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AUSTRALIA'S ONLY MULTI-FORMAT GAMING MAG

EXCLUSIVE HARRY POTTER REVIEW!

ISSUE 99  
JANUARY 2002

# HYPHER



EXCLUSIVE PICS & INTERVIEW!

# LORD OF THE RINGS

INSIDE THE SPECIAL EFFECTS  
OF THE YEAR'S BIGGEST FILM

## REVIEWED

GOOD THINGS  
COME IN 3'S!

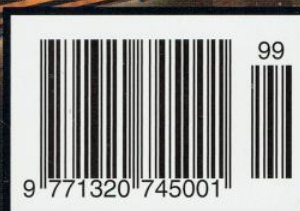
- Grand Theft Auto 3
- Tony Hawk 3
- Civilization 3
- Silent Hill 2
- Crash Bandicoot 5
- Empire Earth • Burnout
- WWF Smackdown 3
- Batman Vengeance
- FIFA 2002 • SSX Tricky



# STAR WARS

Galactic Battlegrounds

Age of the Empire on PC



next

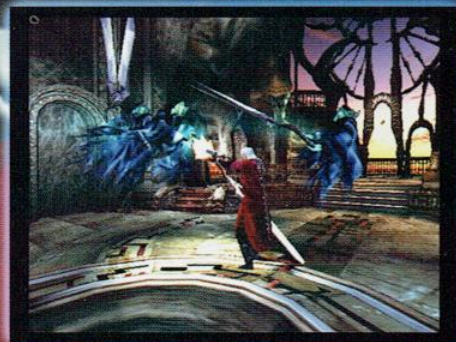
THE NEW  
TOMB  
RAIDER  
REVEALED

PLUS:  
DVDS &  
MUSIC



PC • GAMECUBE • XBOX • PLAYSTATION 2 • PSONE • GAME BOY ADVANCE


The Devil doesn't know it yet,  
but there's a bullet  
with his name on it.



TM

**F**ONS AGO, IN THE DARKEST REACHES OF HELL, A DEMON  
SWORDSMAN NAMED SPARDA WAGED A ONE-MAN WAR TO SAVE  
THE HUMAN WORLD FROM DAMNATION. 2000 YEARS LATER, A  
SHADOWY FIGURE NAMED DANTE FINDS CLUES THAT THE DEVIL  
WILL RISE UP AGAIN. SOMEWHERE BETWEEN A MAN AND A DEMON  
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**WILL HE**



# ANNIHILATE?

Or will Rebel forces dominate? The ultimate outcome is up to you, as *Star Wars Galactic Battlegrounds™* thrusts you into explosive real-time strategy conflicts spanning the entire *Star Wars* saga.



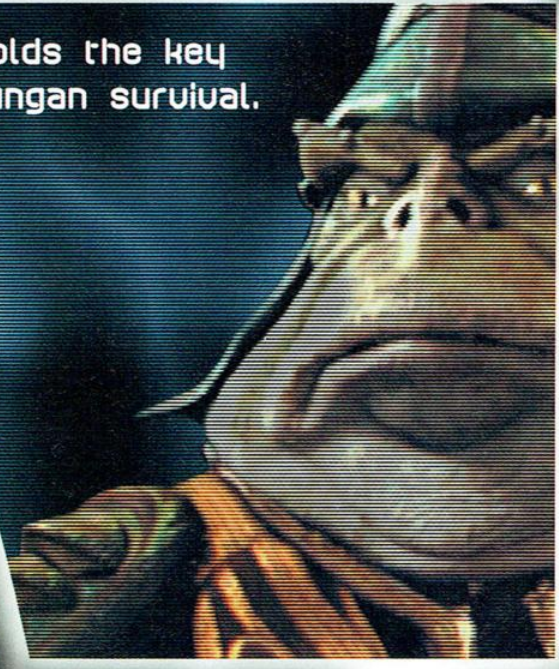
- With gameplay based on an enhanced Age of Empire® engine
- Six different civilizations clash in epic land, sea and air battles
- Command legions of troops in single and multi-player missions
- Design your own missions with the extensive campaign editor

## STAR WARS™ GALACTIC BATTLEFIELDS™

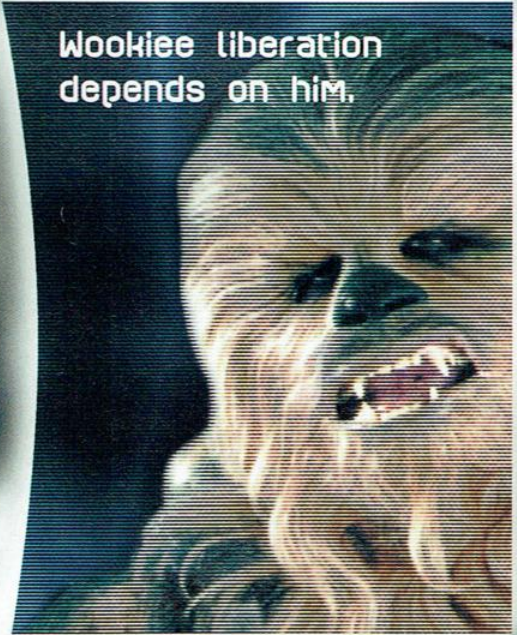
Real-time strategy on a galactic scale.

For your pre-battle briefing, report to  
[www.swgalacticbattlegrounds.com](http://www.swgalacticbattlegrounds.com)  
Official Star Wars Web Site  
[www.starwars.com](http://www.starwars.com)

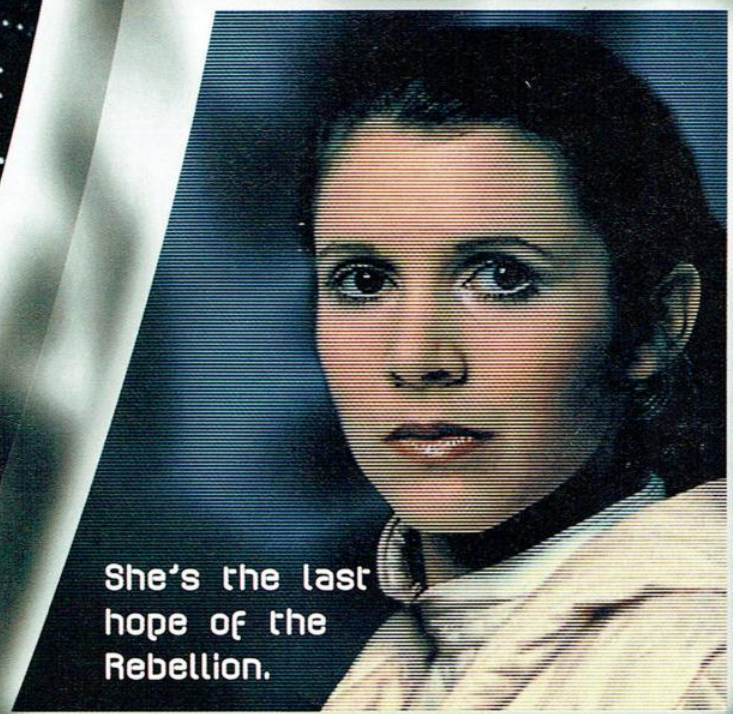
He holds the key  
to Gungan survival.



Wookiee liberation  
depends on him.



She's the last  
hope of the  
Rebellion.



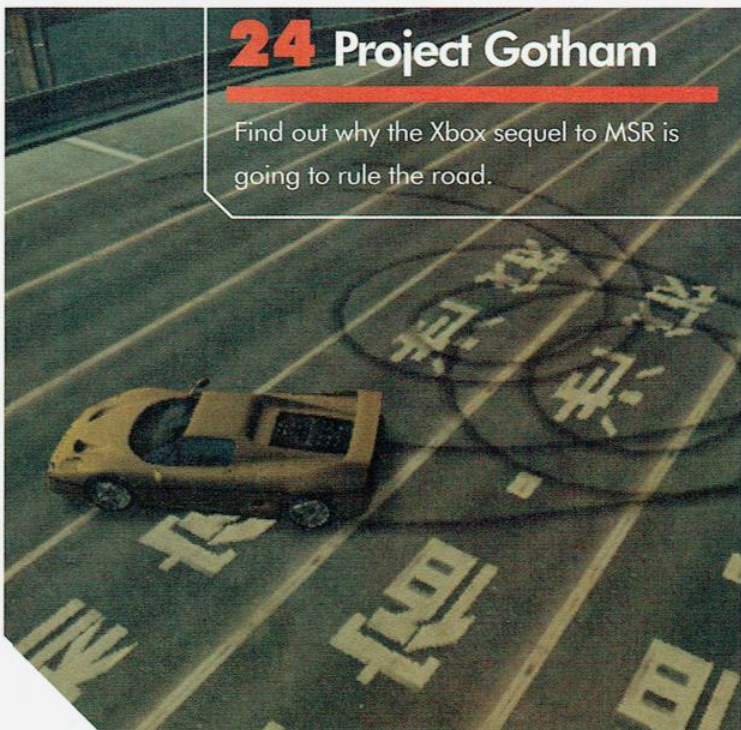
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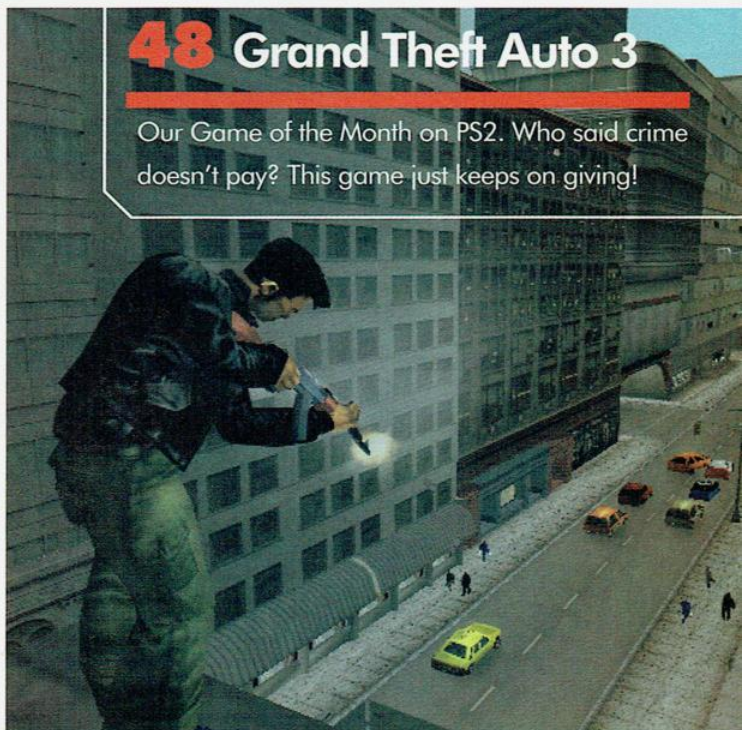
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Find out why the Xbox sequel to MSR is going to rule the road.



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Our Game of the Month on PS2. Who said crime doesn't pay? This game just keeps on giving!

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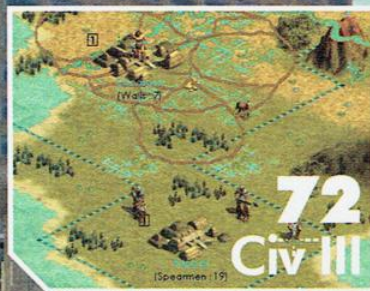
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Stuffed with the latest gaming goodies: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Return to Castle Wolfenstein... and more!



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»HYPER 7

# HYPER»»



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**99**  
JANUARY  
2002

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# EDITORIAL

»» For the first time in the history of Hyper, we've done a non-gaming cover. Some of you are probably ripping the magazine open in shivers of geeky excitement and others may be wondering what kind of drugs we're on. If you haven't read Lord of the Rings, then it's a little hard to describe just how important it actually has been to gaming. Tolkien's book was the genesis for most of today's sword and sorcery fantasy fiction, which has undoubtedly influenced most of the RPGs we've ever played on console or PC. Now that films are being made of the Lord of the Rings trilogy, we're a little more than excited – and you should be too! Go get the books and read them, then join in on the thrill of seeing it come alive on the big screen this Christmas. And yes, there are new Lord of the Rings games on the way. More on that later. For now, have a very merry Christmas!

**Eliot Fish** »» Editor



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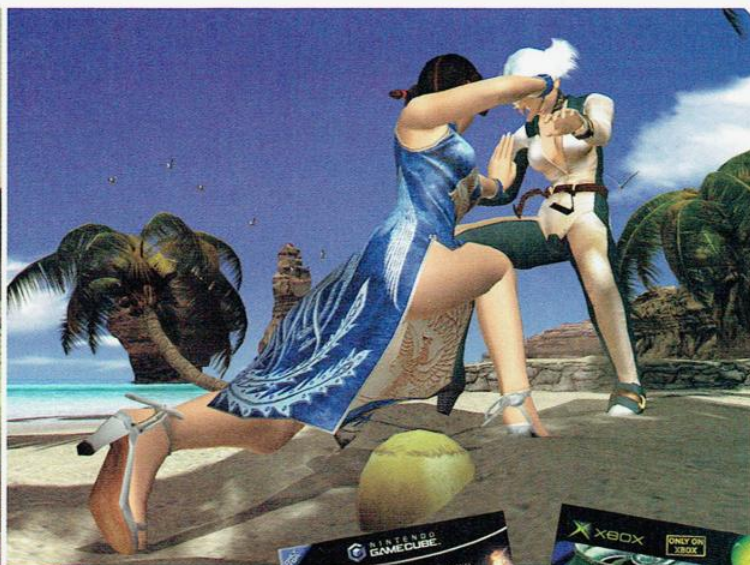
# NEWS



**IN THE NEWS:** Xbox and GCN launch in the USA ■ House of the Dead 3 ■ GT3 add-on ■ Oh, and Merry Xmas!



Rogue Leader looks more amazing every day. Dead or Alive 3 also looks stunning.



## We have lift off! GameCube and Xbox launch in the USA

**E**y the time you read this, Microsoft and Nintendo will have gone head-to-head with their next-generation consoles. Microsoft's Xbox hit US stores on November 15 and the Nintendo Cube rolled in on November 18. Of course, because of print lead times, we can't report to you what has happened on launch, but we expect things got pretty nasty if you consider the launch titles both machines were boasting.

### VIDEOGAME BLITZKRIEG

The Xbox has Halo, Munch's Oddysee, Project Gotham Racing, Dead or Alive 3 and Amped, just to name a few. The GameCube is out there with Star Wars: Rogue Leader, Luigi's Mansion, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 and Wave Race: Blue Storm amongst other good titles. Both consoles have killer launch games, so it was never going to be easy choosing between the two. However, to further confuse the decision making process over both new consoles, the PS2 is going to

➤ Both consoles have killer launch games, so it was never going to be easy

have Metal Gear Solid 2 this Christmas to compliment the other AAA games that have released for the system over the last month (such as Grand Theft Auto 3, Tony Hawk 3, Silent Hill 2, Burnout and Devil May Cry). The PS2 software library is really kicking along at an alarming rate at the moment. Never has there been a tougher time to buy! Of course, that's for the Americans to worry about.

Here in Australia, the software line-ups will be a little different... by the time both the GCN and Xbox are available locally, the range of software on all the consoles will be greater, hopefully making it an easier decision for us gamers — simply pick the console with the most games that interest you! Still no walk in the park, but hey, we all know that as the software range expands, the easier it is to evaluate and decide where to invest.

### "AD" IT UP

Both Nintendo and Microsoft have begun to unleash their TV advertising campaigns in America, proving that Sony's surreal "third place" approach is old hat. For Xbox, there have been a series of strong ads that show nothing but pure gameplay. Why has it taken so long for a company to do this? To further promote the Xbox in the USA, Microsoft held an enormous Xbox party that basically travelled around the country to give gamers a taste of their games. Called "Xbox



Odyssey", the event sounded just incredible. Two massive semi-trailers have been carting around huge plasma screens, a giant tent, 52 Xbox units and some seriously fancy looking chrome cabinets.

Also, some of you may have noticed that Microsoft have started advertising the Xbox here in Australia — on TV, posters, on buses... we're getting the feeling that March is the month.

Nintendo, on the other hand, are being plagued by rumours that PAL GameCubes may not be released to Europe or Australia until September 2002. Seems like an awful long time to wait, doesn't it? Can the GameCube survive such a delay?



Coolest shot from a TV ad ever!



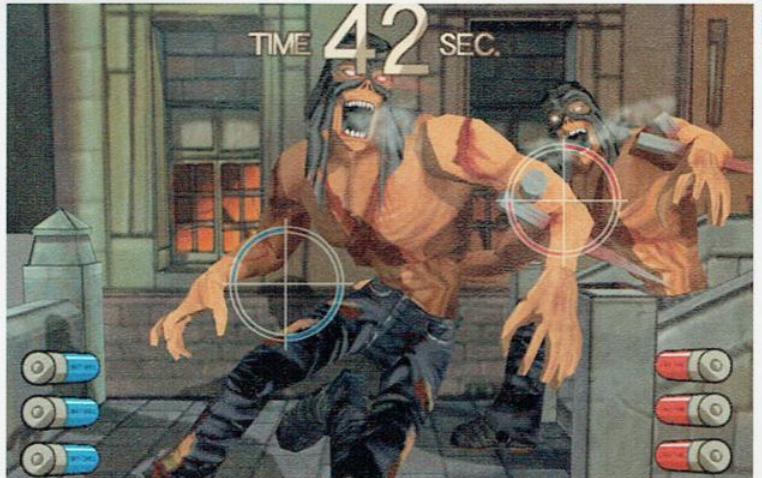
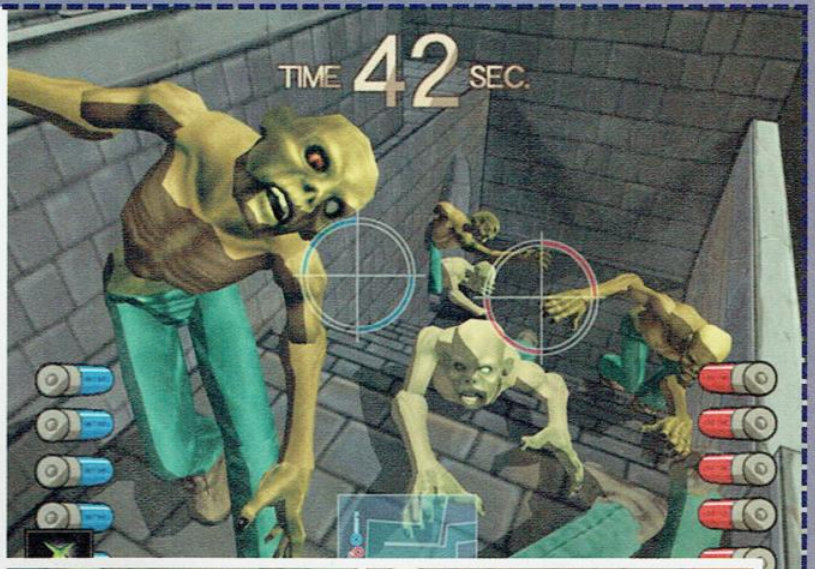
The Xbox odyssey looked amazing.



## SOUL CALIBUR 2 FOR ALL!

After burning holes in our Dreamcast, Soul Calibur remains one of our favourite console games ever. The long-awaited sequel will be coming to the GameCube, Xbox and PS2, so this time around, no one is going to miss out on this great weapons-based fighting game.

Joining the cast of characters from the original will be at least three new fighters: Talim, Hong Yung Sung and Cassandra. You can expect to see Soul Calibur 2 at the arcades before it hits the home consoles.



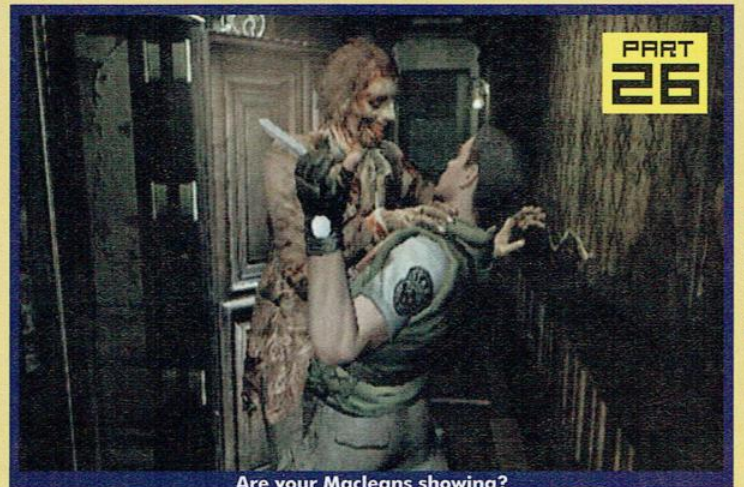
## XBOX BREEDS ZOMBIES

Seega have announced House of the Dead 3 for the Xbox, sporting a brand new cartoon-style cel-shaded look — much like Nintendo's new approach to its Zelda series. The clever reasoning behind the switch to this new stylistic approach, is that it takes the edge off the ever-increasing sensitivity to realistic

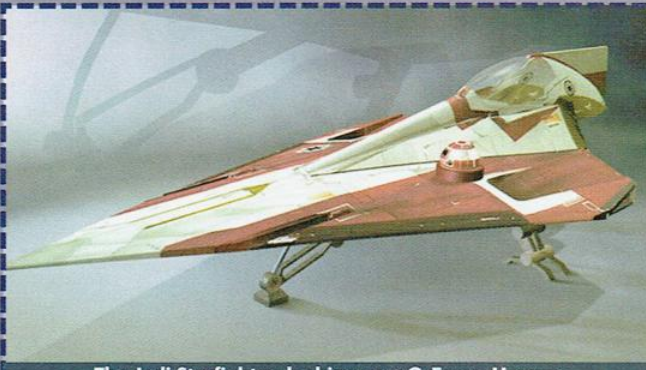
violence in games. Seeing as how House of the Dead 3 will involve endless shotgun blasting at lumbering zombies, what better way to get it on a home console without censorship woes than to style-it-up? The Hyper crew all agree that the new cartoony approach is supremely cool. Y'know, it'd be okay if they did Doom 4 this way...

## CAPTION THIS!

Come on readers! Get your pens out. Yes I wrote, "pens". No don't get those out! Ewwwww... Send your captions to [captionthis@next.com.au](mailto:captionthis@next.com.au) with Caption This Part 26 in the subject line. Ahhh, hilarity.



Are your Macleans showing?



The Jedi Starfighter, looking very G-Force. Hmm.

## ATTACK OF THE JEDI

Star Wars: Starfighter on PS2 was one damn fine game, and indication that LucasArts have started to get back on track and resurrect their once fine gaming reputation. Fans of Starfighter will be excited to hear that the sequel is in development — Jedi Starfighter.

The Jedi Starfighter is the new spacecraft that Obi-Wan Kenobi gets to pilot in the upcoming Star Wars: Episode II — Attack of the Clones. In the game at least, the new ship will allow for special Jedi force powers to be used whilst piloting the ship through all sorts of new action-packed missions. Whilst it won't feature scenarios from the movie, Jedi Starfighter will have Episode I Jedi council member, Adi Gallia, taking a prominent role in the game's new storyline, along with the alien, Nym, from Starfighter. Look forward to more intense dogfighting action in 2002. Ccoolness!



He's so Hideo, he has to wear a mask.

## SOLID GOLD

Konami's long-awaited Metal Gear Solid 2 has gone gold, making it ready for manufacturing and distribution this Christmas. Except for in Australia. Whilst the sure-to-be million seller will be available for PS2 owners overseas, the local release date is set for sometime in February, so there's still a bit of waiting for Aussie gamers. It'll be worth it though... trust us.

Hideo Kojima has also revealed plans to release the official soundtrack to the game. The score is by Harry Gregson-Williams, who is the composer responsible for the music in films such as The Rock, Armageddon and Enemy of the State, so this soundtrack isn't as niche as it sounds. We're not sure if it will be released here in Australia at all, but here's hoping.



## GRAN TURISMO 3 ADD-ON

Gran Turismo 3 Concept 2001 Tokyo is the long and winding road of a title for the upcoming bonus disc that Sony will be releasing for GT3 owners.

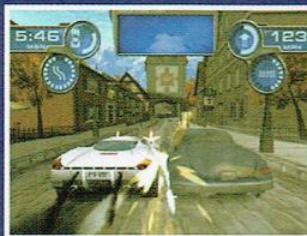
The add-on disc features all the cars that were unveiled at the Tokyo motor show, including the Pod Aibo, Toyota Soarer 430 SCV, Mazda RX-8, Honda Dualnote, Nissan GT-R, Honda NSX-R, Nissan GT-R Concept and the Daihatsu Kogyo Copen. As well as all these very funky new cars, there will be five new tracks thrown in! New tracks is really what we want, eh?

At this point in time, the add-on disc has only been announced for Japan, but chances are we may receive the add-on at some stage considering how well GT3 has sold at retail.

## WINNERS HYPER 97

### SPY HUNTER

D. Cahill, WA  
Greg Gozdz, Vic  
Sharon Clague, Qld  
Thomas Stewart, NSW  
Josh Willcocks, Qld



### MECH COMMANDER 2

Tracey Crosby, Qld  
Jason Smith, NSW  
Lewis Williams, SA  
Rick Morrison, Vic  
Carl Fricker, Qld

## OVERFLOW

SNK, the game company famous among hardcore gamers for its NeoGeo console and library of influential games including King Of Fighters, Samurai Shodown and Metal Slug, has gone bust and is officially closing its doors after 23 years. It's a cruel world folks... especially when we're still playing Capcom Vs SNK 2 everyday at the office.

Last issue we reviewed Total Soccer on the GBA and scored it a pretty lowly 49%. It turns out that the cartridge we received from Ubisoft was incorrectly labelled, and was not the final cartridge. Since playing the final cart, we must agree that a certain AI bug has been corrected, making the game more enjoyable. It's still not a killer soccer game, but we would like to point out that our score was too harsh in light of this bug fix before release.

Nintendo second party developer Left Field have stopped work on i080 2, presumably following some kind of quality analysis by Nintendo. In early footage we'd seen, the game wasn't looking like a true next gen sequel, and Nintendo are notorious for their quality control. Although the game appears to have been put on hold completely, we're quietly confident that Nintendo will take it back in-house.

Sega and Microsoft are teaming up to develop Xbox compatible arcade hardware. And the first title? Believe it or not, but it's Outrun 2!

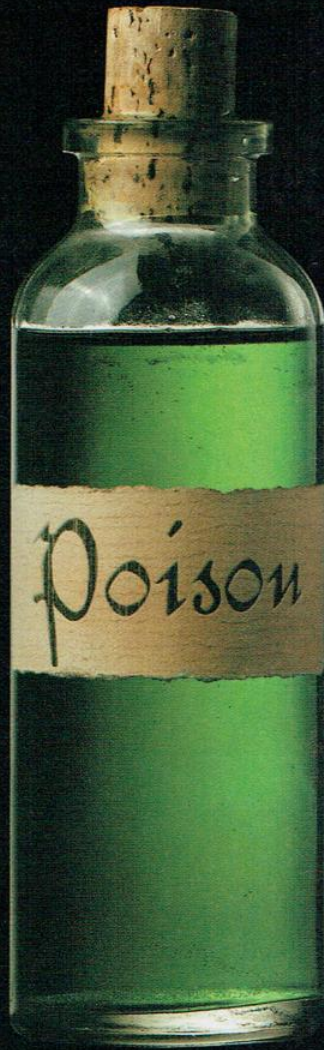
Virtua Fighter 4 is finally just around the corner... well in Japan at least. Japanese gamers will get their first taste at the end of January. Details are still relatively scarce on the PS2 version of the game, but Sega are promising that the visuals will be virtually identical to its arcade counterpart. We also know that the PS2 game will have an enhanced training mode and an "AI" mode, but we're not sure what that means — possibly your opponent's AI will improve as you do.

Even though Sony now hold a significant number of shares in Square (19% in fact), indications out of Japan are that Square are still pursuing developing games for GBA. Phew! Don't expect to see any GameCube Square titles any time soon though.

Sony Computer Entertainment America are lining up some great electronic acts for their upcoming music based game Frequency. The game will enable PS2 owners to play with and remix tracks from artists including Meat Beat Manifesto, Funkstar De Luxe, Orbital, Powerman 500, Paul Oakenfold, Roni Size, Lo Fidelity All Stars, Crystal Method, Juno Reactor, DJ Q-Bert, BT, Fear Factory and Dub Pistols. Pity about BT, but you can't have everything. More on this awesome looking title soon.



PlayStation®2



# USE ONLY AS DIRECTED

Not everything you drink in Baldur's Gate™ is good for you, so make sure you're paying attention. Three and a half million people have experienced the PC version - but this is different, way different. This is 55 levels of frantic combat. This is a world full of hideous monsters, fiendish traps and hordes of treasure. This is Baldur's Gate™: Dark Alliance™.



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Baldur's Gate™  
DARK ALLIANCE



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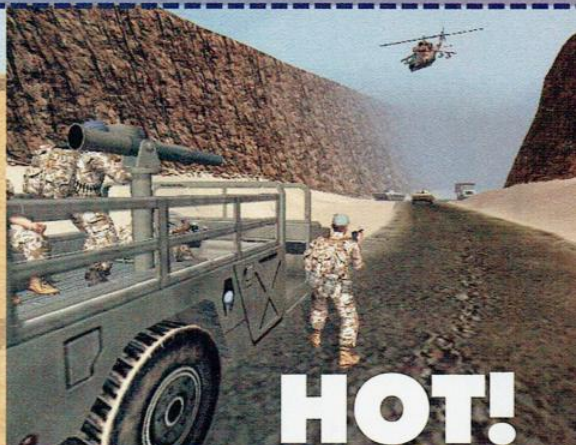
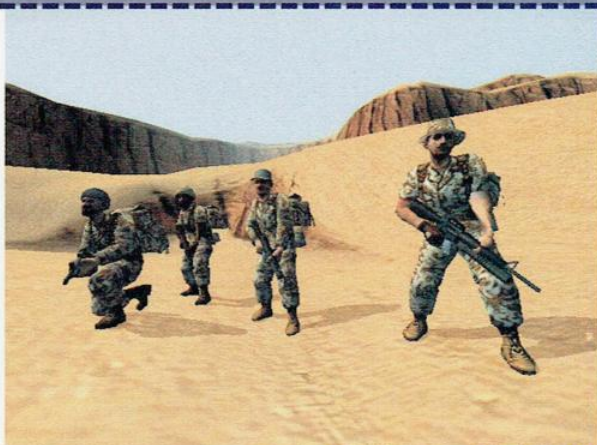
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A barrel-load of action.

## SERIOUS SEQUEL

❖❖ The popularity of Croteam's Serious Sam is undeniable. Gamers longing for that frenzied shooter action of Doom days were pleasantly surprised to find the essence of that kind of adrenalin pumping gameplay in this title from the little known croatian development house. Well, now Croteam are bringing Sam back in Serious Sam: The Second Encounter (which is a nice homage to Wolfenstein 3D's Second Encounter released way back in the early 90s). Featuring new levels, new monsters and new multiplayer, we can't wait to get caught up in a Serious Sam frenzy once more. Oh, and no more Egypt! Yay!



**HOT!**

**DESERT STORM ON XBOX!  
FIRST SCREENS!**



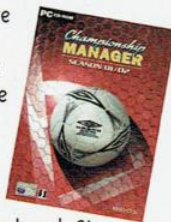
**HOT!**

**MAXIMO: GHOSTS TO GLORY ON PS2!  
FIRST SCREENS!**



## SOCCER (R)EVOLUTION

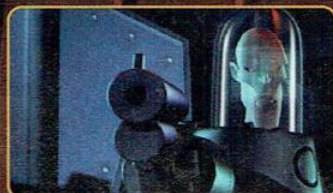
❖❖ EA Sports are shaking in their boots with the news that two of the most loved developers in the soccer game market are giving each other a helping hand. SI Games, makers of Championship Manager, have given the developers of the ISS Evolution series, KCET, full use of the famous player database CM's success is founded on. This means that KCET's next title, Pro Evolution Soccer (due out soon for PS2), will not only feature more detailed and accurate statistics, but also players who more closely resemble their real life counterparts. It's not clear exactly what SI get out of this collaboration, but what is clear is that it's going to be us who'll benefit, as SI and KCET try to end the FIFA monopoly of the sales charts.



# BATMAN VENGEANCE

"The best Batman game ever.  
Imaginative, yet true to its origins."

Official PlayStation Magazine. [Australia]



## A darker justice must be served.

PlayStation 2

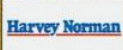


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Ubi Soft

Available at these and other good retailers



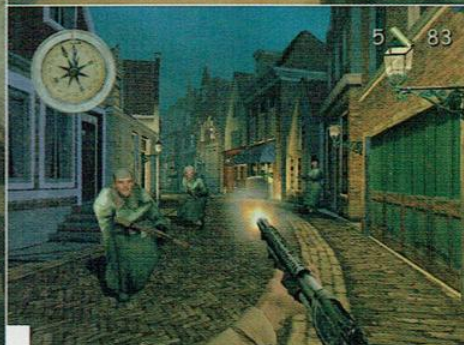
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# MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE

PS2 ELECTRONIC ARTS

Coming early next year is the PS2 sequel to the awesome Medal of Honor on Psone — Medal of Honor: Frontline. Featuring 15 missions based on actual events in World War II, lush 3D environments and over 20 realistic weapons, Frontline has us pretty darn excited. Check out these tasty screens!





CHECKPOINT

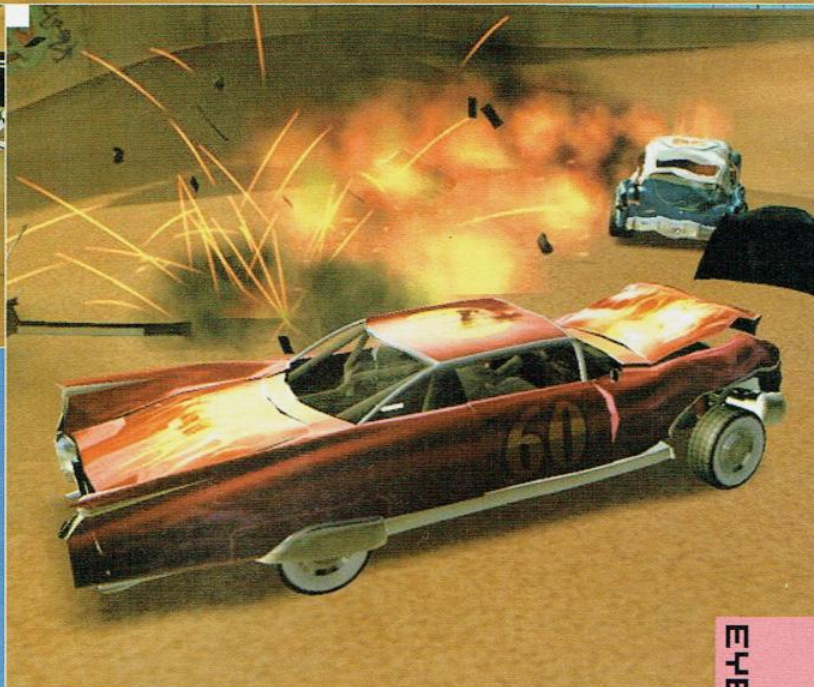
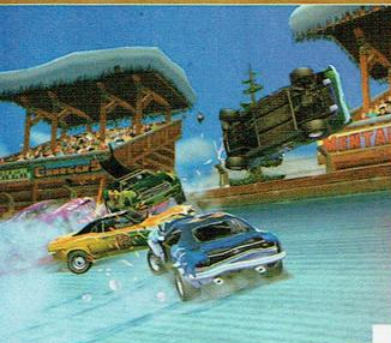


## CRASH

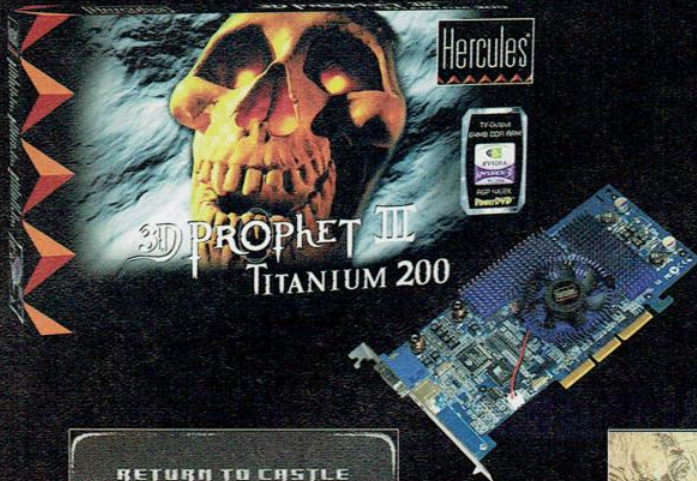
» XBOX/PS2 RAGE



o, we're not talking Bandicoots here. This is the destruction derby inspired car crash 'em up for the Xbox and PS2 from Rage software. Hop into a variety of muscle cars, hot rods and performance cars and smash them to a pulp. Good dirty fun. Both versions of the game will be released early to mid 2002, and both will feature exclusive content to some degree.



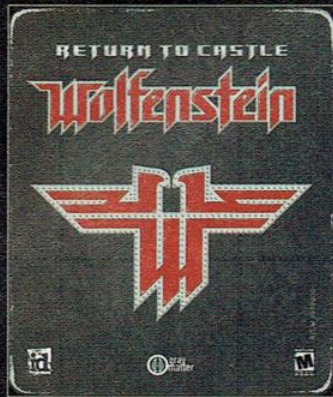
# Why Go Anywhere Else



\$499

3D Prophet III Titanium 200.

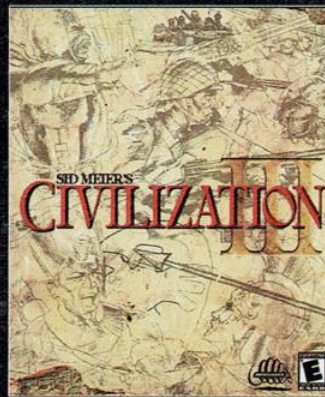
A powerful and fully featured graphics processor that enables you to produce a virtually infinite number of special effects for a new level of realism in 3D games.



\$99<sup>95</sup>

Return to Castle Wolfenstein PC. Limited Edition Tin Box. (MA15+)

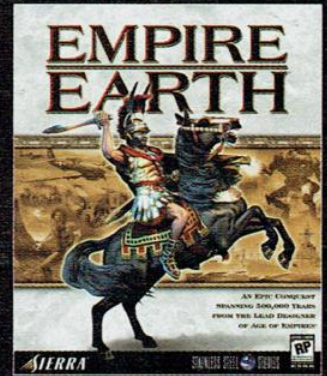
Prepare for a most frightening and action-packed adventure teeming with shocking paranormal experiments, perverted, flesh-chewing SS weaponry and bone chilling encounters with the Fuhrer's unrelenting henchmen.



\$99<sup>95</sup>

Civilization III PC. (G8+)

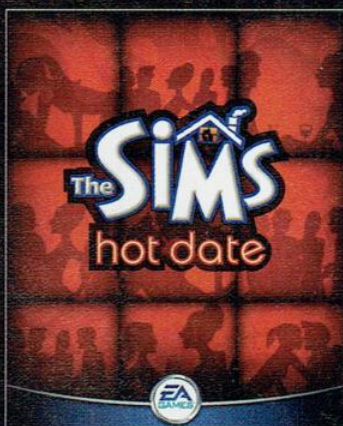
Rewrite history with the greatest game of all time. Witness an epic adventure unfold before you as you wield the ultimate power and reinvent the history of Civilization.



\$99<sup>95</sup>

Empire Earth PC. (M15+)

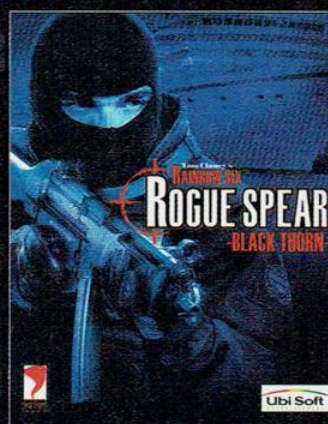
From the lead designer of Age of Empires comes Empire Earth, a real-time strategy game that lets you control the destiny of a fledgling society through 500,000 years of human history. Choose any point in time and establish a civilization to transcend the ages and dominate the earth.



\$39<sup>95</sup>

The Sims: Hot Date PC. (M15+)

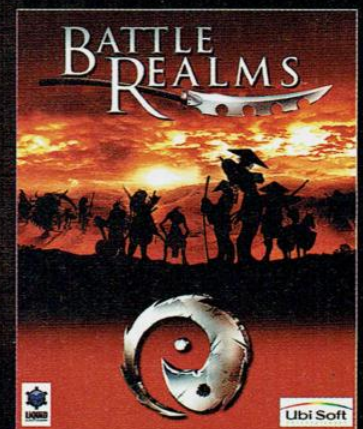
Play matchmaker to your Sims and watch the sparks fly or fizzle. Get them out of the house and into the all-new downtown area where they'll gossip over a candle-lit dinner, buy gifts for their dates or just cruise the Strip in hopes of getting lucky.



\$69<sup>95</sup>

Rogue Spear: Black Thorn PC. (M15+)

Join a team of counter-terrorism experts and seize the day in this tactical fighting game.

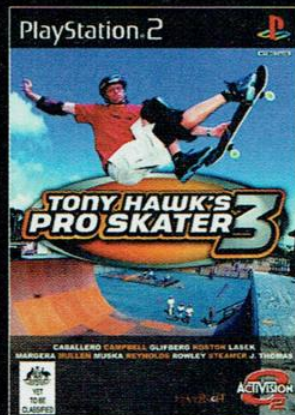


\$89<sup>95</sup>

Battle Realms PC. (MA15+)

Real-time strategy inspired by kung-fu movies and Japanese mythology. Battle Realms features detailed 3D environments, realistic weather effects and a unique battle gear system to advance the abilities of your warriors.

# For Your Gaming Needs?



**\$99<sup>95</sup>**  
 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 PS2.  
 (M15+)



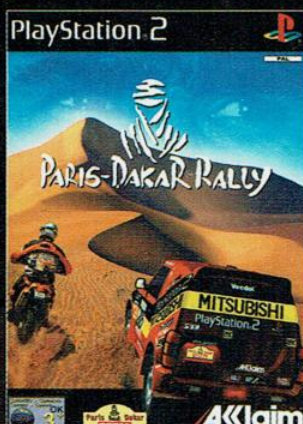
**\$99<sup>95</sup>**  
 Formula 1 2001 PS2. (G)



**\$99<sup>95</sup>**  
 Gran Turismo 3 PS2. (G)



**\$109<sup>95</sup>**  
 Devil May Cry PS2. (MA15+)



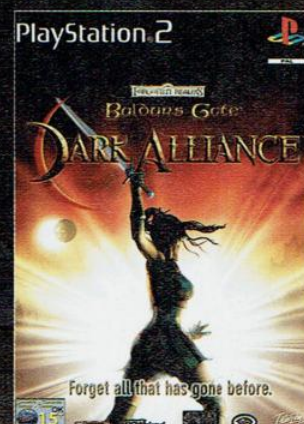
**\$99<sup>95</sup>**  
 Paris Dakar Rally PS2. (G)



**\$99<sup>95</sup>**  
 World Rally Championship  
 2001 PS2. (G)



**\$99<sup>95</sup>**  
 SSX Tricky PS2. (G)



**\$99<sup>95</sup>**  
 Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance  
 PS2. (M15+)

**\$99<sup>95</sup>**  
**Logitech Mouseman Dual Optical Mouse.**  
 The latest technology for the user who expects nothing less. This sleek, ergonomic mouse takes advantage of dual optical sensors to provide the most accurate possible movement.



**\$99<sup>95</sup>**  
**Top Gun Fox 2 Pro Shock Joystick.**  
 Vibrating joystick with twist handle. Includes a built-in motor in joystick handle, seven programmable buttons, 8-way hat switch, and more. 2960578



**\$109<sup>95</sup>**  
**Wingman Extreme Digital 3D Joystick.**  
 Non-stick rubber buttons for fast action, 8-way hat switch, sculpted stick for comfortable combat.



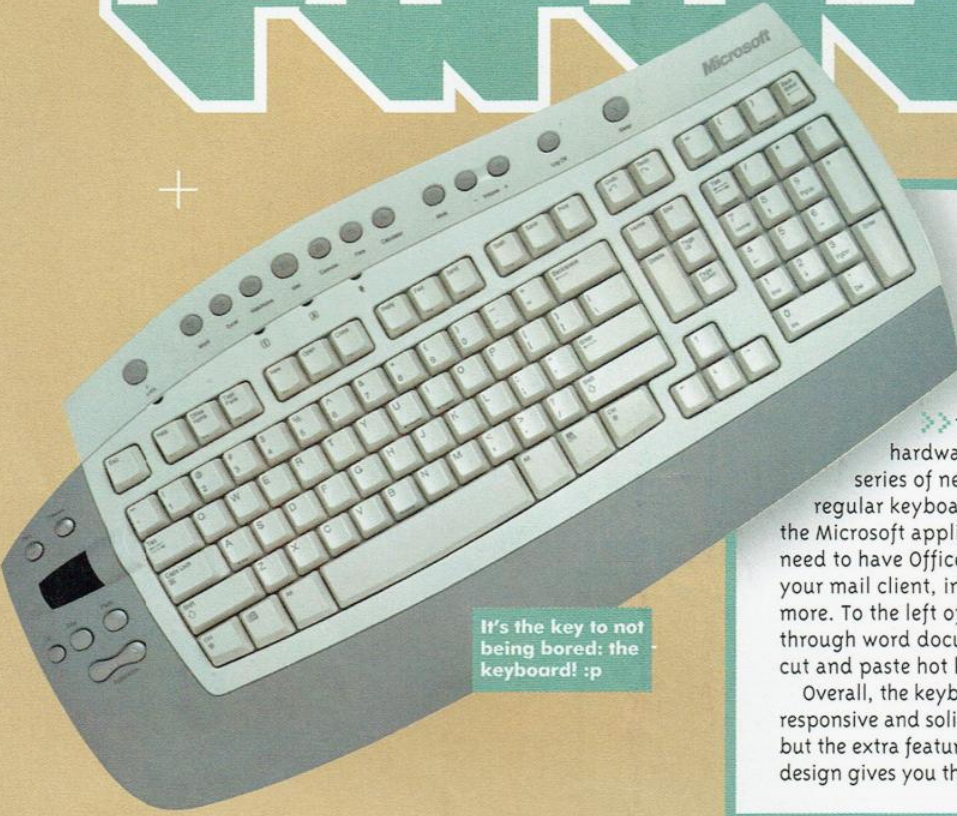
# Harvey Norman

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# HAAROWA



It's the key to not being bored: the keyboard! :p

## MICROSOFT OFFICE KEYBOARD

Microsoft

Available: Now Price: \$129.95

»» This new keyboard from Microsoft is a big, solid piece of hardware. But the size is for good reason — this keyboard hosts a series of new keys, buttons and extra functions that wouldn't fit on a regular keyboard. Primarily, this keyboard has been designed for use with the Microsoft applications in Office, such as Word and Excel, but you don't need to have Office to use it. There are hot keys above the F keys that will open your mail client, internet browser, calculator, adjust your system volume and more. To the left of the standard keyboard is a scroll (handy for scrolling through word documents without taking your hands off the keyboard), with cut and paste hot keys and back and forward hot keys.

