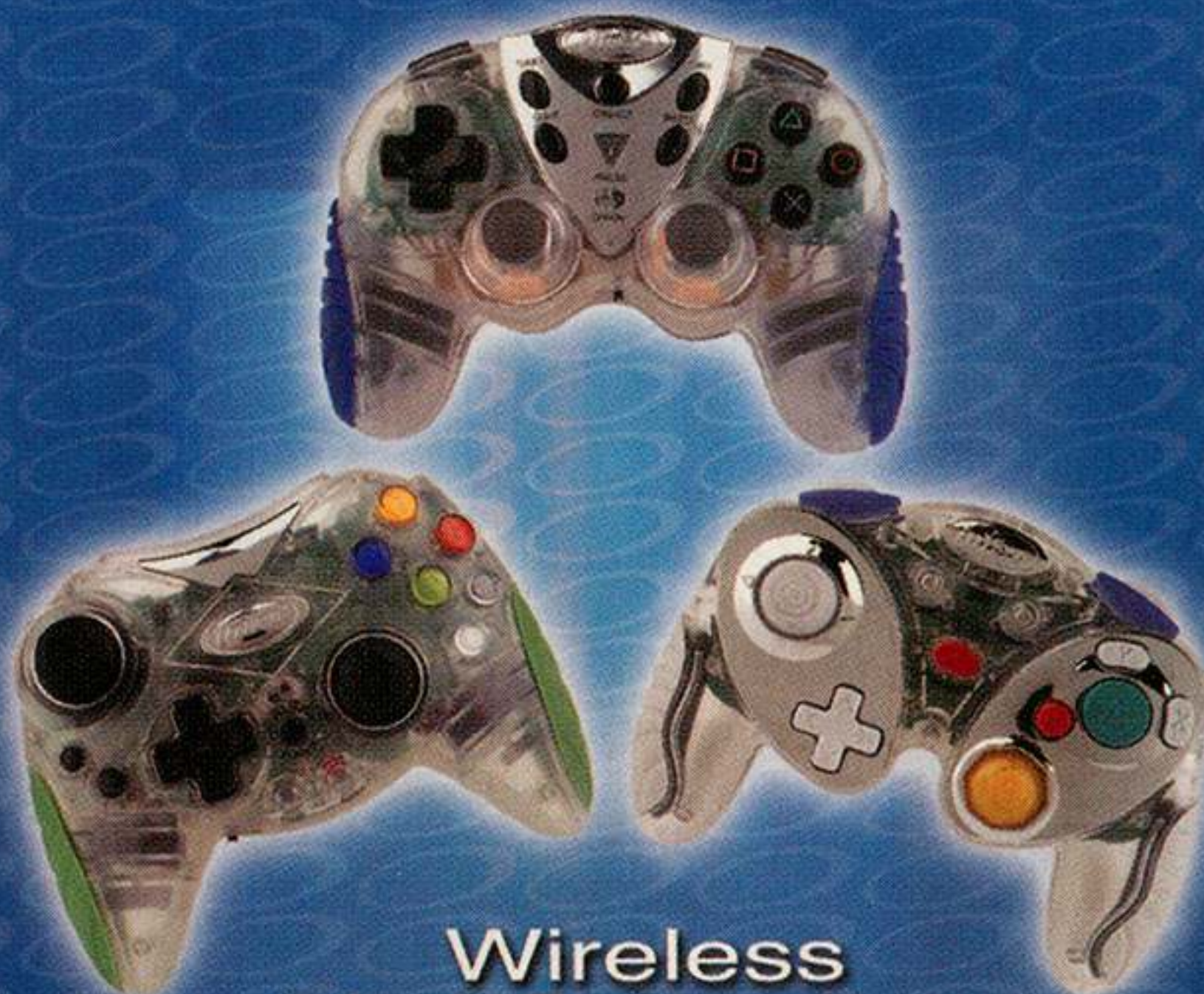
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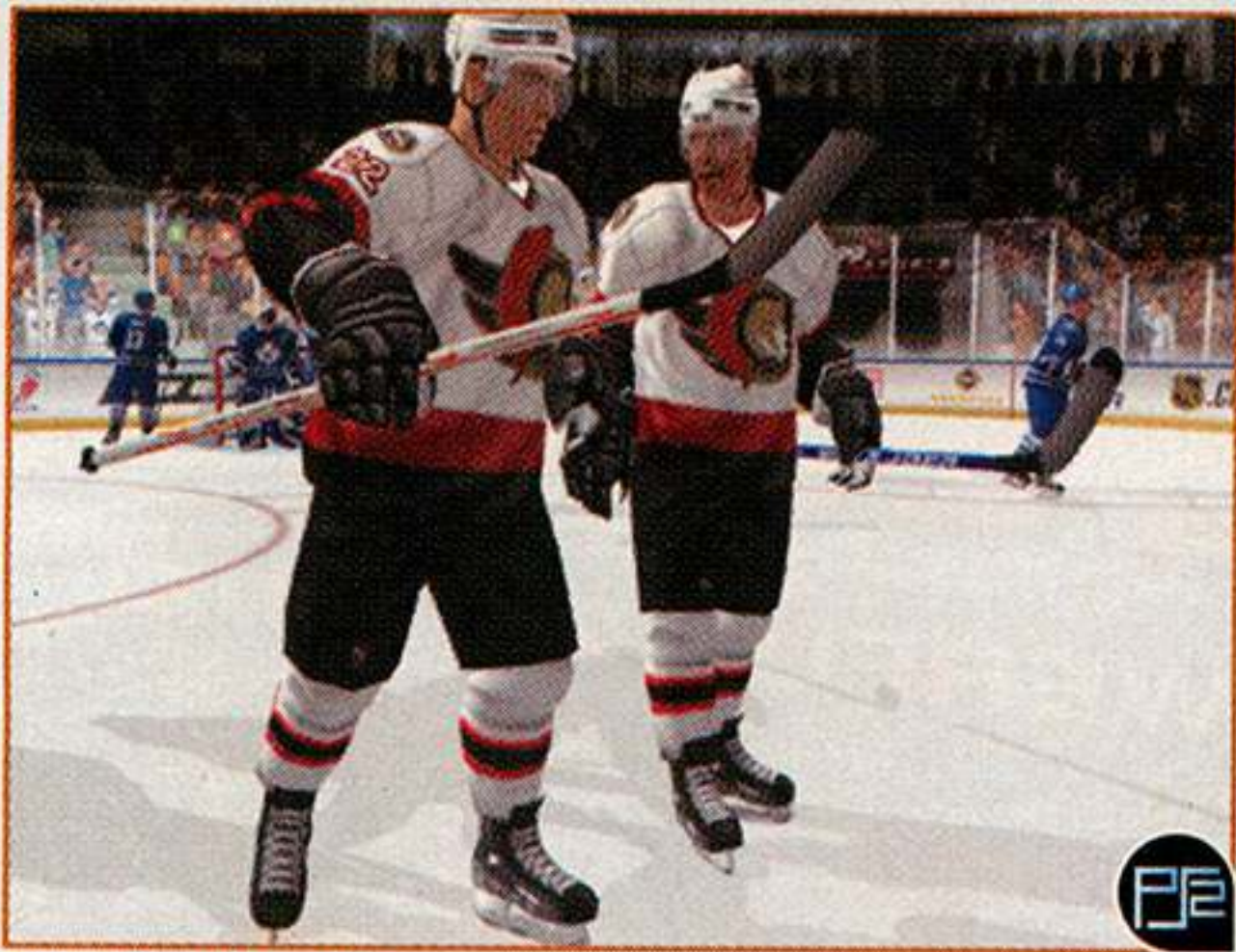
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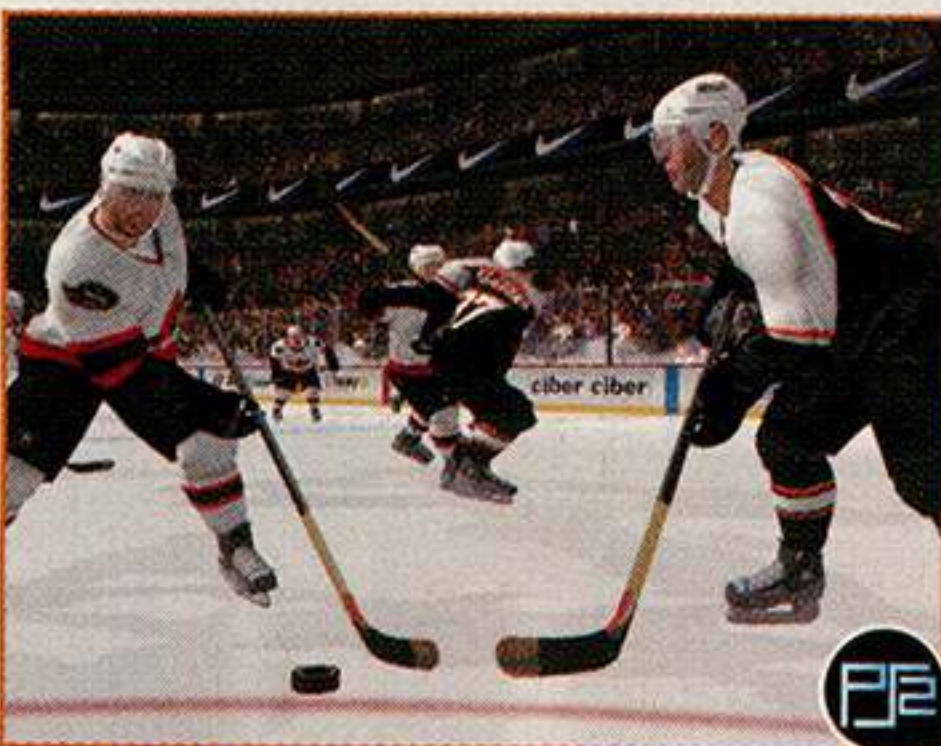
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NHL FaceOff 2005



NHL FaceOff 2005

ability to sign free agents. It's a pretty immense level of detail, and EA's doing a great job at streamlining all the info into a PDA interface that makes it more enjoyable. But the support of online play is standard at best. Along with adding Xbox Live, you can play tournaments, download rosters, or go head-to-head—all the usuals.

As for FaceOff, 989 was reluctant to part with details, but the superb Career mode in MLB 2005 could be a good early indicator. As with 989's surprisingly good baseball game, you can control as much or as little detail as you like in your team operations, ranging from drafts to free agents to contracts to minor-league affiliates. Other great stuff includes EyeToy support for mapping your face onto created players and a cool Rivalry mode that lets two gamers track a lifetime of stats in their ongoing battle for supremacy.

## Preseason Picks

EA virtually launched sports gaming with its Madden and NHL series back in the 16-bit Genesis era, earning it huge amounts of street cred in hockey, which it then squandered in the early PS2 days. While EA's been slowly rebuilding and relying on its rep, the hotshot ESPN is coming on stronger than ever, and it's going to be tight—triple OT kinda tight. Unless FaceOff manages a revolution, ESPN's starting to own this sport. Stay tuned for the final box scores in next month's issue.—Air Hendrix



ESPN NHL 2K5



NHL FaceOff 2005

Scouting Report	NHL 2005	ESPN NHL 2K5	NHL FaceOff 2005
Hockey authenticity	The expected action-packed, arcade-style feel	More realistic and true to the sport but harder	Unknown
Career mode	RPG-like "video-game" approach	"Fantasy hockey" feel to building roster and staff	Details under wraps; broad picture is promising
Fighting	No meters; can opt in; great feel	Great new redesign with tight new controls	Unknown
Online	Tournaments and head-to-head only	Clear winner—usuals plus leagues and even Party mode!	Tournaments and head-to-head only
Arcade mode	Free4All mode lacks creativity	Party mode mini-games absolutely rock	None yet revealed
Skating/controls	Needs tuning—spastic, jerky feel	Butter-smooth and natural; handles instinctively	No playable yet, but 989 plans cool shot-aiming controls
Checking	Difficult to line up and connect—needs tuning	Wins by a hair—hits connect easily but lack bone-crunching feel	Sounds good on paper—989 promises you'll feel "weight" of checks
Graphics	Unbeatably gorgeous arenas, scary-real player faces and movements	Respectable but lacks wow power	Screen shots look awesome, but how real are they?
Commentary	Same tired, no-name duo in the booth—EA needs to hire some pros	Gary Thorne and Bill Clement—hard to top the voices of hockey	Mike Emrick and Darren Pang—should be solid if you can tolerate the Panger



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# Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005

**PE X PC** After topping the leaderboards with last year's surprising, top-selling performance, Tiger Woods PGA Tour is all about expanding on the roots of that success for 2005. Before you even pick up a club, the improved Game Face II makes building a custom golfer as much fun as hitting the links. A robust toolkit gives you access to almost every aspect of your golfer's appearance and swing, or you can just dive right in and play as an established figure. As with many things in Tiger 2005, the choice is yours.

## Haptic Happiness

The preview of Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005 showcased accurate, intuitive controls that are easy to learn. Though some traditionalists may disagree, binding the swing to the analog stick is a great step forward for realism in golf games by creating a more physically analogous connection between the player and the software. After nailing a hole in one on my first nine, success seemed like it might come too easily. Turns out it was just dumb luck. Later courses proved to be downright merciless; misplaced shots resulted in horrible lies with no hope of recovery. For those who have mastered even the toughest of the tough,



the new Tiger Proofing feature will renew your passion for the sport. Tiger Proofing is a Game Face for courses, meaning you can stretch, distort, and otherwise modify your favorite holes to personalize the experience and/or frustrate your friends. Tiger Proofing can also be used to make difficult holes easier if you're so inclined. Though it doesn't have as many options as Game Face II, Tiger Proofing adds interest to the 14 included courses.