Overall, the keyboard feels very well made, with every key soft to the touch but responsive and solid enough to be fairly hardy. It's a lot to pay for a keyboard, but the extra features will make it worthwhile to some, and the big, chunky design gives you the illusory feeling that your computer just got more powerful.

## WINDOWS XP

### Finally time to upgrade

»» If you're buying a new PC this Xmas, or contemplating that long overdue upgrade, then you should seriously consider finally giving Windows 98 - or particularly Windows ME - the flick. Microsoft's brand new Operating System, Windows XP, is finally here.



As far as gaming goes, XP Home Edition is the new solid system to rely on. The benefits of this upgrade are numerous, and more readily apparent than the dubious benefits of Windows ME. You see, XP finally gets rid of the Windows 95 kernel that has been at the heart of 98, 98 SE and ME. XP is based on the far more reliable Windows NT kernel, but it's the first of its kind to be marketed directly at the general user — i.e. the home user and the mainstream PC gamer. Basically, XP is faster, more reliable and will eventually be the OS of choice worldwide. It's Win 2k with frills!

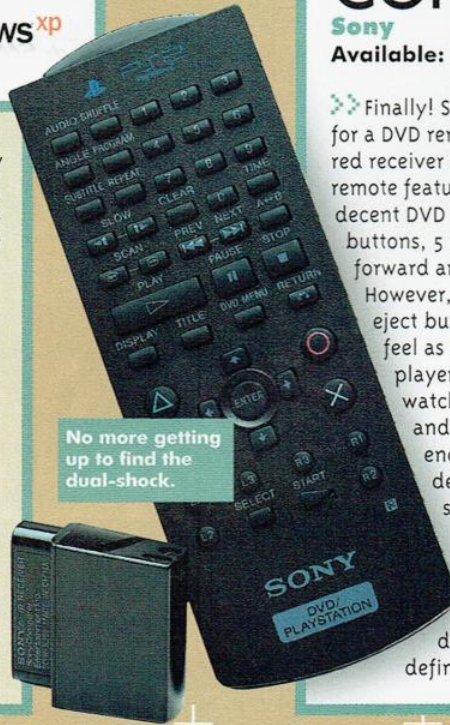
It may take a while for all the software out there to become XP compatible, but you should be fine upgrading now if most of the software you use has Windows 2000 support (just check on the game box). What you will find with XP is very few instances of a total OS crash. You see, with the NT kernel, most software that bombs out can be safely quit without affecting the operating system, allowing you to continue your work or gaming unhindered. Finally.

Windows XP Home Edition Upgrade (to upgrade from your previous Windows) will retail for \$237.

## PS2 DVD REMOTE CONTROL

Sony

Available: Now Price: \$49.95



No more getting up to find the dual-shock.

»» Finally! Sony have now delivered on their promise for a DVD remote control for the PS2. Utilising an infra-red receiver slotted into the controller port, the PS2 remote features everything you would expect from a decent DVD remote control — all the necessary function buttons, 5 playback modes, 3 different speeds of fast forward and reverse and a time search function.

However, there is the distinct absence of a power or eject button, which is a shame. Whilst it doesn't feel as convincing in the hand as a dedicated DVD player remote, the PS2 remote certainly makes watching DVDs on your PS2 that much easier, and it's definitely powerful and functional enough to satisfy almost everyone who desperately needs one. There's only one small hitch with the remote control — you must have a PS2 memory card to load the drivers that are necessary for full functionality. The remote will work without them, but to a much lesser degree of functionality. Overall, this is definitely something to ask for this Christmas!

# ARE

## ALL I WANT FOR XMAS IS A NOKIA 5510

» We don't often feature phones in our hardware section, but this month Nokia's 5510 caught our eye and demanded that we show it off. The reason that this phone in particular appeals, is that here at Hyper we're messaging freaks. We're on ICQ all day and all night, and when we're not in front of a PC we're sending off SMS messages on our mobiles. It's an addiction, and we love it.

The 5510 recognises this new breed of geek, and gives you a full QWERTY keyboard to play with, making messaging a breeze. It has a funky widescreen LCD and a very kitsch design aesthetic that we really dig. It's available in two colours "groove red" and "melody blue". These names allude to the fact that it's also an mp3 player! Yes, the 5510 comes with 64MB of flash memory built in and a headphone jack to plug into... plus all the other features you'd expect on a Nokia. Damn cool and due out really soon.

Never has QWERTY been such a cutie.

## THRUSTMASTER FREESTYLER BIKE

**Thrustmaster**

**Available:** Now **Price:** \$149

» These chunky handlebars have been designed to bring you an all-new controller experience for your favourite PSone and PS2 biking games, whether it be MX2002, Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2, or Moto GP. With three different modes – digital/analogue/Negcon – the Freestyler should be compatible with almost every game you throw at it. Plus, it features an analogue lever and handle (for brake and accelerate) and a digital lever for a clutch – you can also turn or lean with the handlebars. Fancy. The handlebars also emit a vibration effect for that "ooh, I'm going over bumpy ground" feeling. Exciting stuff.

We haven't had a chance to play with the Freestyler bike, but knowing Thrustmaster products, it's sure to be long-lasting, sturdy and little-brother proof. If you're a serious bike freak who wants the ultimate experience, go check out the Freestyler at your local store and ask for a demonstration.

Can you "handle" the action?



## FIGHTING ARENA

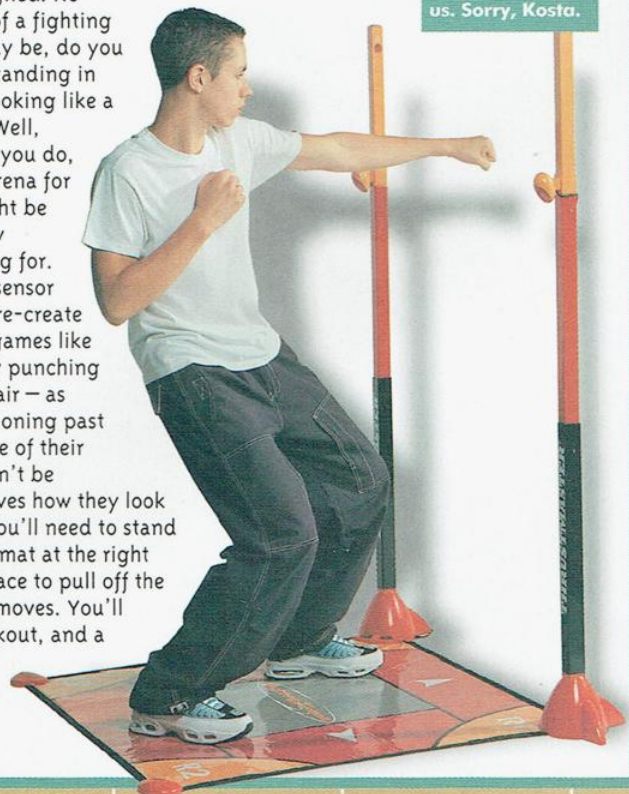
**Thrustmaster**

**Available:** Now **Price:** \$199

» Oh, how we laughed. No matter how much of a fighting game freak you may be, do you really want to be standing in your living room looking like a Karate Kid reject? Well, strangely, some of you do, and the Fighting Arena for PSone and PS2 might be the gaming novelty you've been looking for.

A floor mat and sensor poles allow you to re-create fighting moves in games like Tekken, by actually punching and kicking in the air – as long as you're motioning past the sensors. Because of their placement, you won't be performing the moves how they look in the game, and you'll need to stand on the d-pad floor mat at the right time in the right place to pull off the more complicated moves. You'll certainly get a workout, and a good laugh at the same time. Not recommended for serious players.

Kosta took time out to pose for us. Sorry, Kosta.

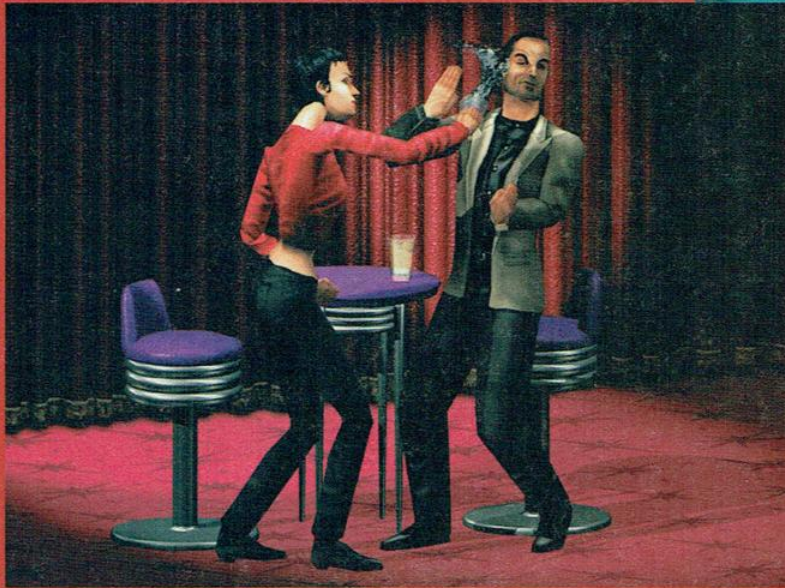
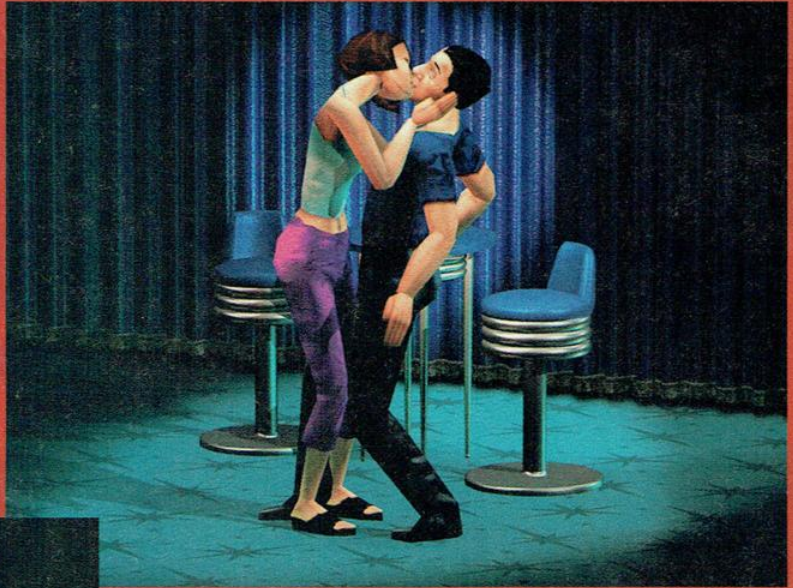




MAXIS



# hot



# NOT!

### Meet and Date Outrageous Characters

- Meet new people and make new friends like The Blonde Bombshell and The Jock.

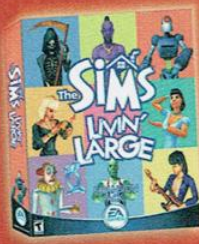
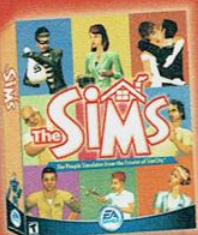
### Create Romance

- Play footsie, blow kisses, gossip about the couple at the next table... whatever it takes to keep the sparks flying.

### Turn Up the Heat

- Help set the mood with new romantic objects including the Cuddle Couch, Love Tub, Picnic Basket and Lover's Swing

## THE NO. 1 PC GAME KEEPS GETTING BETTER!



## Why not date the whole family?



Oh jolly, off for tea with the Queen are we?



# PROJECT GOTHAM RACING



CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >>  
 PUBLISHER: Microsoft >> AVAILABLE: March 2002

WOW-O-METER



**BIZARRE CREATIONS**, the guys behind Metropolis Street Racing on Dreamcast, let us in on their upcoming Xbox racer.

**HYPER:** So how did Project Gotham for Xbox come about after MSR?

It was something that we wanted to do after MSR — we thought about where we could take the idea and the cities, and where the game should go. When we met up with Microsoft, it wasn't something that we'd initially thought to do on Xbox. We really interrogated them about the console, their plans and how they were going to break into the console market. They really impressed us with their planning and strategies, and it all really developed from there.

On Xbox, we've been able to code a brand new complex 3-D, four-wheel dynamics and physics engine. We've tried to give a playable balance between realism and playability. It's easy to get going without smashing into everything,

but it's still sim-like in the way that you've got to learn how to master the car.

**HYPER:** Is the essence of the game the same as in MSR on Dreamcast?

Yes, the main idea of the game is the Kudos. It's this that you have to gain to progress, and it's this that is your best measure of performance in the game. You can gain Kudos in a number of ways. You're rewarded for your skill (e.g. beating the opponents) but also for your style. And on top of this, you can set your own goals in the game — reduce the goals as low as you can to gamble to earn more Kudos!

You don't just get points for power slides; you can earn it in a whole host of ways. From daring overtakes, getting onto two wheels, jumping the car, doing 'donuts' to avoiding damage with clean sections

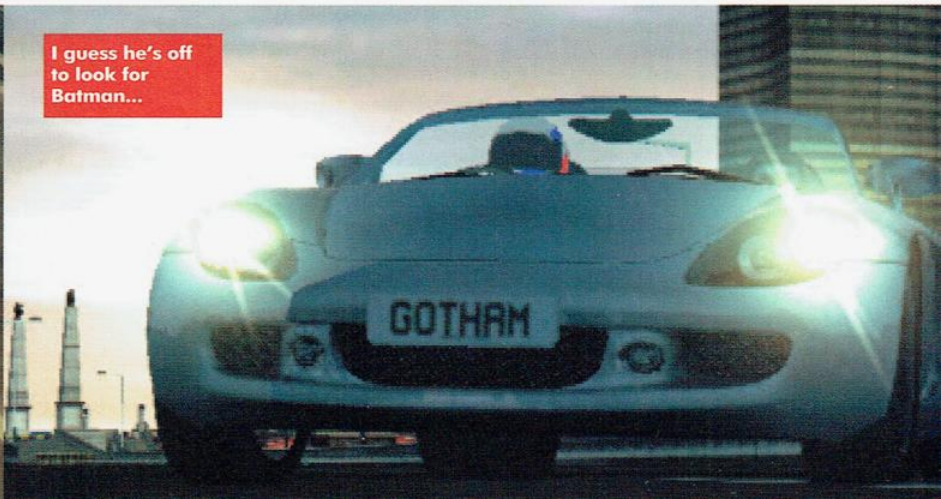
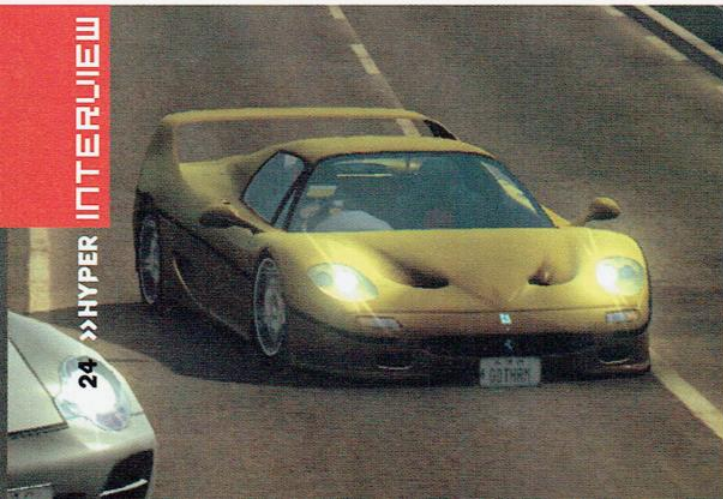
— you'll get rewarded for it all.

The game has different modes to suit all players. There's a Quick Race mode that allows you to pick up and play, Ridge Racer style. There's an Arcade Race in true Gotham style, where you've got to earn Kudos to progress. There's a Time Attack where you get to post your fastest laps for people to challenge against. And then there's the main Kudos Challenge part of the game, where it's all out to earn Kudos, win the cars and beat the game!

There's street races, one-on-ones, Kudos races, hotlaps, car-passing challenges, time-attacks — loads of different races to get your teeth into.

**HYPER:** So is it fair to say that Project Gotham is just MSR 2?

We've taken the spirit of MSR, and built it into a game with what we hope will be a broader and more polished appeal. We had a lot of feedback from MSR fans, and from those who didn't get on with the game — from magazines, websites and e-mails. We've paid a lot of attention to them, and tried to address all of the issues. Many of the e-mails echoed things that we would have done ourselves (such as car damage) had time and licensing allowed.



I guess he's off to look for Batman...





Such disrespect for such an upstanding cone.

Brrrooom, vroooooom, nnyyyyyrrrrrrrow.



### TURN UP YOUR RADIO

❖ All the music included with Gotham is licensed from a variety of artists. There are too many to list – over 80 tracks in the game from over 50 artists – but here's a few of the biggies:

- The Chemical Brothers
- LA Symphony
- Angie Martinez
- David Lee Roth
- Placebo
- Stereo MC's
- Gorillaz.

The main thing we've learnt is "feedback". The players need to know the consequences of what they're doing immediately. When they lower the goals before a race, they need to know how much extra Kudos they could get. When they weave through a set of cone gates, they need to see the Kudos adding up as they go. The game will now give rewards rather than penalising for mistakes, and we hope that it'll be adaptable enough for all standards of players, rather than just the most skilled!

**HYPHER:** How detailed is car damage? Can you crash, drive and generally do what you want in the cars?

The crash damage is visually quite realistic, and we're really pleased to be able to include it. The only real proviso is that no harm can come to

the driver – which wouldn't be very helpful in the gameplay anyway! You can now do pretty much anything with the car that you could in real life – the manufacturers are happy to have the cars leave the ground now, so you can jump, get onto two wheels, etc.

If you crash, the cars will crumple on the front, back and sides. If you scrape the walls, you'll scratch your paintwork. Scrape really hard and you risk losing your wing-mirrors too. Hit the nose or tail of the car hard, and you'll pop up and crease the hood or trunk. And at night, where the car headlights are lighting up the road in real-time, if you smash any lights, you'll really notice a difference!

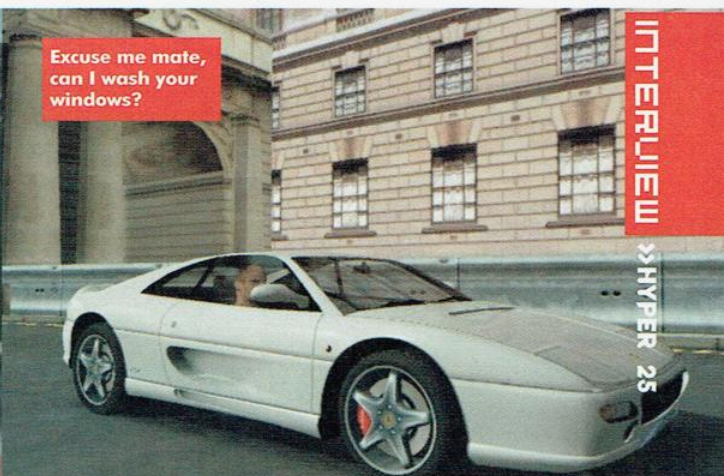
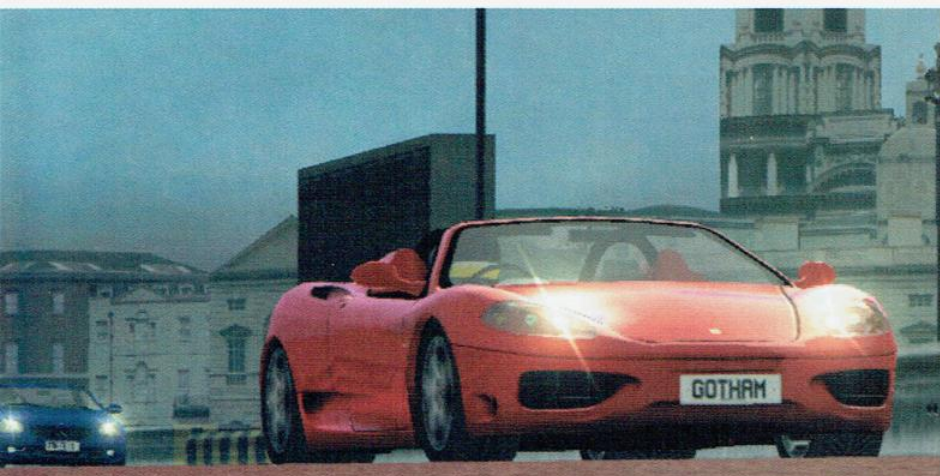
**HYPHER:** What are your thoughts on the Xbox?

Xbox is a great console to develop

for, and that's essential. The architecture is simple and flexible, which means that developers can get going on it quickly, but it still allows enough 'under the hood' to do clever tricks to increase performance. This is one of its great advantages – like the original PlayStation, the development environment is simple, easy to get going on, but with plenty to master.

Microsoft has spent a lot of time and effort in making sure they do it right. It would be easy to fall back on their good name, but they've tried to make sure that they don't just rest on their software laurels.

They're aiming the console at the wider audience, as well as the hardcore gamers, and are signing up the games that will deliver, in all territories. We're looking forward to seeing the results of all this planning! ❖❖



Excuse me mate, can I wash your windows?



Look sir! The hula-hoop clan is attacking!

# MYTH III - THE WOLF AGE

>> **PC** **CATEGORY:** Strategy >> **PLAYERS:** 1-Multi >> **WOW-O-METER**  
**PUBLISHER:** Take 2 >> **AVAILABLE:** Late November



Clean this mess up boys, or no dessert for you.

**F**or those of you who weren't aware, Microsoft snapped up Bungie in what was an apparent effort to make sure Halo was exclusive to Xbox. Besides angering some Mac-fanatics, this concerned a collection of strategy gamers who had grown to love Bungie's medieval 3D strategy phenomenon, Myth. The first two instalments of Myth saw 2D sprites duking it out on a 3D battlefield, featuring not only excellent visuals, but also some seriously impressive physics for the time. Thankfully, Myth III is still coming to the PC and Mac.

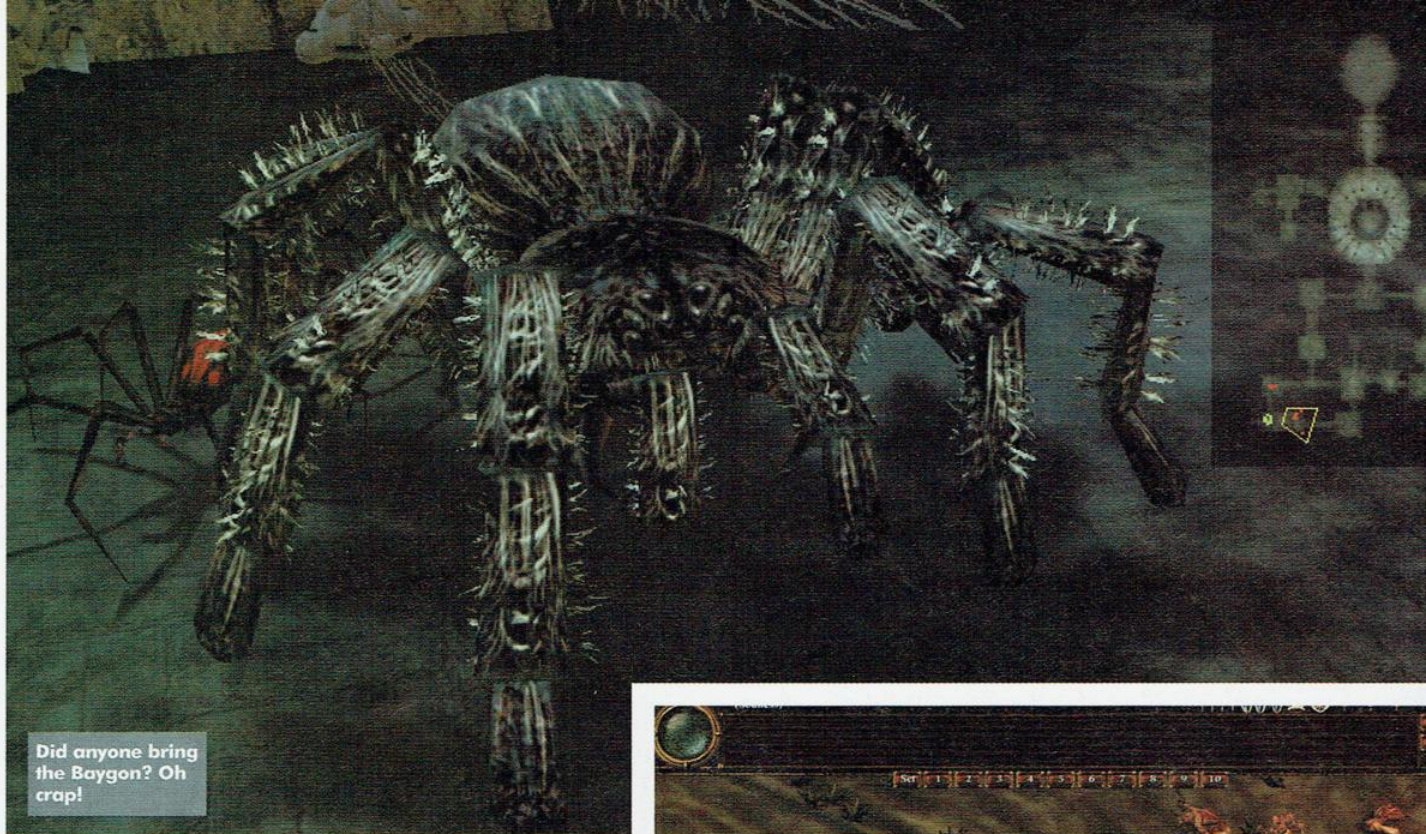
**MUMBO JUMBO**  
 Actually, Myth — The Fallen Lords was the first 3D real time strategy game out there, which was a bit of a slap in the face for RTS giants such as Westwood and Blizzard. Myth also stood out by being a RTS game that didn't involve resource management of unit production. Instead it focused on manoeuvring your troops into strategic positions, choosing formations and basically dealing with things as military

commanders had to back in the day. Well, the Myth series lives on, as Take 2 grabbed the publishing rights a while back, putting the new development team Mumbo Jumbo to work on the first totally 3D game in the series, Myth III — The Wolf Age. This time we're looking at a prequel, set around 1,000 years before Myth — The Fallen Lords. As you progress through the game you'll unravel the tale of Connacht the Wolf, a legendary hero who works to unite forces against the Myrkridia who are essentially destroying all in their wake. Fans of the series will get a buzz out of using some of the characters whom end up becoming the Fallen Lords in Myth I, long before they wind up becoming malevolent end-of-game-bosses. To take the series into full 3D, Mumbo Jumbo took the existing Myth II engine, worked some of the unit designs from Myth I & II into 3D models, along with their new additions to go along with the storyline of their first chapter in the saga. The difference is quite

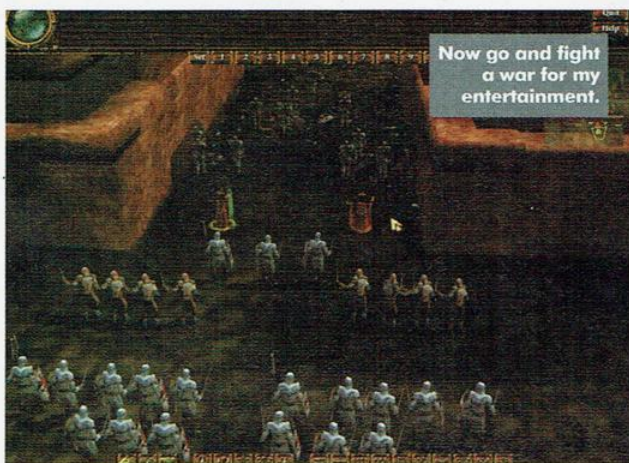
impressive, with monsters and champions alike both looking more life-like and realistic, but it's the little things like seeing the models of the trees swaying in the wind that make this one really stand out from its predecessors in terms of visuals.

**FEAR AND LOATHING**  
 On the matter of the 3D units, they utilise the Tiki character animation system, which many readers may have seen put to use in American McGee's Alice. In English, this will help convey a sense of interaction between the units and the environment. Also, those of you that recall the pixelisation that came with zooming in to take a closer look





Did anyone bring the Baygon? Oh crap!



Now go and fight a war for my entertainment.



That's what you get in small towns...

at things in the first two games can forget all that, as having an entirely 3D engine has allowed the developers to include more detailed textures, so zooming in actually shows you more detail now, rather than less.

Those worried that having a new developer will lead to a bunch of unnecessary changes to the control system and general gameplay need not worry, as Mumbo Jumbo have basically just taken the existing mechanics, and stuffed them into a more capable graphics engine. Besides that, you're looking at more units, some totally new, while others are variations on the existing races and units, creating more diverse forces. About the only thing that has changed in what could be called a "minimising" way would be having three difficulty settings, rather than five.

Amongst the new treats in store are a variety of giant spiders, ranging from the ma-szied, through

to "We're gonna need a bigger can of Baygon" sized black tarantulas, which would give any arachnophobe a few sleepless nights. The humanoid races also vary heavily in size, with the Trow (nasty race of giants) and Oghre towering over the humans and dwarves.

Myth III will ship on PC and Mac, and shall include "Vengeance", the new map/scenario editor, which replaces Fear and Loathing from Myth II, to account for the new engine. Expect to see lots of user made maps floating around shortly after the game's release, although Bungie.net won't be the place to look, as Myth III's online play will be hosted elsewhere.

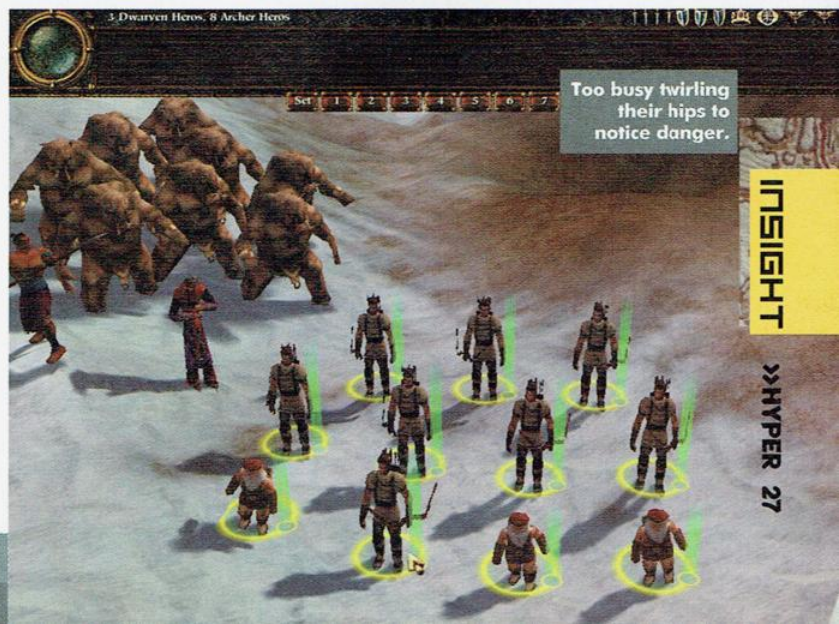
Assuming things stay on schedule, Myth III: The Wolf Age might just scrape into next issue for a full review, although as this is Mumbo Jumbo's first project as a team, and with an online gaming service to get going in place of Bungie.net, we're not holding our breath. <<<

**WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:**

A big pile of cash on our desks in the morning. Oh, that's not really relevant is it.



Too busy twirling their hips to notice danger.



INSIGHT

>>> HYPER 27

# TOMB RAIDER: Next Generation

» PS2 / PC / XBOX

CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1 >>  
PUBLISHER: Eidos >> AVAILABLE: 2002 >>

**STEVE POLAK** caught up with one of the key creative figures behind the Tomb Raider phenomenon, Core Operations Director **Adrian Smith**, for the low-down on the brand-new Lara due sometime in 2002.

**HYPER:** Lara obviously survived the last game to fight again, so tell us what has happened since *The Last Revelation*.

**Adrian Smith:** Lara got through a near-death experience and we see things changing for her. In this new game she is put in a situation which is very alien for her. She will have to pit her wits against something very different compared to what she has been challenged with in the past. We wanted to go for something a little more mature; a little darker and a little bit deeper.

**HYPER:** So... smaller breasts then?

**AS:** (Laughs) She is certainly better defined, but there is a lot that is different. We have gone to great lengths to give Lara more personality and even the early art and modeling we are doing show enormous promise.

**HYPER:** Can we expect an all-new Tomb Raider in terms of gameplay?

**AS:** We wanted to go in a different direction when looking at the previous

## WOW-O-METER

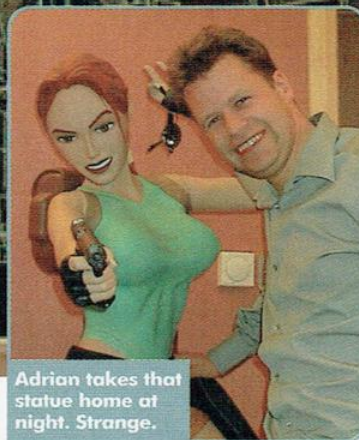


versions of the game which we have been developing for over 6 years now. We wanted to go in a fresh direction rather than just churn out something everyone would expect to see. We have put a lot of thought into this and are very happy with the result. I think it will surprise a few people.

There is more character interaction, other playable characters and the plot is much more involved.

Indeed the story plays a key part in drawing you into the game, much more so than before.

We have written what we call the Tomb Raider 'book' and the next game is only going to represent episode one, with several new episodes planned after that, but these won't be predictable and the narrative will weave its way logically through all of the upcoming episodes so that they feel like they are a part of Lara's life, and not just a few 'tacked on' levels which you get to explore in



Adrian takes that statue home at night. Strange.

a sequel or add on pack.

**HYPER:** Interesting. So there will be different layers of narrative?

**AS:** Certainly not all of the conclusions will be realised in the next game and you'll have to wait until the second or third installment in the new series to see how it plays out. This is a very different approach for us.

**HYPER:** So in more detail... what is Lara's situation at the start of the game?

**AS:** At the start of the game, Lara's character is called into question. We present the player with something different. The situation really is something new, as she has certain accusations leveled at her, and she has to try and clear her name. The adventure is about Lara doing some soul searching and mixing with underworld criminal elements in a way which she hasn't in the past. The game will be set in Paris, an area shrouded in mystery. There are some great dark dingy areas.



## WHAT WE'D LIKE TO SEE:

No more crate pushing. No more jumping from ledge to ledge. Innovation!

**HYPER:** Sounds like the fabled underground catacombs...

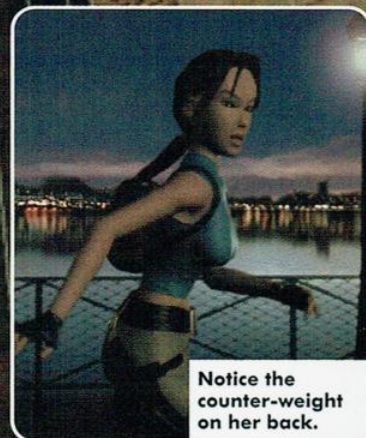
**AS:** (smiles) I'll let you guess. Certainly we will be exploring the myths and some of the more sinister places in the city.

**HYPER:** How will Lara change for the player? Is it just a matter of new artwork?

**AS:** Lara will be more of a personal character who is defined by the way each of us plays her. For example, maybe if I run everywhere she will become faster and this attribute will grow. Maybe if you do other things she will develop skills in these areas. We have tried to take her in new directions to make her a more complete person and less of a more rigidly defined character.

**HYPER:** Thanks for the peek!

*Tomb Raider: Next Generation* (just a working title at this stage) will arrive sometime in 2002 for the Xbox, PS2 and PC. <<<



Notice the counter-weight on her back.



Yes, Lara's back.

# EXPERIENCE THE TRUE MEANING OF THE WORD... EPIC!

EARLY MAN  
25,000 BC

ROBERT THE BRUCE  
1314 AD

GENERAL DE DONOP  
1815 AD

COURAGEOUS TWELVE  
1918 AD

THE NANOWAR  
2150 AD



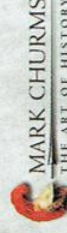
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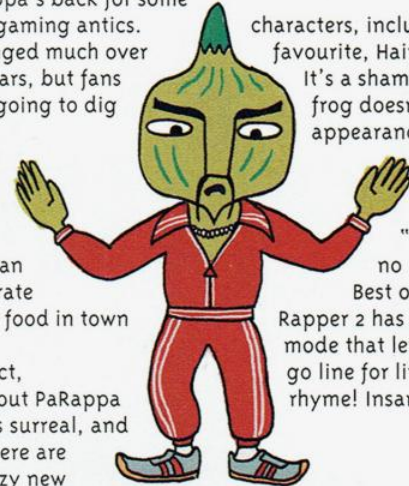


# PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2

**PS2** CATEGORY: Acid sim >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Sony >> AVAILABLE: March 2002

**I**t's out in Japan, we have it and we love it. Yes, PaRappa's back for some more hip hop gaming antics. He hasn't changed much over the last few years, but fans are definitely going to dig it — after all, what other game could possibly have a storyline based around an evil conglomerate turning all the food in town into noodles? As you'd expect, everything about PaRappa the Rapper 2 is surreal, and very funky. There are some truly crazy new

## WOW-O-METER



characters, including our personal favourite, Hairdresser Octopus. It's a shame that the rasta frog doesn't make a return appearance, but Chop Chop Master Onion is back, and giving lessons in "romantic karate" no less! Best of all, PaRappa Rapper 2 has a new two-player mode that lets you and a friend go line for line, rhyme for rhyme! Insane...



Got any pills?

Ac-ceed, ac-ceed!

# RESIDENT EVIL

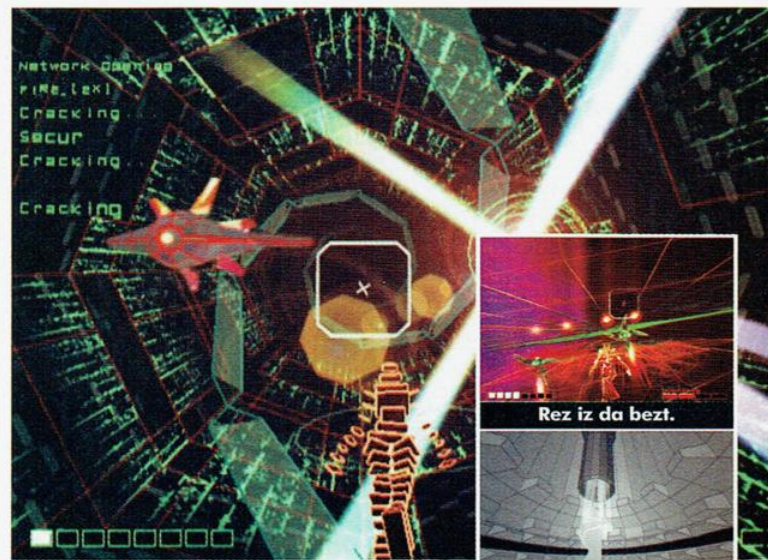
**GCN** CATEGORY: Survival Horror >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Capcom >> AVAILABLE: TBA

**A**s we reported last issue, the Resident Evil series is moving wholesale to GameCube. Yes, one of the goriest, most pants-wettingest series' of all time is now a Nintendo exclusive... and we have the screenshots to prove it! This is a huge undertaking for Capcom, as they're remaking every single previous RE title in order, leading up to the all new RE 4 and RE Zero.

Seeing the light of day in Japan in March, the first game is looking amazing. Although it's a remake (well, "Director's Cut" technically), this still affords Capcom a lot of room

for improvements. For instance, they're revamping the controls and combining the usual high res pre-rendered backgrounds with some stunningly atmospheric real-time shadow, lighting and reflection effects. Plus, after a five-year break from the series, RE's creator Shinji Mikami is back at the helm of the GCN titles. Considering what he's done with Devil May Cry, the series is definitely in good hands.

## WOW-O-METER



# REZ

**PS2** CATEGORY: Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Sega >> AVAILABLE: TBA

**O**ne of the most innovative designers working in gaming today is undoubtedly Tetsuya Mizuguchi. After bringing Ulala and the kinky Space Channel 5 into the world, his next project for PS2 looks to take an even bigger step into an abstract world of music and gaming. In fact, his chief inspiration for Rez is capturing the vibe at the peak of a night out clubbing... what better muse there could be we don't know!

The setting is in cyber-space, in a system so badly corrupted by viruses that the world has been reduced to a wireframe existence. Your mission, obviously, is to defeat the viruses and bring order to the

gameworld. Rez is, in many ways, the next evolution of the shooter genre. The gameplay is simple, but it makes manipulating the sights and sounds of the game integral to the experience. Indeed, everything you do has a musical and visual accompaniment. As you progress through a level, you capture sounds making the music evolve and build, and the gameworld becomes a little more solid. Much of the depth in the gameplay will come from timing your attacks and moves to add to the music. Rez is going to be a pumping, trance-inducing experience like no other.

## WOW-O-METER



Alone in the dark. Again.

INSIGHT

HYPERTHINK

ESCAPE THE  
HUMAN ZOO  
BUILD YOUR OWN



# ZOO TYCOON

From controlling a rogue elephant to controlling unruly zoo staff, the challenge is yours. Find out what it means to be a Zoo Tycoon - turn a profit with 40 different types of animals, each with their own personalities and challenges. Build enclosures, feed animals, feed customers and pay your staff - all while keeping your ultimate zoo creation looking great. Zoo Tycoon - the only PC game that will bring out your animal instincts.

[www.microsoft.com/games/zootycoon](http://www.microsoft.com/games/zootycoon) **Microsoft**

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# WIN

ENTRIES CLOSE JANUARY 1ST

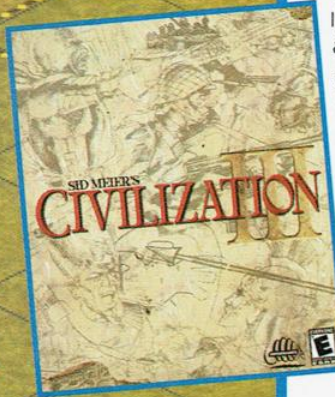
## WIN CIVILIZATION III

If you're looking at locking yourself away these Christmas holidays for some serious gaming, we heartily recommend you devote this precious time to a game as epic and rewarding as Civilization III. Sid Meier's classic series just got one step closer to total gaming nirvana. If you'd like to win one of five copies we have to give away, then answer us this question:

FOR PC

Name another game by Sid Meier.

Put your answer, along with your name and address, on the back of an envelope and send it to: **Civilised Gaming, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**



## WIN BURNOUT!

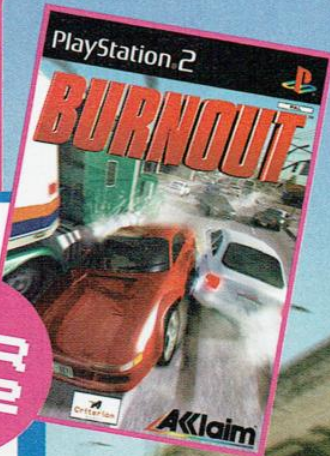
If you've ever wanted to play chicken with oncoming traffic, then we recommend you restrict that kind of behaviour to videogames. Burnout is the perfect game to satisfy your maniacal driving urges, as it actually rewards you for being the worst (or is that best?) driver on the road!

We have five copies of this great game and five Burnout t-shirts to give away to some lucky folk who can answer the following question:

Name another Acclaim racing game.

Put your answer on the back of an envelope and post it to: **Burnout Bounty, Hyper, 78 Renwick St, Redfern, NSW 2016.**

FOR PS2



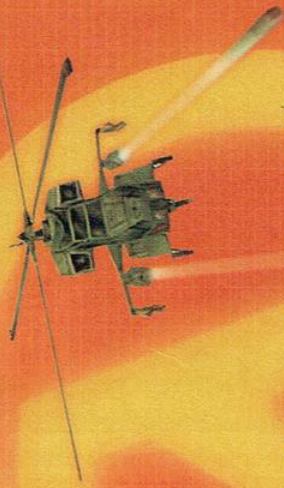


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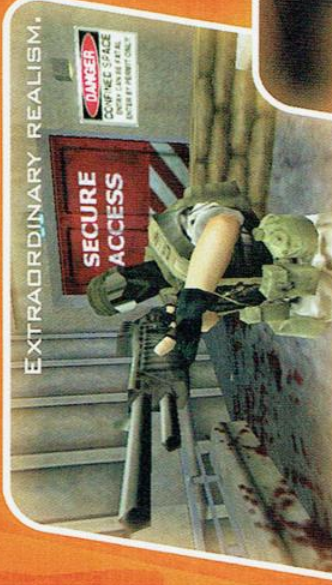
AN EXCLUSIVE NEW SPLIT-SCREEN COOPERATIVE GAME.



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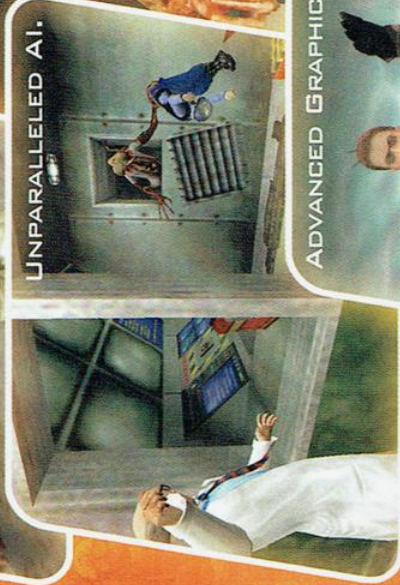
EXTRAORDINARY REALISM.



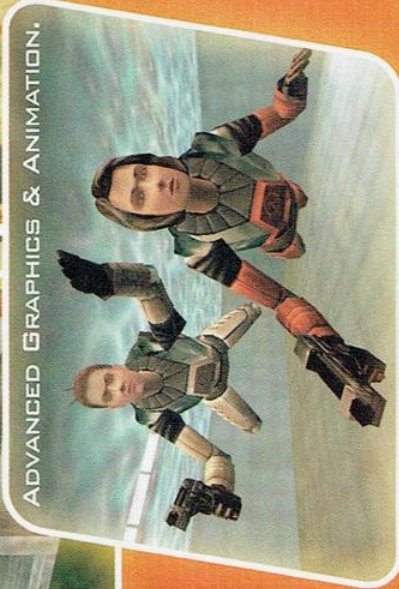
INCREDIBLE ACTION.



UNPARALLELED AI.



ADVANCED GRAPHICS & ANIMATION.



"The 'best action game ever made' gets even better on the PS2®"  
— Electronic Gaming Monthly



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# TERRA

DAVID WILGOOS

## Neverwinter Nights

[WWW.NEWWINTERNIGHTS.COM](http://WWW.NEWWINTERNIGHTS.COM)

Some years ago, before the original Baldur's Gate was even a twinkle in their eye, Bioware founders Greg Zeschuk and Ray Muzyka pitched a demo to Interplay. It was called Battleground Infinity, and was a computer roleplaying game that tried to replicate the experience of pen & paper roleplaying. Interplay liked it so much, it invited the fledgling developer to work on a mech combat title to be known as Shattered Steel. Soon though, Bioware would get its chance to create that RPG both Greg and Ray had always wanted to make.

After the extraordinary success of the Baldur's Gate series — titles which are largely responsible for the current roleplaying renaissance after years in the doldrums — Bioware plans to bring the ultimate game of Dungeons & Dragons to your PC. If all goes according to plan, Neverwinter Nights will herald the next revolution in roleplaying.

**BEWARE THE DUNGEON MASTER**  
What's the major difference between

a computer RPG and a pen & paper RPG? No, it's not the quantity of Mountain Dew. It's the Dungeon Master — or rather, the lack of a DM in computer RPGs. This one factor has a huge effect on the way the game is played. In a CRPG, you must follow the story as laid out for you by the game's designer; there's no room to diverge from this predefined path, and events always happen in the same order, in the same locations and at the same time. In a PnP RPG, the DM works in realtime, constantly monitoring the players' progress and making it all up as it goes along. Sure, he's probably prepared a series of events for the players to encounter, but he can easily tweak and tailor them depending on how the players respond. It's this experience that Bioware hopes Neverwinter Nights will bring to CPRGs.

The game will ship with an official campaign that can be played through in either single or multiplayer. In accordance to Bioware convention, which states that all its games must be longer



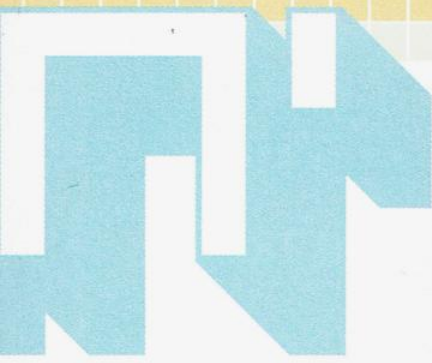
than is humanly possible to complete, the campaign will consist of up to 30 modules and allegedly provide almost 100 hours of play. Let it never be said Bioware is a company that skimps on its customers.

Then there's the Neverwinter Toolset. This allows for the creation of player-made modules and campaigns. You can do anything — build the world using the existing tilesets (or design your own), populate it with monsters to slay and non-player characters to interact with, treasure to plunder, and countless quests to accomplish. Once complete, your module can be distributed via the Internet amongst other NWN players to enjoy on their



own or venture through together.

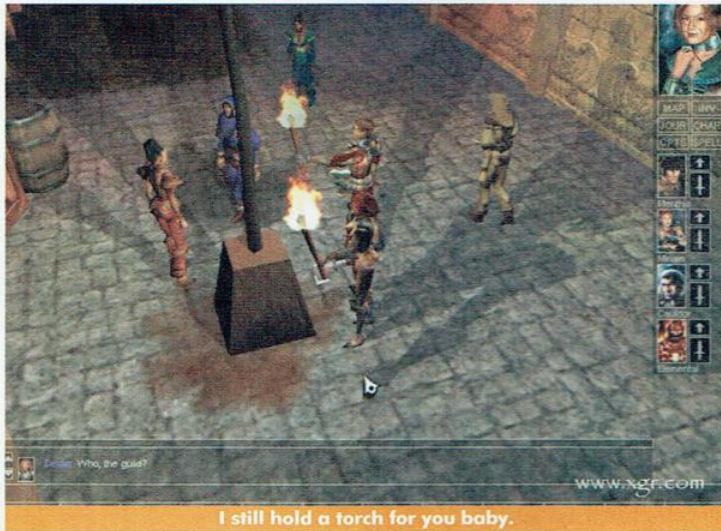
But the real meat of the package is the Dungeon Master role. Here you can take your existing module and invite a group of friends to play through while you play as the DM. While monitoring their progress, you can alter the adventure accordingly. Add some monsters here, adjust the behaviour of other creatures there, slip into the role of an NPC and speak to the party in realtime, or even create whole new quests in response to an unexpected action from a particular player. It's also possible to prepare individual encounters (detailing which monsters, characters, treasure and dialogue will feature) for use at any time during the game.



Roast spider for dinner again?



Bridging RPGs and online gaming.



I still hold a torch for you baby.

### MILLIONS OF GEEKS

With this realtime aspect, one might imagine the Dungeon Master struggling to keep pace with his players as he fumbles through various icons and menus. However, Bioware has an elegant solution. The Dungeon Master interface has been designed as an extension of the singleplayer one, keeping the same presentation

style only far more powerful. And that's not to mention the capacity to have multiple DMs running a game co-operatively (or, who knows, maybe even competitively!).

In addition, this means it shouldn't take much adjustment to progress from player to DM. The real question is whether you'll have the imagination to pull it off.

Incidentally, one facet of the interface will enable private messages to be sent between party members and/or the DM — perfect for a little intra-party conspiracy.

Upon release, Bioware plans to have a dedicated match-up service in operation to bring together NWN players worldwide. Of course, you can also set up your own servers to host games. The number of players it expects to be able to support per server is a remarkable 64. And even this could increase thanks to the use of portals that connect servers, allowing players to journey between different worlds on different servers while still participating in the same game.

All this means, is that when Neverwinter Nights is released next year (sorry, there's no fixed date at this stage), the Internet will grind to a halt under the weight of millions of geeks injecting a little bit of fantasy into their otherwise mundane lives. What do you mean it's already like that? ☘☘



Between a rock and a hard place, I guess.

## Neverwinter Nodes

Already, several websites have begun posting tutorials written by members of the Bioware team on how to use the various editing tools that will come with Neverwinter Nights. Check them out.

### Neverwinter Nights Adventure Creation Guide

The first part was posted in March this year, but it's now up to part five. <http://www.gamespy.com/articles/march01/neverwinter1/>

### Neverwinter Haven

This fan site has a host of guides on how to build objects for use in the game. [http://www.neverwinterhaven.com/tutorials/tutorial\\_3D\\_1000.phtml](http://www.neverwinterhaven.com/tutorials/tutorial_3D_1000.phtml)

### DM and Module Resources

Neverwinter Vault takes you through the basics (and not so basics) of writing and compiling your own modules. <http://nwnvault.ign.com/modules/wydratz/tutorials.shtml>



Oh how we love the internet.



**AGATA BUDINSKA**

» Microsoft have really made use of their marketing department recently,

getting some good and some not so good publicity thrown their way. We saw the launch of Windows XP – the next upgrade for Windows users which doesn't smack "dated" on its box. According to The Australian, Microsoft will be spending \$2 billion to convince us all we want to use XP – part of that we might assume goes to paying for the rights to Madonna's "Ray of Light" that accompanies footage of people happily flying around, presumably 'cause they're all so stoked over XP and what it can do. Having played around with XP only a little, so far it looks like 2000 with a new, prettier shell, and a built in firewall. Ooooooh.

The other bit of publicity came when MSN decided to block visitors to its popular site who weren't using Internet Explorer to view the pages. Anyone using browsers such as Opera would be re-routed to a page advising them to download the latest version of Internet Explorer.

The block, which only effected msn.com (not the Australian ninemsn site) was brief, with Microsoft taking a quick U-turn and restoring the coding so that all could enjoy. Apparently, the redirect was put in place because the other browsers would display downgraded content, as they don't meet with Microsoft's high XHTML standards. Opera then claimed that Microsoft didn't conform to World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) international Internet standards, and wackiness ensued. Its all systems go again though, and the minority users of Netscape and Opera can view MSN without too many issues.

The last bit of advertising, is the sidewalk spray paint job for the Xbox (think late 90's doof) that have been popping up in major centres. A fluo green X inside a black box is all that we get, designed to intrigue us to find out more about it. This same form of advertising was also used by Sony to hype up the PS2 months before its release. Ambiguous ads have also just started to be played on prime time TV.

The way I see it, they really didn't learn that going for a monopoly isn't good for a company's image – and even after the US courts ruled that Microsoft holds a monopoly position with Intel PC Operating Systems...

Discourse, flames, opinions to: budinska@another.com

## LINKS



### EPISODE II TRAILER

<http://www.starwars.com/episode-ii/>

» Every now and then, something on the internet just goes a little nuts, and before you know it, the whole web slows to a crawl because millions of people are trying to download the same thing. You may have noticed that three trailers for Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones were released this month. You didn't? What rock do you live under? Go now!

Mmmm... judge me by my CGI do you? CGI not make a Jedi great!



### WHEN I AM KING

<http://www.demian5.com/>

» Demian 5 has put together quite an awesome little online comic - "When I Am King". The artwork is simple but stylish, and Demian has employed some very cool techniques in laying out the various chapters and telling the bizarre story. Funky.



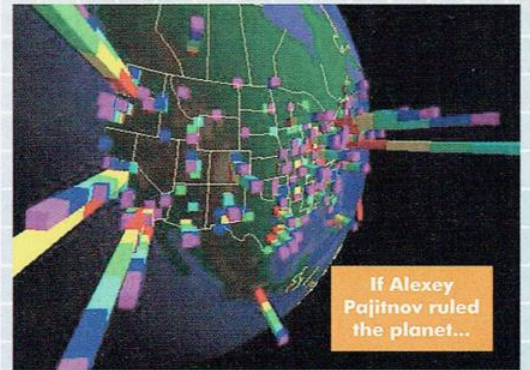
It does take a while to read though, but it's zany all the way.

## "KILL THE TRAITOR,"

### HEAVY INDUSTRIES

<http://www.yhchang.com/>

» YoUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES PRESENTS is the name of the site, and the best way to describe it is as 'stream of consciousness beatnik poetry from a Korean perspective'. Presented in Flash and minimal as all hell, the rants are stylishly presented and set to a backdrop of freeform jazz from artists like Thelonius Monk, Duke Ellington, and Miles Davis. Unique. Warning: Some of the language is fairly adult.



If Alexey Pajitnov ruled the planet...

### CYBER-GEOGRAPHY

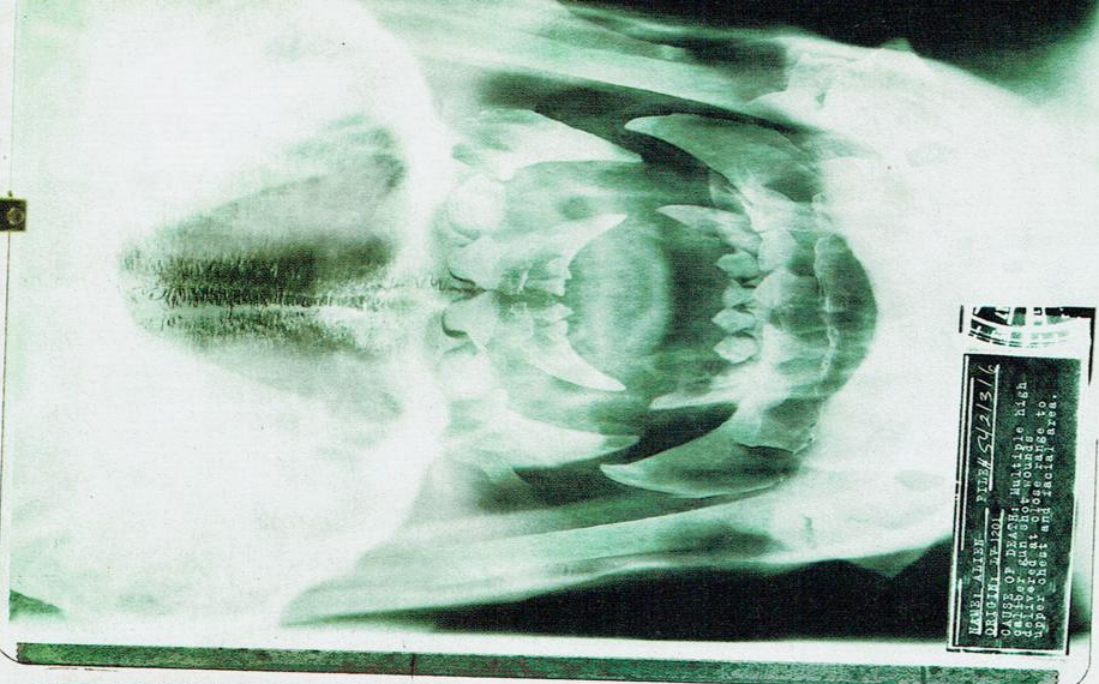
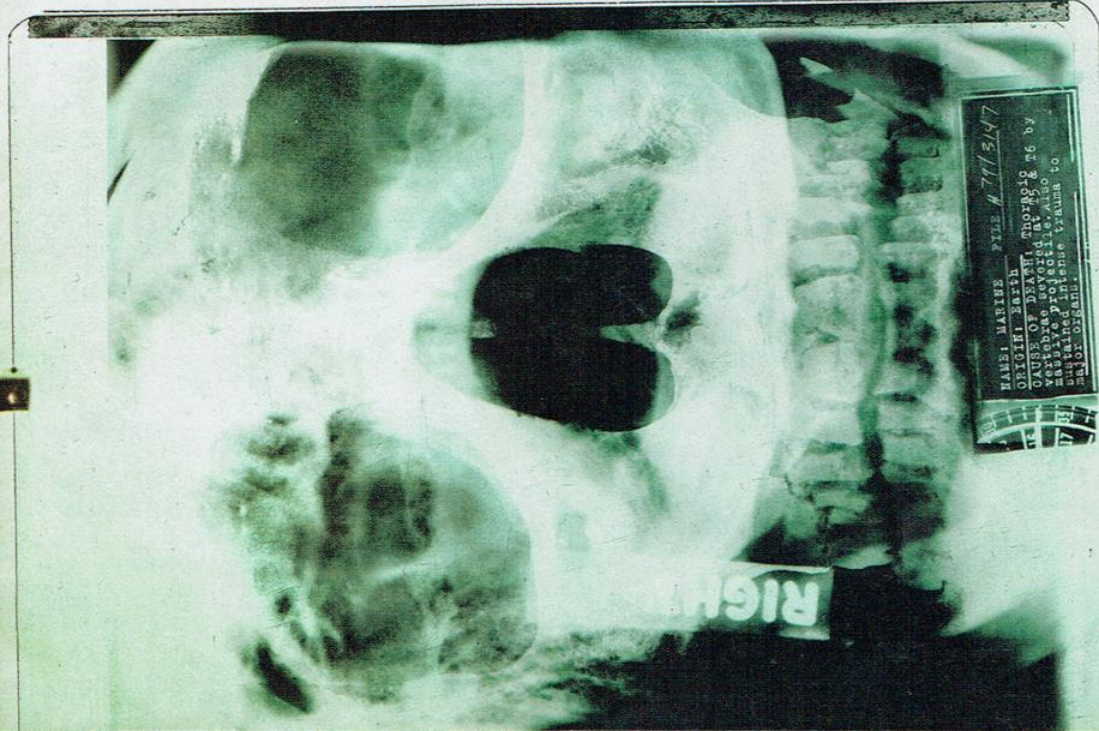
<http://www.cybergeography.org/atlas/>

» This site features an eclectic collection of research from around the globe, concerned with graphically mapping the new digital frontiers. It's an atlas of cyberspaces, and has everything from early maps of ARPANET, to the land of Britannia (Ultima Online), to 3D visualisations of the web, to the structure of Usenet groups, to "The Internet Genome Project", and "The Anatomy Of A Linux System".

Recognize your mortality.

# ALIENS 2 VERSUS PREDATOR™

the evolution of fear



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Kill or be killed as three different species. Alien. Predator. Human. Each with new weapons and capabilities in a single story/line told from three perspectives. Intense PC action. Graphically accurate environments. Blinking just became a liability.



<http://sierrastudios.com/games/aliens/predator2/>

# THE LORD OF THE RINGS

## THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING



OUR FRIENDS ENTRUSTED WITH DESTROYING THE DREADED ONE RING INCLUDE HUMANS, HOBBITS, A DWARF AND AN ELF! NEED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT WHO THESE MYSTERIOUS ADVENTURERS ARE AND HOW THEY FIT INTO THE FELLOWSHIP?

### MEET THE FELLOWSHIP

#### **GANDALF THE GREY**

(Istari/Wizard)

Played by *Ian McKellan*

■ The mysterious, wise and powerful wizard, Gandalf, is the only one who knows the full history of Sauron, the One Ring, and how to destroy it. He is the fellowship's leader and guide, and his magic saves the lives of the party on more than one occasion.

# RINGS

## THE RING

**BEHIND THE MAGIC OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING, WITH WETA DIGITAL'S OWN GANDALF, JIM RYGIEL.**



**“ONE** ring to rule them all, One ring to find them. One ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them”. The moment Lord of the Rings fans heard those words uttered by Ian McKellen’s Gandalf in the first teaser trailer, the hype over this new film trilogy reached its zenith. The teaser rapidly became the most-downloaded movie trailer in history, surpassing even that of the debut of the *Star Wars: Episode One* teaser in 1998. Here was the reality of director Peter Jackson and New Line Cinema’s commitment to bringing the land of Middle Earth to the big screen. Gandalf was real. Of course, he’d always been real to the fans captivated with Tolkien’s magical words, but now he was living, breathing and staring into the eyes of a very frightened Frodo Baggins, played by Elijah Wood. Middle Earth had come to life indeed, and in a most convincing and captivating way.

The responsibility of realising three epic fantasy books, books that already manage to transport the reader very vividly into their world, was not to be taken lightly by Jackson and his team. There was an effort from day one to make Tolkien’s Middle Earth as real and believable as possible. The natural landscape of New Zealand, from grassy plains to snow-capped mountains, was perfect for the lands of the Shire, Gondor and the forest of Lothlorien, but the sets created by a remarkable crew were just as rooted in the real world. Hobbiton’s hobbit holes, set into the sides of hills, appeared to have materialised straight out of Tolkien’s own sketches – even the actors reported getting goosebumps walking onto the set.

However, once as much physical trickery as possible has been shoved down the lens of the camera, the crucial components of making us really believe what we’re seeing is in

### MEET THE FELLOWSHIP

#### **PIPPIN TOOK** (Hobbit)

Played by **Billy Boyd**

■ A mischievous and young Hobbit, Peregrin “Pippin” Took innocently agrees to help Frodo move from the Shire, unwittingly becoming part of the Fellowship.

the hands of WETA Digital, the effects house owned by director Peter Jackson. To find out a little bit of the behind the scenes blood, sweat and polygons, we spoke with Visual Effects Supervisor for *Lord of the Rings*, Jim Rygiel, direct from his office in Middle Earth... sorry, New Zealand.

**HYPER:** Jim, we just noticed on your bio that you worked on that classic 80’s movie, *The Last Starfighter* (a film in which a guy who is good at videogames saves the planet with his elite gaming skills)! Was that your first feature film?

**Jim Rygiel:** Heh, yeah that was one of my first big jobs actually. There wasn’t a lot of computer animation being done at that time. I mean, *TRON* was kind of the first CG film, but then *The Last Starfighter* was the first film where they did entire realistic looking ships in CG. So...Yeah it was my first film.

**HYPER:** So, do you have any interest in videogames these days?

**JR:** I’m a little busy now... so, not as much as I’d want to. We have Doom and Quake here online, so we all get together on Friday nights... Y’know, to release the pressure!

**HYPER:** How then did you get your start in the industry?

**JR:** I hate to say it, but I guess just kind of lucked out. There was no such thing as digital effects when I got started. I graduated from art school, and I was semi-interested in

**"MY SAME PHILOSOPHY APPLIED TO DIGITAL EFFECTS AS TO THE OVERALL DESIGN. I WANTED THE MONSTERS TO FEEL REAL RIGHT DOWN TO THE DIRT UNDER THE FINGERNAILS OF A CAVE TROLL OR THE BLOODSHOT, BULGING EYES OF GOLLUM." – PETER JACKSON**

computers, even though there weren't a lot of computers at the time. I think IBM was just coming out with their first home PC. There were no programs — no Photoshop, no Maya — nothing. The first program I worked on was a software program built for the CIA to visualise nuclear bomb testing! A program called Synthavision.

Basically, it lost its security clearance and they were trying to sell it as a product... one company bought it and said, "we could try to do some neat graphics with this thing!" That was the first program I used, and to just build a sphere, you had to draw it on graph paper and plot it out. You had to sit down and calculate what the radius was on graph paper and actually type those co-ordinates in by hand on a keyboard! Then if you wanted to animate that sphere, you'd have to draw the path on graph paper and at each intersection, you'd have to write the X & Y co-ordinates for each frame and type that into the computer (laughs). Frame by frame. It progressed very quickly though... now we use Maya for animation and effects and scene set-ups and then do all our rendering with Renderman.

**HYPER:** Have you seen much of the quality of animation in the games out there these days?

**JR:** Yeah, it's cool. Someone showed me this game called Molotov — you know that game? I think it was banned in the US, it's a creepy game where you throw molotov cocktails at people and they run around on fire. But the animation is amazing in it! It's pretty cool.

**HYPER:** Well, *Fellowship of the Ring* is in the bag now; so what has exceeded your expectations in terms of the visual effects?

**JR:** Well, the interesting thing about this film, compared to any other show that I've done that you can easily categorise — like, my last "CG" show, *102 Dalmatians*... where I knew I was gonna do 30 shots with

CG dogs and 300 shots where I had to remove spots off the dog — this film however, is the cornucopia of effects. Every sequence and shot just has every sort of CG character, bluescreen miniature, live action... it's just constantly all over the place and it's interesting because you can't really focus on whether the thing is real or not... you don't end up looking at it and saying, "oh, this is the CG this or that", because it keeps changing so much, you tend to just think about the story more than anything.

**HYPER:** Well, it's a big challenge visualising Tolkien's words on the big screen. The expectations from fans of the books is huge — do you feel that kind of pressure?

**JR:** Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. You look on the website and everybody's talking about it... "Are they gonna do this?" or, "I hope they do this!" and after people saw the preview at Cannes, everybody said it's very true (to the books) and I think one of the reasons is that the art department had a lot of say. Allan Lee who is in charge of the production design, actually designed a lot of the books. He was the one that actually did a lot of the watercolour illustrations for a lot of the books. So, I can sit with him and say, "what does Bree look like?" or "what's Mordor all about?" and he pretty much knows exactly where everything is. It's good, because it helps you to stick exactly to what everyone thinks of Tolkien. He's doing sketches here daily for us; he's done thousands of sketches already to help us visualise what it should all look like.

**HYPER:** How do you work on *Fellowship of the Ring*?

### MEET THE FELLOWSHIP

**MERRY BRANDYBUCK**  
(Hobbit) - Played by **Dominic Monaghan**

■ The brave Meriadoc "Merry" Brandybuck is a close friend of Frodo's and agrees to join the Fellowship. Gandalf believes the loyalty of a true friend could be greater than the might of a warrior.



(December 26) as well as having *The Two Towers* (December 2002) and *Return of the King* (December 2003) just around the corner? Is it all happening at once?

**JR:** The plan was to start film two (*The Two Towers*) about three months ago, but film one (*Fellowship of the Ring*) just became so huge... and halfway through, Peter Jackson just started adding more shots, so it just made film two unthinkable. We've started shooting elements and things, just getting the ball rolling on it; it is kind of in production already. So yeah, it's a little hectic... you see a little miniature for film two and you're still thinking about film one and you have to kind of put that into your brain about what film two is all about...

**HYPER:** How do you account for improvements in effects over the next couple of years, so that one film doesn't look too wildly

different from the other?

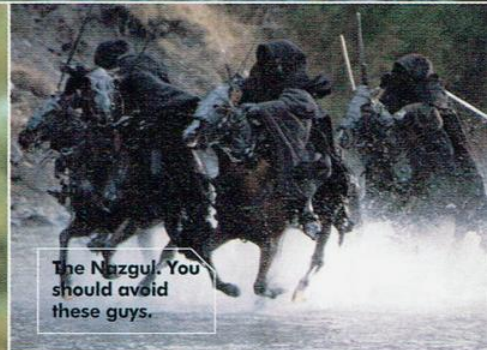
**JR:** Well, it's partly that the films are different amongst themselves... *The Two Towers* is going to have a much darker look from what I'm seeing. Film one, you know, it's the fellowship and you're kind of learning about the guys and you have some kind of happy moments here and there... So it kind of comes and goes in lightheartedness. In film two, it's all about the battles and the downtrodden Rohan and so it does take on a whole other look. I mean, you're going to have Cave Trolls in film two, as we do in film one, but hey, they'll just look better! It's not gonna change that much, because the *Fellowship of the Ring* stuff looks really great. So if anything, for film two we'll just be figuring out better ways to make them move and better ways to use motion capture...

**HYPER:** Of course, we'll get to see Gollum...

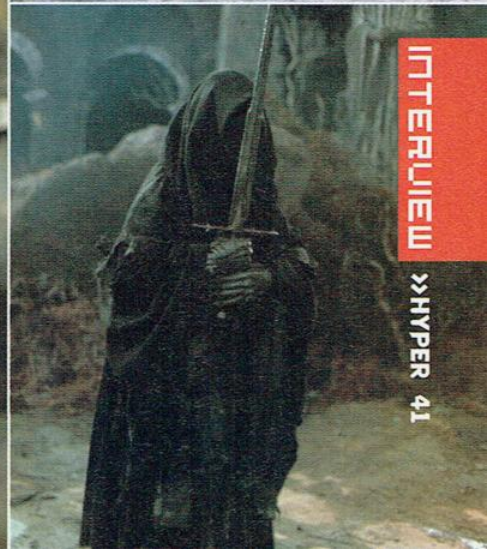




Quick, someone  
get some  
breath mints...



The Nazgûl. You  
should avoid  
these guys.



INTERVIEW

»HYPER 41

**"THIS FILM IS THE CORNUCOPIA OF EFFECTS – EVERY SEQUENCE AND SHOT JUST HAS EVERY SORT OF CG CHARACTER, BLUESCREEN MINIATURE, LIVE ACTION... IT'S JUST CONSTANTLY ALL OVER THE PLACE!" – JIM RYGIEL**

**JR:** Gollum makes a couple of little hints of appearances in *Fellowship of the Ring* – three or five shots or something. He follows them on their journey, so he starts to get introduced. He knows that Frodo has the Ring, so he's kind of tracking them. He's kind of shadowing, and it alludes to him being in film two. Gollum is one technology that is going to have to progress a lot in the next few months, and we're really working heavily on the motion capture, because motion has a lot to do with it. And facial animation and facial capture is what we're gonna start working on now, because it's something we really didn't have to develop that much for *Fellowship*. We have a huge motion capture stage, but we primarily used a program called Massive, which basically creates a lot of the armies in an artificial intelligence sort of way. You can actually build ten thousand Orcs and ten thousand Gondorians and tell the Orcs to go attack the Gondorians and tell the Gondorians to go attack the Orcs and they basically run at each other. An Orc will see a Gondorian and start slashing its sword and if it hits the Gondorian, the Gondorian knows to fall and die and vice versa...

**HYPER:** Sounds almost like you've created an A.I. for a videogame!

**JR:** It's totally A.I.! What's really cool about it, is that it's driven by 300 motion capture cycles. So, you'll have 20 run cycles, 20 walk cycles, 20 slash cycles and 20 die cycles... this program knows to go pick out the bits and bobs from these libraries of different cycles and randomise the behaviour. So it knows if an Orc is running, it needs to choose a different die cycle than if the Orc is just standing there. It has to know how to transition between all

these different cycles, which is the cool part about the whole thing. It does it all automatically, which is great!

**HYPER:** So when you're looking at the shot, and it's all playing out for you, can you go in and change one individual "actor"?

**JR:** Yep, exactly. It's very much like doing a film – we have something called a call sheet, and the call sheet says who's turning up for work that day and what they're going to do...

**HYPER:** ...like, ten thousand Orcs.

**JR:** (Laughs) yeah, ten thousand Orcs – and every one of these guys has a call sheet, so if we don't want the Orc in the lower left hand corner stepping over a rock, you can just take him out of the call sheet, like "don't show up for work today". It's very interesting the way you can direct these guys. You can select a group of guys and on the call sheet say, "today I want you guys to go run down this cliff here and attack these guys". You're basically staging what you want all these guys to do and they'll just go and do it. It's pretty cool.

**HYPER:** You hear about work on the *Star Wars* films with George Lucas, y'know, asking ILM to do something and you just know they're thinking, "how the hell are we going to do that?!" Is it anything like that working with Peter Jackson?

**JR:** Very much so! It's very much like a mini ILM here, in that George Lucas owns ILM and Peter Jackson owns WETA. So he can do very much the same thing. If Peter Jackson had to go to a post-production house saying "I want to add an additional 10 shots and have it done in a month", they would give him a price tag of \$2 million dollars and say "we'll do it, but this is what



Row, row, row your boat. Gently etc.



Gandalf tries a bit of beard trimming.

we're going to need and this is how much money...". He doesn't have to do that here, it's like "okay, I don't care, just do it!" So we all make a mad scramble... (laughs) and it's good and bad, actually, because he can add all these extra shots – I mean he was still cutting the film up until a few weeks ago, which is unheard of. With digital technology, you can, unfortunately to our dismay (laughs), you can actually appease that sort of behaviour. And it's just gonna get easier and easier to do that. Especially now, with Lucas doing digital photography, there's no need to scan stuff. Now we have one little buffer, and we say "oh, we're gonna have to scan all this extra stuff on the scanner", but with digital photography, it's going to be sitting there on the tape or on a disk drive, and you're cutting and creating visual effects almost on the fly.

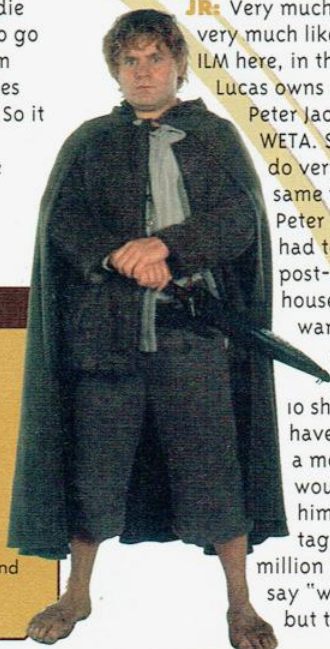
**HYPER:** Does Peter Jackson, like Lucas, ever want to mess with the

performances from his live actors using digital technology?

**JR:** We did a bit of that. We did a bit of dialogue changing... he wanted Gandalf in one of the scenes to say something else, and we had to move his lips around differently to say something different to what he was saying. Nothing too large in that sense but there have been cases where some of the actors that were shot didn't work in the scene and we had to end up putting a digital actor in instead.

We have a full fellowship all completely digitally created, and we primarily did that to put them into scenes where we couldn't shoot them. There's always the occasional time when it's "ahh, let's just put the digital actor in here and it'll be fine for the shot".

**HYPER:** Can you explain how you managed to have all the characters to scale? So the Hobbits look half the size of humans etc.?



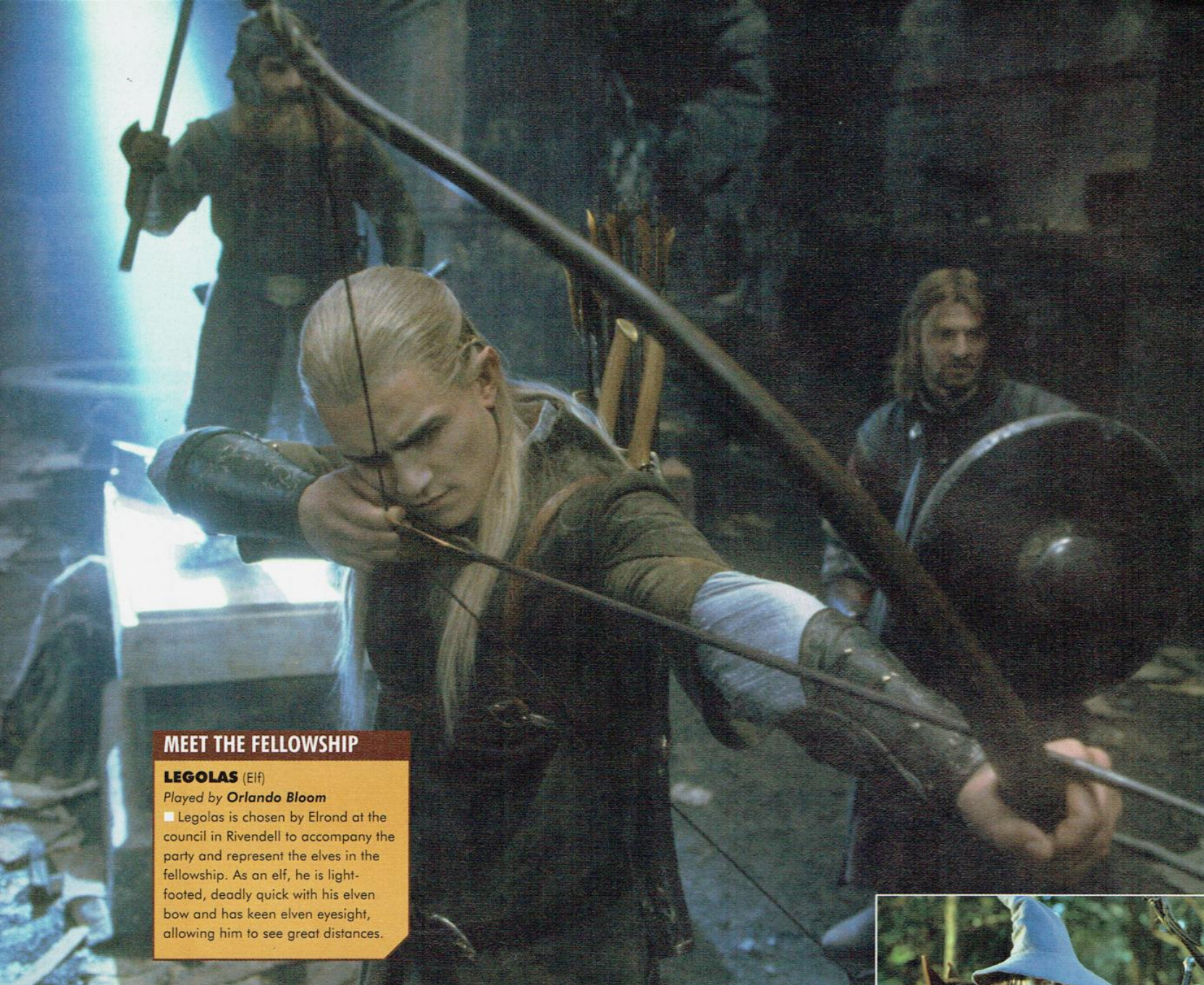
**MEET THE FELLOWSHIP**

**SAMWISE GAMGEE**

(Hobbit)

Played by Sean Astin

Sam is Frodo's dedicated friend who gets drawn into the Fellowship by eavesdropping on Gandalf and Frodo as they make plans. He will do anything to protect his "master" and best friend, Frodo.

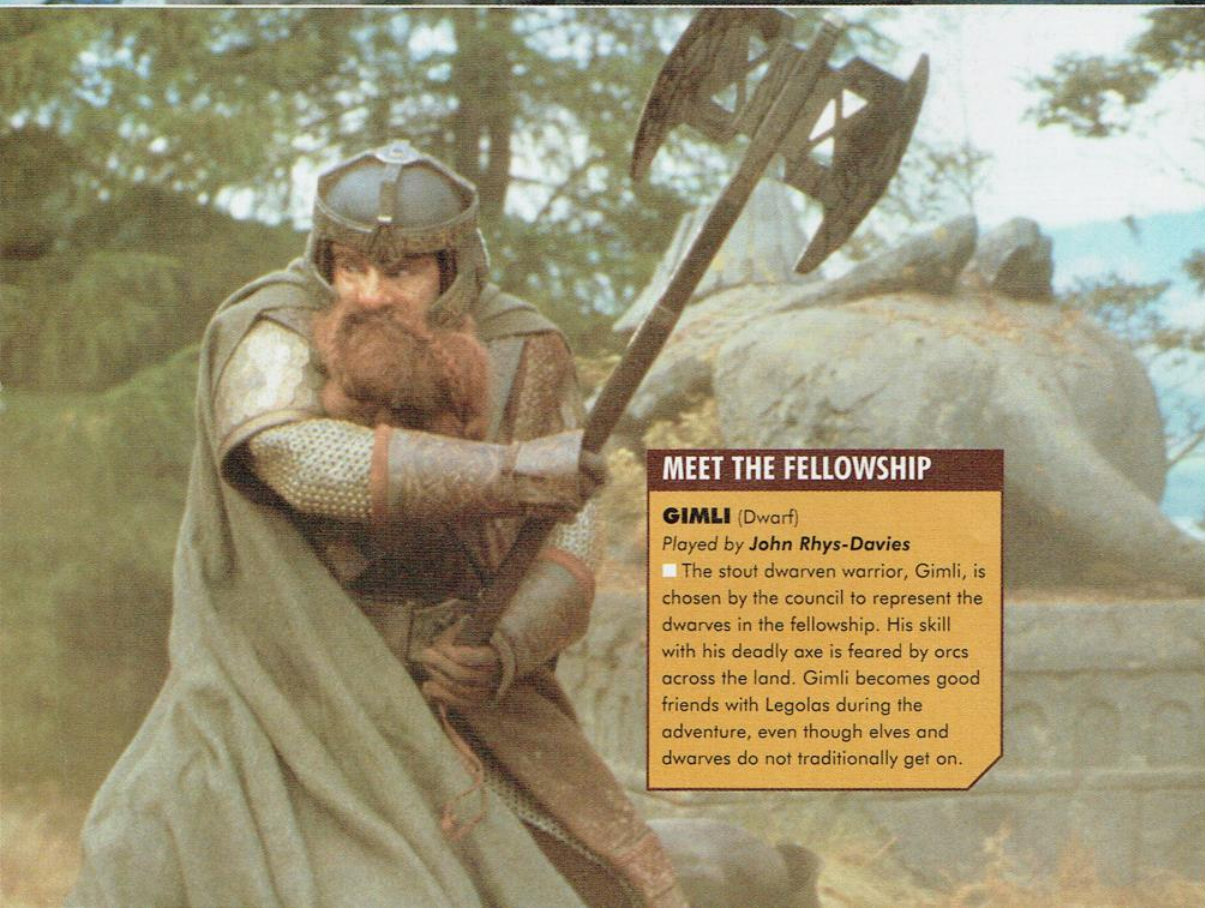


### MEET THE FELLOWSHIP

#### **LEGOLAS** (Elf)

Played by **Orlando Bloom**

■ Legolas is chosen by Elrond at the council in Rivendell to accompany the party and represent the elves in the fellowship. As an elf, he is light-footed, deadly quick with his elven bow and has keen elven eyesight, allowing him to see great distances.

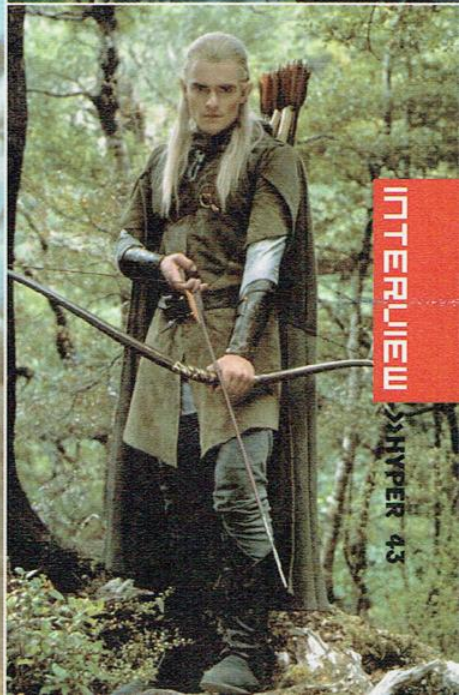


### MEET THE FELLOWSHIP

#### **GIMLI** (Dwarf)

Played by **John Rhys-Davies**

■ The stout dwarven warrior, Gimli, is chosen by the council to represent the dwarves in the fellowship. His skill with his deadly axe is feared by orcs across the land. Gimli becomes good friends with Legolas during the adventure, even though elves and dwarves do not traditionally get on.



**"THERE ARE WHOLE SHOTS AND SCENES THAT HAVE BEEN CUT OUT THAT PETER JACKSON HAS SAID HE'LL DEFINITELY WANT TO INCLUDE ON THE DVD." – JIM RYGIEL**

**JR:** Yeah – that's done with a number of different techniques. We did something called "forced perspective" photography. There's one shot where Frodo is pouring Gandalf a cup of tea at a table. So, the camera is sitting at one end of the table, and Gandalf is three feet away from the camera and Frodo may be ten feet away from the camera! So, because he's farther in the distance, he looks smaller. When Frodo pours the tea, he's pouring it into a cup that's ten feet behind Gandalf's cup. The way you set the whole thing up... it's very staged, with exact placement of objects and different scale objects... but it looks like he's pouring the tea right into Gandalf's cup.

**HYPER:** That obviously saves you a lot of time...

**JR:** That's it, we didn't have to do anything with that – it's all on camera. Then there's a very simple technique where they put people in stilts and created "big" people. There are some shots that are amazing, you'll look at it, and it's basically the Hobbits in the bar and they're standing at the bar with their noses up on the counter, but in the background are these humans walking back and forth and drinking... and you'd never know, that it's stunt guys on stilts. It looks amazing. It's really difficult to pick up, and you look at the film, and you think wow, how is

Ian McKellen so big?

**HYPER:** Who else in the fellowship needed some digital help?

**JR:** There are shots of Legolas (the elven member of the fellowship) shooting like ten arrows in one second, and so basically, he's pulling nothing out of his quiver and we track digital arrows in and line them up on the bow...

**HYPER:** Now, the big CGI creation for this film would have to be Balrog in the mines of Moria. What can you tell us about this vile creature?

**JR:** Balrog is great, he's probably my favourite. He's basically described in the book as this creature of shadow and light, so the way he was envisioned by the art department, is this kind of demonic-looking creature – he has a whip and big horns, wings and a tail – but he's always covered with this thick black cape – more like a cloak of smoke that's pouring down his body the whole time. As he walks, he's emitting this thick layer of smoke – you kinda catch glimpses of his body through this smoke layer, but it's almost like a big black cape coming off of his head, and then off the top of his head coming right down the middle of his back is this mane of fire. It's like a having a big bonfire on his head as he walks down with this cloak of black smoke. And then whenever he gets pissed (off), he tenses his muscles and erupts fire out of every pore in his body.

Peter Jackson had a very definite idea of what this thing should be like... when we were animating it, he'd come down and say "I don't want this big T-Rex kind of thing, he should be lighter... I want him to be menacing, but quick". After reading the script, it's neat seeing all these things that you had in your head come to life.

**HYPER:** I imagine something like the Ents from *The Two Towers* will be hard to visualise...

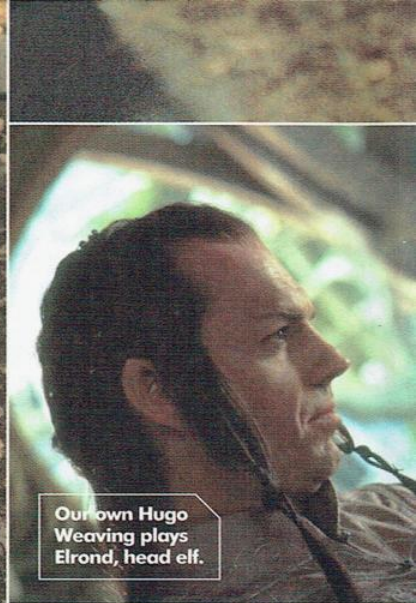
**JR:** Oh yeah (laughs), I don't even want to think about that yet! We're working on that...

**HYPER:** Now that work on *Fellowship of the Ring* is complete, do you wake up in the middle of the night and think, "oh I wish we could just change that one thing!"

**JR:** Oh yeah, and we're doing that (laughs). I don't wake up, or dream



Liv Tyler plays the spunky elf, Arwen.



Our own Hugo Weaving plays Elrond, head elf.



**MEET THE FELLOWSHIP**

**BOROMIR** (Human)  
Played by **Sean Bean**

■ A man of Gondor, Boromir is a brave and proud warrior – sometimes too proud – who is the eldest son of Denethor II. He is chosen to join the Fellowship by Elrond at the council, and his tough nature is essential to the fellowship in the thick of a fight.

it, we do it! We come in here and we'll see something and be like "that's good, but it's not quite right" and we change it and everyone flips out because it's like last minute Quarterbacking. But we look at everything and pick our battles at this point and say "this is something we really need to change" Anything you work on, you always wish you had more time.