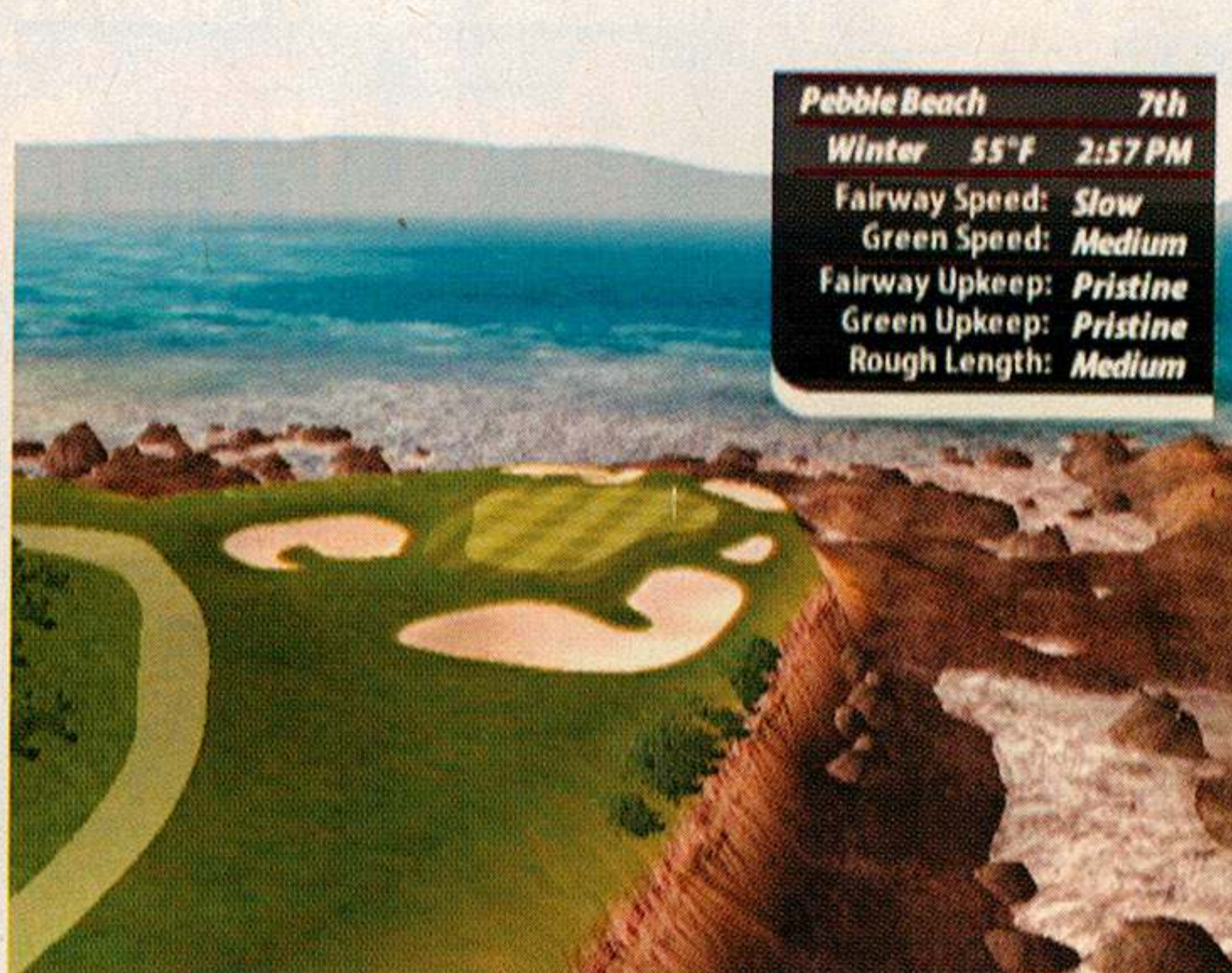
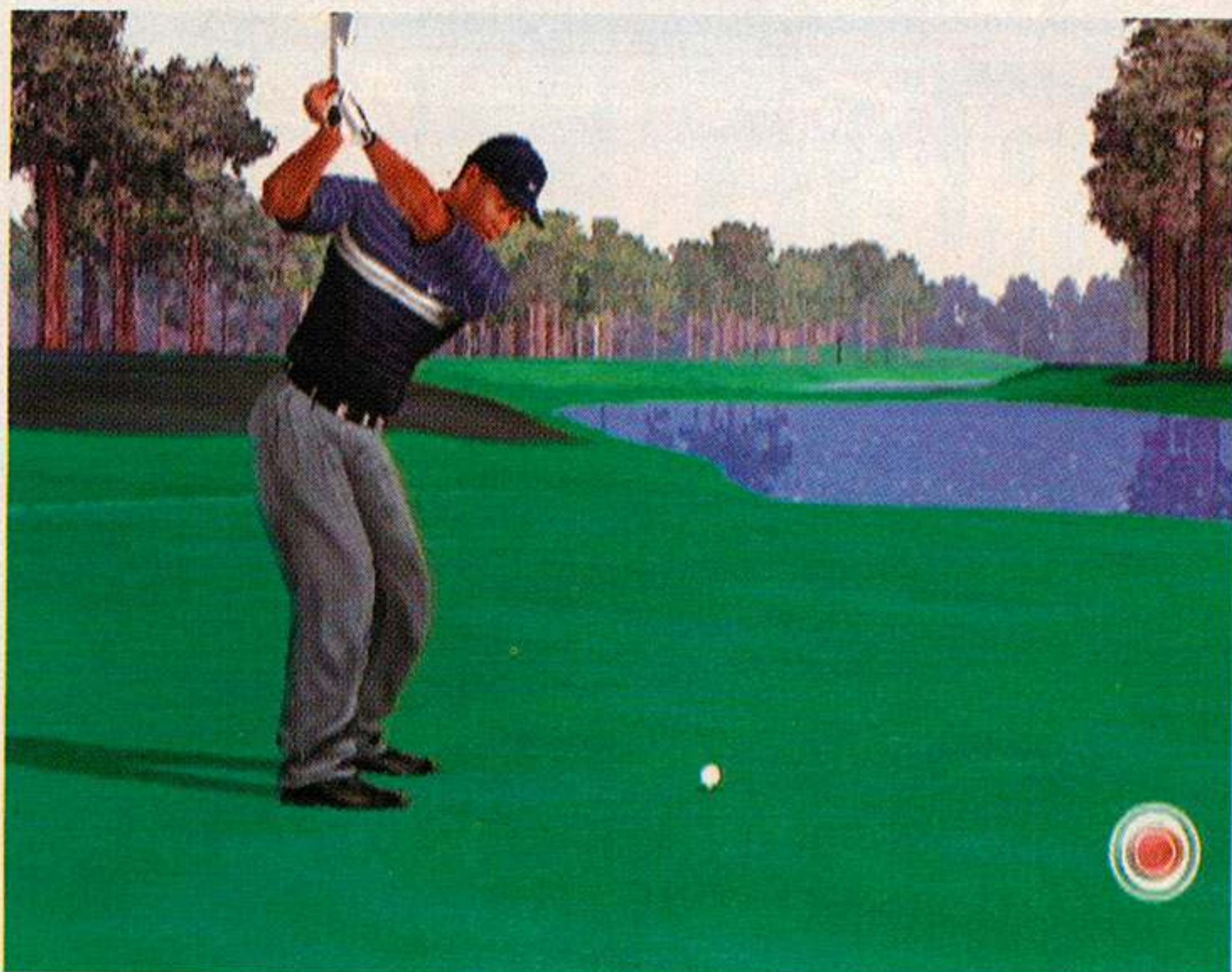
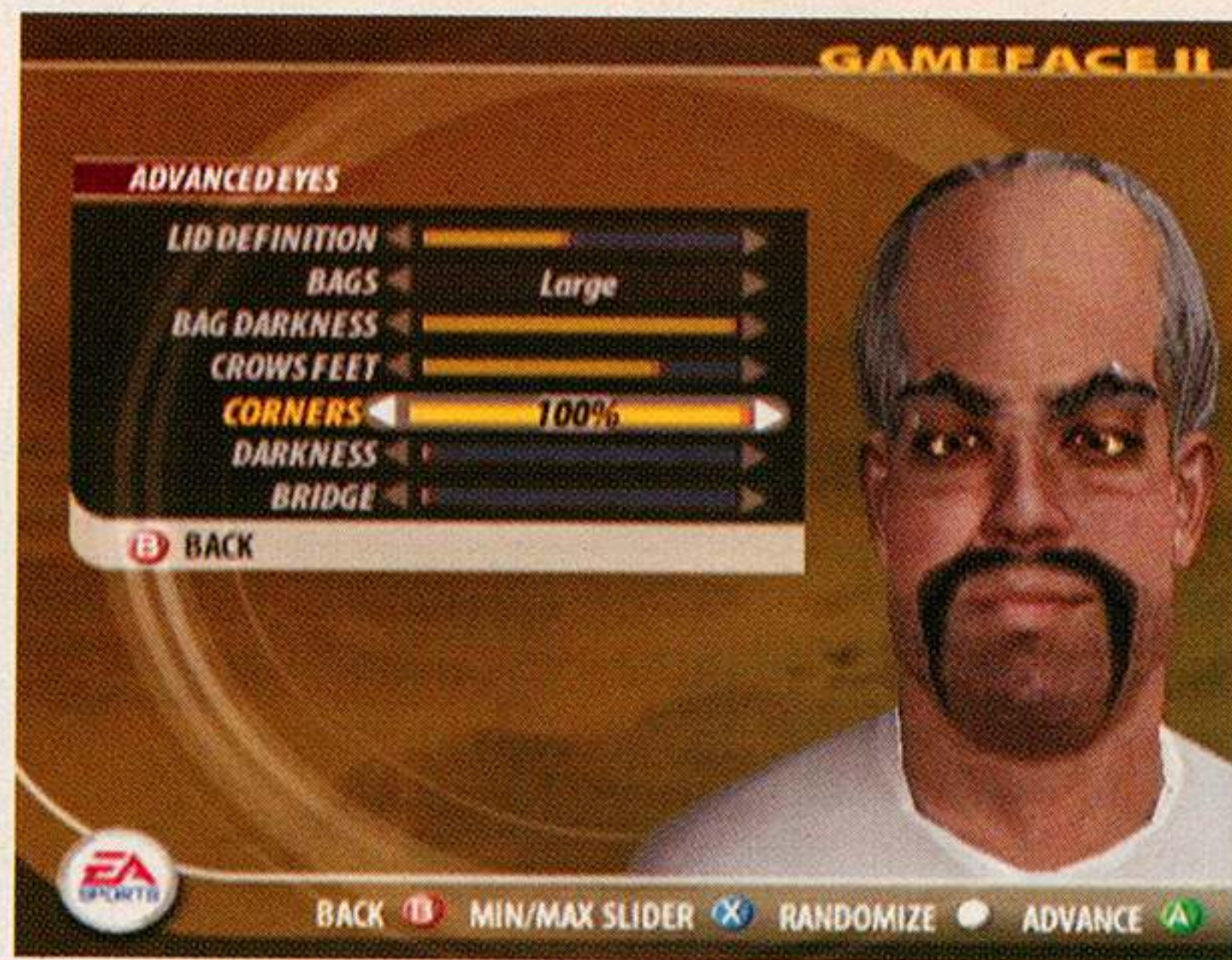
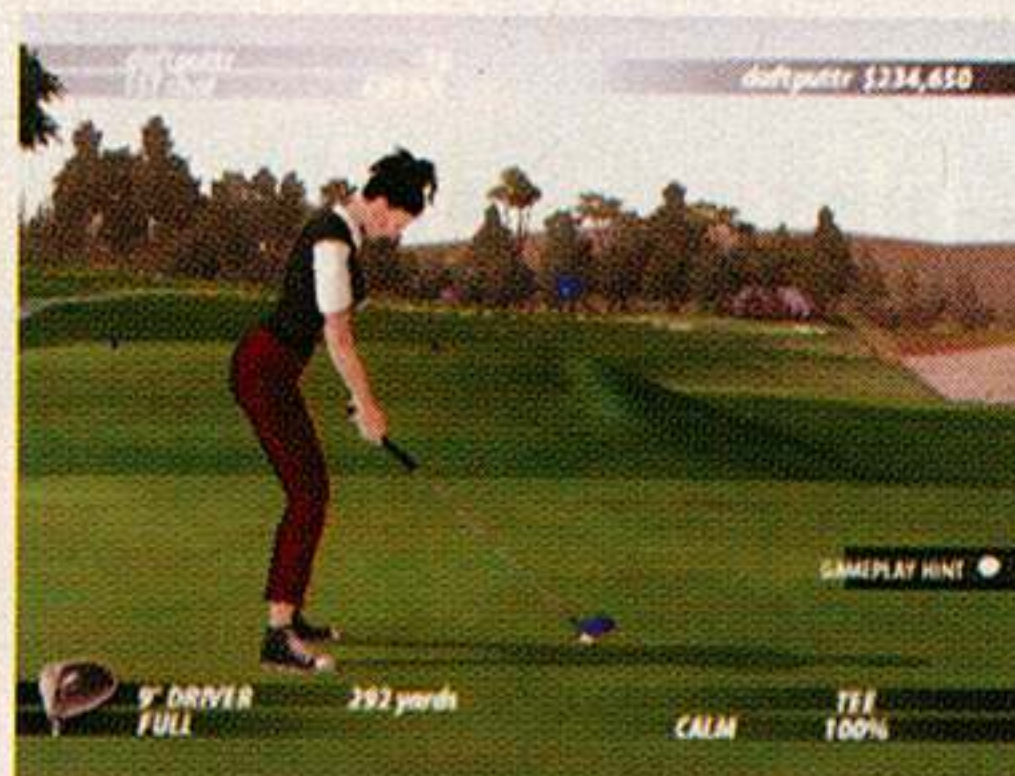


## Kitten Crossing

Online play looks to be the stuff of dreams with tournaments, leagues, and stat tracking in the works. If you don't want tournament pressure, there are also multiplayer games such as skins, capture the flag, best ball, and more. Legend scenarios let you tee off against some of the best golfers in history, and My Dream 18 allows you to assemble your 18 favorite holes into one glorious round of play. Your immersion into golf culture is complete with corporate sponsorships, a fully stocked pro shop, and all the witty banter you can stomach from announcers David Feherty and Gary McCord. Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005 looks like it will be EA Sports' most comprehensive golf game to date.—*Super8 Samurai*

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by EA Redwood Shores ■ Published by EA Sports ■ Target release date: September

All screens shown here are from the Xbox version.





# FIFA Soccer 2005

**EA X** As the road to the next World Cup continues, FIFA Soccer 2005 tweaks and upgrades to prepare.

The funny thing about new features in sports games is that you always wonder why it's taken so long for some developer to have figured it out. In FIFA Soccer 2005, the big focus is on a quality first touch—a skill that separates the greats from the just averages. In the past, you received a pass from a teammate then either shot, passed, or dribbled the ball. The basics of that haven't changed; the effectiveness of your next move is what's different.



The early preview version did indeed reveal a pronounced difference in the animation and skill set of great players. It doesn't take as much to protect the ball, and quick passes are more precise. One aspect that takes getting used to is the way the momentum of the ball and players is handled this year. It looks realistic but makes the action a trifle harder to control. The visuals are also closer to real life with character models that edge nearer to their human inspiration.

FIFA was playable online last year for the PlayStation 2, but this year, gamers can enjoy this function on both the PlayStation 2 and Xbox. Online modes were not available to test just yet, but you can look for info on that once the upcoming reviews see print.

—Tokyo Drifter

Also on the GameCube

- Hands-On ■ Developed by EA Canada
- Published by EA Sports
- Target release date: October



# Rocky Legends

**EA X** Besides better-looking character models and more particle effects for sweat and blood, perhaps Rocky Legends' biggest improvement over its prequel, Rocky, is the revamped Story mode, which lets you experience firsthand Apollo Creed's rise through the amateur ranks, Rocky's humble beginnings in back-

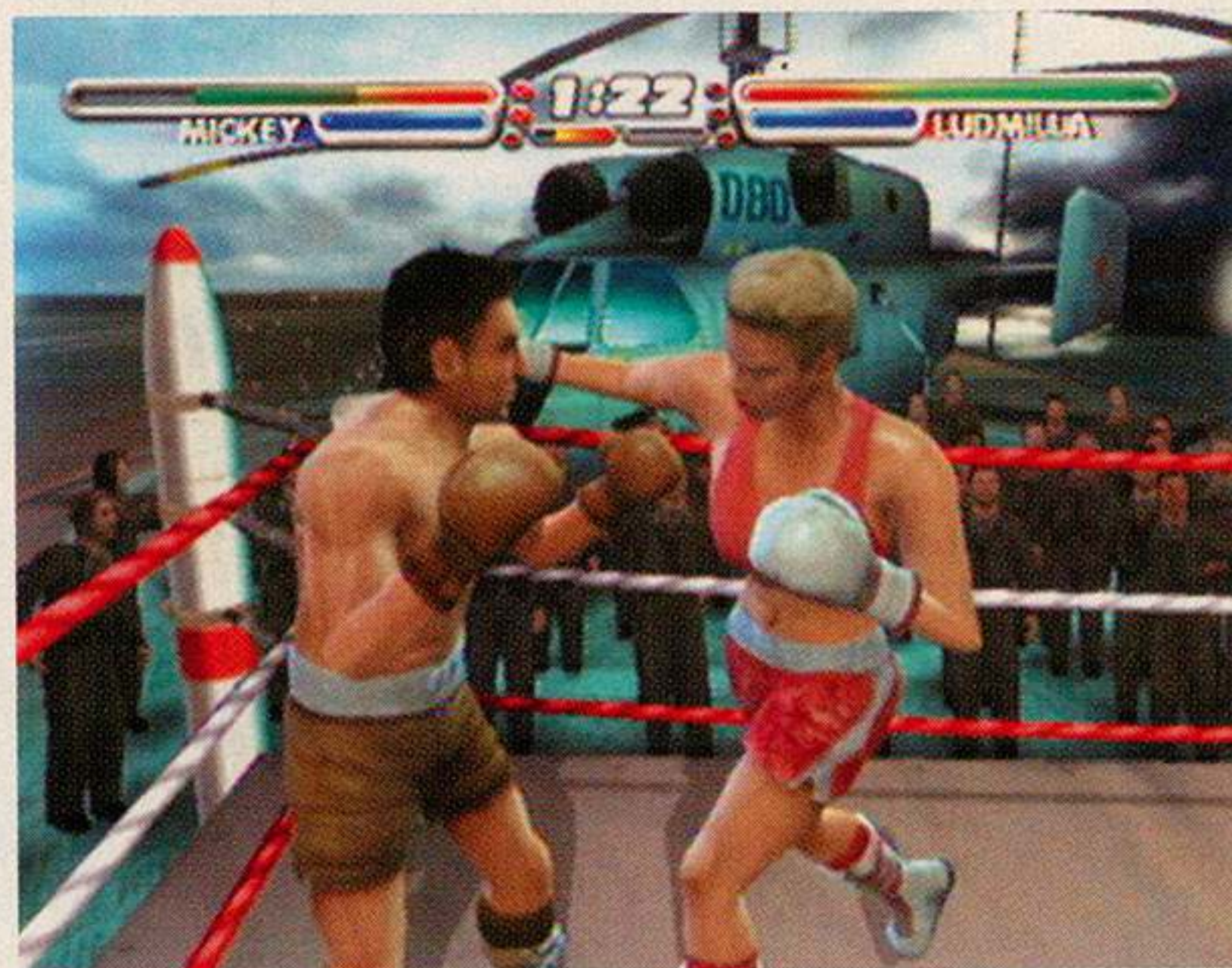
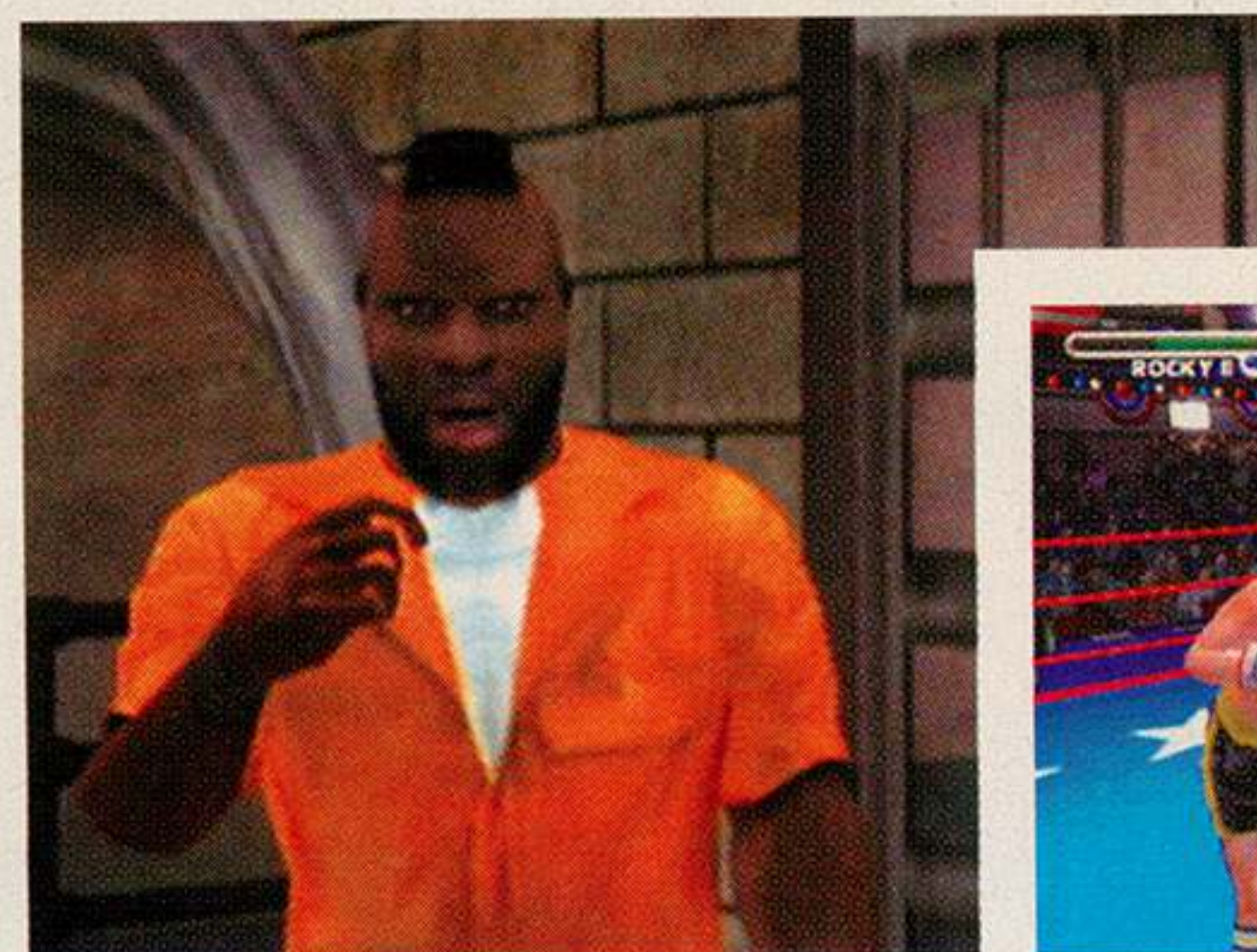
alley brawls, and Clubber Lang's tragic past as a prison inmate. You begin your character's career by boxing in small venues and working your way up to stadiums, chapels, and art museums. Between matches, you can increase your punching speed, movement, and strength by successfully completing heavy-bag and chicken-catching mini-games.

The fighting engine, which focuses on devastating combos, has a few problem areas. Sluggish controls make landing a punch difficult, and not being able to break out of the game's slow weaving animations means you're going to take a lot more hits than you can handle. And with Fight Night raising the bar for boxing games, this game

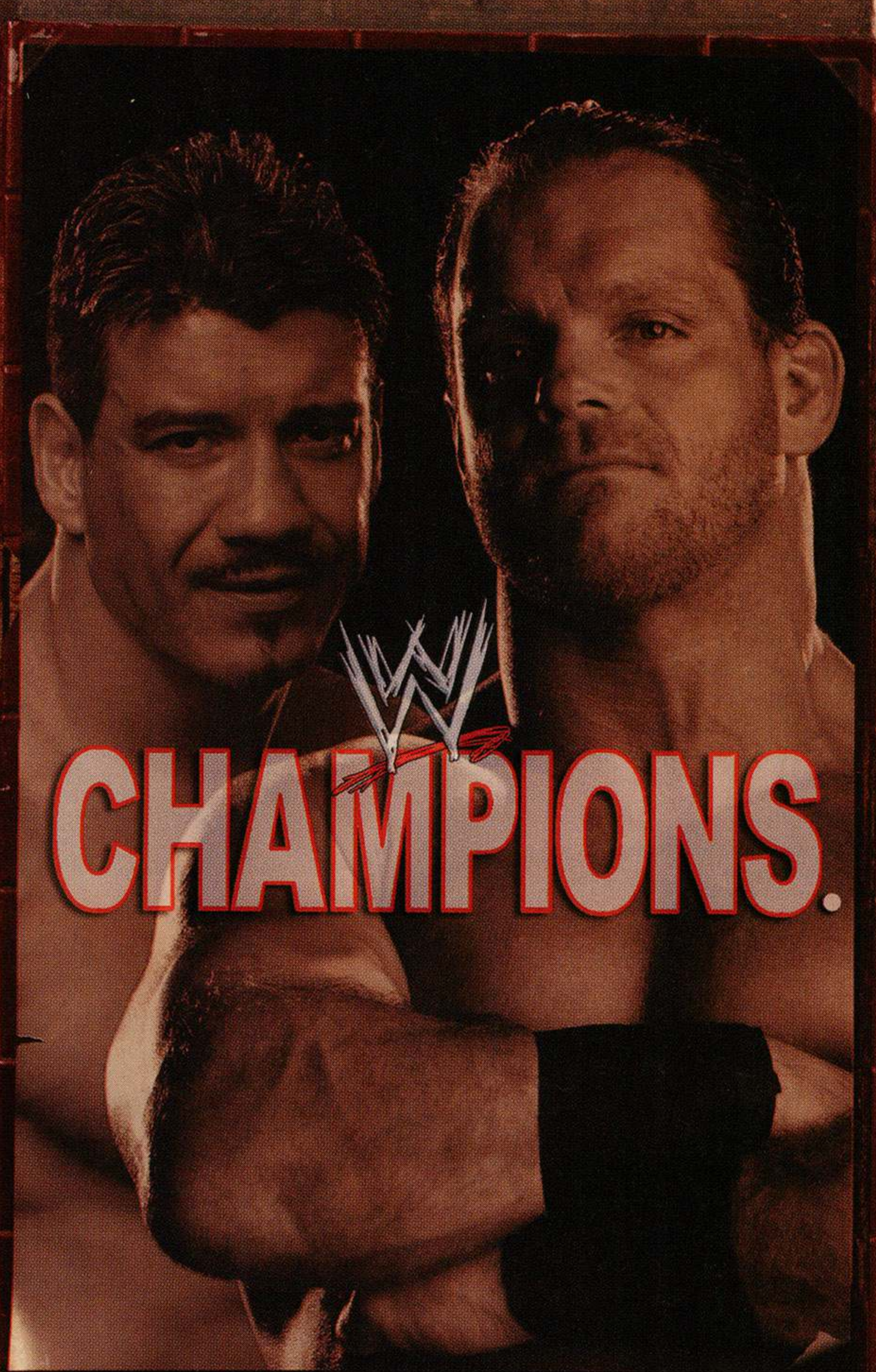
hasn't yet come together enough to be a contender in terms of pure gameplay. But c'mon, there's something to be said about a game that lets you be Burgess Meredith and have the mortal crap punched out of you by Amazonian has-been Brigitte Nielsen aboard an aircraft carrier, right? Right??—Iron Monkey

- Hands-On ■ Developed by Venom Games
- Published by Ubisoft Entertainment ■ Target release date: September

All screens shown here are from the Xbox version.







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# The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age

**PE X G** The Lord of the Rings: The Third Age is, for all intents and purposes, Final Fantasy X channeled through Peter Jackson with the added bonus of a freestyle camera in the exploration sequences. If you enjoyed Final Fantasy X's style of combat, you're going to glom onto the gameplay of The Third Age—it borrows most of its battle system straight from the source. If you enjoyed that nutty *Lord of the Rings* movie trilogy, you'll dig right into the story here, which details a sort of "second fellowship" that follows in the real one's footsteps. If you enjoyed both, well, then this'll be just as good as diminishing and going into the West.

## The Two Powers

Anyone who has played any of EA's scarily faithful-to-the-look *Lord of the Rings* hack-n-slashers knows exactly what to expect from Third Age's production values—and it's obvious that New Line works with EA more closely than most licensors/licenseses. Ian McKellan lends his voice for new, dramatic narration (too cool), and it's eerie just how gosh-darn *right* Helm's Deep and the Balrog look in The Third Age.