**HYPER:** Do you ever waste time sneaking in little "Easter Eggs" into the digital effects?

**JR:** Like my face on the Balrog? (Laughs) I don't particularly have time to do any of that stuff or plan that sort of thing, but I'm sure people are putting things in (laughs). I'm sure we're going to find out at some point that my head's on Gollum's back somewhere...

**HYPER:** Well, when the DVD comes out, we can sit back and scrutinise everything!

**JR:** Yeah, I mean, there are whole shots and scenes that have been cut out that Peter Jackson has said he'll definitely want to include on the DVD. We did like 80 shots of the Cave Troll sequence, and there's like maybe only 50-60 that made it into the film.

The original cut of the film was like three hours and 45 minutes, and then I saw it at three hours and 15 minutes, and finally I think it's coming in just under three hours.

**HYPER:** How big is the WETA digital team working on *Fellowship of the Ring*?

**JR:** I'd say there are about 200 artists here. More than I ever expected...

**HYPER:** So you've got all that computer hardware and 200 people to play Quake deathmatch?!

**JR:** (Laughs) Exactly! That's a blast, yeah? But only on Friday night. Beer-o'clock! <<<

**THE LORD OF THE RIGHTS**

» So who is making us a series of exciting Lord of the Rings video games to compliment our ever-growing plethora of Tolkien merchandise? Funny you should ask. Electronic Arts have officially obtained the rights to produce games based on the New Line Cinema Lord of the Rings movie trilogy, however, Sierra have held the rights to the Tolkien books for years now. As a result, both Electronic Arts and Sierra will produce competing products based on the same property. Gamers will simply have to make a decision down the track as to which they would prefer... games that feature likenesses of the actors and situations from the films, or games that concentrate on Tolkien's pure word. There is also the confusion and endless lawsuits over Sierra's massively multiplayer Middle Earth online... but that story is a fantasy epic in its own right.



### MEET THE FELLOWSHIP

#### **ARAGORN/STRIDER** (Human)

Played by **Viggo Mortensen**

■ Aragorn, also known as Strider, may appear to be a simple ranger, but is actually descendent of the great king, Isildur and possessor of the legendary sword, Anduril. As a ranger, he has the ability to understand the land and animals to aid the fellowship through perilous areas. He is in love with Arwen, the elven daughter of Elrond, head of the Council.

Careful where you sheath that sword, Strider.



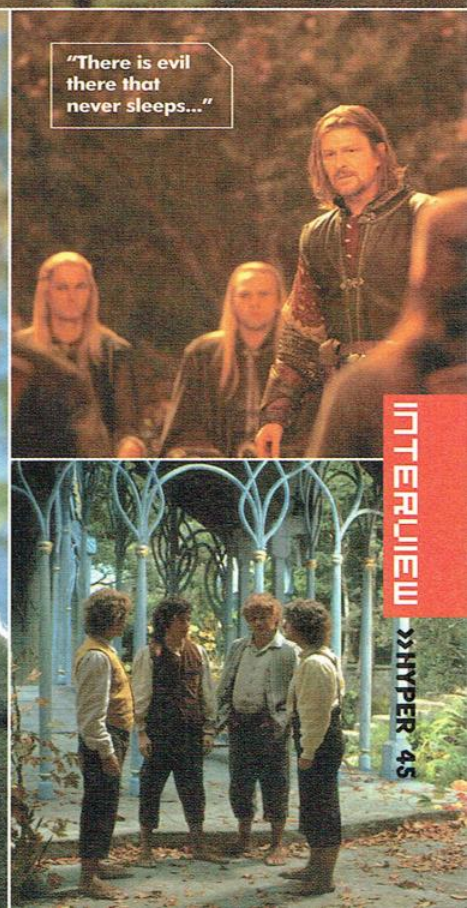
### MEET THE FELLOWSHIP

#### **FRODO BAGGINS** (Hobbit)

Played by **Elijah Wood**

■ The adopted cousin of Bilbo Baggins and the possessor of the One Ring, Frodo reluctantly accepts the burden of taking the One Ring to Mount Doom in Mordor to destroy it once and for all. He must struggle to resist using the ring's powers as it can alert the evil Sauron to the location of the fellowship.

"There is evil there that never sleeps..."



# REVIEWS

GAME OF THE MONTH >> **PS2**

## Grand Theft Auto 3

One huge sprawling city... and you feel a crime spree coming on. Are you up to the task?

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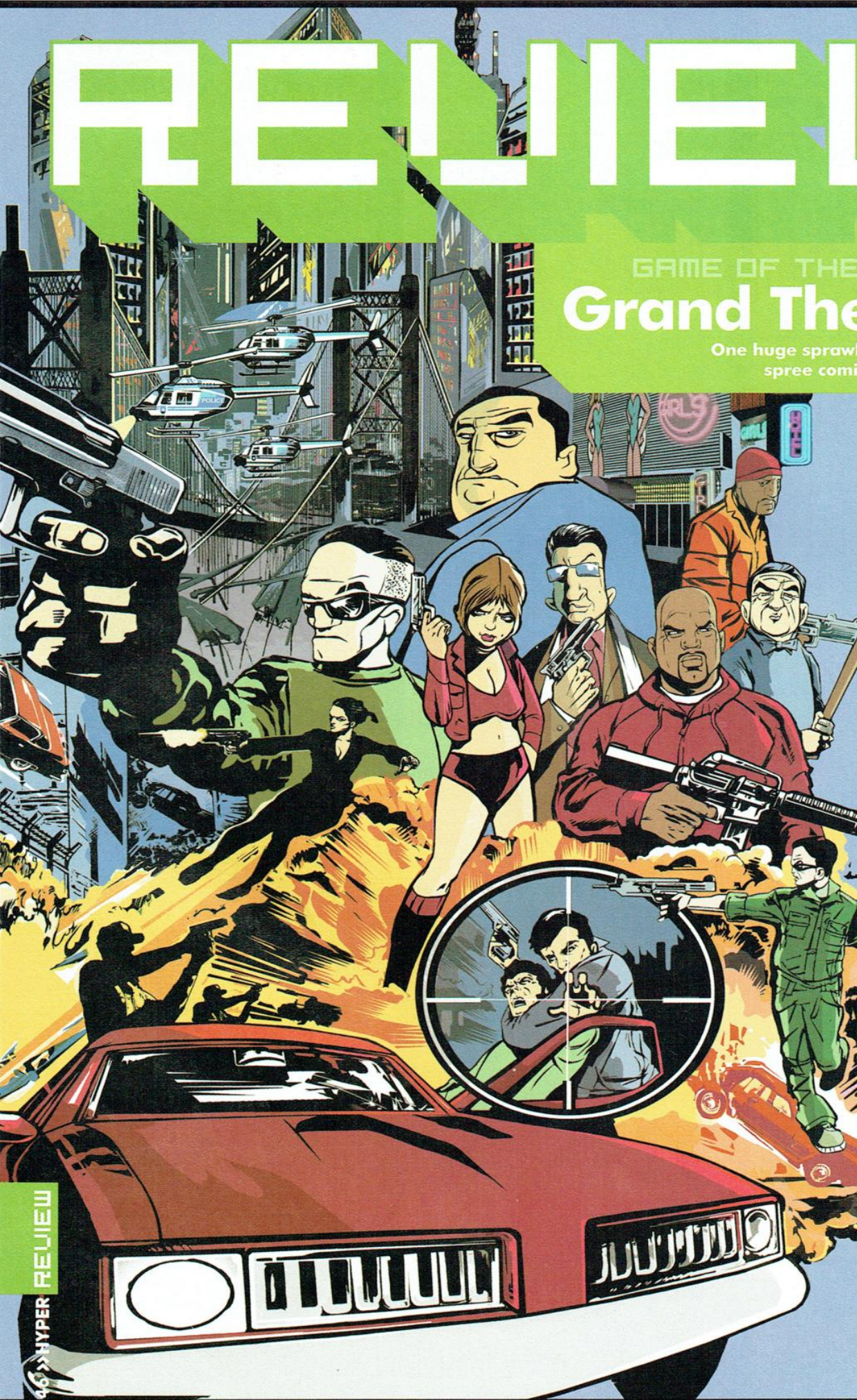
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# GAME THEORY

DAVID WILLOGOOSE



>> In recent times, some universities in Australia and around the world have begun offering courses related to videogames. Yet without exception they are all concerned with the nuts and bolts of creating a game – programming, modelling, etc. When we study film or literature, we aren't interested in the film stock or the word processor used by the author. Instead, we scrutinise the ideas, the ideology, the social context, the philosophy. We ask ourselves: what does it mean?

Can we adopt this approach to videogames? After all, it's another art form, another mode of human expression, isn't it? Here's a few ideas to throw around...

Ion Storm's classic, *Deus Ex*, is a dissertation on the role of an increasingly redundant God in a future (read: contemporary) society. Discuss.

Link's journey from boyhood to adulthood in Miyamoto's *Zelda* series recalls the famous saying: "Show me a boy at the age of seven, and I will show you the man." Discuss. (And, by the way, someone really ought to conduct a psychoanalytical study into Link's alarmingly incestuous relationship with Princess Zelda. His sword gets bigger the closer he gets to her. I can see Freud arching an eyebrow as I type.)

Black Isle's acclaimed *Planescape: Torment* plays more like a philosophical inquiry than an RPG, questioning as it does issues of memory, identity of self, and the Cartesian dualism of mind and body.

Perhaps Mario symbolises the triumph of the underdog spirit over the powers that be. Sure, he may well wear a cape and eat magic mushrooms, but Mario is indeed the Everyman. With his working class dungarees and stoically unfashionable facial hair, his appeal is universal and our empathy assured. Would he have been half as successful if he was not a plumber but fresh out of law school with a job at Daddy's firm?

Asking ourselves these kinds of questions won't make a game any more entertaining, but it might just give us a deeper appreciation. Class dismissed!

Hand in your final papers at:  
[hyper\\_game\\_theory@hotmail.com](mailto:hyper_game_theory@hotmail.com)

## THE HYPER CREW'S TOP 5

**Eliot Fish – Editor**

1. Grand Theft Auto 3 – PS2  
**"The most entertaining PS2 game all year. Maybe the best game of 2001."**
2. Zork 1 – Mac
3. Stronghold – PC
4. WipeOut Fusion – PS2
5. Rez – PS2

**Cam Shea – Deputy Editor**

1. Rez – PS2  
**"Questionable depth certainly, but Rez oozes style from every wireframe."**
2. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 – PS2
3. WipeOut Fusion – PS2
4. Burnout – PS2
5. Warioland 4 – GBA

**Malcolm Campbell – Art guy**

1. Wave Race Blue Storm – GameCube  
**"Plenty of hidden cool bits."**
2. Wipeout Fusion – PS2
3. Rez – PS2
4. Capcom vs. SNK 2 – PS2
5. Quake III Arena – PC

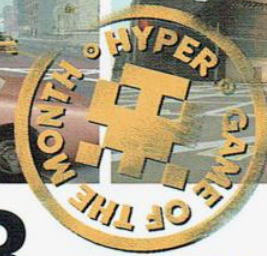
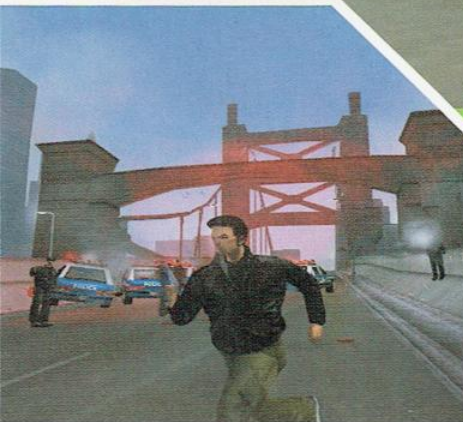
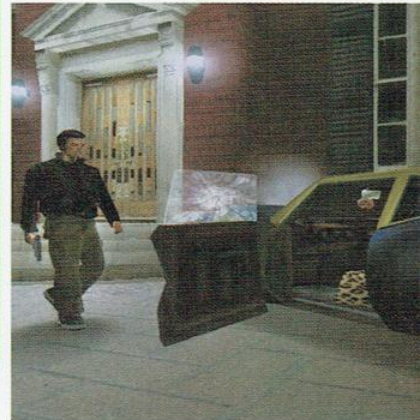
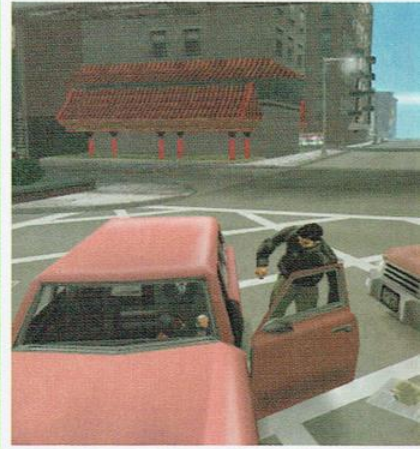
**Jackson Gothe-Snape – Reviewer**

1. Grand Theft Auto 3 – PS2  
**"Don't move a muscle."**
2. Championship Manager 01/02 – PC
3. NHL 2002 – PS2
4. Gran Turismo 3 – PS2
5. Powerstone 2 – DC

## THE HYPER SCORING SYSTEM

The Overall Score – what's it all about?

90+	Excellent and worthy of a Big Rubber Stamp. Buy it!
80-89	Very good. This is a quality game, but not perfect.
70-79	Good, verging on average. Try before you buy.
60-69	Average, verging on bad. This game is badly flawed.
50-59	Bad game design and possibly not even worth renting.
0-49	These games simply suck. A total waste of money!



**PS2**

# Grand Theft Auto 3

CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Take 2 Interactive >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >>

AVAILABLE: Now

**KEVIN CHEUNG** goes for a true joyride...

**A**t a glance, it could be mistaken for just another non-descript 3D action game, not unlike *Driver 2*. But a few hours into *GTA3*, you'll discover that this game is a microcosm of activity, a virtual city that's thriving with people, traffic, geography, and a few indications of modern infrastructure. Even better, rather than sit on the laurels of its 3D reality, *Grand Theft Auto 3* adds spice to the equation by letting you take on the role of a virtual criminal.

## ABSOLUTE FREEDOM

As a recently escaped convict, you start by taking up a few odd jobs for crime bosses around the city. They include chauffeuring a gangster's favourite squeeze around town, beating someone to a pulp and

nicking off with his car, or planting explosive devices under the nose of rival gang members. With each successful mission, you earn money, kudos, and a reputation. Your work comes into higher demand, and the scent you leave for the cops to follow grows stronger.

Veterans of previous *Grand Theft Auto* games will know that its allure comes not from being a scripted adventure, but from having complete and absolute freedom to proceed at your own pace. You see, most games of this type will have you complete a driving-based mission, then reward you with a cut-scene of some kind, then you'll magically appear in your vehicle for the next mission. The beauty of *Grand Theft Auto 3* is that it lets you do everything in between. That is, stealing cars, cruising around

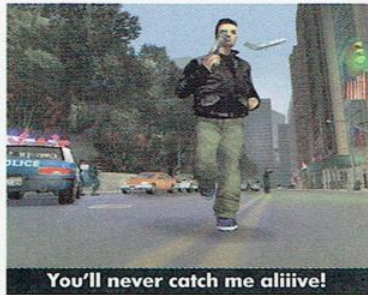
town, skulking the streets — all the mischief you'd otherwise get up to when you're not on duty.

It's a formula that works sensationally well. Stealing a car is but the first joy one experiences in *Grand Theft Auto 3*. You basically walk right up to one of the doors of any car that takes your fancy, hit the button, and you'll literally boot the driver out of the car before skidding away. You can steal sedans, wagons, vans, trucks,

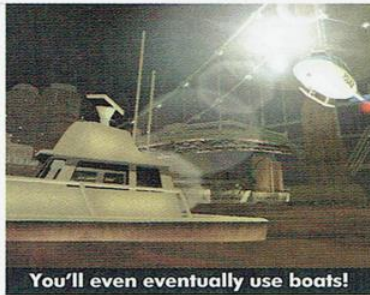


taxis, and even police cars. You have to drive gingerly on the streets. Follow the road signs and signals, watch for red lights, and use them to anticipate the flow of traffic. If you drive like a maniac, you'll scuff up your car, possibly run over a few pedestrians, and draw unwanted attention to yourself. That's when you take it in for repairs, get a new paint job, or better still, ditch the bomb and find a new set of wheels. If you're careless

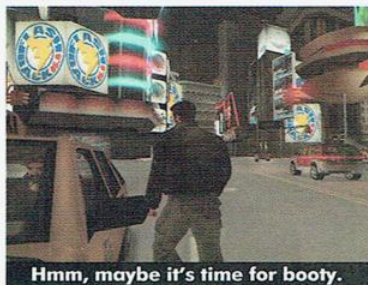
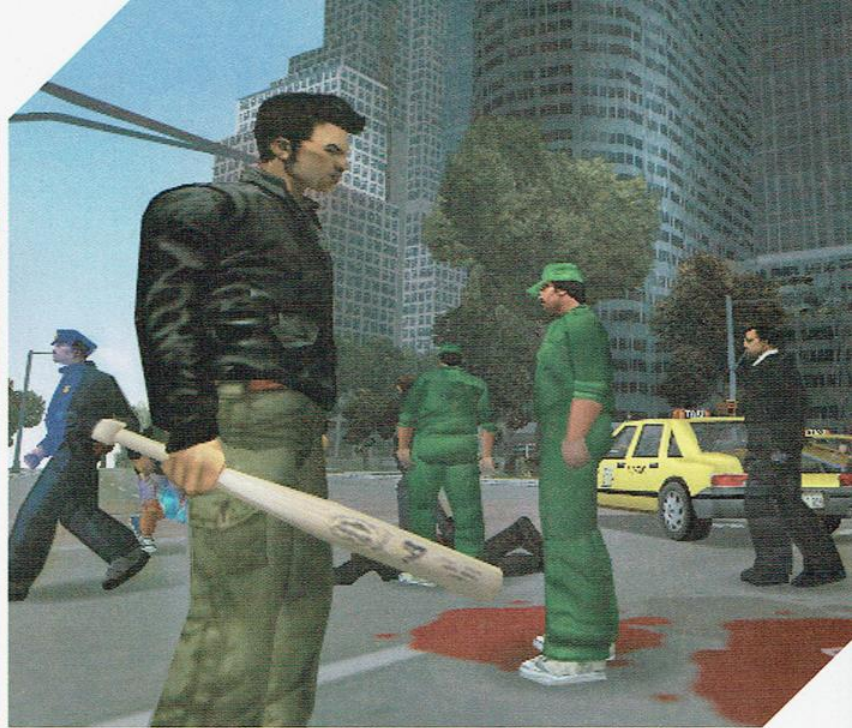




You'll never catch me alive!



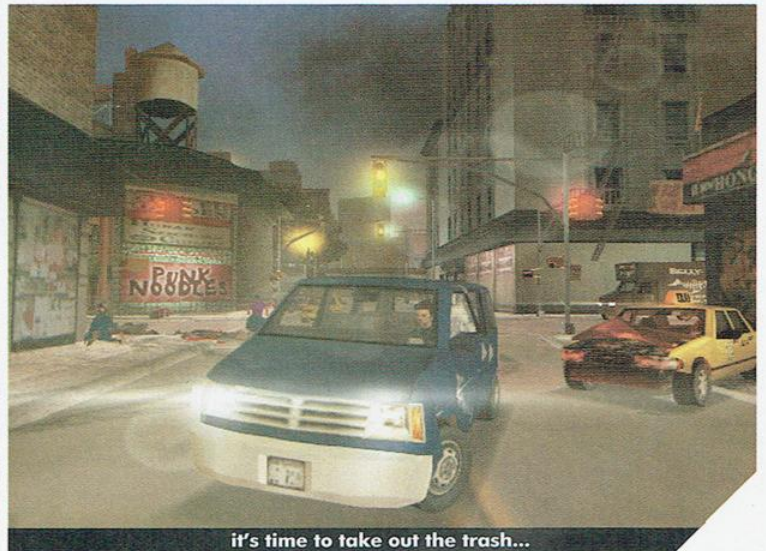
You'll even eventually use boats!



Hmm, maybe it's time for booty.



Just try to take me coppers!



it's time to take out the trash...

The longer you play GTA3, the more it continues to **surprise and delight you** with moments of stunning coolness.

and get caught by the cops, you'll have to start the mission from scratch at the nearest police station, with no money or weapons (which you can casually pick up off the street, as indicated by the fluorescent icons). The same will happen if you can't get yourself safely out of a shoot-out or inter-gang brawl.

**NEVER-ENDING**

It's the things on the side that really make Grand Theft Auto 3 special. If you steal a cab, you can use it to pick up fares and earn a little extra cash on the side. If you steal a police car, you can go on a few vigilante raids. Every car has a radio you can listen to, and you can even change channels on them; and police cars are usually filled with chatter from other cops on the wire. The variety and flexibility of side-missions is also very impressive.

!!! The different radio stations in the cars are hilarious. There's even talkback!

There are so many of them to take up, all of varying difficulty and reward, but they all count towards an absolutely massive number of characters to interact with throughout the game.

Grand Theft Auto 3 is also as much about style as it is about gameplay. Voice acting is done appropriately in-character, and the dialogue doesn't pull any punches in the way of language or sexual allusion — it's all beautifully in context, without any patronising watering-down for the young ones. The huge selection of music is also a big plus.

The impact of the new 3D presentation cannot be stressed more. Switching between the classic overhead view, the over-the-shoulder view and numerous other presets, the fictitious world of

Liberty City (in which the game takes place) is fully immersive. You'll learn landmarks, street positions, store locations, and eventually you'll know the entire city by sight rather than having to rely on the wee little radar in the bottom corner of the screen.

The thrill and excitement of exploring this massive city seems never-ending. The longer you play GTA3, the more it continues to surprise and delight you with moments of stunning coolness. Just driving your car endlessly off ramps is enough to keep you happy for hours, let alone tackling the variety of missions.

Grand Theft Auto 3 is a considerable achievement for which DMA Design deserves a load of credit. By the time you figure out how to take a prostitute for a little rumpy pump in the back seat of your car, you'll agree too. <<



**PLUS:** Freedom and flexibility of missions. Awesome scale of the city.

**MINUS:** There is no minus. Go get this game now.

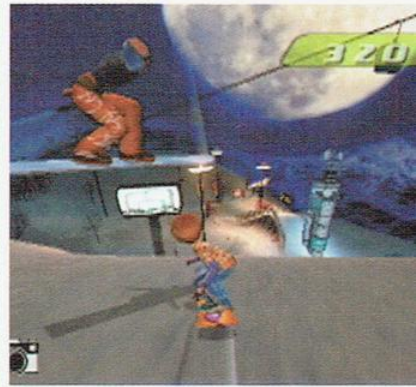
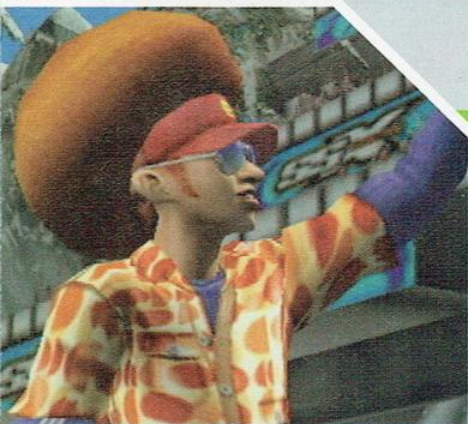
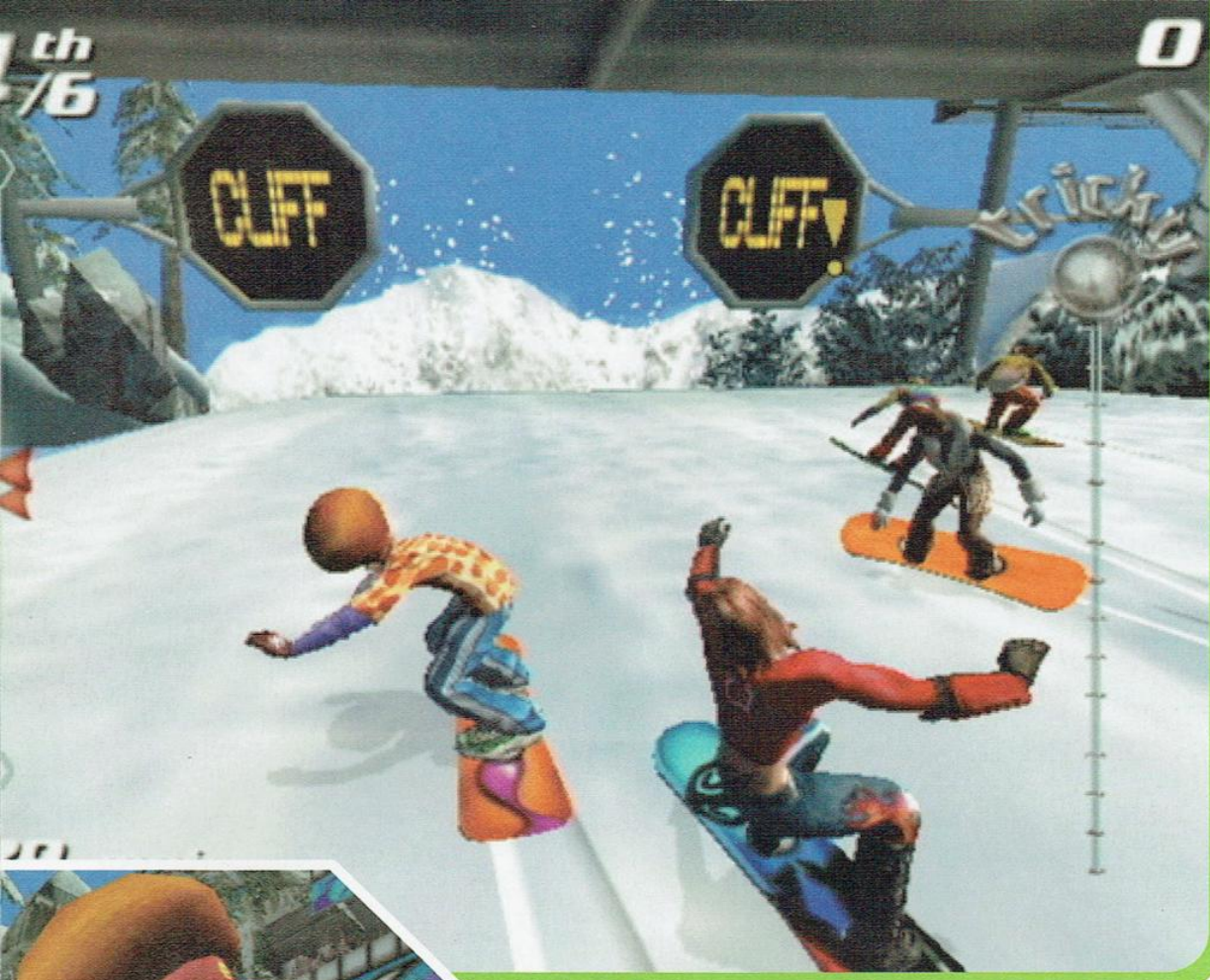
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

90 92 97

OVERALL

96

Part shooting, part driving, part adventure... amazing!!



# SSX Tricky

» PS2

CATEGORY: Snowboarding >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts >> PRICE: STBA >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

**ELIOT FISH** says it's all down hill from here.

When the PS2 launched in Australia, Hyper magazine was one of few publications that didn't proclaim SSX as the Second Coming. It was a good launch title, but ultimately it suffered from a lot of the typical flaws that were apparent in plenty of previous snowboarding games. Flaws that spoiled what appeared to be an amazing game on the surface. Now, a year down the track, we have the anticipated sequel, SSX Tricky, which will also be coming to the GameCube and Xbox. Have EA radically improved the game? Made it worse? Done nothing at all? Blown their budget on Hollywood voice talent?

## STEEP SLOPES

It probably pays to remember that SSX Tricky isn't really a true, full-

blown sequel, but rather a "here's one that we prepared earlier" release that EA Big obviously cranked out as soon as SSX shipped. There's not a lot, visually, that distinguishes SSX from this semi-sequel except for the fact that the boarders look nicer and the tracks are bigger and longer in Tricky. Of course, there's also the inclusion of all the character voices. Amazing that EA were happy to blow god knows how much money on getting people like Billy Zane, Macy Gray, David Arquette, Jim Rose and others to do the voices for the characters. I hate to tell them, but whilst you're playing, you're really not paying that much attention to the voice acting. Really, they could have saved a lot of money by just getting some dudes off the street to yell "Sweet!" into the microphone

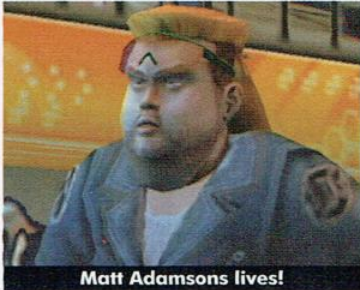
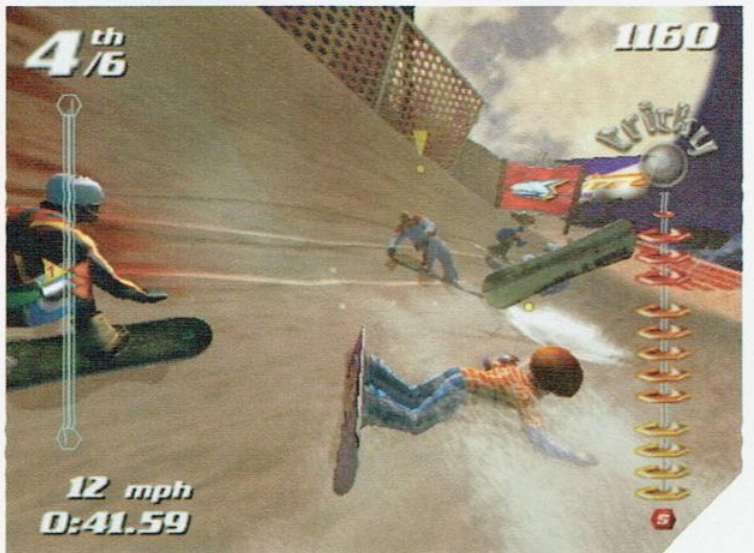
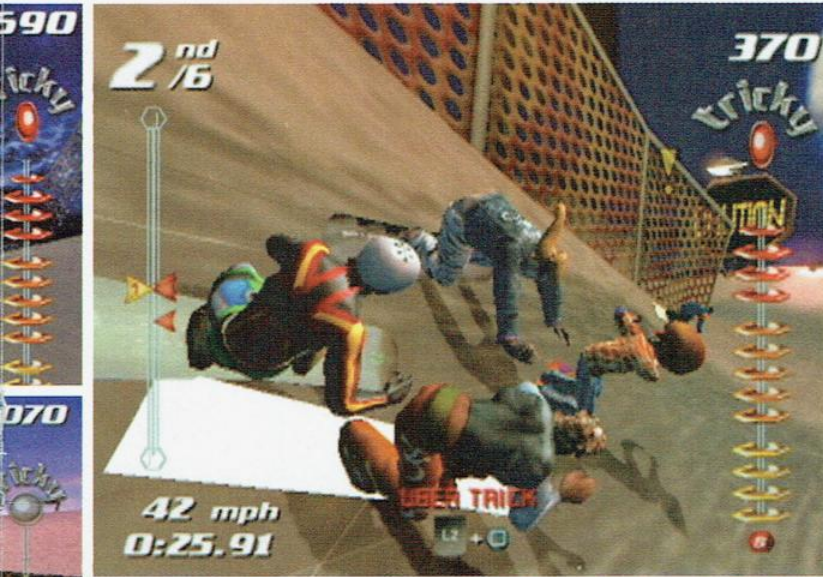
and no one would have noticed the difference. And getting celebrity voices doesn't change the unfortunate fact that the script is just awful... hearing the announcer tell you you've just pulled off a "funky dope manoeuvre!" is just painful. The trash talking between the characters after each race is also pretty cringe-worthy... it's a shame that a lot of time and effort has gone into creating characters that have

such lame and cheesy personalities.

The game simply tries too hard to be "hip", "cool" and "rad", and it just doesn't stick.

Especially when this has been at the expense of really fixing up SSX's flaws and improving on the gameplay. The new Uber tricks that you can perform are a good example of how Tricky's dev team have placed style over substance. Some of the tricks just look ridiculous.

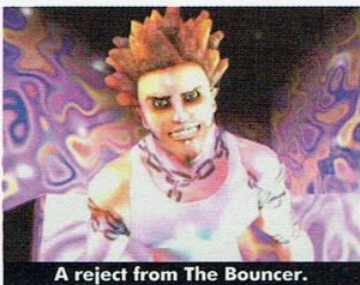




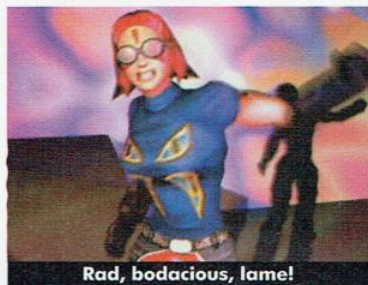
Matt Adams lives!



Get lost you hippy.



A reject from The Bouncer.



Rad, bodacious, lame!

It's annoying that you can have a long, successful run of awesomely executed tricks, only to **have your massive score be dropped** to zero.

Who ever thought it was a good idea to include break dancing moves on a snowboard in mid-air should have been given another job. It not only looks unnatural and woefully try-hard, but once you've built up your trick meter, there's never enough big jumps to pull them off anyway!

EA also got Mix Master Mike from the Beastie Boys to do the soundtrack... but what about spending that money on development time and tools to get rid of all the slowdown in the game? Or spending more money on play testing to rid the game of all the places on the track where you can still get stuck in-between objects in the environment? And why place so many stack-inducing barriers along the lips of half-pipes, or up the

sides of slopes? Somewhere along the line, the gameplay got shafted.

#### POWDER PUFF GIRLS

Tricky features a Race mode and Show Off mode, like SSX, that are both playable in the form of an on-going competition where you have to win a medal to unlock new tracks, boards, outfits and characters. In the race mode, it's natural that getting to the finish line

on time is of utmost importance... but in the trick mode? It's annoying that you can have a long, successful run of awesomely executed tricks, only to have your massive score be dropped to zero if you don't cross over the finish line at the end by the time the clock runs out. If we want to race to finish lines, we'll play the race mode.

Don't force us to race in the trick mode. Design decisions such as these just make no sense. We're also still forced to race the same track three times just to progress to the next, which can result in far too many runs on the same track, which frankly becomes a little annoying.

Tricky manages to aggravate and frustrate in so many ways, that it is easy to overlook the fact that at the heart of it, it's actually a pretty good game. Some of the runs are immensely long and pretty complicated to navigate, plus executing a really difficult but well-timed trick can be very satisfying. If you stick with SSX Tricky and show a bit of patience, you'll probably get quite a bit out of the experience. Just don't expect it to be the hyped-up game it's meant to be, or a big improvement over SSX. <<



**PLUS:** Nice long runs and there is a lot to unlock.

**MINUS:** Still as flawed as SSX, tries too hard to be hip.

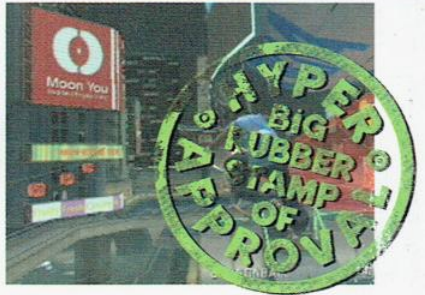
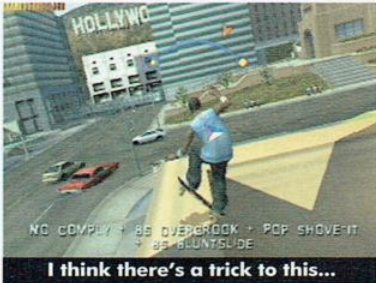
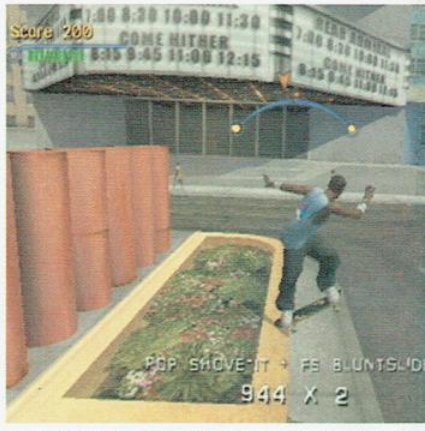
VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

87 83 79

OVERALL

80

Not really the sequel we were looking for, but okay.



# Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

CATEGORY: Skateboarding >> PLAYERS: 1-? >> PUBLISHER: Activision >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now

>> PS2

**CAM SHEA** takes another week off to practice his sack taps...

Sequels are an integral part of gaming, whether we like it or not. While it often seems that there are innumerable Army Men quality franchises for every new Mario game, sequels help provide economic stability for the industry, and often allow game concepts to fully mature. Tony Hawk 3 (TH3) definitely falls into the "worthy sequel" category. With successive games, Neversoft have added integral and rewarding new play mechanics, and TH3 is no exception.

## WE HATE CASPAR SO MUCH...

Tony Hawk 2 introduced us to the manual, which single handedly redefined how the game was played. TH3 has several important gameplay changes. One is the addition of an extensive range of flatland tricks —

these are performed on flat ground without ollieing, and include oldschool classics like handstands and truck stands, as well as mindblowing newer moves like the anti caspar. Flatland tricks require a full special metre, which leads us into another major gameplay tweak. Your special metre now builds up on the fly, rather than only registering at the end of a combo. This means that your specials are available more of the time, and hence become an even more integral part of the gameplay.

The other main addition is the revert. In Tony Hawk 2, the gameplay was heavily weighted towards street skating, because this was where all the combo potential lay — you could manual out of any trick on the flat, but not out of vert. Well, the revert simply allows you to include vert tricks in

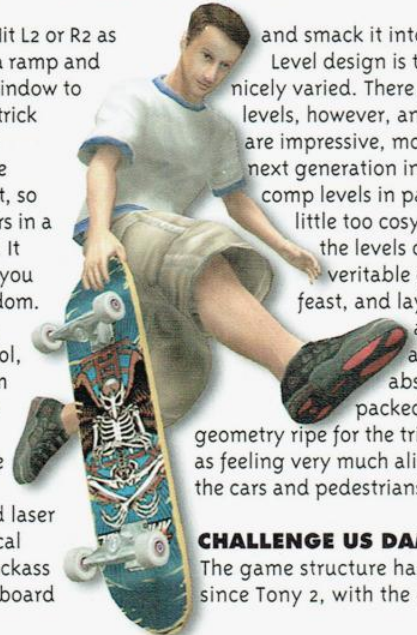
your mega combo. Hit L2 or R2 as you come down off a ramp and you'll have a short window to launch into another trick and keep the combo going. You lose some speed doing a revert, so chaining together airs in a bowl isn't an option. It does, however, give you serious tricking freedom.

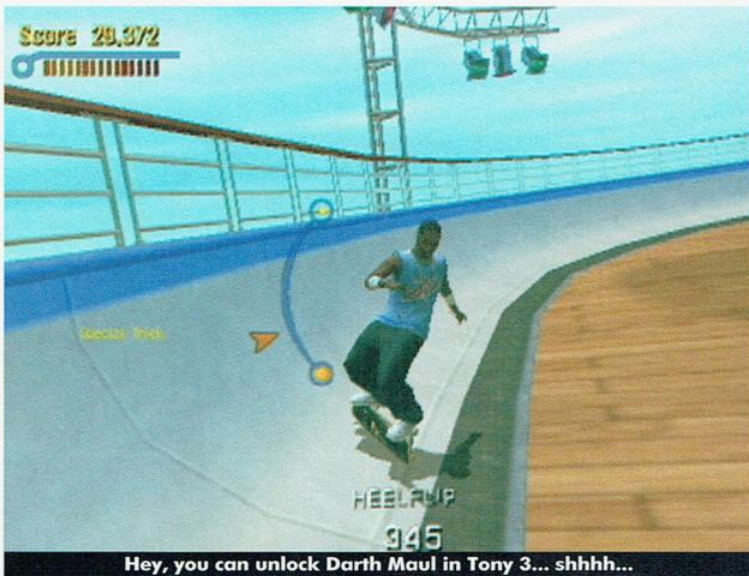
As expected, TH3 has a larger trick pool, with heaps of hidden combos and a huge range of specials. They're all here - the gazelle underflip, kickflip backflip and laser flip, as well as comical inclusions like the jackass where you grab the board

and smack it into your head! Level design is top notch and nicely varied. There are only nine levels, however, and while some are impressive, most aren't truly next generation in size. The comp levels in particular are a little too cosy. That said, all the levels offer a veritable gameplay feast, and layouts like L.A. are very cool — as it's absolutely packed with complex geometry ripe for the tricking, as well as feeling very much alive thanks to the cars and pedestrians.

## CHALLENGE US DAMMIT!

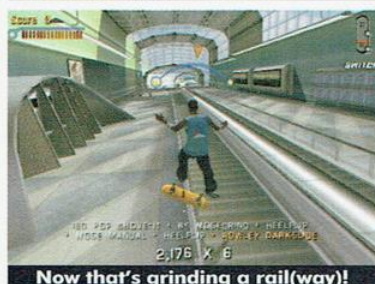
The game structure has changed since Tony 2, with the cash system





### Aural Pleasure

Neversoft have licensed quite a cool soundtrack for Tony 3. Among the artists featured are The Ramones, RHCP, KRS-One, Motorhead, Rollins Band, House Of Pain, Xzibit, Redman, Del, AFI, Adolescents, Guttermouth and Bodyjar. A broader range of less angsty music would have been appreciated, however, especially given the storage capabilities of DVD.



## Not only are you chaining tricks on the ground, on rails, in bowls, **in vert and on the flat**, but you're doing it at a breakneck pace.

being scrapped. Neversoft have instead hidden five TH3 logos in each level, each one corresponding to one experience point which can be used to upgrade your skater's abilities. Each level also has a hidden skateboard to find, allowing you to upgrade your equipment as well.

The range of challenges on offer, however, are too limited and the game as a whole is far too easy. We had all the levels unlocked and about half of them 100% complete after a single night with the game. Sure, it was a late night, and the totally freeform nature of the gameplay means that we're not going to get bored for a long while, but we can't help but feel that Neversoft should have done more.

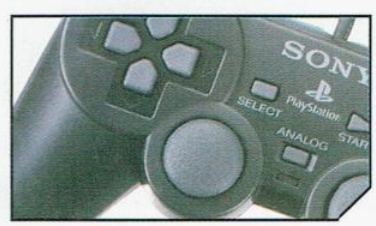
Each level has only nine challenges, three of which are score based. Ideally, beating this set

should unlock a more difficult set of challenges designed specifically for that skater. After all, there's so much to do in each level that creating extra challenges wouldn't be hard. Plus, beating the game with each skater would be far more rewarding.

As it stands, there are only minor differences in challenges between different skaters. There are a few different sets of S-K-A-T-E placements and TH3 logo placements, and generally each level has one trick based goal that changes depending on whether your chosen skater is vert or street oriented. Not good enough Neversoft. And we'd have preferred less gimmicky challenges (like the weak "help the thin man" task in the suburbia level) in exchange for more challenges. Even so, at the end of each run you're given a set of useful stats

which is a nice touch. Completing all the tasks in a level also rewards you with a new special trick slot.

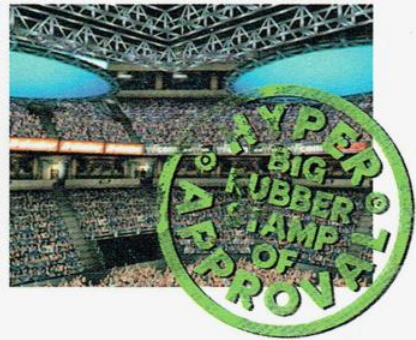
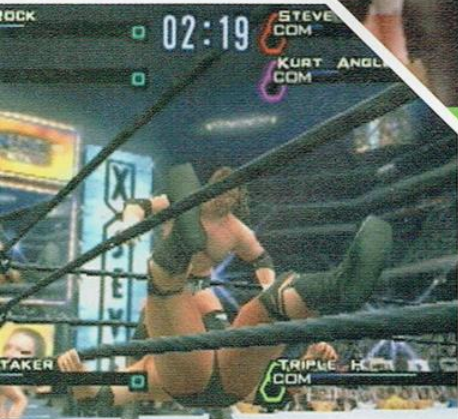
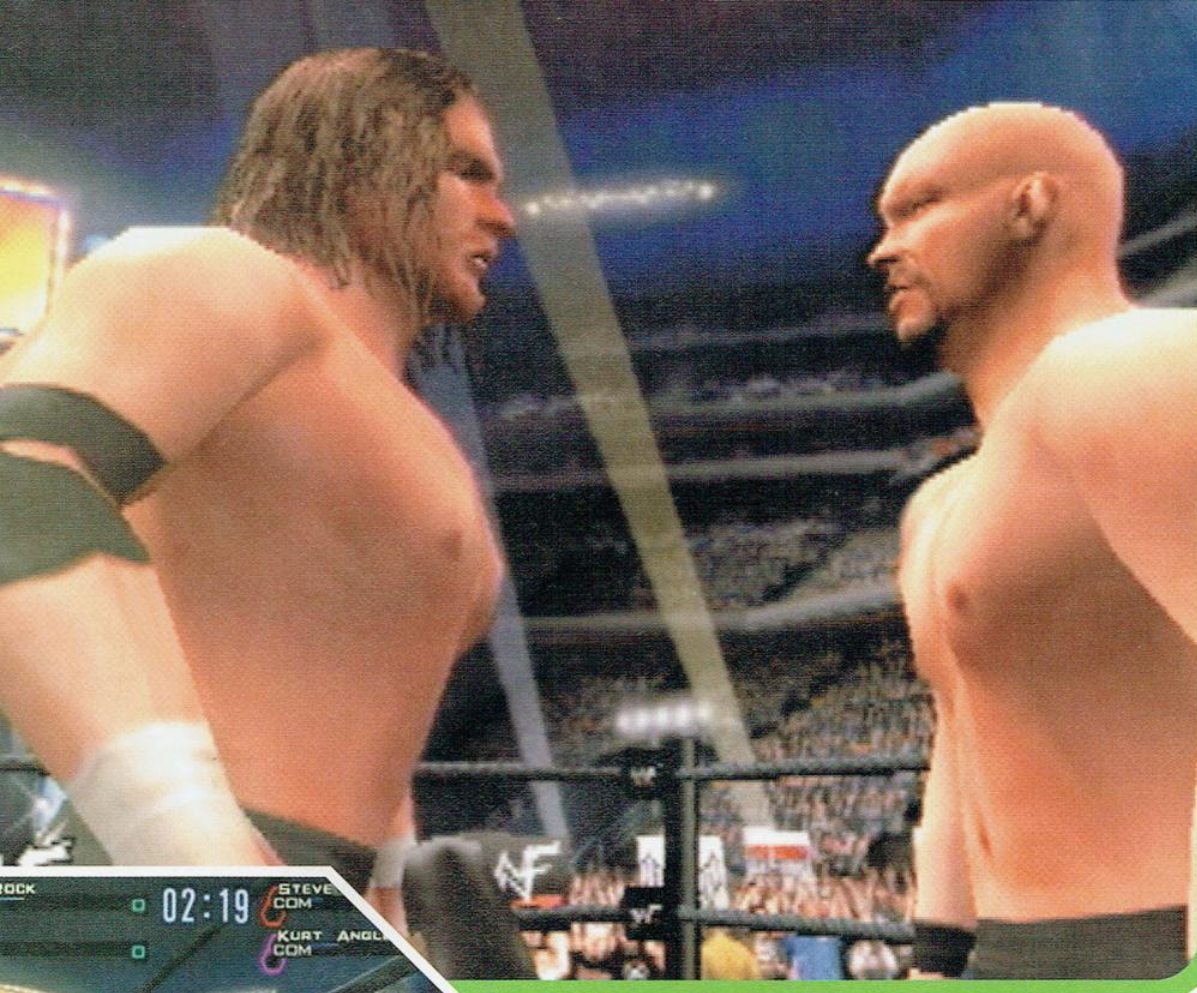
Tony 3 is a very pretty game, but it's not detailed textures that will have your jaw on the ground, as the texture work is relatively plain. What really elevates Tony 3 is the blistering frame rate. It really canes along — 50/60fps the whole way. And hell, for this kind of game we'd take a fast, constant frame rate over detail any day (gameplay, it's all about the gameplay). Coming from Tony 2 (even the ultra smooth DC version), Tony on PS2 takes some getting used to, even feeling too fast at first! Once you've adapted, however, Tony 3 is a godlike experience. Not only are you chaining tricks on the ground, on rails, in bowls, in vert and on the flat, but you're doing it at a breakneck pace. Brilliant. <<<



**PLUS:** Limitless gameplay. Park editor.

**MINUS:** We want to be playing online now!

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	88	90
OVERALL		
92		
A truly opulent gaming experience!		



# WWF Smackdown: JUST BRING IT!

CATEGORY: Wrestling >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: THQ >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now

>> PS2

**GEORGE SOROPOS** gets into his lycra undies for this one.

**T**he WWF has managed to survive the numerous splits, break ups and defections that plagued wrestling in the 90's to emerge again as the dominant force in wrestling. Wrestling supremo Vince McMahon can take much of the credit, but I think at least a little bit should go to THQ and their highly acclaimed and successful Smackdown games. Both earlier instalments sold in excess of one million copies world wide, and if you include potential pirate copies, brothers, sisters, friends and acquaintances it wouldn't be exaggerating to say that over ten million people have played one version or other of this series since it began.

With this being the third in the series there was always the risk of

the game not offering enough to entice the seasoned fans. Thanks to the PS2, that is definitely not a problem. The increased power and memory capacity of the PlayStation 2 has allowed for all sorts of new features and innovations.

## TRANSPARENT EYEBROWS

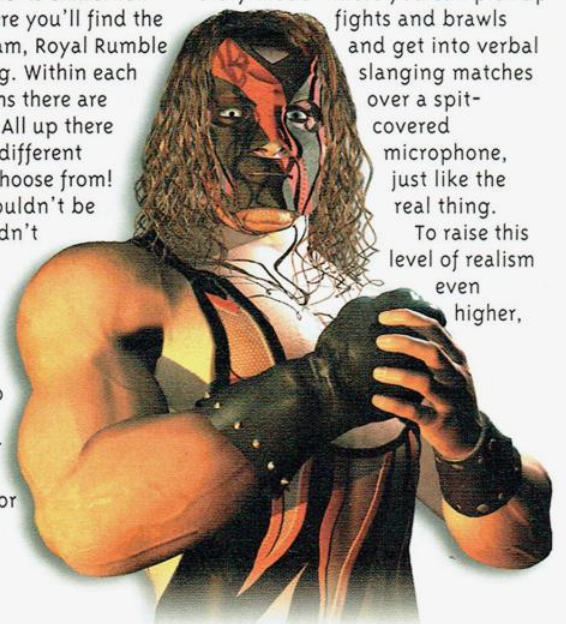
The first change you're likely to notice is the new and massive creation system that lets you make wrestlers, taunts and 'stables' The wrestler creation menu is quite phenomenal allowing you to choose everything from their size and sex to the transparency of their eyebrows! They also get three signature moves and adjustable stat ratings for their skills. You don't have to make a new wrestler but if you want to play the 'story mode' you'll need one.

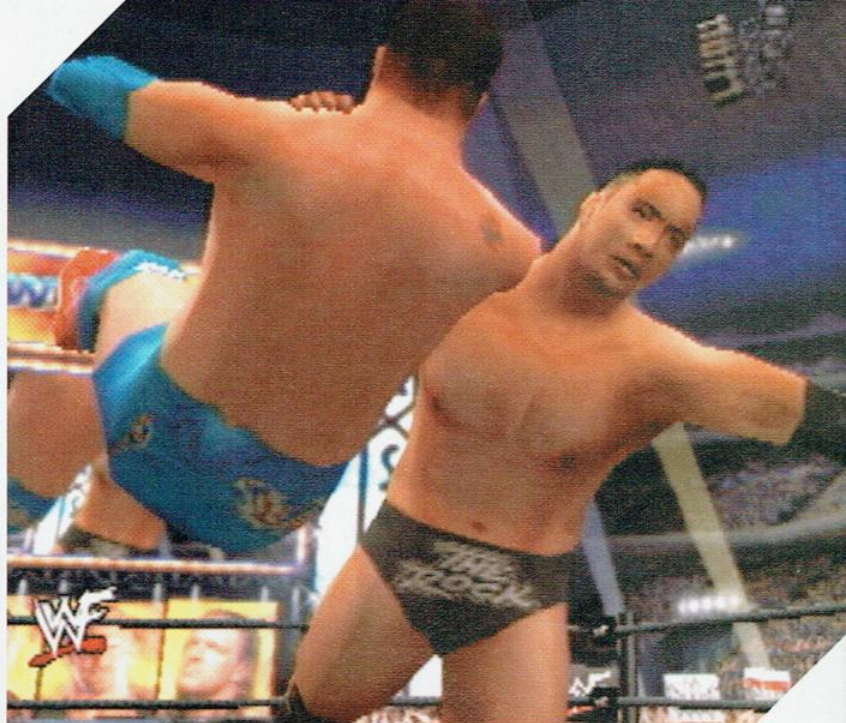
The other main game mode apart from the 'story mode' is exhibition mode, which is where you'll find the classics like Tag Team, Royal Rumble and King of the Ring. Within each of these sub-sections there are even more choices. All up there are no less than 78 different styles of match to choose from!

Smackdown 3 wouldn't be true to form if it didn't follow the latest developments in wrestling entertainment and so you can now take your fight into the crowd, take it into the car park or backstage, the boiler room, Plaza or even the lobby!

These locations are best used in the 'story mode' where you can pick up fights and brawls and get into verbal slanging matches over a spit-covered microphone, just like the real thing.

To raise this level of realism even higher,





Oh no, I forgot to bring the baby oil.



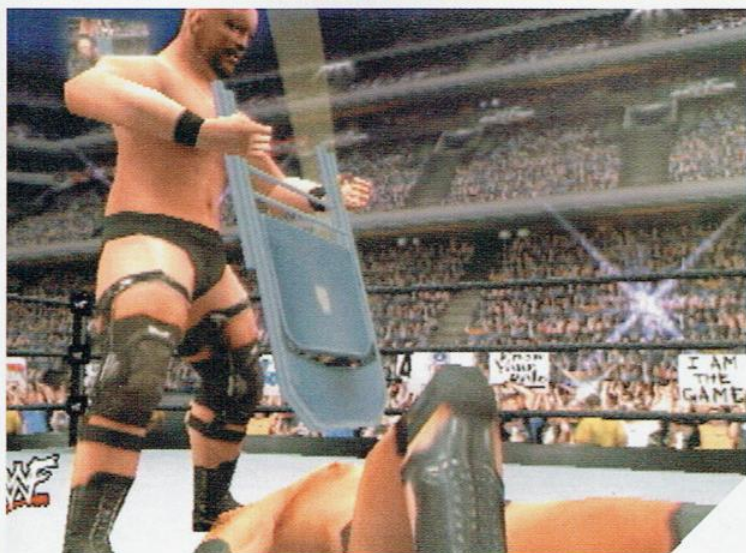
Spin your partner round n' round.



So, you free for dinner later?



First over the ladder gets a hug.



**You get to indulge in all the TV style antics, running backstage for brawls, getting special matches from Vince and trash talking.**

work has been done to make the weapons and 'foreign objects' in the game more lifelike and the interaction with the gameworld has been increased. For example, if you do a special move on an opponent, say a chokeslam into a chair, you'll do more damage to him than if you'd just done it normally. Tables can also be broken in several different ways now, by landing on them, throwing them and slamming them.

**THE ATOMIC DROP**

Smackdown has added in-game commentary for the first time, courtesy of Michael Cole and Taz, but what is even better than just adding commentary is that the microphone jockeys are fully modelled 3D characters. "So what?", you say. Well, it means that you can take them on! You might be

in the middle of a tough bout and Taz makes an unkind remark about your style, so you jump out of the ring, grab Taz and Atomic Drop him onto the commentary desk, great fun! To help you pull off these slightly illegal moves you can now distract the referee by using your partner, if you have one.

While the exhibition modes are all great multiplayer types the Story Mode is mainly designed to make things more interesting for the single player. In this mode you have to use a created wrestler and one of the WWF stars with the aim being to take or defend the wrestling world's equivalent of the Academy Awards, the title belts. In this mode you get to indulge in all the TV style antics, running backstage for brawls, getting special matches from Vince

!!! Wondering where that Xbox Raw is War feature vanished to? So are we!

and trash talking your opponents.

As you can see from the screenies this is a very good looking game, something that you can't tell from stills though is the quality of the animation, which is also very good. The game runs at a uniform 60 fps, even with the new maximum of nine wrestlers in the ring at once, making it much smoother than either of its predecessors. One thing that may or may not disturb you about the graphics is that there is no blood anywhere in the game, possibly for censorship reasons.

WWF Smackdown: Just Bring It! has set the bar pretty high for anyone wanting to follow (Raw Is War on the Xbox for example). It is a phenomenally detailed and extensive simulation of almost every aspect of the WWF and is easily the best wrestling game yet. <<<



**PLUS:** Massive array of game types and options.

**MINUS:** No Blood! Ref gets in the way a bit.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

89 86 80

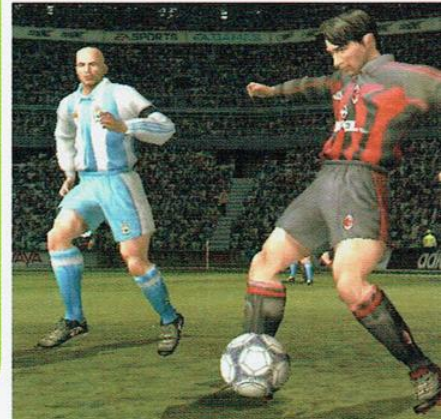
OVERALL

90

If you love the WWF, then Smackdown will bodyslam ya.

REVIEW

»»HYPER 55



# FIFA 2002

»» PS2

CATEGORY: Soccer sim >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: EA Sports >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now

## CAM SHEA kicks off on an esoteric tip...

**I**n these turbulent and frankly confusing times, it's useful to have a few "facts" about the world that can be used as barometers of normality. Indicators, if you will, that all is well with the world and that the Earth's magnetic poles haven't reversed, plunging us all into a bizarre-o-existence where Daikatana is a good game, and Hyper is called "Slothy" or something. For example: the Earth is round (well, close enough); the sky is blue (unless you're on voluntary medication); c\*\*\*t is the only real swear word left; Windows Millennium is the source of all evil; and finally, the surest of them all — that every FIFA review from here to eternity will contain the phrase "if it ain't broke". Well, welcome to bizarre-o-world, cos... aah damn, I

totally stuffed that up. Okay, so I've gone and used that phrase in order to point out that I won't be using it, but the point is that FIFA 2002 is an almost all-new game. And that's almost as refreshing as an intelligent post on the Hyperactive forums.

### BACK TO THE ANALOGUE OLDSKOOL

Yep, the FIFA franchise has taken a good hard look at itself in the gaming mirror and decided that it's been the pretty boy of the genre long enough. To be honest we were expecting FIFA 2002 to be a largely cosmetic update — liposuction here, collagen injections there — but imagine our surprise (and the resulting double checking of Daikatana scores) when bizarre-o-FIFA came on screen. Surprise soon gave way to confusion

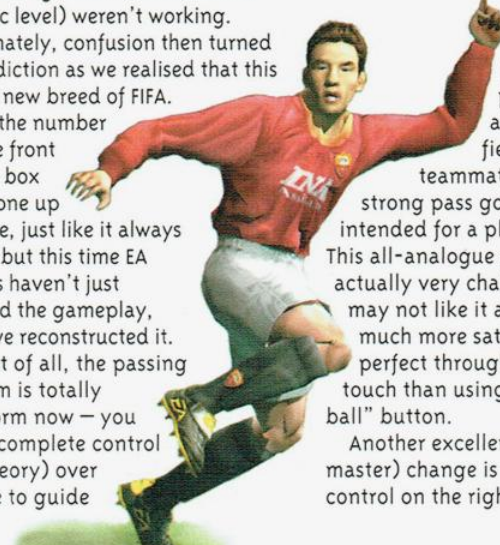
when no one had scored within the first few minutes and we found our old passing skills (accurate to an atomic level) weren't working. Fortunately, confusion then turned to addiction as we realised that this was a new breed of FIFA. Sure, the number on the front of the box has gone up by one, just like it always does, but this time EA Sports haven't just refined the gameplay, they've reconstructed it.

First of all, the passing system is totally freeform now — you have complete control (in theory) over where to guide

the ball, including a power meter for how much oomph to put behind

it. This is a huge step up for FIFA, and with practice you'll be able to place the ball anywhere on the field. Your teammates will even let a strong pass go if they think it's intended for a player further on. This all-analogue passing system is actually very challenging, and you may not like it at first, but it's much more satisfying to place a perfect through ball with a deft touch than using the "through ball" button.

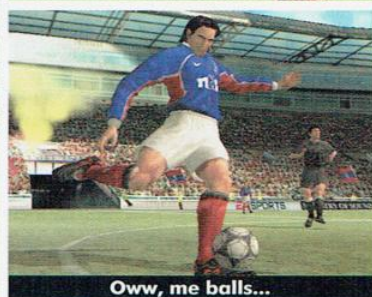
Another excellent (but difficult to master) change is the "one-two" control on the right analogue stick —







Guardian The Observer



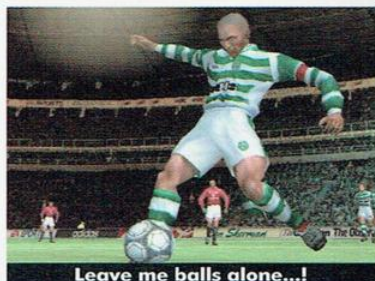
Oww, me balls...



Bananas at half-time?



Get your hands off me, human!

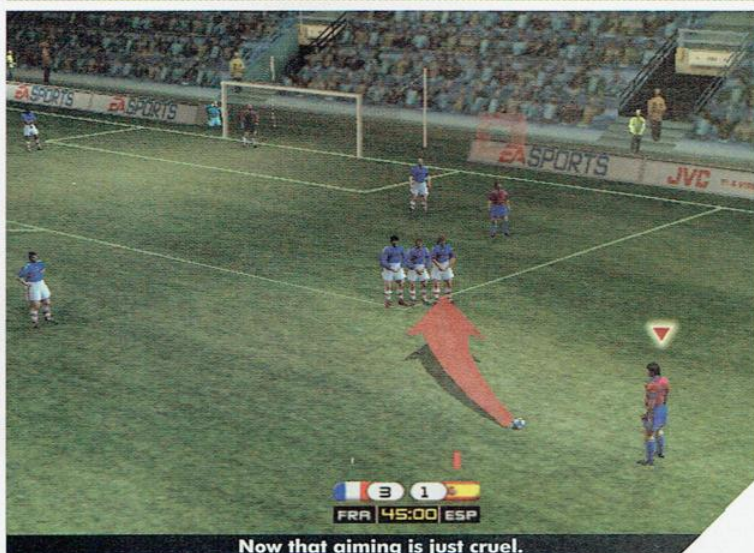


Leave me balls alone...!



1 2  
FRA 48:08 ESP

MUNITIS



3 1  
FRA 45:00 ESP

Now that aiming is just cruel.

## This time EA Sports haven't just refined the gameplay, they've reconstructed it.

With no button press involved. Simply flick the stick in your teammate's direction and he'll receive and pass the ball back. The mechanics seem a little suspect at times, resulting in passes to the wrong player in the wrong direction, but when it works it certainly feels intuitive. We're actually surprised EA Sports didn't map all passing to the right analogue, so running and passing were truly independent (Robotron anyone?), but this is a step in the right direction.

FIFA 2002 also introduces handy visual indicators of your teammates' tactics. If a player sees a potential opening to run onto a pass, a series of dotted lines in the intended path pop up. Thus, if you pass into that line, he'll execute the run and a real game of soccer starts to emerge. It's cool seeing your team actually

looking for opportunities to break away from their markers.

### THEY'RE ALL FREAKS...

True to its bizarre-o-nature, FIFA 2002 is a little mixed visually. This Is Soccer (TIS) is actually the more striking of the two, but that's mostly due to the crisp contrast created by the mostly flat shaded textures on both the players and the pitch, as opposed to

FIFA's more detailed and realistic looking texture work. Both games show off a high standard of player animation, but both games also struggle to make the players look human. FIFA is definitely the weaker of the two, to the point where close up replays can be downright scary. Where did the soccer game go, and who summoned all these demonically possessed simians from the fiery pits of evolutionary hell?

!!! The heading game is still quite silly in 2002. You can spend the entire game heading the ball back and forth if you want...

FIFA 2002 also loses out on game speed. Going from the fast setting in FIFA to vanilla flavoured This Is Soccer, is a step up in the speed department. A shame, but you get used to it soon enough. (And yes, we are aware that there is a faster setting, but it's the player movement, not the overall game speed that needs to be upped.)

Overall, this is a polished game - props to EA Sports for trying something so different. FIFA 2002 has drastically altered the soccer sim landscape, turning the natural order of things on their head. This is a tough game to master, and often frustrating. In contrast to what we said only two issues ago, TIS is now the soccer game for immediate gratification, with FIFA 2002 for those after a steeper challenge. That said, we've logged many hours on both games, and still can't decide which one we prefer. Chances are you'll be happy either way. <<



**PLUS:** It's FIFA, Jim, but not as we know it. Not as we know it.

**MINUS:** Planet of the Apes player models and skins.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

84 80 89

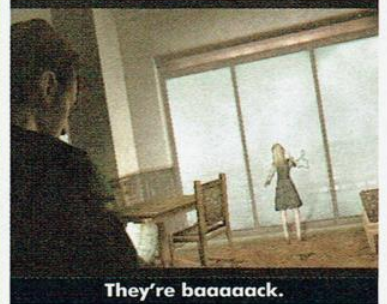
OVERALL

88

All new controls and a steep learning curve. But worth it.



Geez, not baked beans again.



They're baaaaack.



I hate cockroaches! Die! DIE!

# Silent Hill 2

» PS2

CATEGORY: Survival/Horror >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Konami >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: November

## GEORGE SOROPOS gets lost in the fog...

American towns have been increasingly overrun by zombies and all manner of flesh eating ghouls for quite a while now. Silent Hill has the distinction of being one of the more popular destinations for the undead, offering cheap accommodation and all the corpses you can carry, and it's just a stones throw away from Raccoon City. The hero of our story is James Sunderland, a man who just received a letter from his dead wife, a letter asking him to meet her in Silent Hill.

**GRABS YOU BY THE GOOLIES**  
Konami's new frightener grabs you by the goolies from the first moment and never lets go. If you're thinking that you've seen enough Survival/Horror games, think again. This is no tired Resident Evil sequel. The atmosphere of Silent Hill 2 is truly intense. The imagery and graphical style of the game is familiar but at the same time far from typical. The township is shrouded behind a veil of mist and gritty realism that immerses you

and puts you on edge. Alongside this graphical genius lies Akira Yamaka's music and audio effects that represent some of the best quality work in the industry. The music and effects are never used, as they are in films, as a giveaway to the action or as a warning but to add to the depth of the players fear and uncertainty.

Those of you lucky enough to have surround sound will also be able to enjoy the superb use of 3D positioning, gaining an advantage by being able to tell where monsters are coming from before seeing them.

**SUPERBLY FRIGHTENING**  
The original title was criticised by some for being too hard, particularly the puzzles. Silent Hill 2 has been made more accessible by offering two sets of difficulty levels to the player, one for the gameplay and the other for the puzzles, catering to players of every temperament.

!!! Silent Hill 2 will also make an appearance on the Xbox with even better visuals and sound.

The developers have also chosen to do something which all games of this type should do, offer a choice of control scheme. You can choose to play with a Resident Evil type control where you turn and then move forward or with a much more enjoyable '2D' scheme that moves your character in whichever direction you point your thumb stick.

The only real gripes with the game are with the poor voice acting and the weird analogue melee attack method that judges how hard you hit by how much pressure you put on the X button. There is never any need not to hit your enemies as hard as you can so it seems rather pointless.

Konami have produced a superbly frightening and very polished game, that's right up there with the other big PS2 games this Christmas. If you're looking for something slower-paced, eerie, moody and cinematic, then check this out. It just may be the change of pace you're looking for. <<



**PLUS:** Brilliant graphics and audio. A full-blooded experience.

**MINUS:** Analogue attack impractical. Possibly too short.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

92 90 87

OVERALL

88

It'll scare the brown underpants right off you.

The Bandicoot is BACK!

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## THE WRATH OF CORTOX



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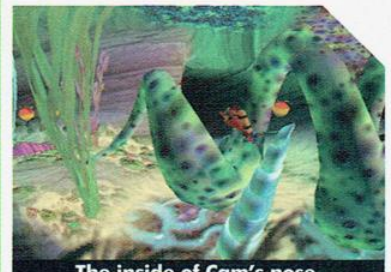


unleashed on

PlayStation®2



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The inside of Cam's nose.



This game ain't crate.



Sega's new Super Marsupial Ball.

# Crash Bandicoot: THE WRATH OF CORTEX

» PS2

CATEGORY: Platformer >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Universal >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: Now

**JAMES COTTEE** could play with crates for hours...

**C**rash Bandicoot is back! Crash: lab reject and demented platform jumper, cause of crippling PlayStation addiction across the globe. The animal testing lobby couldn't find a better spokesman than this guy, as Sony's de-facto PSX mascot put a friendly face on experimental brain surgery! The first three games in the series breathed new life into crate-based platform jumping, and lingered in the Australian charts for years after their release. And for good reason: they were well designed, exciting, varied, and had tons of replay value.

Scrolling levels filled with crates (filled with Wumpa Fruit) lie before Crash, as do vehicle based missions and menacing end of zone boss levels. Simply finishing a level may be easy, but finding every last crate for the hidden bonuses is a lot harder. Crash on PS2 doesn't meddle with the formula. The only significant change is to the quality of the graphics, which are much, much glossier than anything the old PSone could produce. Why, they're so good that the level of detail in the cut scenes and on the playable bits is roughly the same.

!!! Did we mention Jak & Daxter, Naughty Dog's new game? Buy it instead!

**O I O I O I!** It's almost as if it wasn't even made by the creators of the old Crash games we all know and love. Guess what? It wasn't! Naughty Dog, the coding maestros behind Crash Bandicoot Warped and Crash Team Racing had nothing to do with The Wrath of Cortex. In fact, they're never doing a Crash game again! If you want a fresh dose of Naughty Dog goodness, then you'd best wait for Jak & Daxter, their upcoming PS2 masterpiece.

No, Crash's PS2 debut was a production of Traveler's Tales, who are more famous for their mediocre movie tie-ins like A Bug's Life. The difference between the old Crash and the new Crash is like chalk and cheese. Like the difference between a movie where Quentin Tarantino directs, and one where he acts. The flaccid gameplay more than makes up for any graphical improvement in The Wrath of Cortex. A small child might find it amusing, but discerning gamers would get more value from one of Crash's Platinum Collection editions. <<<



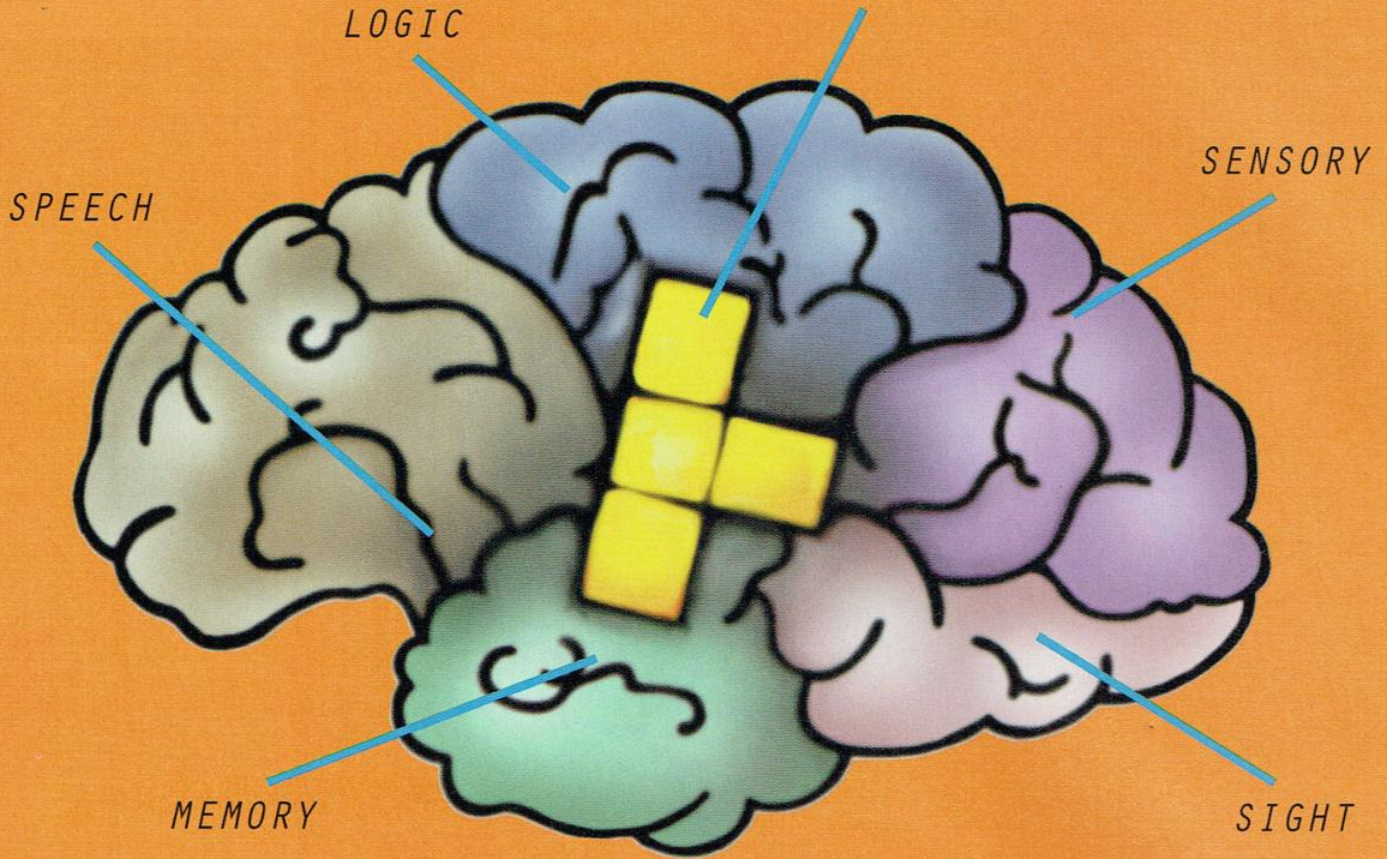
**PLUS:** Crash looks better than ever on PS2.

**MINUS:** A giant leap backward in gameplay.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80	76	65
OVERALL		
68		

Crash falls flat on PS2. A soulless clone.

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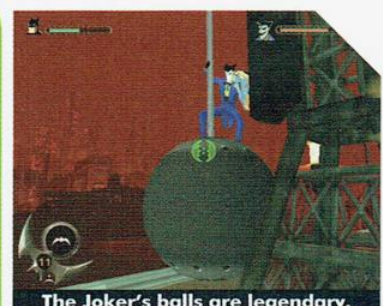
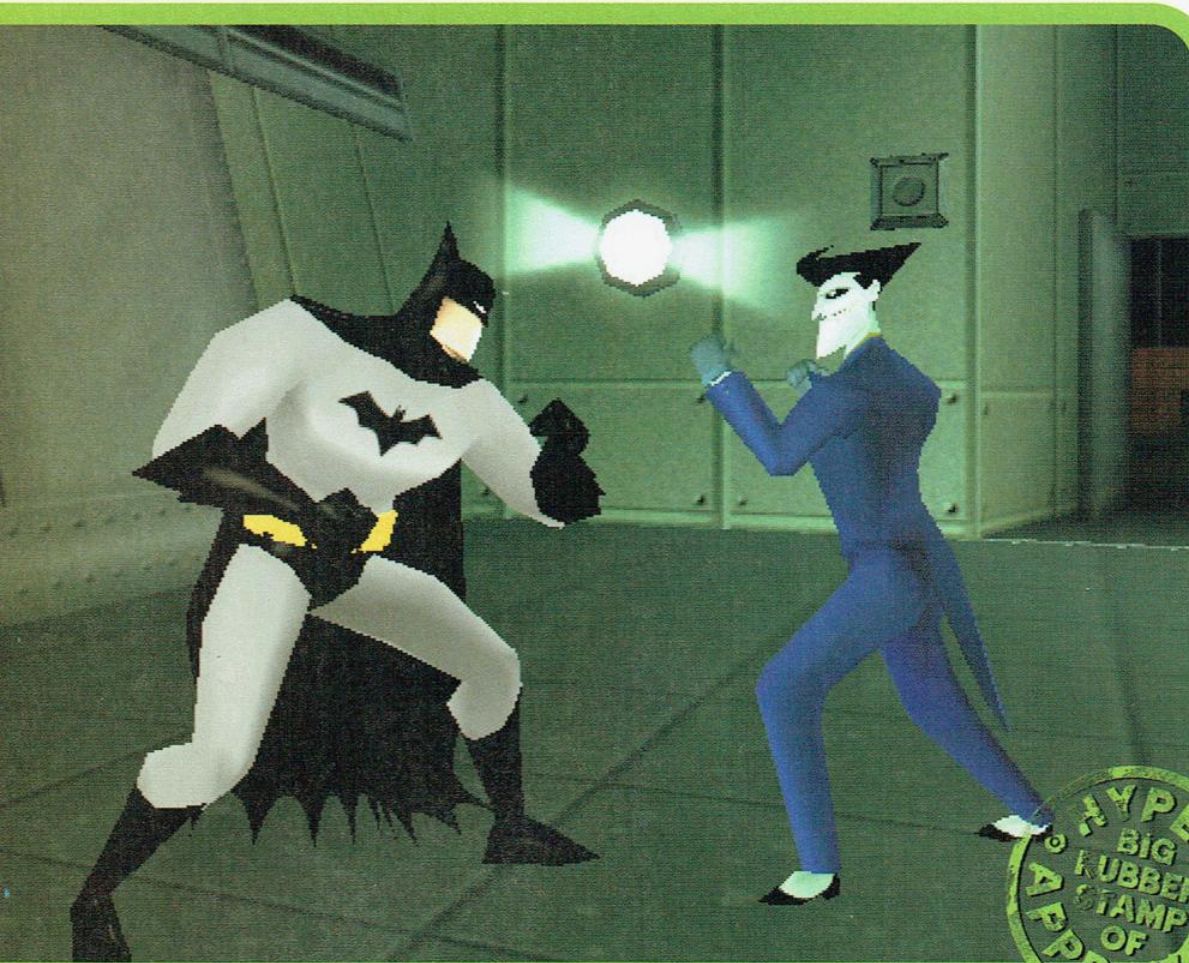


Available at these and all good game retailers

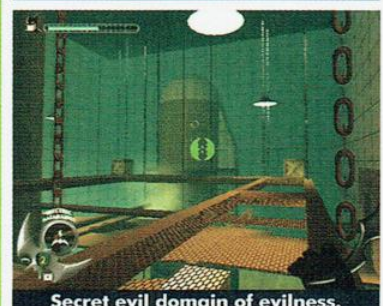


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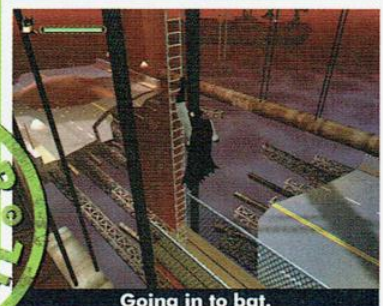




The Joker's balls are legendary.



Secret evil domain of evilness.



Going in to bat.



# Batman: Vengeance

» PS2

CATEGORY: Action/Adventure >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Ubi Soft >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: November

**JAMES COTTEE** has bats in his belfry...

**T**he Batman franchise has enjoyed a boom in popularity in recent years, thanks in no small part to the stylish animated series created by Paul Dini and Bruce Timm. Playing endlessly on cable TV, it's a dark vision of the dark knight, set in a crumbling metropolis plagued by the criminally insane. Protecting the masses from these colourful crooks is Batman, a masked avenger with a square jaw and nerves of steel. It's one of the best shows on TV, and the basis for this new adventure game for PS2.

**NICE PLACE... LOTS OF SPACE**  
To say that the cartoon comes alive in this game would be something of an understatement, as the unique look of the show is captured perfectly. All of the architecture and interior design has a 20's and 30's feel to it, a gothic "dark deco" ambiance. The night sky of Gotham is a sickly blood red, and the feeling of scale is tremendous. When Batman dashes along the rooftops, one can see elaborate, gargoyle-embellished facades from hundreds of metres away. It's an oppressive scene, where

the darkness seeps from the shadows into your very soul.  
But when you're in control of Batman, you feel like you can face any odds. The Caped Crusader is animated in lavish detail, and comes across as the master of his environment. With fine-tuned controls you can either sneak along walls Solid-Snake style, or surge about like a runaway freight train. Batman can even glide; simply hold down the jump button and his flowing cape solidifies into an ink-black glider. There's a first-person element to the game too, for using bat-grapples, batarangs, and all his other bat gadgets. He's a one-man war on crime!

**LOVE THAT JOKER!**  
Batman: Vengeance pits you against a massive criminal conspiracy hatched by the most popular villains from the show. The icy, angsty Mr. Freeze is at it again, now backed up by a force of attractive young women in mink coats. Poison Ivy and her hideous plant creatures are choking the city in strangling,

grasping weeds, and her highly suspect relationship with buxom Joker sidekick Harley Quinn continues. These and other recognisable characters return, all voiced by the same actors as in the cartoon. Best of the lot is Mark "Jedi" Hamill as the Joker.  
You also get a chance to strap into both the Bat-Mobile and the Bat-Wing, and while these levels are brief, they're very intense. Even Batman's vehicles are chock full of gadgets — you use grappling hooks for high-speed turns just like in the movies!

Vengeance looks great, sounds great, and plays great. But the highly linear nature of the game works against its long-term appeal. Tenchu and Metal Gear Solid had levels that you could solve in many different ways, challenging the player again and again. Batman Vengeance is more of a roller coaster ride. Every single second is tweaked for maximum enjoyment, but you don't get to steer. It's great fun, but stops short of true greatness. <<<

!!! Warner Bros will soon release the uncut version of Return of the Joker! YES!!



**PLUS:** Authentic voice cast, polished graphics and controls.

**MINUS:** Limited replay value, maddeningly difficult at times.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
91	93	88
OVERALL		
90		

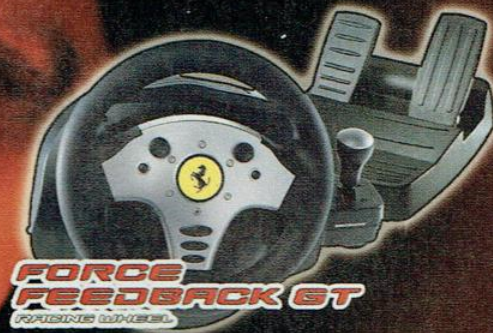
Awesome bat-action! A must-have for bat-fans.

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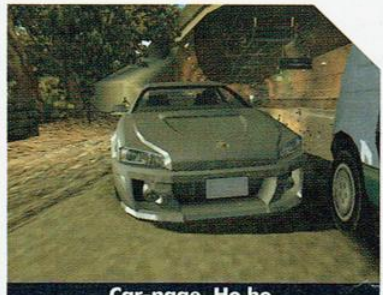
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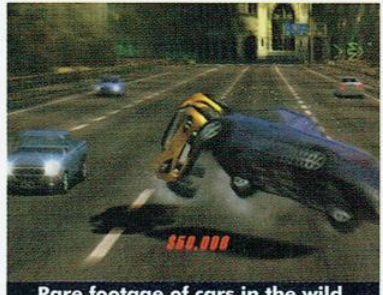
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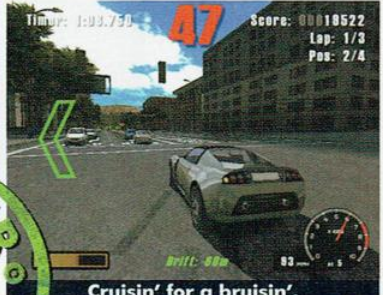




Car-nage. Ho ho.



Rare footage of cars in the wild.



Cruisin' for a bruisein'.

# Burnout

PS2

CATEGORY: Racing >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Acclaim >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: November

**CAM SHEA** reckons this is more a near-death sim than racing game.

**T**he basic concept of Burnout is this — drive incredibly fast through oncoming traffic on heavily populated roadways and survive. Or not. It's up to you. Indeed, Burnout has to be one of the first racing games where crashing is actually fun. As soon as you stack, the game cuts to a special replay mode, highlighting the collision from a variety of angles, so you can see all the bone-crunching detail. The physics of the impact itself are accurately modelled, resulting in some spectacular motor ballet. Combined with the brilliant damage model, the overall effect as cars spin, windows smash and metal crumples is entrancing.

**CRASH TEST DUMMIES HAVE NEVER BEEN SO COOL!**

When you're not crashing, however, chances are you're almost crashing — weaving through cross traffic, playing chicken on the wrong side of the road, powersliding around blind corners and generally driving at stupidly fast speeds. Indeed, as cool as the crashes are, it's the near misses and the

feeling of only just being in control that's so compelling. And once you're really good at the game, you can pull off totally insane runs that will send shivers down your spine and elicit "oohs" and "aahs" from anyone watching. In this respect, we'd even call Burnout a party game. During our extended playtests, we always had a bunch of people sitting around watching the game, waiting patiently for their turn. Eye candy and adrenaline all in one, and that's what we want from an arcade racer right?

As for game structure, there are nine cars to choose from and fourteen circuits across a number of championships. Races are against either three cars or one-on-one challenges, and you complete three laps per race. The courses range from about two minutes per lap to more than five, and from cities and coastal highways to winding mountain runs. Each course has somewhere in the vicinity of 300 other vehicles doing their own thing, so you can imagine just how hair-raising the racing can

be. Most satisfying of all, you can use the traffic to your advantage by nudging your competition into the path of oncoming vehicles, and listen to the sound of the carnage as you keep on racing.

**LEAN FORWARD IN YOUR SEAT**

The only major problem we have with Burnout is scripted traffic. In the general flow of traffic, everything feels fine, but as soon as you hit the cross streets, you'll see the same vehicles crossing in the same places every race. Some of these encounters are entirely unfair, like a bus pulling out across your path on a one lane street and blocking it entirely. For other sections you simply have to remember where the traffic appears. It's a shame that it's not completely random. Even so, this is the sort of game that you can't simply sit back and play. It's a lean forward in your seat, intense concentration, white-knuckled racing experience. Arcade racing perfection. <<<

!!! Pull off enough risky moves and you'll be rewarded with an extra speed boost for a limited amount of time. A Burnout if you will.



**PLUS:** Fast, intense and adrenaline pumping.  
**MINUS:** Scripted traffic. Not huge long-term potential.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
88	86	91
OVERALL		
90		

Burnout is an unbelievably addictive and fresh racer.



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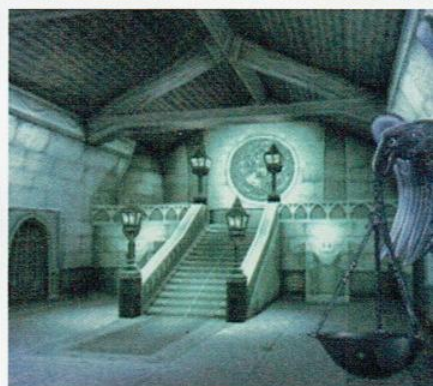
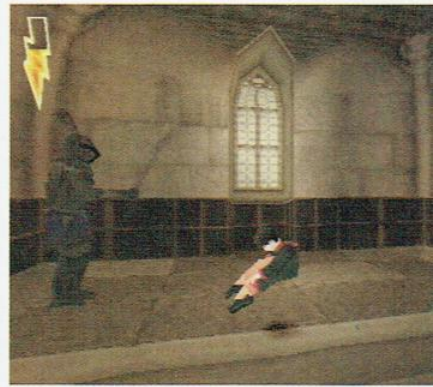
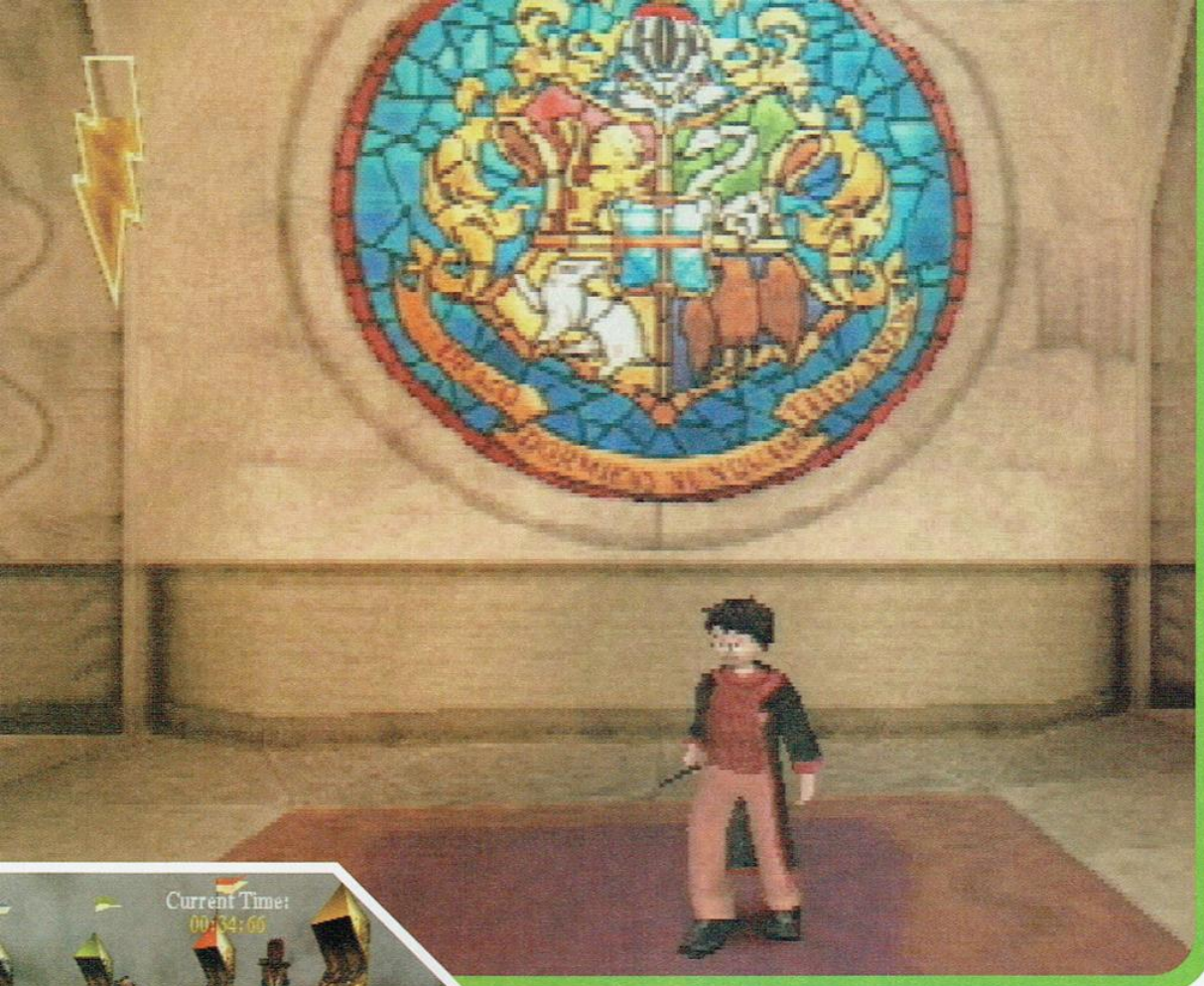


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EVOLVE  
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DON'T STEAL MUSIC



# Harry Potter

>> PSone

CATEGORY: Adventure >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: EA >> PRICE: \$79.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now

**CAM SHEA** is a Slytherin and proud of it...

**H**arry Potter fans can breathe a sigh of relief, as the first Harry Potter game is here and it's not half bad. Tracking the events of the first book, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Argonaut have produced a highly playable game that stays true to the Harry Potter world.