Battles have the same "three guys on the right, menus on the bottom" feel of FFX, though the camera milks the scene for dramatic angles and swoops. While you don't get to generate your own characters from scratch, they're all fully customizable, meaning you're able to turn whoever you want into your healer or superswordsman so long as you teach them the right skills through a Final Fantasy Tactics-like "learning" system.

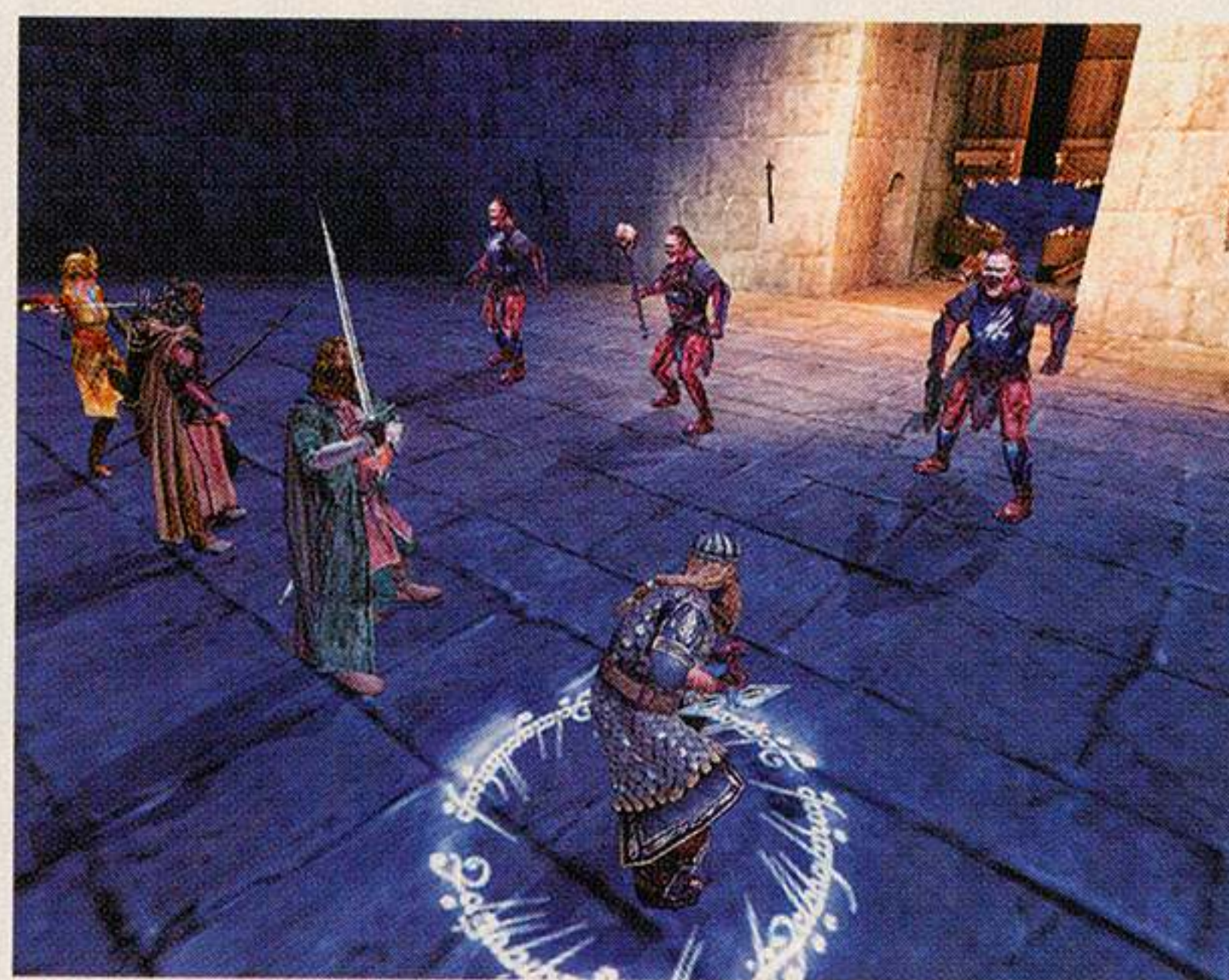
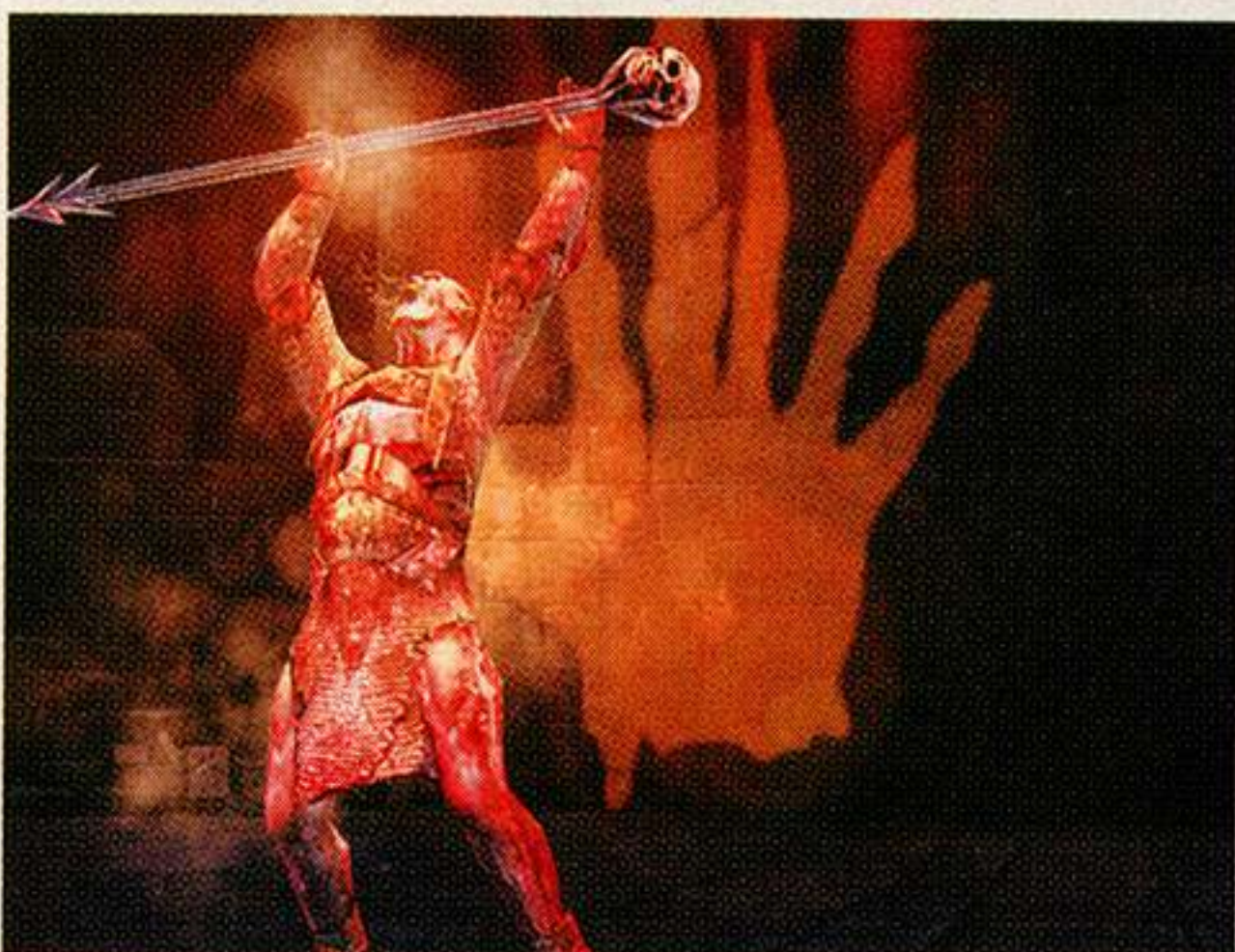
While the development team had originally thought to include separate good and evil story lines, it eventually realized it would be absolutely impossible to be true to the fiction in the evil campaign. So instead of going the KOTOR route, the developers have crafted a sort of "evil campaign" mini-game, in which you can play key battles over again from the side of wrong; winning these "alternate version" battles unlocks special items for the good crew back in the main quest.

## Hark! An Army Of Purists Stirs in the East...

Granted, having a "second fellowship" intervene in Gandalf's fight with the Balrog on the Bridge of Khazad-Dum might seem fictionally silly (or even blasphemous) to some. But The Third Age is looking like a welcome sort of anomaly—a Japanese-style RPG with just about the most Western bent you could imagine. Two of the world's greatest fantasies, intertwined.—*Star Dingo*

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by EA Redwood Shores**  
 ■ **Published by EA Games**  
 ■ **Target release date: November**

All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.





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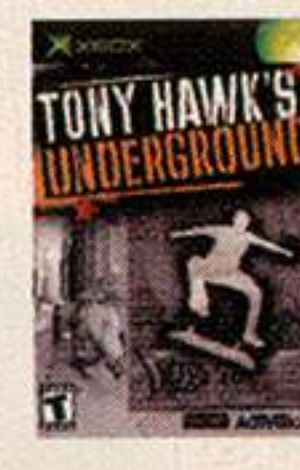
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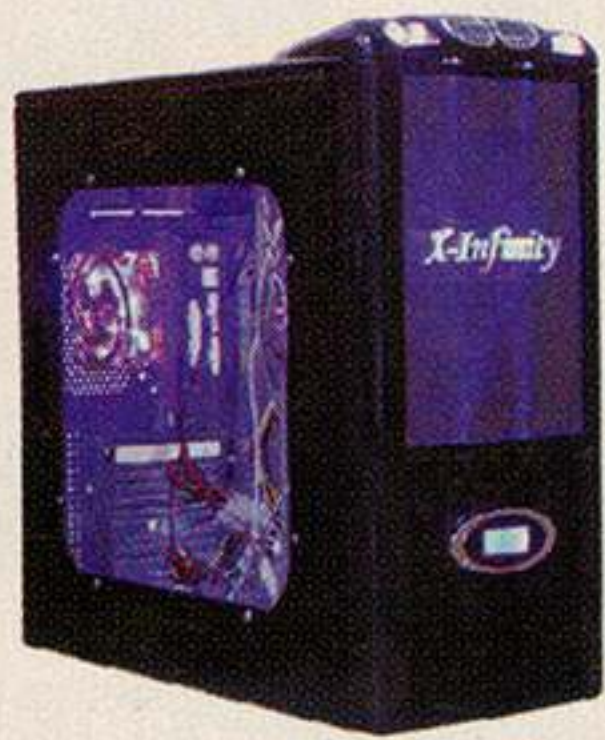
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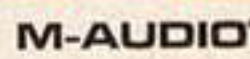
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## Fable

Oh God, not *another* Fable preview...but wait, before you turn the page, we actually got to *play* the game for more than five minutes and can finally address some of the questions you've doubtlessly had over the game's four-year (!) stint in the spotlight. Gather 'round and listen for a spell, won't you?

### Project E-What?

First off, the game is gorgeous; the level of character detail you've seen in screen shots isn't a lie. The voice acting is topnotch, witty, and oh so British, and the soundtrack (some pieces by movie composer Danny Elfman) absolutely soars.

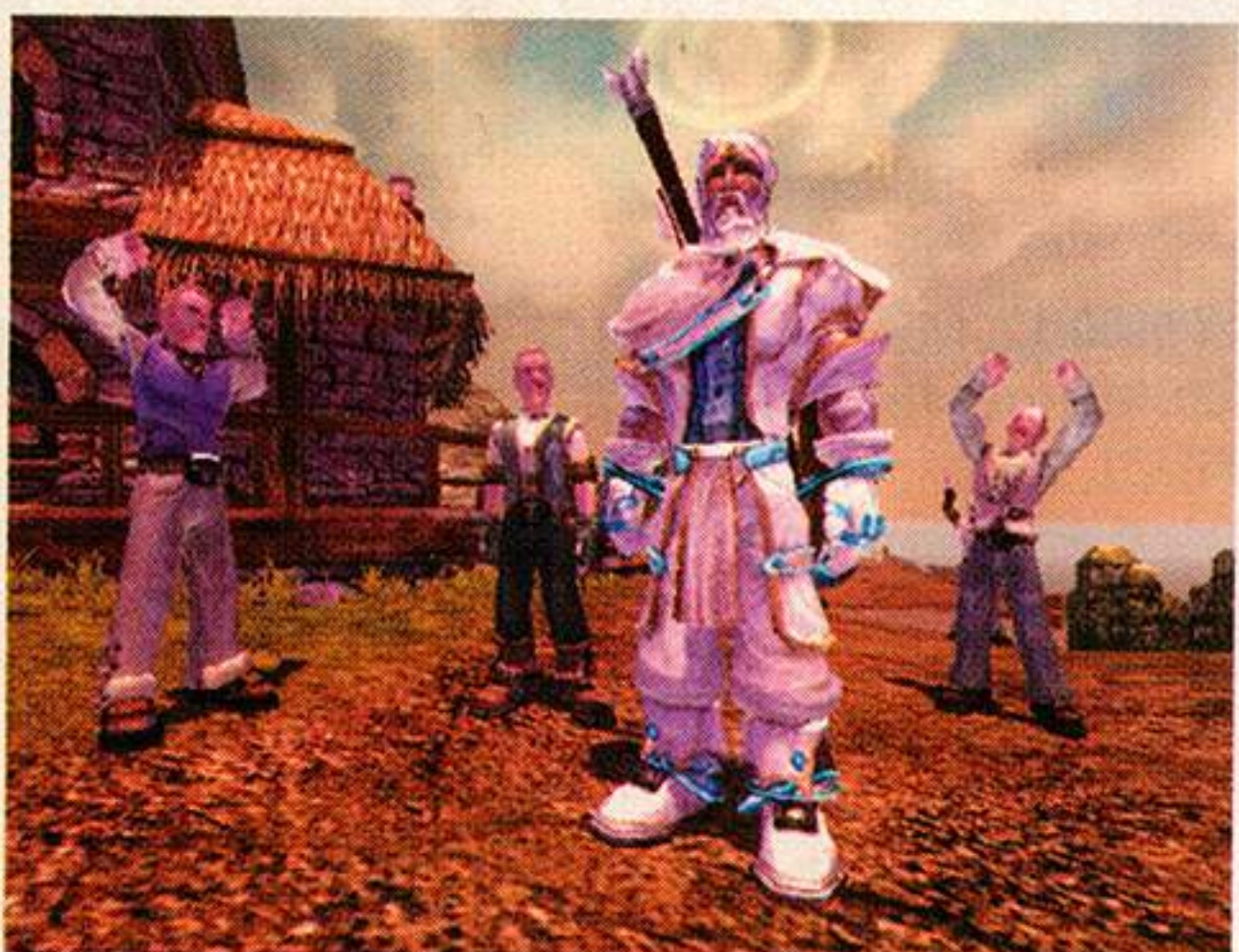
The gameplay is very mission centric and more actiony than you might have expected (or hoped). It works like this: At the "Hero's Guild," where you were raised as an orphan, you take a mission—go kill a giant wasp, go find a fizzy bumpwhistle, etc.—and warp to where the mission takes place. Once in the mission,



markers on a mini-map point out where the next important thing you should check out is waiting while waves of enemies stand in your way.