## JUMPY JUMPY

The game starts with Harry's arrival at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, and the majority of the game is spent in and around Hogwarts. The path of the player is carefully guided — you'll always know what task to accomplish and how to get there. Although the player is afforded some freedom to explore, the gameplay is mostly linear. Fortunately, the pacing is

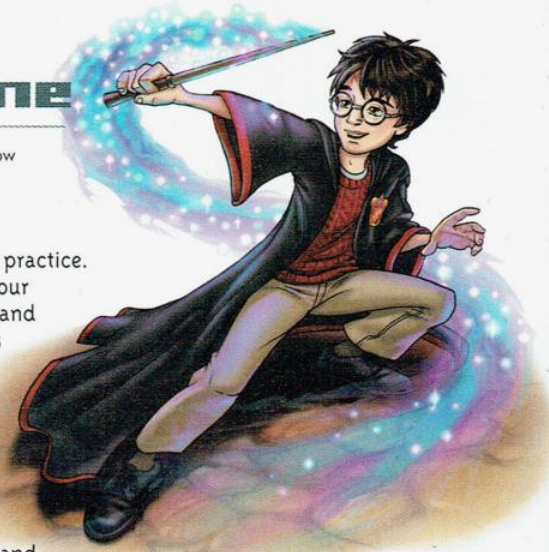
spot on, and it's packed with enough variety to keep you playing 'til the wee hours. Or should I say to keep the wee playing for hours. Yes, this game is very much skewed towards the younger Harry Potter fans... but we still couldn't help enjoying it nonetheless.

Controlling Harry is very simple — jumping and climbing are automatic, so the jumpy jumpy sections aren't as annoying as in some games. Harry can look around with the triangle button and lock on to enemies with the R1 button. Harry's abilities are limited, but they progress nicely throughout the game. In each class Harry attends he learns a new spell in a simple Simon Says game. Once you've mastered the sequence, the teacher will then take you to a new area where you'll

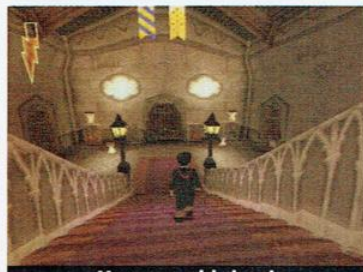
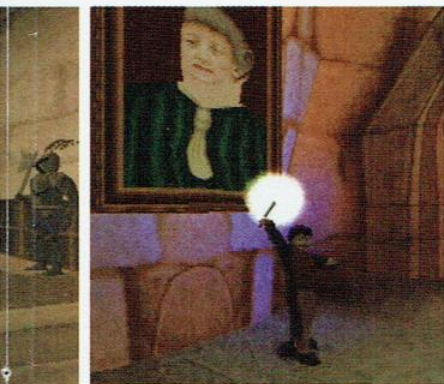
have to put the spell into practice. Although there are only four spells, they're quite cool and include levitating objects and transfiguration. Outside the classroom, launching into a spell is as simple as hitting the X button. This triggers a cool little cutscene of Harry raising his wand in preparation, and then you have to follow the onscreen cues and press the buttons in time. Simple really, but it gives spellcasting a necessary degree of interactivity, without making it too difficult or longwinded.

## SOLVE THE MYSTERY

It's the constant changes in setting and gameplay that will keep you



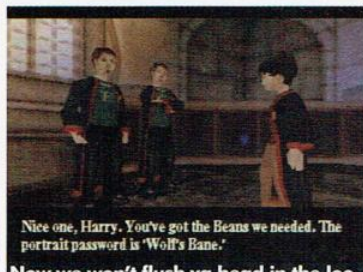
hooked to Harry Potter on PSone. In-between going to classes, you'll be duelling, broomstick racing around the castle grounds against Malfoy, helping Hagrid with Norbert the Norwegian Ridgeback, retrieving spell ingredients, finding the wounded unicorn in the forest, stopping a rampaging troll, collecting four different flavours of



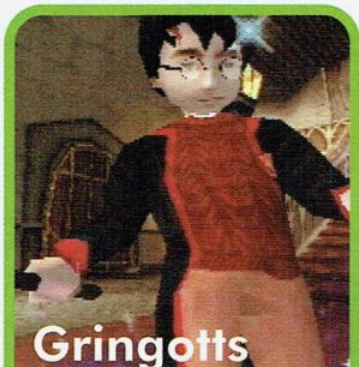
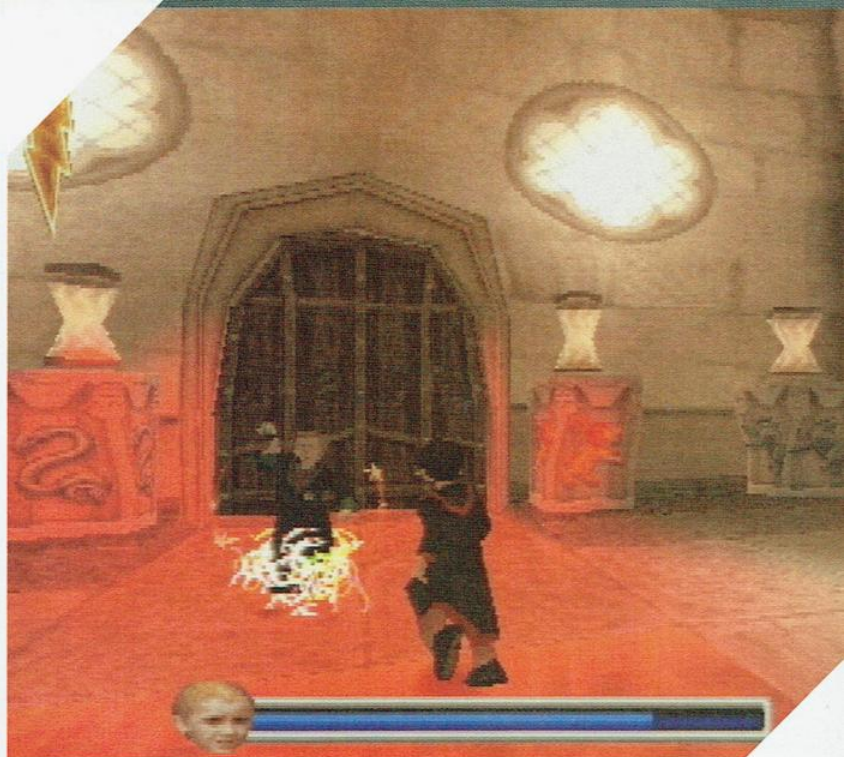
Harry up old chap!



Woah-oh oh, it's magic... you know-ow.



Nice one, Harry. You've got the Beans we needed. The portrait password is 'Wolf's Bane.'  
Now we won't flush ya head in the loo.



## Gringotts

» If you're like us, you can sense a mine cart level coming from miles away... and this game was no exception. In the books, getting money out of your account at the Gringotts (the wizard's bank) did indeed involve a high speed ride into the bowels of the Earth. Argonaut have written in a trip for Harry to Diagon alley specifically for that purpose. To be fair, however, it's not a bad take on the old mine cart ride... and what Harry Potter game would be complete without Diagon Alley?

It's simple, and practically impossible to lose, but for the young fans of the book **it's a thrill anyway.**

Bertie Botts beans for Fred and George Weasley... not to mention trying to solve the mystery of the third floor corridor. Each task/challenge is relatively short, usually well designed (especially given technical limitations) and very much in keeping with the Harry Potter world. Harry even receives his invisibility cloak about halfway through the game, leading into some cool sequences with Harry trying to sneak past Filch and his cat Mrs Norris. The cloaked Harry is also the most graphically impressive element in the game.

Best of all, however, all your actions in the game are rewarded with house points, and the race to beat Slytherin is another element designed to suck fans of the book into the game. You can, of course,

lose house points as well. For instance, to get to each class you'll have to get through a little obstacle course within a time limit. Take too long and you can kiss five house points goodbye.

On the whole the graphics are very... shall we say "PSone quality". It's hard to be objective with such oldschool hardware, but despite an often chugging frame rate, low polygon characters and frequent texture warping, the graphical defects are made up for by the authentic feel, and the fact that there are almost no camera issues. Although the engine could definitely be more sophisticated, Argonaut have pulled off some cool sequences that we thought might be out of reach. Quidditch is the prime example. The

basic goal is to follow the golden snitch and go through the rings it leaves in its path. Successfully go through enough rings and you'll gain the necessary speed to catch it. You'll also have to beat the other seeker to the snitch and avoid the bludgers. It's simple, and practically impossible to lose, but for young fans of the book it's a thrill anyway. And of course, Lee Jordan commentates during the match, which is a nice touch. Indeed, the voice acting in the game (aside from the odd bad British accent) is outstanding, and one of the coolest aspects for Potter fans is the large amount of dialogue. Malfoy in particular, is a highlight, coming across as just as snide, arrogant and nasty as you'd imagined. It can be beaten in a day, but young Harry Potter freaks will lap this one up. <<

!!! The Harry Potter movie is out now. You may even see the Star Wars trailer too.



**PLUS:** Fans will love it. Good use of aging hardware.

**MINUS:** On the easy side, so experienced gamers beware.

VISUALS 79 SOUND 85 GAMEPLAY 82

OVERALL  
**83**

A hugely entertaining game for the younger Harry Potter fans.



Anyone got a rolled-up newspaper?



Eat sticky goo fiend!



Spidey has another hot spell.

# Spiderman 2: ENTER ELECTRO

CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Activision >> PRICE: \$49.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now

**GEORGE SOROPOS** gets caught in Activision's web...

**T**he Sultan of Spandex, the Lieutenant of Lycra, and our favourite Spidey guy has come to save the city once more, this time from the evil clutches of Electro. Those of you au fait with the world of Spiderman will probably be slightly bemused by this, as Electro is hardly one of Spiderman's greatest foes, in fact he's just a small time bum and why the developers chose him to be the main villain is a mystery. Nevertheless he's there, and in your way.

## THE WEB PULL

Spiderman 2 follows up the successful and acclaimed original game with an offering of more of

the same. It seems that Activision didn't think there was much time left for the PSone and so decided to rush out what is really no more than a large expansion pack to the first release. Admittedly the story follows on from the original in the same way that comic books do, but games shouldn't be soap operas and once you start playing it doesn't take long before you start feeling like you've been there before.

There is one new move available from the start, the web pull, and some others available when you unlock or find new outfits! The problem with the web pull, apart from the name, is that it is very tricky to do and leaves you vulnerable in many situations, for example when activating, or trying to activate, switches. You'll be standing in front of some lever having a frantic panic attack as ten dudes bear down on you while you're pulling madly and getting nowhere.

## EDGES AND CORNERS

The really big pain in the behind

however is the woeful imbalance in the design of the bosses. The very first boss character you'll meet is Shocker, and that's just what he is. Why? Because he's the toughest boss in the game, that's why! After him the rest of the game is downhill all the way, making it all seem rather pointless.

There are also some very silly mission objectives such as putting out a burning car. Obviously the fire department have all been sacked in lieu of Spiderman being able to do everything. The camera also creates some problems when you are moving around, particularly up walls as it tends to fly wildly around the place when you near edges and corners.

If you love the Spider guy and the first instalment in this series, then you'll most likely get a kick out of this. But if you're looking out for quality titles for your PSone, then there are many others around, and a lot of them are now available very cheaply. <<<

!!! There will be a Spidey game specifically for the movie that comes out next May.

>> PSone



**PLUS:** New powers, new story.

**MINUS:** Doesn't add much to original, poorly designed.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY  
**80 70 68**

OVERALL  
**70**

Spiderman gets a little neglected the second time around.





Gabe goes searching for net porn.



Gabe like the odd bang.



Practical counter-terrorist outfit...



# Syphon Filter 3 >> PSone

CATEGORY: Action >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: SCEA >> PRICE: \$69.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now

**ELIOT FISH** knows about coffee filters at least...

**G**abe Logan is back once more, but instead of opting for some PS2 plastic surgery, he's sticking to the PSone, where he knows his fans are waiting for him with open arms. Maybe. Sure, Syphon Filter 1 and 2 were exciting stuff back in the PlayStation heyday, but we live in a different gaming age now, and we've played bigger and better things elsewhere. Is Syphon Filter 3 still worth a look in?

### TRIED AND TRUE

Talk about sticking with a tried and true formula. The developers of Syphon Filter 3 haven't advanced or embellished the gameplay in any great leaps or bounds in this sequel — this is very much more of the same for the series, with a few new cool things thrown in to keep your interest. The main dilemma with this subtle tweaking approach is that many gamers will be expecting a lot more from a third instalment than just what is essentially a bunch of new missions that could easily have come from Syphon Filter 2. Whilst that's not necessarily a bad thing — this game is

lots of fun to play — some new ideas or concepts for us to get our teeth into would have been nice. The mini-games that can be accessed from the main menu are a welcome addition, but it won't satisfy those wanting a whole new and improved Syphon Filter experience. I guess for that, we'll have to wait for the PS2 incarnation.

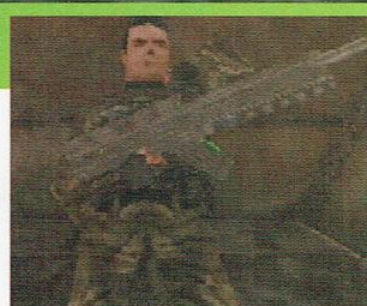
Missions actually play out as the characters testify in a court case, recounting their past missions which you then get to act out. A nice idea. The primary aim here is still to destroy everything in your path, whether it be human or object, but the developers have made an effort to spice the gameplay up with some much needed variety and there are always multiple mission objectives. For instance, one mission has you actually gliding down in a parachute, shooting at the guards down on the ground, as you try to find a safe spot to drop. There are also a tonne of gadgets that make the missions a bit more interesting than just pulling the trigger.

!!! Looks like September 11 didn't prevent this one from getting released. Kill those terrorists!!

### BANG AND GLITZ

But action is what most gamers pay the entry fee for, so when it comes to shooting shit up, the weapons are lots of fun to use. As always, the strict camera positioning can make it tricky at times to see where you want to, but the aiming is pretty well engineered. You can aim from first person, or use the auto-aim button and follow the green gun sight. This keeps the action fast-paced, except for the fact that you're always pausing the game to check your inventory, to change to a more appropriate weapon, or to check the map for your objectives. There's a good enough story, and the pacing of the game is well thought out, so you'll certainly be intrigued to the end.

If you're still gaming life away on the old-faithful PSone, then Syphon Filter 3 is a game you should definitely check out for some espionage fun. But if you've now got a PC or a next-gen console, then there's not enough bang or glitz here to really satisfy you. <<<



**PLUS:** Lots of variety, easy to play, some nifty puzzles.

**MINUS:** The visuals are a bit grimy and dark at times.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
78	77	75
OVERALL		
79		

PSone owners should be pretty happy with this one.



# Star Wars: GALACTIC BATTLEGROUNDS

CATEGORY: RTS >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: LucasArts >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: PII 400, 64MB RAM

**ELIOT FISH** wipes out the Gungans. All of them.

>> **PC**

**S**tar Wars: Galactic Battlegrounds is an interesting back pedal from LucasArts. In the wake of their utterly disappointing attempt at a 3D RTS in the shape of Force Commander, it seems that the decision was made to bring gamers the Star Wars RTS they wanted in the first place — a traditional top-down 2D strategy game.

Hyper sent out its probe droids to collect more info, and before we knew it, another RTS was in the works by none other than the experts in the genre, Ensemble Studios, the folks behind the massively successful Age of Empires series for Microsoft.

So, what we have here, is an honest attempt to "get it right" for the fans (and it's not the only new

Star Wars game to have been farmed out to more experienced development teams). However, with the Age of Empires engine now starting to show its age (no pun intended), is Galactic Battlegrounds just a little too late to truly impress?

## **GREAT KID, DON'T GET COCKY**

If you never played Age of Empires II on the PC, then you're going to get a whole lot more out of Battlegrounds than those who did. The simple reason being that this is pretty much the same game, but with different graphics. It really is quite amazing how Ensemble Studios have been happy enough to give the AOEII engine a facelift and add some Star Wars story, designs and sound effects. Don't get me wrong... a lot of very hard work has

gone into this game, but very little work has gone into making it an original strategy game experience. I guess LucasArts told them, "...if it ain't broke..." Sadly, this has resulted in Battlegrounds playing more like playing an AOEII Star Wars Total Conversion (hey, you can even use all the same AOEII keyboard shortcuts). But is that necessarily a bad thing? AOEII is an amazing game after all...

In fact, if you never played AOEII, and you're inclined to like a bit of Star Wars, then Galactic Battlegrounds is going to be immensely fun. For Star Wars



fans, there is a lot of detail here, and certainly a lot of depth that was sorely lacking from Force Commander. Playable races include the Empire, Gungans, Trade Federation, Wookiees, Naboo and the Rebellion, all with their own unique technology trees and hero characters. Finally, we get to control Darth Vader in combat and send in legions of Stormtroopers to annihilate every living Gungan. Or build up a huge, lumbering Wookiee army and decimate their fellow Rebels... just for kicks. Yes, the prequel and original era of Star Wars have



I will not sign the treaty Sen...aaaaarrgggghhhh!



The Federation do a little "trading".



Take a look AT-AT this!



Man you've got a big head.



The missile has "Jar Jar" written on it.



## Finally, we get to control Darth Vader in combat and **send in legions of Stormtroopers** to annihilate every living Gungan.

been mixed here, but to good effect. The Trade Federation units can face off against the Empire quite competently thanks to some well thought out unit design and some serious unit balancing and gameplay tweaking. Every AOEII unit has a Star Wars counterpart, so if you mastered AOEII, it won't take long to be ruling the galaxy with an iron fist.

### BUT I CAN'T FIGHT A WAR FOR YOU

As you endlessly mine the resources of food, carbon, ore and crystals, you'll be able to upgrade your units, research new technologies (like better armour for your troopers, better motivators for your worker droids, more advanced mechs and lots more)

!!! Look out for the mod community to make some great stuff for this title.

and evolve your humble command center into a full-blown base with walls, turrets and an array of factories pumping out all sorts of cool Star Wars units. Medical droids, scout bikes, AT-ATs, Jedi and Sith... you'll really enjoying exploring the depths and detail of this game. Not only do you get a full campaign/story mode that is also littered with "hero" characters like Han Solo and Luke Skywalker, but Galactic Battlegrounds has the same robust skirmish mode as AOEII. There is also a campaign editor so you can set up and play classic set-piece battles from the movies, or whatever you wish.

There are still some AI and unit pathing issues, which was always a problem with these older 2D RTS

titles, so I guess that's the age of the AOEII engine rearing its ugly head. It's ever frustrating having to baby sit units across the map. Sometimes they will inexplicably allow the enemy to walk right past them unless you've grabbed them by the head and pointed them in the right direction. There's also not a lot of logic in how some units decide what next to attack after their current target is defeated – sometimes a building seems more important to them than the half a dozen enemy soldiers standing next to them. Minor quibbles aside, for the uninitiated, Galactic Battlegrounds is an epic, challenging and fun strategy game. However, it is based on ageing RTS title, and for some of us, the magic isn't there anymore. <<<



**PLUS:** Authentic Star Wars experience, lots of detail.

**MINUS:** So many hot-keys to learn... or re-learn.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

82 89 86

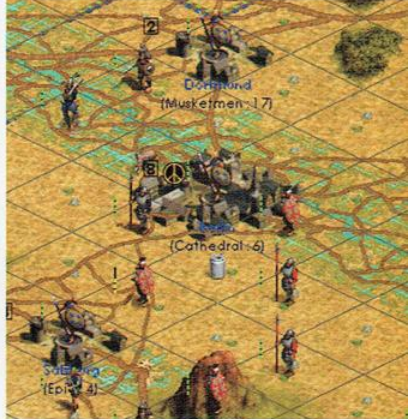
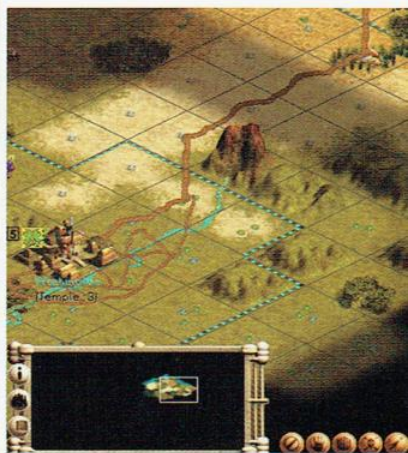
OVERALL

85

Solid strategy gaming, even if it feels a little "been-there".

REVIEW

>>HYPER 71



DOMESTIC ADVISOR

City	Food	Production	Production
Berlin	10	10	10
Heidelberg	10	10	10
Munich	10	10	10
Hamburg	10	10	10
Heliopolis	10	10	10



# Civilization III

CATEGORY: Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Infogrames >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: P300, 32 MB RAM

**JAMES COTTEE** is addicted to something far worse than crack...

**S**id Meier's Civilization: landmark game, or human tragedy? Most PC gamers face Civ addiction at some point in their lives, and its crippling effects can stop any productive lifestyle in its tracks. A turn-based strategy institution, Civ is one of those rare games that can totally captivate the player. All too often one completely loses track of time, only to stare dumbfounded at the rising sun that follows a night of strategic oblivion. The power of Civ is a terrible, wonderful thing.

**GLOBAL DOMINATION**  
The premise is simple. You, as the immortal, benevolent dictator of a human civilisation, must guide your tribe from the stone age through to the 21st century. You must found

cities, raise armies, till the soil, and spread your influence across the globe. Wheel and deal with rival civs, and if they get in your way, adjust the borders by way of force. Victory comes from building a vibrant, advanced society that stands the test of time.

Although there were cosmetic improvements between Civ 1 and 2, the basic mechanics of the game were the same. By harvesting food and mineral resources you could build structures and military units, and the benefits of trade were split at your discretion between gold, science and luxuries. For game bonuses, you could set the peasants to build Wonders of the World. Barbarian incursions? Build the Great Wall, and keep those teeming Mongols in their place!

The addictive quality of Civ comes from the fact that there's always something on the boil, and you feel like you really achieve something every turn. One minute you'd finally build that trireme so you could explore the seas; the next you'd develop Bronze Working so you could build phalanxes; the next you'd finally destroy that pesky Roman colony... With randomised maps, user created campaigns, and endless tactical possibilities, you could play every day for months and never get sick of Civ.

But after a few years, shortcomings became apparent. The only way to win was to butcher all

the other civs, or to build a spaceship and send it to Alpha Centauri. Loopholes in the rules only became more irritating over time: In Civ 1 it was possible (and often desirable) to develop Genetic Engineering before Electricity. So now that the game concept is ten (10) years old, the Civ elite are ready for an update.

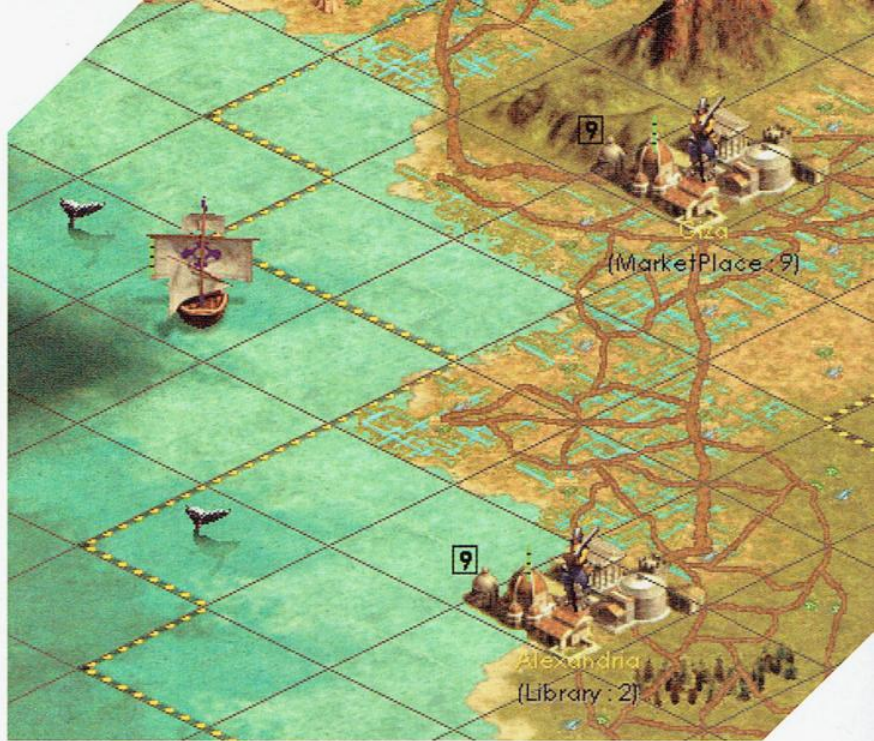
Civilization III gives the game a complete overhaul, introducing many improvements and refinements. There are now six different ways to win, for a start. One irritating thing about Civ was that you could have conquered 95% of the globe, but until you found that







Lots of little people to abuse, crush, starve and bleed for tax.



**MILITARY ADVISOR**

Total Units: 14  
Free Units Allowed: 8  
Army support cost: 5 gold/turn

Available Leaders: Crassus, Hadrian, Austin, Naon

Puny France is no match for our mighty military machine. I suggest we send in the paper airplanes...

Your Army of the Roman Republic

Military Intelligence: The French Army (Monarchy) WAR

You have: An Embassy, A Military Alliance, A Mutual Protection Pact

View by Unit | City

Rome	5 units	Catapult (5 turns)
Montreal	3 units	
Guam*	1 unit	
Kerplokistan	1 unit	Warrior (2 turns)
Stalingrad	1 unit	
Seattle	5 units	

Warrior (5) 3 turns  
Explorer (3)  
Catapult (1) 3 turns

We will watch your career with great interest!

## The addictive quality of Civ comes from the fact that there's **always something on the boil...**

last pesky enemy city you couldn't win. With Domination mode turned on, you need only cover 2/3 of the planet's land with your empire to claim victory. Diplomatic Victory is also possible, assuming you build the UN wonder. Cultural Victory is obtained if you amass enough culture points, one of the new game elements.

### CULTURE CLUB

No longer can you just run a barbarous empire geared only for war; you have to build things like Temples and Libraries in your cities to ensure your borders continue to expand. Wonders of the World are good for amassing culture points every turn, and so are universities, coliseums, and cathedrals. Taken to the extreme, this can be a truly insidious tactic, as weak foreign cities can be utterly absorbed if they fall within your cancerous borders. Sort

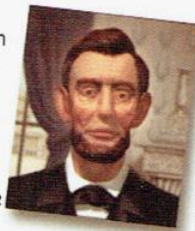
of like how all that American TV is slowly turning us into yanks, you dig?

Culture is an intriguing addition to the big picture, but for the nuts and bolts of gameplay the biggest change is how

!!! Civ III ships with a campaign generator. Australia versus the world? It's possible!

resources are handled. There are still bonus squares dotted around the map (Wheat, fish, whales, etc) that make those tiles more productive, but now resources affect what you can and cannot build. You may have the Iron Working Advance, but unless one of your worker units has built a road up to an Iron deposit, you can't build any Swordsmen.

Historically, this is a very authentic addition to the mix. No matter how big your



civ is, there is probably something you'll have to trade for from one of your rivals. And if the price is too high, you may have to take it by force. With everything from spice to uranium scattered across the globe, the need to foster production adds incalculable depth to an already excellent game design.

For Civ veterans, Civilization III is a shot in the arm, a new reason to go on living. The interface has been streamlined, the animations are cool and the randomised sound effects are stunning. With civ-specific units and bonuses, new rules to master and a truly classy look and feel, Civilization III is the perfect strategy game. Let Civ take over your life, and take over the world! <<<



**PLUS:** Better graphics, sound and controls, much more depth.

**MINUS:** Heinously addictive, nothing else really.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY

92 93 96

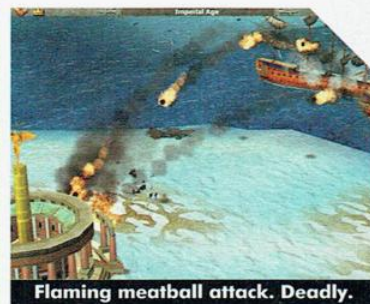
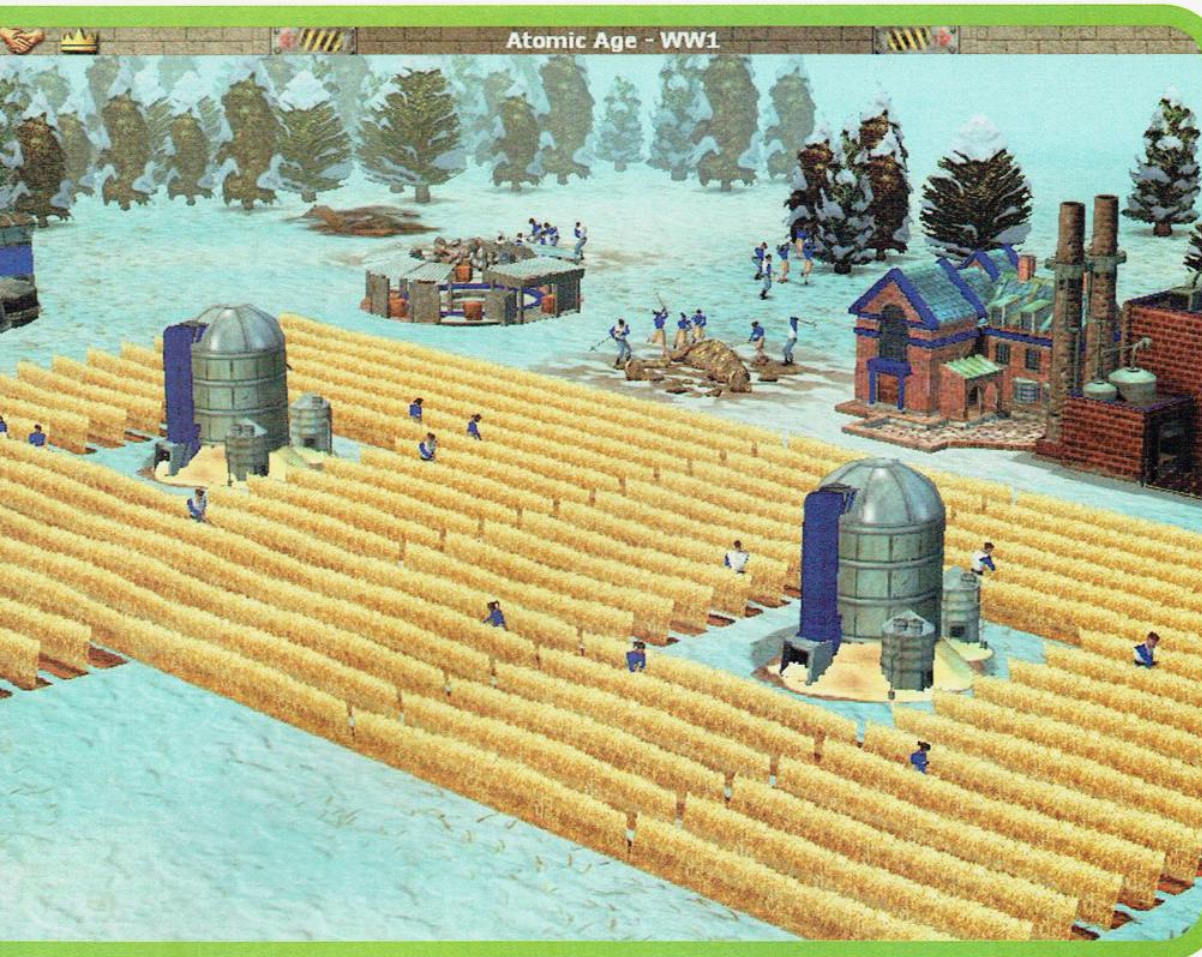
OVERALL

95

Don't plan on going outside for a year or so.

REVIEW

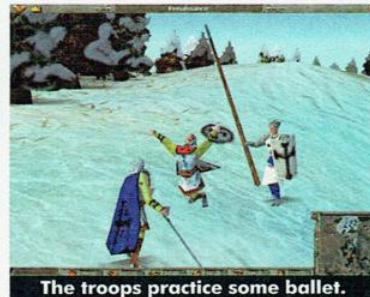
>>>HYPER 73



Flaming meatball attack. Deadly.



Nice to meet you too.



The troops practice some ballet.

# Empire Earth

>> PC

CATEGORY: Strategy >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: Sierra >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: November >> REQUIRED: PII 400, 64MB RAM

**ELIOT FISH** always wanted to be called Emperor...

**H**ow tell me, who out there doesn't want to trample people with elephants, raze ugly villages, build temples in their own honour, drop nuclear weapons on whining farmers and plunder the landscape until it's a dry, lifeless shell? You really should try it. Empire Earth is one of a few games this issue that allow you to be the grumpy overlord of your dreams. But after hyping itself up to be the most epic of all strategy games ever, it turns out that Empire Earth is more of a thinning rainforest rather than a thick jungle of gameplay.

## PICK ON THE LITTLE PEOPLE

A while ago, Empire Earth was showing immense promise. It really did appear to be the game that would have everything — an array of interesting time periods, a bunch of different cultures, a mixture of story, strategy and economic management... and all coming from the brain of Rick Goodman, lead designer of Age of Empires. How could it fail? Well, whilst it's certainly a rich game full of

goodness, it seems that the attempt at covering every stage in history has resulted in a game that over-stretches itself to the point where you never get to dive in as deep into any particular aspect as you'd like.

You have the choice of historical scenarios, four different single-player Campaigns, random maps, editing tools, multiplayer... Hey, variety is great and all, but what happened to the open singleplayer mode of evolving your game from scratch to a futuristic age teeming with killer robots? It seems that at some stage, this option was axed. The game has been broken down into four separate campaigns, each dealing with a different age of technological evolution. On top of this, the campaigns have become character driven, which tends to detract from the whole attraction of acting as the omnipotent overlord — events are scripted and tightly restricted. Now you have to worry about Frank the Lord of Horse Whispering and make sure he lives. Sigh.

## PAPER, SCISSORS, ROCK

Still, there's a lot to get your teeth into here. As usual, resource management is the key to growth. Iron, Stone, Gold, Wood and Food keep your people thriving and your domain expanding, and when it's time to evolve into, say, the Iron Age, all your units will reflect the change visually, and you'll then have access to more technologies and new units. You can even improve specific stats of your units with Civilisation points that you earn by completing objectives.

Combat is based around the "scissors, paper, rock" concept with each unit having a stronger and weaker opponent. This helps to discourage swarming mass attacks, as you may find huge sections of your army getting cut down unnecessarily. In some ways this works very well, except that it's a stress managing your units in battle.

Empire Earth is still a good strategy game that will probably only improve with further patches, mods and custom campaigns. <<<

!!! For Empire Earth fan ramblings, news and downloads: [www.eenc.net](http://www.eenc.net)



**PLUS:** Long shelf life, fancy zooming camera.

**MINUS:** Lacking in overall character. Too scripted.

VISUALS SOUND GAMEPLAY  
**85 86 84**

OVERALL  
**83**

Will reward the dedicated who can wait for mods and stuff.

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MAC



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CHAT



SEGA



ARCADE



NINTENDO 64



Fishing for a compliment?



Now where do I use this rubber duck?



It's your turn to buy toilet paper.



A Blade Runner moment.



# The Longest Journey

>> PC

CATEGORY: Adventure >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Funcom >> PRICE: \$\$\$ >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >> REQUIRED: P-166, 32MB RAM

**DAVID WILDGOOSE** is a true adventurer at heart.

**A**dventure games of the point-and-click variety were once the sole domain of competent interactive fiction. However, throughout the 90's their star dimmed, replaced by brighter entities in the night sky of PC gaming. Roleplaying games — the Black Isle triumvirate of *Fallout*, *Baldur's Gate* and *Planescape Torment*, in particular — and the rise of narrative-led action titles such as *Deus Ex* have absorbed the adventure genre, retooling its chief strengths (story and character interaction) into more accessible forms. The adventure game hasn't died, it's just gone undercover.

The *Longest Journey* doesn't disguise its heritage. This is point-and-click adventuring laid bare, in love with the genre's traditions and determined to prove they still mean something eleven years after *The Secret of Monkey Island*.

**BLADE RUNNER IN VENICE**  
In a sense, it succeeds; Funcom has crafted a near-flawless genre-piece, sure to please many a nostalgic gamer, but you can't help feeling it's

all a little too late. The future of interactive fiction won't involve using a clamp, a length of rope and an inflatable rubber ducky to retrieve a key, but rather will take its cue from *Deus Ex* and provide the player with a toolset that enables multiple solutions to the game's obstacles. In 2001, *The Longest Journey* is somewhat of a guilty pleasure. It's anachronistic design reminds you of how far game design has progressed since *Sam & Max* hit that road, but you can't help loving it all the same.

The anachronism extends to the game's setting, the parallel worlds of Stark and Arcadia, representing science and magic respectively. Heroine April Ryan, an 18 year-old art student, finds herself drawn into an ancient conflict over whether Stark and Arcadia should reunite after millennia of division. The art used to depict each world is incredible. With its monolithic towers, hovercars and grimy canals, Stark appears as if Ridley Scott had opted to set *Blade Runner* in Venice; Arcadia steers clear

of Tolkien-esque cliché, offering a refreshing take on the fantastic that is thankfully free of elves and orcs.

**SIMPLE AND POLISHED**

April Ryan is a revelation. Equipped with a range of understandable and genuinely human emotions, motives and vulnerabilities, she's one of the most sympathetic and engaging game characters in years.

Indeed, Ragnar Tornquist, the game's scriptwriter, has excelled across the board, populating both worlds with characters of depth (though inevitably there's the odd one-dimensional cipher) and, crucially, feeding them with some great dialogue. Though the voice acting occasionally grates and conversations can be very long, you won't get tired of talking to everyone and clicking on every last dialogue option. All in all, this really is about as good as adventure gaming gets.

The last great true adventure game? Probably. Unless Funcom makes a sequel... <<<

!!! For those wondering about Anarchy Online, the four-year story arc has just begun...



**PLUS:** Well-paced and well-scripted story. Gorgeous graphics.

**MINUS:** Old-fashioned design shows its age.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
92	87	90
OVERALL		
91		

Adventure fans will love it. Everyone else — give it a try.



Feel nothing.



Feel everything.

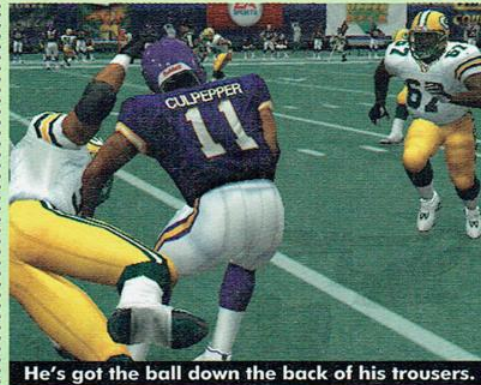
Experience every bump and bend as you take to the track with a Logitech® Driving Force steering wheel. It features realistic force-feedback, foot pedals and even a moulded lap attachment so you can play from your favourite driving seat. And it's compatible with the latest PlayStation® 2 games such as

Gran Turismo™ 3: A-spec and World Rally Championship™, with more great new titles coming soon. Make sure you don't let anything get between you and the ultimate driving experience.

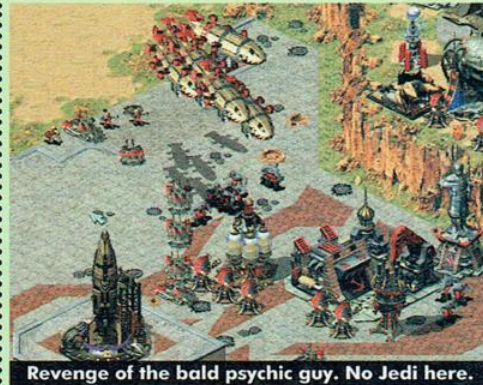




Bang bang, you dead.



He's got the ball down the back of his trousers.



Revenge of the bald psychic guy. No Jedi here.



» PS2

## Half Life

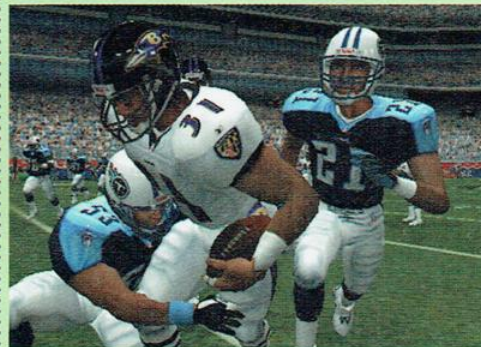
CATEGORY: First Person Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: Sierra >> PRICE: \$99.95 >> RATING: MA15+ >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

A seminal classic from Valve software, Half-Life started a renaissance in PC first-person-shooters. Doom and Quake were little more than mindless violence, but Half-Life introduced a strong story element through ingenious level design, judicious use of scripted events, and by messing with the player's head. And for those just into mindless violence, there's Counter-Strike, the popular terrorist-killing mod for online and LAN play.

So why, after years that have seen Half-Life migrate to the bargain bins, would you want to buy it full price for the PlayStation 2? The PS2 version does include the entire original game, but it's a lesser experience on Sony's black box. The graphics are murkier, the sound is tinny, and aiming with the Dual Shock 2 is no picnic. You can't download patches or mods, let alone Counter-Strike, and the multi-player option is a sick joke.

What this new version does offer is an entirely new co-operative campaign. There hasn't been nearly enough co-op action on the PS2, and Half Life is a step in the right direction. Set on the same fateful day at the Black Mesa laboratory as the other Half Life games, you and another human player must face hordes of nasty alien mutants, often splitting up to attack problems from different angles.

It's well done, but only one facet of a larger package. If you can only afford one shooter on the PS2, then you'd best save your money for something else. - James Cottee



» PS2/PC

## Madden NFL 2002

CATEGORY: Sports >> PLAYERS: 1-2 >> PUBLISHER: EA Sports >> PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

If only EA Sports put the same amount of research and cold hard cash that has gone into making Madden, into some of their more neglected titles, such as Cricket 2002. You see, Madden NFL 2002 is one of the best EA Sports games this year, sacking all its opposition with one forceful crunch. It's polished, looks amazing, it's packed full of options and plays like a treat. Just imagine a cricket or rugby game this accomplished...

Even if you don't know all the intricacies of the game, or any of the rules for that matter, playing Madden 2002 is still lots of fun and over time you'll pick up how a game of NFL really works. There are so many options to tweak, and so many game modes, that a gamer of any skill level can get something out of this game. Everyone will gasp at some of the replays - the graphics really are that good. From the shine of the players' helmets, to the subtle blur effect that creates more depth of field, Madden 2002 is gorgeous. The smooth, responsive controls also help to make you feel like you really are taking part in an NFL telecast. The player animations are so varied that it's rare that you see players repeating themselves - they adjust their helmets and gloves, they scratch, they talk to each other - and the commentary compliments this with an insight into how the game is progressing and which players are performing well. Of course, if you bought or played Madden NFL 2001, then you won't be quite as impressed, as the improvements are minimal. However, if you dig NFL and just bought a PS2, then you can be assured that Madden NFL 2002 is an incredibly satisfying game. - Eliot Fish



» PC

## Yuri's Revenge

CATEGORY: RTS >> PLAYERS: 1-8 >> PUBLISHER: EA >> PRICE: \$44.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

Unlike some of the, at times, fairly lackluster expansion sets which have been delivered by Westwood in the past, this latest effort is truly deserving of your dollars. Instead of tossing you a few more units and maps to play with, Westwood have gone the whole hog and produced a complete cohesive campaign and a totally new force for you to fight. Yuri's Revenge has a complete roster of new units, special weapons and with that comes a whole lot of great multiplayer and skirmish strategies. The campaign mode sees you steering the Allies and Soviets against Yuri, and although both campaigns are fun, it is a bit of a pity there isn't a dedicated campaign for Yuri himself. That said you'll see plenty of the wrinkly headed Russian as you have to beat him not once, but twice as Westwood use time travel to tie this all together in a narrative which is for the most part compelling.

The new units for the Soviets are a bit disappointing as the only real worthwhile inclusion is the awesome Siege Chopper, which can attack from the air with machine guns, and then deploy on land and deliver massive artillery bursts. This unit is one of the best in the game, but it is disappointing that the Russians don't have much else that is new up their sleeves. The Americans get more. There is the brilliant rocket toting Guardian GI, the all-crushing Siege Tank, and the Robot Tank.

Yuri's forces are pretty formidable and interesting too, with many new mind control units, a grinder building where you can recycle mind controlled enemy units for cash (uuurgh!) and there are even super powerful building bashing genetic mutants. - Steve Polak

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
80	79	85	79

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
91	87	89	90

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
73	90	83	82

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# Warioland 4

**GBA**

CATEGORY: Platformer >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Nintendo >>  
PRICE: \$69.95 >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>



The ultimate gaming anti-hero is back, and his fourth adventure is packed with charm, playability and personality. Warioland 4 takes place across five worlds, each with four stages, and the variety in design – both visually and gameplay-wise, is hugely impressive.

Wario has a great set of base abilities, from his dash moves and throw, through to the all-important

butt-stomp. Most developers would have been content to base all the gameplay around those moves, but Nintendo have added greatly to the game's depth and variety, by giving creatures in the environment the power to transform Wario. It's a similar approach to Klonoa 2 and it works just as

well, allowing the gameplay to constantly evolve. Some of the coolest transformations in the game are Pogo Wario that sends him careening high up into the level, Bat Wario where you can fly around the map as long as you avoid lightsources, and Zombie Wario where he lumbers along and liquifies if you jump (allowing you to sluice through to lower levels!). The animations that accompany all these different personas are simply hilarious too. The best animation, it has to be said, is when you have to set fire to Wario to get past certain blocks!