The sheer number of real-time commands can be overwhelming—combinations of triggers and buttons bring up different attacks, and the directional pad is constantly changing to offer context-sensitive activities like digging up a grave, flirting with a stranger, or giving a command to a soldier tagging along. The learning curve is high, but once you figure it out, you can pull off almost anything you would in a regular RPG without ever having to access a menu.

Despite the action bent, the RPG-style character development stuff is woven organically into the fabric of the game. Killing monsters earns you general experience, but using specific attack styles (swords, bows, fireballs) earns you specialized experience that you can spend on new skills in each of the three



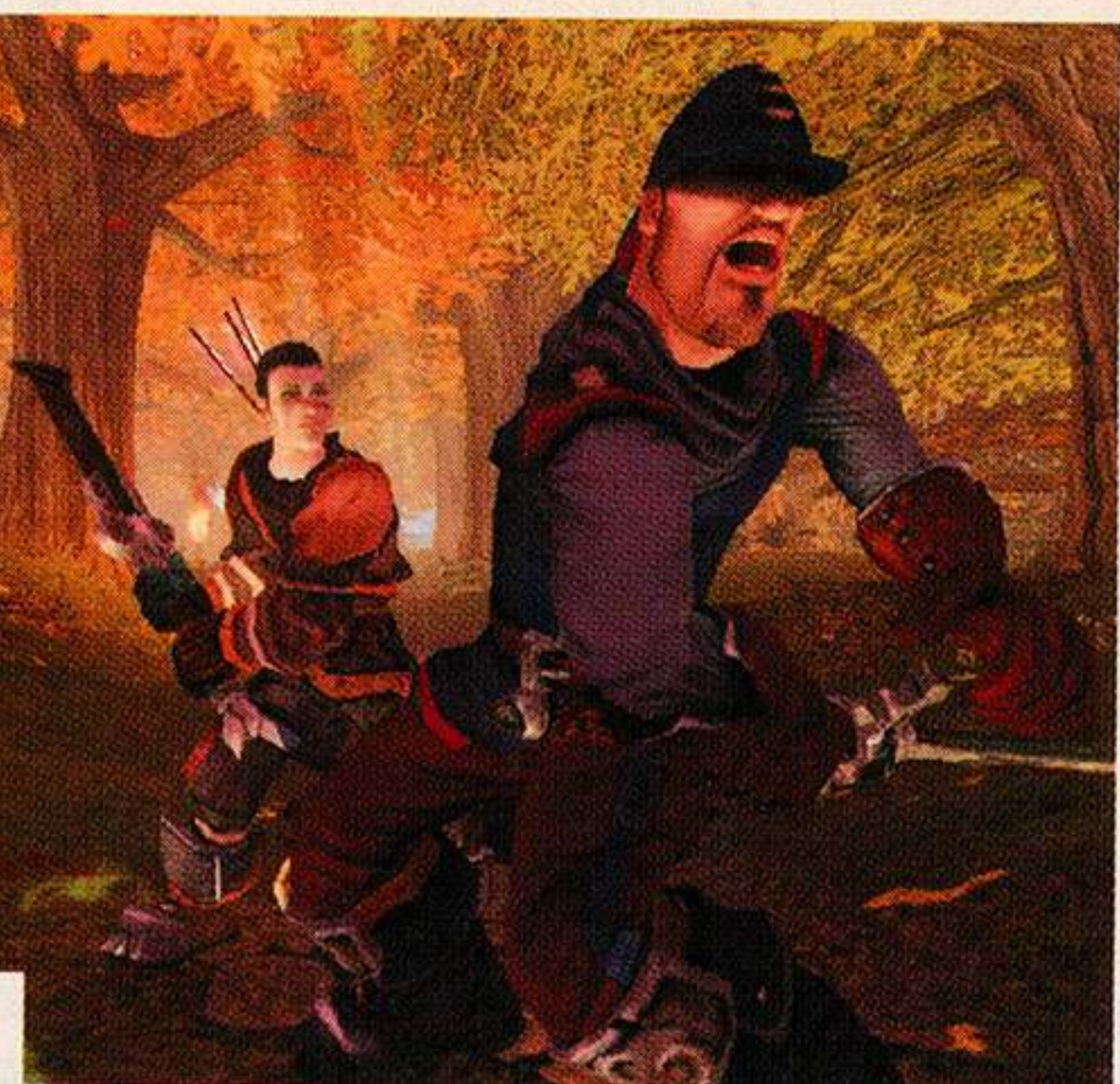
main arts: strength, skill, and will. How you play really does dictate how you grow, and countless custom "cross classes" (for lack of a better term) are possible.

### The Game To End All Games?

All the cool features you've heard about are in there, and, as it turns out, they're *actually cool*: Sims-like social gestures, dark-side/light-side choices (one particularly evil thing to do: kill an entire town, then buy all the property and put everything up for rent to earn big piles of cash), earning fame and renown. Renown is almost another form of currency—getting people to cheer for you by brandishing the head of a notorious monster isn't just a nice little gimmick.

So is Fable gonna be worth the wait? Some may be disappointed by the actiony mission structure, but otherwise, all signs, incredibly, point to yes. Our wavering faith has been steadied—the game is creative, different, and smartly designed. But four years is a long time to ask people to hold their breath.—*Star Dingo*

- Hands-On ■ Developed by Big Blue Box
- Published by Microsoft
- Target release date: September





# Shin Megami Tensei: Digital Devil Saga

**PE** A film of icky strangeness coats Digital Devil Saga, known in some alternate reality as Avatar Tuner, the latest entry (next to Nocturne) in the long-running Shin Megami Tensei (a.k.a. Persona) series—well, sort of. It's all very convoluted, but the bottom line is this: Digital Devil Saga is one *weird* role-playing game. Sort of like what the next Phantasy Star might be like with a little bit of peyote on the side.

The setting is that of your usual futuristic, asymptotic, metaphysical post-*Evangelion* anime with brooding, dead-eyed boys and girls wearing skin-tight science-fantasy suits. The plot involves kids in apocalyptic gang wars who receive horrific "special abilities" after a strange object crashes near their turf—and suddenly they're fighting inexplicabeasts in addition to the rival gangs. The game's art direction is immediately striking and

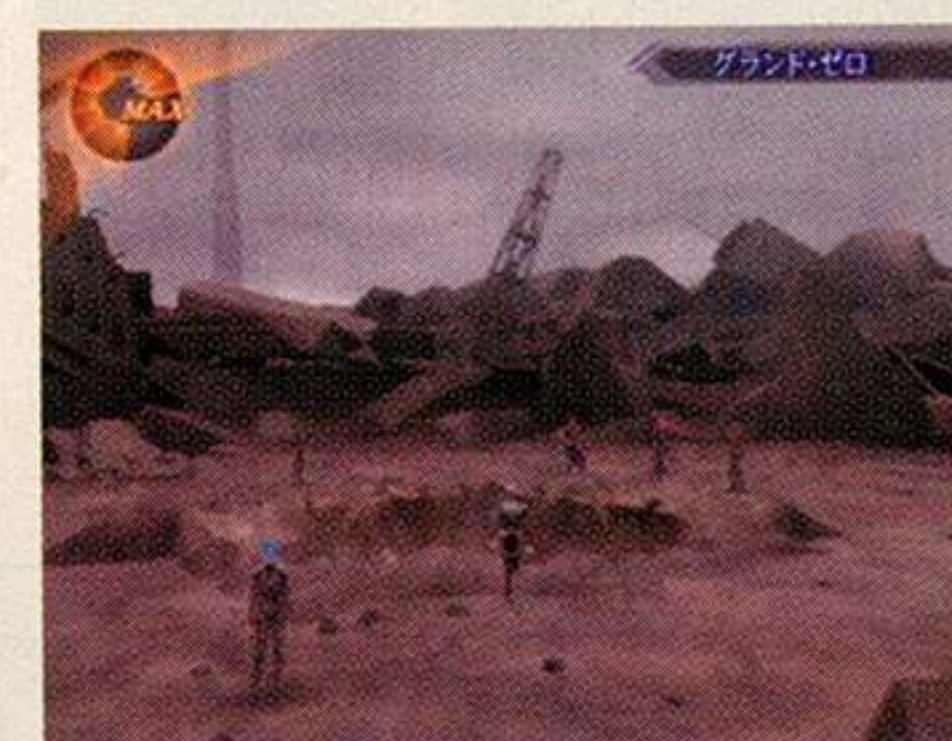
unique: an almost-cel-shaded look that can be as fluid and beautiful in motion as *The Wind Waker* but in a much more eerie and pallid way.

As far as the role-playing mechanics go, they seem pretty standard so far in this Japanese-language build: turn-based encounters with hit and magic points pitting three guys versus several monsters. The major selling points include the ability to transform your party into devil avatars (as encoded in colorful tattoos) in a very painful-looking process as well as the ability to "eat" other devils and assume their powers. The three main kids in your party can perform combos with one another depending on who's in what form, and these potent Freudian nightmares have all sorts of special moves

that your regular form can't use... like any good devil avatar should.

—Star Dingo

- Hands-On
- Developed and published by Atlus
- Target release date: November



# Inuyasha: The Secret Of the Cursed Mask

**PE** This one's strictly for the anime fans: Rumiko Takahashi's (of *Ranma 1/2* fame) cool tale of a demon-dog-man and the Japanese schoolgirl who accidentally gets sucked into his feudal-era world is getting the RPG treatment. The Secret of the Cursed Mask puts you in the role of one of two visitors to Inuyasha's world trying to get back to the present; your perspective isn't exactly the same as that of the show, but you will get to meet up with and fight alongside Inuyasha, Kagome, and other characters from the series. As is probably abundantly obvious from these screen shots, the game definitely

has a more cutesy, kiddie bent than most RPGs (or even the anime), but older fans may still want to check it out for the 30 minutes of new, made-just-for-the-game anime footage.

—Star Dingo

- First Look
- Developed and published by Bandai
- Target release date: November





# Phantom Brave

**PE** In a mere two games' time, developer NIS America has carved itself a comfy little niche of quirk, releasing quality tactical role-playing games with heavy, weird anime influences. Phantom Brave is the company's latest nutso creation, and it's just as out there and special as ever—even more so, thanks to one rather brave (no pun intended) decision to completely rewrite the "tactics game" rules.



**PROTIP:** You won't make it very far if you confine all your phantoms to the map at once. Confine only a few every turn.



**PROTIP:** The random dungeons that the monk phantom creates for you are totally whacked, but there are good items to be found in them.

## Warped Thinking

Despite its strategy/RPG ancestry, the gameplay is very unlike that in "tactics" games you've played before. The conceit: Your party members are all ghosts and don't exist until you confine (i.e. summon) them "into" objects in the map. Different objects grant stat bonuses, and characters only exist for a few turns before their energy expires and they're removed from the map. There's no grid—instead, you're able to freely walk within a circle. The system is challenging, a ton of fun, and totally chaotic, and you're given many customization options and encouraged to experiment with all sorts of wacky scenarios. The chaos proves a little problematic in a purely practical sense—picking out your target with the cursor can be a pain in crowded maps—but the game's menu and selection system is fast and forgiving, enabling you to quickly recall any missteps you make.

The graphics aren't fancy, but they sure are fun. While the 2D sprites may recall early PlayStation or later Working Designs games, there's tons of personality in the cut-scenes and character designs. The story is an absolute blast, stronger than almost any other game in "tactics" territory, and structured very much like an anime TV series would be—with distinct three-act episodes and an umbrella story arc to hold them all together. The voice acting is a riot, too.

## Phantom Power

Phantom Brave may not have the best control scheme or huge production values, but it does have heart—this one plays like a labor of love. Crazy, wacky, weird, mad love.—*Star Dingo*

**T** ■ Developed and published by NIS America ■ \$49.99 ■ Available now ■ Strategy/RPG ■ 1 player



**PROTIP:** Tossing enemies off the map is an easy way to get rid of them, but use it carefully. You get no XP...but the remaining enemies do.



PE	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR <b>4.5</b>
	SOUND	4.5	
	CONTROL	3.5	



**PROTIP:** Certain spells have a very limited area of effect. Make sure your enemies are in the highlighted area before the spell finishes charging or your attack will miss!

# Sudeki

**X** The Xbox is not a console known for its large library of RPGs, so Sudeki's release was anticipated by many hungering for a bit of role-playing love. While it would have been nice to see the title last year, the delays were put to good use, and the final version shines brightly.

## Putting the "Action" in Action/RPG

One of the defining aspects of Sudeki's style is the heavy emphasis on action. Nearly everything happens in real-time, and the controls have been designed to enable instant access to as much as possible. Winning in combat depends more on your skills with the controller than with the weapon used, and each of the four main characters has a decidedly different fighting style, which provides for a nice bit of variety. Switching on the fly permits an easy way to use any character's special ability at any time.

## Give Me a Story or Give Me Death!

Story is an essential component of any RPG, and Sudeki is no slouch in that regard. The game weaves a tale of one reality, torn asunder, and split into two. Playing off the conflict of light versus dark is fairly standard stuff—Sudeki, however, puts a novel spin on things and uses the concept of a shadow world in an intriguing way.

Brightly lit and incredibly colorful, the often over-saturated visuals in the world convey a look that owes its heritage to Japanese anime but is still distinctly Western. Spell animations are short but sweet and make good use of special effects.

A solid mix of story, action, and adventure, Sudeki does just about everything one would expect. The main quest could have been longer—it clocks in a bit shy of 20 hours—but the length is more than made up for by the complete immersion factor of the world. If you've been jonesing for a good Xbox RPG, jones no more. Sudeki is here.—*Syriel*

**M** ■ Developed by Climax ■ Published by Microsoft ■ \$49.99 ■ Available now ■ Action/RPG ■ 1 player



**PROTIP:** Every character has a special ability. Alish can make hidden items appear with dispel. Any time you see a sparkle of light, be sure to cast it.



X	GRAPHICS	5.0	FUN FACTOR <b>4.5</b>
	SOUND	4.5	
	CONTROL	4.0	



**PROTIP:** When fighting melee style, make sure you press the attack buttons only when the indicator in the lower left-hand side of the screen is lit. Hit the button too fast, and your combo will fail.



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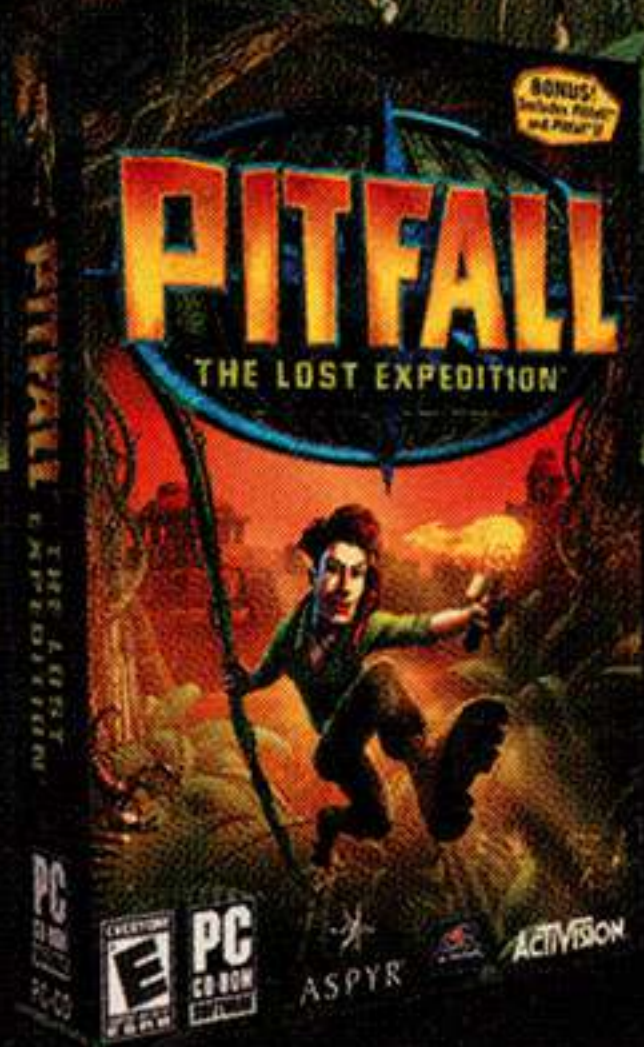


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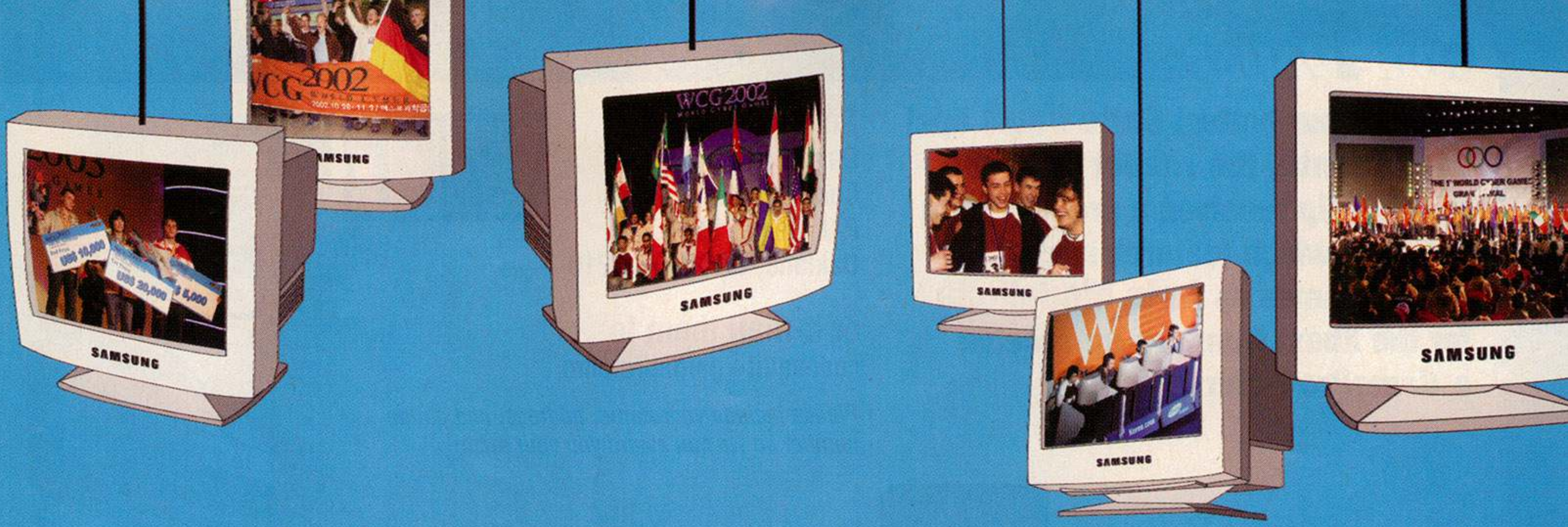
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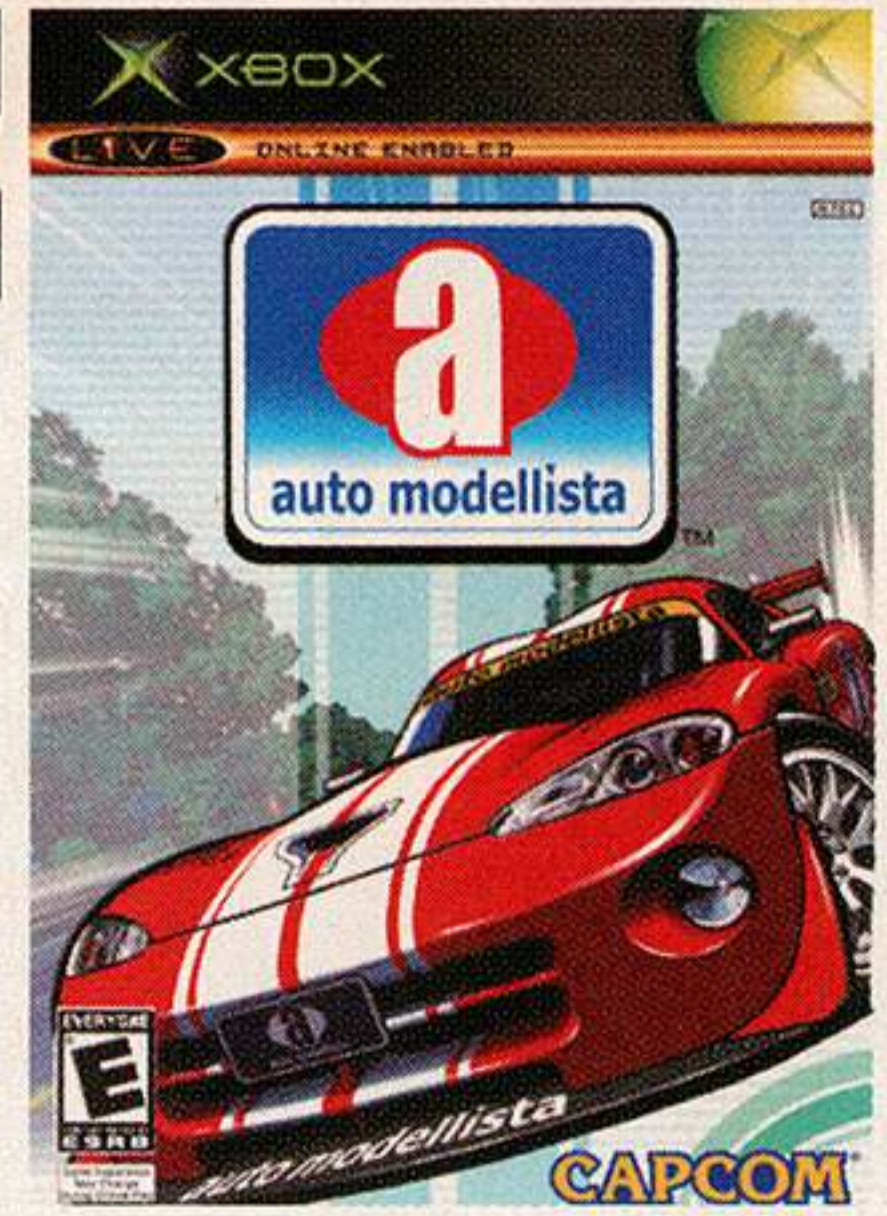
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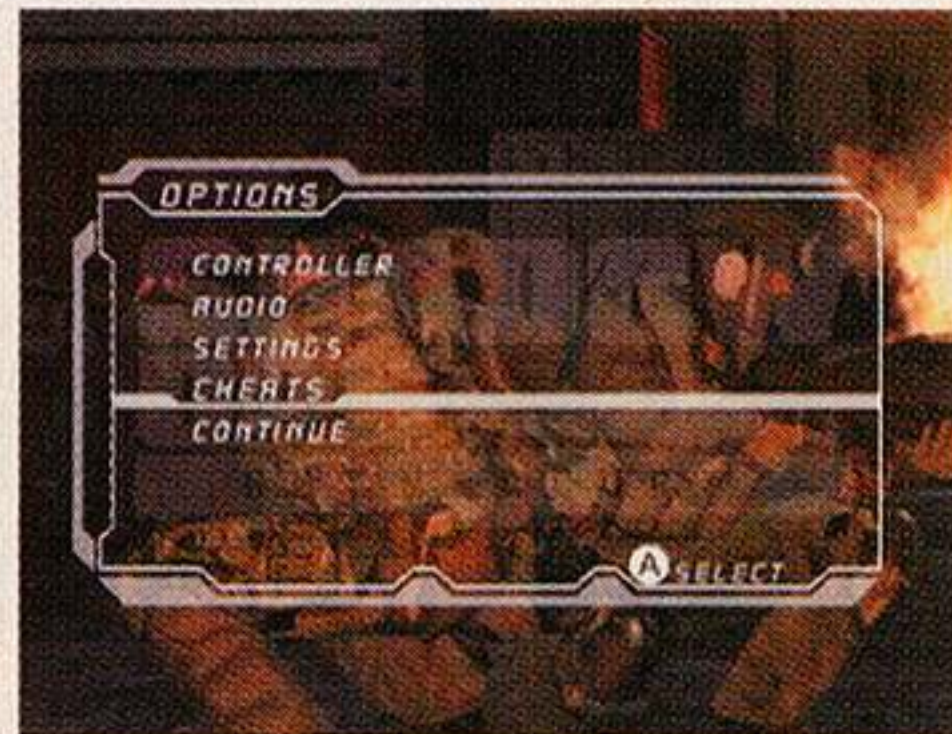
# WIN!



## READER TIP OF THE MONTH

### SHADOW OPS: RED MERCURY

All Cinematics, All Co-Op Play Maps, And All Single-Player Maps



At the Main Menu, select Options and then select Cheats. At the Cheats screen, enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the cheat correctly, you'll see a confirming message.

All Cinematics:	FILMCRITIC
All Co-Op Play Maps:	WANDERLUST
All Single-Player Maps:	HAPPYCAMPER

Chad Awazawa—Waimea, Hawaii

### JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE

Golden P2K, Grapple Upgrade, and More



At the main menu, select Codenames. At the Enter Codename screen, create a new codename or select a pre-existing one, and at the next screen, select Secret Unlocks. Enter the following codes to unlock the following cheats. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear telling you that a cheat has been unlocked.

A "\_" designates a blank space.

All Multiplayer Game Mods:	GAMEROOM
Alpine Escape Level:	POWDER
Camera Upgrade:	SHUTTER
Decryptor Upgrade:	SESAME
Deep Descent Level:	AQUA
Double Cross Level:	BONSAI
Enemies Vanquished Level:	TRACTION
Golden P2K:	AU_P2K
Golden PP7:	AU_PP7
Grapple Upgrade:	LIFTOFF
Island Infiltration Level:	PARADISE
Nightshift Level:	HIGHRISE
P2K Upgrade:	P2000
Phoenix Level:	FLAME
Unlock Bond Spacesuit:	ZERO_G
Unlock Drake:	NUMBER_1
Unlock Electra King:	SLICK
Unlock Mayday:	BADGIRL
Unlock Nick Nack:	BITESIZE
Unlock Wai Lin:	MARTIAL





## CLASSIC NES SERIES: THE LEGEND OF ZELDA



### Second Quest



At title screen, **press Start**, and at the character select screen, enter **Ze1da** as your character name. If you entered the code correctly, the Link icon will have a sword.

## CLASSIC NES SERIES: BOMBERMAN



### Level Passwords



At the title screen, select Continue and enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the cheat correctly, the level will automatically begin.