From Egyptian tombs and tropical forests to industrial meat lockers, settings change constantly in Warioland 4, but the learning curve is spot on. Beating each level isn't hard, but finding all the secrets is a little trickier, as Nintendo have saved all the hardest



Druggy Wario



Bulimic Wario



puzzles for hidden items. You'll have to master every move in the game to find them all.

In short, Warioland 4 is a stunning demonstration that Nintendo are still the masters of 2D platforming. Plus, Wario has more personality than Mario ever had. Brilliant. - Cam Shea

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
89	83	90	90

# Spiderman: Mysterio's Menace

**GBA**

CATEGORY: Platformer >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Activision  
PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: PG >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

After creating the standout GBA port of Tony Hawk 2, Vicarious Visions are back with a strong follow-up in the form of Mysterio's Menace (MM). Although their previous Spiderman game demonstrated a good grasp on the property, it was flawed in many ways. With MM, Vicarious Visions are a step closer to realising the kind of game that Spiderman fans crave.

MM is largely a straightforward action game that rises above its peers thanks to Spiderman's abilities and the relatively free form level design. At the start of the game you have a choice of three flashpoints (and three villains) to investigate – downtown (Hammerhead), factory (Big Wheel) and the docks (Rhino). Each of these levels have several paths through, and open up more levels when completed. Unsurprisingly they're littered with bad guys waiting for a pummeling. They can be very quick to attack, but



Spidey ties up the bad guy's shoe.



I'm evil crazy guy!



Spiderman has a good range of moves, from projectile web attacks to hand-to-hand combat (the drop down from the ceiling move is sweet). There's nothing outstanding about the fighting, however, and the animations are a little lacking. Fortunately, Spiderman's versatility helps make things more interesting.

He's fast, climbs on any surface and can swing from building to building. The ability to go anywhere is very cool, and sneaking around a level upside down is a lot of fun.

The gameplay is pretty standard beat 'em up fare, with little in the way of puzzles, which is a shame. The best levels are those where the goal is greater than simply getting to the end of the level, such as

rescuing a certain number of hostages. The range of environments is reasonable, with the dance party level in particular being a highlight. Worth a look for Spiderman fans. - Cam Shea

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
78	76	80	79



# Spyro: Season of Ice

**GBA** CATEGORY: Platformer >> PLAYERS: 1 >> PUBLISHER: Universal  
 PRICE: STBA >> RATING: G >> AVAILABLE: Now >>

No longer exclusive to PlayStation, everyone's favourite dragon (hey, he's only got Puff to compete with), Spyro, has raised his oh-so-cute head on GBA. The storyline involves the evil two-headed Grendor and his gigantic double headache. A Panadol obviously wouldn't do the trick, so Grendor enlists the aid of an army of Rhynoc thugs to help him gather the 100 fairy wings needed for

his pain killing spell. Thus, there are 100 fairies imprisoned across the Dragon Realm and it's up to Spyro to save them all.

As you'd expect from a Spyro game, Season of Ice certainly looks pretty. The levels are hugely varied in theme and the vibrant colours jump out of the screen. The animations on Spyro are top notch,

whether he's trotting, charging, flying or breathing fire. The majority of the game is played from an isometric perspective, with Spyro roaming across the stepped terrain collecting items, talking to other characters, taking out Rhynocs and solving mini puzzles. Spyro also gets to indulge in some Mode 7 flying levels, as well as top down shooter mini-games. It's all very

much in keeping with the previous games, so fans of the franchise will undoubtedly find a lot to like here.

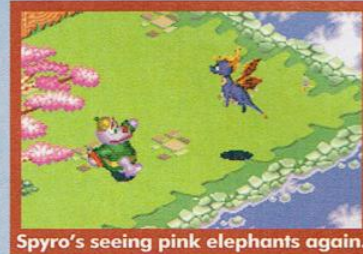
Even so, we found the control a little imprecise at crucial times –



Spyro has a caramel fudge fantasy.



probably due more to the forced perspective than anything else. We also found the constant item collection somewhat dull, and since the gameplay is very much built around this we weren't compelled to beat the game. A good game for young 'uns, but Spyro: Season of Ice left us a little cold. - Frank Dry



Spyro's seeing pink elephants again.

VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	79	80	79

# Doom

**GBA** CATEGORY: First Person Shooter >> PLAYERS: 1-4 >> PUBLISHER: Activision >>  
 PRICE: \$89.95 >> RATING: M >> AVAILABLE: Now >>



Can't we all just get along?

Doom. It rocked hard back in the day, and it still rocks pretty hard today. The GBA port is a very impressive little tech demo, bringing 24 levels of Doom in almost all their glory to the handheld domain. All the weapons, all the enemies, all the secrets, all the sound effects, all the difficulty levels and all the green blood are back with a

vengeance. Err... sorry, the green blood bit isn't meant to be in that list. Funny that all the satanic imagery made it into the game, but red blood was out of the question. Oh well, it

doesn't affect the gameplay.

Before playing GBA Doom, we had two main areas of concern. Firstly, could it handle the number of creatures on-screen that made playing the original on Nightmare so satisfying?

Well the answer is yes. It's not quite as full on, bodies disappear almost immediately and there's some slowdown, but this version of Doom has definitely got "it". Secondly, the obvious one – without a backlit screen would we be able to see anything anyway? Well, we're pleased to report that Activision have included a brightness control in the options, as well as the option to turn dynamic lighting off. This bathes all the rooms in light, destroying the atmosphere, but you'll be able to see what you're



Eat pixel! Er, pistol.

doing under almost any lighting conditions – bravo Activision!

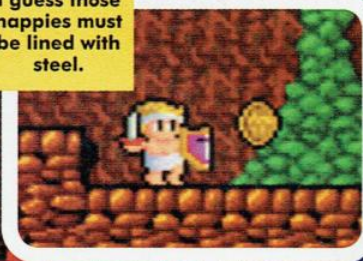
Doom's resolution is quite limited, but it's all very faithful to the original. The fact is, it's no mean feat to put textures on all surfaces, have plenty of enemies on screen at once and still get the game to move at a decent pace. The multiplayer options are a bit lacking – no maps designed specifically for multiplayer and no frag count as you play, but it's playable. Whether it's worth the money is up to you. GL Doom on PC is not exactly hard to come by, but the added portability the GBA brings makes this a very attractive proposition. - Cam Shea



VISUALS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY	OVERALL
85	88	88	88



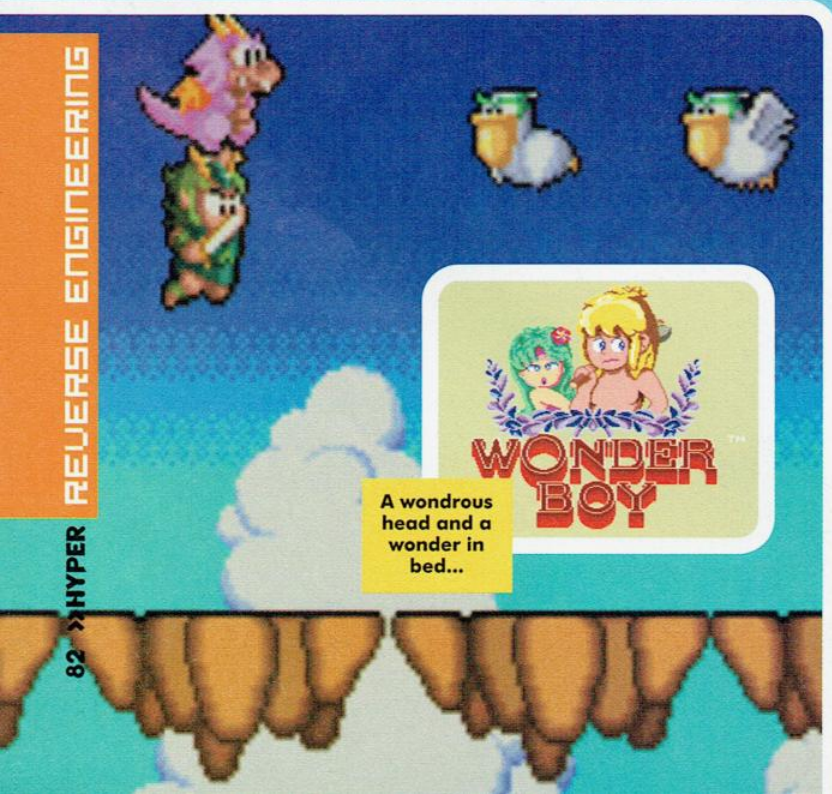
I guess those nappies must be lined with steel.



# Wonder Boy



A cave-boy on a skateboard was one of the biggest platform hits of the 80's. Wonder why? **JAMES COTTEE** has the answers...



REVERSE ENGINEERING

82 >> HYPER



A wondrous head and a wonder in bed...

**M**aking his arcade debut in 1986, Wonder Boy from Sega has left a lasting impression in the video game canon. A fast-paced platform adventure, it pit a pre-historic, pre-pubescent dynamo against endless waves of surreal animal aggressors. With bright backgrounds, zany themes, and compelling gameplay, Wonder Boy sucked you in and kept you coming back for more. While many of games from the same era have garnered exclusive cult followings, Wonder Boy has a certain flair that makes it appeal to everyone.

He's a digital legend, but just who is Wonder Boy?

#### GLEAMING THE CUBE

There have actually been several

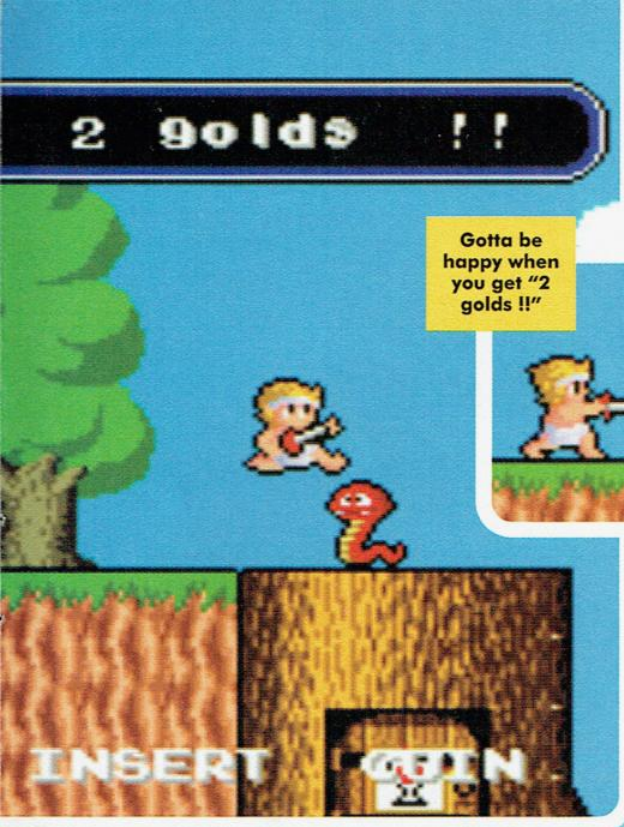
Wonder Boys over the years, with each new game bringing a successor to the family business of platform adventure. It's a bit like Castlevania in that respect, or The Phantom. Whether clad in full plate armour or an animal skin, his mission is always the same: rid the land of evil, and save the girl!

The gameplay in the first Wonder Boy was classic old-school: Simple, yet frantic. You controlled Tom-Tom in a mad dash through his pre-historic world, perpetually striving from left to right. Goofy looking enemies would pop-up in front of you, and this insolence would be repaid with a barrage from you never-ending supply of tomahawks. Bonuses came in the form of giant eggs, which you cracked open with



2 golds !!

Gotta be happy when you get "2 golds !!"



Our old friend Dexter Jettster.

gusto. Before long you'd be zipping along on a skateboard. Your little cave-dude even got a helmet and pads, a historical anachronism that at least displayed Sega's safety conscious side.

The game featured sloped terrain, and hostile boulders that would bear down on you out of nowhere. Even when the threats of enemies and obstacles were overcome, your mission was still a never-ending quest for fruit. With the ever-decreasing health bar in check, the final thing to keep track of was the "doll bonuses," little totems that would reward the superstitious youngster with bonus points at the levels end. With this simple balance of play elements in place, endless glee could be extracted from the basic Wonder Boy formula, whether you won or lost.

### DO THE MONSTER MASH

The following year, 1987, brought what many consider the pinnacle of the Wonder Boy experience. Wonder Boy in Monster Land, or Monster Land as it was more commonly called, added an extra RPG element. Reminiscent of Mario's fantasy kingdom, Monster Land was a Byzantine labyrinth of untold complexity, yielding new secrets even to experienced players with each visit. Every bush could hide a coin, and every door held opportunity on the other side. Whether it was a sleazy bar, a humble shop, or the spacious lair of a cuddly super-villain, you never knew until you stepped inside.

Like all classic Japanese games, the complete absence of logic and grammar only added to the charm.

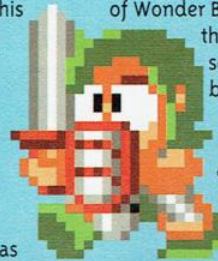
When a window popped up to alert you that you had "10 GOLDS !!," the wry smile from the botched translation job doubled the satisfaction of mere material gain. Enter a store to spend your ill-gotten booty, and the clerk would get



straight to the point: "What you want?" Even your grave mission statement had an "All your base" edge to it: "Defeat DRAGON, and let's regain peace." But how could the poor, nearly naked Wonder Boy fulfill this goal? "Get this sword and pill." Of course!

Ultimately a highly linear adventure despite itself, the main theme of Monster Land was one of acquiring wealth, and bettering oneself through science. To wit, you (Book Shonen) would continually upgrade your equipment throughout the adventure: sword, shield, armour and boots. You could also buy attack spells to defeat minor foes, and if you were feeling lucky you could try to squeeze helpful advice out of a reptilian bartender. Some of his wisdom though, like "DEATH god has the key to neighbor" posed more questions than they answered.

Wonder Boy III: Monster Lair was a return to form for the franchise, with side scrolling action at the fore. Leo, the new Wonder Boy, was not confined to trundling along on the ground, and would spend many a level jetting along on the back of a bird. This put the game somewhere between Rygar and R-Type, particularly with the exotic power-ups and absurdly overwrought boss creatures. The action was fast, unforgiving, and somewhat flat, but



to its credit WB 3 was the first to allow two-player co-operative action, as well as a female character for all the aspiring game-girls of the 80s to look up to.

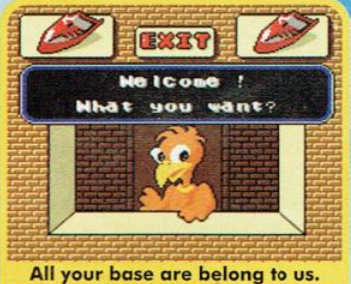
### THE WONDER YEARS

Wonder Boy 3 was the last adventure in the series to appear in the arcades, and from then on out the experience was confined to home consoles. A further three titles in the series would follow, not including ports and the variants created by endlessly re-badging the same games. Wonder Boy titles were available for the Master System, the Mega Drive, the Turbo Grafx/PC Engine, and even the Game Gear hand-held system. The final adventure in the series, Monster Land IV, came out in 1994 for the Sega Mega Drive, and distinguished itself by being the first and only title in the series with a female lead (Asha). She had bright green hair, and would typically be accompanied by a Totoro-like stuffed toy that would hover inexplicably at her side.

Most everyone has fond memories of Wonder Boy. So how do you define the lingering appeal of the series? There have been bigger and better games over the years, but one can still imagine blowing a dollar coin to spend some time with him while waiting for a serve of minimum chips. The games still live on in our hearts and minds not just because they're simple and fun to play, but because above all they're happy. No matter what life throws at this kid, he meets it head-on with a spring in his step and huge grin on his dial. We could all learn a lot from Wonder Boy: He's an eternal optimist in a world gone mad. ❖❖



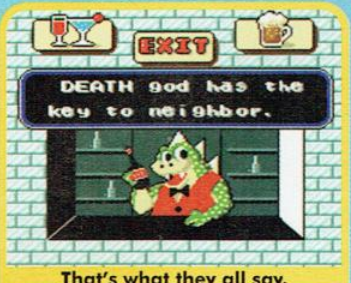
Gee, pill pushing.



All your base are belong to us.



Great idea! Okay!



That's what they all say.

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# Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within

COLUMBIA TRISTAR, M15+

**A**n ambitious film, and game developer Squaresoft's first (and likely last), this was meant to be the movie that offered the first proof that computers can replace live actors. Yet for all that *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* achieved in the way of cutting edge computer animation and special effects, it failed at the box office, and ended up breaking Square's bank account. Yes, they outdid Pixar, but at a terrible cost.

The 2-disc DVD set was made with its original vision in mind, with extras, audio commentary, background files and featurettes where the creators are surprisingly enamoured and self-congratulatory of their own work. In hindsight, series creator Sakaguchi could almost be faulted for indulging in his life theories, which don't really add up in sci-fi. Nevertheless, this tale of a future Earth fighting for its survival against invading Phantom aliens holds its own. The special effects are quite amazing, and through digital transfer, the picture quality is absolutely perfect.

It's heartening to know that

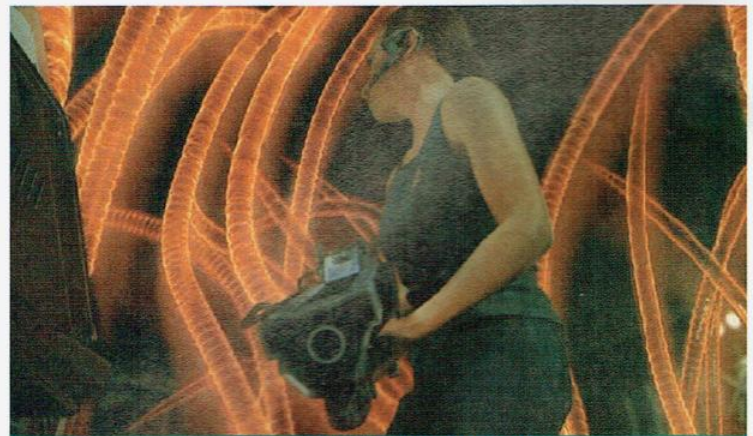
despite the box office failure, Square Pictures have put some considerable effort into making the DVD a collectible (and perhaps follow *Mallrats'* footsteps into retail and rental success). There are detailed synopses for all the main characters, which narrate their history and life story relative to the Phantom invasion. There are also detailed specs on the functions and operations of vehicles that appear in the film. This serves to broaden one's understanding of this particular Final



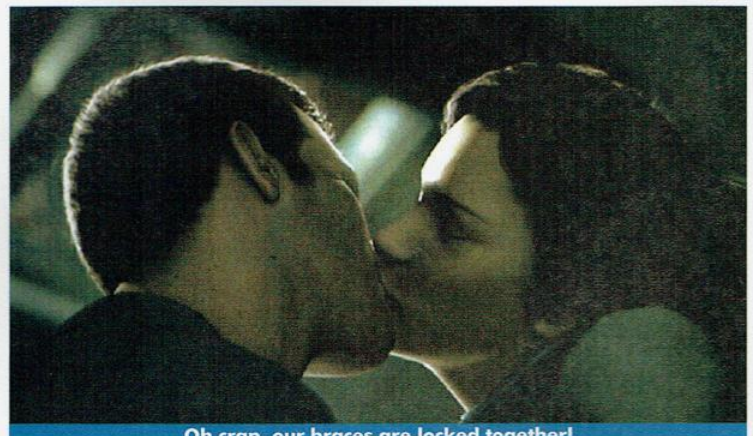
Fantasy universe beyond the film. There is as much peripheral detail packed into the making-of featurettes, which provide 'hot links' to additional info and footage during the show.

The most promising extra feature — which lets you re-edit a scene to your liking — turns out to be a dud. Rather than giving you multiple camera angles to select from, you merely rearrange the order in which characters appear. The problem is, the dialogue for anything that deviates from the original cut doesn't make sense.

**MOVIE:** 8/10 **EXTRA:** 8/10



Argh, it's the Phantom Menace!



Oh crap, our braces are locked together!

# The Simpsons SEASON 1

FOX, RATED G

**F**or everyone who's watched the TV show, taped it, bought the chopped up videos, and then taped it again off Foxtel when they ran the Simpsons Marathon during the Olympics, the purchase of this DVD set is but mere formality. We've all seen Bart the General dozens of times; Homer being mistaken as Bigfoot got old a long time ago; and the family electroshocking each other at Dr. Marvin Monroe's is pretty testing these days.

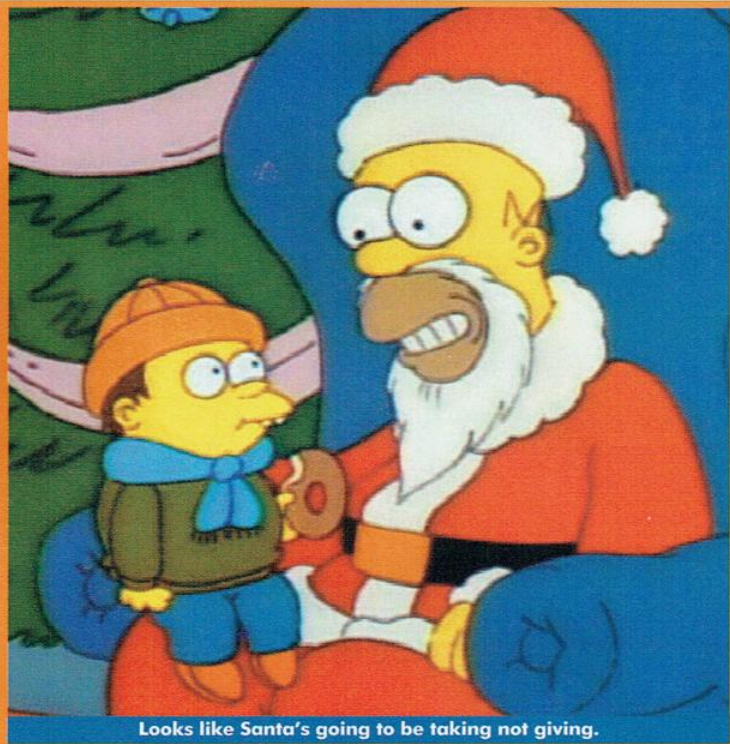
But there's still good reason for Simpsons fans to cheer. In addition to the first 13 episodes, this three disc set contains audio commentary from creator Matt Groening through every episode, as well as a few words from producers, writers and directors. It



We all know Bart's really a big girl.

also comes bundled with original scripts, sketches and outtakes, including a few from an unaired version of 'Some Enchanted Evening'. And the episodes themselves? Well, at least now you'll have a complete and properly sequenced part of the whole series, of which you can spare yourself anymore videotaping.

**MOVIE:** 7/10 **EXTRA:** 8/10



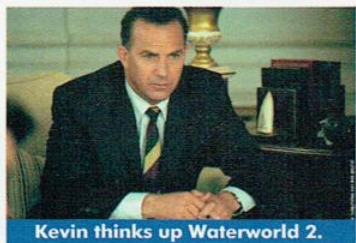
Looks like Santa's going to be taking not giving.



National arms-crossing day kinda made doing things a little awkward.



Phallic imagery, anyone?



Kevin thinks up Waterworld 2.

# Thirteen Days

ROADSHOW, RATED M15+

**D**epicting the days in October 1962 when America and the then Soviet Union had a nuclear standoff, it's with some irony that *Thirteen Days* should be released now, given the current political climate. But this is more a historical account, with some drama injected for good measure; and in that respect, *Thirteen Days* is one of the best politically charged films of late.

It's been a while between drinks for lead actor, Kevin Costner, but those of you who are worried about another JFK/Wyatt Earp-style

marathon can rest easy knowing that his involvement is limited purely to acting. He plays the assistant to JFK, who provides a front seat view of all the planning and discussions that almost lead to a third world war.

Extras on the disc are particularly fascinating if you're a modern history buff, especially the historical commentary running through the film, explaining the context of each event.

**MOVIE:** 8/10 **EXTRA:** 7/10

# Bridget Jones's Diary

COLUMBIA TRI-STAR, RATED M15+

**F**unny, embarrassing, and all too human, *Bridget Jones's Diary* is so much more than a modern interpretation of Austen's *Pride & Prejudice*, and a heart-warming reminder that the only normal people in the world are the ones we don't know. American lass, Renee Zellweger, takes on the role of Britain's popular female icon, passing off perfectly for a plump marketing associate in a publishing firm who croons over the greatest hits of Celine Dion, and has unsurprisingly stayed single well into her thirties.

The shameful moments she gets into as she juggles men, jobs and



Playboy's standards are dropping.

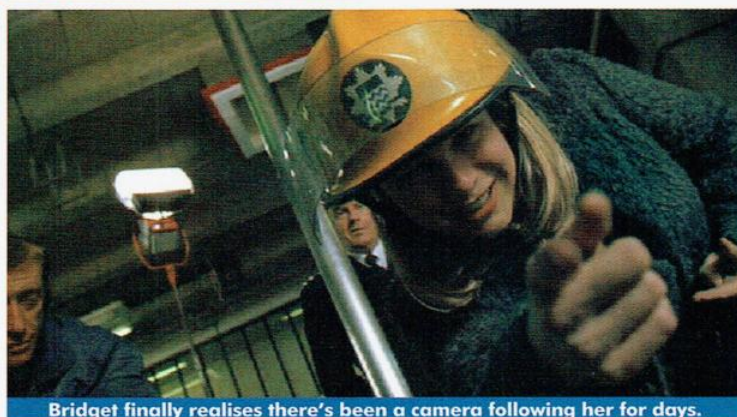
family reveals many a quirk in the female lifestyle, perhaps too quirky for some male audiences, but altogether hilarious for the husbands and boyfriends who've been sworn to secrecy about those tummy-tucking 'granny pants'. The ladies, no doubt, will be tickled by the portrait of the modern, insecure woman.

Check out the extras, and spare a moment to read the snippets from the original column too.



Hugh zips up his pants too quickly.

**MOVIE:** 8/10 **EXTRA:** 5/10



Bridget finally realises there's been a camera following her for days.

# Shrek

UNIVERSAL, RATED PG

**A** modern fairytale in CG with biting wit and humour. Shrek is an ogre hired by Lord Farquaad to rescue Princess Fiona from the clutches of a fiery red dragon. There are cameos from most old fairytales, ranging from Snow White and Pinocchio to Robin Hood and the Pied Piper. It's the voice actors who steal the show, though, especially Eddie Murphy and John Lithgow.

The film has been digitally transferred; meaning the luscious visuals can be enjoyed as closely to what was originally intended. Ironical it is that the commentary and documentaries should claim that no other film has achieved its level of realism for human characters, for it only preceded *Final Fantasy* by a



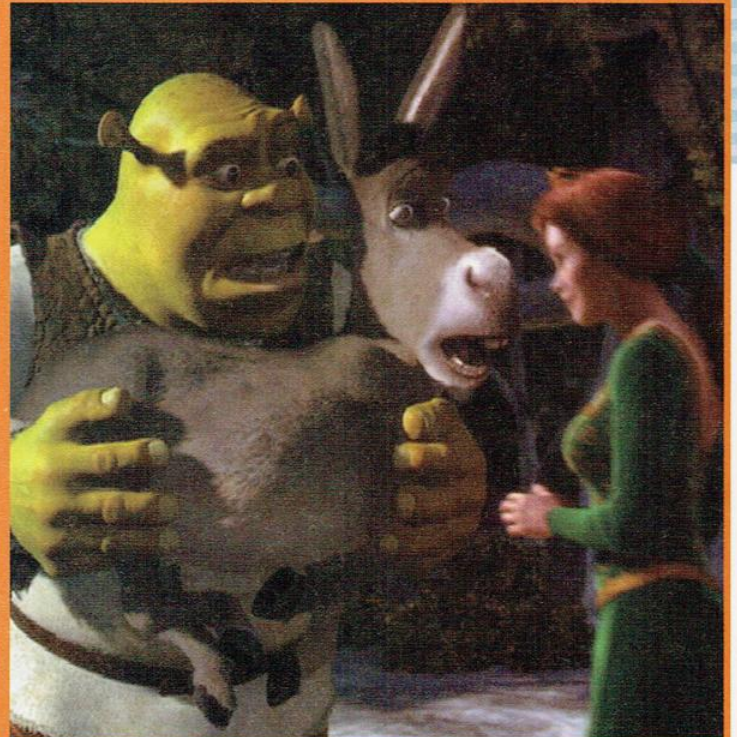
...who's the shortest king of all?

matter of months. Still, all credit to Dreamworks, because *Shrek* came out the better at the box office.

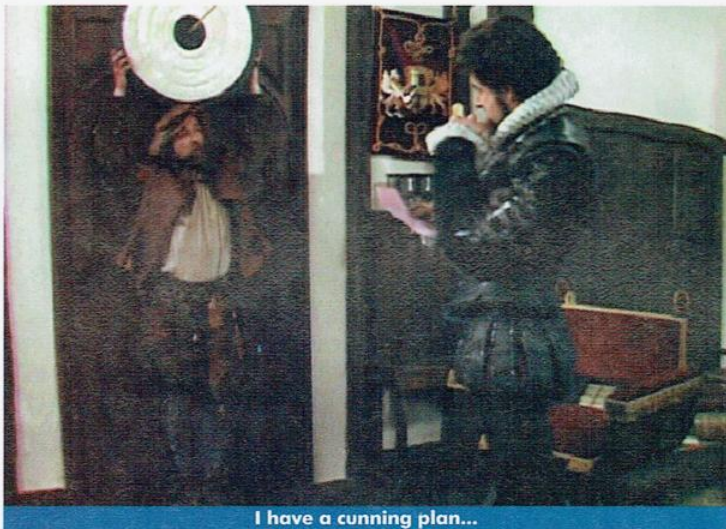
Extras include some excellent behind-the-scenes footage and commentary, and there are 'interviews' with some of the movie characters. However, it's just not long enough, and doesn't carry nearly as much value or humour as the *Toy Story* or *A Bug's Life* extras.



**MOVIE:** 8/10 **EXTRA:** 6/10



Shrek, before you squeeze, that's no accordion...



I have a cunning plan...

# Black Adder (I-III)

ROADSHOW, RATED PG

**T**here are many who would argue that *Black Adder* represents the finest in British comedy. The series that brought Rowan Atkinson into prominence, *Black Adder* is the complete opposite of his other role, Mr. Bean, using sophistication and smart dialogue in place of physical comedy. You may have noticed the first three volumes floating in stores (why won't they make a box set?), and before long the final fourth volume should be out.

*Black Adder* chronicles the family line of Edmund Blackadder, Duke of Edinburgh, from the days of the Dark Ages in 1485. The subsequent seasons centre on his progeny who search for the grace and favour of Queen Elizabeth during the 17th century,



and who serve as butler to the Prince Regent during the late 18th century.

Anyone who knows their history will know it's a complete piss-take on English history, from sending up occasions like the creation of the modern dictionary to depicting historical figures as utter twits and morons.

**MOVIE:** 10/10 **EXTRA:** 1/10

# Chocolat

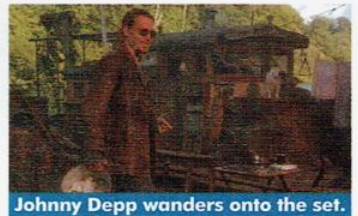
ROADSHOW, RATED PG

**C**hocolat is a character film, bubbling with personality and charm; offering an ever-changing canvass of mesmerising colours and tones. Directed by Lasse Hallstrom (*The Cider House Rules*), *Chocolat* tells the tale of a single mother who makes a new home in a secluded rural area of France. She and her six-year-old daughter do their best to fit in, but their new chocolate shop is turning heads in the deeply religious town, which views confectionery as a form of temptation. The fact that she kept her shop open on Sundays doesn't help either.

*Chocolat* features a cast of great actors — Juliette Binoche the star, supported by Judi Dench and Johnny Depp. Together they weave a subtle and heart-warming tale



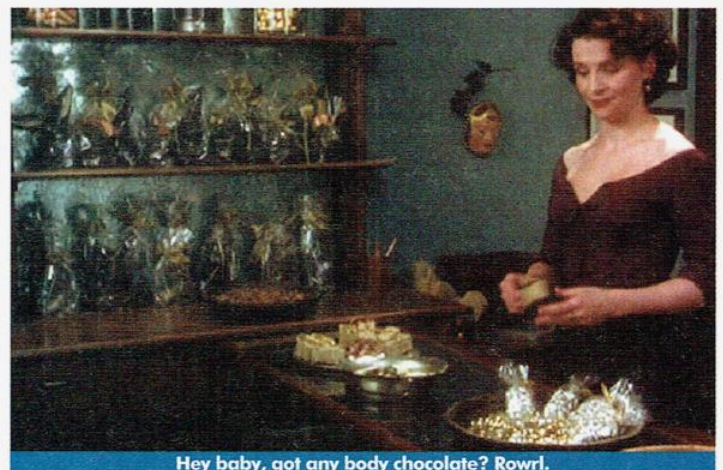
The nose knows.



Johnny Depp wanders onto the set.

about acceptance, change and tolerance. Not surprisingly, the disc is somewhat bare in the extras department, but it's a timeless tale you can always come back to in the years to come.

**MOVIE:** 7/10 **EXTRA:** 2/10



Hey baby, got any body chocolate? Rowrl.

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## Getter Robo Armageddon

CATEGORY: ACTION, MECHA • PRODUCTION COMPANY: BANDAI VISUAL

**F**ans of old-school mecha like *Mazinger* and *Tetsujin* should instantly recognise the style and purpose of this series, originally titled *Shin Getter Robo* and the second of Go Nagai's manga to get the modern treatment (after *Shin Honey Flash*). It helps if you know the original story, which the first few episodes gloss over.

### I FEEL GETTER NOW

Years ago, humankind discovered the

Getter Rays, only to spark an invasion by hideous black aliens that start by taking over the moon. New technology is developed through the Getter Rays to combat the aliens, culminating in the creation of an army of Getter Robos that do indeed save the world.

*Getter Robo Armageddon* takes place several years later, with the death of the leading Getter scientist sparking a new invasion, one that

reveals conspiracies that began with the first war on the moon. The hero, Ryoma, is brought out of incarceration to prevent any further disaster, and old companions join him in their familiar Getter Robos.

*Getter Robo Armageddon* is anything but a cheap resurrection of an old favourite. The story takes you through many twists, with the same gusto and emotion (and more than

a few similarities) to another classic, *Giant Robo*. It turns out this new invasion stems from Dr. Saotome's creation of the final Getter Robo, which has somehow triggered devolution through its technology. The combination of old-style character and mecha designs work extremely well with modern direction. Hardcore mecha fans would do well to pick this one up.



**ANIMATION:** 9/10 **PLOT:** 7/10 **POTENTIAL:** 8/10 **OVERALL:** 9/10

## Arc the Lad

CATEGORY: FANTASY, ACTION • PRODUCTION COMPANY: SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

**O**rphaned at a young age, Elk is a promising member of the Hunter's Guild who privately hopes for the day he may avenge the death of his parents and townsfolk who were put to slaughter at the hands of an evil organisation called White House. The man he blames and seeks out is a warrior named Arc the Lad, who is himself, a charismatic hero-type.

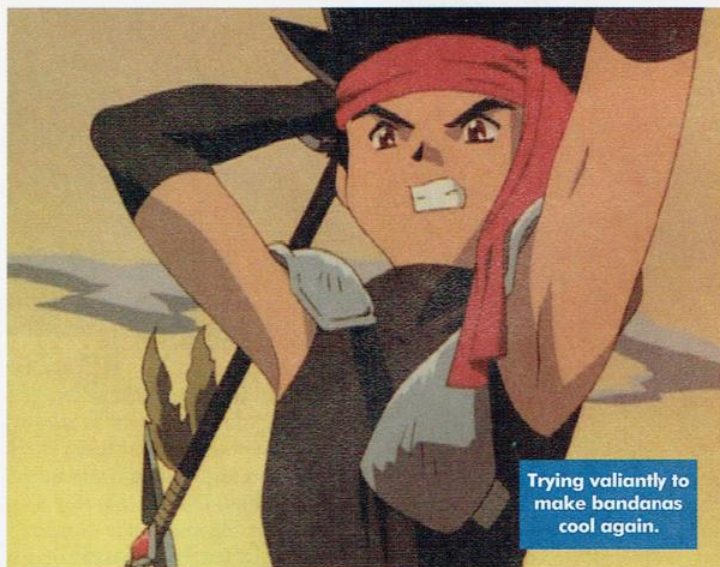
### BEAST MISTRESS

Based on the PlayStation games (which were hugely popular in Japan but never made it out West), Elk is finally given his window of opportunity to investigate a case that may lead to the doorstep of White House. He is a wielder of the element of fire, and after five years of toil, he's now encountered a girl with the power to control beasts.

Both were kidnapped by White House as children, and both have

had to escape from it, though this girl is still being pursued. By now, however, they're stumbling across more and more Chimera beasts, a result of White House experimentation that causes other magic-bearing children to mutate into terrible monsters. With the help of his mentor, Shu (who bears an uncanny resemblance to Hayabusa from *DOA2*), Elk and the girl embark upon a mission to expose the White House conspiracy and settle their personal vendettas.

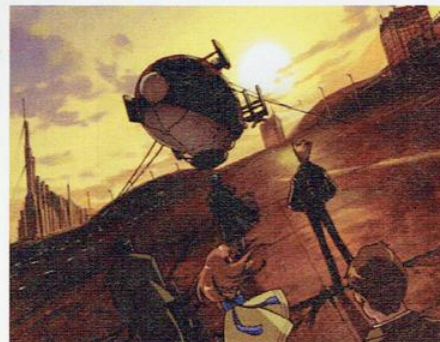
Animation is mostly well done, with a fascinating fusion of a medieval society with modern technology, but with a few odd moments of cheaply panning around the one picture. *Arc the Lad* has excellent potential as a fantasy adventure series, as it's able to create the same gravity as *Lodoss Wars* without losing track of its pace.



Trying valiantly to make bandanas cool again.



Freaks anonymous.

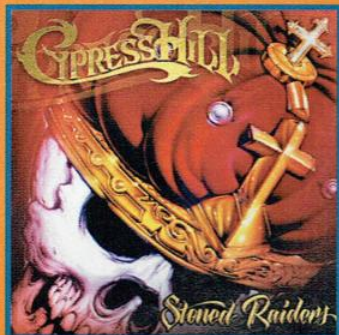


**ANIMATION:** 7/10 **PLOT:** 8/10 **POTENTIAL:** 7/10 **OVERALL:** 7.5/10

# MUSIC

MUSIC REVIEWS  
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**Blunt**

Whether it be on the soundtrack to the latest videogame, getting high rotation on the airwaves or tagged on the credits of the latest blockbuster movie, the latest music releases are everywhere. Want to know what's hot and what's not? Our **Hyper CD reviews** should keep you in the loop.



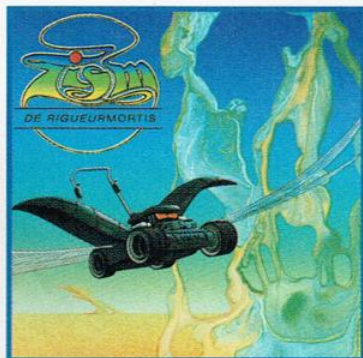
## CYPRESS HILL Stoned Raiders

SONY

★★★★

»» The Cypress boys continue to indulge their dual obsession, finding imagination enough to roll out both hip-hop and heavy rock on *Stoned Raiders*. The two styles sit nicely side by side on this record, providing a smooth fusion of the dichotomy on *Skull and Bones*. The hip-hop of tracks like "Lowrider" is as phat and fancy-free as any rhyming you might care to name, and the rock of "Trouble" makes Fred Durst look like the balding little white boy that he is. This is a classy outing from the masters of rap-rock.

supremacy that everyman rock has devoted itself to has found a new champion in Nickelback. Edgier than Three Doors Down, harder than Lifehouse, more credible than Live, the Canadian four piece have stormed to the top of charts all round the world, and look like staying there with all the block headed pride a middle of the road rock god can muster. There's absolutely nothing wrong with *Silver Side Up*, but given the number of predecessors Nickelback have had to study, there wouldn't want to be.

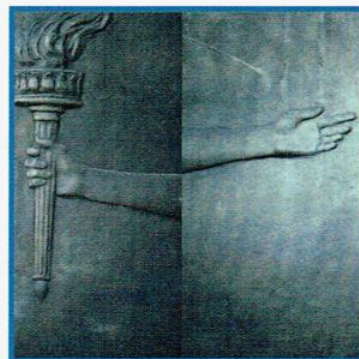


## TISM De Rigueurmortis

FESTIVAL

★★★

»» "If You're Not Famous At Fourteen, You're Finished" is as good a proof as any that the anonymous absurdity of TISM still has something to offer, digging a steel capped boot into the dubious teen fame of such divas as Nikki Webster. "Five Yards (from a fuckwit)" backs it up nicely, signalling the beginning of yet another classically Australian piss take of everything under the sun. 31 tracks long — the majority of which are unlisted tid-bits of useless, but still entertaining, nonsensical poetry — this is bound to produce an odd look and few belly laughs.



## FUGAZI The Argument

INERTIA

★★★★

»» Straight-edge in a crooked world, Fugazi continue to stand proud, finding new dimensions to the sound they have been so true to for the last 15 years. *The Argument* is a perfect balance of white noise angst and open melody, with classic loud/soft contrast given genuine power by low-fi production and the honesty of Ian Mackaye's voice. The familiar elements are still there, but we find more space, more gentleness among the anger as well as some surprisingly straight jams like the middle section of "Epic Problem". Another solid album from a still solid band.

and white outfits, have become the new cool in rock & roll's current retrospective obsession. Their rough and ready garage grind has won over the same market that swooned for the Strokes, and it's no surprise. Ostentatiously unpretentious (go figure...), the White Stripes deliver low-fi blues-rock, loose as an American cannon in Afghanistan, lead by a vocal that is a charming blend of Frank Black and Mick Jagger. This is their third album, and it looks like Jack and Meg have finally worked out how to make one guitar, one drum kit, and one voice work.

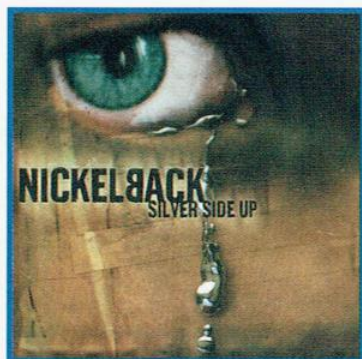


## EELS Souljacker

UNIVERSAL

★★★★

»» Continuing his eclectic musical excursions, Eels main man Mr E has created an album that sounds as little like his last outing as anyone could manage. While his wry poetic ramblings and distinctive husky voice remain unchanged, the folksy backgrounds of *Daisies of the Galaxy* have been traded-in for some dirty fuzz ("Dog Faced Boy"), bizarre keyboards ("Teenage Witch") and reversed tape loops ("World of Shit"). Fortunately, the humour is a black and well placed as ever, and that same uncanny feel for a good song shines through the new material, making some of the more difficult songs surprisingly easy to get a handle on.



## NICKELBACK Silver Side Up

ROADRUNNER

★★★

»» Big dumb rock, but at least it's Canadian this time. The never-ending struggle for chart



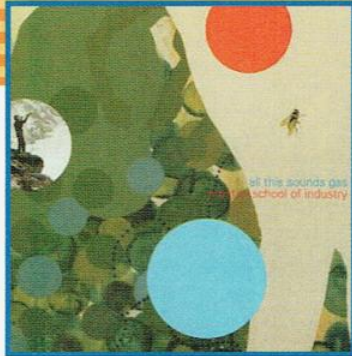
## THE WHITE STRIPES White Blood Cells

REMOTE CONTROL

★★★

»» Brother and sister Jack and Meg White, resplendent in patented red





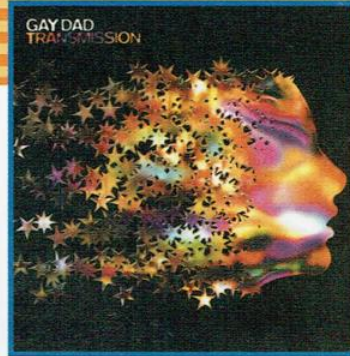
## PRESTON SCHOOL OF INDUSTRY All This Sounds Gas

TRIFEKTA **☆☆☆**  
 Fronted by ex-Pavement guitarist Scott Kannberg (aka Spiral Stairs), PSOI have been working on material for their debut since early last year, and the carefully measured pace is evident. On songs like "Falling Away" the time shows up as well spent, manifesting itself in simple catchy tunes, but on tracks like "Doping For Gold", PSOI sound like they have spent too long labouring an idea that was never going to work. The feel is a little like Pavement on Valium, and inoffensive as it is, it doesn't have the spine to be much more than background noise.



## FENIX\*TX Lechuza

UNIVERSAL **☆☆☆**  
 Five years after their self-titled debut, Fenix TX return with album number two. Lechuza (the title is Spanish for Owl, and also the name of a legend half-witch/half-owl that searches the night for children to steal) possesses a little more punch than its predecessor, although this is still very much on the pop side of rock. Most tunes are catchy, radio friendly efforts ("Threesome" and "Phoebe Cates" being good examples), but on the occasions where FTX do hit with something harder ("Something Bad Is Gonna Happen"), Lechuza leaps to life.



## GAY DAD Transmission

INERTIA **☆☆☆**  
 Initially as difficult to swallow as their name, Gay Dad are none the less worth persevering with. Their second album, Transmission, is a slow burning blend of pop kitsch and genuine rock & roll. With tongue firmly in cheek, Gay Dad roll through a set of songs that will leave you unsure of whether you want to smash the stereo or give in and groove along. And with lines like "Suicide is over rated" it is good to know that these London lads are still keen to tackle life, even if it is on their own rather unusual terms. Ambient rock with a sense of humour.

JAMES  
COTTEE



Edginess. It's the magical x-factor that makes millions of youngsters part with billions of dollars every year. It's a never-ending quest for cool, for the next big thing. Even if something is designed by committee, mass-produced, and utterly commercial, if it has the edge, it'll bring home the bacon. This phenomenon affects all modern media: movies, music, TV, games. If it's edgy, it sells. If it's lame, it rots in the bargain bins at Woolies.