Level 01:	NMIHPPBPCAFHABDPCPC
Level 02:	HIJDIJFJDLHFLOPDJJDJN
Level 03:	BAJDINANMJGGCPOOLOG
Level 04:	DJOLBGLGKGJAHIEMNMN
Level 05:	NMKGDDONMHLGKKGKJKJ
Level 06:	ABGKKBPHILHFLOPCPCPC
Level 07:	FEBABGLEFLHFLOPCPCPA
Level 08:	HIFEMIIABJGGCPOBABAN
Level 09:	NMEFPHCMNJGGCPOBABAF
Level 10:	JDGKKBPHILHFLOPGKGL
Level 11:	HIPCOHCMNLHFLOPEFEFG
Level 12:	ABJDIFJGGJAHIEPCPCN
Level 13:	JDBABANOLJGGCPODJDJF
Level 14:	ABNMKNAIHFAJNMMKKGKF
Level 15:	ABIHPGLEFCNNJDBEFEN
Level 16:	ABABEMKJDAFHABDCPPCN
Level 17:	JDDJOI IOLCANNJDBABOLH
Level 18:	JDNMKGILHFLHFLHFLHFLH
Level 19:	DJABEKMPCFJAJNMMOLFEL
Level 20:	FEGKJFNMAFHABDABOLN
Level 21:	NMKGDDOIHJGGCPONMIHN
Level 22:	NMCP IIIOLFAJNMMGKEFF
Level 23:	NMPCOI IOLCANNJDBBAHIJ
Level 24:	NMGKKEEHILHFLOPPCGKL
Level 25:	HIKGDODCPGJAHIEPCGKJ
Level 26:	ABHIMGLBANCLFEINMIHH
Level 27:	MNGKKDOOLGJAHIEKGCPC
Level 28:	OLDJOI IKGHLHFLOPEFLOL
Level 29:	IHDJIKMEFNCLFEINMIHF
Level 30:	IHDJOI IKGHLFLOPMNJDA
Level 31:	DJJDIDOO LFAJNMMEFLOC
Level 32:	IHIHPBPCPNCBOLIHJJDH
Level 33:	OLFEMANMNFADDJMABFEF
Level 34:	MNDJODJDHLPPCKBAMNA

Level 35:	DJABEMKMNNCMIHIMNDJC
Level 36:	BADJOI I IHAFDDJDIHOLA
Level 37:	DJFEMPBPCGJKEFEFEBAC
Level 38:	DJKGDI I IHJGBOLOABFEH
Level 39:	DJCPIODFECNOBABABFEN
Level 40:	IHEFPBGKFAIMNMOLKGI
Level 41:	IHLOEHCMMNCMIH I HOLJ
Level 42:	DJEFPHCMNJGBOLOABFEH
Level 43:	MNGKKI IOLGJKEFEKGPCJ
Level 44:	BAPCOMKDJGBOLODJIHJ
Level 45:	OLNMKDOIHF AIMNMGKLOF
Level 46:	OLIHMKMNF AIMNMABFEH
Level 47:	OLABEMKMCNOBABPCEFL
Level 48:	OLOLBFJGKJKEFEFEPCL
Level 49:	OLFEMFJGKHLPPCPLMNL
Level 50:	NMABEKMKGNCLEIHFEL





## PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY



### All Powers, Player Skins, and More



At the main menu, highlight "Extra Content" and then **press R** on the Xbox or **R1** on the PlayStation 2 to bring up the cheat-entry screen. At the cheat-entry screen, enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the cheat correctly, you'll automatically return to the main menu and see a confirming message.

All Powers:	537893
Arcade Mode:	05051979
Bullet Resistant:	548975
Cooperative Play Mode:	07041979
Dark Mode:	465486
Extra Mission—Aura Pool:	659785
Extra Mission—Bottomless Pit:	154897
Extra Mission—Bouncy, Bouncy:	568789
Extra Mission—Floor of Death:	05120926
Extra Mission—Gasoline:	9442662
Extra Mission—Gearshift:	154684
Extra Mission—Gnomotron:	456878
Extra Mission—Panic Room:	76635766
Extra Mission—Psi Pool:	565485
Extra Mission—Stoplights:	945678
Extra Mission—Tip the Idol:	428584
Extra Mission—TK Alley:	090702
Extra Mission—Up and Over:	020615
No Head Mode:	987978
Player Skin—Crispy Soldier:	454566
Player Skin—Dock Worker:	364654
Player Skin—Edgar Barret:	497878
Player Skin—Edgar Barret (Training 1):	196001
Player Skin—Edgar Barret (Training 2):	196002
Player Skin—Edgar Barret (Training 3):	196003
Player Skin—Edgar Barret (Training 4):	196004
Player Skin—Edgar Barret (Training 5):	196005
Player Skin—Edgar Barret (Training 6):	196006
Player Skin—The General:	459797
Player Skin—The General (Clown):	431644
Player Skin—Jack:	698798
Player Skin—Jov Leonov:	468987
Player Skin—Kimiko Jones:	978798
Player Skin—Labcoat:	998789

Player Skin—Marlena Kessler:	489788
Player Skin—Marlena Kessler (Bikini):	135454
Player Skin—Marlena Kessler (Leather):	136876
Player Skin—Marlena Kessler (Saranae):	65496873
Player Skin—MP1:	321646
Player Skin—MP2:	698799
Player Skin—MP3:	654659
Player Skin—Nick Scryer (Stealth):	456498
Player Skin—Nick Scryer (Training):	564689
Player Skin—Nick Scryer (Urban):	484646
Player Skin—Nick Scryer (Wasteland):	975466
Player Skin—Sara Blake:	135488
Player Skin—Sara Blake (Psi):	468799
Player Skin—Sara Blake (Suicide):	231644
Player Skin—Scorpion:	546546
Player Skin—Tonya:	678999
Player Skin—UN Soldier:	365498
Player Skin—Wei Lu:	231324
Player Skin—Wei Lu (Dragon):	978789
Player Skin—Wei Lu (Tranquility):	654654
Super Psi:	456456
Survival Mode:	7734206
Unlimited Ammo:	978945

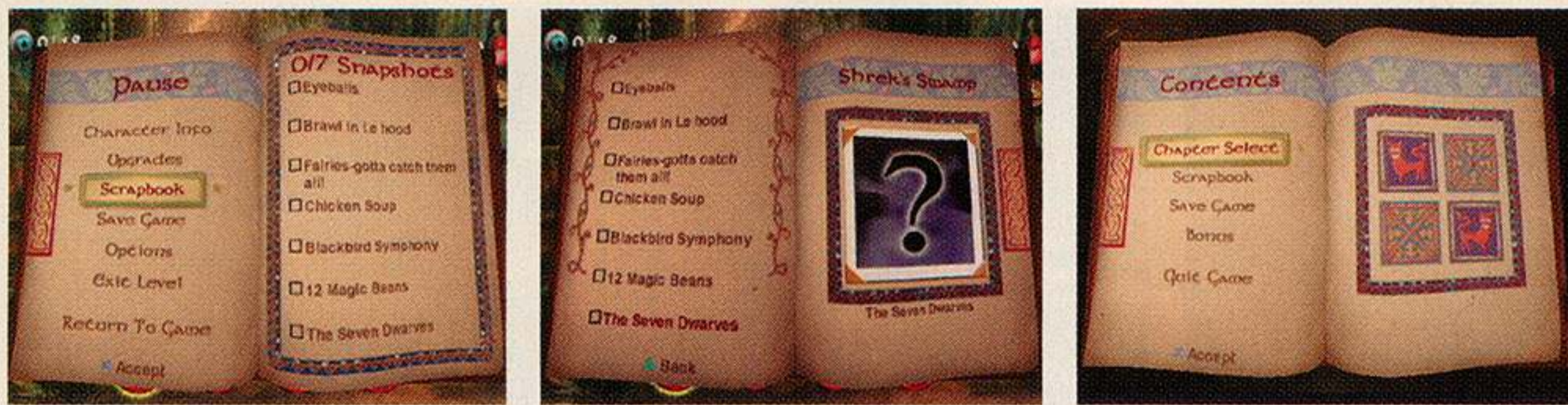




## SHREK 2



### All Bonuses and Level Select



During gameplay, **press Start** to access the Pause menu. At the Pause menu, select Scrapbook and enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the cheat correctly, you'll hear a confirming message.

**All Bonuses:** Press **Left, Up, X, O, Left, Up, X, O, Left, Up, X, O, □, O, □, O, □, O**.

**Level Select:** Press **Left, Up, X, O, Left, Up, X, O, Left, Up, X, O, Up, Up, Up, Up, Up**.

## FIGHT NIGHT 2004



### Big Tigger and Tiny Fighters



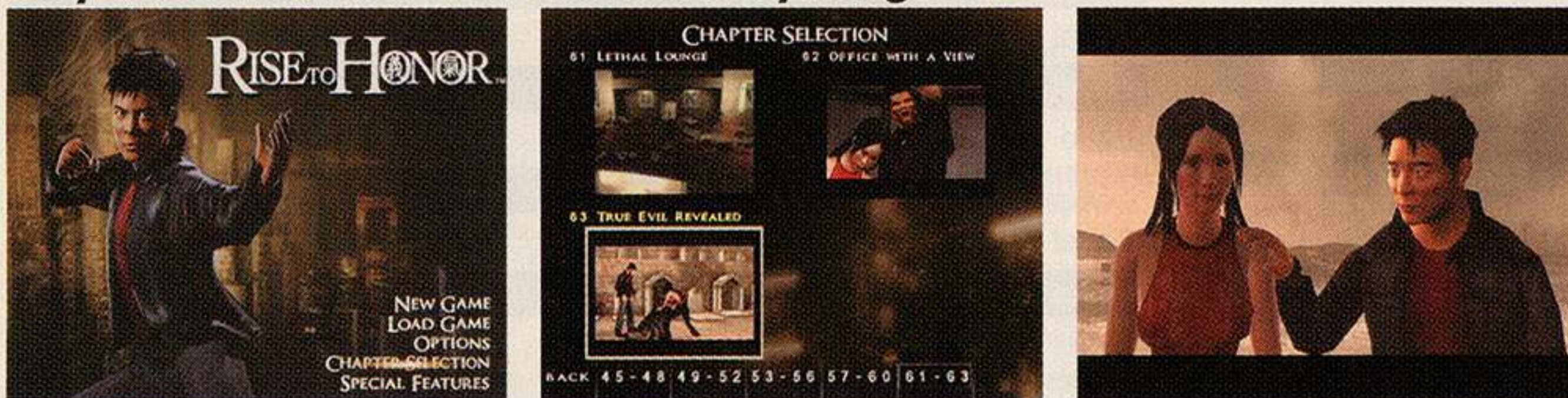
**Big Tigger:** At the Main Menu, select My Corner, and at the My Corner screen, select Record Books. At the Record Books screen, select Most Wins-Boxer and then **press Up, Up**. If you entered the code correctly, you'll see a confirming message.

**Tiny Fighters:** At the Main Menu, **press Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, Right, Left, X**. If you entered the code correctly, your boxers will be tiny with big heads.