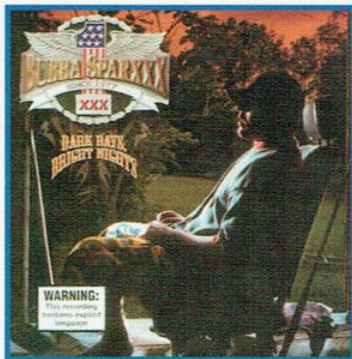
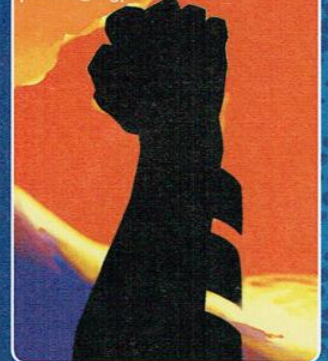
But just what is edgy? The lack of a concrete definition keeps clueless coke-snorting marketing-types busy night and day, trying to trick us into parting with our cash. It all comes down to the vibe. Spray-painted sidewalk ads that have "TM" symbols aren't edgy. Duets with Elton John aren't edgy. And no matter how retro he is, anything, anything with Craig McLachlan in it is begging for scorn.

Okay, product endorsement time. In the classic cyber-punk comic book The Dark Knight Returns, the criminally insane super-villain Two Face, obsessed with the number two, plots to blow up a famous Gotham landmark: the twin towers. That's pretty edgy, considering the comic came out in 1986. The long-awaited sequel, The Dark Knight Strikes Again, will hit your local comic store soon. BUY IT.

And while I'm on the subject, there seems to be some doubt in the minds of the general population as to the motivations of terrorists. Did they have troubled childhoods? Did their daddies yell at them? Are they... unhappy? No, brainiac. They're killers. Anyone who says otherwise is a sympathiser, or deluded, or somewhere in-between. Take your pick.

I won't go into details. I don't want my car blown up. Just remember: there's never been a better time to live on the edge. Because every moment, could-be-your-LAST.

Discourse, flames, opinions to  
[jcotee@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jcotee@bigpond.net.au)



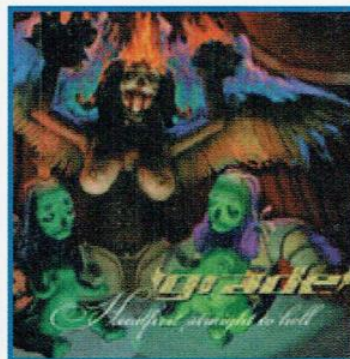
## BUBBA SPARXXX Dark Days, Bright Nights

UNIVERSAL **☆☆☆☆**  
 Smooth laid back hip-hop is never as easy as it seems — like playing the blues, it takes a lot more style to go slow than it does to kick it out at top speed. Bubba nails it nicely on opening track "Take-Off", kicking this record off in good fashion. By the time he hits the acoustic guitar driven "Bubba Talk", it is clear Bubba is comfortable with his voice sitting front and centre of things. Stepping the vocal up a gear for the funky "Betty, Betty" provides a bit of variety, and even if raps like "The First Wutchucallit" are a little tired, Dark Days, Bright Nights still has the legs it needs.



## H2O Go

UNIVERSAL **☆☆☆**  
 According to the grapevine, H2O — close friends of Good Charlotte — are a hardcore band. Well, I guess if Good Charlotte are a punk band, then H2O might be a hardcore band. I ain't buying it though. Half a decade old, and already sounding tired, H2O's sound resembles a b-grade Pulley at best, at worst coming off like a pack of school kids trying to cover all the punk bands their older brothers listened to but that they never quite understood themselves. Which is probably a fair description of H2O — a pack of guys playing punk rock who obviously missed the wisdom of Jello Biafra's comment "A hair style's not a lifestyle".

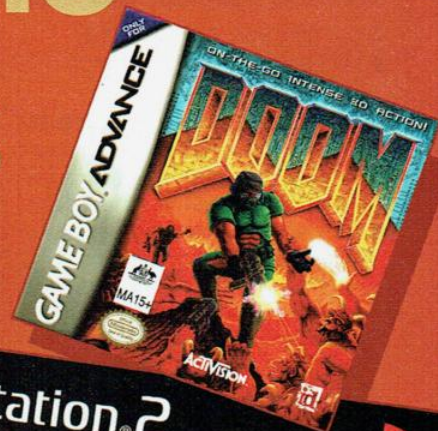
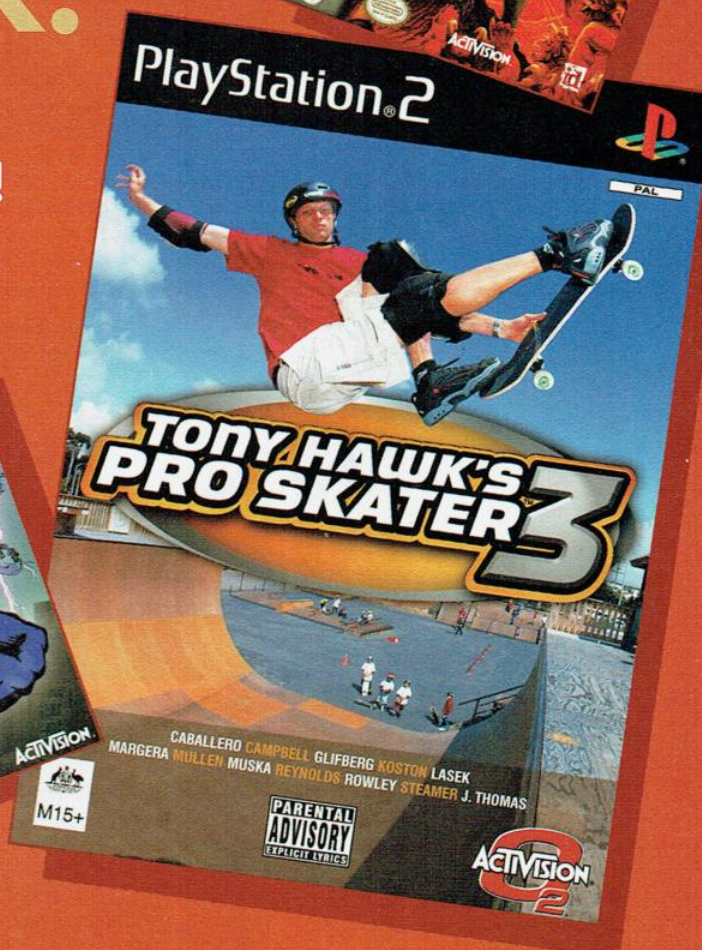
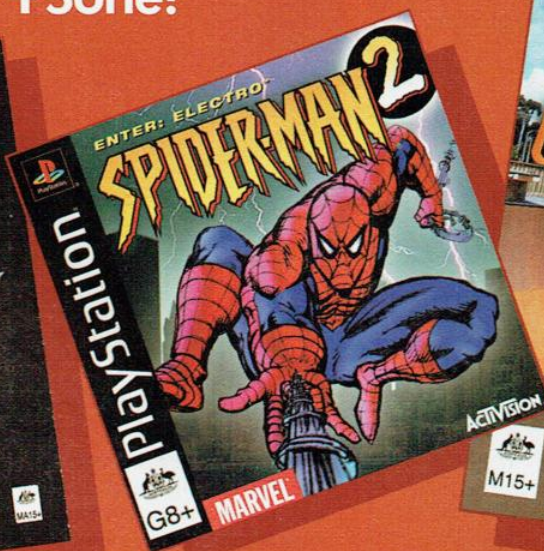
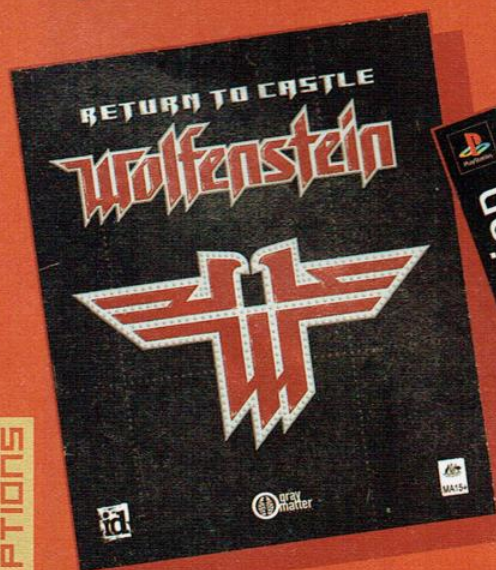


## GRADE Headfirst Straight To Hell

FESTIVAL / VICTORY **☆☆☆**  
 In a world where hard rock has become increasingly bottom heavy — growled vocals, fat low end guitars and bowel churning bass — the angular hardcore of Grade is a breath of fresh air. The virtue of having well defined parts — treble heavy guitar, melodic bass and a vocalist with a nice range of screams — is clear on Headfirst Straight To Hell, as Descendents like arrangements are deployed on Sick Of It All flavoured tunes. This is hardcore with a little bit of personality, a proud display of anti-posturing, balls to the wall intelligence.

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# FORUM

✉ **HYPER FORUM:** 78 Renwick St. Redfern, NSW 2016 Australia  
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## Q. I WANT TO BUY A NINTENDO GAME-CUBE BECAUSE... ?

The responses came in thick and fast this month. It seems Nintendo still own the hearts of many a gamer out there, but not all of you were convinced. What surprised us was the blind assumption by many of you that the GCN will be hundreds of dollars cheaper than the Xbox or PS2. We hate to break it to you, but Nintendo have announced no pricing for Oz yet. And with the current economy, chances are the GCN is not going to be any cheaper than its competition...



### HYPER FORUM

Everyone has a different opinion and the Hyper Forum is where you can get your thoughts out of your head and onto the page for all to see. Don't forget that we have a new topic every issue! The next topic of discussion...



"Is online gaming the way of the future?"

Responses will be printed in Hyper 101.

E-mail: FREAKSCENE@NEXT.COM.AU with Hyper Forum in the subject line, and the topic of discussion at the top of your response. Please note that very long contributions may be edited.

#### RARE GAMES

First and second party software. Really, how can any self-respecting gamer ignore a console which will be the 'only' (I can't stress the only enough here) home for a number of the world's best developers and their respective franchises? If you want to play a Rare developed game, guess what you'll need (besides a GBA of course)? That's right. A GameCube. Want Zelda or any number of Shig's future masterpieces? Can you say it? GameCube again.

In a console world increasingly dominated by cross platform strategies and advertising muscle, the 'exclusive blockbuster title' will play an increasingly important role. AND as far as exclusive and blockbuster go, there's no development house that can touch Nintendo. Especially now Sega has gone multi platform. So make room next to the jet black beast (be it PS2 or Xbox) under your TV. Not much room mind you. Just enough for a little purple cube with a handle...

**Craig Marrant**  
Marrant@hotmail.com

#### LOST THEIR EDGE

Dear Hyper crew,  
Hi, I just want to say what a great job you guys are doing over there and to keep up the good work. I will

cut straight to the point – the Gamecube, for me, won't be something I look forward to next year. I feel that Nintendo have really lost their edge. Why? Because the games they make today are boring and take little skill compared to the older Nintendo system games. The second reason is lastability – the hardware isn't quite as impressive as the Xbox and will have the same childish games they had on the N64. Thirdly I put up with so much crap from my friends about having a Nintendo because of these childish games. There were only a handful of good N64 games in the whole 4-5 years it was around. So in conclusion I won't be buying a GameCube, that's for sure.

**DISRUPTOR**  
oneill@webase.com.au

#### DEDICATED FAN

Oh... so many reasons. One, the games, the games. It looks like Nintendo will finally get some RPGs and I couldn't be happier. Two, the price. It may be \$200 Australian cheaper (if you convert) and I love it, seeing as I'm paying for it. Three, the hardware. I've read the specs, and although they say Xbox is more powerful, Nintendo is easy to program for, and as a result, it will have great games. Developers all



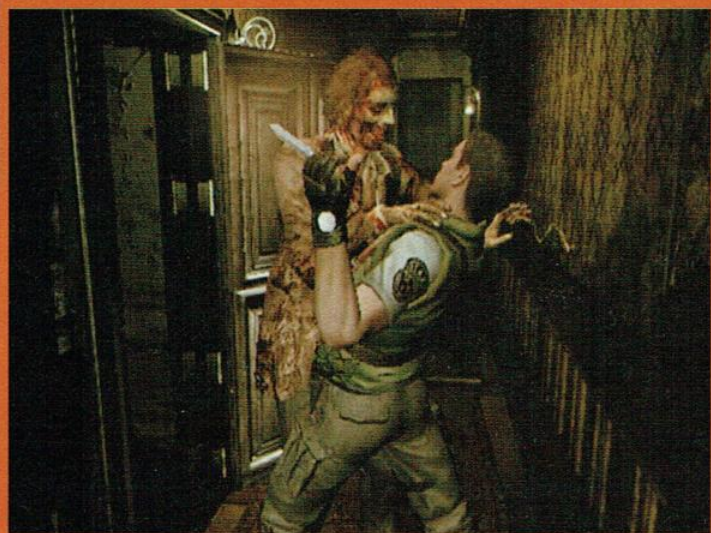
Nintendo fans are drooling already.

around the world are saying that they will be able to push the GameCube to its limits easily, producing great results. Four, I'm a dedicated Nintendo fan. I love their games (except for the butchered version of Zelda on GameCube. What happened?) And I love their attitude. GO GAMECUBE!

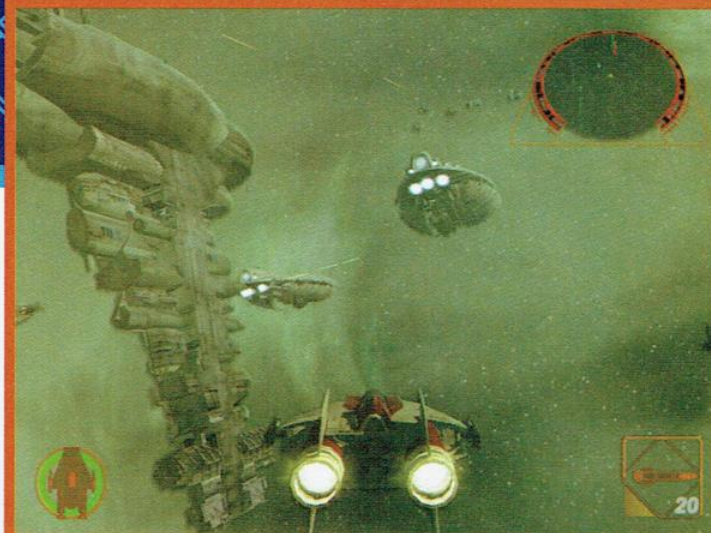
**Ben Miller**  
Ben@techangel.com

#### JUST GAMES

They have been in the gaming business for a long time now. I've experienced all their units, right back to the original NES, and think they offer top-notch quality in gaming. I think the Gamecube will be a great success, because they are offering great games, and just great games. No DVD or any of that mumbo jumbo that all the others are offering, just great games. I



These Avon ladies are getting uglier.



Okay, this is why you'll buy a GameCube.

wouldn't buy a PlayStation 2 because half of the games they sell are on PC. They may have a big range of games but most of them are rushed and are of a bad standard. Another thing that will make the GameCube worth buying is Rareware. Their games are always made to the best they can be, with no hiccups. I can't wait to see what their games look like on the GameCube. If they make a second Perfect Dark, I'll buy the unit just for that game. I think Nintendo will come out on top because they offer great games and lots of experience.

**Jeremy Zehnwirth**  
Pugslly54@hotmail.com

### BOUND TO BE GREAT

Where do I start?

Well, I plan on owning the 2 winning consoles in the console war, so I'll have to own a GCN and a PS2 because the Xbox sux. With so many high quality, exclusive games, e.g. Too Human & of course, Rogue Leader, you're a fool to miss out.

There's also the fact that it will have the best graphics available and then there's the innovation. The controller is bound to be great and the connectivity with the GBA will kick arse (that Kirby game sounds so cool).

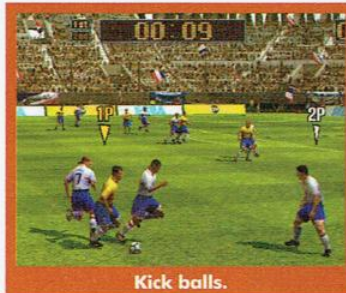
To sum it all up, if you don't own one, you're not really living.

**Leni Erceg**  
goliath\_noi@hotmail.com

### A BIG FLOP?

Well, my first reason for wanting a Nintendo GameCube is that it looks to have more promising games than the PS2 and Xbox.

Secondly, I have heard enough about people saying things like "the Xbox has a built in hard-drive and modem," but you can get memory cards for the GCN, which are exactly the same as hard-drives, and a modem. What does an extra \$150 mean when the GameCube is already a few hundred dollars cheaper than both the PS2 and Xbox?



Kick balls.



Kick smalls.



Kick walls.

Another major factor is that Nintendo have a lot more experience in the console gaming area than almost any other company, and definitely more than Microsoft.

However, sometimes I just have to let logic kick in. No matter how much a fan I am of the Big N, I will still wait around long enough to see if the GameCube turns out to be a big flop (or at least that's my excuse to give me enough time to save up the money).

**The Cuber**  
gcn13@hotmail.com

### RESIDENT FREAK

Hyper,

Why do I want a Gamecube? One main reason. RESIDENT EVIL REMAKES. It seems that all Resident Evil games are now Nintendo exclusives. Yep. RE 0 and 4 are being made specifically for GC, and as I always dreamed and hoped and prayed, the four games that are currently out on multiple systems are being remade completely from scratch! I almost fainted when I saw the video preview of RE1 on GC, with its dark, foreboding environments, and even more terrifying enemies. Not to mention the games will have brand new sections, such as the forest in RE1! AND IT'S ALL BEING DONE SPECIFICALLY FOR GCN! NO OTHER PLATFORM!

Sure, I would definitely buy Rogue Leader, Luigi's Mansion, and the long-awaited Metroid sequel, but my main reason is undoubtedly RE. It has always been my favourite game, and will most likely always be.

Many people mocked GC because of Nintendo's previous shocking failure in the console market, but whilst I'm still a PSX supporter, the PS2 just doesn't cut it for me. Forgive me, Sony, but it is a serious disappointment. It has some major flaws, but this is a discussion for another time.

The GCN will rock my world simply because it's bringing survival horror to a new level.

**Panicky-Ski-Jumping-Puppet Boy**  
Oso\_vega@telstra.easymail.com.au

### IT'S WORTH IT

I want a GameCube, I want an Xbox, I want a Game Boy Advance. All systems people are dying for. Did these same people do this for the Atari and Commodore 64 as well as saying I will support Sega all the way? All these systems went dead with new technology. Will these new systems be subject to the same downfall? One will stand alone. The GameCube will not be a pushover. It's compatible with the new "Smart Systems" and seems it will be a mark for the time anyway. The Xbox will fade with time to a new Bill Gates "Super Child" and the others are doing no better. So I say if you want a system that will stand the test of time and is worth standing in line for ages and worth the sacrifice of your hard earned money go for a GameCube.

It's worth it, you'll see.  
**Sam Ash**  
jaina66@hotmail.com

### BEANBAG

I want to play GREAT games. I actually want every console, but GameCube is the one that has me the most excited. Look at the new Zelda game, it may look kiddy but I think it's unreal and would never have thought Nintendo would take it in that direction. Mario and Luigi in their own games? I hope they do interact somehow.

Also, Nintendo's focus is on the games, not how powerful the hardware is (which is how it should be). The controller looks like one funky piece of equipment (I couldn't stop looking at the N64 one when I first saw it), it's a little different but I'm sure Nintendo know what they're doing. I wanna play with the double analogue sticks and click the L and R buttons to death.

Another reason — Resident Evil. The remake of RE1 looks AWESOME, I just hope they fix the voice acting ("what IS it?!"). Plus I want to play all the latest RE games, never has another game made me fall out of my beanbag at regular intervals.

Nintendo seem to be making the right moves, all they need is a lot of advertising to let the public know they ain't no kiddy company and they have the ultimate games, and they'll be set. I thought my Game Boy Advance was fantastic when I got it, so imagine what GameCube will be like (and they'll both interact too!) I can't wait.

**Steve Milich**  
milich@picknowl.com.au

# MAIL

## ✉ HYPER LETTERS:

78 Renwick St. Redfern, NSW 2016 Australia  
E-mail: freakscene@next.com.au

### CONFUSED

Dear Hyper,

I love your magazine and have just subscribed for another twelve months for the third time in a row! Anyway, the point is that after one of those scary dreams where you find that Zelda is really a girl, I had a great idea for a game! I call it "Sim\_gaming\_corporation". Imagine it, we've all wanted to run a major gaming corporation before, and now with my new game, finally everyone around the world can experience what it's like! Imagine all the crazy stuff you could do, stuff that the real gaming corporations would never think of!

You could design a good machine but spend no money on advertising and see what happens! You could design a new and powerful machine and then shape it like an ordinary box! You could place unbelievable quality control on your games and watch how few games actually make it to your console! You could choose how to set up your marketing booths at E3 or the Tokyo Game Show, build the media up about a new fantastic game you

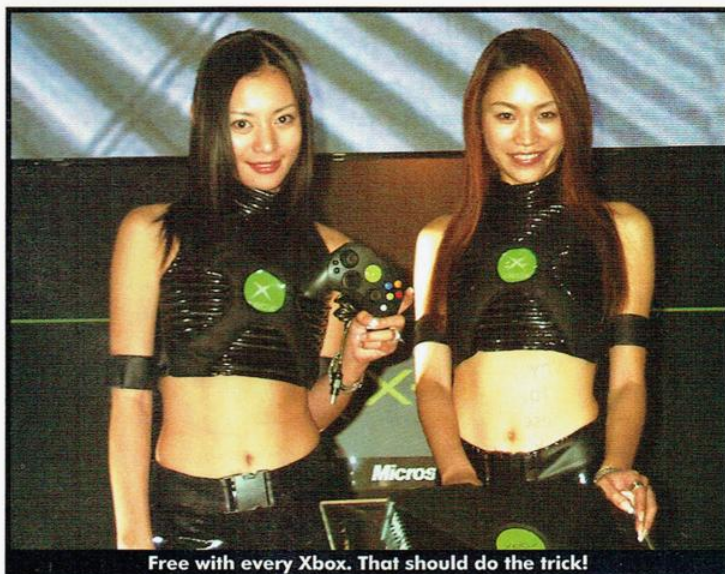
have in development and then show only a rolling demo of what appears to be only FMV footage! Imagine the hilarity and fun of doing all these crazy things! Hell, you could even withhold delivery of your new system and games from Australia until everyone in the world already owns one, and then make it really expensive and see what those Aussie people do!! You could... well, need I go on?

C'mon people, throw me some money so I can get this project underway. Shall we start the bidding at \$50,000? Actually, there's a better idea... Zelda as a girl... hmmm... No, get these voices out of my head... someone help me... END TRANSMISSION.

Owl

S329936@student.uq.edu.au

Dear Owl,  
We hate to break this to you, but Zelda IS a girl. Maybe you're thinking of Link... Anyway here's a picture of some cute Xbox girls from the Tokyo Game Show. Because... you like, mentioned the Tokyo Game Show. Yeah that's it!



Free with every Xbox. That should do the trick!

### MULTIPLAYER MOCHA

To the 1337 doods at Hyper,

First of all, great job on the mag, it's been a winner ever since I started reading it, and that was about 4 years ago.

The main reason I'm writing, is to share an opinion, and hopefully encourage other readers about network games parlors.

About 6 months ago, a network games parlor opened in my local area. It had 15 super-fast machines all networked together, so a friend and I, being the avid gamers we are, decided to try it out. It was awesome. The only thing that it lacked was more players. Recently, many players have joined this parlor, and they regularly hold tournaments on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Suffice to say, my money has been drained because of this. \$15 for 5 hours is a pretty good price in my books, and not only has it increased my skills in Counter Strike, and other games, it has also encouraged me to go out and meet fellow gamers in the community.

I guess what I'm saying is, if you haven't gone out and had a tournie at the local network games parlor, then you're missing out on something really fun.

Anyway, thanks for hearing me out, and I hope I've encouraged people around Australia to take a different look at network games parlors.

Phone Phreaker  
Fried\_chips@hotmail.com

Dear Phone Phreaker,  
The "network parlor" is certainly a good alternative for those who either can't play online or can't hook up with enough friends for a private LAN session. It is, however, certainly the most expensive option. Frag away with your latté.

### SIZE MATTERS

Giddy Hyper,

The people who complain about the GBA being too small are idiots. The other day my GBA batteries ran out I decided to use my old GBC and I was shocked as to how small it is. My hands were cramping by the time I had finished with it. I have no problems with the size of the GBA.

Anyhow here are some questions if you will:

1. Is it true that PC games can be played on the Xbox?
2. Are there any Dragonball Z games coming out, and if so, for what system?
3. Which is the better system in graphics: the GameCube or the Xbox?

Thanks  
Danny Summers  
Mojojoes001@hotmail.com

Dear Danny,  
Before you call them idiots, maybe you should consider that their hands might be bigger than yours.

1. Utterly false!
2. Not that we're aware of.
3. It depends on what the software

## CAPTION THIS!

### PART 24 WINNER

Our winning caption this month comes to us from **KANE ALLAN** of South Australia. Good stuff!



CERTAINLY EXPLAINS THE HIGH, SQUEAKY VOICE.

developer squeezes out of the hardware. On paper, the Xbox has the superior graphics capability, but Nintendo may have better programmers... we'll just have to wait and see.

**VIRTUAL REALITY**

Hey to all you guys at Hyper. And girls if there are any. I speak today on behalf of all the hardcore gamers who are plagued with the everyday addiction of videogames, for all the people who are placed in a lower class bracket to all the athletic heroes out there, to the people who are commonly referred to as geeks. To the people who are commonly asked, "How can you sit in front of that thing"? Or "Why do you like games so much"? Today I answer these questions; these questions are hard but if you think real well, the answers are pretty simple. The answer to all the questions is that we are bred into videogames.

It begins long before we are born, when our parents are doing dirty deeds. For me, it started when my father plugged his joystick in and turned mum on. Like all men, my father skipped the boring credits at the start of the game and began without an introduction. In the dark room, the set up looked similar to that of 'Galaga'. My father shooting at the ovum, and not wanting them to contact his ship or it's game over. But alas my father is a bad aim and eventually the ovum and ship met and I was created.

Developing inside the womb was

a long and boring stage. But somehow my parents enjoyed it. It was like a 'Tamagotchie' how they talked to me and played with me even though I did nothing to entertain them. After months of constant attention, I was born into the world.

As a baby I was given boring repetitive puzzles that were meant to stimulate the mind but these Tetris-like puzzles did nothing but distract me from the real world.

On my first day of school, I was thrown into a room and forced into lines where I was ordered to do everything the teacher wanted. Again I solved stupid puzzles with no point. This was about the same time I played my first game of Lemmings and the similarities to my life were uncanny.

As I went through primary school, I participated in many random battles that began as a petty dispute but built into a fight for my life. But I became victorious and started the sequel, High School. High school had more to it than just puzzles and fighting. We went up against many 'Rival Schools' at athletics carnivals and I became one of the best decathletes in the area.

At high school, I also attended my fair share of dance parties where I tried to show off my 'Dance Dance' skills but did nothing but make a fool of myself.

After long nights of hard work and extensive reading, I finished the game of school and received only a piece of paper saying I finished. A



Baka and Dairan by Hype reader, Mark Lin. Thanks Mark!

**WAR ON GAMES**

Dear Hyper,

With the war on terrorism currently being fought, I was wondering just how much of an impact this will have on video games. Already I have heard that Microsoft have taken the World Trade Centre out of its flight sim, and Syphon Filter 3 was delayed in the U.S because of the marketing campaign it had. Are there any other developers who have had to change some part of a game? And will censors be tougher on games which involve terrorism, or which deal with innocent civilians losing their lives? Anyway, thanks for a great mag and keep up the excellent work.

Aiden

aidenoi@bigpond.com

Dear Aiden,

We have heard of a few cases of this kind of knee-jerk censorship in light of September 11, and it's certainly something to be concerned about. Usually these things get taken too far. It's one thing to show respect for the people affected by such a tragedy (by removing the World Trade Center from a game), but in times such as these the censors do tend to start going nuts and games start getting banned left, right and center.

Hopefully, the world of videogames will return to normality in due course. You'll probably have your gratuitous gaming violence on a platter before long.

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huge anti-climax and a waste of time. The sad thing is we can't do anything to stop others from going down the same path.

So as you can see, we don't choose to become addicted to videogames. We are just raised to like them. And who knows, as we continue to grow we could turn out to be more like videogames, until one day when it's GAME OVER.

Yours Sincerely

Rhys Votano

Finalheaven@start.com.au

Dear Rhys,

You are a freak. It's nice to see someone putting such effort into such a pointless letter.

**QUESTION TIME**

Dear Hyper,

I am just writing to say congratulations on the 100th issue! I was wondering if you could answer some questions for me.

1. When will Shenmue II be released in good old Oz?
2. Is it possible to get the Hyper font for my computer?
3. After playing Mario Kart: Super Circuit I was just wondering what the original Mario Kart Scored?
4. Have you guys played Final Fantasy X yet? If so, is it the best

and how does it differ from the rest of the series?

5. Is Hyper the best selling games magazine in Australia?
6. How come you stopped putting the free CD in your mag? I thought it was great!
7. Does the green X on the Xbox controller glow green?
8. Have any of you been working at Hyper since day one?
9. In issue 97 a guy called Nick Hamm wrote in saying that he would like to write for an Xbox magazine if there ever was one and I think that's a great idea! If there are any positions there, when or if you start one, count me in! Do you think an Xbox mag will start up?

See you next month guys, and once again, congratulations on the 100th issue!!

From your loyal subscriber,

**Chris Dowling**

P.S. Hi to all my fans out there!

Dear Chris,

1. Well, it's been cancelled for Dreamcast outside of Japan, but will be on the Xbox in the US (and probably here also) instead. Sega actually apologised for this.
2. Yes! The font is called Keedy Sans Bold and it comes from a font company called Emigre. You have to

# MAIL

purchase it.

3. Mario Kart on SNES or N64? Be more specific! Basically, both scored very highly. What, you want us to be specific?

4. Yes, and we must say, it's better than VIII and better than IX. It's quite different in many ways, so look forward to our review!

5. Sometimes...

6. We were faced with a cover price hike if we kept it because of production costs.

7. No, it didn't when we were over in Seattle earlier this year. It's just a design feature.

8. Pretty much, I (Eliot) was here when the magazine started, but I was working on a different mag here at the same company. I started writing for Hyper after the first few issues.

9. If the console seems to sell well, Next Gaming may very well do an Xbox mag. It depends on the demand!

## SONIC DREAM

Hi,  
back in Hyper 73 (Nov 99) in the Sonic Adventure Review for Dreamcast, you mentioned that the Sonic Team are working on 4 more

Sonic games for the Dreamcast. Now that the Dreamcast is no longer, do you know what is happening to those games? If they are going to continue working on them (I think most likely) what platform will they move to?

**James**  
jcollins@cairns.com.au

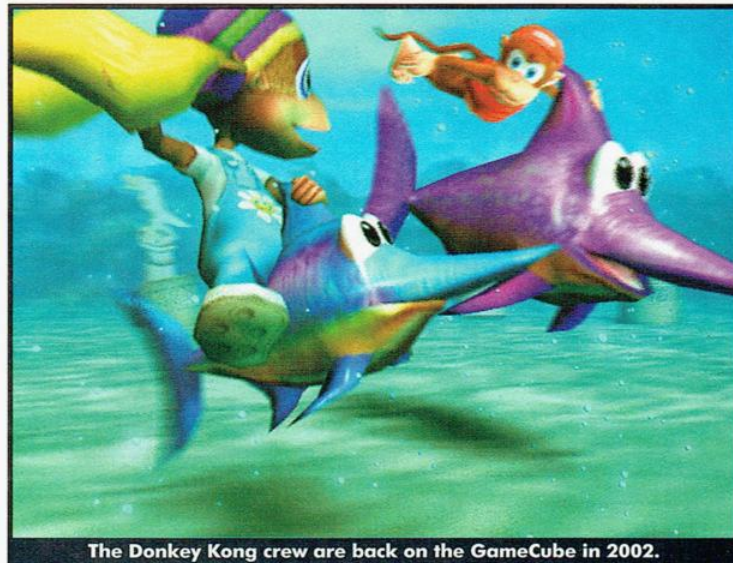
Dear James,  
Now that Sega are developing for all consoles, you can be assured that there will probably be a Sonic game on every platform.

## XBOX PAYNE

Hi Hyper,  
I think the Xbox is great and I just wanted to know if you could answer some of my questions

1. Are there any soccer games coming out on the Xbox?
  2. Is it confirmed that Interplay are going to make a Matrix game for the Xbox and PS2?
  3. Is Max Payne an Xbox title?
  4. Is there going to be a Duke Nukem movie with the Rock in it?
- And another thing, your magazine rocks!

**gray sd**  
E-mail address withheld



The Donkey Kong crew are back on the GameCube in 2002.

Dear gray sd,  
1. Yes, there will be some soccer games on the Xbox, without a doubt. EA Sports have signed up for Xbox development, so we may even see FIFA.  
2. Yes.  
3. Yes!  
4. It has been rumoured, but they certainly have not signed anyone yet. It could be years until the movie surfaces - if it happens at all!

## WICKED KONGS

Hey guys,  
Firstly I'll say Happy Birthday to you (even though it's a bit early). I'll also say happy birthday to the Donkey Kongs. I first noticed your mag when my teacher brought some really old Hyper mags into class. I borrowed a few with Donkey Kong in them (wicked!) and read them. Your mag is the best video gaming mag I've ever read. Full of comps and the latest news, it's wicked! Anyway, I'll ask a few questions:

1. What are the best games coming out in summer? (Consider PC games, cos mum and daddy won't let me get anything else)
2. What is the best console?
3. I loved the Donkey Kong Country games on SNES. Have they put them on the computer or anything else?
4. What is an Xbox, what do you need for it, when is its release date and how much will it cost?

Thanks for producing the best mag ever and I hope it continues as I get older.

Cheers,  
**Christopher Airey**  
sairey@kisser.net.au

Dear Christopher,  
Sounds like you have one really cool teacher!

1. For the PC? Depends on what kind of games you like. Return to Castle Wolfenstein show promise. Civilization III rocks. Harry Potter on PC could be good. Wizardy 8 could be da bomb. But, you know, when it comes to PC games, people can be so particular...
2. The one that has the most games that you really like.
3. The GameCube is going to have another Diddy Kong racing game and there may be more from Nintendo in the future with Donkey Kong himself.
4. The Xbox is a console, just like the PS2 and GameCube. It's made by Microsoft and it will be out in March (probably). We don't know how much it will cost yet, but it won't be cheap to begin with. The games look great.

## TWISTED DISBELIEF

Aaaarrggghhhh!!!  
Where has TMB gone? Rumour has it that it has been canned because of the September 11 incidents... Surely not, especially since we have had WDL: War Jets released after that date as well. Does anyone know what happened to such a great game? It's still not in the shop and stores have said that it's not coming in either.

**Scared Disbelief,**  
NSW

Dear Mr. Disbelief,  
Sony have not released the game due to some sensitive issues that were picked up during censorship. It may be released one day...

## Harvey Norman

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HH4



# The Official Australian Games Chart

Compiled by Inform in association with AVSDA

**TOP 10**

## PlayStation 2 Games Over \$50

W/E 14 Oct 2001  
RETAIL SALES

1	◆	Gran Turismo 3	Racing
2	◆	Resident Evil Code Veronica X	Adventure
3	◆	Red Faction	Action
4	◆	Tekken Tag Tournament	Action
5	▲	MX 2002	Racing
6	▲	SSX	Sports
7	▼	Crazy Taxi	Racing
8	▲	Formula 1 2001	Racing
9	▼	Dark Cloud	RPG
10	☆	Rugby	Sports

**TOP 10**

## PlayStation Games Over \$40

W/E 14 Oct 2001  
RETAIL SALES

1	▲	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
2	▲	Sheepdog 'N' Wolf	Adventure
3	▼	Atlantis The Lost Empire	Adventure
4	☆	Winnie & Tigger Honey Hunt	Adventure
5	▲	Gran Turismo 2 Ptm	Racing
6	▼	Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX	Sports
7	☆	X-Men: Mutant Academy 2	Action
8	◆	TOCA World Touring Cars	Racing
9	▼	Digimon	RPG
10	☆	Spyro 3 Year Of The Dragon	Adventure

**TOP 10**

## Game Boy Games Over \$40

W/E 14 Oct 2001  
RETAIL SALES

1	◆	Pokemon Crystal	RPG
2	▲	Pokemon Silver	RPG
3	▲	Pokemon Gold	RPG
4	☆	Super Mario Brothers Dlx	Action
5	▲	Donkey Kong Country	Adventure
6	▲	Zelda: Oracle Of Ages	RPG
7	☆	Zelda: Oracle Of Seasons	RPG
8	☆	Pokemon Yellow	RPG
9	☆	Shrek FairyTale Freak Down	Action
10	☆	Atlantis The Lost Empire	Adventure

**TOP 10**

## N64 Games Over \$40

W/E 14 Oct 2001  
RETAIL SALES

1	◆	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
2	▲	Mario Tennis	Sports
3	▲	Mario Kart 64	Racing
4	▲	Goldeneye 007	Action
5	▲	Pokemon Stadium 2	Action
6	▲	Donkey Kong 64	Adventure
7	▲	Banjo Tooie	Adventure
8	▼	Conker's Bad Fur Day	Adventure
9	▼	Mario Party 3	Family
10	☆	Super Mario 64	Adventure

**TOP 10**

## PC Games Over \$30

W/E 14 Oct 2001  
RETAIL SALES

1	◆	Red Faction	Action
2	☆	C & C Yuri's Revenge Exp Pk	Strategy
3	▼	The Sims	Strategy
4	▼	Diablo 2: Lrd Of Destruction	RPG
5	▼	Baldurs Gate 2 Shdw Of Amn	RPG
6	▼	The Sims Collectors Edition	Strategy
7	☆	Commandos 2	Strategy
8	▼	The Sims House Party	Strategy
9	▼	Sim City 3000 Unlimited	Strategy
10	☆	Operation Flashpoint	Strategy

**TOP 10**

## Game Boy Advance Games Over \$40

W/E 14 Oct 2001  
RETAIL SALES

1	◆	Mario Kart Super Circuit	Racing
2	◆	Super Mario Advance	Adventure
3	◆	Advance Wars	Strategy
4	◆	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Sports
5	◆	Rayman Advance	Adventure
6	▲	Jurassic Park 3 DNA Factor	Action
7	▼	GT Advance Racing	Racing
8	▼	Castlevania	Action
9	◆	Bomberman Tournament	Action
10	☆	Final Fight 1	Action

**TOP 10**

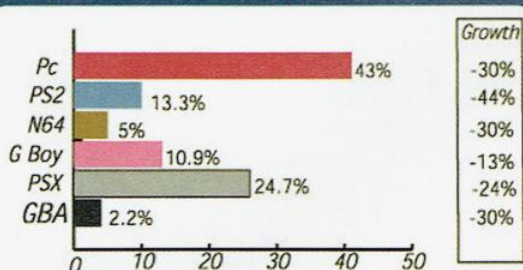
## All Full Priced Games

W/E 14 Oct 2001  
RETAIL SALES

1	◆	Pokemon Crystal	Game Boy
2	◆	Gran Turismo 3	PlayStation 2
3	◆	Red Faction	PC/MAC
4	▲	Resident Evil Code Veronica X	PlayStation 2
5	▼	Mario Kart Super Circuit	GB Advance
6	◆	Red Faction	PlayStation 2
7	▲	Tekken Tag Tournament	PlayStation 2
8	▼	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	N64
9	☆	C & C Yuri's Revenge Exp Pk	PC/MAC
10	◆	The Sims	PC/MAC

## MARKET WATCH All Games by Platform

Sep v Aug 2001  
RETAIL SALES



- ☆ New Entry
- ◆ Non Mover
- ▲ Up from last week
- ▼ Down from last week



Charts can be viewed at [www.informbd.com.au](http://www.informbd.com.au) as part of Inform's comprehensive database of online market intelligence, updated weekly



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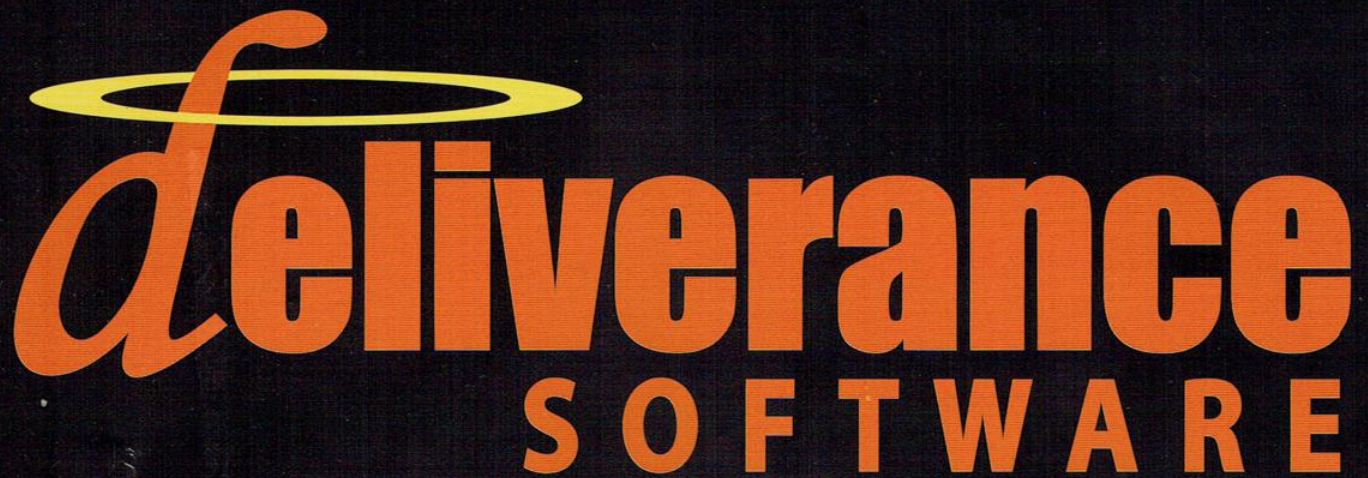
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REVIEWS OF WIPEOUT FUSION, RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN & MORE  
**PLUS!** SOME VERY SPECIAL 100TH ISSUE PRIZES TO BE WON!

**NEXT ISSUE**

**Hyper 100**  **On sale January 2**



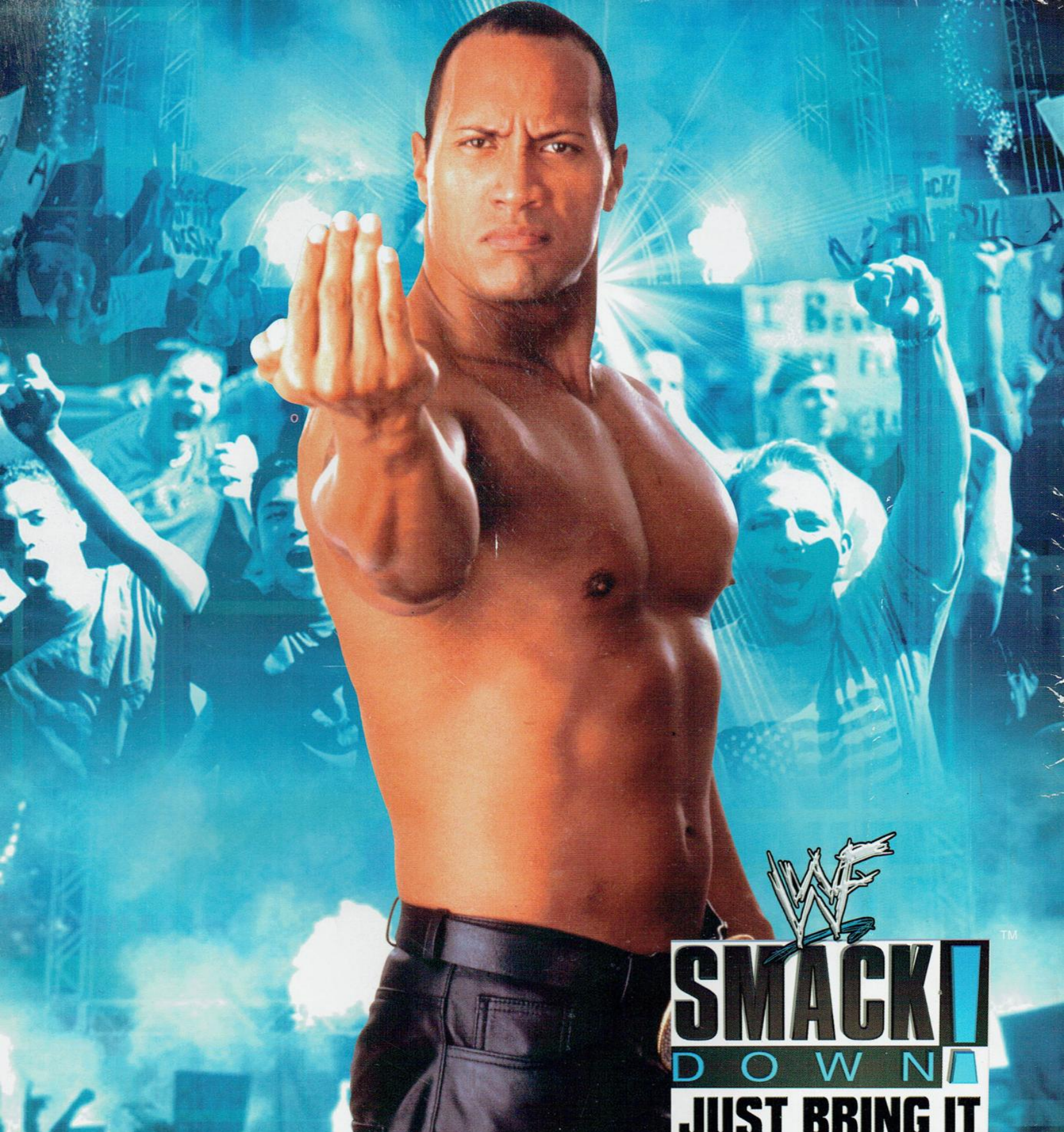
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