## RISE TO HONOR

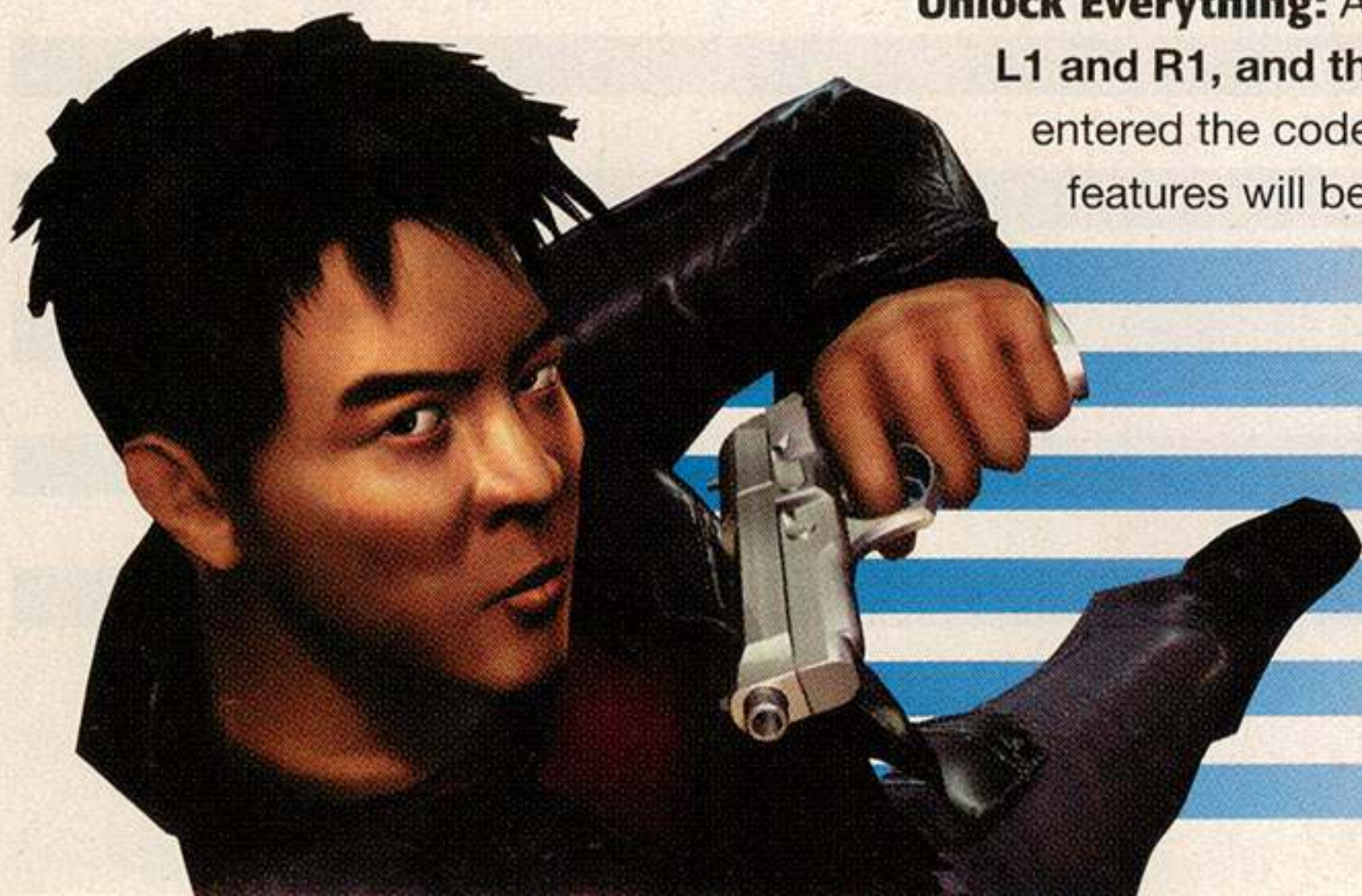


### Play as Roast Duck and Unlock Everything

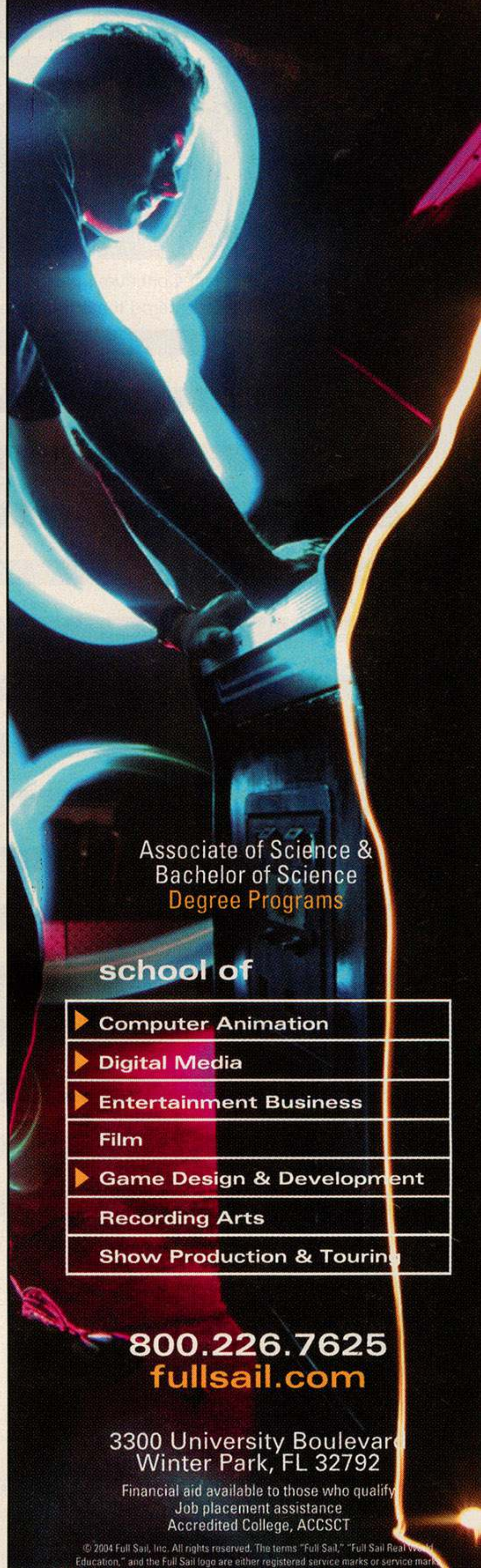


**Play as Roast Duck:** At the main menu, enter the Unlock Everything cheat (see below), go to Chapter Selection, and select Chapter 63 True Evil Revealed. After the ending credits, return to the main menu and then **press and hold L1 and R1, and then press O, □, Down, Left**. If you entered the code correctly, you'll hear a confirming sound. Select New Game to play as the Roast Duck.

**Unlock Everything:** At the main menu, **press and hold L1 and R1, and then press □, Up, Down, O**. If you entered the code correctly, all levels and special features will be unlocked.



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## TOMB RAIDER: THE PROPHECY

### Level Passwords



At the main menu, select Continue. Enter the following passwords to unlock these levels. If you entered the code correctly, you'll begin that level.

Level 1:	PRLD
Level 2:	GAZE
Level 3:	MEDI
Level 4:	HAXE
Level 5:	PATH
Level 6:	BONE
Level 7:	TREE
Level 8:	LINK
Level 9:	KURZ
Level 10:	HELL
Level 11:	WEFX
Level 12:	MEMO
Level 13:	HEAR
Level 14:	FITZ
Level 15:	ELRC
Level 16:	CLIK
Level 17:	MGSL
Level 18:	ROMA
Level 19:	MONK
Level 20:	AEON
Level 21:	TIME
Level 22:	OLIM
Level 23:	LAND
Level 24:	DART
Level 25:	HILL
Level 26:	CHEX
Level 27:	STLK
Level 28:	MECH
Level 29:	ARKD
Level 30:	MUSH
Level 31:	SPOK
Level 32:	LITH



## PRO RALLY 2002

### 65 Percent Completion



At the Drivers screen, create a New Driver with the name ASEREJE. If you entered the code correctly, you'll have 65 percent completion for your driver profile.

## TREASURE PLANET

### Level Passwords



At the main menu, select Continue and then enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the cheat correctly, the level will automatically begin.

Level 1:	MUSHROOM
Level 2:	TRUMPET
Level 3:	CLOUDY
Level 4:	RABBIT
Level 5:	SUNSHINE
Level 6:	SPIDER
Level 7:	APRON
Level 8:	RAINBOW
Level 9:	GOOSE
Level 10:	ENGLAND
Level 11:	MOUNTAIN
Level 12:	CAPTAIN
Level 13:	SNOWMAN
Level 14:	WITCHES
Level 15:	MONKEY
Level 16:	PRINCESS
Level 17:	WINDOW
Level 18:	COCONUT
Level 19:	FOOTBALL
Level 20:	CONCRETE
Level 21:	ELEPHANT
Level 22:	PHANTOM
Level 23:	DRAGON



## CRASH BANDICOOT PURPLE: RIPTO'S REVENGE

500 Free Wumpa, Spyro Party USA, and More



At the main menu, **simultaneously press L and R** to access the cheat-entry screen. At the cheat-entry screen, enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the cheat correctly, you'll see a confirming message.

100 Free Wumpa:	CR4SH
200 Free Wumpa:	G3CK0
500 Free Wumpa:	C0FF33
Bombs:	STR4WB3RRY
Green Pants:	K1LL4Z
Orange Mode:	L4MPP0ST
Spyro Party USA (alternate):	SW1NGS3T
View Credits (alternate):	CR3D1TS

**Spyro Party USA:** During the GBA load screen, **simultaneously press and hold L and R**. If you entered the code correctly, the game will load Spyro Party USA.

## SPYRO ORANGE: THE CORTEX CONSPIRACY

100 Gems, Sheep Flame Mode, and More



At the main menu, **simultaneously press L and R** to access the cheat-entry screen. At the cheat-entry screen, enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the cheat correctly, you'll see a confirming message.

100 Gems:	V1S10NS
Orange Mode:	SP4RX
Orange Spyro:	SPYRO
Purple Mode:	P0RT4L
Sheep Mode:	SH33P
Sheep Flame Mode:	B41S0KV

**Crash Party USA:** During the GBA load screen, **simultaneously press and hold L and R**. If you entered the code correctly, the game will load Crash Party USA.

## MX UNLEASHED

Play Demo Track



At the title screen, let the game sit for three minutes and a demo race will begin. While the demo race is playing, **press X** to join in and race the demo track.

**"Without guys like me, you'd still be playing Pong."**

—Mark Hartlieb  
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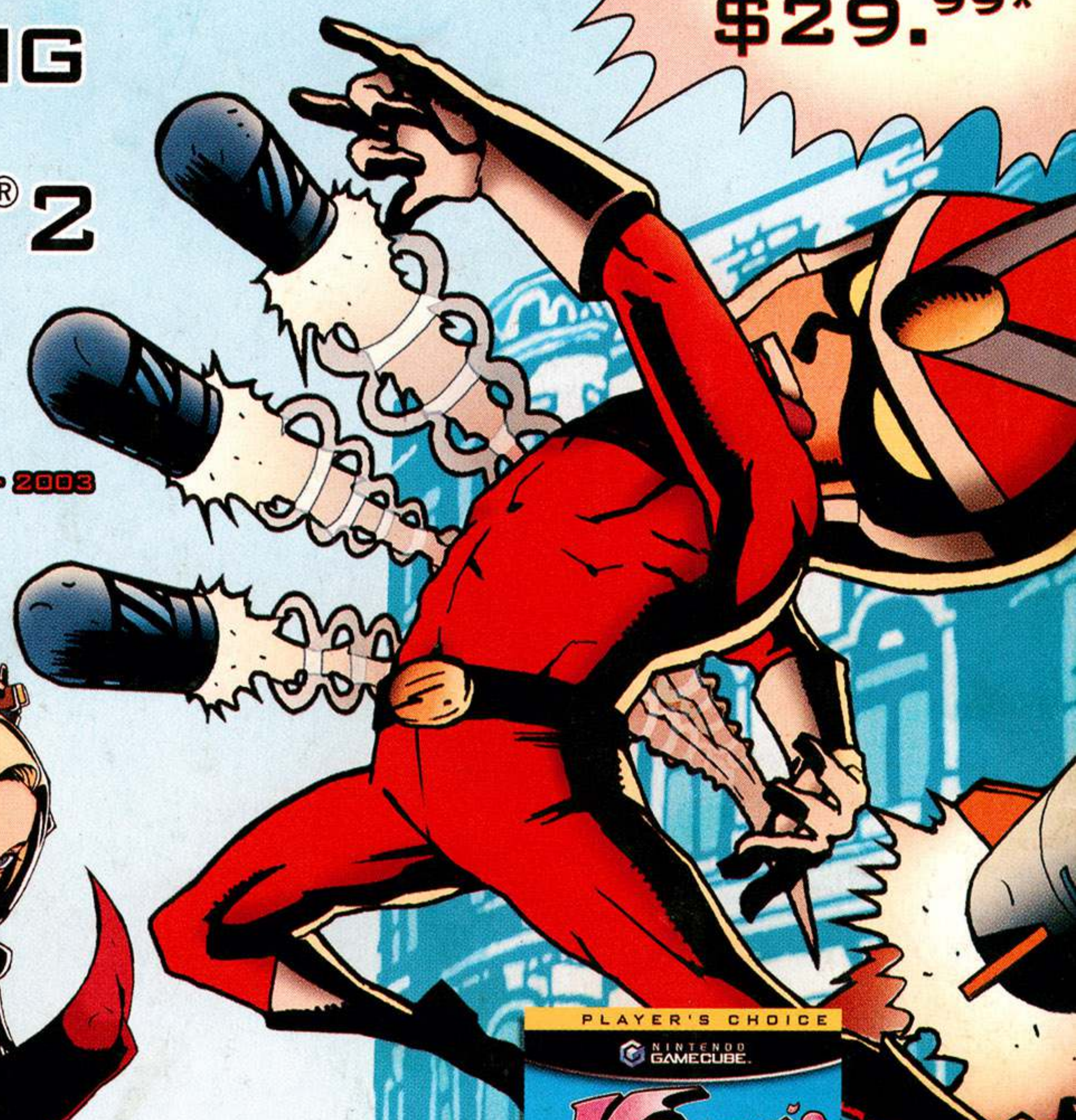




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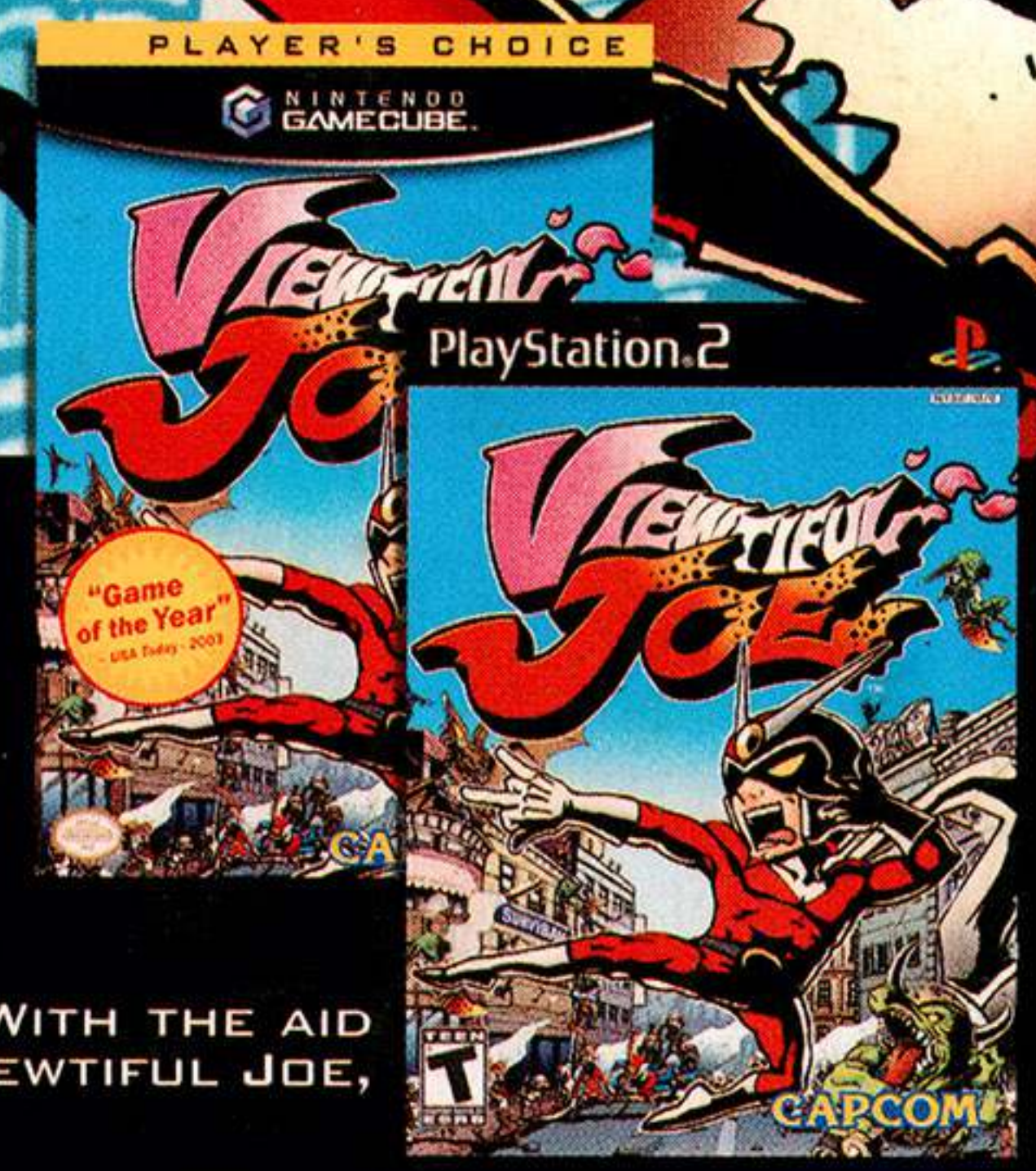
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